

Hut-to-Hut in Austria's Otztal and Stubai Alps

August 22, 2014 – September 6, 2014 (trip# 1422)



Otztal Alps

OVERVIEW

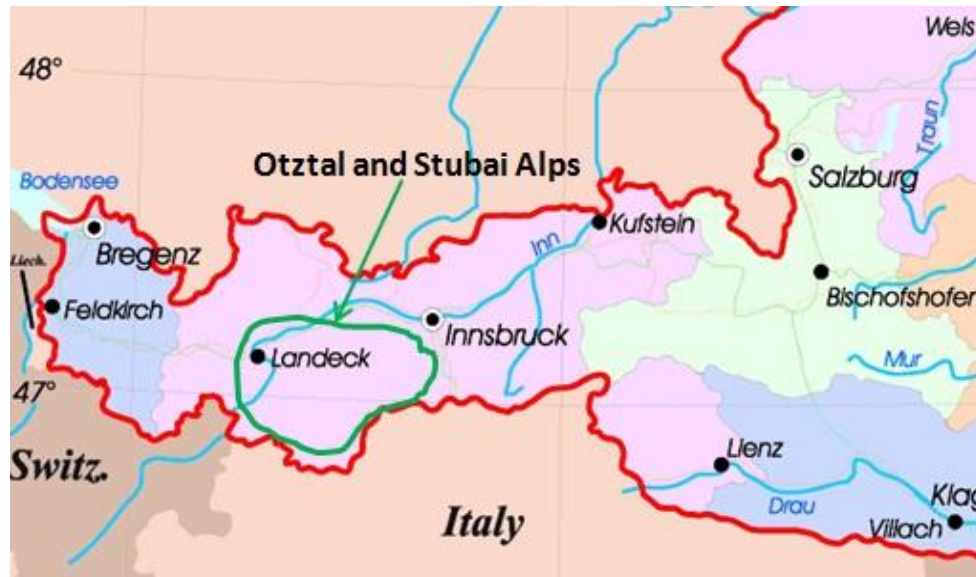
Join us in an unforgettable trek through the Otztal and Stubai Alps. This region brings to mind the spectacular Austrian mountain images seen in the well-known musical "The Sound of Music." The towering glaciated peaks are surrounded by rolling high mountain meadows. This alpine area, renowned for its breathtaking landscapes, is located close to Innsbruck, the capital of the Tyrolean region since the Middle Ages. We will enjoy the well-known Austrian friendly hospitality ('Gemueticlichkeit') in many of the mountain huts.

Our journey will maximize our exposure to the natural beauty of the region as we hike for twelve days through this enchanting region. We will stay in hostels, hotels, and mountain huts similar to the AMC's with the important difference that they all serve wine and beer and most have hot showers.

Trip leader Steve Cohen lived in neighboring Switzerland for three years and is competent in German. In recent years he has hiked several of the well-known European alpine treks

including the Tour de Mont Blanc, the Haute Route (from Chamonix, France to Zermatt, Switzerland), and the Alta Via II (from Bressanone to Feltre in the Italian Alps). Trip co-leader Bill Wheeler has climbed over 90 of New England's highest peaks and co-led or participated in eleven AMC adventure travel trips.

TRIP ITINERARY

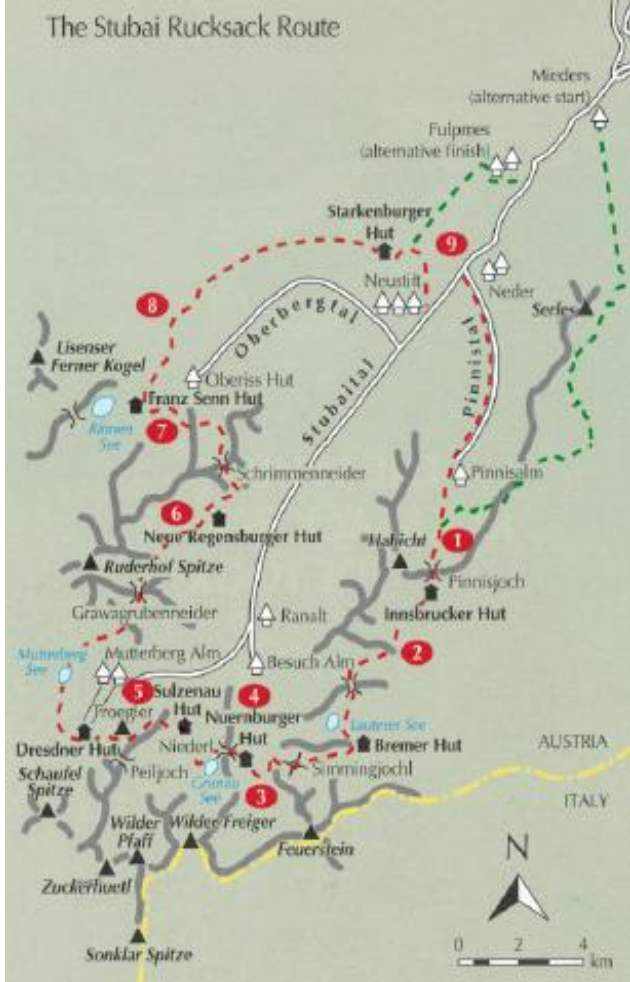


We will start our adventure at dinner time in the town of Innsbruck and end 15 days later. To ease our adjustment to European time we will spend the first full day in Austria exploring the streets of Innsbruck on a professionally guided walking tour including stops at a historic landmarks and museums. After this cultural introduction to the Tyrolean region, our trek will follow the routes laid out in recent guidebooks "Walking in Austria" by Kev Reynolds and "Trekking in the Stubai Alps" by Allan Hartley, both published by the Cicerone Press. Aside from the days of arrival, departure and a sightseeing day in Innsbruck, we will be hiking every day with a typical altitude gain of ~800m (2,500')/day and a distance covered of ~12km (7.5 miles)/day. We will be outdoors ~8 hours per day of which ~6 hours is hiking and the balance is lunch and other breaks.

The maps below show the trekking paths in both the Otztal and Stubai Alps:

HUT TO HUT ACROSS THE ÖTZTAL ALPS: Route 15





Below is a day by day summary of the treks:

Date	Day#	Booktime (hrs)	Distance (km)	Elevation Gain (m)	Elevation Loss (m)	Lodging
22-Aug	1					Fly to Europe
23-Aug	2					Innsbruck
24-Aug	3					Neustift
25-Aug	4	4.50	10	1405	0	Innsbrucker hut
26-Aug	5	6.00	9	900	177	Bremer hut
27-Aug	6	3.00	5	500	467	Nuernberger hut
28-Aug	7	6.00	10	985	805	Dresdner hut
29-Aug	8	6.50	12	900	602	Neue Regensberger hut
30-Aug	9	4.00	6.5	500	559	Franz-Senn hut
31-Aug	10	6.00	13	500	240	Starkenberger hut
1-Sep	11	2.50	6	0	1237	Landeck
2-Sep	12					Gepatsch Haus
3-Sep	13	7.00	8	1167	661	Taschach Haus
4-Sep	14	7.00	14	324	700	Braunschweiger Hut
5-Sep	15	3.50	10	236	1628	Soelden
6-Sep	16					depart for US

Notes:

- 1) 8/23 - Arrival in Innsbruck - afternoon free to explore the town
- 2) 8/24 - AM – tour of Innsbruck with local guide PM travel to Neustift
- 3) 9/1 – Descend into Neustift, bus transfer to Landeck
- 4) 9/2 – Dayhike in the vicinity of Gepatsch Haus
- 5) Hiking time is “pure” hiking time excluding stops. Rest breaks, lunch, time for photos, etc. typically adds ~two hours to each day’s activity.
- 6) The leaders reserve the right to change the itinerary for reasons such as weather, trail conditions, availability of accommodations, group preference, etc.

A typical day will have us waking up at 6:30AM and on the trail by 8:00AM. We may pass other huts along the way and indulge in homemade strudel as a lunch time snack. We aim to arrive at our destination by 4PM each afternoon. Almost all huts/hotels have showers. The cuisine is Austrian. Vegetarian options are limited. All huts serve beer or wine. Dinner is at 6:30 or 7:00PM. Most people are in bed by 9-10PM.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

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

This is a strenuous hike geared towards the outdoors adventurer. Since breakfast, dinner and lodging are provided we will be traveling light, with backpacks in the range of twenty to twenty-five (max!) pounds fully loaded. The typical day is 7.5 miles long with a gain and loss of 2500'/2200'. Some days we will climb/descend up to ~1405/1618 meters (4610'/5308' respectively). You should have at least intermediate to advanced hiking skills. While no technical climbing is required, there are areas with narrow trails bordered by steep drop-offs. We may use ladders bolted to the mountain side for short ascents of steep terrain. For more specific information about the kind of experience we are looking for, please read about the Experience and Risks below.

ACCOMMODATIONS

We will spend every night in either hotels or mountain huts. Blankets and pillows will be provided. Participants must bring a sleeping bag liner (a.k.a. sleep sack) to be used instead of sheets. Accommodations are typically in a bunkroom with 4 to 10 persons.



The Nuernberger Hut

COST

The trip cost is \$2200 for AMC members. Non-members can join for \$50, and get the same price. This will cover the following items:

- Lodging, breakfasts and dinners from the welcome dinner in Innsbruck through breakfast on the last day of the trip (9/6)
- All transportation required to get us from Innsbruck to Gepatschhaus (start of the Oetztal section of the trek), and from the end of the Oetztal trek to the start of the Stubai section
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage
- Hiking map covering our itinerary
- Membership in one of the European alpine clubs [to reduce lodging expense]

All lunches, trail snacks, alcohol, cable/gondola rides, and other personal expenses are NOT included. Lunch supplies can be purchased at local groceries every few days or purchased from the hut manager.

Your transportation to Innsbruck and back is your responsibility. Most participants will choose to fly to the Innsbruck airport: the Munich airport is also a good alternative. The trip leaders will advise you as much as you need and will facilitate group travel. At this time, we estimate that the cost for a round trip ticket between the East Coast and Europe will be in the vicinity of \$1500.

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



AMC Adventure Travel trips are run on a non-profit basis. Leaders are volunteers who are not compensated except for their travel costs associated with the trip. The advertised trip cost includes a surcharge which goes toward the administrative expenses of the AMC Adventure Travel program.

The trip fee includes emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage, which is required by the AMC. It does *not* include insurance for travel delay, interruption, or cancellation, or for baggage loss. If the possibility of such problems concerns you, individual travel insurance is suggested. The AMC has a recommended vendor whose material will be sent to you if your application is accepted.

The Stubai Alps

Any unspent funds will be refunded to the participants. If the trip's financial position is strong enough at the start, the leaders may make partial refunds during the trip, in the form of payments toward some meals and/or free time activities which would otherwise not be included

REGISTRATION and CANCELLATION

To apply, you must request, complete, and submit the Application, Confidential Medical form, and Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk and Release form (all available on request), enclosing a registration deposit of \$1000. Mail the deposit and all required forms to Steve Cohen at the address shown on the application form. You will not actually be accepted, and your check will not be deposited, until the leaders have determined by telephone conversation with you that you and the trip seem to be a good match. The final balance of \$1,200 is due June 1, 2014. Deposit checks from wait-listed applicants will not be cashed until we accept them AND they confirm continued interest. Please make payments by check payable to the *Appalachian Mountain Club*.

Our cancellation policy is based on several considerations. Cancellation will not be allowed to raise the cost to the other participants or to the leaders. Published minimum penalty schedule: \$100 before February 2014, \$250 in February-April, and \$500 after April 2014. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf, and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant.

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

In the unlikely event that the trip is cancelled because not enough acceptable participants apply, everything you have paid will be refunded in full.

EXPERIENCE and RISKS

Climbing high mountain passes is physically very demanding. Most of our travels will be between 6,500 and 10,200 feet. Although these elevations should not be high enough for properly conditioned people to contract acute mountain sickness (AMS), the combination of physical exertion and slightly lower oxygen levels require that we pace ourselves and pay attention to proper nutrition and hydration. People wishing to participate in this trip must have previous backpacking experience, at the intermediate level or higher. Several of the days are long and strenuous. You need to be prepared to commit yourself to keeping in shape between the time you sign up for the trip to the time you depart on it.

When you participate in this activity, you should be prepared both physically and mentally, and equipped with the appropriate gear. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. We are not responsible for your safety; you are. Prior to your being accepted as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. Please do not be offended by our questions.

The weather is likely to be temperate and sunny, although there is always a possibility of some precipitation. That said, mountain climate is unpredictable and can range from 25 to 75 degrees. Snow can fall in every month of the year.

QUESTIONS and REQUESTING APPLICATION MATERIALS

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. We prefer to handle your inquiries by email if they are straight forward or by phone if they require discussion. The contact information is immediately below, with the leader biographies.

TRIP LEADERS

Steve Cohen leads three season hikes for the Hiking/Backpacking Committee of the AMC Boston Chapter. He has been a participant on many major excursions in the last seven years including trips to Alaska, the Smoky



Mountains, Maroon Bells (near Aspen, CO), Grand Tetons/Yellowstone, Tour du Mont Blanc, Escalante Canyons (Utah), etc. In 2010 he organized and led a 14 day non-AMC trek along the Haute Route from Chamonix, France to Zermatt, Switzerland. In 2011 he went rock climbing in the Dolomites (Italian Alps). In 2012 and 2013 he led AMC hut-to-hut treks in the Dolomites along the Alta Via II and in the Jungfrau region of Switzerland. He lived in Europe for four years and has a good command of both the French and German languages. Steve can be reached at 617 997-6861 or scohen1234@gmail.com.

Bill Wheeler joined the AMC in 1995 with a goal of summiting the 48 New Hampshire 4,000 footers, which he achieved in 2009.



He has also climbed more than 90 of New England's 100 highest peaks. Bill became a hike leader for the Connecticut Chapter in 2005 and has led over 90 day hikes, as well as

lead or co-lead over 10 weekend trips to New Hampshire's White Mountains. He has completed the SOLO basic First Aid Course and Heart Saver CPR Course. Bill has traveled to 6 Canadian provinces, 6 European countries, India and New Zealand. He has co-lead or participated in 11 Adventure Travel trips on which he climbed several high peaks in the Western U.S., including 14,497 ft. Mt. Whitney, the highest point in the contiguous 48 states. Bill has co-lead 4 Adventure Travel trips since 2010 to Bulgaria, Texas/New Mexico, Oregon and Wyoming. His experience with hut trips to Bulgaria, Norway and New Zealand and desire to experience hut stays in other countries led Bill to team up with Steve for this trip. Bill can be reached at bwheelsjr@cox.net or 860 324-7374.

EQUIPMENT LIST

Below is a list of the required and recommended gear for the trip, as well as a list of items which some people will bring and share.

Required and Essential Gear

- broken-in waterproof hiking boots
- at least 2-3 set of hiking socks with liners
- non-cotton shorts (or long pants if you prefer) and shirt for hiking
- backpack (aim for 35 liter)
- sleeping bag liner (a.k.a sleep sack)
- waterproof wind and rain gear (tops and bottoms)
- wool sweater, or synthetic pile/fleece jacket
- long underwear top and bottom
- hat for warmth, and gloves or mittens
- polypropylene, Coolmax, Bergelene or other synthetic extra layer clothing
- sunglasses
- hat or bandanna for sun protection
- sunscreen
- Tevas, Crocs or other sandals (to wear in huts, which do NOT permit the wearing of hiking boots outside of the public areas)
- headlamp or flashlight with fresh batteries
- unbreakable bottles or hydration bladder (at least 2 liters total capacity)
- waterproof pack liner and/or pack cover
- high-energy trail snacks
- toiletry kit (many huts do not supply soap or shampoo)
- camp towel (many, but not all huts supply towels)
- ear plugs
- personal first aid kit (leaders will have a group first aid kit)

Optional Gear

- casual clothing for use in a hut
- gaiters (for rain)
- hiking poles
- whistle
- knife
- camera
- batteries/recharger/adapter plug
- pillowcase

Join us on this great adventure in one of the world's most spectacular mountain regions!