

Use and re-use of heritage for tourism

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Introduction

Cornerstones of tourism in 19th Century – Spas and Resorts following the heath ideal coming from the air, water and sunlight.

Examples of Dolenjske Toplice and Bled Spa

The construction of Südbahn (Southern Railway) in 1855 connecting Vienna and Adriatic coast – development of Adriatic resorts such as Grado – Palace Hotel Portorož in nowadays Slovenia.

20th Century – in 70ties: pulling down of historic tourist infrastructure and constructing typical mass hotels – example of Rogaška Spa Wandelbahn (covered promenade) built around 1850 and demolished in 1970'.

Some statistics

Number of visitors

Turistična znamenitost	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Bled Castle	144.488	162.500	169.747	173.131	187.834	191.883	190.156	209.371	221.230
Ljubljana Castle	73.993	75.576	84.799	95.009	111.314	114.161	125.596	151.539	122.753
Predjamai Castle	79.552	92.191	98.482	92.685	103.071	104.542	113.359	117.938	115.079
Lipica Stud Farm	92.027	103.797	105.878	103.992	108.267	108.480	96.289	88.114	95.730

Source: Statistial Office of Slovenija, May 2010

Late 20th and beginning of 21st century main attractions in Slovenia:

1. Bled with its island church and castle in a picturesque rock above the lake,
2. Ljubljana Castle with virtual museum
3. Predjama castle near Postojna caves (one tourist operator managing both sites as one tourist destination)
4. Lipica Stud Farm of Lipizzaner horses, difficulties of state ownership and lack of maintenance of tourist infrastructure.

Problems

90ties: exemption from privatisation of cultural monuments, mostly castles (42) – the state wished to renovate them and bring them to new use – actually renovating only 5 of them: Ptuj, Snežnik, Castle Grad, Negova and Pišcece – not one project has been concluded, not one castle put to re-used for tourism purpose although it was the original plan. Why ?

Not realistic programming, the partners from tourism industry showed initial interest and then withdrew before the public-private partnership was concluded, castles by definition located in the countryside, away from tourist flows, the State could not sell cultural properties due to the legal obstacles, 2008 new heritage protection act: opening the possibility for sale but beginning of economic recession.

Some examples of negative and positive practice of re-use

What is a possible re-use of cultural heritage objects for tourism?

Problem of standards in tourism industry – the case of renovation of Palace Hotel in Portorož – only the facade was kept and the main hall at the ground floor completely reconstructed.

Hotels, restaurants (Manor house Zemono), what else?

The case of missed opportunities – rejected proposals for activating cultural heritage as parts of motorway service areas – Podsmreka manor house, old post office at Lukovica and Castle Brdo near Ljubljana.

Examples of good practice:

- re-use of derelict military barracks in Trenta for Triglav National Park information centre,
- re-use of military prison in Ljubljana for a trendy youth hostel Celica,
- re-use of traditional farm houses for a country side youth hostel (Pliskovica in Karst region) and rural tourism facilities strengthening local economy (Ljubno in Štajerska region).