Trek The Little-Known Silvretta and Rätikon Alps
Straddling the Swiss-Austrian Border

The Region
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 6: 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 are provided a fully loaded backpack will weigh typically 20 -25 pounds. We will hike for 11 consecutive days. A typical day will have a book time 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 are generally mountain huts and family-run hotels, where we are provided both dinner and breakfast.
Daily Itinerary

Day 1 - Saturday, July 11. Depart US for Zurich, Switzerland.

Day 2 - Sunday, July 12

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, July 13

After breakfast at the hostel, we take the day to explore Klosters and do a “shakedown” hike before our trek begins Tuesday.

Day 4 – Tuesday, July 14 - Klosters to Chamanna Tuoi Hut

After breakfast we board the train to Guarda, one of the loveliest Swiss villages, where we begin our counter-clockwise circuit of the Silvretta Alps. We pass by Lac Blau, a lovely azure-colored alpine lake as we make our way towards our 1st 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, -521

Day 5 - Wednesday, July 15 - 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 cross into Austria through pastoral valleys that can be remote, wild and rocky.
Stats: 6.5 hrs, 15km, +1147m, -1232m
Day 6 - Thursday, July 16 - 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 7 - Friday, July 17 - Wiesbadener Hut to Tübingen 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 8 - Saturday, July 18 - Tübingen 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 9 - Sunday, July 19 - 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 10 - Monday, July 20 - 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 hrs, 14 km, +240m, -566m
Day 11 - Tuesday, July 21 - 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 12 - Wednesday, July 22 - Nenzinger Himmel to Douglass Hut (3.4, p123)

Today we 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 enjoy a bus up the 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 13 - Thursday, July 23 - 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 14 - Friday, July 24 - Tilisuna Hut to Klosters

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 take the bus back to Klosters and our home base, Jugendherberge (youth hostel), and enjoy our farewell dinner.

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

Day 15 - Saturday, July 25 - Klosters to Zurich to Home

After breakfast we take the train to Zurich airport for the journey home.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Gain</th>
<th>Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sa., 7/11</td>
<td>Depart US to Switzerland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Su., 7/12</td>
<td>Arrival in Zurich; Train to Klosters; Check-in at hostel; Welcome dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M, 7/13</td>
<td>Layover/sightseeing/ shakedown hike Day Klosters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T, 7/14</td>
<td>Silvretta: Klosters to Chamanna Tuoi Hut 6.5 - 7 hr. 17.4km 134 m 521m</td>
<td>6.5 – 7 hr.</td>
<td>17.4 km</td>
<td>134 m</td>
<td>521 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>W, 7/15</td>
<td>Silvretta: Chamanna Tuoi Hut to Jamtal Hut</td>
<td>6.5 hr.</td>
<td>15km</td>
<td>1147 m</td>
<td>1232 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Th, 7/16</td>
<td>Silvretta: Jamtal Hut to Wiesbadener Hut</td>
<td>5.5 - 6 hr.</td>
<td>9km</td>
<td>1100 m</td>
<td>748 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>F, 7/17</td>
<td>Silvretta: Wiesbadener Hut to Tübinger Hut</td>
<td>6 hr.</td>
<td>15km</td>
<td>600m</td>
<td>837 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sa., 7/18</td>
<td>Silvretta: Tübingen Hut to Klosters</td>
<td>6.5 - 7 hr.</td>
<td>17km</td>
<td>537m</td>
<td>1549 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Su., 7/19</td>
<td>Rätikon: Bus from Klosters to St. Antönien to Carschina Hut</td>
<td>3 - 3.5 hr.</td>
<td>6km</td>
<td>815m</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>M, 7/20</td>
<td>Rätikon: Carschina Hut to Schesaplana Hut</td>
<td>4.5 hr.</td>
<td>14km</td>
<td>240m</td>
<td>566m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>T, 7/21</td>
<td>Rätikon: Schesaplana Hut to Nenzinger Himmel</td>
<td>5 - 6 hr.</td>
<td>12km</td>
<td>451m</td>
<td>989m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>W, 7/22</td>
<td>Rätikon: Nenzinger Himmel to Douglass Hut</td>
<td>6 - 7 hr. (+bus/cab)</td>
<td>9km</td>
<td>658m</td>
<td>978m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Th, 7/23</td>
<td>Rätikon: Douglass Hut to Tilisuna Hut</td>
<td>6.5 - 7 hr.</td>
<td>13km</td>
<td>1100 m</td>
<td>847 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>F, 7/24</td>
<td>Rätikon: Tilisuna Hut to St. Antönien and bus to Klosters.</td>
<td>3.5 - 4 hr.</td>
<td>11km</td>
<td>143m</td>
<td>934 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sa., 7/25</td>
<td>Depart for Zurich airport for flights home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participant 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 6: 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 11 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 July, bringing with it the possibility of some precipitation. That said, mountain climate is unpredictable and can range from 35-75 ºF 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: Sue Lach, 73 Amherst Drive, Manchester, CT 06042. The balance of $1,600 is due January 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 a 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:

- 13 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 days 9 and 14
- Emergency medical & evacuation insurance coverage.

Price 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 minimum group size of 7 and a maximum of 12, including the 2 leaders.

To apply, please fill out the Application Form and follow the instructions.

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.

When registration is complete, we will send all participants the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all those going on the trip.

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.
Questions

If you have questions, please contact Sue or Jeanne at the phone numbers or email addresses below.

Leaders

Sue Lach - Sue is an avid hiker, backpacker and adventure traveler who enjoys sharing her passion for exploring the globe with others! She is a long-time member of the AMC, a past CT Chapter Committee Member and is currently serving as an Adventure Travel Committee Member. Her AMC Adventure Travel journeys include 6 of the 7 continents with the most recent being European hiking in the Italian Dolomites. Personally, she had the opportunity to explore her 7th continent of Antarctica in 2018. She lives in Manchester, CT and also enjoys biking, photography and is an avid runner having completed three New York City Marathons as a member of the Sandy Hook Promise Charity Team and is training for 2019 to raise more money for such an important cause! When she is not traversing the globe, Sue occupies her time as a Certified Pilates Teacher and Certified Running Coach. Sue can be reached at: (860) 712-7216 slach@me.com, 73 Amherst Drive Manchester CT 06042.

Jeanne Blauner - Jeanne has been leading outdoor adventures for over 45 years for AMC and Sierra Club among other organizations. Jeanne is a backcountry leader and past chair AMC Boston Family Outings leading hiking, camping, and winter trips and former Boston Chapter Membership Chair. Jeanne joined AMC Adventure Travel in 2014 and has led trips in the Jungfrau region in Switzerland, Machu Picchu, Morocco, New Zealand, and Fiji and Tonga. In addition, Jeanne has led 40 national and international weeklong Sierra Club trips since 1980 including the Dolomites in Italy, the Dordogne region in France, and the Austrian Alps. Jeanne can be reached at: 978-202-5606; jabloaner@comcast.net, 509 Neck Road Unit 1, Lancaster, MA. 01523.
Packing List

Backpack: We cannot emphasize enough, the attention you need to give for choosing the correct pack and pack weight.

- Size & weight (without water or food) matter. Aim for 32 liters & 5kg (11lb) for comfortable light hike that allows you to run up the mountain. Cannot fit everything in? Try 35 liters & 6kg (13lb), trading some comfort with a third change of clothes. You cannot hike without those extra equipment “just in case”, no matter how much your shoulders ache & feet suffer? Go all out with 38 liters & 7kg (15lb). But remember, “we you told so”.

- Fit matters: get the right fit for your torso. Ever wondered what all these straps are for? Stop by your REI or local outdoor store for proper fitting.

- Packing matters: keep heavy items in the middle to lower part of the pack, close to your back. Light items go on the outer & top layers. But none of this matters, because your whole pack is very light, right?

Required

- Passport. Tourist visa not required for US citizens. For other citizens, check with the French consulate. The passport must be valid for at least six months from the start date of the trip.
- Broken-in waterproof hiking boots
- At least 2-3 set of hiking socks with liners
- Non-cotton shorts (or long pants) and shirt for hiking
- Sleeping bag liner (sleep sack)
- Waterproof wind and rain gear (tops and bottoms)
- Wool sweater, or synthetic pile/fleece jacket
- Long underwear top and bottom
- Hat for warmth, & gloves or mittens
- Polypropylene, Coolmax, Bergelene or other synthetic extra layer clothing
- Sunglasses, Sunscreen
- Hat or bandana for sun protection
- Water shoes / crocs/etc to wear in huts, which do NOT permit the wearing of hiking boots outside of the public areas, to shower and to cross streams
- Headlamp or flashlight with fresh batteries
- Unbreakable bottles or hydration bladder (at least 3 liters total capacity)
- Waterproof pack liner and/or pack cover
- High-energy trail snacks
- Toiletry kit (many huts do not supply soap or shampoo)
- Camp towel (most huts do not supply towels)
- Ear plugs
- Personal first aid kit (leaders will have a group first aid kit)

Optional: The following is a long list of optional items to bring. Use it as a reminder of additional items that can make your trip more comfortable.
- Casual clothing for use in a hut
- Swim suit (for sea and rivers by the huts)
- Gaiters (for rain)
- Hiking poles
- Whistle
- Knife
- Smartphone
- Camera
- Batteries/charger/adapter plug
- Pillowcase