

*This book is dedicated to the memory of my Mother,
who loved to sing.*

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Front Cover Glagolista. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License.

Page 9 Missah picture: *Misa u Harvatski Jezik* (Mass in Croatian Language) , kept in the Franciscan convent in Sinj, 1644. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License.

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About the Music

These are traditional carols dating from early medieval times to the 1800s from the regions of Croatia, Dalmatia and Istria. The melody voice sings with the arrangements of Croatian folk harmony, Istrian mode and Glagolitic chant style. Croatian pleter and Glagolitic script artwork adorn the sheet music.

Although these fourteen carol arrangements are for the small harp, two and one quarter octaves with tone range of C3 - E5, they can be adapted to play on any size of harp. They are arranged in the keys of C, F and G and their minors and modes. Chord symbols are indicated and fingerings are included. They are arranged for advanced beginners to intermediate harp players. Two songs have a lever change. One song is set in the key of C, but with *Ab*, *Bb* and *D#* levers needed. Lyrics are not given as there are songs that can have over 20 verses and verses that can have a dozen of different melodies, varying considerably from region to region.

Introduction

Singing can be heard on the streets, in the homes and churches all over Croatia. With its rich and diverse history, carols and chants are loved by all regardless of religion or region. It is a blend of countries and traditions. Before the 7th century formation of what would be Croatia, the Greeks colonized on my grandparent's island home of Hvar. Prior to the formation of the Kingdom of Croatia in 925 AD, Byzantine influence gave way to Christendom. Since then Croatia has been ruled by the Ottoman Empire, Vienna, Venetian, Dalmatia, Italy, Hungary, Austria (my grandparent's time), and Yugoslavia before returning to their own rule in 1991.

The Croats have more than five hundred Christmas Carols. I selected fourteen to be representative of traditional carols, Istrian scale and medieval Glagolitic chants that are still being sung today. The oldest preserved texts of Croatian Christmas carols are from 1380, in the Paris Song Book, within the Croatian Glagolitic book called the Paris Miscellany, kept in the National Library of France in Paris. The Old Church Slavonic Institute in Zagreb has 152 CDs of recorded Glagolitic Chanting, also known as Glagolitic singing.



Different traditions of church music have played a role in the creation of the musical characteristics of Glagolitic singing. The first documentation of the music dates from 1117, when Pope Alexander III visited Zadar. Today Glagolitic chant is studied on the basis of documents, liturgical roles in manuscripts, rare note records, but mostly sound recordings and transcriptions (from the beginning of the 20th century). Parts of the Croatian Glagolitic singing were influenced by Byzantine and Jewish singing, and today some musicologists argue about the beginnings of authentic Dalmatian Gregorian chanting.

This book cover features the Glagolitic alphabet, also known as Glagolista. It was created as the liturgical language of Glagolitic priests. This was the oldest Slavic language in use in Croatia. Glagolitic characters can represent a meaning as well as a letter. The music was written in Glagolitic neumes, somewhat similar to Gregorian. A hymn book picture can be found on the *Kyrie Eleison* pages.

The Istrian scale, so named after the peninsula region Istria, has passages that comprise of two-part singing in parallel non-tempered sixths with movements in octaves. The leading voice is usually lower with the accompanying voice moving an octave above or a third below the leading voice ending in cadence. The present tendency is to sing in thirds or seconds and ending on the same tone.

Croatian interlace or known as the *pletter* Croatian wattle, is a type of interlace characteristic for its three-ribbon pattern. It is one of the most often used patterns of pre-romanesque Croatian art. It is found on and within churches as well as monasteries built in early medieval Kingdom of Croatia between the 9th and beginning of the 12th century. The ornamental strings were sometimes grouped together with animal and herbal figures.

The harp is not a Croatian traditional instrument. But the carols are so beautiful when played on the harp, whether with single or sparse voices and with regional or classical harmonies, that the melody needs no translation. Both harp and Croatian carols will bring joyful vibrancies and peaceful resonance to you and yours.

Svibanj glazbu, mir i radost biti tvoja tijekom cijele godine.
May music, peace and joy be yours throughout the year.



 **Djetešce Nam Se Rodilo** 
Our Little Child Was Born

Waltz like

Croatian Carol

First system of musical notation. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: C, F, G7. Fingerings: Treble (1, 2, 1, 1, 2, 3, 1, 2), Bass (3, 1, 3, 1, 1, 2, 3).

Second system of musical notation. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: C, C, F. Fingerings: Treble (3, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1), Bass (4, 2, 1, 1, 1).

Third system of musical notation. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: C, G7, C, C. Fingerings: Treble (2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 1), Bass (4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3).

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: F, G7, C. Fingerings: Treble (1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3), Bass (3, 2, 1, 1, 2, 3).