

Julian Alps Guided Walking Holiday

Tour Style: Centre Based

Destination: Slovenia

Trip code: LJLCL

2 & 4



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Discover Europe's picture-perfect secret. Riddled with gorges, rolling with vineyards, and carpeted with spectacular Alpine scenery, Slovenia and the Julian Alps are enchanting places to discover on a walking holiday. Hike above emerald valleys and through medieval villages, find gorgeous waterfalls in the Vintgar Gorge and soak up serene mountain scenery that once featured in World War I battles. Watch the sun set over stunning Lake Bled with its tiny, tear-shaped islet crowned with a fairy-tale church, and sample some of the regions' best wine and cuisine.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- A full programme of guided walks with 2 options every walking day
- The services of experienced HF Holidays' leaders
- 'With flight' holidays include return flights from the UK and hotel transfers
- 7 nights' accommodation in en-suite rooms
- Half Board – continental breakfast and evening buffet meal

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore beautiful Lake Bled and sister lake Bohinj
- Climb to the ridge and viewpoint of Debela Pec for fantastic views over the Krma Valley
- Walk in Triglav National Park amidst the dramatic limestone peaks of the Julian Alps
- Criss-cross the Radovna River on a pretty wooden walkway, above rapids, tiered cascades and pools
- Hike along the Mostnica Gorge past secluded turquoise pools
- Sample the famous Bled Cake, a local delicacy
- Stay in the picture perfect and magical resort of Lake Bled at our comfortable and well-equipped hotel

TRIP SUITABILITY

This is a level 2 and level 4 graded Activity, Easier walks: 5 to 9 miles (8 to 14½km) generally on good paths, with some rocky sections. Up to 1,400 feet (420m) of ascent in a day. Harder walks: 7 to 11 miles (11 to 17½km) with some steep ascents and descents. There are also some rocky and exposed sections. Up to 3,100 feet (930m) of ascent in a day.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Welcome to Hotel Astoria. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2: Lake Bled, Osjnica And Rcitna

Today's walks take place around Lake Bled and explore the wooded upland areas to the west of the lake.

Option 1 - Mlino, Bohinjska Bela & Lake Bled

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 700 feet (210m)

In summary: The walk starts by the lake and heads towards the village Mlino where we turn away from the lake and descend towards the River Bohinjka and the village of Bohinjska Bela. Here we take a wooded path which rises over a coll and back to the northern side of the lake where we walk to the hotel below the castle with views to the island.

Highlight: A great introduction to the picturesque Lake Bled.

Option 2 - Mlino, Kupljenik, Bohinjska Bela & Lake Bled

Distance: 9½ miles (15km)

Total ascent: 1,300 feet (400m)

In summary: Walking via Mlino, we cross the river and following the path to the village of Kupljenik with stunning views back over the lake. We then descend to Bohinjska Bela, crossing the river again, and follow the easier route back to Bled.

Highlight: Stunning views of the lake.

Day 3: Lake Bohinj & Mostnica Gorge

The bus will take us to the beautiful Bohinj valley and lake. Both groups will be dropped off at the village of Stara Fuzina.

Option 1 - Mostnica Gorge

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Total ascent: 1,200 feet (350m)

In summary: We ascend through the attractive old village into a narrow valley that opens out into Alpine pastureland. There may be time for a swim in Lake Bohinj or a paddle in the Mostnica river.

Highlight: At the head of the valley is the spectacular Mostnica waterfall, one of the 'must see' attractions of the area.

Option 2 - Pršivec, Lake Jezera And Volgar

Distance: 9½ miles (15km)

Total ascent: 2,500 feet (750m)

Total descent: 4,200 feet (1,300m)

In summary: Starting from the wooded area to the North of Lake Bohinj, we walk on forest tracks and paths high above the lake to the summit of Pršivec which has extensive views over the lake. We descend to the Mostnica valley and Stara Fužina.

Highlight: 360° views from the summit of Pršivec.

Day 4: Vrsic Pass To Kranjska Gora

The longest coach ride of the holiday takes us to Kranjska Gora, a mountain village and skiing centre deep in the Julian Alps. The coach will then leave the valley to ascend through a number of hairpin bends to reach the top of the Vrsic Pass, from where both groups will enjoy the view.

Option 1 - Pišnica Valley And Kranjska Gora

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 500ft (150m)

Total descent: 1,700 feet (520m)

In summary: The group leave the bus in the Vrsic valley and pass through woodland pasture beside a stream with spectacular waterfalls, passing near a glacial lake and onwards to Kranjska Gora village.

Highlight: Jasna Lake is a beautiful clear lake with white sand around the rim. Its surface reflects the surrounding mountains and it is guarded by a bronze statue of Zlatorog, a golden horned Ibex.

Option 2 - Vršič Pass And Visoki Maverinc Belvedere

Distance: 10½ miles (17km)

Total ascent: 1,500 feet (450m)

Total descent: 4,000 feet (1,220m)

In summary: This walk starts by descending a path from the pass followed by an ascent through woodland to the Visoki Maverinc Belvedere. The path zigzags to reduce the gradient. We stop for lunch at the summit before descending to Kranjska Gora.

Highlight: Stunning views of the valley and surrounding hills.

Day 5: Free Day

Each week there is a free day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently or visit local places of interest. Some options for your free day might include:

Ljubljana: The capital city of Slovenia is a most attractive city, with plenty of museums and shops. It can be reached easily by bus or minibus. See our leaders for further details and fares.

Bled Castle: A short but steep walk will take you to the castle. It costs approximately €9 to go round the museum. There is a shop, historic printing press and a café.

Wellness Centre: The hotel has a wellness centre, located on the first floor. It offers concessionary rates to guests, details of which can be found in your room. Treatments include various types of massage, manicures, facials, sauna and a plunge pool.

Activities: Near the bus station are offices offering a variety of activities, including gorge walking/ canyoning, horse riding, paragliding and kayaking. Guests may also like to try the summer toboggan run on the slopes of Straza.

Cycle hire: The hotel has bikes for hire. Explore the quiet side roads and farming villages around Bled. Please book this at reception. Current rates are from €4 for an hour.

Land train around Lake Bled: A land train follows the lakeside path. It leaves the town every 45 minutes from late April until mid-October; however it doesn't run in poor weather.

For information on Lake Bled please visit www.bled.si/en/

Day 6: Lake Bohinj, Vogel And Sija

Today the two parties again travel by bus to Lake Bohinj, the easier group taking a lovely lakeside walk while the harder party takes in peaks to the south of the lake.

Option 1 - Lake Bohinj

Distance: 8 miles (12½km)

Total ascent: 750 feet (230m)

In summary: The bus takes us to the village of Ribcev Laz, with its much photographed church beside the lake. We ascend through woods to a terrace path above the south side of the lake. Our route takes us across numerous wooden plank bridges before descending to the cable car station where there is an option to take the cable car to the upper station and enjoy the views over the lake. From the lower cable car station we visit the First World War cemetery at Ukanc and descend further to the lakeshore. We then follow a path close by the lake for our return to Ribcev Laz.

Highlight: Lake Bohinj is considered by many to be the most attractive lake in Slovenia.

Option 2 - Vogel And Šija

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 2,650 feet (810m)

In summary: The bus will drop this group at the foot of the cable car, and we then ascend to the upper station. We ascend through a picturesque valley to the summit of Vogel. Mt Vogel is a great viewpoint in good weather and provides an excellent vantage point for Triglav, the highest mountain in Slovenia. On the return route to the cable car, we can also take in the summit of Sija.

Highlight: An excellent high level alpine walk.

Day 7: Vintgar Gorge And Debela Pec

Today the two parties split. The easier walk returns to the Bled area for a visit to the Vintgar Gorge, yet another

famous attraction in the region. The harder group will ascend Debela Pec; this peak has spectacular views into the deep Krma Valley, with the Triglav massif beyond.

Option 1 - Vintgar Gorge And Back To Bled

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Total ascent: 500 feet (150m)

In summary: We take a service bus to Podhom to the start of the Vintgar Gorge. After paying the entrance fee, we walk along the gorge, following wooden walkways and paths cut into the steep valley sides. At the final ticket office we descend some steps to view the waterfall at the end of the gorge. Retracing our steps to the ticket office, we ascend through deciduous woodland to the church of St Katerina. Here there are seats with a stunning view across towards Bled and the surrounding hills. We then descend on a good gravel path to the plains below. A short stretch of road and a much longer gravel track following the edge of the river valley take us back into Bled. Here we can visit the National Park Centre before returning to the hotel.

Highlight: Sample chestnut cakes, a local speciality.

Option 2 - Debela Peč

Distance: 9½ miles (15km)

Total ascent: 2,600 feet (790m)

In summary: We use hired transport to reach the high forests to the west of Bled. The walk ascends gently through woodland pitted with the remnants of ancient iron workings, then more steeply to reach a remote mountain hut or 'Dom'. We continue the ascent to the ridge above the Krma valley. Here a winding path passes deep swallow holes, then takes us to the final ridge and viewpoint of Debla Pec. We will retrace our steps along the ridge and take a different route down to the Dom. From here we follow our outward route, continuing through Alpine pastures and woodland to the end and a well-earned drink in a bar.

Highlight: A challenging walk to a spectacular viewpoint.

Day 8: Departure Day

We hope to see you again soon.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Astoria - Julian Alps

The Hotel Astoria is a compact and stylish 3-star hotel and offers a great location for our holidays, with Bled town centre, the lake shore and castle all within walking distance. The comfortable en-suite bedrooms are decorated in a contemporary style and some rooms offer balconies. Facilities at the hotel include a wellness centre with sauna and spa pool, as well as a gym and bar with out door terrace.

Accommodation Info

Rooms

All 72 en-suite bedrooms are comfortable and furnished with all the modern amenities including:

- Air conditioning
- Room safe
- Minibar
- Telephone
- Free WiFi
- TV

Facilities

Leading off the reception area there is a large and airy lounge and bar area with comfortable seating and tourist literature. To the other side the restaurant has fresh and modern decor, opening onto an attractive terrace area where guests can sit and enjoy the view with a coffee when the Café Astoria is open from 10am until 11pm.

Complimentary wireless internet access is available in all public areas. There is a 24-hr reception service.

The hotel has a Wellness Centre open every day from 1pm until 9pm. There is a large variety of treatments offered at an additional charge and access to the gym is free to our guests.

Food & Drink

Holidays at Lake Bled are Half Board with a buffet breakfast and 3-course evening buffet. On one evening you can enjoy a traditional Slovenian dinner accompanied by live music.

Breakfast

Buffet breakfast is served from 7am and consists of a good selection of breads and pastries, fruit juices, cold hams and salami, cheeses, paté, cereals and yoghurts, as well as jams and honey, tea, coffee and cocoa. A hot selection is cooked fresh and you can enjoy eggs (including omelettes), pancakes, sausages and fried bacon. The hotel, where possible, serves local products.

Lunch (Payable Locally)

Packed lunches are available to order from the hotel but you can also walk just a few minutes to some local shops and purchase the ingredients for your lunch.

Evening Meal

The evening meal is a 4-course buffet and our guests can enjoy a special dinner on the last evening accompanied by local Slovenian music.

Your Evenings

Each evening your walking leaders will tell you about the choice of walks for the next day and answer any questions you may have.

During the evening you may like to join in an optional organised evening activity, such as a quiz.

One evening, we have arranged an evening speaker to enlighten you on the interesting history and what to look out for when you walk in this region.

Travel Details

THE HASSLE-FREE OPTION

Book your holiday 'with flight' and choose between Stanstead and Manchester flights to Ljubljana airport.

If you choose this option we automatically include return transfers between the airport and the hotel.

The short coach transfer takes approx 30 minutes to the Hotel Astoria Bled.

THE FLEXIBLE TRAVEL OPTION

Alternatively, tailor your journey to suit you by booking your holiday 'without flight' allowing you the freedom to book your own flights from your local airport.

If you choose this option, transfers are not included in the price. However, below are some suggestions to help you reach your destination:

- We can book you a seat on the **HF Holidays' transfer coach** from Ljubljana airport. This short transfer is timed to meet the HF Holidays' flights* (provisional flight times can be found on the dates and prices tab or you can call us on 020 8732 1220 for more information). Cost per single journey is £21.50
- Why not let us book you a **private taxi transfer** at a cost of £69 per single taxi journey?

Transfers must be pre-booked. Please call 020 8732 1220 for more details

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

What To Bring

Essential Equipment

To enjoy walking/hiking comfortably and safely, footwear, clothing and equipment needs to be suitable for the conditions. Safety and comfort are our priorities, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities.

- Footwear with a good grip on the sole (e.g. Vibram sole) is the key to avoiding accidents.
- Walking/hiking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended (ideally worn in), and specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed, are better than a single layer (include spares).
- Fabrics (lightweight and fast drying) designed for the outdoors are recommended.
- Waterproof jacket and waterproof over trousers.
- Warm hat and gloves. Gaiters are an optional but useful extra.
- Denim jeans and capes are not suitable on any walks.
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner.
- Thermos flask for hot drink.
- Water bottle (at least 2 litre).
- Spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar.
- Small torch.
- First aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed).
- Sun hat and sunglasses
- Sun cream.

Optional Equipment

- Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents.
- Insect repellent.
- Sunglasses.
- Camera.

Useful Information

Language: Slovenian

Currency: Euro

Money: There are several ATM machines in Lake Bled where you can obtain money.

Electricity: 2340 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

Tap water: Is considered safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled mineral water can be purchased from the hotel or local supermarkets.

Telephone code: If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.

To dial a UK number 0044

To dial a Slovenian number 00386

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday & Sunday: 9am – 1pm Bank Holiday Monday: 9am – 1pm

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

ASSOCIATE'S FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying an Associate's fee of £10 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full life membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details. Also, please advise us of any dietary requirements so that we can inform your accommodation. To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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