

HERITAGE TRAIL

“The Beauty of the Karst of the Devetaki Plateau”

Introduction

This is an adventure amid the beauty of the Devetaki Plateau and a special look at the karst formations that both shape and preserve its history.

You will have the chance to hear the pulse and meet the winged guardians in the Devetaki Cave, to feel the mysterious powers hidden in the Krushuna Waterfalls, in addition to their incredible beauty. You will discover the dark tunnels of the Fyutova Cave, that keep the secret of a hidden treasure, and you will look at the world from the inside out in the Golyama Garvanitsa Cave.

What you'll discover

- The Bats in the Devetaki Cave
- The Krushuna Waterfalls
- Futyo and Fyutova Cave
- Golyama Garvanitsa Abyss Cave

Each stop along this trail offers interesting stories and wonderful views, happiness of immersing yourself in nature and history.

Heritage stories

Story 1 “The Bats in the Devetaki Cave: The Guardians of the Night”



A quick, slightly creaking sound pierces the silence of the night – the guardians of the night wake up: the bats of the Devetaki cave. Whispers in the darkness... a motion in the shadows. The Devetaki cave is a home of the silent and magical guardians of the night. A sudden flicker, a flap of wings and darkness comes alive under the majestic vaults of the Devetaki cave!

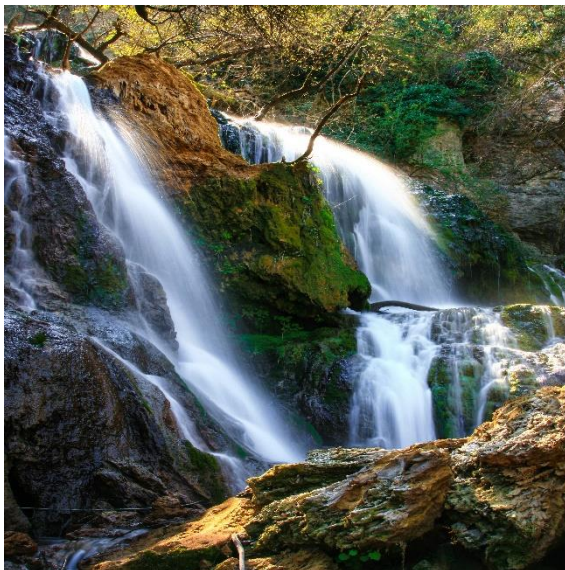
You will meet the incredible inhabitants of the cave – fifteen bat species, masters of flight and sonar. Explore the cave that has sheltered ancient civilizations and today preserves the miracles of nature.

The bats are the evidence of the fragile balance between nature and history – a connection that one needs to preserve. With the dance between light and shadows, the Devetaki cave reminds us that miracles are invisible to the naked eye, and manifest in the least expected ways.

Would you dare to enter the world of the masters of the night? Are you ready to feel the pulse of the cave and to meet its winged guardians?

Take the “Beauty of the Karst of the Devetaki Plateau” Heritage Trail and visit the Devetaki Cave.

Story 2 “The Krushuna Waterfalls: Ancient Wise Men Whisper Next to the King’s Lost Tomb”



What do the Krushuna Waterfalls hide and why they are linked to lost kings and mystical monks? This place is not just a natural phenomenon, but also a treasure with mysteries. The mysterious waterfalls of Krushuna hide more than just natural beauty. The legends tell a story of a king, buried here, and a monastery, which has not been found yet. The legends of the lost tomb of the Bulgarian king and the search for the mystical monastery, engulfed in time, will take you on a journey through the centuries. You will find remains of cells of Hesychast monks, who sought silent union with God.

The Krushuna Waterfalls are not just a natural wonder, they are also a treasure trove of ancient spiritual practices, which leave an indelible mark on our history. Each rock here carries a secret, and each niche – wisdom. The Krushuna Waterfalls impress not only with their beauty, but also with their historical and spiritual significance. This is just one of the sites that conquers not only with nature, but also with the infinite secrets of Bulgarian history.

What secret forces are hidden in the Krushuna Waterfalls? Take a closer look and uncover the spiritual traces of the past.

Take “The Beauty of the Karst of the Devetaki Plateau” Heritage Trail and visit the Krushuna Waterfalls.

Story 3 “Futyo and Futyova Cave: Where the True Treasure Lies”



A cave nests deep within the rocks around the village of Karpachevo; a cave whose dark passages keep a secret of a hidden treasure... and about the destiny of two men.

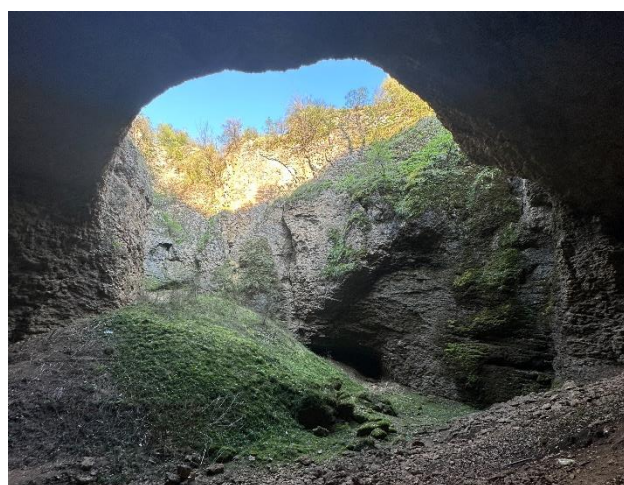
You will get acquainted with Futyo – a poor servant, who unexpectedly became rich; and a noble chieftain who chose goodness over power. You can also accidentally come across the treasure

somewhere in the dark corridors. Futyova cave reminds us all that true treasure lies not underground, but is hidden in the heart.

Do you dare to cross the threshold and discover the secret? Somewhere there, in the darkness, you may find much more than gold...

Take the “Beauty of the Karst of the Devetaki Plateau” Heritage Trail and visit the Futyova Cave.

Story 4 “Golyama Garvanitsa Abyss Cave: to See the Earth Inside Out”



Step on the ground, but this time take a look from the inside out! The Golyama Garvanitsa cave is not just a geographical landmark, it is an entrance to a completely new perspective. Descending into this deep abyss is not just a physical journey, but also an experience that is going to transform how you perceive the world. Imagine a cave that is not only a geographical phenomenon, but is also a portal to our ancestors’ past. Golyama Garvanitsa is an

abyss linked to myths about giants and ancient forces. When you visit it, you will feel in your bones that you are part of something bigger, something far beyond the trivial.

With a depth of 65 meters and a giant opening with a diameter of 45 meters, Golyama Garvanitsa is a place where ancient Thracians and Romans conducted mystical rituals. You will venture into a cave with unforgettable geological shapes, and you will find out how ancient people descended into this underground world without using modern technology.

This is an awesome place for those seeking unsolved mysteries. You will feel how the earth is breathing and how each stone tells its own story. Grab your adventure shoes and do not forget your camera, because this journey is worth being part of your memories!

Take the “Beauty of the Karst of the Devetaki Plateau” Heritage Trail and visit Golyama Garvanitsa Cave.

Why this trail matters

These caves are not just historical or geographical sites – they are living stories.

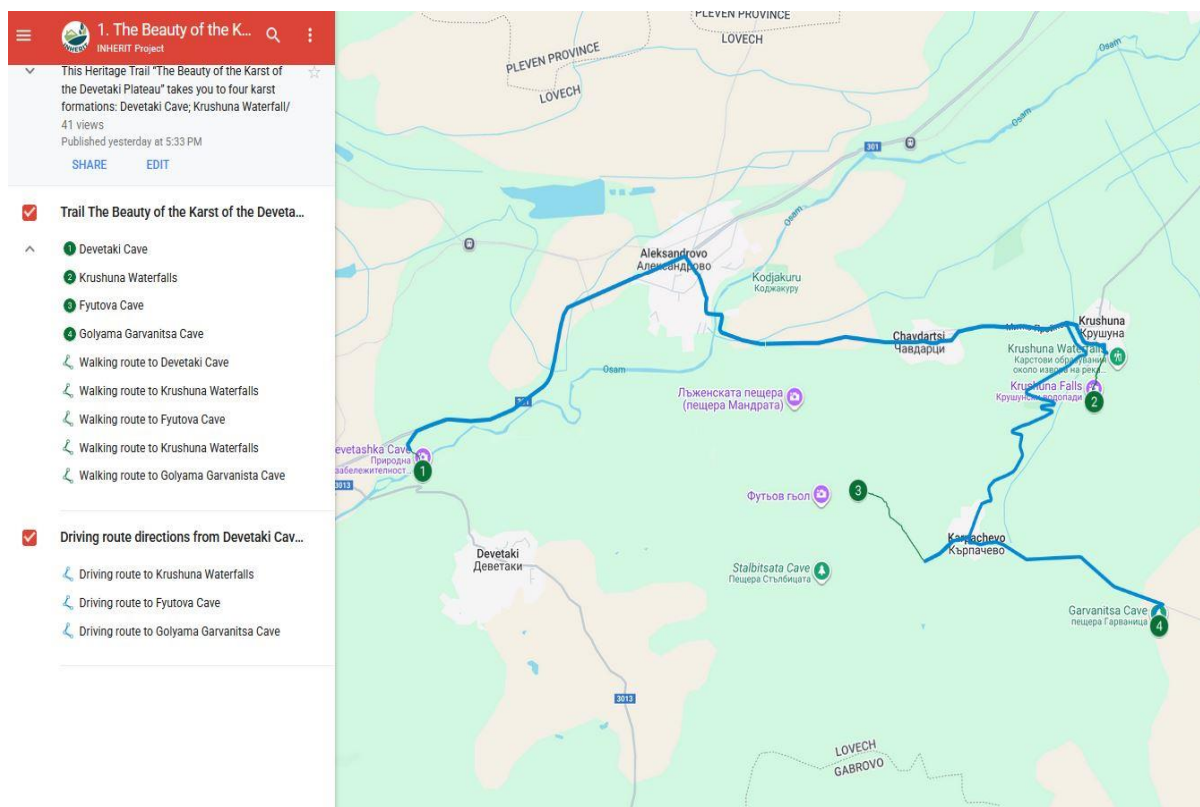
It’s not every day you can venture into places where time and history collide - places linked to mythical giants, ancient beliefs, and military secrets from our communist past, places where we can find the evidence of the fragile balance between nature and history – a connection we need to preserve, places that captivate the eyes and mind not only with nature, but also with infinite secrets from Bulgarian history.

Enjoy the beauty of the karst formations, the wonderful nature, and the exciting stories of the Devetaki Plateau.

Trail map

This Heritage Trail “The Beauty of the Karst of the Devetaki Plateau” takes you to four karst formations:

- Devetaki Cave
- Krushuna Waterfall/Maarata Cave
- Fyutova cave
- Golyama Garvanitsa Cave.



Link to the map:

https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/edit?mid=1TBtywBaJZqnZufQH1p9NMe7JR3ES_GY&usp=sharing

Stop 1	Devetaki Cave https://maps.app.goo.gl/vqiTrt4aS1fKq7Q98 GPS 43.233508, 24.885456
Stop 2	Krushuna Waterfalls/Maarata Cave https://maps.app.goo.gl/pRsBiB4J13D4gZNH9 GPS 43.242419, 25.034150
Stop 3	Futyova Cave https://maps.app.goo.gl/9BDepLv3YsKPi4v4A GPS 43.230833, 24.981111

Stop 4	Golyama Garvanitsa Cave https://maps.app.goo.gl/sL1Q6ZaMk8DtVdxVA GPS 43.211389, 25.047500
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Trail details

- Length (km):
 - 31 km
- Duration (without a quest / with a quest):
 - 4 hours and 30 min. / 5 hours
- Getting there:
 - Cycling and walking
 - Driving and walking
- Special notes (e.g., clothes, equipment, weather, etc.)
 - Sturdy shoes (rocky terrain inside caves and slippery paths in the forest)
 - Flashlight or headlamp (low-light areas inside caves)
 - Smartphone or printed map (for navigation)
 - Notebook or phone (to take notes for clues, if you engage with quests)
 - Best Season: Spring to Autumn (April – October), when the caves are easily accessible and safe
- Safety guidelines
 - Be cautious of uneven surfaces in the caves
 - Watch for loose rocks or slippery surfaces
 - Limited mobile coverage inside the caves – download an offline map
 - Respect the sites – the caves are natural heritage
- Guided tour (by INHERIT partner) and/or self-organized trip by travelers
 - This trail can be taken by travelers on their own
 - Guiding is not offered

- Contacts for more details:

Devetaki Plateau Association

<https://www.devetakiplateau.org/en>

Quests / Chances to be creative

Quest 1 “Karst Adventures: Finding Imaginary Figures”

Quest Overview

- Theme & Heritage Focus: The beauty and diversity of the karst of the Devetaki Plateau
- Duration: Variable (depends on the trail completion time, plus 5-10 additional minutes per stop)
- Difficulty Level: Moderate (Suitable for anyone capable of walking on rugged terrain with slight gradient)
- Location: All stops along the trail
- Best Season: spring, summer, autumn



Mission

Discovering and photographing imaginary figures at each stop (cave), with the goal of collecting 4 photographs.

Practical Information

- Essential Equipment: comfortable shoes and clothing, flashlight

Quest Description

Let your imagination run wild! Discover and photograph formations in the karst that resemble figures of animals, birds, people or objects at each of the sites. Send them to us by email: devetakiplateau@gmail.com or post them on social media, tagging Devetaki Plateau Association.

Everyone who completes the quest will participate in a raffle and may receive an incentive prize from the Devetaki Plateau Association.

Starting Point

Devetaki Cave



Co-funded by
the European Union

Area Description

The four heritage sites along the trail

Heritage Connection

Karst formations

Success Criteria

One photo taken at each of the 4 trail stops

Participant's Role

To find and photograph imaginary figures.

Disclaimer:

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.