



Vintage Slovenia (and Lake Bled)

7 Nights

15 - 22 September 2024

If you've ever wanted to visit a place that few people even know exists (and fewer still can point out on a map), then come with us to Slovenia; it won't be long before this smart central European country is setting the tone for fashionable travel.

Highlights

- Spectacular scenery in an unspoilt country
- Castle and funicular in Ljubljana
- Lake Bled
- Postojna caves and underground railway
- Scenic rail journeys
- Services of our tour manager

With less than two million inhabitants, and a few tourists attracted by tales of its idyllic beauty, Slovenia is very tranquil and sophisticated. Its beauty has drawn comparisons with Switzerland, a country twice its size but with some similarities. Slovenia is blessed with fantastic, jagged mountains, turquoise rivers and silver lakes, vast subterranean caves and just enough medieval castles to conjure up a fairytale or two!

To top all of this it has some of the most stunningly scenic rail journeys in the whole of Europe with many comfortable locomotive hauled trains, quaint stations and welcoming staff.

This is now one of our most popular and longest running tours.

Most of our rooms at Lake Bled are lake view rooms but we recommend you book early to guarantee one of these rooms.

Tour Manager is Marion. Any questions about the itinerary please email Marion at marion@ptg.co.uk

Day 1 Sunday 15 September, 2024

Late afternoon flights from Gatwick or Heathrow. From Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh fly direct (with Lufthansa) to Munich on 14 September for train to Ljubljana the next morning. By rail from St Pancras you catch the 12:56 Eurostar, changing in Paris, arriving in Munich late evening for overnight in Munich then the through train to Ljubljana the next morning. The overland price includes a Interrail ticket which gives you free travel from your home station to/from London. It is also possible to join this tour, with Marion, from our Hidden Slovenia tour. See Hidden Slovenia tour for details.

Landing at Ljubljana airport you are immediately struck by spectacular views of mountains. Our coach will meet us and transfer us to our hotel in Ljubljana. After time to relax we meet up for our welcome dinner.

Day 2 Monday 16 September (B, L)

Today we will explore Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, with a local guide. It is a fascinating little city, we meet in reception at 09.30 for a guided walk. First, we will visit

the castle, via the funicular, that overlooks Ljubljana and the River Ljubljanica which flows through this picturesque city of beautiful bridges and Baroque townhouses. Our tour will end at the quayside where we join our boat for a river cruise on the Ljubljanica. We will have "welcome" lunch on board. The rest of the day is free for your own relaxation or perhaps a visit to the railway museum.

Day 3 Tuesday 17 September (B)

A superb scenic railway journey today as we head east along the Sava river valley to Dobova, which is near the border with Croatia. We alight here and take our road coach to the nearby wine cellars of Najger's Repnice. Repnice are caves, dug in the flint-stone which was washed up by the Pannonian Sea millions of years ago. They got their name after turnips, because the locals stored turnips and other vegetable produce in them. At the top of the Graben valley Jozica and Martin Najger open for us their remarkable Repnice, dug by Martin's great-grandfather in the 19th century. We have a wine tasting and some savoury specialties in the main room of the cave and see one of the other dug out rooms where the wine is aged. After this we go for a very special late lunch served in a nearby farm. We then return by rail to Ljubljana.

Day 4 Wednesday 18 September (B, L)

A short walk to the main railway station where we catch our train through the mountains to Postojna. On arrival, we have a short road transfer to Predjama Castle, just 10 kilometres from the Postojna Cave. For more than 700 years it has perched proudly on its 123-metre high cliff: powerful, defiant and impregnable. After our visit we will break for lunch before our visit of Postojna Cave. The caves are a network of 20 kilometres of passages, galleries and chambers. It is Slovenia's largest cave in the "classic karst" and the most visited show cave in Slovenia. In 1872 railway lines were laid in the cave; electricity arrived in 1884. We begin our visit aboard the cave train; the electric lighting allows you to admire the size and splendour of the underground world on an amazing 4 km ride. We will also see a collection of different cave dwelling creatures including the "Human Fish", a kind of Salamander. Later we return by train to Ljubljana and onward to Lake Bled (arriving 7:30pm) for



our first of 4 nights in this stunning location.

Day 5 Thursday 19 September (B)

Today we take the train to Bohinjska Bistrica where we will be met by our coach for our visit of Lake Bohinj and the Vogel cable car. The cable car travels 1,535m above sea level to a winter ski resort where you will have the most spectacular views (weather permitting). As we travel in the cable car you can see Lake Bohinj and surrounding mountains. There will be time for a light lunch here before we return to our coach for our transfer to Lake Bled. Lake Bled is over a thousand years old and is by far the country's most popular tourist destination because of the fairytale lake and island, dramatically sited castle and high mountains. Lake Bled is extremely picturesque with its small island in the middle of the lake where many people travel by boat to get married.

Day 6 Friday 20 September (B)

The whole day is yours to explore, our programme so far has given us little time to walk around the lake, visit the castle, ride the ski lift, take a horse drawn coach or just relax and enjoy our visit of Lake Bled.

Alternatively

This morning we will have a transfer to the Vintgar Gorge, where we take a walk and feel as if we are in another world. We see crystal clear waters, lots of different river fish, a waterfall and for some of us the most important, we will walk under the stone railway bridge that we travelled along only yesterday. Don't forget your cameras and comfortable shoes. After our walk we transfer to the little town of Radovljica. Built upon a seventy five metre high outcrop above the River Sava. Here we have time for lunch, a visit to a most unusual museum (of gingerbread) and a guided (short walk) through the streets of Gothic and Renaissance architecture.

We then return to Lake Bled for a short visit, via a boat called a Pletna to the little island in the lake.

Day 7 Saturday 21 September (B, L)

Today we take the local train to Most na Soci. Located on a rocky crest above the confluence of the Soca (once again you will be amazed by the beautiful colour of the river) and Idrijca rivers. Due to the nearby Doblar Hydro

Plant, the basins of the rivers were entirely inundated and below the settlement a vast lake was formed which now attracts both fishermen and visitors. We will go on a two hour cruise on the river. Time to relax, have lunch and enjoy the views from the boat. Mid-afternoon return by rail to Bled.

Day 8 Sunday 22 September (B)

Heathrow and Gatwick Departures

The morning and early afternoon are free before our coach takes us back to Ljubljana airport for our evening flights back to the UK.

Return by Rail or Flights from Munich – London St Pancras, Birmingham, Manchester or Edinburgh

Take the morning train from Bled to Munich for overnight stay before flights back to Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh on Monday 23 September. If returning all the way to London by rail, departure from Munich is at 10:46 travelling via Mannheim and Paris to arrive into London at 19:39. If enough people choose the rail to London option then Marion will escort the group through to London.

This is a moderately active tour. To fully enjoy this program, participants should be able to climb a flight of stairs and walk at least a half-mile on uneven ground during several of the sightseeing trips (or be happy to opt out).

Overland by
Rail from UK
Available

Holiday Prices (per person)

- From London Heathrow: £1,895
- From London Gatwick: £1,895
- From Birmingham (with night in Munich in each direction): £1,955
- From Manchester (with night in Munich in each direction): £1,955
- From Edinburgh (with night in Munich in each direction): £1,955
- From St Pancras: £2,025*
- From Ljubljana: £1,675

* Overland price includes a first class Interrail pass (over 65s) which gives you free travel from your home station to London and back. Book early to get upgrade to Standard Premier on Eurostar as Interrail seats are very limited. It is also possible to go one way by rail and one way by plane – price on request

Options

- Single room Supplement: £350 (7 nights), £480 (9 nights MAN/BHX/EDI)

Deposit

- Travelling by air: £600
- Travelling by rail: £1,000
- Own travel: £300

Hotels

- Grand Plaza Hotel in Ljubljana (3 nights)
- Old Parish House Hotel in Bled (4 nights)



Escorted

