



welcome to Slovenia

Scenic Beauty

Slovenia offers pristine panoramas in the middle of Europe, with soaring vistas of Alpine peaks, hills and dales straight out of a 19th-century landscape painting, and sparkling lakes and rivers that appear to be underlit by emeralds. Slovenes are well attuned to natural beauty, and the inclination is nearly always to protect and preserve it. Where humankind intrudes, it's often to good effect, such as at Lake Bled, where a tiny baroque chapel atop Bled Island and a dramatic cliffside castle complete a harmonious whole. You may well return from your holiday thinking Slovenia is the prettiest country you've ever seen.

Food & Drink

Slovenian cooking borrows a little from each of its neighbours – Italy, Austria, Hungary and the Balkans – synthesising and reinventing dishes that emerge both familiar and unique. The 'Slovenian' touch, as it were, might well be a local obsession for using fresh and (where possible) locally sourced ingredients. The result is a terrific foodie destination, where you'll sample dishes in unusual combinations featuring items you may not be familiar with, like buckwheat groats or mashed beans. Slovenian wine, both white or red, is an unheralded strength, and regional varieties pair well with local specialities.



JOHN AND TINA REID / GETTY IMAGES ©

*Snow-capped peaks,
turquoise-green rivers
and an Adriatic coastline
inspired by Venice.
Throughout Slovenia, a
culinary and cultural
sophistication hides behind
a rural, rustic charm.*

(left) Piran (p122)
(below) Vršič Pass (p92), Julian Alps



LUZIE SHEPHERD / GETTY IMAGES ©

Friendly Faces

The people are the 'X' factor in any visit to a foreign land, and rest assured you'll find plenty of friendly people here. Wherever you go, you'll get an enthusiastic, helpful, welcoming response, often in English. Numbering only around two million people, Slovenes punch well above their weight class in international sport, science, academics and even philosophy. In the days of old Yugoslavia, Slovenia was regarded as the most open of the country's republics, and it's not any different today. Slovenes are proud of their country and happy to show it off.

Fresh-Air Pursuits

Slovenia is an outdoor destination. Of course, there are great museums and historic churches here too, but the locals seem to favour active holidays, and you'll be invited – even expected – to join in. The most popular pursuits remain mountain walks and hikes, though increasingly Slovenes are discovering cycling (especially in the capital, Ljubljana). Fast rivers like the Soča cry out to be rafted and there are ample chances to try out more esoteric activities like horse riding, ballooning, caving and diving. If all this sounds a bit much, you can always decamp to the coast and sunbathe by the Adriatic.