

RENDEZ-VOUS AUX JARDINS 2026:
REPORT FROM SLOVENIA

The Arboretum and Botanical
Gardens Volčji Potok

Report on the implementation of Rendez-vous aux jardins 2026 in Slovenia

Slovenia participated in the European Rendez-vous aux jardins initiative again in 2026. The national programme was coordinated by the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens Volčji Potok in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia.

A total of 28 gardens, parks, institutions, associations and other organisations participated in the initiative, jointly organising 51 events at various locations across Slovenia. Participants included botanical gardens, historic and castle parks, monastery and urban gardens, private gardens, horticultural centres, cultural institutions and associations.

Programme and interpretation of the theme

The central theme for 2026, “Sight”, was incorporated into the programmes in a variety of ways. Participants connected it with the observation of vistas, perspectives, light, shadows, colours, plant structures, architecture, cultural landscapes and details that visitors often overlook during a regular visit.

The programme included guided tours, photography and creative workshops, expert presentations, themed walks, exhibitions, lectures, concerts and other accompanying activities. Each location adapted the theme to its distinctive spatial, natural and cultural characteristics.

Selected examples of programmes

At the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens **Volčji Potok**, a photography workshop entitled “Sight” invited participants to explore different views of the park, broad vistas, the lines created by paths, planting arrangements, light, shadows and less noticeable details. Participants were also introduced to the concept of the borrowed landscape, in which views of the surrounding scenery become part of the experience of a designed space.

At the Ferrari Garden in Štanjel, the theme was linked to the garden’s terraced design, views of the Karst landscape, the architectural heritage of Maks Fabiani and the importance of water in the Karst region. The guided tour also included a visit to the renovated Natalija House.

At Kindler Park, the programme focused on roses, floral art and biodiversity. Visitors took part in selecting the most beautiful rose, creative activities, an expert lecture and the planting of a flowering dogwood. More than 70 visitors voted in the most beautiful rose competition.

At the Juliana Alpine Botanical Garden in Trenta, the programme was adapted to visitors’ interests and presented flowering, rare and useful plants. The botanical content was complemented by views of the surrounding Alpine peaks and birdsong.

Approximately 50 visitors participated in a three-hour guided tour of the Mekinje Monastery Herb and Rose Garden. They explored a garden containing more than 200 different herbs, edible wild plants, berry-producing plants and roses. The programme presented 25 plants in greater detail, focusing on their importance in herbalism, culinary use and health support.

These examples demonstrate how participants connected the common theme with a variety of fields, including landscape architecture, cultural heritage, botany, photography, art and visitor education.

Responses from visitors and participants

Reports submitted by participants indicate a positive response from visitors. Activities that enabled direct observation, expert interpretation, creative participation and personal interaction with programme facilitators were particularly well received.

The organisers of the programme at the Mekinje Monastery Herb and Rose Garden summarised the visitors' response as follows: "They were extremely enthusiastic about the garden and the roses. Most of the visitors were visiting us for the first time and were very impressed by the appearance and careful maintenance of Mekinje Monastery."

At some locations, organisers adapted their programmes to weather conditions, visitor numbers and participants' particular interests. This flexibility enabled programmes to be delivered even under less favourable conditions. For example, at the Juliana Alpine Botanical Garden, the programme was adjusted to visitors' interest in Slovenia's distinctive plant species.

Participants also emphasised the wider value of opening green spaces to the public. The organisers at Villa Mayer stated: "We are delighted to have participated in Rendez-vous aux jardins this year and to have contributed to the shared effort of opening gardens, parks and green spaces to the wider public."

As visitor numbers were not collected using a standardised methodology, it is not possible to provide a reliable total attendance figure for all events held in Slovenia. Nevertheless, the feedback received indicates that the events attracted diverse groups, including families, garden enthusiasts, photographers, visitors interested in cultural heritage, and people interested in plants, herbalism and biodiversity.

Communication and national networking

As the national coordinator, the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens Volčji Potok collected applications, connected participating organisations, coordinated the presentation of programmes and managed the initiative's joint communication activities in Slovenia. The Arboretum published [the call for participation](#), [the complete programme](#) of all participating institutions and [a post-event report](#) on its official website. Information about the events was

also shared through social media, the participants' own websites and communication channels, and local and regional media.

The initiative once again brought together a diverse range of green-space managers, cultural institutions, associations, experts, local communities and private organisers. This cooperation contributed to the visibility of individual locations and encouraged the exchange of content and approaches to presenting garden and landscape heritage.

Overall assessment

The implementation of Rendez-vous aux jardins 2026 in Slovenia is considered successful. The participation of 28 organisations and the delivery of 51 events demonstrate broad national engagement. The diversity of the programmes confirms that the theme "Sight" was meaningfully incorporated into different types of gardens, parks and cultural spaces.

The most important outcomes included connecting diverse locations across Slovenia, making garden and landscape heritage more accessible to the public, incorporating expert and creative content, and encouraging visitors to observe green spaces more attentively. Positive responses from participants and visitors confirm continued interest in the initiative and its further development in Slovenia.

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