

# Levoca

## WHAT TO SEE



### THE MASTER PAUL'S SQUARE

The well-preserved square has retained its Medieval shape: it is a rectangle with 3:1 sides, and it belongs to the largest squares of its kind in Europe. In the square are situated 60 burghers' houses in the Renaissance style of the 14th and 15th centuries that testify the riches of the town in the Middle Ages.

### THE ST. JACOB'S CHURCH

This church is a National Cultural Monument. and it is a three-nave **Gothic church** with a sturdy sanctuary. It was built in the last quarter of the 14th century. In 1392, the St. George's Chapel was added to the northern part of the church. The tower originates them of the church was various times destroyed from fires and therefore in the 18th century the inhabitants of Levoca constructed one new tower.

The interior of the church attracts your attention with its 11 Gothic altars, the most precious of them being the **Main altar**. Thanks to its size it is one of the worlds highest. It is 18.62 m in height, made of limetree wood in **Master Pavol's** workshop. Other important objects of the church are: the altar of St. John of 1520, the altar of St. Peter and Paul of 1500, the altar of the Virgin Maria the Snowy, the altar "Vir dolorum" of 1480 approximately, etc. Between the important works of art we remember also some frescoes, most ancient of which it is of the half of the 14th century, but also some handicraft works, like as an example the pulpit in the Renaissance style of 1626, the wooden senators' pews of the 15th and 16th centuries, the metal font of 1400, the rich decorated organ, than for a long time it has been one of the greatest organs in Hungary.



### THE TOWN HALL

The Town Hall of Levoca dates back to the 15th century. It burnt down in 1550, and there was another fire in 1599. In **1615** the Town Hall was enlarged and the southern part, as well as the archways on the first and second floors, was added. In the corner of the southern facade, there is a remain of the original painting. More paintings were placed between the windows. The paintings represent symbols of civil virtues: moderation, carefulness, bravery, patience and justice. The building of the Town Hall is attached to a Renaissance tower, which was built between 1656 - 1661 as a **bell-tower**. There are some expositions of the **Spis Museum** on the first floor of the Town Hall. Its Session Hall is used for representation purposes.

### THE CAGE OF THE SHAME

It comes from the 16th century and it was used for punishing for minor delinquencies. Its original place was where the Protestant Church is situated now. Later, it belonged to the Probstner family and it was placed in their park, which was situated where the hospital is now. The Cage was given to the town by the Probstner family in 1933 and since then, it has been situated in front of the Town Hall.



### THE PROTESTANT CHURCH

There is a Greek-cross-shaped building in the south of the square, with a huge dome. It was built in Classicistic style by Anton Povolny between **1825 -1837**. There is an organ, archives and a valuable library. In this church, there is a well-preserved Baroque wooden cross and another, forged, cross. A famous painter from Levoca, Jozef Czauzik, made the large altar picture of Christ walking on the sea.

## THE TRADE HOUSE

It used to belong to the complex of buildings in the park, just like the goldsmiths' workshops. Originally, there was a school here, which is proved by the coat of arms opposite the church. It was rebuilt into a higher standard school in 1588. The town's armory was situated here, too. Between **1587-1588** the buildings were joined together. After the reconstructions in 1810 and 1858 - 1852, there was a grammar school, casino, confectionery, restaurant and apartments. Today, being restored again, the building is the seat of the town's administration.



## THURZO HOUSE

House No. 7 on the square, is distinguished from the other bourgeois houses for its well conserved Renaissance attic. The facade of Thurzo house has a rich decorates with sgraffito of 1903- 1904. The house was obtained from the union of two buildings of the 15th century. The house belonged until 1532 to a famous Levoca's family, the **Thurzo family**. Today it is the seat of the State Regional Archives.



## MASTER PAUL'S HOUSE

House No. 20 is situated in the east part of the square. In the house lived and created **Master Paul of Levoca**, the great medieval sculptor and carver. He is the author of the main altar of the St. Jacob's church and the other important artistic works. The present aspect of the house has been conserved from the 15th and 16th centuries. Today the restored house is the Museum dedicated to Master Paul.

## MARIASSY'S HOUSE

House No. 43 in the west part of the square was constructed in the 15th century. The house has a spectacular stone portal of 1530, but above all the excellent interior. Very interesting is also its Renaissance courtyard with loggia and archades, typical for the town of Levoca.



## SPILENNBERG'S HOUSE

House No. 45. In the 16th and 17th centuries belonged to one known medical family. The facade of the house is rich decorated in the Renaissance style. The attention of the visitors is attracts also from its interesting door of entrance, all striking by hand.

## KRUPEK'S HOUSE

House n. 44 attracts the attention for its facade rich decorated with pyramidal paintings and decoration. The house is of the 16th century and belonged to an important merchant of Crakow, Sebastian Krupek.



## THE LARGE PROVINCIAL HOUSE

House n. 59 was constructed in the Classicistic style between 1806 and 1826 as an administration building of the Spis Province.

## THE SMALL PROVINCIAL HOUSE

The facade of the house No. 60 is decorated with sgraffito and between the windows the coat of arms of Spis Province may be seen. After the construction of the large Provincial House, they are remained the small offices of the province and the prison. Today it is the seat of the provincial archives.





### THE FORMER MONASTERY OF THE MINORITIES AND CHURCH

Also called the **Gymnasial church** is of the 14th century. The church is one of the greatest churches in Slovakia and at the same time an example of the art of the gothic's building in our country. Interior of the church it detaches the imposing greater altar with the gothic statue of the Madonna from the 15th century and with the baroque statues of the Hungarians king. The precious wall-paintings of the church are from the first part of the 14th century.



### THE TOWN FORTIFICATIONS

The first town fortifications already encircled the historical nucleus in the 13th century, for one length of 2,5 km. The fortification consisted of three gatehouses of which only two have been conserved until today: Vysna, now called **Kosicka** (of Kosice) and **Menhardska**. Its walls were strengthened with 16-18 bastions and towers of which only five constructions have been saved.

**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 0:43**

## Castle of Spis - 1993



It is one of the largest medieval castle in the Central Europe. It had been mentioned by the **12th century** as a regional castle. The main body of the castle was surrounded by a stone fortification in the first half of the 13th century. This enabled the castle to resist the raids of the Tatars in 1241. In the same century the fortifications was mainly strengthened by the **Italian stonecutters** who worked to the construction of the Spisska Kapitula. Of the 13th century it is a Romanesque palace, the gothic dwelling tower and a now non-existent Romanesque chapel.

These monuments are situated in the higher courtyard. During the reign of Ludovit (the son of Charles Robert of Anjou) the castle was extended by the addition of the central coutry yard with an entry gate and barbican in the 14th century. In the half of the 15th century the lower courtyard was built Its construction is cenected with the army of Ján Jiskra of Brandýs, that it was called after the dead of the king Zigmund (in 1437) in order to protect the new Hungarian king still underage **Ladislav Pohrobok** (1445-1457).



The Spis castle is belonged to many owners. In 1464 it was property of the **Zapolsky** family, in the first rt of the 16th century of the **Thurzo** family and the last proprietor after 1636 was the **Csaky** family until 1945. During a fire in 1780 the castle suffered extensive damage and was not reconstructed afterwards. From 1970 in the castle imposing jobs of restoration are carried out. In the restored part of the castle is situated the exposure of the history of the Spis castle and in the underground prison the torture instruments.

In 1993 the Spis castle together with the surroundings (Spisske Podhradie, Spisska Kapitula, the church in Žehra) was enlisted into **UNESCO** World Heritage List.

### Visiting hours:

May-September, Monday - Sunday, 09.00 - 18.00 October; Tuesday - Sunday, 09.00 - 17.00

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**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 1:00**

## Spisske Podhradie - 1993

The town under the Spis castle is of the **11th century**, but its importance grew after the settling of Saxons in the 12th and 13th centuries. In that time the small own developed as a community below the castle, mentioned in 1249 for the first time. The town of Spisske Podhradie was an important centre of crafts. Its history is connected to the history of the Spis castle.

### WHAT TO SEE:

**The church of the Virgin Mary** - the original gothic church of the 13th century was different times restored. Its contemporary appearance in classical style is of 1829. From the original construction have preserved only the tower and the portal of entrance. Inside the church is situated a very precious gothic Virgin Mary triptych altar and the gothic baptismal font in bronze of 1390.

**The civic hospital** (the Monastery and Church of the Mercedarians) - it was constructed in 1327 and it came used like small civic hospital. In the 17th century the building was inherited by the religious order of "merciful brothers" who enlarged the hospital and annexed two town-houses to the monastic complex and than baroquized it.

**The Evangelical church** - it was built between 1799 and 1808. Inside the church and in the center of the main altar it attracts the caution the picture of Christ on the Mount of Olives that is of the same period of the construction of the church.

**The Jewish Synagogue** - it is of 1875, after a fire was rebuilt again. The Synagogue is only sustained in the whole Spis region and is reconstructed now, and a museum/gallery will be opened in it.

**The Town hall** - it is of 1546 built in Renaissance style and the **Marian Column** - dating from 1726 in Baroque style. Both are located in the center of the Marian square.

**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 1:00**

## Spisska Kapitula - 1993



(Religious capital of the Spis region). Also the history of Spisska Kapitula is connected with the history of the Spis castle. It is situated on the eastern part of the slope of the **Martin's hill**, 1 km from the town of Spisske Podhradie. This small ecclesiastical seat of the **13th century** is completely surrounded by stonewalls, built between 1662-1665. Today is the seat of the Bishop of Spis and the centre of Church administration.

**The Cathedral of St. Martin** - this three naves construction in the late-Romanesque style is of the first part of the 13th century. It has two Romanesque twin towers and a gothic sanctuary. The cathedral was different times restored. Between 1488 and 1499 was connected to the church the late-gothic Zapolsky funerary chapel and in the years 1777-1778 the cathedral was restored in baroque style.

The cathedral has particularly valuable interior, especially the **Gothic altars**; the altar of St. Martin (1470-78), the altar of the Three king, the altar of St. Michael, the altar of the Virgin Mary Falling Asleep, the neogothic altar of the Pietà. The most precious altar is the neogothic triptych altar of the Coronation of the Virgin Mary created in 1493, it is the **Zapolsky Chapel**. Near the door it is located a very precious object - a white lion (**Leo albus**) a Romanesque stone sculpture originated of the 13th century, and is one of the little examples of the Romanesque art in Slovakia.

On opposite sides of the cathedral are situated the **seminary** and the **bishop's palace** of the 15th century, in Romanesque origin and more later restored in gothic and baroque style.

**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 1:00**

## Zehra - 1993



The early-Gothic **church of the Holy Spirit** at Zehra was built between 1245 and 1275. Inside the church there are very precious frescoes. The oldest frescoes are from the end of the 13th century, while the youngest was painted in the half of the 15th century.

The most beautiful fresco is the Tree of Life (**Arbor vital**) and dominates on the northern wall of the nave. It was painted around 1400. The other precious objects in the church are - the stone baptismal font of the 13th century, the altar and the pulpit of the 17th century.

**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 1:00**

## Vlkolinec - 1993



This picturesque village is situated near the town of Ruzomberok, 718 m above sea level. Vlkolinec is known for its **wooden architecture** well preserved, there are 40 wooden houses from 15th to 19th century, which from the outside look exactly alike. The first news written about village goes back to **1376**. In the 18th century lived here the highest number of inhabitants (280), today live here about 20 persons. Vlkolinec was in 1944 marked by the war and a part of the village was burnt.

In the village it is situated the wooden **Bell Tower** of 1770 that dominates this peculiar village. Beyond the Bell Tower there is the **Church** of the Visit of the Virgin Mary of 1875, the **Well** - built with wooden logs of 1860 and the **Museum** that it is situated in the Farmer's House with the historical exhibition about village and information office.

In 1977 Vlkolinec was declared like protected Reserve because of its country's folk heritage. The most important date for the village was the year 1993, when Vlkolinec has been included in the World's cultural heritage list of **UNESCO**.

**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 0:52**

## Banska Stiavnica - 1993



In the past the town was the **main producer of silver** of the Hungary and one of the most significant mining town in the Europe. The first news written on the extraction of the precious metals and silver dates from **1075**. Its privileges as cities of the mining industry go back already to 1238. The Stiavnica seal is of 1275 and it is also the oldest representation of town's fortifications which is a pre-heraldic topographic symbol, and with mining implements set into the Arms. Banska Stiavnica, with its

surroundings, had an extraordinary importance in the area of the public education of the mining industry. Already in **1735** in Banska Stiavnica was established the first mining school.

In 1762 this school was promoted for decision of the Emperor Maria Theresa, to the **Mining Academy**, first example in the world of technical Academy of this type, and was taken as an example from the polytechnic founded in Paris in the successive years. This academy remained opened until 1919, and until then it instructed hundred of specialists in mining field.

The historical nucleus of the town was declared in the 1950 the Urban conservation Areas.

WHAT TO SEE:

the **plague column**, with a statue of Holy Trinity  
the **Old Castle** - a former fortress against the Turks

the **New Castle** built in renaissance style

the **St. Catherine's church** - in Late-Gothic style - also called the Slovak church, built between 1443-1491  
the **church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary** - the parish church, that in origin was a Romanesque basilica with three naves, built in the years around 1230

the **Evangelical church** of 1794-96, rich decorated and with a very precious organ to its inside

The attraction of the Banska Stiavnica is **the Open Air Mining Museum** with an exposition of mining technique, the laboratory and a little wooden church for the miners. There is the possibility to enter in old mining rooms and to visit the historical Bartolomej gallery. The museum is closed from December to April.

Singularity of monuments in the symbiosis with the environment is an object of social protection for contemporary persons and future generations. Values concentrated on the area of town and its environment were registered into the List of the world cultural and natural heritage **UNESCO** on December 11. 1993

**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 2:13**

## Bardejov - 2000



The town of Bardejov is situated in the north of eastern Slovakia. The news written more ancient of the town dates back to **1241**. At the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries, the town attracted the attention of Hungarians sovereign of the family Anjou, for its strategic position on the commercial road for the Poland and the Russia. In the 1320 king Charles Robert of Anjou granted to colonists from Silesia extensive rights, which speeded up the process of transformation of the chartered village

Bardejov into a town. In 1352 the town obtained the right to hold the 8-day fair and the guarantee of freedom for all who took part in it. In 1365 Bardejov obtained the right of capital punishment and in 1376 King Louis I. promoted it to the status of **Free Royal Town**. The town was supported but also financial exploited from the King Zigmund of Luxembourg and King Matthias Corvinus. The 15th century meant for Bardejov the apex of its prides and of its riches. The majority of the inhabitants is taken care of commerce and of craftsmanship, and already in 1437 had been recorded in town quite 64 different professions.

The great economical prosperity of the town influences also the development of a new architecture in town. Close to the parish church of St. Egidius were built bourgeois buildings with high and sloping roofs. Between 1505-1511 was built the gothic-renaissance **Town hall** and the town fortifications system was completed. In the 16th XVI century it had been a great development of science, of the culture and the art, centralized in the humanist municipal school of Bardejov. The city became therefore the important center of the education in the northeast Hungary. In the successive centuries, like result of the numerous wars and of natural catastrophes, the decline of the town deepened and therefore Bardejov became a small town of province.



In 1950 it was declared a protected city core and an intensive restoration of the cultural heritage was begun. It was for the preservation of its heritage that in 1986 Bardejov was awarded the European prize - Gold Medal by the International Board of Trustees in Hamburg. Bardejov became the holder of this award as the first town in the Czechoslovakia. In the **30.11.2000** Bardejov was enlisted into UNESCO World Heritage List. The most protected monuments are in the first place the town fortifications and the small Jewish quarter.

**Important monuments of Bardejov are:** the Town hall, The St. Egidius church, the Town fortifications, the Former Humanist Gymnasium, the church of St. John of Baptist, the Greek-catholic church, the Evangelical church, the Orthodox church, the Former Jewish complex.



**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski:2:03**

## The Dobsinska Ice Cave - 2000

**Open:** 15.5. - 30.9.

**Closed:** on Mondays

**Duration of the guided tour:** 40 min.



that-time Hungary.

The unique karsts exemplary in the National park of **Slovak Paradise** is the Dobsinska Ice Cave. It is a karst cave with ice content in some parts of the cave. The largest part of the cave was discovered in **1870** and immediately from the beginning it attracted a lot the attention. Thanks to the Dobsina town the cave was open to the public already in 1871, just a year after its discovery. Since 1882, it has been the first cave with **electric illumination** in



A **curiosity** of the cave was that until 1946 to its inside was possible to skate on ice for the public all the Year round. In the early Fifties years inside the cave, was trained also the well-known **Czechoslovakian champion** Karol Divin.

The cave length is 1,232 m, for the public are accessible only **475 m**. The vertical range is 112 m. The air temperature in the ice chamber called the Big Hall goes from the -3,8 until + 0,5°C, the relevant humidity is 75 - 88%. In the **Big Hall** there is ice in the form of ground ice, ice waterfalls, ice stalagmites and columns, the largest layer of ice is 26,5 m thick. The individual parts of the cave carry names in base to what remember: In the frozen parts are situated the Small Hall, the Big Hall, the Hall of Rufiny and the House destroyed. In the not freeze parts done we remember the Stalactites Hall, the White Hall, the Dry House, the Hell.

Due to its beauty and nature value it was inscribed into the List of **UNESCO** World Natural Heritage in 2000.

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**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski:0:53**

## The Ochtinska aragonit Cave - 1995

**Open:** 1.4 - 31.10

**Closed:** on Monday

**Tempo della visita:** 45 min.



The aragonite cave is situated in the attractive landscape of the **Slovak Metalliferous Mountains** (Slovenske Rudohorie) between Jelsava and Stitnik. It is the unique example of cave not only in Slovakia, but also in Europe. It is one of three caves of this type accessible to the public all over the world. The other two are situated in Mexico and in Argentina. ARAGONITE - a less common crystalline form of calcium carbonate than calcite, denser and orthorhombic.



The Ochtinska aragonite cave was discovered for chance in **1954** by the workers during the geologic exploratory. In 1972 it was open to the public. The cave is 300 m long of whom 230 m are accessible. The temperature of the cave is between 7,2 and 7,8°C and the relevant air humidity is of 92 - 97%.

The aragonite cave is not the classic cave of stalactites or stalagmites, but is constituted by something like to twigs and small shrubs of white color formations of aragonites. The formations of aragonites are three types: **kidney-shaped** (138 thousand years old), **needle-shaped** (13 thousand years old) and **spiral** forms.

The most attractive part of the cave is considered the **Milky Way Hall** with the characteristic oval formations. It was called this way because of the long crack in the ceiling replenished of formations of white aragonites that shine like the stars in the Milky Way.

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**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 1:42**

## The Gombasecka Cave - 1995

**Open:** 1.4 - 31.10

**Closed:** on Monday

**Duration of the guided tour:** 35 min.



The Gombasecka cave is situated on the western foothill of the Silicka Plateau between Roznava and Plesivec. It was discovered in 1951 and in 1955 was open to the public for a length of 285 m. Since 1968, it was introduced for **speleotherapeutical procedures** for 10 years, as the first of the caves in Slovakia. On 6th December 1995 the Gombasecka cave, together with the Ochtinska Aragonit Cave, the Jasovska cave, the Domica Cave and with Hungarian caves of the national park Aggtelek, has been included in the World's cultural heritage list of **UNESCO**.



The visit of the cave is lead in the underground rooms with their feature. The attention of the visitor in the cave is attracted by the **Marble Hall** for its spacious and its colorful decorations. The climate of the cave with relevant humidity of almost 100% and with the air temperature of 9,0 - 9,4 °C is excellent to treat the illnesses of respiratory tract. In the underground hall called **Hirosima** because of the column that resembles to an atomic mushroom are different formations of stalactites and thin sinter straws of different colors.

In the Hall of Ladislav Hereny, called so in honor to one of the discoverers of the cave are situated the formations of stalactites with rich decorations, they are looking an impression of **stoned rain** on the brown red structure of limestone's walls. In the Hall of Viliam Rozloznic the accessible part of cave to the public ends. The underground space of the cave continuous other 1225 m long, with not practicable passages.

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**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 1:45**

## The Domica Cave - 1995

**Open:** 1.2 - 31.12

**Closed:** 24, 25, 26. 12, on Monday

**Duration of the guided tour:** A - 45 min. B - 85 min. (with boat trip)



The Domica cave is situated in the province of Roznava, near the small town **Plesivec**. It was discovered in **1926** by Jan Majko and in 1932 was open to the public. Together with the Baradla cave in Hungary does part of a unique complex with total length of 23 km, of whom in Slovakia are situated **7 km**. The cave is decorated by the stalactites and its underground had been created by two course of river: the Styx and Domica river.



The Domica cave is constituted by the different underground rooms, called also halls or houses. The most imposing room is called the **House of Majko**, high 20 m, wide 30 m and long 80 m. Inside of the House of Majko, all of the underground corridors meet themselves and there is situated also the most evocative part of the cave "**the Waterfalls**", called also **Hall of the Roman Spa**, acrossed with the river Styx.

For the visitors it is possible to do the **boat trip for** about 150 m across the river Styx and admire some parts of the cave, otherwise not accessible. Other interesting places of the cave are: the House of the mysteries, the House of the ceramics, the Virgins corridor, the Lake of the luck, the Forest, and finally the **House of the Indian pagodas** that is considered the most attractive part of the cave. The particularity of the Domica cave is the abounding presence of bats. There are about 1500 bats of 16 different species.

The Domica Cave is the most important **finding-place** of the Neolithic "bukovohorska" culture (4,000 years B.C.). Finding of spear spike from the Early Stone Age - Szeletien - from 35,000 years ago is unique.

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**Distance from Grand Hotel Kempinski: 1:50**