

Slovene Sojourn: A guide from the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana and some recent and former Fulbright Fellows

First, we know that you'll have a great time, as we all did. Slovenia is a terrific place to live and work. If you haven't been here before, you'll feel like you've hit the Fulbright jackpot. And if you have been here before, you already know you have.

However, there can be a few challenges along the way. Ted Dobson, a Fulbright Fellow from 2008, counsels that above all, **DON'T WORRY. EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT.** And it will. However, we offer the below guide with the hope that many anxieties will be allayed with copious amounts of information at your fingertips.

ADMINISTRATION

- Temporary Residency Permit application process and or Visa D: Here is the explanation the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana, Slovenia obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the changes in the legislation and the application process for either temporary residency permit or Visa D.
- The new Slovenian Act on Foreigners which came into force on October 27, 2011 enables foreign citizens (provided they meet the required conditions) to live in Slovenia for up to one year on the basis of a long-term visa – Visa D. Therefore, Fulbright Fellowship Program recipients can come to Slovenia either on the basis of the residency permit (for which they need to give fingerprints at the Slovenian Embassy) or on the basis of Visa D. In case Fulbrighters need to prolong their stay in Slovenia, they can, on the basis of Visa D, apply for a residency permit directly at the Administrative Unit (which is found in larger cities in Slovenia, e.g. Upravna Enota Ljubljana). On the basis of Visa D they cannot report their place of residence in Slovenia (address) at the Administrative Unit, however, they would still be able to open a non-resident bank account (we checked this with Nova Ljubljanska Bank/NLB). In order to do this, they will need to present their tax number – which they will have obtained from the Tax Office of the Republic of Slovenia (DURS) - and an identity document (passport).
- Javni sklad RS za razvoj kadrov in stipendiranje/Slovenian Human Resources and Scholarship Fund is expected to administer the local currency stipend grant issues/payment, starting with academic year 2012-2013 (on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport). Fulbrighters will most likely be required to have a bank account in Slovenia in order to provide them with local currency stipends.
- The only difficulty that foreign students (Fulbright grantees) may run into after coming to Slovenia on the basis of Visa D is that they cannot live in student dormitories or other university housing. The Student Housing Office requires a residency permit (in this case students/holders of Visa D will be referred to the Administrative Unit in their host city where they apply for a residency permit).

- Dear all- I just wanted to report that we got our passports back today with the Visa D stamp in them. Hooray! I asked for permission to stay from February 7 to August 7 but they provided a visa for Feb 1 to October 31. It took about a week. I had to send by e-mail a letter of invitation, which was not in the original list of documents to include. But that was not difficult to acquire. We are now set to go. I would recommend this route to Fulbrighters next year...depending of course on whether we have any trouble with this new visa while we are in Slovenia. Stay tuned. (Paul and Lind Hirt).

In brief: As it is evident from the above explanation, U.S. Fulbright students and scholars coming to Slovenia have two options:

- To either apply for Visa D (Visa D will enable you to stay in Slovenia for the period of 12 months. In case a longer stay in Slovenia is required, you will need to apply for a residency permit in Slovenia and then go to the nearest Slovenian Embassy or Consulate abroad like in Zagreb, Croatia or Consulate in Trieste. Visa D will enable you to obtain a Slovenian tax number and also open a non-resident bank account and receive Slovene local currency stipend. However, under Visa D you will not be able to seek housing at any of the University/Visiting faculty Housing or in Student dormitories.
- Administrative experiences with Temporary Residency Permit vary widely. It's a good idea to start your Temporary Residency Permit (TRP) application process early as it may take several months.
- If the policy doesn't get changed, the Slovene embassy in the U.S. may want a specific, custom letter for the proof of health insurance. Ask them if they can provide you with a sample letter so your insurance company knows what is needed. It might be easier to have the Fulbright supplemental insurance company provide the letter than trying to deal with your insurance company. The Embassy informed us that they would include a letter stating that all Fulbright grantees are provided with insurance coverage, but they encouraged us to supply an insurance letter from our universities as well. This may be particularly important if you are bringing spouses, children, or others.
- If you don't have the TRP in your passport by the time you leave, get documentation from the embassy that confirms that you will pick it up after you arrive to provide the airline (airlines require this only occasionally, but it's better to be forewarned). Obtaining your TRP before you leave will require a personal visit to the Slovenian Embassy. If you plan to purchase your return ticket more than 90 days after departing the U.S., you may want to get the Embassy documentation. Most people do not have an issue, my wife and I (Don Hodges) were stopped at the airport while the ticket agent confirmed that they would not be in Slovenia for more than 90 days.
- To procure your TRP in Slovenia, you will need to go to the old tobacco factory near the city center in LJU. Bring all of your documentation, including your Fulbright Award Letter, something on letterhead stating that you have received this award, and multiple copies of your (and your dependents') passport photos. Thanks to Ivanka at the U.S. Embassy, the process was much easier in 2011. The Old Tobacco Factory is located on Tobačna ulica near the intersection

of Tržaška cesta, Tivolska cesta, and Aškerčeva cesta (buses 1 and 6 have a stop at Tobačna). We completed the application several months before leaving and mailed it to the Slovenia Embassy in DC. All we needed to receive the TRP when we arrived in Slovenia was our passport and around 10 euros per person. It would still be a good idea to take all documentation to be safe.

- You also may have to obtain proof of your residential address. Some landlords may do this for you (particularly if you are staying in university housing). If not, in Ljubljana you will have to go back to Tobačna (the end of the building opposite the office for the TRP). You will need your passport and documentation of your local address, such as a lease. They may check that all names requesting a proof of address are listed on the document, so the lease must list all names.
- You need a tax ID number to open a bank account. To get the Tax ID number, you must go to the Ministry of Finance office. Bring your Fulbright Award letter, your visa, and proof of your residential address. The office is located in northeast Ljubljana at Davčna 1 (follow Smartinska cesta to Savska cesta – the building will be to the right just before the traffic circle). This step was relatively easy – other than finding the office.
- Once you have a tax ID you can get a bank account, which allows you to access your housing allowance. This is a fairly simple process and most large banks in Ljubljana can process a foreigner’s account in English and without difficulty. NLB is the largest bank in Slovenia and their main office near Maxi in the center of Ljubljana can handle all services, including wire transfers, automatic payments for rent and utilities, etc.
- If you have books that you want to send through the diplomatic pouch, you might want to send them early. Delivery seems somewhat erratic. Some boxes took two weeks, while others took three months to arrive.
- If you are one of two parents/guardians travelling alone with a dependent child, be sure to send the CIES Program Officer a letter from the other giving you “permission to leave the US.” Also, obtain a notarized copy of a “Permission to Travel Form” that lists your partner’s permission to travel alone with your minor child. Some countries do not allow a minor to travel unless accompanied by both parents/guardians.

READING

- Erica Debeljak. Forbidden Bread
- Oto Luthar. The Land Between, A History of Slovenia Resistance, Suffering, Hope - The Slovene Partisan Movement 1941-1945 (avail online)
- Darren (Norm) Longley. The Rough Guide to Slovenia
- James Gow, Cathie Carmichael. Slovenia and the Slovenes: A Small State and the New Europe.
- John K. Cox. Slovenia: Evolving Loyalties.

HOUSING

- Warning: Fulbright housing stipends are notoriously late here. Set aside extra funds for housing as you may not get yours for months. It is entirely possible that you will not receive your stipend until November for the fall and May for the spring.
- http://www.property.si/index_eng.htm is a comprehensive website of real estate, including rental apartments, in Slovenia. You can narrow your list by place, price, space, etc. Know that apartments rented by owners will not require a real estate agent fee.
- If you are renting for a short period (3-4 months) you will encounter greater difficulties finding an apartment. Many apartment owners prefer renters who can commit to a long term lease, so be clear about your situation from the get go. There is a company that specializes in shorter-term rentals (www.apartmaji.si). Rent is a little bit higher, but includes utilities and they do not charge a one-month fee, so if you are renting for only 4-5 months it will probably come out about the same as renting through a real estate agent somewhere else. Also, all linens and housewares are included so you won't need to buy them (this isn't the case with all furnished apartments). They are also *very* responsive to any needs you have. If you have any questions about this company, please feel free to contact Jay Ebben (jjebben@stthomas.edu).
- If you are arriving in the fall, look for housing immediately. You will be competing with thousands of students starting classes, and they usually pick the most affordable flats. They are also interested in renting for longer periods, which is preferable to owners. You should consider accessing websites from the U.S. prior to leaving for Slovenia.
- If you are going to purchase or rent a car and live in the center of Ljubljana, you should consider renting an apartment with a garage (which may cost extra). Parking in downtown Ljubljana is expensive and scarce.
- A recommended Ljubljana realtor is Alja at Stoja-trade Realty. Her email is Alga@stoja-trade.si. Expect to pay one month's rent to any realtor who helps you find an apartment.
- Annette-in-Centre is a recommended short or long-term one-bedroom apartment in Ljubljana. It's recently renovated and in a good location. The landlord is incredibly helpful and connected and speaks English. His number is 031 396 484.
http://www.travel-library.com/accommodations/europe/slovenia/ljubljana/annette_in_center.html
- Student housing: Some faculties maintain online databases/listservs of people looking for roommates. If you have a university/faculty affiliation, they might be able to share this info with you. If not, ask around-- one of my friends here is in the Medical Faculty, which maintains a list like this. She sent out a message saying there was an American who needed a place to live for a few months, and several people contacted her right away. I found a nice apartment with two nice roommates for 260 euros per month, which is less than I would have paid if I went through the standard realtor route. I was certainly lucky, but there are deals to be found in the surprisingly tough Ljubljana rental market.

TRAVEL

- The Ljubljana bus system is extensive and efficient. However, keep in mind that the bus system doesn't run very late and runs on a very reduced schedule at night, on weekends, and on holidays. The bus routes/frequency are listed at each kiosk. Buses now require a bus card, "Urbana," which can be purchased at kiosks for 2 euros. You then add money to the card at a kiosk, newsstand, or automated machine located near many major bus stops. The cost of one ride is 0.80 euros; you are not charged for transfers within 90 minutes of the initial ride.
- Purchase international bus tickets well in advance, as it decreases the price considerably.
- Railway employees on the trains oftentimes don't speak English, so make sure you have all your questions answered before you get on the train. Some of the smaller stations outside of Ljubljana do not always have open ticket windows, in which case you can purchase a ticket on the train from the conductor. Also, if you are taking the train to a smaller town, make sure to find out where the train station in that town is, because they are often located somewhere outside of town and a long walk to where you want to go.
- In Koper, everything is accessible on foot. Public transportation is good along the coast, with several buses every hour. Otherwise, there are buses every couple of hours to Trieste and Ljubljana and a couple of trains to Ljubljana. It is difficult to get directly to other places. Both buses and trains are slow and often stop running early. The bus schedule also seems to change by season, which may not be indicated online. I don't know if there is a good solution other than regularly checking at the station. If you plan to do much traveling, even if it is only in Slovenia, consider having access to a car.
- Consider renting or buying a cheap car in general. Despite the solid public transportation system here, you'll have better access to many more places outside your city of residence.
- To travel to and from the Ljubljana airport, use Markun, an inexpensive shuttle service (www.prevozi-markun.com). They will pick you up at your residence and bring you to the airport (9 euros) or you can catch the shuttle at the shuttle station by the main train terminal (5 euros). When arriving to the airport, their vans/buses are located outside of the main entrance, across the street. They coordinate their service according to typical flight times, so you will not have to plan ahead. Avoid the taxis, which will cost 35+ euros for a one-way trip.
- For assistance in booking travel through an agency, or finding temporary housing in a city you would like to visit, contact Nina Dvanajscek 00386-(0)31-566-014. She is currently working for Turistincna Agencija Az (www.az-sp.si). She can send you some travel packages – make sure you book through her rather than directly after viewing the options.

LANGUAGE

- Talk Now has a CD course that helps with basic nouns, numbers, etc. in Slovene.

- The Filozofska Fakulteta (Faculty of Arts) of the University of Ljubljana will allow Fulbright fellows teaching in one of its depts. to take a Slovene language course at the Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language for free. Must arrange in advance as spaces fill up quickly.
- The Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign/ Language puts out several language books. A nice compact one for basic reference is Pocket Slovene (2008).
- Verba is an outstanding language school for kids and adults. Nina and Primoz, the owners, are helpful and offer any permutation of classes in any language that a family might need. They have language classes combined with sport camps for kids, too, that are fun and well organized.
- There are children's books and dictionaries in Slovenian, English and Italian (or other combinations) that can be helpful ways to learn nouns.

HEALTH

- A little-known and little-used fact is that Slovenia provides Fulbrighters with free access to the public health care system (hence the insistence on letters from American health insurance companies is especially baffling). However, fellows here did not receive their letters confirming this until their housing stipends came in, and these were months late.
- You may not be able to obtain the OTC meds you usually use, so think about bringing your favorites, even ibuprofen, with you. You can't browse the shelves at a drug store to find what you are looking for – you have to go to a *lekarna*, and the names of products, even in their generic forms, may be different.
- Bring all vitamins and supplements you may use/want as they can be hard to find, at least in the form/quality that you typically use at home.
- Try to get all prescriptions filled in advance and bring these with you. Consider also bringing a prophylactic supply of antibiotics, which are readily available in Slovenia but which usually require a local prescription.
- Flu shots are available at private and public clinics.
- If you are going to do a lot of hiking or attend recreational events in the countryside, consider a vaccination for tick-borne diseases. Ticks are very common in Slovenia and the government encourages its own residents to vaccinate.
- The public clinics and Ljubljana hospital have been tried and deemed perfectly good by this year's Fulbrighters. Most medical personnel speak English. Medical practices are more or less in line with those in the U.S. Out-of-pocket medical expenses are generally low. The one difficulty is finding the right place to go...we (Jay Ebben) found the Embassy to be particularly helpful in making sure we got to the right place when our daughter broke her collar bone.

INFO

- The Friday issue of Delo contains a New York Times insert in English and the week's TV guide (in Slovenian).
- Hotels have free, regularly updated Ljubljana in Your Pocket guides (plus guides for Maribor, Bled, and the coast), as well as monthly Slovenian Times, the only regularly published Slovene news magazine in English.
- The Ljubljana Tourist Office has good maps, puts out monthly calendar of events, including kids' events, and is generally very helpful with information pertaining to most aspects of travel in and from Slovenia.

BEST PRACTICES

- Keep a binder in which you place all your Fulbright documents, receipts, etc. for administrative purposes in Slovenia and tax filing later.
- Overestimate your initial expenses (such as “finder's fees,” security deposit, first month's rent, all of the provisions you need to get started in a place, like food, laundry detergent, cleaning supplies, stuff that isn't already provided in the flat – I had to buy a pillow! – managing transportation, etc.).
- If you make a wire transfer from your U.S. bank to a Slovene account, you may have to request that your USD be converted to Euros upon arrival before the money will actually show up in your account. Unlike many banks in the U.S., however, one can have multiple currencies in a single account in Slovenia.
- Find out if there is a difference between the start of the grant and the start of the school term. If everyone is on holiday, there may not be anyone there to orient you when you arrive. Generally, the fall term is from October-January and the spring term is from February-May with final exams in June.
- Consider taking the inexpensive downtown tour of Ljubljana once you arrive. It will help familiarize you with the downtown area. You can purchase tickets at the Tourist Office.
- Use Google Translate to figure out what is what in the grocery, to get Slovene news from Delo, to decipher departmental messages, etc. Google Translate has improved even in the year that we've been here and gets better all the time.
- Try to attend at least one performance at Cankarjev Dom in Ljubljana.
- Get involved. Slovenia is a great place, but it can be a little isolating, in part because everyone knows each other already and may not be inclined to reach out to new people much further than pleasantries. Perhaps this will be easy or natural for future Fulbrighters, depending on their projects. But if not, and if you're interested in joining an amateur/community-based chorus, band, dance, theater, etc. group, I'd suggest sending an e-mail to one of the discipline directors at

the Javni Sklad za Kulturne Dejavnosti (Slovenian Public Fund for Cultural Activities). The JSKD's website is: <http://www.jskd.si/>, and the discipline directors' contact info can be found throughout the website. They are arts administrators and not always personally involved with a band/chorus/etc., but they know the amateur culture scene around Slovenia and may be able to refer you to a group that is looking for members. Another organization to check out is SILA (<http://www.sila.si/>).

- If you're Catholic, the Franciscan church (big pink church) in Presernov Trg offers an International Mass at 11:15 a.m. on Sundays. What this means is that the priest will give a very short sermon in Slovene, and then ask if there are any English speakers in the congregation. If anyone raises his or her hand, the priest will repeat the sermon again in English. He'll do this for German, Italian, and sometimes French, if anyone puts up their hand.
- Consider getting together with the other Fulbrighters at least once or twice during your residency; it's a collegial thing to do and a good way to compare notes.

RECREATION

- Slovenians are very active. Many take walks or go for hikes after work or on the weekends. Hiking opportunities are plentiful. For an easy, accessible hike, check out Smarna Gora, located just outside the city. You can catch the #8 bus to the base of the hill. It is a 30-45 minute walk. Many other options are available in the Julian and Kamnisko-Savinjske Alps. Hiking trails are marked according to average hiking time (e.g. 1 hour) rather than rigor.
- A wealth of recreational activities (canyoning, kayaking, boating, hang gliding) are offered in Bohinj, which is an area inside the very large Triglav National Park. Recommended hikes include the Black Lake, Seven Lakes and Triglav. There are also trails leading up to these lovely meadows and mountain pastures where there are several small huts—very picturesque. Kranjska Gora offers a number of easy hikes. Bovec is also well worth the trip for hiking, rafting, skiing, etc.
- In the spring Ljubljana holds its annual Pot ob zici, which is a 33km walk around Ljubljana. The city was enclosed by barbed wire and guarded during World War II to keep everyone in the city, and the trail follows the original fencing. You can walk a part of or the full (recommended) trail.
- If possible, find a way to get invited to a grape harvest in the fall at one of the many wineries in the region. It is a lot of fun and most families finish the day with a feast featuring traditional Slovenian food.
- Slovenia has a number of great caves to visit. The large (and frequently visited) Postojnska Jama and Skocjanske Jama are very impressive. But for an amazing, once-in-a-lifetime spelunking opportunity, go to Krizna jama; small groups (3-4) visit 2 dozen or so underground lakes in a small raft.
- If you are in Slovenia for second semester, attend one of the festivals associated with Carnivale season. Ptuj holds the largest celebration with parades and parties for two weeks, culminating

with Shrove Tuesday (the biggest parade is the weekend before). Most cities will hold some type of celebration.

BEST PLACES

- Ljubljana public library – hidden off the northern part of Slovenska through a dark archway, but contains a reasonable collection of adult (and some children's) books and DVDs in English. It also has an extensive music collection.
- Organic/natural foods: Kalcek at BTC is by far the best bet with the most variety. Maxi has a small bio section, but no fresh fruits and vegetables. There are two very small natural stores on Trubarjeva if you need the occasional item or fresh bread when you can't get to BTC.
- Ajdovo-Zrno is a good vegetarian restaurant for lunch and dinner. Good prices and very nice owners on a small alleyway on Trubarjeva.
- The Thai restaurant in CityPark (BTC) makes very good tom yom and other Thai soups.
- Sushimama on Wolfova is good for sushi, tempura, and udon cravings.
- Best bakery (none are perfect) Slaščičarna in Pekarna on Trubarjeva. Very nice owners. Great krofi and croissants and good prices. For whole wheat breads you have to go to the natural stores, or Maxi. In Koper, I liked Evropa on Kidričeva Ulica right off Titov Trg and across from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences – they had a decent selection and very nice employees who didn't mind my awful Slovene.
- The Ljubljana Central Market is open everyday except Sunday. You can buy about anything imaginable – fresh flowers, produce, spices, bread, meat, fish, gifts, clothes, etc. Cheese, bread, and pasta from the market are fantastic. Also, try the Mleko Mat (the milk machine), if nothing else for the novelty of it.

Some favorite spots:

- Triglav National Park/Soca Valley (and the Kobarid Museum detailing the Soca Front from WWI).
- Franja Partisan Hospital
- Cable car up to Velika Planina
- Tour of Plečnik's house in LJU
- Ljubljana City Museum
- Ethnographic Museum in LJU (and café!)
- Outdoor market in Ljubljana
- Savica Waterfall
- Lake Bohinj and Lake Bled
- Kamnik and Kamnik sedlo (a great hike)
- Pomurje (especially Lendava)

- And spend lots of afternoons at the Ljubljana castle or by the river having *bela kavas* of course.

FOR FULBRIGHT FACULTY

- Outside of Ljubljana students' English might not be as good as in the capital city. (In Koper, it seemed to be their third language instead of their second.)
- If you are teaching a course that is usually taught in Slovene, there is a law that says only part of the class may be taught in English. Find out what that means for you, and how your academic sponsor plans to make the necessary accommodations, like translating lecture materials, translating test questions, grading tests that are written or orally conducted in Slovene, having an assistant teach part of the class (e.g. a lab component), or having an assistant who will be in lectures with you, etc.
- If you teach a lecture course, especially an introductory class, be prepared for the fact that some students may never show up. Lectures are not mandatory, so students may complete the required labs or exams but never attend lecture. (E.g. Out of 42 students on my roster, 26 took the exam, and 8-12 showed up for lectures.)
- At least at the undergraduate level, lectures are expected to be lectures. There is not really a culture of classroom engagement – many students are not willing to answer questions voluntarily and will not ask questions for the purpose of clarification or generating discussion. Consider requiring students to come to office hours to break the ice.
- Education in Slovenia is heavily subsidized by the government. Students enjoy many perks, including subsidized meal tickets and the opportunity to take classes over (and over) again without penalty if they fail. As a result, many assert, students don't necessarily take their studies as seriously as they otherwise might. Nonetheless, the majority of us had excellent teaching experiences here.
- Slovenia only recently converted to the Bologna system, so faculty, administrators and students are still adjusting.
- If you are unsure about which classes you will be teaching (you may not know until you actually get there), consider the "course packet" approach rather than traditional textbooks.
- Above all, be flexible. Most of us were unsure of our exact teaching responsibilities until we arrived. The Faculties are fitting you into a system that often bases the pay for their professors on the number of hours they spend in the classroom. Therefore, it can be difficult to assign an entire class to someone who will be here for only one or two semesters.

FOR FULBRIGHT STUDENTS

Get a Visiting Student ID from the university's student organization. If you have any sort of loose university/faculty affiliation, ask them write a letter of introduction, and bring it and a passport-type photo to the SOU (student organization) office on Kersnikova in the center of Ljubljana. You'll

probably have to fill out forms and jump through a series of bureaucratic hurdles, but it's worth the headaches for two reasons, both of which will save you money. First, you can buy "Studentski Bon," which are meal coupons that allow you to eat at a selection of about 30-40 restaurants (real restaurants, not just cheap/bad places) in Ljubljana for half price. Each month, you just need to show your ID at the SOU office and you can buy coupons for these restaurants in advance, and then you don't pay anything when you go to the selected restaurants and order from the appropriate menu. A month's worth of lunches (approx. 20-24 coupons per month) ran me about 60-70 euros, which was a pretty good deal. Also, your student ID-- together with a form that must be picked up at the international office in the university headquarters—will get you a green student's bus pass. Just bring these items to the LPP main office at the Bavarski Dvor stop, and they will issue your pass, which you can renew monthly for 17 euros. (There is a one-time fee of 10 euros to issue your bus pass.) This is half the price of a normal monthly bus pass, and works out to be a good value if you're taking the bus once or twice a day.

KIDS

- Lubo and Ana in Ljubljana is a guide for children in Ljubljana published in English and available in Ljubljana bookstores. http://www.ljuboinani.si/eng_knjiga.php
- Rollerblades are an excellent way to get around Ljubljana. Many people cycle, but bikes are a bit dangerous in the city for kids.
- Many malls (including BTC) have play areas and rotating “displays” (e.g. legos, Barbie dolls) where children can play.
- Best playgrounds in Ljubljana: outdoor – Tivoli Park (near the pond) and in Bežigrad on Železna Cesta; indoor – CityPark in BTC mall.
- Danile Kumar, the publicly subsidized international school within a Slovene school, is very friendly and nurturing of elementary and middle-school students. <http://en.os-danilekumar.si/>
- The Gimnazija Bežigrad high school IB program is open, flexible, welcoming, and academically oriented.
- The Atlantis pool in BTC and the Tivoli Park pool both offer swimming lessons in English.
- Rock climbing (indoor) -- Stena -- a great and welcoming place with weekly classes for young people.
- It is difficult to find music teachers or musical instruments to rent (although at Danile Kumar I hear there is a piano teacher and a guitar teacher and a voice teacher). It is best to bring your own instruments, and skype your lessons with your US teacher.
- Ice skating at Tivoli.
- Skiing: Kravavec is closest and where all the local kids go if you are going for the day. Kranska Gora is nice too, but farther. Otherwise, for longer trips, go to Italy or Austria.

- Go to the outdoor market often and get to know the vendors. If you have young kids and go to the same vendors over and over, your kids will get spoiled with treats!

MISC

- There is an International Club of Slovenia (<http://www.sloveniawelcomes.com/expats/>) that organizes various events and often provides transportation if you are in Ljubljana (for hikes around Slovenia, for example, which could be a good – free and more convenient – way of getting to see some of these places without having your own car. They also often have advertisements for flats, cars, etc.).
- Note that virtually every store is closed on Saturday afternoons and all day Sunday. If you need groceries (or beer/wine) on a Sunday, there is a small grocery store on the south end of Stari Trg that is open until 4:00. Also, several stores of the larger chains (Mercator and Spar) have Sunday hours now.
- Susan Cook, who is married to Ted Dobson, a Fulbrighter from Fall 2008, wrote a blog about their family’s experiences living in Koper and traveling around the area: <http://www.susandcook.webeden.co.uk/#/blog/4530534305>
- Two 2010/2011 Fulbright families also wrote blogs: <http://hogwallopsabroad.wordpress.com/> and www.fiveflewover.blogspot.com.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

- <http://bus.talktrack.com/Default.aspx?culture=en-GB> This allows you estimate when the bus will arrive at your bus stop, which is particularly helpful at night and on weekends/holidays when you could otherwise be standing out in the cold for up to an hour.
- http://www.najdi.si/index_dictionary.jsp?tab=dictionary My friends here contend this is the best Slovene online dictionary.
- <http://tv.blinkx.com/> This will help you keep up to date with your favorite TV shows from home. Or connect to your university’s ip address in advance and continue to use hulu, Netflix, etc.
- http://zemljevid.najdi.si/index_maps.jsp?&tab=maps A Slovenian alternative to Google Maps, which I've found is sometimes better at finding weird addresses here.
- http://www.uni-info.si/feed_pon_LJ.xml If you can read Slovene (or use Google Translate!), this website lists university students around Ljubljana who are looking for roommates, people to sublease, etc.
- <http://www.ap-ljubljana.si/eng/#> and <http://www.slo-zeleznice.si/en/> for planning trips around Slovenia (and beyond).
- <http://www.promet.si/?lang=2> for traffic issues in Slovenia. Check before you take a drive.
- <http://meteo.arso.gov.si/met/en/> for weather all over the “chicken.”
- <http://www.spottedbylocals.com/ljubljana/> for some good hints, excursions, etc.
- <http://www.posta.si/?localeid=en-EN> for the Slovenian post office, including locations and prices.

- <http://www.ljubljana.info/cinemas/> because most English-language films are subtitled, not dubbed, in Slovenia, and there are numerous screens around.
- http://www.ukom.gov.si/en/promotion_of_slovenia/ For info about Slovenia the website of the Slovene Government and Communication Office is a good one to check, read about the country prior to arrival to Slovenia.

TAXES (for Fulbright faculty members; students will have slightly different issues):

1. Fulbright monies issued by the State Dept. count as "wages" – even those paid out for travel, shipping, and supplies.
2. Housing deductions can only be taken if one includes the housing stipend in the wages section, converted to dollars on the date it was paid to bank account.
3. One must take the actual cost of lodging rather than per diem.
4. One may only deduct 50% of the meals and incidentals per diem (\$91 in 2009).
5. No deductions for dependent expenses unless directly related to work.
6. No entertainment expenses unless directly related to work
7. One can only deduct expenses for the year in which they are incurred.
8. One may deduct costs of car rental, as well as bus/train fees as they pertain to work-related travel.
9. One cannot deduct more than 2% of one's Adjusted Gross Income.
10. Be aware that the Fulbright monies, if combined with sabbatical pay or other salary, may place you in a position of having to pay the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT).

Have further questions? Get in touch with us:

2009/2010 Faculty Fellows

- Lisa Botshon, Professor of English at the University of Maine at Augusta (botshon@maine.edu)
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