Trekking in Italy’s Magnificent Dolomites
a.k.a. The ‘Dream Way’ Munich–Venice Part II
Trip #2336 September 3-17, 2023

Der Traumpfad (“Dream Way” in German) from Munich to Venice is like a modern day pilgrimage—a long walk to an iconic destination but without the religious overtones. It is one of the most popular trans-alpine treks, but little known outside the German speaking world. Prolific guide book author John Hayes writes that he has “crossed the Alps on foot many other times but this was the best.” The “Dream Way” links two of Europe’s most iconic destinations with a journey across some of the best scenery in the Alps. From the heart of Bavaria, from biergartens, wurst, and lederhosen, to the Adriatic and prosecco, fritto misto and tiramisù—it’s a journey across cultures as well as mountains.

This trek, part II of the “Dream Way”, takes place entirely in the Dolomites, located in the northeast corner of Italy, near the border with Austria. The route partly follows the well-known Alta Via I and Alta Via II routes. This region, chosen as a UNESCO Heritage site, is in the words of John Murray (1840) “unlike any other mountains and are to be seen nowhere else among the Alps. They arrest the attention by the singularity and picturesqueness of their forms, by their sharp peaks or horns, sometimes rising in pinnacles and obelisks, at others extending in serrated ridges teethed like the jaw of an alligator.” These mountains are surrounded sometimes by stark...
moonscapes and at other times by vast expanses of alpine meadows and forests.

The route’s origin has a unique history. Rather than being developed by a national alpine club, it was the invention of just one German man, Ludwig Grassler. The final route plan was set in 1974. Just like Wainwright’s famous ‘coast-to-coast’ walk across England, one man’s vision has resulted in many thousands of hikers following this route each year.

One Journey in Two Parts over Two Years

The entire trail is 569km (335mi) with 30,290m (93,900') of elevation change.

To manage the itinerary within the typically available vacation time of two weeks we split the two into two sections over two years. In 2022 we walked from Munich Germany, through Austria, to Pfunders, Italy. In 2023 we continue through the Dolomites to Venice. We will use public transportation to traverse some of the flatter, less interesting parts of the journey. Participants in Part I will have priority to register for Part II.

We use the reference guide Trekking Munich to Venice by John Hayes.
Trip Itinerary and Description

We will meet in Bressanone, Italy, follow the Dream Way, and finish fourteen days later in San Marco Square, Venice.

Aside from the travel days of arrival and departure, we will hike every day with a typical altitude gain of 738m (2435’) and a distance covered of 12.6km (7.8 miles). We will be outdoors seven to eight hours per day of which five to six hours are hiking and the balance for lunch, taking pictures, & smelling the fresh air. The trip is a true alpine experience containing sections with exposure, use of cables for security, short ladder sections, etc. This trip is aimed at seasoned trekkers and is rated strenuous.

Lodging

We will spend every night in either hotels or mountain huts. Blankets and pillows will be provided. Participants must bring a sleeping bag liner (sleep sack) to use instead of sheets. Accommodations are typically in a bunk room with 4–12 people of mixed gender. Mattresses are
either side-by-side or in two-level bunk beds. Alternatively, we may sometimes have two persons (same sex) per room sharing two adjacent mattresses in a single bed frame.

A scene from the Dolomites in the region that we will traverse

Itinerary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 2 September 2023</td>
<td>Depart USA to Venice (VCE). Alternate options to Munich (MUC) &amp; Innsbruck (INN). Reminder that the return flight will be from Venice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 3 September: Bressanone youth hostel</td>
<td>Arrive at the destination airport. Arrange train transfer to Bressanone station in Italy. Group welcome dinner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 4 September: Kreuzwiesen Almhütte 1,925m</td>
<td>Post office stop to mail extra gear to the final destination. Trekking begins. Steady climb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 5 September</td>
<td>Maurerberghütte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 6 September</td>
<td>Schlüterhütte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 7 September</td>
<td>Puez Hütte</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A scene from the Dolomites in the region that we will traverse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Ascent</th>
<th>Descent</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 8 September: Rifugio Boè 2,873m</td>
<td>6:50 🔄 14km 🆆️ 1,270m 🅿️ 860m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Forcella de Ciampei 2,365m Forcella de Crespiena 2,528m Passo Cir 2,469m Grodner Joch 2,120m Altipiano delle Meisules 2,962m Another amazing day in the Dolomites heading into the heart of the Sella mountains. Climb to the highest point on Traumpfad: Altipiano delle Meisules. Expect crowds in this popular area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 9 September: Rifugio Viel dal Pan 2,436m</td>
<td>4:00 🔄 8km 🆆️ 400m 🅿️ 840m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pordoi Joch 2,239m Descend to Passo Pordoi: lively destination, popular with day trippers, &amp; regularly included in Giro d’Italia bicycle race. Enjoy walking along a grassy ridge facing the northern side of the Marmolada “Queen of the Dolomites”. Some hiking with cables for safety. Viel del Pan (Way of Bread) originally used by flour merchants. Complete traverse of the Sella Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 10 September</td>
<td>Alleghe</td>
<td>Change of pace from Geisler Puez &amp; Sella mountains. Downhill most of the day. Contour walk along the grassy Viel del Pan and then descending to the Lago di Fedaia. More opportunities for pictures of the Marmolada's glacier. Arrive Alleghe tourist town for hiking, skiing, &amp; mountain biking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 11 September</td>
<td>Rifugio Tissi</td>
<td>Climb 1,000m from Alleghe mostly in the trees along ski runs. Open views to Monte Pelmo, the &quot;most beautiful mountain in the Dolomites&quot;. Sunset view at the rifugio with Marmolada &amp; Sella to the west, &amp; changing colors of the west wall. The Civetta to the east is one of Traumpfad's most memorable highlights.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 12 September</td>
<td>Rifugio Bruto</td>
<td>Beautiful cliff walk. Climb a low pass to continue around Torre Venezia (2,337m), a stunning tower &amp; a big attraction for climbers. Cross Forcella del Camp. Descend to our rifugio.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 13 September</td>
<td>Rifugio Pramperet</td>
<td>Head into the heart of the Belluno Dolomites National Park. It is particularly peaceful, empty &amp; very beautiful. Climb Forcella del Moschesin to a meadow full of alpine flowers. Our tiny hut is low on facilities &amp; high on charm.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 14 September</td>
<td>Rifugio Pian de Fontana</td>
<td>Gentle start turns steep to reach Portela del Piazedel. Continue steep climb to reach Forcella de Zità Sud: views from the pass are immense. Harsh north-facing dry limestone landscape is replaced by the lush green world of the Van de Zita de Fora. Looks for herds of chamois. Showers are free in our rifugio &amp; there is no hot water.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 15 September</td>
<td>Belluno</td>
<td>Long descent all day except a brief climb on a pretty exposed path to the Forcella de la Vareta. Continue along forest road cutting across switchbacks. From the main road, catch hourly bus service to Belluno.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 16 September</td>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>Morning train to Venice. Enjoy the sights, take a dip in the Mediterranean, &amp; celebrate with a group farewell dinner.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sunday 17 September: depart

Bus or train to Venice (VCE) airport. Flight to the USA.

Venice, Italy

Terms and Conditions

Please refer to Terms & Conditions regarding the AMC Adventure Travel:

- Cancellation Policy
- Leaders’ Right to Change Itinerary
- Leaders’ Expectations of Participants
- Trip Price
- Travel Documents
- Safety
- Activity Rating System

Price

Cost is US$2,950 per club member shared occupancy. Non-members add US$100. Deposit of US$1,000 is due with application. Balance of US$1,950 is due by 1 March 2023.
A scene from the Dolomites in the region that we will traverse

Includes:
- 14 nights of lodging.
- Breakfast and dinner for the entire trip excluding dinner in Belluno, starting with dinner on Sunday 3 September 2023 through breakfast on Sunday 17 September 2023.
- All transport within the trip including buses, taxis, trains & cable cars.
- Emergency medical & evacuation insurance coverage.

Does not include:
- Airfare. We estimate the cost for a round trip ticket between Boston & Munich about $1,250.
- Lunches, beverages, & incidental expenses.
- Local transport between arrival airport & beginning of the trip.
- Local transport between the end of the trip & the 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. You should apply as soon as possible.

To apply, you must review, complete, and submit the application form which consists of:

- Application
- Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk and Release forms
- Medical Questionnaire

Mail deposit separately to Stephen Cohen 2802 Arbor Drive #2 Madison, WI 53711.

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 wait-listed applicants will not be cashed until a spot is available, the applicant is accepted onto the trip, & they confirm their continued interest.
Leaders

Rami and Steve led the GR5 trek from Geneva, Switzerland to Nice, France in 2016 and 2017

Steve Cohen

Since 2012 Steve has been an active AMC adventure travel leader. He has planned and led twenty-seven 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. His website www.adventuretravelwithsteve.com contains both photographs and itineraries of all past and upcoming trips. He lived in Europe for four years and is fluent in both French and German. Steve is the chair of Adventure Travel. Contact Steve at 617-997-6861 or scohen1234@gmail.com.

Rami Haddad

Rami is an active AMC leader with Adventure Travel, Bicycle, Ski, & Family committees. He traveled throughout the Alps region on several trips for hiking, bicycle touring, sightseeing, &
Ironman Switzerland. He has been on extended trekking & bicycle tours through the Pacific Northwest, Pacific Coast, Rocky Mountains, China, Japan, France, & Germany. Contact Rami at +1-857-288-8571 or mcccxxv@outlook.com.

Photography:

All photos are courtesy of Steve Cohen except for Venice, Italy on page 7 [Kit Suman/Unsplash] and the Schlüterhütte [ courtesy of the Schlüterhütte] on page 10.

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 a 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 told you so”. Do not bother coming on the trip with anything larger & heavier.
- **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 German embassy. The passport must be valid for at least six months from the start date of the trip
- Broken-in waterproof hiking boots
- Two or three sets of hiking socks. Some participants choose to use liners as well.
- Non-cotton hiking clothes (tops & bottoms)
- Sleeping bag liner (sleep sack)
- Waterproof wind and rain gear (tops & bottoms)
- Wool sweater, or synthetic fleece jacket
- Long underwear top and bottom
• Hat for warmth
• Gloves or mittens
• Polypropylene, Coolmax, Bergelene or other synthetic extra layer clothing
• Sunglasses
• Hat or bandanna for sun protection
• Sunscreen
• Sandals/crocs/etc to wear in huts, which do NOT permit the wearing of hiking boots outside of the public areas
• 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 or earbuds (noise-canceling the best) if sensitive to noise at night
• Personal first aid kit (leaders will have a group first aid kit)
• Whistle
• Lip protection balm
• Toilet paper and plastic bags for carrying out the used paper

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
• Gaiters: for rain
• Hiking poles: check-in luggage, not carry on
• Small knife: check-in luggage, not carry on
• Synthetic line, safety pins or clips, and either soap or detergent for in-room laundry
• Zip lock bags
• Reusable plastic container(s) for lunch & snacks
• Reading material: on your phone is best
• Smartphone
• Camera
• Batteries & charger
• Electrical adapter: plug type C same as for most of Europe