

# The „Almen“ of the Gasteinertal Valley

**...on the trail of the gentian**

traditional huts and wonderful views

✓ **...SELF-GUIDED TREK (NO LUGGAGE TRANSFER)**



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*No one can forge the happiness of life, only the  
happiness of the moment.*

**Karl Heinrich Waggerl (1897-1973), Austrian writer from Bad Gastein**

The Gastein Valley - like the neighbouring Tauern valleys - represents a strong north-south furrow in the mountains and rises from the narrow Salzach Valley to the Klamm Pass near Lend. Behind it, majestic white glaciers rise up, steep and green rise the highest grassy mountains in Europe. Clear mountain lakes lie in the middle of this dreamlike mountain scenery. With a length of 35 kilometers, the Gastein Valley is the largest

northern valley of the Tauern and a wonderful hiking area. Threaded like pearls, the alpine pastures in the Gastein Valley extend to the border of the Hohe Tauern National Park, the largest nature reserve in the Alps and a truly scenic jewel. The long-distance hiking trail is a total of 350 kilometers long and leads in 25 stages across Salzburg's Pongau. The special thing about the Almenweg is - as the name suggests - the large number of alpine pastures. The origins of local alpine farming go back around 4,000 years to the Bronze Age. However, its heyday dates back to the 12th to the 15th century. At that time, several farmers shared their use and thus benefited from the common infrastructure. Nowadays, hikers and mountaineers enjoy regional delicacies on the rustic alpine pastures and experience Austrian hospitality here in a delicious way.

## Highlights

- + **OUT AND ABOUT ON ONE OF AUSTRIA'S MOST POPULAR LONG-DISTANCE HIKING TRAILS**
- + **HIGH ALPINE NATURE EXPERIENCE**
- + **ALPINE HUT ADVENTURES WITH MAGNIFICENT VIEWS**
- + **TRANQUILITY AND REST ON BEAUTIFUL SITUATED ALPINE PASTURES**
- + **IMMERSE YOURSELF IN A THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD, VARIED NATURAL LANDSCAPE**

## The course of your hiking tour:

### Day 1: Individual arrival in Dorfgastein.

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Located at the entrance to the Gastein Valley, the holiday resort has retained its pleasant village character. With comfort and traditional customs, Dorfgastein offers a relaxed start to your hiking week. At the hotel you will receive your travel documents (maps, further information, vouchers, etc.).

You can park your car free of charge for the hiking period and can also leave luggage at the hotel or leave it in the car, which you do not need for the 4-day hut tour.

(2 nights in Dorfgastein)

## Day 2: Via the Maierhofener Almenweg to the Steiner Hochalm

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Today's circular hike takes you through the district of Mühlbach. Across meadows and an extensive spruce forest, the trail climbs steadily along the Maierhofener Almenweg. Far above the Gastein Valley at over 1500 meters above sea level, the famous Steiner Hochalm is enthroned. Picture-book panoramas are omnipresent, such as those of the peaks of the Hohe Tauern. The alpine pasture is ideal for a culinary hiking break; fresh, deliciously fragrant farmer's doughnuts are prepared daily at the wood-fired oven. After this refreshment, you climb back down to the valley on the sunny side of Dorfgastein with a wonderful view over the Gastein Valley.

**Hiking: 5,5 hours (approx. 12 km, ascent: 730 m in height / descent: 730 m in height)**

## Day 3: Into the "Dorfer Heaven"

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Today's stage requires good physical condition, rewards you with a unique landscape and scores above all with your excellent alpine snack from the farm that the hut belongs to. From Dorfgastein, the route climbs vigorously to the oldest crossing into the Gastein Valley and the Drei-Waller-Chapel. The following section along the ridge to the south to the Rauchkögerl with a wonderful view of the Salzach Valley is pleasant. Via the Amoser Hochalm and the Bettlersteig, you march over gentle mountain ridges and through idyllic mountain primeval forests towards the striking summit of the Bernkogel and the Heinreichalm. A special feature here is its own beautiful alpine lake as well as a good opportunity to observe wild animals such as chamois and marmots.

**Hiking: 8 hours (approx. 14,5 km, ascent: 1,470 m in height / descent: 630 m in height)**

### Alternative hike

Alternatively, you can also climb past the Kokaseralm on a more direct route to the Heinreichalm.

**Hiking: 4 hours (approx. 10 km, ascent: 850 m in height / descent: 20 m in height)**

(alternatively: on the 2-kilometer and 45-minute longer ascent via the Präau Hochalm)

(1 night at the Heinreichalm)

## Day 4: Places of power and far-sightedness

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From the Heinreichalm you hike up to the chapel of the same name first thing in the morning. This is a special place of power. The high-altitude trail now runs across alpine meadows to the 150-year-old, managed Präau Alm, which invites you to take a leisurely break. Other alpine pastures follow, such as the Wölfalm and the Gröbneralm as well as the Walchalm, which are not managed, but serve as accommodation for the alpine farmers when they look after the grazing cattle. After a vigorous ascent, you can enjoy the view of Bad Hofgastein and Bad Gastein. The weather cross invites you to linger while enjoying the panorama. From here you can already see the stage destination, the Biberalm, with probably the most beautiful view of the Gastein Valley and the graceful Hohe Tauern in the background.

(1 night at the Biberalm)

**Hiking: 5 hours (approx. 10 km, ascent: 802 m in height / decent: 756 m in height)**

## **Day 5: Through the Enchanted Forest**

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Hardly any other place in the Gastein Valley is as suitable for experiencing the sunrise in all its splendour as the Biberalm. Today you follow an old connecting path to the Kerscherhütte and Kompberghütte, where you can enjoy the idyll of a mountain village. Through a beautiful and secluded valley incision, the Hytongasteig leads into a forest scented with moss, mushrooms and trees. Later you will pass three managed alpine pastures. The murmur of the Leidalmbach stream and the shade of a mixed forest now accompany the path for a while. Then it goes up to the small saddle and the wide path becomes a narrow path step by step before you reach the Brandner Alm, which is also managed. Accompanied by chamois and eagles, the alpine path continues to the Hofgasteinerhaus.

(1 night in the Hofgasteinerhaus)

**Hiking: 5 hours (approx. 8,5 km, ascent: 787 m in height / decent: 558 m in height)**

## **Day 6: Beautiful Schlossalm**

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After a hearty mountain breakfast, you will leave the Hofgasteinerhaus. Unique plateau landscapes, hidden rock creatures and the "Schlossalmblick" viewing platform make today's hiking day a promising start. In summer, cows graze on the wide area of the Schlossalm in order to maintain and preserve biodiversity. On the way to the Hirschenhütte, with a bit of luck, you can observe bearded vultures in the sky, which were

reintroduced to the Hohe Tauern National Park in the 1980s. At the end of today's hiking day, enjoy a hearty snack in the Hirschenhütte before you take the bus transfer (according to the timetable) to Bad Hofgastein and from there the public bus to Dorfgastein to your starting point. (Total bus costs approx. 11 euros; taxi transfers from the hut owner are also offered).

(1 night in Dorfgastein)

**Hiking: 4 hours (approx. 10 km, ascent: 371 m in height / decent: 1,135 m in height)**

## **Day 7: Individual departure or additional nights**

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Surrounded by lush green meadows, Dorfgastein is a real hiker's paradise. Around 115 kilometres of hiking trails are waiting to be explored. For example, it is a good idea to explore the Fulseck, the local mountain of the village, and discover places of power as well as various themed trails. Additional nights can be booked. Otherwise, the return journey will take place today.



## REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The tour mainly covers alpine terrain. You will need appropriate mountain equipment and basic stamina. Necessary mountain equipment: ankle-high boots, functional clothes, rucksack, food and water, rain and sun protection, first-aid kit, mobile phone, possibly hiking sticks,... The routes are well signposted, although the signs could partly be covered by snow. Hence, it is imperative that you take your maps and your hiking book with you. An experienced guide is available to accompany you upon request.



The carrying out of the tour is dependent on weather conditions! Alternative walking routes are always possible.

## Arrangement

- 6x** overnight stay with breakfast buffet in hotel and alpine breakfast at huts (3 x \*\*\*hotels, 3 x in huts – double rooms or communal bunks, mandatory, running water available, toilets partly biological)
- 1x** Hiking map + guide-book (1 x per room)
- 1x** Parking for 5 days at the starting point
- +** Service hotline daily from 8.00 - 18.00 o'clock (also on weekends)

### Rates per person and arrangement in €:

	01.07. - 18.09.24
***hotel/inn in double room (communal bunks in hut)	509,--
Supplement halfboard (min 2 course dinner at the inn, hearty mountain breakfast and dinner at the huts)	175,--
Supplement single room (1., 2. and 6. night at hotel )	99,--
Mountain guide	on request
Day of arrival	daily

The local tax, also known as visitor's tax, is payable locally to the landlord; the amount depends on the resort and is between €1,00 and €4,00 per person per night. Children up to the age of 15 are usually exempt.

### Notes on staying at an Alpine lodge:

- \*Hut sleeping bag: blankets are available in the huts; necessary but mandatory is only a lightweight cotton/silk sleeping bag liner
- Due to their location, not all huts can offer running water, hot water or showers. In some cases there is also no flushing system in the toilets.
- On most huts, card payment is not possible. Take enough cash with you for food and drinks.

Become a sponsor of Austrian mountain rescue and enjoy the comprehensive rescue protection:  
[www.bergrettung-ooe.at/en/foerderer-werden](http://www.bergrettung-ooe.at/en/foerderer-werden)

The standard [terms and conditions of the Salzkammergut Touristik GmbH](#) apply in the current version.

Rates and operating hours / timetables are subject to change

Our recommendations:

Get a travel cancellation insurance.

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## Informations

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For environmental reasons, we recommend arriving and departing by public transport (train/bus). We are happy to help you organise your train journey within Austria. Talk to us!