

SLOVENIA

Julian Alps to the Adriatic

A Guided Walking Adventure





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Travel Style

This small-group Guided Walking Adventure offers an authentic travel experience, one that takes you away from the crowds and deep in to the fabric of local life. On it, you'll enjoy 24/7 expert guides, premium accommodations, delicious meals, effortless transportation, and local wine or beer with dinner. Rest assured that every trip detail has been anticipated so you're free to enjoy an adventure that exceeds your expectations.

And, with our **optional Flight + Tour Combo** and **Ljubljana Pre-Tour Extension** to complement this destination, we take care of all the travel to simplify the journey. Refer to the attached itinerary for more details.



Overview

Enjoy sweeping Alpine vistas and sun-dazzled Adriatic coastline as you explore Slovenia, an undiscovered pearl of central Europe. Walking here, you'll experience the magnificent natural beauty and warm, friendly culture of this captivating country. Our creative itinerary features highlights such as soaring gondola rides up to views of snow-mantled peaks, the otherworldly salt flats of Sečovlje Nature Park, and the Venetian-Gothic alleyways of seaside Piran. In Triglav National Park, marvel at the majestic Julian Alps as you stroll beside the glacial, blue-green Lake Bohinj, passing through pine forest and fields of Alpine flowers like Turk's cap lilies and gentian. Follow the emerald waters of a rushing river on your walk through the Soča Valley, passing limestone outcrops and traditional farms along the way. Near the hilltop town of Medana, terraced vineyards hint at the region's Italian influences; you enjoy its finest vintages during a tasting at a family-run winery. Throughout your journey, delight in lavish accommodations and savor the refreshing outlook of a country that greatly values conservation, farm-to-table cuisine, and outdoor adventure.



Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Meet in Ljubljana; Kamnik Alps and Velika Planina; 4 miles, easy to moderate; 600-ft. elevation gain (shorter option: 2 miles; easy to moderate). Transfer to Bled

You meet your guide(s) in the lobby of the Vander Urbani Resort in Ljubljana, the country's charming capital situated between the Alps and the Adriatic (voted European Green Capital for 2016). After a brief welcome and introductions, you set off for an hour-long drive to the Kamnik Alps and Velika Planina (literally "Big Pasture" in Slovenian). Upon arrival in Kamniska Bistrica, a short gondola ride takes you to the highlands (at an elevation of 5,286 feet). This area is one of very few shepherds' settlements of this scale preserved in Europe, and during the summer months, herdsmen bring their flocks to these highland pastures to graze. As you walk, the picturesque limestone peaks and the sound of cowbells tinkling in the air will transport you to another era, reminiscent of the "Sound of Music." Wind your way past traditional wooden huts, with their unique conical, pine-shingled roofs that extend so low it looks from afar like they touch the ground. Meet our friend Francka, and enjoy a tour of her hut and a well-deserved picnic featuring some of her cheeses, fresh yogurts, buckwheat dumplings, herbal teas, and even a nip of the local brandies. For those guests embarking on today's full walking circuit, the trail continues up to the chapel of

Snow Mary, a beautiful structure built before World War II. (Masses are still held every Sunday in summer as well as a midnight mass on Christmas Eve.)

Afterward, you descend back to the settlement, reuniting with guests who may have remained to chat with Francka or visit the local museum.



The gondola whisks you back down to the valley, and you continue (approximately one hour via minivan) to Lake Bled, and your home for the next three nights. With its fairytale castle, Lake Bled is undeniably the most stunning lake in the Alps. After settling into your hotel, you reunite for a welcome drink followed by a dinner of local specialties beef carpaccio from nearby Bohinj, green pea soup with scallops, fillet of lake trout with parsley root cream, and lamb cutlet crusted with almond and wild herbs may be among the offerings, topped off with a pear tart with *tepka* pear ice cream—served in the panoramic restaurant or (weather permitting) on the outdoor terrace.

Hotel Triglav, Bled

There are myriad vantage points of the beautiful lake from the Hotel Triglav. Cheerful fabrics complement the antique furniture, bringing charm and life to this 110-year old hotel. An indoor pool and sauna offer a sanctuary to relax after your day's adventures.

DAY 2

Lake Bohinj and Mt. Vogel; 5-6 miles, easy (option of 2-3 miles additional, easy to moderate)

After a hearty buffet breakfast of fresh bread, homemade jams, cured meats and cheeses, you depart via minivan to walk Lake Bled's untamed brother, Lake Bohinj, in the heart of Triglav National Park. The day begins with a cable car up to Mt. Vogel, a popular ski resort in the wintertime. Sitting 3,000 feet above the lake, you have an amazing vantage point from which to admire the picture-perfect Julian Alps. Afterward, descend back to the valley, and embark on an easy walking circuit skirting the shores of the lake—Slovenia's largest glacial lake. Surrounded by majestic mountains and dramatic cliffs, this region also offers diverse flora, from orchids to the Carniola and Turk's cap lilies to many Alpine

flowers, including the Triglav (literally “three-headed”) gentian—named after the highest mountain in the heart of the park. A scenic lakeside spot is selected for a picnic lunch of fresh bread, local cold cuts and cheeses, seasonal fruit, and cookies.

You return to Bled by late afternoon (via a 30-minute transfer), and there is time to relax or take a quick swim before transferring to nearby Radovljica. The old town of Radovljica is one of the best-preserved in Slovenia, with houses dating from the 15th and 16th centuries. The town sits atop a natural promontory, overlooking the Dezela plain to the east and the Sava river valley to the west, the Julian Alps dominating the background. Noteworthy attractions include the Museum of Apiculture, which offers a fascinating insight into Slovene beekeeping traditions. After a brief stroll through town and opportunity for independent exploration, you continue to Lectar Restaurant for a dinner of Slovene fare served up by staff in traditional dress. The menu features hearty soups, home-baked bread, seasonal salads, *štruklji* (rolled dough dumplings with a range of fillings), and local beer or wine from some of the country’s renowned cellars. Save room for dessert—likely to be a *potica* (a sweet yeasted dough rolled with nuts or other fillings) or apple strudel. After dinner, take a peek into the cellar workshop where gingerbread hearts continue to be made in the time-honored tradition.

Hotel Triglav, Bled

DAY 3

Vintgar Gorge; 2 miles, easy or 4-5 miles, easy to moderate. Afternoon option: Lake Bled, 1-2 miles, easy

This morning, after another bountiful breakfast, you head north to explore the Vintgar Gorge. The gorge takes its name from the German term for “wine garden” as there used to be vineyards in the region, and it has been a popular tourist destination for more than a hundred years. The walking path runs along the rock wall of the mile-long gorge, hovering just above the flowing Radovna River, whose emerald waters rush through cascades and rapids, and form mesmerizing crystalline pools. The gorge ends at the delightful Šum waterfall, the highest river fall in Slovenia at 82 feet. After taking in the falls and the old stone railway bridge, you may choose to retrace your steps to the entrance of the gorge or, for a longer walk, you can continue up to Hom hill, through green meadows, and past St. Catherine Church, looping back to the starting point.

By midday, you return to Bled for lunch on your own at one of the many lakeside cafes, with recommendations from your guides, of course. Be sure to try the famous local desserts like *kremšnita* (cream cake) or *grmada* (akin to rum-raisin pudding and literally translated as “bonfire”). Afterward, you may wish to climb up to Bled Castle. Built on a cliff top in 1004, the castle was the seat of the Austrian bishops of Brixen. Even if you opt not to visit the castle itself, the views of the lake and mountains are worth the climb.



Mid-afternoon, you may join your guides to return along the lakeside footpath to the hotel, passing great villas, most from the beginning of the 19th century—including Tito’s former residence, now a hotel. Enjoy a swim, or relax with a book on the terrace before reconvening for a special early-evening aperitif and visit to the romantic island on the lake. You’ll board traditional Pletna boats and savor a glass of wine while sailing to the 10th-century church on the small island of Otok. You continue on to a favorite lakeside restaurant where local specialties are served in a cozy, convivial atmosphere, either on the lakeside patio or in the dining room.

Hotel Triglav, Bled

DAY 4

Lake Bled to Soča Valley (via Vršič Pass); 2-4 miles, easy. Transfer to Kobarid

This morning you bid farewell to Lake Bled and drive to Kranjska Gora, a cosmopolitan village that’s a 10-minute drive from both Italy and Austria, and the site of many World Cup ski races. As you wind your way over the Vršič Pass (5,316 feet) along one of the most scenic mountain roads in Europe (and the highest road in Slovenia), you enter the Soča Valley, the mountainous World War I battleground vividly described in the Ernest Hemingway’s novel *A Farewell to Arms*. (In fact, it’s rumored that your hotel tonight is where Hemingway penned the piece!)

The stunning turquoise waters of the Soča are especially popular with kayakers. You walk along the Soča Trail, beginning in the quaint village of Trenta (one of two in the horseshoe-shaped valley) and continue along the banks of the river to



the Jelinčič family farm, where you stop for a visit and lunch. Fresh fish from the river, award-winning organic sheep cheese, fresh bread, and *čompe* (boiled potatoes) refuel you for the optional hour-long walk through picturesque forests and meadows (or you may wish to visit the small falls just past the farm).

By late afternoon, you reach Kobarid and the Hiša Franko, a charming countryside villa and your home for the night. Hiša Franko is also home to one of Slovenia's best chefs— Ana Roš. Ana is considered one of the most progressive chefs in Southern Europe, and she is completely self-taught. Together with her husband, Valter, she creates an unforgettable foray into Slovene food and wine. After checking into your rooms, your evening begins with an invitation into their cellar for a tour of Valter's extensive (mostly Slovenian) wine selections and a tasting of local cheeses before proceeding upstairs for a memorable dinner—menus change seasonally but feature local products from the surrounding area, and may include items as innovative as black cod in ash tempura with asparagus and truffles, followed by an apple strudel dessert.

Hiša Franko, Kobarid

Hiša Franko has had a long and storied history over the past century, transforming from roadside inn to village mill to World War I hospital. It is also rumored to be the place of Ernest Hemingway's convalescence when he was injured on the Isonzo Front. In its current incarnation, the property is a warm and welcoming home away from home for travelers. You'll find a gracious estate with a large flower, herb, and vegetable garden and a lively creek. Rooms are modern and comfortable, and massages are available to ease your tired muscles.

DAY 5

Guided tour of Kobarid Museum or Kozjak Waterfall; 2 miles, easy. Goriška Brda wine region and transfer to Piran

It's an early start today, with breakfast served outdoors in the shaded garden by the brook, with views of the dramatic Kobariski Stol mountain. After fueling up with freshly baked bread, pastries, homemade marmalade, Alpine butter, cheese, cottage cheese, and local fruit, you bid your hosts farewell and depart for a

guided tour of the World War I museum in town. Walk through history, taking in battlefield maps, country flags, and portraits of soldiers and gravestones. Alternatively, you may opt to stretch your legs on an easy, hour-long walk along the Kobarid historical trail to the “hidden” waterfall of Kozjak, with a cascade of water that falls from approximately 45 feet. A dirt road leads you across a meadow, and then you follow a path by the riverbed of the emerald Soča River. The Kozjak Brook springs from Mt. Krnčica (7,028 feet), making six waterfalls in its journey to feed the Soča River. The beautiful Kozjak Waterfall flows into a natural amphitheater carved into rock.

Your next destination is the wine-growing region of Goriška Brda (one-hour drive) and the picturesque Gorizia Hills bordering Italy’s Collio region. Goriška Brda is increasingly gaining attention because of its innovative winemakers and its ancient method of aging wine in *qvevri*, large earthenware vessels lined with beeswax and buried below ground. The region is also well known for its fruit (cherries, peaches, apricots) and olive oil. On arrival, you’ll enjoy lunch and a wine tasting at Klinec—a family winery and restaurant in the pretty hilltop town of Medana, overlooking vineyards and olive and fruit orchards. The restaurant serves local, seasonal specialties, such as wild asparagus and white polenta and *pršutov toč* (fried prosciutto and wine).

Feeling sated and better acquainted with Slovenian wines, you continue to the Adriatic Coast (2-hour transfer) and the stunning seaside town of Piran. Time and interest permitting, you may arrive at your seafront hotel via a coastal footpath. Ideally situated on the tip of a narrow peninsula, Piran is the best-preserved cultural monument of Slovenia’s Istria region. Upon arriving at your hotel, your guides provide a brief orientation as well as recommendations for dinner on your own.

Hotel Piran, Piran

The Hotel Piran is a modern hotel that commands a majestic location overlooking the Adriatic on one side and the medieval town on the other. Your sea-facing room offers a balcony to take in the breathtaking view, and the room itself is comfortable and well appointed.

DAY 6

Sečovlje Salina Nature Park; 2-4 miles, easy. Guided walking tour of Piran

After a leisurely breakfast of cappuccino (the Italian influence is strong in this former part of the Venetian empire), you take a short drive to the Sečovlje Salina Nature Park. The park is home to still-functioning traditional salt flats, as well as a truly unique mix of flora and fauna (including white herons) that thrive in this unique environment. Precious salt and trading routes dating back to ancient Greece were of vital economic importance to Piran and the region. After an easy walk through the area, and perhaps a glimpse at the folks harvesting salt using traditional methods, you return to Piran for lunch. Mid-afternoon, your guides provide an overview of the town's importance and history on a walking tour, after which you enjoy some time on your own for strolling and exploring, or return to the hotel to relax (or indulge in a massage). You gather in the evening for a special farewell feast featuring delicious locally caught seafood, squid with risotto, or grilled fish of the day, served with perhaps a Rebula or Cabernet—a wine from the vineyards you passed yesterday.

Hotel Piran, Piran

DAY 7

Departure to Ljubljana

After a leisurely breakfast and perhaps a stroll along the seaside promenade, you say “*nasvidenje*” to Piran and the enchanting coast as you return to Ljubljana for continued explorations or departures.

ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Tour Itinerary Overview

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Vander Urbani Resort (lobby), Ljubljana, Slovenia, 8:30 a.m.

Krojaska Ulica 6–8
Ljubljana, Slovenia
Tel 011 386 1 200 9000
Email reception@vanderhotel.com
vanderhotel.com

NIGHTS 1, 2, & 3

Hotel Triglav

Kolodvorska Cesta, 33
Bled, Slovenia
Tel 011 386 4 575 2610
Email info@hoteltriglavbled.si
hoteltriglavbled.si
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHT 4

Hiša Franko

Staro Selo 1
Kobarid, Slovenia
Tel 011 386 5 389 4120
Email info@hisafranko.com
[Hisafranko.com](http://hisafranko.com)
Wireless Internet and hair dryers available.

NIGHTS 5 & 6

Hotel Piran

Stjenkova ulica 1
Piran, Slovenia
Tel 011 386 5 666 7100
Email hinfo@hotel-piran.si
Hotel-piran.si
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Vander Urbani Resort, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 12:00 p.m.

TRAVEL DELAY AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

If you are delayed while traveling, or experience any unforeseen situation en route to your tour, assistance is only a few, easy steps away:

As a Country Walkers guest, you benefit from 24-hour, toll free access to One Call Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance. Call the numbers below from anywhere in the world to get immediate assistance (regarding everything from lost luggage, to missed connections, to health concerns or notifying your guides or our local partners of a delayed arrival).

To contact One Call, please use one of the following methods:

By Email: mail@oncallinternational.com

By Text: 603.945.0103

By Phone:

If calling from within the USA: 800.555.9095

If calling from outside the USA: 800.555.9095 or 603.894.4710

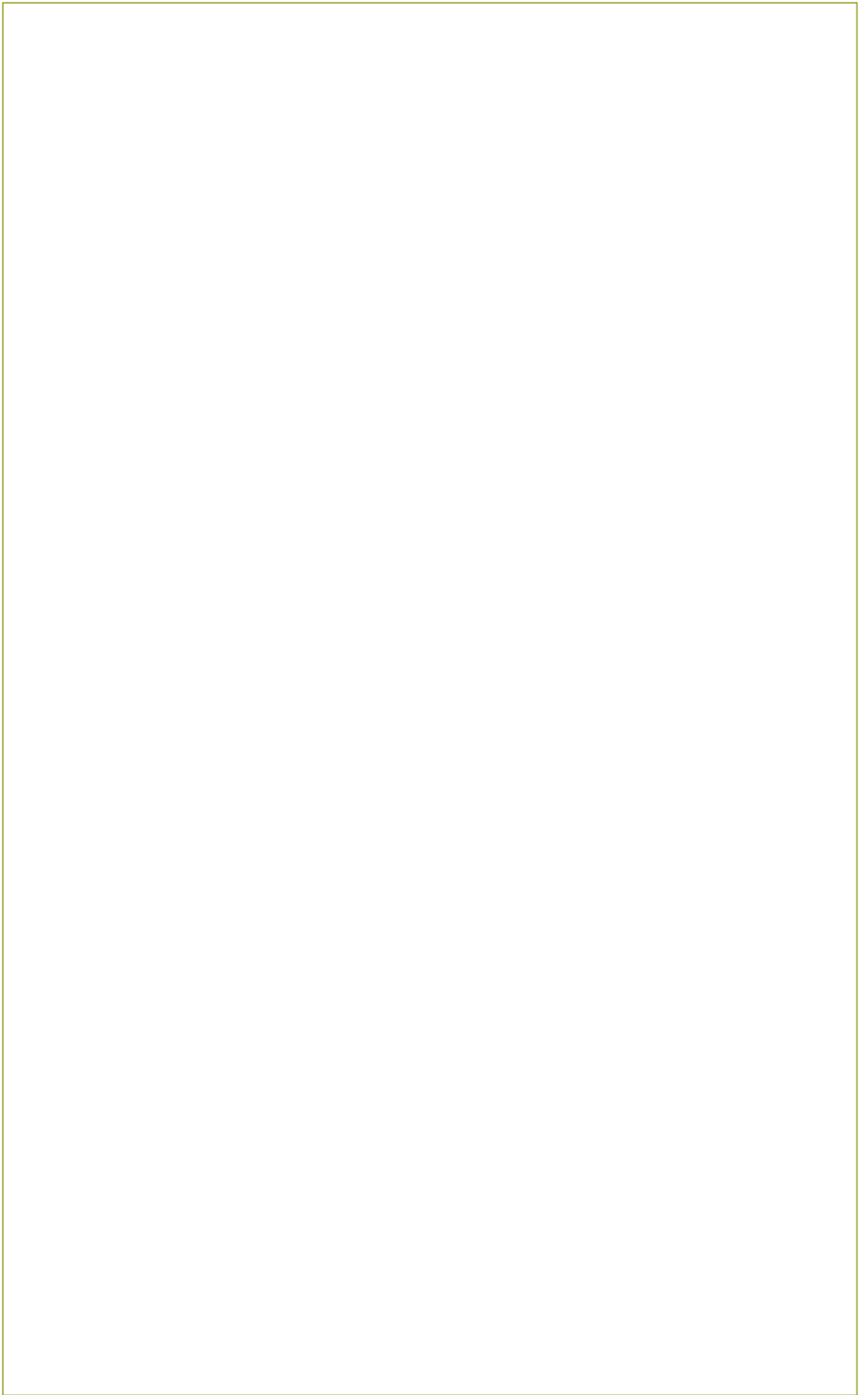
When calling from outside the USA, you will need to dial the access code for the country you are calling from (a complete list of access codes, provided by AT&T, can be found on the Country Walkers website under Travel Planning and Travel Resources: AT&T International Access Codes. If you receive an automated response, when prompted, you can then enter either of the numbers above; One Call accepts collect calls 24/7.

In the unlikely event you are unable to connect by phone with One Call, or the region you are calling from does not have an access code, you should speak with a live international operator and ask them to place a collect call to **800.555.9095 or 603.894.4710**.

Should there be any problems placing a collect call (as is occasionally the case depending on the country), dial, email, or text One Call directly and ask them to return your call immediately to minimize any out of pocket costs.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.



Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH (WITHOUT FLIGHT PACKAGE)

7 days, 6 nights

DEPARTURE DATES AND PRICE

Please refer to our website for the most current list of departure dates, scheduled group tour and private tour prices.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Vander Urbani Resort (lobby), Ljubljana, Slovenia, 8:30 a.m.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Vander Urbani Resort, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 12:00 p.m.

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures. It is rated easy to moderate, with an average of 3 to 6 miles per day, with options on many days. There are few ascents and descents, with climbing time on the ascents ranging from about 15 to 30 minutes. The terrain varies from paved and cobblestone streets (during organized city tours and other easy village exploration) to uneven, single-track trails with loose stones or gravel, rocks, and roots. Some trails are exposed to the sun. Days are quite full on this tour due to the inclusion of many regions—from the capital to the Kamnik and Julian Alps, the Soča River Valley, wine country, and the Adriatic Coast.

INCLUSIONS

- » Two expert, local guides (for groups of 8 or more), with you 24/7
- » All meals except one lunch and one dinner; local wine or beer included with dinners
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Transportation from the meeting point to the departure point
- » Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary

- » Destination information (weather, visa requirements, etc.) and other travel assistance available 24/7 provided by One Call International
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Passenger Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » Luggage tags
- » List of travel companions and guide biographies

GRATUITIES

Gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers. Should you wish to tip your Country Walkers guide(s), the standard in the industry ranges from \$10 to \$15 per person, per guide, per day (or \$20 to \$30 per couple, per guide, per day), and can be paid in USD or local currency.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

If you are interested in reserving the **optional Flight + Tour Combo** and **pre- or post-tour extensions**, please refer to the attached itinerary for more details.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Vander Urbani Resort (lobby), Ljubljana, Slovenia, 8:30 a.m.

Your guide(s) will be wearing a Country Walkers shirt. Please be dressed for walking.

MOST CONVENIENT ARRIVAL AIRPORT

Ljubljana's Jože Pučnik Airport (LJU)

lju-airport.si

GETTING TO THE MEETING POINT

A taxi from the airport to the Vander Urbani Resort costs approximately 35-40 euros. Travel time is 25-30 minutes. You may also arrange a private transfer directly through the Vander Urbani Resort. Please contact the hotel directly for assistance. Another option is to book a transfer through MNJ Shuttle. The cost is approximately 9 euros. For further information and reservations, visit:

mnj.si/en/mnj-transfer-shuttle-airport/

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are not reserving our optional Flight + Tour Combo, you may wish to stay at the Vander Urbani Resort in Ljubljana, the meeting-point hotel, for the night prior to the tour. To make a reservation, please contact the hotel directly.

Vander Urbani Resort

Krojaska Ulica 6-8

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Tel 011 386 1 200 9000

Email reception@vanderhotel.com

vanderhotel.com

Room rates vary according to season and room type.

DELAYS AND LATE ARRIVALS

If you are delayed or miss the scheduled group meeting for any reason, we kindly request that you contact our emergency assistance provider, One Call

International. This service is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to assist you with any type of travel delay. Please refer to the emergency contact details on your Tour Itinerary Overview page for One Call International contact details.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Vander Urbani Resort, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 12:00 p.m.

MOST CONVENIENT DEPARTURE AIRPORT

Ljubljana's Jože Pučnik Airport (LJU) is the most convenient airport for your departure (requires connection if traveling to the U.S.).

lju-airport.si

Depending on your destination, it may not be possible to depart Slovenia on the last day of the tour. Please check airline schedules carefully. If you plan to schedule return flights immediately following the tour's conclusion, please call your airline directly for specific check-in requirements.

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*—no exceptions and no disappointments! From the moment you make your deposit, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, small-group experience (with an average of 6 or 7 guests per guide). For best availability, reserve your trip today!

**except in cases of force majeure*

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

SCHEDULED GROUP INDIVIDUAL RESERVATIONS

Reservations for this tour may be made by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255 and providing a \$350 per person deposit. The Balance of your payment (final tour cost) is due 90 days prior to the tour departure date.

SCHEDULED GROUP CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost*. Please notify us in writing.

**One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply. Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price.*

PRIVATE ADVENTURE RESERVATION & CANCELLATION POLICIES

If you are booking a Private Adventure, a \$500 nonrefundable group deposit is required to secure hotel reservations and guides. Once these arrangements are confirmed, the deposit will be applied as the provider's deposit for the trip. If we are unable to secure the hotel and/or guides for your requested dates, this deposit will be refunded.

Once your Private Adventure is confirmed, your individual \$350 per person deposit is required within 14 days. The balance of your payment (final tour cost) is due 90 days prior to the tour departure date. Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150 (plus the nonrefundable group deposit of \$500); cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. **Please note that Private Adventure tour pricing is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests. Should the group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price, if necessary.**

Slovenia at a Glance

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

U.S. citizens: Passports are required and must be valid for at least three months beyond the dates of travel. Visas are not required for stays of up to 90 days. For more information, see travel.state.gov.



Travel Tip

Have a variety of options to start your trip: ATM card(s), credit card(s), some dollars to exchange.

CURRENCY

Slovenia uses the euro (EUR). For current exchange rates, visit oanda.com.

Many businesses in Europe will no longer accept credit cards without PIN numbers (chip and pin cards).

Always contact your bank or your credit-card company for details on fees and card use when traveling.

TIME ZONE

Slovenia is in the Central European Time Zone, Eastern Standard Time plus six hours. For more information on worldwide time zones, see worldtimezone.com.

PHONE & INTERNET

Slovenia country code: +386

Cell phone coverage throughout Slovenia is extensive, but cannot be guaranteed to be accessible on all American mobile carriers or to function at all times while on the trail or in remote areas. For more information regarding international phone use, please refer to countrywalkers.com/phones.



Internet access is generally very good in towns and villages; however, it is not guaranteed at all of the hotels used on the tour. For more details regarding Wi-Fi availability, please refer to the Tour Itinerary Overview.

LANGUAGE

The official language of Slovenia is Slovenian.

While knowledge of the local language is not necessary, you may want to learn some fun and useful phrases; see

bbc.co.uk/languages/other/quickfix/slovene.shtml or the enclosed Reading Guide for a suggested phrase book.

ELECTRICITY

Alternating current of 220V and 50Hz is used in Slovenia. Plugs have two prongs. For a full listing of electrical outlets worldwide, see

electricaloutlet.org.

WEATHER

Slovenia's climate varies from sub-Mediterranean along the Adriatic Coast to continental in the northeast lowlands (Ljubljana) and Alpine in the mountains. The coastal areas experience warm, sunny weather throughout the year with mild winters and hot summers: temperatures can reach up to 100°F in the summer (although more typically it will be in the mid-80s). In the eastern part of Slovenia, warm summers and cold winters are typical, with rain likely in late spring and early summer. Be prepared to layer your attire since weather in Alpine regions, as well as on the coast, can be variable.

For up-to-date forecasts, see qwikcast.com. For historical average temperatures and rainfall, see weatherbase.com.



Travel Tip

- Bringing your own hair dryer or other electrical device? You'll need a travel converter, available at most hardware, travel, or consumer electronic stores.
- For laptops or an electronic device with a dual voltage switch, you'll need the adapter plug but not a converter.

FOOD & DRINK

Slovenian cuisine is a savory blend of tastes reflecting the cultures (from Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Italy) that have influenced the country over the course of its history. The Mediterranean Coastal cuisine typically features pastas, local wines, *fritalje* (omelettes), vegetables, and local meats, including a local prosciutto called *kraški pršut*. Central Slovenia is known for its wheat and

buckwheat *štruklji* (rolled dough filled with walnut, tarragon, apple, or cottage cheese). For main courses, you might be served creamy paprika chicken, buckwheat *žganci* (a polenta-like dish served with cracklings), or *jota* (a hearty bean and sauerkraut soup).

Slovenia has a long winemaking tradition, and is especially known for its white wines. Two distinctive wine-producing regions are Primorska and Brda, both in the west of Slovenia, abutting Italy's Friuli-Venezia Giulia. They export world-renowned bottles. In the east, the Podravje region produces a beautiful Laški Rizling, as well as Chardonnay and

Sauvignon.

LIFE IN SLOVENIA

Shopping and banking hours

Shops and stores are generally open Monday to Saturday between 7:00 a.m. (or 9:00 a.m.) and 7:00 p.m. (or 9:00 p.m.), and on Sundays some stores in shopping malls may be open from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Banks are open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday (and may be closed for an hour at noon).

Mealtimes

Breakfast is served at hotels from 7:00 to 10:00 a.m. In restaurants, lunch is served from noon to 3:00 p.m., and dinner is usually served from 6:00 to 10:30 p.m. In tourist areas, restaurants serve continuously from noon



Travel Tip

The oldest vine in the world can be found in Mirabor, Slovenia. It's over 400 years old and still bearing grapes!

until late in the evening.

Tipping

Tipping in Slovenia is not very common. In cafés and taxis, you can round up your change on the table for excellent service (a 10 percent service charge is usually included in the bill at restaurants).

TRAVEL RESOURCES

National Slovenian tourist board official site:
slovenia.info

Public holidays

To assist in travel planning, it may be helpful to be aware of Slovenian public holidays, festivals, or calendars of events. Visit the Slovenian tourist board's website: slovenia.info/en/Public-and-school-holidays-in-2015.htm?prazniki_in_solske_pocitnice=0&lng=2.

TRAVEL IN SLOVENIA

A wealth of travel information is available at slovenia.info

Airports

The majority of international flights arrive at Ljubljana's Jože Pučnik International Airport (lju-airport.si), requiring connections within Europe from the United States. Maribor Edvard Rusjan Airport (maribor-airport.si) is the second-largest airport, and offers seasonal service between London and Maribor.



Trains

Slovenia Railways: slo-zeleznice.si, the national railway company site with schedules, fares, and pass options.

Raileurope: raileurope.com or 800.622.8600, a U.S.-based company that provides schedules, reservations, and ticketing for all European train networks (their multi-day/-week/-month passes in one country or combinations of countries may be an economical and convenient choice for European train travel).

Travel Tip

Did you know that the Lippizaner horse, although founded by the Viennese Hapsburgs, originated in Slovenia? This noble lineage (over 430 years old!) continues to be bred in Lipica, in southern Slovenia.

Other local transportation

In addition to rail and airlines, Slovenia also has an extensive long-distance bus network that, for some towns and cities, may be more convenient and affordable than rail or air travel. You may obtain timetables and maps by visiting: ap-ljubljana.si. Because there are a number of local companies and online ticket booking is not available, it is best to buy tickets and seats at the local bus station.

Most major car rental agencies are available at airports and train stations, although it may be best to rent through a local agency branch. Visit slovenia.info/en/Rent-a-Car.htm?rent_a_car=0&lng=2 for further information. Taxis are available at all major airports, train stations, and in smaller towns, and can be reserved in advance (your hotel can usually provide assistance). For more information contact Country Walkers, or go to slovenia.info/en/faq/Prices-for-transport-by-taxi.htm?faq=130&lng=2.

Museum Information

nms.si/index.php?lang=en

Packing List

PACKING TIPS

Pack light! Keep in mind there will be times you may have to carry your own luggage short distances, especially before and after your Country Walkers tour. Due to space constraints, we require you to limit your luggage to one medium piece (approximately 18x15x29 inches or 8,000 cu. in.) and one small carry-on, per person. We recommend packing any personal necessities, medications, your hotel itinerary/emergency contact information, your hiking boots (or shoes), and extra clothes in your carry-on luggage in the event that your baggage is delayed. We suggest leaving valuable jewelry at home. A copy of your passport or other important documents should be kept in a separate area of your luggage. Always be alert when carrying a purse, camera, money belt, or backpack in busy cities, airports, and train stations.

FOOTWEAR

- » Hiking boots or shoes. There are many brands to choose from. Proper fit is crucial, so try on new boots or shoes while wearing socks you plan to use on tour. Be sure to break in new footwear well before your tour begins. By the time you're ready to join your walking tour, you should be able to complete 4-6 miles of walking without discomfort. We require lightweight boots or shoes with proper ankle support and good tread to ensure stability on all types of terrain. Waterproof footwear keeps feet dry in heavy rain and water-resistant footwear keeps feet dry in heavy dew. Country Walkers reserves the right to deny participation to any guest not wearing appropriate footwear.
- » Comfortable shoes for evening strolls
- » Synthetic, moisture-wicking socks (cotton socks are not recommended for walking as they will quickly cause blisters)
- » Blister remedy

CLOTHING

- » Lightweight, wash-and-wear long pants
- » Long-sleeved, wash-and-wear shirt
- » T-shirts and shorts

- » Polar fleece or light wool pullover (it will keep you warm even when wet)
- » Dinner attire: dress is smart casual
- » Light jacket or sweater for evening strolls and alfresco dining

OUTERWEAR

- » Waterproof rain gear: jacket, pants, hat or hood
- » Windbreaker with hood (your rain gear may be suitable)
- » Hat with a broad brim, or visor

EQUIPMENT

- » Pack (minimum size of 25 liters): large enough to carry water, extra clothing, rain gear, and personal items (camera, etc.)
- » Waterproof cover for pack
- » Water bottle, canteen, or CamelBak-type water reservoir or hydration pack to carry your own water while walking (equivalent of one to two liters)
- » Sunblock and lip balm
- » Insect repellent
- » Sunglasses
- » Toilet kit for when facilities are not available on the walks. Include zip-lock baggies, tissues, and moist towelettes, which can be disposed of upon return to the hotel
- » Personal first-aid kit including any medications you ordinarily take (in their original container)

OPTIONAL

- » Telescopic walking sticks (Please note that while telescopic walking sticks are recommended for this tour, they are not provided by Country Walkers. Therefore please plan on bringing your own should you wish to use them.)
- » Scarf (for women to cover shoulders when entering churches)
- » Binoculars
- » Bathing suit for optional swimming in the sea or hotel pools
- » Fleece or wool hat and gloves (for Julian Alps region)
- » Water shoes or sandals

- » Camera and charger and/or extra batteries
- » Zip-lock bags (to keep camera and valuables dry)
- » Small notebook and pen
- » Field guides (see enclosed reading list)
- » Folding umbrella
- » Bandana
- » Washcloth (many European hotels do not provide them)
- » Hand sanitizer and/or moist towelettes
- » Motion-sickness bracelets or other non-sleep-inducing remedy if prone to motion sickness on bus or boat ride (on Lake Bled)
- » Alarm clock