

# East Slovakia



Wooden churches, sprawling castle ruins, crashing waterfalls...beyond the High Tatras lies one of the most intriguing regions in Slovakia. The isolation of East Slovakia has for centuries preserved folk dialects and protected a rich architectural heritage and natural beauty. In the Germano-Slovak Spiš region for example, you'll see a distinct and well-preserved Gothic style of buildings. And several national parks and castles are within day-trip distance of Spiš towns.

Highlights of the Šariš region include Bardejov, with perhaps the prettiest Renaissance square in the nation, and the folksy architecture of its neighbouring villages. Furthest east, in the borderlands, there are more nail-less wooden churches to seek out.

If you're craving city life, the east has that too. The country's second city, Košice, is a grand mix of old and new, with a towering Gothic cathedral and a lively bar and cafe scene. Spread among all this eastern beauty you will encounter some industrial ugliness, but much of the region still has a sense of remove worth discovering.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Being astonished at the area once protected by the defensive walls at **Spiš Castle** (p342)
- Scaling a ladder alongside a waterfall at **Slovenský raj National Park** (p343)
- Admiring the fabulous Icon Exposition in **Bardejov** (p351)
- Walking the ancient town walls of medieval **Levoča** (p340)
- Attending a lively crafts fair beneath the Tatras in **Kežmarok** (p337)



