



Kutná Hora

Revitalization of the national cultural monument The Italian Court

The revitalization of the Italian Court began in 2018. This very demanding renovation included repairs and new layouts of Municipality offices, including their repairs, renovation and extension exhibition spaces and the acquisition of new exhibitions, the establishment of archives in the attic, refurbishment and repair of all joinery products (windows, doors, wooden ceilings and paneling), restoration of paving in the corridors of the building and reconstruction of painted decors located by wooden and stone staircases, restoration of stone elements. Furthermore, the ceiling on the 1st floor was insulated and a lift was built for barrier-free access. All these works were carried out during the operation of the Municipal Office and were very demanding both for the implementation company, for the employees of the office and for the public.

Before the revitalization, the building served mainly as an administrative building of the Municipal Office and partially was opened to tourists. Unfortunately the tourist part was not very well designed. Adjacent park was in bad condition unable to fulfill its relaxing function. The public toilets were in very bad conditions.

The main aim of the project was to make the Italian Court and adjacent park more accessible by revitalization, restoration and creation of new modern exhibitions with attractive and accessible sightseeing routes in context with the history of the building and the whole city. The project included revitalization from the smallest elements such as tinning of door handles to refurbishment of windows, doors and gates, restoration of stained glass, restoration of stones, production and assembly of replicas of historic doors, windows. It is important to emphasize that experts from the ranks of Kutná Hora's residents were also involved in the project. This is, for example, the local company of Libor Ptacek, which focuses on the reconstruction of monuments. Furthermore, the local architect Ondrej Kubik was involved in the revitalization of the park as he deepened the connection between history and nature, not only in the form of a stone amphitheater opening the course of the Vrchlice river.

Another aim was to modernize the administrative premises of the building to meet the needs of the municipality of the 21st Century while maintaining their historic character of the location. Last but not least the aim was to create educational a relaxation centre for both visitors and residents of Kutná Hora.

The revitalization of the Italian Court underlined the unique urban structure of our mining town associated with fast unorganized growth in the days of the medieval silver rush.

The Italian Court still serves the same purpose as centuries ago, when it was the administrative center of royal officials and the royal mint, which is presented by the exhibition focused on the unique history of the city. The exhibitions are designed in an interactive form to attract visitors of all ages. Great attention is paid to minting in form of an extensive exhibition of all coins minted in the Italian Court. It also includes a demonstration of the medieval technique of coin minting and the journey of silver ore to the Prague groschen. The earth provided Kutná Hora with mineral deposits (silver) which provided financing for magnificent buildings, which have been preserved to this day. That is why it is important to constantly remember the value of this raw material, even though silver is no longer mined here. At the same time, it



is important to draw attention to the extremely demanding work of inhabitants of that time who used to process silver ores.

The renovation of the adjacent park opened new views of the unique panorama of the Church of St. Barbara and the Jesuit College. Its appearance in no way reduces the size and importance of The Cathedral of St. Barbara, but it complements it appropriately. After the completed revitalization, this national cultural monument became an integral part of the city and the functions it performs were improved and expanded.

Overall, the project allows better understanding of the uniqueness of Kutna Hora and its values inscribed on the World Heritage List for its residents and visitors as well as future generations. The project was finished in 2020 which was the year when Kutna Hora celebrated the 25th anniversary of inscription in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

In conclusion, we would like to mention that the Italian Court serves not only the activities already presented, but also as a venue for events such as cultural events (e.g. international music festival, theater performances of the local amateur association or organ concerts in the chapel), marriages and thanks to the revitalization of the park main city events will return to the park as well. It could be said that Italian Court is the place where past, present and future intertwine.