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The Municipality of Kanal ob Soči is situated in Western Slovenia, in the Central Soča Valley at the border with Italy. It is divided from the neighbouring Slavia Friulana (Slovene: Beneška Slovenija) in the Italian region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia by the river Idrija. Its location between the hills of the Kanalski Kolovrat in the West and the plateau Banjška planota in the East offers its visitors several possibilities for recreation, relaxation, journeys, cycling, hiking, hunting, fishing, swimming in the River Soča as well as visits of cultural, historical and natural sights. The heart of the Municipality is Kanal, a small medieval town with a rich cultural heritage, surrounded by natural beauties.

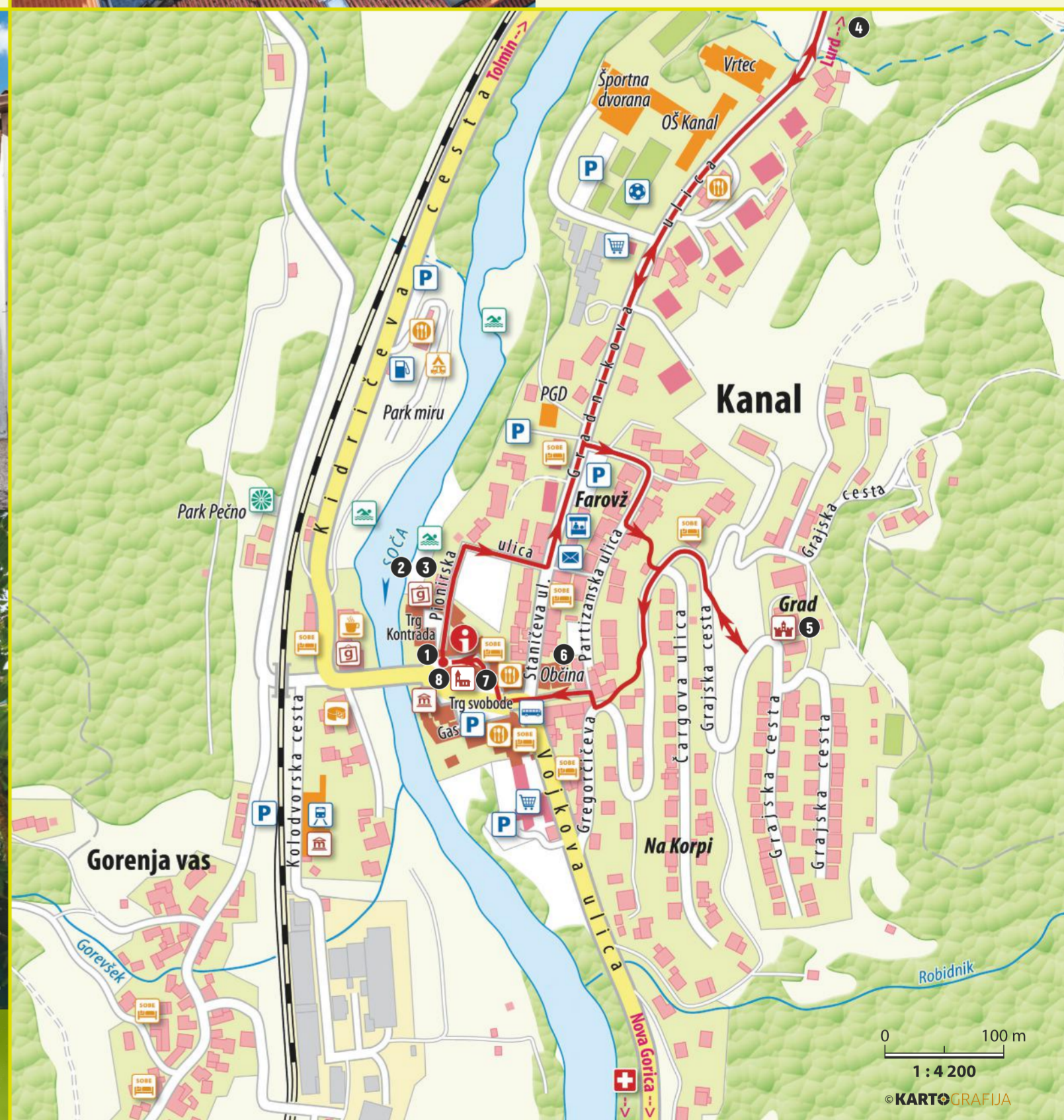


The graphic image of a stylised Soča trout was chosen as the floor marking of the cultural trail, as a symbol of the culture of coexistence between natural and cultural heritage. Shaped like an arrow, it represents the creative flow of life that flows and guides the visitor through Kanal. The central fish represents Kanal, while the left and right fish represent the two banks. The right fish points north (towards Tolmin and the mountains) and the left fish points south (towards Nova Gorica and the Mediterranean). Kanal plays an important role as a centre connecting the two worlds and both banks of the Soča River.

1 Kontrada

In the Middle Ages the heart of the settlement was enclosed with a defensive wall. The word *kontrada* is of Italian origin and derives from the words in *contrarsi* meaning to meet. A bridge once led to the centre of Kontrada, around which houses began to be built. Today, the square is the central venue for cultural events in Kanal during the summer months. It was renovated in 2019.

Pionirska Street leads from Kontrada Square, the narrowest street in Kanal, which was created during the times of the Turkish sieges. The oldest house in the Canal is the Petrucka house.



2 The Riko Debenjak Gallery and The Gothic House

The Riko Debenjak gallery is situated in one of the three remaining defensive towers from the time of the Turkish sieges. Riko Debenjak, a painter and graphic artist from Kanal, donated a collection of his graphic art to the town, which is exhibited in the gallery during the summer months, while throughout the year, the exhibition features works by various artists. In front of the gallery stands a bust of Debenjak.

The Gothic House is built in the Gothic style and dates from the 11th century. Its western part stands on a cliff by the Soča river. The house includes a memorial room of the composer Marija Kogoj.



3 The Riko Debenjak Memorial Room

In the memorial room in the renovated Fiščeva house in Kontrada, a part of the documentary material from the legacy of Riko Debenjak, donated to the town of Kanal by his son dr. Božidar Debenjak, is on display. This part of the legacy significantly complements the permanent collection of works of art by Riko Debenjak in the gallery carrying his name in Kanal.



CULTURAL ROAD	SPORTS PLAYGROUND	INN, RESTAURANT
CAR PARK	BATHING SPOT	BAR
BUS STATION	VIEWPOINT	ROOMS
RAILWAY STATION	GALLERY	CAMP
SERVICE STATION	MUSEUM	SALES OF CHEESE
HEALTH CENTRE	SMALL MUSEUM COLLECTION	INFORMATION CENTER
POST OFFICE	CHURCH	
MARKETPLACE	CASTLE	
GROCERY		



4 Cave with a statue from Lourdes

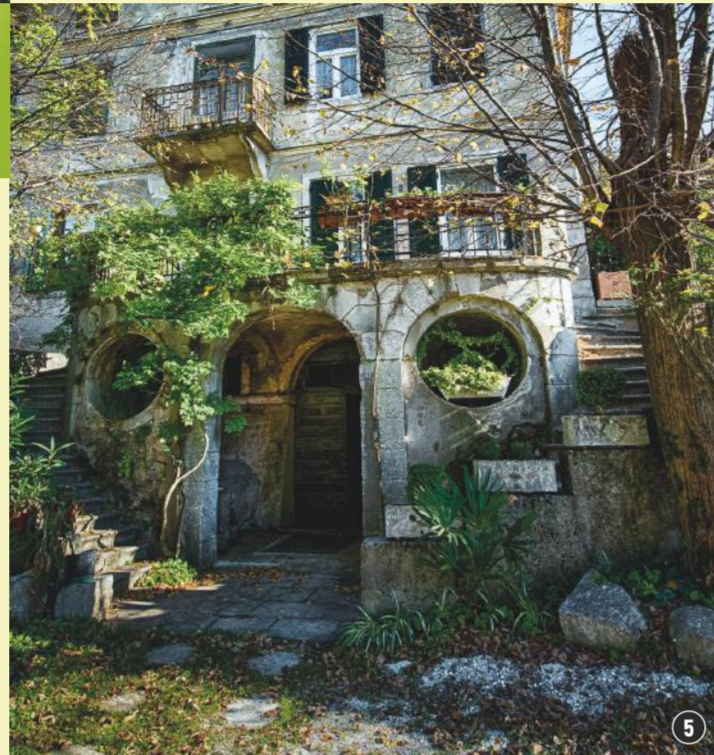
The cave in Kanal was set up in 1934 on the initiative of Mrs. Ravnik from a moneyed Kanal family who during her pilgrimage to Lourdes in France noticed a striking likeness between her home-town cave and the one in Lourdes. Returning from the pilgrimage, she got in contact with the then parish priest of Kanal and purchased the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes which was put up in the cave and was consecrated that same year. Throughout the Second World War, the cave remained unharmed. Since 1958, Holy Masses have been held in it.



5 Mansion (Castle)

On the site where the remains of the Castle are visible today, the Tuscan Counts of Rabatta built a typical late Renaissance mansion in the second quarter of the 17th century. Into the mansion they probably incorporated the remains of the medieval tower court, which is said to have stood on this hill. Throughout history, the Castle has switched many owners and undergone several alterations. It housed a valuable art collection that is now housed in the British Museum in London. The Castle was demolished in the First World War, and after the war it was restored by the architect Nibrant in the style of a bourgeois villa.

Legend has it that Napoleon once spent a night in the Castle. As his horse, which was buried near the Castle, was said to have died at that time, this place was named Na konjevem (The horse's place).



6 Municipal building

The building, which today houses the Municipality of Kanal ob Soči was designed by the architect Maks Fabiani, one of the most important architects and urbanist from the late 19th and early 20th century. Fabiani was in charge of the urban redevelopment of the square in front of the municipal building as well as the construction of a new town hall. He also took an active part in the urban renewal of settlements in the municipality of Kanal ob Soči after the First World War. Next to the municipal building is a bust of the composer Mario Kogoj, after whom the international festival of contemporary music called "The Kogoj Days" is named, which takes place every year in the autumn months.



7 Neptune's Fountain

The citizens of Kanal erected the stone Neptune's Fountain in the town square in 1815 with the help of Baron Coronini. It was named Matija. In the beginning, it stood at the opposite side of the square and was moved to its current position in 1937.

Near the Neptune's Fountain stands a bust of a fellow citizen Valentin Stanič, a priest, illuminator, humanist and one of the pioneers of alpine climbing in Europe. Each year, Valentin Stanič Alpine society of Kanal organises a memorial hiking tour called "By the footsteps of Valentin Stanič" to celebrate the memory of this great man.



8 Church of the Assumption of Mary

The church sits in the place of a former Romanesque church. The three-sided chancel with a star-shaped ribbed arch is said to be the oldest of its kind in Slovenia. The Baroque nave carries a Palladian façade and the ceiling features a fresco of the Mary of the Assumption from 1931. The large altar is also Baroque and is the work of the stonemasons of Gorizia. There are crypts contained inside the church dating back to the times when a graveyard was still kept near the church. The outer supporting column of the Baroque chancel contains a sundial from the 15th century.



THE MASKS OF LIG

The masks of Lig are among the traditional Shrovetide mask of Slovenia. They originate from the settlement of Lig and the surrounding villages situated under the Kanalski Kolovrat area. The distinctive feature separating them from other Slovenian mask is that they are made of sheet metal. They were first made from copper sheet metal, but are nowadays made of aluminium. The tradition of making the Lig masks is being continued by Branko Žnidarčič. He has reconstructed the masks of the 19th century using the notes and paintings from the 1950s made by the painter and ethnologist Pavel Medvešček. These masks are made of copper sheet metal. They are on display in Kanal throughout the entire year by prior arrangement.



KANAL BRIDGE

The Kanal bridge, which was originally made of wood, was built in 1580. Throughout history, the bridge has been demolished and rebuilt several times. It got its present-day appearance after the renovation in 1920. It is undoubtedly the landmark of Kanal and a popular sight attracting many artists and visitors. Every year in August, it is the place of the traditional Bridge jumps event.



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