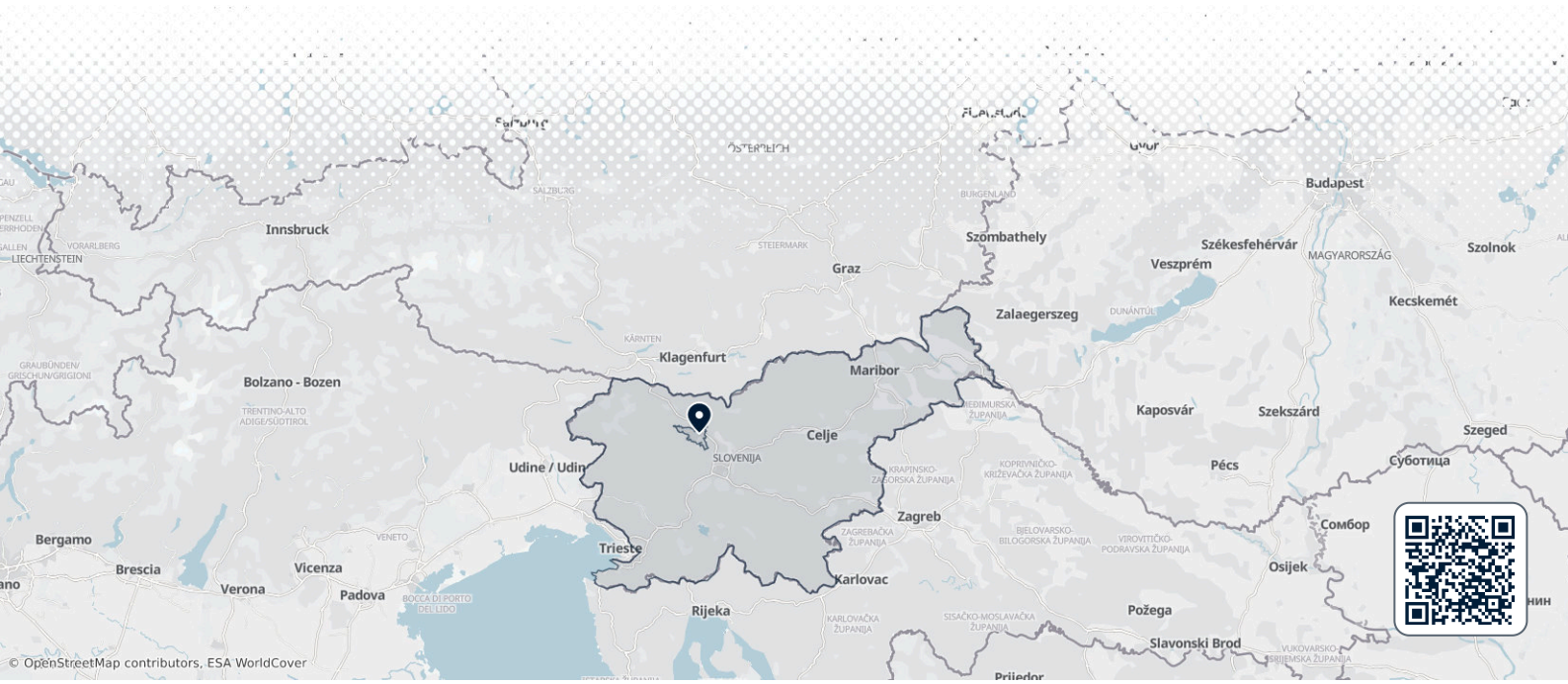


Kranj

Upper Carniola · Slovenia

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Kranj is Slovenia's fourth-largest town, about 20 km north-west of Ljubljana. Its compact old town sits on a narrow rock above the meeting point of two rivers, the Sava and the Kokra. Below the houses, the Kokra has cut a deep, green gorge right through the town. Gothic churches, a castle and old town houses line the streets above it, with the peaks of the Kamnik–Savinja Alps behind.

Kranj is best known as the town of *France Prešeren*, Slovenia's national poet, who spent his last years here and is buried in the town. The old town is small enough to see in half a day, so it works well as a stop between Ljubljana and Bled. Stay a night or two to add the WWII tunnels under the town, the Brdo Estate and easy hikes on the hills nearby. The airport is only a few kilometres away, which also makes Kranj a practical first or last night in Slovenia.

When to visit

June and September are the best months, warm enough for walks in the Kokra canyon and on the hills but not too hot. July and August are warm, with frequent afternoon thunderstorms. Winters are cold and grey, with snow on the surrounding hills.

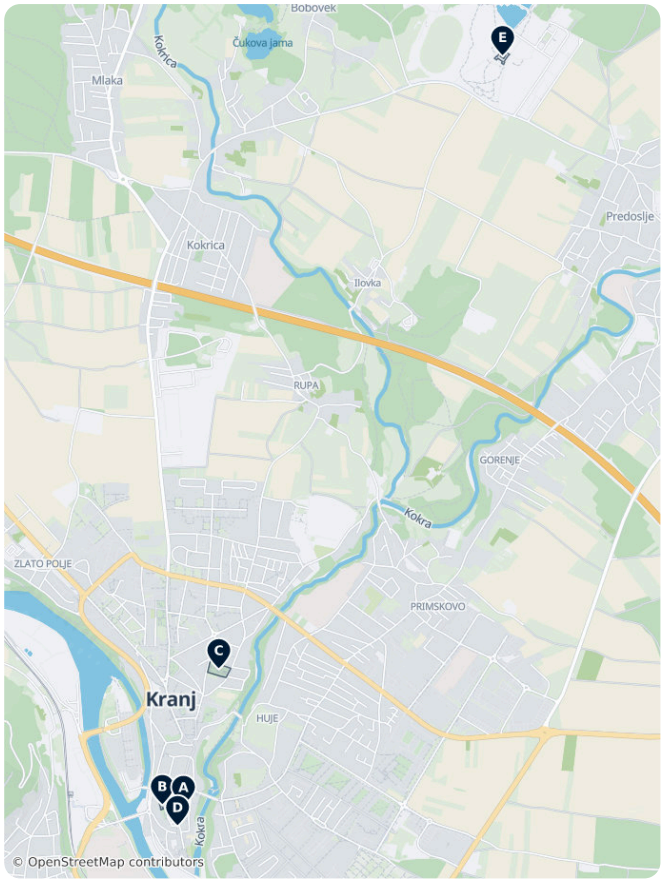
The biggest local day is the **Prešeren Fair** on 8 February, the Slovenian cultural holiday and the anniversary of the poet's death. The old town hosts a fair and cultural events. In summer, the courtyard of Khislstein Castle hosts open-air concerts and theatre.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 11° Feels like 1°	-3° / -10°	Dry air · Calm winds
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 13° Feels like 3°	-2° / -10°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Fair Fair for hiking	11° / 19° Feels like 8°	1° / -5°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for hiking	16° / 22°	5° / -1°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Good Good for sightseeing	20° / 26°	10° / 5°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 30°	14° / 9°	14 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	27° / 32°	16° / 11°	Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	27° / 34°	16° / 11°	Calm winds
September	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 28°	11° / 6°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for hiking	17° / 23°	7° / 1°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for hiking	10° / 17°	3° / -4°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	5° / 11° Feels like 2°	-1° / -9°	Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: June, September

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

Top sights



A Church of St Cantianus on the main square is one of the finest late Gothic churches in Slovenia. Inside, slender pillars hold a star-shaped vault with carved keystones and 15th-century frescoes of angels playing music. Its bell tower is open to visitors and has views of the Alps in every direction.

B Khislstein Castle stands on the western edge of the old rock, above the Sava. It was built in the 13th century on an older keep and renovated by the architect *Jože Plečnik* in 1952. It now holds exhibitions of the Gorenjska Museum, and its courtyard is the town's summer stage.

Prešeren House, on Prešernova ulica, is where the poet lived from 1846 until his death in 1849. It is now a small memorial museum, with his bedroom and law office furnished with original pieces.

C Prešeren Grove is a shady park on the site of the old town cemetery. It holds the tombstone of *France Prešeren* and the grave of the poet *Simon Jenko*.

The Kranj Tunnels are a network of about 1,300 m of tunnels dug under the old town during the Second World War as air-raid shelters. You can visit them only on a tour, which you book at the tourist office on the main square, Glavni trg. Bring a warm layer, because it is cool inside all year.

The **Kokra canyon** runs right below the old town, about 30 m deep. Paths lead down to the river, past conglomerate cliffs, an old orchard and the remains of mills.

D Plečnik Staircase, Fountain and Arcades stand beside the Rosary Church, at the southern end of the old town. From here it is a short walk to Pungert, the tip of the rock with an old defence tower and views over the canyon.

E Brdo Castle, about 10 minutes north of town by car, is a Renaissance mansion in a huge park

with ponds, woods and Lipizzaner horses. It is used by the Slovenian state for official events and summits. The park is open to visitors daily, except during state events.

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What to experience

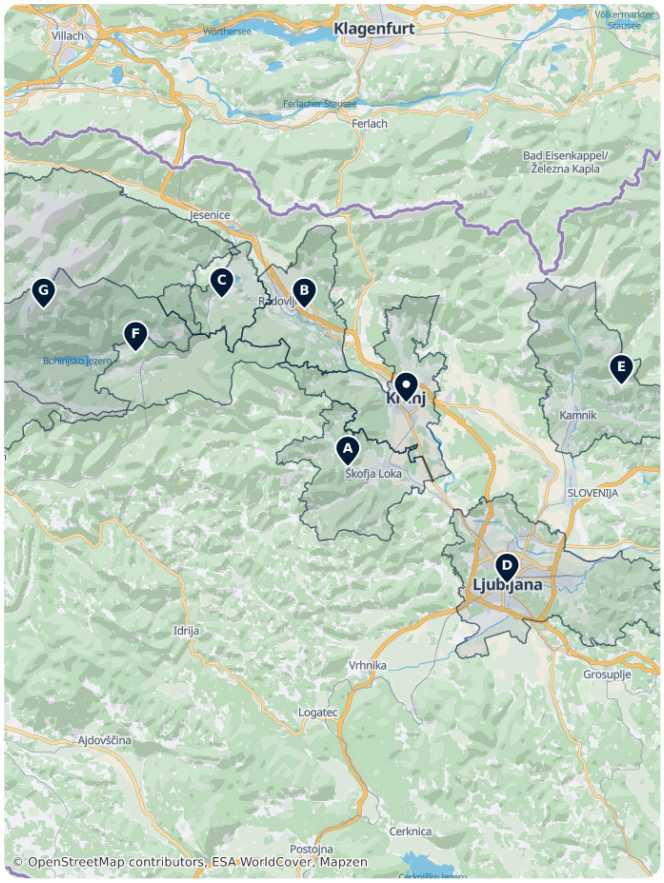
Kranj's best experiences are underground, in its gorge and on the hills that rise straight from the town.

- **Go under the old town**: Join a tour of the Kranj Tunnels, the wartime air-raid shelters cut into the rock. In late November, the tunnels host the Wine Route, when winemakers from all over Slovenia pour their wines in the passages.
- **Walk the Kokra canyon**: Take the paths down from the old town to the river. In early spring the banks are full of wild garlic, and on hot summer days locals swim in the river.
- **Climb to Sveti Jošt**: An easy marked trail of about 45 minutes leads to this hill with a pilgrimage church, a mountain hut and wide views of the Alps.
- **Watch the sunset from Šmarjetna gora**: This hill just west of town is a 30–40-minute walk from the Stražišče district. A church and a hotel with a terrace stand at the top.
- **Spend a summer evening at the castle**: In summer, concerts and theatre performances take place in the courtyard of Khislstein Castle.

Day trips

Kranj is in the middle of Upper Carniola, so the Alpine lakes, the capital and several old towns are all close.

- A Škofja Loka — about 15–20 minutes by car or bus. A well-preserved medieval town with a castle above two rivers.
- B Radovljica — about 20 minutes by car or train. A small old town on a terrace above the Sava, known for beekeeping and chocolate.
- C Bled — about 20–25 minutes by car, or a short bus ride. The famous Alpine lake with an island church and a castle on a cliff.
- D Ljubljana — about 30 minutes by car, train or bus. Slovenia's capital, with a castle above a riverside old town.
- E Kamnik — about 30 minutes by car. A small historic town at the foot of the Kamnik–Savinja Alps, and the base for the high pastures of Velika planina.
- F Bohinj — about 1 hour by car. A large, quiet lake inside G Triglav National Park, with hiking and swimming in summer.



Where to explore

Kranj is the largest town in Upper Carniola, the Alpine region of north-west Slovenia.

- **Historic towns nearby**: Škofja Loka, Radovljica and Kamnik have compact old centres and are easy to combine with Kranj.
- **Lakes and mountains**: Bled, Bohinj, Kranjska Gora and Triglav National Park are the places for Alpine scenery and hiking.

Getting there

- **By air**: Ljubljana Jože Pučnik Airport at Brnik is only about 7 km from Kranj. A taxi takes about 15 minutes.
- **By train**: Kranj station is on the main line from Ljubljana to Jesenice and Austria. Trains from Ljubljana take about 30 minutes. The station is below the old town, about a 15-minute walk uphill. Slovenian Railways
- **By bus**: Frequent buses link Kranj with Ljubljana, Bled and other towns in Upper Carniola. The main bus station is about a 10-minute walk from the old town. Arriva Slovenia
- **By car**: The A2 motorway from Ljubljana to Austria passes the town, with the exits Kranj East and Kranj West. Slovenian motorways need an e-vignette.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old town is small, and all its sights are within a 10-minute walk. Paths down into the Kokra canyon are short but steep.
- **City buses**: Arriva runs the town bus lines, including to Brdo. Tap a contactless bank card on the reader each time you board. You pay only one cheap day ticket per day, and drivers do not accept cash. Arriva Slovenia
- **Cycling**: The flat land around the town is good for cycling, but the climbs up to the old town and into the hills are steep.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town is compact and all main sights are within a short walk; the paths into the Kokra canyon and up from the railway station are steep.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The flat land around the town is easy to ride, but the climbs to the old town and into the hills are steep and some roads are busy.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Not for the town itself, which is compact and well connected by train and bus. A car is useful for Brdo, the trailheads in the hills and day trips around Upper Carniola.
- **Parking**: Parking in the old town is very limited. Use the public car parks at its edge and walk in.

Food & drink

Food in Kranj is hearty Upper Carniolan cooking: Carniolan sausage (kranjska klobasa), buckwheat dishes, štruklji dumplings and trout. In the villages around the town, traditional inns (gostilna) and tourist farms serve home-made meals.

For eating in town, go to the old town, especially the main square, Glavni trg, and the streets around it, where cafés and restaurants fill the old houses. In May, the Fine Cuisine in and around Kranj festival brings special menus to local restaurants.

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

Kranj is a very safe town, and crime against visitors is rare. Normal care with belongings is enough.

The main risks are outdoors. The paths into the Kokra canyon are steep and can be slippery after rain. If you swim in the rivers, watch for cold water and currents. Summer afternoons often bring thunderstorms, so start hikes early. Tap water is safe to drink.

History

People have lived on the rock above the Sava and the Kokra since prehistoric times. The Romans had a settlement here called Carnium. In the 6th century a large Germanic and later Lombard settlement stood on the site, and Slavs settled the area afterwards.

In the Middle Ages, Kranj was an important seat in Carniola, and it was first called a town in 1256. In the same year the Counts of Ortenburg built Khislstein Castle to guard the river crossing. In the 15th century the town built Church of St Cantianus and strong walls, and parts of the walls still stand at Pungert.

The poet *France Prešeren* moved to Kranj in 1846 to work as a lawyer and died here in 1849. He is buried in Prešeren Grove. In the 20th century, Kranj became a major textile town. During the Second World War, under German occupation, the tunnels under the old town were dug as shelters, and today you can visit them.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Slovenia at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

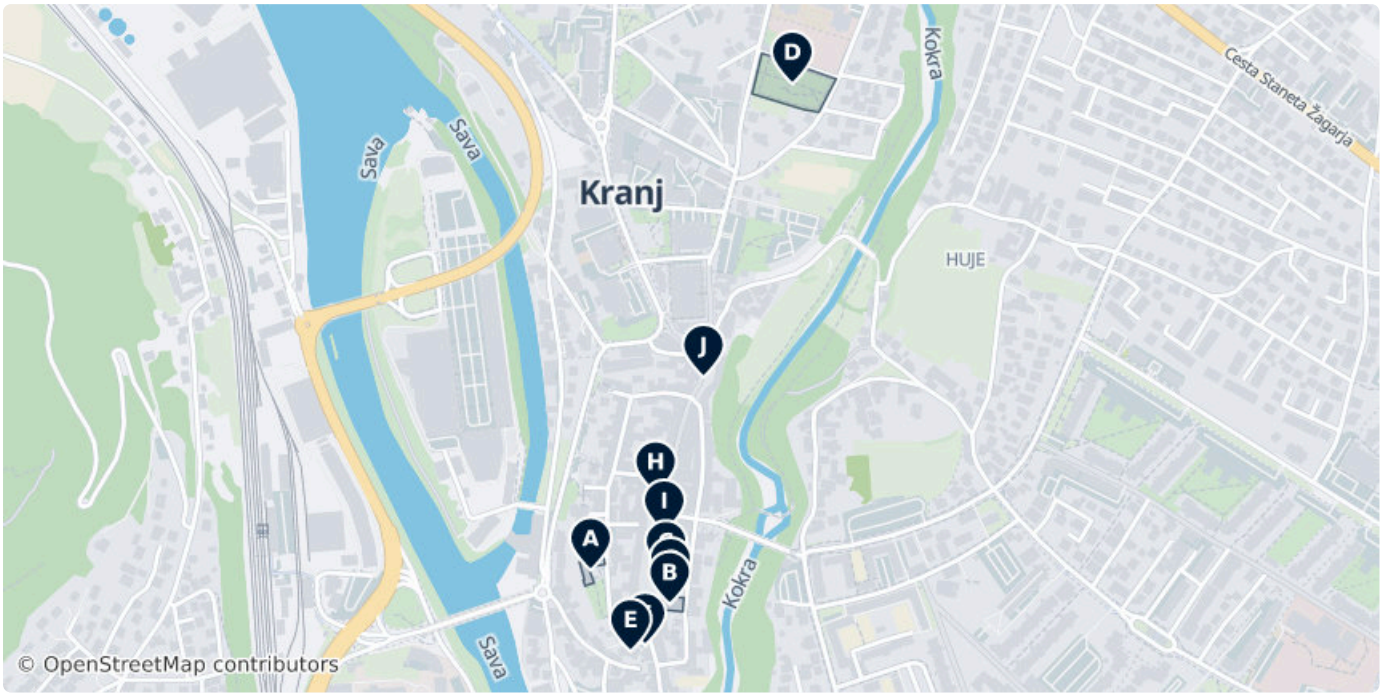
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230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Slovenian

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Kranj Essentials

Perched on a 30-meter high conglomerate rock above the Kokra River canyon, Kranj's historical center showcases a blend of medieval and modern Slovenian culture. This selection highlights the city's architectural evolution, from the 13th-century Castle Khislstein and Gothic Parish Church of St. Cantius to the monumental 20th-century stairs and arcades designed by Jože Plečnik. The sites also honor national poet France Prešeren, including his memorial and the theater bearing his name, alongside the Gorenjska Museum and the remnants of the town's medieval defenses.





A Castle Khislstein

Kieselstein Castle, also known as Khislstein, is a 13th-century castle in the city of Kranj, in the Upper Carniola region of Slovenia.

Tomšičeva ulica 44, 4000 Kranj, Slovenia (46.23844, 14.35436)

Mo	Closed
Tu–Su	10:00–18:00

gorenjski-muzej.si, +386 4 201 39 50



B Prešeren Theater

A professional theater named after Slovenia's national poet, featuring a distinctive facade and hosting the annual Week of Slovenian Drama.

Glavni trg 6, 4000 Kranj (46.23801, 14.35584)

pgk.si



C Parish Church of St Cantius Kranj

The impressive Gothich church is the main sight of Kranj, with its gorgeous reliefs and an impressive portal.

7 Glavni trg, Kranj 4000, Slovenia (46.23841, 14.35577)

zupnija-kranj.rkc.si



D Prešernov gaj

A memorial park located on the site of a former cemetery, containing the tomb of poet France Prešeren and monuments to other notable local figures.

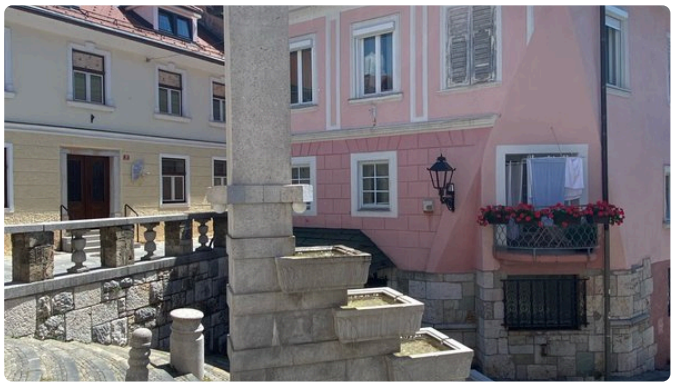
3 Partizanska cesta, Kranj 4000, Slovenia (46.24471, 14.35813)

E Cerkev Rožnovenske Matere Božje

A church situated at the southern edge of the old town, known for its location overlooking the canyon and its proximity to Plečnik's monumental staircase.

2 Vodopivčeva ulica, Kranj 4000, Slovenia (46.23740, 14.35511)

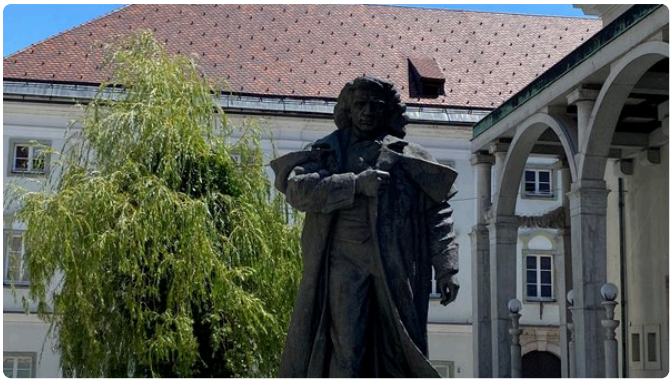
zupnija-kranj.rkc.si/o-zupniji/podruznice



F Plečnikovo stopnišče, vodnjak in arkade

A monumental entrance to the old town designed by architect Jože Plečnik in the 1950s, featuring a stone staircase, a fountain with a bronze rooster, and classicist arcades.

1 Vodopivčeva ulica, Kranj 4000, Slovenia (46.23748, 14.35538)



G Dr. France Preseren

A large bronze monument dedicated to Slovenia's national poet, France Prešeren, located in the central square outside the theater.

6 Glavni trg, Kranj 4000, Slovenia (46.23819, 14.35585)



H Vodnjak na Glavnem trgu

A stone fountain located in the center of Glavni trg, the city's main square, serving as a historical gathering point in the medieval core.

2 Glavni trg, Kranj 4000, Slovenia (46.23943, 14.35558)

I Gorenjska Museum Kranj

Discover the history, traditions and customs of the characteristic Gorenjska region. The museum features a truly interesting exhibition.

Glavni trg 4, 4000 Kranj (46.23893, 14.35574)

gorenjski-muzej.si, +386 4 201 39 50

J Špital Tower

This impressive coned shape tower serves as an entrance to the historical core of Kranj, and was part of the town's defenses in the Middle...

Maistrov trg 3, 4000 Kranj, Slovenia (46.24093, 14.35647)

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