

KONTURE

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ADVENT IN CROATIA: CHRISTMAS MARKETS & TRADITIONS

Day 1: Ljubljana

Arrival at the airport
Airport procedures
Transfer to Ljubljana
Accommodation in hotel
Overnight, Ljubljana

Day 3: Ljubljana – Postojna - Ljubljana

Breakfast at hotel
8.30 – 9.30 Transfer to Postojna, 52 km
Note: Pick up tickets and audio guides 30 min before entrance
10.00 – 11.30 Postojna cave sightseeing with audio guide

Postojna Cave is a network of 20 kilometres of passages, galleries and chambers into which experienced guides have accompanied more than 35 million visitors in the last 188 years. It is the largest cave in the "classic karst" and the most visited show cave in Europe. In 1872 railway lines were laid in the cave; electricity arrived in 1884. Today you begin your visit aboard the cave train; the electric lighting allows you to admire the size and splendour of the underground world, where the geological past is recorded in a unique manner. Visitors to the cave are dazzled by a wealth of speleothems: calcite formations, stalactites and stalagmites abounding in a variety of shapes, colours and age. Some 150 species can be found in the mysterious subterranean world of Postojna Cave, but only one can truly be described as the main event. Call it the Olm, call it the Proteus, call it the Human Fish, call it what you will, but what it is without doubt is one of the most unique creatures on the planet. The constant temperature in the caves ranges from 8 to 10° C.



11.30 – 13.00 Free time for lunch
13.00 – 14.00 Transfer back to Ljubljana, 52 km
14.00 – 16.00 Ljubljana sightseeing with local guide

Ljubljana is the capital of a state, but it is small and pretty, easy to get around, and full of surprises. While during winter it is its dreamy central European character that prevails, during summer it has a relaxed Mediterranean feel to it. It is remarkable for its rich tradition, youthful vibrancy, cultural creativity, feel for entertainment, and numerous green spaces.

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Ljubljana has preserved evidence of all the five millennia of its history, including, among others, the remains of the Roman city of Emona and the old city centre with its medieval castle and beautiful buildings with Baroque façades, decorative portals and uneven roofs. Other significant bits in the mosaic of Ljubljana are its picturesque bridges across the river Ljubljanica and its vast Tivoli park, stretching into the very city centre. In the second half of the 20th century, it was the world famous architect Jože Plečnik that put an indelible personal stamp on his native city, and the so called Plečnik's Ljubljana ranks among the 20th century's most prominent total works of art.

Free time at leisure and enjoy Ljubljana Christmas Market



Accommodation
Overnight, Ljubljana

Day 4: Ljubljana – Bled – Bohinj - Ljubljana

Breakfast at hotel

9.00 – 10.30 Transfer to Bohinj, 83 km

10.30 – 12.00 Bohinj sightseeing with local guide (take the cable car to Vogel Mountain)

You will see beautiful Bohinj lakes, have opportunity to explore paths that are surrounding it, as well as ride on Vogel Cable car and enjoy some amazing views on Triglav National Park



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About 8-kilometres long valley beneath Mount Triglav has been praised as one of the most beautiful parts of the Julian Alps since the beginning of mountaineering. With its little lakes and ponds, this karstified valley is a photographer's paradise. Lake Bohinj is the largest natural lake in Slovenia. Nested in the heart of the Julian Alps, this jewel is a precious natural resource and at the same time offers endless opportunities for outdoor activities.



The natural conditions — the normal ski season lasts from December to the first of May — put Vogel in first place among Slovene ski resorts for reliable snow conditions. Because Vogel lies on the first mountain barrier above the Adriatic Sea, substantially more snow falls here than anywhere else of similar altitude in the Alps. The high mountain setting and the extraordinary panoramas over the surrounding area — the ski center lies in Triglav National Park above Lake Bohinj — give Vogel a special attraction. In spite of its majestic setting, the ski center is suitable for all skill levels. The abundant sun, outstanding views, and attractive, well-groomed trails are certain to bring many beautiful moments. In good weather and suitable conditions, experts will relish the opportunities for off-piste skiing.

12.00 – 12.45 Transfer to Bled, 30 km

12.45 – 14.00 Free time for lunch

14.00 – 16.00 Bled lake sightseeing with local guide

Slovenia has only one island but its uniqueness makes it more attractive than many an archipelago. Sheltered by picturesque mountains, the island reigns in the middle of an Alpine lake. Its charm has made it a symbol for centuries of a town to which guests from all over the world love to return. This town, which has already existed for a thousand years, is Bled. The town, already famous at the beginning of the 20th century as the most beautiful health spa of the then Austrian empire, attracted the European aristocratic elite. After WWII, one of the most attractive state residences of the former regime was located in Bled. Many of the world's most important people thus enjoyed the beauties of Bled. And now, for decades already, the pilgrims of the new age have been discovering this town.



16.00 – 17.00 Transfer to Ljubljana, 54 km

Accommodation

Overnight, Ljubljana

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Day 5: Ljubljana – Zagreb

Breakfast at hotel

10.00 – 12.00 Transfer to Zagreb, 93 km

Free time to enjoy Zagreb Christmas Market

Zagreb Advent has been voted the best Christmas Market in Europe 3 years in a row. Zagreb Advent raises the bar every year with new events and experiences. By far the best thing is, it is designed to be easily experienced on foot, offering great fun for everyone. During the day we recommend visiting Zagreb popular attractions, such as Ice Park at King Tomislav Square, Fooling Around at Strossmayer square, Zagreb Christmas Tale at Central Ban Jelačić Square etc. As the night falls the Zagreb Christmas Market lights up. Zagreb is filled with Christmas booths and live music in its hotspots. Enjoy, sausages, mulled wine and schnaps bars. They are all here to stimulate the senses and keep you warm during Zagreb in winter.



Accommodation

Overnight, Zagreb

Day 6: Zagreb – Plitvice Lakes NP - Zagreb

Breakfast at hotel

08.00 – 10.30 Transfer to Plitvice Lakes, 137 km

10.30 – 12.30 Plitvice lakes NP sightseeing with local guide

The area of Plitvička jezera, declared to be National park in 1949., is considered one of the the prettiest natural notability of Europe. It is forested mountain area throughout which, one under another, line sixteen beautiful lakes and ponds of crystal blue-green colour. They are filled with water from many streams and brooks, interconnected with foamy cascades and murmuring waterfalls. Throughout the ages water from these lakes was breaking, corroding and melting the rocks and beds thorough which they have flown. Through sedimentation of calcium carbonate from the flow and through interference of special algae and mosses, spongy kind of rock, sedra or travertin, has been and still is created. Near the lakes there are a couple of caves, and there were even discoveries from ancient history. The national park covers the area of 29.482 hectares in size, most of which falls of on woods, then grasslands with village spaces and waters. This natural resource is rich with diverse flora and fauna. In the park alongside many kinds of birds (around 161 different kinds), butterflies, there is also some small game, followed by large game, bears, wolves, boars and wild cats. Flora of the park is made from about 1200 herb sorts, of which 55 sorts are in the orchid family.



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12.30 – 13.30 Free time for lunch
13.30 – 16.00 Transfer back to Zagreb, 137 km
Accommodation
Overnight, Zagreb

Day 7: Zagreb

Breakfast at hotel

10.00 – 12.00 Zagreb sightseeing with local guide



Zagreb has served as the cultural and political focus of the nation since the Middle Ages. The city grew out of two medieval communities, Kaptol to the east and Gradec to the west, each sited on a hill and divided by a (long since dried up) river. Zagreb grew rapidly in the nineteenth century, and many of the city's buildings are well-preserved, peach-coloured monuments to the self-esteem of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Zagreb is more than just a gateway to Central Europe; it is a melting pot. The city incorporates all the benefits of the West with the promising opportunities of the developing regions in South and East Europe, making it an ideal location for your company. A vibrating city on the river Sava, at the heart of a politically and economically stable market, Zagreb has a long history, rich culture, offers high quality life-style, excellent prospects and a highly educated population boasting over 1 million people. The city offers a uniquely vivacious café life and a year-round programme of heavy-duty art exhibitions and at least one genuine cultural flagship in the shape of the recently opened Museum of Contemporary Art. The Croatian capital's growing reputation for arty fun also extends into its nightlife, with cutting-edge clubs, live gig venues and summer festivals.

12.00 – 13.00 Free time for lunch
13.00 – 13.45 Transfer to shopping outlet
Free time for shopping
Visit to Croatian National Theatre



The Croatian National Theater in Zagreb is the central and oldest theater institution in Croatia, with three ensembles: opera, drama and ballet. At least twelve premieres are performed annually, resulting in more than two hundred and twenty stage performances per season. As a central national house, the Croatian National Theater in Zagreb nurtures a diverse program and, with the performances of works by local authors of different styles and periods, performs works of the classical and contemporary world repertoire. The Croatian National Theater in Zagreb has positioned itself in the last few years as a relevant

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theater company in European and world contexts, and with three permanent ensembles regularly performs on world stages and hosts foreign productions on its stage. The Croatian National Theater in Zagreb greatly contributes to the cultural life of the metropolis, developing and attracting an increasingly diverse theater audience, resulting in performances sometimes sold out months in advance. For several seasons, the Croatian National Theater in Zagreb is also a producer and / or co-producer of many important international projects, such as the World Theater Festival.

Acommodation
Overnight, Zagreb

Day 8: Zagreb – Trakošćan – Varaždin – Zagreb

Breakfast at hotel
9.00 – 10.30 Transfer to Trakošćan castle, 80 km
10.40 – 11.40 Trakošćan castle sightseeing with local guide



Trakoscan was built in the late 13th century in northwestern Croatian defense system as a small observation fortress for monitoring the road from Ptuj to Bednja Valley. According to legend, Trakoscan was named after the Thracian fortress which allegedly existed in antiquity. Another preserved legend says, it is named after the knights Drachenstein who in the early Middle Ages, ruled the region. Including entrance to Trakošćan castle.

12.00 - 13.00 Transfer to Varaždin, 39 km
Free time for lunch
14.30 – 16.00 Varaždin sightseeing with local guide



The preserved baroque historic City core is rich in monuments and art heritage and a walk down the City's streets reveals numerous palaces, villas and the oldest city hall in Europe. Varaždin was built over the centuries and different stylistic influences, varying fashions of certain historical periods and wishes of the investors created an interesting and somewhat unusual harmony of flora and fauna, mythical animals and unusual characters built into the facades of the houses and palaces in the historic City core. Also note on your walk through Varaždin the fantastic bestiary of Varaždin: try to penetrate into its hidden meaning or just enjoy the imagination of the builder.

16.00 – 17.00 Transfer back to Zagreb
Rest of the day free at leisure

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Overnight, Zagreb

Day 9: Zagreb

Breakfast at hotel
Transfer to the airport
END of services