

The Demänovská Ice Cave

1/ Entrance Corridor (Vstupná chodba):

Welcome to the Demanovska Ice Cave. It is situated in the territory of the Low Tatras National Park, in the National Nature Reserve Demanovska Valley. The Demanovska Ice Cave is in fact the northern end of Demanova cave system, the longest cave system in Slovakia. Underground spaces were created by the former flow of the small river Demanovka, calcite fills is formed thanks to seeping atmospheric water. During the last 500 years the cave was cooled by the winter air from surface so that an ice fill was formed. The tour is 650 m long and takes 45 minutes. The path has 670 stairs.

We must inform you that touching and damaging the karst and ice decorations, smoking, littering and touching electrical equipments is strictly forbidden. An extra fee is charged for taking pictures and video recording.

2/ Bear's Passage (Medvedia chodba):

We descended 26 m to the Bear's Passage. The temperature varies from -1°C to $+2.4^{\circ}\text{C}$ in this part of the cave. Many bones of cave bears (*Ursus spelaeus*) that used to live here 12,000 years ago have been found here. This cave is wintering place for 8 species of bats, several species of invertebrates and millipedes. We can find here mosses, lichens and moulds as well mostly close to the natural cave entrance.

3/ Bel's Dome (Belov dóm):

This part of the cave is named after Slovak historian and scientist Matej Bel. Calcite decoration crystallizes from seepage water solution with the growth of 1 mm^3 in 10-15 years on average. Chemical elements dissolved in seepage water and mechanical particles from the air cause different colours of the rock. We are going to pass Halas's Dome with the greatest 5 m high stalagmite. Its age is about 365 thousand years.

4/ Visitors' Book (Kniha návštev):

Here you can see signatures of visitors on the wall, the oldest of them dating back to 1714. You can also see the signatures of famous personalities of cultural and social life from 18th and 19th centuries. We shall continue through the Black Gallery, which is a river modelled passage 30 m high.

5/ Janosik's Dome (Jánošíkov dóm):

The greatest 35 m high dome is named after Slovak national hero Juraj Janosik. Favourable geological and tectonic conditions help to form such a great space. Demanovska Cave of Peace, which connects Demanovska Ice Cave with Demanovska Cave of Liberty was discovered in 1952 through this part of the cave.

6/ Bel's Dome II. (Belov dóm II):

From here, a narrow corridor leads to the ice-covered parts of the cave, to Kmet's Dome. The ice is formed in places where water and sufficiently undercooled environment occurs. In good season, ice columns, ice cascades and ground ice can be noticed there. Ice fill grows approximately from December to April and melts from April to December. The temperature in this part varies from -7°C in winter to $+0.4^{\circ}\text{C}$ in summer.

7/ Great Dome (Veľký dóm):

After strong winters ice decoration is dominant here because calcite formations were destructed by the effect of frost weathering. You can see the evorsion pots and holes on the walls as an evidence of former whirling flow of the Demanovka River. The amount of ice fill depends on length and intensity of wintertime and therefore it is varying every year. Now we have to climb the last 213 stairs to the surface. Thank you for your visit. We recommend you to visit of some other show cave in Slovakia. The nearest one is the Demanovska Cave of Liberty with its remarkable sinter decoration. It is only 2 km up the valley from this cave. We wish you a pleasant stay in the Low Tatras and hope to see you again. Goodbye.

