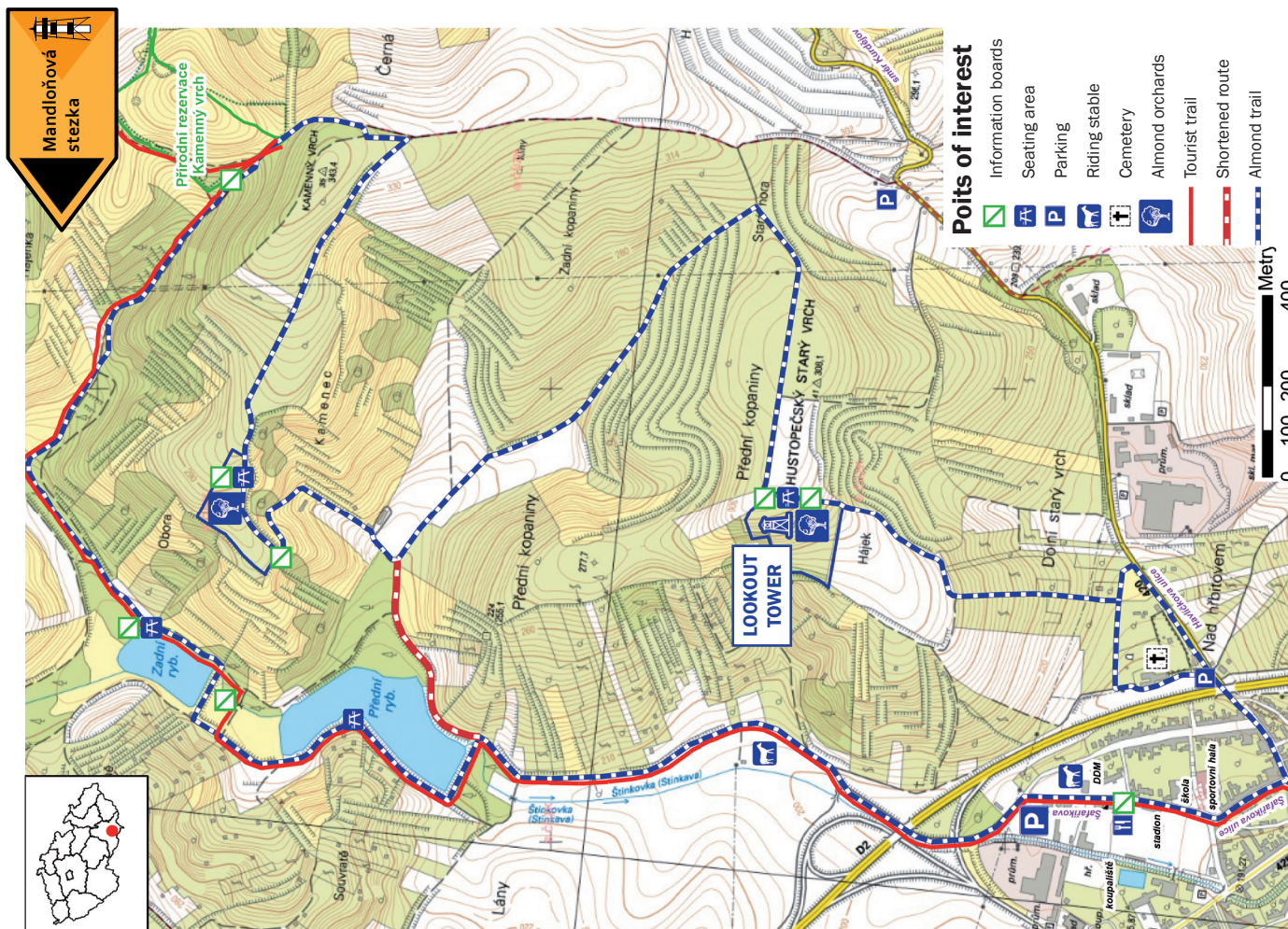
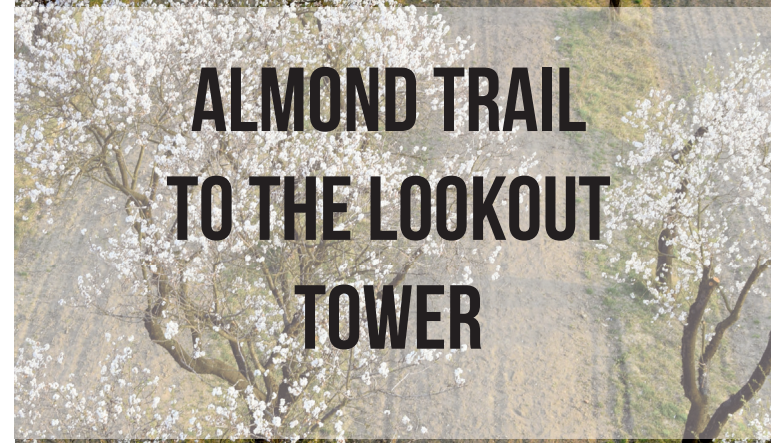


HUSTOPEČE - ALMOND ORCHARDS AND THE LOOKOUT TOWER



ALMOND TRAIL TO THE LOOKOUT TOWER



We believe you will enjoy your stay in Hustopeče and its surroundings, take home beautiful memories, and be happy to return again.



jihomoravský kraj

Tento propagační materiál byl spolufinancován Jihomoravským krajem.

Contact: Tourist Information Centre
Dukelské nám. 15, Hustopeče
Tel.: 0042 530 351 418 / 419

Město Hustopeče www.hustopece.cz



Dear Visitors, We invite you to follow a trail that will lead you not only to the lookout tower but also to two almond orchards — the largest in Central Europe. Along the way, you can also enjoy many other beautiful places in the surrounding countryside.

The route is just under 9 km long; a shortened option of approximately 5 km is also available. However, on the shorter circuit you will visit only the orchard with the lookout tower on Starý vrch (Old Hill).

The Almond Trail is intended for pedestrians and cyclists only. Motor vehicles are prohibited; please leave your car in one of the parking spots in town. If you start your walk at the Pavučina Children and Youth Centre, the first section of the trail follows a route marked with a red hiking sign by the Czech Tourist Club. The Almond Trail then diverges from the red trail near the Kamenný vrch Nature Reserve and continues, marked with yellow arrows bearing the symbol of a lookout tower. The shorter route branches off from the red trail earlier, near a dry pond, and is also marked with a yellow arrow. The trail can also be walked in the opposite direction, starting at the local cemetery by the road to Kurdějov.



The lookout tower stands on the edge of an almond orchard on Starý vrch at an altitude of approximately 300 m above sea level. It is 17.4 m high, with the viewing platform situated at a height of 12.6 m. The tower was designed by Ing. Antonín Olšina and Ing. Martin Novák and built by TEPLOTECHNA Ostrava, a.s. The main supporting columns are made of larch wood, the floors of oak, and other wooden elements of spruce. The tower was opened on 31 March 2012.



ALMOND ORCHARDS

The history of almond cultivation in this region dates back to the 17th century. However, the first large-scale orchards were planted in 1949 in Hustopeče as part of efforts to achieve self-sufficiency under the socialist economy. At the peak of their expansion in the 1960s, around 50,000 almond trees grew in Hustopeče on an area of 185 hectares. Over time, almond cultivation became uneconomical, and the orchards gradually diminished until only two remained by the late 1980s.

After the social and economic changes following November 1989 (the Velvet revolution), interest in harvesting almonds also declined, and the orchards were left unused and unmanaged. Many years without maintenance and pruning led to dense crowns, branch dieback, and frequent breakage. Unwanted plants, including invasive acacia, began to spread throughout the orchards.

The town of Hustopeče acquired part of the orchards through land consolidation in 2004 and purchased another significant portion in 2008. Ownership of the orchards created the conditions for long-term, systematic management. In 2007 and 2009, the trees underwent health pruning, invasive growth was removed, and two information panels were installed. The orchard at the Kamenec hill covers an area of 1.7 ha and contains approximately

400 trees. The second orchard on Starý vrch has around 530 almond trees on an area of about 2.7 ha.

In May 2015, a new era began for the Hustopeče almond orchards. Nearly 150 young trees were added to the existing 900 mature trees. Members of the public were invited to participate in the planting, which took place on Family Day on 15 May. Discussions about planting new trees had already begun in 2012. Three years later, specialists from the Mendeleum Institute of the Faculty of Horticulture at Mendel University in Lednice assisted with growing the saplings. Experts took buds from mother trees growing in Hustopeče and grafted them onto rootstocks. As a result, all five almond varieties found in the young orchard originate from Hustopeče.

Among the five genotypes is the Zora variety, which was officially recognized and registered from the Hustopeče orchards and named after a chocolate factory in Olomouc, original owner of the orchards.

NATURE

The orchards are set in exceptionally well-preserved and valuable natural surroundings, which is another reason to visit these sites. They are literally encircled by areas that rank among the most important in the Czech Republic and the European Union. For this reason, they have been included in the Natura 2000 network, which protects the most endangered natural habitats and plant and animal species within the EU.

The orchard at Kamenec borders the Kamenný vrch. This area protects steppe grasslands, small patches of oak-hornbeam woodland, and many plant species.

Near orchard on Starý vrch is the Přední kopaniny, which has also been included in the Natura 2000 network for the protection of valuable steppe grasslands and plants.



PULSATILLA GRANDIS