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SLOVENIA AND CROATIA EXPLORER

9 days / 8 nights

Discovering Slovenia and the Dalmatian coast of Croatia with touch of Montenegro and Bosnia

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Enjoy the charming capital, Ljubljana and head to Slovenia's gem, lakes Bled and Bohinj, located in the heart of the Julian Alps
- Go underground to the best-known cave in the world, Postojna cave
- Visit Piran, Slovenian little Adriatic treasure
- Discover the picturesque nature of Plitvice national park
- Experience Split with its remarkable Diocletian palace and
- Explore the winding alleys of walled Old town of Dubrovnik, the pearl of the Adriatic

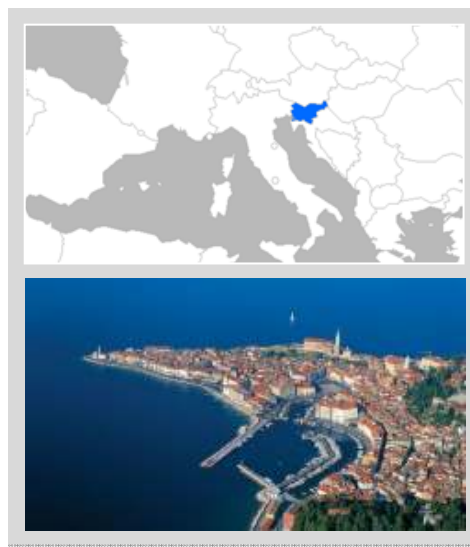


GENERAL INFORMATION

SLOVENIA

The country of Slovenia lies in the heart of the enlarged Europe. It has a border with Italy, Austria, Hungary and Croatia. The capital Ljubljana is a modern, fresh, young, creative and surprising city.

Slovenia, a green and diverse country between the Alps and the Mediterranean, boasts all the beauties of the Old World. When you want to experience Europe in one stroke, come to Slovenia. In just 20,273 square kilometres there are snow-covered mountains, a sea coast bathing in the Mediterranean sun, beautiful karst caves and thermal springs, narrow white-water canyons and wide slow moving rivers, high mountain lakes and lakes that disappear mysteriously underground at the start of summer, ancient villages and medieval cities, the antique castles and modern entertainment, countless vineyards with top quality wines, and the only primeval forest in Europe. Here in this small and easily covered area, where hundreds of birds migrating south make a briefly stop and where dozens of unique indigenous plants find their home, more diverse experiences await you all year round than can be found anywhere else.

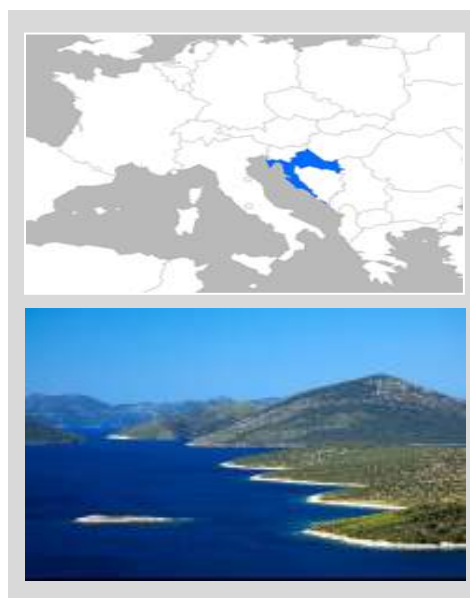


CROATIA

Travelling through Croatia, Dalmatia or Dubrovnik Region offers immense and rich experiences to every visitor. From the coastal to the continental parts, Croatia's rich cultural heritage, combined with its magnificent natural beauties, make it the perfect place to spend your vacation at. The capital of Croatia is Zagreb, a charming medieval city of exceptional beauty known for its spirit and architecture, with a population of approximately 1 million.

The uniqueness of Croatia lies in its diversity. Situated between the Alps and the Adriatic Sea, Croatia provides visitors with the opportunity to ski in the winter and swim during the summer months, all within driving distance. With its 1,185 islands, islets and reefs, it is the most diverse coast on the Mediterranean.

There are seven national parks in Croatia, three being in the mountainous regions (Risnjak, Paklenica and Plitvicka Jezera), and four in the coastal regions (Kornati, Brijuni, Krka and Mljet). To mention a few, Croatia is home to the Old City of Dubrovnik, Diocletian's Palace in Split, Euphrasies Basilica in Porec, and many others. Croatia boasts the largest number of developed settlements in southeast Europe, in addition, many of which date back to Roman and medieval times. Rarely can you find so many examples of cultural and historical significance from different periods in such a small region.



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the last undiscovered regions of the southern area of the Alps, with vast tracks of wild and untouched nature attracting adventurers and nature lovers. According to an estimation of the World Tourism Organization, Bosnia and Herzegovina will have the third highest tourism growth rate in the world between 1995 and 2020.

Most notable among its charms is its lush, mountainous landscape, best seen from the vantage point of one of the national parks. The central Dinaric Alps are favoured by hikers & walkers, containing both Mediterranean & Alpine climates. White-water rafting with 3 rivers (including the deepest river canyon in Europe, Tara River) is something akin to a national pastime. Bosnia has also become an increasingly popular skiing and Ecotourism destination. For some, the country remains synonymous with the Yugoslav wars that ravaged the Balkan region in the 1990s; it still bears the legacy of this, having a fractured infrastructure and a countryside that remains littered with mines in some regions.

However, there are plenty of positives to take from Bosnia and Herzegovina's urban centres, especially the cosmopolitan capital of Sarajevo with its Turkish heritage and lively cafe scene. Lonely Planet, in ranking the best cities in the



world, ranked Sarajevo ahead of Croatian Dubrovnik. Tourism there is chiefly focused on historical, religious, and cultural aspects. Elsewhere there are historic fortresses, splendid old mosques, monasteries and Catholic shrines to enjoy. But perhaps above all else, it is the reconstructed Ottoman bridge at Mostar that symbolizes both the past and a positive new beginning for the country.

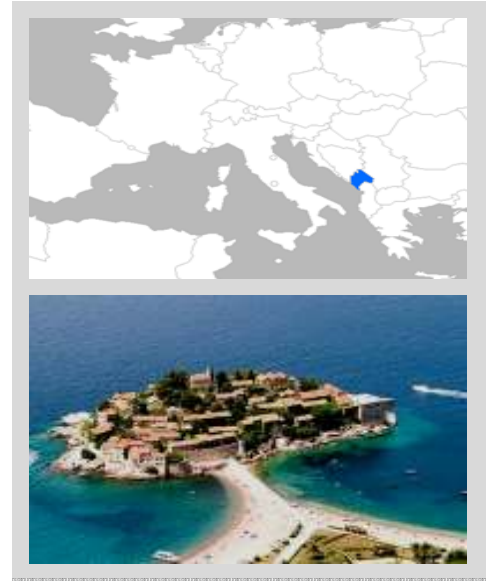
MONTENEGRO

Montenegro is the smallest of ex - Yugoslav republics. It offers wide range of investment possibilities and great geographic diversities which make this country worth visiting and exploring.

293 km of coast with its beautiful beaches and amazing beauty of its unique bay are a total opposite to the lakes, canyons, rivers and high mountains of Inner Montenegro.

It is unique in many ways. It is extremely wild and beautiful. It has it all, small medieval cities on the coast, wild mountains, the biggest lake on the Balkan, the longest and the deepest canyon in Europe, Mediterranean climate and most beautiful fjord in Mediterranean. It has wide range of hotels on the coast and in land and venues that can host up to 1000 participants.

Different cultures have left their traces here. Today in Montenegro one can feel the influence of Venetian, Roman, Byzantine, French and Turkish culture. Moreover, all of that could be experienced in a relatively small distance.



SUGGESTED ITINERARY

DAY 1

Arrival to Ljubljana airport
Meet and greet at the airport and drive to Ljubljana (25km)
Check-in to a hotel
A sightseeing tour around Ljubljana
Dinner at a local restaurant
Overnight in Ljubljana

LJUBLJANA - a charming mixture of styles of Central Europe

One of Europe's best-kept secrets, the ancient walled city of Ljubljana lies at the very heart of Slovenia and boasts a vibrant history that traces 3,000 years of Roman, Medieval, Baroque and Italian influences. A friendly and cosmopolitan city Ljubljana offers a broad selection of diversions that range from strolling the shimmering reaches of the Ljubljana River to exploring the formal gardens and fortified battlements of the city. There is also wandering the cobbled streets of the Old town and a bright café society to be enjoyed plus plenty of atmospheric bars, a broad range of regional restaurants and a host of cultural events.



DAY 2

Breakfast in the hotel
Drive to Bled (57km)
A ride by pletna boat and a visit of Bled Castle
Drive to Vintgar gorge (4km)
Continue to Bohinj (27km) via Pokljuka plateau.
Lunch on the way
Return to Ljubljana
Dinner at a local restaurant
Overnight in Ljubljana

BLED – Alpine pearl of Slovenia

The picture-postcard of the Alpine town of Bled was once the preferred choice of the Austro Hungarian Empire's elite. Its many charms include a medieval castle, perched high on a rocky cliff, a scenic lake studded by a tiny wooded island, and the alpine splendour of the nearby Triglav National Park, a natural wonderland of glacial valleys, glittering peaks, Limestone canyons, ice-cold tarns, flowered meadows, Alpine forests, Pretty hamlets and cascading waterfalls. It is a tourist place, surrounded by the wreaths of the Julian Alps and Karavanke Mountains, placed in a dish shaped basin of a glacial lake, the warmest in Europe.

VINTGAR – the gorgeous gorge

The 1.6 km long Vintgar gorge carves its way through the vertical rocks of the Hom and Bort hills and is graced by the Radovna with its waterfalls, pools and rapids. The path leads you over bridges and Sumer's galleries, and ends with a bridge overlooking the mighty 16m high Sum waterfall. Due to its natural beauty, Vintgar was classified among the more important tourist sites in Slovenia and the number of visitors increases every year.



BOHINJ - one of the most beautiful places in the heart of the Julian Alps

The natural beauty of high mountains, green forests, beautiful mountain pastures and meadows, the cultural and historical monuments, also friendly villages and towns with their hotels, restaurants, inns, and private rooms guarantee visitors a pleasant stay in Bohinj.

It is an ideal starting point for day trips, for walks on the trails that run throughout the valley, and for mountaineering or climbing tours and offers ideal options and opportunities for rest and relaxation in all seasons. In winter the valley becomes a winter sports centre, while during the summer the most beautiful pearl of the valley, Lake Bohinj, invites bathers, and with the Sava Bohinjka river, kayakers and fishermen as well.



DAY 3

Breakfast in the hotel
Drive to Postojna (52km) and visit the caves
Continue to Piran (75km) for a visit
Lunch at a local restaurant
Return to Ljubljana
Dinner at a local restaurant
Overnight in Ljubljana

MARVELLOUS POSTOJNA CAVES – the most visited caves in Europe

The Postojna cave system is the largest known cave system in Slovenia. A visit to a cave such as Postojna deserves full attention due to the diversity of shapes, expansive cave areas, stalactite and stalagmite formations and water characteristics. Admire its unique Karst underground world of beautiful formations of stalactites and stalagmites. You can also see an unusual and rare underground animal Proteus Anguinus - the so-called "human fish". A visit to Postojna cave is a special experience, as an electric train takes visitors to their hour and a half circle tour visit to the cave. From train station inside the cave guides accompany visitors as they walk amongst magnificent creations of nature.



PIRAN- historical gem on Slovenian coast

Piran, a typical Mediterranean town designated by a lovely St. Georges Church and square, named after Piran's most famous citizen - musician Giuseppe Tartini. It is situated at the cape of the Piran peninsula on the Northern side of Istria. The town is actually one large museum with the medieval architecture and rich culture heritage. Narrow streets and tight houses form a special charm of the town. Piran is also an administrative centre of the local area and important Slovenian tourist centre.



DAY 4

Breakfast in the hotel and check-out
Drive to Plitvice National Park (284km)
Lunch at a local restaurant
Continue to Split (273km)
Check-in to a hotel
Dinner at a local restaurant
Overnight in Split



PLITVICE - a misty natural wonderland

Located in a deep mysterious ancient forest known as the “Devil’s Garden” between Zagreb and Zadar lies Plitvice Lakes National Park, composed of 19.5 hectares of woods, lakes and waterfalls. Imagine Niagara Falls diced and sprinkled over a heavily forested Grand Canyon. This lush valley of terraced lakes is laced together by waterfalls and miles of pleasant wooden-plank walks. It is one of Croatia’s top sights and the oldest national park in Europe, deservedly listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1979. Countless cascades and strangely clear and colourful water make the Plitvice Lakes National Park a misty natural wonderland.



SPLIT – the cultural and economic center of Dalmatia

Split is the largest and most important town in Dalmatia. The town was developed around the palace, which was erected in the 4th century by the Roman Emperor, Diocletian. You can also visit the ancient cellars, Cathedral, Temple of Jupiter and the Golden Gate. The town of Split is situated in the central part of the eastern Adriatic coast and is bordered by the mouths of the small river Ćrnovnica in the Southeast, and the river Jadro in the North. Split offers you its many charms; the pines of the Marjan forest in the Western part of the peninsula, the murmur of the sea and the sound of the Dalmatian song in the stone streets of the city. Split has a very favourable climate characterized by an extremely bright sky with about 2700 sunny hours per year.



DAY 5

Breakfast in the hotel
A sightseeing tour around Split
Lunch at a local restaurant
In the afternoon drive to Trogir (30km) for a visit
Return to Split
Dinner at a local restaurant
Overnight in Split

TROGIR – town-museum on the Adriatic coast

In Trogir lovers of cultural and historical monuments, art, architecture and nice alleys are given the opportunity to learn about manifold and complex heritage – from Romanesque yard to the modern interiors. The unique historical core, Radovan’s portal, the art collections, which have been arousing excitement among visitors and travellers for centuries offer a tourist beauty, personified in the relief of Kairos as an appropriate souvenir.



DAY 6

Breakfast in the hotel and check-out
Drive to Dubrovnik (230km)
Check-in to a hotel
Lunch at a local restaurant
A sightseeing tour around Dubrovnik
Dinner at a local restaurant
Overnight in Dubrovnik



DUBROVNIK – the pearl of the Adriatic

The city of Dubrovnik is situated in the very South of the Republic of Croatia. The particularity and uniqueness of Dubrovnik is in its permanent live connection to its rich past and its cultural heritage, while it keeps vibrantly in pace with contemporary life, echoing its spiritual identity and its presence in the European cultural environment. Dubrovnik, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, is rich in cultural and historical monuments.

The most recognizable feature which defines the History of Dubrovnik and gives it its characteristic are its intact city walls which run uninterrupted for 1940 meters encircling the city. This complex structure, one of the most beautiful and strongest fort systems in the Europe is the main attraction for the city's visitors. This is a tour which will show you the finest sites of the Old Walled City and will reveal why Dubrovnik is often referred to as the "Pearl of the Adriatic". We will lead you through the streets of the Old Town introducing you to the history and culture of this magnificent city. Other splendid buildings such as Onofrio's Fountain, St. Blaise's Church, Sponza Palace will be viewed along the way. You will be able to visit the Franciscan Monastery with Europe's oldest pharmacy, the Cathedral with its famous Treasury and the Rector's Palace which once used to be the seat of the government in the Dubrovnik Republic.



DAY 7

Breakfast in the hotel
Drive to Kotor (Montenegro) for a visit (91km)
Continue to Budva (23km)
Lunch at a local restaurant
Return to Dubrovnik
Dinner at a local restaurant
Overnight in Dubrovnik

KOTOR – the metropolis of Montenegrin tourism

Surrounded by mountains ranging from 1000m to 1700m high, situated at the eastern tip of Kotor Bay, lies the picturesque city of Kotor. Its city-core is the best preserved of the cities along the Montenegrin coast and it is rich in medieval monuments. The walled medieval city centre with its winding, narrow little streets, squares and small churches, appears on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Of its religious monuments, the most notable is the Cathedral of Saint Tryphon, dating from the 12th century.

BUDVA – rich medieval monument

Budva is Montenegro's main tourist centre. The secret of the city's popularity rests mainly on its beautiful, mostly sandy coastline, diverse nightlife and examples of Mediterranean architecture. In addition to the splendid beaches of the "Budva Riviera", the city also possesses a tiny, but beautiful, historic centre. Surrounded by a wall, the historic centre is located on a small peninsula which extends as a harbour-side promenade.



DAY 8

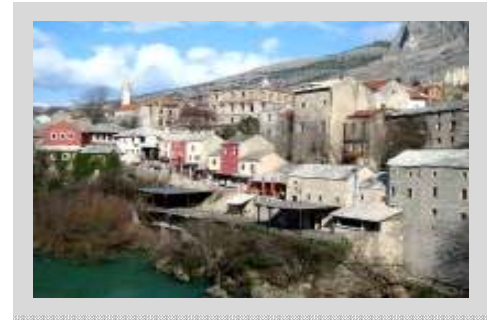
Breakfast in the hotel
Drive to Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) for a visit (140km)
Lunch at a local restaurant
Return to Dubrovnik
Dinner at a local restaurant
Overnight in Dubrovnik



MOSTAR – the city with the largest population of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Mostar is the biggest and the most important city in the Herzegovina region in the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is situated on the Neretva River and is the fifth-largest city in the country. Mostar was named after "the bridge keepers" (natively: mostari) who guarded the Stari Most (Old Bridge) over the river. The bridge was ruined during the war and then rebuilt in 2004. Today it is one of the city's most recognizable landmarks. Together with the Old town became a listed UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site. The Old Town with its towers, oriental shops, and restaurants, which are specialized in aromatic cooking, take you back for many centuries. Traces of 'old' times are imprinted in the market, the mosques, Herzegovina's museum and in the typical Turkish houses, a few of which have been kept in original style v.

The city excels in the spheres of art, cuisine, music, theatre, museums, and literature. It is also widely celebrated in popular lore, featured frequently as the setting for books, movies, and television programs.



DAY 9

Breakfast in the hotel and check-out
Transfer to the airport of Dubrovnik for your departure flight

SERVICES

SERVICES INCLUDED:

TRANSFERS:

Air conditioned comfortable vehicle through the whole tour

ACCOMMODATION (in DBL or SGL room, breakfast included):

3 nights in 4*/5* hotels in Ljubljana, 2 nights in 4*/5* hotels in Split, 3 nights in 4*/5* hotels in Dubrovnik

GUIDES:

English speaking guide through the whole tour including meals and accommodation + local guides where obligatory

ENTRANCE FEES:

Cable car ride to Ljubljana castle, Bled castle, Pletna boat ride & visit of St. Mary church, Vintgar gorge, Postojna caves, Plitvice lakes, Diocletian cellars and palace in Split, Cathedral in Trogir, Cathedral, Rector's palace and Franciscan Monastery in Dubrovnik

MEALS:

As per program

OTHER:

Organization of the tour and VAT

SERVICES EXCLUDED:

- Services not mentioned in the program
- Porterage
- Drinks during the meals
- Tips