

A LOVE PATH TOWARDS THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF PODGORICA

Each part of Podgorica has its own history which, together with the memories of the city and the people who created it, makes us aware of its rich cultural heritage. Interesting notions, intertwined with human destinies and historical events, "paint" a city in a special way. They are remembered for a long time, while their emotional charge encourages thinking about a sunny town in the valleys of impetuous rivers.

"A Love Path towards the Cultural Identity of Podgorica" is a walk through the alleys of Podgorica, which introduces the culture of living, developing the city and understanding the harmonious multicultural coexistence in this area. This track is not common. Cultural monuments, as testimonies of the city's long and rich past, will be "narrators" of various stories: human, love, historically based or those that poems managed to save from oblivion.



KUSLEV'S HOUSE

The house belonged to the dentist Dr. Hristo (Risto) Kuslev, who came to work in the Principality of Montenegro after finishing his studies in 1908. Kuslev was born in 1883 in the town of Kukush, in former Macedonia. In the twenties of the XX century, this famous dentist built a house on the right bank of Ribnica, where he immediately placed a dental clinic and performed practice. With a series of windows, enframements, staircases, spacious porches and terraces, the house is one of the few buildings in Podgorica with preserved authentic Balkan architecture of the first decades of the XX century. One of the few which survived the 1944 bombing. After World War II, the house was used for various purposes and for the longest period of time for the needs of the City Museum, to which it still belongs today. The interior of the house is adorned with the exhibition "Kuslev's House - Time Travel" which follows the life and work of the famous dentist who stayed in Podgorica for the rest of his life.



1.

HAMMAM/BATH

The former hammam (bathroom) was built in the Oriental style during the Ottoman period. It was designed in two single-storey architectural units of different bases, which were connected to the third ground floor. The disjointed architecture was dominated by three domes combined with dual - drain roofs.

It was later turned into a public bathroom, the so-called Bath. This was reported by the newspapers in 1926: "Podgorica got a new cultural heritage. On March 16 this year, the modern bathroom was completed, with bathtubs, showers, and on that day, it was put in function".

Of the three domes, only the middle one has been preserved. Today, the Carver Bookstore is at this place, where it organizes occasional literary events.



2.

HADŽI - PAŠA'S BRIDGE

The area around the mouth of the Ribnica in Morača is known as Sastavci or Skaline. In the immediate vicinity of the place is the oldest bridge in Podgorica, built during Roman times. The stone bridge is one of the few remains of a former Roman city located in this area. After several damages, in the first half of the 18th century, it was restored by Hadži-Paša Osmanagić, after whom it was named Hadži-Paša's Bridge. Smaller in size and with harmonious lines, it blends in perfectly with the natural ambience of the place. Slightly raised in the middle, it bridges Ribnica with one arched opening. It is believed that in addition to the Hadži-Paša Osmanagić's bridge, he paved the alleys of the Old Town with pebbles from Morača, built the Clock Tower, the symbol of the Old Town and the Osmanagić Mosque. Already at the end of the 19th century, it connected the old part of the city with the modern one, mixing styles, cultures, religions and customs. Hadži-Paša's Bridge is a testimony to Podgorica's uniqueness. Various gatherings, unforgettable friendships, love meetings or farewells are still an indispensable part of the memory of many Podgorica citizens, which gives this area a special, emotional symbolism.



3.

DEPEDOGEN

On the plateau above the mouth of the Ribnica in Morača are the remains of a former large Ottoman fortress, built during the reign of Mehmed Khan from 1474 to 1477/8. As a fortification facility, adapted to warfare with firearms, it is mentioned in a defter from 1485 under the name Depedogen, which means under the hill (under Goric). The fortress was built of square hewn stone, with strong towers and city walls that were increased several times during the Ottoman rule "both in width and length". On the mainland, along the entire length of the fortress, at a distance of 6 to 10 meters from the ramparts, there was a protective trench that probably connected the river banks, through which a drawbridge led to the main entrance. Inside the walls there was a city with "300 houses, one Fatih's mosque, granaries, an excellent ammunition depot, cannons and water tanks". High ramparts do not exist today. Here and there, the remains can be seen as the oldest parts of the former kasaba, later the small town from which today's Podgorica will emerge. The old town - Stara varoš - is the oldest part of Podgorica, with recognizable Balkan oriental architecture. After the liberation of Podgorica from the Ottomans in 1879, the importance of the Old Town declined. During a visit to Podgorica in 1912, an English travel writer recorded:

"The streets are vertical and roughly paved, and each damaged stone exudes a pathetic story of past glory that has disappeared in stories of the past long time ago".



4.

STARODOGANJSKA MOSQUE

Of all the mosques that Podgorica once had, today there are two - Starodoganjska and Osmanagić mosques. The oldest and for a long time the only mosque in Podgorica was the Starodoganjska mosque built by Skender-beg Čaušev at the end of the 15th century. It was called Skender-Čaušev's mosque "until it lost its waqfs in Kuči, and since then it has been called Starodoganjska, because it was maintained by merchants and craftsmen who had their shops (known as "doganje") in its surroundings". The largest and most beautiful mosque in Podgorica - Glavotović mosque was built at the end of the 16th century, but it was destroyed in the 1944 bombing. After the Second World War until recently, it was the only active mosque in Podgorica. It is not known what this mosque originally looked like. It has been restored several times. It is built of stone, as is the minaret. The mosque is surrounded by a stone wall. In its yard is the seat of the Meshihat of the Islamic Community of Montenegro.

OSMANAGIĆ MOSQUE

Not far from Starodoganjska, there is the Osmanagić mosque. It was built parallel to the Clock Tower at the end of the 18th century. Both the Clock Tower and this mosque were built by Hadži Mehmed - Paša Osmanagić. It was also known as the Lukačević's mosque, because members of the Lukačević family took care of its maintenance. Within the courtyard there is a turbe (grave) of Mehmed- Paša Osmanagić, the founder of the mosque, while on the right side of the entrance there is a well. The turbe was built as an open building with four pillars of finely hewn stone on which rests a semi-circular masonry dome. As the headstone on the turbe was destroyed, the exact year of the death of the builder of this mosque remained unknown. During the Second World War, it suffered great damage, due to which it was in a ruined state for almost half a century. Today, the mosque is an imposing building, with a stone minaret of harmonious proportions, whose facades are shaped like domed buildings with pointed arches above the windows.

CLOCK TOWER

The Clock Tower - a symbol of old Podgorica, was built by Hadži-Paša Osmanagić in the 18th century. In 1865, the English travel writer William Denton wrote that it was the tallest of all the buildings in the town. Legend has it that Hafiz Paša "brought a clock from Italy, and built a bell and weights of unusual weight into it." After the liberation of Podgorica from the Ottoman rule in 1879, Prince Nikola has also been taking care about proper functioning of the clock on the tower. In July 1892, the Clock Tower was restored, and it was written: "The Clock Tower in Podgorica was repaired and a clock was installed, while the bell was already there from ancient times. The prince gave 200 forints. The repair of the tower, the purchase of the clock and its installation costed the municipality 1000 forints. Around it was a bazaar with inns." It is built of crushed and hewn stone in lime mortar, square in base and about 20 m high. It is located on Bećir-Beg Osmanagić Square. It stood for itself like some Belgian or Italian bell tower. For a long time this beautiful lady was the only indicator of time. It is in the same place today. It's telling us a story about the love of two young people, in the time after liberation, when Podgorica as taking on the characteristics of a European city in which the bourgeoisie was slowly accepting European manners, but religion, customs and honor were remaining the Montenegrin identification shield. In the collision of the modern with the old, new patterns of behavior were formed, Europeanization could be seen, but tradition and culture stand firm.



7.

"RISTO STIJOVIĆ" GALLERY

The famous sculptor Risto Stijović was born in 1894 in Podgorica, in the heart of Stara Varoš. His birth house was reconstructed by the Capital and turned into a gallery in 2018. It consists of an authentically reconstructed ground floor house, a spacious courtyard intended for an open stage and a representative gallery space with a permanent exhibition of works created by the celebrated artist. In 1912, when Risto Stijović finished high school, he went to Belgrade, where, at his father's request, he attended the Trade School. But he did not become the merchant. By mere chance, he found himself at the Art School, carrying a message to the future, then already respectable, Professor Đorđe Jovanović. There he saw easels for the first time, just started plaster works, drawings of various kinds and a wish to stay there was born. His works are part of many important museums and collections. He has won numerous prestigious awards and recognitions. At the World's Exhibition in Paris in 1937, he won the Grand Prix for sculpture. He participated in the most prestigious joint Paris exhibitions and collaborated with the greatest artists of that time: Pompon, Maillol, Picasso and Matisse. The exhibition setting in the "Risto Stijović" Gallery in Stara Varoš was realized through three thematic units that marked Stijović's work: the figure of a woman, portraits of characters from "The Mountain Wreath", as well as animal performances.



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6.

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ROUTE NAME:
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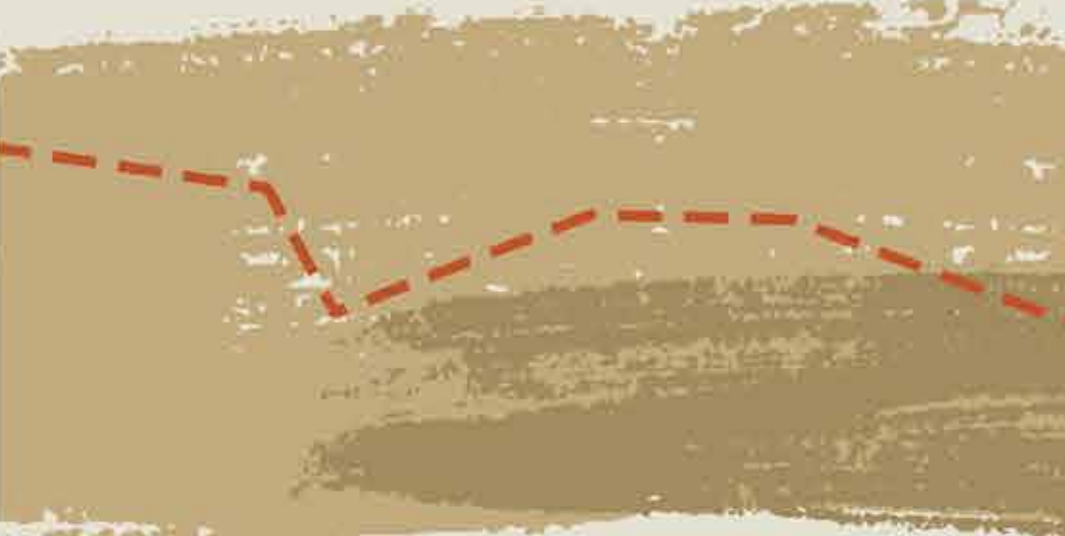
KUSLEV'S HOUSE - KAPADŽIĆ'S BRIDGE - HAMMAM -
BRIDGE ON SASTAVCI - DEPEDOGEN FORTRESS -
STARODOGANJSKA MOSQUE - OSMANAGIĆ MOSQUE -
CLOCK TOWER - "RISTO STIJOVIĆ" GALLERY

CATEGORIES:
**HISTORY, CULTURE, NATURE,
RELIGION, ART**

TRACK DIFFICULTY: EASY WALKING ROUTE
(NO SPECIAL PHYSICAL FITNESS REQUIRED)

DURATION: 2 - 3 HOURS

PATH LENGTH 1960 m



Realization: mr Vanja Vuković (text author), Aleksandar Drakulović (maps and design), Ivica Vuković (fotografija), mr Zorica Stijepović (cooperator), Slađana Sjekloća (translator). Print: DPC, 2021.