

MARIJA BISTRICA

A place of rich heritage



ENGLISH





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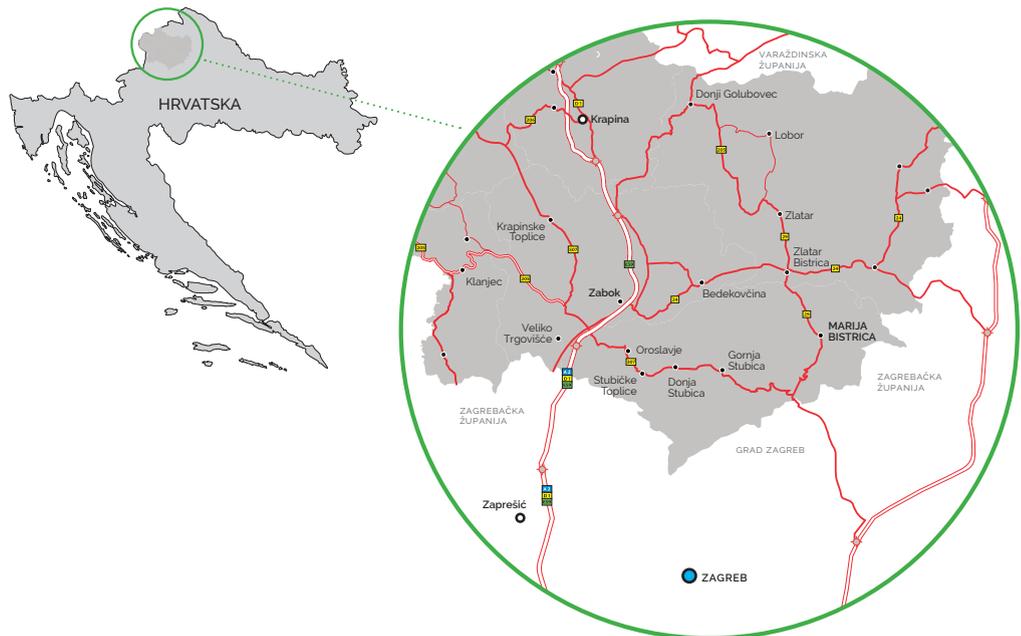


Marija Bistrica – a place of rich heritage; come and find out for yourselves!

Marija Bistrica is the **largest Marian sanctuary in Croatia** located in the southeast of Hrvatsko Zagorje on north slopes of Zagrebačka gora, around 40 km from the capital Zagreb.

When mentioning Marija Bistrica everybody will first think of **pilgrimages to Saint Mary of Marija Bistrica**. The focal point of the place is the **Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary** which compels admiration by its size, surroundings and significance. A mass of believers from all parts of Croatia but also from abroad have been coming for centuries to Marija Bistrica as well as the individuals coming in silence of personal pilgrimage seeking and finding inner peace.

Parallel with the pilgrimages in this region the **old crafts** have also developed with the offer of products made from honey, wood and clay. Candles, gingerbread, pottery and wooden toys present a colorful and various offer for all generations.







A place blessed by the Pope John Paul II.

The most glorious day in the history of Marija Bistrica was **03 October 1998** when **Pope John Paul II** visited Marija Bistrica and proclaimed the deceased Zagreb Archbishop and pilgrim to Marija Bistrica, Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac as blessed.

From the early hours in the evening of the 02 October thousands of pilgrims were taking part in various religious ceremonies thus preparing themselves religiously for the **meeting with the Holy Father** and **beatification of the Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac**. The Holy Father set forth from the nunciature on the 03 October around 8 a.m. in his personal car along the road over Sljeme, through Stubičke Toplice to Marija Bistrica. A few kilometers before the entrance into Marija Bistrica he switched to "popemobile" and continued to the Church in the open. When hundreds of thousands of pilgrims noticed the "popemobile" a loud applause was heard. The Holy Father held a service concelebrating with seven cardinals, seventy bishops and more than one thousand priests.

In a holy service in Rome on 27 April 2014 Pope Francis proclaimed the Pope John Paul II as blessed who thus became the thirty-first Pole the saint within the Catholic Church.





Rich history visible on every corner

Shrine in Marija Bistrica became the national shrine in 1715 when the Croatian parliament built a big votive altar at the church in Marija Bistrica. As Marian devotions grew and many prayers got answered by seeking intercession of Saint Mary of Bistrica, the shrine's church became tight and too small so Bistrica's parish priest Juraj Žerjavić had the church and the parish house with arcades extended and reconstructed following the designs of architect Friedrich von Schmidt and his student Hermann Bollé. The new church was built in Neo-Renaissance style.

The first large celebration in Marija Bistrica was on **15 August 1971** when the **XIII. International Marian Congress** was held there. That year, the bishops proclaimed the shrine **Croatian national shrine of Saint Mary of Bistrica**.

The statue of Saint Mary of Bistrica dates back to the end of the 15th century, and belongs to black Madonnas, although during restoration it was discovered that its dark color is not original. Late-gothic wooden statue of the Bistrica's Holy Mother is the work by a folk craftsman. The statue was first positioned at the original sanctuary in Vinski vrh, then in 1545 buried at the parish church in Marija Bistrica, and discovered in 1588. Once again forgotten and bricked up, it was discovered for the second time in 1684. The moving of the statue, its hiding and twice discovering have stirred faith in its miraculous powers.







In the 20th century Marija Bistrica added a **monumental Calvary** to its pilgrimage activities. By this act, the pilgrims-penitents were finally given an adequate space for performing joined praying ceremonies of the Stations of the Cross. The idea for it came from Archbishop Antun Bauer and his Coadjutor Blessed Alojzije Stepinac.

The first four stations of the Bistrica's Calvary, made from carrara marble with the statues in actual size, were placed in 1943 and carved in Italy. In the following years at the initiative of the then-director of the sanctuary mons. Lovro Cindori, new stations were put up – works by our renowned academic sculptors: Kruno Bošnjak (5th station), Ante Orlić in cooperation with Marija Ujević (13th station), Stanko Jančić (7th, 9th, 11th, 15th station), Ante Orlić (10th, 12th, 14th station), Josip Poljan (6th station) and Ante Starčević (8th station).

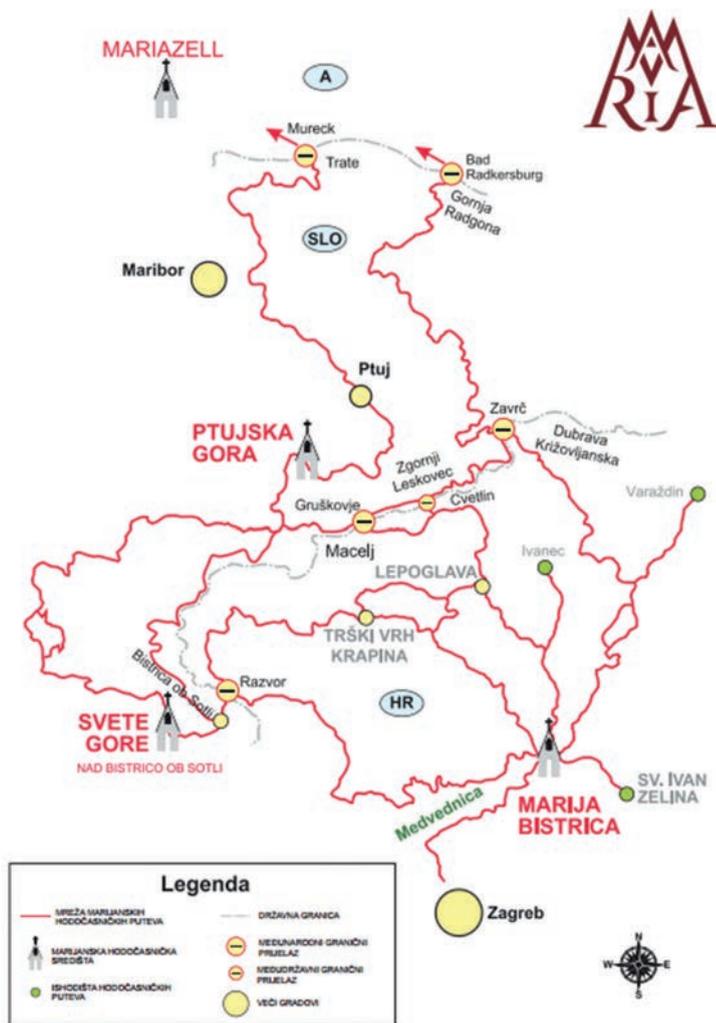


Paths of faith and hope in Bistrica

Hrvatsko zagorje can boast of valuable gothic and baroque churches and many parish fête sites of which we will single out the most renowned and go down a path of pilgrims who since the ancient times celebrated Mary by walking towards her miraculous places.

Marian Routes – the routes which will be mentioned in this text, are a way of reconstruction of ancient routes which connect the Slovenian and Croatian Marian shrines among which Ptujaska Gora and Svete gore nad Bisticom ob Sotli stand out. By crossing near Kumrovec onto the Croatian side, the route connects the shrines in Vinagora and Trški Vrh with the national shrine in Marija Bistrica on one side and on the other it lowers from Ptujaska Gora over Cvetlin, Lepoglava, Lobar and Belec into the shrine. The third route to Marija Bistrica passes from Dubrava Križovljanska and connects with the route from Varaždin.

To Marija Bistrica, which is a meeting point for all pilgrimage routes, leads the route from Sv. Ivan Zelina. One of the more trafficked is the one connecting Zagreb with the national shrine and to which a special importance was given by the blessed Alojzije Stepinac. The marked road which leads from his native place Krašić over Zagreb, Marija Bistrica and all to Lepoglava was named after him.





The beauty of tradition and old crafts

Centuries-old tradition of this region is related to the products made from honey, clay and wood. The most represented traditional craftsmen in Marija Bistrica are mead and gingerbread makers, gingerbread men, candle makers and potters. With time, the crafts have changed, some of them have developed, some have become forgotten but the tradition has remained alive until present day.

The tradition lives in **Bistrička dobrodošlica** - a traditional reception of tourist groups welcomed by young women in national garb who offer them honey-biscuits and mead. **Honey-biscuit** is a traditional cookie from Bistrica made from honey. Mead and gingerbread makers complete the experience of Marija Bistrica. **Mead** is a beverage made from honey and one of the oldest alcoholic drinks which the man had consummated. It is produced by spontaneous fermentation of honey.



Wooden children's toys are recognizable traditional products from Hrvatsko Zagorje with long tradition. The way of manufacturing has been handed down from generation to generation and maintained until today. Wooden flutes - žviegle and tamburitzas are in lively colors and of various shapes. The making and yellow color are traditional and a distinguishing mark of wooden toys. The art of making traditional wooden children's toys in Hrvatsko Zagorje was made part of UNESCO-s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009.

Gingerbread is a colorfully decorated cookie made from honey-dough. Traditionally, it is bright red and comes in various forms and sizes. Small gingerbread pieces (hearts, babies, birds, hooves, wreaths, horses) are favorite decorations on Christmas trees in homes in Croatia and the larger ones are intended for giving as presents to the loved ones on special occasions. Gingerbread making is an old craft which dates back to the 13th century. Gingerbread making tradition was made part of UNESCO-s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010.

Pottery is the art of making pots and similar objects from clay. Diligent craftsmen make with their hands flower pots, baking dishes, small goblets but also musical instruments from baked clay. Those are various reeds shaped as birds which by blowing into the holes make sounds like a nightingale or some other song-bird. Pottery products had been primarily used in household as useful objects but today they have more and more become souvenirs which are willingly bought by visitors.





Old crafts workshops

Apart from religious activities which attract numerous pilgrims to Marija Bistrica, this place also has numerous old crafts and trades to offer to its visitors to explore. **The art of craftsmen** has its future in making of wooden toys, gingerbread, pottery and other souvenirs.

You can get an insight into and experience the old trades in a **very special and interesting way** every day in an interactive presentation by the craftsmen - workshops for making gingerbread, wooden toys or pottery products. In old crafts workshops children, but also everybody who has interest in it, can learn how to express themselves in visual art and find out about the values and the necessity of maintaining the authentic handcrafts of the folk heritage of Hrvatsko Zagorje.



Visit our gallery and the Park of sculptures

At the **Gallery Hudek** you can see the works of the academic sculptor Pavao Hudek, a master of sculpting and painting, an artist who has dedicated the whole of his working life to the creating of works of art in which painting and sculpting combine. The Gallery Hudek **opened its doors on 13 July 2002** within the manifestation **Summer in Marija Bistrica 2002**. With his painting skill the author brought Marija Bistrica to life in his landscapes and in earthen and ceramic figurines he celebrated the land of Marija Bistrica.

The Park of sculptures is located on the tourist road towards Vinski vrh, 500 m from the main square in Marija Bistrica towards the chapel of the Holy Virgin on Vinski vrh. The colonies of sculptors had been started by a group of enthusiasts in 1983. A part of the fundus was destroyed in the flood which swept over Marija Bistrica on 04 July 1989. After a few years of interruption, the colony of wood-sculptors was organized in 2000 again and since then a whole gallery of top works of art in the open has arisen. The motifs of the sculptures are sacral events or freely chosen by wood-sculptor. The Park already has **more than 100 sculptures**.







Enjoy our cultural events

The manifestation **Summer in Marija Bistrica** offers various cultural, spiritual, sports and other entertaining activities during the summer with an emphasis on the 13 July – the celebration of the festivity of Saint Mary of Bistrica and the Day of the municipality and parish Marija Bistrica. Summer in Marija Bistrica encompasses various subcategories of events and manifestations such as: the Cycle race Four chapels, the Meeting of the retired people of Krapinsko–zagorska County, the Happy Children's Day, Bistrica's Door Ajar, By mountain beltway around Marija Bistrica, Bistrica night, Procession with candles from Marija Bistrica to Vinski vrh, the Folklore Days Laz, the Cycle race Selnica – Gusakovec, Sports Summer in Bistrica. The manifestation lasts from June to August.

Advent in Marija Bistrica, a place of centuries-long tradition of pilgrimage, old trades and cultural events has always been celebrated and marked in a special way. First organized manifestation Advent in Marija Bistrica was held in 2010 and since then it has been held every December. Advent is marked by occasional cultural-artistic program, Christmas fair and numerous workshops for children and adults. Advent at the national shrine is special and its atmosphere is in the sign of spirituality, family, cultural and traditional values.





Gastronomic pleasures

Food has always been a link between generations and has helped hand down the customs. The gastronomic offer of Bistrica's restaurants is varied and adjusted to different types of guests - from those who wish to taste original, traditional food to those who want the atmosphere of a top-quality restaurant and a high-quality service with specialties innovatively interpreted from the traditional Zagorje cooking. For younger guests with adventurous spirit there are pizzerias, smaller local restaurants which offer simple meals of Zagorje and other types of cooking. Culinary specialties of Marija Bistrica are a real delicacy and include traditional meals of Zagorje region.

Well-positioned **vineyards**, bathed in warm sun and unselfishly and lovingly tended for by winegrowers yield top-quality crop which makes excellent grapes. In Marija Bistrica you can also taste wines with a protected mark of geographic origin and they are all quality wines.



If you want an active vacation, come to Marija Bistrica

Within the tourist offer of **Marija Bistrica cycling routes** stand out - from the macadam field paths to asphalted roads for family panoramic ride. The variety is such that anyone can find a suitable path. The main assets of cycling routes in Marija Bistrica are preserved natural environment, cultural-historical heritage and a high degree of ecological awareness. Routes' lengths are five to nine kilometers in average. Depending on the route you choose, you can pass by the shrine, Calvary, old sanctuary in Vinski vrh, the Park of sculptures and beautiful landscape.

Mountain beltway Za dušu i tiele was included into Mountain beltways of Croatia and yearly over 1 500 mountain climbers pass through it; it is also used by recreational walkers. Staying in nature on fresh air fills one with satisfaction – mountain climbing makes life more pleasant, interesting and nicer.

Ranch Pia is separated, located along the settlement Podgrade, 5,5 km in distance from Marija Bistrica. It is situated between the wooded hills and fields in the valley of the River Krapina. Ranch Pia integrates various facilities. There is pasture for horses, stable with 14 compartments and outdoor roofed compartment next to the stable. For riding, the premises for equipment, the area for saddling and grooming in front of the stable and smaller roofed areas of sizes 14×30 m for riding courses are used. The visitors can spend their free time at the gastronomic facility with a terrace and a wine cellar or in a pleasant ambient of the fish pond along the forest.



HOTEL, PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION

Bluesun hotel Kaj ****

Zagrebačka bb
Phone: 00385 (0)49 326 600
kaj@bluesunhotels.com
www.hotelkaj.hr

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Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 256
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Zagrebačka 21
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Cell: 00385 (0)98/9186 009

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Zagrebačka 29 A
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Marija Ivak

Trg pape Ivana Pavla II. 6
Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 041
Cell: 00385 (0)98/9828 886

Anita Micak

Podgorje Bistričko 188
Cell: 00385 (0)99/2128 733

Blanka Ozimec

Stubička cesta 1
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Zdravko Prugovečki

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Cell: 00385 (0)95/847 7540

Stjepan Šalamon

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Josipa Škrlec

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Nada Totović

Gornjoselska 30
Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 287
Cell: 00385 (0)99/4006 355

Zvonimir Vedrina

Podgorje Bistričko 96
Cell: 00385 (0)98/9269 921

GASTRONOMIC FACILITIES

Bluesun hotel Kaj ****

Zagrebačka bb
Phone: 00385 (0)49 326 600
kaj@bluesunhotels.com
www.hotelkaj.hr

Restaurant Bisticza Restaurant Academia

Bistro i pizzeria Bistrica

Kralja Tomislava 5
Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 117

Restoran Dobro nam došel prijatelj

Nova cesta 1
Phone: 00385 (0)49 468 458

Winery Micak

Hum Bistrički 69 a
Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 198
Cell: 00385 (0)98/555 415
mladen.micak@kr.t-com.hr
www.vinarija-micak.hr

Bistro–night bar Mladost

Zagrebačka 9
Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 099
bistro.mladost@gmail.com

Catering trade Haustor

Trg pape Ivana Pavla II. 30
Phone: 00385 (0)49 468 830

TRADITIONAL CRAFTS

Gingerbread and candle maker Zozolly – founded in 1882

Vlasta Hubicki

Nova cesta 13

Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 070;
468 354

Gingerbread and candle maker and souvenir shop

Gordana Mahmet Habazin

Kolodvorska 22

Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 040;
468 296

Gingerbread and candle maker—catering trade

“Brlečić”

Snježana Husinec

Trg pape Ivana Pavla II. 5

Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 527

Gingerbread - candle maker and souvenir shop Bičak

Jasminka Kovačić

Trg pape Ivana Pavla II. 29

Cell: 00385 (0)99 6919 666

“Gingerbreads” Bičak

Ljerka Dragija

Zagrebačka 8

Phone: 00385 (0)1 2064 188

Mead and gingerbread maker Šćuric

Brankica Šćuric

Podgorje Bistričko 29

Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 486

Traditional crafts by the craftsman Toma

Tomo Kovačić

Globočec 18

Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 292

Pottery

Ivan Kovačić

Globočec 20

Phone: 00385 (0)49 469 443

Wood – M

Vladimir Gorički

Tugonica 52

Phone: 00385 (0)49 444 216

Making of wooden toys

Ivica Mesar

Tugonica 146

Cell: 00385 (0)95/ 5291 410

Making of wooden toys

Ivan Mikuš

Laz Stubički 10

Cell: 00385 (0)91/ 5800 590

Making of wooden toys

Stjepan Mikuš

Laz Stubički 42a

Cell: 00385 (0)98/ 612 702

Making of wooden toys

Ivan Hajnić

Tugonica 54b

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Making of wooden toys

Lovro Fijan

Zagrebačka 3

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Krapinsko-zagorska
županija



Zagorje