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SmartGuide

Free digital guide

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BRATISLAVA TOURIST BOARD

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND SPORTS OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Bratislava Tourist Board
Primaciálne nám. 1
P. O. BOX 349
810 00 Bratislava
btb@visitbratislava.com
www.visitbratislava.com

Tourist Information Centre
Klobučnícka 2
SK-811 01 Bratislava
Tel.: +421 2 16 186
Tel.: +421 2 59356651
touristinfo@visitbratislava.com

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Historical Garden

The Baroque garden in the northern part of the Castle spreads over four terraces and is separated from the other parts of the Castle by a high wall. The present form of this relaxation space is the result of a historical reconstruction of the garden as it looked like during the reign of Maria Theresa. The garden, which disappeared in the 19th century, was restored in 2016 on the basis of preserved historical sources. The garden includes two distinctive buildings. The Winter Riding Hall is the largest covered area of the Castle. In 1811 a fire broke out in it and destroyed most of the Castle. The smaller building, the Garden Pavilion, was used for ball games and music festivals.

Events with the Castle Backdrop

In the courtyard of the Castle various events focused on culture, traditions, crafts and gastronomy are being held. The biggest attractions are Shakespeare's plays that take place during the Castle Festival of the Cultural Summer, programs during the Bratislava Coronation Days, concerts and Advent events. SNM – Museum of History offers several educational programs for school groups as well as families with children.



Although Bratislava Castle resembles an inverted table with four towers, it has an irregular ground plan.

Attractions

- The Knight's Hall on the ground floor is the largest room in the palace. In 1992, the Constitution of the Slovak Republic was signed there.
- On the ceremonial staircase are large mirrors in gold frames, which are sought after for selfie photos.

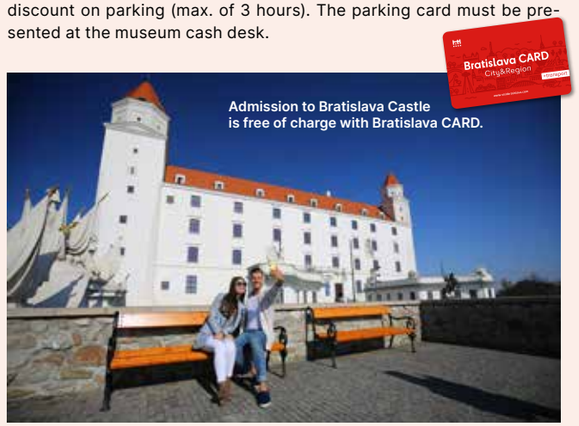


Opening Hours of SNM – Museum of History

Open daily except Tuesday from 10:00 to 18:00, last entry at 17:00.
The Bratislava Castle complex is open daily from 8.00 AM to 10.00 PM. The museum is open on most public holidays except November 1, Christmas holidays an January 1. In case of an extraordinary closure of the Castle, we recommend you to follow the website or Facebook of the Museum.

Barrier-free Museum
The museum is wheelchair-friendly. The museum provides special educational programs for the visually impaired. Selected articles of permanent exhibition are presented by videos adapted for the hearing impaired. These records are accessible on the Internet.

Parking
The public garage under Bratislava Castle is open daily from 8.00 AM to midnight (last entry at 11.00 PM). Visitors to the Museum have a 50% discount on parking (max. of 3 hours). The parking card must be presented at the museum cash desk.



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Bratislava Castle

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Bratislava Castle

The majestic Castle on the hill, 85 metres above the Danube has been a symbol of Bratislava and a characteristic feature of the city skyline for centuries. The area of the Bratislava Castle covers an area of almost 7 football fields and is one of the largest in Slovakia. The Castle is encircled by massive walls in which are four entrance gates (Vienna, Leopold, Sigismund and Nicholas Gates). Today, the Castle is the seat of the Slovak National Museum – Museum of History. The panorama terraces offer a unique view not only of the city but also of the neighboring countries.

Looking Back

Bratislava Castle Hill was settled due to its strategic location more than 5,000 years ago. In the 1st century BC, the hilltop was ruled by the Celts. At the turn of the 5th and 6th centuries, Slavs came here and built a fortified settlement. The first written record of the Castle goes back to 907 AD. After the year 1000, the Castle became part of the network of county castles as a border fortress of the Kingdom of Hungary. The present Castle was built as an imperial residence in the first half of the 15th century. In the 16th century the Castle became the seat of the Hungarian emperors. It underwent the last major renovation in the 18th century at the command of Maria Theresa. With slight changes, the Castle still looks the same. The Castle burnt down in 1811 and fell into disrepair until the second half of the 20th century. The current appearance is the result of two major renovations.





Celtic Acropolis

In the 1st century BC, the castle hill served as an acropolis of the Celtic city, the so-called oppidum. Recent archaeological excavations have revealed the foundations of stone buildings built by the Roman Empire builders, which showed the luxury of the region. Celtic Bratislava is the center of attention of the museum's exhibition in the basement of the palace. It also includes a tour of the archaeological site **in situ** under the palace courtyard, where you will see a building with a preserved mosaic **opus signinum** floor featuring a floral pattern. Other "Roman-Celtic" buildings in the Castle area are accessible during specialized tours within the so-called Celtic Path, organized by the SNM - Historical Museum.

The well from the 15th century is 85 metres deep and reaches to the bottom of the Danube. The grounds of the Great Moravian basilica stand out on the grassy area of the Castle.



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Through the Floors of the Castle

The Castle is home to the Slovak National Museum – Museum of History, which primarily documents the history of Slovakia. There are more than 250,000 items in the museum's collections. In the basement of the Castle visitors can see cellars dug in the 15th century. At present, the exhibition Celts from Bratislava is installed there. The part of the exhibition with archeological findings is located under the courtyard. On the first floor, visitors will get to the representative premises of Francis I. Stephen through the chapel (also known as the Music Hall). On the second floor, formerly serving the children of Maria Theresa, the museum organizes various exhibitions. There is also a medieval wall with a thickness of about 7 m. On the third floor there is an exhibition of History of Slovakia - from prehistoric times to the Middle Ages. Visitors will get to know the findings from the Stone Age and Bronze Age, the Celtic settlement of Slovakia and the period of Roman presence on the Danube. A separate part of the exhibition is devoted to the arrival of the Slavs and the Great Moravian Empire. The period of the Middle Ages covers the years 1000 to 1526, when Slovakia formed part of the Kingdom of Hungary. The exposition focuses on medieval coinage, the origins of Slovak cities, and Christianity. Gradually, the exposition is being extended by adding items from modern periods. On the third floor there are current exhibitions, a café and a museum shop.

Treasury

Rare items from collections of precious metals, e.g. utensils used for dining, decorative and representative works from the 17th to the 20th centuries are displayed by the museum in the Treasury situated on the ground floor of the Crown Tower.





Baroque Residence

Bratislava Castle underwent an extensive renovation during the reign of Maria Theresa (1740 - 1780), when the Castle was transformed into a luxurious Baroque residence with elegant French gardens. Visitors to the museum have the opportunity to stroll up the Theresian staircase, which is one of the largest interior baroque staircases in Central Europe, or visit the golden-decorated representative halls of Francis I. Stephen, the husband of Maria Theresa. Her representative halls situated in the southern wing of the palace are used for state visits by the National Council of the Slovak Republic and are open to the public during the Constitution Day on 1st September.

Crown Tower with Panorama

The Crown Tower is the oldest standing building of the Castle. It was built in the 13th century as a defensive tower of an older castle and was incorporated into the current Castle in the 15th century. It was named after the Hungarian coronation jewels, which were kept here with breaks from 1552 to 1783. The other three towers on the corners of the Castle were not built until the 17th century.



Forty-seven metres high Crown Tower gives visitors to the museum a unique opportunity to enjoy panoramic views of three countries - Slovakia, Austria and Hungary.

