



## DOLOMITES VAL GARDENA DAY WALKS – ITALIAN DOLOMITES



The Odles Peaks © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

<b>Grade:</b>	This trip can be adapted to suit your needs, abilities and aspirations - there really is something here for everyone, from gentle valley walks, or walks in the higher areas. You can choose to use cable cars and the funicular railway to whisk you up and down the hills to give you easy access to a wide range of paths. There is a choice of easier and harder walks in each of the walking areas in the Val Gardena area. Challenging hikes, via ferrata and e-biking are all options too!
<b>Style:</b>	Guided or self-guided
<b>Accommodation:</b>	Choose between hotels, self-catering and / or mountain huts
<b>Dates:</b>	This trip can be run on dates to suit you between 20 June and 20 September.

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## Trip overview



The Val Gardena area is one of our very favourite parts of the Dolomites. The Sella Massif the Sasso Piatto, Sasso Lungo, the spikes of the Odles Peaks, and Marmolada, the highest peak in the Dolomites all surround the walks and bike rides in this immaculately-kept valley, with its gorgeous hotels and manicured window-boxes of flowers.

The Val Gardena is immersed in some of the most stunning scenery that the Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage Site has to offer. Cable cars take you swiftly up from Selva to the area of the Sasso Piatto and Sasso Lungo where you can find gentle or hard walks, and the famous Sella Massif with 3152m Piz Boe dominates the end of the valley looking down over the charming town of Selva.

The gentle walks of the Alpe de Siusi area are easily accessible by cable car from the Gardena valley, as is the wonderful Puez-Odles Nature Park area with its striking needle-like peaks - this basin is a particular favourite of mine!

The Alta Via 2 passes through this area, and offers some challenging walks and some via ferrata for those that are willing and able!

This trip truly offers you the chance to be flexible to choose what you do each day. As the valley area is linked by a fantastic, integrated network of cable cars and a funicular railway, together with a frequent and free bus system which make getting around easy. You can get passes for the cable cars for unlimited use over a period of several days, or you can pay for them individually.

All this makes it a great destination for people who want to have the chance to shorten walks, catch up with their friends, wait, sunbathe or meet up at one of the many excellent mountain-top cafes, restaurants and refuges.

There really is something for everyone in this part of the Dolomites. Ann Foulkes, owner of trekMountains has led day walks in this area for several years, and knows it extremely well, so we can offer you a programme with differently graded walks in the all the walking areas of the Gardena Valley for each day of your walking holiday. In that way, there is the option if your party prefers different types of walk that some of you can do the harder walks and some the easier walks in the same area as each other. This means that you can be as flexible as is possible, and meet up at key places, perhaps to share lunch or a beer immersed in the Alpine scenery.

We can offer a full programme of easier and harder walks with full turn-by-turn instructions and maps, and information about the bus and cable car and funicular railway options that are open to you. You won't need a car there at all! We genuinely love this area, and strongly recommend it to you. It is a fabulous area - we promise you - you won't be disappointed!



The stunning town of Selva di Val Gardena, surrounded by mountains © Ann Foulkes

## Accommodation

The Val Gardena area offers a huge variety of beautifully maintained accommodation. Whether you prefer to stay in hotels, guest houses, self-catering apartments or to mix it up with some great quality high-level mountain accommodation, we can tailor this trip to suit your requirements.



Val Gardena © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

## Suggested Itinerary

We will create a bespoke itinerary based upon your preferred type of accommodation, the level of walking difficulty and any other activities you wish to do. Below is a sample itinerary which can be altered in terms of content and length according to your preferences.

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<b>Itinerary – Dolomites Val Gardena Day Walks</b>	
<b>Accommodation:</b> Hotel, B&B or chalet or mountain refuges in the Val Gardena area according to your preference	
<b>Meals included:</b> Your meal plan is dependent on your preferred type of accommodation	
Day	Activities:
1	Arrive Selva di Val Gardena area, overnight hotel
2	Choice of walks in the area – perhaps in the Alpe de Siusi area
3	Choice of walks in the area – perhaps in the area above Ortesei
4	Choice of walks in the area – perhaps in the Col Raiser Basin, Odles Nature Park
5	Choice of walks in the area – perhaps in the Vallunga / Puez area, or perhaps take a break from walking and visit the old town of Bressanone, or the Ice Man museum in Bolzano
6	Choice of walks in the area – perhaps in the Sasso Piatto / Sasso Lungo area, or perhaps hire a bike or e-bike and explore the Gardena valley, the single track bike park or the Alpe de Siusi in more depth.
7	Choice of walks in the area – perhaps traversing with views of the Sella Massif, or trek into the Sella itself.
8	Travel day (we can make this itinerary shorter or longer to suit your requirements)

## The different areas of the Val Gardena



The Val Gardena area offers some of the most spectacular walking in the Dolomites © Ann Foulkes

**The Val Gardena (Gardena Valley)** is a wonderfully-maintained valley with its immaculate villages of Ortisei, Santa Cristina and Selva di Val Gardena. There are also some pretty impressive pizzas to be found here as well as some amazing gelateria serving the best Italian ice cream. The picturesque villages are all well worth exploring themselves, and are all linked by cycle paths and footpaths which follows the valley in addition to paths on either side of the valley slopes at all levels.

Buses (which are free if you stay in a hotel in the area) also run along the valley connecting the villages, their cable cars, the funicular railway and on to the railway station at the end of the valley at Ponte Gardena, which then easily connects with trains to Bolzano (home of the Ice Man museum), Bressanone with its spectacular old town, Verona and of course Venice. There is so much to explore here!



The Val Gardena cycle path which links the villages in the valley © Ann Foulkes, trekMountains

There is a complete mixture of paths in this area from broad, easy-graded paths to some which are steep and with some exposure. We know the area very well, so we will enter into discussion with you and tailor our suggestions for each day of the trip to the abilities of your group. Cable cars, chairlifts, shuttle buses and alternative route options can quickly whisk you up into the high mountains and back down as well if you like. From there the decision is yours. You can stroll and enjoy the views from high up, sampling the culinary delights of the many alpine huts. A huge variety of walks can be enjoyed, or even via ferrata for the more adventurous of you.

The Gardena Valley offers several other different areas which can be explored:

- **The Alpe di Suisi** offers a softer landscape. It is a high alpage (a place of summer grazing for animals) which is easily accessible by cable car. It makes a superb area for families too, with lots to interest the children. The Alpe di Suisi is a huge basin which provides a great habitat for wild flowers. We also find it to be the ideal playground for e-biking, but more about that later!
- **The Col Raiser Basin & the Puez-Odles National Park:** One of my absolute favourite parts of the Dolomites is the wonderful basin of the Col Raiser which can be accessed from the Gardena Valley by funicular railway and cable car, or by foot.
- The jagged peaks of the Odles, (shown on the first page) are not to be missed! The basin has a host of mountain refuges for refreshment, and the views from here will leave precious memories of your trek.
- **The Vallunga** is a long, flat valley next to the village of Selva di Val Gardena. Popular for day walks, the area is filled with wild flowers, and cafes make for a pleasant day.
- **The Alta Via 2** passes through this area too, and offers challenging terrain and some vie ferrata for anyone wanting a challenge!



The Sella Massif – not to be underestimated, the Alta Via 2 passes through this massif © Ann Foulkes

## E-biking option

The trekMountains team went out to the Val Gardena area recently and hired e-bikes for what turned out to be the very best couple of days cycling we've ever done anywhere in the world. It was the first time we'd given e-bikes a decent workout, and we were incredibly impressed. You can even take your e-bikes on some of the cable cars if you wish, but you might decide it isn't necessary - the bikes make going uphill fun! It just felt that someone very powerful was giving a push any time I wanted it, and the scenery... oh my...the scenery we were biking in was sublime. Surrounded by massive peaks all around us, on good paths and with superb huts to stop off for refreshments, what's not to like?

There is a huge choice in bike routes to suit all levels:

- gentle rides down the delightful converted old railway line in the valley
- dedicated family bike trail
- journeys with incredible vistas of the mountains all around you the wonderful variety offered in the high Alpe di Siusi
- single-track challenges for adrenaline junkies.

All these routes are accessible with your bike either via the cable cars or with e-bike turbo power.



Enjoying e-biking, Alpe di Siusi, Val Gardena © trekMountains

## Travel to Italy

The more popular travel options from the UK are listed below, but this is certainly not a complete list.

- Flights from the South of England: Easyjet operate daily flights between London and Venice or Verona
- Flights from the North of England: Easyjet operate several flights per week between Manchester and Venice.
- The Val Gardena area is also easily reached by train – whether you are travelling internationally or by train from one of the airports at Verona or Venice.

However you choose to travel, we can help you with the timetables and logistics.

### The Price Includes (Self-Guided trips):

- Your choice of accommodation in the Val Gardena area (hotel, guest house or self-catering apartment).
- Accommodation in mountain refuges (if requested) in shared rooms or dormitories on a half-board basis as per your bespoke itinerary.
- Meals as indicated in your bespoke itinerary
- Detailed, original 1:25,000 maps with the routes highlighted on them
- Detailed walk instructions
- Survival Italian Language Guide
- For those choosing to stay in hotels in the area you will also receive a complimentary bus pass for all buses in the valley while you are staying at the hotels



### Not Included (Self-Guided trips):

- International flights
- Travel between airport and Val Gardena
- Meals not specified in your bespoke itinerary as being included.
- E-bikes (optional extra - can be hired locally)
- Cost of any cable cars, funicular railways, chairlifts required (individual tickets and multi-day passes can be purchased locally)
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone calls and souvenirs
- Drinking water / drinks / showers / optional extras if you choose to stay in mountain refuges.
- Travel Insurance



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