

# Path to Puštal



What shall we eat at fast,  
Do not worry,  
The Puštuci take care of that,  
And they are all frogmen.

The little and the big ones  
All catch frogs there,  
And sometimes even a toad  
Rolls into the sack.

If you caught lice,  
And your head itches,  
Comb makers in Puštal,  
Solve your worries.

(from the poem Škofjeloška I., Tine Sever)

On a walk along the theme trail through Puštal you will hear stories that will reveal how »Puštuci« - the inhabitants of Puštal lived in old times. You will find out how the devil, combs and frogs are connected with Puštal, and many other interesting things.

Although Puštal is only for a shooting range away from Škofja Loka, the conflicts between Puštal and Škofja Loka reach back to the Middle Ages. The territory of Puštal was taken away from the bishop of Freising already in the 13th century and thus belonged to another lord than the town. The social situation of the inhabitants of Puštal also varied much from that of the townsmen, because cottagers and crofters lived in Puštal who made their living especially with non-agricultural activities. Comb making was one of the most spread ones, and catching and selling frogs was the most unusual one, as frogs were in abundance in Puštal. The inhabitants of Loka liked to make fun of the locals of Puštal because of this activity and thus they returned them for teasing with Loka's smojkas.

The path starts at Town Square, opposite to Martin House (1) and leads from here across the main road to Karlovec. The name of the suburb Karlovec most likely derives from the name of the Croatian town Karlovec in Vojna krajina. The suburb is divided in Upper Karlovec, which was named Poljane Suburb due to the passage to the Poljanska valley, and Lower Karlovec, which appears in castrates under the name Essel Gasse – Donkey street.

**Comb Making** Oral tradition has it that comb making craft was brought to Škofja Loka by the inhabitants of Tolmin and Vipava in the first half of the 18th century. The craft was first being developed in town, but later the main holders of comb making were in the area of Puštal. Combs or »kampli« were made from beef and wether horns, and eighteen to twenty phases were needed to make finished goods from horns.

In Karlovec, at Kopališka street 8, there is Firbar's House (2), which obtained its name after the house activity – painting activity. Jurij Pokorn started the painting activity in the house and he was a renowned man, even the mayor of Škofja Loka from 1861-1866. The activity was preserved in the house till 1907, and even today we can see the proves of the painting craft on its exterior – if you look at the upper part of the house, you will notice »a rake«, where coloured flax linen used to be dried.

Only a few steps forward the street on the left, there is the birth house of Fran Jesenko (3) (1875-1932), a famous botanist and geneticist, one of the founders of today's Triglav National Park and the first professor of botany at the University of Ljubljana, established in 1921.

**Rihard Jakopič**, painter, also lived for some time in Puštal.

At the crossing of the Kopališka street and Fužine street, on the border of two suburbs, Karlovec and Studenec, there is "Lepo znamenje" (Beautiful Shrine) (4). The original shrine was made of wood, but since 1826 a built shrine has stood here. Beside the mark there is a well, where people used to get water. The house behind the Lepo znamenje obtained its name right due to the vicinity of the shrine – the house used to be called "Pri Znamčkarju" (at Marker's). Floor marks will take you from the "Lepo znamenje" for some time among the houses in Karlovec, and then you turn left towards the Devil's Footbridge (5).

The inhabitants of Puštal and Škofja Loka know to tell that the wooden footbridge across the Sora river got its name after ancient visitations of devil at this place. When the locals built shrines on both sides of the bridge, they drove him away for some time, but then again he started visitations in the middle of the bridge. They finally managed to drive him away under the Šturm rock by building a shrine dedicated to St. John Nepomuk, the patron of bridges, in the middle of the footbridge.

On the other side of the bridge, there are two well preserved built houses from the 18th century. The first one is Bernik's House (6), and the other one is Poličar's House (7). On the façade of Poličar's House you can find a mark dated 27.9.1926 – water in the great flood in 1926 reached this mark. The Poljanska Sora river and the Gradaščica river flooded at that time due to heavy storm and the raging of mountain streams, and the large flood also claimed several victims.

The path then leads right past the former swimming area towards Nace's House (8), built in the 16th century, and which obtained its Baroque appearance in 1755. It is named after its owner Ignacij Homan, who bought the house in 1818, and since then it has passed from generation to generation. Nace's House remains alive thanks to its owners, the Polenec family.

From Nace's House return by the same path to the Devil's Footbridge and then continue towards Puštal Castle (9).

In the 16th century, the Puštal lords were a strong support to **Protestantism**. The Puštal lords had an oratory arranged in the castle tower where also Protestants from Škofja Loka and Stara Loka frequented.

Puštal Castle was mentioned already in the 13th century, but the present appearance of the castle was created from the 16th century on. The Chapel of St. Cross in Puštal Castle is adorned by the fresco The Descent from the Cross made by Giulio Quaglio in 1706, which is one of the most valuable works of art in Škofja Loka. Today a music school is in the castle. Since the castle is privately owned, the castle courtyard cannot be seen at all times.

**August Berthold** (1880 – 1919), Slovenian photographer and impressionist was born in Puštal Castle; his mother Ema was from the Oblak – Wolkensperg family. He was the first Slovenian artistic photographer, also known as the fifth impressionist. Ivan Grohar was supposed to take his photo of a temple for a template of his painting.

From Puštal Castle, the path leads right towards Hribec (10), approximately 100m also by the main road, so be careful. A short ascent to Hribec takes you past the chapels of the Stations of the Cross to the Church of St. Cross, which the Wolkenspergs, the Puštal lords had it built in the beginning of the 18th century.

**Oblak von Wolkensperg** The family of barons Wolkensperg is in the opinion of historians one of rare aristocratic families with Slovenian roots. The beginner of the Wolkensperg family was Marko Oblak, who bought Puštal Castle in 1696.

The theme trail ends here, you only need to return to Town Square in Škofja Loka.

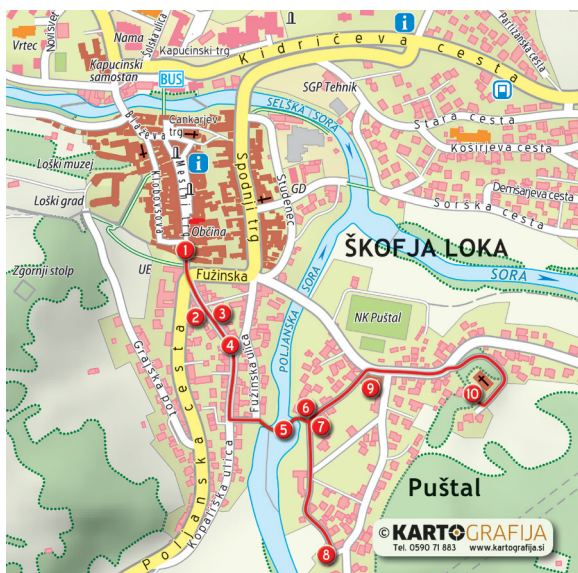
## Visit also:

The old town centre of Škofja Loka | Arts and Crafts Centre at Town Square | Loka Museum in Loka Castle | The three castles path Capuchin Library | From Hribec there is a marked mountain trail to Osolnik (858m, 2h 15min)

**Parking areas:** At Administrative Unit Škofja Loka (payable) | At football ground in Puštal (free) | Parking area opposite the main bus station (free)

## Restaurants in the vicinity:

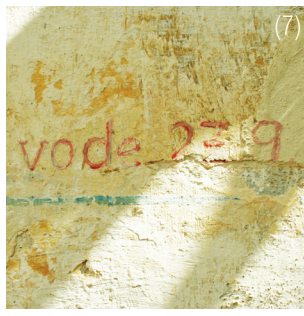
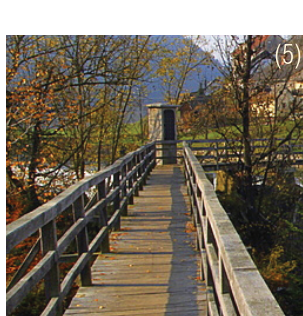
Coffeehouse Homan | Coffeehouse Vahtnca | Coffeehouse Na Stengah Pizza and Spaghetti House Jesharna | Restaurant Kašča | Pizza House Klementina | Pizza House Origano



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