



Western Slovenia & the Soča Valley

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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Dobra Vila (p113)
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- ➔ Majerija (p120)
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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Hiša Franko (p116)
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- ➔ Majerija (p120)
- ➔ Faladur (p121)
- ➔ Gostilna Pri Lojzetu (p121)

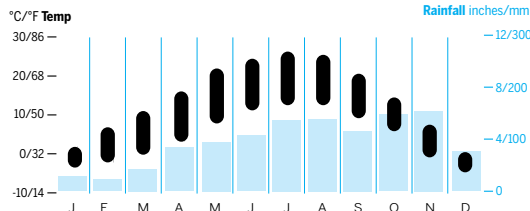
Why Go?

Rivers don't come much more scenic than the Soča (pronounced so-cha). This aquamarine-coloured watercourse threads through the Soča Valley (Dolina Soče) from its source in the Julian Alps and gives rise to a smorgasbord of sights like gorges and waterfalls. Loads of activities get travellers up close to the natural splendour from busy centres like Bovec and Kobarid, where tour operators help adrenaline-seekers ride river rapids or paraglide from hill-sides. But it doesn't have to be all high action: cycling and walking trails get you out among stunning panoramas.

As ever in this pocket-sized country, there's more to explore behind the scenes. There's rich history to delve into – particularly relating to WWI, when millions of troops fought on the mountainous battlefield here. Tucked away east of the Soča is a Unesco-recognised mercury-mining town, and small regions like Goriška Brda and the Vipava Valley enchant with idyllic landscapes and long wine-making traditions.

When to Go

Bovec



Feb–Mar See Cerkno's fascinating Laufarija Mardi Gras in the run-up to Lent.

May–Jun Melt-water swells the Soča River for the most dramatic white-water rafting.

Sep–Oct The grape harvest – ideal for wine and food touring in Goriška Brda and the Vipava Valley.



Western Slovenia & the Soča Valley Highlights

1 Marvel over the exquisite green waters of the **Soča River** (p111) while rafting or kayaking on them.

2 Take one of the area's loveliest short walks to **Kozjak Waterfall** (p114) in Kobarid.

3 Tour the idyllic, under-the-radar villages and vineyards of **Goriška Brda** (p119).

4 Dine superbly and get a lesson in indigenous wine varieties in the **Vipava Valley** (p120).

5 Push your limits with activities like canyoning or hydrospeeding from **Bovec** (p111).

6 Check out World Heritage-listed history in **Idrija** (p122),

followed by a plate of *žlikrofi* (ravioli-like pasta pockets).

7 Wonder over the human spirit at Cerkno's **Franja Partisan Hospital** (p125).

8 Stretch your legs and admire the views at **Most na Soči** (p117).