Defence and barrier system from the late Roman times, Claustra Alpium Iuliam, was built in the 3rd half of the 3rd century or in the beginning of the 4th century at the latest, in the interior of the Roman Empire. It protected the heart of the Empire from the intrusions of foreign peoples, and it also played an important role in case of internal conflicts and struggles for power. It was the last defence line before entering the rich and fertile plains of Northern Italy and the ultimate barrier of the eternal city of Rome. The system was abandoned in the beginning of the 5th century at the latest.

The defence system consisted of several sections of stone walls with towers. It adapted to the natural shape of the terrain, which even enhanced its defence potential. Individual sections were crossing valleys, passes or ridges, where Roman roads headed towards ancient Italy.

The most important sections of the system included forts and forts with military units. The length of each barrier was from a few hundreds meters to a few kilometres and the walls were between one and two meters wide, while the walls of the strongholds were even broader. The longest barrier was the so-called Heathen Wall (Adovščina zid) above Vrhnika (the ancient Naupactus) with 8 km in length, which included at least 35 towers.

Today, we can trace the remains of the Claustra Alpium Iuliam defence system from Brijeka (the ancient Tamisica), Croatia, through Preval and the Fabri dolina in Slovenia, over the Blidikova planina and the area between the towns of Vrhnika and Ajdovščina (ancient Castra) all the way to Zarkovce near Cerkno. The virtual line linking all the barriers extends to approximately 130 km. There are 13 archaeologically documented locations with more than 30 km of barrier walls, more than 100 towers, 4 forts and 5 forts.

The archaeological remains of the Claustra Alpium Iuliam defence system are sometimes difficult to recognize, at a few locations they are displayed and accessible to the public.

Start your journey and experience them!
**Rijeka (lat. Tarsatica), Croatia**

Defence walls of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum system stretched from the ancient Tarsatica on a steep slope towards north above the canyon of the river Rijitnja. In ancient times, it was also built as a building of the military headquarters in the centre of reinforced Tarsatica, so called principula (principis). The town was thus a part of the defence system, protecting one of the main Roman roads from the Balkan Peninsula, Pannonia and North Europe towards ancient Italy.

**Babno polje - Prezid, Croatia and Slovenia**

The remains of the central part of the defence walls run exactly along the present state border between Slovenia and Croatia, between Babno polje and Prezid. On the location of the international border crossing, the remains are completely ruined. Full length of this part of the defence wall is approximately 2800 m.

**Solin near Kostrena, Croatia**

At the top of Solin in the municipality of Kostrena, we can find the remains of a fortlet, which was probably part of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum barrier system.

**Benete, Slovenia**

Blazka planota was well protected in the late Roman times. Its eastern margin was surrounded by at least five defence walls. The most southern of them was the defence wall near Benete, approximately 480 m long, reinforced by three towers.

**Jelenje on Grobnikovo polje, Croatia**

The barrier in Jelenje on Grobnikovo polje is situated approximately 6 km north of Rijeka. Today, we can trace the remains of the barrier with five towers as far as 2800 m.

**Studena, Croatia**

6 km north of Grobnikovo polje, near Studena and Cena, a barrier with three towers and the length of 5380 m is preserved. Together with the canyon of the Rakitna river and the section of walls in Rijeka, the barriers represent 20 km of continuous defence line.

**Taboršč/Tabrišč, Slovenia**

On Taboršč hill, we can see scarce remains of a tower, measuring approximately 6 x 5 m, with a defence wall of 9 m. This is the shortest known part of the defence system. It was probably in control of small road crossing, and as the defence wall near Benete and Novi Pot was close by, experts assume it was not used as an independent barrier.

**Novi Pot, Slovenia**

300 m long defence wall was discovered by the archaeologists only a few years ago. Mighty, 2 m wide wall was reinforced by two towers.

**Gradušče near Rob, Slovenia**

Defensive wall in Gradušče near Rob differs from the others due to its groundplan shape. In the middle of this defence section, at the top of the Gradušč vrh, the wall turns by 90 degrees and starts descending down the slope. In antiquity, the wall was protecting two narrow valleys leading to the Biška planota. Approximately 1350 m long defensive wall used to be fortified with seven towers.

**Seho near Rob, Slovenia**

In ancient times, 340 m long defensive wall with two towers was running close by Seho near Rob.

**Rakitna, Slovenia**

The 600 m long defence line on Rakitna, climbing through natural stone walls, used to protect the ancient crossing from ljubljansko barje towards Celtska. It has two defence towers, built on opposite slopes, providing good overview over the whole part of the defensive wall.

**Pokojšče, Slovenia**

In antiquity, the defensive wall above Borovnica in ljubljansko barje ran above the plain and provided a good overview from Nauportus to Emona. The 875 m long wall was fortified with five towers.

**Hrulica (lat. Ad Pirum), Slovenia**

The last defence line at the highest point of the ancient main road Emona - Castra ad Pirum fort, with defensive walls running for hundreds of meters north and south of the fort. In total, they measure almost 7 km in length, and the circumference of the fort is more than 600 m. Due to its location, the Ad Pirum fort was one of the most important points in the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum defence system, and, next to Tarsatica, it is also the richest archaeological site. The remains of the fort’s walls have been consolidated and the inside was almost completely explored. You can visit the archaeological park or exhibition and you can walk the 4 km long archaeological route or enjoy in the restaurant.

**Ajdovščina (lat. Castra), Slovenia**

In the second half of the 3rd century, the ancient town of Castra was surrounded by a strong wall, including 14 towers. After descending from the impassable forests around Hrulica, Castra was the first town where the terrain opened up towards the plain of Northwestern Italy. Due to its proximity, the archaeologists assume the town provided good logistical support to the defensive lines in Hrulica and can therefore be classified as a part of the Claustra Alpium Iuliarum system.

**Zarazovec, Slovenia**

The northernmost defensive wall documented to date lies near the village of Zarazovec, under the steep slopes of the Julian Alps. It was protecting the north road to Italy, leading over the hills of Sotla Loka and the Sola river to Northern Italy. Since the 660 m long defensive wall was built on a location, remote from other lines of the defence system, the experts believe there were more defence lines in this area during the late Roman times, that haven’t been discovered yet.