

BALKAN MOSAIC TOUR

11 days

1\ LJUBLJANA

Arrival. Visit **Ljubljana**. First day we do tour of "Bela Ljubljana", the nickname given to this city after it was entirely rebuilt in the 16th century following the massive earthquake of 1511. We visit the 16th century castle, then Trg Naradnih Herojev, the square housing one of the world's newest parliaments and continue on foot to the old town with its large university, philharmonic hall, beautiful square of the three bridges and the Cathedral with brand new bronze doors with bas-reliefs that recount major events in Slovenia's history. Our walking tour will finish with some free time spent wandering through the open air and indoor city markets. Overnight stay. (D)

2\ LJUBLJANA – BLEED – ZAGREB (260 km)

Departure to visit the **Lake Bled** in the Julian Alps. We visit the castle located on a cliff with nice view of the town and we embark on a boat ride to Slovenia's only island. There is legend saying that this little island was originally inhabited by fairies. Today the island is home to a Baroque church dedicated to Our Lady of the Lake. Near the altar of the church hangs a rope attached to the bells in the tower. Legend has it that if you make a wish while ringing the bells the wish will come true. Visit the **Žiče Carthusian Monastery**. Departure for Croatia. Overnight in Zagreb. (B, D)

3\ ZAGREB – PLITVICE LAKES (150 km)

Visit Zagreb: named "the city with a million hearts", for the million inhabitants that it shelters, Zagreb is the most important city of the Republic of Croatia and is his financial and cultural capital. Ideally placed between the Mount Medvednica and the Rio Sava. Walk along the suggestive **old town** of Zagreb, happening for the Gornji grad (High City) – of narrow streets and with two doors of access, as the famous Door of Stone – where you will find all kinds of historical buildings, as the Church of San Marcos, the Museum of the city of Zagreb and the spectacular Palace Klovic. Departure to Plitvice. Visiting one of the worlds most Beautiful National Park - **Plitvice Lakes**, a Natural Heritage Site where the waters flowing over the limestone and chalk have, over thousands of years, deposited travertine barriers, creating natural dams which in turn have created a series of beautiful lakes, caves and waterfalls. Overnight in Plitvice. (B, D)

4\ PLITVICE – TROGIR – SPLIT (270 km)

Departure to Split. Visit of the medieval town of **Trogir**, we start with main square Narodni Trg, we visit the Cathedral, Communal Palace and Loggia. We visit the Venetian Cathedral of St. Lovro, built from the 13th to 15th centuries and one of the finest architectural works in Croatia. We continue our tour with visit of Sibenik, a unique place on the Dalmatian coast surrounded by several hundred inlets. We finish our day with visit of Zadar, the ancient capital of Dalmatia. The town offers a variety of architectures and styles, where Corinthian columns stand alongside Romanesque churches. Zadar was Italian city until 1947, and everywhere you can see the Italian culture and Italian influence. We start visit of Zadar with the Archaeological Museum, which houses a collection of Roman, pre-Christian, and medieval artefacts; the Roman Forum dating to the 2nd century B. C.; the 9th century pre-Romanesque church of St Donatus and St Elias Church. Departure to **Split** an half day tour. The ruins of Diocletian's Palace, built between the late 3rd and the early 4th centuries A.D., can be found throughout the city. The cathedral was built in the Middle Ages, reusing materials from the ancient mausoleum. Twelfth- and 13th-century Romanesque churches, medieval fortifications, 15th-century Gothic palaces and other palaces in Renaissance and Baroque style make up the rest of the protected area. Overnight in Split. (B, D)

5\ SPLIT – DUBROVNIK (240 km)

Departure to Dubrovnik. Visit **Dubrovnik**: The 'Pearl of the Adriatic', situated on the Dalmatian coast, became an important Mediterranean sea power from the 13th century onwards. Although severely damaged by an earthquake in 1667, Dubrovnik managed to preserve its beautiful Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque churches, monasteries, palaces and fountains. Damaged again in the 1990s by armed conflict, it is now the focus of a major restoration programme co-ordinated by UNESCO. Overnight in Dubrovnik. (B,D)

6\ DUBROVNIK – KOTOR – CETINJE – KOLASIN (250 km)

Departure for Montenegro. **Visit of Kotor**, which is located in the **Bay of Kotor** - UNESCO protected area. The wealth of historical monuments - the cultural witness for the passage of different civilizations, cultures and styles from prehistoric times to the Baroque. Among the most significant monuments of the old town is definitely the Cathedral of "St. Tryphon". It was consecrated in 1166 and there are the remains of the saint from 809. Visit the church "San Luca" (13th century), "St. Anna" (12th century), church "Santa Maria" (13th century). There can be seen also see the Rector's Palace (12th century), the Napoleon Theatre (19th century) and the beautiful squares, which are a meeting place for bands passing through town. visit the city of **Cetinje**, the old capital of Montenegro, **the Cetinje Monastery** and visit the **Royal Palace**. Visit the **Moraca Monastery** from the 13th century. Because of its collections of icons and frescoes, it is considered for the most important monastery in Montenegro. The road is along the **National Park Biogradska Gora** (the Biograd forest). In 1872 the Montenegrin King Nikola I realized, that it has enormous environmental legacy for future generations and decided to protect them by law. This is one of the few virgin forests left in Europe, which is characterized by typical vegetation. National Park covers 5400 hectares in the central part of the mountain Bjelasica, between the rivers Tara and Lim. Overnight in Kolasin. (B,D)

7\ KOLASIN – DECANI – PEC – PRISTINA (250 km)

Departure for Kosovo. **Visit the Monastery of Decani**, founded in 1327 by St. Stephen Uros III. In 1331 King Stephen was murdered by his son Dusan. Lived and died a holy martyr Stephen was buried in the church of the monastery, where his body still completely intact, resting in the shrine in front of the iconostasis. The monastic complex includes the church dedicated to the Ascension of Christ, the dormitories of Milos and Leontije, the refectory, the Arhimandrija (the abode of the abbot), the bell tower and the tower entrance. visit the **Monastery of Pec**. Situated at the throat of Rugovo, a few kilometers from the town of Pech, the monastery contains four churches built over two centuries by some Serbian archbishops and patriarchs. The oldest, dedicated to the Holy Apostles, and also known as the Church of San Salvatore, was built around the middle of 1200 by Archbishop Arsenie I, successor of St. Sava (the founder of the Serbian Church). Overnight in Pristina. (B, D)

8\ PRISTINA – STUDENICA – SKOPJE (90 km)

Visit the Monastery of **Gracanica**. Dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the church of the monastery is an outstanding example of Byzantine architecture and a unique combination of edges, faces, windows and domes. Visit the **Kosovo Polje** - monument sacred to the nationalism of Serbia, now protected by UN forces. Departure for Macedonia. Visit the **Monastery of St. Panteleimon** located on a hill overlooking the **city of Skopje**. Visit the Macedonian capital: the National Museum, the Church of St. Kliment Ohridski, the Fortress, the Church of St. Spas with its incredible iconostasis six meters high and ten meters long, made entirely by brothers Filipovski from 1819 to 1824. Visit the Memorial dedicated to Mother Teresa and the place where once stood the house of his birth. Visit the ancient Muslim quarter. Overnight in Skopje. (B,D)

9\ SKOPJE – NIS – BELGRADE (440 km)

Departure for Serbia. Visit the city of Niš: the largest city of southern Serbia and third-largest city in Serbia after Belgrade and Novi Sad. Visit the **Concentration camp of Nis**: located in the district of CrveniKrst (Red Cross), one of the few fully preserved fascist camps in Europe. Even today, it provides authentic testimony to the perils of the Serbian, Romani, and Jewish population, communists, numerous supporters of the liberation movement and partisans, who were incarcerated here during the German occupation of Serbia (1941-1945). Visit the **Manasija Monastery**, near Despotovac. In the first half of the 15th century, the monastery was a haven for artists and writers who fled Kosovo after the Ottoman invasion. Overnight in Belgrade. (B,D)

10\ BELGRADE

Visit to Belgrade. Belgrade (Beograd) is the capital of Serbia, and has a population of around 1.6 million. It is situated in South-Eastern Europe, on the Balkan Peninsula, at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers. It is one of the oldest cities in Europe and has since ancient times been an important focal point for traffic, an intersection of the roads of Eastern and Western Europe. Visit the historic part of the capital - the bohemian quarter Skadarlija with old-style buildings of Serbia and the Balkans, it was as the residence of Princess Ljubica, the donation of Captain Misa, the Dositej School, the Cathedral, the Mosque Bajrakli Džamija. Visit of the temple of Saint Sava, the largest Orthodox Church in the Balkans. Evening walk in the center to admire the Palace of Parliament, the Government, the Kalemegdan - the great Roman fortress, situated at the confluence of the Sava and Danube. Overnight in Belgrade. (B,D)

11\ BELGRADE – DEPARTURE

Transfer to the airport. (B)

| TOUR BALKAN MOSAIC net quote valid until October 2013 (except July and August) | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Min. 30 pax | Min. 25 pax | Min. 20 pax | Min. 15 pax | Min. 10 pax |
| Per person in DBL/FB | 990 € | 1'030 € | 1'080 € | 1'160 € | 1'320 |
| Supplement for SGL | 280 € | | | | |
| Free | 1\25 payed tourists | | | | |
| Lunch | 15 € p.p for 1 meal (without drinks) | | | | |
| The price includes | Transport by air-conditioned bus; Overnight stays in hotels 4* and 3+*; Half board (10 breakfast; 0 lunches, 10 dinners), meals and accommodation for the guides, assistant and driver; customs fees and tolls; parkings, entrance fees, English speaking assistant during all tour (11 days in total), <u>Local guides:</u> Zagreb: 1 HD Split: 1 HD Dubrovnik: 1 HD Kotor and Cetinje: 1 FD Kosovo: 1 FD + 1 HD Skopje: 1 FD Belgrade: 1 FD | | | | |
| The price does not includes | Flight and airport taxes, insurance, drinks, tips, portorage, extras and anything not specifically mentioned in "The price included" | | | | |
| Note | The order of the excursions can be variations for technical reasons | | | | |

Please do not hesitate to contact us for other sizes groups !