

TRIP OVERVIEW

Enjoy a freshwater swimming holiday in Slovenia and discover why the country is considered to be one of Europe's true hidden gems. Swim in the emerald green waters of Lake Bled and the crystal clear Soca River, take in the stunning scenery of Triglav National Park and even cross the border into Italy to swim Lago del Predil on this unforgettable short escape.

On this trip we'll be based in the small town of Bohinj, the central hub for all our excursions by land and water. This includes a swim to the 17th Century church on Bled Island, crossing the beautiful Lake Bohinj, and exploring the National Park and Kazjak waterfall by foot.

To get the most out of this amazing experience, we will be combining swims with walks to see as much of the local area as possible, with occasional help from a canoe or rowboat. In order to experience the best swimming that Slovenia has to offer, we spend time travelling to and from different locations, which makes for quite a busy trip, with evening returns to the hotel on Days 2 and 3.

With such an action-packed four day adventure, we know it's important to recharge your batteries and the Hotel Jezero on the banks of the Bohinj Lake is the perfect place for it. The hotel offers comfortable accommodation, beautiful scenery, friendly staff and there's even a pool if you just can't get enough of swimming.

WHO IS THIS TRIP FOR?

This trip is for swimmers who love freshwater swimming and inspiring mountain scenery. Swimmers should have a basic understanding of open water swimming and be capable of completing the average daily swim distance of around 4km (split over a minimum of two swims) prior to the start of the trip.

LOCATION SUMMARIES

Lake Bled

One of Slovenia's oldest medieval castles overlooks the stunning emerald-green Lake Bled. The lake is home to Slovenia's only island, which is one of the iconic images of this country. The town of Bled offers a great place to relax after a busy day's swim.

Lake Bohinj

This is Slovenia's largest lake, which lies to the west of Lake Bled. It's one of the region's hidden gems and an ideal base for our tour. The mountain peaks of Pršivec and Storeč Vrh dominate the surroundings. It's a glacial lake and also a great place to relax and enjoy the serenity that this area offers.

Julian Alps

The Julian Alps, named in honour of Caesar, form Slovenia's dramatic northwest frontier with Italy. They are located in Triglav National Park which is named after Slovenia's highest peak (2864m). The Sava and Soča rivers, which we cross during our tour, are the largest two in the region. They rise in the

Julian Alps and then flow down to the Black Sea and Adriatic respectively.

Triglav National Park

First protected in 1924 and now covering some 838 km², the Triglav National Park is the only National Park in Slovenia and one of Europe's oldest parks. Named after its highest mountain, it covers 4% of Slovenia's total land mass and is almost entirely covered by the eastern Julian Alps.

Lago del Predil

Located just 2 miles from the Slovenian border in Italy, this idyllic and remote lake is at an altitude of 960m. Fed by Rio de Saletto, the lake is surrounded by trees and cliff faces. The water quality is exceptional and the views unsurpassed.

TRIP SCHEDULE

Start Point	Hotel Jezero, Lake Bohinj www.bohinj.si/en
Start Time	20:30 on Day 1
Finish Point	Hotel Jezero, Lake Bohinj, Slovenia
Finish Time	14:00 on Day 4

Please note that the below daily itineraries are an example of the swims that may take place during the course of your trip. However, actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and sea conditions. Your SwimTrek guides and local boat pilot will determine the most suitable swim locations each day and will communicate the plan with all guests as soon as possible.

Day 1

We meet at the hotel bar for welcome drinks and a short briefing on the plans for the rest of the trip. The acclimatisation swim is held the next morning.

Day 2

We take a short van journey into Bled where we hold an acclimatisation swim, followed by a day of swimming in this famous lake. The first swim is across to Bled Island, home to the Pilgrimage Church and where we'll walk the 99 steps to enjoy the stunning view. It's then back into the water as we cross to the lake's western shore where there will be time for a technique advice session with your swim guides.

After a stop for lunch, we take an optional 20-minute walk up the steep path to Mount Osojnica, which offers stunning views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. On our return to the shore, we swim a full length of the lake, finishing at the lakeside lido. The late afternoon/evening is free for you to either enjoy the view over Lake Bled from the medieval castle, get lost in the shops, cafes and restaurants of the town center or to relax by the lake, before meeting up again to travel back to the hotel.

Day 3

After breakfast we have a 1.5-2 hour scenic van transfer into Italy and onto the shores of the idyllic Lago del Predil for the first swim of the day. It's then a short drive back into Slovenia for lunch at the popular alpine town of Bovec. Following this, we head into the remote centre of the Triglav National Park, and take a 20-minute walk for a cool, exhilarating dip underneath the secluded Kozjak waterfalls.

It's then time to head to the emerald green Soča River, for a swim where the river enjoys a gentle current. The scenery is outstanding and the river swim makes a striking contrast to the lakes of the previous few days. The adventure continues on the way home, with a memorable return journey on the car train, taking us through the countryside to Bohinj arriving back in time for dinner.

Day 4

After the previous days, we have an early chance to stretch our legs, as we walk the length of Lake Bohinj. Following the walk we swim the 4km length of Slovenia's largest lake. We may be accompanied by the schools of wild trout which frequent the lake. The dark green forests and surrounding mountain peaks guide our way. There are suitable get-out points along the way for those that would prefer a shorter swim. The swim finishes within 50 metres of the hotel, where you will be able to use the hotel's sauna and shower facilities from 2pm to finish off your trip.

TRIP INFORMATION

Equipment Checklist

In addition to your daily non-swimming clothes, we also recommend that you bring the following items:

✓	ITEM	✓	ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Costume (x 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Towel
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Goggles (x 2)*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Daypack
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun Hat and Sunglasses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sweater/Fleece
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Sun Cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	Windproof/Waterproof Jacket
<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking Shoes/Sandals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wetsuit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Aqua Shoes/Sandals	<input type="checkbox"/>	

*Try to bring one clear lens and one tinted lens for different light conditions.

Please note that SwimTrek will supply swim hats and provide water and electrolyte drinks in shared water bottles on your safety boat. If you prefer to use your own drink bottle, please feel free to bring one along. If you would like to use a wetsuit, rash vest or fins during your swims, please ensure that you bring these with you.

Swimming Distances

Swim	Distance	Swim	Distance
Osojnica – Bled Island	1km	Bled Island - Osojnica	¾km
Crossing of Lake Bled	2km	Crossing of Lago del Predil	1½km
Soca River	2km	Crossing of Lake Bohinj	4km

Environmental Lake Swimming

These lakes are some of the world's cleanest freshwater lakes, however water quality can be an issue with water runoff from fields. Bluegreen algae and Weil's disease are all possible contaminants. If you do feel unwell at any stage during or after the trip, you should go to your GP immediately, telling them what you have been doing.

Temperatures

Please note that, due to this area being an alpine region, weather conditions are unpredictable and temperatures can drop overnight. Therefore, the temperatures below are indicative and should be used as a guide only.

Temperatures for Lake Bled:

MONTH	WATER TEMPERATURE	AIR TEMPERATURE
July	19-21°C / 66-70°F	21-23°C / 70-73°F
August	20-23°C / 68-73°F	23-25°C / 73-77°F

Temperatures for Lake Bohinj:

MONTH	WATER TEMPERATURE*	AIR TEMPERATURE
July	20-23°C / 68-73°F	21-23°C / 70-73°F
August	20-23°C / 68-73°F	23-25°C / 73-77°F

*Please note that Lago del Predil and Soča River may be 3-5°C cooler than these temperatures.

Weather Caveat

For safety reasons, we rely on decent weather conditions when carrying out our swims. As a consequence, open water swimming holidays require a certain degree of on-trip flexibility which can result in changes to the planned itinerary. These changes often add a touch of uniqueness to your trip and will be communicated to you by your SwimTrek guides as quickly as possible.

Walking Distances

Most walks take place on recognised paths and tracks, however there may be cases where we walk along trails or other unsealed surfaces and care should be taken in these areas. The walk on Lake Bled gets quite steep and rocky towards the top, so a pair of sturdy trainers or walking sandals will be required.

Group Size and Boat Support

This trip has a maximum group size of 14. The group will be split into a maximum of three groups based on speed, with each group being accompanied by their own safety vessel/escort.

Boat support on this trip includes a combination of kayaks and canoes to be piloted by your SwimTrek guides and local safety team. Please note that this boat support is subject to change without notice and cannot be guaranteed.

GETTING THERE

The easiest option to get to Lake Bohinj is to fly into Ljubljana Airport and book a transfer to the hotel. There are a wide range of airlines serving Ljubljana from various British and European cities.

While we have outlined various travel options below, they are subject to change and should be used as a guide only. We suggest that you use www.skyscanner.net to search for alternative flight options for this trip.

Whichever route you choose to take, we recommend confirming your flights and other travel arrangements as early as possible in order to avoid price rises and availability issues.

Travelling via Ljubljana

To search for available flights into Ljubljana, please visit www.skyscanner.net.

Transfers from Ljubljana Airport

From Ljubljana airport, you can get a transfer directly to the Hotel Jezero. The transfer costs €80 per vehicle (up to 8 people) and takes approximately one hour. Please contact Outdoor Slovenia on +386 40865386 or email them directly at info@outdoor-slovenia.com. We recommend using the SwimTrek discussion page in the month leading up to the trip to arrange sharing the transfer with other guests to reduce your costs.

Travel from Ljubljana via Bus

There are frequent shuttle buses that run from Ljubljana Airport to the town of Kranj which takes approximately 30 minutes and costs approximately €2. From here you can get a connecting bus to Bohinj. The journey takes 1 - 1½ hours and costs approximately €8. You can view the bus timetable at lju-airport.si/en.

Travel via Train

Zagreb, in neighbouring Croatia, offers a regular, scenic, train service to Ljubljana. Both Zurich (www.swissrailways.com) and Munich (www.deutschebahn.com) have direct trains to the Slovenian town of Jesenice. Overnight services are also available via www.oebb.at. From Jesenice, you will need to change for the connection to Bohinj station. The bus leaves hourly from outside the station and the Hotel Jezero is a 15-minute bus ride away.

Getting there via other European countries

You can also travel to Slovenia via neighbouring countries. Trieste airport in Italy is south-west of Bohinj, Zagreb in Croatia is to the east, and the Austrian airports of Graz and Klagenfurt are to the north. Our hotel address for those travelling by car is: *Ribcev Laz 51, 4265 Bohinjsko Jezero, Slovenia.*

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Accommodation

For the duration of our trip, we stay in the beautiful Hotel Jezero, a 4-star hotel that sits directly in front of Lake Bohinj. Our accommodation is based on twin-share rooms with en suite facilities. There are a limited number of single supplement rooms which can be reserved during the booking process, subject to availability.

If you would like to extend your stay in Bohinj and need to book additional nights' accommodation before or after your trip, please contact the hotel directly via email at info@hotel-jezero.si. SwimTrek have arranged special rates for additional nights and the hotel will quote you the best price possible at the time of booking these nights directly with them.

Meals

All breakfasts are included in your trip price, however lunches and dinners are at your own expense. This allows you to enjoy the cuisines on offer in the various restaurants and cafes or have a relaxing picnic on the grassy banks surrounding the lakes and rivers. Throughout the course of the trip you will have to opportunity to join us for optional group meals at locally recommended restaurants.

Extra Expenses

You should bring extra money with you to cover such items as dinners, drinks, entertainment, souvenirs, etc. The local currency in Slovenia is the Euro (€). There is also a tourist tax of €2.60 (*subject to change*) per person per night, which is payable locally to the hotel. ATMs are widely available both at the airport and in Bohinj.

Passports and Visas

Slovenia is part of the European Union. Non-residents of Slovenia require a full passport to enter the country, which should be valid for six months beyond the expected length of stay. Citizens of all E.U. member states, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not require a visa to enter Slovenia. Please note that visa regulations are subject to change and we advise that you check your own visa requirements prior to travel.

Health Information and Recommended Vaccinations

For comprehensive health information for people travelling to Slovenia, including all recommended and required vaccinations, please visit www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries. Please note that this information is subject to change and you should re-check this site regularly prior to your trip.

Travel Plugs & Electricity

For a useful source of information on the different electrical outlets, electrical plugs, and electric sockets, please visit www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/.