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BLED, SLOVENIA

Marianne Migliori, RIMJ graphic designer, views the journal from the shore of Lake Bled in northern Slovenia, about 10 miles form the Austrian border. Its shores were settled by 7th-century Slavs. Bled Castle, built in the 11th century, stands on the edge of a 200foot precipice overlooking the lake. On tiny Bled Island, the 17th-century Church of the Assumption sits atop a 99-step staircase on the site of a former sacred site that dates to the 9th century. The lake's natural blue-green waters are fed by warm springs, and in the mid 19th century, baths were opened, making this a favorite resort destination. Bled was the summer residence of the Yugoslav royal family, and later of Marshall Josip Tito, who controlled Yugoslavia from 1956 until his death in 1980. In 1990, Slovenia was the first Yugoslav republic to hold free elections and declare its independence.

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