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A visit to Bratislava – part 2

English lesson plan = 1 or 2 x 90 mins, 1 or 2 x 60 min

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Note: A visit to Bratislava - part 1 precedes this lesson	
Ideas and Articles by David Robinson	

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Category: Lifestyle / Central Europe / Bratislava
Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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THE ARTICLE

A visit to Bratislava – part 2

Today we are continuing our look at the Slovak capital Bratislava. Let's start with its Old Town. Dating from the 15th century, its centre has largely been preserved and is a positive delight to see. It has charm! Since the collapse of communism and gradually since independence the Old Town has seen much reconstruction. Today it has many highly popular coffee shops and bars to visit. During the summer months the streets are packed with bar terraces, which bring the Old Town alive. One can sit, relax and enjoy a cup of coffee or have a beer and watch the world go by. There is also the Bratislava Summer Festival where one can see street entertainers, exhibitions, open air opera, orchestras and music festivals. In wintertime when it snows the Old Town becomes a winter wonderland. The narrow streets give one a glimpse into the past right here in the present. December sees the Christmas market in the Old Town. It offers visitors a multitude of unusual gifts to buy, hot wine and excellent foods.

St Michael's Gate is the only preserved gate into the Old Town and is one of the entrances into it. Its lower part is gothic. Its present appearance is baroque, due to rebuilding in 1758. From the top of the tower there is a great view of the city. Other notable buildings in the Old Town include the original Slovak National Theatre. Situated Downtown the building originates back to 1885. It is used for operas and ballet performances. To see one of these live is a truly wonderful experience. Practically adjacent to this is the Reduta building that is today used primarily for the Slovak Philharmonic orchestra. This is the place to see domestic and foreign orchestras play. Both of these venues are the place to be in January when the Ball season starts. It kicks off with the Orange Ball at the Slovak National Theatre while at Reduta the famous Bratislava Ball takes place.

'New Bratislava' is emerging from the ashes of Communism. On the northern riverbank of the river Danube one sees the new Europea

complex taking shape. Nearby is the new Slovak National Theatre. This is an experience to see. Designed in the 80s, during communism, you can feel this and see it the moment you walk in the door. A good theatre but many still prefer the original. Further new developments are planned nearby.

On the far side of the river is the city park. During the summer a part of it becomes an urban beach. The facility offers leisure and sports facilities, a beach and a wonderful bar with a terrace to relax on and enjoy a cool beer. One can take in the stunning views of the Old Town, the castle and the sun setting over New Bridge. Wintertime has seen the site transformed into an ice skating ring. Bratislava actually has several other beaches including Zlaté Piesky and Petržalka. Popular summer sports include in-line skating and cycling along the dykes of the Danube. Winter sports include ice skating and ice hockey. The city also has a race course.

Bratislava offers you more! It has a castle to visit. Bratislava Castle looks out over the whole city. It's been a part of the panorama for many centuries. The castle has also been associated with the first written remark about the city back in 907. The original Palace in the castle was built in the 15th century during the rule of King Zigmund of Luxembourg. A destructive fire in 1811 destroyed much of the castle, so it was abandoned and lay in ruins for 150 years. It was finally rebuilt in 1961 by the Communists. Since the early 60s Bratislava Castle has once again been a joy for all to see on the city's skyline. Indeed the views from the castle are stunning. One can see the Old Town, and on the far side of the river Petržalka, and the Austrian wind turbines in the distance. Today the castle houses the Slovak National Museum. It is also used as offices by the government.

Practically opposite the castle is the New Bridge. A giant UFO shaped restaurant sits at the top of one side of the bridge. Its odd shape makes it stand out for miles. The aerial views from the top of the 'UFO' are well worth the lift ride up there! The communist interior has been reconstructed into a modern café and restaurant where you can relax and take in the breathtaking views of the city. **Note: A visit to Bratislava - Part 1 precedes this lesson**

EXERCISES

1. Let's talk! In Bratislava: In pairs. You are in a pub in Bratislava. One of you is a barman/barmaid. The other is a tourist just in off the street who wants a drink. The tourist orders one at the bar. Between you – you get talking. Find out what you can about each other. Then ask questions about where to go in Bratislava. *5-minutes.*

2. Let's do 'the Article quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score one point for each correct answer, and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) What can you do in the summer in the Old Town?
- 2) Name the Balls.
- 3) What was built around 1885?
- 4) Where can you enjoy a cool beer?
- 5) What does the castle house?
- 6) Describe the Old Town.

Student B

- 1) What is emerging from the ashes of Communism?
- 2) What happens in the city park?
- 3) What happened in 1961?
- 4) Name the summer sports.
- 5) What happens in December?
- 6) Where can you see orchestras perform?

3. A day in Bratislava: In pairs. Look at the list below. Each person chooses to be one of the following. Think of five things that person might do or see during a typical day in Bratislava. (Imagine!) Create a short story about it. Tell it to your partner. Try to make it interesting, funny, the problems, the experiences, the weather, etc...

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Tour guide | 4 Street entertainer |
| 2 Barman/barmaid at the Beach | 5 Ice hockey fan |
| 3 Taxi driver | 6 In-line skater |

The teacher will choose some pairs to tell their stories in front of the class.

4. Let's think! Bratislava: Swap partners. With your new partner on the board write as many words to do with '**Bratislava**' as you can. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

5. Let's compile! Sentences: Choose six/nine of the words from No 4. Write two/three sentences using two/three words in each. Underline your chosen words. The teacher will if necessary correct your work. Students might be asked to read their sentences aloud.

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6. Let's think! 10 things about Slovakia: Think of 10 things you know about Slovakia? Write them below. Then tell your partner about your findings. (You may need to use the internet on this)

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. Let's be economic! The economic issues of Bratislava: Think of four economic advantages of Bratislava today. Add four economic issues it faces today. Fill in the list below then discuss with your partner.

Economic advantages of Bratislava today	
1 _____	3 _____
2 _____	4 _____
Economic issues the city faces today	
1 _____	3 _____
2 _____	4 _____

The teacher will choose some pairs to tell their stories in front of the class.

8. Let's debate: In pairs. Students A think Bratislava is a great small European City for tourists to visit. Students B think otherwise – choose an alternative European city. Explain why.

9. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Bratislava _____
- b) Central Europe _____
- c) Bratislava Castle _____
- d) The UFO restaurant _____
- e) Tourists _____

10. Quickfire session: The teacher asks the class: **I love Bratislava because...**

11. Bratislava: With your partner, discuss the following about Bratislava etc... (You may need to look on the internet for this)

1	Infrastructure	4	Markets
2	Transportation	5	Sports facilities
3	Real estate	6	Industry

The teacher will choose some pairs to tell their stories in front of the class.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: After reading the article guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| a. The Old Town in Bratislava dates from the 13 th century | T / F |
| b. St Michael's gate is the only preserved gate into the Old Town | T / F |
| c. New Bratislava is emerging from the ashes of Communism | T / F |
| d. Bratislava has a castle | T / F |
| e. Winter sports include ice skating and running | T / F |
| f. Summer sports include in-line skating and cycling | T / F |
| g. The new Slovak National Theatre was designed in the 80s | T / F |
| h. The Old Town is a positive delight to see | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. while | approximately |
| b. enjoy | amazing |
| c. narrow | remains |
| d. primarily | alongside |
| e. wonderful | close-by |
| f. adjacent | chiefly |
| g. practically | appreciate |
| h. ashes | appearance |
| i. shape | confining |
| j. nearby | although |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| a. Today we are continuing our look at the | enjoy a cup of coffee |
| b. Let's start with | the streets are packed with bar terraces |
| c. the Old Town | a glimpse into the past |
| d. Today it has many highly popular | Christmas market in the Old Town |
| e. During the summer months | its Old Town |
| f. One can sit, relax and | Slovak capital Bratislava. |
| g. There is also the | preserved gate into the Old Town |
| h. The narrow streets give one | has seen much reconstruction |
| i. December sees the | Bratislava Summer Festival |
| j. St Michael's Gate is the only | coffee shops and bars to visit. |

GAP FILL: READING

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Today we are continuing our look at the Slovak capital Bratislava. Let's start with its Old Town. Dating from the 15th century, its centre has largely been preserved and is a positive delight to see. It has charm! Since the _____ of communism and _____ since independence the Old Town has seen much reconstruction. Today it has many highly popular coffee shops and _____ to visit. During the summer months the streets are packed with bar terraces, which bring the Old Town alive. One can sit, relax and enjoy a cup of coffee or have a beer and watch the world go by. There is also the Bratislava Summer Festival where one can see street entertainers, _____, open air opera, orchestras and music festivals. In wintertime when it snows the Old Town becomes a winter wonderland. The _____ streets give one a _____ into the past right here in the present. December sees the Christmas market in the Old Town. It offers visitors a _____ of unusual _____ to buy, hot wine and excellent foods.

narrow

gradually

glimpse

bars

collapse

gifts

multitude

exhibitions

St Michael's Gate is the only preserved gate into the Old Town and is one of the entrances into it. Its lower part is _____. Its present appearance is _____, due to rebuilding in 1758. From the top of the tower there is a great view of the city. Other _____ buildings in the Old Town include the original Slovak National Theatre. Situated Downtown the building originates back to 1885. It is used for operas and _____ performances. To see one of these live is a truly _____ experience. Practically adjacent to this is the Reduta building that is today used _____ for the Slovak Philharmonic orchestra. This is the place to see _____ and foreign orchestras play. Both of these venues are the place to be in January when the Ball season starts. It kicks off with the Orange Ball at the Slovak National _____ while at Reduta the famous Bratislava Ball takes place.

theatre

gothic

wonderful

baroque

primarily

notable

domestic

ballet

DISCUSSION

Note: A previous trip to Bratislava will benefit students here.

For students who have NOT been to Bratislava – IMAGINE a little!

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. Have you ever attended a Ball? If yes, which one?
- c. Would you like to visit Bratislava?
- d. What is the view from where you live?
- e. What tall buildings have you visited recently?
- f. What is the name of biggest river where you live?
- g. What do you think of Christmas markets?
- h. What do you think of Bratislava Old Town?
- i. Which museums have you visited recently?
- j. What is the nightlife like in Bratislava?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. What do you think about what you read?
- b. How would you describe the old town in Bratislava?
- c. What do you think of Bratislava Castle?
- d. How often do you visit a park?
- e. What winter sports do you like?
- f. What summer sports do you like?
- g. Do you like to visit a beach?
- h. What castles have you visited recently?
- i. What theatres or operas have you visited recently?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Brainstorming! Slovakia:

Allow 10-20 minutes

Small groups

In small groups brainstorm some ideas about what you all know about Slovakia. Choose a spokesperson who can present your ideas to the class at the end of your preparation. Present it visually or use the board etc... Try to be imaginative! *10-20 minutes.*

	Your ideas	
1) Five famous Slovak foods and five famous Slovak beers	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5
2) Five towns/cities in Slovakia plus five famous castles	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5
4) Five good places to visit in Bratislava and in Slovakia	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5
5) Five famous Slovak musicians, five writers	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5
6) Four Slovak Prime Ministers, four Slovak Presidents	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
7) Five popular sports, five ice hockey teams	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5

The teacher can moderate the session.

GRAMMAR 1: MIDWAY

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Today we are continuing our look at the Slovak capital Bratislava. Let's start with its Old Town. Dating from the 15th century, its centre has largely been preserved and is a positive delight to see. It has charm! (1)___ the collapse of communism and gradually since independence the Old Town has seen much reconstruction. Today it has (2)___ highly popular coffee shops and bars to visit. During the summer months the streets are packed (3)___ bar terraces (4)___ bring the Old Town alive. One can sit, relax and enjoy a cup of coffee or have a beer and watch the world go by. (5)___ is also the Bratislava Summer Festival (6)___ one can see street entertainers, exhibitions, open air opera, orchestras and music festivals. In wintertime (7)___ it snows the Old Town becomes a winter wonderland. The narrow streets give one a glimpse into the past right (8)___ in the present. December sees the Christmas market in the Old Town. It offers visitors a multitude of unusual gifts to buy, hot wine and excellent foods.

which

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since

St Michael's Gate is the (1)___ preserved gate (2)___ the Old Town and is one of the entrances into it. Its lower part is gothic. Its present appearance is baroque, due to rebuilding in 1758. From the top of the tower (3)___ is a great view of the city. (4)___ notable buildings in the Old Town include the original Slovak National Theatre. Situated Downtown the building originates back to 1885. It is used for operas and ballet performances. To see one of (5)___ live is a truly wonderful experience. Practically adjacent to (6)___ is the Reduta building (7)___ is today used primarily for the Slovak Philharmonic orchestra. This is the place to see domestic and foreign orchestras play. Both of these venues are the place to be in January (8)___ the Ball season starts. It kicks off with the Orange Ball at the Slovak National Theatre while at Reduta the famous Bratislava Ball takes place.

when

other

only

there

into

these

this

that

GRAMMAR 2: EASY

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Today (1)___ are continuing (2)___ look at the Slovak capital Bratislava. Let's start with its Old Town. Dating from the 15th century, its centre has largely been preserved (3)___ is a positive delight to see. (4)___ has charm! Since the collapse of communism and gradually since independence the Old Town has seen much reconstruction. Today it has many highly popular coffee shops and bars to visit. During the summer months (5)___ streets are packed with bar terraces, which bring the Old Town alive. One can sit, relax and enjoy a cup of coffee (6)___ have a beer and watch the world go by. There is also the Bratislava Summer Festival where one can see street entertainers, exhibitions, open air opera, orchestras and music festivals. (7)___ wintertime when it snows the Old Town becomes a winter wonderland. The narrow streets give one a glimpse into the past right here in the present. December sees the Christmas market in the Old Town. It offers visitors a multitude (8)___ unusual gifts to buy, hot wine and excellent foods.

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St Michael's Gate is the only preserved gate into the Old Town and is one of the entrances into it. (1)___ lower part is gothic. Its present appearance is baroque, due to rebuilding in 1758. From the top (2)___ the tower there is a great view of the city. Other notable buildings (3)___ the Old Town include the original Slovak National Theatre. Situated Downtown the building originates back to 1885. It is used for operas and ballet performances. To see one of these live is (4)___ truly wonderful experience. Practically adjacent to this is the Reduta building that is today used primarily (5)___ the Slovak Philharmonic orchestra. This is the place to see domestic and foreign orchestras play. Both of these venues are the place to be in January when (6)___ Ball season starts. (7)___ kicks off with the Orange Ball at the Slovak National Theatre while (8)___ Reduta the famous Bratislava Ball takes place.

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ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. T d. T e. F f. T g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. while | although |
| b. enjoy | appreciate |
| c. narrow | confining |
| d. primarily | chiefly |
| e. wonderful | amazing |
| f. adjacent | alongside |
| g. practically | approximately |
| h. ashes | remains |
| i. shape | appearance |
| j. nearby | close-by |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| a. Today we are continuing our look at the | Slovak capital Bratislava. |
| b. Let's start with | its Old Town |
| c. the Old Town | has seen much reconstruction |
| d. Today it has many highly popular | coffee shops and bars to visit. |
| e. During the summer months | the streets are packed with bar terraces |
| f. One can sit, relax and | enjoy a cup of coffee |
| g. There is also the | Bratislava Summer Festival |
| h. The narrow streets give one | a glimpse into the past |
| i. December sees the | Christmas market in the Old Town |
| j. St Michael's Gate is the only | preserved gate into the Old Town |

GAP FILL: A visit to Bratislava – part 2 Today we are continuing our look at the Slovak capital Bratislava. Let's start with its Old Town. Dating from the 15th century, its centre has largely been preserved and is a positive delight to see. It has charm! Since the **collapse** of communism and **gradually** since independence the Old Town has seen much reconstruction. Today it has many highly popular coffee shops and **bars** to visit. During the summer months the streets are packed with bar terraces, which bring the Old Town alive. One can sit, relax and enjoy a cup of coffee or have a beer and watch the world go by. There is also the Bratislava Summer Festival where one can see street entertainers, **exhibitions**, open air opera, orchestras and music festivals. In wintertime when it snows the Old Town becomes a winter wonderland. The **narrow** streets give one a **glimpse** into the past right here in the present. December sees the Christmas market in the Old Town. It offers visitors a **multitude** of unusual **gifts** to buy, hot wine and excellent foods.

St Michael's Gate is the only preserved gate into the Old Town and is one of the entrances into it. Its lower part is **gothic**. Its present appearance is **baroque**, due to rebuilding in 1758. From the top of the tower there is a great view of the city. Other **notable** buildings in the Old Town include the original Slovak National Theatre. Situated Downtown the building originates back to 1885. It is used for operas and **ballet** performances. To see one of these live is a truly **wonderful** experience. Practically adjacent to this is the Reduta building that is today used **primarily** for the Slovak Philharmonic orchestra. This is the place to see **domestic** and foreign orchestras play. Both of these venues are the place to be in January when the Ball season starts. It kicks off with the Orange Ball at the Slovak National **Theatre** while at Reduta the famous Bratislava Ball takes place.