

SLOVAKIA

UNESCO World Heritage



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Slovak Republic



Total Area: 49 034 km²

Population: 5 416 727

Capital: Bratislava (417 389 inhabitants)



Geography

Slovakia is a country situated in the heart of Europe. The geographical centre of Europe is in fact the Church of St John in Kremnické Bane, a village in central Slovakia. Measuring 49 000 square kilometres and with a population of slightly less than 5.5 million, Slovakia is not a large country. It is only slightly larger than Denmark, Switzerland or the Netherlands. It takes a mere half hour to fly over Slovakia.

Slovakia occupies an area between Poland in the north and Hungary in the south. Its western neighbours are the Czech Republic and Austria, while Ukraine lies on its eastern border (this is the shortest border, only 96 kilometres long). Slovakia has no access to the sea. The nearest sea is the Adriatic in the south (361 km away). Slovaks wishing to bathe in the Baltic Sea have to fly some 440 kilometres north of the border.



UNESCO World Heritage and Slovakia

In 1972 the protection and preservation for some invaluable parts of the cultural and natural heritage for the progress and development of mankind became a matter of a global concern. The question of how the existing heritage in one country can become the heritage of the entire world has been finally answered by the adoption of an international document by a single world organization involved with questions of culture and cultural heritage,

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The deputies of the UNESCO General Conference in Paris adopted the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* in autumn of 1972. Since then, 186 countries have ratified the convention as to what classifies it as the most widespread international legal instruments.



Based on the Convention, the list of the most important unique monuments in the world value began in 1975. In total, 890 such monuments have been inscribed into the List of the World Heritage and this number increases annually. The inscribed locations include 689 cultural, 176 natural and 25 sites with mixed properties from 148 countries. They are the best representatives of their kind and unique to the world as verified and confirmed by the World Heritage Committee. They represent enormous wealth and incredible diversity of cultural and natural heritage on the globe.

The Slovak Republic ratified this convention on November 15, 1990.

Slovak UNESCO Cultural Monuments



Three localities from Slovakia were inscribed to the UNESCO List of cultural monuments in 1993: The Castle of Spiš and its environs, Banská Štiavnica and Vlkolínec. In 2000, the historic town of Bardejov was added and in 2008, wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area were entered in the List.

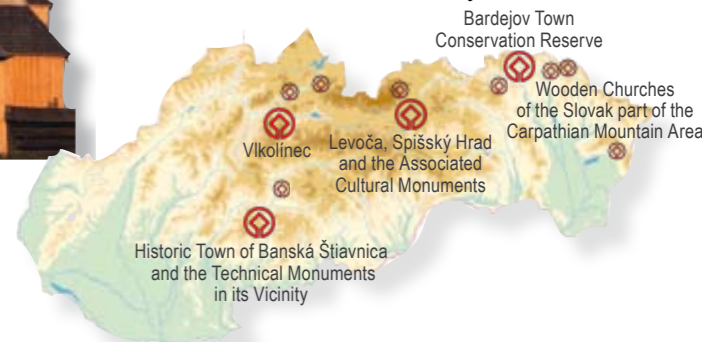
The Castle of Spiš is the largest medieval castle compound in central Europe along with the little town of Spišské Podhradie (with typical Renaissance and Baroque burgher houses), the church town of Spišská Kapitula (including several sacral monuments and above all the impressive two-tower cathedral of St Martin) and the Gothic church of the Holy Spirit in Žehra from the 14th century and frescoes in its interior from the 14th and 15th centuries. Well conserved monuments along with the charm-



ing natural setting of the travertine territory of the National Nature Reserve Drevenik forms a unique whole. In June 2009, the historic town of Levoča was included in this group of Spiš monuments.

Banská Štiavnica is a Town Monument Reserve which demonstrates the mining tradition in Slovakia. Vlkolínec represents a reserve of traditional folk architecture and Bardejov is considered to be the most Gothic town in Slovakia.

Wooden churches of the Slovak part of the Carpathian Mountain area possess an extraordinary worldwide value, too. The churches include: Roman Catholic churches in Hervartov and Tvrdošín, Evangelical articular churches in Kežmarok, Leštiny and Hronsek, and churches of Eastern rite in Bodružal, Ladamirová and Ruská Bystrá.



Vlkolínec

Biely Potok is the salient point for the community of Vlkolínec, a Monument Reserve of Folk Architecture. This extraordinary and remarkable oasis of folk architecture was included in the List of the World Cultural and Nature Heritage of UNESCO in 1993.



the community divides into a street leading to the Baroque-Classical Roman-Catholic Church of the Virgin Mary's Visitation of 1875 and a street heading along a steeper terrain to the foothills of the Sidorovo Mountain (1,099 m).



The community was first referred to in 1376. Its unique compound of original folk buildings remained untouched by modern construction. Based on a comparative study from ICOMOS (International Council for Monuments and Settlements) it was classified as the best-preserved settlement of this time within the Carpathian Arch. Originally, it was the settlement of loggers, shepherds and farmers. Vlkolínec is a typical example of a two-line street pattern with long yards. In its centre,



At the division of the streets the two most frequently photographed objects stand – a log two-storey belfry from 1770 on a stone pedestal and a log well from 1860. The protected buildings in the community include 45 log houses with farmyards from the 16th to 19th century. An interesting fact is that they were painted in blue, rose and white paints twice a year.



A typical example of a house in Vlkolínec is the farmers' house – a detached outdoor part of the expositions of the Liptov Museum. The house was built in 1886 and opened to the public in 1991. Its well-preserved original interior and furniture provide a true picture of the way of life of its ancient inhabitants from the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th. The remaining protected objects in the Monument Reserve are still inhabited and its population amounts to 35. This is the reason why visitors can see only the exterior of houses.

Vlkolínec is included in the National Park of Veľká Fatra. A cyclist route crosses it and owners of several private houses offer accommodation. An interesting folk event called "Sunday in Vlkolínec" is organised every summer at the beginning of August.



Historic Town of Banská Štiavnica and the Technical Monuments in its Vicinity

Banská Štiavnica lies amid the forests of the Štiavnické vrchy Mts. and is included in the List of the World Cultural Heritage of UNESCO.

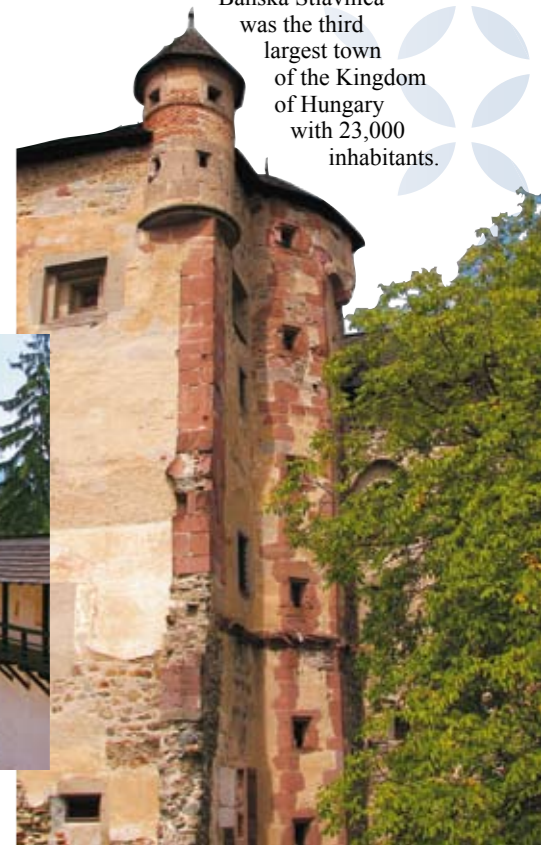
The former mining town Banská Štiavnica (population 10,500) has slowly acquired a reconstructed look. Banská Štiavnica today is given special attention and it has become the main Slovak centre of the environmental research and schooling. Students

brought life back to the town and they are the organisers of “Salamander Days” every September with attractive cultural and artistic events including the night march through the town. The symbol of the event is the spotted little lizard, which, as local legend says, showed the miners the place where the deposits of silver and gold ore were.



It was promoted to the Banská akadémia (Mining Academy) in 1762, the first superior mining school in Europe. In 1846 it joined the Forest Academy founded in 1808 to form one common entity. Prosperity and fame returned to the town for some time and by the end of the 18th century

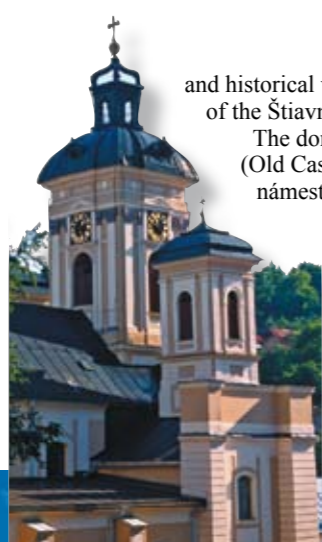
Banská Štiavnica was the third largest town of the Kingdom of Hungary with 23,000 inhabitants.



Extraction of precious metals in the part of the Štiavnické vrchy Mts. enjoys a very long history. The area was first mentioned in a document from 1156 as *Terra Banensium* or the Land of Miners. Silver ore prevailed among the mined metals and the town won the attribute of “silver”.

Banská Štiavnica progressively became the biggest mining centre in the Monarchy in the 18th century. In the period between 1790 and 1863 the mountains surrounding the town yielded 490 metric tons of silver and 11 tons of gold. Mining schools and science also flourished in the town: the oldest mining school in the Kingdom of Hungary was founded in 1735.





and historical value, which is set amongst the wonderful environment of the Štiavnické vrchy Mts.

The dominant feature of the town centre is Starý zámok (Old Castle) standing on the terrain terrace west of the Trojičné námestie Square. The oldest part of the castle is the former parish Church of the Virgin Mary. It was built together with the adjacent ossuary of St. Michael in the 13th century as a three-nave Romanesque basilica. Today the Old Castle houses a museum. Collections of pipes and targets are especially interesting exhibits. On the opposite hill Nový zámok (New Castle) has stood since 1571. It also contains collections of the Slovak Mining Museum, documents concerning the counter-Turkish wars in Slovakia and provides a fine view of the town.



But the development of the town reached a standstill at the end of the 19th century with the decline of the mining industry. This trend also continued in the 20th century. The last pit was closed in the Štiavnické vrchy Mts. in 2001.

The buildings in the historic centre are the parts of the Town Monument Reserve. The Reserve comprises as much as 360 structures. Together they represent the unique set of high cultural



The majority of monuments of Banská Štiavnica are concentrated into the area between the Trojičné and Radničné námestie Squares. Both squares are separated from each other by the Gothic Church of St Catherine from the end of the 15th century and the building of town hall with its slender clock tower.

In the centre of the Trojičné námestie Square skirted by old burgher houses and public buildings, the wonderful Trinity Pillar stands. The biggest building standing on the Trojičné námestie Square is the Hal-

lenbach House, where the mining court yard is located. Another bulky building stands on the Kammerhofská ulica Street, which runs from the town centre to the bus station. It is the Kammerhof building or Chamber Yard which originated in 1550 by the adaptation of several Gothic houses. Today it is the principal building of the Slovak Mining Museum. Its most attractive part is the open-air museum which offers the possibility to descend to one of its pits.

The cone-shaped hill Kalvária (Calvary) is the impressive dominant feature of the eastern part of Banská Štiavnica. Apart from a beautiful view of the town, it also offers a complete set of Baroque sacral monuments.



Levoča, Spišský Hrad and the Associated Cultural Monuments



Spiš Castle towers in the eastern horizon of Spišské Podhradie. As a National Cultural Monument, Spiš Castle with its area of more than four hectares, and partially in ruins, is one of the largest castle compounds in Central Europe. Spiš Castle was included in the UNESCO List of monuments belonging to the world cultural heritage in 1993.

Construction of the medieval castle on a travertine hill dates back to the beginning of the 12th century. The oldest written reference to the castle is from 1120. At the beginning it was a boundary fort placed at the northern frontier of an early feudal Kingdom of Hungary. Afterwards, it became the seat of the head of the Spiš region for many centuries.

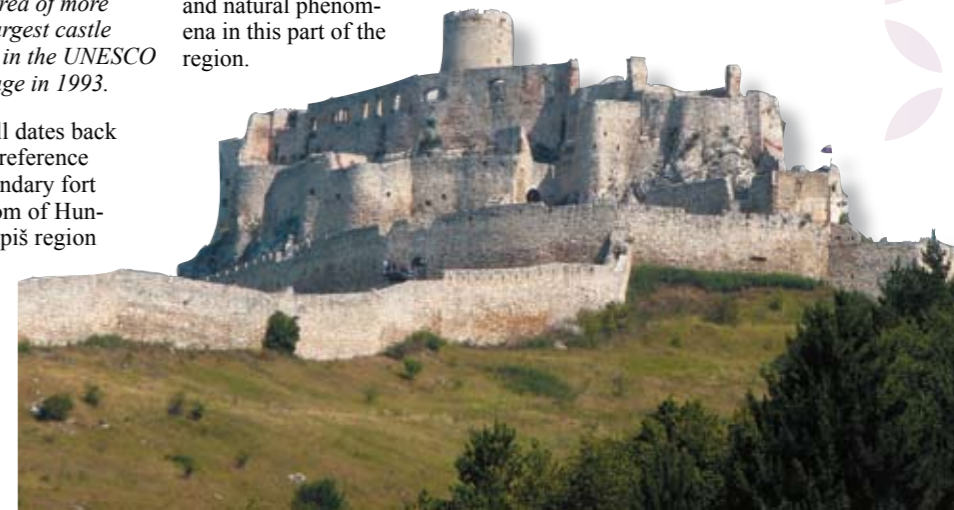
In the second half of the 15th century, the reconstruction of the castle fell upon its new owner Štefan Zápoľský whose intention was to remake it into a stately aristocratic residence. He made a palace, a knight's hall and chapel of St Elisabeth in the castle. His son John, later king of Hungary, was born at the castle.

The last building works at the upper castle were made under the orders of the Thurzos' and the Csákys'.

In 1780 the castle compound was destroyed by fire and the proud Spiš Castle gradually fell into ruins. The total decay of the castle was prevented only through the intervention of conservationists who in 1970 got down to the difficult job of preserving the walls and palaces threatened by the instability of its rocky base.

At present, there are the collections of the Spišské múzeum placed in the castle, which document its history, along with medieval arms and feudal jurisdiction.

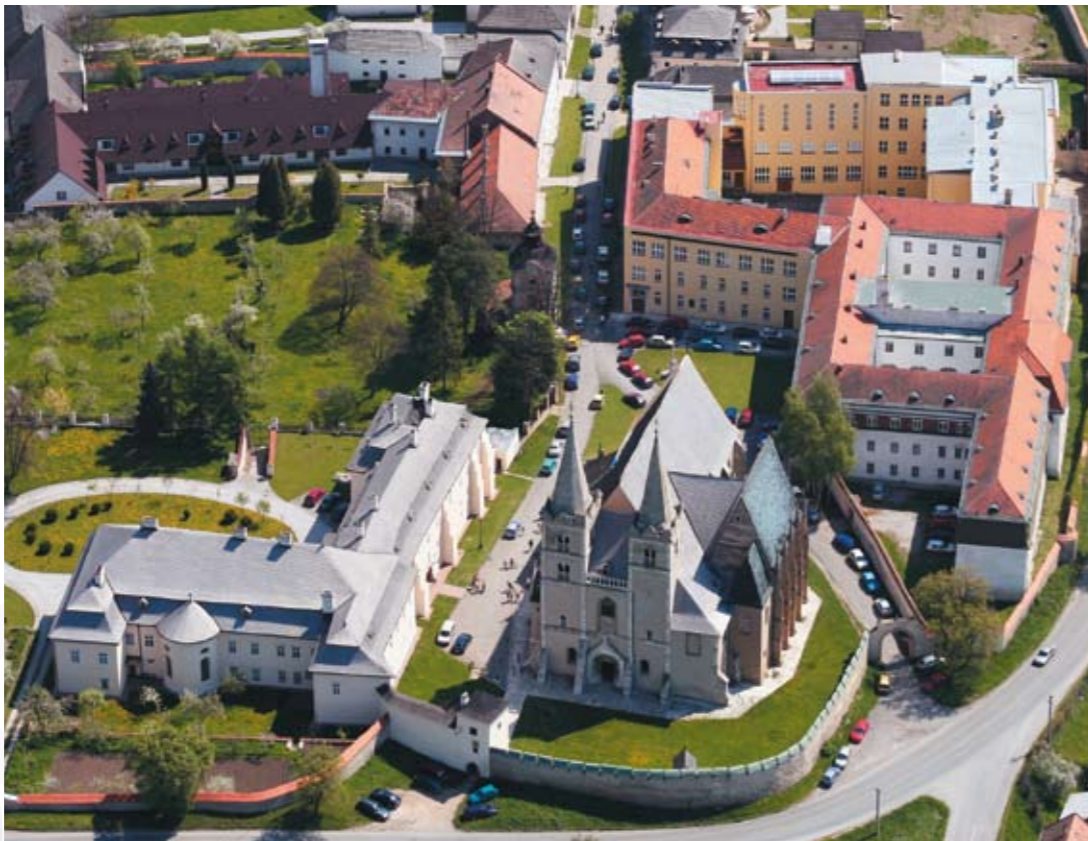
The landscape around the village of Spišské Podhradie can be seen comfortably by using the instructive footpath Sivá Brada – Dreveník, which has eight information boards along its route which guide the visitor through the travertine hills and natural phenomena in this part of the region.



Spišská Kapitula

The ecclesiastic town Spišská Kapitula is sometimes also referred to as the “Slovak Vatican”. Life in Spišská Kapitula (The Chapter of Spiš) was organised by bishops, provosts, and canonists.

The most important building of Spišská Kapitula is the Late-Romanesque St Martin's Cathedral. It acquired its massive form of a three-nave building with two towers in the years



1245-1275. In 1382, a Corpus Christi chapel was added to it, though it was replaced by the contemporary one in the years 1488-1493. This chapel of the Zápoľský family resembles the French chapel of Saint Chapelle. Baroque traits were erased by reconstruction in the years 1873-1889 in an attempt to give it a medieval character in line with the taste of the period of Romanticism.

The Bishop's Palace was built together with the cathedral as a provost's palace. In the past, there used to be a French park around the palace and its entrance was next to the Hodiňová veža (the clock tower) from 1739.

In the eastern part of Spišská Kapitula on narrow Gothic plots, the chapters of the canonists are accessible only by one narrow lane. The fortification of this ecclesiastical town, with two entrance gates, was built in the 14th century and has been rebuilt several times. Spišská Kapitula is administered by the community Spišské Podhradie.

The community of Žehra is known for its precious local Roman-Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit included in the list of National Cultural Monuments. A simple single-nave building with a square presbytery has kept its original early-Gothic form until the present time. The interior of the ancient church contains unique Medieval wall paintings originating in different stages from the second half of the 13th century to the end of the 15th. The church paintings in Žehra are remarkable for their artistic quality and unusual thematic diversity. They depict various Biblical stories and legends of the saints. The main altar is early-Baroque dated 1656.



Žehra

Levoča

The city of Levoča (population 14,900) is often considered the brightest jewel in the crown of Spiš. There is the tallest Gothic wooden altar in the world and other interesting monuments enclosed within the town walls.



The focus of ancient Levoča is the large Námestie Majstra Pavla Square. In its centre stands the Roman Catholic Church of St Jakub from 14th century. It is one of the most important sacral buildings in Slovakia. The tall, slender tower of St Jakub from the first half of the 19th century is the most distinct feature in town's silhouette.

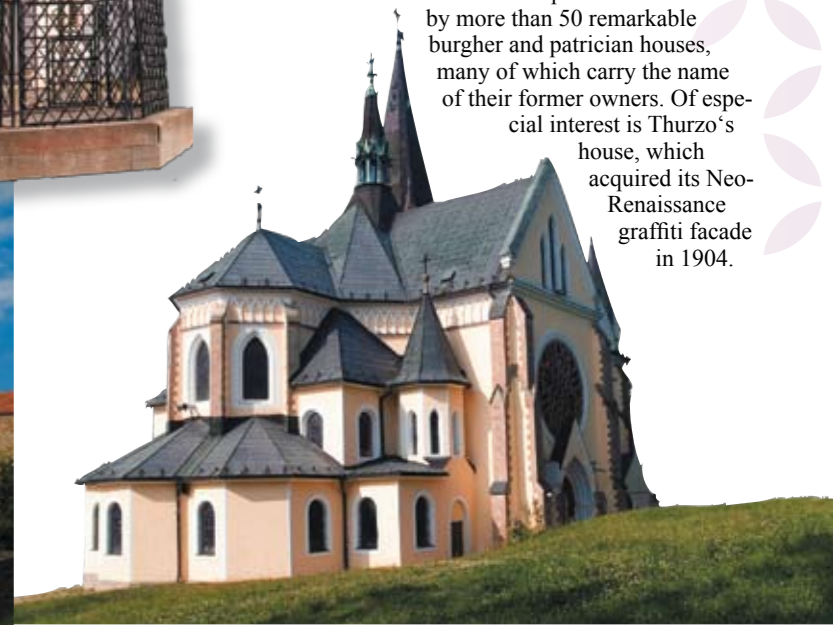


The interior of the church is especially precious, which is in fact a unique museum of medieval sacral art. The 18,6 m tall, late-Gothic main altar of St Jakub is the tallest of its kind in the world. Made of lime wood in 1507-1517 in the workshop of Maestro Pavol of Levoča, it is of extraordinary artistic value, whilst the board paintings are attributed to the painter Hans.

The church neighbours the arcaded building of the former town hall built after the fire in 1550. It is one of the finest buildings of secular Renaissance architecture in Slovakia.

The cage of opprobrium on the square is from the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries and was used in the past for the public humiliation of petty criminals.

The central square is skirted by more than 50 remarkable burgher and patrician houses, many of which carry the name of their former owners. Of especial interest is Thurzo's house, which acquired its Neo-Renaissance graffiti facade in 1904.



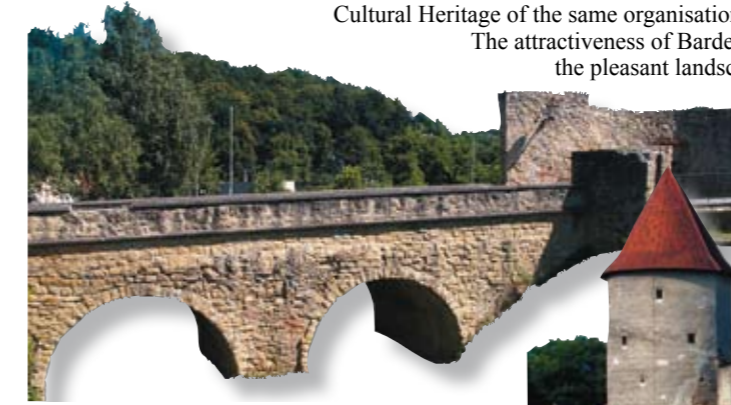


Bardejov Town Conservation Reserve

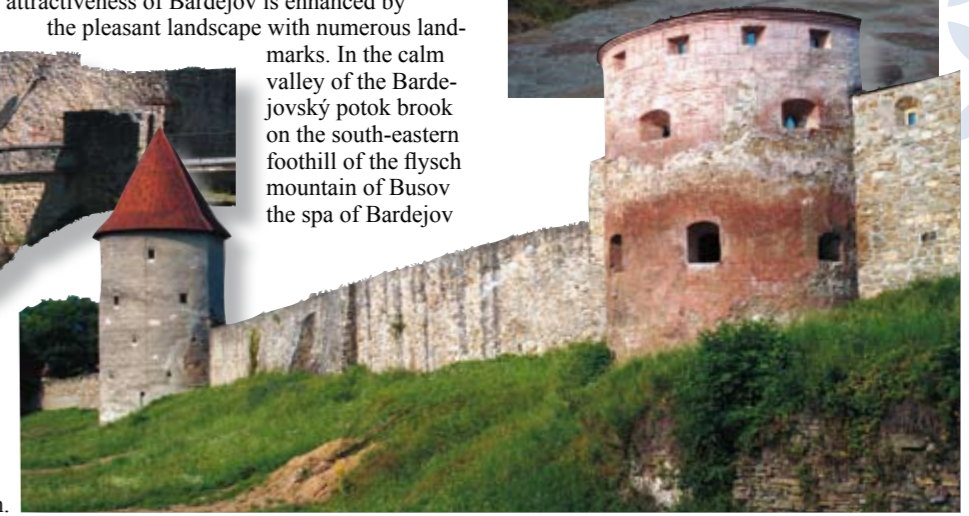
Another Slovak town inscribed in the List of the World Cultural Heritage is Bardejov, one of the oldest towns in Slovakia.

The ancient town of Bardejov (population 33,400) is undoubtedly among the most beautiful towns in Slovakia. It was rightly awarded the European award, the gold medal of ICOMOS Foundation of UNESCO in 1986, and it was inscribed into the List of the World Cultural Heritage of the same organisation in 2001.

The attractiveness of Bardejov is enhanced by the pleasant landscape with numerous landmarks. In the calm valley of the Bardejovský potok on the south-eastern foothill of the flysch mountain of Busov the spa of Bardejov



is located. The town administers it. The Múzeum ľudovej architektúry (The Museum of Popular Architecture) is situated on the edge of the spa, it concentrates 28 folk buildings gathered in the upper part of the Šariš and north of Zemplín.





The town was referred to in the Ipatievsky annals in 1241 as the market settlement of *Bardouev*. Another, document six years prior, mentions that the Cistercian monastery was in the territory of *Bardha*. The arrival of German colonists after the Tartar invasion gave impetus to the development of a prosperous and flourishing town. Royal privileges, and above all the decision of Louis I of 1376 to promote Bardejov to free royal borough accelerated its further development.

Bardejov lived its best times in the 15th century. The driving force of its prosperity was trade and crafts, which classified it among the most important towns of the Kingdom of Hungary. The town opened itself to modern ideas in the field of culture and education



in the 16th century imported from Germany by the representatives of the Renaissance and Reformation.

The buildings in the historic centre are parts of the Town Monument Reserve. Bardejov is spoken of as the “most Gothic town in Slovakia”. Its centre consists of a set of historical buildings arranged in the area of the pear-shaped ground plan limited by an almost continuous belt of town fortifications. The principal area of the historical core is the rectangular Radničné námestie Square skirted by rows of antique burgher houses with typical gable facades.



In the centre of the square is the building of the former town hall from the 16th century. The interior of the town hall contains the most valuable exhibits of the Šarišské múzeum (Museum of Šariš). More expositions of this museum are exhibited in the Gothic burgher house Gantzuhof with the Renaissance arcade, which stands in the south-western corner of the square.

The most important monument in the square is the parish Church of St Egidius standing in its northern part. Its construction started at the beginning of the 15th century.

It was conceived as a majestic Gothic basilica with three naves. In the set of eleven late-Gothic



wing altars built in the period between 1460 and 1520, the side altar of the Nativity of the Lord, attributed to the circle of artists around the Krakow workshop of W. Stwosz is considered the most valuable.

The top of the new-Gothic church tower offers a unique view of the town. The Franciscan monastery with the church was built in the Gothic style in the in mid-17th century.

The monastery stands near the town walls, the best preserved medieval fortification system in Slovakia. Apart from the stone walls, two gates and four bastions survive here.



Wooden Churches

of the Slovak part of the Carpathian Mountain Area

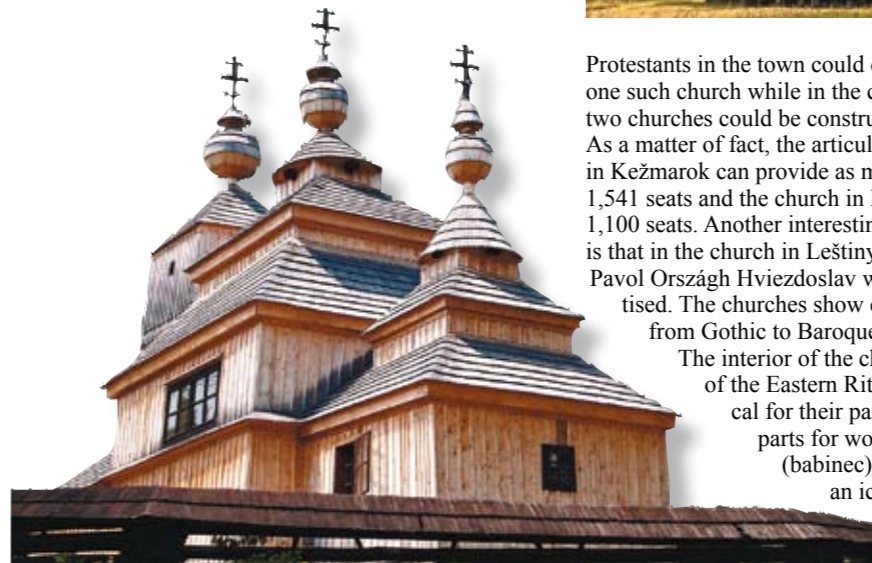
In 2008, the World Heritage Committee approved the inscription of the complex of eight wooden churches in the Slovak part of the Carpathians into the UNESCO List of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.



This concerns the following churches:

- The Roman Catholic Church of All Saints in Tvrdošín from the 15th century
- The Roman Catholic Church of Saint Francis of Assisi in Hervartov from the 16th century
- The Evangelical (articular) Church in Kežmarok from between the 17th and 18th centuries
- The Evangelical (articular) Church with a bell tower in Hronsek from the 18th century
- The Evangelical (articular) Church in Leštiny from the 17th century
- The Greek Catholic Church of St Nicolas in Bodružal from 1658
- The Greek Catholic Church of St Michael the Archangel in Ladomírová from 1742
- The Greek Catholic Church of St Nicolas in Ruská Bystrá from 1730

All of the above-mentioned wooden churches are unique and their characteristic features are their original historical construction, the authentic artistic and craft elements, their rich artistic decoration, well-preserved original interior equipment as well as the natural surroundings, including historical verdure. The area of the churches takes up a total of 2.56 hectares and the conservation area covers 90.41 hectares. One of the facts that make the Evangelical wooden churches so interesting is that according to an article of the law (artikula), they had to be built without using any metal elements, within one year and without an entrance from the street.



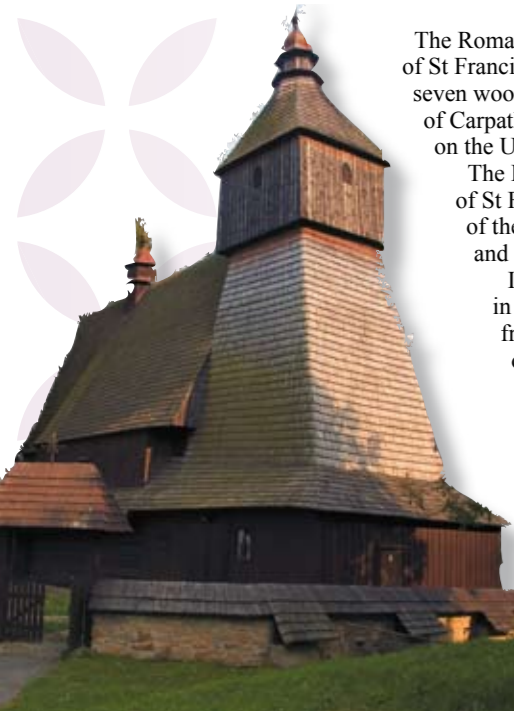
Protestants in the town could only build one such church while in the counties two churches could be constructed. As a matter of fact, the articular church in Kežmarok can provide as many 1,541 seats and the church in Hronsek 1,100 seats. Another interesting fact is that in the church in Leštiny, poet Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav was baptised. The churches show elements from Gothic to Baroque.

The interior of the churches of the Eastern Rite are typical for their particular parts for women (babinec) and an iconostas.



Roman Catholic Churches

Hervartov



The Roman Catholic wooden Church of St Francis of Assisi. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, it was included on the UNESCO's Word Heritage List.

The Roman Catholic wooden Church of St Francis of Assisi was built by the end of the 15th century (probably between 1499 and 1500).

It is the oldest and best preserved wooden church in Slovakia. The Gothic portraits and wall paintings from 1655 and 1805 are the most valuable parts of its interior.



Tvrdošín

The pride of Tvrdošín and its oldest preserved building is the Gothic wooden Roman Catholic All Saints Church situated in the local cemetery. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, it was included on the UNESCO's Word Heritage List.

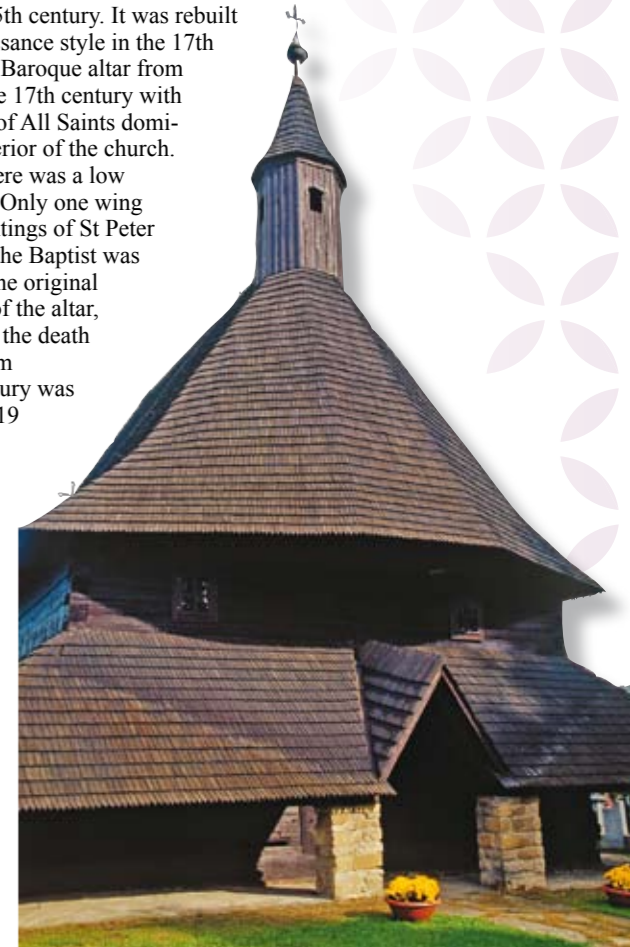


Its origins date back to the second half of the 15th century. It was rebuilt in the Renaissance style in the 17th century. The Baroque altar from the end of the 17th century with the painting of All Saints dominates the interior of the church. Formerly, there was a low Gothic altar. Only one wing with the paintings of St Peter and St John the Baptist was preserved. The original central part of the altar, a painting of the death of Christ from the 15th century was moved in 1919

to a museum in Budapest. The interior of the church was finished in the mid-17th century.

When viewing the church, the paintings of the Apostles, the late Renaissance pulpit with figures of the Evangelists from 1654, and a painting of St George mounted on a horse fighting a dragon (a distemper painting on wood from 1653) will especially draw the attention of any visitor. The wonderful dome paintings (a sky with stars, angels and a panelled ceiling) complement the Gothic mysticism of space.

Highly artistic and expert reconstruction and restoration of the church was awarded a prize by EUROPA NOSTRA in 1993, and the church itself, as the National Cultural Monument, was included in the list of European cultural heritage.



Evangelical Articular Churches

Kežmarok

One of the best preserved Slovak wooden sacral buildings is the articular Evangelical church in Kežmarok. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, it was included on the UNESCO's Word Heritage List.

The Evangelical church was built in 1717 next to an older sacral stone building from 1593, which today is a sacristy. This unique wooden building made of yew and red spruce wood was built without using a single metal component and its ground plan is in the form of a Greek cross.



The Baroque interior of the church is also made of wood. The church organ with wooden pipes is of immense artistic value.



Leštiny



The wooden articular Evangelical church. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, it was included on the UNESCO's Word Heritage List.

The most important monument in Leštiny is the wooden articular Evangelical church of 1688 with a wooden belfry. The lavishly painted interior decoration of the church is from the 17th and 18th centuries.

Visitors are especially attracted to the main altar from the beginning of the 18th century, church pews with coats of arms, the Renaissance baptistery of the 17th century, a copy of the burial flag of J. Zmeškal, and an epitaph of M. Meško from 1753.



The wooden articular Evangelical church. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part

Hronsek

The wooden articular church. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, it was included on the UNESCO's Word Heritage List.



The wooden articular church from 1726 is set in a wonderful environment of large lime trees. There are 1,100 seats in this church. Its organ was fitted in 1764. Four bulky lime trees stand in its yard. A fine wooden belfry from 1726 stands nearby.

The member of the Štúr's literary group, poet Andrej Sládkovič, married the local girl Júlia Senkovičová in this church.



Churches of Eastern Rite

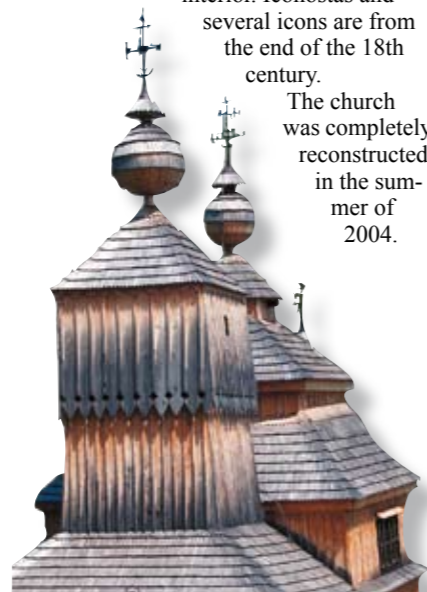
Bodružal

The Greek Catholic wooden Church of St Nicolas. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, it was included in the UNESCO's World Heritage List.



The Greek Catholic wooden Church of St Nicolas from 1658. The log building consists of three parts. Its shingled roof is dissected and has three little towers.

The area of the church has a log fence with shingled tops. Remains of wall paintings from the 18th century survive in its interior. Iconostas and several icons are from the end of the 18th century.

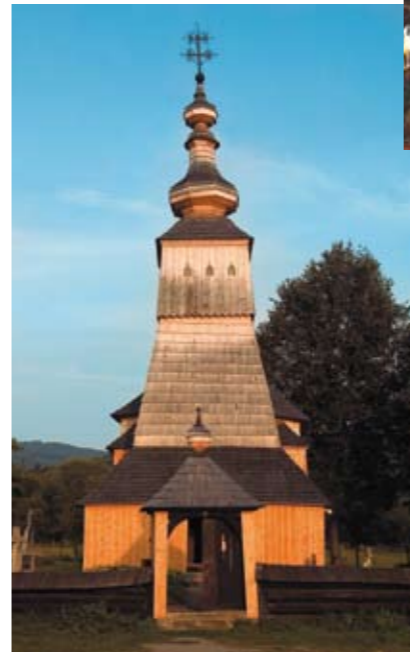


The church was completely reconstructed in the summer of 2004.



Ladomírová

The Greek Catholic wooden Church of St Michael the Archangel. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, it was included in the UNESCO's World Heritage List.



The Greek Catholic wooden Church of St Michael the Archangel was built in 1742 without a single metal nail. An independent belfry with column construction stands by the church. The area, part of which is a cemetery, has a log fence.

Valuable iconostas and an altar are from the mid-18th century. It is a five-row wooden structure filled with icons, part of which were destroyed in the Second World War.

Ruská Bystrá

The Greek Catholic wooden Church of St Nicolas the Bishop. In 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, it was included in the UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The Greek Catholic wooden Church of St Nicolas the Bishop was built at the beginning of the 18th century, in the years 1720 to 1730.

The log building consists of three parts. It is covered by shingled roof.

The interior in the Baroque and Rococo style is from the beginning of the 18th century.



Slovak UNESCO Natural Phenomena

Slovakia's unique natural phenomena are represented in the UNESCO list by caves and abysses of the Slovak Karst and by Dobšinská ľadová jaskyňa Cave. In 2007, the Carpathian primeval beech forests of the Bukovské vrchy and Vihorlatské vrchy Mts. in the east of Slovakia were added to this list.



The primeval beech forests of the Carpathians in Ukraine and in Slovakia were added to the UNESCO List in June 2007. Thanks to this fact, the primeval forests of Stučica, Rožok and Havešová in the Bukovské vrchy Mts. and Kyjov primeval forest in the Vihorlatské vrchy Mts. in the Protected Landscape Area of Vihorlat are of world importance. The first three are situated in the area of the Poloniny National Park.

The Slovak Republic prepared further nominations for this List and among them is the Tatra National Park, the National Park of Slovenský raj and the National Park of Malá Fatra.

Slovak Karst, situated in the south of Slovakia on the frontier with Hungary is the largest karstic area in Central Europe. It consists of 1,100 caves and abysses.

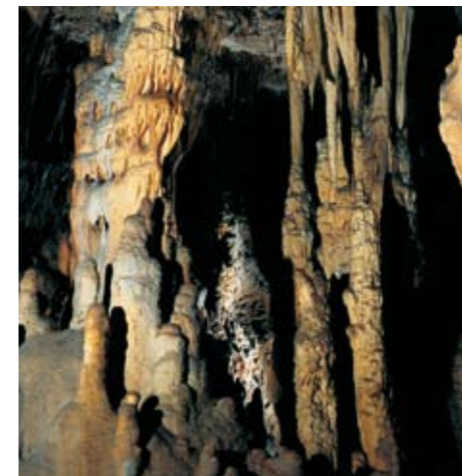
In 1995, the bilateral Slovak-Hungarian project with the title Caves of the Slovak and Aggtelek Karst was successful in its endeavour to be included among the most precious world natural phenomena. In 2000, this inscription also included the ice cave of Dobšinská ľadová jaskyňa, one of the largest of its kind in Europe.



Caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst

Twelve caves of the underground world of the Slovak Karst along with the Aggtelek karst have been inscribed in the UNESCO List of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

Slovak Karst along with the Aggtelek karst in Hungary forms one unit which is the most



Among them is the Domica Cave on the Slovak side and the Baradla Cave on the Hungarian side of the border; it is a unique 21 km long system of corridors and underground space adorned with bulky dripstone ornamentation, including the navigable Styx River.



extensive karstic territory in Central Europe. It stretches on an area of 600 km² and it contains 1,100 caves and abysses.

The "entrance" to the Slovak Karst from the east is the unique Zádielska tiesňava, a more than 2 kilometre long canyon, which is only 10 metres wide in some places. It is skirted by a more than 200 m tall steep-rock faces of bizarre forms. The 105 m tall Cukrová homôľa is especially spectacular.



The Jasovská jaskyňa Cave is situated on the eastern edge of the Slovenský kras karst. Due to its significance and unique ornamentation, it was included into the UNESCO List of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

In the south-western edge of the Slovenský raj Mts. is the Dobšinská ľadová jaskyňa Cave, one of the largest ice caves in Europe. Thanks to its significance and unique ornamentation, it was included into the List of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of UNESCO.



The Ochtinská aragonitová jaskyňa Cave is the only cave in Europe with ornamentation of white aragonite. This kind of limestone forms bush-like nests of varied forms. Not far away is the Gombasecká jaskyňa Cave with wonderful two to three metres tall white, fine dripstones that contrast with the red coat of the rock walls. Another unique cave is that of Krásnohorská jaskyňa. Its 32.6 m tall dripstone inscribed in the Guinness Book of Records is the tallest in the world.



Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians



The primeval beech forests of Stučica, Rožok and Havešová (Bukovské vrchy Mts.) and Kyjov (Vihorlatské vrchy Mts.) were put on the UNESCO List of World Natural Heritage in 2007.

The easternmost Slovak National Park is that of Poloniny. It contains original extensive beech and fir-beech forests and the primeval forests of Stučica, Rožok and Havešová.





This remotest part of Slovakia is becoming ever more attractive for tourists. They can visit the National Park of Poloniny, which was added to the list of National Parks of Slovakia in 1997. It is situated at the point where three frontiers meet: Slovak, Polish and Ukrainian. The park immediately neighbours the Polish Bieszczadzski Park Narodowy. The mountain area where the park was established is also known under the Slovak name, the Bukovské vrchy Mts. The name of the park derives from the Slovak term for special and unique alpine meadows – *poloniny* – which are spread out above the upper timberline.



The UNESCO in the framework of the Man and Biosphere Programme defined the territory as the Biosphere Reserve of Východné Karpaty in 1993. The primeval forests of Stuzica, Rožok and Havešová in the Bukovské vrchy Mts. were added to the UNESCO List of World Natural Heritage in June 2007 together with the Kyjov primeval forest in the Vihorlatské vrchy Mts. near Poloniny and with the primeval forests in the Ukraine.

Almost 80 percent of the forest area consists of rounded ridges and waterlogged valleys. Sharp stones are less frequent. Particular to the territory is the occurrence of the largest complexes of original, in places virgin, beech-fir woods in Europe and the rare concentration of threatened animal and plant species, including wild game.

The starting point for the trips to the National Park is the easternmost situated village in Slovakia, Nová Sedlica.



Slovak UNESCO Intangible Heritage

The fujara is a musical instrument unique to Slovakia. It was inscribed into the UNESCO List of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.



The fujara is a wooden overtone fipple flute that can be up to 1.8 m long. It is usually made from elder tree, decorated is by ornaments or figural decorations and has a characteristic meditation tone. It is known nowhere else in the world but Slovakia. This country is considered to be the place of origin of this instrument, especially the regions of Poľana and North Gemer.

The longest instrument is the Fujara Trombita, up to 6 m long, and was used for signaling and for communication among shepherds in their pastures because of its magnificent and strong tone.

On December 2013 The Music of Terchova was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity managed by UNESCO.



The village of Terchová in north-west Slovakia is renowned for its collective vocal and instrumental music, performed by three-, four- or five-member string ensembles with a small two-string bass or diatonic button accordion. It is often accompanied by polyphonic singing and combined with folk dances. The musical tradition of Terchová also includes solo instrumental performances on shepherds' fifes. The traditional musical culture, which is transmitted orally, is a matter of pride and a marker of local identity.



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