



LOKETT

*Historic
Promenade*



Welcome to the historic town of Locket. Come for a little walk with us. We will tell you many interesting stories and show you the most beautiful sights. Whichever direction you take, we will keep you company and show you how fascinating our town is.



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LOKET CASTLE



Castle courtyard
and rotunda

Standing at the rocky top of a spur, around the entire circumference of which the Ohře River flows, the castle was built as a royal border stronghold to fend off expanding Cheb ministeriales probably during the reign of King Vladislaus II in the second half of the 12th century. Written records first mention the castle only in 1234. Since its early beginnings, the castle was frequently visited by Bohemian sovereigns with their families and hosted significant diplomatic negotiations. The original two-storey Romanesque castle complex consisted of isolated buildings – a prismatic tower, a palace, and a rotunda. During the reign of King Ottokar II, the castle was rebuilt in Early Gothic style.

When the House of Luxembourg ruled Bohemia, the castle served as their temporary seat on numerous occasions. Reconstruction in Gothic style presumably commenced towards the end of the reign of King Charles IV, after a devastating fire in 1352, and largely continued during

the rule of King Wenceslaus IV. A stately palatial building known as the Margrave's House and apparently also an outbuilding known as the Headman's House were built in this period. The castle fortification was further reinforced and its entrances were secured by castle gates. In 1434, Emperor Sigmund pledged the castle to Kašpar Šlik. Three generations of the Šliks (1434–1547) contributed to the Late Gothic and Renaissance conversions of the castle, which was transformed into a stately residence and the seat of the administrative rule of the region. After the Battle of White Mountain, the castle was confiscated and it fell into the possession of the town. Its importance began to decline, it was gradually losing both artistic and architectonic value and its fate was ultimately sealed by an insensitive conversion of the entire complex into a state prison (1797–1821). During the reconstruction work, the Stone Room was demolished, the top floors of the palatial buildings were torn down, and the interiors were converted into prison cells. When the prison was closed down in 1948, the castle deteriorated for decades until becoming so dilapidated that it had to be closed to the public for several years. Since 1992, when Locket Castle was returned to the town of Locket, the entire castle complex has been undergoing gradual renovation, as a result of which thousands of visitors from around the world can admire the renewed beauty and majesty of the castle towering over the surrounding countryside.

Charles IV and Locket

When young Prince Wenceslas (*later Roman Emperor and Bohemian King Charles IV*) was only three years old, disputes between his parents escalated. His father John of Luxembourg held him as a prisoner at Locket Castle for two months, while he sent his mother, Elizabeth of Bohemia, to Mělník. Surprisingly, Charles IV never came to hate Locket Castle and he often gladly returned in his adult years. He attended to various affairs of the state and rested while hunting. According to legend, he discovered a true miracle of nature during one of his hunting expeditions – hot springs in the valley of the Teplá River. He then ordered the building of town, which was named Karlovy Vary.

*View of the castle from the park by the river
Karl Streer, graphic sheets, collotype, 1926

Exhibitions

The castle offers an interesting visitor route for individual, as well as guided tours. Each of the exhibitions situated in 7 castle buildings displays selected exhibits from the so-called Locket Collection, which comprises almost 8,000 items of regional character (*furniture, wooden sculptures, paintings, porcelain, mineral collections, arms, tin objects, etc.*). An impressive torture display is installed in the former prison cells.

Points of Interest

- **Romanesque Rotunda** from the second half of the 12th century with a 3.5 m internal diameter and 6.5 m height.
- A part (14 kg) of the oldest known Czech **meteorite** ***Magic-struck Burgrave***, which was allegedly found here after impact in 1422.
- **Šlik Archive (Chapel)** located in the North Palace dates to the period of the reconstruction with Renaissance fresco decorations carried out upon the order of the Šliks between the years 1528 and 1535. Its restoration took place in 2020 and 2021.
- ***Around the World with Charles*** interactive trail for school children and ***The Art of Quill scrivener's workshop***.

WEYROTHER'S LOOKOUT



The romantic arbour on a rocky spur below the castle was built before the awaited visit of Emperor Franz I in 1812 as a part of a path leading along the bank of the Ohře River under the castle. It is named after a former hetman of the region, Johann von Weyrother. The originally Empire circular pavilion with Ionic columns and a domed roof was probably rebuilt at a later time into an octagonal brick arbour with a pyramidal roof. A complete reconstruction of the arbour roof and floor tiling with the coat-of-arms of the town and lettering were commissioned by the Locket beautification society in 2005.

*Weyrother's Lookout, view from the park by the river
Dominik Schöning, coloured lithograph, 19th century

J. W. GOETHE'S MONUMENT



The German poet, writer, playwright, and politician Johann Wolfgang Goethe loved Locket and visited the town frequently. From his diaries, we learn that he travelled through Locket three times and stayed ten times whether during his geological expeditions or in the company of beautiful women.

In 1932, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Goethe's death, sculptor Willy Russ from Krásno created this sculpture commemorating the German poet's stays in picturesque Locket. The sculptor also dedicated his time to ceramics, stove building, or wood carving. His best known work is the so-called Cheb stove from 1944, on which 336 figures are depicted in 16 reliefs.

*Statue of J. W. Goethe in the park by the school
Author unknown, photography, 20th century

CHAPEL OF SAINT ANNE



The single-aisle chapel with a hipped roof stands on the site in front of the former main town gate. It was built in 1744 as a symbol of gratitude for sparing the town from being despoiled by French soldiers in 1742. The semi-circular entrance portal is decorated with cartouches with a Latin inscription and a chronogram. A recess for the sculpture of the saint was built in the gable.

A group of wooden Baroque statues representing the Holy Mother of Mary and Grandmother of Jesus, St. Joseph and St. Joachim were originally installed in the altar recess, and the sculptures of St. John the Evangelist and the Virgin Mary in the side niches.

*Chapel of St. Anna
Author unknown, after 1945

CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST



The original medieval church, which used to stand on the slope terrace above Janský Bridge, was demolished in 1852. Between the years 1854 and 1857, it was replaced by a smaller cemetery church built in pseudo Romanesque style according to the design of Locket builder F. Schidl. After the adjoining cemetery had been closed down in 1877, the church lost its purpose. It was used by local real-school (Realschule) students for religion lessons for some time. In the 1950s, the dilapidating church was handed over to the Evangelic Church. The church interiors were redecorated according to the plans of Sokolov architect H. Scherrer. It was ultimately torn down in 1973. The antependium painted by Eliáš Dollhopf (1703-1773), which is currently displayed at the castle, was originally installed in the church.

*Church of Saint John the Baptist
Postcard, circa 1916

TORSO OF JÁNSKÝ BRIDGE



The original wooden bridge arching over the Ohře River near the porcelain factory was replaced by a new bridge with a wooden bridge deck carried by four stone piers. The statue of Czech patron Saint John of Nepomuk was installed on one of the piers in 1734. As the Baroque bridge could not keep up with increasing traffic, another bridge was built of concrete in its vicinity between the years 1927 and 1928. The statue of the saint was moved to the site of the original Baroque bridge at the edge of Zahradní Street.

*View of Janský Bridge from the former hospital
Anton Hanh, pencil drawing, 1899

BLACK TOWER



Theatre



Several fragments have been preserved from the original medieval fortification system to this day, such as the 32 m tall tower. The Black Tower was originally a part of the so-called Lower Castle and its function was not only defensive, which is evidenced by the loopholes in the body and by the entrance located at half of the height of the tower, but it was also used as a look-out post.

At the uppermost floor of the tower, a flat was furnished for the watchman whose duty was to watch the entire town and its surroundings. The watchman often lived with his whole family in the modest flat. The tower inhabitants had to endure heat in hot summers and cold in freezing winters. One of the displeasure's of living in the tower was that one had to climb 25 stone and 78 wooden stairs with firewood or water. The tower is accessible to the public and offers interesting views of the surrounding built-up area.

*Black Tower

Karl Streer, graphic sheets, collotype, 1926

GOETHE'S LOOKOUT



Goethe's pavilion



Theatre

The White Horse Hotel is one of the most significant buildings in Locket's town square. It was built in 1899 in historicist style according to the plans of architect G. Reitmayer on the site of an original Baroque house. The memorial plaque commemorates the frequent stays of Locket's great admirer Johann Wolfgang Goethe between the years 1807 and 1823. A wooden terrace with a decoratively carved balustrade from 1823 is a part of the hotel and it is also known as Goethe's pavilion. It was here where Goethe celebrated his 74th birthday in the company of young Ulrika von Levetzow. This was during Goethe's last trip to Bohemia. You can sit here and enjoy a wonderful view of the surrounding slopes and the Ohře River

*View of Goethe's view from the river

Postcard, circa 1918

HOLY TRINITY COLUMN



Theatre



The triangular High Baroque column with a group of statues representing the Holy Trinity was erected between the years 1717 and 1719 as a symbol of gratitude for sparing the town inhabitants from an outbreak of plague. The creation of the column was originally commissioned to Cheb sculptor Peter Anton Felsner, however, the town council subsequently held a competition, which was won by Cheb sculptor Johann Karl Stilp. The author of the sculptural group and the coat-of-arms of the town is Jáchymov sculptor Johann G. Grobisch. The column base consists of a two-level pedestal with a triangular ground plan. The sculptures of Saint Wenceslas and Saint Florian, Saint John the Baptist, Saint John of Nepomuk, Saint Sebastian, and the Immaculate Virgin Mary are installed on the bottom level. The statues of archangels Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael stand in the centre. The sculptural group of the Holy Trinity – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit – is installed on the top of the column.

*Holy Trinity Column with original railing
Postcard, 30s of the 20th century

TOWN HALL



Ceremonial Hall
Exposure
book bindings



The original town hall stood on the opposite side of the town square. During the Thirty Years' War, the town hall fell into disrepair and the town council had to convene in the castle from 1680. As the situation was unbearable, the councillors decided to build a new town hall. The construction was commissioned to experienced German builder Abraham Leuthner. The construction was carried out between the years 1682 and 1696. The Gothic cellars of the original burgher house have been preserved to this day. A tower with an onion dome on top rises from the central axis of the forefront. A polychrome coat-of-arms made by A. Zeidler in 1686 is placed above the entrance front. The town hall was reconstructed in the 1980s and since then, it has been serving as the seat of the town authority. The town library with a unique exhibition dedicated to the art of book binding is situated on the ground floor.

*Town Hall on the square
Karl Streer, graphic sheets, collotype, 1926

TOWN ASSEMBLY HALL



The building was erected on the site of several demolished burgher houses in 1895. It is a perfect example of eclectic architecture. The building originally served as a boarding house for the local real school (Realschule) and the hall was used as a gym. From 1946, the hall hosted various social and cultural events and the building housed the national council. The dominant elements are the entrance hall and the main hall with a stage. Abundant cultural life had thrived here until the 1980s, however, after privatisation, the building faced gradual decay. In 2002, it was returned to the possession of the town. In 2015, the Town Assembly Hall was declared a cultural monument and underwent expensive reconstruction between the years 2015 and 2022. Today, the Basic School of Arts may be found here and the contributory organisation Kulturní dům Dvůrana, p.o.

*View of the hall from the river
Coloured postcard, before 1918

ROBIČSKÁ TOWER



A small gate known as “Robičská branka” used to stand here and it served as the only entrance to the town from this side. The gate was demolished in 1859 and only the watch tower remains standing. The structure is built from quarry stone with cut corner block stones in the lower part. Windows with a vaulted arch are placed above one another in the upper part.

In the course of years, the tower was raised. The superstructure provided a room for the watchman who watched the surroundings.

A well-preserved private on the uppermost floor is certainly worth noticing. The private (*from the Latin locus privatus*) is a medieval toilet built on consoles extending outside the tower body. Although the tower is currently not accessible to the public, it is an interesting remnant of the original southern fortification.

*Robičská Tower
Wilhelm Kaiser, woodcut, 30s of the 20th century

BRIDGE



The first bridge connecting the banks of the Ohře River was built on this site according to the design of Leopold Wöllner in 1834. The construction took two years and cost almost 90.000 guildens. The last stone was laid in the presence of Emperor Ferdinand I. The structure was quite unique with two tall tapering pylons erected on the river banks. A wooden bridge deck was suspended on the pylons by means of chains. The bridge served its purpose for almost a century, nevertheless, increasing road traffic caused serious defects and the bridge had to be torn down in 1931. It was replaced by a new, reinforced concrete bridge built according to the design of architect Adolf Benš in 1936. It is 116 metres long and the main arch has a 74.6 metre span and a 17,5 metre camber. Apart from beautiful vistas of the castle and the bend of the Ohře River, it also offers views of the Loket amphitheatre.

*Chain bridge over the river Ohře
Josef Paulus, oil painting, 1920

TOWN WALLS



The building of the Loket fortification system began in the 13th century. In the 17th century, Baroque bastions were added to the fortification. They extend beyond the walls to allow the gunning of the enemy at the foot of the walls without putting shooters at own risk. It is estimated that the height of the town walls was almost 5 metres in some parts and their width was 1.5 metres. The demolition of the main town gate, which was a part of the so-called Lower Castle, and the construction of a chain bridge marked the end of the centuries-long encirclement of Loket by defensive walls. As the fortification system no longer served its purpose, the town council decided on tearing it down in 1850. Parts of the walls were sold to the owners of adjoining properties and were used as building material. Restoration of the remains of the town walls began in the 1970s.

*City map with city fortifications marked
Vinzenz Prökl, lithograph, 19th century

CHURCH OF SAINT WENCESLAS



Interior and roof truss
Church



Theatre

The church was built on the site of an original Romanesque church, which was probably built in the first half of the 13th century and was managed by the Order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star. When the church burnt down in the 1470s, Matyáš Šlik who acquired Loket Castle and the demesne through a pledge initiated the construction of a late Gothic church. It was to house the tomb of the House of Šlik.

In 1701, a Baroque reconstruction of the church began according to the plans of J. W. Braunbock, a builder from Teplá. It was completed only in 1734 because the church was almost destroyed by a huge fire that swept through the town in 1725. After the reconstruction of the church had been completed, well-known local organ-builder J. L. Burckhart installed an organ with Baroque carving decorations. Another major renovation of the church began in 1875 and 27 years later, the church vessel received new window panes. The main column altar and

pulpit are the work of Czech Baroque sculptor and carver J. Eberle. In 1757, statues of the patrons of the land were added to the altar. The main altar painting is the work of significant Czech High Baroque artist Petr Brandl. An untraditional memorial to the victims of World War I is located in the church interior – the memorial painting was created by W. Ditz in 1923.

Sources of historical photos:

Depository of Loket Castle: 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16

Collection of František Truhlář: 4, 6, 10, 12

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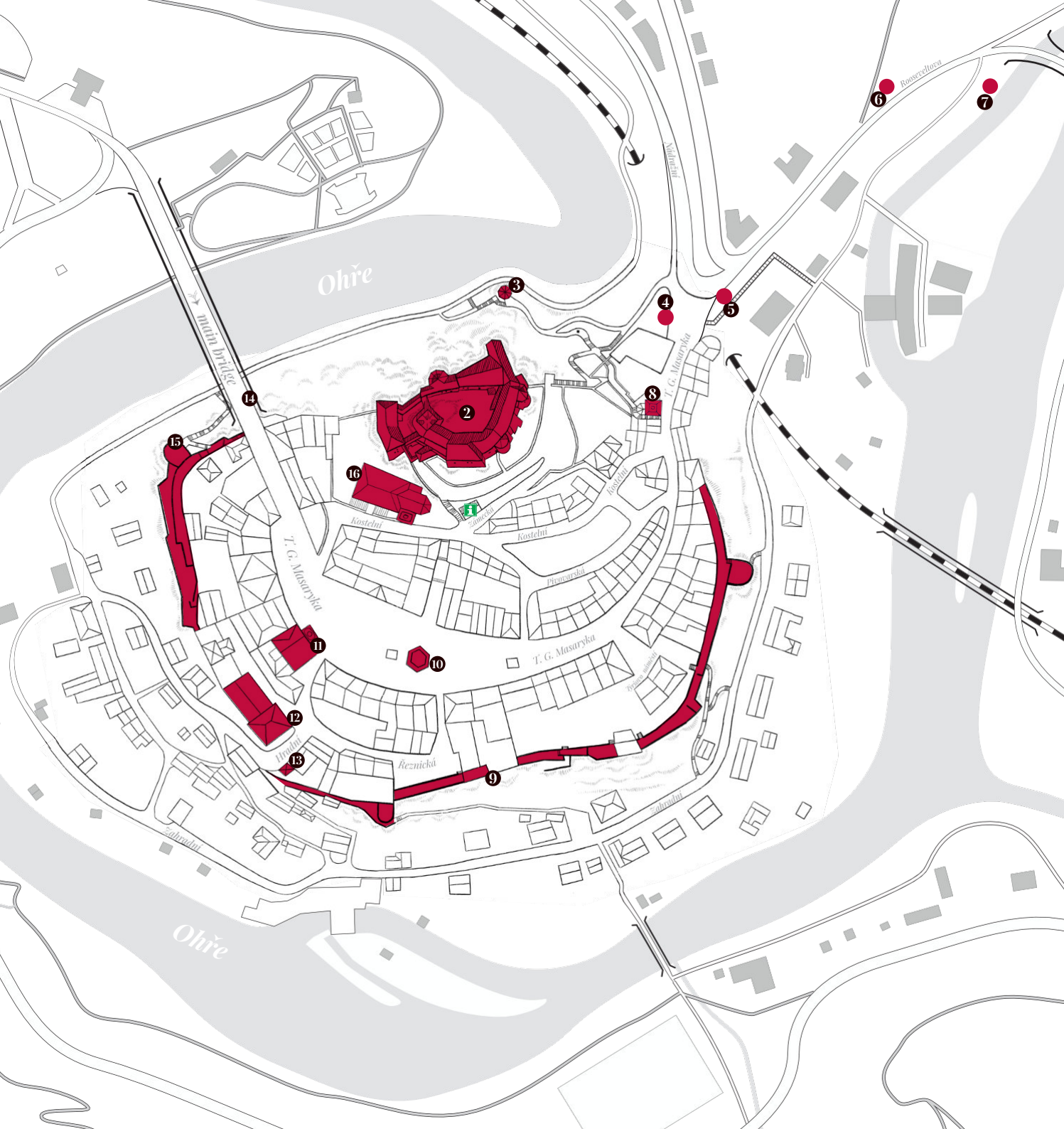
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Other photos from the photo archive HRADU LOKET, o.p.s.

*Church of Saint Wenceslas
Fritz Albert, etching, 20th century





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Translation: YES – překlady a tlumočení, s.r.o.

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Žijeme regionem



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