

Czech Fortifications Open Their Gates

The fortifications and fortified installations, which were built along the border of the former Czechoslovakia (today's Czech Republic and Slovakia) before the WWII, remain sad memorials to the tragic development of the political situation in 1930's. Today the history lovers can visit and admire the long-closed witnesses of the nation's fighting spirit.



The Kraliky Fortified Sector

The Kraliky Fortified sector around the Czech town of Kraliky (close to Polish border) was responsible for the defense of this part of the former German-Czechoslovakian frontier in the 1930's. It was one of the most intensively fortified frontier sectors in Europe of that time. This sector consisted of three major fortresses (Hurka, Bouda, Adam) with extended underground facilities, a number of heavy infantry blocks and extensive lines of small pillboxes supporting these big blocks between the hill tops named Malinik and Adam.

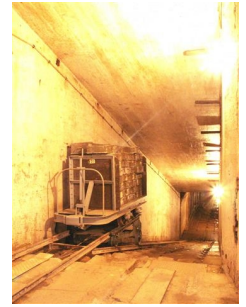
Altogether, 247 fortifications of all types were structurally completed until the so called Sudeten Crisis in September 1938. For the soldiers of the border guard three modern barracks systems, one barracks for crews of pillboxes model 36 and two fortress roads to the fortifications Bouda and Adam were constructed. Telephone cable networks with more than one hundred cable chambers and many miles of infantry and tank obstacle systems have been carried out.

Bouda

Artillery fortification BOUDA with its unique atmosphere is the best preserved construction of this type in the region. It consists of five mighty bastions (three infantry blocks, one artillery block and the entrance block), which were built to the strongest level of construction.

Deep inside the mountain, the blocks are connected by an extended systems of tunnels and caverns, which contained everything the garrison of 316 carefully selected and specially trained soldiers of the border guard needed to accomplish their combat task.

Visitors entering this fortification museum can see long underground galleries, barracks, ammo dumps, narrow-gauge railway, power station, infantry blocks, emergency exits, shaft for the retractable gun turret etc.



During WWII the German army tested various weapon systems, explosive charges and several elements of fortification engineering there. Due to the German occupation, structural changes after the war, and the dismantling activities of a scrap enterprise in the 1950s, the fortification Bouda became strongly devastated. In spite of that, it represents one of the best of five structurally completed artillery fortifications on the Czech territory, which has been renovated and made open for the public in 1990.

Hurka

Artillery fortification HURKA is also a unique military–historical monument. It consists of five mighty bastions, which are connected by an extended system of tunnels and caverns deep inside a hill (total length 1.75 km). These are two sophisticated designed infantry blocks, an artillery casemate, an artillery block with projected retractable gun turret, and the entrance block.

The infantry blocks and especially the artillery casemate served during the German occupation in the times of WWII as targets for the testing of various weapons. The combat blocks of the fortification were also used as test objects for the development of a secret weapon of the Third Reich – the so called Röchling concrete piercing grenades.



The visitors can see some rare display pieces: a big armored gate in the entrance block, the fully operational sloping ramp lift and the electric locomotive with cargo wagons of the narrow gauge railway (from 1950's). In the fortification the visitors will understand, how extensive and costly the Czechoslovakian defense plans were under the threat of Hitler's aggression.

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<http://www.boudamuseum.com>

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