



Moravsky Kras – Moravian Karst

Moravian Karst is one of the most important karst areas of Central Europe. In the area of the Moravian Karst, there are more than 1100 caverns and gorges. But only 4 caves are open to public. The Punkvevní jeskyně (Punkva Caves) have an underground river – during the cruise you can see there the bottom of the famous Macocha Abyss. Another cave is Kateřinská jeskyně with its unique limestone columns. The Balcarka Cave is full of colorful stalactite decoration. Sloupsko-šošůvské jeskyně are made by huge corridors and underground gorges. <http://www.moravskykras.net/en/moravian-karst.html>

What is a Karst? Karst is a topography formed from the dissolution of soluble rocks such as limestone, dolomite, and gypsum. It is characterized by underground drainage systems with sinkholes and caves. It has also been documented for more weathering-resistant rocks, such as quartzite, given the right conditions.

What is a Stalactite? A stalactite is a mineral formation that hangs from the ceiling of caves, hot springs, or man-made structures such as bridges and mines. Any material that is soluble and that can be deposited as a colloid, or is in suspension, or is capable of being melted, may form a stalactite.

What is a Stalagmite? A stalagmite is a type of rock formation that rises from the floor of a cave due to the accumulation of material deposited on the floor from ceiling drippings. Stalagmites are typically composed of calcium carbonate, but may consist of lava, mud, peat, pitch, sand, sinter, and amberat.





Tour of the Punkva Caves

These caves are of most popular caves in the Moravian Karst. The main entrance is about 2 km distant from Skalní mlýn – in Pustý žleb under the vertical cliff. This popularity is because of romantic water cruise on underground River Punkva and also possibility to be on the bottom of the Macocha Abyss. Hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world visit these caves.

Once we arrive at the Moravský Kras parking area we will take a shuttle to the cave entrance and meet our guide. The tour begins in large dome called Přední dóm. Its entrance is guarded by the biggest stalactite column called Strážce. The seal-pipe corridor leads into Hlinité síně connected with Střední dóm and also with Krystalová chodba, which is not open to public. Beyond Stalagmitová chodba there is Zadní dóm.

From this point, all tourists could reach the bottom of Macocha Abyss and this is the end of journey called Suchá cesta. Here you can fully enjoy the magnificence of huge gorge and see the Upper and Lower Lake fed by River Punkva. The next stage is Mokrá cesta – underground cruise on the River Punkva. The Punkva's Vodní dómy are created by strong stream of flowing water for thousands of years. Water is under pressure looking for way out. Ceilings and walls are full of gutters, holes, made by the vortex current.

