

I FEEL
SLOVENIA

Idrija.
Slovenia.



FELDBAN

MILITARY NARROW-GAUGE FIELD RAILWAY

The story of feldban begins in WWI. In the 6th Battle of Isonzo, in August 1916, Italian army pushed the Austro-Hungarian one to the left bank of Isonzo River cutting its supply via the Bohinj railway. As the remaining railways failed to provide sufficient supplies, additional paths needed to be constructed.



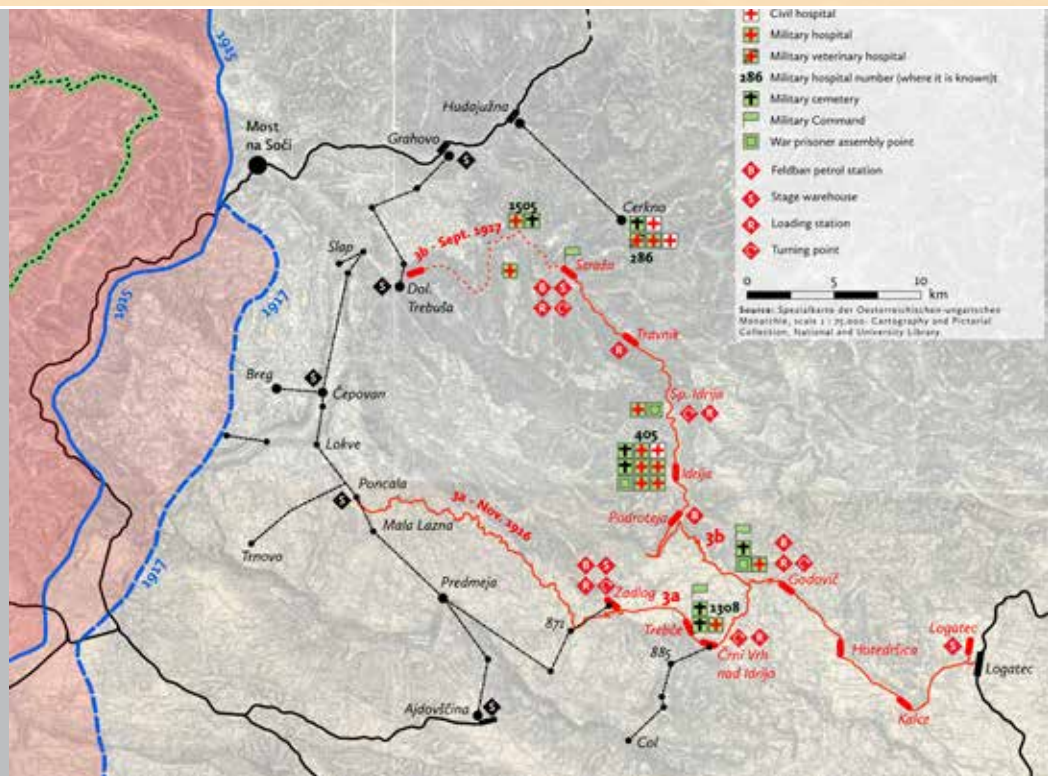
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HISTORY WALK ALONG THE FELDBAN RAILWAY

To supply its units on the Isonzo Front and the Banjšice Plateau, the Austro-Hungarian army promoted the construction of new narrow-gauge railways – feldbans. They connected the battlefield with the south railway station Dolnji Logatec, where there was a large military depot.

The main, 17-km part of the railway, followed the road from Dolnji Logatec to Godovič. From the Godovič station, the tracks went in the direction of Črni Vrh and divided in two at the Cestnikova rajda, Cestnik's Turn: The first, 56-km line went to Črni Vrh, Zadlog and Lokve on the Trnovo Forest Plateau, the second to Idrija. In 1917, this was extended to Straža and probably to Dolenja Trebuša. In total, the second part was 55 km long.



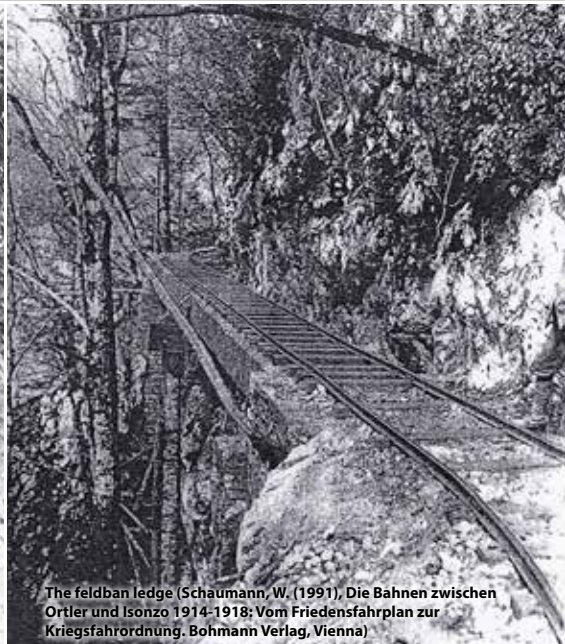
In order to overcome the demanding steep terrain, on some points, the feldban had to be connected to military supply cableways. There were two operating in the Idrija region: one from Črni Vrh to Col, the other from Zadlog to Predmeja. The cableways were driven by electricity. Electrical energy was supplied to the starting point by the mine powerplant in Idrija.

The construction was planned so as to make minimal interventions in the terrain, and instead adapting to it. The tracks mostly ran on existing roads. Where the terrain was more demanding, several embankments, supporting walls, wooden bridges, cuttings, and tunnels were built. Modestly equipped workers managed to lay around 2 km of tracks daily. The feldban was built by railway- and field-railway company soldiers, the Landstrum, and Russian and Italian prisoners of war. At the end of 1916, Godovič alone held more than 1500 of the latter.

The most demanding part of the tracks – the 12 km between Godovič and Idrija encompassing a 300-m drop in altitude and a 25-m tunnel – was built in record time: construction ran from September 1 to September 30, 1916. The drive from Idrija to Godovič took 3 hours.



Tunnel construction on the feldban tracks (Schaumann, W. (1991), Die Bahnen zwischen Ortler und Isonzo 1914-1918: Vom Friedensfahrplan zur Kriegsfahrordnung, Bohmann Verlag, Vienna)



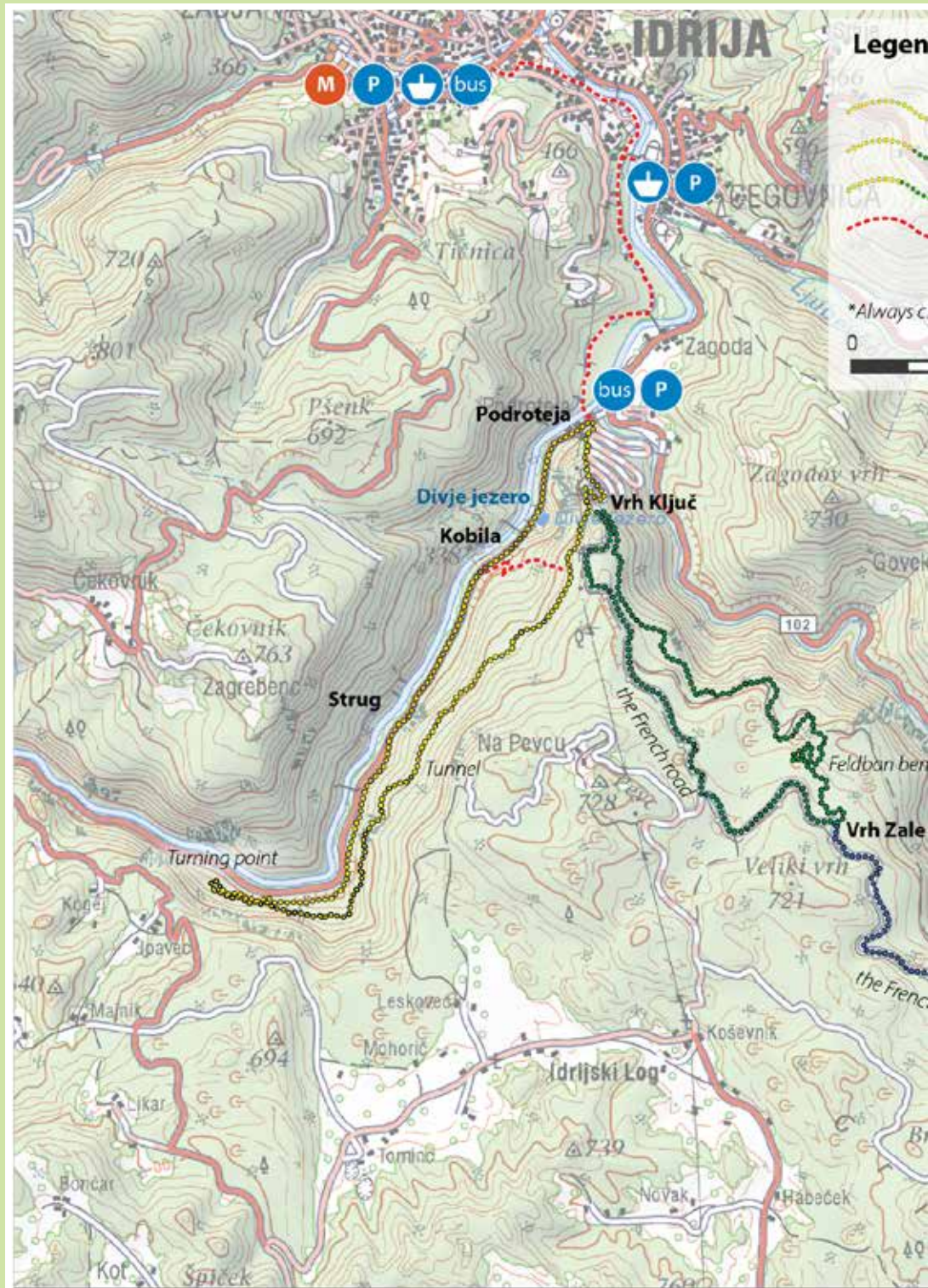
The feldban ledge (Schaumann, W. (1991), Die Bahnen zwischen Ortler und Isonzo 1914-1918: Vom Friedensfahrplan zur Kriegsfahrordnung, Bohmann Verlag, Vienna)

The tracks were busy day and night. The trains never ran on a fixed timetable or had set stops; they stopped as was needed. The railway transported military equipment, food, military post, medical supplies, the wounded and primary commodities for the civilians, occasionally the refugees from the littoral region and iron flasks of mercury. The wagons were first moved by horses. But when in 1917, transshipment increased while horses and fodder became scarce, motor-driven wagons were introduced. As such supply failed to fulfil the growing needs of the military, in 1917, it began constructing a standard track to run from Logatec to Črni Vrh but never finished.



The turning point (Schaumann, W. (1991), Die Bahnen zwischen Ortler und Isonzo 1914-1918: Vom Friedensfahrplan zur Kriegsfahrordnung, Bohmann Verlag, Vienna)

Feldban operated for a good year: from July 1916 to 24 October 1917, until the last, 12th Battle of Isonzo and the Caporetto breakthrough.



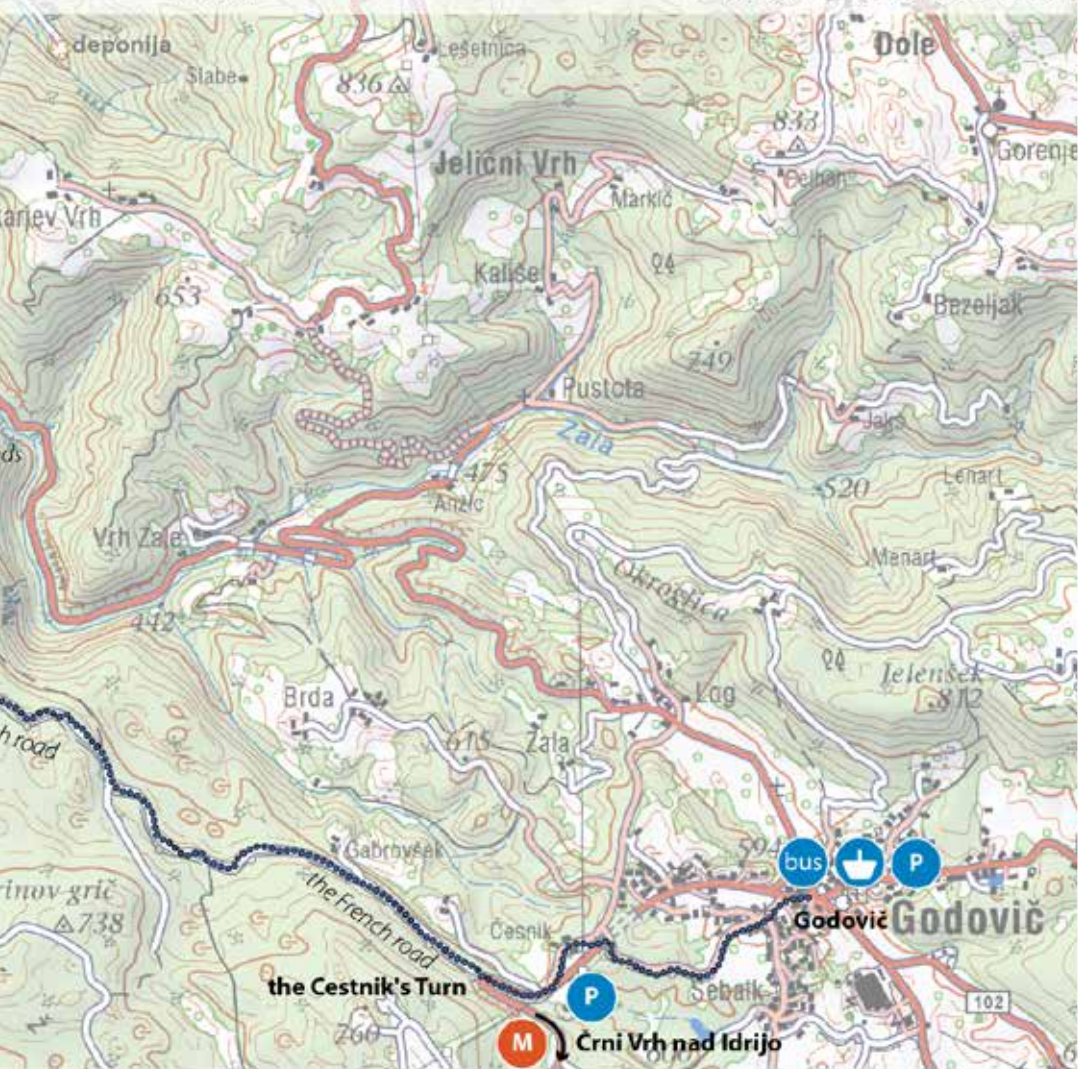
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- The shortest route (7 km):** Podroteja–Strug–vrh Ključ–Podroteja
- The middle route (13 km):** Podroteja–Strug–vrh Ključ–vrh Zale–Podroteja
- The longest route (15 km):** Podroteja–Strug–vrh Ključ–vrh Zale–Cestnikova rajda–Godovič
- Footpath Idrija–Podroteja, Kobila–vrh Ključ

check for current local and interurban transport timetables.



Background source: GURS, 2020



Sightseeing tip

NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE UPPER IDRİJCA LANDSCAPE PARK:

- Wild Lake
- Kamšt with the Rake water channel and the Kobilja dam
- Lajšt natural pool
- The Babji zob (Hag's Tooth) rock
- Brus and Putrih klavže on the Belca River
- The Bučke swimming pools
- Idrija forest railway

Additional information:

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5280 Idrija

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In Idrija

- Geopark Idrija Visitor Centre with TIC Idrija
- Idrija Municipal Museum
- Anthony's Main Road
- Hg Smelting Plant
- Idrija Lace School
- Townspeople Apiary

Museum collections featuring exhibits from the feldban era

IDRIJA WAR MUSEUM,
Trg Sv. Ahacija 4, 5280 Idrija,
Tel: +386 41 407 651

WWI MUSEUM IN ČRNI VRH NAD IDRIJO
Črni Vrh 36, 5274 Črni Vrh nad Idrijo,
Tel: +386 41 739 544



Discover the world of select taste!

Idrija cuisine is famous for making priceless culinary pearls from select, high-quality local ingredients. You can find them under the IDRIJA SELECTED collective trademark.



Feldban route

Length: from 7 to 15 km (you can combine the trails, choosing an appropriate length for you)

Altitude difference: 300 m

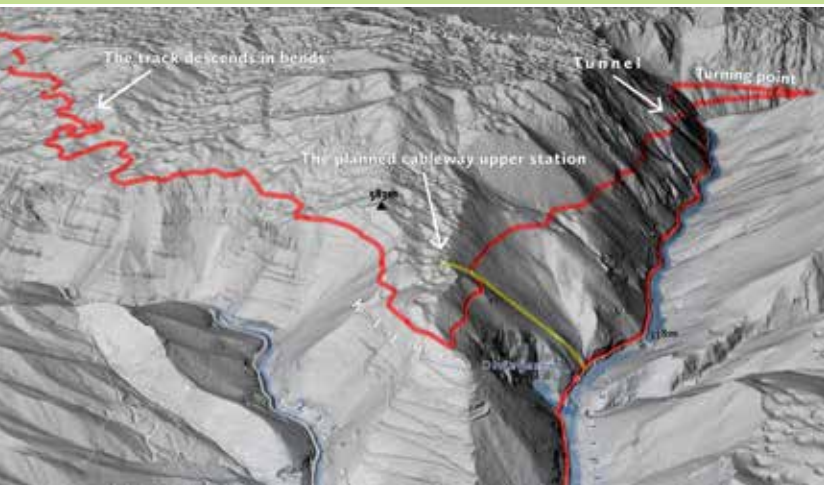
Predominant bedrock: dolomite and limestone, fossiliferous limestone (rudist limestone)

Natural site: Dinaric fir-beech forest (*Omphalodo-Fagetum*)

Botanic features: Carniolan primrose (*Primula carniolica*), ox-eye (*Bupthalmum salicifolium*), horned rampion (*Phyteuma scheuchzeri* ssp. *columnae*)

Watercourses: Idrijca River, Zala River

Viewing points: vrh Zale, vrh Ključ



Published by: Idrija Tourism Board – Idrija Geopark; **Editors:** Mojca Gorjup Kavčič, Branka M. Peternel; **Translation:** Sonja Benčina; **Design:** Anja Deželak s. p.; **Images:** Idrija Municipal Museum Photo Archive, Gregor Zorž; **Photos:** Idrija Tourism Board Archive, Jošt Gantar, Bojan Tavčar, Iztok Bončina, Mojca Gorjup Kavčič; **Map drawing:** Gregor Zorž; **Print:** PAPIRUS PRINT d.o.o.; **Edition:** 1500 copies

Source: Kosmač, M., Terpin Mlinar, M., 2020. "Dediščina vojnega obdobja 20. stoletja" – Vojaška ozkotirna železnica – feldban na Idrijskem in Cerkljanskem, unpublished material of the "Dediščina vojnega obdobja 20. stoletja" project, Idrija Municipal Museum

Idrija, July 2023



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