

**I FEEL
SLOVENIA**

FOLLOW THE BEES
SLOVENIA

Green. Active. Healthy.

www.slovenia.info
#ifeelsLOVEnia

With love of nature



An old Slovenian tale says that when the world was created, each land received what's most typical of it: one got the mountains, the other the sea; this one received endless fields, that one got thick woods. Slovenia, however, waited until the end and received the best of everything! It is the only country **connecting the Alps with the Mediterranean, the Karst with the Pannonian Plain** within easily accessible distances. With love in its name it preserves its extraordinary natural resources. At the meeting point of different worlds it remains one of the most biodiverse countries in the world.



Green, active and healthy Slovenia

In Slovenia, the world's first green country by Green Destinations' international standards and a proud recipient of the **National Geographic World Legacy (Destination Leadership)** Award, its natural and traditional features are a source of fresh experiences for guests from all over the world. Apart from its innovative Green Adventures combined with a surprising luxury of its thermal springs, its opportunities for an active nature holiday, its cuisine that varies with every step you take and its other special features, it is also one of the first in the world to offer **innovative and certified forms of apitourism**.

Beekeeping experience in Slovenia

In Slovenia, one of the cradles of beekeeping in Europe, you can taste honey, other hive products and related **dishes with honey**, traditional **honey drinks** and locally diverse sweet treats – some even have love notes. In health resorts and wellness centres you can experience **honey massages** and other pampering treatments. With Slovenian beekeepers you can get to know peculiarities from the lives of Carniolan honey bees, surrender yourself to the sounds of their buzzing and to the beneficial breaths of beehive air. You can try your hand at **being creative with beeswax** and other substances. You can explore **gardens with nectar plants**, go for a ramble along **thematic beekeeping trails** and discover the exceptional **heritage of beekeeping** in Slovenia's museum collections. You can treat yourself to a break in harmony with bees in all Slovenian regions. Slovenia is the first country to systematically check tourist arrangements connected to beekeeping. Service providers are graded according to strict criteria. **Based on the grade they get a sign with one, two or three bees.**

On a little under **8000 sq mi**, which is less than 0.4 percent of the Earth's surface, more than **2 percent of all land-dwelling species** live! Native and endemic species are an important part of Slovenia's natural splendours. **Carniolan honey bee, the native Slovenian bee**, which has long been popular among beekeepers around the world due to its non-aggressiveness, holds a special place among them. Apart from the honey it gathers it keeps various useful plant species pollinated and **helps preserve biodiversity**.

A man and a woman are sitting on a picnic blanket on a grassy field. The woman is wearing a beige sweater, blue jeans, and red shoes. The man is wearing a plaid shirt, a hat, and jeans. They are both holding glasses of orange juice. Behind them is a large wooden structure with many small drawers, which is a beehive. The structure has a thatched roof. The background shows a blue sky with some clouds and green hills.

Explore special features of the beekeeping land

If you are interested in well-being, you will find it in Slovenia in collaboration with our bees. If you are looking for a true connection with nature, you will find it – along with the bees – in Slovenia's remarkable and diverse regions. If you are interested in beekeeping, Slovenia is the right destination for old and new discoveries, special experiences and lovely surprises.

The science of beekeeping based on love

In the area of present-day Slovenia, people already kept bees in the first Slavic country. The beekeepers of the then Carantania supplied honey to monasteries, churches and counties far to the north and west of Europe. Due to climatic conditions and landscape diversity a special form of apiary as an individual structure in a permanent place developed here.

In the 18th century as part of the agriculture and education reforms, Maria Theresa, the empress of the Habsburg Empire, established **the first beekeeping school in the world**. She appointed a Slovene, **Anton Janša**, as the first teacher there. He came from Žirovnica, an area at the foothills of the Karavanke mountain range, which is still considered the cradle of Slovenian beekeeping. Anton Janša's findings, compiled in two books, fostered the development of the modern way of beekeeping. Other renowned Slovenian beekeepers at that time also took part in deepening and broadening the beekeeping knowledge.

The traditional Slovenian love of bees, which is inseparably connected to the conservation of the environment, is passed from one generation to another here. Schools as well as beekeeping societies have beekeeping circles. At the initiative of our beekeepers, kindergarten and school children have been tasting honey at the **Traditional Slovenian Breakfast** for several years now. The project of familiarizing children with typical homemade delicacies has spread from Slovenia across Europe and has grown into the **European Honey Breakfast**.



UN Declares 20 May World Bee Day

The United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution declaring 20 May as World Bee Day. Slovenian beekeepers proposed the celebration of World Bee Day in the month of May which corresponds to the greatest spring build-up of bee colonies and to the biggest need for pollination on the northern hemisphere and to the time of gathering hive products on the southern hemisphere. The chosen day, 20 May, is also the birthday of Anton Janša (1734–1773), a pioneer of modern beekeeping and one of the greatest experts in this field in his day. Follow www.worldbeeday.org to keep up with things.



The Slovenian bee

The Carniolan honey bee, *Apis mellifera carnica*, is a native bee species in Slovenia. Because of its calmness, non-aggressiveness, good orientation, immunity to diseases, quick spring build-up, suitability for collecting forest honeydew and other qualities, it is popular with beekeepers around the world. In Slovenia, the Carniolan honey bee is bred exclusively; it is **the only protected native bee species** in the European Union. **With five beekeepers per 1,000 inhabitants**, Slovenia is at the very top of the list of European Union countries ranked by the number of beekeepers. The number has been rising in recent years. Slovenian beekeepers look after almost 200 thousand bee colonies. More than 90 percent of the Carniolan honey bee colonies live in typically Slovenian AŽ-beehives.

Slovenian honey

At the EU level, **Slovenian honey** has the protected geographical indication status. It was assigned to **acacia, flower, linden, chestnut, spruce, silver fir** and **forest honey**, which are typical of our country. The extraordinary biodiversity here is another source of diverse and high quality honey. The **Kočevje Forest Honey** and the **Karst Honey** are protected in the EU as well. The first one originates in an area of mighty virgin forests, the second in the Karst region with its unique community of plants and an abundance of medicinal herbs. The diversity of Slovenian honey is supplemented by **the buckwheat, dandelion** and **rape honey**. Slovenia produces around 2,500 tons of honey every year. It prides itself not on great quantity but rather on high quality. The apiaries are registered and honey is being kept under strict quality control.





Slovenian hive products

Apart from numerous varieties of honey, the Slovenian beekeepers also produce other high quality bee products. One of the things that can be tasted here is the excellent **pollen**. With their vitamins, minerals, proteins, amino acids, hormones, enzymes, fats and natural antibiotics, these tiny drops bees gather on the flowering plants are one of the richest natural foodstuffs known to man. **Royal jelly**, which is secreted by young bees as food for the queen bee, is a powerful biostimulator to be consumed (if possible after a consultation with a doctor) as fresh as possible. **Propolis**, a natural antibiotic that the bees prepare by gathering resinous substances from the living parts of plants, is consumed as a healthy dietary supplement and is used in ointments and pharmaceuticals. Another edible hive product, which can be used in various ways, is **wax**; young bees produce it for building combs – their own home. Wax can be used in cooking and it is tradition to use it in the making of **beeswax candles** and in the production of skilfully decorated honey pastry. And finally, even the most demanding seekers of delicious tastes will be thrilled by **comb honey**.

Slovenian-style apiaries

In his book *The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola* as far back as 17th century, the famous polymath Janez Vajkard Valvasor wrote that the Slovenian apiaries are something special. He described special wooden houses for putting in beehives. A century later, the painting of humorous beehive panels developed and spread in Slovenia. Beekeepers' depictions of amusing everyday stories, superstitions, customs and love motifs are a distinctive Slovenian ethnographic feature. The hives are originally Slovenian as well. They were designed by Anton Žnidaršič and are called AŽ-beehives.





Off to the countryside where life is all honey

How to get to know the land of bees, beekeepers and honey love?
It's simple: just go there. You will be closest to adventures, apiaries and
amazing nature if you hop to the countryside. Certified beekeeping providers,
tourist farms, places of original ethnological heritage and green nature await
you. Draw your own Slovenian beekeeping trail!

The hospitality of certified providers

Slovenia is the first country in the world that awards special certifications to beekeepers with tourist arrangements. Based on strict criteria, the apitourism providers receive a sign with one, two or three bees. Professionalism, innovativeness, training possibilities, food services, entertainment programme, accommodation in some places and of course their own honey products everywhere distinguish the best providers.



You can find your own excellent host at:
www.apiturizem.si

Seeking well-being from bees

Slovenian beekeepers offer original experiences that strengthen your body and soul. Special api-arrangements ensuring your well-being are being developed at their apiaries; in many places, bee-related accommodation is available as well.

Think of the sound of an apiary. It will make you feel at ease and calm when **resting in the apiary**; it will accompany your meditation with the bees. **Being in the api-chamber and on the beds next to the hives** and breathing the air from the bees' dwellings that has a beneficial effect on your respiratory organs will relax you together with the buzzing of the bees. Bees form special aerosol. Experience **inhalations** directly from the beehive! But don't worry: you will be very close to bees, but none will be able to reach you.

Honey is a completely natural aid for preserving vitality with **massages** and its **detoxification effects**. During a massage it gets absorbed in your skin, it nourishes and takes care of your body and stimulates the elimination of harmful substances from the organism.





Seeking new experience and knowledge

You can actively increase your knowledge and broaden your experience when visiting Slovenian beekeepers. Take your pick: demonstrations, workshops and classes including the preparation and decoration of honey pastries and other **pastry and gingerbread treats, beeswax candles or painting your own beehive panel**. **Open-air beekeeping museums** are an excellent source of new knowledge and insights. Apart from that, adults as well as children are fascinated by **the bee-watching adventure**.

Treading the heritage trails

The beekeeping heritage is preserved and presented by museums and several other beekeeping centres and family collections all over Slovenia. Wandering around our country you will find workshops with a rich tradition of passing down the knowledge of honey pastry, gingerbread and wax making from generation to generation. Walking around across Žirovnica, the cradle of Slovenian beekeeping, you can visit the **apiary of Anton Janša**, the pioneer of modern beekeeping. **Thematic and nature beekeeping trails** can be found elsewhere in Slovenia as well.



Beekeeping everywhere.

Even in the middle of a city!

Slovenia is a green country where beehives can be found even in the middle of a city: on school terraces or on the roof of one of the most important cultural centres in the country. Urban beekeeping is a part of sustainable development, which encourages the preservation and planting of trees and nectar plants. It promotes self-supply and enhances the quality of city life. In Slovenia, you can get to know the distinctive features and good practices of urban beekeeping.



Potica is from Slovenia.

The filling can contain honey.

Potica is the most typical Slovenian holiday desert. It's made from rolled leavened dough and filled with one of more than 80 types of filling! A very special is the honey potica. How is it made?

A recipe from 1890 says to crush some yeast and sugar into 7 ml of lukewarm milk and let it rise in a warm place. Whisk 5 egg yolks with 20 g of sugar. When the yolks rise, add 2 whipped egg whites. Pour 90 g of melted butter onto 880 g of warmed wheat flour; add salt, some anise and 37 ml of lukewarm milk. Mix everything together and add sugar and eggs; mix again and add 35 g of the yeast that has risen. Beat the mixture well with a wooden spoon, sprinkle it with flour, cover it with a kitchen cloth and let it rise in a warm place. Cut the risen dough in half, knead each half and let them rise again.

Roll out the dough evenly on a table cloth and put on "the honey filling for a good potica". Prepare it by finely chopping or crushing 880 g of walnut kernels. Bring 1120 g of honey to a boil and add 80 g of butter and 60 g of sugar. After boiling it for 7 minutes, take it off the stove and add 3 ml of rum, lemon zest, cinnamon, ground pepper and walnuts. After it cools down a bit, add another egg yolk or a whole egg.

Spread the warm filling, which should not be too hot, on the rolled-out dough and sprinkle it with walnuts and raisins. Roll the potica tightly, place it in a buttered baking tray and let it rise in a warm place. Bake it.



Taste of Slovenian honey

Potica is definitely one of the many treats of the Slovenian cuisine you will get a chance to taste. Let it contain honey! You will be fascinated by **honey tasting** when visiting beekeepers and attending cooking classes. Honey is an ingredient of many traditional and modern dishes typical for as many as **24 gastronomic regions in Slovenia**. On your culinary ramble through the land of beekeeping, you will be able to supplement the dishes with **mead, honey liqueurs and honey ales**.



Organized honey experience in all regions of Slovenia

Beekeeping-themed adventures

Beekeeping-themed adventures await you in every corner of our country! You can include the beekeeping experience in your every visit to Slovenia. Choose your own experience at a specialised provider of honey adventures who, as a strategic partner of the Slovenian Beekeepers' Association, participates in the development, promotion and certification of apitourism providers in Slovenia.



Explore your possibilities at:
www.authentic-routes.com/apiroutes

Beekeeping educational trips

Because of its knowledge, tradition and the high quality of beekeeping products, Slovenia is a great destination for the community of beekeeping professionals. Guided group and individual experiences, which are suitable for experts as well as beginners, include learning beekeeping theory and practice. Following the native Carniolan honey bee, you also get to know the most important highlights in the green, active and healthy Slovenia with its firm orientation towards the development of sustainable tourism.



Explore your possibilities at:
www.authentic-routes.com/apiroutes


Api tourist guides

Providers of bee tourism and the various adventure options in Slovenia are best presented by properly qualified beekeeping tourist guides.



Get to know them at:
www.apiturizem.si



A close-up photograph of a woman's back and shoulder. A hand is holding a piece of honeycomb, from which a stream of golden honey is being poured onto her skin. The skin is glistening with honey. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the woman's body.

Pampering treatments with honey

Slovenian spas

You can choose different types of accommodation as your starting point for getting to know the beekeeping splendours of Slovenia. Among the most popular are the hotels of Slovenian thermal spas, which include honey more and more in their care for your health and well-being. Honey wellness, honey saunas and massages, and other pampering treatments with honey are available.



You can find your Slovenian spa break at:
www.slovenia.info/spas

Slovenia in the heart of Europe

Official name: Republic of Slovenia • **Area:** 20,273 km² • **Forest:** 11,854 km² • **Vineyards:** 163.5 km² • **Slovenia's international borders 1370 km:** Austria (318 km), Italy (280 km), Hungary (102 km), Croatia (670 km) • **Length of coast:** 46.6 km • **Capital:** Ljubljana • **Population:** 2,054,741 (2011) • **Ethnic origin of population:** Slovenian (83.06%), Italian (0.11%), Hungarian (0.32%), Others (16.51%) • **Language:** Slovenian • **Time zone:** Central European Time (GMT +1) • **Currency:** EURO (EUR)

1, 2 January: New Year • **8 February:** Prešeren Day • **Moveable:** Easter Monday • **27 April:** Day of Uprising against Occupation
1 and 2 May: Labour Day • **25 June:** Statehood Day • **15 August:** Assumption Day • **31 October:** Reformation Day
1 November: All Saints' Day • **25 December:** Christmas • **26 December:** Independence and Unity Day

Climate and temperature:

	Mediterranean in the coastal region	Continental in Central Slovenia	Alpine in the mountains	
July	23.8°C / 73.4 F	21.6°C / 69.8 F	17.7°C / 62.6 F	7.4°C / 44.6 F
January	4.6°C / 39.2 F	0.4°C / 32 F	-3.7°C / 26.6 F	-7.7°C / 19.4 F
	Portorož 2 m	Novo mesto 220 m	Rateče 846 m	Kredarica 2514 m

Average daily temperature 2004 – 2013 in the locations indicated. Figures from ARSO archives.

Border formalities

By car or coach, enter Slovenia from Italy, Austria, Hungary or Croatia. Slovenia is a member of the EU and part of the Schengen Area. The borders with Italy, Austria and Hungary have no border controls and may be crossed anywhere and at any time. At the border with Croatia, border checks are carried out in accordance with Schengen standards, a simplified procedure being in place for EU citizens.

Bringing in Items

The flow of goods between Member States of the EU is tax-free, and regulations are uniform in all Member States of the Union. Restrictions apply only to the transport of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, where the amount not subject to excise tax is limited.

DDV (VAT) tax refunds

As a member of the single European market, Slovenia has removed the possibility of tax refunds at border crossings since this form of tax relief no longer exists among the Member States of the EU. Visitors from

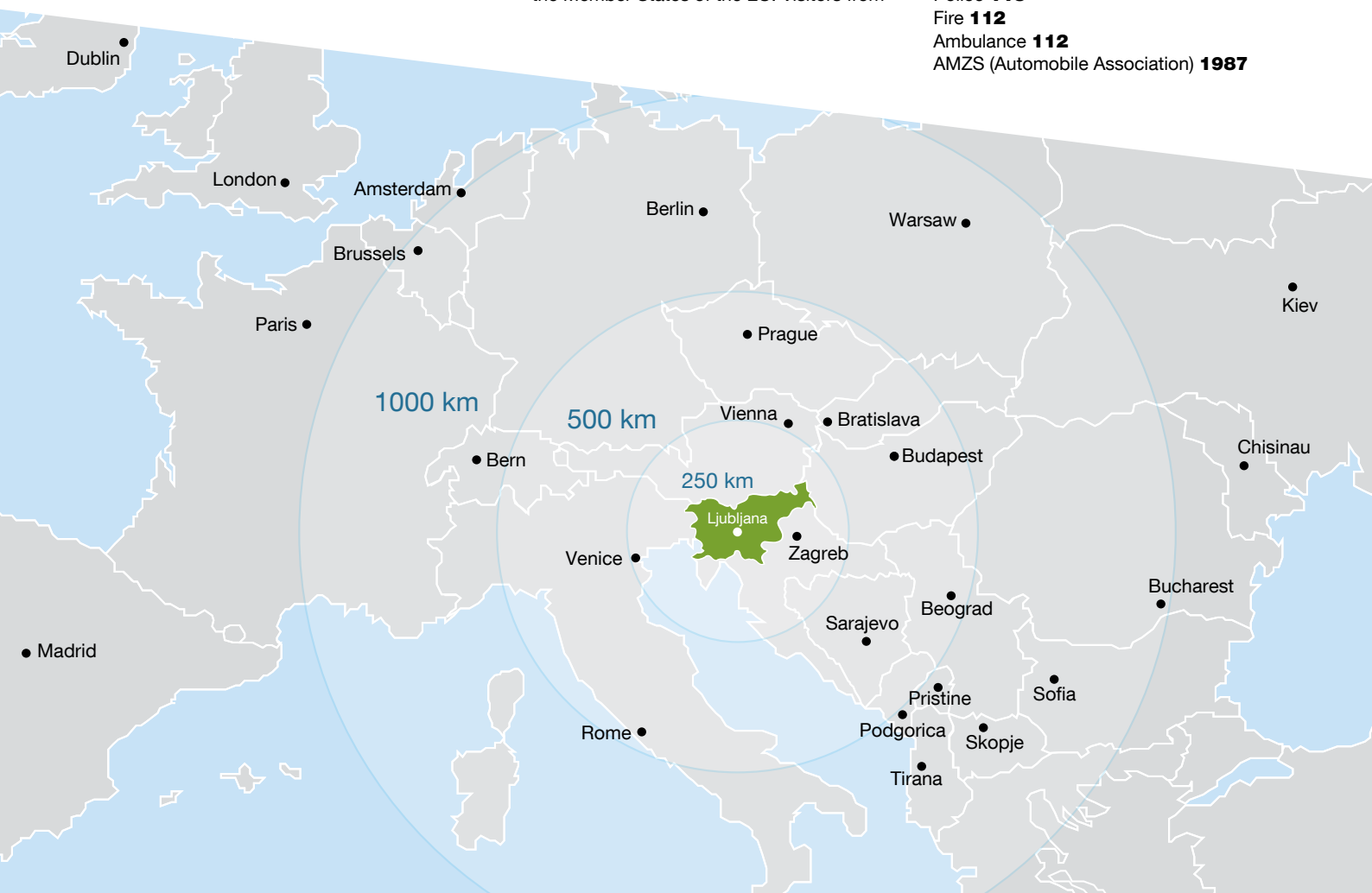
countries that are not members of the European Union must have special forms for purchased goods filled in by sellers. The form must be stamped by the customs office at the border crossing upon leaving a Member State of the EU. The tax will be returned by the institutions listed on the form for tax-free purchases.

Water

Tap water is suitable for drinking throughout the country.

Important numbers

Police **113**
Fire **112**
Ambulance **112**
AMZS (Automobile Association) **1987**





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