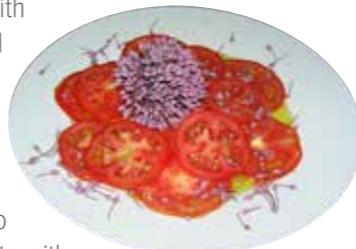


## Good food, good people

Visiting Volčji Grad is possible in all seasons and there are numerous socializing and sport activities on offer. There are many cycling and walking routes near and around the village for independent visitors, while taking a guided walking tour is a great option to learn more about the life and history of Volčji Grad. If you like food and wine tasting, Volčji Grad is the place for you. Besides *Kraški pršut* and teran (*prosciutto* and a typical red wine), you can also try the Karst omelette *frtalja* (a dish made from fried beaten eggs with freshly picked wild asparagus or other herbs), Volčji Grad *pogača* (buttery bread with dried bacon, cheese and herbs, baked in a wood oven), *štruklji* (a kind of dumpling) and traditionally prepared turnip (first soaked in black grape skins and then cooked with *kožarica* sausage and karst pancetta). Friendly locals will also offer you various homemade spirits with local herbs, organic dried meat and homemade cheese. If you like sweets, you can try and purchase the Karst honey at the local beekeepers.

## Welcome to paradise

Volčji Grad is easily accessible and a visit only takes a short time, but you may, like many other enthusiastic visitors, want to visit repeatedly. This piece of Karst paradise will never cease to amaze you with its mysterious and fiery nature, where you can find peacefulness and passion, grey stone and a rainbow of exuberant colours, as well as the eternal beauty of nature which gives man hope, happiness and optimism, awakening a love for life.



# Volčji Grad

Volčji Grad information brochure

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Občina Komen



# Volčji Grad

Na Krasu je krasno -  
nikdar ni prezgodaj,  
nikdar ni prekasno:  
vse je zmeraj o pravem času,  
na Krasu.

Na Krasu je krasno -  
nikdar ni pretiho,  
nikdar ni preglasno:  
vsi so zmeraj na dobrem glasu,  
na Krasu.

A poem about Karst  
by Miroslav Košuta,  
*Na Krasu je krasno*



## Under the warm Karst sun

Volčji Grad is a friendly village which lies in the heart of the Karst region. It is becoming an increasingly popular tourist attraction and an important stop for everyone visiting the exciting and mysterious Karst landscape. Amazing nature, rich historical heritage, various cultural, musical and art events, excellent culinary offer and the hospitality of the locals are just a few of the numerous reasons why people love discovering and returning to this warm and fascinating corner of the earth.



### Debela griža – the most photogenic hill fort

In Volčji Grad you will find the most fascinating archaeological site in the Karst region: Debela griža, one of the largest prehistoric hill forts in the region spreading over an area of 4.2 hectares. According to the archaeologist Andrej Preložnik, Debela griža represents 'one of the most beautiful and interesting hill forts – not only in the Karst region, but in the wider area between the Adriatic Sea and the Pannonian Plain' (Guštin, 2012 Volčji Grad). Debela griža was declared an area of archaeological heritage in 1992 and it is also one of the astonishing sights you can see on the four kilometre thematic path, called *The Stone Trail*.

## The stone trail and the stonemasonry art

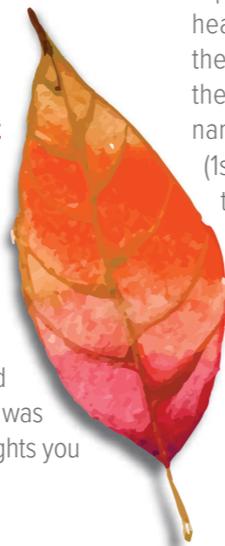
*The Stone Trail* takes you on a colourful journey through different periods, and it is also an outdoor museum of stonemasonry craft. Accompanied by a local guide, you can admire a rich collection of stone art which is the result of the karst landscape and the



past and present life. A number of renowned stonemasons left their mark in the village and its surroundings. It is their work that makes walking on the Stone Trail such a special and interesting experience. Many of the karstic houses have the typical stone arched entrance called '*kolóna*' decorated with a traditional protection symbol in the shape of a windmill (called *morca*) and other carved images. Two special characteristics of the village are also '*pili*' (stone pillared signs) and stone wells ('*štirne*'). On a walk around the area you can also see the walled sinkholes, caverns, ponds, a stone shepherd's cottage and the remains of an Italian quarry. Many people would agree that the most beautiful stone



portal in Karst is found in our village, made in 1860: it is the one decorating the entrance to the *Mržkova* house.



## The mystery of Volčji Grad

The village church with its separate bell tower is dedicated to St. John the Baptist and is one of the village's architectural landmarks, boasting many artistic details. Legend has it that one of the Aquileia countesses came to Volčji Grad and in return for her good health built or renovated the old church. The legend also explains the origin of the name Volčji Grad, as the surname of the countess was Volcija. It is interesting that the same name, Volcija, is also carved into a Roman tombstone (1st century AD), which is built into the north wall of the church. This fact raises a number of questions and further stirs our imagination about the origin of the village name. Next to the church there is a hamlet named *Brith*, where the homestead of renowned Slovenian writer, playwright and essayist Marjan Rožanc (1930 – 1990) is located. He spent the last period of his life living and working there. The literary award *Rožančeva nagrada* has annually been given to the best collection of essays since 1993. A memorial plaque was built in the wall of his former home to honour his creative time spent in Volčji Grad.

## Natural jewels

Visitors coming to Volčji Grad are greeted by diverse nature, which with its greenery and flowers softens the hardness of the carstic rock and provides shelter to many endangered animals (owls, bats, various reptiles, amphibians and some species of large moths). Even the stone base hides a secret: fossilized animals, lying there for more than 100 million years. The greater part of the village spreads over the former seabed, the famous Komen shale, where archaeologists have discovered numerous fossils of fish and reptiles. Volčji Grad and its surroundings are deservedly included in the *Natura 2000* protection area, because despite the unfavourable living conditions, it is home to many rare, protected and beautiful plants and mushrooms. Every spring unfolds a colourful palette of flowers, where you cannot miss the wild peony with the largest blossoms in the Slovenian flora, numerous species of Slovenian orchids, irises and wild daffodils.



## Love and respect for the village history and tradition

The villagers of Volčji Grad are bound by friendship and a commitment to preserve the rich historical, ethnological and cultural heritage. The Debela griža Association (*Društvo Debela griža*) focuses on caring for the natural resources of the village and its surroundings, but have also managed to evoke a greater interest in the village with their own efforts and will. The once unrelenting and much less fertile karst land is closely connected with the inhabitants. Working in the field and at home every day also meant a time to socialize, exchange opinions and provide mutual help. This bond is still strong today as the villagers enjoy spending their free time and work together. Especially important for the village and the locals are harvesting grapes and other crops, the carnival, St. Martin's day, celebration of the village patron St. John the Baptist, organization of KulinArtfest (international cookbook fair) and a musical festival Volčji SOUND.



Springtime in the Karst also marks the growth of wild asparagus, elder and acacia blossoms and many fragrant wild herbs. In the late summer breeze you can smell the winter savory (*žeppek*), a herb that was supposedly valued as an aphrodisiac by the Romans. Even in autumn and winter Volčji Grad offers a green embrace of ivy, butcher's broom, black pine and a variety of shrubs and trees with delicious fruits.