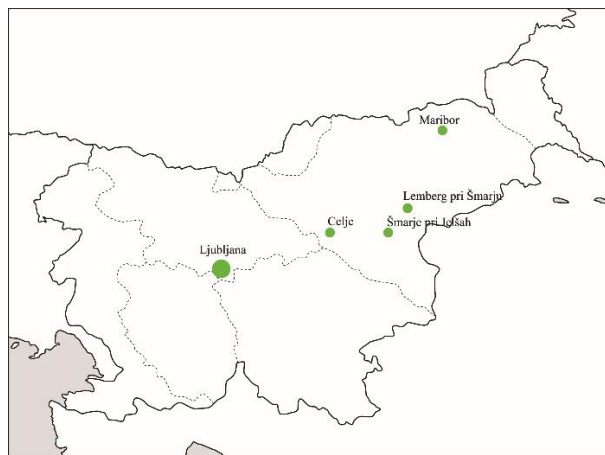


**Institute for Tourism, Sport and Youth Šmarje pri Jelšah  
Lemberg Tourist and Cultural Association**



*Coat of arms of Lemberg, early 16th century*

*Location on the map: Lemberg near Šmarje*

**A tour of the once famous medieval market town of Lemberg near Šmarje, today a unique and comprehensively preserved heritage site**

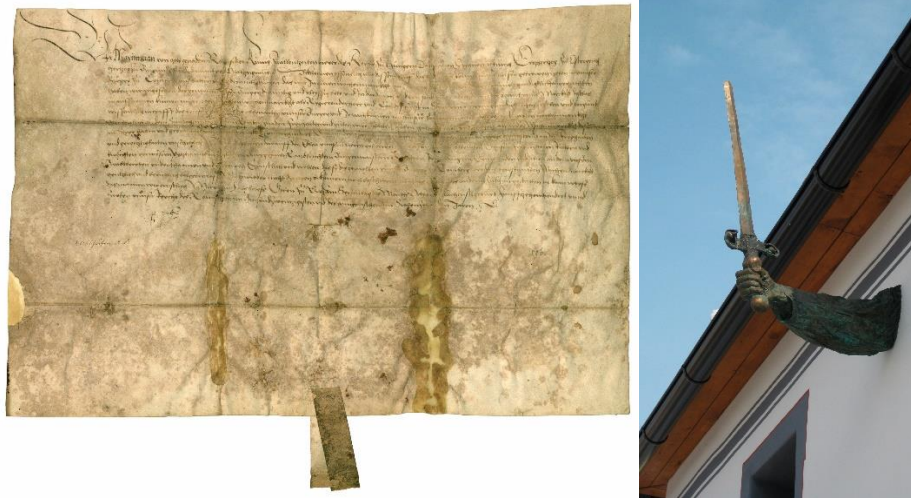
Lemberg has legends of seven or even twelve castles that stood on the hills around the square like a natural ring of defence. They were connected by bridges and underground tunnels. Lemberg was an extremely wealthy market and was linked to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The saying "Lemberg was on the Emperor's golden thread" has been preserved. The market town is home to the Rotovž – The Town Hall Museum, which preserves precious relics of local history, which has greatly shaped the history of the Slovenian nation

- **Visit the medieval market town with its fairground**

The medieval market town Lemberg is one of the best maintained medieval villages in Slovenia, according to the legendary art history professor PhD Nace Šumi. The village is squeezed into a narrow valley, through which the Lemberžica stream flows, and alongside it winds a once-important trade and feudal route that connected the southern and eastern parts of Styria. The village has the shape of a roadside square, with a chapel at the beginning of the square, a church

at the end and a cemetery alongside it. Lemberg was first granted market rights in the 14th century and was famous for its fairs.

In 1506, Emperor Maximilian I granted Lemberg and its inhabitants the first imperial charter, which allowed them to have a fair centre with all rights and privileges. The fairground is squeezed into the square and as such part of the market area, which is also a special feature in Slovenia. The village has preserved its medieval design and is protected as a cultural and historical heritage site in the Slovenian Cultural Heritage Register. Trade fairs remained alive for 500 years.



*Museum at Town hall, the first imperial charter of free trade of the Lemberg market in 1506, signed by King Maximilian I (The original charter is kept in the Maribor Regional Archives). The Hand of Justice at the Town hall (bronze, 2009, Mirsad Begič).*

#### - **The Tour of the former Folk School**

There was a school here, even before Empress Maria Theresa. The first school stood at the Church of St. Pancras, where the rectory was located. According to the story, the school was headed by a woman, which was very unusual considering that it was founded before Empress Maria Theresa ordered the introduction of education throughout her empire. The new school was built at the end of the 19th century. There is now a cultural-historical space for the local community.



*Lemberg near Šmarje, former folk and primary school, late 19th century. In the foreground the fairground, behind the school the fairground inn, behind it the Town hall and behind it the Church of St. Nicholas, on the left on the castle hill the tomb chapel in the Church of St. Pancras.*

#### **- Visit the Town hall - Rotovž**

The medieval Town hall or Rotovž, also known as the magistrate's court, stands in the centre of the village. From the Middle Ages until 1820, it was the seat of a magistrate. On the building was the golden hand of justice with a sword (now made of bronze), symbolising and confirming judicial and commercial (trade) freedoms. There is also a pillory, or a pillar of shame, attached to the Town hall where people who cheated at fairs were tried. In the market square, every house had a craft. The richest were leatherworkers, and the oldest craft was pottery.

There were five fair inns, a blacksmith, a wheelwright, a butcher and a shop. In the museum, you will be able to see the castle's architectural element, the medieval capitol, which was once part of the double window or arcaded corridor of Lemberg Castle and is the only material evidence of the former castle. The handicraft objects of the last Lemberg craftsmen who were still active until the 1980s, a potter and a blacksmith, are also preserved here.

On the first floor, you can see rare objects from the taverns and inns of Lemberg and objects belonging to a former judge. A special feature of the museum's collection is the preserved cup of Countess and writer Bertha von Suttner, the first female Nobel Prize winner, who had her own holiday villa near Lemberg.



*Lemberg with the Town hall Museum with its pillar of shame. The Town hall was renovated and converted into a museum in 2010.*



*The Rotovž Museum, objects from the former fair inns in Lemberg.*



*The Rotovž Museum, the Judge's Wardrobe, the sabre and imperial documents.*

- **Countess Bertha von Suttner**

The peacemaker, feminist, writer and activist Bertha von Suttner (1843-1914) was Alfred Nobel's unmarried partner and was undoubtedly a key influence on his decision to include the Peace Prize in the set of prizes he listed in his Will. And it was Bertha who was the first woman to receive this award in 1905. Her speech at the award ceremony was realistic, stimulating and touching: "Of all the struggles and questions that arise in our turbulent times, the most important is whether we will choose violence or the rule of law. A time must be approached when the sword will no longer be the judge between nations."



*The Rotovž museum, Cup of Countess Bertha von Suttner, around 1890.*

*Bertha von Suttner bought a house nearby. Legend has it that in gratitude for her help, she gave a local woman this cup filled with sugar, which was an expensive commodity in those days.*

- **Visit the Church of St. Nicholas**

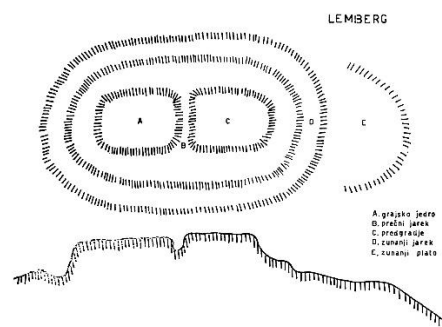
In the village stands the Gothic and Baroque church of St. Nicholas. It was the seat of the parish from 1490 to 1786, when it was transferred to nearby village Sladka Gora. There was a cemetery around the church, which was also moved to the new parish seat in 1796. The church has a mighty bell tower, about which there are well-known funny stories about the local people dragging a bull into a belfry written by Niko Kuret.



*Niko Kuret, Funny Stories about the People of Lemberg, 1954*

- Visit the former castle chapel, now the Church of St. Pancras, where the lords of Žovnek-Lemberg and the parish priests of Lemberg until 1740 are buried.

Above the village, on Romanesque foundations, stands the former castle chapel, later enlarged into the Church of St. Pancras. The castle hill rises above the church. At the beginning of the 12th century, it was one of the most important castles in Slovenia, where the lords of Žovnek-Lemberg lived for more than a hundred years, and who took the name of the Counts of Celje from the Lemberg feudal estate.



*Sites of former castles around Lemberg Square. Floor plan of the 12th-century Lemberg Castle. (Sketch after I. Stopar, 1977)*

We are sure that you will go home full of stories, legends and amusements that will bring you closer to the Middle Ages and the life of the people in this small but once famous Lemberg.