



Trenčín Region



Little Big Country



The Trenčín Region is in the west of Slovakia and neighbours the Czech Republic. Most of the Trenčín Region is made up of the broad valleys along the central flow of the River Váh, flanked by the hills of the Little and the White Carpathians on one side, and by the Považský Inovec and Strážovské vrchy ranges on the other. The eastern

ruins. Among the best known castles we can mention at least those in Čachtice, Beckov, Považska, Trenčín, and Vršatec. Legends are associated with each of the castles, which when told conjure up a colourful picture for the listener of the rich history of this beautiful region. The many uplands with mild elevations and gradual increases in height



part of the territory comprises the upper Nitra basin with its rich coal deposits. In the past the River Váh acted as the natural border of the western edge of the Kingdom of Hungary. It ensured protection of the region from military onslaughts with its many massive castles and fortifications. The castles were also centres of trade and crafts. Only a few of them have been preserved to the present day, though, and we can only admire most of the others thanks to period drawings from the time or from the leftover

produce the perfect conditions for hiking and cycling. In addition to the possibility to visit various historical castles, when on an outing you can also enjoy the beautiful countryside, visit any of the many major sights, or just absorb the atmosphere of traditional and local customs. If you are at a health spa or not, you can enjoy some interesting cultural events. The Trenčín Region is known for its traditional festivals and the rich range of cultural programmes. These include several important exhibitions and trade fairs at the Trenčín Exhibition Centre.



Trenčín



City Tower



Burghers' houses

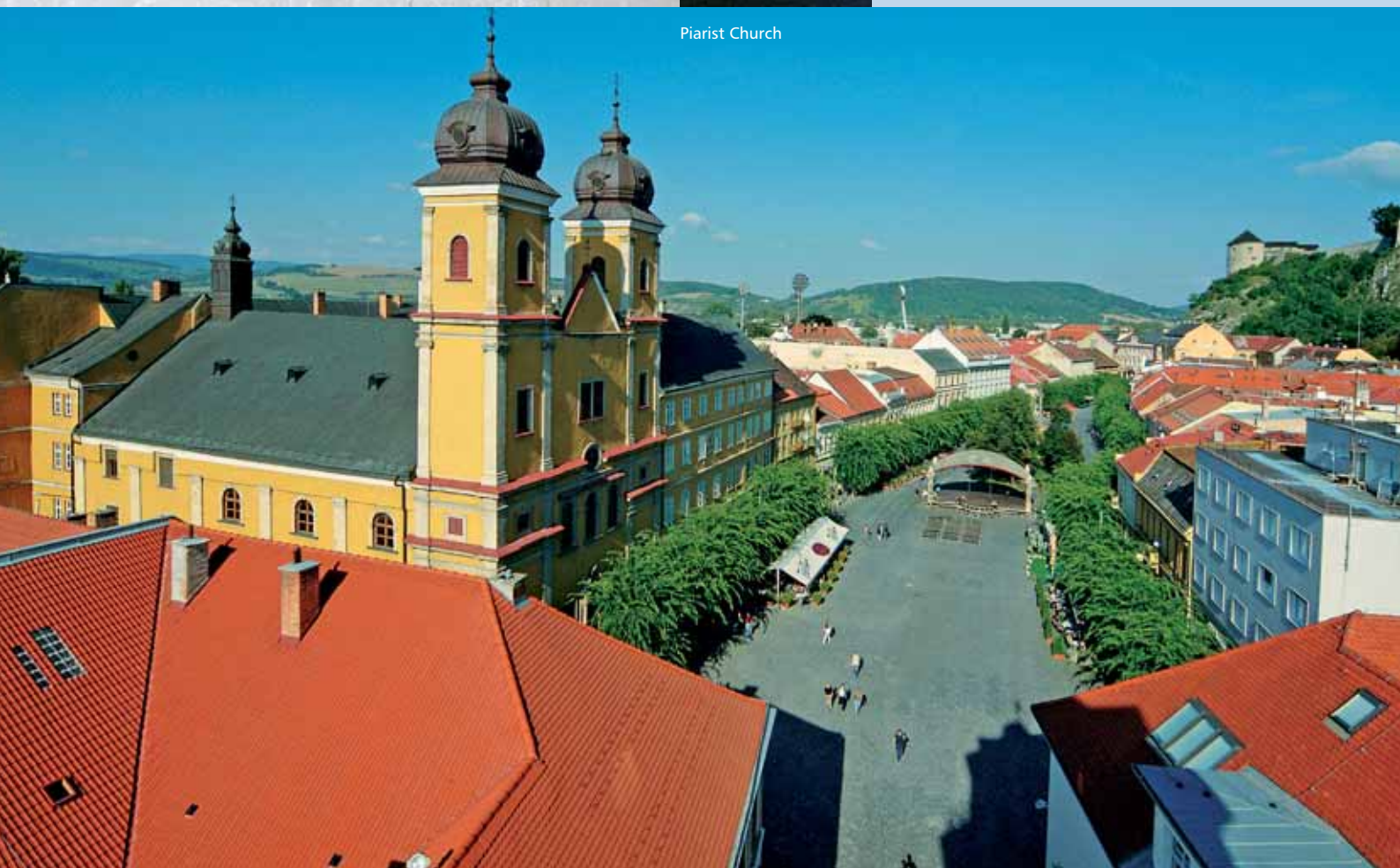
Proof that the Trenčín locality was inhabited already during the Late Stone Age comes from the various archaeological findings here. Original evidence on the presence of Roman legionnaires in the Slovak territory is the inscription carved into Trenčín Castle rock. It recalls the victory of Emperor Marcus Aurelius over the Quad in the year 179. The very beginnings of the town under the massive castle can be found

in the market settlement mentioned in 1111 on the ancient route from Vážsky brod under Brezina hill. The biggest boom for the town came after 1275, when the castle passed to the hands of Matthew Csak, the lord of almost all of the territory of present day Slovakia. During the Middle Ages the town of Trenčín acquired various privileges and rights, crafts and trading developed, with annual markets being held here. Beer was also





Piarist Church



Piarist Church



brewed here from 1380. King Trenčín did not avoid various catastrophes and it was often the victim of wars. The memorial Plague Column at the centre of the city square was erected in memory of those who lost their lives to the plague in 1710. It was created in Baroque style in 1712 by Viennese master stonemasons. This did not halt development of the town, though, and from the second half of the 19th century Trenčín became a major trade and industrial centre of the Považie region. Today the city is home to almost 60,000 residents and it is

the regional capital. Visitors come to the city to see the castle in all its glory and to hear about the reputation of the Well of Love. The exhibition of the Ilešházi family gallery in Zápoľský Palace is a splendid attraction with almost a hundred original oil paintings from the 16th to the 19th centuries. A dominant feature of the square Štúrovo námestie is the fountain with the water-imp Valentine, which is converted into an ice-rink in the winter. Right in the city centre is the entrance to Brezina forest park, which contains learning trails.



Trenčín Castle

Trenčín Castle is a fairly extensively renovated castle, which looms at the top of a steep limestone cliff overlooking the city of Trenčín. The castle is a characteristic and irreplaceable dominant feature not just of the city of Trenčín itself, but of the whole Central Považie region. It is a natural cultural monument. The history of the castle cliff dates back to the era of the Roman Empire, proof of which is the inscription on the castle rock, reporting the victory of the II Roman legion



over the Germans at Laugaricia from 179 AD. Today's castle was probably built on the site of a fortress. At the end of the 13th century Trenčín Castle fell to the hands of Lord Matthew Csak, who controlled a huge territory and who became the legendary "Lord of the Váh and the Tatras". In the castle courtyard the Well of Love has been preserved. Legend has it that a young Turk called Omar had to dig out the well deeper into the rock with his bare hands to get back his beloved Fatima. Although this story of eternal love is rather fetching, in reality the well was created in a much more prosaic manner.



Bojnice Castle



Bojnice Castle is a Romanesque castle that has partially retained the original Gothic and renaissance foundation of the castle. It is well visible from a large part of the upper Nitra region and lies on the western edge of the town of Bojnice. The castle was originally made of wood and evolved from an older fortress. In the second half of the 17th century the castle was transformed into a baroque style. The last major conversion in Neo-Gothic

style was carried out between 1889 and 1910 and transformed the castle into an enchanting palace. At the present time the castle houses part of the collection of the Slovak National Museum. The concept of the castle includes also the surrounding gardens and adjacent forest park and a very popular zoo.





Beckov Castle is a reconstructed castle ruin on a steep 70-metre high cliff, which makes the silhouette of the castle clearly visible from afar. The castle was originally built as a border stronghold that controlled a large part of the Central Považie region. At the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries the castle went through a period of extravagant conversion, during which the height of the castle tower was raised and an upper Gothic palace with Knights Room and chapel was added on. In the middle of the 16th century the castle was fortified as

Beckov



a result of the threat from the Turks. At that time a cannon tower was built in the lower courtyard and the outer walls of the castle were raised in height. A fire that broke out in 1727 destroyed most of the buildings and the castle has been abandoned ever since. The ruins of the upper and lower castle are the remnants of palaces, functional and defensive buildings and fortifications.





Čachtice Castle



The castle was built in the second half of the 13th century and was among the first castles that had the role of securing the western frontier of the former Kingdom of Hungary. Erected on top of a cliff, at the highest point there was a palace, with other castle buildings gradually being added around the upper courtyard. The lower courtyard, which served mostly for defensive purposes, was accessible from the upper level over a channel that was cut out of the rock. In the 17th century it was the seat of the famous Countess Elisabeth Báthory, whose life is shrouded in rumours about her horrifying acts.



It was built at the end of the 13th century in response to Tatar raids. Hungarian King Béla IV had several stone castles built at that time in the Považie region. For many years it belonged to the distinguished family Podmanický, and from 1571 to Ondrej Balaš, who was the chief royal chamberlain and lord. His son Imrich had a chateau built below the castle in 1631 and left the castle that had burned in 1623. The castle has been a ruin ever since.

Považský Castle





Myjava



This part of the Záhorie region also received the name of Kopanice. It is characterised by the many small settlements spread out in the valleys between the Little Carpathian uplands. When taking a trip, either by foot or bike, you can admire the beauty of the surrounding countryside and traditional folk architecture. Myjava and the entire Kopanice area have a rich tradition of folklore and traditional culture is still very much alive here. Proof of this can be seen in the frequent and attractive

cultural events that take place in Myjava. The biggest such event is the annual three-day international folklore festival and festival of European traditional cultures. Around 1400 performers take part in it regularly – dance groups, traditional folk music, soloists – not just from Slovakia, but the whole of Europe, and the world in fact. An integral part of the festival is the special traditional market. The festival includes folk recitals, theatrical performances for children and adults, sampling of local culinary specialties and tasting of home-made spirits, accompanied by folk dance and entertainment, of course. The festival atmosphere is complemented by the stalls of traditional artists and artisans.



Brezová pod Bradlom

In the most western part of Slovakia, bordered to the east by the northern peaks of the Little Carpathians and to the west by the River Morava, in the picturesque hilly countryside lies the small town of Brezová pod Bradlom. This region is associated with the name of the distinguished Slovak statesman, General Milan Rastislav Štefánik. This merited scientist and researcher, a general in the French legion, was also the co-founder of the first Czechoslovak Republic. In 1919, shortly after this key event in the history of the Slovak nation, General Štefánik died tragically in a plane crash.



The Štefánik Memorial on Bradlo hill was ceremoniously unveiled on the tenth anniversary of his death. The memorial was the design of architect Dušan Jurkovič and represents one of the truly finest memorials in Central Europe from the period between the wars. The selection of the locality

on the northern ledge of the Little Carpathians above the birthplace of the general, guaranteed that the memorial would be a naturally dominant feature of the whole surroundings. The museum in Košariská, the general's birthplace, gives you the chance to see the exposition called Fragments of Štefánik's Life.





Uhrovec

In this small village, two of the most distinguished figures in Slovak history were born in the same house – Ľudovít Štúr and Alexander Dubček. The house that both these prominent Slovak men were born in is now a museum. The first exposition here was open on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Ľudovít Štúr, and captures the fate of this thinker and politician, co-founder of the official Slovak language. Some 106 years after Ľ. Štúr, in the very same house Alexander Dubček (1921-1992) was also born. He was a prominent European politician. Part of the exposition is also devoted to his life and work.



The tradition of glassmaking

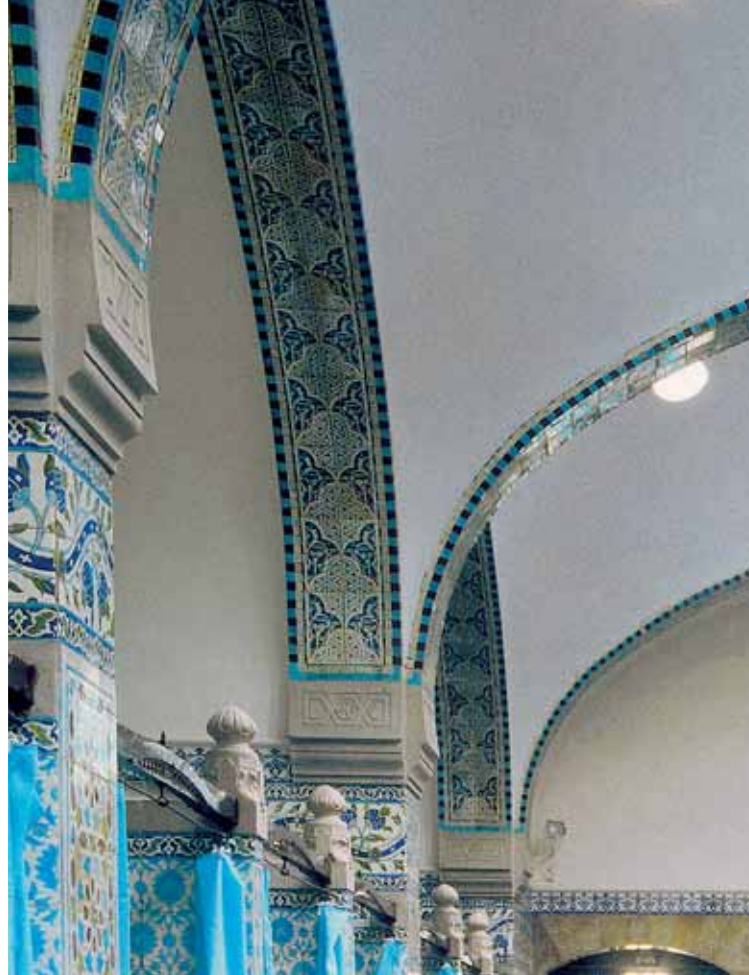
The tradition of glassmaking in Slovakia is kept alive by the Slovak Glass Museum in the village of Lednické Rovne, near the town of Púchov. Jozef Schieber founded a glassworks here in 1892. Since then, it has continued to expand and the works' current products are presented more and more beyond the Slovak borders. Visitors to Lednické Rovne take interest in the beautiful baroque manor house, which was reconstructed in 1860 in Romantic style and today houses the museum.



Among Slovakia's best-known and most sought-after spas is Trenčianske Teplice, reverently praised even by Juraj Werhern, author of the first compendium on Austro-Hungarian spas, as far back as 1549. Presently the Trenčianske Teplice spa provides comprehensive therapy for more than twenty thousand patients a year and offers around 80 different kinds of procedures.

Trenčianske Teplice

The main focus of the spas at Trenčianske Teplice is the treatment of rheumatic conditions. The sulphurous local springs are unique, and their temperature range from 37.7 to 40 °C, enabling direct usage in external balneotherapy without the need for additional heating or cooling. The spas specialise in the diagnosis and treatment of the musculoskeletal system but are also suitable for patients with neurological and rheumatic ailments.







Bicycle tourism



The moderately steep and rarely-used roads in remote parts of the region provide excellent conditions for bicycle tourism. The River Váh's main cycling route along the Váh's protective dams and the Váh canal, the Myjava hill country, the Little and White Carpathians, as well as the Inovec hills, provide visitors with splendid views of the countryside, the Kopanice settlements and all the charms of nature. Cyclists can visit many interesting historical landmarks including old churches in the villages; the burial memorial to General M. R. Štefánik in Bradlo; Gazdovský dvor in Myjava – Turej Lúke; the Branč, Beckov and Čachtice castles; the ruins of a fortified chapel in Haluzice and much more. Tourists can choose from a large number of marked trails, ranging from the simplest – which even children can handle – through the most challenging, intended for proficient cyclists.



Biele Karpaty





The best known festival of modern music and dance in the open air in Slovakia is always held at Trenčín airport at the beginning of the summer. It provides space for bands and singers producing various genres of modern music, not just from Slovakia, but also the whole world. It is also an opportunity especially for the many young people to enjoy the special experience of several hours of concerts.

Festival Pohoda



The international film festival in Trenčianske Teplice presents new trends in world cinematography, both professional as well as the work of art school students. International experts participate in the evaluation of the films in the competition categories. The best feature film in the main competition category takes away the prestigious Blue Angel prize. The festival also includes bestowal of the Actor's Mission award – a plaque with



ARTFILM

the artist's name permanently affixed to the bridge of fame 'Most slávy' – for distinguished work in the field of world filmmaking. Besides those of the most prominent Slovak and Czech actors, the bridge also bears plaques on world celebrities of motion picture arts, including Sophia Loren, Ornella Muti, Jean Paul Belmondo, Franco Nero and many more.





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