

Trail Running  
Holidays in **Kočevsko**  
for All Adventure Lovers



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**kočevsko**  
OUTDOOR FESTIVAL

HOSTED BY:  
**I FEEL  
SLOVENIA**

**WILD.  
BUT NICE.**

# Your guide to trail running holidays in Kočevsko

Kočevsko is a mysterious destination, **full of green** and **mysterious forests**. These hide various stories and history, while the remains of **virgin forests**, which can be observed from the landscaped paths along their edges, provide an additional mystery of experiencing nature and life in its pristine form. To keep the virgin forests so unique, of course, we do not enter them.

The destination offers exceptional conditions for **numerous outdoor sports activities**, especially trail running. Kočevje's nature is intertwined with many paths that invite you to discover the mysterious virgin forest and other natural sights. At the same time, this same nature is home to numerous **animal species – brown bear** included. But no worries. Encountering them is highly unlikely, as the animals can hear and smell humans very well, so they retreat upon hearing us.

An **experienced team**, which also organizes Julian Alps Trail Run, Soča Outdoor Festival and UTVV Slovenia, prepared **five distances** for you: 5, 10, 15, 30 and 60 kilometres. The trail running part will be complemented by numerous activities along **Kočevje Lake**, where you'll be able to relax after your race and experience Kočevje to the fullest.

**See you in the heart of Slovenia's wilderness.**

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# Race Routes

Trail runners will pass through **ancient forests** home to **brown bears, hidden valleys, and pristine nature**, experiencing the true spirit of Slovenia's outdoor paradise. The race routes explore the best of the region, from the shores of **Kočevje Lake** to the peaks of the **Kočevski Rog** plateau.

5 km

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10 km

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15 km

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30 km

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60 km

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Vertical Race

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Kids run

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## 5 km Bambi Trail

Distance	5,9 km	Time limit	There is no time limit.
Total elevation	70 m	Start Finish location:	Lake Kočevje

The **start and finish** of the 5 km distance will be next to the beautiful **Kočevsko Lake**, where the entire festival takes place. It is a **circular route** that explores the **stunning forests** of Kočevsko and the wild but friendly destination of Kočevsko.

The route is designed to be **perfect for beginners** in the world of running and trail running. It has very **little elevation** gain and follows beautiful **meadow and forest paths**. So don't worry: there are **no technical or demanding sections**, which means you can enjoy the beautiful green nature in peace.

### Who is this trail ideal for besides individuals?

#### Families and Groups

When registering, you can also choose to **register as a family or group**, which means you can run with your family or a group of friends (up to a maximum of **5 people**). It is a **non-competitive discipline**, where the main focus is on an unforgettable experience in nature.

#### Youngest trail runners

For Bambi Trail, we have prepared **additional age group placements** for the youngest runners. Therefore, all children **older than 10 years** are welcome to participate, as the 5 km distance and special age groups created just for them provide an **excellent introduction to the world of trail running**.



# 10 km Fox Trail

Distance	10,2 km	Time limit	3 h
Total elevation	223 m	Start Finish location:	Lake Kočevje

The **start** will be at the **beautiful Kočevje Lake**, where the entire Kočevje Outdoor Festival will take place. The **circular route** we put together for you showcases the stunning **green landscape of Kočevsko**, a destination best known for its mysterious forests. This is a wild yet incredibly welcoming destination, one that will surely leave you speechless.

The route takes you through the **eastern part of the lake**, which accompanies you on your left throughout the run. As you cross the **meadows**, the path slowly leads you into the forest, where you can already feel the magical atmosphere of **Kočevje's forests**. As you make your way towards the **finish line**, you will pass near the **Željnske Caves**, which are definitely worth a visit after your race or the following day.

The 10 km route is designed to be **accessible and enjoyable**, making it perfect **for those new to trail running**. The route **does not contain technically demanding sections**, as the terrain is a mix of meadow and forest paths.

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# 15 km

## Lynx Trail

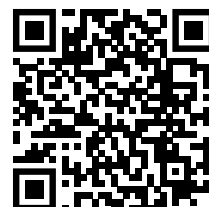
Distance	14,1 km	Time limit	5 h
Total elevation	304 m	Start Finish location:	Lake Kočevje

The **start** will be at the **beautiful Kočevje Lake**, where the entire Kočevje Outdoor Festival will take place. The **circular route** we created for you showcases the stunning green landscape of Kočevsko, a destination best known for its mysterious forests. This is a wild yet incredibly welcoming destination, one that will surely mesmerize you.

The **beginning and end** of the race are the **same as our shortest distance**, but in between, the 15-kilometer distance takes you **deeper into the vast Kočevje forests**. The route winds **between mighty trees**, each with its own story to tell. Below the **village of Onek**, the 15 km route joins runners from longer distances, and together, you descend along the common path towards the finish line, where a **refreshing dip in the lake** awaits.

The 15 km route is designed especially for **regular or occasional runners** looking for a beautiful yet **not too demanding** running terrain.

A **few short climbs**, forest paths, **meadow trails**, and a **balanced terrain** make this the perfect combination for your trail running adventure.



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## 30 km Wolf Trail

Distance	29,2 km	Time limit	8 h
Total elevation	1016 m	Start Finish location:	Kočevski Rog / Lake Kočevje

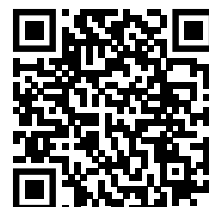
The 30 km runners will experience all the **best parts of our longest distance**, without the extra kilometers.

You will **start at Kočevski Rog**, and the route will first take you to the **highest peak** of the plateau – **Veliki Rog**. If you wish, you can take a short break and **climb the tower**, where you'll be rewarded with a **breathtaking view** of the vast forests you'll be running through.

Next, you will pass through the **Rajhenav primeval forest**, where you can feel the pulse of the **centuries-old** forest and run past the majestic Thick Fir, also known as the **Queen of the Horn**.

From these mystical forests, you will **ascend to Lovski vrh** above the **village of Onek**, where you will already be able to enjoy an incredible **panoramic view**. At this point, you'll even be able to see your **finish line at Kočevsko Lake**, where a highly anticipated **refreshment in the lake** awaits you.

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# 60 km

## Bear Trail

Distance	59,4 km	Time limit	13 h
Total elevation	1961 m	Start Finish location:	Lake Kočevje

Our **queen route** repeatedly crosses the well-known **Roška footpath** – a path **marked with a bear's paw**. The **start** of your race is **at Kočevsko Lake**, and then it quickly takes you towards the mysterious Kočevje forests.

As you leave the **urban area** of Kočevje, you are quickly surrounded only by **pristine nature**, interrupted only by a few **tiny villages** and **historic remains** along the way.

The best part of your race is the sections along the edge of the **Rajhenav primeval forest**. Take your time, admire the **remarkable trees** in all their beauty, and listen to the stories they have to tell. We promise you won't regret it.

The route then takes you across the **Kočevski Rog plateau** and past **Kraljica Roga** – the most powerful fir tree on the plateau, towering **51 meters high**.

Above the **village of Onek**, on **Lovski vrh**, you will already be able to enjoy **a breathtaking view**. At this point, you can see your **finish line at Kočevsko Lake**, where your highly anticipated **refreshment in the lake** is waiting for you.



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# Vertical Race

## Vertical Fridrihštajn

Distance	2,6 km
Total elevation	475 m
Start Finish location:	MTB centre Kočevje / Fridrihštajn castle

**Fridrihštajn Castle** is located on a **978-metre-high hill** with a **beautiful view of Kočevje**. The castle was **built in the 15th century**.

Today, **only ruins of the castle remain**, but they have been rebuilt and protected from further decay. The castle can be reached by a short climbing route or a less demanding hiking route, making it a **popular spot for hikers**.

As such, the hill on which the ruins stand is perfect for a real vertical challenge. **Start** from the **MTB centre in Kočevje** and immediately **head up the slope** towards Fridrihštajn. In **2.6 kilometres**, you will overcome almost **500 metres of elevation gain** and finish at the **spectacular viewpoint** of the ruins of Fridrihštajn Castle.

Friday's vertical can be a great **activation before Saturday's run** or simply a **beautiful sunset hike**. There is **no time limit** on the vertical, making it perfectly **suitable for hikers as well**.

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# Kids run

**Distance** 300 m

**Total elevation** 10 m

**Start Finish location:** Lake Kočevje

We are preparing a broad program for the whole family. **Kids run** will be held on **Saturday at 3:00 p.m.** The start and finish location will be at the main event area **by Lake Kočevsko**. Children will be able to **run alone or be accompanied by their parents**.

The run is meant for kids **up to 12 years of age** and is **free of charge**. With our partners, we will also prepare **small gifts for all participants**.





# What makes Kočevsko so special?

## The wildest, greenest, and most pristine part of Slovenia.

If you're searching for **Slovenia's wildest and most remote hidden gems**, you'll undoubtedly find them in **Kočevsko**. Vast, untouched forests cover much of this region, home to a thriving wildlife population and countless **hidden treasures**.

- Kočevsko is the most forested region in Slovenia
- Europe's last primeval, UNESCO-recognized forests
- Home to one of the highest densities of brown bears in Europe
- Because of its untouched wilderness, Kočevsko is home to thriving wildlife, including deer, roe deer, lynx, foxes, wolves, and wild boar.

Still unsure if Kočevsko is the right trail running destination for you? Here are some of its **hidden gems** that are absolutely worth exploring:

## Top 6 natural sights in Kočevsko

### Unesco Primeval Forest

Kočevsko is home to some of the last remaining primeval forests in Europe, protected under UNESCO due to their ecological significance and undisturbed natural development.



## The Rajhenavski Rog virgin forest

Visit one of the most **iconic virgin forests**, where nature has been left entirely to its own rhythm. **The Roška Trail**, marked with a bear paw, runs right along its edge, giving you a chance to admire this mysterious forest from up close.

## Krokar virgin forest

Covering over 75 hectares, the Krokar Virgin Forest is a pristine virgin forest that has remained untouched for centuries. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it represents an ecosystem of remarkable biodiversity and natural beauty.

## Veliki Rog

Climb to Veliki Rog (1,099 m), **the highest peak** of Kočevski Rog, and enjoy panoramic views from the observation tower. On the way, you'll pass the **Queen of Rog**, a 51-meter-tall fir tree – one of the tallest in Slovenia.

## Queen of Rog

This ancient fir tree is a testament to the enduring vitality of Kočevsko's forests. It is 55 meters high with a diameter exceeding 500 centimeters, standing not far from the Rajhenav Virgin Forest.



## Željnske caves

Just a short walk from the village of Željne near Kočevje, the Željne Caves stretch over **1.6 km** with more than **ten entrances**, making them one of the **most fascinating karst cave systems in the region**. Once used as shelter by Ice Age hunters and later by locals during WWII, the caves are rich in history and legend. You can explore them **year-round** — in summer, sunlight filters through collapsed ceilings, and in winter, delicate ice formations appear. Wear sturdy shoes, bring a flashlight, and start your visit from the nearby forest path. Guided tours are available on request.

## Lake Kočevje

The lake was formed on the site of a former mine and is now considered one of the cleanest lakes in Slovenia. You can walk around the lake in about an hour (approx. 3 km), rent a SUP or kayak during summer months, and spot birds from the wooden observatory on the northern shore. The lake is also popular for swimming and fishing, with several fish species living in its clean waters.

**Find more information about natural points of interest in Kočevsko:**





# Top 6 unmissable stops and activities in Kočevsko

## Fridrihštajn Castle Ruins

Fridrihštajn Castle stands at **970 meters** above sea level and offers one of the best **panoramic views** of the Kočevje region. The castle can be reached by a short climbing route or the usual easier hiking route. Built in the **15th century** by Frederick II of Celje, the castle is most famous as the secret meeting place of Veronika of Desenice and Frederick — a love story that ended in tragedy.

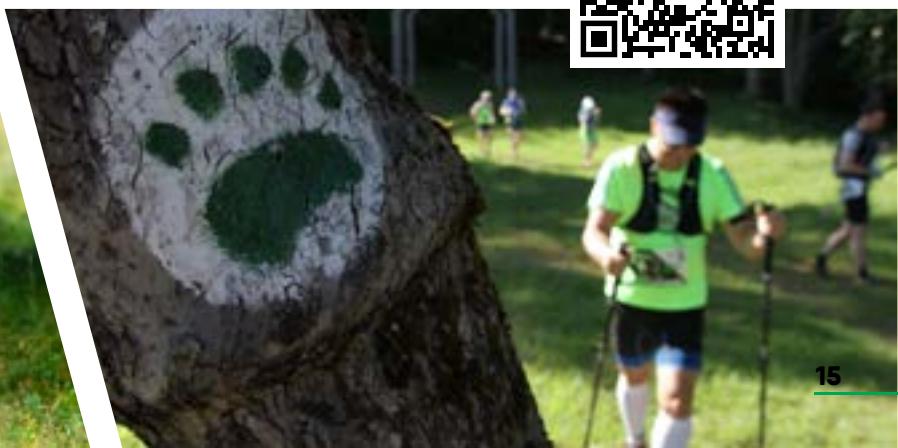
Today, visitors can hike to the **well-preserved ruins** and explore the remaining walls, foundations, and viewpoints. The route to the top is **short but steep**, making it a great option for a quick **vertical challenge** or a sunset walk. The trail starts from the MTB center in Kočevje and covers **2.6 km** with around **475 meters** of elevation gain.

## Bear-Watching Experiences

Kočevsko is home to **one of the highest densities of brown bears in Europe**, with an estimated **900 individuals** living in its vast forests. Despite this, bear encounters are **extremely rare** — these shy animals usually avoid humans, as they can hear and smell us from a great distance and tend to move away before we get close.

If you'd like to learn more about them, you can join a **guided bear-watching tour**. The tours are safe, respectful to wildlife, and led by experienced local guides who explain bear behavior, their role in the ecosystem, and how to safely observe them. Tours last up to 7 hours.

If you're interested, you can sign up for a bear-watching tour when registering for the Kočevsko Outdoor Festival, or find more info here:





## Bunker Škrilj Experience

Hidden **72 meters below the surface** in the Kočevsko forests lies a Cold War-era secret — the underground Škrilj Bunker, once used by the **Yugoslav army** as a top-secret shelter for political and military elites. Built to withstand nuclear attacks, the bunker remained classified for decades.

Today, you can explore this unique piece of history on a **guided tour** through its **500 meters of tunnels**, command rooms, and communication chambers. The tour reveals how the bunker was designed, who used it, and what life would've been like underground. Tours are available by prior arrangement. You can find more information [here](#).



## Regional museum of Kočevje and the Šešek Home

Established in 1952, the Regional Museum of Kočevje is housed in the Šešek Home, a building of significant **historical importance**. Constructed in **1936** as the Sokolski Home, it hosted the Assembly of Delegates of the Slovenian Nation in 1943, where several pivotal decisions were made. Today, the museum presents numerous **permanent and temporary exhibitions**, including displays on the German linguistic enclave and the evolution of Slovenian statehood.

## Kostel Castle

Perched on a hill overlooking the Kolpa River, Kostel Castle is the **second-largest castle complex in Slovenia**. Dating back to the **13th century**, this fortress played a crucial role in defending against Ottoman invasions. In 1809, it became a focal point during the anti-French rebellion when locals attacked French soldiers stationed there. Although partially restored since the 1990s, the castle now hosts **various exhibitions and offers panoramic views** of the Kolpa Valley. It's also a venue for cultural, musical, and culinary

## Grbac Mill

Located just below the **Nežica Waterfall**, the Grbac Mill has historical mentions dating back to **1494**. Adjacent to the mill is a learning farm where visitors can acquaint themselves with **endangered animal species** such as goats, cows, and chickens. The farm offers **authentic experiences**, including farm breakfasts featuring traditional dishes like žganci with milk. You can tour the mill, **participate in farm chores**, and purchase local products. Additionally, **workshops** tailored for children are available.





# Ideas for other daily activities

Kočevsko offers numerous adventures that are easily accessible year-round. That's why we've put together a few single-day trip ideas, perfect for exploring Kočevsko – from easy family hikes to more challenging trail runs. All routes come equipped with GPX files to ensure you stay on track and never lose your way.

## Along the Edge of the Rajhenavski Rog Virgin Forest

The starting point for this route will be the **Scout Environmental Center Kočevski Rog**. Before heading there by car, make sure to download a map, as the signal in this area is quite weak or even nonexistent.

At the beginning of the trail, you will pass through the **gate leading along the outskirts of the Rajhenavski Rog virgin forest**. Along the way, you will notice signs marking the **Roška Trail**, which stretches over 60 km and serves as the starting route for the **longest race at the Kočevsko Outdoor Festival**.

In this part of the forest, you will see that fallen trees are not removed from the trail. Since this area borders the virgin forest, it is **forbidden to clear them**, allowing nature to take its course. The path remains accessible, but you may encounter a few obstacles along the way.

After passing through this section, you will return **along a gravel road back to the starting point**. From here, you can extend your trip to the highest peak of Kočevski Rog, **Veliki Rog (1,099 m)**. At the summit, you can climb the **observation tower**, offering breathtaking views of the vast Kočevsko forests.

Finally, a descent will take you back to the starting point.

**Distance** 11 km

**Elevation** 390 m

**GPX File**



## Fridrihštajn and the Ice Cave on Stojna

This running or hiking loop will take you past several interesting sights in the Kočevsko region. You can park at the MTB center parking lot. To start, you'll face a climb to the scenic viewpoint at Fridrihštajn Castle. The trail ascends gradually, allowing you to warm up nicely before reaching the castle.

This area, where the trail leads, is called **Stojna**—a plateau rising above Kočevje, offering several fascinating spots. If the view from the top doesn't captivate you, the sight of the **Ice Cave on Stojna**, which awaits along the route, surely will.

If you wish to take a break, **Koča pri Jelenovem studencu** is a great spot to refuel—just check its opening hours in advance. Toward the end, you'll climb to a viewpoint below **Mestni vrh**, or you can extend your trip to the summit itself.

Finally, a descent and a short flat section will bring you back to the **MTB center**.

**Distance** 16,5 km

**Elevation** 880 m

**GPX File**



## Željnske jame

Željnské jame is a **cave system** near **Kočevje, Slovenia**. These **karst caves** were used as a **shelter** by locals and partisans during **World War II**. The caves feature **rock formations**, underground passages, and a unique natural environment. They are accessible via a **hiking trail**, making them a great spot for **nature and history enthusiasts**.

A visit can be a **fun family trip**, as the distance from the parking lot is only **400 meters**. Just don't forget **hiking shoes** and a **flashlight** to explore the underground world.

**Distance** 1 km

**Elevation** 50 m

**Parking location**



## Some more ideas for running, hiking, and cycling trips

The **Kočevsko Trails** page provides an overview of various **hiking, running, and cycling routes** in the Kočevsko region. It features **detailed descriptions, distances, elevation profiles, and maps** to help visitors explore the area's **pristine nature, forests, and cultural landmarks**. Whether you're looking for an easy walk, a challenging trail run, or an exciting MTB adventure, you'll find routes suited for all levels.

**More information:**



# How to Get to Kočevsko

Kočevsko is easily accessible from major Slovenian cities and international airports, making it a convenient destination for travelers from near and far. Whether you're flying, driving, or taking public transport, reaching this beautiful region is straightforward.

## By Air

The nearest international airport is **Ljubljana Jože Pučnik Airport (LJU)**, which is well-connected with direct flights to major European cities. Once you arrive, you can easily reach Kočevsko by **shuttle** or **rental car**, with a drive of approximately **1.5 hours**. Alternatively, you can take a combination of public transport to complete your journey.

The nearest international airport in Croatia is **Zagreb Franjo Tuđman Airport (ZAG)**, which offers direct flights to many European cities. From the airport, you can reach **Kočevsko** by rental car in approximately **1.5 hours**, driving through the border crossing at **Metlika**. Alternatively, you can take a **bus or train** from Zagreb to Novo Mesto or Ljubljana and continue to Kočevje by local transport.

## By Car

Kočevsko is easily reachable by car from several locations in Slovenia and neighboring countries:

- From **Ljubljana**: A quick **1-hour drive** will bring you to the heart of the region.
- From **Zagreb (Croatia)**: The drive is around **1.5 hours**.
- From **Trieste (Italy)**: The drive takes approximately **2 hours**.

## By Public Transport

- **By Bus**: For those relying on public transport, **regular bus services** connect **Kočevje** with **Ljubljana** and other major Slovenian cities. The bus offers a comfortable and affordable way to travel to Kočevsko, with direct routes from the capital city.
- **By Train**: You can also take a **train** from **Ljubljana** to **Kočevje**. The train journey offers scenic views and takes about **1.5 to 2 hours**, providing a relaxed and eco-friendly option to reach Kočevsko.







# Where to Stay

Kočevsko offers a variety of accommodation options to suit all preferences and budgets, from eco-friendly lodges to comfortable hotels and charming guesthouses. Whether you prefer staying in the heart of nature or in a cozy town setting, you'll find a place that feels like home. Here are some recommended stays for your visit to Kočevsko:

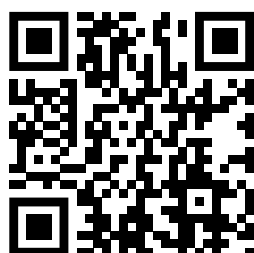
## Bearlog Hostel

A cozy and **eco-friendly** hostel located in the heart of Kočevsko. Offering a warm and welcoming atmosphere, this accommodation is perfect for those looking to stay in an environmentally conscious setting without compromising on comfort.

## Camp Jezero

For nature lovers and those seeking a more outdoorsy experience, **Camp Jezero** is an excellent choice. Located near **Lake Kočevje**, the camp offers pitches for tents and caravans, as well as cozy cabins. It's the perfect spot to enjoy the natural beauty of the region, with opportunities for swimming, hiking, and

For more options, visit **Kočevsko Accommodation**, where you'll find a wider selection of places to stay, ranging from rustic cabins to charming guesthouses, all offering a warm Slovenian welcome. Whether you're looking for luxury or simplicity, Kočevsko has the perfect place for every type of traveler.



# Local Cuisine

After your adventure in Kočevsko, be sure to refuel with the region's **traditional delicacies**, which offer a taste of the local flavors and culinary traditions. The unique blend of forest ingredients and locally sourced products makes Kočevsko a great place to explore authentic Slovenian cuisine. Here are some must-try dishes:

## Mushroom Dishes

With its rich forests teeming with wild mushrooms, Kočevsko is renowned for its mushroom dishes. The region boasts a wide variety of edible mushrooms, including chanterelles, porcini, and boletus, which feature prominently in local recipes. From creamy mushroom soups to sautéed dishes and risottos, these mushrooms bring earthy, flavorful notes to the table. Whether foraging for them in the woods or finding them in a local restaurant, mushroom dishes are a true highlight of the Kočevsko culinary experience.

## Forest Honey

Produced in the pristine environment of Kočevsko, Forest Honey is known for its exceptional purity and distinctive flavor. Collected from the region's diverse flora, including wildflowers and forest plants, this honey offers a sweet taste of the untouched nature surrounding the area. It's often used as a sweetener for local pastries or enjoyed on its own with bread and cheese.

## Bear Goulash

A standout dish in Kočevsko, Bear Goulash is made from sustainably sourced game meat, particularly from the region's famous brown bears. This hearty stew is slow-cooked to perfection with rich herbs and spices, creating a tender and flavorful meal that reflects the deep connection between the local culture and the surrounding wilderness.



Kočevsko's cuisine is a reflection of its rich natural resources, blending flavors that celebrate the region's wild forests and tradition of sustainability. After a day of outdoor activities, these local specialties will offer the perfect way to indulge in the authentic tastes of the area.

# Family-friendly event

The Kočevsko Outdoor Festival is bringing a fun-filled weekend for the whole family. As always, the main event will be the trail runs on Saturday, with distances of 5, 10, 15, 30, and 60 km. But that's just the beginning. We're offering a variety of activities, including lectures, concerts, and plenty of fun for kids and families throughout the weekend.

## Day Care During the Main Trail Events

Parents participating in the trail runs on Saturday (7:30 AM to 2:30 PM) can take advantage of our on-site daycare services. While you're out running, your children can enjoy fun activities with experienced animators. With plenty of games and entertainment, the time will fly by for the little ones, leaving you to enjoy your trail adventure with peace of mind.

## Kids Run

The Kids Run is set for 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, at the main event area by Lake Kočevsko. This fun, free event is for kids up to 12 years old and is a great way to get the next generation of trail runners involved. Whether they want to run solo or with their parents, everyone will have a blast. The course is about 300 meters long and loops along the picturesque Kočevsko Lake. All participants will receive a small gift as a token of appreciation for their efforts.

## Bambi Trail – 5 km for Families and Kids Aged 10+

For families and children aged 10 and up, the Bambi Trail offers a scenic 5 km route that's perfect for beginners. The route is designed with young runners in mind and takes you through peaceful meadows and forests with minimal elevation gain. Whether you choose to run or walk, there's no time limit, so you can take your time and enjoy the lush, green surroundings.

Families can join in as a group (2-5 people), and the race also includes age categories for the youngest runners: up to 12 years, up to 15 years, and up to 18 years.

## A Perfect Family Venue

Located right next to Lake Kočevsko, the event venue is ideal for water-based activities. After your run, you can cool off with a refreshing swim in the lake or rent a stand-up paddleboard (SUP) to explore the water. For families who want to make a weekend of it, Camp Jezero offers accommodations for motorhomes, tents, and even glamping houses. There are also plenty of other accommodation options nearby.

## Saturday and Sunday Guided Tours for Families

Wrap up the weekend with a relaxing and educational experience at Kočevsko Lake. On Saturday and Sunday, families can join guided tours through the mysterious forests of Kočevje, where you'll learn how to track wild animals or explore the Bunker Škrilj. These short, easy hikes are perfect for families, with a focus on fun, interactive learning and discovering the hidden wonders of the Kočevsko wilderness.

**You can sign up for these tours when registering for the trail run or by contacting us directly at [kocevsko@trailrun.si](mailto:kocevsko@trailrun.si).**





**We look forward to welcoming you to the Kočevsko Outdoor Festival. Let's create an unforgettable adventure together.**

## **Contact Information**

For questions or assistance:

- Website: **[kocevsko-outdoor.si](http://kocevsko-outdoor.si)**
- Email: **[kocevsko@trailrun.com](mailto:kocevsko@trailrun.com)**
- Social Media: Follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** **@KocevskoOutdoor**