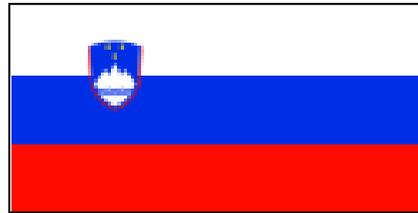
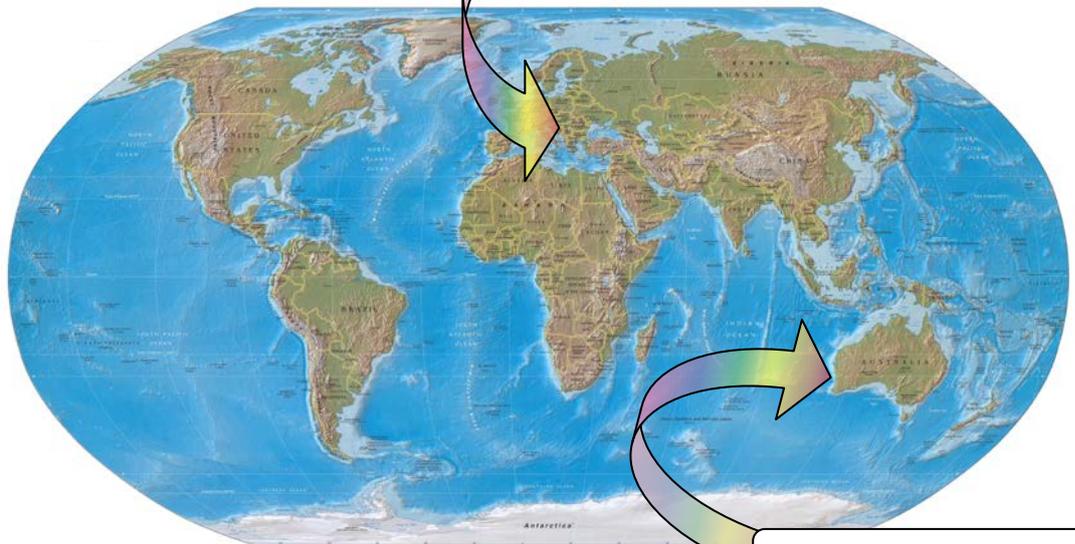


SLOVENIA



We were there



Now we are here

FACTS:

- **Full name:** Republic of Slovenia
- **Population:** 2 million (UN, 2005)
- **Capital:** Ljubljana
- **Area:** 20,273 sq km (7,827 sq miles)
- **Major language:** Slovene
- **Major religion:** Christianity
- **Life expectancy:** 73 years (men), 80 years (women) (UN)
- **Monetary unit:** Euro
- **Main exports:** Machinery and transport equipment, chemicals, household goods
- **GNI per capita:** US \$17,350 (World Bank, 2006)
- **Internet domain:** .si
- **International dialing code:** +386

Slovenian Community in WA

Slovenian Club Perth Inc. 6/225 Beechboro Rd, Embleton WA 6062
ph: 9364 2740 fax: 9364 2716

Newsletter of the Slovenian Club of Perth WA Inc. ph: 9279 4688 fax: 9364 2716

Slovenian Community 4/2 View St, Dianella WA 6059 ph: 9276 2723

Overview of cultural groups

Slovenia's main ethnic group is Slovenian 83%.

Nationalities from the former Yugoslavia like Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Macedonian and Montenegrin form 5.3%. The Hungarian, Albanian, Roma, Italian and other minorities form 2.8% of the population. Ethnic affiliation of 8.9% was either undeclared or unknown.

Language/dialects spoken

The official language is Slovenian, which is a member of the South Slavic language group.

Hungarian and Italian enjoy the status of official languages in the ethnically mixed regions along the Hungarian and Italian borders.

Dietary preferences

Slovene cooking has over 30 different regional cuisines, influenced greatly by Slovenia's neighboring countries. While there is a sufficient amount of poultry, dairy products, and potatoes, much of the land in Slovenia is not suited for producing crops. Basic foods, such as oil, wheat, sugar, and meat are imported.

Slovene foods are often simple and hearty. Many dishes are made with cream, such as mushroom soup, and pork sour soup. Horseradish with cream, a specialty of northeastern Slovenia, is often served with beef dishes. Chicken paprika is a creamy sauce made with spicy, red paprika served over noodles or dumplings.

The Christmas dinner table is filled with traditional foods, such as pork or turkey, along with delicacies, such as smoked meats. *Potica* (nut bread), *sarkelj* (raisin cake), and other freshly baked goods may be eaten as well.

Prekmurska Gibanica - is a cake similar to Strudel, with poppy seeds, curd cheese, walnuts and apples. It is a national speciality of Slovenia.

Kranjska klobasa - is a Slovene national meat dish. It contains at least 68% of pork meat, 12% of cow meat and 20% of bacon.

Jota - the most common very nourishing and popular soup eaten with bread. It consists of "kisle zelje" cooked beans and potatoes with the addition of smoked pork, sausage or ribs.

Ričet - this is soup known all over Slovenia. The basic ingredients are pearl barley and dried meat. In some places dried plums or pears are added. Plain "ričet" (without tasty additions) was often served in prison.

Zlinkrofi - were adapted from Italian ravioli. The best known are Idria "zlinkrofi" made with potato filling or with meat and eggs.

Potica - the most famous Slovenian nut roll.

Religion/spirituality/observances

The majority of Slovenes are Roman Catholics, although there are around 40 other religious communities, spiritual groups, societies and associations registered in Slovenia. Along with the guaranteed right to preserve national identity, Slovenes have a right to their own religious beliefs.

Under the Slovenian Constitution, state and religion are separate. Religious communities enjoy equal rights, and they pursue their activities freely.

Since the Constitution states that no one is obliged to declare their religious or other beliefs, there are no exact figures on numbers within various religious groups. According to the 2002 Census the figures for religious affiliation are as follows: Roman Catholic 57.8%, Muslim 2.4%, Orthodox 2.3%, other Christian 0.9%, unaffiliated 3.5%, other or unspecified 23%, none 10.1%.

Slovenia observes religious holidays including Easter and Christmas. New Year is celebrated and perhaps the most important national holiday is National Day on 25 June which commemorates Slovenia's independence from Yugoslavia in 1991.

Public Holidays:

Date	English Name	Local Name
January 1 & 2	New Year	Novo Leto
February 8	The Slovenian Cultural Holiday	Prešernov Dan, Slovenski Kulturni Praznik
April 27	Day of Uprising Against Occupation	Dan Upora Proti Okupatorju
Date Varies	Pentecostal Sunday	Binkoštna Nedelja
June 25	Statehood Day	Dan Državnosti
August 15	Assumption Day	Marijino Vnebovzetje (veliki šmaren)
October 31	Reformation Day	Dan Reformacije
November 1	Remembrance Day	Dan Spomina Na Mrtve
December 26	Independence and Unity Day	Dan Neodvisnosti In Enotnosti

Customs/traditions

Slovenia has always preserved its ethnological features and traditions. Even today, the kozolec, a traditional rack for drying hay and other field crops, can be seen all across Slovenia. The double kozolec is unique in the world and delights the eye with the originality of its construction and its ornate decoration. Along with its universally known breed of honeybee, a special feature of Slovenia is the colourful beehive panel decorated with religious, historical, and frequently humorous scenes found on the front of the original Slovene beehive.

One of the most important traditions in Slovenia is related to Carnival. The "strange" figure colorized in red is called *Kurent* and is a mythical pagan creature which, according to the people's belief, chases winter away and welcomes spring. On the last Sunday before Shrove Tuesday *Kurents* go through the streets running and jumping for the bells that hang from their belts to ring out loud and scare the cold winter away. There are other customs linked to this tradition such as the girls offering handkerchiefs to the *Kurents* and the housewives breaking clay pots at the *Kurents'* feet for good luck.

On Palm Sunday the Slovenes take olive branches to church in order to have them blessed by the priest, and bells don't ring from Good Friday to Easter Sunday morning. On Easter Saturday the family puts some goods in a wooden basket and takes it to the church to be blessed too. On Easter Sunday, after the morning mass, the blessed food is eaten.

A very particular custom in Slovenia is painting eggs or decorating them (with wax, small engravings, etc.) in order to offer them to family and friends.

Christmas is also a very important holiday for the Slovenes, and the Christmas traditions in Slovenia are familiar to most Catholic countries: the Christmas tree, the Crib and other decorations, postcards

wishing a merry Christmas and a happy new year, family gathering, the Midnight Mass. When they come back home after the Midnight Mass, presents are opened. Slovenian children believe in Santa Claus (whose name is Bozicek) and write him letters telling him what they wish for.

Recreational activities

Slovenia has good reasons to be proud of its sporting past and present, as well as to believe in a happy future. Both in individual and in collective sports many Slovenian athletes have achieved international recognition, having written their names in the golden pages of world sports.

The Slovenes are sports lovers, but they weren't very keen on soccer until recently. Now it's the most important sport in Slovenia, followed by basketball, Winter sports, ice hockey and handball. In all of these sports Slovenia has achieved great success.

In winter all are welcomed in skiing resorts. In summer there are lakes, sea and rivers and in autumn trekking and cycling possibilities can be explored. Among popular sports are skydiving, rafting, sailing and scuba-diving, surfing, fishing and hunting, riding and golf.

The dreams of many Slovenes became reality when the Slovene national soccer team qualified for the first time for the European Championship in 2000 and for the 2002 Soccer World Cup.

Slovene sportsmen are also achieving excellent results in other team sports: basketball, volleyball and handball.

Over the last twenty years it is the skiers who have achieved the best results and stood on the winners' podiums at major world competitions. Slovene ski jumpers are also very successful. The annual final competition of the ski-jumping World Cup each year takes place at Planica, at the largest natural ski-jump in the world.

Environment

Slovenia is located in central Europe. Officially the Republic of Slovenia (Slovenian: *Republika Slovenija*), is a country in southern Central Europe bordering Italy to the west, the Adriatic Sea to the southwest, Croatia to the south and east, Hungary to the northeast, and Austria to the north. The capital of Slovenia is Ljubljana.

Next to Italy in the west are the Julian Alps and various mountains and valleys with numerous rivers in the east.

The climate in the coastal strip of Slovenia is determined by the Mediterranean Sea. Its inland climate ranges from mild to hot summers, with cold winters in the valleys and plateaus of the east.

The average temperatures are (-2°C) in January and 21°C in July. The average rainfall is 1,000 millimeters for the coast, up to 3,500 millimeters for the Alps.

Your Notes and Comments: