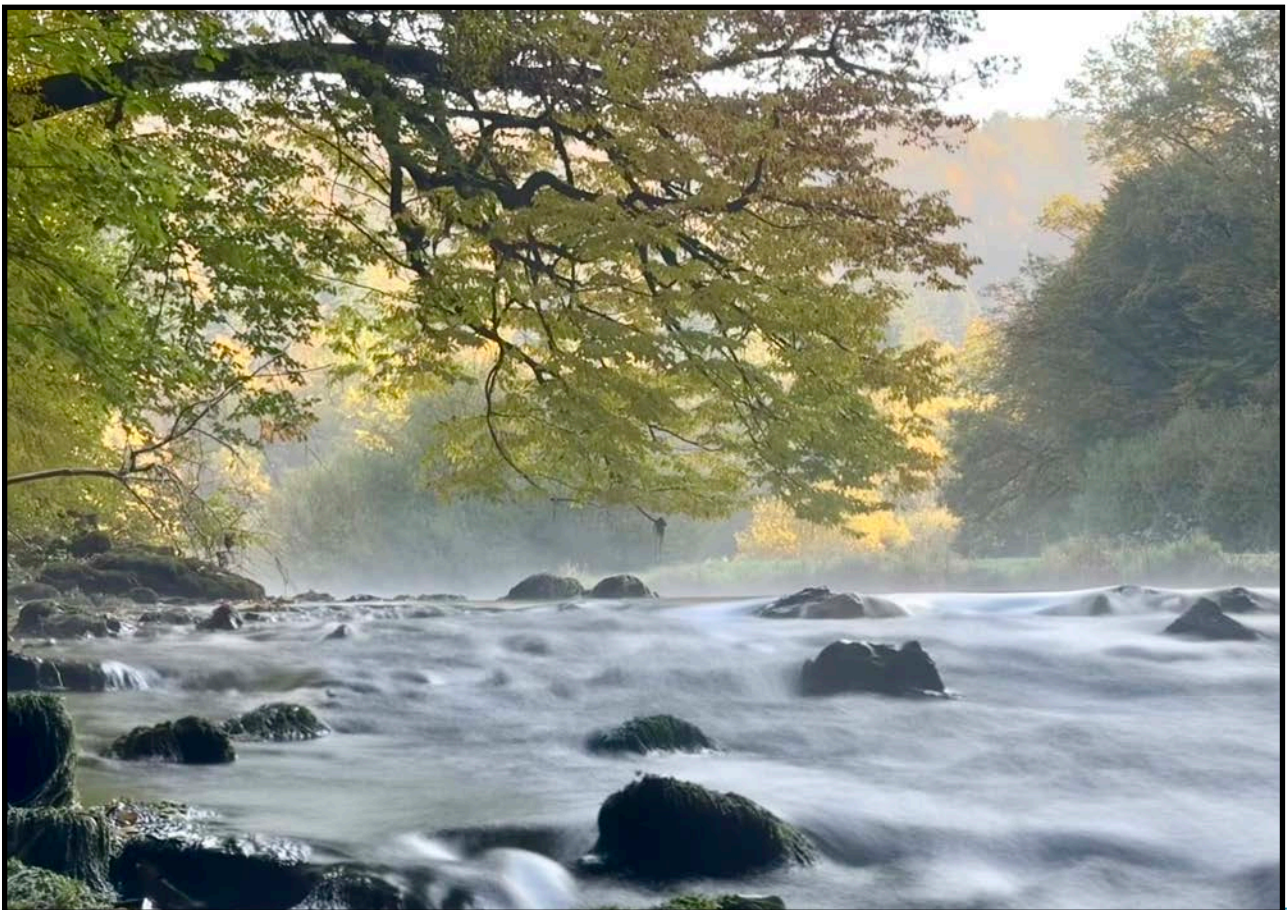
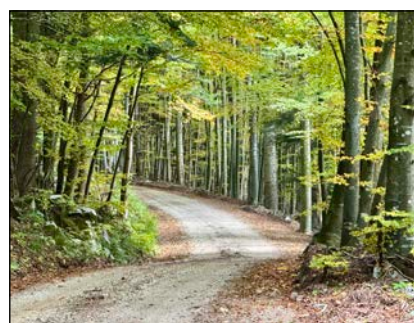

Argonauts

Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, is the city of the dragons. We don't know how much to believe to the myth of Giason and his men who sailed up the Ljubljanica River with their ship Argo and fought a terrible dragon. Victorious after the battle, on the place they'll give birth to the actual city of Ljubljana. What is certainly true is that still nowadays more of the 60% of Slovenian territory is covered by dense forests, rugged mountain ridges, deep and dark valleys where wild rivers runs free. If there is a place where a dragon could enjoy his staying, this is the one! Load a couple of Union beers - whose factory is in Ljubljana city center and has a dragon on its label - on your bike and carry them with you on this epic gravel cycling ride along some of the wildest Slovenian surroundings. If you meet the dragon, drink to your health!

5 days - 380km/240mi - 9.000mt+/30.000ft+ - level: moderate to demanding



Argonauts gravel bike tour starts from our beloved city of **Ljubljana**, capital of Slovenia, the greenest among European cities for its environmental commitment. A car-free city center, a huge cycling lane network, city parks and gardens everywhere, bar, great restaurants, live music, night life. We know it will be hard to leave... ! The territory south of Ljubljana is hilly, green and wild: it will reward gravel grinders with well kept gravel roads, lonely 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 where you will be hosted for the overnight. 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 (according with the number of grappas/schnapps had as goodnight at the refugio) to the valley floor, you will cross the **Cerknika 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. You will resurface only while climbing to the top of the beautiful **Nanos's** plateau, also known as the "Burja's plateau", where the strong wind from the North-East get at its best! The place offer amazing views over the Giulian Alps, the Venice lagoon and the Dynaric Alps mountain chain to the South-East. You are right above the beautiful **Vipava river valley**, a world' famous wine region: a fast descent will let you get in town right in time for the aperitif. A Ribolla served chill is an elisir to escape the heat of the ride and to get ready for one of the best dinner of your life at our much loved farm, where you will overnight.

The next morning you will cycle following the Vipava River with its beautiful network of gravel roads to get to the town of **Gorizia/Nova Gorica** - right at the border in between Italy and Slovenia and 2025 European Culture Capital. Don't miss an aperitif on a busy bar on the central square to taste gorgeous red wines from the nearby **Collio/Brda** wine region: try it together with local finger food. Left Gorizia/Nova Gorica, you will climb the **Collio/Brda** hills to get to the town of **San Floriano del Collio**, placed on a super panoramic balcony. Steep climbs will be rewarded by the view of one of the most precious cultural landscapes, where gentle hills, vineyards, woodland and small settlements blend harmoniously together. Don't miss a glass of Malvasia too. Left the wine area you'll tackle the long ridge that ends on the ultra-panoramic top of the **Kolovrat mountain**, from where the view runs free on the full range of peaks of the Julian Alps and, down below, the unbelievably turquoise waters of the **Soka River** running towards the town of **Tolmin**, your destination for today. Do not miss a visit to the **Korita Zadlaščice gorge**, one of the highlights of the Soka River valley!



From the Soka River valley you will then start to explore the dense forested, sparsely inhabited, beautifully wild area of the western Inner Carniola/Notranjska region, cycling along the **Idrija** and **Trebuščica rivers**. Do not forget swimsuits! The pristine and clear waters will offer plenty of opportunities for refreshing dives thanks to small and secluded beaches. Enjoy this true paradise for gravel cycling - in the heart of the **Idrija Unesco Geoparc** - and discover the beautiful **Wild Lake**, a turquoise eye in the middle of the forest. After an overnight on a farm near the town of Idrija - and a great culinary experience with best local products - you'll be fully energized to start crossing the whole territory of the **Polhov Gradec Hills**, made of forests crossed by miles and miles by finest gravel roads. After a last climb to **Saint Jakob church** - a scenographic little white church, one of the symbols of the Slovenian countryside - you will finally get back to Ljubljana, the city of the dragons.



Departure town: Ljubljana

Arrival town: Ljubljana

- Hotel overnight in Ljubljana the day before the tour starts and when it ends
 - Day 1_52km/32,3mi - 1300mt+/4270ft+_mountain refugio overnight
 - Day 2_100km/62,2mi - 1700mt+/5600ft+_farm overnight
 - Day 3_100km/62,2mi - 2000mt+/6560ft+_hotel overnight
 - Day 4_60km/37,3mi - 1900mt+/6230ft+_farm overnight
 - Day 5_65km/40,4mi - 1900mt+/6230ft+_hotel overnight in Ljubljana
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