



Chinese Bridge (1800). Statues of Chinese people, reconstructed (sculptor R. Gelman)

The park features the perfectly thought-out scenic layout, the focal point of which is the **Grand Glade** (with the area of 10 ha), the **Small Glade** (4 ha), a 200 years old oak forest (48 ha), and a beautiful system of alleys totaling 20 km in length. Many alleys have names: Main, Linden, Birch, Pine, Hornbeam, Nightingale, Decabrist's, Fir, as well as romantic names such as the alley of Love and the alley of Graces. The park's magnificence is accentuated by the Ros River, numerous decorative reservoirs (21 ha), and a fenced private garden 'Mur'

(3 ha) abounding in rare plants and original labyrinths. A lot of architectural structures and statues decorate the park.

The park was created by a number of outstanding architects and gardeners: *Ludwig Metzel*, the Frenchman *Muffeau*, the Italian *Dominico Botani*, *August Stange* from Lviv, *Barietky*, *Stange*, *Witt*, *August Jens* (a memorial column was raised in the park in his honour in 1865), the Czech *Renger*. A very special place in the park is the 25 m high **Paly's Hill** rising over the river. From the top of the Hill you

Sights of Alexandria Park

- Pavilion 'Rotunda'(1800)
- Pavilion 'Echo'(1800)
- Column 'Globe'
- Column of Sorrow (1800)
- Sunny Glade
- Romantic Ruins (1800)
- Great Waterfall
- Little Waterfall
- Golden Ear Island and Arch Bridge (1800)
- Turtle Waterfall
- Chinese Bridge (1800)
- Swan Lake
- Mirror Lake
- Bath Lake
- Mermaid Pond
- Water Spirit Pond
- Rocky Pond
- Island of Dream
- Lion Spring
- Paly's Hill
- Turkish House
- Varna Fortress (1829)
- Statues of Diana, Apollo, Gladiator, and Angel

can see the remnants of Colonel **Semen Paly's fortifications**. In 1702, he liberated Bila Tserkva from the Poles, but Hetman *Mazepa* helped the Russian troops arrest him, and Paly was exiled to Siberia. Among 'Alexandria's' guests were *A. Pushkin*, *T. Shevchenko*, *Alexander I* (the ash-tree planted by him in 1816 has been preserved), *Alexander II* and Decembrists (participants of the December 1825 Rebellion; there is a monument erected in their memory in the park).

The most popular park structure is the **Echo Pavilion** (1800) with unique acoustics. The words of love softly whispered at one end of the colonnade easily fly over 34 m and reach your beloved. The statue of Three Graces by *A. Canova* has been preserved in the park museum.

Branicki's descendants live in France, in Montrésor Castle.

Echo Pavilion (1800). Statue of Hermes, reconstructed (sculptor V. Klokov)





Mgarsky Monastery of Our Saviour Transfiguration

Poltava Oblast, Lubny District, Village of Mgar



Mgarsky Monastery is situated on the right bank of the Sula River, 6 km far from the town of Lubny. This is one of the most respected monasteries in Ukraine. In 1619 Princess *Raina Mohylianka-Vyshnevetska* granted the prominent church figure *Isaya Kopynsky*, Father-Superior of the Mezhyhirsky Monastery and the future Metropolitan of Kyiv, with a writ to establish an Orthodox monastery in her lands. Just in a short period of time the monastery became known for its active opposition to spreading the Union over Ukrainian lands, and because of this it got the mighty Cossack support. In 1663 *Yuriy*, son of *Bohdan Khmelnytsky*, stayed here under the monk's name of *Gedeon*.

Even the passionate Late rite champion and the super-big Uk-

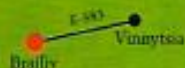
raine's magnate, Prince *Yarema Vyshnevetsky* issued a writ of protection for the monastery in memory of his mother. In 1654 the Patriarch of Constantinople *Athanasius* passed away here during the visit to his favourite cloister. He was buried in the **Transfiguration Cathedral** burial vault according to the Eastern rites: sitting dressed in patriarch's garments. Today his imperishable relics are preserved in the Annunciation Cathedral of Kharkiv. The monastery became a place of eternal rest for the Patriarch of Constantinople *Serapheim Antin* (in 1799) and Metropolitan of Kyiv *I. Neliubovich-Tukalsky* (in 1676). Here in the 17th-18th cc. was written the chronicle telling about the church and secular history of Ukraine.

In 1684-1692 the magnificent Cathedral of Our Saviour Transfi-

guration was raised out of the funds of Hetmans *I. Samoilovich* and *I. Mazepa*. It integrated in harmony Ukrainian architecture traditions with those of Ancient Rus architecture and Baroque. A three-tiered bell tower was constructed next to it in 1786-1844. And the **Church of Annunciation of Mother of God** (1889-1891) was built on the site of the hermitage where St Athanasius used to seclude. The monastery's history contains also tragic pages: in 1919 the Bolsheviks shot its Father-Superior and 16 monks.

The monastery attracted many outstanding figures. It was many times visited by *I. Mazepa*, *Peter I*, *Taras Shevchenko*. And Alexander Pushkin, having failed to meet his beloved *Anna Kern* in Lubny, came to Mgar where, as monks believe, he was graced.





Brailiv

Vinnytsia Oblast, Zhmerynka District



The settlement was founded at an elevated place where the Braga River flows into the Rov River, hence city's name roots – Brailiv (from Braga-Rov). In 1440, a castle was built here, but only underground passages have been preserved till our days. In 1879, the castle's site was chosen for the construction of the **Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church**.

In the beginning of the 17th c., Brailiv became the property of the Bratslav Governor *Ya. Potocki*. In 1740, *Franciszek Potocki* founded a church and a monastery of Trinitarians. The **Cathedral of Holy Trinity** was consecrated in 1783, at the time of *Stanislaw Potocki*. It is famous for its splendid frescos, admired by King *Stanislaw August* and painted by the Viennese artist *J. Progtl* in 1787. In 1831, the monastery was reconstructed and transferred to Orthodox Church.

In 1868, industrialist *Karl von Meck* bought the estate. By the recommendation of the Director of Moscow



The Holy Trinity Nunnery (1783)

Philharmonic Society *M. Rubinstein*, *Nadezhda von Meck* ordered a musical composition from *Pyotr Tchaikovsky*. This was a beginning of their mysterious friendship. *Nadezhda* provided *Chaikovsky* with an enormous annual perpetuity; five times the composer stayed at the estate for a long time; they were corresponding actively for 13 years – but they have not met once during all those years. *Chaikovsky* admired *Brailiv* and its surroundings, as can be seen from his letters, 'Trips to *Brailiv* will remain in my memory as resplendent recollection of the most poetic days in my life...'. Here he wrote 'The Maid of Orleans', and a lot of romances. **Tchaikovsky's Rock**, the composer's favourite place, rises over the Rov River, not far from *Brailiv*.

Von Mecks' Palace was built in Classical style on the hill in 1860. Just a small picturesque plot of 7 ha has been preserved from the splendid 19th c. park. A stone bridge across the pond creates a unique romantic picture.

Von Mecks' Palace park

The palace houses the **Tchaikovsky Museum** with a unique library of musical rarities.



The biography of another composer – *Claude Debussy*, is also associated with *Brailiv*. In the time of his studying at Paris Conservatoire he earned additional money as a home pianist at the estate in the summer of 1881. *Von Mecks* had impeccable taste! The atmosphere of the town, full of *Tchaikovsky's* genius spirit, is certain to have influenced the evolution of the brilliant French composer.



