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INVITATION TO THE 15TH ANNUAL GATHERING OF THE FRIENDS OF SCOUTING IN EUROPE

Slovenia, 10th through 13th October 2013



The venue of the 15th annual gathering of the Friends of Scouting in Europe will be the Northern Balkan state of Slovenia, one of the youngest democracies in Europe. The country gained its independence in 1991, and became a member of the European Union in 2004. Stepping into Slovenia, one enters a stunning mixture of biological, landscape, and cultural diversity.

The programme for this year's event gives participants a chance to get a glimpse of this diversity, offering a chance to meet society (scouts, politicians, and other people making Slovenia work as a community), nature (UNESCO classified sights as well as merely beautiful places), and history. The travelling experience includes something for the eye, something for the mind, something for the taste, and a little thrill too, all - of course - together with a highly dedicated group of scouting promoters: Yourselves.

Who can participate?

All Friends of Scouting in Europe and their adult family members are welcome, and so are their friends. Availability of accommodation as well as transportation may force organizers to limit the number of participants, therefore be sure to book as early as possible. First come first served.

Travel arrangements

Our base will be the capitol of Ljubljana. Ljubljana's international airport is served by several international airlines, and the town is also easily accessible by road or train for those in the party arriving from neighbouring countries. Please be aware that parking is as difficult and as expensive in Ljubljana as in any other metropolis of the world, and that bringing your own car may therefore prove somewhat unpractical.

Those arriving by air will receive further information on cheap and reliable transfers from the airport.

Slovenia is a member of the Schengen treaty. Entering the country from other EU countries therefore implies no specific formalities. If you plan to enter Slovenia from a non-EU country, please check for possible visa requirements with local consular services in your own country prior to departure.

What to bring

Bring casual clothing for early autumn temperatures – and a scout uniform, if you have got one.

Programme

The official programme will start on Thursday, 10th October mid-afternoon, and end Sunday 13th October after lunch. Please check out the details below. Like in previous years, however, you can opt for participating in a week end only-programme i.e. Saturday late afternoon through Sunday lunchtime.

Costs

a) Full programme, 10th through 13th October

The cost for participation in the full programme (accommodation not included) will be € 320. The programme will, as usually, be arranged on an *all inclusive basis*, and so the programme fee will cover transportation throughout the week end, all excursions, guides, entrance fees, and (not forgetting) catering inclusive of drinks during meals from Thursday afternoon until farewell time Sunday early afternoon.

b) Short programme, 12th through 13th October

The cost for participation in the short programme (accommodation not included) will be € 100 covering the Saturday Night Dinner, and the Sunday Morning programme.

c) Accommodation

The group will stay at the Hotel Park, Tabor 9, 1000 Ljubljana. The hotel is located in downtown Ljubljana, just 5 minutes walk away from the Dragon Bridge, and 10 minutes walk away from the central square. The Park is a modern tourist and business hotel, located in a quiet area, a block away from the busy streets.

All rooms are equipped with private toilet/shower, cable TV and free WiFi access. Any use of mini bars will be at own expense, however...



Accommodation for **all 3 nights** will cost € 171 per person in single rooms, and € 105 per person sharing double rooms.

Accommodation for **1 night only** (short programme) will cost € 57 per person in single rooms, and € 35 per person sharing double rooms.

It has become a tradition to use any financial surplus from the gathering, should it occur, to sponsor a Scout project, with priority given to a project in the host country.

Programme

Thursday 10th October

Ljubljana

We meet in the hotel lobby (or in front of the hotel in the event of sunshine...) at 15:15 for a guided walk through the picturesque streets of Ljubljana old town. It will not be all walking, as the tour will also include a cruise on the River Ljubljanica and a ride on the Funicular leading to the Ljubljana Castle. From the towers of the castle, you may enjoy a magnificent view of Ljubljana and the hinterland mountains.



Friday 11th October

Štajerska region

Friday we shall go for a guided tour around the North Eastern Slovenian Region of Štajerska.

First stop will be Velenje where we shall enjoy a *meet and greet arrangement* with scouts group representing the country's largest scout group.

In Velenje, we shall also visit the internationally well known Gorenje factory, giving important employment to the local community as well as an equally important contribution to Slovenian economy.

We shall pass through the Šaleška Valley, known for the Velenje Coalmine providing energy as well as jobs for the region.

Next stop will be in the city of Ptuj where we shall stroll through the old streets, heading for the magnificent Ptuj Castle and its famous wine cellar which will of course be duly examined as part of the visit.



Saturday 12th October

Primorska region

Saturday is reserved for exploring the South-Western part of Slovenia. Our first stop will be at the Škocjan Caves, a UNESCO protected unique natural phenomenon created far below the ground surface by the Reka River.

After visiting the Škocjan Caves, we shall go to the Slovenian Adriatic Coast where we shall visit the town of Piran, claimed to be the best preserved cultural monument of Slovenian Istria. By the way, the town's parish church is dedicated to St George...



We shall also visit the Sečovlje Salina Nature Park, one of the very few remaining places in the world where sea salt is harvested exactly like it was done in the old days. The coastal marsh wetlands being the site of the salines are at the same time the most important Slovenian locality from an ornithological point of view.

On our way, we shall have the possibility to learn about the Refošk Wine, particular for this part of Europe (and the possibility to taste it, of course).

We shall be back in Ljubljana in due time to wash away any remaining dust from the caves, and to go for the traditional Saturday Night Dinner: nice food, welcoming of new friends, and other *official words*. Bearing the formalities in mind, you are invited to put on your scout uniform for the event, if you have got one. Other nice clothing will be welcome too, of course.



Sunday 13th October

Gorenjska region

We'll go North-West, pass the town of Bled heading for Lake Bohinj, the largest natural permanent Lake in Slovenia, being located in a glacial hollow.



Our goal is the Gozdna Šola Slovenian Scout centre where we shall have our official annual gathering of the Friends of Scouting in Europe, followed by a farewell lunch. Transfers to the airport will be arranged from here - so those leaving by air Sunday afternoon should bring their luggage with them for the excursion. Any rest of the party will, of course, be taken back to Ljubljana.

What you don't see during the gathering...

Well, Slovenia has so much to offer, and we cannot possibly see it all in just a prolonged week end. For those having the possibility to do so, take the chance. Guide books and tourist agencies will happily lead your way.



The lake that regularly disappears - lake Cerknica. A strange natural phenomenon of the *KARST*



Postojna cave - stalactites and stalagmites galore.



Countryside and wine trails - well signed. Visits to wineries should be booked in advance, however.

Registration form

To register for the 15th annual gathering of the FRIENDS OF SCOUTING IN EUROPE, please fill in the below form, and send it as attachment to a mail to FOSEtours@live.dk. Snail mail to Johansen&Stephansen, Boegevej 5, DK-4070 Kirke Hyllinge is less efficient, more expensive, but of course fully acceptable!

Please fill in & return the form as soon as possible, but no later than **18th August 2013**

YES, cannot wait to go to Slovenia on this year's FOSE-tour.

Name _____

Street/City/Country _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I/we shall **arrive** Ljubljana

on (date)_____ at (time)_____ by air___ / rail___ / road___ (tick as appropriate)

I/we shall **leave** Ljubljana

on (date)_____ at (time)_____ by air___ / rail___ / road___ (tick as appropriate)

____ I shall bring family/friends along, and there will be ____ people, including myself

____ I hereby book ____ (number) of **double rooms** in the name of _____

____ (number) of **single rooms** in the name of _____

____ I am travelling on my own, but I would not mind sharing a double room with somebody else

I have the following special dietary requirement (e.g. vegetarian, kosher, halal, allergies etc.):

Any further information or comments: _____

WAIVER AND RELEASE with respect to the 15th annual gathering of the Friends of Scouting in Europe (FOSE):

I/we _____ desire to participate voluntarily in the 15th annual gathering of the Friends of Scouting in Europe ("Event"). I assume voluntarily all of the risks associated with the participation in the Event. I confirm that I have sufficient insurance coverage to cover the consequences, should a risk associated with the Event materialize.

My attendance and participation is absolutely and entirely at my own risk without any exception, and I agree that neither the European Scout Foundation, Geneva, nor any of the members of the board of this Foundation, has any responsibility for my participation in the Event. I forever waive, release and discharge the Foundation and its board members from any and all claims, liabilities or expenses, whether such claim, liability or expense is in contract, statute, tort or otherwise, relating in any way to my participation in the Event. This waiver and release may not be modified orally. This waiver and release shall be governed by, and constituted in accordance with, the substantive laws of Switzerland.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Friends of Scouting in Europe, Annual Gathering
Ljubljana, Slovenia, 10th through 13th October, 2013