

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 08 – July 09: Flight CLT-JFK-PRG 1N (Sat – Sun). Dpt CLT 3pm Sat, 2hr JFK, dpt 7:30pm, 8hr fly, arv 10am Sun
July 09 – July 13: Prague 4N (Sun – Thur). Explore old town for 5 days. Need bag check on arrive/depart days
July 13 – July 14: Train Prague-Krakow 1N (Thurs – Fri). Sleeper car 7hrs, depart 10pm, arrive 5am
July 14 – July 17: Krakow 3N (Fri – Mon). Explore old town for 4 days. Need bag check on arrive/depart days
July 17 – July 18: Train Krakow-Budapest 1N (Mon – Tues). Sleeper car 10hrs, depart 10:30pm, arrive 8:30am
July 18 – July 22: Budapest 4N (Tues - Sat). Explore old towns for 4 days. Need bag check on arrive day
July 22 – July 22: Train Budapest-Zagreb 0N (Sat – Sat). Direct BP to Zagreb (6½hr) depart 3:30 arrive 10pm
July 22 – July 23: Zagreb 1N (Sat - Sun). Zagreb Saturday Night! No Rakija! Pick up rental car.
July 23 – July 26: Lake Bled 3N (Sun - Wed). Explore the lake, hike the Julian Alps.
July 26 – July 28: Ljubljana 2N (Wed - Fri). Miramare Castle and Miro Truffles enroute. Swim/Run/Old Town.
July 28 – July 31: Rovinj 3N (Fri - Mon). Enjoy old town, market, and people watching.
July 31 – Aug 07: Baška Voda 7N (Mon - Mon). Swim/Run/eat fish. Stop enroute at Zadar or Sibenik.
Aug 07 – Aug 19: Bol 12N (Mon - Sat). Swim/Run/eat fish! Drop car at ferry in Split.

ETIAS – Not required. The European Travel Information and Authorization System or ETIAS visa waiver will be required for U.S. citizens visiting Europe starting in 2024. Check details at [ETIAS.US](https://etias.us), [InterExchange](https://interexchange.com) and [EU Site](https://europa.eu).

VPN/Phone – Surfshark VPN for access to U.S. financials, streaming sites, etc. Surfroam for Mark's phone data

COVID Travel Requirements – None, and no EU-PLF. Confirmed no entry restrictions: Czechia, Poland, Hungary, Croatia, France, Italy, Switzerland, Slovenia

Prescriptions – must have a prescription, in original bottle, up to 90-day supply.

Driving – International Driver's License required (France, Italy, Slovenia).

Overall Route – from [Prague to Bol](#)

Weather – Temp H/L in F, Rain mm//days. [Site here](#)

Prague (50.0755° N, 14.4378° E) July **73/55, 69//18**; Aug **73/54, 66//16**; Sept **66/48, 39//15**
Krakow (50.0647° N, 19.9450° E): July **77/54, 69//17**; Aug **75/54, 45//14**; Sept **66/48, 45//14**
Budapest (47.4979° N, 19.0402° E): July **79/61, 40//12**; Aug **79/59, 70//10**; Sept **72/54, 70//11**
Bled (46.3683° N, 14.1146° E): July **84/62, 40//12**; Aug **83/62, 44//13**; Sept **74/55, 65//13**
Ljubljana (46.0569° N, 14.5058° E): July **80/60, 110//12**; Aug **80/60, 140//12**; Sept **70/52, 150//12**
Rovinj (45.0812° N, 13.6387° E): July **81/70, 15//02**; Aug **81/70, 45//03**; Sept **73/63, 65//04**
Baska V. (43.3573° N, 16.9520° E): July **93/73, 20//02**; Aug **90/72, 15//02**; Sept **79/59, 34//04**
Bol (43.2622° N, 16.6541° E): July **89/74, 25//02**; Aug **89/74, 45//03**; Sept **81/67, 70//04**

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July 09 – July 13: Prague 4N (Sun – Thur). Explore old town for 5 days. Need bag check on arrive/depart days

Czechia: (RS) The Czechs have always been at a crossroads of Europe—between the Slavic and Germanic worlds, between Catholicism and Protestantism, and between Cold War East and West. As if having foreseen all of this, the mythical founder of Prague—the beautiful princess Libuše—named her city “Praha” (meaning “threshold” in Czech). Despite these strong external influences, the Czechs have retained their distinct culture...and a dark, ironic sense of humor to keep them laughing through it all.

For centuries, Prague’s cultural makeup had consisted of a rich mix of Czech, German, and Jewish people—historically, they were almost evenly divided. Then Great Britain and France peacefully ceded part of Bohemia to Hitler in 1938, to the dismay of Czechs. The rest of the country soon followed. The Nazis decimated the Jewish population, and part of that delicate cultural tapestry was gone forever. And after World War II ended, more than two million people of Germanic descent who lived in Czechoslovakia were pushed into Germany. Their forced resettlement—which led to the deaths of untold numbers of Germans (what some today might call “ethnic cleansing”) – was demanded by the public.

Under the Soviet thumb for decades (and the Germans before), Czechoslovakia (itself cobbled together after WW1 from fragments of the defeated Austro-Hungarian Empire) split peacefully into Czechia and Slovakia in the November 1989 [Velvet Revolution](#), 8 days after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Czechia is now part of NATO, the EU and Schengen. About 65% of the population are ethnic Czechs (Slavic).

Religion: Despite being surrounded by very religious neighbors Poland and Slovakia, 90% of Czechs are unaffiliated/agnostic. 10% are Catholic. Dark humor seems to be their religion.

Money: 20 Czech crowns (koruna, Kč) = about \$1. Check your bill and count your change. Don’t be in a rush. Wait until you get all the money you’re due. Freestanding ATMs are notorious for bad rates. Use an ATM attached to a bank (look for names that include the word banka or spořitelna. Avoid Euronet machines).

Cuisine: Meat, potatoes, cabbage. *Polévka* (soup) is the most essential part of a meal. The saying goes: “The soup fills you up, the dish plugs it up.” Soups include: *Zelná* (or *zelňačka*, cabbage), *Čočková* (lentil), *Fazolová* (bean), *Dršťková* (tripe), *Hovězí* (or *slepičí vývar s nudlemi*, beef or chicken noodle), *Pórková* (leek), *Květáková* (cauliflower). *Pečivo* (bread) is charged separately.

Mains include *knedlíky* (dumplings with gravy) and meats. *Guláš* (meaty stew), *pečená kachna* (duck), *pečené kuře* (chicken), *smažený řízek* (fried pork), *svíčková na smetaně* (beef tenderloin in cream sauce), *vepřové koleno* (pork knuckle), *vepřová pečeně* (pork roast). *Šopský salát* (Greek salad) is a good option.

Drink: Espresso and *turecká káva* (Turkish coffee) are common with meals. Water is bottled (*minerálka* is sparkling, *neperlivá* still). Moravians prefer wine and *slivovice* (brandy). *Medovina* (honey wine) is mead.

Bohemia is *pivo* (beer) country (*Pilsner Urquell*), *pivo* is large, *malé pivo* small. A new pint will appear when the old glass is almost empty (until you tell the waiter to stop). *Na zdraví* means “to your health”.

Language: Letter pronunciation is similar to Croatia (also Slavic). Key phrases: *Dobrý den* (**doh**-bree den, hello), *Ahoj* (ahoy, hi/bye), *Ano* (ah-noh, yes), *Ne* (neh, no), *prosim* (proh-seem, please), *děkuji* (dyeh-kwee, thank you), *promiňte* (**proh**-meen-the, sorry/excuse me), *je to možné?* (yeh toh mohzh-neh, is it possible?).

And probably most importantly: *mluvíte anglicky?* (**mloo**-vee-teh **ahn**-glits-kee, do you speak English?)

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 09 – July 13: Prague 4N (Sun – Thur). Explore old town for 5 days. Need bag check on arrive/depart days

Prague: Pronounced “PRAH-ha” in Czech. Few cities can match Prague’s over-the-top romance, evocative Old World charm...and tourist crowds. The only Central European capital to escape the bombing of the last century’s wars—is one of Europe’s best-preserved cities. Note that Jewish Quarter sights close on Saturday and Jewish holidays. Some museums, mainly in the Old Town, are closed on Monday.

The Vltava River divides the city in two. East of the river are the Old Town and New Town. To the west is Prague Castle, and below that, the sleepy Lesser Town. Connecting the two halves are several bridges, including the landmark Charles Bridge. Think of Prague as a collection of neighborhoods. Until about 1800, Prague was four distinct towns with four town squares, all separated by fortified walls.

- **Old Town (Staré Město):** The historic core, almost traffic-free, where most tourists spend their time
- **Jewish Quarter (Josefov):** Within Old Town, this area has old synagogues and historic sights
- **New Town (Nové Město):** Wenceslas Square is the center of (600 y.o.) New Town. Traffic, modern.
- **Castle Quarter (Hradčany):** Hilltop Prague Castle and St. Vitus. Leafy, grand, high art, few pubs.
- **Lesser Town (Malá Strana):** At the foot of Castle Hill, with fine palaces and gardens and embassies.
- **The Royal Way:** Ancient path of coronation processions. Modern streets of *Celetná, Karlova*, and *Nerudova* are marred by trinket shops and tours — explore beyond it for the real Prague.

Architecture: Prague is Europe’s best city for Art Nouveau, the style of art and architecture that flourished throughout Europe around 1900. It was called “*nouveau*”—or new—because it was associated with all things modern: technology, social progress, and enlightened thinking. It was a fresh answer to all the revival styles of the late-19th century, and an organic response to the Eiffel Tower art of the Industrial Age. By taking advantage of recent advances in engineering, Art Nouveau liberated the artist in each architect. Notice the curves and motifs expressing originality—every facade is unique. Artists such as Alfons Mucha believed that the style should apply to everyday life - from buildings and furniture to typefaces and cigarette packs.

Ideas: [RS](#), [Matt](#)

Stay: U Zeleného jalovce via [booking](#)

Day 1 - Sunday July 9 afternoon arrival -----

- We arrive about noon. I have requested early check-in, and there is bag room at our stay. If we need a bag check, [Bounce Old Town](#) is a 4min walk from apt (star on GM, €5/bag), Book online.
- **Prague Castle** via the **Summer Palace** and **Royal Garden**. See *GM Green Flags with RS notes*
- Check-in and dinner.

Day 2 - Monday July 10 -----

- For more **Prague Castle** (2 day tix), tram up by 8am. St. Vitus 9am, then castle. Or late for sunset :-)
- **RS Old Town and Charles Bridge walk** (see book and GM points with notes). Allow 3-4 hours, touristy and busy, patience is a virtue here! #1 Jan Hus Memorial, #2 Old Town Square, #3 Astronomical Clock, #4 Old Town Hall, #5 Tyn Church, #6 Ungelt Courtyard, #7 Kostel Sv. Jakuba, #8 House of Black Madonna, #9 Estates Theater and Karolinum, #10 Powder Tower, #11 Municipal House, #12 Old City Wall (Na Prikope), #13 Wenceslas Square, #14 Havelka Market, #15 Karlova Street, #16-17 Charles IV Statue, #18 Charles Bridge
- **Jewish Quarter Walk** —Pinkas Synagogue & Terezin Childrens Art, Old Cemetery, Klausen Synagogue, Ceremonial Hall, Old-New Synagogue, Spanish Synagogue, Franz Kafka Statue, Maisel Synagogue
See notes on Jewish History in Prague on the next page and GM Flags with notes embedded
- **Sunset view of the “Golden City of 100 spires”** from the garden terrace in front of Strahov Monastery, Petrin Park, the top tower of Charles Bridge, or steps of the National Museum.

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Jewish History in Prague Jews first came to Prague in the 10th century. The least habitable, marshy area closest to the bend was allotted to the Jewish community. The Jewish Quarter's main intersection (*Maiselova* and *Široká* streets) was the meeting point of two medieval trade routes.

For centuries, Jews coexisted - at times tensely - with their non-Jewish Czech neighbors.

During the Crusades in the 12th century, the pope declared that Jews and Christians should not live together. Jews had to wear yellow badges, and their quarter was walled in and became a ghetto (minority neighborhood) of wooden houses and narrow lanes.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, Prague had one of the biggest ghettos in Europe, with 11,000 inhabitants. Within its six gates, Prague's Jewish Quarter had 200 wooden buildings.

Faced with institutionalized bigotry and harassment, Jews relied mainly on profits from moneylending (forbidden to Christians) and community solidarity to survive. While their money bought them protection (the kings taxed Jewish communities heavily), it was often also a curse. Throughout Europe, when times got tough and Christian debts to the Jewish community mounted, entire Jewish communities were evicted or killed. The worst pogroms were in 1096 and in 1389, when around 3,000 Jews were killed.

In 1781, Emperor Josef II, motivated more by economic concerns than by religious freedom, eased much of the discrimination against Jews. In 1848, the Jewish Quarter's walls were torn down, and the neighborhood – named *Josefov* in honor of this small measure of tolerance - was incorporated as a district of the Old Town.

In 1897, ramshackle *Josefov* was razed and replaced by a new modern town - the original 31 streets and 220 buildings became 10 streets and 83 buildings. They leveled the medieval-era buildings (except the synagogues) and turned this into perhaps Europe's finest Art Nouveau neighborhood, boasting stately facades with gables, turrets, elegant balconies, mosaics, statues, and all manner of architectural marvels. By the 1930s, the community prospered.

Then World War II hit. Of the 55,000 Jews living in Prague in 1939, just 10,000 survived the Holocaust to see liberation in 1945. And in the communist era - when the atheistic regime was also anti-Semitic - recovery was slow. Today there are only 3,000 "registered" Jews in the Czech Republic, and only 1,700 in Prague.

Today, despite their tiny numbers, the legacy of Prague's Jewish community lives on with a few Jewish-themed shops and restaurants in the area add ambience to this (otherwise modern) neighborhood.

Day 3 - Tuesday July 11 -----

- **Lesser Town Walk:** Loreta Church, Strahov Monastery, Nerudova street, Lesser Town Square, Lennon Wall, and Kampa Island. *See GM Green Flags with notes embedded*
- **Petrin Park Walk** for city views, sculpture

Day 4 - Wednesday July 12 -----

- FREE DAY

Day 5 – Thursday July 13 – depart 10pm train to Krakow -----

- We depart **Hlavní Nádraží** (main train station). Given the late departure we will need baggage storage. [Bounce Train Station](#) is a 20min walk from apartment, started on GM, €5/bag. Book online.
- **New Town** and **National Museum** or **Cold War Museum**. *See GM Green Flags with notes embedded.*

Run: Petrin Park and Prague Castle 5mi - <https://greatruns.com/prague-petrin-and-castle/>
Prague Major Sites Runsee 4-8mi (short, long routes) - <https://greatruns.com/prague-major-sites/>
Vlata + Letna 5mi - <https://greatruns.com/prague-river-run/>, <https://greatruns.com/prague-letna/>

Next: Night Train to Krakow

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July 13 – July 14: Train Prague-Krakow 1N (Thurs – Fri). Sleeper car 7hrs, depart 10pm, arrive 5am

CHECK TICKET AVAILABILITY ONLINE MAY 22 (60 days out)

**Train – Sleeper 1N Prague (*Hlavní Nádraží*) to Krakow Główny: [write-up](#), [Option 1](#), [Option 2](#) or [tour?](#)
Sleeper car 8hrs, depart 10pm, arrive 5am (7hr)**

Arrival

Kraków's main train station (called "*Kraków Główny*," KROCK-oof GWOHV-nee) sits just northeast of the Old Town, adjoining the sprawling *Galeria Krakowska* mall. The station and mall face a broad plaza (*plac Dworcowy*) across the ring road from the *Planty* park and Old Town. The main concourse ATMs, **lockers (under the big schedule board between the ticket windows)**, WCs, coffee, and a handy *Biedronka* market.

July 14 – July 17: Krakow 3N (Fri – Mon). Explore old town for 4 days. Need bag check on arrive/depart days

Poland: (RS) The first Poles were the *Polonians* ("people of the plains"), a Slavic band that arrived here in the eighth century. And Poland is flat; the path of least resistance from northern Europe to Russia. Invaders—from Genghis Khan to Napoleon to Hitler—have stormed through so often that the country has been called "God's playground". Poland has been invaded by Soviets, Nazis, French, Austrians, Russians, Prussians, Swedes, Teutonic Knights, Tatars, Bohemians, Magyars—and, about 1,300 years ago, Poles.

Poland was formed when in 966, *Mieszko I*, duke of the *Polonian* tribe, adopted Christianity and founded the *Piast* dynasty, which would last for more than 400 years. The last *Piast* king, *Kazimierz the Great* (1300s), famously "*found a Poland made of wood and left one made of brick and stone.*" He brought Poland (and its then-capital, Kraków) to international prominence. Progressive *Kazimierz* also invited Europe's much-persecuted Jews to settle here, establishing Poland as a haven which would remain for 600 years. The territory included Lithuania, Belarus, and nearly all of Ukraine.

Fast forward: in the 1600-1700s political weakness led to a Swedish invasion that killed 1/3 of the population. Then in the late 1700s, Russia, Prussia (Germany), and Austro-Hungaria divided Poland into the "*Three Partitions*". Poland disappeared from the maps and did not return until after WW1. After WW1, the Second Polish Republic was established, which included much of much of Lithuania, Western Ukraine and Belarus. The region was multi-cultural and multi-lingual: 1/3 of poles spoke no Polish.

In 1939, the Nazis invaded. Poland suffered the worst per-capita WWII losses of any nation. By the war's end, one out of every five Polish citizens were dead - and 90 percent of those killed were civilians.

At the war's end, the victorious Allies shifted Poland's borders significantly westward — folding historically German areas into Polish territory and appropriating previously Polish areas for the USSR. This prompted a massive movement of populations—which today we'd decry as "ethnic cleansing." Germans were forcibly removed from western Poland, and Poles from newly Soviet territory were transplanted to Poland. Entire cities were repopulated (such as the formerly German metropolis of *Breslau*, which was renamed *Wroclaw* and filled with refugee Poles from *Lwów*, now *Lviv*, in Ukraine). After millions died in the war, millions more were displaced from their ancestral homes. Poland is now almost exclusively Polish.

Poles resisted the Soviet regime with protests in '56, '68, '70, '76. JPII become Pope in '78. Electrician Lech Wałęsa led the Solidarity movement in '80. Martial law was in effect '82-83. Communism fell by '89.

Today there are two Polands: lively, cosmopolitan urban centers, and countless tiny farm villages in the countryside. A societal tension exists between city-dwelling progressives and the small-town Poles who tend to be politically conservative and staunchly Euroskeptic.

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Religion: (RS) Poland is arguably Europe’s most devoutly Catholic country. Catholicism has been a source of unity and protest, as for centuries dominated by Protestant Prussia (Germany), Orthodox Russia, or under Soviet communism. Poles could express dissent against the atheistic regime by going to church.

Before World War II, 80% of Europe’s Jews lived in Poland. Warsaw was the world’s second-largest Jewish city (after New York), with 380,000 Jews (out of a total population of 1.2 million). While Poland had relatively welcoming policies, Jews were forbidden from owning land, so many settled mostly in cities. Today, however, virtually everyone in the country is an ethnic Pole, and only a few thousand Polish Jews remain. The reason: Ethnic cleansing of the Holocaust and Soviet regimes.

Personalities: Pope JPII is the national hero. Copernicus, Marie Curie, Joseph Conrad, Chopin, Kazimierz.

Language: Because of the distinct cadence of Polish, Poles speaking English oft sound more impatient, gruff, or irritated than they actually are. Poles are not as slick and self-assured as many Europeans; rather they are soft-spoken, and shy. With a friendly *Dzień dobry!*, you’ll turn a grouch into an ally. America is widely seen as the big ally across the sea; it is the home of the largest population of Poles outside of Poland.

Restroom: You’ll see doors marked with *męska* (men) and *damska* (women)—but even more often, you’ll simply see a triangle (for men) or a circle (for women).

Money: 4 zł = about \$1. 1 złoty (zł, or PLN) = 100 groszy (gr) = about 25 cents. Freestanding ATMs are notorious for bad rates. Use an ATM attached to a bank; avoid Euronet machines).

Cuisine: Chilly weather limits the kinds of fruits and vegetables grown here. Dominant staples include potatoes, dill, berries, beets, and rye. Much of what you might think of as “Jewish cuisine” turns up on Polish menus (gefilte fish, potato pancakes, chicken soup, and so forth). Look for a *cukiernia* (pastry shop).

Polish soups are a highlight. *Żurek* (“sour soup”) is a thickened, light-colored soup made from a sourdough base, usually containing a hard-boiled egg and pieces of *kielbasa*. *Barszcz* (borscht) is a savory beet soup that you’ll see in several varieties: *Barszcz czerwony* (red borscht) is a thin, flavorful broth with a deep red color, sometimes containing dumplings or a hard-boiled egg. *Barszcz ukraiński* (Ukrainian borscht) is thicker, with cream and vegetables (usually cabbage, beans, and carrots). In summer, try the “Polish gazpacho” — *chłodnik*, a savory cream soup with beets, onions, and radishes that’s served cold. Avoid *flaki* (tripe). *Bigos* is a rich and delicious sauerkraut stew cooked with meat, mushrooms, and whatever’s in the pantry. It’s sort of the Polish version of chili – comfort food, especially in winter, and everyone has their own recipe.

Pierogi are ravioli-like dumplings. Traditional fillings are minced meat, sauerkraut, mushroom, cheese, and blueberry. They’re generally cheap, tasty, and very filling. *Gołąbki* is a dish of cabbage leaves stuffed with minced meat and rice in a tomato or mushroom sauce. *Kotlet schabowy* (fried pork chop) and *Kaczka* (duck) are popular. So are freshwater fish: Look for *pstrąg* (trout), *karp* (carp, beware of bones), and *węgorz* (eel).

Drink: *Woda* is water, *woda mineralna* is bottled water (*gazowana* is with gas, *niegazowana* is w/o), *kawa* is coffee, *herbata* is tea, *sok* is juice, and *mleko* is milk. *Piwo* is beer (*Żywiec*, *Okocim*, and *Lech* are common).

Wódka (vodka) is a Polish staple—the word means, roughly, “precious little water.” *Żubrówka*, the most famous brand of vodka, comes with a blade of grass from the bison reserves in eastern Poland (look for the bison on the label). The bison “flavor” the grass...then the grass flavors the vodka.

For “Cheers!” say, “*Na zdrowie!*” (nah ZDROH-vyeh).

Language: Similar to Croatian (also Slavic). Key phrases: *Dzień dobry* (jehn doh-brih, hello), *Cześć* (cheshch, hi), *Tak / Nie* (tahk / nyeh, yes/no), *Proszę* (proh-sheh, please or you’re welcome or may I help you), *Dziękuję* (jehn-koo-yeh, thank you), *Przepraszam* (psheh-prah-shahm, excuse me or I’m sorry), *Czy Pan mówi po angielsku?* (chih pahh moo-vee poh ahn-gyehl-skoo, do you speak English?).

The accent is almost always on the next-to-last syllable.

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July 14 – July 17: Krakow 3N (Fri – Mon). Explore old town for 4 days. Need bag check on arrive/depart days

Krakow: Pronounced “KROCK-oof” in Polish, but KRACK-cow is ok. Kraków is giving Prague a run for its money on the “must visit” tourist route. Top sights are Schindler’s Factory, Wawel Castle, JPII sites, Old Town, Kazimierz and parks on the Vistula River, and nearby Auschwitz.

The Old Town (*Stare Miasto*, STAH-reh mee-AH-stoh) is surrounded by a greenbelt called the *Planty* (PLAHN-tee) and the *Vistula River* and *Wawel Hill* to the south. *Kazimierz* to the southeast has Jewish history, Schindler’s Factory, and the best nightlife and restaurants. The town is flat, compact, and easy to navigate; everything (except Auschwitz) is a 5-30 minute walk from our apartment.

Book Ahead: Auschwitz (done). Book first day for *Schindler’s Factory Museum* and the *Rynek Underground*. You can book up to three days in advance online; in person, you can prebook even the same day for *Schindler* and *Rynek* at the Cloth Hall ticket office.

Architecture: Kraków’s cityscape - if not its people - emerged from World War II virtually unscathed. Soviets added factory smog for decades, and brutalist architecture in some places.

Ideas: [food](#), [road affair 3 days](#)

Day 1 - Friday July 14 early morning arrival -----

- Need bag storage on arrival as train arrives ~5am. The lockers at the station lockers (under the big schedule board between the ticket windows) are the best option. [Others](#) don’t open until mid-morning.
- Begin exploring Krakow with the **RS Self-guided Royal Way Walk**. Breakfast along the way.
 - o See GM “Want to Go” green flags for directions and descriptions. #1 Barbican and Planty, #2 Jan Matejko Statue, #3 Grunwald Monument, #4 Stary Kleparz Market (and breakfast!), #5 Florian Gate, #6 Florianska Street (and Jazz Club Muniaka), #7 St. Mary’s Basilica, #8 Rynek Główny (Main Market Square), #9 Cloth Hall (coffee at Café Szal, **buy tickets for Schindler’s Factory Museum and Rynek Underground**), #10 Town Hall Tower, #11 Jagiellonian University and Collegium Maius, #12 Archbishop’s Palace, #13 St. Francis Basilica, #14 Grodzka Street with Wyspianskk Pavillion and Bar Mleczny, #15 Mary Magdalene Square, #16 Kanonicza Street, #17 Archdiocesan Museum (JPII stuff)
- **Lunch and decide...** (1) *Rynek*, (2) *Schindler & Kazimierz* (see day 4) or (3) or *Wawel Hill Walk* (see Day 2)
- **Check-in and find dinner.**

Stay – CracWoW Old Town Apt, [booking](#)

Day 2 - Saturday July 15 ----- most of Kazimierz’s Jewish-themed sights are closed -----

- **RS Self-guided Wawel Hill Walk.** A castle has stood here since the beginning of Poland’s recorded history, and this is the country’s most visited sight. If any museums are of interest, visit after the walk.
 - o See GM “Want to Go” green flags for directions and descriptions. #1 Wawel Hill Ramp, #2 Tadeusz Kościuszko Monument, #3 Wawel Cathedral, #4 Gothic Church Ruins, #5 Wawel Castle, #6 Vistula River View and the dragon below
- **Wawel Hill Museums.** It’s faster to buy tickets at the visitors center at the far corner of the castle grounds (across the field from the cathedral, near the café). I saw none of particular interest.
- **Ryneck Underground** – if not done prior
- **Jazz in the evening.** Kraków has a surprisingly thriving jazz scene. Several popular clubs hide on the streets surrounding the Main Market Square (most shows start around 21:30). **Muniaka** (see GM) is the most famous and best for all-around jazz in a sophisticated cellar environment. **Harris Piano Jazz Bar** (see GM), #28 on the Square, is more casual with a mix of traditional and “fusion” jazz, plus blues.
- A good option is **“The Herring Embassy”** (*Ambasada Śledzia*) for Polish Tapas.

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Day 3 - Sunday July 16 -----

- **Auschwitz** – full day *Krakow Trip - Auschwitz Tours* phone. +486 0620 6031
 - o Booked via Viator/TripAdvisor, sched July 14, cancel up to 24 hours prior.
 - o 7-8 hr (1½ hr bus, 2½ hr Auschwitz, 1½ hr Birkenau, 1½ hour bus)
 - o Central pickup location between 7:20-9am (they will email logistics 2 days prior).
- Dinner TBD

Day 4 - Monday July 17 -----

- Need **bag storage** as departure is ~10pm. *The lockers at the station lockers (under the big schedule board between the ticket windows) are the best option.* Other [GM](#) options close early evening.
- **Schindler Factory** – book tour ahead at Cloth Hall on our first day.
- **Kazimierz** – *RS Self-guided Kazimierz Walk*. Jewish history and hip nightlife and dining.
 - o See GM “Want to Go” green flags for directions and descriptions. #1 Ulica Szeroka, #2 Remah Cemetery, #3 Jan Karski Monument, #4 Klezmer-Hois, #5 Jewish Square, #6 Old Synagogue, #7 Ulica Ciemna, #8 Synagoga Izaaka, #9 Plac Nowy, #10 I'm Happy Again, #11 Schindler's List Passage, #12 Ulica Józefa, #13 plac Wolnica, #14 Yehuda mural, #15 Ghetto Hero's Square (Plac Bohaterów Getta), #16 Pharmacy under the Eagle, #17 Schindler Factory Museum
- **Kazimierz for evening**. The highest concentration of bars ring *plac Nowy* market square.
 - o **Plac Nowy 1** specializes in Polish microbrews and upmarket pub grub in a bright, sleek setting.
 - o **Alchemia**, one of the first (and best) bars in Kazimierz, is candlelit, cluttered, claustrophobic, with cave-like rooms and rickety furniture, plus a cellar used for live performances.

Run: *Blonia and Jordana Parks* (including to+from stay) 5mi – [Parks route here](#)
Vistula River East 6mi (including to+from stay) – [Vistula River route here](#)
The Planty (city park loop) 2mi - <https://greatruns.com/krakow-poland-the-planty/>

July 17 – July 18: Train Krakow-Budapest 1N (Mon – Tues). Sleeper car 10hrs, depart 10:30pm, arrive 8:30am

CHECK TICKET AVAILABILITY ONLINE MAY 22 (60 days out)

Train – 1N [Krakow Główny to BP Nyugati](#) or [private car tour?](#)
Sleeper car 10hrs, depart 10:30pm, arrive 8:30am

Arrival

We arrive at Budapest *Nyugati pályaudvar* (“Western Station”, abbreviated *Nyugati pu.*). The station is a cavernous, slightly run-down, late-19th-century masterpiece, facing the Great Boulevard northeast of Pest.

Most trains use the shorter tracks 1-9, which are set back from the main entrance. The longer tracks 10-13 extend all the way to the main entrance. Ticket windows are through an easy-to-miss door by platform 13 (marked *jegypénztár* and *információ*). This area is being renovated, so you may have to hunt around for international ticket windows (*nemzetközi jegypénztár*) and for lockers.

An ATM is just inside the main door, on the right (use the one marked with the OTP logo).

From the head of tracks 10-13, exit straight ahead out the main entrance and we will be on *Teréz körút*, the very busy Great Boulevard ring road. In front of the building to the right are stairs leading to an underpass (if using *Lock-n-Go* storage, use it to avoid crossing this busy intersection); and to the left is the classiest Art Nouveau McDonald's on the planet – take a look inside!

We will need bag storage on arrival as train arrives ~8:30am. Good options are:

- o [Happy Luggage BP](#) (9am – 5:30pm, 6€/bag, shower 10€, pinball, lounge, wifi, print)
- o [Lock-n-Go](#) (9am – 7pm, 7€/bag, cameras, guard, insured, 10% discount if reserve ahead)

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

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Hungary: Hungary sits in the Carpathian Basin, bound by the Carpathian (north) and Dinaric (south) Mountains. Though surrounded by mountains, Hungary is relatively flat, with gently rolling hills. The Great Hungarian Plain - beginning on the east bank of the Danube in Budapest - stretches all the way to Asia.

This is where West meets East. The Roman empire extended to the Danube; to the East was the frontier. After Rome fell, the plains were home of *Celts*, *Vandals*, *Huns*, and *Avars* until the [Magyars](#) (led by *Arpad* the Great) invaded in 896. As fearsome as the Vikings they would camp in the plains in winter, and raid Europe in summer. They used stirrups (unknown in the west), so were swift and nimble horsemen. They split the Slavic population with Poles, Czechs, Slovaks north and the Balkans and Bulgarians south.

After a defeat in 955, the *Magyar* leader wisely converted to Christianity to foment peace with his neighbors. On Christmas 1000 AD, *King Vajk* was rechristened *Istvan* (Stephen) and crowned by the pope.

Ghengi's Khan's son invaded in 1241 but died after destroying much of the *Magyar* kingdom. The Magyar kings rebuilt, but the *Arpad* dynasty died out, and Hungary was ruled by foreign kings for 150 years until *King Matthias Corvinus* (Matthew Raven). But in the 1500s, the Ottomans invaded, and ruled until the 1680s. The Hungarian nobles asked the Austrian Habsburgs to drive out the Ottomans. Eventually they did – and took over. The Hungarians rebelled and were brutally put down. Just 18 years later, however, Austria was occupied with Prussia to the north, and decided they could not control Hungary at the same time. They chose a *Dual Monarchy*, creating the [Austro-Hungarian Empire](#), and giving Budapest control over the eastern half of the empire. Hungary thrived ~1860 to WW1. This coincided with the 1000-year anniversary of *Magyar* arrival, and given the rivalry with Vienna, Budapest was built lavishly to celebrate the occasion.

As retribution for their role on the losing side of World War I, the 1920 [Treaty of Trianon](#) reassigned two-thirds of Hungary's territory and half of its population to Romania, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. It is impossible to overstate the impact of the *Treaty of Trianon* on the Hungarian psyche. Towns along the new Hungarian borders were suddenly divided down the middle. Many Hungarians found themselves unable to visit relatives or commute to jobs that were in the same country the day before. There were hundreds of thousands of Hungarian refugees. You'll see maps, posters, and bumper stickers with the distinctive shape of a much larger, pre-WWI Hungary... patriotically displayed by *Magyars* who feel as strongly about *Trianon* as if it happened yesterday. Some Hungarians see the enlargement of the European Union as a happy ending in the big-picture sense: They have finally been reunited with Slovakia, Romania, and Croatia.

As a result, Hungary sided with the Nazis, hoping to avoid invasion and regain territory. Eventually Hitler's patience wore thin, and Germany invaded and set up a puppet "[Arrow Cross Party](#)" government. As savage campaign to eliminate Hungary's Jews ensued. More than 600,000 were killed.

The Soviets "liberated" Hungary after a 100 day siege that destroyed Budapest. Hungary was swept behind the Iron Curtain. There was a monumental uprising in 1956, put down Tiananmen Square style with Soviet tanks. In the 1960's, the Soviet-installed government began to liberalize, allowing in "evil capitalist goods", in what was dubbed "[goulash communism](#)". In 1989, the parliament quietly voted out their own regime.

By 2004, Hungary joined the EU. But rampant inflation racked the country, threatening bankruptcy. As a result, the Nationalist [Fidesz](#) Party, led by Victor Orban, won landslide elections in 2010. He used a 2/3 coalition majority adopt a Fidesz-favorable constitution and strip away several checks and balances, to the alarm of the US and Western Europe. *Fidesz* has however proactively used EU funds for public works, making stunning, rapid improvements. His government was re-elected in 2014, 2018, and 2022.

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Population: Hungary's 10 million people are 85 percent ethnic Hungarians. One in 50 is Roma (Gypsy). About 40 percent of the populace is Catholic, and nearly 15 percent is Protestant. Of the world's approximately 12 million ethnic Hungarians, one in six lives outside Hungary (mostly in areas of Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, and Croatia that were once part of Hungary).

Personalities: More ingenious than arty; think Andy Grove, Edward Teller, John von Neumann. Hungarian Jewish of note include Houdini, Elie Wiesel, Tony (and Jamie Lee) Curtis, Goldie Hawn, George Soros, Peter Lorre, Eva and Zsa Zsa Gabor. Composers: Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály, Franz Liszt (classical music is revered).

Language: [Hungarian](#) isn't an Indo-European language - English is more closely related to Hindi or Russian. Hungarian is agglutinative: to create meaning, you start with a root word and then tack on suffixes. The emphasis always goes on the first syllable, and the following syllables are droned in a kind of a monotone.

Pronunciation is challenging:

- s sounds like "sh" as in "shirt"
- gy sounds like "dg" as in "hedge"
- ny sounds like "ny" as in "canyon" (not "nee")
- ty sounds like "tch" as in "itch"
- cs sounds like "ch" as in "church"
- a almost sounds like o (aw, as in "hot")
- á brightens up to the more standard "ah."
- e sounds like "eh"
- é sounds like "ay"

An accent (á, é, í, ó, ú) indicates that you linger on that vowel, but not necessarily a stressed syllable

ö sounds like "ur" (it is an umlaut, so purse your lips when you say that vowel)

ü sounds like "ew" (it is an umlaut, so purse your lips when you say that vowel)

ő, ű (long unlaute) is the same sound, but you hold it a little longer.

Words ending in k are often plural.

Key Phrases:

Hello / Goodbye = "szia" = SEE-yaw, like "ciao" can be hi/bye. They also use English "hello" as both.

Hello (old fashioned) = *szervusz* = SEHR-voos. A greeting from the old Austro-Hungarian Empire

Do you speak English? = *Beszél angolul* = beh-sayl awn-goh-lool

Yes. / No = *Igen.* / *Nem* = ee-gehn / neh

Please = *Kérem* = kay-rehm

Thank you = *Köszönöm* = kur-sur-nurm

I'm sorry = *Bocsánat* = boh-chah-nawt

Hungarians list a person's family name first, and the given name is last; "Franz Liszt" in German is "Liszt Ferenc" in his homeland. Hungarians use the English word "hello" for both "hi" and "bye," (like "ciao").

Economy: Per capita GDP is ~\$30,000. Thanks to its progressive "goulash communism," Hungary had a head start on many other former Soviet Bloc countries and is now thriving, privatized...and largely foreign-owned. Grains, metals, machinery, and cars are major exports, and about one-quarter of trade is with Germany.

Money: The currency is the "forint" (Ft, or HUF). 340 Ft = about \$1; 1000Ft = ~ \$3. Get cash from an ATM associated with a major bank (including OTP, MKB, K&H, and various big international banks). Check your bill carefully. Most restaurants add a 10-12 percent service charge; if you don't notice this, you might accidentally double-tip. Locals never hail a cab; unless you call a cab, it will be a rip-off.

Tipping: Most restaurants in Budapest automatically add a service charge to the bill (look for "service," "tip," *felszolgálati díj*, or *szervizdíj*); if it's been included, an additional tip is not necessary. Else round up ~10%

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Cuisine: Hungarian cuisine is the best in Central Europe. It blends *Magyar* peasant cooking (with rich spices), elegant preparation, and flavors from the vast, multiethnic Austro-Hungarian Empire (including Germanic, Balkan, Jewish, and Carpathian). Everything is heavily seasoned: with paprika, tomatoes, and peppers.

“*Gulyás*,” comes from the Hungarian *gulyás leves*, or “shepherd’s soup” Here in its homeland, it’s a clear, spicy broth with chunks of meat, potatoes, and vegetables. In neighboring countries, “goulash” is a thick stew. The hearty Hungarian stew called *pörkölt* is probably closer to what most people think of as goulash.

Cold, sweet, cream and fruit soups (*hideg gyümölcs leves*) are often appetizers. Made with *meggy* (sour cherries); sometimes with *alma* (apples) or *körte* (pears). Other soups (*levesek*) are *zöldségleves* (vegetable), *bableves* (bean), *gombaleves* (mushroom), *halászlé* (fish broth with paprika), and *húsleves* (meat or chicken).

Hungarians adore meat. *Hús* or *marhahús* (beef), *csirke* (chicken), *borjú* (veal), *kacsa* (duck), *liba* (goose), *sertés* (pork), *sonka* (ham), *kolbász* (sausage), and *mangalica* (free-range woolly pig). Anything prepared “Budapest style” is topped with *libamáj* (goose liver). Rich sauces are common, and lard is used extensively.

Vegetarians have a tricky time in traditional Hungarian restaurants. A traditional “salad” is composed mostly of pickled vegetables. More modern, trendy eateries often offer excellent vegetarian options.

Starches (*köreték*) include *nokedli* (like *spätzle*), *galuska* (noodles), *burgonya* (potatoes), *sült krumpli* (fries), *kroket* (croquettes), or *rizs* (rice). *Kenyér* (bread) often comes with the meal. *Pogácsa* (oft a snack with wine tasting) is a little ball of cheesy fried dough. A common side dish is *káposzta* (cabbage), *töltött káposzta* (cabbage stuffed with meat) or *töltött paprika* (stuffed peppers). *Lecsó* (LEH-chew) is the Hungarian answer to ratatouille: a richly flavorful stew of tomatoes, peppers, and other vegetables.

Paprika (peppers) can mean red or green, fresh or dried. There are more than 40 varieties of paprika spice. Hungarians typically cook with sweet paprika (*édesnemes* or *édes*) to add flavor and color. Then, at the table, each diner adds hot paprika (*csípős* or *erős*) to taste. Try *csirke* (chicken), *borjú* (veal) *paprikas*, smothered in a spicy red paprika gravy, thickened with sour cream.

The bright-red *Erős Pista* (EH-rewsh PEESH-taw, “Spicy Steve”) paste is Hungaria’s answer to Tabasco. Or try *Édes Anna* (AY-desh AW-naw, “Sweet Anna”), a variation that’s more sweet than spicy. To flavor soup, there are tubes of *Gulyáskrém* (a bright-orange, sweet-but-not-hot paste) and *Piros Arany* (“Red Gold,” a deep-red, intensely flavorful, spicy paste).

When you’re ready for the bill, you can simply say, “*Fizetek*” (FEE-zeh-tehk) —“I’ll pay.”

Drink: Water is *víz* (pronounced “veez”), it comes as *szódavíz* (soda water) or *ásványvíz* (spring water). *Kávés* (KAH-vay) and *tea* (TEH-aw) are coffee and tea. *Tej* is milk.

Pálinka is a powerful schnapps made from various fruits (most often plum, *szilva*; or apricots, *barack*).

Unicum is a unique and beloved Hungarian bitter liquor made of 40 different herbs and aged in oak casks.

Wine (*bor*) is an essential part of Hungarian cuisine. Whites (*fehér*) can be sweet (*édes*), half-dry (*félszáraz*), or dry (*száraz*). Whites include the standards (riesling, chardonnay), as well as some wines made from more typically Hungarian grapes: *leányka* (“little girl”), a half-dry, fairly heavy, white table wine; *cserszegi fűszeres*, a spicy, light white that can be fruity; the half-dry, full-bodied *hárslevélű* (“linden leaf”); and the dry *furmint* and *kéknyelű* (“blue stalk”).

Reds (*vörös*) include the familiar varieties (cab sauv, cab franc, merlot, pinot noir). *Kekporto* is better known as *blauer Portugieser* in Germany. *Egri Bikavér* (Bull’s Blood) is a distinctive blend of red. *Kékfrankos* (“blue Frankish”) is a spicy, medium-body wine.

The most famous Hungarian wine is *Tokaji Aszú*, a sweet, late-harvest, honey-colored dessert wine made primarily from *furmint* grapes. Known as the “wine of kings, and the king of wines,” Tokaji Aszú is D.O.C.

The standard toast: *Egészségedre* (EH-gehs-shay-geh-dreh; “to your health”).

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Budapest: The city (~3m people), like Vienna, was built as the head of a much larger empire than it currently governs. It is surprisingly easy to manage with an excellent public transportation network. The city is split down the center by the Danube River. On the east side of the Danube is flat Pest (pronounced “pesht”), and on the west is hilly Buda. A third part of the city, Óbuda, sits to the north of Buda.

Buda is dominated by Castle Hill. The pleasant *Víziváros* (“Water Town”; VEE-zee-vah-rohsh) is between the castle and the river; nearby is *Batthyány tér* (“Bethany Square”, a handy hub for the Metró). To the south is the taller, wooded *Gellért Hill*, capped by the Liberation Monument, and *Gellért* and *Rudas* thermal baths.

Pest: Just across the river from Castle Hill, Pest is divided into two sections. The more polished northern half, called Leopold Town (*Lipótváros*), surrounds the giant Parliament building. This is the governmental, business, and banking district (sleepy after hours). The southern half, the grittier and more urban-feeling Town Center (*Belváros*, literally “Inner Town”), is a bustling dining, nightlife, and residential Major landmarks here include the vast *Great Market Hall* and the famous (and overrated) *Váci utca* shopping street.

Budapest uses a *district system* (like Paris and Vienna). There are 23 districts (*kerület*), identified by Roman numerals. For example, Castle Hill is in district I, central Pest is district V, and City Park is in district XIV. Ruin pubs are district VII. Addresses often start with the district number (as a Roman numeral).

Budapest sits on a thin layer of earth covering thermal springs. Those waters attracted the ancient Romans, who, 2,000 years ago, established *Aquincum* just north of today’s city center. Baths are a part of life still.

Getting Around: Budapest is quite decentralized: Just about everything is walkable, but distances are far, and public transit is excellent and saves time (www.bkk.hu). The same tickets work for the entire system. Buy them at kiosks, Metró ticket windows, or machines (with English instructions, credit cards accepted). Tickets are cheap and kiosks hard to find, so get a multiday ticket to hop on at will. Get a 72-hr card (~\$16 per person), or a 10-pack of singles (< \$1/ticket, we can share).

Validate single-ride tickets as you enter the bus, tram, or Metró station (stick it in the elbow-high box). On older buses and trams that have little red validation boxes, stick your ticket in the black slot, then pull the slot toward you to punch holes in your ticket. Multiday tickets need be validated only once. The stern-looking people with green armbands check often and fine on the spot.

Book Ahead: Parliament ([reserve ahead here](#))

Architecture: Much dates to the 1896 Millennial Celebration, including *Parliament*, *Hero’s Square*, *Vajdahunyad Castle*, *St. Istvan’s Basilica*, *Great Market Hall*, *Fishermen’s Bastion*, *Opera*, *Andrassy Ut*.

Ideas: RS book

Day 1 - Tuesday July 18 8:30am arrival -----

- Need **bag storage** on arrival as train arrives ~8:30am. Construction in the station means external storage is probably a better option. Good options from [GM](#) between *Nyugati Station* and apartment are:
 - o [Happy Luggage BP](#) (9am – 5:30pm, 6€/bag, shower 10€, pinball, lounge, wifi, print)
 - o [Lock-n-Go](#) (9am – 7pm, 7€/bag, cameras, guard, insured, 10% discount if reserve ahead)
- **Explore Pest** via *Leopold Town* and *Inner Town Walks*. See GM “Want to Go” green flags for notes:
 - o **Leopold Town Walk:** #1 Columbo Statue, #2 Parliament ([reserve ahead](#)), #3 Kossuth Ter, #4 Shoes on the Danube, #5 Szabadság Tér (“Liberty Square”, with Reagan statue), #6 St. Istvan’s Basilika, #7 Gresham Palace, #8 Chain Bridge
 - o **Inner Town Walk:** #1 Elizabeth’s Square, #2 Vorosmarty ter (with Café Berbeaud), #3 Dunakorzó (Danube Promenade), #4 McDonalds (first behind Iron Curtain), #5 Vaci Street, #6 Great Market Hall. Walk by the National Museum and Great Synagogue (we will see later in the week) on the way to the apartment and to get our bags.
- Check-in, get bags and relax a bit!

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Stay – Rose Garden Apartments, [booking](#)

Day 2 - Wednesday July 19 -----

- **RS Andressy Ut walk** in Pest and nearby sights. Connecting downtown Pest to City Park, *Andrássy út* is Budapest's main boulevard, lined with plane trees, shops, theaters, cafés, and locals living very well.
 - o **RS Andressy Ut walk:** #1 Opera, #2 Broadway Quarter, #3 Parisi Nagy Aruhaz, #4 Liszt Ferenc Ter, #5 Franz Liszt Music Academy, #6 Oktogon, #7 House of Terror, #8 Franz Liszt Museum, #9 Hero's Square, #10 City Park, #11 Vajdahunyad Castle, #12 Széchenyi Thermal Bath
- **Evening: Ruins pub crawl.** Bohemian pubs filled with ramshackle secondhand furniture and filled with both locals and tourists. Each ruin pub (*romkocsmá*) is different: *mulató* (club, usually higher-energy), *kávészó* (coffeehouse, usually mellower), *kert* ("garden"), *tető* ("rooftop"). Find dinner in the 7th district (near Dohány Synagogue) the visit *Szimpla*, *Kőleves*, *Ellátó*, and *Mika*. See www.ruinpubs.com

Day 3 - Thursday July 20 -----

- Coffee at **New York Café**, then **Great Synagogue** and **Jewish Quarter**
- Lunch in **Gozsdu Court** or at **Great Market Hall** (for picnic on the Danube/Monument Gate)
- **Buda and Castle Hill.** Busy mornings, less so after noon. Restaurants are poor, so lunch elsewhere first.
 - o **Get there:** It is a 2½ mile walk from apartment, or public transport (#16 from near Deák Ter).
 - o **Getting Up:** From the monumental gateway facing the Danube, head up the stairs into the park, then look right for the covered escalator. From its top, you can either turn left to walk up (switchbacks), or go straight ahead to find an elevator (under a rust-colored canopy) to the view terrace in front of the Royal Palace (floor 2). From here, you can begin the walk.
 - o **RS Buda and Castle Hill:** #1 Buda Castle, #2 History Museum, #3 Sandor Palace, #4 Matthias Church, #5 Fishermen's Bastion, #6 St. Stephen Statue, #7 Hospital in the Rock
- **Gellert Hill** – Gellért Hill rises from the Danube just downriver from the castle. When King István converted Hungary to Christianity in the year 1000, he brought in Bishop Gellért, a monk from Venice, to tutor his son. But some rebellious Magyars put the bishop in a barrel, drove long nails in from the outside, and rolled him down this hill...tenderizing him to death. Gellért became the patron saint of Budapest and gave his name to the hill that killed him. Enjoy the park, visit elegant *Gellért Baths* (in the Gellért Hotel) or the Turkish-style *Rudas Baths*).
- **Evening Concert** - classical for folk concert at *Franz Liszt Academy* or *Duna Palota* or *Pesti Vigadó*

Day 4 - Friday July 21 -----

- **Visit whatever we missed**, or **Margaret Island** to relax, or ride from Deák tér out to **Memento Park** on the 11:00 direct bus. Takes about 2½ hours. See www.mementopark.hu to book and get 20% discount.
- **Evening: Riverbank Bar near Chain Bridge.** *Pontoon* (see GM) is a casual option with a great view.
- <https://www.atlasobscura.com/things-to-do/budapest-hungary/places?page=2>

Day 5 - Saturday July 22 -----

- After checkout head to *Budapest-Déli* ("Southern Station") and store the bags. Enjoy lunch before departure at 15:35 (3:30pm) on a direct to Zagreb – see next page for details

Run: Runseeing BP 13mi – <https://greatruns.com/budapest-hungary-runseeing-tour/>
Varosliget Park 5mi (also 2k track) – <https://greatruns.com/budapest-hungary-city-park-varosliget/>
Margaret Isle 7mi (4 to/from + 3 loop) - <https://greatruns.com/budapest-hungary-margaret-island/>
Danube Loop 8mi (3 to/from + 5 loop) - <https://greatruns.com/budapest-hungary-danube-river/>

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 22 – July 22: Train Budapest-Zagreb 0N (Sat – Sat). Direct BP to Zagreb (6½hr) depart 3:30 arrive 10pm

CHECK TICKET AVAILABILITY ONLINE MAY 22 (60 days out)

Man in Seat 61 [Guide to using MAV](#)

Day -----

- **Head to Budapest-Déli** ("[Southern Station](#)") after checkout of our apartment. It is about 3 miles from the apartment, so let's take the metro ([GM route here](#)). **Budapest-Déli Station** was renovated by the communists, and the station is dreary. It has 12 platforms, numbered from left to right as you look towards the trains, see the station plan. *International trains to Zagreb are usually on platforms 1-7. Note: Vágány is track, induló vonatok is departures, and érkező vonatok is arrivals.*
- **Baggage Storage:** Deli ([map here](#)) has storage lockers in the passenger hall, to the left of the entrance close to the international ticket office (outside beyond Track 1). They take HUF (forint) coins, and perhaps Euros. We may have to drag them with us if these are full, as there aren't other options nearby.
- **Lunch: Vagon Etterem** (www.vagonetterem.hu), directly across the road from the station on the east (platform 1) side in *Vérmező Park*. It's an old railway dining-car, and the food gets good reviews. *Another option is Fisherman's Bastion (15 min walk).*

Train – Direct (no connections) Budapest-Déli to Zagreb Glavni Kol. Depart 15:35 arrive 22:10 (6½hr)
[BP to Zagreb on DB or MAV](#) or [private car tour?](#)

July 22 – July 23: Zagreb 1N (Sat - Sun). Zagreb Saturday Night! No Rakija! Pick up rental car.

Zagreb: In Zagreb, you'll find historic neighborhoods, a thriving café culture, an Old-World streetscape, and virtually no tourists. The city has Croatia's best foodie scene. And of course, [Zagreb Saturday Nights!](#)

Ideas: MnJTravel2.

Stay – Hotel Central , [booking](#)

Evening - Zagreb Saturday Night and the Beautiful People. No Rakija! See [MnJTravel2](#)

Run: *Bundek Park* 5-6mi (3 to+from + park) – <https://greatruns.com/zagreb-sava-river-and-lake-bundek/>

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 23 – July 28: Slovenia 5N (Sun - Fri). See here for Slovenia overview, and following pages for Bled, Ljubljana

Slovenia: at the intersection of the Slavic, German, and Italian worlds, Slovenia is an exciting mix of the best of each culture. Today, it seems strange to think that Slovenia was ever part of Yugoslavia. Both in the personality of its people and in its landscape, Slovenia feels more like Austria. Slovenes are more industrious, organized, and punctual than their fellow former Yugoslavs...yet still friendly, relaxed, and Mediterranean.

Slovenia enjoys a prosperity unusual for a formerly communist country. The Austro-Hungarian Empire left it with a strong work ethic and an impressive industrial infrastructure, which the Yugoslav government expanded. By 1980, 60% of all Yugoslav industry was in Slovenia (which had only 8% of Yugoslavia's population and territory). Of 13 nations that have joined the EU since 2004, Slovenia is the only net donor.

Cuisine: Slovenia cuisine has strong Italian, German and French influences, and also features many pan-Balkan elements. The savory phyllo-dough pastry *burek*; grilled *čevapčići* (minced meat) and *ražnjići* (kebab), topped off with the eggplant-and-red-bell-pepper condiment *ajvar*. You'll also see plenty of *štruklji*, a dumpling-like savory layer cake that can be stuffed with cheese, meat, or vegetables. *Repa* is turnip prepared like sauerkraut. Among the hearty soups in Slovenia is *jota*—a staple for Karst peasants, made from repa, beans, vegetables, and often sausage. Traditional Slovenian meals come with *groats*—a grainy mush made with buckwheat, barley, or corn. Buckwheat thrives in this climate, and often appears on the menu. *Pršut* (purr-SHOOT, aka prosciutto). *Voda iz pipe* is tap water, and *kava* is coffee.

Wine: Slovenia's main wine-growing regions are *Primorska*, *Posavje*, and *Podravje*. The best-known is the *Primorska* region, in the western hills. With a Mediterranean climate (hence its name: "by the sea"), *Primorska* is best known for its reds, and in particular *Goriška Brda* ("Hillsides of Gorica"), which shares the terroir of Italy's Friuli/Venezia Giulia region (and its much-vaunted, DOC-classified *Collio Goriziano* wines).

Teran, *Malvazija* (see Croatia notes), *Reula* (Ribolla), *Chardonnay* and *Cabernet* are all grown in Slovenia. The country is most famous for its *orange wines*, traditionally macerated in clay vessels known as *qvevri*.

With any type of Slovenian wine, *vrhunsko* (premium) is a mark of quality, while *kakovostno* is a notch down, and *namizno* is a table wine. Other key terms are *suho* (dry), *sladko* (sweet), and *pol-* (half).

Language: In Slovene, c is pronounced "ts" (as in "cats"). The letter j is pronounced as "y" —making "Ljubljana" easier to say than it looks (lyoob-lyee-AH-nah). Slovene only has one diacritical mark: the *strešica*, or "little roof." This makes č sound like "ch," š sound like "sh," and ž sound like "zh" (as in "measure"). The letter v is pronounced like "u" —so the Slovenian word *avto* sounds like "auto," and the mountain *Triglav* is pronounced "TREE-glau" (rhymes with "cow"). As in English, which syllable gets the emphasis is unpredictable.

Ideas: [RS](#), [RS video](#), [here](#), *RS Eastern Europe* (Lake Bled p. 1415, Ljubljana p. 1320, Julian Alps p. 1485)

Car: Carwiz via [rentalcars.com](#)

Toll Sticker: To drive on Slovenia's expressways (*avtocesta*), you'll need to display a toll sticker (*vinjeta*, veen-YEH-tah; €15/week, €30/month. **Buy a *vinjeta* at a gas station, post office, or newsstand** (watch for *vinjeta* signs at gas stations as you approach the border). This rule is taken very seriously. If you're found driving on expressways without the sticker, you'll immediately be fined €150.

Enroute: [about 2hrs](#), no planned stops.

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 23 – July 26: Lake Bled, Slovenia 3N (Sun - Wed). Explore the lake, hike the Julian Alps.

Lake Bled: (RS) Since the Habsburg days, Lake Bled (locals pronounce it like “blade”) has been the place where Slovenes wow visitors. In the late 19th century, aristocrats surrounded the lakefront with villas. Tito also had one of his vacation homes here (today’s Hotel Vila Bled), where he entertained illustrious guests. Bled is also a great jumping-off point for a car trip through the Julian Alps, a scenic route to Ljubljana.

Cuisine: While you’re in Bled, be sure to enjoy the town’s specialty, a cream cake called *kremna rezina* (KRAYM-nah ray-ZEE-nah; often called by its German name, *kremšnita*, KRAYM-shnee-tah). It’s a layer of cream and a thick layer of vanilla custard sandwiched between sheets of delicate, crispy crust. Heavenly.

Just as tasty—is *grmada* (gur-MAH-dah, “bonfire”). This dessert was developed by Hotel Jelovica as a way to get rid of their day-old leftovers. They take yesterday’s cake, add rum, milk, custard, and raisins, and top it off with whipped cream and chocolate syrup. There’s also *prekmurska gibanica*—or just *gibanica* (gee-bah-NEET-seh) for short. Originating in the Hungarian corner of the country, it is an earthy pastry filled with poppy seeds, walnuts, apples, and cheese, and drizzled with rum. Finally, the very traditional *potica* (poh-TEET-seh), a walnut roll that’s usually eaten at Christmas. While it’s rare to find this in bakeries, the café on the island in the lake sells several varieties.

Stay: Mariana Apartments, [booking](#)

Day 1 (afternoon of arrival) -----

- **Lake Bled Loop** – walk or bike the ~3-4mi loop. The best views are from the lakefront gravel path; just is an easy, mostly level, paved road, but the views can be more obstructed by trees. Bikes are forbidden along the gravel path, but if it’s not crowded with walkers, you can try to pedal there discreetly.
- **Bled Castle** – Bled’s cliff-hanging castle, dating in one form or another from 1,000 years ago, was the seat of the Austrian bishops of Brixen, who controlled Bled in the Middle Ages. Today it’s a fine tourist attraction with a little history and lots of big views. Hike (see RS), drive (€3 toe park), or shuttle bus.

Day 2 Hike and Boat -----

- **Vintgar Gorge** – 2½ mi north of Bled, mostly level, walk or bike. Perfect for a countryside pedal with a nature walk. The hike is an easy yet spectacular walk. The River Radovna has carved this mile-long, picturesque gorge into the mountainside. Boardwalks and bridges put you right in the middle of the magic in this “poor man’s Plitvice.” Shaded and relatively cool, this is a refreshing place for a walk on a hot day. The gorge is 2.5 miles north of Bled. To reach the gorge entrance, you can drive, electric bike, or walk (takes at least one hour one-way), plus 1.5 hours for a round-trip hike in the park. Get an early start to avoid crowds. Open 8am – 7pm, €5 to enter. Combine for an extended walk/picnic.
- **The Island** – Otok. 99 steps lead from the island’s dock up to the Church on top. It’s tradition for the groom to (try to) carry his bride up. About 4 of 5 succeed, proving themselves “fit for marriage”. The most romantic route to the island is to cruise on one of the distinctive *pletna* boats. The handiest options are directly below Hotel Park, or in front of Grand Hotel Toplice. Farther around the lake, you can get a *pletna* in Mlino; at the foot of the grand staircase leading to Vila Bled.

Day 3 Rent a bike -----

- **Bike to Radovljica** – a separated **bike** path to Radovljica (and its bee museum) is ~4mi one way (level)
- **Bike Kranjska Gora** – a longer **bike** path is planned all the way from Bled to Kranjska Gora, at the base of the Vršič Pass (part of this trail—deep in the mountains—is already complete). For other ideas, ask for the TI’s excellent biking map, with various bike trips clearly marked and described.

Run: [Lake Bled Loop](#) – ~4mi with minimal elevation gain; it is the best of the [GR Options](#)

Next: *Julian Alps scenic drive to Ljubljana*

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 28: Drive Bled to Ljubljana via the Julian Alps. Use the RS self-guided [Julian Alps Driving Tour \(GM here\)](#)

Enroute: ~4½ hr (plus stops) [Julian Alps Driving Tour \(GM here\)](#)

The circular route takes us up and over the stunning *Vršič Pass*, then down the scenic and historic *Soča River Valley*, where Hemmingway was an ambulance driver in WW1. His experience here was the basis for “*A Farewell to Arms*.” Follow-along in the RS *Eastern Europe* (p 1487) for details; I’ve a few highlights here.

Bled to of Vršič Pass

- Take the A-2 expressway north, enjoying views of *Mount Triglav* on the left as you drive. *Mount Triglav* (“Three Heads”) stands watch over the Julian Alps, and all of Slovenia. Slovenes say that its three peaks are the guardians of the water, air, and earth. Look for the characteristic Slovenian hayracks (recognized as part of the national heritage).
- At **Kranjska Gora**, follow the signs for *Vršič*. Before long, you’ll officially enter Triglav National Park and come to the first of this road’s **50 hairpin turns (24 up, then 26 down)**—each one numbered and labeled with the altitude in meters. The turns are cobbled to provide better traction. If the drive seems daunting, remember that 50-seat tour buses do this regularly...
- After **switchback #8**, park on the right and hike up the stairs on the left to the little Russian Orthodox chapel. This road was built during World War I by at least 10,000 Russian POWs of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to supply the Soča Front. The POWs lived and worked in terrible conditions, and several hundred died of illness and exposure. On March 8, 1916, an avalanche thundered down the mountains, killing hundreds. This chapel was built where the final casualty was found. Take a minute to pay your respects to the men who built the road.
- **After #17**, look up as high as you can on the cliff face to see a “window” in the rock.
- **After #22**, at the pullout for *Erjavčeva Koča* restaurant, look for a ghostly face on the cliff wall, belonging to mythical *Ajda*. This village girl was cursed by townspeople after correctly predicting the death of the *Zlatorog* (Golden Horn), a magical, beloved, chamois-like animal. Her tiny image is just above the tree line, a little to the right, best seen at the signpost near the road. Consider hiking about 20 minutes uphill to the *Poštarski Dom* (“Fifth Hut,” with good food) for the best views of *Ajda’s* face.
- **After #24**, you reach the summit (5,285 feet); get out of the car to enjoy the views

Soča River Valley

- During World War I, the terrain between here and the Adriatic made up the *Soča* (Isonzo) Front. As you follow the Soča River south, through the “Valley of the Cemeteries,” the *Soča* front in WW1.
- After *Trenta*, you’ll pass through a tunnel; then, on the left, look for a suspension footbridge.
- About five miles beyond *Trenta*, in the town of *Soča*, is the *Church of St. Joseph*. On the ceiling is St. Michael (clad in Yugoslav colors) with Yugoslavia’s three WWII enemies at his feet: the eagle (Germany), the wolf (Italy), and the serpent (Japan). Finally, look carefully at the Stations of the Cross and find the faces of hated Yugoslav enemies: a lederhosen-clad **Hitler** (pulling a rope to lift up the cross; fourth from altar on left) and **Mussolini** (seated, as Herod; first from altar on right).
- Stop about two minutes past the church at the small gravel lot (on the left) marked *Velika Korita Soče* (Grand Canyon of Soča). While the entire Soča Valley is dramatic, this half-mile stretch, 30 to 50 feet deep, is considered the most impressive. Venture out onto the suspension bridge over the gorge. If the water’s high, notice the many side streams pouring into the churning river in a series of mini waterfalls.
- About five miles after *Soča*, you come to a fork. Take a two-mile detour to the right (marked *Trbiž/Tarvisio* and *Predel/Kluže*), where the WWI *Kluže Fort* keeps a close watch over the narrowest part of a valley leading to Italy. Reverse route and drive to and past *Bovec*.
- About three miles past *Bovec*, as you cross the bridge (with the yellow *Boka* sign), look high up on the rock wall in the gorge to your right to spot the *Boka Waterfall* cutting a deep gouge in the cliff.
- Stop at the highly recommended *Kobarid Museum*, which tells the tale of the WWI-era [Soča Front](#).

Next: On to Ljubljana and our next stay

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 26 – July 28: Ljubljana 2N (Wed - Fri). Enjoy old town, market, and people watching.

Ljubljana: (RS) With a lazy Old Town clustered around a castle-topped hill, Slovenia's capital is often likened to Salzburg. It's an apt comparison—but only if you inject a healthy dose of breezy Adriatic culture, add a Slavic accent, and replace favorite son Mozart with local architect Jože Plečnik.

Legend has it that Jason and his Argonauts founded *Ljubljana* when they stopped here for the winter on their way home with the Golden Fleece. Some stories say Jason slayed a dragon here, while according to others, it was St. George; either way, the dragon remains the city mascot to this day.

The area was populated by the *Illyrians* and *Celts*, and was eventually Romanized before being overrun by *Huns*, only to be resettled by *Slavs*—the ancestors of today's Slovenes. In 1335, Ljubljana fell under the Habsburg emperors, who called it Laibach and steered its development for the next six centuries.

Napoleon put Ljubljana on the map when he named it the capital of his *Illyrian Provinces* (1809-1813). While brief, the people recall this era fondly, as Slovenia was for the first time taught in schools.

An earthquake rocked the city in 1895. Locals cleverly exaggerated the impact (propping up buildings that were structurally sound, and even tearing down unwanted old houses that had been unharmed) in preparation for the visit of Emperor Franz Josef—who, just as they hoped, took pity on the city and invested generously in its reconstruction. Ljubljana was made over in the Art Nouveau style.

A generation later, architect *Jože Plečnik* bathed the city in his distinctive, artsy-but-sensible, classical-meets-modern style. [Jože Plečnik](#) is to Ljubljana what Antoni Gaudí is to Barcelona: a homegrown, amazingly prolific genius who shaped his town with a unique and beautiful vision. Plečnik's mark on Ljubljana, much like Gaudí's on Barcelona, has a way of turning people who couldn't care less about architecture into fans.

In WW II, Slovenia was occupied first by the Italians, then by the Nazis. Ljubljana had a thriving resistance that the Nazis couldn't suppress—so they fenced off the entire city and made it a giant prison for 3 years.

Today, Ljubljana is a thriving, trendy university town with art, architecture, fashion and progressive leaders.

Ideas: [RS](#), [RS video](#), [here](#)

Stay – Central Apartments w/Parking, [booking](#)

Day 1 (arrival evening) -----

- Settle in after our long Julian Alps drive; dinner somewhere

Day 2 -----

- Spend the day strolling the pleasant town center, exploring the many interesting squares and architectural gems, browsing the produce market, shopping at the boutiques, and sipping coffee at sidewalk cafés along the river. See GM pings
- The TI organizes excellent 2hr guided town walks of Ljubljana in English, led by knowledgeable guides.

Run: Tivoli Park 6mi (1.5 to+from stay) – <https://greatruns.com/ljubljana-slovenia-tivoli-park/>
Runseeing 4mi (0.5 to+from stay) – <https://greatruns.com/ljubljana-slovenia-runseeing-tour/>
Ljubljanica River 3-4mi – <https://greatruns.com/ljubljana-slovenia-ljubljanica-river/>

Next: *Miramare Castle and Miro Truffles enroute to Rovinj*

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 28 – July 31: Rovinj 3N (Fri - Mon). Miramare Castle and Miro Truffles enroute. Swim/Run/Old Town.

Rovinj: Istria, the wedge-shaped peninsula in northern Croatia, has rolling hills, wineries, truffles, charming hill towns, ancient ruins (in Pula), and the finest coastal town between Venice and Dubrovnik: Rovinj.

Rovinj's main attraction is simply its gorgeous Old Town—rising dramatically from the Adriatic as though being pulled up to heaven by its grand bell tower. Once inside the Old Town, you're swallowed up by a creaky and colorful townscape and bustling market.

Food: Like Italian fare, Croatian cooking includes lots of pasta, pizza, seafood, and *pršut* (prosciutto). Try *octopus salad* or "*black risotto*" (a rice dish with cuttlefish simmered in its own ink). In the interior, meat is popular (especially prepared with a *peka*—simmered for hours under a metal baking lid covered in hot coals). While the cuisine in coastal destinations is seafood, Istria—with its proximity to Italy and its own abundant truffles—is a step above. Croatia also produces excellent wines (*bijelo* is white, *crno* is red).

Wine: In 1994, grape geneticist, Dr. Carol Meredith, discovered that Zinfandel (aka Primitivo) is identical to Croatia's *Tribidrag* (or *Crljenak Kaštelanski*). *Tribidrag* also happens to be the parent grape of Croatia's most popular red wine, *Plavac Mali*. So, if you love Zinfandel, you will love *Plavac Mali*!

Croatian wines include:

- *Plavac Mali* (little blue) - bold red wines with blackberry notes, similar to zinfandel
- *Pošip* - full-bodied white wines with subtle almond notes
- *Malvazija Istarska* - refreshing white wines with a spice note
- *Grk* - dry white wines with a peppery pear note, found only in Korčula (only female flowers!)
- *Teran* - Earthy, full-bodied robust reds from Istria. Bold, smokey, high tannin
- *Graševina* - medium-bodied aromatic whites; everyday wine of Central Europe (aka welschriesling)

Language: "Hello" is *Dobar dan* (formal) or *Bok* (informal); "please" is *molim*; "thank you" is *hvala vam*; and "Goodbye" is *Do viđenija*. č – sounds like the "ch" in "cheese" or "match." ž – pronounced like the "s" in "measure." dž – pronounced like "j" in "jug" š – sounds like "sh" in "show"

Ideas: RS, MnJTravel2

Enroute: Miramare Castle, Trieste, Miro Tartufi, ~4hr driving, plus stops. [To Miramare, to Miro, to parking](#)
The ornate **Castello Miramare** sits perched between cliffs and sea. The restless [Archduke Maximilian of Austria](#) built the castle between 1855 and 1860. Inside you'll find testaments to his vanity as well as wealth, with portraits hung in nearly every room, different dining rooms for winter and summer and a throne room that was never used. The Archduke was executed in Mexico after trying to establish himself as its monarch during one of the more outlandish empire-building adventures of the 19th century. Ironically, he was well-liked by almost everyone who knew him and he refused repeated attempts to help him escape his fate, apparently out of love for Mexico.

Parking: tbd, host will recommend free parking nearby, or public fee lot

Stay: AlPe Mar, [booking](#)

Day -----

- Run, swim, eat fish! And Church of St. Euphemia, where you can climb rickety stairs up the bell tower.
- Day trip to Pula; its urban core holds priceless ancient Roman ruins that rival Split's. Park near the remarkably well-preserved amphitheater. Then walk the town center. On the main square (formerly the ancient forum) is a largely-intact ancient temple; a Roman floor mosaic hides behind some nearby shops.

Run: Rovinj Grand Tour 3-6mi – <https://greatruns.com/istria-rovini-grand-tour/>

Next: Baška Voda

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

July 31 – Aug 07: Baška Voda 7N (Mon - Mon). Swim/Run/eat fish. Stop enroute at Zadar or Sibenik.

Baška Voda: *Baška Voda* is a charming towns lon the *Makarska Riviera*, about 50km along the coast from Split. The [Biokovo Massif](#) towers impressively above and behind. The length and height of *Biokovo* protects the coast from chilly continental winds and is largely responsible for the mild coastal climate.

Baška Voda took shape at the end of the 17th-century after the forcible departure of the Turks from the Dalmatian coast. Small groups of people began coming down from the highlands to the sea looking for fresh water (*baska voda*). The nearest settlement in antiquity was Bast, was once the site of Illyrian-Roman Biston.

Food: Fish, grilled veg, and meat or bread under the *peka*! Wines of course *Plavacs Mali, Malvasia, Posip*

Ideas: [Timeout](#)

Enroute: Slow route along the coast is ~6hr, stop at *Sibenik* for lunch? [Route here](#)

Parking: private parking €10/day, confirmed reserved

Stay: Lux Apartments Marko, [booking](#), €2200 (€500 pd, rest via EFT before), no refund, check-in 3pm
Ground Floor Apt 1, balcony, wifi, sea view, W/D, stove, fridge, nespresso, walkable
Obala Sv. Nikole 13, 21320 Baška Voda, Croatia Phone +385 95 892 2829

Day -----

- Swim! One of the best beaches in terms of facilities and location is the pebble-y, Blue Flag-awarded *Nikolina Beach*, which has beach chairs/umbrellas to rent, showers, cafes/restaurants close by; and changing cabins, and is located in the centre of town. It is very family-friendly.
- Take an easy [walk](#) to *Promajna* and the little fishermen's village of *Bratus* (6mi round-trip).
- Drive to a hike in [Biokovo Nature Park](#); see AT for options. *Vošac* is the highest point at 1422 metres. The views from here are considered some of Croatia's best. *Ravna Vlačka*, near *Vošac*, holds a great attraction for getting the most out of the view. Completed in 2020, the *Skywalk* is a viewing platform which sits 1228 metres above sea level and extends some 12 metres out into the skies,
- [Baška Voda](#) also hosts its own 'cultural summer' each year which stretches from early July to early September. A number of festivities take place, including live music, open air theatre, dance and more.
- Kayak or boat along the coast

Run: Promenade tbd

Next: *Ferry to Bol*

Central Europe 2023 Itinerary

Aug 07 – Aug 19: Bol 12N (Mon - Sat). Swim/Run/eat fish! Drop car at ferry in Split.

Bol: *Bol* is the oldest coastal settlement on *Brač*. It exists in the solitude of the southern landscape, at the foot of *Vidova Mountain*, at 778m the highest peak of all Adriatic islands. Once Bol was an area for wine growers, fishermen and seamen; today it is a spectacular tourist destination.

Ideas: [Bol](#) website (check for news/events)

Drive: about 1½hr [BV to ferry wharf](#), then [15 min to car drop](#). 30 min walk / 10 min cab [back to warf](#)
Leave by about 8am for 11:45 ferry, or noon for the 3:30 ferry

Car: Carwiz via rentalcars.com, fuel like-for-like, unlimited kilometers
Return is at the Radisson Blue Resort
19, Put Trstenika, Hotel Radisson Blu Resort & Spa, Split, Croatia, 21000 Phone +38521229115

Transit: *The return is about 30 min walk or 10 min taxi to the Ferry Terminal*

Ferry: Buy onsite – Split-Bol (7:30, 9:00, 11:45, and 15:30). See the [schedule here](#) and [here](#) for options.

Transit: walk the promenade

Stay: Privately booked

Day -----

- Run/Swim/cook fish/read. Repeat!
- A [Bol](#) summer night is organized weekly on Wednesdays throughout the summer months.
- The [International Graffiti festival](#) is July 29 – Aug 1. Look for murals when we arrive
- The [Brač Film Festival](#) is in Supetar Aug 9-12, maybe rent a car or scooter and check it out
- Visit Dragon's Cave, with unique reliefs carved in the rock over centuries by the monks. While about in a car, also explore Blača hermitage further west.
- Bike, drive or walk 3mi to swim at Dračeva Bay; a small, quiet and isolated beach, surrounded with crystal clear water, small pebbles and with lots of pine trees, which give you a shadow to rest.
- Visit the stonemason school in Pušišća
- Visit the Dominican Monastery. The interior is beautiful, and it houses Ancient Greek coins, famous paintings, and in St. Peter's church a mosaic floor and Venetian Renaissance art dating to the 1600s.
- The summer carnival is held every year in September, complete with Venetian-style masks

Run: The Promenade and beach paths

Next: On to France!

Aug 19 – Aug 20: Fly to Lyon (Saturday) Early ferry, direct flight SPU 12:20 - 14:30 LYS.

Ferry: **Buy online ahead – Bol-Split (6:30am).** See the [schedule here](#) for options and tix.

To SPU: [taxi is about 45-60 min](#)

Flight: Croatia Airlines OU4474 SPU-LYS 12:20 - 14:30
