

WALKING TRAILS

Explore the roads!
ON THE SEA,
BY THE LAKE

PAKOŠTANE

THE STORY OF SWEET AND SALTY ADVENTURE

Once upon a time, there was a cave, and in it, two springs – the Spring of Remembrance and the Spring of Oblivion... Thus begins the legend of the mysterious prophetess that lived in the cave Pećina above Vrana, at the very source of the Stream of Future in which, the story says, the waters of both springs meet.

This is the place where our adventure begins. Following the path of water from rich springs in Vrana, across fertile fields and the turquoise Lake, through invisible underground flows of the karst ridge of Čelinka, to the azure sea of the nearby Vrgada, we have woven a network of hiking trails that invites you to explore this unique area.

Fertile land surrounded by lake and sea has attracted and nourished people in search of a better life since the beginning of time. The prehistoric Illyrian tribe of Liburni built its forts on rocky hilltops; the mighty rulers of ancient Rome and Byzantine Empire conquered these lands; and in Medieval times, Vrana was the seat of the Benedictines, Templars, and Knights Hospitaller, as well as the religious and political centre of Croatian rulers. Both the Ottomans and the Venetians fought for this precious piece of fertile land, and a rich heritage of cultural and historical monuments has been inherited from the stormy past.

Today, when people turn mostly to the seaside, nature is slowly taking over the Vrana Lake. The protected area of the nature park provides shelter to numerous species of birds, which, just like tourists from nearby beaches, come from all over the world, enjoying the safety, beauty, and generosity of this landscape. We invite you to explore, discover and experience the beauty of nature and the rich cultural heritage of Pakoštane countryside through the network of hiking trails.

Welcome to the Sweet & Salty Adventure!

1 BABA DORA'S TRAIL



The promenade by the sea from Pakoštane to Drage leads along the picturesque flysch bank, just by the sea-shore. The sea and waves have carved it with unusual shapes, such as the 'House of Baba Dora' – a small cave where, according to legend, the terrible Grandmother Dora lived, feared by generations of children from Pakoštane. The trail starts at Janice beach, next to the site of the ancient Roman harbor. The remains of the Roman pier stretch under the sea towards the islet of St. Justina, once protecting the harbor from mighty waves.

2 THREE ISLANDS TRAIL



Thanks to three little islands in front of Pakoštane, the town has a unique walking & swimming trail: by swimming (with caution!) or paddling in a kayak, you can easily reach the interesting islets which can be explored on foot. The chapel on St. Justina is the trademark of Pakoštane. On Veli Školj there is a hiking trail leading to the ancient Liburnian fort, and Babuljaš is the smallest one, wearing a green leafy bonnet. On the islands of St. Justina and Veli Školj you can explore the interesting "open-air museum," learning about the typical maritime vegetation and the story of the past and present of the islets of Pakoštane.

3 PILATUŠA TRAIL

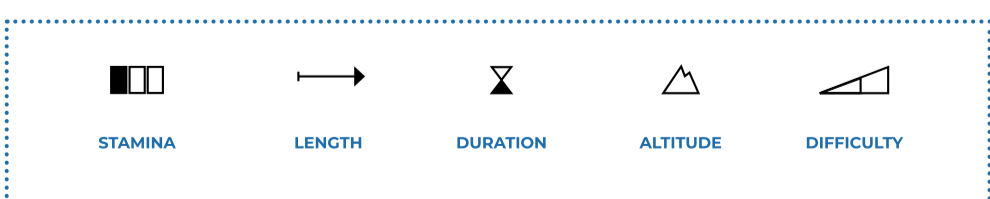


Pilatuša beach at the western end of Pakoštane is the beginning of a playful trail along the sea, shaded by pine trees that alternate with a maze of dense evergreen shrubland called *maquis* or *macchia*. Here you will discover all the luxury of Mediterranean plants and enjoy their intoxicating fragrances that blend with the scent of the sea breeze at any time of the year – the perfect natural aromatherapy!

4 BIOGRAD TRAIL



The Biograd trail starts near the entrance to Pine Beach, the former camping resort of the Club Mediteranée, where the tourism of Pakoštane was born. The trail soon leaves the road and climbs towards Kostelj hill, the site of a prehistoric Liburnian fortress. Although there is almost no trace of the ancient fort, from the top you can enjoy the view of Pakoštane, the sea and the surrounding islets. The trail continues westward along the macadam road, bypassing the tourist resort in Crvena Luka, and then descends all the way to the sea. The trail continues along the coast all the way to Biograd, passing along beaches and through fragrant pine groves.



5 CRKVINE TRAIL



An ancient path from Vransko polje to the sea led through Gaz, a narrow strip of solid ground passing through a muddy swamp. There, the Romans built their road from ancient Asseria to the harbor from Pakoštane, and Templars from Vrana used it to reach their harbor in Bužakovina bay. Next to road was a village called Zabláče, from which remain the ruins of the church of St. Mary on Crkvine. Today, there is a road connecting the sea and the lake, the sweet and the salty, two different water worlds.

6 LAKE VRANA BIRDING TRAIL



Dense reed bed along the northwestern shore of Lake Vrana is an ideal habitat for many bird species. Walking along the wooden walkway, you can immerse yourself in the lilting city of birds, and with a little luck and patience, you will also see its winged inhabitants. Bird celebrities of the Park are Purple Heron and Pygmy Cormorant, which can build their large heavy nests only in old, solid reed. A visit to the ornithological reserve is most interesting in autumn, during bird-ringing season before the great bird migration.

7 TRAIL ALONG THE BAYS OF DRAGE



Although the ancient past of Drage is related to hilltop forts of Liburnians, its modern life is primarily bound to the sea. Charming coves, blushing sunsets and silent songs of fishermen invite you for a walk along the path by the sea towards Dolaška Draga. At dusk, on the sea, you can see *bumbete* – the lamplights of fishing boats of fishermen from Drage.

8 LAKE TRAIL



The people of Pakoštane have been bound to the land since time immemorial – they still grow their fertile gardens all around Lake Vrana. On the southern side of the lake, a wide road leads through their neat fields, from which numerous paths diverge to the sea and the lake. At Lokin Brig, there is a whole network of small paths where you can find a secluded corner at the lake shore, just for yourself.

9 RIDGE TRAIL – BETWEEN THE TWO WATERS



Unique views of dark blue and turquoise tones of sea and lake unfold from the belvedere at the hill Čelinka above Drage. Ancient Liburni had their settlement on the western part of the ridge, from which they could follow all movements of friends or foes in the surrounding area. The path leading from the belvedere of Čelinka to the remains of the Liburnian Gradina is somewhat more demanding, and it is accessible only to more experienced hikers in solid footwear.

10 PEĆINA – TRAIL OF THE PROPHETESS VRANA



We start towards spring Pećina from the ruins of the old city of Templars – the heart of medieval Vrana. A legend says that there was an ancient oracle by the spring, which Romans dedicated to water nymphs, and built an impressive aqueduct from springs Pećina, Biba and Subiba to Zadar (Roman ladera). The view above the cave spreads over the valley, and the return through the hamlet of Pećina offers an interesting insight into the present-day life of Vrana.

11 MAJDAN TRAIL



Built in the 17th century as a caravanserai – an inn for travellers, Maškovića Han was recently converted into a heritage-hotel, with a museum and restaurant. From the Han our trail passes the church of St. Nediljica (Santa Domenica) and leads to the observation post on Majdan, part of the educational trail "Birds of Prey." You can return via the cemetery church of St. Mihovil, or by a longer route alongside the lake reeds.

12 BAK HIKING TRAIL



The hiking trail along the mountain ridge north of Vrana is intended for more experienced hikers in sturdy shoes. The trail starts at spring Pećina near Maškovića Han, and takes you through rough rocky karst with magnificent views and hidden caves, but also through pine and cypress forests above the hamlets of Vrana. The trail passes by a Liburnian fort on Bak and a Roman one on Zamina, which the people called Vran Samograd because of its isolated location. When climbing Bak, you can use an attractive section of the trail, built by members of the Belveder Mountain Club, in memory of their member Milo Vođera. You can descend from Bak back towards the Han on a circular tour on the south side along the picturesque rock scree, while those who want a longer hike can continue the ascent from Zamina all the way to the viewpoint on top of Kamenjak.

13 KAMENJAK – MERNJAČA TRAIL



If you wish to experience the wide blueness from the peaks of Velebit to the islands of Kornati, you must climb Kamenjak, the highest peak of the nature park. There you will find a belvedere with an info-centre, the chapel of All Saints, a restaurant, and two educational trails: the short one along the summit plateau and the circular botanical trail descending through the Mernjača canyon to lake dock Bašinka, on its way telling tales about the flora of this area.

VRGADA

The saltiest part of the Sweet & Salty Adventure awaits you on Vrgada, the largest island in the waters of Pakoštane. Famous for its clean sea, sandy beaches, and fragrant pine trees, Vrgada will proudly show you its rich cultural heritage, created during the age-old history of this tiny island paradise. Take a walk through the old village and get to know its narrow streets and corners, its chapels and churches, its nobles and common people, their Glagolitic heritage, and their precious huge water tank. After reading the island's stories written on the panels of the 'Open Air Museum,' go for a walk on the hiking trails of Vrgada and enjoy the beauty of its enchanting nature.



14 KRANJA TRAIL

For centuries, the hardworking people of Vrgada have stolen every clump of fertile soil from the stone, building a vast network of drystone walls for their vineyards and olive groves. The path through that rocky maze, today overgrown with dense pine forest and moss, leads to the picturesque cove of Kranja on the southeast side of the island.



15 GARMA TRAIL

Enterprising fishermen from Vrgada used to row all the way to Zadar to sell their night's catch, and in more recent times they are also farming fish in modern fish farms in their waters. A pleasant shady path through fields and olive groves will take you to the little fishing port of Garma on the south side of the island.



16 ST. ANDREW'S TRAIL

St. Andrew's Trail passes by the Podbrzi beach, famous for its red sand and a stubborn pine tree that, defying gravity, overhangs the vertical flysch rampart above the beach. After encircling a small peninsula, the path reaches the old Croatian church of St. Andrew in the cove of the same name. A barely noticeable footpath climbs from the church through the olive groves to the remains of the Byzantine military fort on the Gradina hill, which offers magnificent views to all sides of the island world.



17 ST. NICHOLAS' TRAIL

From the bottom of the bay of St. Andrew, a beautiful and playful trail starts along the sea towards the westernmost cape of Vrgada – Punta Glavčina. The confraternity of St. Nicholas, the youngest one on the island, built a small church there in 2006, dedicated to the generous saint who calms the sea and comforts human hearts.



Walking trails:



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- VRGADA**
- 14 KRANJA TRAIL
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 - 17 ST. NICHOLAS' TRAIL

Instructions for using the hiking trail network:



Follow me!



Inform yourself about the difficulty and duration of trails



Choose the trail according to your physical and psychological abilities and available time



Be well equipped - wear solid shoes and adjust your clothes to weather conditions (sun, wind, rain)



Use mosquito repellent and sunscreen



Bring enough water



Obey the code of conduct in Nature Park Vransko Jezero and Ornithological Reserve



Leave no trace - do not throw or leave any waste, do not light a fire outdoors, do not camp outside campsites



In case of emergency call 112



Attention! There are no marked and secured pedestrian crossings at the main road!

