



THE DOLOMITES VAL GARDENA TRAVERSE, SWITZERLAND: INN-TO-INN COMBO HIKING TOUR

MEET: Bolzano (Italy)
VISIT: St. Ulrich (Ortisei)
LENGTH: 7 days, 6 nights
HIKE RATING: Moderate–Strenuous, 5–7 hours/day,
1000'–3500' elevation gain/loss

The Dolomites are a unique region, where green meadows, surprising wildflowers, and quaint villages give way to huge pink and yellow limestone towers laced with hiking trails. Situated in northern Italy near the border with Austria, the Dolomites hold a fascinating mix of Italian, Tyrolean and ancient Ladin cultures. Meet in Bolzano, home of the Ötzi ice-man, and transfer to the charming village of St Ulrich. We'll hike a stunning inn-to-inn circuit around the Gardena valley, in the heart of the Dolomites. Spend 2 nights in mountain huts and 4 nights in luxurious 4-star village hotels, exploring gorgeous hiking trails. A great exploration of an impressive region.

Actual hikes vary from trip to trip, but our itinerary will go something like this:

DAY ONE

Arrive in Italy and transfer by train to Bolzano, our meeting point in the Italian Dolomites. Bolzano is a pleasant city with large squares, outdoor markets, and an captivating natural history museum (home of the famous Ötzi iceman). After we meet, we'll take a bus to St Ulrich, a charming village with narrow cobblestoned streets lined with elegant. We'll enjoy a wonderful welcome dinner and settle in to our elegant and very friendly 4-star hotel for the night.(Hotel Grones)

DAY TWO

St. Ulrich is surrounded by pleasant hiking trails and is blessed with beautiful views from every corner. For our first dayhike, we may choose to hike through the U-shaped Langenthal valley, or into the Puez-Odle National Park. Return to St Ulrich for a 2nd night. (Hotel Grones)

DAYS THREE–FOUR

Hiking hut-to-hut, we'll head up through a narrow gorge to Schlern hut, an historic hut atop the mighty Schlern peak, with breathtaking views in every direction. After a night here, we'll continue on a high-level traverse above the Alpe di Siusi, the largest mountain meadow in the Alps, to the towering Sassolungo mountain group, to rifugio Plattkofel, a remote inn tucked away on the edge of the rocky group. (rifugios Plattkofel and Schlern)

DAYS FIVE–SIX

A rugged traverse around the Sassolungo group brings us to the beautiful Sella pass, where we'll catch a bus or hike back down to St. Ulrich. On our last day, we like the hike through the high scenic meadow trails of Seceda, where we can look back on almost our entire route. In the evening, you can unwind in the sauna or pool and enjoy the gourmet cuisine at our tasteful 4-star hotel. (Hotel Grones)

DAY SEVEN

Today we say *arrivederci*, and depart for our post-tour destinations.