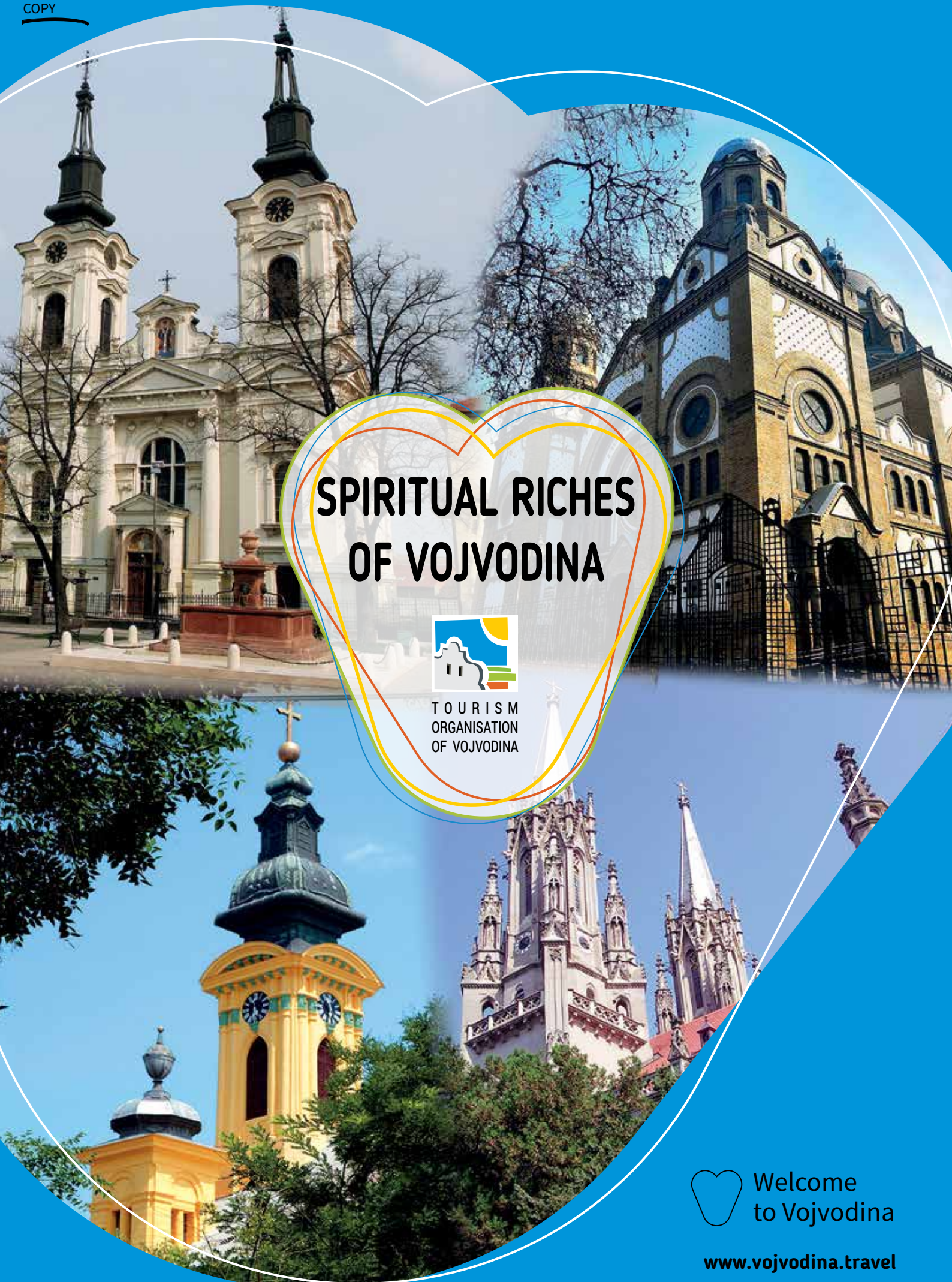
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SPIRITUAL RICHES OF VOJVODINA

TOURISM
ORGANISATION
OF VOJVODINA

Welcome
to Vojvodina

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MULTICONFESSIONALISM BRINGS PROGRESS

A multitude of nations, a multitude of languages, a multitude of cultures, and therefore a multitude of confessions. In a word – Vojvodina. The number of different peoples almost equals the number of religious views on life. In addition to the dominant Orthodox and Roman Catholic religious rituals and buildings, the plain is adorned by the beautiful temples of Romanian Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Baptist, Evangelical, Evangelical-Methodist, Calvinistic, Franciscan, Protestant-Evangelical, Reformatory, Ruthenian Greek Catholic, Christian-Adventist and many other confessions. Today, religion is less practised, the sacred objects remain preserved to various degrees, to witness the rich spiritual history of our plains and hills. A newly arriving tribe wishing to plant roots in this inviting soil would not waste a moment before planting its spiritual flowers whose towers sprout to the heavens. If, however, the ethnic group was forced to move further or, worse, disappeared in some other way – a church or chapel would remain, or at least its ruins to testify who was once there. If the people stayed, which was not rare, the prosperity and population expansion would soon make the original spiritual home tight, and it would, most often, be replaced by a new, better, bigger temple in the same location, and then after a century or two, or more quickly, with the newest, even more magnificent temple. In order not to have a break in service, the construction of a new temple would often begin within the old structure (imagine the Russian stacking dolls). The old temple would not be torn down until the new one was close to completion. Thus for some time the faithful would enter the new church through the old church. After the Second World War, in the changed ideological environment, the flame of spirituality did not burn bright but did not go out either. In the last few decades there has been an increase in the number of new church buildings, predominantly Orthodox, many of which are semi-finished, largely due to lack of funds, which only shows that spirituality is not built or developed overnight.

The Law on Churches and Religious Communities in the Territory of the Republic of Serbia, which guarantees freedom of religion, prohibits religious discrimination, guarantees freedom of association and assembly, and the autonomy of churches and religious communities, recognizes the traditional churches that have a long-standing historical continuity and whose legal subjectivity is acquired on the basis of special laws. According to the above criteria, these are: The Serbian Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Slovak Evangelical Church, the Reformed Christian Church, the Evangelical Christian Church, the Diocese of the Romanian Orthodox Church Dacia Felix with its administrative headquarters in Vršac and, of course, traditional religious communities: Jewish and Islamic. Vojvodina, within its home state, is leading in the number of listed confessions.

In addition to the above, the Register of Churches and Religious Communities also includes: the Christian Adventist Church, the Evangelical Methodist Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Evangelical Church in Serbia, the Church of Christ's Love, the Christ's Spiritual Church, the Association of Christian Baptist Churches in Serbia, the Christian Nazarene Religious Community, the Church of God in Serbia, the Protestant Christian Community in Serbia , the Christian Church of the Friars in Serbia, the Free Church of Belgrade, Jehovah's Witnesses – the Christian Religious Community, the Consecration Church of Sion, the Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement Union, "Spiritual Centre" – the Protestant Evangelical Church, and the Evangelical Church of Jesus Christ.

All of the above is a wonderful example of one of the most established multiconfessionalities in Europe, and a great tourism potential.

Almost all sacred objects in the territory of AP Vojvodina, dating from the period before the Second World War, are at the very least on the list of immovable cultural heritage of great importance. A more detailed look at the list would be too long to fit on these pages. Therefore, we will use this confined space of a decent tourist brochure to present to you, above all, a segment of religious buildings that are considered cultural monuments of exceptional significance.





CHURCHES WATCHING THE HEAVENS AND TELLING THEIR TALES

Churches are religious buildings where the faithful gather. The perception of the role of the church varies within the various Christian traditions. Icon means picture, image, or face. In them, the Orthodox Christians see God's presence in the church. Anyone can become acquainted with the main events and teachings of Christian faith by reading the iconostasis as an open book.

In Vojvodina, which has over four hundred registered churches, even the smallest settlement has a sacral object or two in its heritage, while larger towns have more than ten. In the past the most obvious indicator of civilisation development used to be the number (and diversity) of its churches, and today the development is measured by the dedication to preserving and promoting this valuable cultural heritage.

THE CITY OF NOVI SAD TEMPLES AS THE POINTS OF INTEREST

The Nikolajevska Church (**1**) is the smallest, but also the oldest Serbian Orthodox Church in Novi Sad, and it is preserved in its original form. In it, in 1913, the sons of Mileva Marić and Albert Einstein were baptized. The greatest Novi Sad benefactor of all time, Marija Trandafil, with her husband, is buried in it. One of the great mysteries of this temple is the black icon of the Mother of God.

The largest Orthodox building in Novi Sad (and the community of Podbara) is the Almaška Church. Wanting to prove their worth to the original settlers who had already built the churches Saborna, Nikolajevska, Uspenska and Jovanovska, the inhabitants of the Almaški quarter, the so-called Podbara, decided that their church would be the largest and the tallest in the city. Thus, in 1797, the Almaška Church was erected. The icon "The Mother of God with Christ" was painted by Uroš Predić and is considered one of his best artistic achievements. This place of worship was in 1852 visited by Emperor Franz Joseph.

The Uspenska Church (of the Assumption) is located in the Novi Sad street of the same name. It was built in the period from 1765 to 1774, in baroque style, and due to artistic woodworking, the ornaments and inventory, it was the most important church of the wider area. Alongside the wall, the foundation is where the important Novi Sad people, nobles and knights were buried.

There are not many churches in Vojvodina that deserve the prefix of Saborna (the Cathedral). The Novi Sad Saborna Church of Saint George (**2**) was built, presumably, in 1734, of stone and brick, and is located at the beginning of the popular Pašić Street. The icons were painted by the famous Paja Jovanović. Its courtyard is where the oldest public city monument is located – the Orthodox cross in red marble.

The temple of the Slovak Evangelical Church (**3**) stands at the corner of the Masarikova and Šafarikova streets. It is fruit of joint efforts of the Germans and the Slovaks in 1873. It is also the residence of the bishop of the Slovak Evangelical Church in Serbia. In this temple there are no icons, nor the images of saints, which is in accordance with the theological doctrines of the Reformation.



IN BAČKA, DUSK IS WHEN THE CHURCH BELLS CHIME

The Čurug Temple of the Lord's Ascension (**4**), erected in 1860, is known for the iconostasis by Đorđe Krstić and the famous "Great Contra G" bell weighing 4,775 kg. They say that the church in Čurug, before the construction of the Temple of St. Sava in Belgrade, was the largest Serbian church. Its three towers confirm this.



At the site of St. John the Forerunner Church in Sombor, was once a mosque for a time. Hiding from the Turks, the monks of the Fruška Gora Monastery of Jazak move the remains, and as a sign of gratitude they leave the icon of the Most Holy Mother of God brought from Kosovo, preserved in the church to this day. The old church was demolished in 1786, and the new baroque style one with elements of rococo was built in 1790 (**5**).

The church of the great martyr Stefan Dečanski in Vilovo was built, in the spirit of Classicism, in 1806 at the site of the old church. It was painted in 1752 by the Aradian painter Stefan Tenecki, one of our first artists who adhered to Western models,




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7a


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opposite to the Byzantine art. With an exceptional drapery, precise drawing and striking colour palette, a special artistic value is present in iconostasis bulkhead transferred from a larger church.

THE SPIRUTAUL SPLENDOR OF SREM

The Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Sremski Karlovci, situated alongside theold Patriarchal Palace, today's Bishopric of the Srem Eparchy, is one of the most important temples of theSerbian Orthodox Church. The Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Vojvodinacategorized the Cathedral as cultural goods of outstanding importance, because in it, in addition to the frescoes, a painting ofPaja Jovanovićand other valuable religious and artistic objects, there are two relics – parts of the remains of the second Serbian ArchbishopSt Arsenije Sremacand the Miraculous icon of the Most Holy Mother of God.

The entire city centre of Sremski Karlovci (**6**) has been declared a spatial cultural and historical unit of exceptional importance. There are also the secondary school of theology, the Upper Church, the rich treasury of the Karlovci metropolis and other valuable cultural and spiritual goods (**7, 7a**).

On the outskirts of the village of Kupinovo, there is a church of St. Luke (**8**), the endowment of the despot Đurđ Branković. Built in the middle of the 15th century, it represents the oldest Orthodox chapel in the regions north of the Sava and the Danube. Today, the church together with the baroque iconostasis of Jakov Orfelin from 1780 is protected by law. Kupinovo, as the former reduced centre of the Serbian state in its decline, attracted the best artists of the epoch. In Kupinovo there is the Church of Holy Spirit dating from 1803.

As for the churches of exceptional significance in Srem, one should mention the Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas in Sibič, the Old Serbian church of St. Stefan in Sremska Mitrovica, the Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Archangel Gabriel in Molovin, the Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas in Stari Slankamen as well as the Sretenjska (the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple) Church in Krušedol. We also recommend a Sremska Mitrovica temple of an unusual name: Small Serbian Church on the Sava River.

THE IRRESISTIBILITY OF THE BANAT SPIRITUALITY

The Bishop's Palace in Vršac (**9**) is one of the finest examples bishops courts in the Serbian nation. At the same time, it is also the oldest Bishopric of theSerbian Orthodox Church and the only one of this use from the baroque period. The building is residential, because the court is where the Bishop of Banat resides. The court has a worthy collection of icons, portraits of the most important bishops of the Vršac Eparchy and a large library.

The Roman Orthodox Church of St. George in Uzdin (**10**), erected in1801in the spirit of baroque, it is one of the largest and most beautiful Vojvodinatemplesof theRomanian Orthodox Church. Iconostasis with 69 icons ofunusual layout was painted from1833 to 1836 by Konstantin Danil.

Construction of the Roman Catholic Church of St. Trinity in Čoka, in the spirit of classicism in 1808, was assisted by the noble family Marczibanyi, whose remains are in the church crypt. The images of Peter and Paul were done in the rare technique of plaster mosaic.

The ruins of the Benedictine Abbey of Arača on the Tisa (**11**), near Novo Miloševo, represent a scheduled cultural and historical monument of national importance – the only one of that importance, and medieval from this area. The first written trace of Arača dates from the 8th century, when it was a Benedictine monastery. Archaeological research shows that the monumental building of the abbey was erected on the foundations of the older church, probably from the 11th century. The approach to Arača for centuries was defended by the swamp and quick mud with spooky goat skulls on spears driven into the soil.According to the legend, the English King Richard the Lionheart also visited Arač, where, in the aftermath of the Crusade, he treated himself and his cohorts with warm mud wraps. By the same legend, going out, somewhere he forgot a shield bordered by golden lions who would have to dig. In 1417, despot Stefan Lazarević received the possession of Arača, and then it was inherited by the despot Đurađ Branković. The fortress rebuilt in 1551 was handed over to the Turks without a fight, who burned it. In early spring this is where an event is organized called "The Medieval Festival of Arača". Princesses briskly cheer their knights in armour crossing


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swords, axes and spears. In pauses, the kids try aiming with bow and arrow. As in the olden times.

Banat inherited a few more churches of exceptional significance: Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas in Kikinda, the Serbian Orthodox Church of the Archdiocese of Michael in Mokrin, and, finally, the Serbian Orthodox Church of the Transfiguration of the Lord in Pancevo.

EVEN FAUX, THE CATHEDRALS ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT

The Name of Mary Church (**12**) dominates not only the central Novi Sad square, but also the panorama of the whole city. It is the highest point to which the city has risen, so the inhabitants give it the title of the "cathedral" although this, in fact, it is not. According to church canons it is "merely" a parish church. Completed in only two years, it was ceremoniously sanctified in 1895. To convince newcomers that their favourite building is not a "cathedral" is an impossible mission, so forgive us church fathers when we say: Let's meet at the cathedral!

The Cathedral of St. Theresa of Avila in Subotica (**13**), also called the Great Church, is a cathedral of the late baroque style dedicated to the patron saint ofSubotica. It was built in the period 1773-1798, the main altar was completed six years later, and the clock in the tower was set up in 1840. It is a real cathedral because the Bishop of the Subotica diocese is present in it.

The Zrenjanin Cathedral (**14**) was built in the Neo-Romanesque style, and named after the patron saint of the city, St. John Nepomuk. After the First World War, the Great Veliki Bečkerek Parish Church became the main temple (Protocathedral) in 1923, and John Paul II, with his 1996 bull, raised the Apostolic Administration to the ranks of the diocese, and the main church of this region became a cathedral. With the building of the Roman Catholic parish office in a neo-Renaissance style, and a valuable secessionist building of the Roman Catholic bishop's ordinariate, the cathedral constitutes one unit.

Rare are tourists who, when visiting Vršac, do not visit the Roman Catholic church "the cathedral" of St. Gerard Sagredo, the largest Roman Catholic church in Serbia. This church of imposing appearance and dimensions with towers 63 meters high, once the second largest in the whole of Yugoslavia, is not a cathedral however.

SYNAGOGUEIS IN THE PLAINS, IN WORDS AND PICTURES

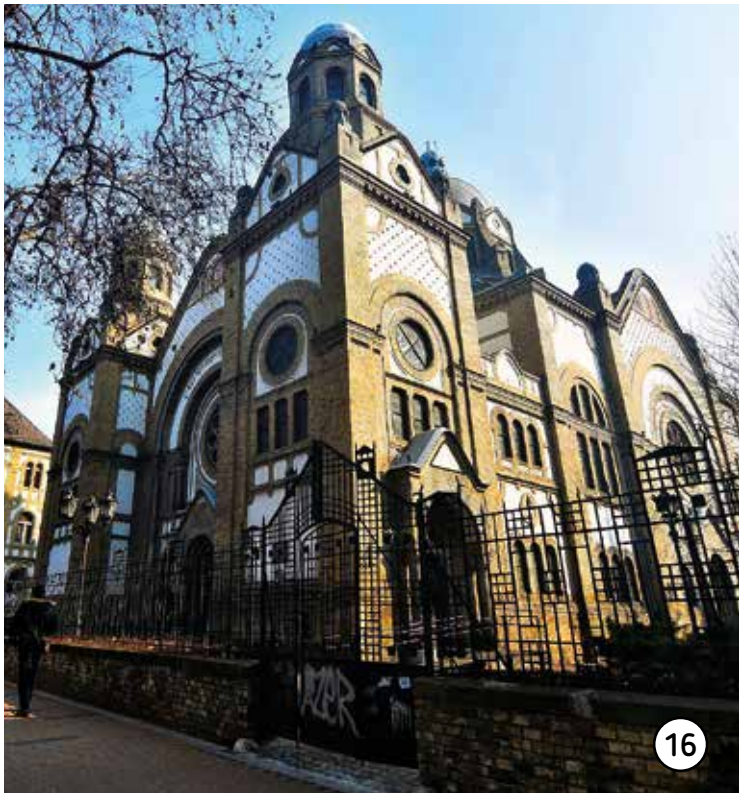
Unfortunately, the area of Vojvodina was once richer in Jewish prayer temples. But worry not, not all synagogues have been destroyed.

Subotica, in 1902, received one of the most beautiful Synagogues (**15**) in this part of Europe when the Subotica Jewish Community received the second-placed work on the Szeged competition. It is the only one in Europe to bear the features of the Hungarian secession. The avant-garde of its construction is reminiscent of a tent in the spirit of Old Testament times, and the brilliant coloration awakens feelings of harmony and joy. It can receive 850 men on the ground floor and 550 women in the gallery. It was also used as a theatre stage. The so-called Small Synagogue is located on the ground floor of the Jewish Community building and at the same time it served as a winter synagogue.

The Novi Sad Synagogue (**16**), with the church municipality and the former Jewish school, is located in Jewish Street, dates back to 1909. Above the main entrance is the Hebrew inscription ... because my home will be called the home of the prayers of all nations... It is withdrawn from the street front line, in accordance with the regulations in the Habsburg monarchy, because the line of the street front was reserved only for the sacral objects belonging to the Roman Catholic faith. It used to have 999 and today it has 700 seats. The Novi Sadians mostly associate this building of the extraordinary acoustics with concerts of classical music, however, it is still, above all, the “home of all people’s prayers”.

The Second World War destroyed a beautiful synagogue in Vrbas, which can only be seen on old photographs today. At the place where it used to be, the hexagonal pillar that belonged to it rises.


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TOURISTS PEAK INTO THE MONASTERIES


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18a

The wider area ofthe Srem mountain of Fruška Gora in the old times was suitable for the sanctuaries, and the16th and 17th centuries record 35 monasteries. In the area of50 kilometres long and 10 kilometres wide, from west to east, under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Srem, the following monasteries await for you: Đipša (or Divša), Jazak, Beočin, Bešenovo, Velika Remeta, Ravanica - Vrdnik, Grgeteg, Krušedol, Kuveždin, Mala Remeta, Novo Hopovo, Petkovica, Privina Glava, Rakovac, Sveta Petka - Berkasovo, Staro Hopovo, Fenek, Šišatovac. They say that there is another monastery here somewhere among the above, neither in the sky nor on earth, between the real world and dream, which can only be found by the most patient and committed ones. This unique cultural and historical entity is also proposed for inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

But Vojvodina has more monasteries:

The Mesić Monastery (**17**) is a female Orthodox monastery in the Banat eparchy, more precisely, in the south-eastern Banat, about ten kilometres from Vršac. More precisely, at the entrance to the village of Mesić, probably our most eastern settlement. It was probably built by the last Branković, most likely at the end of the 15th century. It treasury hides valuable manuscripts, printed books and paintings of famous painters.

The Vojlovica Monastery is a male Orthodox monastery from the Pančevo suburb of the same name, and within the Refinery complex. According to the oldest version, the monastery was founded in 1383 by despot Stefan Lazarević, the son of Prince Lazar. On the south side of the monastery, near the church, there is a mysterious grave with a Templar cross. Worthy is also a gold-plated 18th-century iconostasis with some thirty icons. The factory and the monastery today coexist in a rarely seen symbiosis.

The Bođani Monastery (**19**) is in the direction towards the Danube, 15 km from Bač. This baroque complex is composed of church, accommodation

wing and ancillary farm (forests and orchards). The pride of the monastery is one of the six Orthodox canonized icons in the world - the Virgin of Bođani (**19a**), whose healing powers especially help childless couples. In the small chapel at the well, according to the tale, in 1478 the patron of this monastery, trader Bogdan from Dalmatia, washed his face and cured ill eyes.

The attractiveness of the Kovilj Monastery lies in the fact that its monks practise Byzantine singing, so that the travellers can attend the service featuring the elements of the ancient Byzantine liturgy (**18, 18a**).

Other monasteries of rich and educational heritage also emerged from the soil of Vojvodina: Forest Monastery Bavanište near Pančevo, Zrenjanin Monastery St. Melania of Rome as the first female monastery of the Banat Diocese, Hajdučica Monastery in the eastern Banat, Sombor Monastery and Središte Monastery in the town of Malo Središte near Vrsac.


19


19a

DO NOT RUSH, STAY - THE MONASTERIES SAY

The very centre of Bač is where a Franciscan monastery (**20**) with inner courtyard and church of the Assumption of Mary is located. On the foundations of the old cathedral, in the year 1169 the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcre of Jerusalem – "Canonical Crucifers" builds, in a superior manner of Romanesque architecture, its monastery and church. Since the Friars for three centuries did not abandon the monastery, a lot of old dishes, textiles, clothes and ecclesiastical objects were preserved, which testify to the continuity of from the Middle Ages, but also the ancient Roman times.

Among numerous elegant villas in Novi Sad's Cara Dušana Street, there is an inconspicuous building that was redecorated in 1942 in the Franciscan monastery of St. John Kapistran. The mentioned seventy-year-old Franciscan monk, fought against the Turks in the siege of Belgrade in 1456, with Janos Hunyadi. The secular appearance of a civic house hides a lovely church with valuable stained glass windows.


20

A VISIT TO THE CHAPEL DOES GOOD TO THE SOUL AND BODY


21


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Chapels, small churches, also called “vodica”, because they are predominantly raised along water, or spring or well.

The Chapel of Peace in Sremski Karlovci (**21**) is certainly the most important chapel in Vojvodina. The Karlovci Peace was concludedon January 26th,1699betweenAustriaand its allies on one side andTurkeyon the other, and the negotiations were held at the round table for the first time in the history of diplomacy. Each of the four delegations entered the hall, an improvised barrack, at their door. At the place where the Peace of Karlovci was signed, the Petrovaradin Friars first created the monastery, and the Karlovci Catholics in 1817 built a temple called the Chapel of Peace.

The Chapel of St. Petka (**22**) grew into an old, hollow trunk, with a stork nest on the top, is a recognizable picture related to the Kovilj Monastery. The oldest mention of the chapel “leaned against thick oak” dates back to 1878. There is no longer the well with healing water. Only a century ago, the monastery and the chapel were in the middle of an oak forest. The remaining oak it is believed to be sacred wood.

In addition to the Fantast Castle in the Bečej municipality, a chapel was built in a Neo-Byzantine style in the 20s of the 20th century. The iconostasis was painted by a friend of the owner - Bogdan Dunđerski, our famous painter Uroš Predić.

The Dudvarski Chapel at the Orthodox cemetery in Ada, built in 1892, is dedicated to the relocation of the relics of Holy Father Nikolai. In its vicinity is the Serbian Orthodox Church of the Assumption of Christ from 1926, which is a copy of the church in Oplenac.

The Mausoleum of Stevan Dunđerski at the Srbobran cemetery reminds us of the dome of medieval Serbian monasteries. The Mausoleum was made of white stone built in the first half of the 20th century for about 2,000 tons of wheat.



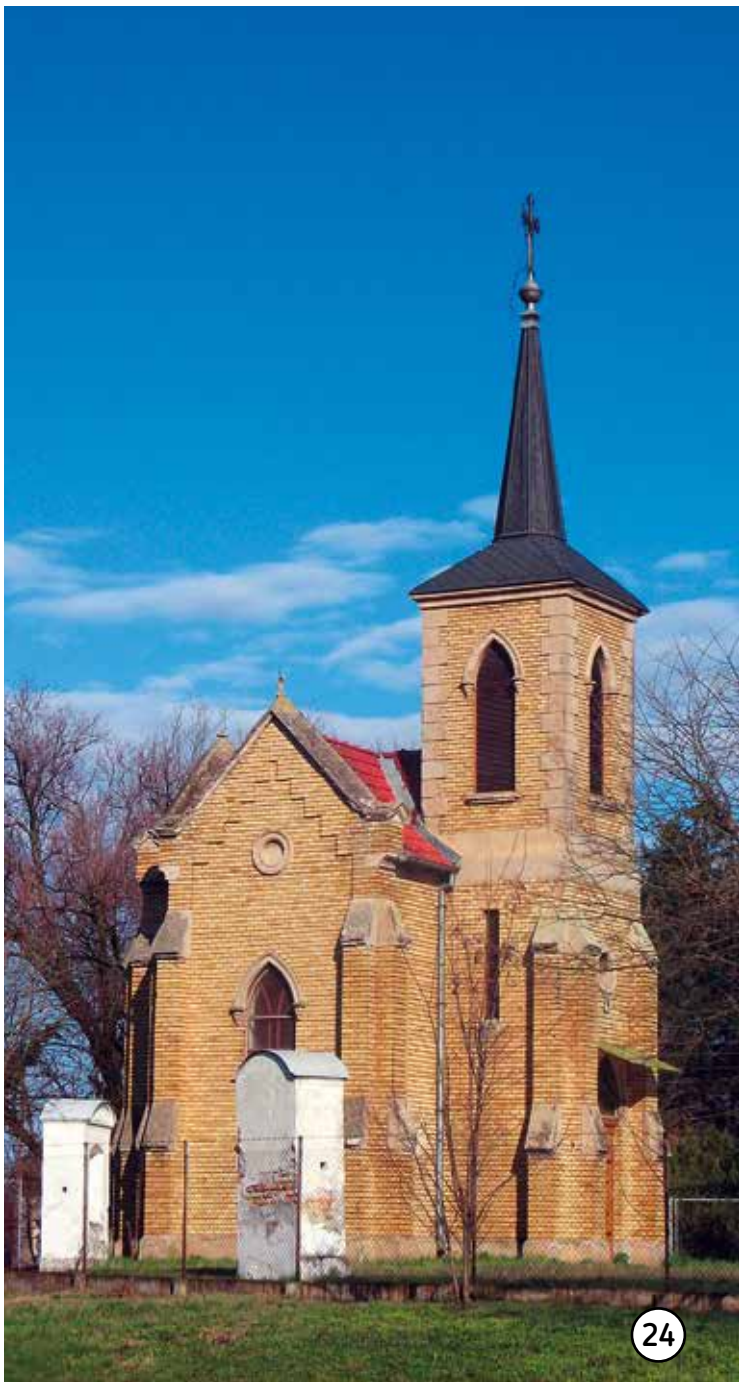
THE CALVARIES STANDING HIGH, IMMUNE TO PASSAGE OF TIME

Calvary, also called Golgotha, are arranged religious places, most often on elevations, with 12 or 14 stations that follow the suffering of Jesus Christ on the road to the crucifix with the stairs leading to it. The purpose of these sanctuaries is thepilgrimageat the time oflentand other holidays. The tradition of constructing calvaries in Europe, as well as the crosses on the side of roads, goes back to theMiddle Ages. Similar toiconsin Orthodoxy, they are Catholic objects of worship. They inherit the function that Megaliths had in the previous eons, as monuments to mark the landscape in religious and ideological manner.

From the highest point in the city, the Calvary seems to dominate Bačka Topola. A monument dedicated to the New Testament Golgotha, built in the late 18th century, is the oldest building in the city (**24**).

In addition to the New Calvary, the Old Calvary is also located in Bajša. The Old Calvary consists of the marble cross of Christ, of two crosses of wood. The New Calvary consists of three large crosses and three statues in the size of man.

During the prehistory, the Titel hill was an island inhabited by many peoples, as evidenced by the remains of the settlement and fortifications. Of the three hundred archaeological sites, the most significant is the Calvary. It's a vista over the Titel settlement (**23**).



TOURISM ORGANISATION OF VOJVODINA

SPIRITUAL POINTS OF INTEREST ARE PLENTIFUL IN VOJVODINA

What is this Slovak Evangelical Church of the Augsburg confession in Bački Petrovac? Who was the Saint Lazarus of the Four Days whose name is given to the temple in the Banat town of Pločice? Where is the Roman Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary? Who were the Piarists who founded the church in Zrenjanin? How come there is a religious building in the memorial of the Srem Front?

Some religious figures and concepts appear more often in the names of Vojvodina's spiritual temples than others. For example: Saint Nikola, Snow Maiden, the Heart of Jesus ... In Srem, there are even four churches dedicated to the transfer of the relics of St. Nicholas. The tributes to the Assumption of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Worship of the Most Holy Theotokos are not a rarity. The reasons for this are certainly interesting but let's not reveal everything just yet. You are invited to do some discovery on a spiritual tour of Vojvodina.

A large number of religious buildings disappeared from the face of Vojvodina. Some have been destroyed by the representatives of other confessions, some have succumbed to decay over time, some have been suppressed by other ideologies, such as the Armenian Churches in Novi Sad and Ada. But what remains is enough to testify about the prominent position of the Vojvodina region on the European map of religious tourism. This is supported by the fact that the General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), which brings together representatives of 116 Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican and Old Catholic churches, was held in 2018 in Novi Sad.

All in all, we have just scratched the surface of the spiritual treasure of Vojvodina. You are invited to go further on your own.





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