

THE DOLOMITES

Monday 29 June – Tuesday 14 July 2026 (16 days)



Two magnificent weeks exploring top trails and scenic sights in the west and east of Italy's famous Dolomite Mountains. Summer generally provides more favourable weather conditions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Starting point: Venice; finishing point Bolzano.
- Led by Astrid Brauksiepe, abrauksiepenz@yahoo.de, 021-2520877
German born Kiwi Astrid Brauksiepe has been working as a professional hiking guide since 2000, mostly in NZ, but also in Italy, Switzerland, the UK, Portugal, Vietnam and Africa. She has also guided for the FMC Travel Club. She has been a member of the CHCH Over 40s and the Nelson

Tramping Club for which she leads numerous trips. This is her 5th trip to the Dolomites.

- Price: \$6500 pp based on a minimum of 8 participants and subject to currency exchange fluctuations
- Price is estimated at April 2025, so subject to change until fully paid.


PRICE INCLUDES:


- Accommodation in dormitories in mountain lodges and refugios.
- Internal buses and trains.
- Experienced trip leader throughout.
- Entry fees to national parks and major walking sites.

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- International flights.
- Meals other than those provided by accommodation facilities.
- Travel insurance,
- Personal expenses
- Any arrangements outside of the itinerary and its inclusions.

ITINERARY (prepared by Astrid)	
DATE	ACTIVITIES
Day 1 Monday 29 June	<p><i>Arrival day in Venice.</i></p> <p><i>By arriving early, you will have the opportunity to explore Venice's bridges, squares, canals and hidden lanes! Take a local gondola across the Grand Canal and get lost in the maze of the historic town centre. Stay in a very central hotel, a few minutes walk from the railway station.</i></p> <p><i>Initial pre-dinner briefing.</i></p> <p><i>Free evening.</i></p>
PART ONE: 1ST REGION: EASTERN DOLOMITES	
1st area: Parco Naturale Fanes-Sennes-Braies/Prags, Dolomiti d'Ampezzo	
Day 2 Tuesday 30 June	<p><i>We take the bus to Cortina d'Ampezzo, place of the Winter Olympics in the Belluno Dolomites. We drop our luggage at our city hotel and take the bus to the Falzarego Pass. From Rozes, below the Tofana massif, we climb up to the Lagazuoi Hut, the highest in the Ampezzo region at 2752m.</i></p> <p><i>This trail satisfies many fields of interest: botany, geology and the history of World War I in a pristine, wild and fascinating landscape.</i></p>

	<p>We explore the outer part of the <u>open-air museum of World War 1</u>: soon you will see ruins of the soldiers' huts and the Italian defensive positions. Shortly we'll reach the Forcella Lagazuoi from where we see most of the mountain groups that exceed 3200 m. From the saddle follow the trail 401 that leads through the open-air museum of the First World War. Finally, at an altitude of 2752 m, we'll reach the <u>Lagazuoi refuge</u> with its breathtaking panoramic terrace, where the Pompanin family pampers his guests. From the hut, a simple, wide path leads to the <u>top of Mt. Lagazuoi</u> in 10 minutes. Tramp 3.5 hrs.</p> <p>If the time is not sufficient, we'll either walk up through the war tunnels, 2 hrs, or take the chairlift.</p>
<p>Day 3 Wed 1 July</p>	<p>Walk through the tunnels down to Passo Falzarego (or walk to Sotto Rozes, see day 1), then a short, easy forest walk to Baita Bai de Dones carpark, 1889m. Take the Chairlift to Rif Scoiattoli, 2245m, and explore Cinque Torri a climbers' paradise. We walk through the well maintained and preserved WW1 open air museum of Torre Grande and Cinque Torri. The views right across the Tofane are fantastic. continue along path #439 via Rif Averau for another 1.5hrs to stay at Rif Nuvolau, 2575m, https://rifugionuvolau.it/language/en/home-inglese/, the oldest hut in the region.</p> <p>Here, we can admire the most famous peaks of the Dolomites: Marmolada, Pala group, Agner, Civetta, Pelmo, Antelao, Sorapis, Cristallo, Tofane, Lagazuoi. Below are the mountains Monte Pore and Cernerà, formed from volcanic sedimentary rock, and the Giau Pass, which is very popular with cycling enthusiasts.</p> <p>Walk about 5-6 hrs(?)</p> 
<p>Day 4 Thursday 2 July</p>	<p>We descend to the Giau Pass and take trail n. 436, walking through the marvellous mountain pastures of Mondeval till we reach our hut for the night. The refuge is situated in a magical spot overlooking the colossal mountains of Croda da Lago, Croda Rossa, Pomagagnon, Cristallo, Sorapis and Becco di Mezzodì. it is a stopping point on the Alta Via n. 1, the most famous trekking path in the Dolomites. Sauna available! 2046m</p>

Day 5 Friday 3 July	<p><i>The Croda da Lago loop is undoubtedly one of the most rewarding itineraries from a geological and a landscape perspective. From the hut, it continues downhill along the Val di Formin valley, then through the woods, heading back towards Cortina. There are various trek options. We might walk all the way back to Cortina or catch a bus for some of the way, depending on time, group and weather.</i></p> <p><i>Stay at a hotel in the town centre, free evening to explore</i></p>
<p>2nd area: Parco Naturale Tre Cime di Lavaredo/ 3 Zinnen & Carnic Alps (Austrian border peace trail)</p>	
Day 6 Saturday 4 July	<p><i>We take the morning bus to the Auronzo Hut where we stay the night. Auronzo Hut is at the foot of the south face of the Tre Cime di Lavaredo and the main starting point to get to know and explore them. While walking on a wide and popular track on your right enjoy the sweeping views of the Crode de Torri, lake of Auronzo, lake Misurina and the Cristallo group. While on your left, keeping an eye on the climbers up the tre Cime de Lavaredo. We now have the choice of a day walk in the famous Tre Cime area, where there are options of varying lengths.</i></p>
Day 7 Sunday 5 July	<p><i>The Peace Trail in the Carnic Alps, along the Italo-Austrian border, offers a ridgeline walk with superb vistas of the 3 Peaks area, a great variety of wildflowers, and WWI+II relicts of gun replacements and bunkers and cemeteries. This ridge formed the battle line between Italy and Austria during WWI.</i></p> <p><i>We take the bus to Dobbiaccio, drop our extra gear at a hotel, then bus or train to Versciaco. From here, a cable car up Mt Elmo, follow the mountain ridge, stop for an Austrian lunch at Sillaner Hut (local fare) after 2-3 hrs, pass the Hornischegg summit (2550m) and overnight in Austria at the Obstaner See Hut at 2304m with a sun terrace and particularly beautiful views of the Sesto Dolomites and the Grossglockner (Austria's highest mountain), another 4hrs walking.</i></p> <p><i>Specialities from the kitchen: homemade pastries, strudel, Kaiserschmarren, traditional cuisine, Alpine products: homemade yoghurt, curd cheese, butter, milk.</i></p>
Day 8 Monday 6 July	<p><i>There are plenty of variations to descend back to the road, then bus back to Dobbiaccio at the eastern end of the verdant Puster Valley.</i></p> <p><i>We enjoy a night in our central hotel in this mountain village. Free evening. walk max 6hrs.</i></p> <p><i>Depending on time and weather, we can swap the hikes on days 5 and 6!!</i></p> <p><i>walking up to Obstaner See Hut takes 6 hrs from Candido, 4 from Mosso and 3 from Kreuzbergpass.</i></p> 

PART 2: 2ND REGION: WESTERN DOLOMITES

1st area: Gardener Valley /Groednertal, Alpe di Suisi, Sasso Piano and Lungo & Secada Plateau

Day 9 Tuesday 7 July	<p><i>During the following week we'll explore the bi-lingual, autonomous region of South Tyrol. Known for their huge gothic crags, sharp saw-toothed ridges and rugged peaks, the Dolomite's unique ecology is protected as a UNESCO World heritage site.</i></p> <p><i>We take to train to Bressanone, then bus to Ortesei, drop our gear at the hotel. In the afternoon, we take an easy, scenic loop walk to the iconic Raschoetz summit cross. We take the Resciesa funicular. From there, trail no. 35 leads to the Raschötz Hut, and following the same trail, continue to the Holy Cross Chapel, located on the western edge of the Raschötz summit area. An easy trail turns right here and leads up to the summit of Ausserraschötz (2,281 m) with its impressive summit cross. To make this a truly circular hike, we descend from the summit via trail no. 10 to Höhenweg 31 and follow it to the Filzer Scharte ridge at 2,107 m. There, we take trail no. 35 again, which takes us back to the mountain station of the funicular.</i></p> <p><i>Overnight in a hotel. Free evening to enjoy this picturesque village.</i></p>
Day 10 Wed 8 July	<p><i>By cablecar to Alpe di Siusi (Seiser Alm). At 1800m to 2300m the Seiser Alm is the highest plateau (alm) in Europe. Its gentle slopes make it an all season family favourite. Walking starts on an easy track at Compatsch and descends to Saltria. Then a final climb to our accommodation. Expansive views all round with Sassolungo and Sassopiatto the most prominent. Good chance to see marmots. Walk 4 – 5hrs, 100m down and 600m up. Overnight at Rifugio Sasso Piatto. In the afternoon, optional climb of Sasso Piatto, 2955m, 2 hrs up.</i></p>
Day 11 Thursday 9 July	<p><i>Another panoramic trail leads around the western side to the Sassolungo Hut. Here, the bizarre landscape begins, resembling a lunar landscape between the two giants, the Sassopiatto to our right and the Sassolungo ("flat/long rock") to our left.</i></p> <p><i>Passing Demetz Hut at 2681m we descend 550 meters steeply to the valley station of the Sassolungo lift at Passo Sella, about 4hrs. Easier option to Sella Pass along the southern slopes on Friedrich August track available. We reunite at Sella Pass to take the bus to San Cristina, 1446m, and the chairlift up to Col Raiser, 2106m. From here an easy 25min walk to Rifugio Firenze/Regensburger Huette, 2037m. Various afternoon walking options or relax.</i></p>
Day 12 Friday 10 July	<p><i>In the Ladin-speaking Val Gardena, the Seceda Alm lies on the sunny side of the valley. Nestled in the Puez-Odle Nature Park and part of the UNESCO Dolomites World Heritage Site, it offers an incomparable panorama, not only of numerous</i></p>

	<p><i>Dolomite peaks, but also of renowned mountains such as the Ortler and Grossglockner. The side view from the Seceda of the graceful Odle peaks is one of the most popular photo motifs in the Dolomites. We enjoy an easy day up the spectacular Seceda high plateau. Loop walk past Fermeda, Seceda and Troier huts (food available). Day loop with variations. Several options to walk down to our Ortelsei hotel. 2 nights. Free evening.</i></p>
<p>Day 13 Saturday 11 July</p>	<p><i>Day walk to a picturesque mountain lake, steeped in legend: in former times the lake was called Lech de Lietres what means "Lake of the ladders". This goes back to the legend, that in the Puez-Odle Nature Park savages were living, who hid in the mountains using corded ladders.</i></p> <p><i>After a short bus ride to Wolkenstein/Selva Gardena, we take the cable car up to the Dantercepies Pass and from there follow the signs for "Puez Hut" or the trail marked 12A eastwards to the Jimmy Hut. We continue along trail no. 2, a rather rocky climb to the Cierjoch Pass and then almost level to the Crespeina Pass. From here, the Crespeina High Trail leads us steeply downhill into the depression of Lake Crespeina. After a leisurely rest by the lake, we continue northeast along the high trail to the Ciampeijoch Pass at 2,366 m and then up through a small gorge to the Gardenaccia Plateau. Following trail nos. 2/4, we reach the Puez Hut, initially heading north and then turning left. From the hut, trail no. 14 initially leads quite steeply southwards down into the Vallunga Valley. Once reached, a wide forest path leads through the romantic valley covered in larch and spruce trees. After about an hour, we reach the valley exit and the paved road, which leads back to the Dantercepies cable car valley station in another 20 minutes. Then bus or walk back to our hotel through the pretty Gardena Valley.</i></p>
<p>2nd area: Rosegarden/Catinaccio</p>	
<p>Day 14 Sunday 12 July</p>	<p><i>We leave the Gardena Valley and head for the famous glowing mountains, the "rosegarden", named after the unique glow of the white mountains at sunset. By bus to Bolzano. We drop our luggage at a hotel and probably have some free time for lunch or to visit the Oetzi-Museum. In the afternoon, take the bus to San Ciprano. Walk up Val di Ciami/Tschamin Valley to Rifugio Bergamo/Grasleiten Hut at 2134m, near the "rosegarden" rocks and Vajolet towers. About 2 hrs, 5km, 440m up, 50m down.</i></p>
<p>Day 15 Monday 13 July</p>	<p><i>Grasleiten Hut – Grasleiten Pass Hut – Violett Hut</i></p> <p><i>Today, after a steep climb to the Grasleiten Pass Hut, we'll hike the south side of the Catinaccio. The narrower and more rugged the rock faces appear at the beginning of the hike, the more expansive the view of King Laurin's Catinaccio becomes! Later, we'll marvel at the mountains of the Sella Group, Pordoi, and Marmolada in the distance. Behind the hut, follow trail no. 11 to a wide gravel</i></p>

	<p>cirque. There, keep right and follow trail 11 and climb steeply to the Grasleiten Pass Hut. The effects of recent heavy rainfall have partially destroyed the markings, but the direction is clear, and the trail is easy to find. After a long photo stop at the small Grasleiten Pass Hut (refreshments available), which is built like a small swallow's nest on the rock, we'll descend on trail no. 584 to the Vajolet Hut (refreshments available), which is located right next to the Preuss Hut.</p> <p>We overnight in the Rifugio Violet next to the famous Vajolet towers. After dropping our packs, we take a spectacular 3 hrs sidetrip to Santner Pass at 2734m.</p>
<p>Day 16 Tuesday 14 July</p>	<p>Crossing the Cigolade Pass, 2547m, along path #541, we drop down to the Rifugio Roda di Vael/Rotwand (food), at 2283m, 3 hrs. Finally, it's another easy 45min, 2km, 150m down past a large eagle monument (for pioneer T.Christomannos) along paths #549,539 with views of the Latemar group to the Paolina chairlift, above the Costalunga Pass. We zip down and take the bus to our hotel in Bolzano. Free time before (visit Oetzi Museum?). Farewell dinner. Trip concludes.</p>
<p>Own arrangements. The nearest large cities to Bolzano are Venice, Verona and Milan.</p>	



FOOTSTEPS WALKING AND TRAVEL CLUB OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Dolomites 2026: Booking Conditions

1. Participants agree to all terms and conditions by signing the Registration Form.
2. Phillip Donnell and *Footsteps Walking and Travel Club* are not responsible or liable for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may arise from weather, pandemic, defect in any vehicle, vessel or aircraft, or through the acts or default of any person or company engaged in carrying out any of the arrangements of the trip. Everyone participates entirely at their own risk. The separate waiver form must be completed.
3. We reserve the right to cancel the trip if minimum numbers don't eventuate. In such an event, all monies paid will be refunded. The minimum number for this trip is eight.
4. *Footsteps* reserves the right to make any modifications to the trip that may be necessary. The walks undertaken each day are determined by group consensus, but as far as possible we endeavour to meet your personal preferences.
5. The trip fee includes subsidisation of the leader/driver administrative and travel expenses, as well as a gift of appreciation/gratuity.
6. Registrations should be sent *as early as possible* in order to obtain optimal outcomes. Once we reach "critical mass" the trip moves from "orange light" status to "green light" status and the earlier that happens the better because people can then book flights and make arrangements with confidence. The deadline for registrations is **1 March, 2026**, or earlier if fully subscribed.
7. Registrations are accepted in good faith on a first comer's basis on receipt of the Registration form, Waiver form and passport scan. A deposit of \$500 per person is paid at the time of registration.
8. The balance of the trip price is due by **1 May, 2026**. Our preferred method of payment is internet banking to Kiwibank Footsteps P J Donnell 38-9002-0435674-03 (please write your surname and "Dolomites" in the reference boxes).
9. Cancellations: If you need to cancel your registration for any reason, you must advise Phillip in writing as soon as possible. Full refunds are given up to 90 days prior. Following that, refunds are by negotiation. Travel insurance can cover you for unexpected changes of plan that have a valid reason. If you find a suitable replacement person, cancellation fees MAY be waived.
10. Personal travel insurance is mandatory.

Registration and Waiver forms are below...

FOOTSTEPS WALKING & TRAVEL CLUB OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Dolomites 2026: Trip Registration Form

Complete and send this (along with a passport scan and the waiver form) to our postal address (see base of page) or scan and email. The deposit required is \$500 per person. Our preferred payment method is internet banking into Kiwibank Footsteps P J Donnell 38-9002-0435674-03 (with your surname/name of trip in reference column).

Your full name(s) and please underline or highlight your preferred first name(s):

Postal Address:

Day/Night phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Date(s) of birth:

Are you comfortable in close contact with like-minded travellers with all the give and take needed for harmony? Please extend your answers overleaf or on separate paper, or by email.

Specify any dietary requirements, allergies or medical conditions:

Contact person in NZ for any emergencies : name, address, contact phone numbers, email and the relationship to you. In the event of any emergency, this is the sole person you are authorising us to liaise with.

I/We have read the trip information and booking conditions. I / We enclose the deposit of \$500pp.
I / We agree to pay the remainder of trip costs by the due date.

(signed and dated by each person registering):

Send (with passport scan and waiver form) to:

Footsteps, 3/B Te Arawa Place, Welcome Bay, Tauranga 3112. Email: footstepsanz@gmail.com

FOOTSTEPS WALKING & TRAVEL CLUB OF AOTEAROA / NEW ZEALAND

RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY FORM

PROVIDER: Footsteps Walking and Travel Club (Phillip John Donnell)
("Footsteps")

PARTICIPANT:

("the Participant")

I, the Participant, release and forever discharge and hold harmless Footsteps from all and any liability, claims, demands and damages, of whatsoever kind or nature, whether foreseeable or otherwise, either at law or in equity, which arise or may arise from the services and activities provided and arranged by Footsteps.

I understand and acknowledge that this Release and Waiver discharges Footsteps from any liability or claim that I may have against Footsteps in respect of personal injury, illness, medical treatment, death, property loss or damage, and otherwise howsoever, resulting from the services and activities provided and arranged by Footsteps. I hereby waive all such rights and remedies.

I accept that I participate in the services and activities entirely at my own risk.

I acknowledge and accept that this Release and Waiver:

- (a) Extends to and covers all contractors, agents, volunteers and employees of Footsteps; and
- (b) Binds the executors, administrators, successors, attorneys and assigns of both parties.

Signed by the Participant: _____

Date: _____