



Slovenia

INFORMATION SHEET

Slovenia, formerly part of Yugoslavia, ranges from the Adriatic to the Alps. Infrastructure and tourist facilities are on par with Western European standards. Ljubljana is a university city with great culture, outdoor cafes, and a focus on green spaces. You'll find Slovenians are helpful, pleasant people prepared to go out of their way to welcome you.

Currency: The unit of currency is the Euro, available in various denominations. For your convenience, we have enclosed a sheet with common dollar/Euro conversions. We recommend that you purchase at least 200-400 Euros, depending on your spending habits. Major banks in the U.S. generally can make this conversion for you. There are currency exchange kiosks in most major airports, if you are not able to get it converted prior to departure. Tourists reaching their destination without local currency can obtain local currency through any bank or exchange office, but the process can be expensive and time-draining. Money can be changed at banks in all of the main tourist areas or exchange offices as well as most hotels and railroad stations. Banking hours are usually 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (some close for an hour at noontime) on weekdays and closed on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

Most shops and restaurants in the cities and tourist resorts accept major credit cards (MasterCard, Visa, American Express) and offer the best exchange rates, but credit cards are less easy to use in the countryside. Check with your credit card company for details of merchant acceptability and other services, which may be available. Cash is often preferred but should not be carried in large quantities. Be sure to have some local coin with you to use in the public bathrooms. ATMs are very common and will give you your cash in local currency. This is the most convenient way to get money abroad. Always check with your bank before you use your ATM card overseas. Some European banking institutions require 4-digit pin numbers, so if yours is more, change it to four before you leave. Advise your bank and credit card companies that you will be abroad, to avoid problems.

Weather: Slovenia has an oceanic climate, with continental European features like moderate winters and warm summers. Below are the average 24-hour temperatures for the seasons in Ljubljana. However, you can always experience unusual weather conditions. For that reason, we always suggest that you pack clothes that can be layered. It is also wise to check the newspaper, the Weather Channel, or weather.com before you pack to verify the most current weather situation.

CITY	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER
Ljubljana	45 - 60	66 - 70	43 - 60	32-35

You will see temperatures forecast in Celsius. To convert Celsius to Fahrenheit, multiply the Celsius number by 9, then divide your answer by 5, and add 32.

Clothing: It is advisable to bring a mid-weight coat or jacket. Most natives will dress smartly when dining out. You may wish to pack one outfit that is a little dressier for a special evening: for gentlemen, a sport coat and tie and a dress or fancy pantsuit for the ladies. Be sure to bring comfortable soft-soled shoes or sneakers for the days you are sightseeing. A small packable umbrella and sweaters are always handy to have with you. It is important to remember that you may stop at churches. Shorts and short skirts are not acceptable. Please remember to wear long pants or knee-length or longer skirts on those days.

Packing Smart: Be sure to pack any prescriptions that you will need for your vacation in your carry-on-bag.

You may wish to bring any special soaps or accessories from home. Foreign hotels do not always have face cloths in the room. It's a good idea to pack your own. You may wish to pack a pocket calculator (useful in money conversion) and a small multi-language guide with basic phrases. Wake-up calls will be available from the front desk, but you also might want to bring your own battery-operated alarm clock. Don't forget your camera and extra film (film tends to be more expensive overseas). The availability and quality of hairdryers and irons at hotels vary greatly. For that reason, we strongly recommend that you bring your own with you, if you have a need for them.

Due to heightened security at the airports, remember to pack questionable items in your checked luggage, not your carry-on. Such items include knives, scissors, any cutting implements, as well as some sports items (golf clubs, ski poles, bats, etc.). If in doubt, put it in your checked bag. It will save you time going through security checkpoints.

Enjoying the trip: Your trip will probably include an intermediate destination, where you will change planes, but your luggage will be checked all the way to your final destination. Since the airplane is dry, and you will have a long international flight, it helps to drink a lot of non-alcoholic liquids while flying. Alcohol contributes to jetlag, as does eating heavy meals on board. Feet swell at high altitudes, so it is a good idea to remove your shoes while in flight. You will probably want to bring a small book or magazine in your carry-on luggage.

A valid U.S. passport is required. It must be **valid for at least 6 months past the time your tour ends**. If you are a not a U.S. citizen, you may need further identification. Contact National Passport Information at (888) 362-8668 (toll call) or the Slovenian Consulate for further information. No Visa is necessary for this tour for U.S. citizens. No vaccinations are necessary for U.S. citizens. Remember that you are responsible for having all valid documentation needed for this tour.

Electrical Current: The standard current is 230 volts A.C. A transformer may also be necessary and can be purchased in many stores. Sockets generally have two round pins. Adapters are needed for U.S. plugs (for hairdryers and travel irons). The hairdryer may not work unless the wattage is properly matched up, and may damage dryer even though you are using an adapter.

Food, Drink & Entertainment: Since water away from home can often be upsetting to the digestive tract, we recommend that you drink bottled water, which is not usually complimentary. This will usually be offered in restaurants. If in doubt, ask the locals. Water supplies marked "**non-potable**" should not be used for drinking or brushing your teeth. If you have special dietary requests, either let your tour escort or the dining room staff know and they will try to accommodate your needs. If you have a very limited diet, we suggest that you bring what you might need. Since the coffee may be stronger than American coffee, you may wish to bring tea bags or instant coffee. Breakfast at most hotels is a continental buffet, though cereal is not always provided, so you may wish to bring your own.

Dining is generally later than is customary in the United States. Dairy and pastry shops offer light, inexpensive meals. Table service is common and there is a good array of restaurants.

Optional Side Trips: At some destinations, optional side trips to nearby attractions may be available. The tour host at your destination can help you arrange these trips during your free time. A few operators on these side trips will not take credit cards. You may want to carry more Euros if you think that you may be interested in taking these trips. The prices on the excursions vary greatly depending on the length of the tour and the places visited.

Safety and Health Services: We recommend you leave a copy of your itinerary with friends or family, in case of emergencies. In order to have a trouble-free holiday as a traveler, you should avoid flaunting jewelry, and wear your handbag securely strapped across your chest. Many stores sell security wallets that are worn inside your clothing. They are large enough to hold your passport, money, etc., and offer a secure option if you prefer to carry them with you.

You should keep a copy of your credit card(s) separate from your purse or wallet. It is also a good idea to carry a photocopy of the picture page of your passport and leave your passport (remember that you may need to have your passport with you to cash traveler's checks), and any valuables locked in the hotel safe, unless you have a security wallet. Losing your passport can be very expensive and inconvenient. Avoid going off on your own, unless you are familiar with the area. Be alert for suspicious people or circumstances.

There is no reciprocal health agreement with the U.S. and treatment is very expensive. If you have health issues, be sure to check with your healthcare provider before leaving home to verify what procedures they want you to follow, should the need arise. Should an injury or accident occur, you will be responsible for any costs involved, medical and/or travel related. For this reason, we **strongly urge** you to take out some form of traveler's insurance before your departure.

Accommodations: Hotel rooms abroad are most always smaller than those in the United States, and it is not unusual for one room to differ from the next. Hotel rooms in major cities tend to be smaller than hotel rooms throughout the rest of the country – but what you don't get in spacious accommodations is more than compensated by the wealth of attractions surrounding you.

It is the custom for a twin room to be two single beds made up separately and placed side by side. A double room will usually have one double bed. A single room will have one twin-size bed. A triple is generally a twin room with a cot or small bed added. Also, please be aware that single rooms are almost always smaller than twin rooms. **Unfortunately, we can only request room types and locations.**

Room assignments are made at the discretion of the hotel.

Telephones: To call Slovenia from the U.S., dial 011 and then 386 followed by the phone number. To call the U.S. from Slovenia, dial 001 followed by the area code and rest of the phone number. It is very expensive to call the United States from your hotel room.

Depending on your mobile carrier, you may be able activate International coverage for the time you are away. Contact your carrier for further details. We suggest that you use a prepaid phone card from a public phone booth. Coins are often not accepted in public phones, but phone cards can be purchased at many newspaper stands and pharmacies. If you are using your own telephone credit card, you can secure the access codes to call the United States from your long-distance telephone service provider. To call the U.S. from abroad, once you get a local line, dial your access code, followed by the area code and number. No need to dial 1.

Transportation & Shopping: Taxis are available from the hotel. Ask the front desk for help summoning a taxi. Secure a fixed price from the driver before you depart. Public transportation is available in many cities. Ljubljana has a very good and varied public transportation system, with taxis, public bus, train, and even boat travel on the river. Bike rentals are also popular. And as a small, pedestrian-friendly city, travel by foot is actually the most popular and easiest mode of transportation. Ljubljana features several impressive malls as well as open-air markets, flea markets, and antiques. Most establishments are open 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., but some take one-hour lunch breaks. On Saturdays, most stores have shorter hours, and few are open Sundays.

A value-added tax (VAT) is sometimes added to purchases. If the purchase is over a certain amount, you can get it partially refunded. Ask for a form where you purchase the item or at the airport. You must submit the form at the airport before you depart. Your refund will be mailed to you. For more information call (800) 566-9828.

Time: Slovenia is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Time.

Gratuities: Tipping is not entirely necessary, though a 10-20 percent tip is reasonable. Oftentimes people simply round up their bill to the nearest whole amount and have that be the tip. Do not say "thank you" when you pay your bill if you're expecting change. Saying thank you indicates that you want the server to keep the entire amount you are handing them.

Custom Regulations: Luggage may be examined upon entering and leaving countries. U.S. citizens can bring home up to \$800 worth of foreign goods. Each member of the family is entitled to the same exemption and the exemption can be pooled. Included for travelers 21 and older are one liter of alcohol, 100 cigars (non-Cuban) and 200 cigarettes. You cannot bring back fresh fruit, meat, cheeses or plants.

Language & Customs: The official language is Slovenian, with Hungarian and Italian as "co-official" languages. English and German are the most-taught foreign languages, so some English is spoken, largely by hotel personnel and other service industries, as well as young people.

Expectations: While group tours are one of the most enjoyable ways to travel, they do require a certain degree of flexibility and understanding on every individual's part. We have carefully planned your itinerary and have done our best to provide you with information about what to expect. However, much of what makes travel interesting is the unexpected. Travel with an open mind and you will get the most and best out of your holiday. Please be assured that our mission is to create and provide you with the most enjoyable and memorable travel experience.