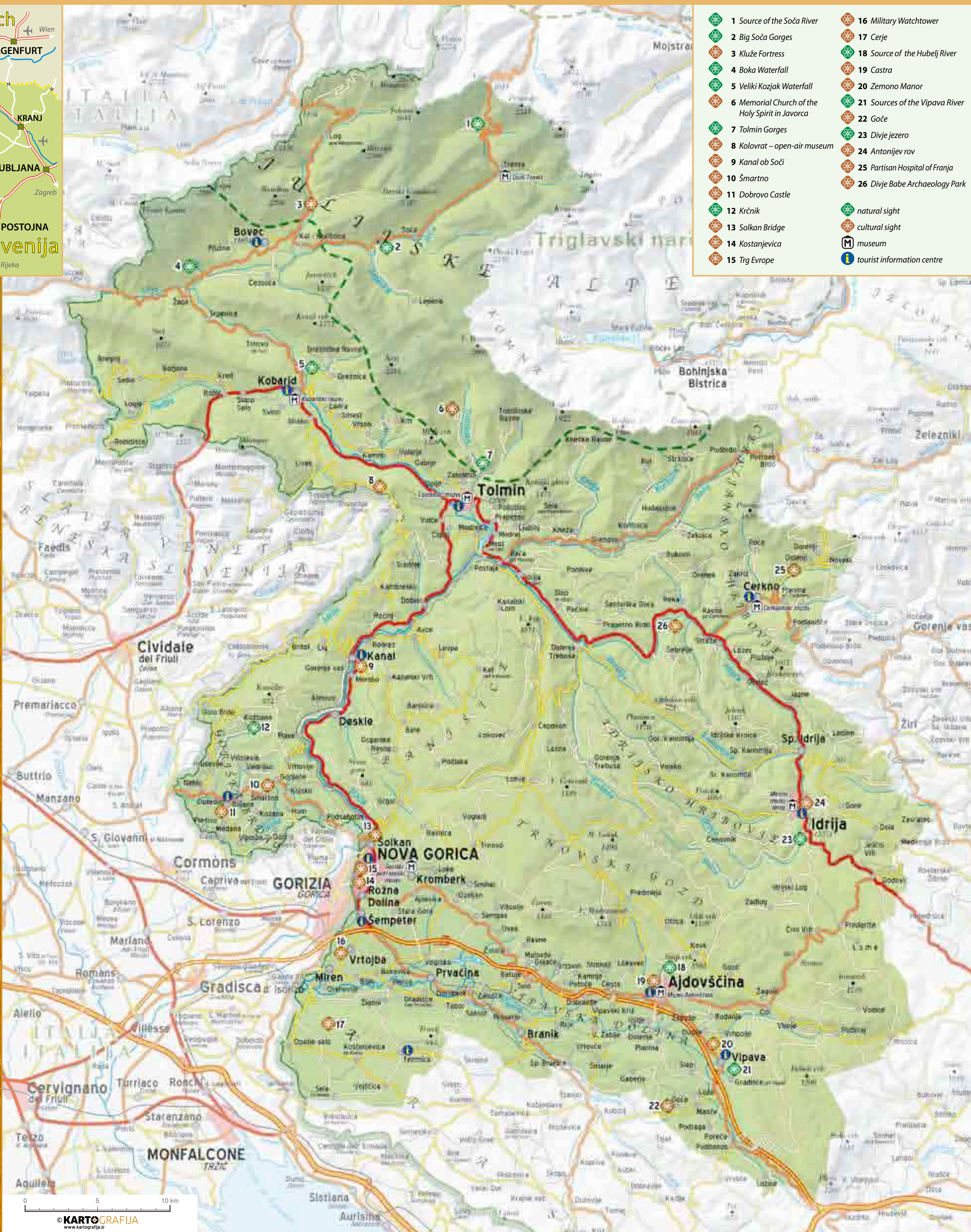


THE EMERALD TRAIL



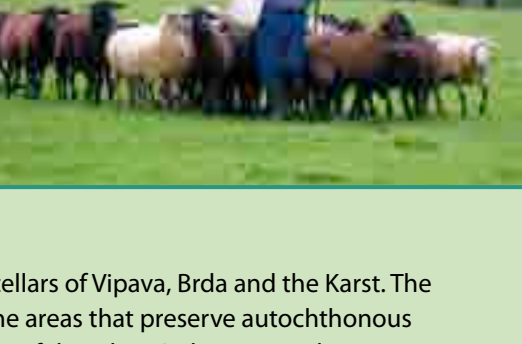
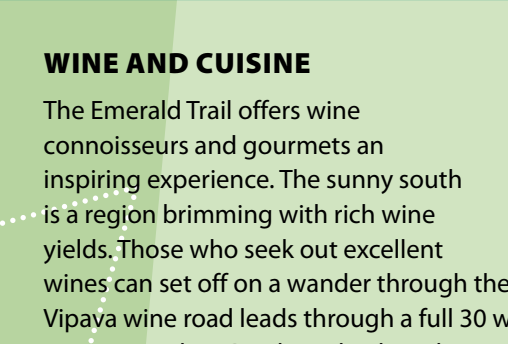
The beautiful Soča is one of the most important rivers in Slovenia. It was written into the historical memory of Europeans, particularly Slovenians and Italians, as the scene of major and bloody battles during the First World War, but in the imagination of the modern visitor it is primarily a synonym for pristine beauty and liveliness, as a place for a wealth of active experiences in the embrace of unspoiled nature.

The Soča river basin is an expansive and diverse land. It stretches from the Alpine north to the lowlands in the lower reaches of the river, and also takes in the Idrija and Vipava valleys and all the other tributaries. The territory is administratively incorporated into the Northern Primorska – Gorica statistical region, which today comprises 13 municipalities: Bovec, Kobarid, Tolmin, Kanal, Nova Gorica, Brda, Šempeter - Vrtojba, Miren - Kostanjevica, Renče - Vogrsko, Ajdovščina, Vipava, Idrija and Cerklje. One of the key developmental orientations of the region is for tourism to be developed across the entire area, services and attractions to be linked together and a common destination established. This destination is named the Emerald Trail, after the Soča River – the biggest natural and symbolic feature of the area.



NATURE

The Emerald Trail offers an exceptionally diverse natural environment. It takes the visitor below precipitous rock faces and Alpine ridges past the green tops of the sub-Alpine foothills and expansive Dinaric plateaux, through the delightful vineyards of Goriska Brda and the Vipava Valley. Along the way it conceals countless mysterious caves, enchanting waterfalls, picturesque lakes and crystal-clear rivers. The luxuriant natural wealth is safeguarded in protected areas such as Triglav National Park and the Zgornja Idrija and Trnovski Gozd Regional Park. Visitors can experience these natural wonders as a wayfarer, through active discovery by pursuing sports in the natural environment or simply as a respectful and silent admirer.



WINE AND CUISINE

The Emerald Trail offers wine connoisseurs and gourmets an inspiring experience. The sunny south is a region brimming with rich wine yields. Those who seek out excellent wines can set off on a wander through the cellars of Vipava, Brda and the Karst. The Vipava wine road leads through a full 30 wine areas that preserve autochthonous varieties such as Pinela and Zelen. The queen of the white Brda wines is the native Rebula, while at its side are Picolit and Friulan Tokay, and the reds are dominated by Merlot. The cooler Alpine area offers stronger distilled spirits, and this is also the place where they mature the famous Tolminc cow's cheese and Bovec sheep's cheese. In the area between the north and south you can find Idrija žlikrofi stuffed dumplings and the delicacy of Sebrejle stomach. Of course there is no lack of local inns and fine restaurants, where culinary masters serve up classic popular dishes or specialities from the local area.

SPORTS IN THE WILD

The Emerald Trail is a paradise for those seeking active exploration of nature. The Soča River offers rafting, kayaking and hydrospeed, while the mountain streams offer the thrill of canyoning. The fantastic gliding conditions draw numerous paragliders, hang gliders and gliders. The valleys lure hikers to wander the numerous trails that run past natural and cultural features. The mountain areas offer mountain bikers both highly and less challenging mountain tours, an abundance of mountain biking trails for cyclists and a range of walls for climbing, while alpinists can take their pick of thousand-metre rock face climbs. In winter there are two skiing centres operating – the high mountain Kanin and the ultra-modern Cerklje Centre, while ski touring enthusiasts will find plenty to challenge them on other mountains. The Soča, Nadiža, Bača, Trebušica, Idrija and Vipava rivers are first-rate fly-fishing locations that draw anglers from all over the world.



GAMES AND FUN

Gaming, spectacles, concerts, top-class cuisine and excellent entertainments await in Nova Gorica, one of the biggest casino centres in Europe, and every day thousands of visitors are drawn there. Most outstanding in its attractions is definitely the Perla, which offers a wealth of services including a casino, hotel, discotheque, events venue, conference centre, restaurant, café and wellness centre, making it the biggest gaming and amusement centre on the continent. In addition to the gaming centre at the Hotel Perla, in Nova Gorica, Brda, the Vipava Valley and Kobarid you will also find a series of gaming salons offering attractions that are slightly more modest, but for that reason more attuned to the individual guest.



HERITAGE

The Emerald Trail can boast an exceptional historical, cultural and technical heritage. It was undoubtedly the Soča or Isonzo Front that left the greatest mark on the area's turbulent past, although we should not forget the Neanderthal whistle from Divlje Babe cave, the Iron Age Santa Lucia culture, the Roman battles in the Vipava Valley, the great Tolmin revolt, the resting place of French rulers at Kostanjevica, the fortress system of the Rapallo border, the Partisan hospital of Franja and more. The rich cultural tradition is reflected in the arts and crafts, outstanding among which is Idrija lace, and in the folk traditions, customs, songs, dances, habits and practices. This region has been marked by a multitude of artists in all fields: poets, writers, musicians, painters and architects. High on the list of the Emerald Trail's technical heritage is the Idrija mercury mine, which for 500 years ranked Idrija among the technologically most advanced places in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the century-old Bohinj railway, an extraordinary monument to engineering complete with stone bridges, tunnels and galleries.

