



8 Days

Slovakia

Winter Wilderness

Lakes & rivers, forests & woods, hot springs & survival, mountain huts & snowy bbqs, endless summers followed by cold winters ... the list goes on in this remarkable country which will expose your students to outdoor adventure at its best. A country known for its natural treasures and historic monuments, this itinerary takes you into wild rugged mountains by snowshoe, ski and sled; a fantastic opportunity for students to learn survival skills and follow in bear footprints.



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1

Arrive High Tatras

Our local STC Expedition Leader will meet us on arrival in either Krakow or Poprad. Together we will transfer to our hotel in the High Tatras Mountains. After a quick rest, we will meet for a briefing on what to expect over the next few days and head out into the snow for our first traditional Slovakian dinner.

Day
2

Snowshoe Trek

The Tatransky National Park Museum is first on the list today where we will learn about the history, flora & fauna of the High Tatras. After a short drive to Biela Voda, we are fitted with our snowshoes and head off on a snowshoe trek along scenic mountain trails. Walking in snowshoes feels very strange at first but you quickly get used to them! From Biela Voda it takes us 2.5hrs to reach Zelene Pleso, with a short scenic stop on the way for a packed lunch. The mountain hut at Zelene Pleso will be our home for the next two nights.

Day
3

Survival Training

Today we are joined by a Professional Mountain Guide who is going to share their wealth of knowledge in outdoor winter skills with us. This is a survival training day where our Guide will deliver lots of different sessions including recognising different types of snow, avalanche training and working with receivers. After lunch we will have another snowshoeing trek in the High Tatras before stopping for dinner.

Day
4

Snowshoe and Sleigh Ride

After breakfast we will snowshoe trek back to Biela Voda and transfer to Zdiar. Zdiar is a typical Goral village, full of traditional wooden houses and barns. Here we visit the outdoor museum to learn about local folklore, traditions and the highland way of life. A horse and carriage ride will bring us through the snow and forestry to a clearing where we grill our lunch on an open fire in the traditional Slovak way. On arrival in Tatranska Lomnica we can check in to our hotel and relax this afternoon.





Day
5

Sledding

Dog sled day. After a short transfer, we are split into smaller groups for an introduction to dog sledding and are allocated individual dog teams. We learn how to harness the teams, handle the sled and how to 'mush' the dogs for an exciting sled ride! Lunch is cooked out in the wilderness. More dog sledding this afternoon across snow-covered meadows while we perfect our techniques. Next we enjoy a well earned soak in the indoor and outdoor thermal pools of Besenova before finally returning to our hotel for dinner.

Day
6

Wildlife expedition

An early start this morning as we meet Robin Rigg, chairman of the Slovak Wildlife Society. Robin is a specialist in large carnivores and mitigating human-carnivore conflicts and our Guide for today. We will trek through the wilderness looking for signs of passing wildlife such as bears and wolves and see first hand their daily routines or favourite spots to drink, eat, sleep and hunt. We will also hear talks on the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe and management of the large carnivores in Slovakia such as the brown bear, wolf, lynx, wolverines and jackal.

Day
7

Cross country skiing

We jump on a mountain tram to arrive an hour later in Strbske Pleso. This is Slovakia's highest village and a picturesque, glacial mountain lake surrounded by snow-capped peaks and forested hills. Here we are fitted with more kit and begin a guided cross country skiing lesson around the lake. Lunch will be at a lovely, traditional Slovak restaurant where we can sample local delicacies. Afterwards we put our skills to the test and head off on a cross country skiing adventure over hillier terrain above the lake with views of the Low Tatras and Slovak Paradise National Parks. Return to the hotel for a final team feast.

Day
8

Depart and head back to UK

Today marks the end of our winter adventure as we say our goodbyes and take our returning flight to the UK.

Further information

Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your expedition timeline



Physical expedition rating:



Moderate physical activities are included in Grade 3 trips. Good health and reasonable fitness are important to get the most out of the trip. Trips of this grading are likely to include some walking at moderate altitude (up to 2,500m) and occasional longer/harder days may be involved, with between five and seven hours of walking on certain days. The trip may contain other activities such as cycling or rafting which also require physical effort and a reasonable level of fitness. Some steady preparation and an increase in your underlying fitness levels would help you get the most from this grade trip.

Culture shock rating:



Expect to find local life broadly familiar to that in the UK, however aspects of the trip are likely to be in remoter areas where differences are more profound. Whilst English may not be the native language, you can expect it to be widely spoken. There may be some cultural differences and although western palates should be well catered for there will be the opportunity to try new dishes.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey



1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



t: 01392 660056 | e: schools@thestc.co.uk | w: www.thestc.co.uk