



CASTLES

IN ŽILINA REGION





ŽILINA
TOURISM
REGION



Budatín Castle

1



The existence of this monument, whose oldest preserved parts date from the 14th century, is documented in writing as early as the 13th century. The construction of the castle was associated with control of the most important roads that ran along the Váh and Kysuca rivers. The oldest part of the castle is a cylindrical tower, which originally formed the entire castle. It was enclosed by a low perimeter wall and surrounded by a moat, over which a drawbridge probably led. We therefore classify Budatín Castle as one of the few so-called “water castles” in Slovakia.

The castle had several owners, e.g. Matthew Csák of Trenčín, the Balassa family, the Suňog family and the Csáki family. The last owner was Count Gejza Csáki, who owned the castle until 1945. Budatín Castle has been the seat of the Museum of Považie Region in Žilina since 1953. An integral element of Budatín Castle is the tinkering trade – a truly Slovak phenomenon. The permanent exhibition on tinkering here is the only specialised exhibition of its kind in the world. A part of the Budatín Castle complex is a park founded probably in the mid-19th century in the natural-landscape English style. Visitors here can find, along with a pleasant place to relax, a Maple-leaved Plane Tree, which was declared the Slovak Tree of the Year in 2016.



Did you know... ?

Katarína Suňogová was walled up in the tower of Budatín Castle. Her father had her confined in this way because she did not want to marry Ján Jakušič, the groom he had chosen for her. Katarína loved the knight Fraňo Forgáč, who eventually freed her from her prison. However, when Jakušič found out about it, he challenged Fraňo to a duel. He killed him in the duel, and Katarína had no choice but to marry Jakušič – a man she did not love and who had killed her one true love.



Annual events

MARCH/APRIL Stations of the Cross – ecumenical devotion of the Stations of the Cross in the park

MAY Spring Beauty – an exhibition of plants and trees combined with a cultural programme

JULY Golden Times of Budatín – an event as if taken from the times of the last owner of Budatín Castle, Count Gejza Csáki

SEPTEMBER Meeting of Tinkering Masters – a meeting of artistic craftsmen from Slovakia and the Czech Republic, supplemented by accompanying events

OCTOBER Budatín Market – a traditional final seasonal event combined with demonstrations of crafts, a rich accompanying programme and culinary specialties



📖 Budatín Castle
Topoľová 1, 010 03 Žilina-Budatín
📍 GPS: 49.2363036N, 18.7347203E
🅅 parking is available at the castle
☎ +421 41 500 15 11
✉ muzeum@pmza.sk
🌐 www.pmza.sk

Strečno Castle

2



Strečno Castle was built at the start of the 14th century as a guard castle at the ford across the Váh River, where tolls were collected. It originally comprised a castle tower and a small area surrounded by a wall. Several reconstructions took place, and other buildings, palaces and walls were added to this core. In the 14th and 15th centuries, Strečno was a royal castle and later the property of the nobility. The most famous owners of the castle were Francis Vesselenyi, later the Palatine of Hungary, and his pious and good wife Žofia Bosniaková.

Strečno Castle was demolished at the end of the 17th century on the order of Emperor Leopold I. The demolition works mainly affected the fortifications and roofs of the palaces; in addition, the castle well and cistern were filled in. Strečno Castle thus fell into disrepair for almost 300 years.

In 1995, after extensive reconstruction work was completed, the Museum of Považie Region in Žilina opened this National Cultural Monument to the public. In 2013, the medieval village of Paseka, consisting of five authentic medieval buildings – the houses of a baker, a fisherman and a folk healer, a cozy place for pilgrims and a bell tower – was added to the lower part of Strečno Castle.



Did you know... ?

*In 1689, the almost intact body of Žofia Bosniaková (*1609 – †1644) was found in the crypt of the castle chapel, although 45 years had passed since her death. This discovery confirmed what the locals had long believed about her – that she was a saint. Žofia was transferred to the church in Teplička nad Váhom in 1698. The remains were later displayed in a coffin with a glass lid allowing people to pay their respects to her. Unfortunately, in 2009, on the 400th anniversary of Žofia's birth, a mentally disturbed perpetrator took the remains outside the chapel and set them on fire.*

Annual events

APRIL Ceremonial opening of Strečno Castle – the first event of the season welcomes visitors with a varied programme with an experiential tour

JUNE Children's Day – an event full of activities will delight visitors young and old

JULY/AUGUST Night tours of Strečno Castle – popular tours in the late hours attract hundreds of visitors

AUGUST Castle Games of Žofia Bosniaková – this event with a rich programme devoted to the castle's most famous owner takes visitors back to the Middle Ages

SEPTEMBER Time Travel – an attractive event for all history enthusiasts, exceptional experiences and unconventional tastes

OCTOBER Night of Ghosts, Pumpkins and Spooks – the traditional final event of the current season for all those who like to be scared



Did you know... ?

Several legends are told about Žofia. It is said that she baked and distributed small loaves of bread to the poor for free, which people called *Bosniaks* after her surname. *Bosniaks* are baked in and around Žilina and Strečno still today. The American film *Dragonheart* (1994) and the German comedy *Siegfried* (2005) were filmed at Strečno Castle.

📖 Strečno Castle
Hradná 1, 013 24 Strečno
📍 GPS: 49.1745631N, 18.8621633E
🅑 parking is available below the castle
☎ +421 41 569 74 00
✉ muzeum@pmza.sk
🌐 www.pmza.sk

The Old Castle

3



The first written mention of the castle comes from 1323, under the name Varín Castle. It was not referred to as the Old Castle (Starý hrad) until 1384, in connection with the fact that Strečno Castle had been standing nearby as a new castle since the beginning of the 14th century. The shortened name Starhrad was also used.

The castle is comprised of two parts – in the upper part is the core of the castle with a narrowing tower, to which a Gothic residential tower is connected at the opposite end (southern part). To the east of the tower, in the forecourt, barracks were built for the military garrison as well as farm buildings, which formed part of the castle's forward defences. The forecourt was enclosed by a moat, over which there was likely a bridge. In the lower part (to the north) there were newer fortifications and buildings.





From the mid-18th century, the Old Castle fell into disrepair, until it turned into a ruin, though during the Slovak National Uprising in 1944, it was the site of battles. The present owners of the castle are descendants of the Pongráč family; the castle is freely accessible.



Did you know... ?



The Pongráč family and its descendants have owned the castle for over 570 years. The most famous member of this family was Pongráč of St. Nicholas. The cradle of his military fame was at Brumov and Sehradice castles, both in Moravia, from which he defended the Kingdom of Hungary against Hussite raids. He was also celebrated for the battle against the Turks at the Smederevo Fortress. After the death of Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg, he became a robber knight and, in alliance with others, raided mainly royal estates and their inhabitants. His seat at that time was Branč Castle. In 1446, he was granted the ownership of the Old Castle and Strečno Castle by the Nitra Chapter.

-  Starting point: Nezbudská Lúčka, station
trail length: 3,1 km, duration: 1 h
elevation: 103 m (ascent 124 m, descent 24 m)
-  parking lots behind the village along the route
-  GPS: 49.1780331N, 18.8903650E
-  www.tikzilina.eu

Hričov Castle

4



Hričov Castle was built by Magister Toluš, the son of Farkaš, in the years 1254 – 1265. After his death, King Béla IV gifted the castle to Mikuláš, nephew of Magister Farkaš.

At the end of the 13th century, the army of Matthew Csák of Trenčín occupied Hričov, and it remained in his possession until his death in 1321. Between 1321 – 1323, the castle returned to royal ownership, but no other news of its fate has been preserved until 1392. In 1392, Dezider of Kapla became the castle's owner. Sigismund of Luxembourg then took over the castle from him and granted it as a "pro honore" to Duke Sandziwoj. Later, the king granted the castle to his wife Barbara of Cilli and in 1437 to the future king Albert. The takeover never took place, however, and Mikuláš Szarlejský then occupied the castle. Around 1456, the castle was owned by the family of Necpaly, and before 1468, Hričov was owned by King Matthias I Corvinus. He then granted it to Blažej Podmanický, and after his death, the king granted Hričov, along with the manor house in Bytča, to William Tettauer. The Tettauers then gave up Hričov at the end of the 15th century.

King Vladislav II granted it to Michal Imreffy, and according to the charter of the Trenčín County from 1552, the castellan at the castle was Bartolomej Szunyogh, who had handed it over to Mikuláš Thurn in 1528. He, in turn, allied himself with the brothers Ján and Raffael Podmanický. The brothers once sided with Ferdinand I and then with the anti-king John. In 1536, King John honoured Ján Podmanický by gifting Hričov to him, and the validity of the charter also applied to his brother Raffael.





After the death of King John in 1540 and also after the death of his brother Ján, Raffael returned to the side of King Ferdinand I. The latter gave Hričov to Raffael in 1549. A report has been preserved from these times about the suspicion that there was an illegal mint in the castle. After Raffael's death in 1559, several people claimed ownership of the castle. The monarch granted the castle to the Thurzo brothers, but they had to pay 12,000 Hungarian gulden for the estate. The Thurzo brothers were unable to raise that amount, so they deposited the castle for the widow of Gaspar Horváth, Jana Likerka. The widow settled at the castle but eventually moved to the manor house in Bytča. František Thurzo obtained the money to pay for the castle, and in 1563 he acquired it along with the manor house in Bytča. He did not use Hričov for residential purposes, instead, he lived in the manor house.

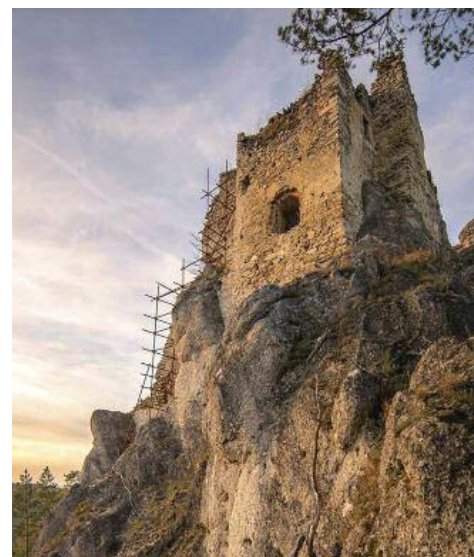
From the second half of the 17th century, the new owners of the castle, the Esterházy family, was not interested in repairing Hričov, and in the 18th century the process of its falling into ruin accelerated.



Did you know... ?

During the ownership of the castle by the brothers Raffael and Ján Podmanický, a counterfeit mint was established in the castle, where they minted and silver-plated fake copper denarii.

-  Starting point: Hričovské Podhradie, center
trail length: 1,5 km, duration: 45 min.
elevation: 209 m (ascent 217 m, descent 17 m)
-  there is no reserved parking available
-  GPS: 49.2116436N, 18.6196872E
-  www.hradhricov.sk



Lietava Castle

5

Photographs of the Lietava Castle: Roman Šulc



The origin of Lietava Castle is assumed to be in the last quarter of the 13th century. A four-storey square tower was built here on the highest part of the rock, along with a smaller palace and a wall northeast of the tower. In the 14th and 15th centuries, the castle was mainly royal property granted to regional judges “pro honore”, but also given as a deposit or granted in ownership. Among the significant owners who later rebuilt and expanded the castle were Pavol Kiniži (†1494), Mikuláš Kostka (†1556) and František Thurzo (†1574). Under Kiniži, a palace was built south-west of the main tower, which was finished with the construction of a large residential tower.

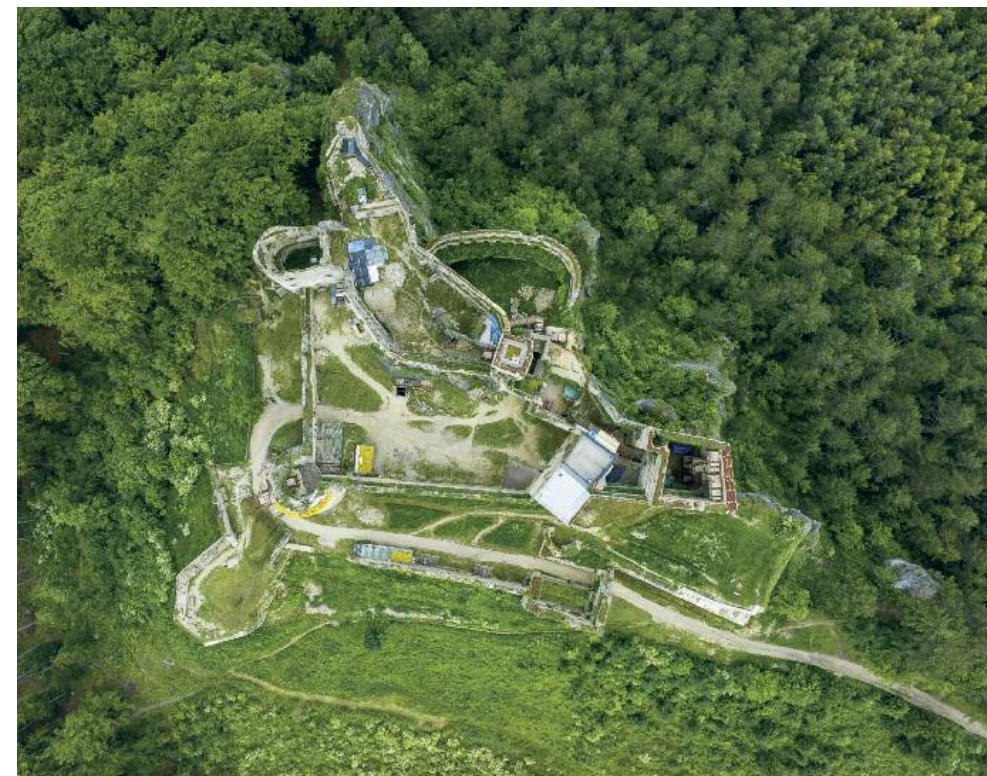
The new entrance to the castle led into a square passable tower that was connected to the perimeter wall on the north-west side. The northern courtyard was fortified with a cylindrical bastion. Here the wall turned at a right angle to the east, where it ended in a large, four-storey horseshoe-shaped tower. Mikuláš Kostka built a new gate by breaking through the northern perimeter wall; he also added a large roundel on the eastern side of the castle.

František Thurzo had the castle rebuilt in the Renaissance style. Fragments of this reconstruction work still adorn the castle today, for example, the arched attics or remnants of sgraffito decoration. During his period of ownership, the last defensive enclosure was built around the castle. It was opened by a new tower gate, and the wall continued to the north. Another gate – called Orlová – was built near the cylindrical tower.



František's son, Palatine George Thurzo (*1567 – †1616), continued the enhancement of the castle, but after his death, it gradually began to deteriorate. The castle was abandoned in the mid-18th century, and after 250 years of disrepair, the monument has fallen into a dilapidated state. In 1999, the Association for the Preservation of Lietava Castle was established, and it began to care for the castle. In 2008, the association became the official owner of the castle building based on a donation contract, and in 2017, on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the birth of Palatine George Thurzo, the first official exhibition was ceremonially opened at the castle.





Did you know... ?

The coat-of-arms of the castle's owner, Pavol Kinyži, has been preserved on the corner of the residential tower of the middle castle. This famous Hungarian duke from the anti-Turkish wars was granted several properties in Slovakia by King Matthias Corvinus, including Strečno Castle. Back then, Lietava and Strečno had a common castellan, one Teofil Thurzo, the grandfather of the later owner of the castle, František Thurzo. A little-known fact is that during the Second World War, repair work was carried out at the castle (summer 1941) and was done by workers from a Jewish labour camp which housed 62 people.



- 📖 Starting point: Lietava, part Majer
trail length: 1,8 km, duration: 1 h
elevation: 233 m (ascent 246 m,
descent 49 m)
- 🅑 parking Lietava-Majer
- 📍 GPS: 49.1605856N, 18.6848836E
- 🌐 www.hradlietava.sk



Súľov Castle

6



A popular tourist destination is Súľov Castle, which is considered the most inaccessible castle in the Považie region, as its ruins stand at an elevation of 660 m above sea level. The complex structure was built into the rocky terrain, which makes it a very valuable and interesting technical and architectural monument. Based on its position, the castle was called the “eagle’s nest” and, depending on the method of construction, also the “swallow’s nest”. The exact start of the castle’s construction is unknown. The first written mention of the castle dates back to 1470, when the building already existed on a smaller scale, and when the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus allowed Eliáš Súľovský to reinforce and expand the castle or fortress with walls, towers, ramparts and ditches in the style of a castle. In the 16th century, members of the Podmanický family from Bystrica Castle consolidated their power in the Považie region. They, too, were interested in Súľov Castle; therefore, they did not agree with the decision of King Ferdinand I of Habsburg to grant it to Sebastián Sirmiensi. As a sign of his protest, Raffael Podmanický set fire to the castle in three places during the ceremonial handover of the property to the new owners on 29 December 1550, and he did so in the presence of invited nobility, neighbours and other important guests.

The castle comprised two parts – the upper and lower castles – which were connected by a tunnel corridor carved into the rock. The upper castle contained a water cistern 3 m deep as well as an observation tower and representative and residential areas. It also had a kitchen, a



bakery, a study, a grain and flour warehouse, an armoury, stables, a treasury with family archives and cellars. The original access road was different from the current entrance to the castle, leading instead from the south side. In his work on the Trenčín County, Matej Bel wrote that the gate leading into Súľov Castle was carved into a rock cliff and had a high wooden drawbridge, which was not even as high as the depth below it. In 1759, the castle owners no longer lived in the castle but instead resided in manor houses beneath the castle. In 1763, the castle was significantly damaged by an earthquake whose epicentre was in Komárno, and in 1858 by another centred in Žilina.

In 1780, the castle was no longer guarded, and it has remained abandoned and dilapidated for centuries. Only a handful of disjointed walls and foundations cut into the rock have survived from the original structure.

Unfortunately, Matej Bel already referred to the castle as a ruin in the mid-18th century, and Alexander Lombardini in the second half

of the 19th century stated that the remains of the castle were difficult to distinguish from the village with the naked eye. Súľov Castle became a National Cultural Monument in 1963.



📖 Starting point: Súľov, parking
trail length: 1,2 km, duration: 1 h
elevation: 206 m (ascent 206 m,
descent 0 m)

📍 parking is available under the Súľov cliffs
📍 GPS: 49.1748697N, 18.5833833E
🌐 www.tikzilina.eu

Orava Castle

7



Orava Castle, the majestic dominant feature of the Orava region, is one of the most important monuments of castle architecture in Slovakia and one of the most visited castles in Slovakia each year.

The present area of the castle complex was created by the gradual construction of defensive, residential and farm buildings from the 13th to the start of the 20th century, and each part is evidence of various architectural styles – from Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance to Baroque and Romanticism.

The castle hill was inhabited as early as in prehistoric times. The first historical reference to Orava Castle dates back to 1267, when it fulfilled three basic functions: a guard castle, a defensive castle and as the seat of administration of the territory that belonged to it at that time. During its history, Orava Castle and the castle estate was alternately the property of the king or wealthy landowners.





In 1800, Orava Castle suffered its greatest disaster; it burned down and was left in ruins. Partial rescue work was carried out by František Zichy, and in the years 1906 – 1912 Jozef Palffy restored the central part of the Castle. In 1868 under the auspices of the then director of the Orava Compossessorate, Edmund Zichy, the abandoned castle complex was repurposed to house the Museum of the Orava Compossessorate, one of the first museums in Slovakia.

In 1953, Orava Castle was declared a National Cultural Monument, and in 1953 – 1968 a general repair of the castle was performed. At present, it is under the management of the Orava Museum of Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav.

According to legend, a woman wearing white walks in the Middle Castle on All Souls' Day at night and on Palm Sunday in the morning. She is said to be the wife of the Knight Donč, who reportedly had killed her. Supposedly, once on All Saints' Day, the Knight Donč was in a foul mood, so he took it out on a servant. Nothing was good enough for him. When he started beating his maid for no reason, his wife, who witnessed the scene, tried to stop his malice and end the fight. However, the Knight Donč also stood up to her, and when she continued to defend the maid, in a fit of rage, he cut off her hand. His wife then bled and suffered pain from All Souls' Day to Palm Sunday, when she finally died. The Knight Donč was troubled; he despaired of what he had done and no longer was able to feel at peace and one day he met the ghost of his wife in the castle courtyard. Three years after her death, the Knight Donč also passed away. Therefore, it is said that the "white lady" appears in the castle premises to this day and even after her death asks for forgiveness for her husband.

Did you know... ?

Orava Castle is made up of 27 buildings. You would have to climb more than 800 steps to visit all 155 rooms.





Aside from the white lady, according to legend, a lady in black also appears in the interiors of Orava Castle. This is Alžbeta Cobarová, the second wife of the Hungarian palatine and owner of Orava Castle, Juraj Thurzo. During her life, Alžbeta Cobarová was a skilled and capable housewife and managed the entire Thurzo property very well during the absence of her husband, who was constantly on the battlefield or performing political duties away from home. She regularly checked the condition and order on her estates, and Orava Castle was no exception. So that the servants could fulfil their duties responsibly, she once promised to check them and pay attention to the proper fulfilment of her orders even after her death. So, after her death, she is said to occasionally appear at Orava Castle, carrying a lighted lantern in her hand and checking that everything is as she ordered it. And not only does she keep an eye on Orava Castle in this way, but she is also said to protect it.



Did you know... ?

The Castle was a filming location for movies such as *King Thrushbeard* (Kráľ drozdia brada), *The Princess and the Beggar* (Princezná a žobrák), *Thomas the Falconer* (Sokoliar Tomáš) and even for the first adaptation of the story about Dracula, *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror*.



📖 Orava Castle
027 41 Oravský Podzámok
📍 GPS: 49.2619606N, 19.3584281E
🅅 parking in the vicinity of the castle
☎ +421 43 581 61 51
✉ muzeum@oravskemuzeum.sk
🌐 www.oravskemuzeum.sk

Annual events

APRIL/MAY Thurzo Festival – a traditional event focused on unlocking the castle for the summer tourist season

MAY Fairytale Castle – an event devoted to fairy tales and especially to children

JULY/AUGUST Mysterious Castle – an evening tour for families with children, in which visitors go on a mysterious and adventurous journey through the nooks and crannies of Orava Castle

AUGUST Dracula – the vampire Nosferatu – an event during which visitors tour Orava Castle after dusk and inevitably meet Count Dracula and his dark friends

DECEMBER St. Nicholas at Orava Castle – an event for the youngest visitors on the occasion of the feast day of St. Nicholas, which also includes devils, angels and St. Nicholas himself

The Great Castle of Liptov 8



The oldest of the stone royal castles of the Liptov region, the seat of the court governor, the deputy governor of Zvolen within the Liptov, and later the seat of the governor of the independent Liptov Comitatus and Liptov County.

The castle is located on Sestrč Hill, above the village of Kalameny in the Lower Liptov, at an elevation of 999.96 m above sea level. It is thought to be the highest placed castle building in all of Slovakia, Bohemia and Moravia.

The first written mention of the castle dates back to 1262, when it was already standing. At the end of the 14th century, Liptov Castle was directly affected by complications of Central European politics. After the battles, the heavily damaged castle had to be repaired over many years.

The castle is situated on the land owned by the landowners' association in the villages of Liptovská Sielnica and Kalameny. The maintenance of its ruins and the castle territory is managed by the municipal authorities, the landowners' association and enthusiasts from the mentioned municipalities as well as Liptovská Teplá.





The castle is freely accessible along the yellow- and red-marked tourist route from the villages of Kalameny and Liptovské Vlchy, and a large part of the climb passes over relatively exposed terrain. Every year, on Easter Monday, the traditional ascent to its modest ruins takes place, organised by hikers from Liptovská Teplá.



Did you know... ?

Different versions of a legend about the castle, which are linked with the siege by King Matthias I Corvinus in 1474, tell of a woman in a white dress wandering around the ruined castle. She is either the cursed daughter of the castle lord or a kidnapped maiden who wanted to open the castle gates to the royal army. Only a knight, who leads her across the stream, can free her, and he'll receive a hidden treasure as a reward. At other times, she appears in the form of a pig, carrying the keys to the castle in its snout. Another legend speaks about how the lord of the castle had a cannonball fired from its walls leaving fate to decide who would own the castle and the castle estate. The stone ball landed near Sielnica, and thus Liptovská Sielnica became the owner of Liptov Castle.



-  Starting point: village of Kalameny, thermal spring and a natural lake
trail length: 2,5 km, duration: 1 h 30 min.
elevation: 421 m (ascent 421 m, descent 0 m)
-  parking is available near the thermal lake
-  GPS: 49.1474700N, 19.4300364E
-  www.visitliptov.sk/en/interests/liptov-castle/

Likava Castle

9



Likava Castle, the largest castle ruin in the Liptov region and one of the largest castles in central Slovakia, was built in the first half of the 14th century by the governor of Zvolen and Liptov, Magister Knight Donč, following the consolidation of political relations. The first written mention of the already existing castle dates back to 1341. The castle protected a new and important route – the country road from Buda to Poland, which led through what is today Dolný Kubín. After linking the regions of Liptov, Turiec, and Orava through the Váh Valley between Ružomberok and Kraľovany, the castle's strategic importance grew even further due to its location at the crossroads of the main trade routes. The data on the castle's area are also impressive: including the western forecourt, hidden in the forest, and two artificial earth platforms to the east, it covers an area of 538 x 238 metres.

The castle is still a valuable example of the castle architecture from the late Gothic and early Renaissance periods, as evidenced by the number of preserved architectural elements, window frames, gargoyles, murder holes, loopholes, fireplace torsos and chimney shells and facade decorations. The high, slender walls of the palaces of the upper castle, growing out of the edges of the castle cliff, or the bold s-shaped vaulting of the walls of the former castle tower and the southern palace indicate the architectural skill, courage and subtle aesthetic feeling of those who built it, who were able to combine the beauty of human work with the splendour of the surrounding landscape.

The lower castle at Likava is accessible during the summer exclusively to hikers walking along the red-marked tourist trail that leads to Predný Choč.



The exhibition "Treasures from under Likava", which presents a unique treasure found near the castle, is housed in the Liptov Museum in Ružomberok. The treasure consisted of 1,870 coins, two of which were ducats of Louis II, and 1,868 small Hungarian silver coins from the 15th and 16th centuries. The castle, today owned by the Žilina Self-Governing Region, is managed by the Liptov Museum in Ružomberok.

Starting in 2025, the castle is closed to the public, as it is undergoing comprehensive renovation that focuses on protecting and preserving elements of the castle's architecture. Aside from the renovation itself, an exhibition will also be added to the castle, and once the work is complete, previously inaccessible parts of the castle complex will be opened to the public. The renovation is expected to continue at least until the end of 2026.



Did you know... ?

Likava Castle is also known for its legends about the Lady in Black and the ghost of the murdered servant – the guardian of the Thököly treasures. Helena Krušičová, who had a compassionate and kind relationship with the subjects of the Likava estate, began to appear after her death as the Lady in Black. It is said that when she walks through the fields and caresses the ripening grain, she protects the harvest from storms, winds and hail. When she blesses the surrounding fields from the castle windows, it means that the harvest will be good and rich. On the last night before the fall of Likava, which was being besieged by the imperial army, Stephen II Thököly, together with his most loyal servant, hid the family treasures in the underground castle cellars. In the end, the count dealt his loyal companion an unexpected fatal blow, so that he alone would know the secret of the Likava treasures and their hiding place. Since then, night after night, the ghost of the murdered servant has tirelessly wandered the ruins of the castle, faithfully guarding the Thököly family's gold, gemstones and pearls, and he will destroy any brazen treasure hunter who is looking for Count Stefan's hidden wealth.



- 📖 Starting point: Likavka
trail length: 2,3 km, duration: 45 min.
elevation: 92 m (ascent 92 m, descent 17 m)
- 🅑 parking is available in Likavka
- 📍 GPS: 49.1053133N, 19.3122200E
- 🌐 www.liptovskemuzeum.sk

Liptovský Hrádok Castle and Manor House

10



This is the youngest of the three Liptov castles, built before 1341 by the Count Donč on the site of the yeoman guard settlement of Belsko. To this day, it has retained the original layout of the two-tower castle core with a centrally located palace. In the 15th century, it fell into the hands of the Hussites and was damaged. At some point around the 16th century, the castle was expanded; an external Renaissance fortification with corner bastions was added. The castle acquired its definitive form in the early 17th century under the couple Mikuláš Šándorffy and Magdaléna Zai, who are credited with constructing a Renaissance manor house in the western and northern parts of the forecourt. In the 18th century, the castle and manor house in Liptovský Hrádok became the model centre of the united Likava-Hrádok chamberlain estate, specialising in the economic use of the local forest wealth, the processing of base metals and the trade in salt.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the entire complex of buildings burned down; the Gothic castle core, unlike the manor house, was not restored, and in 1933 it was only preserved. The chamber office, prison and district court were then located in the area of the castle and manor house in Liptovský Hrádok, and since 1959 it also housed the Ethnographic Museum of Liptov (today part of the Liptov Museum in Ružomberok). In 2002, the devastated and dilapidated monument was purchased by a private owner, who reconstructed it into its current form.

Did you know... ?

A legend of the castle tells the sad story of a Hussite bride – the daughter of the castle lord – who lost her life because of her father's opposition to the man chosen by her heart, a Hussite hetman.



In the 16th century, Liptovský Hrádok Castle was a favourite residence of the most important poet of Renaissance Hungary – Bálint Balassi – who sought inspiration for his poetry here and lived the most beautiful period of his life under the silhouette of the Tatra mountains.

📖 Castle and Manor House, Ulica Magdaleny Zai 1, 033 01 Liptovský Hrádok
📍 GPS: 49.0460506N, 19.7323881E
🅑🅖 parking is available at the castle
☎ +421 44 520 77 11
✉ roman@hradliptovskyyhradok.sk
🌐 www.hradliptovskyyhradok.sk



Sklabiňa Castle

11



In terms of area, this is one of the largest castles in the Žilina Region. It was probably built on the site of an older hillfort sometime in the first half of the 13th century. It first appears in written records in 1309, when it was owned by the Count Donč of Zvolen. Starting in 1339, it was for 450 years the seat of the county governors of Turiec region, as well as the administrative and power centre of the Turiec. The castle lords controlled the collection of tolls from here; the county prison was located here, and the county archive was also kept here. Between 1410 – 1469, it was in the deposit of the Polish family of Balický. In May 1434, the castle was set on fire by the Hussites; therefore, it was subsequently fortified with a ring of palisade walls with a new gate. During the reign of King Matthias Corvinus between 1483 – 1487, an extensive reconstruction followed. A tower with a Gothic chapel of St. Andrew and a new front gate with a painted facade to meet the requirements of the royal representation were built. In 1527, the King Ferdinand I of Habsburg granted half of the castle to his supporter František Révay, who 13 years later acquired the other part as well. The castle then remained in the hereditary possession of the Révay family until 1914. They fortified the castle in several stages, and new gates were built. From the western approach, where a polygonal artillery tower stood, Peter Révay, the guardian of the royal crown, united the buildings into the castle manor house in 1612, which housed the Révay family museum, full of rare treasures, until the 20th century. The manor house was burned down by the fascists in 1944 as a reprisal for partisan activities in the area. They also burned down the village of Sklabinský Podzámok. The last owners after 1914 were two sisters, Countesses Mária and Róza Cebriánová. Róza's husband, Jenő Hubay, was a famous Hungarian composer whose works are still performed all over the world today.







The castle is open all year round, there is an admission fee. Several events are held here throughout the year, the largest being the traditional August castle festivities. At present, rescue and reconstruction work is underway at the castle. Visitors can explore the exhibition on the history of the castle including a cellar area in the lower building and can taste homemade goat-milk products. Since 2022, a second exhibition focusing on the Slovak National Uprising and the castle fire has been open in the renovated northern bastion near the main gate, featuring the room of the last castellan Jozef Pekár, who, together with his daughter Anna, was directly involved in the anti-fascist resistance.

Did you know... ?

Sklabiňa Castle ranks among the top places for paranormal activity. Legend says that during storms a dark knight with no face walks here and that thunderous footsteps, the clanking of chains and weapons and other strange sounds can be heard. Some people report seeing little girl in a white dress, probably the soul of one of the little deceased daughters of Baron Peter Révay. Under the castle there also reportedly lived a snake with a head as big as a calf, and anyone who saw it was unable to move.



-  Starting point: Sklabinský Podzámok
trail length: 1,3 km, duration: 20 min.
elevation: 104 m (ascent 106 m, descent 5 m)
-  no designated parking lot
-  GPS: 49.0551111N, 19.0181333E
-  Facebook: Hrad Sklabiňa

Zniev Castle

12



The castle was built at the rocky foot of the Zniev Hill at an elevation of 985 m. It is also the oldest known castle in Turiec region and one of the highest placed castles in Slovakia. It was built next to the older Znojov Castle by Hungarian King Béla IV (*1235 – †1276) after a devastating Mongol invasion.

It first appears in written records in 1243 under the name castrum Turuch (Turiec Castle). It was situated in a strategic location, from which it protected and controlled the access to Turiec along the old trade route from the Ponitrie region. At the same time it was the first seat of the Turiec County, but later the governor's office moved to the larger, more accessible Sklabiňa Castle and people gradually restored the old name to Zniev Castle.

The originally majestic seat of the Turiec County governor paid for its inaccessibility in the following years. It gradually became inconvenient and frequently changed owners. In 1681, the castle was burned down by Thököly's rebel forces. Since then, it has been abandoned and gradually fallen into ruin.

To this day, only the remains of the square tower and the lower foundations of the elongated residential building have survived from what was once an important castle.



Did you know... ?

Legend has it that the castle got its name from the Hussite captain Zniev, who captured it without a fight, thanks to a small helper.

📖 Starting point: Kláštor pod Znievom
trail length: 3,5 km, duration: 2 h
elevation: 453 m (ascent 477 m, descent 38 m)

P parking is available near the cemetery

📍 GPS: 48.9683886N, 18.7730036E

🌐 www.turiec.com

Blatnica Castle

13



Blatnica Castle, a true “eagle’s nest”, standing on a narrow rock tower above the Gader gorge, was probably built in the second half of the 13th century by Peter of Brezovica. It later became royal property.

The foundation of the castle complex was a long narrow palace reinforced on the north and south sides with semicircular towers and protected from the north-east by a rocky cliff. In 1539, the King Ferdinand I of Habsburg granted the castle to František Révay. During subsequent reconstructions, members of the Révay family expanded the building by adding a forecourt with new buildings.

During the Tököly Uprising (1678 – 1686), the castle served as a safe haven for nobles and persecuted clergy from the surrounding area, and in 1703, the castle was occupied by the rebels of Francis II Rákoczy, who probably set fire to the upper castle and looted the entire building. The following years brought a gradual decline. The Révay family gradually moved their residences to nearby manor houses in Štiavnička and Mošovce, and the abandoned castle was eventually turned into a farm building. Its fate was definitely sealed by a devastating fire in 1760, after which it remained uninhabited and gradually fell into ruin.



Did you know... ?

Legend tells of a cruel castle lord who took another man’s bride. When he grew weary of her, he did not hesitate to kill her and had his son walled up alive. He also poisoned his second wife, and to this day, the cries of a child can be heard within the castle walls, while the ghosts of murdered women are said to appear.

- 📖 Starting point: Blatnica, memorial trail length: 2,2 km, duration: 45 min. elevation: 91 m (ascent 91 m, descent 0 m)
- 🅑🅖 parking in Gader Valley
- 📍 GPS: 48.9471153N, 18.9471378E
- 🌐 www.blatnica.sk

Wedding Palace in Bytča 14

BONUS



The Wedding Palace in Bytča ranks among the most important Renaissance buildings in our territory. It is a unique building, whose original character and use are evidence of a high cultural level as well as a reflection of the high social status of the Thurzo family, particularly George Thurzo, who had it built in 1601. The palace was intended to serve as a venue for the wedding banquets of his daughters. Given the custom that the wedding ceremony and banquet were held at the bride's family home, George Thurzo was likely expecting to host large banquets. Weddings were not the only use of the palace, however, and in the first half of the 17th century it served mainly as a warehouse for salt, grain and other crops. The Wedding Palace was damaged by several fires. Since 1970 it has been a national cultural monument and has undergone significant reconstruction. It houses a permanent exhibition, which is a reminder of the unique history of the palace, the town of Bytča and the personality of the Palatine George Thurzo.

Did you know... ?

In the wedding hall, there was a niche with a bed, where newlyweds spent their first wedding night during the feast, giving the guests the opportunity to witness the consummation of the marriage. The niche for the bed has been preserved in the hall to this day.



📖 Wedding Palace in Bytča
Zámocký areál, 041 01 Bytča
📍 GPS: 49.2205611N, 18.5583417E
🅑🅖 parking at the Palace
☎ +421 41 5523 027
✉ muzeum@pmza.sk
🌐 www.pmza.sk

Radola Manor House

15

BONUS



Details on the origin of the manor house are still not fully known. Current research, based on archaeological and art-historical research, puts the origin of the oldest part of the manor house in the third quarter of the 16th century. At that time, a square two-story building with one living space on each floor was built.

Originally, this was more of a residential tower, serving as a safe noble residence. Only after the addition of more rooms in the second half of the 17th century, did the building take on the character of a manor house. A hall and three living rooms were added to each floor, and the individual floors were connected by a staircase leading between the two halls.

In 1658 the manor house included manor stables, barns, a fruit garden, ponds, a brewery, a hop garden, a mill, and a sawmill. The manor house served residential purposes until 1977. In that year, its restoration as a monument began with the aim of preserving the original architectural elements. The manor house is one of the extended expositions of the Kysuce Museum in Čadca. Permanent and temporary exhibitions are available for visitors in the manor house, and lectures and creative workshops are also held here.



Did you know... ?

The Radola Manor House is a unique Renaissance building and the only Renaissance yeoman's residence preserved in the Kysuce region. The archaeological site near the manor house is the oldest historically documented settlement in the region.

- 📖 Radola Manor House
023 36 Radola
- 📍 GPS: 49.2954203N, 18.7882197E
- 🅅 no designated parking lot
- 📞 +421 41 4212505
- ✉ kastiel@kysuckemuzeum.sk
- 🌐 www.kysuckemuzeum.sk

Oščadnica Manor House 16

BONUS



The manor house was built between 1910 and 1913 by the Prussian Count Valentin von Ballestrem on land that his father Franz von Ballestrem had once purchased from the original owner, Arnold Popper, with the intention of building an occasional representative seat here. In 1973, the manor house in Oščadnica, together with the adjacent forest park covering an area of more than 3 hectares, was declared a National Cultural Monument of the Slovak Republic within the Kysuce Protected Landscape Area. At present it is owned by the Žilina Self-Governing Region and is also the seat of the Kysuce Gallery in Oščadnica. The first exhibitions in the building were opened to the public in November 1981.

The manor house underwent a vast reconstruction in 2020 – 2022, thanks to which new exhibition spaces were created, and the building acquired a well-deserved representative appearance. A barrier-free entrance was also built at that time. The gallery currently administers more than 3,000 works of art and focuses its acquisition activities on contemporary art with an emphasis on the work of representatives of the Kysuce region and the work of significant representatives of Slovak fine arts. In the past, the gallery organised international sculpture symposia, attended by artists from abroad. The works created during these events became part of the forest park.

The manor house does not serve as an exhibition of historical furniture or a collection related to its past. Instead, it is an exceptional space dedicated to art and, thanks to its architectural style,



it represents a unique monument of its kind in the Kysuce region. History and the present are thus combined in one place. Openings, exhibitions and concerts are held in the manor house, and cultural and social events are often moved to the adjacent forest park.

📖 Kysuce Gallery in Oščadnica,
023 01 Oščadnica 13
📍 GPS: 49.4228042N, 18.8410442E
🅑🅖 parking at the Manor House
☎ +421 41 433 2166
✉ kysgalerie@vuczilina.sk
🌐 www.kysuckagaleria.sk





ŽILINA
TOURISM
REGION



MINISTRY
OF TOURISM AND SPORTS
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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ŽILINSKÝ
SAMOSPRÁVNÝ
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