

Tour Central Europe

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2018 Slovenia, Croatia and the Adriatic Sea Tour

This is the best and most comprehensive tour you will find anywhere!

- Departure:** **Wednesday, September 26, 2018**
From your point of departure in the US for Ljubljana (Slovenia)
- Pick-up:** **Thursday, September 27, 2018**
At Ljubljana/Brnik Airport (LJU)
- Returning:** **Sunday, October 14, 2018**
From Ljubljana Brnik Airport

NOTE: For interested guests, we will be able to take you from Prague in our mini-bus to Bled (our first destination in Slovenia) and/or back to Prague (all day travel).

Once upon a time, Yugoslavia was a country in Southeastern Europe during most of the 20th century. It came into existence after World War I in 1918. After an economic and political crisis in the 1980s, Yugoslavia broke up, at first into five countries, which led to the Yugoslav Wars. Today there are seven independent countries that rose from the ashes of former Yugoslavia's turmoil.

To help you understand Yugoslavia's rich history, we are inviting you to experience two remarkable and fascinating countries of Slovenia and Croatia. In Slovenia, you will experience with the dominating Julian Alps and WW I sites, deep gorges and the mysterious area of Karst, green forests and pastures, vineyards and the first "taste" of the Adriatic Sea at Piran. Croatia will make you wonder where to place it. You will find fascinating coastline with hidden coves, the turquoise Adriatic Sea, historic Roman villages and ruins, Venetian bell towers and dramatic mountains. The Dalmatian Coast dominated by many islands in the Adriatic to the spectacular Dubrovnik in the very South. From Split, we will be venturing inland through the mountain ranges to the stunning waterfalls and turquoise colored lakes at Plitvice Lakes National Park. We will conclude our adventure in Ljubljana, the city of love and capital of Slovenia. In both countries you will be spoiled by their culinary specials, such as seafood and tasty local wines.

Tour Highlights:

Lake side town of Bled - Vintgar cascade gorge - fairy-tale village of Radovljica – breathtaking exploration of the Vrsic Pass (WW I historical sites) in the Julian Alps - Lipica, the home of the noble white Lipizzaner horses - Postojna Caves, one of the world's most impressive underground caves - ancient coastal town of Piran on the Slovenian Adriatic - historic central Dalmatian city of Sibenik - romantic cities of Stari Grad and Hvar on the Mediterranean island of Hvar - the "Pearl of the Adriatic, the old town of Dubrovnik - city of Split including the ancient Diocletian's Palace - hiking in the picturesque Plitvice Lakes National Park - historic Ljubljana, and much more.

Day 1 (traveling day):

Upon arrival in **Ljubljana's** airport **Brnik**, we transfer directly to our hotel in **Bled** (35 minutes away). Bled is the only lakeside town in Slovenia situated in a serene valley beneath craggy mountains. Lake Bled, Slovenia's leading mountain resort comes complete with a sweeping alpine panorama, a fairy-tale island, a cliff-hanging medieval castle, a lakeside promenade, and the country's most sought after dessert - vanilla-custard-and-cream cake - called *kremna rezina*.

Depending on our arrival there will be time on our own to cruise through a portion of the city.

Overnight in Bled.

DAY 2:

In the morning there will be time for us to relax and/or take a walk to the nearby lake.

After lunch we will take a boat trip to a medieval Tyrolean-style cloister Bled nestled on the wooded island of **Otok**.

Next, there will be a visit to the medieval **Bled Castle** majestically overlooking the town and the lake. Following the Bled Castle tour we will enjoy a welcome dinner and tour orientation.

Overnight in Bled.

(B-D)

DAY 3:

This day is calling for a day filled with fun activities. The first excursion will take us to the **Vingtar** cascade gorge and a very pleasant mile-long scenic hike along the "wild" **River Radovna**. Vingtar is a very interesting nature gap which is above the roaring water cascades ending in a waterfall. Boardwalks and bridges put you right in the middle of the action. In the afternoon we will visit the historic town of **Radovljica**, located nearby Bled.

After lunch we will drive to the Bohinjske Lake, Slovenia's largest lake. Its brooding and mystical feel are encouraged by the steep mountain faces that rise out of the lake on the northern side, with mountain peaks also dominating the background to the west and south. If it is nature and alpine beauty you long for, then Bohinj is your number one choice! Take the cable car to the top of the range of Triglav (Slovenian Alps), where a cable car whizzes us up to the summit of **Mount Vogel** (5100 feet) in no time – if the Alps look dramatic from the lakeside, from Vogel's summit they're breathtaking.

In the evening, we will enjoy a private dinner with musical entertainment at a family farm Mulej located in the village **Selo**, in the close vicinity of Bled.

Overnight in Bled.

(B-D)

DAY 4:

Most of this day we will spend traveling and indulging in the natural beauty of the **Triglav National Park**. This park is situated in the **Julian Alps** and we will be driving up and over the **Vrsic Pass** (el. 5300 feet). The road across the pass was built for military purposes, to supply the Isonzo front of World War I. Opened in late 1915, it is currently known as Russian Road, renamed in July 2006 to honor the Russian prisoners of war that were forced to build it and many of whom died. In their memory the prisoners built next to the road a wooden Russian Church. Following lunch at the top of Vrsic Pass we will continue down on the other side of the mountains via the **Soca River Valley**. This circular drive features some spectacular mountain scenery, as well as some offbeat WWI sights.

We may arrive later in the afternoon or early evening. The rest of the day is at our leisure.

Overnight in Bled.

(B)

DAY 5:

Following breakfast we will continue to **Postojnska Jama (Cave)** – one of the world's most impressive underground caves. Slovenia boasts several fine cave systems, but Postojna is arguably the best.

After lunch, we will continue to **Lipica** – home of the noble white horses **Lipizzaners** situated in wonderful natural park like setting. We will enjoy touring this famous horse farm and stables. The stables were founded by the son of Keiser Ferdinand I. Charles in 1580. The horses were and still are used for leading the royal chariots.

We will continue to the ancient coastal town of **Piran** located at the Adriatic Sea.

Overnight in Piran.

(B)

DAY 6:

This day will be very relaxing and enjoyable by spending all day on our own to explore the ancient seaside town of **Piran**. Slovenia owns only 29 miles of Adriatic coastline and it includes the Back Door gem of the Slovenian Adriatic, Piran. Its main square spills into its harbor. Enjoy a gelato or a "kava" on its sleek marbled square, surrounded by neoclassical buildings and watched over by a bell tower. Wander its piers and take a lot of pictures at sunset. Enjoy a spectacular seafood and pasta feast in a very domestic atmosphere.

There will be a fresh fish dinner on a private fishing boat coasting the Golfo di Trieste.

Overnight in Piran.

(B-D)

DAY 7:

In the morning, we will depart Piran and continue to Croatia. Our destination of the day will be the town of Zadar (5 hours travel time). **Zadar** is the oldest continuously inhabited Croatian city. It is situated on the Adriatic Sea, at the northwestern part of Ravni Kotari region. Zadar serves as the seat of Zadar County and the wider northern Dalmatian region. The city proper covers 9.7 sq mi with a population of 75,082 in 2011, making it the fifth-largest city in the nation.

Overnight in Zadar

(B-D)

DAY 8:

Following breakfast, we will be heading further South to Split (2.5 hour travel time). We will head directly to Split's harbor where we will board a boat ferry (2 hours boat ride). The ferry will take us to the beautiful Mediterranean island of **Hvar**. Upon arrival and to readjust from the boat ride, we may enjoy a casual stroll or just have coffee, wine, or gelato in the small ancient town of **Stari Grad (Old Town)**. It is one of the oldest towns in Europe (384 b.c.) and it used to be called Pharos. We will then continue on to the town of **Hvar**.

Since Hvar is situated in the middle of the main sea routes, history has left many traces in the villages in middle of astonishing natural beauty. Hvar is an island of heather, sunshine and crickets, an island of lavender, sage, rosemary, and wine.

Upon settling in our hotel, there will be time on your own to explore the harbor, the old town, or just take a walk to the beach.

Overnight in Hvar.

(B)

DAY 9:

As per request from many previous tour participants, we will spend a full day at leisure in this magnificent and historical city. There are many things to do, so enjoy this day on your own.

Overnight in Hvar.

(B)

DAY 10:

After breakfast we will travel (2 hour travel time) across this spectacular island to catch a ferryboat at **Drvenik** that will take us back to the mainland (45 minute boat ride). Continue travel by car (2.5 hour travel time) south along the very picturesque **Jadran Coastal Highway** to **Dubrovnik**, called the "Pearl of the Adriatic" and situated on the **Dalmatian Coast**. Tour the old town of Dubrovnik by night.

Overnight in Dubrovnik.

(B-D)

DAY 11:

Today we discover the city whose ancient walls have withstood both time and tide for a hundred years, and more recently, the attack during the Serbian invasion of the early 1990s. The city is now repaired, renewed, and ready to show off its many charms. We begin with a guided walking tour through Old Town that will take us to some of the most important sights such as Luza Square, Sponza Palace, Rector's Palace, the old harbor, and the stately Baroque Cathedral. Do not forget the walk along the city's walls.

Overnight in Dubrovnik.

(B)

DAY 12:

This day is reserved for our leisure in **Dubrovnik**.

Overnight in Dubrovnik.

(B-D)

DAY 13:

Leaving Dubrovnik this morning we travel due northwest on the inland highway to **Split** (approx. 4 hour travel time). **Split** is the main city of the central Dalmatian Coast and home of the **Diocletian Palace** located in the center of the city, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built by the Roman emperor Diocletian at the end of the 3rd century, the palace and the ruins, eventually formed the historic heart of picturesque Split.

Overnight outside of Split.

(B-D)

DAY 14:

After breakfast, we will be drive to the nearby city of Split. We will tour the **Diocletian Palace** accompanied by a guide followed by a few hours at our leisure. Next, we will head deep into the mountains of Croatia from sea level to nearly 5000 ft. above the sea level to the Plitvice National Park (approx. 4 hours travel time). This park is the first and most natural park in the country. Depending on our arrival time, we may be able to visit a small portion of the park on our own.

Overnight in Plitvice Lakes.

(B-D)

DAY 15:

Plitvice Lakes National Park is one of Europe's most spectacular natural wonders. Imagine Niagara Falls diced and sprinkled over a heavily forested Grand Canyon. Plitvice Lakes National Park is a dramatic string of 16 turquoise-colored lakes connected by a series of waterfalls, cascades, caves, and miles of pleasant plank walks. Once known as Devils Garden, this intriguing natural landscape of karst formations and abundant wildlife is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We will have the opportunity to explore the park all day long on our own.

Overnight in Plitvice Lakes.

(B)

DAY 16:

This morning we will travel from Plitvice to Ljubljana (approx. 4 hour travel time).

This afternoon is at leisure in **Ljubljana**. Ljubljana, a lazy old town clustered around a castle-topped mountain is often compared to Salzburg. While there are few must-see sights, the town's biggest attraction is its ambience. The Ljubljana River, lined with cafes, restaurants, and buzzing outdoor markets, divides the city in half. Most sights are either along or just a short walk from the river, which is crossed by several interesting bridges.

Overnight in Ljubljana.

(B)

DAY 17:

After lunch, we will meet our guide and spent several hours enjoying this cosmopolitan and picturesque city. Then the afternoon is at leisure for independent exploration.

Tonight we celebrate our adventure with a farewell dinner.

Overnight in Ljubljana.

(B-D)

Day 18 (traveling day):

This morning we transfer to the airport in Ljubljana/Brnik Airport (LJU) for our return flights to the US.

(B)

TOUR SPECIFICATIONS AND PRICING

Upon signing up for this tour, you will receive a booklet with important and helpful information, including detailed itinerary, money exchange, what to pack, electrical appliances, cell phones, hotel addresses and phone numbers, medical concerns, suggested readings, information on visiting places, and much more.

This trip has been custom-designed specifically for a small group of just 12 to 14 guests to appreciate unique natural landscapes, cultural and historical sites, culinary treats, behind the scene treasures, and authentic encounters. You will never feel like you are a part of a herd. We like to travel light – smaller group causes little environmental and cultural disturbance, which allows you to get closer to the world you are exploring.

We will be traveling in a private air-conditioned mid-size bus. We realize that hotels are not the main reason for you to select a tour. But great accommodation can improve the tour experience. We are selecting hotels according to our previous satisfied experience or hotels that we believe are the best for our particular trip. European hotels are usually smaller than those in the U.S.A. Also, air conditioning isn't as common as at home and in some country setting hotels elevators may not be available (we'll help you with your luggage). Our goal is to select accommodations that will offer you a nice and clean place, with the usual amenities or better, good service and good location. In larger cities, our hotels are usually centrally located so you can get around easily. In rural areas we will offer unique lodging that will provide local ambiance larger groups never experience.

YOUR PRICE INCLUDES:

- Small group of up to 14 guests.
- All accommodations.
- All breakfasts and 9 dinners as indicated on the itinerary (beverages are not included).
- All land and boat transportations.
- Entrance fees for all planned events.
- Transfer from/to the airport (only on the official arriving and departure day).
- Guided tours and special events.

Note: Round trip air-fare from your point of departure is not included.

All land arrangements as described above:

- Double room occupancy: **\$4,825 per person**
- Single room occupancy: **\$5,325**

Deposit of \$700.00 per guest is due with sign up to secure your spot. It is fully refundable if Tour Central Europe cancels the tour.

Limited space reservation to 14 people - first come, first served basis.

The prices are based on minimum of 12 travelers. For a fewer than 12 registered travellers by 95 days prior to departure the tour cost may proportionally increase to compensate for the missing number of travellers. We reserve the right to cancel the tour due to insufficient number of travelers.

We would like to suggest arranging your own round trip air travel from your hometown to Ljubljana (LJU) and from Ljubljana back home. Please contact us first prior to making your reservation. If you are not able to make your own travel plans we will assist you.

In order to get the full benefit of this trip adequate degree of physical conditioning is recommended due to a good amount of walking and some hiking on our tour. If you need assistance in getting around, our tour may not be appropriate for you. Please contact us prior making a decision on this tour.

We are strongly recommending purchasing a travel insurance to protect yourself and your investment in case you have to cancel or interrupt this tour. In order to provide you with the most effective coverage, the policy exclusion for "Pre-Existing Conditions" will be waived if you purchase a plan within 14 days of making your initial deposit payment for your trip. Please let us help you with securing your travel insurance.

Please consult the "[Reservations](#)" and "[Terms & Conditions/Travel Insurance](#)" sections for more pertinent information concerning this tour.

In order to secure the best possible air-fair and our reserved hotels please register early! Before securing your flight arrangements, please check with us on the number of registered travelers.