







Ptuj is

- mentioned by the Roman historian Tacitus in connection with a military gathering in Poetovio in 69 AD during which Pannonian legions decisively endorsed Vespasian in his claim to the throne;
- having had the status of a town since the Roman era;
- boasting the Town Statute from 1376, the only such statute of continental towns in Slovenia;
- built on numerous wine cellars which bear witness to more than a hundred year old tradition of wine-making;
- treasuring the oldest vintage in Slovenia: the Golden Vine 1917;
- boasting the largest artificial lake in Slovenia: 346 ha;
- being proud of the Regional Museum Ptuj-Ormož for it has been often proclaimed the most visited and best museum in Slovenia,
- being the stage to the biggest and most well-known carnival event in Slovenia and in the wider region – KURENTOVANJE.

Geographical position

the City Municipality of Ptuj is situated in the north-east of Slovenia, in the core of the Lower Podravje region bordering the region of Prlekija. It represents a natural centre towards which converge roads leading from Haloze and Slovenske Gorice hills, Dravsko and Ptujsko fields. The historic town core is protected.

• Number of inhabitants: 23,957 (2007)

• Surface: 66,7 km2

• Altitude above sea level: 232 m; the Castle of Ptuj: 264 m; the highest point: 417 m

• Climate: sub-Pannonian, the average yearly temperature: 10°C

• City Municipality of Ptuj comprises 5533 house numbers in 10 settlements and 8 town quarters



Town's coat of arms

The town's coat of arms has developed from the town's seal, which was subject to several simplifications in iconographic point of view between 1273 and 1400. The present coat of arms features a red St. George's cross on the silver field of the shield.



Day of Ptuj

On 5th August 1513 the second Town Statute was approved.













Maribor, Slovenija - Evropska prestolnica kulture 2012





Kurentovanje

On Shrove Sunday, 27th February 1960, the first organised event called Kurentovanje was held in Ptuj featuring the traditional carnival masks from Markovci lined up in a carnival procession. At the sound of music played by a local band, the ones to lead the procession were the dancing "spearmen" followed by "ploughmen", the "rusa", a "bear", the "fairies", "cockerels" and Kurents. The typical performance and customs of each traditional mask were explained to the gathered crowd over loud-speakers. The event knew a tremendous success and aroused general interest which encouraged the organisers to continue. A year later masks from Markovci were joined by ploughmen from Lancova Vas, log-haulers from Cirkovci and the mourners coming from Hajdina. For the first time carnival (non-ethnographic) groups presented themselves in the afternoon. In 1962 the event reached beyond the local boundaries by inviting "laufarji" (runners) from Cerkno and "borovo gostuvanje" (the marriage of pine) from Predanovci in the Prekmurje region. But the international dimension was only acquired in the years to follow when local and Slovene traditional masks were joined by masks from Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Hungary, Austria, Italy, and many others. On the other hand, thousands of spectators came to the carnival to enjoy themselves.









Kurentovanje 1965



Kurentovanje 1965, sports stadium

Kurentovanje 1979



Kurentovanje 2009

The main event of Kurentovanje is the procession of traditional carnival masks and groups taking place on Shrove Sunday in the afternoon. For a great number of years the constituent part of the event was also the presentation of individual traditional carnival groups taking place either on Saturday or Sunday morning prior to the afternoon procession. In 1994 Kurentovanje knew an upgrade as the event was conceived to last for more than a couple of days featuring various carnival events, performances of traditional carnival masks in the square in front of the Town Hall, the burial of the Carnival, and the organised entertainment programme held in the carnival tent. In 1999 the organisers introduced the Prince of the Carnival who has since been chosen among numerous active perpetuators of the masquerading tradition in the region of Ptuj. The enthronement of the Prince takes place on 11th November each year – on St. Martin's Day – which has become an important cultural and entertaining event in itself.



During the past few years, the carnival time has started at midnight on 2nd February – Candlemas. Budina, one of the mostly rural suburbs of Ptuj, stages the event – a huge bonfire around which start dancing, on the strike of twelve, Kurents, simply equipped with a chain and five bells, holding a wooden club in their hands, thus announcing the beginning of carnival. From this moment on Kurents are "allowed" to do their habitual rounds.

Nowadays the carnival lasts for approximately eleven days, starting on Saturday, a week before Shrove Sunday, when only traditional masks form a procession on the streets of Ptuj and when the Prince of the Carnival is bestowed upon the honour to rule the town during the carnival period. Each day features performances of masks and many other entertaining events taking place in the square in front of the



Kurent's Jump, 2005

Town Hall and in the carnival tent. All these activities culminate in the Saturday's procession of traditional, and typically carnival masks, children's carnival parade, the burial of Carnival and the return of power to the Mayor of the town. But sometimes there are just a few days between Candlemas and Shrove Tuesday which means that other activities are of shorter duration, too. Consequently, this strongly influences the entire programme and development of the event.

The idea of an organised carnival event in Ptuj came up in the 50's of the last century, as the carnival masks spontaneously formed processions on Shrove Tuesday preceded by a band. In 1959 Drago Hasl, strongly backed by those who shared his views, proposed to the Historical Society of Ptuj to take over the organisation and the implementation of the carnival event that should be named after the most well-known mask Kurent – Kurentovanje in Ptuj. Drago Hasl, indefatigable organiser of Kurentovanje since its beginnings until the

70's of the past century, was strongly convinced that the organised event could prevent the extremely rapid progression toward extinction of carnival habits in the surrounding villages; on the other hand, such performances could meet expectations of numerous spectators. Hasl also made a draft regarding the content and outlined the major guidelines to be followed in order to transform Kurentovanje into an event of ethnographic importance containing the unique carnival figures and habits from the Ptuj region, which could have been joined at a later stage by other traditional Slovene masks, thus making the event grow into a festival of masks. He equally planned to expand the content of the event by introducing contemporary carnival masks. The conjunction of the aforementioned guidelines and efforts employed by the organisers has turned Kurentovanje into the Carnival of European dimensions, confirmed also by admitting the town of Ptuj into the European Federation of Carnival Cities (EFCC-FECC) in 1991.



Carnival masks

Masks are so widely spread that they hold a significant place in the history of the mankind. For centuries people have believed that the use of masks could help to make connections with the world beyond, with demons, gods, and ancestors' spirits. Their driving force was to understand and influence natural and social phenomena. The celebration of the carnival goes back to the pagan period, before Christianity, when people celebrated the forthcoming spring and the inevitable end



Kurent from the village of Markovci, 1968

of the winter by performing the rituals of fertility and by magic of masks. Although later Christianity felt absolutely disinclined to this pagan performance, it could never really uproot the masquerading. Therefore the carnival was allowed to take place at the beginning of the 40-day Lent preceding Easter; in fact Lent lasts 46 days as the first day is Ash Wednesday. After the period of merry-making, excessive eating and drinking which end on Shrove Tuesday at midnight, begins the period of fasting. Easter is a holiday without the fixed date, for it is calculated every year according to the lunar calendar. It has to take place on the first Sunday after the spring moon between 22nd March and 25th April. Once the date of Easter is found, dates for some other religious holidays and the carnival can be determined.

Masks and masquerading which have come into existence through various historical periods, can nowadays be divided into traditional masks with magic power, and contemporary carnival masks criticising and mocking different events happening in everyday life. In Slovenia, the Ptuj and Drava Fields, Haloze and Slovenske Gorice hills represent the area which deserves special attention for the number and variety of traditional carnival masks. Until the second half of the 20th century, only village boys could wear a mask from Shrove Sunday until

Ash Wednesday. The participation in the organised carnival events, and in Kurentovanje, which has been organised since 1960, resulted in the general loss of a certain culture which had taken its origins in the countryside, and which, in turn, have thus caused considerable changes. Masks have become more "civilised" and, taken from their genuine environment, they have lost their magic power. What remains nowadays is the performance of "masquerading" in which participate not only young men but also married men, their wives, young women and children. The majority of carnival groups adhere to folklore associations and societies. They can be seen quite a few days before Shrove Sunday, either on their own or in processions passing through



Krampuses from Eberndorf, Austria

villages, in Ptuj and even in other Slovene towns. Undoubtedly the most prominent mask is Kurent who begins the traditional rounds immediately after Candlemas on 2nd February. During the carnival period Kurents can be seen everywhere – at social gatherings, sports and cultural events, and many other, regardless of time and place.

Traditional carnival masks

Ploughmen

an extremely popular carnival custom is the ploughing. The already forgotten rituals are hidden in this custom, namely the ploughing of the defensive magic circle around the village, and the solemn plough-



The spearman

The spearman from Markovci na Ptujskem polju is not a genuine carnival figure. In fact his place is at the peasant's wedding where he attends the groom and the bride, and at the same time, due to his resourcefulness, he amuses and entertains all guests. In 1960 a group of spearmen led the first carnival procession in Ptuj. Wearing their best black suits, a decorated hat and black boots, the spearmen danced tossing their spears, decorated with multi-colour ribbons, high up into the air. Since then they have been an indispensable element of Kurentovanje, and during the past years also of the local carnival processions.

18

ing of the first furrow to announce the beginning of work on fields. The custom is closely related to the magic of fertility and is known everywhere where ploughing of the soil is performed. The ploughmen are known in a considerable part of Europe and in almost entire Slovenia. In the region of Ptuj, the most renowned groups of ploughmen come from villages of Markovci, Lancova Vas, Podlehnik, Leskovec, Dornava and Okič in Haloze. Of course, there are many other groups of ploughmen and their numbers are changing all the time. A group of ploughmen normally consists of three pairs of "horses" harnessed in a decorated wooden plough which is then followed by a Kurent. The "whip-cracker" chases evil spirits away with his long whip that he whirls and makes crack; at the same time he announces the arrival

of ploughmen. A comic collector of donations, another figure of this collective mask, is equipped with a rake and a basket in which he carefully stores donations, especially the "fatty" ones, received from landladies. Certain groups of ploughmen, for example those from Lancova Vas, Podlehnik and Okič, are accompanied by several Kurents. Just before the ploughmen arrive to the farmyard, one of Kurents

All groups resemble each other in number and rituals performed, but they do differ in the appearance. For example, in Markovci, the "horses" wear black trousers, a white shirt, a dark waistcoat, a blue apron and black boots. They wear hats with a kerchief which hides their faces. Those from Lancova vas wear boots, black trousers and a white shirt. Colourful kerchiefs folded in a triangle are tied to their



runs to the door asking the landlord if he would allow the ploughing. Once the demand is granted, the whip-cracker cracks his whip, the ploughmen make several symbolic furrows in the farmyard and sow "fat turnips" wishing good crops. Extremely scarce are the houses where ploughmen are not welcome and given presents. But those that show no hospitality to ploughmen will inevitably face misfortune in future for Kurents roll themselves on the ground thus bringing bad luck to the house.

hips and shoulders, while the most spectacular part of their outfit is undoubtedly a high semicircular head-covering decorated with multicoloured artificial flowers, greenery and ribbons. Similar head-covers are worn by ploughmen in Podlehnik and Leskovec. However, if both groups wear boots and black trousers, the ones from Podlehnik put on a white shirt and a tie, a white apron and a kerchief around shoulders and hips. On the other hand the ploughmen from Leskovec have white shirts, blue aprons and dark waistcoats with a kerchief around shoulders. The ploughmen from Okič have high conical capes with

colourful paper ribbons glued onto them. They have boots, black trousers and a long white shirt hanging loose over the waist, a tie and a red kerchief with white dots put around the shoulders. Whip-crackers of all groups wear their best clothes, boots and a decorated hat. On the contrary, collectors of donations put on old worn-out clothes and disguise themselves either as a man or a woman in which case the bosom is exaggerated. In the past few years the groups of ploughmen have had to admit in their ranks also a landlord and his lady in order to participate in carnivals where the entire ritual on the farmyard has to be performed.



Log-haulers

the "hauling of the log", known in the village of Cirkovci na Dravskem polju, can be related to the ancient ritual of fertility. When not one of the village young women got married in the pre-carnival period, the village young men had to haul a pine log. Nowadays, girls participate in the ritual as well. The procession is lead by a musician and the best man with the bridesmaid. Three pairs of young women haul a log which is placed on two plough tails and decorated with fir tree branches and colourful ribbons. On the log is a chair where a straw doll, representing the groom, is attached. Behind it follow the bride, "black women", young men and loggers. The latter keep sawing the log, and while offering its pieces to young women with a wish they would find a husband they keep saying: "As you did not want a groom in flesh, have the one in wood!"

In the past the procession of log-haulers was the event the entire village wanted to see. Youngsters and the elderly crowded around the haulers. The procession thus had to stop several times. Young men and women then started to dance during which they firmly stamped their feet on the ground to chase the winter away and ask for "fat turnips".

-23



The trough

Very similar to the "hauling of the log" is the habit of the "trough" which is still alive in the village of Markovci na Ptujskem polju. This ritual normally consists of young men disguised as women. To the general amusement they drag behind them a trough with a straw bride sitting in it. They used to stop at each house where an eligible young man lived offering him the "bride", who, of course, was strikingly rich having cows, pigs, money and much more. Instead of flowers the "bride" wore wreaths of onions.

Rusa

the "rusa" is a carnival animal wishing fertility and health of horses and other domestic animals. The mask is known in Slovenia and in almost entire Europe. In our region the mask is mostly seen in different villages of the Ptuj field. A wooden framework is recovered with sackcloth. At the front, there is a wooden head covered with the sheep skin, having a mobile or sometimes even loose lower jaw and a tongue, while at the rear there is a tail. Below the tail hang pig's bladders filled with air and represent scrotums. On its back there is a rag doll. Two boys are needed to put the wooden framework on their shoulders and hide beneath the sackcloth. Smaller two-legged "rusa", that means with only one person hidden beneath the cover, are nevertheless less frequent. According to the records from the end of the 19th century, the small "rusa" was enlivened again in Markovci not sooner than by the 90's of the last century. Again different is the two-legged "rusa" from Podlehnik and Leskovec in Haloze: the bearer of the framework is at the same time also a rider for there is a hole for his bust in the

sackcloth. Nevertheless all kinds of "rusa" are accompanied by a drover holding a whip and a donation-collector carrying a basket to store goods in with him. The entire group moves from house to house with "rusa" playing a fool, showing its mischievousness and snatching with its loose jaw at people. Once the ritual is over, the collector gathers donations and the entire group continues their way.



The "rusa" from the Ptuj field in the 50's of the 20th century; the collection of carnival masks at the Regional Museum Ptuj-Ormož



Bear

a bear and its drover are believed to represent a gypsy who used to walk around with a tamed bear to perform in villages. Nowadays there are two types of bears: the more ancient ones have their outfits made of sackcloth, while the recent ones have a head, a coat and trousers made of sheep skin. They walk in groups accompanied by an important number of drovers who in their turn wear old shabby clothes and carry various instruments, such as trumpets, sticks, baskets to collect donations, and the like. While performing they are rather agile especially when chasing young women which they do with obvious joy.



Cockerel

The mask of the cockerel is worn by a boy who puts on white trousers and a sort of a shirt resembling an old petticoat tied around the neck, which decades ago used to be the only disguise for cockerels. The face has to be coloured and the head covered by a conical cap made of paper which is richly decorated with colourful ribbons. The cockerel rides a stick with a carved hen's head at the front end, while a wisp of hen's feathers is attached at the back end.



Hen

The hen is of a big and cylindrically shaped body, pointed at both ends, and built of light material; the whole body is covered with paper or cloth and with feathers glued on. At the front there is a hen's head made of wood or millboard, and at the back there is a tail of feathers. The boy pulls himself through an opening at the bottom part of the body so that only his legs are visible.

The cockerel and the hen are traditionally children's and bird-like masks guided by a donation-collector dressed in old clothes. The collector has a rake and a basket full of weeds which in fact represent seeds. The group visits one house after another, dancing and singing songs, wishing happiness and fertility of hens. After the ritual seeding and raking for abundant crops, the group collects donations and moves on.



Fairies

the fairies represent a particularity to be found exclusively on the Ptuj field dating back to the 30's of the past century, when young girls joined boys at the masquerading. Girls put on white dresses, a plaid around the shoulders and a paper crown on the head. In the farmyard or in the house they form a circle and dance around the Queen whose only distinction is a bigger and prettier crown. While dancing, the fairies sing songs written especially for the occasion wishing luck and happiness, after what they receive donations from the landlady.

The old woman carrying the old man

The Old woman carrying the old man or the Old man carrying the old woman is the mask known in numerous European countries. In the region of Ptuj this mask is very popular as it can be related to an old man and woman who, by their human figure, represent spirits of the dead.



Gypsies from dornava

gypsies from Dornava na Ptujskem polju are unique in this region. Almost all villagers dress up in Gypsies, the habit which has been alive for decades now. They assume many different roles, such as fortune-telling, knife-grinding, music playing, chicken-stealing, and the like. Their merry-making and colourfully decorated carts add humour and liveliness to the carnival atmosphere.

Carnival dancers

the carnival dancers coming from Pobrežje near Ptuj hold a special place among carnival masks of the region. A few dance pairs, a musician, Kurent and an egg-dealer wish happiness and abundance with dancing and singing. All members of the group, with the exception of horned Kurent, of course, are dressed in their best clothes. The most distinguished part of the outfit is a high semicircular cap worn by dancers. The caps are decorated with colourful artificial flowers, fresh greenery and colourful ribbons.

Decades ago, the groups of dancers used to walk from house to house and were always welcome. Upon entering a house, members of a group would first greet the landlord and landlady. Then followed an extended wish for abundant crops, healthy livestock, numerous children, a good husband for the daughter, and much more. After that everybody would wildly dance at the sound of the accordion, while the tattling egg-dealer would be collecting donations.



Jurek from Haloze

jurek from Haloze or Green Jurij is the so-called plant and spring mask worn by a boy. The mask was well-known in our region until the end of the 19th century, and in the Haloze hills until the first quarter of the 20th century. Green Jurij is a boy literally wrapped in green plants. The mask used to be very popular in Slovenia, and besides in our country it also appears in Croatia and in some other European countries. The ritual represents the victory of the spring goddess over winter. The ancient ritual was named after St. Jurij (St. George) as it used to take place on the saint's day, on 23rd or 24th April.

Jurek from Haloze, as the group mask, was revived in the village of Dolena at the beginning of the 80's of the last century. Such a group consists of Jurek, Rabolj, four to five dance pairs, musicians and a donation-collector. Jurek is a young man wearing a jacket, trousers and a hat all of which are entirely sewn over with green ivy and colourful ribbons. Rabolj is also a young man wearing a scary head-cover made of leather and sheep skin; the latter is also used for trousers and a jacket. In a farmyard Jurek and Rabolj perform a fight in which the winter demon Rabolj is beaten and banished to Donačka gora. Such outcome is happily greeted by the rest of the solemnly dressed party; young men and women start dancing, singing and then they collect donations.



Kurent or Korant

kurent or Korant, as people living in countryside would call the mask, is the most popular and numerous traditional carnival figure. Its origin has still not been completely understood, although there are some hypotheses associating it to the Illyrian and Celtic tradition, to the mythical followers of the goddess Cybele worshipped on the territory of Poetovio in the late antiquity, to the Slovene ancestors, to the establishment of Uskoks (Croatian Habsburg soldiers) in the 16th century, and many more. According to an ancient belief Kurent is a demon chasing winter away and calling spring to the country. Although Kurent has long lost its magic power, it cannot be considered as an ordinary carnival mask, for it still inspires mystical and powerful feelings. The most prominent part of the Kurent's outfit is the head-mask which also makes Kurents different from each other. The ones on the Ptuj field have the ears made of turkey or goose feathers and horns made of straw or wood wrapped in leather and decorated with colourful paper flowers and ribbons. On the other hand the ones from Haloze and villages on the Drava field wear



genuine cow horns and ears of either sackcloth or leather. The facial part made of leather is sewn in the head-mask bearing holes for eyes and mouth. The teeth are made of white beans threaded on a string. A rather long tongue is made of fabric or leather. Kurents wear a coat of sheep skin girded about with a chain with five cow bells, high boots and red or green knitted socks. A wooden club that Kurents brandish in their hands is covered with hedgehog skin at one end. The outfit of Kurents is called "kurentija" and is nowadays made of sheep skin. However Kurents from the village of Okič in Haloze, for example, have coats made of rabbit or even goat skin. During the first decades of the 20th century, the "kurentija" was made by countrymen themselves of materials available at home: old fur coats, rabbit or goat skin, and other. The description of Kurent, found in the register from the end



Kurents from the village of Okič



of the 19th century in the village of Markovci, describes Kurent as "if he has just escaped from Hell and made friends with the Devil itself". He wore a sheep skin inside-out, while the facial part of the head-cap was made of old leather and was furry behind. On the top, there were horns made either of leather or of felt, and on the tips were attached goose feathers. Kurent had one big cow bell tied to his back with which he announced himself from far.

In the past only fully grown-up men were allowed to wear the Kurent's outfit. In small groups they would visit not only houses in their own village but also in neighbouring ones, from Shrove Sunday to Ash Wednesday. Houses where Kurents stopped were believed to be lucky throughout the year, while Kurent rolling himself on the ground meant

bad luck. In the second half of the 20th century Kurents started coming in big groups to the town of Ptuj to perform and present themselves at Kurentovanje. Soon they were invited to participate in other carnivals and folklore events both home and abroad. Nowadays several hundreds of Kurents belong to either groups in town or the ones in villages. The majority are young men and married men, but there are also young women and wives. Kurents' outfits are made by specialised craftsmen and although the price is rather high, the number of orders has been increasing. Accompanied by the devil, Kurents make their rounds from Candlemas, 2nd February, to Ash Wednesday.

40

Devil

the devil is responsible for the smooth and undisturbed procession of Kurents. He wears a red or black overalls made of fabric. The cap he puts on his head is from sheep skin to which are attached horns, a pointed nose and a long red tongue. A fishing net is thrown across his back to catch "souls", and he holds a fork or a trident in his hands.



Did you know:





"The old woman carrying the old man" and Kurent from the village of Zgornje Gruškovje; the collection of carnival masks at the Regional Museum Ptuj-Ormož

- The castle of Ptuj houses a collection of traditional carnival masks thus enabling visitors to get to know the carnival time and masks also during the rest of the year.
- There are some 150 Kurent-like masks all over the world.
- The "Mountain of Goodness" is planned to be set up on the Panorama hill, the hill next to the castle hill. The future multicultural centre would include all Kurent-like figures in full size surrounded by plants brought from the country of a particular figure.

- The figure of Kurent appears in almost every sphere of social life. Quite a few local communities, most of all the city of Ptuj, feel deep connections with Kurent which they present as a promotional mascot and gift. Kurent used to be the symbol of the military stationed in Ptuj. The name Kurent appears in numerous clubs and associations' names, humanitarian organisations and sports clubs. Some dishes prepared during the carnival time bear the name of Kurent (Kurent's sausage, cold cuts, soup, wine). It has become a tradition to meet Kurents at certain winter sports events, as for example at the ski jumping in Planica. Kurents have inspired and bewitched various artists: painters, photographers, poets and writers, sculptors, sketchers, illustrators and musicians, both home and abroad. Kurent watches us from envelopes and stamps, postcards and seals, calendars and badges. Kurent can be seen as a mascot or a souvenir, a badge and magnet; on posters, playing cards and even as the central theme of graffiti.
- A façade of the house, built in 1878, located in Jadranska street in Ptuj, displays decorative elements strongly resembling Kurents' caps.

43







Historical milestones

5th and 4th millennia BC

The area of Ptuj was settled early in the Neolithic period (remains of the settlement on the Castle hill in the nearby village of Rabelčja Vas).

Around 15 BC

The emperor Augustus extended the territory as far as to the Danube. The ancient Celtic settlement was subjected by the Romans. As a part of the Noricum, Poetovio was included into the military area of Illyricum around 15 BC, while between 6 and 9 AD Poetovio became part of Pannonina.

69 AD

The winter camp of the legion XIII Gemina hosted the military council at which all Pannonian commanders-in-chief expressed their full support to Vespasian in his claim to the throne. The event was reported by Tacitus in his Historiae. Thus the year 69 is considered as the first written record of Ptuj in the historic(al) literature.

Around 103 AD

The town got the civilian administration and the status of a colony with the name of Colonia Ulpia Traiana Poetovio, thus named after the then emperor Trajan.

During the reign of the emperor Hadrian (117-138) a stone bridge across the Drava River was built or perhaps only reconstructed.

2nd century

Two of the most prominent landmarks of Ptuj came into being: in the first quarter of the century – the Orpheus monument erected in the memory of Marcus Valerius Verus, and in the mid century the Mithras shrine I.

3rd century

Poetovio reached its greatest extent, with 10,000 citizens in the town and some 30,000 with the surrounding area. Poetovio also became the see of a diocese.

2nd November 303

Ptuj bishop Victorinus (St. Victorinus of Ptuj), writer of Biblical commentaries, died as a martyr.

452

The Huns plundered Poetovio in their march to Italy.

568-590

Arrival and gradual settlement of the Slavs.

795-796

Ptuj came under the Frankish rule.

811

The Drava River was designed as the border between the Salzburg archdiocese and the Patriarchate of Aquileia.

840-874

Ptuj was the possession of the Lower Pannonian margraves – princes Pribinus and Cozilis.

874

Cozilis (861-874) undertook the construction of a church on the site of today's parish church of St. George, right next to his court. In 874, the church was consecrated by the archbishop of Salzburg Theotmar. Ptuj also became the town with regular fairs, and the see of the parish.

890, 977, 982, 984

Different rulers through their deeds of donation strengthened the position of the Church of Salzburg in its ownership of the "civitas Pettouia". At the time, the town was already divided into three parts: the first one in the upper eastern part, the second in the lower western part, and the third one along the Drava River. The town had a parish church, a bridge spanning the river with the toll collection representing an important income, judicial and customs systems.

900-970

The town was in the hands of the Magyars.

1132

The first written record of Friedrich, the beginner of the mighty family of the Lords of Ptuj. As important ministerials of Salzburg, they owned large estates and collected significant revenues in the region of Styria. They were also known as founders and patrons of the arts.

Until 1147

The archbishop of Salzburg, Konrad I (1106-47), had the castle rebuilt on the foundations of an old and ruined one.

13th century

All the prominent buildings already existed in the town: the castle on the Castle hill, the Dominican monastery and the Upper Liberal Court (the Small Castle) to the west, to the east the Lower Liberal Court and the Minorite monastery, and the parish church of St. George in the centre of the town.

1230

The Dominican monastery was established.

Around 1250

Ptuj obtained the status of a town and was therefore allowed to surround itself by defensive walls.

1273

The oldest recorded town seal featuring St. George on a horse and bearing the inscription +SIGILLVM *CI – UITATIS – DE * BETOVIA.

1286-1494

An important colony of Jews lived in Ptuj having their own street, square, synagogue, graveyard, school and a judge.

1315

The town's almshouse was founded, and as a social institution took care of 12 poor citizens.

Around 1349

Disastrous floods destroyed the ancient Roman stone bridge. A new one was built in the centre of the town.

1376

The archbishop of Salzburg, Pilgrim Puchheim confirmed the town rights and therefore the Statute of Ptuj with its 195 articles. The Statute is still considered to be the oldest legal document of the kind in Slovenia concerning the continental towns.

6th January 1438

Death of Friedrich IX, the last Lord of Ptuj.

1479-90

The Hungarians ruled the town.

1496

The decree of the emperor Maximilian I ordered the Jews out of the country, which was the end of the medieval Jewish community in Ptuj.

1511

The emperor Maximilian sold the town of Ptuj to the archbishop of Salzburg for 20,000 Rhenish gulden, and thus Ptuj became anew the property of the archdiocese of Salzburg for a while.

5th August 1513

The archbishop of Salzburg, Leonhard von Keutschach, approved the second, improved, modernised and comprehensive town Statute.

22nd September 1532

The army of Suleiman the Magnificent passed near Ptuj, without attacking it. Nevertheless the Turkish army plundered and ransacked the town's immediate neighbourhood and its suburbs.

1549 until around 1560

The renovation and modernisation of the town walls was led by Italian builders.

1551

The recorded town's coat of arms featured the red George's cross in the middle of a silver field.

1555

On St. George's Day, the emperor Ferdinand I bought Ptuj from the archbishop of Salzburg for 28,657 Rhenish gulden. Thus Ptuj became for a few centuries the imperial-royal town belonging to the sovereign prince.

The sword of the town judge was adorned with the figure of St. George.

2nd May 1579

Ptuj was mentioned for the first time in the Slovene language "o Ptuje" in a letter sent from Zagreb to Jacob Szekely, the owner of Ormož.

1656

The count Walter Leslie acquired the estate of the Upper Ptuj and the castle both of which remained the family property until 1802.

Around 1665

The count Georg Sauer had the column of St. Mary erected in front of the Minorite monastery in memory of the victorious battle against the Turks at Szentgotthard on 1st August 1664.

1680-82

The plague took its toll as 519 inhabitants died of it.

5th May 1684

The devastating fires in the town damaged almost all the houses, and destroyed ancient archives.

8th October 1705

The fires ravaged the town and the Town Tower was lowered for one storey for safety reasons.

1744

After the great fires, the citizens of Ptuj had a statue of St. Florian erected.

1750

During the military manoeuvres, the town was visited by the empress Maria Theresa who promised help. In 1751 the general military invalids' administration settled in Ptuj invalids who stayed here until 1860.

1775

The abolition of the graveyard around the parish church in town.

1786

Following the Josephinian reforms, few churches, the Dominican and Capuchin monasteries were suppressed.

The theatre of Ptuj was founded.

16th December 1805

The first arrival of the French. The citizens of Ptuj had to collect food for soldiers and their horses and money for the Napoleon's army.

1830

A historiographer and curate Simon Povoden had a few Roman reliefs built in the Town Tower which thus became the first open air museum in Ptuj.

25th February 1873

Shrove Tuesday - the first procession of carnival masks on the streets of Ptuj.

27th September 1873

The Castle of Ptuj was bought by the countess Theresa Herberstein, born Dietrichstein. The castle remained the family property until 1945, when it was nationalised and turned into a museum.

23rd January 1886

The establishment of the Society for Care of the Town and Tourism, the forerunner of the today's Tourist Association of Ptuj.

1887

Ptuj became the seat of an autonomous municipality.

1891

The destruction of the Drava Gate.

3rd August 1893

The establishment of the Ptuj Museum Society.

1895

Franz Ferk, the professor of history and researcher of Ptuj's ancient past, donated to the town his personal collections; hence the museum was named after him until the beginning of the World War II.

1898

Gasworks and gas lightning in Ptuj.

1903

The first car in town.

1905

Valentin Reinhard established a society for the commercialisation of poultry – the forerunner of the present-day company Perutnina Ptuj.

1907

A new town hall was built following the plans of the architect from Vienna, Max von Ferstl.

29th October 1918

The creation of the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs was met with great enthusiasm by the citizens of Ptuj.

8th June 1925

The town got the electric supply.

8th April 1941

Members of the German Kulturbund temporarily took power in town, which was followed by first arrests of the Slovenes. Ptuj became the seat of the occupation forces district from where the Nazis expelled more than 1,260 Slovenes.

8th August 1942

The forest Laze near the village of Mostje was the tragic setting of the battle between the German troops and the Slovenske Gorice squad. Jože Lacko was captured, and he died in the prison in Ptuj after brutal torturing.

3rd and 4th January 1945

The allied bombing of Ptuj destroyed a few houses, the Minorite church, the Large Barracks, Mladika and the railway bridge.

8th May 1945

Departure of the occupation forces and the liberation of the town.

1946-47

Discovery of the early medieval burial site in the tournament field at the castle of Ptuj.

1959

A new reinforced concrete bridge over the Drava River was built, and the wooden one pulled down.

1969

Thermal water was found on the right river bank, which can be considered as the beginning of Terme Ptuj spa.

1979

The Secondary School Centre Ptuj was built.

1994

Ptuj became the City Municipality and the seat of district court.

1997

Next to the Minorite monastery was built the underpass beneath the railway, partly leading through the town park.

On the site where once stood the medieval wooden bridge, was built the pedestrian bridge connecting the old town core to the right river bank.

2000

The library Ivan Potrč moved into the renovated Small Castle (Mali Grad) in Prešern Street.

2002

The new Grammar School was built.

2007

The Puh bridge, the fourth bridge spanning the river was opened.

Terme Ptuj spa opened a new hotel – Grand Hotel Primus.

Theatre Ptuj: the completion of renovation works and the reconstruction of the façade from 1896.

The reconstruction and building works at the Minorite church continue.



Traditional events

Carnival and Kurentovanje (February)

Fairs: George's (23rd April), Oswald's (5th August), Catherine's (25th November)

Specialities of Slovene Farms (May)

Celebration of Wine at the Castle (June)

Hot Air Balloon Contest (July)

Festival Art Ptuj (July – August)

Night of Ptuj (August)

Festival of pop-folk music (August)

Ptuj – Open Town (August)

Medieval Castle Feast (September)

"Poli" Cyclist Marathon (September)

St. Martin's Day and the election of the Prince of the Carnival and the Queen of the Wine (11th November)

St. Sylvester's - celebration in the open air





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