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The Dolomites "Alta Via" n.2 from Brixen to Feltre

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The Dolomites “Alta Via” n.2

Or the Way of Legends

According to an idea from Mario Brovelli nel 1966

From Brixen to Feltre



On the cover:
From the Dolomites to the Austrian Alps
On the first page:
Rock climb on the Marmolada
On the back cover:
Old Town of Feltre - Hinterground Burèl

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Preface

The Dolomites “Alta Via” n.2, leads from the Eisack Valley (i.e. from the extreme northwestern edge of the Dolomites where the town of Brixen is situated. Brixen itself is more than one thousand years old and is the place where German and Latin cultures merged) to the ancient town of Feltre. Through the centuries, Feltre became the core of Venetian culture on the border of the alpine mountains. It is precisely here on the green hills near to the River Piave and the Plain of Veneto that the Dolomites “Alta Via” n.2 reaches its end.

The mountain range crossed by the “Alta Via” is one of the most famous in the Dolomites. Some peaks appear soft and inviting while others are dignified, haughty and as sharp as the turrets of old medieval castles. This long route is divided into 13 stages. The Plose, Peiterkofel, Púez, Sella, Marmolada Geisler mountain groups are good examples of the former while the Pale di San and the Alpi Feltrine are typical of the latter, with their arching peaks.

This route offers a variety of different landscapes and geological features. The scenery alternates between mountains made of Dolomite rock such as the Peiterkofel, the Geisler, Sella, Pale and Cimònega to limestone mountains such as the Marmolada. Some regions, like the Plose, Púez, Padon, Bocche and Vette are made of a completely different type of rock and have therefore a completely different appearance, offering a strong and picturesque contrast to the Dolomite mountains.

The path leads through slopes, pastures and forests across rocky terrain. The ice masses may have shrunk significantly in the last couple of years, but the glacier on the Marmolada remains large, becoming a bit smaller on the Fradusta. Although today rare, it is still possible to see hanging glaciers here and there on the San Martino.

It is however, the large plateaus make this route so special and unique. These plateaus lie between 2000m and 2500m above sea level and the Pale di San Martino measures around 50 km. The plateaus of the Sella, Púez, Zingari and the Vette Feltrine are smaller.

The suggested route stays generally at an altitude of 2100m with summits at nearly 3000m and is only moderately difficult. Some of the easier sections of the route are secured with wire cables (stages: two, three, four, five, seven, eight, eleven and twelve), which are fixed to the rock and although some parts are exposed, they are not dangerous. This makes the path one of the easiest sections of the “Alta Via”, as it is well marked and clearly signposted. Hikers should however be aware that some gullies can remain covered in snow until the early summer and that they should therefore exercise caution when negotiating these areas.

Thanks to the numerous places to stop and rest along this “Alta Via” this path can be described as relatively easy. Yet, as one of the most fascinating paths in the western Dolomites, it most certainly represents an enchanting mountain hike.

Along this route, it is possible to see how the different ages have left their mark on the region – walking along the “Alta Via” n. 2 is like hiking through time. One can see fossils, imprints, the remains of animals and plants and many different layers of rock, which together reconstruct the history of living creatures in this country during prehistoric times.

The climate around Brixen is mild and moderate. In the sections between 2000m and 3000m, the meteorological conditions correspond however to typical mountain weather and this applies to the Dolomites as a whole at this altitude. The influence of a humid alternating atmosphere and winds from the plain can be felt on the Pale di San Martino. These are sometime diverted by strong breezes and cause condensation, which are the cause of the fog, and rain, which are frequently affect the Vette Feltrine. In Feltre itself, the climate is better and rather more temperate.

The flora is very diverse and varied depending on the altitude of the path (i.e. between the 325m of Feltre and the 3343m of the Marmolada). In fact, you could say that in just a few days one gains such an insight in to the plant world it is as if one had been on an imaginary trip to Greenland.

The fauna is typical of the Western Alps: deer, chamois, squirrel, marmot, alpine hare, viper, eagle, partridge, black grouse, western capercaillie, common raven, alpine chough, chaffinch and a variety of other animals, large and small, which can be encountered along the way and will brighten the day immensely.

An article from Mario Brovelli was published in the magazine of the Italian Alpine Association CAI “Lo scarpone” on 16th March and 1st September 1966. Brovelli was the first person to suggest the idea of a long and exceptionally interesting route through the Dolomites that connected the towns of Brixen and Feltre. This idea proved to be a huge success and was named the “Alta Via” n. 2 or the Way of Legends which describes the High-Altitude Trail in the Dolomites and distinguishes it from the “Alta Via” n.1.

In the years to follow, Sigi Lechner systematically explored the path, paying particular attention to the sections that were still relatively unfamiliar. Even back in 1967 he was well known within the circle of passionate, German-speaking hikers for his articles and lectures. Together with Mario Brovelli he wrote a small Italian guide that was published by EPT Belluno and later translated into four different languages.

Abroad, primarily in Germany, the Norwegian-Bavarian photographer Olaf Beer contributed to the recognition of the “Alta Via”. On top of that he also described and signposted several new stretches of the path. For this, he received the „Pelmo d’Oro” award given by the province of Belluno.

Ivano Tisot and Luis Pillon from Feltre were the first to complete the entire stretch of the “Alta Via” n. 2 in July 1969. The first woman to achieve this feat was Hildegard Buser from Switzerland who also completed the path in 1969, accompanied by her husband Otto.

But just why is this route known as the “Way of Legends”? The entire path runs through a world full of ancient legends, heathen and Christian histories and through the world of enigmatic creatures that appear dressed only in leaves. In addition, some gentle giants or the mythic Conturina and the nimble Crodères, the sweet daughter of the sun Soreghina, the voluptuous fairies or the witches who esca-

ped from the council of Trent could be met along the way. The fauns with goat's legs and horns, the half-naked, treacherous nymphs, but also some scary monsters and divinities always appeared along the entire way to Dantes with its "Piazza Del Diavolo" (Devil's Square). This square has the appearance of an enormous tomb buried in a rift situated in the heart of the Vette Feltrine's basin. It is said that all sources of evil come together here.

The path indeed deserves its name, the "Way of Legends".

Here, one must point out that some authors have changed the original sequence and pattern of the route. They have adapted it to fit with their personal tastes, sometimes because of their readers or under some circumstances because of tourist requirements. Occasionally they have altered the original Italian route with new variations and, in doing so, have made the "Alta Via" far too long, e.g. 21 days instead of 13 which would suffice. Consequently, some of the walking stages last only one or two hours per day which naturally increases the overall time taken. This may make for more peaceful and relaxing holidays, but the normal path has always been our preferred variant, as it was back in the "good old days". The trail can seem exhausting at times due to its length, and the sudden changes in altitude can put added stresses on the body, however it remains the preferred route.

In putting together this guide we too have had to make several changes and updates compared to the original path description in the guide written by Mario Brovelli and Sigi Lechner, which was edited at the Tamari Publishing in Bologna and published in 1973. In the last few years things have changed, one the one hand relating to the morphology of the trail and on the other regarding the authorities' maintenance plan and methods of securing different sections of the trail.

These changes are not however a negative reflection on the original idea. Indeed, the improvements have been made with the best of intentions to make the conditions better for hiking and to do so in a way that is respectful of Brovelli's work.

A particular problem on this route is the lack of water available,

especially in its central and southern section. Until July, it is still possible to find some supplies of water, however later on in the year it is necessary to take adequate provisions with you.

Finally, it is important to take note of any sudden changes in the weather. Paying attention to the weather will ensure that you will not find yourself confronted by any unpleasant surprises on the way to the vast and desolate rocks of the Pale di San Martino – or even worse, getting lost in the fog at the Vette Feltrine.

One tip: Those who decide to attempt the suggested route must have a decent level of general fitness. Some stages of the route are rather long and, although it would be convenient to carry a small tent in a rucksack, this is rather heavy.

Naturally, the total time for the route increases if you decide to follow some of the following alternative routes suggested here - it all depends on the number of days you have available during your holiday:

- 1) the Adolph-Munkel-Weg (path)
- 2) the crossing of the Marmoladascharte (col)
- 3) the Klettersteig "Ferrata della Tridentina" (fixed-rope route)

In order to satisfy the most diverse of wishes and preferences this guide describes seven additional alternative variations. These offer a wider choice of stages that are occasionally more demanding because of the length of the path.

You can subdivide the Dolomites "Alta Via" n.2 or "Way of Legends", which starts from Brixen in the province of Bozen to Feltre in the province of Belluno, into six sections that correspond to the crossing of these main mountains chains:

- 1) Plose and Peitlerkofel
- 2) Geisler and Púez
- 3) Sella
- 4) Marmolada
- 5) Pale di San Martino
- 6) Alpi Feltrine

The entire route is suitable for every hiker wishing to experience something of the romantic 19th century in the mountains and to enjoy the beauty of nature.

From valley to valley or from hut to hut, you walk through the richest landscape, not only in the Dolomite region but also all along the "Alta Via". Every section is unique, always new, full of dazzling colours and timeless.

The Stages

This long route has been divided into a series of stages. Each of these has a start and end point, which can be a shelter, a bivouac, an alpine hut or simple accommodation. These bases are (with very few exceptions) open from 20th June until 20th September. Shelters and alpine huts (these are both numerous and comfortable in Austria) offer accommodation and meals which may be basic but are nonetheless homely and traditional.

The bivouacs are always opened and unmanned. Inside one can find piece(s) of furniture, divan beds, mattresses and blankets.

During the high season in summer, it is always advisable to book an overnight stay in a mountain hut well in advance, especially in August (see the telephone numbers in the hut descriptions).

If you have to cancel a reservation we would ask you to contact the hut immediately (even if you have already paid) as it's respectful toward the owner and is courteous to other hikers.

The stages have been divided up so that a hiker with an average level of fitness and preparation can complete the stage from the starting point to the finishing point in between 4 and 9 hours. By setting out early enough you allow yourself sufficient time to rest or simply admire the beautiful surroundings along the way.

You can, of course, walk each stage individually, starting from any point you wish, such as a village in the valley. Many of the additional connecting paths can also prove very useful in case of emergency. They are indicated in the bibliography or on the appropriate maps, which contain practical information.

The descriptions of the stages have been kept simple, immediately understandable and easily readable. They do nevertheless contain useful information and numerous important details. We have particularly focused on the inclusion of this interesting information in order to satisfy the needs of all but the most demanding of hikers. Day stages are described in a way that gives the hiker all the information he/she may need for in the course of the day. This allows the hiker to know what he/she will encounter on the path: e.g. additional shelters or bases/staging posts, indication of differences in altitude (ascent and descent), the length of the path in km, the walking time, markings of the paths, level of difficulty (grades), safeguarding condition relating to the routes, signposts. Alongside these technical details, we have also included information about the landscape and panorama, flora and fauna, geology and unusual features.

As with climbing, difficulty grades for walking are displayed on a five-level scale. Please pay attention to the key below to ensure that you do not find yourself in difficulties when walking.

The following difficulty grades correspond to the evaluation scale of the INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAINEERING AND CLIMBING FEDERATION (UIAA):

- T,** Tourist, suitable for all, simple
- E,** hiker
- EE,** Experienced Hiker
- EEA,** Experienced Hiker with mountaineering equipment
- A,** mountaineer

Recommended Walking Time

The best season for walking the suggested trails is undoubtedly summer, from June until September. Walking the trails in summer means that one is likely to encounter favourable weather conditions.

On the Dolomites “Alta Via” n. 2 one can also encounter snow and ice on the ground even in midsummer. This applies particularly on the alternative route No. 5 of the sixth stage, leading in the direction of Marmolada (Punta Penia, summit at 3,343m), and also on the eighth stage on the Passo delle Farangole, (pass at 2,932m) and in the surrounding area.

The hiker should always have climbing aids such as climbing irons, which are normally light and can be carried in a rucksack, and use them as soon as they find themselves on a path covered with snow and ice.

In this case, the use of a pickaxe and a light rope is often necessary to secure less experienced walkers. After all, an accident is a bad experience for every alpinist.

Equipment

Every mountain hiker must pay special attention to his equipment. The market offers endless varieties of products of all different types, colours and technical specifications for every season. In a number of specialised shops experts are on hand to advise the hiker, allowing for a thorough preparation. Nevertheless, here are a few of our own recommendations:

The choice of the right clothing such as **underwear** is very important: Traditional clothing made of wool or cotton has been replaced today by synthetics such as polypropylene, which are often mixed with polyester fibres or other newly developed clothing material. This helps sweat to evaporate and keeps the body dry by managing perspiration. (textile and clothing research is constantly developing and by the time this guide is published new materials will have appeared).

Grandma’s hand-knitted **woollen socks** are a thing of the past. Today, textiles made from synthetic materials are commonly used

and have the advantage of keeping the body warm and being breathable. Many hikers use a pair of very light nylon stockings that offer protection to the skin and support the muscles.

One should pay special attention to the choice of walking shoes. Light walking shoes will suffice in the southern part of the path but on the snow-covered mountains in the north, robust hiking shoes such as alpine hiking boots are more suitable as you can attach crampons to give a better grip on hard-packed snow.

Sunglasses are absolutely essential when on snow-covered areas.

Trousers: today, plus fours (shorts) are only worn in Italy for example by deeply nostalgic people who value customs and traditions, yet in other countries they are far more common. Today, longer trousers are probably better as they are lightweight, flexible, have many pockets, are waterproof and available in different high-visibility colours etc....

Classic, heavyweight wool shirts are also a thing of the past. Today, clothing made of synthetic fibres, such as pile fabric or new functional and smart textiles, are more suitable. They are made of materials that have active breathing properties. **Pile** is an excellent plush type material, which is light and warm and has been used for years in waterproof **sweaters**. Today, the same material is also used for **gloves and caps**.

It is not difficult to select a good ‘windcheater’ type **fleece jacket**. Those made of polyamide are the lightest and are 100% waterproof but also highly breathable. Such garments can be very expensive but, for the less fashion-conscious hiker, good-quality products can be found at good prices in the end of season sales.

Walking poles (sticks) are light and can be extended and adjusted. Walking uphill, the walker can save up to 30% of the energy used without poles. They are imperative for hikers with knee problems because they partly transfer the rucksack’s load to the arms.

However, a few restrictions apply: the sticks should not be used on rocks and ice or on very steep paths and slopes because the hiker can easily lose balance and stumble. Walking poles should not be used either as an aid on hilly terrain or on a steep descent. It is not advisable to carry the telescopic sticks between the straps of the rucksack because the hiker can easily become stuck.

The **rucksack** should not be too large. If it is, it can cause the hiker problems along the route – after all, the rucksack should not hinder the walk. A medium-sized backpack and a small bag are sufficient to carry the most important items:

- **a form of identification**
- **mobile phone** (is very useful and has already helped save the lives of numerous accident victims. Reception conditions do however vary)
- **membership card** of the Alpine Association (to receive a discount at the mountain huts)
- **maps and guides**
- **ball point pen** and maybe a notebook
- **pocket knife**
- **bottle**
- **compass and altimeter**
- **camera**
- **common medicines** such as painkillers, vitamin C supplements, mineral salts, plasters, gauze and bandages, a clinical thermometer etc. as well as all those small items which **contribute to your safety** and that your own experience in the mountains recommends.

The following items should also be included:

- **a change of underwear**
- **stockings or socks**
- **handkerchiefs**
- synthetic **sheet** (sold in many shelters)
- lightweight sleeping-bag for emergencies (ones weighing about 200g can be found for a reasonable price in shops)
- protection against the rain (raincoats tend to be used less nowa-

days, rather a small **umbrella** which, however, must be robust enough to resist strong gusts of wind),

- comfortable **shoes** to wear in the mountain hut
- waterproof mountain cap made of cotton (if possible choose a legionnaire-style cap made from UV-rated polycotton which offers UV-protection and covers the ears and neck).
- in some cases it is also advisable to take a light **rope** about 20m long and a few **carabiners**.

On the **fixed rope route**, **helmet**, **carabiners** and a **climbing harness** are compulsory and the hiker should always have them in his rucksack. Ice-climbing crampons should always be included. Light mountaineering crampons or crampon points that help over difficult terrain can be found in shops.

For the Dolomites “Alta Via” n. 2, the hiker does not require a rope, but it can be an advantage when one must overcome several significant obstacles such as rocky terrain or snowfields or simply when someone in difficulty needs help. If one is in a group of hikers, everyone can take turns carrying the rope.

Lovers of the alpine mountains can experience the beauty of the mountains by spending a memorable night in a **tent**, wrapped up in a warm **sleeping bag**, sometimes cradled to sleep by the gentle sound of the raindrops falling on the tent.

Important: always remember to take sufficient water provisions and a daily food ration, which can be bought in the huts.

Markings

Along all the routes, the hiker can find three types of signs at all the main points:

- a) a red triangle with the number of the “Alta Via”; although this sign is less common than the following;
- b) a marking consisting of red-white-red horizontal stripes with a number written on the white stripe. Occasionally, you can find a red or white-red marking;

c) a small wooden stake indicator (but also some older ones made of metal).

The markings on the routes along the alpine hiking way in the regions of Veneto and Trentino (South Tyrol) are regularly checked, area by area. Path checks are also carried out in Austria. Where the triangles and other markings are destroyed, missing (unfortunately sometimes due to vandalism) or completely illegible you should refer to this guide.

Experienced hikers will have no difficulty in finding their bearings if they have bought a proper map (available locally) or have a good guide with them. It is always recommended to speak with the owner of the mountain hut who will give you tips about the path and any steep sections that you may be likely to encounter.

Safety Precautions

Since these paths can be very challenging in parts, at times **reaching an altitude of 3,000 m**, it is essential that the hiker has a certain **degree of experience** behind him coupled with good quality equipment and a well stocked first aid kit. Trekkers should be in good physical condition and have a good head for heights in order to overcome the many potential difficulties.

The possible dangers in the mountains are often underestimated. For example, an unforeseen change in the weather, a sudden thunderstorm, a premature snowfall, icy patches or an unusually strong current in a stream can turn a walk on even the most well marked of paths from a pleasant day out into an extremely unpleasant, potentially life-threatening experience. All of these meteorological conditions can have a negative effect on even the most pleasant of footpaths. In such situations, the ability to exercise a high level of self-control is indispensable.

An essential prerequisite for going hiking that also allows the hiker to relax whilst walking the "Alta Via n. 2" is, of course, good weather conditions! It is therefore necessary to stay informed about the weather conditions by consulting the local meteorological office.

Should you be unlucky enough to have an accident despite fol-

lowing all of these preventative measures and the using the recommended equipment (slide, break - fracture, injuries after falling rocks or lightning, stroke, nausea - sickness, and fits of dizziness) it is essential that you remain calm. Keep a clear head (this will give yourself and others around you some added protection) and – wherever possible - follow the instructions outlined in each of the following chapters.

The C.N.S.A.S. (Corpo Nazionale del Soccorso Alpino e Speleologico) is a division of the Club Alpino Italiano which can be reached round the clock by dialling 118) work in remote or inaccessible areas. This includes not only classic rock faces or fixed rope route climbing, but also operations on névé, glaciers, and ice cascades or during an avalanche. Some rescues are made on ascent and descent and in caverns, canyons, gullies, ravines with fast-flowing streams, gorges and other terrains (hills, forests etc.) or simply on ski slopes. Some operations are only carried out by specialists due to the specific nature of the environment and the meteorological conditions or because of the difficulty in accessing the terrain where technical operations and a specialist knowledge of first aid in alpine areas or in potholing is required.

All refuges and mountain huts along the Alta Via n. 2 are equipped with public telephones. The owners of these huts are able to establish a fast and efficient connection with the rescue team.

■ International Safety Principles in the Mountains

- Any dangerous activity carried out in, around the mountains is not without risk (e.g. mountaineering, hiking, rock climbing and potholing, skiing, mountain-biking, hunting, collecting mushrooms, hang-gliding, paragliding etc.), and should never be underestimated. Rapid changes in the weather, the difficulty level and length of the path etc. must always be taken in to account.
- According to the type of activity undertaken, the participant should be in a corresponding physical and emotional condition. The necessity of adequate preparation cannot be stressed enough.

- Stages that require too much effort or exceed your capabilities should be avoided.
- The hiker should never go alone; it is always better to be accompanied by or at the very least be advised by members of the appropriate association.
- The participant should be well informed about the risks and difficulties which can be encountered en route and the main characteristics of the area before setting off. It is recommended that one gathers as much useful information as possible about the path from maps and guidebooks.
- Before setting off it is vital to leave details of your exact destination and planned route. It is a good idea to tell someone and leave written details at your mountain hut.
- The local weather forecasts must be taken into account.
- Suitable footwear and appropriate clothing are very important. Generally avoid trainers and shoes with a smooth sole. Additional warm clothing such as a wind and waterproof jacket and a spare change of underwear should always be included.
- A head torch is a useful piece of equipment, as well as high-energy food (easily digestible) and drinks (water is still best but some energy drinks can also be good).
- A first aid kit is part your basic equipment.

■ **Basic Safety Rules if an Accident Occurs**

- Stay calm; the situation has to be analysed as clearly and calmly as possible.
- The overall conditions (in the surrounding area) and particularly the accident itself have to be evaluated, taking into consideration any further possible sources of danger.
- Immediately take all necessary measures to avoid any further danger.
- **Call S.U.E.M. 118 for help immediately.**

Essential Information for a Telephone Call to the 118

- Give exact details of the injured person (full name, place of residence) and the telephone number from where you are calling.
- Give exact information about the accident scene and a detailed description of the surroundings, which will make it easier to find the injured person.
- Give a general description of the circumstances of the accident and information about the time of the accident.
- Indicate the number of injured and details of their condition.
- Indicate what the weather conditions are like at the accident scene - especially the visibility.
- Give details about any possible obstacles in the area that could impede a rescue attempt - especially electric cables, power lines, lifts, all ascent/descent facilities, overhead cable railway and other hard, taught cables that can pose a danger.
- Give any further information that could be of use to the rescue services.
- Give precise details about the accident scene especially the area where the injured persons are - mountain range, slope, path, fixed rope route, gully, rocky face, crest, gorge etc.
- Give information about any other people around who are able to help (mountain guide member of the C.N.S.A.S. and others).

■ **Search for a Missing Person**

- Indicate the time of disappearance
- Give descriptions of any possible means of transport (e.g. car, licence number, model, colour, and other unusual features).
- Give as much information about the possible destination, probable itinerary, planned activity (climb, hiking etc.)
- Clarify the number of missing and give information about the mountaineering experience of the guides.
- Give details of all clothing including colour as well as information about the equipment and food carried.

- Give information about their emotional and physical condition and possible social, family and personal problems.
- Indicate if another rescue service has been already called
- Give all other details in connection with the missing person, for example the area etc. In short, everything that could be seen as important.

Avalanche Victim Search



- Give all information as specified above.
- Give all possible information about the number of the people buried beneath the avalanche.
- Indicate the name or the particular type of avalanche safety equipment available.
- Indicate possible witnesses to the avalanche who may be able to make an exact analysis of the situation:
 - whether the first basic procedure for missing person has already been carried out (hearing search, visual search, search with an avalanche transceiver);
 - general description of the avalanche (size of the slide and characteristics e.g.: speed of the avalanche, description of the snow, powder snow etc.) as well as the exact point where the person was buried under the avalanche or disappeared (right, left, high up, further down the slope etc.);
 - objects which have been found and exact details of the locations;
 - all other information that could be useful for a successful rescue operation.

■ International Distress Signal for Mountain Rescue Service

Every mountaineer should be familiar with the international distress signal - often it is the only signal that can be used in the mountains. It consists of visual and acoustic warning-signals six (6) times per minute (every 10 seconds) repeated at one (1) minute intervals. After a break of a minute, the same signal is continually repeated until an answer is given. The rescue team answers in turn with an acoustic or visual signal, three (3) times per minute (every 20 seconds).

The term 'acoustic signals' is to be understood in the broadest sense of the word, including cries, whistles or other audible noises. Visual signals include waving a cloth or a garment, signals with a mirror etc. At night you can signal using a torch or, if possible, a fire (be careful with fire particularly if you are in a wooded area).

Due to the increased use of helicopters in mountain rescue operations in recent years, new distress signals have had to be developed. Coloured sleeping bags and garments, smoke signals or signs in the snow can be interpreted and make it easier to be identified from the air. The distress signal SOS can be made in the snow, drawing attention to where help is needed. Write 'SOS' in 2m high letters using footprints in the snow or by laying stones on the ground, using another colour as a background. In order to be seen by the helicopter, you must give the following signals using lights at night or with the arms during the day:

| | | |
|--|--|--|
|  | Lift and spread out both arms Green light | -Yes, to the pilot's questions. -Land here -Help is needed |
|  | Lift and spread out left arm Right arm pointing down Red light | -No, to the pilot's questions. -Don't land here. -No help needed |

Set up a LANDING SITE: stay at the edge of the helicopter landing area, raise and stretch your arms. For the landing site an area of 20 x 20m is required with a surface free from rocks and debris.

BEWARE! Do not move away before the propellers of the helicopter have stopped rotating. You are an important point of reference during the landing for the pilot.

All objects used to help guide the pilot when landing must be weighed down with stones or something heavy because of the strong downwind caused by the rotary arm of the helicopter!

Nature Conservation

Walking is one of the healthiest most pleasant outdoor activities. Hikers must however be acutely aware of their actions and the possible negative effects they could have on nature and the landscape. In the high mountains, the humus layer is thin and the vegetation is very vulnerable and can easily be trampled down when walked upon. It only takes 3,000 people per year to cross an Alpine pasture before the area begins to show signs of wear.

Hikers must try to stick to the path and avoid shortcuts in order to reduce the consequences of eluviation (the washing out or removal of soil substance from the earth) and the erosion of fertile top soils. In addition, one should not leave the paths as this may lead to alpine fauna being disturbed, particularly if one crosses protected areas or biotopes. Do not drop litter. Picking mushrooms, berries and flowers is forbidden and fossils must be left in the Alps for the benefit of future visitors. Fires may only be lit with special care and in suitable places

“Alta Via Badge”

Hikers who have completed the “Alta Via” in Feltre receive a special badge with the logo of the Alta Via No. 2.

To receive this badge hikers have to collect stamps from all the mountain huts situated on the “Alta Via”. These must then be sent to the **Italian Tourist Information Office “IAT”** (Informazioni e Assistenza Turistica) in **Feltre** (situated on the square: Piazza Trento e Trieste). (The stamps can also be collected on the relevant pages of this guide.)

If you collect this badge you can write your name in the hikers’ guest book of the “Alta Via No. 2”, adding your impressions and any comments you may wish to.

The Church of S. Andrea near the cablecar to the Plose



Technical details

Itinerary

| | |
|---|--|
| Departure point: | Brixen |
| Destination: | Feltre |
| Hiking days: | 13 (without the alternative routes) |
| Length of the path: | 180 km (210 from town to town) |
| Length of the path: | 80 km as the crow flies |
| Refuge-mountain huts on the main way: | 14 |
| Other overnight accommodation and inns on the main route: | around 15 |
| Bivouacs on the main way: | 2 |
| Longest stage: | the eleventh, 9 hours, from the Bivouac in Feltre to Dal Piaz mountain hut |
| Shortest stage: | the ninth, 4.30 hours, from the Treviso mountain hut to Ceréda pass |
| Hiking time (alternative routes excepted): | approx. 80 hours from Brixen to Feltre |
| Grade: | E, EE (EEA on several sections and alternative routes) |
| Total ascent: | approx. 11,300m from Brixen |
| Total descent: | approx. 11,200m to Feltre |
| Maximum ascent: | 1,150m, sixth stage, from S. Pellegrino to Mulàz (1,890m from Brixen to the Plose; depending on the choice of the itinerary) |
| Maximum descent: | 1,550m, eighth stage, from Rosetta to the Treviso mountain hut (1,680m the last day from the Dal Piaz mountain hut to Feltre) |
| Highest point: | Faràngole pass, 2,932m |
| Lowest point: | Feltre, 324m |
| Mountain chains covered: | 8 (Plose, Peitlerkofel, Geisler, Pùez, Sella, Marmolada, Pale di San Martino, Vette Feltrine) |
| Opening times of the mountain huts: | approx. from 20th June until 20th September |
| Marking: | good all-round |

Recommended Topographic Maps (in the order of use) - Map Tabacco 1:25.000,

- n. **030** "Bressanone/Brixen-Val di Funes/Vilnöss" *From Brixen to Pùez mountain hut*
- n. **07** "Alta Badia-Arabba-Marmolada" *from Passo Rodella to Malga Ciapèla*
- n. **015** "Marmolada-Pelmo-Civetta-Moiazza" *from Passo Pordoi to Passo San Pellegrino*
- n. **06** "Val di Fassa e Dolomiti Fassane" *from Malga Ciapèla to Passo Vallès*
- n. **022** "Pale di San Martino" *from Passo Vallès to Rifugio Bruno Boz and Le Vette*
- n. **023** "Alpi Feltrine-Le Vette-Cimónega" *from Rifugio Bruno Boz to Feltre*

Description of the walks

First Stage

■ From Brixen to Plose mountain hut

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Altitude difference: | ascent 1,900m from Brixen, 435m from Kreuz valley, 150m from the cable car |
| Length of the path: | around 27 km from Brixen |
| Hiking time: | 6.30 hours from Brixen; 1.30 hours from Kreuz valley |
| Paths: | Nos. 4-5 and 17, or along the road from Brixen; no. 7 from Kreuz valley |
| Grade: | E |

You can reach the Plose mountain hut at 2,446m (Afers-Palmschoss area) by taking any of the following routes:

- a) shortly after St. Andrä (961m) south-east of Brixen (560m) take the cable car that brings you up to an altitude of 2,060m. Near the Kreuz valley (2,012m) there are inns and overnight accommodation available. In the Kreuz valley, you will find a chairlift (be aware that this runs according to a special timetable during the summer months) that reaches an altitude of 2,300m. Follow Path No. 7 and continue on foot along to the Plose mountain hut.
- b) Kreuz valley is situated approx. 25 km from Brixen. You can walk along the asphalted road, however this can prove quite uninteresting.
- c) Using public transport (bus).
- d) By foot: walk along Path No. 7-8 from Milland to Schmied-Felser. When you come to the junction continue along Path No. 4-5 until you reach the cable car station. From here, continue on Path No. 17 to Kreuz valley and Plose.

The Plose mountain hut (2,246m) belongs to the Brixner Division of the Italian Alpine Club. It was built in 1887 and renovated in 1985. The hut, situated on the south crest of the Plose summit, is a massive building with two



Geisler mountain range

floors, a panoramic terrace, from where you can enjoy an incredible 360-degree view. The mountain hut is open all year round and offers lodgings: 60 beds, showers, warm water, electricity and a base of the “118” mountain rescue service. Pre-booking is recommended: Tel. +39 0472 521333 (mountain hut), Fax. +39 0472 521236. (plosehuette@dnet.it, www.berghotel-schlemmer.com).

Second Stage

■ From the Plose mountain hut to the Schlüter mountain hut

Altitude difference: 500 m ascendent; 650 m descendent

Length of the path: approx. 15 Km

Hiking time: 5 hours

Path: 4

Grade: E, with short but secured part

From the Plose mountain hut, with its wonderful panorama, choose the path leading eastwards (markings 3-4-6-7) that offers a beautiful view on the Peitlerkofel and the Aferer Geisler. On the crest, continue along the path towards the southeast and follow marking

No. 4 (paths Nos. 3,6 and 7 lead along the same route here) which, after crossing a ski slope, leads to the Lüsner Scharte, (col at 2,371m) and meets the path leading to the Pfannspitz mountain hut.

After a short descent, you come to path No. 6 at an altitude of 2,310m that leads to the Parkhotel Plose (1,900m) on the old route of the “Alta Via” n. 2. At the junction, choose path No. 4 and continue towards the east, despite the fact that the path is poorly marked. Finally, head south through some alpine pastures and a Norway spruce forest where some sections of the route are secured, making it easy to overcome this potential hurdle with the minimum of fuss.

At the same altitude as the Kerer Kreuzl, around 2,000m, you meet the road, which leads to the Kreuz valley, the Schätzen mountain hut, the Parkhotel Plose and the Ski chalet (see alternative route 1).

Follow the road for around 1 km towards the east and then turn right near the Enzian hut at 1,963m (southeast) and continue along path No. 4. After a rather steep section through the forest, follow the almost flat meadows, which bring you along the path leading to Kofeljoch (Halsl) 1,878m after 2 hours walking from either the Plose mountain hut or from the Kreuz valley (see alternative route 1).

The pass divides the Plose from the Peitlerkofel chain of mountains. Rest places available on this route are the Rodelalm inn and also the nearby Halsl and Edelweiss mountain huts.

Go along the road towards the east for approx. 2 km. After a bend, turn right (south) on to path No. 4, which crosses a flat part of a wood and reaches a brook at an altitude of 1,860m.

The Peitlerscharte (col) can be seen in the background and appears as a massive entrance to the wonderful world of the Dolomites. In order to reach it, you have to overcome an altitude difference of 500m. The path initially leads gently uphill and continues steeply uphill over several hairpin bends that lead along a rocky gully (snow until mid-summer) until you reach the Peitlerscharte at an altitude of 2,357m.

From the col, follow path No. 4 (towards the southwest) taking in the wonderful views until coming to the Kreuzkofeljoch (pass at 2,340). From here, walk down towards the west in the direction of the nearby Schlüter mountain hut.

5 hours from the Plose mountain hut

The Schlüter mountain hut, located on the territory of the municipality Villnöss, belongs to the Brixner Division of the Italian Alpine Club. It was built in 1898 and renovated in 2000. This compact but nevertheless elegant building made of wood and stones has four floors with 82 beds and a power unit and solar panels provide electricity and warm water for showers. Open from 1st July until the 2nd Sunday in October; refuge in winter with 12 places in dormitory. Station of the "118" mountain rescue service. For pre-booking: Tel. +39 0472 840132 (hut), Fax. +39 0472 842642 (info@schlueterhuetten.com).

Alternative Route 1

■ From Kreuz valley to the Schlüter mountain hut

The main inspirations for most walkers who climb up to the Plose mountain are the stunning panoramic views that reward the hiker upon his arrival at the summit. If it is foggy or should the chairlift not be operating for any reason you can choose any of the following easier alternatives that require the same amount of walking time.



View of Peitlerkofel

From Kreuz valley and the cable car station (2,050m) there is an easy walk downwards to a small church. Walk along the path, (towards the east), which leads to the pension Geisler (B&B). After a short ascent, you reach a junction at 2,029m. Follow the path to the right, which leads with path No. 17 towards the east. You are now on the Dolomites Panorama Route. The path meets another junction at 2,080m. Stay on the right (east) and follow path No. 17 which, although not that well marked, is nevertheless clearly recognizable. It leads downhill on the Premstallhang (inclination) to a ski slope and then to the Parkhotel Plose, 1,900m.

From here, follow path No. 8, first towards the east, then straight on in a southerly direction, then again towards the east until you reach the junction at Kerer Kreuzl.

From the Kerer to the Schlüter mountain hut, follow the main path described above.

5 hours from Kreuz valley

Third Stage

■ From the Schlüter mountain hut to Púez mountain hut

Altitude difference: ascent 850m; descent 670m

Length of the path: approx. 15 km

Hiking time: 6 hours

Paths: Nos. 3 and 2

Grade: EE, with partly secured terrain

From the Schlüter mountain hut (2,297m) continue along path No. 3. The path leads first towards the east and then bends towards the south on the eastern slope of the Bronsoi continue. The path offers a wonderful view of the Geisler and Peitlerkofel summits.

The geology and flora of this area are fascinating.

Level with the Juac (2,421m) the path finally turns southwest over the Munt de Medalges in the nature park Púez-Geisler and reaches the Kreuzjoch (known as the “Fürcia de Medalges” in the local ‘Ladis’ dialect) at 2,293m. Path No. 3 initially leads towards the southwest, then south and finally in an easterly direction to the Campillerturms and the Wasserkofele (“Sass da l’Ega”). Hike along the crest of Longiarù and, after climbing a steep slope, walk further upwards to a junction at 2,389m.

Path No. 13 splits off to the west, crosses the Wasserscharte (Fürcia Mont da l’Ega) and leads further on to the Regensburg mountain hut. Continue along path No. 3 (towards the south) until you reach a gully with boulders. Above this gully the path leads steeply uphill until you reach the Roascharte, (“Fürcia dla Roa”) (col at 2,617m). This mountain saddle is very important because it separates the “Geisler” mountain group in the west from the “Peitler” group. One must be particularly careful at the start of the season as it is still possible to find frozen snow in the gully and therefore a pickaxe and crampons could prove very useful.



From here, there is an interesting detour for experienced mountain hikers, which is described in alternative route 3.

Those who prefer to stay on the initial route should walk downwards (south) until you reach a junction at around 2,500m, next to a large crater with some sizeable boulders. Leave path No. 3 here that leads right down (direction southwest) and connects with path No. 2, which comes from the Regensburg hut. One continues on almost level ground towards the south and then downhill until you meet path No. 2 which leads (towards the east) along the serpentine to the Siellescharte (Fòrces de Siëles), col at 2,505m.

After crossing the col, you reach sparse alpine pastures at the foot of crumbling rocks. In the distance (looking east) the Sassonghèr is visible.

From here, the path suddenly bends in a northeasterly direction and becomes narrower and rockier. The path is, however, not difficult to nego-

tiate since it is held in place by fixed wire-cables. Later, after an almost flat section, the path turns towards the east and crosses a green area on the Püezalpe (“Munt de Püez”) and after a second serpentine, turns again towards the east in order to reach Püez mountain hut, 2,475m.

6 hours from the Schlüter mountain hut.

The Püez mountain hut lies in a large remote green crater with bright rocks, which look like small islands. These make the landscape appear wild and mysterious. This area is geologically extremely rich.

The mountain hut belongs to the Bozen Division of the Italian Alpine Club. It was built in 1889 and renovated in 1986. It offers 94 beds; a power unit provides electricity and hot water, shower and meals are also available. Open from 1st July until 30th September. Refuge in winter with 20 dormitory places. Station of the CNSAS “118” mountain rescue service. Tel. +39 0471 795365 (mountain hut).

Alternative Route 2

■ From the Schlüter mountain hut to Puèz mountain hut via the Geisler way delle Odle

The alternative route described here is easier and simpler to follow than the previously described route and therefore suitable for less experienced hiker or for walkers, who do not want to undertake an exhausting trip. It does however take around 9 hours, a whole dais walking, and this must be taken into account when planning your holiday. The reasons for choosing this route are numerous: the particular beauty of the trail, its large panorama or simply because the gully of the Roascharte is too difficult to cross due to the frozen snow and ice.

From the Schlüter mountain hut, follow path No. 35 towards the west (or south on the cart path which is longer) then climb upwards (towards the southwest) to Gampenalm at 2,062m. From here, follow the forest road and the marking No. 35 (always heading southwest). You are now on the famous “Geisler Weg”, which is also known as “Adolf Munkel Weg” after its creator.

The path continues gently up and down and leads to the foot of the



Roascharte (col)

north face along the Geisler peaks, partially through woods, partially over alpine pastures and brings you to the Brogles alpine hut at 2,045m. From here one can admire the stunning panoramic views.

Approx. **3 hours** from the Schlüter mountain hut.

The Brogles alpine hut is a private property situated on a charming dip in the land with a view of the Geisler peaks. The building has two floors and offers running water inside the hut. It has 37 beds and is open from 20th June until the beginning of October. Refuge in winter with 4 dormitory places; Tel. +39 0471 655642.

A short walk is recommended for hikers with a particular interest in geology. Hike up to the Broglescharte (col at 2,119m) for about 10 to 15 minutes - here the north face of the Secèda offers an insight into the Dolomites’ structure.

From Brogles, head south along path No. 6 and, staying on this trail, climb over a rock secured with ropes. At the junction, climb up the gully through the rocks to the Panascharte (col at 2,450m). Your gaze will be drawn to the green area on the Ncisles on the Sella range and on the Langkofel (Sasslonch).

From the Panascharte take path No. 2b (towards the south) and then, after a few minutes, cross onto path no. 1 that leads downhill



(southeast) to the Regensburg hut at 2,037m.

3 hours from the Brogles alpine hut

6 hours from Schlüter mountain hut

The Regensburger mountain hut, situated on the Cisles alp, belongs to the Florence Division of the Italian Alpine Club. It was built in 1888 and renovated in 1966. The beautiful building is constructed with stones and is open from Christmas until Epiphany, from 15th February until 30th March and from 1st June until 30th September. The hut offers 113 beds and has a service restaurant. A power unit provides electricity and hot water and shower and toilet facilities are also available. Station of "118" mountain rescue service; Tel. +39 0471 796307 (mountain hut)

From the Regensburg hut, go towards the northeast and walk along a path between grass and rocks with the markings 2 and 3. At 2,140m altitude the path turns towards the southeast. Leave path No. 3 which heads left at the junction at 2,255m (NE). This path continues upwards on the Riascharte (Furcia dla Roa) and the hiker can decide to continue on if he/she wishes, although this naturally increases the length of the route.

Stay on path No. 2 and climb up (towards the southeast) from the hollow Forces de Sielës to the col of Forces de Sielës at 2,505m. Head briefly west and meet the classic way that comes from the north,

from the Fùrcia dla Róa. This leads down to the Püez mountain hut, 2,475m. (see last part of the third stage)

3 hours from the Regensburger mountain hut

9 hours from the Schlüter mountain hut.

Alternative Route 3

■ From Fùrcia dla Róa on secured walking and climbing trails

The mountain guide Pietro Costa discovered this magnificent walk, which is only recommended for experienced mountaineers and climbers. By walking this trail, you can reduce the scheduled time by approx one and a half hours.

From the Furcia dla Róa, cross towards the southwest (the usual route leads south) and follow the path No. 2c on the slope under the rocks. After that, climb up the scree on the left and reach the gully, which often contains snow. Follow the well-secured trail until you reach the Forcella Nives (col at 2,740m). From here, there is an absolutely marvellous view.

From the col, walk along path No. 2c (towards the southeast) until the junction at 2,442m and come further on the main path No. 2.

Over Munt de Püez (Püez Kofel) descend to the Püez mountain hut.

4 hours from the Schlüter mountain hut.

Fourth Stage

■ From the Püez mountain hut to the Franco Cavazza mountain hut on the Pisciadù

Altitude difference: ascent 570m; descent 460m

Length of the path: approx. 10 km

Hiking time: 5 hours

Paths: Nos. 2 and 666

Grade: EE, with partly secured terrain

From the Püez mountain hut at 2,475m, the path has a triple marking: 2, 4 and 15.

Path No. 15 soon diverts in the direction of La Villa in Abtei and path No. 4 leads down from the Ciampeischarte to Kolfuschg. Path No. 2 leads further to the Grödner pass.

Follow the well-marked path along flat ground (towards the southeast). This brings you on the Püez plateau with its unique lunar-like landscape. In bad weather conditions such as fog you must be very careful not to lose sight of the markings.

Far away in the distance, you see the stronghold of Civetta.

Passing the junction at 2,104m, where path No. 15 descends (towards the east) walk towards the south and where, after a descent through a gully, you reach the Ciampëischarte (also called Somafürcja), (col at 2,366 m).

From here, path No. 2 continues southwest to Grödner pass.

From the col, the path goes gently uphill until it flattens out and runs through the hollow where you find the Crespeina Lake (Ladin: "Lech de Crespëina"). From here, a steep ascent leads you to the Crespëina pass at 2,528m.

From the pass, descend steeply for approx. 100 m and then continue at the same height before finally climbing up through rocks to the Cirjoch ("Dantes les Pizes") at 2,469m.

From here, the path becomes easier as it weaves up and down over small passes, loose boulders, small peaks, and alpine meadows to the Dolomite saddle of the Grödner pass at 2,121m. There are several inns here, which are open all year around, but tend to be fully booked in summer.

3 hours from the Püez mountain hut.

It is advisable to leave Grödner pass, which is teeming with noisy traffic, and continue on to the peaceful oasis of the Pisciadù mountain hut.

From the pass, follow the large and well-marked path No. 666 (towards the southeast). Climb over a grassy slope, turn at the foot of the rocks and hike briefly downhill before turning left towards the east. The path branches off to the Tridentina- Klettersteig (fixed rope route) (see alternative route no. 4.).

Climb further along path No. 666, winding your way around numerous hairpin bends through a narrow rocky valley, which eventually widens. Turn left here and walk through rubble and slabs of stone. It is still possible to find some snow on the ground (section secured with wire-cable). You then reach a large stony terrace where you must turn towards the southeast. After a quick descent across scree you reach the Pisciadù mountain hut at 2,585m.

5 hours from the Püez mountain hut

The Pisciadù mountain hut (Ladin: "Ütia Pisciadù", Italian: "Franco Cavazza" al Pisciadù) belongs to the Bologna Division of the CAI – Italian Alpine Club, and was opened in 1924 and renovated in 1985. The hut is situated in wonderful position with fantastic panoramic views into the valley of Pisciadù, near a small lake. The sturdy, elegant building has three floors and is open from 1st July until 15th September. It offers 106 beds, electricity supply, toilets inside and out, hot water and showers. A base of the "118" mountain rescue service, refuge in winter with 6 dormitory places. Tel. +39 0471 836292 (mountain hut).

Alternative Route 4

■ From Grödner pass to Pisciadù mountain hut via the Tridentina-Klettersteig (fixed rope route)

This challenging, highly interesting and varied alternative route is suitable for surefooted hikers with mountaineering experience and a solid basic knowledge of climbing. It should only be attempted by experienced mountaineers with good equipment or in the company of a mountain guide. You should not carry any heavy rucksacks and check the weather forecast to ensure conditions are favourable before setting off. This tour should only be undertaken if there are relatively few climbers already on the route (a fairly common occurrence).

From the Grödner pass, follow path No. 666 downwards (or towards

ds the east from the pass at 1,956m, going along main road No. 243 at the car park) and then follow the signposts to the fixed rope route. After hiking round the Torre Brunico, climb up to the waterfall .The Klettersteig-Tridentina runs right along the waterfall and is secured by wire-cables and some rungs. The route is varied, exposed but secure and leads to a grassy area at approx. 2,300m. If you wish to avoid the following section, you can walk to the Pisciadù hut via a footpath. If you wish to continue the rock climb, you must now tackle the most difficult section, which means climbing along a long exposed ladder followed by a small hanging bridge between walls over a deep ravine. Once you have accomplished this, you can then enjoy the plateau of the peak. It is not recommended to return the same way; instead, head south along a path that leads comfortably to the Pisciadù mountain hut.

Approx. **3 hours**

Fifth stage

■ From the Pisciadù mountain hut to Castiglioni mountain hut on the Marmolada

Altitude difference: ascent 750m; descent 1280m

Length of the path: approx. 19 km

Hiking time: 6.30-7 hours

Paths: Nos. 666, 647, 627, 601

Grade: EE, with partly secured sections

This stage is rather long but fascinating and rewarding because of the spectacular panoramic views. It is possible, according to personal preference, to avoid staying overnight at the heavily frequented Pordoi pass.

From the Pisciadù hut, choose path No. 666 that goes towards the south, on the eastern bank of the beautiful lake and walk along the western slope of the Cima Pisciadù.

Above the Val de Tita (Tita valley), there are two different possibilities for continuing the walk: over rocks or along a section secured with wire-cables. The latter is certainly the safer of the two options. The path goes further over a scree and occasionally over snowfields

before reaching a saddle where the path heads southwards then towards the west and, after climb, reaches the featureless high plateau of the Sella. When it is foggy, you must be especially vigilant in following the markings. The path now continues towards the south and crosses the high plateau (here path 649 diverges towards the west to the Sellajoch) and then finally heads down to the Zwischenkofelscharte (Ladin: "Antersass") (col at 2,861m). Path 666 ends here and rejoins with footpath No. 647 coming up from Pian de Scivananèis.

Walk further along path No. 647, (towards the south) which snakes up to the peak of the Zwischenkofel at 2,907m. You can avoid the summit by going along a specially secured path, but when the weather is fine, the stunning view from the peak is very rewarding. From here, you descend directly down and in a short time, reach the Bamberger mountain hut (also called Boè hut), 2,871m.

2 hours from the Pisciadù mountain hut.

The Bamberger mountain hut (Boè hut) was opened in 1898 and renovated in 1924. It was built on the rocky, barren ground of the Piz Boè. It belongs to the Trent Division of the Italian Alpine Club – Società Alpina Tridentina (CAI-SAT). It is a stone building with two floors and is open from 20th June until 20th September; it offers: lodging for 73 people, restaurant, toilet and shower inside the hut. Refuge in winter with four places dormitory places. Station of the mountain rescue service CNSAS "118". Tel. +39 0471 847303 (hut)



The Tridentina via Ferrata (fixed rope route)

From the Sass Pordoi
towards Piz Clavazes



From the Boè hut (Bamberger hut), take the path No. 627, which after a short ascent almost flattens out (towards the south), leading to an altitude of 2,852m. Here, turn sharply towards the west and reach the Rifugio Forcella Pordoi 2,829m (a small private mountain hut with lodging; open from the beginning of July until the end of September). From here, you can enjoy some breathtaking panoramic views.

Near the hut, (towards the west), a large steep scree slope begins which hangs on the southern face. You can follow the numerous hairpin bends or you can “slide down” over the ground covered with soft rubble. Reach a junction walking along a well maintained on the Pordoi Joch, (pass at 2,239m).

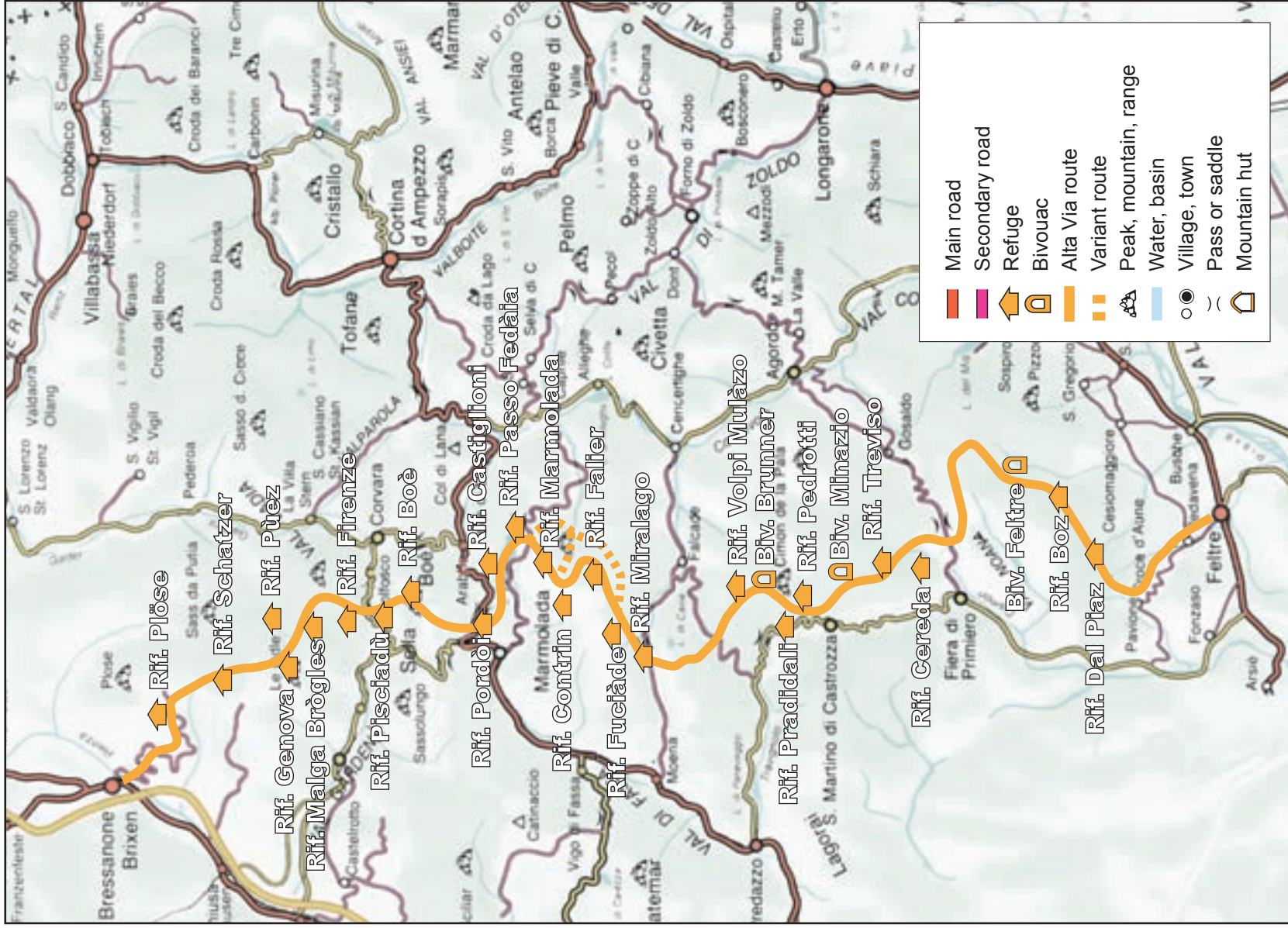
1 hours from the Boè hut

4 hours from the Pisciadù hut

The Pordoi joch extends on a large green saddle between the two massifs of the Sella and the Marmolada. The panorama here is truly breathtaking. You will find some guesthouses and the Bruno Crepez Centre - headquarters of the Italian Alpine Club. Tel. +39 0462 601279.

At Pordoi joch opt for path No. 601 which leads (towards the south) in the direction of a chapel; then walk further under the eastern face of Sasso Beccèi to the saddle near the “Sass Beccèi” mountain hut (2,423m, private inn). Passing the Baita Federòla hut (2,370m private hut with inn) turn left and walk along the Vièl dal Pan. In German, Bindelweg which, literally translated, means The Way of the Bread. This ancient path connects the Fassa valley and the Agordo region. The cart path is wide and easy to walk on and consequently very busy, offering a very good view especially towards the Marmolada, which is clearly and majestically visible here. At the halfway point you arrive at Viel dal Pan hut (at 2,432m, private hut with inn) which is situated in a beautiful area. From here, the path becomes narrower and curves under the Forfesc (Schere in German) and the Belvedere.

At the junction with path No. 698 (this leads to Porta Vescovo towards the north), path No. 601 leads towards the south and then



| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| | Main road |
| | Secondary road |
| | Refuge |
| | Bivouac |
| | Alta Via route |
| | Variant route |
| | Peak, mountain, range |
| | Water, basin |
| | Village, town |
| | Pass or saddle |
| | Mountain hut |

west, passing steep grassy slopes and later heads southeast. Walk through a beautiful natural wooded area to the barrage of Fedàia Lake and reach the Marmolada mountain hut at 2,044m.

2 hours from Pordoijoch

6 hours from the Pisciadù hut.

The Marmolada mountain hut (Italian: Rifugio Ettore Castiglioni alla Marmolada) is privately run but has belonged to the central registered office of the Italian Alpine Club since 1995. It is a large building, made of stone and wood and has three floors where 60 people can lodge. The hut is open all year around and offers rooms and homely cooking. Tel. +39 0462 601117

Above the dam is the Dolomia mountain hut, (at 2,074m) privately owned, which is open from the middle of June until the end of September; 50 beds, room with bath and shower, homely cooking; Tel. +39 0462 601221

The Passo Fedàia mountain hut (at 2,057m) is situated east of the lake and is open from the 1st of December until the 1st of May and from 1st June until 30th September. 23 beds, rooms with bath and shower, home-cooked food; Tel. +39 0437 722007

Sixth Stage

■ From the Marmolada mountain hut to Passo San Pellegrino (pass)

Altitude difference: ascent 1,100m; descent 1,200m

Length of the path: approx. 9 + 16 km

Hiking time: 2 + 5 hours

Paths: asphalted road and hiking paths Nos. 610, 689, 694, 670, 607

Grade: T and E

From the Marmolada hut after passing the dam, you can either walk along the southern bank of the lake or go also along the asphalted road on the northern bank, which is however a little dull - in order to reach the Passo di Fedàia, 2,056m. The Passo Fedàia mountain hut previously referred to is situated here.

At the pass, a longer section of around 9 km starts – walk on the asphalted road to reach the Malga Ciapèla. If you wish, you can take a shortcut that reduces the length of this section.

In theory you might also find somebody willing to take hitchhikers (which would save around two hours), but in practice this is, as most hikers are aware, easier said than done. However, a few snack stands can be found on the way, such as for example the Ristoro al Cirmolo (off the road) or the Capanna Bill, Baita del Gigio, Baita Dovich, Roberta, Roy, that can make the journey more comfortable!

Near the Malga Ciapela at 1,435m, there are some shops and guesthouses which offer altogether approximately 120 beds. Nearby, you come across the valley station of the Marmolada cable car with its three sections: the first reaches the 2,350m of altitude on the Antermoia, the second 2,950m on the Serauta, and the third 3,270m on the Punta Rocca. This is an excellent tourist route for those who want to combine a walk without any great physical effort and enjoy the beauty of the nature, which is readily available.

From the Malga Ciapèla, follow path No. 610 (towards the west), past a camping site and near a rural tourist area. Subsequently the slope begins to lead uphill. At 1,638m, path No. 610 heads uphill and to the right in the direction of Malga Ombretta, then turns left (towards the south). Path No. 689 branches off on to the cart path of the Val de Franzedàz. The path suddenly bends and leads through serpentine (towards the southwest) at an altitude of 1,950m. Here, the path goes left (towards the east) in direction of Franzedàz. Stay on this path (right) i.e. remain on the path number 689, which becomes a well-maintained cart path and walk to the junction at 2,250m. Here, leave this path (it continues left towards the south, named the Alta via dei Pastori – The Shepherd's Path) and take (right) the path No. 694 (towards the southwest) which leads to some hairpin bends to the Forca Rossa, 2,490m, between Pizzo Le Crene and Col Becher.

On the other side of the col head downwards, initially along path No. 694 for a short while until, at approx. 2,500m, you take path No. 670, which leads along a reddish slope down (towards the sou-



Viel Del Pan and Marmolada

thwest) to Valfredda. Head now through some grassy hollows and finally, after a twist towards the northeast, you reach a small valley with numerous barns - a perfect area for walking and enjoying the wonderful flora. The Furciàde mountain hut is situated in wonderful mountain scenery at 1,982m.

The Furciàde mountain hut is privately owned and offers 18 beds (room with WC); it is open from the second week of June until the end of September and from the beginning of December until Easter. The inn offers excellent cuisine. Tel. +39 0462 574281.

Now go easily down the roadway until reaching the Lago di Pozze (lake). The path runs directly along the lake, close to the mountain hut.

The Miralago mountain hut is run privately, offers home-cooked food, 25 beds and is open all year round Tel +39 0462 573791.

The road leads to the Passo di San Pellegrino, (pass at 1,907m), where this long, fascinating sixth stage ends.

2 + 5 hours from Rifugio Castiglioni.

The Passo di San Pellegrino, which can be reached by public transport (bus) from the Agordino area, is very popular and frequently crowded because

it represents the shortest route between Venice and Bozen. In the past, this route was also used for the trade of iron, coal and timber. The three dioceses of Brixen, Trent and Belluno met in the nearby village “dei Zinghen” (the gypsies). There was also a hospice, which served as lodgings for travellers and was founded by Frate Gualtiero - Ordine di San Pellegrino (pilgrim order) in 1358. The extraordinary flora is well worth paying special attention to.

On the pass and in the surrounding areas, you can find lodging in one of the numerous hotels (many of which are highly starred) e.g. Costabella, Monzoni, Armira, Cristallo, Miralago and in some of the inns situated around the pass. However, you can find good accommodation in a rather more homely and friendly atmosphere and less expensive in Malga San Pellegrino.

Alternative Route 5

■ From the Castiglioni mountain hut to the Passo di San Pellegrino (pass) via the Marmoladascharte (col) (and via the peak of Marmolada)

This is the most interesting route that brings you on to the San Pellegrino pass. It is therefore technically also the most difficult and is only recommended for mountaineers and climbers with mountain experience or those in the company of a mountain guide. Adequate equipment (ice axe, rope, crampons) is a prerequisite for the climb.



Rock climb on the Marmolada's west ridge

After all, do not forget that you are going to climb the Marmolada, the Queen of the Dolomites.

From Rifugio Castiglioni via the dam and near the cable car, continue along path No. 606, which leads to the Pian dei Fiacconi mountain hut (at 2,626m) within 2 hours. The hut offers sleeping places for an overnight stay. You can also reach the hut by cable car - this has to be taken into consideration when you calculate the entire hiking time and length of the stage.

Path No. 606 goes further towards the west and steps down a little to the residual edge of the glacier then goes flat through the rocks to a crevasse on the northern crest of the Marmolada. From here, hike down on the glacier between Marmolada and Piccolo Vernè and again over the glacier up, first through scree and rocks then on ice to the secured wall which leads to the Marmoladascharte, (col at 2,896m).

2 hours from Pian dei Fiacconi.

From the Marmoladascharte, it is possible to reach the summit of the Marmolada in around an hour, Punta Penia at 3,343m and over the Klettersteig (fixed rope route) on the northwestern crest. The route is exposed, fascinating and varied but suitable only for experienced mountaineers and climbers with good equipment.

This section should not be attempted in bad weather, particularly after fresh snowfall. It is also dangerous because of the danger of lightning striking the countless fittings made of forged steel.

On the summit, you find the Capanna Penia (Penia mountain hut) which offers home-cooked food and limited overnight accommodation for small groups.

Descend using the same route.

Back at the Marmoladascharte, climb down (towards the west) walking sometimes on a thin sheet ice then head towards the south along a partly secured section of path before, after a gully, finally reaching the junction with path No. 610 which comes down from the Passo Ombretta.

Opt for path No. 610 and reach the Passo Ombretta (pass at 2,727m), with the bivouac "Marco Dal Bianco". From here, descend to the mountain hut "Onorio Falièr" at 2,074m and into the Franzedàz valley. Near the Malga Ciapèla, you rejoin the initial route.

The bivouac "Marco Dal Bianco" on Passo Ombretta belongs to the Oriental Group of the Academic Italian Alpine Club. It was built in 1968 to pay tribute to a courageous mountaineer from Vicenza, and was renovated in 1982; it offers nine sleeping places, is always open but unmanned. Water must be obtained by melting snow and ice. The accommodation is basic, and a little neglected.

The Falièr mountain hut, under the imposing south walls of the Marmolada, belongs to the Venice Division of the Italian Alpine Club. It was built in 1911 and renovated in 1999. It is open from 20th June until 20th September and serves home cooking. It offers 56 beds, refuge in winter with 4 places in a dormitory, hot and cold water, shower, toilet, light power unit; Station of the mountain rescue service CNSAS "118"; Tel: +39 0437 722005 (mountain hut).

If you continue along path No. 606 (towards the west), you reach the Contrin mountain hut (at 2,074m).

4 hours from Pian dei Fiacconi.

The Rifugio Contrin belongs to the Italian National Alpine Association (Association of Italian Mountain Infantry). The building has two floors. A chapel is situated in this idyllic rocky basin. It offers accommodation for 90 people and is open from mid-June to the end of September. Tel +39 0462 601101.

From Rifugio Contrin, walk along path No. 607 (towards the east) in the direction of Malga Contrin; the path leads over a steep rocky area and then reaches a large crater. Here path No. 612 begins and leads to the Passo Ombrettola. Turn right towards the southwest and remain on path No. 607; pass near the Passo delle Cirelle (Ladin: Pas de le Zirèle) (pass at 2,683m).

2 hours from the Contrin mountain hut

The path now heads south over numerous hairpin bends (or more directly if you slide over the rocky ground; the snow patches should be avoided) until reaching the green oasis of Fuciàde with its hut. From here, you rejoin the main route in order to reach the Passo di San Pellegrino at 1,907m.

8 hours from Pian dei Fiacconi.

Seventh Stage

■ From the San Pellegrino pass to the “Volpi” mountain hut on the Mulàz

Altitude difference: ascent 1,100m; descent 500m

Length of the path: approx. 14 km

Hiking time: 7 hours

Paths: Nos. 658 and 751

Grade: EE+, with a partly secured passage

From the Passo di San Pellegrino, take path No. 658 (marked on a stone and on a tree) opposite to the lifts of the Cima Uomo. This leads in a southeasterly direction through damp fields under the cable car from the Col Margherita. The path goes upwards (towards the south-southeast) through a grassy landscape. You reach a ski slope and finally see the sparse alpine meadows of the Zingari Alti (Ladin: “Zinghen”), which is littered with granite blocks. When it is foggy,

you should be extra vigilant and check you are on the right path to avoid getting lost. In this area, it is very easy to lose your bearings and head off the trail.

A long way below (towards the east) you can see the bright surface of the beautiful lake Cavia.

From the saddle at approx. 2,300m, descend towards the south, which offers a fantastic view of the Civetta, the Pelmo and the Tofane and ahead the glorious mountain group of the Pale di San Martino.

South of the plateau, you reach the Forcella Pradazzo (col at 2,220m).



The Marmolada glacier on August 2004

Slightly eastwards of the col is the privately owned Laresèi hut (at 2,250 m) which it is very inviting and open during the ski season and also from June to October, offering home-cooked food and 16 beds; Tel. +39 0437 599 000.

Still on path No. 658, head downwards, partly on a road, partly on a path to the Malga Pradazzo alpine hut until arriving after a short while at the Passo Valles (pass at 2,031m).

2 hours from Passo di San Pellegrino.

From the Passo Valles, go down along path No. 751 (towards the east). This path heads uphill on the northern slopes of the Cima Venegia at 2,217m and reaches the Forcella Venegia (col at 2,217m), where you are in direct contact with the border of the national park:

The Focobon peaks on the Cirelle pass





Hay barns in Fuciàde

“Parco Naturale di Paneveggio e delle Pale di San Martino”. The crest is initially covered in earth and then grass and the path leads down into a basin with a small mountain lake. On the banks of this lake you may be lucky enough to watch a family of marmots, which form part of a unique, fairytale landscape! Cross the eastern slope and then the southern slope of the Cima Venegiota where you reach the Passo di Venegiota (pass at 2,303m), and walk towards the east in order to reach Passo dei Fochèt from Focobòn at 2,291m. From here, path No. 751 heads up the slope (towards the southeast) and then flattens out for a short period. Climb downwards over a scree and go further upwards along a ridge. Go along the eastern slopes of the Monte Mulàz and higher over the Valle del Focobòn, where the spectacular Dolomite range, the Lastei and the tops of Focobòn rise. From a hollow covered with snow, climb up to any area full of greenery. Hiking through declines, terracing and an old glacier with stone plates, you reach a little saddle, Passo Arduini. From here, the path drops downwards after having crossed a small plateau. You reach the Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata - Mulàz mountain hut at 2,571m.

5 hours from Passo Valles

7 hours from Passo di San Pellegrino

The Mulàz mountain hut is a beautiful building with two floors. The owner is the Venetian Division of the Italian Alpine Club. It was built in 1907 and renovated in 2000. It is open from 20th June until 20th September and offers home-cooked food, 39 beds, refuge in winter with 12 places in dormitory and a telephone in case of an emergency; light produced by power unit; toilet, hot water and shower. It is also a station of the mountain rescue service CNSAS “118”: Tel. +39 0437 599420.

Eighth Stage

■ From the “Volpi” mountain hut - Mulàz to the Pedrotti mountain hut at Rosetta

Altitude difference: ascent 760m; descent 750m

Length of the path: approx. 8 km

Hiking time: 5 hours

Path: No. 703

Grade: EE and EEA on the section Sentiero delle Faràngole

This stage is for experienced mountaineers only, particularly on the famous “Faràngole” path, which is exposed but well secured with wire-cables. When there is a lot of snow, particularly at the beginning of the season, the ropes could still be covered with snow, making this section very difficult. It is recommended to take a rope to secure the way for less experienced hikers or leaders. Also to be recommended are an axe for cutting steps into ice and crampons. Such equipment is heavy and adds a lot of weight and bulk to a rucksack. You must always consider that you will have to carry this baggage during the complete “Alta Via” journey. However, there is no alternative unless you live by the motto “eyes closed and let’s go” and “what will be, will be” which can lead to putting yourself or your companions in danger and, in the worst scenario, endanger the lives of the rescue service. In any case, there is an alternative route for this stage at the end of this section. The alternative route 6 is easier to complete and the scenery is just as impressive.

From the Mulàz mountain hut, head uphill (towards the west) through a scree under the Passo del Mulàz for a while. Near a junction turn left (southwards) and walk along path No. 703, which soon leads to the Forcella Margherita (col at 2,655m) on the north crest of the Cima di Focobòn. Keep heading south and you will skirt past the rock before crossing the depression in the land. Walk through the scree (risk of rock fall) and over reasonably large patch of ice. With the help of a wire-cable, you will reach the beautiful rocky terracing of the Passo delle Faràngole, (pass at 2,932m) - the highest point of this classic route.



On the Valles pass near the Mulàz mountain hut

When you have crossed the col, you head rapidly downhill with the help of a wire-cable in order to reach the rocky hollow and the basin that gradually narrows. Here, the path suddenly turns left (eastwards) and then back towards the south in the direction of the Col de Burèla. You are now on the famous Faràngole path. A short distance further on you can enjoy an enchanting view on the steep slope of Torcia di Valgrande and admire the bold outline of the mountain set against the sky. You reach path No. 716 which leads up to the rough Val Schutt in the direction of bivouac “Giorgio Brunner”. Go further towards the south and hike through a long and exposed area with the help of some solid wire-cables overcoming the eastern flank of Val Delle Comelle.

From the Val delle Galline, the path goes down through very steep meadows where you can make use of some wire-cables in order to descend it safely. This leads to the plateau Pian die Cantoni from where, near a boulder, the beautiful Sentiero delle Comelle path comes from Garès, on the left-hand side.

Follow the path over flat ground and then climb gently up to the Giovanni Pedrotti mountain hut on the Rosetta (at 2,581m).

5 hours from Mulàz mountain hut

The Giovanni Pedrotti mountain hut on the Rosetta is a pleasant building with three floors, where you are made to feel very much at home. It is situated near the mountain station of the cable car of the Col Verde. The mountain hut belongs to the Division CAI-SAT of Trent. It was built in 1890 and renovated in 2000. It offers accommodation with 80 beds and refuge in winter with 12 places in dormitory; toilet, hot water and shower; light produced by power unit and solar panels; open from 20th June until 20th September; Station of the mountain rescue service CNSAS “118”; Tel +39 0439 68308. (mountain hut)

Alternative Route 6

■ From Mulàz mountain hut to Rosetta mountain hut via the Passo Rolle (pass), the Sentiero del Cacciatore (path) and Col Verde

This is a lovely alternative route which you can take in order to avoid the snow or bad weather, which can cause difficulties on the Farangole way. Along the way you will encounter some beautiful scenery.

Southwest of the Mulàz mountain hut, climb along path No. 710 to the Passo del Mulàz (pass at 2,619m) and cross it in the direction of Val Venegia and then head downwards along a winding stretch of path. When you reach a junction, stay on the left (towards the southwest). Pass the mountain springs of Travignòlo and you will come to a cart path which twists and turns its way to the Baita Segantini mountain hut.

Baita Segantini is a small private snack bar situated at 2,170m altitude near the chairlift, which brings you to the Rolle pass.

Continue to follow path No. 710. Along the cart path or over the short cut, you pass the Capanna Cervino hut (at 2,082m) and from now on, it leads comfortably downwards to the Passo Rolle at 1,972m where you can find many hotels. From here, you can reach San Martino di Castrozza by public transport (bus).



Now, you must go along main road No. 50 (towards the southeast) for approx. 2 km in order to reach the Malga Fosse di Sopra alpine hut (at 1,938m) (snack bar). From here, you can take a short cut left (towards the southeast) which can be used to avoid the numerous hairpin bends of the road. You reach the Fosse bridge a little while later (at 1,816m).

From the bridge, walk down along the road for around 1 km. Once you come level with a bend, bear first towards the southeast and then south to the Cacciatore path marked No. 725 and 21. It leads to the Malga Pala hut (at 1,897m). From here, hike up to reach the Col Verde at 1,965m. Here you will find the valley station of the cable car to go up to the Rosetta hut and the station of the chairlift to go down to San Martino di Castrozza.

Over the cable car, you can reach the Rosetta mountain hut. Here you retrace your steps along the initial route of “Alta Via” n. 2; those determined to do things properly can, of course, climb up on foot to the Rosetta hut, taking roughly 2 hours

Around **3 hours** from the Mulàz mountain hut to Col Verde, then with the cable car.

Around **5 hours** from the Mulàz mountain hut to Rosetta mountain hut.

Ninth Stage

■ From the Rosetta mountain hut to the Pradidàl and Treviso mountain huts

Altitude difference: ascent 720m; descent 1,600m

Length of the path: approx. 14 km

Hiking time: 7 hours

Paths: Nos. 702, 715, 709, 711, 707

Grade: EE with an EEA-section

From the Rosetta mountain hut, path No. 702 heads (towards the south) in the direction of Passo di Val di Roda (pass at 2,580m), where it bends towards the north and then southwest for around



300m before continuing downwards over an extraordinary series of hairpin bends. After the Col de le Fede, leave path No. 702 that leads further down to San Martino and go further along path No. 715, which soon becomes increasingly demanding. Although it is partly secured using wire-cables in the rocks for around 100m, the path is certainly not too difficult to overcome.

After the rock face, climb up to Passo di Ball (pass at 2,433m). From here head downwards, taking in the stunning view of the Canali and Sass Maòr summits. After a short walk, you reach the Pradidali hut (at 2,278m).

2 hours from the Rosetta mountain hut.

The Pradidali mountain hut was built in 1896 and renovated in 1959. The hut consists of three floors situated on a rocky plateau and is surrounded by soaring mountains. It belongs to the Treviso Division of the Italian Alpine Club. The mountain hut offers home-cooked food and 66 beds; refuge in winter for four people; water inside; open from 20th June to 20th September. Electricity is produced by power unit. Station of the mountain rescue service CNSAS "118". Tel. +39 0439 64180. (mountain hut)

At the Pradidali Hut, opt for path No. 709 that leads towards the northeast in the direction of a mountain lake. Pass the lake and turn right at a junction. Leave path No. 709 here, which heads off to the left (NE) and follow the path No. 711. This route is rather demanding as it runs across rocky terrain (graded 'difficult') to a terrace with stone rubble. It is important to be cautious as it can be difficult to see the path markings and occasionally there are still some thin sheets of ice remaining in summer, which can pose a danger.

When you have passed an area with loose rocks and rock walls, you reach the Passo delle Lede (pass at 2,695m). Descend on the opposite slope through a gully full of rocky rubble. Go further (towards the southeast) along the left side of the depression of the Vallon delle Lede (sunken or depressed geological formation) Cross some ground with more rocks and a few grassy patches and you pass the wreckage of an old American aeroplane, which crashed in 1957.

You do not see the bivouac Carlo Minazio until you are practically on top of it (2,250m) but it is in the vicinity and can be reached after the final descent.

3 hours from the Pradidali mountain hut

5 hours from the Rosetta mountain hut

The Minazio bivouac belongs to the Padua Division of the Italian Alpine Club. It was built as a tribute to a mountaineer in 1964. It offers 12 beds; water at approx. 100m; open all year round. As it is not supervised, the hut is entrusted to the mountaineers and climbers. Please be considerate when staying here! (In the past, some people have abused this trust, using the hut as a permanent summer residence, which has prevented other mountaineers and climbers from using it saying: "We were here first!" – the author of this book has experience first-hand experience of this.)

Path No. 711 bends towards the east, then further to the southeast along the left side of the valley (downstream). The path leads through rocky slopes to a steep incline with rocks and mountain pines. There is a junction at around 1,600m. Here it is recommended to opt for the path that goes left (towards the east). This way is more direct and shorter and leads to the foot of the numerous serpentines. The hairpin bends lead on the opposite side of the Canali brook at 1,500m. Hike up to the Rifugio Treviso (hut at 1,631m), situated on a romantic wooded hill. Here you will be enchanted by the natural beauty and uniquely peaceful atmosphere that one can only experience in the Alps.

1 hours from Minazio bivouac.

7 hours from the Rosetta mountain hut.

The Treviso mountain hut in the Canali valley was built in 1898 and renovated in 1974. It belongs to the Treviso Division of the Italian Alpine Club. It offers home-cooked food and 42 beds; Refuge in winter with 4 places in dormitory; toilet, shower with hot water, electricity; open from 20th June until 20th September; Station of the mountain rescue service CNSAS "118". Tel. +39 0439 62311. (mountain hut)

Alternative Route 7

■ From the Rosetta mountain hut to the Treviso mountain hut via the Malga Canali

This route is recommended for the inexperienced hiker or casual walker as it requires less skill. This route enjoys some beautiful scenery and is a good alternative to the other route if the weather is inclement.

Walk from Rosetta hut to the Pradidali mountain hut as described in the first part of the ninth stage.

2 hours.

From The Pradidali mountain hut, walk down along path No. 709 (towards the south), first through sparse alpine meadows and grassy hollows and then through the serpentine of the Pedemonte. You will find a junction at the foot of the mountain: take the path that branches off to the left (SE) and continue along path No. 709 that heads into the valley (a well can be seen here). Continue on to a second junction where you follow the cart path on the left for approx. 200m (SE, but not to the right in the direction of Pieréni). Here, continue along the path on the left (towards the east) that leads to the ruins of the Malga Pradidali at 1,428m. The path continues across flat ground and crosses a wood. You pass near the Pra d'Ostio and reach the glade of Malga Canali at 1,302m where there is a refreshment bar.

Shortly after the alp, continue along the forest road into the valley (markings 711, 707); and, without great effort, walk towards the east almost until the end of the path, where you take the path no. 707. This path soon brings you to the foot of the serpentines, which is always marked No. 707 and leads to the Refugio Treviso (hut at 1,631 m).

3 hours from the Pradidali mountain hut

6 hours from the Rosetta mountain hut.

Tenth Stage

■ From the Treviso mountain hut to the Passo Ceréda (pass)

Altitude difference: ascent 1,150m; descent 900m

Length of the path: approx. 10 km

Hiking time: 4.30 hours

Path: No. 718

Grade: EE

From the Treviso hut, the narrow path No. 718 leads towards the south and snakes up and down through bushes, mountain pines and through rock-filled gullies before finally reaching the barren Vallon dell' Oltro (valley not cited on the maps).

At approx. 1,700m you meet the path known as the Tròi dei Todesch ("Germans' Way") which comes up from the valley. Turn firstly towards the southeast and then towards the east in the direction of a high col at the centre a characteristic jagged rock.

At approx. 1800m you leave the Sentiero Del Passo Regàde on the right (path towards the south), which you could continue to follow as an alternative route.

The path No. 718 becomes steep and leads through mountain pinewoods, bushes, and patches of grass and rocks (Scholle - Klotzen). After a steep ascent, you reach the col of Forcella d'Oltro (at 2,094m), where there is a lovely view of the two faces.

2 hours from the Treviso mountain hut.

From the Forcella d'Oltro, go down (towards the east) for approx. 250m. You must stay on the left and then continue to ascend and descend in a southwesterly direction. Cross the faces of the Cima d'Oltro, the Rocchette and the Cima Feltraio and hike along steep slopes and dangerous gullies. These are very misleading as they often end on a sharp precipice and should therefore not be followed.

*The Canali valley from the
Minazio Bivouac*



Beneath the Regàde pass, the path turns towards the southeast and then climbs along the serpentine on to the slope of the Bastie.

In the south, you can see the arching, jagged peaks of Piz de Segròn and Sass de Mura in Alpi Feltrine.

At the foot of the serpentines, you arrive on a cart path. Follow it towards the southeast to the large grassy saddle of the Passo Cerèda (pass at 1,350m).

4 hours from the Treviso mountain hut

At the Cerèda pass, you will find the Cerèda mountain hut (40 beds), a beautiful building in private ownership with three floors, which offers typical mountain hospitality and the usual comfort of our mountain accommodations. Tel. +39 0439 65030. In the same area, agricultural tourism “Broch” is also available and offers an excellent option for overnight stay and meal during the summer; pre-booking is recommended.

Eleventh Stage

■ From the Passo Cereda (pass) to the Feltre - Walter Bodo bivouac and to the Bruno Boz mountain hut

Altitude difference: ascent 1,200m; descent 600m

Length of the path: approx. 14 km

Hiking time: 6.30 hours

Path: No. 801

Grade: EE, with secured sections on the Intaiàda and on the Tròi dei Caserìn

From the Passo Cerèda (pass at 1,361m), go along the main road No. 347 for approx. 1 km (towards the east and northeast) to reach the village of Padreterno (1,302m). From here, a small road leads towards the south and later eastwards towards the hamlet of Matiüz at 1,201m.

There is accommodation available in Matiüz as well as at nearby Segròn (at 1,602m).

In Matiüz, you find two signposts, which indicate the continuation of the “Alta Via” n. 2 (towards the south). When you reach the camping site, go up towards the southeast and follow the signposts pointing towards the alpine huts. Walk along an easy path leading through sunny meadows, forest and a mountain pinewood. After crossing the cart path (it ends shortly afterwards but you can follow it from Matiüz if you wish. It is longer than the track but easier), continue south and hike through a unique ravine before continuing under the rock faces (towards the east). We are now on the path named Sentiero dell’Intaiàda. The track closely hugs the rocky wall and you follow the narrow trail on the rock face that crosses the eastern wall of the Sasso Largo. After reaching a small col, go further through other trails on the rocky wall and passages until you reach the bottom of a barren gully filled with rocks. In this section there is an ascending slope well secured by wire-cables and chains. Climb up along the gully for approx. 200m. The ascent is rather challenging. For safety reasons you should stay on the left side as it would be dangerous to stay on the right or in the middle of the gully. There is a risk, particularly during thunderstorms, of rock fall and landslides.

At the end of the ascent, you reach the Passo Del Comedòn (pass at 2,067m). Local smugglers used this area in earlier times.

Now we come into the enchanting world of the Italian National Park: “Parco Nazionale delle Dolomiti Bellunesi”.

Go down towards the west and cross a saddle. Walk down again over a gully and hike further through rocks to the large and picturesque plateau of the Piano della Regina.

After crossing this green oasis, it heads gently uphill until you reach the bivouac Feltre “Walter Bodo” at 1,930m situated in an area with beautiful scenery.

4 hours from the Cerèda pass

The Feltre bivouac was named Walter Bodo as a tribute to the president of the Feltre Division of the Italian Alpine Club who had died in a fatal accident on the Vette Feltrine in 1963. The bivouac belongs to the Feltre Division and

comprises an older hut built in 1959, which sleeps four in dormitory-style accommodation and a newer mountain hut opened in 1972 with 15 bunk beds and lodgings for approx. 20 people. It is always open but unmanned. There is a water pipe in the vicinity or a spring 10 minutes northwest of the hut.

The bivouac is a good destination because it is situated in an outstandingly beautiful natural area and is also incredibly peaceful. However, those who want a warm meal and a comfortable bed still have a few of hours hiking ahead of them before reaching the Boz mountain hut. The route is, however, very pleasant and interesting. By doing this you can shorten the following stage, which is rather long and rough. On top of that, there is no further accommodation on the way from the Boz hut to the Dal Piaz hut. If you have enough time, you can stop at the Feltre bivouac and the Boz hut. The route takes an entire day but the landscape makes it worthwhile.

From the bivouac, continue along path No. 801 (towards the south) and after a short period of walking, you arrive at the junction with path No. 806 which leads upwards from the Lago della Sua into Val Canzoi (lake in valley). Stay on the right (S) and on path No. 801 and you will pass some small lakes. The path weaves up and down between rocky blocks and there is little vegetation. Pass along the impressive reddish curved walls of the Parete Piatta and then, turn towards the southeast. After some hairpin bends, you reach the grass-covered slope of the Col dei Béchi (pass at 1.960m).

Here, the path named Troi dei Caserin (Troi = narrow path) begins and immediately heads west. It leads under the impressive walls of Sass de Mura (or Mur). The path, which is often exposed but secured where necessary, leads through challenging terrain heading uphill. However, it is not as difficult as it first appears. At an altitude of 1,830m, the path bends towards the southwest and leads through the “chamois” pastures of the village of Caserin (hence name of the path); here, it reaches a cave, which offers shelter from rain or thunderstorms. Climb up through steep grass-covered slopes until you reach the Passo de Mura (pass at 1,867m). From here, walk further upwards to the grassy saddle from where you can look down on the charming basin shaped valley of Neva with its quiet mountain hut.

If you follow (direction southwest) the signposts from here, you arrive at the Bruno Boz mountain hut (at 1,718m) after a short time. (You need to be careful here as patches of dense fog often affect this area and visibility is poor).

2 hours from the Feltre – Walter Bodo bivouac

6 hours from the Passo Ceréda (pass)

The Bruno Boz mountain hut is a pleasant, two-storey building (in the traditional style of a sheep-farmer’s home) which has resulted from the renovation of the old Malga Nevetta (Nevettaalm) in 1970. It belongs to the Episcopal Seminary of Feltre and is presently under the leadership of the Feltre Division of the CAI. The old “larin” (traditional fireplace) is very imposing in the large living room as it was in the past and is an example of the traditional style of the region. The mountain hut is open from 20th June until 20th September and offers 42 beds, home-style cooking, cold and hot water, electricity produced by solar panels. Refuge in winter with six places in dormitory in the old renovated stable next door. Tel. +39 0439 64448.

Twelfth Stage

■ From the Feltre bivouac to the Dal Piaz mountain hut

Altitude difference: ascent 900m; descent 650m

Length of the path: approx. 15 km

Hiking time: 7 hours

Path: No. 801

Grade: EE, with a secured walking section

The following route is one of the longest stages of “Alta Via” n. 2. It is just as beautifully, varied and interesting, as it is austere, inhospitable and original. There is no accommodation along the entire trail and the path always winds directly along or very near to the crest. Fog and thunderstorms are a regular occurrence in these mountains, which form the first wall to the plateau of Veneto. Even the wind, which often blows with extraordinary force over the crest, can become frustrating and severely lower morale. This can challen-

ge the motivation of the most determined of hikers but we have now reached the last part of the “Alta Via” and nothing can get in the way of completing the journey! Besides, maybe one of the famous beers will be waiting for you when you reach the valley floor!

From the Rifugio Boz, follow path No. 801 (towards the south), which soon turns towards the southwest and goes uphill. You reach the Passo Finestra (pass at 1,766m), between the Colsent in the northeast and the Monte Zocarè Alto in the southwest. After a few metres, south from the pass, there is a junction. On the right, walk along path No. 801 (towards the west) which heads up and leads under the crest of Zocarè. It then heads in and out along the various bends of the southeast slope – which, although at the same level, can prove a little uncomfortable.

After some small passages on the crest, ascend rapidly in the direction of Sasso di Scàrnia. As you climb the view extends towards the north on the Pale di San Martino - all of which you have crossed on this adventure in just a matter of a few days. Further down, to the east, you can see the bleak and wild valley of Canzòì.

Some steps cut into the rocks and a wire-cable along an exposed section make walking this section easier, (under normal meteorological conditions it is easy to complete), while the landscape changes impressively before your eyes. Near a shoulder on the north slope of the Sasso di Scàrnia, the path continues and goes around the slopes between enormous blocks of rock, like a dyke in the slope.

The path now heads downwards and you have to stick close to an overhanging rock to cross over a large crack, and then over gullies and smaller walls of the south slope of the Scàrnia before passing some rocky structures. At a junction, path No. 803 goes southeast then south to Vignùì path No. 801 continues west. Follow the path into a dense and completely overgrown wooded area with mountain pines. Here you arrive on the old military cart path that, after scree, leads in to a saddle at 2,205m, southwest of the Monte Ramèzza



Near a marked rock, you can take the narrow path, which brings you after a 20-minute descent to an enormous natural cave. (Caution: for the return journey, you will need approximately double the walking time). This cave has a volume of approx. 500 cubic metres. In it, you find a cone (conical structure made of snow) with an impressive base of ice; this is the Giazèra di Ramèzza (the ice cellar of Ramèzza), which was used to provide ice to the brewery located in the valley of Pedavena. The woodcutters, shepherds and hunters of the area carried out this hard work, as it was their only opportunity to scratch out a meagre living.

You are now in the nature reserve: “Riserva Naturale Integrale Piazza del Diavolo”. On this route, you may not leave the marked path. The violation of these regulations carries a heavy penalty especially if the hiker does not respect the fauna and flora, which is particularly diverse and unique in this area. In this section, you must remember that it is strictly forbidden to leave the marked “Alta Via” - at least on the section between the bivouac Feltre and the Rifugio Dal Piaz - (this principle is also to be adhered to along the whole “Alta Via”).

On the Alpe Ramezza, continue upwards for a quite a long while and then climb over the crest and go further, along an impressive path situated north of the ridge's edge. The path has been hollowed out of the mountainside and the Noana valley lies below to the north. If thunderstorms are forecast you must be careful because the ground becomes very slippery. If the ground is frozen, it is recommended to follow the Gratschneide (the edge of the ridge).

Back in the south, you rapidly cross the wild sacred Piazza Del Diavolo (in Ladin "Diàol" means "Devil's Place"). Everything is covered here with enormous boulders, with stones of different forms that look as if they have been decorated with arabesques and are marked by the effects of the wind and mist during over thousands of years. This area looks as if an earthquake has hit it, and gives you a real impression that you are near the residence of the devil, as rumour has it in the valley.

After the Devil's Place, continue over the green hollow of the alpine meadows of the Busa di Piètena; (here one can see a strange rock formation in the shape of a book). This region is rich in fossils (it is forbidden here even to touch them because you are still in the nature reserve). Go further along the cart path, which heads slowly upwards at approx 2,050m, northwest of the Piètena pass.

Some massive stone blocks in the immediate proximity make you think of some ancient and puzzling prehistoric monuments left here by some mysterious lost civilisation.

From the pass, continue to head southwest. The cart path begins after a narrow bend and climbs in the direction of another "Busa" (depression in the land) named Busa delle Vette. This large, very green meadow in the high mountains is broken up by white scree over the slopes, offering a remarkable variety of flora.

Continuing at the same altitude on the Vette Grande for a while, it weaves effortlessly upwards along a narrow road to the Vette Grande pass at 1,994m. This pass represents the last col of the "Alta Via" – from here on it's downhill all the way.

South of the pass, you can quickly reach the "Giorgio Dal Piaz" mountain hut (1,993m).

7 hours from the Boz mountain hut.

The Rifugio Giorgio Dal Piaz is a beautiful stone building built in 1963; it belongs to the Feltre Division of the Italian Alpine Club and offers home-cooked food and 22 beds, with water supply. Open from 20th June until 20th September. Refuge in winter with six places in a dormitory. Electricity produced using solar panels. Tel. +39 0439 9065

Thirteenth Stage

■ From the Dal Piaz mountain hut to Croce d'Aune and to Feltre

Altitude difference: descent 980m until Croce d'Àune, 1,670m until Feltre

Length of the path: approx. 19 km

Hiking time: 6 hours until Feltre

Paths: No. 801 and asphalted road

Grade: E and T

From the Dal Piaz hut, take either path No. 801, which directly descends towards the south, or the narrow military road. This road is just as convenient but a bit longer. The path shortens the distance, because it does not go along the numerous bends but leads directly down over meadows and rocks. The path becomes challenging later in the walk, but it remains easy to pass. The path winds downwards for quite a long way, crossing the forest. At the Col dei Cavài (Pferdehügel) at 1,472m, path No. 801 leads you out of the nature reserve and heads west, and finally, after a bend towards the south, brings you into the large saddle of the Passo di Croce d'Aune. (pass at 1,015m). This pass lies between the slightly hilly depression in the ground of Pedavena and Cisonon valley. Here you will find an assortment of hotels, restaurants and shops.

It is here that your outdoor adventure along the "Alta Via" n.2, set against stunning mountain scenery, ends. Those who wish to can continue along the path on foot.



The Peaks of Feltre

Pedavena and Feltre can be reached with the public bus service (look out for timetables) but also by foot. Of course, the purists can walk along the relatively uninteresting 473 main road for around 9 km to Pedavena and another 4 km to Feltre.

In Pedavena (359m) you have the chance to have a refreshing beer - as long as you do not arrive to find that the local brewery has closed! (There was talk of closing the Heineken brewery at the end of 2004.) You could try a good pint in the local historical pub (but please remember to only drink alcohol in moderation) and in the dry cellar of the Bierstube as described in the twelfth stage.

After this break, it may be difficult to reach Feltre on foot; but there is still public transport.

Feltre is a town of ancient origin that is dominated in the north by a circle of mountain peaks and in the south by the base of the Prealpi (foothills of the Alps). It was probably founded by the Rhaetians or by the early settlers of this area, the Euganeans. What is certain is that the area was under Roman rule and that it has been destroyed and rebuilt many times – usually even more beautifully than before its destruction. The strongest rule imposed on the town

was during the republic of Venice. The town was popular during this lordship. The old town, situated high on the Colle delle Capre and the Tombe (the hill of the goats and the tombs), is a perfect jewel of renaissance architecture. The Castello (castle) rises over the old fortification directly on the square: Piazza Maggiore with the Goldoni theatre. It connects the street Via Mezzaterra with its fresco-filled palaces with the lower part of the town. Quiet alleys and splendid gates lead you to churches rich in art and history.

You can also find a wrought iron museum, a university with a Languages and Linguistics department, superb aristocrats' villas in the surrounding countryside, hotels, restaurants, guesthouses, a youth hostel, tourism office, registered office of the Italian Alpine Club at the Porta Imperiale, train station (for a possible return to Brixen), hospital, mountain rescue service, banks, Italian Touring Club and travel agency.

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- MAP n.07 "Alta Badia-Arabba-Marmolada" from Passo Rodella to Malga Ciapèla
- MAP n.015 "Marmolada - Pelmo - Civetta - Moiazza" from Passo Pordò to Passo S.Pellegrino
- MAP n.06 "Val di Fassa e Dolomiti Fassane" from Malga Ciapèla to Passo Vallès
- MAP n.022 "Pale di San Martino" from Passo Vallès to Rifugio Bruno Boz and Le Vette
- MAP n.023 "Alpi Feltrine-Le Vette-Cimónega" from Rifugio Bruno Boz to Feltre

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Refuge stamps

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For special requests and any queries, such as reservations, confirmations, cancellations, opening times of the mountain huts, complaints etc. you can also contact the respective owners of the mountain huts or the relevant section of the Italian Alpine Club. Please remember that the members of the CAI are all volunteers can therefore not always be reached during office hours. For the telephone numbers of the mountain huts and their operators, please refer to the corresponding notes in the text.



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