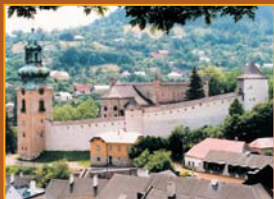


BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA 7x7



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BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA 7x7



If you plan to visit Banská Štiavnica, a town that is on the UNESCO World Heritage List, you should definitely have this book

This is what you will find in the book:

7 topics providing basic information about the oldest free royal mining town in Slovakia

and within them you may read about:

- 7 landmarks**
- 7 recommendations on what to visit**
- 7 legends**
- 7 famous residents**
- 7 culinary specialities**
- 7 suggested walks and trips (including biking trips)**
- 7 Štiavnica wonders**

and you will also get:

an overview of the history of Banská Štiavnica and an orientation map

Welcome to Banská Štiavnica!

ŠTIAVNICA 7x7



7 x 7



**BANSKÁ
ŠTIAVNICA
7x7**

IN THIS BOOKLET YOU WILL FIND:

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At the back of the booklet you will find an orientation map (the numbers in the text give the location of the buildings and places described)

WELCOME TO OUR TOWN!

According to an old, commendable custom a host should offer his guest the best that he has to offer. And this is what we should like to do at the start of your visit to Banská Štiavnica.

What, however, should we begin with? What is the best that we have to offer?

As usual, there are as many opinions as people you ask. Some would say that the best and the most beautiful that we have to offer is the view of the town in the first rays of the rising sun. The circle of hills is already bathed in sunlight, while the valley and the roofs of the houses and the towers of the churches are just awaking from their night's sleep...Others will tell you that Štiavnica evenings are the most beautiful. In the twilight, when the shadows of the mountains fall on the town, the setting sun makes a priceless jewel of Calvary - an unforgettable picture. These two opinions are not, however, contradictory. Both of these experiences are connected by something which there is less and less of in this world: an atmosphere of tranquillity and harmony. And this is another attraction, which we offer you, dear visitors.

Our town offers you a chance to experience the past, which you will sense all around you as you walk along the steep streets of the town. We hope the information on individual historical buildings in this guide will add to your experience. Even a quick glance at our guide will leave you in no doubt of the wealth of experiences our town has to offer. And we mustn't forget the enchanting countryside that surrounds the town, marked by centuries of mining of precious metals. Not however, in a negative or destructive manner, but rather an example of a harmonious unity of natural beauty with human endeavour. The Štiavnica countryside offers superb trekking paths, cycle paths and ski trails. They will guide you to locations with unforgettable views.

And last, but by no means least, there are the mirrored surfaces of the reservoirs - the celebrated Štiavnica tajchs. Perfectly merging with the natural environment, it is hard to believe they are a completely artificial phenomena. And we can't forget the lively cultural life of the town, which offers comfortable accommodation often in romantic surroundings and many local restaurants and cafes. And what is more...

Our town has much, much more to offer. We hope our guide will at least open the door to our town for you, to give you an initial orientation, and that your subsequent steps will lead you to the heart and soul of Banská Štiavnica. And this is what we most want to offer you!

The Editors

THE HISTORY OF BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA

ONE OF THE OLDEST TOWNS IN THE HUNGARIAN KINGDOM

The medieval town of Banská Štiavnica developed within a relatively complicated natural environment shaped mostly by an extensive volcanic activity that took place millions of years ago here. Banská Štiavnica is located in the middle of a large cauldron that was formed after the volcano crater – the Štiavnica bedded volcano – had collapsed. Archaeological research has revealed that the site of today's Banská Štiavnica was settled in prehistory and evidence of many prehistoric cultures have been discovered, the oldest of which date to the Stone Age. These early settlements were undoubtedly influenced by finds of precious metals, particularly gold and silver. Increasing possibilities for the mining of precious metals in the Middle Ages sped up the town creating process and the Hungarian king - Belo IV awarded Banská Štiavnica town privileges in 1237 - 1238. The town developed from a settlement in the valley of the Štiavnica brook. A second settlement, which stood on the slope of Glanzenberg Hill (today's Staré mesto - Old Town Hill), secured the defence of the area



4 BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY. LITHOGRAPH. L. ROHBOCK

on which ore was mined and processed. The name of the settlement, derived from the Štiavnica brook, indicates a Slavic origin. Preserved architectural elements of several buildings indicate that in the 1230s two sacral buildings existed in the settlement- the parish church – the Church of the Virgin Mary (Starý zámok – Old Castle) and the Dominican Church of St. Mikuláš (today's parish church – the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary) – and several buildings on today's Andrej Kmeť Street and within the Chamber Court (Kammerhof for more details, see also the section – 7 *Banská Štiavnica Landmarks*).

As early as the 13th century, revenues from mining in Banská Štiavnica were a significant source of income to the Royal Court and Banská Štiavnica was one of the most important economic centres within the medieval Hungarian Kingdom. With regard to the development of the town and the wider region, a key role was played by colonists (“guests”) from the Tyrol and Saxony, particularly after the Tartar incursions at the beginning of the 1240s. The guests brought with them knowledge of new technology that helped solve problems related to the mining and processing of ore and were instrumental in Banská Štiavnica becoming a significant European centre of silver production. They gradually became the most influential class of citizens in the medieval town. They were active in the mining industry, controlled its administrative body as well as local and long-distance trade.

THE TOWN COUNCIL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORY OF THE TOWN IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The town was governed by the magistrate and the council, traditionally elected for a period of one year on the Candlemas holiday on 2nd February. The administration of the town and the le-



THE TOWN'S COAT OF ARMS WITH THE TOWN
FORTIFICATIONS AND MINING TOOLS

gal status of its citizens were regulated by the town law and mining activities were regulated by the mining law. Both these legal systems had their roots in the states of the German language area. The original legal documents regarding these systems have not survived. They were probably destroyed, along with the town privileges, during the assault on the town by opponents of King Ladislav V Posthumous in 1442, or by the earthquake of 1443. Only their new versions, drawn up in 1466, have survived.

The original territory of the medieval Banská Štiavnica was bounded by the settlements of Kopanice (today, part of the village of Hodruša-Hámre), Sigelsberg (part of the village of Štiavnické Bane), Karlík (Kerling, an abandoned settlement within Hodruša-Hámre), Banský Studenec, Banská Belá and Žakýl (part of the village of Podhorie). Prior to 1352, these settlements were taken by the castellan of Šášov Castle and Banská Štiavnica endeavoured to effect their return, but without success. The only exception was Banská Belá, which also gained town privileges in the first half of the 15th century. Within this markedly reduced territory of the town, several settlements were established as, for example, Štefultov, Horná and Dolná Roveň, Vindšachta, Banky and Vindišlajtna. Thanks to the development of mining, from amongst these Hodruša won a long battle to be a separate entity. At the beginning of the 16th century, Banská Štiavnica strengthened its economic base with the incorporation of the villages of Vyhne and Bzenica, by which it also gained important road links to trade routes in the Hron valley.

TURBULENT CENTURIES

Banská Štiavnica, is one of the oldest towns and the oldest mining town in Slovakia and it was one of the most important economic centres within the Hungarian Kingdom, of which current Slovakia was a part of until 1918. It was also a member of the union of seven Central Slovak mining towns. As part of the centralisation of mining and the related sectors, begun by the Hapsburg Emperor Ferdinand I, at the end of the 16th century, Banská Štiavnica became the residence of the Chief Chamberlain's Office. The development of the town from the 16th century was marked by the almost 150-year threat of Turkish ex-

pansion and in the 17th century until the beginning of the 18th century, the rebellion of the Hungarian magnates against Hapsburg supremacy. Fortification of the town proved extremely costly. A two-ring defensive system with gates was constructed around the town. It garrisoned troops, at times the Emperor's, at other times Rebel troops, and posted watch guards and sentry guards. The Turks never took the town although they plundered in its immediate vicinity on a number of occasions. This turbulent time of war was unfavourable for mining activity. The miners had an unenviable socio-economic position and had to fight for improvements to their living conditions in various ways – from the submission of protests to open rebellion as for example in the period 1525 – 1526. As the political and economic situation worsened and the state gradually began to nationalise the mines, many mine-owning families left Banská Štiavnica, or took up trade instead.

As a consequence of economic and cultural contacts with German states, from the 1520s Banská Štiavnica proved a fertile breeding ground for the teachings of Martin Luther. Many of Štiavnica's citizens began to study the new theology at universities in Wittenberg, Wrocław and Halle.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF MINING AND THE TOWN

During the reign of Maria Theresa, Banská Štiavnica experienced its



A MINER'S BURNER AND HAMMER FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE SLOVAK MINING MUSEUM

Golden Age thanks to the stabilisation of political development and the favourable development of the mining industry. Churches and burgher's houses were reconstructed in the Baroque style, new roads were built to the town, and in the period 1744 – 1751 a new landmark took shape – Calvary (for more details, see also the section – 7 *Banská Štiavnica Landmarks*). In 1735, the cartographer and mathema-

tician Samuel Mikovíni established a unique type of school to train mining specialists in Banská Štiavnica. With the visits of the Emperor Francis Stephen of Lorraine in 1751 and his sons the future Emperors Jozef and Leopold in 1764, the town's status was significantly enhanced. At the instigation of the Empress Maria Theresa, the first technical university in the world, the Mining Academy was established here, to which was later added the Forestry Department (for more details, see also the section - *7 Banská Štiavnica Landmarks*). An important role in the town's economy was played by the guilds, which were often divided along national lines - German and Hungarian. In addition to mining, ore processing, and metallurgy, the latest technological advances were also applied in other sectors such as textiles, engineering, tobacco and wood processing. In the spiritual sphere, lay preachers came to the fore in the town, and there were also strong Dominican and Jesuit communities; in nearby Štiavnické Bane the technically orientated Hieronymites settled. In 1776, Piarists settled in the town as did later the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent. The Toleration Act of Emperor Jozef II allowed the unhindered development of the Evangelical Church and in 1796 a classical Evangelical church was completed. High standards of teaching were maintained at the Evangelical Lyceum and also the Jesuit secondary school, which became the Piarist secondary school. Many renowned figures from Slovak history taught or studied at Štiavnica schools. At the beginning of the 1780s, Banská Štiavnica was the second largest town in Slovakia by population size and the third largest in the Hungarian Kingdom.

THE END OF THE MINING GLORY DAYS

Mining was the main engine of the development of the town and in the 19th century and 20th century, it became, more and more, a loss making business. This was contributed to by the fall in the price of metals and the turbulent times of war and revolution. However, Banská Štiavnica continued for the time being to maintain its historical tradition of having a special status. In 1870, as one of four towns in Slovakia, it gained municipal rights, which took it away from the authority of the County (župa) and subordinated it to the Ministry of the Interior. However, it lost this status in 1922.

Banská Štiavnica suffered greatly during the hardships of the First World War and the complicated integration into the new Czechoslovak Republic. The tension in the town, already high due to the multinational structure of the population of the town, was further complicated by the arrival of the Hungarian Red Army in June 1919. After the intervention of Czechoslovak troops, gradually a new state and public administration took shape. In the period 1923 - 1960, Banská Štiavnica was a District centre (its status as a District town was renewed in 1996).

The fate of the town in the dramatic 20th century was influenced by the economic crisis of the 1930s, the war years from 1939-1945 and after the war particularly by the communist coup of February 1948 which had far reaching consequences for political, social and spiritual life. Closing the mines, which employed the majority of the productive population, had already been considered during the above-mentioned economic crisis. However, the centuries of mining tradition came to a definite close at the beginning of the 1990s, when the mining of precious metals ended in the region.



A SILVER COIN COMMEMORATING THE RECORDING OF BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA INTO THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST IN 1993 (MILAN VIRČÍK)

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW MILLENNIUM

After the social changes of 1989, efforts increased to preserve and value the cultural heritage represented by the monuments in the town monument reserve of a technical and architectural nature. In 1993, Banská Štiavnica was recorded in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Recently, life in the town has been revived by various new cultural and social activities. A university, dedicated to Environmental Studies which left after 1918, returned to the town. The town is gradually drawing on its historic tradition and in the future plans to develop education, tourism, culture and local industry.

7 BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA

LANDMARKS

STARÝ ZÁMOK (OLD CASTLE)

The Town Castle, known as the Old Castle ❶, is built on a raised terrace and towers over the centre of the town. It represents a unique example of the transformation of a sacral structure into a fortification and is the best-preserved town castle in Slovakia.

Originally, a three-naved Romanesque church, built by German settlers around the turn of the 13th century above the emerging medieval mining town, stood on the site of the castle. It served as a parish church and it stood at the centre of a cemetery. The ossuary of this cemetery survives to the present day – the two-story Chapel of St. Michal at the entrance to the castle grounds. In the 1440s, the church was badly damaged, evidently by the earthquake, but also by an attack on the town led by opponents of King Ladislav V Posthumous.

The subsequent fate of the church was linked to efforts to improve the town's defences. The reconstructed church was encircled by a wall with semicircular towers. At the end of the 15th century, the church was further fortified by the Himmelreich tower, which in addition to being the residence of the castle captain also served as a prison and an



VIEW OF THE OLD CASTLE FROM THE NORTH, THE CENTRAL BUILDING WAS ORIGINALLY A GOTHIC CHURCH

entrance gate to the castle with a tower. Many architectural details that have survived to the present day, bear witness to the fact that the reconstruction of the church in the Late Gothic style was very extensive. Despite this, its days were numbered: the growing Turkish threat (and possibly also problems with financing the extensive reconstruction) led the town's leaders to order the complete transformation

of the church into a fortress in the mid-16th century. The central nave of the church became a courtyard, the side naves were transformed into residential wings and the material gained in the process was used to strengthen the external walls. The central building had a storage area in its lower part. Above the store were residential and ceremonial rooms and on the top floor there was a gallery housing cannon



TODAY'S OLD CASTLE TOWER WAS BUILT ON TOP OF THE ORIGINAL GATE TOWER OF THE RENAISSANCE FORT

trained on the approach roads to the castle. The castle has been preserved to the present day in this form – a Renaissance fortress – with the exception of the reconstruction of the entrance gate into a Baroque bell tower in the 18th century. Today, it houses the historical collection of the Slovak Mining Museum. (see the section – 7 recommendations)

NOVÝ ZÁMOK (NEW CASTLE)

This intriguing and distinctive building stands above, the southwestern entrance to the historical centre of the town ❷. The New Castle dates to the period 1564 – 1571. It was built as part of the fortifications of the town to protect against the feared Turkish incursions. Its other name – Panenský hrad (Maiden's Castle) is derived from the name of the hill on which it stands (Frauenberg). The hilly terrain around Banská Štiavnica prevented the construction of continuous fortifications. The defence of the town was based on the entrance gates on the



THE NEW CASTLE (ON THE RIGHT), WITH THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE TOWN AND CALVARY VISIBLE

approach roads and non-continuous sections of wall with towers (their remains can still be seen behind the Kammerhof building). The New Castle was not then a true castle, that is to say some kind of comfortable residence, but rather a fortified military watch tower, part of the network of the so-called “vartovkas” (watch towers), on similarly guarded points within the Central Slovak mining town region. As the castle was built above the town, the garrison was in visual contact with other watch towers (e.g. on Sitno Hill) and could receive signals regarding Turkish troop movements from the direction of Krupina and Levice.

The result of the work of the Renaissance builders was a square tower with a pyramidal roof, with two semicircular corner bastions. This gave the building a relatively simple but effective defensive structure. All four sides had arrow slits, fortified oriel windows and observation windows. After the Turkish threat receded, two further bastions were added giving the castle its current form. It continued to function as a watch tower and for a while the building was used to store gunpowder, which was used for the first time in the world in 1627 in the local mines to fragment the ore-bearing rock (later this explosive was stored in a purpose-built building – the powder house above the town by the road to Levice). Today, the New Castle is a museum and houses a permanent exhibition documenting the Anti-Turkish Wars in Slovakia. The top floor windows offer a superb view over the historical centre of the town and the surrounding countryside, marked by centuries of mining activity.

ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH



A FIGURAL CONSOLE ON A VAULT IN ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH

This Late Gothic church ³ is imposingly located at the very heart of the town, at the junction of two of the most important medieval roads – today's Holy Trinity Square and Andrej Kmeť Street. The church was constructed during a period of prosperity in the town at the beginning of the 16th century, which was reflected by the building of new churches and the extensive reconstruction of the burgher's houses. The builders were constrained by the terrain and the neighbouring buildings and as a consequence built the church into

a steep slope and gave it an orientation unusual for the Middle Ages, i.e. with the presbytery on the southern side. Particularly noteworthy is the graceful and harmonious construction of the church and its interior space, which features reticulated vaults and private chapels separated by supporting pillars, typical for Late Gothic architecture of this time. The excellence of the architecture is witnessed by the detailing,



ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE SLOVAK CHURCH, AS SERVICES WERE READ HERE TO THE MINERS IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE (ON THE RIGHT – THE TOWN HALL)

for example, the intricately worked details of the portals and the figural consoles of the vaults and, above all, the richly decorated font. Elements of the original interior which have survived to the present day include: the large mural of the Last Judgement in the presbytery, the Gothic statues of the Madonna and Christ on the Cross and the 17th century roof timbers. St. Catherine's Church was only subject to minimal later Baroque alterations, and so the late medieval character of the church has been preserved. The current interior is dominated by the wooden Baroque altar and the Neo-gothic side altars of the chapels.

THE PARISH CHURCH AND THE RUINS OF THE DOMINICAN MONASTERY

The massive structure of today's parish church – the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary 4 represents a kind of direct contrast to the Old Castle. Originally named the Church of St. Mikuláš, it was the



THE FACADE OF THE PARISH CHURCH, ALSO KNOWN IN ŠTIAVNICA AS THE GERMAN CHURCH

monastery church of the Dominican friar preachers, who settled in the town around 1230, at a time when the town was experiencing prosperity and growth. This is reflected in the architecture of the church. It was built as a Romanesque three-apsed basilica with a transverse nave. The basic dimensions of one of the largest sacral structures in Slovakia of its time have been preserved to the present today. Many of the original interior features have survived, for example the ribbed vault in the transverse nave and

the vaulted consoles under the choir. On the outside of the church, on the eastern side behind the current chapel, part of the structure of the original chapel has been preserved.

On the North side of the church, on what is today open ground, stood a medieval monastery with residential wings around a courtyard,

which was connected to the church by a Late Gothic ridge portal. In the 16th century, after the departure of the Dominicans, the monastery was owned by the town and became part of the town fortifications. Later, part of the monastery buildings were reconstructed to serve as a Jesuit secondary school.

The current form of the church is the result of fairly recent alterations. Although, the reconstruction at the beginning of the 19th century preserved the overall substance of the original church, but completely suppressed its medieval character. The facades were altered to conform to the high classicism in vogue at the time. After the demolition of the ruins of the secondary school in the 20th century, all that remained of the monastery, the medieval centre of education in Banská Štiavnica, was an empty lot with the partially exposed remains of the main building and the wall of the medieval cloister with Gothic windows.

CHAMBER COURT – KAMMERHOF

Chamber Court – Kammerhof 6 is one of the most extensive sets of buildings in the town. It fulfilled a specific function – after the destruction of the castle and the system of fortifications on the Old Town



THE FACADE OF THE KAMMERHOF, ON THE LEFT IN THE FOREGROUND – THE STATUE OF ANDREJ KMEŤ – ARCHAEOLOGIST, BOTANIST, AND ETHNOGRAPHER

(Glanzenberg) in the mid-15th century, it became the residence of the king's Mining Chamber and from the mid-16th century the residence of the chief chamberlains, who administered all the mines, smelteries, mints, forests and specialist schools in the Central Slovakia mining region. At the Kammerhof, ore was purchased from the mine owners and the urbura (tax on mined ore) collected. In addition, the ore was cleaned here, the gold separated from the silver and the quality of the ore determined, and so on.

Today's form of the Kammerhof buildings is the result of many alterations, thanks to which it became a gallery of architectonic and creative styles. Archaeological research has confirmed that a structure with towers with a manufacturing and residential function stood on the site of the Kammerhof at the time of the establishment of the Romanesque town at the turn of the 13th century. In some parts of the Kammerhof, the structural framework and elements from the Romanesque and Gothic phases of its development have survived, however, its current form was determined by the Renaissance construction phase during which time the complex was extended. At the time of the Turkish expansion, the Kammerhof became part of the internal ring of the town's fortifications and an interior town gate (which no longer exists) was added to the north western corner. Two Renaissance corner bastions and the remnants of the defensive wall, which continued to the south up the slope to the New Castle, survive from this reconstruction. Although the Kammerhof was badly damaged by fires several times, many of its valuable historical, architectural and artistic elements have survived to the present day. Particularly noteworthy are the Renaissance stone portals, the Baroque murals in the interior and the painted decorations of the external facades. Today, the Kammerhof houses the head office of the Slovak Mining Museum and a permanent exhibition on the history of mining and metallurgy (see the section – 7 recommendations).

THE BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA CALVARY

The Calvary complex was built in the mid-18th century on the western side of the Scharffenberg hill at the instigation of the Jesuit priest – František Perger and is a unique combination of architecture and

landscaping on the slope of a volcanic hill. (See also the section – 7 Legends). This unique group of 25 buildings, ingeniously sited in picturesque natural surroundings, creates an extraordinarily harmonious whole with an exceptional atmosphere thanks to the technical excellence of the construction and the unified character of the decoration. The Calvary is also unique as regards its liturgical conception. It does not follow the traditional model of fourteen Stations of the Cross, but rather it presents a combination



THE ENTRANCE PORTAL OF THE LOWER CHURCH OF CALVARY

of scenes from the lives of Jesus and the Virgin Mary. The chapels and churches are predominantly Baroque in character, although there are also elements of classicism present. The main buildings are symmetrically positioned all the way up the slope of the hill facing the town: Dolný kostol (Lower Church), the statue of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary, Sväté schody (the Saints' Stairs), the Ecce homo chapel and Horný kostol (Upper Church). Kaplnka Božieho hrobu (Holy Sepulchre Chapel) is located on the eastern side of the hill.

The churches of the Calvary are architectonically balanced and the elegant buildings were constructed with the intention of creating the dominant landmark in the area. The chapels contain wooden reliefs, and the churches' interiors are decorated with murals and have extensive interior features. The murals have been credited to the Austrian painter – Anton Schmidt. The impressive Calvary complex was one of the most beautiful monuments of this type in Europe.

THE CAMPUS OF THE FORMER MINING AND FORESTRY ACADEMY

In the mid-18th century, the Central Slovakia mining region, and above all Banská Štiavnica, were a centre of the most advanced mining and metallurgical technology in Europe. This created ideal con-

ditions for the establishment of a specialist school teaching the technical sciences connected with mining and its related disciplines. In 1763, the first technical university in the world was established in Banská Štiavnica, from 1770 known as the Mining Academy. In 1824, the Academy was merged with the Forestry Institute, which had been independent until then. The establishment of the Academy brought about a small-scale revolution in the history of the town. The presence of students from all over Europe rejuvenated the town and attracted inventive technicians and scientists, who came to lecture here. The Academy was initially located in several adapted older burgher houses in the town centre. As the renown of the school grew, the need to construct appropriate and functional buildings for it became stronger. Around the turn of the 20th century, the Mining and Forestry Academy was established in the Botanical Gardens (established in 1838). It comprised three grandiose neo-renaissance buildings 14. No. 12 Academy Street housed the Academy's laboratory, which was equipped with the most advanced apparatus available at that time.

The buildings have a rigidly symmetrical architectonic structure and the facades and interiors feature intricate stucco decoration. Their palatial dimensions, grandeur, ethereality, illumination and aesthetic decoration harmoniously combine functionality with technical excellence in the style prevalent at the time.

After the Academy moved to Šopron in 1918, the buildings continued to serve an educational purpose and housed a vocational secondary school, and in more recent years also universities. The campus has, thus, retained its specific academic genius loci to the present day.



THE LABORATORY BUILDING IN THE PICTURESQUE SETTING OF THE BOTANICAL GARDENS

RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHAT SHOULDN'T BE MISSED IN BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA

THE SLOVAK MINING MUSEUM – EXHIBITIONS AT THE CHAMBER COURT (KAMMERHOF), HELLENBACH'S HOUSE AND AT THE NEW CASTLE

The unique geological structure of the Banská Štiavnica region, more than a thousand years of continuous ore mining, the legacy of the first technical university dedicated to mining in the world, the tradition of technical inventiveness and the wealth embodied in artistic collections, in addition to the architectonic and urbanistic values of the town provided the background from which the museum developed at the turn of the 20th century. Its subject matter and the extent of the collection makes it unique in Europe. The six separate exhibitions provide a comprehensive overview of the history of this part of Slovakia, extensively marked by mining activity.

The extensively restored Kammerhof ⑥ (further details in the section – 7 *Banská Štiavnica Landmarks*), the former residence of the Štiavnica chamberlain, is home to the exhibition on the history of mining in Slovakia – and covers mining technology and science and the education of mining specialists.



LATE GOTHIC STATUE OF ST. CATHERINE

The former Mining Court ⑩ (Berggericht, Hellenbach's house – (for more details see 7 *Banská Štiavnica Residents*) on Holy Trinity Square now houses a mineralogical exhibition, which includes rare minerals from Slovakia and the world. The basis of



APPROACH AND ENTRANCE TO THE NEW CASTLE

the collection are minerals from the Banská Štiavnica area which demonstrate the global importance of Banská Štiavnica from a mineralogical standpoint.

In two reconstructed burgher's houses on the same square, we can immerse ourselves in the tranquillity and beauty of the exhibits at the Jozef Kollár Gallery 11 (in the section – 7 *Banská Štiavnica Residents*). On show here are works created in the region from the 13th century to the 20th century. The Late Gothic statues of St. Barbora and St. Catharine, which probably came

from St. Catherine's Church are the pièces de résistance of the gallery. The museum exhibition – Slovakia in the Period of Turkish Expansion is housed in the New Castle 2, a former part of the defences of the Central Slovak mining towns against the Ottoman forces (see the section – 7 *Banská Štiavnica Landmarks*). The exhibits on display help bring to life the atmosphere during the time of the turbulent period of the Anti-Turkish Wars.

THE SLOVAK MINING MUSEUM – THE OLD CASTLE EXHIBITION

The Old Castle 1 is connected with the very beginnings of museology in Banská Štiavnica. At the end of the 19th century, Mayor Goldbrunner began to collect museum exhibits here and in 1900 the Old Castle was able to open the first Banská Štiavnica museum. It was the beginning of a process which led to today's Slovak Mining Museum. Its first custodian, Vojtech Baker, deserves acknowledgement for his exceptional contribution to building up this museum.

The exhibits on show today to visitors in the halls of the Old Castle, would most certainly be a great surprise to Mr. Goldbrunner. First of

all, however, it is perhaps necessary to see the archaeological exhibition, which displays finds from the oldest historical period of the town and from mining activity in the surrounding area. The comprehensive and impressive exhibition of artistic metalwork documents the close relationship between metalworking and mining. In the chapel, can be found the originals and older copies of the statues from the Baroque Plague Column 6, the grandiose centrepiece of Holy Trinity Square.



VISITORS TO THE FESTIVAL OF ARTS, CRAFTS AND PASTIMES CAN SEE AT FIRST HAND HOW „ŠTIAVNIČKY PIPES“ ARE MADE

The exhibition of shooting targets and historical weapons provides a record of the shooting club of the Banská Štiavnica burghers, established in the 16th century. The collection of 211 targets is one of the most interesting that the Old Castle has to offer. The clay pipes produced in Banská Štiavnica gained international renown. In the pipe exhibition you will find a unique collection of these „štiavničky pipes“ and a complete pipe workshop with the original tools.

In 2002, an interesting exhibition of models of the unique altar attributed to Master MS, whose identity remains veiled in secrecy to this day, was added in the sacristy of the Old Castle. Seasonal exhibitions, for example, in the pre-Christmas period and on other occasions, help create the cultural environment within Banská Štiavnica.

In the summer months, the Old Castle comes to life with a number of cultural events, including concerts and theatre performances, many of which make ingenious use of the romantic backdrop of the historical buildings. Of particular interest is the now well-established Festival of Arts, Crafts and Pastimes. Spectators have the opportunity to watch the master craftsmen at work, who revive the former glory of the old crafts at stalls erected in the courtyard, and to buy original souvenirs and admire the art of the falconers. For the children, there are performances of the ever popular puppet theatre.

The gradual reconstruction of the Old Castle will allow the opening



THE BUILDING IN WHICH THE MINERS GATHERED PRIOR TO THEIR SHIFT, PART OF THE SURFACE EXHIBITION OF THE OPEN AIR MINING MUSEUM (SKANZEN)

of further exhibitions, and visitors can look forward to new surprises from this unique museum complex.

THE SLOVAK MINING MUSEUM – THE OPEN AIR MINING MUSEUM

The Open Air Mining Museum offers the chance to descend into a more than four-hundred-year-old mine and experience for yourself at least something of the very particular atmosphere of the mine.

The first part of the mining “skanzen”, as this museum is popularly known, i.e. the surface and underground exhibition, was opened to the public in 1974. Since that time, it has acquired many unique exhibits, exhibition spaces and added many activities.

The main attraction, however, remains a tour of the underground exhibition of the first two tunnels of the Ondrej shaft. Its winding tower is the centrepiece of the surface exhibition in addition to the mine buildings, machinery and mining equipment. The underground tour is 1,500 m long and follows old mining tunnels from the 17th – 19th century. Tools, equipment and implements used for heavy mining work are displayed in the tunnels. Exploring the mine in cloaks and helmets with built-in torches is an experience in itself.

The tour of the underground exhibition takes around two hours, but it is worth allowing more time for the tour, so that you have to time to take a look at the surface exhibits, for example, the unique mining locomotives or the remnants of the hauling gear. Not far from the Open Air Mining Museum, you will also find the coal mining exhibition, the old powder house, and the mining sawmill and also right next to the museum is the Klinger reservoir.

THE REMAINS OF MINING ACTIVITY ON OLD TOWN HILL

The slopes of the Old Town Hill ²² rise above the northern side of the historical centre of Banská Štiavnica. This hill is presumed to be the first site of mining in this area. This is indicated above all by the remnants of surface ore mining on the south-eastern slopes of the hill. The rich Špitáľer ore vein reached the surface here. With a little imagination, it is easy to imagine the slope shimmering in the sun’s rays, reflected by the minerals scattered in the ore vein, which was twenty metres wide in places. This earned the hill the German name – Glanzenberg. The traditional Slovak name stems from the belief that this was the location of the original settlement of Banská Štiavnica. Archaeological research has not confirmed this, but the very intensive degree of mining activity across all of the Old Town Hill would seem to point to this. Areas where surface mining occurred are marked by ex-



EVIDENCE OF EARLY ORE MINING ON THE SLOPES OF THE OLD TOWN HILL

posed stone walls. Preserved features include the tunnels, chimneys, the large quantities of excavated material, mining tools, the remnants of equipment for determining the quality of ore and smelting furnaces and remnants of the slag. The greater part of the hill was taken up by the fortified residence of the king's chamberlain, who collected the king's tax (*urbura*) from the mine owners, and a storage facility for the ore. Today, the foundations of these features have been restored. Archaeological research is continuing on the remnants of residential and operational buildings lower down the hill. After the exhaustion of the surface parts of the Špitáľer vein, mining operations moved to other locations, and there was also a switch to underground mining.

Today, the Old Town Hill is mostly covered by a wood, and has a special charm for visitors – traces of the work of the early miners of the precious metal ores can be discerned here. Tourists are also attracted by the unique view over the town and its surrounding countryside, indelibly marked by mining activity. The Old Town Hill is crossed by a nature trail – the blue footpath.

THE WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM FOR THE MINES

Finland is known as the land of a thousand lakes and the Banská Štiavnica area is similarly the land of tens of lakes. These lakes, however, are not the gift of nature, the local people had to build them.



THE OTTERGRUND RESERVOIR ON THE SLOPES OF PARADAJZ HILL IS ONE OF THE SMALLEST AND ALSO THE HIGHEST OF THE RESERVOIRS AND ITS DAM GIVES SPLENDID VIEWS OF THE TOWN (SEE ALSO THE SECTION – 7 BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA WALKS)

Mining activity is particularly demanding as regards water consumption. In the 17th century, the shortage of water threatened the closure of the mines. Water was also the chief source of energy to drive the mining machinery and for the pumping equipment in the mines, whilst groundwater in the mines hampered mining operations. Part of the water was removed by the older drainage channels, sunk beneath the mines, but this was a slow and expensive solution. Securing sufficient pumping equipment was thus a matter of life and death to the mining industry in the Banská Štiavnica region. This, of course, meant finding a source of energy to drive the pumps. Water was also essential for the processing of the mined ore.

How could water be acquired in this hilly region though? As early as the 16th century and 17th century, reservoirs were built in the valleys using clay and stone dams. In the 18th century, several tens of reservoirs were built, known in this region as “tajchy” (from the German word *Teich*, fishpond). Water flowed into them from the mining watercourses and from mining tunnels in the higher parts of the Štiavnica Hills. A similarly conceived system of watercourses and tunnels from the reservoirs distributed the water to individual mines.

This truly gigantic project was a success thanks to the technical inventiveness and erudition of local technicians, above all the polymath – Samuel Mikovíni, the mining technician – Matej Kornel Hell (for more details see *7 Banská Štiavnica Residents*) and their colleagues.

With the introduction of the use of steam power, and above all electricity, and the gradual decline of the mining industry in the region, the reservoirs gradually lost their original function. In the 20th century, many became recreational centres for the town. The popularity of the natural swimming pools and facilities as centres of social life has not lasted to the present day, but the chance to swim in the picturesque surroundings attracts hundreds of people to the beaches of the tajchs summer after summer. The largest lakes have tourist centres with accommodation, restaurants and other services. If you prefer a romantic atmosphere and enchanting corners, the area also has several “forgotten” tajchs waiting to be discovered... Walks along the old mining watercourses, ingeniously cut into the terrain with a minimal increase in gradient, are among the most beautiful that the Banská Štiavnica area has to offer the tourist.

The bold technical construction of the lakes, which are harmoniously integrated into the countryside and the fact that almost all of them exceeded their expected life, make the tajchs a unique technical monument that deserves to be recognised as world heritage.

SITNO HILL – A TOURIST PARADISE SHROUDED IN MYTH

Sitno (1,009 m) is the highest point in the Štiavnica Hills and attracts one's attention today, just as it did in prehistoric times. In the early Bronze Age, a Lusatian fort stood on top of Sitno, protected on one side by a massive escarpment, and from the other by sheer cliffs. The medieval stone castle, whose remnants can be seen today on the south-eastern slopes, provided the inhabitants of the surroundings villages with a haven in times of trouble. A sentry on Sitno, lit the beacon to warn of the approach of the Turks, avid for plunder, towards the mining town region. Amongst the myths, with which Sitno is connected, the best known is the legend of the Sitno knights, who sleep in the bowels of the earth below the hill, but will wake to fight for the country at its time of greatest need...

Today, Sitno is a national nature reserve. The most valuable part of the reserve is the surviving ancient woods. There is a unique symbiosis here of thermophilic and temperate species of vegetation, some of which have their most southerly occurrence on the hill. Of particular



THE RUINS OF SITNO CASTLE, CAREFULLY PRESERVED BY ENTHUSIASTIC VOLUNTEERS

interest is the great number of species of rose that grow here – the celebrated specialist, Andrej Kmeť (1841 – 1908), the natural scientist and museologist recorded around 300 different species.

The unmistakable outline of Sitno and the superb panoramic view from the hill has attracted tourists from the very beginnings of tourism in the region. In 1727, the owner of the St. Anton estate – Mikuláš Koháry ordered the construction of an observation tower on the top of Sitno, and the origins of organised tourism, outside the Alps, can be traced to the establishment of the Sitniansky klub in Banská Štiavnica in 1882. Its members marked tourist footpaths on Sitno, maintained upland springs and propagated tourism. The construction of the stone steps leading to the top of the hill and the rebuilding of the observation tower destroyed by fire was the work of a pioneer of tourism in the Hungarian Kingdom – Dr. Edmund Téry (whose name is borne by one of the most beautifully situated mountain lodges in the High Tatras). From the beginning of the 20th century, the vertical cliffs of Sitno have attracted mountaineers and it was one of the first sites of one of the most popular branches of mountaineering – rock climbing.

A network of tourist paths makes Sitno accessible from all points of the compass. We can begin longer walks in Banská Štiavnica and the most beautiful route is the ascent from Počúvadlianske lake. A nature trail leads through the most beautiful corners of this unique area and respects the principles of environmental protection.

Every ascent to Sitno is an unforgettable experience (particularly true of the traditional New Year ascent).

THE ST. ANTON MANOR HOUSE

Historical heritage and the tradition of hunting and natural science come together in this impressive manor house and surrounding park and thousands of visitors are drawn to St. Anton year after year. The manor house, which stands in the village about 3 km to the south of Banská Štiavnica, was built at the beginning of the 18th century for the owners of the Sitno estate an old noble family – the Koháry. In 1826, one of the daughters of the last male heirs of the family married Ferdinand Juraj Coburg from Saxony. The last of the Coburgs to live in the manor house was the multi-talented Ferdinand Coburg, from

1908 – 1918, Bulgarian Tsar. This was a culmination of the fortunate tradition that the St. Anton manor house always belonged to an enlightened, erudite and healthily ambitious owner. Generation after generation skillfully increased the family assets, and built and furnished the family seat with refined taste to mirror their diverse interests. The rooms of the manor house enchant the visitor with the diversity of furniture, decorative and artistic craft styles. No other similar building in Slovakia has such a well-preserved original interior. Of particular interest is, for example, the suite of furniture gilded with 24-carat gold, which the Empress Maria Theresa gave as a wedding gift to her ill-fated daughter Marie Antoinette.

The manor house's chapel is decorated by frescos from 1750 by the court painter for the Central Slovak mining towns – Anton Schmidt. Their bright colours give the impression that they were only painted recently, even though the frescos have not as yet been restored.

A passion for hunting was a part of the life of all the owners of the Sitno estate. The extensive forests around Sitno gave them an ideal opportunity to practice their passion. The trophies originating from Sitno and from other European game reserves, together with artwork with a hunting theme, weapons and other exhibits connected with hunting became the basis of the extensive hunting collection at the St. Anton manor house. The hunting tradition is brought to life by the annual Saint Hubert's Day festival. Its participants compete in deer luring, archery contests and percussive gun competitions. Other attractions include Hubert's Ride, fishing competitions in the manor house lake, as well as falconry and hunting dog displays.

The seven recommendations that we have presented only represent a fraction of the sights of interest to tourists in and around Banská Štiavnica. Others include the renowned curative spa town – Dudince (about 40 km to the South), and the smaller and closer spas at Vyhne (about 10 km to the NorthWest) and Sklené Teplice (about 10 km to the North). The first of these already has its golden age behind it, whereas at the second you can experience the beneficial effects of thermal mineral water in the town and in the Parenica cave.

7 BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA LEGENDS

OF ŠTIAVNICA LIZARDS

A long, long time ago, when everything looked different, but the Štiavnica hills and valleys already had their familiar shape, a shepherd, it is said, was dozing half asleep in the sun next to his sheep on the slopes of today's Old Town Hill 22. Suddenly, something sparkling caught his eye and he just had time to catch sight of two lizards – the back of one glittered with gold, the other with a silver dust. They hid from him under a boulder. The shepherd rolled the boulder aside and to his surprise he found beneath the boulder a nugget of gold...

This fortuitous accident changed the life of the poor shepherd and, as legend would have it, it was also the beginning of the Štiavnica mining industry. And as a consequence, the lizards were included in the older coat of arms of our town, which today is a shield with the town walls and mining tools. And so at the head of the so-called salamander parade, a traditional festival held every year in our town, a shepherd walks with a salamander in his arms... The hill, whose slopes perhaps shone in the sun where the ore vein reached the surface, was named Glanzenberg – Shining Hill, by the German miners who were sett-



SHEPHERD WITH LIZARD AT THE HEAD OF THE TRADITIONAL SALAMANDER PARADE

led in this region by the king. It is very likely that the first mining operations did indeed begin here. Evidence for this is provided, not only by today's name for the hill – Old Town, but also by the remnants of mining activity and buildings which archaeologists have uncovered here (see also the section – *7 Recommendations*).

OF THE BEAUTIFUL BARBORA RÖSSELOVÁ

Erazmus Rössel was an important man. He was one of the wealthiest of the Štiavnica mine owners – the Waldbürgers and Rinbürgers, mining entrepreneurs and businessmen who owned houses on the main square. He was twice elected as town magistrate (*richtár*) and then went on to be the chamberlain. In addition to mines and houses, he also owned mills, breweries, and fields all around the town. The Church of the Virgin Mary of the Snows 5, also known as the Frauenberg church, was built at his instigation and his name is also commemorated by the town quarters of Horná and Dolná Resla.

Good fortune, however, deserted Erazmus' son – Vavrínek. His fortune was greatly reduced after he had to pay a share to his brother's widow. Difficult times came – dark clouds gathered above the mining business and trade in the Hungarian Kingdom. The Ottoman Turks advanced close to the Central Slovak mining towns from the South... And then fate took a cruel turn: Vavrínek owned a mine in nearby Štiavnicé Bane which was in such close proximity to the mines of



RESLA – A QUARTER OF MINING HOUSES, IN THE FOREGROUND – THE FRAUENBERG CHURCH

two other burghers that they had to share shafts and connecting tunnels. And the miners working the neighbouring mines began to take ore from Vavrínek's mine. And, indeed, they carried off a good quantity. When the truth came to light, a long feud over compensation broke out. Vavrínek had the worse of it and, after his death, the king decided against the Rössel's. Expensive gifts supplied to Vienna by Vavrínek's opponents were said to have played their part...

At that time in Štiavnica people spoke of little else, but Vavrínek's daughter – Barbora. She was beautiful, educated, single and as yet still rich. And so, little wonder, that many suitors took a close interest, as did, of course, the envious and the rumourmongers. When the conversation turned to Barbora, there was little need to embroider the truth, for the young lady lived a dissolute life. Legend has it that she favoured revels and feasts with young Štiavničans and that, fortified by wine, the guests at her revels behaved in riotous fashion. Indeed some even committed crimes. And so, it is said, several of Barbora's admirers were hung in front of her eyes on the hill where the New Castle stands today. This she found most disagreeable and so she begged the City Fathers to take down the gallows, promising to build a beautiful castle in its place.

And the legend does not end there: proud Barbora did not learn the error of her ways. Once, after she had celebrated a hunt with a great feast somewhere near the river Hron, she received a letter from her uncle – the Abbot of Kremnica. The letter admonished her and warned her of a divine and worldly punishment. Barbora grew angry, pulled a ring from her finger and hurled it into the river with the words that she would be poor and respectable when this ring returned to her... And then haughty Barbora gave another celebrated feast. The cook was preparing a fish for the banquet and to his surprise he found in its innards a golden ring. The cook, little knowing, placed the ring in the fish's jaws to please his mistress, only far from pleasing her, at the sight of the ring she fainted. She knew what would follow! She accepted her fate, and soon she had lost everything and was reduced to begging. They buried her by the walls of the unfinished castle, but the walls were struck by lightning and the castle was completely destroyed, save for the tower which is known today as the New Castle and also as Maiden's Castle...

And there ends the legend. History, however, confirms that Barbora

Rösselová did (1575) indeed die indebted and poverty stricken. She was buried in the Church of the Virgin Mary of the Snows.

(AFTER RUDOLF POKORNÝ AND M. M. HÚSKA)

OF THE MYSTICAL ANCESTOR OF THE CELTS

Perhaps, the first miners in the Štiavnica Hills were the Celts from the Kotin tribe, who were skilled smiths and craftsman. Around 2,000 to 2,200 years ago, they came in search of and mined precious metals and minted their coins from Štiavnica silver. Indeed, they are also our ancestors and in addition to the heritage of the Old Slavs and other tribes and nations who settled on Slovak territory, we also have a Celtic heritage within us. Perhaps, it is also hidden at the heart of the legends, which have survived from ancient times in our region... One of these tells of a man known as Finn Holdubrix, which would have meant in the Celtic language “salt”, “water” and “king”.

This healer and spa master was raised, legend tells, by Scottish Benedictines and learnt much from the Templars. According to the custom of the time, after finishing his studies he set out on a trip to the Holy Land and on his return he decided to live the hermit's life. Holdubrix was considered to be a man with exceptional abilities and a secret spiritual power. He used his abilities for healing. Somewhere on the Old Town Hill, he built a spa, which was dedicated to the care of miners broken by work underground. They bathed here in mineral water and in a salvia decoction and a curative mud was applied. Their wounds were washed in wine and vinegar, so that all the scars to their body and to their souls healed.

It is said that on his travels he also found isker, the plant of immortality, and kimla-kima juice, with which base metal could be transformed into precious metal. And so, it is said, there were those who would rob him of these treasures. One night, they set upon him in his house and tortured him to wring from him their hiding place. Holdubrix, in his suffering, passed away, but his torturers learnt nothing. After his death, many are said to have searched for the secret records of the hermit, but in vain.

(BY PAVEL BALŽANKA FROM THE WORK OF JOZEF GINDL)

OF THE MONK ON THE DAM OF THE VEĽKÁ VODÁRENSKÁ RESERVOIR

On the dams of the reservoirs around Banská Štiavnica (known as tajchs) stand wooden huts. Hidden away in them is the machinery for regulating the discharge of water from the reservoir. From time immemorial, they have been known as “monks”. And legend tells of how they came to have this name.

Long ago, when the dam of Veľká vodárenská reservoir (incidentally the oldest of all the reservoirs) was being built, no one was certain if the dam would be able to withhold the enormous pressure of the water. It was not only the miners who were afraid, as they piled up the high bank of rocks and loamy clay with sweat on their faces, but the town's City Fathers also had their doubts. And as the dam grew higher and higher, even the architect himself the celebrated expert – Darumini, who had been commissioned from Rome, grew less certain as he walked along the dam day after day...

Finally the dam was completed and they became to fill the reservoir. Everything seemed to be in order, the dam held, and everyone was relieved. They congratulated the architect, and the dignitaries went back to town in an elated mood and at the Town Hall, naturally, the celebrations began. The wine, it is said, flowed like a river, and so it was no wonder that no one heard the miner beating on the Town Hall doors despairingly at midnight. After a long time, a servant opened the door and the exhausted man gasped the ill tidings: “Water, water, the dam is leaking...!”

The guests froze. The Italian, at once sober, raced up the hill. It was true – water was leaking from the dam and running down the hill toward the town. The danger was clear – if the leak increased, the dam might break. In the morning, when they had discharged the water, the architect examined his dam metre by metre, but he couldn't find a single crack in it. In town, rumours immediately began to spread of a curse of mining ghosts, work on the other tajchs was stopped and fear reigned in Štiavnica. The unfortunate Darumini, pale and exhausted, walked along the dam and checked the water tightness of the beaten down clay and rocks perhaps a thousand times, but he found nothing. In despair, he packed his bags and returned home. Not long

after, he returned gloomier than ever. The Town Council were stunned by his proposal: "This dam, and all the others too, will be strong and impermeable only after we wall someone up alive in it!" The City Fathers were utterly shocked – whoever heard of walling up someone alive, and what was more, who would consent to such a thing? The stormy meeting continued until morning and after daybreak the architect's proposal filtered out to the burghers. Hatred of foreigners, which was already strong, boiled over. Time passed, however, and the dams remained unfinished. One day, the Abbot of the Dominican monastery knocked on Darumini's door and divulged to him that a monk named František had come on a pilgrimage to the monastery, and this unfortunate man wanted to atone for his sins. He was willing to be walled up in the dam... The Italian was lost for words, but after a moment's thought he silently nodded his agreement. The next day,



everyone who was able, came to the tajch to watch. The abbot blessed František the monk and then he slowly disappeared under layers of clay. No one slept that night – the tajch was filled and everyone waited to see what would happen. There were no more leaks. The dam held and it still holds today. The unfortunate monk František is remembered by the wooden hut on top of the dam.

(FROM A LEGEND COLLECTED
BY SOŇA LUŽINOVÁ)

OF THE ORIGINS OF THE ŠTIAVNICA CALVARY

The hill on which the Štiavnica Calvary (see the section – 7 *Banská Štiavnica Landmarks*)

stands, juts out from the surrounding countryside so steeply that it received the apposite name – Scharffenberg (Sharp Hill). Nothing worthwhile grew on the hill, only shrubs and thistle patches. And so the wealthy mine owner – Leopold Ondrej Fritz from Friedenlieb was more than surprised when he received a visit from Father František Perger from the Štiavnica Jesuit monastery who requested that he sell him Scharffenberg.

That a Jesuit would pay a visit to one of Štiavnica's leading Protestants, was strange enough to Fritz, but the Father's request seemed to him unfathomable. For what did he want something so worthless? He proposed to the priest that he buy the surrounding meadows and fields instead. The priest, however, would not be swayed, and so they parted company without agreement.

A week later, Father Perger again paid a visit. Once again the Jesuit would not reveal his reason for wanting the rocky worthless hill, although Fritz pressed him for his motive. So once again they parted without agreement.

After a time, Father Perger made a third attempt. At last, he agreed to reveal his intentions – he wanted to build a Calvary on Scharffenberg Hill. Fritz, after a moment's reflection, it is said, shook the priest's hand and told him that for such a purpose he would not sell Scharffenberg, but rather would make a gift of it to the Catholic Church, let it belong to the Church "while it serves the glory of God".

The legend of Fritz from Friedenlieb and Father Perger concludes with these words: "...a Protestant gave the foundation and the Jesuit began to build there Banská Štiavnica's most beautiful jewel."

(FROM THE BOOK – ŠTIAVNICKÁ KALVÁRIA
BY ARPÁD HIDVÉGHY)



THE UNIQUE CALVARY WAS BUILT BY FATHER PERGER ON TOP OF SCHARFFENBERG HILL

OF THE CLEVER LITTLE CHEST OF MISS CHARITAS

The Slovak Church (St. Catherine's Church) 3 was once graced by beautiful silver candleholders. But it shouldn't have been, as Emperor František I, preparing for war against the French, needed money and he had ordered all articles of gold and silver to be collected up. They were to be melted down and the metal used to mint coins. The candleholders, however, were saved thanks to a rich and virtuous maid, named appropriately - Charitas. It is said, the candleholders were already upon the scales, when she offered to buy them for their weight in silver coins. And so they were returned to where they belonged.



St. CATHERINE'S CHURCH

Legend tells that Charitas was not the most beautiful, and she was no longer young, but even so her riches attracted „enterprising men, who put a good house before a pretty face“. The old maid, however, immediately saw what these suitors for her hand were attracted to. When a suitor came to call, she would say nothing to him, but rather she went over to the chest, where she kept her money, and knocked on it: “They have come to ask you if you want to marry, my little chest, will you go?” She would put her ear to the chest and listen carefully. Then she would tell the suitor: “No, no she doesn't want to marry.” There was nothing left for the suitor to do but to leave embarrassed.

OF LOVE WITH A ROMANTIC BEGINNING AND A REALISTIC END

The Slovak students of the Banská Štiavnica Evangelical lyceum were never the most solvent and their young stomachs more often experienced hunger than surfeit. One of the ways by which they were ab-

le to earn at least a little money was to give lessons to the children of the Štiavnica burgher families. It was no different for nineteen-year-old Andrej Braxatoris from Krupina, who returned to Štiavnica in 1839 after a yearlong attempt to improve his financial situation by teaching. This clever and lively young man became the heart and soul of a group of Slovak students and word quickly spread amongst the young ladies of Štiavnica that he was also a gifted poet. An older friend recommended him as tutor to the two sons of Pischl the tanner. Mrs. Pischl welcomed Slovak students, for they allowed her to open a reading room in her house at the lower end of Holy Trinity Square 13 in a room with its windows facing the square. Andrej had, therefore, plenty of opportunities to meet with the charming twenty-year-old Marína, the sister of one of his pupils. And indeed, what else - romantic love in beautiful Štiavnica was not long in coming. When Andrej left to continue his studies in Bratislava, he carried with him in his heart a picture of a beloved young woman and the promise that they would be faithful... But, how could he balance his love for Marína with his love for his nation and his work for it? For the young romantic Slovak acolytes of the charismatic leader - Ľudovít Štúr placed this above everything and, thus, also above the love for a woman. In the end, the young poet, who published his verse under the name - Andrej Sládkovič, decided to go his own way: as he wrote - to love his cherished homeland in beloved Marína, and beloved Marína in his beautiful homeland “and embrace the both as one!”.

In the harsh realities of everyday life, however, romantic love only rarely attains its fulfilment. Andrej found this out after returning from the German town of Halle, where he studied to be a priest. Marína wanted to exchange vows, but her mother had other ideas. For what kind of match was a poor evangelical priest? And so Marína had to marry Gerža - a respectable gingerbread baker.



THE LATE 18TH CENTURY EVANGELICAL CHURCH

The ephemeral tale of Andrej and Marína was, thus, over even before it could reach fruition. Marína was swallowed up by the life of a mother and burgher's wife. She cared for her children, and suffered the loss of her daughter, became widowed and the close of her life can best be summed up by her own words "... my soul pains me". Andrej, whose poetic lyre sounded ever more mellifluous, could only send her the manuscript of his poem entitled – Marína. And, thus, the fruit of their love became this work, one of Slovak literature's most beautiful love poems of all time. Andrej Sládkovič is buried at the Evangelical cemetery in Banská Štiavnica 15.

(AFTER MILAN VARSÍK)

There are naturally many legends from Banská Štiavnica's past, and their number would be further increased if we also included the stories connected with the Banská Štiavnica figure of Nácko. The miner Nácko and his companion Hancko have been part of the local oral tradition since time immemorial. They embody a part of the Štiavnica genius loci. In short, the vision of this good-natured caricature reflects the worldview of the ordinary folk of Štiavnica and Hodruša with his ideas for solutions to both big and small problems. Nácko is cunning, or rather he believes that he is cunning, he is proud to be a miner and he is macho, but in a tight corner he prefers to take the easy way out....And he definitely isn't one to start a fight. He likes nothing better than to cheat the oreman, and he would rather avoid the strict gaze of his Léna in the corners of the mining inn, sometimes he is envious but he always finds a peaceful solution. Banská Štiavnica's Nácko has been played with success for many years by Jozef Osvald (see picture).



7 FAMOUS BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA RESIDENTS

THE LITERARY MAN WHO SERVED THE EMPEROR

Rubigall's house, with its impressive portal, in the lower part of Holy Trinity Square 12 was owned by Pavol Rothan an acclaimed humanistic poet and an equally successful mining businessman. He was better known by his latinized name – Rubigallus.

He was born in Kremnica (*around 1510). He was one of the first students from the

Hungarian Kingdom to study at Wittenberg University, where he studied under Filip Melancthon. A central theme ran like a thread through all the public and literary activity of Pavol Rubigall – fear for his homeland and for Europe from the growing threat of Ottoman expansion. Although a Protestant (in 1547 and 1548 he participated in the Augsburg Diet), in these matters he was at one with the Catholic Emperor. Not only did he take part in the Anti-Turkish Wars and the organisation of the defence of the country, but he also provided the court with a substantial loan for the prosecution of the war. Emperor Maximilian II appointed him as his advisor and in the last year of his life (1577) he became the mining commissar in Štiavnica. In 1537, whilst still a student at Wittenberg, his first poetic work was published – *Querela Pannoniae ad Germaniam* (Entreaty of Pannonia to Germany), an impassioned clarion call to the German states to help defend the Hungarian Kingdom from the Ottomans (in 1545 he wrote another verse letter with a similar call to arms). Rubigall's poem *Hodoeporicon itineris Constantinopolitani* (A description of a journey to Constantinople) was the first travel work



THE RUBIGALL'S COAT OF ARMS ON THE PORTAL OF THEIR HOUSE

from our older literature and the source of much interesting information on the countries through which the author travelled as a member of a delegation of Hungarian magnates. Virgil's *Bucolics* inspired the Štiavnica humanist to write the idyll – *Satyriuscus*. In addition to his literary works, also worthy of mention is the part Rubigall played in the creation of the new mining code of Emperor Maximilian II, which unified mining law.

DOCTOR, BUSINESSMAN AND POLITICIAN

The house of renowned Štiavnica resident Ján Gottfried Hellenbach stands on Holy Trinity Square and later housed the Mining Court (Berggericht 10, see the section – 7 recommendations...) and is today one of the museum buildings. He was born in 1659 and studied medicine at Wittenberg University and brought honour to his alma mater by tending to the Emperor Leopold I himself. The property with which the sovereign rewarded the services of Doctor Hellenbach increased his inherited fortune and provided the basis for his subsequent successful business activities. In the meantime, he also found time to befriend, and offer his services as a doctor to the main opponent of the Vienna court and the leader of the anti-Hapsburg rebellion of the Hungarian magnates – František Rakoci II. Thanks to his protector, in 1703 he became the administrator of three Central Slovak mining chambers, mines, mining towns, and the Kremnica mint. This proved to be a most difficult function. Rakoci required money, a great deal of



THE YELLOW HOUSE OF BARON HELLENBACH TODAY HOUSES THE MUSEUM'S MINERALOGY EXHIBITION

money, and Baron Hellenbach minted him coins in Kremnica by the thousand...But what coins! These were the notorious "libertás" (from Latin *libertas* – freedom) which bought almost nothing. In the mining towns and settlements the people starved. And when the miners were driven to rebellion by their poverty, Doctor Hellenbach forgot his Hippocratic oath and had the insurrection bloodily suppressed. After Rakoci's uprising was put down, Hellenbach was forced to emigrate to Poland and returned after the amnesty of 1711. His mining business prospered and Baron Hellenbach quietly lived out his days in his birthplace and lived to be almost seventy.

THE SAVIOUR OF BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA MINING

The chief engineer of the Banská Štiavnica mining chamber, Matej Kornel Hell, contributed a great deal to saving the mining business in Banská Štiavnica region. He did it using two of his talents – technical creativity and bravery. He was a man who could support his ideas with convincing statements and defend them against the power of the authority.

It is assumed that Matej Kornel Hell (1651 – 1743) was born in Horný Slavkov, Bohemia (though Kremnica as his birthplace cannot be excluded from consideration either). He came to Banská Štiavnica as a specialist for building pumping machines for mines around the year 1693. In the Štiavnica mining region his name is most closely connected with the centuries old battle of miners against water and for water. Groundwater in the mines was such a serious problem for the miners of precious metals that it threatened to end mining in the region. And so it was of utmost importance to perfect a method to remove the water from the mines. Chief Engineer Hell built three powerful pumping machines with lever gears (known as štangenkusty). They were driven by a waterwheel which Hell perfected. He also improved the construction of other mining equipment. The history, however, especially appreciates the complexity of Hell's approach to the problem of water in mines, mainly because there were two sides of this problem – on one hand, the mines suffered from excessive groundwater, on the other hand, there was a lack of water to power the machines and process of the ore. Matej Kornel Hell and the carto-

grapher Samuel Mikovíni designed and built a original system of artificial reservoirs, known as the Banská Štiavnica tajchs (see the section – 7 recommendations...). The water retained in these valley reservoirs was distributed to lower situated shafts and its power was used to work the water wheels of the pumping machines. After completing this work, the same water was reused for processing of the exploited ore.

During the Rákoczi's uprising, the mines were predestined to extinct – the deeper parts were flooded, and General Berčeni even wanted to destroy the surface mining equipment in Vindšachta (current Štiavnické Bane). Hell, however, convinced him that he is able to pump the groundwater from mines, using his pumping machines, and resume the ore exploitation. Later, when the Royal Chamber in Vienna decided that they will not invest to saving of the Štiavnica mines anymore, Hell was again successful in his efforts and the ruler himself supported his water-pumping plans. It was paid off – Hell's technical improvements saved annually several thousands of florens to the mining chamber.

When speaking about Matej Kornel Hell, we must not forget to mention his two talented sons. The elder son – Jozef Karol (1713 – 1789) inherited his father's technical gifts, the function of chief mining engineer and also the task of making the pumping of water from the mines more efficient. And it was in this area that he became celebrated thanks to the original machinery he designed. First, he built a beam pump and in 1749 a very powerful water column pump, which allowed a far more efficient use of waterpower. The water column pumps were able for many years to match steam engines for efficiency and reliability. Jozef Karol Hell did not rest on his laurels and also constructed a pneumatic pump, which was used where it was not possible to supply water.

Maximilián Hell (1720 – 1790) became an astronomer at Trnava University, where he built an astronomical observatory. He published the astronomical almanac – Ephemerides, in addition to other scientific work. From 1768 – 1770, he undertook a scientific expedition to the island of Vardø in the North Sea at the invitation of the Danish king – Kristian VII. Hell was accepted as a member of scholarly societies in London, Paris, Stockholm and Copenhagen. One of the craters of the Moon was named after this famous son of Štiavnica.

A MAN OF THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENT



MIKOVÍNI'S HOUSE WITH COMMERMORATIVE
PLAQUE

The modest commemorative plaque on the house at No. 10 Andrej Kmet Street 17 states that in this house the mathematician and cartographer Samuel Mikovíni taught his pupils. He was the creator of many detailed maps and realistic illustrations.

The best known of which are those used by the polymath Matej Bel in his work – Notitia Hungariae novae historico-geographica.

Samuel Mikovíni was born in Cinobaňa-Turíčky (*1686). He studied first in Nuremberg as an engraver, and then studied mathematics in Altdorf and Jena, and cartography in Vienna. He came to Banská Štiavnica at the age of almost fifty with the reputation of a multi-talented scholar and a mathematician par excellence. In the maps that he created he made use of his own cartographic method. He was also, however, a typical technician, a man of action and a good organizer. This was notably demonstrated by the dams he designed and the regulation of the flow of the rivers Danube and Váh that he undertook. The Empress Maria Theresa entrusted him with the planning of the new royal palace at Buda. In Banská Štiavnica, he initially created maps and plans for the Mining Chamber. In 1735, he established the Mining School, the first higher technical school in Slovakia where he taught mathematics, physics and mining surveying. He placed great emphasis on his pupils, mining interns, receiving the opportunity to apply their knowledge in practice. He continued to produce mining maps and perfected a method of mining surveying, and assisted in the planning of technical construction projects for the mines, for example, the system of water reservoirs.

As an engineer working for the Mining Chamber, Samuel Mikovíni also participated in a number of projects relating to water regulation. He died

in 1750, when returning to Banská Štiavnica from surveying work near Trenčín. Few people are aware, he was also a member of the Prussian Academy of Science in Berlin and that from 1950 the Hungarian Mining and Metallurgical Company awarded a medal bearing his name.

A CAMPAIGNER AGAINST MINING ILLNESSES

From 1873, MUDr. Imrich Tóth worked in Banská Štiavnica. He was born in the Hungarian town of Ságvár (*1844), and lived in Banská Štiavnica until his death in 1928. Without exaggeration, it can be said that this Hungarian doctor unselfishly devoted all of these years predominantly to the Slovak miners as a mining doctor and also as an internationally acclaimed researcher of typical mining illnesses. Working underground took a terrible toll on the health of the miners of these times. They suffered, for example, from ancylostomiasis, an intestinal illness caused by the hookworm (*Ancylostoma duodenale*), and they were also struck down by lead poisoning and of course tuberculosis. All this was further exacerbated by widespread alcoholism. Doctor Tóth made a detailed investigation of the symptoms of these diseases, and kept up-to-date with the latest advances within medical science. His work was particularly focussed on identifying the connections between disease and the miner's working conditions. In addition to research, however, he was also an untiring proponent of measures to combat this scourge by improvements to working conditions, hygienic improvements and the removal of the sources of infection in the mines. The Mine Authority was not always willing to compromise, but in the Štiavnica mines he did succeed in gradually eliminating the so-called *bergsucht* (disease of the mountains), which continued to ravage other mining regions. On the other hand, in the fight against lead poisoning, he met with strong resistance from the Mine Authority. As a solution to the poisoning problem, he required to introduce expensive and difficult measures. As a result, they banned him from pursuing his scientific research into mining illnesses. When he proposed a ban on the sale of alcohol in the town, the Town Council were so incensed that they unsuccessfully attempted to bring about the withdrawal of his medical diploma...

FROM THE MODERNISATION OF THE MINES TO THE HISTORY OF THE MINING INDUSTRY

The name Anton Péch can be met with in Banská Štiavnica at least twice. For example, he is commemorated by Ulica Antona Pécha (Anton Péch Street), on which the building known as the Old Hospital stands (noteworthy murals were recently uncovered in this building). Opposite this building is the Scout's House - a centre for Slovak scouts. And you can also find his name in Štiavnica at the Panský Cintorín (Noble's Cemetery), where he is buried (†1895) 16. His name is also closely connected with the extensive modernisation of the mining industry in Štiavnica in the second half of the 19th century. And he proved to be the saviour of mining in the area - as mining director he understood when the price of silver fell that new business opportunities had to be found and his proposal to concentrate on the mining of lead and zinc ores proved correct.

Anton Péch was born in Romania in the town of Oradea in 1822. He came to know the steep roads and paths of Štiavnica as a sixteen-year-old student at the Mining Academy. In 1844, he became the head of the mine works in the Banská Štiavnica mining region. Later, he had the chance to gain valuable experience across the whole of the Hapsburg Empire. From 1873, he put this experience to good use - for 26 years he was the mining executive in Banská Štiavnica. He participated in the construction of drills and drilling carts, invented a winding cage mechanism, and developed a new method for producing mining maps, which was later used beyond the borders of the Hungarian Kingdom. He also collected material on the history of the mining industry in Central Slovakia. In 1879, he was elected as a corresponding member of the Academy of Science of the Hungarian Kingdom.

THE PAINTER OF THE ŠTIAVNICA COUNTRYSIDE

In the history of Slovak art, Banská Štiavnica is closely linked with the painter - Jozef Kollár. He was born and lived his entire life here (1899 - 1982), with the exception of his student years, and captured Štiavnica and its surroundings in original fashion in his extensive



WINTER MARKET IN BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA, OILS – JOZEF KOLLÁR, 1936

work. Older Štiavnica residents will be glad to show you the garden and house high above the town, where this individualistic artist lived and worked. A large number of his works can be seen at the Jozef Kollár Gallery (see section – 7 recommendations...).

The town and the Štiavnica countryside were the chief inspiration for Kollár's pictures – the town from various perspectives, the character of its streets, scenes from the markets; orchards in spring, autumn and winter. At times, captured in severe, even saturnine tones, at other times drenched in sunlight...

From the pleiad of prominent figures of science, technology and culture who were born, studied or worked in Banská Štiavnica, let us also remember a few more – the Slovak dramatist from the humanist period – Pavol Kyrmezer, from the 19th century the professors of the Evangelical Lyceum – Daniel Lichard and Samuel Ormis, the Slovak poet – Andrej Sládkovič (see the section – 7 legends...), the Hungarian poet Sándor Petőfi and the essayist – Kálmán Mikszáth; from the 20th century the writers Jozef Horák and Anton Hykisch, the painters Jaroslav Auğusta and Edmund Gwerk... Dežo Hoffmann, the famous photographer of the Beatles was also born here, and in the laboratories of the industrial school the Czech Nobel Prize winner for Chemistry, Jaroslav Heyrovský, undertook his research...

7 BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA WONDERS

The ancient world had its seven wonders. Banská Štiavnica has even more, though, if the truth be told, these wonders have Štiavnica dimensions and a Štiavnica character. The visitor to our town would, however, be the poorer if he didn't learn something of these wonders...

IN ŠTIAVNICA SNOW FALLS EVERY YEAR ON ST. PETER AND PAUL

This sentence will undoubtedly create surprise regarding the climatic anomalies in Štiavnica. As the saint's day of Peter and Paul marks the end of the school year and the beginning of summer, the hottest time of the year! If, however, someone were to make a bet that it is not true, he would most certainly lose. As this matter relates not to the saint's day of these saints, but rather their statues on the facade of the parish church – the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary ④ (for Štiavnica residents – the German Church). When it snows, the snow falls on them too and wraps them in an attractive cloak. There can be no doubt then, that here in Štiavnica, snow falls on St. Peter and Paul every year.

THE MYSTERIOUS HANDS OF THE TOWN HALL CLOCK



Anyone who would wish to know the exact time from the Štiavnica Town Hall clock, can expect a surprise. It will show the onlooker a time that will be very different to that which he expected. After receiving the explanation that the clock's hands have been installed in an opposite manner to other clocks, and thus the big hand marks the hours and the small hand the minutes, the confused foreigner can breath a sigh of relief. It is only one of the Štiavnica wonders. It came about during the renovation of the Town Hall in the 18th century

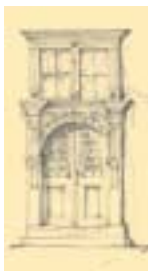
and a number of explanations for it exist. According to one, the clock master came from a land where such an installation of the hands was the norm. According to another, the hands were installed by the master's apprentice and, watched over by the severe town councillors, and conscious of the weight of his responsibility, he simply got the hands mixed up. The error was not noticed until the clock makers had left town... Well, there is one further version: the town councillors were of the opinion that an hour is longer than a minute and so warranted the longer hand. And one last version – when the clock was inspected, they had drunk more than usual and nobody noticed...

THE GOAT TETHERED TO THE CHIMNEY

Goats used to be widely kept in the poorer parts of Štiavnica. The goat is known for its voracious appetite, but it will eat almost anything. You need only tether it somewhere in the garden and it will thrive on the very slightest of vegetation. However, the gardens in Štiavnica are very steep and are sometimes located at the same level as the roofs of the mining houses. The owner of such a house was able without difficulty to tether his goat to the chimney – he didn't need a stake and he didn't need to worry that his goat would eat the neighbour's grass.

UPPER STORIES AND GROUND FLOORS CHANGED PLACES

Banská Štiavnica houses are built into an unbelievably hilly terrain. So, sometimes it happens that we enter a house from the road or path by the first or second floor and then descend the stairs to reach the ground floor. Should you be in doubt, you can check this wonder for yourself in the heart of the town. The ground floor of the back of Oberaigner's house on Holy Trinity Square is reached via the first floor entrance on Starozámocká Street 19 with its beautiful portal decorated by vine leaf and grape motifs. From Holy Trinity Square, you enter the ground floor of the front of the house.



THE ENTRANCE TO
OBERAIGNER'S HOUSE

WHEN WATER FLOWED ACROSS THE BRIDGE

Bridges are built around the world to allow people to cross rivers and brooks. In Štiavnica, the reverse was true – the water flowed across the bridge, the people and the carts went under the bridge. In the past, an aqueduct was built in Kysihýbel above the road to Banský Studenec (Kolpachy), along which water flowed from Banský Studenec to Štiavnica. And thus another Štiavnica wonder was born. The aqueduct, which is today dry, can be seen on the left side of the road to Banský Studenec.

THE BULL IN THE CHIMNEY

Is there a chimney anywhere in the world that a bull could fit into? In Štiavnica, the answer is yes. It is not, however, a chimney on the roof of a house. "Chimney" is also the name given to the ventilation shafts of the mines. And once, when a bull grazing in a meadow fell into such a chimney, he had to spend the night in a six metre deep hole. The bull, unable to scramble out, had to be rescued by the mine rescue workers.

ONE MORE "CLOCK" WONDER IN BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA

The view from the New Castle gave early notice of the approach of uninvited guests. A tower sentry, with a blast on his horn every quarter of an hour, gave notice that he was on guard and the town was not under threat. And thus the tradition of the Štiavnica live clock was born. In our time, this tradition was revived and until recently the sound of the horn resounded from the New Castle every fifteen minutes. This proved a great attraction for visitors to our town, and for Štiavnica residents a reminder of how quickly time flies...

(THE SOURCE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL TEXTS ON THESE PHENOMENA IS THE PUBLICATION –
**ŠTIAVNICKÉ DIVY (ŠTIAVNICA WONDERS), 1998 BY MARIÁN
LICHNER AND IGOR LACKOVIČ.**

7 BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA

CULINARY SPECIALITIES

Traditional Štiavnica food was simple, used basic ingredients and was easy to prepare. The form in which we know it today stems from the cooking practices in mining households, evidently seasoned by the remnants of the culinary legacy of Štiavnica burgher households. These are dishes typical for the wider Banská Štiavnica area and various variants exist. We hope that, should you prepare some of our dishes according to these recipes, they will remind you of your time in Banská Štiavnica.

ŠTIAVNICA TROKŠIAR

500 g fine-grained flour, 175 g butter, 2 dl hot milk, 1 egg, 300 – 350 g oškarok (cracknel) (according to how fatty they are), 30 g yeast, a pinch of salt, cumin

Method:

Add the butter, milk, yeast and salt to the flour (we can first make a mixture of hot milk and dough as for classic yeast dough). Knead the dough and allow it to ferment somewhere warm. Roll out the fermented dough on a floured board to a thickness of about 2 cm. Finely mince the cracknel and divide it into three portions. Spread the first portion on the rolled dough and shape the dough into a loaf, and then leave for about 15 minutes. Repeat for the other two portions. Then, roll out the loaf again, place on a greased baking tray, and lightly mark a grid pattern on the loaf with a knife, sprinkle with the cumin and smear with the egg white. Bake in an oven heated to 180 °C. Štiavnica trokšiar are best served hot.

(A RECIPE OF 92-YEAR OLD MRS. MÁRIA OSVALDOVÁ)

ŠTIARC

1 kg potatoes, 300 g of semolina or coarse-grained flour, one large onion, a little fat, salt

Method:

Peel the potatoes and cut into slices and then put them to boil. When they are fairly soft, strain off the water, but remember to put the water aside for later! Mash the potatoes and add the semolina or coarse-grained flour. Thoroughly mix all the ingredients together to form a thick paste. If it is too thick, add the water strained from the potatoes. Boil on a medium flame for 5–10 minutes. Finely slice the onion and fry until golden in the fat. Then add to the paste and mix thoroughly. Serve the štiarc and pour over the fat with the fried onion to taste.

(A RECIPE OF KAROL MELCER)

BUGÁR BEAN SAUCE OR POOR MAN'S BEANS

500 g bugár (large coloured beans), a few potatoes, 1 dl. milk, fine-grained flour, salt, sugar, vinegar

Method:

Wash the beans and soak them in cold water for about ten hours (ideally overnight). There should be just enough water to cover the beans. Boil the beans in the same water in which they were soaked until they are soft. Peel and dice the potatoes into small cubes and add to the beans before they are cooked. When the beans and the potatoes are soft, pour the batter made from the milk and fine-grained flour over them. Boil for a while. Add sugar and vinegar to taste.

(A RECIPE OF KAROL MELCER)

NUDLFANC

Semi-coarse grained flour, ground walnuts, butter, 1 egg, plum jam, salt

Method:

Make a dough from the flour, egg and salt (no water!). Roll out the dough and cut into thick vermicelli, place into boiling water and boil for 4 – 6 minutes. When the vermicelli are soft, pour over the melted butter, sprinkle with the crushed nuts and add the plum jam to taste.

(A RECIPE OF MR. PAVOL BALŽANKA)

BACEKÝCHLE OR BAKER'S SHAME

A dish which Štiavnica bakers prepared from spoilt bread rolls, which could not be sold to their customers.

Bread rolls, sugar, butter, poppy seeds or bryndza (sheep's cheese)

Method:

Cut the rolls into thin slices. Heat the water and sugar to make a syrup and melt the butter into the syrup, (according to the number of cut rolls) and then pour over the rolls. Finally, sprinkle liberally with poppy seed, or with bryndza if you prefer the salty version.

(A RECIPE OF ANTON GREGUSS)

ŠTIAVNICA CAKE

200 g fine-grained flour, 6 eggs, 50 g raisins, 200 g honey, 60 g orange peel, 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda, ground cinnamon, icing sugar

Method:

Heat up the honey and add four egg yolks, the baking soda and the ground cinnamon. Leave the mix aside for half an hour and then add the raisins and the grated orange peel. Whisk six egg whites until stiff,

and fold into the mixture along with the flour. Grease the baking tray well and sprinkle with flour. Place the mixture onto the baking tray and bake for about an hour in a hot oven. Cut the cake on the next day and sprinkle with icing sugar.

(A RECIPE OF KLÁRA JANDOVÁ)

**KRAMPAMPULA
(HOT ALCOHOLIC DRINK)**

1st variant

Real Štiavnica Miner's Krampampula
1 litre of vodka (or pure alcohol), smoked slanina (fatty bacon), granulated sugar

Method:

Cut the slanina into small cubes and fry in a frying pan on a medium flame. When it starts to brown, add the vodka (if you use pure alcohol, dilute it first with two decilitres of boiled water). Add two tablespoons of granulated sugar, mix and then heat until it almost reaches boiling point. Remove from the heat (don't let it boil!). Serve while hot.

2nd variant

Real Štiavnica Krampampula for the Ladies
1/2 litre of rum, 150 g granulated sugar, 125 g butter

Method:

Melt the butter and then add the sugar to make a fine caramel. Add the rum to the caramel when ready and heat until it almost reaches boiling point and then remove from the heat immediately. Serve while hot.

(A RECIPE OF KAROL MELCER)

7 BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA

WALKS AND TRIPS

Our seven ideas for excursions in and around Banská Štiavnica only represent a fraction of the possible excursions, and of the trekking and cycling paths which Banská Štiavnica has to offer its visitors. It is not a detailed guidebook, but rather an initial orientation. With a detailed guidebook and a map you can create your very own combination of trekking experiences

THE BEST OF BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA

Duration – about 3 hours. Undemanding walk around the town, during which you will see and experience everything, in Banská Štiavnica which is worth experiencing and seeing.

The walk begins in Holy Trinity Square. The square is dominated by the monumental Plague Column ⑧, built as an expression of gratitude for the end of the 18th century cholera epidemic. The square is lined by burgher's houses from the 15th and 16th century. Even today, centuries after they were built, their grandeur is an impressive reflection of the wealth of their original owners who were mine owners and merchants – the Waldbürgers and the Ringbürgers. Some of these houses served as public buildings in the past, for example, Hellenbach's House, at the beginning



MINING MASS IN FRONT OF THE STATUES OF THE HOLY TRINITY (PLAGUE COLUMN FROM THE MID-18TH CENTURY)

of the right side of the square, which housed the Mining Court (Berggericht) ⑩. The first house in the left row was formerly a vicarage and later the Forestry Department of the Mining Academy. From the remaining houses, of particular interest is the house of the mine owning family – the Rubigalls ⑫ today houses the Town Information Office. We



DETAILS OF THE ROOF OF KLOPAČKA (RIGHT) AND A VIEW OVER THE SOUTH PART OF THE TOWN AND CALVARY

continue up the square between the grand burgher houses, on the right side building of the Evangelical Lyceum ⑳. Above the building of the lyceum we turn to the left onto Starozámocká Street and reach the Old Castle ① (see the section – 7 Banská Štiavnica Landmarks for more details). From the Old Castle, we descend by the steps back to town and turn to the right towards Klopačka (the Clapper). Today, this building houses an inviting tea-room, but in the past the sound of knocking on a wooden board from the tower of Klopačka called the miners to work (which is why it is situated above the town – so the sound was audible across the town). Klopačka was formerly home to the mining credit union, and also housed a prison.

From Klopačka, it is only a few minutes to the Old Castle. Visible from far and wide, it almost seems to hover above the town reassuring the residents that it will protect them from danger, just as it did in the past (for more details see the section – 7 Banská Štiavnica landmarks). From the New Castle, we descend by Novozámocká Street, passing the amphitheatre and at the Special School we turn right onto a narrow footpath, which later turns to the left taking us to the top of a long flight of steps, which will lead us (further on between the houses) to the main road – Andrej Kmeť Street. Such alleys and steps are characteristic of Banská Štiavnica. This incredible web links the streets and lanes creating handy shortcuts and despite their steepness, round every corner you will meet older Štiavnica residents, slowly climbing from step to step, returning from the shops or from

church. And every turn of these enchanting back streets offers us a new view of the town. We continue along the main road down the hill through the town until we reach a fork, where we take the high road. From the statue of the priest and natural scientist – Andrej Kmeť, we get a fine view of the facade of the Kammerhof ⑥ (Chamber Court) – (see the section – *7 Banská Štiavnica Landmarks* for more details).

We continue past the building of the former Catholic Society (and before this a Jesuit monastery) on the right, above the statue of Andrej Kmeť and past the shell of Hell's house ②③ (formerly a relay station for the stagecoach postal service and a coaching inn) until we reach the gate to the upper part of the Botanical Gardens with its unique complex of four buildings of the former Mining and Forestry Academy, the first technical university in the world (see the section – *7 Štiavnica Landmarks* for more details). The Botanical Gardens were established in the 1830s to serve the educational requirements of the forestry science institute. Around 250 different types of tree grow here, both native and exotic. Of particular interest, given the local climate, are the sequoias and cedars. After a tour of the gardens, we exit onto Dolná ružová Street, from where there are superb views of the historical centre of the town and the typical miner's housing on the opposite slopes, we can reflect on our walk as we return along Dolná ružová Street to Holy Trinity Square.

WALK TO KLINGER RESERVOIR

Duration – about 1.5 hours, a relatively undemanding walk through typical Štiavnica hilly countryside.

A trip to the Klinger reservoir has been for many years one of the favourite trips of Štiavnica residents and visitors to the town alike. It offers the chance to appreciate the unique way that the town is integrated into the landscape. We can also take the opportunity to swim and take a pleasant rest by the water.

We begin our trip from Holy Trinity Square. Starting in front of the Town Hall, we cross to Sládkovičová Street and continue up the hill. Above the street on the right is Klopačka ⑦. The street climbs past the former Church of the Virgin Mary of the Snows ⑤ to the last existing remnants of the external fortifications of the town, the renaissance-

baroque Piarg gate ②④. We continue through the gate and climb steeply to the right past the cemetery and then the road levels out and we reach a crossroads (on the right you will see the tennis courts). From the crossroads, we take the red footpath and continue through the woods along the contours to the Klinger reservoir (tajch).

The reservoir was completed in 1759. The water from the reservoir powered the pumps for the Žigmund shaft. Since the beginning of the 20th century, it has been a popular tourist site. In the past, Štiavnica residents took every available opportunity to swim here and make use of the swimming facilities. The lake used to be a water sports centre (at one time national league water polo matches were played here and many top class swimmers from Štiavnica learnt their trade here). Swimming and sunbathing on the banks of the Klinger lake were a central part of the summer of Banská Štiavnica families.

If the goal of our trip wasn't a swim in Klinger lake, we cross the dam and we leave the footpath and take the road. After about half-an-hour's fairly gentle climb along the road, we reach the old mining settlement of Horná Roveň.

After arriving at the outskirts of Horná Roveň, (opposite the fire station) we turn to the right and soon find ourselves on a paved road. Before us stands the abandoned premises of the mining works of the Roveň shaft. The skyline to the right is dominated by the outlines of the three crosses of the Horná Roveň Calvary; which is our goal. We climb towards it along an avenue lined with ancient linden trees and stone blocks, whose weathered surfaces and inscriptions marked the Stations of the Cross.



THE IMPRESSIVE OUTLINE OF THE HORNÁ ROVEŇ CALVARY

The reward for our effort is a superb view of the area which was, in a distant geological age, the Štiavnica stratovolcano. Its activity was responsible for the creation of the ore deposits in this area. To the right, the skyline is dominated by the splendour of the majestic cliffs at Sitno.

RIDGE WALK ČERVENÁ STUDŇA (RED WELL) – RICHŇAVA

Duration – about 3.5 hours. A walk with all the advantages of a ridge walk.

The great plus of this ridge walk are the superb views of the Banská Štiavnica caldera (collapsed peak of a volcano cone), and on the other side of the ridge, views into the deep valleys which extend all the way to the river Hron, with the upland ridges of Vtáčnik and the Kremnické Hills on the western skyline. In addition, this route runs in several places along the nature trail established by the Protected Regional Area Authority for the Štiavnica Hills, so we can also take the opportunity to learn something about the countryside and history of the region.

The starting point of our trip will be the Červená studňa sedlo (pass). We reach the pass by taking the road to Hodruša and Sklené Teplice, best of all on foot from Holy Trinity Square. First, we walk up the square and then we take the green path, which changes from paved to unpaved and which leads us past the Veľká vodárenská reservoir (on our right, the oldest of the reservoirs and the closest to the town centre). The path levels out and we reach a crossroads and Janko's spring, named after the statue of St. Ján Nepomucký (it is said that its water was greatly appreciated in the past by the local innkeepers, as their spirits remained clear when diluted with the spring water; this is our last opportunity to top up our water supply). Here, we also find the first information table of the Old Town nature trail. We continue either by the path on the right or by the steeper path on the left to the Na Červenej studni reservoir and to the road junction. This is the starting point of two nature trails. We take the red footpath from here, which leads us along the ridge all the way to sedlo Peciny above the Richnavské lakes. The beginning of the ridge walk is

also part of the geological nature trail, where we can see for ourselves the complexity of the geology of the Štiavnica Hills. After reaching the ridge, we continue to follow the red marks which lead us to an area with unparalleled panoramic views of both sides of the ridge.

From sedlo Peciny we have a choice of several ways to continue. The fitter walker can reach the top of Sitno by the blue footpath, the more weary can go down through the meadow and refresh his feet in the Richnavské lake. Then, it is only a matter of waiting for the next bus back to Štiavnica.

THE ŽILA TERÉZIA NATURE TRAIL

Duration – 2 – 3 hours, the route mostly follows the contours, beautiful views.

The surroundings of Banská Štiavnica provides an example of the influence of economic activity, namely mining, on the landscape. It is only necessary to walk with our eyes open along the žila (vein) Terézia nature trail in the Protected Regional Area of the Štiavnica Hills.

The starting point of this hiking path is the sedlo Červená studňa (see also the ridge walk: Červená studňa – Richnavské lake). Three nature trails meet here: The Old Town trail, the geological trail and the one which we are about to set out on. It is a starting point for both hi-



THE ROUTE OF THE NATURE TRAIL IS MARKED ON THE INFORMATION TABLE

king and cycling paths. Walks along the žila Terézia are undemanding, but are certainly rewarding. The trail offers a wealth of interesting information, and the chance to delight in the superb views and experience the enchanting tranquillity of the forest.

There are 16 sites along the route of the nature trail, you will get to see the remnants of the oldest mining activity in the region, and to visit the Ottergrund reservoir, the smallest and highest reservoir of the entire system. Again and again, you will be drawn by the view from above of the picturesque group of burgher's houses in the historical centre of Banská Štiavnica, from where the miner's houses rise on both sides.

Although the main theme of the nature trail is mining activity and its influence on the landscape, the region is also of interest from the botanical point of view. For example, the mix of thermophilic and upland species, and the planting of new tree species on the level ground, where the original forest was decimated by intensive logging to meet the needs of the mines. Long past Štiavnica generations made brave attempts to cultivate the steep slopes. After this fruitless battle with nature, the fields became meadows. A testament to the century-old struggle for survival in the region.

With a little luck you will get a sight of the rare spotted salamander and you are certain to see roe deer, which from time to time wander as far as the outlying town gardens. And all around, you will hear the ever-present birdsong. When the weather is clear, the peaks of the Low Tatras and Poľana loom up above the mist.

KOLPACHY CYCLE ROUTE

The route is 20 km long and can be completed in two hours. Undemanding, but spectacular cycle tour.

It is no exaggeration to say that the surroundings of Banská Štiavnica are a paradise for cycling. It is possible to visit a large number of interesting sites by mountain bike in a single day, something that the tourist on foot cannot hope to achieve.

The character of the Kolpachy cycle path and the great many points of interest along it are sufficient reason for you to make this the start of your visit to the Banská Štiavnica area. An advantage of the route is

the moderate level of traffic on the road which the route follows, although you also should also be prepared to come across a car as you are admiring the beautiful scenery.

We begin from the lower end of Banská Štiavnica (námestie Križovatka (Crossroads Square) by the bus stops). First, we climb along the road towards Banský Studenec (today's name of the old mining settlement of Kolpachy – originally Goldbach). A good way out of town, we pass the Kysihýbel Arboretum (formerly part of the Mining and Forestry Academy, today the study area of the Wood Research Institute). The pleasant forest trail leads us all the way to Banský Studenec, The cycle path follows the route of the old mining watercourse, which supplied water from the Kolpašská reservoir to the mine works in Štiavnica. We cross Banský Studenec to the upper end of the village and turn to the left at the bus stop onto a tarmac road. After about 500 metres, we reach a crossroads, if we want to swim in the Kolpašské reservoirs, we turn to the left towards the Bačikstav lodge. Otherwise, we continue straight on along the road. By the Dinas lodge we reach the top of the climb, where it pays to stop and take in the view. As we look back, we see the Kolpašské lakes in full view. The trail leads us to the left around Anderloch hill. After a long descent, we reach a spring of quality drinking water. The route then continues across fairly undulating terrain but after a while, we reach the penultimate climb behind a small forester's lodge. After we reach the top, the Kysihýbel nature trail crosses our route 100 metres ahead. On the



THE SHIMMERING SURFACE OF THE KOLPAŠSKÁ RESERVOIR SET IN THE FOREST

right side, about 150 m from our trail is a technical monument – an underground andesite quarry. Much of the red stone used to build many of the buildings in Banská Štiavnica came from this quarry. We return to the track and after a long descent we reach Kysihýbel. The fishponds here were dug at the end of the 19th century and were used by the Academy students to investigate the possibilities of fish farming in the surrounding reservoirs – tajchy. At the forester's hut, we turn to the left and return by the road on which we set out to Banský Studenec. The circle is complete and pleasantly tired we retrace our own tracks back to Banská Štiavnica.

SITNO CYCLE CIRCUIT

The route is about 50 km long, it runs along paved roads with minimal traffic, and so is appropriate for every type of bicycle and a minimally fit cyclist will be able to complete the circuit in around 3.5 – 4 hours.

It is a typical cycle route, which tests the condition of the local cyclists every year in the spring, after the long winter lay off. We begin in Banská Štiavnica, and set out on the main road towards Levice. At sedlo Peciny above the Veľká Vindšachtské reservoir we turn towards Počúvadlo. After a while, we reach the Počúvadlo lake, which is perhaps the biggest tourist centre in the region. The route continues through the villages of Počúvadlo, Baďan, Klastava and Beluj, circling the awe-inspiring Sitno from the South. These villages date to the 13th century and were established as part of the colonisation of this area. The preserved original architecture and the tranquil, even sleepy in summer afternoons, pace of life of the locals, acts as a balm for the soul of today's stressed city dwellers. From Beluj, we continue to Prenčov and we join the southern access road to Banská Štiavnica. About three kilometres beyond Prenčov, we can stop at Samaritánka, a spring of excellent drinking water. Refreshed, we are faced by a moderate climb along a wide valley and before long we are welcomed by Svätý Anton. We can take this opportunity to make a leisurely tour of the local manor house (see the section – 7 recommendations), as Banská Štiavnica, the goal of our trip, is already in sight.

MINING PATHS TO HODRUŠA

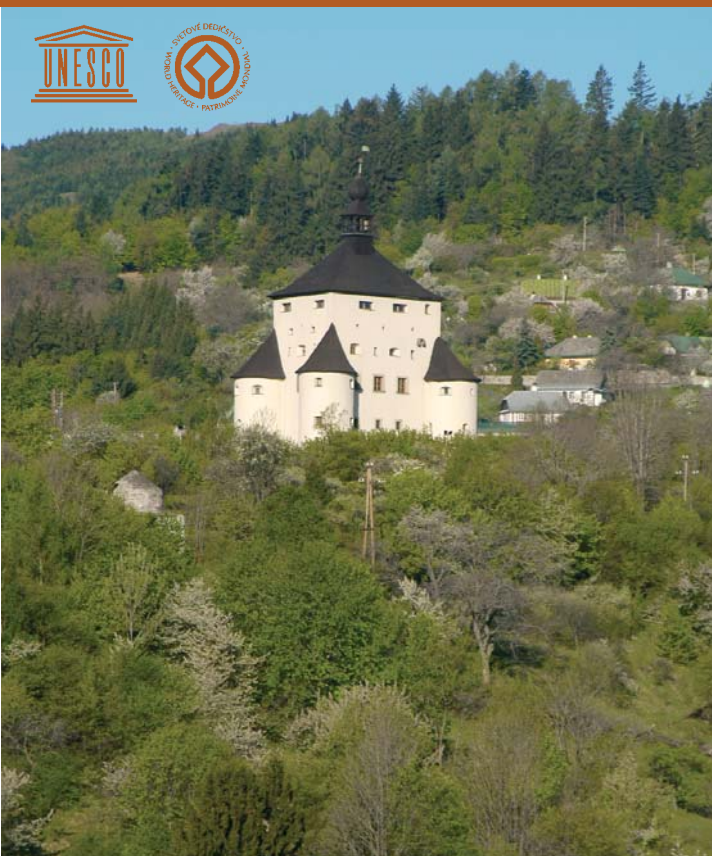
An interesting route through countryside marked by the intensive mining activity of the past. Duration – about 4.5 hours. Possibility to go down into Všechnsvätých (All Saints) mine – must be ordered in advance – information available in Banská Štiavnica.

Our starting point for this tour is again the pass – sedlo Červená studňa (how to get to the pass is detailed in the description of the ridge walk). We start out along the main road to Žarnovica, following the blue path known as the Andrej Kmeť footpath. The blue path follows a lateral ridge of the Štiavnica Hills, which divides the Vyhne and Hodruša valleys. In the past, both saw intensive mining activity, the evidence of which is visible all around us. After about two kilometres, we reach the hamlet of Hadová and continue towards the hamlet of Rumplovská. At a cross, about halfway between the hamlets, we take a left turn onto a path which descends into the valley. After about 500 metres, we come across the impressive projecting rock of Rabenstein. From here, there are superb views along the Hodruša valley, and in the vicinity of Rabenstein the remnants of the oldest mining activity in this valley are visible. We return to the blue path and from the hamlet of Rumplovská we continue to the chapel on top of Kerling hill. On this site stood the old mining settlement of Karlík (Kerling). We now say farewell to the blue path and switch to the green path. As we approach Hodruša, more and more evidence of the glory days of the area's mining past are visible in the countryside around us. We walk along the Jelšovská valley and pass the only active mine in the region at Rozália nad Hodrušou, where gold bearing ores are processed.

The greatest attraction Hodruša has to offer tourists is the chance to go down into the Všechnsvätých mine. It is located in the upper part of the village about three kilometres from where the green path reaches the valley floor. However, it is necessary to order a visit to the mine in advance. And if the weather is fine, don't forget to wash away your tiredness after the trip in the soothing water of the Hodrušské lake. The yellow path will take us around the lake and back to Banská Štiavnica via Červená studňa, but if you're feeling tired it's best to return to the village and wait for the bus (be sure to check the bus timetable before setting off on the trip!).

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Banská Štiavnica and technical monuments in its surroundings were inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993 because of:

- they are an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates significant stage in human history, and
- they are an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture, especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change