

Slovenia: Julian Alps Lure Adventurers and Nature Lovers

For casual tourists, the Alps are often associated with skiing and countries like Austria and the north of Italy. But the beauty of the most famous European mountain chain extends even further to the east. The Julian Alps can be found in Slovenia, one of the two most prosperous ex-Yugoslavian countries, along with Croatia.



The massive mountain ranges, their location and the local businesses that pepper them allow for many forms of entertainment and relaxation, oriented towards both, seekers of adventure and those just wanting to relax and enjoy a peaceful, breathtaking landscape. The latter is brought by several Julian Alps peaks, overlooking deep valleys, edged in stone and rivers, home to fast currents. The length of the emerald river, found in the Soca Valley, makes all water sports possible, from the milder kayaking and canoeing to the much more adrenaline-filled rafting adventure. While the sights of the valley can be admired from nearby mountains, they can also be taken in while gliding over them with either hand-gliders or parachutes.

Having the highest summit, Mount Triglav towers with its snow-covered peak over its siblings and the surrounding valleys. On its northern side, tourists that prefer summer outings at higher altitudes will never get bored due to the multitudes of activities and pastimes offered by the locals. The web of paths and trails leading up the mountain can be explored by hikers looking to exercise and breathe fresh air. The same trails can also be explored while on bicycles.



The Julian Alps are not devoid of lakes. Some, like Lake Bled will inspire awe with its island stranded in the middle while allowing a view towards a castle. Hotels and hot springs, golf courses and swimming areas blend seamlessly with the natural background of hot springs.

Mount Triglav is a sight in itself, but the highest mountain in Slovenia, peaking at 2864 meters, is also home to a very large protected area that takes the name of Triglav National Park. The summit stands in the middle of the park which covers more than 3 percent of the country's territory. The name came in 1961. Before then, the area was known as the Alpine Conservation Park, established all the way back in 1924.

The park is home to more tourist-friendly locations, like the aforementioned lake Bled, but also to unspoiled natural gems like the Kriska jezera, three glacial lakes found at an approximate altitude of 2000 meters and the Savica waterfall, pouring down from a height of 60 meters. The rare flowers that brave the harsh alpine environment can be admired in the Juliana Alpine Botanical Garden and admission is free.



The breathtaking landscape of the Julian Alps is best admired from the Vrsic Pass, the highest in all of Slovenia, allowing more than a glimpse over the border into both Italy and Austria. Built-in order to facilitate logistics during the First World War, Vrsic Pass connects most of the peaks found in the Slovenian Alps. However, crossing its highest sections is impossible during winter because of snowfall.

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