



*Press Announcement*  
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## **KRANJ: SLOVENIA'S GREEN GETAWAY** **Discover the Capital of the Slovenian Alps**

Kranj, a destination with alpine air and city flair, is the 2023 [European Destination of Excellence](#). The city was chosen by the European Commission for its innovative sustainable tourism practices. From zero-waste dining events to conservation efforts of a rare amphibian, Kranj has a lot to share with the world.

The '[Capital of the Slovenian Alps](#)' sits at the convergence of two rivers with views of the highest peaks of the Southern Alps, which makes Kranj an attractive destination for many visitors. As you wander through the cobblestone streets of the Old Town, you'll encounter well-preserved medieval buildings, Gothic churches, and charming squares, all radiating a distinct medieval atmosphere. Visitors can enjoy a stroll through the [old town](#), a hike in the [Alps nearby](#), or a visit to one of the eclectic [historical attractions](#), all of which have distinct, sustainable initiatives behind them.



*Kranj, 2023 European Destination of Excellence*

**GREEN DREAM: A EUROPEAN DESTINATION OF EXCELLENCE**



Visitors will not only be in awe of Kranj's rich natural landscape, but also for its green and sustainable practices. The northern Slovenian town is leading the way in sustainability initiatives and creating a memorable experience for its visitors. In 2023, Kranj won the [European Destination of Excellence \(EDEN\)](#) award. EDEN is an initiative of the European Union to promote sustainable tourism and smaller European destinations.



*Kranj, 2023 European Destination of Excellence*

In addition to its EDEN award, Kranj has received the [Slovenia Green Destination Platinum Label](#) and is a member of the [EU Mission for 100 climate-neutral](#) and smart cities by 2030.

Within the sustainable development framework, Kranj has created the [Green Team](#), comprised of members from different local authority institutions dedicated to lowering the city's carbon footprint. The team collects data, formulates concrete measures and targets, and works toward their implementation. Tourism is an important part of the overall sustainability efforts. The Green Team works closely with local businesses and tourism industry representatives to achieve its green goals.



*Kranj old town*

## THE OLMS OF THE OLD TOWN TUNNELS

One of the most popular tourist attractions is the [network of tunnels](#) beneath the city. Built during World War II, these tunnels are also home to a species of rare aquatic salamanders that live in the groundwater.

Visit the [SOS Info Centre Proteus](#) to learn about and support the conservation efforts of these blind amphibians. The information center also spreads awareness on the importance of conserving clean groundwater, a vital source for the salamander, as well as a main source of drinking water around the world.

## FROM POINT A TO E: E-MOBILITY IN KRANJ

Ride in style – Kranj's [Centre for Sustainable Mobility](#) has created the largest electric bike-sharing system in Slovenia and was named the best e-mobility municipality in



Slovenia in 2021. The city offers a total of 29 electric stations for 125 bicycles, 75 e-bikes and 2 e-tricycles. Thanks to the regional network [Gorenjska.bike](#) connecting eight municipalities, visitors can [rent and return a bike](#) across more than 50 different locations. For those who prefer an alternative method of transportation, anyone can hop on the electric minibus for free and drive across the old town.



*Explore Kranj by bike*

## **JOIN A GREEN DINNER PARTY FOR 100**

Kranj has come up with new ways to put sustainability on the table. In an effort to support the catering sector after the COVID-19 pandemic, the city organized the **Kranj Long Table**, a green culinary event for 100 visitors in the garden of the [Khislstein castle](#). There, local chefs prepared a menu made of 100% regional ingredients using electricity from renewable resources, saving a total of 266 kg of CO2 emissions and reducing the event's carbon footprint by 18%. To combat food waste, guests could take any excess food with them in recyclable containers. The Kranj Long Table is now an example of a more climate-friendly tourism event in Slovenia and will be held again this year.



*Kranj Long Table Dinner at Khislstein Castle*

Visit Kranj, where unforgettable, innovative, and unique experiences await. To learn more about the European Destination of Excellence competition and Kranj's sustainable practices, [watch this video](#).

### **LEARN FROM THE BEST: Best Practices from the 2023 European Destinations of Excellence Competition**

**Learn from the greenest destinations** -- To find out more about other innovative sustainable tourism measures that cities put forward in their applications to become European Destinations of Excellence, download the Best Practices 2023 Report [here](#).

#### **For further press information, contact:**

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. Since 2007, the European Commission has supported EU Member States and other countries participating in the COSME programme to reward non-traditional, emerging sustainable tourism destinations in Europe through the 'European Destination of Excellence' (EDEN)



award. This action aimed to foster sustainable tourism destination management models across Europe by selecting and promoting EDEN destinations. To date, 176 destinations from 27 different countries have received the award under different annual themes.

2. In 2019 the “Study on EDEN evaluation” was carried out to assess the continued relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the EDEN initiative and the various actions implemented in its framework, as well as its coherence with other EU initiatives. Following the results and recommendations of the evaluation study, the European Commission relaunched the initiative, taking into account European Green Deal goals. In addition to the EU countries, it also covers non-EU countries participating in the COSME/Single Market programme. The competition addresses smaller tourism destinations which can showcase their outstanding achievements in sustainability and inspire other tourism destinations in their green transition.
3. The EDEN Award was implemented first as a pilot project and as a preparatory action initiated by the European Parliament and since 2011 has continued under the CIP/COSME/Single Market programmes.
4. The 2023 EDEN competition was open to submissions from 31 March 2022 to 1 June 2022. Terms and conditions are available at [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/eden\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/eden_en)
5. The current 2023 European Destination of Excellence Kranj was selected at the end of 2022 and has since been acting as a role model for sustainable tourism in Europe. Find out more about Kranj [here](#) and watch the video [here](#).