

CULTURE + WALKING

# SLOVENIA & CROATIA

Ljubljana to the Istrian Peninsula



*Classic*  
JOURNEYS





“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

— *Travel + Leisure*

## Gems of the Northern Adriatic

Just a generation ago, Slovenia and Croatia's Istrian Peninsula were part of Yugoslavia. Now, they're two of the great under-the-radar screen destinations in all of Europe. These unspoiled next-door lands sit right at the top of the Adriatic Sea just east of Venice. The scenery is so insanely perfect that you don't want the walks to end. Think vineyards rolling into olive groves sweeping to the Adriatic and mirror calm mountain lakes reflecting snow-capped Alps. Can't you see yourself, eating an apricot plucked from the orchard of a limestone farmhouse...chatting with a shepherd...sipping the local Malvasia wine before another forkful of truffled gnocchi? The Romans called this region Terra Magica and even now there are strong traces of Italian culture in the food, scenery and everyday life. Travel experts love to say that these lands are "like Tuscany 30 years ago." We think Istria and Slovenia are even better...the rare kind of destination just about guaranteed to give you the unforgettable thrill of discovery.

## DAY 1

## LJUBLJANA

- Enjoy a private guided exploration of Ljubljana
- Celebrate over a festive welcome dinner

Meet in Ljubljana, Slovenia's capital. You've rarely seen a major city so full of trees. The shady setting makes for wonderful walking. You'll go for a guided stroll crossing the Ljubljanica River that meanders through the city and explore the Old Town. With the red-roofed city in the foreground and mountains as a backdrop, you'll also take in the wonderful views from Ljubljana Castle.

Slovenian cuisine has been influenced by neighboring Italy, Austria and Hungary, and you'll enjoy your first taste at dinner in one of the city's fine local restaurants.

**OVERNIGHT: LJUBLJANA**  
**MEALS: D**

## DAY 2

## LAKE BLEĐ

- Explore 15<sup>th</sup> century frescoes on an island
- Follow mountainside trails with views of waterfalls

A scenic drive this morning leads to Lake Bled, a fantasy setting in real life. The Julian Alps soar in the near distance and of course there's a medieval castle clinging to a cliff. You'll visit a small island on the lake where a pilgrimage church sits in picturesque isolation. Its steeple pierces the clear mountain air and inside there are remains of frescoes dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Just before it spills into Lake Bled, the Radovna River has carved the remarkable Vintgar gorge. As you walk the wooden bridges and trails, you'll discover a beautiful series of rapids and emerald green pools, culminating in the view from a small bridge overlooking powerful Šum waterfall.

**OVERNIGHT: LJUBLJANA**  
**MEALS: B, D**

## DAY 3

## GROZNJAN / ROVINJ

- Walk scenic countryside trails to the beautiful hill town of Groznan
- Savor a wine tasting at the end of a vineyard walk.

This morning, we cross the border to Croatia. Your destination is the walled hilltop village of Groznan. (That's Grosignana in Italian. All towns here are named in both languages. That fact perfectly sums up the interesting mix of cultures you encounter in Croatia.) Improbably, Groznan has a wonderful collection of art galleries. You have time here to stroll the charming narrow streets and venture along the Parenzana trail.

Later this afternoon, your new friend, Antonella, and her family welcome you to their award-winning winery for a tasting of the typical white Malvasia wine and the deep-ruby Teran wine made of the vines that only grow in this type of soil.

Continue on to Rovinj, one of the most picture-perfect towns you'll ever see. It completely fills the pearl-shaped tip of a small peninsula, with its red-roofed buildings on the verge of spilling into the sea. Your hotel is set on a beautiful

cove with views of the offshore islands and the surrounding area.

**OVERNIGHT: ROVINJ**  
**MEALS: B, L, D**

## DAY 4

## BRIJUNI ISLANDS / PULA

- Explore the private Brijuni Islands on foot
- Visit ancient pula amphitheater
- Taste award-winning olive oil

After breakfast, make the short drive to Fazana, your embarkation point for the ride in a wooden naval boat to the Brijuni Islands. These scenic islands held the summer residence of President Tito and were closed to the public for over 40 years. Access is still strictly controlled so the paths are quiet (except for the trademark calls of the abundant peacocks). Walks with your expert guide include a nature preserve, a Byzantine fortress, and villas that date to Roman times. Midday, return to Pula with time to explore the magnificent Roman amphitheater, one of the world's largest and best-preserved.

This afternoon, we are welcomed to a family run olive mill and into their home for a tasting of their award-winning oils. On the last of your two nights in Rovinj, you have the run of the city to dine in the restaurant of your choice.

**OVERNIGHT: ROVINJ**  
**MEALS: B**

## DAY 5

## POREČ / OPATIJA

- Walk to a seaside village
- Explore the 2,000-year-old town of Poreč
- Learn how to find truffles from an expert hunter

The beauty of your stays in Croatia's wonderful coastal towns is the ease with which you can strike out on lovely walks overlooking the Adriatic. Today starts just like that! You'll continue to enjoy the views along a short coastal drive to Poreč, a city founded by the Romans more than 2,000 years ago. The crowing glory of the town is the Euphrasian Basilica, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its octagonal baptistry that dates back to the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

Later, join up with a friend who fills you in on the history of the truffle and, you even get to join a hunt. In this region, special hounds are fed truffles from the time they're pups to help them learn how to sniff out the delicacy.

Then you're off to Opatija and your luxurious 5-star villa hotel, surrounded by a park and the lungomare where you'll promenade beside the water. You'll love this gorgeous city. It's the undisputed star of the Croatian Riviera, with its yacht-studded harbor, grand architecture and fashionable resort attitude.

**OVERNIGHT: OPATIJA**  
**MEALS: B, D**

## DAILY ITINERARY

SLOVENIA & CROATIA | LJUBLJANA TO THE ISTRIAN PENINSULA | CULTURE + WALKING

### DAY 6

#### MOSCENICE / OPATIJA

- Walk to a scenic seaside village
- Walk along the Opatija Riviera
- Enjoy a welcome by mayor's wife in Moscenice
- Celebrate over a farewell dinner

After a hearty breakfast, you will enjoy a walk from the hotel to the town of Lovran on the seaside promenade. You will enjoy a walk along the Adriatic, passing incredible villas, palm trees, and the scenic Cres and Krk islands just offshore. Here, you will have an opportunity to enjoy a nice swim before continuing for the day.

Later this afternoon, a short drive will take you to Moscenice, perched high over the peninsula's east coast. Your friend Kornelia, wife of the 2,000-year-old town's mayor, often greets us before we head off to explore. Along the way, you'll sample grappa, the local "firewater".

We return to your hotel for a chance to relax before we enjoy a festive farewell dinner.

**OVERNIGHT: OPATIJA**

**MEALS: B, D**

### DAY 7

#### ZAGREB

- Enjoy a guided visit of Zagreb

Zagreb is Croatia's capital and another Balkan town designed for great walking. Much of the architecture is from the era of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Your guided walk offers an engaging look at the cathedral, café-lined Tkalčićeva Street, and the shops and parks that are this lively city's trademarks.

After lunch, part company with your guide and fellow guests.

**OVERNIGHT: NONE**

**MEALS: B**





## Tour Hotels



### Grand Hotel Union

This breathtaking hotel in Art Nouveau style offers an exclusive location in the heart of the city centre, overlooking Prešeren Square, the Triple Bridge and the Ljubljana Castle.

**OVERNIGHT: LJUBLJANA | NIGHTS: 2**



### Hotel Lone

Spectacular contemporary design is the hallmark of this 5-star boutique property in a forest overlooking the Adriatic just outside Rovinj. Each room has a spacious balcony. There's a spa, indoor and outdoor pools and a beach.

**OVERNIGHT: ROVINJ | NIGHTS: 2**



### Hotel Milenij

A luxurious 5-star hotel situated in the center of Opatija, Hotel Milenij is situated between St. James Park and the famous seaside promenade, the 'lungomare'. The palm-lined terrace has a pool with a retractable roof.

**OVERNIGHT: OPATIJA | NIGHTS: 2**

## Tour Dates & Prices

Tour Dates	Price per Person	Price per Person
	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy
May 10-16, 2020	\$4,695	\$5,390
June 14-20, 2020	\$4,895	\$5,590
July 12-18, 2020	\$4,895	\$5,590
September 13-19, 2020	\$4,995	\$5,690
October 11-17, 2020	\$4,995	\$5,690
May 9-15, 2021	\$4,795	\$5,490
June 13-19, 2021	\$4,995	\$5,690
July 11-17, 2021	\$4,995	\$5,690
September 12-18, 2021	\$5,095	\$5,790
October 10-16, 2021	\$5,095	\$5,790

Want a different date? Or your own date? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://www.classicjourneys.com/private) to learn more about private journeys.

## Trip Essentials

**TRIP LENGTH:** 7 Days, 6 Nights

**START:** 2:30 PM Lobby of InterContinental Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

**END:** 3:00 PM Zagreb city center, Zagreb, Croatia

**TERRAIN:** Easy to moderate on good trails and coastal paths. An average of 2 to 3 hours of walking per day, with a mini-van usually in support.

## What's Included

- Memorable accommodations for 6 nights
- All breakfasts, 1 lunch and 5 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip, handle behind-the-scenes logistics and are there to help with anything
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

## Above & Beyond Benefits

- **Privileged Access Events**
- **Wine on Us**

**READY TO BOOK?**  
**CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION**

## Or give us a call

**1-833-387-1210**

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

[moreinfo@classicjourneys.com](mailto:moreinfo@classicjourneys.com)

*Travel for Free*

*Your trip is free when you organize a Classic Journeys trip with 10 or more travelers (including you)! Or you can share your savings with other group members.*

## TRAVEL WORRY-FREE!

It's easy with insurance from Travel Guard. Your policy can cover trip cancellation, travel delays, lost luggage, medical emergencies, and more. If you are traveling with kids, add them to your policy at no extra cost. [Click here](#) or call 800-826-4919 for details.

## AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to a [whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

## ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

\*\*Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

# THE Classic Journeys Difference



## HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.

At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

President & Founder



## You can expect the highest standards:



### Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



### Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



### Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



### Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



### Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



### Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

## You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Croatia and Slovenia...

- Joining a truffle hunt and eating the Croatian specialties like truffled gnocchi
- Tasting award-winning olive oil at a family run olive farm
- Following scenic footpaths on a guided walk on the private Brijuni islands through a nature preserve and to ancient Roman villas
- Relaxing at 5-star Hotel Milenij, situated between a park and the famous seaside promenade in Opatija
- Exploring with local guides like our friend Livio, named the country's #1 guide by the Croatian National Tourist Board

*"Classic Journeys excels in providing exceptional guides familiar with the local area."*

—Bert and Jo Ann E.

*Let's Go!*

TO RESERVE: 833.493.5038 | [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/RESERVATIONS](https://www.classicjourneys.com/reservations)



You might also enjoy...



## Italian Lakes

Como, Maggiore & Orta

Culture + Walking

### PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Vacationing with a view each day
- Strolling lakeside and mountain paths
- Shopping for sensuous Como silk

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/italianlakes/>.



## Montenegro

Azure Adriatic & Soaring Mountains

Culture + Walking

### PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Strolling the palm-lined shores of the Adriatic
- Lunching with shepherds in their mountaintop huts
- Tasting olive oil in the mill where it was pressed

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/montenegro/>.



# “Enthusiasm is Contagious”

AS TRAVEL + LEISURE NAMES CLASSIC JOURNEYS THE WORLD'S BEST TOUR OPERATOR FOR 2019, FOUNDER EDWARD PIEGZA REVEALS HOW IT FEELS. ENTHUSIASTICALLY.



*EDITOR'S NOTE: Just before publication of this issue, Travel + Leisure magazine announced that its readers have voted Classic Journeys the World's Best Tour Operator for 2019. It's the second time Classic Journeys has won that recognition and the 14th consecutive year the company has been in the Top 10.*

### **Congratulations! How did you get the news?**

I received a top-secret email and phone call from the editor of *Travel + Leisure* a few weeks ago with orders not to tell ANYONE. Friends and neighbors must have wondered why my smile has been so extra big lately. Now they know.

### **And how does it feel to be the World's Best Tour Operator again?**

Awesome. Humbling. So, so satisfying. Deeply gratifying to learn that we have achieved what we set out to do which is to handcraft trips of a lifetime for every guest who travels with us. I'm known as long-winded, so I could probably come up with 10 or 15 more ways to describe it if you want me to keep going.

### **Why do you think *Travel + Leisure* gave you this recognition?**

Actually, it isn't the *T+L* editors who make the decision. That's the best part. Their readers cast the votes. So the people who do the traveling, the guests who explore the world with us and our competitors — they are the ones who raised their hands to tell *T+L* that Classic Journeys is the World's Best Tour Operator based on their own experiences. Let me say it right here: "To all of you who voted for us, you are the World's Best Guests!"

### **What do you think makes your guests the World's Best Guests?**

That's easy. They are curious. They care about connecting with people of different cultures and immersing themselves in the world. They treasure experiences more than things. Like the old ad slogan went, they go for the gusto and crave the chance to have one-of-a-kind moments. They are incredibly interesting and interested people, and all of us at Classic Journeys count it as a real privilege to share in their passion for travel. And we feel that way on the

other 364 days of the year when we're not celebrating recognition like this.

### **I guess this is what you meant when you told me that "Enthusiasm is contagious."**

Absolutely. That's not our official motto, but it could be. We love what we do. We enjoy helping guests figure out how to invest their precious time and budget. I can honestly say that all of us feel that way — the Guest Services folks who interact with you while you're planning your trip, the Tour Operations team members who plan all of the logistics, the local guides who lead each one of our trips full time. There's just a huge amount of positive energy in what we do, and I think it truly is hard to resist. We'd climb into every one of our guest's suitcases and go along with them if we could. Because we can't, we call each guest while they're on tour just to be sure they are having a trip of a lifetime.

### **Has anyone ever called Classic Journeys obsessive?**

I hope so, because we are. Everything is in the details. For instance, we've created a special tour for the total eclipse of the sun which is going to pass over parts of South America in 2020. We've already analyzed likely traffic patterns in the most remote areas and figured out how to structure our itinerary so that our guests will be in place in the path of totality while the people who don't plan ahead will be stuck in jams on remote dirt roads. We enjoy obsessing about details like that so that our guests never have to.



### **How can you top this?**

Oh, we never let ourselves think of it that way. We just continue to approach every single guest on each and every departure like the most important guest we've ever had. It seems to be working! Of course, we keep looking for new ways to win more converts. For 2019, we've launched a new series of Classic Journeys that are based from

## **"I voted for you!"**

We've heard that expression so many times lately from guests who registered their votes with *Travel + Leisure*. Given the results, we know it's true ... and you know that your votes really count!

### **STAFF AND GUIDES**

"I always feel like I'm traveling with a best friend. I prefer your local guides to the ones that other companies fly in."

### **ITINERARIES AND DESTINATIONS**

"If it's on my bucket list, you always seem to go there. Of course, with so many options you always seem to make my list longer and longer!"

### **ACTIVITIES**

"On your trips, I've cooked with Michelin chefs, sung songs with Quechua schoolchildren, and walked on glaciers with the descendants of Vikings. Fun doesn't begin to describe it."

### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

"How you manage so many 5-star properties on these trips shocks me. But please, please, please keep it up!"

### **FOOD**

"I have never eaten so well so often so happily. When you people claim that you are foodies, you aren't kidding."

### **OVERALL VALUE**

"We have never had a better vacation at any price."

river cruise boats. On a different note, seeing how many travelers can't always find as much vacation time as they really want, we have developed a series of 6-day or shorter quick trips that go as far afield as Iceland, the Galápagos and Morocco.

### **Final thoughts?**

It's always an honor to win recognition. But, for all of us at Classic Journeys, the biggest privilege is to share the dreams of our guests and make those dreams come true. That connection is the best feeling of all.