

IVICA MAX KRIZMANIĆ, GENERAL MANAGER OF THE ESPLANADE ZAGREB HOTEL, ELECTED EHMA EUROPEAN HOTEL MANAGER OF THE YEAR 2025

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Hotel Managers Association (EHMA) has honoured Ivica Max Krizmanić, General Manager of the iconic Esplanade Zagreb Hotel, with the prestigious title of [“European Hotel Manager of the Year 2025.”](#) The award was presented during the Gala Dinner at the 51st EHMA Annual General Assembly, held in the elegant Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton Grand Warsaw.

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*Panos Almyrantis, President of
EHMA*

The EHMA jury selected Mr Krizmanić for his outstanding ability to blend managerial innovation with a deep commitment to nurturing local community values and fostering staff development. His distinguished career at the Esplanade Zagreb Hotel exemplifies exceptional leadership and relentless dedication to elevating standards in Europe’s luxury hospitality sector.

“Ivica’s remarkable achievements embody EHMA’s mission to foster excellence, leadership, and innovation in hospitality,” commented Panos Almyrantis, President of EHMA, National Delegate for Greece & Cyprus, and Chief Growth & Commercial Officer at Ella Resorts in Athens. “His ability to blend visionary leadership with a deep respect for tradition, has consistently transformed his hotel into a symbol of local culture and world-class service.”

A member of EHMA since 2014, Mr Krizmanić has demonstrated his passion and dedication through active involvement in EHMA annual events, including national gatherings.

About the Award

Each year, EHMA proudly presents the “European Hotel Manager of the Year” award to a General Manager who exemplifies excellence in operational performance, team development,

community engagement, and industry innovation. Mr Krizmanić's outstanding achievements in these areas have firmly established him as a distinguished leader—not only in Croatia's hospitality sector but across the broader European tourism landscape.

Brief Biography: Ivica Max Krizmanić

- **A Lifelong Commitment:** Mr Krizmanić has devoted 32 years to the Esplanade Zagreb Hotel, including 12 as General Manager. Following in the footsteps of his father, who served at the Esplanade for three decades, he carries forward this family legacy with unwavering passion, dedication, and visionary leadership.
- **Education & Expertise:** Mr Krizmanić refined his managerial expertise through prestigious programs with the Rezidor Hotel Group and advanced studies at Cornell University. Since taking the helm in 2012, he has transformed the Esplanade into a globally renowned destination, celebrated for exceptional hospitality and appeal to discerning guests.
- **Achievements & Accolades:** Under Mr Krizmanić's visionary leadership, the Esplanade has garnered numerous awards, earning prestigious accolades such as recognition in Condé Nast Traveller's Readers' Choice Awards and multiple honours from the World Luxury Hotel Awards. In 2022, his exceptional contributions were celebrated as he was awarded the title of "General Manager of the Year for South and East Europe" by the World Luxury Hotel Awards.
- **Industry Engagement & Sustainability:** Deeply committed to promoting Zagreb as a leading tourist destination, Mr Krizmanić champions environmental responsibility, implementing sustainable practices such as food waste programmes in collaboration with the WWF. Additionally, he holds honorary memberships in several distinguished organisations, such as FIJET and SKAL.
- **Personal Touch:** A dedicated mentor to aspiring hospitality professionals, Mr Krizmanić fosters a culture of growth and excellence at the Esplanade, inspiring both personal and professional development. Residing in Zagreb, he shares his life with his wife, Sanda—an award-winning PR and Marketing Director—and their young son, continuing to shape the future of Croatian tourism together.

About Esplanade Zagreb Hotel

Founded in 1925 to welcome Orient Express travellers, the Esplanade Zagreb Hotel has become



Panos Almyrantis (President of The European Hotel Managers Association), and Ivica Max Krizmanić, General Manager of the iconic Esplanade Zagreb Hotel

a timeless icon of Croatian hospitality and Art Deco sophistication. With nearly a century of storied heritage, it has paid host to luminaries from heads of state to global celebrities. Seamlessly blending tradition with contemporary elegance, the hotel serves as a quintessential symbol of Zagreb's cultural and historical grandeur.

Spotlight on Europe's Finest Hoteliers: Celebrating the 2025 Finalists

The "European Hotel Manager of the Year 2025" Award highlighted not only the winner but also four exceptional finalists, each embodying the talent, vision, and passion that define Europe's premier hospitality experience. Representing the Netherlands, Robert Jan Woltering, General Manager at Hotel de L'Europe Amsterdam, stood out for his innovative strategies in guest engagement and community outreach. From Switzerland, Simon Jenny, General Manager at Castello del Sole Beach Resort & Spa Ascona, gained acclaim for merging authentic Swiss hospitality with state-of-the-art spa and wellness offerings. In Portugal, Pedro Pinto, COO at GreatCreation Collection Hotels, earned recognition for spearheading strategic brand expansions and cultivating profound guest connections. Last, but not least, Italy's Giuseppe De Martino, General Manager at The St. Regis Rome, distinguished himself through his meticulous attention to detail and steadfast pursuit of service excellence. All these remarkable individuals, united by their dedication to excellence, underscore the vibrancy and strength of the European hotel industry.

About the European Hotel Managers Association (EHMA)

Founded in Rome in 1974, the European Hotel Managers Association (EHMA) is a prestigious non-profit organisation committed to excellence in Europe's luxury hospitality industry. With a membership of nearly 500 top professionals overseeing more than 1,200 premier hotels across 24 countries, EHMA fosters leadership, innovation, and the highest service standards. Through educational initiatives, networking events, and industry research, EHMA drives knowledge-sharing and professional growth while shaping a sustainable, forward-thinking future for European hospitality.

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