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Julian Alps Peak Walk

COUNTRY Slovenia **START/FINISH** Bled (loop) **DISTANCE** 37 miles (60 km)
TIME 5 days (+ 1 day if climbing Mount Triglav) **DIFFICULTY** Moderate to challenging **INFORMATION** www.slovenia.info; the dry, warm summer months (May–Sep) are best for hiking

This alpine adventure through Slovenia's Triglav National Park takes in sweeping mountain scenery, thick fir-tree forests, gorgeous glacial pools and enchanting waterfalls.

Starting at postcard-perfect Bled, take a stroll around the lake and visit the medieval Bled castle, perched on a precipice overlooking the cyan-blue lake. The route then leads away from the lake up through the fir forests to the Pokljuka high plateau. Shelter in welcoming, wooden mountain huts during your four nights in the Julian Alps (you'll need to book in advance in summer). Ascents climb through bright, flower-filled and airy alpine meadows, and are followed by dark descents through dense and wild woodlands.

Lake Bled with the tiny, tear-shaped Bled isle in its centre, surrounded by forests and mountains

The further you go, the bigger the climbs and the greater the vistas, from rocky ravines and canyons carved out by aqua-blue rivers to secret caves and caverns lined with creeping moss. At over 2,850 m (9,350 ft), the eponymous Mount Triglav juts self-consciously out of the landscape from every angle; it's climbable, if you've the time and inclination.

The trail opens up as it enters the Valley of the Triglav Lakes, a spectacular smattering of alpine glacial pools, then narrows into a steep, high-stepped path leading up to Savica Waterfall. One of Slovenia's biggest tourist draws, the falls burst out of the sheer rock face before tumbling down into the mighty Lake Bohinj, the largest lake in Slovenia.

Finally, it's time to put your feet up. Take the cable car up to the 1,532-m (5,026-ft) peak of Mount Vogel for a spectacular panoramic view of the Julian Alps before hopping on a bus for the 30-minute journey back to Lake Bled.

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another way

Short on time during your trip to Lake Bled? Take a one-day hike to the gorgeous Vintgar Gorge. A wooden walkway leads along the sheer canyon walls and rumbling rapids to an arresting 13-m- (43-ft-) high river waterfall.



SLEEP in charming mountain huts and wake up to glorious panoramic views

LOOK for fossilized ammonites (Jurassic-era molluscs) in the rocks around the **Triglav Lakes**

TAKE a boat trip out to the pilgrimage church in the middle of **Lake Bled**



CLIMB up to the spectacular **Savica Waterfall**, one of Slovenia's most popular attractions

