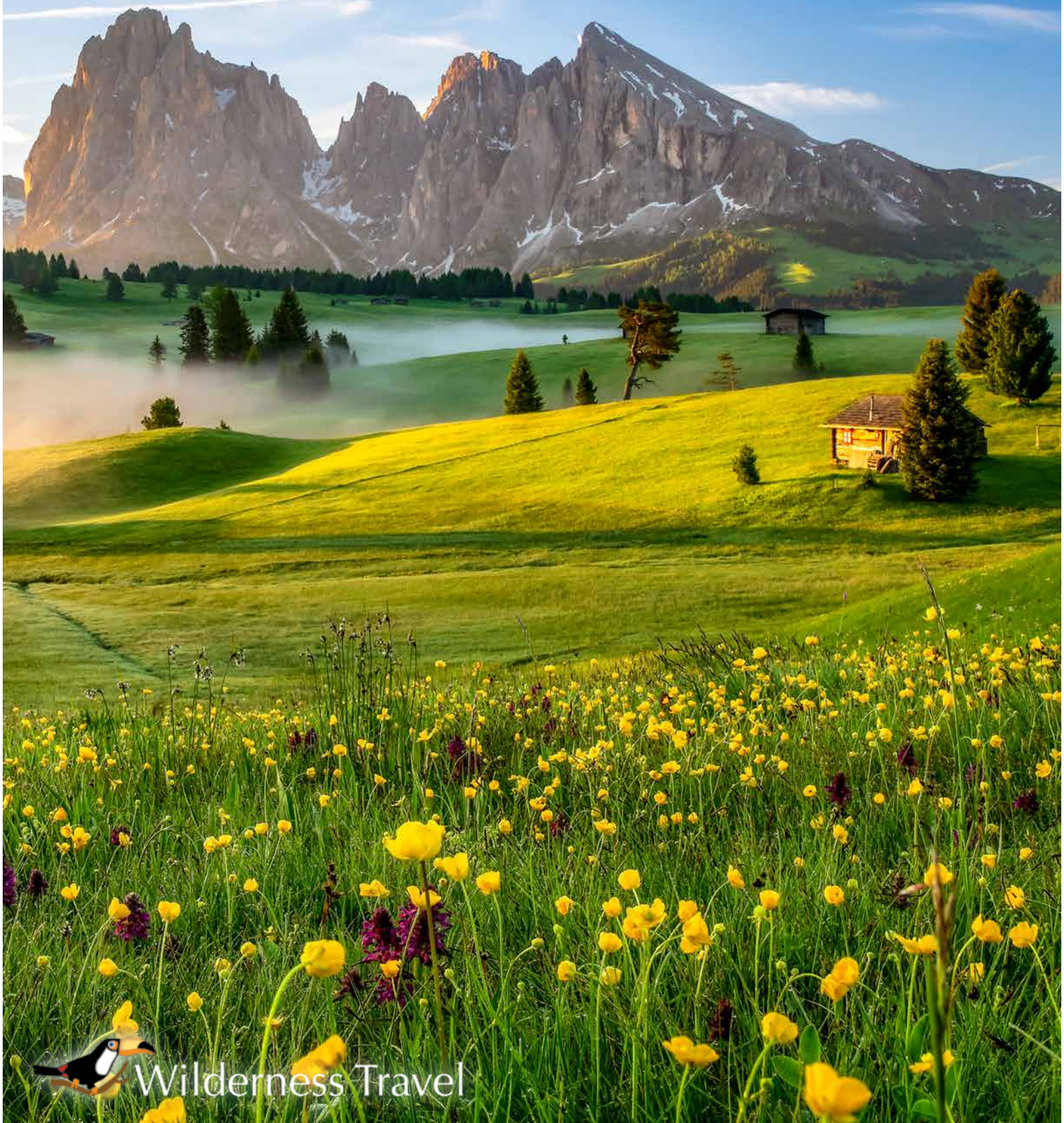


Ultimate Dolomites

TRAVERSING FROM WEST TO EAST



Wilderness Travel



Ultimate Dolomites

TRIP DATES

2024

July 5-16, 2024

August 29-September 9, 2024

2025

June 20-July 1, 2025

July 5-16, 2025

July 20-31, 2025

August 30-September 10, 2025

Our friend Reinhold Messner, renowned mountaineer and native son of the Dolomites, calls these mountains “the 8th wonder of the world,” and we agree! This odyssey, our longest in the Dolomites, features hikes in three distinct regions of this majestic realm, each with its own characteristics: the Pale di San Martino in the southern Dolomites, the rose-tinted spires of the Rosengarten Massif, and the Tre Cime di Lavaredo in the north—all on one trip. Along the way, we fuel our hikes with sumptuous meals topped by robust wines. Two overnights are in hike-in lodges among the high peaks, and with up to three Trip Leaders, there’s a choice of hiking options most days.

Itinerary

DAY 1

VENICE, ITALY / SAN MARTINO DI CASTROZZA

Arrive at the airport in Venice, where you are met for a transfer to our hotel in San Martino di Castrozza on the southern edge of the Dolomites. En route, we visit the picturesque town of Bassano del Grappa, just over an hour's drive from Venice. Bassano enjoys a stunning location on the River Brenta, with Monte Grappa in the background. The town features baroque palazzi, small squares, and arcaded medieval buildings along the Brenta River, and is renowned for its grappa, Italy's national firewater of choice. We'll have lunch in town, followed by grappa tasting. Later we continue to our hotel in San Martino di Castrozza, situated below the sheer flanks of the Pale di San Martino, 19 square miles of high alpine plains and spires. Time and weather permitting, we'll take a short warm-up walk, then gather for a trip briefing and Welcome Dinner. Overnight at a hotel in San Martino...LD

Hiking Details: 1.5 hours, 3 miles

Driving Details: 2.5-3.5 hours total

Note: Throughout the trip, our leaders will present different hiking options, usually distinguished by the level of challenge, trail conditions, elevation gain or loss, or duration. On many days, we will have two hiking options to choose from.

DAY 2

LAGHI DEL COLBRICON

Today's hike is along a beautiful ridge across three mountain summits to the superbly located Laghi del Colbricon and the Rifugio Colbricon. From Passo Rolle (6,450'), a trail leads up to our first summit, Tognazza (7,300'), with its stunning views of the towers and cliffs of the Pale di San Martino range (especially the slender shark-tooth of Cimon della Pala, often referred to as the Matterhorn of the Dolomites). We continue along the ridge to the summit of the Piccolo Cavallazza, passing a number of WWI bunkers and trench emplacements, to our highest point, the summit of the Grande Cavallazza (7,700'), with views of the town of San Martino and the mountains of the Pale di San Martino. After exploring the WWI trenches on the summit, we drop steeply down to lakeside Rifugio Colbricon (6,360'), where we enjoy a simple traditional lunch. Afterwards, we have a choice of trails, including a path through the woods back to Passo Rolle, or a hike down the mountain below the Colbricon lakes and a walk back to our hotel in San Martino...BLD

Hiking Details: 5 hours, 6 miles, 2,000 feet ascent, 2,860 feet descent

DAY 3

ROSENGARTEN HIKES

This morning we drive over the Passo Rolle to the village of Vigo di Fassa in the next valley and take the cable car to get up to the amazing high plain area of Ciampiede. Our hike begins under the spires and peaks of the Rosengarten—hiking in the Rosengarten allows us to soak up the incredible scenery of the Val di Ega and Val di Fassa in the Dolomites (or Catinaccio in



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 12 days
Arrive: Venice, Italy
Depart: Venice, Italy
Lodging: 9 nights 4- and 5-star mountain hotels, 2 nights comfortable alpine lodges with semi-private or dorm-style rooms, shared baths, and hot showers
Meals: All meals included except 2 dinners (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity: Hiking / Trekking
Trip Level: 1 2 3 4 5 6
10 hiking days, choice of moderate to steep trails, 3-7 hours a day, altitudes between 5,000-9,100 feet, van support (for luggage or if you wish to skip a day's hike). This is a strenuous hiking trip, read "What the Trip is Like" for more details.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover the Dolomites in depth, with world-class hikes in three sections of this extraordinary mountain realm
- Enjoy a choice of moderate or challenging hiking options most days
- Two special overnights in comfy hike-in lodges set high among the peaks
- In Bolzano, view the mummy of Otzi or visit the Messner museum

Itinerary (cont'd)

Italian), named for their luminous rose-red hues at dawn and dusk. The sheer Vajolet Towers, part of the massif, rise to over 9,000 feet and are well known to rock climbers around the world. Hiking under these stunning sheer faces, we reach our lunch spot, Rifugio Roda di Vael, where we enjoy views of the Marmolada Glacier.



After lunch, we follow a fairly level trail that traverses right underneath the stunning sheer face of the Rosengarten Massif, with views the whole way of the spires of the Latemar Massif across the way. Our final destination is Rifugio Fronza, where we take a lift down and drive to the hotel. An easier option is a 30-minute hike to a chairlift that will take us down to our hotel, where you can enjoy the sauna, indoor pool, or just soak in the views of the area. Overnight at hotel...BLD

Geology of the Dolomites: The evolution of the dolomitic landscape began at least 250 million years ago. After their uplift from the sea, the Dolomite reliefs were sculpted and molded through millennia by the force of gravity, running water, and ice, all

of which made them “the most beautiful work of architecture in the world,” as the architect Le Corbusier once remarked. These shaping activities took place in very different climatic conditions. At least five glaciation periods, each one followed by inter-glacial phases, have been identified in the Alps. The coldest phases ended some 15,000 years ago when the Alps were buried under a thick icecap from which only the sharpest and highest peaks emerged. During the glacial periods, ice masses completely invaded the main valleys and merged with other ice bodies from the surrounding valleys. The vast heaps of rock debris at the foot of sheer dolomitic cliffs provide the landscape with a moon-like aspect.

“This was my 9th WT trip and
it was excellent.”

S. Edwards, Henderson, NV

DAY 4

LATEMAR MASSIF / ICEMAN

Our morning's hike is a moderate loop right from our hotel through the fantastic Latemar Labyrinth, an enchanting maze of pinnacles, needles, and massive blocks of rock broken off from the dramatic spires of the Latemar massif. A more strenuous hiking option is a challenging five-hour traverse of the Latemar massif's rim, the remnants of an ancient volcano some 200 million years ago. As we negotiate the sometimes crumbly rock, we are rewarded with spectacular views and panoramas of brilliant wildflowers.

For those doing the morning hike only, we transfer 30 minutes into the nearby town of Bolzano to visit the museum that is home to the remarkable mummy of Otzi, the Iceman, the Copper Age hunter whose corpse—in an astonishing state of preservation—was found in 1991 by two German hikers at the base of a glacier at 10,000 feet in the Otztal Alps. The world's oldest and best preserved mummy, Otzi perished in the Alps about 5,300 years ago. He was carrying a bow, arrows, and a dagger, among other items. The extraordinary level of preservation of the artifacts found with and on his body have transformed our



understanding of the early dwellers of these mountains. Overnight at our hotel in Rosengarten...BLD

Hiking Details: 5 hours, 7 miles, ascent 1,000 feet, descent 2,250 feet

Shorter Hike Option with Bolzano Visit: 3 hours, 5 miles, ascent/descent 1,500 feet

DAY 5

ASCENT TO RIFUGIO ALPE DI TIRES

Starting from the pastoral Rosengarten Valley, we traverse high mountain trails to the Rifugio Alpe di Tires, a hike-in lodge set among the high peaks of the Alpe di Siusi, Europe's largest high alpine plateau. Our moderate hiking option starts close to the national park headquarters in the hamlet of Weisslahnbach.

We follow a good trail up through the lush woodlands and pastures of the Tschamin Tal ("tal" means valley in German). A steep climb at the end of this valley leads us up into the towers and spires of the northern Rosengarten mountains and the huge alpine plateau of Alpe di Siusi, with its spectacular displays of wildflowers including crocus, lilies, and columbines. Set below the peaks of Mount Sciliar, the Alpe di Siusi is one of the most prominent natural wonders of the Dolomites. From here we continue to the Rifugio Alpe di Tires, set right on the Tierser Alpjoch Pass at 8,000 feet. Our challenging option is a demanding alpine route through the heart of the most rugged part of the Rosengarten mountains via the Passo Principe (8,576'), the Passo Molignon (8,610'), and Tierser Alpjoch Pass (8,000'). A highlight of this hike is the dramatic and massive amphitheater of the Conca del Principe, which dwarfs walkers under its immense crumbling rock walls. Dinner and overnight at the Rifugio Alpe di Tires. Note: There is very limited vehicle access to this rifugio, but we have special permission to transfer our belongings into and out of the rifugio, which saves us carrying extra weight...BLD

Moderate Hiking Option: 4.5 hours, 6 miles, ascent 3,900 feet (no descent)

Challenging Hiking Option: 7 hours, 6.5 miles, cumulative ascent 3,800 feet, cumulative descent 3,300 feet

DAY 6

VAL GARDENA / ALPE DI SIUSI PLATEAU TO ORTISEI

From Rifugio Alpe di Tires, we descend into the Val Gardena, hiking east toward the instantly recognizable spires of Sassolunga ("long stone") and Sasso Piatto, which stand like sentinels over the Val Gardena. The trail brings us to the famous Plattkofel Hutte, where we taste their excellent homemade strudel before hiking down into the beautiful meadows of the Alpe di Siusi plateau. After lunch at a traditional malaga (farm restaurant), we continue our hike over the Alpe di Siusi's northern edge, where high cliffs tower over the Val Gardena and our destination, the town of Ortisei, far below. A cable car brings us down into



"This was one of the best vacations my husband and I have ever taken and my first trip with WT. Outstanding itinerary, great leaders. We enjoyed it so much that we booked another trip with WT a week after we returned home!"

Marilyn H., Barnstable, MA



Itinerary (cont'd)



“This was the ultimate trip for scenic hiking and the food was the icing on the cake!”

Don T., Windsor, Ontario, Canada

the heart of Ortisei, and a short walk through the streets leads to our centrally located hotel. The beautiful Val Gardena is the most Ladin of all valleys, where the ancient Ladin language is still spoken in a few remaining enclaves. Dating from the 5th century, Ladin developed when the Romans invaded the high valleys and the local mountain language mixed with Latin. Today, about 40,000 people consider themselves Ladin. Dinner is on your own tonight (your Trip Leader will be happy to make recommendations, depending on how fancy or local you want to go)...BL

Hiking Details: 6 hours, 8 miles, ascent/descent 2,000 feet

The South Tyrol in History: In addition to Italian and German, Ladin (Romansch) is spoken in the high valleys of the South Tyrol. The Ladin language owes its origins to 15 BC, when Druso, stepson of the Roman Emperor Augustus, conquered this region. Tiberius sent troops to crush the Celtic resisters in the mountain valleys and some of them stayed behind. Their descendants still retain their ancestral Ladin, an archaic tongue that is a combination of ancient Latin and mountain Celtic. Napoleon was a key player in the story of the South Tyrol, conquering it and placing it under the realm of the Austrian Habsburgs. The Habsburgs ruled until the South Tyrol was returned to Italy at the end of World War I. In 1943, the South Tyrol was occupied by Germany, but was restored to Italian rule in 1945 at the conclusion of World War II. Today the South Tyrol is 70 percent German speaking, 26 percent Italian speaking, and four percent Ladin speaking.



A Taste of the South Tyrol: The cuisine of the South Tyrol is a blend of the best of both sides of the Alps. Speck, one of the South Tyrol's famous specialties, is lean pork cured with juniper berries and other herbs, wood-smoked, and aged for months. Polenta (coarsely ground white or yellow cornmeal) is another staple, traditionally cooked in huge copper pots, blended with Parmesan cheese, and served by the spoonful or turned out onto a cutting board to set before being cut into slices. The region has a plentiful harvest of wild mushrooms, including porcini, chanterelles, and chiodini. Rye flour finds its way into many local dishes. In one traditional local pasta dish, ravioli alla pusterese, the ravioli dough is made with rye flour, something unheard of elsewhere in Italy. Risottos (baked rice dishes), stews, and knodel (dumplings) appear on menus along with typical Mediterranean pastas. Alto Adige's orchards produce 30 percent of Italy's apples, and strudel is omnipresent. Wine-growing in the area of Bolzano dates back to prehistoric times. Virtually surrounded by the Alps, the Alto Adige region grows a wide range of varieties.

DAY 7 ORTISEI TO CORVARA

A cable car whisks us up 4,000 feet to the western end of the magnificent Odle range at 8,100 feet. The Odle's crowd of towers and famous north faces drop for 3,000 feet into the valley below, and are considered to be some of the most emblematic of the Dolomite mountain ranges. We have two hiking options today: we traverse beneath these massive spires and precipitous needles on a balcony trail through pastures and working farmland. A well-marked trail through a cluster of massive boulders brings us to our first pass of the day, the Forcella Forces de Sielles (8,266'), or the Siellesscharte as the local German-speakers know it. The magnificent vista from the small grassy plateau at the top encompasses the Fanes group to the east, Sella to the southeast, and the Odles and Seceda to the west. We stop along the trail to enjoy a packed lunch and at the welcoming Puez Hutte (8,170'), we can have an excellent snack, then continue across the Puez plateau, a vast altipiano not as visited as the neighboring Sella group, thus improving our chances of seeing wildlife such as chamois and golden eagle. Geology enthusiasts will find much of interest, as erosion has laid bare an unusual vast range of rock beds from successive past eras. Several volcanic-looking cones punctuate the central plateau, solitary remnants of the Jurassic and Cretaceous layers that once covered the whole area. After crossing the altipiano, we start our descent into the majestic Val Badia and at Colfosco, we make a short transfer to the charming town of Corvara (5,100'), a South Tyrolean gem set in a pretty valley and surrounded by high peaks.

The second hiking option does not continue to the Forcella, but instead drops down to the Rifugio Odles at the Col Raiser cable car. After lunch at the rifugio, the cable car takes us down to the town of Santa Cristina and from there, an hour's drive over the Passo Gardena brings us to Corvara, and to our hotel. Overnight at hotel...BLD



"This trip was fabulous! A great itinerary, and walking across the Alpe di Suisi is one of the best things I've done on nine trips to the Alps!"

Kristi H., Orinda, CA



Itinerary (cont'd)



Longer Hike Option: 7 hours, 10 miles, ascent 2,000 feet, descent 3,500 feet

Shorter Hike Option: 6 miles, plus a 1-hour drive

The Puez-Odle Range: Our hike takes us through part of the famous Puez-Odle National Park, which offers scientists a well-preserved record of the earth's formation with important rock strata and prehistoric fossils considered internationally important by natural history experts. It was crucial in the Dolomites' 2009 designation as a World Heritage Site, easily meeting UNESCO's criteria of superlative natural phenomena. Reinhold Messner, the famous Italian mountaineer who has been climbing in the Dolomites for decades and was a leading proponent of the World Heritage campaign, was born at the foot of the Odle range in the Val di Funes.

DAY 8

HIKING ON THE SELLA MASSIF

The Gruppo Sella is a mountain plateau of massive terraces, soaring dolomitic towers, and plunging rock walls. The highest peak is Piz Boè (10,400'), and within its enormous fortress-shaped massif is an excellent network of paths, including the popular Alta Via 2 that snakes its way through this mountain range. After a short transfer to the Passo Pordoi (7,400'), we take a cable car 2,300 feet up to the peak of Sass Pordoi (9,735') on the Sella's plateau's southern edge. From here, views are incredible, including most of the big peaks of the Dolomites, such as Sassolungo, Civetta, Pelmo, Antelao, and the Marmolada (11,050'), the Dolomites' highest peak. Our climb up the pyramidal Piz Boè, the highest "hikeable" peak in the Dolomites, offers a 360-degree view of the surrounding mountains from one of the Dolomites' highest points.



We encourage all to join us on the cable car up to this “Terrace on the Dolomites”. For those not up to the climb to the top of Piz Boè, we offer a moderate hike that goes under the cliffs of Piz Boè, passing the pink marble boulders and taking in the moonscape atmosphere of this Sella Massif. Both groups meet for lunch at the Rifugio Piz Boè, set beneath the peak. Overnight in Corvara...BLD

DAY 9

CORVARA TO RIFUGIO LAGAZUOI OR SANTA CROCE SANCTUARY

From the cable car close to our hotel, we make a quick 1,500-foot ascent to the beautiful green alpine plateau above Corvara. As we traverse this lush pastureland we enjoy uninterrupted views of the Sella massif and the Marmolada, the “Queen of the Dolomites,” with its disappearing glacier. Our hike brings us to the Rifugio Pralonga, with its stunning views and excellent local cuisine. From the Pralonga high plateau, we have a marvelous view of the surrounding mountains, including the Sella massif, Conturines, and Santa Croce mountains, the spires of the Puez-Odle group, and, of course, the Marmolada. We continue along to the rugged Settsaas ridge, famous because geologists and fossil hunters of the mid-19th century suggested the formation was originally a coral reef, a crucial idea in the understanding of how the Dolomites were formed. As we traverse this magnificent ridge, enjoying panoramic views as well as exploring for fossils and wartime remains, we step across a subtle cultural and linguistic boundary. Local people of trilingual Corvara still speak Ladin, a Latin derivative, as well as German and Italian, while the ancient language of Cortina was Ampezzano, a relic of Latin. We hike down to the Passo di Valparola and on to the Passo Falzarego, where we take a cable car the final 2,200 feet up to the Rifugio Lagazuoi at 9,030 feet, our overnight accommodation. Clouds permitting, we’ll experience one of the world’s finest sunsets here, with the rock pinnacles taking on an extraordinary palette of ever-changing hues. After settling into the rifugio, we can spend the late afternoon exploring a World War I tunnel system that runs through the mountain. These tunnels were part of the important Italian stronghold on the Dolomite front during fierce combat with the Austrians in 1916 and 1917. While the Austrians controlled the summit, the Italians successfully held the ground below by building and using some two miles of these tunnels.

For our moderate hiking option, we drive to the village of San Leonardo and take the chairlift past the cliffs of the Sasso della Croce and up to the Rifugio Santa Croce. From the top, our hike brings us downhill through mixed woods and meadows to San Cassiano, a tiny village tucked between Italy and Austria where we enjoy lunch in a local restaurant. Later, we reconvene with the rest of the group for the journey to Rifugio Lagazuoi.

The Rifugio Lagazuoi is comfortable, warm and spacious, with dorm-style rooms, shared bathroom facilities with hot showers, and a good restaurant. There is no road access for our vans, but we will be able to transport our overnight needs to and from the rifugio. We can’t get our full luggage up there,



“Best trip ever! You should really promote this trip because there’s nothing else like it!”

Craig K., Sewickley, PA



Itinerary (cont'd)



“A very well designed trip in a memorable mountain area.”

Kitty L., Chicago, IL

but a smaller bag containing toothbrush, and a change of clothing suffice for most people. Dinner and overnight at Rifugio Lagazuoi...BLD

Challenging Hiking Option: 4-5 hours, 5 miles, ascent/descent 1,500 feet

Moderate Hiking Option: 5-6 hours, 5 miles, ascent 500 feet, descent 1,900 feet

The Great War in the Dolomites: Between May 1915 and October 1917, the mighty peaks of the Dolomites were the setting of an exhausting war of attrition between the Italian and Austrian armies in the First World War. For 20 months, the soldiers of the opposing troops endured terrible battles, deprivation, and loss of life, especially during the two long winters spent on the peaks. It was a war of individual bayonet attacks to conquer some anonymous summit, perhaps only to be regained by the enemy the next week. It is thought that 6,400 Italian soldiers and 1,800 Austrian soldiers lost their lives in a single battle on the Col di Lana. After October 1917, the Italian army withdrew to the River Piave, where the famous battle of Caporetto took place, a prelude to the Italian army's insurrection. The labyrinth of tunnels can still be visited at the Lagazuoi, Castelletto della Tofana, and Citta di Ghiaccio, the “ice city” constructed by the Italian Alpini who fought on the Marmolada.

DAY 10

RIFUGIO LAGAZUOI / TOFANE / CORTINA D'AMPEZZO

The Rifugio Lagazuoi is located along the Alta Via 1, a famous long-distance path that traverses the Dolomites from north to south. Hiking right from the lodge, we descend beneath the peaks of the famous Tofane massif: Tofane di Roses, Tofane di Mezzo, and Tofane di Dentro, all over 10,500 feet in height. Renowned by climbers and alpinists worldwide, these peaks still have scars left by World War I, with tunnels, trenches, and barbed wire giving silent testimony to the horrific battles between Italy and Austria. Today's more challenging hike features the “secret” valley behind the Tofane, which few hikers explore. We descend into the remote Val Travenanzes amid wildflowers, crystal-clear springs, and alpine meadows. A river at the bottom of a 250-foot gorge is crossed by a bridge of local legend—“high bridge”—where a horseman's desire to reach his beloved on the other side caused him to cross the gorge in one magnificent jump! After exploring the huge waterfall nearby, we make our way down to our pick-up point at Fiammes. We enjoy a picnic lunch en route, passing the canyons and waterfalls that have long made this area special. A shorter option leads beneath the Tofane di Roses and continues along the Alta Via 1 to the Rifugio Dibona, where we have lunch and then descend to our hotel. We spend the night in Cortina, the stylish resort town of the Dolomites, where we have the opportunity to stroll and shop. Dinner is on your own this evening...BL

Challenging Hiking Option: 6-7 hours, 11.5 miles, descent 4,700 feet

Moderate Hiking Option: 3 hours, 5 miles, descent 2,500 feet

DAY 11

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO / TRE CIME DI LAVAREDO

All hiking options today bring us northeast of Cortina to the Sesto Dolomites and the famous “Tre Cime Di Lavaredo” (Three Peaks of Lavaredo), the quintessential climbing mecca of the Dolomites. The steep, yellow-pink rock of these giants offers classic Dolomite scenery. Our hikes begin from the Rifugio Auronzo beneath the south face. Our easy hike follows a level path to the southeast of the three peaks for about five miles. The more challenging circuit features more up and down and rougher, rockier trails, but even more stunning views, with an ascent and descent of 1,600 feet. For those not wanting to hike, you can enjoy the day in the Cortina area, perhaps with an optional cable car excursion to Tofane di Mezzo for spectacular views. This evening we gather for a festive Farewell Dinner...BLD

Easier Hiking Option: 5 miles, 2-3 hours, 800 feet ascent, 600 feet descent

More Challenging Option: 7 miles, 4-6 hours, 1,600 feet ascent/descent

Driving Time: 1.5 hours

DAY 12

VENICE / DEPART

After breakfast in Cortina, we transfer by van to the Venice airport (2.5 hours) to connect with homeward-bound flights, or depart for other destinations in Europe...B



“Superb trip! Everything about it was outstanding and every day was terrific.”

John L., Highland Park, IL



Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024

\$6995 (12-14 members)

\$7495 (9-11 members)

\$7895 (5-8 members)

Single supplement: \$560

Please note: Single rooms are offered when possible, but those who pay the Single Supplement may have to share a room for the two nights at the alpine lodges.

2025 Trip Cost: Please call for details

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Due to the volatility of currency markets, we can only offer the most competitive pricing on our trips in Europe by partially tying the trip cost directly to the value of the Euro. In the late spring of 2022, when we set the rates for our 2023 program, the US Dollar equaled 0.93 Euros. While in most years, no price changes are ever necessary, if there were to be a significant change in exchange rates, we may be forced to raise or able to lower our trip cost; if so, your final invoice, sent two weeks before your final payment is due, will reflect the difference. Please note that the calculation will not be a straight proration. While most of the trip cost is paid in Euros, the remainder of our expenses are paid in US Dollars. The overall effect is to moderate any change; thus, if the Euro were to rise in value, the land price would rise less than might be expected, and if the Euro were to fall, the drop in trip cost would also be less than might be expected.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of at least two Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders (and sometimes three, depending on group size)
- Accommodations as noted
- All meals included except 2 dinners as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- A glass of wine or beer with dinner
- Land transportation
- Airport transfers as noted
- Cable cars and other transportation for our scheduled hikes

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, airport departure taxes, optional cultural events, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessary due to airline schedule changes or other factors, pre-trip expenses of travel insurance, or passports and visas; and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$600

90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No charge!

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

Trip Leaders

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information about our Trip Leaders, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit our webpage and click on “Trip Leaders”: www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/italy-alps-ultimate-dolomites-hiking-tour/



TANIA MASI

Born in Florence, Italy, of an American mother and a Florentine father, Tania Masi was raised with an appreciation for both American and European cultures. Her passion for hiking has started at a very early age and today she holds an International Mountain Leader license from Austria. She speaks nine languages, has a Masters in geography and is an avid climber. "Mountains are my antidote to the modern frenetic speed: they are made of beauty, challenge, solitude, and silence." When not leading trips, Tania loves to explore new mountain faces to climb. She currently lives in southern Tuscany with husband and daughter.



TERESA BALDI

Teresa Baldi, daughter of veteran WT Trip Leader Stefano Baldi, grew up on a farm owned by her family on the hills surrounding Florence. She has a degree in art history at the University of Florence and when she is not helping on the farm, a working agriturismo, she is employed at a nearby firsty-class restaurant, where she developed a passion for good food and wines. "It was great for me to grow up on a farm with plenty of animals and fantastic trails to explore and, at the same time, have the opportunity to study the beauty of art right in the streets of my home town. A hop on the bus and you step from nature to the glories of the Renaissance."



MARIANGELA LOVICU

Mariangela Lovicu was born in a lovely mountain village in Sardinia and has lived on this beautiful island all her life. Since earning her degree in Languages and Communication from the University of Cagliari, she has worked as a guide, enjoying her “dream job” of introducing people to Sardinia and its traditions. When not guiding, she can be found enjoying outdoor pursuits, from hiking, climbing, and kayaking to caving and canyoning.

Accommodations



ROMANTIK HOTEL REGINA

San Martino di Castrozza, Italy

Days 1 to 2 (2 nights)

Managed by one of the oldest hotelier families in the Trentino region, the hotel is situated in San Martino di Castrozza, at the foot of the Pale di San Martino. Along with great mountain views, the hotel has well-appointed rooms, an indoor pool, and a sauna. The warm colors, collection of antique toys, and soft furniture makes this hotel feel like you are coming home to a very cozy place. The owner is happy to show you his watercolors of the local wildlife in the area.



SPORTHOTEL ALPENROSE

Carezza, Italy

Days 3 to 4 (2 nights)

With a stunning setting right at the base of the Rosengarten and Latemar massifs, the Alpenrose is a fine hotel with all the modern comforts, and with the surrounding mountains so close, the views are extraordinary from the glass enclosed pool and spa area.



RIFUGIO ALPE DI TIRES

Alpe di Siusi, Italy

Day 5 (1 night)

The Rifugio Alpe di Tires enjoys a remarkable setting overlooking the rolling green pastures of the Alpe di Siusi with the magnificent Sassolunga and Sasso Piatto mountains forming a perfect backdrop. It's a very comfortable place to stay and features comfortable 4- and 6-person rooms, hot showers, and a good restaurant. This family-owned rifugio was originally built by the current owner's father and has now been enlarged using natural wood. The owners, Judith, Stephen, and their sons, all work to make us very comfortable.

Accommodations (cont'd)



HOTELS IN ORTISEI

Day 6 (1 night)

In Ortisei, we stay at one of the following hotels:

ALPENHOTEL RAINELL

The Rainell has the charm of a traditional Alpine hotel with the comfort and amenities of a modern resort. Overlooking the slopes and villas of the small town of Ortisei with views of passing cable cars, rooms are chic, woodsy retreats. Expansive gardens are a perfect spot for breakfast on a summer morning or lounging in a lawn chair. Travelers can take a plunge in the heated pool or visit the steam room, sauna, and wellness center, where views of the Dolomites stretch out beyond the gardens.



HOTEL GARDENA GRODNERHOF

Once a private home, the Gardena was purchased and converted into a hotel in the early 1900s. Under the hands of its new owners in 2003, the hotel was entirely rebuilt and transformed into the 5-star hotel it is today. Traditional Tyrolean charm is blended with modern style throughout the hotel's guest rooms and lounge areas. The award-winning Anna Stuben Gourmet Restaurant serves seasonal, regional cuisine, and the wine cellar offers tasting sessions from its wide selection of Italian and international wines. After a day on the trails, guests can relax in the indoor pool, sauna, and spa, or head to the Habana Bar and Lounge for a drink with fellow travelers.

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Ultimate Dolomites* webpage and click on "Accommodations."

HOTELS IN CORVARA IN BADIA

Days 7 to 8 (2 nights)

In Corvara in Badia, we stay at one of the following hotels:

POSTA ZIRM HOTEL

Corvara's Kostner family has run this hotel for generations and it has top-notch facilities including spacious rooms with balconies overlooking the mountains, a well-run bar and restaurant, and a first-class spa. The staff is welcoming and helpful. The location can't be beat, with the front of the hotel right on Corvara's main street, and at the rear, the Col Alt gondola, Italy's first chairlift, built by Franz Kostner in the 1930s.

HOTEL COL ALTO

This traditional alpine-style hotel on the edge of Corvara has been newly renovated, and offers a cozy ambiance in which to relax after an active day of exploring. Spacious and well-appointed guest rooms feature views of the surrounding mountains and hotel amenities include an indoor swimming pool and large wellness center offering a Turkish bath, Finnish sauna, gym, and a variety of soothing spa treatments.

RIFUGIO LAGAZUOI

Dolomites, Italy

Day 9 (1 night)

360-degree panoramas of the spires of the Dolomites, including glorious Tofano, Cristallo, and Marmolada, are at our fingertips at Rifugio Lagazuoi, a privately owned hike-in lodge with a stunning location atop Mount Lagazuoi. Here we are on top of the world, above the clouds and the birds, amid the silence of the mountains. We stay in dormitory-style rooms with toilets/sinks down the hall, and hot showers available. The lodge has a beautiful wood-paneled dining room with huge windows and an outdoor terrace where we can watch breathtaking sunsets.



Accommodations (cont'd)

HOTELS IN CORTINA D'AMPEZZO

Day 9 (1 night)

In Cortina d'Ampezzo, we stay at one of the following properties.

HOTEL CORTINA

Set in the heart of Cortina overlooking the Corso Italia, the pedestrian zone, this family-operated hotel dates back to 1870 and offers traditional old world charm. Guest rooms feature warm wooden paneling that lends an air of elegance and coziness. The friendly staff is helpful and accommodating.



HOTEL DE LA POSTE

Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy

Days 10 to 11 (2 nights)

With a perfect location in the heart of the pedestrian zone, this chalet-style hotel is a Cortina landmark, originally built in 1835 as a stop for mail coaches. "The Posta" has been in the hands of the Maniago family for the last century and has a grand dining room and a celebrated bar. Rooms are very well appointed and have either town views or mountain views.



Arrival & Departure

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Venice, Italy

Suggested Airport: Venice Marco Polo Airport (VCE)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, by 10:00 am

Meeting Place: You will meet your Trip Leader in front of the RELAY store located in the arrivals hall of the main terminal (on the ground floor) in the Venice Marco Polo Airport at 11:00 am on Day 1. The RELAY store is to the right as you exit the baggage claim area.

If you are staying in Venice prior to the beginning of the trip, you can take a private water taxi from the Venice city center (approximately €120 and it is direct from your hotel to the airport, one fare covers up to 8 people) or a mini-ferry vaporetto (approximately €30, with several stops along the way) to the airport. You can also take a land side taxi directly from Piazzale Roma to the airport (approximately €40 and takes 20 minutes). Lastly, there is an Express Bus. Blue ATVO buses run every half hour between the Piazzale Roma in Venice and Marco Polo (Venice) Airport, and take about 25 minutes. You purchase a ticket before boarding the bus at the ATVO ticket office, opposite the Vaporetto ticket office on Piazzale Roma. The Marco Polo Airport ATVO ticket office is inside the main terminal. A one-way ticket per person is approximately €3.

Although some airlines have flights that arrive in Venice before 10:00 am, we recommend planning on arriving in Venice the day before the trip begins, especially if flying in from overseas. Our first hotel is about a 3-hour drive from Venice, and it would be difficult to get there on your own with public transportation if you were to miss the group meeting time.

DEPARTURE

Venice, Italy

Suggested Airport: Venice Marco Polo Airport (VCE)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 12, after 1:00 pm

At the end of the trip, a group transfer will be provided from Hotel de la Poste in Cortina d'Ampezzo at 8:30 am directly to the Venice Marco Polo Airport. This transfer takes approximately 2.5 hours.

Two drop off points will be provided:

1. Venice Airport—for return flights to the US, onward travel, or for passengers traveling into Venice City Center by bus, taxi, or vaporetto (water bus).
2. Venice Mestre Train Station—for passengers continuing by train, a second drop will be at the Mestre train station, about a 15-minute drive from the airport.

Trip members with flights departing Venice earlier than 1:00 pm are responsible for transferring on their own from Cortina to Venice. A taxi can cost up to €300.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Italy. There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

RECOMMENDED HOTELS IN VENICE

City Center Hotels:

The **Hotel American Dinesen** is located in the Dorsoduro neighborhood of Venice, near the Academy of Fine Arts and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection. It is about a 15-minute walk to the Rialto Bridge or Piazza San Marco. The hotel can be booked directly at www.hotelamerican.com.

The **Hotel Locanda Fiorita** is set in a quiet square in the San Marco neighborhood of Venice, just a few minutes' walk to the Rialto Bridge and Piazza San Marco. www.locandafiorita.com

Bloom B&B is the sister hotel to Locanda Fiorita and is just steps away from many sights in the historic center. www.bloom-venice.com

Hotel Palazzo Giovanelli, set in the historic center, overlooks the Grand Canal. www.hotelpalazzogiovanelli.com.

Airport Hotels:

The **Courtyard Marriott Venice Airport Hotel** is just outside the entrance to the airport. The hotel can be booked directly at www.marriott.com.

The **Annia Park Hotel** is another good option very close to the airport. www.anniaparkhotel.it

Both of these hotels provide shuttle service to and from the airport.

Trip Details

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is Level 4 or 5, depending on the hiking options you choose. During our ten days of hiking, we have two hiking options to choose from on most days, ranging from moderate to challenging by Alps standards. Each day will include anywhere from three to seven hours of hiking, with options that give us time for visiting small villages and other interesting places en route. Most hiking is between 5,000 and 9,000 feet, with the routes featuring a good bit of up-and-down (although some level walks are available). While the Dolomites are not exceptionally high, they are steep and rugged, and this trip, while not difficult, is aimed for those who have at least some experience of mountain hiking. All participants must be in good physical condition. No climbing or mountaineering experience is necessary. Of course, you are always free to skip a day's hike and travel to the next destination in the support vehicle. The support vehicle transports the group's luggage, so you only need to carry a daypack for items you need for the day (sweater, camera, water bottle).

We strongly urge you to “train up” for your trip. Your enjoyment of the trip will be very dependent on your level of fitness. The best training for hiking is hiking, especially over hills or rough terrain. Next best are running, swimming, bicycling or other sports exercise. Stair-climbing machines are excellent preparation for hiking uphill. Try to incorporate exercise into your daily schedule at least a couple of months before departure. Your feet should also be well prepared—make sure your hiking boots are sturdy and thoroughly broken-in. Altitude is not a problem on these trips. The itineraries are designed to take you gently to higher altitude, giving you plenty of time to acclimatize. However, some people still find they get a few problems when they first reach high altitude. Slight headache and sleeplessness are the most common problems.

On most days, breakfast will be around 7:30 am. You should bring your packed bag to the hotel lobby when you come down for breakfast on days when we will be changing hotels. We usually leave the hotel at around 8:00 or 8:30 am. The Trip Leader will describe each day's hiking options including trail conditions, level of challenge, elevation gain or loss, mileage, and duration, so that you can choose the one that fits your wishes best for that day. Lunch will usually be either in a small village, mountain lodge, or a picnic amidst the beauty of the surrounding mountains.

Most evening meals will be taken at our hotels and will be hearty, nourishing mountain fare, often with the cuisine the region is noted for. Please note that in Europe, the dinner hour is considerably later than what it is in the US. We do our best to secure early reservations for our groups, but most often the evening meal will be at 7:30 pm.

Our accommodations are in comfortable, small hotels with private bathrooms. Our hotels have been chosen as much as possible for their ambience and history and they are delightful for the local color and dining that they offer. These rustic and well located hotels are clean and comfortable, but rooms are not always of uniform size or amenities. Our Trip Leaders try to assign rooms in a fair way so that all participants experience an equal advantage throughout the trip as a whole. Single rooms are offered when possible, but those who pay the Single Supplement may have to share a room for the two nights at alpine lodges.

For two nights we stay in a fantastic alpine lodge with 4- or 6-person rooms with shared bath and showers. The bedding at the lodges is very clean, consisting of a down comforter, a bottom sheet, and a pillow. There is limited vehicle or cable car access to these alpine lodges, so you will not have to carry your overnight luggage.

| Average Daily Max/Min °F | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| Venice | 43/30 | 48/34 | 54/39 | 63/46 | 72/54 | 77/61 | 82/64 | 81/64 | 75/57 | 66/50 | 54/41 | 45/32 |
| Bolzano | 34/19 | 37/21 | 45/27 | 50/34 | 59/41 | 66/46 | 72/50 | 70/50 | 64/46 | 55/37 | 43/28 | 36/21 |
| Rainfall - Inches | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Venice | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 2.5 | 3.3 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.5 | 2.7 |
| Bolzano | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.5 | 1.9 | 3.2 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 3.0 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 1.1 |

WEATHER

Temperatures are likely to reach the 60s and 70s during the day, with cooling breezes and occasional rain. At night the temperature will drop quite a bit, depending on the altitude. The months we run these trips are the optimal ones, but the weather can be fickle and it can range from blue skies to cloudy, wet, and cold conditions, making rain gear and warm garments necessary.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Europe Manager or email us at europe@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

TOUCAN CLUB

We're proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business! The Wilderness Travel Toucan Club was established to reward our travelers for their loyalty. For details, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/resources/toucan-club/

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

Toucan Club Rewards & Discounts



MEN'S T-SHIRT



WOMEN'S T-SHIRT



PATAGONIA SYNCHILLA FLEECE VEST
PLUS INSULATED CAMELBAK WATER BOTTLE



PATAGONIA R1 PULLOVER

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan.

Here's how it works:

YOUR FIRST TRIP

As a first-time traveler, you receive a lightweight Wilderness Travel T-shirt and set of durable WT Luggage Tags. On subsequent trips, we're happy to send you a new WT T-shirt and set of Luggage Tags by request.

YOUR SECOND TRIP

A top quality Wilderness Travel insulated stainless steel water bottle by CamelBak and a cozy Wilderness Travel fleece vest by Patagonia (\$130 value).

YOUR THIRD TRIP

A versatile Wilderness Travel R-1 pullover by Patagonia (\$140 value).

YOUR FOURTH TRIP

Discounts on the cost of your trip begin! You receive a 4% discount on the tour cost.

FIVE AND MORE TRIPS

You receive a 5% discount on the base trip cost. On your sixth trip, you receive a 6% discount, and so on up to your 10th trip. The maximum discount is 10%, with a ceiling of \$500.

Note: Due to special pricing considerations, Toucan Club discounts do not apply to our Private Journeys or Special Events. However, your participation on these trips does count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular adventures.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Toucan Club travel discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount, unless otherwise specified. Discounts are deducted from the base trip cost and shown on the final invoice. The base trip cost is the main land/tier cost and does not include single supplement fees, extensions, internal airfare, or other additional charges. Bonus gifts (T-shirts, luggage tags, vests, water bottles, and pullovers) will be mailed approximately three weeks prior to trip departure. Terms and conditions of Toucan Club bonuses are subject to change or cancellation at the discretion of Wilderness Travel, Inc.

Travel Notes



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 2022, 11-time winner

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveller*, 2022, 3 years in a row

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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