

EXPLORE!



Self-Guided Dolomites Hiking

A self-guided walking holiday in the magnificent Dolomites. You'll hike through stunning landscapes of dramatic limestone cliffs and snow-capped peaks, picture-perfect alpine pastures and idyllic meadows. This unique German-speaking part of Italy boasts an exceptional cuisine, a rich variety of wildlife including marmots and chamois, and an extraordinary variety of flowers which bloom in their thousands in spring and summer. Beginning in Platzwiese (Prato Piazza in Italian), you walk across the Fanes-Sennes Nature Reserve to San Vigilio di Marebbe, overnighting in excellent and beautifully located rifugi (mountain lodges) where hearty meals provide you with energy for the breathtaking walks.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Spellbinding views** - Enjoy hikes amongst the wild open spaces, mountain lakes and jagged peaks of this UNESCO World Heritage Site
- ★ **Rifugio accommodation** - Warm, comfortable and family-run in the heart of the mountains
- ★ **Flora and fauna** - Enjoy untouched nature in the mountains
- ★ **Friendly locals** - Discover the Dolomites unique cultural heritage
- ★ **Culinary treats** - Taste delicious cheeses, polenta, mushrooms, speck and outstanding wines

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Simple

These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

WALKING GRADE:

Moderate To Challenging

Combining moderate grade walks with some more strenuous hikes. This grade is ideal if you are fit and want to challenge yourself with a few longer, more demanding trekking days, possibly on difficult terrain or at higher altitudes.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Trip starts in Plätzwiese/Prato Piazza

Your base for the first two nights of your holiday is a peaceful refugio on the Prato Piazza plateau. This mountain lodge has an enviable position overlooking the giant limestone peaks of the Dolomites. After you have settled into your accommodation, you may choose to explore the Prato Piazza plateau, with its impressive rock formations and First World War fortification remains.



Accommodation: Rifugio Platzwiese (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Meals Provided: Dinner

DAY 2 - A choice of hikes; see the famous Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime

Today, you can choose between two different circular hiking routes from your base at Platzwiese/Prato Piazza. One option is to climb the Strudelkopf (2307m) to gain excellent views of the Drei Zinnen - the three distinctive peaks (known as the Tre Cime in Italian) that this part of the Alps is so famous for. Alternatively, you may prefer to take a shorter walk through the rolling Stollaplatz and Stolla-Alm. Of course, there is time to do both routes, should you wish.

You can expect today's eight and six kilometre walks to take approximately two-and-a-half hours each. The Strudelkopf loop involves an ascent and descent of 250m and the Stollaplatz walk an ascent and descent of 350m.



Accommodation: Rifugio Platzwiese (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 3 - Trek to Sennes through meadows, forests and valleys

Today's trekking destination is the rifugio at Sennes, where you will spend the next two nights.

Your walk starts with a descent via the spectacular Val dei Canope, to Cimabanche. After a short stroll along the road, you climb through Val de Gotres towards Forcella Lerosa - a meadow plateau surrounded by beautiful mountain peaks. After a steep descent

through a forest, you reach Rifugio Ra Stua, where you can stop for a rest and something to eat, before your final climb through the lovely Val Salata to Sennes. Here, your comfortable refugio accommodation once again boasts outstanding panoramic views of the surrounding Dolomites.

You can expect today's 17.5 kilometre walk to take approximately six hours with an ascent of 985m and a descent of 834m.



Accommodation: Rifugio Sennes Hutte (or similar)



Simple Rifugio



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4 - A circular hike in the mountains surrounding Sennes

Today's circular hiking route takes you through plateaus and valleys above the tree line, surrounded by mountain vistas. This short hike can be extended with a climb to the Muntejela de Senes peak (2887m). The view from this peak is stunning on clear days, although we recommend that this extension is only attempted by confident hikers, as it does involve some scrambling.

You can expect today's seven kilometre walk to take approximately two-and-a-half hours with an ascent of 345m and a descent of 330m. Climbing the Muntejela de Senes adds 4 kilometres and 430m elevation gain to the walk.



Accommodation: Rifugio Sennes Hutte (or similar)



Simple Rifugio



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 5 - Trek to Fanes via picturesque lakes and valleys

Today's varied route to Fanes initially follows the Dolomite Hohenweg/Alta via Dolomiti, maintaining a constant elevation. After this, you descend to the beautiful Lago de Foses and then on to the Valon Scuro. On the other side of the valley, you climb back up towards Lago Le Casun and further on to Rifugio Fodara Vedla - a picturesque spot for a break. After a long, steep descent to the Pederu hut, you start the final ascent to the Fanes Plateau where you will be staying in one of three rifugi there.

You can expect today's 17 kilometre walk to take approximately seven hours with an ascent of 1000m and a descent of 900m.



Accommodation: Rifugio Fanes Hutte (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 6 - Trek to Ju d'la Crusc or 'Bivacco della Pace'

Using your Fanes refugio as a base, today you can choose between two all-day hikes. The first walk is to Ju d'la Crusc (2612m),

where you can gain impressive views from the top of a perpendicular rock wall forming the edge of the Fanes Plateau. You then have the option of extending this hike to the L'Ciaval/ Kreuzkofel peak (2907m).

The second option takes you to the 'Bivacco della Pace' (Shelter of Peace) in an area that saw some of the heaviest fighting in the region during the First World War. After passing through barren and rocky valleys, the view from Bivacco is simply breathtaking. If you are visiting early in the season, be aware that large patches of snow may remain just below the Bivacco.

You can expect the 17 kilometres of the Ju d'la Crusc hike to take approximately six-and-a-half hours with an ascent of 1069m and descent of 1076m, and the 16.5 kilometres of the 'Bivacco della Pace' walk to take approximately six hours with an ascent and descent of 1235m.



Accommodation: Rifugio Fanes Hutte (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 7 - Hike through the valley to San Vigilio di Marebbe

On today's final trek of the holiday, you descend from the Fanes Plateau to your final night stop in lovely San Vigilio di Marebbe. There are two options, with the easier option via Rifugio Pederu recommended in poor weather. After a steep downward trail to Rifugio Pederu, you can enjoy a pleasant stroll following the meltwater stream as it winds its way through the forest and along the bottom of the valley.

You can expect the shorter, easier option today of 19 kilometres to take approximately six hours with an ascent of 150m and a descent of 930m. The tougher trek via Sant Antonio Pass is 21 kilometres and you can expect it to take 7 hours with an ascent of 650m and a descent of 1450m.



Accommodation: Villa La Bercia (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 8 - Trip ends in San Vigilio di Marebbe

After breakfast, the organised part of your holiday comes to an end.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Walking and Trekking information

Walking grade

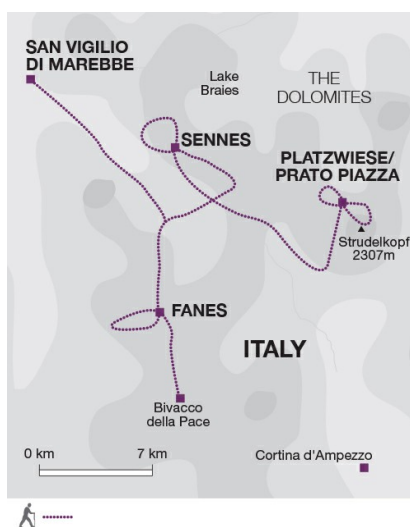
Moderate to challenging

Trek details

On this journey you walk 86.5 km over 6 days (an average of almost 14 km a day). On day 2 there are longer walking options available. The route follows narrow gravel roads or well-marked hiking trails. On some occasions there are optional opportunities for climbing local peaks that can require some scrambling and are suitable only for experienced mountain hikers. Ascents/descents average around 800 m a day.

Max walking altitude (m)

2849



What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 7
Lunch: 6
Dinner: 6



Accommodation

1 nights simple hotel
4 nights simple lodge
2 nights simple rifugio

Trip information

Country information

Italy

Climate

April/May and October/November are pleasantly warm. June/September are the hottest months. Showers are common in Autumn.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Roman Catholic

Language

Italian

Budgeting and packing

Clothing

We recommend taking lightweight and breathable clothing that can be layered according to the temperature and your level of activity. This should include a good quality waterproof jacket and trousers (e.g. Gore-tex / e-Vent), fleece jacket, comfortable walking trousers, shorts, warm hat and gloves, sunhat and sunglasses. Temperatures can change dramatically at altitude and at night.

Footwear

Take a pair of good, comfortable and broken in walking boots. Trainers and/or sandals for post-trek relaxation.

Luggage: On tour

You will need one main piece of baggage and a waterproof daypack sufficiently large to take spare layers of clothing, your water bottle, picnic and camera during each days walking (25-40 litres recommended). Your main luggage will be transferred to your next accommodation. Please clearly mark all your belongings with your name and the name of the next accommodation in order to indicate where the bags should go to next. Bags should be ready and at the reception or store room by 09:00 on the morning of your departure.

Luggage transfer

Included between each hotel and rifugio

Equipment

You will need a water bottle (preferably 2 litres) and high factor sun cream. Trekking poles are recommended. Tap water is safe to drink at the rifugio, but water sources along the trail may not always be drinkable. We recommend you bring water purifying tablets if you intend to fill-up along the trail. Using tap or purified water rather than bottled water will help avoid creating plastic bottle waste.

Maps - Along with the destination manual and route notes you will be sent a set of maps that have been created specifically for this trip to help you navigate. The route is marked on each map together with a series of numbered waypoints which correspond with instructions in the route notes. Should you wish to purchase a more detailed commercially produced map we recommend the following:-

General maps

Trentino Alto Adige 1:200.000 TCI Touring Club Italiano, ISBN: B003P4VSW2

Tipping

Local fees

A local city tax of € 1.20 is required to be paid in cash upon check in to the accommodation in San Vigilio di Marebbe

Italy

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£5.00 - 10.00

Dinner price

£15.00 - 20.00

Beer price

£2.00 - 4.00

Water price

£1.00 - 2.00

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Euro.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

GBP.

Where To Exchange

We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

ATM Availability

Major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance

Larger hotels and restaurants.

Travellers Cheques

Only in major towns. Please note, the exchange rate for cash and Travellers Cheques is poor.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Recommended airport

Innsbruck or Verona

Flying to your destination

We recommend outbound and inbound flights to/from Innsbruck or Verona airports. Innsbruck is served by both budget airlines (EasyJet from Gatwick) and various charter flights from multiple airports in the UK. Verona is served by both budget airlines (EasyJet, Jet2, Flybe) and non-budget airlines (including British Airways).

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

The rifugi (mountain lodges) are all located at around 2000 m altitude and are surrounded by the beautiful peaks of the Dolomites.

They offer simple yet comfortable accommodation where two people will be accommodated in a twin room and this may comprise two single beds or a bunkbed. Some rooms have private bathrooms, although these fill up very quickly and you will usually be sharing shower and toilet facilities located along the hallway. Sheets and towels are included when staying in private rooms. Due to the high demand we are unable to offer a single room on this holiday. However, there is dormitory accommodation at the rifugi and we are able to provide a quote using the dormitories if requested. When staying in a dormitory you will need to take your own sheet and towel.

Arrival and departure information

At the start and end of your trip you can fly into and out from Innsbruck or Verona airports.

By public transport from/to Innsbruck - You can take a bus or a train to reach the central train station (see www.innsbruck-airport.com/en/train-bus/) and then get a train to Villabassa/Niederdorf (see www.trenitalia.it for timetable information). Or you could opt for a shuttle from the airport, see www.innsbruck-airport.com/en/transfer/

By public transport from/to Verona - From and to Verona airport you can take a shuttle bus that runs every 20 minutes to and from the central train station (see http://www.aeroporto.verona.it/en/aerobus_t2p) or you can take a train. When you are in Verona Porta Nuova railway station, take a train to Villabassa/Niederdorf (see www.trenitalia.it for timetable information).

From Villabassa or Neiderdorf train station take a local bus to Platzwiese/Prato Piazza (see <http://www.steinertouring.com/en/home.html>). There's a walk of around 300m to the rifugio which is signposted from the bus station.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Italy: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, US, New Zealand, US or Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer click [here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Maximum altitude (m)

2849

Italy

Vaccinations

Nothing required. Tetanus recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.