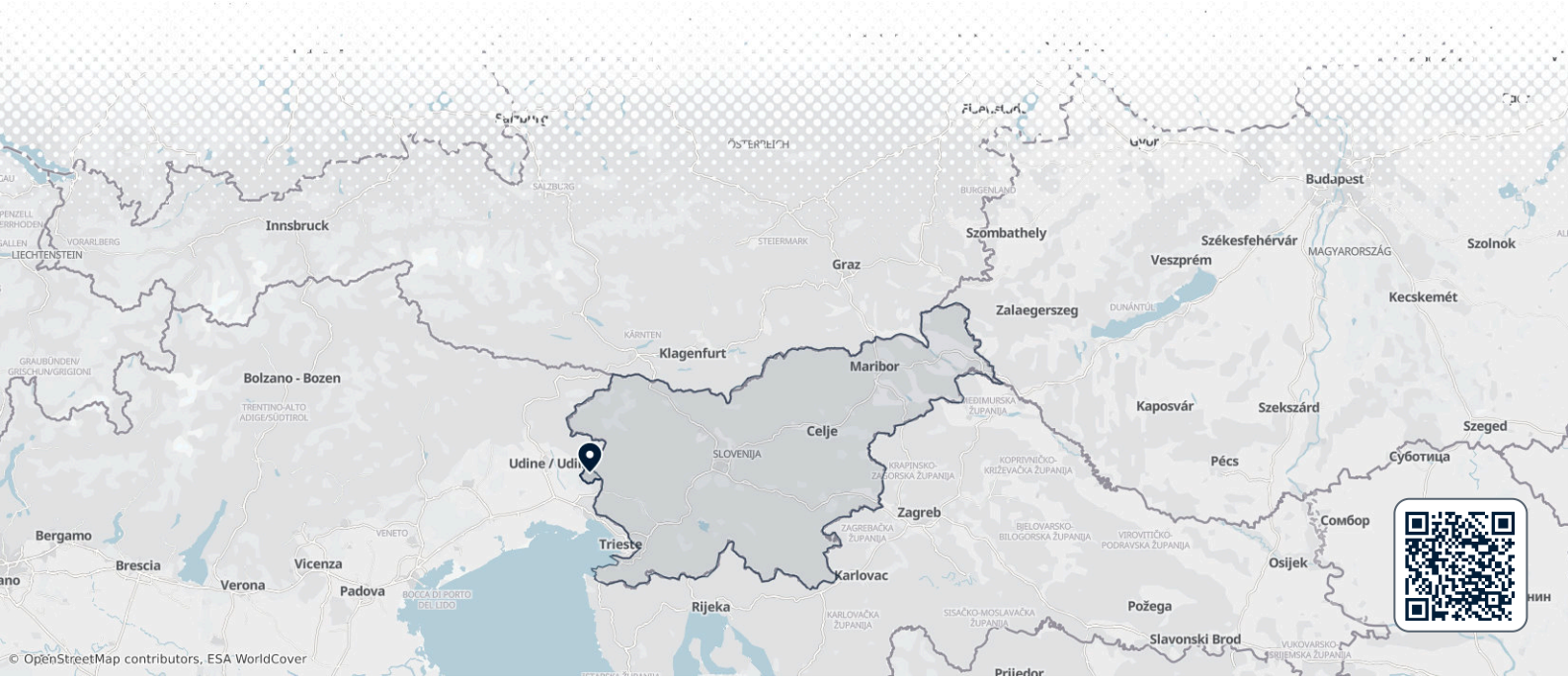


Brda

Nova Gorica · Slovenia

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Goriška Brda, usually just called Brda, is a small hilly wine region in the far west of Slovenia, on the border with Italy. Steep vineyard terraces, cherry and olive orchards, and small stone villages on hilltops cover the slopes between the Alps and the Adriatic. Across the border, the same hills continue as the Collio wine region in Italy.

Brda suits a slow trip of a few days built around wine, food and short drives or bike rides between villages. Families run most of the wineries, and many welcome visitors for tastings. The local white grape, **rebula**, is the region's signature wine. The poet *Alojz Gradnik*, one of the greatest Slovenian poets of the 20th century, was born in the village of Medana.

When to visit

Late spring and early autumn are the best times to visit. May and June bring blossoms and the cherry harvest, and September and October bring the grape harvest and autumn colours. July and August are hot, with afternoon storms. Winter is quiet, and some wineries open only by appointment.

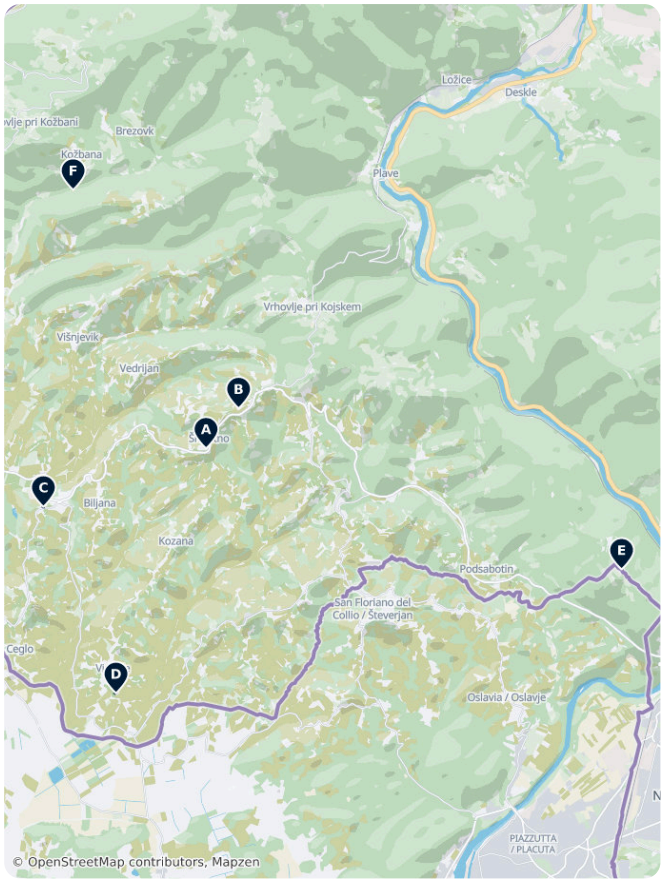
The biggest event is the **Cherry Festival** in early June, with market stalls, local food, music and plenty of fresh cherries in the Brda villages. Wine lovers can also time a visit for the Open Wine Cellar Days in mid-June, when dozens of wineries open their doors.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	5° / 11° Feels like 2°	-1° / -8°	Dry air · Calm winds
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	7° / 13° Feels like 4°	0° / -8°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Good Good for cycling	12° / 18°	3° / -3°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for cycling	16° / 22°	7° / 1°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Good Good for sightseeing	21° / 26°	11° / 7°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 31°	16° / 10°	14 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	28° / 34°	17° / 13°	14 rainy days · Humid air · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	28° / 35°	17° / 13°	13 rainy days · Humid air · Calm winds
September	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 29°	13° / 8°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for cycling	18° / 23°	9° / 3°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for cycling	11° / 17°	5° / -2°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 11° Feels like 3°	1° / -7°	Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: June, September

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights



Šmartno is a fortified village on a hilltop in the middle of Brda, surrounded by stone walls and defensive towers. In the 16th century, it was turned into a border fortress during the wars between Venice and the Habsburgs. Inside the walls are narrow lanes, a tourist information centre and the large Baroque Church of St Martin, whose bell tower was once a fortress tower.

A Briška Hiša is a small ethnological museum in Šmartno. Furnished rooms, a granary and a traditional wine cellar show how families in Brda once lived. Entry is free.

B Gonjače Lookout Tower is a 23 m tower on a hill above the village of Gonjače, built in 1961 as a memorial to 315 victims of the Second World War. Climb its 144 steps for the best view in Brda. On clear days you can see the Julian Alps, the Friulian plain and the Gulf of Trieste. Entry is free and it is open all year.

C Dobrovo Castle is a Renaissance manor with corner towers in Dobrovo, the main village of Brda. Vineyards surround it, and its cellar holds the regional wine shop. The interior is not regularly open to visitors, so check in advance.

D Vipolže Manor is a restored Renaissance villa in the village of Vipolže, once a hunting lodge of the Counts of Gorizia. Old cypress trees stand in front of it. Today it hosts exhibitions, wine festivals and events, and has a restaurant with a vaulted wine cellar.

E Sabotin is a long ridge on the eastern edge of Brda, high above Gorizia and the Soča river. It was a key position on the Isonzo Front in the First World War, and the trenches and caverns of that time are still visible. The Sabotin Peace Park has a museum and a viewpoint, open at weekends and on public holidays.

F Krčnik is a protected gorge in the northern part of Brda, near the village of Kožbana. A short walk leads to rock pools and a natural stone

bridge. It is a popular place to cool down on hot summer days.

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What to experience

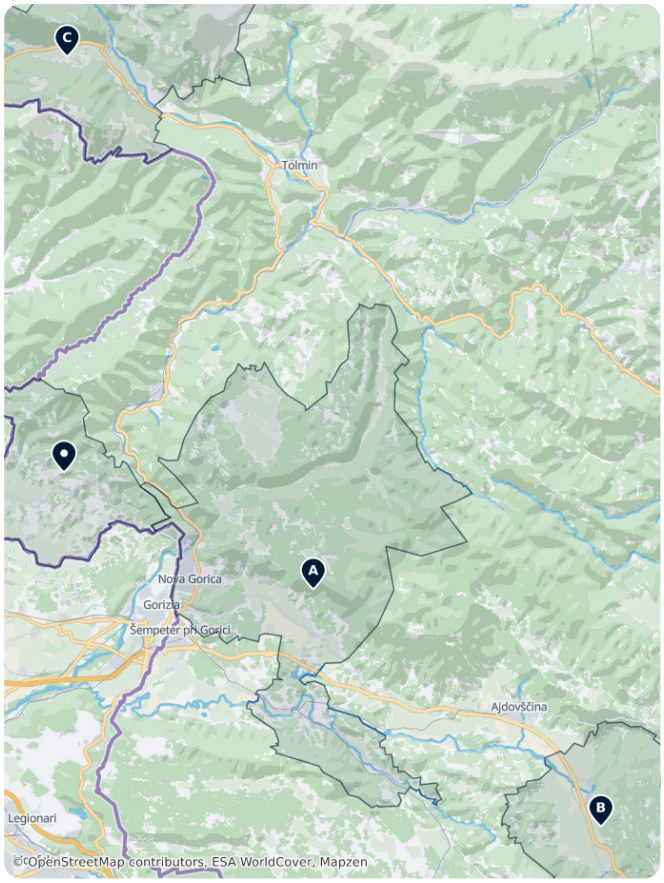
In Brda, a visit is about tasting, walking and eating with the seasons.

- **Taste rebula at a family winery**: Many small wineries offer tastings in their cellars, often with views over the vineyards. Call or book ahead, especially outside summer. The large Klet Brda cooperative in Dobrovo also runs cellar tours and tastings.
- **Join the Open Wine Cellar Days**: In mid-June, dozens of wineries open their cellars to visitors on the same weekend.
- **Pick cherries in early summer**: Brda is famous for its cherries. In late May and June, buy them at farms and roadside stands, or visit during the Cherry Festival.
- **Cycle the vineyard roads**: Rent an e-bike and ride the quiet roads between hilltop villages, stopping for wine and views.
- **Walk the First World War paths on Sabotin**: Follow the trails along the ridge past trenches and caverns, with views over the Soča and Gorizia.
- **Watch the sunset from a hilltop**: Climb Gonjače Lookout Tower in the evening for long views towards the Alps and the sea.
- **Visit a wine festival at Vipolže**: In spring and autumn, Vipolže Manor hosts wine festivals with more than 50 wineries from Brda, the Italian Collio and beyond.

Day trips

Brda sits close to the Italian border, the Soča valley and the Vipava valley, so many day trips are short.

- **Gorizia, Italy** — ≈20 min by car. A historic town with a castle on a hill and a pleasant old centre, right on the border.
- A Nova Gorica — ≈20 min by car. Slovenia's border town, with the Franciscan monastery of Kostanjevica and the large stone railway bridge over the Soča at Solkan.
- **Cividale del Friuli, Italy** — ≈30 min by car. A small town with Lombard monuments on the UNESCO World Heritage List and a medieval bridge over a deep river gorge.
- B Vipava — ≈45 min by car. The centre of the Vipava valley, another wine region with springs in the middle of town and hilltop villages around it.
- **Aquileia, Italy** — ≈1 h by car. A former Roman city with a basilica and large early Christian floor mosaics, on the UNESCO list.
- C Kobarid — ≈1 h by car up the Soča valley. First World War history, the Kozjak waterfall and the clear, green Soča river.



Where to explore

Brda belongs to the wider Gorizia area. The nearest town is Nova Gorica, the main base for shops, trains and services.

For more wine country, continue east to Vipava in the Vipava valley, or southeast to the Karst plateau around Komen, known for teran wine and cured ham. To the north, the Soča valley leads to Kobarid and the Julian Alps.

Getting there

- **By air**: Trieste Airport in Italy is the closest, about 45 minutes by car. Ljubljana Jože Pučnik Airport is about 1.5 hours away and Venice Marco Polo Airport about 2 hours. There is no direct public transport from the airports to Brda, so most visitors rent a car.
- **By train**: The nearest stations are in Nova Gorica, on the Slovenian Bohinj railway, and in Gorizia on the Italian side, with trains to Udine and Trieste and connections to Venice. Both are about 20 minutes by car from Brda. Slovenian Railways
- **By bus**: Long-distance buses connect Ljubljana with Nova Gorica several times a day. From there, local buses to Dobrovo and other villages in Brda are infrequent. Arriva bus timetables

Getting around

- **By car**: The most practical way to move between villages, wineries and viewpoints. Roads are narrow and winding but in good condition.
- **Buses**: A few local buses link the main villages with Nova Gorica, but services are infrequent and not practical for visiting wineries.
- **By bike**: Brda is popular for road cycling and e-bike tours, with marked routes through the vineyards. The hills are steep, so many visitors rent an e-bike.
- **On foot**: Villages such as Šmartno are small and easy to walk. Marked walking trails link villages, vineyards and viewpoints, but distances between sights are too long to do everything on foot.
- **Tourist information**: The information centre in Šmartno has maps, trail guides and winery lists. Brda tourist board

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Low

Villages are small and walkable, but sights and wineries are spread across steep hills; a car or e-bike is needed.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Popular for road cycling and e-bikes on quiet vineyard roads, but the hills are steep.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Yes. Wineries, villages and viewpoints are spread out, and public transport is very limited. Plan a designated driver for tasting days.
- **Parking**: Free parking is easy to find in most villages and at wineries. In Šmartno, park outside the walls and walk in.
- **Roads**: Roads are narrow, winding and sometimes steep, with tractors during the harvest. Some routes cross into Italy and back several times, so carry your passport or ID card.

Food & drink

Brda is above all a wine region. **Rebula** is the local white grape, made both as a fresh white wine and as an amber "orange" wine, which is left on the grape skins for days or weeks. Many local winemakers are known for this style. Brda also grows cherries, figs and peaches, and produces olive oil. Restaurants and farm stays cook seasonal dishes with local produce, game and home-made pasta.

The best places to eat and drink are in and around Šmartno, with several restaurants and a wine shop inside the walls, and in Dobrovo, where the regional wine shop in the castle cellar stocks wines from many Brda producers. For a relaxed meal, look for family farm stays (turistične kmetije) in the villages, which serve their own wine and food.

What to eat & drink

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Potica · potica
A rolled nut cake, traditionally served at holidays.

Kremna rezina · kremna rezina
A vanilla and whipped-cream custard slice, associated with Bled.

DRINKS

Slovenian wine
Wine from the Vipava Valley, Štajerska, and Primorska regions.

SIGNATURE DISHES

Štruklji · štruklji
Rolled dumplings, sweet or savory, boiled or baked.

Kranjska klobasa · kranjska klobasa
A protected (PGI) pork sausage, usually boiled and served with mustard and horseradish.

Jota · jota
A hearty stew of beans, sauerkraut or turnip, and smoked meat.

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Safety & health

Brda is very safe, and crime against visitors is rare. Tap water is safe to drink.

- **Roads**: The biggest risk is driving on narrow, winding roads, especially after wine tastings. Do not drink and drive.
- **Summer heat**: July and August can be hot. Carry water when walking or cycling between villages, and avoid the steepest climbs at midday.
- **War remains**: On Sabotin and other First World War sites, stay on marked paths, do not enter unsafe caverns, and never touch old metal objects.

History

People have lived in Brda since at least Roman times. In the Middle Ages, the hills belonged to the Counts of Gorizia, who owned manors such as Vipolže Manor. Later the area was part of the Habsburg lands. In the 16th century, Venice and the Habsburgs fought over the border here, and villages such as Šmartno were turned into fortresses with walls and towers.

During the First World War, the Isonzo Front ran along the eastern edge of Brda. Austro-Hungarian and Italian armies fought for Sabotin, which guarded the approach to Gorizia, and its trenches and caverns remain today. After the war, Brda became part of Italy.

After the Second World War, the new border of 1947 divided the hills. The eastern part, Goriška Brda, went to Yugoslavia, and the western part, the Collio, stayed in Italy. Gonjače Lookout Tower remembers the local victims of that war. Today, both countries are in the EU, and small roads and wine routes cross the border in many places.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Slovenia at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



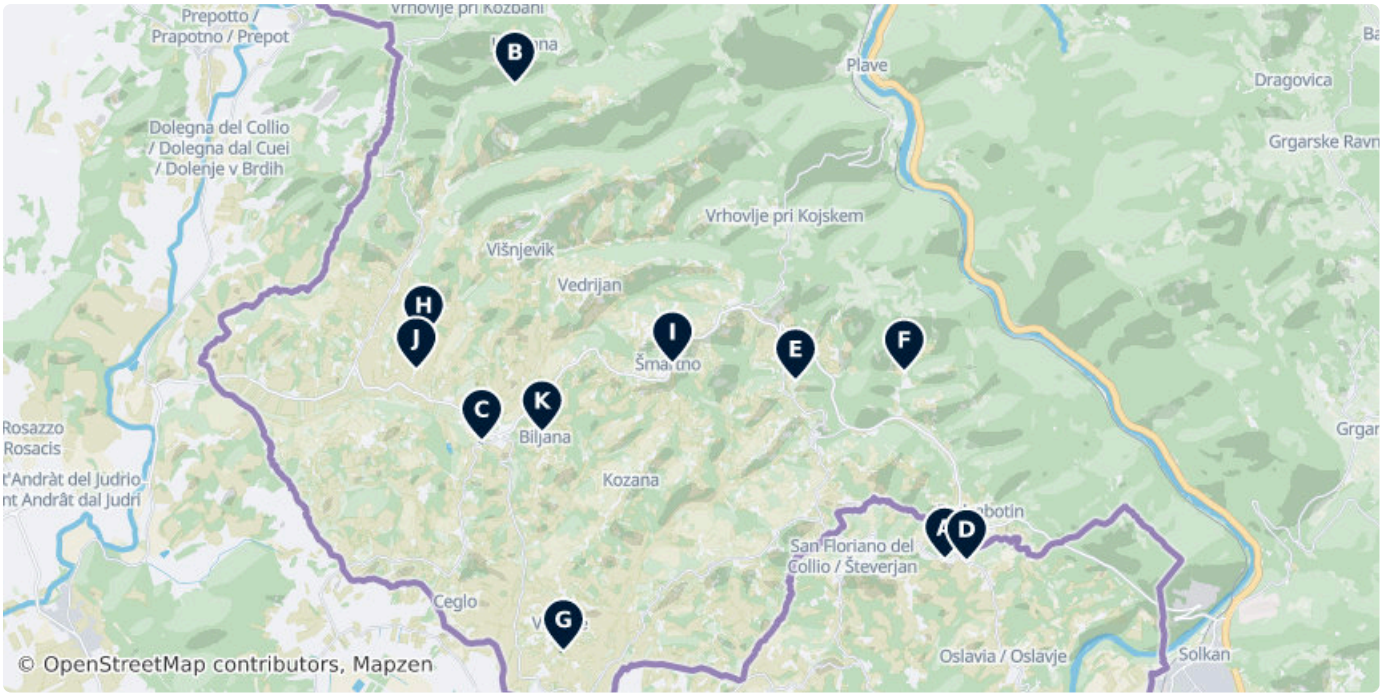
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Slovenian

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Brda Essentials

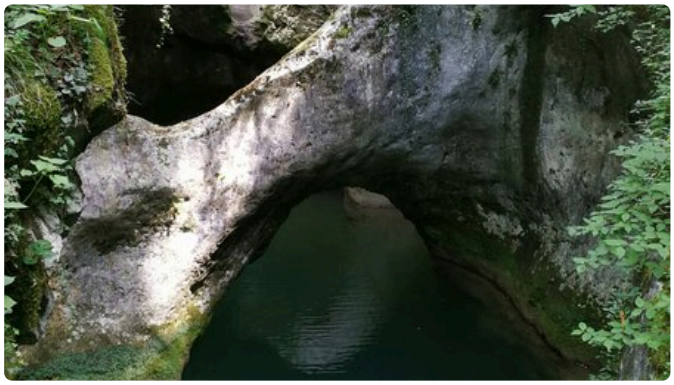
Brda, known as the Slovenian Tuscany, spans the border between Slovenia and Italy, defined by its marl soil and terraced vineyards. This selection highlights the region's viticultural heritage, featuring pioneers of skin-contact orange wines like Radikon and Gravner alongside traditional method sparkling wine producers like Bjana. Architectural landmarks include the Renaissance-era Dobrovo Castle and Vila Vipolže, while the natural stone bridge at Krčnik showcases the area's limestone geology and the medieval village of Šmartno serves as a hub for regional gastronomy.



A Azienda Agricola Radikon

Family-run winery in Oslavia known for pioneering natural, skin-contact orange wines produced without added sulfites and aged for several years in large oak vats.

(45.98279, 13.60284)



B Krčnik

A natural stone bridge over the Kožbanjšček stream, featuring a five-meter-long arch carved by water erosion into the limestone rock.

(Unnamed Road), 5212, Slovenia (46.03898, 13.52969)



C Dobrovo Castle

A 17th-century Renaissance castle housing a permanent collection of works by Zoran Mušič and a regional wine cellar showcasing local Rebula vintages.

15 Grajska cesta, Dobrovo 5212, Slovenia
(45.99677, 13.52401)

D Azienda Agricola Joško Gravner

Renowned winery famous for fermenting white wines in Georgian terracotta amphorae buried underground, following ancient viticultural traditions.

(45.98258, 13.60657)

E Sveti Križ

Baroque church located in the medieval village of Šmartno, featuring three marble altars and a bell tower that originally served as a defensive fortification.

(Unnamed Road), 5211, Slovenia (46.00392, 13.57744)



F Štanfel

Family restaurant in Kojsko specializing in traditional Brda cuisine, utilizing seasonal local ingredients and house-produced wines.

(46.00498, 13.59593)

stanfel.si, +386 5 3046252



G Vipolže Manor

A restored 16th-century Renaissance hunting lodge and villa that now serves as a cultural center and venue for regional wine tastings.

Vila Vipolže (Grad), 5212 Vipolže, Slovenia (45.97193, 13.53790)

vilavipolze.eu



H Mavrič Jožko - Vinarstvo

Traditional family winery producing regional varietals including Rebula and Merlot from vineyards situated on the characteristic opoka marl soil.

Šlovrenc 9, 5212 Dobrovo v Brdih (46.00909, 13.51412)

+386 5 3045316

I San Martin Hotel/Restavracija/Enoteka

Boutique hotel and restaurant in Šmartno featuring a panoramic terrace and a menu focused on modern interpretations of traditional Brda dishes.

(46.00594, 13.55647)

sanmartin.si

J Domačija Kabaj Morel

Winery and homestead known for its amphora-aged wines and traditional culinary offerings, frequently recognized among the world's top wine producers.

(46.00522, 13.51287)

kabaj.si

K Bjana

Family-run estate located in the historic Dvorec Biljana, specializing exclusively in high-quality sparkling wines produced using the traditional method.

Biljana 38, 5212 Dobrovo v Brdih (45.99780, 13.53428)

bjana.si, +386 31 339 931

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