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THE FORMER DOMINICAN MONASTERY OF PALĖVENĖ

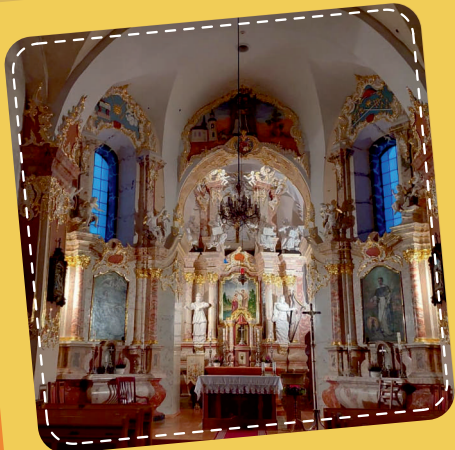
The hall and cellars of the monastery barn have been restored, there you can learn about the history of the monastery, the way of life of the monks, taste monk dishes, certified Kupiškis region beer, and try writing with a goose feather in the scriptorium by choosing one of the educational programs that you can find by visiting:

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For educational programs in the former Palėvenė monastery, contact the Kupiškis District tourism and business information center.



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According to the legend, Laurynas Mykolas Počobutas–Odlianickis, the assistant to the judge of the Ukmergė region, and his wife Marijona Daumantaitė–Siesickaitė, decided to finance a Dominican monastery and a church, and chose the scenic location in the valley of the Lėvuos River not by accident. Here was the place where L. M. Počobutas survived for several weeks while hiding from the Swedes during the so-called Flood years and promised to build a church if he will survive. Its foundations were laid in 1671, but construction officially began in 1676.

Church of St. The Church St. Dominic, St. Francis, and St. Lawrence is an architectural monument in the Baroque style. It has an asymmetrical cross layout, covered with cylindrical domes. The outer walls are divided by flat pilasters, a wide entablature, the windows are finished with segmental arches. The church has 8 two-tiered altars of late baroque and rococo forms, multi-plan order composition altars of artificial marble, richly decorated with sculptures and mouldings: order entablatures, column capitals, bas-reliefs, and heraldic cartouches. The high altar in the presbytery was built in the second half of the 18th century.

Its iconographic program symbolizes the unity of the Old and New Testaments: the statues of King David with a harp and Melchizedek standing in the first period, and the Crucified One with the figures of the four evangelists sitting on his sides in the second period are connected by the painting of the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River in the first period.

All three buildings of the monastery were built from the 17th century to the end of the 18th century. There was a library in the driest building, which had 970 books, including Lithuanian ones, in 1820. Its oldest publication was printed in 1552. There were a total of 38 rooms in three buildings. Almost all rooms had a stove. The most beautiful and spacious was the prior's cell. The walls of the first floor of the monastery's residential building were richly polychromed, decorated with portraits of monks and decorative compositions of plant motifs. The monastery was covered with shingles. In the middle of the 18th century, the farm yard of the monastery was finally formed next to the residential buildings, it was surrounded by brick and wooden buildings. A spacious barn with cellars was built in 1789. Next to the monastery there was a tavern, a hospital, and 2 houses for worshippers. Only brick buildings have survived to this day: a stable with a carriage house, a barn with a mill, a mortuary, a dwelling house for monks, and a fence with an entrance gate.

From 6 to 20 monks lived in the monastery from 1775 to 1865.



Young Dominican priests – students of theology and philosophy – were trained in the monastery. There was also a parish school here, where the monastery voluntarily taught a few children of the poorer nobles and peasants in the area for serving the priests and monks. The later famous architect Laurynas Gucevičius studied here for 2 years in the middle of the 18th century.

The Dominicans were people of science, as evidenced by the Lithuanian–Polish and Lithuanian–Latin–Polish dictionaries prepared by D. Sutkevičius. Another Dominican, R. Jasikevičius, published a four-volume set of sermons in Lithuanian. The latter was recognized by the Russian tsarist authorities as an official collection of sermons for some time.

M. Valančius began to publicly preach sobriety while visiting Palėvėnė in 1858, and the first society of the Žemaitija diocese, with over 100 members, was created here. The Dominicans of Palėvėnė themselves were in no hurry to spread sobriety. M. Valančius convinced the monks only in 1862, and he trained the prior to be an advocate of sobriety.

For cooperation with rebels of 1863, the governor of Kaunas ordered the monastery to be liquidated, and the monks to be assigned to other monasteries. All property was confiscated, and the famous library was liquidated.