The Triglav National Park is named after Triglav, the highest peak in Slovenia, and is Slovenia’s only national park. It lies in the north-west part of the country and encompasses almost the entire Julian Alps range on the Slovenian side. It is an exceptional experience to learn about the nature, cultural landscape and people of the Julian Alps. However, we must always keep in mind that we are just guests here.

The Mostnica Gorge and the Voje Valley are among the most beautiful and popular natural sights in Bohinj. They offer views of crystal clear pools and huge rock-shaped rocks, as well as diverse flora and fauna and a cultural landscape that has been nurtured by the people throughout the centuries. Four brave men walked along the Voje Valley to be the first to climb Triglav from the Bohinj side on 26 August 1778.

### The Bridges of Mostnica

Four bridges and two footbridges cross the Mostnica on the way from Stara Fužina to Mostnica Waterfall, so our ancestors named the river after the bridges Mostnica (“Bridge Water”).

**HUDIČEV MOST - DEVIL’S BRIDGE**

Just above Zois’ Mansion the single-arch stone Devil’s Bridge rises high above the deep gorge of the Mostnica River. It opens the view to the narrow gorge that the Mostnica carved in the limestone base. The stone bridge was built to shorten and simplify the transport of iron ore and charcoal from the surrounding mountain areas to the ironworks along the Mostnica. Bohinj was the most important centre of mining, ironworks and iron foundries in the Julian Alps region. Because of the iron ore deposits it has been permanently settled since the old Iron Age (8th century BC).

The iron making tradition in Bohinj lasted from the old Iron Age through Roman times to the end of the Middle Ages in the 16th century. The golden era of the iron foundry industry is connected with Baron Žiga Žois, who lived at the end of the 18th century. Its swift decline occurred due to the advancing technology and import of iron ore. The joint name for the ironworks installations along the Mostnica and for the first iron foundry hamlet there was Althammer or Stara škrdlo (“old hammer”). This was the previous village on the site of the present day Stara Fužina.

The Devil then took the dog’s soul and was very angry and started waving his tail, and he threw the bone across the bridge and the dog chased after it. People used to talk about how the Devil’s Bridge was made. The people worked all day but the next morning everything that had been built was demolished.

And someone said: “Let the devil build this bridge, I will not build it anymore.” And then the devil really started making it. The people asked him what he wanted for his efforts. The devil answered: “The first soul that crosses the bridge – this is the one that I want!” A farmer who had a dog, got an idea. He said: “I will take a big bone and my dog with me.” Then he threw the bone across the bridge and the dog ran after it. The devil then took the dog’s soul and was very angry and started waving his tail, and he demolished the entire fence.

Written by Marija Cvetek

**TRIGLAV NATIONAL PARK, VOJE VALLEY AND MOSTNICA GORGE**

**Rules of behaviour in the Triglav National Park:**

- Respect the habits of the local people when visiting these areas.
- Admire the flowers, but do not pick them.
- Leave no waste behind.
- Dogs must be on a lead.
- Keep to the marked paths.
- The trail along the Mostnica Gorge from the Devil’s Bridge (Hudičev most) to the alpine hut in Voje is intended for bikers, so cycling is not permitted.
- Leave vehicles in properly marked car parks.

**EROSION POTHOLEs AND THE ELEPHANT**

The Mostnica Gorge was formed due to water erosion of the surface. Although the majority of the water runs into Voje from karst springs and is not turbid, there is still enough gravel and sand to erode and reshape the rock, especially when the water is high and the stream is faster and has more volume. The fast water flow is turbulent, and this is the most important erosion factor for the rocky river bed.

Potholes are the most visible erosion forms in the Mostnica Gorge. These are various round basins in the river bed, which usually contain sand and small stones. The energy of the water swirls the stones around and widens as well as deepens the potholes. One opening in the rock between two water-carved potholes is very interesting, forming a natural window with a rocky arch resembling an elephant’s trunk.

**MOSTNICA WATERFALL SLAP MOSTINICE**

The 23-metre high waterfall attracts our attention immediately above the Voje pasture. The dynamic stream of the water calms down on the flat meadows of Pišma Voje.
If you do not want to keep this leaflet, do not throw it in the bin, but return it to any of the information points. Protect the environment!

Warning!

The use of the trail is at your own risk. Proper hiking boots are mandatory. In case of emergency, call 112.

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HOW THE GORGE WAS FORMED

The most interesting and beautiful part of the Mostnica is its narrow gorge. The formation of the approximately 2 kilometre long gorge is partly connected with tectonic sinking of the main Bohinj valley and partly to glacial deepening caused by erosion or the deepening of the Bohinj glacial valley. The gorge remains at a higher altitude, or we can say that it is “hanging valley”. The Mostnica river had to overcome the height difference by carving a narrow gorge in the base rock. In some places it is up to 20 metres deep and the sides are only shoulder-width apart. The deepening of the Mostnica was fastest during the glacial melting (15,000 to 12,000 years ago), when there were enormous quantities of water and its power was immense. The river, together with the material which it carried, carved the rocks.

FLORA AND FAUNA

The Voje pasture abounds in beechnuts that provide shelter to many animals, especially red and roe deer. Heathers, laggerwort and hazel nuts grow on the forest floor before the trees get their leaves, and cyclamen, recognizable by their pink flowers and expressive scent, are also quite common at the end of summer. Gentians, lilies and carnations. There are also many grass snakes.

Hummock meadows can also be admired in the Voje pasture. They are characterised by hummocks that are covered by grass. They most likely developed through the karstification of the limestone ground moraine material. Hummock meadows are part of our cultural heritage, since they have been preserved by many years of mowing by hand. Due to machine mowing, the meadows are disappearing from our landscape and they are gradually being overgrown by forests. The other typical diverse flora and fauna elements of the architectural heritage of the 19th century.

Mostnica is a mountain water stream with a typical swirly and uneven flow and very fast cold water. Species that are adapted to fast flow are typical for the Mostnica. Water meadows, pastures and non-fertilised lowland meadows are intertwined in the upper part of the Voje valley. They are mostly in flower in late spring and early summer. There are several types of orchids, globe-flowers, ox-eyes, gentians, lilies and carnations.

A walk along the valley is also interesting in winter, when the river is adorned with ice and snow, the banks are covered by a thick layer of snow.

VOJE PASTURE - PLANINA VOJE

The grassland of Planina Voje is the open middle part of the Mostnica valley, at an altitude of just slightly over 700 metres. The surface is covered with ground glacial moraine, and towards the south the pasture is closed by the terminal moraine dam. It is rich in water and at individual spot a number of springs rise from the ground. Planina Voje is in a typical glacial valley in the shape of the letter U.

The voje pasture is used for temporary grazing where cattle move to higher pastures in the spring and return in autumn, and it is also intended for mowing.

The glacial moraine is an unsorted stone material that the glacier carried and deposited.

Planina Voje has traditionally been used for pasture farming. In the past, cattle were grazed on grassland pastures before moving to the higher pastures, and again in autumn when the sheep were moved their cattle back down to the valley.

Autumn grazing in the Voje pasture is still used today. The meadows in the Voje valley are mown in summer.

In the past, locals did not go far to get the basic material for building. They used what nature had to offer, i.e. wood and stone. Numerous sheds and huts were drastically transformed in the past decades; however, we can still find some buildings that preserve the quality elements of the architectural heritage of the 19th century.

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