

STORIES WITH A VIEW

The Military - History Heritage of the Green Karst





Razdrto at the foot of Nanos (in Antiquity known as Ocra), one of the points to enter the Green Karst area, which represents the most convenient gateway between the Mediterranean and Central Europe, the Pannonian Basin and the Balkans.

Cover page: Silentabor, a hill near the village of Zagorje, where the largest fort complex in the area of what is now Slovenia used to be located (more on page 9).

To the Seeker of the Lost Time

Welcome, traveller, off the beaten track in the mysterious Green Karst. Welcome in the land where a stone seemingly placed somewhere by accident is not merely a stone, but a remnant dating back several thousand years, a remnant stripped of existence by being carried away from fortified ramparts of abandoned hill forts by man's tireless hand.

A view of the dominant slope rising above the village is almost always a view of the forgotten world of pagan settlements or weather-beaten walls, where a stone on stone did not make a palace but a rampart, a castle inhabited by knights or a fort against Turks. And a descent into the subterranean world is not merely a walk along the wet limestone ground of karst caves, cement labyrinths of abandoned bunkers are namely likewise leading into it.

The Green Karst enriches our lives with its hidden world abundant with karst wonders and with mysterious stories woven at the ever-turbulent crossroads of the coming and departing cultures. Owing to its geographical position it has for several millenniums been the most convenient natural gateway connecting the Mediterranean with Central Europe, the Pannonian Basin and the Balkans. Its diverse configuration elevated in all the places of key importance provides it with a defence potential that all the native inhabitants knew to make use of and that even newcomers most eager to fight had to count on.

Dear traveller, may your legs and the bicycle set the time machine in motion! Have a journey through time while indulging in some recreation, but use your imagination and keep in mind all the suggestions included in the brochure.



Armaments throughout time Ancient Roman weapons from Śmihel pod Nanosom (2nd c. BC, stored at the National Museum of Slovenia), a soldier of the Republic of Venice, Browning M1919A4 7.62 mm machine gun (stored at the Military Museum of Slovenian Armed Forces at the Park of Military History Pivka).

From Prehistory to Antiquity

It was in the caves located within the Pivka Basin where the oldest traces of man were found in the area of what is now Slovenia. As for the military history, the area of the Green Karst did not gain on importance until the Bronze Age, when the construction of fortified hill forts started. These forts were experiencing a boom up until the arrival of Romans in the Late Iron Age.



Fibula with onion-shaped knobs,
part of a Roman soldier's garb (Cave under
Predjama Castle) The fibula made of copper alloy
dating back to the 4th c. or the early 5th c. proves
that in Late Antiquity only rather small military
units at non-exposed points were left guarding
important gateways to the Apennine Peninsula.
Stored at the Notraniska Museum Postoina.

Mysterious Hill Forts

The earliest rural settlements in the area of the Green Karst came to existence as early as the Middle Bronze Age, most of them, however, were started in the Early Iron Age. Remains of what used to be stone and earthen ramparts can be seen on elevated ground locations, as a rule in the immediate vicinity of the present-day settlements. Fallow names of plots, hills or even settlements and parts of them (Gradišče, Grobišče, Stari grad etc.) also bear witness to ancient settlements. Inhabitants of these ancient hill forts were rather unknown indigenous tribes (of the Notraniska Region group) who made their living by means of livestock breeding, land cultivation. blacksmithing, pottery, weaving and trade.

Romans on the Horizon!

In the second century BC, the Romans made it to the east of Aquileia and dealt a devastating blow to the settlements of the Notranjska – Karst group. However, Rome did not subject this area to its rule until after year 35 BC, when Octavian crushed the pugnacious tribe of lapydes and ravaged their principal city of Metulum. Some of the hill forts were torn down by the Romans, while most of them were colonized and fortified.

Because of the pressure of tribes from the north-east, the Roman Empire in the third century started building a defence system called Claustra Alpium Iuliarum (Barrier of the Julian Alps). The defence system consisted of walls, strongholds and towers four metres in height and its south section extended from Vrhnika via Babno Polje all the way to Rijeka. After the Empire was divided into the western and eastern halves, the defence system lost its function and was left abandoned. Hardly any of its remains are left standing, but a number of modern times Alpine Wall fortifications have been constructed in its place.



The Silentabor Hill Fort What remains preserved of one

What remains preserved of one of the largest hill forts in the Pivka area, which used to be over 1,000 metres in circumference, are the ramparts on the south and the east sides.





Roman republican coins, a treasure find

(Hill Fort above Knežak) Coin finds dating back to the middle of the 2nd c. BC bear witness to the fact that even at the time the Pivka Basin was of strategic importance for the Romans.

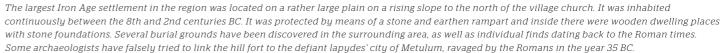
Stored at the National Museum of Slovenia.

16th -10th c. BC Middle Bronze Age
10th - 8th c. BC Late Bronze Age
8th - 4th c. BC Early Iron Age
4th BC -1st c. BC Late Iron Age
year 35 BC the fall of Metulum
year 476 AD Claustra Alpium Iuliarum
the fall of Western Roman Empire

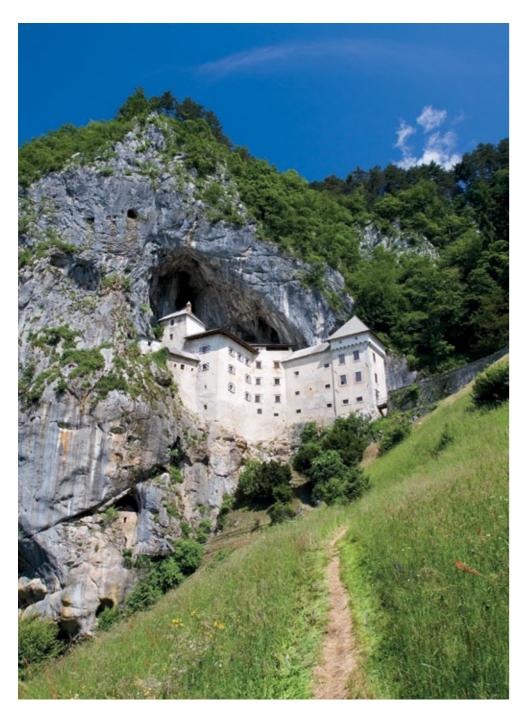
To gain a better insight into the times of Antiquity, visits to the Notranjska Museum Postojna and Park of Military History Pivka are highly recommended.



Hill Fort above the village of Šmihel pod Nanosom 2 km & Q 🏌 💠 🏴 Šmihel



4 5



Predjama Castle 🗿 🟛 🚲

The inaccessible castle perched in the middle of a vertical cliff, which was built bu the Patriarchate of Aquileia, was in writing mentioned for the first time in 1274. It was later remodelled by the Luegg Family, whose member was also Erazem of Predjama, the most famous lord of the castle. After a long siege of the castle, Erazem was in 1484 tricked and killed. In 1570, the castle was once again remodelled, new features were added and it has remained in this form to the present day.





Pusti grad ('Waste Castle'), Lož @ 🛼 🔾 🏌 💠

Ruins are the only thing left from the majestic building with double walls that was in the 12th century built by the Patriarchate of Aquileia. The ruins can be seen in a picture by J. W. von Valvasor, which dates back to the 2nd half of the 17th century and depicts the town of Lož. Also shown in the picture is a rampart against the Turks, built after the year 1477, when Lož was on account of frequent Turkish plundering attacks given town privileges and the potential of additional income associated therewith.

Mighty Castle Forts

For the most part castles were built in the 12th century, on exposed hills, particularly on sites of prehistoric hill forts. The word 'castle' is used to describe a fortified residence of foreign feudal lords, constructed on a naturally or artificially protected site. The edges of the Green Karst that are farthest away is where the most important castles preserved to the present-day are located: Prediama Castle in the north. Prem Castle on the south edge of the Pivka Basin and Snežnik Castle in the south-west part of Lož Valley. Peasant revolts. Turkish invasions and the introduction of firearms were the reason for additional architectural defence elements being added to these medieval structures in the 16th century.

Predjama Castle, Prem Castle and Snežnik Castle are waiting for you to take them by storm! Other castles of the Green Karst might have fallen into ruins over time, but they nevertheless make a pleasant destination for a daytrip and a fantastic walk inside medieval walls.





The first owner of the castle, which was in the 12th century built on the foundations of a Roman stronghold, was the Patriarchate of Aquileia, which later enfeoffed the castle to the aristocrats of Duino. After the aristocrats of Duiono died out in 1399, a number of different aristocratic families followed one another as castle owners - from the Counts of Gorizia to the House of Habsburg. After World War I, the castle was renovated by Zuccolini, a doctor from Trieste. Since 2008, the castle has housed a permanent museum exhibition about castles and hill forts of the Reka River basin.

Ravbar Tower near Planina

A renovated remnant of the former Mali grad (Small Castle) from the 14th century, which clearly served the purposes of protection and defence at the gateway to the Postojna Gate. Planina







1213 the first written mention of Prem Castle

1244 the first written mention of Lož Castle 1269 the first written mention of Snežnik Castle

1274 the first written mention of Predjama Castle

16th c. architectural changes made to the castles









Snežnik Castle and the lords of Snežnik were first mentioned in the 13th century. In subsequent times, a number of different noble families followed one another as castle owners until it was in the 17th century made an important administrative centre of this part of the Notranjska Region. What had originally been a fortified stronghold was at a later time repeatedly refurbished and renaissance and baroque features were added to it; they have been well preserved up until the present-day. The castle's present appearance with its front walls and towers dates back to the second half of the 19th century, when the castle was bought by the Saxon family of Schönburg-Waldenburg and was then converted into a summer home and hunting residence.

Oh, Mighty Fort, Mighty Fort!*

Forts were set up at the time of Turkish invasions in the late 15th century and early 16th century, which mostly took place from the neighbouring region of Lika, across Lož Valley and along the Reka River Valley. They were constructed as thin and tall walls with semicircular towers, most commonly around the previously existing courts and castles (Gotnik, Podgrad) as well as churches (Orehek, Košana, Cerknica).

As the name 'anti-Turk forts' itself suggests, these forts served as places of refuge from Ottoman plundering expeditions, while at the same time they were also permanent or temporary fortified storage places and granaries for all sorts of valuable things: from food and livestock to clothing and liturgical valuables.

After the decisive defeat of the Turks at Sisak it did not take long for the forts to shed their role, feudal lords had namely been worried these peasant strongholds could become centres of peasants who were getting more and more defiant. The demolishing of most of the forts thus started in the 17th and the 18th centuries.

Even though these forts have not been preserved in their original form, you will nevertheless be enraptured by structures and facilities that used to be a vital part of peasant strongholds, while in the present day they are again churches, houses part of human settlements or caves.



St. Florian's Church in Orehek 🔮 🟣 🝳

This used to be a fort against Turkish

invasions. It features walls that have an

irregular shape leaning onto a massive

church belfry with a well preserved system

of embrasures and an upper-floor entrance.

Podtabor Cave near Šembije Remains of a fortified shelter built by owners of Prem Castle are located in a precipitous rocky cliff above the village of Podtabor. In the 17th century the shelter still served the purposes of a granary.







1408 first Turkish invasions

1453 Fall of Constantinople

1593

1463 the Turks conquer Bosnia

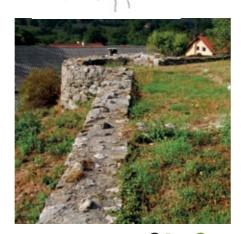
in the Bela Krajina Region

systematic Turkish invasions **1471** the construction of Šilentabor

defeat of the Turks at Sisak

* The introductory line of the poem Mighty Fort, written by Miroslav Vilhar (1818-1871), a patriot, poet,

composer and politician from the Notranjska Region.







Šilentabor above Zagorje 🗘 🗿

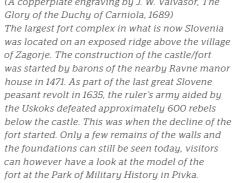
(A copperplate engraving by J. W. Valvasor, The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola, 1689) The largest fort complex in what is now Slovenia was located on an exposed ridge above the village of Zagorje. The construction of the castle/fort was started by barons of the nearby Ravne manor house in 1471. As part of the last great Slovene peasant revolt in 1635, the ruler's army aided by the Uskoks defeated approximately 600 rebels below the castle. This was when the decline of the fort started. Only a few remains of the walls and the foundations can still be seen today, visitors can however have a look at the model of the





One of the largest and most fortified fort complexes. The original church was demolished by the Turks in the second half of the 15th century, while a new parish church - St Mary's Nativity Church - was constructed in the old town centre Tabor: a fort against the Turkish invasion was built around the church between 1472 and 1482. The tall irregular walls featured five massive square towers and two-storey granaries. Today the Notranjska Regional Park and the Tourist Information Centre are housed in one of the towers.









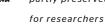


The Military - History Heritage of the Green Karst 1:250.000



museum

partly preserved



viewpoint



cycling point of interest

access on foot



TIC Cerknica

Tabor 42. Cerknica +386 (0)1 709 3636 ticerknica@cerknica.si Opening times: Mondays to Fridays, 10.00-16.00, Saturdays, 8.30-13.00



Notranjska museum Postojna Kolodvorska c. 3, Postojna +386 (0)5 721 1090 info@notranjski-muzej.si Opening times: correspond to the opening times of the museum (see page 18)



TIC Predjama

car park at Predjama Castle Opening times: VI-IX - daily, 10.00-18.00

TIC Lož

Cesta 19. oktobra 49. Lož +386 (0)8 160 2853 tic.loz@kabelnet.net Opening times: V-IX - daily, 10.00-18.00 X-IV - Mon. to Fri., 10.00-16.00

7IC Galerija na vogalu

Gregorčičev drev. 2, Postojna +386 (0)5 726 4900 polona.skodic@postojna.si Opening times: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 10.00-14.00, Wednesdays, 14.00-18.00

TIC Pivka

Park of Military History Pivka Kolodvorska c. 51, Pivka +386 (0)5 721 2180 +386 (0)31 775 002 tic.pivka@pivka.si Opening times: correspond to the opening times of the Park (see page 18)

3 TIC Bloke

Nova vas 46, Nova vas +386 (0)31 326 158 tic@bloke.si Opening times: Mondays to Fridays, 10.00-14.00

TIC TD Postojna

Jamska c. 9, Postojna +386 (0)5 7201 610 info@tdpostojna.si Opening times: Mondays to Fridays, 8.00-16.00

TIC Grad Prem (Prem Castle)

Prem 39, Prem, Ilirska Bistrica +386 (0)51 674 352 tanja.sajina@ilirska-bistrica.si Opening times: correspond to the opening times of the castle (see page 18)

Križna Gora Hill hill fort Nadlesk Hill Roman fortification







An armed conflict between the Austrian army and Napoleon's forces in Razdrto in 1809
Presented and performed as part of the third Festival of Military History (Park of Military History Pivka, 2009).

Turbulent New Times

In the 14th century, the Austro-Hungarian rule in the region of present-day Slovenia got fully established and lasted up until the end of World War II – with a single discontinuity: the establishment of Illyrian Provinces after Napoleon's victory against the Austrian Empire. Places in this region played a very important role at the time when the Austrian army tried to stop - to no avail - the advancing French Army in the Battle of Razdrto in 1809, and likewise in the four subsequent years, when this was an important transport region of the newly established Illyrian Provinces.

In 1915, the present-day area of the Green Karst was still uniform, however, it being in the immediate hinterland of the Isonzo Front gave reason to believe that the tragedy was not far off. And tragedy did indeed strike at the end of World War I, when its western part was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy and its eastern part to the newly established Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

The military heritage of the modern times remains the most vivid witness of the time. You will be able to feel it both outdoors and inside the Park of Military History Pivka.



Svetozar Borojević von Bojna, Austro-Hungarian field marshal (Kostajnica, 1856 - Klagenfurt, 1920) Between 1915 and 1917, when he was in command at the Isonzo Front, his commander's office was located at the Grand Hotel Adelsberghof in Postojna (the present-day Secondary Forestry and Woodwork School).



Borojević Trail across the Sovič Hill

During his stay in Postojna, Borojević
accompanied by armed escorts walked
around Sović Hill twice daily, along the trail
that remains named after him even today.

Postojna

From the Rise of Fascism to the Devastated Europe

In 1931, the Fascist Italy started strengthening the Rapallo Border by means of a system of fortifications called the Alpine Wall (Vallo Alpino); in the area of the Green Karst, the Alpine Wall mostly followed the lines of Claustra Alpium Iuliarium, the Barrier of the Julian Alps. The response of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia came five years later, when a less complex system was constructed, the so-called Rupnik Line. The Rupnik Line was abandoned and demolished at the start of World War II, when Italy marched into Yugoslavia. And the Alpine Wall proved to be of no special value even during the subsequent years – it turned out to be completely useless against the guerrilla combat style of the Partisans, both prior to the capitulation of Italy, as well as after the arrival of the German army. The national liberation activities of the Partisans were focused on sabotaging the transport and logistic infrastructure and thus mostly had no permanent base whose traces could have been preserved up until the present day.

1918 the end of World War I

1920 the so-called Rapallo Border established

1931 start of the Alpine Wall construction

1933 start of the Primož fortifications construction

1935 start of the Rupnik Line construction

1941 Axis alliance attack on the Kingdom of Yugoslavia

1943 surrender of Italy

1945 surrender of Germany

Are you interested in finding out what was going on in the turbulent Green Karst area before and during World War II? Would you like to see for yourself what the military life in trenches is like? Visit the Park of Military History and from there set off along a circular trail around Primož Hill, either accompanied by a guide or on your own.



"Dragon's Teeth" in Otok Valley

The aim of these anti-tank obstacles, part of the Alpine Wall, was to prevent access across one of the lowest gateways in the entire Dinaric Alps.

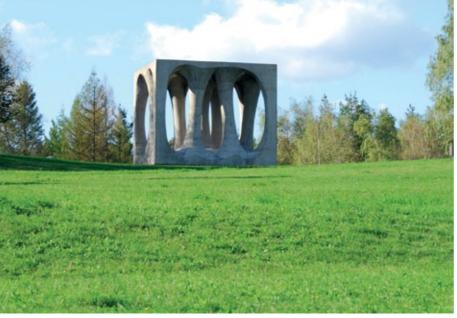








Partisans' sabotage in the Postojna Cave in 1944
Fuel depot arson; the fuel was kept by the
Germans in the cave area near the entrance to
the Postojna Cave.



Freedom Hill above Ilirska Bistrica 🍄 💠 🕪 Ilirska Bistrica

A memorial dedicated to the combatants of the Third Prekomorska Combat Brigade, which took part in the final combats against the German army in the area of Ilirska Bistrica and Trieste as part of the Yugoslav Fourth Army. Authors: sculptor Janez Lenassi, architect Živa Baraga.



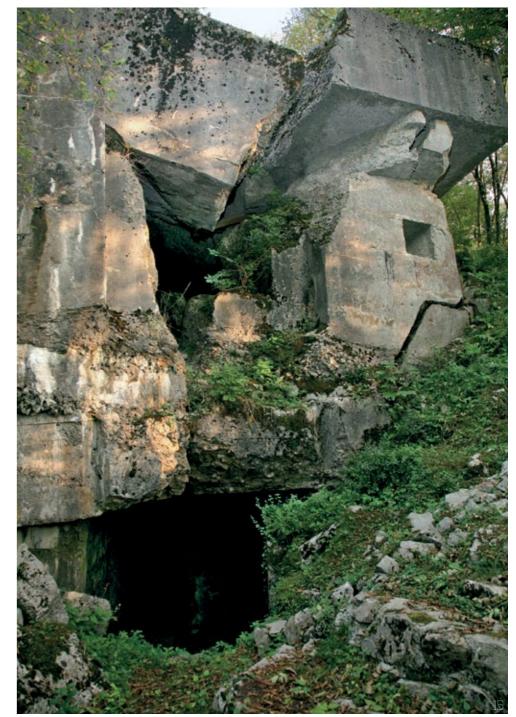






Italian underground fortifications, circular trail around Primož hill above Pivka

A double artillery casemate with its two 75-mm cannons is in command of a large part of the Pivka Basin. 481 metres of underground passages, a network of living quarters and logistics facilities, (ventilation, water reservoirs, bathroom and toilet facilities, communication by means of photophone transmitters, food and weapons storage) as well as four combat blocks give this imposing fortification the status of one of the most fortified points of the second line of the Alpine Wall, the so-called Zone of Security. After the surrender of Italy, Germans - afraid of the invasion of the allied forces - blew up the combat blocks.





1 The main exhibition area of the Park of Military History Pivka

In the first museum pavilion visitors can have a look at tanks, armoured vehicles and cannons from World War II and the post-war Yugoslavia period.

From Yugoslavia to Independent Slovenia

The Green Karst area was after 1945 again part of the homogenous territory of Yugoslavia, which was well aware of the area's territorial advantages, a proof of which was strong presence of the Yugoslav People's Army in the Pivka Basin. The armed forces accumulated light and heavy weapons of Soviet and even American origin in its military bases, as well as locally-manufactured weaponry and gear.

The strategic importance of this area was further attested at the time of Slovenia's Independence War, when tanks of the Yugoslav People's Army left the Pivka Military Post a day before the official start of the war. After the war, the military posts and the major part of the weaponry were got hold by the Slovenian army.

For a leap into the exciting recent history we recommend you to take a walk around the Park of Military History in Pivka. The vast collection of light and heavy weapons in the facilities part of the former military post will surely make a big impression on you; also of big importance are documents and testimonies related to Slovenia's independence.

1948	Yugoslavia's conflict
	with the Informbiro
1953-57	American military assistance
	to the Yugoslav People's Army
1991	Slovenian independence
2004	Park of Military History established
2011	P-913 submarine part of
	the permanent collection

of the Park of Military History



The day before

Yugoslav T55 tanks left the Pivka Military Post on the day before the start of Slovenia's Independence War. Today the former military post houses the Park of Military History and as part of its permanent exhibition United in Victory visitors can have a closer look at the course of the ten-day war for Slovenia's independence.



The first aircraft of the Slovenian Armed Forces

A part of the permanent exhibition at the Park of Military History is the

helicopter Gazelle TO-001 Velenje, used by two Slovenian pilots of the Yugoslav People's Army to defect to the Slovenian side at the time of the war for independence. The helicopter designations were changed that same day and it thus became the first aircraft of the Slovenian armed forces.



Park of Military History

The Park of Military History opened its door to visitors with the first exhibits in 2006; it was set up in the former Italian and later-time Yugoslav army barracks.

www.parkvojaskezgodovine.si Kolodvorska cesta 51, 6257 Pivka +386 (0)5 721 2180

Opening times: VI, VII, VIII, IX - daily, 10.00-17.00 V, X - Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, school holidays, 10.00-17.00 I, II, III, IV, XI, XII - Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, school holidays, 10.00-15.00 (I, II, XII - tours take place every two hours) For groups announced in advance a visit to the park is possible throughout the year.

Closed: 1 January, Easter, 25 December



Prem Castle 🧿

Part of the Regional Museum of Koper. Prem, 6255 Prem +386 (0)5 710 1384

Opening times:

V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, 1-5 X - Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, 12.00-19.00. For groups announced in advance a visit is possible on weekdays and in the wintertime as well.



Notranjska Museum Postojna 🍄

After World War II, the former carabinieri barracks was turned into Yugoslav People's Army garrison headquarters and much later, after it had been renovated, the Notranjska Museum Postojna was housed in it in 2011.

www.notranjski-muzej.si Kolodvorska cesta 3, 6230 Postojna +386 (0)5 721 1090

Opening times:

V, VI, VII, VIII, IX - daily, 11.00-18.00
X, XI, XII, I, II, III, IV - Mondays to Fridays,
9.00-15.00, Saturdays and Sundays, 11.00-16.00
Advance notice a minimum of two days before
the visit is required for visits to the museum
outside of the opening hours and for groups
that would like a guided exhibition tour.



Predjama Castle 🗿

Predjama 1 6230 Postojna +386 (0)5 753 6014

Opening times:

VII, VIII - daily, 9.00-19.00 V, VI, IX - daily, 9.00-18.00 IV, X - daily, 10.00-17.00 I, II, III, XI, XII - daily, 10.00-16.00



Snežnik Castle 🧿

Part of the National Museum of Slovenia. Kozarišče 67, 1386 Stari trg pri Ložu +386 (0)1 705 7814

Opening times:

IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX - daily, 10.0019.00 (entry every hour on the
hour, final castle tour at 18.00)
I, II, III, X, XI, XII - daily, except Mondays,
10.00-17.00 (entry every hour on the
hour, final castle tour at 16.00)
Visits to the castle are available as guided tours
only and in groups of no more than 30 people.
Organized groups of more than ten people are
required to give notice of their visit in advance.
Closed: 1 January, 1 November,
24 and 25 December



The P-913 Submarine (Park of Military History Pivka)

A pocket submarine of the Yugoslav Navy; its key task was the transport and provision of support to combat divers (commandos).

The P-913 submarine is an exceptional example of technical heritage, for which the lion's share was contributed by Slovene industry and knowledge. This specific combat vessel is at the same time also a former working environment of numerous Slovenian submariners; an above-the-average number of these submariners were commanders in the Yugoslav Navy, many of them reached the highest ranks.



18 19



A stone with an engraved image of a cavalryman from the pre-Roman period (Parti near Stara Sušica) Stored at the Notranjska Museum Postojna.







Stories with a View, The Military - History Heritage of the Green Karst

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