

#### SLOVENIA ● CROATIA ● NORTH MACEDONIA

## The Offer

Discover seven spectacular countries with a friend on a bucket list tour visiting Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovenia in 17 days. Choose from Itinerary 1 starting in Zagreb, Croatia and finishing in Sofia, Bulgaria, or choose Itinerary 2 starting in Sofia and finishing in Zagreb!

Choosing Itinerary 1, start in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, where you will visit the iconic architecture of Ban Jelačić Square, St Mark's Church and the vibrant Dolac Market on a half-day city tour. Travel to Slovenia and the enchanting Lake Bled to join a guided tour to see Bled Castle (entrance ticket not included), dating back to the 11th century. In Slovenia's leafy capital, Ljubljana, a half-day guided tour will take you to the New Square and Dragon Bridge, among other landmarks. Travel to witness the majesty of Postojna Cave (entrance ticket not included). At 24 kilometres long, it's one of the largest caves in Europe and comes complete with a tourist train to take visitors through a network of karst corridors, galleries and halls. Continue on a scenic drive to see the oldest and largest national park in Croatia, the stunning Plitvice Lakes National Park. Here you may witness cascading waterfalls and crystal-clear waters

surrounded by lush greenery (entrance ticket not included). Afterwards, see the beautiful Roman ruins of Zadar's old town and then relax in the seaside city of Split, home of the Roman palace of Emperor Diocletian, built in the fourth century AD.

Next, depart to the coastal city of Neum in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and then onto the UNESCO-listed town of Mostar and its ancient Bazaar. This rich mix of historic old towns and coastal living is enjoyed in picturesque places such as Montenegro's Kotor and Croatia's Dubrovnik, each as interesting as the next. The third part of the trip will take you across Albania, North Macedonia and Bulgaria, where the Ottoman Empire's influence is mixed with Greco-Roman culture, giving each destination a distinct culture. Unique places, like beautiful Lake Ohrid in North Macedonia, Shkoder in Albania and Sofia's gold-domed Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Bulgaria are only some of the highlights of this final part of the trip.

Make memories to cherish for a lifetime with return international flights, 14 nights of accommodation, daily breakfast and return airport transfers.

Offer available for a limited time or until sold out. TRIP A DEAL PTY LTD: 50149240433





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# **The Offer**

Want more? Tailor your itinerary adding extra days pre and post-tour in Europe at checkout.

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17-DAY TOUR PACKAGE | BEAUTY OF THE BALKANS FOR 2

# The Map



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# The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 1**

Day 1 Australia (or New Zealand) – Zagreb, Croatia Today depart for Zagreb, the capital of Croatia.

Please note: Some departures may depart on Day 2 and arrive on Day 2.

Meals included: In-Flight

#### Day 2 Welcome to Zagreb

Upon arrival at Zagreb airport, you will be met by a representative and transferred to the hotel.

Overnight: Pullman Accor or similar, Zagreb Meals included: None

#### **Day 3 Zagreb City Tour**

Today enjoy a half-day city tour of Zagreb with a local guide.

Visit the iconic traditional architecture of Ban Jelačić Square, St. Mark's Church, and the vibrant Dolac Market.

In the afternoon, enjoy some free time to explore the city's museums (additional charges may apply), relax in its green parks or take the evening to stroll through Zagreb's historic Upper Town, filled with charming streets, cafes, and historic

landmarks with amazing city views from the Strossmayer Promenade.

Overnight: Pullman Accor or similar, Zagreb Meals included: Breakfast

## Day 4 Zagreb, Croatia - Lake Bled, Slovenia - Ljubljana, Slovenia

After breakfast, you will be driven to the enchanting Lake Bled. Upon arrival join a guided tour to see Bled Castle (entrance ticket not included), the oldest castle in Slovenia, dating back to the 11th century. Perched on a steep cliff high above the lake, the castle creates a dramatic backdrop to the city. Enjoy the serene beauty of this alpine paradise. Afterward, you can enjoy some time at leisure, or join an optional activity.

Optional Activity: Bled Island - See important information for pricing

Take an optional scenic ride on a traditional pletna boat on the emerald-green and picturesque Bled Island to admire lush scenery.

In the late afternoon continue to Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, one of Europe's greenest and most liveable capitals.

Today's travel is approximately 250 kilometres.

Overnight: Exe Lev Hotel or similar, Ljubljana Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 5 Ljubljana City Tour

After breakfast enjoy a half-day guided tour of the city and discover the main tourist attractions of Ljubljana's city centre. These include the National University Library, Congress Square, Cobbler's Bridge, the New Square, the main square with the Prešeren Monument, the Three Bridges, the river promenade, the Open-Air Market, Butcher's Bridge, the Old Square, St. Nicholas Cathedral and Dragon Bridge.

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# The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 1**

You might like to see the Ljubljana Castle, a medieval castle with Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance architectural elements located on the summit of Castle Hill which dominates the city centre (16 Euro entrance fee applies, purchasable on the day).

Entrance Fee: Postojna Cave, Slovenia - See important information for pricing

In the afternoon the bus will travel to Postojna Cave, one of the largest caves in Europe. Visit the mesmerising Postojna Cave, the only karst cave with a railway built more than 140 years ago.

If you wish to not go on the optional tour of Postojna Cave, you can enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure in Ljubljana.

Today's travel is approximately 100 kilometres (including optional activity).

Overnight: Exe Lev Hotel or similar, Ljubljana Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 6 Ljubljana, Slovenia - Plitvice, Croatia

After breakfast, continue on a scenic drive to Plitvice to explore Croatia's Plitvice Lakes National Park (entrance ticket not included - can be purchased at check-out). Afterwards, be transferred to your hotel to enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure. Today travel is approximately 190 kilometres.

Entrance Fee: Plitvice Lake National Park - See important information for pricing

Explore the cascading waterfalls and crystal-clear lakes, surrounded by lush greenery. It is Croatia's oldest National Park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here you will enjoy a guided nature walking tour, where you will be amazed by the colour of the water and the pure beauty of this natural wonder.

Please note: An entry ticket is required to be purchased in advance (upon checkout) for this section of the tour, to secure your spot, skip the line and enjoy a guided tour (Ticket pre-purchased is valid for a single entry into the park). Tickets may also be purchased on site, upon entering the park. However, please note that tickets purchased on tour at Plitvice Lakes National Park are subject to seasonality and prices vary, depending on entry date. We may also not be able to guarantee a guided tour with your tour leader.

Overnight: Hotel Jezero or similar, Plitvice Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 7 Plitvice - Rastoke - Plitvice

Enjoy breakfast and the morning at leisure. Take the opportunity to explore more of the park or relax in your accommodation.

In the afternoon, visit the charming village of Rastoke, Croatia known for its watermills, waterfalls and picturesque landscapes.

Rastoke village is often referred to as the "Small Lakes of Plitvice" as it has the same occurring natural phenomena of Plitvice National Park namely, water rushing through, over and around porous limestone (referred to as travertine) in the form of 23 waterfalls.

In the afternoon, return back to your hotel.

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# The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 1**

Please Note: Rastoke Waterfalls entry fees are not included.

Overnight: Hotel Jezero or similar, Plitvice

Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 8 Plitvice - Zadar - Split, Croatia - Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Early this morning, depart for your journey along the beautiful Dalmatic Adriatic coast to Neum.

First, stop at the historic old town of Zadar. This city is a wonderful combination of beautiful Roman architecture, Habsburg elegance, and a picture-perfect seafront. Enjoy a tour of the city with free time to explore on your own.

Continue to the city of Split, a UNESCO-protected seaside town and the second largest city in Croatia. Walk along the cobbled streets of the Old Town, admire the astonishing 4th century Palace of Diocletian. This spectacular palace is the largest and best-preserved Roman palace in the world, built for the Roman Emperor Diocletian. See the remains of the Roman Peristyle, the unusual Cathedral of St. Domnius built in the Middle Ages (entry fees apply), and the Temple of Jupiter, with its headless black sphinx guarding the entrance (entry fees apply).

Spend time discovering the town independently before continuing along the coast and entering the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to reach the coastal town of Neum.

Today's travel is approximately 460 kilometres.

Overnight: Grand Hotel or similar, Neum Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 9 Neum - Mostar

After breakfast your journey continues to the UNESCO-listed town of Mostar, known for its iconic Stari Most (Old Bridge). Explore the Old Bazaar and maybe even witness a traditional bridge-jumping performance. Mostar is a unique city, with its Islamic architecture, hearty dishes and undisturbed natural surroundings.

After exploring Mostar, return to your accommodation in Neum.

Today, travel approximately 160 kilometres.

Overnight: Grand Hotel or similar, Neum Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 10 Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina - Dubrovnik, Croatia – Petrovac, Montenegro

Today enjoy a half day guided tour of Dubrovnik, a city known as the 'Pearl of the Adriatic.'

View the monumental Sponza Palace preserved in its original form (entry not included). Under the City Bell Tower on Luza Square, view the Orlando Column, dedicated to the legendary knight that saved the city in the 9th century. Then see the Dominican Monastery, the Franciscan Monastery, and its 14th century pharmacy, one of the oldest still-functioning pharmacies in Europe (entrance fees not included).

The rest of the day is yours to explore independently.

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# The Itinerary

### **Itinerary 1**

Depart from Dubrovnik to cross the border into Montenegro, the jewel of the Mediterranean. Arrive in Petrovac, nestled on the beautiful Adriatic coast with its lovely beaches and crystal-clear lakes

Today, travel approximately 170 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Sato or similar, Petrovac Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 11 Petrovac - Kotor

This morning will explore Kotor's medieval charm on a half-day guided tour. Kotor, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is one of the most atmospheric medieval towns on Montenegro's Adriatic coast. Set against a backdrop of breathtaking mountains, it's a delight to those with a love of history and architecture. Glimpse ancient churches, an array of rustic palaces, and a maze of streets and squares. Afterwards, enjoy time at leisure in the beautiful bay of Kotor.

In the late afternoon, return to Petrovac for your overnight stay. Today, travel approximately 200 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Sato or similar, Petrovac Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 12 Petrovac, Montenegro - Shkoder, Albania

Depart today for Lake Skadar, which lies on the border of Albania and Montenegro and is the largest lake in Southern Europe. The Montenegrin section of the lake has been designated as a National Park.

Afterwards, head to Podgorica, the capital of Montenegro. Take a panoramic tour of the city. It is a relatively new city, since most of the area was destroyed during World War II.

Continue to cross the border into Albania. Drive by the ruins of the mythical Rozafa Castle, one of the largest and most famous castles in Albania, with its fascinating history dating back to the early Bronze Age.

Your journey continues to Shkoder, known for its historical significance and picturesque landscapes. It is one of the most historic cities in Albania and arguably it's most attractive urban centre, being surrounded by high mountains.

Upon arrival, enjoy some time at leisure.

Today, travel approximately 100 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Colosseo & Spa or similar, Shkoder Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 13 Shkoder - Tirana, Albania - Ohrid, North Macedonia

Today visit Tirana, Albania's capital, on a half-day guided tour. See the main tourist attractions in the city centre, such as Tirana's massive main square (Skanderbeg), Et'hem Bey Mosque and the Skanderbeg's statue.

Continue crossing the Albanian region to Lake Ohrid of North Macedonia and next travel to Ohrid, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

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## The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 1**

Lake Ohrid is famous as it is Europe's oldest lake having formed over three million years ago. Upon arrival spend free time at leisure.

Today, travel approximately 230 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Belvedere or similar, Ohrid Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 14 Ohrid - Skopje

This morning enjoy a half-day guided tour of the old city. Ohrid once had 365 churches, one for each day of the year, therefore it has been referred to as the 'Jerusalem of the Balkans.' You will have the chance to wander through the narrow streets and squares of the city situated on the banks of the lake of the same name. The tour will include the Ancient Theatre, the Tsar Samuil's (Samuel's) Fortress, old churches, monasteries, basilicas (Sveti Sofia Church) and the famous pedestrian shopping street (entrances not included).

Continue to Skopje, the capital of North Macedonia, famous for being the birthplace of Mother Teresa. Enjoy time at leisure to discover the most attractive landmarks of Skopje: the quay of the Macedonian river 'Vardar', the Memorial house of Mother Teresa, Macedonia Square with the statue of Alexander the Great on his horse, the 1500-year-old fortress Kale and the narrow streets in the Old Bazaar (entrances not included).

As one of the oldest and largest marketplaces in the Balkans, the Old Bazaar has been Skopje's centre for trade and commerce since the 12th century and it is still home to several active mosques, churches, and a clock tower. Don't miss the excellent eating and drinking scene in Debar Maalo, a lovely tree-lined neighbourhood (not included).

Today, travel approximately 170 kilometres.

Overnight: Bushi Resort or similar, Skopje Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 15 Skopje, North Macedonia - Sofia, Bulgaria

This morning, travel to the capital city of Bulgaria, Sofia. Upon arrival, explore the city with your Tour Leader. See the gold-domed Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Saint (Sveta) Sofia Church, the main shopping street Vitosha, the Synagogue, St George Rotunda, the National Theatre and Banya Bashi Mosque (entrances not included). You may like to visit the country's most important museum, The Museum of National History which contains some of the most important artefacts in Bulgaria's history (entrance not included).

Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to explore some more on your own in this beautiful city.

Sofia is a modern, youthful city, with a scattering of onion-domed churches, Ottoman mosques and stubborn Red Army monuments that lend an eclectic, exotic feel.

Today, travel approximately 240 kilometres.

Overnight: Budapest Hotel or similar, Sofia Meals included: Breakfast

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# The Itinerary

### **Itinerary 1**

Day 16 Sofia, Bulgaria – Australia or (New Zealand)

Today, at the appropriate time, you will be transferred to the airport for your return flight to Australia or New Zealand after your trip of a lifetime!

Meals included: Breakfast; In-Flight

Day 17 Arrive in Australia (or New Zealand)

Please note: Some flights may arrive +1 day.

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# The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 2**

Day 1 Australia (or New Zealand) – Sofia, Bulgaria Today depart for Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria.

Please note: Some departures may depart on Day 2 and arrive on Day 2.

Meals included: In-Flight

#### Day 2 Welcome to Sofia

Upon arrival at Sofia airport, you will be met by a representative and transferred to the hotel.

Overnight: Budapest Hotel or similar, Sofia

#### Day 3 Sofia, Bulgaria - Skopje, North Macedonia

This morning, explore the capital city of Bulgaria, Sofia with your Tour Leader. See the gold-domed Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Saint (Sveta) Sofia Church, the main shopping street Vitosha, the Synagogue, St George Rotunda, the National Theatre and Banya Bashi Mosque (entrances not included). You may like to visit the country's most important museum, The Museum of National History which contains some of the most important artefacts in Bulgaria's history (entrance not included).

Enjoy some time at leisure to explore some more on your own in this beautiful city.

Sofia is a modern, youthful city, with a scattering of onion-domed churches, Ottoman mosques and stubborn Red Army monuments that lend an eclectic, exotic feel.

In the afternoon travel to Skopje, the capital of North Macedonia, famous for being the birthplace of Mother Teresa.

Today, travel approximately 240 kilometres.

Overnight: Bushi Resort or similar, Skopje Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 4 Skopje - Ohrid, North Macedonia

This morning Enjoy time at leisure to discover the most attractive landmarks of Skopje: the quay of the Macedonian river 'Vardar', the Memorial house of Mother Teresa, Macedonia Square with the statue of Alexander the Great on his horse, the 1500-yearold fortress Kale and the narrow streets in the Old Bazaar (entrances not included).

As one of the oldest and largest marketplaces in the Balkans, the Old Bazaar has been Skopje's centre for trade and commerce since the 12th century and it is still home to several active mosques, churches, and a clock tower.

Don't miss the excellent eating and drinking scene in Debar Maalo, a lovely tree-lined neighbourhood (not included).

In the afternoon travel to Lake Ohrid of North Macedonia and next travel to Ohrid, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where you will enjoy a half-day guided tour of the old city. Ohrid once had 365 churches, one for each day of the year, therefore it has been referred to as the 'Jerusalem of the Balkans.' You will have the chance to wander through the narrow streets and squares of the city situated on the banks of the lake of the same name.

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## The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 2**

Lake Ohrid a famous as it is Europe's oldest lake having formed over three million years ago. The tour will include the Ancient Theatre, the Tsar Samuil's (Samuel's) Fortress, old churches, monasteries, basilicas (Sveti Sofia Church) and the famous pedestrian shopping street (entrances not included).

Today, travel approximately 170 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Belvedere or similar, Ohrid Meals included: Breakfast

# Day 5 Ohrid, North Macedonia - Tirana, Albania - Shkoder, Albania

Today continue travel to the Albanian region and reach the capital city of Tirana. Upon arrival visit Tirana, on a half-day guided tour. See the main tourist attractions in the city centre, such as Tirana's massive main square (Skanderbeg), Et'hem Bey Mosque and the Skanderbeg statue. Today continue into Albania. Drive by the ruins of the mythical Rozafa Castle, one of the largest and most famous castles in Albania, with its fascinating history dating back to the early Bronze Age. Your journey continues to Shkoder, known for its historical significance and picturesque landscapes. It is one of the most historic cities in Albania and arguably its most attractive urban centre, being surrounded by high mountains. Upon arrival, enjoy some time at leisure.

Today, travel approximately 230 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Colosseo & Spa or similar, Shkoder Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 6 Shkoder, Albania - Petrovac, Montenegro

Today, head to Podgorica, the capital of Montenegro. Take a panoramic tour of the city. It is a relatively new city since most of the area was destroyed during World War II.

Afterwards depart for Lake Skadar, which lies on the border of Albania and Montenegro and is the largest lake in Southern Europe. The Montenegrin section of the lake has been designated as a National Park.

Upon arrival, enjoy some time at leisure.

Today, travel approximately 100 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Sato or similar, Petrovac Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 7 Petrovac - Kotor

This morning will explore Kotor's medieval charm on a half-day guided tour. Kotor, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is one of the most atmospheric medieval towns on Montenegro's Adriatic coast. Set against a backdrop of breathtaking mountains, it's a delight to those with a love of history and architecture. Glimpse ancient churches, an array of rustic palaces, and a maze of streets and squares.

Afterwards, enjoy time at leisure in the beautiful bay of Kotor.

In the late afternoon return to Petrovac for your overnight stay.

Today, travel approximately 200 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Sato or similar, Petrovac

Meals included: Breakfast

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## The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 2**

Day 8 Petrovac, Montenegro - Dubrovnik, Croatia - Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Today enjoy a half-day guided tour of Dubrovnik, a city known as the 'Pearl of the Adriatic.'

View the monumental Sponza Palace preserved in its original form (entry not included). Under the City Bell Tower on Luza Square, view the Orlando Column, dedicated to the legendary knight who saved the city in the 9th century. Then see the Dominican Monastery, the Franciscan Monastery, and its 14th-century pharmacy, one of the oldest still-functioning pharmacies in Europe (entrance fees not included).

The rest of the day is yours to explore independently.

Depart from Dubrovnik to cross the border into Bosnia and Herzegovina, for your journey along the beautiful Dalmatic Adriatic coast to Neum. Arrive in the coastal town of Neum and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure.

Today, travel approximately 170 kilometres.

Overnight: Grand Hotel or similar, Neum Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 9 Neum - Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

After breakfast, your journey continues to the UNESCO-listed town of Mostar, known for its iconic Stari Most (Old Bridge). Explore the Old Bazaar and maybe even witness a traditional bridge-jumping performance. Mostar is a unique city, with its Islamic architecture, hearty dishes and undisturbed natural surroundings. After exploring Mostar, return to your accommodation in Neum.

Today, travel approximately 160 kilometres.

Overnight: Grand Hotel or similar, Neum Meals included: Breakfast

# Day 10 Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina - Split, Croatia - Zadar, Croatia - Plitvice, Croatia

Today travel to the city of Split, a UNESCO-protected seaside town and the second-largest city in Croatia. Walk along the cobbled streets of the Old Town and admire the astonishing 4th-century Palace of Diocletian. This spectacular palace is the largest and best-preserved Roman palace in the world, built for the Roman Emperor Diocletian. See the remains of the Roman Peristyle, the unusual Cathedral of St. Domnius built in the Middle Ages (entry fees apply), and the Temple of Jupiter, with its headless black sphinx guarding the entrance (entry fees apply).

Afterwards stop at the historic old town of Zadar. This city is a wonderful combination of beautiful Roman architecture, Habsburg elegance, and a picture-perfect seafront. Enjoy a tour of the city with free time to explore on your own.

In the late afternoon arrive at your hotel in Plitvice.

Today's travel is approximately 460 kilometres.

Overnight: Hotel Jezero or similar, Plitvice Meals included: Breakfast

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# The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 2**

#### Day 11 Plitvice - Rastoke - Plitvice

After breakfast, continue on a scenic drive to Plitvice to explore Croatia's Plitvice Lakes National Park (entrance ticket not included - can be purchased at check-out). Afterwards, be transferred to your hotel to enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure. Today travel is approximately 190 kilometres.

<u>Entrance Fee: Plitvice Lake National Park</u> - See important information for pricing

Explore the cascading waterfalls and crystal-clear lakes, surrounded by lush greenery. It is Croatia's oldest National Park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here you will enjoy a guided nature walking tour, where you will be amazed by the colour of the water and the pure beauty of this natural wonder.

Please note: An entry ticket is required to be purchased in advance (upon checkout) for this section of the tour, to secure your spot, skip the line and enjoy a guided tour (The ticket pre-purchased is valid for a single entry into the park). Tickets may also be purchased onsite, upon entering the park. However, please note that tickets purchased on tour at Plitvice Lakes National Park are subject to seasonality and prices vary, depending on the entry date. We may also not be able to guarantee a guided tour with your tour leader.

In the afternoon, visit the charming village of Rastoke, Croatia known for its watermills, waterfalls and picturesque landscapes. Rastoke village is often referred to as the "Small Lakes of Plitvice" as it has the same occurring natural phenomena of Plitvice National Park namely, water rushing through, over and around porous limestone (referred to as travertine) in the form of 23 waterfalls. In the afternoon, return back to your hotel.

Please Note: Rastoke Waterfalls entry fees are not included.

Overnight: Hotel Jezero or similar, Plitvice Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 12 Plitvice, Croatia - Ljubljana, Slovenia

Enjoy breakfast and the morning at leisure. Take the opportunity to explore more of the park or relax in your accommodation.

In the late afternoon continue to Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, one of Europe's greenest and most liveable capitals.

Overnight: Exe Lev Hotel or similar, Ljubljana Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 13 Ljubljana City Tour

After breakfast enjoy a half-day guided tour of the city and discover the main tourist attractions of Ljubljana's city centre. These include the National University Library, Congress Square, Cobbler's Bridge, the New Square, the main square with the Prešeren Monument, the Three Bridges, the river promenade, the Open-Air Market, Butcher's Bridge, the Old Square, St. Nicholas Cathedral and Dragon Bridge.

You might like to see the Ljubljana Castle, a medieval castle with Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance architectural elements located on the summit of Castle Hill which dominates the city centre (16 Euro entrance fee applies, purchasable on the day).

Entrance Fee: Postojna Cave, Slovenia - See important information for pricing

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# The Itinerary

#### **Itinerary 2**

In the afternoon the bus will travel to Postojna Cave, one of the largest caves in Europe. Visit the mesmerising Postojna Cave, the only karst cave with a railway built more than 140 years ago. If you wish to not go on the optional tour of Postojna Cave, you can enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure in Ljubljana.

Today's travel is approximately 100 kilometres (including optional activity).

Overnight: Exe Lev Hotel or similar, Ljubljana Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 14 Ljubljana, Slovenia - Lake Bled, Slovenia - Zagreb, Croatia

After breakfast, you will be driven to the enchanting Lake Bled. Upon arrival join a guided tour to see Bled Castle (entrance ticket not included), the oldest castle in Slovenia, dating back to the 11th century. Perched on a steep cliff high above the lake, the castle creates a dramatic backdrop to the city. Enjoy the serene beauty of this alpine paradise. Afterward, you can enjoy some time at leisure, or join an optional activity.

Optional Activity: Bled Island - See important information for pricing

Take an optional scenic ride on a traditional pletna boat on the emerald-green and picturesque Bled Island to admire lush scenery. In the late afternoon continue to Zagreb, the capital of Croatia

Today's travel is approximately 250 kilometres.

Overnight: Pullman Accor or similar, Zagreb Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 15 Zagreb City Tour

Today enjoy a half-day city tour of Zagreb with a local guide.

Visit the iconic traditional architecture of Ban Jelačić Square, St. Mark's Church, and the vibrant Dolac Market. In the afternoon, enjoy some free time to explore the city's museums (additional charges may apply), relax in its green parks or take the evening to stroll through Zagreb's historic Upper Town, filled with charming streets, cafes, and historic landmarks with amazing city views from the Strossmayer Promenade.

Overnight: Pullman Accor or similar, Zagreb Meals included: Breakfast

#### Day 16 Zagreb, Croatia – Australia or (New Zealand)

Today, at the appropriate time, you will be transferred to the airport for your return flight to Australia or New Zealand after the trip of a lifetime!

Meals included: Breakfast; In-Flight

Day 17 Arrive in Australia (or New Zealand)
Please note: Some flights may arrive +1 day.

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## **Tour Inclusions**

#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

Discover the highlights of Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Albania and Bulgaria

Visit Ljubljana, Dubrovnik, Sofia, Kotor and more

Wander the streets of Zagreb on a guided tour

Marvel the lush greenery of Plitvice Lakes National Park

Enjoy a guided tour of picturesque Lake Bled and to see Bled Castle

Explore Ljubljana, Europe's greenest capital city

Discover the charming & historic city of Zadar

Visit Split, the beautiful UNESCO seaside town on the Dalmatian Coast

Experience Mostar and its UNESCO-listed Old Town

Stay in the resort town of Neum on the Adriatic Coast

Visit Dubrovnik, known as 'The Pearl of the Adriatic' on a guided tour

Explore Kotor's medieval charm on a guided tour

Admire Shkoder, a picturesque historic town in Albania

Discover Tirana, Albania's capital city on a guided tour

Explore UNESCO-listed Ohrid and its famous lake

Spend a day at leisure in the Ottoman and Byzantine city of Skopje

See the famous gold-domed Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Sofia on a leisure day

#### **FLIGHTS**

Return international flights (economy class), surcharges may apply

#### **ACCOMMODATION**

14 nights in 3, 4 and 5-star hotel accommodation

#### DINING

Enjoy daily breakfast

#### **ESSENTIALS**

English-speaking tour leader and guides

Airline taxes and surcharges

#### **TRANSPORT**

Transportation by air-conditioned vehicles

#### **TRANSFERS**

Return airport transfers

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\*Please note: All information provided in this brochure is subject to both change and availability. Prior to purchase please check the current deal for up-to-date information. If you have already purchased this deal, the terms and conditions on your Purchase Confirmation apply and take precedence over the information in this brochure.

#### **Booking Information**

After purchase, you will receive a receipt and a Purchase Confirmation, directing you to an online Passenger Information Form. You must complete the Passenger Information Form within 72 hours of purchase.

Any special requests, preferences and optional extras MUST be clearly stated in your Passenger Information Form. Any change requested after submitting your Passenger Information Form cannot be guaranteed, is strictly subject to availability and will incur surcharges as outlined in the Schedule of Fees below.

On purchasing this Travel Offer, you are bound by the <u>General Terms and</u>
<u>Conditions</u> and the specific terms and conditions outlined in this Important Information.

Please note: All countries and territories have different entry requirements in relation to vaccinations, quarantine/isolation periods and travel restrictions. Due to the evolving nature, we would ask all of our customers to monitor, meet and adhere to the specific requirements of their intended destination(s) in the lead-up to and immediately before travel, as well as any requirements post-travel upon their return.

#### **Our Policies**

#### **Cancellation & Refund Policy**

By placing a booking with us, you acknowledge the following important information:

we act as your booking agent: TripADeal
is a booking services provider, and
curates the Travel Offers available on our
website. We act as your booking agent,
and we receive payment for the Booking
Services as part of the booking price,
however, we do not provide any of the

Travel Services (flights, accommodation, tours or other products or services) included in your booking – the Travel Services are provided by a number of third party Travel Suppliers.

- each booking is unique: our Travel Offers are made up of a variety of different components and are, during the booking process, uniquely tailored to suit your requirements, for example, departure dates and ports, flight and room upgrades, tour inclusions, etc.
- changes/modifications to your booking may not be possible: once your booking has been made, changes or modifications may not be possible, and where possible, may incur a fee. It is important to ensure that the information you provide during the booking process is accurate and up to date, and that you read the Travel Offer carefully before placing your order.
- Travel Offers are a package: our Travel
   Offers have been curated into package
   offerings and must be used as a package
   - individual components cannot be used
   independently of the full package
   offering.
- our Travel Offers are generally nonrefundable: in order to provide great value Travel Offers, we work with a variety of Travel Suppliers to find the best deals – this often means the Travel Suppliers' offerings are non-refundable to ensure the best price. We recommend that you obtain travel insurance as soon as you make a booking with us.

To read more about our Cancellation and Refund Policy, please click here.

#### **General Terms & Conditions**

By placing your booking with us, you acknowledge and agree to our <u>Terms & Conditions</u>, <u>Privacy Policy</u> and <u>Cancellation Policy</u>.

#### **Offer Essentials**

This travel offer is valid for travel on selected dates until the 28th October 2026.

This travel offer is priced for 2 people

based on twin share.

#### **Single Traveller Supplement**

For solo travellers, a full-priced voucher must be purchased.

Please note: Accommodation for single customers who are travelling on a tour or cruise package may be in a single room, depending on availability.

#### **Departure Dates & Surcharges**

See checkout for live dates and availability.

#### **Flights**

#### **Departure Cities**

Sydney, Melbourne, \*Perth, \*Brisbane, \*Adelaide or \*Auckland.

#### **Departure City Surcharges**

• Perth: \$50 per person

• Brisbane: \$250 per person.

• Adelaide: \$450 per person.

• Auckland: \$650 per person.

#### International Flight(s)

• Cabin Class: Economy Class

#### Please note:

- FlyDubai, Emirates low-cost partner airline will operate the Dubai to Zagreb sector (if flying with Emirates). This is not a fullservice flight, however it will include a meal, drink and checked baggage.
- We cannot accommodate one-way flights.
   Travellers must take all included flights within the package, and any flights intentionally forfeited will result in later flights being subject to cancellation.

Please note: From Sydney, Melbourne or Perth, the flying journey to your destination may take up to 28 hours, with up to 2 stops. This is provided as a guide only - actual flight duration can vary depending on availability and airline schedules. Your booking's final details will be confirmed to you via email once available.

From Brisbane, Adelaide or Auckland, the flying journey to your destination may take up to 32 hours, with up to 2 stops. This is provided as a guide only - actual flight duration can vary depending on availability

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and airline schedules. Your booking's final details will be confirmed to you via email once available.

#### **Missed Flights**

If you fail to arrive for your outbound flight, you risk all flight and land arrangements in your destination being automatically cancelled by the airlines and land operator, respectively. Additional fees may apply to reinstate these services. If you miss your flight for whatever reason, please contact us as soon as possible to make arrangements.

#### **Preferred Airline Surcharge**

- Cabin Class: Economy Class
- Singapore Airlines: \$550 per person
- Emirates: \$578 per person

#### Please note:

- If choosing Emirates, FlyDubai (Emirates low-cost partner airline) will operate the Dubai to Zagreb sector. This is not a full-service flight, however it will include a meal, drink and checked baggage.
- Preferred airlines are subject to availability.
   If we are unable to fulfil your request, the above extra cost will be refunded.
- On any upgrade purchase, short-haul flights and domestic flight sectors are not guaranteed, subject to aircraft configuration.
- In the event that a purchased stopover package and a purchased preferred airline upgrade are not compatible, you will have the option to receive a refund for the preferred airline upgrade or be offered an alternative stopover city option, e.g if you choose to fly with Singapore Airlines you cannot stopover in Dubai.
- Preferred airline refers to the marketing carrier and could include codeshare partners.

#### **Arrive Early & Stay Behind Options**

Fly out and return home up to 60 days pre and post your tour dates.

#### **Arrive Early**

Zagreb, Croatia (Itinerary 1 only) - From \$300 per person, subject to availability.

Sofia, Bulgaria (Itinerary 2 only) - From \$300 per person, subject to availability.

#### Stay Behind

Sofia, Bulgaria (Itinerary 1 only) - From \$300 per person, subject to availability. Zagreb, Croatia (Itinerary 2 only) - From \$300 per person, subject to availability.

#### Please note:

#### • Exclusions:

This fee does not include extra nights' accommodation, meals or airport transfers.

#### • Cancellations & Changes:

Flight booking changes or cancellations after air tickets have been issued are not guaranteed and may incur additional fees and fare difference, subject to the airline cancellation and change policies. Flight changes are subject to availability at the time of booking.

#### • High-Season:

A high-season Arrive Early or Stay Behind can be purchased for an additional charge, subject to availability. For pricing, please refer to the cart.

#### • + 60 days:

You can fly out up to 60 days before your package's start date, and/or return home 60 days after your package's end date.

Should you wish to fly out or return home for more than 60 days from the tour, please contact us to request availability.

Additional costs may apply.

#### • Estimated dates:

Your estimated departure, return, and arrival dates are all subject to availability and may vary. The confirmed schedule for all flights will be provided when you receive your flight tickets.

 High season surcharges apply to flights departing between the below date ranges:

16 June 2025 - 20 July 2025 15 September 2025 - 12 October 2025 1 December 2025 - 31 January 2026 3 April 2026 - 20 April 2026 26 June 2026 - 17 July 2026 18 September 2026 - 9 October 2026

12 December 2026 - 26 January 2027

#### **Stopover Packages**

- Dubai
- Doha
- Singapore Includes:
- 2, 3 or 5 nights in 4-star accommodation.
- Daily breakfast
- Return airport transfers
   For pricing, please refer to the payment cart at checkout.

#### Please note:

- When a pre and post-tour stopover is chosen, the same stopover location must be chosen each way, due to the airline used.
- When selecting to Arrive Early for your tour in conjunction with a Stopover Package, your fly out date from home will take place before the stopover.
- When selecting to Stay Behind after your tour in conjunction with a Stopover Package, your stopover will take place before your final flight home.
- Stopover packages are subject to availability.
- In the event that a purchased stopover package and a purchased preferred airline upgrade are not compatible, you will have the option to receive a refund for the preferred airline upgrade or be offered an alternative stopover city option, e.g if you choose to fly with Singapore Airlines you cannot stopover in Dubai.
- Blackout dates apply to flights departing between the below date ranges:

Singapore Grand Prix: 02 October - 08 October 2025

Doha Grand Prix: 27 November - 03 December 2025

Doha MotoGP: 08 April 2025 - 16 April 2025

Abu Dhabi Grand Prix (for Dubai): 04 December - 10 December 2025 Christmas and New Years Eve: 22 December 2025 - 02 January 2026

Please note: The exact dates for 2025 are yet to be confirmed.

#### **Flight Class Upgrades**

Business or Premium Economy Class: For pricing, please refer to the payment cart at

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#### checkout.

#### Please note:

- Flight upgrades are subject to availability and pricing changes (if we cannot fulfil your request, the upgrade cost will be refunded).
- On any upgrade purchase, short-haul flights and domestic flight sectors are not guaranteed

#### **Accommodation**

#### **Accommodation Used**

#### 3 & 5-Star Accommodation (self-rated)

- Zagreb, Croatia: Pullman Accor
- Sofia, Bulgaria: Budapest Hotel
- Ljubljana, Slovenia: Exe Lev Hotel
- Plitvice, Croatia: Hotel Jezero
- Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Grand Hotel
- Petrovac Area, Montenegro: Hotel Sato
- Ohrid, North Macedonia: Hotel Belvedere
- Shkoder, Albania: Hotel Colosseo & Spa
- Skopje, North Macedonia: Bushi Resort

Please note: Accommodation/rooms offered are based on a lead-in room type and are subject to availability based on seasonality. In the instance a property is not available, a similar standard of accommodation will be provided. Properties will be confirmed and included in your travel pack, which you will receive 4-6 weeks before travel.

#### **Accommodation Location**

To ensure a comfortable and convenient experience for everyone, we've carefully selected hotels that best suit the size and specific needs of each group. While this means your accommodation may not be in the city centre, you can rest assured that our hotels are typically located near public transportation and a variety of local restaurants and attractions. Once your tour begins, your friendly driver or tour leader will be happy to help you get your bearings and offer assistance, should you need it.

#### **Extra Nights**

Not available at check-out.

Please note: If you are interested in booking additional nights of accommodation pre or post-tour, please wait until you receive your travel documentation approximately 4-6 weeks before departure for the confirmed list of hotels. If booking your own additional accommodation directly with the hotel, please be aware that you may be required to change rooms at the start/end of your tour.

#### **Maximum Room Capacity**

2 people.

#### **Child Policy**

- No child discounts. The full price applies to all children travelling with their parents.
- Valid for children 8 years old and over.

Please note: Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult 18 years old and over to travel. No unaccompanied minors are allowed.

#### **Triple Share**

Not available.

#### **Bedding Configuration**

Double or Twin bedding (subject to availability).

#### **General Information**

Minimum group size 25, maximum group size 40 per vehicle.

#### **Optional Tours/Activities**

- Day 4: Boat ride to Bled Island \$50
   AUD per person
- Day 5: Entrance Ticket to Postojna Cave,
   Slovenia \$65 AUD per person
- Day 6: Entrance Ticket to Plitvice Lakes National Park, Croatia (Valid for one entry into the park) - \$45 AUD per person

#### Please note:

- The optional tours listed above must be purchased on checkout or over the phone before submitting your passenger information form (subject to availability).
- Some tours require minimum numbers to operate.

 An entry ticket for Plitvice National Park is required to be purchased in advance to secure your spot, skip the line and take part in a guided tour (Valid for two entries into the park).

#### **Exclusions**

- Visa fees and requirements
- Domestic transfers and flights not stated in the deal offer
- Meals/beverages not stated in the deal offer
- Optional gratuities/tipping
- Optional activities/tours/entrance fees
- Personal expenses
- Travel insurance

#### Other Important Information

TOUR GUIDE VS. TOUR LEADER

#### **Tour Guide**

Often locals with intimate knowledge of an area, its culture, and history. Their role entails providing commentary, routing the tour, and seeing that people have a good time. They are a licensed, qualified expert who supplies specific information on the history, art, architecture and culture of the city/village/attraction where they are guiding the tour. The guide meets the group at the required place and leaves it at the end of the tour; they do not travel with the group.

#### **Tour Leader**

An experienced person tasked with ensuring the smooth operation of tours, as well as providing practical support to passengers throughout the whole trip. Their role primarily includes assisting with accommodation, transportation between locations, and communication with tour guides at each stop. A tour leader may provide general guidance around a city or village and offer information on the place visited on the bus. However, they are not required to have specific art, architecture, or historical knowledge. They are not allowed to provide a guided tour or commentary of a city/village/attraction once there and, if caught doing so, can be fined.

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Please note: Tour leaders/guides are not a standard inclusion in all travel offers. Tour leaders/guides will only be made available when required to enhance the experience of the destination featured.

#### **CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES**

#### **Balkans**

#### September to November

Balkans have a lot to offer in the fall shoulder season. The weather is still comfortably warm in the south, while northern countries like Serbia begin experiencing cooler weather.

If you have the right clothing for the chilly weather, autumn is the best season to enjoy some refreshing time in the Balkan countryside surrounded by fairy-tale-like streets and buildings.

October and November are the peak months for autumn foliage in the Balkans, offering beautiful scenery and opportunities for photography.

October and November are the seasons of harvest festivals, offering the best of traditional food and local music.

#### January to February

January and February are the coldest months in all the Balkans. Temperatures may be as low as 5°C inland, and weather in the mountainous countries is crisp, bringing heavy snowfall.

- Many Balkan countries host festivals and events during the winter months that are worth experiencing.
- Winter is a great time to experience local culture in the Balkans. You can warm up with traditional dishes such as goulash, sarma, and čevapi.
- The Balkans can be incredibly picturesque in winter, with snow-covered mountains, forests, and towns.

#### March to June

Spring is the best time to visit the Balkans, as the changing countryside hosts some of the most breathtaking natural landscapes. Temperatures rise in March, but occasional rains last till early April. So, packing up for wet weather is recommended.

These are also the shoulder months, meaning that you will find the streets and historic sites less busy than in summer.

- A great time to explore the region's outdoor attractions, such as national parks, lakes, and beaches in the Balkans.
- You can enjoy popular tourist destinations without the crowds and have a more peaceful and relaxed Balkans trip.
- Many festivals and events take place during spring in the Balkans
- During spring, the region comes alive with colourful flowers and blossoming trees.

#### July to August

Summer, from July to August, brings the warmest weather to the Balkans, making it ideal for sun-soaked adventures. July typically sees temperatures soaring above 30°C, occasionally reaching the mid-30s or higher, while August maintains similarly hot conditions.

#### **FLIGHTS**

#### **Seat Selection & Frequent Flyer Points**

We do not arrange seat selection. It is essential to highlight that some airlines do not allow pre-selected seats. We strongly suggest you contact the airline directly with seating allocation requirements and/or arrive at the airport earlier to arrange your seating. While we do not add frequent flyer member details to bookings, you can do this directly with the airline once you have your flight information.

#### **Passport Validity**

Customers must provide valid passport details either at the time of purchase or no later than 45 days before the departure date. Failure to do so may result in the cancellation of the booking. Customers will be responsible for any costs and fees incurred in this instance.

#### **COACH TOUR**

#### Meals

For meals not included, the tour leader (when available) will offer assistance with

reservations, suggestions and directions to local restaurants. It is your responsibility to notify us of any dietary requests/requirements.

Please note: We will do our best to meet your requests/requirements; however, we cannot guarantee that we will always be able to.

#### Luggage

You will be responsible for all your personal belongings whilst on tour. You must carry your own luggage from the vehicle to the hotel room and back to the vehicle. The driver will assist with the uploading and unloading of bags from the vehicle.

#### **OTHER**

#### Mobility

If you require wheelchair access please contact our friendly sales and service team to inquire on your behalf.

#### **Fitness Level Required**

Adventure (and spontaneity) create some of the best travel memories. Bear in mind, your home schedules and timings might not be adhered to on tour - it's all part of the fun!

A relaxed level of fitness will be required. Expect a comfortable pace of touring with a focus on leisure time and gentle activity. This may include city tours, the ability to walk up and down small flights of stairs and gentle slopes. You will be responsible for your own luggage and have the ability to board all modes of transport without assistance.

#### Please note:

 Some areas may be inaccessible to wheelchairs or mobility scooters, with personal walking sticks and other aids required should they be needed. Although some assistance may be available, every traveller should be self-reliant during all aspects of their travel.

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- It is expected that every traveller must be self-reliant and able to undertake all aspects of their own travel. Please speak to your booking agent about your personal circumstances and any assistance requirements to ensure this tour is right for you.
- If you have any concerns, please consult your healthcare provider prior to purchase/ travel.

#### **Gratuities/Tipping**

#### Land

Gratuities (tips) are not included for the services of the tour leader (when available) and driver throughout the tour. The recommended tip is 5 to 7 Euros per person per day. This covers the guide/leader and the driver and will be collected on tour.

Please note: Tipping for services provided is always a matter of personal discretion; however, please be aware that many locals consider tipping part of their normal remuneration, and they may approach you for payment; there's no need to be intimidated by the request.

#### Sightseeing

Please note: If entry to a site is affected by changes in operating hours or public holiday closures, your itinerary, where possible, may be adjusted, or a similar activity will be offered in its place (subject to availability).

#### **Shopping**

Shopping overseas can be a daunting and confusing experience, especially when there is a language barrier. Please be very cautious when foreign currencies and prices are involved. If paying by credit card, please pay close attention to the amount you are being charged and keep all your receipts. Do not make any purchases you are not comfortable with or feel pressured into. If you are uncertain or need assistance with the language barrier, please seek assistance from your Tour Guide/Leader. Please refer to our Terms and Conditions regarding shopping for further information.

#### **Visas**

A tourist visa is not required in Europe for stays of up to 90 days if travelling on an Australian or New Zealand passport.

#### EU Entry/Exit System (EES)

From October 12, 2025, a new European Entry System (EES) replaces the current manual passport-stamping process for non-EU travellers. Upon arrival in the Schengen area, Australian and New Zealand passport holders will have their fingerprints recorded and a photograph taken. Their entry and exit dates will be electronically registered. No previous action is required, but please be aware of longer wait times at border entry. From 10 April 2026, the EES will be fully operational at all external border crossing points of all the European countries (Schengen area) using the system.

# European Travel Information & Authorisation System (ETIAS)

As an extension of the EES implementation introduced from 2025, ETIAS travel authorisation is a mandatory entry requirement for visa-exempt nationals travelling to any of these 30 European countries, including Australian and New Zealand citizens, that will be introduced in 2026. We advise you to monitor smartraveller.com.au closer to your departure to ensure you are up to date on the requirements at the time of entry.

#### Important:

- Please start arranging your visa three weeks before departure to account for any delays due to consulate operating hours.
- Visa rules may have changed since
   Covid-19. Some countries and airlines may
   require you to obtain an additional visa
   before arrival. Please check with the
   nearest embassy, consulate or immigration
   department of the destination you're
   entering.

Please note:

- Passengers who are not Australian citizens must also check with the respective consulate or visa agency to determine what their visa requirements are and what personal identification is required.
- It is also important to note that some areas of employment, such as journalism, government authorities and charity organisations, may have additional restrictions in applying for visas. This may, in turn, affect the type of application required.

#### **Travel Insurance**

Embarking on your next trip is exciting, and while you hope the unexpected does not happen, it is best to be prepared. We strongly recommend you take out travel insurance when making your booking. Whether it's a potential medical emergency, a flight cancellation, a delayed suitcase, or an unforeseen event, it's important to ensure you're adequately protected. For more information or advice visit <a href="https://www.tripadeal.com.au/travelinsurance">https://www.tripadeal.com.au/travelinsurance</a>

#### **Schedule Of Fees**

#### **Voluntary Changes**

This includes booking changes requested by you, including but not limited to those changes requiring an airline ticket or a Purchase Confirmation reissue.

 Changes - \$100 AUD per booking and any additional charges applied by the airline/cruise company/accommodation/ other travel providers.

#### Name Changes Due To Passenger Error

If the incorrect name has been provided, charges of \$100 AUD per booking and any additional charges applied by the airline/cruise company/accommodation/other travel providers.

#### Supplier Fees

In the event the tour package you have purchased is unable to proceed, and/or a travel Supplier is unable to fulfil the tour due to external circumstances (Limitation of Liability e.g. a Force Majeure event),

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there may be a fee or amount of money that is withheld by our Suppliers and is unrecoverable. This may be due to non-refundable airline tickets, cancellation penalties with cruise cabins or unrecoverable payments with our land/accommodation partners. If refunds are not available from Suppliers, we will endeavour to obtain a travel credit on the best terms available and communicate these outcomes to you. In the event we are unable to obtain a refund or travel service credit, or part thereof, this cost is passed on to the customer as a Supplier Fee.

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