
Slavc: the long love run

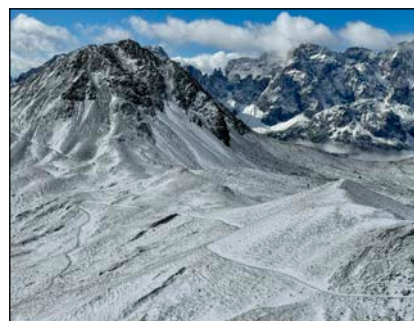
Slavc is the name of a grey European wolf that has been migrating from Slovenia to Italian Alps: an incredible run of almost 2000km on rugged mountain terrain, crossing rivers and human settlements, risking his life in an adventurous journey to finally meet Giulietta, a female wolf. We are been inspired by this beautiful story of freedom, determination and instinct and we started cycling Slavc's path backwards. From the Dolomites to the Giulian Alps of Slovenia, across some of the last wild European mountain ranges.

Get in love for the adventure, be ready for the long run.

11 days - 730km/450mi - 22.400mt+/73.500ft+ - demanding



Slavc gravel bike journey starts from **Dobbiaco** in Val Pusteria (South Tyrol) and get to **Ljubljana** after 9 full days of cycling. With two extra days you will get by bike to **Piran**, on the Mediterranean Sea. The route begin immediately being extraordinary with the climb and the single track riding on an amazing ridge right in the border in between Italy and Austria, with outstanding views over tens of Dolomites's peaks. Explore the lonely and dense forested territory of the **Comelico** and **Cadore**: from one pasture to another, from one mountain to the next, the bell sounds of livestock farming and the shout of the shepherds together with the wind will be the soundtrack till your beautiful mountain hut (with unbelievable good food!) where you will overnight. On the next day - after breakfast's delicious pancakes with jam or chocolate - you will cycle at the feet of the **Carnic Alps**, a stunning territory made of high alpine pastures where super scenic gravel roads connects shepherds' huts at the shadow of big and wild mountains. Right under the highest and most impressive above them all, you'll finally reach your cozy mountain refugio where you will overnight.



Enjoy an amazing descent early in the day, on a dreamlike mountain scenario, with hundreds of peaks looking at you, small, alone, bended on your bars, flying down with grace towards the **Passo di Monte Croce Carnico/Plöckenpass**. Cycle along an ancient Roman time road, cross the nearby border and tackle the long climb to enter in **Austrian** territory then, enjoying pure off-road adventure in one of the sweetest and greenest mountain plateau we have ever seen, with outstanding views over the snowy peaked, far north, of the High Tauern National Park. Once back to Italy you will be warmly welcomed by one of our favorite refugio where to try good homemade food: get fully energized, the day ahead will still be long. Explore one of the less inhabited - and beautiful - area of Italy, the mountain region of **Carnia**. At the end of this glorious stage you will be hosted in a unique setting, a farm placed on a sea of green pastures spotted by cows. When you will see the animals get back in an ordered row to the farm to be milked, it will be time for you to go dinner. Taste the best local products, enjoy cheese with red wine. A night full of stars will be the best reward for such an amazing day of cycling.

Warm-up on the **Alpe-Adria** cycling path and be ready to tackle the longest and loneliest climb of your journey. During the ascent, take a rest and try very good local food at the farm: long day ahead still, better always to have the batteries charged! Climb on a panoramic **I°WW military road**, crossing several villages abandoned after an earthquake on the 1976. Along the way, many occasions to stop to read on information panels the history of soldiers and their struggles. Keep cycling under the mighty shape of the **Jof di Montasio** mountain, stop at the next farm to try their flower scented cheese and get to your mountain refugio where you will overnight. Welcome to the heart of the **Giulian Alps**!



Enjoy the morning breathing deeply the scented air on the beautiful **Val Saisera**, admiring the impressive shapes of the Jôf di Montasio and Jôf Fuart rising abruptly from a bottom of dark pine trees. Climb along a beautiful gravel road getting to a mountain pass and then run together with the silver and shining waters of a stream to get down to the **Val Canale**. The route will then takes you to the hidden gems of **Val Fusine's lakes** with the north face of **Mangart mountain** reflected on their placid green waters: that's a great place for lunch at the local refugio on the lake's shores. Back to the Alpe-Adria cycling path you will cross the border entering in **Slovenia**, visiting the turquoise waters of the **Zelenci pools** and arriving in **Kranjska Gora** to our favourite patisserie. Cycling eastward along the **Sava Dolinka River** you will then meet the town of **Mojstrana** and nearby, Natalja' organic farm where a stop is highly recommended (we love the goat milk' gelatooooo). A last climb along a winding gravel road will takes you at the top of a mountain plateau exploring the beautiful and dense forested area protected by the **Triglav National Park**: soon you will get to your cozy refugio for the overnight.

After exploring the mountain plateau you will cycle down to the ultra famous (and beautiful) **Lake Bled**. Take a break along its picturesque shores looking for the best view of its iconic island with the church. Don't miss the stop to our favourite *patisserie* in town! After crossing the **Sava Dolinka River** you will climb across the alpine territory of the wild **Caravanches** mountains, cycling at the feet of it's two tallest peaks, the **Weinasc**

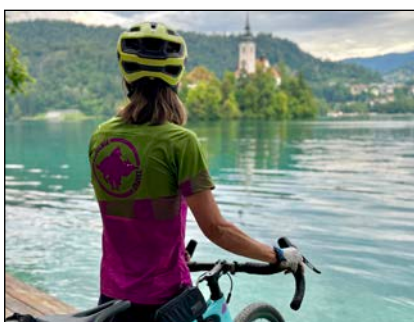
and the **Hochstuhl**. A tough second part of the day ahead, rewarded with beautiful lonely gravel roads, alpine meadows and, at the end, a super panoramic mountain refugio where you will overnight.

Another day of great gravel cycling will then takes you across the **Pungrat** area, crossing some of the most beautiful, panoramic and sunny mountain pastures, with several mountain huts where to stop to enjoy the best homemade **štruklji** (traditional rolled dumplings) and dairy farm where to try local cheese. Time to leave the Caravanche and enter in the **Kamnic-Savinjan Alp** range, a dense forested environment where you will have fun along some single-track sectors till an epic descent into the beautiful **Slovenian Carinthia region** and the mountain village of **Zgornje Jezersko** where you will overnight. The village is part of the European network of **Bergsteiger Dorfer** (mountaineers' villages) that aim to protect the authenticity, traditions, and culture of the place avoiding mass tourism, keeping intact the village character, mountain agriculture and forestry, nature and landscape conservation, and environmentally friendly mobility/transport. Together with the nearby lake where to dip in, it's a real paradise for all mountain'lovers!



One of the highlights of the whole tour awaits you: the **Solcava Panoramic Road** is an unmissable destination for the scenic places it display at every turns, a paradise of unspoiled nature made of soaring peaks and valleys running everywhere. Admire the grandeur of the **Logarska Dolina valley**, with the impressive mountain shape of the **Grintovec** range closing it at its southern point, have a break in one of the fantastic organic farms along the way where not only to taste the best local products, but above all, to met the local culture thanks to an authentic warm welcome of the farmers. Follow the clear running waters of the **Savinja** and **Lučnika Rivers** before to enjoy a last, beautiful climb to reach the amazing **Velica Planina** plateau, where you'll find your mountain refugio for the overnight.

There's no better moment of the day than the morning to enjoy the magic atmosphere of the Velica Planina: green pastures all around, white gravel roads, thin threads of smoke coming out from the wooden shepherd's huts, the bells' cows that lazy start to play at the new day. It is simply magic! Enjoy your time out there, it will be priceless. You will get to the city of **Kamnik** right for the lunch time: get ready to taste the best **artisanal beers** with a visit to all four breweries in town! We don't remember how the ride was to get to Ljubljana, we know for sure that we quickly reached our favourite pub in the city to listen good live music, starting to live the unique feezy atmosphere of the gorgeous **Ljubljana**. The territory south of Ljubljana is hilly, green and wild: it will rewards gravel grinders with well kept gravel roads, farms, a nice countryside and at least one major climb (sooo beautiful) to the top of **Slivnica mountain** where you will find Mitja, the good man that runs the mountain refugio. From the top the view over the **Cerknica Lake** (but it could only be a green wetland according with the season) is gorgeous.



After been survived at the downhill from the top of Slivnica mountain (according with the number of grappas/schnapps had at the refugio) to the valley floor, you will cross the Cerknica Lake area (a protected European natural area) cycling fast in one of the smoothest hardpack ever and then you will get lost again in the deep of the woods: hills and hills, miles of good gravel, some stream to cross and you will finally reach the farm where you will overnight. Valentina will know how to regenerate you with a king size dinner!

The scent of the sea! Not yet. It will be preceded by one last big climb (not the last climb of your tour!) to the top of **Slavnik mountain** from where the view goes all over the North Adriatic Sea, from the Gulf of Trieste to the Slovenian and Croatian coastline.

This is the area from where **Slavc**, our grey wolf hero, pointed his wet nose to the sky, leaving his pack and started the epic journey.

Going towards the sea, you will enter the **Karst** arid region, a scented land full of white shining calcareous rocks, cliffs colonized by rosemarin, olive trees, ginestra, figue trees, agave and Fico d'India. Steep - even steeper especially on last kilometers to add some glory - climbs will show you the way to get with glory to your final destination, **Piran**.

Departure town: Dobbiaco

Arrival town: Ljubljana or Piran

- Hotel overnight in Dobbiaco the day before the tour starts
- Day 1_60km/37mi - 2400mt+ / 7870ft+_mountain refugio overnight
- Day 2_62km/38,5mi - 2500mt+ / 8200ft+_mountain refugio overnight
- Day 3_77km/47,8mi - 2870mt+ / 9380ft+_farm overnight
- Day 4_40km/24,8mi - 1860mt+ / 6100ft+_mountain refugio overnight
- Day 5_84km/52,2mi - 2350mt+ / 7710ft+_mountain refugio overnight
- Day 6_52km/32,3mi - 1850mt+ / 6070ft+_mountain refugio overnight
- Day 7_50km / 31,06mi - 1900mt+ / 6233ft+_ hotel overnight (optional 2 nights at the farm with one layover day)
- Day 8_64km / 39,76mi - 2020mt+ / 6627ft+_mountain refugio overnight (optional stay in a traditional wooden shepherd's hut)
- Day 9_57km / 35,4mi - 750mt+ / 2460ft+_hotel overnight in Ljubljana
- Day 10_100km / 62,13mi - 2000mt+ / 6561ft+_farm overnight
- Day 11_83km / 51,57mi - 1900mt+ / 6233ft+_hotel overnight in Piran

Please note: the fast boat connecting Piran with Venice (3h30min) leaves Piran only on Saturdays

