



Foto: Marijan Močivnik

A BIKE TOUR – FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

**A Historical and Culinary Tour across Goriška Region,
2 days**

Its location and its diverse landscape make Goriška an attractive destination for bicycle tours. The mild climate is ideal for leisure activities all year round. This makes the uphill and downhill bike rides from the Alps to the Adriatic Sea even more inviting. The local eateries attract many with their delectable aromas. As a matter of fact, the local chefs make a point of preparing the delicacies by carefully following the rich culinary and cultural traditions of the region. Combine your active break with local tradition and feel the light breeze upon your face as you ride over hill and dale.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Kostanjevica Monastery
- Solkan Bridge spanning the emerald Soča River
- Solkan War Museum: The Isonzo Front of 1915 - 1917 and Carpentry Museum
- View from Sabotin Hill over the summits of the Julian Alps and Friuli
- Ascent to Sveta Gora

DAY 1:

Kostanjevica Monastery – Europe Square – Solkan War Museum: The Isonzo Front of 1915 - 1917 – Solkan Bridge – Ascent to Sveta Gora – Lokve

A ride uphill to Kostanjevica Monastery, which is in the immediate vicinity of Nova Gorica, is a great way to start our guided bike adventure. We are rewarded with a pleasant view of the town and the surrounding area. Franciscan monks act as the caretakers of this cultural and historic monument. The monastery is particularly famous for the crypt belonging to the last King of France and the last descendants of the French Bourbon dynasty who found refuge in this region. The monastery library holds a vast collection of 10,000 books, among them the first Slovenian grammar book, written by Adam Bohorič. Next, we will take a stroll along the south wall of the monastery. Along the wall, you will find one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of Bourbon roses in the world. As a matter of fact, this collection is second only to the collection in Paris, but, of course, the spring flowers here are much more luxuriant. From here, we will ride to Nova Gorica (dubbed the *Town of Roses*) and, in particular, to the famous Europe Square where the Slovenian Nova Gorica and the Italian Gorizia merge together. The square features a floor mosaic which symbolizes cross-border cooperation, and was created specially in order to celebrate Slovenia's entry into the European Union. Facing north, we can accurately tell the time from the sundial made from the driving wheel of a steam locomotive.

We will make our way to Solkan and pay a visit to the Carpentry Museum. The museum is a testament to the masterpieces created by the Solkan master carpenters which were once widely renowned for their artistry. We continue with a visit to the Solkan War Museum: The Isonzo Front of 1915 – 1917, which honours the 100th anniversary of World War I. The private museum collection contains more than 3,000 artefacts and was designed to preserve the war legacy of the Slovenian territory. In fact, it was actually private collectors who first began to research and put together our war legacy. Many of them have had a lifelong fascination with the Isonzo Front, starting while they were children and ignited either by discovering their first

cavern playing outdoors or by stories about their grandfathers who had fought on the Front. We will unwind with a pleasant lunch and indulge in the creative cuisine which incorporates many healthy ingredients. Our next stop will be the Solkan Bridge. We will pause to admire the emerald green Soča River running below. The famous railroad bridge connecting the towns Jesenice and Nova Gorica boasts the longest stone arch in the world and attracts thrill-seekers. There have been instances of aerobatic planes flying through it and it has been the location for several free-climbing stunts.

Next, we will make our way up to Sveta Gora (*Holy Mountain*), which is an important religious centre with a rich history of pilgrimage. The site will reward us with a magnificent view of the Julian Alps, the Trnovo Forest Plateau and the distinct karst landscape. If the weather is clear you might also catch a glimpse of the sea.

(ADDITIONAL OPTION: We scale the Sabotin Hill, which is the last hill of the Alpine mountain range and the first of the Mediterranean hills. This hill ridge marks the state border between Slovenia and Italy and has its share of stirring tales. Sabotin Peace Park was designed to unite 22 nations that fought on the slopes of Sabotin during the Isonzo Front in World War I. Accompanied by a guide, we will hike over the ridge to see the museum collection with artefacts from the Isonzo Front. Did you know that the women here protested against the fighting in World War I by stuffing grenades with clothes instead of explosives? During the break, we will take in the splendid summits of the Julian Alps and the magnificent Friuli landscape.)

Inhale the crystal clear air amidst unspoilt nature and recharge your batteries before continuing with your active stay. We will have dinner in the village of Lokve, which is said to be the highest village in the Plateau. Next, it's time to call it a night.

DAY 2:

Banjšice and Trnovo Plateau

After breakfast, the morning sun will be accompanying us throughout the exciting group ride over the diverse terrain of the Banjšice and Trnovo Plateau. On the way, we will stop to taste homemade goodies seasoned with organically grown herbs. Once we finish the snack, you can relax or meditate at leisure, taking time for some mindful breathing. The route will then take us past Lokovec and Banjšice to the settlement Bate and a local family farm which is open to visitors. We will return to Lokve after a tasting round of homemade cheese. A car will take us down to the valley where our bike tour of the sunny Goriška region comes to an end.

More information:

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