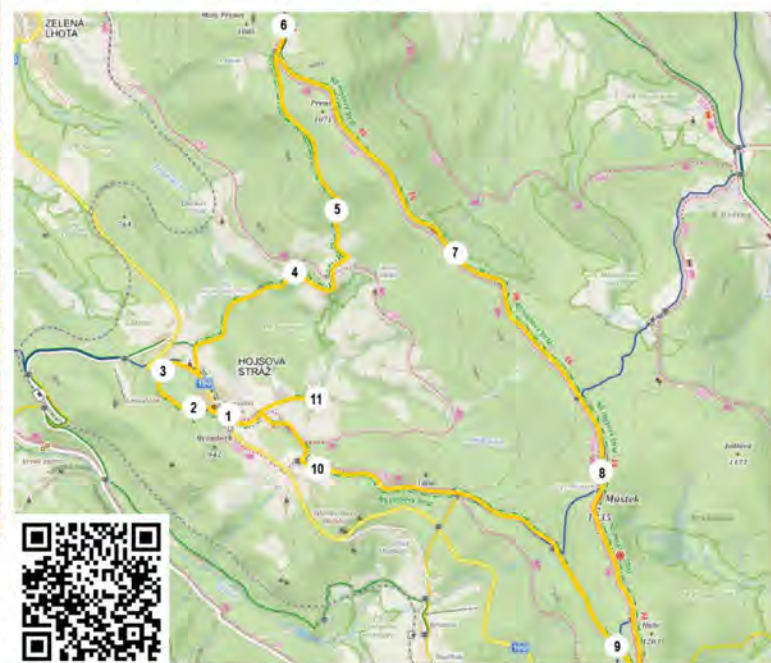


# THE NATURE TRAILS

[www.zeleznaruda.cz/itcruda](http://www.zeleznaruda.cz/itcruda)

## THE NATURE TRAIL HOJSOVA STRÁŽ

Hojsova Stráž (Eisenstrass in German) is one of the six parts of the town of Železná Ruda. Its part is also a mountain settlement Prenet with the chapel of St. Kunhuta. The history of the village reaches the period between 1040 and 1086, when the border deep forests had been settled by the Chods, later the so-called Králováks, on the grounds of the protection of the borders of the Bohemian Kingdom. In Hojsova Stráž there was one of the nine (later eight) reeve areas of Králováks. The colonization of the primeval forest of the Šumava Mountains in the 17 century influenced a lot. The people, mainly from Austria and Bavaria, started to come into this region. That is why the entire Šumava Mountains became linguistically German.



Route: The NT Hojsova Stráž

of local inhabitants have been doing it for living to this day. **THE DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE TRAIL HOJSOVA STRÁŽ** The trail leads its visitors around some interesting places of Hojsova Stráž and its surroundings. Those interested in it, it gives an idea of the history of the region and rough lives of former inhabitants. It will show them gorgeous views. There are several ones in the surroundings of Hojsova Stráž. The nature trail boards also describe sacral sights or a local brewery. Furthermore, they explain who Králováks were and their significance for the whole region. Other interesting topics, such as skiing, railway building, trails and transport, nature protection and others, are not left out.

**LENGTH:** 21 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** +/- 729 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** 11  
**PARKING:** in the centre of the village of Hojsova Stráž (P free of charge)  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by bus (bus stop Železná Ruda, Hojsova Stráž) to the village of Hojsova Stráž; the first part of the route is for hikers only (Z1 – Z6), its part (Z7 – Z11) can be gone through even by bicycle, (hard ascents and downhill). The route is very hard because of its vertical distance.



**THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ROUTE:** The nature trail begins at the local church (Z1) in the middle of the village. It goes along the main road together with the blue tourist sign. After ca. 200 m it turns left up in front of the Astronomical Clock of the Šumava Mountains towards the vantage point Liebeshöhe, but after 350 m it turns left to the watchtower (Z2). The route finishes here and goes back. After ca. 250 m it turns left to Liebeshöhe, where the route finishes again at the vantage point (Z3) and returns to Hojsova Stráž. The route goes on along the pavement as a blue tourist sign. After ca. 400 m in front of the Cottage Šumava the trail turns right following its own signage down to Brčálník Brook and to the former Rumpel's Mill (Rümpelmühle (Z4)). Afterwards the route steeply rises to the recreation objects and then to the South Hillsides (Z5). The steep ascend is rewarded with magnificent views of the Royal Deep Forest, Ostrý/Sharp and the peak of Špičák with its outlook tower. Ascending continues just a little bit farther onto the South Hillsides, then the way eases and carries on to the former cottage on Prenet. From here the route goes to the Chapel of St. Kunhuta (Z6), then a little bit backwards and it carries on around the peak of Prenet to Mústek (Z7, Z8), parallel to the red signage. And again on the way there are wonderful views of the Royal Deep Forest, the Nýrsko Reservoir and even of the inland of Klatovy. At the crossroads on the ridge the trail turns right and then it gradually goes down back to Hojsova Stráž (Z9), past another board (Z10) to the little stately home and on the way it turns right to the former brewery (Z11), from where it goes back to Hojsova Stráž.



Photo: The Nature Trail Hojsova Stráž - view of Mústek

## THE NATURE TRAIL BRČÁLNÍK

The nature trail goes through the Nature Reserve Brčálník Marshlands, which is characterized by patchwork of spring places, peatbogs, pastures and brook meadows along the Úhlava and its naturally meandering current and its tributaries. Those spontaneously arisen formations of woody plants and extensive grazing complete here a valuable landscape valley. We can name the following representatives of the precious local flora: *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, *Dactylorhiza majalis*, *Platanthera chlorantha*, *Pinguicula vulgaris*, *Drosera rotundifolia*, *Pedicularis sylvatica* or *Trollius europaeus*.

**THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ROUTE:** The starting point is situated near the railway station Brčálník, where there is an information panel with map and every single stop. It is based on a one-way move. From the initial panel the route proceeds through a built-up part of Brčálník to the turn-off left, where there is a panel with a panoramic description of view of the part of the Royal Deep Forest with Lake Mountain. Afterwards the route goes on along a field path past cottages,



Route: The Nature Trail Brčálník



Photo: The Nature Trail Brčálník - Platanthera Chlorantha



behind which the way starts to descend towards the railway to the viaduct. At the viaduct each visitor has a possibility to get to know the history of the railway on that information panel. After going under the viaduct the trail leads along a forest path past some recreation houses to the Úhlava. After crossing the bridge the route bends left uphill along the edge of the forest at the information stand of the Nature Reserve Brčálník Marshlands. After a slow ascend there is another stand with a panoramic view of the Mústek Ridge. Behind the stand the route turns left sharply and it goes down to a little cross, where it turns left again and over the rolls and through the pens it leads through the pasture grounds to the Úhlava. By the river there is an information stand named the Úhlava. Across the bridge over the Úhlava and overcoming those water-soaked places along a roll pavement the route goes up to the railway. Above the railway by a little road a directional sign points to the left to the starting point of the route.



Photo: The Nature Trail Brčálník - Brčálník

## THE HARE AND THE THREE-TOED WOODPECKER TRAILS IN ŠPIČÁK

The nature trails for children, always accessible in the period from 15. 06. to 15. 09., they both start at the top of Špičák and go either to Black Lake or to Devil's Lake. Children answer questions, solve a solution and learn something new about the Šumava Mountains. The cards and pens for filling in the solution are for sale at the chairlift ticket office. The ones who solved it right, will find out the hare and the three-toed woodpecker's message for them. They will get a reward sticker at the chairlift ticket office.

### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE HARE TRAIL

A lot of hares live in surrounding forests. There is one that stands out among all of them, not only because of its curiosity but also for its ears. Thanks to its curiosity it knows all the trees, plants and the other animals. It knows the local foresters who take care of the local forest and who it meets in it regularly. It prefers staying away from the other people. It knows everything about the forest and the nature. After all, it is its home. On this trail you have a chance to get to know its home closely and to show that you belong to the forest just as the hare does.

**SIGNAGE:** its own one with boards  
**LENGTH:** 3.5 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** - 329 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** 10  
**PARKING:** in the village of Špičák in P1 (P for free)  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by train (the station Špičák) and by bus (the bus stop Železná Ruda, Stella) to the village of Špičák, after that about 500 m on foot into the area Ski & Bike Špičák.



Route: The hare trail

**THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ROUTE:** The trail starts on the top of Špičák, which you can reach when going by chairlift. It meanders along well-tended graveled roads over the Watershed/Rozvodí to Devil's Lake and from here along the Lake Way to the area chairlift station of departure. It leads along Slope Number 2 for the last 300 m. When walking calmly, you can usually manage it for an hour. It goes mainly downhill. Except for a couple of worse stretches, it is manageable by sports baby carriage.

### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE THREE-TOED WOODPECKER

The three-toed woodpecker is one of the inhabitants of the forests of Špičák. It will guide us through the forest to Black Lake. Thanks to its living in treetops it knows a lot about the local nature. Let's go through the Three-toed Woodpecker Trail and answer 10 questions, solve a solution and learn something new about the Šumava Mountains.



Route: The three-toed woodpecker

**SIGNAGE:** its own signage with boards  
**LENGTH:** 6.7 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** + 24/- 344 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** 10  
**PARKING:** in the village of Špičák in P1 (P for free)  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by train (the station Špičák) and by bus (the bus stop Železná Ruda, Stella) to the village of Špičák, after that about 500 m on foot into the area Ski & Bike Špičák.

**THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ROUTE:** The trail starts on the top of Špičák again, which you can reach when going by chairlift. It continues along a graveled road to the Watershed/Rozvodí and from here along a worse stony way it descends sharply to Black Lake. From the lake it goes along a nearly flat way, particularly along a forest tarmac

way. A short way in front of the Špičák Saddle it turns over Prokop's Meadow onto the slope named Lower Chances/Spodní Šance and along it it keeps going downhill back to the area chairlift station of departure.

### THE SNAKE TRAIL

How to come and meet the nature as best as you can? To have first-hand experience of it. This trail offers such an experience. Those interested in it can try how they can leap. Whether like a hare or like a deer. They will find out how the food chain works or if they are able to count annual rings. What is that annual ring? The trail describes, explains and talks about these topics and many more, such as peopling, travelling, biodiversities and others.

### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SNAKE TRAIL

No matter what its name says, it has nothing to do with snakes. The aim of this nature trail is to give some information about the local nature to its visitors. The origin of the name lies in the fact that its shape in the map looks like a snake.

**LENGTH:** 2 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** + 84 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** 10  
**PARKING:** in Gerlova Hut (P paid, 5 km far from Železná Ruda, direction Hartmanice, Sušice)  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by bus, the bus stop Čachrov, Gerlova Hut, 6 km along the green tourist sign, on foot from Železná Ruda, the trail for hikers only.



### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAIL

The route begins at the shelter in Gerlova Hut with its yellow signage and it goes along it two kilometres to the north-west. Using this trail, it is either possible to go back to the parking lot in Gerlova Hut, or to keep on walking 5 km far, at first following the green signage and then the blue tourist signs to Železná Ruda.



Route: The Snake Trail



**Texts:** the Information Centre of Železná Ruda, Jitka Lněničková, Jan Lakosil, Radovan Holub, the Open Šumava Mountains, c.c., the Administration of the National Park of the Šumava Mountains, Ski & Bike Špičák  
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## THE GLASS NATURE TRAIL

### GLASS-MAKING IN THE ŽELEZNORUDSKO AREA

In 1906 the glass furnace in Alžbětín emitted heat for the last time and in 1945 the last glass sharpening place stopped its operation in Železná Ruda. Mostly just the names of places, the inconspicuous remains of glass working or the names of glassmakers on their tombstones remind the formerly renowned glass-making in this region. There are only a few traces left. You can go along the glass nature trail 300 years against the stream of passing time to remind something from those old times when sheet and mirror glass had been primarily made in the Železnorudsko area.

### GLASSMAKERS

The history of the local glass factories is only one of the chapters of a long story of famous glass-making of the Šumava Mountains and it is interconnected to the glass development in Bavaria nearby. Their business and family relations had been lively across the border for many centuries, concerning operators of glass factories, glassmakers, glass traders, builders of glass furnaces or providers of material. The names of many significant families of glass formen, glass-making factory owners – the Gerls, the Adlers, the Hafenbraedts, the Abeles, the Ascherls, the Ziegler, the Blochs or the Schrenks had been inseperable from the glass factories in the Železnorudsko area. Thanks



Route: The Glass NT – Part 1

to them the Železnorudsko area went down in history of glass-making unforgettably. The first glass factories, specialized in sheet glass, had been working in this area, and the technique of pouring flat glass had also been implemented in the Czech country for the first time.

### GLASS TRADE

The production of glass factories in the Železnorudsko area had always been meant for distant markets, little priests beat/pateřiks (glass beads for making prayer beads) or sheet and mirror glass later. So all the glass factories used to stand near those long-distance trade routes. Today we can hardly imagine how those heavy forman wagons with barrels full of little priest beads or large glass sheets, put in wooden crates interspersed with straw, clattered there. And they were heading hundreds of kilometres far away. For example, mirror glass from the Železnorudsko area travelled especially in the 18th and in the 19th centuries to its additional treatment to North Bohemia and also to many mirror refineries in Bavaria. Completed mirrors were heading, similarly to sheet window glass, even farther – to Italy, the Pyrenean Peninsula, Turkey and the products from the local glass factories voyaged on the transoceanic ships even to America.



Photo: the glass nature trail – Part 2 – Old Brunst

### SHEET AND MIRROR GLASS

Even though sheet and mirror glass is not as attractive at sight as glass cups and vases, its quality and availability influence the people's lives much more than it seems at first sight. Every single stop of the glass nature trail reminds not only of calm but even dramatic stories of the glass factories and their owners. Moreover, they also familiarize the visitors of the nature trail step by step with the forgotten glass techniques of the production of flat glass.

### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE GLASS NATURE TRAIL

The glass nature trail newly consists of two trails.

#### TRAIL 1

**LENGTH:** 15 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** +/- 366 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** from the first stop to the 11th one

**PARKING:** in the centre of the town of Železná Ruda  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by train and by bus to the centre of the town of Železná Ruda, then on foot; a part of the nature trail between Železná Ruda and Alžbětín is accessible for bicycles, prams and wheelchair users.



#### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAIL – PART 1

The starting point S1 is situated in the centre of Železná Ruda next to the motomuseum in a historical building called Zámeček/a little stately home. The trail goes on along Sklářská Street to the bridge across the Řezná – Board 2 (S2) and then to the left behind the railway towards the cemetery, behind which a beautiful tree avenue (S3) follows to the place where the Debrník stately home (S4) used to stand. The trail continues down from here to Ferdinand's Valley (S5) and then back to Debrník. The trail leads farther down towards Alžbětín. Behind the board (S6) you will go under the viaduct and the way will lead you along the cycle track to the former customs house in Alžbětín (S7) and from here it goes on up stream of the Svarožná (S8 – S11). The trail leads here at first through a magnificent avenue that resembles a former settlement. Then it goes on through the forest and across the bridge over the Svarožná, it gradually turns back past the former 2nd company BG Svarožná and an erstwhile Rendl's Courtyard to Železná Ruda to the turn-off at the Adolf Kašpar memorial, which it passes, and after that past the Železná Ruda ash tree back to Železná Ruda.



Photo: Glass Nature Trail, Part 1 – a replica of a glass furnace

#### TRAIL 2

**LENGTH:** 17.5 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** +316/-318 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** 5 (from the 12th to the 16th stops)

**PARKING:** P2 at the railway station Špičák (P paid)  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by train (the railway station Špičák) and by bus (the bus stop Železná Ruda, Špičák, railway station crossroads 0.5) to the village of Špičák, then on foot.

#### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAIL – PART 2:

The trails begins at the railway station Špičák, parallel to the yellow signage, in the direction of the south and Železná Ruda. Afterwards it turns left together with the nature trail The History of the Village of Špičák, past a former George's Courtyard (Girglof) and its partly renovated chapel. Near the cottage Bumbálka there is Board S12. Then the route returns to the village of Špičák to Čertův Mlýn/Devil's Mill and afterwards onto the main road which it crosses and it rises up steeply and crosswisely to the left. After climbing you are rewarded with gorgeous views of the Royal Forest and Gr. Arber. The way goes up to the Belveder way leading to Hofmanky and afterwards onto the crossroads Hofmanky and continues to the right to New Brunst (S13), where a settlement with 18 buildings, including glassworks, used to stand. The way goes on farther to Gerlova Huť/ Gerl's Glassworks, where glassworks also used to stand. The way intersects the main road and it carries on to the parking lot Gerlova Huť, where Stop S14 is. The trail comes back to Železná Ruda, parallel to the green tourist signage. After about 2.7 km Stop S15 follows and after ca. 300 m the trail turns left to Pamferova Huť/Pamfer's Glassworks, where the last board S16 is situated by the petrol station. From here the trail returns ca. 250 m to the forest and then it turns right towards Železná Ruda and along the main road, to which it comes closer gradually and at the turn-off to Chata Ořovský/Ořovský Cottage it crosses it and carries on past the mentioned cottage to the centre of Železná Ruda over the slopes and along Lyžařská Street.



Route: The Glass Nature Trail, Part 2

## THE SECRET DEFENCE OF THE IRON CURTAIN

The end of the Second World War also brought a gradual division of Europe into two blocks. Czechoslovakia, put in the sphere of the Soviet influence, unfortunately ended up on the very line of two absolutely different ideologies, between those the cold war burst out not a long time after the defeat of Germany and the infamous Iron Curtain grew up. The threat of outbreak of the Third World War, additionally intensified with the war conflicts in Korea and Vietnam, made the two blocks to supplying with arms and intimidating by nuclear weapons. Even the Czechoslovak Army got ready for that expected encounter. The part of those preparations was a top secret building of bunkers and pillboxes in the system of the so-called field defence. Between 1953 and 1990 thousands of ingeniously hidden bunkers had been built in the west border area that should have helped us stop the attack of our enemies and subsequently enable a subsequent transmission of conflicts onto the territory of our enemies. Until recently (until uncovering all those bunkers and pillboxes) hardly anybody had had an idea that there were some military devices hidden under small natural elevations on meadows or in forests that used to be crossed over.

### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAIL THE SECRET DEFENCE OF THE IRON CURTAIN

This trail consists of two routes – Belveder and Debrník.

#### THE BELVEDER ROUTE

The one-way route offers its visitors the basic types of six post-war bunkers and pillboxes open to public that were built in the zone of the in advance built defence for the army units. Until recently they had been secret fortification objects. The entrance into all these objects open to public is at your own risk only.



Photo: The Belveder Route – the entrance into the bunker/pillbox



Route: The Belveder Route

**LENGTH:** 2.5 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** +/- 94 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** 8

**PARKING:** in the centre of Železná Ruda  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by train and by bus to the centre of Železná Ruda, afterwards on foot only.

#### SIGNAGE:



#### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE BELVEDER ROUTE

The starting point is located in the centre of Železná Ruda next to the motomuseum in the historical stately home Zámeček. The route goes on up along Belvederská Street parallel to the blue tourist sign. After ca. 250m the route turns onto the cross way and together with it it crosses the way to Belveder. In that place there are even two fortification objects, one 50 m on the left – B1, the other one 50 m on the right side – B2. The route carries on along the cross way and after ca. 200 m, behind Stop 8 of the cross way it turns left along the path to B3 and right after that to B4. Then the way continues over the slope Nad nádražím/Above the Railway Station and it turns back along the forest down to B5 and afterwards ca. 100 m to the right to the forest to B6. Then the path turns back over the sports grounds Nad nádražím to B7 where the own signage finishes. It is possible to set out for the centre of Železná Ruda down under the viaduct and to the left along 1. máje Street to the starting point. The whole walking tour is 2.5 km long.

#### THE DEBRNÍK ROUTE

This two-way route leads its visitors into the former banner border area, to 1989 for common citizens absolutely inaccessible. The trail offers a tour of several fortification objects (two fire ones) and it acquaints its visitors with the forms of anti-tank and anti-personnel obstacles used in the system of post-war fortification. It also gives an idea of forms and functions of devices and buildings used by the Border Guard for border guarding.

**LENGTH:** 4.5 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** +62/- 119 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** 12

**PARKING:** in the centre of Železná Ruda or by the former customs house in Alžbětín (now Free One Shop)  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by train and by bus to the centre of Železná Ruda (or in the opposite direction to Alžbětín), after that on foot, by bicycle, with prams



The Route: Debrník

## THE HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE OF ŠPIČÁK

On 16 boards you can find the information about the history of the village of Špičák that had been a self-governing village Dorf Eisenstein, with its own municipal authority and its own post office, until 1945. After 1949 the village was renamed and as Špičák it became a part of Železná Ruda. The first mentions about the village are dated back to 1569 in connection with iron ore mining. Besides iron ore mining and later glass making those people, like everywhere else in the Šumava Mountains, worked especially in forests during wood processing, gaining resin, wood coal and potash. Even though there were not very suitable conditions for agriculture in Špičák, agricultural homesteads started to come in existence there.

and also for wheelchair users. It leads along paved ways.

### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE DEBRNÍK ROUTE

The starting point is situated in the centre of Železná Ruda by the motomuseum in the former building of the stately home Zámeček. The route goes on together with the Glass Nature Trail along Sklářská Street to the bridge over the Řezná, then to the left behind the railway towards the cemetery, behind which a beautiful tree avenue follows (Boards D1-D3) to the place where the stately home Debrník used to stand (D4). From here the trail carries on ca. 400 m into Ferdinand's Valley (D5 – D7), and then back to Debrník. Then the route leads farther down towards Alžbětín (D8-D9) under the viaduct and over the Řezná. Then it turns left onto the cycle track (D10 and D11) and it continues along to the former customs house in Alžbětín D12.



Route: The History of the Village of Špičák

### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE TRAIL THE HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE OF ŠPIČÁK

The nature trail boards will give you information about original homesteads and their inhabitants, the realization of the Špičák tunnel and the railway. About the birth of tourism and father Prokop, the first hotelier in the Šumava Mountains, but also about skiers and Arno Juránek, a pioneer of skiing in the Šumava Mountains and a founder of Juránek's Cottage on Svaroh. About founding the Mountain Rescue Service in the Šumava Mountains, about the first cableway and chairlift in the Šumava Mountains, about interesting history of the largest ski site of the Šumava Mountains in Špičák, about a frontier zone that became a sad guide of modern history.

**LENGTH:** 6.8 km  
**VERTICAL DISTANCE:** +/- 214 m  
**NUMBER OF STOPS:** 16

**PARKING:** P3 Kaskády/Cascades in the village of Špičák (P for free)  
**ACCESSIBILITY:** by train (the railway station Špičák) and by bus (the bus stop Železná Ruda, Špičák, railway station, crossroads, 0.5) to the village of Špičák, then on foot.



Photo: The History of the Village of Špičák – the Špičák railway station