

Active winter and New Year in Slovenia

Slovenia, small country on the sunny side of the Alps, is a land of people who have always been enamored with winter challenges. So most New Year's parties are held close to ski slopes. There are almost 40 winter sports centers in which you can experience all forms of active winter and New Year's holidays. You can discover rich winter sports traditions which reach back to the original Bloke skiing - one of the oldest ways in Europe of conquering the snow-covered paths. The fact that Slovenia is an excellent stage for winter sports is proven by its famous competitions of the best alpine skiers in the world, of ski flyers, boarders, biathalonists and sledders.

Best Ski Centers

The best known ski centers world-wide are Kranjska Gora, which hosts an annual World Cup men's downhill competition, and Maribor Pohorje, which hosts the annual World Cup women's downhill Golden Fox competition. The highest ski center in Slovenia is on Mount Kanin, where the snow remains well into the spring. Also among the most popular destinations for alpine skiers are Krvavec, not far from Ljubljana, Rogla in the Zreče Pohorje region, and Golte above Mozirje. Cerknoski Center is the most modern family ski slope in Slovenia. The larger ski centers also maintain trails for snowboarding, sledding, cross-country skiing, and even ski touring.

Cross-country Skiing

Trails for cross-country skiers are found by many lakes and on high plateaus such as Pokljuka, which hosts a World Championship biathlon meet and the Bloke plateau, the cradle of an original form of skiing, one of the oldest known in Europe. Groomed cross-country trails are also found in Logarska dolina and close to many tourist areas where small local ski hills and lifts are also often available.

Sled and Sleigh!

Winter pleasures can be diversified with snowmobile rides, which are possible in Kranjska Gora, Pohorje, Pokljuka, Krvavec... In some places, tourist rides are offered on dog sleds and horse-drawn sleighs. Across Slovenia, there are organized sled runs, even outside the ski centers. Especially attractive is sledding down the roads from snowed-in mountain passes that are closed for the winter (Vršič, Mangart, Ljubelj). In Pohorje (Adrenaline Park) and Bled (Straža), sledding is possible even in summer!

Merry December in Ljubljana

The biggest New Year's celebration is of course held in the capital city, Ljubljana. The city is nestling below the hill with Ljubljana Castle has a lively cultural life created by numerous theatres, museums, and galleries, one of the oldest Philharmonics in the world, cinemas, more than ten thousand cultural events each year, also many international festivals. Because of the University of Ljubljana, daily life in the city is marked by a challenging and lively youthful character but also by the charm of enjoying a tranquil and relaxing boat ride on the Ljubljanica River and a stroll in Tivoli Park close to the very

center of the city. Winter holiday mood's warm-up starts in December in the festive decorated old city center. Numerous events are held between December 3rd and January 2nd, when the city streets are revived with Christmas lights on trees, bridges and buildings. Concerts, juggle and fire-eating shows, other artistic, dance and street theatre performances complement winter food and drink stalls with aromatic tea, mulled wine and other delicacies, which are part of winter time. The top of these events is of course on December 31st, when outdoor celebration of New Year's Eve is held. On several squares concerts are staged and at midnight traditional fireworks announce the beginning of a new year.

www.ljubljana-tourism.si

Maribor's New Year

The second most important center in Slovenia, the university city of Maribor, invites you to the embrace of its wine growing hills and green Pohorje. Extensive vineyards, which rise from the edge of town over the hills of Maribor, are interwoven with more than 50 kilometers of wine roads. These roads are sown with wine shops and tourist farms, which with their homemade wine and food entice ramblers, cyclists and friends of the iron horse. Discovering Pohorje's primeval forest and pure waters offers an unforgettable experience for ramblers as well as lovers of horse riding and cycling. Along the glimmering surface of the river Drava, on which you can also raft, your stroll will take you past numerous cafés to the "Stara trta" grapevine in Lent, named as the oldest vine in the world. In Slovenia the season of international winter competitions starts in January with the Golden Fox Trophy - the women's alpine skiing competition on Maribor Pohorje, which has been attracting visitors to its trails, with the finish line at the very edge of the city, for 40 years. Maribor is a city with excellent ski slopes and numerous winter holiday events, including the outdoor celebration of New Year's Eve. Many concerts are staged and at midnight you can't miss the colorful fireworks reflecting in the river Drava.

www.maribor-tourism.si

Winter Festivities in Bled

The Julian Alps are bejeweled by two picturesque lakes. Bled with its legendary island in the middle of the lake, overlooking castle, hot springs, and beneficial climate has attracted numerous visitors for centuries. The Bohinj region with its unspoiled high-mountain lake inspires visitors not only with the beauties of the nature and the Vogel, Kobla, and Soriška planina ski centers but also with its rich ethnological heritage and many interesting cultural and sacral sites. Every year pleasant festivity mood is surrounds Bled. On Christmas day a Legend of submerged bell is performed on the lake. You can experience the promenade with torches around the lake and join hands in the Circle of friends on the night before the New Year's Eve. And on December 31st you can celebrate the coming of the New Year taking part in numerous festive outdoor events.

www.bled.si

Kranjska Gora in December

In the vicinity of Bled and Bohinj, this town is most famous for its winter sports but is the heart of the valley in summer too. Traditional mountain homeliness and athletic dynamism are united here. It offers many sport events and plenty of entertainment for all who enjoy sport, parties and fun. In February,

Kranjska Gora, the winter sports center below the highest peaks of Slovenian Sunny Alps, is hosting competitions for the World Cup men's slalom and giant slalom races in the Vitranc Trophy for more than 40 years. Although Kranjska Gora is most widely known for its ski slopes, other challenges are also offered: from hiking to night sledding, from snowmobile rides to the International Dog Sledge Competition. From the picturesque valley of the Upper Sava (Zgornejsavska dolina), with Kranjska Gora and other ski slopes, it is not far to reach Pokljuka plateau, which is a paradise for hikers, mushroom hunters, and cross-country skiers and is the site of major world biathlon competitions. And on the plains of Triglav National Park there are numerous trails for recreational cross-country skiers. During the Christmas and New Year time a surprise is awaiting you in the middle of frozen waterfalls in Mojstrana - a unique performance of "Live Christmas Crib in Ice", and of course many new year's parties all around the city.

www.kranjska-gora.si

New Year on Slovenian Coast

Snow and winter sports is not everything that Slovenia has to offer in winter. There are numerous picturesque Mediterranean towns on the Adriatic coast. Here is a natural reserve with a rich fund of marl and sandstone and the unique, eighty-meter Strunjan cliff, the highest flysch wall on the Adriatic coast. Here are the Sečovlje salt works, first mentioned in the 13th century, and the nearby is a sanctuary for more than 150 bird species. Here the towns of Piran, Izola, and Koper draw visitors with their medieval cores, while Portorož, though mentioned as early as 1251, offers numerous cultural, entertainment, and sport events. Not far from the coast, the beauties of Slovene Istria with its picturesque villages await for you. Some of the most beautiful underground worlds of our planet lie below in the near vicinity. There are more than six thousand karst caves and sinkholes in Slovenia, and ten of these treasures of limestone masterpieces created by disappearing karst rivers have been adapted and opened for tourists. On the coast you can find numerous New Year's parties, like the one in Piran, where the main square transforms into a dance-floor and rich park of lights.

www.slo-istra.com

Euro<26 Discounts in Slovenia

There are many more events held all over Slovenia during the New Year's holidays. You can find more information about events in Slovenia at www.slovenia.info, on the official website of Slovene tourist organization, where you can find also information about most Slovene EURO<26 discounts that are interesting for young travelers - in five languages! You can access the list of EURO<26 discounts through some main categories on the first page of the website like: Accommodation, Attractions, Cuisine&Wine and Active Holidays. Once you have clicked one of the categories look for the "Selected for you" menu on the left side, showing "Offerers of EURO<26 Card". If English is your favorite foreign language you can also check discount search on www.euro26.si - all Slovenian EURO<26 discounts are collected here. There is also a lot of useful information for young travelers gathered and much more will come in the future. All Slovenian EURO<26 discounts are translated into English and there is a discount search engine available for your best convenience. Enjoy surfing on www.euro26.si!