

Trek the Dachstein Trail

Trip style: Guided trails

Destination:  Austria

Trip code: DLN10-LDW13

Grades: 1-6

Carbon Footprint:  573kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Austria is full of showstopping walks, but one of the best by far is the Dachstein Trail. At 2,995m above sea level, the main summit of the Dachstein Mountains is one of the highest elevations in the Northern Alps and hikes here reward with a fairytale landscape of alpine pastures, cloud-piercing peaks, and glistening glacial lakes. Venture into the Notgasse gorge in search of its UNESCO-protected prehistoric petroglyphs, ascend from the shores of Lake Hallstatt to cross a sky-high suspension bridge overlooking the Salzkammergut mountains, and stay in a traditional mountain hut where the welcome and hospitality is almost on par with the views.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Visiting the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Hallstatt-Dachstein
- Staying in traditional Alpine huts
- Discovering UNESCO-protected petroglyphs
- Walking the Dachstein trail
- Marvelling at the majestic Lake Gosau

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Full programme of guided walks led by local HF Holidays Leaders
- Comfortable accommodation
- Half-board (10 breakfasts, 4 picnic lunches, 10 evening meals)
- Group airport transfers
- A tree is planted in the Austrian Alps for every booking of this tour
- Two ascents via cable car
- One train ride from Bad Mitterndorf/Pichl to Bad Aussee
- One return boat trip from Hallstatt station to Hallstatt market
- Luggage transfers
- Return flights from the UK including hold baggage and airport transfers

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

You'll be transferred to Gosau Valley to start the holiday surrounded by heart-stirring scenery. It's considered one of the greatest mountain areas in the Northern Alps and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997. You'll stay overnight – hopefully arriving in time to catch the sun set over the mountain peaks and lakes.

Day 2: GOSAU TO HOPPURGLHUTTE

Distance: 10km (six hours) Ascent: 850m We'll catch the 'Gosaukambahn' to the Zwieselalm, a lush mountain area used for grazing that sits at 1,475m above sea level. From here, our walk begins. We'll head towards the 'Bible Path', aptly named after the Bible prints that were smuggled along this path at the time of the Counter-Reformation. You'll skirt below a chain of mountains known as Gosaukamm and through idyllic alpine pastures before passing through the area of Stuhlalm. Then following the path in an arc around the most renowned peak of the Gosaukamm, the Bischofsmütze, your efforts will be rewarded with breathtaking panoramic views. Our walk ends in Hofpürghütte, where we'll spend the night. Note: includes packed lunch for the day and luggage transport from Gosau to Steinerhaus where you'll spend the fifth night. Luggage and sleeping bag for your overnight stay at the Hofpürghütte, Dachstein Südwandhütte, and Guttenberghaus are to be taken along by yourself.

Day 3: HOHER DACHSTEIN

Distance: 12.5km (seven hours) Ascent: 895m We'll embark on a walk following the Salzburg Almenweg to an area called Rinderfeld to find fields covered with limestone blocks and stones brought down by landslides. And running through the middle of this dreamlike landscape is a mountain stream boasting crystal waters. We'll continue our walk past these huge formations and climb to the 'Tor', meaning 'gate' in German. Once we arrive at the highest point in today's walk, we'll cross the Salzburg – Styrian border, walking beneath the steep walls of Torstein, Mitterspitz, and Hoher Dachstein. Our destination for the evening is Dachstein Südwandhütte where we'll stay in a hut that lies below the steep south walls of the impressive Dachstein itself.

Day 4: RAMSAU TO GUTTENBERGHAUS

The Guttenberghaus, located at 2,147m above sea level, is our destination for today. This Alpine hut is the highest in Styria and dates back 100 years, so it's got plenty of original rustic charm. From here, you'll gaze out over Ramsau and the Enns Valley as well as the Lower and Higher Tauern just opposite. Option 1 Distance: 6.5km (six hours) Ascent: 1,044m We'll walk directly from the hotel in Ramsau, enjoying impressive views of the imposing Dachstein massif. Our ascent takes us via the Anton-Baum-Weg and to the Guttenberghaus, where we'll wander through sparse forests before reaching a watercourse that sits in front of Larchboden. As our journey continues, we head uphill along a narrow path with the Ramsau now back in view. We then reach the Alpine Club Hut for the evening. Option 2 Distance: 9.5km (six hours) Ascent: 264m You'll swing over the mountaintops in the Dachstein Cable Car as we climb with ease to the station at 2,687m above sea level. Take a peek at where we'll be walking – the Schladming-Dachstein Glacier. We'll navigate a wide arc over the rugged landscape of the Dachstein Massif – a complete contrast to the lush pastures the days before. Then you'll follow the Feisterscharte to Guttenberghaus.

Day 5: STODERZINKEN

Distance: 13km (seven hours) Ascent: 552m We leave the Guttenberghaus behind us today as we venture over the northern slope of the Sinabell. Along the way, we'll walk past mountain rocks, pine forests, and gorges as we pass over the 'Am Stein' plateau. The first stage takes us through barren rocky landscapes before we reach lush meadows and verdant forests. We'll take a breather at the Grafenbergalm to take in our surroundings and then continue to our endpoint, Stoderzinken. Here we'll be greeted by a small collection of huts and inns, which sit below one of the most panoramic mountains in the north of Styria.

Day 6: FOREST TRAILS & ROCK CARVINGS

Distance: 22km (eight hours) Ascent: 627m Take in the peaceful surroundings of a larch forest as we trail past pine trees along an ancient mule and smuggler's path. Then we'll wind our way up through a 30metre-high gorge in search of the UNESCO-protected ancient petroglyphs. Once we arrive at a hut on the Viehbergalm, we'll take a scenic break before continuing past the Hochmuhleck with the Kemet Mountains off in the distance. Then we dip into a forest near Steinitzenalm and begin descending towards Bad Mitterndorf for the evening.

Day 7: KOPPENRAUN VALLEY

Distance: 15km (six hours) Ascent: 166m From Bad Mitterndorf we'll take the train to Bad Aussee where our walk through the wild Koppentraun valley begins. You'll get a perfect view over the Koppentraun's unruly waters as we cross over a suspension bridge on our walk via Sarstein. Verdant forests flank the river while the sight of fly fishing in its crystal waters add to this idyllic scene. Once we get to the Koppental refuge we'll take a well-deserved break before passing an old railway tunnel. Here, we'll find the Koppenbrüllerhöhle cave, one of three famous caves in the Dachstein region. The cave offers incredible sounds of the hidden brooks that run through the interior of the mountain, particularly impressive after heavy rainfall. Our walk continues to Obertraun where we'll hop on the ferry to our stop for the night in Hallstatt.

Day 8: FREE DAY

Enjoy a free day to spend as you wish. We'll be based in the charming village of Hallstatt with an abundance of activities to fill your time. Explore the old town and wander around the lake's edge. Hallstatt is also well-known for its skywalk, a platform that perches over the houses of Hallstatt and boasts unbeatable views of the surrounding area.

Day 9: LAKE HALLSTATT

Distance: 17km (eight hours) Ascent: 1108m Tie your shoelaces tightly today as we'll be embarking on a long and rewarding walk. Firstly, we'll hop on the ferry at Hallstatt Market to cross the lake, a journey not dissimilar to the Norwegian Fjords. Then after disembarking we'll follow the east bank trail, crossing a sky-high suspension bridge for a picture-perfect view over the deepest point of Lake Hallstatt. We'll continue walk alongside the lake with views of the Salzkammergut mountains right beside us. Reaching Bad Goisern, our ascent then leads us by the Trockentannalm to the Goisererhutte at 1,592m. And after a full day of walking, you'll get to wind down while tucking into some local delicacies and taking in the views from the hut terrace. Note: you'll need to carry your own luggage and sleeping bag for the overnight stay.

Day 10: BIBLE PATH & IGLMOOSALM

Distance: 7km (four hours) Ascent: 46m We'll walk via Igmoosalm taking the Bible Path over mountain pastures to Gosau. You'll not be able to take your eyes off the jagged peaks of Gosau Ridge, formed 200 million years ago as a coral reef in warm seawater.

Day 11: DEPARTURE DAY

Time to pack your things for departure. You'll be transferred to the airport for your return flight.

Cooee Alpine Hotel Dachstein

This 3-star hotel is located in Gosau and will be the hotel used for the first and last night on the holiday, apart from the September group who will spend their last night in Kirchenwirt. All rooms are ensuite and have a flat screen TV, radio and hairdryer.

Hofpürghütte - Alpine Hut

The Hofpürghütte, a serviced Alpine hut, offers warm showers and a drying room for shoes. This is hut accommodation so there is no WiFi however there may be some phone reception. Please note the showers are coin-operated (€ 5 per person for 3 minutes of warm water, dependent on availability of water). You will need a light hut sleeping bag or bed liner for this accommodation, to be carried with you through the day. Rooms are dormitories with 8 to 19 people sharing.

Dachstein Südwandhütte

A serviced Alpine hut with a mixture of shared rooms and dormitories, You will need a light hut sleeping bag or bed liner for this accommodation. There is a shared washroom but no shower is available. The hut has a large terrace that offers incredible views of the massif of Dachstein. The rooms are dormitories with 6 to 18 people sharing.

Guttenberghaus

A serviced Alpine Hut, built in 1914. There is dormitory accommodation and you will need a light hut sleeping bag or bed liner for this hut. There are showers but usage is dependent on water availability (€ 2,50 per person for 3.5 min warm water). The hut has a large spacious terrace that boasts panoramic views. The rooms are dormitories with sharing of 4-17 people.

Hotel Post

This 3-star hotel is located in Bad Mitterndorf. All rooms have ensuite facilities, cable TV and a safe.

Gasthof Bergfried

This guesthouse is located in Halstatt. Rooms are equipped with ensuite facilities, a TV, hairdryer and internet. Dinner will be served in the nearby restaurant Gasthof Weisses Lamm - about 8 minute walk from the accommodation.

Goisererhütte

A serviced Alpine Hut that can house up to 150 guests. The hut has two toilet facilities, a washroom, a storage rack, cloakroom and place to dry your things, if needed. There are no shower facilities. There are bunk beds with 3x8 people.

Kirchenwirt

Only the September departure group will stay at this guesthouse for their final night in Gosau. All rooms have ensuite facilities, internet, a safety deposit box and a hairdryer.