



PREŠOV AUTONOMOUS REGION'S HAPPY THIRTEEN

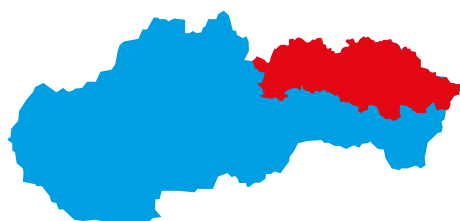
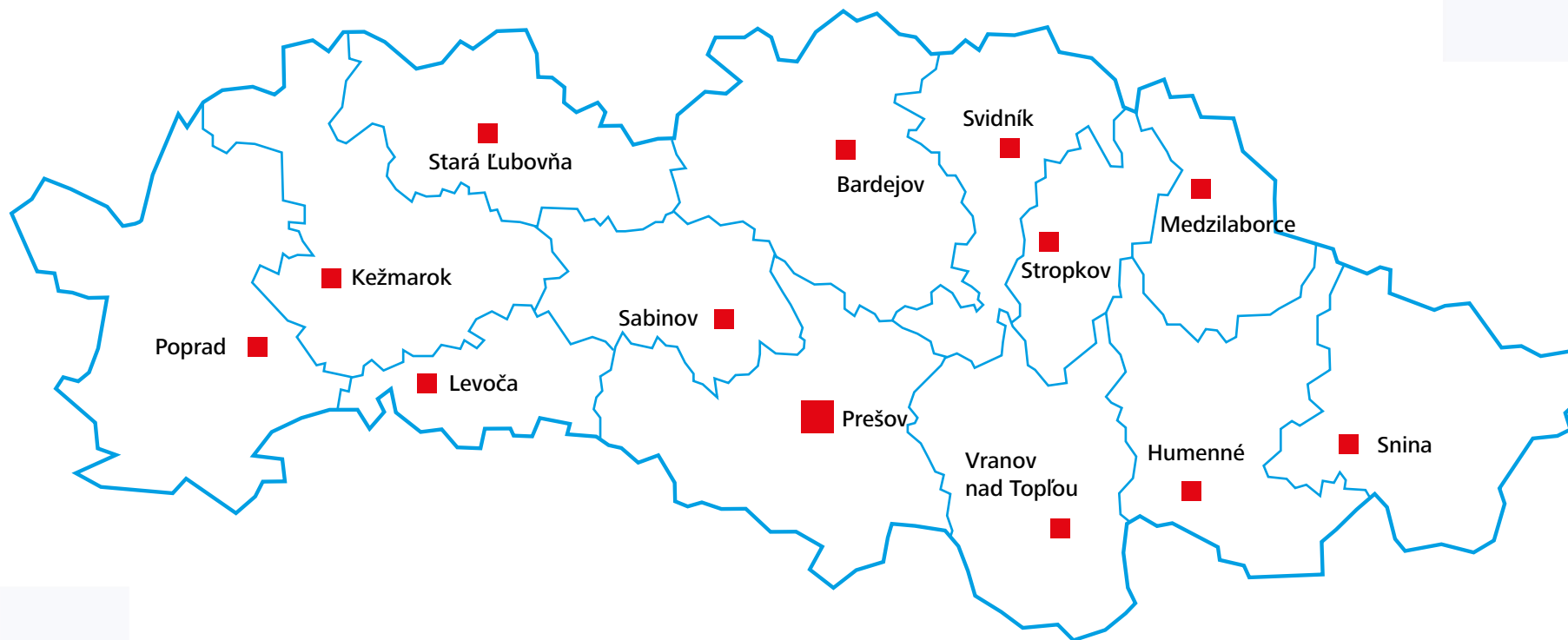
Thirteen districts, thirteen colourful collections of cultural and historic monuments, beautiful natural scenery and opportunities for active leisure activities and relaxation. You can find many known and sought-after sites in the Prešov region as well as many undiscovered places. They will please not only your eyes but also your soul with their ravishing beauty, spiritual ambience and historic value. The guide book in your hand will accompany you on your way and show you the most beautiful lucky thirteen. Discover with us the monumental peaks



of the High Tatras, the beguiling charm of Pieniny and wilderness of the Poloniny national park forests. See the ruins of medieval castles spun in legends, let yourselves be carried away by the indescribable beauty of UNESCO monuments and the spiritual might of churches on the Carpathian wooden road...



You can be sure that despite its volume, this guide will not prepare you for everything. Behind every single place and experience, the possibilities for thousands more appear. Just watch, dream and travel with an open mind.



Country	Slovakia
Region	Prešov
Highest peak	Gerlachovský štít 2654.4 MASL
Area	8973.7 km ² (897,370 ha)
Population	818,916 (31.12.2013)
Population density	91 people per km ²



and the Ukraine, you will find yourself in a city that will charm you with its pleasant architecture and ideal mix of historic monuments, culture and opportunities for relaxation and sporting activities. Prešov is a wonderful place for those wishing to enjoy a moment's peace in the atmosphere of a developed city infrastructure and everything that goes with it.

PREŠOV

The city on the 49°N parallel

If your ambition is to travel around the world on the 49°N parallel, Prešov will be the only city you encounter on your 26,263 km journey. After picturesque České Budějovice, German Regensburg, the French suburbs of Paris, the Canadian island city of Gander, 2000 km along the coastline of the Pacific Ocean, the Kuril Islands, China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan



When visiting Prešov for the first time, you will be enthralled by its buoyant architecture and ever-present greenery. The streets, resembling boulevards in their width and lining of majestic historic buildings, lend the city a glamour similar to that of a Habsburgian metropolis while the panorama of the surrounding mountains, on the other hand, provide an everlasting freshness. From the second half of the 19th century, with regard to its high culture and level of learning and education, Prešov proudly bore the nickname 'Athens above the Torysa' and has managed to maintain this status in many ways until today. Prešov University resides here and has 8 faculties providing education in the

fields of humanities and exact sciences. For this reason, maybe, Prešov succeeds in keeping its youthful character. An important national cultural institution is the Jonáš Záborský Theatre that follows an artistic tradition rooted in the 17th century. Music lovers and seekers of the club and festival ambience will remember Prešov easily for its nickname as 'the Slovak Seattle'. You could hardly find a city from which so many frontmen and leaders of successful Slovak bands come. Apart from this, the city is known for its club subculture where you can find many alternative music groups, which you can enjoy at some of the many longstanding music festivals in Prešov. For example, there is the Rock League Festival with more than 20 years of success, Prešov Student Liverpool, the Good Festival, the Festival of Bad Music and Jazz Prešov. This regional city lies in a valley at the meeting point of the Torysa and Sekčov rivers, from east bordering with Slanské vrchy and from west with Šarišská vrchovina.



There are still doubts about how the city got its name. One ancient legend says that King Belo II 'The Blind' got lost and while looking for his knights he satisfied his hunger and thirst by strawberries. When the knights found him in the evening, as a sign of gratitude he named a nearby village after the strawberries, 'Eperies', from the Hungarian word 'eper'. In fact, historians tend to believe that the origin of the name of Prešov, which first appeared in the 16th century, came from the Slavik name Preš. Whichever is the truth, it is sure that the first written reference to the city originates from 1247, where it was mentioned in a letter of King Belo IV. After only a little time, it achieved its first city privileges in 1299 and as of 1374 it was granted the status of a free royal city. Thanks to its geographic location on the crossroad of important commercial routes, it has had a significant strategic importance since the

Middle Ages and belonged to the defence system of the rising Hungarian state. During this period, several defensive settlements and fortresses were established, whose existence is kept in our memory by the names of two adjacent hills, Veľká and Lysá stráž. Due to its geographic importance, Prešov was involved in many military conflicts. Battles with the Turks as well as anti-Habsburg uprisings shook the city to its roots and slowed down, for a while, the economic growth that citizens had benefited from during the 14th and 15th centuries. In this period of economic prosperity, many skilful craftsmen settled and established guilds, the most prosperous of which were those of furriers, blacksmiths, tailors and shoemakers. The satisfaction of citizens with their standard of living is evidenced by the development of construction in the city that resulted in the splendid architecture of the townhouses. Turkish invasions and anti-Habsburg uprisings from the end of the 16th century to the beginning of the 18th century together with several natural disasters, fires and a plague decimated the city, however, it grew again and experienced a period of renewed vitality until the revolutionary year of 1848. The revolutionary years of 1848–1849 pulled the city, together with the rest of the country, into a spiral of power struggles

that climaxed in World War I. Although the economic importance of the city declined again at this time, craftsmen's workshops and smaller companies remained stable. Mills, local liqueur production, vinegar production, the brewery and salt mining prospered. Despite slower economic development, several technical discoveries found their way into the city. In 1894, the city already had a sewage system, power plant, and a year later, also its own electric lighting. By the end of the 19th century, the first railway and telephone network were completed. In 1887, the city almost burned down, requiring a massive reconstruction of the medieval townhouses and the construction of new buildings and streets. In 1919, Prešov witnessed one of the most significant events in the Slovak history when on June 16 The Slovak Soviet Republic was declared from the balcony of the city hall.





What to see

Saint Nicholas Co-cathedral

GPS N 48°59'53" E 21°14'22"

Formerly a single-nave church built in the middle of the 14th century, it was later rebuilt to have three aisles. It is a late-Gothic building with the feature of the additional aisles having the same height and the main nave and includes three presbyteries and star and rib vaults. Thanks to its

dimensions, 54.7 m long, 34.45 m wide and 16 m high, the church belongs to the biggest religious buildings in our territory. Pope Benedict XVI promoted it to a co-cathedral in 2008. The dominant feature of the temple is the Baroque altar of St Nicholas made between 1490 and 1506. The maker of the altar was a woodcarver from Prešov, Ján Weiss. In the cabinet of the main altar can be found preserved larger-than-life polychrome statues of the Madonna, St Nicholas and St Vojtech as well as three sculptures of the evangelists. The biggest statue shows St Sebastian, a Roman soldier and martyr, with arrows in his body. The top of the altar is decorated with a moulding of the Holy Trinity and a medal depicting the coat-of-arms of the city, used since 1558. Apart from another 6 altars in the building, you can admire



a monumental statue of the Crucified characterised by its highly artistic and expressive elaboration. Included in the decorative objects of the church is also a small sculpture of Christ the Sufferer, made by Master Pavol of Levoča.



Cathedral of St John the Baptist

GPS N 48°59'39" E 21°14'34"

On the place where, in the 14th century stood a chapel used by the local hospital, grew a church that was later promoted to a cathedral in 1820. The original chapel was rebuilt and consecrated to the Virgin Mary, and from 1603 belonged to monks of the Minorite order who used it as a monastery. It passed into the hands of Greek Catholics in 1820 when the Baroque building was adjusted to meet the needs of worship according to east Byzantine tradition. In 1994–1995, the now cathedral under-

went complete reconstruction. Today, apart from a valuable iconostas and decorations, you can also find relics of the hieromartyrs Paul and Vasil', a faithful copy of the Turin Shroud and a relic of the Holy Cross.

Turin Shroud

One of the four valuable faithful copies of Turin Shroud in the world is located in the

Calvary

GPS N 48°59'16" E 21°13'35"

A collection of 15 beautiful Baroque chapels, catacombs, cemetery and a church from the 18th century can be found on a hill to the west of Prešov. Apart from the 14 chapels of the Stations of the Cross (the symbolic journey of Jesus to Golgotha) with gable facades, semi-circular vaulted portals and partially preserved coats of arms of donors, there is the chapel of the Holy Stairs built by Lithuanian Count Karol Radziwill as a sign of gratitude for asylum. The chapel



Greek Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist. Jesus Christ's body was placed in the shroud after taking him down from the cross. The shroud's original can be found in Turin, however, it is not accessible to public. Turin Shroud in Prešov's Cathedral is located on the right side of the nave, hanging on the wall next to the bishop's throne.



is decorated by beautiful fresco paintings and a stone sculpture of the Pieta. The Baroque church of the Holy Cross at Calvary with two side chapels dates back to 1753. It was built by František Perger and painted by Ondrej Trtina. Above the main altar there are three crosses and statues showing the Virgin Mary, Mary Madeleine and St John the Apostle. The organ and three bells were added to the church over time. The entire Calvary was consecrated in 1769.



Neptune's Fountain

The oldest and most beautiful fountain in Prešov can be found on the Main Street in the south part of the historic square. Until 1789, the fountain was only an ordinary cistern, which together with other cisterns provided the citizens of Prešov with drinking water before the construction of a municipal water system. Then in 1789, it was rebuilt as a fountain by a

Jewish merchant, Marek Holländer, out of gratitude to the City Council who allowed him to settle and run a business in the city, which was forbidden until the government of Emperor Joseph II. The statue depicts Neptune with a trident surrounded by sea creatures. Neptune's Fountain is the only preserved original cistern and the oldest and the most beautiful fountain in the city at the same time.

Immaculata sculpture

GPS N 48°59'56.83", E 21°14'21.01"

A Baroque statue of 'the Immaculate Conception', which is also called 'the Trinity' by the citizens, was built in the 18th century in the square in front of the Evangelical college as a sign of reconciliation between Catholics and Lutherans. According to historical sources, the statue was built on the spot where, after the suppression of the anti-Habsburg uprising led by Imrich Thököly, the bloody execu-

tion of twenty-four Prešov Lutherans took place. It is decorated by statues of St John of Nepomuk and St Nicholas as well as reliefs of martyrs and saints. Figures of the Virgin Mary and Baby Jesus wearing gilded crowns on their heads can be seen on the top of the sculpture.





Solivar salt mines

GPS N 49°00'56" E 21°23'99"

In the southeast part of the city, at 2A Zborovská Street, you can find a unique architectural monument, the Solivar salt mines. As the name suggests, the salt mines are an area where salt was mined and processed, starting in the 17th century and ending at the close of WWI. Within the premises you can find the Leopold shaft, brine reservoirs, a smelt

house, evaporating facilities, storehouses, a blacksmiths workshop and a 'clapper' used to announce the start and end of shifts to miners. Solivar is a national cultural monument without technical competition in Slovakia. Since 2001, the Slovak Technical Museum has held an exhibition about the history of Solivar salt mining and production and the equipment used in the evaporating facilities.



Caraffa's prison

GPS N 49°00'38" E 21°24'06"

This late-Gothic building from the beginning of the 16th century resides in the immediate vicinity of the city hall on Main Street. According to archive records it served as a city wine house, for barrel storage, as an armoury and as the place where the city measurement and scale controls were kept. In the 19th century,

the city started to use the building as a prison. It is named after general Antonio Caraffa, the initiator of Prešov's bloody executions in 1687, during which twenty-four Lutheran noblemen and citizens were executed. The building was reconstructed in 2012 and now houses the city gallery, which has a focus on new trends in the visual arts.



Michal Bosák. Originally from Okružle, he immigrated to the USA in 1886 where he quickly worked his way up, established his own bank and became an influential banker and member of several financial institutes and financial administrative boards. The facade of the building will attract your interest with a sculpture depicting Peace and Love, Abundance, Saving and Science. At the rear of the building, on Levočská Street, there is an allegory of the four seasons and reliefs of a steam ship, steam locomotive and plane.

Bosák's bank

GPS N 49°00'14.88" E 21°23'88.19"

An impressive Art Nouveau building from the beginning of the 20th century, located where Main Street and Levočská Street cross. It was one of twelve branches of an American-Slovak bank established in 1920 by Slovak emigrant and financier,





Jonáš Záborský Theatre

GPS N 48°59'51" E 21°14'24"

The theatre tradition of the city is rooted in the 17th century. The Jonáš Záborský Theatre, named after the author of classic Slovak literature, lifted its curtain for the first time in 1944. The original drama theatre expanded its repertoire very quickly to include musical pieces and stayed with

them to this day. Should you crave a little culture on your wander through the city, you will not be let down by the dramatic or musical productions found in this historic building on Main Street or in the new building at Námestie legionárov.

www.djz.sk



Alexander Duchnovič Theatre

GPS N 48°59'52.08" E 21°14'17.16"

This theatre, with a history spanning almost 70 years, was founded with a unique mission: to become a cultural and artistic institution aimed at development of the cultural life of Rusyns in Slovakia. From its beginning, the theatre introduced approximately 340 premieres. The repertoire was mainly oriented on Rusyn classics, and here can be heard the lyrical Rusyn language.

www.divadload.sk



Wine museum

GPS N 48°99'73.06" E 21°23'98.55"

A rare treasure can be found in the historic cellars under Prešov City Hall. Over two floors, samples of Slovak and world wine producers are gathered along with examples of the technologies used for grape processing. A separate place is dedicated to the topic of Tokaj and sparkling wine production. Understandably, any exploration

of this beautiful historic place can be accompanied by wine tasting.

www.muzeumvin.sk



Šariš gallery

GPS N 48°99'63.36" E 21°24'08.26"

The Šariš gallery was established in 1956, making it one of the oldest regional galleries in Slovakia. It can be found directly on Main Street in the historic townhouses that have been reconstructed to meet the needs of the gallery. Its focus is predominantly on works from the northeast of Slovakia, but works from the entire east of the country can be found along with key pieces of modern Slovak art and of personalities connected with the region. In what was a city castle ditch, the so-called 'garden of art' can be found, in which visitors can find six statues from international collections.

www.sgpresov.sk



Regional museum

GPS N°48°59'54" E 21°14'27"

This museum is situated in the beautiful Rákóczy palace on Main Street, a Renais-

sance building built at the beginning of the 17th century by connecting and rebuilding several medieval townhouses to meet the needs of Transylvanian Prince Sigismund Rákóczi. The representative city palace became the residence of the Rákóczi family, the Šariš hereditary district administrators in the 17th century. It serves as the seat of the museum after its reconstruction beginning in 1956, and currently houses archaeological, historical, ethnographical, art historical and scientific collections.

www.muzempresov.sk

Museum of Jewish culture

GPS N 49°00'38" E 21°24'06"

This museum was established in 1928 and is one of a kind in Slovakia. It contains a permanent exhibition of Judaica and is located in the Orthodox synagogue at 32 Okružná Street. A literal jewel of synagogue architecture lies behind its austere Moorish neo-Roman facades. The richly decorated interior space is used as a prayer room to this day.



Water tower

GPS N 48°59'58" E 21°14'47"

A unique 29 m tall structure dating from the beginning of the 20th century, it was a drinking water reservoir as part of the municipal water network project. It was one of the first projects of Viliam Glasz in the city. After complex reconstruction, it is now open to the public as an observation tower from which visitors can admire not only the city scenery of Prešov but even the High Tatras. In the upper part of the tower, you can also enjoy a cup of coffee.



The city at your fingertips

If you like a view from a height, then do not miss the opportunity to admire the panorama of the city and its crowning features from the highest places in the city. A beautiful view over the city can be admired from approximately 60 m up, from the tower of St Nicholas Co-cathedral on Main Street. A similarly impressive view of the city and the Tatras can be found at 29 m up the reconstructed Water tower, located at the edge of the city. And if you would like a view with a spiritual ambience, you can look over the entire valley from the Calvary.

The capital of beer

If you are a hops lover, the fact that the biggest producer of beer in Slovakia is found close to Prešov might interest you. Since 1967, when the first batch of beer was brewed here, more than 25 million hectolitres have flowed through the local pipes. From several well-known brands brewed here, Šariš and Smädny mních will provide you with an alternative taste of the Šariš district. There is also a ginger-mania sweeping the city thanks to a local ginger beer brewed according to a traditional recipe. It can be sampled in several pubs in Prešov.

Prešov castle road

The unique castle road project has connected six castles situated close to Prešov: Šariš, Kapušany, Sebeš, Obišovce, Lipovce a Solnohrad, known also as Zbojnický Castle. All the castle ruins are located within 20 km of the Šariš metropolis and accessible to the public.



Kapušany Castle

GPS N 49°3'17" E 21°19'09"

This medieval castle rises above Kapušany village on Zámčisko rock. It was built to protect the royal trade route from Prešov to the north. Stone walls, including some render, and parts of the windows, embrasures and portals are preserved. In several places, it is also possible to see sections of the vaults. Renovation of the castle has been underway since 2012 as part of a Conservation of cultural heritage project.

Where to go

Šariš Castle

GPS N 49°03'07.99" E 21°10'33.90"

One of the largest medieval royal castles in Slovakia, it is situated on top of the 570 m high Šariš hill. The first written mention of the castle dates back to the 13th century. The fortification of the castle with bastions and a central tower, from which there is a nice view over the nearby mountains and ruins of Kapušany castle and Kamenický castle, are well preserved. The access road, serving as an educational trail, is paved making it also possible to get to the castle by bicycle.



Crafty noblemen

At Kapušany Castle, there once lived the Kapy brothers, who did not respect their king very much. King Matthias overlooked their spiteful behaviour for a long time until the day he found out that they mocked him behind his back and said his son, John, was illegitimate. At this point, he told Baron Zápoľský to gather an army to destroy Kapušany Castle. At that time, King Matthias's son also fell gravely ill. No doctor, sage, healer or herbalist could help him as his condition deteriorated. News of the illness reached the Kapy brothers and they saw an opportunity to reconcile with the angry king, so they gathered together treasures and precious stones even though they knew they would not be enough to appease the king. But then they

saw an old man leading a weak horse out of the barn. The brothers washed and shod it, polished its hoofs and made a beautiful harness. The horse, now beautiful, was sent to King Matthias's court along with the collected treasures. They had guessed correctly that the King would refuse their gifts. However, the servants liked the horse very much and decided to show it to the ill boy, secretly taking it to the boy's bedside. When the young John heard merry neighing and felt a horse's hairy muzzle on his temple, he laughed and was miraculously cured. King Matthias forgave the Kapy brothers and lavished various treasures upon them and Baron Zápoľský was discharged from his obligation to destroy Kapušany Castle. The little horse that had cured the prince was appointed doctor of the royal court.

Zbojnický Castle

GPS N 48°58'28.55" E 21°20'47.23"

Ruins of the castle can be found near Ruská Nová Ves, which you can get to from Prešov by tourist trail following the red signs. Half of the square tower, some of the fortifications and part of the round tower are preserved. A beautiful view of the neighbourhood is offered from the stone platform.

Dubník opal mines

GPS N 48°54'26" E 21°27'34"

Around 28 km from Prešov, in the Slanské vrchy, you can find a historic mining site where precious opals were once extracted. Until the 19th century, it was the only known opal mine in the world.

Napoleon's Empress, Joséphine, wore a Slovak opal called 'the fire of Troy'. The biggest opal, called 'the harlequin', was discovered in 1775, weighing 600 grams and with a value of 700 thousand Dutch guilders.

Zlá diera cave

GPS N 49°3'12" E 20°56'38"

The only publicly accessible cave in the Prešov region, it is situated near the village of Lipovce. A tour of the basic route takes approximately 40 minutes and it is not physically demanding. The cave does not have electric lighting and each visitor will be provided with his or her own headlamp. As the temperature inside the cave is around 7°C, warm clothing is recommended.

Fričovce Manor

GPS N 20°97'39.28" E 49°01'69.37"

A reconstructed Renaissance manor house surrounded by beautiful parkland, built between 1623 and 1630. Well-preserved parapets featuring sgraffiti and key embrasures surround the roof of the building, with reconstruction reveal-



ing a coat of arms with a date inscription and sundial. The building is richly decorated by images of 150 mythological and historic people. The interior hides Renaissance groin and barrel vaults with lunettes. The manor is open to the public and offers catering and accommodation services for corporate and private events.

Raslavkameň

GPS N 48°93'24.53" E 21°36'57.47"

This interesting natural phenomenon, the object of many legends, lies about 2.5 km from the village of Abranovce. It is a moss-covered stone with an elliptical shape that looks similar to a human face or skull with holes where the eyes, nose and mouth would be, and that apparently water found in the holes has healing abilities. One legend says that girls who wished to marry cut off a piece of their clothing, hung it over the stone and their dream came true.

Wooden Church of Saint Lucas

GPS N 48°97'85.92" E 21°11'32.65"

Originally a Greek Catholic church, it is the only wooden church in the Prešov region situated in the village of Brežany and dates back to 1727, which makes it the oldest church in Slovakia. The interior is decorated by a Baroque altar and multi-row iconostasis with a traditional Byzantine scheme of icon distribution. Currently, it is fully operational and serves as a Roman Catholic place of worship.



Outdoor Park, Prešov

Rope centre and artificial climbing wall.

www.outdoorpark.sk



available there for fun and relaxation.

Tireless sportsmen can additionally enjoy

a game of tennis or play beach volleyball.

A market street with two restaurants, bar

and bowling is also part of the complex.

Its lighthouse can also offer a unique

view over Prešov and the Tatras.

www.plazabeach.sk



Aquapark Delňa

1500 m² of water, a lagoon, swimming,

children's and relaxation pools and attrac-

tions including water slides, whirlpool,

wave breaks, waterfalls and water jets

are just a some of the services necessary

to make a good aqua park. This modern

wellness centre offers a wide range of re-

laxation and therapeutic massages as well

as sauna facilities, Jacuzzi, Kneipp bath or

a pleasantly cooling ice cave.

www.aquaparkpresov.sk

Sport & relaxation

Plaza Beach Solivar

Should you get tired from your sightsee-

ing tour around Prešov, finish it in Solivar

at Plaza Beach Solivar. The two-lagoon

pool, children's pool with attractions and

swimming pool with a water slide are





Lipovce Búče

A recreational and ski area at 1006 metres above sea level in the Bachureň hills, offers many opportunities for hiking and cycling. In winter, 6 ski lifts, a natural ice rink, ski school and snowmobile rental are at your service.

www.skibuče.sk

Bublínka, Prešov

Children's indoor playground with a café and various attractions spread over 700 m². Slides, spiral chutes, a trampoline and bouncy castle, X-BOX room, nursery for the youngest and optional baby-sitting services.

www.centrum-bublínka.sk

Opalex Sigord, Kokošovce

The recreational area in the Slanské vrchy hills offers an ideal mixture of relaxation and sports activities, with accommodation and food services and a wellness centre and horse riding.

www.opalexsigord.sk

Slanské vrchy

A 60 km long range of hills that offer many opportunities for cycling and hiking as well as being popular with cross-country skiers. The Dubník opal mines can be found in these hills.

www.slanskevrchy.sk



Traditional events



Prešov days

Cultural festival for every age category, **June**

Prešovská musical spring

Festival of traditional and modern classical music, **April**

DrinkIN fest

Festival of modern music, **August**

Bastion film festival

Slovak and foreign short film festival, **August/September**

Jazz Prešov

Autumn music festival for music connoisseurs, **October**

Festival of good taste

Gastronomic festival full of aromas and tastes in the centre of Prešov, **May**

EUROCUP Prešov

Traditional international junior barman competition, **October**

Rally Prešov

Traditional motorist event that has already been running for 13 years, **May**

Šariš classic car circuit

A unique opportunity to run your old-timer, **June**

Prešov show jumping

Two days of purebred horse show jumping, **September**





LEVOČA

A chest full of treasures

If there is a place in Slovakia whose magical ambience can take you back in time several centuries, it is Levoča, a place with a powerful spiritual atmosphere and many preserved treasures in the form of historic and cultural monuments with mysterious stories...

Levoča was built in the 13th century on the Via Magna trade route, on the ruins of two former Slovak villages pillaged by the Tatars in 1241. The first written reference to the town comes from 1249, where it is mentioned as 'Leucha' in a document by King Bela IV. In 1271, it became the administrative centre of the 24 Spiš towns in the Association of the Spiš Saxons. From the beginning of the 14th century it is mentioned as a royal city with extensive privileges that freed Levoča citizens from paying storage and transportation tolls on goods across the entire territory of Hungary. Royal privileges granted the city great conditions conducive to the development of commerce on an international level. Levoča traded



with Krakow, the Hanseatic cities and Venice. The fact that the city prospered greatly in that period is supported by the number of newly constructed Gothic and Renaissance buildings, including the splendid townhouses and St Jacob's church. In the 16th century, the development of the city was slowed down by anti-Habsburg uprisings as well as by a disastrous fire that destroyed the city almost completely. In the modern history of Slovakia, the city played an important role in the formation of national awareness and the Slovak National Movement.





An Evangelical Lyceum was founded here to which, in 1844, came students of the famous Slovak national revivalist Ľudovít Štúr, to continue their studies after he was released from the faculty in Bratislava. Reportedly, the song that later became the Slovak national anthem 'Nad Tatrou sa blýska' was first sung here.

In 1922, the city became the leader in specialist education when an institute for the blind and visually impaired was established, and which later became a modern educational institute that included the only library and printers workshop for the blind and visually impaired in Slovakia. Whether you desire to rediscover remnants of the past, enjoy active relaxation in Levočské vrchy or were brought to

Levoča by a cultural event, from the very first moment you won't be able to resist feeling a part of the rare and colourful mosaic of this 'beauty'. The spirituality of this experience is further reinforced by the close proximity of the Marian pilgrimage site above the city, which has been included on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites since 2009.



What to see

Historic centre

GPS N 49°01'34" E 20°35'20"

Levoča is city filled with 354 cultural and historic buildings and artefacts, all enclosed within almost completely preserved city fortifications. The city walls originally ran for almost 2.5 km, with 80 % now remaining in a preserved state. Within the centre of the city, which has been listed on the UNESCO List of World

Heritage Sites since 2009, visitors can find one of the biggest Medieval town squares in Europe, the town square of Master Pavol. Defining the character of the town square are more than 60 town and aristocratic houses, from among which Thurza house stands out. A Renaissance palace from the 15th century, it is adorned with beautiful parapets decorated with sgraffito art, and today functions as the seat of the State Archive.



St Jacob's Church (UNESCO)

GPS N 49°01'35" E 20°35'21"

This three-nave church, dating from the last quarter of the 14th century, holds a prominent religious position within the town square. Behind its doors you can find fourteen Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque altars in addition to many other religious



Kingdom of Hungary. The Cage of Shame was designed for the punishment of minor crimes. Originally it stood where today stands an Evangelical church, and after becoming the property of the Probstner family, stood where you will today find the hospital. However, the family gave it to the town as a gift in 1933 and since then it has been an essential part of the square. Today, tourists who dare enter the cage can feel the experience for themselves.



artefacts. Of highest interest is the main altar made by Master Pavol, which is, thanks to its height of 18.62 m and width of 6 m, thought to be the tallest late-Gothic wooden altar in the world and the only work of Master Pavol bearing the distinct signature of the artist. The church's collection of altars, precious fresco paintings and valuable artefacts is the work of Master Pavol and Baroque goldsmith Ján Szilassy and together comprise a three-time national cultural monument.

Cage of Shame

GPS N 49°1'34" E 20°35'20"

The Cage of Shame is now situated in front of the Renaissance Town Hall, which dates from between the 15th and 17th centuries. The building is characterised by its beautiful facade paintings representing the civil virtues of moderation, caution, bravery, patience and justice, and currently houses the Spiš museum. In the past, the building bore on its belfry the first clock tower of the





Former District House

GPS N 49°1'34" E 20°35'20"

Also called the 'Big District House', it was considered the most representative house of the former Kingdom of Hungary. Built between 1805 and 1831, it was the

administrative centre of the Spiš district is considered the purest Classical building in Slovakia. You can find it on Master Pavol Square close to the Napoleonic 'Small District House'.

The House of Master Pavol

GPS N 49°1'31" E 20°35'15"

In the historic town centre, you can find a building whose earliest- and best-known owner was Master Pavol of Levoča. It is recognisable by its preserved Gothic portal and shell-painted facade dating from the 18th century. Inside, there is an exhibition dedicated to the life and work of one of the most notable and mysterious masters of Gothic woodcarving alongside replicas of his famous works.



Old Minorite Monastery

GPS N 49°02'49.93" E 20°58'45.86"

The monastery building dates from the 14th century and can be found on Kláštorňá Street near the city walls and the old Minorite church. Within the building can be found well-preserved fresco paintings and the only completely preserved so-called 'Gothic cross-corridor' in Slovakia, which has an arcaded square floor plan.



Mariánska hora

GPS N 49°04'39.44" E 20°59'76.48"

One of the most visited Marian pilgrimage sites in Slovakia, the steep slope, Basilica Minor of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary and chapel from the 13th century form a dominating point over the town that cannot be overlooked. The Basilica is a branch of the main Marian basilica in Rome, the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. It is on the mid-European Marian tourist route and was visited by Pope John Paul II in 1995.





Where to go

Zápoľský chapel, Spišský Štvrtok

GPS N 49°00'10" E 20°27'50"

Dating from 1473, it is the burial chapel of an aristocratic family located near St Ladislav church on the premises of the social services house in Spišský Štvrtok. It was built to copy the style of the famous Parisian Sainte Chapelle and is characterised by an elaborately artistic design. The multi-storey family mausoleum was built quickly for Štefan Zápoľský, a Hungarian Baron and the Spiš district administrator, when he fell gravely ill in Spišský Štvrtok. However, after a full recovery, he later had another bigger burial chapel built in Spišská Kapitula, where he actually was buried.



Spišské Podhradie

GPS N 48°59'59" E 20°45'09"

In the shadows of the majestic silhouette of Spiš castle, it has fulfilled the function of a typical vassal town for centuries. The oldest written record of it dates back to 1249. It is in the locality of Levoča, Spiš Castle and the surrounding historic sites, all of which are included in the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites. The most significant sites to be found include the Romanesque church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary that later underwent both late-Gothic and Classical reconstructions, the Renaissance Town Hall from 1546,

the Renaissance and Baroque craftsmen's and townhouses, Baroque Marian column, the Monastery of the Order of the Brothers of Mercy from the 14th century that served as the town hospital, and one of the few preserved Jewish synagogues in Slovakia.





Spišská Kapitula

GPS N 49°00'03" E 20°44'27"

Formerly an independent village, it is today part of Spišské Podhradie. It was considered the spiritual centre of the Spiš region and since the end of the 12th century was the seat of the Spiš Abbot and is now the seat of the Spiš Bishop. The most significant architectural site is the late-Romanesque St Martin's Cathedral,

dating from of 13th, and the rare artefacts and decoration found within. Part of the building is the already-mentioned Zapoľský chapel. Visitors can also find a preserved fresco depicting the coronation of King Charles Robert of Anjou and the oldest known Roman sculpture, the Leo albus. Other notable features of the town are the preserved fortification wall with upper and lower gates, the Canonist houses and the Renaissance Bishop's palace from 1652, that later received Baroque adjustments.



Grey beard

GPS N 49°00'68.13" E 20° 72'28.64"

Within a national nature reservation covering 19.55 hectares that can be found approximately 2 km from Spišské Podhradie, there is a 25 m tall travertine rock that is still actively growing. At its peak, there is a pond with sparkling mineral water. There are several other mineral sources within the vicinity of the rock that can be beneficial for gastrointestinal and metabolic health. At the bottom of the

hill can be found a geyser that projects water 2–3 m into the air at regular intervals. Hikers can discover the location while wandering the educational trail that starts on the Spiš salaš sheep farm.



Museum of Folk Musical Instruments, Brutovce

GPS N 49°05'14" E 20°46'30"

Near the Levočské vrchy, located in a quaint wooden house in the village of Brutovce, you can find a museum exhibiting original and exotic aero phonic musical instruments. Apart from the 'drumbla' from the Iron Age, you can hear the sound of the 'gajdica', a typical instrument of east-Slovak farmers, as well as Shamanic drums or Egyptian, Thai, Armenian, Australian instruments including those from Nagorno-Karabakh and Ireland.



Sport & relaxation

Kováčova vila outdoor swimming pool, Levoča

A multipurpose reservoir with a surface area of 3000 m², offers a wide range of opportunities for sport and relaxation.
www.autocamplevoca.sk

Ski Centre Levoča

A year round sporting facility where you can ski in winter and cycle in summer. Table tennis also available.
www.skicentrelevoca.sk

Ski Závada

A ski resort with well-maintained slopes suitable for the whole family.

Around Levoča

A medium level route that will lead you through the beautiful surroundings of the Levoča mountains and past cultural monuments. Route SR38 is clearly marked and leads from Levoča to Zbojnícka lúka, then to Uhlisko and from there to Levočská dolina towards Mariánska hora and back to Levoča. It should take approximately 4 hours and 15 minutes.



Traditional events

The Days of Master Pavol, Levoča

Multi-genre arts and cultural festival with a craft market, **July–August**

Mariánska hora pilgrimage, Levoča

A journey to one of the most significant Marian pilgrimage sites, **first weekend of July**
EXIT, Levoča

Watch the performance of an amateur alternative theatre group, **June**

Guláš Fest Branisko, Spišský salaš, Spišské Podhradie

A regular competition where people aim to make the tastiest goulash



POPRAD

Tatra toll

If a toll were to be paid for the possibility to savour the panoramic view of the High Tatras, the tollbooth would certainly be located in Poprad. Although inconspicuous at first sight, the town has the honour of being referred to as the 'entrance to the smallest high mountains in the world' thanks

to its position at the foot of the main ridge of the Tatras, which looms 2000 m above. However, if you don't wish to pay a toll for the view, you can rest assured that a visit to Poprad and its surroundings will provide many opportunities to enjoy your time.

Poprad has a rich history standing alongside modern architectural landmarks like the Poprad Arena and AquaCity Poprad thermal water park. The archaeological discovery of various work tools and weapons is testament to the fact that the area was inhabited a very long time ago. This is further supported by the finding of a Neanderthal skull, which is more than 100 thousand years old, in a travertine mound called Hrádok at the edge of the village of Gánovce, not far from Poprad. The first written reference to Poprad dates from 1256 when it is mentioned alongside the names of surrounding vil-

lages. In 1946, the villages were united into one administrative area that created the base of the modern day town with its 53 thousand inhabitants. The town's privileged geographical location at the foot of the Tatras provides ideal conditions for sporting activities and tourism. Furthermore, public places within the town's districts have been renovated in recent years, including the provision of recreation zones, children's playground and cycle paths. The town also received favourable reviews from the British royal family after a visit in 2008.





What to see

Tatra gallery

GPS N 49°05'81.97" E 20°29'81.05"

The gallery is housed in a former steam power plant built in the Art Nouveau style by a Hungarian branch of the Siemens company called 'Schuckert Budapest – Pressburg' in 1912. The plant was built to power the electric Tatra railway and operated until 1956. This industrial building is one of few monuments preserved from that time of rapidly developing industrial production of turn of 19th and 20th century in upper Hungary and it is classified into the list of cultural monuments of Slovakia. From the 41-metre-

high chimney there is a wonderful view onto the whole Poprad and Podtatranská kotlina (basin under Tatras). The unique space with an exhibition area of 900 m² now provides its occasions to the present Slovak and foreign visual artists, but also to artists of dance, music and theatre, to present what is the most interesting and the most present of their output.

www.tatragaleria.sk



Podtatranské museum

GPS N 49°03'13" E 20°17'50"

The history of this museum goes back to the second half of the 19th century after the establishment of the first tourist association in Starý Smokovec, the Hungarian Carpathian Society. The museum currently houses more than 47 thousand objects and an additional 18 thousand



books in the library across two historical locations: 72 Vajanského Street in Poprad and on Sobotské Square in the Spišská Sobota part of the town. By means of ten permanent exhibitions it displays the life of Neanderthal man, of those living under the Tatras in Prehistoric and Middle Age times, the history of the town of Poprad over the centuries, the production of blueprints, the artisan culture of the area and information about past and present famous people from Spišská Sobota. One of the most unique displays presently included in the museum is the tomb of a prince, which was uncovered in Poprad in 2006 during the construction of an industrial park. The tomb is that of a Germanic count from the turn of 4th and 5th centuries BC and takes the form of a roofed chamber within which is a wooden sarcophagus and other interior equipment. Besides clothes and the remains of the deceased, there are also preserved food remains contained in ceramic and bronze vessels and decorative objects of bronze, silver and gold.

www.muzeumpp.sk



TANAP (Tatra National Park)

The Tatra National Park is the oldest national park of Slovakia. The mission of the park, which covers an area of 1045 km², is to preserve the diverse plant and animal life and generally protect nature in the Tatras. From 1993, the High Tatras have been a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. There can be found the highest Carpathian peaks, 35 valleys, more than 100



glacial mountain lakes, more than 300 caves and several waterfalls in as well as 600 km of tourist paths and sixteen sign posted cycle routes.



About TANAP

"Of all the mountain ranges in the Kingdom of Hungary, the Carpathians must be mentioned first. The highest and steepest ridges of these mountains soar above the clouds in the Spiš area. As they are almost always covered in snow they are also known as the Snowy Mountains. The Slavs call them the Tatras, meaning bare rocky mountains. They are much steeper and wilder than the Alps and almost impassable, which is why they are so rarely visited by nature-lovers..." wrote Dávid Frälich, a scholar from Kežmarok, in 1639.

After more than four centuries, this assertion is no longer valid. The Tatra peaks have been conquered and are now a popular and frequented place. Their roughness and exceptionality has been retained even after such a long time and continues to command respect. For their breathtaking beauty and scenery, they have naturally become a symbol of the Slovak nation and are treated as a most valued treasure. To show due respect and in acknowledgement of the need to protect it for future generations, the Western and Eastern Tatras were declared the Tatra National Park on 1st January 1949.

Which one is the highest?

The search for the Tatras' highest peak took a few centuries. The first peak measurements date to 1763, when the Viennese Court ordered cartographic processing of the entire Habsburg Monarchy. After the first measuring, the authorised military measurers determined Kriváň to be the highest peak. Their 'mistake' was eight years later confirmed by mineralogist Ján Fichtel from Bratislava in his measurements. An



English traveller, Robert Townson, came up with a new hypothesis, according to which Lomnický štít or Ľadový štít were deemed to reign over the Tatras. Scientists followed his opinion in the 19th century, until, in 1838, further measurements awarded the status of highest peak to Gerlachovský štít, a status undisputed until today.

Tears wept

From the more than 100 glacial mountain lakes located within the TANAP area, there are a few that stand out. One of them is undoubtedly Veľké Hincovo pleso. With a surface covering 20.08 hectares and a depth of 53.7, it is the biggest and deepest mountain lake in Slovakia. Ice covers its surface for an average of 270 days a year.



On the western side, under Malý Ľadový štít (Small Ice peak), at 2192 metres above sea level, is the highest situated lake in Central Europe, Modré pleso (Blue mountain lake). Its oval shape is supposed to be an image of the face of a woman who found her husband frozen there, and the azure waters the tears she cried for him. In the High Tatras, the most visited lakes are Štrbské and Popradské pleso, both of which are bustling with tourists and have a sensitively built infrastructure of hotels and restaurants around them.



Only in the Tatras

The nature protecting activities of the Tatra National Park focus on the Tatra's unique fauna and flora, many species of which are endemic. For that reason you will not be able to admire the agility of a Tatra Chamois, or humble beauty of a Bird's-eye Primrose. Some of the rarest species living in the Tatras are the European snow vole, Alpine Marmot, Grey wolf, Brown bear, Eurasian lynx, Golden eagle and Eurasian eagle-owl. Rare flowers such as Ranunculus glacialis (Alpine buttercup), Dianthus nitidus (Carpathian Pink), Ranunculus reptans (Prostrate



buttercup), Delphinium oxysepallum (Larkspur) and Saxifraga wahlenbergii (Rockfoil) bring a colourful variety to the Tatra peaks.

TANAP Museum, Tatranská Lomnica

GPS N 49°09'59.02" E 20°17'03.07"

The TANAP Museum was established and is today is located at Tatranská Lomnica. The museum collection includes many botanical, zoological, historic, cartographic, geological and ethnographic items. There are four main exhibitions: the natural sciences section focuses on the geological structure, fauna and flora of the Western, High and Belianske Tatras; the nature preservation section maps the history of nature preservation development in the High Tatras, mountain rescue activities and current research in the area of the national park; the historical section covers colonisation of the mountain area and the influence of human activity on the natural environment; and the ethnographic section, called 'From a cradle to grave', is collection of references to the material and spiritual culture of the people the areas both in and below the Tatras. There is also the Tatra Nature Exhibition, a botanical garden located in the terrain near the museum.



Ski Museum, Tatranská Lomnica

GPS N 49°09'55" E 20°16'42"

In Tatranská Lomnica you can find a private museum that charts the development of winter sports in the Tatras until 1945. Covering an area of 300 m², visitors can find there an exhibition of snowshoes, skis, fixing equipment and clothing for skiers. Other parts are dedicated to winter hiking, the development of mountain facilities, ice-skating, curling, ice hockey, sledging and bobsleighbing, but

also the history of military exercises in the Tatras. You can also see the workroom of a joiner and shoemaker where skis, ski poles and shoes were made. There is also a realistic visualisation of Gertruda's hut, which was once situated under the present start point above Tatranská Lomnica.



GEDEON WILHELM MAJUNKE

(1854-1921)

The man who built the Tatras

Many architects left their mark on the villages of the Tatra, but none of them influenced the atmosphere as much as an architect from Spišská Sobota, who created at least one third of the constructions in this locality. He fundamentally affected the appearance of Dolný Smokovec, Starý Smokovec, Tatranská

Polianka, Vyšné Hágy, Tatranská Lomnica and Štrbské Pleso. He is also the creator of the Divine Saviour's Church in Dolný Smokovec, of Tery's hut, which stands until now at a height of 2015 MASL in Malá Studená dolina, and of Hotel Lomnica in Tatranská Lomnica, which cost more than 85 thousand guilders to build. Characteristic of his work are half-timbered constructions enriched with decorative elements.





Spišská Sobota

GPS N 49°03'51" E 20°18'48"

The first written mention about this village comes from 1256. In 13th century it was one of the most significant trade centres in Upper Spiš. Since 1946, it has been a urban district of Poprad. The preserved historical centre is also a town monumental reserve decorated with reconstructed



Where to go

Belianska jaskyňa cave

GPS N 49°22'81" E 20°31'99"

This is the biggest and only alpine stalagmite cave open to the public in TANAP. It is situated in the Belianske Tatras in height of 890 MASL. The charcoal writings on the walls say that gold miners knew about it as early as 1826. However, its existence remained secret until 1881. From the whole known length of 3.5 km

you can admire beauties of dripstone shapes on a route 1,135 m long. They include wall waterfalls, pagoda-like stalagmites, one of which strikingly reminds of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and some smaller lakes. By visiting the cave do not forget to bear in mind presence of its present inhabitants. They include three kinds of bats, edible dormouse and eudaptomus chappuisi in lakes.



Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque town-houses, a belfry and Marian column. The religious landmark of the square is the late-Romanesque St George's Church from 1273 with a precious carved wooden organ and six wooden altars. The high altar comes from the workroom of Master Pavol of Levoča. In 2011, St George's Church was awarded the prize of National Cultural Monument of the Year.





Ždiar

GPS N 49°16'18" E 20°15'44"

This scenic village, with preserved folk architecture and folklore and typical ornamental folk costumes decorated with motives of plants and animals, is situated at the foot of the Belianske Tatras. Most of the inhabitants also speak Goral. Thanks to their position, local forests stayed untouched by a whirlwind in 2004 and



they offer a wonderful view of coniferous and mixed stands. The area has many tourist pathways and in winter becomes a frequented ski resort. In August there are held Goral folklore festivities every year. In the village you can find a museum called Ždiarsky dvor (Court of Ždiar) with an exhibition showing the life and culture of the Goral minority. The museum offers a unique occasion to try a beautiful Goral folk costume on and take part in a wedding ceremony wearing it.



Sport & relaxation

Nový Smokovec Spa

A spa with many years of tradition surrounded by the beautiful Tatras. With a newly built swimming pool and a wellness centre, they offer a wide range of therapeutic and relaxing programmes. The procedures aim to ease problems connected to respiratory system diseases, metabolism and endocrine system disorders, mental diseases and issues caused during or as the result of working, and are complemented by relaxation in a wellness zone with sauna, Jacuzzi, Kneipp bath, cold water pool and tepidarium. Its location, above the dust and smoke zone, brings benefits in the form of clean fresh air without bacteria and allergens.

www.kupelens.sk





Grand Hotel Kempinski, High Tatras

Exceptional elegance with a gentle hedonistic and bohemian flavour. Those are the two attributes that describe the luxury premises of Zion Spa Hotel. Other than relaxing in a pool or a sauna it also offers a wide range of classical and Thai massages and skin and body treatments. A novel and unique concept uses a new collection of original body and skin treatments, Mountains of Love, containing massage oils based on plant extracts found in the Tatras, mainly pine tree, sage, juniper and lavender. A VIP apartment, where you can



enjoy selected procedures in pairs is also a part of Zion Spa.

www.kempinski.com

Grand Hotel**** Starý Smokovec

A luxury hotel with a tradition spanning more than 100 years, set in a stunning location in the foothills of Slavkovský štít, offers not only accommodation and a gourmet experience in its restaurant but also a full wellness programme in its Spa Grand. In addition to the swimming pools and Jacuzzi, it offers different types of massages such as lava and precious stone massages, but also original massage rituals using Tatra rose petals or real 24 carat gold. The latest procedure on offer in the wellness centre is a Garra Rufa



fish pedicure. A healing procedure using the water from a natural spring, called Smokovecká kyselka, is done in accordance with the moon phases.

www.grandhotel.sk





Kontakt Wellness Hotel**, Stará Lesná**

A luxury wellness hotel nestled in a beautiful landscape directly underneath the Tatra peaks. The concept of this hotel focuses on visitor regeneration and the extensive wellness programme is tailored accordingly. Available to guests are seven saunas with relaxation rooms, a Jacuzzi with four whirlpools and a bar where you can enjoy a great drink while you are relaxing. The NeoQi Energy Cocoon is also a part of the complex, being a unique device that focuses on reducing stress levels and anxieties, metabolism regulation, body weight reduction and restoration of general balance between the body and mind. Salon skin treatments using SOTHYS PARIS luxury cosmetics, special

procedures like a cinnamon slimming wrap or a chocolate massage, Japanese Hanakasumi treatments with rice powder and cherry flower – you can enjoy all of this in the luxury hotel during your family holiday, relaxation stay or company team building.

www.hotelkontakt.sk



AquaCity Poprad

13 indoor and outdoor thermal pools with water temperatures ranging between 30-38 °C, 71 m and 54 m long water slides with many turns, rafting

and adrenalin kamikaze water slides, a family slide, aerated bath, massage jets and a rich wellness programme including relaxation and Thai massages or cryotherapy, are only some of the many services you can be spoilt by here. The concept is that of a water park that can conjure a good mood and make all family members smile. A rich and animated programme, salt-water children's pool and many other attractions for children, including meeting the Pirates of the Caribbean, are complemented by beauty centre services and an opportunity to use a gym and spinning centre.

www.aquacity.sk





Vysoké Tatry – Tatranská Lomnica

This slope is the highest, located at an altitude of 2190 m, and steepest, with an altitude difference of 1300 m. There is now a new cable car service to Skalnaté Pleso.

Vysoké Tatry - Štrbské Pleso

An easy 9 km long slope with a moderate incline and a 26.5 km long cross country ski course. Services include ski and snowboard rental along with courses for beginners and an adrenaline snow park.



Vysoké Tatry - Starý Smokovec , Jakubkova lúka

Ideal for beginner and intermediate skiers, perfect for sledding and winter hiking.

Ski TaJA, Tatranská Javorina

A ski centre in the northern part of The High Tatras, 3 km from the Polish border.

www.skitaja.sk

SkiTatry – Tatrasvit, Nová Lopošná Dolina

Two maintained slopes at an altitude of 784 m. One of the best quality slalom courses with a length of 1100 m and suitable for advanced skiers, along with an easier 100 m course for beginners and intermediate skiers. Night skiing is also available.

www.skitatry.sk



Skicentrum Lopošná dolina – Lučivná, Svit

A ski centre with four ski lifts and artificial snow slopes at altitudes between 777 and 916 m.

www.skichem.sk



SNOWPARK Lučivná

A ski centre with a view across the Tatras with four ski lifts and various slopes suitable for all levels of aptitude and a 5 km long cross country course.

www.snowpark.sk

BachledaSKI, Ždiar

Easy skiing in the picturesque location of Ždiar with a ski lift and a 250 m long slope at an altitude of 1000 m.

www.skibachledova.sk



Skicentrum Strednica, Ždiar

Nine ski lifts, seven marked slopes with a height difference up to 50 m and a 5 km long cross country course. Services include a skiing school as well as ski and snowboard rental.

www.strednica.sk

Strachan Ski Centrum, Ždiar

A ski centre in the Belianske Tatras at an altitude of up to 1116 m.

www.penzionstrachan.sk



**Veveričí (squirrel) park,
Štrbské Pleso**

Adrenalínový lanový park ponúka 320 m dlhú trať s 25 lanovými prekážkami vo výške 5 m.

www.vevericipark.sk

Spider park, Tatranská Kotlina

A rope centre with a view of the surrounding countryside offers a unique adrenalin experience on a 250 m long and 6 m high route.

www.lanovypark.sk



Paragliding, Vysoké Tatry

There are four locations with allocated times available for paragliding in the area of High Tatras National Park.

<http://www.vysoke-tatry.travel/informacie/leto/paragliding/>



Bike Park Bachledova, Ždiar

3 tracks with different experience levels and 130 km of sign-posted mountain biking tracks suitable for recreational cyclists and experienced riders.

www.sunbachledova.sk



Horská dráha Tatrabob, Tatranská Lomnica

A roller coaster starts at 850 m above sea level and races 482 m downhill through 12 turns.

www.tatrabob.com



Motokáry Tatry, Svit

Full of adrenalin go-karting fun under the shadow of the Tatras, it is possible to reach a speed of up to 30 km/h on a 230 m long course.

www.motokarytatry.sk



Mountain Go-kart, The High Tatra's

An unforgettable, safe yet adventurous ride through the Tatra countryside.

www.vt.sk/aktivita/leto/mountain-kary/

Bungeejumping, Štrbské Pleso

A 70 m jump on a rubber rope from a ski jumping K-120 ramp.

www.bungee.sk



The Tatra Wilderness, The High Tatras

Seven adventure circuits containing fun and educational programmes intended for young visitors. Children will find out about the most beautiful and interesting places in the Tatras, their animal residents and crack the biggest Tatra mysteries on these adventure quests. There is also the eco-mini park, Marmotland, at Skalnaté pleso, where you can find wooden statues, Marmot house and monkey bars.

<http://www.vt.sk/aktivita/leto/tatranska-divocina-zazitkov/>



Traditional events

International Youth Meeting at Rysy, Poprad

Traditional climb on the Rysy mountain with many accompanying events, **August**

Poprad musical spring, A festival of classical music, **April/May**

Made in Slovakia, Poprad

A festival focused on popularisation of characteristic and exceptional Slovak products, **July/August**

Quadtrophy Lučivná Endurance race on quad-bikes, **January/February**

Tatra music fest, High Tatras

A multi-genre music festival, **summer**

International Festival of Folk-costumed Dolls, Tatranská Lomnica, Svit, High Tatras

A unique guided tour of Slovak folk clothing, **June**



KEŽMAROK

A comely royal city

The Medieval charm, royal privileges and strategic position of the city as the historic centre of the Spiš Region pulled it into as many as 13 civil wars. For 100 years it struggled with neighbouring Levoča for the right to store goods and for 250 years it fought against its own castle. Nowadays it reigns with

dignity on the foot of the Pieniny with the grace of a comely beauty that enchants with its collection of historical monuments and the surrounding scenery.

The town began its rise in 13th century on a site already inhabited in the Stone Age. It grew based on the connecting of three villages – a Slovak fishing village, a royal frontier guard village and a German village. From 1380, it boasted the status of free royal city. This status brought many economic and political advantages. A good position close to trade routes between the Orient and Northern Europe further supported the economic development of the town. Between the 15th to



19th centuries, there were 40 craft guilds, from among which excelled the local dyers, joiners, weavers, needle makers and goldsmiths with a strong European reputation. A testament to this Golden Era of Kežmarok is the preserved historical centre, declared a town monumental reserve. The geographical proximity of the town to TANAP and Pieniny makes Kežmarok a common starting point for hiking, cycling and all kinds of winter sports.





What to see

Town Monumental Reserve

GPS N 20°43'02.34" E 49°13'52.00"

In this town under the Tatras you can find one of the most compact collections of cultural and historical monuments. From 1950, there are 256 among them together declared the town monumental



reserve. They include the building of the Town Hall in the Main Square, Renaissance castle, Basilica of the Holy Cross, the oldest Renaissance belfry in Spiš from 1568, Evangelical articular church from 1717 and Evangelical lyceum with an admirable historic library of more than 150 thousand books.



Lyceum library

GPS N 49°13'32.99" E 20°42'76.74"

The biggest school library in Central Europe is situated in the building of the Evangelical Lyceum at 18 Hviezdoslavova Street. It holds more than 150 thousand books. Among them there are 55 incunabula, 1520 newspaper titles and periodicals from the 17th to 20th cen-



turies, 600 graphical letters, 600 music titles and a precious collection of maps and handwritings. To the most valuable displays are included original works of Erasmus of Rotterdam, Martin Luther, Phillip Melanchthon, a handwriting of the chronicle of Cologne from 1437, a wedding schedule of Augsburg from 1581 and a handwriting of the Schwäbisch Hall history from 1490. Many Slovak cultural leaders have spent their time in this library. Among them were Karol Kuzmány, Pavol Jozef Šafárik and Pavol Országh-Hviezdoslav.



Evangelical Wooden Articular Church of the Holy Trinity (UNESCO)

GPS N 49°08'00" E 20°25'42"

This unique wooden construction, made from yew and red spruce, was built without using a single metal nail. Built in 1717, the church was built based on a special permission, an article issued by the Šoproňa council in 1681. The building was financially supported by Protestants from across whole Northern Europe and the church is said to have been built with the help of Swedish sailors, thanks to this the upper part of the interior resembles an

upside down ship's bow. A well-preserved ceiling painting depicting the twelve Apostles and four evangelists completes the interior. The church organ with wooden pipes has a great artistic value. Since 2008, the church has been registered in the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites.



Kežmarok Castle

GPS N 49°13'98" E 20°43'33"

Kežmarok Castle is the only entirely preserved castle in Spiš. It is classified as a town castle, meaning it was built within the town to protect it against enemies.

The castle was first mentioned in 1463. It is situated under Zámocký hill in the eastern part of the town. It is currently open to the public as a museum with historical exhibitions illustrating the development of Kežmarok and its surroundings.



In the exhibition of historical vehicles and fire machinery there are unique cars and motorbikes, for example, a Skoda 154 fire engine from 1929, the only of its kind in Europe, and also the Praga Alpha Phaeton in which Tomáš Baťa travelled through the region when he was looking for a place to build his new factory, which was finally constructed in Svit. A guided tour through the castle is connected with visiting the castle chapel, a dungeon and an observation tower.

www.kezmarok.com





Kežmarok's Black Lady

During the reign of the Thökölys, Kežmarok Castle was a representative place with many spacious ballrooms decorated with wall paintings. But it so happened that there was a big bounty for the capture of the Lord of the castle, so he had to leave and live on the run, hiding from the Emperor's armies. His wife Ilona retired to safety in far-away Transylvania. Before she left the castle she hid her jewellery and entrusted the secret to Trúda, a servant and key master. She was told that should the Lord of the castle appear there one day, he was to look underneath the seventh tile by the stove. Trúda swore on the cross that she would keep quiet

and disclose the secret to the Lord of the castle only, but it did not take long for the secret to start eating away at her and eventually she found the treasure and stole it. Then one night, Lord Thököly came, and she passed his wife's message to him but of course the treasure was missing. The Lord sensed Trúda's betrayal and put a curse of death on her, and the next morning Trúda was found dead in her bed. Since then she apparently can be seen wandering in the corridors of the castle jingling the keys. It is said that a daredevil decided to follow her, found the chest with the treasure and on the spot built a chapel, as a gesture of gratitude, which stands there to this day.



The legend of the walled lady

The tragic fate of Polish noblewoman Beata Laska is linked to Kežmarok Castle. In 1565 she, along with some townsfolk, made the first known trip to Zelené Pleso in the Tatras. After returning home, her husband walled her into the castle tower as punishment, where she was kept for six long years. There were only two small windows in the tower, one through which she was fed and another through which she could see the Tatras that were the cause of her incarceration. When the castle was taken over by a new owner who won it playing cards, Beata Laska was freed, but it was too late for this unfortunate lady as she soon died in the town of Košice.



The Basilica of the Holy Cross with Renaissance belfry

GPS N 49°13'75.15" E 20°42'98.71"

This ranks among the most beautiful and admirable churches in Spiš and is one of few non-Marian basilicas in Slovakia. The structure was built with seven pillars symbolising the paradise garden with seven trees of virtues, and a cross, which originally stood in the middle of the church, symbolises the tree of life, Jesus Christ. The most precious parts include a statue of the crucified Christ on the high altar. Under the choir loft there is a

preserved Renaissance pew, from 1518, where city council members sat with a reeve. Close to the church there is a belfry from 1591, considered as the most beautiful Renaissance belfry in Slovakia. It has a square floor plan and is decorated with a battlement displaying the coats of arms of the imperial Habsburg family, Hungary and the town of Kežmarok. Similar belfries can be found in Strážky, Spišská Belá, Vrbové, Spišská Sobota and Poprad among others.

The New Evangelical church

GPS N 49°13'31" E 20°42'86.02"

The Evangelical church of Kežmarok was built between 1879 and 1892 by local builder Viktor Lazary on the basis of given projects from the well-known Viennese architect Theofil von Hansen, projects originally given for the Orient. In 1909, the mausoleum of Imrich Thokoly (1657–1705), a native of Kežmarok and the owner of the castle, was added to the church. He was a commander of the anti-imperial rebellion of Hungarian nobility and a fighter for religious liberty.



Townhouse cultural museum

GPS N 49°08'15" E 20°25'54"

At number 55 on the Main Square in Kežmarok, you can find a charming exhibition displaying the way of life of town dwellers in the Spiš region. It includes a unique collection of arts and craft items and household equipment originating from 17th to 19th centuries. Here, visitors can see for themselves the kitchen, dining room, reception rooms and bedroom of one of the wealthier Spiš townsfolk.

What to see

Spišská Belá

GPS N 49°11'09" E 20°27'24"

This small Medieval town was first mentioned in the deed of donation of the Hungarian King Bela IV in 1263. Its origin is related to the arrival of German colonists in the Spiš region. From the very beginning, the town had a strong agricultural and craft culture and focused on the rearing of sheep and cattle. In 1535, the town

received the right to hold a market and during the 15th century there developed many craft guilds as craftsmen united in their specialisations. Particularly successful were the furriers, blacksmiths and weavers. A special linen canvas showing a blueprint of Spišská Belá was exported to the entire Hungarian Empire, the Balkans and Turkey. The town's former prosperity is today characterised by the number of significant buildings including the Church of St Anthony the Hermit from the 13th century, the Town Hall, a Rectory and belfry from the 16th century, a Marian column from the early 18th century and numerous townhouses. There is a historical route through the town leading to 20 notable monuments and equipped with information boards and a painted map.





Strážky Manor

GPS N 49°10'19" E 20°27'15"

In Spišská Belá you can find a jewel of Slovak Renaissance architecture with a carefully maintained English park. It is thought to be the birthplace of Slovak painter of European renown, Ladislav Mednyánszky. Since 1972, the building has been under the care of the Slovak National Gallery. There is a publicly accessible exhibition of historical furniture, interior items, an exhibition called 'Ladislav Mednyánszky and Strážky Manor', a collection of portraits from the 17th to 19th centuries and a historical library.



J.M. Petzval Museum, Spišská Belá

GPS N 49°11'23" E 20°27'15"

A unique exhibition mapping the development of photographic and cinematographic techniques against the background of the life and works of Professor Jozef Maximilian Petzval, mathematician, physicist, inventor and founder of modern optics and photography. Located in the late-Renaissance school building in Spišská Belá, the collection consists of more than 600 photographic and optical items as well as documentation of Petzval's discoveries including the invention of the objective lens.



The Renaissance belfry in Strážky

GPS N 49°10'21.36" E 20°27'12.24"

This Renaissance belfry from the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, situated within the premises of the Church of St Anne in the town Spišská Belá, was created by Ulrich Meterer. It is a brick building with a square floor plan and has partially preserved sgraffiti ornamental decoration by an artist with the initials H.B., which he left in the inscription 'Solideo HB 1629 Gloria' on the south side of the belfry above three sound windows and the artwork itself. It is possible to enter the belfry up a wooden staircase located on the first floor.





Pieniny

3749 hectares of astounding beauty lay in the northern part of Slovakia along the Polish border on the banks of the foamy river Dunajec. The nature around Pieniny, a part of Beskids, was established a National Park in 1967. In addition to a rare forest and protected endemic fauna and flora, the river Dunajec with its lovely canyon naturally dominates the whole area. In contrast to the neighbouring Tatra National Park, there are no majestic peaks in Pieniny, but the scenery unfolding before visitors' eyes is no less dramatic or beautiful. Moreover, the easily accessible and tourist-friendly terrain allows for exploration of the National Park via hiking trails, cycle paths or over water by boat or raft.

Pieniny National park

One of the most romantic and sought out places in the National Park is the Dunajec river canyon, a gorge, which on its way to the Baltic sea, is fed by water from the Lesnický potok stream and later made stronger still by the its biggest source, the River Poprad. Covering an area of 360 hectares, the Pieniny National Park is the smallest in Slovakia and home to many rare species of flora and fauna,



represented by Carpathian and Western Carpathian endemic flora species such as the *Arabis pieninica* (Alpine rock-cress), *Dendranthema zawadskii* (a type of chrysanthemum), *Erysimum pieninicum* (a genus of the wallflower) and *Taraxacum pieninicum* (a special type of dandelion), and fauna species such as Alpine shrew, Rufous-tailed rock thrush and wallcreeper. The river canyon is also

home to the black stork, lesser spotted eagle and Eurasian eagle-owl. And in the waters you can find brown trout, grayling and the European otter.

Haligovce rocks

GPS N 49°38'10.03" E 20°45'39.07"

Pieniny National Park holds several treasures that may only be viewed from a distance. One of them is the Haligovské skaly rocks reserve, located in the village of Haligovce. A karst rock massif divided by five furrows can be observed from selected surrounding tourist trails and because its development was isolated from the rest of the Tatras, numerous endemic flora species are found here. The forests consist of beech-fern with a fragment of relict pine alongside trees including spruce, larch, fir and pine. In the cliff



formation of the Haligovské skaly rocks, at 750 metres above sea level, there a typical karst cave called Aksamitka, which was established as a protected natural site in 1976 and later declared a National Natural monument. In order to protect the cave, it is now closed to the public.



Červený Kláštor

GPS N 49°39'13.05" E 20°39'93.05"

A village called Červený Kláštor is at the vibrant centre of Pieniny. It got its name from a dominant building of the same name, a Carthusian Monastery with an eye-catching red roof. According to historical sources the construction of the monastery probably started in 1320 after approval by King Charles Robert I of Anjou. Its history was later connected to Carthusian and Camaldolese ascetic orders. Despite numerous renovations, the exterior retained its Gothic character even after the restoration but the interior arches were given a new decorative Baroque paint finish. There are several museum exhibitions within the premises of the Monastery, such as the herbarium



of Frater Cyprián, which includes 283 pressed plants from the Pieniny and Belianske Tatras areas with accompanying descriptions in Greek, Latin, Polish and German. There is another collection with original medical cabinets from the early 18th century, medical scales, made in Amsterdam in the 17th century, and a

copy of the first Slovak pharmacopoeia text, the so called Bratislava Torkoš pharmaceutical tax from 1745. There is also a museum exhibition that maps the history of the monastery and its various orders of monks. A part of the exhibition is the restored church of St Anthony the Hermit and valuable artistic and historic relics from Červený Kláštor and the northern part of the Spiš Region. The village of Červený Kláštor and its architectural dominance coexist in perfect harmony.



Osturňa

GPS N 49°20'04" E 20°14'02"

In the middle of Pieniny's mountain landscape lays one of the biggest reserves of folk architecture in Slovakia, the village of Osturňa, often called a 'living open-air museum'. The original villagers were mainly Ruthenian shepherds. The village itself spans a length of almost 9.5 km and is filled with traditional timber houses with ornamental paintings on the corner logs and window frames. They are built as a chain with closed square yards. The dominant building of the village is the Greek Catholic church of St Michael the Archangel dating from 1796, located on

a hill behind a village brook. In Osturňa, time goes much slower and it is an ideal location for enjoying hiking in unspoilt nature where mushrooms, raspberries, blueberries and other treats can be picked in handfuls.





Sport & relaxation

disorders. The immediate proximity of the Pieniny National Park also presents ideal conditions for hiking and other sports activities, the most popular being rafting and zorbing.

www.smerdzonka.eu

Červený Kláštor Spa

The discovery of natural mineral water with a high content of hydrogen sulphide led to the formation of Červený Kláštor Spa, named after the characteristic aroma of its mineral spring. Thanks to its mineral composition the waters are used to treat mainly skin, musculoskeletal and neurological diseases as well as problems connected to digestive system



Thermal Park Vrbov

A year round swimming pool complex with ten thermal pools, four of which are for children. The water temperature of the pools ranges between 26 °C and 38 °C. The thermal waters have ben-



eficial effects on musculoskeletal and neurological systems as well as positively influencing respiratory and circulatory systems. Accommodation facilities include bungalows and apartments as well as a restaurant, and Thai massages can be enjoyed directly in the swimming pool complex. Passionate fishermen will appreciate the possibility of catching

some fish in the nearby fishpond with an option to purchase a license for one day or the whole week.

www.termalneakupalisko.com



tel's wellness centre offers several types of sauna, Jacuzzi, a vitamin corner and various types of massages by order. These services are available to the hotel guests as well as the general public.
www.hotelhviezdoslav.sk



Hotel Hviezdoslav**, Kežmarok**

This charming historical hotel, in a building dating from the 17th century, can be found in the old royal town of Kežmarok. The owners have named it after one of the most significant Slovak poets, Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav, who lived there in rented accommodation during his five years of German language studies and the writing of his first poetry collection. Special tributes to this important person also include a hotel restaurant called Poézia (poetry) and a charming Literary café with an international library. The ho-

Skicomp Fakľovka Litmanová

A ski area in a beautiful part of the Pieniny mountain range with three ski lifts, five artificial snow slopes suitable for all levels of aptitude and 12 km of cross country tracks.

www.skilitmanova.sk

Ski Štart, Kežmarok

A ski area with two artificial snow slopes and many attractions, located on the outskirts of the town by Hotel Start.

www.hotelstart.sk

Dunajec

Ideal conditions for canoeing or rafting.

www.rafting-pieniny.sk

www.canoeraft-dunajec.sk

Čajka Ranch, Kežmarok

An agrotourism facility with accommodation, its own herd of horses and lots of other animals.

www.ranc-cajka.sk

Traditional events

Festival of European folk crafts, Kežmarok

International craft festival with a rich supporting programme, **second weekend of July**
Zamagurské folklore festival, Pieniny

Annual festival of singing, music and dancing in the natural amphitheatre below the Three Crowns Massif, **June**

Spiš potato fair, Spišská Belá

Annual showing and tasting of the best and tastiest potatoes, **September**

Belltown fest, Spišská Belá A musical festival for new and breakthrough bands, **July/August**

Traditional Goral slaughter, Červený Kláštor

Traditional pig killing directly in the monastery courtyard, **December**

Opening of the Dunajec river by a symbolic key marking the start of the waterman's season coupled with the feast of the barges, **April**





STARÁ ĽUBOVŇA

Where time runs differently

A well-preserved castle with museum, open-air museum and Medieval Knight's camp, a town outlined by the surrounding Belianske Tatras within which you can find a picturesque town square with townhouses, and many opportunities for active relaxation and regeneration of your mental powers. Stará Ľubovňa and its surroundings will breathe peace into your hectic life.

The Medieval town and its surroundings were characterised by such charm and strategic importance that Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius was greatly interested in it and wished to push the boundaries of the Roman Empire to include it. The first official mention of Ľubovňa dates from 1292, and by 1364 it was already a free royal town. In the 15th century it came under the administration



of Poland and was inhabited by Polish nobility and officers, and subsequently, over time, grew to become the cultural centre of the area. A historical town square with a rectangular shape, skirted by Renaissance townhouses with later Baroque and Classical alterations, are today testament to this period of prosperity. After 1772, when the town was returned to the administration of the Kingdom of

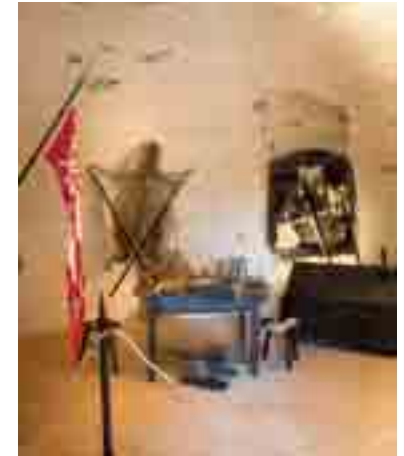
Hungary, the Polish aristocracy and intelligentsia slowly left and Stará Ľubovňa gradually lost its prestige compared to the surrounding area. Until this day, the town has preserved its charm and the air of a provincial town seated within spectacular scenery. It could easily give a sleepy impression to visitors at first glance, but in reality Stará Ľubovňa and its locality offer many opportunities for active relaxation and recuperation as well as many interesting sites for lovers of history. Ľubovňa Castle, one of the best-preserved Medieval castles in Slovakia, has unique museum and open-air museum exhibitions and a camp, and is located near the village of Hniezdne. Nearby are Nestville Park, skiing possibilities in the Ľubovnianska highlands, or the option to enjoy a spa experience at Vyšné Ružbachy, a thermal resort with a rich therapeutic and a wellness program and open-air gallery of travertine sculptures.





routes to Poland. The round tower and Gothic palace, both located on the highest spot, make up the upper Gothic castle. Its current form, with lots of interesting exhibits, reflects several building styles. The Renaissance palace, which was left to become ruins in 1772, deserves special attention, with its restoration to the now almost original state only beginning after more than 200 years. At present, visitors can find here distillery and brewery exhibitions.

www.hradlubovna.sk



What to see

Lubovňa castle

GPS N 49°31'53.59" E 20°69'96.36"

The castle was built at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries by Hungarian King Andrew III and served as a border control fortification that defended trade





The rocks at Hajtovka

Legend says that when Prince Lubina and his sons reached the top of a 548 m hill, he was so stunned by the beauty of the surrounding countryside, the view of the river Poprad and the hills of Ľubovnianska vrchovina (Ľubovňa highlands), that he decided to build his residence and sold his soul to do so... because, according to this legend, builders worked hard building the castle walls every day but overnight someone pulled them down. The Prince figured that some evil forces were responsible, so he ventured into a cave and found an evil spirit there who promised him he would let him finish the castle in exchange for his soul. When the Prince realised what he had done he

supposedly asked local monks for advice. They offered him shelter in their monastery where he was meant to free himself from the evil forces by praying. That made the evil spirits so angry they decided to throw a boulder on the castle. When the prince learned about that he started praying even more ardently and ringing the bell, which took the evil spirit's power away. However, supposedly the evil spirit still appears below the castle in the form of a strong north wind and local residents drive it away in same way as the Prince, with a prayer. It has never been confirmed whether this legend is true or not but the fact remains that the boulder meant to bury the castle dominates the waters of the river Poprad near a village called Hajtovka to this day..

Ľubovňa open-air museum

GPS N 49°31'51.56" E 20°69'92.06"

In the immediate vicinity of the castle is Ľubovniansky skanzen (the Ľubovňa Open-air Museum), an ethnographic exhibition comprising 15 well-preserved houses in which Slovaks, Germans, Ruthenians, Gorals and Jews once lived in peace. The museum paints a perfect picture of the variety of cultures and life below the castle. A Greek Catholic church from the village Matysová, built in 1833, dominates the museum. Besides a valuable iconostasis, a visitor's attention is drawn to an



object that hangs down from a ceiling in the centre of the nave and was considered to be magical for a long time. Legend says it was made in the time of the plague, sometime around 1633, following a dream. It is a symbolic spatial depiction of the throne of the god Yahweh Ridvan, and its form evokes a biblical revelation of God's throne. In addition to the church, it is possible to see various residential houses, a granary, a farm settlement, a carpentry workshop, a smithy and a mill displaying examples of the traditional technologies used to process grain.

www.muzeumlsl.sk





Medieval military camp

Below Ľubovňa Castle, time has stopped in the 16th century and the Knights rule. Here you can improve their crossbow and bow and arrow shooting, practise horse riding, try living like a falconer and at the same time enjoy some medieval meals in the tavern.



Ľubovňa townhouses

GPS N 49°18'08" E 20°41'28"

This living museum can be found at 21 St Nicholas Square in the centre of Stará Ľubovňa. Its visual demonstration of the life of the more leisurely middle class in the 19th century includes a preserved kitchen, paper and blueprint manufacturing workshop and mint where you can stamp your own Ľubovňa Gold Ducat, which is used as payment in the medieval camp below the castle.



Where to go



Plaveč Castle

GPS N 49°15'19.28" E 20°50'51.82"

The ruins of a border medieval castle from the 13th century can be found in a village of the name. According to a description from 1644, consisted of a massive residential tower, to which a palace was later added with a representative annex, a manor house, a kitchen, a chapel, two bastions and a locksmith's house. The ruins include parts of the southeast walls with preserved circular and semi-circular bastions.



Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary

GPS: N 49°15'27.80" E 20°32'05.35"

A Roman Catholic church from the 13th century, situated in the village of Podolíneč. The originally Gothic church bears traces of Renaissance and Baroque styling and décor. Of exception artistic value are in particular the Medieval wall paintings from between 1360 and 1430, that are arranged in three rows and by individual scenes divided into paintings.

Piaristic monastery, Podolíneč

GPS N 49°25'88.03" E 20°53'72.02"

This multi-storey building with four towers and a double-spired church in the centre was built in the early-Baroque style between 1642 and 1648. It was the seat of one of the most significant Piaristic colleges in Central Europe and educated more than 50 thousand young noblemen from the upper classes of Poland, Hungary and Germany. Due to its scholarly excellence, the college was known as the 'Oxford of Spiš' or 'Athens above Poprad'. The Piarists sold the monastery to the Redemptorists in 1941. In 1950, after the operation known as the 'night of the barbarians' when all fraternities in Slovakia were meant to be disbanded, the communist regime established here one of the most heavily guarded prisons, guarded by armed sentries and dogs.



Crater and travertine statues in Vyšné Ružbachy

GPS N 49°30'57.03" E 20°56'04"

In the vicinity of Vyšné Ružbachy spa, there are located two sought out attraction. The first is the small natural travertine lake called 'crater' with thermal waters of an interesting origin. The lake's



intake area is located up in the Belianske Tatras, from where it travels through the Spišská Magura mountains on the east and rises up under a pressure in the so-called Ružbachy tectonic window. Due to its dimensions, with a diameter of 20 m and depth of 3 m, it is the largest of its kind in Slovakia. Since 1964 an international sculpture exhibition has been held in the nearby travertine quarry, which includes stone statues that have seemingly grown from the ground.



Nestville Park Hniezdne

GPS N 49°18'12" E 20°37'51"

The smallest royal town of the former Hungarian Empire, Hniezdne is visible from Ľubovňa if you turn to look towards the scenery of the Belianske Tatras. From time immemorial, it was known to be a lively artisan town, with brewers, shoemakers, tailors and blacksmiths. You can learn more about the way of life of these

craftsmen by visiting the open-air museum located in Nestville Park, which also has the oldest distillery in Slovakia. The biggest wooden carving in Europe is found in the Carving Hall of the exhibition.

www.nestvillepark.sk



Zvir Hill

GPS N 49°39'19.35" E 20°63'35.34"

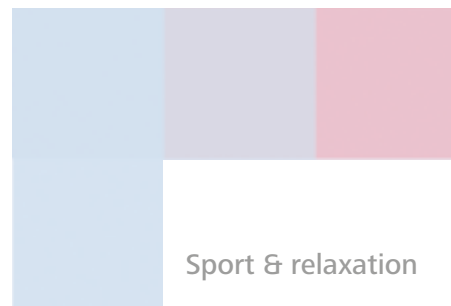
A Greek Catholic Marian pilgrimage site of the Apparition of Virgin Mary, located on Zvir hill over the village of Litmanová. The Virgin Mary appeared to two girls in the room of a log cabin, which still stands in a meadow surrounded by forest. There is also the prayer chapel of the Immaculate Conception of the Birthgiver of God on this hill.

Vyšné Ružbachy Spa

If there is a spa in Slovakia that can affect all of our senses as well as our souls with its unique combination of hot and healing springs, an omnipresent history, beautiful period architecture tastefully complemented by modern buildings and a certain nobility, it is this one. Thanks to this rare mixture of ingredients, it is an ideal place for the treatment of oncologi-

cal and mental diseases, circulatory and digestive system disorders, kidney and urinary system problems and gynaecology ailments. A modern wellness hotel with plentiful relaxation programmes and its own thermal pool – Izabela, and with four outdoor and one indoor pools –within close proximity, makes this spa a popular place for relaxation and regeneration.

www.ruzbachy.sk



Sport & relaxation





Skicomp Fakľovka, Litmanová

A ski area in a beautiful part of the Pieniny mountain range with three ski lifts, five artificial snow slopes suitable for all levels of aptitude and 12 km of cross country tracks.

www.skilitmanova.sk

Ružbachy Ski Park

4000 metres of maintain artificial snow slopes suitable for all levels of aptitude with ski lifts. Services include ski and snowboard rental and storage as well as a swimming pool and sauna.

www.skiparkruzbachy.sk

Ski centre, Lubovnianske Spa

GPS: N 49°15'32.99" E 20°43'45.45"

8 km from the town of Stará Ľubovňa, you can find six slopes suitable for various levels of aptitude as well as a ski school and accommodation.



Equestrian Club Aurora, Stará Ľubovňa

A riding school that offers courses for beginner to advanced riders.

www.jkaurora.sk



Traditional events

Fair of traditional crafts, Stará Ľubovňa

A rich cultural program with falconers, **June**

Midsummer starry night, Stará Ľubovňa

A night full of stars, balloons of happiness and midsummer fires, **June**

Celebration of spring at Nestville Park

A traditional folk festival full of dancing and singing, **May**

Slovak dog sled cup, Vyšné Ružbachy

Races of choice dog breeds in the Ruzbachy Park ski resort, **February**

Zvir Hill pilgrimage, Litmanová

Annual pilgrimage to the site of the first Apparition of Our Virgin Mary, **first Sunday of August**





SABINOV

A town founded of love

According to an ancient legend, the town of Sabinov grew on the place where, some time ago, the love of Štefan and the beautiful Sabína was fulfilled, after which the town was named. In commemoration of this legend, stands a stainless steel sculpture of the daughter of Knight Tharczay in the town's central square.

The Lord of Šariš Castle, Duke Štefan, used to indulge in all sorts of activities. But he was not happy because his heart had never felt true love before. One day, on his wanders through the county, he strayed to Kamenica Castle. It belonged to the Knight Tarczay who had a reputation for being a hostile man. His mistrust of men however had its reason. He had a beautiful daughter, Sabína, who he watched over very carefully. Only a few people had managed to see her. The crafty Duke introduced himself to Kamenica's guards as Gergely, his squire. They let him in the castle where he sat drinking with a local castellan who described the beauty of the young woman so enthusiastically that Štefan got a strong desire to see her for himself. He managed to carry out his plan and once the two saw each other at breakfast they both fell deeply in love. They were only able to meet in secret because they knew too well that Knight Tarczay would not give their love a blessing. Therefore, they decided to run away from the castle. Her mad father was too quick in realising Sabína's plotted kidnapping and went to chase the runaways. When he spotted them he did not hesitate for a moment and put an arrow in his bow. But the hand of providence slightly deviated its path and saved Duke Štefan from a sure death. The arrow instead shot through his shoulder and at the same time beautiful Sabína fell in his arms.

As a sign of their eternal love, Duke Štefan established a town on that spot, which bears his beautiful wife's name to this day. The settlement, which later acquired the status of a free royal town, was founded on the banks of the river Torysa in the 13th century. Its original inhabitants were mainly farmers. The development of crafts occurred at the beginning of the 15th century, and also in favour of the advancement of the town was membership in the Pentapolitana league of five associations of Eastern towns along with Košice, Prešov, Bardejov and Levoča. From the late 18th century, development of the town slowly declined and it turned more towards agriculture once again. Nevertheless, there are several reasons why during a trip to the Prešov region, you would not miss the opportunity to see the town of Sabinov and its locality. Among the many potential experiences certainly belongs a walk in the castle ruins or exploration of Čergov Minčol National Nature Reserve.





Statue of Sabina

In June 2014, located on the main town square in Sabinov, you can see a stainless steel statue of legendary Sabina, who gave the town its name. The statue is the result of 19 months' hard work and the result is an interesting work of art that is characterised by its intensive processing technique: it consists of 1634 triangles. The creator of the sculpture is a young Sabinov sculptor, Juraj Andraščík.

The Oscar town

In 1965, the town of Sabinov was overtaken by filmmakers and actors involved in the shooting of a film based on a story by Ladislav Grossman, 'The shop on Main street'. The film directors, Jan Kadar and Elmar Klos, chose the town for its preserved and authentic architecture. The movie they made was a year later awarded an Oscar in the best foreign language film category, the first Slovak movie to be awarded with a golden statue. The town honours this cinematic experi-



ence to this day on the premises of the former Piarist Lyceum, which now serves as a museum and information centre where visitors can find a permanent exhibition about the victorious film. Sabinov now hosts the annual 'Oscar town' project, a cultural programme where amateur movies are shown.



The town walls

GPS N 49°06'12" E 21°05'20"

In 1405, Sabinov was granted the position of a free royal town, a fact that was associated with the rapid development of both craft and production trades. In 1472, its significance had increased so much that King Matej added other royal privileges and commanded the town to build a fortification system from which a continuous section has been preserved until today.

What to see

The church of St John the Baptist

GPS N 49°10'32.28" E 21°09'67.21"

A Gothic church from the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, it is a historically and architecturally dominant feature of the town's Liberty Square. After a series of renovations, it is characterised by Gothic as well as Renaissance and Baroque features. Within the church you can find a replica of the main Baroque altar from the workshop of Master Pavol of Levoča, the original of which is located in the National Museum in Budapest. Also part of the church is a Renaissance belfry from 1657. A Greek Catholic church, two Evangelical churches and an Orthodox church add to the architectural and religious panorama of the historic town centre.





Piaristic Lyceum

GPS N 49°10'30.07" E 21°09'60.61"

The former Lyceum from 1530 and rebuilt in the 18th century, is at present the seat of the Na Korze cultural centre located on the central Liberty Square. There is a municipal gallery, a concert hall, an information centre and a permanent exhibition about the film 'The Shop on Main Street', which was shot in the town in 1964 and which was the first Slovak film to be awarded an Oscar.

Regional museum

Since 2012, the Regional Museum has been located in the renovated Medieval bastion, which for several centuries served as part of the town's fortification system. The museum focuses on the region of Sabinov and its close surroundings. An ethnographic exhibition shows the daily items used in a typical town-house in addition to, on the top floor, paintings by Sabinov painters Ernest Stenhura, Erika Kraumann and Andrej Cirbus, who lived and worked in the town.



Where to go

Hanigov Castle

GPS N 49°17'49.7" E 21°01'74.75"

An impressive ruin soars above the village of Hanigovce. The period of its origin is uncertain, but it is believed that there

once stood a wooden castle on the site, which was rebuilt in stone at the beginning of the 15th century. The first written mention of 'Castrum Wywar' (New Castle) comes from the 1411. From that point, its importance increased. The function of the castle was to strengthen the border region between Hungary and Poland. After a fire in the year 1557, the castle was never restored. At present, there are partially preserved fortifications and portholes along with the recognisable ground plans of inlet gates, farm buildings and several other constructions.



The poisoner of Hanigov Castle

When under the reign of Mikuláš Tarczay, Hanigove Castle is said to have received a visit from Father Francesco of the Vatican. Slanderers claimed that he was an expert in poisons. The ambitious castle Lord longed for the favour of the King but had no opportunity to prove his courage and loyalty so along with Father Francesco, devised a diabolical plan. The Clergyman produced for the Lord a poison made from a mushroom called the black spider, with a cunning toxicity than worked slowly and without symptom while gnawing at the insides of the victim. The Lord of the castle planned to eliminate all of his rivals in

this way, but before the plan could be realised, King Ľudovít II called on Mikuláš Tarczay to fight against the Turks. So, armed with a dagger and long sword and outfitted with armour and courage, he accompanied the King. However, a sharp Turkish arrow pierced his thin armour and Mikuláš dropped dead without ever knowing that his body had shielded the King from the arrow intended for him. To this end, the sovereign rewarded him after death when he gave Hanigov Castle to Mikuláš Tarczay's daughter, Anna. And Father Francesco? When news of the Lord's death reached Hanigovce, he packed his deadly ointments and ran away.



Kamenica Castle

GPS N 49°18'95.04" E 20°95'86.01"

The thirteenth largest castle in Slovakia is located near the village of Kamenica, northwest of Sabinov. According to preserved documentation, it was built in the first half of the 13th century by Earl Dietrich of the Spiš Saxons on a royal hunting ground. It soars at a height of 725 meters above sea level on a limestone hill with a low and narrow central part that functioned as a natural moat. At the time of its peak, several important buildings including Renaissance palaces were located here. The castle was demolished by royal troops in 1556 and has since then been in a state of ruin. However, the location is attractive for hiking.

Péchy Manor

GPS N 49°04'64" E 21°01'75"

This charming and now completely reconstructed Classical Manor with adjacent English park was built in the 19th century in the village Hermanovce by Count Georg von Péchy Péchújfalu for his family. After World War II, it was expropriated and from then was unmaintained. After more recent reconstruction, which was undertaken by descendants of the Count, the Manor again stands in its full glory. Accessible to public is a hunting house, in which is located a lifestyle hotel, and a park.

Šarišské Dravce Manor

GPS N 49°10'30" E 20°51'47"

A unique Renaissance monument of world class importance from the 17th century. At that time, the Manor was home to the aristocratic Smrečány family. In recent years, it has undergone extensive reconstruction after which a library with reading room and a room of folk traditions were located within its premises. An adjacent forest park is maintained with a sports area and provides several sporting possibilities for visitors.



Čergov Minčol National Nature Reserve

GPS N 20°99'58.38" E 49°23'39.24"

Within the Čergovský Minčol National Nature Reserve can be found various forest types including those of a primeval character and is the home to many typical species of Carpathian flora across an area of 171 hectares. It is surrounded by mountain meadows, which were used in the past particularly as pasture lands. There are a number of springs as well as animal

trails where it is possible to see traces of deer and wild boar.

The highest peak, Minčol, rises to a height of 1157 meters above sea level and provides a spectacular view over the surrounding ridges, mountains, the river Topľa, the Tatras and the Pieniny. There are several hiking trails leading to its uncovered peak. Most visitors use ascending routes that begin in the villages of Šarišské Jastrabie or Livovská Huta. The easiest route, designed for fast ascent, begins in the village of Potoky.



The Ľutina pilgrimage site

GPS N 49°10'02" E 21°02'51"

The village of Ľutina lays about 9.5 km from Sabinov on the southern slope of the Čergov mountains. There are stories about former resident, Susana Fekete, having visions of St Nicholas in 1851. The local parish did not believe her and declared her foolish, but after repeated visions and confirmation of her mental health, the Roman congregation approved the results of the investigation

and Pope Pius IX, by Apostolic breve, confirmed in the status of the pilgrimage site in 1855. The original wooden Gothic Catholic church was later replaced by a stone building, which Pope John Paul II promoted to a basilica minor in 1988, together with adjacent buildings. There is a mini museum of local architecture located near the Basilica Minor, where visitors can see a collection of more than 50 miniatures of the wooden churches of the Carpathian arch.



Rožkovany ponds

GPS N 49°14'39.01" E 20°97'65.05"

A system of picturesque ponds, covering an area of 2300 square meters, is located near the town of Lipany in the village of Rožkovany. The ponds, which are accessible by a pleasant cycle route, are used by

the Slovak Union of Fishing as breeding fishponds, so if your idea of relaxation is to go fishing, these ponds should surely feature on your itinerary. Despite an almost intact and attractive appearance, bathing is officially banned.

Public swimming pool Sabinov

Swimming, recreational and children's pools in addition to badminton and beach volleyball courts, located directly in the town.



Péchy Manor

Wellness and sporting activities in the romantic environment of the park, located in the village of Hermanovce.

www.pechycastle.com

Hotel Javorná, Drienica – Lysá

A mountain recreational facility with a 25 m indoor pool and various wellness and sporting programmes as well as their own herd of mouflon (wild sheep).

www.hoteljavorna.sk

SkiDrienica

A slope located in Sabinov District at an altitude of 720 m with a ski lift and the possibility of night skiing.

www.skidrienica.sk

Majire Ranch

A picturesque ranch with its own graceful and trained pure breed horses, situated in an area of unspoilt nature.

www.rancmajire.sk

Sport & relaxation



Traditional events

The Day of Sabina

A cultural and entertainment festival with a fair and lots of attractions for children and adults too, **June**

Toryský kantár

Cart horse races in the village Torysa, **June**

Hornotoryský folklore festival in Krivany

August

Brezovica steering wheel, Brezovica over Torysou

Homemade tractor racing, **July**

Castle festival, Kamenica

The ruins of the castle come to life with falconers, craftsmen and fencers, **August**

Novohradské Castle days, Hanigovce

Medieval duels and fun competitions in the ruins of Hanigov Castle, **July**



BARDEJOV

The pearl of Upper Šariš

A picturesque town square with multicolour townhouses, a monumental Gothic basilica with beautiful artefacts, the Renaissance wall paintings in the Town Hall, a mysterious Jewish suburb, and a spa favoured by Empress Elisabeth of Austria.

According to its first written mention in 1241, Medieval Bardejov was a significant and quickly developing town. Its strategic location at the intersection of trade routes between Hungary and Poland and the Black and the Baltic seas, marked the town as a significant business centre, which very quickly received many royal privileges. In 1352, Ľudovít the Great of Anjou granted the town the right to hold an eight-day fair and simultaneously also the right for the construction of town walls. In 1376, Bardejov became a free royal town and was experiencing a period of boundless prosperity. In the 16th century, it was a reputable centre of culture

and education. A humanistic gymnasium was established, which belonged to the highest level of the Hungarian Empire. Its rector, Leonard Stöckel, was the author of the first pedagogic document issued in Slovakia. The presence of two notable printers, which spread a number of rare works within the town including the first Catechism of Martin Luther translated into Slovak, among others, also supported the high level of education. In the 17th century, Bardejov and many other neighbouring towns experienced a series of natural disasters as well as anti-Habsburg uprisings, which resulted in the economic decline of the town and region. That economic crisis, which culminated in WWI, compelled many town residents to emigrate. After the war, the town rebuilt itself on industry, and for this reason the number of inhabitants again rose. At this time, machinery and shoe making led the renewed prosperity. In 1950, the town was declared a town historical reserve, which resulted in intensive renovation and the rescue of many cultural heritage sites. Since 2000, Bardejov has been listed on the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites.



Bardejov Spa

The first written mention of the Bardejov mineral springs dates back to 1247, when it was named along with the town in a document by King Bela IV. According to preserved accounting records, the use of local mineral springs began in the year 1505, with the establishment of the spa occurring during the reign of Maria Theresa, when Polish aristocrat Thomas Lisický of Lisice, who had been brought to the spa powerless, was healed when after two weeks he left the spa on his own two feet. Because of this publicity, other prominent guests discovered the spa, including Emperor Jozef II, the second wife of Napoleon

I, Mary Louise, Russian Tsar Alexander and Empress Elisabeth of Austria, who when leaving stated that she felt eighteen years old again even though she was in fact already an older woman. The spa, with its beautiful colonnade, restored and new medical therapeutic houses and a beautiful park, now offers an extensive therapeutic and wellness programme.

www.kupele-bj.sk



What to see



The town walls

In 1352, Ludovit the Great of Anjou granted the town Bardejov the right to hold an eight-day fair along with the right to construct town walls. By the end of the 14th century, the commercially capable town already benefited from a perfect fortification system consisting of a stone castle wall with three major town gates and a water moat with Hoist Bridge, to which in the first half of the 16th century supporting bastions were added. The bastions, named Archival, Renaissance, Great, Broad, Royal, Square and School, are preserved to this day as a symbol of one of the most flawless fortifications of the Gothic period in Slovakia.



Town Hall Square

GPS N 29°40'00" E 12°60'00"

From 1376, Bardejov benefited from the privileges of a free royal town. This period in its history can be described as the town's Golden Age, with more than 50 guilds and 64 craft specialisations in practice. This period of prosperity is evidenced by the many preserved religious and secular buildings from the 14th and 15th centuries, thanks to which the town has maintained its Medieval charm until



The Basilica Minor of St Giles

GPS N 29°40'00" E 12°60'00"

The religious and architectural centre of Town Hall Square, the church was originally a Gothic building dating from the middle of the 14th century. Its interior is of particular interest to visitors thanks to its collection of eleven wing altars with paintings and many other rare sacred furnishings. The Basilica has undergone a number of reconstructions at the hands of various prominent buildings, among them the famous royal builder, Štefan of Kosice, who worked on the Cathedral of St Elisabeth in Košice. The building you see today is the result of 20 years of renovation. One of the most significant points of the sacred space is the main neo-Gothic altar, from 1878, completed with statues of St Giles, St Stephen and St Ladislaus. Other features include the anatomically precise Golgotha sculptures from the 15th century, depicting the crucified Christ alongside the two thieves.



The Town Hall

GPS N 29°40'00" E 12°60'00"

The dominant secular structure of Town Hall Square dates back to the early 16th century and displays recognisable elements marking the appearance of Renaissance architecture. A number of significant builders were 'signed' under the building's final appearance. A local foreman, Theofil Stancel, created the painted decoration of the interior, which is comprised of shields, coats of arms and a scene of the last supper. The top of the southern gable is decorated with a replica of the figure of the legendary protector of the town's privileges, the Knight Roland, holding a halberd. Architectural details such as decorated portals, decorative shield paintings, coats of arms, and the beamed ceiling and furniture of the Council Hall increase the artistic value of the premises, which currently houses the Šariš Museum.



today. Perhaps the most impressive testimony of this time is the Town Hall Square with forty-six typical townhouses, which is after reconstruction in 2002 are now as they were seven centuries ago, the centre of all town activity.



Jewish suburb

Behind the historical town walls is located a group of buildings including a nine-vault synagogue dating from 1836, rich with ornamental decoration and home to an impressive Hebrew poetic chronogram with dedicatory inscription. A gathering place during Midrash and Mikveh, for the performing ritual baths, is also a part of the suburb.



and hunting trophies as well regular showcases of the works of various contemporary artists.

www.muzeumbardejov.sk

Šariš museum

There are three permanent museum exhibitions located within the town. In addition to that found in the Town Hall, at 27 Town Hall Square visitors can find the only independent iconography exhibition in Slovakia, at 4 Rhody Street it is possible to see a natural history exhibition of animal species from the north east of Slovakia, and at 13 Town Hall Street there is an exhibition displaying period artefacts



Open-air museum of a folk architecture

GPS N 49°32'99.01" E 21°26'68"04"

The oldest open-air museum in Slovakia is located directly on the premises of Bardejov Spa. It is composed of 24 exhibition items that document the architecture and way of life of Slovak and Ruthenian ethnic populations from the period of the 19th and 20th centuries. You can find here



residential timber houses, farm buildings, a blacksmith's workshop, a wooden beehive, a device for the domestic production of cloth, several religious buildings. The religious buildings include a reconstructed wooden chapel in the village of Mikulášová, another wooden chapel of an Eastern Rite built in 1766 and transferred to its current location from the village of Zboj, the belfrys in the villages of Nižný Orlík, Janovce and Nemcovce, and the chapel of St John of Nepomuk.





Mikulášová on the premises of Badejov Spa open-air museum, we can find the Greek Catholic wooden church of St Luke from 1826 in Krivé, the Baroque-Gothic Orthodox church of St Cosmas and St Damian in the village of Lukov, the Greek Catholic church of the Meeting of the Lord and Simeon from 1698 in Kožany, the Greek Catholic church of St Luke the Evangelist in Tročany, the Orthodox church of the Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary from 1763 in the village of Jedlinka, the Orthodox church of St Michael the Archangel in Frička, and the church of St Francis of Assisi in Hervartov. All of these churches have been included on the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites since 2008.



Where to go



The wooden churches

Of the 27 wooden churches located in the Prešov region, all built without the use of a single metal nail, as many as nine can be found in the district of Bardejov. Since 1968 they have been proudly adorned with the status of national cultural monuments, with most of them still serving their spiritual purpose today. Besides those located within the villages of Zboj and





Zborov Castle

GPS N 49°36'81" E 21°30'93"

The ruin, also known by the name Makovica, is located near the village of Zborov. The first written mention of the castle is from the charter of King Louis I, from 1347. It was built as a border and guard castle and over the years was owned by various noble families, including the Cudar,



Rozgonyi, Tarczay and Rákoci families. The first buildings included Gothic features, and in the 16th century extensive rebuilding took place that resulting in the expansion of the living areas and the strengthening of the fortifications. From written documents dated to 1704, the castle was still fully functional at the beginning of the

18th century. However, much of the now apparent extensive damage came from the period of WWI. Currently, the fortification are under reconstruction. The hill on which the castle is located has been classed as a National Nature Reserve since 1950, with a focus on protection of some several



hundred-year-old oaks found on the path to the castle. The castle itself is a sought after tourist attraction and is accessible along an educational route starting from Bardejov Spa or from Podhradie Sreet in the village of Zborov. During the summer months, the castle hosts various concerts.

The oldest oak in Slovakia, Dubinné

GPS N 49°14'38" E 21°26'28"

An 850 year old oak (*Quercus robur*) can be found at the egdge of the main road leading to the village of Dubinné. It is thought to be the oldest oak, not only in Slovakia but also in the whole of Central Europe. The tree is 25 m tall and its trunk has a circumference of 12.33 at ground level, and is more than just a rare example of a particular forest species but also a clerical symbol as it was already standing at the time the village was established and has grown alongside it as well as surviving the Husite movement and both world wars. A legend told by residents of village says that during the wars, they the locals hid animals inside the trunk to protect them and that the Virgin Mary appeared on that site. There is a chapel in honour of her revelation by the tree.



Sport & relaxation



Bardejov Spa

A facility with a long history and that was favoured by Empress Elisabeth of Austria.

www.kupele-bj.sk

Town swimming pool in Bardejov

A swimming and children's pool and two beach volleyball courts, located on Toplianska Street.

Natural swimming pool Makovica

Complete facilities located north of Bardejov, 3 km from the Polish border in a picturesque valley.

www.makovica.sk

Ski centre Makovica

A 950 m long slope and many other services, suitable for skiers and snow-boarders.

www.makovica.sk/lyzovacka

Ski centre Regetovka

3 km of partially artificial ski slopes, ski rental, accommodation facilities and refreshments. Located 18 km from Bardejov.

www.regetovka.sk

Ski centre Stebnícka Huta

A ski and snowboard facility with two ski lifts, located 17 km from Bardejov in the Low Beskids.



Equestrian club NOVOTNÝ, Abrahámovce

Equestrian training, recreational riding, hypotherapy and barbequing in natural surroundings.

novotny.jan@slovanet.sk;

Abrahámovce 77

Horse breeding, Dlhá Lúka (Bardejov)

Equestrian training, winter skijoring and a carriage rental service for events.



Traditional events

The games of Knight Roland

Days of Bardejov town, **June**

Jozef Grešák organ days

An international festival of organ music with a more than 20 year tradition, **July**

Bardejov fair

A traditional fair with a history spanning more than six hundred years, held in the historic heart of the town, **August**

Horse racing and jumping, Bardejov

Horse races with a rich supplementary programme for children and adults, **May**



STROPKOV

An unexplored town

Archaeologists have paid little attention to the town of Stropkov and its surroundings. However, if you decide to visit you will not regret it. There is something for everyone in this town, whether you are a lover of history, religious landmarks, animals, swimming, skiing or even honey.

There are many blank spaces in the history of the district town of Stropkov as no archaeological research was ever done here, so its history before the first mention in 1404 is unknown and filled with unverifiable ideas only. However, it is likely that a Great Morava of post-Great Morava settlement was located here, which lasted until the end of the 13th century. This theory was supported by the accidental discovery, in 1956, of burned ditches 1 m wide and 1.5 m deep that were probably used by early settlers as granaries. This finding has never been further investigated though and was later covered as the urban area of the town expanded. Another supporting factor of the Great Morava theory is the name of Stropkov, which linguists derive from the Slovenian words Strop or Stropok. In all other documents it is later referred to as an oppidum (Iron Age settlement) or civitas (from Roman times) and there is no evidence of the town being awarded any sovereign rights. One thing that is certain is that in the 14th and 15th centuries, the town was inhabited by German residents who contributed to its architectural development based upon which the time developed an urban character over time. A historical town square with four different streets and a Gothic church initially,

consecrated to St Anna, are dated to this time. In the 14th century, Stropkov was a craft centre in the area and various 'masters', referring to themselves as 'of Stropkov', worked in Bardejov and Košice. In 1575, a 'big guild' came into existence and joined together 17 different craft forms. The town's development declined when Zigmund Luxembourg gave it to local feudal lords as a small vassal town without rights, which in turn led to the emigration of much of the skilled German population. At present, the town benefits particularly from its geographical location in the picturesque Ondava highlands and its proximity to the Veľká Domaša reservoir, which provide ideal conditions for the development of tourism, especially rural tourism. A popular place for tourists is Valkov, a recreational centre on



the shores of the reservoir where visitors can find a beach with especially clean water. And if you choose to visit Stropkov in the winter months, the Miková winter sports centre will surely satisfy your desire for active relaxation. Another popular attraction is Zoo Park Stropkov, the town's zoological garden with the unique feature of being right in the middle of the town.

Also, if you visit at the turn of November and December you will feel particularly sweet, as this is the time when the Honey Days are regularly held.

which was later overturned by the Pete family. The last written mention of the castle is from 1767, when it was apparently burned down and destroyed along with much of the town centre. It has



What to see

Stropkov Castle

GPS N 49°12'06" E 21°39'12"

The original building, from the first half of the 15th century, was situated in the southern part of the town square. Its owners were the noble Pereni family,

never been renovated and the remaining masonry was used by locals for the buildings of their homes. Currently, the southern part of the eastern wing is still preserved as it was rebuilt as a mansion. Part of the castle is situated below the surface of the square.

The Roman Catholic Church of the Holiest Body and Blood of Christ

GPS N 49°12'06" E 21°39'12"

The three-aisled Gothic church with seven-storey church tower from the turn of 13th and 14th centuries was part of the now vanished Stropkov Castle and belongs to the most significant religious architectural landmarks of the town. The early-Baroque main altar, with rich figural and ornamental decoration, is one of the most beautiful in Slovakia. In the 18th century, a vestry was built out to the north side of the church. The Peter and Paul bell in the church belfry dates back to 1847 and came from the bell-workshop of Paul Schmitz.



The Franciscan Church of the Holy Trinity and monastery

GPS N 49°20'45.02" E 21°65'12.68"

A Franciscan Church, consecrated to the Holy Trinity, dates from the 17th century. The same named main altar, which is characterised by its highly artistic creation, dominates the interior. Its central motive is a picture of the Holy Trinity with a case for the tabernacle of God's body. In the 17th century, a monastery was built at the church for Franciscan monks who were called to the town to prevent the spread of reformation ideology. The monastery was later rebuilt, but to this day the so-called 'yard of paradise', a rectangular space between the wings of the monastery where monks meditated, remains here. In 1921, the monastery passed to the administration of the Redemptorist Order, becoming the first monastery of its kind in Slovakia.

Town museum and gallery

The Stropkov museum and gallery of František Veselý can be found at 519 Zámocká Street in the town's manor house, where visitors can see various objects of historical value in a permanent exhibition, most of which were provided by inhabitants of the town. An exclusive collection of dolls is the most popular exhibition. The museum and gallery also organise a wide range of thematic exhibits several times per year.

<http://www.stropkov.sk/muzeum/>



Where to go



ZOO Park

GPS N 49°12'17" E 21°39'06"

It is possible to find Zoo Park right in the centre of the town on Main Street. There are forty enclosures where you can see various well-known and exotic animal species. Part of the park is an area where it is possible to feed some of the animals. Despite its modest dimensions, this zoological garden is the only of its kind in

Slovakia. By caring for animals, this zoo is helping to preserve the planet's gene pool. In addition to animals, the park is also home to some plants, shrubs and trees. There is the Little Red Riding Hood fairy-tale buffet. The facility has wheelchair and disabled access.

www.zoostropkov.sk

Baňa Hill

Lovers of nature and hiking will surely appreciate the opportunity to travel on one of the most attractive hills in the town's surroundings. Several maintained hiking trails end on the top of Baňa Hill, at an altitude of 526 m, from starting points directly in the town. By taking the blue signed route, you can reach the top in about 1.5 hours. It is possible to continue

walking from Baňa Hill to Šarišský Štiavnik Spa, which although no longer a functioning spa still provides mineral dioxide, calcium and sulphurous spring water. A dominant feature of the surrounding area that cannot be overlooked is the newly built telephone tower, which with a height of 50 m, is the tallest in Slovakia.

Stropkov swimming pool

A 50 x 22.5 m swimming pool and children's pool and playground.

Ski centre Stropkov

Slopes for skiers of all levels, with two lifts and a ski kindergarten for children. Located in the Ondava highlands.



Traditional events

Stropkov fair

Annual fair that renews old traditions, and where you can find many craft items and products, **August**

Stropkov Castle celebrations

Say farewell to summer on the town square with the conquering of the castle, a public execution and a balloon battle, **August/September**

Stropkov golden horseshoe

Popular horse races with a more than 30-year tradition, **August**

Stropkov Honey Days

A sweet festival with the smell of honey, honey-cakes, gingerbread and mead for honey connoisseurs and beekeepers, **November/December**

Sport & relaxation

Domaša – Valkov

A recreational area and beach, with a reputation as one of the cleanest sites in Great Domaša, surrounded by pubs.

www.tatra-domasa.sk





MEDZILABORCE

Warhol's town

The Andy Warhol, Museum of Modern Art, which boasts the second largest collection of his works in the world, is undoubtedly the biggest attraction in Medzilaborce.

However, if you are not an art lover of art, Medzilaborce also offers many opportunities for hiking and the exploration of the history of war in Slovakia.

A simple look at the history of Medzilaborce suggests that town had seen many hard times, partly due to its geographical location near a state border and partly because, from ancient times, the town's inhabitants had few job opportunities. Most citizens were entirely dependent on agriculture and forestry work. According to documentation, in 1347 the Drugheta family were the nobility of Mezobrod and 92 other municipalities, but were later toppled by the Čáky family, who were in turn overturned by the Andrassy family. At the beginning of the 17th century there were two flour mills, a sawmill and the first shops and taverns opened their doors. The development of capitalism at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries caused many of the locals to emigrate to Belgium, France,



the US and Canada. The construction of a railroad that led from Medzilaborce through Lupkovský mountain to Poland proved to moderately stimulate the struggling economy, but the first and second world wars brought both allied and hostile fighting to the town. Russian troops, under the commandment of A. A. Brusilov, passed this way along with a Czech group, and cruel battles were fought in Lupkovský Pass against the Čapajev partisans, who were fighting for the liberation of the area in 1944. The town was badly damaged and 47 nearby villages were completely destroyed. During the second half of the 20th century, the town partially recovered and began slowly developing, and although never a centre of industry, it does capitalise on its setting within beautiful natural surroundings, which provide ideal conditions for tourism. There are as many as six nature reserves with marked tourist routes within the town area where visitors can see many rare species of flora and fauna. Laborec river also offers the chance for rafting.





paintings, drawings, sketches and various keepsakes. Besides of the artists' works there are also one hundred works by his brother Paul and nephew James.

www.muzeumaw.sk



What to see

The Andy Warhol Museum of Modern Art

This unobtrusive Eastern Slovak town boasts a world rarity: The Andy Warhol Museum of Modern Art. Located at 749/26 A Warhol Street, the museum is dedicated to the work and life of the founder of pop art and was founded in 1991 by descendants of the American artist. The mother of Andy Warhol, Julia Warhol, was born in the village of Miková, only 17 km away. The Museum boasts the second largest collection of Warhol's work in the world. It consists of



Open-air museum

GPS N 49°16'20.28" E 21°54'03.24"
Not far from the amphitheatre is located an interesting exhibition mapping the history of a Ruthenian village with a

wooden chapel. Even though the buildings are not original, they were built by hand using traditional techniques. The collection of replica buildings include traditional houses and farm buildings in which visitors can see the enactment of the everyday life of the Ruthenian ethnic group. The erection of this mini museum of folk architecture is part of a more extensive project, Warhol's town, by which the town intends to change its image.





Where to go

The Monastery of the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

GPS N 49°13'33" E 21°53'45"

One of the most beautiful Greek Catholic monasteries in Slovakia is located in the village of Krásny Brod. It was built in the 14th century, and according to legend the reason for this was that on the Friday before the feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, a blind beggar passed through the location. When he rubbed water from the local spring over his eyes, his eyesight returned. Consequently, a chapel with



an icon of the Mother of God was built, which was later replaced by a wooden church and monastery where an order of Basilian monks settled. Over the years, the monastery was destroyed three times, the last time being during WWI. After the first destruction in 1603, when Protestant Count Valentín Drugeth left it to burn, the important icon of the Mother of God was rescued. This icon was later transferred to the southern wall of the church of St John the Baptist in Krásny Brod, where it remains until this day.

Habura, the valley of Prince Laborec

GPS N 49°19'27" E 21°51'41"

Two important Ruthenian cultural monuments stand in the nearby village of Habura. There is a replica of the wooden chapel of St Nicholas the Wondermaker and a 5.10 m high bronze statue of Prince Laborec located on a 1.70 m high base. A nameless chronicle states that the Slavic Prince lived at the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries at Hung Castle. After the invasion of old Hungarian tribes into the Carpathian basin, the Prince supposedly sought refuge in the Zemplin fort. When he failed in his attempt to escape, the tribesmen caught him and, on the

bank of the river Sviržava, executed him. Since then the river takes his name, Laborec. Prince Laborec plays a very important role in Ruthenian culture. The creator of the bronze sculpture is an academic and painter Ján Ľapák. A distinctive message is built into the base of the statue: soil from Eastern Slovak Ruthenian villages to symbolise the unity and identity of the ethnic group.



The church of St Nicholas the Wondermaker

Built in the village of Habura between the years 1502 and 1510, it was initially an Orthodox church but later came under the administration of the Greek Catholic church. In 1740, a Greek Catholic religious community built a walled church dedicated to St Michael the Archangel and the wooden church was donated to the village of Malá Poľana, from where it was sold, in the 20th century, to the city of Hradec Králové in the Czech Republic, where it stands to this day. After unsuccessful attempts to get the church back, the village decided to build a replica, a true copy of the original building from the 16th century now stands on the same site and has been consecrated since 2011.

Palota fir forest

The Laborec region provides many opportunities for hiking in as many as six nature reserves, with Palota fir forest being one of them. The hiking routes enable visitors

to admire many rare, endangered and protected plants. The Brown bear, Grey wolf, Eurasian lynx and European otter as well as 124 species of birds and 60 species of mammals represent the animal life of the area. Popular hiking routes begin in the village of Habura and pass through the village of Chvastejov, the area of Kejda and on to the state border (5 km along the blue route) and from the last bus stop in Palota it goes to Lupkovský Pass (5 km along the green route). Medzilaborce serves as the main tourist base.



grew angry at this and decided to destroy the monastery. To do this they planned to throw a huge boulder at the building. However, as they carried the boulder through the forests of Krásný Brod, a cock began to crow and the energy of the devils was lost so that they dropped the boulder on themselves. On some days you can apparently hear them groaning from underneath the rock. There is a tourist lodge and a table marked with the village's coat of arms located at the top of the rock today.

The devils' stone

You can find this stone in the locality of the Kamjana Massif, which stretches north from the village of Krásny Brod. The Devil's stone is a distinctive grit rock found at around 433 metres above sea level. According to Ruthenian legend, many pilgrims visited the monastery for the feast of the Protection of the Holiest Mother of God to her icon, and the devils

Lupkovský Pass

GPS N 49°15'03" E 22°02'19"

Located at an altitude of 640 metres above sea level in the northern Laborecká highlands on the border between Slovakia and Poland, the Lupkovský Pass is 416 m long and has the railway line connecting Medzilaborce and the Polish town of Sanok running through it. The Pass can be reached on the international route E8 that passes through Laborecký Pass to Vysoký Grúň, or along the less demanding green route from the village of Palota.



Sport & relaxation

Rafting on the Laborec river

A whole lot of adventure by raft or canoe.

www.alcea.sk

Ski Centre Danová

Two ski slopes with lifts, a natural skating rink and a ski school, located in the vicinity of Medzilaborce.



Ski centre Borov, Medzilaborce

1.7 km of easy to moderate ski slopes for skiers, snowboarders and cross-country skiing enthusiasts.



Traditional events

The march of thanks from Čertižné to Dukla

A popular cross-country skiing memorial race along the Slovak-Polish border in honour of the cruel fighting during WWII, **February**

The Laborec Spring fair, Medzilaborce

The hailing of spring in the streets of the town in a traditional fair spirit, **May**

Festival of culture and sport, Medzilaborce

A multi-genre cultural and sporting festival with lots of good music and sporting possibilities, **June**

Laborecká 24, Medzilaborce A 24-hour hall football tournament , **December**



SVIDNÍK

A town of the souls of fallen soldiers

When Sudice stood at the creation of this town, they predicted it an uneasy fate. Nearby Dukla Pass experienced the full weight of this prediction, as it became witness to large-scale military operations the death of many soldiers. More than ten thousands souls are at rest in the four local war cemeteries.

In memory of the bravery of the lost souls and the scars of

Of course, there is no place in Slovakia that would choose to be memento of death, however Svidník involuntarily took on this role in WWII, in particular in 1944 when one of the most cruel battles of the war, the Battle of the Dukla Pass, took place. For this reason, the locality is an ideal destination for lovers of military history. The religious polar opposite of these war memorials are the eleven Easter Rite wooden churches that provide consolation, not only to believers, but also to anyone who can appreciate the skill of the builders who were able to erect these structures without the use of a single metal nail, and who enjoy the beauty of religious art.

battle, there are several monuments forming part of a preserve military arsenal.

The district town, which grew on the meeting place of the Lodomirka and Ondava rivers, is now the modern administrative, economic, cultural and sporting centre of the region. The unofficial symbol of the town is a statue of army general, Ludvik Svoboda, the only of its kind in Europe. Other dominating features of the town are two Greek Catholic churches, the Orthodox church of the Holy Trinity and Roman Catholic church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.





Dukla battlefield

GPS N 49°35'84" E 21°59'34"

A national cultural monument commemorating the joint assault of Soviet and Czech soldiers in Dukla Pass in the autumn of 1944. The outcome of the battle was indecisive and claimed the lives of many many thousands of soldiers. However, many military strategists have not evaluated the battle as unsuccessful

as the Germans eventually withdrew. An important monument to this battle is the symbolic 28 m high conical Memorial of the Czechoslovakian army with ceremonial hall. On the twentieth anniversary of the Offensive, a group of sculptures called 'I accuse' was added. There is a commemorative cemetery with 15 busts of the heroes of the Battle for Dukla Pass, an exhibition of tanks on the battlefield in the villages of Nižný Komárnik and Vyšný Komárnik and the publicly accessible firing positions and bunkers of First Brigade of the First Czechoslovak Army Corps.

What to see

The Military museum and Soviet Army monument

GPS N 49°18'28" E 21°33'56"

A museum specialising in documenting the military history of Slovakia immediately before WWI in the Eastern Carpathians, the interwar period and WWII, with a focus on the Battle for Dukla Pass and its partisan operations in 1944 and 1945. The main exhibition contains original

photographs, personal keepsakes and various weapons found on the battlefield. There is also a park dedicated to the art of war located directly next to the museum, where visitors can see heavy military techniques in practice. Also part of the facility are a Soviet Army monument and a cemetery where 9000 soldiers, who died in the autumn of 1944, are buried. The museum additionally oversees and 48 m high lookout tower directly in the Dukla area.



The Valley of Death

In the villages of Kapišová, Kružlová and Nižná Pisaná, visitors can see tanks arranged to depict an attack. Eight of the T-34/35 tanks are positioned to commemorate the events of the 25th to 27th of October 1944.





and the living conditions of Ruthenians in Slovakia. Within relocated and reconstructed buildings, it is possible to see folk furniture, home items, traditional working tools and folk art. Besides domestic buildings, there are also technical and farm buildings. A dominant feature of the museum is the wooden church in the village of Nová Polianka, which dates from 1766 and has interesting interior decoration. The exhibition also maps the day-to-day living that characterised the Ruthenians of the past: agricultural and livestock.



Ethnographic and geographic exhibition of the Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník

Publically accessible since 1982, there is an open-air museum covering an area of ten hectares in the immediate vicinity of the local amphitheatre. There, visitors can find examples of the typical folk architecture



Museum of Ukrainian-Ruthenian culture

GPS N 49°18'15" E 21°34'46"

A further national institute dedicated to the culture, history and political and social development of the Slovak Rutheni-

ans is located at 258 Main Street in Svidník. As part of the museum, visitors can see the Gallery of Dezider Milly, which is named after the Ruthenian artists and founder of 'generation 1909'. The museum is seated with a Baroque manor from the 18th century and displays the works of Ruthenian artists made from the 16th century to today. A collection of unique icons also forms part of the museum's collection.

www.muk.sk



Low Beskids

GPS N 49°23'17" E 21°09'39"

The nearby mountain range, with its highest hill, Busov, standing at 1002 MASL, provides a number of opportunities for hiking and cycling on signposted routes. An easy ascent up to the highest peak begins in the villages of Gaboltov or Cigelka, from where the green route is to be followed. Once at the top, you can find a small clearing with a wooden cross.
www.kst-beskyd.sk



The church of St Michael the Archangel in the village Ladoširová (UNESCO)

GPS N 49°19'47" E 21°37'29"

A church of a Byzantine Rite with belfry from 1742, dedicated to St Michael the Archangel. It is one of several churches referred to as being of the 'lemkovsky' type, inspired by the religious architecture of the Carpatho-Rusyns. This influence can be seen in the position of the belfry above the church hall. A five-row iconostasis from the 18th century is one of the most valuable artistic artefacts in

the church, with the main row including icons depicting St Nicholas the Bishop, the Hodegetria, Jesus the Teacher and St Michael the Archangel. The second row depicts the content of important religious holidays, and the third row has images of the Apostles. Pairs of characters in the fourth row are completed by an image of Christ rising from the dead on the fifth row. In addition to the iconostasis, there are highly artistic wall paintings by the monks Filion and Cyprián, and various liturgical items. Since the year 2008, the church has been included in the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites.

Where to go

The church of St Nicholas in the village of Bodružal (UNESCO)

GPS N 49°21'10" E 21°42'27"

A stunning Greek Catholic church of a Byzantine Rite dedicated to St Nicholas the Wonderworker, archbishop of Myra in Lycia. Built in 1658, it has white gold Baroque interior decorations and is one

of the oldest sacral wooden buildings of the 'wooden' Carpathians. The church's external architecture bears features inspired by Byzantine sacral art. The main altar and iconostasis inside are also typical for a Byzantine Rite but the Baroque paintings and decorative objects indicate also the influence of Latin Rites. Wall paintings from the late 18th century depict biblical scenes from the Apocalypse and Crucifixion. A three-row iconostasis from the same period bears Rococo features. Since 2008, this church, together with the other seven wooden churches of the Carpathian arch, have been included in the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites.



Roztoky Observatory

GPS N 49°33'57" E 21°28'54"

An astronomical observatory located at an altitude of 440 MASL, offers excursions, lectures, organised observations of the nocturnal sky, the Sun and other objects for schools and the general public. Its mission is to disseminate scientific knowledge of astronomy and related disciplines. Its main ambition is the gradual building of a positive relationship with nature. There is also the provision of accommodation.

Lookout tower at Čierna Hora and Makovica Hill

GPS N 49°18'07.01" E 21°30'33.09"

Čierna Hora is a hill reaching to a height of 667 MASL. It is a sought out tourist attraction with the red hiking route that starts in Svidník or green route starting in the village of Rovné leading to its top. There, visitors can find a monument to the fallen Russian soldiers of WWI. Since 2007, there has also been observation tower, a shelter and a small gazebo. The top of Makovica rises to 655 MASL and is easiest to access using the red route lead-

ing from the village of Kurimka along the road of the Heroes of the Slovak National Uprising, or using the blue route from Šarišské Čierne. A statue of St Florian, the patron of firemen, is located at the top of the hill. The two hills are separated by the 'saddle of Makovica', although it is possible to climb both hills in one ascent.



Sport & relaxation

Water World Svidník

Five indoor and outdoor wave pools with water attractions and awater chute in addition to a children's pool.

www.vodnysvetsvidnik.sk



Ski centre Medvedie

A ski centre with various slopes and three lifts and the possibility of night skiing. Located in the nearby village of Šarbov, it provides excellent accommodation in Medveď penzion (Bear hotel).

www.skimedvedie.sk

www.penzionmedved.eu



Traditional events

Cultural celebration the of Ruthenian-Ukrainians of Slovakia

The oldest folklore festival in Slovakia, **June**

Craft and folk tradition fair

Demonstrations of traditional craft production and processing of different kinds of materials and foodstuffs, held on the premises the museum of a folk architecture in Svidník,

September

Dukla run of peace

An organised run with a tradition of more than 55 years, **September**

The Battle of Dukla Pass

A biennial re-enactment of one of the bloodiest battles of WWII, the Battle for Dukla Pass, **October**



SNINA

Spiritual heritage and unspoiled nature

Since time immemorial, the easternmost district in Slovakia has been marked by the peaceful mixing of cultures. The Byzantine and Roman cultures left behind remnants in the form of wooden churches, and today Slovaks, Ruthenians and Ukrainians live side by side without conflict. All of this works in harmony with Poloniny National Park, the green 'jewel', with its primeval forest vegetation and unspoiled beauty.

The easternmost district astounds with its versatility and diversity and will provide every visitor with just what they need. Do you need to renew your spiritual powers? Then you will surely be interested in the wooden churches of the Carpathian wooden trail and which represent the religious legacies of the Byzantine and Roman cultures. Do you wish to enjoy active relaxation? The thick green forests of Poloniny National Park offer many opportunities for hiking and the exploration of unspoiled beauty. The unique bio swimming Snina ponds allow for undisturbed relaxation and regeneration. Are you interested in culture? Then your goal should be the Andrej Smolák Gallery with its exhibition of monumental

sculptures and annual 'rock under the stone' festival. The district of Snina is full of more pleasant surprises that you could ever imagine.

The district town of Snina is characterised by the dynamism of a modern town that has and continues to change. It dates back to the 14th century, when the area was first colonised by Ruthenian farmers. As the town lay on an important trade route from the Hungarian Empire to Polish Galicia, Porta Rusica, the town gradually and continuously grew. Originally it was under the administration of the noble Italian Drugheta family, who sold it in 1799 to entrepreneur Joseph Rholl of the Gemer region. On his initiative, a metal works and foundry were established in Jozef's Valley, which further contributed to the development of the town. Here was cast the statue of Hercules that to this day stands in the courtyard of the local convent, and which acts as the unofficial symbol of the town. However, economic crisis in the late 19th



century led to the decline of the metal works and a resultant wave of emigration to Western Europe, Canada and the US. A short period of economic development was enjoyed after a railway line was built, but was interrupted by WWI and WWII.

A silent witness of the suffering of the locals during that time is the local war cemetery at Predný Hodošík, the highest lying cemetery in Slovakia.



Andrej Smolák Gallery

GPS N 48°09'16.35" E 17°08'19.60"
 Located on Centrum Square, the gallery was founded by the academic painter Andrej Smolák. Since 1993, it has hosted more than 100 exhibitions of international and Slovak classical and modern artists. It also organises drawing and painting courses for the general public.
www.galeriaas.sk

What to see

Snina Manor

GPS N 48°58'57" E 22°08'19"

A Classical manor house with English park from the late 18th century is located at 71 Cpt. Nálepka Street. It was built by Countess Terézia van Dernáth, granddaughter of the last male descendant of the noble family Drugheta, who ruled



Snina in the 14th century. The two-storey building had residential, representative and service rooms. A water supply was constructed in the basement of the building to supply Hercules' fountain,

which still stands in the courtyard. Part of the extensive parkland has also been preserved. Since 2010, the manor has been in the ownership of the town and has undergone reconstruction. Now the building houses a gallery, library, museum and is used to host various cultural and social events.



The chapel of Our Lady Seven Sorrows

"Here lays Katarina, wife of the respected and brave patriot Joseph Rholl. Maiden name Uszfalvai. She fell asleep forever on the 24th, on St Michael's Day of the year 1803 in the 55th year of her life. With feelings of gratitude and deep respect, the son of Štefan gave permission for this building in 1842." So reads a Hungarian inscription on the inner wall of the chapel, a Classical building in the old Snina cemetery dating from 1842. As the dedicatory inscription suggests, it was erected by Štefan Rholl, an entrepreneur and metalworker who settled in Snina in 1799, when he bought a farm and mansion from the sons of Countess van Dernáth. The Rholl family tomb is located under the chapel, but was ransacked during WWII.



Where to go

A history of Snina

An urban bike trail winds its way alongside the most important cultural monuments of the town, past the manor with its park and the chapel of Our Lady of the

Seven Sorrows built on the old cemetery. By crossing over a wooden bridge that links the manor with the Roman Catholic church of the Elevation of the Holy Cross you will pass a chapel dedicated to St John of Nepomuk, go through Snina square and arrive at Starina reservoir. The 10 km route, which is undemanding and suitable for families with children, includes 9 stops at cultural monuments that map the history of the town.

The Crypt of soldiers from WWI, Osadné

GPS N 49°08'34.87" E 22°09'08.24"

The only crypt of its kind in Slovakia, is located under the Russian Orthodox church in the village of Osadné. "On this place, in the years 1914 and 1915, 1025 soldiers killed during World War I. Known are the names of 23 and unknown are those of 1002. We honour their memory!" says the memorable inscription, which has been located on a plaque near the crypt since



1934 in both the Czech and Russian language. The remains of the fallen Russian and Austro-Hungarian soldiers from WWI were originally buried in the surrounding forests, on the initiative of the Orthodox priest, Alexander Cuglevič. However, during 1933 and 1934, they were transferred to the crypt. The site was reconstructed in 2005 and consecrated by Metropolitan Bishop Nikolaj. Although its existence was for some time forgotten, its mention in Marek Škop's work 'Osadné' has once again brought it to people's attention

Porta Rusica stone road

GPS N 22°33'26.30" E 49°13'42.16"

The stony road 'Porta Rusica' is a sought-after spot of the fans of hiking and cycling. Originally a trade route, it was built between 1861 and 1865 to connect the Kingdom of Hungary with the Polish town of Halič. It was named after Ruské sedlo, through which the route leads.

Stone monuments, well-preserved drainage trenches and stone outlets are to be found along the way. The route leads past a WWI military cemetery, a Jewish cemetery and a wooden blacksmith's shop at Tri studničky, which is the location of apparitions of Mary. In 2001, this road being the oldest in Slovakia, it was added to the National Landmark List.



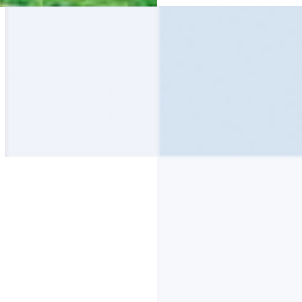
Poloniny National Park

GPS N 48°57'50" E 22°25'07"

The least inhabited National Park in Slovakia, it covers an area of 30 hectares. It is exceptional in particular the concentration of primeval forest vegetation. For the purpose of its protection, the land is divided into six national nature reserves, of which the largest and best known is Stuzica. The ancient European Silver Fir dominates this nature reserve and has been observed to live as long as 500 years. The oldest queen of the primeval forest is 300 years old, almost 50 m high and has a trunk circumference of 518 cm. She is accompanied by beech, ash, elm and maple trees. The untouched



appearance of this area spreads across the valley between the highest mountain, Kremenec, which peaks at 1210 m MASL, and River Stuzica at an altitude of from 647 MASL, up to 1210 MASL, and perfectly reflects how forests of the past would have looked. There are 500 hundred species of mushroom, 105 species of lichen and 190 species of moss to be



found in the primeval forest. Most of the species are endemic and can be found only in the East-Carpathian mountains. Birds are the most numerous members of the fauna and many of these species face extinction. Red deer, grey wolf, brown bear, Eurasian lynx and European otter also dwell in these forests. Also part of the park is Starina reservoir, the biggest source of drinking water in Slovakia. The beauty of the National Park can be admired from several hiking trails. The 12 km long Miroslav Poliščuk educational



route leads from the village of Ulič past ten stopping points where you can learn about the local wildlife and the Fedor Hlavatý highwaymen. More demanding tourists can choose to walk to the educational locality of Havešová along a 3 km route, that although shorter is not marked and can only be completed with the help of a tourist guide from the Park. Thanks to the low number of inhabitants in the area, there are excellent conditions for observation of the night sky. The declaration of the Park as a 'dark sky reservation' is testament to this fact.





Snina stone

GPS N 48°55'46" E 22°11'21"

A hill with an height of 1005 m forms part of the Vihorlat Mountains and a naturally dominant feature of the area as well as being the object of many legends. It rises to the south east of the village of Zemplínske Hámre, from where you can begin the easiest hike to the top. The hill is made of two rock formations, the Small and Big Snina stones. One legend says that the Lord of Hell himself, Lucifer, wanted to throw down a large rock on the town below out of anger for the fact that his servant, Beelzebub, was unable to break the morality of the honest Snina residents' souls. However, at the last moment, the guardian of the mountains, Iskroň, tickled Lucifer and made him drop the rock so

that it fell apart into many smaller stones.

One of them landed in Vihorlat not far from Snina.

Another legend says that both Snina stones are replicas of the Biblical Mount Sinai, where God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. A supporting fact of this theory is that on a map of Zemplín county from the 19th century, Snina is called Sinai. Either way, the area is characterised by its rare flora, with 43 types of lichen and 148 species of higher plants. Also, you can find the only Slovak liana, the Alpine Clematis. Snina stone is a common tourist destination at the intersection of hiking routes leading from that lead to the Park from the village of Zemplínske Hámre, from Snina as well as from the mountain ridges.

Nová Sedlica

GPS N 49°02'44" E 22°30'56"

During your travels you should not miss a visit to this seemingly uninteresting village. The easternmost situated village in Slovakia, it stands at the border of Slovakia, Poland and the Ukraine near Kremenec Hill, the highest in Poloniny National Park. Those who like unconventional art will be delighted by a view of the statues looming above the village in the area of Medová baba. The area is named after the first 7 m tall oak statue of Žofia Maťašovská, a native of the

mountains who was nicknamed Medová baba for her lifelong occupation of beekeeping. Apparently, her honey was desired around the world and was used by the gingerbread makers of Pardubice.



Hostovické lúky

A beautiful view of River Udava, located in the Laborec highlands, can be appreciated from the village of Hostovice. Since 1980, the area has been classed as a nature reserve and is exceptional thanks to the several rare plant species found there, in particular the protected Siberian iris, gladiolus imbricatus and saw-wort. From the animal kingdom there are many species of insect and birds including the Northern lapwing, common snipe and landrail. The easy terrain makes it possible to soak up the scenery and enjoy bird watching during hikes or cycle tours.

Predný Hodošík

GPS N 22°46'01"56.05"

E 49°07'97.11"

In the village of Stakčín we can find the highest located military cemetery in Slovakia. Due to its location, the village came under attack by troops during WWI and WWII. After 1944, when the Red Army liberated the village, 80 % of the homes were destroyed. The military cemetery is situated on Hodošík Hill, at 885 MASL, and is part of the Poloniny National Park.

The wooden churches the Carpathian arch

Passing through the district of Snina is the Carpathian wooden trail, on which you can find unique religious wooden churches made without the use of a single metal nail. There is the Greek Catholic church of St Michael the Archangel with a belfry and three bells from 1718 in the village of Uličské Krivé. The five rowed iconostasis and icons of the Pieta are completely renovated. In the village of Topoľa you can find the Greek Catholic church of St Michael the Archangel with belfry from 1700. Although the church is no longer used for liturgical purposes, it is characterised by rare interior furnishings and a colourful four-row iconostasis. Another spiritual witness to the times past is found in the village of Ruský Potok.



18th century and liturgical books from the 17th century. A supplementary belfry, with three bells, was added in 1956. In the village of Kalná Rostoka there is the Greek Catholic church of St John the Baptists from 1750. A five-row iconostasis with images of St Nicholas of Myra, the Hodegetria and St John the Baptist originates from the 17th century. From 2002 to 2004, the building underwent complete reconstruction. Finally, there is the church of St Basil the Great from the 18th century in the village of Hrabová Rostoka. The value of this historic landmark is particularly high thanks to the fact that the interior is preserved in its



original state. However, exterior renovations were done in 2000.

Ulič

GPS N 48°57'40" E 22°25'27"

The village of Ulič is located in the easternmost point of Slovakia in the Ulič valley. The village's main attraction is an open-air mini museum of folk architecture in the local park, with nine 1:10 scaled oak and pine miniature replicas of the wooden churches of the Carpathian arch. If you decide to visit for a trip with your children, follow the directions to the Merganec school educational route, which is named after a brave woodsman who died at the hand of a poacher. On the route you will find many interesting information boards, carved wooden statues and a small lake.



Originally a Greek Catholic wooden church built in 1740, it has belonged to the Russian Orthodox church since 2000. Besides a rare four-row iconostasis, there are other features of exceptional artistic value including an icon of Christ taken down from the cross from the



Kolonica Astronomical observatory

GPS N 49°02'38.00" E 18°79'00.05"

A remote workshop of the Vihorlat observatory, which, due to its optimal location in a sparsely populated area, suffers little interference from light pollution and is used for specialist observation activity. Astronomical hobbyists and casual visitors are also welcome. There is an observation platform with a telescope and planetarium in the public area. Located near to the observatory are a meteorological station, sundials and information centre. Access routes are suitable also for cyclists. A recommended route starts from Snina, passes the Snina ponds and continues through the locality of Pri Umartom, to Šponáreň and then to Kolonica, the Kofajka cross-road and on to the observatory.



ommended route starts from Snina, passes the Snina ponds and continues through the locality of Pri Umartom, to Šponáreň and then to Kolonica, the Kofajka cross-road and on to the observatory.

The ponds have a total water surface area of 6155 m² and are divided into areas designated for swimmers, non-swimmers and children. There is also a children's playground and areas for various sporting activities. Accommodation and food services are available.

www.biokupaliskosnina.sk

Ski center Parihuzovce

More than 5 km of artificial snow of ski slopes and 10 km of cross-country skiing routes.

www.snowski.sk

Sport & relaxation

Snina ponds

3 km from Snina, in the embrace of the Vihorlat mountains and an area crossed by many hiking and cycle routes, you will find a unique bio swimming pool that uses plants and algae to clean itself.



Traditional events

Rock under the stone

International music festival held at Snina ponds, **August**

Folklore festival under the Vihorlat hills, Snina ponds

A showcase of the most lively rhythms and dances of the region, **June**

Snina fair

Traditional urban and craft markets, **September**

International Art Festival, Anton Smolák Gallery, Snina

A festival with a several year tradition at which 7000 works by more than 500 artists from 47 countries have already been exhibited, **September**





HUMENNÉ

The town under the volcano

A modern town with clear traces of history in the form of historical monuments. Its scenery is complemented by the impressive volcanic Vihorlat hills. And the literary figure of Jaroslav Hašek's Good Soldier Švejk made a rest near the train

station in Humenné, lit a proverbial pipe and tasted the local ferric waters on his way to the Eastern Front...

The district town of Humenné and its surroundings attract by their natural beauty up until today. The Laborec and Cirocha rivers provide ideal conditions for practicing water sports and the nearby Vihorlat hills and Poloniny mountains appeal to those interested in hiking. Humenné was first mentioned in 1317, after its formation on the meeting point of the Laborec and Cirocha rivers on the site of an old Slavic settlement. From the 15th century, the town benefitted from many royal privileges granted by the Hungarian kings. A beautiful Renaissance manor with a cultivated park and a museum of folk architecture remind us of a period when the town belonged to prominent aristocratic families. Recent history of the town and its construction boom are closely linked to industrialisation and the development of

several prosperous businesses. A reconstructed central square, which now has a pedestrian zone, relaxation zones and event space, is a pleasant place for walking. In this way, the square has become the pulse of local social life, completed by the presence of a sound and colour water fountain. In the northern part of the square there is a water surface with night lighting in which a bust of general Milan Rastislav Štefánik is located, that symbolises the passage of time. Humenné is the ideal starting point for walking tours to the nearby surroundings. Besides the attractive the Vihorlat mountains and Humenský Sokol Natural Nature Reserve, the Laborec valley is an attractive destination with its replica of the church of St Nicholas the Wondermaker and a monumental sculpture of Slavic Prince Laborec, who reportedly perished here during his fleeing from Hungarian tribes.





What to see

Renaissance manor

GPS N 48°56'17" E 21°54'30"

A representative manor house with a square ground plan, central yard and corner towers. It grew on the site of a former Medieval curia in the 17th century when it was built by the noble Drugheta family.

At that time, the family owned the town of Humenné and several adjacent castles. Various constructional modifications were in the following years when Baroque features began to appear and a cupola was added along with French and English parks and a pond. The manor underwent



reconstruction in 1972, and today houses the Vihorlat Museum with a permanent exhibition of the period interiors enjoyed by the nobility in the early 20th century. Another natural science exhibition is the only one of its kind that presents the history of Slovak Romani. There is also a gallery and event hall in the manor house.
www.muzeumhumenne.sk



The statue of the Good soldier Švejk GPS N 48°55'49" E 21°54'04"

Whoever knows the fate of the hero of Jaroslav Hašek's cult novel, 'The Good Soldier Švejk' can tell you that he wandered through the Humenné on his way from Vienna to the Eastern Front. It is no coincidence that, since 2000, his likeness can be seen near the railway station. A statue more than 2 m tall and weighing 150 kg shows Švejk in his most popular incarnation, with a pipe and a steadfast gaze somewhere off into the unknown, similar to the illustrations of him by legendary painter Josef Lada. The statue was made by local sculptor, Jaroslav Drotár. By following the footsteps of Švejk, you can

wander from the Humenné railway to the Polish town of Sanok where visitors can find the legendary Trzema Rozay Hotel and another statue of Good Soldier Švejk.





Exhibition of folk architecture

GPS N 48°56'17" E 21°54'30"

In 1984, a museum of folk architecture was established in the town, about 300 m from the manor house. It is a collection of 15 folk buildings displayed with



Jewish cemetery

For 700 years now, have the local Jews been burying their dead on the Jewish hill in the locality of Hubková in Humenné. With more than 900 tombs, it is one of the oldest and largest Jewish cemeteries in Slovakia. According to preserved documents, there was already a Jewish community in Humenné in the 18th century, with members occupying the town centre and holding reputable positions as doctors, pharmacists and merchants. A synagogue was built here in 1795, and the community began to bury their dead nearby as early as 1828. There are graves of prominent Jewish families with genealogies going to the US, Canada and Israel, as well as here. After reconstruction in 2011, the cemetery has become a sought out tourist attraction and a place where descendants of Jews from all around the world come to honour their ancestors.

the intention of showing visitors the way of life in the Eastern Carpathian area in the past. There is a three-storey timber house from the period before WWI, with a living area, parlour and pantry. There is also a work building with folk equipment, a blacksmith's workshop and flourmill. A dominant feature of the museum is a wooden church consecrated to St Michael the Archangel from 1764, which was moved here from Nová Sedlica.

www.muzeumhumenne.sk



Graffiti gallery

Since 2013 there has been a unique street art project called 'the gallery under the bridge', located on the supports of Humenné overpass. The project includes portraits of important personalities and pictures of urban environments. Depictions of the sportsman of year

Marián Čišovský, cartoonist and editor Peter Gossányi, The Good Soldier Švejk, Valaškov bridge, a Ginkgo biloba tree and local Renaissance manor its museum of folk architecture were added, in the second phase of the project, to images of musician Marián Čekovský, screenwriter Ladislav Grosman and fashion designer Lydia Eckhardt.

Casimir IV. Between 1484 and 1488, the castle belonged to the noble Zápolský family, who further developed the structure. The next owner, Francis Kendy, joined the anti-Habsburg uprising leading to the castle's destruction in 1558 by royal troops. Later, in 1575, it was repaired by Nicholas Drugeth but was again destroyed by rebel armies in 1644. Stone by stone, the castle crumbled during the wake of anti-Habsburg uprisings. Today, the entrance gate and entrance to the upper courtyard still remain preserved, with remnants of the residential part with arched rooms and part of window and door arches still visible in the ruins. On a stone doorframe can be seen an interesting Latin inscription "Si Deus pro nobis quis contra nos" (if God be for us, who can be against us).

The angry black horse of Brekov Castle

František Barkóci, the Lord of Brekov Castle, had a reputation for being a cruel feudal Lord. He was said to treat his horses better than his subjects. If someone complained of his cruel treatment, he would be sent to prison or put on the rack. The peasant Mišo lived in Brekov at that time. He bought himself a horse for the money he had saved and made a cart to go with it. Everybody was jealous of his horse and cart but most of all the Barkóci's Pandur soldiers, who made up a lie that the peasant had stolen the horse from the Lord's stables. Mišo ended

up getting a beating and they took his horse. The dishonoured peasant, in a rage, cursed his master. The following night an earthquake struck Brekov. The castle crashed down and in its ruins everyone, including the cruel master, were dead. Soon afterwards the people from under the castle started seeing a black horse wandering around the remains of the castle. People say it is the ghost of Františka Barkóci, who was turned into a horse by peasant Mišo's curse. He supposedly walks in the ruins of his castle until today and sometimes his evil neighing can be heard.

Where to go

Brekov Castle

GPS N 48°54'21" E 21°50'09"

Medieval Brekov Castle was built in the 13th century on the Hungarian-Polish road. A fortification system was added in the middle of the 15th century and for a short time it played a major role in civil political struggles. In 1466, there was a battle under the castle walls between the army of Matej Corvinus and Polish king



Eneolithic tumuli

There are 26 Eastern Slovak Eneolithic burial mounds dating from 2000 to 3000 years ago in the Bronze Age. Located on the Rakovec-Hrabovec-Brekov mountain ridge, about 3 km from Humenné. A few conical bowls backfilled with fractions of burnt bones were found in the Brekov mound.



Jasenov Castle

GPS N 48°89'91.45" E 21°90'58.80"

Located about 4 km from Humenné in the surrounding hills, the castle was probably built in the 13th century after the invasion of Tartar tribes to protect the access route from the southern Hungarian Empire to the town. Over the years, it belonged to many aristocratic Hungarian lines such as the Račkaj, Drugheta, Juraj Rákoci, Čáky and Andráši. The castle consisted of a palace, a four-sided tower and stone ramparts, to which were later

added shooting bastions and embrasures. Masonry from the palaces, towers and small remnants of Renaissance arches has remained intact until today. Also an inlet and semi-circular Renaissance gate to the courtyard have been preserved. It is advisable to take a walk among the ruins in nice weather, after reaching it by various routes: from Humenné railway station in 1.5 hours, from the village of Jasenov in 45 minutes and from the valley of Laborec river in about two hours.

Kamenica nad Cirocha

The largest municipality in the district of Humenné is located about 7 km from the main town. The first written mention of the village dates from 1317, when King Robert I of Anjou gave it to the noble Drughetovci family, who chose it as their residence. One of the most important monuments in the village is a Classical manor house from 1773, which was built by the Čáky family. The castle is a national cultural monument and was in the past used by the Vihorlat Museum.

Brestov ponds

A recreational area on the outskirts of the village of Brestov with a set of fishing and rearing ponds and which offers many opportunities for active relaxation. Preserved forests covering an area of approximately 30 km² and easy terrain create ideal conditions for walking and cycling. Popular hiking trails lead to Hubková or the Slovak Volová ponds. The areas around Brestov ponds is much sought out for weekend relaxation and for collecting mushrooms and forest fruits. Of particular interest in the mass migration of toads from the forest to the water at the end of March each year



Pasika

On the border with Poland, at a height of 848 MASL, you can find a German watchtower of extraordinary strategic importance from WWII. About 500 m northwest of the tower is the place where Soviet liberation troops entered the territory of the former Czechoslovakia on the 20th September 1944. Tourist hiking trails starting in the villages of Palota, Habura or Čertižné, or from the village of Kalinov in the neighbouring district of Medzilaborce, are lead here.

Vihorlat protected landscape area

GPS N 48°54'32" E 22°10'04"

An impressive volcanic mountain range with preserved virgin forests that touches on the territory of Humenné. Since 1973, it has been classified as a protected area, with up to 95 % of the reservation covered by forest, 53.4 hectares of which are preserved in their original state, including virgin beech forests with trees as old as 220 years. The distinctive geological evolution of the volcanic mountain range enabled the creation of special rock formations, lakes, peat bogs and endemic plant species.



Humenné Falcon

The Humenné Falcon national nature reserve spreads on forest soil between Humenné and the villages of Jasenov,

Chlmec and Ptičie. A number of interesting protected animal and plant species can be found within the 541.5 hectares of the reserve. The forests are made up from beech, dogwood and oak. The most common of all the trees is the oak. The mysterious beauty of the reserve can be experienced during hiking along the Humenský Sokol education route, which starts in the village of Podskalka and leads past Červený Kameň, which at 447 MASL, provides a magnificent view of Jasenov castle, Snina Kameň and Humenné. The route also leads to Dúpna cave, at a height of 360 MASL.

Sport & relaxation

Hotel Ali Baba***

A renovated and modern hotel with a charming wellness and fitness zone and squash and tennis courts.

www.hotelalibaba.sk

Public swimming pool, Humenné

Indoor and outdoor pools, a sports area, tennis courts and recreational area on Laborec river, located in the town of Humenné.



Climbing wall, Humenné

A modern climbing wall with a maximum height of 11 m. Run by a local climbing club, it is also available for public use. There are approximately 700 grips, eight clenches and a 2.5 m overhang.

www.lezenie.he.sk/lezecka_stena

Chlmec Ski Park, Humenné

Five maintained ski slopes with a total length of 1680 m are located at the foot of the Vihorlat hills only 7 km from the town. With night skiing, ski rental, ski equipment servicing, a ski school and snow tubing.

www.skiparkchlmec.sk



Laborec, Humenné

Rafting and canoeing with a starting point in the district town and several interesting routes.

www.alcea.sk



Recreational and riding yard underneath Vihorlat, Kamienka

"A horse without a rider is always a horse. But a rider without the horse is only a person." So is the claim of the owners of this unique agrotourism facility that can be found near Humenné in a village called Kamenica nad Cirochou. Permanent residents of this place are many beautiful horses and snow dogs. The riding yard offers all year round horse

riding tuition and several day excursions for experienced riders. In winter you can also try riding a dog sled pulled by a local dog crew. During weekends, all day sport-riding programmes and trips to the countryside are organised for children and teens. You also have the opportunity to relax in an Indian tent, local sauna and a swimming pool.

www.rajd.sk

Hippospring Farm, Ptičie

A farm focused on breeding, riding and working with horses. Located in the protected area of Sokol. In addition you can also find goats, sheep, rabbits, hens, ducks, geese, turkeys and guinea fowl.



Traditional events

Humenné musical spring

A regular festival of classical and chamber music, **May**

Humenné fair

An urban fair with a more than 25 year tradition, **August**

Švejk beer days

A beer festival with tastings of samples from small breweries and a rich cultural-musical programme, **April/May**



V R A N O V N A D T O P Ľ O U

The town that experienced the marriage of Countess Báthory

There is no doubt about the origin of the town's name, as 'vranov' is a derivative of the word crow. Whether this name is a play on words or there was once a large number of crows in the area, neither historians or linguists know. Not to be mistaken by towns of the same name in neighbouring countries, the modifier 'nad Topľou', literally over Topľa (the river running by the town), was added in 1927.

According to archaeological findings, the area where the town now sits has been inhabited since the Stone Age. And not only by humans, but also by prehistoric animals, which is evidenced by the discovery of a Mammoth tooth. The oldest written record of Vranov is in a deed from Hungarian King Štefan V from 1920. The document implies that the King gave the town to the aristocrat Rajnold, the administrator of the royal horse keepers, out of gratitude for his selfless service and bravery in battle. Along with the town of Vranov, Rajnold also gained dominion of Čičava and the area of what is now the village of Vranovské Dlhé. The importance of Vranov increased, especially during the first decades of the 16th century, mainly due to its geographical location on the commercial route to

Poland. This route brought Vranov the privilege of 'the thirties', which allowed the town to take a thirtieth of the value of any goods from foreign merchants. The town and nearby manors in time came under the ownership of the Báthory family, who had the reputation of being cruel feudal lords. Of all the cruelties that sent the residents of Vranov running to neighbouring territories, the worst were performed by Countess Elisabeth Báthory, who in 1575, said her 'I do' to the tycoon František Nádašy. Immediately after she received Čičava Castle as her dowry, she began practicing her bloody occultist ceremonies with young girls. Vranov, like any place, has been through good and bad times, and its former appearance suggests that it was rather an agricultural town and remained almost untouched by industrialisation. The picturesque scenery of the area creates ideal conditions for tourism, and rural tourism in particular. This is supported by the development of several agrotourism and horse breeding facilities. The Vranov water sprites are popular across the whole of Slovakia and have for several years enjoyed the privilege of locking and unlocking the Veľká Domaša waters. In this way they have made an agreement with visitors that they will watch over their safe bathing and not attempt to take their souls.



What to see

Basilica of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary

GPS N 48°89'20.35" E 21°68'05.74"

The church from 1580, later elevated to a Basilica Minor, was built in a late-Gothic style, but underwent a Baroque reconstruction of the interior in the 18th century. Within the building, visitors can find frescoes by famous Czech Baroque painter, Jan Lukáš Kracker. The main altar, side altars and pulpit are the work of Košice carver, Joseph Hartman, and are testament to the high artistic value of eastern Slovak carving. A rare Rococo liturgical collection including a monstrance, chalice, ciborium and cross, was made by the prominent Slovak Baroque goldsmith Ján Szilassy, and is classified as a national cultural monument.

The Baroque sculptures of St John of Nepomuk and the Virgin Mary with a young Jesus

GPS N 48°88'26.08" E 21°69'84.05"

Located in the Roman Catholic church of St Francis of Assisi in the southern part of the town, the sandstone sculptures were made in 1770 and form a group. The group depicts a kneeling saint in an ample folded robe with a palm leaf in his left hand and a headdress in his right. The figure of the Virgin Mary is wearing a folded dress and holds a small Jesus at her knees. All of the figures seemingly float on clouds. Since 1986, the group has been classified as a national cultural monument.



Former Pavlin Monastery

The Monastery, built in 1672, stands on the site of a former Franciscan monastery from the 15th century and is located on Liberty Square. Pavlin monks came to the monastery at the invitation of Countess Mária Esterházy, who initiated its construction. Of particular interest to visitors is a portal that was discovered during renovations carried out in 1718 after the monastery was damaged by fire. There is also a preserved Rococo arch fresco by Czech Baroque painter Jan Lukáš Kracker from 1756, which depicts the scene of the Ascension of Prophet Elijah.

Jewish cemetery

GPS N 48°88'68.00" E 21°69'35.13"

The cemetery, dating from the 18th century, is located in the southern part of the town behind the hospital and clinic and near a forest. There are two access gates. At one time there was a mortuary in the left lower area, from which the back and side walls are preserved and act as part of the cemetery boundary. The oldest tombstones in the cemetery are from the 1760s to 1790s. Most of the monuments have shields decorated with various symbols, for example an image

of a lion, deer, broken tree, candle or broken feather, that represent a tragic death or an image of an open book to represent knowledge and blessing. The most beautiful tombstone, made of Swedish granite, belongs to Sára Šindel, Rabbi Jozef's mother. The newest tombstone dates from 1948. Since 1963, the cemetery has been a national cultural monument. In 2002, a memorial plaque showing the names of the 1700 Jewish inhabitants of Vranov nad Topľou who died in concentration camps during WWII, was added.

An ancient bell from the 17th century newly set

Since 2005, a belfry with a replica of an old bell has been located in the Vranovské Dlhé area of the town, on Dlhá Street in the direction of Humenné. Vranovské Dlhé was for a long time independent

of the main town and is probably older. During WWI, the original bell was seized and melted down for military purposes. Now, the reconstructed belfry houses a new bell, made according to historical documents, to be like the original.



is dedicated to an exhibit called 'the spirit of a nation', which consists of a collection of everyday objects. Established in 2014, there is new and highly interesting exhibit located within the manor park that enables visitors to see the way of life in the area in the early Middle Ages. There is also an open-air museum where it is possible to see five archaeological buildings from a particular time period, within which visitors can see household equipment and clothing that correspond to historical facts.

www.muzeumhanusovce.sk

Hanušovce nad Topľou history and geography museum and archaeological open-air museum **GPS N 49°01'34" E 21°29'56"**

The museum is located on the premises of a Classical manor with extensive parkland, built in the first half of the 18th century. There are several permanent exhibitions including one called 'the natural conditions of the Vranov region', which presents the flora and fauna of the area throughout various geological periods. Another part, called 'the history of Vranov', maps the history of the area from the time of the settlement's origin until the end of WWII. Visitors can also find three period furnished rooms that illustrate the way of life of aristocrats and wealthy townsfolk. The fourth hall of the manor, located in a former work building,

The tajch forest trail, Pavlovce

GPS N 49°03'22.78" E 21°27'24.02"

This educational trail, with two routes, was created in the forests surrounding the village of Pavlovce in 2008. The first route focuses on the forest and its functions and acquaints visitors with the genetic merit of seed resources and approached the issues of forest maintenance and activity. The second route includes an exhibition that clearly documents individual forest categories, protected areas and stones. There are also working water ponds and visitors can find information about the history of the area and the nearby stone quarry.

Where to go

Hanušovce viaduct

GPS N 49°01'24" E 21°29'50"

The longest arched bridge in Central Europe, the viaduct is 389.8 m long and its highest pillar is 28 m tall. It is located near Hanušovce nad Topľou in the district of Vranov nad Topľou. Dating from 1943, it was almost completely destroyed during WWII, but has since undergone extensive reconstruction. It is now the rail link between the towns of Kapušany and Vranov nad Topľou.





Čičava Castle

GPS N 48°54'51.75" E 21°44'18.20"

The now ruined castle, dating from the 14th century, was built on the ridge of the Ondava highlands above the village of Sedliská. It was a fortress built to protect the Polish gate and the highly populated territory where as many as 60 villages were located. In the 16th century, the castle acted as an archive for the Zemplín area. In 1527, the castle was destroyed by fire but soon rebuilt. Later, it came under the administration of the

Drughet family, who also contributed to its rise. For a short time the castle passed to the hands of Imrich Thököly, but in 1704 was seized by the troops of Francis Rákóczi II, who oversaw it until 1711 when Imperial General Laucken had it demolished. Although Čičava Castle is



only a ruin today, enormous treasures are hidden within its remains according to legend. It is also said that the notaries kept a Book of Lies and Liars into which they recorded all kinds of possible and impossible fraudulences and lies they encountered. It is rumoured that when somebody is caught lying around Čičava people say to them: "This should also be noted in the Čičava Book!".



Blood wedding

When beautiful Elizabeth Báthory said her "I do" to the tycoon František Nádašy on May 8th 1575 in Vranov, she was given as her dowry a nearby castle called Čičava that had belonged to her family since the 14th century. It was that castle where a grandiose and flamboyant wedding feast took place and at which allegedly more than 4500 guests attended. The castle stood on a 319 m tall, steep rock in a pass called the Polish gate, a guarded trade route. Surrounded by picturesque countryside and at the same time out of people's stern sight, it became Elizabeth's favourite residence and as later surfaced, probably also a torture chamber. A rumour about her taste for torturing young girls and hair-raising stories about how she was without fear and shame bathing in their blood to maintain eternal youth were spreading in the country, stories that also reached

Čičava. It was on that day when the floor of the local church caved in during service, uncovering many bones in the secret corridors connecting the church with the castle. From that moment nobody had any doubts that Elizabeth was enjoying bloody pleasures in her residence in Čičava. Elizabeth Báthory (*7.8.1560 –†21.8.1614) was a Hungarian countess and the most famous mass murderer in the history of Slovakia and the Kingdom of Hungary. Legend says she exercised sadistic practises where she was bathing in the blood of young female servants. She was said to burn the girls with candles, red-hot iron, prick them with skewers and pour cold water on them in freezing weather. Numerous complaints led to her arrest in 1610. Because she was from a very respected aristocratic family, the only punishment bestowed on her by the court was house arrest at Čachtice Castle, where she remained until her death.



Sport & relaxation

Summer swimming pool, Vranov nad Topľou

A 50 m swimming pool, two children's pools and full services for comfortable relaxation. Located directly in the town.

Slaňák climbing wall, Vranov nad Topľou

The district town of Vranov nad Topľou has benefitted from its own climbing wall since 2013. The wall is 7 m high and 8 m wide, has an area of 60 m², 250 grips and 4 climbing lines and is suitable for climbers of various levels. It is located within the leisure centre premises.

www.slanak.sk

Veľká Domaša

A water reservoir with recreation area that offers many opportunities for relaxation and water sports.

www.domasacity.sk

Breziny Ranch, Pavlovce

A small ranch at the foot of Slanské Vrchy hills close to the district town of Vranov nad Topľou offers rider training courses, countryside trips with a guide, and riding in a circle for the children. As well as horses you will find at the ranch beautiful Czechoslovak shepherd dogs, Ria the dachshund, sheep, a cat, rabbits, cockatiels, guinea pigs, degus, ducks, pigeons, chickens and turkeys.

www.ranctbreziny.wbl.sk



Sahiba Ranch, Komárany

A ranch near the district town Vranov nad Topľou offers riding courses with an instructor, trips to the countryside as well as horse riding for beginners and more advanced riders, all in accordance with the principles of horsemanship, which respects horses' natural upbringing.

www.western.wbl.sk

Traditional events

Vranov choir celebrations

An international show of community singing, **June**

Ascent to 101 castles and manors

A sport-hiking event connected to the ascent to Čičava Castle, **October**

Traditional fair

An urban fair with the participation of craftsmen and a varied supplementary programme, **August**

Key opening of the Veľká Domaša reservoir

The festive opening of the summer season with the participation of water sprites and other fairy-tale creatures, **May**

The Domaša goulash championship

A competition open to all amateur cooks, who fight to prepare the tastiest goulash and be awarded the 'golden spoon', **July/August**





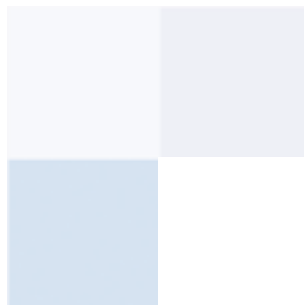
EURÓPSKA ÚNIA



regionálny
operačný
program



PREŠOVSKÝ
SAMOSPRÁVNÝ
KRAJ



European Regional Development Fund “An Investment into your Future”

Collection of systematic informational and promotional materials about PSK (Prešov Self-Governing Region)

The project is co-financed with the resources from the European Union, Regional Operational Program, Priority 3 The reinforcement of the cultural potential of the regions and the infrastructure of tourism, Provision 3.2 The support and development of tourism infrastructure – non-investment activities in tourism.