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SOME HISTORICAL POINTS OF INTEREST ABOUT WINE GROWING IN ŠTAJERSKA

The wine growing Slovenske gorice and vineyards on the slopes of Pohorje have a rich past. Wine was made here already in antiquity, to which the first written records from approximately 400 years BC, from the time of the Celts, bear witness. With the arrival of the Romans the vineyards expanded, and then with the fall of the Roman Empire the vineyards were also destroyed. Only with the settlement of the Slavs were the fields and vineyards cultivated once again.

As a wine-growing region this part has been renowned since the Middle Ages, when with extremely good white wine it also became popular on the then European market. On wine growing hills in the surroundings of Maribor there were the most vineyards at the end of the 18th century, prior to the destructive onslaught of Phylloxera. On the edges and in the middle of wine growing hills villages and later towns developed that experienced their heyday through the wine trade.

In the year 1872 the Viticultural and Fruit growing school was founded, which due to its professional and scientific activities became the most reputable institution in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The continuity of its original activities is being carried on by the Secondary School for Agriculture, which on the school estate on Kalvarija (Calvary Hill) has organised a wine-fruit learning trail. The Maribor Faculty for Agriculture is also dedicated to the continuation of the rich wine tradition, which for the needs of science and research work runs the renowned Meranovo estate, where in the first half of the previous century the important personage, Archduke Johann worked for Slovene viticulture. Next to his manor, surrounded with sunny slopes on the hillsides of the north-eastern part of Pohorje, on the hill Prinčev vrh, he planted west European sorts of grape vines and organised extensive modern vineyards, after which he founded the first viticulture school in the then Lower Styrian province.