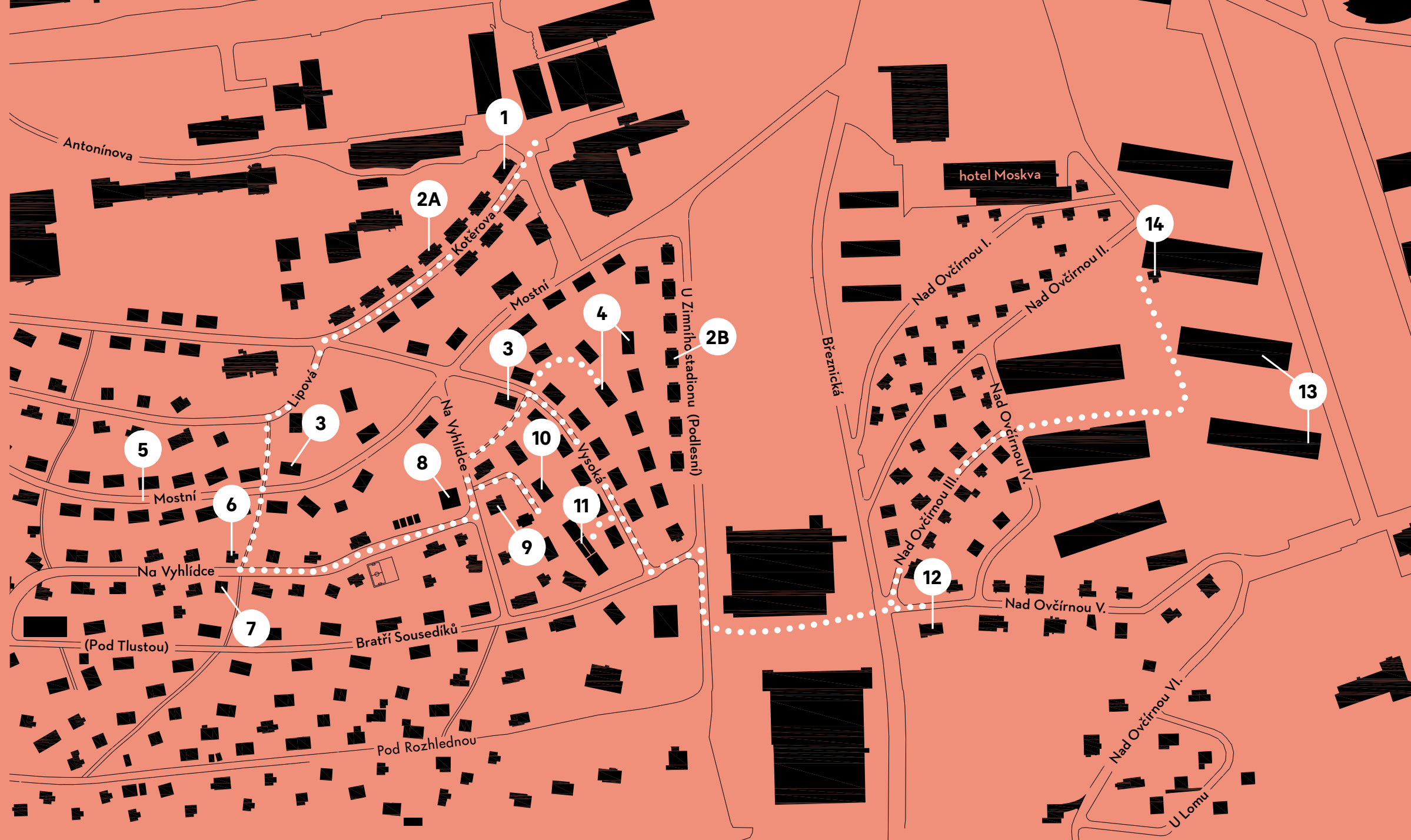


2 Baťa Housing Tour



tour length: 1.5 km

In 1915, a master plan was drawn up by Jan Kotěra to build the first workers' colony near the factory site of the developing Baťa company. Kotěra, a renowned architect and pedagogue of the School of Applied Arts in Prague, enjoyed several years of successful cooperation with the young entrepreneur Tomáš Baťa, who wanted to provide his employees with quality housing and thus ensure qualified employees for his company. After Kotěra's death in 1923, his pupil František Lýdie Gahura continued this work. In the sloping terrain an experimental district grew up, searching for an ideal and easily standardised type of house for Bata plant employees. It was based on light, efficient and inexpensive buildings that Baťa had seen on his visits to the Netherlands and the United States of America. Letná was the first housing district in Zlín, which was established during the 1920s and 1930s. A few elements are preserved here that do not appear in other parts of the town – mansard roofs, semi-detached houses, wooden buildings, etc. The tour will also include several buildings in the nearby district of Nad Ovčárnou, where the Baťa housing Infopoint is located.



1 House with mansard roof 1923 Kotěrova 858



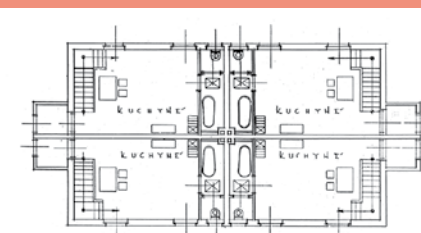
The four-family house designed by architect Jan Kotěra is the oldest example of Baťa's corporate housing. It was originally built as part of the so-called "five-house-set", which lined Kotěrova Street. The house of 17m x 8m is designed for four families. The amenities included a bathroom with flush toilet and running water in the kitchen. The first four-family houses had different layouts. The attic was used as a modest hostel for workers and single men from the Baťa Company. Due to the complicated truss involved in their construction, the mansard roofs were soon replaced by flat roofs and plaster with a more permanent brick masonry. The houses included large plots of land on which the inhabitants could farm. The garden was also supposed to ease their transition to the urban environment.

2 Fourplexes with plastered facades 1924 Kotěrova (type A) Pod Stadionem (type B)



The designer of the houses with four flats is one of the main architects of Baťa's Zlín, František Lýdie Gahura. The fourplexes with plastered roofs illustrate the early phase of mass housing with a simple layout: a large room with a kitchen, and a bedroom upstairs. This type of fourplex was originally part of a group of fifty houses of the so-called "new type", which have a roof sloped to the eaves and a ground plan of 15.7 m x 9.15 m (external measurements), a bathroom and toilet. This standard has been fully applied to the subsequent construction of workers' houses.

type A



type B

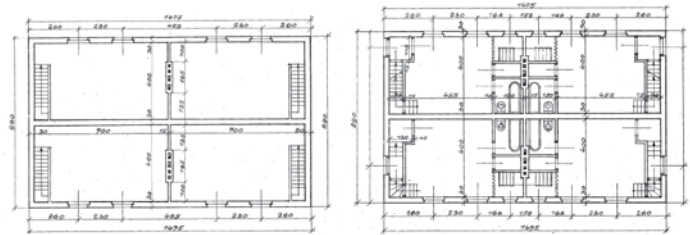


3 Fourplexes 1926—1928

Vysoká, Kotěrova,
Mostní, Bratří
Sousedníků



The fourplex made of grey masonry is a type of house specific only to the Letná district. It was probably designed by F. L. Gahura, who in the mid-twenties headed the construction department of the Baťa Company. These houses draw on previous variants of family houses, having almost identical layout and facilities. Each apartment has a separate entrance and 56m² of living space. For the first time we encounter a flat roof falling into the centre of the house. This style was subsequently applied to semi-detached houses and single-family houses. All bathrooms and kitchens were connected to the central drainage system, minimizing the extent of water pipes and sewerage. The roof is sloped towards the central downpipe by gradually tilting the wooden ceiling elements that are visible in the interior. Around two hundred fourplexes were built at Letná over a period of time.



4 Bachelor Houses 1926—1929

Vysoká 2085



As the number of employees increased, Baťa had to deal with accommodation issues. From the end of the 1920s, alongside the family houses, the company started to build bachelor houses for senior civil servants, teachers, or doctors. More than a dozen houses were built on the edge of the Letná neighbourhood, each of which had about 20 double or single rooms. They were equipped with a lounge (clubroom), caretaker's apartment, and shared toilets. This type of accommodation was later replaced by large-capacity dormitories. Ten years later, Vladimír Karfík again designed four bachelor houses in the district of Dily.

5 Mostní Street 1927



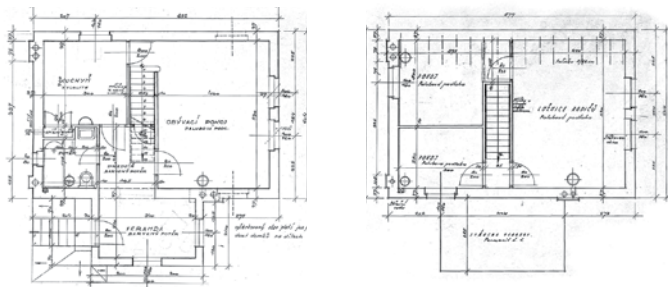
Baťa's construction department, headed by František Lydie Gahura, had to deal with difficult, sloping terrain when planning new neighbourhoods. In order to make the construction more efficient, it was necessary to reduce the complexity of building foundations. F. L. Gahura therefore decided to place the houses along the contour lines of the natural terrain. The houses therefore turn and face the street with one corner only. This principle, which is purely practical, creates pleasant spaces between individual structures. This way of rotating houses from the street line was later used in other neighbourhoods such as Zálešná and Podvesná.

6 Single family house / 1928

Na vyhlídce 1606



Single-family houses were the most comfortable housing provided by the Baťa Company to senior workers, teachers, doctors, and other professionals. They are located individually throughout Letná. Only in the Nad Ovčírnou and Forest Districts were groups of detached houses built. There are many types of single-family houses that were designed according to the specific needs of the residents. For example, the doctors' house had a room for a maid, some single-family houses had their own garage, while a teacher's house would have a study or a veranda.

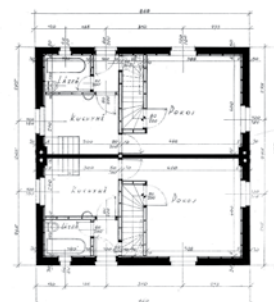


7 Duplex 1926—1927

Na Vyhlídce 1604



A semi-detached house, locally called a "duplex", with a flat roof, became the most widespread type of working-class housing, providing families with more privacy and living space (around 64 m²). It was designed by the architect F. L. Gahura. Construction of duplexes continued in the Podvesná neighbourhood. In the Zálešná neighbourhood, a pitched roof was used instead of a flat one. The kitchen was separated from the living room, and flush toilets, running water and sewerage had become commonplace. The building process was carried out by means of stream work, standardized, under the supervision of the construction department of the Baťa Company. In the western part of Letná so-called inbetween-houses were built. These are duplexes not adjacent to the main road. They are the buildings that have undergone the most significant transformation since the 1990s. Apart from applying external insulation, they are often added to and extended, mostly with a garage and another room. These interventions change the character of the original development, and the adjacent gardens shrink at the expense of parking spaces or outbuildings. Sheds adjacent to the houses have a similar effect.



8 Shop / 1940

Na Vyhlídce 1594



In the middle of neighbourhoods full of family houses, shops eventually began to emerge. The original duplex was extended on each side in 1940. The house had three entrances from the main street. The first to the dairy, the second to the shop and the third to the slaughterhouse. All the shops had a separate warehouse. On the upper floor there was a kitchen and three rooms. Up until 2017, a convenience store was situated here.

9 Kindergarten 1931

Na Vyhlídce 1016/3



In each of the working-class quarters, in addition to family houses, civic amenities were also built. These were schools, kindergartens, and shops, but also children's homes, which the Baťa Company founded and managed. The kindergarten at Na Vyhlídce Street has been operating from 1931 to the present day. The detached house had additions built for kindergarten purposes. In the original layout, two classrooms were located on the lower floor and a third classroom with a playroom on the first floor was completed with a room for a teacher and a bathroom.

10 Alladin House 1927

Na Vyhlídce 1013



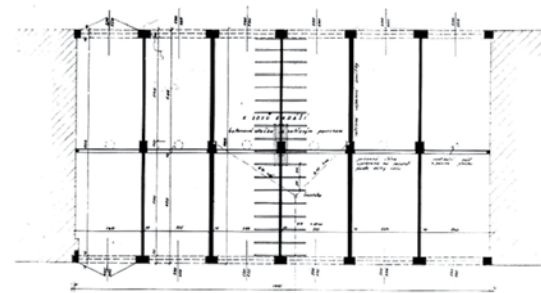
The ground-floor prefabricated wooden house was ordered from the catalogue of the Alladin company at the request of Tomáš Baťa, who had long been interested in wooden buildings and in making the construction of workers' houses more efficient. The house, packed in wooden crates, was shipped from the United States and built in the eastern part of Letná, still a "green field" in those days. Even today, the installation of this house in a place between bachelor apartment houses and fourplex houses seems really surprising. Along with the house came the builder Rudolf Švácha, a Czech-American from Chicago, who stayed in Zlín for two and half years and taught the local masters the "American way of building". It was thanks to Švácha that "veneer" technology was applied to the later built houses: a circumferential air gap was created between the perimeter wall and the inner plaster to ensure a warm and dry environment inside.

11 Garages / 1935

Vysoká



The civic amenities eventually included garages, located at several places in the neighbourhood. Garages with a straight, wooden roof had concrete floor tiles and wooden doors. The boxes were divided by wooden partitions and could accommodate twelve vehicles in total.



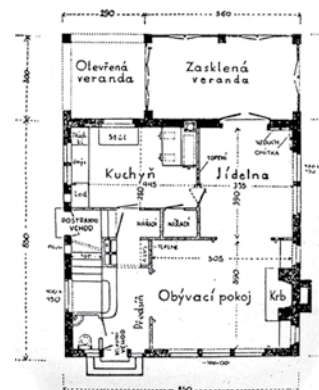
12 Berty Ženatý's house called "Villa near the forest" / 1927

Nad Ovčírnou V 1573



In 1928, columnist and engineer Berty Ženatý joined the press department. This Czech-American had worked with Tomáš Baťa before,

including, among other things, when buying the wooden Alladin house. His house, which was built a year earlier, according to American standards, had become an exemplary structure for local craftsmen, thanks to its inner layout and outer appearance. For the first time the American sliding window was used here. The house has three entrances (main, side and rear), a square layout of 8.5 × 8.5 m, and is equipped with central heating, a tiled bathroom, electricity, and a tank for hot water. The kitchen played an important role with a sink made of enamelled iron and a so-called work track. The centrepiece of the house was a fireplace, which was supposed to be the "pride of the home". The interior layout is open, without doors; three rooms are joined together. The hallway is connected to the main living room, which is connected to the dining room, and the glazed veranda is also in view, so it was possible to feel in touch with the garden and the surrounding area all year round. Together with his wife Fanuška, Berty Ženatý published the book "American Houses" (1931), which was supposed to help solve the problem of housing for a "small man".



13 Dormitories 1930—1937

náměstí Tomáše
G. Masaryka



In 1925, the Baťa School of Work was set up in Zlín for boys, and later girls, between 14 and 18 years of age. A group of free-standing buildings is connected in two rows to the Labour Square and the school district. The dormitories are placed along the contour line. They consist of a frame structure with columns placed in a grid of 6.15 m by 6.15 m allowing for flexible layouts. The buildings are designed as three-bay with a central operating corridor. On the ground floor there is a caretaker's apartment and a common room (gym, lecture room, dining room, etc.). Twenty rooms for ten people are on each floor.

14 Infopoint of Baťa Housing 1928

Nad Ovčírnou II 1295



In the one-family house between the dormitories there was once an exhibition of Baťa housing. The house was part of a street that was destroyed and replaced by new buildings. In 2014 the house was renovated and became the seat of the architectural office ellement. Currently, an exhibition is on here, called "Vanishing Elements of Zlín Architecture," dealing with the transformation of the workers' houses that were built during the 1920s and 1930s. The exhibition documents the current appearance of the houses that have been perpetually renovated and annexed. A special part is devoted to individual features, of building or architectural details, such as original windows, doors, railings, etc. Many photos show the state of the houses just before refurbishment. A catalogue of the same title has been published for the exhibition.