

A day in Trieste castle and the Giant cave



Meet your driver in piazzale Roma at 9:30am
In 1 hour and 30 minutes we will reach Trieste: first stop: **Miramare castle**



The headland of Miramare is located only a few kilometres from the city centre of Trieste. Here, in a very privileged position vertically to the sea, the white castle wanted by Maximilian of the Asburgo family of Austria (1832 – 1867), Francis Joseph's younger brother.

The castle is a rare example of a noble residence of mid-seventeenth century.

He decided to build his official residence here, and it had to represent the power of his dynasty, but it had to be a place for meditation and rest to share with his beloved consort, Charlotte of Sax, Belgian king's daughter.

It is possible to relive some of the moments of Maximilian's life and passions through a succession of objects and documents linked to his long stay at Miramare: his love for sea and for maritime life, the government of the Lombard-Venetian region, the projects for the building of the castle, the sad epilogue of his political career in the far away land of Mexico.

In the inside, perfectly preserved, the rich furnishings and the ornamental decorations can be admired.

At this point, a good but not too expensive restaurant can be advised from your driver...
Once appease the hungry, the next stop is the Giant Cave just few minutes from the castle.



The tour inside the cave:

First stop

The huge size of the Great Cavern is the most important feature of this cave, and it is for this reason that the cave was entered into the Guinness World Records in 1995. Oval-shaped, the cave has a volume of 400,000 cubic metres. It is 167,70 metres long, 76,30 metres wide and 98,50 metres high. Its depth from the ground level is 120 metres, and during this visit we are going to walk 100 metres downwards.

Approximately 10 million years ago, the rivers flowing on calcareous surfaces gradually began to widen and deepen the fractures in the rocks by a process of dissolution.

Second stop

Approximately 3 million years ago the prehistoric Timavo river abandoned the Giant Cave, as it had dug a deeper way throughout the cavity, which looked very different from what we see today.

The phase of concreting had already started at that time, and is still going on. The rainwater percolates throughout the limestone and by chemical reaction, melts the calcium carbonate. Drop by drop, during the course of millions of years, it is re-deposited inside the cave, giving origin to stalactites descending from the vault, stalagmites rising from the bottom, columns, created by the fusion of a stalactite with the stalagmite below, and calcium flows, which cover large and small rocks in limestone.



Third stop

The Giant cave is a specific site of study and it is the most appropriate location to carry out particular scientific researches.

In 1959 the Earth Science Department of the University of Trieste installed two geodetic pendulums to study movements of the earth's crust, such as the "earth tides", similar to the sea tides, which are due to the attraction of the Moon and Sun, or the movements caused by the weight of snow on the Alps, or the movements caused by the flooding of underground rivers, as well as other phenomena of great scientific interest. The length of the thin steel wires holding the pendulums, protected by two plastic coverings that can be seen at the centre of the cave, makes this instrument one of the largest in the world. It is a highly-sensitive detecting device, which amplifies 40,000 times these very small and slow movements while recording them.

Tour duration: **9 hours**

Not included in the tour: castle and garden entrance, restaurant, cave entrance.