



FAMILY HUT TO HUT TREK: UNESCO GEOTRAIL – a journey through time ITALIAN DOLOMITES



Family Geotrail Circular: Bletterbach to Bolzano 1-week trip	
Trip length:	8 days
Trekking days:	6 days
Shorter options:	This itinerary can also be offered as 7, 6 or 5 days in total
Grade:	Family-friendly
Trip style:	Self-guided hut to hut multi-day trek
Dates:	This trek can be run on dates to suit you between 15 June – 21 September

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Trip overview

The Dolomites UNESCO Geotrail is an exciting new multi-day hut-to-hut trekking route which follows the geological story of the Dolomites.

It has been developed to take the trekker on a journey that traverses through some of the most beautiful and geologically interesting mountain ranges in the region. The route features plenty of contrasts, giving an overview of the area's unique geological history and an insight into why the Dolomites have been awarded UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

The UNESCO Geotrail travels from South-West to North-East across the Dolomite range.

The walk: The route is mostly on good paths, though some of the route is steep or on rocky paths or scree. The route does have some places where the path is steep on one side. Chairlifts can make some of the longer days easier. The distances shown below do not give a realistic reflection of the true distance as they are calculated as a horizontal route by the mapping software.

We have adapted our standard Geotrail trek as follows to make the route more appropriate for families:

Day	Itinerary	Distance	Ascent	Descent	Meals included	Accommodation
1	Arrive in Bolzano					4* Hotel, Bolzano
2	Private taxi to the start of the Geotrail at Bletterbach Gorge and optional guided tour of Bletterbach Gorge. Trek to Passo Oclini	5.7 km, 3.5 miles	559 m, 1834 ft	2 m, 6.5ft	Breakfast, dinner	Luxury Rifugio
3	Trek into the Latemar mountains – walk statistics assume you use the chairlift into Obereggen	10.7 km, 6.6 miles	402 m, 1319 ft	311 m, 1020 ft	Breakfast	Alpine hotel
4	Trek to the Passo di Costalunga and into the Rosengarten / Catinaccio mountains. Walk statistics assume you use the chairlift	9.1 km, 5.6 miles	163 m, 535 ft	90 m, 295 ft	Breakfast, dinner	Rifugio (Alpine hut)
5	Trek through the spectacular Rosengarten / Catinaccio mountains.	10.4 km, 6.4 miles	521 m, 1709 ft	395 m, 1296 ft	Breakfast, dinner	Rifugio (Alpine hut)
6	Continue your journey trekking through the Rosengarten / Catinaccio mountains past the Vajolet Towers	4.1 km, 2.6 miles on scree and steep ground	350 m, 1148 ft	462 m, 1516 ft	Breakfast, dinner	Rifugio (Alpine hut)
7	Walk to San Cipriano, bus to Bolzano, overnight Bolzano	7.8 km, 4.8 miles	39 m, 128ft	1043 m, 3422 ft	Breakfast	4* Hotel, Bolzano
8	Depart				Breakfast	

Outline Itinerary

Important Note: The following itinerary is to be taken as a guide only. Whilst we expect that the trek will run as per the itinerary, participants should accept that there is a possibility of changes being necessary subject to local conditions.

Day 1 Arrive in Bolzano

The trip starts in the medieval city of Bolzano in the South Tyrol province of Northern Italy.

The city's archaeological museum is home to the Neolithic mummy who was discovered in a glacier, Otzi the Iceman. His pieces of equipment and clothing have been restored to give you a glimpse into life 5,300 years ago.

Bolzano is easily reached by train from the nearest airports of Verona or Venice Marco Polo.

Overnight: 4* hotel, Bolzano

Day 2 Travel to the start of the Geotrail at Bletterbach Gorge and trek to Passo Oclini

The GeoTrail starts at the Bletterbach Gorge – we will organise a private taxi for you to get here from Bolzano. The Bletterbach Gorge reveals the various geological layers of the Dolomites. Following violent volcanic eruptions about 280-274 million years ago, hot ash and lava streams covered the area that used to be located near the Equator. Today this reddish volcanic rock is the basis of the Bletterbach Gorge. Fossils of animals, animal tracks and plant life were embedded in sand or mud, and can still be easily found in the gorge.



Bletterbach Gorge, the start of the UNESCO Geotrail © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

The Geotrail ascends to the rim of the gorge to viewpoints offering spectacular vistas down into it. Our trail continues to the luxury rifugio at Passo Oclini at the foot of the contrasting peaks of Corno Bianco and Corno Nero.

Overnight: Luxury rifugio

Day 3 Trek from Passo Oclini into the Latemar mountains and on to Obergggen

From Passo Oclini the trek continues through forests and past a Nordic skiing area to the lake at Passo di Lavaze.

From here it continues through forests and ski areas to reach a panoramic plateau before traversing under the impressive cliffs of the Latemar Massif which form the rim of an ancient atoll when it was below sea level. This part of the route includes various family-friendly items to keep younger family members

entertained. Descend to an alpine hotel near to the ski resort of Obereggen – you may prefer to use the chairlift if legs are getting tired.
Overnight: Alpine Hotel



Passo di Lavaze, UNESCO Geotrail © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

Day 4 Trek from Obereggen to the Passo di Costalunga and into the Rosengarten / Catinaccio mountains

Today the Geotrail passes from the Latemar range to the Catinaccio & Rosengarten mountain range which will dominate the next few days of the walk. The Latemar and the Catinaccio ancient reefs used to be separated by a deep sea.

The walking today starts with an easy morning on broad paths and tracks which take you to the popular lake, Lago di Carezza.

From here it is an easy walk to Passo di Costalunga and then a long ascent onto the flanks of the Catinaccio mountain range. A chairlift is available and recommended for younger families.

Overnight: mountain rifugio

Day 5 Trek through the spectacular Rosengarten / Catinaccio mountains

Today's route descends to a cluster of rifugi where you could have lunch before ascending to the night's rifugio which is located in the heart of an old sea atoll, surrounded by towering Dolomite spires.

Overnight: mountain rifugio



Dolomite reflections in Lago di Carezza © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

Day 6 Continue your journey through the Catinaccio mountains past the Vajolet Towers

This is a short day, but can be challenging terrain, especially in bad weather. Climbing back up out of the atoll basin the route ascends for a coffee stop at Rifugio Principe perched on the Passo Principe, before a big descent over a dramatic landscape down into a dry, rock-strewn valley before heading downhill to tonight's rifugio.

In good weather it is possible to extend today's route if you want more of a challenge.

Overnight: mountain rifugio

Day 7 Trek to San Cipriano, bus to Bolzano.

Today you descend from the high mountain scenery down to the valley and the village of San Cipriano, from where you can catch a bus back to Bolzano. Your hotel is within easy walking distance of both the bus station and the heart of this vibrant city.

Overnight: 4* hotel, Bolzano

Day 8 Depart Dolomites

Today sadly is the day your 1-week tour of the Geotrail finishes.

Travel to the Dolomites

The nearest airports are **Verona**, **Venice Marco Polo** and **Innsbruck**.

Bolzano is on the main train line linking Verona, Venice and Innsbruck.

Travel times by public transport to Bolzano: typically 2¼ hours from Verona or at least 4 hours from Venice.

We will supply comprehensive advice on travel options between the airports and the Dolomites.

Languages:

The area this trek passes through embraces the cultures of both the Italian Alto-Adige and the Austrian Sud Tyrol. Both Italian and German are spoken locally, as well as the local language of Ladin. English is often also now used in many places.



Route finding is easy - the paths are well signed. We provide detailed route instructions, good quality walking maps with your route highlighted on them, and GPX files if you wish to use on your phone.

Equipment:

In addition to the things you would normally carry for a day walk you will also need to carry a spare set of clothing to change into in the evenings, a few basic toiletries, a towel and a sheet sleeping bag. You do not need to carry sleeping bags or food. Including your water, you should aim to keep your rucksack weight to around 10kg. A full kit list will be supplied.

You can leave any luggage you don't need for the trek at your hotel in Bolzano.



Accommodation:

- In Bolzano we normally accommodate guests in a 4* hotel.
- In the mountains you will stay in a mixture of luxury rifugi (some of which are more or less hotel standard with spa facilities) and traditional mountain rifugi.
- In the traditional mountain rifugi, bathroom facilities are normally shared.
- **For groups of 2 or more and for families, it is our policy at trekMountains to request private rooms in the mountain rifugi for you wherever they are available, which we do at no extra cost to yourself.**



Inside a typical rifugio dining area © trekMountains

Food and drink:

Refreshments and meals can be obtained from rifugi en-route.

On just a few days you will need to carry a packed lunch obtainable from the rifugio the night before.

Breakfasts and dinners will be available at the refuges that you will stay at.

Drinking water will always be available. In those places where the tap water is not drinkable you will always be able to buy bottled water.

Mountain refuges serve a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.

The price:

The price will vary according to your group size and the number of days trekking you wish to do.

Please contact us with your preferences and we will tailor a trek for you and give you a quotation.

The Price Includes (Self-guided trips):

- ✓ Valley-based accommodation before and after the trek as shown in the itinerary above – where this in hotels it will usually be on a twin or double or family room basis inclusive of breakfast.
- ✓ Mountain accommodation during the trek as shown in the itinerary above. Most mountain rifugi have shared bathroom facilities. **For bookings of 2 people or more and for families, trekMountains will request private rooms wherever available in the rifugi at no extra cost to yourself.** Please note that these rooms are very popular, and therefore early booking is advised if you wish to try to avoid shared rooms.
- ✓ Meals as shown in the itinerary above – Please note that a few rifugi no longer offer half-board packages. In these cases, dinners are available to purchase at the rifugio on an a la carte basis. Where this is applicable to the rifugi we book for you, we will indicate this on your invoice.
- ✓ Detailed route instructions
- ✓ Detailed, original 1:25,000 map with your route highlighted.
- ✓ GPX files on request to use on your preferred mapping software.
- ✓ A survival Italian guide.

Not Included (Self-guided trips):

- × Travel between your home and the start of the trip.
- × Travel between your final night's accommodation and your home at the end of the trip.
- × Meals not specified in the itinerary as being included.
- × Travel Insurance (required)
- × Tourist taxes – typically a few euros per night payable in cash on arrival at your accommodation.
- × Chairlifts can make some of the longer or harder days easier. The cost of using any of these easier options has not been included in the price of the trip. A typical chairlift adult ticket costs around €13.
- × Any costs incurred by a deviation from the itinerary.
- × Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone calls, souvenirs and spa facilities.