Lake Bled & Slovenian Alps



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Slovenia	4 & 8	587kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Natural wonders come thick and fast as we explore Slovenia's beautiful landscapes in and around Triglav National Park and the spectacular Julian Alps. Enjoy gentle strolls around the blue-green waters of Lake Bled, trek through Vintgar Gorge and take a cable car to the upper reaches of Mount Vogel for views over the 2,864-metre peak of Mount Triglav – Slovenia's tallest mountain. There'll also be walks through the Mostnica Gorge and an opportunity to visit Slovenia's cosmopolitan capital, Ljubljana, on your free day.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking in Triglav National Park
- A cable car ride up Mount Vogel
- Hiking along the Mostnica Gorge
- Discovering a trio of lakes; Bled, Bohinj, and Jasna
- Taking in the views from Debela Peč
- Crossing the Vršič Pass

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers
- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)

- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in Bled
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

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Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Welcome to Hotel Astoria. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2 **Lake Bled**

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 col 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 Kupljnik 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 - Mostnica Gorge and Uskovnic Ridge

Distance: 9½ miles (15km)

Total ascent: 2,500 feet (750m)

In summary: We begin by following the same route as the easier group to the waterfall. We head east, ascending to the village of Uskovnica before descending on tracks and forest paths back to Stara Fuzina.

Highlight: After the waterfall at the head of the valley we enjoy views back to Triglav from the ridge.

Day 4 **Vršič 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

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Total ascent: 500 feet (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 the glacial Jasna Lake.

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 Lake Jasna, with the option to continue towards 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.

Day 6 **Lake Bohinj, Vogel and Šija**

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 and Orlova Glava

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 1,000 feet (300m)

In summary: We make our way to the Vogel cable car and ascend to enjoy the views over the lake. If conditions permit, we take a short walk to the summit of Orlova Glava to see the views to the Triglaf Massif, and enjoy the upland environment. Our walk continues to visit the First World War cemetery at Ukanc and descends to the lakeshore. We the follow a path close to the lake to the village of Ribcev Laz with its much photographed church.

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: 2,900 feet (900m)

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 sumit 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 Peč**

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: 5 miles (8km)

Total ascent: 650 feet (200m)

In summary: We descend to view the waterfall before ascending to an ancient church. From here we take a balcony path with splendid views over the area to return to the start of the gorge to catch the shuttle bus back into Bled.

Highlight: the amazing rock structures of the gorge.

Option 2 - Debela Peč

Distance: 7½ miles (12km)

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. We will retrace our steps along the ridge on a circular route.

Highlight: A challenging walk to a spectacular viewpoint.

Day 8 Departure Day

We hope to see you again soon.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.



Challenging walking grade 8

Challenging walks for fit, experienced walkers. Expect rugged or mountainous terrain, or some longer distances than typical for this grade. Typically, 12-13 miles (19-21km) with around 2,300ft (700m) of ascent.

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.

Your evenings

Each evening join your tour manager and fellow travellers to relax, enjoy a drink, and discuss your day's activities. You may like to join in an optional organised evening get together, such as a quiz.

FOOD & DRINK

Dining at the Hotel Astoria

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.

ROOMS

Your room at the Hotel Astoria

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

- Air conditioning
- Room safe
- Telephone
- Free Wi-Fi
- TV

ABOUT YOUR STAY

Facilities at the Hotel Astoria

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 8am-12pm / 5pm-10pm.

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 2pm until 9pm. There is a large variety of treatments offered at an additional charge and access to the gym is free to our guests.

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Hotel Astoria Bled
Prešernova
Cesta 44
4260 Bled

Tel: 00386 45794400

LOCAL AREA

This small nation certainly packs a big punch. Slovenia offers its visitors a forward-thinking, modern nation combined with incredibly varied history and truly outstanding natural beauty. From Romans, Slavs, Franks, Habsburgs and Napoleon's army, Slovenia's central position has made it an attractive place throughout its history and this diversity is showcased in the architecture, particularly in the capital city, Ljubljana, and culture. Since detaching itself from Yugoslavia in 1991, modern Slovenia has since joined the European Union and continued to demonstrate the industrious and hard-working nature of its people, yet visitors will find that this is an incredibly welcoming and easygoing country.

Despite having swathes of green forest further south, the Triglav National Park is certainly the country's crowning glory when it comes to natural beauty and the Julian Alps are an outdoor enthusiasts paradise. From mountains towering above 2,000 metres to lakeside wanders, there are walks for all to enjoy. Owing to the prominence of limestone, you'll find a host of beautiful waterfalls, as well as pretty Lakes Bled and Bohinj to accompany your walks. However, one of the most enjoyable features of your walks will undoubtedly be watching traditional rural life from traditional farming villages to the still-popular practice of bee-keeping.

> *Bled was a great location as were the hotel's facilities and staff. It was unusually hot that September week and we swam in Lake Bled and Lake Bohinj which was more than welcome after very hot walks. The gorgeous Vintgar Gorge was dramatic and a lovely contrast compared to our other walks. The walk around Lake Bohinj also stood out and it was well worth the climb to the top of Ostrijca Mount to get perhaps highest viewpoint overlooking Lake Bled itself and inspire one to visit the iconic Bled castle on our free day. I had a day off to myself during the week to rest and it was a wonderful bonus to have the sauna and jacuzzi facilities to enhance my well being. (Sharon, Melton Mowbray)*

Lake Bled: The town of Bled sits on the shores of the lake itself and offers a mesmerising setting. The turquoise waters are framed by snow-capped mountains and are watched over by a precariously placed, fairytale castle. Rarely do photos do it justice and visitors are sure of a treat. Due to this setting, the town is popular all year round, yet loses none of its charm. Any visitor should endeavour to enjoy two things: the town's famous Bled Cake, which is similar to a vanilla slice, and a journey across the lake on a 'pletna' boat to Bled Island, with its tiny church and staircase down to the lakeshore.

Shops & facilities: There are a number of local shops in Bled where you can obtain the basic necessities, as well as a small supermarket a short walk from the hotel. When shopping for gifts, traditional Slovenian crafts can be found in a number of shops in the town.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Holiday Tips for Julian Alps Guided Walking

Language: Slovenian

Currency: Euro

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

Electricity: 230 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

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

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

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.

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BONDED TRAVEL
ORGANISERS TRUST
ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES
AALA
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