

## Danube Geo Tour

Valorisation of geo-heritage for sustainable and innovative tourism development of  
Danube Geoparks

## Danube GeoTour Itinerary Code: 6.1.

“Project co-funded by the European Union”

Programme: Interreg Danube Transnational Programme  
PA2: Environment and culture responsible Danube region  
Project Duration 01/2017 to 12/2019

Responsible Partner(s): ERDF PP1 Bakony-Balaton Geopark  
Participating Partners: ERDF PP11 Styrian Eisenwurzen Geopark, ERDF PP4 Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark, LP Idrija Geopark, ERDF PP10 Iron Mountains Geopark, ERDF PP3 Papuk Geopark, IPA PP1 Djerdap National Park, ERDF PP8 University of Bucharest

Author (s): VONZERŐ 2005 BT.  
Date: 20.06.2019  
Version: 1.0



Project co-funded by European Union funds (ERDF, IPA)  
[www.interreg-danube.eu/danube-geotour](http://www.interreg-danube.eu/danube-geotour)

## List of Abbreviations

<Add abbreviations used in the document>

DTP	Danube Transnational Programme
JS	Joint Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
PP	Project Partner
WP	Work Package



## Table of Contents

<b>List of Abbreviations</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1. <i>Background information</i>	4
1.2. <i>Methodology</i>	4
1.3. <i>Summary</i>	5
<b>2. Geotour Itineraries</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1. <i>Territorial Itineraries</i>	6
2.1.1. Styrian Eisenwurzen Geopark – Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark – Idrija Geopark	6
2.1.2. Iron Mountains Geopark – Bakony Balaton Geopark	10
2.1.3. Bakony Balaton Geopark – Papuk Geopark	15
2.1.4. Djerdap Aspiring Geopark – Hateg Geopark	19
2.1.5. Idrija Geopark – Papuk Geopark	22
2.2. <i>Thematic itineraries</i>	25
2.2.1. GeoCulture	25
2.2.2. Geo Triathlon	35
2.2.3. Tour de Geoparks	40
2.2.4. Historic Time Travel	45
2.2.5. Digging Deep	50
2.2.6. Into the Woods	53
<b>3. Conclusions and recommendations</b>	<b>57</b>
3.1. <i>Conclusions</i>	57
3.2. <i>Recommendations</i>	58



## 1. Introduction

The 8 participating Geoparks are rich in geo-heritage and represent unique areas in the Danube region. Their sustainable tourism development however lags behind quality standards of top European Geoparks. The Danube GeoTour project was established to jointly find ways of using the exceptional wealth of the Geopark natural resources and heritage in a sustainable way. Pooling resources, sharing the accumulated experiences of the project partners (geoparks, universities, destination management organisations), as well as designing and testing geotourism products and interpretative should all contribute to decreasing the quality gap between the Danube GeoTour geoparks and the other geoparks in the EU. The product development puts emphasis on the involvement of the local communities as a key prerequisite of sustainable tourism development.

The project partners have developed various geotourism products in line with the main aim of the project, utilising the treasures of the geoparks, including geological and geo-historical phenomena, areas of natural beauty, landscapes excellent for various outdoor leisure activities, cultural heritage and local products. This document presents the Output 6.1. as required in the WP6 of the Danube GeoTour project. The recommended itineraries arranged along a common theme will incorporate these treasures in different combinations, in line with the focus of the itineraries.

### 1.1. Background information

Danube Geotour is the final product of the project in the form of a series of diverse travel itineraries that cover the innovative products of participating Geoparks in Danube region. One of the aims of the Danube GeoTour projects is to connect geoparks with travel itineraries to increase their visibility, attract visitors and contribute to the sustainable tourism development of the geoparks while developing them into destinations on their own right. A series of proposed itineraries based on territorial aspects (proximity) and common themes will create linkages amongst the participating geoparks that will contribute to demand for geopark products (activities) and therefore contribute to their sustainability. Furthermore, the itineraries aim to incorporate the unique sustainable geoproducts and services created in WP4 to increase the capacities of participating Geoparks based on a Geopark's specific heritage, the involvement of local SMEs, new gamification tools and visitor engagement with a focus that is in line with the strategy on management tourism pressures. Therefore these, new geoproducts play an essential role in the success of the entire project.

### 1.2. Methodology

The development of the proposed GeoTour Itineraries is primarily based on the itineraries recommended by the individual geoparks, the newly developed geo-products and geo-interpretation sites. The Danube GeoTour products are the thematic geotrails/geotours/georoutes/guided geowalks (the attractions), which led the visitors through times and show them the changing formation of the environment. The different places and natural trails of geoparks are suitable for various outdoor activities as well, such as geohiking, geobiking and georafting.

The GeoApp devised during the project has also been a basis for the recommendations within the various itineraries. Additional information from the websites of the geoparks,



related national parks, service providers, tourism destination management organisations and other tourism websites were also incorporated into the itineraries.

Various hiking and cycling trails, guided tours, educational programmes for schools (and kindergartens), and visitors centres are characteristic in almost all the geoparks, however, the service and programme offer is rather varied across the Danube region. Some of the itineraries build on the common themes uniting the various geoparks, and some are offering complementary activities in the different geoparks along the proposed route of the itinerary. The design and duration of the itineraries takes the travel habits of the potential target groups into account.

### 1.3. Summary

The 8 participating Geoparks are rich in geo-heritage and represent unique areas in the Danube region. The project partners have developed various geotourism products in line with the main aim of the project, utilising the treasures of the geoparks, including geological and geo-historical phenomena, areas of natural beauty, landscapes excellent for various outdoor leisure activities, cultural heritage and local products. The recommended itineraries arranged along a common theme will incorporate these treasures in different combinations, in line with the focus of the itineraries.

The development of the proposed GeoTour Itineraries is primarily based on the itineraries recommended by the individual geoparks, the geo-products, and the GeoApp devised during the project. Additional information from the websites of the geoparks, related national parks, service providers, tourism destination management organisations and other tourism websites were also incorporated into the itineraries.

The proposed itineraries were designed along two aspects the geographical proximity of the geoparks (creating territorial itineraries) and a common theme connecting the geoparks (thematic routes). Among the proposed itineraries there are four territorial ones and six types of thematic routes which cover the areas of geoculture, geocycling, geohiking, georaffing, geological and natural heritage.



**Danube region Geoparks**

## 2. Geotour Itineraries

The travel habits have changed significantly in the last 10-15 years, less and less tourists are purchasing travel packages where the travel itinerary and the tourism services are fixed. Modern day travellers prefer to mix and match the various elements according to their needs, booking their accommodation on the Internet, arranging the mode of transport individually. They gather information before travelling using various offline and online platforms, however they appreciate recommended attractions, sights and activities that they can choose from. Hence, the itineraries are designed to raise their interest in geoparks (in case of general tourists), to draw their attention to the key sights and activities and with the links provided to help them find the tourism services that satisfy their needs during their travel. As the mode of transport may differ, the itineraries do not incorporate travel time between the geoparks.

The proposed itineraries were designed along two aspects:

- 1) geographical proximity of the geoparks (creating territorial itineraries)
- 2) common theme connecting geoparks (creating thematic routes)

### 2.1. Territorial Itineraries

#### 2.1.1. Styrian Eisenwurzen Geopark – Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark – Idrija Geopark

*Styrian Eisenwurzen Geopark (Austria):*

##### **Recommended sights:**

##### GeoRafting - Rafting Camp Palfau.

With the help of trained GeoRaft guides visitors can explore Experience earth's history in a rafting boat aka "Travel through time, do sports and explore Salza valley". While enjoying the spectacular landscape visitors will learn all about the Gesaeuse region, the Nature & Geopark and the formation of the Salza valley.

##### GeoPath and North Gorge:

The North Gorge is part of the GeoPfad ("path"). Almost floating – that's the first impression visitors get when entering the 700 m long climbing facility. Leading through the dramatic North Gorge, the Noth footpath winds its way slightly up and then down again, connected by a few steps and bridges here and there. Visitors get information on the geological features on and get an understanding of the formation of Earth's about 4.6 billion year-old-history on several stages of the trail.

##### Spitzenbach Gorge:

The valley is also known as the "valley of butterflies". Preserved as a natural monument, the gorge has enjoyed the highest level of protection in Styria since 1971 and is an El Dorado for botanists, geologists and butterfly lovers, especially in early summer.





### Wasserloch Gorge:

The Palfau Wasserloch Gorge is one of Austria's most remarkable natural phenomena. Be it narrow canyons, intoxicating waterfalls, in-depth insights or expansive views, Wasserloch Gorge has everything you could possibly wish for when going on a hiking adventure. You pass five breath-taking waterfalls and the next thing you know is that a climbing facility adapted to nature takes you through the gorge and on towards one of the most impressive karst springs in Austria

### **Additional tourist information:**

[www.gesaeuse.at](http://www.gesaeuse.at)  
[www.eisenwurzen.com](http://www.eisenwurzen.com)  
[www.raftingcamp.at](http://www.raftingcamp.at)  
[www.geodorf.com](http://www.geodorf.com); [www.eisenwurzen.com/en](http://www.eisenwurzen.com/en)  
[www.eisenwurzen.com/en](http://www.eisenwurzen.com/en)  
[www.wasserlochklamm.at/en/](http://www.wasserlochklamm.at/en/)

### *Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark (Austria and Slovenia):*

### **Recommended sights:**

#### Underground biking experience

Discover a path through the abandoned and mysterious mining tunnels under Mount Peca. Led by a guide and equipped with helmets and flashlights you can safely ride from one valley to another.

#### Underground Kayaking experience

This special adventure begins before the Mining Museum in Glančnik in Mežica. Visitors climb into a real mine train that runs through the 3.5 km long tunnel Glančnik to a sloping tunnel, called Unionski vpadnik. From there they take a flight of stairs (95 m) that leads to the water. At this point the visitors get the necessary personal protective equipment (neoprene shoes, life jackets and mining helmets with headlamps). and get in the special kayaks. The guide takes the visitors to a small underground river all the way to a magical underground lake, which is almost 700 m below the surface.

#### Adventure Park With Dinosaurs, King Matjaž, Mining Area And Crystals

In front of the mine, there is a theme park which offers the possibility to travel back to the time of the dinosaurs millions of years ago into the time of King Matjaž.

#### Geopark Information Centre "World Of Geology"

Here, the locals and the tourists, the non-professionals as well as experts find an exciting and interactive overview of the tourist offer and the genesis of the whole area. The Geopuls table represents the lithologic map of the area. Guests can use a pen and a book to navigate



interactively through all the characteristics of the region. Ranging from geological treasures to culinary products so every guest can plan their own stay in the region

### Obir Dripstone Caves

The Obir Caves were created by the incomparable cooperation of nature and man, with the symbiosis of 200 million years of history and modern technology. The caves were discovered in 1870 when miners went on a search for lead and zinc. The living dripstones in the caves are a rare and special phenomenon in Europe

### The Smrekovec Info Point – The Extinct Giant

The purpose of the info point is to present the peculiarities and characteristics of the Smrekovec Mountain Range in an entertaining and educational way. Visitors can learn what was it like when 23 million years ago a volcano erupted under the sea here.

### The Eisenkappler circular geotrail

The trip starts at the Geopark Information Centre "World of geology" and explore the wide variety of different rocks, with its magmatites, the crystalline basement, the diabase, the southern Alpine Mesozoic, the Palaeozoic, and finally the Periadriatic Seam which forms the boundary between the Adriatic (once part of the African plate) and the European tectonic plates.

### The Hochobir Geotrail – the highest peak in the Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark

The geotrail runs mainly in the Middle Triassic Wetterstein limestone, which is the main component of the Northern Karavanke. The approximately 1,000-metre thick Middle Triassic Wetterstein limestone was formed about 230 million years ago. While hiking to the summit, you can find numerous remains of the former mining industry.

### The Petzen Geotrail – the mysterious Petzen – a karst mountain and a former glacier

The Petzen is a karst mountain range on the border of Slovenia and Austria in the eastern part of the Karavanke, with numerous karst springs largely on the Austrian part of the mountain.

### Wildensteiner Waterfall

One of the highest free falling waterfalls in Europe, where a sequence of rocks from uppermost Triassic to Lower Cretaceous is present.

### Trögern Klamm Geotrail

The Trögener Gorge was formed by the erosive power of water like all other gorges. you can discover many colourful rocks in the stream bed, deposited here due to the proximity of the Periadriatic Seam.





**Local products to enjoy:**

Cave ham, honey products, organic spirits, curd cheese, buckwheat products

**Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.bikenomad.com/en/main/day-tours>

<https://www.geopark-karawanken.at/en/home.html>

*Idrija Geopark (Slovenia):***Recommended sights:**Idrija the 500 years story about the mercury mine

The Heritage of Mercury in Idrija and Almadén – the biggest mercury mine in the world – is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In Idrija visitors can take a stroll along a 1.6 km long hiking trail in the town of Idrija with sightseeing of UNESCO heritage, technical and other cultural monuments, architecture and gastronomic experience.

Idrija Geopark Visitor Centre

Visitors can discover the main tectonic theme involving natural and cultural heritage individually or participate in a guided tour through an educational exhibit in Idrija's Visitor Center. Information is provided on the geological history of the Idrija UNESCO Global Geopark, geological processes, nature, landscape and people.

Zgornja Idrija Landscape Park

The Upper Idrija Landscape Park offers the experience of secluded trails, wild ravines and lush forests. The Wild Lake with its emerald colour, the rapids, waterfalls and stream pools, as well as rare plant species, interesting geological phenomena and unique technical monuments. In the park you can visit the mighty water barriers "Klavže" built for the purpose of floating timber used in the Idrija mine. All of the natural and cultural heritage will make this a walk to remember.

Discovering Vojsko

The Vojsko plateau with its extraordinary panoramic views is situated above the steep slopes that run along the Kanomljica and Idrija rivers. In summer, it offers blooming meadows and in winter, panoramic cross-country skiing tracks. The 14.5 km long cycling and hiking trail leads you to Slovenija Partisan Printing Shop, passes Vojščica Burial Grounds, Brdar Farm and Brdar Waterfall and takes you to wetlands in Gačnik, Gačnik gorge and to Jelenk. A trail with great altitude change, along which you can observe solitary rocks, waterfalls, wetlands and taste the culinary offer of Idrija's countryside.



### Along The Valley Of The Idrija Fault – Kanomlja And Idrijske Krnice

Kanomlja, a long valley cut deep into the fault zone of the Idrija Fault lies between the sunny and steep slopes of the Krnice Ridge, charmingly scattered with houses, and the steep slopes of the Vojsko Plateau. In the valley you can observe a tectonic window, fossils of Rudists and various Karst phenomena.

### Črni Vrh Plateau – Part Of The Alpine Dinaric Transition Zone

Karst fields and plains are surrounded by hills over Črni Vrh which are part of high karst plateaus Trnovski gozd and Hrušica. On the Črni Vrh Plateau there are numerous landmarks and sites to visit: the linden tree in Zadlog, Hrvatova jama cave, Habečkovno brezno chasm, Andrejčkovno brezno chasm, Military Museum in Črni Vrh, several peaks, marshes, linen production historical heritage and an the Astronomical observatory Javornik.

### Godovič – Paths Into Prehistory

From the Zala Gorge, the edge of the Godovič Plane marks the beginning of a completely new, diverse landscape between Okroglica and Jelenšek. The history of this remote area is shown in the 200-million-year-old "dinosaur" footprints, pre-historic diggings and nature's playful creativity. The 4.2 km long trail leads you past "Snake pine", archeological site Jelenšek to the "Dinosaur" Footprints and Šebalk pond.

### Zavratec Plateau

From the old Zavratec Village, its old farm houses with ornately carved doorways, granary, fruit drying room and baroque church, the road leads across the softly rolling landscape of the Zavratec Plateau that unveils karst caves and archaeological remains of the past.

### **Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.visit-idrija.si/>

[www.geopark-idrija.si](http://www.geopark-idrija.si)

## 2.1.2. Iron Mountains Geopark – Bakony Balaton Geopark

### *Iron Mountain Geopark (Czech Republic)*

GeoFamily ("Where did it come from") is the geoproduct developed by Iron Mountain Geopark urging visitors to discover the geological features presented at the individual stages and how they are connected with the area.



## **Recommended sights:**

### Old sandstone rock town of Touloucovy Maštale

Touloucovy Maštale, a natural rocky area of sandstone rock and pine forests where visitors can see sandstone walls and underlying crystalline rock.

### Berl's Limekiln – Museum of limestones

At the museum equipped with information panels visitors can observe a unique lift for kiln filling and enter the heart of lime kiln. The most important exhibit is the building itself. Geological exhibits from the Iron Mountains Geopark are displayed there.

### Gateway to prehistory in Pasíčka

At the eastern gateways to the geopark we can learn about the history of the evolution of fossils. It is a freely accessible facility with gaming and educational elements focused on geology and paleontology. Here you can dig up a dinosaur skeleton from the sand, explore different kinds of fossils or learn how a sandstone town was built.

### Prachovice – active limestone quarry and nature trail

The educative trail leading from the Prachovice Quarry to Vápenný Podol includes 6 information panels that acquaints visitors with the past and presence of the quarry, rare paleozoic fossils and minerals in the quarry, cave system in the surrounding and local rocks.

### Horky granite pathway

The 4.5 km long granite trail takes you through the tradition of stonemasonry that the area of Skuteč is bound for centuries. It leads past several abandoned and flooded granite quarries. They provide lots of romantic sights and opportunities for bathing also.

### Skuteč Museum

In the museum visitors can experience all the operation in a quarry from mining to processing and try old tools that are used in quarries until now. The interior exhibition deals with the history of granite mining and the geology of Skuteč and its surroundings, while the exterior exhibition imitates a walk in a quarry.

### Walk through the flooded Chrudim

Floods, raise worries and fear, but also amazement. In the past, Chrudim did not avoid them either. Download the app from the stone sign and look at the history, present and future of Chrudim's "high" water at three locations in the town centre.



### **Recommended leisure activities:**

guided geowalks, cycling (MAGMA geo-cycle trail), hiking, winter sports: downhill and cross-country skiing

### **Local products to enjoy:**

special beer - Smoked Iron, honey, mead, cheese, sausage

### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.czechtourism.com/c/zelezne-hory-geopark/>

<https://www.geoparkzh.cz/en/geoturism/permanent-exhibitions/>

<https://www.geoparkzh.cz/en/geoturism/educative-trails/>

*Bakony -Balaton Geopark (Hungary):*

### **Recommended sights:**

#### Boroszlán nature trail

The short cut version of the 7 km long trail is 2 km: it turns back from Odvaskő Cave via a stairway to the valley, from where you can reach the starting point with a short walk. Along the walking road established on the Kőris Hill side, visitors can find out more about the area's natural assets with the help of several information boards.

#### Bakonybél – Pannon Observatory

The No. 1 complex, astronomical educational centre of Hungary. Modern telescope park, 3D planetarium show, astronomical and space research exhibition

#### Somló Hill

This solitary, inactive volcano offers a heap of excitement and vivid memories for wanderers. If you climb up to the top, you can still feel the compelling power and noble charm of the Somló Castle. There is a splendid view from here of the surrounding countryside. The castle on top of the Somló hill is hallmarked by legendary figures like King Matthias, who owned the castle for a short time, and his faithful warlord Pál Kinizsi, who owned the castle after King Matthias. Legend has it Kinizsi climbed up here on the side facing Doba and took a rest on a cliff, which has been called Kinizsi's cliff ever since.

#### Tihany Peninsula

Tihany Peninsula where the first volcanoes of the Balaton Uplands erupted 8 million years ago. The geological scenery, the varied landscape of the peninsula and many protected animal and plant species are attractions to visitors throughout the year. Two lakes, the so called Inner and Outer Lakes, increase the beauty of the hillsides and mountains covered with vineyards and forests.



### The Benedictine Abbey of Tihany

The monastery was founded in 1055 by King Andrew I (who reigned from 1046 to 1060). It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and Saint Ányos. Its deed of foundation is the oldest coherent Hungarian written record to survive in its original form.

### Lavender House Visitor Centre

The visitor centre is located at the Belső-tó (Inner Lake) of Tihany Peninsula, a precious part of the Bakony–Balaton Geopark and Balaton Uplands National Park, and a proud holder of the European Diploma. The Lavender House interprets the outstanding natural heritage of the peninsula. It is also the eastern gate of the Geopark. After watching an amusing short film about the history of volcanism at Balaton Uplands, at the exhibition we can get acquainted with the geological events of the region and many rock types and fossils that have been developed during the millions of years.

### Lake Cave of Tapolca Visitor Centre

A really unique experience awaits in the cave, located in the heart of Tapolca town. An exhibition of ten rooms – including a projection room – in the reception building presents the wonderful world of karst regions and caves. Following the steps to the deep, you will reach a beautifully lit chamber, where the guide tells about the development of the cave and its history of exploration. After a few steps, visitors can get in the boats and take a short boating trip in the circular cave branch, on the wonderful, naturally bluish-greenish, glimmering water surface.

### Salföld Manor

Salföld can be found in the heart of the Balaton Uplands National Park, on the border between Káli Basin and the Badacsony region, only a few kilometres from Lake Balaton. The National Park Directorate established the Manor on the outskirts of the village keeping traditional Hungarian breeds of farm animals such as racka, cigája, cikta sheep, buffalo, Hungarian Grey cattle, mangalica pig, poultry and sheep dogs. The site also gives home to a picturesque, new photo exhibition about butterflies: 'Abstract Nature'. The spice and herb garden of the Manor gives an adventure of fragrances to the visitors, the exhibition of agricultural machines provides a spotlight on traditional farming. Horse shows, pony riding, horse riding, horse-carriage tours are among the services of the manor as well. A souvenir shop, buffet and playground await visitors.

### Hegyesztű Geological Interpretive Site

Hegyesztű protruding 337 m over and between Zánka and Monoszló is the guard of the gate of the Káli Basin. From the top of its basalt top visitors can get a wonderful view of the typical landscape of Balaton Uplands. A nearly 50 m high wall of the former basalt mine reveals the inside of the basalt volcano that used to be active 5-6 million years ago. The exhibition in the mine building commemorates quarrying, presents the geological structure of the Balaton Uplands and the Transdanubian Region, their typical rocks, minerals and the natural values of the national park.

### Csodabogyós Cave – near the village of Balatonederics

The cave is on the eastern edge of Keszthelyi-hegység, and it is the 10th longest cave in Hungary, named after the thorny bush with red wonderberries in front of the entrance of the cave. Visitors can discover the rock formations from the Triassic Period and also experience a fun physical test with lots of climbing and bending.

### Buffalo Reserve, Kápolnapuszta

The visitor site plays an important role in the survival and the conservation of genome of the indigenous buffalo in Hungary, and it is the popular display center of the species since the tameness of the livestock makes direct connection possible with the visitors. The visitors become acquainted with the gentle, pitch dark animals on the path supplied with picnic area, information boards, and at the exhibition on buffalo history. An interactive exhibition displays the flora and the fauna of Kis-Balaton, part of the Balaton-felvidéki National Park.

### Kis-Balaton

The Kis-Balaton, as a huge wetland habitat is unique in the whole of Europe, which is why it has always been recorded by international nature conservation. It is famous for the wonderful world of birds living in the area. In addition to 250 species of birds identified so far, several other rare animals and plants can be also observed, like the Northern vole, dogfish, pond loach or some rare species of dragonflies.

### Lóczy Cave Visitor Centre, Balatonfüred

The cave is located on the outskirts of Balatonfüred. The spectacular middle Triassic limestone layers, displaced from their horizontal formation by the impact of mountain-forming forces, hide this strictly protected cave, created by erosion of the limestone by warm waters gushing up from the deep. The dissolving process left cauldron shaped forms and occasionally still visible pea-stones as a reminder of the circumstances surrounding the formation of the cave.

### Sea of Stones near Szentbékállya

The most well-known and most famous geological formations, geomorphologic features of the Kál Basin are represented by the gigantic boulders and groups of cliffs which are strongly cemented by silica. The seas of stones were formed by the subsequent cementation of sand, pebbly sand and gravel beds which had been deposited in the Lake Pannon.

### Basalt Organs on Szent György Hill

The basalt organs were formed from the hot lava; the rapid cooling of the lava causes fractions, creating polygonal columns, which later were shaped by the weather. Basalt organs were also called “stone bags” or “cotton bags”, and on Szent György Hill their height often reaches 30-40 meters.

### **Additional tourist information:**

[www.bakony-balaton.hu](http://www.bakony-balaton.hu)  
[www.welovebalaton.hu](http://www.welovebalaton.hu)





[www.bfnp.hu](http://www.bfnp.hu)

### 2.1.3. Bakony Balaton Geopark – Papuk Geopark

*Bakony -Balaton Geopark (Hungary):*

#### **Recommended sights:**

##### Boroszlán nature trail

The short cut version of the 7 km long trail is 2 km: it turns back from Odvaskő Cave via a stairway to the valley, from where you can reach the starting point with a short walk. Along the walking road established on the Kőris Hill side, visitors can find out more about the area's natural assets with the help of several information boards.

##### Bakonybél – Pannon Observatory

The No. 1 complex, astronomical educational centre of Hungary. Modern telescope park, 3D planetarium show, astronomical and space research exhibition

##### Somló Hill

This solitary, inactive volcano offers a heap of excitement and vivid memories for wanderers. If you climb up to the top, you can still feel the compelling power and noble charm of the Somló Castle. There is a splendid view from here of the surrounding countryside. The castle on top of the Somló hill is hallmarked by legendary figures like King Matthias, who owned the castle for a short time, and his faithful warlord Pál Kinizsi, who owned the castle after King Matthias. Legend has it Kinizsi climbed up here on the side facing Doba and took a rest on a cliff, which has been called Kinizsi's cliff ever since.

##### Tihany Peninsula

Tihany Peninsula where the first volcanoes of the Balaton Uplands erupted 8 million years ago. The geological scenery, the varied landscape of the peninsula and many protected animal and plant species are attractions to visitors throughout the year. Two lakes, the so called Inner and Outer Lakes, increase the beauty of the hillsides and mountains covered with vineyards and forests.

##### The Benedictine Abbey of Tihany

The monastery was founded in 1055 by King Andrew I (who reigned from 1046 to 1060). It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and Saint Ányos. Its deed of foundation is the oldest coherent Hungarian written record to survive in its original form.

##### Lavender House Visitor Centre

The visitor centre is located at the Belső-tó (Inner Lake) of Tihany Peninsula, a precious part of the Bakony–Balaton Geopark and Balaton Uplands National Park, and a proud holder of

the European Diploma. The Lavender House interprets the outstanding natural heritage of the peninsula. It is also the eastern gate of the Geopark. After watching an amusing short film about the history of volcanism at Balaton Uplands, at the exhibition we can get acquainted with the geological events of the region and many rock types and fossils that have been developed during the millions of years.

### Lake Cave of Tapolca Visitor Centre

A really unique experience awaits in the cave, located in the heart of Tapolca town. An exhibition of ten rooms – including a projection room – in the reception building presents the wonderful world of karst regions and caves. Following the steps to the deep, you will reach a beautifully lit chamber, where the guide tells about the development of the cave and its history of exploration. After a few steps, visitors can get in the boats and take a short boating trip in the circular cave branch, on the wonderful, naturally bluish-greenish, glimmering water surface.

### Salföld Manor

Salföld can be found in the heart of the Balaton Uplands National Park, on the border between Káli Basin and the Badacsony region, only a few kilometres from Lake Balaton. The National Park Directorate established the Manor on the outskirts of the village keeping traditional Hungarian breeds of farm animals such as racka, cigája, cikta sheep, buffalo, Hungarian Grey cattle, mangalica pig, poultry and sheep dogs. The site also gives home to a picturesque, new photo exhibition about butterflies: 'Abstract Nature'. The spice and herb garden of the Manor gives an adventure of fragrances to the visitors, the exhibition of agricultural machines provides a spotlight on traditional farming. Horse shows, pony riding, horse riding, horse-carriage tours are among the services of the manor as well. A souvenir shop, buffet and playground await visitors.

### Hegvestű Geological Interpretive Site

Hegvestű protruding 337 m over and between Zánka and Monoszló is the guard of the gate of the Káli Basin. From the top of its basalt top visitors can get a wonderful view of the typical landscape of Balaton Uplands. A nearly 50 m high wall of the former basalt mine reveals the inside of the basalt volcano that used to be active 5-6 million years ago. The exhibition in the mine building commemorates quarrying, presents the geological structure of the Balaton Uplands and the Transdanubian Region, their typical rocks, minerals and the natural values of the national park.

### Csodabogyós Cave – near the village of Balatonederics

The cave is on the eastern edge of Keszthelyi-hegység, and it is the 10th longest cave in Hungary, named after the thorny bush with red wonderberries in front of the entrance of the cave. Visitors can discover the rock formations from the Triassic Period and also experience a fun physical test with lots of climbing and bending.

### Buffalo Reserve, Kápolnapuszta

The visitor site plays an important role in the survival and the conservation of genome of the indigenous buffalo in Hungary, and it is the popular display center of the species since the



tameness of the livestock makes direct connection possible with the visitors. The visitors become acquainted with the gentle, pitch dark animals on the path supplied with picnic area, information boards, and at the exhibition on buffalo history. An interactive exhibition displays the flora and the fauna of Kis-Balaton, part of the Balaton-felvidéki National Park.

### Kis-Balaton

The Kis-Balaton, as a huge wetland habitat is unique in the whole of Europe, which is why it has always been recorded by international nature conservation. It is famous for the wonderful world of birds living in the area. In addition to 250 species of birds identified so far, several other rare animals and plants can be also observed, like the Northern vole, dogfish, pond loach or some rare species of dragonflies.

### Lóczy Cave Visitor Centre, Balatonfüred

The cave is located on the outskirts of Balatonfüred. The spectacular middle Triassic limestone layers, displaced from their horizontal formation by the impact of mountain-forming forces, hide this strictly protected cave, created by erosion of the limestone by warm waters gushing up from the deep. The dissolving process left cauldron shaped forms and occasionally still visible pea-stones as a reminder of the circumstances surrounding the formation of the cave.

### Sea of Stones near Szentbékállya

The most well-known and most famous geological formations, geomorphologic features of the Kál Basin are represented by the gigantic boulders and groups of cliffs which are strongly cemented by silica. The seas of stones were formed by the subsequent cementation of sand, pebbly sand and gravel beds which had been deposited in the Lake Pannon.

### Basalt Organs on Szent György Hill

The basalt organs were formed from the hot lava; the rapid cooling of the lava causes fractions, creating polygonal columns, which later were shaped by the weather. Basalt organs were also called “stone bags” or “cotton bags”, and on Szent György Hill their height often reaches 30-40 meters.

### **Additional tourist information:**

[www.bakony-balaton.hu](http://www.bakony-balaton.hu)

[www.welovebalaton.hu](http://www.welovebalaton.hu)

[www.bfnp.hu](http://www.bfnp.hu)

*Papuk Geopark (Croatia):*

### **Recommended sights:**

### Park Forest Jankovac

This harmonious natural entity consists of a valley, hills covered with century-old woods, streams and artificial lakes. This is one of the most beautiful mountain valleys, surrounded by a centuries-old beech forest, and also one of the most popular mountain excursion sites with educational trails, mountain streams and lakes, caves, waterfalls and around 1200 types of flora and fauna.

### Skakavac Waterfall

The 35 meters high waterfall is one of the most popular tourist attractions of the geopark situated in Park Forest Jankovac.

### Count's educational trail

The educational trail is built in the most beautiful part of the Park Forest Jankovac. It is a perfect choice for visitors with reduced mobility. A playground, an info point with souvenir shop can be found here as well. Canoeing and professional guided tour possibilities are also available.

### Adventure Park Duboka

Adventurers of all generations, looking for an active vacation, adrenaline and fun, can test their abilities on the two super-equipped polygons in the Adventure Park Duboka, located right by to the Campsite Duboka in the beautiful nature surroundings of Papuk UGG. Artificial rock climbing, running over woody mushrooms that hang over trees, crossing wooden hanging bridges, also nets, zippers and a handful of other challenges make visitors feel like actors in an action film.

### Visitor Centre House of Pannonian Sea

The visitor centre House of Pannonian Sea, located in Velika, interprets the wildlife and aquatic life of the Pannonian Sea that covered the area of Papuk 16 million years ago.

### Geological interpretation point Zvečevo

Interpretation point Zvečevo is an outdoor interpretation point that presents geochallenge metamorphic rocks and processes. Geochallenge is presented through interpretation panels and educational equipment that include interactive installation (meta machine which in very simplified way explain metamorphic processes).

### Geosite Rupnica

Rupnica is the most important geological site on Papuk, which was declared as the first Croatian geological monument of nature back in 1948. It is a special geological feature made from volcanic mass, a natural mosaic of rocks arranged like giant stone pillars.

### **Additional tourist information:**



<https://www.inlandia.com/accommodation-in-inland/croatia/mountain-lodge-jankovac.html>

[www.papukgeopark.com](http://www.papukgeopark.com)

[www.pp-papuk.hr](http://www.pp-papuk.hr)

[www.tzzps.hr](http://www.tzzps.hr)

[www.tzvpz.hr](http://www.tzvpz.hr)

[tz-velika@net.hr](mailto:tz-velika@net.hr)

[www.montis-aurea.hr/en](http://www.montis-aurea.hr/en)

#### 2.1.4. Djerdap Aspiring Geopark – Hateg Geopark

*Djerdap Aspiring Geopark (Serbia):*

##### **Recommended sights:**

###### Golubac Fortress

Discover the well-restored medieval fortress situated in a dramatic and amazing landscape offering scenic views over the River Danube.

###### Boljetin River Gorge

The gorge is famous for its continuous geological layers and offers regular geology study tours.

###### Lepenski Vir

The archaeological site is located on the banks of the River Danube. It used to be the centre of one of the most important prehistoric cultures and its remains of religious architecture dating from 6500-5500 BC.

###### Diana Fortification

Situated on the Danube Riverbank Diana is considered as one of the largest and best-preserved military fortifications in the area.

###### Bosman-Sokolovac

This walking trail requires active hiking because trail climbs along the cliffs above the Danube, all the way to the top of Sokolovac on 683 m above sea level. From the top there gorge Gospodjđin Vir and the Romanian Nature Park Portile de Fier on the other side of the River Danube can also be seen.

###### Greben

Greben is a 2.4 km long walking trail starting from Djerdap highway on Boljetin Hill at 230 m altitude and continues along the forest trail all the way to Greben at 192m of altitude. From the ridge you can see the gorge Gospodjin Vir, the archaeological site Lepenski Vir, the mythological Treskavac in Romania and the basin Donjomilanovacka kotlina.

#### Kovilovo

The trail begins at the regional road Donji Milanovac-Majdanpek at 398m altitude and continues along the forest road all the way to the Kovilovo viewpoint. From this viewpoint Donjomilanovacka kotlina, the archaeological site Lepenski Vir, Greben, the submerged Porecko ostvro, Donji Milanovac, Glavica, Golubinja and Romania can be seen.

#### Mali Strbac

Near the Ploce viewpoint, the trail leads right up to the Mali Strbac and provides a wonderful view on the Djerdap Gorge, and the rock with the carved figure of king Decebal.

#### Ploce

Ploce is a viewpoint in National Park Djerdap. Viewpoint Ploce represents a smooth space just above the canyon Mali kazan and a limestone flat under peak Veliki Strbac.

#### Veliki Strbac

The trail leads through the most attractive part of the National Park Djerdap and ends at Veliki Strbac. Veliki Strbac is the highest peak of the Miroc Mountain and from here there is a beautiful view of the River Danube in its narrowest part.

#### **Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.geohikingdjerdap.rs/geotourism/geopark-destinations/>

*Hateg Geopark (Romania):*

#### **Recommended sights and trails:**

##### Visitor Centres - "Houses of the Geopark"

Developed as geoproducts in the framework of this project, they are small interpretation centres integrated in the communities. Based on scientific research the visitor centres offer introductions in the topic of dinosaurs, volcanoes, intangible heritage, rocks, local architecture, people, rural landscape and striving for reliable connection between science and art.

- House of the Geopark – An introduction to UNESCO Global Geoparks and to the Hateg Territory. The exhibition shows both the ancient myths and legends about dragons and local balaur and the scientific research on dinosaurs.





- House of Science and Art – Redesigned as part of the Danube GeoTour project, it shows the connection between Man and Earth through stone made objects from the geopark territory.
- House of Dwarf Dinosaurs – located where the dinosaurs story started more than 100 years ago with the scientist Frantz Nopcsa, the House is the starting point for the Dinosaur Valley trail and an essential part of the Sanpetru village community centre.
- House of Volcanoes – shows two lost worlds, the volcanic landscapes and the Tethys seabed, providing also educational programs for children and families.
- House of Traditions – Also part of the Sanpetru village community centre, it is managed by the local women association, showing parts of the story of people in the area, the multiple cultures living in harmony and their day to day objects.
- House of Stones – an ecological construction showing the connection between rocks and life, at the foothills of the Retezat mountains.

### DinoStops

An innovative concept of geoproduct developed in the Danube GeoTour project. They are a partnership between the geopark and a commercial partner. Each dinostop is dedicated to a dinosaur specie. Artistic reconstructions of the dinosaur species from the former Hateg Island are bringing these unique creatures to attention. Visitors are provided with an overview related to local identity, geodiversity, in line with heritage management and marketing development.

- *Struthiosaurus transsylvanicus* in Sălașu de Sus village is a point made up of an artistic reconstruction of the dinosaur, a restaurant and a tourism info centre.
- *Elopteryx nopcsai* located in Sânpetru village consists in a scientific reconstruction and a commercial point run by the local women association
- *Balaur bondoc* is located near the House of the Geopark in Hateg town. It consists in a scientific reconstruction and a souvenir shop managed by a local association.
- *Telmatosaurus transsylvanicus* a dinostop under construction in the General Berthelot village.

### The Dinosaurs Valley Trail

It begins at the House of Dwarf Dinosaurs and House of Traditions in Sânpetru village and leads visitors to the place where the first dinosaur remains were found, at the Geosite La Scoabă. From the geosite the trail takes visitors to the traditional village, Ohaba-Sibișel, where one can see how people used the granite boulders to make dry stone fences and build their houses foundations. After passing the village visitors can walk through granite boulder fields and visit the House of Stones, which is in the middle of these fields.

### The Volcanoes Trail

This trail begins in Densuș village centre and leads visitors to the volcanic hills and the House of Volcanoes. Along the way to the volcanic hills pillow lavas can be observed. After passing the pillow lavas the signs will take visitors to the House of Volcanoes. Visitors along the trail can enjoy the sight of volcanic hills, the Tethys sea bead, trail fossils and can explore the House of Volcanoes.

### **Local products to enjoy:**

Răchitova brandy and Sălaș sausages.

**Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.hateggeoparc.ro/>

<https://turismrezezat.ro/en/>

2.1.5. Idrija Geopark – Papuk Geopark

*Idrija Geopark (Slovenia):*

**Recommended sights:**

Idrija the 500 years story about the mercury mine

The Heritage of Mercury in Idrija and Almadén – the biggest mercury mine in the world – is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In Idrija visitors can take a stroll along a 1.6 km long hiking trail in the town of Idrija with sightseeing of UNESCO heritage, technical and other cultural monuments, architecture and gastronomic experience.

Idrija Geopark Visitor Centre

Visitors can discover the main tectonic theme involving natural and cultural heritage individually or participate in a guided tour through an educational exhibit in Idrija's Visitor Center. Information is provided on the geological history of the Idrija UNESCO Global Geopark, geological processes, nature, landscape and people.

Zgornja Idrijca Landscape Park

The Upper Idrijca Landscape Park offers the experience of secluded trails, wild ravines and lush forests. The Wild Lake with its emerald colour, the rapids, waterfalls and stream pools, as well as rare plant species, interesting geological phenomena and unique technical monuments. In the park you can visit the mighty water barriers "Klavže" built for the purpose of floating timber used in the Idrija mine. All of the natural and cultural heritage will make this a walk to remember.

Discovering Vojsko

The Vojsko plateau with its extraordinary panoramic views is situated above the steep slopes that run along the Kanomljica and Idrijca rivers. In summer, it offers blooming meadows and in winter, panoramic cross-country skiing tracks. The 14.5 km long cycling and hiking trail leads you to Slovenija Partisan Printing Shop, passes Vojščica Burial Grounds, Brdar Farm and Brdar Waterfall and takes you to wetlands in Gačnik, Gačnik gorge and to Jelenk. A trail with great altitude change, along which you can observe solitary rocks, waterfalls, wetlands and taste the culinary offer of Idrija's countryside.

Along The Valley Of The Idrija Fault – Kanomlja And Idrijske Krnice



Kanomlja, a long valley cut deep into the fault zone of the Idrija Fault lies between the sunny and steep slopes of the Krnice Ridge, charmingly scattered with houses, and the steep slopes of the Vojsko Plateau. In the valley you can observe a tectonic window, fossils of Rudists and various Karst phenomena.

### Črni Vrh Plateau – Part Of The Alpine Dinaric Transition Zone

Karst fields and plains are surrounded by hills over Črni Vrh which are part of high karst plateaus Trnovski gozd and Hrušica. On the Črni Vrh Plateau there are numerous landmarks and sites to visit: the linden tree in Zadlog, Hrvatova jama cave, Habečkovo brezno chasm, Andrejčkovo brezno chasm, Military Museum in Črni Vrh, several peaks, marshes, linen production historical heritage and an the Astronomical observatory Javornik.

### Godovič – Paths Into Prehistory

From the Zala Gorge, the edge of the Godovič Plane marks the beginning of a completely new, diverse landscape between Okroglica and Jelenšek. The history of this remote area is shown in the 200-million-year-old "dinosaur" footprints, pre-historic diggings and nature's playful creativity. The 4.2 km long trail leads you past "Snake pine", archeological site Jelenšek to the "Dinosaur" Footprints and Šebalk pond.

### Zavratec Plateau

From the old Zavratec Village, its old farm houses with ornately carved doorways, granary, fruit drying room and baroque church, the road leads across the softly rolling landscape of the Zavratec Plateau that unveils karst caves and archaeological remains of the past.

### **Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.visit-idrija.si/>

[www.geopark-idrija.si](http://www.geopark-idrija.si)

### *Papuk Geopark (Croatia):*

### **Recommended sights:**

#### Jankovc forest park

This harmonious natural entity consists of a valley, hills covered with century-old woods, streams and artificial lakes

#### Skakavac waterfall

The 35 meters high waterfall is one of the most popular tourist attractions of the geopark.

### Count's educational trail

It is a perfect choice for visitors with reduced mobility. A playground, an info point with souvenir shop can be found as well. Canoeing and professional guided tour possibilities are also available.

### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.inlandia.com/accommodation-in-inland/croatia/mountain-lodge-jankovac.html>

[www.papukgeopark.com](http://www.papukgeopark.com)



## 2.2. Thematic itineraries



### 2.2.1. GeoCulture



“Travel is the only thing that you buy that makes you richer” – Explore the enriching GeoCulture in the Danube Region! Conquer ancient castles, row a boat under a town, become a pilgrim or an astronaut for a few hours, see rare animals and plants in their natural habitat and taste handmade local delicacies such as lavender ice cream, lace cake or the miners’ drink along your journey!

#### **Geoculture –Bakony-Balaton Geopark (Hungary)**

##### **3 days trip**

Only 100 km from the capital city of Hungary, in the Bakony-Balaton Geopark forested hillsides, wine cellars, pleasant sub-Mediterranean climate and popular beaches on the lakeshore awaiting the visitors. As described in Output 4.3 in connection with geoculture 4 innovative geofood products have been introduced in the Bakony-Balaton Geopark region by local farmers for visitors to try and taste: Vácza-kő Major products, Vulcanics Bombs by Zsusska, Badacsony Rózsakő Wine and an infusion of herbs family named “By the Vulcans

feet". In the northern part of the geopark dense forests, ruins of medieval castles and tiny villages of Bakony Hills are waiting to be explored.

### Day 1. Exploring the Bakony Hills:

**Key activity:** GeoCulture

#### Boroszlán nature trail

The short cut version of the 7 km long trail is 2 km: it turns back from Odvaskő Cave via a stairway to the valley, from where you can reach the starting point with a short walk. Along the walking road established on the Kőris Hill side, visitors can find out more about the area's natural assets with the help of several information boards.

#### Bakonybél – Pannon Observatory

The No. 1 complex, astronomical educational centre of Hungary. Modern telescope park, 3D planetarium show, astronomical and space research exhibition

#### Somló Hill

This solitary, inactive volcano offers a heap of excitement and vivid memories for wanderers. If you climb up to the top, you can still feel the compelling power and noble charm of the Somló Castle. There is a splendid view from here of the surrounding countryside. The castle on top of the Somló hill is hallmarked by legendary figures like King Matthias, who owned the castle for a short time, and his faithful warlord Pál Kinizsi, who owned the castle after King Matthias. Legend has it Kinizsi climbed up here on the side facing Doba and took a rest on a cliff, which has been called Kinizsi's cliff ever since.

#### Somló wine region- wine dinner

Hungary's smallest wine region lies on the slopes of the Somló Mountain. Vineyards encircle this almost symmetrical, cone-shaped, dormant volcano rising from the plains of the Tapolca Basin.

### Day 2. Discovering the Tihany Peninsula

**Key activity:** GeoCulture

Tihany Peninsula where the first volcanoes of the Balaton Uplands erupted 8 million years ago. The geological scenery, the varied landscape of the peninsula and many protected animal and plant species are attractions to visitors throughout the year. Two lakes, the so called Inner and Outer Lakes, increase the beauty of the hillsides and mountains covered with vineyards and forests.

#### The Benedictine Abbey of Tihany





The monastery was founded in 1055 by King Andrew I (who reigned from 1046 to 1060). It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and Saint Ányos. Its deed of foundation is the oldest coherent Hungarian written record to survive in its original form.

### Lavender House Visitor Centre

The visitor centre is located at the Belső-tó (Inner Lake) of Tihany Peninsula, a precious part of the Bakony–Balaton Geopark and Balaton Uplands National Park, and a proud holder of the European Diploma. The Lavender House interprets the outstanding natural heritage of the peninsula. It is also the eastern gate of the Geopark. After watching an amusing short film about the history of volcanism at Balaton Uplands, at the exhibition we can get acquainted with the geological events of the region and many rock types and fossils that have been developed during the millions of years.

### Day 3. Dive into the adventure:

**Key activity:** GeoCulture

### Lake Cave of Tapolca Visitor Centre

A really unique experience awaits in the cave, located in the heart of Tapolca town. An exhibition of ten rooms – including a projection room – in the reception building presents the wonderful world of karst regions and caves. Following the steps to the deep, you will reach a beautifully lit chamber, where the guide tells about the development of the cave and its history of exploration. After a few steps, visitors can get in the boats and take a short boating trip in the circular cave branch, on the wonderful, naturally bluish-greenish, glimmering water surface.

### Salföld Manor - Lunch

Salföld can be found in the heart of the Balaton Uplands National Park, on the border between Káli Basin and the Badacsony region, only a few kilometres from Lake Balaton. The National Park Directorate established the Manor on the outskirts of the village keeping traditional Hungarian breeds of farm animals such as racka, cigája, cikta sheep, buffalo, Hungarian Grey cattle, mangalica pig, poultry and sheep dogs. The site also gives home to a picturesque, new photo exhibition about butterflies: 'Abstract Nature'. The spice and herb garden of the Manor gives an adventure of fragrances to the visitors, the exhibition of agricultural machines provides a spotlight on traditional farming. Horse shows, pony riding, horse riding, horse-carriage tours are among the services of the manor as well. A souvenir shop, buffet and playground await visitors.

## **1 day trips**

### Trip 1:

**Key activity:** GeoCulture

### Hegvestű Geological Interpretive Site

Hegvestű protruding 337 m over and between Zánka and Monoszló is the guard of the gate of the Káli Basin. From the top of its basalt top visitors can get a wonderful view of the typical landscape of Balaton Uplands. A nearly 50 m high wall of the former basalt mine reveals the inside of the basalt volcano that used to be active 5-6 million years ago. The exhibition in the mine building commemorates quarrying, presents the geological structure of the Balaton Uplands and the Transdanubian Region, their typical rocks, minerals and the natural values of the national park.

### Csodabogyós Cave – near the village of Balatonederics

The cave is on the eastern edge of Keszthelyi-hegység, and it is the 10th longest cave in Hungary, named after the thorny bush with red wonderberries in front of the entrance of the cave. Visitors can discover the rock formations from the Triassic Period and also experience a fun physical test with lots of climbing and bending.

### Buffalo Reserve, Kápolnapuszta

The visitor site plays an important role in the survival and the conservation of genome of the indigenous buffalo in Hungary, and it is the popular display center of the species since the tameness of the livestock makes direct connection possible with the visitors. The visitors become acquainted with the gentle, pitch dark animals on the path supplied with picnic area, information boards, and at the exhibition on buffalo history. An interactive exhibition displays the flora and the fauna of Kis-Balaton, part of the Balaton-felvidéki National Park.

### Trip 2:

**Key activity:** GeoCulture

### Kis-Balaton

The Kis-Balaton, as a huge wetland habitat is unique in the whole of Europe, which is why it has always been recorded by international nature conservation. It is famous for the wonderful world of birds living in the area. In addition to 250 species of birds identified so far, several other rare animals and plants can be also observed, like the Northern vole, dogfish, pond loach or some rare species of dragonflies.

### Buffalo Reserve, Kápolnapuszta - Lunch

The visitor site plays an important role in the survival and the conservation of genome of the indigenous buffalo in Hungary, and it is the popular display center of the species since the tameness of the livestock makes direct connection possible with the visitors. The visitors become acquainted with the gentle, pitch dark animals on the path supplied with picnic area, information boards, and at the exhibition on buffalo history. An interactive exhibition displays the flora and the fauna of Kis-Balaton, part of the Balaton-felvidéki National Park.



### **Additional recommended sights:**

#### Lóczy Cave Visitor Centre, Balatonfüred

The cave is located on the outskirts of Balatonfüred. The spectacular middle Triassic limestone layers, displaced from their horizontal formation by the impact of mountain-forming forces, hide this strictly protected cave, created by erosion of the limestone by warm waters gushing up from the deep. The dissolving process left cauldron shaped forms and occasionally still visible pea-stones as a reminder of the circumstances surrounding the formation of the cave.

#### Sea of Stones near Szentbékállya

The most well-known and most famous geological formations, geomorphologic features of the Kál Basin are represented by the gigantic boulders and groups of cliffs which are strongly cemented by silica. The seas of stones were formed by the subsequent cementation of sand, pebbly sand and gravel beds which had been deposited in the Lake Pannon.

#### Basalt Organs on Szent György Hill

The basalt organs were formed from the hot lava; the rapid cooling of the lava causes fractions, creating polygonal columns, which later were shaped by the weather. Basalt organs were also called “stone bags” or “cotton bags”, and on Szent György Hill their height often reaches 30-40 meters.

### **Local products to enjoy:**

“At the Feet of Volcanoes” herbal tea mixtures, Katrabóca Ammonite Gingerbread, Laposa KőKövön / "On the Rocks" Furmint (white wine), Szászi Winery Badacsonyi Rózsakő (organic white wine), Vácza-kő Major: home made jams and fruit vinegars

### **Additional tourist information:**

[www.bakony-balaton.hu](http://www.bakony-balaton.hu)

[www.welovebalaton.hu](http://www.welovebalaton.hu)

[www.bfnp.hu](http://www.bfnp.hu)

### **Geoculture – Idrija Geopark (Slovenia)**

#### **2 days trip**

The Idrija Geopark lies in the western part of Slovenia and comprises the area of the Municipality of Idrija. The town of Idrija is reputed primarily for having the second largest mercury mine in the world. The area of the Geopark has an extremely diversified

morphology, featuring deep and narrow ravines and gorges, as well as vast, high-lying, karstified plateaus, which is due to its position at the meeting point of the alpine and Karst worlds.

### Day 1. Exploring Idrija:

**Key activity:** GeoCulture

#### Idrija - the 500 years story about the mercury mine

The Heritage of Mercury in Idrija and Almadén – the biggest mercury mine in the world – is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Visitors can take a stroll along a 1.6 km long hiking trail in the town of Idrija with sightseeing of UNESCO heritage, technical and other cultural monuments, architecture and gastronomic experience.

#### Idrija Geopark Visitor Centre

Visitors can discover the main tectonic theme involving natural and cultural heritage individually or participate in a guided tour through an educational exhibit in Idrija's Visitor Center. Information is provided on the geological history of the Idrija UNESCO Global Geopark, geological processes, nature, landscape and people.

#### Rake Water channel

In the 17th century the river Idrijca was dammed at Kobilja and the water channel named 'Rake' was built. For 350 years the water from the 3,5 km long channel was used to run the mine water pumps and the elevators to ascend and descend cargo along the shafts. Near the end of the channel Idrija 'Kamšt' was built – a wooden water-driven wheel with a diameter of 13.6 m. The wheel was used to pump water from the Idrija mine.

### Day 2. Discovering Vojsko – The Highest Lying Village In Primorska Region

**Key activity:** GeoCulture

The Vojsko plateau with its extraordinary panoramic views is situated above the steep slopes that run along the Kanomljica and Idrijca rivers. In summer, it offers blooming meadows and in winter, panoramic cross-country skiing tracks. The 14.5 km long cycling and hiking trail leads you to Slovenija Partisan Printing Shop, passes Vojščica Burial Grounds, Brdar Farm and Brdar Waterfall and takes you to wetlands in Gačnik, Gačnik gorge and to Jelenk. A trail with great altitude change, along which you can observe solitary rocks, waterfalls, wetlands and taste the culinary offer of Idrija's countryside.

**Additional recommended sights:**

#### Zgornja Idrijca Landscape Park



The Upper Idrija Landscape Park offers the experience of secluded trails, wild ravines and lush forests. The Wild Lake with its emerald colour, the rapids, waterfalls and stream pools, as well as rare plant species, interesting geological phenomena and unique technical monuments. In the park you can visit the mighty water barriers "Klavže" built for the purpose of floating timber used in the Idrija mine. All of the natural and cultural heritage will make this a walk to remember.

#### Along The Valley Of The Idrija Fault – Kanomlja And Idrijske Krnice

Kanomlja, a long valley cut deep into the fault zone of the Idrija Fault lies between the sunny and steep slopes of the Krnice Ridge, charmingly scattered with houses, and the steep slopes of the Vojsko Plateau.

#### Črni Vrh Plateau – Part Of The Alpine Dinaric Transition Zone

Karst fields and plains are surrounded by hills over Črni Vrh which are part of high karst plateaus Trnovski gozd and Hrušica. On the Črni Vrh Plateau there are numerous landmarks and sites to visit: the linden tree in Zadlog, Hrvatova jama cave, Habečkovo brezno chasm, Andrejčkovo brezno chasm, Military Museum in Črni Vrh, several peaks, marshes, linen production historical heritage and an the Astronomical observatory Javornik.

#### Godovič – Paths Into Prehistory

From the Zala Gorge, the edge of the Godovič Plane marks the beginning of a completely new, diverse landscape between Okroglica and Jelenšek. The history of this remote area is shown in the 200-million-year-old "dinosaur" footprints, pre-historic diggings and nature's playful creativity. The 4.2 km long trail leads you past "Snake pine", archeological site Jelenšek to the "Dinosaur" Footprints and Šebalk pond.

#### Zavratec Plateau

From the old Zavratec Village, its old farm houses with ornately carved doorways, granary, fruit drying room and baroque church, the road leads across the softly rolling landscape of the Zavratec Plateau that unveils karst caves and archaeological remains of the past.

[www.geopark-idrija.si](http://www.geopark-idrija.si)

#### **Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.visit-idrija.si/>

#### **Geoculture - Hateg Geopark (Romania):**

#### **Key activity: GeoCulture**

The picturesque landscapes of the area have provided the setting for a long human history that stretches from the Paleolithic to the Roman Antiquity, from the Middle Ages to the present. The stories of dwarf dinosaurs of Transylvania, as well as the tales of the Earth,

nature and people have been developed as geoproducts made available at a network of visitor centres (“Houses of the Geopark”) and points (“DinoStops”) showcasing the unique geoculture attributes of the region..

### **Recommended sights and trails:**

#### House of Volcanoes

It shows two lost worlds, the volcanic landscapes and the Tethys seabed, providing also educational programs for children and families. Visitors can witness the traces of ancient eruption, the volcanic rocks-tuffs, lavas and volcanic bombs marking the volcanic eruptions that took place in the region during the dinosaurs’ existence.

#### House of Science and Art

Redesigned as part of the Danube GeoTour project, it shows the connection between Man and Earth through stone made objects from the geopark territory.

#### House of Traditions

As a part of the Sanpetru village community centre, it is managed by the local women association, showing parts of the story of people in the area, the multiple cultures living in harmony and their day to day objects.

#### House of Stones

The House of Stones is an ecological construction showing the connection between rocks and life, at the foothills of the Retezat mountains.

#### *Struthiosaurus transsylvanicus* DinoStop

The DinoStop in Sălașu de Sus village is a point made up of an artistic reconstruction of the dinosaur, a restaurant and a tourism info centre.

#### House of Dwarf Dinosaurs

The House of Dwarf Dinosaurs is located where the dinosaurs story started more than 100 years ago with the scientist Frantz Nopcsa, the House is the starting point for the Dinosaur Valley trail and an essential part of the Sanpetru village community centre.

#### *Elopteryx nopcsai* DinoStop





Located in Sânpetru village, the DinoStop consists in a scientific reconstruction and a commercial point run by the local women association.

### House of the Geopark

The House of the Geopark offers an introduction to UNESCO Global Geoparks and to the Hateg Territory. The exhibition shows both the ancient myths and legends about dragons and local balaur and the scientific research on dinosaurs.

### Balaur bondoc DinoStop

This DinoStop is located near the House of the Geopark in Hateg town. It consists of a scientific reconstruction and a souvenir shop managed by a local association.

### The Dinosaurs Valley Trail

It begins at the House of Dwarf Dinosaurs and House of Traditions in Sânpetru village and leads visitors to the place where the first dinosaur remains were found, at the Geosite La Scoabă. From the geosite the trail takes visitors to the traditional village, Ohaba-Sibișel, where one can see how people used the granite boulders to make dry stone fences and build their houses foundations. After passing the village visitors can walk through granite boulder fields and visit the House of Stones, which is in the middle of these fields.

### The Volcanoes Trail

This trail begins in Densuș village centre and leads visitors to the volcanic hills and the House of Volcanoes. Along the way to the volcanic hills pillow lavas can be observed. After passing the pillow lavas the signs will take visitors to the House of Volcanoes. Visitors along the trail can enjoy the sight of volcanic hills, the Tethys sea bed, trail fossils and can explore the House of Volcanoes.

### **Local products to enjoy:**

Răchitova brandy and Sălaș sausages

### **Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.hateggeoparc.ro/>

<https://turismrezezat.ro/en/>



## 2.2.2. Geo Triathlon



Do you like challenges? Are you tough enough for a triathlon? We have designed an alternative triathlon for you in the astonishing surrounding of three Danube geoparks. Start with the water sport in the Styrian Eisenwurzen Geopark - where we have substituted swimming with rafting as the water is rather cold... Then comes the cycling in the Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark – but underground, to make it special! Finish with hiking in the Papuk Geopark – where you can choose from 7 different trails to test your limits. Ready? Steady! Go!

### Geo Triathlon – 3 days trip

#### Day 1. Styrian Eisenwurzen Geopark (Austria):

**Key activity:** GeoRafting – Experience Earth’s history in a rafting boat

GeoRafting is a unique package for visitors, which combines adventure tourism elements with education of geodiversity, biodiversity, nature protection and cultural heritage. With the help of trained GeoRaft guides visitors can explore Experience earth’s history in a rafting boat aka “Travel through time, do sports and explore Salza valley”. While enjoying the spectacular landscape visitors will learn all about the Gesaeuse region, the Nature & Geopark and the formation of the Salza valley.

#### **Recommended sights:**

##### GeoPath and North Gorge:

The North Gorge is part of the GeoPfad (“path”). Almost floating – that’s the first impression visitors get when entering the 700 m long climbing facility. Leading through the dramatic North Gorge, the North footpath winds its way slightly up and then down again, connected by a few steps and bridges here and there. Visitors get information on the geological features on and get an understanding of the formation of Earth’s about 4.6 billion year-old-history on several stages of the trail.

### Spitzenbach Gorge:

The valley is also known as the "valley of butterflies". Preserved as a natural monument, the gorge has enjoyed the highest level of protection in Styria since 1971 and is an El Dorado for botanists, geologists and butterfly lovers, especially in early summer.

### Wasserloch Gorge:

The Palfau Wasserloch Gorge is one of Austria's most remarkable natural phenomena. Be it narrow canyons, intoxicating waterfalls, in-depth insights or expansive views, Wasserloch Gorge has everything you could possibly wish for when going on a hiking adventure. You pass five breath-taking waterfalls and the next thing you know is that a climbing facility adapted to nature takes you through the gorge and on towards one of the most impressive karst springs in Austria

### **Additional tourist information:**

[www.gesaeuse.at](http://www.gesaeuse.at)  
[www.eisenwurzen.com](http://www.eisenwurzen.com)  
[www.raftingcamp.at](http://www.raftingcamp.at)  
[www.geodorf.com](http://www.geodorf.com); [www.eisenwurzen.com/en](http://www.eisenwurzen.com/en)  
[www.eisenwurzen.com/en](http://www.eisenwurzen.com/en)  
[www.wasserlochklamm.at/en/](http://www.wasserlochklamm.at/en/)

### Day 2. Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark (Austria and Slovenia)

#### **Key activity:** GeoCycling – Underground biking experience

The geopark offers different guided and self-guided biking tours introducing the rich geology in the area and also other cultural and natural heritage. Discover a path through the abandoned and mysterious mining tunnels under Mount Peca. Led by a guide and equipped with helmets and flashlights you can safely ride from one valley to another.

Apart from the underground biking experience visitors can discover other tours like the "Geopark Karawanken-Karavanke Geobike Grand tour" connecting five main points of the geopark: Geopark infocenter "World of geology" in Bad Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla, Tourist mine and Geopark infocenter Mežica, Obir dripstone caves, Wildensteiner waterfall and the info point in Lavamünd. The Black hole trail for mountain bikers with good biking skills and daily tours for families and school children like the Springs of Mountain Peca, Old Mines tour, The Miners paths tour and the green volcano tour.

### **Recommended sights:**

#### Underground Kayaking experience

This special adventure begins before the Mining Museum in Glančnik in Mežica. Visitors climb into a real mine train that runs through the 3.5 km long tunnel Glančnik to a sloping



tunnel, called Unionski vpadnik. From there they take a flight of stairs (95 m) that leads to the water. At this point the visitors get the necessary personal protective equipment (neoprene shoes, life jackets and mining helmets with headlamps). and get in the special kayaks. The guide takes the visitors to a small underground river all the way to a magical underground lake, which is almost 700 m below the surface.

#### Adventure Park With Dinosaurs, King Matjaž, Mining Area And Crystals

In front of the mine, there is a theme park which offers the possibility to travel back to the time of the dinosaurs millions of years ago into the time of King Matjaž.

#### Geopark Information Centre "World Of Geology"

Here, the locals and the tourists, the non-professionals as well as experts find an exciting and interactive overview of the tourist offer and the genesis of the whole area. The Geopuls table represents the lithologic map of the area. Guests can use a pen and a book to navigate interactively through all the characteristics of the region. Ranging from geological treasures to culinary products so every guest can plan their own stay in the region

#### Obir Dripstone Caves

The Obir Caves were created by the incomparable cooperation of nature and man, with the symbiosis of 200 million years of history and modern technology. The caves were discovered in 1870 when miners went on a search for lead and zinc. The living dripstones in the caves are a rare and special phenomenon in Europe

#### The Smrekovec Info Point – The Extinct Giant

The purpose of the info point is to present the peculiarities and characteristics of the Smrekovec Mountain Range in an entertaining and educational way. Visitors can learn what was it like when 23 million years ago a volcano erupted under the sea here.

#### The Eisenkappler circular geotrail

The trip starts at the Geopark Information Centre "World of geology" and explore the wide variety of different rocks, with its magmatites, the crystalline basement, the diabase, the southern Alpine Mesozoic, the Palaeozoic, and finally the Periadriatic Seam which forms the boundary between the Adriatic (once part of the African plate) and the European tectonic plates.

#### The Hochobir Geotrail – the highest peak in the Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark

The geotrail runs mainly in the Middle Triassic Wetterstein limestone, which is the main component of the Northern Karavanke. The approximately 1,000-metre thick Middle Triassic Wetterstein limestone was formed about 230 million years ago. While hiking to the summit, you can find numerous remains of the former mining industry.

### The Petzen Geotrail – the mysterious Petzen – a karst mountain and a former glacier

The Petzen is a karst mountain range on the border of Slovenia and Austria in the eastern part of the Karavanke, with numerous karst springs largely on the Austrian part of the mountain.

### Trögern Klamm Geotrail

The Trögener Gorge was formed by the erosive power of water like all other gorges. you can discover many colourful rocks in the stream bed, deposited here due to the proximity of the Periadriatic Seam.

### **Local products to enjoy:**

Cave ham, honey products, organic spirits, curd cheese, buckwheat products

### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.geopark-karawanken.at/en/home.htm>

<http://www.bikenomad.com/en/main/day-tours>

### Day 3 Papuk Geopark (Croatia)

**Key activity:** GeoHiking –Step into nature and learn all the stories

GeoHiking is part of the geoproduct called GeoChallenge developed by Papuk geopark, based on outdoor activities taking place in rich geological, biological and cultural heritage area. It provides an opportunity for visitors to actively spend their holiday in nature and at the same time learn information about valuable geological, biological and cultural heritage of the region. Hikers can choose from 7 different hiking trails in Papuk Geopark 6 of which are educational trails presenting rock formations of exceptional geological interest.

### **Recommended sights:**

#### Park Forest Jankovac

This harmonious natural entity consists of a valley, hills covered with century-old woods, streams and artificial lakes. This is one of the most beautiful mountain valleys, surrounded by a centuries-old beech forest, and also one of the most popular mountain excursion sites with educational trails, mountain streams and lakes, caves, waterfalls and around 1200 types of flora and fauna.

#### Skakavac Waterfall

The 35 meters high waterfall is one of the most popular tourist attractions of the geopark situated in Park Forest Jankovac.





### Count's educational trail

The educational trail is built in the most beautiful part of the Park Forest Jankovac. It is a perfect choice for visitors with reduced mobility. A playground, an info point with souvenir shop can be found here as well. Canoeing and professional guided tour possibilities are also available.

### Adventure Park Duboka

Adventurers of all generations, looking for an active vacation, adrenaline and fun, can test their abilities on the two super-equipped polygons in the Adventure Park Duboka, located right by to the Campsite Duboka in the beautiful nature surroundings of Papuk UGG. Artificial rock climbing, running over woody mushrooms that hang over trees, crossing wooden hanging bridges, also nets, zippers and a handful of other challenges make visitors feel like actors in an action film.

### Visitor Centre House of Pannonian Sea

The visitor centre House of Pannonian Sea, located in Velika, interprets the wildlife and aquatic life of the Pannonian Sea that covered the area of Papuk 16 million years ago.

### Geological interpretation point Zvečevo

Interpretation point Zvečevo is an outdoor interpretation point that presents geochallenge metamorphic rocks and processes. Geochallenge is presented through interpretation panels and educational equipment that include interactive installation (meta machine which in very simplified way explain metamorphic processes).

### Geosite Rupnica

Rupnica is the most important geological site on Papuk, which was declared as the first Croatian geological monument of nature back in 1948. It is a special geological feature made from volcanic mass, a natural mosaic of rocks arranged like giant stone pillars.

### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.inlandia.com/accommodation-in-inland/croatia/mountain-lodge-jankovac.html>

[www.papukgeopark.com](http://www.papukgeopark.com)

[www.pp-papuk.hr](http://www.pp-papuk.hr)

[www.tzzps.hr](http://www.tzzps.hr)

[www.tzvpz.hr](http://www.tzvpz.hr)

[tz-velika@net.hr](mailto:tz-velika@net.hr)

[www.montis-aurea.hr/en](http://www.montis-aurea.hr/en)

### 2.2.3. Tour de Geoparks



Life is like riding a bicycle, to stay balanced you must keep moving. Keep – or even find your balance while discovering the treasures of the Danube geoparks in an alternative way! Geocycling offers a unique experience riding amongst special geological formations, on karst mountain ranges and even in underground tunnels!

#### **Tour de Geopark – 3 days trip**

##### Day 1. Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark (Austria and Slovenia):

#### **Key activity:** GeoCycling – Underground biking experience

The geopark offers different guided and self-guided biking tours introducing the rich geology in the area and also other cultural and natural heritage. Discover a path through the abandoned and mysterious mining tunnels under Mount Peca. Led by a guide and equipped with helmets and flashlights you can safely ride from one valley to another.

Apart from the underground biking experience visitors can discover other tours like the “Geopark Karawanken-Karavanke Geobike Grand tour” connecting five main points of the geopark: Geopark infocenter “World of geology” in Bad Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla, Tourist mine and Geopark infocenter Mežica, Obir dripstone caves, Wildensteiner waterfall and the info point in Lavamünd. The Black hole trail for mountain bikers with good biking skills and daily tours for families and school children like the Springs of Mountain Peca, Old Mines tour, The Miners paths tour and the green volcano tour.

#### **Recommended sights:**

##### Underground Kayaking experience

This special adventure begins before the Mining Museum in Glančnik in Mežica. Visitors climb into a real mine train that runs through the 3.5 km long tunnel Glančnik to a sloping tunnel, called Unionski vpadnik. From there they take a flight of stairs (95 m) that leads to the water. At this point the visitors get the necessary personal protective equipment (neoprene shoes, life jackets and mining helmets with headlamps). and get in the special kayaks. The guide takes the visitors to a small underground river all the way to a magical underground lake, which is almost 700 m below the surface.



### Adventure Park With Dinosaurs, King Matjaž, Mining Area And Crystals

In front of the mine, there is a theme park which offers the possibility to travel back to the time of the dinosaurs millions of years ago into the time of King Matjaž.

### Geopark Information Centre "World Of Geology"

Here, the locals and the tourists, the non-professionals as well as experts find an exciting and interactive overview of the tourist offer and the genesis of the whole area. The Geopuls table represents the lithologic map of the area. Guests can use a pen and a book to navigate interactively through all the characteristics of the region. Ranging from geological treasures to culinary products so every guest can plan their own stay in the region

### Obir Dripstone Caves

The Obir Caves were created by the incomparable cooperation of nature and man, with the symbiosis of 200 million years of history and modern technology. The caves were discovered in 1870 when miners went on a search for lead and zinc. The living dripstones in the caves are a rare and special phenomenon in Europe

### The Smrekovec Info Point – The Extinct Giant

The purpose of the info point is to present the peculiarities and characteristics of the Smrekovec Mountain Range in an entertaining and educational way. Visitors can learn what was it like when 23 million years ago a volcano erupted under the sea here.

### The Eisenkappler circular geotrail

The trip starts at the Geopark Information Centre "World of geology" and explore the wide variety of different rocks, with its magmatites, the crystalline basement, the diabase, the southern Alpine Mesozoic, the Palaeozoic, and finally the Periadriatic Seam which forms the boundary between the Adriatic (once part of the African plate) and the European tectonic plates.

### The Hochobir Geotrail – the highest peak in the Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark

The geotrail runs mainly in the Middle Triassic Wetterstein limestone, which is the main component of the Northern Karavanke. The approximately 1,000-metre thick Middle Triassic Wetterstein limestone was formed about 230 million years ago. While hiking to the summit, you can find numerous remains of the former mining industry.

### The Petzen Geotrail – the mysterious Petzen – a karst mountain and a former glacier

The Petzen is a karst mountain range on the border of Slovenia and Austria in the eastern part of the Karavanke, with numerous karst springs largely on the Austrian part of the mountain.

### Trögern Klamm Geotrail

The Trögerner Gorge was formed by the erosive power of water like all other gorges. you can discover many colourful rocks in the stream bed, deposited here due to the proximity of the Periadriatic Seam.

### **Local products to enjoy:**

Cave ham, honey products, organic spirits, curd cheese, buckwheat products

### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.geopark-karawanken.at/en/home.html>

<http://www.bikenomad.com/en/main/day-tours>

### Day 2. Bakony-Balaton Geopark (Hungary)

### **Key activity:** GeoCycling – “Sea of stones”

The most well-known and most famous geological formations, geomorphologic features of the Kál Basin are represented by the gigantic boulders and groups of cliffs which are strongly cemented by silica. The seas of stones were formed by the subsequent cementation of sand, pebbly sand and gravel beds which had been deposited in the Lake Pannon.

### **Recommended sights:**

#### Tapolca Lake Visitor Centre

The Visitor Centre offers an interactive exhibition with a 3D film and a Geopark Room introducing the many aspects of karst phenomena. You can also take a boat trip in the cave just beneath the streets of Tapolca.

#### Csodabogyós Cave and Szentgáli-kőlik Cave

Both caves are an excellent choice for a caving adventure.

#### Hegystű Geological Interpretive Site

It is a partly quarried hill, for enjoying a view of a rock face consisting of columnar jointed basalt.

#### Tihany Peninsula

The peninsula offers great hiking trails. Visiting Tihany Abbey and the famous Lavender House Visitor Centre are also a must.



### **Local products to enjoy:**

“At the Feet of Volcanoes” herbal tea mixtures, Katrabóca Ammonite Gingerbread, Laposa Kőkövön / "On the Rocks" Furmint (white wine), Szászi Winery Badacsonyi Rózsakő (organic white wine), Vácza-kő Major: home made jams and fruit vinegars

### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://bakony-balaton.hu/en>

[www.geopark.hu](http://www.geopark.hu)

### **Day 3 Papuk Geopark (Croatia)**

#### **Key activity:** GeoCycling –Velika Cycling trail

GeoCycling is part of the geoproduct called GeoChallenge developed by Papuk geopark, based on outdoor activities taking place in rich geological, biological and cultural heritage area. It provides an opportunity for visitors to actively spend their holiday in nature and at the same time learn information about valuable geological, biological and cultural heritage of the region. Velika Cycling trail is a circular 18.5 km long trail starting in the village of Velika, at the Sv. Augustina church.

#### **Recommended sights:**

##### Park Forest Jankovac

This harmonious natural entity consists of a valley, hills covered with century-old woods, streams and artificial lakes. This is one of the most beautiful mountain valleys, surrounded by a centuries-old beech forest, and also one of the most popular mountain excursion sites with educational trails, mountain streams and lakes, caves, waterfalls and around 1200 types of flora and fauna.

##### Skakavac Waterfall

The 35 meters high waterfall is one of the most popular tourist attractions of the geopark situated in Park Forest Jankovac.

##### Count's educational trail

The educational trail is built in the most beautiful part of the Park Forest Jankovac. It is a perfect choice for visitors with reduced mobility. A playground, an info point with souvenir shop can be found here as well. Canoeing and professional guided tour possibilities are also available.

##### Adventure Park Duboka

Adventurers of all generations, looking for an active vacation, adrenaline and fun, can test their abilities on the two super-equipped polygons in the Adventure Park Duboka, located

right by to the Campsite Duboka in the beautiful nature surroundings of Papuk UGG. Artificial rock climbing, running over woody mushrooms that hang over trees, crossing wooden hanging bridges, also nets, zippers and a handful of other challenges make visitors feel like actors in an action film.

#### Visitor Centre House of Pannonian Sea

The visitor centre House of Pannonian Sea, located in Velika, interprets the wildlife and aquatic life of the Pannonian Sea that covered the area of Papuk 16 million years ago.

#### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.inlandia.com/accommodation-in-inland/croatia/mountain-lodge-jankovac.html>

[www.papukgeopark.com](http://www.papukgeopark.com)

[www.pp-papuk.hr](http://www.pp-papuk.hr)

[www.tzzps.hr](http://www.tzzps.hr)

[www.tzvpz.hr](http://www.tzvpz.hr)

[tz-velika@net.hr](mailto:tz-velika@net.hr)

[www.montis-aurea.hr/en](http://www.montis-aurea.hr/en)

[in-inland/croatia/mountain-lodge-jankovac.html](https://www.inlandia.com/accommodation-in-inland/croatia/mountain-lodge-jankovac.html)





## 2.2.4. Historic Time Travel



Want to see where the last dinosaurs on Earth lived? Or how volcanoes shaped the land in some parts of the Danube area? Become a time traveller and discover the millions of years of history of Earth in just 10 days, visiting 4 geoparks in the Danube region.

### **Presenting the history of Earth – 10 days trip**

#### Day 1-2 - Iron Mountain Geopark (Czech Republic)

“Explore the history of Earth in 2 days”

#### **Key sights during the journey through ages:**

##### Old sandstone rock town of Toulouvcovy Mastale

Toulouvcovy Maštale, a natural rocky area of sandstone rock and pine forests where visitors can see sandstone walls and underlying crystalline rock.

##### Berl's Limekiln – Museum of limestones

At the museum equipped with information panels visitors can observe a unique lift for kiln filling and enter the heart of lime kiln. The most important exhibit is the building itself. Geological exhibits from the Iron Mountains Geopark are displayed there.

##### Gateway to prehistory in Pasicka

At the eastern gateways to the geopark we can learn about the history of the evolution of fossils. It is a freely accessible facility with gaming and educational elements focused on geology and paleontology. Here you can dig up a dinosaur skeleton from the sand, explore different kinds of fossils or learn how a sandstone town was built.

##### Prachovice – active limestone quarry and nature trail

The educative trail leading from the Prachovice Quarry to Vápenný Podol includes 6 information panels that acquaints visitors with the past and presence of the quarry, rare paleozoic fossils and minerals in the quarry, cave system in the surrounding and local rocks.

### Horky granite pathway

The 4.5 km long granite trail takes you through the tradition of stonemasonry that the area of Skuteč is bound for centuries. It Leads past several abandoned and flooded granite quarries. They provide lots of romantic sights and opportunities for bathing also.

### **Recommended leisure activities:**

guided geowalks, cycling (MAGMA geo-cycle trail), hiking, winter sports: downhill and cross-country skiing

### **Local products to enjoy:**

special beer - Smoked Iron, honey, mead, cheese, sausage

### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.czechtourism.com/c/zelezne-hory-geopark/>

<https://www.geoparkzh.cz/en/geoturism/permanent-exhibitions/>.

<https://www.geoparkzh.cz/en/geoturism/educative-trails/>

### Day 3-5 travel to Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark (Austria and Slovenia)

“Secrets Written in Stone”

### **Key sights during the journey through ages:**

#### Obir Dripstone Caves

The fascination of the Obir Caves were created by the incomparable mix of nature and man, with the symbiosis of 200 million years of history and modern technology.

#### Visitor Centre World of Geology

Visitors can explore geology over time, the genesis of the whole area, in an interactive way. The so-called Geoclock which shows the entire creation and evolution of the Earth through animation. Using the Geopuls table, represents the lithologic map of the area, visitors can navigate interactively through all the characteristics of the region.

#### Mezica Mine – Former lead and zinc mine

The history of mining unfolds at Mezica Mine. The original apperance of the mining workplace has been preserved here and shows mining machinery, equipment and tools through time. In one part of the Moring deposit, there are well-preserved tunnels and ore winning sites.



### Wildensteiner Waterfall

One of the highest free falling waterfalls in Europe, where a sequence of rocks from uppermost Triassic to Lower Cretaceous is present. In the area ammonite and crinoid fossils

#### **Recommended leisure activities:**

underground cycling, hiking

#### **Local products to enjoy:**

Cave ham, honey products, organic spirits, curd cheese, buckwheat products

#### **Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.geopark-karawanken.at/en/caves-and-mines.html>

<https://www.geopark-karawanken.at/en/geopark-experience/geosites.html>

### Days 6-7 Bakony-Balaton Geopark (Hungary)

“A Geological Wonderland”

#### **Key sights during the journey through ages:**

##### Tapolca Lake Cave

A really unique experience awaits in the cave, located in the heart of Tapolca town. An exhibition of ten rooms – including a projection room – in the reception building presents the wonderful world of karst regions and caves. Following the steps to the deep, you will reach a beautifully lit chamber, where the guide tells about the development of the cave and its history of exploration. After a few steps, visitors can get in the boats and take a short boating trip in the circular cave branch, on the wonderful, naturally bluish-greenish, glimmering water surface.

##### Hegyestű Geological Interpretive Site

Hegyestű Geological Interpretive Site offers a wonderful panorama of Lake Balaton, Tihany Peninsula, Káli and Tapolca Basin, and an exhibition about the history of the quarry and the use of basalt, million years old rock types of Transdanubia (the Western half of Hungary).

##### Lavender House Visitor Centre - Tihany peninsula

In the Lavender House Visitor Centre at the Eastern gate of the Bakony–Balaton Geopark an interactive exhibition and short spectacular film and presents the Tihany Peninsula, where volcanoes shaped the landscape and the centuries-long co-existence of people and nature in an entertaining way. Visitors can learn about the history of the peninsula and its emblematic activity, lavender production.

**Potential leisure activities:**

guided geotour, cycling, hiking

**Local products to enjoy:**

“At the Feet of Volcanoes” herbal tea mixtures, Katrabóca Ammonite Gingerbread, Laposa KőKövön / "On the Rocks" Furmint (white wine), Szászi Winery Badacsonyi Rózsakő (organic white wine), Vácza-kő Major: home made jams and fruit vinegars

**Additional tourist information:**

<https://www.bfnp.hu/en>

<https://bakony-balaton.hu/en>

[www.geopark.hu](http://www.geopark.hu)

Days 8-10 Hateq (Romania)

“The Land of Dwarf Dinosaurs”

**Key sights during the journey through ages:**

House of Volcanoes

It shows two lost worlds, the volcanic landscapes and the Tethys seabed, providing also educational programs for children and families. Visitors can witness the traces of ancient eruption, the volcanic rocks-tuffs, lavas and volcanic bombs marking the volcanic eruptions that took place in the region during the dinosaurs’ existence.

Struthiosaurus transsylvanicus DinoStop

The DinoStop in Sălașu de Sus village is a point made up of an artistic reconstruction of the dinosaur, a restaurant and a tourism info centre.

House of Dwarf Dinosaurs

The House of Dwarf Dinosaurs is located where the dinosaurs story started more than 100 years ago with the scientist Frantz Nopcsa, the House is the starting point for the Dinosaur Valley trail and an essential part of the Sanpetru village community centre.

Elopteryx nopcsai DinoStop

Located in Sânpetru village, the DinoStop consists in a scientific reconstruction and a commercial point run by the local women association.



### House of the Geopark

The House of the Geopark offers an introduction to UNESCO Global Geoparks and to the Hateg Territory. The exhibition shows both the ancient myths and legends about dragons and local balaur and the scientific research on dinosaurs.

### Balaur bondoc DinoStop

This DinoStop is located near the House of the Geopark in Hateg town. It consists of a scientific reconstruction and a souvenir shop managed by a local association.

### **Local products to enjoy:**

Răchitova brandy and Sălaș sausages

### **Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.hateggeoparc.ro/>

<https://turismrezezat.ro/en/>

### 2.2.5. Digging Deep



You may not meet Snow White and the seven dwarfs but you can discover how miners used to work in the past centuries! Did you know that the second largest mercury mine of the world is located in the Idrija Geopark? Or that you can explore what walking around a quarry is like in the Iron Mountains Geopark? Not to mention the Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark where you can see all the original equipment that were used to get the underground treasures out of the ground. Glück auf!

#### **Digging Deep – 3 days trip**

##### *Iron Mountains Geopark (Czech Republic):*

##### **Key sights of ‘mining memories’:**

##### Berl’s Limekiln – Museum of lime stones

At the museum equipped with information panels visitors can observe a unique lift for kiln filling and enter the heart of lime kiln. The most important exhibit is the building itself. Geological exhibits from the Iron Mountains Geopark are displayed there.

##### Skuteč Museum

In the museum visitors can experience all the operation in a quarry from mining to processing and try old tools that are used in quarries until now. The interior exhibition deals with the history of granite mining and the geology of Skuteč and its surroundings, while the exterior exhibition imitates a walk in a quarry.

##### **Local products to enjoy:**

special beer - Smoked Iron, honey, mead, cheese, sausage

##### **Additional tourism information:**

[\\_https://www.czechtourism.com/c/zelezne-hory-geopark/](https://www.czechtourism.com/c/zelezne-hory-geopark/)

<https://www.geoparkzh.cz/en/geoturism/permanent-exhibitions/>





### Idrija Geopark (Slovenia)

#### **Key sights of 'mining memories':**

##### Idrija, and surroundings

At the second largest mercury mine in the world, visitors can get acquainted with the 500 year story of mercury mining.

Visit the Idrija Geopark to discover the never-ending creative power of nature and human mind, enjoy the fresh air, magnificent views, local hospitality and interesting stories, written by nature and the people.

<http://www.visit-idrija.si/en/>

<http://www.geopark-idrija.si/en/geopark/112/mining-heritage/>

##### Anthony's Main Road

Anthony's Main Road is arranged as an underground museum. It is one of the oldest preserved and still opened mine entrances in the world. This tourist mine shaft is a part of the second largest mercury mine in the world and was first opened in the year 1500, initially supported by wood, and in 1766 built into an oval-shaped shaft. Inside the mine you will see presentations of old working processes in the mine with original tools, old tool copies and dummies. The total length of the pit is about 300 metres. At the beginning of the pit Šelštev - the mighty building that was used as a register office was built in the 18th century.

<http://www.geopark-idrija.si/en/geopark/112/mining-heritage/#Anthony's%20Main%20Road>

<http://www.cudhg-idrija.si/en/anthonys-main-road/>

##### Hg Smelting Plant

Hg Smeltery is a restored monument of mercury heritage, that is under UNESCO protection. At the permanent exhibition "From Ore to Mercury Drops" you will learn about a unique liquid metal and trace the development of smelting furnaces through five centuries. Your tour will end with a walk along the path of ore, where you will view the entire procedure of mercury extraction. Presentation of the history of smelting in Idrija displays the exceptional significance of mercury, which marked the development of Idrija and contributed to the flourishing of human civilisation throughout the world.

<http://www.geopark-idrija.si/en/geopark/112/mining-heritage/#Smelting%20plant>

<http://www.cudhg-idrija.si/en/hg-smelting-plant/>

##### Gewerkenegg Castle

Gewerkenegg Castle has served as the headquarters of the mine administration and as a mercury storage through the centuries. It was the centre of mercury trading in Slovenia and the place where mercury began its journey into the world. The entire complex of the castle is now a museum exhibition area.

<http://www.geopark-idrija.si/en/geopark/112/mining-heritage/#Gewerkenegg%20castle>

<https://www.muzej-idrija-cerkno.si/lokacija/grad-gewerkenegg/>

**Local products to enjoy:**

Idrija lace, Geruš (miners' drink, a traditional bitter), Idrija Žlikrofi (a culinary specialty with the European trademark protection), lace cake Rezi, Idrija Selected collective trademark products

*Karawanken-Karavanke Geopark (Austria and Slovenia)*

**Key sights of 'mining memories':**

Mezica Mine – Former lead and zinc mine

The history of mining unfolds at Mezica Mine. The original appearance of the mining workplace has been preserved here and shows mining machinery, equipment and tools through time. In one part of the Moring deposit, there are well-preserved tunnels and ore winning sites.

<https://www.geopark-karawanken.at/en/caves-and-mines/the-meica-mine.html>

**Recommended leisure activities:**

underground cycling, underground kayaking, hiking

**Local products to enjoy:**

Cave ham, honey products, organic spirits, curd cheese, buckwheat products

**Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.bikenomad.com/en/main/day-tours>



## 2.2.6. Into the Woods



Well, the Golden Globe Award winning American musical fantasy was not filmed here but the scenery along this itinerary is so breath-taking that visitors will definitely agree we live on a golden globe! Let the various geo-hiking trails lead you into the woods!

### **Into the Woods, Geo-hiking - 4 days trip**

#### *Djerdap Aspiring Geopark (Serbia):*

**Key activity:** GeoHiking

Djerdap National Park, Serbia's biggest National Park, is made up of natural wonders, rare phenomena, tradition and rich history as well as numerous cultural and historical monuments.

#### **Recommended sights and trails:**

##### Golubac Fortress

Discover the well-restored medieval fortress situated in a dramatic and amazing landscape offering scenic views over the River Danube.

##### Boljetin River Gorge

The gorge is famous for its continuous geological layers and offers regular geology study tours.

##### Lepenski Vir

The archaeological site is located on the banks of the River Danube. It used to be the centre of one of the most important prehistoric cultures and its remains of religious architecture dating from 6500-5500 BC.

##### Diana Fortification

Situated on the Danube Riverbank Diana is considered as one of the largest and best-preserved military fortifications in the area.

### Bosman-Sokolovac

This walking trail requires active hiking because trail climbs along the cliffs above the Danube, all the way to the top of Sokolovac on 683 m above sea level. From the top there gorge Gospodjđin Vir and the Romanian Nature Park Portile de Fier on the other side of the River Danube can also be seen.

### Greben

Greben is a 2.4 km long walking trail starting from Djerdap highway on Boljetin Hill at 230 m altitude and continues along the forest trail all the way to Greben at 192m of altitude. From the ridge you can see the gorge Gospodjin Vir, the archaeological site Lepenski Vir, the mythological Treskavac in Romania and the basin Donjomilanovacka kotlina.

### Kovilovo

The trail begins at the regional road Donji Milanovac-Majdanpek at 398m altitude and continues along the forest road all the way to the Kovilovo viewpoint. From this viewpoint Donjomilanovacka kotlina, the archaeological site Lepenski Vir, Greben, the submerged Porecko ostvro, Donji Milanovac, Glavica, Golubinje and Romania can be seen.

### Mali Strbac

Near the Ploce viewpoint, the trail leads right up to the Mali Strbac and provides a wonderful view on the Djerdap Gorge, and the rock with the carved figure of king Decebal.

### Ploce

Ploce is a viewpoint in National Park Djerdap. Viewpoint Ploce represents a smoth space just above the canyon Mali kazan and a limestone flat under peak Veliki Štrbac.

### Veliki Strbac

The trail leads through the most attractive part of the National Park Djerdap and ends at Veliki Strbac. Veliki Strbac is the highest peak of the Miroc Mountain and from here there is a beautiful view of the River Danube in its narrowest part.

### **Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.geohikingdjerdap.rs/geotourism/geopark-destinations/>



### Hateg Geopark (Romania):

#### **Key activity:** GeoHiking

The picturesque landscapes of the area have provided the setting for a long human history that stretches from the Paleolithic to the Roman Antiquity, from the Middle Ages to the present. The stories of dwarf dinosaurs of Transylvania, as well as the tales of the Earth, nature and people have been developed as geoproducts made available at a network of visitor centres (“Houses of the Geopark”) and points (“DinoStops”). The story of Time is told in Hateg Country Geopark at the Geopark Houses and DinoStops, developed under the Danube GeoTour project. In addition, visitors can hike on the recommended trails connecting the most important attractions and geoproducts.

#### **Recommended sights and trails:**

##### The Dinosaurs Valley Trail

It begins at the House of Dwarf Dinosaurs and House of Traditions in Sânpetru village and leads visitors to the place where the first dinosaur remains were found, at the Geosite La Scoabă. From the geosite the trail takes visitors to the traditional village, Ohaba-Sibişel, where one can see how people used the granite boulders to make dry stone fences and build their houses foundations. After passing the village visitors can walk through granite boulder fields and visit the House of Stones, which is in the middle of these fields.

##### The Volcanoes Trail

This trail begins in Densuş village centre and leads visitors to the volcanic hills and the House of Volcanoes. Along the way to the volcanic hills pillow lavas can be observed. After passing the pillow lavas the signs will take visitors to the House of Volcanoes. Visitors along the trail can enjoy the sight of volcanic hills, the Tethys sea bead, trail fossils and can explore the House of Volcanoes.

##### House of Volcanoes

It shows two lost worlds, the volcanic landscapes and the Tethys seabed, providing also educational programs for children and families. Visitors can witness the traces of ancient eruption, the volcanic rocks-tuffs, lavas and volcanic bombs marking the volcanic eruptions that took place in the region during the dinosaurs’ existence.

##### *Struthiosaurus transsylvanicus* DinoStop

The DinoStop in Sălaşu de Sus village is a point made up of an artistic reconstruction of the dinosaur, a restaurant and a tourism info centre.

##### House of Dwarf Dinosaurs

The House of Dwarf Dinosaurs is located where the dinosaurs story started more than 100 years ago with the scientist Frantz Nopcsa, the House is the starting point for the Dinosaur Valley trail and an essential part of the Sanpetru village community centre.

### *Elopteryx nopcsai* DinoStop

Located in Sânpetru village, the DinoStop consists in a scientific reconstruction and a commercial point run by the local women association.

### House of the Geopark

The House of the Geopark offers an introduction to UNESCO Global Geoparks and to the Hateg Territory. The exhibition shows both the ancient myths and legends about dragons and local balaur and the scientific research on dinosaurs.

### *Balaur bondoc* DinoStop

This DinoStop is located near the House of the Geopark in Hateg town. It consists of a scientific reconstruction and a souvenir shop managed by a local association.

### **Local products to enjoy:**

Răchitova brandy and Sălaș sausages

### **Additional tourist information:**

<http://www.hateggeoparc.ro/>

<https://turismrezezat.ro/en/>



### 3. Conclusions and recommendations

#### 3.1. Conclusions

The objective of the WP6 is to ensure that Danube GeoTour and Danube Geoparks are visible, appreciated and recognized internationally – within the Danube programme region as well as within our own countries. As the project proposal outlines, the participating geoparks are rather new but highly dedicated and open entities of the Danube territory. Each of them acts rather isolated in its emphasis for the promotion of geoheritage. The thematic itineraries are aiming to enhance their visibility through creating a focus that can be attractive to specific target groups, which can potentially be reached easier than the general public, and fighting their isolation.

The Output 6.1 covers all the geoparks participating in the project. All the itineraries link at least two geoparks, in the case of the territorial ones the itineraries always connect two geopark and two countries, whereas the thematic itineraries may connect three (Geo Triathlon, Tour de Geoparks, Digging Deep) or even four geoparks (Historic Time Travel). All the geoparks are incorporated into at least two itineraries.

As outlined in the project proposal, the “Danube GeoTour is designed so that itineraries as well as all promotional tools are independent of any new future institution or common management. Danube GeoTour provides only hints and positive images for those who visit Geopark websites. This can last for several years and be run by each Geopark independently. All Danube Geopark contact points already exist in Geopark Managements and info centres.”

The itineraries comprise sites that have already been functioning as tourist attractions, cycling and hiking trails that have already been designated and used by tourists, and some activities that that have already been on offer in the various geoparks. Therefore these elements do not rely on a partnership which lasts only for the duration of the project. The geoproducts developed by the project partners have also been incorporated into the itineraries, which were developed with a long term vision and with sustainability in mind. The tangible products (e.g. Idrija Lace) can be used to widen the range of local products (and souvenirs) offered in local stores, tourist information centres, visitors centres and at events that takes place in the geoparks.



### 3.2. Recommendations

The itineraries described in this document need to be recommended on the website of the project. The individual websites of the participating geoparks and those of the destination management organisations of the nearby areas should display the itineraries that they are involved with. All these websites should provide inviting pictures of the various recommended sites and activities, where any of the potential target groups are enjoying the site or the activity – to prove the fun and enjoyment people will have while discovering the places recommended by the itineraries. Furthermore, the websites providing further (tourism) information on the recommended sites and activities, listed in this document based on the recommendations of the project partners, should be indicated with direct links on the websites.

The structure of the itineraries is easily transferable to other geoparks and potentially other rural destinations where there is rich natural and cultural heritage and where tourism services (attractions, (hiking and cycling) trails, visitor centres, tourist information centres as well as accommodation and catering services) are available. The itineraries were designed with touristic and special interests in focus, which may also motivate other areas to create linkages along a similar approach.

