

TRAIL OF THE LIPIZZANERS - 2017

Tour Itinerary:

28 Aug Arrive Venice

Arrival in Venice and make your way to the Hotel Plaza in Mestre. Tonight we'll have a "welcome" dinner in a local restaurant near the hotel. (D)

29 Aug Venice

This morning we take a train across the lagoon to the island of Venice, and then a vaporetto (public boat) along the Grand Canal to Piazza San Marco. Here we'll meet our guide for a 90-minute tour of this ancient city before having free time for wandering at leisure. Late afternoon we'll meet at the Rialto Bridge and take a meal at one of the restaurants on the Grand Canal. (B,D)

30 Aug Venice – Rovinj

After breakfast we will meet our driver and depart for the 3.5hr drive into Slovenia, then Croatia and our destination, Rovinj, an ancient Greek settlement on the Adriatic coast. Lunch will be taken enroute. Check-in at the Park Hotel and free time to explore the old town. Tonight we'll eat in a local restaurant in the old town. (B,D)

31 Aug Rovinj

This morning we have a guided walking tour of the old town and will learn about its important and strategic location. This afternoon is at leisure to explore the old town or relax at the hotel or perhaps take a walk around the bay. (B)

01 Sep Rovinj - Pula - Rovinj

35kms south of Rovinj is the historic town of Pula. This picturesque coastal town has a well-preserved "old town" - as well as a Roman amphitheatre more than 2000 years old! A short guided tour here, time for lunch, and afternoon return to Rovinj. Tonight we'll eat in one of our favourite restaurants in the old town. (B,D)

02 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. Tonight we eat in the hotel's restaurant. (B,D)

03 Sep Lipica

This is one of the highlights of our tour. We start this morning with a guided tour of the stables 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. This evening we travel 20kms to a farmhouse restaurant for a typical Slovenian meal with locally produces wine. (B,D)

04 Sep Lipica – Bled

This morning we take an hour's drive to Postojna to visit the 3rd largest cave complex in the world. The tour includes a 3km train ride, a 1 km walk, and a 3km train back to the start point. We then continue our journey to Lake Bled, the "pearl" of Slovenia. Early afternoon check-in at Grand Hotel Toplice. Dinner will be taken in a local restaurant.(B,D)

05 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 bank and you have the afternoon at leisure to explore the town or take a walk around the lake. There is an optional visit to Vintgar Gorge for those who would like to take the scenic 1-mile walk (each way) through the spectacular gorge. Dinner is at your leisure this evening. (B)

06 Sep Bled – Ljubljana – Bled

Today we have an excursion to the capital of Slovenia. Free time to explore the city - perhaps take a walk up to the castle for panoramic views of the city and surrounds. We'll return to Lake Bled and take dinner in a local restaurant. (B,D)

07 Sep Bled – Koeflach

Today we depart for Austria, stopping in the town of Villach for a while before continuing toward our next destination, the town of Koeflach, near Piber. Afternoon check-in at Hotel Herold. At 5:00pm we will drive up the mountain to the pastures where the young stallions have spent their summer. Here you have a chance to interact with them and get some great photos. We then return to our hotel for dinner. (B,D)

09 Sep Koeflach/Piber

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. This afternoon there is a special event at the Piber stud and you are able to purchase tickets that include a meal and drinks. Your Tour Manager will have more information for you prior to arrival in Piber. Tonight dinner is at your own leisure. (B)

09 Sep Koeflach – Vienna

It just keeps getting better!! Today we 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 2 kms to the town, where they will then be introduced by name to excited on-lookers, and blessed by the local priest. Music and festivities will abound throughout the town for most of the day! We then leave late afternoon for our final stop – Vienna. Late afternoon check-in at Hotel Herrenhof. Tonight we take a group dinner in the nearby Melkerstiftskeller. (B,D)

10 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 take a short journey 70kms to Bratislava, capital of Slovakia. We have a guided tour here with “Big George”, then free time to explore and find a local restaurant for the evening meal. We then return to Vienna.(B)

11 Sep Vienna.

This morning we have a short city tour followed by a guided tour of the Palace of Schoenbrunn where we visit 22 of the former State Apartments. Free time in the beautiful gardens before we return to our hotel. The afternoon is at leisure for personal sightseeing, visiting the old town or shopping. Tonight we take our farewell meal at the Passauerhof, a "heuriger" in the wine village of Grinzing.(B,D).

12 Sep Vienna – onward travel.

Sadly our tour finishes after breakfast. Transfers can be arranged to suit your travel requirements.

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
- Porterage 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 Germany, Austria, Italy, Slovenia and Slovakia for Australian 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 \$450 per person is required to confirm a place on the tour. Final balance is due no later than 01 June 2016.

Cancellation/Refund:

After confirmation and payment of deposit, there is a cancellation fee of \$350 per person up until 01 July. After that date, the following cancellation fees apply.

Between 01 and 14 June \$500 per person

Between 15 June and 30 June \$1500 per person

Between 01 July and 14 July \$2000 per person

On or after 15 July 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.

This tour is operated by Global Travel Enterprises Pty Ltd, trading as Austria Travel Direct