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**TRIP DETAILS**

10 days

Germany, Austria & Italy

7 days moderate to strenuous  
hiking on varied terrain  
(max. elev. (9,824')

9 nights hotels or guesthouses

**DATES**

Jun 26-Jul 5  
Jul 10-Jul 19  
Jul 31-Aug 9  
Aug 28-Sep 6

**LAND COST**

\$3450 per person  
(6-16 members)

# ACROSS THE ALPS

*Inn-to-Inn Hiking from Bavaria to Italy*

**TRIP LEVEL  
STRENUOUS**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- *Hike across the Alps along parts of the E5, one of Europe's famous long distance trails*
- *Encounter some of the most spectacular scenery in Europe, from rugged mountains to glaciers, from medieval villages to fairytale castles*
- *Accommodations in charming chalet-style guesthouses or hotels on an itinerary that's exclusive to MTS!*

Revised July 17, 2007



# ACROSS THE ALPS

*Inn-to-Inn Hiking From Bavaria to Italy*

Ten days, six valleys, three countries! Join us for an exhilarating ramble across the Alps along parts of the E5, one of Europe's most famous and challenging long-distance trails—and one of its most spectacular! Alpine meadows awash with flowers, rugged peaks, and glaciers galore fill the vistas as you cross the Alps from Germany's picturesque Bavaria through the glaciated mountains of Austrian Tyrol and ending in the medieval city of Meran (Merano) in northern Italy.

Accommodations for the traditional E5 are in dorm-style mountain huts, but we've modified the classic itinerary slightly so you can rest comfortably at night in charming chalet-style guesthouses or hotels tucked away in verdant valleys (including a four-star hotel with spa, sauna, and swimming pool!). And vehicle support means you'll only need to carry a daypack during the day (the rest of your luggage will be transported to your next hotel every day). *Wunderbar!*

Local guides will accompany us, providing an insider's view of this part of the world, a land of fantastic mountains and *gemutlichkeit*, a kind of friendliness we'll find nowhere else in the world.



## ITINERARY

☞ This trip begins with a rendezvous at the Best Western Atrium Hotel in downtown Munich, Germany, on Day 1.

### DAY 1 ~ Arrive in Munich

Arrive at any time in Munich, Germany, and transfer on your own to our group hotel in the city center. The remainder of the day is free to rest, relax, or explore on your own. The pedestrian zone of Munich with the famous "Frauenkirche," a huge church where you can climb up more than 300 feet for a great view, is all within walking distance. You'll meet with the trip leader and group in the evening for a briefing and a "welcome" dinner at a local beer garden.

*D...Best Western Atrium, Munich*

### DAY 2 ~ Schloss Neuschwanstein – Oy-Mittelberg

After breakfast we transfer two hours to Füssen, set at the edge of the Alps and one of Germany's best known medieval towns. Here in a unique and vastly scenic setting, the Bavarian King Ludwig II built his dream castle, Neuschwanstein, a fairytale castle right out of Cinderella and Germany's number one tourist attraction. We will hike up to the Chateau (40 minutes) and have a guided tour of the building, followed by a lunch in Füssen.

After lunch we'll have time to stroll around in Füssen, a remarkably beautiful old city. In the afternoon we transfer 30 minutes to the scenic Bavarian village of Oy-Mittelberg, where we stay in the charming Krone guesthouse. There will be time for a 1- to 2-hour stroll above this lovely village with great views of several mountain ranges. After dinner the guide will recheck the equipment and advise us about weather and trail conditions.

*B,L,D...Gasthaus Krone, Oy-Mittelberg*

### **DAY 3 ~ From Oberstdorf to the Lech Valley**

Transfer 50 minutes by bus to Oberstdorf, one of Germany's famous winter resorts. We'll begin hiking from here at about 10 a.m., with an ascent to the Kemptner Hütte at 6,055 feet. This is a large mountain accommodation that is perfectly situated for climbs in the immediate area. After lunch we will continue our hike up to a ridge where ibex and marmots can sometimes be spotted before descending to the Lech Valley in Tyrol, Austria. A short bus transfer brings us to our cozy Gasthof zur Gemütlichkeit in the very small and idyllic village of Bschlabs. (6 hours hiking; 3,117' elevation gain/2,789' elevation drop.)

*B,L,D...Gasthof zur Gemütlichkeit, Bschlabs*

### **DAY 4 ~ Lech Valley to Inn Valley**

From the Gasthaus Gemütlichkeit we hike up to the Anhalterhütte, one of the many German and Austrian Alpine Club huts. After lunch we continue up to the Steinjöchle pass (7,211') before descending to the road where our bus will be waiting for us. A short transfer brings us to Landeck, where we can enjoy the comfort of the beautiful four-star Hotel Enzian, with its spa, sauna, and outdoor swimming pool. Landeck is a medieval town and has a large old castle that we can visit, time permitting. (4½ hours hiking; 2,625' elevation gain/984' elevation drop.)

*B,L,D...Hotel Enzian, Landeck*

### **DAY 5 ~ Inn Valley to the Pitz Valley**

We make use of a gondola to gain 4,600 feet altitude, then follow a ridge that crosses several summits with stunning views to the Venetberg (8,241'). We hike above treeline all day, which makes for exceptional views and some relaxed alpine hiking without any drastic ascents. We come to the Pitztal Valley where we have some time in the afternoon to relax in the village of Wenns. (4 hours hiking; 1,500' elevation gain/2,700' elevation drop.)

*B,L,D...Pitztaler Hof, Wenns*

### **DAY 6 ~ Braunschweiger Hütte**

We travel to the very end of the Pitztal, then at about 6,600 feet we start our ascent. The trail is spectacular, with more and more glaciers appearing in view. This is a wild and breathtaking landscape, and we see many peaks above 11,000 feet as we hike into high alpine terrain. After two hours we reach the Braunschweiger Hütte (9,053'), first built in 1892 and majestically located in an amphitheater of glaciated mountains dominated by the Wildspitze (12,398'). After a hearty lunch here, we walk up to the Pitztaler Jöchle (9,824') and scramble across some rocks and have a good chance of spotting some ibex, animals similar to mountain sheep but with long horns. We traverse some snow and descend into the famous Ötztal Valley, where the mummified remains of Ötzi, the prehistoric "Iceman," were found perfectly preserved in the glacial ice several years ago. A public bus brings us to our hotel in Zwieselstein. (7 hours hiking; 3,640' elevation gain/1,969' elevation drop.)

*B,L,D...Hotel Neue Post, Zwieselstein*

### **DAY 7 ~ Italy**

From the hotel we strike out on a nice trail through woods of larches to about 1,500 feet. Here our bus will be waiting and will bring us up to the Timmelsjoch (8,528'), a 10-minute drive, from where we hike from Austria to Italy and down to the small village of Moos. A shuttle takes us to lunch, possibly the Sandwirt restaurant, former home of Andreas Hofer who led the Tyroleans against Napoleon's French and Bavarian troops in a cruel war at the end of the 18th century. Here we'll indulge in our first Italian meal, then it's on to St. Leonhard where we will stay in a charming pension or hotel (5 hours hiking; 4,757' elevation drop.)

*B,L,D...Hotel TBA, St. Leonhard*

### **DAY 8 ~ Meran (Merano)**

On our last day of hiking we drive as far as possible and then start hiking to the Pfandler Alm. (It was here that Andreas Hofer hid until he was found and finally executed by the French.) We'll cross beautiful alpine meadows rich with wildflowers and many "almen" (the grass that creates the best milk and cheese) as we approach the ridge. After a steep ascent it goes flat along the ridges to another rustic hut where we will have lunch. Another half hour brings us to the Hirzer Alm, from where we take a gondola 5,000 feet down to hot and Mediterranean climates.

We use the public bus for the transfer to medieval Merano (984'), a quiet town of 70,000 inhabitants with typical Tyrolean architecture. Dinner is at one of the great old and charming beer gardens. Overnight at the Hotel Europa, located in the city center. (4-5 hours hiking; 820' elevation gain/3,281' elevation drop.)

*B,L,D...Hotel Europa, Meran*

### **DAY 9 ~ Munich**

After breakfast we drive back to Munich (5 hours). We'll stop along the way to see the glacier mummy in the museum in Bozen. An English-speaking guide will give details on the extraordinary artifacts on display. There is a chance for a break in Innsbruck or Garmisch-Partenkirchen, two famous Olympic cities along the way to Munich. We will stay again at the Best Western Atrium where we have stored our luggage for return travel. Festive farewell dinner at one of the great Munich restaurants or, if it's sunny, in one of the famous Bavarian beer gardens in Munich.

*B,L,D...Hotel Best Western Atrium, Munich*

### **DAY 10 ~ Depart**

Transfer to the airport by taxi or train (it's a five-minute walk to the train station) at any time and depart on homeward-bound flights or continue to other destinations in Europe.

## **LAND COST**

\$3450 per person (6-16 members)

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations.

Single Supplement—\$600 for "requested" singles; \$300 for "forced" singles. If you prefer single accommodations, you must pay the Single Supplement Fee. If you're traveling alone and wish to share accommodations, we'll try our best to find you a roommate. If that's not possible, we will only charge you half of the single supplement.

### **What's Included**

- ◆ expert leadership
- ◆ assistant guide
- ◆ accommodations in guesthouses, pensions, and hotels as noted
- ◆ meals as noted (B=Breakfast, D=Dinner)
- ◆ sightseeing as noted in the itinerary
- ◆ ground transportation, gondola costs
- ◆ transportation of the luggage from hotel to hotel every day

- ◆ entrance fees to Neuschwanstein castle
- ◆ basic medical and evacuation insurance

### **What's Not**

International airfare to Munich and return; meals not noted in itinerary; insurance other than basic medical and evacuation insurance as noted above (we strongly recommend you purchase the supplementary trip insurance offered by Mountain Travel Sobek, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to leader, guides and local staff; airport transfers; excess baggage charges; airport taxes; and items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

### **Air Travel**

Airfare is not included in the land cost of our trips. For air reservations, we recommend you contact the airlines directly, either by phone or the Internet. In addition, many travelers elect to use their "frequent flyer" miles when traveling with us. **But please check with our staff before purchasing or obtaining your tickets.** We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule and ensure we have enough participants to operate the trip.

## **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT**

### **Expert Leadership**

Expert leadership is the key to an exciting, unforgettable experience. Our trips feature gifted leaders for whom leading trips is a true vocation. Besides showing you wonders you'd never find on your own, they make sure everything runs smoothly and safely without a hitch. They are knowledgeable about all aspects of your trip, and take great pleasure in sharing their insights with you. More than just guides, they positively elevate your experience by being teachers, companions, and the best of friends. You'll be in good hands with them every step of the way.

Although leader assignments are subject to change, **Valentin Hingerl** regularly guides this trip. Valentin, 48, is a native of Bavaria with a passion for hiking, biking, skating, and ski mountaineering. Besides guiding, he also owns a music and language school (Inlingua) in the city of Kempten in the very south of Germany. Because he attended a school with many native English teachers, he has a strong affinity for English and American culture. He looks forward to meeting you in Munich.

Leader assignments will be confirmed in the Final Bulletin sent to you three weeks prior to departure.

### **Activity Level**

Mountain Travel Sobek trips are designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active and have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. We rate this trip as strenuous in nature. You should be an experienced hiker in excellent physical condition. This trip is challenging; you must be prepared and capable of walking an average four to seven hours a day on trails with steep ascents and descents averaging 2,000-3,000 feet up and down most days (one day has an even longer descent of up to 4,757'!). No technical climbing or other special abilities are required. There are no chains or ladders, but there is one section of about 300 feet where hands must be used for easy rock scrambling (we always carry a rope if anybody feels uneasy but that happens very rarely). Average daily hiking distance is about 7-9 miles.

You need to be in excellent health and top physical condition to enjoy such an experience, with adequate cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, and excellent balance. You must also be able to descend on rocks,

snow, or gravel without too much trouble. We recommend that you start a moderate training program several months before departure, then slowly build up to a more strenuous level. Since training is highly sport-specific, include some hiking or running in your program. Hiking up and down steep trails with a daypack, mountain biking, running, jogging, and other aerobic exercise for at least one hour four or five times a week is very important if you want to enjoy the hike. Remember, the best way to train for a hike is to go hiking. Wear your boots and go up and down as many hills as you can to strengthen your leg muscles and build up your stamina.

Consult your physician if you have questions concerning your underlying health. We can help answer questions for you or your physician concerning required levels of fitness and health conditions at altitude. If you have concerns about your ability to do this trip, we can suggest appropriate alternatives.

## THE NEXT STEP

### **Ready to go? Signing up is easy!**

Just call us at 1-888-MTSOBEK (687-6235) and reserve your spot! You can also book a reservation online at our website ([www.mtsobek.com](http://www.mtsobek.com)). If you prefer to use a travel agent, he or she can book your trip at no extra cost and provide other helpful assistance.

### **Then Leave the Rest to Us**

Before you go, we provide you with extensive pre-departure information, including clothing recommendations, suggested reading lists, and other details.

### **Why Mountain Travel Sobek is Your First Choice for Adventure**

Mountain Travel Sobek is the pioneer in active adventure travel. No other adventure travel company can lay claim to that title. We were the first to take Americans trekking in Nepal, raft the wild rivers of Africa, and open up many previously inaccessible corners of the world to curious travelers. We set the standard for adventure travel and have a strong reputation for excellence that we do everything we can to maintain. Since we are the leading adventure company, we have a lot to live up to, so we make sure we provide safe, quality trips and the best customer service to our passengers.

### **References**

Don't take our word for how great our trips are. We'll be happy to provide you with references of satisfied past travelers.

### **Questions?**

Feel free to call us at 1-888-MTSOBEK (687-6235) if you still have any questions or concerns. We're here to help you. You can also check out our website at [www.mtsobek.com](http://www.mtsobek.com).

### **Note on Itinerary**

Although we will do our very best to adhere to the itinerary schedule as listed, it is subject to change for numerous reasons beyond our control. Please read the Limitations of Liability and Booking Conditions in the four-page Participant Information Form.

**Conditions of Participation**

Your participation on a Mountain Travel Sobek trip is subject to the conditions stated in the four-page Participant Information Form, which includes the Agreement and Release from Liability and the Booking Conditions. We urge you to read this information carefully, and to call us if you have any questions.

**Note on Services**

We often use local suppliers who provide services that may include transportation, equipment, logistic support, and other services (hotels, restaurants, etc.). We do not own or operate these independent suppliers. We work with service providers who share our commitment to safety and quality, and work closely with them to develop itineraries unique to Mountain Travel Sobek.

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