

Ljubljana



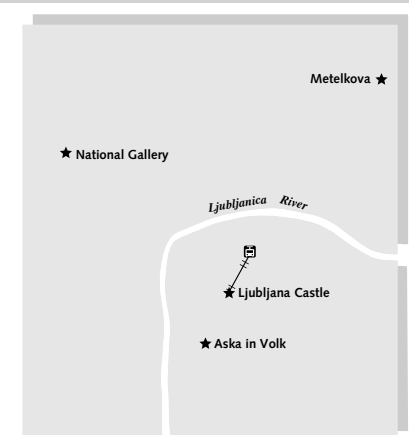
With a dazzling hilltop castle as her crown and the emerald-green Ljubljanica River at her feet, Ljubljana is a princess in size (petite). But her pint size conceals a wealth of culture, sights, activities and good old-fashioned fun that would be the envy of a city twice her extent. And best of all, everything is within such easy reach – a mere stroll or cycle away.

The princess, whose name *almost* means 'beloved' (*ljubljen*) in Slovene, is also a working girl. As the country's political, economic and cultural capital, this is where virtually everything of national importance begins, ends or is taking place. Of course that might not be immediately apparent in spring and summer, when café tables spill into the narrow streets of the Old Town and street musicians and actors entertain passers-by in Prešernov trg and on the little bridges spanning the Ljubljanica River.

Ljubljana's buzzing student community – there are some 56,650 students attending Ljubljana University's 20 faculties, three art academies and three university colleges – and alternative-lifestyle centre at Metelkova are added bonuses. Admittedly, the city may lack the grandeur or big-ticket attractions of, say, Prague or Budapest, but the great museums and galleries, atmospheric bars and varied, accessible nightlife make it a wonderful, relaxed place to visit and stay awhile – perhaps longer than you had planned.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Enjoy a thrilling ride on the new **funicular** (p71) up to Ljubljana Castle for the spectacular views
- Stroll along the willow-lined walkways of the Ljubljanica River or the **Trail of Remembrance** (p76) around the city
- View the collection of 20th-century Slovenian art at the **National Gallery** (p73)
- Do a pub-crawl through the Old Town and end up at any of the **alternative clubs** (p86) at Metelkova
- Make a meal of *pljeskavica* with *ajvar* at the **Aska in Volk** (p82)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: ###

■ POPULATION: ###

■ LABEL: STAT

HISTORY

The first written reference to Ljubljana as the town of Laibach appeared in 1144, but the area had been inhabited for at least three millennia before then. An infertile bog to the south of the present city was settled during the Bronze Age by marsh dwellers who lived in round huts built on stilts. These early people – mostly hunters and fisherfolk – were followed by the Illyrians and, sometime in the 4th century BC, by the Celts, who established themselves along the Ljubljanica River.

The first important settlement in the area, however, came with the arrival of the Romans who built a military camp here in around 50 BC. Within a hundred years, what had become known as Emona was a thriving town of 5000 inhabitants and a strategic crossroad on the routes linking Upper Pannonia in the south with the Roman colonies at Noricum and Aquileia to the north and west. Legacies of the Roman presence – remnants of walls, dwellings and early churches – can still be seen throughout Ljubljana.

Emona was sacked and destroyed by the Huns, Ostrogoths and Langobards (Lombards) from the mid-5th century, but the 'Ljubljana gate' remained an important crossing point between east and west. Tribes of early Slavs settled here at the end of the 6th century.

Ljubljana changed hands frequently in the Middle Ages. The last and most momentous change came in 1335, when the Habsburgs became the town's new rulers. Except for a brief interlude in the early 19th century, they would remain the city's (and the nation's) masters until the end of WWI in 1918.

The town and its hilltop castle were able to repel the Turks in the late 15th century, but a devastating earthquake in 1511 reduced much of the medieval Ljubljana to rubble. This led to a period of frantic construction in the 17th and 18th centuries that provided Ljubljana with many of its pale-coloured baroque churches and mansions – and the nickname 'Bela (White) Ljubljana'. The most important engineering feat was the building of a canal to the south and east of Castle Hill in the late 18th century that regulated the flow of the Ljubljanica and prevented flooding.

When Napoleon established his Illyrian Provinces in 1809 in a bid to cut Habsburg Austria's access to the Adriatic, he made Ljubljana the capital; Austrian rule was restored in 1813. In 1821 members of the Holy Alliance (Austria, Prussia, Russia and Naples) met at the Congress of Laibach to discuss measures to suppress the democratic revolutionary and national movements in Italy.

Railways linked Ljubljana with Vienna and Trieste in 1849 and 1857, stimulating economic development of the town. Not long after the Ljubljana Tobacco Factory was established in 1871 it was employing 2500 people. By then this city had become the centre of Slovenian nationalism under Austrian rule. But in 1895 another, more powerful earthquake struck, forcing the city to rebuild once again. To Ljubljana's great benefit, the Secessionist and Art Nouveau styles were all the rage in Central Europe at the time, and many of the wonderful buildings erected then still stand.

During WWII Ljubljana was occupied by the Italians and then the Germans, who en-

circled the city with a barbed-wire fence creating, in effect, an urban concentration camp. Ljubljana became the capital of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia within Yugoslavia in 1945 and remained the capital after Slovenia's independence in 1991. Today, Ljubljana is the nation's largest and most vibrant city.

ORIENTATION

Ljubljana lies within the Ljubljana Basin (Ljubljanska Kotlina), which extends 25km to the north and northwest along the Sava River to Kranj. The basin has two distinct parts: the Ljubljana Marsh (Ljubljansko Barje) to the south and the fertile Ljubljana Plain (Ljubljansko Polje) to the north and east. The city is wedged between the Polhov Gradec hills to the west and Golovec hills (including Castle Hill) to the east and southeast.

Ljubljana is traditionally divided into two dozen districts, but only a handful are of any importance to travellers. Center is the commercial area on the left bank of the Ljubljanica River, to the west and north of Castle Hill and the Old Town. Tabor and Poljane are the easternmost parts of Center, and Bežigrad, where the bulk of the university buildings are, lies to the north of them. Krakovo and Trnovo, two old suburbs south of Center, retain a lot of traditional charm.

Certain streets and squares (eg Čopova ulica, Prešernov trg, most of Trubarjeva cesta) and much of the Old Town are pedestrianised. The Ljubljanica is crossed by more than a dozen vehicular bridges and footbridges, and three of them – Cobbler Bridge (Čevljarški Most), Triple Bridge (Tromostovje) and Dragon Bridge (Zmajski Most) – are most useful to travellers and historically important.

Brnik airport, 27km to the northwest, is easily accessible by bus and taxi (p91). The train and bus stations are opposite one another on Trg Osvobodilne Fronte (Trg OF) at the northern end of Center. You can reach the centre by walking south along Slovenska cesta, the capital's main thoroughfare some 300m to the west.

Maps

The tourist office hands out its own free 1:35,000-scale *Ljubljana City Map*; ask them for the more useful tear-out map of the central district with street index. For extended stays, you might want to pick up the 1:20,000-scale commercial *Mestni Načrt Ljubljana* (Ljubljana

City Map; €7) published by Kod & Kam (p61), which has an enlarged 1:7000 plan of the centre and a 1:75,000 map of the surrounding areas on the reverse. The 1:15,000 *Atlas Mesta Ljubljana in Okolica* (€13) is a street atlas of the capital and its suburbs. The town centre appears on a scale of 1: 6600.

INFORMATION

Bookshops

Geonavtik (Map pp66-7; ☎ 252 70 27; www.geo.navig.com, in Slovene; Kongresni trg 1; ☎ 8.30am-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-4pm Sat) Superb shop with travel and nautical guides, maps, books about Slovenia and a popular café/bar (p87).

Knjigarna Vale-Novak (Map pp66-7; ☎ 422 34 10; Wolfova ulica 8; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat, 10am-noon Sun) Inviting, well-run and very large, this bookshop is in the heart of town.

Kod & Kam (Map pp66-7; ☎ 200 27 32; www.kod-kam.si; Trg Francoske Revolucije 7; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) 'Whence & Whither' stocks local city, regional and hiking maps as well as imported maps and guides (enter from Gosposka ulica).

Mladinska Knjiga (Map pp66-7 ☎ 241 06 51; 1st fl, Slovenska cesta 29; ☎ 9am-7.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) Miklošičeva cesta (Map pp62-3; ☎ 234 27 81; Miklošičeva cesta 40; ☎ 8.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) 'MK' is the biggest and best-stocked bookshop in Ljubljana, with lots of guidebooks, maps, pictorials, fiction and newspapers and periodicals in English.

Cultural Centres

British Council (Map pp62-3; ☎ 300 20 30; www.britishcouncil.si; Tivolska cesta 30; Center Tivoli; ☎ 11am-8pm Mon-Fri)

SLAVENIAN HERITAGE

If you are searching for your Slovenian roots, check first with the *mestna občina* (municipal government) or *občina* (county office); they have birth and death certificates going back a century. Vital records beyond the 100-year limit are kept at the **Archives of the Republic of Slovenia** (Arhiv Republike Slovenije; Map p75; ☎ 241 42 00; www.arhiv.gov.si; Gruber Palace, Zvezdarska ulica 1; ☎ 8am-3pm Mon, Tue & Thu, 8am-4.30pm Wed, 8am-2pm Fri). Ethnic Slovenes living abroad should contact the **Slovenian Emigrants Centre** (Slovenska Izseljenška Matica, SIM; Map pp66-7; ☎ 241 02 80; www.zdruzenje-sim.si; 2nd fl, Cankarjeva cesta 1; ☎ by appointment).

LJUBLJANA IN...

One Day

From Prešernov trg cross the Triple Bridge to Mestni trg in the Old Town. Ascend Ulica na Grad from Gornji trg to Ljubljana Castle (p70). Grajska Kavarna (p85) has outdoor seating and is a convenient spot for a snack or light lunch. In the afternoon visit the National Museum or the National Gallery (p73), then walk through Park Tivoli (p74) to cool off (or warm up – depending on the season) at the Ilirija swimming pool (p77) or Zlati Klub sauna (p77). End the day with a drink at Kavarna Pločnik (p85) and a meal at Taverna Tatjana (p83).

Two Days

The next day follow the walking tour on p77 for an introduction to what Ljubljana looks like off the beaten track. In the afternoon rent a bike from Ljubljana Bike (p91) and cycle through Park Tivoli (p74) to the Ljubljana Zoo (p74) or along the Ljubljanica River. In the evening take in a performance at the Križanke or Cankarjev Dom (p72) and then visit one of the clubs (p86).



Kongresni trg with Plečnikov trg, and on Hrib-arjevo nabrežje (Map pp66-7) below Kavarna Pločnik (p85) on Prešernov trg.

commodation info ☎ 434 56 90; www.pzs.si; Dvoržakova ulica 9; 🕒 8am-5pm Mon, 8am-3pm Tue-Fri) Information about hiking and mountain huts throughout the country, with maps and guides for sale.

Tourist Information

Alpine Association of Slovenia (Planinska Zveza Slovenije; Map pp62-3; general info ☎ 434 56 80, ac-

Ljubljana Tourist Information Centre Kresjija Bldg (TIC; Map pp66-7; ☎ 306 12 15; www.ljubljana-tourism.si; Kresjija Bldg, Stritarjeva ulica; 🕒 8am-9pm Jun-Sep,

INFORMATION	Prešeren Monument.....	47 C3	Cafe Antico.....	94 C5
Central Pharmacy.....	Robba Fountain.....	48 C4	Café Galerija.....	(see 23)
Chemo Express.....	Škuc Gallery.....	49 C6	Cutty Sark.....	95 B3
Cyber Café Xplorer.....	Schweiger House.....	50 C5	Dvorni Bar.....	96 B4
European Union House.....	Seminary.....	51 D3	Grajska Kavarna.....	97 D4
Geonavtik.....	(see 112)		Slovenian Academy of Arts and Sciences.....	98 C6
Hida Exchange Bureau.....	5 D3		Slovenian School Museum.....	53 A3
Institut Frančis Charles Nodier.....	6 B6		Tourist Train.....	54 C3
Knjigarna Vale-Novak.....	7 B3		Town Hall.....	55 C4
Kod & Kam.....	8 B5		Tranca.....	56 C5
Kompas.....	9 B2		Urbanc.....	(see 122)
Ljubljana City Savings Bank Building.....	10 B3		Ursuline Church of the Holy Trinity.....	57 A4
Ljubljana Tourist Information Centre (TIC).....	11 C3		Viewasor's Birthplace.....	58 C5
Main Post Office.....	12 A2		Viewing Tower.....	59 D4
Mladinska Knjiga.....	13 A3		Virtual Museum.....	(see 59)
Nova Ljubljanska Banka.....	14 C4		SLEEPING	
Škuc Cultural Centre.....	(see 49)		Alibi Hostel.....	60 B4
ŠOU Information Centre.....	15 C2		Alibi K5.....	61 C4
Slovenian Emigrants Centre.....	16 A2		Antiq Hotel.....	62 C6
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES			Grand Hotel Union Business.....	63 C1
Bishop's Palace.....	17 C3		Grand Hotel Union Executive.....	64 C2
Cankarjevo Nabrežje Pier (Boat Tours).....	18 B3		Hotel Emonec.....	65 B3
Cathedral of St Nicholas.....	19 D3		Hotel Slon Best Western.....	66 B2
Chapel of St George.....	(see 59)		Pri Mraku.....	67 A5
Church of St Florian.....	20 D6		Tour As.....	68 D1
Church of St James.....	21 C6		EATING	
Citizen of Emona.....	22 A3		Ajdovo Zrno.....	69 C2
City Gallery.....	23 C4		Aska in Volk.....	70 C6
Cooperative Bank.....	24 C2		Cantina Mexicana.....	71 B3
DESSA Architectural Gallery.....	25 B5		Chez Eric.....	72 C4
Equrna Gallery.....	26 A5		Covered Market.....	(see 51)
Franciscan Church of the Annunciation.....	27 C2		Delikatesa Ljubljanski Dvor.....	73 B4
Funicular Lower Station.....	28 D3		Fish Market.....	74 C3
Funicular Upper Station.....	29 D4		Gostilna As.....	75 B3
Grand Hotel Union.....	(see 64)		Gostilna Pri Pavli.....	76 C6
Grand Hotel Union.....	(see 63)		Julija.....	77 C5
Hauptman House (Ura Building).....	30 B3		Ljubljanski Dvor.....	78 B4
Hercules Fountain.....	31 C6		Lunch Café.....	79 C5
Ilirija Column.....	32 A6		Open-air Markets.....	80 D3
Križanke.....	33 A6		Paninoteka.....	81 B4
Little Gallery.....	34 A2		Pizzerija Foculus.....	82 A5
Ljubljana Castle.....	35 D4		Pri Vitezu.....	83 B6
Ljubljana City Museum.....	36 B6		Ribka.....	84 C3
Ljubljana University.....	37 B4		Smrekarjev Hram.....	85 B2
Luwigiana Gallery.....	38 C6		Sokol.....	86 C3
Medieval Houses.....	39 C6		Sushimama.....	87 B3
National and University Library.....	40 A5		Taverna Tatjana.....	88 D6
Nebotičnik.....	41 A2		Triglav.....	89 C2
Pentagonal Tower.....	42 D5		DRINKING	
People's Loan Bank.....	43 C2		Abecedarium Cafe.....	90 C3
Philharmonic Hall.....	44 B4		As Pub.....	(see 75)
Plečnikov Colonnade.....	45 D3		BikoFe.....	91 B5
Plečnik Cone.....	46 C3		Čajna Hiša.....	92 C5
			Čarli.....	93 D2
			ENTERTAINMENT	
			As Pub.....	(see 75)
			Bacchus Centre Club.....	109 B3
			Glej Theatre.....	(see 26)
			Global.....	110 A2
			Jazz Club Gajo.....	111 A3
			Kavarna Geonavtik.....	112 A3
			Kino Komuna.....	113 A2
			Križanke.....	(see 33)
			Philharmonic Hall.....	(see 44)
			Slovenian National Drama Theatre.....	114 A4
			Tramontana.....	115 B2
			SHOPPING	
			Akultura.....	116 C5
			Antika Ferjan.....	117 C4
			Antiques Flea Market.....	118 B4
			ArtGlass Atelje.....	119 B4
			Butanoga.....	120 C6
			Carniola Antiqua.....	121 C2
			Centromerkur Department Store.....	122 C3
			Devetka.....	123 C6
			Galerija Fortuna.....	124 C5
			Katarina Silk.....	125 C6
			Ljubljancček.....	126 C2
			MCD Shop.....	127 C2
			Muzikalje.....	128 A5
			Nama Department Store.....	129 A2
			Piranske Soline.....	130 C4
			Rustika.....	131 D4
			Skrina.....	132 B5
			Spin Vinyl.....	133 C6
			Studio Irma Vončina.....	134 C4
			Trubarjev Antikvariat.....	135 C4
			Vino Boutique.....	136 B2
			TRANSPORT	
			ABC Rent a Car.....	137 D1
			Budget.....	(see 63)
			Europcar.....	(see 137)
			Ljubljana Bike Stand.....	138 C2

8am-7pm Oct-May); Train station (Map pp62-3; ☎ 433 94 75; central hall, Ljubljana train station, Trg OF; 🚶 8am-10pm Jun-Sep, 10am-7pm Oct-May) Run by the innovative Ljubljana Tourist Board (Zavod za Turizem Ljubljana), these outlets are excellent sources of information on Ljubljana and the rest of Slovenia. Knowledgeable, enthusiastic staff dispense information and useful literature (*Ljubljana City Map, Where to? in Ljubljana* tourist guide, *Ljubljana from A to Z* booklet etc) and can check accommodation availability. **Slovenian Tourist Information Centre** (STIC; Map pp62-3; ☎ 306 45 75; www.slovenia.info; Krekov trg 10; 🚶 8am-9pm Jun-Sep, 8am-7pm Oct-May) Good source of information for the rest of Slovenia. Internet and bicycle rental also available.

Student Organisation of the University of Ljubljana

(Studentska Organizacija Univerze Ljubljani; SOU; Map pp66-7; ☎ 433 01 76, 438 02 00; www.sou-lj.si/english; Trubarjeva cesta 7; 🚶 10am-6pm Mon-Thu, 10am-3pm Fri) Information and student cards.

Travel Agencies

Erazem (Map pp62-3; ☎ 430 55 37; www.erazem.net; basement, Miklošičeva cesta 26; 🚶 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Jun-Sep; noon-5pm Mon-Fri Oct-May) Popular with backpackers and students; staff make plane, train and ferry bookings and sell ISIC, ITC and IYTC cards. **Globtour** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 244 13 20; www.globtour.si; Maximarket passageway, Trg Republike 1; 🚶 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat)

Kompas Slovenska cesta (Map pp66-7; ☎ 200 62 22; www.kompas.net; Slovenska cesta 36; 🚶 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-12.30pm Sat); Miklošičeva cesta (Map pp62-3; ☎ 200 63 40; Miklošičeva cesta 11; 🚶 9am-5pm Mon-Fri)

Label (Map pp62-3; ☎ 051-200 743; www.label.si; Trubarjeva cesta 47; 🚶 9.30am-7.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) Subtitled 'Board Culture Shop', this agency organises adventure-sport excursions around Slovenia.

STA Ljubljana (Map pp66-7; ☎ 439 16 90, 041-612 711; www.staljubljana.com, in Slovenc; 1st fl, Trg Ajdovščina 1; 🚶 10am-1pm & 2-5pm Mon-Fri) Offers discount airfares for students and its café has internet access. Located in the Mobilnet Centre.

Trek Trek (Map pp62-3; ☎ 425 13 92, 041-521 655; www.trekkrek.si; Bičevje ulica 5; 🚶 10am-5pm Mon-Fri) Specialising in adventure travel, with emphasis on trekking and cycling holidays in southeast Slovenia.

SIGHTS

The easiest way to see the best that Ljubljana has to offer is on foot. The oldest part of town, with the most important historical buildings and sights (including Ljubljana Castle) lies on the right (east) bank of the Ljubljanica; on the left (west) side is Center and the lion's share of the city's museums.

Prešernov Trg

This central and very beautiful square (Map pp66-7) forms the link between Center and the Old Town. Taking pride of place is the **Prešeren monument** (1905) designed by Maks Fabiani and Ivan Zajc, and erected in honour of Slovenia's greatest poet, France Prešeren (1800-49). On the plinth are motifs from his poems. Just south of the monument is the **Triple Bridge** (Tromostovje), once called Špital Bridge (1842), which leads to the Old Town. The prolific architect Jože Plečnik added the two sides in 1931.

To the east of the monument at No 5 is the Italianate **Central Pharmacy** (Centralna Lekarna), an erstwhile café frequented by intellectuals in the 19th century. To the north, on the corner of Trubarjeva cesta and Miklošičeva cesta, is the delightful Secessionist **Urbanc** building (1903), now the Centromerker department store. Diagonally across the square at No 1 is another Secessionist gem: the **Hauptman House** (or Ura building). Peer two doors down Wolfova ulica and at No 4 you'll see a terracotta figure peeking out from a 'window'. It's Julija Primic looking at the monument to her lifelong admirer Prešeren.

The 17th-century Italianate **Franciscan Church of the Annunciation** (Frančiškanska Cerkev Marijinega Oznanjanja; ☎ 242 93 00; Prešernov trg 4; 🚶 6.45am-noon & 3-8pm) stands on the northern side of the square. The interior is not so interesting with its six side altars and enormous choir stall, though the main altar was designed by the Italian sculptor Francesco Robba (1698-1757).

Miklošičeva Cesta

This 650m-long thoroughfare links Prešernov trg with Trg OF and the train and bus stations; the southern end boasts a splendid array of fine Secessionist buildings. The cream-coloured former **People's Loan Bank** (Map pp66-7; 1908) at No 4 is topped with blue tiles and the figures of two women holding symbols of industry (a beehive) and wealth (a purse). The one-time **Cooperative Bank** (Map pp66-7) at No 8 was designed by Ivan Vurnik, and the red, yellow and blue geometric patterns were painted by his wife Helena in 1922. Just opposite is the **Grand Hotel Union** (Map pp66-7), the *grande dame* of Ljubljana hotels built in 1905. About 150m to the north is **Miklošičev Park** (Map pp62-3 & Map pp66-7), laid out by Fabiani in 1902.

All the buildings facing it are Art Nouveau masterpieces, with the exception of the unspeakable one housing offices, trade unions and a bank to the south.

Central Market

The Central Market (Centralna Tržnica; Map pp66-7) lies across Triple Bridge to the southeast of Prešernov trg. The elegant covered walkway along the river, the **Plečnik Colonnade** (Plečnikov Arkada), forms part of the market to the north.

Walk through **Pogačarjev trg** and on to **Vodnikov trg**, with their wonderful open-air market stalls selling everything from wild mushrooms and forest berries, to honey and homemade cheeses, such as soft white *sirček*.

The curious **cone** at the entrance to Pogačarjev trg was erected in honour of Plečnik in 1993. It represents the similarly shaped parliament building he designed, but never built, for the top of Castle Hill. The building on the southern side of the square is the Renaissance **Bishop's Palace** (Škofijski Dvorec), with a lovely arched central courtyard. The **Seminary** (Semenišče; 1708) to the east, its entrance framed by a pair of Atlas figures sculpted by Andrea Pozzo of Atlases, contains ornate baroque furnishings and a library with priceless incunabula, 16th-century manuscripts and frescoes. The interior can be visited by appointment only; contact the tourist office. There's a covered market with meat, fish and dairy products on the ground floor (p84).

Dominating Pogačarjev trg is the **Cathedral of St Nicholas** (Stolnica; Map pp66-7; ☎ 234 26 90; Dolničarjeva ulica 1; 🚶 10am-noon & 3-6pm). A church has stood here since the 13th century, but the existing twin-towered building dates from the start of the 18th century. Inside it's a palace of pink marble, white stucco and gilt, with frescoes by baroque master Giulio Quaglio

and 19th-century artist Matevž Langus. Have a look at the magnificent carved choir stalls, organ and the angels on the main altar – another Robba creation. Two stunning bronze doors were added in 1996 to commemorate the late Pope John Paul II's visit – the (main) west door facing the Bishop's Palace symbolises 1250 years of Christianity in Slovenia, and the six bishops on the south door fronting Ciril-Methodov trg depict the history of the Ljubljana diocese.

Old Town

Ljubljana's Old Town (Staro Mesto; Map pp66-7) is its oldest and most important historical quarter. A large portion of the buildings here are baroque, although some houses along Stari trg and Gornji trg have retained their medieval layout.

MESTNI TRG

The first of the Old Town's three 'squares' (the next two are more like narrow cobbled streets), Mestni trg (Town Square) is dominated by the **town hall** (rotovž; ☎ 306 30 00; 🚶 7.30am-4pm Mon-Fri), the seat of the city government and sometimes referred to as the Magistrat. It was erected in the late 15th century and rebuilt in 1718. The Gothic courtyard inside, arched on three levels, is where theatrical performances once took place and contains some lovely sgraffiti. If you look above the south portal leading to a second courtyard you'll see a relief map of Ljubljana in the second half of the 17th century.

In front of the town hall stands the **Robba Fountain** (1751); the three titans with their gushing urns represent the three rivers of Carniola: the Sava, Krka and Ljubljanica.

STARI TRG

'Old Square', the true heart of the Old Town, is lined with 19th-century wooden shop

WAGGIN' DRAGONS

Ljubljana's town hall is topped with a golden dragon, a symbol of Ljubljana but not an ancient one as many people assume. Just before the turn of the 20th century a wily mayor named Ivan Hribar apparently persuaded the authorities in Vienna that Ljubljana needed a new crossing over the Ljubljanica, and submitted plans for a 'Jubilee Bridge' to mark 50 years of the reign of Franz Joseph. The result, the much-loved Dragon Bridge (Zmajski Most) was built to the northeast, off Vodnikov trg, and renamed in 1919. City folk say the winged bronze dragons wag their tails whenever a virgin crosses the bridge. To his credit, Mayor Hribar even suggested that a lift be built to Ljubljana Castle, something has finally been realised in the form of a funicular (p71).

fronts, quiet courtyards and cobblestone passageways. From behind the medieval houses on the eastern side, paths once led to Castle Hill, which was a source of water. The buildings fronting the river had large passageways built to allow drainage in case of flooding. Where No 4 is today a prison called **Tranča** formerly stood until the 18th century, and those condemned to death were executed at a spot nearby. The great polymath Janez Vajkard Valvasor (p198) was born in the house next door in 1641.

A small street to the north called Pod Trančo (Below Tranča) leads to **Cobbler Bridge** (Čevljarski Most). During the Middle Ages this was a place of trade, and a tolled gateway led to the town. Craftsmen worked and lived on the bridges (in this case 16 shoemakers) to catch the traffic and avoid paying town taxes; it was a kind of medieval version of duty-free.

Between Stari trg 11a and No 15 – the house that *should* bear the number 13 – there's a lovely rococo building called **Schweiger House** with a large Atlas supporting the upper balcony. The figure has his finger raised to his lips as if asking passers-by to be quiet (the owner's name means 'Silent One' in German). In this part of the world, bordellos were traditionally located at house No 13 of a street, and he probably got quite a few unsolicited calls.

In Levstikov trg, the southern extension of Stari trg, the **Hercules Fountain** is a recent copy of the 17th-century statue now in the town hall. To the southeast is the **Church of St James** (Cerkev Sv Jakoba; Map p66-7; ☎ 252 17 27; Gornji trg 18; ☞ 7am-8pm) built in 1615. Inside the church, far more interesting than Robba's main altar (1732) is the one in the church's **Chapel of St Francis Xavier** to the left, with statues of a 'White Queen' and a 'Black King'.

Across Karlovska cesta is **Gruber Palace** (Gruberjeva Palača; Map p75; Zvezdarska ulica 1). Gabriel Gruber, the Jesuit who built the Gruber Canal (Gruberjev Prekop) that regulates the Ljubljana, lived here until 1784. The palace is in Zopf style, a transitional art style between late baroque and neoclassicism, and now contains the national archives (p61). If you look eastward on Karlovska cesta to No 1, you'll see what was once the **Balkan Gate** (Map p75), the southernmost point of the Old Town. From here the town walls ran up Castle Hill.

GORNJI TRG

'Upper Square' is the eastern extension of Stari trg. The five **medieval houses** at Nos 7 to 15 (Map pp66-7) have narrow side passages (some with doors) where rubbish was once deposited so that it could be washed down into the river. The most important building on this elongated square is the **Church of St Florian** (Cerkev Sv Florijana), built in 1672 it was dedicated to the patron saint of fires after a serious blaze destroyed much of the Old Town. It was renovated by Plečnik in 1934.

The footpath **Ulica na Grad**, leading up from the church, is an easy way to reach the castle.

Botanical Garden

About 800m southeast of the Old Town along Karlovska cesta and over the Ljubljana River, this 2.5-hectare **botanical garden** (Botanični Vrt; Map p75; ☎ 427 12 80; lžanska cesta 15; admission free; ☞ 7am-7pm Apr-Oct, 7am-5pm Nov-Mar) was founded in 1810 as a sanctuary of native flora. It contains 4500 species of plants and trees, about a third of which are indigenous, and is overseen by the University of Ljubljana. You can also reach here on bus 3 from Slovenska cesta (stop: Strelišče).

Ljubljana Castle

Known as Ljubljana Castle (Ljubljanski Grad), there have been fortifications of one kind or another on Castle Hill (Grajska Planota) since at least Celtic times, but the existing **castle** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 232 99 94; www.festival-lj.si; admission free; ☞ 9am-10pm May-Sep, 10am-9pm Oct-Apr) mostly dates from a 16th-century rebuilding following the 1511 earthquake. It was a royal residence in the 17th and 18th centuries and a prison and barracks in the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. About 80% of the castle has been renovated in recent years, and it is now frequently used as a venue for concerts and other cultural activities, and as a wedding hall on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

The **Viewing Tower** (Razgledni Stolp; Map pp66-7; adult/senior & student/family €3.30/2/4.15; ☎ 9am-9pm May-Sep, 10am-6pm Oct-Apr), which is the tower on the western side of the castle courtyard, contains the **Virtual Museum** (Virtualni Muzej), a 20-minute 3D video tour of Ljubljana and its history in four languages. The climb up to the top of the tower, via a double wrought-iron staircase (95 steps from the museum level) of the 19th-century tower and a walk along

the ramparts, is worth the effort for the views down into the Old Town and across the river to Center.

Attached to the Viewing Tower, the **Chapel of St George** (Kapela Sv Jurija; 1489) is covered in frescoes and the coats of arms of the Dukes of Carniola. In the castle's southern wing, the **Pentagonal Tower** (Peterokotni Stolp) hosts changing exhibitions, smaller concerts and theatrical performances.

Castle tours (Map pp66-7; adult/senior/student & under 18 €4/6/3.30; ☞ 10am & 4pm Jun-mid-Sep) depart from the bridge at the castle's main entrance and include admission to the tower and museum.

You can reach the castle from the Old Town on foot in about 15 minutes via any of three routes: Študentovska ulica, which runs south from Ciril-Metodov trg; steep Reber ulica from Stari trg; and Ulica na Grad from Gornji trg. The fastest way to reach the castle is via the new **funicular**, which ascends from Krekov trg in just one minute. You can also take the hourly **tourist train** (Map pp66-7; adult/child €2.50/1.70; ☎ 11am-6pm Apr-mid-Jun; 9am-9pm mid-Jun-Sep, 9am-7pm Oct, 11am-3pm Nov-Mar) from Prešernov trg.

Tabor

North of Castle Hill across the Ljubljana River, this district (Map pp62-3) is leafy, residential, and home to the pulsating Metelkova district of alternative culture (p86). Some say it also holds Ljubljana's best museum.

SLOVENIAN ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM

This new **museum** (Slovenski Etnografski Muzej; Map pp62-3; ☎ 300 87 45; www.etno-muzej.si; Metelkova ulica 2; adult/student & senior €3.35/2.10, admission free last Sun of month; ☞ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun), housed in the 1886 Belgian Barracks on the southern edge of Metelkova, has a permanent collection on the 3rd floor. There's traditional Slovenian trades and handicrafts – everything from beekeeping and blacksmithing to glass-painting and pottery making – and some excellent exhibits directed at children. Temporary exhibits are on the 1st and 2nd floors. Allow extra time for this one; it's excellent.

Žale

This suburb about 2km northeast of Tabor contains Plečnik's largest masterpiece, the monumental **Žale Cemetery** (Pokopališče Žale; Map pp62-3; ☎ 420 17 00; med Hmeljniki 2; ☞ 6am-8pm Apr-

Sep, 7am-6pm Oct-Mar). It has a series of chapels dedicated to the patron saints of Ljubljana's churches, and the entrance is an enormous two-storey arcade. Ljubljana's own Père Lachaise or Highgate is a very peaceful, green place and 'home' to a number of Slovenian actors, writers, painters and a certain distinguished architect – Gospod Plečnik himself. There are also the graves of Austrian, Italian and German soldiers from both world wars and a Jewish section. You can reach Žale on bus 2, 7 or 22 (stop: Žale).

Center

This district on the left bank of the Ljubljana is the nerve centre of modern Ljubljana. It is filled with shops, commercial offices, government departments and embassies. There are several areas of interest to travellers as well.

NOVI TRG

'New Square' (Map pp66-7), south of Cobbler Bridge, was a walled settlement of fisherfolk outside the town administration in the Middle Ages, but it became more aristocratic from the 16th century. It suffered extensive damage in the 1895 earthquake, but medieval remnants include the very narrow street to the north called **Židovska ulica** (Jewish Street) and its offshoot Židovska steza (Jewish Lane), once the site of a synagogue and the centre of Jewish life here in the Middle Ages. **Breg**, the city's port when the Ljubljana River was still navigable this far inland, runs south from the square. At Novi trg's western end is the **Slovenian Academy of Arts and Sciences** (Slovenska Akademija Znanosti in Umetnosti; Map pp66-7; ☎ 470 61 00; Novi trg 3), housed in a 16th-century building that was the seat of the provincial diet under the Habsburgs. The **National and University Library** (Narodna in Univerzitetna Knjižnica; Map pp66-7; ☎ 200 11 00; Gosposka ulica 14; ☞ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat), Plečnik's masterpiece completed in 1941, is just opposite. To appreciate more of this great man's philosophy, enter through the main door (note the horse-head doorknobs) on Turjaška ulica 1 – you'll find yourself in near darkness, entombed in black marble. But as you ascend the steps, you'll emerge into a colonnade suffused with light – the light of knowledge, according to the architect's plans. The Main Reading Room (Velika Čitalnica), now closed to nonstudents, has huge glass walls and some stunning lamps,

also designed by Plečnik. Check out the Art Deco **Plečnik Café** in the basement.

TRG FRANCOŠKE REVOLUCIJE

'French Revolution Square' was for centuries the headquarters of the Teutonic Knights of the Cross (*Križniki*). They built a commandery here in the early 13th century, which was transformed into the **Križanke** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 241 60 00; Trg Francoske Revolucije 1-2) monastery complex in 1714. Today it serves as the headquarters of the Ljubljana Summer Festival (p78), with an open-air theatre seating 1400 people. The **Ilirija Column** in the centre of the square is dedicated to Napoleon and his Illyrian Provinces (1809-13), when Slovene was taught in schools for the first time.

At the eastern end of Trg Francoske Revolucije is the excellent **Ljubljana City Museum** (Mestni Muzej Ljubljana; Map pp66-7; ☎ 241 25 00; www.mm-lj.si; Gosposka ulica 15; adult/child €2.10/1.25; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun), which has reopened after a four-year renovation and focuses on Ljubljana's history, culture and politics. The reconstructed Roman street that linked the eastern gates of Emona to the Ljubljana, and the collection of well-preserved classical artefacts in the basement are worth a visit in themselves.

KONGRESNI TRG

This lovely square can be reached from Trg Francoske Revolucije by walking north along Vegova ulica, a pleasant street lined with trees and busts of Slovenian writers, scientists and musicians. Named in honour of the Congress of the Holy Alliance, convened by Austria, Prussia, Russia and Naples in 1821 and hosted by Ljubljana, 'Congress Square' contains several important buildings. To the south at No 12 is the central building of **Ljubljana University** (Univerza v Ljubljani; Map pp66-7; ☎ 241 85 00; Kongresni trg 12), erected as a ducal palace in 1902. The **Philharmonic Hall** (Filharmonija; Map pp66-7; ☎ 241 08 00; Kongresni trg 10) in the southeast corner is home to the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, which was founded in 1701 and is one of the oldest in the world. Haydn, Beethoven and Brahms were honorary members, and Gustav Mahler was resident conductor for a season (1881-82).

The **Ursuline Church of the Holy Trinity** (Uršulinska Cerkev Sv Trojice; Map pp66-7; ☎ 252 48 64; Slovenska cesta 21; ☎ 5.30-7.30am, 9-11am & 4-7pm), which faces the square from across Slovenska cesta and

dates from 1726, is the most beautiful baroque building in the city. It contains a multicoloured altar by Robba made of African marble. To reach the church use the Plečnik underpass (Plečnikov podhod) at the western end of Kongresni trg and, as you descend, look to the right for a small gilded statue on top of a column. It's a copy (the original is in the National Museum) of the Roman-era **Citizen of Emona**, dating from the 4th century and unearthed nearby in 1836. At the other end of the underpass is the entrance to the rather esoteric **Slovenian School Museum** (Slovenski Šolski Muzej; Map pp66-7; ☎ 251 30 24; www.sšolski-muzej.si; Plečnikov trg 1; admission free; ☎ 9am-1pm Mon-Fri), which explores how Slovenian kids learned the three Rs in the 19th century.

Some 300m north of the Ursuline church along Slovenska cesta is the impressive Art Deco **Nebotičnik** (Skyscraper; Map pp66-7; Štefanova ulica 1), designed by Vladimir Šubič (1933) and, at nine storeys, the city's tallest building for decades.

TRG REPUBLIKE

'Republic Square' is Center's main plaza. Unfortunately, it is basically a car park dominated by a pair of glowering, grey tower blocks – **TR3** (Map pp62-3; Trg Republike 3), housing offices and embassies, and the headquarters of **Nova Ljubljanska Banka** (Map pp62-3; Trg Republike 2) – and a couple of garish revolutionary monuments. The renovated **Parliament Building** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 478 97 87; Šubičeva ulica 4; admission free; ☎ 9am, 10am & 11am every 2nd Sat), built in 1959 at the northeast corner of the square, is no beauty pageant winner on the outside but the mammoth portal festooned with bronze sculptures is noteworthy. It's worth joining one of the infrequent guided tours at the weekend to see the inside, especially the period-piece mural in the vestibule of the Large Hall depicting the history of Slovenia. **Cankarjev Dom** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 71 00; 10), the city's premier cultural and conference centre (p87), squats behind the TR3 building to the southwest.

Behind Cankarjev Dom is **Ferant Garden** (Map pp62-3; Erjavčeva cesta 18; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Apr-Oct), with the remains of an early Christian church porch and baptistry with mosaics from the 4th century. To visit you must first contact the City Museum (p72). Opposite and to the west of the Cankarjev Dom are the remains of a **Roman wall** dating from 15AD.

Museum Area

Four of Ljubljana's most important museums are located in this area (Map pp62-3), which is only a short distance to the northwest of Trg Republike.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SLOVENIA

On the western side of parklike Trg Narodnih Herojev, this **museum** (Narodni Muzej Slovenije; Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 44 00; www.narmuz-lj.si; Muzejska ulica 1; adult/student & senior/family €3/2.10/5.85, incl Natural History Museum €4.60/3.35/9.20, admission free 1st Sun; ☎ 10am-6pm Fri-Wed, 10am-8pm Thu) occupies an elegant 1888 building. It has a large collection but at the time of writing only highlights from the rich archaeological and coin collections were on display. The Roman glass and the jewellery found in 6th-century Slavic graves is pretty standard fare, but the *chef d'oeuvre* here is the highly embossed Vače situla, a Celtic pail from the late 6th century BC unearthed in a town east of Ljubljana. Make sure you check out the ceiling fresco in the foyer, which features an allegorical Carniola surrounded by important Slovenes from the past and the statues of the Muses and Fates relaxing on the stairway banisters.

SLOVENIAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Housed in 16 rooms and hallways of the same impressive building as the National Museum, the **Natural History Museum** (Prirodoslovni Muzej Slovenije; Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 09 40; www.2.pms-lj.si; Muzejska

ulica 1; adult/student & senior/family €3/2.10/5.85, incl National Museum €4.60/3.35/9.20, admission free 1st Sun; ☎ 10am-6pm Fri-Wed, 10am-8pm Thu) contains the usual reassembled mammoth and whale skeletons, stuffed birds, reptiles and mammals. However, the mineral collections amassed by the philanthropic Baron Žiga Zois in the early 19th century and the display on Slovenia's unique salamander *Proteus anguinus* (p185) are worth a visit.

NATIONAL GALLERY

Slovenia's foremost collection of fine art is at the **National Gallery** (Narodna Galerija; Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 54 34; www.ng-slo.si; Prešernova cesta 24; adult/student & senior €4.20/2.90, admission free 2-6pm Sat & 1st Sun; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun). It offers portraits and Slovenian landscapes from the 17th to 19th centuries (check out works by 'national Romantics' Pavel Künl, Marko Pernhart and Anton Karinger), copies of medieval frescoes and a wonderful Gothic statuary (1896) in its old south wing. Although the subjects of the earlier paintings are the usual foppish nobles and lemon-lipped clergymen, some of the later works are remarkable and provide a good introduction to Slovenian art. Take a close look at the works of the impressionists Jurij Šubič (*Before the Hunt*) and Rihard Jakopič (*Birches in Autumn*), the pointillist Ivan Grohar (*Škofja Loka in the Snow*) and Slovenia's most celebrated female painter Ivana Kobilca (*Summer*). The bronzes by Franc Berneker and Anton Gangl are truly exceptional. The

A GALLERY OF GALLERIES

Ljubljana is awash in galleries both public and commercial. The following are among the best.

- **City Gallery** (Mestni trg (Mestna Galerija; Map p66-7; ☎ 241 17 70; www.mestna-galerija.si; Mestni trg 5; admission free; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sat, 10am-1pm Sun); Cankarjevo nabrežje (☎ 241 17 90; Cankarjevo nabrežje 11; ☎ same hr) Rotating displays of contemporary painting, sculpture and graphic art.
- **DESSA Architectural Gallery** (Map p66-7; ☎ 251 40 74; www.dessa.si; Židovska steza 4; admission free; ☎ 10am-3pm Mon-Fri) Small gallery spotlighting contemporary architecture and architects.
- **Equrna Gallery** (Galerija Equrna; Map p66-7; ☎ 252 71 23; www.galerija-equrna.si; Gregorčičeva ulica 3; admission free; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) Among the most innovative modern galleries in town.
- **Little Gallery** (Mala Galerija; Map p66-7; ☎ 241 68 00; www.mg-lj.si; Slovenska cesta 35; admission free; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun) Rotating exhibits in the heart of Center.
- **Luwigiana Gallery** (Galerija Luwigiana; Map p66-7; ☎ 252 73 69; www.studiocerne-jc.si; Gornji trg 19; admission free; ☎ 11am-7pm Mon-Fri) Well-respected space in the Old Town.
- **Škuc Gallery** (Galerija Škuc; Map p66-7; ☎ 421 31 40, 432 73 68; www.galerija.skuc-drustvo.si; Stari trg 21; admission free; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun) Cutting-edge gallery in the Old Town.

gallery's modern north wing facing Puharjeva ulica has a permanent collection of European paintings from the Middle Ages to the 20th century on the 1st floor and is also used for temporary exhibits.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Housed in an ugly modern building (Edvard Ravnikar; 1939–51), the inwardly vibrant and inspiring **Museum of Modern Art** (Moderna Galerija; Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 68 00; www.mg-lj.si; Cankarjeva cesta 15; adult/student & senior €4.20/2.10; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun) exhibits a permanent collection of 20th-century Slovenian art on two floors that helps put some of the socialist-inspired work of sculptors such as Jakob Savinšek (*Protest*) into artistic perspective. Watch out for works by Tone Kralj (*Peasant Wedding*), the expressionist France Mihelič (*The Quintet*) and the surrealist Stefan Planinc (*Primeval World* series). Some people might consider the works by multimedia group Neue Slovenische Kunst (NSK; *Suitcase for Spiritual Use: Baptism under Triglav*) and the artists' cooperative IRWIN (*Kapital*) 'fun' rather than 'serious' art.

OTHER HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The graceful **Opera House** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 17 40; www.opera.si; Župančičeva ulica 1), northeast of the National Museum, opened in 1892 as the Provincial Theatre, and plays in German and Slovene were performed here. After WWI it was renamed the Opera House and is now home to the Slovenian National Opera and Ballet (p87) companies.

The interior of the **Serbian Orthodox Church** (Srbska Pravoslavna Cerkev; Map pp62-3; ☎ 252 40 02, 041-744 402; Prešernova cesta; 🕒 2-6pm Tue-Sun), built in 1936 and dedicated to Sts Cyril and Methodius, is covered from floor to ceiling with colourful modern frescoes. There is a richly carved iconostasis separating the nave from the sanctuary.

Park Tivoli

You can reach Tivoli, the city's leafy playground laid out in 1813 and measuring 5 sq km, via an underpass from Cankarjeva cesta. Straight ahead, at the end of **Jakopičev sprehajališče**, the monumental Jakopič Promenade designed by Plečnik in the 1920s and 30s, is the 17th-century **Tivoli Mansion** (Grad Tivoli), which now contains the **International Centre of Graphic Arts** (Mednarodni Grafični Likovni Center,

MGLC; Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 38 00; www.mglc-lj.si; Pod tumom 3; adult/senior & student €3.35/1.70; 🕒 11am-6pm Wed-Sun). The centre has new exhibitions every three months and hosts the International Biennial of Graphic Arts (p78) every odd-numbered year.

The **Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia** (Muzej Novejše Zgodovine Slovenije; Map pp62-3; ☎ 300 96 10; www.muzej-nz.si; Celovška cesta 23; adult/student €2.10/1.25; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sat), housed in the 18th-century Cekin Mansion (Grad Cekinov) just northeast of the Tivoli Recreation Centre (p77), traces the history of Slovenia in the 20th century through multimedia and artefacts. Note the contrast between the sober earnestness of the communist-era Room G and the exuberant, logo-mad commercialism of the neighbouring industrial exhibit in Room H. A portrait of Stalin lies 'discarded' behind the door between the two. The gloriously baroque Ceremonial Hall (Viteška Dvorana) on the 1st floor is how the whole mansion once looked.

The 20-hectare **Ljubljana Zoo** (Živalski Vrt Ljubljana; Map pp62-3; ☎ 244 21 88; www.zoo-ljubljana.si in Slovene; Večna pot 70; adult/senior & student/child 2-10 5.70/4.85/3.25; 🕒 9am-7pm May-Aug, 9am-6pm Apr & Sep, 9am-5pm Mar & Oct, 9am-4pm Nov-Feb), on the southern slope of **Rožnik Hill** (394m), contains 580 animals representing more than 150 species. There's also a petting zoo for children. It's an upbeat and well-landscaped menagerie.

Krakovo & Trnovo

These two attractive districts south of Center are Ljubljana's oldest suburbs, and they have a number of interesting buildings and historic sites. The neighbourhood around Krakovska ulica, with all its two-storey cottages, was once called the 'Montmartre of Ljubljana' because of all the artists living there. There are many market gardeners here who sell their produce (notably lettuce) at Ljubljana's market.

The **Roman wall** running along Mirje from Barjanska cesta dates from about 15AD; the archway topped with a pyramid is a Plečnik addition. Within the **Jakopič Garden** (Mirje 4; Map p75; 🕒 10am-1pm & 4-6pm) to the southeast, where the impressionist painter once worked in his summerhouse, there are more Roman ruins, including household artefacts, mosaics and the remains of sophisticated heating and sewage systems. Contact the City Museum (p72) if you want to visit.



Spanning the picturesque canal called Gradaščica to the south is little **Trnovo Bridge**, designed in 1932 by Plečnik, who added five of his trademark pyramids. On the south side is the **Church of St John the Baptist** (Cerkev Sv Janeza Krstnika; Map p75; ☎ 283 50 60; Kolezijska ulica 1; 🕒 6-8pm Mon-Sat, 8am-noon Sun), which has a lovely carved altar and where the poet Prešeren met the love of his life, Julija Primic.

A short distance south is the house where Jože Plečnik lived and worked for almost 40 years. Today it houses the Ljubljana Architectural Museum's **Plečnik Collection** (Map p75; ☎ 280 16 00; Karunova ulica 4; adult/child €4.20/2.10; 🕒 10am-2pm & 4-6pm Tue-Thu, 9am-3pm Sat). There's an excellent introduction by guided tour to this almost ascetically religious man, his inspirations and his work.

Other Museums & Galleries

Ljubljana contains many more interesting museums, some of them a bit further out from the centre.

Ljubljana Architectural Museum (Arhitekturni Muzej Ljubljana; Map pp62-3; ☎ 540 97 98; www.aml.si; Fužine Castle, Pot na Fužine 2, Studenec; adult/senior, student &

child 6-16 €2.10/1.05; 🕒 9am-3pm Mon-Fri, 11am-6pm Sat, 11am-2pm Sun) Much emphasis on Plečnik, focusing on his work at home and abroad, and some stunning unrealised projects (bus 20 to Fužine).

Brewery Museum (Pivovarski Muzej; Map pp62-3; ☎ 471 73 40; www.pivo-union.si; Union Brewery, Pivovarniška ulica 2; admission free; 🕒 8am-1pm every 1st Tue & by appointment) Beer-making displays, film and a tour of the brewery (bus 1, 3 or 5 to Pivovarna).

Railway Museum (Železniški Muzej; Map pp62-3; ☎ 291 26 41; www.slo-zeleznice.si/en/about_us/railway_museum; Parmova ulica 35; adult/senior, student & child 6-16 €3.15/2.10; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Sun) Locomotives, carriages, uniforms and railway-related art north of Centre (bus 14).

Technical Museum of Slovenia (Tehniški Muzej Slovenije; Map pp62-3; ☎ 750 66 70; www.tms.si; Bistra Castle, Bistra pri Vrhnikih; adult/student & child €3.75/3; 🕒 8am-4pm Tue-Fri, 8am-5pm Sat, 10am-6pm Sun Mar-Nov) Huge collection of antique motor vehicles and bicycles, water-driven and horse-powered mills, and implements used in agriculture, weaving, forestry, smithing, fishing and hunting. It's 22km southwest of Ljubljana; bus to Vrhnika or train to Verd.

Tobacco Museum (Tobačni Muzej; Map pp62-3; ☎ 477 73 44; www.mm-lj.si; Tobacco Factory, Tobačna

JOŽE PLEČNIK, ARCHITECT EXTRAORDINAIRE

Few architects anywhere in the world have had as great an impact on their birthplace as Jože Plečnik. His work is eclectic, inspired, unique – and found everywhere in Ljubljana and elsewhere in Slovenia.

Born in Ljubljana in 1872, Plečnik was educated at the College of Arts in Graz and studied under the architect Otto Wagner in Vienna. He lived for 10 years in Prague from 1911, where he taught and later helped renovate Prague Castle.

Plečnik's work in his hometown began in 1921. Almost single-handedly he transformed the city, adding elements of classical Greek and Roman architecture with Byzantine, Islamic, ancient Egyptian and folkloric motifs to its baroque and Secessionist faces. The list of his creations and renovations is endless – from the National and University Library and the colonnaded Central Market to the magnificent cemetery at Žale.

Plečnik was also a city planner and designer. Not only did he redesign the banks of the Ljubljanica River (including the Triple Bridge and the monumental lock downstream), entire streets (Zoisova ulica) and Park Tivoli, but he also set his sights elsewhere on monumental stairways (Kranj), public buildings (Kamnik) and outdoor shrines (Bled). An intensely religious man, Plečnik designed many furnishings and liturgical objects – chalices, candlesticks, lanterns – for churches throughout the land (eg Škofja Loka's Church of St James, p99). One of Plečnik's designs that was never realised was an extravagant parliament, complete with an enormous cone-shaped structure, to be built on Castle Hill after WWII.

Plečnik's eclecticism and individuality alienated him from the mainstream of modern architecture during his lifetime, and he was relatively unknown outside Eastern and Central Europe when he died in 1957. Today he is hailed as a prophet of postmodernism.

ulica 5; admission free; ☎ 10am–6pm 1st Wed & 3rd Thu of month) Ljubljana's first factory (bus 6 to Tobačna).

ACTIVITIES Adventure Sports

Agencies like Label (p68) and Trek Trek (p68) and **Adrenaline-Check** (☎ 041-383 662, 040-150 600; www.adrenaline-check.com) at the Celica Hostel (p80) can organise a wide range of outdoor activities around Ljubljana and further afield across the rest of Slovenia, including trekking, mountaineering, rock climbing, ski touring, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, rafting, kayaking, canyoning, caving and paragliding.

Ballooning

The Ljubljana Tourist Information Centre (p67) organises **balloon rides** (adult/child €87/45; ☎ 7am & 6pm Apr–Aug, 8am & 5pm Sep–Mar) year-round lasting three to four hours (one to 1½ hours actually in the air) departing from the Slovenian Tourist Information Centre (p68).

Boating & Rafting

The **Ljubljana Rowing Club** (Veslaški Klub Ljubljana; Map p75; ☎ 283 87 12; www.vesl-klub-ljubljana.si in Slovene; Velika Čolnarska ulica, 20; per hr from €2.50; ☎ 10am–

7pm mid-May–Sep) in Trnovo has dinghies and larger rowing boats for hire on the Ljubljanica River.

Skok Sport (Map pp62-3; ☎ 512 44 02, 040-218 000; www.skok-sport.si; Marjova cesta 8) in Sentvid, 8km northwest of Center, organises rafting trips on the Sava, from Medvode to Brod for €15 and from Boka to Trnovo for €30. They can also arrange kayak and canoe excursions (from €25) on the Ljubljanica and run a kayaking school (bus 8 to Brod).

Bowling & Billiards

Klub 300 (Map pp62-3; ☎ 510 39 40; www.bowlingklub300.com; Regentova cesta 35; game €2.10-3.35, rental shoes €1.50; ☎ 2pm-midnight Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri, noon-midnight Wed, 10am-midnight Sat & Sun) is a super-modern 16-lane bowling centre with four billiard and pool tables. It's located northwest of Center (bus 7 to Plešičeva stop). For a drugless high, try **cosmic bowling** (per hr €22.50; ☎ 9pm-midnight Fri & Sat), with special lighting effects and music.

Hiking

The marked **Trail of Remembrance** (Pot Spominov) is popular with walkers and joggers. It runs for 34km around the city, where German barbed wire once completely enclosed

Ljubljana during WWII. The easiest places to reach the trail are from the **AMZS headquarters** (Map pp62-3; bus 6, 8 or 21 to AMZS stop) on Dunajska cesta (No 128), or from Trg Komandanta Staneta just northwest of the central office of the public transport authority LPP (Map pp62-3; bus 1 to Remiza stop), on Celovška cesta (No 160). You can also join it from the northwestern side of **Zale Cemetery** (Map pp62-3; bus 19 to Nove Žale stop) or south of **Trnovo** (Map p75; bus 19 to Veliki Štradol stop).

Another popular destination from Ljubljana is **Šmarna Gora**, a 669m-high hill above the Sava River, 12km northwest of Ljubljana. Take bus 15 from Slovenska cesta or Gosposvetska cesta to the Medno stop or bus 8 to Brod and begin walking. Another way to go is via the Smlednik bus from the main station and then follow the marked path from the 12th-century Smlednik Castle. There's swimming and boating in Zbilje Lake nearby.

Swimming & Sauna

Tivoli Recreation Centre (Map pp62-3; ☎ 431 51 55; Celovška cesta 25) in Park Tivoli has an indoor swimming pool (open mid-September to June), a fitness centre, clay tennis courts and a roller-skating rink (which becomes an ice rink from mid-August to February). It also has a popular sauna called **Zlati Klub** (Gold Club; morning €12, afternoon €14.60; ☎ 10am-10pm Mon, Wed, Thu & Sun, 10am-11pm Fri & Sat, women only 10am-10pm Tue) with saunas, steam room, splash pools and outside swimming pool surrounded by high walls so you can sunbathe *au naturel*. Towels are an extra €2.

Southeast of the Tivoli Centre is the **Ilirija outdoor swimming pool** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 231 02 33, 439 75 80; Celovška cesta 3; adult/child 6-10/child 11-14/student €4.20/2.50/3/3.35; ☎ 10am-7pm Jun–Aug). The most modern of its kind in Yugoslavia when built in 1929, it's now a bit rough around the edges.

Ljubljana boasts two enormous water parks. **Atlantis** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 585 21 00; www.atlantis-vodnomoesti.si, BTC City, Šmartinska cesta 152; Adventure World day pass Mon–Fri adult/child €12.50/10.40, Sat & Sun €14.20/12.10; ☎ 9am-11pm) is the more swish, with separate theme areas: Adventure World for kids, with a half-dozen pools and water slides; Thermal Temple with indoor and outdoor thermal pools; and Land of Saunas with 11 different types of saunas. Get there on

bus 2, 7 or 17. **Laguna** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 568 39 13; www.laguna.si; Dunajska cesta 270; day pass adult/student & child over 10/child under 10 €10/8/5.85 Mon–Fri, €12/10/6.70 Sat & Sun; ☎ 9am-8pm Jun–Sep) at the Ljubljana Resort (p79) is more traditional, with several outdoor swimming pools and sunbathing areas, as well as fitness studio with sauna, badminton and volleyball courts. Take bus 8 to its terminus or the more frequent no 6 (stop Ježica).

WALKING TOUR

This is a short and straightforward walk that will give you a taste of the Old Town, the banks of the Ljubljanica River and Krakovo. Start the tour on **Prešernov trg** (p68) in the very heart of Ljubljana. Cross the celebrated **Triple Bridge** and head north (left) at the tourist office for a stroll through the **Central Market** (p69), with its colourful stalls and Plečnik's elegant colonnades. Turn west (right) onto Ciril-Metodov trg and walk towards Old Town, Ljubljana's historical centre. Make a brief visit to the **Cathedral of St Nicholas** (p69) before crossing into cobbled Mestni trg. Past the impressive **town hall** (p69) and renovated **Robba Fountain** (p69), explore the narrow lanes that lead down to the river from the square before continuing on to Stari trg, where you might take a relaxing tea break at **Čajna Hiša** (p84) and ruminate over some contemporary art at the **Škuc Gallery** (p73). Walk to the end of the Levstikov trg and head east (right) onto Karlovska cesta in front of the **Church of St James** (p70), crossing the Ljubljanica River via the foot and vehicular bridge. Walk south along the riverbank for a short while and then turn west (right) into Krakovska ulica. You're in the heart of Krakovo, an 'inner suburb' that often feels more like the country – just check out all those vegetable (mostly lettuce) patches. Peek through the gates of the atmospheric courtyards before finishing off with a scrumptious bite at **Pri Škofju** (p81) on Rečna ulica.

WALK FACTS

Start Prešernov trg
End Krakovo (Rečna ulica)
Distance 2km
Duration 1½ hours
Fuel Stop Čajna Hiša or Pri Škofju

THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Celica Hostel (Map pp62-3; ☎ 230 97 00; www.hostelcelica.com; Metelkova ulica 8; dm/s/d/tr €17/44/48/57; 📍 🚻 🚰 🚰 🚰) This revamped former prison (1882) in Metelkova has 20 designer 'cells', complete with original bars, rooms and apartments with three to seven beds, and a popular 12-bed dorm. The all-blue room 116 with the circular bed is like sleeping in an eye. The ground floor is home to three cafés (set lunch €3.15 to 5.25): a traditional Slovenian *gostilna*, a western-style café (with two internet stations) and the Oriental Café, with cushions, water pipes, and shoes strictly outside. Celica has become such a landmark that there are guided tours every day at 2pm.

villa in the centre of the museum district has its own garden and 40 beds on three floors. It offers mostly hostel accommodation in three rooms with four to eight beds, but a double and an apartment with en suite facilities make it an attractive midrange option. Some rooms face Park Tivoli across busy Tivolska cesta. Reception is on first floor.

BIT Center Hotel (Map pp62-3; ☎ 548 00 55; www.bit-center.net; Litijska cesta 57; s/d/tr €34/50/54; 📍 🚻 🚰) The Bit Center offers one of the best-value deals in Ljubljana, although at 3km east of the centre (bus 5, 9 or 13 to Emona stop) it's a bit far from the action. Its 33 rooms are spartan but bright and comfortable.

Park Hotel (Map pp62-3; ☎ 300 25 00, 433 00 88; www.hotelpark.si; Tabor 9; s €39-55, d €48-71; 📍 🚻 🚰) A partial face-lift inside and out has turned this 145-room tower-block hotel into an even better-value midrange choice in central Ljubljana. Pleasant, well-renovated standard rooms are bright and unpretentiously well equipped. Cheaper rooms have en suite toilet but share showers on the corridor. Students with ISIC cards get a 10% discount. The staff are very friendly.

Hotel Emonec (Map pp66-7; ☎ 200 15 20; www.hotel-emonec.com; Wolfova ulica 12; s €53, d €60-70, tr €83; 📍 🚻 🚰) The décor is simple and coldly modern at this 26-room hotel, but everything is spotless and you can't beat the central location – only steps away from Prešernov trg at the back of a courtyard.

Vila Minka (Map pp62-3; ☎ 583 00 80; www.vila.minka.si; Kogovškova ulica 10; s/d €55/75, apt for 1/2/3/4

€70/85/100/120; 📍 🚻 🚰 🚰 🚰) This welcoming pension, some 4km northwest of Center in Koseze, has about a dozen rooms and apartments. It's a good choice for families or small groups with their own wheels (though it can be reached on bus 5 in just 20 minutes). Apartments are positively huge, very bright and well equipped. The glassed-in atrium, art on the walls and tranquil surrounds are bonuses.

Pri Mraku (Map pp66-7; ☎ 421 96 00; www.daj-dam.si; Rimska cesta 4; s €60-74.50, d €95-112, tr €116-125, ste from €159; 📍 🚻 🚰 🚰) Although it calls itself a *gostilna* (innlike restaurant), the 'At Twilight' is really just a smallish hotel (36 rooms) in an old building with no lift. Almost opposite the Križanke on Trg Francoske Revolucije, it's ideally located for culture vultures. Only some rooms have air-con. The welcome here isn't always warm.

M Hotel (Map pp62-3; ☎ 513 70 00; www.m-hotel.si; Derčeva ulica 4; s €62-83, d €95-115; 📍 🚻 🚰 🚰) This hotel 2km northwest of Center and set back from noisy Celovška cesta (bus 1, 5, 8 or 15 to Kino Šiška stop) is not much to look at from the outside, but the 154 rooms are comfortable and airy, with all the basic mod-cons. Park Tivoli is just round the corner.

Top End

Hotel Slon Best Western (Map pp66-7; ☎ 470 11 00; www.hotelslon.com; Slovenska cesta 34; s €93-127, d €133-166, tr €198, ste from €190; 📍 🚻 🚰 🚰) In the thick of things is the 174-room 'Hotel Elephant', with a history going back more than four centuries. It is said that this was the spot where a pachyderm presented to the Habsburg emperor by an African king carried on its way to Vienna, although the present hotel dates from the 20th century and has a certain Eastern Bloc elegance. There are several categories of rooms, some with a Jacuzzi in the bathroom.

Grand Hotel Union Executive (Map pp66-7; ☎ 308 12 70; www.gh-union.si; Miklošičeva cesta 1; s €149-191, d €177-212, ste from €350; 📍 🚻 🚰 🚰) This 187-room hotel, the Art Nouveau southern wing of a two-part hostelery, was built in 1905 and remains the most desirable address for visitors to Ljubljana. It has glorious public areas, including a cellar restaurant called the Unionska Klet, which moves to the Unionski Vrt (Union Garden) restaurant in summer. Guests get to use the indoor swimming pool, sauna and fitness centre on the 8th floor of the adjacent 133-room **Grand Hotel Union Business** (Map pp66-7;

THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Antiq Hotel (Map pp66-7; ☎ 421 35 60; www.antiqhotel.si; Gornji trg 3-5; s €53-142, d €70-185; 📍 🚻 🚰) Well, it had to happen...Ljubljana now has its very own boutique hotel, and it's a corker. Cobble together from a series of townhouses on the site of a Roman workshop in the heart of the Old Town, the Antiq has 14 rooms and apartments (most of which are very spacious), a small wellness centre and pretty back garden. The decor – kitsch with a smirk – may not be to everyone's taste. However, there are so many fabulous nooks and nice touches: glassed-in medieval courtyard, vaulted ceilings, two antiallergenic floors, bath towels trimmed with Slovenian lace. Among our favourite rooms are No 4 on the 2nd floor, measuring almost 42 sq metres with swooningly romantic views of the Hercules Fountain, and No 9, an even bigger two-room suite on the top floor with a terrace and fleeting glimpses of Ljubljana Castle. The two cheapest rooms have their own bathrooms on the corridor.

☎ 308 11 70; www.gh-union.si; Miklošičeva cesta 3; s €129-168, d €164-197, ste from €279; 📍 🚻 🚰 🚰) the Grand Union's recently renovated modern wing to the north. It caters to the business (not romance) minded.

EATING

Although there are many quality top-end restaurants, it is still possible to eat well in Ljubljana at moderate cost; even the more expensive restaurants offer an excellent-value three-course *dnevno kosilo* (set lunch) for as little as €6. For even cheaper options try the dull but functional snack bars around the stations and at the shopping mall below Trg Ajdovščina. For self-catering there are the markets and plenty of branches of the Mercator supermarket chain.

Restaurants

SLOVENIAN

Triglav (Map pp66-7; ☎ 430 10 21; Mala ulica 5; salads & soups €2.80-3.75, mains €5-9.60; 🕒 7am-10pm Mon-Fri) Primarily a lunch place, Triglav has stopped serving a mishmash of cuisines and dishes – from ramen soup and curries to tortillas – and embraced its name. It now serves traditional Slovenian dishes only.

Gostilna Pri Pavli (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 92 75; Stari trg 21; starters €4.10-5.40, mains €5.80-10.85; 🕒 8am-11pm) A wonderful holdover from the socialist era, 'Paula's Place' is an attractive, country-style inn in an enviable location that has managed to retain its old-school style and prices. The Farmer's Feast (€22.10) is a two-person blowout.

Sokol (Falcon; Map pp66-7; ☎ 439 68 55; Ciril Metodov trg 18; starters €4.15-9.60, mains €5.80-11.20; 🕒 7am-11pm Mon-Sat, 10am-11pm Sun) In this old vaulted house near the Central Market, traditional Slovenian

food is served on heavy tables by costumed waiters. Pizza is available if traditional dishes like *obara* (veal stew; €5.40) and Krvavica sausage with cabbage (€5.80) don't appeal.

Pri Škofju (At the Bishop's; Map p75; ☎ 426 45 08; Rečna ulica 8; starters €4.20-6.25, mains €4.60-13.35; 🕒 8am-midnight Mon-Fri, noon-midnight Sat & Sun) This wonderful little place in tranquil Krakovo south of the centre serves some of the best prepared local dishes and salads in Ljubljana, with an ever-changing menu. Set lunches are a bargain at €5 to €6.75.

Breskvar (Map p75; ☎ 283 88 33; Cesta na Loko 28; starters €6.25-12.50, mains €7.50-21.70; 🕒 noon-10pm Mon-Fri, noon-5pm Sun) This cosy *gostilna* in Trnovo serves some of the finest home-cooking in town. The shady garden is a delight when the warmer months roll around, but we also love the retro dining room with scenes and memories of old Ljubljana.

SOUTH SLAV

Pod Rožnikom (Under Mt Rožnik; Map pp62-3; ☎ 251 34 46; Cesta na Rožnik 18; starters €2.30-4, mains €5.45-7; 🕒 10am-11pm Mon-Fri, 11am-11pm Sat & Sun) This place 'Under Mt Rožnik' (sort of) and just downwind from the zoo in Park Tivoli serves southern Slav-style grills, like *pljeskavica* (spicy meat patties) with *ajvar* (roasted red peppers, tomatoes and eggplant cooked into a purée) and starters such as *prebranac* (onions and beans cooked in an earthenware pot). Worth the trip.

Harambaša (Map p75; ☎ 041-843 106; Vrtna ulica 8; dishes €2.70-4; 🕒 10am-10pm Mon-Fri, noon-10pm Sat, noon-6pm Sun) At this small place in Krakovo you'll find authentic Bosnian – Sarajevo to be precise – cuisine served at low tables in a charming modern cottage atmosphere with quiet Balkan music and a lively crowd.

AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Aska in Volk (Map p66-7; ☎ 251 10 69; Gornji trg 4; starters €5.50-7.80, mains €7.60-18; ☎ noon-10pm Sun-Thu, noon-11pm Fri & Sat) The 'Lamb and Wolf', which takes its name from a novel by Bosnian Nobel Prize-winner Ivo Andrić (1892-1975), is an excellent choice for South Slav specialities. Effectively a café-cum-restaurant, the decor runs the gamut from 'colourful Bosnian village' to stylishly humorous, including fully laid tables suspended upside-down from the ceiling in the main dining room. The speciality here is the €12.30 lamb (there's no wolf in sight) roasted in the traditional way; it's a guaranteed winner.

Sofra (Map pp62-3; ☎ 565 68 00; Dunajska cesta 145; starters €3.35-5.85, mains €5.85-10.85; ☎ 11am-11pm Mon-Fri, noon-midnight Sat) Often touted as the most authentic Bosnian restaurant in town, there's also live music every night from September to June, when your fellow diners are likely to provide as much entertainment as those performing.

INTERNATIONAL

Pen Club (Map pp62-3; ☎ 251 41 60; Tomšičeva ulica 12; starters €2/7.50, mains €5.85-12.50; ☎ noon-11pm Mon-Fri) This artsy restaurant, at the top of old wooden steps in the headquarters of the national journalists' association, is a favourite with Slovenian literati. It just has to be one of the cosiest and most romantic eateries in town; try to bag a table on the terrace balcony.

Smrekarjev Hram (Smrekar's House; Map pp66-7; ☎ 308 19 07; Nazorjeva ulica 2; starters €5-11.80, mains €14.60-18.80; ☎ noon-11pm Mon-Fri Sep-late Jun) This Art Nouveau jewel run by the Grand Hotel Union and named after artist and illustrator Hinko Smrekar (1883-1942), famed (in certain circles) for his 'pan-Slavic' playing cards, has always been considered the poshest international restaurant in Ljubljana. It closes in summer.

Lunch Café (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 01 18; Stari trg 9; starters €5-6.70, mains €5.85-16.30; ☎ 10am-10pm Mon Sat, noon-10pm Sun) More New York than Ljubljana, this café, from the people who brought you Pri Vitezu, is the perfect spot for a late breakfast (around €2.50), even later brunch (€7.50) and nosh until late. Pasta dishes (€3.75 to €6.70) are notable.

Manna (Map p75; ☎ 283 52 94; Eipprova ulica 1a; starters €6.70-10.40, mains €10-17.50; ☎ noon-midnight Mon-Sat) Festooned across the front of this canal-side restaurant in Trnovo is the slogan 'Manna - Bžanske Jedi na Zemlji' (Manna - Heavenly Food on Earth). It didn't feel quite like paradise the last time we visited, but the decor is stylish, there's a wonderful covered inner courtyard for dining almost al fresco and the setting is pretty nice.

Pri Vitezu (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 60 58; Breg 18-20; starters €6.70-14.20, mains €11.70-20; ☎ noon-11pm Mon-Sat) Located on the left bank of the Ljubljanica River, 'At the Knight' is the place for a special meal (Mediterranean-style grills and Adriatic fish dishes), whether in the vaulted cellar dining rooms or adjoining wine bar.

JB (Map pp62-3; ☎ 433 13 58, 474 72 19; Miklošičeva cesta 17; starters €8.35-12.50, mains €16-25; ☎ 11am-midnight Mon-Fri, 6pm-midnight Sat) Old-world charm, a hybrid Slovenian-Mediterranean-French menu, a top-notch wine list and very stylish decor have made this restaurant one of the most popular in town for a fancy meal.

ITALIAN & MEDITERRANEAN

Mirje (Map pp62-3; ☎ 426 60 15; Tržaška cesta 5; starters €3.35-6.25, mains €5.40-8.35; ☎ 10am-10pm Mon-Fri, noon-10pm Sat) Just a few blocks southwest of the centre, this little trattoria serves a wide range of pizzas and pastas (€3.75 to €6.25), as well as a few more ambitious main courses. The decor - light wood furniture, checked tablecloths and blue-and-white trim - is upbeat and welcoming.

Julija (Map pp62-3; ☎ 425 64 63; Stari trg 9; starters €5-7.50, mains €7.50-15.85; ☎ 8am-midnight Mon-Thu & Sat, 8am-1am Fri, 10am-11pm Sun) Julija serves up decent risottos and pastas either outside on the pavement terrace or in a Delft-tiled backroom behind a café decorated with 1920s prints.

Like most European capitals nowadays, Ljubljana is awash in pizzerias, but the pick of the crop include the following:

Ljubljanski Dvor (Ljubljana Court; Map pp66-7; ☎ 251 65 55; Dvorni trg 1; pizza €4-9.60; ☎ 10am-midnight Mon-Sat, noon-11pm Sun) Overlooks the Ljubljana.

Pizzerija Foculus (Map pp66-7; ☎ 251 56 43; Gregorčičeva ulica 3; pizza €4-6.65; ☎ 10am-midnight Mon-Fri, 11am-midnight Sat & Sun) Boasts a vaulted ceiling painted with spring and autumn leaves.

Trta (Grapevine; Map p75; ☎ 426 50 66; Grudnovo nabrežje 21; pizza €4.40-7.35; ☎ 11am-10.30pm Mon-Fri, noon-10.30pm Sat) On the right bank of the Ljubljanica opposite Trnovo.

Tramvaj Ekspres (Map pp62-3; ☎ 425 47 82; Trg Mladinskih Delovnih Brigad 10; pizza €3.35-6.70; ☎ 10am-9pm Mon-Fri Jun-Jul, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri Aug-May) Eat your pizza in a vintage (c 1958) tramcar from Prague.

FRENCH

Chez Eric (Map pp66-7; ☎ 251 28 39; Mestni trg 3; starters €5.75-11.50, €15.65-19.40; ☎ noon-4pm & 7-11pm Mon-Sat) This tastefully decorated restaurant has a short but well chosen menu. The three-course set dinner is €25.

SPANISH & MEXICAN

Cantina Mexicana (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 93 25; Knafjev prehod 3; starters €2.70-3.75, mains €7.10-13.80; ☎ 11am-midnight Sun-Thu, 11am-1am Fri & Sat) The capital's most stylish Mexican restaurant has an eye-catching red-and-blue exterior and hacienda-like decor, with sofas and lanterns inside. The fajitas (€7.50 to €11.70) are great.

Don Felipe (Map pp62-3; ☎ 434 38 62; Streliška ulica 22; tapas €3.85-5.40, mains €7-8.25; ☎ noon-midnight) Southeast of Krekov trg, Don Felipe was Ljubljana's first Spanish restaurant and it remains the best. It specialises in tapas and paella (€8.25) and has some striking decor.

Mexico 1867 (Map pp62-3; ☎ 438 24 50; Medvedova cesta 18; mains €8.35-13.35; ☎ noon-midnight Mon-Sat, noon-midnight Sun Sep-May) Mexico 1867's lurid colours, unappetizing scenes of civil war scenes and sombreros notwithstanding, the huge menus offers some authentic Mexican favourites, including nachos (€5 to €5.85), *chimichangas* (€6.70 to €7.50), tacos and fajitas.

MIDDLE EASTERN

Yildiz Han (Map p75; ☎ 426 57 17; Karlovska cesta 19; starters €2.70-5, mains €6.90-10.20; ☎ noon-midnight Tue-Sun) If Turkish is your thing, head for this mom and pop-run restaurant, which features belly dancing and/or live Turkish music on Friday night.

Ali Baba (Map pp62-3; ☎ 230 17 87, 051-234 066; Poljanska cesta 11; mains €7.10-7.75; ☎ 7am-11pm Mon-Fri, 10am-10pm Sat) Carpets and low brass tables decorate this cosy little restaurant, whose Iranian and Indian dishes are popular with journalists and students.

CHINESE & JAPANESE

Kitajska Zvezda (Map p75; ☎ 425 88 24; Hrenova ulica 19; starters €1.50-2.45, mains €5-6.45; ☎ 11am-11pm) If you're looking for a fix of rice or noodles, try the 'Chinese Star' on the river just south of

the Old Town. Szechuan dishes, including the *mapo doufu* (tofu with garlic and chilli) are quite good.

Shanghai (Map pp62-3; ☎ 234 71 36; Poljanska cesta 14; starters €1.50-2.50, mains €6-9.60; ☎ 11am-11pm) Shanghai has authentic Sichuan and Cantonese dishes - no Shanghainese ones that we could find - and a user-friendly picture menu. It's pretty toned-down fare so aficionados should stick with rice and noodle dishes (€4.20 to €5.45).

Sushimama (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 91 25, 040-702 070; Wolfova ulica 12; mixed sushi €10.75-15, mixed sashimi €12-16.25; ☎ 11am-11pm Mon-Sat) Ljubljana's only Japanese sushi restaurant has simple, restful decor and very fresh fish.

SEAFOOD

Taverna Tatjana (Map pp66-7; ☎ 421 00 87, 041-707 900; Gornji trg 38; starters €5-8.35, mains €8.35-20.90; ☎ 5pm-midnight) Looking like an old-world wooden-beamed cottage pub with a nautical theme, this is actually a rather exclusive fish restaurant with a lovely (and protected) back courtyard for the warmer months.

Gostilna As (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 88 22; Čopova ulica 5a, enter from Knafjev prehod; starters €7.50-16.70, mains €16.70-24.60; ☎ noon-midnight) The 'Ace Inn', in the passage linking Wolfova ulica and Slovenska cesta, is the place for a special occasion, with seafood, a good wine list, and a few classic Slovene dishes dominating the menu. You can also enter from Slovenska cesta 30. The **As Lounge** in both the cellar and a glassed-in terrace is much more informal, with sandwiches (€4.15 to €6.25), salads (€4.15 to €7), and a few less elaborate main courses (€8.30 to €12.50).

VEGETARIAN

Ajdovo Zrno (Map pp66-7; ☎ 230 16 15, 041 690 478; Trubarjeva cesta 7; soups & sandwiches €1.60-2, set lunch €3.75-5.75; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri) A relatively recent arrival on the Ljubljana dining scene, 'Buckwheat Grain' serves soups, sandwiches, fried vegetables and lots of different salads (self-service: €2.40 to €3). And they have terrific, freshly squeezed juices, including the unusual rose-petal juice with lemon. Enter from Mali trg.

Vegedrom (Map pp66-7; ☎ 513 26 42; Vodnikova cesta 35; soups & salads €2.10-3.35, dishes €4.20-9.80; ☎ 9am-10pm Mon-Fri, noon-10pm Sat) Most eating places (including pizzerias) in Ljubljana have at least a couple of veggie dishes on the menu, but the

only specialist vegetarian restaurant in town is this appealing if somewhat pricey vegan place at the northeastern edge of Park Tivoli. The platters for two are good value at €17.50 to €21, and there's a salad bar and some Indian-inspired dishes (€3.35 to €4.10).

Quick Eats

Delikatosa Ljubljanski Dvor (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 93 27; Kongresni trg 11; pizza slices €1.20-1.70; ☎ 9am-midnight Mon-Sat) Locals queue for huge, bargain slices of pizzas, salads, and grilled vegetables sold by weight to take away or eat on the spot.

Paninoteka (Map pp66-7; ☎ 059-018 445, 041-529 824; Jurčičev trg 3; soups & toasted sandwiches €2.10-3.35; ☎ 8am-1am Mon-Sat, 9am-11pm Sun) Healthy sandwich creations on olive ciabatta are sold here to take away or to eat outside. Located in a lovely little square which has scenic views of the castle.

Restavracija 2000 (Map pp62-3; ☎ 476 68 00; Trg Republike 1; dishes €2.30-3, set lunch €6.25; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat) In the basement of the Maximarket department store, this glass and chrome self-service eatery is surprisingly upbeat, and just the ticket if you want something quick while visiting Ljubljana's main museums.

Hot Horse Trubarjeva (Map pp62-3; Trubarjeva cesta 31; snacks & burgers €2.50-3.35; ☎ 8am-1am Mon-Sat, noon-1am Sun); Park Tivoli (Park Tivoli; ☎ 24hr) These two places exist to supply Ljubljancani with a favourite treat: horse burgers. The branch in Park Tivoli is just down the hill from the Museum of Contemporary History (p74).

Ribca (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 15 44; Adamič-Lundrovo nabrežje 1; dishes €2.70-6.70; ☎ 7am-4pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm Sat) This basement seafood bar below the Plečnik Colonnade in Pogačarjev trg serves tasty fried squid, sardines and herrings to hungry market-goers.

Kebabci (Map pp62-3; Trubarjeva cesta 47; döner €3.15-3.75, döner plate €4.40-5; ☎ 9am-1am Mon-Sat, 3pm-1am Sun) For a taste of the Middle East, try this little hole-in-the-wall up an alley off Trubarjeva cesta.

The **burek stand** (Map pp62-3; Pražakova ulica 2; burek €1.90; pizza slice €1.50; ☎ 24hr) southwest of the train and bus stations serves some of the best cheese, meat and apple *burek* in town. Another good spot for the same thing is **Nobel Burek** (Miklošičeva cesta 30; burek €1.90, pizza €1.50; ☎ 24hr).

Markets & Self-Catering

Convenient supermarkets include **Mercator** (Map pp62-3; Slovenska cesta 55; ☎ 7am-9pm) and **Maxi-market** (Map pp62-3; basement, Trg Republike 1; ☎ 9am-9pm Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Sat) below the department store of that name. The latter has the largest selection of food and wine in the city centre as well as a bakery. Opposite the train and bus stations, **Noč in Dan** (Map pp62-3; Trg Of 13; ☎ 24hr) is a variety store open 'Day and Night'.

Ljubljana's adjoining **open-air markets** (Map pp66-7; Pogačarjev trg & Vodnikov trg; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 6am-5pm Sat Jun-Sep, 6am-4pm Mon-Sat Oct-May) opposite the cathedral sell mostly fresh fruit and vegetables, though some also sell seasonal goods such as wild mushrooms, honey, chestnuts, beeswax and fresh herbs.

To the west the **covered market** (Map pp66-7; Pogačarjev trg 4; ☎ 7am-2pm Mon-Wed & Sat, 7am-4pm Thu-Fri) on the ground floor of the Seminary has a superb range of meats, charcuterie, fish and dairy products. The nearby **fish market** (Map pp66-7; Adamič-Lundrovo nabrežje 1; ☎ 7am-4pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm Sat) is on the lower level of the Plečnik Colonnade overlooking the river.

DRINKING

Few European cities of comparable size to Ljubljana offer such a dizzying array of drinking options, whether your poison is beer, wine and spirits or tea and coffee. In Ljubljana there's a fine line between cafés, most of which serve food as well as drinks, and pubs and bars, particularly in the warmer months, when tables of both line the pavements.

Cafés & Teahouses

Kavarna Zvezda (Map pp66-7; ☎ 421 90 90; Kongresni trg 4 & Wolfova ulica 14; ☎ 7am-11pm Mon-Sat, 10am-8pm Sun) The 'Star Café' is celebrated for its shop-made cakes, especially *skutina pečena* (€2), an eggy cheese cake.

Café Antico (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 13 39; Stari trg 17; ☎ 10am-midnight Mon-Sat, 11am-10pm Sun) With frescoed ceilings and retro-style furniture, this is the place for a quiet tête-à-tête over a cup of coffee or glass of wine.

Čajna Hiša (Map pp66-7; ☎ 421 24 44; Stari trg 3; ☎ 9am-11pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm & 6-10pm Sat) If you take your cuppa seriously come here; the appropriately named 'Teahouse' offers a wide range of green and black teas and fruit tisanes for €1.60 to €3.15 a pot; it sells the leaves, too.

Le Petit Café (Map pp66-7; ☎ 251 25 75; Trg Francoske Revolucije 4; ☎ 7.30am-11pm Sun-Thu, 9am-midnight Fri & Sat) Just opposite the Križanke, this pleasant, studenty place offers great coffee and a wide range of breakfast goodies (€2.90 to €4.20), lunches and light meals.

Kafeterija Lan (Map pp66-7; Gallusovo nabrežje 27; ☎ 9am-midnight Mon-Thu, 9am-1am Fri & Sat, 10am-1am Sun) This little greener-than-green café-bar on the river below Cobbler Bridge is something of a hipster/gay magnet.

Slaščičarna Pri Vodnjaku (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 07 12; Stari trg 30; ☎ 8am-midnight) For all kinds of chocolate of the-ice cream and drinking kind, the 'Confectionery by the Fountain' will surely satisfy – there are 32 different flavours (€0.85 per scoop) as well as teas (€1.50) and fresh juices (€1.05 to €3.35).

Trubadur (Map pp66-7; ☎ 434 35 30; Trubarjeva cesta 31; ☎ 7.30am-10pm Mon-Fri, 7.30am-3pm Sat) This little *sladki bar* (sweet bar) with the badly punned name (see street name) serves some of the best cakes on the left bank.

Café Galerija (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 03 27; Mestni trg 5; ☎ 9am-1am Mon-Sat, 9am-10pm Sun) This Arabesque-style café, with brass tables, coloured glass and cosy nooks is hidden behind the City Gallery (p73).

Grajska Kavarna (Map pp66-7; ☎ 439 41 40; Ljubljana Castle, Grajska planota 1; 9am-midnight May-Sep, ☎ 9am-11pm) You wouldn't go out of your way to reach the 'Castle Café', but if you're on the hill and thirsty or peckish, it's a decent pit stop. Think 1970s concrete café.

Abecedarium Cafe (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 95 14; Ribji trg 2; ☎ 7am-1am) Ensclosed in the oldest house (1528) in Ljubljana and one-time residence of the writer Primož Trubar (p34), this place oozes atmosphere.

Slamici Kavačaj (Map pp62-3; ☎ 433 82 33; Kersnikova ulica 1; ☎ 7.30am-10pm Mon-Thu, 7.30am-9pm Fri, 9am-2pm Sun) This gem of a place serves excellent tea and coffee, and sells the stuff (and accoutrements) as well. There's a smokers' area upstairs.

Ambiente (☎ 430 27 56; Čufarjeva ulica 2; ☎ 7am-11pm Mon-Fri, 9am-11pm Sat) This stylish café-cum-bistro, hidden down a narrow side street just east of Miklošičeva cesta, caters to a diverse crowd throughout the day. Food is good too.

Pubs & Bars

Kavarna Pločnik (Map pp66-7; Prešernov trg 1; ☎ 7am-1am Apr-Oct) With the distinctive name of 'Pavement', this roped-off café-bar on the southern

side of Prešernov trg is one of the most popular places for a drink. Sit outside and watch the passing parade or listen to some live music (most nights).

Maček (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 37 91; Krojaška ulica 5; ☎ 9am-1am) The place to be seen on a sunny summer afternoon, the 'Cat' is Pločnik's rival on the right bank of the Ljubljana. Happy hour is between 4pm and 7pm daily.

Cutty Sark (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 14 77; Knafjehov prehod 1; ☎ 9am-1am Mon-Sat, noon-1am Sun) A pleasant and well-stocked nautically themed pub in the courtyard behind Wolfova ulica 6, the Cutty Sark is a congenial place for a *pivo* (beer) or glass of *vino* (wine).

Dvorni Bar (Map pp66-7; ☎ 251 12 57; Dvorni trg 1; ☎ 8am-1am) This wine bar is an excellent place to taste Slovenia vintages; they've got 100 different types in stock and frequently schedule promotions and wine tastings.

Pr'skelet (Map pp66-7; ☎ 252 77 99; Ključavničarska ulica 5; ☎ 10am-3am) OK, it might be something of a one-joke wonder but you'll shake, rattle and roll at this skeleton-themed basement bar, where cocktails are two for one throughout the day.

Salon (Map pp66-7; ☎ 439 87 64; Trubarjeva cesta 23; ☎ 9am-1am Mon & Tue, 9am-3am Wed-Sat, 10am-1am Sun) Salon is a dazzling designer-kitsch cocktail bar featuring gold ceilings, faux leopard armchairs, heavy burgundy and gold drapes, and excellent cocktails (€4.20 to €6.25) and shooters (€3.75 to €4.20).

Žmavc (Map pp62-3; ☎ 251 0324; Rimska cesta 21; ☎ 7.30am-1am Mon-Sat, 8am-1am Sun) A super-popular student hangout west of Slovenska cesta, it has comic strip scenes and figures running halfway up the walls.

Šank Pub (Map p75; ☎ 281 11 71; Eipprova ulica 19; ☎ 6am-midnight Sun-Thu, 7am-1am Fri & Sat) Down in studenty Trnovo, this raggedy little place has pleasant outdoor tables beside the canal. It's just down from the Sax (p87).

Klub Metropol (Map pp62-3; ☎ 438 03 00; Kersnikova ulica 6; ☎ 8am-10pm Mon-Fri) This ultramodern bar with multicoloured comfy chairs and a groovy glass bar is almost too good for the students who frequent it and the hackers from Kiber Pipa (p64) downstairs.

Vinoteka Movia (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 54 48; Mestni trg 2; ☎ noon-midnight Mon-Sat) If you're more interested in the grape than the grain, hop over to this excellent wine bar where, with due ceremony and ritual, you can taste your way through some award-winning Slovenian

wines (€3.75 to €8.35 for 0.1L). They do retail as well: buy a bottle of their white Veliko Belo (€23) or red Veliko Rdeče (€27), a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir.

BiKofe (Map pp66-7; Židovska steza 2; ☎ 7am-1am Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat, 6pm-1am Sun) A favourite with the hipster crowd, this small, smoky bar has mosaic tables, student art on the walls, soul and jazz on the stereo, and a giant water pipe on the menu for that long, lingering smoke (€3.50). Cool but a bit pretentious. There's a shady outdoor patio.

If you're looking to continue bending your elbow into the wee hours, head for **Čarli** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 232 81 83; Petkovškovo nabrežje 2; ☎ 9am-3am), a convivial, socialist-era boozier along the river east of Prešernov trg that its regulars treat like a second home; **Pod Skalco** (Under the Rock; Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 58 20; Gosposka ulica 19; ☎ 6.30am-3am Mon-Thu, 5pm-3am Fri-Sun) due south of the City Museum; or **Druga Pomoč** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 431 32 77; Šmartinska cesta 3; ☎ 6am-3am), a quintessential dive bar called 'Second Aid' and just north of the city's emergency hospital.

ENTERTAINMENT

Ljubljana Life (www.ljubljanalife.com) is a free quarterly magazine with practical information and listings. It's distributed free at the airport and in hotels and the tourist offices. *Where to?* in *Ljubljana*, available from the tourist offices, lists cultural and sporting events.

Nightclubs

D'Place (Map pp62-3; ☎ 040-626 901; www.club-dplace.com, in Slovene; Šmartinska cesta 152, BTC Shopping Centre; ☎ 10pm-6am Thu-Sat) This new club with different themed evenings (eg hip-hop and R'n'B on Saturday) in the Kolosej multiplex cinema at BTC City Shopping Centre has been making quite a splash since it opened in mid-2006.

Funfactory (Map p75; ☎ 428 96 90; Industrijska Cona Rudnik, Jurčkova cesta 224; ☎ 9pm-dawn Thu-Sat) Ljubljana's biggest club is hidden in a shopping centre opposite the Leclerc Hypermarket (bus 3 to the end) in the far southeast suburbs.

Global (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 90 20; www.global.si, in Slovene; Tomšičeva ulica 2; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat) This retro cocktail bar on the 6th floor of the Nama department store becomes a popular dance venue nightly and attracts a chi-chi crowd. Take the bouncer-guarded lift in the passage-

way linking Cankarjeva ulica and Tomšičeva ulica.

Klub K4 (Map pp62-3; ☎ 438 03 04; www.klubk4.org in Slovene; Kersnikova ulica 4; ☎ 10pm-4am) This evergreen club in the basement of the Student Organisation of the University of Ljubljana (Študentska Organizacija Univerze Ljubljani; ŠOU) features rave-electronic music Friday and Saturday, with other styles of music week-nights, and a popular gay and lesbian night on Sunday (p87). It closes when university breaks up.

Bachus Center Club (Map pp66-7; ☎ 241 82 44; www.bachus-center.com; Kongresni trg 3; ☎ 10pm-5am Mon-Sat) There's something for everyone at Bachus, it also has a restaurant and bar-lounge and attracts a mixed crowd.

As Pub (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 88 22; Čopova ulica 5a but enter from Knafjjev prehod; ☎ 7am-3am Wed-Sat) DJs transform this candle-lit basement bar, hidden beneath an upmarket fish restaurant, into a pumping, crowd-pulling nightclub four nights a week.

KUD France Prešeren (Map p75; ☎ 283 22 88; www.kud-fp.si; Karunova ulica 14; ☎ 9am-up to 1am) This 'noninstitutional culture and arts society' in Trnovo stages concerts as well as performances, literary events, exhibitions, workshops and so on, on most nights.

Slovenia, which cannot (it must be said) boast a truly rich tradition of indigenous music often looks to its former co-tenants, and music of the republics of the late Yugoslavia is all the rage at two clubs: **Tramontana** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 041-767 447; Nazorjeva ulica 6; ☎ 10am-5am Wed, 9pm-5am Thu-Sat), celebrated for its *Balkan žur* (Balkan party), and **Katastrofa** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 431 51 55; www.petica.si, in Slovene; Celovška cesta 25; ☎ 8pm-5am Fri & Sat) in the Tivoli Recreation Centre in Park Tivoli.

For an evening of alternative entertainment and partying, try **Metelkova Mesto** (Map pp62-3; btwn Metelkova ulica & Maistrova ul; www.metelkova.org). 'Metelkova Town', an ex-army garrison taken over by squatters after independence, is now a free-living commune – a miniature version of Copenhagen's Christiania. In this two-court-yard block, half a dozen idiosyncratic venues hide behind gaily tagged doorways, coming to life generally after midnight Thursday to Saturday. Entering the main 'city gate' from Masarykova cesta, the building to the right houses **Gala Hala** (www.galahala.com, in Slovene) with live bands and club nights, **Channel Zero** (punk, hardcore) and **100% Mizart**. Easy to miss in the

first building to the left are **Tiffany** (below) for gay men and **Monokel** (below) for lesbians. Beyond the first courtyard to the southwest, well-hidden **Klub Gromka** (folk, live concerts) is beneath the bodyless heads. Next door is **Menza pri Koritu** (performance) and the idiosyncratic **Čajnica pri Marlič** (psycho-blues). Details are usually thin on the ground, the venues change and opening times are erratic; visit the Metelkova website or just show up.

Gay & Lesbian Venues

Ljubljana may not be the most gay-friendly city in Central Europe, but there are a few decent options. For general information and advice, ring **K4 Roza** (☎ 430 47 40; Kersnikova ulica 4), which is made up of the gay and lesbian branches of Škuc (Študentski Kulturni Center or Student Cultural Centre) or the gay and lesbian hotline **GALfon** (☎ 432 40 89; ☎ 7-10pm).

K4 Roza (☎ 431 70 10, 438 03 04; Kersnikova ulica 4; ☎ 10pm-6am Sun Sep-Jun) A popular spot for both gays and lesbians alike is this Sunday night disco at Klub K4 (p86). The music takes no risks, but the crowd is lively and friendly.

Tiffany (Map pp62-3; www.ljudmila.org/siqrd/tiffany in Slovene; Masarykova cesta 24; ☎ 10pm-1am Wed & Thu, 10am-4pm Fri & Sat, 10pm-midnight Sun). This friendly gay and lesbian café-bar is in the small building to the left (east) as you enter Metelkova Mesto.

Monokel (Map pp62-3; www.klubmonokel.com, in Slovene; ☎ 9pm-1am Fri) For lesbians, Monokel is in the same building as Tiffany.

Classical Music, Opera & Dance

Cankarjev Dom (Cankar House; Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 71 00; www.cd-cc.si; Prešernova cesta 10) Ljubljana's premier cultural and conference centre has two large auditoriums (the Gallus Hall has perfect acoustics) and a dozen smaller performance spaces offering a remarkable smorgasbord of performance arts (up to 1000 cultural events a year). The **ticket office** (☎ 241 72 99; ☎ 11am-1pm & 3-8pm Mon-Fri, 11am-1pm Sat & 1hr before performance) is in the subway below Maximarket supermarket on the opposite side of Trg Republike.

Philharmonic Hall (Filharmonija; Map pp66-7; ☎ 241 08 00; www.filharmonija.si; Kongresni trg 10). Home to the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, this smaller but more atmospheric venue stages concerts and hosts performances of the **Slovenian Chamber Choir** (Slovenski Komorni Zbor; ☎ 231 18 92), which was founded in 1991. Buy tickets from the **ticket office** (☎ 241 08 10; Hribarjevo nabrežje;

☎ 4-6pm Mon-Sat) in the rear of the building facing the river.

Slovenian National Opera and Ballet Theatre (Slovensko Narodno Gledališče Opera in Balet; Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 17 40, box office 241 17 64, 031-696 600; www.operainbalet-lj.si; Zupancičeva ulica 1; ☎ 1-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-1pm Sat & 1hr before performance) This historic theatre stages both opera and ballet.

Križanke (Map pp66-7; ☎ 241 60 00, box office 241 60 28; www.festival-lj.si; Trg Francoske Revolucije 1-2; ☎ 10am-1.30pm & 4-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat & 1hr before performance) The outdoor theatre at this sprawling 18th-century monastery hosts the events of the Ljubljana Summer Festival (p78). The smaller **Knights Hall** (Viteška Dvorana) is the venue for chamber concerts.

Rock, Pop & Jazz

Orto Bar (Map pp62-3; ☎ 232 16 74; www.orto-bar.com; Graboličeva ulica 1; ☎ 6pm-4am Mon-Thu, 6pm-5am Fri & Sat, 6pm-2am Sun) A popular bar for late-night drinking and dancing with occasional live music, Orto is just five minutes' walk from Metelkova.

Jazz Club Gajo (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 32 06; Beethovnova ulica 8; www.jazzclubgajo.com; ☎ 11am-2am Mon-Fri, 7pm-midnight Sat & Sun) Just up from the Parliament building, Gajo is the city's premier venue for live jazz and attracts both local and international talent, usually midweek or on Friday at 8.30pm. Jam sessions are at 8.30pm Monday.

Sax Pub (Map p75; ☎ 283 90 09; Eipprova ulica 7; ☎ noon-1am Mon, 10am-1am Tue-Sat, 4-10pm Sun) In Trnovo and decorated with colourful murals and graffiti inside and out, Sax has live jazz at 9.30pm on Thursday.

Kavarna Geonavtik (Map pp66-7; ☎ 252 70 27; Kongresni trg 1; ☎ 7am-2am Mon-Fri, 8am-2am Sat) This café-bar, behind the bookshop of the same name (p61), sometimes has jazz sessions.

Cinemas

Slovenska Kinoteka (Slovenian Cinematheque; Map pp62-3; ☎ 434 25 20; www.kinoteka.si in Slovene; Miklošičeva cesta 28) shows archival art and classic films whereas its sister-cinema **Kino Dvor** (Court Cinema; Map pp62-3; ☎ 434 25 48; www.kinodvor.si, in Slovene; Kolodvorska ulica 13) nearby more contemporary films. Screenings are usually at 6pm, 8pm and 10pm and cost €4.

Foreign films are never dubbed into Slovene but are shown in their original language with subtitles. For the latest films (€3.75 to €4.60), head for any of the cinemas listed below.

Kolosej (Map pp62-3; ☎ 520 55 00; www.kolosej.si, in Slovene; Šmartinska cesta 152) Twelve-screen multiplex in BTC City shopping centre 3.5km northeast of Center with more than 3300 seats.

Kino Komuna (Map pp66-7; ☎ 421 84 00; Cankarjeva cesta 1) In the passageway.

Kinoklub Vič (Map pp62-3; ☎ 241 84 10; Trg Mladinskih Delovnih Brigad 6) Southwest of Center.

Theatre

Ljubljana has half a dozen theatres so there should be something on stage for everyone. Slovenian theatre is usually quite visual with a lot of mixed media, so you don't always have to speak the lingo to enjoy the production. In addition to concerts and other musical events, **Cankarjev Dom** (p87) regularly stages theatrical productions.

Slovenian National Drama Theatre (Slovensko Narodno Gledališče Drama; Map pp66-7; ☎ 252 14 62, box office 252 15 11; www.sngdrama-lj.si; Erjavčeva cesta 1; ☎ box office 2-5pm & 6-8pm Mon-Fri, 6pm-time of performance Sat) Built as a German-language theatre in 1911, this wonderful Art Nouveau building is home to the national theatre company.

Slovenian Youth Theatre (Slovensko Mladinsko Gledališče; Map pp62-3; ☎ 231 06 10, 230 12 86; www.mladinsko-gl.si; Festivalna Dvorana, Vilharjeva cesta 11; box office ☎ 10am-noon & 3.30-5.30 Mon-Fri, 10am-noon Sat) Established in 1955 as the first professional theatre for children and youth in Slovenia, this company has staged some highly acclaimed contemporary productions in the Festival Hall north of the train station.

Glej Theatre (Gledališče Glej; Map pp66-7; ☎ 421 92 40, 251 66 79; Gregorčičeva ulica 3) Glej has been Ljubljana's foremost experimental theatre, working with companies that include Beton-tanc (dance) and Grejpfрут (drama). It stages about five productions a year.

Ljubljana Puppet Theatre (Lutkovno Gledališče Ljubljana; Map pp62-3; ☎ 300 09 70, box office 300 09 82; www.lgl.si; Krekov trg 2; ☎ box office 4-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-noon Sat & 1hr before performance) The Ljubljana Puppet Theatre stages its own shows throughout the year and hosts Lutke, the biennial International Puppet Festival (Mednarodni Lutkovni Festival), in September.

Sport

Now that Ljubljana's Central Stadium (Centralni Stadion; Vodovodna cesta 20) just off Dunajska cesta in Bežigrad and designed by Jože Plečnik in 1925 has closed, matches are held at the nearby **ŽSD Ljubljana Stadium** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 438 64

70; Milčinskega ulica 2). Those wanting to watch the national team play, however, must now travel to Celje (p248) and the spanking new Celje Sport Park (Športni Park) multiuse stadium there. The capital's First Division team is NK Factor Ljubljana. For basketball, ice hockey and volleyball, the venue is the **Hala Tivoli** (Tivoli Hall; Map pp62-3; ☎ 431 51 55; Celovška cesta 25) sport centre in Park Tivoli.

SHOPPING

Ljubljana has plenty on offer in the way of folk art, antiques, music, wine and, increasingly, fashion. If you want everything under one roof, head for **BTC City** (☎ 585 11 00; www.btc.si; Šmartinska cesta 152; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Sat), a sprawling mall with scores of shops in Moste, northeast of Center. It can be reached on bus 2, 7 and 17.

Art & Antiques

Worth checking out is the weekly **antiques flea market** (Cankarjevo nabrežje; Map pp66-7; ☎ 8am-12pm Sun) held year-round on the embankment between Triple and Cobbler Bridges. A summer art market called **Ljubljana Montmartre** (Pogačarjev trg; ☎ 9am-4pm Sat Jun-Sep) near the Central Market has paintings and ceramics.

Antika Ferjan (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 18 15; 1st fl, Mestni trg 21; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat) Ferjan is a large shop with Slovenian and other European art and antique glass, furniture and clocks.

Carniola Antiqua (Map pp66-7; ☎ 231 63 97; Trubarjeva cesta 9; ☎ 10am-1pm & 4-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) This is among the best small antique galleries in town.

Galerija Fortuna (☎ 425 01 87; Gornji trg 1; ☎ 10am-1pm & 4-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) Packed into this lovely shop are some really beautiful antiques, especially glassware from the 1920s and other delightful Art Nouveau treasures. Prices are pretty reasonable too.

Trubarjev Antikvariat (Map pp66-7; ☎ 244 26 83; Mestni trg 25; ☎ 8.30am-1.30pm & 3.30-7.30 Mon-Fri, 8.30am-1.30pm Sat) Come here for antiquarian and second-hand books.

Clothing & Fashion

Almira Sadar (Map pp62-3; ☎ 430 13 29; Tavčarjeva ulica 6; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) On offer here are uniquely patterned women's foundation pieces and accessories in natural materials from one of Slovenia's leading designers.

Torbice Grošelj (Map pp62-3; ☎ 231 89 84; Tavčarjeva ulica 6; ☎ 8.30am-12.30pm & 3.30-7pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-

12.30pm Sat) This shop just next door sells handbags by designer Marjeta Grošelj in top-quality leather.

Recently, the southern reaches of the Old Town have seen a number of high-quality fashion boutiques open up, including the four listed below.

Akultura (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 17 00; www.akultura.si; Stari trg 11a; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) Skirts, jackets and gloves in multicoloured, butter-soft leathers. In summer, silk makes an appearance.

Devetka (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 95 90; Gornji trg 1; ☎ 10am-1pm & 4-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm) Women's foundation pieces and bed linens in bold geometrical prints.

Katarina Silk (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 00 10; Gornji trg 5; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat) Silk scarves so fine they'll pass through a ring and unique costume jewellery.

Butanoga (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 98 88; Levstikov trg 8; ☎ 1-8pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-1.30pm Sat) Now we've seen shoes and we've worn shoes but we've never – ever – seen anything like these kind by Matjaž Vlah.

Folk Art & Gifts

Darila Rokus (Rokus Gifts; ☎ 234 77 17; www.darila.com; Gosposvetska cesta 2; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) This stunning shop is the main outlet for a company manufacturing high-end glassware and crockery designed by the likes of Oskar Kagoj and Zora Stančič, reproductions of Plečnik's sketches and Trubar's original catechism, fine folk art and vintage wines.

Skrina (Trousseau; Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 51 61; www.skrina.si; Breg 8; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) This is the best shop – bar none – for distinctly Slovenian (and affordable) folk craft, like Prekmurje black pottery, Idrija lace, beehive panels with folk motifs, decorated heart-shaped honey cakes, painted Easter eggs, Rogaska glassware, colourful bridal chests and colourful stepped stools.

Studio Irma Vončina (☎ 425 00 51; Mestni trg 17; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Jun-Aug; 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Sep-May) This gallery in the Old Town stocks some of the finest lace you'll find in Slovenia outside Idrija.

Ljubljanček (Map pp66-7; ☎ 308 19 40; Miklošičeva cesta 1; ☎ 8am-2pm & 3.30-7.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat, 8am-noon Sun) This small souvenir shop in the Grand Hotel Union Executive specialises in products and souvenirs with distinct Ljubljana motifs. It also stocks local guides and English-language newspapers and periodicals.

ArtGlass Ateje (Map pp66-7; ☎ 031-717 458; Dvorni trg 2; ☎ 10am-7.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) This shop

specialises in stunning functional and glass pieces by master craftsman Tomaž Miletič.

Piranske Soline (Map pp66-7; ☎ 472 01 90; Mestni trg 19; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat & Sun) This shop in the Old Town sells bath sea salts and other products from Sečovlje (p180).

Rustika (Map pp66-7; ☎ 031-383 247, 041-859 666; ☎ 9am-7.30pm Jun-Sep, 10am-7pm Oct-May) This attractive gallery and shop, with wooden floors and a really 'rustic' feel, is conveniently located in Ljubljana Castle and is good for folk art.

Music

MCD Shop (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 17 06; Miklošičeva cesta 2; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) This is Ljubljana's best music shop, with informed and very helpful staff.

Musikalje (Map pp66-7; ☎ 426 70 36; Trg Francoske Revolucije 6; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) This atmospheric shop near the Križanke is the place in Ljubljana for classical music, scores and instruments.

Spin Vinyl (Map pp66-7; ☎ 251 10 18; www.spinvinyl.si; Gallusovo nabrežje 13; ☎ 10.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun) A sizeable collection of old vinyl and CDs complements the newer stuff, which is a mix of alternative rock and dance music, both local and international.

Sporting Goods

Annapurna (Map p75; ☎ 426 34 28; Krakovski nasip 4; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) If you've forgotten your sleeping bag, ski poles, hiking boots, climbing gear or rucksack, this shop in Krakovo can supply you with most (or all) of it.

Lovec (Map pp62-3; ☎ 231 73 87; Gosposvetska cesta 12; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) For those into ridin', fishin' and shootin', 'Hunter' has all the kit and equipment you'll need.

Wine

The most central place to buy (and taste) Slovenian wine is **Vinoteka Movia** (p85).

Wine Cellars of Slovenia (Vinske Kleti Slovenije; Map pp62-3; ☎ 431 50 15; Jurček Pavilion, Ljubljana Fairgrounds, Dunajska cesta 18; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) If you're serious about wine this enormous wine cellar and restaurant north of Center is for you. It has a selection of 800 wines, most of which are Slovenian.

Vino Boutique (Map pp66-7; ☎ 425 26 80; Slovenska cesta 38; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) This small shop in a narrow passageway may not

have as much choice as the Wine Cellars of Slovenia but it's more central, and but the owners are well informed and helpful.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

For details of flights to and from Ljubljana, see p286.

Bus

Buses to destinations both within Slovenia and abroad leave from the same shedlike **bus station** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 234 46 01, information ☎ 090 42 30; www.ap-ljubljana.si; Trg OF 4; ☎ 5.30am-10.30pm Mon-Sat, 8am-8pm Sun) opposite the train station. Next to the ticket windows are bilingual information phones and touch-screen computers. The posted timetable is useful once you get the hang of it.

You do not usually have to buy your ticket in advance; just pay as you board the bus. But for long-distance trips on Friday, just before the school break and public holidays, you are running the risk of not getting a seat. Book one the day before and reserve a seat (€1/3.60 domestic/international).

You can reach virtually anywhere in the country by bus – as close as Kamnik (€3, 45 minutes, 23km, every half-hour) or as far away as Brežice (€9.60, three hours, 109km, four a day). Here are some sample one-way fares (return fares are double), travel times, distances and frequencies from the capital: Bled (€6.15, 1¼ hours, 57km, hourly), Bohinj (€8, two hours, 86km, hourly), Koper (€10.75, 2½ hours, 122km, up to 11 daily), Maribor (€11.20, three hours, 127km; between two and eight daily), Murska Sobota (€15.70, 4¼ hours, 187km, one or two a day), Novo Mesto (€7, two hours, 72km, seven to 10 a day), Piran (€11.70, three hours, 140km, up to seven daily) and Postojna (€5.75, one hour, 53km, up to 24 daily).

For details of international bus services from Ljubljana, see p288.

Car & Motorcycle

All the big international car-rental firms have offices in Ljubljana, including **Avis** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 430 80 10; www.avis.si; Čufarjeva ulica 2; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8-11am & 6-8pm Sat, 8-11am Sun), **Budget** (Map pp66-7; ☎ 421 73 40; www.budget-slovenia.com; Grand Hotel Union Business, Miklošičeva cesta 3; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) and **Hertz** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 434 01 47; www.hertz.si; Trdinova ulica 9; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat,

8am-noon Sun). However, you should get a better deal at one of the local firms listed below.

ABC Rent a Car Cityhotel Turist (Map pp66-7; ☎ 510 43 20, 031-382 051; infoabc@siol.net; Cityhotel Turist, Dalmatinova ulica 15, enter from Tavčarjeva ulica; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8-11am & 6-8pm Sat, 8-11am Sun); airport (☎ 04-236 79 90; Brnik Airport; ☎ 8am-9pm) Has its own fleet and acts as an agent for **Europcar** (www.europcar.si).

Atet Rent a Car (Map pp62-3; ☎ 513 70 17; www.atet.si; Derčeva ulica 4; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat) In the M Hotel.

AutoRent (Map pp62-3; ☎ 234 46 50; www.renta carslo.com; Trg OF 5; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1 Sat, 8am-noon Sun) Next to the post office.

For sample rates and information on conditions, see p293.

Hitching

If you are leaving Ljubljana by way of thumb, take one of the following city buses to the terminus and begin hitching there.

Bled, Jesenice & Austria (Salzburg) Bus 1 northwest (Vižmarje stop)

Maribor & Austria (Vienna) Bus 6 northeast (Čmučje stop)

Novo Mesto & Croatia (Zagreb) Bus 3 southeast (Rudnik stop)

Postojna, Koper, Croatian Istria and Italy (Trieste) Bus 6 southwest (Dolgi Most stop)

Train

Domestic and international trains arrive at and depart from central Ljubljana's lone **train station** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 291 33 32; www.slo-zeleznice.si; Trg OF 6; ☎ 5am-10pm). You can get rail information from window no 10. Buy domestic tickets from window nos 1 to 8 and international ones from nos 9 and 10. You'll also find a branch of the Ljubljana Tourist Information Centre here.

The following are some one-way 2nd-class domestic fares, travel times, distances and frequencies from Ljubljana: Bled (€3.90 to €5.30, 55 minutes, 51km, up to 17 a day), Koper (€7.30 to €8.70, 2½ hours, 153km, four times a day), Maribor (€7.30 to €12.40, 1¼ hours, 156km, up to 25 a day), Murska Sobota (€9.90 to €14.50, 4¼ hour, 216km, up to eight a day) and Novo Mesto (€5, 1½ hours, 75km, up to 14 daily). Return fares are double the price, and there's a surcharge of between €1.45 to €1.80 on domestic InterCity (IC) train tickets.

For more information on international trains leaving Ljubljana, see p288.

GETTING AROUND

To/From the Airport

The cheapest way to Brnik Airport is by **public airport bus** (Map pp62-3; €3.70, 50 minutes, 27km) from stop no 28 at the bus station. These run hourly, from 6.10am to 8.10pm Monday to Friday; at the weekend there's a bus at 6.10am then one every two hours from 9.10am to 7.10pm.

A **private airport van** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 04-252 63 19, 041-792 865; €8) also links Trg OF near the bus station with the airport up to 10 times daily between 5.20am and 10.30pm, and is a 30 minute trip. They go from the airport to Ljubljana nine times a day between 5.45am and 11pm.

A taxi from the airport to Ljubljana will cost about €32.

Bicycle

Ljubljana is a city of cyclists, and there are bike lanes and special traffic lights everywhere. It's a real pleasure.

Ljubljana Bike (☎ 051-441 900; 2hr/1 day €0.85/4.20; ☎ 8am-8pm Apr-Oct) has bikes available from some 10 locations around the city, including the train station (Map pp62-3), the Slovenian Tourist Information Centre (p68), the Celica Hostel (p80), and at the start of Miklošičeva cesta (Map pp66-7).

Car & Motorcycle

You can **street park** (per hr €0.40-0.50; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) in Ljubljana, though not always very easily, especially in the museum area and close to the Old Town. There are enclosed car parks throughout the city, and their locations are indicated on most maps. The one below Trg Republike Miklošičev Park, for example, charges €1.25 for the first hour and €1per hour after that; a 12-hour stretch costs €13.

Public Transport

Ljubljana's public transport system, run by **LPP** (Ljubljanski Potniški Promet; ☎ 582 24 20; www.lpp.si in Slovene; Celovška cesta 160; ☎ 6.45am-7pm Mon-Fri,

6.45am-1pm Sat), is very user-friendly. There are a total of 21 lines numbered 1 to 22 (no 4 doesn't exist), and half a dozen of them (nos 1, 2, 3, 6, 8 and 11) are considered main lines. nos 2, 6 and 11 start at 3.15am and finish at midnight; the rest begin their runs at 5am and stop any time between 9pm and 10.30pm. Buses on the main lines run about every five to 15 minutes; service is less frequent on other lines and on Sunday and holidays.

You can pay the flat fare (€1.25) on board with exact change or use a tiny metal *žeton* (€0.80) available at many newsstands, kiosks and post offices.

Bus passes (as well as tokens, of course) can be purchased from three LPP locations, including the company's head office. More central is the **LPP Information Centre** (Map pp62-3; ☎ 430 51 75; Slovenska cesta 56; ☎ 6.45am-7pm Mon-Fri, 6.45am-1pm Sat) near the Borza (Ljubljana Stock Exchange) and the **LPP kiosk** (Map pp66-7; Slovenska cesta 55; ☎ 6am-8pm Mon-Fri, 7am-8pm Sat) at the system's central stop (Bavarski Dvor). Passes are available for a day (*dnevna vozovnica*, €3.75) or a week (*tedenska vozovnica*, €14.20).

From the bus or train stations, bus 2 will take you down Slovenska cesta to Mestni trg (Magistrat stop) in the Old Town. To reach Trnovo, catch bus 9 to the terminus (Trnovo stop). In general the central area of Ljubljana is perfectly walkable, so buses are really only necessary if you're staying out of town

Taxi

Metered taxis can be hailed on the street or hired from ranks near the train station, on Prešernov trg, at the Ljubljana Tourist Information Centre (p67), on Stritarjeva ulica, in front of Hotel Slon (p80) on Slovenska cesta, or on Mestni trg. Flagfall is €0.65 to €1 and the per-kilometre charge is €0.75 to €1.50, depending on whether you call ahead or hail a taxi on the street. You can call a taxi on any of the following numbers: ☎ 031-311 311, ☎ 041-445 406, and ☎ 051-809 908.

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