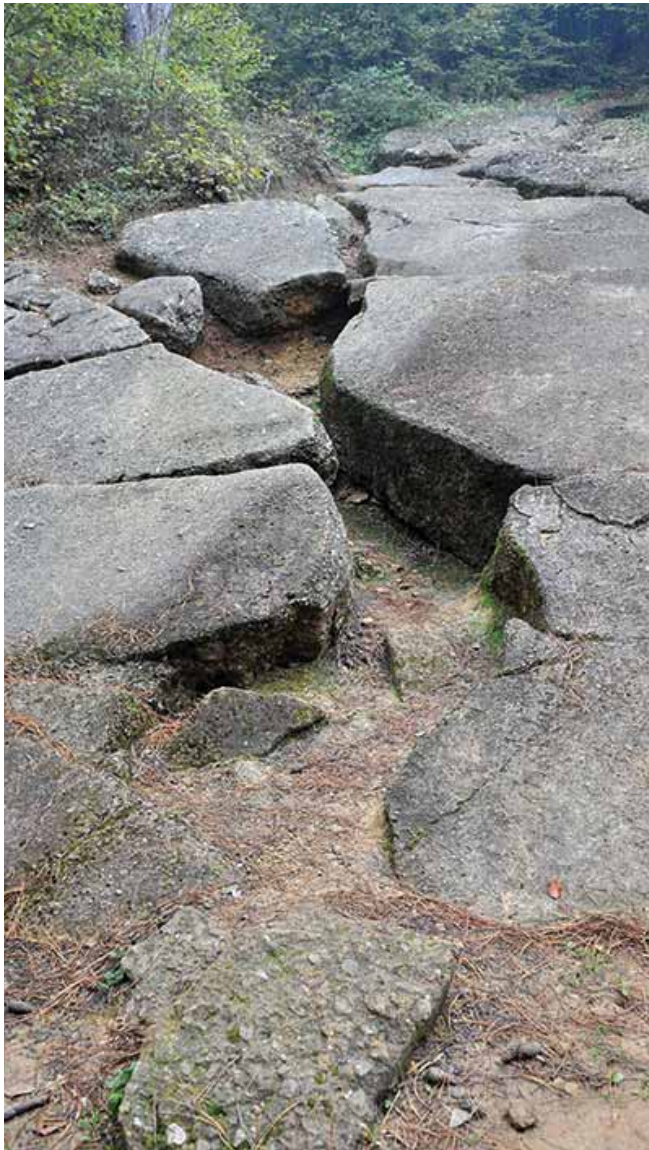


Lifestyle | Feature

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The archaeological park "Ravne" near the central-Bosnian town of Visoko.

but since Djokovic has been here, it's been a joy," says Nermin Alihodzic, 47, who sells tourists colorful mini-pyramids and pieces of quartz. While the government stopped backing the park over a decade ago, local authorities have helped finance the construction of roads, parking lots and other infrastructure to encourage tourists.

A five euro (\$5.94) entry fee for the whole park also includes access to the underground tunnel network which Osmanagic claims emit healing electromagnetic waves. In his tour of the park, Osmanagic takes groups down to the chambers, urging them to hold their hands over a smooth rock and feel the "energy" rising. Dzenana Halepovic, a 67-year-old from Sarajevo, is a frequent visitor. In the tunnels "I feel good, I breathe well, I feel light. I simply feel like I'm receiving energy there", she said.

Immunity booster

For Enver Imamovic, a professor emeritus of archaeology at the University of Sarajevo, the project is pure scam. The tunnels are likely "remnants of an ancient gold mine" while wedges of stones on the hillside, which believers consider to be the building blocks of the pyramid, are "nothing more than natural geological formations", he told AFP. "Everything that is said about the pyramids is absolutely unacceptable".

Founder Osmanagic has also been promoting the site as a place to "boost immunity" during the coronavirus pandemic. While he insists no cures are guaranteed, he cites other alleged miracles in which people have been healed of ailments like hypertension, diabetes or even cancer after a trip to the underground tunnels. In a destitute country with a weak health system whose shortcomings have been exposed by the coronavirus crisis, many are drawn to the hope of alternative medicine. Emina Kavaz, 53, says she is choosing the pyramids to treat her asthma. "I used to come every Saturday to go through the tunnels for between 40 and 60 minutes," she told AFP. "The price... is insignificant compared to the result obtained."— AFP



Touristic guide Semir Osmanagic (right) gives a tour to Serbia's tennis player Novak Djokovic at the archaeological park "Ravne".



Tourists sit near a ceramic block as they visit the underground tunnel "Ravne" near central-Bosnian town of Visoko.



A woman gets out of the underground tunnel "Ravne", near the central-Bosnian town of Visoko.



Tourists visit the archaeological park "Ravne" near the central-Bosnian town of Visoko.



A Bosnian guide explains to tourists the tour of the so-called Bosnian Valley of Pyramids in the central-Bosnian town of Visoko.

