

Please join us on our fourth international adventure as



AARCH GOES TO SLOVAKIA

SEPTEMBER 26-OCTOBER 6, 2019

Please join us for an eleven day guided adventure highlighting the rich cultural heritage, architectural marvels, and fascinating history of this off-the-beaten track European country.

Led by our Slovak guide, Peter Blazicek, with help from our Slovak colleague, Katarina Voskova, and the intrepid AARCH staff



An aerial view of Bardejov, Slovakia

September 26 - October 6, 2019

**\$3,750.00 per person (based on double occupancy)
Please add an additional \$700.00 for single occupancy**

PLEASE NOTE: This cost does **NOT** include round-trip airfare to Vienna, Austria. Each traveler will be responsible for arranging his or her own individual airfare.

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My father, a professor of American literature, and my mother loved to travel. Every few years he would take a sabbatical and get a job overseas, and, as a family we would have the great experience of living for a year in Germany, Austria, and England. During these years abroad we also traveled extensively throughout Europe and North Africa. These experiences sparked my interests in architecture, historic preservation, and community vitality.

In 2006, I was invited to be part of a professional exchange with historic preservation colleagues in Slovakia. They came to the United States and we hosted them in the Adirondacks for some of their time here, exploring Fort Ticonderoga, Camp Santanoni, and some of our community work here.



In 2009, Michael Frenette, Santanoni master craftsman, and I spent ten days exploring Slovakia's architecture, landscapes, and preservation work with a group of Slovak preservation colleagues. What we saw and learned and experienced absolutely blew us away. From its walled medieval cities, to its bustling capital, to its amazing wooden churches, to its mountainside castles, to the dynamic state of its preservation efforts—we totally fell in love with

Slovakia and its people. And, ever since this trip, I have wanted to return to Slovakia with group of AARCH members and friends. This year we are finally able to offer you the opportunity to see, taste and experience this hidden gem of Europe.

As you will see in this brochure, our September 2019 outing will explore the very best that Slovakia has to offer, through our expert guide and colleagues and in the company of good AARCH friends and companions.

I hope you will joins us.

Steven

Steven Engelhart
Executive Director



A Bratislava streetscape

ITINERARY:

The following pages are a proposed itinerary for our Slovakia trip. Please note that this itinerary is subject to minor changes.



Bratislava

Thursday, September 26— Travel Day

Participants will be responsible for their own travel to Vienna, Austria. Travelers may choose to arrive in Vienna on the morning of September 26 (most flights from the United States arrive during the morning hours) or, alternatively, may opt to arrive in Vienna on the day before (September 25). Our group will be picked up at Vienna Schwechat International Airport at 12:00 pm (noon) Vienna time. From there we will travel as a group to Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia (approximate travel time: 1 hour). We will arrive in Bratislava at approximately 1:00 pm Slovakia time.

- 1:00 pm** Lunch on own (with recommendations)
- 2:30 pm** After lunch we'll have a walking tour of the historic part of the capital city.
- 4:00 pm** Check-in at **Hotel Radisson Blu**
- 5:00 pm** We'll gather as a group for a welcome reception and orientation. Wine and cheese will be served.
- Evening** On your own. Overnight accommodations at **Hotel Radisson Blu**.

Friday, September 27—Bratislava

Morning Breakfast at hotel.

Travel to the Danube overlook and the ruins of Devin Castle, built in the 9th century and one of the oldest castles in Slovakia. References to this castle date as far back as 864 AD. The site overlooks the confluence of the Danube and Morava Rivers. We'll admire the majestic Danube River from high above the water, and then tour the castle ruins.

Lunch as a group.

Afternoon Travel back to Bratislava. We'll tour the hilltop complex of **Bratislava Castle**, the main castle of the capital city. This site, Castle Hill, was



Bratislava Castle

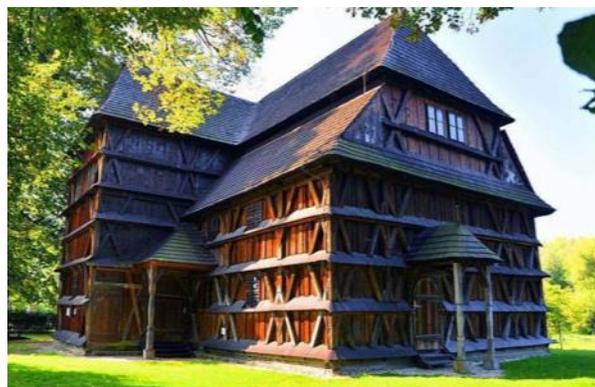
the site of several castles dating as far back as the 10th century. The existing Bratislava Castle was built in the 17th century in the baroque style, the fashionable architectural style of the time, to replace the outdated Renaissance style castle built in the 16th century by King Ferdinand. During our tour we'll learn about the recent restoration of this remarkable site. After our tour you'll have free time to explore the **Old City** on your own.

Evening Dinner on your own (with recommendations provided). Overnight accommodations at **Hotel Radisson Blu** in Bratislava.

Saturday, September 28 —Travel to Banska Stiavnica

Morning Breakfast and check out of hotel.

We'll depart Bratislava and start our journey to Banska Stiavnica. On the way we'll visit the wooden Lutheran church at **Hronsek**, completed in 1726 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Evangelical churches of this age and type are extremely unique due to restrictions set by the church at the time of construction. Leaders decreed that such churches had to be constructed entirely of wood, without using a single iron nail; that the entire structure had to be built in one year; that the main entrance of the church could not face the street; and that churches could not have an attached bell tower.



Lutheran church at Hronsek

After our time at Hronsek we will travel to Banska Stiavnica for lunch at the **Erb Brewery**.

Afternoon After lunch we'll embark on a walking tour of **Banska Stiavnica**, a former silver mining community and UNESCO World Heritage Site, with Katarina Voskova, the director of the Regional Office of Institute for Monuments Preservation in Banska Stiavnica, with a particular emphasis on historic architecture and preservation activities.



Banska Stiavnica

Evening Official Welcome Dinner with Fujara (Slovak UNESCO music instrument) and traditional folk music. Overnight accommodations at **Penzion Kachelman**

Sunday, September 29 —Banska Stiavnica

Morning Breakfast at the hotel.

We'll depart our hotel for a full day of activities in **Banska Stiavnica** with Katarina Voskova. We'll visit the **Calvary Complex**, an impressive baroque complex on the slopes of a dormant volcano, built by the Jesuits in the 18th century and testament to the wealth of the silver mining community during this period. Next, we'll visit a **Jewish cemetery** on the Slovak Jewish Heritage Route. The synagogue was built in 1893 and recently restored.

We'll also visit a preservation trades training program and conclude with a walking tour that includes the **Old Castle**, **Holy Trinity Square**, and highlights local



The baroque Calvary Complex

preservation projects.

Evening Dinner as a group. Overnight accommodations at **Penzion Kachelman**.



Zuberec Outdoor Museum



Orava Castle

Monday, September 30 —Orava Region and the High Tatras Mountains

Morning Breakfast at the hotel.

After breakfast we'll depart Banska Stiavnica and head for the mountainous **High Tatra region** while visiting several sites along the way. Our first stop will be the castle at **Orava**, built in the 13th century on a cliff in the Kingdom of Hungary and among the most beautiful and striking in Slovakia. It was originally built in Romanesque and Gothic style and later reconstructed as a Renaissance and Neo-Gothic structure.

After we tour the castle we'll have lunch as a group with traditional music at a shepherd-style restaurant.

Afternoon After lunch we'll visit the **Zuberec Outdoor Museum**, a village of peasant houses, larders, lumber rooms, farmsteads, shepherd's huts, haylofts, a wooden church, cemetery and working sawmill. After touring the museum we'll continue our journey to the High Tatras.

Evening Dinner as a group. Overnight accommodations at **Hotel Grand Kempinski Strbske Pleso**.

Tuesday, October 1—High Tatras

Morning Breakfast at the hotel.

Free time. This day will be a bit open-ended, allowing you to choose your own activities for the day. You might choose to partake in any of the recreational day time activities such as a morning trip to the high mountains on a gondola, a short hike or walk in the area, traveling through old resort towns on light-weight railroad, or visiting a Soviet era resort where factory workers received vacations in the mountains. Or you may opt to take advantage of the spa and relaxation opportunities at our hotel.

Lunch We'll have lunch as a group at one of the restored 19th century hotels nearby.

Afternoon Free time.

Evening Dinner on your own. Overnight accommodations at **Hotel Grand Kempinski Strbske Pleso**.



Hotel Grand Kempinski, surrounded by the High Tatra Mountains

Wednesday, October 2—Bardejov

Morning Breakfast and check out of hotel.

We'll depart Stbske Pleso after breakfast and head to **Bardejov** with stop at a distillery along the way.

We'll arrive in **Bardejov** for lunch as a group. After lunch we'll have a guided tour of this walled museum city that dates back to c. 1240 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our tour will include stops at the icon museum, church, and an in-depth look at a local preservation project.



The medieval walled city of Bardejov

Evening Dinner as a group. Overnight accommodations at **Hotel Pod Branou**.



Jewish Orthodox Synagogue



St. Francis of Assisi Church

Thursday, October 3—Presov and Kosice

Morning Breakfast and check out of hotel.

After breakfast we will head to Kosice. Along the way we will stop at **Hervartov** to see the wooden 15th century Roman Catholic **Church of St. Francis of Assisi**, the oldest wooden church in Slovakia and a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Afternoon Lunch in **Presov**. After, we'll tour the restored **Jewish Orthodox Synagogue**.

Evening Dinner on your own. Overnight accommodations at **Hotel Double Tree**, Kosice.

Friday, October 4—Kosice

Morning Breakfast at the hotel.

We will have a full day in **Kosice** to explore the historic city center, its museums and some ongoing preservation projects.

Lunch as a group.

Evening Farewell dinner as a group. Overnight accommodations at **Hotel Double Tree**, Kosice.

DAY 10: Saturday, October 5—Kosice to Bratislava

Morning Breakfast and check out of hotel.

We'll depart for our trip back Bratislava. On the way we'll stop at **Spiss Castle**, built in the 12th century, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of the largest castles in Europe.

Afternoon Lunch as a group.

After lunch we'll embark on a walking tour of **Levoca**, a walled city that dates to approximately 1250 and another UNESCO World Heritage site.

Evening On our return to Bratislava we'll have dinner in **Banska Bysteria**, arriving in Bratislava around 8:30. Overnight accommodations at **Hotel Radisson Blu**, Bratislava



Spiss Castle



Levoca

Sunday, October 6—Farewell to Slovakia

Transport group to Vienna, as needed, for departure flights. Tour organizers will also provide opportunities for participants to leave the following day and/or extend their stay with additional time in Vienna and Prague.

Included in Price:

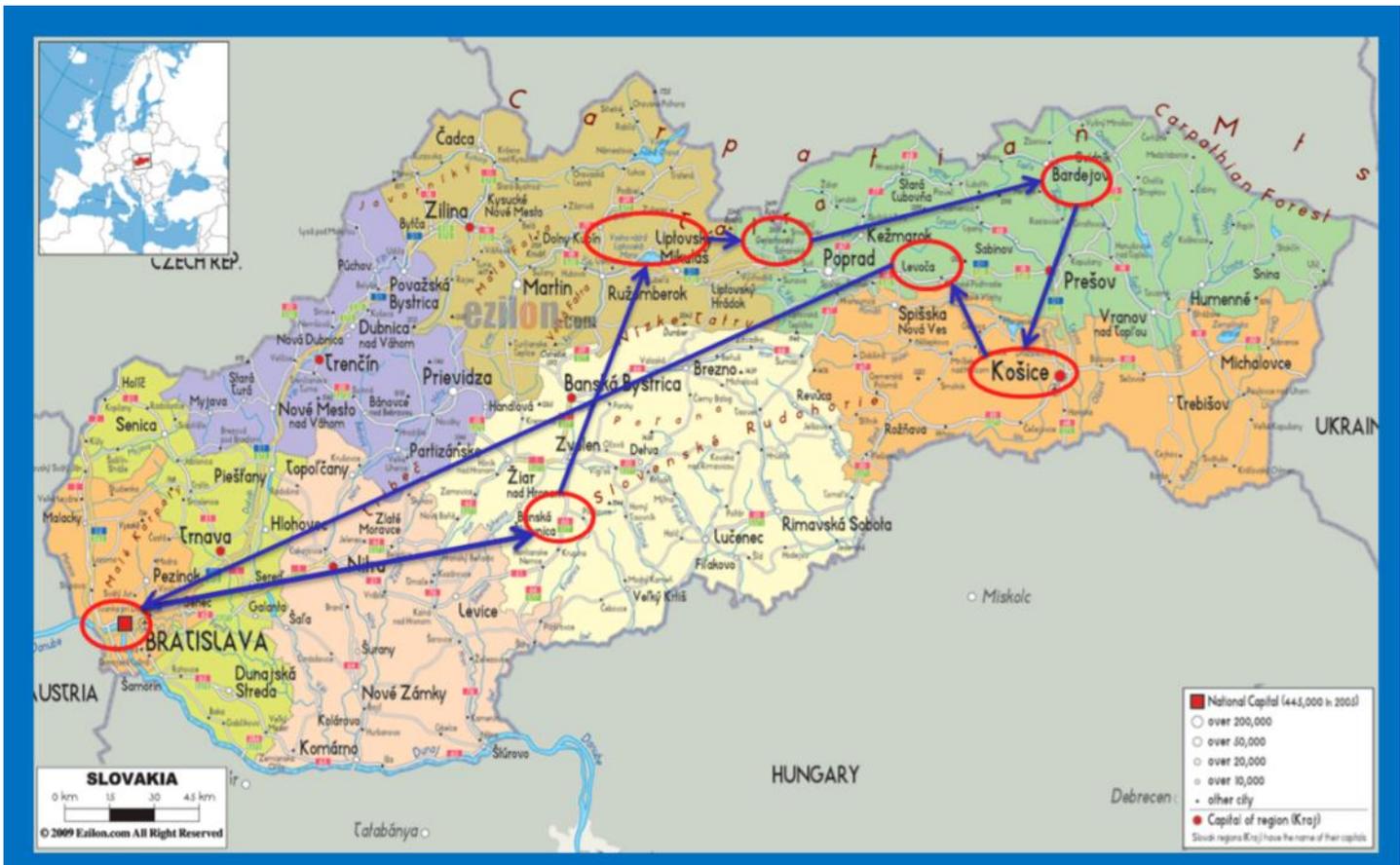
1. All hotel accommodations: 3 nights in Bratislava; 2 nights in Banska Stiavnica; 2 nights in the High Tatras; 1 night in Bardejov; 2 nights in Kosice.
2. An English-speaking guide
3. Meetings with preservation professionals
4. Entrance fees for all sites
5. Bus and shuttle transportation as per program
6. Full board (breakfast, lunch and dinner where
7. indicated) with non-alcoholic beverages, coffee or tea
8. AARCH 1 year membership

Not Included in Price:

1. Airfare to Vienna, Austria (roundtrip coach airfare approximately \$1,000 per person)
2. Single supplement (additional \$700)
3. 3 dinners and 1 lunch (where indicated)
4. Personal expenses

MAP OF PROPOSED ITINERARY:

The following map reflects the preceding itinerary and demonstrates the geographic range of our planned travel. Please note that this itinerary is subject to minor changes.



FAQS – GETTING TO KNOW AND TRAVELING TO SLOVAKIA

Q: How do I differentiate between Slovakia, the Slovak Republic, Slovak, and Slovakian?

The full and official designation for **Slovakia** is the **Slovak Republic** and hence both terms refer to the same nation-state. For formal purposes use the official designation: the Slovak Republic. **Slovak** refers to an inhabitant or native of Slovakia. **Slovaks** is the plural. **Slovak** also refers to the language of Slovakia. **Slovak** can also be used as an adjective, as in "We studied Slovak literature by reading Slovak books." **Slovakian** is equivalent to **Slovak** but the term Slovakian is less common and not used in official environments.

Q: Why did Slovakia secede from Czechoslovakia?

Both the *United Nations Charter* and the *International Declaration of the Rights of Man* have always guaranteed the self-determination of peoples. The leaders of Slovakia felt that the Czech and Slovak Federation did not provide for adequate autonomy and wasn't the best way for the Slovak people to develop culturally and economically. In short, after being oppressed and even ethnically cleansed by Hungarians in the Hapsburg and Austro-Hungarian empires, and coexistence with the Czechs on unequal terms in Czechoslovakia, elected Slovak politicians decided to go at it alone in 1993.

Q: Was the 1993 separation democratic and amicable?

The separation of Slovakia from Czechoslovakia, which occurred in 1993 and referred to as the 'Velvet Divorce,' was executed in a democratic and largely uneventful way. Consequently, this clean breakup has served as a model for other peoples who wish to forge their own identity via the nation-state, including Quebec leaders wanting to explore a similar separation from Canada. There has been some debate as to whether the breakup was truly democratic. Although the decision was made by both Czech and

Slovak leaders who were elected by the citizens of each part of the nation, no question about separation was ever posed to the people of Czechoslovakia.

Q: Do I need a visa to visit Slovakia?

Citizens of the United State DO NOT need a visa to visit Slovakia (or Austria). Only a valid American passport is required.

Q: What is Slovakia like?

Slovakia is modern European country mixed with a deep rural tradition. Geographically, it is primarily a mountainous country with numerous winter activities. It has a continental European climate with moderate winters and warm summers. Most infrastructure and many of the tourist facilities are on par or near Western European standards. There is refreshingly little McDonald's-style commercialism that is rampant across Western Europe. Quaint and jovial with a surprisingly rich cultural life, Bratislava is a capital city without the usual congestion. The High Tatras are a magnificent range of European mountains dotted with villages with deep peasant traditions. You'll find Slovaks to be an extremely helpful, pleasant people prepared to go out of their way to welcome you. From city breaks, film and folk festivals, to castle tours to snowboarding and hiking you'll find Slovakia a spectacular country to visit.

Q: Who are the Slovaks?

The 5 million Slovaks are Slavic people, having a common cultural, historic and linguistic heritage with their fellow Slavs. Slavs number over 300 million and are the largest European ethnic and linguistic body. The group includes these nationalities: Belorussians, Bosnians, Bulgarians, Croats, Czechs, Macedonians, Montenegrans, Poles, Russians, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenes and Ukrainians. Other ethnic Slavs such as Ruthenians, Sorbs and Wends do not have national homelands. The Slavic peoples are divided into three linguistic groups, West, East and South. Slovaks are part of the Western group that also includes Czechs and Poles. About 15% of the population of Slovakia is non-Slovak. Composed mainly of Hungarians, Roma (Gypsies), Czechs, Ruthenians and Ukrainians, these minorities enjoy full protection of their language, culture and history under the constitution and subsequent legislation enacted into law.

Q: What Can I expect the weather to be in September and early October?

The weather in Slovakia in September and early October will be much like the Adirondacks with temperatures fluctuating between 40 and 70 F, lots of sunshine (relative to the rest of the year), and fall in the air. The weather will become even cooler when we go into the Tatra Mountains.

Q. How much walking can I expect on this trip?

Although we will be traveling around the country by bus this tour will require significant walking and some hills. Slovakia is a fairly mountainous country with many changes in grade. This landscape will be especially noticeable during out time in the High Tatras region, although hiking here is optional. Additionally, we will be walking over old cobblestones and uneven ground around the country. Comfortable shoes are a must.

Q: How do we get there?

Participants are responsible for getting themselves to Vienna. We will be meeting at the airport there on Thursday, September 26. Most flights from the United States to Vienna conveniently arrive in the morning. Depending on when people arrive, we may be picked up and delivered to Bratislava in several groups.

***Additional questions? Please let us know.
Give us a call at (518) 834-9328
Send us an email at info@aarch.org***