

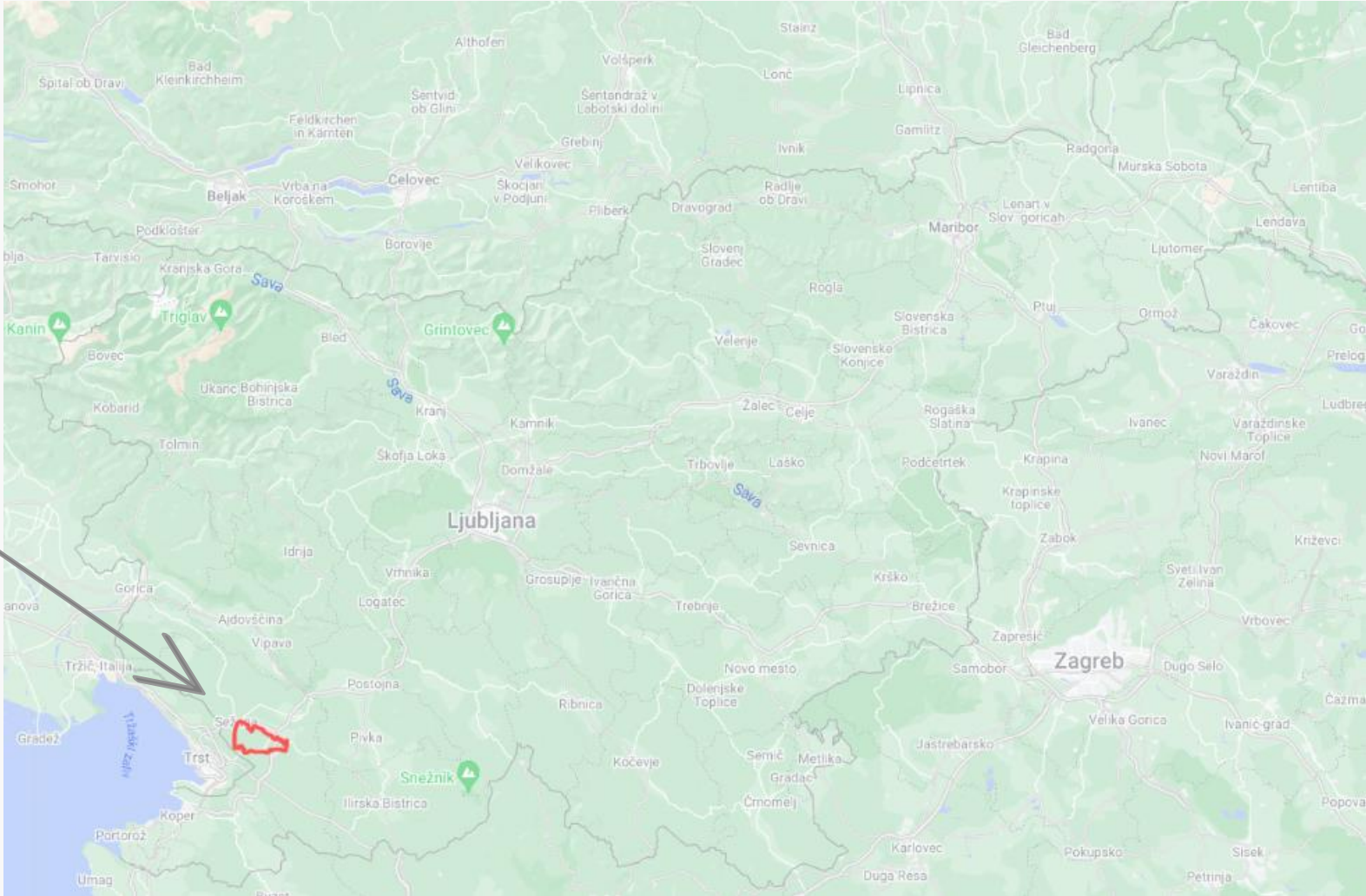
SEŽANA TO ŠKOCJAN CYCLING LOOP

SLOVENIA

The chosen route, a 33,5 km long cycling loop between Sežana and Škocjan leads through the Karst Region, limestone, cave-covered landscape, which is known as being one of the most unique geological attractions on the planet. It goes throughout the recently established Geopark Kras-Carso zone — part of UNESCO's Geopark network. The area has a little bit of everything: rolling hills, panoramas, quiet paved roads, and packed-gravel trails that gradually climb to perched villages and vineyards.

MAP

**SEŽANA TO ŠKOCJAN
CYCLING LOOP**





- Length: **33,5 km**
- Cycling time: **1 day**
- Municipalities: Divača, Sežana

The **three main points of interest** on this route are:

- Karst caves – **Škocjan Caves**
UNESCO world heritage site
- Karst phenomena – **Karst Living Museum**
area with thematic and recreational paths, showcasing a high concentration of karst phenomena close one to another
- Karst vegetation – **Karst Vegetation Interpretation Centre**
biodiversity of karst vegetation

These sites are individual points of interest that outline the particularities of karst.

The route starts in Sežana, goes towards Divača and Škocjan to the south-east and then turns to the west in direction of Lipica, through the Karst Living Museum and ends in Sežana.

▶ **Start: Sežana, town centre**

SEŽANA → DIVAČA

Sežana to Divača: 9,7 km / + 150 m / 60 min

→ ŠKOCJAN CAVES

Divača to Škocjan Caves: 6,6 km / + 110 m / 45 min

→ LIPICA → KARST LIVING MUSEUM

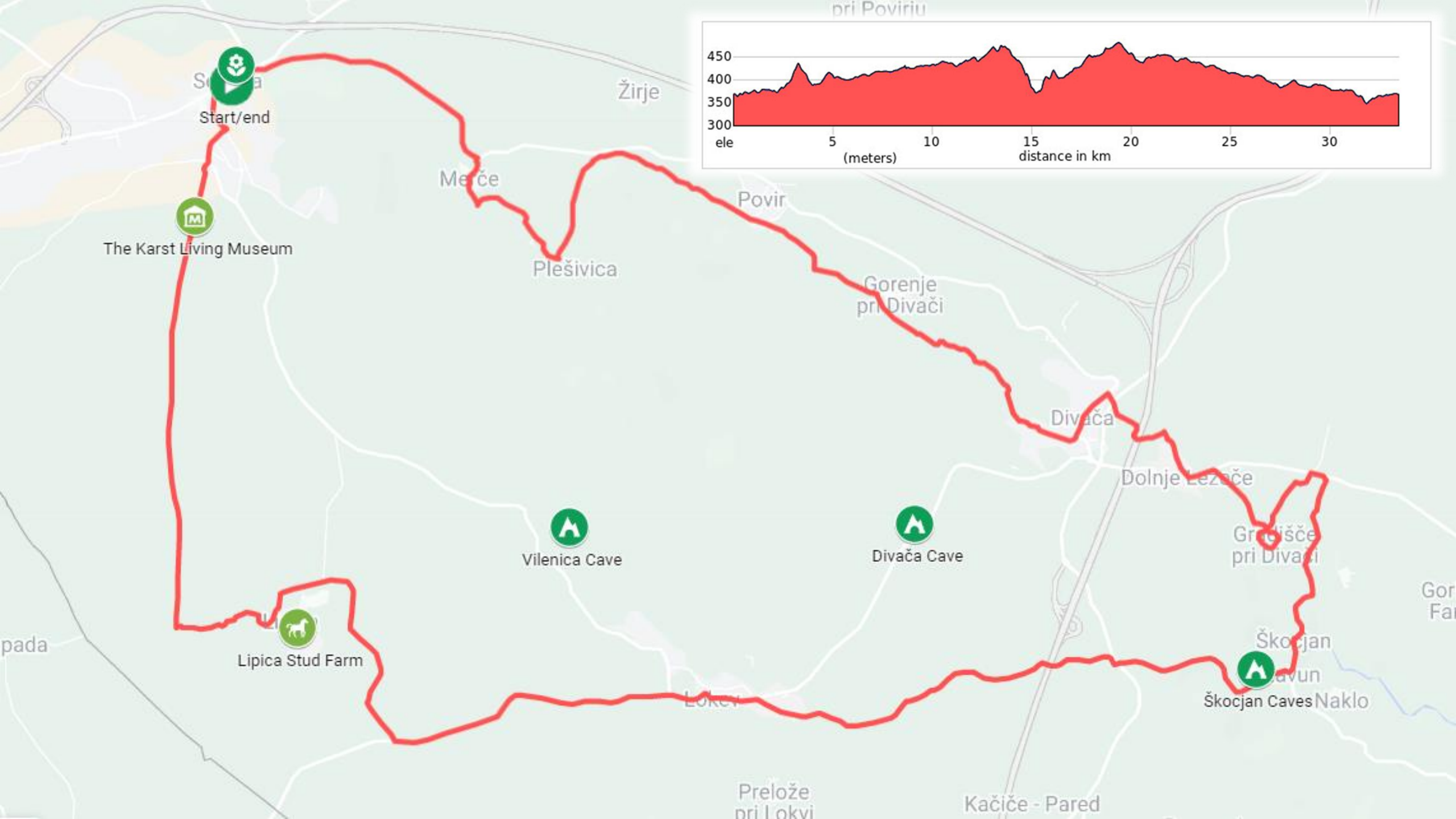
Škocjan Caves to Karst Living Museum: 11,8 km / +120 m / 70 min

→ SEŽANA BOTANICAL GARDEN

Karst Living Museum to Sežana Botanical Garden:
5,4 km / + 30 m / 30 min

▶ **End: Sežana Botanical Garden**





PRACTICAL INFORMATION

- One can start the route at any point of the loop. It can be adapted to individuals.
- Most of the stages are fairly flat. Elevation gains and loss for this route is +/- 410 m.
- The route can be self-guided by any individual, following the GPX tracks.
- Surface: 55% paved, 45% unpaved.
- The route is suitable for cyclists of any age.
- It can be done by e-bike as well.
- The climate conditions allow visits through the whole year.

MAP



Sezana_to_Skocjan_loop.gpx



STAGE #1

FROM SEŽANA TO DIVAČA

The route starts in Sežana and goes towards the town of Divača. In vicinity of Divača (however not on the route), there is Divača cave, which is a part of the comprehensive system of collapse dolines, karst caves and chasms, that Reka River formed over time in this area.

Sežana to Divača

distance: 9,7 km

elevation gain: + 150 m

approximate duration: 60 min



OPTIONAL SPOT (off-road)

DIVAČA CAVE

Divača Cave is situated in the vicinity of the town Divača. It is a part of the comprehensive system of collapse dolines, karst caves and chasms, that Reka River formed over time in this area. The cave has been welcoming visitors since the end of 19th century.

The cave is arranged for tourist visits (around 1,5h).



From Divača, the route heads south and east towards one of the most known attractions of Slovenia, the UNESCO-protected Škocjan Caves.

STAGE #2

FROM DIVAČA TO ŠKOCJAN CAVES

SPOT 1:

ŠKOCJAN CAVES

*From Divača, the route heads towards the largest known underground canyon in the world. The **Škocjan Caves** are a unique natural phenomenon and were entered on the list of UNESCO world heritage sites.*

Divača to Škocjan Caves:
distance: 6,6 km
elevation gain: + 110 m
approximate duration: 45 min



SPOT 1: ŠKOCJAN CAVES

- The Škocjan Caves Regional Park is situated in the Karst Plateau of South-West Slovenia.
- The Škocjan Caves are the most characteristic karst area of global importance and were therefore entered on UNESCO's list of natural and cultural world heritage sites in 1986. Later, in 1999, the Caves were also entered on the Ramsar Directory of Wetlands of International Importance.
- The area is also part of the Karst and Reka Basin Biosphere Reserve and known for the pioneering research into the karst underground. It is one of the classic examples of contact karst, which is formed at the contact of impermeable flysch and permeable limestone.





Lozej, B., arhiv javni zavod Park Škocjanske jame, www.slovenia.info

- The regional park's network of caverns, collapsed dolines, and other natural landmarks form a typical example of "Karst architecture." The regional park is formed of a specific landscape that combines a variety of rich natural assets, natural heritage – karst phenomena and other phenomena and unique features. The rare coexistence of vegetation and animal species in such a small space demonstrates the region's great diversity in terms of both biotic and abiotic factors, as well as its vulnerability.
- There are an interpretation centre and an interpretation polygon in the park, which represent contact karst. The interpretation centre disposes of a renovated geological collection and is located close to the Škocjan Caves information centre. The main theme are three important topics of this protected area: archaeology, biology, and geology (karstology).
- Škocjan Caves are the largest known underground canyon in the world. Numerous karst phenomena, such as sink holes, natural bridges, abysses, gorges, potholes, collapse dolines, underground canyon, passages covered with flowstone deposits, springs,... have been developed in this area.

STAGE #3

FROM ŠKOCJAN CAVES TO KARST LIVING MUSEUM

SPOT 2:

KARST LIVING MUSEUM

*The road from Škocjan Caves to the Karst Living Museum passes by **Lipica**, a historic town and the location and birthplace of the famous Lipizzaner horses and the world's biggest Lipizzaner stud farm. The **Karst Living Museum** is an „open-air“ museum, with over 20 km of themed (cross-border) walking paths, showcasing the typical karst natural and cultural heritage.*

Škocjan Caves to Karst Living Museum:

distance: 11,8 km

elevation gain: +120 m

approximate duration: 70 min





SPOT 2: KARST LIVING MUSEUM

- Karst Living Museum is a unique area, where numerous typical karst phenomena can be found so close together. In an area of around 700 hectares, it presents the natural and cultural heritage of the traditional Karst.

- Within the museum, over 20km of thematic and cross-border recreational routes are organized, and points of interest are marked. This area is classified as classic karst and has numerous dolines, collapse dolines, depressions, limestone pavements, and underground caves.
- Main sights along the trail include shepherd's corbelled huts, well, limestone pavement, natural forma viva, stone 'mushrooms', old gunpowder warehouse, Golokratna Cave, Napoleon's oak tree, ...
- On the edge of this area, there is also the oldest tourist cave in Europe, the Vilenica cave.



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STAGE #4

FROM KARST LIVING MUSEUM TO SEŽANA BOTANICAL GARDEN

SPOT 3

SEŽANA BOTANICAL GARDEN AT VILLA MIRASASSO

*From the Karst Living Museum, the road leads back to the town of Sežana. The last stop is the **Botanical Garden** at Villa Mirasasso. The interpretation centre for karst vegetation presents the peculiarities of the karst landscape. The loop ends in Sežana.*

Karst Living Museum to Sežana Botanical Garden:

distance: 5,4 km
elevation gain: + 30 m
approximate duration: 30 min





SPOT 3

SEŽANA BOTANICAL GARDEN AT VILLA MIRASASSO

- The Karst Vegetation Interpretation Centre shows the visitor features of the underground karst world, the native karst landscape, and its vegetation. It is equipped with didactic and interactive interpretative content. The main goal of the interpretation centre is to present to visitors the biotic diversity of the karst vegetation through time and space in an experiential, didactic and interactive way, as one of the most important elements of the formation of the karst cultural landscape.

Opening hours Škocjan Caves:

- guided tours to the caves all year round
- Circular Škocjan Educational Trail (starts and ends at the Visitors Centre): guided or self-guided tour (self-guided tour is free of charge)

It is possible to cycle through Karst Living Museum, however some points are not easily accessible by bike, and it is recommended to visit them on foot.

Opening hours Karst Living Museum:

- open all year
- free entrance

Opening hours Karst Vegetation Interpretation Centre:

- November to February: every day 8.00 – 16.00
- March and October: every day 8.00 – 18.00
- April to September: every day 8.00 – 19.00



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