

## TRAIL OF THE LIPIZZANERS - 2016

### *Tour Itinerary:*

#### **29 Aug. Arrive Venice**

The tour group meets in the reception area of the Hotel Plaza in Mestre at 6:00pm. You will meet your Tour Manager and fellow travelling companions - then enjoy a "welcome" meal at a local restaurant. (D)

#### **30 Aug. Venice**

Breakfast at the hotel. This morning we take an 8-minute train ride to Venice island, then a "vaporetto" (ferry) along the Grand Canal to Piazza San Marco where we meet our guide for a tour of the historic centre of this island city. Tonight we enjoy dinner at a restaurant along the Grand Canal. (B,D)

#### **31 Aug. Venice – Rovinj**

After a leisurely breakfast we depart for the 3.5hr drive into Slovenia, then Croatia and our destination, Rovinj, an ancient Greek settlement on the Adriatic coast. Check-in at Hotel Eden and free time to explore the old town. Tonight you are at leisure to eat in your hotel or in the old town. (B)

#### **01 Sep. Rovinj**

This morning we have a guided walking tour of the old town and will learn about its important and strategic location. The afternoon is at leisure. Tonight we will eat in one of the local restaurants in the old town. (B,D)

#### **02 Sep. Rovinj - Pula - Rovinj**

This morning we take a short 50km drive south to the port town of Pula. An ancient Roman coliseum is the main historic site here, and there is plenty of time for a guided tour, visit to the museum and lunch in the old quarter. Early afternoon return to our hotel in Rovinj so you can relax and enjoy the hotel's facilities. The evening meal will be taken in a local restaurant. (B,D)

#### **03 Sep. Rovinj - Lipica**

Today we travel back in to Slovenia - with a stop at the port town of Piran. Some free time here for lunch before we drive the short distance to Lipica and check-in at Hotel Maestoso. Tonight we eat in a nearby restaurant. (B,D)

#### **04 Sep. Lipica**

This is one of the highlights of our tour. We start this morning with a guided tour of the stables and during the tour we'll learn about the history of this renowned breed of horses. Following the tour, there will be a carriage ride through the grounds of the estate. At 3.00pm we'll enjoy a performance of the stallions in the pavilion, and you have free time to continue exploring the stud, coach museum and art gallery. The evening meal is taken in the hotel's restaurant. (B,D)

#### **05 Sep. Lipica – Postojna - Ljubljana - Bled**

This morning we take an hour's drive to Postojna to visit one of the world's largest cave complexes. The tour includes a 3km train ride, a 1 km walk, and a 3km train back to the start point. We then continue to Ljubljana, the capital for our lunch stop and free time. Afternoon check-in at Grand Hotel Toplice on Lake Bled. Dinner will be taken in a local restaurant.(B,D)

**06 Sep. Bled**

After a leisurely breakfast, we take a “pletna” boat across the lake to Slovenia’s only island. Here you can climb the 99 steps to the church, which legend says a groom must carry his new bride up to ensure a long and healthy marriage. We return to the lake shore and you have the afternoon at leisure to explore the town or take a walk or tourist train around the lake. This is also the perfect time to take a treatment or massage in the hotel’s wellness centre. Dinner is at your leisure this evening. (B)

**07 Sep. Bled**

After breakfast you have a free day to explore Bled. Perhaps a walk around the lake or up to the castle for spectacular views over the lake and surrounding area. This afternoon is an optional tour to Vintgar Gorge for those who would like to take the scenic 1-mile walk (each way) through the spectacular gorge. Dinner will be taken in a local restaurant this evening. (B,D)

**08 Sep. Bled – Graz**

Today we depart for Graz in the Austrian province of Steiermark. A stop will be made at either Maribor or Klagenfurt (depending on weather/traffic). Afternoon check-in at Grand Hotel Wiesler in Graz. The evening is at leisure for you to try one of the many restaurants in the old town.(B)

**09 Sep. Graz - Piber - Graz**

After breakfast we travel the 34kms to Piber - location of the Federal Lipizzaner stud. This morning starts with a carriage ride around the estate. We then have a VIP Backstage Pass to visit the stable and museum complex. Everything you wanted to know about the famed Lipizzaner stallions you will learn here. You’ll see some new foals, as well as some of the “retired” stallions from the Spanish Riding School in Vienna. After a visit to the morning workout arena and time in the Carriage Museum – you’ll have free time to explore the stud. After lunch we travel 20kms to the mountain pastures where the young stallions have spent their summer. Here you have a chance to interact with them (weather permitting) and get some great photos. We then return to our hotel in Graz. Tonight dinner is at your own leisure. (B)

**10 Sep. Graz - Koeflach – Vienna**

It just keeps getting better!! Today we drive back to Koeflach to witness the parade of the Lipizzaner stallions from their mountain pastures down to Koeflach town centre. You have the chance to walk with the stallions for their last 3 kms to the local church, where they will be blessed by the local priest. A short distance later they are presented to the townspeople. Music and festivities will abound throughout the town for most of the day! We then leave early afternoon for our final stop – Vienna. Late afternoon check-in at the Ring Hotel. Tonight we take a group dinner in a nearby restaurant. (B,D)

**11 Sep. Vienna**

The highlight of our tour! A gala performance in the Spanish riding School!! We have been fortunate enough to secure front-row seats in the VIP Box in order to give you what we believe are the best views of the performance. Following the performance, we have a special guided tour of the stables, where you can meet some of the “stars” of the show. After time for lunch, we have a guided tour of Vienna and the beautiful palace of Schonbrunn. Tonight you have at leisure to explore the historic centre of Vienna and eat in a local establishment. (B)

**12 Sep. Vienna**

Enjoy a leisure breakfast before having the day at leisure for optional activities. It's possible to watch the morning work-out session between 10:00-12:00 at the Spanish Riding School. Tonight we take our farewell meal at a local "heuriger" in the wine village of Grinzing. (B,D).

**13 Sep. Vienna – onward travel**

Sadly our tour finishes after breakfast. Private transfers are provided to the airport or railway station. (B)

**Tour Price:** \$6,795.00 per person twin or double share. Single room supplement \$995.00

**Main Tour price includes:**

- 15 nights hotel accommodations, room with private facilities
- Buffet breakfast daily at all hotels
- 11 dinners, at hotels or local restaurants
- Travel in deluxe coach with reclining seats and AC
- Tour Manager from arrival in Venice until departure in Vienna
- Guided sightseeing tours as listed in itinerary
- Entrance fees where necessary
- Ticket for guided tour of Lipica stables and afternoon performance
- Carriage ride through the Lipica estate
- VIP ticket for guided tour of stud farm at Piber
- Visit to mountain pastures to see the young stallions
- Ticket to gala performance at Spanish Riding School in Vienna
- Portage of one suitcase per person at hotels
- All local service fees, taxes and road tolls

**Does not include:**

- International airfare
- Meals other than those listed as being included
- Optional activities or tours
- Gratuities to tour driver and tour manager

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:****Passports/Visas:**

A valid passport is required to travel. No visas are necessary for Austria, Italy, Slovenia and Croatia for Australian/US/Canadian/GB passport holders. Other nationalities should check if they require any visas.

**Minimum/maximum:**

The tour is based on a minimum of 10 paying passengers. If the tour falls below 10 persons, we reserve the right to adjust the tour price accordingly, change hotels and type of transportation used. The tour maximum will be 16 persons.

**Booking/Payment:**

A non-refundable deposit of AU\$500 per person is required to confirm a place on the tour. Final balance is due no later than 15 June 2016.

**Cancellation/Refund:**

After confirmation and payment of deposit, there is a cancellation fee of AU\$500 per person up until 01 July. After that date, the following cancellation fees apply.

Between 01 July and 14 July AU\$1000 per person

Between 15 July and 31 July \$2000 per person

Between 01 August and 14 August \$3000 per person

On or after 15 August No refund

There may be separate cancellation fees levied by the airline who has supplied the air tickets.

Please note that this tour will be strictly limited to 16 persons due to the limited availability of the tickets for the Spanish Riding School performance.

**Please note:**

This tour involves activity such as guided city tours in Venice, Rovinj, Lipica, Piber and Vienna.. Some areas of “old town” have cobble-stone streets and other uneven surfaces. Tour participants should be in relevantly good health and able to endure leisurely guided walking tours – some which last between 1 and 1.5 hours. People with mobility problems including walking frames or wheelchairs should seriously consider if this tour is right for them. Unfortunately no allowance/refund can be made for any tours unable to be taken by the participant. If you are unable to complete a scheduled walking tour, you are responsible for any cost to get yourself back to the tour hotel.

**For more information or to make a booking request, please click on the link below:**

