



# 10 Emeralds



THE EMERALD TRAIL

Idrija • Cerknj • Tolmin • Kobarid • Bovec



Divje jezero  
(Wild Lake)

## Visit the route

The Emerald Trail unites people and places along Slovenia's western border, and offers visitors the opportunity to admire the exceptional natural diversity and rich cultural heritage. This is a world carved by an emerald river, the Soča, with its tributaries, the Idrijca and Vipava rivers. On the extreme northwest, along the border with Italy and in the direct vicinity of Austria, lies the scenic, mountainous world of the Bovec, Kobarid and Tolmin regions. Towards the south, the landscape becomes gentler. The undulating hills of the Gorica region blend into the Friuli lowlands, and the Soča plain gradually disappears into the Adriatic Sea. In the central part, the mountainous world of the Upper Soča Region looks toward the Idrija and Cerklje hills, and connects with them at Sveta Lucija – today known as Most na Soči, situated at the confluence of the Idrijca and Soča rivers. Here the fertile soil offered a home to our ancestors as early as in the Bronze and Iron Ages. It was here that the so-called Sveta Lucija (St. Lucia) culture began to flourish and spread through the surrounding valleys. Even along the route travelled in ancient times by a Neanderthal from Divje Babe, who left a priceless treasure in a cave beneath the village of Šebrelje – a bone flute, today the oldest known musical instrument of its kind in the world. Several ten thousand years later, man discovered, in the upper reaches of the Idrijca River, yet another wonder of nature – mercury, the only metal in a liquid state on the globe.



Owl Skyphos, kept by  
the Tolmin Museum



Flute, kept by the  
National Museum of Slovenia



Most na Soči  
and Tolmin

## From Idrija to Trenta

Though beautiful and captivating, nature is unrelenting to the people who inhabit these parts. On the sunny slopes of the high-lying mountainous world or on the scanty patches of fertile soil in the valleys of streams, homes have been created by herdsmen, cheesemakers, woodcutters, miners, small farmers, cottagers, and workers. For centuries they lovingly cultivated and lived off the soil. But over the years, they also had to undergo numerous trials. Despite everything, they have remained freedom-loving and warm-hearted. Always ready to help their fellow man when help is needed. The memorial »holy« places on the battlefields of the Isonzo Front and in the hinterlands of World War II warfare testify to the greatness of their spirit.

The most precious jewels of these parts are therefore its people, the local inhabitants, who are preserving their exceptional heritage by persisting on their soil.

We invite you to join them, to hear their stories, and the stories told by this unique world.

# Anthony's Main Road



## In the Heart of Idrija's Underground World

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Idrija is Slovenia's oldest mining town with the second largest mercury mine in the world. An unforgettable experience when visiting the town is a tour of Anthony's Main Road – the museum mine, and a descent into the depths of Idrija's underground world, where miners dug out more than 700 km of shafts over a period of five hundred years. Visitors will be captivated by the glittering drops of native mercury, the diversified underground architecture of shafts and galleries, the unique mine Chapel of the Holy Trinity from the 18th century, the reconstruction of excavation methods and historical mining styles, and last but not least, the mysterious pit elf »Prekmandlc«.

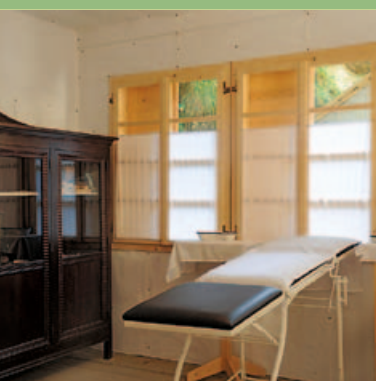


## Gewerkenegg Castle Mine Castle

Gewerkenegg Castle dominates over the old town of Idrija. It was built in the early 16th century as the administrative building of the Mercury Mine. The castle furnishings have not been preserved, but its lovely exterior dating from the late 18th century with its impressive, painted arched courtyard has been reconstructed. Today, the interior of the castle is enriched by exhibitions revealing to visitors the exceptional history of the town and the mine, the art of designing and making Idrija lace, the life of Idrija miners' families, and the unique technical heritage. The castle is home to the Idrija Municipal Museum, which was named Best European Museum of Industrial and Technical Heritage in 1997.



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## ☞ A Monument to Comradeship and Humanity

The Franja Partisan Hospital, named after a physician, Dr. Franja Bojc Bidovec, was constructed and operated during World War II, in the years from 1943 to 1945, in the narrow Pasice gorge in the village of Dolenji Novaki near Cerčno. The hospital complex comprised 14 wooden cabins and several other facilities that were almost entirely destroyed by a severe storm in the autumn of 2007, but have today been completely restored. During its operation, the hospital was one of the best equipped clandestine hospitals in Slovenia. Under its wing, partisans, allied and enemy soldiers, and civilians were treated – altogether 578 persons of various nationalities. The Franja Partisan Hospital is today a magnificent place of remembrance, a symbol of humanity, solidarity and comradeship. In 2007 the hospital was ranked among monuments bearing the prestigious European Heritage Label.

## Franja Partisan Hospital



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In the picturesque valley of the Tolminka River, above a steep slope overlooking the Polog mountain pasture, stands the Memorial Church of the Holy Spirit in Javorca dating from World War I. The frontline trenches have been erased by time, but the church has withstood the test of time as a shocking monument of that period. It was built in 1916 by soldiers of the 3rd mountain Austro-Hungarian Brigade in memory of their fallen comrades, the defenders of the Tolmin battlefield of the Isonzo Front. The exterior of the wooden temple is decorated with the coats-of-arms of the Austro-Hungarian provinces. In its peaceful interior, the names of 2564 fallen heroes have been burnt into oak panels that open like the pages of a book on the walls of a nave. In 2007 the Church was classified among monuments bearing the prestigious European Heritage Label.



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The Tolmin Gorges are situated at an altitude of 180 m and are the lowest entry point to the Triglav National Park. They are an exceptional natural heritage site that is protected because of its natural shapes and phenomena, and as such is the largest natural attraction in the Tolmin area. Forming part of the Tolmin Gorges are the gorges of the Tolminka and Zadlaščica rivers. A circular tourist path leads through the area, past the junction of both rivers, up to Devil's Bridge, and then to the Zadlaška or Dante's Cave. Visitors can also gaze at the Bear's Head – a rock wedged into the gorge. The clear, blue-green colour of the Tolminka River never ceases to fascinate visitors.

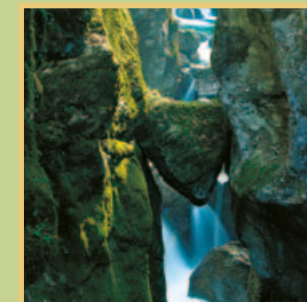


### 🦋 Cradle of Millenniums Past in the Soča Region

The rich cultural heritage of the Upper Soča Region is displayed in condensed form at permanent and occasional exhibitions in the Tolmin Museum, domiciled at the Coronini Manor in the center of Tolmin. Among its exceptional specimens from millenniums past are archaeological finds from various sites dating from the Stone Age to the Middle Ages. Special attention is devoted to the Sveta Lucija (St. Lucia) culture dating from the Iron Age, whose center was at Most na Soči. The exhibited curiosities of the area reveal the richness of local ethnological and architectural traditions, also expressed through mountain pasturage and an enduring cheese-making tradition. Among the historically significant events are the Great Tolmin Peasant Uprising of 1713 and its bloody suppression, and the rise of national consciousness at the end of the 19th century.



## Tolmin Gorges



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## ☞ Farewell to Arms

The Kobarid Museum, recipient of the Council of Europe Museum Prize in 1993, with its photos, maps, models, weapons and personal belongings of soldiers, and a documentary film, presents with sensitivity the most extensive story about World War I on Slovenian soil. It portrays in detail the horrors of mountain warfare in the Julian Alps, the Isonzo Front, and in particular the Twelfth Battle of the Isonzo, one of the major mountain conflicts in military history. During this battle, in October 1917, a combined offensive of German and Austro-Hungarian forces employed a new military tactic and drove the Italians all the way to the Piave River. The main message relayed by the Museum is the condemnation of war and suffering endured by mankind as a result of warfare.



## Kobarid Museum

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The Walk of Peace in the Upper Soča Region connects places and regions where numerous remnants of World War I have been preserved, restored and arranged as outdoor museums. One of these is Kolovrat. Along its ridge, visitors marvel at the breathtaking views of Veneto and the Friuli lowlands on one side, and the former battlefields of the Isonzo Front on the other side. During World War I, the Italian army built here an extensive system of its third line of defence, known as »linea d'armata«. A unique experience is visiting this »museum« in the company of a guide, who will present in detail the cultural and historical heritage, as well as the natural attractions of the area.



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## Kluže The Bovec Gate

A historically marked site at the confluence of the Koritnica and Šumnik rivers tells numerous stories of the past. Among these is also the history of the Kluže Fortress. The fortress was used to control the strategically important passage from the Bovec basin across the Predel pass into the interior of Austria. The present-day fortress was erected by the Austrians in 1882. Long before them, the site was occupied by the old Romans, Venetians and, in the period of the Illyrian Provinces, the French. The fortress served its purpose for the last time during World War I. Today, it is restored and arranged as a museum. On occasion, various World War I events are performed by the cultural society in the fortress's courtyard.



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# Trenta Lodge



## The Heart of the Triglav National Park

The Trenta Lodge with its museum and information centre is an important information, cultural and social venue of the Triglav National Park. The exhibitions at the Trenta Museum unveil to visitors the breathtaking beauties of alpine nature in Slovenia's sole natural park, as well as the cultural and ethnological legacy of Trenta's tenacious inhabitants – ironworkers, alpine herdsmen, woodcutters, daring climbers, and mountain guides. Here visitors will find ample information on the park and its surroundings, accommodation, professional guides for alpine ascents and guided tours to natural attractions, such as the Soča River spring and the Juliana Alpine Botanical Garden. Nestled in a tranquil glacial valley, the Trenta Lodge is an ideal venue for seminars, conferences, business and professional meetings.

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To experience the Emerald Trail means to explore the wildness of nature and the jewels of protected natural values, respect the past reflected in the richness of the cultural heritage, discover the picturesque beauty of hiking, alpine and cycling trails, enjoy the exhilarating white plains of winter, feel the magical power of deep waters inviting kayakers, rafters, and fishermen, catch the wind that carries you to infinite heights on the wings of parachutes and gliders, taste the specialties of local cuisine, surrender to the peace that embraces the soul after a stressful day.



# Tips for excursions

## IDRIJA

- **Kamšt** – largest wooden water wheel in Europe
- **Idrija miner's house**, Bazoviška 4 – living quarters of a miner's family from the early 20th century, arranged as a museum
- **Idrija Lace School** – lacemaking lessons and presentation of exquisite bobbin lace products made by young hands
- **M Idrija Aquarium** – presentation of more than 170 species of freshwater and sea fish
- **Zgornja Idrija Landscape Park** – a wealth of natural attractions (Wild Lake) and technical monuments (klavže – water barriers on the Idrija River and Belca stream)
- **Slovenia Partisan Printing Workshop on Vojsko plateau** – an authentically preserved monument of World War II
- **Pilgrimage Church of Mary on the Rock** in Spodnja Idrija
- **Mt. Javornik (1242 m)** – lookout peak offering views extending from the Julian Alps to the Ljubljana basin and the Adriatic Sea

## CERKNO

- **Divje babe below the edge of the Šebrelje plateau** – archaeological site of the oldest bone flute in the world
- **Cerkno Museum** – presentation of local history and the Cerkno carnival figures (»laufarji«)
- **Bevk's homestead in Zakojca** – the home of writer France Bevk
- **Zaganjalka spring in the Volkova grapa gorge below Cerkljanski Vrh** – karst phenomenon with intermittent water flows
- **Mt. Porezen (1630 m)** – highest peak of the Cerkno hills

## TOLMIN

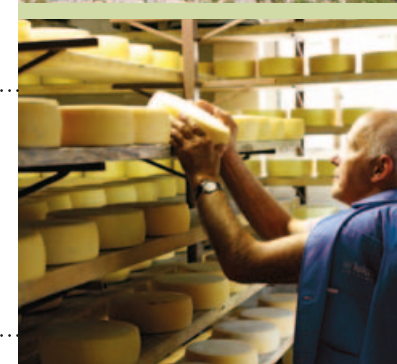
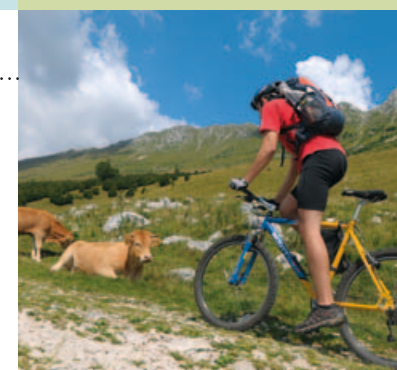
- **Cultural and historical path through Most na Soči**
- **Kosmač homestead** in Slap ob Idrijci and the Kosmač educational trail
- **Kozlov rob** – hill above Tolmin with a lookout point and an educational trail leading to the castle
- **Linden tree in the village of Rut in the Baška Grapa valley** – one of the oldest and most magnificent linden trees in Slovenia
- **Church of the Visitation of Mary at Ponikve** – the work of architect Jože Plečnik
- **Trail along the Old Border** – scenic trail among the fortifications of the former Rapallo border around Podbrdo
- **Mengore** – outdoor museum exhibiting World War I remains, Church of the Virgin Mary, and the Stations of the Cross made by Father Marko Rupnik
- **Kobilja glava (1475 m)** – a breathtaking lookout peak above Tolmin

## KOBARID

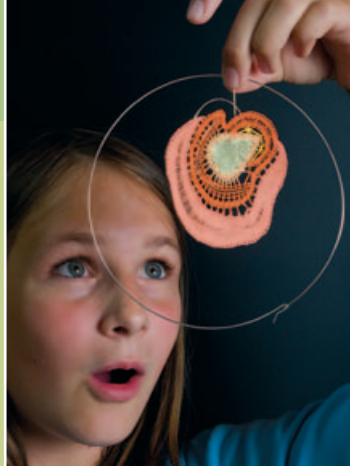
- **Kobarid Historical Trail:**
  - St. Anthony's Church and ossuary of fallen Italian soldiers
  - late antiquity settlement on Tonovcov Grad hill near Kobarid
  - the waterfalls of the Kozjak stream near Kobarid
  - the Soča Gorge
  - dairy museum »Od planine do Planike«
- **Birthplace of poet Simon Gregorčič** in Vrsno
- **Koseč chutes and 80 m high Curk waterfall** near Drežnica
- **Napoleon's Bridge** – stone bridge across the Nadiža River in Podbela

## BOVEC

- **Stergulec House in Bovec** – museum presentation of the rich history of Bovec
- **Alpinum Juliana in the Trenta Valley** – alpine botanical garden
- **Soča Trail** – natural science educational path of the Triglav National Park leading from the Soča River spring to Bovec
- **Great Gorge of the Soča River** – 750 m long and up to 15 m deep
- **Boka Waterfall** – the most magnificent waterfall in Slovenia, 106 m high
- **Šunik's Water Hurst** – a nook of waterfalls and pools with benevolent energies in the Lepena valley
- **Krn Lake (1391 m)** – Slovenia's largest mountain lake
- **Mangart Saddle (2055 m)** – lookout point with the highest lying road in Slovenia



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Anthony's Main Road

IDRIJA

Gewerkenegg Castle

IDRIJA

Dear visitors,

While visiting these jewels of nature, you may receive a stamp.

If you collect all 10 stamps, you will receive a souvenir gift. Come and visit us!

Franja Partisan Hospital

CERKNO

Javorca

TOLMIN

Tolmin Museum

TOLMIN

Tolmin Gorges

TOLMIN

Kobarid Museum

KOBARID

Kolovrat

KOBARID

Kluže

BOVEC

Trenta Lodge

TRENTA

I FEEL  
SLOVENIA



*Investing in your future*

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