

# Marian pilgrimage tour

Connects Slovenian and Croatian places of worship dedicated to Saint Mary, including the most important pilgrimage sites, such as Ptujška Gora and Svete gore above Bistrica ob Sotli in Slovenia, and Marija Bistrica in Croatia. The route is part of the international cultural pilgrimage route of the same name connecting Częsochowa (Poland) – Levoča (Slovakia) – Mariaszell (Austria) – Ptujška Gora and Svete gore above Bistrica ob Sotli (Slovenia) – Marija Bistrica (Croatia). The 409-kilometre route in Slovenia and 393 kilometres in Croatia are intended for pilgrims, hikers, nature and cultural heritage enthusiasts, and anyone who wants to discover new and interesting places.

There are two branches of Marian pilgrimage tour in Slovenia, the western and the eastern, with four different versions of the route from which pilgrims or travellers may choose. Both branches continue into Croatia and on to Marija Bistrica.



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Public Institution Kozjanski park

## Partners:

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# MARIAN PILGRIMAGE TOUR





## Marija Bistrica - «Blessed Virgin Mary»

It is not only a town, but a lake in which rivers of people pour in. 800.000 pilgrims visit Marija Bistrica every year. Why? Votive paintings on the walls of the arcades and votive chapel give a detailed answer to this question. Based on such a number of granted prayers, the faith of pilgrims that visit this place every year is getting stronger.

However, for the biggest event in Marija Bistrica once again late Alojzije Stepinac took care of. In 1998 Pope John Paul II visited Croatia and Marija Bistrica (and is the only Pope who spoke in kaikavian verses of Dragutin Domjanić: "Here is my every brother...") and consecrated the one blessed, who has liked to pilgrim to this shrine on foot and made Croatian people to vow. The Pope was then given a book "**The start of a better world: The Blessed Virgin Mary in Hrvatsko Zagorje**" by Monsignor Lovro Cindori. In honour of the Pope's visit, the main square in Bistrica was given his name, what has made Marija Bistrica even more attractive.



## The town of Lepoglava

Situated in the idyllic landscape between mountains of Ivanščica and Ravna Gora with the bed of river Bednja, Lepoglava provides a unique experience of culture, art, traditional handicrafts and natural beauties. The history of the town is enriched due to the Paulines, who 1503 established first Croatian grammar school, 1656 the faculty of philosophy and then the first Croatian university. There were also built many rich architectonic edifices, such as the church and monasteries decorated by Ranger's frescoes.

Lepoglava is especially recognised as the centre of world famous "Lepoglava lace" and lacework production that was 2009, as a part of Croatian lacework tradition, added to the UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage. Every September a traditional manifestation "International Lace Festival" takes place. Not far away from the very centre of Lepoglava is Gaveznica – Kameni vrh, a geological monument to nature and a depository of half-precious stone agate, as well as the only preserved fossil volcano in Croatia.

There are two Marian churches within the area of Lepoglava, the church of Immaculate Conception in Lepoglava, the church of Visitation of Blessed Virgin Mary in Višnjica and the chapel of Out Lady of the Snow in Kamenica.

## The town of Krapina

Krapina was first mentioned in 1193 and it got the status of a borough in 1347. Krapina is worldwide famous as the biggest and the richest finding site of 130.000 years old fossil remainings of the Neanderthals and stone handicrafts. Krapina is historical, cultural, educational and economical centre of Krapina-zagorje County. Ljudevit Gaj was born there, and one can return to his time by visiting his birth house that is nowadays a museum. Due



to rich cultural offer (Histrionic festival, Summer in Krapina, The Week of Kaikavian Culture, The Art Exhibition of Zagorje) Krapina holds a significant place on the map of Croatia.

## The town of Sveti Ivan Zelina

Sveti Ivan Zelina is an old cultural and economic centre of Hrvatsko prigorje, situated on the meek slopes of the eastern parts of the Medvednica Mountain, next to the valley of the river Lonja. Zelina proudly holds the title of the beauty and the belvedere of Prigorje. One should come to its peaks and enjoy the view towards nearby picturesque villages, orchards, vineyards, fields, tufts and lawns in the plain of the river Lonja or further towards surrounding and distant mountains.

Zelina and its surroundings are very picturesque and attract lots of hikers. One can, by going through beautiful villages, find here the remains of former mills, water mills and other sights. This region is nowadays well known for its wines that are tended by vine-growers and wine-makers of Zelina. For tourists is especially interesting the Zelina wine road that goes through wine-rich settlements around Zelina. It is an opportunity to visit wine cellars or vineyards of well known vine growers, but as well to have fun with excellent home-made specialties and quality wine.

