

Swiss Bliss: Trekking the Spectacular Silvretta and Rätikon Alps

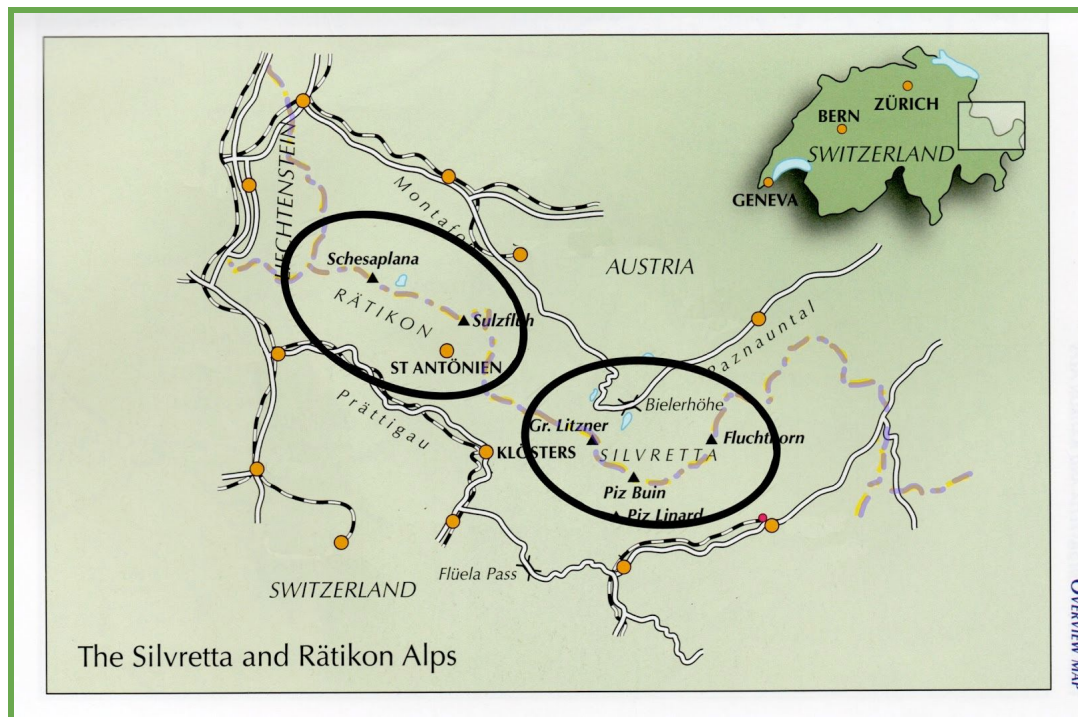


Trip# 2034 August 15-30, 2020

The region we will explore:

The Silvretta and Rätikon Alps, located along the Swiss/Austrian border, provide the venue for a unique hiking and cultural experience. These mountain ranges have been long appreciated in Europe for their superior year-round outdoor recreational opportunities. Ernest Hemingway penned his memoirs of Paris in the '20s ("A Movable Feast") while living in this area.

During our two week journey we will experience two distinct cultures, Swiss and Austrian, and explore two mountain ranges, geographically adjacent but geologically distinctly different. The Silvretta Alps are high mountains covered with snow and ice, while the Rätikon Alps have lower elevations and are almost completely ice-free. Their limestone composition and sharply rising peaks, topped by turrets and towers, are directly reminiscent of the Dolomites in northern Italy.



Trip overview:

This trip is a [strenuous](#) mountain trekking experience appropriate for an experienced outdoor adventurer. You will carry all your possessions, clothing, lunch and water in your backpack. Since lodging, breakfast, and dinner will be provided a fully loaded backpack will weigh typically 20 -25 pounds. We will hike for 13 consecutive days. A typical day will have a booktime of 5.5 hours [excludes all breaks] which is sufficient to cover eight miles and gain 2,500 -3,000 feet of elevation. While no technical climbing is required, there will be some narrow trails bordered by steep drop offs.

Itinerary Overview

After flying into Zurich, you will take a train to Klosters, where the group will meet at an in-town hostel. From there we will begin with a week-long trek in the Silvretta Alps. Our hike will take us along a circuit beginning in Switzerland, winding through Austria, and looping full circle back to Klosters. Next, we will take a bus a few hours west to St. Antönien to begin a similar, second, week-long trek in the Rätikon Alps. This circuit will again begin in Switzerland, briefly touch Liechtenstein before entering into Austria, and finally loop us back into St. Antönien, Switzerland. We will conclude our adventure with a farewell dinner and celebration.

Accommodations throughout will generally be mountain huts and family-run hotels, where we will be provided with both dinner and breakfast.

Daily Itinerary

Day 1 - Saturday, Aug 15

Depart from the US for Zurich, Switzerland.

Day 2 - Sunday, Aug 16

After arriving in Zurich, you will take a train to Klosters and meet your fellow adventure travelers at the Jugendherberge (youth hostel). We will all enjoy a get-acquainted dinner that evening.

Day 3 - Monday, Aug 17 - *Klosters to Berghaus Vereina*

The weeklong counter-clockwise circuit of the Silvretta Alps begins with a pleasant prelude hike that will take us to Berghaus Vereina, a privately owned lodge. We will pass through meadows, a beautiful gorge, cascades, and carpets of alpenrose.

Stats: 4 hours, 14 km, +782m, -73m



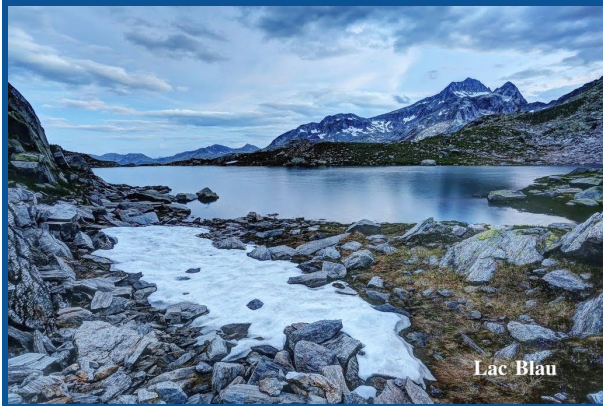
View from Berghaus Vereina

Day 4 - Tuesday, Aug 18 - *Berghaus Vereina to Lavin*

Our moderate climb will take us through the Vereina Pass, passing numerous streams. During our hike today, we will enjoy views of Piz Linard (3411m), the highest of the Silvretta Alps. We will descend to Lavin, where we will spend the night at a small hotel.

Stats: 5.5 - 6 hours, 13km, +642m, -1173m

Day 5 - Wednesday, Aug 19 - *Lavin to Chamanna Tuoi Hut*



Today we will pass through Guarda, one of the most lovely Swiss villages and ascend through alpine meadows. We will pass by Lac Blau, a lovely azure-colored alpine lake as we make our way towards our first mountain hut, at Chamanna Tuoi. Piz Linard's south face will loom large in front of us.

Stats: 6.5 - 7 hours, 17.4km, +1340m, -521m

Day 6 - Thursday, Aug 20 - *Chamanna Tuoi Hut to Jamtal Hut*

With two passes to cross this is one of the more vigorous stages of our trek, but also one of the more interesting and varied. We will cross into Austria through pastoral valleys that can be remote, wild and rocky.

Stats: 6.5 hours, 15km, +1147m, -1232m



Day 7 - Friday, Aug 21 - *Jamtal Hut to Wiesbadener Hut*



Another beautiful high mountain and challenging stage awaits us today. We will weave through two mountain passes, past snow fields while enjoying views of our rugged surroundings.

Stats: 5.5 - 6 hours, 9km, +1100m, -748m

Day 8 - Saturday, Aug 22 - Wiesbadener Hut to Tübinger Hut

A long but splendid trek west along the Austrian flank of the Silvretta, brings us up through a rocky and pasture strewn mountain valley.

Stats: 6 hours, 15km, +600m, -837m

Day 9 - Sunday, Aug 23 - Tübinger Hut to Klosters

After a short but steep climb, the final stage of the Silvretta Alps brings us across the border back to Switzerland. We descend into the head of a long and wildly attractive valley that returns us back to Klosters.

Stats: 6.5 - 7 hours, 17km, +537m, -1549m

Day 10 - Monday, Aug 24 - Klosters to St. Antönien to Carschina Hut

After our morning bus ride to St. Antonien, we will begin our second, week-long trek into the Rätikon Alps. Trekking along this relatively short section, we will take a break at the beautiful Carschinasee (lake).

Stats: 3 - 3.5 hours, 6km, +815m



Day 11 - Tuesday, Aug 25 - Carschina Hut to Schesaplana Hut

This interesting stage skirts the foot of the Rätikon wall, cutting across rock scree and threading through fingers of limestone. In summer, there are often carpets of alpine flowers, along with sightings of marmot and chamois.

Stats: 4.5 hours, 14km, +240m, -566m

Day 12 - Wednesday, Aug 26 - Schesaplana Hut to Nenzinger Himmel

This fairly challenging stage leaves Switzerland, briefly visiting Liechtenstein and descends into the Austrian village of Nenzinger



Himmel. From our accommodations at Alpengasthof Camperdona, we will hopefully catch the lovely alpenglow on the looming west facing wall of the Paunüelerkopf.

Stats: 5 - 6 hours, 12km, +451m, -989m

Day 13 - Thursday, Aug 27 - *Nenzinger Himmel to Douglass Hut (3.4, p123)*

Today we will cross over the ridge of the mountain, passing through extensive grasslands on both sides of the mountain pass. After a steep descent into the valley bed, we will enjoy a bus up valley and a cable car ride up the final 300m to Douglass Hut.

Stats: 6 - 7 hours, 9km (+bus & cable car rides), +658m, -978m

Day 14 - Friday, Aug 28 - *Douglass Hut to Tilisuna Hut*

As we work our way back to the Swiss border, the day begins with a pleasant journey through two easy passes. A short but steep descent brings us to a lush valley at the foot of Sulzfluh (9,242').

Stats: 6.5 - 7 hours, 13km, +1100m, -847m



Day 15 - Saturday, Aug 29 - *Tilisuna Hut to St. Antönien*

This stage returns us to St. Antönien. We will descend down a great basin of pastureland on the Swiss side. This day will be a fine and leisurely hike without great effort, closing the

lovely circuit of the limestone mountains. We will settle into a small hotel and enjoy a farewell dinner.

Stats: 3.5 - 4 hours, 11km, +143m, -934m

Day 16 - Sunday, Aug 30 - St. Antönien to Zurich to Home

A morning bus ride of 2 ½ hours takes one to the Zurich airport for the journey home.

Trekking Summary

Day	Date	Segment	Time	Distance	Gain	Loss
1	Sa., 8/15	Depart US to Switzerland				
2	Su., 8/16	Arrival in Zurich; Train to Klosters; Check-in at hostel; Welcome dinner				
3	M, 8/17	Silvretta: Klosters to Berghaus Vereina	4 hr.	14km	782m	73m
4	T, 8/18	Silvretta: Berghaus Vereina to Lavin	5.5 - 6 hr.	13km	642m	1173m
5	W, 8/19	Silvretta: Lavin to Chamanna Tuoi Hut	6.5 - 7 hr.	17.4km	1340 m	521m
6	Th, 8/20	Silvretta: Chamanna Tuoi Hut to Jamtal Hut	6.5 hr.	15km	1147m	1232m
7	F, 8/21	Silvretta: Jamtal Hut to Wiesbadener Hut	5.5 - 6 hr.	9km	1100m	748m
8	Sa., 8/22	Silvretta: Wiesbadener Hut to Tübinger Hut	6 hr.	15km	600m	837m
9	Su., 8/23	Silvretta: Tübinger Hut to Klosters	6.5 - 7 hr.	17km	537m	1549m
10	M, 8/24	Rätikon: Klosters to St. Antönien to Carschina Hut	3 - 3.5 hr.	6km	815m	--
11	T, 8/25	Rätikon: Carschina Hut to Schesaplana Hut	4.5 hr.	14km	240m	566m
12	W, 8/26	Rätikon: Schesaplana Hut to Nenzinger Himmel	5 - 6 hr.	12km	451m	989m
13	Th, 8/27	Rätikon: Nenzinger Himmel to Douglass Hut	6 - 7 hr.	9km (+bus/cable car)	658m	978m

14	F, 8/28	Rätikon: Douglass Hut to Tilisuna Hut	6.5 - 7 hr.	13km	1100m	847m
15	Sa., 8/29	Rätikon: Tilisuna Hut to St. Antönien	3.5 - 4 hr.	11km	143m	934m
16	Su., 8/30	Depart for Zurich airport for flights home				

Participants Profile

You should enjoy traveling with a group for extended periods of time and be comfortable traveling in areas which are unfamiliar to you. You should recognize that you may find yourself in closer quarters or be less comfortable than you are used to at home. You should make it a priority to help others on the trip and contribute to their having a great time. If you do that, we guarantee that you will have a great time!

This is a [strenuous](#) hike, suitable for those with recent hiking experience and at least intermediate to advanced hiking skills. While no technical climbing is required, the trail is rated as both rugged and difficult. Participants should be comfortable with trails that have steep drop-offs. There is a possibility of stream crossings. While the pace will be moderate, you should be able to be active up to 5-7 hours per day, with brief breaks, for 13 back-to-back days, with sometimes little shade.

Since breakfast, dinner and lodging are provided, we will be traveling light, with backpacks in the range of 20-25 pounds fully loaded. What you need for the 13 days of trekking, you will need to carry in your backpack. Typical daily treks will include five to seven hours of hike time excluding breaks, with between 6 and 12 miles and an altitude gain between 200-1150m.

Experience & Risks

We will hike between an elevation of 1000m - 2235m (just over 7000'). Weather is likely to be warm and sunny during August, bringing with it the possibility of some precipitation. That said, mountain climate is unpredictable and can range from 35-75 °F that time of year.

When you participate in this activity, you should be prepared both physically and mentally, and equipped with the appropriate gear. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. We are not responsible for your safety—you are.

Nonetheless, it may happen on any trip that a trip member is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of group or individual safety. Illness, injury or lack of proper gear or fitness for a particular activity are examples of some conditions that might result in a participant's being unable to perform one or

more activity. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this may not always be possible.

Prior to your being accepted as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. Please do not be offended by our questions.

Trip Price

Price is \$2,600 per person shared occupancy for AMC members. Non-members can join for \$50, and get the same price.

Deposit of \$1,000 is due with application. A check payable to the Appalachian Mountain Club should be sent to: Stephen Cohen 2802 Arbor Drive #2 Madison, WI 53711. The balance of \$1,600 is due February 1, 2020.

The price will be adjusted in accordance with the best final arrangements we can make and currency fluctuations. Any savings we achieve, as well as any cost increases, will be passed back to you. Our cost estimates are conservative, and so a refund is considerably more likely than a price increase.

To provide the most advantageous trip price, participants are **required** to purchase membership in an European alpine club. This results in lower lodging costs at all the huts at which we stay. The easiest and least expensive way to accomplish this is to join [The Austrian Alpine Club \(UK branch\)](#). Membership is ~\$60 for a calendar year: thus membership should be purchased **after** 1/1/2020. A membership card will be mailed to you. It must be in your physical possession during the trip for the discount to be obtained.

Price includes:

- 14 nights of lodging
- Breakfast and dinner for the entire trip, starting with dinner on the first night through breakfast on the last morning
- Bus transport as a scheduled part of the itinerary on day 10
- Emergency medical & evacuation insurance coverage.

Does not include:

- Airfare. The trip leaders will advise you as much as you need and will facilitate group travel. At this time, we estimate that the cost for a round trip ticket between the US East Coast and Zurich, Switzerland will be in the range of \$1,000 - \$1,500.
- Lunches, beverages, & incidental expenses
- Local transport between arrival airport & beginning of trip

- Local transport between end of trip & departure airport
- Insurance for travel delay, interruption, cancellation, or for baggage loss. If the possibility of such problems concerns you, individual travel insurance is suggested. The AMC has a recommended vendor whose material will be sent to you if your application is accepted.

Registration

We expect a group size of 12 people, including the 2 leaders. This trip is likely to fill quickly. If you are interested, you should apply as soon as possible. When registration is complete, we will send all participants the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all those going on the trip.

To apply, you must download, complete, and submit the [Application Documents](#) which consist of:

- Application
- Confidential medical form
- Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk and Release form
- Supplemental Medical Questionnaire (optional)

You will not be accepted and your check will not be deposited until the leaders have determined by telephone conversation with you, that you and the trip are a good match. Deposit checks from waitlisted applicants will not be cashed until a spot is available, the applicant is accepted onto the trip, and they confirmed their continued interest.

Participant Cancellation Policy

Cancellation will not be allowed when it raises the cost to the other participants or to the leaders.

The minimum cancellation fee is \$200 once the trip has been declared a go. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf, and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant.

Trip Cancellation Policy

In the unlikely event that the trip is cancelled, everything you have paid to AMC for this trip will be refunded in full.

Participants are responsible for their own airline tickets and other external expenses. Most airlines no longer give refunds for cancellations; instead, they issue coupons for a future trip

with an administrative charge and an expiration date. Trip cancellation insurance is advised. Policy information will be supplied to all participants.

Disclosure

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run on a nonprofit basis. Leaders are not compensated except for their travel and administrative costs associated with the trip. A program fee is assessed toward AMC Adventure Travel program and administrative expenses.

Prior to your being accepted as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. Please do not be offended by our questions.

Leaders



Steve Cohen has been an active AMC adventure travel leader since 2012. He has led 19 hiking/ trekking-oriented Adventure Travel trips to such destinations the Haute Route (from Chamonix, France to Zermatt, Switzerland), the Alta Via II through the Italian Dolomites, the tour of the Jungfrau region (Switzerland), Patagonia, the high mountains huts of Austria, etc. He lived in Europe for four years and is fluent in both French and German. Steve is chair of Adventure Travel.



Beth Zimmer is an active AMC hiking leader and instructor with the New Hampshire Chapter. Current Past Chair of the AMC NH Excursions committee, Beth has extensive four-season experience having hiked all 48, four-thousand footers in both three-season and winter, has completed the NH200 (bushwhack list) and most recently she was the 42nd person to complete a redline, which is to hike every trail in the AMC's White Mountain Guidebook. Beth teaches backcountry navigation workshops and she enjoys identifying alpine and woodland flowers. Beth has hiked and backpacked in Central America, Quebec, the UK and Switzerland.

