



Undiscovered Culinary Gems of the Mediterranean Trieste, Slovenia & Croatia 10 day itinerary

Day 1 – Arrival & Trieste



Arrive at Trieste airport* and rendezvous with your diVino sommeliers and driver, then transfer to your luxury 4-star accommodations in the heart of historic Trieste. After free time to settle in, we'll meet at the hotel's lovely restaurant for a welcome toast and light buffet lunch of local specialties. During lunch your diVino hosts will present your trip itinerary and answer questions. Then we'll head out for a walking tour of Trieste with a local historian guide, who will highlight the history and multicultural nature of this port city. You will have some free time to explore the historic city center or relax at the hotel's spa before we stroll to a wonderful restaurant in the city center to enjoy a sommelier-guided welcome dinner featuring regional cuisine paired to an array of wines representing the three regions we'll visit during our trip.

Includes:

- Arrival toast and buffet lunch with diVino guided introduction to the itinerary
- Two hour guided tour of Trieste with a local historian guide
- 'Welcome to Italy' sommelier-guided wine tasting dinner
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver, including transfer from Trieste airport
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

Day 2 – Historic Castles of Trieste: San Giusto, Miramare and Duino



After breakfast at the hotel, we'll travel to the medieval castle of San Giusto and learn about the time when the Venetians and Austro-Hungarians dominated Trieste.

Then we'll visit the breathtaking castle and park of Miramare, built in the mid 19th century by Archduke Maximilian of Habsburg (later to become Emperor of Mexico), and planned by Carl Junker. After visiting the castle and its gardens, we'll move on to one of our favorite local trattorias to enjoy a light seafood lunch paired to an array of wines from the Carso DOC region.

After lunch a brief walk along the seaside Rilke trail will lead us to the historic castle of Duino, residence of the noble Princes of von Thurm and Taxis.

You'll return to your hotel with free time to rest and relax before heading out for a traditional Italian dinner paired to wines from the Friuli Venezia-Giulia region.

Includes:

- Tour of three historic castles, including entrance fees
- Light seafood lunch paired to wines from the Carso region
- Dinner paired to Friuli Venezia-Giulia wines
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

Day 3 – San Canziano Grottos & Slovenia



After breakfast, we'll check-out of the hotel and travel across the Slovenian border to the the Škocjan Caves Regional Park in the heart of Slovenia's Karst region. We'll visit the breathtaking grottos of San Canziano (a UNESCO World Heritage site) for a 1 ½ hour guided tour of the spectacular caverns and underground river of Reka (total walking approximately 2 miles).*

Then we'll move on to a great local 'gostilna' (trattoria) for a light lunch of traditional local specialties. Afterwards, we'll continue our journey into the heart of Slovenia's beautiful countryside to Lake Bled, where you'll check-in to your luxury 4-star accommodations. After settling in and enjoying free time to rest and relax by the lake, we'll begin our exploration of the flavors of Slovenia with a gourmet dinner at the hotel, paired to an array of fine Slovenian wines presented by your personal sommeliers, who will tell you about Slovenia's wine regions, traditions and grape varieties.

Includes:

- 1 ½ hour guided tour of the San Canziano grottos
- Light 'gostilna' lunch paired to local wine
- Gourmet dinner at Vila Bled paired to an array of Slovenian wines
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

* The tour of the **Škocjan Caves** includes the Great Hall, from which enormous stalactites called the *Orjaki (Giants)* rise up to 50', the renowned *Orgle (Organ)*, where visitors can first hear the roaring of the Reka River as it enters the Karst underworld through the spacious *Šumeča jama (Murmuring Cave)*. Upon leaving the *Tiha jama (Silent Cave)*, there is an impressive view of the river's underground canyon. The trail continues along a gallery chiseled through the rock walls to the *Cerkevnik Bridge* towering 150' above the riverbed at the point where the river enters the *Hanke's Channel*. Descending through the *Müller* and *Svetina Halls*, we reach the lowest point of the tourist path, nearly 500' beneath the surface. Then we leave the river and ascend to the *Dvorana ponvic (Rimstone Pools' Hall)*. Visitors see daylight again in the *Schmidl Hall* that leads to the *Velika dolina* whose walls ascend up to 500'. At the bottom, we can see the Reka River with its 30' waterfall.

Day 4 – Slovenia: Lake Bled



After breakfast we'll explore the breathtaking surroundings of Lake Bled. We'll begin with an outing on the lake in a private boat, stopping at its charming island. Then we'll visit the majestic 11th century Bled Castle, followed by a light lunch including a sample of locally produced cheeses, cured meats and other specialties.

After lunch, those who choose to will hike along one of Bled's most spectacular sites, the Vintgar Gorge, (walking time approximately 1 hour with option of extending the hike). Those who prefer free time will return to the hotel grounds for lake side relaxation.

That evening we'll travel to one of the area's most highly acclaimed restaurants, where the Chef will tell us about traditional local products and recipes followed by a demonstration in the restaurant's kitchen. Then we'll sit down to a gourmet dinner paired to an array of top Slovenian wines presented by the restaurant's sommelier, one of Slovenia's leading wine experts.

Includes:

- Private boat outing on Lake Bled
- Entrance fees to Bled Castle
- Light lunch with wine
- Cooking demonstration and gourmet wine dinner presented by one of Slovenia's leading sommeliers
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

Day 5 – Ljubljana: History & Gourmet tour



After breakfast at the hotel, we'll depart for Ljubljana, Slovenia's historic capital city. We'll enjoy a guided art and gourmet tour with a local art historian guide through the historic city center with a visit to the morning markets. Then we'll embark on an outing on the Ljubljanica River on a private river boat, followed by lunch at one of Ljubljana's fabulous restaurants. After lunch you'll enjoy free time to shop and explore in the city center or sit and enjoy a cocktail at one of the charming riverside cafès.

We'll return to our hotel on lake Bled with free time to freshen up before enjoying dinner at the hotel.

Includes:

- Three hour guided tour of Ljubljana with a local art historian guide
- Private river boat outing in Ljubljana
- Gourmet lunch in with wine
- Dinner with wine at Vila Bled
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

Day 6 – Slovenia: The Alpine Area - Kranjska Gora & the Vrsic Pass



After breakfast we'll explore the beautiful mountain scenery of north-western Slovenia, including the alpine town of Kranjska Gora and the Vrsic Pass. Then we'll travel through the beautiful Soca River valley to historic Kobarid, where we'll stop at one of Slovenia's finest restaurants and meet Movia, a renowned local winemaker who will join us for a gourmet tasting lunch of exquisite cuisine creatively paired to an array of Movia wines.

After lunch we'll visit Kobarid, site of Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms* and its world-famous WWI museum, before returning to Lake Bled to enjoy a light dinner at the hotel.

Includes:

- Gourmet Movia winemaker's lunch with wine*
- Light dinner at the hotel
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

Day 7 – Slovenia and Croatia: Vipavska Dolina, Sutor Wine Tour and Istria



After breakfast, we'll check out of the hotel and travel to the Vipava Valley, site of **Sutor**, one of the region's leading wineries, where we'll meet Sutor's visionary young winemaker and owner, Primoz Lavrencic. Primoz and his wife Mateja Zidarich Lavrencic will lead us on a tour of the vineyard and its winery before moving on to one of Slovenia's best restaurants *Pri Lojzetu* in Zvonce Zemono, where leading Slovenian chef Tomaz Kavcic will prepare an unforgettable lunch perfectly paired to an array of Sutor wines presented by Primoz.

After lunch, we'll leave for Istria on the Croatian seaside where we'll check in to luxury seaside accommodations. In the afternoon, you'll have free time to settle in and enjoy the resort, relax by the pool or at the beach.

That evening we'll enjoy a light fresh seafood dinner, paired to an array of Istrian wines. During dinner we'll introduce you to the winemaking traditions and indigenous grapes of Istria, while guiding you through a tasting of some of the regions top wines.

Includes:

- Sutor Winery tour
- Pri Lojzetu gourmet winemakers lunch paired to Sutor wines
- 'Welcome to Croatia' light seafood dinner and wine tasting
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

Day 8 – Istrian Coast



After breakfast at the hotel, we'll explore the beautiful coastline of Istria by private bus. We'll stop at charming coastal villages including Porec, the breathtaking Limski canal, Rovinj and Pula, stopping en route for lunch at a local trattoria to sample traditional Istrian cuisine.

We'll see the Venetian influence on the seaside towns and villages where the influence of the Serenissima Republic can be seen and felt lingering in the air.

Then we'll travel to Opatija for a gourmet fresh seafood dinner, prepared by one of Istria's leading young Chefs and paired to an array of top Istrian wines.

Includes:

- Trattoria lunch with wine
- Gourmet seafood dinner with wine
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

Day 9 - Green Istria, inland Croatia



After breakfast we'll travel into the heart of the Istrian countryside, where we'll discover the flavours and beauty of one of Europe's undiscovered gems.

We'll visit medieval villages including the breathtaking hill top town of Motovun, home to Istria's famous truffles. After learning about Istrian truffles, we'll enjoy a lunch of traditional local cuisine and seasonal truffles paired to locally produced wines, followed by free time to explore Motovun and enjoy the magnificent views from every corner.

Then we'll return to the hotel with free time to relax and enjoy the resort and spa before wrapping up our journey with a gourmet feast paired to an overview of fine wines from throughout our travels.

Includes:

- Traditional lunch with seasonal truffles and Istrian wines.
- Gourmet farewell wine-paired dinner at the hotel
- Full day transportation in a private bus with driver
- Services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers

Day 10 - Departure

AM check out of accommodations and transfer to Trieste airport for departure*.

Includes:

- One way transfer to Trieste airport

* Transfers to other airports can be arranged.

Prices for this private custom culinary tour will vary according to the number of people in your group, final custom itinerary and hotel preferences. Please contact us for more information and price quotes.

This itinerary includes:

- Custom itinerary planning service and trip folder with detailed itinerary
- 2 nights luxury accommodations, with breakfast in Trieste
- 4 nights luxury accommodations, with breakfast in Slovenia
- 3 nights luxury accommodations, with breakfast in Istria
- 9 wine-paired dinners as outlined in the itinerary
- 9 wine-paired lunches as outlined in the itinerary
- Museum and castle entrance fees as detailed in the itinerary
- Winery entrance and tasting fees
- Cooking demonstration
- 10 days transportation in a private bus with driver including airport transfers as outlined
- Tour of Lake Bled on private boat
- Tour of Ljubljana River on private river boat
- Private tours of Trieste and Ljubljana with art historian guides
- Tour of grottos at San Caziano
- 9 days services of two bilingual diVino sommeliers*

* diVino sommeliers are bilingual, professional wine experts who will serve as both your personal sommeliers as well as your hosts throughout your trip and may include Amy Wadman – diVino proprietor, Summer Wolff – diVino marketing director and wine consultant, Noris Vesnaver – diVino's north-eastern Italy (Slovenia & Croatia) expert, as well as a small carefully selected group of diVino partnering sommeliers.

Does not include:

Airfare
Travel insurance
Hotel mini bar, hotel spa entrance and treatments
Personal shopping items

