



Published in 2011 by the Regional Council for Development and Cooperation in the Tourism Industry of Karviná as part of the project 'Těšín Silesia - Cooperation in the Tourism Industry'.



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INFORMATION CENTRES
IN TĚŠÍN SILESIA

WATER SPORTS ON THE ODRA AND OLŠE RIVERS



Whether you are an experienced water sports enthusiast or a complete beginner, the Těšín Silesia region gives you a great choice of places to enjoy action and adventure, with wonderful rivers running through beautiful countryside. Two of the region's rivers – the Odra and Olše – provide ideal conditions for water sports. These two waterways meet on the Czech-Polish border, from where you can continue downstream and explore what our neighbours in Poland have to offer. The Odra and Olše rank among the finest rivers in the entire region for water sports enthusiasts: they pass through tranquil and unspoilt countryside, they are easily accessible from anywhere in the region, they are perfect for half-day or full-day trips, they require a minimum of preparation, they offer good water conditions almost all year round, and they are easy enough for even beginners to enjoy.

So why not come and see for yourself? Come and enjoy these two wonderful rivers, and take a plunge into a world of action, adventure and excitement!

There are many ways to enjoy the natural beauty of the Odra and Olše. Of course you can choose a boat, raft or canoe, but there are also plenty of places where you can walk or cycle, especially in and around the town of Bohumín, where there are two fascinating nature trails: the Odra Border Meanders Trail and the Odra and Olše Waterway Nature Trail.

There have been meanders on the Odra River along the Czech-Polish border for centuries, but it is only recently that people



have begun to realize just what a unique natural treasure they are. You can enjoy the meanders from a boat, take a relaxing walk, or use one of the local cycle paths. However you choose to get around, this unique landscape is there for you to enjoy in its full glory. The meanders are an important habitat for many rare and endangered plant and animal species, as well as being a favourite nesting site for rare birds. The entire area – on both sides of the border – is one of Europe's most remarkable examples of a dynamic river system, and it forms part of the Natura 2000 ecological network of protected areas in Europe.

Children and complete beginners will love the newly renovated boatyard in Karviná's central park (Park Boženy Němcové). This family water sports centre has a range of channels, bridges, walkways, and a playpark for children. You can take basic boating lessons from the instructors, or you can just relax and enjoy a range of refreshments. The boatyard also hosts cultural and social events, featuring a wide range of musical styles from folk to brass bands or jazz. Boats are also available for hire.

Around 40 species of mammals live in the meanders, including several protected species such as the European otter and a colony of Eurasian beavers. The beavers are nocturnal, so you will have to wait until nighttime to spot them. However, even during the day you can see where beavers have cut down trees, and you might even see a beaver dam in the more inaccessible parts of the meanders. There are also many species of birds – the meanders are a favourite mating site, and around 60 species nest here too. One of the most beautiful birds in the area is the kingfisher, with its wonderfully distinctive bright colours. You might also spot endangered birds of prey such as the white-tailed eagle, the European honey buzzard, the northern goshawk or the western marsh harrier.



This section of the Odra River, extending for several kilometres, has been declared a protected area by the Moravian-Silesian Region. The protected area covers 126 hectares and represents a type of landscape that has almost disappeared elsewhere in Europe. The river has been left alone and allowed to change its course constantly by a slow natural process, gradually building up shingle deposits which eventually cut former meanders off from the new course of the river, creating oxbow lakes and ponds. The meandering river can also serve up a surprise from time to time, revealing forgotten objects dating back many centuries. These unexpected historical finds include a vertebra from a mammoth that died here many thousands of years ago, or an old border post from the 18th century.



The Olše River is navigable all the way from Karviná to Bohumín (via Věřňovice), though boats and other craft have to be lifted up and carried across the weirs. If water levels are high enough, the Olše is navigable from Jablunkov, but these conditions are quite rare.

Both the Olše and Odra (including the meanders) are suitable for dinghies, canoes or rafts. If you do not have your own craft, there is a hire shop in Starý Bohumín, on the banks of the Odra near the old bridge into Poland. The shop is run by volunteer firefighters from the town.

You can set out on the Odra provided that the flow rate is slower than 60 m³/s. Boats can be returned within two hours of hiring them at the bridge in the Polish village of Zabełków, near the confluence of the Odra and Olše. Hire includes paddles, inflatable sacks and life-jackets, and is free of charge. The boats are named after the various species that live (or used to live) along the Odra in the Bohumín area – including the Mammoth, Kingfisher, Frog, Beaver, Pike, Zander, Catfish, or Perch.



THERE ARE 6 NAVIGABLE SECTIONS OF THE ODRA AND OLŠE. ALL ARE CLEARLY MARKED:

- 1) Závada (CZ)–Věřňovice (CZ)
(Olše River, km 13.2 – km 7.5)
- 2) Věřňovice (CZ)–confluence with the Odra River (CZ/PL) (Olše River, km 7.5 – confluence of Odra and Olše)
- 3) Ostrava-Koblov (CZ)–Antošovice footbridge (CZ)
(Odra River, km 13.9 – km 8.8)
- 4) Antošovice footbridge (CZ)–Starý Bohumín (CZ)
(Odra River, km 8.8 – km 6.3)
- 5) Starý Bohumín (CZ) – Zabełków (PL)
(Odra River, km 6.3 – confluence of Odra and Olše)
- 6) Zabełków (PL) – Krzyżanowice (PL)
(Odra River km 0.4 – km 6.0)

For more details on the navigable routes, see the guidebook 'Odra a Olše okolí soutoku Odry s Olší' (in Czech and Polish), which is available on the Town of Bohumín's website or from the 'Posejdon' association, which runs a boat hire shop on the Olše River.

Boating, rafting or canoeing on the Odra and Olše is an unforgettable experience. The river is your passport to a world of adventure, guiding you into the heart of a hidden landscape with a rich diversity of plant and animal life. Nothing beats the thrill of the water!

But before you set out to enjoy the river, just take a while to remember the TEN COMMANDMENTS OF THE WATERWAYS:

- 1) Before you get in or out of the boat, make sure the front of the boat is pointing upstream.
- 2) When approaching the bank, always move against the current.
- 3) If you capsize in deep water, drag the boat to the bank upside down.
- 4) Never let go of a paddle (especially after capsizing).
- 5) Make sure everything in the boat is well wrapped in waterproof bags to prevent it getting wet, and tie it to the boat so you don't lose it.
- 6) When travelling along the river, constantly check the water level in front of the boat, and look out for rapids and whirlpools – these are signs of underwater obstacles that you must avoid.
- 7) Keep an eye out for changing weather conditions.
- 8) Never drink alcohol while on the water!
- 9) Look out for other people and help them if they need it.
- 10) Plan your goals realistically, and never take risks!

We wish you a wonderful adventure on our rivers!

WATER SPORTS EVENTS HELD ON THE ODRA AND OLŠE IN TĚŠÍN SILESIA:

JANUARY

New Year trip on the Olše River

JUNE

Plavidlo – annual international water sports event on the Olše and Odra (PL)

JULY

Opening of the Odra meanders
Beginning of the water sports season

SEPTEMBER or OCTOBER

Closing of the Odra meanders
End of the water sports season



BOAT HIRE ON THE ODRA AND OLŠE:

Odra boat hire

Město Bohumín,
JPO Starý Bohumín
Starobohumínská 153
735 81 Bohumín-Starý Bohumín
tel.: +420 731 130 686,
+420 732 596 092
e-mail: tic@mubo.cz
web: www.mesto-bohumin.cz/cz/volny-cas/
vodacka-stezka-odra-a-olse

Open from July to September at 9.00 and again at 14.00.
(The shop is not open in the spring in order to protect nesting birds.)

Olše boat hire

Boats can be hired from the Posejdon association.
Hlavní 33,
Dolní Lutyně-Věřňovice
tel.: +420 603 706 754
e-mail: posejdonos@seznam.cz
web: www.posejdon.cz

**Water sports club
'8. oddíl Hraníčář', Karviná**

Karviná-Darkov
tel.: +420 774 914 914
web: http://hranicari.skauting.cz

