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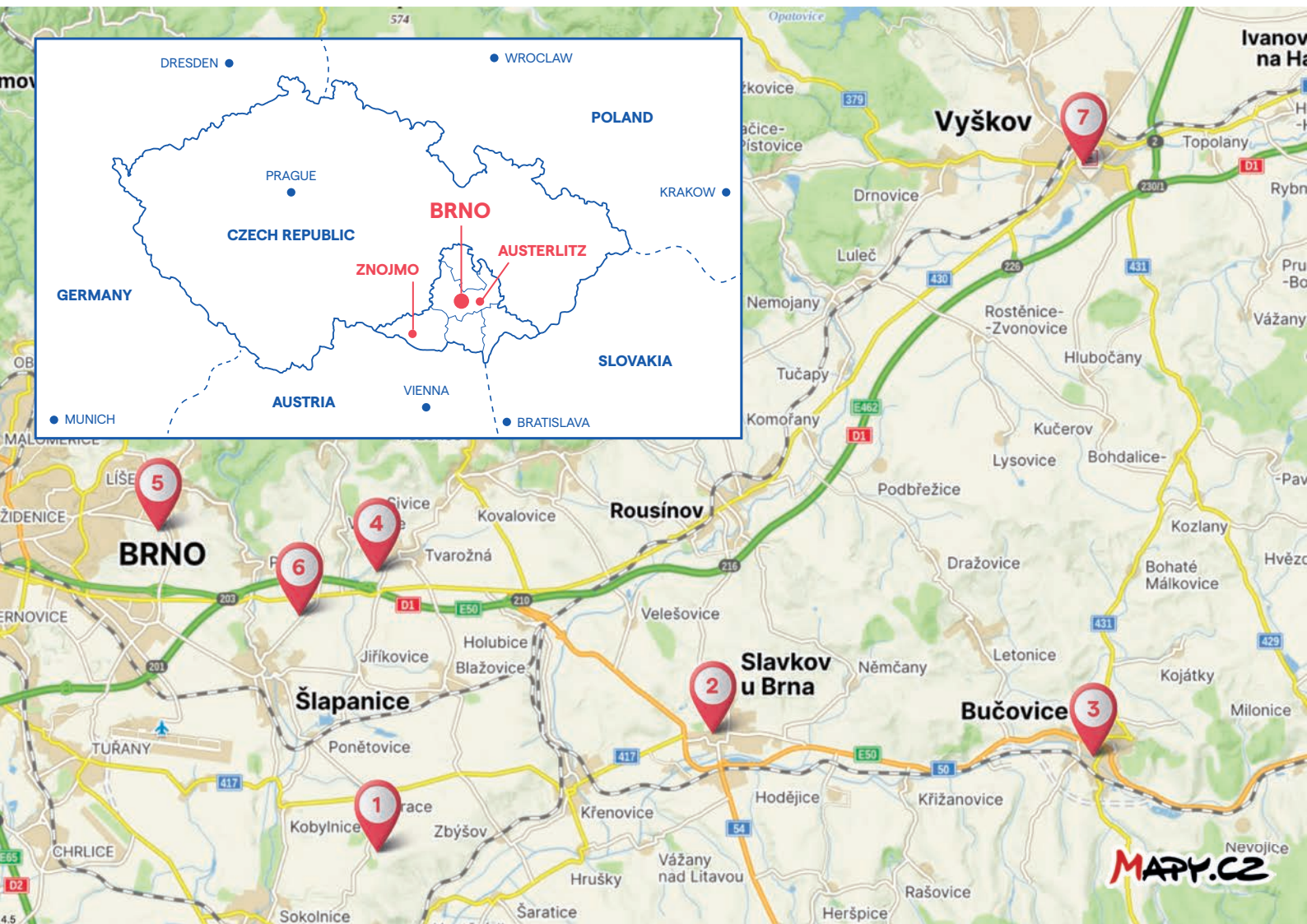
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NAPOLEON IN SOUTH MORAVIA

Explore the sites where European history unfolded.

EN



NAPOLEONIC WARS



Under pressure, Louis XVI signed a new constitution in 1791, and France became a constitutional monarchy. Leopold II of Habsburg, along with Prussia's Frederick William II, formed an alliance against France. France declared war on them and occupied parts of present-day Belgium and the Netherlands. After another coup in Paris, Louis XVI was executed, leaving the rest of Europe understandably shocked! More states joined the anti-French coalition and recaptured the so-called Habsburg Netherlands. In this war, General Napoleon Bonaparte shone brightly for the first time. During the

Italian campaign, he defeated Piedmont-Sardinian and Austrian allied forces. Napoleon occupied Nice, Savoy, Tuscany... Under France's patronage in Italy, the Cisalpine and Ligurian Republics emerged, and Emperor Francis requested a ceasefire. Napoleon returned to Paris as a hero and then embarked on the famous Egyptian campaign. Meanwhile, in 1799, a new coalition dealt the French a series of defeats. Napoleon returned as a savior, became the first consul, defeated the Austrians at the Battle of Marengo, annexed a large part of northern Italy to France, and in 1801, had himself crowned Emperor of the French.



BATTLE OF THE THREE EMPERORS



In 1805, Napoleon planned to invade Britain, annexing Hanover and executing a relative of the former French king, angering European monarchs. Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Britain formed the Third Anti-Napoleonic Coalition. Instead of defending France, he intended to attack Austria and Russia. In October, he reached the Danube and surrounded the Austrian Feldmarschall Mack at Ulm. The Russian army, led by General Kutuzov, marched to assist. They failed to free Mack's soldiers or halt Napoleon, who forced the enemy to retreat to Olomouc, occupying Znojmo and Brno. However, he faced supply issues, and

the coalition was bolstered by the Russian army under Tsar Alexander I. By November 29th, the French strategically positioned themselves on Staré Vinohrady's heights, surprising the enemy and maintaining an advantageous stance. Despite setbacks in the battle plan, Napoleon decisively defeated 90,000 allies with his 70,000 troops. After the battle, he secured a ceasefire with Emperor Francis of Austria, while Russian units withdrew without a peace agreement. Each December, Slavkov hosts events commemorating the Napoleonic era, featuring military demonstrations and other period aspects.



1



THE CAIRN OF PEACE MEMORIAL

A unique war memorial with a message of peace honors all Battle of Slavkov (Austerlitz) victims on the battlefield. Architect Fanta's slim pyramid-like structure serves as a landmark and focal point in the protected heritage zone. The chapel's underground still houses the remains of fallen soldiers found in the vicinity. Legend has it that the

allied forces' vantage point was illuminated by a red sun, revealing to Napoleon the enemy lines along the ridge. Besides the memorial, enjoy the café, and explore the museum's multimedia exhibition for a deeper understanding of this European event. Expect an extraordinary experience beyond mere facts!

2



SLAVKOV CASTLE – AUSTERLITZ

Austrian Emperor Francis and Russian Tsar Alexander I spent the night at Slavkov Castle before the battle, filled with optimism. However, the next day, Napoleon announced victory to his soldiers from the castle balcony. In the Historic Hall on December 6, 1805, France and Austria signed a ceasefire. This period is vividly portrayed in the extensive

exhibition of the Historical Museum located in one of the castle wings. It is worth visiting the former residence of the famous Kounic family, not only during Napoleonic events. The Baroque gem is surrounded by a beautiful park with rare statues and an adjacent golf course. For post-cultural indulgence, visit the nearby Slavkov Brewery.

3



BUČOVICE CASTLE

In 1805, the Imperial Guard marched through Bučovice. The castle's owners, including Field Marshal Jan Josef, Prince of Liechtenstein, led the allied cavalry at the Battle of Slavkov and later represented Austria in peace negotiations. Admire the beautifully decorated halls of the castle. Explore the lavishly decorated halls, especially the renowned Imperial Hall

and the whimsical Hare Hall frescoes depicting a topsy-turvy world where hares triumph over humans and dogs to become rulers of the world. This Renaissance gem, with breathtaking arcaded courtyard and hundreds of reliefs, adorned by artists from across Europe, stands unique north of the Alps.

4



SANTON

The Battle of the Three Emperors is commemorated by a hillock west of Tvarožná. Napoleon chose it as an artillery position. Locals call it Kopeček, formerly Padělek. French soldiers named it Santon, recalling a hill from the Egyptian campaign. The hill was prepared for battle, with a chapel demolished and trenches fortified. Atop the hill stands

a charming Neoclassical chapel of Our Lady of the Snows from 1832, with a Marian statue and memorial plaques featuring portraits of French generals Claparède, Valhubert Russian general Bagration. Visit the village square in Tvarožná to see a replica French field gun, relocated from Santon to protect it from vandals.

5



BRNO

Was Napoleon in Brno during the famous campaign? Yes! In the significant year of 1805, he spent more time here than on the battlefield. Explore the city center in his footsteps. He stayed at the Governor's Palace, now the Moravian Gallery, and even had slaughterhouses built on Zelný trh for his soldiers! Nearby, the Reduta Theatre became a prison for officers

and a military hospital. In Denis Gardens, you'll find an 1818 obelisk to commemorate the end of the war's hardships. Look for the monument to French General Valhubert in Tyrš Garden at Veveří, who passed away in Brno after being wounded in the Battle of Austerlitz.

7



VYŠKOV CASTLE

Vyškov witnessed the first major clash between the French and Russian armies during the allied campaign from Olomouc to Slavkov. Four days before the bloody Battle of Slavkov, Russian units surprised several detachments of French light cavalry here. Faced with superior numbers, the French quickly retreated along the imperial road towards Brno, and

the Russians easily took control of Vyškov. Russian Tsar Alexander I and Austrian Emperor Francis stayed at the castle overnight. (Reportedly, Napoleon also stayed here in 1805.) Today, explore the museum with various exhibitions, including one about the Middle Ages. Additionally, see the local exhibit of Haban ceramics, the most extensive collection of famous painted faience in Moravia.

6



ŠLAPANICE AND ŽURÁŇ

In Šlapanice, discover relics linked to the battlefield, just a 25-minute walk from Žuráň for a taste of the battle atmosphere. The hilltop memorial marks French extraterritorial territory. It's not a natural formation but an artificially constructed burial mound from the Migration Period, a significant Moravian archaeological site. Maples crown the summit, next to a

cubist memorial featuring a relief map of the battlefield and troop deployments from December 2, 1805. Read a quote from Napoleon's post-battle proclamation at this command post, where he ordered the decisive manoeuvre on the Pratzen Heights, known as the „lion's leap.“

8



ZNOJMO

What many Znojmo residents might not know is that a pivotal battle in European history involving Napoleon occurred here! In July 1809, he defeated the so-called Fifth Anti-French Coalition. Retreating Austrian Archduke Charles fought battles at Dobšice and Suchohrdel. The French, stalled by a storm near Louka monastery, sought refuge in

its wine cellars and fell into a completely unoperational state until reinforcements arrived. Despite the Imperial Guard's aid to the Austrians, Napoleon's numerical advantage led to a ceasefire declaration. The Battle of Znojmo confirmed Napoleon as the (temporary) master of Europe.