

# Springs of health



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# Two is *better* than one ...

Nowadays, we live in a world of constant lack of gentle moments. It's a time of haste, physical and mental strains, stress for the body and soul. This time is definitely not in favour of the basic unit of the human society, the union of a man and a woman, the couple, the relationship between Him and Her. To be more precise: time is not in Our favour. Even in calmer times, a good relationship needs careful attention and constant nurturing. However, when in a hurry, we tend to forget about the two of Us. Now, there are no more excuses – at Dolenjske Toplice Spa, we have a unique opportunity to stop for a moment, to take a break, to focus on each other, to tune our mental and physical strings, to listen to the song of our relationship, the song called love since the beginning of human civilization.

## Let's pamper ourselves

Huh...when was the last time we took some time for ourselves and got away? Maybe we went for a quick drink together, or we took some time for breakfast or perhaps we even went to the cinema. But that's it, nothing more than that... Come on, let's go to Dolenjske Toplice Spa and enjoy their Zeus' bath, Turkish sauna, bio sauna, Finnish sauna, Japanese sweat bath, and a bottle of exquisite wine in the evening. What are we waiting for?

## Want to be tickled?

Stimulation of certain points on your feet works wonders. All the vital organs of the human body are connected into a net of meridians on your feet – if the feet are stroked by professional hands and the points are stimulated, this results in gentle tickling. At Dolenjske Toplice Spa, they go beyond that – they also teach us how to tickle each other in the right way so that we can continue with the reflexology massage at home. Just imagine... when we are tired, with aching soul and body, when we're stressed, we'll think of the Balnea Wellness Centre and tickle each other just as they have taught us. Mmm...tempting...

## Let's laugh

What healing power laughter has! Even more so after it was gone for some time ... And I don't mean laughing at trivialities that life serves us on a daily basis. We miss the sincere laughter when we laugh our head off, a challenge and desire to laugh as children do. They don't say laughter is the best medicine for nothing. Relaxation with laughter yoga will make sure that the smile on our faces will last for a long time.

## Breathe with me

Sometimes we get the feeling that life doesn't let us breathe freely. Actually, we seem to breathe deeply only due to real physical strain or after something frightening has taken our breath away. In the haven of Kočevje forests, we can get as much fresh air as we want, we can relax and finally capture that vital energy. Not only our bodies but also our souls will breathe at ease, in harmony, in peace ...



## Eliminate those toxins

We don't want to sound pessimistic but the following is indisputable: we live in a polluted environment, full of toxins and harmful substances that affect our body and soul. Every day, intentionally or unintentionally, we contaminate our body and relationship. We are aware of the fact that we cannot lock ourselves into an airtight cage where we would be safe from all the bad. If we want to live our lives to the fullest, we need to treat our body and soul with some beneficent detoxification. Less is more – natural, fresh, organic and ... just for the two of us. This is what we've been looking for.

## When expecting

Of course we wanted and planned this, but it still came so fast. We are a bit surprised at how quick time flies.

If we are a bit pathetic: our basic life task – to continue the life – is coming true these days. And you, My love with two hearts, are not as energetic as you used to be. You are often tired and worried if we took care of all the things so that everything goes according to the plan. And I, the proud father-to-be ... anxious, not knowing how to deal with it, how to take care of the baby who is due anytime and is Ours. Why don't we get ready for the happy event at Dolenjske Toplice Spa?



## Let's enjoy the autumn of our lives

We can say for sure that we know each other; that we get along and that we know our joint and separate steps. The way you park your car tells me what kind of mood you are in. Sometimes we feel as if we have done it all. Yet, every now and then, the body and soul yearn for something different, beautiful, pure pampering. We should encourage each other and let others lead us in the autumn of our lives that will be a balm for our body and soul...

# It's high time for love ...

## The programme includes:

- accommodation in a double room at the Kristal Hotel\*\*\*\* or Balnea Hotel\*\*\*\* superior,
- 2x half board (including 1x romantic dinner or 1x lunch with a picnic basket in the outdoors),
- breakfast room service (if requested),
- unlimited pass to the indoor pools with thermal water,
- unlimited swimming at Balnea Wellness Centre,
- Friday and Saturday romantic night swimming at Balnea Wellness Centre (till 11 pm) and
- one of the abovementioned packages.

## FOR THE PERFECT PAMPERING:

For a surcharge of 40,00 EUR per day (per suite) all the true **romantics** will absolutely adore staying in one of the Balnea Hotel\*\*\*\* superior **suites**. Revive your relationship in the atmosphere created for pampering while enjoying romantic dinners on a spacious terrace where peace and unspoilt nature complement perfect relaxation. You will also be able to enjoy the jacuzzi with a panoramic view ... Each of the five suites is uniquely furnished – natural materials, warm colour scheme, pleasant lighting, separated bedroom and the living room, an armchair, a fireplace, two exits leading onto the terrace, and a comfortable bathroom.

<http://bit.ly/1jxta55>  
For the  
two of us  
- special  
offer!

2 nights for two persons from **311 Euro**

# Annoying **kilos**, large waist circumference and metabolic disorders

**L**et's start with a simple task: look around you... How many people in your vicinity are in your opinion overweight? How many have extra belly fat, exercise too little and eat too sweet and unhealthy food? Even if we estimated the number in general including people we know and people we don't know it would still be (too) high. Don't you agree? In the recent years, obesity has become a serious problem for adults as well as children.

Obesity is a metabolic disorder with numerous consequences such as diabetes, early vascular aging, high blood pressure, chronic degenerative joint diseases, greater stroke and heart attack risk ... Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of risk factors that can dramatically worsen or even threaten your life, and this is why they must not to be disregarded.

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF METABOLIC SYNDROME?

In addition to large waist circumference or abdominal obesity, which raises doctor's suspicion of metabolic disorders at first sight, the symptoms of metabolic syndrome or syndrome X are impaired glucose and fat metabolism and insulin resistance.

#### Risk factors are:

- waist circumference of more than 80 cm for women and more than 94 cm for men;
- high serum triglycerides level (on an empty stomach);
- low HDL ("the good") cholesterol level;
- high blood sugar level (on an empty stomach) or diagnosed and treated diabetes;
- hypertension.

Any three of the above-mentioned traits in the same individual meet the criteria for the metabolic syndrome that needs medical treatment.





### Apple-shaped obesity and pear-shaped obesity

People accumulate fat differently. Apple-shaped obesity is also called abdominal obesity at which fat accumulates around the waist, the belly is convex, yet buttocks and thighs are not excessively fat. Pear-shaped obesity is more common in women – fat piles up in the buttock, hip and thigh subcutaneous tissue.

### METABOLIC SYNDROME NEEDS TREATMENT

As previously mentioned, having any one of these risk factors isn't good. But when they're combined, they set the stage for grave problems. If an indi-

vidual does not take targeted measures in time, the risk for cardiovascular diseases (heart attack and stroke), diabetes, fatty liver and a possibility for liver cancer increases dramatically.

It is vital that also those who do not have problems deciding whether they are "an apple" or "a

pear" (yet) get to know the risks of metabolic syndrome. The most common cause is unhealthy lifestyle – improper nutrition, lack of physical exercise, long-term and uncontrollable stress, and harmful substances found in food, water and air.

*Metabolic syndrome risk factors double your risk of blood vessel disease and heart disease, which can lead to heart attacks and strokes, and they increase your risk of diabetes by 5 times. Fatty liver can lead to liver infection, cirrhosis or hepatocellular carcinoma.*

### HAVE YOU RECOGNIZED THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OR BECOME UPSET?

Calm down, it was not our intention to upset you! We only wanted to warn you about the severity of the problem, the mysterious syndrome X, raise your awareness and make you think about it. As you know in most cases obesity is our own fault, which also means that we can do a great deal ourselves by modifying our lifestyle. If you are a regular reader of our magazine Springs of Youth then you must have noticed our motto Living a healthy life which is also the main theme of medical wellness programmes carried out at Šmarješke Toplice Spa. A team of professionals at Šmarješke Toplice Spa, composed of a physician (internal medicine specialist), a nutrition expert and a sports trainer, have closely examined the increasing problem of syndrome X and set up a treatment programme aiming at improving the quality of an individual's life. **The treatment eliminates insulin resistance, glucose and lipids metabolism disorders and abdominal obesity. What is more, it teaches you how to lead a healthy life – how to change your current lifestyle for the better and manage metabolic syndrome risk factors.**

### METABOLIC SYNDROME TREATMENT PROGRAMME AT ŠMARJEŠKE TOPLICE SPA

The extraordinary metabolic syndrome treatment programme, aiming at eliminating the diagnosed metabolic disorders and regulating blood pressure, is tailor-made. The basic treatment is lifestyle modification: calorie, simple carbohydrates, saturated fat and trans fats restriction. Weight needs to be monitored and one needs to work out intensively, because muscles are the greatest glucose consumer and so actively help eliminate insulin resistance.

### WHAT AWAITS YOU?

You are bound to feel great at Šmarješke Toplice Spa for the kind and professional staff is not only familiar with the problem but they also understand it. There is no need to worry about the judgmental looks because there won't be any. Our staff is well aware of the fact how hard it is for an individual to face their own problem and they are determined to help you deal with it.

The programme includes a medical examination by a specialist in internal medicine, tissue structure analysis (body fat percentage, water content and muscle mass percentage are estimated), several anthropometric measurements and body mass index, physical activity cardiac testing, CoRe bioresonance examination and blood tests (initial and final).

*After the initial examination, the physician can change or alter certain services due to patient's health condition (similar services are substituted free of charge). Moreover, after having carefully examined medical documentation the patient brings along to the initial examination and based on the results of the initial examination, the physician can decide the patient should do stress testing instead of physical ability cardiac testing in order to set the physical activity threshold (surcharge of 40 EUR).*

**CoRe bioresonance examination** (30 to 45 minutes) is a simple, painless examination that enables an insight into the bio-informational and bioenergetic condition of the body. The examination is performed at the doctor's office; the patient is fully dressed, holding the device's electrodes that detect the condition.

**Biological terrain bioresonance analysis** assesses causes for the disturbed balance of the biological terrain, allergies and food intolerance, detects emotional causes, lack of vitamins, minerals, digestion enzymes and antioxidants, establishes the surplus of harmful substances – toxins, presence of harmful microbes and parasites in the body as well as the level of dehydration.

In addition to all of the above, the programme also includes services that stimulate new processes in the body. One of them is altitude training in hypoxic chamber (based on the principle of lower oxygen content in the air which makes the exercise on the bicycle or the rower more intense), a 40-minute radial endodermo therapy (local vacuum therapy targeting at cellulite and water retention), guided physical activity programme in the outdoors and the gym (Nordic walking or PACE exercise, Pilates, water aerobics, cardio cross training), initial and final consultation with a nutrition expert and a tailor-made diet.

*We do not recommend the metabolic treatment programme to patients with pacemakers or epilepsy, pregnant women or patients with low physical abilities.*



### WHAT CAN YOU DO ON YOUR OWN?

Until you decide to accept our help, you can do a lot on your own as well. It is you who has to take the decision to change your lifestyle. It is a hard one, though. Make a plan that will motivate you and awaken the determination for a healthier lifestyle and a better wellbeing – it has to include the three winning elements: healthy and balanced diet, physical exercise and relaxation. Once the path has been set, choose some fellow travellers for support. It will be our pleasure to join you on your way to a better wellbeing!



**Primarius Tomislav Majić,**

MD, internal medicine and cardiology specialist

A long-time head of Medical Service at Šmarješke Toplice Spa graduated in 1967 at the Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb. He specialised in internal medicine at the Golnik Institute for pulmonary diseases and tuberculosis. In his rich career, he also worked at the Department of Internal Medicine at the General Hospital in Novo mesto. Since 1982, he has been employed at Terme Krka (Šmarješke Toplice Spa), where he has laid the foundations for modern rehabilitation of coronary patients. He has focused on preventive medicine and delivered numerous lectures and published many scientific articles. In 2005, he masterminded the first medical wellness centre in Slovenia, Vitarium Spa&Clinique, with two basic programmes – detoxification and healthy weight-loss. He has also designed the highly efficient metabolic syndrome treatment programme – in a natural way, without medications.

More information: Terme Šmarješke Toplice

T: 00386 7/ 38 43 565

E: [booking.smarjeske@terme-krka.si](mailto:booking.smarjeske@terme-krka.si)

## Physical exercise

Text: Andreja Zidarič

# Work out!

## It's for your own good

The basis for a long and healthy life is a combination of three aspects that people pay more or less attention to: proper nutrition, avoiding and preventing stress, and regular exercise and recreation. Recreation helps you strengthen your muscles, improve your physical condition and strengthen your immune system, and last but not least, it's a fun way to eliminate stress.

Spring is an ideal time for outdoor activities. The winter is gone and we are slowly getting back into our set life pace. It is important to take advantage of every possible minute in the fresh air as we need to exercise and prepare our body for new adventures. The second part of the word wellness contains the word fitness which implies that physical activity is absolutely necessary for your well-being. Suitable, regular, and most importantly pleasant exercise that is resistant to the excuses such as I can't or I have no time.

### SUITABLE

All types of exercise are suitable if you want to maintain your well-being and consequently your health; in other words, you have to find exercise which is appropriate for you. For instance, if you are overweight, you shouldn't choose running to start with because you will experience knee pain. Trust me, I know... A wonderful substitute is walking. You can call it a stroll if it sounds better and more pleasant to you as long as you don't substitute it with a lazy sequence of steps. Walking as a sport is brisk walking that increases your breathing and heart rate. We can walk on almost all kinds of terrain, in all kinds of weather and in every season. Beneficial effects of walking are shown in as little as 10 minutes, however, if it's possible, it's recommendable to walk up to an hour.

It's been said numerous times that the region of Dolenjska is a heaven for hikers. Otočec is an excellent starting point for shorter as well as longer excursions that can pleasantly complement the physical activity of your choice, be it walking or something else. If you decide to spend some time-off in one of the Otočec Hotels you will receive a free map of hiking trails and a booklet with their description.

### CAREFUL ...

In case you have experienced any health problems during physical exercise, it is wise to consult a physician on the planned activities.



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**Summer  
 at Otočec  
 2014**

<http://bit.ly/1jxtmkc>  
**Hiking  
 or cycling  
 package**

**REGULAR**

Let's face it - physical activity which benefits our health does not take up so much time. Half an hour of moderate physical activity per day for an adult and an hour for the younger ones is sufficient. One does not have to be in perfect physical condition in order to start exercising. One only needs to take things slowly, one step at a time, and listen to one's body – it is really not necessary to look at one's own muscles in the mirror as it does more harm than good.

The secret of working on oneself lies in persistence. While exercising, which requires some effort, patience and will, we gain physical and mental strength, build up our personality and increase our confidence and self-reliance. There's nothing better than being aware that you can do everything you want to, that you can succeed in everything you set your mind to and that there are numerous opportunities still ahead of you?

The Sports Centre at Otočec offers plentiful possibilities for regular exercise. After all, this is important for increasing perseverance, in case this is tested one day.

**Important ...**

The beginning of exercise should be slow and it should last for a few minutes. Prior to exercise we should warm up well and do stretching exercises.

**PLEASANT**

When you are choosing physical activity, choose the one that suits you most. If you like the exercise, you will enjoy it. Consequently, you won't be completely out of breath, you won't experience vertigo, chest pain or nausea because this is definitely something you want to avoid. When in doubt, what the limit is - when you are out of breath, you should be able to utter at least five words.



You'll see ... The excuses such as I don't want to and I don't have time in your mind dialogues will soon disappear. Once you are truly determined to do something for yourself and you really want this, you will make time easily. And it is then when you will be able to fight all the heads of the seven-headed dragon which symbolize your inner fight. (The idea of the seven-headed dragon is borrowed.)

**Dragon's heads symbolize:**

- 1st head = sloth
- 2nd head = pain
- 3rd head = lying – the worst lie of all is the one you tell to yourself
- 4th head = negative self-talk, negative thoughts – eliminate them!
- 5th head = daily worries
- 6th head = atmospheric influences – rain, cold, heat
- 7th head = arrogance or overestimating one's own abilities

**Different kinds of exercise bring about different results – increase in muscle mass, body transformation, muscle endurance, weight-loss, improved cardiovascular system condition and physical condition, quicker rehabilitation after injuries and efficient prevention, relaxation, meditation, and last but not least socialising. Too many benefits to make excuses, right?**

Once you are at Otočec, you won't be able to overlook Otočec Castle – a cultural monument of national importance that is one of the most beautiful sights in Slovenia due to its distinctive architecture and location on an islet surrounded by the Krka River. Don't miss out on a unique opportunity to savour excellent home-made desserts ... Take a stroll along the castle park by the Krka River in the evening when the light becomes soft, peaceful ...



# Otočec

## Sports Centre

**Tennis**

For those who want to improve their game: ideal practice programmes based on initial testing, leasing 6 outdoor and 3 indoor tennis courts, equipment service

**Fitness centre**

To get in top shape and relax: working out on exercise equipment, a possibility of a personal trainer

**Cycling, hiking, skike**

Connect your active lifestyle with the trails in the landscape: all-in-one cycling and hiking offer and the first skike centre in Slovenia

You can also play badminton, volleyball, basketball, football ...



T: +386 31 643 100  
E: src.otocec@terme-krka.si

**And let's not forget ...**

If you are looking for a place where you could focus on sport activities in peace and prepare your body and soul for the strains that sport events demand, Otočec is the ideal location as it offers everything you need – complete services and concentration. The offer for athletes is suitable for team sports as well as for individuals, for athletes in need of sport preparation, rehabilitation, or just relaxation in a pleasant atmosphere. If you want to focus on your practise, we recommend accommodation at the Šport Hotel\*\*\*\*.

*Spring time-off at the seaside*

# Sun, water, air, freedom...

Text: Andreja Zidarič



Strunjan. The sunny bay of well-being with 2300 hours of sun per year, with an extraordinary location in a pine grove in the heart of a protected landscape park, next to the thousand-year-old salt pans ...

Immediate vicinity of the sea and its beneficial effects have enabled this Terme Krka's seaside resort to develop an all-in-one thalassic approach which is based on the use of different sea elements: maritime climate, seawater, mud, algae and sea salt. Nowadays, Talaso Strunjan is acknowledged as an exquisite natural Slovene climate health resort. An ideal spot for well-being, beauty and active life. 365 days a year ...



## Strunjan invites all those ...

... who want to let the sunshine and seaside energy in. Their medical and wellness services and programmes are interwoven with the natural resources of the Mediterranean environment and thus co-create an opportunity for a holistic experience of everything that the sea treasury has to offer.

Highly qualified, friendly and kind-hearted team at Strunjan listens to the needs of hotel as well as non-hotel guests and realizes their wishes for pampering, comfort, luxury and general well-being. Effective medical programmes solve many problems of a modern man; hiking and other activities strengthen one's heart and body and fill the soul, while unique thalassic treatments, such as sea baths, sea mud wraps, salt peelings and massages with Mediterranean oils and herbs, result in positive energy and a strong commitment to a healthier and more relaxed lifestyle.

### ► For those eager for knowledge ...

Salt production at Strunjan salt pans has created a unique landscape with special architectural features, monuments of the past and amazing flora and fauna diversity throughout the centuries. More than 270 bird species nest here and they feel right at home in the park with Mediterranean flora. Natural and cultural sights fans never cease to be impressed by the excursions near and far.

The unspoilt nature of the protected landscape park with the thousand-year-old salt pans, high cliffs, the fascinating Moon Bay, olive tree plantations and energy spots in the vicinity of the Strunjan Cross, which protects the sailors and helps them find a safe route home, offer numerous possibilities for strolls during which the air rich in aerosols beneficially affects the lungs and the mood. What is more, you can watch the most beautiful sunsets here... This piece of Slovene coast will give you the feeling of the blue infinity and peace and quiet will settle in your soul as well.

### ► For those eager for special flavours ...

At the beginning of November, Strunjan is reigned by the orange colour of persimmons. Almost a third of all Slovene persimmon plantations are actually located in the valley of Strunjan. Due to the mild climate and fertile soil the produce is abundant and of high quality. The Persimmon Festival, which has been luring a great number of visitors to this part of the green Slovene coast for more than a decade, is accompanied by an interesting and diverse cultural and entertainment programme on the spacious gravel car park in Strunjan. The event is complemented by the culinary exhibition of persimmon delicacies, educational lectures and a market where you can try and buy this delicious healthy fruit. Visitors can also participate in the blessing of the orange harvest or spend the day hiking along the Strunjan landscape park and the nearby persimmon plantation.

### ► For those eager for exercise ...

Talaso Strunjan is located in the immediate vicinity of the sea, which provides us with numerous opportunities for free time activities in the unspoilt nature and plentiful chances for sport and relaxation. Swimming in the sea water is just one of the delightful possibilities of physical exercise. Hiking along more than 80 kilometres of marked trails, cycling along the picturesque coastal villages and hills, Nordic walking in Slovene Istria hinterland ... One can indulge in absolutely everything that is good for one's body and soul.

Exercise stimulates our blood circulation and makes us forget the daily worries in addition to having a beneficial effect on our respiratory system due to the sea air. The sea air in Strunjan is specific: it is clean due to the lack of heavy industry in the vicinity, it has low allergen concentration, and it is rich in sodium chloride and iodine (concentration of the substances decreases as the distance from the sea increases). Salt particles in the air also strengthen the airway mucosa. Moreover, the combination of the aromatic aerosol of the pine trees and the sea aerosol has a beneficial effect on the airways as well as our well-being.

A hiking week is organized in Strunjan twice a year – when the heat has reduced and the trails are no longer overgrown with bushes. The hikers are our regular guests; however, we do try out a new trail or two every time. We also pay a visit to oil manufacturers, wine growers, olive growers, persimmon growers ...

### ► For those eager for relaxation ...

How you feel mainly depends on you. A day can be beautiful if you let it. If you set your mind to it, your life can be beautiful as well. Pampering means enjoying comfort and luxury and this is something that mustn't be ignored. Pamper yourself and your loved ones ... and let yourself be pampered by others.

### ► And for those eager for freedom

Have you heard of the story about the sand, pebbles and stones in a jar? The one where you have to place in the stones first and then the pebbles so there is still some place left for the sand? However, if you start with sand, there's no more place left for anything else ... In case you haven't heard the story – its moral is the one thing you need to remember: the most important is to include the larger stones – the important things in our lives, because if we don't do so, we are likely to miss out on life altogether. If we give priority to the smaller things in life (pebbles & sand), our lives will be filled up with less important things, leaving little or no time for the things in our lives that are most important to us.

*Stay healthy, be curious, be on the move, be relaxed. Collect the big stones.*

<http://bit.ly/1iFpuZe>

Summer  
at sea



## Otočec Castle Restaurant

Text: Maja Bele

# Grad Otočec

### Special ... in a simple way

A simple Sunday meal can be transformed into a true artistic culinary experience among the ancient walls of Otočec Castle, surrounded by the beautiful green Krka River passing slowly along the region of Dolenjska, sowed with graceful white swans. The soul and stomach are filled with symphony of flavours, in which modern culinary trends, ethnological specialties and the tradition of the region of Dolenjska are interwoven.



<http://bit.ly/5SsdK6>

Romantic weekend in a castle

The ravages of time left only one castle out of 65 holding sway in the past centuries by the Krka River – Otočec Castle whose written records date back to the 13th century. It was built on the right bank, next to the river's special feature – tufa thresholds. These formations were formed due to the slow river flow which has enabled limestone to deposit on the river bed in the form of thresholds for thousands of years and across which the water

playfully foams into picturesque water curtains as it slides over them.

One of the castle owners had a part of the land surrounding his castle dug out in order to defend himself against the enemies and this is how Otočec became a castle on a small river islet.

The castle has changed numerous owners and they have left a combination of gothic and renaissance traces on its walls due to their additions and restorations.

During the last restoration, which took place four years

ago, the architect managed to create a harmony of the past spirit and an up-to-date feeling of aesthetics with his subtle combination of walnut wood furniture and oak wood flooring, thus enabling Otočec Castle to become a member of the prestigious association of boutique hotels and mansions, Relais & Chateaux. This has irrevocably put our local castle on the world map of the must-see places. One Sunday, after I had got some fresh autumn air in the colourful park by the castle, next to which one of the most beautiful golf courses in Slovenia is subtly set, as connoisseurs say, I found myself under the ancient stone arch of the entrance of this unique Slovene island castle.

Creators of the last restoration have managed to create a simple warm ambience in the cold thick medieval walls with exquisite minimalist furnishings and a fireplace in one of the restaurant corners where the flickering fire offers a soothing effect in the colder days.

»Top-notch restaurants stand out due to their dish creativity and complexity, fresh ingredients, individual approach and exclusive atmosphere« once said an acknowledged Slovene gourmet. All of the above is met when tasting the delicacies on the menu prepared by the chef Dejan Pavlič and his team.



# Traces of the **past**

Among the dishes of the carefully composed seasonal castle menu, where recipes for diverse traditional local dishes of our grandmas and brilliant new recipes of modern international cuisine are interwoven, there are three, four or five-course meals which stand out, the most interesting one being the so-called seven-course tasting menu.

*»This menu has become my trademark, a presentation of my culinary expertise and imagination,«* says Dejan Pavlič smilingly when I decide to have a go on it.

Having enough time is of key importance when you decide to try this menu. One needs at least two to three hours to peacefully enjoy the selection of dishes which complement each other and upgrade each other's flavours. »I spend a couple of weeks thinking about the tasting menu which I change four times a year according to the season. I check what basic ingredients are available on local fields and in the forests, and then I harmonize my ideas with a sommelier because wine additionally reinforces the perception of our taste buds and enables deeper flavours, « furthermore explains the chef of the Otočec Castle Restaurant, whose team of seven cooks and two assistants helps his creations come true.

In the kingdom of flavours ...

## Degustation menu Spring 2014

◆  
*Foie gras in spring garden*

◆  
*Creamy wild garlic soup with cappuccino and balsamic vinegar with honey*

◆  
*Zander cheeks on polenta with nettle mousse*

◆  
*Acacia ice tea with Williams pear jelly*

◆  
*Lamb chop on herb crouton and roasted suckling pig with gentle mustard sauce and spring vegetables*

◆  
*Young whey cheese from the Gorišek farm and blueberry jam*

◆  
*Sweet spring fruit and salad*



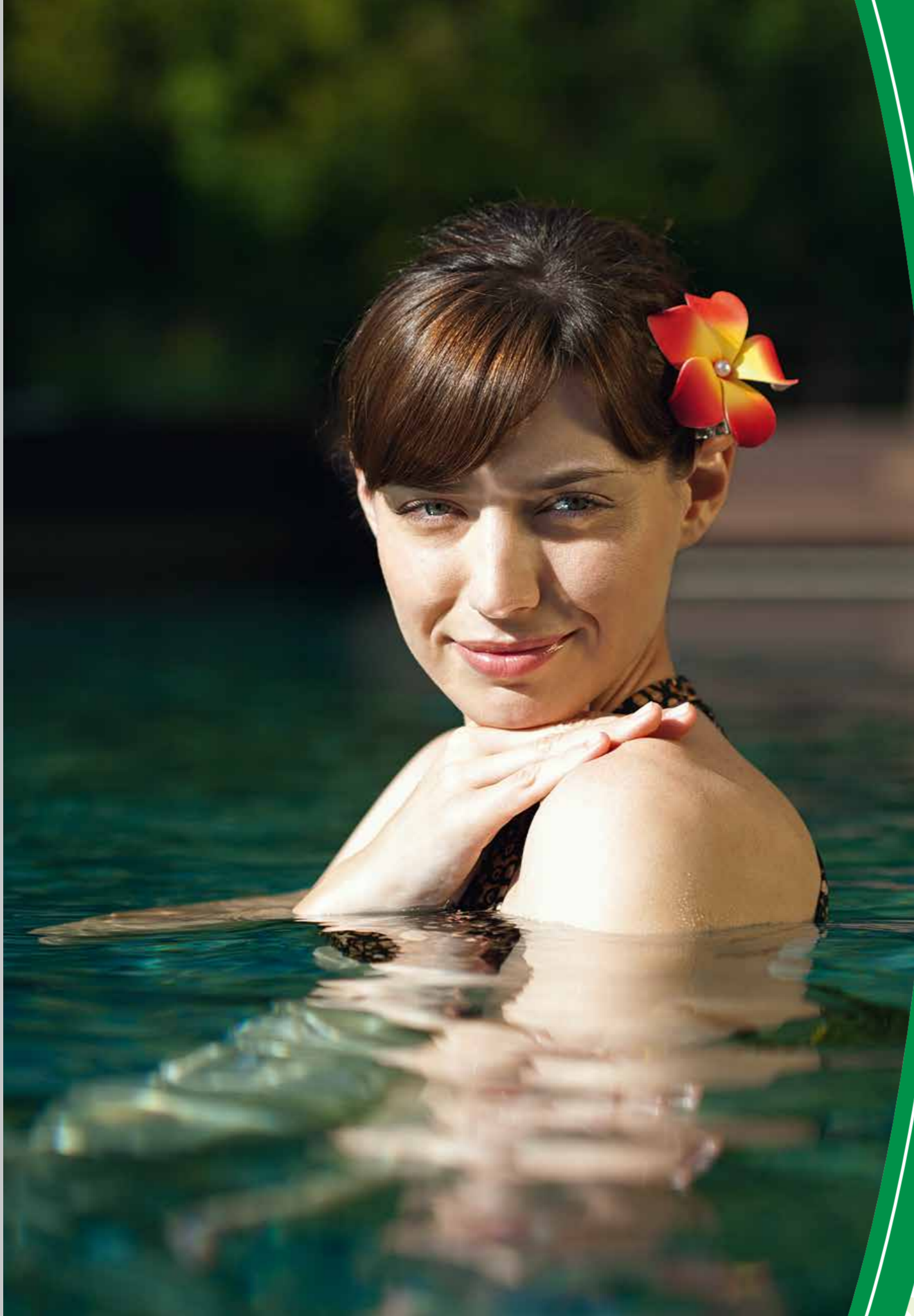
My experience of dining at the Otočec Castle Restaurant came to an end that Sunday after a little more than three hours of a pleasant and educative coo- kery chat. I headed home pleasantly satiated, yet not too full.



T: 07/ 38 48 900

E: [booking.grad-otocec@terme-krka.si](mailto:booking.grad-otocec@terme-krka.si)

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