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Kraški vrt

Karst Garden

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Albanija

Najboljše v Ljubljani • The Best of Ljubljana
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Mali raj pod kostanji

Specifično ravnovesje med kamnom in skromno vegetacijo, ubranost vinogradov z okoljem, značilna arhitektura, gurmanski užitki v majhnih zasebnih gostiščih – vse to je znano, a se vedno ne dovoli, da bi nas Kras pritegnil delček množic, ki se stekajo v Provanso ali Toskano, s katerima ga nekateri primerjajo. Slovenski Kras opisujejo v preseznihah vsi, ki so imeli priložnost doživeti katero od odlik te pokrajine.



NAD KRASOM SE JE NAVDUŠILA TUDI BRITTA HOESCHELE, ko je začela pred poldrugim desetletjem med izleti ob koncu tedna z možem Erikom in sinkom Bernardom raziskovati Slovenijo. Po treh letih so v Kobdilju, vasi, ki se drži znanega Štanjela, našli staro, zapuščeno hišo z zaraščenim vrtom in se vanjo zaljubili na prvi pogled. Sledili so delovni konci tednov, ki sta jih Britta in Erik preživela s sekuro, lopato, krampom in podobnimi orodji v rokah med urejanjem okolice hiše in pripravami na obnovo njihovega bodočega doma. V »mali raj pod kostanji«, kot tudi pravijo svoji domačiji, so vložili veliko denarja, a še več ljubezni in truda.

Britta je v rodni Nemčiji končala vrtnarsko šolo in nekaj let tudi delala kot vrtnarica, po selitvi v Erikovo domovino pa se je njena ljubezen do rastlin razrasla prav na vrtu kraške domačije.

»Prvo vrtnico sem kupila v majhni ljubljanski vrtnariji, kjer so ponujali uvožene vrtnice iz Francije. Najraje imam stare sorte teh rož, ki tako bujno cvetijo in opojno dišijo, jeseni pa očarajo še šipki. Te zgodovinske vrtnice res niso tako zahtevne, so pa zelo zoprne za obrezovanje in čiščenje, saj so izredno trnaste. Na terasi imam plezajoče vrtnice ('Bobby James' in 'Veilchenblau'), ki poženejo od 8 do 10 metrov dolge veje. Februarja jih moram obrezati. Ko plešem tam zgoraj po ograji, sem vsa popikana, vse me boli, a

tako se vsaj zavem, da je prišla pomlad,« radoživo pripoveduje Britta.

Njena zbirka vrtnic (preko sto različnih sort) je le del tega, kar dela njen vrt edinstven. Ogromna stara kostanja na dvorišču, razrasli lovor, koprivovec in smokva so preživeli z vrta prejšnjih lastnikov. Na terasasto urejenem zemljišču je Britta vrtnicam dodala izvirno družbo cvetočih trajnic, prilagojenih žgočim kraškim poletjem. Na zelenjavni vrt vstopimo pod loki cvetočih vrtnic med gredice, na katerih je sonaravna združba solatnic in divjih zelišč ujeta med nizke pušpanove obrobe.

Najbolj ravne, pravilne poteze riše plavalni bazen, razkošje, namenjeno tujim gostom. Turisti iz različnih evropskih dežel se v privlačno opremljenem apartmaju počutijo tako dobro, da svoje počitnice na Krasu podaljšajo na več tednov.

Seveda je **vrt** živ organizem, ki nastaja, se spreminja in ni nikoli dokončan.





V naravi ni ravnih potez in pravilnih likov, po njej se zgleduje tudi Brita na vrtu. Zato so opore za vrtnice, loki in latniki iz akacijevoga lesa rahlo skrivenčeni, vegasti, grčasti – takšni, kot je kolje v kraških vinogradih. Med presenečenja spadajo: Oskar («naša hobotnica»), ki je pravzaprav nenavadno razraščan kos debla; palica, viseča na verigi sredi lesenega loka, ki obiskovalca prisili, da se odloči, ali se ji bo ognil levo ali desno; skrilaste ploščice nepravilnih oblik z imeni rastlin; številni domiselno oblikovani kosi lesa v ateljeju, razstavljeni med njenimi artefakti iz gline in likovnimi deli.

Seveda je vrt živ organizem, ki nastaja, se spreminja in ni nikoli dokončan. Med Britto Hoeschele in njenim vrtom so se stakale večplastne vezi. «Vrt je moje veselje,» še pove. «Četudi si včasih rečem: Ah, čez glavo ga imam, ne morem ga več videti! Koliko je plevela! Potem en teden hodim kar mimo in se delam, kot da nič ne vidim. In potem spet pridejo jutra, ko se sprehajam po vrtu, tu poduham, tam opazujem. Ves čas pa čutim potrebo, da moram imeti roke v zemlji. To je zame najbolj pomembno.»

Mali raj pod kostanji je eden tistih čarobnih kotičkov, ki obiskovalca ujame v svoje razpoloženje. Zazna skladnost vrta z okolico in s stavbami, izbor okrasnih rastlin, ki se mešajo z domačo floro, neprisiljenost in prijaznost gostiteljev. Čeprav je na vrtu prvič, se obiskovalcu kmalu zazdi, kot bi tu že kdaj bil.





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A Little Paradise Under the Chestnuts

Text and photography: **Stane Sušnik**

THE SPECIFIC BALANCE BETWEEN ROCK AND MEAGRE VEGETATION, the harmony of the vineyards with the surroundings, the characteristic architecture, the foodie delights in small private restaurants – all of this is well known, but still not enough for our Karst to attract a part of the crowds that pour into Provence or Tuscany, with which some compare it. The Slovenian Karst is described in superlatives by all those who have had the chance to experience any of the distinctions of this landscape.

The Karst has also enchanted Britta Hoeschele, who started exploring Slovenia on weekend trips a decade and a half ago with her husband Erik and son Bernard. After three years they found in Kobdilj, a hamlet close to the more famous Stanjel, an old and abandoned house, with an overgrown garden, and they fell in love with it at first glance. This was followed by working weekends, which Britta and Erik spent with axe, shovel, pick and similar tools in their hands, fixing up the environs of the house and preparing to renovate their future home. In the "Little Paradise Under the Chestnuts", as they call their home, they have invested considerable money, but even more love and labour.

In her native Germany, Britta graduated from horticultural school, and even worked for several years as a gardener, but after moving to Erik's homeland her love of plants blossomed there in the garden of their home in the Karst.

"I bought my first rose at a small garden shop in Ljubljana, where they offered imported roses from France. Most of all I like the old rose varieties with abundant blooms and intoxicating fragrances, then in the autumn they have wonderful rosehips. These historical roses are really not so demanding, but they are hard work to prune and clean, since they are very thorny. On the terrace I have creeping roses ('Bobby James' and 'Veilchenblau'), which send out 8 to 10 metre long branches. In February I have to prune them. When I'm dancing around up there on the fence, I'm all scratched, everything hurts, but that way I know spring has come," recounts Britta.

Her collection of roses (more than a hundred different varieties) is just part of what makes her garden unique. The huge old chestnuts in the courtyard, the overgrown laurel, hackberry and fig trees have survived from the garden of the previous owners. On the plot of land arranged in terraces, Britta has added amongst the roses an original array of flowering perennials, adapted to the scorching Karst summers. You enter the vegetable garden through an arch of flowering roses, between beds growing an ecologically harmonious group of lettuces and wild herbs, contained in a low hedge of box.

The flattest, straightest lines are delineated by the swimming pool, a luxury intended for foreign guests. Tourists from various European countries feel so good in the attractively furnished apartment that they extend their holiday in the Karst for several weeks.

Nature has no straight lines and regular features, and Britta models her garden on the natural. So the supports for the roses, the arches and trellising of robinia wood are slightly twisted, uneven and gnarled – the kind used for poles in Karst vineyards. The surprises include Oskar ("our octopus"), which is in fact an unusually grown piece of tree trunk; a stick hanging on a chain in the middle of a wooden arch, forcing the visitor to decide whether to steer around it to the left or right; slate slabs of irregular shape with the names of plants; numerous interestingly shaped pieces of wood in the studio, with artefacts of clay and artworks displayed among them.

Of course the garden is a living organism, which emerges, changes and is never finished. Many-layered bonds have been established between Britta Hoeschele and her garden. "The garden is my joy. Although I sometimes say: Ah, I'm in over my head, I can't see it any more! There are so many weeds! Then for a week I walk past it and pretend that I don't see anything. Then again there are mornings when I stroll around the garden, sniffing here, watching there. The whole time I feel the need to have my hands in the earth. That is the most important thing for me."

The Little Paradise Under the Chestnuts is one of those enchanting spots that draws the visitor into its mood. You sense the harmony of the garden with its surroundings and buildings, the selection of decorative plants that mix with the native flora, and the ease and friendliness of have been here before. ✨



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