

Topic 2: The River - Its Secrets and Beauties

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THE LJUBLJANICA RIVER – THE RIVER REVEALING THE BEAUTIES AND SECRETS OF THE CITY

Why I have chosen this topic?



In the opinion of many Ljubljana is one of the most beautiful cities and it is also my city. This is how I feel when I walk through its streets, markets and parks, recalling memories of pleasant walks to the Botanical Garden in Ljubljana with my mother who taught me how to value and enjoy the nature. In any season of the year, Ljubljana reveals its secrets and beauties. The Ljubljanica river, which divides the city with its riverbed and then connects it again with river banks and bridges, is extremely attractive to me.

From its source it slowly meanders to the city and in order to avoid the floods redirects part of its stream into the Gruber channel, surrounding the castle hill, and the remaining part continues to research the city. At Špica with a beautiful park, it recalls the memory of the prehistoric inhabitants of the Ljubljana marshes – residents of the pre-historic pile dwellings, considered by archaeologists the oldest of the kind in Europe. Remains of the pile-dwellings are waiting under the park for the time when we will be able to keep them in good shape and exhibit them.

The river says goodbye here to the anchored boats waiting for the passengers to take them toward the city centre – pass the Trnovski pristan (harbour of Trnovo), mouth of the Gradaščica river and under the reconstructed Hradecki bridge. On the right, there are beautiful houses of Prule, and Krakovski nasip on the left, where there are often open photography exhibitions. There is Krakovo in the back, definitely one of the most unusual old settlements in the centre of Ljubljana. Under the Šentjakob bridge, the most beautifully kept part of the bank is



situated. There are colourful facades with numerous shops on the right, behind them the old city of Ljubljana with a castle hill. There is also part of the river bank called Breg. The beauty of the facades of luxurious middle-class houses has found proper expression only after the reconstruction. There is a fountain in front of the Čevljarski most and from there you can see the National Library of the Architect Jože Plečnik, whose works created the image of Ljubljana. There is

also a statue of the most renowned mayor of Ljubljana, Ivan Hribar. The river is now flowing toward the very centre of Ljubljana with Tromostovje (Three bridges), Prešernov trg (the Prešeren square) with the statue of the poet and his muse, the Franciscan church and many buildings from the Secession period. Various events take place here all year round.

When the river comes from under the three bridges, it covers the building of the Ljubljana market place with beautiful columns and the Butchers' bridge, which attracts the attention of tourists with partly glass floor and sculptures of the sculptor Jakov Brdar. There are numerous locks of couples, who "lock" their love for eternity to the bridge. The river continues to the Secession bridge called the Dragon Bridge and already passes the Plečnik barrier. A few bridges later the river flows to Kodeljevo, where it reunites with the Gruber channel and peacefully continues toward the Fužine castle and than leaves the city.

The entire renovated bank of the Ljubljanica river is intended for the pedestrians. The city received an award for the arrangement of the river bank. People like it. Even in winter, particularly during the New Year period, when Ljubljana is lavishly decorated, people like to hang out and drink a glass of mulled wine. When the weather is warmer, there is a lot of tourists who praise our city. In warm summer evenings we like to end our day by chatting with friends at the pubs along the river. The Ljubljanica is flowing slowly by, sometimes remembering us that time also flies and we do not even notice this.