Caves in Slovakia

► Caves are real natural gems. Some Slovakia caves are interesting by their rich and unique decoration, others by archaeological excavations. You will be awed by geomorphologic cave structures: stalactites, stalagmites, tufa cascades and curtains, pillars, mounds, pea like and lake formations or soft tufa and eccentric formations.

► Slovakia is extremely rich in caves. 5,450 is the total number of our known caves in Slovakia, but new caves are being discovered constantly. Most of them are situated in Slovak Karst, Low Tatras and Spis – Gemer Karst (Slovak Paradise and Muran Plain), Great Fatra, Western, Eastern and Belianske Tatras. There is no other such concentration of caves with so high representative value located in the karst region of the mild climate zone as in Slovakia.
12 Slovak caves opened to public

* Belianska Cave
* Bystrianska Cave
* Demänovská Cave of Liberty
* Demänovská Ice Cave
* Dobšinská Ice Cave
* Domica
* Driny
* Gombasecká Cave
* Harmanecká Cave
* Jasovská Cave
* Ochtinská Aragonite Cave
* Važecká Cave
Belianska cave is located in an attractive environment of the Tatra National Park.

- The cave length is 3,640 m with elevation range of 160 m. The entrance parts, accessible through thirled tunnel, contain chimney spaces opening into them and leading from the upper original entrance situated 82 m above the present one.
Belianska cave was open for public through the original entrance as early as in 1882. Electrically lit is the cave from 1896.
**Bystrianska cave** is located on the southern edge of the Bystrá village, between Podbrezová and Mýto pod Ďumbierom.

The cave was formed by tectonical and erosional processes and modelled by underground stream, which flows at present through the spaces 15 to 20 m under the show path. You can see three abysses with the depth of 20 m during the visit. The cave is interesting by diversity of the underground spaces along the tourist path.
Bystrianska cave has been opened for public in today’s shape since 1968 in length of 490 m. The Lower Guerilla Hall has been used for speleotherapy since 1971.
Demänovská Cave of Liberty contains Virgin Passage, Passage of Suffering, The Red Gallery, Magical Passage and Violet Dome, Svantovít’s Halls and Miraculous Halls.

Demanska cave of liberty is the most beautiful karst cave in Slovakia. It is located in Low Tatras in Demanska valley, close to Liptovsky Mikulas city. The cave length is 8,400 meters, and the pathway of long tour is 2,150 m long and the short tour is 1,145 m long. The longer route of Demanska Cave of Libery takes about 1 hour and 40 minutes, the smaller route takes about 1 hour. The Demanska Cave of Liberty is unique with variety of stalactite formations, lakes, waterfalls and Demanovka River. This Slovakia cave has been open for public since 1924. Entrance is at the altitude of 870 m accessible from a car park located just in front of the cave. Tourist signs will take you directly to the car park. Temperature in the cave is only around 6 degrees, so do not forget some warm clothes.
Demänovská Ice Cave

The first written mention about this cave is related to the description of a cave not far from Liptovský Mikuláš and comes from 1672 by J. P. Hain who was interested in cave bear bones and took them for dragon’s bones.
Demänovská Ice Cave entrance is located in the cliff Bašta on the northern side of the Low Tatras Mts., only two kilometers northerly from the Demänovská Cave of Liberty. Ice fill has been formed in the cave for the last 500 years and in combination with calcite decoration the cave offers a very interesting tour.

- The show path is 650 m long with vertical span of 48 m. The entrance and exit are at the same elevation, only 40 m away one from the other. The stay in cave lasts about 45 min. The temperature during summer months fluctuates between +0.4°C and +3°C.
- The show path goes through mighty river passages interconnected by steep sections. The first part of the tour leads through cave spaces with flowstone decoration and the second part is in the iced spaces of the cave.
- The combination of flowstone and ice decoration offers a very interesting tour for visitors, where they can learn on forming cave spaces, cave decoration and conditions for glaciation and also on the influence of ice on original calcite fill. The cave spaces consist of oval, river modelled passages and domes reshaped by collapses and frost weathering.
Dobšinská Ice Cave
Dobšinská Ice Cave is situated between Poprad and Rožňava towns, just a few kilometres from village Dobšiná, the area between Slovak Paradise and Spišskogemerský kras.

- Dobšinská Ice Cave is 1483 m long. A curiosity of the cave is the instant ice filling that occurs in the form of ground ice, waterfalls, columns and ice stalagmites. Dobšinská Ice Cave belongs to one of the world most important ice caves and is included in the world national heritage of Slovakia. Temperature in the ice chamber is around -4 to 0 degrees Celsius, other parts 3, 5 degrees, so do not forget to take warm clothes. Dobsinska Ice Cave is home of 12 bat species. It is one of the first caves with electric illumination. The pathway of this Slovakia cave is 515 m long and takes 30 minutes.
Domica Cave together with the Hungarian Baradla Cave make a unique cave complex lying in two states - Slovakia and Hungary. Except the boat ride on the Styx River, which is very attractive, the visitors can admire plentiful flowstone forms with outstanding Roman Spa in Majkov Dome. The cave is also a significant archaeological finding place, since the prehistoric man lived here 5-6 thousand years ago in the Early Stone Age - Neolithic. Various stone and bone artefacts were found during archeological discoveries and you can see some of them in the entrance part of the building.
Driny Cave is the only show cave in the Western Slovakia. It is located in the Smolenice Karst in the Lesser Carpathians Mountains, south-westerly from Smolenice, in the Trnava district.
The Gombasecká Cave and Silická Ice Cave are a part of the Silica-Gombasek underground hydrological system.

- The Gombasecká Cave represents a fluviokarst outlet cave, which is 1,525 m long. The two floors consist of oval, river modeled as well as fissure passages, which are in places widened by collapses into domes and halls. The upper floor is situated 5 to 10 above the active riverbed of the Black Brook, which flows in the lower parts of the cave. The Dry Passage, located on the upper floor, was formed by waters of unknown origin, which intermittently rise through the 10 m deep well in the Marble Hall also at present.
The Harmanecka Cave is situated in the Harmanecka valley. The access point is from the road from Banska Bystrica to Ružomberok turning towards Harmanec.

The overall length of the Harmanecka Cave is 2,763 m long. Because of rich occurrence of white soft sinter the Harmanecka Cave is also known as White Cave. Inside the Slovakia cave you will find also waterfalls, sinter pools and stalagmites. The Harmanecka Cave shelters different species of bats. The pathway is 1,020 m long and takes 60 minutes. Average temperature inside the cave is 6 degrees Celsius.
Jasovská Cave is located in the Medzev Upland in the western part of the Košice Basin, in eastern Slovakia.

It is passed on that the cave (its upper parts) was discovered by a monk from the Premonstrate Order located in Jasov. The first mentions on the Order existence are bound with the 12th century. People from village and monastery used the cave as a shelter. Many old inscriptions and drawings on cave walls were preserved. The inscription from 1452 records the victory of Jan Jiskra’s from Brandýs soldiers. The year 1576 in the Bats Dome witnesses that some bottom parts of the cave had been known already in the 16th century. Fading away of the Turkish expansion can be connected with finding of the Turkish dagger with a tooled ornament. The cave was opened to the public in 1846 by then Canonic Premonstrate Order superior A. Richter.
Ochtinská Aragonite Cave is a specific phenomenon also from the world caves perspective, which attracts every visitor by its variability, wealth and beauty of aragonite fill.

Three generations of aragonite were determined in the cave. It is formed from water solutions with high content of Mg-, Fe- and Mn-ions under conditions of stable microclimate. The oldest are milky translucent kidney-shaped formation and their corroded relics (dated age of 121-138 thousand years) with partially recrystalized aragonite, in places metamorphosed to calcite. The second generation of aragonite prevails and occurs mostly in the form of several cm long needles and spiral helictites (dated age of 14 thousand years). These form cluster or dendritic formations (including so called cave flower or anthodite), which are most attractive for visitors. Aragonite of the second generation is still growing, by which it maintains the white colour and clean appearance. The youngest, contemporary generation of aragonite forms tiny fans with diameter of 2-4 mm (sometimes even more), sporadically creating miniature helictites with length not overlapping 40 mm.
Važecká Cave

is located between Liptovský Mikuláš and Poprad.
In terms of the act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no. 543/2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection, every cave in Slovakia represents a natural monument. The 12 show caves have an important place among the educational localities. They represent important geomorphological phenomena with rich and special flowstone, aragonite or ice fill, moreover some of them are significant archaeological and cultural localities. Since they are the most attacked caves by man, they require a special protection. Their sustainable use resides in observation of visitors’ influence on natural environment of caves, including its regulation. All show caves are designated national nature monuments.

The Ochtinská Aragonite Cave, Domica Cave, Gombasecká Cave and Jasovská Cave are inscribed on the World Natural Heritage List since 1995 within the „Caves of the Slovak and Aggtelek Karst“ site, which was extended by the Dobšinská Ice Cave in November 2000. The protection and operation of show caves in the Slovak Republic is carried out by the Slovak Caves Administration in Liptovský Mikuláš, as a specialized organization of nature protection under the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic.