NORTHERN ITALY, SLOVENIA, CROATIA, BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA AND SERBIA
Day 1: 18. May - MADRID-VENICE-SLOVENIA

Transfer to a hotel in Slovenia.

On the way we'll make a stop in the Eleonora Garlant garden where we'll go for a short walk while admiring more than 1000 different kinds of roses.

In the Garden of Eden, which has no comparison, you will be welcomed by Vladimir Vremec, Breda Čopi and Polona Senčar.

Accommodation in Hotel Bernardin on the Slovenian Coast right at the seaside. Dinner in the hotel.

4 x overnight stay in Hotel Bernardin.

Day 2: 19. May - Trip to Karst region (Italy, Slovenia)

After breakfast we'll go on a one-day trip by bus. First we'll stop to see St. Ivan's Rose garden in Trieste, Italy (with expert guidance by Vladimir Vremec). Lunch in the rose garden with more than 3000 kinds of roses.

Visit of Nabrežina Quarry, Miramare Castle (castle built by Mexican King and brother of Franz Joseph - Maximilian) and Miramare park, then ride to Kostanjevica to see the garden of the largest collection of bourbon flowers in Europe and the tomb of the last King of France.

Karst evening in a typical local restaurant with a view of Adriatic sea; bruschettes, cold cuts, grilled vegetables and more will be served...
Day 3: 20. May - Piran, Izola (10 km) and the Postojna cave

Visiting Piran, one of the most beautiful towns in Slovenia. Walk through the old part of the town.

_Piran_: The town has preserved the medieval layout with narrow streets and compact houses, which rise in steps from the coastal lowland into the hills and give the whole area a typical Mediterranean look.

Boat trip or bus trip (depending on the weather) to Izola (1 hour). Izola is a small fishing town with numerous gardens and amazing ambients. Visits of rose gardens will be under the expert guidance of Breda Čopi. Lunch at the seaside among roses.

Gala evening with a concert composed by the Slovenian-born composer Guiseppe Tartini, Verdi, Wagner.

Optional excursion to Postojna cave

A fantastic web of tunnels, passages, galleries and halls, the astonishing diversity of Karst features as well as easy access are certainly the main reasons for such popularity of the cave and a large number of visitors, which has already reached 35 million in 200 years.

Postojna Cave is the best-known cave in the world. It is also the greatest tourist attraction in Slovenia and one of the world’s largest karst monuments. Many books and other contributions have been written about Postojna Cave; speaking of tourist guides regarding the cave itself, almost 100 have been produced over 200 years.

We will be visiting Bled.

With immense natural beauty, Bled, together with its surroundings, ranks among the most beautiful alpine resorts, renowned for its mild, healing climate and thermal lake water.

The beauty of the mountains reflected on the lake, the sun, the serenity and the fresh air arouse pleasant feelings in visitors throughout the year, guaranteeing an ideal base or a relaxing break or an active holiday.

Ljubljana is the political and cultural heart of the Slovenian nation. It is an important European commercial, business, exhibition and congressional centre as well as the transport, science and education centre of Slovenia. As its inhabitants and numerous visitors will tell you, Ljubljana is, indeed, a people-friendly city. Categorised as a medium-sized European city, it offers everything a metropolis does yet preserves its small-town friendliness.

The Volčji Potok Arboretum was opened to the public in 1952. It originally formed part of the Souvan family estate in 1885, which was taken over by the University of Ljubljana in 1952 and legally declared a place of cultural and natural heritage of national importance. Now independent of the university, it is the most visited botanical garden in Slovenia and in recent years has become well known for its spring flower shows. The arboretum is primarily a botanical garden for woody plants, the only one in Slovenia.

We then return back to the Slovenian coast. Dinner and an overnight stay.

The most valuable cultural property in Poreč, the Euphrasian Basilica, was registered on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1997. The early-Christian compound is the only complete landmark in the world preserved from that period.

The peninsula on which the Poreč’s rich old city developed and was preserved has been inhabited for thousands of years and is today often called a cultural landmark. The historical centre, once encircled by walls and towers is today conserved in valuable remains.

The most famous and important monument, the starting and ending point of every sightseeing tour is the Amphitheater, popularly called the Arena of Pula, which was once the site of gladiator fights. It was built in the 1st century AD during the reign of Emperor Vespasian, at the same time as the magnificent Colosseum in Rome.

Opatija, this elegant tourist destination, lies at the centre of the Riviera with the longest tradition of tourism in Croatia. The very attractive geographic position, enabling its warm seas to be quickly reached from many cities in Central Europe (only about 500 km from Milan, Vienna and Münich), lush green scenery and a pleasant climate (45° 20’ north latitude) were some of the main reasons for its beginning and the quick development of its tourism at the end of the 19th century.

Dinner and an overnight stay in Opatija.

Day 6: 23. May - Plitvice Lakes

On the way we will make a stop at Plitvice Lakes Nature Park.

Plitvice: There are sixteen blue-green lakes connected to each other by a series of waterfalls, resembling a pearl, all embraced in a magic greenery of the forests and meadows. Every nook and cranny of this rich vegetation is a wonderful place for birds, butterflies and game of all sorts to live. Words fail to describe the beauty and harmony of the Plitvice Lakes.

Dinner and overnight stay in Split.
**Day 7: 24. May - SPLIT**

Split is by far the largest Dalmatian city and the second-largest city of Croatia. Spread over a central peninsula and its surroundings, Split’s greater area includes the neighboring seaside towns as well. An intraregional transport hub, the city is a link to numerous Adriatic islands and the Apennine peninsula, as well as a popular tourist destination.

Split is also one of the oldest cities in the area. While it is traditionally considered just over 1,700 years old counting from the construction of Diocletian's Palace in AD 305, archaeological research relating to the original founding of the city as the Greek colony of Aspálothos in the 6th century BC, establishes the urban tradition of the area as being several centuries older.

The ground plan of the palace is an irregular rectangle (approximately 160 meters x 190 meters) with towers projecting from the western, northern, and eastern facades. It combines qualities of a luxurious villa with those of a military camp, with its huge gates and watchtowers. The palace is enclosed by walls, and at times, it housed over 9000 people. Subterranean portions of the palace feature barrel vaulted stonework.

Bus ride to Mostar. Dinner and overnight stay.

**Day 8: 25. May- MOSTAR- MEDUGORJE**

After breakfast it's time to do a sightseeing tour of Mostar.

Commissioned by the Ottoman emperor Suleiman the Magnificent in 1557, this arch bridge over the Neretva River in modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina stood for more than 400 years until it was destroyed in the Balkans War in 1993. It was rebuilt after the war ended, and re-opened in 2004. Most of the historic Bosnian town of Mostar, including the 16th-century-era Stari Most (translated, "Old Bridge"), was destroyed by artillery fire in the Balkans War of the early 1990s. It wasn't until several years later that reconstruction began in this multicultural city where a variety of nationalities and ethnic groups – including Ottoman, western European and Mediterranean – have lived for centuries. Book-ended by two towers often called the "bridge keepers," the bridge is made of stone and limestone and built into the cliffs along the Neretva River that flows through Mostar. Today, Stari Most is as famous for its history as for the annual diving competition held from its arch every summer, which usually draws only the bravest local divers willing to plunge into the Neretva's icy waters.

Bus ride to Medugorje. We will be visiting the location where the Virgin Mary has been appearing and will be attending the local mass.

Medjugorje is a town located in the Herzegovina region of western Bosnia and Herzegovina, around 25 km southwest of Mostar and close to the border of Croatia. "Our Lady of Medjugorje" and "Our Lady Queen of Peace" are the titles given to the Blessed Virgin Mary by those who believe that she has been appearing since 24 June 1981 to six children in Medjugorje.
The messages attributed to Our Lady of Medjugorje have a strong following among Catholics worldwide. Medjugorje has become one of the most popular pilgrimage sites for Catholics in the world and has turned into Europe’s third most important apparition site, where each year more than 1 million people visit. It has been estimated that 30 million pilgrims have come to Medjugorje since the reputed apparitions began in 1981.

Late afternoon bus ride to Dubrovnik. Lodging, dinner and an overnight stay.

Day 9: 26. May - Dubrovnik

Dubrovnik: History is alive in every part of this city - as museum city and at the same time a live stage, it represents a perfect cross between the past and the present.

Every nook and cranny of this Pearl of the Adriatic, as it is known, hides a treasure. Dubrovnik is surrounded by 1940 meters of unique medieval ramparts preserved in their original form and open to visitors as the city’s flagship attraction. Protected by UNESCO World Heritage status since 1979, Dubrovnik can boast one of the first such listings in Croatia.

Overnight stay in Dubrovnik.

Day 10: 27. May - Dubrovnik and Lokrum

Visiting Dubrovnik and an optional boat trip to Lokrum.

Lokrum is an island in the Adriatic Sea 600 metres from the city of Dubrovnik, Croatia. It stretches from northwest to southeast and receives regular ferry service from the city.

Austrian archduke (and short-lived Emperor of Mexico) Maximilian once had a holiday home on the island. A monastery and a botanical garden survive from his era. On the island’s highest point at 96m above sea level stands Fort Royal Castle, which was built by the French, though it was later named "Maximilian’s the Austrians.

Overnight stay in Dubrovnik.

11 Day: 28. May - DUBROVNIK

A free day to spend however you like in Dubrovnik.
12 Day: 29. May - Flight home or optional trip to Belgrade.

**PRICE:** € 1.640 for 30 passengers, € 1.740 for 20 passengers

*The price includes:*

- tour programme
- bus service
- 11 Nights with breakfast in the Hotel **** or Hotel***
- HB
- Gala-concert
- local guide in Porec, Split and Dubrovnik
- Lunch after the program
- all the time one guide will be present
- the members of the World Federation of Rose lovers will guide you too

*The price does not include entrance fees, air transport, transfer from and to the airport.*

*Optional excursions:*

- Postojna Cave 60€
- Lokrum 10€-15€
- Belgrade 29.-31. May 2013, Price: 450€ - 8 passangers (flight, 2x nights in hotel+2 dinner, bus transfer)