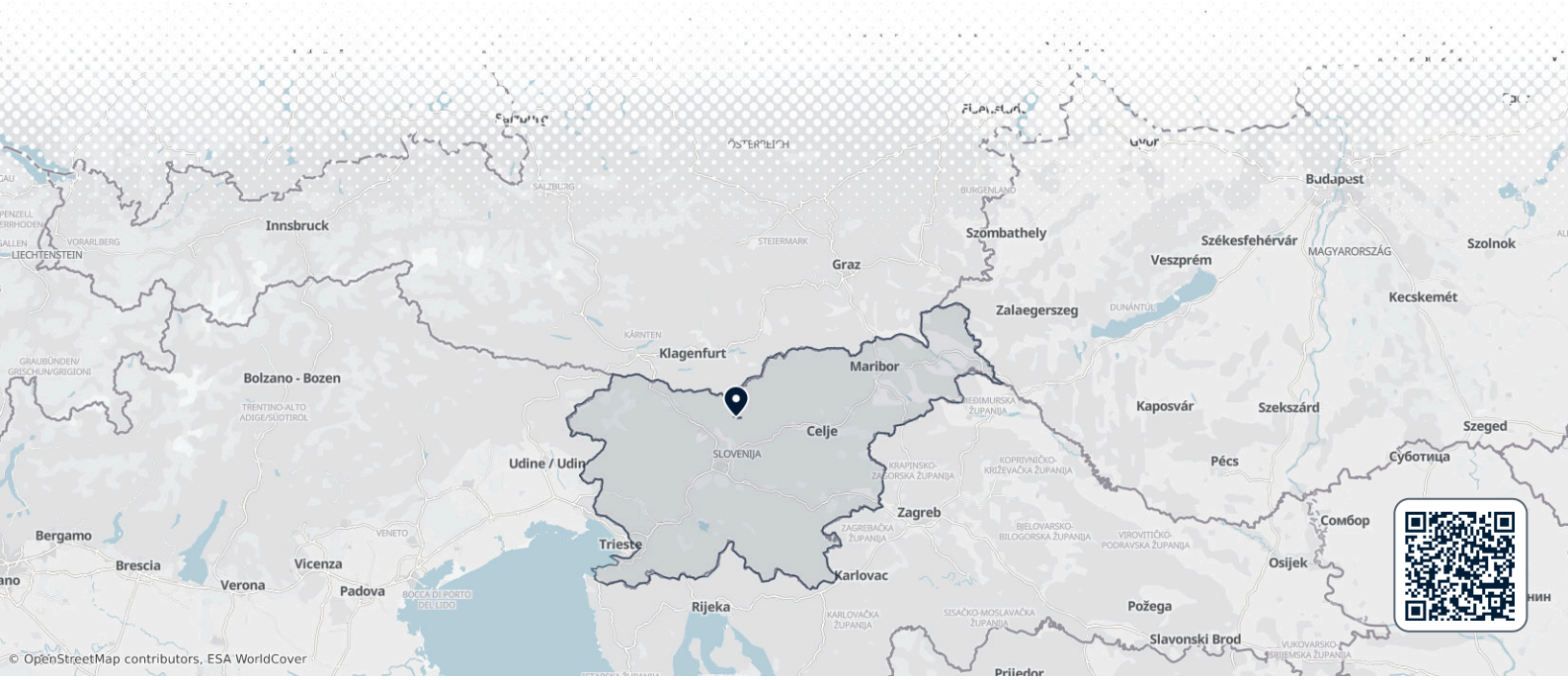


Velika Planina

Kamnik · Slovenia

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Velika Planina is a high grassy plateau above Kamnik, in the Kamnik-Savinja Alps. It is one of the few herdsmen's settlements of its size left in Europe. Wooden huts with low shingle roofs stand in clusters on the green hills, and from June to September herders still live here with their cattle.

A cable car and a chairlift bring you up from the valley in minutes, so the plateau suits an easy day out from Ljubljana as well as a quiet night in a rented hut. Come in summer for walks, fresh dairy food and wide views of the high peaks. In winter the plateau turns into a small family ski area under deep snow.

When to visit

The herding season, from early June to September, is the best time to visit: the huts are open, herders sell cheese and the meadows are green. July and August bring mild days, but afternoon thunderstorms are common. Winter is long, cold and snowy, and the ski lifts usually run from December to April. The cable car and chairlift close for maintenance for about a month in autumn, from mid-October to mid-November.

The best-known event is the **midnight Mass on Christmas Eve** in the Chapel of St Mary of the Snows. Thousands of people come up through the snow for it. In summer, 5 August is the chapel's feast day.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Great Great for skiing	-4° / 3° Feels like -8°	-11° / -20°	Dry air · Calm winds
February	Great Great for skiing	-2° / 6° Feels like -6°	-10° / -19°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Great Great for skiing	3° / 11° Feels like -1°	-7° / -14°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Fair Fair for skiing	8° / 15° Feels like 5°	-3° / -9°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Fair Fair for hiking	13° / 19°	2° / -3°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Good Good for hiking	17° / 24°	6° / 1°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
July	Fair Fair for hiking	19° / 25°	8° / 3°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
August	Good Good for hiking	19° / 26°	8° / 3°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
September	Good Good for hiking	14° / 20°	3° / -2°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Fair Fair for skiing	9° / 15°	0° / -7°	Dry air · Calm winds
November	Great Great for skiing	2° / 9° Feels like -1°	-5° / -12°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Great Great for skiing	-3° / 3° Feels like -7°	-9° / -18°	Dry air · Calm winds

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

Top sights



- **The herdsmen's settlement**: The oval wooden huts stand in clusters across the plateau, with pine-shingle roofs that reach almost to the ground. About 30 minutes on foot from the top cable-car station, it is the reason most people come.
- A Preskar Museum Hut is a small museum in a herdsman's hut rebuilt in 1945 in the old oval shape. It shows 19th-century herders' clothing, tools and customs, and in the grazing season you can watch trnič cheese being made at 1 pm.
- B Chapel of St Mary of the Snows stands on a rise above the settlement. The original, designed by *Jože Plečnik*, burned in the Second World War, and the herders rebuilt it in 1988. Mass is held on Sundays in summer.
- C Velika Planina Cable Car starts in the Kamniška Bistrica valley and climbs to about 1,400 m. A six-seat chairlift, opened in December 2023, continues to about 1,600 m, close to the settlement. Gradišče, the plateau's highest point at 1,666 m, is a short walk away.
- D Velika Planina Resort is a small, family-friendly ski area served by the cable car and chairlifts. Outside winter, the same slopes are used for hiking and mountain biking.
- E Domžalski dom na Mali Planini is a mountain hut on neighbouring Mala planina, a short walk south-east of the main settlement. It is open all year and has wide views over the Ljubljana Basin.
- **Gojška planina**: Beyond Mala planina, this quieter pasture has its own small group of herdsmen's huts and is a good goal for a longer walk.
- F Kamniška Bistrica Spring is a clear spring pool at the head of the Kamniška Bistrica valley, about 3 km past the cable-car lower station. It makes an easy add-on before or after the ride up.

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What to experience

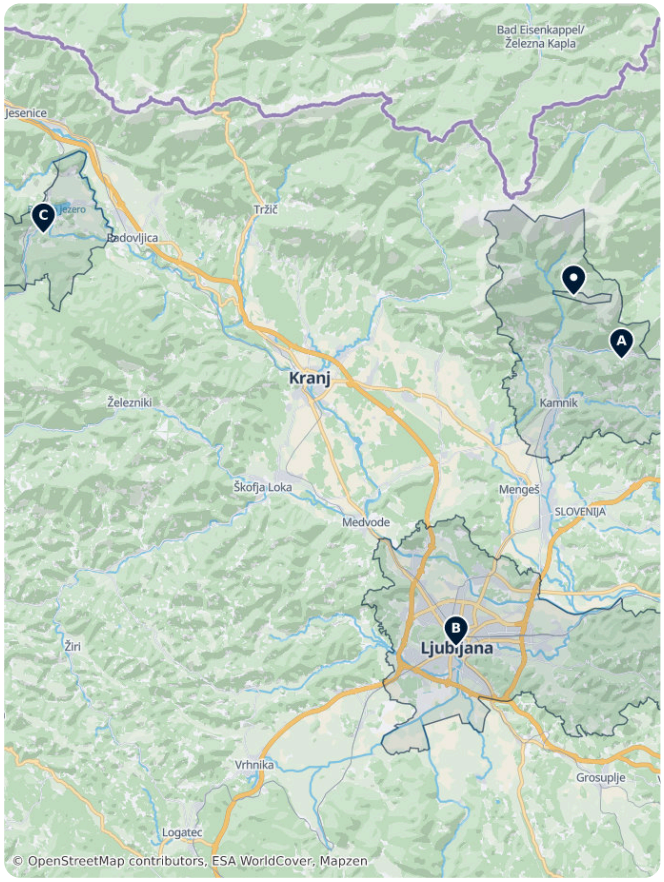
The best moments here are slow and seasonal, and tied to herding life.

- **Watch trnič being made**: In the grazing season, there is a daily demonstration at 1 pm at Preskar Museum Hut. Herders press carved wooden patterns into the pear-shaped cheese.
- **Eat with the herders**: In summer, some herders sell a simple meal of sour milk with buckwheat mush, plus fresh cheese, at their huts.
- **Sleep in a hut**: Holiday cottages built to look like herders' huts can be rented on the plateau. Staying overnight means quiet evenings, starry skies and the meadows to yourself after the last cable car.
- **Look for the Kamnik flower**: In June, watch for this rare orchid in the meadows. It is protected, so photograph it but never pick it.
- **Winter in the snow**: Families can use the snow park for children near the ski slopes, or walk to the snow-covered settlement on marked paths.

Day trips

The plateau fills a full day, but the valley below and central Slovenia are close by car.

- Ⓐ Kamnik (about 20 min by car from the cable-car lower station): A small medieval town with a castle hill, old streets and a Franciscan monastery. It is the gateway town for Velika Planina.
- Volčji Potok Arboretum (about 30 min by car): A large botanical park with themed gardens and big spring flower displays.
- Ⓑ Ljubljana (about 45 min by car, longer by bus with a change in Kamnik): The capital's old town, river embankments and castle make an easy combination with the plateau.
- **Logar Valley** (about 1 h 30 min by car): A glacial valley at the foot of the highest peaks of the Kamnik-Savinja Alps, with waterfalls and farm stays.
- Ⓒ Bled (about 1 h by car): Slovenia's famous lake with its island church and castle on a cliff.



Getting there

The plateau is reached by cable car from the Kamniška Bistrica valley, about 10 km north of Kamnik.

- **By air**: Ljubljana Jože Pučnik Airport is about 28 km from the cable-car lower station. There is no direct public transport, so take a taxi or rent a car.
- **By train**: Trains run on the line from Ljubljana to Kamnik, about 18 a day. From Kamnik, continue by bus or taxi to the cable car.
- **By bus**: Buses run about 60 times a day between Ljubljana and Kamnik. Some buses continue up the valley to the cable-car stop, but they are infrequent, so check the timetable first. Visit Kamnik – getting here
- **Cable car and chairlift**: The cable car runs all year, with a pause from mid-October to mid-November. Off-season, it leaves roughly every hour on weekends and less often on weekdays. Buy tickets at the lower station. Velika Planina timetable and prices

Getting around

- **On foot**: Visitors leave cars at the car parks below the plateau, and everything on top is reached on foot over grassy hills on marked paths. The herdsmen's settlement is about 30 minutes from the top cable-car station.
- **Chairlift**: The chairlift saves the climb from the top cable-car station up to the edge of the settlement. Check the last ride time, as it stops earlier than the cable car.
- **In winter**: The paths are under deep snow. Wear proper boots, and consider snowshoes away from the ski slopes.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

Everything on the plateau is reached on foot over grassy hills; distances are short, but paths are uneven and snowy in winter.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Gravel tracks suit mountain bikes only; there is no bike infrastructure on the plateau.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Yes, if you want flexibility. Buses to the cable car are infrequent, and a car also lets you reach the upper car parks.
- **Lower station**: A large car park sits opposite the cable-car lower station in Kamniška Bistrica.
- **Upper car parks**: The only official road from Kamnik climbs from Podlom towards Kranjski Rak. From the car parks you walk to the settlement: Mačkin kot takes about 30–45 minutes, Ušivec about 40–60 minutes, and Rakove Ravni about 1.5–2 hours.
- **Parking fees**: All upper car parks charge a daily fee. Pay with the EasyPark app or in cash to the attendant, as **cards are not accepted**.
- **Winter**: Winter tyres and snow chains are required. The roads to Ušivec and Mačkin kot are not cleared in winter, so only Rakove Ravni is open all year.

Food & drink

The local speciality is **trnič**, a hard, pear-shaped cheese made from cottage cheese, cream and salt. Herders decorate it by pressing carved wooden patterns into it. They traditionally made trnič in pairs, gave one to a woman they liked as a sign of love, and kept the other. It is made on Velika, Mala and Gojška planina, and is also grated over pasta and other dishes.

The classic herder's meal is sour milk with buckwheat mush. In summer, look for it at the herders' huts in the settlement. For a sit-down meal, the mountain inns near the chairlift's top station and the huts on Mala planina serve hearty one-pot dishes, sausages with sauerkraut, and cheese dumplings.

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

Velika Planina is very safe, and crime is not a concern. The main risks come from the mountain setting.

- **Weather**: Fog can cover the plateau quickly and make the open hills hard to navigate. In summer, thunderstorms often build in the afternoon, so start walks early and leave exposed ridges when storms come.
- **Cattle**: Cows graze freely in summer. Keep your distance, especially from cows with calves, and keep dogs on a lead.
- **Private huts**: The herders' huts are private homes and working buildings. Do not enter or look through windows without an invitation.
- **Cash**: Bring some cash for parking and for cheese and meals bought directly from herders.

History

For centuries, farmers from the villages below have brought their cattle up to the plateau for the summer. Today about 200 huts stand on the alp, and 63 of them form the herders' settlement, owned by families who still hold grazing rights. The oval huts with their very low shingle roofs once sheltered both herders and animals.

Near the end of the Second World War, about 100 huts and the chapel were burned down. Herder *Andrej Preskar* rebuilt his hut on the ruins in the summer of 1945 in the old oval shape. That hut is now Preskar Museum Hut, and it shows the traditional form most clearly. The herders rebuilt Chapel of St Mary of the Snows in 1988.

From 1959, a separate holiday village grew up nearby. Architect *Vlasto Kopač* designed its cottages to look like herders' huts, and by 1964 there were around 60 of them.

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

Top sights



A Preskar Cottage on Velika Planina Alp

(Unnamed Road), Velika Planina 1242, Slovenia
(46.29714, 14.65085)

Mo–Th	Closed
Fr–Su	09:00–15:00

velikaplanina.si/en/cultural-and-natural-..., +386 1 8327 258



B Chapel of of St Mary of the Snows

Small Catholic chapel designed by Jože Plečnik, first built in 1938 for the spiritual needs of the herdsmen on the Velika planina plateau.

1242, Slovenia (46.29513, 14.65360)

C Nihalka na Veliko Planino

Kamniška Bistrica, 1242 Kamnik, Slovenia
(46.30492, 14.60795)



D Velika Planina Resort

Family ski resort in the Kamnik-Savinja Alps with about 6 km of slopes, reached by cable car, that also serves hikers and mountain bikers in summer.

2A Kamniška Bistrica, 1242, Slovenia (46.30455, 14.60938)

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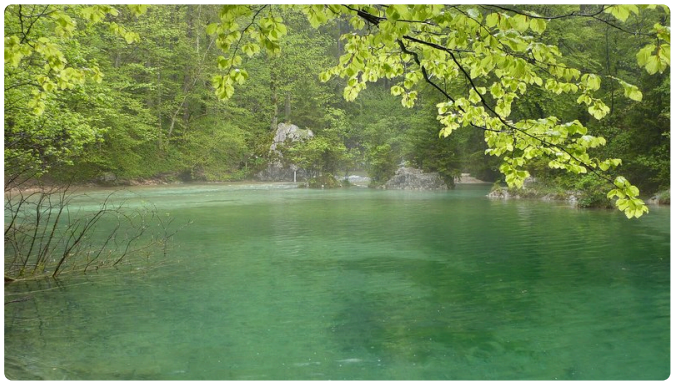
E Domžalski dom na Mali Planini

Mountain hut at about 1,534 m on the eastern slope of Velika planina in the Kamnik–Savinja Alps, built by the Domžale mountaineering club and open all year.

Žaga 18, 1242 Stahovica (46.28911, 14.65679)



F Izvir Kamniške Bistrice

Karst spring pool with clear water at the head of the Kamniška Bistrica valley, regarded as the start of the river.

Kamniška Bistrica, 1242, Slovenia (46.32742, 14.59028)

DATA SOURCES

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