

## TOURING THE BALKAN BEAUTIES (Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro)

### EX VIENNA

This 25-day trip will take you on a journey through four Balkan countries, **Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro**. Countries that were once united in one, but in spite of that have very different history and culture. During the journey you will visit the historical cities of **Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade, Dubrovnik, Split** and experience the true culture of this Balkan pearls. You will be amazed by the beautiful **mountains and alpine towns** of Slovenia and intact **national parks** of Croatia and Montenegro. You will finish the journey with a **cruise** among the numerous islands of **Dalmatia**.

This program was adjusted for a more **active traveller**, who likes to discover new **hiking trails** and **cycling paths**, and paddle on **clear blue sea waters, rivers and lakes**. Please do not be concerned if you do not ride a bike, as we have optional hikes.



### ITINERARY

**DAY 1: VIENNA** Arrive Vienna and transfer to our hotel. Our preferred airline is Emirates due to the arrival and departure times and connections. But the choice is entirely yours when booking your flight please ensure that you book a flight arriving into Vienna on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September and departing afternoon evening of the **(B)**

#### Day 2 VIENNA – KRANJSKA GORA

After breakfast we will transfer to **Kranjska Gora**, most famous for its winter sports but is the heart of the valley in the summer too. Traditional mountain home lines and athletic dynamism are united here. It offers many sport events and plenty of entertainment for all who enjoy **sport, parties and fun**. True romantics will find a **peaceful retreat**, whilst

more curious, inquisitive minds will be overwhelmed by the variety of **folklore**. Accommodation in hotel and the rest of the afternoon free for individual exploring, walking to **Lake Jasna** or just relaxing in the hotel spa. **Dinner and accommodation in hotel in Kranjska Gora. (B)**

### Day 3: KRANJSKA GORA - PLANICA - TAMAR - SLEMENOVA ŠPICA – VRŠIČ – KRANJSKA GORA

After the breakfast, the first hike in the Julian Alps. Easy walk to **Planica**, the famous centre of skiing jumps, followed by an easy hike through the **Tamar Valley**. From the hut in Tamar starts ascent to **Slemenova Špica**, popular mountain among Slovenian hikers. From Slemenova Špica you descend to **Vršič**, the highest pass in the Julian Alps. Although the excursion this day is not very difficult you will enjoy in beautiful views of Julian Alps. Transfer from Vršič to Kranjska Gora, dinner and accommodation in hotel in Kranjska Gora. (BD)

**Information about the hike: duration: 6h-7h; difference: cca.850m**

### DAY 4: KRANJSKA GORA – VRŠIČ – SOČA – KRANJSKA GORA

Breakfast. From Kranjska Gora you will depart towards the area of Posočje through Vršič. On the way you will visit the **Russian Chapel**, which was built by Russian prisoners of war engaged in forced labor in this area during World War I. Transfer to Žaga, where you will start your experience, **kayak ride on River Soča**, which is beautiful, untouched, pure and perfect in its mountain current. When you will paddle on this magnificent river, you will understand what attracts even the world's filmmakers such as the makers of **Narnia**. Late afternoon return to Kranjska Gora. **Dinner and accommodation in hotel in Kranjska Gora. (BD)**

### DAY 5: KRANJSKA GORA – VINTGAR GORGE – BLED – BOHINJ - LJUBLJANA

Breakfast. Continue to the beautiful **Vintgar Gorge**, made by Radovna River. The gorge was discovered by chance in 1891. They built the wooden bridges and opened to the public. Continue to **alpine town of Bled**, where you will visit the **castle built on high rock** with a local guide. From the castle you can enjoy a panoramic view over the lake and the **island of Bled**. You will continue the tour going to the island with the traditional boat called **pletna**, where you will visit the **baroque Church of St. Mary**. In the afternoon visit of **Bohinj** and the **largest glacial lake in Slovenia**, that is located beneath the high mountains of **Julian Alps**. We recommend taking a **canoe boat ride** on the lake. **Transfer to the capital, dinner and accommodation in hotel in Ljubljana. (BD)**

### DAY 6: LJUBLJANA – CITY TOUR (possible cycling city tour) – POSTOJNA CAVE – PREDJAMA – LJUBLJANA

Breakfast. Guided tour of **Ljubljana**. In this wonderful city you will visit its most strategic point - **the castle**, from there you can enjoy amazing views of the city and its historic center. Once down again, you will walk along the river Ljubljanica, getting to know the numerous bridges, including the **Dragon Bridge**, the symbol of the city. You will visit the **congress building**, the **National Library**, the **Cathedral** and the main square "**Prešernov trg**" which is next to the famous **three bridges**. In the afternoon, transfer to the town of

Postojna to visit the famous **Postojna Cave**, which is the largest cave in the world open to the public. You will see the first part of the cave with the electric train. After the visit of the cave, you will visit the magical **Predjama Castle**, located about 9 kilometers from Postojna. The medieval castle is famous for its incredible location, situated under a rock, with numerous caves and hideouts. **Return to the capital, dinner and accommodation in Ljubljana. (BD)**

#### DAY 7: LJUBLJANA – ZAGREB

Breakfast. In the morning some free time for individual exploring of Ljubljana. As a city, it has a **rich cultural scene** and a notable University. The Old City Center is completely pedestrian and centered around the castle and the river - both banks are filled with **charming cafes, restaurants and shops**. The people are **friendly and open-minded**, the cuisine is excellent and the city is clean, safe and accessible. In the afternoon departure towards Croatia, dinner and **accommodation in hotel in Zagreb. ( B D )**

#### DAY 8: ZAGREB – NATIONAL PARK PLITVICE – ZAGREB

Breakfast and departure towards **National Park Plitvice Lakes**. With cascading **waterfalls** hidden among lush forest **greenery**, it's easy to see why Croatia's very own Garden of Eden regularly features in lists of the world's most beautiful places. At the heart of the Plitvice Lakes National Park, **16 azure pools spill** into each other, connected with rocky outcrops dripping in moss. The tallest waterfall, Vikeli Slap, drops an impressive 70 metres, ensconced in a veil of mist, while the surrounding woodland teems and chatters with life. A boardwalk curves sinuously between lakes, allowing visitors to drink in the arresting beauty of the Plitvice Lakes at very close quarters. **Possible many different hiking trails with different difficulty levels. Return to Zagreb, dinner and accommodation in hotel. (BD)**

#### DAY 9: ZAGREB – NOVI SAD

Breakfast. Local tour of **Zagreb, capital of the Republic of Croatia**, also its largest city and the cultural, economic, cinematic, sporting and governmental hub of the country. It is located on the southern slopes of **Medvednica Mountain** along the banks of the **Sava River**. Culturally, it is a European city well worth visiting, with its numerous historical monuments and medieval architecture.

Its favourable geographic positioning in the **Pannonian Basin** gives the city instant access to Central Europe and the Adriatic coast. Maybe that's why, for many years, it has remained the economic gateway connecting Central and Western Europe via the Adriatic Sea. On this tour you will visit some of the most important points, the historic centre "**Gornji grad**", the **Cathedral, St. Marks Church** and the **King Tomislav Square**. Departure towards Novi Sad, the second largest city in Serbia. **Dinner and accommodation in hotel in Novi Sad. (BD)**

#### DAY 10: NOVI SAD – CITY TOUR – BELGRADE

Breakfast. Tour of **Novi Sad** with a local guide, where you will visit the most important historical point as **Liberty Square, Town Hall, Catholic Church "Name of Mary", center of Apollo and Uspen Church**. In the Serbian language, the synonyms for the word sad (plantation) are: garden, yard and bed of flowers. One of the first impressions the city

makes is that it is a city of **well-tended beauty**. **Easy-going** and surrounded by fertile lowland, **Fruška Mountain** and the **Danube**, the capital city of Vojvodina is a **pearl** amongst the Serbian cities. In the afternoon departure towards the capital, **Belgrade** and some free time for exploring one of the oldest European cities. **Dinner and accommodation in hotel. (BD)**

#### **DAY 11 : BELGRADE – CITY TOUR – ZLATIBOR**

Breakfast. In the morning guided tour with local guide. Visit neighborhoods and historic buildings as **Skadarlija Belgrade, Zemun, Terazije, Kalemegdan, the Temple of Saint Sava**.

The city lies on two international waterways, at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers, which surround it on three sides. Because of this position, Belgrade is fittingly referred to as the Gateway to the Balkans and the Door to Central Europe. **In the afternoon departure towards Zlatibor, dinner and accommodation in hotel in Zlatibor. (BD)**

#### **DAY 12: ZLATIBOR – DURMITOR**

Breakfast . In the morning you will go by bus to **Zlatibor Park**. Zlatibor, beauty among the mountains, is situated 220km from Belgrade, rich in lush meadows, clear mountain rivers and streams. Most of the Zlatibor, about 85%, are large fields and pastures surrounded the mountain peaks of the periodic coniferous forest plantations. The highest peaks are **Tornik** in the south and **Čigota** in the northwest. On this journey you will be able to climb **Čigota** (2- 3h) or visit the village of **Kosturica** " drven grad " and take a steam locomotive ride " Šarganska osmica ". **Dinner and accommodation in Žabljak. (BD)**

#### **DAY 13: DURMITOR – HIKING – DURMITOR**

The mountain massif of **Durmitor** is cluster of 48 rocky peaks above 2000 meters, crowned by 2,523m high **Bobotov Kuk**, which is the highest point of Montenegro. Its exceptionally stunning looks are due to the fact that its rocky sides rise suddenly from the high tableland of **Jezerica** and **Pivska Planina** and have granted it a nickname of Soa nebeska –“**The Pillar of Heavens**”. The 20 by 10 km massif is one of the largest in the Dinaric Alps and its furrowed scenery contains several exceptionally beautiful “mountain eyes” (gorske oči). Your hike will include the following points: **Žabljak** (1421m) - **Barno Lake** - **Bošaća** (1489) - **Jablan Bara** - **Jablan Lake** (1791 ) - **Žabljak** (1421m) . **Dinner and accommodation in Žabljak. (BD)**

**Duration: 5h - 6h ; slope : cca.370m**

#### **DAY 14: DURMITOR – CETINJE – BUDVA – KOTOR**

Breakfast. Departure from Durmitor towards **Cetinje**, the former Montenegrin capital. Cetinje, the old historic capital of Montenegro, is a pleasant small town with **harmonious architecture** and an undoubted sense of **pride for its heritage**, which is best observed in the museums that are amongst the richest in the country. Tourist season or not, the town enjoys its own slow pace with barley anyone outside during hot summers days, the situation which abruptly changes in the pleasant fresh evenings when both young and old get to streets for a walk or to sip a drink or two. Continue to **Budva**, where you will



vitis **the Old Town**. Budva Old Town lies on a small peninsula and represents a **treasure chest of culture heritage**. Crossed with **narrow streets** and squares are famous buildings, the **Church Sv. Trojica**, housing the tomb of the exquisite writer Stjepan Mitrov Ljubisa, the **Churches of Sv. Ivan, Sv. Bogorodica and Sv. Sava**. You will finish the day in **Kotor**, which is listed as a **UNESCO World Heritage site**. The Old Town of Kotor lays in the shadows of the fearsome **St. John's Hill** and the walls protecting this town are a fortification masterpiece at up to 15 meters wide and 20 meters high each. These walls are skillfully crafted into the natural steep slopes of the hill and the view of this town on approach is one of the amazing sights, not only of the Mediterranean, but of the world. **Dinner and accommodation in Kotor. (BD)**

#### **DAY 15: KOTOR – DUBROVNIK CITY TOUR – DUBROVNIK**

Breakfast. From Kotor you will depart towards **Dubrovnik**, also one of the cities listed as a **UNESCO World Heritage site**. On the way you can admire the natural beauty of the **Adriatic coast**. In the afternoon you will make a tour through the historic center with a local guide. During the visit you will visit the **Rector's Palace** and **Franciscan Monastery**, the **oldest pharmacy** in the world. Later you will visit the walls from where you can enjoy the spectacular views over the Adriatic. **Dinner and accommodation in Dubrovnik. (BD)**

#### **DAY 16: DUBROVNIK – NEUM – SPLIT**

Breakfast. In the morning some free time for individual exploring. Departure to **Split**, the second largest city in Croatia. The old town, which was listed as World Heritage site by **UNESCO**, will take your breath away. You will walk around the city with a local guide. Alternatively you can enter the **Diocletian Palace**, built in the fourth century by the Roman emperor Diocletian. You will also visit the **Cathedral of San Dominus** and the **Temple of Jupiter**. **Dinner and accommodation in Split. (BD)**

#### **DAY 17: SPLIT – CRUISE**

Breakfast. Some free time for individual exploring. Boarding on cruise and departure, starting with two-hour cruise to the island of **Brač**. Upon arrival in **Milna** you will cycle to **Bobovišda**. You will be able to have an afternoon swim here or just a coffee break. On returning to Milna we suggest a cycle ride along the coast. **Dinner and overnight in the harbour of Milna. (BD)**

Bike Course: Milna – Bobovišda NM – Milna (approx 17 km) **DIFFICULTY LEVEL 3** • Paved, gravel • Inclination: Partly hilly - partly flat • Highest point at: 175 m

#### **DAY 18: BRAČ ISLAND**

After breakfast your adventure will start with a long, but even climb to the crest of a hill, past mulberry and fig trees, pine forests, olive groves and vineyards. After nice and long break you still have another 10 km to get to **Bol**. The breathtaking panoramic views of the neighboring island of Hvar on the descent to the beach at Bol are well worth the effort of the

ascent. In Bol you can take a swim or stroll around the village. Overnight in Bol.

Bike Course: Milna - Bol (approx. 43km) **DIFFICULTY LEVEL 5** • Surface: Paved, short part to Gažul village is gravel • Incline: Very hilly, partly flat, last 8 km downhill • Highest point at: 570 m ( B )

#### DAY 19: HVAR ISLAND

After breakfast the biking tour takes you through small island settlements, fields and vineyards from **Jelsa** towards **Vrboska** and then we descend on an old road towards **Stari Grad** where you have a refreshing stop. The tour ends at the historical city of **Hvar** where you can climb up to the **Španjol**, a citadel built on the site of a medieval castle to defend the town from the Turks. Overnight in Hvar. (B)

Bike Course: Jelsa - Stari Grad - Hvar (approx 33 km) **DIFFICULTY LEVEL 4** • Surface: Paved, gravel • Incline: Flat on the way to Starigrad, hilly from Stari Grad • Highest point at: 415 m

#### DAY 20: KORČULA ISLAND

After breakfast you will visit **Korčula**, the island with the most abundant vegetation on the Adriatic. Its old Greek name **Korkyra Melaina** is especially due to the rich cover of pine woods. The medieval town of Korčula is constructed like a fishbone with a main “bone” (street) going from main gate to the peak of the old town. **Overnight in Korčula.**

**Bike Course: Vela Luka - Korčula (approx 44 km) or Račišće - Lumbarda - Korčula (approx 24 km) - to be confirmed on the spot as Vela Luka – Korčula is very demanding trail and not suitable for less fit groups.**

**DIFFICULTY LEVEL 4/3** • Surface: Paved • Incline: Partly flat, partly hilly, last 5 km downhill • Highest point at: 500 m

#### DAY 21: MIJET ISLAND NATIONAL PARK

While you enjoy your breakfast, the ship will take you to the lush green island of **Mljet** also known as Honey-Island. You will cycle around the saltwater-lake, in which there is actually another island where in the twelfth century Benedictine created a monastery, beautifully secluded, and surrounded by pine and oak forests. Boat ride to the monastery follows. After lunch you can take a swim in **Small Lake** or take another ride around the lakes. Overnight in **Pomena** (Mljet).

**Bike Course: National park Mljet (approx. 15 km) DIFFICULTY LEVEL 1**  
**Surface: Paved, gravel • Incline: Flat • Highest point at: 65 m**

#### DAY 22: PELJEŠAC PENINSULA & MAKARSKA RIVIERA

After breakfast enjoy the sail towards **Pelješac Peninsula**, where life is very much like that on an island. The climb ahead of you is not an easy one, but you will enjoy the landscape,

which will help you get through the difficult part. The cycle-tour leads you into the backcountry and past the most famous wine growing area. In the afternoon our boat brings you to the popular holiday resort on **Makarska Riviera**. **Overnight in Baška Voda or Makarska.**

**Bike Course: Kučište - Orebid - Lovište (approx 30 km) DIFFICULTY LEVEL 4 • Surface: Paved • Inclination: Partly flat, party hilly to very hilly, last 6 km downhill • Highest point at: 270 m**

### DAY 23: OMIŠ & SPLIT

After breakfast take the last ride of your Dalmatian adventure, this time to **Radman's Mills**, a popular resort, to enjoy the beauty of a natural park and canyon of the **Cetina River** where you can also see stone mill wheels dating from the 17th century. After lunch the ship leads you back to the monumental city of **Split**. **Overnight in Split.**

**Bike Course: Omiš – Radmanove Mlinice - Omiš (approx 12 km) DIFFICULTY LEVEL 1 • Surface: Paved • Inclination: Partly flat, partly hilly • Highest point at: 160 m**

### Day 24: SPLIT – DEPART SPIT AIRPORT TO VIENNA FOR OUR CONNECTING FLIGHT

Breakfast at 9:00 am and then disembarkation in Split. Transfer to Split airport and flight back home.

### Program includes:

- English speaking tour guide
- Accommodation in 3 star hotels with half board;
- hotel taxes and services
- Accommodation on cruise boat, category A, with full board
- Transfers in minibuses / vans
- Arrival and departure transfers
- Bike rental on cruise boat
- Hikes mentioned in the itinerary

### Included visits

Ljubljana, Bled, Bohinj, Postojna Cave, Predjama Castle, Zagreb, Plitvice, Novi Sad, Belgrade, Cetinje, Budva, Kotor, Dubrovnik, Split

**Cost:\$7500 twin share**

### The price does not include:

- Personal expenses
- Visitors tax and port fees (to be paid on the spot)

- Travel insurance
- International Flight ticket
- Flight Split to Vienna approx. \$280Euro



LYN TAYLOR'S ADVENTURE TRAVEL  
*Nepal... Africa... Where ever !!!*