

# Važecká Cave

**1/ Entrance hall (Vstupná chodba):** Welcome to the national nature reserve Važecká Cave between Kozie Chrbty Mts. and Liptov Valley at the western edge of the Važec village. The entrance to the cave lies at an altitude of 784 m above sea level and 8 m above the Biely Váh River. Apart from the many stalactites and stalagmites, the cave is known by the discovery of the bones of prehistoric cave bears (*Ursus spelaeus*) and provides a hiding place for many species of cave animals. The cave was created in tectonic faults in Gutenstein limestone by the past waters of the Biely Váh River tributary. The cave length is 530 m of which 230 m is accessible for tourists. Air temperature in the cave is around 7°C and relative humidity more than 90 %.

The cave was discovered on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1922 by Ondrej Húska, a young forest keeper from Važec. Cave discovery also attracted the academic painter František Havránek who, from his own resources, provided the means for tentative opening the cave to public from 1928 to 1934. After adaptation of the show path and electrification, the cave was newly opened to public in 1954. There is a life-size statue of a cave bear in the entrance part.

**We must inform you that it is strictly forbidden to touch and damage the karst decoration, pollute the cave and touch the electrical devices. Photography and filming is only permitted after payment of a fee.**

**2/ Collapsed Dome (Zrútený dóm):** this part of the cave was named after the ceiling which collapsed approximately 10,000 years ago. Važecká Cave is one of the places with the richest findings of cave bear bones in Slovakia. Cave bear was bigger than the present brown bear and became extinct approximately 15,000 years ago. The remains of the bones of this creature can be seen at the entrance to the dome. Some of the bones which are situated in the soil sediments are more than 51,000 years old. Cave decoration is created by precipitation from the seepage atmospheric water. Water containing dissolved limestone, reaches the bottom of the cave where it creates rimstone pools, floor onflows and stalagmites growing opposite stalactites. They can join into columns. Various colours are due to the admixtures of iron, magnesium and manganese.

**3/ Lake Hall (Jazierková sieň):** was named after cascading lakes. Curved shapes of some rimstone dams are named “snake lakes”. The underground areas appear to be lifeless. However, three bat species were discovered in this cave which, in the winter time, form a small colony. The show path consists of passages which are partially dug out through the clay sediments. On the right hand side, there is a Magic Garden and on the left hand side the Moon Surface.

**4/ Húska’s Hall (Húskova sieň):** the hall is dedicated to the discoverer of the cave, Ondrej Húska. It is one of the most beautifully decorated parts of the cave, with a dominant massive column with estimated age of 60,000 years. In some places on the ceiling, there are peculiar, deflected stalactites which originally grew straight, but later they deviated slightly due to weathering of the thin limestone surfaces in the ceiling. The tunnel called Menagerie is followed by the Gallery.

**5/ Gallery (Galéria):** is the highest lying part of the cave, above which there is 25 metres of limestone cover. Further, the tour goes through Clay Passage with Dwarf Cavities, through Treasury into Charnel-house. This is the lowest cave passage where, in the untouched sediments, a great amount of bones of cave bears and other animals were discovered and still remain. This corridor leads back to the Lake Hall. By going through the Collapsed Dome and Entry Hall, the tour of the cave ends. Educational panels in the entry area provide information for visitors regarding the extinct and living fauna of the cave.

Thank you for paying a visit and let us recommend the other show caves in Slovakia. Have a nice day.

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