

Ochtinska Aragonite cave

1/ The Entrance hall (Vstupná sieň): I would like to welcome you to the Ochtinska aragonite cave. It is located on the northern slope of the Hrádok Hill on the road between Štítnik and Jelšava, in the Slovak Ore Mountains, 26 km from Rožňava and 657 meters in altitude. The Ochtinska aragonite cave was discovered by accident when a geological gallery "Cabbage" was being drilled on 7th December 1954. The surveying work started in the second half of the 60ties and the cave was finally opened to the public on 2nd July 1972. The length of the cave is 585 meters, but only 230m was opened to the public. Cave was formed in a lens of Palaeozoic Devonian crystalline blue-grey marble with an estimated 400 million years ago. In comparison with the other caves, the cave fills are made of the aragonite crystals. It is protected by law as a National natural monument and from the year 2000 it is inscribed in the world's science and cultural heritage list of UNESCO within the framework of Slovak and Aggteleksky karst. The length of the cave is 300 meters, but only 230m was opened to the public. Air temperature is around 8°C and humidity is more than 90%.

Touching and damaging the karst decorations, smoking, littering and touching electrical equipments is strictly forbidden. An extra fee is charged for taking pictures and video recording.

2/ The Marble Hall (Mramorová sieň): Its walls are very similar to the other walls in the cave, made of crystalline limestone with a striped appearance. The limestone creates huge lenses in the middle of the slate and phyllites. After the water had fallen and the cave spaces were emptied that is when the aragonite crystals started to grow. We will see them in the next area of the cave, the Star Hall.

3/ The Milky road hall (Sieň mliečnej cesty): In this part of the cave the ceiling is decorated by unique shapes of the eccentric aragonite formations. Aragonite is a rare crystalline modification of calcite. The condition for creation of the aragonite eccentric shapes is slow filtering of water through. It is important that the water drops don't fall down but evaporate instead. As a result of the suitable geological and physical conditions could have been created this unique aragnite decoration.

4/ The Deep dome (Hlboký dóm): It is the most remote part of the cave ending with the abyss 10mtrs in depth. The abyss is filled with water when more water is running into the cave. In the spring it usually floods. On the ceiling there is a tectonic fault filled with aragnite decoration.

5/ The Small hall of the Deep dome (Malá sieň Hlbokého dómu): On the walls you can see very eccentric aragonite decorations. For good reasons it is considered as the most beautiful part of the cave.

6/ The Hall of Great milky road (Sieň veľkej mliečnej cesty):

In a minute, we will end our show tour of the cave. We will be passing through the Magic passage. Thank you for your attention and visit. We would recommend you to go and visit other Slovakian show caves. The closest to Ochtinska aragonite cave are Gombasecka cave with unique straw stalactite decoration and the Domica cave which has rich archeological findings of the Neolithic Era. We hope you enjoyed your tour and we wish you all the best on your journey discovering the beauty of the Slovakian nature.

