



## MAP OF CELJE'S LEGENDS

AWARE OF THE FACT THAT CELJE IS LIKE LASAGNE WITH A THOUSAND LAYERS, WE DECIDED TO PRESENT THE VISITORS WITH A CONCISE ILLUSTRATED PRESENTATION OF THE TOWN AND ITS SURROUNDINGS, WHICH SHEDS SOME LIGHT ON THE HISTORY, URBAN LEGENDS, AND NOTABLE SIGHTS THAT MAKE OUR TOWN SO ATTRACTIVE. THROUGH A SERIES OF STORIES, EACH LOCATION IS BROUGHT TO LIFE BY NOTORIOUS RESIDENTS WHO TAKE THE VISITORS ON A JOYRIDE THROUGH CELJE. WE WISH ALL WELL-INTENTIONED GUESTS AN UNFORGETTABLE STAY, MAY YOU CREATE A CELJE LEGEND OF YOUR OWN!



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## 1. URBAN LEGENDS FROM THE HOSTEL



THE COUNTS OF CELJE

**1. The Counts of Celje**  
 Wide paved roads, tales of hidden treasures, huge castles, dragons, lovers lost, backstabbing murders and invincible heroes. The position of Celje, City of Lords, which could have stood equal to the biggest cities of Europe, remains a phantasm of everyday life, with the cry: "Counts of Celje, today and never-more" still resounding.



CATFISH DOGEATER

**2. Catfish Dogeater**  
 Bubbles gently break the surface, water stirs and the pooch, swimming around carelessly, is gone with-out a trace. There are many mystical stories surrounding Šmartinsko Lake. A gigantic catfish is supposed to be lurking there, eating small children, cats, dogs, swans.



CELJE NINJA

**3. Celje Ninja**  
 One quiet morning a shuriken ripped through the air and just for a briefest of moments, a dark shadow could be seen lurking, as a city gets its newest urban legend. This is a true story of a man in black, armed to the teeth, who wanted to put an end to the injustice happening around him.



MR. K.

**4. Mr.K.**  
 "How to catch oneself?" This is a question echoing the city streets for decades. An urban story of a police officer in pursuit of a person behind a crime, he himself has perpetrated.



RED HOUSE

**5. Red House**  
 ...on one bright socialist day, a notorious factory in Celje was visited by a high-ranking political officer of the Central Committee. He demanded that, for the good of the socialist future, the current director be replaced with comrade Ocvirk...



CELJE SUBCULTURE

**6. Celje Subculture**  
 Celje probably has the highest percent of unique characters per square meter of urban land-scape. All these "warriors against everyday bleakness" have successfully merged with the colorful subculture. The ambient of back alleys offers company, freedom of expression, and in the same time, a haven against the mainstream of "normality".



LOVE

**7. Love**  
 Unrequented, past, gay, forbidden, lost, damned. All these manners of love, and many more, have been woven into the fabric of the city. Of most of them, there are only tiny specs left to remind us, like those of Alfred Nobel and his great money devourer from Celje – Sofija Hess

### MCC Hostel – house of legends

Lively, youthful, artsy, active and social. It is located on the edge of the city center in a recently renovated building, close to bus and train station. Rooms designed by local artist glow with youthful playfulness and they take you into the world of Celje myths and legends. The hostel is part of Celje youth center and together with the Club of students they form a powerful boost of young energy at one place. It also has a café, little park, concert hall and numerous options for socializing and sports. You definitely won't get bored there, so check the event list before arrival! [www.mc-celje.si](http://www.mc-celje.si), [www.celje.si](http://www.celje.si)

## 2. THE LEGENDS OF HISTORY



THE LEGENDS OF HISTORY

**8. Narodni dom**  
 Once the spiritual and cultural fortress of Slovenes in the city. Built according to the plans of the Czech architect V. Hraski (1879). It has a rich Neo-Renaissance front and festive hall, in which are held a number of concerts and all official municipality ceremonies. Today, the building is the seat of the Municipality of Celje.

### 9. Pelikan photo studio

One of the very few excellently preserved photo studios featuring a glass roof structure, dating from the 19th century. Acquired by the renowned Celje-based photographer Josip Pelikan in 1920, it is now a part of the collection of Celje's Museum of Recent History, showcasing both the photographer's everyday life and the bits and pieces of Celje as it once was. A photo session in early 20th century attire can also be booked.

### 10. Alma Karlin

A cosmopolitan, globetrotter, writer and theologian, she travelled around the world (1919-1928) on a meager budget and a typewriter, the legendary Erika. She spoke over a dozen languages and her skin morphology saved her from being devoured by cannibals of Papua New Guinea.

### 11. Celeia - a town beneath the town

In the period of Classical Antiquity, Celje – then called Celeia – was home to some 10,000 souls. Town beneath the town is a concept of exhibiting the remains of the Roman settlement, which include an excellently preserved Roman road. This transparently laid out "in situ" exhibition space will take you on a stroll through the ancient times. Perhaps one of Slovenia's most beautiful museums, it won the award for the best Slovenian architectural solution in 2010.

### 12. Stari pisker

In World War II, this was a notorious prison where Slovenian patriots were locked up, tortured, and executed. In 1944, six daring activists freed 127 prisoners in a raid that would make Hollywood action heroes tremble and blush. Today, it is a part of the Museum of Recent History.

### 13. Water Tower

Seeing a major deluge every once in a decade, the residents of Celje hardly need to travel to Venice; they are "lucky" enough to see Venice occasionally flood into their city. One witness of high waters in the past is the exposed defense post in the medieval walls – the Water Tower. It got its name from the stone plaque carrying the year 1627 and a relief of a finger pointing to the level of water during the flood in that year.

### 14. People's Loan Society

The most notable building constructed in Celje during the two World Wars built to the design and plans of the most known Central European architect Jože Plečnik. Plečnik resolved the tension between two street-side lots with a rounded corner wall featuring balconies, which seamlessly brings the two wings of the building together. While supervising the construction, the prominent gentleman Plečnik could not resist the local wines, which severely challenged his balance as he tried to catch the train to Ljubljana and left him dead to the world throughout the ride.

### 15. Old castle

This is the largest medieval fortress in Slovenia and in the region of Eastern Alps. The original castle was built in the second half of the 12th century. Owing to the Lords of Žovnek whose meteor-like political ascent driven by skilful politics and speculative marriages also resulted in their elevation to the rank of Counts of Celje in 1341, the Castle became a political centerpiece of Central Europe in the centuries to come. After 1456 when the Counts were sadly left without heirs, the castle started to deteriorate. Today, it is well restored, offering lovely viewing points, a nice café, and a rich cultural program including concerts and historical reenactments on weekends.

## 3. NIGHT LEGENDS



NIGHT LEGENDS

**16. Špital**  
 A pub harboured in Slovenia's only preserved medieval almshouse offers a choice of cultural events throughout the year, and a varied assortment of beer. Friendly staff, pleasant location along the mediaeval walls and great live music on weekends spell out great night-time entertainment that you can also follow up with a morning coffee.

**17. Branibor**  
 The most frequented night club in recent years. Ample space, solid offer and modern trendy pop music seem to be the winning combination for drunken fun.

### 18. Zlata jama

The bar, residing in a mediaeval defence tower, offers an impressive selection of beer and other beverages. Good music and great brew served by friendly staff make Zlata jama a natural shelter from the madness of the outside world. According to a legend, a treasure once belonging to the Counts of Celje is hidden somewhere in the basement. Good coffee in the morning, refreshing beer and invigorating wine in the afternoon – or any other time of the day – just to make the time stop for a while.

### 19. Tamkocužiri

Drinking, culinary, and cultural heart of the artistic quarter, it will welcome characters who can save the world over a pint (or other piece of drinkware properly filled and frequently replenished). Probably the pub with the highest number of oddballs and misfits per capita. According to the Lonely Planet guide, it is "hipster and gay-friendly".

### 20. Metropol

Metropol café cohabits with its namesake cinema that has been in operation since 1936. Conversations over good coffee in the summer garden can easily extend into evening concerts of world, jazz or classical music, accompanied by a glass of wine. Sitting on the historical center's busiest street, it allows its patrons to take the pulse of the town's social life.

### 21. Sport pub Celeia

The place to go for all the sporty souls. Apart from cheering for your favourite team on one of many large TV screens, you can also cool your head with a wide selection of beverages and fill your stomach with delicious burgers and snacks. All in a good fun until the early morning hours. For additional enthusiasm after your team has won, you can climb onto the roof, where a panoramic view of the Celje - city with a long sports tradition, opens up.

## 4. CULTURAL/ART LEGENDS



CULTURAL/ART LEGENDS

**22. Visual Arts Gallery (Likovni salon)**  
 This exhibition area, part of Celje's Contemporary Arts Center (Center sodobnih umetnosti), is a sort of a lab presenting progressive contemporary artistic practices.

**23. Gallery of Contemporary Art**  
 The central exhibition facility of the Contemporary Arts Center, hosting solo and group exhibitions of renowned artists from Slovenia and abroad.

### 24. Plevnik-Kronkowska Gallery

A space of production and display of contemporary art, presenting Slovenian and international artists. Arguably, the exciting program is to be thanked for high attendance at the exhibitions that change about monthly. The name Kronkowska remains a mystery that the owner refuses to elucidate, which has led to a number of urban legends as to its origins.

### 25. Artistic quarter

The municipal authorities decided to allow the local artists to move into defunct and abandoned elite boutiques flanking a tiny square. The result is a minuscule artistic quarter, a place of small studios and big ideas. The quarter has a particularly lively pulse on Fridays and Saturdays. Here, the visitors can meet the authors of MCC Hostel's interior decoration.

### 26. Theatre

The only professional theatre in the region. The building with a lavish entrance was built in place of an older theatre and it incorporates a defense tower of the medieval walls. The theatre is renowned for its comedy festival "Dnevi komedije" and an excellent repertoire.

### 27. Regional Museum

Founded in 1882, this is the central museum institution for the broad region. In addition to the main building, it includes ten branch units. Permanent exhibitions (archaeology, cultural history, ethnology) are complemented by excellent temporary exhibitions. Notable exhibits include the oldest bone needle in Europe, and the Celje Ceiling, a giant optical illusion canvas.

### 28. Museum of Recent History

Former city hall houses the Museum of Recent history. Apart from the permanent collection which includes an exhibition on Celje, and a dentistry collection, it is also home to the children's museum called Herman's Den – the only children's museum in the country and a perennial winner of museum awards. Superb visiting exhibitions add their share in drawing a very decent attendance.

### 29. The church of St. Daniel

The abbey and parish church was built in the Gothic period and re-Gothicized in the 19th century. The interior and exterior feature several integrated medieval and renaissance tombstones. The Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows is an excellent example of a private chapel reserved for the high nobility. Virtually untouched to this day, it is a remnant of the glory days of the Counts of Celje. The chapel features one of the most beautiful sculptures of Lamentation (Pietà) from the High Gothic period.

### 30. Cinema Metropol

The only movie theatre in the city center. The auditorium is located in a Plečnik building. The cinema has been in operation continuously since 1936 and it is appreciated by its patrons for refined choice of films as well as concert series focusing on different musical genres.

## 5. SPORTS LEGENDS



SPORTS LEGENDS

**31. Šmartinsko Lake**  
 One of the largest artificial lakes, or reservoirs, in Slovenia. This popular destination includes walking paths, an open-air bathing site, as well as standard hospitality services. The lake offers recreational activities on the water, such as supping or kayaking, as well as great fishing. You can have a drink by the lake in the newly opened Catfish with mustache bar or at Muzelj, where you can rent paddle boats and get something to eat as well.

### 32. Zlatorog Hall + the Football Stadium

The sports center of the town with two modern venues. Handball has a long tradition in Celje. The most glorious season for the Celje Pivovarna Laško team was 2003/04 when they won the EHF Champions League.

### 33. Open air swimming pool

Throughout the town's history, public open air swimming pools were traditionally located on the shores of Savinja river, which earned Celje the moniker »The pearl on Savinja«. Today, the open air pool includes an Olympic size pool and other facilities, offering a total of 1700 square meters of water fun. The place to go to escape the heat of the summer!

### 34. Celjska Koča

A popular hiking and biking destination for many locals. During the winter, it doubles as a ski resort. Next to the ski slope, there is an adrenaline-pumping Alpine coaster, adventure park and a thrilling path for mountain bikers from the top of Tolsti vrh. Educational path through the woods is also neatly maintained. Hotel offers wide selection of menus and drinks and the views to the city are magnificent. Worth a day hike!

### 35. Kotečnik climbing wall, Liboje

Just outside Celje, there is an alpine ridge whose relief makes it one of the largest climbing walls in the South eastern Europe, challenging the climbers to countless routes of all difficulty levels.

### 36. Athletic stadium/tennis courts

Athletics has a long history in the city that has given many great athletes. The best known are Stanko Loriger, an honorary citizen and participant of three Olympic Games, and Stane Rozman whose national record for the 10,000 m run from 30 years ago remains unbeaten to this day. Next to athletic stadium, there are tennis courts and nice picnic place.

**WORDS and PHRASES you need to blend in with the locals**  
 (phonetic transcription in square brackets):  
 Serbus (serbi) [saer-boose] – greeting upon arrival or departure  
 Pir [peer] – beer  
 Čele (Cele) [tsiyele] – Celje

## 6. LEGENDARY EATS



LEGENDARY EATS

**37. Frand**  
 A family restaurant that can caress your palates in a number of ways. Focus on homemade specialties and typical Slovenian fare. Culinary delights, worthy of sin. The place has been awarded the "Goštilna Slovenija" (Restaurant Slovenia) brand.

**38. Pub and pizzeria Koper**  
 The pizza is great here and garden is always full of shade, and other offer is certainly keeping up. In addition to exquisite cuisine, pizzeria Koper boasts being the first to serve pizza in Celje – as far back as in the days of socialism.

### 39. Prijatlih

The very name of this restaurant (meaning "At Friends") indicates that every guest will be welcomed like a true friend and offered a broad selection of daily lunches served by friendly staff. The summer garden overlooks the main square (Glavni trg) with its daily verve. A decent wine list, a menu of select dishes and intimate and relaxed atmosphere make this place a good choice for a romantic evening as well.

### 40. Snack bar/burek parlour Šerif Šaban

The best burek in town; paired with yoghurt and Turkish coffee, it makes the infamous "breakfast of champions". Due to the owner's conservative policy of dignified livelihood, it runs out shortly after noon. The place is also popular for its fresh old school ice cream straight from the machine.

### 41. Stari pisker

One of the best restaurant and pub catering primarily to the carnivore crowds. It is famous for burgers and their own aged meat. Quality ingredients, meticulous preparation, and solid service amount to a meat-lover's paradise. Inventive desserts will round off your meal and give your blood sugar a surge. They also offer daily lunches, including a vegetarian version.

### 42. Aga kebabçi

Almost touching the ruins of Alma Karlin's birthplace, this stand packed with diligent staff serves several versions of the döner kebab. The place is especially lively on weekends when it is tasked with feeding the starving crowds of partying youth.

### 43. Grill snack bar Jakup Beđeti, s. p.

To get up close and personal with the king of pleskavica and ževapčiči (finger-shaped grilled minced meat), head to the bus station to see a ball of meat instantly transform into something delicious.

## 7. CITY LEGENDS



CITY LEGENDS

**44. Public park**  
 Public park designed in the second half of the 19th century. It features chestnut lined alleys, a promenade with a water pool along the axis and a web of walking paths on the woody slopes the park is leaning against. There are tennis courts, ice skating hall and a nice bar with little sport park for kids. A popular destination for citizens looking for a brief getaway and teenagers celebrating the end of a successful week at school on Fridays. In addition, space like tree house together with playground for children, has been built on the way from park to Miklavški hill.

### 45. City beach

From late May to mid September, the southern side of the medieval city walls turns into a riverside beach with plenty of shade to chill in. Offer from the bar goes well with regular cultural events taking place there.

### 46. City market

The main market is a slightly architectural whole, albeit falling short in some aspects of functionality. In the mornings, especially Saturdays, the market is a popular gathering hub for the locals feasting their eyes on a wide offer of juicy fruit and vegetables. Don't miss a chance to try some pumpkin seeds, if you are in the neighbourhood.

### 47. Celje Fair showground

In Slovenia and indeed the broader region, Celje is famous for being a city of fairs and tradeshows that have seen local and international exhibitors and visitors flock to this site for ages. Specialized fairs and tradeshows are held each year. The main event of the season is the International Trade Fair which has taken place each year since 1967; recent additions to the roster include the only erotic fair in Slovenia.

### 48. Špica

For every fan of water sports, particularly kayaking and canoeing, Špica is a popular destination, where excellent athletes of all categories hone their skills. For the brave who wish to get up close and personal with the Savinja River, boats are available for rent. The bar offers a selection of pizzas and other food served on a terrace from where you can observe the young athletes in training or just locals passing by.

## 8. LEGENDARY VIEWS



LEGENDARY VIEWS

**49. A walk up the Miklavški hill**  
 The ultimate make-out spot

**50. Friderik's Tower**  
 Freestanding defense tower within the old castle, 23 meters high. After the fateful love (forbidden marriage) between Frederick II. and Veronika Deseniška, the father of Friderik II. Herman II. murdered Veronika and imprisoned Friderik in the tower for a year. Today the tower is newly renovated and offers a viewing platform of the entire neighborhood.

### 51. Jožefov hrib

Jožefov hrib ("the Joseph Hill") with St. Joseph's Church, built in 1681 as a token of appreciation to the Almighty for protecting the citizens from plague, also makes a great spot for a view of the town.



**CELJE**  
city of legends

TO LASKO

CESTA V LASKO

CELJE CASTLE  
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