

HERITAGE TRAIL

“Time Trail: In Between Bronze of Time and Mill of the Future”

Introduction

This is a journey through time that will take you to the prehistoric, contemporary and future moments of the Devetaki Plateau. You will feel the fear, hopes and dreams of those who came before us with stories in the Devetaki Cave. We will find that when people believe in the future, even the old mill can become the scene of new adventures. Looking towards the Alexander Stamboliyski Dam, you will discover evidences of how history, culture and nature intertwine, creating a heritage that shapes the modern landscape.

What you'll discover

- Devetaki Cave, Archaeology
- Devetaki Cave, New History
- Kramolin, Fortress Grada
- Kramolin, View of the Alexandar Stamboliyski Dam
- Agatovo
- Kakrina, Kakrinsko Hanche (The Kakrina Inn)
- The Old Mill in Karpachevo

Each stop along this trail offers amazing stories and views; it provides you with the joy of immersing yourself in nature and history.

Heritage stories

Story 1 “Devetaki Cave: A Home for Humanity from the Dawn of Time to Present Days”



Stone to stone, step by step... Ancient voices echo in the Devetaki cave. From the first hunters to Roman settlers, each period has left its imprint here. Under the magnificent vaults of the Devetaki cave, time has halted its pace. Homo sapiens used to light fire, while ancient artists drew symbols which survived for millennia.

Drawings, ancient weapons, and traces from the first farmers, and the secrets of the first artists. The cave is an actual

museum of humanity's living memory. Follow the life of people via prehistory, the Neolithic, the Bronze Age and Roman times. Discover the secrets of ancient sanctuaries and forgotten necropolises.

You can feel the fear, the hopes and the dreams of those that came before us. Would you be able to hear the whisper of the past under the stone vaults?

Take the “Time Trail: In Between Bronze of Time and Mill of the Future” and visit the Devetaki Cave.

Story 2 “The Devetaki Cave: Legends for the Pilot, the Shepherd and the King, and a Slightly Sad Story for the Primitive Humanity of the 20th Century”



The Devetaki cave hides not only amazing natural formations, but also past legends for a pilot, shepherd and a king. From the audacious flight of a pilot in the 1940s to the salvation mission of the shepherd and the noble king Boris the Third, the cave keeps numerous stories.

You will find out how the legends for the pilot, the shepherd and the king intertwine with the destiny of the cave, which has

been almost destroyed; and how from neglect and ruin it was gradually restored into a valuable natural site. The Devetaki cave history is a story not only for natural wonders, but also for the people who saved her for the generations to come, those who restored it after years of oblivion and desolation.

Are you ready to discover how a cave has managed to endure wars, desolation and the transformation of time? Indulge yourself in the near past and present of the Devetaki cave.

Take the “Time Trail: In Between Bronze of Time and Mill of the Future” and visit the Devetaki Cave.

Story 3 “Kramolin: The Town Over the Village - the Ancient Fortress Amidst the Rocks”



You climb a rocky ridge above the village of Kramolin. Then you see the ruins in front of you – at a place where once warriors, boyars, and craftsmen lived. There are no signs, no noise... only silence and wind that carries stories from beyond.

You will step over stones where once Roman warriors walked. You will see walls that resisted time, as well as remnants of a tower from which the warriors observed the whole valley. You will learn about a

fortress, which guarded roads, about a village that sank under a reservoir, and about secrets buried some meters below your feet. This site shows how a rock can be a home, a fortress, and a witness to centuries of human destinies.

Do you want to discover a fortress that is not featured in the textbooks? Grab some water and your comfortable shoes, get something to picnic and let’s go up the hill. The fortress is waiting for you.

Take the “Time Trail: In Between Bronze of Time and Mill of the Future” and visit the Ancient Fortress Gradat.

Story 4 “Kramolin: The Inheritance of Alexandar Stamboliyski Reservoir - the Oldest Dam in Bulgaria”



From the top of the Grada Fortress, there is a scenic view towards Alexandar Stamboliyski Dam.

But beyond its beauty, there is a story of destruction and resurrection. The construction of the reservoir has forever changed the landscape, absorbing villages and changing the lives of many people. Find out how the dam was built during the last century, in order to prevent future floods, and how this has transformed the

life of local communities.

The reservoir is a symbol of human sustainability and the fight against the elements of nature. It is proof of how history, culture, and nature intertwine, creating a heritage that shapes the contemporary landscape.

How can a flood can give rise to such an impressive dam? Take a walk to the site and discover the stories of people, landmarks, and events that shape the future of this unique region.

Take the “Time Trail: In Between Bronze of Time and Mill of the Future” and enjoy the view of the Alexander Stamboliyski Dam.

Story 5 “The Fawn from Agatovo: Between the Bronze of Time and the Heart of the Plateau”



More than 2 500 years ago, by the light of the forge’s flames, a blacksmith created a small bronze figurine of a fawn, which was meant to live on for centuries. Today, the fawn is a symbol of ancient magic and the wealth of the Devetaki plateau.

How a small bronze figurine, discovered by accident during the 30s of the 19th centuries, embodies in itself stories of ancient civilizations, deities and the timeless traditions of the local people, who still believe in the magic of these lands. You will find out how the Agatovo fawn as well as the sword and the torc found in the same lands are linked to the ancient Thracian beliefs, and you will realize they belong not only to the past, but are a part of the future.

The enchantment of the bronze fawn does not lie only in its historic roots, but also in the inspiration it brings to contemporary generations to preserve their patrimony. It is a story of a small symbol that carries significant power – to bridge past and present, to inspire people to work together for the preservation of their history and nature.

What is the story of this mystical symbol of the Devetaki plateau? Now is the time to discover not only its past, but also its future. Are you ready to immerse yourselves in the legend of the bronze fawn and discover how a small figurine could bring a big change in the future of this region?

Take the “Time Trail: In Between Bronze of Time and Mill of the Future” and visit Agatovo village.

Story 6 “Kakrinsko hanche (Kakrina’s Inn) - National Tourist Site”



The Kakrina’s Inn (Kakrinsko hanche) is one of the most famous places associated with the revolutionary activities of the Apostle of Freedom Vasil Levski, the place that gave him his last shelter before being captured by Turkish troops at dawn on December 27, 1872. The meetings of the local revolutionary committee were held there. After Levski's capture, the inn was abandoned, and at the end of the 19th century a fire completely destroyed it,

leaving only its foundations. On December 26, 1901, patriotic citizens of Lovech and Kakrina placed a memorial plaque on the spot where the immortal son of Bulgaria was captured. In 1924, on the initiative of local patriots, the Vasil Levski Citizens' Committee was founded. Its goal was to restore the inn with donations. With great perseverance and energy on the part of the committee members, funds were collected. The building was completed at the end of 1926, but the collection of exhibits continued and on May 10, 1931, the museum was solemnly opened.

Other landmarks of the village are the church "Assumption of the Virgin Mary" built in 1884, a cultural monument since 1974 and the National Community Center "Vasil Levski 1924" with almost 100 years of history.

The area is karst with rock complexes, which are a place for rare species of birds and bats.

Take the “Time Trail: In Between Bronze of Time and Mill of the Future” and visit Kakrinsko hanche (Kakrina’s Inn).

Story 7 “Nice to Meet You: I am the Old Mill”



The secrets hidden within my walls tell a story of brave people who rise from the ashes of the past. Six kilometers, many sharp turns, and infinite dreams bring a mill from Krushuna to Karpachevo. The old walls keep memories of the golden grains of the past.... and the new ideas of the future.

Once a young and proud water mill, the Old Mill survives tumultuous times. It experienced moving, full transformation,

oblivion... and new revival as a modern centre for knowledge and culture. The Old Mill is a traveller. It has been disassembled into parts, carried on calf carts, put back together with lots of love. It has witnessed the wonder of electricity and has found a new meaning in the 21st century. From a water mill on a river, through an electric mill, to a home of dreamers and entrepreneurs – the Old Mill has survived three different lives, each of them more exciting than the previous.

The story proves that tradition and innovation go hand in hand when someone believes in their inner strength. It shows us that when people believe in the future, even an old mill can become a place for new adventures.

Can one spot bring simultaneously so much history and future? The Old Mill is the answer to this question.

Take the “Beauty in Nature Trail: Gazing at the Devetaki Plateau” and visit the Old Mill in Karpachevo.

Why this trail matters

The story of Devetaki Cave is not only about the natural wonders, but also about the people who saved it and the generations who restored it after years of oblivion and destruction. Here we can feel the fear, hopes and dreams of those who came before us.

The Old Mill proves that tradition and innovation go hand in hand, as long as someone believes in their power. It shows us that when people believe in the future, even the old mill can become the scene of new adventures.

The Fortress Grada shows how a rock can be a home, a fortress and a witness to centuries of human destinies.

The dam is a symbol of human resilience and the fight against natural elements. It is also evidence of how history, culture and nature intertwine, creating a heritage that shapes the modern landscape.

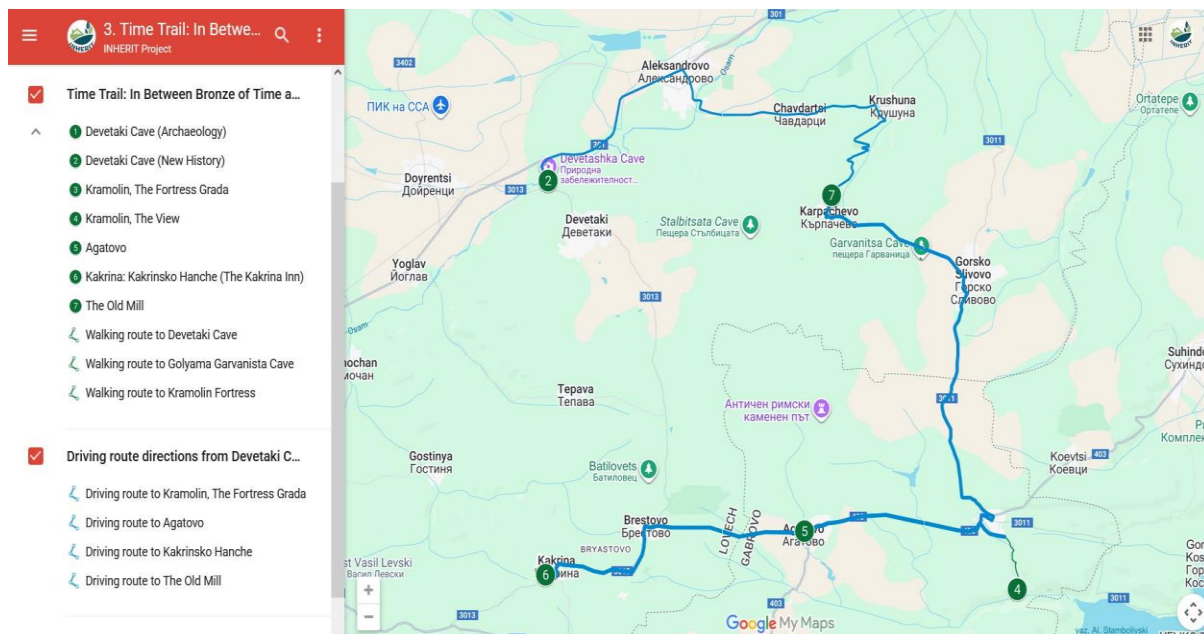
The magic of the bronze fawn is not only in its historical roots, but also in the ways in which antiquity continues to inspire modern generations to preserve its heritage. This is a story about a small symbol that carries great power – to connect the past with the present and to inspire people to work to preserve their history and nature.

The Kakrina Inn is one of the most famous places associated with the revolutionary activities of the Apostle of Freedom Vasil Levski, the place that gave him his last refuge before being captured by the Turkish garrison.

Trail map

This Heritage Trail “In Between Bronze of Time and Mill of the Future” takes you to four karst formations:

- Devetaki Cave, Archaeology
- Devetaki Cave, New History
- Kramolin, Fortress Grada
- Kramolin, View of the Alexandar Stamboliyski Dam
- Agatovo
- Kakrina, Kakrinsko Hanche (The Kakrina Inn)
- The Old Mill in Karpachevo



Link to the map:

https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/edit?mid=1fG0VLYzYZlZHPH_g7JTFmXa7h93gopc&usp=sharing

Stop 1	Devetaki Cave, Archaeology https://maps.app.goo.gl/vqiTrt4aS1fKq7Q98 GPS 43.233508, 24.885456
Stop 2	Devetaki Cave, New History https://maps.app.goo.gl/vqiTrt4aS1fKq7Q98 GPS 43.233508, 24.885456
Stop 3	Kramolin, The Fortress Grada https://maps.app.goo.gl/yVj5tDCZpDeY1jhB7 GPS 43.123291, 25.089109
Stop 4	Kramolin, The View https://maps.app.goo.gl/yVj5tDCZpDeY1jhB7 GPS 43.123291, 25.089109
Stop 5	Agatovo https://maps.app.goo.gl/dYn7Vn1ve6Hjk5WZ6 GPS 43.136556, 24.996861
Stop 6	Kakrina: Kakrinsko Hanche (The Kakrina's Inn) https://maps.app.goo.gl/6R4XJ7CCFSKmGbfn6 GPS 43.124594, 24.884533
Stop 7	The Old Mill https://maps.app.goo.gl/bLvUNUaw4wUXrXDv6 GPS 43.22936093498595, 25.0086952403594

Trail details

- Length (km):
 - 91 km
- Duration (without a quest / with a quest):
 - 5 h / 5 h 30 min
- 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 “Learn More About the Past and Rediscover the Present: Interactive Puzzles in the Old Mill”

Quest Overview

- Theme & Heritage Focus:
Archaeological and historical heritage of the Devetaki Plateau
- Duration: 20-30 min
- Difficulty Level: Medium, for children over 8 years old and adults
- Location: The Old Mill in Karpachevo
- Best Season: All year round



Mission

Find out more about the life of the ancient inhabitants and now-a-day citizens of the Devetaki Plateau.

Quest Description

Arrange a picture of cubes within a certain time, find the objects hidden in the Old Mill, draw fossils, color artifacts, assemble a model. You will get a detailed description of the tasks from the special Time Map in Old Mill. You can count on assistance from our colleagues who are waiting for you there. The Time Map tasks will change as time moves on.

Starting Point

The Old Mill in Karpachevo

Area Description

Devetaki Plateau

Heritage Connection

History, archaeology, modernity, preservation of historical and cultural landmarks

Success Criteria

Going through the Time Map tasks

Participant's Role

Completing the tasks from the Map of Time - arranging a picture of time cubes, discovering the objects hidden in the Old Mill, drawing fossils, coloring artifacts, assembling a model.



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