

Svatobor (845 m n.m.)

There is a legend that Svatobor Hill used to be a place of ancient sacrifice. The sacred groves were full of majestic oak trees and a carefully fenced off area with two entrances; it was a place used for cultic and judicial events. The groves were thought to have a healing power.

The sick used to hang pieces of cloth, or parts of their garments on branches, or put coins beneath the trees as an offering to the gods. Each grove had to have its own spring or stream, that held a healing power, and people could swim in the waters even in the wintertime. The blood of enemies was never allowed to taint the sacred sites.

However, we have no direct evidence of any Slavonic cults in the area. It is, however, undoubtedly the case that Svatobor was inhabited in ancient times. A primitive, half buried hut from the Middle Stone Age (10 000–8 000 BC) was found during one of the digs in the area. The hut was reconstructed based on available evidence and its model can be seen in Sušice Museum. In 1881 when the Scheinost match factory was built,

an old burial place was discovered. Unfortunately, no archaeological research of the location was carried out and most of the valuable historical material disappeared. Thankfully, some of the finds from the burial place were secured, for example a denarius coin from the period of Vratislav I (1061–1092) and pearls that were rarely found in Bohemia and that clearly demonstrate that business contacts had been established with the outside world. The centre of the burial place was where the current factory chimney stands, and the number of graves found was estimated at one hundred.

Svatobor became a popular destination for tourists and national revivalists. In 1868 Dr Gabriel chose stone from Svatobor to be one of the foundation stones for the National Theatre.

Things to do at Svatobor

Svatobor woods are popular with tourists, cyclists and also mushroom pickers. You can reach the top on horseback. There is a chalet

at the top of Svatobor with an open fire place where you can have a picnic and grill a sausage or two. The way down the hill can be adrenalin-filled – you can leap from the paragliding ramp



Length of the route:

4 km (slow walk about 1,5 – 2 hours)

Level of difficulty:

medium, suitable for smaller children and families with prams

Marked:

ORANGE

Description of the route:

Svoboda Square – Klostermannova St – Pod Svato-borem St – St Anthony Chapel – Scheinost Retreat – former jumping bridge – Hadí stezka Rd – former tourist shelter – Svatobor Observation Tower

Elevation difference: 347 m

Average ascent: 1 : 7,5 m



or whoosh down on a terrain scooter. In winter, nothing will get you down faster than a wooden sleigh.

Scheinost Retreat (1) was built by the SOLO company in 1927 in memory to the factory owner, František Scheinost. There is a folly designed by the architect Jindřich Freiwald. Between the wars this place was a very popular destination for Sunday walks.

Hadí stezka (Snake's Path) (2) – just like Prague has its Hunger Wall, Sušice has its Snake's Path. This is the quickest way to get from the Scheinost Retreat to Svatobor. The path was laid in stone and built by the unemployed from Sušice. The project was supervised by mayor Seitz. Unfortunately, the path started to disappear during the Second World War and during the times of communism, and eventually it was covered by layers of moss and grass. However, thanks to a EU subsidy, the path was renewed and from 2010 you can follow it all the way up to the top.

Útulna (Shelter house for tourists) (3) – if you look carefully, you can find the remains of a cellar on the paragliding ramp; the cellar used to be a part of a former shelter house for tourists dating back to 1898 – 1900. The wooden house burnt down in 1905 and it was never repaired. There is a photograph on the right behind the entrance door to the Svatobor lodge, where you can see for yourself how the place looked at the beginning of the last century.

TV transmitter tower (4) serves parts of the Plzeň and South Bohemia regions. It has been broadcasting digitally since 28.2.2010 (as the fourth transmitter in the country). The concrete tower is 85 m high.

Observation tower (5) – the first observation tower was built in 1898. However, in 1933 the observation tower leaned 1.78 m from its axis so it was closed and one year later it was pulled down. Nevertheless, only three months later a new observation tower by Karel Houra was constructed on the site and it has been there ever since. It is 31 m tall and it has 182 steps. One year later a tourist chalet with a restaurant and accommodation facilities was built.



Opening times of the chalet and the observation tower: Wed – Sun from 10:00 – 21:00

Meteorological station Svatobor – information on the temperature, the speed and direction of the wind can be found on www.sonda.paradel-tasusice.cz



FOLK TALES AND LEGENDS

Vodolenka (V. V. Tomek – Šumavské pověsti / Šumava Folk Tales)

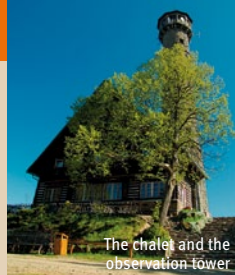
On the northern slope of Svatobor Hill near Sušice, you will find the Vodolenka spring hidden in the quiet woods. The spring has been known for its clear healing water from ancient times. According to a folk tale that is still being retold by the locals, a very long time ago a pagan girl called Vodolenka, the daughter of a well known Slav nobleman, the founder of Klatovy, pleaded with her friends and family on her deathbed to be buried at the place where a pair of unguided white oxen would take her. The white oxen came to a halt in the foothills of Svatobor, and so Vodolenka was buried there. Her funeral was celebrated with much loud, mournful singing and bonfires. Shortly after the funeral, a spring sprang forth from the inside of the Svatobor Hill, right by her grave. The spring was named after the dead Vodolenka and later a spa, also called Vodolenka, was established on the very same spot.

Svatobor Treasure

Somewhere on the slopes of Svatobor, there are two rose bushes that hide the entrance to a secret cave, through which there is a passage leading into a large hall divided by beautifully adorned columns. This is the place where the Svatobor treasure is hidden; a treasure so enormous that Sušice could be rebuilt three times should it ever be found. The entrance to the cave was discovered by accident some time ago by an elderly man from Dolejší předměstí; the floor of the cave and the passage was covered in water, and as the man had only matches to guide his way through them, he decided to come back in summertime when the water goes down. He did not tell anyone about his find but then when he fell ill in winter, he decided on his deathbed to tell his friends about the cave and the secret passage. Sadly he was unable to show them the entrance to the cave. Needless to say his friends have never found the cave and the passage.

About the lake

Just like in Blaník Mountain there is a Czech army dozing, waiting for the time of crisis to come for it to appear, so inside Svatobor hill there is a secret army waiting to defend Sušice against its enemies. Put your ear to the ground and you will be able to hear it. According to an old legend, there is a big lake hidden inside the hills and large creatures, resembling mermaids, live in it. The Sea Eye is a bottomless spring at the foothills of the mountain and it is awaiting its time. When the time is ripe, the lake will burst out of Svatobor and it will flush all the enemies out of the town and the country, without hurting a single person from Sušice.



The chalet and the observation tower



HADÍ STEZKA TO SVATOBOR HILL



SUSICKÁ pavučina

HADÍ STEZKA (SNAKE'S PATH) TO SVATOBOR HILL

BEAUTIFUL RAMBLES AROUND SUŠICE



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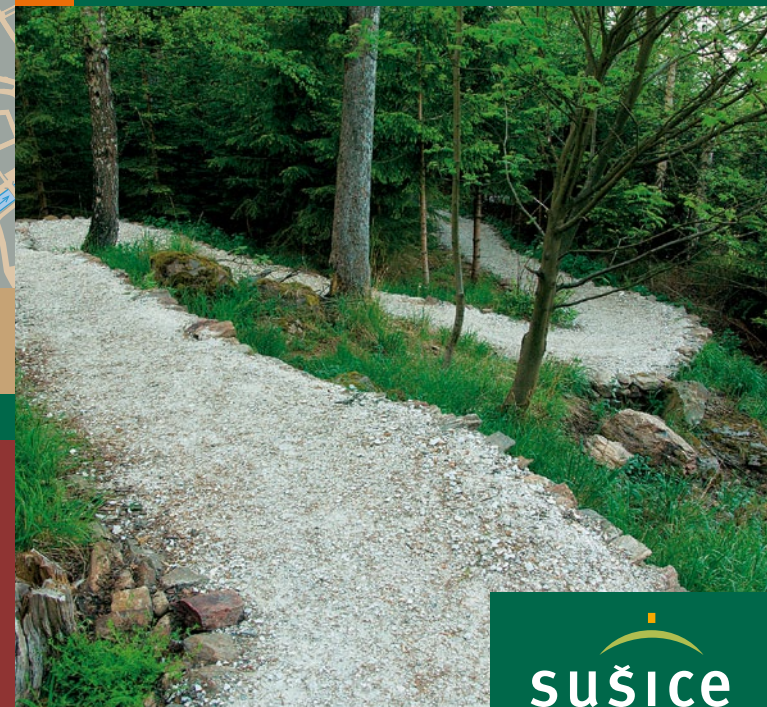
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