



SLOVAKIA

**BRIEF HISTORY – WHEN THE
NATIONAL CULTURE BEGAN
TO DEVELOP**

o Early Slovakia

- Slavs settled in what is now Slovakia in the 6th century AD.
- They were soon conquered by a people called the Avars but at the end of the 8th century they drove out the Avars.
- In the 9th century Slovakia became part of the state of Great Moravia, which included parts of Germany, Hungary and Poland.
- The Moravian Empire lasted from 830 to 906.
- During its lifetime St Cyril and St Methodius converted Slovakia to Christianity and they created first Glagolitic script in 863 - it is the oldest known Slavic alphabet .
- However in the early 10th century a people called the Magyars (ancestors of today's Hungarians) destroyed the Moravian Empire.
- The Magyars settled down and formed the state of Hungary but they still ruled Slovakia.
- Hungary was to rule Slovakia for the next 1,000 years!
- Slovakia became part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

○ Slovakia in the 18th Century and 19th Century

- For most of the 18th century Slovakia was in the doldrums.
- However at the end of the century Slovak nationalism began to grow.
- In 1792 Anton Bernolak founded the Slovak Learned Society and in the 19th century a Slovak National Revival began.
- It was led by Ludovit Stur (1815-1856).
- In 1845 he published the first periodical in the Slovak language.

○ Slovakia in the 20th Century

- On 30 October 1918 as Austria collapsed the formation of a new Czech-Slovak state was announced.
- It was called Czechoslovakia.
- The 1920s were year of prosperity for Czechoslovakia.
- However like the rest of the world the country suffered in the depression of the 1930s.
- On 15 March 1939 the German army occupied the rest of what is now the Czech Republic.
- Slovakia became nominally independent (although it was really a German puppet).

- The new Slovak government was led by Jozef Tiso, who introduced a repressive regime.
- Then in August 1944 a rebellion called the Slovak National Uprising took place.
- However Germany troops crushed the rebellion.

Yet by the end of 1944 Czech and Russian troops had entered Slovakia and on 4 April 1945 a provisional government was formed.

- It consisted to Socialists, Social Democrats and Communists.

However on 5 January 1968 Alexander Dubcek, a Slovakian became head of government.

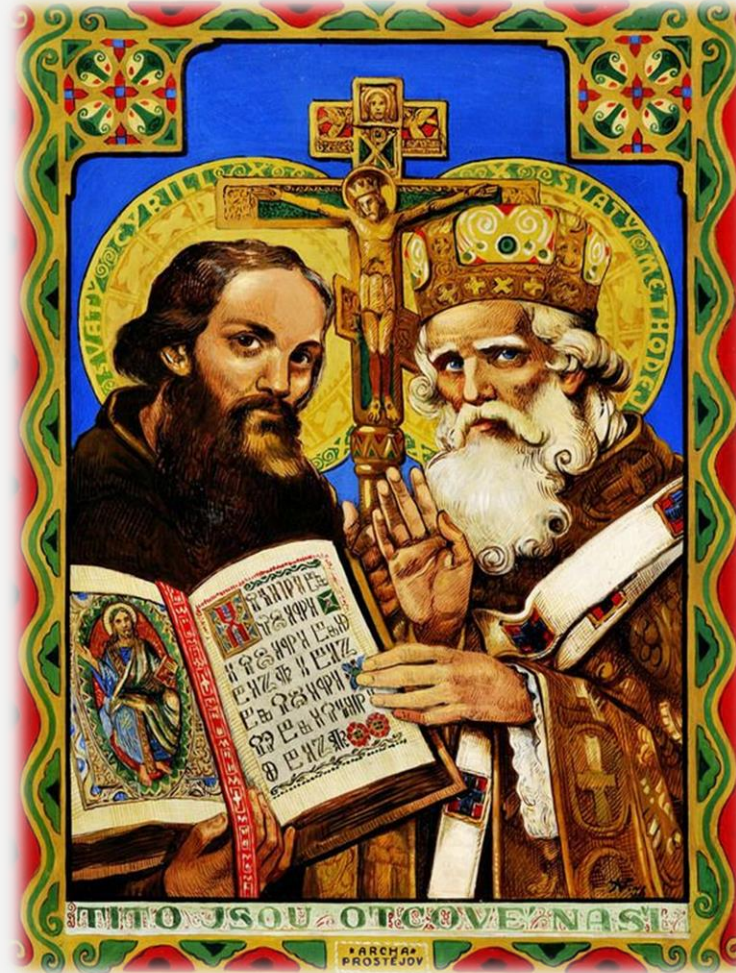
- However the Velvet Revolution was followed by the velvet divorce when Slovakia and the Czech Republic separated.
- The split took place on 1 January 1993.

Independent Slovakia faced many problems.

- At first its economy performed poorly but in the early 21st century the situation improved.
- Slovakia also suffered from high unemployment.

○ Slovakia in the 21st Century

- In 2004 Slovakia joined the EU.
- In 2009 it joined the Euro.
- Furthermore in 2009 Slovakia joined NATO.
- Meanwhile in the early 21st century the economy of Slovakia grew strongly although the country suffered from high unemployment.
- Today the population of Slovakia is 5.5 million.



Cyril and Metod



Glagolitic script



**BUILDING
MONUMENTS**

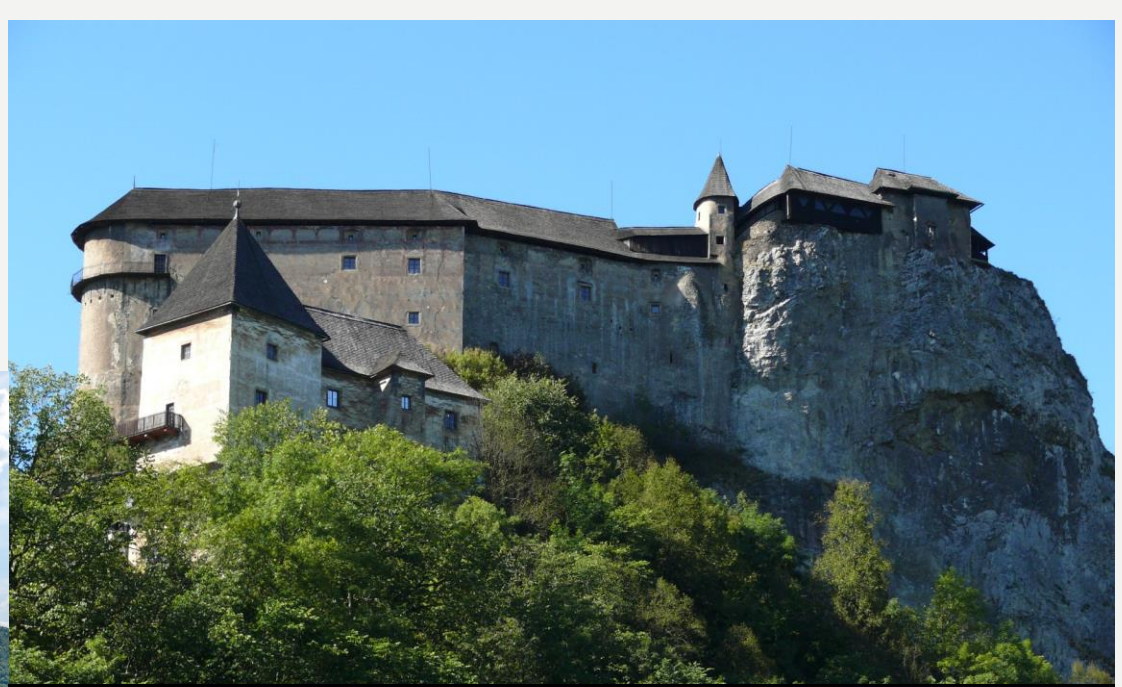
BOJNICE CASTLE

- Bojnice Castle belongs to the most beautiful and the most visited castles in Central Europe.
- It is one of the oldest and the most important castles in Slovakia.
- Bojnice Castle is a national culture heritage and a residence of museum.



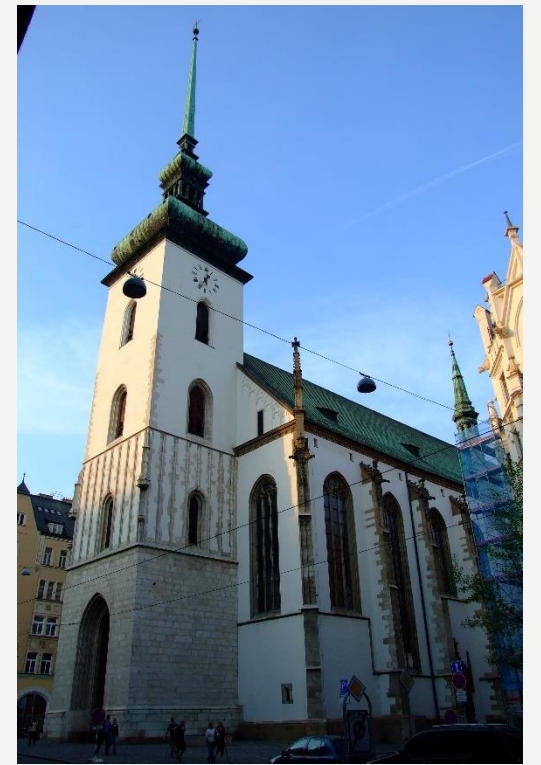
ORAVA CASTLE

- Large and well-preserved castle is towering on a steep limestone hill right by the village at 112 metres over the level of the river Orava
- The castle is a national culture heritage.



CHURCH OF ST. JAMES

- Church of St. James in Levoča, originally in gothic style, is the second largest church in Slovakia, national monument and a building of a particular art-historical significance.



ACADEMIA ISTROPOLITANA

- The first university to be founded in the territory of present-day Slovakia.
- It was founded in 1465 by Pope Paul II on the request of King Matthias Corvinus.
- The renaissance university building still stands, currently housing the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava.



CITY HERITAGE RESERVATIONS

- **Banská Bystrica**
- **Banská Štiavnica**
- **Bardejov**
- **Bratislava**
- **Kežmarok**
- **Košice**

- **Kremnica**
- **Levoča**
- **Nitra**
- **Podolíneec**
- **Prešov**
- **Spišská Kapitula**

- **Spišská Sobota**
- **Svätý Jur**
- **Štiavnické Bane**
- **Trenčín**
- **Trnava**
- **Žilina**

BANSKÁ BYSTRICA

- The city of Banská Bystrica is located in central Slovakia. Banská Bystrica is the most important historical, cultural and economic centre of the central Slovakia. The first written reference about the city is from the year 1255.
- **BANSKÁ BYSTRICA** was member of the exclusive trio of the **richest central Slovakian mining towns**. Banská Bystrica attribute was “**copper**” as this ore was extracted in the Starohorské vrchy Mts. near the town in the 14th century.
- The pride of Banská Bystrica is its central **Námestie SNP** square. The multicoloured area of the square can be best admired from the slender **Hodinová veža** tower (The Clock Tower). It was built in 1552 as part of the town prison.

SNP square



The Clock Tower



BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA

- The gem among the towns of Slovakia is undoubtedly **Banská Štiavnica** situated in the heart of the Štiavnické vrchy Mts. Its undeniable values and beauty caused that it is one of the first Slovak towns that has been included into the **UNESCO** World Heritage List in 1996.
- Mining schools and science also flourished in the town: the oldest mining school in the Kingdom of Hungary was founded in 1735. It was promoted to the **Mining Academy** in 1762, **the first superior mining school in Europe**.
- The dominant of the town centre is **Starý zámok** (Old Castle) standing on the west terrace of the Trojičné námestie square. Today, the Old Castle houses is the (Slovak Mining Museum).
- **Calvary** - is a set of twenty two separate sacral buildings.

The Mining Academy



The Old Castle



Calvary



- The special elements of the landscape are artificial lakes called **Tajchy**. They were founded for mining purposes. There 23 of such lakes now used for recreation.
- **Počúvadlo Lake** - Is located in the Štiavnické vrchy protected landscape area
- The water reservion was built n 1775



KREMNICA

- **KREMNICA** situated in central Slovakia was one of the **richest towns** of the Kingdom of Hungary in the past. Kremnica derived its wealth from **gold mining** due to which it soon won the attribute of a "**golden town**".
- The central area of the town is the **Štefánikovo námestie** square. The with its dominant, which is the **town castle** and the **Gothic church of St Catherine**, built in the 15th century.pride of the church is the old organ with wonderful sound appreciable above all during the traditional summer event called **Kremnický hradný organ** (The Castle Organ of Kremnica).
- The gem of the Štefánikovo námestie square is the bulky Baroque **Trinity Pillar**. In the north-western corner of the square is the **building of the oldest mint in the world**. **Múzeum mincí a medailí** (Museum of coins and medals) offers more information about the craft of coinage and its tradition in Kremnica. The visitors can take a special souvenir from here - a **self-made coin**.

Štefánik's square



Building of the oldest mint in the world



**THE TOP IN THE
WORLD**

- The highest wooden Gothic altar in the world - in Levoca in the Church of St. James (8,6 m).
- The Kremlin Mint is the oldest business in the world that operates continuously (since 1328).
- The Bratislava tapestries exhibited at the Primaciálny palác are the most complete series of tapestries in the world produced in the English royal workshop in Mortlake.



- The first university of technical character in the world was the Banská akadémia, founded in 1762.
- The building of the first horse-drawn railway in Hungary is one of the oldest station buildings in the world.



- Chamois Tatra is a unique species of chamois because it has developed thousands of years after the end of the ice age completely isolated. You will not find this species anywhere else on earth.
- The highest sinter pillar in the world is hiding the Krásnohorská Cave (32,6 m).



WOODEN CHURCHES

**ARE SPECIFIC FOR OUR COUNTRY. WOODEN
CHURCHES WERE MADE ONLY FROM WOOD.
WOODEN CHURCHES ARE NUMBER ONE IN
THE WORLD AMONG THE CHURCHES.**

CHURCH OF THE RELICS OF ST. NICHOLAS

- The Greek Catholic wooden **Church of the relics of St. Nicholas the Bishop** was included in 2008, along with seven wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area, on the **UNESCO** World Heritage List.
- The wooden church was built at the beginning of the 18th century, in the years 1720 to 1730.
- The interior in the Baroque and Rococo style is from the beginning of the 18th century.



HRONSEK – ARTICLED CHURCH

- The **wooden articulated church** is on the **UNESCO** World Heritage List.
- The **wooden articulated church** from 1726 is set in the wonderful environment of big lime trees. There are 1,100 chairs in this church. It's organ was fitted in 1764. Four bulky lime trees stand in its yard. Fine wooden belfry from 1726 stands nearby.
- The member of the Štúr's literary group, poet Andrej Sládkovič married the local girl Júlia Senkovičová in this church.

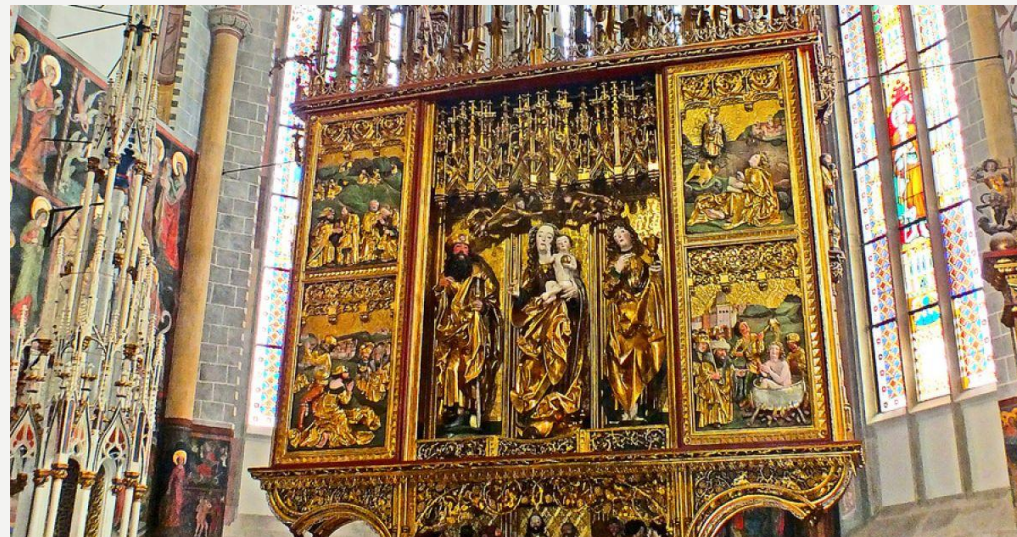


LEVOČA

- The town has a historic center with a well preserved town wall, a Renaissance church with the highest wooden altar in the world, carved by Master Pavol of Levoča, and many other Renaissance buildings.



- the highest wooden altar in the world





**MONUMENTS
UNESCO**

VLKOLÍNEC

- The village is a nice example typical old northern Slovakian architecture. It is interesting that unlike other open-air folk museums, 45 original wooden houses forming Vlkolínec are still inhabited. The village was inscribed in to the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1993.



CAVES AND OF SLOVENSKY KRAS

- Caves lying in Slovak Karst were added to the UNESCO's World Heritage List together with caves located in Hungary in 1995. Some of them are accessible to tourists, some not. Dobšinská Ice Cave and Ochtinská Aragonite Cave lying in Rožňava and Spišská Nová Ves districts are the most precious and popular ones.



BARDEJOV

- Bardejov and its Town Hall Square were included in to the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2000. The square is surrounded by many precious historical buildings built in Renaissance and Baroque styles.



SPIŠ CASTLE

- Spiš Castle is one of the biggest castles in Europe and the biggest one in the Central Europe. It was inscribed in to the UNESCO's World heritage List in 1993. The castle is formed by a complex of Renaissance and Gothic buildings constructed by several owners. Nowadays it houses an exhibition of arms.



**TYPICAL SLOVAK
MUSICAL
INSTRUMENTS**

CIMBAL



- The **cimbalom** is a type of chordophone composed of a large, trapezoidal box with metal strings stretched across its top. It is a musical instrument commonly found in the group of Central-Eastern European nations and cultures, namely contemporary Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. It is also popular in Greece and gypsy music. The cimbalom is (typically) played by striking two beaters against the strings. The steel treble strings are arranged in groups of 4 and are tuned in unison. The bass strings which are over-spun with copper, are arranged in groups of 3 and are also tuned in unison.

FUJARA

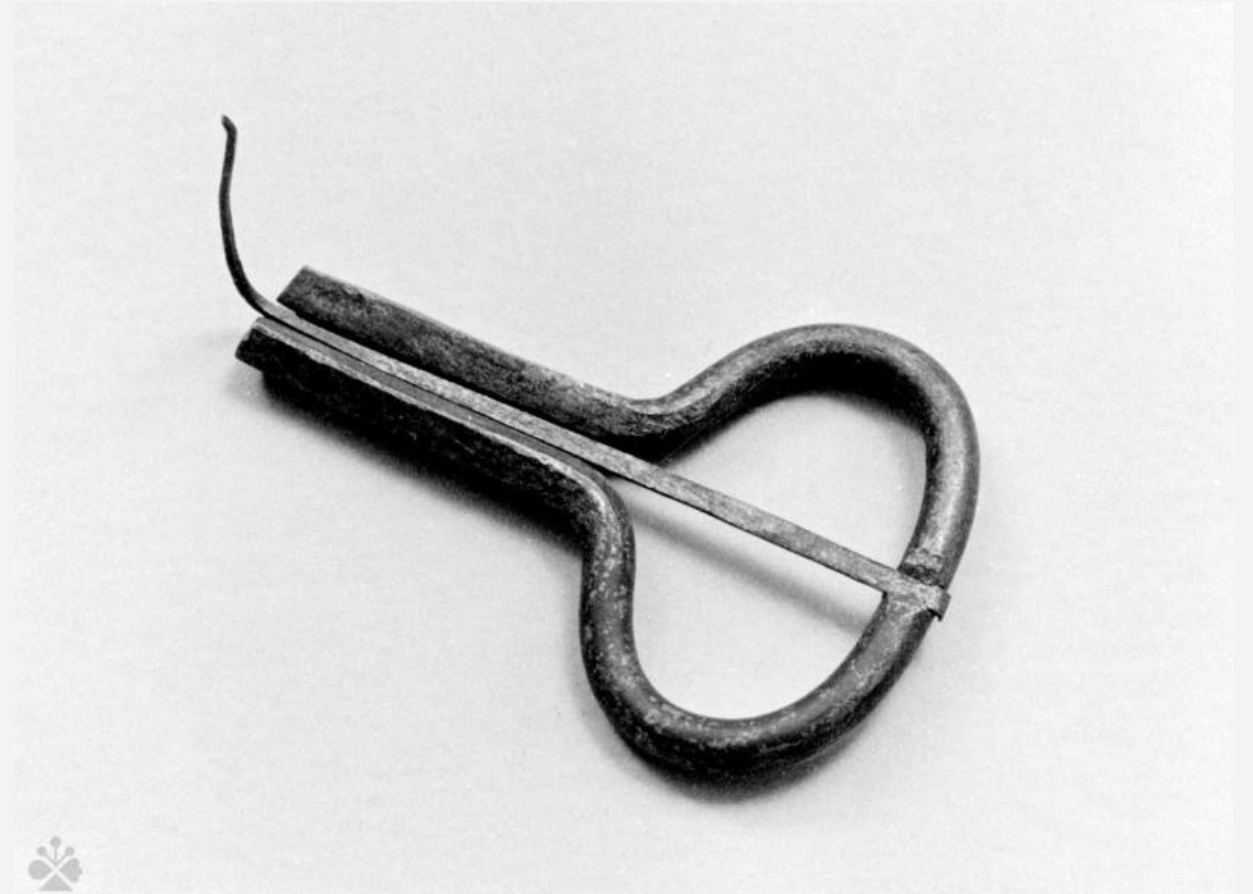


The **fujara** originated in central Slovakia as a large sophisticated folk shepherd's overtone fipple flute of unique design. It is technically a contrabass in the tabor pipe class.

Ranging from 160 to 200 cm long (5'3" – 6'6"). It has three tone holes (also called *finger holes*) located on the lower part of the main body. The sound is produced by a fipple at the upper end of the main body of the fujara. The air is led to the fipple through a smaller parallel pipe, called *vzduchovod* in Slovak (meaning "air channel"), mounted on the main body of the instrument. While it is possible to play the fundamental frequency on fujaras, the normal playing technique is based on overblowing the instrument. Because of the high aspect ratio of the sound chamber (great length versus small internal diameter), the player can use overtones to play a diatonic scale using only the three tone holes. The fujara is typically played while standing, with the instrument held vertically and usually braced against the right thigh.

DRUMBL'A

- Drumbra is a folk music instrument belonging to a group of idiophones. It appears to be from Asia; on Chinese artwork from 3rd century BC there is a musician playing on drumbra. It came to Europe from the eastern plain of Kazakhstan and was known by the old Roman. In European countries, drumbra has been a very common musical instrument. On the territory of Slovakia, it was mainly Roma sculpture. With the first European settlers, it also came to America.



HELIGÓNKA



- Heligonka is a diatonic button pull harmonica supplemented with a reinforced bass part, "Heligon bass". Strong bass sound is usually achieved by two paths: by shifting individual bass sounds by an octave less than that of other harmonics, and by placing a robust spider plate in the wooden horn. The characteristic trumpets in the bass part are also partly involved in the output of a strong bass tone; their meaning is rather decorative

FOLK COSTUMES



Slovak costume represented the clothes of the people living on the village. Its evolution was peaking in the second half of the 19th to the end of the first half of the 20th century, when it is progressively being changed into the industrial and crafted sewn ready-to-wear parts of clothing. An image of the traditional clothing was formed by several important factors (geographical and climatic conditions, social status, financial abilities), but also social and historical determinants such as colonization, migrations of the population, development of the craftwork, industrial production, trade, etc. Traditional materials for the Slovak folk costume production were linen, hemp, fur and wool. Except for these, also imported materials (cotton, silk) and textiles produced in factories (brocades, soft cotton textiles or woolen cloth) became popular.

The people, who worn and produced them, also paid attention to not only the functionality, but also to the decoration, where



At the end of the 19th century was a creation of **the 60 local variations of the traditional clothing!**

PARTS OF THE TRADITIONAL CLOTHING

- The clothes were always divided by sex and age. Among female clothes there was the lower part more segmented than in the masculine lower part. It consisted of several undershirts, **rubáš** (a type of underwear), **blouse** or **female shirt**, **rukávce** (a shirt with embroidered sleeves) and **skirt**. The upper part consisted of upper **skirt**, **apron**, **scarf**, **bodice**, short or long **coats**, **mentieka** (a type of the coat) or **fur coat**. For shoes production domestic materials such as leather, linen and wool in the form of the knitted fabric or cloth were used. The oldest type of wraparound leather shoes are **krpce**. They symbolized the farmers, but after the First World War they stopped to wear them. **Boots** became a new type of the leather footwear. **Jewellery** were also the significant accessory.

FEMALE CLOTHES



Rubáš

Female



Underskirt



An upper skirt



A skirt with bodice



An apron



A bodice



MALE CLOTHES

Blouse



Fur coat



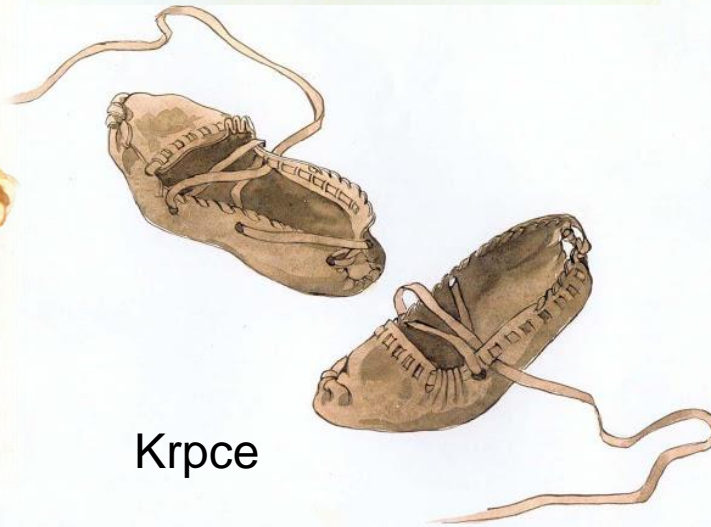
Coat



Mentieka



Krpce



Boots



FOLK COSTUMES – SLOVAK REGION



Bratislava region



Trnava region



Nitra region



Trenčín region



Žilina region



Prešov region



Detva folk costume



**TRADITIONAL
ARCHITECTURE**

TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE IN SLOVAKIA

- The construction of families houses have characteristic features according to the area in Slovakia, and local people built them by themselves. However, the exact definition of the term „folk architecture“ is problematic and quite relative. Thanks to the geographical position of Slovakia at the intersections of different cultures and due to the diversity of geomorphologies, the Slovak folk architecture characterizes the great expression of diversity and the richness of elements and forms. In Slovakia, clay and wood were used in the construction of buildings, and Slovakia can be divided into two basic areas according to the availability of these materials from local sources. Many objects of Slovak folk architecture are monumentally protected or even listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.



CHARAKTERISTIC

- People's architecture in Slovakia has been resistant to fashionable influences throughout its history, and its primary role has always played its part. In the former Hungary, compared to the rest of Europe, the social structure had a relatively large impact on construction, which also conditioned the different structures of individual social conditions. Higher tiers of people built houses that were more ornamented, or floorboards, while the lower layers were generally ground-floor houses, due to both poorness and sometimes direct regulations. Houses of the lower strata of the population differed little in the region, and that was just an ornamental expression, which was usually more modest. The decoration mainly concerned the street facade and the entrances.





SLOVAK CUISINE

- **Slovak cuisine** varies slightly from region to region across Slovakia.
- It was influenced by the traditional cuisine of its neighbours and it influenced them as well. The origins of traditional Slovak cuisine can be traced to times when the majority of the population lived self-sufficiently in villages.
- The food was produced and processed by families themselves with some local trade at the country markets.
- Wheat was ground, and bread, dumplings and noodles were made from it. Potatoes were mostly boiled or processed into potato dough. Milk was processed into a wide range of products such as butter, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, and various types of cheese.
- Typical pork products include sausages, smoked bacon, and lard.
- Spices were not widely used, and animal fats and butter were used instead of cooking oils.
- Main drinks included fresh and sour milk, and beer.
- Contemporary Slovak cuisine is widely influenced by various world cuisines and uses many different ingredients, spices and industrially processed foods.

SLOVAK DISHES

- Halušky
 - Bryndzové halušky (potato dumplings with bryndza - a sheep's-milk cheese)
 - Strapačky
- Lokše (pancakes made of potato-dough baked directly on the stove)
- Bryndzové pirohy
- Široké rezance s tvarohom a slaninou: tagliatelle with quark (farmer's cheese) and fried bacon
- Zemiakové placky (potato pancakes fried in oil), also called Haruľa in regions Horehronie, Pohronie, Kysuce and Orava
- Granatiersky pochod or granadír, also known as granadírmarš and grenadírmarš
- Segedin goulash (a dish consisting of pork stew with sauerkraut and cream or sour cream, usually served with steamed dumplings (knedľa)
- Rezeň (schnitzel, usually breaded)

Bryndzové pirohy



Bryndzové halušky



Lokše



TRADITIONAL SOUPS

- Fazuľová (soup made of beans)
- Kapustnica (soup made of sauerkraut)
- Rezancová (chicken soup with noodles)
- Demikát
- Strapkáč

Rezancová



Kapustnica



Demikát



Fazuľová



Strapkáč



MEAT

- Pork, beef and poultry are the main meats consumed in Slovakia, the pork meat is most popular.
- Among poultry, chicken is most common, although duck, goose, and turkey are also well established.
- Game meats, especially boar, rabbit, and venison, are also widely available throughout the year. Lamb and goat are also available, but for the most part are not very popular.
- Meat is either breaded and fried in oil (schnitzel), or cooked and served in sauce.
- Hungarian influences in Slovak cuisine can be seen in popular stews and goulashes.
- Local sausage types include *krvavničky*, a blood sausage, and *jaternice* (traditionally called *hurky*), a sausage with rice containing any and all parts of a butchered pig.

Húrky



Krvavničky



Rezeň



TRADITIONAL SWEETS AND COOKIES

- Usually baked at Christmas time, but also all year long, Slovak traditional sweets are usually home baked and harder to find in stores.
- Buchty
- Parené buchty (steamed dumplings with various fillings (jam, plum, curd, poppy) topped with poppy seeds, sugar, butter, sourcream,
- Žemľovka (bread pudding)
- Ryžový nákyp (rice pudding)
- Orechovník (sweet walnut roll)
- Makovník (poppy seed roll)
- Medovníky – traditional gingerbreads
- Trdelník or *Skalický trdelník*, a traditional cake baked on a rotating spit over open fire

Parené buchty



Buchty



Medovníky



Žemľovka



Makovník



Trdelník



MAIN DAILY MEAL

- Traditionally the main meal of the day is lunch, eaten around noon.
- However, changing work routine has altered this in the recent decades; today, many Slovaks have their main meal in the evening.
- Lunch in Slovakia usually consists of soup and a main course.
- It is customary in Slovakia to bring a bottle of wine or other alcohol as a gift if you are invited to visit someone's home.

TRADITIONAL LUNCH



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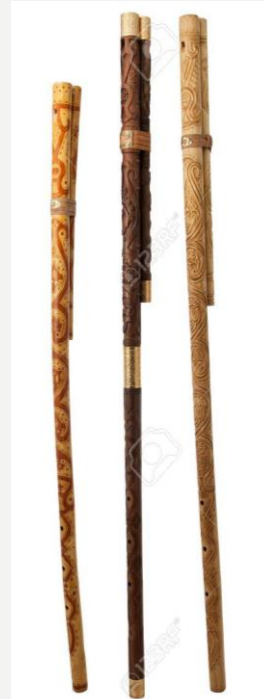
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**TRADITIONAL
MUSIC AND DANCES**

FUJARA

- The very specific instrument, which originated in Detva region, is shepherd's pipe, the so-called **fujara**. For its excellence, brilliant simplicity of the design and the basic operating, it was also included in the list of UNESCO



INSTRUMENTS

Accordion



Ninera is the unique Slovak version of the hurdy-gurdy.



Cimbalom



Koncovka



DANCE

- Most of the Slovak dances have a vocal accompaniment. Otherwise, the most common musical accompaniments were bagpipes, a violin, bass and a flute.
- Different regions perform their own unique dances. When Slovak folk groups perform a dance from a particular region, they wear their traditional costumes typical of that region.
- Slovak folk dances are especially popular in the Orava, Liptov, Šaris, Horehronie and Podpoľanie regions.



- Female dance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jG7P3NU2aQ>

- Male dance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxUIaJNTGf0>

- Couples

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GtvxppXveEo>