

GRUMBLE BEAR TRAIL

Themed family walk trail. Length: 2 km (1.2 mi). Duration: 1 hr – 1.5 hr. Developed by the Bohinjska Bela Tourist Association. Use of trail and execution of activities at your own risk.

Grumble Bear Trail will take you into times past, when a real bear once walked into the village of Bohinjska Bela, coming to be known as Grumble Bear. Following the pleasant family trail, you will walk where Grumble Bear did, discovering what happened to him on his way through our village. The paws will direct you where to go, while tasks at the fourteen stops will test your enthusiasm and skill. Along the trail, take a close look at nature, its trees and its flowers; explore. At each stop, perform the task described on its signboard and elaborated in the list of stops and tasks. If you have a pen on you, find a letter on each signboard, and copy the letters one by one into the boxes bellow – thus, you will get a message in the end. And if you haven't a pen, that's okay, too: a surprise awaits you in the end – the bravest among you will be able to look into a real bear den.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

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STORY

On the Pokljuka Plateau, footsteps of a bear were discovered. Hunters from nearby villages, including the Bohinjska Bela village, gathered to hunt for it. However, as soon as all hunters left, Grumble Bear walked straight into Bohinjska Bela. Probably he came from the Sava River gorge. There, he had likely drank water, and then climbed up, entering the village near school. Terribly hungry, he was looking for food.

First Grumble Bear luckily found a handful of tasty fruits under the *tepka* pear tree. [Stop 1] However, this naturally was not enough for the big bear, and he still felt hunger. Coming to a pond, he pawed at the fish hopefully, but all escaped. [Stop 2] The Bear grumbled angrily, and went on. On his way he sniffed a little, found an occasional snail, but his stomach was still rumbling. Upset, he took up two stones and started to strike them one against the other, grumbling crossly. [Stop 3] After climbing uphill, Grumble Bear now became very tired, and lay down to rest. [Stop 4] He dozed off a bit, and was woken by a naughty Squirrel, who was throwing cones at him. [Stop 5] Darn it! Grumbling, the Bear set out again. He heard a stream burbling, and turned into that direction. He crossed the stream with some caution so as not to wet his paws. [Stop 6] Once over, he was drawn towards the houses by the smell of food cooking, but he was afraid of coming too close to people, so he finally headed for the forest, and walked along the railway. Very hungry, he kept looking around for food. Then suddenly he froze in terror: a roaring black monster was coming rapidly behind him, giving forth thick black smoke. Grumble Bear had never seen a steam train before. To his luck, there was a small tunnel under the

railway, and he took shelter in it, howling in horror. [Stop] When everything became quite again, the Bear cautiously continued his way. He came to a bee house. Honey! His mouth watered. Now he was going to eat. [Stop 8] He pawed at a hive, but vexed, the bees stung him. He howled in pain, and ran off in a frenzy along the trail between the forest and the meadow. [Stop 9] At the end of the meadow, the big dashing bear scared off a resting mouflon, who ran off uphill. Well, Grumble Bear himself was breathless. He found a stone pit, and tiredly lay down for another short rest. [Stop 10] Then he rose up from hunger, and started to search among the stones for something edible, but there was nothing. He grumbled mightily, and went on searching. Now he had a stroke of luck! – he found remains of a dead deer in a small depression, and now finally had a good hearty meal. [Stop 11] At ease with his full stomach, Grumble Bear now strolled on. He drank water from a clear stream, and even took a bath in a small pool, making the water all muddy from his merry water play. [Stop 12] Bathed, the satiated Bear became sleepy, he began to yawn, and had to find a den to spend the winter in. He soon found a cave to his taste, climbed into it, and sank into a pleasant sleep. [Stop 13] Grumble Bear slept all winter long, while in spring he got up and went on. Downhill, he now finally came to Podroje, from where a trail leads back to the village. [Stop 14]

Where did Grumble Bear go from Podroje? Did he return to the Sava River? Or did he go further on, perhaps even right into another story? Who knows? Bohinjska Bela never saw him again ...

STOPS AND TASKS

1. **Tepka Tree.** Pear trees of this sort were ordered to be planted by Empress Maria Theresa, as they bear plenty of fruits, which are good if stewed, and in breads and cakes. Take a look at the leaves and at the bark.
2. **"Kouža".** Take a look at the pond ("puddle"), and at the plants in it and around it, and count the fish. Which is the biggest?
3. **Musical Stones.** Pick up two stones and bang them rhythmically, singing a song about a Bear, or just humming accompanied by the music of stones.
4. **Bear's Rest.** You too take a rest in the forest playground. Play, and gather fresh energy by walking the Labyrinth of Love and Creativity. Take a look at the "kožarca" hut: in such huts made of bark, tree fellers used to sleep, being too far away to go back home. Find a bench at the top of the rise, where you can sit for a while. Finally heap up some leaves or forest fruits – they will be eaten for lunch by the elf guarding the playground.
5. **Throwing Rings.** Throw some rings onto the hooks to help the Squirrel wake the Bear. How far off can you still do it?
6. **Over the Stream.** You too cross the Belca stream carefully. Be careful not to get wet.
7. **Tunnel under the Railway.** You too climb into the tunnel carefully, and scream three times. Listen to your echo.
8. **Bee House.** The *kranjska sivka* bee is one of the most hard-working bees. Your task is to count the hives, and find out how many of each colour there are.
9. **Hunting Watchtower and Dry Stone Wall.** Take a look at the low wall made of stones gathered from the meadow. Then let grownups help you climb to the top of the *preža* watchtower, which is used by hunters watching wild animals grazing below. You too look quietly for a hare, or a badger, or a deer, or a roe deer, or a mouflon, or a fox, or a boar, or even a bear.

10. **Stone Pit.** The stone pit was in use over a hundred years ago when the Bohinj Railway was built as part of the longer rail between Prague in the present-day Czech Republic, and Trieste in Italy. Your task here is to build up a pyramid, a mountain, or an animal of stones.
11. **Remains of Bear's Lunch.** Approach the depression carefully, and take a look at deer bones that remained after the Bear had his lunch. Also take a look at the branch shelter.
12. **Pond.** Find a stick, and stir the water with it. Watch it becoming muddy. The pond used to be a water pool for the mill bellow the slope.
13. **Bear's Den.** Carefully climb up the trail, and approach the Bear's den, looking into it. Imagine the real Bear sleeping there.
14. **Way Back to the Village.** Well done, here Grumble Bear Trail concludes. Check the boxes, and try to read from them our message to you – can you guess or find out what the Slovenian words mean? Then go back to the village. If you wish to tell us something, you can write to us, our address is info@bohinjskabela.si.

MAP

