**Bled**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Snowboarders

Families

Non-skiers

Après ski

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

7

**Intermediate Runs**

21

**Advanced Runs**

8

**Total Runs**

36

**Lifts**

21

**Chairs**

8

**Drags**

12

**Gondola Cable Cars**

1

**Parks**

1

**Pipes**

0

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

3.6m (12ft).

**Overview**

Arguably Slovenia's most important tourism destination, Bled is a year-round resort town with a long history and a scenic location.

Over the years the town has been ruled by the Celts, Romans, Austrians, Germans and latterly the former Yugoslavia – first as a summer residence of the Yugoslav royal family and more recently as a communist-era leisure spot.

Bled has been known as a spa resort for centuries, long before the advent of winter sports in the region. Since the peaceful end of Yugoslav rule here more than 20 years ago, the town has established its own cultural identity and has continued to capitalise on its stunning natural assets.

The town is located on the shores of beautiful Lake Bled and is surrounded by the spectacular Julian Alps. Its castle, which was once the seat of local power, sits above the resort, while the Pilgrimage Church of the Assumption of Mary – a site of religious significance for more than a thousand years – stands proudly on Bled Island in the middle of the lake.

**Location**

The spa town of Bled sits on the shores of Lake Bled. It is located within the Julian Alps of western Slovenia, 50km (31 miles) from the country's capital, Ljubljana.

**Website**

http://www.bled.si

**Piste Map**

http://www.vogel.si/summer/prices-and-info/lifts

**Hit The Slopes**

Bled has just a very small local ski hill of its own at Straža, which is accessed by a double chairlift from the resort itself and a single drag lift. The ski resort is very low lying (503m to 634m/1,650ft to 2,080ft) so snow cover can be problematic and it is only open in the daytime at weekends, although floodlighting enables some skiing on weekday evenings.

Due to these limited possibilities, even beginners are likely to want to buy the Julian Alps Pass which covers five ski areas in the region – although three of these (Kranjska Gora, Soriška Planina and Viševnik), which are around an hour away, are not on the ski bus route and are only really accessible to visitors with their own transport.

The pass does cover Straža's skiing at weekends, but unfortunately not the evening night skiing during the week. However, most pass buyers will want to use it to access the two larger ski centres of Vogel and Krvavec, each within an hour’s ride away on the ski bus – the cost of which is included in the lift ticket price. These three medium-sized ski areas each have about half a dozen lifts, and all three claim about 35km (22 miles) of runs, healthy verticals and a good mix of terrain.

Vogel has one of the biggest verticals in the area (1,231m/4,039ft) and some of the highest slopes that rise above the treeline – a cable car lifts skiers from the lakeside to the slopes. It also has some of the best nursery slopes for beginners, located on a snowy plateau at the top of the cable car; a good choice when snow cover is thin at lower elevations.

Another long-standing ski area near Bled, formerly known as Kobla, ceased operating after the 2012/13 ski season and changed its name to the 2864 Bohinj ski area. This addition, that’s expected to open for the 2014/15, season has higher, longer slopes than its predecessor and is expected to become a key ski destination in its own right.

Another area on ski bus route is Krvavec, which is located in the opposite direction back on the road to the capital Ljubljana and about 45 minutes away from Bled. This area has invested heavily in new infrastructure in recent years, adding a six-seater chairlift, and has the highest lift-served slopes in the region.

**Bled**

**Resort**

503

**Base**

506

**Top**

1971

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Bled is marketed as a multi-activity winter destination with downhill snow sports just a minor part of the offering. Instead, there is an onus on low-key winter pastimes such as snowshoe excursions, horse-drawn carriage rides or a romantic walk on a cleared path through the snow around the lake (which can be used for ice skating if the ice is thick enough). The town itself has many attractions with plenty of cafés, shops and spas; while day trips to the pretty capital, Ljubljana, are also possible.

**Family Fun**

Bled offers a mixed bag for families, as on the one hand there's a good range of affordable activities and facilities in Bled itself, but on the other, there are limited dedicated facilities for children and no nursery provision for younger tots.

Children can join the ski school from age five. If the hassle of the ski bus trip each day to the main ski areas isn’t too much of a problem, first timers will find tuition, rental and lift ticket packages at a third to a half the cost of an equivalent deal in the Alps.

**Retail Therapy**

Although Bled is not promoted as a shopping destination, there are about 50 shops to choose from in the town beside the lake. The year-round nature of the town means there's a wide choice and prices are typically considerably lower than in Western Europe. Local produce includes metal-worked items such as cow bells, specially prepared meats and delicious local cakes. Shopping trips to the capital Ljubljana are also a possibility.

**Splashing Out**

The lakeside Vila Bled (Cesta Svobode 26; tel: (04) 575 3710; [www.brdo.si](http://www.brdo.si)), was once a palace of former Yugoslavian president Josip Broz Tito. And today, the residence capitalises on its reputation for timeless elegance and presidential standards of service by offering gourmet cuisine. It's *the* place to go for a truly special meal, with dishes drawing from the classics of international and Slovenian cuisine.

**Apres Ski**

With beer a third of the price of the equivalent in the Alps, and several dozen bars to choose from, Bled is an affordable place to relax after the ski bus comes back to town each evening.

Among the popular bars are Art Café Bar (Cesta Svobode 7A), which is a popular spot for live DJs and televised sporting events, and A Propos (Cesta Ljubljanska 4), which serves cocktails and coffees.

Evening activities include a cinema, bowling alley, thermal swimming pools and spa facilities in the Park, Golf and Grand hotels. For a night of gambling, head to the resort's 24-hour casino (Cesta Svobode 15).

**Eating Out**

Bled has a centuries-old reputation for its high-quality cuisine, and there are several dozen restaurants to choose from that offer both traditional Slovenian cuisine and some international imports.

The Promenada Gourmet Restaurant (Cankarjeva 6; Tel: (04) 579 1275), under head chef Bine Volčič, is currently the resort’s most prestigious eatery and offers inventive dishes using ingredients sourced locally.

For wide-ranging cuisine, head to Okarina (Cesta Ljubljanska 8; tel: (04) 574 1458; [www.okarina.com](http://www.okarina.com)), which has a particularly good reputation for its quality fare. The cuisine of Slovenia's near neighbour Italy is also prominent in several pizzerias, including the popular Rikli in Hotel Park Bled (Cesta Svobode 15; tel: (04) 579 1839; [www.hotel-park-bled.com](http://www.hotel-park-bled.com)). Or, for some Mexican-style spice, opt for Chilli Restaurant (Cesta Svobode 9; tel: (04) 574 3027; [www.chillibled.com](http://www.chillibled.com)).

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airport: Ljubljana Airport (YLW).

Distance to resort: 50km (31 miles).

Driving time: 45 minutes.

**Getting Around**

The ski bus runs once a day to Krvavec and Vogel from various pick-up points close to hotels in Bled. A similar return service operates in the afternoon. The ski bus is free of charge to Julian Pass ski ticket holders, or a return ticket can be purchased by non pass holders.

**Hotels**

The main accommodation in Ble comes in the form of small, independently-run hotels; the majority of which offer basic 3- and 4-star accommodation. There are also private rooms and apartments for rent for those looking for something a little more homely, as well as a couple of youth hostels for those on a budget.

**Mlino Guest House**

A 3-star traditional guest house by the lake, Mlino Guest House is bestowed with beautiful architecture. It has a reputation for great service and also has a choice of dining options, from eating on the terrace to the rustic ‘peasant room’.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

Cesta Svobode 45

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Bled

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Slovenia

**Telephone**

(04) 574 1404.

**Website**

http://www.mlino.si

**Grand Hotel Toplice**

Bled's leading hotel has excellent facilities, which is little surprise given its 5-star rating. Perched on the side of the lake, the elegant hotel is just a minute's walk from the resort centre and ski bus stop.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

Cesta Svobode 12

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Bled

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Slovenia

**Telephone**

(04) 579 1000.

**Website**

http://www.hotel-toplice.com

**Hotel Jelovica**

A well-positioned 3-star hotel in a beautiful location near the castle, Hotel Jelovica has an indoor pool and can organise a range of leisure activities.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Cesta Svobode 8

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Bled

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Slovenia

**Telephone**

(04) 579 6000.

**Website**

http://www.hotel-jelovica.si