

Celje city of legends

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!



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, Cjele (Cele) [tsiyele] - Celje



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Celje 2012

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 nevermore" still resounding.



CATFISH DOGEATER

2. Catfish Dogeater - Bubbles gently break the surface, water stirs and the pooch, swimming around carelessly, is gone without 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 landscape. 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 sawn 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

2. THE LEGENDS OF HISTORY



THE LEGENDS OF HISTORY

8. Narodni dom - Once the spiritual and cultural fortress of Slovenes in the city, it was built in 1879 to the plans of the Czech architect V. Hraski. It has a rich Neo-Renaissance front and festive hall that hosts numerous concerts and official municipal ceremonies. Today, the building is also 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 theosophist, 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 skinny morphology saved her from being devoured by cannibals of Papua New Guinea.

11. 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 one of the most known Central European architects 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 Zovnek 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 re-enactments on weekends.

3. NIGHT LEGENDS



NIGHT LEGENDS

16. Local - The basement of the only prominent baroque palace in Celje, the Prothasi Mansion, is home to a modern bar serving a wide range of intoxicating potions. The brick arches on the ceiling are an example of a keen ear for cultural heritage.

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. Beer Pub - One of the smaller medieval defense towers houses a beer pub and a beer shop boasting a varied and quality offer of brew from across the globe. This institution stands witness to the fact that the locals of Celje carry beer in their hearts, as well as in their bladders and livers.

19. Tamkouchiri - 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. Planet TUŠ - Spanning an area of 30,000 m², this mall is a combination of shopping and entertainment. It includes all sorts of shops, cafés, cinema halls, and a bowling alley. The place is owned by the richest citizen of Celje, the mysterious adrenaline Junky Mirko Tuš.

21. Kristal - For gentlemen wondering what exactly it was that Alfred Nobel and many other dignitaries came - and kept returning - to Celje for. Keywords: payment, discretion, anonymity, ladies of the night, condoms - you get the picture.

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 - Herman's Den - 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, as well as great fishing.

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 Savinja River, which earned Celje the moniker "The Pearl on the Savinja River". Today, the open air pool includes an Olympic-sized pool and other facilities, offering a total of 1,700 square meters of water area.

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, and the hotel's cuisine is first-rate. Educational path through the woods is also neatly maintained.

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.

6. LEGENDARY EATS



LEGENDARY EATS

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

38. Pub and pizzeria Koper - The pizza is great here, 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. Tavern and pizzeria La Storia - At Trattoria La Storia, master chef Tomaž Zavec, who learned his art from none other than Gordon Ramsey, combines haute cuisine with the cosiness of your grandma's kitchen to caress your palate, Mediterranean style. As of recently, vegetables and herbs come from their own sustainable garden.

40. Snack bar/burek parlor 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 ice cream straight from the soft serve ice cream machine.

41. Friderik pub - Veronika patisserie - Apart from the obvious - beer and pastry - this place, located opposite the cinema Metropol, serves ready-made lunch-break menus and à la carte dishes. The slightly "baroque" interior is complemented by hearty fare.

42. Aga kebapçi - 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 Bedeti, s. p. - To get up close and personal with the king of pljeskavica (hamburger) and čevapčiči (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. A popular destination for citizens looking for a brief getaway, and teenagers celebrating the end of a successful week at school on Fridays.

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.

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 - A popular gathering point on the walking path along the confluence of the Ložnica creek and Savinja River; also the seat of the local kayak and canoe rowing club. Once unsightly wooden shed has recently been replaced by a modern facility catering to the needs of rowers and thirsty by-passers.

8. LEGENDARY VIEWS



LEGENDARY VIEWS

49. A walk up the Miklavški hrib - the 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.

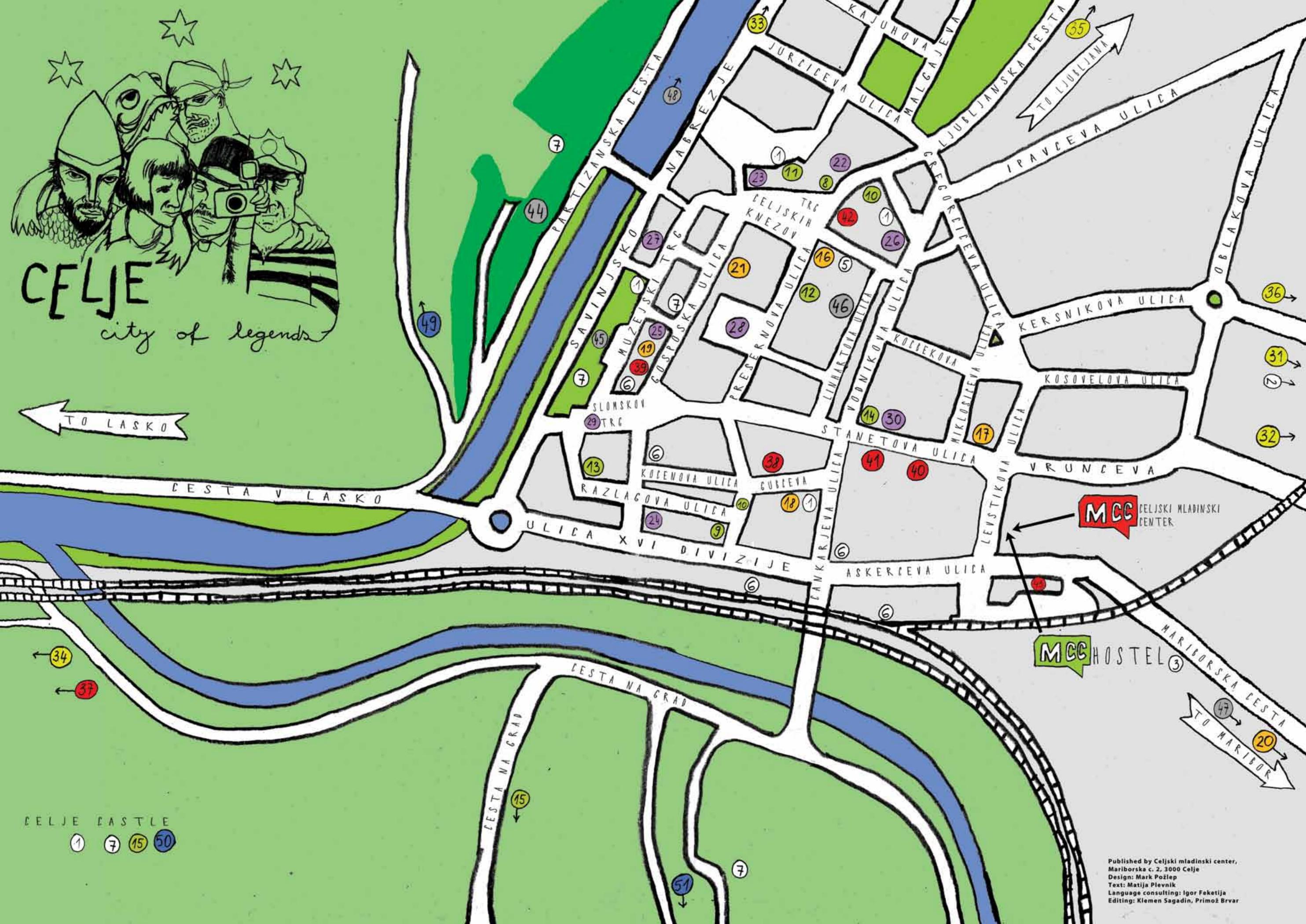
51. Jožefov hrib ("the Joseph Hill") with St. Joseph's Church, built in 1681 as a token of appreciation to the Almighty for protecting the citizens from plague, also makes a great spot for a view of the town.



CELJE

city of legends

← TO LASKO



CELJE CASTLE
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