

# **Slovenia - with a personal touch**

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translated by  
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# Preface

We are both architects, travellers, lovers of art, history, nature, and good food. We also like to wander, and explore our country, both the better-known areas and the hidden corners, the untouched places that only the locals know about. Since our student years, we have been writing about architecture, creating books and guides that present Slovene architecture, art, and culture to the public. In this guide, created in collaboration with the team from Beletrina Academic Press, we have picked out the places that we would most like to visit on a trip to Slovenia, imagining that we are experiencing the country for the first time. Inside you will find interesting cultural landmarks and unforgettable experiences, as well as stories of local people who have followed their dreams, and realised ambitious achievements in various fields — from culinary creativity to master craftsmanship. Linking them all together is Slovenia's bountiful natural beauty. Our little country is full of green corners that are unspoilt and authentic, much like the people who live and work in them, maintaining and refining them with subtlety and sensitivity.

We invite you to explore and enjoy the very best that Slovenia has to offer!

*Špela Kuhar and Robert Potokar*

# How to use or travel with the guide *Slovenia - with a personal touch*

The guide before you answers the question: *Why is Slovenia worth visiting?* Or, for some it might be: *Why is it worth getting to know Slovenia better?* as even locals can be unaware of some of their country's most interesting corners. This guide caters for both local and foreign travellers who, as the title suggests, might like a more personal note when exploring the natural, cultural, and culinary attractions of Slovenia.

The brief description of Slovenia that you will find at the beginning of the guide is followed by a few suggestions for short trips that will stay with you forever – whether you have only a couple of hours to spare, or can take your time over a day or two. For better orientation, all the places presented in this guide are marked on the map inside the front cover. There is a list of places in the order in which they appear in the guide at the front, and

an alphabetical index can be found at the back.

After much thought, we divided Slovenia into 19 areas, some larger, some smaller. These areas partly follow the widely accepted regional subdivisions of the country. Historic subdivisions may vary from modern statistical, geographic, and administrative ones. A brief description of each individual area is followed by a selection of points of interest. These points of interest are divided by content: from cultural attractions (architecture, museums and galleries) to natural ones (nature reserves, lakes, rivers, caves), to culinary spots (ranging from Michelin-starred restaurants to casual local inns), places to stay (from the more prestigious to more affordable options), and craft workshops and other shops. In each place the attractions are listed in the order in which we think they are most easily visited, but you can, of course, take your own route, allow yourself to get lost and to explore the suggested places in your own way. Next to the title of each place is a pictogram that indicates the kind of attraction it is.

Attentive readers will notice that, compared to the rest of Slovenia, Ljubljana is somewhat more modestly represented in this guide. As the country's capital and largest town, it has so many sights that if we were to describe it in the same way as the rest of Slovenia, Ljubljana alone would take up half the guide. Therefore, we decided to prepare a separate guide to Ljubljana, and in this general guide to Slovenia have just highlighted some of the main attractions and unique places that are 'not to be missed'.

Because this guide is being published in the digital age when so much information is available online, we have not included the opening hours of museums and other institutions as the

most up-to-date information is only a click away.

You may find that some of the highlighted points of interest of this guide will no longer be there when you go looking for them. We hope there won't be many, but be aware that places are living organisms, with new points of interest being created all the time, and old ones do sometimes disappear.



## Gastronomy

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## Accommodation

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## Culture

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## Crafts

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## Nature

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## Shopping

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# Slovenia

How would one describe Slovenia in brief? A small and young European country with a population of slightly over 2 million and just over thirty years of history as an independent state. Its capital and largest city is Ljubljana. Slovenia has a little of everything: mountains, a short stretch of sea, lakes, rivers, forests, towns, settlements, and villages. On the same day you can climb a mountain of over 2000 metres altitude and then swim in the sea. You can drive lengthwise through the entire country between Piran in the southwest and Lendava in the northeast in just over three hours. Slovenia also has a mixture of influences from the countries that surround it: Austria, Hungary, Croatia and Italy, as well as from the various newcomers who live and work in the present-day Republic of Slovenia, adding a touch of variety to our cultural mosaic.

There are many attractions for you to discover on the pages that follow, but if you have only a day or two to spend here and would like to get an idea about this part of the world, you should visit any of the more picturesque places which are most visited: the capital Ljubljana, where you can admire the works of architect Jože Plečnik; the natural beauties of lakes Bled, Bohinj and Cerknica; Postojna cave where a small train takes you to the depths of the Karst underworld; the Lipizzan horses at Lipica; the medieval towns of Piran or Škofja Loka, or the world-renowned restaurant, Hiša Franko, in Staro Selo, near Kobarid where you can indulge in an unforgettable culinary experience.





# Gorenjska

The song Beautiful Gorenjska (*Prelepa Gorenjska*) by the Avsenik Brothers Ensemble captures well why this part of Slovenia is worth visiting:

*Beautiful Gorenjska,  
My pride, my yearning,  
Visit once and you'll keep returning!  
Mountains, forests,  
Crystal-clear streams,  
Valleys of green, a true land of dreams.*

Triglav (2864 m), Slovenia's highest peak and one of its national symbols, overlooks this region. Every proud Slovene is supposed to climb to the summit of Triglav at least once in their life, to reach its iconic Aljaž Tower landmark. Gorenjska's pristine nature and impressive mountains make it an excellent area for hiking and climbing, as well as winter sports.

Beautiful medieval towns such as Kranj, Radovljica, Škofja Loka, Tržič and Kamnik, as well as Slovenia's tourist jewels Bled and Bohinj, offer many opportunities to explore and relax. Gorenjska is considered one of the more developed regions of Slovenia. People are known to be hard-working, but perhaps another factor contributing to the abundance of cultural attractions is some of their proverbial rivalry, both between neighbours and towns. Gorenjska is also visited for its culinary offerings.



*A winter idyll by Lake Bohinj;  
the preserved paradise  
nestled among mountains.*

## Kranj

Kranj is the largest town and administrative centre of Gorenjska. It is built on the headland above the confluence of the rivers Sava and Kokra with a beautiful mountain backdrop — Kranj is the only town in Slovenia from which you can see Triglav, Stol and Grintavec, the three highest peaks of the Slovenian Alps. It is believed to be one of the oldest settlements in Slovenia with origins in the Neolithic. The town gives its name to the entire historical region of *Kranjska* (the English name *Carniola* is derived from the Latin *Carni*, a pre-Slavic, Celtic tribe that lived in the area; *Carnium* is the Latin name for Kranj, its Slovene name also ultimately deriving from the Latin). From the 19th century, the town was an important centre of the textile, rubber, and footwear industries. Sadly, after Slovene independence these once leading industries began to decline. Two famous Slovene architects left their mark on the town, Jože Plečnik and Edvard Ravnikar, and the town hosts the Week of Slovene Drama, the Actors' Film Festival, Jazz Camp Kranj, the KAOS Festival of Contemporary College, and the Textile Art Biennial.

## Kranj

### Main Square |

A walk through the old town centre takes us back to the 16th and 17th centuries when many of the town houses were built. The stone portals and historic details on the building façades have been well preserved. The fountain at the centre of the square is a reconstruction of one dating to 1837, built on the location of an earlier, 16th century fountain. The main buildings on the square are the Town Hall and the Church of Saint Cantianus. Parallel to the main street are two side streets also worth investigating.

## Kranj

### Town Hall |

The beautiful Renaissance Town Hall, complete with an original wooden ceiling, is a popular wedding venue in Kranj and it's not hard to see why. The building dates to the 16th and 17th centuries and houses three permanent collections that are part of the Gorenjska Museum: the archaeological and ethnological collections and a collection of sculptures by Lojze Dolinar. The gallery on the ground floor is used for temporary exhibitions.

● *Glavni trg 4*

## Kranj

### Church of Saint Cantianus |

There are a few churches in Slovenia that everyone should visit. The Parish Church of Saint Cantianus in Kranj is certainly one of them. It is one of the best examples of a 15th century Gothic vaulted interior with rich church furnishings. Also interesting is the church ossuary. Until the 18th century, townsfolk buried their dead in the area adjacent to the church and when they ran out of space, they built an ossuary. Recently a new staircase with 163 steps was constructed in the belfry, allowing access to a viewing platform 40 metres above street level, offering stunning views of the town and its mountainous backdrop.

## Kranj

### Gorenjska Museum |

The main gallery and museum institution in town prepares permanent and temporary displays at five locations. Beside the abovementioned Town Hall, there is a permanent exhibition at Khislstein Castle entitled Beautiful Gorenjska. Behind the museum is the

1 Kranj with Mount Storžič in the background

2 Interior of the Church of Saint Cantianus



open-air Khislstein theatre, in front of it, the former castle park with a large lime tree that in the summer provides shade for the Khislstein 12.56 Café. Other parts of the museum include the memorial collection to the Slovene national poet France Prešeren in the house he lived in from 1846 to his death in 1849, the ossuary next to the Church of Saint Cantianus, and a gallery in the Pavšlar House with a permanent exhibition of the works by visual artists, recipients of the Prešeren Award, Slovenia's most prestigious arts award.

● *Tomšičeva ulica 42*

### Kranj

#### Layer's Kranj | 🏠 | ♪

Leopold Layer (1752-1828) was an extremely prolific artist who painted frescoes, oil paintings for nearby churches, and portraits of local bourgeoisie. He was also known for counterfeiting money. Upon the arrival of the French in the area under Napoleon in 1809, a workshop in the Layer house began printing money. A year later the illegal set up was discovered and Leopold and his two brothers were jailed. In prison, Leopold vowed that if he was spared, he would paint frescos in the chapel at the pilgrimage church in Brezje and an oil painting of Mary Help of Christians for the altar. When he was released from jail after the French departed from the area, he kept his promise and the painting of Mary at Brezje, is now one of Slovenia's most iconic religious images. In Kranj, the Layer House is now a hub of cultural and social activity. Next to it is the Škrlovec Tower, part of the town's medieval defences, which is used as a cultural venue – a space for innovative theatre performances and concerts on the ground floor, and the Janez Puhar Gallery on the first floor.

● *Tomšičeva ulica 32*

### Kranj

#### Prešeren's Kranj | 🏠

Few towns in Slovenia have been marked so strongly by any personality as Kranj has been by Slovenia's national poet, Dr France Prešeren (1800-1849), even though he only lived in the town for a few years before his death. There are many reminders of Prešeren around town, the house he lived in is a museum, the gallery of Prešeren Award laureates, the first notes of Slovenia's national anthem, *Zdravljica*, the words of which come from Prešeren's eponymous poem, can be heard from the belfry of the Church of Saint Cantianus at noon every day, and there is a large monument to Prešeren in front of the theatre that also bears his name. The town park, Prešeren Grove (*Prešernov gaj*) where he is buried is also named after him, as are a primary school, a secondary school, the local choir, and many other things. All things Prešeren in Kranj come to a climax at the Prešeren Fair (*Prešernov smenj*) on 8 February, Slovenia's day of celebrating culture, a national holiday named Prešeren Day, which marks the anniversary of the poet's death. If you're lucky, you might just meet him walking down the street, hand in hand with his muse and object of unrequited love, Julija Primic.



France Prešeren



## Kranj

### Prešeren Grove | 🏠 | ♿

The central feature of the park is an elegant open colonnade with eight stone columns and a light roof of repeating concrete arches. It was built in 1951 on the site of the former cemetery chapel. Mounted on the columns are gravestones and other stone slabs, most prominent among which is the gravestone with a bronze medal insert commemorating Janez Puhar, inventor of a unique early process of making photographs on glass in the mid-19th century. A few other monuments from the former town cemetery have been preserved, among them the grave of the poet France Prešeren, his daughter Ernestina Jelovšek, the poet Simon Jenko, and the funerary chapel of the Majdič family.

## Kranj

### Old Post Office | 🏠 | ♿

What is one of the characteristics of modernist buildings from the 1930s? A flat roof! There are two reasons to visit the roof of the Old Post Office in Kranj: it offers a nice view of the old town centre and has a pleasant terrace with plenty of greenery, so much in fact that it is called the urban



jungle above Kranj. Acoustic evenings and parties with DJs are organised all year round. Check their programme or simply enjoy a cup of coffee or a glass of wine.

● *Koroška cesta 2*

## Kranj

### Workroom of the inventor Janez Puhar / Puhar's Kranj | 🏠

Had Janez Puhar (1814-1864) not given in to his mother's wish that he

1 Open colonnade in the central part of Prešeren Grove  
2 Rosary Hill steps designed by architect Jože Plečnik

become a priest, he might have had a photographic studio in Kranj, and even have taken a photograph of his contemporary, Dr France Prešeren. Unfortunately, we still don't know Prešeren's true likeness as all known portraits of him are posthumous, but Janez Puhar did make history with his invention of photography on glass in 1842. His process needed only 15 seconds to take the shot, allowing him to take photographic portraits. His self-portrait can be considered the first selfie in history. At the Janez Puhar Museum Room you can dress up in mid-nineteenth century costume and get your very own portrait on glass.

● *Tomšičeva ulica 13*

### Kranj

#### **Plečnik's Kranj** |

The architect Jože Plečnik, famous for his work in Vienna, Prague, and Ljubljana, also left his mark on Kranj. Three buildings in Kranj have a Plečnik connection. He remodelled Rosary Hill (*Rožnovenški klanec*) that connects the upper town square (*Gornji trg*) with the lower town. At the top he built a stone arcade that continues into a cascading fountain. His second work is the colonnade in front of the Prešeren Theatre that he envisaged as a backdrop to the square, an arcaded porch at the entrance to the theatre. He also planned a monument to France Prešeren in the square in front of the theatre, where the large statue of Prešeren stands today. The third work in Kranj connected with Plečnik is the Bežek Villa from 1936, the graduation project of Plečnik's student Nikolaj Bežek, designed for his brother Jože Bežek in Plečnik's recognisable style.

● *Glavni trg 6: Prešeren Theatre*

● *Koroška cesta 27: Bežek Villa*

### Kranj

#### **Ravnikar's Kranj** |

Four buildings that formed part of the modern centre of Kranj were built according to plans by architect Edvard Ravnikar between 1960 and 1973. The first to be built was the Kranj Municipal Council Assembly, the pinnacle of Slovene modernist architecture. The next was the branch of the National Bank; today the building houses the Surveying and Mapping Authority and other government institutions. In the late 1960s, the brick-clad Hotel Creina was built next to the Kranj Grammar School on the edge of the Sava Terrace, its large reinforced concrete protrusions jutting out above the ridge.

● *Slovenski trg 1: Municipal Council*

● *Slovenski trg 2: Surveying and Mapping Authority*

● *Koroška cesta 5: Hotel Creina*

### Kranj

#### **Globus** |

The fourth and last of Ravnikar's buildings in Kranj was the Globus department store. At the apex of his creative surge at the time, Ravnikar experimented on the façade with Corten steel, special steel plates that oxidise or weather, the layer of rust acting as protection. The building had a modern, open-floor plan, a covered external shopping street and covered parking on the roof, accessed by an external concrete ramp. As a department store, Globus prospered until large shopping centres on the outskirts of town became popular. In 2005 the Globus department store was closed and in 2011 part of it was converted to house the Kranj Municipal Library.

● *Gregorčičeva ulica 1*

### Kranj

#### **Kranj below Kranj** |

A few steps from the old town centre there is a steep path leading 30 metres lower to the river Kokra. The



1



2

Kokra Canyon is the second largest urban canyon in Europe, a pleasant oasis, especially on hot summer days, with a bridge across the river. On the other side of town, also not far from the town centre, is a rather unusual feature – 1300 metres of tunnels that were built during the Second World War as the town's air-raid shelter. Now we can even find drippstones in them, formed over the decades, as well as cave fauna, most interesting among which are two species of olms. Resourceful tourist workers also organise various events in the

tunnels, such as wine and beer tasting sessions.

● *Ljubljanska cesta 2: Tunnels beneath the old town of Kranj*

### Kranj

#### **Kavka Bar** | Ψ4

Kavka was a place we used to frequent as students. And because good things survive, Kavka is still a venue for concerts – the interior is mini, the square in front of the bar maxi. Regulars

1 Former Globus department store

2 Photo session at the Hodalič/Bidovec studio

are local bands with their acoustic performances.

● *Maistrov trg 6*

### Kranj

#### Indija Koromandija Tea Shop | ☺

'All you need is love... and tea,' is the thought that greets visitors in this boutique tea shop called Indija Koromandija (the Slovene expression for 'land of plenty') that offers 100 types of tea and tea mixtures. The owner, Mehtab Singh, a Sikh from Punjab in India whose family both produce and trade in tea. They buy tea leaves from select producers and combine them with various additions. They also produce their own brand of cola with less sugar and fewer bubbles.

● *Tavčarjeva ulica 13*

## All you need is love... and tea

### Kranj

#### Studio of photographers Arne Hodalič and Katja Bidovec | ☺ | ☺

Witness to the tradition of photography in Kranj are the numerous photographic studios that can still be found in town. An interesting addition is the recently set-up studio of the well-known Slovene photographer Arne Hodalič and his partner, also a photographer, local Katja Bidovec. In an unforgettable experience you can also have your portrait created by these photographic artists, providing they are at home and not on one of the photographic expeditions which take them to all corners of the world.

● *To arrange a photo session email, info@arnehodalic.com a few days in advance of your visit*

### Kranj

#### Teater Café | ☺☺

Beside running the café, theatre director Ajdin Huzejrovič and Daša Zupan also look after the theatre group Dramatikon. It was founded by Ajdin and brings together various young artists. The café also has a space that is used as a theatrical costume workshop run by Daša. The walls are covered with posters from the nearby Prešeren Theatre, and actors and theatregoers like to come here for a drink after performances.

● *Glavni trg 8*

### Kranj

#### Stara Pravda | ☺☺

Once you have visited the Stara Pravda restaurant, lovers of pork ribs and properly aged steaks will keep returning. Of course, they offer a wide range of other dishes, something delicious for everyone.

● *Partizanska cesta 17*

### Sveti Jošt nad Kranjem

#### Church of Saint Judoc and Dom na Joštu Restaurant | ☺ | ☺☺

In the 18th century, the Baroque church of Saint Judoc, first mentioned in 1600, was a pilgrimage church. Today it is an hour's walk for those who like to climb hills to be rewarded with beautiful views of the surrounding area, though it is also accessible by car. The Dom na Joštu Inn serves local food with seasonal ingredients, especially worth trying are their *štruklji* (rolled dough dumplings) with various fillings, one of the most recognised Slovene specialities.

● *Sveti Jošt nad Kranjem 2*

1 Renaissance Brdo Castle and park

2 Strmol Castle reflected in the castle pond



## Predoslje

**Brdo Castle and the Brdo Estate** | 🏰 | 🍷 | 🍴

The estate has a rich and interesting history that begins in 1510. A Renaissance Mansion with a square floor-plan and a central courtyard with four tracts. One of the castle's owners was the Zois family; sons Sigmund and Karl created a Baroque park on the estate. In 1935 the estate became the property of the Yugoslav royal family, the Karađorđevićs. After the Second World War, the new Communist authorities nationalised the property and turned it into a presidential residence. With Slovenia's independence in 1991, Brdo became the central state venue for protocol ceremonies. Besides the large park, the estate includes a golf course, a congress centre, a hotel, and a multi-purpose sports building belonging to the Football Association of Slovenia. The castle restaurant Elegans is run by chef Tomaž Kavčič, who was awarded a 2022 Michelin star for his main restaurant in Zemono Manor.

● *Predoslje 38*

## Predoslje

**Gostilna Krištof** | 🍴

Undoubtedly one of the better culinary stops in Gorenjska, drawing inspiration from traditional food from the region as well as their family catering traditions, linking with local organic producers, and nodding to contemporary culinary trends. One of the first restaurants to offer vegetarian and vegan dishes, they also team up with other local establishments, continuously offering their customers new experiences. Among other things, they occasionally offer dining in the Krvavec cable car. It is also included in the Michelin Guide.

● *Predoslje 22*

## Dvorje

**Strmol Castle** | 🏰 | 🍷 | 🍴

More than half a century after the events, the true story of husband and wife, Rado and Ksenija Hribar, has grown into a legend. Rado was an industrialist and his extravagant wife Ksenija the first Yugoslav female pilot, and owner of a crocodile that she took for walks on a lead. They remodelled the castle to give it its current look. In 1944, members of the Partisan security and intelligence service accused the Hribars of being national traitors, torturing them and murdering them in the nearby forest in the night between 4 and 5 January. The revival of the events related to their lives is largely due to the novel *I Saw Her That Night* by one of Slovenia's best-known contemporary writers, Drago Jančar. The building itself is a towering keep with Renaissance corner turrets on its defence wall; the gardens are planned in the English landscape style. The castle is now a boutique hotel and guided tours are also organised.

● *Dvorje 3*

## Spodnji Brnik

**Dvor Jezeršek** | 🍴

The Jezeršek family is very enterprising and, beside their base close to Brnik Airport, run branches of their restaurant at both Ljubljana and Bled Castles and the Union Pub in Ljubljana. Dvor Jezeršek was originally a large farmhouse with a 250-year history, but is now a restaurant focused on Slovene cuisine. It also functions as a hotel and a conference venue, and hosts the Jezeršek Culinary Academy where you can try your hand at learning a few new culinary skills.

● *Spodnji Brnik 63*

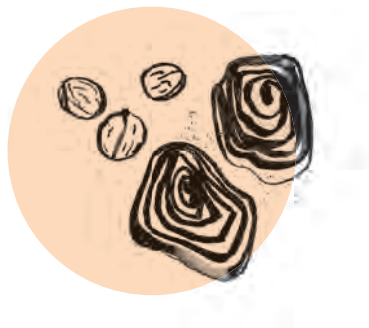


## Šenčur

### Gostilna Ančka | 🍷

On our way home from skiing on Kravavec we always have to stop at Ančka's Inn for some *štruklji*. Their large portions are exactly what is needed after a tiring day on the piste. We still associate Ančka with *štruklji*, but the inn is also known for other kinds of well-prepared typical Slovene dishes. And, if you think of it in advance, call and order their walnut *potica*, which, aside from mother's home-made version, is the best *potica* in the world. We have confirmed this countless times.

● *Delavska cesta 18*



## Jezersko

The name *Jezersko* comes from the word *jezero*, the Slovene for 'lake'. A lake existed here until 1348 when it began to drain after a large earthquake. We can still find fossils of animals and plants preserved in the rocks. Jezersko is made up of two settlements, Spodnje Jezersko and Zgornje Jezersko, and a number of isolated farmsteads. It was already connected with Carinthia along a trade route in Roman times, and in the Middle Ages the connection was further strengthened. In the 19th century, tourism became an important source of income as the fresh mountain air attracted guests from all over the Hapsburg Monarchy. A hotel was built and a number of villas, and farmhouses offered rooms to less-wealthy guests. Today sport tourism is very popular as there are plenty of opportunities for various activities throughout the year.

## Jezersko

### Šenk Homestead | 🏠 | 🍷 | 🍷

A homestead with a 500-year tradition is rare in Slovenia and the Šenk farm in Zgornje Jezersko has been declared a

1 Šenk Homestead surrounded by unspoiled nature

cultural monument of national importance. The cluster of eight residential and utility buildings form an exceptional spatial composition with the surrounding mountains as a backdrop. The owners, aware of the treasure they have inherited from their ancestors, generously share it with guests, offering food, rooms, and apartments.

● *Zgornje Jezersko 140*

### Jezerško

#### Villa Planinka | 🏠 | ♣️

Sometimes we need to take a step backwards in order to move forward. Villa Planinka is an example of understanding what true quality living means. Rooms do not need air conditioning as the climate in Jezerško is ideal on its own, the radiators in the rooms are classical cast-iron ones, beds are placed to avoid harmful currents, the walls are finished with a natural clay-based plaster, wood prevails (after all we are in the midst of endless forests), doors still open with classical keys, there is no Wi-Fi, and the TV is hidden in a cupboard. Sustainability with a capital S. Great attention is also paid to the food; they offer guests dishes made from local organic ingredients, prepared according to traditional recipes.

P.S. Villa Planinka was where the former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his wife Carrie spent their honeymoon in the summer of 2022.

● *Zgornje Jezersko 67*

### Radovljica

Radovljica is a pleasant town with a picturesque mountainous backdrop. It developed on the river terraces above the confluence of the Sava Bohinjka and Sava Dolinka rivers. Its central square (*Linhartov trg*) still gives us an idea of what the town looked like centuries ago. Number 7 is the house in which the Carniolan playwright, historian, and poet Anton Tomaž Linhart (1756-1795)

was born. He is the author of the first play in Slovene, first staged in 1789. Two other interesting personalities that lived in Radovljica were the architect Ivan Vurnik (1884-1971) and his wife, the artist Helena Kottler Vurnik (1882-1962). A memorial room has been set up in their house and a number of buildings by Vurnik can still be seen around town, though many, apart from Villa Savnik, have been altered from his original designs. At the old cemetery we can also see the Vurnik family tomb, designed by Ivan Vurnik after the death of their son who was shot by Italian soldiers during the Second World War, aged only nineteen. The mosaics on the interior are the work of his wife Helena. Another interesting tomb in the cemetery, also designed by Vurnik, is the Resman-Vidic family tomb.

### Radovljica

#### Radovljica Mansion and Museum of Apiculture | 🏠

A mighty Baroque building with stuccoed decoration dominates the main square. It now houses a music school and the Museum of Apiculture, and also hosts special ceremonies and events throughout the year in the Baroque or dancing halls on the first floor. In the 18th century a park was designed alongside the town walls and was connected to the mansion with a wooden corridor. In the 1950s the park was redesigned and a monument to the partisan resistance struggle during the Second World War was built in the form of a stone obelisk designed by the architect Edvard Ravnikar. Housed in the mansion is also the Museum of Apiculture (Beekeeping) where we can find out about the pioneer of modern beekeeping Anton Janša (1734-1773), about why the Carniolan honeybee is so special, about the traditional decorative frontal panels of beehives and the unique *kranjič* hive. There is also



an observation hive where visitors can observe a colony of live bees behind a glass museum display.

● *Linhartov trg 1*

### Radovljica

#### **Church of Saint Peter** |

At the far end of Linhart Square is a picturesque setting with a church, rectory, and a large lime tree. The columns of the aisled interior support the painted ribbed vaults of the roof. The main black marble altar dates to the Baroque. The church is also worth visiting for the tabernacle at the far end of the north aisle, designed in the 1930s by the architect Ivan Vurnik, painted by his wife, the artist Helena Kottler Vurnik.

● *Linhartov trg 31*

### Radovljica

#### **Šivec House Gallery** |

The small 16th century town house is now a museum. The two-storey

overhang on the main façade extended the size of the upper floors, typical for late Gothic and Renaissance town buildings. The opulence of the Baroque can be seen in the 17th century fresco of the Creation of Eve on the front of the building and the painted quoining and decorations around the windows. Preserved on the lower floor is a Gothic vaulted ceiling. On the top floor are the living quarters, kitchen, and pantry. The main room on the first floor is covered in original late Gothic, richly profiled wooden panelling. The ground floor now houses a gallery with temporary exhibitions and the Šivec House also houses a delightful permanent collection of original book illustrations.

● *Linhartov trg 22*

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1 Villa Planinka for a special break from your daily routine

## Radovljica

**Lectar honeybread workshop in the Lectar Inn** | 🏠 | 🍷 | 🍷

The workshop and museum are in the basement of the Lectar Inn where staff in authentic national costumes serve traditional Slovene dishes. The Inn is famous for its mushroom soup in a bread bowl. Visiting the workshop in the basement, you will be shown how honeybread has been made since medieval times. Best known are the red-painted hearts with various decorations, a popular gift for showing love and affection since the 19th century.

● *Linhartov trg 2*

## Radovljica

**Magušar House and Manufaktura Radovljica** | 🏠 | 🍷

If Urban Magušar happens to be at home, he will gladly show you the 16<sup>th</sup> century vaulted corridor at the centre of his house, which was created by joining three older buildings. The pottery he makes is linked to the past and draws its inspiration from traditional pottery from the rural areas of Gorenjska. On the ground floor, Magušar has created an exhibition of pottery from nearby pottery manufacturing centres and his own work is also for sale in a neat shop next to the workshop.

● *Linhartov trg 4*

## Radovljica

**Hiša Linhart** | 🏠 | 🍷 | 🍷

Uroš Štefelin is one of the best culinary masters in Slovenia. After leaving his previous post at Villa Podvin, he continues his story, based on a sustainable approach, at a new location in the centre of the old town. The emphasis on local, seasonal, and fresh ingredients in his creations brought Hiša Linhart a green star as well as a Michelin star in 2022. It also works as a hotel and is part of the culinary

story branded *Okusi Radol'ce* (Tastes of Radol'ca), that connects Radovljica restaurateurs.

● *Linhartov trg 17*

## Radovljica

**Chocolate Radovljica** | 🍷 | 🍷

Radovljica is also famous for its chocolate. A family chocolate firm was established in 1922 and later became the Gorenjka chocolate factory. Today they produce more than 80 different chocolate products. If you're not picky, you can get broken pieces of chocolate at a bargain price in the



factory shop. The tradition of making chocolate was the incentive for the Radovljica Chocolate Festival that takes place every April. Since 2012 the festival has hosted numerous chocolate producers from Slovenia and neighbouring countries. On the roundabout just before you enter the main town square there is also a boutique chocolatier called *Radolška Čokolada*.

● *Rožna Dolina 8: Gorenjka Factory*

● *Gorenjska cesta 4: Radolška čokolada*

## Podbrezje

### Tabor Restaurant | Ψ4

You might not think of Gorenjska as a place to find an excellent fish restaurant, but you would be wrong. The Tabor Restaurant is excellent, original, and bold. Their dishes made from dry-aged fish, fermented vegetables and other specialities are a pleasant surprise. We warmly recommend it when you find yourself surrounded by

1 Radovljica with its medieval centre in the foreground



mountains, longing for the scent of the sea.

● *Podbrezje 246*

Mošnje

**Villa Podvin** | 🍷

Lunch in Villa Podvin is a particularly special experience on a sunny summer day, its garden being one of the most beautiful restaurant gardens in Slovenia. The restaurant is located in the former horse stables on the estate of the now abandoned manor. After the previous chef Uroš Štefelin brought it widespread recognition, the kitchen is now run by chef Janez Šetina. The restaurant was included in the 2022 Michelin recommendations.

● *Mošnje 1*

**Begunje na Gorenjskem**

Locally called 'Begne', Begunje is a village with a long and rich history. The large imposing building right at the centre of the settlement is Kacenštajn Castle, part of which now houses a psychiatric hospital. The castle with Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque elements served as a women's penitentiary before the Second World War. During the war it became a Gestapo prison where Slovene patriots were detained, commemorated by the Museum of Hostages (Begunje 55) that is set up in part of the castle. A section of the castle gardens is also a memorial park designed by the notable Slovene architect Edvard Ravnikar. Across the road from the castle is the famous Avsenik Inn Pr' Jožovcu (Begunje 21). If you are into folk music, especially Oberkreiner ethnic polkas and waltzes, you might have heard of the band the Avsenik Brothers Ensemble. You can visit their museum next to the restaurant and find out about the history of the band.

Begunje is also known for the Elan factory with a long tradition of making

skis and boats. Slovenes are a nation of skiers and most of us grew up on Elan skis, known locally as *elanke*. Attached to the factory is also a museum (Begunje 1) showing the history of Elan and a shop selling skis and other equipment at factory prices.

**Begunje na Gorenjskem**

**Brezjanka and Jožamurka Pavilions** | 🏠

Many of the works of the architect Jože Plečnik have become architectural icons. One of his smaller works is the Brezjanka garden pavilion, which he designed in 1938 for the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, in the garden of their former nunnery. The simple pavilion was created by placing six massive oak trunks in a rhomboid shape. The trunks support a roof covered with concrete tiles which were made by the nuns, based on Plečnik's design. Nearby is a stone-built pavilion known as the Jožamurka, where the architect played with the concept of a house within a house.

● *Begunje na Gorenjskem 55, in the grounds of Kacenštajn Castle*

**Begunje na Gorenjskem**

**Kamen Castle** | 🏠

Impressive castle ruins beyond the village of Begunje at the entrance to the Draga Valley. Dating back to the 12th century, the castle was remodelled in the 16th century and didn't change much until the 18th century. When the threat of Ottoman raids subsided in the early 1700s, the then owners, the Counts of Lamberg, moved to the nearby Kacenštajn Castle, which was more comfortable and located on lower, flatter ground in

1 Šivec House on Linhart Square

2 Hiša Linhart where chef Uroš Štefelin spoils his guests



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what is now the centre of the village of Begunje. To avoid paying roof tax on the former castle, they allowed locals to dismantle the castle roof in 1740. Standing in a line, they passed the tiles by hand from the castle to the village, where they were used to cover the roof of the new parish church. The removal of the roof brought the final decay of the original castle and it is only because of various restorations over the last sixty years that we can still get a sense of its former grandeur within the ruins. Kamen Castle is also connected to Krištof Lambergar, the hero of the Slovene folk poem, *Pegam and Lambergar*.

## One of the best commemorative presentations in Slovenia



### Begunje na Gorenjskem

#### Draga Valley Memorial Park |

During the Second World War, the Draga valley was the site of the execution of several hostages from the nearby Gestapo prison in Begunje. In 1952, the architect Edvard Ravnikar designed one of the best memorial arrangements in Slovenia. It is a pioneering work that both shapes the wider landscape, and commemorates the tragic events that took place. Clusters of prisms, with the names of the 161 prisoners who were murdered at the site, are complemented with a stone obelisk.

### Begunje na Gorenjskem

#### Church of Saint Peter above Begunje |

A short ascent from the village is worth the effort for the panoramic views of the area and the Church of

Saint Peter, one of the most beautiful church monuments in Gorenjska. The simple rural church dating to the early 16th century hides a richly decorated interior with a star vault supported by two columns and frescoes. Signatures of travellers can also be seen on some of the frescos, as Saint Peter's used to be a popular pilgrimage church. During the period of Ottoman incursions, the hill was also the location of a fire beacon that warned neighbouring villages of the danger of attack.

### Brezje

#### Basilica of Mary Help of Christians |

The most important national shrine in Slovenia is a pilgrimage destination throughout the year. Events culminate with the Holy Mass on 15 August, the Feast of the Assumption. Housed in a side chapel of the church is the famous devotional painting of Mary Help of Christians by Leopold Layer. The restored church facade with mosaics was designed in 1965 by the architect Ivan Vurnik who also designed the Chapel of Saint Francis in the monastery courtyard two years later. With large numbers of visitors to the church in the summer, the need arose for an outside altar. Along the perimeter wall in front of the church a new raised space was created for worship. When not in use, it is hidden behind a big dark door, during Mass the altar shines with a pleasantly lit backdrop. Don't miss the Nativity Museum in the nearby former monastic stables.

● *Brezje 72*

1 Ruins of Kamen Castle at the entrance to the Draga Valley

2 Draga Valley Memorial Park designed by architect Edvard Ravnikar

3 Church of Saint Peter above Begunje with its exceptional location

