

Balkan Rivers Tour - Event # 1: Sava River (Si), April 16-17

The Sava River is a 944 km long tributary of the Danube and originates from Sava Bohinjka and Sava Dolinka headwaters in north-western Slovenia. In its upper course, it is a typical Alpine river – fast flowing with white waters. As it continues downstream it grows wider and changes its character to a lowland meandering river with extensive wetlands. In Slovenia, its middle section between Radovljica and Litija is prime habitat for the endangered Danube Salmon (*Hucho Hucho*).



Sava Bohinjka/Slovenia © Miha Ivanc

However, the Sava river has also been targeted for hydropower development: today, there are 7 big and 2 small existing dams, another one is currently under construction (HPP Brežice), while 13 more are being planned. – Many of those are projected in the midst of important Danube Salmon habitats and Natura 2000 areas, such as including HPP Mokrice.



A pair of spawning Danube Salmon (*Hucho hucho*) © Clemens Ratschan



Protected wetland area Lonjsko Polje/Croatia © Goran Šafarek

Program

The kickoff event of the Balkan Rivers Tour will take place at the source of Sava Bohinjka in Ribčev Laz, Bohinj, Slovenia on Saturday, April 16. After a formal press conference, the kayakers will gather at a scenic location on Lake Bohinj for a photo shooting before starting their 35 days journey.



Location of the kickoff event: Lake Bohinj © Peter Koren

Saturday, April 16

- 10.00** – Press conference at Hostel Pod Voglom (address: Ribčev Laz 60, SI-4265 Bohinjsko jezero)
- 11.30** – Photo shooting with kayakers and banners on the lake
- 12.00** – Official start of the Balkan Rivers Tour
- 19.00** – Evening program at Triglav National Park Centre “Triglavska roža” in Bled, DamNation movie screening (address: Ljubljanska cesta 27. SI- 4260 Bled)
- 22.00** – After party at Kult klub (address: Ljubljanska cesta 4, SI-4260 Bled)

Sunday, April 17

- 9.00** – Kayakers’ departure for paddling Sava Dolinka (entrance below the Moste HPP)
- 10.00** Gathering in front of Triglav National Park Centre in Bled (address: Ljubljanska cesta 27. SI- 4260 Bled), departure for a hike into Brje valley, guided by a local initiative for the protection of this magnificent place (10 km approx. 3h).
- 14.00** Picnic at Fux’s hanging bridge near Radovljica (Tina rafting, Savska cesta 30, SI-4240 Radovljica)

Participants are invited to spend the weekend in Bled or Bohinj, which offer several accommodation options and outdoor activities.

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More info about the Save the Blue Heart of Europe campaign at www.balkanrivers.net

