

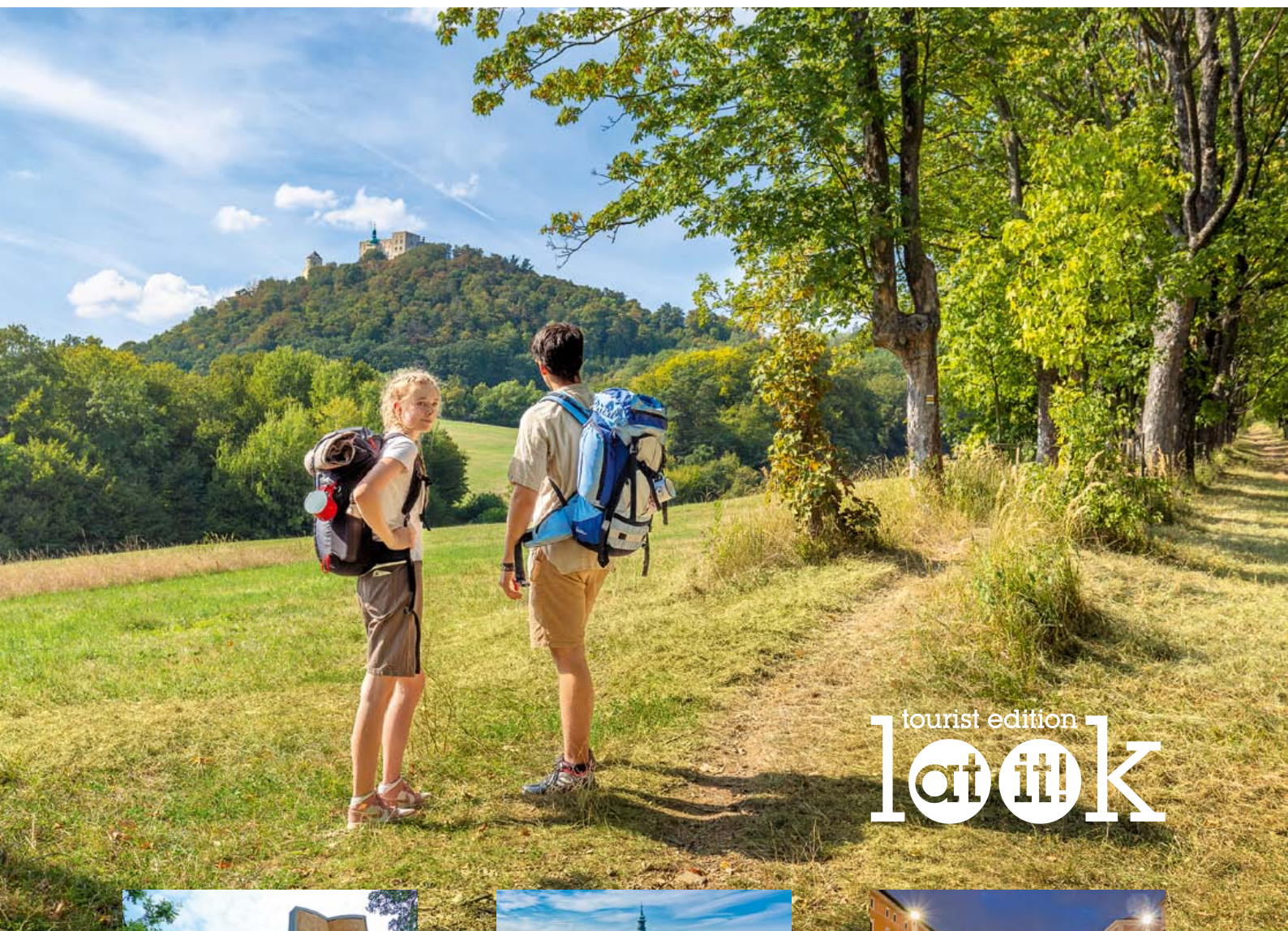
Europe

magazine
VOLUME I

Along the Cyril and Methodius Route

TRAVEL TIPS FOR CULTURAL AND HIKING TRAILS

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tourist edition
lookatit!



On the Trail of the European Story

Cyril and Methodius Heritage
Lives on in Thessaloniki



Embark on a Journey of Discovery and Relaxation

Discover Nitra and Key Sites of the
Great Moravian Empire



Culture and History of the Slavic World

Cyril and Methodius
and Their Journey to Rome



Journeys are Stories of Life



Photo: m-ARK

Every journey, if prepared well, enriches our lives with positive stories. It can be a journey of discovery, relaxation or sport, or a journey undertaken for the pure joy and pleasure of sharing experiences with friends. If we're attentive and perceptive, it can help us understand our life journey. And that's what the Cyril and Methodius Route is about. It's a link between our deep past and our present, connecting us to the story of the Slavic missionaries Saints Cyril and Methodius, who are showing us the way towards the future. This is especially important in today's world filled with chaos and a daily onslaught of irrelevant news.

The magazine you are holding aims to be a good guide on your pleasant journeys. But it also has other objectives, such as giving you a glimpse into the world of certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, of which there are currently forty-eight (www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes).

On the one hundred pages of the Through Europe Along the Cyril and Methodius Route magazine, you will find interesting tips for your journeys in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. We'll also briefly touch upon other countries such as Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovenia. The magazine is packed with many interesting travel stories. There are interviews with the people behind the route, with personalities from social, cultural and church life and with great travellers. Their stories are inspiration for embarking on a journey and explain what walking the trails brings them.

Pick a route or any of the destinations of the Cyril and Methodius Route and experience your own story! The magazine is published in the Look at It tourist edition as the special issue for 2025. We are delighted and honoured that it's being published exactly 1,140 years since the death of St Methodius.

Enjoy your travels,

Ivan Marek and Ondra Marek,
publishers of prestigious travel magazines

The trails of the **Cyril and Methodius Route** are inspired by the real travels of Cyril and Methodius in the 9th century and the spread of their legacy. The entire route is around 5,000 kilometres long and connects the key sites of their activity, such as Thessaloniki, where they were born, Rome, where Cyril is buried, and the central European locations where they arrived in 863 to spread Christianity and learning.



Front page photo: Pilgrims under Buchlov Castle, photo: m-ARK


Cyrilometodějská
stezka

Cultural route
of the Council of Europe
Itinéraire culturel
du Conseil de l'Europe

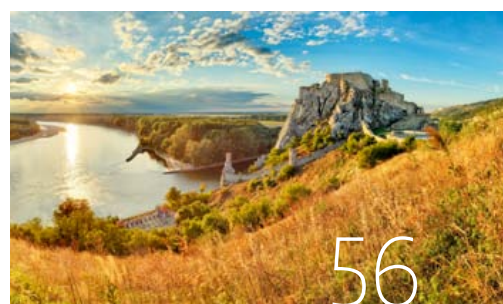
COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



Look at It! magazines in 2025

The latest titles of the m-ARK agency are the 100-page magazines **Discover Záhorie and Kopanice on a Bike** and **Cycling Tours in Austria 2** in the Holiday with an Idea edition.



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EXPERIENCE – LEARNING – UNDERSTANDING

Cyril and Methodius Route – On the Journey to Discover Slavic Culture

The Cultural Route of the Council of Europe takes you to unique places connected with the legacy of Saints Cyril and Methodius, whose history dates back to the Early Middle Ages. The two brothers from Thessaloniki were among the greatest scholars of their time and had a profound influence on the cultural development of Slavic nations. As the co-patrons of Europe and men of great virtue, they remain a lasting inspiration. On routes of varied difficulty in a total length of 5,000 km and in their vicinity, you will find hundreds of heritage sites and beautiful nature. The route connects places through which the brothers and their successors passed on their missionary journey, places from where their tradition and learning spread and sites of their contemporary veneration. The cultural route is a set of marked trails and a network of heritage sites.

The route celebrates the legacy of the Slavic missionaries and more than 1,160 years of living cultural tradition. Get ready for an unforgettable journey full of history, beautiful nature and cultural experiences!



Pilgrims, photo: Martin Peterka

Saints Cyril and Methodius

Patron saints of Europe, brothers, Byzantine Christian theologians and missionaries from Thessaloniki. Their vision significantly influenced the cultural development of all the Slavs. That is why they are also known as the "Apostles to the Slavs". Regarded as the most influential spiritual leaders, the brothers played a fundamental role in spreading the Christian faith in the lands of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and generally in the development of the culture of the Slavic lands. Cyril and Methodius' mission dates to the period of the Great Moravian Empire in the 9th century. Cyril and Methodius created an alphabet for the Slavs (known as the Glagolitic alphabet), created the first Slav literary and liturgical language and translated liturgical books and Scripture into the Slavic language. They subsequently defended Old Church Slavonic as a liturgical language so they could celebrate Mass in the language of the people to whom they were preaching the Gospel. They also educated their disciples, who subsequently spread Christianity further among the Slavs. Saints Cyril and Methodius and their most significant followers, Saint Gorazd, Saint Clement of Ohrid, Saint Naum, Saint Angelar and Saint Sava, were venerated as the Seven Saints beginning in the 17th century. In 1880, Pope Leo XIII included their feast day on the Roman Catholic calendar and in 1980 Pope John Paul II declared both brothers patron saints of Europe.



Sculpture of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Mikulčice, Czech Republic, photo m-ARK

Through Europe

ALONG THE CYRIL AND METHODIUS ROUTE





Tereza Kostková: Life is a Pilgrimage

Actress and presenter Tereza Kostková never stops moving. Every month, she performs twenty shows at Komorní divadlo Kalich, she has her own radio programme Close Encounters on ČRo Dvojka every weekday except Wednesday, she presents TV programmes and appears in films and TV shows. When she needs to be alone with herself, she goes on a pilgrimage. About 22 years ago, it was to Santiago de Compostela; in spring 2024, she undertook a pilgrimage through Tuscany along the Via Francigena.

How did you learn about the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela many years ago, and why did you decide to walk part of it?

I was almost 28 years old. Back then, the pilgrimage wasn't well known in our country. One of my friends who studied French with me started talking excitedly

about the pilgrimage. I was going through a difficult time; I had been in difficult relationship for a long time and was feeling lonely. I didn't want to just patch up the emptiness somehow. I remain firmly convinced that if you need to change something on the outside, you must start on the inside.

I was interested in what my friend was telling me about this unknown journey. I knew what to do.

It was quite difficult to organise back then. Just getting a pilgrim's passport was a challenge. I didn't have much money, so the whole thing was very bare-bones. But I experienced it all: I slept at pilgrimage sites, my feet were bloody and I hauled thirteen kilos on my back for 112 kilometres. Despite it all, it was very fulfilling and a major milestone in my life, in my thinking and in my attitude, a experience that influenced everything I have done since.

Around 2023, you started thinking about going on the pilgrimage again. What was it like?

It had been some 20 years since my first pilgrimage. I married the person I loved, gave birth to a son, then divorced and married again. I was very busy. And I realised it had been many years since I'd had the opportunity to be truly and deeply with myself. I wanted to see if I would still feel like I had back then, if I could restart the processes in my mind, body and soul. We started to talk about it with my husband Jakub, who had never been on a pilgrimage before. Because we wanted to be alone for a while, we decided to walk part of the Via Francigena in beautiful Tuscany. It took a year to plan my ten-day absence from work, which I managed to schedule for the spring of 2024.

How did the pilgrimage go? Did you have an hour-by-hour itinerary, or did you leave things to chance?

Because there were two of us, we had to adapt to each other – just like in marriage.

Her special shoes for the journey weighed only 220 grams.
Photo: Tereza Kostková's archive



April showed us typical spring weather with frequent showers. Photo: Tereza Kostková's archive

While Jakub was constantly holding a GPS in his hand, I wanted to stick to the really good trail markings. But these are small things. I'm the kind of person who wouldn't mind leaving the route for a while to stay in a new place, but we had a return ticket for a specific date.

So it was just partially a pilgrimage, but it was worth it and was everything we had hoped for. It was amazing to truly walk through the land and physically feel your every step. The richness of your inner life comes forward and you have time to think about many different things. You realise how much we are disturbed by noises, sounds, billboards, phone calls, the news and constant contact. Suddenly, you have far fewer impulses and this makes your inner self all the richer.

I'm firmly convinced that if you have to change something on the outside, you must start on the inside.

Have you ever heard of the Cyril and Methodius Route?

I have read about it, but I don't know the details. I haven't studied it or walked it. I love walking; it's the closest activity to the pulse of life. I enjoy this way of being when you can see things and truly process them. On the road, Jakub and I talked about how every day and every activity in your life happens just once and enriches you, and the next stage is once again unknown. You carry on and never go back. And that's life. Life is a pilgrimage. Even though activities repeat themselves, they're never exactly the same; an experienced moment is never repeated, it's constant change.

Do you have favourite places in the Czech Republic that you enjoy returning to?

Until I was 12, we used to spend every summer in a rented house in Suchdol, which is a village between the towns of

Dobříš and Příbram in central Bohemia. The village now invited me to open their annual ball and promised to take me around the places I know there, including the house we used to stay in.

You're a very busy person. Can you tell us what new projects you're planning?

My home stage is the Kalich Chamber Theatre, where I perform twenty times a month, and I appear in one production at the Viola Theatre. I'm finishing the

She appears in Na útěku (The Fugitives) together with her mother, Carmen Mayerová. Photo: archive of Komorní divadlo Kalich



Photo: Tereza Kostková's archive

PROFILE

TEREZA KOSTKOVÁ

The well-known Czech actress and TV presenter was born as the fourth daughter in the theatre family of Petr Kostka and Carmen Mayerová. She graduated from the Higher Vocational School of Acting in Prague. She started her professional career at the Theatre of West Bohemia in Cheb; until 2007, she performed at Divadlo pod Palmovkou. Since 2012, you can see her most often at Komorní divadlo Kalich, where she currently appears in seven shows, with which she also tours the country.

She has an eighteen-year-old son named Antonín with director Petr Kracik. In 2018, she got married for the second time, to director Jakub Nvota.

She loves theatre, but also appears in films and TV shows. Since the very first episode, she has been the presenter of StarDance, a TV show that will start touring the largest arenas in the Czech Republic this autumn. She loves strudel, cold showers and starry skies; she avoids colds, dense people and trash.

Jedna rodina (One Family) series this May, and because the long-running Ordinace primetime television soap opera is celebrating 20 years, they asked for my character to briefly return. In the autumn, we'll do the StarDance tour.

After 18 years on the screen, the StarDance TV show is moving from the studio to large sports halls. How will this be different for you?

For the first time, we'll turn this TV format into something more like theatre. You usually perform for the camera and the huge kind audience on the other side. But in the O₂ Arena, you must reach out and draw in everyone in the venue. That requires a completely different energy. I'm very curious to see how we do, because thousands of people is a lot and no one should be deprived of their experience. I'm so glad that people really want to see it.

Thank you for the interview.
Monika Brothánková



Photo: Neimënster Abbey, headquarters of the European Institute of Cultural Routes in Luxembourg, author Martin Peterka

Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

We are traveling more than ever, with increasing options and information about where and how to embark on our journeys. But how do we navigate the vast array of tourist and leisure options today? One useful guide that can help us in our decision-making are the awards granted in the field of tourism. There are many of them, too. However, if you're interested in discovering places with a European or global impact, the offer becomes clearer. In addition to the UNESCO World Heritage List or the European Heritage Label (EHL), you can also encounter the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

Journeys Through Space and Time

Launched in 1987, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme has been crucial in advancing and preserving the main values of the Council of Europe, which encompass human rights, democracy, participation, cultural diversity, and identity. The Cultural Routes are unique networks of partners and routes that connect historical and cultural sites across Europe, all centered around a particular theme. They offer an opportunity to explore the continent's rich cultural heritage, whether it's monuments, traditions, or significant events. The goal of the currently 48 certified Cultural Routes is not only to deepen the understanding of European history and identity, but also to promote sustainable tourism and mutual understanding among nations.

Notably, 90% of these Routes traverse rural regions, thereby incorporating lesser-known destinations into the broader European tourism landscape and also benefiting local communities. Embark on one of these routes and explore the fascinating stories that have shaped European culture.

The Cyril and Methodius Route – A Cultural Route of the Council of Europe

In 2021, the Council of Europe certified the Cyril and Methodius Route, which connects places and organizations that continue to uphold the legacy of Saints Cyril and Methodius and their disciples. It offers a rich cultural and educational program, as well as cultural tourism products throughout the year. At the same time, it enables the promotion of local cultural heritage on a European scale.

About the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Programme

Did you know that more than 40 countries are involved in the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme through their relevant ministries? The Council of Europe's efforts to certify new Cultural Routes are driven by the goal of strengthening European identity and culture by connecting historical and cultural sites across Europe. This program highlights the wealth of cultural heritage, supports cultural exchange between nations, and deepens mutual understanding and respect. Thanks to this programme, Europeans can better familiarize themselves with the cultural roots of other nations and engage in dialogue, which is key to understanding and cooperation in Europe. Explore the over forty Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe for yourself!



Foto: Petr Kořínek

Martina Dlabajová: The Cyril and Methodius Route is a journey to discover history and ourselves

What makes the Route special in your opinion?

The Cyril and Methodius Route is unique in that it was founded in the Czech Republic and continues to be led and further developed from here, unlike other cultural routes that only pass through the country.

Why did you fall in love with the Route?

The legacy of Cyril and Methodius unites Europe and inspires pride in our shared European heritage. It is no coincidence that the two brothers are patrons of Europe – their message is still relevant today. I realized this strongly in the European Parliament, where I introduced the Route and organized an exhibition. The interest of colleagues from all over Europe was impressive and demonstrated how much this story still resonates. The Route holds incredible potential.

What does it mean in practice?

Local communities and business owners, such as providers of accommodation and services for pilgrims, can get

involved, benefiting from new opportunities. For municipalities and regions, it represents a chance for revitalization. I live near the pilgrimage site of Štípa near Zlín, which lies on one of the Route's trails. Thanks to pilgrims, this place has gained new energy – people are more connected to their surroundings, the community is growing stronger and there is a renewed sense of pride in everything tied to the area.

You are also helping to develop the Route outside the Czech Republic, especially in Italy and elsewhere. Why does this matter?

The Route passes through areas where Cyril and Methodius likely travelled. Italy, particularly places like Rome and Aquileia, plays a significant role in their story. Cooperation with these places helps uncover more pieces of the historical mosaic. The same applies to other countries where the Cyril and Methodius tradition remains alive. With my experience and passion for Europe, I am glad to unlock new opportunities.

Martina Dlabajová

A successful entrepreneur and Member of the European Parliament who has travelled across Europe. She has supported the Cyril and Methodius Route from the very beginning and is its enthusiastic ambassador.



Foto: J3T

What does the legacy of Cyril and Methodius mean to you personally, as a European?

It connects the past with the present and shows that Europe has shared foundations on which we can build. It is a story of cooperation between nations that continues to inspire us today. This legacy gives the Route a unique dimension – it not only allows us to discover beautiful places but also helps us better understand our history, what unites us and why it is important to remember these values.

What would you say to those who hesitate to set out on the trail?

Don't be afraid to take the first step. The Cyril and Methodius Route is not just about walking or learning history – it is also about finding connections: with the landscape, with people, and perhaps even with yourself. This trail offers something for everyone: fascinating places, peace, inspiration and new stories. Whether you decide to walk just a few kilometers or cover a longer distance, the Route will show you that the journey itself can be as enriching as the destination.

A Trail Inspired by the Story of Cyril and Methodius

The fascinating story of Cyril and Methodius, world-class scholars, missionaries and diplomats, who arrived in Great Moravia in 863 at the invitation of Prince Rostislav with the higher purpose to Christianise the Slavs, is a source of endless inspiration. The two Byzantine scholars left their comfort at home and their thinking was a thousand years ahead of their time.



Pilgrims at Velehrad, photo: m-ARK

Saints Cyril and Methodius significantly influenced the spiritual development of Europeans. They remain symbols of the fundamental values of European civilisation, such as human dignity, tolerance, democracy, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression, assembly and association, the rule of law and the right to a fair trial.

By spreading the positive values that St Cyril and Methodius created in the 9th century and continue to create as co-patrons of Europe, the Cyril and Methodius Route contributes to our concept of what it means to be a modern European – understanding, cultural dialogue and the unity of the continent.

The European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius Association

Their strong and still living legacy

Network of Routes, Sights and Partners

The Cyril and Methodius Route is a broader concept than it might seem at first glance. First of all, it is a network of routes related to the cultural heritage of Cyril and Methodius. The routes are around 5,000 kilometres long and connect the key sites of their activity, such as Thessaloniki, where the brothers were born, Rome, where Cyril is buried, and the former territory of Great Moravia, where they arrived in 863 to spread Christianity and learning. There are many such sites, little fires that keep the Cyril and Methodius legacy of cultural dialogue alive, all over Europe. The Cyril and Methodius Route gradually connects them all.

The route can also be understood as a network of cultural, religious and other heritage sites, because not all relevant locations in Europe can be connected by marked trails.

The European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius creates a network of partners between regions, cities and municipalities, but also among educational and cultural institutions, destination management companies and other organisations and associations. Their shared interest is to keep the Cyril and Methodius legacy alive through various activities and projects. The association currently has 37 official members in ten European countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Greece, Bulgaria, Northern Macedonia, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy) and is open to other members and partners, especially from Central, Southwestern and Southeastern Europe. The association develops activities with its members not only in the domain of tourism, but also in the field of science and research, youth education, artistic practice and raising awareness of cultural heritage.

Cyril and Methodius Route – towards Radhošť, photo: personal archive



The Cyril and Methodius Route has been a huge challenge from the beginning

The idea of the Cyril and Methodius Route started coalescing in 2011 in a close group of people connected with the Zlín Region. The person who gave the Cyril and Methodius Route its metaphorical soul was PhDr. Dana Daňová, the then-director of the East Moravia Tourist Authority, founder of the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius Association and today the chairwoman of its Steering Committee and the mayor of Jasenná.

Mrs Daňová, you know more about the beginnings of the Cyril and Methodius Route than anyone. How did the idea first appear in your region and its tourist authority?

Since its founding in 2007, the East Moravia Tourist Authority, which I led at the time, had two interesting products in its offer, the Pilgrimage Trails of East Moravia and the Moravian Amber Trail, which were both connected with pilgrimage tourism and had links to the other Moravian regions. As the anniversary of 1,150 years since the arrival of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Great Moravia approached (in 2013), we engaged in discussions with the region's Department of Culture and Department of Strategic Development and proposed developing these products

into the Cyril and Methodius Route. Because we knew that the Cyril and Methodius Route had huge potential across southeastern Europe, it was logical to start envisioning it as the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius. This idea was much grander in scope than anything we had attempted before. In other words, a huge challenge!

Have your ideas come to fruition?

Absolutely. When I look at the structure of the membership base today, and how we work with the topic, it's far beyond anything I could have imagined. We clearly have chosen the right topic and were not afraid to follow our dreams, if you pardon the lofty expression. Our dreams that one day, in the area between Thessaloniki, Rome and Velehrad (as well as Nitra, Bratislava, Sofia, Ohrid...), there would be a route dedicated to the legacy of Cyril and Methodius, the Slavs and Slavic culture, writing and education.

You took part in many important meetings that led to significant partnerships and often led them. Which do you remember as the most important?

Probably the first General Assembly, which led to the founding of our association. The festive atmosphere and mood among the participants was unforgettable. And then the working meetings in Rome in 2022 and the signing of memoranda with the Papal basilicas. Also the conference in Zlín, where we received the certificate as a Cultural Trail of the Council of Europe. I hosted the conference, and the awarding of the certificate moved me to tears. It was such a joyful occasion. Our dream was no longer a dream, but a reality!

You are an active hiker yourself, and enjoy walking the Cyril and Methodius Route. What does it give you personally?

Freedom. There's nothing better than putting on a good pair of shoes, grabbing your poles and a backpack and heading out into nature. But not just there. Also towards various heritage sites and cultural institutions, where I always learn something new and interesting. I had a great experience during my holiday in Ohrid and around Lake Ohrid. I wanted to see everything there was to see connected with the legacy of Cyril and Methodius's disciples.

Which events related to the route do you remember most fondly?

I like to remember our first organised trip along the Cyril and Methodius Route in Nitra. It was from Dražovce via Zobor to Nitra. It didn't matter how many kilometres we'd cover. It was all about what we experience and see along the trail, whom we meet and talk to. About the joy of sharing.

Constituent General Assembly, photo: personal archive



The heart of the Cyril and Methodius Route is the permanent team in Zlín



The team on the public hike from Kopčany to Mikulčice, photo: Martin Peterka

The Cyril and Methodius Route is more than just a marked trail. It's a living organism, a network connecting people, places and stories linked to the legacy of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Its heart is the Permanent Secretariat in Zlín – a team that works hard every day to keep the legacy alive and ensure that it reaches people across Europe. From strategic planning and development of the route to coordination of international projects and communication with partners and the public – all of that requires constant interaction and personal commitment.

Work on the development of the Cyril and Methodius Route is creative and dynamic. There are no prescribed procedures because every country, every region and every partner brings their own unique perspective and experience to the project. It is the variety and richness of the Cyril and Methodius legacy, whose interpretation varies across cultures, that make this work extremely interesting and inspiring. The secretariat is in constant contact

with the members of the association, partners and the general public. It's open to anyone who wants to learn about the route, contribute to its development or collaborate in any other way. Whether it is consultation on project plans, proposals for new routes, website modifications or the use of the route logo, the secretariat team is ready to provide expert assistance and support. If you have questions concerning the route marking, online presentation and visual identity of the Cyril and Methodius Route, contact Martin Peterka, who is in charge of the development of the route's tourist products. Martina Janochová coordinates budget planning, internal and external communication and organization of the association's events. All these activities are strategically managed by Director Zuzana Vojtová, who is the statutory representative of the association and is responsible for key decisions. In order to make the cooperation as effective as possible, the association works closely with National Coordinators.



Secretariat team, from left: Zuzana Vojtová, Martin Peterka and Martina Janochová, photo: EKSCM



Glagolitic workshop at the Boršice school, photo: Martin Peterka

These are elected by representatives of the member countries and their knowledge of local specifics and their contacts play a key role in connecting partners in the individual countries and communicating with them. Thanks to the tireless work of the Permanent Secretariat, the network of the Cyril and Methodius Route is being built and developed, connecting people and cultures across Europe and preserving the legacy of Saints Cyril and Methodius for future generations. It's not just a tourist route, but a living bridge between the past and the present.

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Nitra-Dražovce, Slovakia
Photo: Martin Peterka

Members of the association

European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius

ITALY

- Metropolitan City of Rome
- ATS Aquileia
- European Association Romea Strata

CROATIA

- Zraka, Draganić

SLOVENIA

- Slovenian Marian National Shrine in Brezje

HUNGARY

- Slovak Municipality in Budapest

POLAND

- Akademia Supraska

CZECH REPUBLIC

- The Zlín Region
- The South Moravian Region
- The Olomouc Region
- The Moravian-Silesian Region
- East Moravia Tourist Authority
- South Moravia Tourist Authority
- Vysočina Tourism
- The town of Velehrad
- The town of Modrá

- Archaeological Museum Veliki Preslav

NORTH MACEDONIA

- Institute of Macedonian Literature at the University of St Cyril and Methodius in Skopje
- Institute of Old Slavonic Culture Prilep

SLOVAKIA

- Nitra Self-Governing Region
- The Trenčín Region
- Trnava Self-Governing Region
- Bratislava Self-Governing Region
- Žilina Self-Governing Region
- Slovak House of Centrope
- Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra
- Mojmir Foundation
- Tourism Board of the Nitra Region
- Nitra Tourism Board
- The municipality of Močenok
- The town of Terchová
- The town of Bojná
- Zobor Embellishing Association
- Creative people
- EUROPEAN ROUTE C&M

GREECE

- The city of Thessaloniki

BULGARIA

- Cyril and Methodius Research Centre of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia



15 tips Czech Republic



1. Třebíč. A town in the south-east of the Vysočina Region, which boasts several UNESCO monuments. Visit the unique St Procopius Basilica, the only fully preserved Jewish quarter in Europe, the château with interactive exhibitions of the Museum of the Vysočina Region and the windmill.



2. National Interception Memorial. An original open-air gallery located in flooded granite quarries near Lipnice Castle. The marked trail will lead you to three sculptures: Bretschneider's Ear, the Mouth of Truth and the Golden Eyes. The monuments were carved by sculptor Radomír Dvořák.



3. Telč. This town in the Vysočina Region will enchant you with its romantic central square with Renaissance buildings and a château that has appeared in many fairy tale films. Telč has rightfully earned its place on the UNESCO list.



4. Museum of Cartography. In Velké Opatovice, you will learn how our ancestors measured and plotted the surface of the Earth and what maps and measuring instruments looked like before we had satellites. Come and see the giant 3-D map of Moravia and Silesia.



5. Uherčice Chateau. The chateau near Znojmo can be used as a textbook for understanding architectural styles. It invites you to visit the restored chateau interiors and the farmstead or take a walk in the garden and the English landscape park.



6. Příkazy Open-Air Museum. Visit a traditional Haná farmhouse, peek into the main room or the fully equipped kitchen and imagine what life was like for the people of the Haná region at the turn of the 20th century. You will see unique log barns and can try to operate a grain blower.



7. Basilica Minor of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary on Svatý Kopeček. The unmissable dominant feature and pride of Olomouc. Thousands of pilgrims have come to the church for centuries and even today it is one of the most famous pilgrimage sites in our country.



8. Skalka Spa. The spa is located at the foot of the Dražanská Vrchovina range, a short distance from Prostějov. The mineral water spa established in 1928 specialises today in the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders and skin diseases. Come for relaxation and wellness and enjoy the beautiful nature.



9. Flower and Castle Gardens in Kroměříž. Take a walk through gardens inscribed on the UNESCO list. The Castle Garden is stylised as an English landscape park, while the Flower Garden is inspired by the greenery of Versailles, with a colonnade, fountains, labyrinths and greenhouses dominated by a central pavilion in the shape of a rotunda.



10. Wallachian Open Air Museum. The oldest museum of its kind in Central Europe can be found in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm. You can look forward to the Wooden Townlet, the Water Mill Valley, the Wallachian Village, the Kolibisko area that is currently under construction and more than a hundred historical buildings.



11. Ostrava – Dolní Vítkovice. One of the biggest tourist attractions in Ostrava. The former industrial complex is a unique example of how an industrial monument can be transformed into a unique educational, cultural and social centre. There is Bolt Tower, Gong Multifunctional Auditorium, Big and Small World of Technology and much more.



12. Chotěbuz-Podobora Archaeology Park. One of the most important and best documented archaeological sites in the whole Czech Republic. The park is a branch of the Těšín Region Museum and can be found near Český Těšín. Visitors can admire a reconstruction of a Slavic settlement from the period between the middle of the 8th and the 11th century.



13. The Chapel of Saints Cyril and Methodius. On the very top of Radhošť Mountain, at an altitude of 1,129 metres above sea level, you will find the Chapel of Saints Cyril and Methodius, built in the Byzantine style in 1898. It is the shrine at the highest elevation in the Czech Republic.



14. Jurkovič's buildings in Luhačovice. The distinctive natural environment of Luhačovice inspired the architect Dušan Jurkovič to create a unique set of buildings in the style of Folk Art Nouveau. At the beginning of the 20th century, he influenced the entire urban character of the spa and you can still admire the healing pavilions and villas, the most prominent of which is the Jurkovič House.



15. Pohansko Fortified Settlement. This archaeological site near Břeclav is one of the most important monuments of the Early Middle Ages in Central Europe. It complements the exhibition on the life of ancient Slavs in the nearby chateau.



Throughout the Czech Republic, there are almost 1,000 kilometres of hiking trails of the Cyril and Methodius Route running from various directions to Velehrad, a pilgrimage site of European importance. The individual trails also have their own names – the Archbishop, Beskydy, White Carpathian, Great Moravian, Bohemian-Moravian and Pálava routes. They have been marked since 2018 in collaboration with the Czech Tourist Club.

Unique Network of Hiking Trails in the Czech Republic

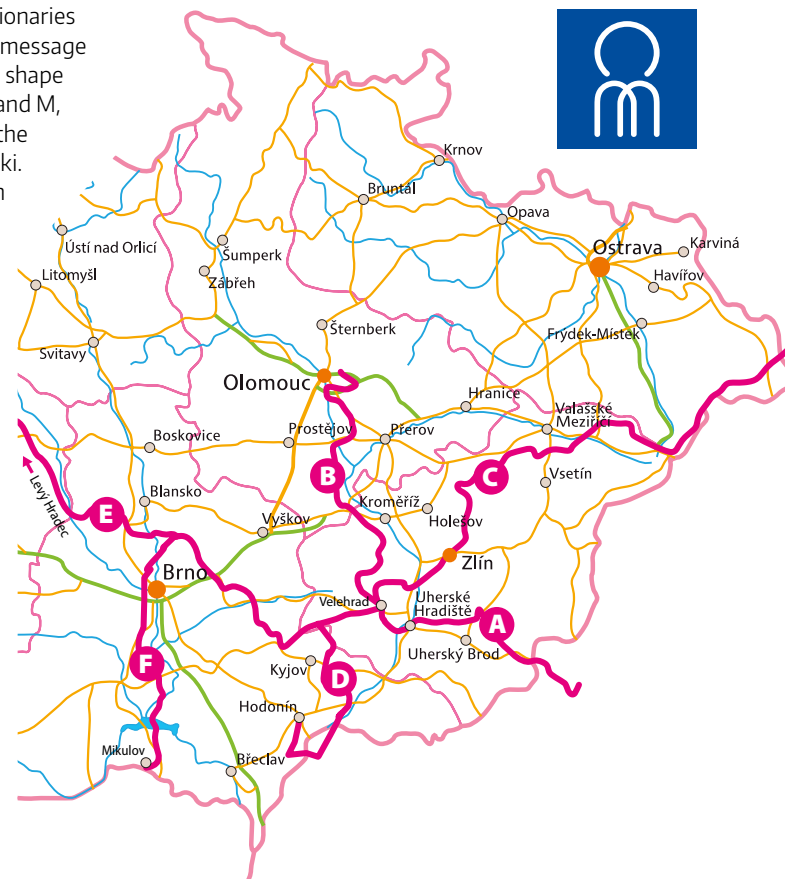


When you embark on a hiking trail, you'll probably notice the markers of the Czech Tourist Club. These markers are important for your orientation and safety. The shape of the marker resembles the figures of the two missionaries who spread faith and their message here. But that's not all! The shape also contains the letters C and M, standing for the names of the two brothers of Thessaloniki. All trails are marked in both directions.

Whichever you choose, you will find it on the

map portal [Mapy.cz](https://mapy.cz) and its **app**, which can be used both online and offline. The tourist trails are identified as part of the Cyril and Methodius Route and by their specific name. This makes orientation much easier. So let's go enjoy the outdoors – regardless of whether you're a tourist, pilgrim or adventurer!

- A. The White Carpathian Trail: Skalka – Velehrad (86km)
- B. The Archbishop Trail: Svatý Kopeček – Velehrad (111km)
- C. The Beskydy Trail: Wisla – Velehrad (211km)
- D. The Great Moravian Trail: Hodonín – Velehrad (92km)
- E. The Bohemian-Moravian Trail: Levý Hradec – Velehrad (418km)
- F. The Pálava Trail: Velehrad – Mikulov (164km)



People of the Zlín Region Have Never Been Afraid to Go Beyond Their Limits

The Cyril and Methodius Route project, which connects partners across many countries, wouldn't be possible without the support of the Zlín Region. What does Radim Holíš, the region's governor, an active sportsman and local patriot, think about the Cyril and Methodius Route?



Governor Radim Holíš (right) welcoming the deputy mayor of the Metropolitan City of Rome at the regional headquarters in Zlín

Governor, you are in charge of the eastern region of the Czech Republic where Cyril and Methodius arrived in the Early Middle Ages, and where the idea of the Cyril and Methodius Route was born. What does their legacy mean for the region today?

The legacy of the Thessaloniki missionaries is firmly imprinted on the cultural and spiritual identity of our region. It's here that the idea of a Cyril and Methodius Route that would connect sites related to their mission and legacy originates. More proof of our strong connection to this heritage is the Cyril and Methodius Centre in Staré Město, which tells the story of the two brothers who were at the birth of Slavic writing to the general public. The arrival of Cyril and Methodius in Great Moravia laid the foundations of our culture, and in the Zlín Region we not only commemorate this legacy, but actively develop it. Our history here flows seamlessly into the present and the Cyril and Methodius Route is a beautiful example of this.

You are a person who enjoys sports actively and you sometimes walk along the trails of the Cyril and Methodius Route. What do you think are its main benefits for people today?

The Cyril and Methodius Route is not only about walking through beautiful landscapes, but also about stopping and reflecting internally. On each of its trails you can recharge your energy, discover the beauty of nature and experience a form of spiritual enrichment. I like to go on the route myself because it's great physical activity and an opportunity to slow down, get inspired and forget your everyday worries for a while. And that is where I see its greatest benefit for the people of today.

What did it mean for you when, in 2021, you personally received the Cultural Route of the Council of Europe certificate for the Cyril and Methodius Route from Stefano Dominioni, then-director of the European Institute of Cultural Routes in Luxembourg?

Receiving the certificate was a great honour for me, but above all it was confirmation that the Zlín Region has become part of an important European network of cultural routes. With it, the Cyril and Methodius Route has taken its place alongside other famous pilgrimage routes, such as the Camino de Santiago (Way of St James). The certificate confirms that our legacy is important not only for us, but also in the broader European context. I also see it as a great commitment to develop the route further.

Many more great people came from the Zlín Region, e.g. John Amos Comenius,

the Teacher of Nations, the shoemaker Tomáš Baťa, travellers Hanzelka and Zikmund, the athlete Emil Zátopek and architect Eva Jiřičná. Where do you think this courage to persevere and not be afraid to do great things comes from?

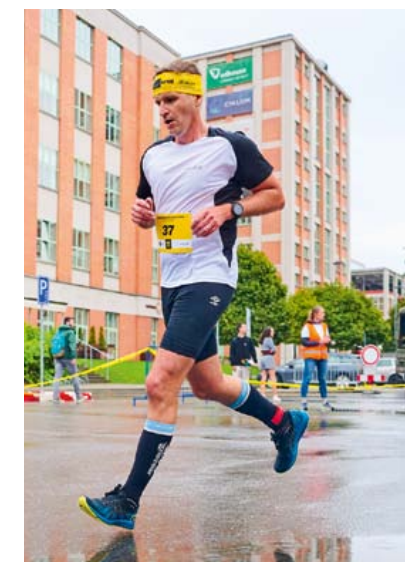
The Zlín Region is a place where people have never been afraid to go beyond their limits. It's no coincidence that our slogan is: Zlín Region, a region without borders. Courage and resilience are deeply rooted in our region. I think this comes from the land where we live – our landscape, strong traditions, hard work and determination. People in the Zlín Region have always had to be creative when solving their issues, which helped them fulfil their dreams. This trait has been passed down from generation to generation here, and I believe it will never go away.

What would you personally invite magazine readers to visit in the Zlín Region? Which places do you like the most?

Personally, I'm very fond of Radhošť and go there regularly – not just for the beautiful nature, but also to admire one of the most magnificent views of our region. I'd definitely recommend Velehrad, the spiritual centre of the Cyril and Methodius Route, and Kroměříž, where you can relax in the beautiful gardens and the historic chateau, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

I also recommend Luhačovice for its unique spa atmosphere, Moravian Slovakia for its traditional folklore and excellent wine, and Zlín for its unique combination of Baťa's architecture and modern urban design. If you like sports and particularly water, the Baťa Canal will delight you. The Zlín Region has many faces and I believe that everyone can find a place they will love here.

Radim Holíš as a participant of the Emil Zátopek Run during Zlín Region Day, photo: The Zlín Region





The Zlín Region

The Cradle of the Cyril and Methodius Route



Velehrad, photo: m-ARK

In the heart of east Moravia lies the Zlín Region, a place that will appeal to you with its nature, rich cultural traditions and unique history. Interestingly, it is the cradle of the Cyril and Methodius Route, which connects places associated with the fascinating story of Cyril and Methodius.



Cyril and Methodius Centre in Staré Město, photo: m-ARK

Modrá and Velehrad, photo: m-ARK

More than a thousand years ago, in the period of Great Moravia in the 9th century, two missionaries brought to this land not only the Slavic liturgy, but also a new alphabet and culture. Their legacy today is not only a spiritual memory, but also an opportunity to think about how our history is reflected in the landscape that we can explore. Let's embark on a journey that will take you to the most important places of cultural and spiritual heritage in the Zlín Region.

A Trail Linking History and Nature

Are you looking for a quiet walk in nature, want to learn more about cultural history or simply spend a day in the fresh air? Then the Cyril and Methodius Route is the ideal choice for you. It is a network of hiking trails that lead through charming landscapes to pilgrimage sites and former Slavic settlements. Each of the trails – the Beskydy, White Carpathian, Great Moravian, Bohemian-Moravian and Archbishop – has its own symbolism and a unique story. They start from different directions, but all lead to the pilgrimage site of Velehrad, a cultural crossroads of our part of Europe. The Zlín Region offers almost 300 kilometres of marked trails of the Cyril and Methodius Routes, which will draw you deep into history thanks to many historical monuments, archaeological sites and sacred shrines. Be inspired by the local people, for whom these sites have an immeasurable importance. Whether you're an experienced hiker or just want to enjoy a leisurely stroll, the trails of the Cyril and Methodius Route will reward you with beautiful views, tranquillity and stories rooted deep in our history. Follow them and let them inspire you.



Treasury of Great Moravia in Modrá, photo: m-ARK

Pustevny – Velehrad

134 km

Pustevny – Radhošť – Svatý Hostýn – Štípa – Zlín – Velehrad

The Beskydy Trail starts at the Polish border. It will take you to Radhošť Mountain and its unmistakable Cyril and Methodius chapel with its Byzantine-style dome, as well as Svatý Hostýn, the highest pilgrimage site in the Czech Republic with a permanent pastor. The route will take you through the Hostýn Hills, to Lukov Castle and the pilgrimage site of Štípa near Zlín, to the archaeological open-air museum in Modrá near Velehrad, where you will see for yourself how the Slavic ancestors lived in the time of Cyril and Methodius. Consider visiting the largest Great Moravian historical festival: Veligrad – The Fight for the Stronghold. Here you will meet the inhabitants of Great Moravia face to face. You can learn about the advanced craft culture of the ancient Slavs in the newly built unique Treasury of Great Moravia. The route is 200 kilometres long, of which 134 are located in the Zlín Region.



Great Moravia Memorial in Staré Město, photo: m-ARK



Svatý Hostýn, photo: m-ARK



Luhačovice, photo: m-ARK

Žitková – Velehrad

86 km

Žitková – Bojkovice – Luhačovice – Uherské Hradiště – Staré Město – Velehrad

Are you a nature and history lover? Then follow the **White Carpathian Trail**, which will take you through picturesque villages and along the green hills of the White Carpathians to the spa town of Luhačovice and to historical Uherské Hradiště and Staré Město. In the Early Middle Ages, this was the site of Veligrad, the place where the Byzantine scholars Cyril and Methodius did their work. Archaeological sites such as the St Methodius Height, Špitálky and Na Valách are complemented by expositions of the Great Moravia Memorial and the Cyril and Methodius Centre. Here you will discover the whole Story of Constantine and Methodius and see many rare finds from prehistoric settlement. From Staré Město, continue to Velehrad along the bike trail decorated with the artistically valuable Pilgrimage Route of the Rosary. The route from the Czech-Slovak border via Žitková to Velehrad is 86 kilometres long.



Archbishop's Chateau, Kroměříž, photo: m-ARK



St Methodius Height, photo: m-ARK

Kroměříž – Velehrad

45km
Hradisko – Arcibiskupský zámek –
Bunč – Modrá – Velehrad

The Archbishop Trail connects Velehrad with Olomouc, the seat of Moravian Archbishops, who are the direct successors of St Methodius. In the Zlín Region, it runs from the Kroměříž Area through the Bunč forest guesthouse in the Chřiby Mountains to Velehrad and is about 45 kilometres long. Along the way, you will visit the Moravian Versailles – the Archbishop's Chateau and gardens in Kroměříž, which are rightly inscribed on the UNESCO list for their refined Baroque style. Don't miss the climb up the chateau tower or the costumed tours with guides who literally live the history of the place.

Osvětimany – Velehrad

22km
Hradisko sv. Klimenta – Buchlov –
Velehrad

The final part of the **Great Moravian Trail** from Mikulčice on the Czech-Slovak border and the Bohemian-Moravian Route from Levý Hradec

lead to Velehrad over the mystical Chřiby Mountains. The twenty-two-kilometre-long stage connects several cultural and natural treasures. In Osvětimany, it begins at the St Clement Stronghold, which, as the name suggests, is related to Pope Clement, whose relics were originally kept in the local church before Cyril and Methodius brought them to Rome. Every year, the church hosts a pilgrimage on Pentecost.

Walking past one of the most interesting rock formations in Chřiby, the Kazatelna (Pulpit), you will reach Buchlov Castle, one of the oldest and most majestic royal castles in the country. The red tourist trail will take you around Břestecá Rock through the nature of Chřiby to Velehrad.

Steps in the Right Direction

Thanks to the cooperation with the Czech Tourist Club, the Cyril and Methodius Route is well signposted, which makes it easy to find your way around even if you're visiting for the first time. Just follow the unique symbol depicting Saints Cyril and Methodius. You can find it on signposts of the Czech Tourist Club.

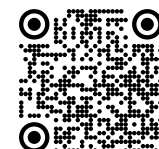
The route is marked as a standard tourist trail on the Mapy.cz map portal and in its app. The app's offline version will ensure you'll never get lost on your hikes. The routes lead not only through Moravia and Bohemia, but also to other countries connected with the Cyril and Methodius tradition. They are marked in both directions.

The routes can be enjoyed by families, pilgrims as well as hikers

The trails of the Cyril and Methodius Route are ideal for families, hikers, pilgrims and anyone who wants to actively discover the cultural and natural beauty of the region. There's something for everyone. Follow in the footsteps of the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius and discover the beauty and depth of a tradition that spans more than a millennium and the evidence that it continues to influence the landscape. The route's importance has been confirmed by its designation as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. This certification means that the route links important sites and monuments associated with the history and heritage of Saints Cyril and Methodius across Europe and is part of a wider European cultural and tourism programme.



St Clement Stronghold, photo: m-ARK



KČT labelling, photo: Martin Peterka

Velehrad



Velehrad, photo: m-ARK

THE JEWEL AND THE HEART OF THE CYRIL AND METHODIUS ROUTE



The most important pilgrimage site in the Czech Republic, which is closely linked to the Cyril and Methodius tradition, is not only a religious centre, but also a symbol of the entire region. It was here that Pope St John Paul II said: "Here are our roots!" The Basilica of the Assumption of Virgin Mary and Saints Cyril and Methodius is a place where you can find peace and a deep spiritual atmosphere all year round. Every year the pilgrimage site hosts the Days of People of Good Will, a festival that commemorates the cultural tradition of this place and attracts pilgrims not only from the Czech Republic. The Cistercian Seal festival of sacramental wines revives the tradition of wine growing and production which dates back to the beginnings of the monastery associated with the Cistercian Order. In 2024, Velehrad was awarded the prestigious European Heritage label and became part of the European network of Cistercian monasteries.

www.cyril-methodius.eu



Photo: m-ARK and Martin Peterka

Interesting Facts about Pilgrimage Sites



Photo: Martin Peterka

Velehrad

More than eight hundred years ago, twelve Cistercian monks decided to found a monastery near Veligrad, today's Staré Město. But the pilgrimage site of Velehrad draws its strength from an even deeper history. Its roots date back to the 9th century, when the famous missionaries worked here.

St Clement Stronghold

The site on St Clement's Hill was known already in prehistoric times and archaeological excavations have confirmed that it was settled from the 9th century. The church that once stood on top of the hill held the relics of St Clement until Cyril and Methodius took them to Rome.



Photo: Martin Peterka



Photo: m-ARK

Štípa Marian pilgrimage site

Located near Zlín is a pilgrimage church dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary. Its main altar is adorned with a statue of the Virgin Mary with the Baby Jesus, which is one of the oldest Marian statues in Moravia.

Svatý Hostýn

A popular Marian pilgrimage site whose main attraction is the Basilica of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. You can also walk along Jurkovič's Stations of the Cross with Koehler's mosaics and learn more about the history of Hostýn in the exhibitions of the Svatý Hostýn Museum.

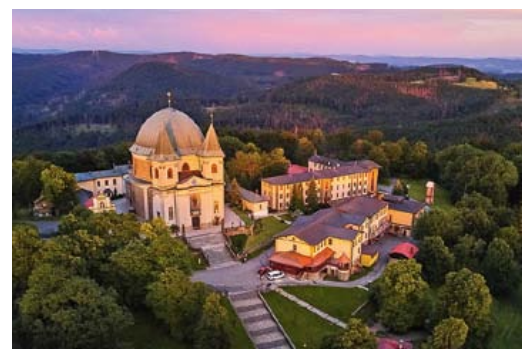


Photo: Tomáš Lénárd

Zašová

The village of Zašová, founded at the beginning of the 14th century, is famous for its Baroque pilgrimage Church of Our Lady of Zašová, built in 1714 on the site of an old wooden church. In the 18th century, the monks of the Trinitarian Order built a monastery here, which is now used as a social care institution.



Photo: m-ARK

Radhošť

What Říp is for Bohemia, Radhošť is for Moravia. One of the foundation stones of the National Theatre came from this mountain, and here, according to tradition, the two missionaries erected a cross over pagan sacrificial grounds. The Cyril and Methodius Chapel at the top of Radhošť Mountain is the fruit of awakened national consciousness and since its founding in 1898 has remained the church at the highest elevation in the Czech Republic.



Photo: archive of the Moravian-Silesian Region

Introducing Archaeological Sites – Great Moravian Hillforts



St Methodius Height, photo: m-ARK



Great Moravia Memorial in Staré Město, photo: m-ARK



Open-Air Archaeological Museum in Modrá, photo: m-ARK

SAINT METHIDIUS HEIGHT IN UHERSKÉ HRADIŠTĚ

A remarkable archaeological site with ancient remains of Great Moravian sacred buildings from the 9th century. Take a walk through the grounds, where the tomb of St Methodius is said to be located, and let the information panels guide you through the rich local history.

MONUMENT OF GREAT MORAVIA AND THE CYRIL AND METHIDIUS CENTRE

in Staré Město has been a showcase of the history of Great Moravia for more than 70 years. Its oldest part was built in the 1960s on the foundations of a Great Moravian church with

a cemetery. In the memorial, you will learn about archaeological finds from the region and the life of the Slavs in three modern exhibitions. The newly completed Cyril and Methodius Centre is one of the representative sites of the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

THE NA DÍLE SITE AND THE OPEN-AIR ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN MODRÁ

In 1911, the fascinating discovery of the Na Díle archaeological site with the foundations of a church from the Great Moravian period sparked debates among historians. As a visitor, you can admire the reconstructed replica of the entire church building, which

stands proudly next to the original foundations. The site is located near the village of Modrá, where you can visit an open-air archaeological museum. The museum takes you back in time with a carefully reconstructed fortified settlement from the era of Great Moravia from the 9th century with defensive walls, dwellings, workshops, farm buildings and magnificent palaces of princes and bishops. An interesting feature is the new Treasury of Great Moravia, built in 2024. In the underground rooms, you can admire rare jewels from the 9th century. The exhibition presents both originals and precise scientific copies.

What events and festivals to visit?



The Days of People of Good Will, photo: m-ARK

■ **THE DAYS OF PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL, VELEHRAD**, early July, dnylididobrevule.cz

■ **CYRIL AND METHIDIUS PILGRIMAGE AT RADHOŠŤ**, 5 July

■ **VELIGRAD – THE FIGHT FOR THE STRONGHOLD** (historical battle from the time of Great Moravia), Open-Air Archaeological Museum in Modrá, second weekend in August

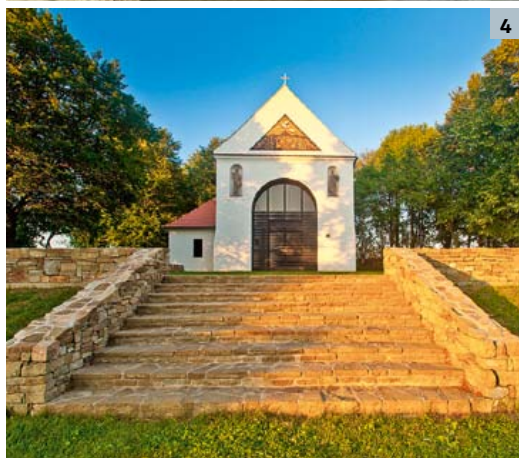
■ **CISTERCIAN SEAL**, competitive exhibition of sacramental and kosher wines, third Saturday in November, Velehrad

■ **RIDE OF THE KINGS** (Vlčnov, Kunovice, Hluk) – A folk custom inscribed on the UNESCO list, which takes place in Kunovice once every two years – most recently in May 2024, and in Vlčnov every year at the end of May. www.jizdakralukunovice.cz, www.jizdakralu.cz



Ride of Kings in Vlčnov, photo: m-ARK

Veligrad – The Fight for the Stronghold, photo: m-ARK



Uherské Hradiště

along the Cyril and Methodius Route

The town of Uherské Hradiště welcomes you on the White Carpathian Trail of the Cyril and Methodius Route with the **Rovně Lookout Tower**, which offers magnificent views of the city, the Chřiby Hills with Buchlov and Barborka and the White Carpathians. If you take a small detour, you will reach the **Chapel of St Roch** (4), a pilgrimage site surrounded by trees, where you can make a short stop and admire the beauty of this quiet corner of land. From the chapel, you can go through the natural **Park Rochus** and around the Rochus open-air folk architecture museum, which captures village life in the 19th and early 20th century. From the open-air museum, you can follow **Vinohradská Street** (5) back to the Cyril and Methodius Route past the Mařatic cemetery and the Church of the Assumption of Virgin Mary. The next stop on your journey is **St Methodius Height** (6), a place of spiritual importance and a significant archaeological site with remains of Great Moravian sacred buildings from the 9th century. A church complex with

four brick buildings (a church, chapel, tomb chamber, and a baptistery) and a group of another 15 log buildings as well as a large cemetery have been identified here. The site has been a National Cultural Monument since 1969. From the St Methodius Height, you will go to the **city centre**, where you can sit in one of the local cafés; on **Masaryk Square** (1) you will have a view of the **Church of St Francis Xavier**, and on Marian Square you can admire the plague column, the Baroque fountain and the tower of the former town hall. If you want to learn more about the city's history, visit the exhibition **Uherské Hradiště – The Royal Town**, housed in the former Jesuit college together with the **Joža Uprka Gallery** (3), which displays paintings of this important painter from Moravian Slovakia. Experience the beauty of traditional folk costumes in the ethnographic exhibition of the **Museum of Moravian Slovakia** (2). All that and more can be found in Uherské Hradiště, the heart of Moravian Slovakia.

www.uherske-hradieste.cz
www.mesto-uh.cz



Photo: m-ARK (6x)



GARDEN CITY WITH A UNIQUE ARCHITECTURE

Zlín

Eva Jiřičná Congress and University Centre, Gahura Boulevard and Labour Square, photo: city archive

Tomáš Baťa's plan for the garden city was based on factory principles, and it's had an inimitable atmosphere ever since. Zlín was transformed from a tiny town into a modern city with Functionalism architecture by some of the best architects and urban planners of the time. Explore its possibilities today and be enchanted by its many unique features.

Zlín boasts a unique factory complex of the former Baťa Works with the iconic **Building 21 – the Baťa Sky-scraper**. Take a ride in Baťa's mobile office in a lift or in the longest paternoster in the Czech Republic, visit the original director's floor and the roof terrace with a café and see the bronze model of the city.

Discover the unique **Baťa Principle exhibition featuring the largest collection of shoes in Central Europe**. Peek into the world of film animation and learn about the adventurous journeys of the world-famous travellers Hanzelka and Zikmund. Don't forget

to visit one of the most impressive buildings in the world of architecture, the glass **Tomáš Baťa Memorial** that glows above the city at night.

The recently opened **Museum of Maps** in Zlín allows you to create your own landscape on a sand model. **The Regional Gallery of Fine Arts** in Zlín now invites visitors to an exhibition called + – Zlín, featuring fine art, architecture and design.

Whether you are a lover of architecture, history or nature, plan a visit to Baťa's Zlín and experience its uniqueness. You can take a stroll among brick

houses, admire important villas and discover architectural gems. The city parks invite you to relax in the peace of the greenery, or you can venture out of the city along nature trails summarised in the guidebook From the City to the Forest.

OUR TIP:

Get to know the city with a professional guide and embark on one of the guided architecture walks called ZÓNA ZLÍN. If you prefer to explore on your own, download the Zlín Architectural Manual (ZAM) app or the interactive city guide Baťa's Zlín with augmented reality features.



Infopoint, Baťa housing, photo: city archive



The Baťa Principle Exhibition, photo: m-ARK



Photo: m-ARK



Photo: m-ARK



www.visitzlin.eu



www.batuvregion.cz

Follow in the Footsteps of Cyril and Methodius through South Moravia



Slavice Fortified Settlement in Mikulčice, photo: m-ARK

Lovers of adventure, tourism and history can also follow the footsteps of the Slavic scholars Cyril and Methodius in the South Moravian Region. Archaeological finds suggest that this region may have been home to the centres where Saints Cyril and Methodius and their disciples worked and from where they spread Slavic writing.

The Cyril and Methodius Route runs through the South Moravian Region, specifically in parts of its Bohemian-Moravian trail from Tišnov to Velehrad and in four stages of the Great Moravian trail from Hodonín to Velehrad. Two sites here remind us of an important part of local history: the Mikulčice settlement near Hodonín and the Pohansko settlement near Břeclav, both connected by a popular bike trail. Discover the history of Great Moravia piece by piece.

Take a Trip to 9th-Century Great Moravia

The South Moravian Region invites you on a fascinating journey to the

9th century, when Great Moravia developed in its territory. History literally comes alive here thanks to the preserved monuments, archaeological sites and remains of ancient settlements. Let's visit together four important sites that reveal the wealth and cultural flourishing of the Great Moravian Empire.

SLAVICE FORTIFIED SETTLEMENT IN MIKULČICE: THE HEART OF GREAT MORAVIA

Mikulčice used to be one of the main power and spiritual centres of Great Moravia. On an area of 10 hectares, experts have discovered the

foundations of a princely palace, twelve churches, three bridges and cemeteries with more than 2,500 graves. Today, you can come to the modern visitor centre, admire the exhibition with many archaeological finds and climb the lookout tower. Mikulčice is rightfully protected as a national cultural monument.

POHANSKO FORTIFIED SETTLEMENT: HISTORICAL LEGACY IN A RIPARIAN FOREST

Just three kilometres from Břeclav, in a riparian forest above the confluence of the Morava and the Dyje rivers, lies the Pohansko settlement. At the time

Slavice Fortified Settlement in Mikulčice, photo: m-ARK



Znojmo, St Hippolytus Settlement, photo: M. Peterka

protected by a massive wall. Today, the village offers a small open-air museum with an example of an ancient Slavic dwelling, an information centre and an exhibition about Great Moravia.

STARÉ ZÁMKY: THE PRECURSOR TO A MODERN METROPOLIS

On a rock promontory above the Říčka Stream, which today belongs to the district of Brno-Líšeň, you will find Staré Zámky. In its heyday, during the era of the Great Moravian Empire, the settlement was a crossroads connecting the centre of the empire with ironworks located in the Moravian Karst, which essentially makes it the predecessor to the city of Brno itself.



Pohansko – multimedia exhibition, photo: m-ARK

Today, the site is a protected archaeological monument conservation area.

A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME IN SEARCH OF THE MISSIONARIES' LEGACY

Since ancient times, Moravia has been considered the cradle of Christianity and learning in Central Europe. It was here that the two Greeks from Thessaloniki, Cyril and Methodius, arrived in 863 to spread the faith and bring the Slavonic liturgy. Their legacy is still alive in Moravia not only in traditions, but also in the historical monuments that preserve fragments of their heritage. Visit places that remind us of the importance of the two saints.

of Great Moravia, it was the site of one of the largest Great Moravian hillforts in Central Europe. This rich history is commemorated at the local archaeological open-air museum, where you will find a pagan shrine from the 10th century and a pithouse with a replica of a period well. The site also extends to the Pohansko Château, built in the Empire Style, which features an exhibition on Great Moravia. If you come to Pohansko, don't forget to visit other sights of the Lednice-Valtice Area, of which Pohansko Château forms a part.

ST HIPPOLYTUS HILLFORT: A JEWEL ABOVE THE DYJE

Not far from Znojmo, on a high rock promontory above the Dyje River, is the St Hippolytus hillfort. In its time, it was a powerful fortress with two stone churches and a cemetery



Pohansko Fortified Settlement, photo: archive of the South Moravian Region



Rajhrad, Museum of Literature in Moravia, photo: archive of the South Moravian Region



BENEDICTINE MONASTERY IN RAJHRAD

A centre of culture and learning. The monastery's founding dates to the first half of the 11th century, but historical sources suggest it was built over another, much older monastery. Today you can visit the Abbey Church of St Peter and Paul and the Museum of Literature in Moravia. The museum presents Moravian literature of the

past ten centuries and offers access to its crown jewel – the historical library with 65,000 volumes. There is also an interesting example of the Glagolitic alphabet which Cyril and Methodius developed for writing Old Church Slavonic.

KŘTINY PILGRIMAGE SITE

Legend has it that in this valley, Saints Cyril and Methodius baptised the pagan population. Pilgrims were coming here already in the 13th century, because the original church reportedly contained a miraculous painting. Today the site attracts not only believers, but also admirers of architecture. Its dominant feature is the Church of the Virgin Mary of Křtiny, the work of the famous architect Jan Blažej Santini, which has the floorplan of a Greek cross in concentric circles. Below the church is an ossuary holding the remains of almost a thousand people from the 13th to the 18th century. The church also features the largest freestanding carillon in Central Europe with 33 bells.

Křtiny Pilgrimage Site, photo: m-ARK



Brno, St Peter and Paul Cathedral, photo: Pixabay

CATHEDRAL OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL IN BRNO

The seat church of the bishop of the Brno diocese, whose history dates back to the second half of the 12th century. Over the centuries, the original church on Petrov Hill was transformed into a massive cathedral in the Neo-Gothic style with a distinctive double tower. It is one of the most important architectural monuments of south Moravia. Since 2013, a stone sculpture of Cyril and Methodius has stood near the cathedral to commemorate the 1,150th anniversary of their arrival in Great Moravia. The two brothers are co-patrons of the Brno cathedral and the entire Brno diocese.

MONASTERY OF ST GORAZD IN HRUBÁ VRBKA

A small Orthodox monastery stands on the border of Moravia and Slovakia in Hrubá Vrbka. It commemorates the local native Matěj Pavlík, later Orthodox Bishop Gorazd. He was executed for hiding paratroopers after the assassination of Protector Heydrich in an Orthodox church in Prague in 1942. Today, three monks living here are trying to revive and preserve the Orthodox Church traditions of Cyril and Methodius.



Hrubá Vrbka – Monastery of St Gorazd, photo: archive of the South Moravian Region



Bučovice Chateau, photo: m-ARK

Wander along the Cyril and Methodius Route in South Moravia

The Bohemian-Moravian Trail

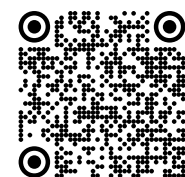
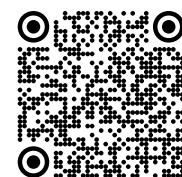
125 km

Tišnov – Vranov u Brna – Křtiny – Rousínov – Bučovice – Bukovany – Velehrad

The route going from Tišnov through the Moravian Karst, Drahany Highlands, Žďánický Forest and Chřiby to Velehrad connects three pilgrimage sites: Vranov u Brna, Křtiny and Velehrad. It will take you to a landscape of monasteries and fortresses where Christian thinking developed.

Begin your journey in **Tišnov** with a visit to the Church of St Wenceslas or the Klucanina lookout tower and continue along the road to **Vranov u Brna**, which is adorned with the pilgrimage church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary at the adjacent Minim monastery. Contemplate the unique Gothic sculpture of the Virgin Mary or visit the Liechtenstein Tomb. From Vranov u Brna, continue on to **Křtiny**; along the way, don't miss the Church of St Barbara in **Adamov**, the unique technical monument of the Old Ironworks in the nearby Křtiny Valley, the mysterious Bull Rock and other caves along the trail. Through the Moravian Karst, you will arrive in Křtiny, where you will certainly be impressed by the Baroque pilgrimage Church of the Virgin Mary designed by architect Santini. The route from Křtiny to **Rousínov**

will lead you through the Drahany Highlands and the Říčky Nature Park. In Rousínov, visit the Church of the Congregation of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Through **Bučovice**, where you will find a chateau and the Marian Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, continue in the Žďánický Forest to **Bukovany**, where the Bukovany Mill and the Chapel of St John Paul II are located. Through the mysterious Chřiby, where you can find St Clement Hill and **Buchlov** Castle, you will reach the most important pilgrimage site in the Czech Republic, **Velehrad**, which is very closely connected with the Cyril and Methodius tradition. It was here that the first Great Moravian archbishop, St Methodius, may have resided. The Bohemian-Moravian route continues west to Levý Hradec near Prague, where Christian learning was transferred from Moravia by the baptism of Prince Bořivoj and his wife Princess Ludmila, the first Czech saint. You can find a detailed description of the individual stages, including tips for other interesting places, restaurants and accommodation on the website www.cyril-methodius.eu.



Petrov-Plze, photo: Martin Peterka

The Great Moravian Trail

94 km

Hodonín – Holíč – Skalica – Strážnice – Vracov – Osvětimany – Velehrad

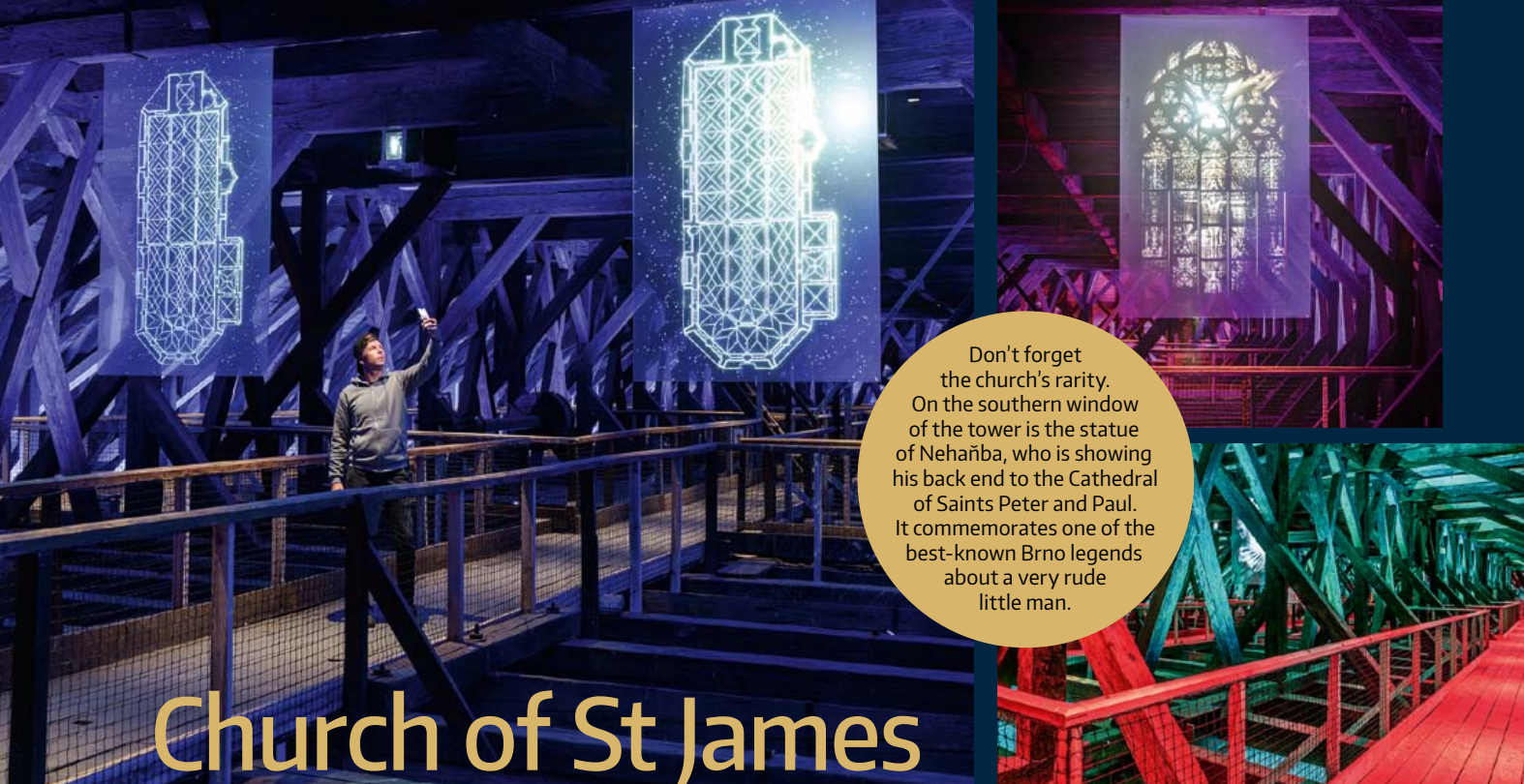
From Hodonín, head to the important Great Moravian centre – the Mikulčice-Kopčany Archaeological Park. In **Mikulčice** you will see an extensive archaeological site, and in **Kopčany** the last partially preserved church from the 9th century. Both sites are connected by the Great Moravia footbridge. Continue to **Holíč** with its Baroque chateau and fortifications. Visit the royal town of **Skalica** and continue past the four ports of the Baťa Canal. Take the opportunity to rent a boat and experience a cruise on this unique example of industrial heritage. Along the way, don't forget to visit **Petrov**, renowned for the ornately painted wine cellars of Plze. Make sure to visit **Strážnice** with its open-air museum and chateau, where an international folklore festival takes place. Enjoy the pine forests near **Bzenec** and continue among the fields and vineyards offering beautiful views. An interesting stop on your journey could be Žeravice, the place where John Amos Comenius, the Teacher of Nations, was ordained a priest. Then you will reach Chřiby, a location that is interesting for both for its nature and history. Enjoy the romantic forest recesses with rocks, wells, streams, deep valleys as well as places with far-reaching views and many archaeological sites until you reach Velehrad itself.



Bzenec, photo: Martin Peterka

More hiking trips in south Moravia:





Don't forget the church's rarity. On the southern window of the tower is the statue of Nehařba, who is showing his back end to the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul. It commemorates one of the best-known Brno legends about a very rude little man.

Church of St James

A GOTHIC JEWEL IN THE HEART OF BRNO

The Church of St James in Brno is one of the most important Gothic monuments in the Czech Republic. In 2021–2024, it underwent an extensive restoration and today offers a unique multimedia exhibition, where you can experience the history of the church and the city of Brno with all your senses.

The church is located in Rašínova Street near Svoboda Square. Its history dates back to the 13th century. One of its main symbols is the 92-metre-high tower.

History of the Church Carved in the Rafters

After the renovation, the National Cultural Monument offers a new sightseeing circuit inside the monumental four-storey timber roof. In the unique space, you can enjoy a modern audiovisual light show about the history of Brno and the church. You will be guided by actors from Brno in the Visit Jakub Brno app; there is also videomapping, a light story with 430 lights, surround sound and holographic projection. The multimedia story lasts about eight minutes and repeats every twenty minutes.

Climb the Tower with a Guide

The vault room, the timber roof with a holographic story about the history of the church, a view of the city from the height of 43 metres, the mechanism of the tower clock and the largest church bell, James, which weighs 7.5 tonnes. All this and much more awaits you on the more physically demanding guided ascent of the tower of St James.

On your way up the unique double spiral staircase you will pass the choir overlooking the interior of the church. On the ground floor and outside the church, you can also be guided by your own phone with the Visit Jakub Brno app.

Underground Secrets

Under the Church of St James lies an ossuary that was only discovered in 2001. With more than 50,000 remains, it's the second largest in Europe. Visiting it can become an unforgettable experience connected with the local mystical atmosphere.



Visit the Church of St James, climb the tower, experience the holographic show inside the rafters and take a special guided tour with one of the actors or moderators of Brno.

www.visitjakub.cz

For more interesting facts and tips, visit gotobrna.cz.



Photo: Pavel Gabzdyl



Archbishop Josef Nuzik and Radim Holíš on the journey from Bunč to Velehrad, photo: The Zlín Region

Archbishop of Olomouc Josef Nuzík: **A Pilgrimage Brings a New Perspective on Our Life**

For Olomouc Archbishop Josef Nuzík, a pilgrimage represents the need to leave a familiar place and venture into the unknown to discover oneself. He has a close relationship to pilgrimages; he walked the route from Bunč and also from Křtiny to Velehrad. This year is the 1,140th anniversary of the death of St Methodius. And what theme has Holy Father Francis chosen for this Holy Year?

When people embark on a longer journey, they may do so with a spiritual intention. What could this aim be, for example, in relation to the Cyril and Methodius legacy? There is the idea of discovering something new. My parents used to say that when our ancestors didn't know what to do, they went on a pilgrimage. John Paul II once put it nicely: people who say that things are bad and are going to get worse have forgotten God. Pilgrimage brings us new knowledge, but also expands our hearts; you discover and learn more about yourself. From a distance, you get a different perspective on what troubles you. And that is the purpose of a pilgrimage: to see your own life and what is happening in the world from a different perspective.

An important part of the Cyril and Methodius Route project is marked hiking routes. One of the routes leading from Svatý Kopeček is called the Archbishop Trail. Have you had a chance to walk it?

Yes, I walked a section of it. Not from Olomouc, but one of the stages closer to Velehrad: from Bunč through Modrá to Velehrad. I travelled alongside the governor and council of the Zlín Region. For the second time, I walked with Prague Bishop Zdenek Wasserbauer from Račice u Vyškova to Křtiny; travelling in the opposite direction, we met Father Jan Peňáz, a well-known pilgrim.

This year, we are celebrating 1,140 years since the death of Archbishop Methodius. Are you planning any special events for this anniversary? The veneration of Saints Cyril and Methodius is associated with the winter pilgrimage on 14 February, which is the day of Saint Cyril's death. The national pilgrimage is held on 5 July. Every year, we choose a special theme. This year, it will be the commemoration of 80 years since the end of the Second World War. This is related to the fact that Cyril and Methodius connected the East to the West. Even today, it's impossible to connect nations or the people of a country without a desire for peace.

The year 2025 is also significant for the Church and its community for another reason. It is a Jubilee, a Holy Year. What does it mean and what theme does it carry?

It is celebrated every quarter of a century. Every Holy Year is the anniversary of the coming of the Son of God into the world. And because the Church is generous and wants to help people, it carries the offer of God's grace. It calls on us to remedy broken relationships, to forgive, to put things in order. And the Holy Father Francis has given this Holy Year a great theme – pilgrims of hope. As the Church and as believers, we carry the message to the world that our life is not a journey without a destination. That there is hope, and that God is the source of hope.

Which place outside the Czech and Slovak republics do you find particularly important and worth visiting from the perspective of the Cyril and Methodius heritage? Years ago, I visited Thessaloniki. I was also delighted to see that the Zlín Region has decided to support the Cyril and Methodius Route and that it is engaged in extensive cooperation with Rome. For example, the route's marker can be found on the Church of St Praxedes in Rome. So beyond Thessaloniki, it would be Rome and many other cities that I have never visited and that remain hidden to me.

Thank you for the interview.
Ivan Marek



Photo: THE ARCHDIOCESE OF OLOMOUC

Wander Moravian-Silesian Region to Meet Yourself

In the Moravian-Silesian Region, you can follow part of the Beskydy trail of the Cyril and Methodius Route and thus connect quiet hiking with traditions, history and the beauty of nature.

The stretch from Wisla to Radhošť offers magnificent views, cultural monuments and places of deep symbolism. A pilgrimage is more than just walking – it's a journey to meet yourself. At a time when slow tourism is gaining popularity, this trail is an invitation to stop, reflect and experience the world fully. Come on a journey with us. Whether you set aside one day or spend four days on the road, you will enjoy natural beauty, cultural richness, traditions, but also space for inner reflection, self-discovery and the time to take a break.

Pustevny – Valaška Trail, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region



Kozubová Lookout Tower, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region



Jablunkov, photo: m-ARK

Day one: from Jablunkov to Vyšší Kamenitý (12.1 km, 4:46 hours)

Take the scenic route from Jablunkov to Vyšší Kamenitý, renowned for its peaceful nature and unique views. You will start in the historic town of Jablunkov, famous for the Church of Corpus Christi, and follow the blue trail to picturesque Bocanovice with its traditional wooden houses. Continue along the green trail through Malá Kyčera, where lush forests and majestic views await you. Further on, the yellow trail towards Malá Kykula will take you to the Kozubová lookout tower, which is part of the Chapel of St Anne built in the 1940s near the village of Milíkov. The destination of the trip, Vyšší Kamenitý, offers a perfect rest in the middle of nature.

WHERE TO STOP?

- Jablunkov Information Centre
- The Trojmezí Museum in the Prince's House in Jablunkov with the exhibition Land and People
- World Museum and Bible Library

Photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region



with unique prints of the Bible and other spiritual books

- Jablunkov Arboretum, a park with a rare collection of trees and a large beech
- Ameryka summer entertainment centre, a summer swimming pool with a water slide, miniature golf and a rope climbing centre
- Kozubová lookout tower, 18 metres tall with a view of the Moravian-Silesian Beskydy Mountains
- Ursus – experience centre Dolní Lomná, environmental programmes for children and adults, two interactive exhibitions, natural garden, café, information centre of the Beskydy Mountains Protected Landscape Area

CULTURAL EVENTS: Gorolské šviato Jablunkov (early August), Matice Slezská Days in Dolní Lomná (May), pilgrimages to Kozubová (July) and Salajka (Horní Lomná, September)

Day two: from Vyšší Kamenitý to Bílý Kříž (13.4 km, 4:52 hours)

Are you a nature lover? Then this route has something for you. A beautiful walk through the Beskydy Mountains, partly on the border between the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Expect a real wilderness with deep forests, rocks and wetlands, and don't forget to pack plenty of food and drink, because civilization doesn't quite reach here. From Vyšší Kamenitý, take the yellow trail towards Babí vrch and at the crossroads switch to the red trail southwards until you reach Kolář's Hut and the "Slavič – turistická chata"



Church of St Frederick in Bílá, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region

crossroads. From here, follow the Wolf-ram-Morávka nature trail to the Lačnov rest area. Then you will continue along the red trail to Kozí hřbety – Václavičky, where you will join the blue trail that will take you to the crossroads "Pod Malým Polomem – sedlo". From here, you will follow the red trail again past Mechový spring, climb to the top of Polomka and eventually reach Bílý Kříž and the local chapel where Karol Wojtyła, later Pope John Paul II, once celebrated Mass.

WHERE TO STOP?

- The Bílý Kříž Chapel, which dates back to 1932, is dedicated to Cyril and Methodius and on their feast day hosts a fair and religious services.
- The Bílý Kříž wooden bell tower under the peak of Súlův.
- On the Morávka Springs Nature Trail, 14 km long, you will learn about the history, local nature and water management and see the Morávka spring and Morávka reservoir.
- The Gruň – Bílý Kříž nature trail leads along one of the most beautiful inhabited ridges of the Beskydy Mountains – Gruň. It starts in Staré Hamry at the monument to Maryčka Magdonová and leads to the last stop at Bílý Kříž.

Kamenitý Lodge, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region





Bílá, photo: m-ARK



Bílá, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region



Pustevny, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region



Pustevny – the Devil's Mill Nature Trail, photo: m-ARK



Bílá, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region

Day three: from Bílý Kříž to Mezivodí (19.1 km, 5:24 hours)

The route from Bílý Kříž to Mezivodí passes through popular ski resorts in the Beskydy Mountains. You will start at Bílý Kříž, pass through Bílá with its beautiful wooden church and finish the third stage of the Beskydy Trail of the Cyril and Methodius Route in Mezivodí. You will follow the green trail for nearly the entire trip. Make sure to stop in Bílá to learn more at the local information centre, visit the wooden church of St Frederick and see the Archbishop's hunting lodge, built by the Archbishop of Olomouc for his relaxation in the early 20th century. From Bílá, follow the green markings to Mezivodí; from the Velká Smradlava

Valley, take the blue trail to Salajka and there switch to yellow markings for the final leg of the journey.

WHERE TO STOP?

- Wooden church of St Frederick in Bílá, folk architecture from the 1870s designed by Antonín Kybasta, who found inspiration in Sweden.
- Children's summer park in Bílá, animals in the mini-zoo, tubing tracks, trampolines, aqua zorbing, water worlds, castle, pond with boats and other attractions for the whole family.
- The Zbojník chairlift in Bílá, trails, scooters, hiking.
- The Archbishop's hunting lodge in Bílá still retains its original appearance with shingled walls.



Libušín, photo: NMVP

Day four: from Mezivodí to Pustevny (16.4 km, 5:35 hours)

The route from Mezivodí to Pustevny starts at two ski resorts. About halfway along your journey, you will pass the Partisan Memorial at Martiňák, where a beautiful view of the surrounding countryside awaits you. You will continue through beech and spruce forests and enjoy more unique views. The valley with the houses on Kněhyně and Prostřední Bečva, as well as peaks such as Soláň, Tanečnice, Vsacký Cáb, Vizovice and the Hostýn Hills will reveal their natural beauty to you. Your reward for the day's wandering will be a view of the mountain huts designed by the Slovak architect Dušan Jurkovič – Libušín and Maměnka. From them, you can either walk to the statue of Radegast or go in the other direction to enjoy the panoramic Valaška Trail that runs through the treetops.

WHERE TO STOP?

- Pustevny:
 - Libušín and Maměnka huts in Folk Art Nouveau style; Libušín reopened in 2020 after a fire
 - Cyrilka lookout and the Wallachian bell tower
 - the statue of Radegast; a legend claims that there used to be a wooden pagan idol of Radegast on top of the mountain that was pulled down by Cyril and Methodius. Today, a granite statue of the pagan god can be found on the trail from Pustevny to the top of Radhošť.
 - Valaška Trail in the treetops, 610 m, glass viewing platform, suspended Himalayan walkway, lookout tower, interesting facts about the nature of the Beskydy Mountains
 - Pustevenská Zoo entertainment and nature trail, 1.5 km, wooden animal statues
 - Tarzanie mountain rope park in Trojanovice, several obstacle routes, routes for children, jump from a height of 13 meters
 - scooter rentals
- Chapel of Saints Cyril and Methodius at Radhošť, built in 1898 in the Byzantine style; in front of the chapel is a sculpture of Saints Cyril and Methodius by Albín Polášek from 1931.

The Beskydy Trail continues into the Zlín Region. All thirteen stages of the Beskydy Trail of the Cyril and Methodius Route can be found

on the website www.cyril-methodius.eu/cs/trasy-v-cesku with tips for specific places to visit, restaurants and accommodation.

Have you heard about slow tourism?

Forget hectic running from one tourist attraction to another. Instead, enjoy the place you've arrived at, discover the details, soak up the local atmosphere and culture, meet the people and experience the smells, tastes and stories. Slow tourism means that instead of running, we prefer to walk and discover the world at a leisurely pace and with an emphasis on what is important.



Statue of Radegast, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region



Radhošť, Chapel of Saints Cyril and Methodius, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region



Radhošť, statue of Saints Cyril and Methodius, photo: The Moravian-Silesian Region



Silesian Museum, photo: Moravian-Silesian Tourism

Come on, Neighbour, Let's Play

PLAYFUL CZECH-POLISH BORDERLAND

Discover the attractions of the Moravian-Silesian Region and the Silesian Voivodeship. The Playful Borderland offers 58 attractions on both the Czech and Polish sides. Whether you prefer hiking, culture or technical monuments, you will find something to your liking.



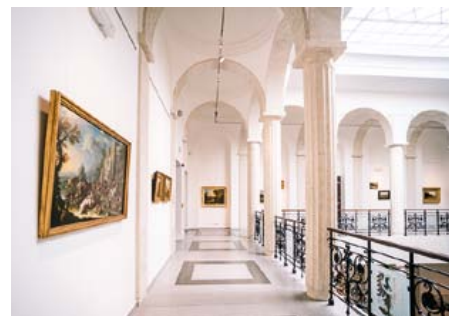
New Town Hall of Ostrava, photo: Moravian-Silesian Tourism

Observation tower of the New Town Hall

Ostrava's New Town Hall impresses with its 85.6-metre-high tower. Originally it was to be made of brick, but due to the unstable foundation it was built of steel and, like the town hall itself, stands on a unique ribbed slab of reinforced concrete. The 73-metre-high observation deck offers views of Silesian and Moravian Ostrava and the Beskydy Mountains; in clear weather, you can see all the way to Poland.

Silesian Museum in Opava

The historical building is the main exhibition area of the oldest museum in the Czech Republic. You can visit the Nature of Silesia exhibition, which displays everything from geology to large mammals. The hall of the historical exhibition building is dominated by a unique stuffed specimen of an Indian elephant. The Müller House, the last remnant of the Opava Château demolished at the end of the 19th century, is also part of the complex.



Silesian Museum, photo: Moravian-Silesian Tourism

More tips for trips can be found at: www.hravepohranici.cz.



Carbonarium, photo: Moravian-Silesian Tourism

Łaźnia Moszczenica – Carbonarium

Thanks to 3D technology and virtual reality, visitors to the Łaźnia Moszczenica centre can learn more about mining work and heavy industry technology, including historical mining methods. The Centre of Post-Industrial Heritage, opened in 2023, is located in the former washrooms of the Moszczenica Mine; its modern exhibition entitled Carbonarium with original mining displays teaches you more about the history, development and culture of Upper Silesia.

Lace Centre in Koniaków

In Koniaków, traditional lace making dates back more than a hundred years. In the Lace Centre with its museum and folk art shop, you will discover the history and extraordinary process of making lace without any templates. The tradition, unique in the world, is passed on from one generation to the next. It was inscribed on the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2017. If you visit Koniaków, you will be able to see these originals for yourself.



Lace Centre in Koniaków, photo: Moravian-Silesian Tourism



A Concert in a Church is a Wonderful Experience

ST WENCESLAS MUSIC FESTIVAL

Renowned European classical music performers have been presenting their art in churches of the Moravian-Silesian Region for more than 20 years thanks to the St Wenceslas Music Festival (SHF). The largest international festival in the country focusing on early and sacred music also presents crossover, jazz and folklore projects, Baroque opera with puppets, films with live music and ballet in a church. Discover the beauty of music in a church atmosphere for yourself!

September with Music

The grandiose festival always offers more than 20 concerts during the month of September, culminating on St Wenceslas Day (this year on 2–28 September 2025). You can look forward to real musical treats, such as monumental vocal-instrumental projects

in the largest churches of the region, which host philharmonic orchestras with choirs and soloists, and first-class projects of specialized singers and musicians playing period instruments led by the residential ensembles SHF Collegium 1704 with Václav Luks and the Collegium Marianum. Professor

Igor Františák's dramaturgy ensures that the projects are tailored to the given spaces – and so in recent years, the festival even spread to the technical spaces of the Tatra Truck Museum, the acoustically brilliant Concert Hall of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ostrava and châteaux throughout the region.

Stars of the Festival

You can meet laureates of prestigious competitions, exclusive BBC artists, world-renowned performers (Elina Garanča, Magdalena Kožená, Federico Colli, VOCES8, etc.) and talented young performers in the city of Ostrava as well as in the smallest villages of the region! In 2025, you can share an experience at concerts of harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani with the Prague Philharmonia, singer Luigi de Donato with the Collegium 1704, the violin virtuoso Isabelle Faust and soprano Kateřina Kněžíková with the Janáček Philharmonic Ostrava. Britten's monumental The War Requiem, Liszt's Christus Oratorio and Massenet's Eva Oratorio. Unforgettable moments – amazing memories – that's SHF.

www.shf.cz
FACEBOOK – INSTAGRAM – YOUTUBE:
St Wenceslas Music Festival



Photo: Ivan Korč, SHF

Cyril and Methodius also left indelible traces in the Olomouc Region. Explore the legacy of the two missionaries and the period of Great Moravia and experience the beauty and uniqueness of this region.

Go in Search of the Beauty of the Olomouc Region



Basilica of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary on Svatý Kopeček, photo: m-ARK

Fairytale castles and châteaux, beautiful nature, sports experiences for all ages, unique culture, traditions, gastronomy and crafts. All that is the Olomouc Region. You can combine your exploration of the region with a trip along one of the trails of the Cyril and Methodius Route. The aptly named Archbishop Trail includes several stages where you will discover the beauty of the Olomouc Region, meet local people, traditions and culture and discover the legacy of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

The Archbishop Trail from Svatý Kopeček

You will begin your journey at one of the most important pilgrimage sites in the Czech Republic – at Svatý Kopeček near Olomouc. The magnificent pilgrimage church has been the destination of thousands of pilgrims for many centuries. The church standing on a hill above the Haná plain can be seen from far and wide and offers unique

views not only of the plain itself, but also the foothills of the majestic Jeseníky Mountains. The Basilica of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary, which bears the title of basilica minor and is therefore under the direct patronage of the Pope, is still a destination for pilgrims and admirers of Baroque architecture. Here you can visit the local museum and see paintings, monstrances, reliquaries, mass vestments and an exhibition dedicated to pilgrimage. The journey continues directly to the historical centre of all of Moravia, the city of Olomouc, the seat of the second oldest bishopric in our country and since 1777 also the seat of archbishops. It is here that the first stage of the Archbishop Trail, which is almost 13 kilometres long, ends.

Museum on Svatý Kopeček, photo: m-ARK



Archbishop's Chateau in Olomouc, photo: OLK archive

Historical, Cultural and Tasty Olomouc

In Olomouc, make sure to include on your itinerary the historical centre, the mediaeval town hall with its unique astronomical clock and the Column of the Holy Trinity, which is inscribed on the UNESCO List of World Heritage, the Baroque fountains and churches in the imposing Gothic and grandiose Baroque styles. Also visit the Archdiocesan Museum and Cathedral of St Wenceslas at the site of Olomouc's oldest settlement – Wenceslaus Hill on the grounds of Olomouc Castle. Take the unique opportunity to peek into the representative rooms of the Archbishop's Chateau, where you will find a sculpture of Cyril and Methodius by Emanuel Max von Wachstein. Interestingly, Olomouc also has something to offer lovers of military history, in this case from the time of Maria Theresa. Discover the original purpose of the Crown Fortress or the individual forts of the Imperial-Royal Olomouc Fortress. If you prefer nature



Archdiocesan Museum in Olomouc (2x), photo: m-ARK

to military history, head to one of the vast parks of this city of flowers.

Experience the Haná Countryside and the Pilgrimage Site of Dub nad Moravou

Once you have explored all the attractions of Olomouc, follow in the footsteps of Cyril and Methodius through the picturesque landscape of Haná on the second 19-kilometre stage of the route to Kokory. Along the way you will encounter places worth visiting. A large stone cairn rises above Velký Týnec, in the area where a fortified settlement once stood. The Liberation Monument with a memorial plaque commemorates 31 local men who



Pilgrimage Church in Dub nad Moravou, photo: OLK archive

Archdiocesan Museum in Olomouc, photo: OLK archive



died on the front during the First World War. Near Týnec, you will find the nature reserve of Království. The third stage of the route takes you from Kokory to Dub nad Moravou. You will pass through the small village of Brodek u Přerova, where the Dytrych family runs a bell-making workshop; make sure to stop by their carillon. The workshop teaches you more about the alchemical work of making bells for temples all over the world. If you take a small detour north at the end of this leg of your journey, you will find a magnificent view of the architectural marvel and well-known pilgrimage site of Dub nad Moravou. The Baroque Church of the Purification of the Virgin Mary, the building with the second tallest vault in Moravia, is a traditional pilgrimage site.



Tovačov Chateau and lakes, photo: m-ARK



Tovačov Chateau, photo: m-ARK

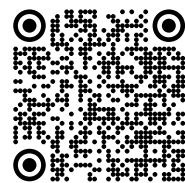


Refresh yourself in the Tovačov region and continue to Kroměříž, the city of archbishops.

The route will then take you to Kojetín, past islands of greenery along the region's watercourses – the Morava, Bečva and Haná rivers. You can stop at the Tovačov Chateau

with its Beautiful Tower, the Tovačov lakes and ponds, then at the Kojetín Biocentre or the Regional Education and Information Centre in Kojetín, where the fourth stage ends; from there, continue to the summer residence of the bishops in Kroměříž and on to Velehrad, where the trails of the Cyril and Methodius Route

converge from several directions. You can find a detailed description of the individual stages of the Archbishop Trail including tips for other interesting places, restaurants and accommodation on the website www.cyril-methodius.eu.



WHAT ELSE CAN YOU experience, taste, try or see in the Olomouc Region?

- See History, Culture and Folklore
- Bouzov, Šternberk and Helfštýn castles
- Velké Losiny, Čechy pod Kosířem and Náměšť na Hané châteaux
- Haná Museum in Nature, Příkazy
- Open-Air Gold-Digging Museum, Zlaté Hory
- Jánský Vrch Chateau

TO SEE SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS

- The Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Olomouc
- Chateau chapel of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Loučná nad Desnou
- Sculpture of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Radvanice
- Chapel of Saints Cyril and Methodius, Příkazy

TO SEE NATURAL BEAUTY

- Jeseníky Mountains Protected Landscape Area
- Litovel Morava River Basin Protected Landscape Area
- Hranice Chasm
- Caves – Javoříčko, Mladeč, Zbrašov Aragonite, Na Pomezí and Na Špičáku

TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

- Priessnitz Spa in Jeseník
- Slatinice and Teplice nad Bečvou Spas
- Velké Losiny – Spa and Therme Park

TO EXPERIENCE FINE DINING AND CRAFTS

- Museum of Olomouc Tvarůžky Cheese
- Craft breweries in Olomouc, Náměšť na Hané, Prostějov, Zábřeh, Velké Bystřice, Velké Losiny, Lipník nad Bečvou, etc.
- Historical Carriage Museum in Čechy pod Kosířem
- Handmade Paper Mill and Paper Museum, Velké Losiny

TO BE ACTIVE IN WINTER AND SUMMER

- Morava Water Trail
- Jeseníky Mountains cross-country skiing trail
- Ski resorts in the Jeseníky Mountains
- The Moravian Trail
- Bečva Bike Trail – the Moravian cycling highway



Mladeč Caves, photo: m-ARK



Bouzov Castle, photo: m-ARK



Hvězdná Bike Trail, photo: m-ARK

Where to Go to See the Attractions of the Olomouc Region

We asked Svatopluk Binder, an enthusiastic tourist and traveller as well as deputy governor for education, tourism and external relations.

Pilgrimages are becoming a trend thanks to a growing interest in authentic experiences and the desire to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life. People seek a connection to nature and history, and well-marked trails make that both possible and easy. We have many beautiful places in the Olomouc Region that offer both natural beauty and a rich history, which attracts travellers and locals alike. Getting to them is easier thanks to the marked routes – you can simply “tune out” and go for a walk or ride on a bike.

What is your personal relationship to pilgrimage? Do you have a favourite place in the Olomouc Region that you like to return to?

I am a passionate hiker and traveller – I love to learn interesting information and discover new places. I have to say it's a way for me to recharge my energy. Whether I'm in the Czech Republic or abroad, I always find something that surprises me. My favourite places include

Dlouhé Stráně – one of the technical marvels of the Czech Republic. The largest pumped-storage hydroelectric power plant in the country is located in the heart of Jeseníky Mountains. From the Olomouc Region, I will mention Svätý Kopeček, from where we have a beautiful view of the surrounding countryside and where there is also an important basilica and a nearby zoo, where my son and I like to go.

You yourself have walked part of the Cyril and Methodius Route, which leads in part through the Olomouc Region. What was your reason and your destination?

You are right, together with my colleagues I walked a part of the trail on the Czechoslovak border area, from Kopčany to Mikulčice. The goal was not only spiritual enrichment, but also to gain a better understanding of how we can further develop this route and make it accessible to visitors. I took away valuable information for our region.

Did you have any ideas about what you would experience? Did the reality surprise you?

Honestly, I went there with no expectations, leaving myself room for spontaneous discovery. The reality of it was a pleasant surprise because I came across places I probably wouldn't have visited otherwise and met inspiring people who were truly passionate about what they were doing.

How do you usually spend your holidays? Do you prefer an active form or do you like to relax?

I prefer an active holiday that includes hiking, cycling and, as already mentioned, discovering new places. I love being outdoors and enjoying nature, but everyone needs to take a break every now and then and we have plenty of places to do that – did you know that our region ranks second in the number of spa facilities?

If you were to invite visitors for one weekend in the Olomouc Region, what would your ideal plan look like? What would it include?

An ideal weekend would include a combination of everything mentioned on the previous pages – a visit to historical monuments in Olomouc, such as St Wenceslas Cathedral, but also relaxation in nature, for example in the Litovel Morava River Basin. I would also recommend tasting the local cuisine – tvarůžky cheese is definitely not to be missed! A beer from a local brewery will be a highlight of your participation in any cultural event. Whatever you choose, you won't be disappointed.



Photo: Svatopluk Binder's archive



to See the Beauty of Olomouc

It only takes one walk to fall in love with Olomouc. The approximately 5-kilometre-long route takes you to the most famous monuments, parks, cafés and restaurants. Discover the most beautiful things that the Haná metropolis has to offer.

Where History Was Made

The walking route forms a circuit. You can start, for example, at the St Wenceslas Cathedral with its hundred-metre tower and eight-tonne Wenceslas Bell, which is the largest in Moravia. The cathedral is adjacent to the Zdik Palace, the most important Romanesque monument in the city, and you can visit the Archdiocesan Museum right on Wenceslas Square. Just a short distance away is the Archbishop's Château, where Franz Joseph I was proclaimed emperor of Austria in 1848. Unassuming Svatojáková Street will lead you to the charming gardens on the city walls; from there, continue to Bezručovy sady below the walls, where you will find an artificial waterfall.

Art Nouveau Primavesi

On the opposite bank of the Mlýnský Stream is a rosarium with 900 species of roses, the second largest in the country.

You will climb the watchtower and the Michael Steps to Villa Primavesi, one of the most beautiful Art Nouveau residences in the Czech Republic, which today houses a café. Just a few metres away is the Baroque Church of St Michael with three domes and an underground spring. Lovers of sacred architecture will appreciate the short detour to the Neo-Baroque Chapel of St Jan Sarkander.

Through the Parks to the UNESCO Monument

Romantic streets take you to the Lower Square with its Baroque Virgin Mary Plague Column, the Neptune and Jupiter Fountains as well as many cafés and restaurants. Follow Lafayette Street across the city boulevard and Palach Square, continue to Smetanovy sady and then to the neighbouring Čechovy sady.



St Wenceslas Cathedral



Arion Fountain and the Holy Trinity Column, photo: m-ARK

After a rest in the greenery, head to the Upper Square with the Baroque Holy Trinity Column, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Another gem is the beautifully restored Town Hall with its historical astronomical clock, which comes alive at noon to the sound of Haná folk songs.

See the City from Above

You can enjoy a view of the city from the town hall tower and the tower of St Maurice Church with its exceptional Engler organ. Art lovers will appreciate the Lomená Gallery and the Museum of Art with its Robber sculpture by David Černý climbing the façade. The Square of the Republic also houses the Olomouc Museum of History and Geography. After this, it's only a few steps back to St Wenceslas Cathedral.

Learn more at <https://tourism.olomouc.eu>



www.lookatit.cz

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At the **m-ARK Marketing a reklama s.r.o. agency**, we are a team of experienced professionals focused on marketing, graphics, photography, video, publications and magazines. We are the publishers of two of our own publication series – the regional magazine Look at It! and the thematic magazines Dovolená s nápadem (Holidays with an Idea). Some titles are also available in English. Would you

like to become a partner of our magazines or are you interested in creating promotional materials or new photographs? For more information, do not hesitate to contact us.



m-ARK
MARKETING A REKLAMA

tourist edition
look at it!

DOVOLENÁ s nápadem

Carriage Museum Displays Carriages from Castles and Châteaux

A dream that Václav Obr turned into reality is today admired by people from all over Europe. When he decided to save the last surviving historical carriages thirty years ago, he had no idea the initiative would lead to an entire museum.

The construction took 15 years and became one of the most important feats of the last two decades. Václav Obr received support from the Olomouc Region and private organisations, and his wife Alena Macháčová always stood by his side during the realisation. The unique collection of 100 carriages includes huge funeral carriages as well as travel carriages that have appeared in various films, such as Maria Theresia. Hearing Václav Obr talk excitedly about the stories behind the carriages is a wonderful experience. His team is composed of people who not only save the carriages, but also repair them, display them and occasionally take them for a ride. Every year, the public can take part in events such as Josefko!, a meeting of master craftsmen and historical horse-drawn carriages. It is an experience that has to be seen to be believed, and will be remembered for the rest of your life.

Carriage Museum

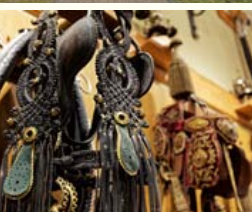
náměstí Svobody 377, 798 58 Čechy pod Kosířem
phone: 602 557 167, e-mail: vaclav.obr@seznam.cz
www.historickekokary.cz

AN ACHIEVEMENT TWO DECADES IN THE MAKING

- A unique collection with a 30-year tradition of rescuing old carriages
- The largest funeral carriage built by the Brožík factory
- The largest collection of funeral and travel carriages
- The largest collection of park carriages
- The largest collection of château carriages and sleighs
- The largest collection of carriage lanterns
- Collection of horse harnesses, livery and hats
- Ceremonial carriages of the Archdiocese of Olomouc
- Historical workshop, restoration workshop
- Guided tours with a video projection
- Various events and demonstrations of horse-drawn carriages



Photo: m-ARK 4





Along the Bohemian-Moravian Trail to the Vysočina Region

Vysočina, a region in the very heart of the country, invites you to quiet and peaceful walks. The region is perfect for hiking, pilgrimages and the discovery of cultural and sacred monuments. The combination of picturesque nature, opportunities for relaxation and the intricate history of castles, châteaux and churches creates a space for disconnecting from the everyday hustle and bustle. Vysočina boasts the largest number of UNESCO monuments in our country and offers an unforgettable cocktail of history, natural beauty and spirituality. Explore it with us.

The Count's Table Lookout Point, photo: Koruna Vysočiny, Vysočina Tourism archive



Drátenická Rock, photo: Jakub Mitáš, Vysočina Tourism archive

Along the Cyril and Methodius Route

Part of the Bohemian-Moravian Trail of the Cyril and Methodius Route crosses the northern part of the Vysočina Region and leads from Ledec nad Sázavou through a picturesque landscape and historical towns to the Bystřice region. It will delight all fans of hiking, pilgrimages as well as architecture. The trail connects places that you would otherwise have difficulty finding on a single itinerary, offering a journey of discovery. You will be guided by the Sázava and towards the end the Svratka River, see architectural gems as well as a UNESCO monument and will be surrounded by peaceful nature on all sides. All that will ensure relaxation for your body and soul.

Sculpture of Saints Cyril and Methodius, photo: Bystřice n. P., Vysočina Tourism archive



Ledec nad Sázavou Castle, photo: m-ARK

LEDEČ NAD SÁZAVOU: A PEARL OF THE POSÁZAVÍ REGION

The starting point of the Bohemian-Moravian Trail in the Vysočina Region is the town of Ledec nad Sázavou, which is a true Pearl of Posázaví. The dominant feature of the town is the local **castle** with a tower from which you see far and wide, which includes views of the Sázava River and the historical centre of the town. The castle is a popular place among filmmakers and houses several exhibitions as well as the only official **museum of the writer and boy scout leader Jaroslav Foglar** in the Czech Republic. The trail from Ledec nad Sázavou towards Světlá nad Sázavou leads directly past the **memorial of Father Josef Toufar**, who served as a priest in nearby Čihošť and who, because of the so-called Čihošť Miracle, was tortured in Valdice prison and died there in 1950.

The trail continues along the Sázava River and leads through the **Stvořidla Nature Reserve**. This section will delight all nature lovers. The meandering Sázava River surrounded by forests offers not only beautiful views, but also time for reflection and relaxation.

SVĚTLÁ NAD SÁZAVOU: A CITY OF GLASS AND HISTORY

The route will take you to Světlá nad Sázavou, where you can admire the recently renovated Trčkův z Lipý Square. Here you will discover the Church of St Wenceslas, an accessible medieval underground and a **Renaissance chateau** with exhibitions for children and adults. At the chateau, you can visit a children's room full of

old toys, a colonial shop from the early 20th century and an exhibition of historic European glass. The region has been closely associated with glassmaking since the 17th century, and there are still glassworks operating in and around Světlá to this day.

HAVLÍČKŮV BROD: THE CITY OF KAREL HAVLÍČEK BOROVSKÝ

From Světlá nad Sázavou, the route continues to Havlíčkův Brod. Here you can visit the **Gallery and Museum of the Vysočina Region** in the house where the famous 19th-century journalist and writer Karel Havlíček Borovský lived. You will also see **the Church** of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary with its tower, which offers beautiful views of the town and its surroundings. Near the centre is the **Budoucnost Forest Park**,



Světlá nad Sázavou Chateau, photo: Aleš Motejl, Vysočina Tourism archive



Vysočina Museum and Gallery in Havlíčkův Brod, author: Vysočina Tourism archive

which offers peaceful places to relax. The unique **Štáfl's Cottage**, a mediaeval timbered house from the 16th century and a national cultural monument, which now houses an antique shop, is also worth a visit.

PŘIBYSLAV: IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JAN ŽIŽKA

If you follow the route, it will lead you to Příbyslav. The town made its mark on Czech history thanks to Jan Žižka of Trocnov and the Hussites. In the past, the town was famous for silver mining. Today, you can visit the chateau and its firefighting museum, the adjacent park with the equestrian statue of Jan Žižka by Bohumil Kafka and the Church of St John the Baptist with its Gothic tower; you can also ride along the almost nine-kilometre-long bike trail over the old railway line to Sázava.

OUR TIP:

Near Světlá nad Sázavou, in the valley of the Sázava River, **Lipnice Castle** stands guard. Visit this monument whose beginnings date back to the 14th century and discover at least some of the mysteries and legends associated with the castle.



State Castle Lipnice, photo: Petr Hejda, Vysočina Tourism archive



Pilgrimage Church of St John of Nepomuk at Zelená hora, photo: m-ARK



Interactive New Generation Museum, photo: m-ARK



Žďár nad Sázavou Château, photo: Koruna Vysočiny, A. Jungmann

THE BEAUTY OF ŽĎÁRSKÉ VRCHY AND ŽĎÁR NAD SÁZAVOU

From Příbyslav, you will continue to Žďár nad Sázavou. Wandering through Žďárské vrchy offers unique views and perfect relaxation in nature. Along the way, you can stop in **Velká Losenice** to see the hexagonal **ossuary** with the remains of soldiers from one of the battles of the Seven Years' War in the 18th century.

You can make another stop a short distance before Žďár nad Sázavou itself in Hamry nad Sázavou, where you can find the **Šlakhamr** – a former water mill which was used until the 17th century to process iron ore. Today it is managed by the Technical Museum in Brno and offers an exhibition focused on the ironworking and blacksmithing tradition in the Žďár region. The crown jewel of Žďár nad Sázavou itself, which the Bohemian-Moravian route passes, is the **pilgrimage Church of St John of Nepomuk on Zelená hora**. This is the most important building by architect Jan Blažej Santini-Aichel and was rightfully inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1994. This pinnacle of the Baroque Gothic style, designed entirely around the symbolism of the five-pointed star, was completed and consecrated in 1722. Here you can admire the geometry of the building, the interplay of light and the magical symbolism of the number five. The number five repeats itself in



Photo: City Spa, Nové Město na Moravě

the floor plan of the church and its cloister, the number of niches, altars, angels, exits, chapels and gates. The Château of Žďár nad Sázavou lies below. The former Cistercian monastery from the 13th century also bears the imprint of the architect Jan Blažej Santini-Aichel. Today, the monument is in the hands of the Kinský family and houses the interactive **New Generation Museum**. Here you will learn about the Cistercian order, the dark Middle Ages and the colourful Baroque era. You will also meet the brilliant architect Santini. The central object of the complex is the **Basilica of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and St Nicholas**, which, with its length of 78 metres, is the second largest church in Moravia after Velehrad, and its interior is also exceptional.

OUR TIP:

And while you are in Žďár nad Sázavou, you can visit the **Pilák** leisure time area by the Pílský Pond, the Model Kingdom which has one of the largest model railways in the country, the Regional Museum and the Relaxation Centre with an indoor swimming pool.



Pilák Leisure Time Area, photo: Aleš Motejl, Vysočina Tourism archive



Nové Město na Moravě, photo: Miloš Neuman, Vysočina Tourism archive

NOVÉ MĚSTO NA MORAVĚ: THE CRADLE OF SKIING

The route will take you through the picturesque landscape of Žďárské vrchy, where you will visit several villages, the peak of **Harus Hill** and the **Vysočina Arena**, a centre of winter sports and the venue of the World Biathlon Championships in 2013 and 2024. The city of **Nové Město na Moravě** is famous not just for the Golden Ski, biathlon or mountain bike races. It's also the historical centre of the Horácko region, where travellers can enjoy historical monuments but also the local **Municipal Spa**. In the city centre, you will find the **Church of St Kunigunda** decorated with sgraffiti, the château with a gallery and in the former town hall the **Horácko Museum**, which features an exhibition of glassmaking, skiing and ironworking in the local

region. Children and adults will enjoy a trip to a school classroom from the 1930s and the **Vírský Mill**, a collection of wooden figures powered by a water wheel.

FROM VÍTOCHOV TO BYSTRICE NAD PERNŠTEJNEM

Once you have explored Nové Město na Moravě, head towards Bystřice nad Pernštejnem. Before Bystřice, the trail passes by the **Church of St Michael the Archangel in Vítchov**, which according to legend was consecrated by St Methodius himself and is allegedly the second oldest Moravian shrine after Velehrad. **Bystřice nad Pernštejnem** is a town full of history and entertainment. The square is decorated with a fountain with a **sculpture of Saints Cyril and Methodius** and dominated by the parish **Church of St Lawrence**.



Church of St Michael the Archangel in Vítchov, photo: Lukáš Doležal, Vysočina Tourism archive

In the former town hall, you will find the **Municipal Museum**; you can also visit the **Museum of Vintage Tatra Cars** and the **Eden Centre** which hosts a replica of a Horácko village with farm animals, an exhibition of living conditions in the past, an eco pavilion and lots of entertainment for children and adults.

From Bystřice, the route slowly yet steadily descends to **Tišnov** in the South Moravian Region.

You will find more information about the stages of the Bohemian-Moravian Trail at **www.cyril-methodius.eu**, including a full description of individual stages with their length, difficulty level, elevation and surface, along with various tips for your journey. You will also find tips on interesting places to stop, eat or stay.

The Vysočina Region connects many cultures and religions

The Vysočina Region is not only associated with Christianity, its legacy and monuments. Many Jews arrived here in the Middle Ages, and their legacy can be found all over this region located in the heart of the country. The ever-present history emanates from the Jewish quarters in Třebíč, Polná, Velké Meziříčí, the Jewish bridge in Brtnice, the oriental synagogue in Nová Cerekev and the synagogue in the Rural Baroque style in Police u Jemnice.

Jewish culture in Vysočina regularly comes to life through the festivals Polin in Polná and Male chajim in Třebíč, which give you an opportunity to bake Shabbat bread and learn Jewish dances. The Jewish legacy is strongest in the city of Třebíč. Here you will find the only fully preserved Jewish quarter in Europe and the only Jewish UNESCO site outside Israel. The UNESCO list also includes the local Jewish cemetery, one of the oldest in the Czech Republic. There are around 2,500 tombstones here, the oldest of which date to 1625 and 1631.

For more information about the sights in Vysočina and tips for more tourist trails, visit the Vysočina tourist portal at **vysočina.eu**.



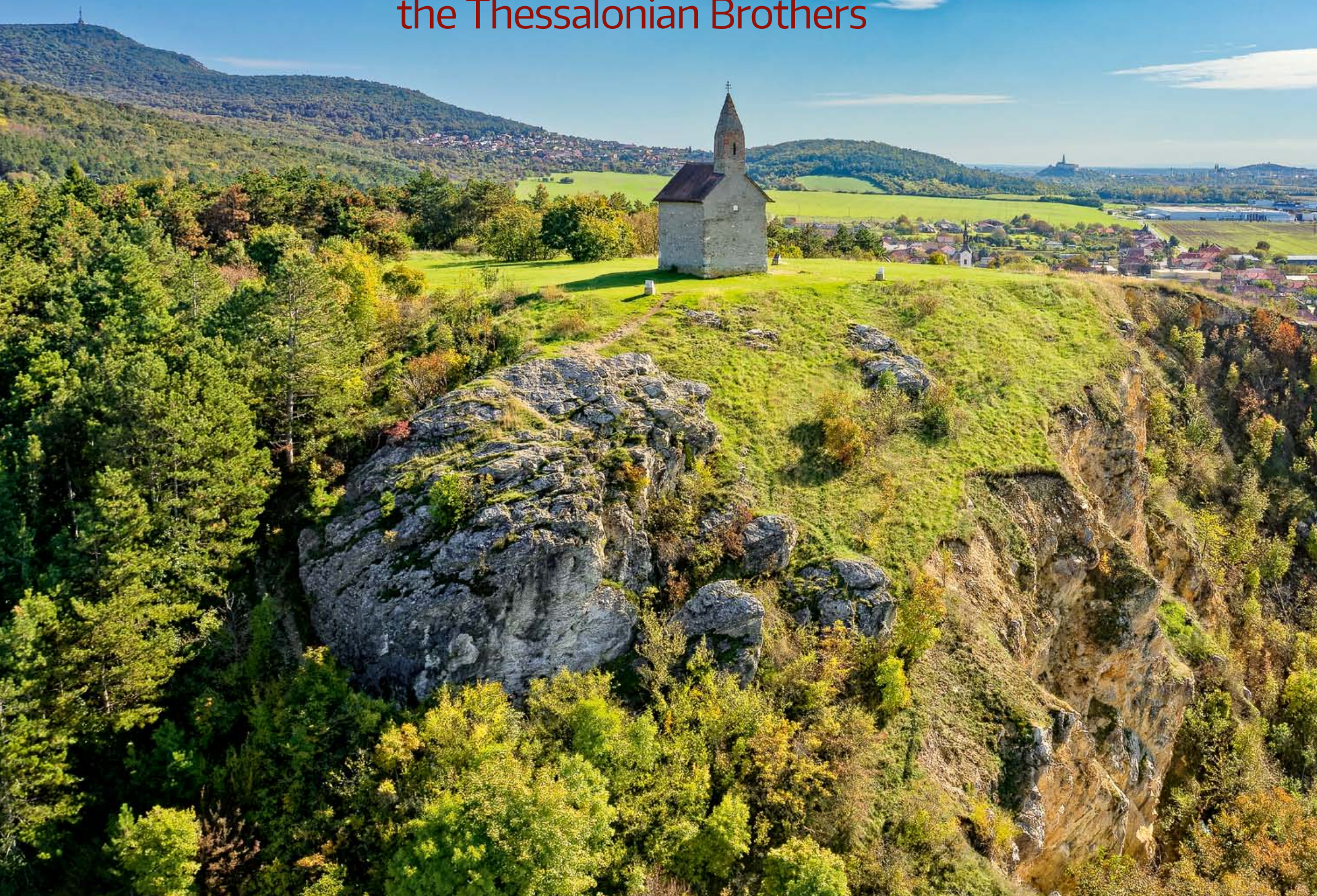
Jewish Quarter in Třebíč, photo: Jakub Mertl, City of Třebíč



Festival Revived Jewish Town, photo: m-ARK

Cyril and Methodius Route

A New Dimension
of the Cultural Legacy of
the Thessalonian Brothers



Church in Dražov, photo: m-ARK



prof. PhDr. **Peter Ivanič**, PhD.

Chairman of the Scientific Committee of the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius, Institute for Research of the Cultural Heritage of Constantine and Methodius FF CPU in Nitra

Why do you think people embark on journeys, professor?

We all love to explore and to travel. The motivation can be to discover new places, countries and cultures, or to have new experiences. Today as in the Middle Ages, believers make pilgrimages to important holy places. In earlier times, travel was not as commonplace as today. Travelling was largely the domain of pilgrims, merchants, craftsmen, religious and secular dignitaries, artists and university students. Another important group was soldiers on military campaigns.

You are the chairman of the scientific committee of the Cyril and Methodius Route. How would you describe its mission?

One of the main contributors to the development of the Cyril and Methodius Route is its research committee, which is composed of renowned experts from several European countries and from different academic fields such as archaeology, history, studies of the ancient Slavs, theology and art. Its activities are very diverse. First of all, it is a platform for cooperation in the organisation of international exhibitions and conferences, preparation of joint projects from various European and national programmes and publications. Together with the members of the European Cultural Route of Saints

Cyril and Methodius Association, which has been in charge of the route since 2013, it contributes to the development of educational activities aimed at pupils and students, the identification of points of interest in individual regions and countries, and the creation of basic strategic documents. The members of the Committee, in cooperation with other colleagues, have drawn up the thematic definition of the Cyril and Methodius Route, which is the basic document of every cultural route of the Council of Europe.

What does this cultural route mean to you personally?

I consider the Cyril and Methodius Route to be a new dimension in learning and disseminating the cultural legacy of the Thessalonian brothers in a pan-European context. It allows us to not only meet the past, to discover places historically connected with the work of Saints Cyril and Methodius and their disciples, but also to explore our own history and monuments. Of course, by walking along marked trails and visiting historical sites or events, you can gain unforgettable experiences to share with friends or family.



Photo: Peter Ivanič's archive

15 tips in Slovakia



1. The **Marianka** pilgrimage site is visited by the faithful from all over the world. It is connected with the legend of the discovery of a healing spring, and the local church is home to the miraculous statue of the Virgin Mary of Tál. You can visit the basilica, Lourdes grotto, pilgrim house and calvary.



2. **Bratislava Castle** is an iconic monument of the capital city of Slovakia. It houses the permanent exposition of the Historical Museum, attractive exhibitions and also features a Baroque garden. Moreover, it offers beautiful views of the historical centre of Bratislava.



3. The imposing **Devín** Castle at the confluence of the Danube and Morava rivers is one of the most important stops on the Cyril and Methodius Cultural Route, and monuments from various periods have been preserved on the castle grounds. In the summer, you can enjoy an attractive boat ride from Bratislava to the castle.



4. The pilgrimage Church of the Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows in **Šaštín-Stráže** features the largest organ in Slovakia, which was saved thanks to a public collection. The church itself is an exceptional building in the Baroque style.



5. **Trnava**, which is sometimes called Little Rome, offers typical urban tourism and can be explored with the help of an interactive mobile game. Make sure to visit the Basilica of St. Nicholas, climb the city tower and take a walk under the preserved fortification walls.



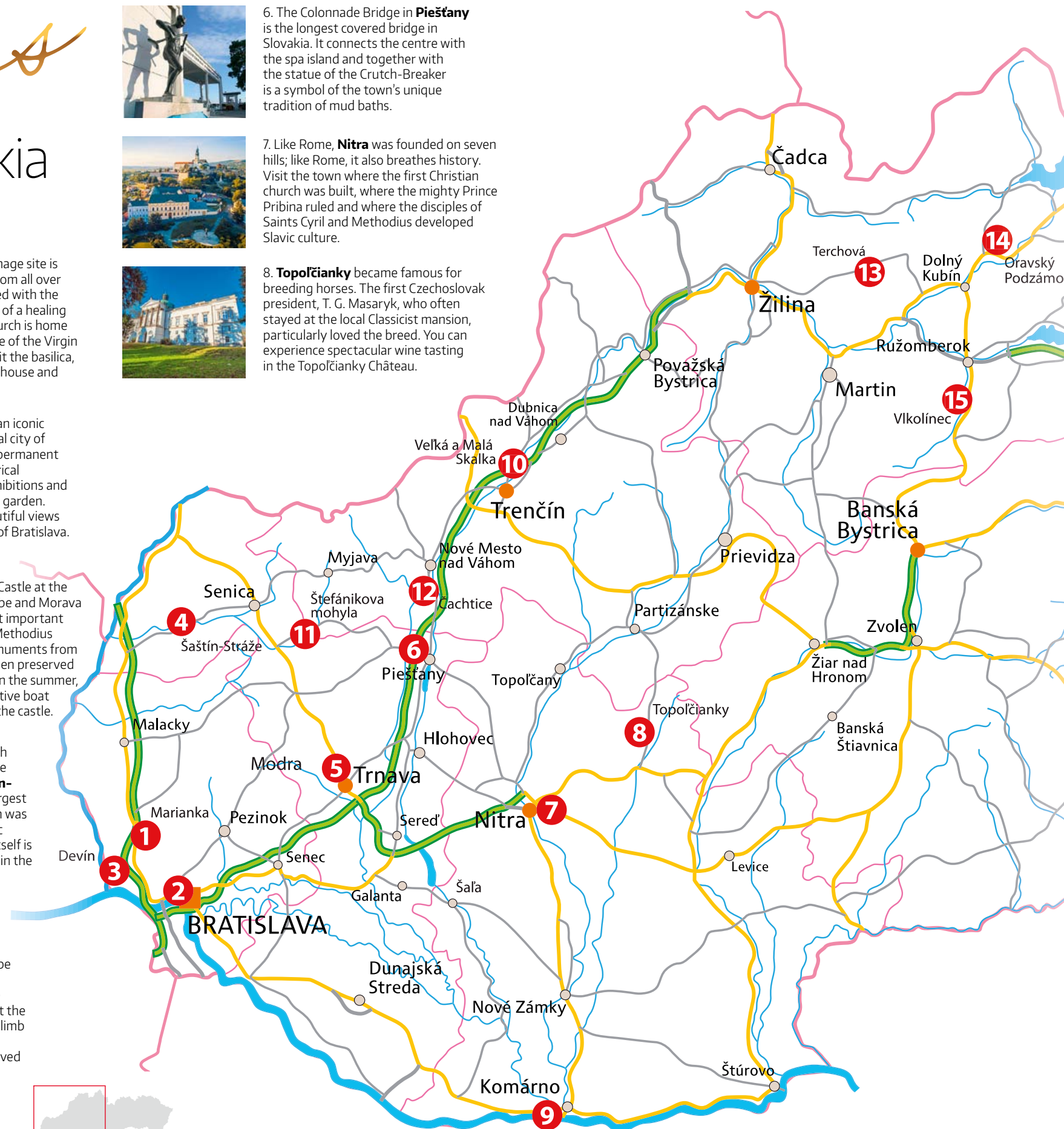
6. The Colonnade Bridge in **Piešťany** is the longest covered bridge in Slovakia. It connects the centre with the spa island and together with the statue of the Crutch-Breaker is a symbol of the town's unique tradition of mud baths.



7. Like Rome, **Nitra** was founded on seven hills; like Rome, it also breathes history. Visit the town where the first Christian church was built, where the mighty Prince Pribina ruled and where the disciples of Saints Cyril and Methodius developed Slavic culture.



8. **Topolčianky** became famous for breeding horses. The first Czechoslovak president, T. G. Masaryk, who often stayed at the local Classicist mansion, particularly loved the breed. You can experience spectacular wine tasting in the Topolčianky Château.



9. **Komárno** is home to a fortress unlike any in Europe – the largest and strongest defensive structure of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. When exploring the city, don't miss the Courtyard of Europe, where you can see 45 different styles of architecture in one place.



10. The ruins of the monastery and the mysterious rock cliff surrounded by legends can be found on the road from Trenčín to Nemšová. The popular pilgrimage site of **Veľká and Malá Skalka** was inhabited in the Middle Ages by hermits and later by Benedictine monks.



11. **The tomb of M. R. Štefánik**, the final resting place of this important Czechoslovak statesman, is located on top of Bradlo Hill at an altitude of 543 m. The imposing masterpiece of the architect Dušan Jurkovič is built from white travertine from Spiš.



12. Lovers of horrific tales will have a great time when visiting **Čachtice Castle**. Besides the mysterious ruins, they will also see the chapel where the "bloody" Countess Báthory was supposedly imprisoned. From the castle, you can go to Čachtice and visit the Draškovič manor house with an interactive exhibition.



13. **The village of Terchová** is located in the beautiful countryside and serves as the gateway to the Malá Fatra National Park. It boasts the largest church dedicated to Saints Cyril and Methodius and a rare wooden Nativity scene. Here you can try the typical Slovak dish of "bryndzové halušky" as well as traditional "korbáč" cheese.



14. **Orava Castle** was built on a steep cliff and reaches the height of 112 metres. Because of its fairytale exterior, many movies have been shot there, including the legendary horror film Nosferatu. Because the castle looks best from the river, we recommend taking a ride on a traditional raft.



15. In the foothill settlement of **Vlkolínec**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, original folk architecture has been preserved to this day. There are several permanent inhabitants still living here, and you can find a bell tower, a church and a school and especially typical Liptov wooden houses.



The Great Moravian Bridge between the Czech Republic and Slovakia, photo: Martin Peterka

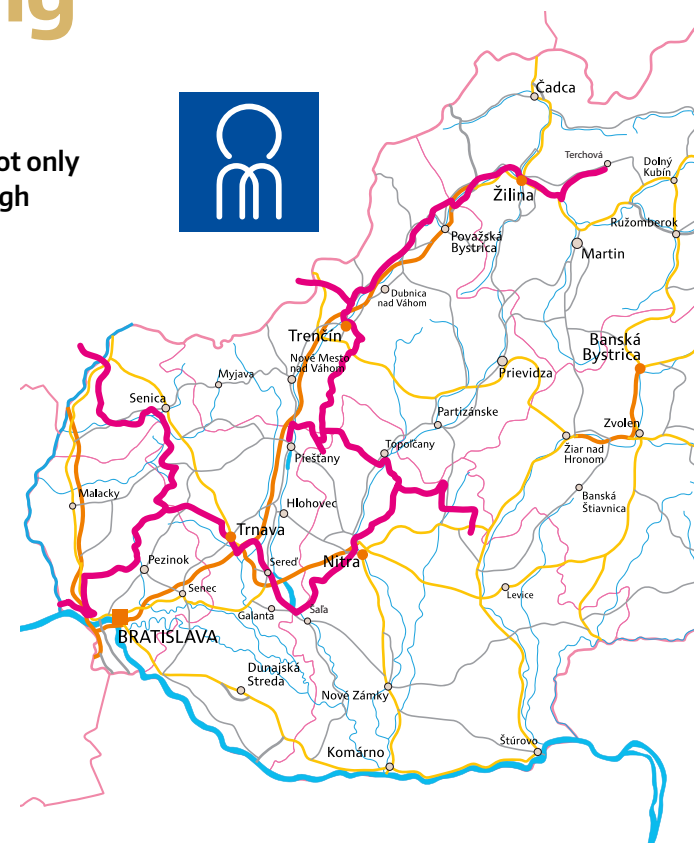
Walking and cycling through Slovakia

On the Slovak side, the Cyril and Methodius Route offers not only walking trails, but also biking routes from Bratislava through Trnava, Nitra and Trenčín to Žilina.



The network of hiking and bike trails is marked in cooperation with the Slovak Tourist Club and the Slovak Cycling Club and today offers a total **of more than 540 km of trails**. The individual routes are marked with the typical blue and gold symbol of Saints Cyril and Methodius as well as a reference to the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

The natural centre of the Slovak network is the historic city of Nitra, from which a walking route leads to the ancient monastery of Hronský Beňadik. From Nitra, the trail will take you via Kostolany pod Trábečom, Bojná and Nitrianska Blatnica to Trenčín and from there onwards to Velehrad. From the south, it leads through Kopčany – Šaštín-Stráže – Smolenice – Marianka pilgrimage site – historical Bratislava and ancient Devín to Austria. For lovers of cycling, there is a bike route from Trnava through Močenok to Nitra. Northern Slovakia offers a bike route along the Váh River from



the Benedictine monastery at Skalka pri Trenčíne through Žilina to Terchová. For more information about the individual routes, visit the website **www.cyril-methodius.eu** or the individual information centres.

interview

with **Tatiana Mikušová**

Director of the Slovak House of Centrope



Photo: Monika Kováčová

Cultural Routes Are Like a Train That Anyone Can Get On

They connect the past, pass through the present and lead to the future. They carry unique stories that were here long before us; their values are enduring and still valid and we are responsible for preserving them for future generations.

Why are cultural routes created?

All of Europe is united by a common history. From it comes a unique and precious tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The aim of the cultural routes is to introduce people today to the values from which our European society was born and based on which it functions.

What do cultural routes offer young people?

Every cultural route is also about the experience of discovery. They are an opportunity to discover cultural sights, events and attractions along the way, but also a challenge to our own inner development, the search for ourselves and our life values. The routes are a great opportunity to make new friends.

What makes the Cyril and Methodius Route special?

Exploring the historical sites along the Cultural Route of Saints Cyril

and Methodius reveals our own past. The period of the Great Moravian Empire in the 9th century is directly linked to the work of the two Slavic missionaries. They created an alphabet for the Slavs as well as a literary and liturgical language; they translated the Holy Scriptures. Their contribution can be seen in three basic dimensions: the political significance of the period of Great Moravia and its influence on the national liberation process, the spread of Christianity and its role in the cultural tradition of the nation, and also the development of the language from the time of its first codification by St Cyril to its present form. These three areas have significantly influenced the historical development of our territory.

What different points of interest can the traveller visit along the trails in each region? Are these just sites associated with Cyril and Methodius?

The trails of the Cyril and Methodius Route link together sites associated with the early medieval period: archaeological sites, Slavic settlements, sacred buildings, museums, galleries, libraries as well as sculptures, paintings and books. The individual places also offer other attractions and unique features along the way, such as local food and products and beautiful nature. The overall picture also includes valuable intangible cultural heritage in the form of various unusual events connected with the long tradition of the given town or village. One of the strengths of the Cyril and Methodius Route is the religious offer in the form of both famous and little-known pilgrimage sites, which can be either a destination or a short stop for silent prayer.

What do you see as the greatest value of the Cyril and Methodius Route?

Today, we live in a fast-paced age where people take all kinds of “shortcuts”. But these rarely pay off. The journey of our life should be an honest one, and probably won't be easy. The Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius could serve as an example that learning about the legacy of ancient scholars can be a challenge for us today and an anchor amidst the chaos and disorder of today's world. Everyone can take away from it what they need and expect; pilgrims a spiritual renewal, history lovers an experience of discovery. But all visitors will certainly gain some strength and balance for their own lives by walking along the path.

Today, the idea of two missionaries wandering through Europe may seem very distant, perhaps even difficult to grasp. Why is it important to refer to a common European past?

Values based on mutual respect, Christian roots, interpersonal relations and tolerance of different cultures and faiths are the backbone that binds the European community together. It is these real values that the brothers of Thessaloniki brought to our territory that are still valid today and are the basis for the functioning of a healthy society.

The Bratislava Region

Embark on a Journey through History

STAGES OF THE CYRIL AND METHODIUS ROUTE IN THE BRATISLAVA REGION:

- 1. Devín – Bratislava**,
distance 15.3 km, travel time 5 hours
- 2. Bratislava – Marianka**,
distance 15.3 km, travel time 5 hours
- 3. Marianka – Pezinok**,
distance 26.2 km, travel time 8 hours
- 4. Pezinok – Dolný**,
distance 22.4 km, travel time 7 hours

Devín Castle, photo: iStockphoto

into the Era of the Great Moravian Empire

By visiting places connected with the history of the first Slavs, you can still discover the cultural and spiritual legacy of Saints Cyril and Methodius, who came to the territory of today's Slovakia more than a thousand years ago. Devín, Bratislava Castle and the remains of other Slavic fortifications are like an open book of our shared European history. Our journey begins symbolically at Devín, because that is where the steps of the missionaries first led them.



Sandberg, photo: m-ARK

First stage: from Devín to Bratislava

The trail from Devín to Bratislava starts by the ancient ruins, on a site where, according to archaeological finds, history was made. Right in front of the entrance gate is a signpost that marks the beginning of your adventure. In contemporary sources, **Devín** is mentioned along Nitra and Bratislava as one of the three main settlements of Great Moravia. In the 9th century, Prince Rastislav had a massive defensive fortress and a Slavic basilica built here. At the castle, you will find its reconstructed foundations and a small model. This is evidence that the place did not serve only a military purpose, but also played an important role in culture and learning. The individual parts of the castle uniquely document the history of the settlement of this region. The upper castle offers a beautiful view of the enchanting natural scenery. The castle regularly hosts various attractive events such as jousting, craftsmanship demonstrations, exhibitions and guided walks.



Devín Castle, photo: m-ARK

FACTS FROM HISTORY:

Prince Rastislav sought to achieve greater independence from East Francia. For this reason, he established his own bishopric and asked the Byzantine Emperor Michal III to send missionaries who knew the Slavic language. Based on his request, the brothers Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius arrived in Great Moravia in 863 – according to tradition, they crossed the Danube on 5 July. One of the results of their activities in Great Moravia was the establishment of a Slavic centre of culture and learning. Its precise location remains unknown, but archaeological research suggests there may have been a church school at Devín Castle.



After leaving the castle grounds, the road will take you to the town of **Devín**, where we recommend a visit to the 13th century **Church of the Holy Cross**, which represents an interesting combination of the Gothic and Baroque styles. Near the church, an extensive burial site from the times of Great Moravia was discovered. The era of the two brothers from Thessaloniki is commemorated by the sculpture of Saints Cyril and Methodius and the statue of Svätopluk in front of the church.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

Lookout Tower on Devínska Kobyla – on the highest point is a twenty-metre-tall lookout tower of a peculiar shape. It has 112 steps that connect three viewing platforms.

Sandberg Hill is located on the site of what once was a pre-historic sea. Fossils of over 250 species of animals have been found here. The protected European bee-eater nests on the steep sandy slopes.

Sandberg, photo: m-ARK





Photo: VideoFly

The Cyril and Methodius Route continues on easy, flat terrain straight to the capital city of Bratislava. As you approach the edge of the city, the landscape changes from rural to urban. First you will pass through a residential area, and then the road will lead you past imposing **Bratislava Castle**. Its silhouette can be seen from afar and it is one of the key places for exploring the Great Moravian period. The castle hill was already inhabited by people 5,000 years ago; in the 9th century there was a fortified Slavic hillfort with a three-nave basilica, which made the castle an important religious and administrative centre. A replica of the remains of the Great Moravian basilica can be seen today on the upper eastern terrace of the castle complex; this Romanesque sacred building is one of the largest known Great Moravian churches. At the castle, which is today the seat of the state representation, you can visit the permanent exposition as well as temporary exhibitions of the Historical Museum, part of the Slovak National Museum.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

City walls – Although only a small part of the original fortification remains, a walk along the walls is a pleasant diversion during your visit to the city.

Slavín is the largest war memorial in Central Europe; the obelisk with the statue of a soldier measures 51 metres. Almost seven thousand soldiers of the Soviet Army who fell during the liberation of Bratislava during the Second World War are buried here.

The first stage of the Cyril and Methodius Route ends at the historic **Cathedral of St Martin**, a Gothic masterpiece. Throughout its glorious history, the cathedral hosted the coronation of eleven Hungarian monarchs and eight royal wives in 1563–1830. These historic events are commemorated every summer with the Coronation Festival. For the rest of the year, visitors can take tours to see the beautiful Baroque Chapel of St John the Almsgiver, the statue of St Martin with a beggar, the mysterious underground or even the precious treasury.



Photo: Stefan Komorny



MARTINEUM, photo: Peter Čintalan

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

Martineum is connected to the cathedral by an impressive new glass walkway. The renovated townhouse offers an information centre, a gallery and a cosy café.

The Salvator Pharmacy is one of the most photogenic buildings in the historic centre. Its interior with Baroque furnishings is magical.

Kapitulská Street with its mysterious atmosphere can be found behind St Martin's Cathedral. After dark, when the lights in the windows of historical houses go out and only small lamps shine on the cobbled road, the street resembles the "ghost alley" of old Prešpork.

WHAT YOU SHOULD TASTE:

Devínsky ríbezlák, Bratislavské rožky



Photo: THEBENER



The sculpture of Saints Cyril, Methodius and Gorazd can be found next to the foundations of the Great Moravian Basilica. Photo: m-ARK



Photo: VideoFly

Second stage: from Bratislava to Marianka

From the bustling metropolis, set off into the forests of the Little Carpathians; the journey promises not only beautiful nature, but also encouragement for the soul. Follow the red hiking trail through a picturesque landscape, dense forests and meadows. When you approach **Marianka**, you will be surprised by its peaceful atmosphere and genius loci. The route is well marked and offers a pleasant walk also suitable for less fit hikers.



Photo: m-ARK

The pilgrimage site in Marianka

is the oldest destination for pilgrims in Slovakia and throughout the year welcomes everyone who comes here to honour the Mother of God. According to a local legend, a bandit found a statue of the Virgin Mary and beneath it a spring with miraculous healing powers. The gracious statue of the Madonna of Tál is displayed on the main altar of the local Church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary from 1377. The pilgrimage site with the church and monastery is administered by the Congregation of the Comforting Brothers. There are several Marian chapels, the Lourdes Grotto with many messages of gratitude carved into stone tablets and a Calvary with life-size statues.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

Bridlicová štôľňa is the smallest mining exhibition and the only preserved old slate mine in Slovakia.

Pajštún Castle – The once vast castle complex has been transformed into perhaps the most mysterious ruin in the Carpathians and features in many legends.



Photo: m-ARK



Marianka, photo: m-ARK

Third stage: from Marianka to Pezinok

The route from Marianka to Pezinok takes travellers through the charming town of Svätý Jur and then the lush vineyards of Grinava, which is an ideal opportunity to enjoy the local winemaking culture. Immerse yourself in the rich history and traditions of this wine-growing region!

Thanks to the tireless work of archaeologists, another important stop on the Cyril and Methodius Route can be found above the town of Svätý Jur. The Great Moravian settlement of Neštich was founded in the 830s at the crossroads of important trade routes. It can be easily identified in the forest thanks to the massive, well-preserved rampart and ditches of the acropolis and two younger baileys. In **September**, the ancient history of the first Slavs comes alive at the event **Slavs in Svätý Jur** through a period camp with a kitchen, clothing demonstrations, duels, **theatre** and period crafts.

FACTS FROM HISTORY:

Fortified settlements played a key role in the history of Great Moravia. They had mainly a defensive function, but also served as political and administrative centres, seats of the upper social class, a place of storage of various goods and craft production centres. In its heyday, the settlement in Neštich had three fortified sections on an area of about 8.5 hectares with a length of more than 680 metres. The timber castle had a permanent military garrison that protected the people of the surrounding area. Craftsmen were concentrated here, and there was a jeweller's workshop that produced magnificent jewellery. One of the most important finds from the era of Great Moravia is a silver Arabic coin – a dirham. In some places, remains

of the massive mound-and-ditch Slavic fortification, 9 to 11 metres high, can still be seen.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

The Way of the Crosses represents a part of the route once followed by pilgrims from St Jura to Marianka.

The ruins of Biely Kameň Castle are located today in the middle of a forest, but in the Middle Ages it was the seat of the Counts of Svätôjur.

The Church of St George and the wooden belfry The romantic Gothic church contains several medieval frescoes as well as a unique Central European rarity: a six-metre-tall altar from white limestone

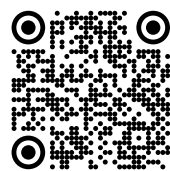
Renaissance vineyard house, Pálfi manor house

Lookout Tower above St Jura

Dubodom is an unusual attraction: a treetop house where you can spend the night and enjoy the quiet and peace of the forest.

WHAT TO TASTE:

Svätôjurské víno – The wine-makers of Svätý Jur invite you to a private wine tour on which you will visit the terraced vineyards above the town, historical cellars, modern wineries and a unique wine library. They will be happy to arrange a degustation for you, and in September, you can join the grape harvest.



Svätý Jur, photo: m-ARK



Pezinok, photo: m-ARK

Fourth stage: from Pezinok to Dolány

The stage of the Cyril and Methodius Route leading from Pezinok to Dolány begins in a popular wine-growing town, famous for its vineyards and their product. Along the way you will encounter lush forests, rolling hills and perhaps some local wildlife as well. The trail is well marked and suitable for hikers of average fitness.

In the middle of the Modra vineyards, near the Calvary, you will find the interesting site **called Zámčisko**. Around 700 BC, a fortified settlement of the Kalenderberg culture was located on this hill. It was shaped like a horseshoe and protected by defensive ramparts and a ditch. The original settlement was rebuilt during the Great Moravia era, and the remains of this later fortification can be seen today. Several rare archaeological finds have also been preserved: an iron knife and plough-share, a medieval hammer, a tinderbox, a spur, a sickle and other utilitarian objects. Just below Zámčisko, there is another interesting location – **Štôlna Márie Pomocnice**, an adit 150 metres long and carved in the rock by hand.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

Calvary and a unique ceramic Way of the Cross. The ceramic tiles depicting the individual Stations of the Cross were made by master potters.

Ludovít Štúr Memorial Room

Červený Kameň Castle – a fairy-tale fortress with unique period furnishings. Its glory days are still remembered through theatrical scenes from history, fencing festivals and falconry displays. In the summer, you can experience an unusual atmosphere during night tours.

Červený Kameň Castle, photo: VideoFly



Photo: Slovak folk majolica

WHAT TO TAKE HOME:

Slovak folk majolica, which are original ceramic products made and painted by hand. Each piece is a unique work of art and represents a centuries-old tradition with typical ornament.

The journey along this route ends in **Dolány**, a village situated at the foot of the Little Carpathians, which boasts a rich history. Like the historical town of Ompitál, it used to be part of the Červený Kameň estate. There are several national cultural monuments here, and the Dolány Historical Trail connects them all. The most important is the Gothic **Church of St Catherine** from the 14th century. The Neo-Gothic Calvary consists of 14 chapels and ends at the Baroque Church of St Sebastian on the hill. Near the Calvary, you will find the Chapel of St Leonard where, according to legend, there was a spring of miraculous water. The left side of the chapel is unusual in that it's embedded into the rock itself.

A European rarity is the **Town Tower**, which was built directly over the creek bed; the open ground floor of the tower used to serve as a passageway over the flowing water.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

Renovated mill

House of Juraj Palkovič's family

House of Juraj Fándly's family, Juraj Fándly memorial

AN EXPERIENCE TO REMEMBER:

A stay in the Bee House in the village of Dubová, where you can relax from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. During apitherapy, your senses will merge with the buzzing of thousands of bees and their pure life-giving energy.



Photo: František Turanský



Tourist tips in the Bratislava Region



Summer Evenings with a Glass of Wine The Winemakers of the Little Carpathians Open Their Wineries

The region of the Little Carpathians with a rich wine-making tradition invites lovers of wine to Open Wineries. From May to August, you can taste wine directly at the winemakers every Friday and Saturday from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. They will welcome you in their cellars or gardens. Open Wineries are ideal for a get-together with friends, a romantic evening for couples or a corporate teambuilding event.

A tip for you – a gift voucher for a tasting at Open Wineries!



Tour de ART – Art and History Tour with “ARTička”

“ARTička” is a discounted QR code pass for various museums and galleries in the Little Carpathians. Discover the history of wine in the Apostolic Cellars, the Pálffy Apartments, the exposition of artistic glass in the Šimák Château or the collection of wine presses in the Museum of the Little Carpathians in Pezinok. With “ARTička”, you get a 30% discount, and the card will remain valid for one more year in other museums as well: Pezinok City Museum, Zoya Museum, SNM-Museum of Ľudovít Štúr and more.



Enjoy a crispy roasted goose. The taste is heavenly

Let yourself be tempted by a crispy roasted goose with homemade “lokše” and cabbage. Visit the restaurants of the Goose Breeder Guild in Slovenský Grob for a unique culinary experience. Gourmets seek out this delicacy mainly in autumn, but you can enjoy tasty goose specialties here all year round, accompanied by delicious wines from the Little Carpathians.



Majolica – Creative Relaxation in the Ceramic Workshop

Discover the magic of working with clay and make your own ceramics. In ceramic workshops in Modra and Pezinok, you can paint ceramics of your choice, for example mugs, vases or Christmas decorations. The programme also includes tours of the production facility, where you will learn about the history of majolica from Modra, which is part of the intangible cultural heritage of Slovakia.

Photo: OOCR Malé Karpaty

Along the Path of the National Revival

Embark on a unique thematic journey that will take you to the period in which the modern Slovak nation was formed. This new tourism product will guide you through the places where the foundations of Slovak culture, language and national identity were laid. The Bratislava region, rich in historical monuments, cultural heritage and inspiring stories, offers an ideal opportunity to discover this important chapter of Slovak history, from the Enlightenment through the turbulent 19th century to the establishment of the first Czechoslovak Republic in 1918.

On the route running through all the parts of the Bratislava region you will get to know places associated with important personalities of Slovak nationhood such as Anton Bernolák, Ľudovít Štúr and Milan Rastislav Štefánik. The route is designed to be accessible and attractive for everyone – from families with children to students and history and culture lovers. On the route, you will not only learn about history through experience, but can also enjoy many pleasant moments in places where, along with relaxation, you can draw inspiration from the life of the most important personalities of the National Revival, which is the general term for the period in which Slovaks sought to strengthen their own language, culture and learning in the multicultural Habsburg Monarchy and in Hungary.

The thematic route following in the footsteps of the National Revival includes creative workshops, historical demonstrations and exhibitions that will undoubtedly make your experience even more unforgettable.

Bring your curiosity, a good mood and a desire to discover, because the Route of the National Revival is not only a return to events long past, but also an exceptional opportunity to see how courage, pride and determination, which we consider today to be the basis of the identity of the modern Slovak nation, were born in times of difficult historical trials. Each stop along the route offers unique insight into what it meant to be part of a nation that had not abandoned its dream of its own language.

Just take the first step – the destination is not very far away. You will become part of a story that began more than 200 years ago. The full Revivalist Trail is currently being finished and will be ready for hikers in 2025.



Dolany, photo: J. Rigo



M. R. Štefánik Tomb, Ivanka pri Dunaji, photo: m-ARK



Modra, photo: J. Rigo



Modra, A. Jurkovičová, photo: J. Rigo



In 1238, Trnava received the privileges of a free royal town from Hungarian King Belo IV as the first town in today's Slovakia. It is also called Little Rome because it is home to 13 churches.

Trnava, photo: Matúš Koprda

Travelling Through the Trnava Region

Means Learning About European History

For pilgrims on the Cyril and Methodius Route, the Trnava region is like a well from which they can draw spiritual joy, the enthusiasm of discovery and the energy of beautiful nature. There is no shortage of monuments from Great Moravia and earlier periods in this area: fortifications, remains of the settlements of various cultures and precious sacred buildings, but it also offers other attractions. There really is a lot to choose from!

Trnava was an important spiritual centre already during the Middle Ages. Its rich history and cultural heritage are closely linked with the traditions co-created by the two brothers of Thessaloniki. Saints Cyril and Methodius remain a timeless symbol of education and culture. Their legacy can be perceived even today when discovering the beauty of the Trnava region. Trnava itself will enchant you with its historic streets and modern hospitality.

The spiritual symbol of the town is the **Basilica of St Nicholas**; its heart is the historic centre, which was declared a Municipal Monument Reserve in 1987. The Basilica is home to a 200-year-old organ, which you

can hear every Sunday during Holy Mass. At 9 o'clock, Mass is held in Latin, transporting you back to past centuries. The **Cathedral of St John the Baptist** is an undisputed jewel of Baroque architecture, but there are also other churches in the city centre:



The Church of St James, the Gothic **Church of St Helena** and the **Church of the Holy Trinity**, which is a national cultural monument. The **Town Tower** is truly unique. Not only does it offer a spectacular view of the city, it also houses a rare clock that is hand-wound every 24 hours by a master clockmaker. The **city walls** of Trnava are among the best preserved brick fortifications in Europe. You can explore them thanks to the interactive GPS game "The Mighty Belt". The **Museum of West Slovakia** offers exhibitions related to the history of the city and the region. In Trnava, you can also take various types of guided tours (churches, the city tower, industrial monuments, the underground city).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OF GREAT MORAVIA:

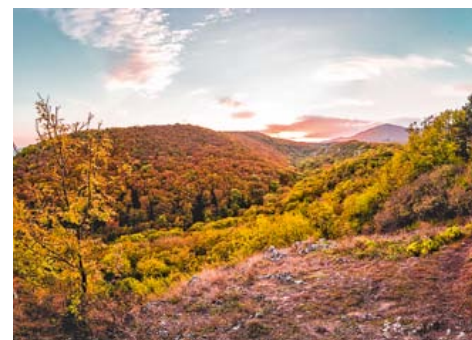
The Church of St Margaret in Kopčany and the Court in Ducové are accessible from Trnava by car.

ACCOMMODATION TIPS:

- Holiday Inn Trnava
- Hotel Empire Trnava
- Penzión Patriot
- Hotel Aréna

Basilica of St Nicholas, photo: Trnava Tourism

Immerse Yourself in the Stories of the Ancient Slavs



Molpír, Smolenice, photo: Marcel Krajčo

The Molpír fortified settlement above the village of Smolenice

is an important archaeological site. The name of the hill Molpír dates back to the pre-Slavic period; the site was inhabited already in the Bronze and Iron Age, and later also in the times of Great Moravia. From the Iron Age, the massive fortifications protecting the hill from all sides still remain. Today, you can see replicas of ancient dwellings and learn more about the various types of buildings and the crafts of



Honey café, Smolenice, photo: Včelovina

various cultures. Among the rarest finds from this site are jewellery, tools, weapons, pottery and ritual objects. Some artefacts are exhibited in the Molpír Museum in Smolenice. The hill offers beautiful panoramic views of the Little Carpathians, Smolenice Château and the Hlboča valley. You can go there at any time; the site is freely accessible by a nature trail with information panels.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

- **Smolenice Château** with a large English landscape garden feels like something straight out of a fairy tale.
- **The Jozef Mak Shelter** in Mihalínová.
- **Katarínka** – the ruins of the ancient Monastery of St Catherine of Alexandria – used to belong to the Franciscan Order and was one of the most important pilgrimage sites in the Archdiocese of Esztergom.
- **Honey Café Včelovina** offers coffee and a view of Smolenice Château.
- **The Smolenický kras nature trail** boasts the only waterfall in the Little Carpathians with a height of 9 metres.
- **Záruby and Havrania skala**
- **Jaskyňa Driny** is the only accessible stalactite cave in western Slovakia.

TIP FOR EXPERIENTIAL ACCOMMODATION:

Try an overnight stay directly at Smolenice Château and become part of the story of the noble Pálffy family.



Smolenice Château, photo: Trnava tourism



Kostolec, Ducové, photo: Martin Palkovič

The Kostolec Court is located on a rocky outcrop of the Považský Inovec mountain range at the village of Ducové near Piešťany. If you visit this important archaeological site, you will see the outline of the rotunda and the foundations of residential and farm buildings, which will take you back in time. The princely court existed here from the second half of the 9th to the first half of the 10th century, when it was destroyed. There were never more than 60–70 people living here, meaning it was not a large settlement, but a fortified court – a precursor to a castle, inhabited by the local ruler and his retinue. There were two above-ground buildings in one section; the larger one was probably used as the ruler's house. In the southern part, there was a rotunda that served as a private church. If you go to the site from the village of Ducové, at the beginning of the trail you will see atypical cellars carved in the easily workable loess and original houses that the inhabitants built from unfired bricks.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

- **Piešťany** is a well-known and popular spa with thermal springs.
- **Považský Inovec Mountains** – a place for hiking and relaxation.
- **Sĺňava Water Reservoir**
- **Hlohov Château** – a magnificent residence of House Erdődy built in the Baroque-Classical style.



Hlohov Château, photo: Trnava tourism



Church of St Margaret of Antioch in Kopčany, photo: m-ARK

The Church of St Margaret of Antioch in Kopčany

is a real jewel that has withstood time, because it is one of the oldest sacred buildings still standing in Slovakia, dating back to the period of Great Moravia. It is even considered the oldest preserved church building in Central Europe. The simple 9th-century shrine is located in an authentic natural setting, surrounded by fields and old trees. Archaeologists have discovered Great Moravian graves and the remains of a fortified farmstead in the immediate vicinity. In the 15th century, a moat was dug around the church, which was probably intended to bolster defence during the Bohemian-Hungarian War; later, images from the life of St Margaret were added to the walls. The church is still functional and services are occasionally held there. If you wish to enter the church, you need to contact the municipal office in Kopčany in advance.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

- **Habánsky dvor** in Sobotišťe
- **Branč Castle** once guarded



Branč Castle, Podbranie, photo: Lubica Mildeová

the roads leading through the Little Carpathians to Moravia.

- **Kačenáreň in Kopčany** – reconstructed cultural monument
- **The Imperial and Royal Stud Farm** in Kopčany – the local information centre offers guided tours.
- **The bike trail** leads from the village of Kopčany past the Kačenáreň and the Church of St Margaret over the Great Moravia Bridge to Mikulčice.
- **The Baťa Canal** offers a unique opportunity for water tours.
- **Mikulčice-Valy fortified settlement**

ACCOMMODATION TIPS:

- Hotel San (Holíč)
- Hotel AIR (Holíč)
- Hotel sv. Ludmila (Skalica)
- Hotel Tatran (Skalica)

REFRESHMENT STOPS:

- Reštaurácia Jozef II (Holíč Brewery)
- Koliba u Deda (Holíč)
- Reštaurácia Golf (Skalica)
- Reštaurácia u Radnice (Skalica)

The Basilica of the Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows in Šaštín-Stráže

is one of the most important Baroque monuments. Its history dates back to the time of Saints Cyril and Methodius. It is a national shrine and place of pilgrimage with deep historical and spiritual roots. The origin of the pilgrimage tradition dates back to the 16th century and the statue of the Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows is considered miraculous. It is said that Maria Theresa and her husband Francis I were invited to the consecration of the church. The basilica stands



Šaštín basilica, photo: Balazs Szarka

in the monastery complex together with other sacred buildings – the Pauline Monastery itself, the Chapel of the Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows, the Šaštín Pieta and the sculpture of the Holy Trinity on Kláštornej Square. Traditional and thematic pilgrimages are held here throughout the year, a national pilgrimage on the Feast of the Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows and on the Feast of the Sending of the Holy Spirit. It is possible to visit the basilica with a guide (by appointment), who will also take you to the chapel and the monastery cellar to show you the courtyard with the sundial and the John Paul II room.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

- **The town of Skalica** with many monuments such as the Rotunda of St George, Franciscan Monastery and the Museum of Záhorie
- **Holíč Château**
- **Lake Gazárka** – ideal for recreation
- **Pine forests** full of exceptional habitats and plant species

ACCOMMODATION TIPS:

- Penzión u Havlíčkov
- Penzión Gazarka

Šaštín, photo: Martin Palkovič



The Most Beautiful Stages of the Cyril and Methodius Route in the Trnava Region

Dolány – Smolenice

Distance: 19 km, time: 5.5 hours, climb: 473 m, descent: 472 m



At the beginning of this stage, you will be surrounded by the beautiful countryside with gently rolling hills. This will eventually give way to the dense forests of the Little Carpathians alternating with views of the surrounding landscape. From the village of Dolány, follow the yellow tourist markings to the Zabité crossroads and then switch to green to the Solírov hunting manor. From the Rybáreň crossroads, continue along Majdán Nature Trail, which runs through the Little Carpathians Protected Landscape Area. From the Jahodník crossroads, follow the Smolenický kras Nature Trail via Molpír to the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary in Smolenice. The route leads past Driny Cave, the only accessible stalactite cave in western Slovakia. Near the route, there is also the Lourdes grotto and, if you're lucky, you might see the Hlbočany waterfall, which only appears when there is enough water in the area.

Brezová pod Bradlom – Podbranie

Distance: 13 km, time: 3.5 hours, climb: 173 m, descent: 180 m



This stage of the Cyril and Methodius Route starts in the centre of Brezová pod Bradlom, at the Baranická crossroads. In the town, we recommend visiting the Museum of Dušan Samuel Jurkovič – an important Slovak architect, designer and ethnographer. Follow the green tourist trail, which shares this section with the red trail (the Trail of the Heroes of the Slovak National

Uprising). At the Church of the Holy Trinity, the two paths diverge; if you're following the Cyril and Methodius Route, stick to the green markings that will lead you to the village of Podbranie. The village is known for Branč Castle, which offers a great view of the Myjava Hills.

Lopašov – Skalica

Distance: 34 km, time: 9.5 hours, climb: 775 m, descent: 459 m



The next stage of the Cyril and Methodius Route which leads to the royal town of Skalica starts from the crossroads at the Lopašov Cemetery. First follow the green tourist trail to Koválovské meadows and then continue along the Záhorácka magistrála. The route offers panoramic views of the surrounding hills and valleys. The final part of will take you to Skalica, which is known for its many monuments (Rotunda of St George, Franciscan Monastery, Museum of Záhorie). We recommend trying the Skalický trdelník spit cake and Skalický rubín wine.

Holíč – Hodonín

Distance: 17 km, time: 4 hours, climb: 45 m, descent: 65 m



This stage of the Cyril and Methodius Route leads past Holíč Castle, which was once a wooden guard fortress on the Moravian-Hungarian border. The late Baroque appearance of Holíč Castle is the result of the reconstruction of a Renaissance anti-Turkish fortress into a representative summer residence of the imperial Habsburg family. Another interesting stop is the Kačenáreň, a former duck house which now serves as a museum. It can be found near



Skalica, photo: Samuel Galica

the Church of Saint Margaret of Antioch. The church dates back to the 9th or 10th century, so it very likely has Great Moravian origins. From here, the blue trail will take you over the Great Moravia Bridge to the Slavic settlement of Mikulčice. Then follow the green markings to Hodonín.



Jozef Mak Shelter, photo: Martin Palkovič

TIP FOR PILGRIMS:

Jozef Mak Shelter

This modern and architecturally interesting building can be found in Mihalínová in the Little Carpathians, near the Trail of the Heroes of the Slovak National Uprising, which is used by long-distance hikers. The Jozef Mak Shelter is primarily for them. It's not located on the Cyril and Methodius Route, but pilgrims who take a small detour will not regret it. This two-storey building serves for rest and overnight stays.

Three hiking trails pass near the Jozef Mak Shelter – the Trail of the Heroes of the Slovak National Uprising shares this section with the Štefánikova magistrála, the yellow trail leads south to the village of Naháč and north to the village of Hradište pod Vrátnom, and the nearby nature trail leads to the Katarínka Monastery, which is also undoubtedly an interesting destination for pilgrims. The nearest spring is about 1.6 km from the shelter along the hiking trail towards Rovnice. There are grocery stores in the villages of Dobrá Voda, Naháč and Trstín.



Nitra

Nitra Castle, photo: m-ARK

IS THE CRADLE OF SLOVAK CULTURE

The Cyril and Methodius Route has four stages in the Nitra region. You can plan several short trips to discover places connected with the history of Great Moravia. There are mysterious castles and châteaux, important historical towns, thermal springs, vineyards and untouched forests, all waiting to be explored. Discover the beauty of this ancient region!

The Cyril and Methodius Route in the Nitra Region

First stage: Nitra – Jelenec

Second stage: Jelenec – Solčany

Third stage: Solčany – Bojná

Fourth stage: Bojná – Inovecká chata



Church of St Michael the Archangel in Dražovce, photo: m-ARK

A Region Rich in History, Beautiful Nature and Vibrant Culture

The Nitra region is where history was literally written, and it can be considered the cradle of Slavic literacy. Nitra, as one of the oldest cities in Europe, is the home of Cyril and Methodius. It was in this region that the Thessalonian brothers began to spread Christianity and created the first Slavic alphabet. Their mission had an enormous impact on the cultural and spiritual development of the Slavs. By spreading education, they raised the cultural level of the nation. The history of the Great Moravian Empire speaks to visitors here through the most important monuments.

The site of the preserved castle complex, the massive walls and towers of the Nitra Castle, was once the centre of power of the Great Moravian princes. Already in the 8th century there was a fortified settlement with an area of about 8.5 hectares. Pribina's oldest church probably also stood on the castle hill; this church is connected with the oldest written document mentioning Nitra and the whole Great Moravian Empire. The complex, which is dominated by the Basilica of St Emmeram and also houses the unique Diocesan Museum, has been the residence of the bishop for more than a thousand years.

The Zobor monastery was founded by the Benedictines in the 9th century and served as a place of scholarship. It laid the foundations of writing, as the oldest documents from the territory of Slovakia were written here, and played an important role in

the medieval cultural life of the country.

The Romanesque Rotunda of St George in Nitrianska Blatnica is considered one of the oldest sacred buildings in Slovakia. Its origin is linked to the period before Great Moravia. Pilgrims have been gathering here on St George's Day, 24 April, since 1530, and the church remains a symbol of the arrival of Christianity in our territory.

Valy pri Bojne fortified settlement – this archaeological site is one of the largest of its kind in Central Europe and offers unique insight into the life of the Slavs in the 9th century. It was an important manufacturing, trade and missionary centre and the seat of the Slavic social elite. The Valy settlement, together with the important princely courts in nearby Nitrianská Blatnica and in Ducovo on the other side of the mountain range already existed at the time of Great Moravia. Visitors will be captivated by the massive entrance gate and by history brought to life during the Cyril and Methodius festivities. Learn more about the finds and local history at the Archaeological Museum of Great Moravia in Bojná.

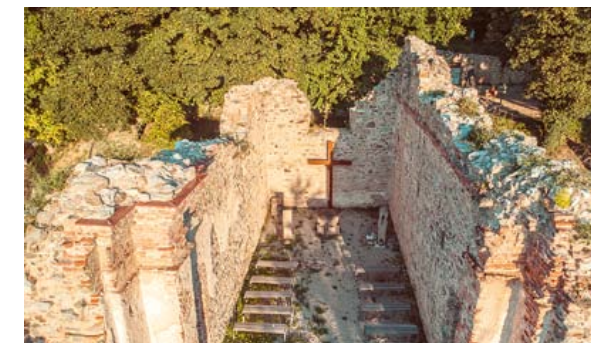
The pre-Romanesque Church of St George in Kostolany pod Tribečom is one of the three oldest still-standing sacred buildings from the Great Moravian period in Slovakia. The unique interior murals are among the oldest in Central Europe.

The Romanesque church in Dražovce is one of the most photogenic places in the Nitra region. The Church of

Church of St George, Kostolany pod Tribečom, photo: The Nitra Region



Rotunda of St George in Nitrianska Blatnica, photo: The Nitra Region



Zobor Monastery, Nitra, photo: The Nitra Region

St Michael the Archangel towers on a rock above the village where a Slavic settlement once stood. The church is accessible after a slight ascent from Dražovce; if you wish to visit the interior, please make an appointment with the parish priest. Services are held here only one day a year, on the Feast of St Michael's on 29 September.

The Brothers of Thessaloniki Welcome You to the Castle

The two brothers, Saints Cyril and Methodius, are depicted in a bronze sculpture on the castle grounds near the Marian Column. The monumental figurative sculpture was created by the academic sculptor Ľudmila Čvengrošová and represents the saints in larger-than-life size in a style reminiscent of ancient Greek art. Constantine (Cyril) is portrayed with a blessing gesture and a book in his left hand; Methodius holds a Greek pyxis jewellery chest.



Nitra Castle, photo: The Nitra Region



Valy pri Bojne fortified settlement, photo: The Nitra Region

The Glory of Great Moravia Comes to Life During the Cyril and Methodius Festivities!

Every year the archaeological site of the **Valy pri Bojne fortified settlement** opens its massive gate to people wishing to visit the past. Visitors will experience the atmosphere of the Great Moravian period through writing in Glagolitic and period crafts, archery, the cuisine of our ancestors or the opportunity to witness a Great Moravian wedding. The programme also includes guided tours, a demonstration of a period military camp and the conquest of the fortress.

Events with an Exceptional Atmosphere

NITRA, DEAR NITRA

(annually, around 5 July) Visit the three-day city festivities combined with a national pilgrimage and a rich cultural programme.

GREAT MORAVIAN WEEKEND

Experience with us a rich programme of festivities, join the Cyril and Methodius pilgrimage and taste a traditional Old Slavonic Feast in Nitra.

GUIDED TOURS

Many museums and monuments offer guided tours, during which you can learn interesting facts about the history and culture of the region.

TICadlovo Children's Zone is a part of the TIC Nitra (an information point on the Cyril and Methodius Route) that gives children the opportunity to learn more about the Nitra region, legends and the Great Moravian period in a playful way.

The Nitra region is also attractive for active tourists because of its natural beauty and many options for active recreation. The picturesque undulating landscape has its own special charm that will delight all nature lovers.

Arborétum Mlyňany, one of the oldest and largest arboreturns in Slovakia, is an ideal place for walks, relaxation and exploration of the diversity of plant species. **Rudniansky waterfall** is hidden in a deep forest valley and offers beautiful views. Visitors can also admire the **rock dwellings in Brhllovce**, which are unique in Slovakia. More demanding tourists and adrenaline lovers will be interested in a brand



Via ferrata Zobor, photo: The Nitra Region

new experience – unique **via ferrata routes on Zobor**.

Explore nature on two wheels, on foot and on water

The extensive network of bike trails invites you to discover the beauty of the region from the saddle of a bicycle. The region is criss-crossed with easy trails suitable for families as well as more demanding cycling routes **in the Tríbeč Mountains** that will satisfy even experienced mountain bikers. You can go on a day trip or a multi-day bicycle tour along the Cyril and Methodius Route from Nitra through Močenok to Trnava. You will travel past forests, meadows and water reservoirs, where you can rent a kayak or a paddleboard. You can also watch rare bird species or engage in a bit of geocaching.

Arborétum Mlyňany, photo: The Nitra Region



Wellness Thermal Spa Podhájska, photo: The Nitra Region



Vadaš Thermal Resort, photo: The Nitra Region

Enjoy Relaxation in Thermal Baths

The Nitra region is famous for its thermal springs, which have beneficial effects on health. This part of Slovakia offers up to 11 thermal pools and water parks, where visitors will enjoy relaxation, many great attractions and unique experiences that they'll never forget.

Vadaš Thermal Resort Štúrovo, the largest thermal water park in Slovakia, offers almost 10,000 square metres of water surfaces with great attractions. In the southernmost village of Slovakia, in the **Wellness Hotel Patince**, you can enjoy a perfect wellness stay all year round. **Thermalpark Nitrava Poľný Kesov** is an ideal place to restore your physical and mental balance in summer or winter. **Thermál Nesvady** offers relaxation in geothermal water, which has beneficial effects on the musculoskeletal system, the nervous system and the skin. Visitors to the **Podhájska Thermal Spa** will experience the unique atmosphere of the Dead Sea throughout the year.



With the **Quappka** mobile app, your visit to the Nitra thermal paradise can be even better thanks to discounts on admissions and services at partner swimming pools. In addition, visitors staying at local hotels can take advantage of a wide range of regional discounts.



Mangalicová Ekofarma Góra, photo: The Nitra Region

Tips for regional products

- Sheep and goat cheeses from local farms – including the **Okomán farm near Šurany**
- Meat products such as sausages, salami and other specialties – **Mangalicová Ekofarma Góra**
- **Quality honey from local beekeepers** – the Nitra region has the most bee farms in Slovakia, with many quality producers of honey and honey products

A Mixture of Colours, Flavours and Aromas

From the six wine-growing regions of Slovakia, three extend into the territory of the Nitra region. Thanks to favourable climatic conditions, quality grape varieties grown here produce **excellent wines**. The wines from the Nitra region were already consumed by the Great Moravian princes and the highest church dignitaries. The first surviving written mention of the cultivation of vines is contained in the Zobor manuscripts from 1111 and 1113. You can experience the unique atmosphere of wine festivals, tasting evenings or simply enjoy a glass of good wine on the terrace overlooking the vineyards.



Photo: The Nitra Region

Uncover the Secrets of the Middle Ages

The Nitra region is dotted with many castles and châteaux, each of which has its own unique history and legends that arouse curiosity to this day.

Thanks to an easy trail, the **Hrušov Castle** can be reached effortlessly by people of all ages. On a nearby meadow, you will find a monument dedicated to T. G. Masaryk, who liked to visit Hrušov Castle.

The rich history **of the Baroque manor house in Topoľčianky** is connected with several important noble families (mainly Habsburgs) and, after the founding of Czechoslovakia, served as a summer residence of presidents. It is surrounded by a beautiful park.

Komárno Fortress will surprise most visitors with its massiveness. It was once considered one of the strongest in Europe. Today it is a national cultural monument.

The Roman castellum in the village of **Iža** consists of the foundations of a large military camp, once part of the Limes Romanus, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Hrušov Castle, photo: The Nitra Region

The Journey Can Be the Destination

Interview with Tereza Zaujecová, National Coordinator of the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Slovakia



Tereza Zaujecová's archive

What is the role of the national coordinators of the Cyril and Methodius Route in each country?
The Cyril and Methodius Route project brings together members, supporters and enthusiasts who work in different areas of cultural and social life. Each of these areas is very important to the life of the route itself. The role of the National Coordinator is to connect all these actors, coordinate individual and joint activities, promote the route externally and actively work on its development. Since Slovakia has the largest number of members (in 2025, 16 members

of the EKSCM association were from Slovakia), the role of the local National Coordinator is very important.

What does the certification of a new cultural route require?

The Tourism Board of the Nitra Region as the National Coordinator of the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Slovakia cooperates closely with the Permanent Secretariat of the EKSCM in Zlín. The closeness of the Czech and Slovak nations is also apparent in all the activities, which are a natural part of the cultural life of Slovaks. The strong Cyril and Methodius legacy present in each region is the basis for the certification of the route as one of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Since 2024, we have been undergoing the process of recertification, which we also supported with a presentation of activities in Nitra.

What makes the Cyril and Methodius Route project interesting for you personally?



Visit to Bojná-Valy, photo: Tereza Zaujecová's archive

It is particularly interesting because I come from the Nitra region, which is closely linked with Saints Cyril and Methodius. The big challenge for me today is to move away from seeing this topic as something historically given and to look at the two missionaries as influencers of their time, to reach out to the people today and create a sustainable and viable tourism product. That's where I see the potential of the Cyril and Methodius Route.

What awaits pilgrims on the Cyril and Methodius Route and which stages of the journey have you walked?

It is a journey of experience, of knowing, of awareness. It brings experiences in the form of visits to various events with demonstrations of life in the Great Moravian period, with a school of writing in Glagolitic, with thematic tours of interesting sites, with interactive workshops that motivate people to discover historical legacies and bring knowledge and an awareness of social values that we take for granted. As a hiking and cycling enthusiast, I have participated in several organised hikes and bike tours. Exploring the land and its attractions, letting go of the daily stress and getting back to nature means for me that the journey itself is the destination.



Photo: personal archive

What was the greatest strength of their work and what do we owe them? Could it be said that they also contributed to the cultural transformation of our territory?
They – to paraphrase Pope John Paul II – received and lived the Christian word of God “breathing with both lungs” – of the East and of the West. Their wisdom anticipated the reform movements in the Church and in national cultures, as they spread the gospel authentically in the language of the people. They also started an ecumenical dialogue within the Church and a dialogue with the non-Christian world, the need for which we still feel today.

Why does it make sense to travel along the Cyril and Methodius Route or any other cultural trail today?

Even today's pilgrimages have retained their importance and partly also the character of ancient pilgrimages. They can still be characterised as places of spiritual conversion and strengthening of faith in God, but also as a means of repentance and sacrifice. That is why many of the people who embark on the Cyril and Methodius Route are those who are searching for the meaning of life. Pilgrimage in any form is very helpful in rediscovering the value of silence, effort and what is essential in our lives. But it also carries signs of hope, as Pope Francis has pointed out, when he referred to contemporary Christians as the “pilgrims of hope” in the context of the Jubilee Year 2025.

The Cyril and Methodius Route Connects Not Only Nations

Interview with Viliam Judák, Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese of Nitra

Was it common in the past for people to go on pilgrimages, and can we see Cyril and Methodius as pilgrims?

From the beginnings of Christianity, a network of pilgrimage routes stretched across Europe, taking the faithful to Rome, Palestine and Santiago de Compostela. In the Middle Ages, the mission to bring the Gospel to others inspired whole groups and individuals to embark on long journeys. The journey of Saints Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius to Great Moravia lasted more than 60 days, so it was a kind of pilgrimage. After forty months of arduous work among our ancestors, they journeyed to Rome in 867 to report on their missionary activities. For the Thessalonian brothers, pilgrimage was an opportunity for self-improvement, but above all for enriching others.

How should we look at the spiritual dimension of pilgrimage?

In history and through history, God is a dynamic God. It's almost as if God Himself was putting on pilgrim clothes to seek people, to be open to people as the God of goodness and humanity. The history of God's chosen people in the Old Testament is a history of wandering; even the 12-year-old Jesus was a pilgrim. In this sense, our pilgrimage is a promise of continuity, fidelity and unquenchable love. Therefore, just as we have been faithful to God, to Christ and to the Church in the past, we want to be faithful today. This is the Cyril and Methodius heritage to which we remain true. Let us be faithful to it, in our time and in our personal lives!



Live logo in Nitra, photo: Luca Bush

Photo: personal archive



Discover Fairy Tale Places in the Trenčín Region



On a Bike along the Traces of History Trail, photo: archív KOČR Trenčín región

The journey from Skalka near Trenčín to Žitková in Moravia is an enriching experience for lovers of hiking combined with the exploration of cultural monuments. It follows the blue trail of the Slovak Tourist Club and the Czech Tourist Club. It will show you the most beautiful places of the Trenčín region – fairy-tale castles as well as a mysterious monastery embedded in a cliff.



Velká Skalka, photo: m-ARK

At the famous pilgrimage site of Skalka nad Váhom, you will immerse yourself in the stories of St Andrew Zorard and Benedict, which will bring you closer to the life of medieval monks. Skalka consists of two areas: Malá and Velká Skalka. Malá Skalka is a spiritual centre for believers from all over Slovakia, who visit it especially in July during the traditional pilgrimages. They are welcomed by a pilgrimage house and a Romanesque church whose main altar is decorated with statues of hermits. Opposite the church, you can walk through the woods along the Stations of the Cross

One of the most popular cycling routes in the Trenčín region, **“On a Bike along the Traces of History”**, runs under the monastery and connects two countries and two castles – Trenčín Castle and Brumov-Bylnice Castle in Moravia. This cycling route connects to the Vážska cyklomagistrála – the cycling artery of the Trenčín region, which in its final form should comprise 100km of bike trails connecting the Žilina and Trnava Regions.

and then follow a nature trail to the ruins of the monastery at Velká Skalka.

The Velká Skalka Monastery has a turbulent history, but today it is primarily a place of peace and contemplation. Parts of the walls and towers of the monastery look as if they have grown into the cliff. On the site where St Benedict lived a hermit's life in a cave around the year 1033, the Bishop of Nitra founded a small monastery about 200 years later. The caves once inhabited by St Benedict became its heart. You can visit them today, and perhaps you will find the saint's handprint. Legend has it that St Benedict was ambushed by bandits while praying and asked God for help. He touched the rock with his hand and it opened in front of him. The monastery is open from March to November and can be visited on a guided tour. www.putnickemiestoskalka.sk



View from Matúš Tower of Trenčín Castle, photo: archive of KOČR Trenčín región

The Romantic Towers of Trenčín Castle

The third largest Gothic-Renaissance castle complex in Slovakia was built in the 11th century on the site of a former Old Slavic settlement. In the period of Great Moravia, the castle served as the administrative centre of the region. Historians believe that the oldest part of the mediaeval castle is the residential tower and rotunda, the remains of which can be seen in the upper courtyard. Today, the history of the castle is presented in the exhibition of

ing to a famous legend, was dug by the Turkish pasha Omar for his love Fatima. The tallest Matúš Tower offers a breathtaking view of a large part of the Považie region. Do not miss the Roman inscription on the castle rock from 179 AD, which is one of the oldest historical records in Slovakia.



the Trenčín Museum. As part of the guided tours, you will visit: the lower courtyard, barracks, the dungeon (with replicas of medieval torture instruments), several palaces, the rotunda, the chapel and the Summer Tower. One of the castle's popular features is the Well of Love which, accord-



Rotunda of Trenčín Castle, photo: archive of KOČR Trenčín región



Roman inscription on the castle rock, photo: archive of KOČR Trenčín región

OUR RECOMMENDATION:

- During the season, the Matúš Čák tourist train rides around the town and can take you to the castle.
- If you're feeling adventurous, you can try an unconventional night tour with an electric torch.



STAGES OF THE CYRIL AND METHODIUS ROUTE IN THE TRENČÍN REGION:

Bojná (Nitra) – Inovecká chata
(41km, travel time about 10 hours)

Inovecká chata – Skalka pri Trenčíne
(approx. 26km, travel time 6.5 hours)

Skalka pri Trenčíne – Žitková
(23.8km, travel time 7.5 hours)

Trenčín Castle, photo: Martin Peterka



Realised with financial support from the Ministry of Tourism and Sport of the Slovak Republic.

Čachtice Castle, photo: iStockphoto

Považie

Land of Castles and Châteaux

The Trenčín region boasts an exceptionally high number of castles and castle ruins. The list includes among others Beckov Castle, Čachtice Castle, Lednica, Považský Castle and Tematín. Each of the castles appears in a story or an interesting legend. Visitors can decide on their own whether to believe the legends or to be merely amused by them. Čachtice Castle was made famous by the alleged “bloody” Countess Elizabeth Báthory. According to legend, she bathed in the blood of young girls to stay young and beautiful forever.

Giant bench with a royal view of the castle

Do you want to sit on it? In that case, you have to either climb a ladder first,

or grow a lot! Above the picturesque village of Lednica, a popular tourist destination, you will find a bench of truly unusual dimensions. If you climb up on the giant bench and take a good look around, you will find beautiful views and more opportunities for interesting trips. Lednica Castle, Vršatské bradlá and Vršatec Castle or the lookout tower of the Púchov Valley are your ideal next destinations.

The App That Brings the Middle Ages to Life

A special app brings augmented reality to selected castles in the Trenčín region. It is available free of charge and visitors can simply download it on their phones. At Trenčín Castle, the app will take you to a medieval

feast in Barbora's Palace, where you can discover beautiful frescoes on the walls, admire period furniture, meet historical figures and even participate in the story interactively. Behind the walls of Čachtice Castle, you will be welcomed by Countess Elizabeth Báthory; in the app, you can choose to weigh in on the controversial topic of her guilt or innocence and listen to two versions of her story. At Považský Castle, visitors have an adventurous task – to rescue the beautiful Hedwig, who, according to legend, was kidnapped by a robber knight. In addition, you will see the castle palace as it looked in the second half of the 17th century. The app also doubles as a guide, as it includes commentary in English and German. You will learn about Beckov Castle from its castellan and a lady-in-waiting.

Google Play:



App Store:



Butkov Cross, photo: archive of KOČR Trenčín region

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:

Butkov Cross – rock sanctuary of Divine Mercy, the youngest pilgrimage site

Draškovič Manor in Čachtice has undergone a full renovation and offers many interactive exhibitions. It is connected with the life of the “bloody countess of Čachtice”.

Lednica Castle, photo: iStockphoto



Trenčín:

A Place to Pique Your Curiosity

Almost everyone knows Trenčín Castle, but what if we told you that the town below it is turning into one of the most interesting cultural places in Europe? Trenčín will become the European Capital of Culture in 2026 and already today offers experiences that combine history, contemporary art and the vibrant atmosphere of the city.

Trenčín 2026 is about events and changing the city itself. Public space is transforming, forgotten places are reviving and new life is entering the streets. Art and culture escape from the galleries, theatres and cultural centres come out to the people. The city and the region want to awaken your curiosity and openness to new things. Will you let them? If you want to experience something new, it's worth visiting this year, because the experiences keep coming. **The Light Art Festival** in April will enliven various parts of Trenčín, including the castle, with light art. In May, you can look forward to the modern city market **Korzo**, which attracts thousands of people to the streets. The end of the summer will belong to **the Garage Festival**

of the best young music. Have we aroused your curiosity? But Trenčín is not only about urban tourism. In its surroundings you will also discover places with an alluring atmosphere. Just a few minutes from the centre is **Skalka pri Trenčíne**, the oldest pilgrimage site in Slovakia. Its unique history and location above the Váh River make it an ideal place for a moment of peace and reflection.

The European Capital of Culture Trenčín 2026 awakens curiosity about history, art and life in the city and the region. Follow us on www.trencin2026.eu and social media and discover how Trenčín is changing. The program will culminate in 2026, but it's worth coming now.

Marián Bebjak, Trenčín 2026

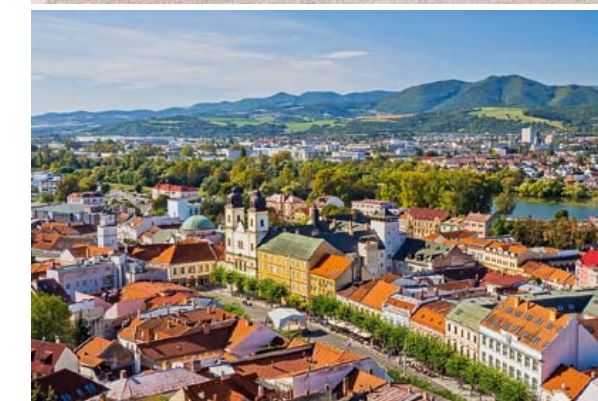


Photo: Juraj Majerský and Daniela Dolinská

TRENČÍN
2026
Európske hlavné mesto kultúry



The Largest Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius Can Be Found

Terchová, photo: Martin Peterka

in Terchová

In the north of Slovakia, under the protection of massive cliffs, you will be welcomed by a village that is one of the important centres of the Cyril and Methodius tradition in Slovakia and a partner municipality of the Moravian Velehrad. In this region, every visitor puts on their hiking boots and sets out to discover not only the natural beauty, but also the sacred monuments and history combined with the values of our ancestors.

Terchová is perhaps most famous as the heart of the region of the Slovak outlaw Juraj Jánošík, but there are also other sights waiting for visitors. The town's dominant architectural feature is the Roman Catholic Church dedicated to the Thessaloniki brothers, which became an official place of pilgrimage in 2019. On the occasion of

the 70th anniversary of its consecration, it was declared a Diocesan Shrine. The interior of the church is awe-inspiring thanks to the open space of the three naves, which are separated by massive round columns, and its interior decoration with the theme of the arrival of Cyril and Methodius to our territory bears the legacy of the Great Moravian period.



Diocesan Shrine of Saints Cyril and Methodius, photo: R. Kohler



Terchovské srdce lookout tower, photo: J. Moravčík

The spiritual message has survived a thousand years. Although the brothers from Thessaloniki never visited these places, their ideas and legacy have spread throughout this region as well. In 1990, Terchová became the first place in the former Czechoslovakia to host the Cyril and Methodius Days. Every year at the beginning of July, the festivities include religious services and other spiritual events, as well as cultural events, exhibitions and folklore performances. The faithful follow the Stations of the Cross to the top of Oravcová Hill in the middle of beautiful nature. They walk along a road made of stone quarried in Terchová a hundred years ago.

The Terchov Nativity scene is a world rarity

A unique carved nativity scene can be admired in the vestibule of the church. It's the oldest and the second largest



Terchov Nativity Scene, photo: terchova.eu



Statue of Jánošík, photo: m-ARK

moving nativity scene, created by master carvers, designers and electrical engineers from Terchová. It was carved by Štefan Hanuliak, who also made the wooden sculpture of the two missionaries in the main part of the church. The figures made of basswood depict old Terchová with typical crafts, the place of Jesus' birth and the city of Jerusalem. The work is permanently installed at the entrance to the church, but shows all its majestic glory during the feast of the Nativity of God on 25 December.

Bronze statue and house of Juraj Jánošík

You can take a short walk through the village to the majestic bronze statue that attracts attention from afar. Jánošík was an outlaw who was said to take from the rich and give to the poor, and who still stands guard over Terchovians. Several films about Juraj Jánošík were made here.



Bell tower at Marunov, photo: J. Hlatký

The **Terchovské srdce lookout tower** attracts visitors to a hill where a gallows once stood as a film prop. You can also visit Jánošík's symbolic house in the settlement Osada u Jánošov.

Another authentic place is the **Bell Tower at Marunov**, located almost at the end of the village in Šípková. The picturesque wooden bell tower with a shingle roof can be reached by car, by bicycle or along Jánošík's trail. The bell tower mainly served the local people and is a symbol of the interconnection between folk culture and the beautiful local nature. The bell tower offers gorgeous views of the ridge of Malá Fatra, but also the peak of Pupov. Locals come here to watch the most beautiful sunset in Terchová.

Tips for attractions in the area:

Jánošíkove diery
Slovak Astronomical Clock in Stará Bystrica
Museum of the Kysuce Village in Nová Bystrica – Vychylovka



Jánošíkove diery, photo: M. Hajkovský



More tips in the Žilina Region



Budatín Castle, photo: J. Moravčík



Lietava Castle, photo: R. Šulc



Marriage Palace in Bytča, photo: ŽSK

Strečno Castle, photo: J. Moravčík



Žilina Church, photo: R. Kohler

Holy Trinity Cathedral and Burian Tower

When you're exploring the sacred monuments of the Žilina region, the **cathedral in Žilina** cannot be missed. It is also popularly known as the Parish Church and is one of the oldest and most important buildings in the city. Nearby stands the **Burian Tower**, a free-standing bell tower reminiscent of the famous Italian campaniles. With a height of 46 metres, it also served as an observation post for protection against fires and enemies. The tower now has a new observation deck, which can be visited during city tours organised by the tourist information office.

Medieval Castles And Original Exhibitions

Budatín Castle in Žilina is certainly worth visiting. It has the character of a romantic château and has been impressively restored. It is home to the Považské Museum, which invites you to explore the period interior and exhibits from regional history. The **Tinsmith Pavilion** houses the only specialised exhibition of its kind in the world. It shows the history and rarity of this unique phenomenon. From wire and metal, period documents and the works of tinsmithing masters, you will learn about this craft made famous far beyond the borders of Slovakia. Stories from the past also come to life at other castles in the Žilina region: **Strečno and Lietava.**

The wedding palace in Bytča was built by Palatine Juraj Thurzo in 1601, mainly for the wedding receptions of his daughters, as it was customary that the wedding ceremony and the reception were organised by the bride's family. It is one of the most important Renaissance buildings in our territory. The façades are richly decorated with sgraffito ornamentation with figural and floral motifs around the stone windows and portal. The complex itself consists of a Renaissance manor house with a square plan, the Marriage Palace, originally an older structure rebuilt in the Classical style and the entrance building from the end of the 19th century.

www.zilinskyturistickykraj.sk



Pilgrimages

Photo: P. Hirsch's archive

Are for Everyone

You have been organising group hikes along the Cyril and Methodius Route since 2017. Why do you think people embark on long-distance walking routes today?

There are many reasons, and it's difficult to summarise them in a short response. Walking is the most natural movement, and I believe that the core of our being still calls for nature. When I was having a difficult time in my life, walking came to me as an offer. Looking back, I am very glad that I said yes to this call. Long-distance walking routes, in my opinion, evoke something hard to grasp and hard to imagine. And I believe that they can be a challenge for someone. Can I handle the long journey, can I handle the discomfort, how much can I walk, won't I be too tired, etc.?

For others, the reason may be curiosity. Organised pilgrimages, on the other hand, bring an interesting aspect of community. They enable encounters between people who'd otherwise never meet. The beautiful thing about hiking is that it really is for everyone whose musculoskeletal system is more or less okay, who is between the ages of 5 and 80 and is willing to walk with an open heart and mind.

In 2020, you produced the first documentary filmed on the Cyril and Methodius Route – Walking without Borders. In your opinion, has it helped popularise hiking among the public?

Yes, it was beautiful work and I am very grateful to the people of the route for this opportunity to participate. I believe the documentary has served its purpose. For two or three years after it aired, I repeatedly had newcomers come to the pilgrimages who mentioned that their inspiration was the documentary they had seen on TV. They were intrigued by the fact that it is possible to travel



In Rožnov pod Radhoštěm during the Velehrad-Terčovská pilgrimage, photo: P. Hirsch's archive

PROFILE

PETR HIRSCH

He made his first pilgrimage in 2010–2012, when he walked over 16,000 km in 2.5 years from his birthplace in Dvůr Králové nad Labem to Santiago de Compostela, Rome and Jerusalem. In 2014–2015, he was involved in a round-the-world hiking project, which he ended after 7,500 kilometres. Afterwards, he started to organise and promote hiking pilgrimages in the Czech Republic. He has given more than 280 talks on the subject of pilgrimage and is the vice-president of the Ultraia association. In 2017, he accompanied his friend, wheelchair user and multiple sclerosis patient Honza Dušek on a 640-km-long pilgrimage to Santiago. A documentary film made of the journey is called Camino on Wheels. Since 2015, he has organised over 60 pilgrimages along Czech pilgrimage routes, attended by more than 500 pilgrims. Petr loves to support charity events.



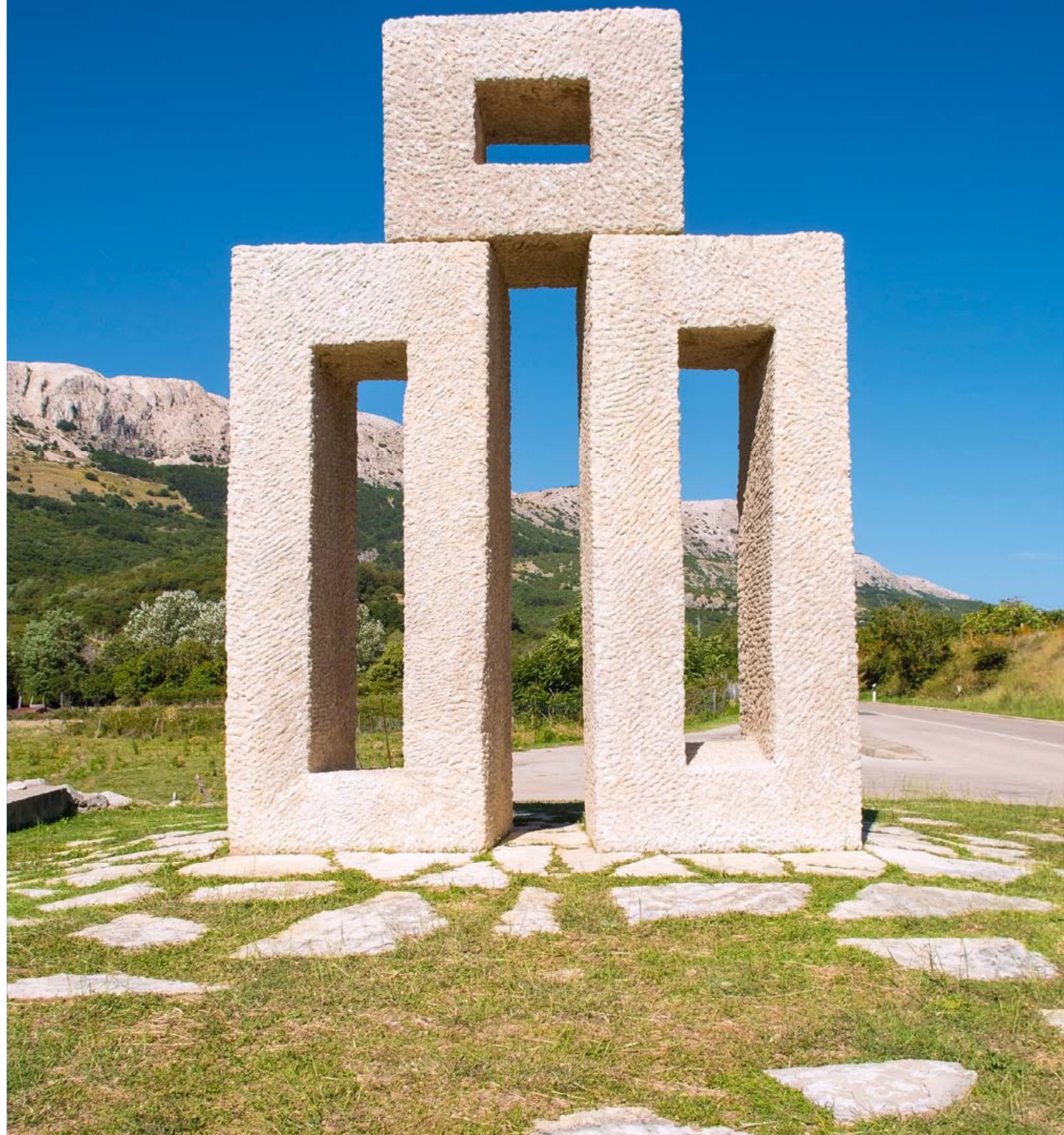
Petr Hirsch at the Bojná-Valy Settlement, photo: P. Hirsch's archive

in a similar way as in Spain, for several days, to get to know the Czech or neighbouring Slovak landscape, people, places and customs, and to visit well-known, but also less known pilgrimage sites and other spiritually rich places. And along the way, learn something new or interesting about our history or our cultural and religious traditions.

Do you have a favourite Cyril and Methodius route?

I have walked pretty much all the main trails. I particularly enjoy walking to/from Trenčín, near the White Carpathian Mountains crossing, in the area of the Goddesses of Žitkov. The rugged region of Kopanice left a deep imprint on my mind. But I honestly love the routes leading to Velehrad from all sides.

The Cyril and Methodius Legacy in Other European Countries



The Glagolitic trail on the island of Krk in Croatia. Photo: iStockphoto

GREECE

Veneration of Saints Cyril and Methodius in the City of Thessaloniki

In Thessaloniki, the memory of its sons, the missionaries and Saints Cyril and Methodius, is honoured in many ways. Several churches have been built in their name, in which their feast day is celebrated annually with grandeur and the participation of many believers on 11 May. The most prominent of these churches is located at the city's 'New Promenade'. Its foundation stone was laid in 1981. Its architectural design is based on that of the Church of the Theotokos of Pharos, an ancient shrine located in Constantinople. In the surrounding area of the church, a monument to the two saints, sculpted by Alexei Arkhipov, was erected as a donation from the National Society of Greeks of Saint Petersburg (2013). The saints are depicted as they appear in many icons and statues in neighbouring Slavic countries, holding a cross in one hand and a scroll with the Slavic alphabet between them.

Additionally, there is a monumental Column of the two Saints in the vicinity, called the 'Book-Temple' (2008). This work, resembling an opened book that symbolizes the path to knowledge opened by the two saints through their missionary work, forms a passageway at the base of the monument. Their figures are represented in the form of a mosaic on its front side. On the back side, tiles referencing the Cyrillic alphabet are affixed. One of the metal plates on the monument bears the inscription: 'Saints Cyril and Methodius, Greeks from Thessaloniki and Illuminators of the Slavs.' Finally, at 'New Promenade', there is the 'Cross of the Russian Navy' (or 'Cross of Cyril and Methodius'), inscribed in a circle together with reliefs depicting ecclesiastical symbols and the names of the two saints in Slavic. This sculpture is a gift from the Russian Navy to the City of Thessaloniki.

Source: Thessaloniki History Center



The 'Book-Temple' monument of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Photo: Courtesy of the Municipality of Thessaloniki



Procession of the icon of Saints Cyril and Methodius through the streets of the city. Photo: Courtesy of the Municipality of Thessaloniki



The Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Photo: Courtesy of the Municipality of Thessaloniki



The statue of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Photo: Courtesy of the Municipality of Thessaloniki

A Living Tradition of Faith, Culture and Education



The National Archaeological Museum in Veliki Preslav offers a fascinating glimpse into the splendour of Bulgaria's medieval Golden Age. As the second capital of the First Bulgarian Empire, the city became a thriving cultural and political centre where the Cyrillo-Methodian disciples established the renowned Preslav Literary School.

There is no definitive evidence that St. Cyril and Methodius had ever set foot on present-day Bulgarian lands, yet their legacy is deeply intertwined with the Bulgarian state and its literary tradition. For over 11 centuries, the Cyrillo-Methodian heritage has stood as a cornerstone of Bulgarian national identity. The credit for preserving and advancing their mission belongs to their immediate disciples – Clement of Ohrid, Naum of Ohrid, Constantine of Preslav, Sava, and Angelarius. Building

on the work of their esteemed teachers, they established the foundation of Bulgarian and Slavic literature, which became the third pillar of European Christian culture. The Cyrillo-Methodian heritage in Bulgaria is ubiquitous, encompassing monuments of graphic culture, liturgical practices, churches and monasteries, archaeological reserves, museums, ancient city quarters, architectural ensembles, schools, universities, libraries, and archives,



Rila Monastery, UNESCO World Heritage site

as well as secular holidays and folk customs. There is a remarkable number of sites that preserve the memory of The Seven Saints, namely 109 churches, 3 chapels, 8 shrines and 2 monasteries dedicated to St. Cyril and Methodius, but also 99 cultural centres, 264 schools, 4 universities and the Bulgarian National Library "St. Cyril and Methodius". Visit Bulgaria to encounter this enduring legacy in every corner. Walk through the ruins of the old capitals, through the medieval monasteries and churches, admire priceless Glagolitic and Cyrillic manuscripts and masterpieces of Orthodox iconography, or take part in the annual celebrations honouring St. Cyril and Methodius in each Bulgarian city.

Author: Elka Zlateva, PhD.
Cyrillo-Methodian Research Centre at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences



"Veliki Preslav", film of the National Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences



Festive Celebration of the Day of St. Cyril and Methodius, the Bulgarian Alphabet, Education and Culture, and Slavic Literature on 24 May in front of the St. Cyril and Methodius National Library, Sofia



Pliska, the first capital of Bulgaria, where King Boris I welcomed the Cyrillo-Methodian disciples in 885, offers visitors a rare chance to step into the cradle of Bulgarian history and promises a memorable journey through space and time.
Photo: Court of the Cyrillic Alphabet in Pliska



Monastery of St. Naum, Ohrid. Photo by Aleksandar Vasilevski

NORTH MACEDONIA

In the footsteps of Saints Cyril and Methodius in the territory of North Macedonia

The impact of the cult of Saints Cyril and Methodius can be found in various aspects of the medieval cultural heritage and in the contemporary cultural life of North Macedonia. A significant portion of the Cyril and Methodius cultural heritage can be found in the area of Ohrid, Prespa, and Skopje. Ohrid, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is an important ecclesiastical and literary centre where the memory of Sts. Cyril and Methodius have been cherished for centuries. The major centre of southern Slavic literacy was established here in the 9th and 10th centuries. The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Ohrid was built on the foundations of

an old shrine after the great mission of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. It probably served the purpose of a cathedral in the times of Tsar Samuel (958–1014). The church was reconstructed under Archbishop Leon (1037–1056). The oldest depiction of St. Cyril, St. Clement of Ohrid, and St. Methodius on a fresco dating from the 11th century has been identified here. The Church of St. George is a 12th-century church located 2 km from the village of Kurbinovo, Prespa. The depictions of Sts. Cyril and Methodius dating from 1191 can be found in the church. Cyril and Methodius are painted on the south wall of the nave, slightly facing each other. The figure of St. Cyril comes after that of St. Cyril of

Alexandria, after whom the Slavic teacher got his monastic name. The monastery of the Assumption of the Most Holy Mother of God – Matka located in the picturesque Matka canyon, near the capital, Skopje, dates back to the 14th century.



Fresco of Seven Slav Saints, The Monastery of Saint Naum, Ohrid. Photo by Aleksandar Vasilevski



Fresco of St. Cyril, St. Methodius and St. Cyril of Alexandria; Church of St. George, Kurbinovo. Photo by Aleksandar Vasilevski



Cathedral of St. Sophia, Ohrid. Photo by Aleksandar Vasilevski



Monastery of the Assumption of the Most Holy Mother of God – Matka, 14th century. Photo by Aleksandar Vasilevski

The 15th-century fresco in the altar apse painting is particularly significant, on which St. Cyril the Philosopher and St. Clement of Ohrid are depicted besides other bishops in the second plan.

Thanks to these monuments, but not only to them, the legacy of Saints Cyril and Methodius remains alive in North Macedonia, and their message of learning and faith has endured for centuries.

Authors:
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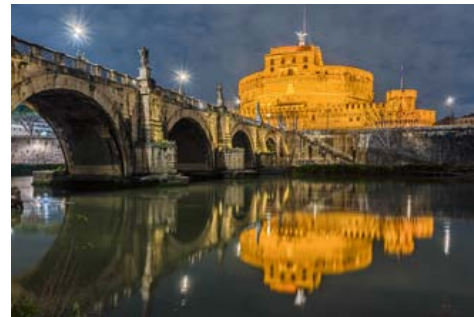
Rome, the Eternal City, bridging cultures and faiths

The legacy of Saints Cyril and Methodius reverberates far beyond Eastern Europe and reaches the metropolitan area of Rome through a captivating trail that intertwines history, spirituality, and breathtaking landscapes. From the peaceful countryside in the north to the ancient ruins in the south, this cultural route celebrates their remarkable role in bridging cultures and faiths while connecting Rome's rich heritage with the Slavic world. The journey begins in the Valle del Treja, where the enchanting Monte Gelato waterfalls provide a stunning opening scene. Nestled amidst lush greenery and soothing streams, this natural wonder creates the perfect setting for reflection and discovery. As the path continues southward, it opens the way to the Veio Regional Park, where visitors can delve into oak forests, rolling meadows, and

ancient Etruscan ruins, while enjoying panoramic viewpoints and well-marked trails that seamlessly combine unspoiled beauty with historical allure. Upon reaching the heart of the Eternal City, the route leads to the Papal Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, where Pope Adrian II welcomed the Saints and approved the use of Old Church Slavonic in liturgy in 867. A short distance away stands the Basilica of Saint Praxedes, which widely commemorates their legacy, and a little further on lies the Basilica of San Clemente, where Saint Cyril's relics are preserved in a sacred chapel. Continuing south, the ancient Appian Way offers you a journey back in history, with its cobblestone paving weathered by centuries of travellers, whispering tales of a bygone era and embodying the passage of time in a uniquely captivating way.

Lined with cypress trees and Roman ruins, the route evokes the spirit of pilgrimage and invites visitors to walk or cycle along its storied path, reflecting on the legacy of missionaries like Cyril and Methodius, who travelled great distances to share their faith.

Source: Metropolitan City of Rome



Castel Sant'Angelo, photo: © Domenico Durastante



Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, photo: by Martin Peterka



Monte Gelato Waterfalls, photo: © Annalaura Pacini



Patriarchal Basilica, photo: Martin Peterka

Aquileia – World Heritage Site

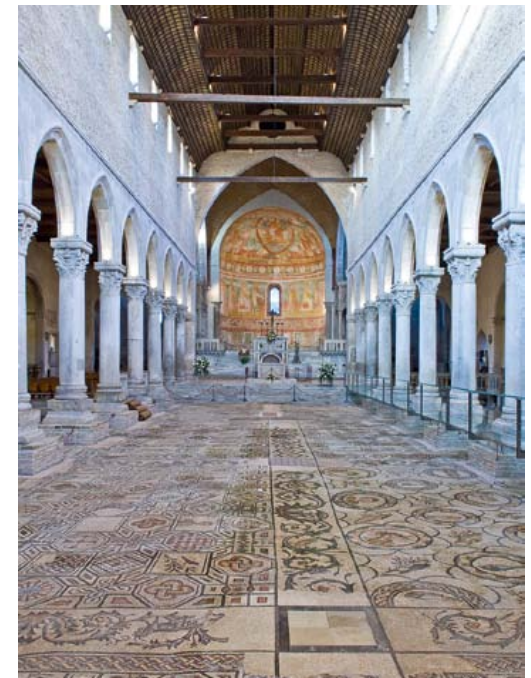
Sea and land routes intersect in Aquileia, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1998 for having been one of the largest and wealthiest cities of the Roman Empire and for its decisive role in the spread of Christianity. Since the time of the ancient Romans, Aquileia has been a key link between the great Mediterranean route and the north, an important and cosmopolitan centre.

The city was a significant stop in the journey of the two Thessalonian brothers, Cyril and Methodius, on their way to Venice and Rome. The grand Patriarchal Basilica of Aquileia still boasts one of the most astonishing mosaic-decorated surfaces in Western Europe. Dating back to the 4th century, the mosaic covers 750 m² and is rich in symbols, elements, and allegorical figures. The mosaic culminates in the "Sea of Jonah," which

depicts three scenes from the story of the Old Testament prophet: Jonah swallowed by the sea monster, Jonah being vomited out by the creature, and Jonah resting under a gourd plant.

The new exhibition at the National Archaeological Museum tells the story of Aquileia's strategic role as a hub for Mediterranean trade through its rich collections. The economic engine of this dense network of exchanges was the river port, one of the most important archaeological areas of the UNESCO site, along with the archaeological areas of the Roman Forum, the Decumanus of Aratria Galla, the Necropolis, Roman houses (Fondo CAL), ancient markets (Fondo Pasqualis), Titus Macer's House, and the Domus and Bishop Palace.

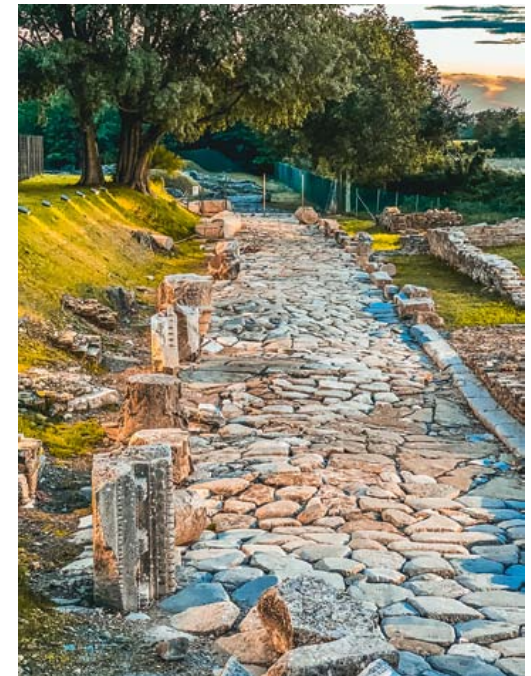
Visit Aquileia and discover its events: www.fondazioneaquileia.it
www.discoveraquileia.com



Mosaics of the patriarchal Basilica, photo: © G. Baronchelli



National Archaeological Museum of Aquileia, photo: ©A. Chemollo



Decumanus of Aratria Galla, photo: ©N.Oleotto



CROATIA

Glagolitic script as Croatian heritage



Baška, Jurandvor. Photo by Davor Žunić, photo: Tourist Board of the Baška Municipality



Baška Tablet. Photo by Davor Žunić, photo: Tourist Board of the Baška Municipality

The Glagolitic script was an important factor in the creation of Croatian national identity, culture, and literature. Since 2014 the script has been included in the Register of Intangible Cultural

Heritage of the Republic of Croatia. The Day of the Croatian Glagolitic Script and Glagolitism is officially celebrated on 22 February in memory of the year 1483, when the first Croatian book, the Missal by the Law of the Roman Court, was printed.

Explore the Glagolitic heritage starting from the Old Church Slavonic Institute in Zagreb, the Baška Tablet (from the 11th century) on the Island of Krk, walk along the Glagolitic Alley from Hum to Roč in Istria, visit Senj and the Senj printing house from the 15–16th centuries, and the royal towns of Nin and Zadar.

There are many sacred buildings in Central Croatia which are the places of activity of Glagolitic priests, and the castles of the Frankopan family are the guardians of records in Glagolitic script.

The Glagolitic alphabet remains a living symbol of Croatian history, imprinted on stone, parchment, and in the cultural memory of the entire nation.

Author: NGO Zraka Draganić



Senj cathedral, photo: NGO Zraka

Castel Ozalj. Photo by Denis Stošić, photo: Tourist Board of the Karlovac County



Photo: Slovenian National Shrine

SLOVENIA

Slovenian National Marian Shrine, Brezje

Brezje became famous in the 19th century when miraculous healings occurred at the merciful image of Mary, Help of Christians. In 1988, the Church of Our Lady of Help was elevated to a basilica by Pope John Paul II. In 2000, the basilica was declared Slovenia's national shrine. The shrine is cared for by the Franciscan monks who built a monastery next to the church. The square in front of the basilica, decorated with a statue of Pope John Paul II, is connected to the Peace Park with the statue of the Holy Family and the Holy Cross and offers a beautiful view of the Julian Alps and their highest peak, Triglav. Near the basilica, in a former stable, is the Nativity Museum with a rich collection of nativity scenes from all over the world. Within the national sanctuary there is a Pilgrimage Office, which takes care

of pilgrims coming to Brezje, organizes pilgrimages, guided tours and takes care of promotion on a national level.

As part of the Cyril and Methodius Route, the shrine promotes the importance of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Slovenia, as well as the importance of religious tourism and cultural routes in Europe. Throughout Slovenia there are eight chapels and eight churches dedicated to Saints Cyril and Methodius. Some of them are situated in remote mountain areas.

Brezje is not just a sanctuary, it is a place where faith, history and natural beauty meet. Here, pilgrims and tourists alike find peace, inspiration and respect for the spiritual traditions that form a unique part of Slovenia's cultural heritage.

Author: Slovenian National Shrine



HUNGARY

Historical Park in Zalavár

The town of Zalavár can be found on an elevation in the middle of the former marshland of the Zala River, on the western edge of Lake Balaton. Surrounded by river marshes, the island's difficult accessibility provided ample protection for the people who have lived here since prehistoric times. It became important in the 9th century before the arrival of the nomadic Hungarians to the Carpathian Basin. At that time, the settlement built on the so-called castle hill became the easternmost centre of the Frankish Empire and a bastion of Christianity. Exiled Nitra Prince Pribina found refuge here, and so did many of his Slavic subjects. In order to convert the inhabitants of the province to the Christian faith and to spread liturgy in the Slavic language, Great Moravian Prince Rastislav asked Byzantine Emperor Michael III to send missionaries to Great Moravia. The emperor entrusted

this task to Cyril and Methodius, two monks from Thessaloniki. On their way to the Great Moravian princely seat, the missionaries stayed for some time in Zalavár and carried out their missionary activities here as well. Archaeological research of the Castle Hill was launched in the early 1980s. In 2001, the ruins of the Church of St Hadrian were uncovered and preserved here. In the historical park, you can find monuments built by Bulgarians, the Archdiocese of Salzburg, Slovenians and Slovaks, all commemorating the local stay of the Thessaloniki brothers Cyril and Methodius. There is also a small museum dedicated to the history and nature of the Little Balaton. Every year, the Slovak community of Budapest organises a pilgrimage to Zalavár for the Slovak inhabitants of the capital and its surroundings. Participants arrive by bus and car. After the singing of the Slovak and

Hungarian anthems, there are speeches, the laying of wreaths at the statue of St Cyril and Methodius, a Slovak Mass in the local church and a concert of the Slovak choir Ozvena. After a joint lunch, the participants tour the archaeological site and listen to a lecture on the current state of the research.

Source/author: Slovak Municipality in Budapest



Cyril and Methodius pilgrimage in Zalavár on the ruins of the Church of St Hadrian, photo: Martin Peterka



Photo: Martin Peterka



Supraśl, photo: Dlinemedia

POLAND

Trail from Częstochowa to Kraków and Wisła

Discover the Cyril and Methodius Route in Poland. Over 330 kilometres long trail is divided into 15 daily stages. Whether you go the whole trail or choose just one of the legs, you will meet Poland's history, culture and natural beauty. It starts in Częstochowa, the most important pilgrimage site in the country, and ends at Mały Stożek on the Czech-Polish border near the town of Wisła, a famous recreational, tourist and sports resort. The trail in Poland passes through picturesque landscapes, many lake areas, national parks, and forest complexes. The first part takes you through flat terrain to

Kraków, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. You can continue to Wadowice, the birthplace of St. John Paul II (1920–2005), the first Slavic Pope, who declared Sts. Cyril and Methodius as co-patrons of Europe in 1980.

Supraśl

In the north-east part of the country, near the borders with Belarus and Lithuania, there is another remarkable place connected with the Cyril and Methodius tradition. Supraśl was

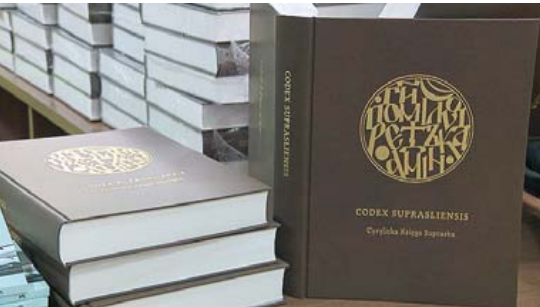
been included in the prestigious "Best of the World 2025" list of the National Geographic magazine. It is one of the gems of the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius, which has included the Supraśl Academy since 2024. Known for the historic Monastery of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God and the Supraśl Academy located within its walls, the Museum of Icons, unique in Poland, and the Museum of the Art of Printing and Papermaking, this small town in north-eastern Poland is an ideal place to relax from the hustle and bustle of the city.

The monastery complex and its significance

Founded at the end of the 15th century, the monastery is the seat of the Supraśl Academy. The monastery also houses the Museum of Icons and the Museum of the Art of Printing and Papermaking. The Academy is a cultural and educational centre. Its mission is to cultivate, develop, and disseminate the traditions, values, and spirituality of Orthodoxy as a source of response to the challenges of modern times. The Academy focuses on research, educational and upbringing activities, and works towards rapprochement of cultures, religions, and denominations with the aim of building a human community based on kindness and respect. Discovered in Supraśl in 1823, the Supraśl Codex is one of the most valuable volumes in the history of humanity. It is the only monument of early Christian Slavic literature of such extent in the world, closely related to the tradition of Saints Cyril and Methodius. In 2007, the monument was entered on the prestigious UNESCO "Memory of the World" list. The Supraśl Codex was published in Polish by the Oikonomos Foundation and Książnica Podlaska im. Łukasza Górnickiego w Białymstoku. This is the first translation of the monument written in Old Church Slavonic into a modern language.



Kraków, photo: Pixabay



The Supraśl Codex, photo: TVP3 Białystok

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The sculpture of Saints Cyril, Methodius,
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