

# Cycling Safaris

## Pearls of Slovenia 2018

### Self guided tour

236 - 246 km | 8 days / 7 nights



Slovenia was formerly part of Yugoslavia (gaining Independence in 1992) and was one of the ten accession countries that joined the EU in May 2004 (indeed the richest and economically well advanced). A relatively small country in terms of size and population (just two million) it has a very varied geography. To the north it is bordered by Austria, to the west by Italy, to the south by Croatia and to the east by Hungary. Culturally, these neighbours have exerted influences over the Slovenian peoples (as it has changed hands between them, from the Roman Empire through to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and also being behind the Iron Curtain). The geography of the country almost seems to reflect these influences too, with the North West predominantly Alpine, the South West Mediterranean and the East low lying plains.

The stunning beauty of the country is certainly a good reason to come and visit, but for many, the friendliness of the Slovenians would be reason enough in itself. Many speak impeccable English (as well as other languages) and are delighted to share their country with foreign visitors.

This is NOT a mountain bike tour. It is suitable for cyclists of average fitness, it includes one pass of 750m / 2500ft (but you have the whole day to do it on a quiet road and a help-out lift can be ordered). A definitive must for photographers and those who like mountain scenery but don't want to take too much effort to get it.

## TOUR ITINERARY

### Day 1 ARRIVAL TO LAKE BLED

**Accommodation in 4\* hotel.** You will arrive in Bled, a world famous town on the shore of a beautiful glacial lake. Defined by its unique island church sitting proudly in the middle of this immense body of water, surrounded by towering alpine mountains, and the castle perched high on a cliff standing guard over the town, Bled is one of Slovenia's most popular tourist attractions.

One of our representatives will meet you and take you for a welcome drink, deliver your information pack and ensure you have everything you need for your trip. For the rest of the day you can choose between a number of leisure activities in Bled. Visit the island church and marvel at the ornate golden altar and ring the church bell and make a wish, it might come true. Hike up to the castle for a spectacular view of this

glacial valley. In the evening try the local speciality – the cream cake – in one of the great little tea shops beside the lake, or sample the many bars and restaurants.

**Day 2**            **BLED – RIBČEV LAZ**                            **19 km + possible side trip to Savica Waterfall 16 km**  
**Accommodation in 4\* hotel.**

You will be transferred up to the high plateau at Pokljuka (12 km). From here you can marvel at the stunning views before gliding down into the neighbouring Bohinj Valley, the jewel in the heart of the Triglav National Park.

You will cycle through the many small alpine villages scattered across the valley until reaching the small settlement of Ribčev Laz (Fisherman’s Pass) lying next to the stunning Lake Bohinj. Cycle around the lake to Savica Waterfall, source of the Sava Bohinjka River, and then take the cable car up to Vogel Mountain for a spectacular view into the Bohinj Valley and of Mount Triglav, the highest peak in the Julian Alps.

Explore the forests surrounding the lake before spending the evening in one of the cosy village pubs and trying the local home-made honey brandy.

**Day 3**            **RIBČEV LAZ – ŠKOFJA LOKA**                            **57 km**

**Mostly flat with a slow climb up to Jelovica High plateau, pass of 750 m / 2400 ft.**

**Accommodation in 3\* hotel.**

Leaving Bohinj you cycle to the lovely village of Bohinjska Bistrica, where you can admire the picture-perfect backdrop. Then it’s up 750 m/2400 ft to the Jelovica high plateau (a “help out” lift to top of mountain pass is available for this part of the trip at extra cost of 15 EUR per person). From the top the route takes you through a deep forest which soon drops off into the Selška Dolina Valley leading to the Škofja Loka hills. The first stop is at the little alpine village of Sorica, set among low green hills. This is the birthplace of the famous Slovene painter, Ivan Grohar. Visit his gallery where you’ll find a limited collection of his work.

The next stop is at the historic iron-smelting town of Železniki, where you will find the remains of an old blast furnace dating from 1826. Stop in one of the village inns along the way and try the delicious trout. Finally you arrive in the wonderful town of Škofja Loka, one of the oldest towns in Slovenia.

If you are not too tired you can cycle up to the castle on the hill overlooking town. Spend the rest of the evening wandering through the old streets of this historic medieval town.

**Day 4**            **ŠKOFJA LOKA - PREDDVOR**                            **33 km**

**Cycling across flatlands. Accommodation in 3\* hotel**

Leaving Škofja Loka you will head across the great Sora plain with the majestic peaks of the Kamnik-Savinja Alps as your backdrop. The route will take you past Kranj, Slovenia’s fourth largest city.

Stop for lunch in Glavni Trg, the main square framed by its interesting gothic architecture.

As you continue northeast you’ll come across Brdo Castle, renowned as Slovenia’s most elegant presidential palace. The day ends in Preddvor where your hotel is set close to a small lake sitting in the shadow of the beautiful Kamnik-Savinja Alps. If the weather is warm enough, you can take a swim here in the pure, refreshing alpine water before having dinner.

**Day 5**            **PREDDVOR - BEGUNJE**                            **43 km ( +11km for optional side trips )**

**Mostly flat with a few small hills. Accommodation in 4\* hotel.**

A ride through history. This route will take you along the edge of the Kamnik-Savinja Alps to Radovljica with its beautifully preserved old town and an interesting beekeeping museum. Y

our route will also take you through the fascinating little village of Kropa where you will find the iron forging museum dedicated to the history of the town’s blacksmith trade. You can even learn how to make your own nail, and either add it to the current collection of over 100 types, or take it home with you.

We suggest lunch in small restaurant near the castle in Radovljica.



## 2018 TOUR PRICE AND DATES

€690.00 per person sharing (low season)

€820.00 single room occupancy (low season)

€725.00 per person sharing (18<sup>th</sup> August – 21<sup>st</sup> September)

€855.00 single room occupancy (18<sup>th</sup> August – 21<sup>st</sup> September)

Half board supplement €110.00 (includes 6 dinners)

Tour can start any day from 17<sup>th</sup> March until 13<sup>th</sup> October.

## WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- Seven nights accommodation, Bed and Breakfast, 3- 4\* accommodation
- 21 speed touring bike (equipped with lock, pannier bag, spare tube, set of Allen keys and puncture repair kit). Bike hire starts at 9am on day 2 of the trip and ends at 6pm on day 7.
- Luggage transfers (1 piece per person max. 20 kg, every additional item €10, payable on spot)
- Information package including detailed route description (one per booking party)
- Back up (hotline service) during the trip

### Supplements:

- Six 3-course dinner at €110.00 ( no dinner supplement possible in Skofja Loka )
- Helmet rental: €12 per week
- E-bike supplement: €110  
(upon delivery you will be asked a deposit of €100 in cash only – this money will be returned to you when the e-bike is given back in good condition it is not damaged or missing parts such as battery lock keys)
- Extra bike rental: €15 per day
- Transfers from/to airport: Ljubljana Airport to Bled - €35, Klagenfurt Airport to Bled - €70.  
All prices per person, 2 persons minimum, one way trip

### Additional accommodation in Bled

3\*-accommodation: €65 per person sharing; €95 single room; €15 half board

4\*-accommodation: €85 per person sharing in Lake View room; €145 single room; €25 half board (4 courses)

## ACCOMMODATION ON TOUR ( **this depends on availability** )

<b>Night 1 &amp; 7: Bled</b>	Hotel Triglav 4* ( <a href="http://www.hoteltriglavbled.si/en">www.hoteltriglavbled.si/en</a> ) or hotel Golf 4* ( <a href="http://www.sava-hotels-resorts.com/en/accomodations/sava-hoteli-bled/hotel-golf">www.sava-hotels-resorts.com/en/accomodations/sava-hoteli-bled/hotel-golf</a> )
<b>Night 2: Lake Bohinj</b>	Hotel Kristal 4* at lake Bohinj ( <a href="http://www.hotel-kristal-slovenia.com">www.hotel-kristal-slovenia.com</a> ) or hotel Eco Park 5* in Bohinjska Bistrica ( <a href="http://www.bohinj-park-hotel.si/eng/">www.bohinj-park-hotel.si/eng/</a> )
<b>Night 3: Skofja Loka</b>	Hotel Mini 3* ( <a href="http://www.minihotel.si/en">www.minihotel.si/en</a> ) or Loka Turizem 3* ( <a href="http://www.loka.si/en/">www.loka.si/en/</a> )
<b>Night 4: Preddvor</b>	Hotel Zaplata 3* ( <a href="http://www.pension-zaplata.com/index_eng.html">www.pension-zaplata.com/index_eng.html</a> )
<b>Night 5: Begunje</b>	Hotel Lambergh 4* ( <a href="http://www.hotel-lambergh.com/sl/hotel.html">www.hotel-lambergh.com/sl/hotel.html</a> )
<b>Night 6: Kranjska Gora</b>	Hotel Miklič 3* ( <a href="http://www.hotelmiklic.com/en/">www.hotelmiklic.com/en/</a> ) (possible to upgrade to 4* hotel Ramada hotel & suites)

## WHAT TO BRING

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- We would recommend that you bring padded cycling shorts or even a gel saddle cover to make your days cycling more comfortable (if you wish to bring your own saddle this is no problem). Cycling gloves are also a good investment.
- We highly recommend that you wear one. If you own a bicycle helmet please bring it, otherwise helmets can be rented for 12 euro each.
- Don't forget sun cream, sunglasses and sun hat.
- If you wish to use toe clips we advise you to bring your own pedals with toe clips, as the pedals on our bikes do not accommodate them.
- We do not provide rain gear so be sure to bring your own lightweight waterproofs.

## BIKE DETAILS

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This tour is perfect for those who like mountain scenery, but don't want to take too much effort to get it. This is NOT a mountain bike tour. It is suitable for cyclists of average fitness, has one pass of 750m / 2500ft (but you have the whole day to do it on a quiet road) or we can arrange a lift.

Bike hire starts at 9am on day 2 of the trip and ends at 6pm on day 7.



Aluminium frame

Shimano gear system with "rapid-fire" shifters

21 speed

Rack on back

1 rear pannier

Repair kit

Computer and map holder

**Helmets are not included but can be rented for 12 euro per week.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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### What is the currency and how much money should I bring?

Slovenia uses the Euro. By UK/US/Irish standards Slovenia is a cheap destination with a ½ litre of beer costing around €1.50 and a glass of wine €2.00. A Pizza would be about €5 euro and a decent 3-course meal with a couple of drinks €10 - €15 euro.

### What is the Language?

The official language is Slovenian. Most Slovenians speak good English and many speak German and Italian as well! Lots of places will have menus in several languages and, if not, the ever-helpful locals are more than happy to explain. The guide is, of course, fluent in English.

### What happens if I am delayed on the first night?

If you know in advance that you will be late please contact our office. If you are unexpectedly delayed you should call the meeting point on Saturday evening and leave a message as to what time you expect to arrive.

### What is the weather like?

Slovenia is a small country that enjoys a varied climate based around its distinct regions - Alpine, Continental and Mediterranean. It is known for being on the sunny side of the Alps. The summer days can be extremely warm (30 C) and sunny with rainfall occurring late into the afternoon (5.00 pm or thereabouts).

## TRAVEL INFORMATION

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Slovenia is a relatively small country with a small dispersed population (around 2 million inhabitants). Therefore the entry/exit points are fairly limited and it is often better served by places outside of the country.

The main access point is to fly into Ljubljana (the capital). There is a direct bus service from the airport to the centre of Bled. From Ljubljana buses depart from Bay 7 at the main bus station every hour on the hour and takes 1 hour and 15 minutes. You can also take a train up to Bled (the train station in Bled is called "Lesce Bled"). The journey takes just under an hour.

Transfers: Ljubljana Airport to Bled - €20. Klagenfurt Airport to Bled - €65. All prices per person, one way (minimum 2 people)

The national airline is Adria Airways and it has a number of direct flights to major European cities including London (Gatwick), Manchester and Dublin (depart Dublin Friday Nights/returning Saturdays only). For more information check ([www.adria-airways.com](http://www.adria-airways.com)).

Easyjet fly daily into Ljubljana from Stansted ([www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com))

There are also many alternatives connections through other European hubs such as Frankfurt, Paris, Prague and Budapest with most of the major European Flag Carriers.

Ryanair ([www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)) fly to Trieste on the Italian side of the border where again you can take a train to and from Bled. The service to and from Trieste is more complicated (as you may have to change trains and train stations in Nova Gorica or Ljubljana) so you should take care in your travel plans if coming to and from this airport. The airport is actually called Ronchi and is some 30km outside the city, which is actually closer to Gorizia (which is one of the trains stopping points).

All the details for the above train journeys are on the website

<http://reiseauskunft.bahn.de/bin/query.exe/en>

**(remember that the train station in Bled is called "Lesce Bled" and is 7km from the town of Bled itself).** We can pre-order taxis for you from various locations on request, so please contact us well in advance of the tour if you would like help.