



Slovenia

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Best Places to Eat

- » Špajza, Ljubljana (p1106)
- » Gostilna Pri Planincu, Bled (p1109)
- » Pri Mari, Piran (p1114)

Best Places to Stay

- » Celica Hostel, Ljubljana (p1103)
- » Traveller's Haven, Bled (p1109)
- » Alibi Hostels, Piran (p1113)

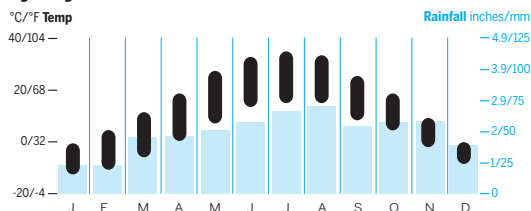
Why Go?

It's a pint-sized place, no doubt about that. But 'good things come in small packages', and never was that old chestnut more appropriate than in describing Slovenia (Slovenija). Slovenia has been dubbed a lot of different things by its PR machine – 'Europe in Miniature', the 'Sunny Side of the Alps', the 'Green Piece of Europe' – and they're all true. From beaches, snow-capped mountains and hills awash in grape vines to Gothic churches and baroque palaces, Slovenia has everything.

Its incredible mixture of climates brings warm Mediterranean breezes up to the foothills of the Alps, where it can snow in summer. And with well over half of its total area covered in forest, Slovenia really is one of the 'greenest' countries in the world. In recent years, it has taken on the role of Europe's activities playground.

When To Go

Ljubljana



Apr–Jun Spring is a great time to be in the lowlands and the flower-carpeted valleys of Gorenjska.

Sep This is the month made for everything – still warm enough to swim and tailor-made for hiking.

Dec–Mar Everyone (and their grandmother) dons their skis in this winter sport-mad country.

Connections

Border formalities with Slovenia's three European Union neighbours – Italy, Austria and Hungary – are nonexistent and all are accessible by train and (less frequently) bus. Venice can also be reached by boat from the coast. Expect a somewhat closer inspection of your documents when travelling to/from non-EU Croatia.

ITINERARIES

One Week

Spend a couple of days in Ljubljana, then head north to unwind in Bled or Bohinj beside idyllic mountain lakes. Take a bus or drive over the hair-raising Vršič Pass into the valley of the vivid blue Soča River and take part in some adventure sports in Bovec before returning to Ljubljana.

Two Weeks

Another week will allow you to see just about everything in this chapter: all of the above as well as the Karst caves at Škocjan and Postojna and the Venetian ports of Koper and Piran on the Adriatic.

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Pršut** Air-dried, thinly sliced ham from the Karst region, not unlike Italian prosciutto.
- » **Žlikrofi** Ravioli-like parcels filled with cheese, bacon and chives.
- » **Žganci** The Slovenian stodge of choice – groats made from barley or corn but usually *ajda* (buckwheat).
- » **Potica** A kind of nut roll eaten at teatime or as a dessert.
- » **Wine** Distinctively Slovenian tipples include peppery red Teran from the Karst region and Malvazija, a straw-colour white wine from the coast.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Euro
- » **Language** Slovene
- » **Money** ATMs are everywhere
- » **Visas** Schengen rules apply; see p1319

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 20,273 sq km
- » **Capital** Ljubljana
- » **Country code** ☎386
- » **Emergency** ambulance/ fire ☎112; police ☎113

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	€0.72
Canada	C\$1	€0.74
Japan	¥100	€0.87
New Zealand	NZ\$1	€0.56
UK	UK£1	€1.16
USA	US\$1	€0.72

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** €40
- » **Two-course evening meal** €20
- » **Museum entrance** €3
- » **Bottle of beer in shop/ bar** €1/3
- » **100km by train/bus** €6.03/9.20

Resources

- » **E-uprava** (<http://e-uprava.gov.si>) Official portal with info and many links
- » **Slovenia Times** (www.sloveniatimes.com) Press agency's biweekly magazine
- » **Slovenian Landmarks** (www.burger.si)