
Destination
Nova Gorica
hit
universe of fun



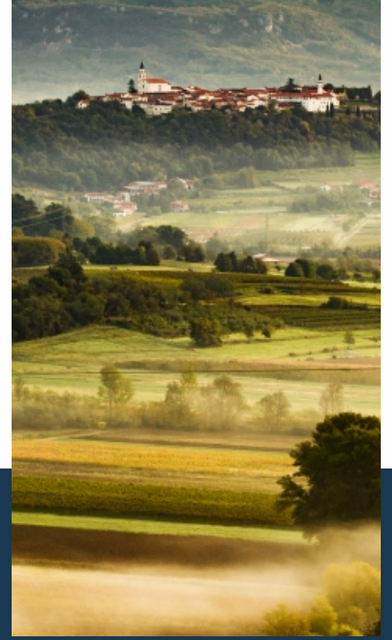


Goriška

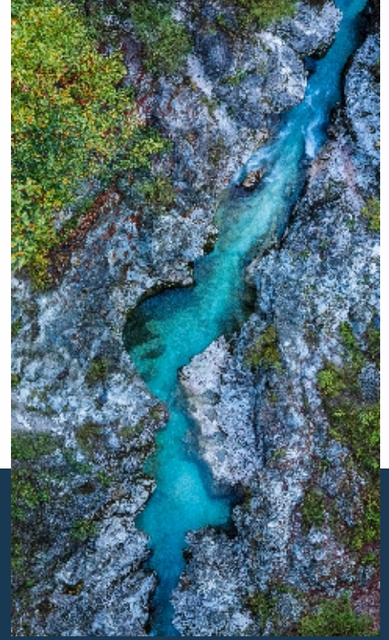
Goriška is a sun-drenched region in the far west of Slovenia, with the young town of Nova Gorica at its heart. It brings together several picturesque landscapes, each with its own distinctive character, yet all sharing a mild climate, lush vegetation, rolling wine-growing hills and warm, welcoming people.



Goriška Brda, also known as "Slovenia's Tuscany", lies halfway between the Alps and the Adriatic Sea. Its undulating landscape and countless vineyards give the region a unique charm.



Nestled beneath the high Karst plateaus, the **Vipava Valley** is a land of exceptional wines, the intoxicating fragrance of ripening fruit and picturesque villages scattered among green hills.



The **Soča Valley**, home to Slovenia's most beautiful river, boasts countless natural wonders while preserving the moving legacy of the First World War. It is the perfect setting for creating unforgettable holiday memories.

Nova Gorica

Nova Gorica is a town where visitors can explore history spanning from Roman times to contemporary Europe, all within a relatively small area. One of the destination's most distinctive features is its cross-border connection with the Italian town of Gorizia, making it possible to explore two countries, different cultural traditions and numerous historical landmarks in a single day. A rich array of museums, First and Second World War memorials, medieval castles, monasteries, contemporary architecture and a vibrant cultural scene offers something for every visitor. A major milestone was the European Capital of Culture title (GO! 2025), jointly held by Nova Gorica and Gorizia in 2025, making them the first cross-border towns in the history of the programme to share this distinction. Experience the true spirit of Europe, where the Slavic and Roman worlds meet, fostering cooperation and tolerance in a region once divided by a strict border.









Why choose our hotels in the town without borders?

Excellent location

and easy access, with good road connections and several airports nearby (Trieste 30 km, Ljubljana 100 km, Treviso 130 km and Venice Marco Polo 130 km)

489 rooms

across 3- and 4-star hotels

6 conference rooms

accommodating 15 to 280 people, plus 1 event hall with a capacity of up to 320 people

A spa

featuring Finnish, Turkish, bio and infrared saunas, a swimming pool, and an excellent selection of massages and beauty treatments

Restaurants,

bars open throughout the day and evening, and cafés serving delicious homemade pastries

Entertainment centres

offering a wide variety of games and an exciting entertainment programme

A comprehensive range

of service under one roof

Experienced, professional

and welcoming staff

Hotels
under the Universe of Fun roof



****** Perla Hotel**
In the very heart of Nova Gorica, the Perla Hotel welcomes you to a world of experiences, elegance and unforgettable moments. A vibrant hub of town life, Perla brings together the comfort of premium accommodation, relaxing spa facilities, outstanding cuisine, and the exhilarating energy of entertainment and gaming—all under one roof. It is the perfect retreat for those seeking a luxurious getaway or an inspiring setting for business meetings.

FREE

perla
RESORT & ENTERTAINMENT
hit universe of fun

Perla, Resort & Entertainment****
Kidričeva 7
5000 Nova Gorica
Slovenia

perla-novagorica.com



****** Park Hotel**
Park Hotel is a welcoming haven of comfort and warmth, set against the relaxed urban backdrop of Nova Gorica. Its distinctive character combines elegance, personalised service and Mediterranean inspiration, complemented by outstanding culinary experiences and evening entertainment. It is an ideal choice for guests seeking a peaceful yet lively escape in the Borderless Town.

FREE

park
HOTEL & ENTERTAINMENT
hit universe of fun

Park, Hotel & Entertainment****
Delpinova 5
5000 Nova Gorica
Slovenia

perla-novagorica.com



***** Sabotin Hotel**
Sabotin Hotel is located in the historic town of Solkan, with a history spanning a thousand years, right beside the emerald-green Soča River. Situated on the route to the Soča Valley and Goriška Brda, it is just one kilometre from the centre of Nova Gorica. Housed in a stately residence dating back to the second half of the 18th century, the hotel offers comfortable accommodation, a welcoming restaurant and pizzeria, as well as facilities for business meetings. A secure bike storage facility is also available.

FREE

Sabotin
HOTEL & RESTAURANT
hit universe of fun

Sabotin, Hotel & Restaurant***
Cesta IX. korpusa 35
5250 Solkan
Slovenia

hotelsabotin.com



***** Lipa Hotel**
Lipa Hotel is a natural focal point of the main square in Šempeter pri Gorici, a picturesque town near the Slovenian–Italian border and just a short distance from Nova Gorica. The hotel stands out for its lively character, warm hospitality and excellent cuisine, while its function hall makes it a suitable venue for a variety of occasions. A secure bike storage facility is also available.

FREE

Lipa
HOTEL & BISTRO
hit universe of fun

Lipa, Hotel & Bistro***
Trg Ivana Roba 7
5290 Šempeter pri Gorici
Slovenia

hotellipa.com

A diverse and unique
culinary experience



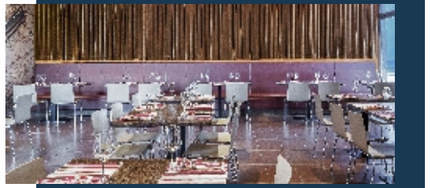
·**Calypso (Perla)** is an intimate, elegant restaurant offering impeccable service. It is ideal for fine dining experiences for groups of up to 46 guests, as well as for individuals looking to indulge in exquisite cuisine and a glass of carefully selected wine. The restaurant has been recommended by the Michelin Guide and is also ranked among Slovenia's finest restaurants by the independent international restaurant guide Gault & Millau. In 2026, it received the award for Best Casino Restaurant in Europe.



Mediterraneo (Perla) is an à la carte restaurant suitable for any occasion, accommodating up to 160 guests.



Oceanis (Perla) is a buffet restaurant offering a varied selection of dishes. It can accommodate up to 100 guests.



Atlantis (Perla) is a restaurant ideal for private functions and groups, with a capacity of up to 120 guests.



Caffé Dolce Vita (Perla) is the perfect place to savour life's sweetest moments, with delicious homemade desserts and ice cream.



Tiffany (Park) is an elegant restaurant set in an atmosphere inspired by the Mediterranean and the surrounding wine-growing regions. It offers exceptional gourmet experiences, while its stage allows for entertainment programmes and other events alongside dinner. Ranked among Slovenia's finest restaurants by the independent international restaurant guide Gault & Millau, Tiffany serves outstanding à la carte cuisine, complemented by carefully selected wines recommended by the restaurant's in-house sommeliers.



Panorama (Park) offers a varied selection of tasty buffet dishes, ideal for a quick and satisfying meal.

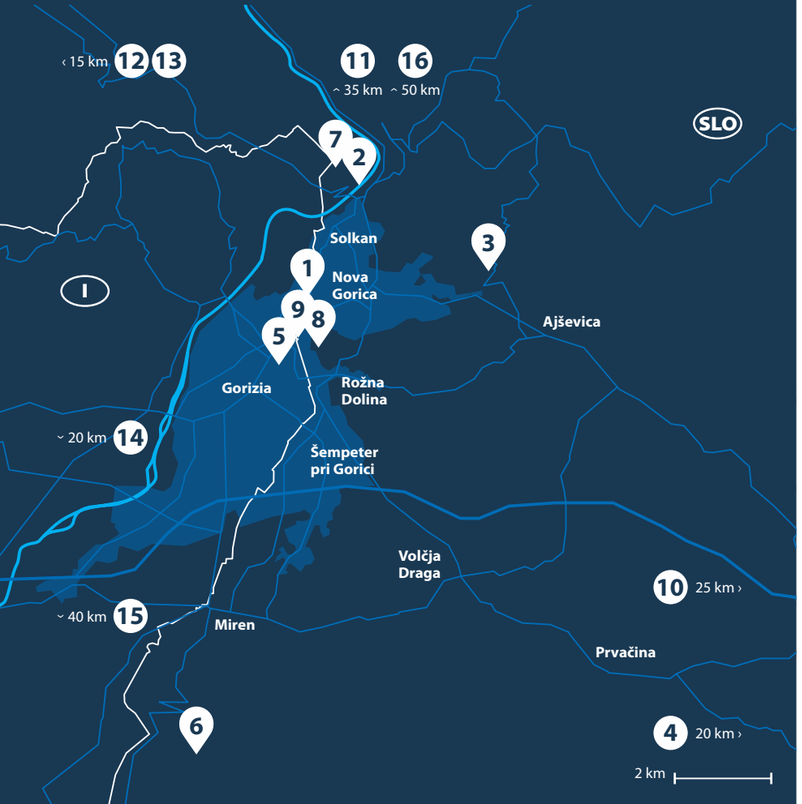


Restaurant Sabotin
·is also well suited to larger groups. One of its highlights is the beautiful outdoor terrace, naturally shaded by trees.



Bistro Lipa brings the stories and flavours of the region to life in a contemporary setting. Its carefully curated menu features a variety of dishes that combine traditional recipes from the Primorska Region with modern food and wine trends. A spacious, multi-purpose venue is also available for private groups and celebrations.

For lovers of culture and history





1 | Europe Square

A symbol of European integration and peace, Europe Square lies directly on the state border, allowing visitors to cross between Slovenia and Italy in a single step. Once a strictly divided area, it is now a vibrant meeting place for two cultures. Nearby, the EPIC Interpretation Centre invites visitors to discover an exhibition exploring life along the border.



2 | Solkan Bridge

This engineering masterpiece spans the emerald-green Soča River with the world's largest stone railway arch. Considered one of the great achievements of European engineering, its impressive silhouette beneath Sabotin Hill provides one of the most photogenic views in the Goriška Region.



3 | Kromberk Castle

This elegant 17th-century Renaissance manor is surrounded by a beautiful park and serves as the principal exhibition venue of the Goriška Museum. Its halls preserve the region's rich heritage, while the castle's excellent restaurant offer adds another dimension to the visitor experience.



4 | Rihemberk Castle

One of Slovenia's most magnificent and best-preserved medieval fortresses has stood for centuries atop a steep hill overlooking the Vipava Valley. Its imposing observation tower takes visitors back to the age of feudal lords and offers unforgettable panoramic views of the surrounding landscape.



5 | Gorizia Castle | I

This medieval fortress stands on a hill above the old town of Gorizia, Italy, offering exceptional views of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and the surrounding area. Once the residence of the Counts of Gorizia, the castle now houses an extensive museum complex featuring collections of weapons and art, as well as exhibits illustrating medieval life.



6 | Cerje Monument to Peace

This monumental tower, located where the Karst meets the Vipava Valley, takes visitors through key periods of Slovenian history and explores the value of peace through its exhibitions. From the highest viewing platform, visitors can enjoy one of the region's finest panoramic vistas, stretching from the snow-capped Alps to the Adriatic Sea.



7 | Sabotin Peace Park

Once the scene of fierce battles on the Isonzo Front, the area above the Soča River is now a unique open-air museum and a symbol of peace and reconciliation. Scenic walking trails lead through preserved trenches and caverns, offering breathtaking views of the surrounding countryside.



8 | Vila Rafut

This remarkable early 20th-century residence captivates visitors with its distinctive Neo-Oriental and Art Nouveau architecture. It is surrounded by the enchanting Rafut Park, home to a rich collection of exotic trees and a peaceful green retreat overlooking the city.



9 | Kostanjevica Franciscan Monastery

A spiritual and cultural landmark overlooking Nova Gorica, the monastery is renowned for the Škrabec Library and the Bourbon crypt, where Charles X, the last King of France from the Bourbon senior line, is buried. Visitors can also admire an impressive collection of historic Bourbon roses and enjoy beautiful views.



10 | Vipavski Križ

This picturesque, walled medieval town stands on a long, narrow hill in the heart of the Vipava Valley. A stroll through its narrow cobbled streets reveals a rich castle heritage, complemented by excellent local food and wine.



11 | Most na Soči

This charming settlement beside an emerald lake on the Soča River is renowned for its outstanding archaeological heritage dating back to the Iron Age. Visitors can enjoy peaceful walks along the water and an unforgettable panoramic boat trip on a solar-powered vessel through the Soča gorge.



12 | Gonjače Viewing Tower

This 23-metre-high tower, located at the highest point of Goriška Brda, offers a spectacular 360-degree panorama of the rolling hills, the Alps and the Adriatic Sea. Nearby, the picturesque village of Šmartno is well worth a visit and makes the perfect addition to an exploration of “Slovenia's Tuscany”.



13 | Šmartno

This fortified medieval village, with its seven defensive towers, looks like something out of a fairytale in the heart of Goriška Brda. Its narrow cobbled streets and traditional Brda houses create an authentic setting for discovering local cuisine and exceptional wines.



14 | Redipuglia | I

This monumental military ossuary and open-air memorial serve as a poignant reminder of the fierce fighting on the Isonzo Front. Its imposing stone terraces contain the remains of more than 100,000 fallen soldiers and offer a profound insight into the history of the First World War.



15 | Miramare Castle | I

This fairytale-white Habsburg residence stands on a dramatic rocky promontory overlooking the Adriatic Sea. Surrounded by a magnificent park filled with exotic plants, the castle enchants visitors with its lavish period interiors and breathtaking sea views.



16 | Kobarid Museum

This internationally acclaimed museum presents the moving stories and events of the First World War on the Isonzo Front with sensitivity and dignity. Its extensive collection of photographs, personal belongings and scale models takes visitors through one of the major conflicts fought in a mountainous landscape.

A traditional three-day tour of the Goriška Region

Day 1: Nova Gorica / Gorizia (10 km)

Nova Gorica, Slovenia's youngest town, was built along the Italian border after the Second World War. Today, it forms a unique urban area with Gorizia, where two towns and two cultures coexist across the border.

Places to visit:

- **Europe Square** – a shared square at the meeting point of two countries and nations, representing one of the finest examples of peaceful coexistence between neighbouring border towns.
- **Kostanjevica Franciscan Monastery** – renowned for the Bourbon crypt, the burial place of members of the French royal family, including Charles X, the last French king of the senior Bourbon line.
- **Solkan Bridge** – featuring the world's largest stone railway arch, the bridge carries the railway across the emerald-green Soča River.
- **Explore the old town of Gorizia, Italy** – discover a fascinating blend of Austrian, Italian and Slovenian influences. The first written reference to Gorizia dates back to 1001.
- **Kromberk Castle** – a 17th-century Renaissance manor and former residence of the noble Coronini family, now the principal exhibition venue of the Goriška Museum.





The package includes:

- Accommodation at a selected 3- or 4-star hotel at special rates, depending on the board option (BB, HB or FB)
- Complimentary parking for cars and coaches
- Complimentary tap water with all meals
- One complimentary bed-and-breakfast night for the tour guide (for groups)

To qualify for these conditions, the group must consist of at least 10 guests.

The visits can also be arranged in reverse order or tailored to your preferences. The tour is also available as a two-day or one-day excursion.

Day 2: Vipava Valley and Soča Valley (85 km)

- **Rihemberk Castle** – one of the finest gems of the Vipava Valley. Discover this remarkable fortress and admire its heritage in the company of historians and cultural and natural heritage experts.
- Visit the walled settlement of **Vipavski Križ**, one of Slovenia's most beautiful historic cultural landmarks. Situated on a long hill in the central part of the Vipava Valley near Ajdovščina, it offers a glimpse into the region's rich past. The visit is followed by a tasting of local wines and cured meats.
- Drive **through the valley of the emerald-green Soča River** to **Most na Soči**, where a beautiful lake awaits. Enjoy a short walk along the lakeshore.
- Board the solar-powered boat Lucija for a **cruise through the Soča River gorge** to the dam at the reservoir lake.

Day 3: Goriška Brda (45 km)

- Visit the Gonjače Viewing Tower and the picturesque village of **Šmartno**, where you can discover a traditional Brda house.
- Visit Slovenia's largest wine cellar, with the option of a guided wine tasting accompanied by light refreshments.

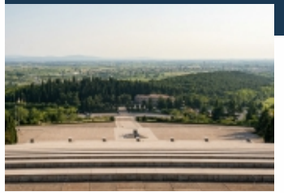
  OR

  Visit a family-run farm dedicated to the cultivation, production and processing of organic herbs. Special attention is given to lavender, rosemary, lemon balm and Damask roses. Take a stroll among the lavender fields, enjoy the views and discover the remarkable qualities of these herbs. Tasting opportunities are also available.
- **Visit Sabotin Peace Park**, an open-air museum featuring numerous caverns and tunnels dating back to the First World War, when the Isonzo Front ran through this area (a guided tour).

In the footsteps of the First World War on the Isonzo Front

Day 1: Cerje – Gorizia – Sabotin (45 km)

- **Cerje Monument to Peace** stands atop a Karst hill, where the remains of the First World War serve as a symbol of peace, patriotism and respect for all victims of war. The tower features exhibitions covering key periods of Slovenian history, while the viewing platform offers magnificent panoramic views.
- Visit the old town of **Gorizia**, Italy, characterised by a historic blend of Austrian, Italian and Slovenian influences. During the Isonzo Front battles, Austro-Hungarian troops defended the town fiercely, but it was eventually captured by Italian forces.
- Visit **Sabotin Peace Park**, an open-air museum overlooking Gorizia, crisscrossed by caverns and tunnels (guided tour). Due to its strategic position above the Soča River, Sabotin was a key defensive stronghold for the Austrian army in the defence of Gorizia.







The package includes:

- Accommodation at a selected 3- or 4-star hotel at special rates, depending on the board option (BB, HB or FB)
- Complimentary parking for cars and coaches
- Complimentary tap water with all meals
- One complimentary bed-and-breakfast night for the tour guide (for groups)

To qualify for these conditions, the group must consist of at least 10 guests.

The visits can also be arranged in reverse order or tailored to your preferences. The tour is also available as a two-day or one-day excursion.

Day 2: Redipuglia – Trieste (115 km)

During the First World War, the rocky Karst landscape became the scene of fierce fighting between Austro-Hungarian and Italian forces.

- The area encompassing the **Bersaglieri Valley** (an open-air museum) and Hill 118 (Monte Sei Busi) offers insight into the fortified line that stretched from Monte San Michele to Monfalcone during the early battles on the Isonzo Front. In the interwar period, a monumental military ossuary was built on the slopes of Monte Sei Busi, where the remains of more than 100,000 fallen soldiers were laid to rest.
- Enjoy a panoramic tour of the cosmopolitan city of **Trieste**. Until the outbreak of the First World War, Trieste was the main port of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; since 1918, it has been part of Italy. Visit the picturesque **Miramare Castle**, built on a dramatic rocky promontory overlooking the sea.

Day 3: Nova Gorica – Soča Valley – Kobarid – Vršič Pass – Kranjska Gora (170 km)

- **Nova Gorica**, Slovenia's youngest town, was built along the Italian border after the Second World War. Today, it forms a unique urban area with Gorizia, where two towns and two cultures coexist across the border. Visit Europe Square, Kostanjevica Franciscan Monastery and Solkan Bridge, featuring the world's largest stone railway arch.
- Drive through the valley of the emerald-green Soča River towards Kobarid.
- In **Kobarid**, visit the renowned museum dedicated to the events of the First World War. The museum has received Slovenia's highest museum distinction, the Council of Europe Museum Prize and a nomination for European Museum of the Year.
- Continue across **Vršič Pass**, Slovenia's highest mountain road pass, towards Kranjska Gora. The road over the pass was built during the First World War by prisoners of war, most of whom came from the Russian Empire. In memory of their suffering and the many fellow prisoners who lost their lives, Russian prisoners built a wooden chapel. Today, this restored Orthodox shrine is known as the Russian Chapel.

For gourmets and food lovers

Nova Gorica is one of Slovenia's most exciting culinary destinations, where Slovenian and Mediterranean flavours come together in a unique cross-border setting. Its location between the Vipava Valley, Goriška Brda, the Karst and the Soča Valley provides an abundance of exceptional local ingredients and a rich winemaking heritage, ranging from acclaimed restaurants recognised by the Michelin Guide to traditional family-run inns.

Be sure to try frtalja (a traditional Slovenian herb omelette), Vipava-style jota (a hearty sauerkraut or turnip stew with beans and potatoes), Karst prosciutto, local cheeses and seasonal dishes featuring asparagus and aromatic herbs. The prized Goriška radicchio holds a special place in local cuisine, while outstanding regional wines provide the perfect finishing touch to the culinary experience.





Wine Tastings

Goriška Brda and the Vipava Valley captivate visitors with their rolling vineyards and centuries-old winemaking traditions. Visit family-run wineries, discover the secrets of winemaking and enjoy guided tastings of outstanding wines, including indigenous varieties such as Rebula, Zelen and Pinela. Delicious local bites perfectly complement an unforgettable wine experience in this unique corner of Slovenia.



The Wine Train

Discover the Vipava Valley on a leisurely train journey accompanied by outstanding local wines and culinary delights. Along the route, with stops along the way, you will visit wineries, sample indigenous grape varieties and hear the stories of local winemakers. This sustainable and immersive journey offers a wonderful way to explore the region's culinary heritage and picturesque landscapes.



Osmice – Traditional Farm Wine Tastings

Osmice are traditional local events during which farmers open their homes and farms to visitors for a limited period, serving homemade wines, prosciutto, cheese and freshly baked bread. The tradition dates back to the reigns of Empress Maria Theresa and Emperor Joseph II, when farmers were permitted to sell their surplus produce for eight days a year. Visiting an osmica offers an authentic opportunity to mingle with locals, enjoy a relaxed atmosphere and experience genuine Slovenian hospitality.

Goriška gourmet experience

Day 1: Nova Gorica

- **Europe Square** – a shared square at the meeting point of two countries and nations, representing one of the finest examples of peaceful coexistence between neighbouring border towns.
- **Kostanjevica Franciscan Monastery** – renowned for the Bourbon crypt, the burial place of members of the French royal family, including Charles X, the last French king of the senior Bourbon line.
- **Solkan Bridge** – featuring the world's largest stone railway arch, the bridge carries the railway across the emerald-green Soča River.

*Enjoy a **four-course slow food menu** at Restaurant Tiffany in the four-star Park Hotel. In the latest edition of the Gault & Millau Slovenia restaurant guide, Tiffany is rated 14 points and awarded two chef's toques.*







The package includes:

- Accommodation at a selected 3- or 4-star hotel at special rates (bed and breakfast)
- Complimentary parking for cars and coaches
- Complimentary tap water with all meals
- One complimentary bed-and-breakfast night for the tour guide (for groups)

To qualify for these conditions, the group must consist of at least 10 guests.

The meal can also be arranged at a traditional osmica (a seasonal farm wine-tasting event), provided the excursion dates coincide with its opening period. The tour can also be arranged in reverse order or tailored to your preferences. One-day and two-day options are also available.

Dan 2: Gorizia & Vipavska dolina (60 km)

- **Explore the old town of Gorizia, Italy** – discover a fascinating blend of Austrian, Italian and Slovenian influences. The first written reference to Gorizia dates back to 1001.

*Enjoy **brunch** at one of Gorizia's traditional local eateries.*

*In the early afternoon, board the **Wine Train** at Nova Gorica railway station for a wonderful half-day journey through the wine-growing countryside, with stops along the way. Meet local winemakers in person and savour the finest flavours the Vipava Valley has to offer.*



Day 3: Goriška Brda (45 km)

***Visit a beekeeper** and discover the fascinating world of bees through a unique and unforgettable experience. The visit includes an introduction to beekeeping, honey and dried persimmon tasting, an aperitif, juice or tea, and traditional honey biscuits.*

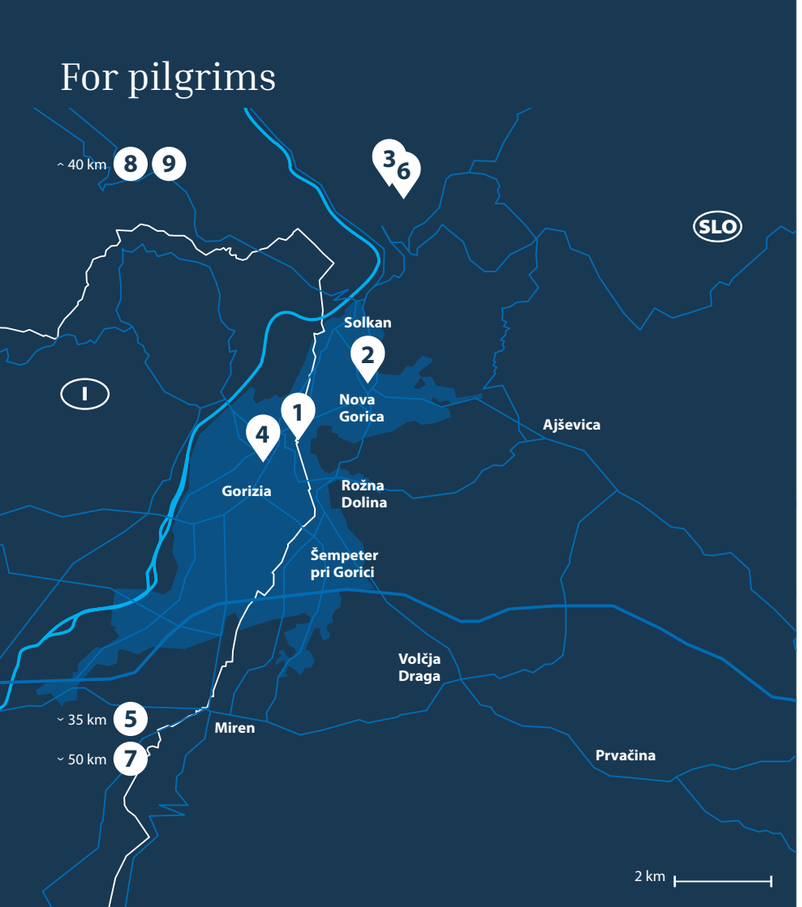
- Visit the Gonjače Viewing Tower and the picturesque village of **Šmartno**, including a traditional Brda house.

*Discover internationally acclaimed **olive oils from Goriška Brda**. Learn about different olive varieties, their beneficial properties and how to use olive oil properly in cooking. The tasting concludes with a delicious snack and a tasting portion of the house dessert: chocolate and walnut slices with olive oil and orange.*

*Visit a local winemaker and enjoy a **wine tasting**.*

*A **late lunch or early dinner** at one of the traditional tourist farms in Goriška Brda will showcase fresh, locally sourced ingredients, flavourful seasonal vegetables and homemade cured meats, especially salami and prosciutto. You may also discover fragrant white polenta, an abundance of herbs and wild shoots. Sample traditional local sausages known as krodegine and markandele, rediscover long-forgotten chestnut dishes, savour the aroma of fennel flowers and enjoy a sip of fine homemade spirits or a herbal liqueur. These authentic flavours offer a truly special way to experience the charm of Goriška Brda.*

For pilgrims





The Nova Gorica area is one of the most important centres of religious tourism in western Slovenia, offering a rich spiritual heritage, a fascinating cultural history and a distinctive cross-border character. Its location on the Italian border connects pilgrimage routes in Slovenia with those in the neighbouring region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, offering visitors a unique blend of spirituality, history and European cultural heritage. Nova Gorica is an important meeting point for European pilgrimage routes and a key stop along the Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic and the various routes of the Way of St James.



1 | Kostanjevica Franciscan Monastery

With its pilgrimage Church of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, the monastery is one of Slovenia's most important religious and cultural landmarks. In addition to the renowned Stanislav Škrabec Library, it houses the tomb of the last members of the French Bourbon royal family. This makes the monastery not only a significant religious site but also a cultural and historical landmark of European importance.



2 | Co-Cathedral of Christ the Saviour

The Co-Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is the main Catholic church in Nova Gorica and the second episcopal church of the Diocese of Koper. Built in 1982, it became Slovenia's first co-cathedral in 2004, assuming an important role in the religious life of the northern part of the diocese.



3 | Pilgrimage Route to Sveta Gora (Holy Mountain)

This popular pilgrimage and hiking trail starts in Solkan and follows well-maintained woodland paths lined with Stations of the Cross chapels, leading to one of Slovenia's most important Marian shrines. According to tradition, the shrine stands at the place where the Virgin Mary appeared to a shepherdess named Urška Ferligoj in 1539 and instructed her to have a church built. At an altitude of 682 metres, visitors are welcomed by a magnificent basilica housing a miraculous image of the Virgin Mary, a Franciscan monastery and unforgettable panoramic views of the Soča River and the Vipava Valley.



4 | Parish Church of St Ignatius | I

Located on Piazza della Vittoria in the centre of Gorizia, Italy, this church is considered one of the most important Baroque churches in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Built during the 17th and 18th centuries following the arrival of the Jesuits in town is dedicated to St Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order.



5 | Aquileia | I

Once a powerful Roman city and now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Aquileia captivates visitors with its patriarchal basilica and the world's largest early Christian floor mosaic. A walk among its ancient remains and archaeological monuments offers a fascinating insight into the earliest beginnings of Christianity in Central Europe.



6 | The Goriška Camino

This 80-kilometre cross-border pilgrimage and hiking route is divided into four daily stages and connects the ancient early Christian centre of Aquileia with the magnificent basilica at Sveta Gora. Passing through Škocjan ob Soči, Cerje, Mirenski Grad (Miren Castle), Gorizia and the symbolic Europe Square, the route reveals the remarkable religious and cultural heritage of both countries. Crossing the former national border, the Camino offers more than a spiritual and nature-based experience: it has also become a symbolic path of peace, cooperation and cross-border unity.



7 | Santuario di Barbana | I

This ancient Marian shrine stands on a peaceful island in the heart of the Grado Lagoon, where a community of Benedictine monks lives permanently. A short, scenic boat trip from Grado takes visitors to this tranquil haven, which has attracted pilgrims and nature lovers since the 6th century.



8 | Castelmonte (Stara Gora above Cividale del Friuli) | I

One of the oldest and most impressive mountain Marian shrines in Friuli Venezia Giulia stands on a picturesque hill overlooking the Natisone Valleys. This fortified religious complex, home to a miraculous statue of the Black Madonna, offers pilgrims and visitors a profound sense of peace, spiritual reflection and magnificent views of the surrounding hills.



9 | Marian Pilgrimage Routes in the Goriška Region

This network of interconnected pilgrimage routes links the most important Marian shrines in Slovenia and Italy, bringing together deep-rooted religious traditions, cultural heritage and unspoilt nature. Its main spiritual landmarks are the magnificent basilicas at Sveta Gora and Kostanjevica in Nova Gorica. From there, the routes wind through picturesque villages and landscapes all the way to the Marian shrine of Marijino Celje near Lig in the Kanalski Kolovrat hills.

Sacred routes – a pilgrimage experience

Day 1: Connecting three shrines (110 km)

- **Sveta Gora (Holy Mountain)** – A magnificent basilica and Franciscan monastery overlooking Nova Gorica. The first pilgrimage church was built here between 1541 and 1544, on the site where, according to tradition, the Virgin Mary appeared to a shepherdess in 1539.
- **The Church of Marijino Celje** – First mentioned in 1325, this church is considered a late Gothic building. Since 1761, when a miraculous image was brought here (a copy of the statue at Mariazell, the largest Marian shrine in Central Europe, located in Styria, Austria), it has also served as a pilgrimage church.
- **Cividale del Friuli** – A picturesque town rich in late medieval art and one of the must-see destinations in Friuli Venezia Giulia. It preserves invaluable traces of its Lombard past, which visitors can discover after crossing the Devil's Bridge, which rises above the Natisone River.
- **The Marian Shrine of Castelmonte**, above Cividale del Friuli, is considered one of the most important shrines in Friuli Venezia Giulia.



The package includes:

- Accommodation at a selected 3-star or 4-star hotel at special rates, depending on the meal plan (BB, HB or FB)
- Complimentary parking for cars or coaches
- Complimentary tap water with all meals
- One complimentary bed-and-breakfast night for the group's tour guide

To qualify for these conditions, the group must consist of at least 10 guests.

The tour can also be arranged in reverse order or tailored to the group's specific wishes. It is also available as a one-day or two-day excursion.

Day 2: Aquileia and Barbana (98 km)

- **The Patriarchal Basilica of Aquileia** – The town's most important monument and one of the most impressive historical testimonies to the spread of Christianity in Central Europe. Inside, visitors can admire an extraordinary early Christian mosaic, the largest of its kind in the world, housed in one of the oldest Christian churches in the world.
- **Santuario di Barbana** – Located on an island at the eastern end of the Grado Lagoon, this shrine is one of the oldest Marian sanctuaries in the world. It is home to a resident community of Benedictine monks.



Day 3: Nova Gorica / Gorizia (10 km)

- **Nova Gorica**, Slovenia's youngest town, was built along the Italian border after the Second World War. Today, it forms a unique cross-border urban area with Gorizia, where Slovenian, Italian and Central European spiritual traditions intertwine.
- **Kostanjevica Franciscan Monastery** – Perched above Nova Gorica, the monastery is renowned for its rich library, rose garden featuring a collection of Bourbon roses, and the tomb of Charles X, the last King of France.
- **The Co-Cathedral of Christ the Saviour** is the principal church of the Diocese of Koper in Nova Gorica and one of Slovenia's most recognisable examples of contemporary religious architecture.
- Explore the old town of **Gorizia (Italy)**, a historic border town with a rich religious heritage.
- **The Parish Church of St Ignatius** is a Baroque church known for its richly decorated interior, imposing façade and Jesuit artistic masterpieces.

For sports enthusiasts and nature lovers

Nova Gorica is one of Slovenia's most appealing destinations for sports enthusiasts and nature lovers, combining an exceptional geographical location, a mild Mediterranean climate and easy access to a variety of natural landscapes. Situated right on the Italian border, the town is also an ideal starting point for exploring three very different yet interconnected regions: the emerald Soča Valley, the vineyard-covered Vipava Valley and the rolling hills of Goriška Brda. This remarkable diversity in such a compact area allows visitors to enjoy a combination of water sports, mountain activities, cycling and relaxation in nature all in a single day. Thanks to its mild climate and varied landscapes, Nova Gorica is ideal for outdoor sports and activities throughout the year.



Hiking and Trekking

Sabotin is one of the best-known hiking destinations overlooking Nova Gorica. This 609-metre-high hill offers spectacular views of the Soča River, Solkan and Goriška Brda, as well as well-maintained hiking trails of varying difficulty and historical remains from the First World War.

Trail length: 8.2 km | Elevation gain: 510 m

Sveta Gora (Holy Mountain) is a popular pilgrimage destination and viewpoint overlooking the Soča Valley. The route is steep but well marked and suitable for hikers of moderate fitness. It is renowned for its stunning views of the Soča Valley and the Julian Alps.

Trail length: 7.8 km | Elevation gain: 389 m

Škabrijel is a wooded hill just above town, ideal for trail running, shorter hikes and training sessions. Its forest paths are interspersed with historical remains from the First World War and offer a quieter, less crowded outdoor experience.

Trail length: 6.9 km | Elevation gain: 564 m

Along the Soča River, flat and easy walking trails are ideal for families and beginners, offering opportunities for leisurely walks and relaxed trekking.



Cycling and Running

The Soča Cycling Route is one of the region's most popular cycling routes, following the Soča River between Solkan, Plave and Nova Gorica. Suitable for recreational cyclists and families, the route runs mostly along well-maintained roads and cycle paths and offers beautiful views of the emerald-green river.

Route length: 22.4 km | Elevation gain: 150 m

The areas around Sabotin, Škabrijel and the Trnovo Plateau offer numerous forest tracks and gravel roads suitable for mountain biking and gravel cycling. The varied terrain attracts both recreational and experienced cyclists.

Panovec Forest is a natural recreation area right on the edge of town. Its many woodland trails provide shaded routes for running, making it particularly popular during the summer months. It is ideal for shorter training sessions and relaxed outdoor exercise.

Route length: 9 km | Elevation gain: 68 m

One of the most popular running routes follows the Soča River between Solkan and Nova Gorica. Trail runners can also choose routes on Škabrijel or Sabotin. Steep climbs, forest trails and panoramic summits provide excellent terrain for more demanding training sessions and sports training camps.

The Šempeter pri Gorici Sports Park features a modern dirt 4X track designed exclusively for cyclists, as well as a paved circular pump track, one of the largest facilities of its kind in Slovenia.

Water Sports

The Soča River is one of Europe's top destinations for kayaking and canoeing. Solkan is home to an internationally renowned kayaking centre featuring an artificial whitewater slalom course, which regularly hosts national and international competitions. In addition to elite athletes, beginners can also enjoy kayaking and canoeing, with guided programmes and equipment rental available.

Rafting is one of the region's most popular tourist activities. Trips down the Soča River are led by experienced guides and are suitable for individuals, families and organised groups. On calmer stretches of the river, visitors can also enjoy stand-up paddleboarding (SUP). During the summer months, many visitors head to natural swimming spots along the Soča to cool off. The clear water and picturesque surroundings make these spots ideal for swimming and unwinding after outdoor activities.

Activity provider: Kajak klub Soške elektrarne



Adventure Sports

The Soča Fun Park adventure park is nestled among the treetops along the Soča River, offering a unique combination of sport, fun and nature. Visitors can tackle a variety of high ropes courses featuring suspension bridges, rope elements and other obstacles designed for both children and adults. The highlight is two zip lines, each approximately 300 metres long, which take visitors soaring about 40 metres above the Soča River, offering unforgettable views of its emerald-green waters.

Activity provider: Soča Fun Park

Bungee jumping from the famous Solkan Bridge is one of the region's best-known adrenaline activities. The jump takes place from a height of approximately 55 metres above the Soča River, making it Slovenia's only bridge bungee-jumping experience. As visitors plunge into free fall, they experience an exhilarating rush while enjoying unique views of the emerald-green river.

Activity provider: Top Go

The Vipava Valley is renowned for its excellent conditions for **paragliding**. Visitors can opt for a tandem flight with an experienced pilot, taking off from Kovk or Lijak, and admire sweeping views of the Vipava Valley, the Karst, the Julian Alps and the Adriatic Sea.

Activity provider: Društvo jadralnih padalcev Polet

Sustainability

The Hit Company and Javni zavod za turizem Nova Gorica (Nova Gorica Public Institute for Tourism) are committed to developing sustainable tourism that minimises environmental impact and encourages visitors to behave responsibly. Particular emphasis is placed on low-impact activities such as hiking, cycling and other forms of sustainable mobility. The town is connected to a network of cycling routes, and many natural attractions can also be reached on foot or by public transport. Sustainable development is also reflected in efforts to protect the Soča River, forests and other natural areas, as well as in promoting local products and services.

The "For Sports Enthusiasts and Nature Lovers" Package Includes:

- Accommodation with half board or full board
- Special accommodation rates for group bookings
- Complimentary parking for cars or buses
- Complimentary tap water with meals
- Complimentary use of bicycle storage facilities

To qualify for these conditions, the group must consist of at least 10 guests.

Sports training camps

With its mild climate, beautiful natural surroundings and modern sports facilities, Nova Gorica is one of the most sought-after destinations for sports training camps throughout the year. Our hotels have extensive experience hosting world-class athletes and are renowned for providing excellent sports nutrition. With outstanding training conditions in every season, Nova Gorica is an ideal choice for teams seeking a high-quality, safe and professional environment in which to achieve their best results. In cooperation with sports institutions and other local service providers, Hit offers comprehensive support with booking sports facilities and organising all accompanying activities.

Our hotels offer:

- Sports-friendly accommodation
- Half-board or full-board options
- Meeting rooms
- 24-hour reception
- Private parking
- Massage table rental on request
- Sports kit laundry service
- Bicycle storage



Sports facilities in Nova Gorica and the surrounding area:

- **Nova Gorica Sports Park**

- Main football stadium
- Athletics stadium
- Athletics facilities for jumping and throwing events
- Auxiliary football pitch with artificial turf
- Additional natural-grass football pitches

- **Balon Multi-Purpose Sports Hall**

- Handball
- Basketball
- Volleyball
- Badminton

The hall can be divided into three separate training areas.

- **Nova Gorica Indoor Swimming Pool**
  25-metre pool with eight lanes
- **Outdoor Municipal Swimming Pool**
  olympic-size 50-metre pool
- **Tennis Centre**
  several clay tennis courts
- **Partizan Gymnasium**
  suitable for gymnastics, martial arts and recreational activities
- **Table Tennis Hall**
- **Lokve Ski Resort**
  suitable for recreational skiing and learning to ski

Activity organiser: Nova Gorica Sports Institute

- **Solkan Kayaking Centre**
  an Olympic-standard course on the Soča River, suitable for international competitions

Activity organiser: Kajak klub Soške elektrarne

- **Vrtojba Karting Centre**

Activity organiser: Društvo Gas Vrtejba

- **DEŠ Climbing Centre**

Activity organiser: Društvo DEŠ

Additional sports facilities:

- Nova Gorica skate park
- Multi-purpose outdoor sports courts
- Fitness centres
- Bocce court, bowling alley and roller-skating rink
- Sports halls at primary and secondary schools
- Medical and physiotherapy support

The "Sports Training Camps" Package Includes:

- Accommodation with half board or full board
- Special accommodation rates for group bookings
- Complimentary parking for cars or buses
- Complimentary tap water with meals
- Complimentary use of bicycle storage facilities
- Complimentary use of a massage table
- Complimentary equipment storage space

To qualify for these conditions, the group must consist of at least 10 guests.



The services and experiences included in the four suggested tours can be combined to suit the group's preferences and practical arrangements. All suggested tours include overnight stays at hotels in Nova Gorica. Nova Gorica is always the starting and finishing point of each tour, making them circular itineraries.

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