

Cycling Safaris

Slovenia Wine & Wellness 2018 Self Guided Tour

min 194 / max 248 km | 8 days / 7 nights



This tour takes us through northeast of Slovenia and has it all – a picturesque countryside tour, with an emphasis on wine, good food and hotel accommodation with thermal water springs where you can relax after your day's cycling. We bike through vineyards, passing wine cellars with great white wine, or stop for a snack in a little roadside inn. Those who have only a passing interest in wine, may be more interested in the old towns, mighty castles, stork nests on chimneys...

This is a trip for hedonists! A picturesque countryside tour, emphasis on wine, good food and relaxation in hot thermal springs, Suitable for cyclists of basic fitness with modest daily distances. This is also a tour that we would recommend to families.

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 Arrival in Maribor

Maribor is the second largest Slovene town with a lovely old center comprising attractive streets with charming shops, restaurants, cafes and a lively section of bars in the Lent district. A popular summer festival takes place on the banks of Drava River. The city castle houses the only Slovene fashion museum with excellent collection of costumes and uniforms, one of the most prestigious is a military uniform worn by Yugoslavian president Tito. Accommodation in a 4* hotel.

DAY 2 Maribor – Ptuj 29 km

The route is flat today and you will follow the Drava River as it meanders its way south-east across the vineyards and orchards of the Drava Plain and passes through Ptuj, the oldest settlement in Slovenia with 2000 years of history and an incredibly well preserved castle dating as far back as 69 AD. Visit the Ptuj Wine Cellar, which has its own shop and tasting room; we recommend you to try the Traminec white wine there. The nearby Haloze Hills also offer you the opportunity to sample more of the wonderful wines of this region. Accommodation in a 4* spa & wellness hotel.

DAY 3 Ptuj – Jeruzalem**50 km**

The route is flat with a short hilly section at the end and one shallow 100 m 330ft climb. Accommodation in a 3* guesthouse set among the vineyards. Again our cycling begins on a dedicated path along the river. Leaving the stony streets of Ptuj, the route will take you to immense eastern plains that will lead you through tiny villages and picturesque scenery. In the border town of Ormoz you can visit the local wine cellars for your lunch and taste white wine which is predominant in this region. This is one of the few Slovene towns to have any visible signs of the Balkan wars owing to a number of new buildings built after bombings. Leaving Ormoz you will cycle northwards passing the most farmhouse wine district Podravje, the landscape of terraced vineyards with the sound of the Klopotes (a wooden wind-powered rattle designed to scare birds). Your day will end at the hilltop village of Jeruzalem.

DAY 4 Jeruzalem – Moravske Toplice**45 km or 52 km**

Some hilly sections in the morning, flat cycle in the afternoon, accommodation in 5* hotel which is part of Moravske Toplice thermal spa resort.

In the morning you continue along the wine road; on a clear day you can see as far as Hungary. There is a never-ending choice of wine cellars between here and Ljutomer offering some of the best white wines in the region; although you might not want to stop at too many in case you start cycling around in circles bleary-eyed. Visit the floating mill of Veržej before crossing the Mura River into the most eastern region of Slovenia, Prekmurje. We also recommend to visit a pottery workshop in Filovci and the modern church in Bogojina. Tonight's destination is part of the Terme 3000 complex in Moravske Toplice where you can take the waters and enjoy the spa.

DAY 5 Rest Day - Moravske Toplice**(Optional roundtrip of 25 or 50 km)**

Accommodation in 5* hotel. You can take the day off and immerse yourself in the healing powers of the thermal spa that Moravske Toplice is most famous for. Or you can take a short cycling trip out to Bukovnica Lake, said to have bio-energetic healing effects! Along the way you'll see the many L-shaped farmhouses and the beautiful white storks nesting on the rooftops. Enjoy a coffee in Lendava and try the local specialty cake, 'gibanica' (a sweet pie containing apple, walnut, poppyseeds and cottage cheese). Of course you can just relax and make the most of the spa facilities and thermal waters on hand.

DAY 6 Moravske Toplice – Cerkevjak**41 km**

First part flat followed by gentle rolling hills. Accommodation in a 2* country inn/guest house; wine tasting included in the tour price.

As you head back westward you will stop at Murska Sobota Castle, which houses a regional museum with an interesting exhibition devoted to the culture and traditions of the Prekmurje region. You will then cross the River Mura on an old-fashioned float before cycling across low green hills, stopping for a picnic beside a tranquil lake. You will end the day in the small settlement of Lenart, set amid the centre of the Slovenske Gorice Hills with beautiful surroundings and the spire of the lovely Church of St. Lenart, which was also used as a walled fort against the invading Turks, standing proud over the village.

DAY 7 Cerkevjak – Maribor**36 km**

A slightly hilly day. Accommodation in 4* hotel. Sauerkraut and blood sausages: for your final day you can take a leisurely ride through more vineyard-covered hills and quaint rural villages and farms. Soon you will join the Malecnik wine road that leads into Maribor. Although this is predominantly white wine territory, there are a couple of very good red ones. Stop in the small village of Vodole just on the outskirts of Maribor, where you can have lunch in one of the tourist farms serving up grilled blood sausages with sauerkraut.

DAY 8 Departure from Maribor

2018 TOUR PRICE

€660.00 per person sharing
€790.00 single room occupancy

2018 TOUR DATES

Any day from 27th March – 13th October

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 night stay in hotels with breakfast
- 21 speed touring bike (equipped with lock, pannier bag, spare tube, set of Allen keys and basic puncture repair set). Bike hire starts at 9am on day 2 of the trip and ends at 6pm on day 7
- Personal welcome meeting and bike fitting on arrival
- All luggage transfers (one piece per person, every additional item €10, payable on spot)
- Information package including detailed route description with corresponding maps (one per booking party)
- Free entry in hotel swimming pools in Ptuj & Moravske Toplice
- Free wine with dinner in Vitomarci on Day 6
- Back-up service (hotline) during the trip

Not included:

- Helmets are available to rent locally at €12.00 for the week.
- Bike insurance: Bikes are insured against minor breaks and normal wear. They are not insured against theft or frame break.
- If you wish to avail of 7 dinners on this trip a supplement of €125 will apply.
- E-bike supplement - €110.00 for the week (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 under condition it is not damaged or missing parts such as battery lock keys)

ACCOMMODATION – *(subject to availability)*

4* Hotels on day 1, 2, and 7
5* hotel (with thermal spa) on day 4 and 5
3* Hotel on day 3
2* Country Inn/Guesthouse on day 6

If you require additional accommodation and would like us to book it on your behalf, please let us know:
Maribor: 4* Hotel €65.00 per person sharing; €100.00 for single room; €15.00 half board supplement

WHAT TO BRING

- Comfortable cycling clothing – shorts, shoes, gloves, etc
- A set of light waterproof clothing
- Hat, sunglasses and bathing suit
- Casual clothes for evening. You may be grateful for something warm with long sleeves.
- 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.

BIKE / FITNESS

Level of difficulty: Medium – low level due to the low mileage (30 – 40 km per day) and relatively flat cycling. Suitable for cyclists of basic fitness.



Aluminium frame
Shimano gear system with “rapid-fire” shifters
21 speed
lock
Rack on back
1 rear pannier
Repair kit

Helmets are not included (available upon booking for €12 per week).

TRAVEL & TRANSPORT

Starting / finishing point of this trip is **Maribor** in North - East Slovenia.

By plane: the closest airport is Graz (in Austria), served by Ryanair from London Stansted. Our transfer from and to airport is available: Graz AP to Maribor 30 EUR per person one way, two persons minimum.

Another airport where you can fly to is Ljubljana (LJU). Several airlines serve it. From the airport you can travel to Maribor by bus (direct buses, takes about 3 hrs) or train (every 2 hours, takes about 2 hours) or book our transfer: Ljubljana Airport (or city centre) to Maribor 65 EUR per person; one way, two persons minimum

Trains:

Maribor is on the main train line between Ljubljana and Vienna. All trains from these two places stop here. (Ljubljana is 90 minutes by train from Maribor, every 2 hours). For train connections in details, check out <http://reiseauskunft.bahn.de>