

"THE IMPORTANT THING IS NOT TO STOP QUESTIONING. CURIOSITY HAS ITS OWN REASON FOR EXISTING." – ALBERT EINSTEIN

THE ALTA VIA 1 SELF GUIDED TREK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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We've compiled a list of the most commonly asked questions about this trip.

Hopefully you find some of these useful but if you have a specific question that isn't covered in the FAQ's, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

For more information please head over to our Alta Via 1 Self Guided trips [here](#).

ARE THERE ANY SAFETY PRECAUTIONS I SHOULD BE AWARE OF?

Safety is paramount. Always check the weather forecast before starting your hike. Carry a map and a charged phone. Be cautious in alpine terrain, and adhere to trail markers and signs. We are on hand to advise every step of the way and will be in constant contact with you.

WHEN'S THE EARLIEST / LATEST YOU CAN TACKLE THIS TRIP?

Same as for most hut-to-hut routes in the Alps, they can be walked during the refuges' opening season. In the Dolomites this goes from middle/end June to the end of September. Outside of this time it will be difficult to find accommodation. Some huts have a winter room that hikers can use but this is just an empty unmanned shelter with beds and sometimes a log burner. Outside of the huts' opening season, as well, there could be snow on the ground making the trek more difficult and potentially dangerous if not equipped in the right way and with the right knowledge about the winter mountain environment.

WHAT ARE THE WW1 CAVES ALL ABOUT?

The area around Cortina d'Ampezzo and Passo Falzarego is where the old border between Italy and the Austro-Hungarian Empire used to be. Lots of battles were fought here during WWI, and both parties were using the mountains at their advantage to protect the front line. In the area of Cinque Torri/Passo Falzarego/Passo Valparola are still visible some of the trenches and tunnels built by the soldiers from both sides during the war, and some of these can be visited by tourists and hikers.

The main tunnel network was dug into the Lagazuoi mountains, just below Rifugio Lagazuoi. If spending the night there, it is possible to descend to passo Falzarego through the tunnels the next morning, before continuing on the AV1. The tunnels, however, are graded as a via ferrata, which means that you will need to have the right equipment (harness, helmet, via ferrata lanyards and a headtorch) in order to go through them safely.

IS THERE SNOW ON THE TRAILS EARLY AND LATE SEASON?

It depends on the amount of snow that accumulates on the ground over the winter. There might still be snow until the first week of July after a very snowy winter. If there's lots of snow some of the passes, such as Forcella del Lago on the way to Rifugio Lagazuoi on day 2 of the hike, are impassable and alternative plans need to be put in place (alternative routes are possible). On the higher sections of the trek it's not unusual to encounter snowfall even in the middle of the summer. This, however, doesn't often cause a problem, but care and the right equipment are needed.

HOW EXPOSED IS IT? (COMPARATIVELY TO THE TMB)

The Alta Via 1 in the Dolomites follows established and well maintained paths. It crosses, however, some pretty exposed and steep terrain as well. The Dolomites are full of scree slopes and boulder fields, so it's not unusual to find these along the way. The AV1 requires some hiking experience, sure footedness and being comfortable with exposure. It is definitely a step up from other treks such as the Tour du Mont Blanc and should not be underestimated.

DO THEY HAVE WIFI?

Some of the huts have WiFi but some others don't, especially those huts that are more remote. Even when WiFi is available, beware that it might not always work, or it might only be switched on for a limited amount of time. If you need to check information such as the weather or the bus timetables just ask the guardians, they'll be able to help. As for the rest of the time, not having WiFi might be a good opportunity to have a chat with some fellow hikers!

DO THEY HAVE CHARGING POINTS?

Yes, you will always be able to charge your phone and electronic devices. Sometimes there won't be charging points in your room, but there will be some in the common room or in the toilets. There might not be many of these, so you will need to take turns at charging your electronics. Some hikers prefer to take a small external power bank with them to charge their stuff. This could be a good idea, but I won't recommend to take one that's too big and heavy. A small one that could charge your phone once or twice would be enough, even though is not strictly necessary.

DO THE REFUGES HAVE SHOWERS?

Most refuges have showers, but not all of them. Some of the most basic and remote ones do not have shower facilities, or only have cold showers. Some of the showers, when available, work with a token that needs to be purchased directly from the hut. This gives you access to a limited amount of water (normally close to a 3 minutes shower), in order not to waste it.

Water in the high mountains is scarce and a shower is very much a luxury. Most huts use water that has been collected over winter or that comes from a spring. If the previous winter has been particularly dry then the water reserves might be limited and run out in the middle of the summer, or a spring could go dry. If this happens, then, the hut guardians might be forced to stop the use of showers even in those huts that have shower facilities. In this case the limited water available will be used for the toilets and kitchen, which are definitely more needed services than showers.

WHAT'S THE FOOD LIKE IN THE HUTS?

The food in the refuges is generally hearty and delicious, with a mix of traditional Italian and Tyrolean dishes. Expect pasta, polenta, soups, stews, cured meats, and cheeses. Many huts offer vegetarian options, but vegan and gluten-free meals may be harder to find, especially in smaller or more remote refuges. If you have dietary restrictions, please let us know at the time of booking so we can notify the huts.

CAN I REFILL MY WATER ALONG THE WAY?

Yes, but water sources vary along the route. Some huts have taps with potable water, while others may require you to buy bottled water. Natural streams and fountains can be found on the trail, but it's always wise to carry a water filter or purification tablets to ensure safe drinking water.

DO I NEED CASH, OR DO HUTS TAKE CARD PAYMENTS?

Some huts accept credit cards, but many still operate on a cash-only basis, particularly in more remote locations. It's advisable to carry enough cash for meals, drinks, and any extras you may need along the way.

DO I NEED A SLEEPING BAG?

No, you don't need to bring a sleeping bag, but a lightweight sleeping bag liner is required. Refuges provide blankets and pillows, but for hygiene reasons, hikers must bring their own liner.

HOW DIFFICULT IS THE ALTA VIA 1?

The AV1 is a challenging trek but does not require technical climbing skills. It involves long days of hiking with significant elevation gain and loss. While it is manageable for fit hikers with some experience in alpine terrain, it is more demanding than some other popular routes like the TMB. Good physical preparation and a solid hiking background are recommended.

CAN I DO THE ALTA VIA 1 SOLO?

Yes, the AV1 can be done solo, and many hikers tackle it alone. The trails are well-marked, and refuges provide a social atmosphere where you can meet fellow hikers. However, solo hikers should be extra cautious with navigation, weather conditions, and safety.

ARE GUIDED TRIPS AVAILABLE?

Yes, guided trips are available for those who prefer a structured experience with expert support. Guides provide route knowledge, safety oversight, and logistical coordination, making the trek more accessible for those who are less experienced or want a more relaxed experience. Please see our trips [here](#).