

## Short historical background about Slovenia

Slovenia, a country in shape of a chicken, is relatively young and has come of age very recently. The language, Slovenian is currently spoken by about 2 million people. A lot of jokes were developed on account of our country's size, for instance how do Slovenes change gears in car? First, second, BORDER! Slovenia may be a very small country but it has a lot to offer, tourists like to say we have a little bit of everything. Coastline in the west, the Alps in the north, karst in the south, Pannonia in the east, and a whole lot of natural and cultural heritage in between.

The existence of our country has been discovered by the USA somewhere during the World Cup in 2010 when all of a sudden Youtube was bursting with new geographical tutorials on where to find a whole new country that is NOT Slovakia as they previously thought. But jokes on the side, Slovenians take their gastronomy very seriously, especially the drinking part hence Slovenia has the highest alcohol consumption per capita in Europe. Luckily our cuisine consists mainly of pork, potatoes and pastry filled with nuts to keep us from getting our stomachs pumped too often.

It may not seem so at the first glance when coming to the capital Ljubljana but on the countryside a lot of cultural heritage has been preserved in form of 45 official dialects in 6 informal regions of the country including their costumes and local cuisine. Slovenia also has many still "living" caves and one of which offers a home to indigenous species Proteus which lives only here and here alone. Considering the fact that our royal family's blood line died out as soon as in 15<sup>th</sup> century there are many deserted castles around, some in ruins, some still standing but as it seems they are too expensive to renovate and are therefore left as they are.

Quick history minute: the first country ever established on these grounds was Carantania which lasted for a very short while due to hostile nations attacking from the west. I don't know what is so attractive in these lands but everybody wanted their share. First it was the Romans, then the Habsburgs of Austria, then the French under Napoleon and then Yugoslavia started to emerge from the rubbles of the World War 1. As always people who were considered Slovenian were once again a minority although we don't talk about Slovenia or Slovenians until the 19<sup>th</sup> century which is rather late. Nations of Yugoslavia had their own disputes among themselves but the World War 2 was fast approaching and Slovenia was busy being invaded, occupied and torn apart by the Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and the Hungarians.

The funny thing is, nations came and went through our territory, brought a lot of customs with them, tried to repress our language and literature but we just wouldn't budge. After all these years and different authority figures our language remained right until the time when Slovenia was born as a democratic republic in 1991 and it hasn't been invaded or taken over since.

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