

Discover Italy, Slovenia & Croatia

Fully escorted 19 nights luxury fly, stay & cruise tour
departing Perth August 24, 2013

Inclusions: Return flights from Perth, 7nts Italian River
Cruise, 5nts Tour of Slovenia, 7nts Croatian cruise on
luxury mega yacht L'Austral. From \$10,995pp twin share*



Italy's Po River & the Venice Lagoon

Day 1: Venice (embark)

Arrive at Venice Marco Polo Airport where you will be transferred to the ship. (D)

Day 2: Venice

Featured Excursions: *Walking tour of historic Venice and Grand Canal cruise*

Venice, founded in the 6th century, rose up on 118 islands in a lagoon of the Adriatic Sea. It became a great political power that controlled all European trade with the East throughout the Middle Ages, and its citizens lavished their wealth on their home town. You'll stand in Piazza San Marco, perhaps the most famous plaza in Italy, where every view has been re-created by painters through the ages, and be awed by 11th-century San Mark's Basilica, adorned inside and out with treasures Venetian traders brought back from their voyages. The Palazzo Ducale, the Doge's Palace, reflects the wealth and the security of Venice's rulers—it contained both the doge's private quarters and the council chambers where the elite 1,000 met to make major political decisions. It is full of artistic treasures, including Tintoretto's wall-sized Paradise. The exquisite Bridge of Sighs connects the palace with the prisons—which may be how it got its name. See the city as voyagers have always seen it, from the water, as you cruise along the Grand Canal, lined with palaces that reflect the history of the city—Byzantine, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque—and spanned by famous bridges. Conclude your first day in Venice with a feast for the senses at the Captain's Welcome Gala. (B, L, Captain's Welcome Gala)

Day 3: Venice (Padua)

Featured Excursions: *Guided tour of historic centre, Scrovegni Chapel, and open market*

You'll board your motor coach for Padua, home to Italy's second oldest university. The 13th and 14th centuries were glory days for Padua. It became a great centre of learning when its university was founded in 1222 (Galileo taught there at one time, and Dante and Petrarch were students there), but perhaps it is even better known for the artists who flourished there. At the Scrovegni Chapel, you'll see the astonishing, lively and moving frescoes painted by Giotto around 1300, but Giotto was not the only artist to shine; Mantegna and Donatello also gave Padua glorious artistic treasures. Your walking tour will take you from the Basilica del Santo, dedicated to St. Anthony, to Caffè Pedrocchi, which writers, poets and artists, including Stendahl (he called it "the best of Italy"), have frequented. You'll also have plenty of free time to explore the world-famous Botanical Gardens on your own. (B, D)



Day 4: Serravalle (Ravenna)

Featured Excursions: *Walking tour of Ravenna's historic 6th century mosaics San Apollinare and Galla Placidia, visit to Medieval Brisighella and Pomposa Abbey, and Olive Mill tasting with lunch*

Ravenna was the last capital of the Western Roman Empire, so it is full of ancient mosaics in the Byzantine style. Celebrated both for the 5th and 6th century mosaics that adorn its churches and for its ongoing role as a producer of mosaics, Ravenna has eight UNESCO World Heritage sites. You will see the amazing Basilica Sant' Appollinare and the mausoleum of Galla Placidia, matriarch of Roman emperors, who had her tomb sheathed in spectacular mosaics that are among the most ancient in the city. You'll also see how modern-day mosaic artists work. On the way back to the ship, we'll stop in the Medieval village of Brisighella, where an unusual 12th-century covered passageway designed to shelter donkeys carrying chalk from the mines tells you how important that business was to the town. Enjoy lunch at an idyllic olive mill, where you'll taste the olive oil made there. Late that afternoon, relax onboard with a delightful *aperitivo* party featuring the tastes of Italy. (B, L, D)

Day 5: Polesella (Bologna)

Featured Excursions: *Walking tour of the culinary capital of Northern Italy and pasta workshop*

Spend the whole day in Bologna, called *la grassa*, meaning bountiful. Does it have the best food in Northern Italy? You be the judge. There's more to the city than Bolognese sauce, that's for sure—there's Parma ham and Parmeggiano (parmesan) and perhaps the best tortellini in the world, all on lavish display at Bologna's amazing food markets. Join in a pasta workshop and discover how to make your own fabulous pasta and then eat the fruits of your labor. (B, L, D)

Day 6: Polesella (Verona), Chioggia

Featured Excursion: *Walking tour of Verona's historic center including Romeo & Juliet balcony and Piazza d' Erbe*

Choice Is Yours | Featured Excursion: *Tour of the Arena di Verona*

Shakespeare gave Verona fame through the ages when he wrote of two star-crossed lovers, Romeo and Juliet. See the balcony where Romeo professed his love to Juliet—or at least that's the story—and where couples from all over the world chose to get married. It's not the only marvel to behold, of course. You'll also see an ancient Roman amphitheater still in use, these days for world-famous stagings of operas, and the Piazza d'Erbe, centered with a 14th-century fountain, which lies at the heart of the city and maintains its historic role as a marketplace. (B, D)

Day 7: Venice

Today is yours to enjoy Venice at leisure. Take a *vaporetto* to Murano to the world-renowned glass studios, such as Barovier, Venini and Seguso. Of course, you must take a gondola ride. Go to the Gallerie dell' Accademia for the greatest collection of Italian masters in one place—you'll find Titian, Tintoretto, Tiepolo, Veronese, Canaletto, and Guardi, to name only a few. Lounge beside the Grand Canal with an *aperitivo*, or stroll across the Rialto Bridge with a gelato. (B, L, Captain's Farewell Dinner)

Day 8: Venice (disembark).

Private 5-day coach tour of Slovenia

Day 1: Venice to Ljubljana (241kms 4hours)

We will be met at the Venice Cruise Pier by the tour manager and taken by private boat for the transfer to the coach parking pier – Tronchetto. The tour manager will remain with the group until we return to the cruise pier in Venice at the end of the tour. Meet the private touring coach that will also remain with the group until we return to Venice. Transfer to Ljubljana and check in at the Grand Union Hotel 4* The hotel is one of the most beautiful and elegant hotels in the region, constructed in 1905 Art Nouveau style. Welcome drink on arrival at the hotel. Short walking tour around the immediate area of the hotel to see some of the interesting buildings with the tour manager.

Day 2: Ljubljana to Piran (52kms 1hour)

Continental buffet breakfast in hotel. Morning transfer to the Postojna Caves for the underground tour. Continue to Predjama Castle for a visit. In the evening a short transfer to the old town for dinner in a local restaurant. Overnight in Portoroz just 2kms from Piran.

Day 3: Piran to Nova Gorica (107kms 2 hours)

Continental buffet breakfast in hotel. Morning walking tour in Piran with a local guide. Continue to Secovlje and visit the salt museum before transfer to Nova Gorica. Special excursion to the Spanish Riding School stud farm for a tour and riding performance. Overnight in Nova Gorica.



Day 4: Nova Gorica to Lake Bled (142kms 3hours)

Continental breakfast in hotel. Drive up into the mountains and visit the War Museum in Kobarid before driving on to Lake Bled. Afternoon at leisure in this picturesque resort. Accommodation Lake Bled.

Day 5: Lake Bled

Continental breakfast in hotel. Bled is very small and a short walking tour is included along with a delightful boat trip to the church on the island in the lake. There is a lovely river boardwalk nearby at Vintgar Gorge. You can also take the cable car up the mountain for some wonderful views. Afternoon free. Evening dinner in the castle restaurant – a wonderful way to finish the tour.

Day 6: Lake Bled to Venice

Continental buffet breakfast in hotel. Transfer to Venice and private boat transfer from the coach parking pier at Tronchetto to the cruise pier.



Seven nights cruising the Croatian Coast on mega yacht L'Austral

Day 1 Venice (Italy) 1800 Embarkation

Day 2: Sibenik (Croatia) – Split (Croatia)

The unspoiled beauty of this rugged coastline bleached by the salt and bordered by crystal clear blue sea transforms Sibenik into a giant aquarium. The nearby thousand-year-old town of Krka was founded by Croatian princes in the 9th and 10th centuries and today is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Along the Dalmatian coast the ancient cosmopolitan city of Split and the former imperial residence reveals all: fortified walls, towers, temples, palaces and baths. A museum in itself, Split is a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to Diocletian's famous palace. Pharaonic Egypt, ancient Rome, the Renaissance and the present exist side by side in perfect harmony.

Day 3 Korcula (Croatia) 1100-2200

You will be enchanted by the harmony which emerges from the town of Korcula built on a rock. The medieval architecture of white stone towers offers a stunning contrast to the orange-red roofs of the houses and limpid blue sea. The alleyways, squares and palaces are a pleasure to behold.

Day 4: Dubrovnik (Croatia) 0700-2345

Known throughout the world as the Pearl of the Adriatic, the walled city of Dubrovnik built on a rock has preserved its cultural heritage. Palaces, monuments and white stone churches are in perfect harmony. Long considered as a rival to Venice traces of its illustrious past are to be found throughout the city which is a UNESCO World Heritage site.



Day 5: Kotor (Montenegro) 0900-2000

The lovely fortified town of Kotor is to be found at the end of a complex series of bays surrounded by limestone massifs in a magnified region of Montenegro. An impressive city wall conceals the alleyways and palaces of a well preserved medieval centre. Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, the town is equally famous for its colourful folk festivities.

Day 6: Hvar (Croatia) 0700-1800

A mild sunny climate has earned Hvar the epithet Croatia's Madeira and is one of the most beautiful islands in the Adriatic. The old town cradled in the bay boasts many remarkable monuments such as the cathedral, a former arsenal and noble palaces all bearing witness to a rich history influenced by the Gothic and Renaissance art.

Day 7: Pula (Croatia) 0800-1200 Rovinj (Croatia) 1430-2200

Pula invites you to a journey back in time more than any other village in Croatia. Pula is a worthy heir to the Roman Empire. Timeless beauty and a truly exceptional architectural heritage is to be found here. More than anywhere else, the ancient ruins seem to have survived the centuries without having aged. You will discover in Pula a culture which dominated Europe for more than five centuries.

In days gone by, Rovinj was a peaceful fishing port on the Istrian Peninsula. Today its picturesque narrow streets lead you down to a marina where fishing boats jostle comfortably alongside modern yachts. You will enjoy wandering around the old town with its sunny terraces.

Day 8: Venice disembark 0700

TOUR PRICE OF \$10,995pp IS BASED ON TWIN SHARE IN A CATEGORY 5 CABIN ON RIVER COUNTESS AND A SUPERIOR CABIN ON L'AUSTRAL

River Countess Optional Upgrade Costs

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
CABIN TYPE	Small Window	Large Window	Large Window	French Balcony
DECK	Moselle	Danube	Main	Rhine
UPGRADE COST	\$205pp	\$495pp	\$775pp	\$995

L'Austral Optional Upgrade Costs

CATEGORY	Prestige 4	Prestige 5	Prestige 6	Suite
CABIN TYPE	Balcony	Balcony	Balcony	Balcony
DECK	4	5	6	6
UPGRADE COST	\$875pp	\$1095pp	\$1295pp	\$2345pp



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