

I FEEL
SLOVENIA

Idrija.



FELDBAN

MILITARY NARROW-GAUGE RAILWAY

23

»The line ran just above the Wild Lake (Divje jezero) and the narrow Idrija River Valley, slowly descending towards the valley. The brakes ground and squealed ever louder. This music was joined by the shouts and yells of German and Hungarian soldiers who did the braking. The hair on the back of stowaways' necks started to stand up.«



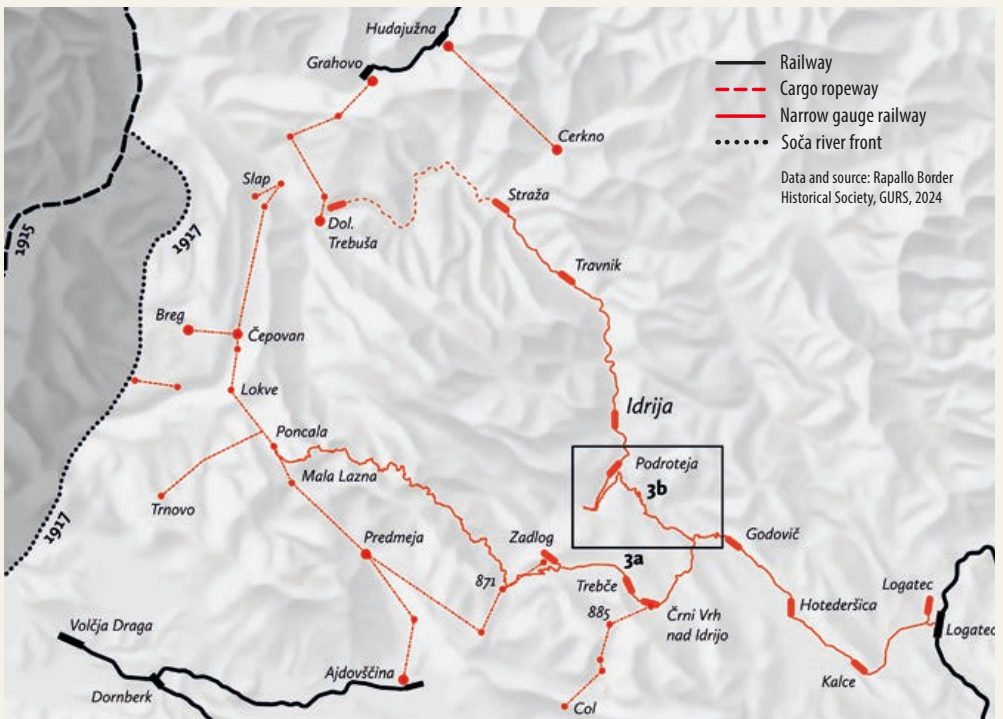
11/30 11/1917
K. u. k. PFERDEFELDBAHN Nr. 4.
Betriebssektion N. 3



Construction of the wooden trestle bridge ("veksl") where the line of the motorised narrow-gauge railway turned towards Idrija

A Historic Walk Along the Feldban Route

The story of the feldban (feld - field; bahn - railway) dates back to the **First World War**. After the fall of Gorizia and the retreat of the Austro-Hungarian army to the left bank of the Soča River in August 1916, this part of the Soča front needed **additional supply lines** through the Trnovo Forest.





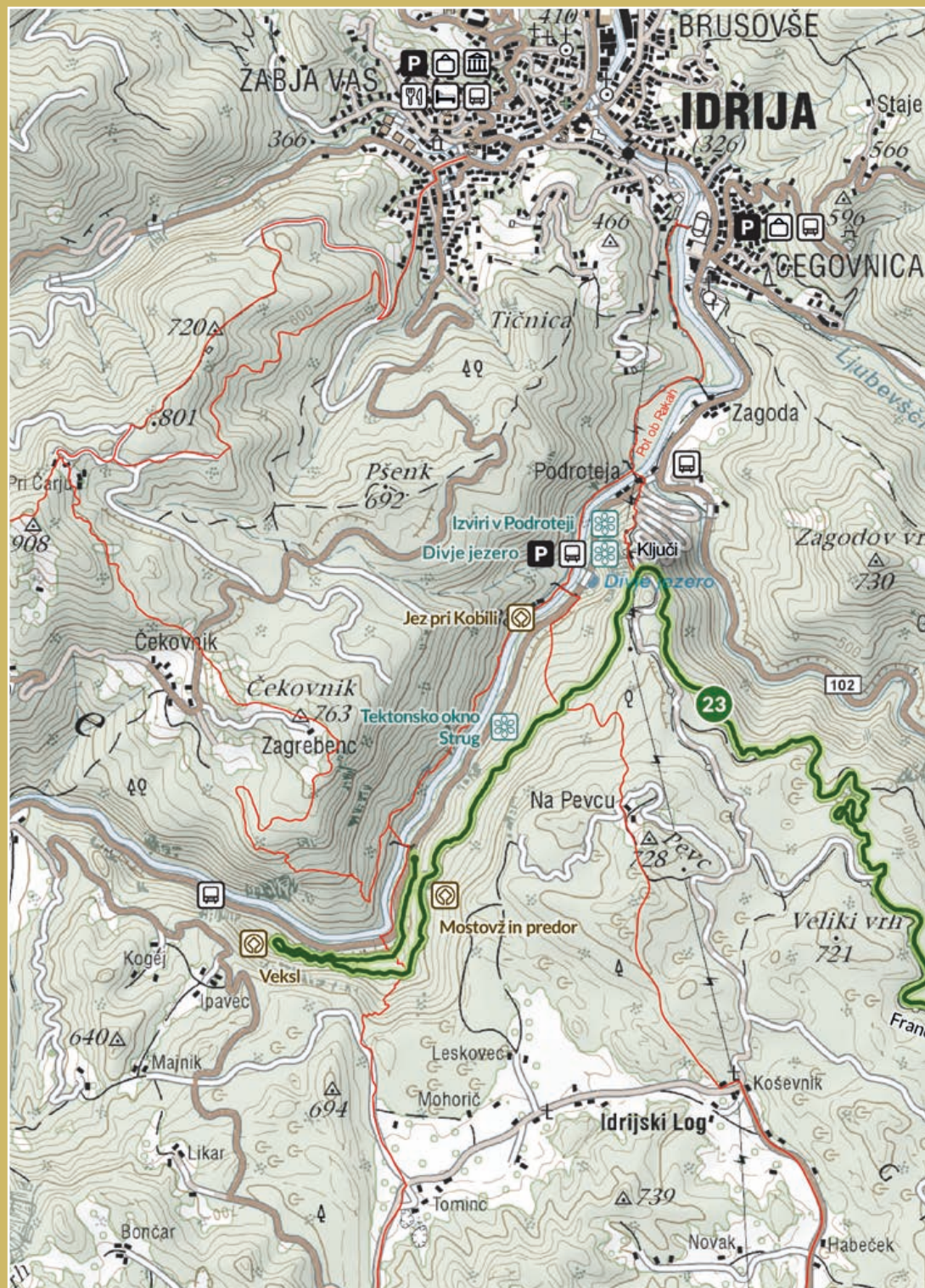
Wounded men on the horse-drawn carriages of the narrow-gauge railway in Godovič

Due to the **congestion of the existing railway lines** and the Ajdovščina-Cepovan line, which supplied the battlefields on the Soča Front, in September 1916 the construction of the **first horse-drawn narrow-gauge railway, or feldban**, from Logatec to Zadlog was started, where the cargo was transferred to the freight line. At the same time, to supply the mining town, a **branch line was built to Idrija** or to the top of Ključe above Wild Lake (Divje jezero). The steep descent into the Idrijca valley was overcome by a **funicular railway**. This railway ran exclusively on existing roads, so its construction was quick. The tracks were built by **prisoners of war**, mostly from Russia.

Because the horse-drawn carriage had a limited carrying capacity, only small loads could be carried on it. This was no longer sufficient, so before the end of 1916, the construction of an **additional motorised narrow-gauge railway Logatec-Zadlog** with a branch line Godovič-Idrija was started. Due to the heavier loads and speeds, this railway was built on a newly constructed route. It was operated by **train sets**, each carriage having its own brakeman.



Construction of a tunnel on the route of the motorised narrow-gauge railway in Strug





- P** Parking
- Restaurant
- Petrol station
- Shop
- Accommodation
- Museum
- Bus station
- Cultural heritage
- Natural heritage
- Feldban route
- Marked mountain trail

0 0,5 1 km
Scale 1:30 000



Example of a train set from the Karst region, which was also used on the section of the line to Idrija



Wooden bridge («mostovž») on the route of the narrow-gauge motor-powered railway in Strug

Traffic ran night and day on the line. There were always about 200 small wagons on the entire feldban. A loop was made at Godovič to allow traffic to flow in both directions. The train composition had no timetable and no timed stops. It transported **military equipment, foodstuffs, war mail, sanitary material and the wounded**, occasionally also **refugees** from Primorsko, and welded **iron bottles of mercury**.

The most challenging and beautifully preserved part of this railway is the descent into the Idrijca valley, where, in order to overcome the 300-metre height difference and the steepness of the terrain, a number of **technical buildings** had to be constructed. In 1917, this section was extended to Straža and, according to some estimates, even to Dolenja Trebuša.

Until the **breakthrough of the Soča front** on 24 October 1917, both narrow-gauge railways existed at the same time. After the signing of the Treaty of Rapallo and the withdrawal of the Italian army, the latter removed the tracks as spoils of war.

The Strug Valley

Between Fežner and Podroteja, the Idrijca has carved out a narrow valley called Strug, which is home to the **Carniolan primrose** (*Primula carniolica*) and the steep and rocky areas are inhabited by the chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*). There is also a well-preserved thermophilic **beech forest**, which is protected as a forest reserve.





TIPS FOR A TRIP

Explore the Idrija Geopark through a variety of **thematic trails** combining hiking, cycling, and discovering the natural and cultural heritage. The trails will lead you past numerous sights and local producers who will provide you with an authentic culinary experience. Don't miss the following:



- the 500-Year Story of the Mercury Mine
- Along the Rake – the Path of Idrija's Natural Scientists
- Zgornja Idrija Landscape Park

Museum Collections

Idrija War Museum, Trg sv. Ahacija 4, Idrija,
T: +386 (0)41 407 651

First World War Museum, Črni Vrh 36,
Črni Vrh nad Idrijo, T: +386 (0)41 739 544

Idrija Municipal Museum (Gewerkenegg Castle), Prelovčeva 9, Idrija,
T: +386 (0)5 372 66 00



First World War Museum, Črni Vrh nad Idrijo

CATERING and ACCOMMODATION

Idrija and its surroundings offer food and drink to please every traveller. In Idrija, they know how to use simple ingredients to prepare real specialities, such as **Idrija žlikrofi** - the symbol of Idrija cuisine, **zeljševka**, **ocvirkovca**, **smukavc** or **štruklji**. In the Idrija countryside, you can taste excellent **cheeses** and **other dairy products**, as well as top-quality **honey** from the beekeepers of Idrija.



Explore the diverse range of **accommodation**, from apartments, guesthouses and a youth hostel in the city centre to tourist farms and boutique accommodations in the countryside.



Idrija Selected Collective Trademark

The Idrija Selected Certificate of Excellence guarantees the proven quality of **selected delicacies, craft products and authentic experiences** created by nature and the people of Idrija region.



FELDBAN – MILITARY NARROW-GAUGE FIELD RAILWAY

Length: from 7 km to 15 km (you can combine the trails and choose the length that suits you best)

Altitude difference: 300 m

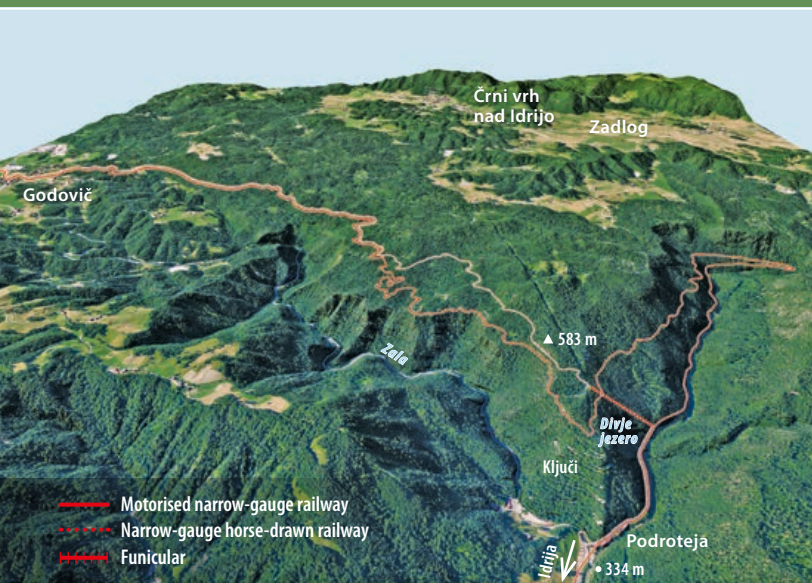
Main rocks: dolomite and limestone, limestone with fossils (rudist limestone)

Habitat: Dinaric fir-beech forest (*Omphalodo-Fagetum*)

Botanical features: Carniolan primrose (*Primula carniolica*), yellow ox-eye (*Buphthalmum solicifolium*), horned rampion (*Phyteuma scheuchzeri* ssp. *Columnae*)

Rivers: Idrijca, Zala

Viewpoints: top of Zala, top of Ključ



The route of the feldban, a narrow-gauge railway, is an excellent example of engineering ingenuity in wartime and an important part of the cultural heritage of the area. Today, you can walk the entire route or just short sections and combine the route with the mountain trails that cross the feldban. On the more difficult parts, wedges are driven across the ravines and safety cables are installed. Under the famous wooden bridge ("mostovž") in front of the tunnel, steel steps are embedded in the wall, making the route more challenging.

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WALK OF PEACE



MESTNI MUZEJ IDRILJA