



Slovenia



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

Carolyn Bain, Steve Fallon

PLAN YOUR TRIP

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Itineraries



Essential Slovenia

This route is ideal for first-time visitors wanting to experience the highlights of the country's alpine, karst and coastal regions.

Begin in the country's capital, **Ljubljana**, allowing at least two nights to take in the sights, restaurants and beautiful riverside setting. Next, head north to **Lake Bled**, over-nighting to allow time for lakeside ambles and taking a *pletna* (gondola) to Bled Island. Lovely **Lake Bohinj**, 26km southwest of Lake Bled, makes for a more rustic, less touristy base and has direct views to **Mt Triglav**.

From here, travel northward to **Kranjska Gora**, the country's skiing capital and another good base for hiking. It's the northern terminus of the spectacular **Vršič Pass**, a high-altitude roadway (open May to October) that zigzags for some 50km down to the white-water rafting capital of **Bovec**. Over-night here and the next day continue along routes 102 and 103 to the amazing cave at **Postojna**. An easy side-trip from here is **Predjama**, where an impregnable castle set in a cliffside cave defies description.

It's just a skip to the coastal resorts of Piran and Portorož. If you're seeking romance, choose **Piran**; if it's sun and fun, **Portorož** is the centre of the action.



2
WEEKS

Slovenia in Depth

With two weeks to explore little Slovenia, you'll be able to experience the best of the country's mountains and coast, plus get a good look at the country's untrampled east.

Allow a couple of nights in **Ljubljana**, then head north, stopping at one or both of the historic towns of **Škofja Loka** or **Radovljica**, to **Lake Bled**. Overnight and explore the lake and Bled Island, or stay a bit longer for adventure, such as rafting or canyoning. To the southwest, picturesque **Lake Bohinj** is an excellent base for exploring **Triglav National Park** or even climbing Mt Triglav itself.

Next head north to ski-capital **Kranjska Gora** to start your climb up and then down to the Soča Valley via the **Vršič Pass**. After 50km of hairpin turns you'll arrive at the country's white-water rafting capital of **Bovec**. Overnight here – especially if you plan to do any adventure sports – or in nearby **Kobarid**, a pretty town with a Mediterranean feel, an amazing WWI history and some of Slovenia's best restaurants.

Continue southward through Nova Gorica to the **Vipava Valley** and on to the Karst region. Little towns here, like **Štanjel** to the west, are rich in olives, ruby-red Teran wine, *pršut* (air-dried ham) and red-tiled roofs.

Further south, following the main Hwy E70 to the coast near Divača, is the awe-inspiring **Škocjan Caves**, part of an immense system of limestone caves. From here, go coastal. **Piran** is the most romantic spot on the Adriatic, but **Izola** has better restaurants and **Portorož** is more fun. Nearby is **Sečovlje** and its famous salt pans.

The return journey to Ljubljana passes through **Postojna**, another amazing cave, with a side trip to **Predjama Castle**. Avoid the capital altogether and continue driving along Hwy E57 to Celje, stopping to visit the awesome Roman necropolis at **Šempeter**. **Celje** is worth an afternoon for its wonderful castle and rich museums but **Maribor**, Slovenia's second-largest city and regional centre, awaits. The surrounding highlands, the **Maribor Pohorje**, rate a look but by now you might just want to spend some downtime along the Drava in atmospheric Lent.

Finish your journey in **Ptuj**, a charming town with a delightful castle and some excellent accommodation.

1
WEEK

Mountain Majesty

What Slovenia has in spades is mountains. Active travellers can head for the hills near Kamnik, climb the dizzying heights of the Julian Alps and then descend into the adventure land of the Soča Valley.

Begin in **Ljubljana**, where you can stock up on hiking gear and regional maps, then make your way to **Kamnik** and the picturesque, high-altitude pastureland of **Velika Planina**. Heading back toward Kranj, continue north to impossibly cute **Radovljica**. Overnight here or a few kilometres north at **Lake Bled**.

Use Bled or nearby **Lake Bohinj** for forays into **Triglav National Park**. Both are popular approaches for scaling **Mt Triglav**. Proceed northward to ski centre **Kranjska Gora** and the heart-stopping **Vršič Pass** (closed winter). The road down deposits you in the **Soča Valley**. Following the Soča River will bring you to the activities centre of **Bovec** and the WWI battlegrounds around **Kobarid**. From here, head down through Tolmin to the sleepy town of **Cerčno**, famous for its pre-Lenten carnival. Route 210 is a sinuous mountain road through the Škofja Loka Hills, a region of steep slopes, deep valleys and ravines, to the charming town of **Škofja Loka** and back to Ljubljana.

1
WEEK

Wine & Spas

Eastern and southern Slovenia are known for both their wines and spas. This tour includes the best of each.

From **Ljubljana** drive southeast to the delightful spa town of **Dolenjske Toplice**. **Otočec ob Krki** and its stunning castle isn't far away. Further east, **Brežice** draws visitors to its Terme Čatež spa complex and the wonderful **Bizejsko-Sremič wine district**, known for medium-dry whites and reds and for *repnice* (caves for storing wine).

Head north on route 219 to **Podčetrtek** and another inviting spa, Terme Olimia. From here it's a short distance through the Haloze Hills to atmospheric **Rogaška Slatina**, Slovenia's oldest and largest spa, a veritable 'cure factory' with a dozen hotels and far more treatments offered.

Head north to the charming town of **Ptuj** and its nearby Terme Ptuj spa then go east to Ormož, for the start of the important **Jeruzalem-Ljutomer district**, home to some of the country's best whites. Walk or hike the wine trail here.

The region's biggest city and cultural hub, **Maribor**, is not very far away. Who could possibly resist seeing the world's oldest (and still productive) grapevine dating back more than three centuries?

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/S-train/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Tube station
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Carolyn Bain

Lake Bled & the Julian Alps, Western Slovenia & the Soča Valley, The Karst & the Coast, Southern Slovenia & the Krka Valley

A sucker for Alpine peaks and fairytale lakes, Melbourne-based Carolyn jumped at the chance to add more Central Europe to her guidebook portfolio, which has been heavy on Nordic destinations of late. A travel writer for 15 years, she was delighted to revisit Slovenia on a mission to hike, raft, swim, glamp, explore caves, sample wines, rank waterfalls and castles, and taste-test *kremšnita* in the name of research. Carolyn also wrote *Travel with Children*.

See more at carolynbain.com.au.

Read more about Carolyn at: <https://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/carolynbain>



Steve Fallon

Ljubljana, Eastern Slovenia Steve has been travelling to Slovenia since the early 1990s, when almost no one but the Slovenes had ever heard of the place. Never

mind, it was his own private Idaho for over a decade. Though on *še govori slovensko kot jamski človek* (he still speaks Slovene like a caveman), Steve considers part of his soul to be Slovenian and returns as often as he can for a glimpse of the Julian Alps in the sun, a dribble of *bučno olje* and a dose of the 'dual'. Steve also wrote *Plan Your Trip* (except *Travel with Children*), *Understand Slovenia* and *Survival Guide*.

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