

2011 Program of Events

February

- Ceremony conferring the title 2011 Alpine Town of the Year in the Blue Hall in Idrija (8 Feb. at 7 pm)

March

- Natural disaster symposium, dedicated to the 500th anniversary of the Idrija earthquake, to be held in Ljubljana (25 Mar.) and Idrija at Gewerkenegg Castle (26 Mar.)
- Opening of the Anno Domini 1511 exhibition in the Nikolaj Pirnat Gallery at Gewerkenegg Castle (26 Mar.)

April

- ECO week (9–16 Apr.)

June

- 30th Anniversary of the Idrija Lace Festival (17–19 Jun.)
- Idrija lace fashion show in the Blue Hall in Idrija (18 Jun. at 8 pm)
- Idrija lace fashion display at the Nikolaj Pirnat Gallery at Gewerkenegg Castle (19 Jun.–31 Aug.)

July

- Summer events: Castle evenings, Thursdays on the Square, 10th Idrija Tango Festival (15–16 Jul.), and more

October

- Ex tempore exhibition in the St. Barbara Gallery (7–22 Oct.)

November

- Lecture: Coexistence of Large Wild Animals and Humans



Idrija, Alpine Town of the Year 2011

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Welcome!

The Alps: Our Shared Home and Responsibility

The Alps: a natural treasure of exceptional importance! Did you know that the Alps are:

- Europe's largest ecosystem next to the Mediterranean
- One of Europe's largest drinking water reserves
- A region with unique natural phenomena
- Home to 30,000 animal and 13,000 plant species
- Home to 14 million people
- A vacation destination for 100 million visitors a year
- A historical area for peoples, languages and culture
- An increasingly burdened transit corridor between the Mediterranean and northern Europe.

To protect the natural treasures of the Alps, eight Alpine countries, including Slovenia, have signed the Alpine Convention, an international agreement on joint protection and sustainable development of the Alpine region based on five key objectives.

To achieve these objectives, the participating countries are joining various Alpine networks; one such network is the Alpine Town of the Year association, linking towns designated Alpine Town of the Year since 1997. This prestigious title is awarded by an international jury of representatives of the Network of municipalities Alliance in the Alps, International Commission for the Protection of the Alps (CIPRA), and Pro Vita Alpina organization to a town implementing sustainable development and successfully coordinating ecological, economic, social, and cultural objectives. Together with Idrija fourteen Alpine towns have received this title so far.



Alpine Convention area and Alpine Towns of the Year.

Idrija: Alpine Town of the Year 2011

In 2011 Idrija became the second town in Slovenia to be named Alpine Town of the Year. It is the only Slovenian town holding this prestigious title after Maribor (Alpine Town of the Year 2000) stepped down.

This is a great honor and affirmation of the town and municipal initiatives towards sustainable development, emphasizing preservation of the delicate harmony between nature and people in the Alps.

Idrija's geographical location south of Triglav National Park and bordering the Smrekova Draga nature reserve connects the Alps and Slovenia's karst areas. This title is international recognition of Idrija's commitment and efforts to achieve the basic objectives of the Alpine Convention.



Idrija. Photo: Jani Peternelj.

Idrija will do justice to this title. With its rich 500-year history, and exceptional technical and cultural legacy, Idrija can offer unique experience in cleaning up mercury pollution, geological knowledge, findings from many studies, experience in economic restructuring, lacemaking skills, and other areas.

Idrija is already an example of an area where ecology and business complement rather than exclude each other. Idrija is committed to environmental responsibility and realizing the goals of the Alpine Convention. It seeks to raise awareness about the importance of the Alps, attract as many people as possible to events associated with awarding the title, and strengthen contact with surrounding regions as well as areas outside the Alps.

Idrija: On the Path to Sustainable Development

Idrija – which has 11,500 inhabitants and lies in the southeastern foothills of the Alps – has primarily been known for its mercury mine, the second largest in the world. The mine was closed in 1995 and Idrija started developing into an industrial high-tech center with the lowest unemployment rate in Slovenia.

The International Commission that evaluated Idrija's candidacy for Alpine Town of the Year was especially satisfied to see all the projects already being carried out in Idrija. The most important include the UNESCO project, the establishment of a geopark, expanding the bicycle path network, and construction of decentralized wastewater treatment facilities.

Idrija is also one of the few Slovenian municipalities aware that environmentally progressive and regulated towns and municipalities must adopt and implement key environmental documents such as a sustainable development strategy, a municipal environmental strategy, a concept for environmentally friendly energy, and so on. The title Alpine Town of the Year recognizes and sums up all of these efforts.

People give life to such projects, and realizing the sustainable development of the town therefore largely depends on whether the town's residents will be involved in carrying out the project, to the benefit of present and future generations in building the future of this part of the Alps.

Idrija will receive the title «Alpine Town of the Year» on 8 February 2011. It already made extensive preparations for this event last year and organized an interesting program of international events including the introductory «Alpine City of the Year» workshop and a joint exhibition of Alpine towns of the year as part of the Idrija Lace Festival, and produced a brochure, a documentary about Idrija, and other promotional material. The main events will take place this year, when Idrija will hold the title «Alpine Town of the Year.»



Rake. Photo: Samo Trebižan.