



# Slovenia

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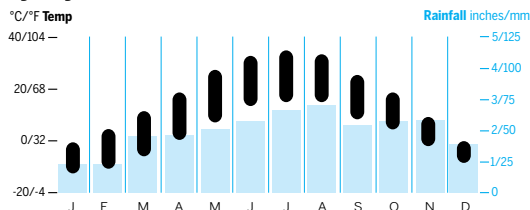
## Why Go?

It's a pint-sized place, with a surface area of just over 20,000 sq km and a population of two million people. But 'good things come in small packages', and never was that old chestnut more appropriate than in describing Slovenia. The country has everything from beaches, snowcapped mountains, hills awash in grape vines and wide plains blanketed in sunflowers to Gothic churches, baroque palaces and art nouveau buildings. Its incredible mixture of climates brings warm Mediterranean breezes up to the foothills of the Alps, where it can snow in summer.

The capital, Ljubljana, is a culturally rich city that values liveability and sustainability over unfettered growth. This sensitivity toward the environment extends to rural and lesser-developed parts of the country as well. With more than half of its total area covered in forest, Slovenia really is one of the 'greenest' countries in the world.

## When to Go

### Ljubljana



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

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

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

## Connections

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

## ITINERARIES

### One Week

Spend a couple of days in Ljubljana, then head north to unwind in Bohinj or romantic Bled beside idyllic mountain lakes. Depending on the season, 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 or Kobarid before returning to Ljubljana.

### Two Weeks

Another week will allow you to see just about everything: 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 coast. The country is small, so even the far eastern region, particularly overlooked but interesting spots like Maribor or Ptuj, is just a few hours away by car or train.

## 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.
- » **Postrv** Trout, particularly the variety from the Soča River, is a real treat.
- » **Prekmurska gibanica** A rich concoction of pastry filled with poppy seeds, walnuts, apples and cheese and topped with cream.
- » **Štruklji** Scrumptious dumplings made with curd cheese and served either savoury as a main course or sweet as a dessert.
- » **Brinjevec** A very strong brandy made from fermented juniper berries (and a decidedly acquired taste).

## AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Euro (€)
- » **Language** Slovene
- » **Money** ATMs are everywhere; banks open Monday to Friday and (rarely) Saturday morning
- » **Visas** Not required for citizens of the EU, Australia, USA, Canada or New Zealand

## Fast Facts

- » **Area** 20,273 sq km
- » **Capital** Ljubljana
- » **Country code** 386
- » **Emergency** Ambulance 112, fire 112, police 113

## Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	€0.82
Canada	C\$1	€0.77
Japan	¥100	€0.83
New Zealand	NZ\$1	€0.65
UK	UK\$1	€1.18
USA	US\$1	€0.78

## Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** €50
- » **Two-course meal** €20
- » **Museum entrance** €4
- » **Beer** €1–3
- » **100km by train/bus** €6/10

## Resources

- » **Slovenian Tourist Board** ([www.slovenia.info](http://www.slovenia.info))
- » **E-uprava** (<http://e-uprava.gov.si/e-uprava/en>)