

Area of the Zgornja Idrijca LANDSCAPE PARK

Length: 11 km

Width: 3.3 km

Area: 44.74 sq.km

Altitude difference: 330 – 1430 m

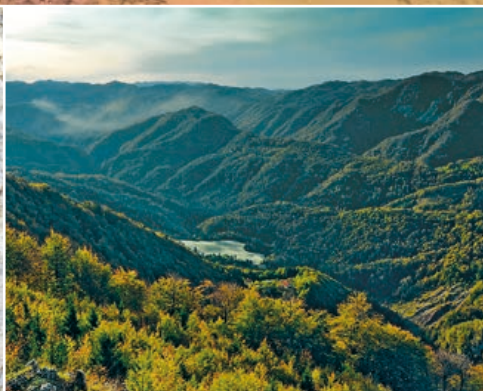
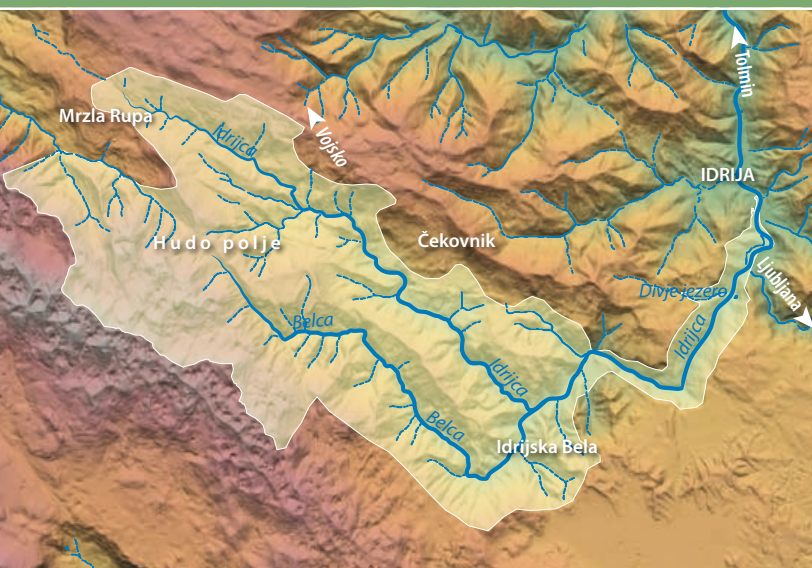
Most important rocks: dolomite, limestone, sandstone

Site: Dinaric beech-fir forest (*Omphalodo-Fagetum*)

Botanic curiosity: Idrija Primrose (*Primula x venusta*)

Watercourses: Idrijca, Belca

Settlement: Idrijska Bela



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I FEEL
SLOVENIA

Idrija.

ZGORNJA IDRIJCA LANDSCAPE PARK

2 3 21 23

On solitary paths, in wild hollows and luxurious forests, along rapids, waterfalls and pools, we shall come across rare plant species, interesting geological phenomena, and unique technical monuments.

**Zgornja
Idrija.**
LANDSCAPE PARK





Typical suspension bridges connect the banks of the Idrijca River.



Let's discover the LANDSCAPE PARK

The highly diversified world carved by the Idrijca River and Belca Stream with their tributaries reveals incredible gorges, geological sections, countless waterfalls, picturesque pools, and springs of excellent water. The area is characterized by alternating layers of permeable and impermeable rocks of varying composition, hardness, age, colour and shape, with traces of ancient life. Karst phenomena have developed in the permeable rocks, and magma rocks bear witness to volcanic activity in the distant past.

Such colourful variety, together with a combination of Mediterranean and alpine climate, has contributed to the highly diversified flora and fauna in the area.

The steep slopes above beds of the Idrijca River and Belca Stream are covered with **forests**, which in the past provided an important raw material and source of energy for the mine's operation. Today these forests have an economic, biotopic and protective role.

The **Idrijca River**, after which the park is named, takes its source below Mrzla Rupa along the edge of the Vojsko plateau. It is one of the cleanest rivers particularly prized by fishermen because of its excellent fishing possibilities.

Together let's discover the landscape park – by foot, bicycle, or longer distances by car.

2 Along Rake – the path of Idrija's natural scientists

At the beginning of the Rake water channel, the **Scopoli Memorial Garden** reminds us of Idrija's famous botanists, and presents the image of our blossoming landscape. It is here that pioneer investigators started to explore the once completely unknown natural surroundings in these parts, and began to develop European natural sciences.

Rising above Scopoli's Garden and the mine's blacksmith workshop is the export tower of **Joseph's Shaft**, which until recently connected the depths of the mine. The eyes of visitors often stop at the chutes and **restored locomotives** used to transport ore from the shafts to the smelting plant. For centuries, Rake's water flow drove the mine machines and »kamšt« (wooden water wheels), which pumped pit water and raised ore from the pit.

As we continue our stroll along the Rake trail, we discover a variegated rock structure, numerous forest plant species and botanical curiosities.



Scopoli
Memorial
Garden



Along the Rake trail, resisting the ravages of time, is an avenue of Pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) trees planted during the channel's reconstruction in 1776. From spring until fall, flowers blossom one after another in natural succession. The first to appear are Snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*), Hepaticas (*Hepatica nobilis*), Christmas roses (*Helleborus niger*), Primroses (*Primula vulgaris*), Lungworts (*Pulmonaria officinalis*), Wood Anemones (*Anemone nemorosa*), and Hacquetias (*Hacquetia epipactis*), followed by fields of Scopolias (*Scopolia carniolica*), Ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), Large Red Dead-Nettles (*Lamium orvala*), Solomon's Seals (*Polygonatum multiflorum*), and Herb Parises (*Paris quadrifolia*). Beneath Bernik's Landslide and alongside the Felc house thrives the Oxlip (*Primula elatior*). Here one can find plants whose generic names honour the discoverers who worked in Idrija at the time.



Along the Rake trail



Hacquetia (*Hacquetia epipactis*)



Blue-eyed Mary
(*Omphalodes verna*)



The Scopolia (*Scopolia carniolica*)
blooms in memory of Idrija's physician Scopoli



Podroteja spring

Karst Springs in Podroteja

The Podroteja karst springs are clearly visible from the footpath where a channel is carved into solid limestone. The strongest spring flows out from under the former mill, and is surrounded on all sides by smaller springs. During rising water levels, water also springs from numerous cracks along and above the road. The surroundings and deeper hinterland of the springs are built of Lower Cretaceous limestone.

After 2.5 km we arrive at the **Kobila dam**. Above the dam, at the meeting point of Upper Cretaceous and Eocene limestone, the waters have carved a karst boiling spring, the »cave above Kobila«.

The trail towards Bela and the Fežnar snack bar continues along the left bank of the Idrijca River, but you may also decide to cross the suspension bridge leading to Divje jezero (Wild Lake).

Dam at Kobila

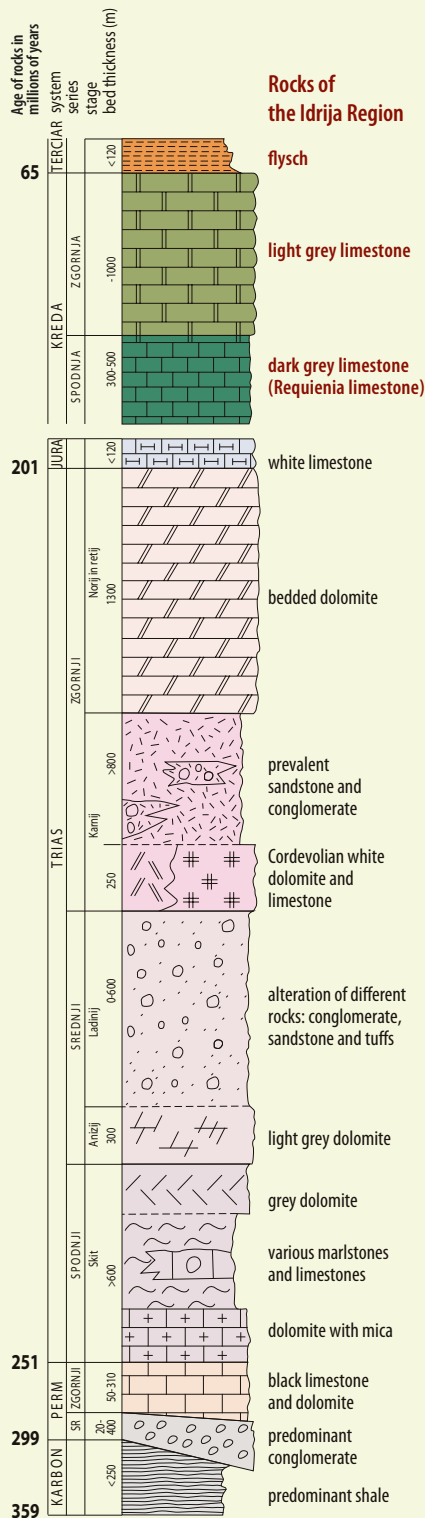


Wild Lake (Divje jezero)

is ranked among the **largest** and most interesting **karst springs in Slovenia**. It lies beneath the steep cliffs of Črni vrh plateau at the beginning of the Strug gorge, and has been arranged as the first museum in nature. Water flows from a steeply descending, submerged pit shaft that has so far been explored by divers to a depth of 164 m, which is at the very limits of current human capacity. The mighty, almost 100 metre-high walls encircling the lake are built of stratified limestone thrust over an impermeable base of flysch rock.

In periods of drought, the water »squeezes« into the small lake below the mighty rock wall, but during high waters the lake spews out enormous quantities of water, forming an up to 60 centimeters-high 'mushroom cap'. In such conditions the water also brings large quantities of air, so that the spewing is also accompanied by a special murmuring. The size of the lake changes, depending on the quantities of water flowing off along **the shortest Slovenian river**, the **Jezernica**, which is only 55 metres long, into the Idrijca riverbed. Heavier rainfall in the upper reaches of the Idrijca River may lead to the opposite phenomenon, where the lake functions as a swallow-hole. Waters flow towards Divje jezero and Podroteja from the entire Črni vrh plateau, Vodice, the surroundings of Godovič, the Zala valley and, during high waters, also from the environs of Hotedrščica.

In the siphon of Divje jezero, divers have discovered the Cave shrimp (*Troglocaris anophthalmus*), *Monolistra spinosissima*, and the *Niphargobates orophobata*, as well as the Olm or »human fish« (*Proteus anguinus*).



Olm or human fish (*Proteus anguinus*)





Wild Lake (Divje jezero)



Alpine Butterwort (*Pinguicula alpina*)



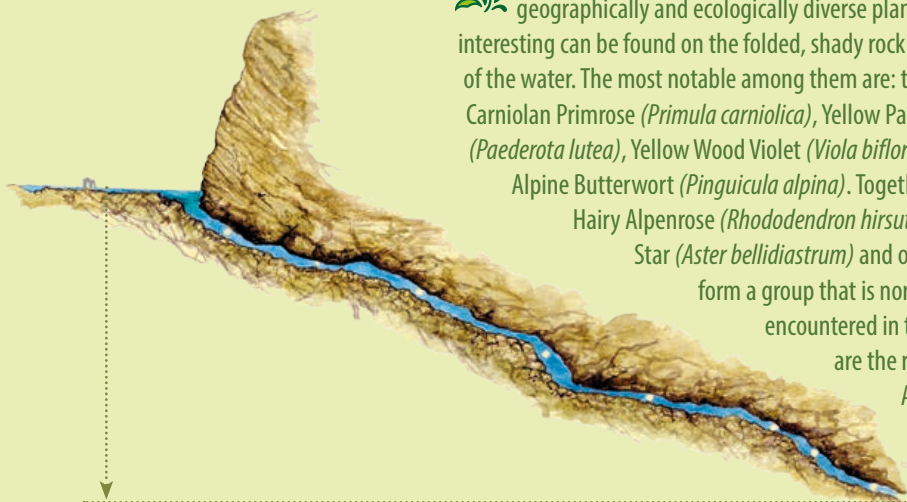
Yellow Wood Violet (*Viola biflora*)



Carniolan Primrose (*Primula carniolica*)



This area is home to more than 150 species of geographically and ecologically diverse plants. The most interesting can be found on the folded, shady rock wall rising out of the water. The most notable among them are: the endemic Carniolan Primrose (*Primula carniolica*), Yellow Paederota (*Paederota lutea*), Yellow Wood Violet (*Viola biflora*), and the Alpine Butterwort (*Pinguicula alpina*). Together with the Hairy Alpenrose (*Rhododendron hirsutum*), Dairy Star (*Aster bellidiastrum*) and others, they form a group that is normally encountered in the Alps. These are the remains of Ice Age flora.



Section of Wild Lake

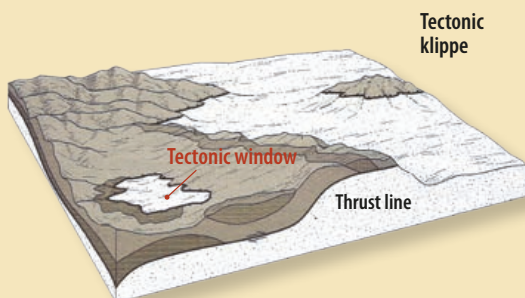
Explored to a depth of 164 m



On the right bank of the Idrijca River, along the mainroad at Strug, the thrust contact between two limestones comes into view.

Strug Tectonic Window

In the far-off geological past, lateral pressures first caused the rock strata to fold, and then to break into several rock blocks that were thrust one over the other. This movement of rock blocks is called **thrusting**. Over millions of years, the disintegration and erosion of rocks gradually removed the highest lying thrust rocks, causing the lower-lying rock strata to appear in the form of a tectonic window.



The old route along the left bank of the Idrijca River leading from the Kobila dam to Bela is also called the Royal Route. In 1838, Idrija's botanical curiosities attracted a visit from Saxon King Frederick Augustus II under the guidance of Henrik Freyer. The two men inspected the unique flora of Divje jezero and Strug.

In the rock wall rising above the path, known as Modrasovše, is an island with thermophilic vegetation. Thriving amidst Hop Hornbeam (*Ostrya carpinifolia*) and Flowering Ash (*Fraxinus ornus*) are the Pyramidal Bellflower (*Campanula pyramidata*), White Dittany (*Dictamnus albus*), and the Sweet Iris (*Iris pallida subsp. illyrica*). Strug is also home to the Horse Tongue Lily (*Ruscus hypoglossum*).



White Dittany (*Dictamnus albus*)



Horse Tongue Lily (*Ruscus hypoglossum*)

Strug Climbing Centre

Halfway in the direction of Idrijska Bela, where the Strug valley narrows, is the Strug Climbing Centre. Here we cross the river on a wooden suspension bridge (»cigu must«), and then for 5 minutes follow the steep marked path to the climbing spot. The 50 metre-high limestone walls offer exciting climbing in 15 directions.



Lajšt Area

At the confluence of the Belca Stream and Idrijca River is a well-maintained **natural bathing ground** – Lajšt. In this beautiful natural setting, visitors can indulge in the exceptional richness of nature, recreation, the hospitality of the locals, and the culinary delights at Lajšt. The colourful gravel draws our attention to the highly diversified rocks found in the Zgornja Idrijca valley.



Shrine below Tršanovše

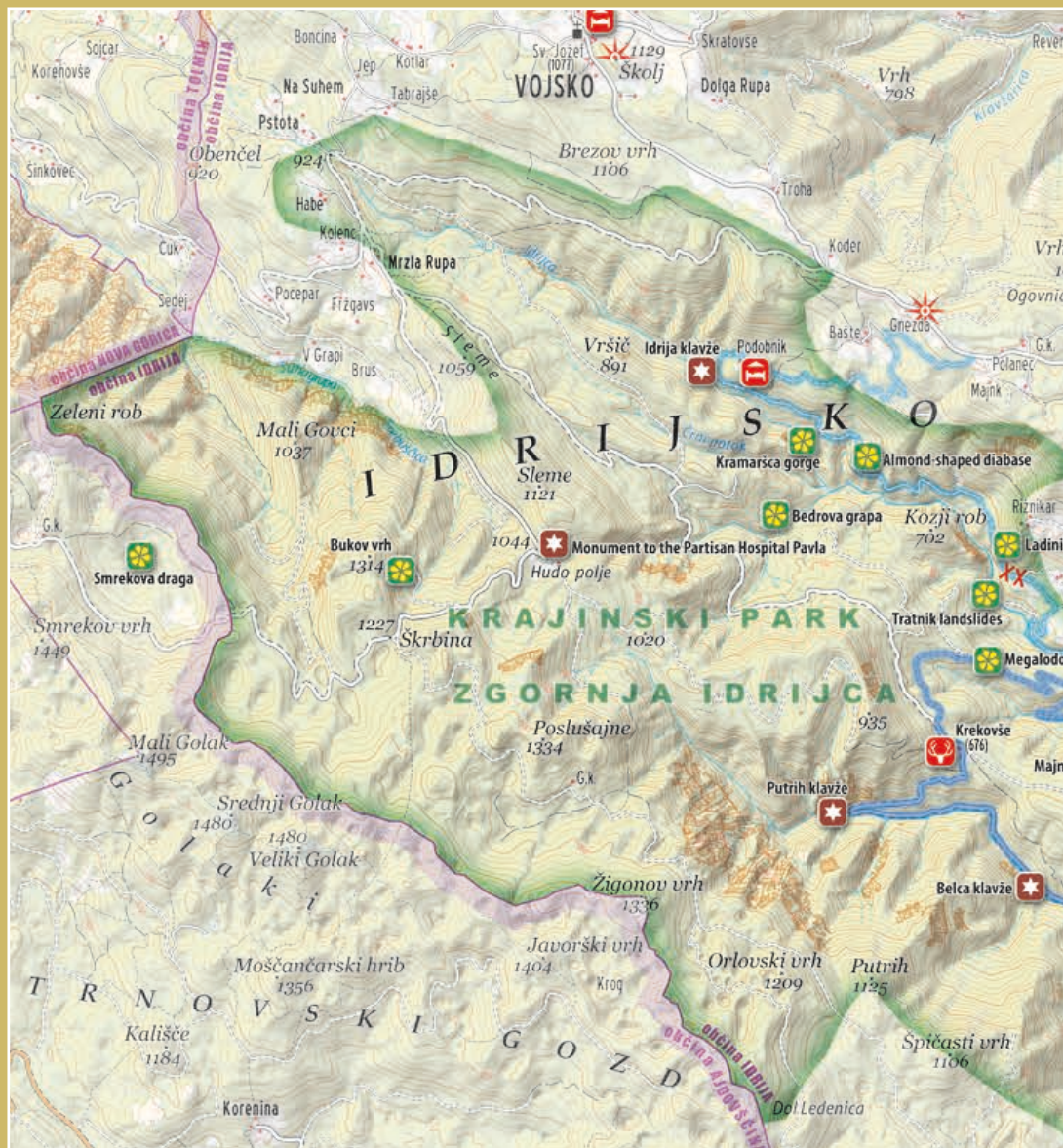
Near St. Mary's Chapel is a spring of excellent drinking water.

Babji zob

is a several metres-high dolomite tower squeezed onto a narrow bank between the Belca Stream and the Idrijska Bela-Belčne klavže road. It originated in light grey, massive, Upper Triassic dolomite. It was partly formed naturally and partly due to the construction of a road.

Where do the old rocky »crones« and »codgers« come from?

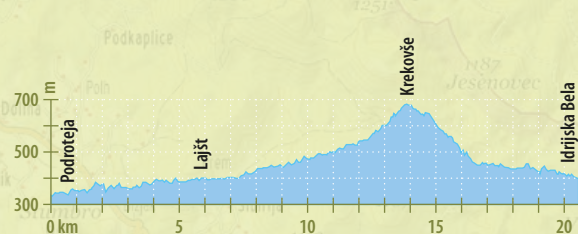
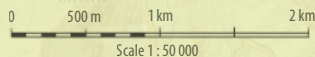
Rock-carved crones and codgers are mostly given old mythological names, usually linked to local tales. Crones and codgers were often turned into stone because of their cursing or other sins.



Zgornja Idrija Landscape Park

CYCLING TRAIL • TIME: 2 h • DISTANCE: 21 km

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Viewpoint | Hunting lodge |
| Inn | Beach |
| Visitor farm | Climbing |
| Mountain hut | Rent A Bike |
| Petrol station | Natural heritage |
| Impassable road | Cultural heritage |







Putrih klavže

Idrija klavže

is the largest water barrier with the greatest capacity among all of Idrija's water barriers. The 41.4 metre-long and 10.8 metre-wide barrier intended for floating timber was capable of retaining 210,000 m³ of water in an 800 metre-long lake. When the barrier was lifted, the accumulated water was able to float 10,000 m³ of timber at once for a distance of 20 km to Idrija. Idrijske klavže are only accessible from the direction of Vojsko.

**The Idrija klavže are only accessible from the direction of Vojsko.*

Klavže (water barriers) were used to float wood for the needs of the mine and the town.

Belca or Brus klavže

on the Belca Stream were able to accumulate up to 100,000 m³ of water.

Putrih klavže

masterfully wedged into the rocks of the precipitous forest gorge, are the most picturesque of them all.

A marked path leads from the Putrih klavže towards the location of the former **partisan hospital Pavla**, which operated in wooden cabins in the area between the Idrija River and Belca Stream. Altogether 1600 wounded persons were treated here. The facilities are not preserved.

How was wood floated?



The river was dammed up by closing the barriers, and timber was stacked in the channel below them. When the dam was full, the gate was opened. Enormous quantities of water floated the timber down to the town in a few hours.



Megalodontid limestone



Megalodontid shells

Triassic Megalodontid Shells

Well-preserved Megalodontid shells, including the species *Triadomegalodon idrianus n.sp.*, can be found at several sites. The most beautiful shells are preserved in the rock fissures along the forest route that branches off the Krekovše-Mrzla Rupa road in the direction of the Idrijca River valley, and along the new Knipajs-Krekovše road. Also impressive are the huge boulders at Lajšt, which are comprised almost entirely of Megalodontid shells.

Forest in Majnšk

The Landscape Park is predominantly covered with mixed fir and beech forests, while higher lying areas are dominated by beech forests. The forest communities change with altitude and position, and also depend on the geological base.

Beech is predominant among deciduous trees, while fir has a major role among conifers.



Idrija Lauf

was a forest railway in a length of up to 3000 m, used to transport and supply timber from the heart of the forests to the riverbed, from where it was floated to Idrija. The lauf, which was the first device of its kind in the former Austria-Hungary and probably the first in the world, was made of wood, while the cart wheels and other small parts were made of steel.



Water Pools

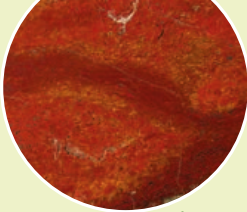
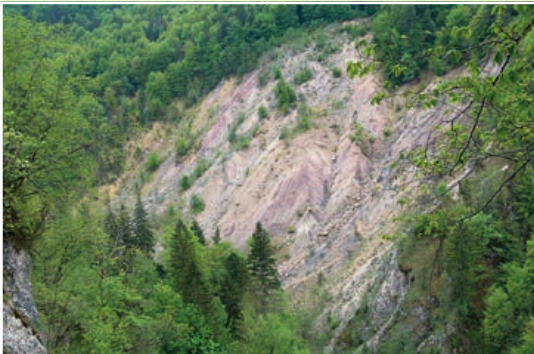
can be found in the Idrijca riverbed, approximately one hundred metres below the bridge on the Lajšt-Majnšk road. They were formed in Upper Triassic dolomite and are of varying depths, the largest being 2 to 3 metres deep. Water pools are formed in streams and along the edges of riverbeds. The water in these pools circulates very quickly, carrying collected gravel, which erodes the rock walls. Such erosion causes the pools to become wider and deeper.

Tratnik Landslides

The area comprises an extensive, continuously moving landslide on the right bank of the Idrija River beneath the Tratnik farm in Čekovnik. The slopes are barren and cannot overgrow because of strong erosion. Disintegration and erosion is much more rapid in softer rocks such as shales and marls, while more solid rocks built of limestones, siliceous sandstones and conglomerates are more prominent. The landslides are a real treasure trove of **various rocks that are approx. 225 million years old**. Here one can find many-coloured shales, sandstones and conglomerates with intercalated layers of limestone containing numerous organic residues. Particularly striking are the variegated Jasper conglomerates. The black, thin-bedded Julian limestones with interbedded marl sequences frequently contain the internal fillings of pelecypods such as *Pachycardia rugosa* and *Myophoria kefersteini*, as well as numerous remains of thin-valved pelecypods and gastropods.

Note: The natural sites above the Tratnik Landslides (Ladinian Beds, Bedrova Grapa gorge, Kramaršca gorge, Almond-shaped Diabase) are accessible from Čekovnik.

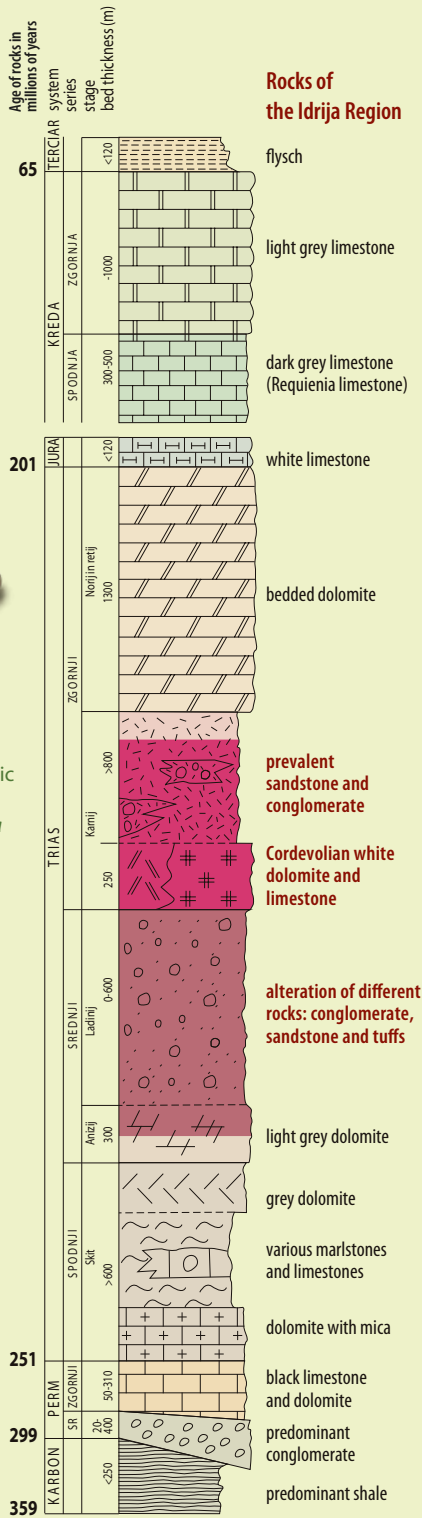
Tratnik landslides



Jasper



Upper Triassic pelecypods (*Pachycardia rugosa*)





Ladinian beds

attract attention because of their quickly changing green and brownish-red marl layers intercalated with reddish limestones and fragments of ammonites. The beds are clearly visible along the Tratnik–Idrijske klavže road, beneath the Rižnikar farm. These rocks are around 230 million years old.

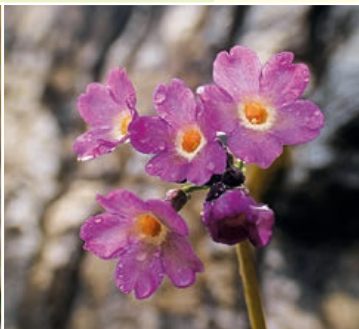


Upper Idrijca River

The most important botanical treasure of these slopes is by all means an extraordinary plant named after our town. This is the endemic hybrid, the **Idrija Primrose** (*Primula x venusta*), which grows only in those areas where both of its parents thrive: **Bear's Ear** (*Primula auricula*), which inhabits sunny rock walls, and the **Carniolan Primrose** (*Primula carniolica*), which thrives in humid ravines. The only other locations where such conditions can be found are on Jelenk and in part of Govci. This is home to several species of the protected Orchid family (*Orchidaceae*), among them the loveliest, Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*). Other special alpine plants include: the Least Snowbell (*Soldanella minima*), Trumpet Gentian (*Gentiana clusii*), Dwarf Alpenrose (*Rhodothamnus chamaecistus*), and Bertoloni's Columbine (*Aquilegia bertolonii*). None the less important are the following woody plants, which have long been protected by law: the European Yew (*Taxus baccata*), European Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and the Horse Tongue Lily (*Ruscus hypoglossum*). Special protection is needed by the marshy area in the upper part of the Idrijca River basin, home of the Common Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*) and Peat Moss (*Spagnum* sp.).



Bear's Ear (*Primula auricula*)



Idrija Primrose (*Primula x venusta*)

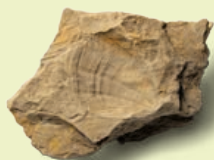


Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*)

Bedrova grapa

springs up below Hudo polje and discharges into the Idrijca River at Kramaršca. In this picturesque, but demanding ravine, one can follow the Upper Triassic Carnian rocks metre by metre, observe the colourful intertwining of rocks, their characteristics and sedimentological particularities. There are also several layers of pelecypods – *Pachycardia rugosa* and *Myophoria kefersteini*. In the middle of the ravine, where Pšenkova grapa connects to the ravine, we cross a major intercalation of laminated and oolitic limestones in which interesting karst phenomena have developed.

Past the remains of the partisan Daddy's hospital, we then arrive at the remarkable barren lands featuring a gradual transition from Carnian shales into Norian-Rhetian dolomite.



Pelecypod
(*Myophoria kefersteini*)

Kramaršca Gorge

is an extremely picturesque and almost impassible section of the Idrijca River **above the junction of Bedrova grapa** and the **Črni potok** stream (Suha Idrijca). Here the Idrijca River cuts its way among precipitous rock walls in waterfalls and swirling pools. Over a length of around 200 m, it forms 3 waterfalls and 4 large pools. The initial part of the gorge features a multitude of large boulders of the Baštet rockfall.

Warning: The gorge is accessible only to visitors with alpinistic skills.



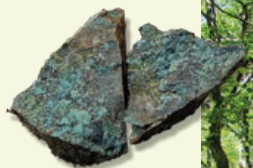
Bedrova grapa



Kramaršca gorge

Almond-shaped Diabase

In Kramaršca, along the mainroad leading to the Idrija klavže (water barriers), lies a dark-green magnatic rock known as the almond-shaped diabase, which is filled with cavities or geodes referred to as almonds because of their shape. Geodes were formed during the rapid cooling of lava that flowed into the shallow sea some 230 million years ago (in Ladinian). White calcite crystals then filled the geodes, giving the rocks an extraordinary appearance. Almond-shaped diabases are the westernmost outcrops of magma rocks in Slovenia.



23 Feldban

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.

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.

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

You are invited to a hiking trail along the feldban, where you will enjoy stunning views and discover the still visible remains of the military narrow-gauge field railway.



SPORTS activities

Lajšt Area – confluence of the Idrijca and Belca rivers

🌐 www.geopark-idrija.si/en/about-the-landscape-park/visitor-information/

Strug Climbing Centre

E: plezalniklub.idrija@gmail.com

🌐 www.plezanje.net/plezalisce/strug

Hunting Club Krekovše

🌐 zld-idrija.si/ld-krekovse.html

CULINARY OFFER and ACCOMMODATION

Idrija and its surroundings offer dishes and drinks that every traveler will enjoy. In Idrija, they know how to prepare real specialties from simple ingredients, such as **Idrija žlikrofi**, the symbol of Idrija's cuisine, **zeljševka**, **ocvirkovca**, **smukavc**, or **štruklji**. The countryside offers excellent **cheeses and other dairy products**, as well as the best **honey** provided by Idrija beekeepers.



Explore the diverse range of accommodations in Idrija and the surroundings, from apartments, guest houses and youth hostel to tourist farms and boutique accommodations in the countryside.



TRADITIONAL events

- Hike through the landscape park (May/June)
- Car-Free Day (June)
- Traditional hike to Hleviše (May)
- Cycling and hiking climb to Hleviše mountain hut (September)
- Hg trail (May)

Idrija Selected Collective Trademark

The Idrija Selected certificate of excellency guarantees the high quality of chosen delicacies, craft products, and authentic experience that are made by the nature and the people of the Idrija region. Tasty, decorative, and useful products designed with care and love tell stories about the traditions and heritage of Idrija.

