

ZNOJMO WINE REGION

The Znojmo region has for many centuries been known for its pleasant climate and fertile soil. Vineyards cover slopes of the many rolling hills dotted with picturesque villages and fields. The region is also known for high quality of its pickled gherkins and the fruit and vegetable industry. The long history of Znojmo has left us plenty of cultural monuments to explore.

There is no specific date to determine when grapes were first grown in the Znojmo region. It is thought that the Romans first brought the grapevines into the area and the Slavs cultivated it during the Great Moravian Empire. The first historical records about wine making are from the 11th century. At the end of the 13th century the first winemakers guild was established. Znojmo wine had an excellent reputation and was served at the tables of the Czech kings. The wine industry continued to prosper until the 16th century but the decline came with the catastrophic 30 Years War. This war had a disastrous affect on the whole country, greatly depopulating it and eradicating most of its economy. It was not until the 19th century that the wine industry recovered and has continued to prosper, grow and improve.

Fine aromatic white wines such as Riesling Blanc, Müller-Thurgau, Sauvignon and Veltliner Vert are the best varieties from the Znojmo region.

Some of the villages with good wine cellar lanes are Chvalovice, Jaroslavice, Lechovice, Nový Šaldorf, Šatov and Vrbovec.

The region also has several very interesting historical sights. Znojmo has plenty of great sights such as the Rotunda of the Virgin Mary & St Catherine, a Castle, Town Hall and the Catacombs, however, the whole historical centre is an architectural museum. Other worthwhile sights are some of the old wine cellars such as the Painted Cellar in Šatov or the Cross Cellar in Přímětice. There is also the best nature highlight in all of South Moravia, the Podyjí National Park, and not forgetting the Chateau at Vranov nad Dyjí.

Most of the cycling is easy as the terrain is mostly flat. It is undulating in the Podyjí National Park and north of Znojmo.

MORAVIAN WINE TRAIL

The Znojmo wine regions main centre is the town of Znojmo and also the western most point of the Moravian Wine Trail. The town is worth spending a day or two to explore its rich historical monuments before setting out to explore the vineyards. The Moravian Wine Trail crosses the Mikulov, Velké Pavlovice, Mutěnice, Kyjov, Bzenec and Uherské Hradiště wine regions, ending in Uherské Hradiště. This is quit a challenging ride considering the number of wine cellars and the amount of wine one might taste getting from one end to the other.

The Znojmo wine region has around 70 wine-growing villages with registered vineyards that cover more than 1800 ha. Most vineyards belong to large agricultural producers as there are relatively a small number of family growers. The largest wine-growing villages are Vrbovec, Hrádek, Hostěradice, Tasovice, Božice and Miroslav. The

wine producer Znovín Znojmo a.s. in Šatov offers an interesting sightseeing program of wine attractions of the Znojmo region.

TRANSPORTATION

Train

Znojmo lies at the end of a minor railway link along which there are direct trains to Prague via Jihlava and Kolín. Two other local rail lines continue out of Znojmo. One heads south to Austria and continues to Vienna, while the other goes to Hrušovany nad Jeviškou and Břeclav via Mikulov. Another line from Hrušovany nad Jeviškou goes north and eventually to Brno

Bus

There are plenty of bus connections to most places in the region and buses also go to Vienna, Brno and Prague.

SUMMARY

Name of the Trail: Moravian Wine Trail in the Znojmo Wine Region

Type of Terrain: Predominantly flat, either along major/minor roads or firm trails.

Major Towns along the Trail: Znojmo, Hrušovany nad Jeviškou

Nature Highlights: Podyjí National Park

Sight Highlights: Znojmo's historical centre, the Cross Cellar in Přímětice, the Painted Cellar in Šatov

Major Wine Cellar Locations: Chvalovice, Jaroslavice, Lechovice, Nový Šaldorf, Šatov and Vrbovec

Major Festivals: Znojmo Wine Harvest – Znojmo (mid-September), Joseph Wine Tastings – Znojmo (mid-March)

Maps: The Moravian Wine Trails Znojmo Mapa (1:65000)

Useful Web Sites: www.znojmo.cz

Transportation: Trains, buses

ZNOJMO

The historical heart of Znojmo sits on top of a hill above a valley cut by the river Dyje and is an ideal place to start a wine tour. There are several good wine shops and bars to get a taste for the local products. The town's panorama is dominated by the towers of the Church of St Nicholas and Town Hall Tower. Among its other major sights is the Romanesque Rotunda, exceptional for its murals of the first Czech princes.

Pre-historical settlements have been found within Znojmo's environs. On the other side of the river bank from the Castle was one of the largest fortified settlements of the Great Moravian Empire. Znojmo was founded by the Prince Břetislav in the 11th century, and king Přemysl Otakar I gave it the title of a royal town in 1226. A great economic boom came in the 14th century that resulted in construction of paved streets, water mains and two hospitals – one of only a handful of towns in the Czech kingdom to have such luxuries. During the Thirty Years War, Znojmo was under siege by the Swedish army whom it payed off a large amount of its wealth to save it from further destruction. The relative prosperity was arrested by the plague at the end of the 17th century which claimed 800 victims. The Austrian and French armies fought several

battles in the vicinity of the town during the Napoleonic Wars of the early 19th century. New industries such as ceramics, canning and fruit sprung up during the Industrial Revolution and continue to this day to be an important part of the local economy. After WWI Znojmo became part of the newly formed Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. Twenty years later it was joined to the German Third Reich and at the end of WWII it once again becomes part of the Czechoslovak Republic. In 1971, the historical heart of the Znojmo was declared an urban conservation area.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The historical centre is a short walk, via Rudoleckého and Lidická streets, north-west of the bus and train stations. Most attractions and facilities are within or in the proximity of the historical centre. The two main squares are Masarykovo and further north is Horní with the post office. The Castle is east of the Horní Square.

BASIC FACTS

Population: 37,000

Elevation: 250 to 300 m above sea level

Information Office

The **Turistické informační centrum** at Obroková 10 (www.tic.znojmo-city.cz/) has friendly and helpful staff. It can help with accommodation, information and book concerts in town and the district. They also have maps and books on sale.

The **National Park Podyjí's** administrative centre (správa národního parku podyjí), Na vyhlídce 5 (info@nppodyji.cz, www.nppodyji.cz), provides information about the park during the winter when the information centre in Čížov is closed.

The **Association of Znojmo Wine Makers** (Sdružení znojmských vinařů) is at Dvořákova 21 (<http://www.szv.estranky.cz/>).

Post & Telephone Office

The **Pošta**, Milady Horákové 6, does not have a telephone centre but has a few telephone booths. It is open weekdays from 8 am to 6 pm and Saturday until 1 pm.

Bank

There are several banks around town that have ATM's, including the **Komerční banka** at nám. Svobody 18 (open weekdays 8 am to 5 pm).

Emergency

There are plenty of **pharmacies** and Lékárna U radnice is conveniently located at Obroková 18. The **hospital** and policlinic (www.nemzn.cz) is at the northern end of town, Mudr. Jan Janského 11. The municipal **police** is at Jana Palacha 2.

Cycling Information

Znojmo has a few cycling shops that sell, service and repair bicycles. See the Tourist Information website for a list of shops. The shops are generally open from around 8 am to noon and 1 to 5 pm weekdays and to noon on Saturdays.

Wine Shops

There are several wine shops around town with a good selection of wines including, **Vinotéka Vinných sklepů Lechovice**, 17. listopadu, which belongs to a wine producer in the village of Lechovice east of Znojmo. **Znovín Znojmo** (based in Šatov; www.znovin.cz) is a large wine producer in the village of Šatov south of Znojmo and has two shops selling a wide selection of their wines at Horní Česká 2, and in Loucký klášter, Loucká (off Vídeňská třída). They also have a mailing service. The opening hours are weekdays 9 am to 6 pm and Saturday 8 am to noon.

Festivals

There are many festivals and special events held throughout the year in and around Znojmo. One of the main events is the **Znojmo Wine Harvest** which is not just about celebrating the wine harvest but also includes a broad cultural program with a historical parade and market, medieval theatre. It is normally held on a weekend around mid-September. In the middle of March is **Joseph Wine Tastings** (Josefský košt) – a wine tasting festival of local and Austrian wines. Hardcore cyclists will enjoy the **Znovín Cup & Vinařská 50** which is a mountain bike race around the wine trails of Znojmo region (held annually at the end of June).

TRANSPORTATION

Train

The train station is a short walk south east of the city centre on dr. M. Horákové (<http://www.idos-jizdni-rady.cz/>). The left-luggage office is open daily between 5 am to 9 pm but keep note of the three breaks when they are closed.

Znojmo lies at the end of a secondary railway link and you need to change trains to get to Vienna (Wien Nord station) in the Austrian town of Retz (1-1/2 hours). There is only one direct train to Prague (4 hours, 257 km) otherwise there are normally two changes required in Okříšky and Jihlava. Direct trains go to Šatov (several a day, 11 km, 12 minutes), Hrušovany nad Jeviškou (several a day, 26 km, 30 minutes), Břeclav (several a day, 69 km, 2 hours) via Mikulov and Brno (several a day, 89 km, 1-3/4 hours).

Bus

The bus station is next to the train station and has no office. It's just made up of bus stand posts, each of which includes time tables to several destinations.

There are several buses a week to Vienna (93 km, 1-1/2 hours). Other direct buses are to Prague (208 km, 3 hours), Brno (22 km,) and to many small villages such as Šatov, Jaroslavice and Lechovice. The above connections are only during weekdays and on weekends there are only one or two connections a day or non at all.

GETTING AROUND

There are infrequent buses around town and fares are available from the driver.

ACCOMMODATION & EATING OPTIONS

There are plenty of places to stay and eat such as the appealing Penzion Solnice (www.penzionsolnice.cz, info@penzionsolnice.cz, tel 775 202 010), Horní Česká 19,

situation in the Medieval part of town, that has mid-range prices. See the tourist information website for accommodation and eating options.

SIGHTS

A good place to start a tour of the town is from nám. Svobody. Just south of it turn right into Jezuitská at the end of which is Jezuitské nám. Here is the baroque **Church of St Michael** (kostel sv. Michala), formerly a Romanesque structure that belonged to the jesuits. Follow Veselá via Václavské nám. to Přemyslovců 6, where the former Minorite Monastery houses the **South Moravian Museum** (Jihomoravské muzeum). It has a collection of weapons from the orient, local archeological and geological finds, and blacksmith exhibits. It is open daily from 10 am to 6 pm between May and August, and from 8 am to 5.30 pm weekdays between September to April. Entrance fee is 15 Kč.

Opposite is the Hostar Brewery and to the left of its main entrance is a lane leading to the Znojmo Castle and the Rotunda of St. Catherine. **Znojmo Castle** (Znojemský hrad) was established in the first half of the 11th century and during the 18th century it was rebuilt as a baroque chateau. On the tour you can see the former trades, period furniture, weapons, prints and local ceramics. The **Rotunda of the Virgin Mary & St Catherine** (rotunda Panny Marie a sv. Kateřiny) is an 11th century Romanesque structure with 12th century frescoes, apparently of the Přemysl princess. It is open from 10 am to 6 pm, Tuesday to Sunday, between June and September, and only on weekends in May. Entrance fee is 90 Kč. The grounds are open all year from 9 am to 10 pm but in winter until 8 pm, and entry is free.

Return to Přemyslovců and walk down Velká Františkánská to Mikulášské nám. The **Church of St. Nicholas** (kostel sv. Mikuláše, 1138) is the town's main church and has a valuable presbytery and nave. In the interior is also the so-called Bread Madonna, who was named after the house where she originally stood. According to the legend the supply of bread never diminished from her feet, no matter how much was eaten. Next to the church is the two storey **St. Wenceslas Chapel** (svatováclavská kaple) built on top of a cemetery.

Continue along Velká Mikulášská to Masarykovo nám. with the baroque **Plague Column** (barokní morový sloup, 1679 – 1682) and the baroque **Fountain** (kašna). The **Capuchin Monastery** (Kapucínský klášter) is at the southern end of the square and includes the Church of St John the Baptist (kostel sv. Jana Křtitele). The **South Moravian Museum** (Jihomoravské muzeum) is in the 16th century house at No. 11 and has a permanent collection of Gothic and Baroque art. It is open 10 am to 6 pm daily and costs 20 Kč.

The beautiful 80 m tall **Town Hall Tower** (radniční věž) was built in the first half of the 15th century and is north of the square in Obroková. There are grand views from the top not only of the town but also the surrounding countryside. It costs 20 Kč to climb the 162 steps daily from 9 am to 5 pm between May and September, until 4 pm Monday to Saturday in April and October, and weekdays in March and November. East of the tower along Kramářská is nám. Slepíčí trh where at No. 2 is the **Znojmo Catacombs** (Znojemské podzemí). It is a labyrinth of almost 30 km of tunnels that was formed by joining the town's cellars. Originally it was meant to be a storage place and later also a hiding place during times of danger. The 40-minute tour costs 40 Kč per person but a

minimum of 10 people is required. It is open daily from 9 am to 4 pm between April and October, but in July and August until 5 pm.

In the village of **Přímětice**, 1 km north of Znojmo, is one of the largest cellars in the Czech Republic, the **Cross Cellar** (Křížový sklep), built by the Jesuits in the 18th century. Individuals can visit the cellar each Friday between noon to 3 pm, and groups can book a tour with wine tasting on tel 22 50 14 from January to August.

ENTERTAINMENT

Tickets for all cultural performances are available either from the the Tourist Information Centre or the entrance to the Town Hall Tower, Obroková 12. The cinema **Kino Svět** is at Havlíčkova 7.

Classical concerts are performed at **Znojemská Beseda**, Masarykovo nám. 22 or in one of the churches. The **Městské divadlo** (Municipal Theatre), nám. Republiky, has plays only in the Czech language. Modern music concerts are listed at the tourist information website.

Ice Stadium (Zimní stadion) is at Dvořákova 21.

SEDLLEŠOVICE

The trail from Znojmo begins in Masarykovo nám. and heads south. On Vídeňská třída just past dr. Milady Horákové is a **Historical Railway Bridge** (Železniční most) built in 1871 and designed by professor Brik. It is 220 m long and 45 m high. Further south at Melkusova cross the bridge across the Dyje River into the village of Sedlešovice. This village is one of the oldest dating back to the 11th century. It always had close relations with the Royal town of Znojmo which was further strengthened by the merchant trail passing through it. There are many vineyards on the slopes of Kraví Mountain (more of a hill) above the village and these vineyards stretch as far as the village of Konice.

The historical **Archive Cellar** (Archivní sklep) was established by the Loucky Premonstratensian order and has one of the largest (hundred of thousands) collections of bottles of wine maturing. Visit can only be prearranged via the tourist office in Znojmo. There is a small locality with wine cellars in a lane south-west of the square. We continue to Nový Šaldorf and the terrain along the way is flat as it is along most the Moravian Wine Trail around the Znojmo region.

NOVÝ ŠALDORF

The settlement of Nový Šaldorf grew up along the merchant trail leading to Znojmo and its history also dates back to the 11th century. It is still a roadside place but it has plenty of charm, especially around the large square with its wine press which is surrounded by wine cellars.

The blue cellars of Nový Šaldorf make up a large wine making locality with a wine cellar lane, where 186 cellars are found. These wine cellars, surrounded by small fields and vineyards, are easily found along the Znojmo-Retz road by the 18th century wooden press and create a so-called “Cellar Square”, being 800 m long. One of the accessible and most famous is **Blue Cellar** (Modrý sklep), which is hollowed out of sandstone and keeps a very stable temperature throughout the year. Within are many

varieties of wines from the vineyard of the local cooperative. Another good winery is operated by the Špalek family with its interesting cellars, log beam press and wine bar.

INFORMATION

The **Agrodružstvo Nový Šaldorf** next to the Blue Cellar sells wine to the public like many other wine cellars which however have irregular opening hours. **Vinárna Modrý sklep** is along the main road at “Cellar Square” and is moderately priced.

THE WINE PRESS

While travelling around the South Moravian wine country you are most likely to come across one of the old wooden wine presses, which stand in village squares as decoration. Even the small wine makers do not use these anymore, as this one thousand year old technology has been superseded by modern metal machines. There are two types of wooden presses, the beam and the screw-type.

The wine makers used wooden wine presses for over two millenniums. It was the only machine they used until the end of the 19th century to press out of the grapes the juice or must.

The beam press is older and was invented around 25 BC in Greece, but in Moravia the first use is documented during the 14th century. It was based on an basic principle of a lever. There were two basic types, the more primitive one had a weight at one end of the beam and the more modern version lacked it. In Moravia, the beam often reached up to 10 m in length and the weight was a stone weighing about 1 tone.

The improved and later version was the screw-type wine press. It was invented around the mid-1st century AD in the region of present day Italy. The first documented evidence of one in the Czech Republic is from the 16th century, but it did not become a common tool until the 18th century. In the late 19th century the wooden screws were replaced by metal ones. Strangely enough the beam presses was mainly used in manor, church and parish cellars, and by many medium size wine producers in the Znojmo Region. The small wine makers in south and southeast Moravia would predominantly use the screw press.

The presses were made from oak, which is very hard and only large trees were used for their construction. The most difficult part of a press was the making of the screw, that was always left up to the oldest and most experienced carpenter. Metal was rarely used in the construction of a wine press, as wine oxidizes and turns brown when it comes in contact with it.

KONICE

From Nový Šaldorf we head up the hill towards Konice. From this village there are beautiful views of Znojmo’s arable plateau. The first mention of the village dates from 1577. Remains of settlements from the Neolithic to the Bronze ages have been found within the vicinity of the village. Of note is the early-19th century **Church of St. Jacob the Elder** (kostel sv. Jakuba staršího). There are a number of extensive and historically valuable wine cellars around the village. A smallish grouping can be found south-west of the church.

POPICE

The downward trail continues to Popice, whose first historical record dates back to 1190. The village belonged to the local monastery after the establishment of the Provost of St. Hypolytus. In the heart of the village is the **Church of St. Sigismund** (Kostel sv. Zikmunda), originally a Gothic structure, but baroquefied during the 17th century. In the neighbourhood of the church stands the former parish of the Knights of the Cross, dating back to the 18th century. Popice is the birthplace of the writer Charles Sealsfield (real name Karl Postl, 1793-1864). There is a memorial plaque on the house where he was born. You can see a few rundown wine cellars in a lane east of the church.

TRANSPORTATION

During weekdays there are up to hourly buses between Znojmo, Nový Šaldorf, Konice and Popice, however, there are very few connections on the weekends.

HAVRANÍKY

Next we reach the larger village of Havraníky of which the first historical mention is from 1229. A burial ground has been found in the village, with early Stone Age pottery and stone tools. One wine cellar here is on the Heritage List and the 19th century **Church of St. Linhart** (kostel sv. Linharta) was built on top of older foundations. The village includes some interesting examples of the traditional village layout. There is a small locality of not well kept wine cellars behind the Restaurant Drei Kronen.

To the west of Havraníky is the **Havraníky Heath**, with unique thermophilous flora and fauna, including pasqueflower, star-of-Bethlehem (*Gagea bohemica*), buckler mustard (*Biscutella laevigata*) and others. Southeast of the village is the **Skalky Nature Memorial** (Přírodní památka Skalky)– a heath with a rich population of pasqueflower.

INFORMATION

The **Pension-Camping Suchý** is on the main road, and has two inexpensive doubles, several bungalows and camping possibilities in its small courtyard. The same people also run the basic pub in the complex serving inexpensive food for lunch and dinner. Opposite is the more expensive and touristy **Restaurant Drei Kronen**.

You can also enjoy the surrounding area from the horseback by riding one of the horses from Wihag, No 18 (tel 728 273 117).

ŠATOV

On the way to the village of Šatov visit the **Painted Cellar** (Malovaný sklep), that stands all alone on the edge of the village but it does have dominant views of Šatov. The cellar's interior sandstone walls have been painted by a one-hand artist with naïve art paintings. Unfortunately, visits have to be pre-booked for groups larger than five people on tel 775 682 048; E-mail: rezervace@malovany-sklep.cz; www.malovany-sklep.cz/ (the Znojmo tourist office may assist in making a booking).

The first historical document about Šatov dates back to 1201. On November 12, 1373, Šatov was granted the status of a small town. The parish **Church of St. Martin** (farní kostel sv. Martina), was originally a late Gothic structure, but was rebuilt in 1656,

then again at the beginning and at the end of the 19th century. Behind the church stands the 19th century **Chapel of the Holy Sepulcher** (kaple Božího hrobu) with surviving remnants of a Gothic charnel. There are a large number of architectural monuments in the village, including: the late 18th century Baroque parsonage, the late Classicist town hall with neo-historic façade from the early 20th century, a late 18th century Classicist wine press house, etc. Šatov was declared a monument heritage region in 1995.

Beyond the southern edge of town (go down Gottwaldova Street) you can visit one of the large bunkers which were built during the 1930's to defend Czechoslovakia against German attack. The **Infantry Cabin in Šatov** (pěchotní srub v Šatově; www.technicalmuseum.cz, email satovsруб@technicalmuseum.cz) can be seen from the outside any time, but the interior regular opening hours only during July and August.

THE BUNKERS

The pre-WWII Czechoslovakia decided to strengthen its frontiers against a potential German attack with a Magionet style system. It was however built on a principle of a less rigid defensive system, using many small, medium and some large size concrete bunkers, which were several hundred meters apart and in several defensive lines. In this part of southern Czechoslovakia the defense was based on small bunkers which were mainly armed with heavy machine guns. They were nicknamed “řopík” an abbreviation from Directorate of Fortress Works that coordinated the building of this defensive system.

In the Šatov region the defensive line was strengthened by four large defensive bunkers referred to as the Infantry Cabins. Their armaments included heavy machine guns, anti-tank guns and mortars. It was possible to survive in these bunkers for a prolonged period of time as they were equipped with showers, toilets and kitchens.

Two of the Infantry Cabins were visited by Hitler, who studied them for their defensive capabilities and even made a speech about them in Šatov. The bunkers were so well constructed, that the Germans after taking over the Sudetenland, could not destroy them – no matter how many explosives they used.

Another sad historical event was a visit by the first Communist Czechoslovak President Gottwald who symbolically ploughed a balk to consolidate arable land in the so-called “socialisation of villages” (beginning of nationalization).

INFORMATION

The **Vinárna Moravský sklípek** (tel 23 22 18, 0602-561 546) is in a wine cellar lane just north of the church. The moderately priced restaurant serves the usual but good meat, fish and chicken dishes. It is open Tuesday to Sunday from 11.30 am to 10 pm. They also rent bicycles.

It is also possible to purchase wine from a large wine producer **Znovín Znojmo a.s. se sídlem v Šatově**, at the eastern end of town on the road to Chvalovice, from the Informační centrum (Information Centre), Monday to Friday between 6.30 am to 5 pm.

It is also possible to camp at the local sport complex TJ Tatran Šatov. The **Kemp Šatov** (www.tatransatov.cz) is in the south-eastern part of town and open from May to September.

CHVALOVICE

The trail continues along the flat border country with Austria to Chvalovice. About 1.5 km before Chvalovice it passes through the vineyards and a complex of wine cellars. It is a motley collection of many cellars with flaking plaster and some with modern extensions built on top of them. It is possible to buy wine from **Vinum** weekdays from 7 am to 5 pm and Saturdays to 12.30 pm.

A prominent architectural building in the village is the parish **Church of St. Margaret** (kostel sv. Markéty), which was originally a Gothic structure that went through several adaptations (a major one was around 1839). Across from the church stands the late Baroque former monastery residence. To the west is an interesting, mostly Baroque wine cellar, originally belonging to the monastery.

DYJÁKOVIČKY

A small town with a wine growing tradition centuries old. The **Church of St. Vitus** (kostel sv. Víta) has a Gothic core. It was rebuilt during the Renaissance (1577) into a larger building and later had several renovations. There are several Baroque statues in and around the church.

VRBOVEC

Further north is Vrbovec, a village with extraordinary large vineyards and wine cellar lanes. These start about 1 km west of the village with the centre being around the cross road with highway E59-38. Many cellars are well looked after and most have extensions built above them. Also worth a look is 16th century **Church of St. John the Baptist** (kostel sv. Jana Křtitele) with Baroque additions.

The major producer with a large tracts of local vineyards is Agrodružstvo Vrbovec s.r.o. It, however, processes the grapes in a wine cellar in Chvalovice. **Ampelos a.s.** (email ampelos@iol.cz, www.ampelos.cz) is a wine research station established here in 1895 and a pre-arranged visit is possible.

NAČERATICE

North of Vrbovec the trail passes through more vineyards along both sides of the road on the way to the next village. Načeratice's largest monument is the **Church of the Virgin Mary** (1804, kostel Panny Marie) and the sculpture of the Pieta. The Načerát Hill (Načeratský kopec) south-east of Znojmo was named after this village. The village is also the base of the **Central Agricultural Inspection Institute** (Kontrolní zemědělský úřad) which tests and registers newly developed varieties of grapevine. The trail continues via Derflice through to Strachotice.

STRACHOTICE

The village's centre point is **The Baroque Church of St George** (kostel sv. Jiří) was built around the mid-18th century, and several Baroque statues surround it. North of the village is the **Old Mill** (Starý mlýn), which is regarded as the remnant of an extinct village of Neslovice. Dwarf almond trees grow on loess soil slopes 5 km from the village.

There are some wine cellars as you enter the village from the west.

SLUP

Along a tedious road the trail brings us to the sleepy but green village of Slup. A street full of trees brings us to the **Water Mill** (Vodní Mlýn) whose first historical record dates back to the early 16th century is a unique technical monument. It was rebuilt in Renaissance style during the early 1600's into a two storey building with four mill wheels at the rear. Inside the Mill is an exhibit on milling and milling technology from ancient times to the present (including original equipment from several other mills). It is open April and October from Tuesday to Sunday, 9 am to noon and 1 to 4 pm.

The late 15th century Gothic **Church of the Name of the Virgin Mary** (kostel Jména Panny Marie) received a Baroque face lift in the 1600's.

If you need a place to stay try the **Penzion Anna** at No 103 (tel 515 235 369).

JAROSLAVICE

The town looks charming with the Chateau on top of hill which dominates it from afar. Up close the place is in disrepair. The original late 13th century Gothic border castle was rebuilt into a Renaissance **Chateau**. Later it went through two Baroque face-lifts, the first around 1700 and the second in 1730 when it acquired its present appearance. Unfortunately, it is in great disrepair and can-not be visited. On the north side of the chateau hill is an archaeological sight where artifacts of the Stone Age mammoth hunters were found.

At the foot of the hill is the late 18th century Classicist **Church of St. Giles** (kostel sv. Jiljí) with a covered connecting staircase. There is also a whipping post from the 16th century and several Baroque statues. In the western part of town behind the cemetery there are three lanes of about 90 wine cellars – some are charming while others need a face lift. Plenty cellars again have extensions on top of them. Large historic wooden presses, dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries, are preserved to this day in some of the wine cellars. The largest cellar, about 300 m long, was built in 1870-1890 and houses the oldest wine archive in the country that belongs to Znovín Znojmo.

West of the town is the large Chateau Pond (Zámecký rybník) with a surface area of about 200 ha.

HRÁDEK

The trail swings north along Jaroslavice's Chateau Pond and passes through Hrádek. The village has an extraordinarily valuable collection of heritage sights on the square around the Baroque **Church of St. Peter and Paul** (1761-1764, kostel sv. Petra a Pavla) built on top of older foundations. Worth of note is the late Baroque main and side altars with pictures by F.A. Maulbertsch and sculptures by Ondřej Schweigl, who also created the richly-decorated pulpit. The Chapel of St. Oldřich is a former Romanesque charnel from the early 13th century with contemporary decoration by J. Horák from Brno. The Parish House is originally a Medieval structure that was renovated in Baroque style around 1737; it once belonged to the Knights of Malta.

DYJÁKOVICE

Next, after just a few hundred meters is the wine growing Dyjákovice with a long vineyard tract at the eastern edge of the village. Baroque **Church of St. Michael** (1757-1761, kostel sv. Michala) with later modifications and splendid grounds, including a late Baroque parish building. The outer wall, which originally enclosed the village cemetery, was built over time by local residents, a fact commemorated by stone plaques in various sections of the wall. There are several Baroque sculptures near the church. On the edge of town is the 19th century **Chapel of St. Mary** (kostelík Panny Marie).

HEVLÍN

We continue to Hevlín, via the Greenways Praha-Wien Trail, through the vivid fields of the border region. The oldest written record about Hevlín dates back to 1282. Its dominant feature is the late Baroque **Church of the Assumption of Virgin Mary** (kostel Nanebevzetí Panny Marie) from around 1742 with a richly furnished interior. The sculptures are made by Ignác Lengelacher. The late Gothic wayside column near the church is an important monument. The **Hotel Restaurace Zetocha** at No 53 has reasonable accommodation and food.

From Hevlín we turn north along the peaceful trail of the border fields. At Trávní Dvůr we have reached the end of Moravian Wine Trail in the Znojmo region. The Moravian Wine Trail continues north to Drnholec in the Mikulov region. It is possible to explore more of Znojmo wine region by going west to Hrabětice where the side trail of the Znojmo Wine Trail begins.

SIDE TRIPS

ZNOJMO WINE TRAIL

This trail takes us through some other important wine-making areas of the northern part of the Znojmo region. Hrušovany nad Jevišovkou is a large wine making village. Further on are Božice and Borotice, both have large vineyards. Next is the charming Lechovice with two large wine producers, the Wine Cellars Lechovice s.r.o. and the Lechovice Wine Cellars. Then it is on to Práče, the former site of a large cooperative farm. We continue via Prosiměřice to the orchard colonies around Tešetice. The trail continues along the orchards through Suchohrdly back to Znojmo. We can also discover part of the Podyjí National Park that we get to via Mašovice and Podmolí from Znojmo. We exit the park further south at Hnanice and end up south of Šatov, back on the Moravian Wine Trail. From here it is possible to either cycle back to Znojmo or take the train/bus to the town.

The Znojmo wines are full of flower scents, which are due to Znojmo's geography. The grapes take longer to mature due to the higher elevation of the vineyards, preserving the original aromatic substances of the fruit. It is also worth to get to know this phenomenon in other wine villages, such as Horní Dunajovice, Hostěradice and Miroslav.

HRUŠOVANY nad JEVIŠKOU

The trail starts in Hrabětice from where we continue to Šanov. Next is the small and fairly pleasant town of Hrušovany nad Jeviškovkou that lies along the left bank of the creek Jeviškovka.

The first historical mention of the town is from the beginning of the 12th century. The main architectural monument is the **Empire Chateau** dating from 1699, built on a small rise and surrounded by a naturally landscaped park. The **Church of St Stephen** (kostel sv. Štěpána) dates from around 1758 and the **Convent of the Sisters of St Karel Boromejský** (1874, konvent sester sv. Karla Boromejského), have been renovated several times. Max Dvořák (1874-1921), an important representative of the Vienna School of Art History, who died at the nearby **Chateau Emin dvůr** in the village of Šanov is buried in the cemetery.

There are two wine companies Diana Hrušovany nad Jeviškovkou s.r.o., Litobratřická 533, and Gastvin Hrušovany nad Jeviškovkou, Lidická 73, that farm a large area around the town.

INFORMATION

In the centre of the town is the main square with the Town Hall, the Post Office and Komerční banka. There are several restaurants around town and a place to stay is the inexpensive **Pension Plachý**, Nádražní 386, with a three of triple rooms. It is on the main road at the southern edge of town towards Hrušovany u Nádraží.

Hrušovany nad Jeviškovkou is a major railway junction of the region after Znojmo. Trains stop here on the way to Znojmo, via Božice, and Břeclav via Novosedly, Mikulov and Valtice. Another line goes south to Hevlín via Hrabětice. A northern line goes as far as Brno.

BOŽICE

From Hrušovany nad Jeviškovkou, the trail is through slightly undulating countryside and along less frequented roads, via Pravice and Břežany to Božice. In the České Křídlovce district is the **Church of St. Peter & Paul** (kostel sv. Petra a Pavla). It includes a presbytery from the 13th century, a Baroque nave and the 18th century Empire sections at the western entrance. South-east of the town in the Horní Hoja forest is the Empire Spring (empírová studánka) built in 1810.

There are about 10 wine cellars on the main road at the southern end of the village. Refreshments can be found at the Hostinec Jan Kudlíček in the centre of the village.

To get to Lechovice the trail continues through the České Křídlovce district. Once we leave the village the road passes through a wooded region with numerous used and disused wine cellars sitting under the canopy of trees.

LECHOVICE

The trail continues through the village of Borotice to Lechovice. This is a charming if touristy place as many people come here by the bus loads to try the wine at one of the two large wine producers. The village is dominated by the Chateau (zámek, 1720-22) and the park on top of a hill which was a former residence of the Premonstratense Monastery Louka near Znojmo. The Chateau is the work of the architect Christian Alexander Oedtl.

The pilgrimage **Church of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary** (kostel Navštívení Panny Marie), with five side alters, was built between 1718-1721. Inside the church are Baroque frescoes by the Znojmo painter Jan Michael Fisee, and the Gothic Madonna on the main altar is from around 1500. The wine cellars are along the Znojmo/Brno road past the outskirts of the village.

The commercial wine producer **Vinné sklepy Lechovice s.r.o.** (www.vslechovice.cz) with a large outlet in a cellar and a wine restaurant next door built in the gardens of the chateau during 1723-1837. This producer is trying to make a wine with typical Znojmo characteristics, and they are especially successful with their Müller Thurgau and Sauvignon wines. Just 100 m south from the complex is a lane with a sign **Lechovické vinné sklepy** at No 63 (tel 515 271 196) – another large wine producer that also has good wines.

INFORMATION

The village seems to have a split personality complex as it is divided into two independent sections and this can be confusing as both localities are called Lechovice. The Chateau is on top of a hill and around it are the post office, a hotel, pension, ubytovna and both of the above mentioned wineries. The other Lechovice, which is below on the bank of the Jevišovka Creek is the location of the village, including plenty of restaurants.

ACCOMMODATION

North of the Chateau is the **Turistická ubytovna U zámku**, (tel 515 271 204, valis@mymail.cz) which offers basic dormitory accommodation. Opposite the Vinné sklepy Lechovice s.r.o. is another similarly priced place, the **Penzion Silvie**, No. 123 (tel 515 271 859) that has simple double rooms with shared bathrooms, but each room has a TV. Opposite the pension is the mid-range **Hotel Restaurant Weiss**, No. 56, (www.hotelweiss.cz) with comfortable modern rooms.

On the banks of the Jevišovka Creek on the edge of the village is the **Horse Farm Jaroslav Kroutilík**, No. 9 (tel 515 271 438 , www.znojman.cz/horse-farm) where instructors are also available. There is also a moderately priced restaurant and a pension offering comfortable rooms.

WHERE TO EAT & DRINK

Wine restaurant **Vinný restaurant u Bazalů** (tel 515 271 212) or **Zájezdní restaurace** (tel 515 271 606) serving inexpensive Moravian dishes are some of the several places to eat.

TRANSPORTATION

There is a direct bus between Znojmo and Brno which stops also at Práče, Lechovice and Pohořelice seven times during weekdays. There are more buses during weekdays between Lechovice and Brno (52 km)

PRÁČE

Práče is an easy 2 km ride or walk west of Lechovice along the busier road. The village is formerly known as Pračice. The first historical record of the village dates back to 1190 in the village of Louka. In the 14th century Práče was held by Sezima of Jevišovice and

between 1374-1531 it was owned by the Augustinian Monastery of St. Thomas in Brno. Throughout its history the village frequently changed owners. **The Church of the Immaculate Conception** (kostel Neposkvrněného početí, 1905) is an important heritage sight.

PROSIMĚŘICE

At Prosiměřice the trail splits into two, one trail heads north towards Brno and the other south-west in the direction of Znojmo. We head towards Znojmo. Its most visible feature is the parish **Church of St. Giles** (kostel sv. Jiljí) with an early Gothic core from the 13th century, later it was rebuilt several times and includes many Baroque decorations. On the square is a whipping post from the mid-16th century.

TĚŠETICE

The busier road takes us to Těšetice. This village has an important heritage sight – the parish building of the Provost of Hradiště, who owned the building. There is also an interesting **Church of St. Sigismund** (kostel sv. Zikmunda) and interesting wine cellar lanes. There is about half a dozen wine cellars in the centre of village on the main road.

The trail continues through a forest and its undulating terrain to Kuchařov, the Znojmo's suburb of Suchohrdly, the village of Dyje, another Znojmo suburb of Dobšice, through the heart of Znojmo, to another of its suburbs the Hradiště where the Dyje National Park begins.

HRADIŠTĚ

Hradišský ostroh is the original section of Hradiště which was settled as far back as the prehistoric times. Here was also a major settlement of the Great Moravian Empire in the 9th century. After the collapse of the Great Moravian Empire, the castle of the local princesses was moved across the Dyje River to the spot where the castle stands today. During the 13th century the **Monastery of the Order of the Cross with a Red Star** (klášter Křižovníků s červenou hvězdou) was built in the place where the fortified settlement of the Great Moravian Empire stood. Part of the monastery was the **Church of St. Hypollite** (kostel sv. Hypollita) which was baroquefied during the 18th century, getting the characteristic Baroque cupola with the marvelous interior fresco by the master artist M.A. Maulbertsche. At the promontory, past the monastery, is the **Chapel of St. Anthony from Padua** (kaple sv. Antononína Paduánského, 1635-62) and the small so-called **Ellias Chaple** (Eliášova kaple, 1665). There is an excellent view of the Dyje River Valley and Znojmo.

The trail continues through the villages of Mašovice and Podmolí.

PODYJÍ NATIONAL PARK

From Podmolí the trail heads south, through the Podyjí National Park, which has the most spectacular fauna in the Czech Republic. The park was established in 1991 and has an area of 63 km². It spreads along the Austrian border between Znojmo and Vranov nad Dyjí. The Podyjí National Park follows the Dyje River and the picturesque valley that over centuries, the river water, cut through the rock up to a depth of 220 m deep. The

unique natural phenomenon has been preserved here, unlike in many other places around the Czech Republic, where similar places been flooded due to the construction of dams.

The park has a very rich abundance of flora, numbering over 1000 species of which 74 are protected. The fauna is also quite impressive with 65 mammals, including otter or the field vole, 161 types of birds, seven types of reptiles and many types of insects.

Across the border in Austria, the Thayatal National Park was established in the year 2000. Both parks merged into one unit and their main headquarters is in the Austrian town of Hardegg.

The park is an ideal place to discover on foot with 76 km of marked trails or by bike along 27 km of marked trails

Our trail takes us through the eastern tip of the park where we come across the **Nine Mills** (Devět mlýnů). The name came from the Nine Mills that stood along the 2.5 km section. The mills were built here because of the steep 13 m descent, which gave the mills an excellent, constant, supply of fast flowing water for milling. Today only the remains of six sluices can be seen.

Next we arrive at the **Šobes Vineyards** (Vinice Šobes), an extraordinary old vineyard, with a unique microclimate. Here, high quality grapes mature on an area of 12 ha. The microclimate is a combination of the factors such as the Dyje River meanders below the slopes that slant perfectly southwards. The constant changes of the summer hot days and cool nights are just ideal for the production of the best wine in the country. Below the vineyard are the remains of some wine cellars and it is possible to taste some of the wines between 10 am to 6 pm daily from June to September. The area was settled 30,000 years ago and remains what is thought to be a Roman road have been found in the region.

If you have more time it is worth exploring other exceptional parts of the park. **Čížov** is further west and the **Dyje National Park** has its summer **information service** here (tel 515 221 115, e-mail: info@nppodyji.cz, www.nppodyji.cz). Here is also the only section left of the so-called "**Iron Curtain**" (železná opona). There is only one 400 m line of the fence left (there were always two fences several metres apart) and one guard tower. During weekdays four to five buses a day come here from Znojmo (23 km).

Another place worth seeing is the Vranov Chateau in **Vranov nad Dyjí** (www.zamek-vranov.cz) which sits majestically high above the village and the Dyje River. Originally a Gothic Castle from the 14th century but in 1680's it was rebuilt into a Baroque Chateau. The interior includes living style and furniture of the nobility during the 18th and 19th centuries. The most beautiful are the oval Hall of the Ancestors (Sál předků) and the Chateau Chapel (zamecká kaple). There an English language tour if there are enough people to form a group. During weekdays there are hourly buses that ply the route from/to Znojmo (24 km).

THE IRON CURTAIN

The former Czechoslovakian/Austrian and Czechoslovakian/German border was on the Czechoslovak side lined with security fences, also known as the 'Iron Curtain'. First a border zone, the so-called no-man's-land, a strip of land isolating the Czech population from the border was set up. Only people with special permits were allowed to enter and very few allowed to live within this zone. Within about 100 m to 4 km from the border a

unique structure of roughly two, 2-metre high electrified fences, running parallel to each other, and separated by a frequently ploughed 20-metre wide tract in whose soft earth footprints could be detected. The tract had plenty of herbicide used to slow the growth of vegetation and beside it an asphalt road for patrol vehicles was built during later years. The environment is still scarred from these unnatural intrusions. Along this fence were strategically placed tall viewing towers from which the border guards had a commanding view of their proximity. There were also mines, booby traps and trip wires placed in strategic places along this line. Later the highly electrified fence was replaced with an alarm system, which when cut signalled to the border guards that an intruder was present. Certain sections also included floodlights. The whole length of the border was constantly patrolled by border guards with dogs. The guards were under strict orders to stop, and if necessary shoot, anyone trying to cross the border illegally.

You may ask why go to all this labour intense and expensive trouble to stop people from leaving their homeland. In the post-WW II Europe a division began to take shape between two competing power blocks. The political and ideological systems divided the Eastern and Central European nations, which followed the so-called people's democratic (Communist) states versus the democratic states of Western Europe. The Communist party set up a system of oppression with no freedom of speech. Any descent to their policies was severely punished by imprisonment in labour camps. People were arrested, tortured and in some instances even executed because the regime feared their democratic, liberal and freedom-loving outlook – not because they committed any crime. Many people did not want to live in a Communist dictatorship and decided to leave their homeland. The government knew that if they opened up the borders, this would start a major exodus and it would lose much face in the world. They decided to build a fence to keep the whole nation within their country against their will. The restrictive law reinforcing the ideology and of protecting the borders came into effect in 1951, when the construction of the barbed wire fence system began.

HNANICE

The first village past the Dyje National Park is Hnanice, just west of Šatov. This is also the end of the Znojmo Wine Trail and at Šatov we join the Moravian Wine Trail.

The Gothic **Church of St Wolfgang** (kostel sv. Wolfganga, 1487-1510) has a sacred well with a miraculous spring. Part of the church was later rebuilt in Baroque style. There are two lanes with wine cellars, one is north-west of the church and the other is south of the church.

ACCOMMODATION

The mid-priced Penzion **Vinohrad** (www.penzion-hnanice.cz/) has clean rooms with bathroom and they also run Penzion u Soudku and Penzion Devět Mlýnu. Their moderately priced restaurant serves local specialties and international dishes. Within the complex is also a wine cellar and bowling.

ZNOJMO-BRNO WINE TRAIL

The Znojmo-Brno Wine Trail snakes through the northern part of the Znojmo Wine Region from Prosiměřice to Moravský Krumlov. Here it links up with the Brno-Znojmo

Wine Trail and continues through the Brno Wine Region to Brno. It is also possible to join it earlier at Chrastí, south of Vedrovice. At the time of writing this trail was still being developed.

HORNÍ DUNAJOVICE

Horní Dujanovice is located 13 km northeast of Znojmo, via the villages of Vítonice and Želetice. There are 69 ha vineyards at the northern edge and further east of the village. The eastern vineyards called Stará hora (Old Mountain) belong to some of the best vineyards in the region. The large wine producer here is the Zemědělské družstvo Horní Dujanovice.

The history of the local **Chateau** goes back to the 14th century. During the next century the Chateau was rebuilt several times and expanded, but during the 30 Years War it was converted into a granary. Another important monument is the Gothic-Renaissance **Church of the Holy Trinity** (kostel nejsvětější Trojice) with a leaning tower. Outside of town at the edge of the forest near the Koráb gamekeeper's lodge, there is a site rich in warm-loving flowers growing in the scrub. There are goldilocks aster (*Aster linosyris*), dwarf sour cherry (*Cerasus fruticosa*), needle-grass (*Stipa capillata*) and several types of mullein.

HOSTĚRADICE

The trail continues north towards Višňové, Skalice and Chlopice. Hostěradice has the third highest acreage of vineyards with 123 ha and the vineyards of Volné pole are regarded as one the best in the Znojmo Region.

The old village of Hostěradice lies along the regional trade route between Znojmo and Rajhrad. The Teutonic Knights established themselves here from the 13th century until the end of the 15th century. The parish **Church of St. Kunhuta** (kostel sv. Kunhuty) is the most impressive architectural structure, with the originally basilica that was in the 14th century decorated with frescos. The church was rebuilt several times, including in late Gothic style at the turn of the 16th century, and the Renaissance modification in the second half of the 16th century.

Near the church is an early Gothic charnel. The parish house, still bearing Gothic elements, was built on the site of the former house of the Knight Commander. In the garden are the remains of the medieval fortifications. Also notable is the Baroque cemetery with Renaissance gravestones and the Renaissance former town hall (1514). On the north-east side of the village is the **U kapličky Nature Reserve** (Přírodní rezervace U kapličky) with thermophilous flowers.

MIROSLAV

The next place is the town of Miroslav and the first historical record of the town dates back 1222. There is also a large Weinperky vineyard area with 78 ha, where high-quality grapes are grown.

In 1553, Miroslav's given the status of a small town and in 1965 of a town. The Renaissance **Chateau** replaced a Gothic Castle which was protected by a water-filled moat (section of the moat still remains). A 19th century park surrounds the Chateau. The

18th century **Church of SS Peter & Paul** (kostel sv. Petra a Pavla) is an interesting cultural monument. There is also a Classicist Parish House and a Baroque wine cellar (1748) formerly used to store wine that was paid as tithe – it is partly vaulted and carved out of rock. A small Jewish community lived in Miroslav since the Middle Ages, and only several 17th century gravestones are still preserved in the Jewish cemetery. On the conglomerate rocky slopes is the **Protected Area of the Miroslav Hills** (Chráněná oblast Miroslavské kopce), that includes thermophilous plants.

The trail continues via Damnice, Jiřice, Troskotovice, Vlasatice, Branišovice, Našiměřice, Bohutice, Olbramovice, Šumice, Kubšice, Vedrovice, Dobelice, Rybníky, Moravský Krumlov to Dolní Kounice (see the Brno Wine Region chapter).