



Hostel Celica Press Information

Additional information:

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Hostel Celica is located in a former military prison, which began operating in 1883 during the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After 2nd World War, the prison was taken over by the Yugoslav People's Army, which managed it until 1991, when Slovenia gained its independence. After the Slovenian army defeated the Yugoslav People's Army in a ten-day war for independence, the barracks and prison were left abandoned and empty.

The Network for Metelkova initiative wanted to change the former barracks into a multicultural centre and gain proper paperwork with the city authorities to officially acquire the vacant premises. However, the procedure was extremely lengthy and lasted more than two years.

In 1993, the Network for Metelkova, tired of waiting, asked the city authorities for permission to move to the former army premises before the end of the year. The response of the city authorities was to start demolishing the vacant buildings. In order to prevent the demolition, a group of approximately 200 supporters of the initiative gathered and prevented the demolition with their own bodies. Later, various independent artists moved to the buildings in the area. The Network for Metelkova thus became even more determined, and the city authorities shut down the power and water supply in an attempt to force them to leave. Due to unbearable conditions, many people really did leave, but the most persistent ones remained, and they are still important figures in Metelkova today.

A group of artists, along with Janko Rožič, who was the main architect in charge of the renovation of the prison into Hostel Celica, formed a cultural-artistic association named Sestava. Their main goal was to change the former prison, a place of punishment, into an open and welcoming place, which would represent a meeting point for travellers and artists from around the world.

The project was subsequently financially supported by the City of Ljubljana and the Student Organization of the University of Ljubljana. Creative planning, renovation and transformation of a former prison into a hostel lasted ten years. During that time more than 80 artists from all over the world left their mark in Hostel Celica. The first travellers stayed in Hostel Celica in July 2003.

Cells

The exceptionality of Hostel Celica can be seen in 20 artistically renovated former prison cells. Each is completely unique, made by a different artist or group of artists, each with its own story and concept. However, all 20 cells retained one common element from its bleaker past: metal bars on the doors and on the windows.

Rooms and dorms

For more traditional hostel travellers, eight comfortable, colourful rooms with artistic elements are available. All rooms have a bathroom, and one of the rooms, located on the ground floor, is wheelchair-accessible. There is also a larger dormitory with twelve beds for individual travellers.

Special features of Hostel Celica

The Point of Peace, a room for prayer, meditation, relaxation and other spiritual practices, is located on the first floor and is available to all travellers. It has six niches with scripture and symbols of the main world religions, while one of the niches is empty to allow travellers to temporarily place their own religious paraphernalia in it. The Point of Peace was blessed by representatives of the largest religious communities in Slovenia.

Two former solitary prison cells are still preserved in the basement of Hostel Celica. The entrance staircase acts as a camera obscura and is decorated with a fresco.

Culture and entertainment

Hostel Celica boasts a vibrant cultural life. Every Tuesday night, we have a concert by domestic or foreign artists, followed by a jam session. In the summertime, we add Friday jazz concerts to our programme.

Gallery Srečišče, located on the ground floor, regularly hosts international art exhibitions. Exhibitions are also located in the main hallway, bar area, and glasshouse.

Hostel Celica's art programme also includes various workshops, prose and poetry readings, round table debates, and presentations on various topics, from literature, philosophy, music to nature, aesthetics and history.

Every day at 2PM you can see the hostel and get to know its history on a free guided tour.

Bar and restaurant

The bar and restaurant area on the ground floor of Hostel Celica is divided into three parts: on the eastern side of the building is the Oriental Café, on the western side the Western Café, and the Slovenian Restaurant in the middle. The names of each space are betrayed by their names.

In the bar and restaurant area of Hostel Celica, we offer a rich self-service breakfast buffet, lunch menus, local and imported drinks, cocktails and various snacks. In the evenings we have seasonal themed events: cocktail evening, all-you-can-eat evening, movie events, boardgame nights, etc.

Additional facilities and services

Hostel Celica offers the use of additional areas and services to our guests: free luggage storage, free storage lockers for valuable items, free Wi-Fi, book exchange corner, guest kitchen, self-service laundry, car and bike rental, and possibility to book different excursions to Ljubljana and Slovenia.

We are proud of being appreciated

Hostel Celica is not appreciated only by travellers; it has received international recognition by numerous well-known tourist guides as well.

- In 2006, **Lonely Planet** declared Hostel Celica as the "No. 1 hippest hostel" in the world
- **Rough Guides** included Hostel Celica in the tourist guide "25 Places to Stay", which includes a selection of 25 unique and unusual hostels from around the world. In celebration of its 25th birthday, this publisher of well-known travel guides issued a collection of guides called 25 Ultimate Experiences, in which Hostel Celica was placed alongside the famous Burj Al Arab in Dubai, Hotel Danieli in Venice, Ice Hotel in Sweden ...
- In 2010, the largest reservation portal **hostelworld.com** declared Hostel Celica as the no. 1 hostel in Slovenia, based on guest ratings

We have also received several local awards:

- In 2004, we received the "Golden Sower" award by the Slovenian Tourist Board for the most innovative tourist product
- In 2006, we received a recognition award by the Mayor of the City of Ljubljana, Zoran Janković, for the most innovative tourist product and its contribution to the promotion of the city of Ljubljana

Who manages Hostel Celica?

Since January 2018, Hostel Celica has been managed by the Public Institute Ljubljana Castle, founded by the City of Ljubljana.

Mission and vision of Hostel Celica

Our mission is to build long-term partnerships and meet the needs of our guests, the environment, employees, owners and suppliers for the common good and to promote youth tourism in Ljubljana and Slovenia.

Hostel Celica should remain one of the best hostels in the world.