

**Example tour itinerary (written for Helia Cycling
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Emerald Route

This classic cycling tour will take you through Slovenia's most famous historical attractions and many natural points of interest. It can be done **individually** as a self-guided trip or as a **group tour** with a personal guide. This trip is suitable for cyclists with an average level of fitness.

Daily itinerary:

Day 1: ARRIVAL IN LJUBLJANA

(Accommodation in 3* hotel)

The Slovene capital: Once settled in to your hotel, you will visit the historic old town and marvel at the ornate, old-world architecture and lovely "fin de siecle" mansions. Then it's a short walk or ride up to the mighty Ljubljana Castle, perched high on a hill and standing guard over the old town and city centre. From its tower you get a commanding view of Ljubljana's heart and soul. As the sun goes down you can choose between relaxing with a drink in the many outdoor bars/cafes beside the Ljubljanica River, or take an evening stroll, enjoying the lights and vibrant sounds of the city and its charismatic people. Or perhaps do both!

[Click here for images of Ljubljana](#)

Day 2: LJUBLJANA - VRHNIKA (37 km; 58 km with a detour)

🚲 A nice easy first day across the historic and richly diverse plains surrounding the capital.
(Accommodation in 4* hotel)

Cycling across the Ljubljansko Barje: As the morning sun begins to rise high in the sky, you will be cycling across an immense 160-square kilometre marshy plain. The Ljubljansko Barje was once a great lake until it dried up 6000 years ago, leaving behind an incredibly diverse landscape that is now home to some of Europe's rarest forms of bird, plant and insect life. Along the way you can take a short walk into the picturesque Iški Vintgar gorge nature reserve, carved deep into a stunning limestone dolomite plateau, and visit the remnants of the world's highest railway viaduct in Borovnica. Just before arriving in Vrhnika, you can visit the Technical Museum of the Republic of Slovenia housed in Bistra Castle, where you'll find a great hunting collection and an interesting exhibition of Tito's cars.

Day 3: VRHNIKA – POSTOJNA (36 km; 44 km with a detour)

🚲 A slightly more demanding day over gentle hills, forest roads and a typical karst polje (field).
(Accommodation in 3* hotel)

Into the heart of the karst landscape: On this day the roads will take you away from the main tourist routes and off the beaten track. You will experience the real Slovenian countryside as you cycle past the beautiful Slivnica Mountain and the magical disappearing lake of Cerknica, and marvel at the wonders of this vast world of limestone. You can stop for a picnic lunch in the Rakov Škocjan nature reserve, where the Rak River has carved out a stunning gorge containing some of nature's most incredible landscape formations, including two natural bridges.

[Click here for images of Slivnica Mountain](#)

Day 4: POSTOJNA – ŠTANJEL (41 km; 53 km with a detour)

🚲 An easy route, one long descent with some hills afterwards.
(Accommodation in 2* country inn)

The world famous Postojna caves: So far nearly 30 million tourists have visited this stunningly beautiful underground cave formation, carved deep into the heart of the limestone hills. This is the

most extensive cave system in Slovenia, covering a total of 21 kilometres. The 1½ hour tour will take you through a fairytale world full of large and colourful stalactites and stalagmites, not forgetting the unique "human fish", a mysterious creature that lives in dark pools inside the caves. You can also take a short detour to the impenetrable fortress of Predjama castle, wedged tight into a crevasse halfway up a 123-metre cliff-face protruding dramatically into the surrounding basin. Here lived a vivacious and daring knight. Erasmus kept a whole army at bay by utilising the secret of the Predjama Caves to sneak out for supplies, which included freshly picked cherries which he used to throw at his adversaries to taunt them. Take the tour and learn how Erasmus met his untimely demise in less than poetic circumstances, as he was literally caught with his pants down. **Click here for images of [Predjama Castle](#)**

Day 5: DAY OFF IN ŠTANJEL OR ROUND TRIP (40 km)

🚲 Day of rest. Choose from a day of no **Cycling**, or a short trip to neighbouring villages.

Štanjel: Spend the day in a typical **karst** village in the heart of vineyard country, where you will see a museum of well-kept traditional houses built entirely from the surrounding limestone. The nearby region was once host to the WWI Battle of Isonzo; visit the many touching monuments here. You will also visit a local artist and painter. Try the food in the local hotel: delicious karst ham (pršut) and tasty **wine** from one of the many nearby domestic cellars. Enjoy the great vistas from Štanjel village, a nice picnic area in a special garden, and a visit to the lovely Štanjel Castle.

Day 6: ŠTANJEL – LIPICA (31 km)

🚲 Mostly flat with just one long, but steady uphill climb.

(Accommodation in 3* hotel)

Lipizzaner horses: First stop is at the lovely botanical garden in Sežana, then it's on to the stud farm of Lipica, where you can visit these beautiful thoroughbred horses whose glistening white coats and gentle, graceful dancing have earned them a worldwide reputation. The history of the Lipica horses is closely linked to the Vienna riding school. Take a tour in a traditional carriage, watch them perform and visit them close up in their stables. This will be a day to remember. If you have the time for a couple of side-trips, you can also visit the unusual but very interesting "War Museum" set in the village tower of Lokev, and the breathtaking Škočjan Caves; not as large as Postojna but equally, if not more fascinating.

Click here for images of [Lipica](#)

Day 7: LIPICA – TRIESTE – KOPER (50 km)

🚲 Long downhill ride from the high karst plateau to Trieste.

(Accommodation in 3* hotel)

From the mountains to the coast: For your last day you take a slight diversion into the Italian town of Trieste - once an important port with its worldly flair and wonderful atmosphere. Many cultures of the world have left their indelible mark on this city. Visit the castle, cathedral and Piazza Unita central square. Trieste was once part of Slovenia whilst under the rule of the Austrian monarchy. Relax with a cappuccino in the many old-fashioned cafes. The tour ends at Slovenia's port town, Koper, the largest 'island' town on the Slovenian Adriatic coast, and, time-permitting, you can cycle along the coastal path and visit the gorgeous Venetian architecture in the little harbour village of Piran. Alternatively you can skip Trieste altogether and spend all your time on this small, but beautiful and diverse strip of Slovenian coast.

Click here for images of [Piran](#)

Day 8: END OF TRIP

Price per person: (Currency converter [here](#))

- **Individual self-guided tour: 520 EUR**
- **Group tour with guide: 650 EUR**

Price for both tour types includes:

- Accommodation in the above mentioned hotels and country inns in two-bedded room with en-suite bathroom, breakfast included.

- Luggage transport between the hotels (one piece per person)
- Information pack, including detailed route description with corresponding maps (one per booking party. Maps must be returned to Helia after the trip).
- Free entry to the swimming pools in Lipica and Koper hotels
- Wine tasting in Hruševica (2 types of wine, wine liqueur and cheese).
- Extra with **group tour**: a licensed English speaking guide who cycles with a group.

Supplements:

- Half board 80 EUR
- Single room 110 EUR
- Bike rental 70 EUR for 6 days ([touring bikes](#) are equipped with a lock, panniers and a basic repair kit. Price includes delivery and pick up)
- Helmet rental 16 EUR
- Personal transfer from Koper to Ljubljana 45 EUR (minimum 2 persons); needs to be ordered when booking the trip!
- To book **additional nights** in Koper or Ljubljana please go [here](#).

Discounts on the basic price:

- Children up to 12 years when sharing room with parents: -30%.
- Third adult person on an extra bed (sharing) in a double room: -10%.

Not included in price:

- Entrance fees.
- There is a free, but unguarded, parking lot in the port of Koper.
- Bike insurance: bikes are insured against minor breakages and normal wear and tear (up to a cost of 10 EUR). They are not insured against theft or major damage. Insurance is available against these events at the rate of 1 EUR per bike per day.
- Transfers to and from Trieste ([Ryan air](#)) and Ljubljana ([Easy jet](#)) **airports** are available upon request.