

History of the village

Preservation and protection of natural assets, historical monuments, and our values for next generations is one of our top priorities and all our efforts are heading towards achieving it. The main goal of the project is to enhance the awareness of the public about those natural and cultural assets and present them and share also with people from more distant regions.

One thousand years ago, Hungarian tribe Kürt decided to settle approximately 6 km away from the place where Dunajská Streda spreads today. The name of the settlement inhabited by them was recorded for the first time as “Kurth” in a document dating back to 1252. In another document dating back to 1277, the tribe is mentioned as Kuurth capitula Psoniensis and there is also a mention about the village of Kywrth dating back to 1138. Documents evidence that in 1390, the name Kiwrt was and was changed to Kyrth 9 years later. In the Pazmány records, the village is mentioned as Egyházkürt.

In Austria – Hungary, up to fifteen settlements had very similar names and that was the reason why the village received the name Csallóközkürt to distinguish it from others. In 1927, not very apt Slovak name “Kerť na Ostrove” was introduced and used with the Hungarian name Csallóköz Kürt in parallel. The current Slovak name Ohrady (meaning “enclosures”) has been in use since 1948 and it was probably created by mistakenly translating the word “kert” instead of “kürt” into the Slovak language.

Already at the time of the reign of King Ladislaus I, the settlement was included the list of frontier defence settlements. In 1252, Bela IV gave the village and its surrounding lands as a gift to the Bratislava Provostry. According to another historical source, the village was the patrimony of the Hunt-Poznan family and this fact is allegedly evidenced by a document dating back to 1256. In 1439, King Albrecht gave the village to the Rozgonyi family as a gift. According to the 1553 List of Portas (property units defined for tax purposes), Gašpar Serédy, Michal Mérey, and Lukáš Kerekes held 11 portas in the village. In 1647, the village was mentioned in records as the property of the Kerekes family. Indigenous people focused on fishing and animal farming but agriculture dominated. This is witnessed by a document dating back to 1825 and containing also an engraved grain that served later as the basic motif to create the current emblem of the village. The today’s emblem features a golden wheat bundle on a green shield that symbolizes the success in the area of agriculture.

In 1796, András Vályi mentioned that the village was one hour of walk from Trhová Hradská and close to Dvorníky and Enyed. The lands belonging to the village included only few pastures and forests, but were rich in good rye. After expulsion of Turks from Hungary, the village was owned by the Pálffy family. By the end of the 18th century, secluded settlements Apponyi-major, Sós-sziget, and Új-major belonged to the village as well. In 1851, Adolf Fényes wrote that the Kürt village was situated in the Bratislava province between Dunajská Streda and Trhová Hradská next to the Budapest road, the village had a Roman Catholic church building, good straw and forest lands and Count František Pálffy was the landlord. Inhabitants of the Ohrady village had to go to Trhová Hradská when they wanted to mail a telegram or to Dolný Bar when they wanted to travel by train. Secluded settlements Sós-sziget and Tájlakpuszta became a part of the village in 1938.

The Roman Catholic church building built in 1138 is deemed to be the oldest building in the village. A brick tower and wooden church building stand on quarry stone foundations. Despite the fact that the church building has been rebuilt three times, the tower has maintained its original shape until today. The tower has three bells and the oldest one is from the year 1482, which is witnessed by the following inscription:

OREX GLORIAE, VENI CUM PACE.
OMARIA PIA, SIS NOBISCUM IN VIA. AMEN

KING OF GLORY, COME WITH PEACE.
MERCIFUL MARY, ACCOMPANY US ON OUR WAY. AMEN
MAGISTER THOMA(S)
MCCCCLXXXII

In 1933, the Saint Stephan the Protomartyr Church building was almost fully reconstructed after being destroyed previously. The white church walls were decorated with frescoes and thanks to the support provided by the local faithful and the municipal authority the church building was completely reconstructed in 1990. The church building has the shape of the Greek cross with a polygonal presbyterium closure (its sanctuary is polygonal as well), walls are decorated with unique frescoes and decorated glass windows offer marvellous views. In 2005, the organ and the sidewalk leading to the church building were reconstructed. The church building features a commemorative plate with names of the local inhabitants who were killed during World War I. World War II also claimed victims from among the soldiers from Ohrady – a memorial with their names is situated on the hill next to the church building. In April 2019, a statute of our King Saint Stephan was created thanks to the donations provided by the local church members and installed in the beautiful church garden. The statue is the work of Gabriela Kádárová, a famous sculpture and artist from Budaörs. The architectural and historical monuments are not the only thing making the village attractive for tourists. The village is proud of and famous thanks to its group singing folk songs. The attractions offered by the village include also a number of cultural and sports events and, of course, the surrounding countryside.

Žitný ostrov (island)

is situated in the western part of the Carpathian basin. In the south, it is delimited by the Danube river and by the Little Danube river in the north and its border is formed also by a short part of the Váh river in the east. This area ranks among the warmest and driest corners of the country and with its 1 600 km², this island is the largest river island in Europe. The island's underground hides extensive reservoirs of drinking water. The Danube river is the second largest river in Europe and as concerns navigation, it is one of the most important European inland waterways. Golden Garden – this is what Žitný ostrov used to be called and people have been telling many stories and legends about it until today. The name Golden Garden is derived from the amazing natural assets of the island. In addition to the Danube river and its tributaries, the island offers beautiful countryside, bottomland forests, and lakes with a great variety of flora and fauna. Being rich in fish, the Danube river used to be the bread and butter for local inhabitants who, in addition to other activities, panned for gold too. In the past, this area was subject to many natural changes and disasters such as fires, floods, and wars. Žitný ostrov offers its visitors a vast number of opportunities for hiking and leisure time activities.

Klátovské rameno (a tributary of the Little Danube river) natural reserve

is situated in the very heart of Žitný ostrov and spreads over 306 hectares. It has been the national natural reserve since 1993 and according to applicable laws, Klátovské rameno enjoys the strictest, fifth level of protection. Hunting, fishing, lumbering, extraction of cane and peat, water drainage, wetland adjustments, natural water expansion hindering, and noise are prohibited here. Klátovské rameno is the right-side tributary of the Little Danube river and offers charming corners and crystal-clear water. The entire water stream and adjacent forests are a protected area. Klátovské rameno has no spring and is not a branch of other water stream, it starts at the groundwater seepage point behind the Orechová Potôň – Lúky village, thanks to which it is extremely clean. Most likely, there is no other river with clearer water in Slovakia. The Klátovské rameno river is full of life. It hosts a lot of aquatic insects, crustaceans and fish. The upper part of Klátovské rameno is not a continuous water stream, it consists of small lakes with rich riverside vegetation. It takes its typical shape only next to the Csótfá settlement. The river branch depths range from a few centimetres up to 5 meters. The most typical tree species in this region are black poplar (*Populus nigra*), white poplar (*Populus alba*), fragile willow (*Salix fragilis*), white willow (*Salix alba*), common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), and alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). There are also several protected water plants such as *Hippuris vulgaris*, water lily (*Nymphaea alba*), yellow water lily (*Nuphar lutea*), elodea plant (*Elodea canadensis*), and spiked water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum verticillatum*). This area features also typical vegetation including hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.), traveller's joy (*Clematis vitalba*), spindle tree (*Euonymus europeus*), and common ivy (*Hedera helix*). Klátovské rameno is a home for approximately 80 species of birds, a majority of them nesting directly within the protected area - swans (*Cygnus olor*), honey buzzards (*Pernis apivorus*), white storks (*Ciconia ciconia*), common kingfishers (*Alcedo atthis*), common coots (*Fulica atra*), and grey herons (*Ardea cinerea*). Fish species include northern pike (*Esox lucius*), perch (*Perca fluviatilis*), crucian carp (*Carassius carassius*), burbot (*Lota lota*), and various species of amphibians such as edible frog (*Rana esculenta*) and marsh frog (*Rana ridibunda*).

Cycling route

The Danube cycling route (Donauradweg) is an international route that is 168 km long and leads across Žitný ostrov along the Danube river. In Slovakia, it starts at the Austrian border crossing Berg. From that point it continues to the Gabčíkovo waterworks on both sides of the river and to Komárno. In Štúrovo, you may cross the border and enter Esztergom from where you may continue and visit Visegrad. Both nature lovers and cyclists will have many opportunities to enjoy the countryside because from Dunajská Streda, you may get by bike to almost all tourist attractions situated within Žitný ostrov. Approximately 9 km away from Dunajská Streda, there is

Dunajský Klátov

At the edge of the Dunajský Klátov village, in the picturesque environment of so-called Klátovské rameno of the Little Danube river, there is a precious technical monument – a watermill with a large blade wheel built in the 19th century. In 1920, the mill was remodelled and acquired its today's appearance. Unlike other watermills in the Danubeland region (Podunajsko), this one has a brick mill room and only the wheel and the drivetrain are situated in an adjacent wooden structure. The Klátov mill was used as late as in the 40-ties of the 20th century. In the following periods, it was damaged and deteriorated but it has been reconstructed and is fully functional today but does not serve its original purpose. The mill is under the administration of the Žitný ostrov Museum in Dunajská Streda, which has opened a very attractive exhibition devoted to water milling traditions within the watermill's authentic and originally furnished premises.

The village area is a home for the internationally renowned horseback riding club Czajlik Ranch. As a member of the Slovak Equestrian Federation, the club organizes Klátovský pohár (Klátovský cup) show jumping competition every year along with competitions for horse-drawn carriages, and fox hunts by the end of every riding season – Hubertus Ride. A sports and recreation centre offering accommodation with a number of sports and leisure time activities is situated next to Klátovské rameno. The centre offers also premises for conferences.

The next stop on the cycling route is the Jahodná village.

Jahodná

The village of Jahodná is situated next to the north-east border of the Dunajská Streda District, approximately 10 km away from the district town. A major part of the village spreads on the left bank of the Little Danube river, but since there is a line of houses on the right bank as well, we can say that the river flows through the village. Legends say that around the year 1460, soldiers of King Mathias were hunting in the surrounding forests and while resting on a clearing, girls from the nearby village offered them freshly picked strawberries. Maybe those soldiers gave the village with its lands full of strawberries the name Eperjes (eper – strawberry). The village is proud of its Roman Catholic church building built in the Baroque style by the Esterházy family in 1747. The church building is the oldest public building in the village and was named after apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul based on the day on which it was consecrated in 1750. In 1877, the village suffered from a big fire that not only destroyed the church roof but also the tower and organ and caused damage to bells. The church building was reconstructed and gained its current appearance in 1882. Currently, is administered by the Žitný ostrov Museum. Thanks to its location right next to the Little Danube river, the village is a popular destination for fans of water sports, fisherman, and those who simply wish to relax. The cycling route then leads us to the Topoľníky village.

Topoľníky

The Topoľníky village is situated close to the confluence of Klátovské rameno and the Little Danube river in the north-east part of Žitný ostrov. But this is not the original location of the village. Allegedly, the village was established on the Little Danube bank but it used to suffer from frequent floods and when it was burnt down by Turkish armies, its inhabitants decided to settle in a new place. Until today, the original location is called by the name Faluhely (the village location) in the Hungarian language. The oldest written report on the village dating back to 1113 mentions the name Narias. The church building in Topoľníky has been rebuilt several times and is almost as old as the village itself. One of its parts was built in 1307. The names identifying individual points within the surrounding lands belonging to the village include also the name Forgóvár (a spinning castle), which probably indicates existence of a turning observation tower serving to watch over a ford across the Little Danube river. The village offers a thermal swimming pool, car camp with excellent conditions for camping with tents, and other accommodation and recreational facilities suitable for various sports activities.

Trhová Hradská

The Trhová Hradská village spreads on the right bank of Klátovské rameno, next to its lower part. The name of the village indicates that a highway frequently used by stallholders and fair visitors used to

lead across the village. In the Middle Ages, the village held the township status with the right to organize fairs and its livestock fairs attended by farmers coming from its wider vicinity contributed significantly to its development. The Saint Antonius of Padova Church building is situated in the centre of the village and surrounded by a well-maintained garden. It was built within the location of the original wooden church building torn down by a flood in 1634. The destroyed church building was replaced by a new one in 1672 and the new church building has undergone several reconstructions. Its current layout forms the Greek cross and despite the fact that the church building interior is in the Art Nouveau style, Romanesque Revival elements dominate its exterior. The Lajos Kossuth Memorial situated in the village was installed in 1994 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his death. Along the road to Topoľníky, we can find the statue of Saint John of Nepomuk carved from sandstone in 1739. Other monuments situated in the village include the Holy Trinity Column created in the late classicism style in 1846, the wayside statue of Saint Florian created by A. Brandl in 1873, and the Holy Trinity Column created in the late Baroque style in 1774.

Horné Mýto

The Horné Mýto village is situated in the picturesque area delimited by Žitný ostrov, the Little Danube river, and Klátovské rameno. This small village is located at one of the highest points of Žitný ostrov. Although the precise date of its establishment is unknown because it is not mentioned even in the lists of watchtowers, it is included in the churchscot collector's list of 1268 where it is registered as Wamus.

There used to be an old Roman Catholic church building in the village which was mentioned as being old already in the Pazmány list. This indicates that it was built in the 14th century if not earlier. But the time took its toll on the church building. A new church building was built instead of it in the Baroque style in 1775 and rebuilt in the classicism style in the 19th century. Flour milling ranks among the oldest trades that Žitný ostrov used to be famous for. First mills were probably built here already in the 8th and 9th centuries. But it took another 500 years for flour milling to develop. At times, as many as hundred mills worked on water streams of Žitný ostrov but a majority of them is lost today. There used to be a big solid mill at Horné Mýto and we know that six millers and four helpers worked there in 1866. In 1930, the mill was still in use and its ruins were still visible as late as in the fifties. Today, there are only remnants of some of its twelve wheels surfacing from water and telling visitors the story of this famous flour milling area.

Ohrady

The village with 1350 inhabitants is situated in the north-east part of Žitný ostrov approximately 6 km away from the Dunajská Streda district town. The village borders with the Little Danube river and is surrounded by amazing countryside. The fauna and flora present here is a European rarity and the area has rightfully been declared to be a protected area. One of the precious natural assets of Žitný ostrov is a smaller island (Kürti-sziget) situated at the edge of the Ohrady village the bank of Klátovské rameno. Although this area is geographically located outside the area surrounded by Klátovské rameno and the Little Danube river, from the administration point of view it belongs to the small but beautiful area of Ohradské lúky (meadows) spreading between the northern border of the Ohrady village and the village of Horné Mýto. The countryside is rich in various species of plants and animals: deer, weasels, wild boars, muskrats hiding in the secret corner of the marvellous countryside full of diverse species of willows, oaks, rushes, reeds, and other colourful flowering plants. The diverse fauna representatives

include swans, pheasants, robins, kingfishers, coots, and grey herons. In addition to algae, you can find here also yellow lilies, white lilies and elodea plants. Klátovské rameno (and partially also Ohradské lúky) is a home for otters, frogs, molluscs, dragonflies and more than one hundred species of beetles.

The village is a member of association of villages of the Klátovské rameno micro region, which was established by the end of 2004 to cooperate not only in the area of economic and social development but also in the areas of tourism, environmental protection, education, and culture. The Association consists of 11 villages with 16 300 inhabitants in total. Each village of the micro region is different but they are similar in many ways and mutually interconnected by the beauty of the surrounding countryside and hospitable people.

Dunajská Streda

is the district town situated in the heart of Žitný ostrov. The town has a rich history and once it was considered to be the market town and the business centre of the region and served as a meeting place for traders for many centuries. The name of the town reflects regularly held local fairs. Žitnoostrovský jarmok (a fair) has been held regularly for 39 years, always in September, as continuation of this tradition. The fair is attended by local craftsmen and craftsmen from the wider vicinity of the Region of Žitný ostrov. The local historical monuments include the Roman Catholic church building of Saint George built in the Gothic style in the 14th century and the protestant church building built in the 19th century. Art lovers may visit the Gallery of works of contemporary Hungarian artists living in Slovakia, which is located in historical Vermes Villa built in the 19th century and in the Žitný ostrov Museum that offers also a permanent ethnographic and archaeological exhibition in so called Žltý kaštieľ (Yellow Manor). The manor was originally built in the Baroque style in the 18th century but later, in the 19th century, it was remodelled in the classicism style. There are also many facilities catering for sports activities: a thermal swimming pool, sports hall, new sports stadium FC DAC 1904, and the artificial ice-skating rink. Those who wish to relax may visit the thermal swimming pool (THERMALPARK Dunajská Streda) offering perfect opportunities for relaxation within the premises spreading over 26 hectares and featuring healing water spots, a swimming pool, spa with adventures, camping site next to the lake and space for other sports activities. International wine festival MUN-DUS is held here every two years and it ranks among the most important wine competitions in Slovakia where winemakers from Žitný ostrov and other regions of Slovakia and from abroad compete with their products and offer wine tasting as well. The town's main street features several historical buildings renovated according to the projects developed by architect Imre Makovecz.

Veľký Meder

is situated in the southern corner of the Western Slovakia, next to the international road and 10 km away from the Medveďov border crossing. The village is located within the Danube lowlands, the south-east part of Žitný ostrov. The town's history spans over 940 years and is very popular among tourists. It became famous thanks to a thermal swimming pool (THERMAL CORVINUS Veľký Meder) run by the municipal authority. The chemical composition of the geothermal water has, according to doctors' experience, favourable effects within treatment of joint diseases, spine problems, and myasthenia and it supports body regeneration in general. The hottest thermal water spring with the temperature of 92°C in Slovakia is situated there.

Šamorín.

POMLÉ, a 10-hectar town park is located around a former branch of the Danube river and it has been a popular recreation spot not only for inhabitants of Šamorín but also for visitors for several centuries. A nature trail provides information about the natural assets of the bottomland forests. The local amphitheatre serves for regular cultural and sports events. The town features also a Roman Catholic church building and a monastery, both monuments are representatives of the Late Baroque style dating back to the 18th century. The most precious monument in Šamorín is the of the Reformed Church building that is one of the oldest and most beautiful architectural gems on Žitný ostrov – it was built in the 13th century in the Late Romanesque style. Close to the Danube river, there is sports and leisure time resort X-BIONIC® SPHERE offering ideal conditions for both professional and amateur sports activities and pleasant relaxation.

Gabčíkovo

The town is about 10 km away from the district town and 40 km away from Bratislava. The Gabčíkovo waterworks situated here serves to regulate the water level in the Danube river and to produce power and offers cruises through its lock chambers. The Gabčíkovo waterworks wins the favour not only those visitors who are active and want to engage in sports activities but also those who prefer peace and relaxation.

Orechová Potôň

is situated approximately 7 km away from Dunajská Streda. The most important tourist attraction is MALKIA PARK – BIG CATS RESCUE, a place where you can find a number of beasts of prey and rare animals. When accompanied by the professionals working there, you may feed and pet the animals or have pictures taken with them. Slovakia Ring is a racing track in Slovakia which hosts many important international motor events. Visitors may try out the track either in their own or in professional racing cars or motor bikes. You may try to walk in the shoes of a true professional for a few minutes. The track not only raises your adrenalin but it also gives you the opportunity to improve your driving skills.

In 2017, the village succeeded in obtaining non-refundable support for implementation of its project: Development of Tourism Infrastructures in the Villages of Ohrady and Erdőkürt, project ID: SKHU/1601/1.1/228. The project was implemented within the Interreg V-A Slovak Republic – Hungary Cooperation Program financed from the European Fund for Regional Development, state budgets of the Slovak Republic and Hungary, and from own resources of the project partners. The general partner of the project is the Ohrady village (SK) and the Erdőkürt village (HU) is the cross-border partner. The implementation of the project started on 1 December 2017 and ended on 31 March 2019. The main goal of the project is to contribute towards the economic competitiveness of countryside areas of the villages of Ohrady and Erdőkürt through enhancement of attractiveness of both villages and to support development of cross-border tourism. The project included construction and reconstruction of public area elements interesting in view of tourism development, improvement of the overall appearance of villages, and the start of cooperation among tourism stakeholders within the region. The villages promote themselves as tourist destinations with specific offers for tourists. For the Ohrady village, the project meant a new park, playground for children, market place, renovation

of the village centre, a nature trail with two meditation and information centres, public lighting system, irrigation system, and greenery adjustments. In the village of Erdőkürt, a playground for children was built along with a bridge across the local brook, information boards were installed, the local park underwent renovation along with installation of a theatre stage shelter and the drainage channel from the car park was reconstructed.

Two workshops were held within the Project in Ohrady attended by representatives of institutions and organizations from the regions of the partner villages, inhabitants, and representatives of self-governments. The workshop agendas included presentation of tourist attractions within the villages of Ohrady and Erdőkürt, which was followed by selection of some of them to create specific packages of combined tourist services making use of the existing natural assets and cultural heritage.

Tourist package:

Danube flour mills and other cultural monuments

Cycling route in the Klátovské rameno micro region

Nature trails on Žitný ostrov

Historical monuments on Žitný ostrov and cultural heritage

Sports activities and relaxation on Žitný ostrov

Natural assets of the Danubeland region