



PRIVLAKA
Traces of the past

About Privlaka

Did you know?

- * Thanks to its geostrategic position, the Privlaka Peninsula has been inhabited since the Stone Age.
- * The first written mention of the name Privlaka, from 1296, was in connection with winegrowing, the area's main economic activity since ancient times; today many local families engage in the production of premium wine which is worth tasting.



- * The people of Privlaka are widely known for a specific method of fishing known as *ludar*, in which the fish are fenced in with nets and drawn toward the coast, where they are lifted onto ships and taken to the city to be sold.
- * The word *privlaka* is equivalent to *istmos* in Greek, which means "isthmus", a narrow passage connecting, but at the same time separating, the mainland and an island (in this case, the island of Vir).

- * Along the southwestern coast of Privlaka, there are remnants of Roman agricultural facilities – *villa rustica* for the processing of olives and grapes, with preserved pools and mosaics.
- * A bronze fibula in the shape of a cross with a dove, the symbol of peace, was found here, a rare and valuable artefact of material culture from the sixth or seventh century.



Wells and legends

Did you know?

- * *There are twenty wells that have been conserved in Privilaka, sources of water and life, which are distributed among the neighbourhoods of Privilaka.*
- * *In the past, the wells were the centre of social life; they served the households and provided water for the livestock and for the irrigation of the fields.*
- * *The most well-known and beautiful well in Privilaka is known as Sokolar and is associated with the legend of an unhappy love told in the first Croatian novel, *Planine* ('The Mountains'), by Petar Zoranić, a renaissance author of the sixteenth century.*



Sabunjari (sand producers)

Did you know:

- * *Privlaka at one time in the past had the greatest concentration of sand producers, known as sabunjari (Italian sabbia – 'sand').*
- * *Sand was first excavated manually with spoons and spades; after the Second World War, due to the ever-growing market demand, modern sand excavation techniques, using hydraulic excavators and winches. For the transportation of the sand, special types of ships were needed – lent, bracara, trabakul and štilac.*
- * *The sand of the sabunjari was used to construct and renew the city of Zadar, especially after it was badly damaged in the Second World War. For this reason, the 1970s are considered the Golden Age of sand production.*





- * *The introduction in the 1980s of new techniques and materials in construction resulted in a reduced demand for sea sand. As a result, the Privlaka sand producers had less and less work and had to seek employment in other fields.*
- * *As a sign of pride and victory over all the hardships of the difficult life of manual labourers, the local football club in Privlaka was named Sabunjar.*

- * *The small hill on which the Church of St. Vitus, the patron saint of pharmacologists, dancers, and actors, was built is in fact a prehistoric tumulus that has yet to be completely explored.*
- * *The parish church in Privlaka, the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, built in 1836, is one of the most beautiful neoclassical buildings in Dalmatia; on 8 September of every year, the traditional holy day of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated with a festive mass and celebration.*



- * *The oldest residential building in Privlaka, a house that the locals call Biskupija ('diocese, bishopric'), was built centuries ago, in 1604, and has been functional until today. The Biskupija was built by the bishops of Nin as a country villa, a summer mansion, where the bishops resided when there was a malaria epidemic in Nin due to the unhealthy air of the Nin lagoon and when under threat of war by the Turks.*

- * *Recent archaeological excavations have revealed the remnants of mediaeval salt works on the territory of Cape Soline from the fourteenth to eighteenth centuries. The tradition of the existence of those salt works and the production of sea salt in the area is witnessed by this very toponym – Soline.*



* *The Sokolar well was named after a young man called Sokolar. He was in love with a girl named Jagica, who was poisoned by her friend Ružica, who wanted to win over Sokolar's love. Overcome by heartache and the loss of his beloved Jagica, Sokolar wept in his mother's lap until he was transformed into the water that still bears his name today.*



* *The most significant well after Sokolar is the Novak well, also mentioned in Zoranić's *The Mountains*. Novak was a young man who was in love with a fairy named Mara. Diana, the goddess of the hunt, was against any love between a fairy and a common man, so she punished Mara with death. Novak, weeping in his mother's lap, also turned into water.*

* *The thirteenth-century well known as Građenik is one of the oldest wells in Privlaka.*

The story of the Apple

If you throw an apple into the Sokolar well, it will reach the spring of Vrilo, one kilometre away, faster than a man on a horse in full gallop. Legend has it that a maiden once promised to marry her loved one only if he managed to get to Vrilo before the apple. The young man succeeded and, since then, the arrival of a young bride in the town is celebrated by placing apples on the crown of the well. Thus, elderly women, when they fetched water from the well, could often see the image of an apple in the bucket of water, which meant that a new bride had arrived.

The story of Prislavka

Prislavka was a fairy who had two sons with the sea-god Proteus, the above-mentioned Sokolar and Novak. Her sons, crying in their mother's lap because of their unhappy love, were transformed into water, causing their mother to die of sorrow. The region in which she was buried is named after her even today—Privlaka.



The story of Gregory of Nin and the snake

Legend has it that a poisonous snake bit the horse of the eminent early Croatian bishop Gregory of Nin while he was passing through Privlaka. The bishop fell from the horse and was injured. Then he cursed every poisonous snake in this region, and they have not been seen in Privlaka ever again.



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