



## Experience Wilderness Risnjak National Park, Croatia

### Bear kingdom

#### Introduction

Only 20 km from the Mediterranean coast, in a huge area of forests at the boarder to Slovenia, one can find probably the highest density of Brown Bears in Europe. Furthermore, in the heart of this region some mystic forests grow, protected by the Risnjak National Park. Since at least 60 years no tree was cut, no animal was hunted. As a result these virgin-like forests host an outstanding flora and fauna, with Ural Owl and Fat Dormouse, Grey Wolf packs and Brown Bears. And it's not by chance that "ris" means lynx in Croatian. This fascinating wilderness we will explore...



At this 7-days-expedition we drive down from Vienna to the Risnjak National Park via minibus, where we change into 4WD cars. We proceed deeper into the forest and spend our first night in a National Park bear-watching hut, where we try to catch a first glimpse of this fascinating animal. Accompanied by a National Park ranger, we walk deeper into the wild and pitch up our tents in the middle of the forest. We stalk Wild Boar, Red Deer and White-backed Woodpecker, look for tracks of wolf and lynx, and try to observe bears. At night, around the campfire, we might even hear wolves howling...



## Itinerary

### ▲ **Day 1: Vienna - Risnjak NP, Bearwatching**

Departure from Vienna Hauptbahnhof at 10:00. Drive via minibus to Crni Lug next to the Risnjak National Park. Via 4WD cars we proceed deep into the forest to a National Park bearwatching hut, where we stay overnight and from which we try to observe Brown Bears!

(-/-/D), Lodging: bearwatching hut with dormitory, Driving time: app. 6 h

### ▲ **Day 2-6: Experience Wilderness, back to real nature!**

Now the adventure really starts, outdoor experience at its best! Together with a National Park ranger we hike with full luggage deeper into the National Park and set up our base camp in the middle of the forest (Walking time about 2 h and 150 m elevation gain, partly of the path). Now we are ready to enjoy our first night in wilderness.

In the following days we hike in the wild off the path during day, dawn, dusk and night. We read tracks, observe animals by stalking and sitting, practice orientation in wilderness and making fire without matches. We interpret nature sounds, animals and plants and prepare simple outdoor food at our campfire. Once we even try to just feed on natural sources provided by the surrounding forest. Moreover, there is enough time to explore the near surroundings on your own or to just enjoy pure nature, tranquillity, peace and remoteness.

After several intensive days in wild we remove our camp on day 6. Via old trails we cross the National Park and arrive in the late afternoon in our private pension in Crni Lug, where we enjoy a dinner with local specialties and a warm shower (Walking time: up to 6,5 h and 300 m elevation gain).

(B/L/D), Lodging: tent or if you want just under the stars, at day 6: private pension

### ▲ **Day 7: Risnjak NP - Vienna**

After a comfortable night in a real bed we drive with our minibus back to Vienna. Arrival time at Hauptbahnhof at about 5 pm.

(B/-/-), Driving time: app. 6 h

As the Risnjak National Park is just an hour drive away from the beautiful Adriatic coast, it is of course possible to extend your stay in Croatia on an individual basis. Furthermore you can also get to Crni Lug on your own or we can pick you up at Zagreb Airport. This will reduce the price by the minibus costs (app. 50 Euro).



## Trip notes

- ⤴ Flexibility, assistance (e.g. by preparing food or setting up the camp) as well as ability to work in a team are prerequisites for this tour. We act in nature, therefore we might have to deal with bad weather and unpredictable nature incidents. Weather and nature can influence our itinerary and as a result delays or changes cannot be excluded. Therefore participants have to be flexible and show patience as well as understanding for unavoidable situations.
- ⤴ Good physical condition and agility over difficult terrain is necessary as we mainly go off the path. In addition to this we have to carry the entire luggage including food and tents to and from the camp site on the first and last day, partly off the path.
- ⤴ Staying and sleeping out in wilderness requires tolerance and willingness to get out of your comfort zone. Our meals are regional or organic, but basic, and there is only a simple outdoor shower facility.
- ⤴ We respect Croatian culture and the environment that we are in, avoid unnecessary disturbances, sensible places and times as well as strictly adhere to a "leave no trace camping" ethic. We expect the same behaviour from all our participants.
- ⤴ Spirit of adventure is a prerequisite, as we are stalking several days through wild nature! To avoid dangerous situations the wilderness guide has to be obeyed at all times. Participants take part in this tour at their own risk and therefore have to sign an indemnity form at the beginning.
- ⤴ The tour will be cancelled if extreme weather conditions (e.g. heavy storm; long-lasting, intensive bad weather) are predicted. If that is the case, one can of course resign free of costs. As an alternative we will try to start a new tour as soon as possible.



## Dates and prices

Mo, 18.09. – So, 24.09.2017 (in German language)      EUR 1.080,-

We of course also offer tailor-made concepts in English for your private journey or incentive trip, regardless of group size and date.

Early booking discount 3 %<sup>1</sup>

Single supplement: EUR 10,-<sup>2</sup>

Prices are based on a group size of 7-8 persons:

Additional charge for 6 participants (per person)      EUR 120,-<sup>3</sup>

## Inclusions

### Costs include:

- Tour itinerary as described above
- 1 night in a dormitory in a National Park hut including bear watching and photo permit
- 1 night in a double room in a private pension
- Transport from Vienna to Risnjak National Park and back in a minibus
- Camping equipment (not including tents, can be rented for a fee of EUR 40 per tent - Type "Hilleberg Allak")
- Full board in the wilderness, for the rest as listed in the itinerary
- English and German speaking, professional wilderness guide for the whole trip
- Additional National Park ranger for some days in the National Park
- Entrance fee into the Risnjak National Park
- Donation for the European Wilderness Society to protect Europe's wilderness (EUR 30) and for research in the Risnjak National Park (EUR 7)

### Costs do not include:

- Sleeping bag, mattress, and other personal outdoor equipment (see equipment checklist)
- Tip for guides
- Travel insurance

---

<sup>1</sup>For bookings at least 3 months prior to departure, no combination with other discounts possible, e.g. discount for regular customers

<sup>2</sup>Only possible during the last night and cannot be guaranteed

<sup>3</sup>If a tour is booked by less than 6 persons and therefore an additional charge is necessary, one can resign free of charge.



## Terms of payment

Deadline for booking 3 weeks prior to departure via [info@tierra-incognita.at](mailto:info@tierra-incognita.at). At time of booking 20% of the full price has to be paid and at least 2 weeks prior to departure the balance has to be paid up. Booking is only valid after the 20 % deposit is paid. Important notice: Restricted number of participants! Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

This journey is organised by the travel agency [Tierra Incognita](#) in cooperation with [Risnjak National Park](#). In addition to the regulations listed above the general terms and conditions<sup>4</sup> of [Tierra Incognita](#) shall apply.

### Tierra Incognita - Reisen mit Weitblick

Mag. Thomas Prinz

1160 Wien, Kirchstetterngasse 20/44-45 / Österreich

+43 (0) 650 494 75 89

[info@tierra-incognita.at](mailto:info@tierra-incognita.at)

<http://www.tierra-incognita.at>

UID: ATU 63508323

Eintragungsnr. 2007/0029 im Veranstalterverzeichnis des BMFWA

The tour was planned and will be guided by:

Bernd Pflieger

Experience Wilderness - Back to real nature!

[www.experience-wilderness.com](http://www.experience-wilderness.com)

Unique adventure tours to untouched wilderness areas

Tel.: 0043/680/2085158, E-Mail: [info@experience-wilderness.com](mailto:info@experience-wilderness.com)

---

#### <sup>4</sup>Cancellation rates:

until 30 days prior to departure	20%
29 to 20 days prior to departure	50%
19 to 10 days prior to departure	65%
9 to 4 days prior to departure	80%
as of 3 days (72 hours) prior to departure of the travel price.	100%



## Equipment checklist

It is important to restrict your personal equipment to essential items. As a general rule the weight of your backpack should not exceed 20-25 % of your body weight. Important notice: At the starting point of our wilderness hike you will get some additional 6 kg of group equipment (including cooking utensils) and food to carry.

To facilitate your packing we developed a checklist of items we strongly recommend for your outdoor luggage during our stay in wilderness. Concerning clothes this list gives an orientation, but you can of course vary based on personal preferences. However, the total weight of your clothes should not be significantly higher than in our checklist and it should fulfil the same purpose. In general more light clothes are better than a few heavy ones ("multi-layer principle"). Furthermore, clothes should be durable and light as well as bright colours of outside clothes should be avoided. Earth or neutral colours such as green, brown, khaki, or grey are preferable so that animal eyes do not catch us that easily.

- Personal medical requirements  
The wilderness guide has a general first aid kit, but if you need a specific medicine you have to bring it yourself. Furthermore, you have to inform us upon booking about relevant health problems.
- Waterproof, lightweight tent  
Two persons should always use one tent to save weight and space. If you are travelling by yourself we are pleased to put you in contact with other group members to find a second person. If necessary, you can also sleep in a one person tent. However, that of course increases the weight of your backpack significantly. In case you do not have a suitable tent, you can rent a very high quality 2-person tent (Typ "Hilleberg Allak") from us for EUR 40 (please indicate that when booking).
- Sleeping bag  
A so called three-seasons-sleeping bag with a comfort zone significantly below -3°C fits best
- Sleeping mat
- Trekking rucksack  
With a volume of 60-70 litre
- Optional soft-pack rucksack  
A small, lightweight daypack that can be packed into your big trekking backpack during the hike to and from the camp. It can be used for our full day walk. We recommend that two persons share one daypack.
- 2 T-shirts
- 2-3 underpants

- 1 long pant  
Might be more comfortable for cold nights and in the sleeping bag
- 2-3 sturdy socks
- 2 long sleeved trekking trousers  
Preferable with zip-off possibility. Otherwise add one short trouser.
- 1 long (trekking) shirt
- Warm trekking or softshell jacket or thin trekking jacket + fleece pullover / jacket
- Rain jacket  
If you use a waterproof trekking jacket an additional rain jacket is not necessary. As an alternative you can also take a rain poncho, that protects also the rucksack from rain
- Rain-cover for rucksack  
Not necessary if you use a rain poncho
- Rain trousers
- Gaiters (optional)  
To prevent water from entering the top of the boot when your trousers are wet
- Head gear
- Light woolly hat (we recommend a "Buff") and light gloves  
During bad weather conditions it can be very cold in the mountains
- (Preferable waterproof), ankle-high hiking boots
- Light shoes (optional)  
Preferable light shoes as second shoes in our camp
- Pocket knife
- Head lamp and spare batteries
- Water bottle  
Minimum 1,5 litre
- Light trekking towel
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Sun cream
- Mosquito spray
- Needle and thread (optional)
- Feminine hygiene (optional)
- Binoculars (optional)<sup>5</sup>
- Photo equipment (optional)
- Hiking stick  
Highly recommended, as we often walk at steeper terrain
- Additional personal documents (e.g. passport)

<sup>5</sup> We rent one piece of Swarovski SL 8x56 (One of the world best binoculars, but big in size) for 25,- Euro for the whole tour. Who informs us first, gets it.



➤ Second bag

For items you do not need during our wilderness stay (e.g. clothes from your arrival). We will store that in the pension.

To forget our daily stressful life, to keep the atmosphere wild even when in camp, and not to disturb other participants, the following items are forbidden while we are in wilderness:

- Mobile phone
- Watch
- Radio, mp3-player,...
- Alcohol (to have full awareness in nature and be able to react in dangerous situations with clear consciousness)

The wilderness guide will bring the following items, so it is not necessary for you to pack them:

- First aid kit
- Cooking and eating utensils
- Soap (biodegradable)
- Toilet paper
- Camping equipment:  
Tarp, water canister, outdoor shower,...
- Field guide books
- Mobile phone  
Only for emergencies. You are not allowed to bring your personal mobile phone during our stay in the wild
- Food  
Basic regional or organic outdoor food, such as muesli, bread on a stick, pasta, hard cured sausage, lentils, rice, hard cheese, berries, nuts, dried fruits, tea, coffee, milk powder. If you are vegetarian, please indicate that upon booking. If you like sweets or bars you have to bring them yourself. We sleep near a spring, therefore water for drinking and washing is available. If you like isotonic drinks you can bring fizzy tablets.