

## Silvretta Ski Tour

Austria's popular Silvretta range is perfect ski touring terrain - with steady climbs, good descents and a fine selection of accessible peaks. The region also has one of the finest hut networks in the Alps - with hot showers and restaurant service being the norm. This is a comfortable 'ski focussed' touring week, with numerous variations available en route to suit the weather and team aspirations. **\*\*Free safety equipment rental is included on this tour\*\***

### The Skiing

The terrain makes for perfect ski journeying with the added bonus of numerous short, relatively straightforward but aesthetic mountaineering peaks. Options are varied and the system of (very) comfortable huts makes it easy to tailor and adjust plans to retain a high degree of flexibility on any given tour. The itinerary below takes in most of the Silvretta chain, following a rough East-West traverse along the Austrian/Swiss border. It has the added bonus of returning to the same valley where you started from.

**NB** We meet in Innsbruck because it's easy to get to and if you turn up early there's good warm up skiing accessible directly from town. Onward travel to the Silvretta is also much easier and quicker, as we are able to hire a private transfer minibus, rather than relying on public transport to resort.

### Sample itinerary

Subject to weather and snow conditions, the plan is as follows. Please note that this is a sample itinerary only - on trips like this, itineraries are always subject to change as the current snow, weather and avalanche conditions need to be taken into account. This is an essential part of safety planning for all backcountry skiing, so please be ready for changes as part of your trip.

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Day 0</b><br>Sat  | PM, meet in <b>Innsbruck</b> for the <b>Evening Briefing</b> .<br>Your guide will run through <b>kit checks</b> and <b>safety routines</b> , as well as hand out any rental equipment, before going on to discuss the <b>current weather</b> and <b>mountain conditions</b> and how these affect our plans. We'll have maps and guidebooks of the area to show you, so if you've any further questions or last minute requests, then this is the ideal time to bring them up. Overnight in the valley (accommodation included in the trip cost). |
| <b>Day 1</b><br>Sun  | <b>Warm up Day</b> and approach to the <b>Heidelberg Hut</b> . AM Travel to the Silvretta, utilise lift system at Ischgl for warm up runs, brushing up on skills and checking everyone's kit before setting off on the main tour.<br>PM and make a scenic traverse through two cols to ski down to the Heidelberg Hut in Switzerland. 300m ascent, 760m descent ~3-5hrs                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Day 2</b><br>Mon  | <b>Kronenjoch to Jamtal Hut</b><br>A steady angled skin up to the Kronenjoch taking in Breite Krone (3097m) en route, followed by a picturesque descent back into Austria down the Breites Wasser valley to the Jamtal Hut. 800 ascent, 900m descent ~5-6hrs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Day 3</b><br>Tue  | <b>Day Tour - Jamtal Hut</b><br>Numerous day tours are possible from the hut - eg the Hintere Jamspitze - final choice dependant on snow and weather conditions. ~1000m ascent and descent ~5hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Day 4</b><br>Wed  | <b>Ochsenscharte to Wiesbadener Hut</b><br>Skin up the Jamtal Glacier to the important Ochsenscharte Col (2913m), before making a great north west facing descent to down the Vermunt Glacier to the Wiesbadener Hut. 800m ascent, 750m descent ~4-5hrs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Day 5</b><br>Thur | <b>Day Tour - Wiesbadener Hut</b><br>Numerous day tours are possible from the hut - final choice dependant on snow and weather conditions. ~800m ascent and descent ~5hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Day 6</b><br>Fri  | <b>The Final Day</b><br>Mostly downhill! A short (300m ascent) up to the Rauhkopfscharte, then a long, north facing descent down the Bieltal. A pisted track then leads back to Galtur via schussing and poling.<br>~300m ascent, 1100m descent ~3-4hrs.<br>PM Travel Back to Innsbruck and final nights accommodation (included in the trip cost).                                                                                                                                                                                              |

## Fitness and Experience

This is a multi day hut-to-hut tour with typically 7-800m of climb per day, so you can expect to be skinning for 3-4 hours a day. You need some previous ski touring experience in order to join this tour – eg a weeks' day touring is usually enough - and the trip is suitable as a first hut to hut tour. As this is a multi day tour, if you haven't skied with us before, then we may ask for a reference to confirm your experience/ski ability for the trip. The first day is relatively easy with time for some skills instruction, and the tour has lots of variations to suit the group.

Please see our website **Fitness Levels and Tech Levels as a further reference point (detailed on this trips course page >**

**Fitness and Experience section)** - you should be at **Fitness Level 2-3 and Tech Level 2-3** to enjoy this trip. If you need to top up your fitness before the trip and need some help, then please contact us, or check out the training advice page on our Knowledge Base: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/insider-knowledge-ski/>

## Guiding Team

All our Alpine programmes are staffed by IFMGA Mountain Guides working at a maximum ratio of 1:6, or occasionally 2:7 with one aspirant guide joining the team too on the Silvretta Ski Tour. We work with a small team of regular guides who's profiles can be found on our website, but we occasionally employ other guides during peak season.

## Course Briefing

The course briefing will be held in the lobby of your hotel at 7pm, the day before your first day of skiing. Your guide will make sure everyone has settled into their rooms, do a quick equipment check and go through the weather forecast and general plan for the week. Hotel details will be sent to you with your final joining instructions.

## Included in the Price

- Guides fees and all guides expenses
- 2 nights accommodation in Innsbruck, including breakfast.
- 5 nights accommodation in mountain huts, including breakfast and 3 course evening meal.
- Return transfers between Innsbruck and the tour starting point
- Equipment hire: avalanche transceiver, shovel, probe, ice axe, crampons, harness

## Not included in the Price (see below for further info)

- Uplift and travel
- Lunches and drinks
- Evening meals in Innsbruck
- Flights and transfers to resort
- Insurance

## Ski FAQ's

Can I recharge my phone in a hut? Can I leave my luggage in the hotel whilst on tour? Answers to questions like these and many more can be found on our Ski FAQ's page here: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/insider-knowledge-ski/ski-touring-faqs/>

## Warm up Skiing and Sightseeing

If you want to arrive early and do some warm up skiing/sightseeing etc in Innsbruck, then hop onto bus F back into town and the city centre funicular leading up to the **Nordkette** ski area is just 400m from the main railway station, or daily bus services are available to several nearby resorts. The city centre Old Town offers numerous sightseeing opportunities, as does the rest of Innsbruck – see the Innsbruck website for more details: <https://www.innsbruck.info/en/innsbruck-city.html>

## Evening Meals in Innsbruck

For the first night in Innsbruck, most people choose to eat at the hotel for convenience; unless you tell us otherwise, we'll book you in for an evening meal (it's a good deal at 16 euros plus drinks) – just pay for your evening meal and drinks directly with the hotel. On the final night we often head into town for a meal and evening out, or you can easily eat at the hotel again – your choice! Budget around **35 Euros\* per night** for the **2 nights** in Innsbruck.

## Uplift and Local travel

The group will take a private minibus taxi from Innsbruck to the tour start point and back to Innsbruck on Friday after the tour, collecting/dropping off at the hotel – this is included in the price. A day pass is required to start the tour which will cost approximately **60 Euros\***.

## Lunches and Drinks

Personal snacks and lunches can be purchased in local supermarkets in resort before departure and in mountain huts en-route. The standard approach is to take enough hill snacks e.g. cereal bars, nuts, energy bars etc. to last for most of the week, and enough sandwich making materials to last for the first few days, so you're not too weighed down. Ski days usually finish by early/mid afternoon and if you're running short of food you can buy a late lunch of rosti or pasta etc. in the huts towards the end of the week. If you're arriving late into your hotel the shops might be closed, and Sunday morning may be a bit rushed, so it's worth bringing some snacks from the UK.

Depending on the available water supply at each hut, drinks and sometimes drinking water must be purchased from the hut guardian. Budget approx. **25 Euros\* per day** to cover a drink, lunches and hill snacks for the 6 days on tour.

**\*Based on this, the extra spending money you will need during the tour is approx. 300 Euros** (plus some contingency, depending on how much beer/wine you plan to drink). Please note that the majority of huts don't accept credit cards, so you need to carry cash.

## Valley Hotels

Our base in Innsbruck is the excellent Alphotel Innsbruck, conveniently located on bus route F direct from the airport every 15 minutes, which stops right outside the hotel. The staff are super friendly and helpful, and everyone really enjoys their stay in Innsbruck: it's a great way to end the trip, seeing the sights and having a nice meal out in the town. Rooms are provided on a twin (or occasionally triple) sharing basis, but if you wish to book a single room please let us know and we will confirm availability. **Any extra luggage not required on the tour can be left at the hotel until the end of the week.**

Your hotel details will be sent with your final joining instructions. Details of our partner hotels can be found on our Accommodation page: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/planning-your-skiing-trip/accommodation/>

## Mountain Huts

During your time in the high mountains you will be staying in mountain huts. These are operated as basic hotels, serving breakfast and an evening meal, which tends to be simple and wholesome with a fixed daily menu. For breakfast there is usually tea, coffee or hot chocolate, then cereal and bread with jam or cheese etc. Evening meals usually start with soup accompanied by bread and/or cheese, followed by pasta or rice with a meat/vegetable/sauce dish and finish with a small desert. Vegetarians are often served the same food as everyone else, with an egg/cheese dish instead of meat, but some huts are more creative and will serve excellent vegetarian food. Other types of diet can also be accommodated, but we must know about these and any requests for vegetarian food at the time you book.

Huts typically have shared dormitory style rooms with bunk beds, blankets/duvets and pillows, so there's no need to carry a sleeping bag. Italian huts insist on a sheet sleeping bag liner, so it's a good idea to carry one of those (the lightweight silk ones are best – packing up to the size of a tennis ball). Earplugs are also a good idea if you are a light sleeper! Washroom facilities are usually quite good in Austrian Huts, with showers often available – so a lightweight travel towel can be a good idea – and in Austrian huts you need to bring something to wear on your feet inside the building: either your ski inner boots, a pair of crocs, or hotel slippers – as they don't supply hut slippers like in other countries. Finally - if you are a member of the BMC or an Alpine Club, then please bring along your card as there is usually a small members discount. For more info on using mountain huts: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/insider-knowledge-ski/using-alpine-huts/>

Also, our Multiday Ski Touring FAQs page answers some of the most common questions we are asked about multi day ski touring and logistics etc: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/insider-knowledge-ski/multiday-ski-touring-faqs/>

## Travel to Resort

Several low cost airlines fly to Innsbruck from the UK, which is the most convenient airport for touring in this part of Austria. Check out Google Flights or Skyscanner for the best options. From the airport you need to take **Bus F**, which runs every 15 minutes; head through town and get off at bus stop "Bernhard-Höfel-Strasse" right outside the hotel – the journey takes about 20 mins, details here: <https://www.ivb.at/en.html>. Alternatively, you can fly to Salzburg or Zurich then catch the train on to Innsbruck - for all Austrian rail timetables and prices use the excellent OEBB timetable: <http://www.oebb.at/en/>. Other non-flight travel options include driving, coach or the excellent Eurostar train service.

Further travel information including flights, airport transfers, railways and channel crossings etc. can be found on the Travel Planning page of our website: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/planning-your-skiing-trip/travel-planning/>

## Insurance

For this trip you must have specialist travel insurance providing medical, emergency search/rescue and repatriation cover for the following activities: off piste skiing and ski touring in glaciated areas requiring the use of ropes, up to 4000m altitude. We also strongly recommend that you purchase cancellation cover, in case you're unable to attend your trip due to personal circumstances or injury. You should also bring your existing European Health Insurance Card, or apply for a new Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) as UK/EU reciprocal health agreements are part of the Brexit deal, so these continue.

**\*\*Once we have confirmed that your trip is running, we strongly advise that you arrange your insurance immediately, so that you're covered for loss of course fees and other travel related costs if you need to cancel your holiday due to personal circumstances. Once you are insured, please email us the policy details, and carry a hard copy with you during the trip\*\***

More information, including advice for non-UK residents, can be found on the Insurance page of our website here: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/planning-your-skiing-trip/insurance/>

## Equipment

A full kit list is enclosed. If you need to purchase skis, boots, or any other items of touring equipment, then please check out the advice articles on our Ski Knowledge Base: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/insider-knowledge-ski/>

If you need to hire any of the following items of specialist climbing equipment: ice axe, crampons, harness, avalanche safety equipment, skis and boots - this can be done through us or via equipment shops in resort. If you'd like to hire any of the above items please visit our Equipment Hire page for more info:

<https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/planning-your-skiing-trip/equipment-hire/>

We recommend you do this well in advance, especially in peak season – some shops have online reservation systems and most speak good English for telephone bookings. In Innsbruck, we recommend Die Börse outdoor shop in town (details on our equipment hire page) – it's a great shop and if you like, they'll collect you from the hotel and drop you off again once you've got your kit – contact the shop for details. Alternatively, just hop on to bus F back into the town centre.

When hiring in resort - ski mountaineering skis usually come supplied with climbing skins and harscheisen as a package (skins and harscheisen cannot be hired separately from skis). Ski Mountaineering boots are essential for skinning and walking in, and should be well bedded in before the tour as blisters can be a serious problem. When contacting the hire shop for skis/boots/bindings, be aware that most shops carry a limited range of touring equipment, so it's easier to specify type of ski rather than exact makes/models etc. Telling the shop what type of skier you are and the intended trip will give them a good idea what to recommend. A good all round setup would be a lightweight backcountry ski with 85-100mm width underfoot.

**NB** A modern lightweight pin binding is required. Heavy freeride setups are not suitable. Older style bar/rail bindings (Fritsch Freeride, Marker Duke etc) are not allowed – if you still own a pair, please update your kit!

To purchase any items of specialist backcountry ski kit, we recommend you speak to Backcountry UK - they are a leading UK retailer of specialist touring gear and always give friendly and expert advice – <https://www.backcountryuk.com>

## Weather and Conditions

On a typical fair weather day the temperature can range from -10 to +20 degrees or more - ie from sub-zero early in the morning to uncomfortably hot in the afternoon - so it's essential to have a good versatile clothing system that can deal with this plus any bad weather you might encounter. Snow conditions in the high mountains can be equally varied - in an ideal world you will be skiing spring hero snow or fresh powder, but you also need to be prepared for the possibility of ice, crust, windblown snow and poor visibility!

## Itinerary Changes

Poor weather and high avalanche risk can sometimes alter the itinerary. This is unavoidable but we will do our best, within safe margins, to stick to the itinerary. Potential changes and variations on the standard tour are numerous but will avoid unsafe avalanche terrain/bad weather days, sometimes using public transport/taxis to connect sections of the tour together as required, to ski it as continuously as possible. This may incur extra transport costs, but your guide will discuss the options with the group if this were to happen.

## Checklist

- Please make sure you have all of the following before leaving home!
- Passport - with at least 6 months validity remaining
- All Skiing Gear (Check kit list)
- Flight + Travel Tickets
- Personal Medications
- European Health Insurance Card (or apply for a new GHIC - Uk-EU reciprocal health agreements continue with Brexit Deal)
- Camera + Spare Batteries
- Insurance Certificate
- Compeed &/or tape to stop blisters
- Credit Card + Foreign Currency
- Full Driving Licence and International Driving Permit (available from local Post Office) if hiring a car
- Green Card from your insurer if driving abroad (contact them at least 2 weeks in advance)
- NB If you travel regularly, check you won't exceed 90 days in Schengen Area in past 180 days - penalty is 1 year exclusion!

## What Next?

- Bookings can be made online via our website. A deposit of £300 per person is required to secure your place, with the balance due 8 weeks before the course start date - we will email you a balance reminder including your invoice and possible payment methods.
- Once we have the minimum required number of bookings we will email you to confirm the course is running (confirmed trips will also be visible on our website). Once confirmed, you should arrange your travel insurance and travel to resort.
- We will email you 2 weeks before the course start date with any final info including your guides contact details, hotel details/directions and any other final info.

## More Info

Please contact us for more info regarding any aspect of the trip - [info@alpine-guides.com](mailto:info@alpine-guides.com) or 0113 8151904 (we might be out skiing or climbing - if so please leave a message and we'll get back to you asap, thanks!).

## Multiday Ski Touring Kit List

Just remember, every extra kilo on your back knocks 10% off your enjoyment on the descents – so try and keep the weight down!

### TECHNICAL CLOTHING

- **Waterproof jacket** – preferably lightweight and breathable
- **Softshell jacket** – mid weight wind/snow resistant jacket
- **Softshell trousers/Mountain Pants** – ideally designed for ski touring.
- **Waterproof overtrousers** – preferably with 3/4 or full length side zips
- **Spare lightweight insulated jacket** – lightweight synthetic/down jacket or other warm layer
- **Wicking thermal top** – ie a 'base layer' not cotton please...
- **Thermal leggings** – base layer 'long johns', light or mid weight (ie not exped weight!)
- **Socks** – specialist ski socks, or a warm loop lined pair of mountain socks
- **Thin inner gloves**
- **Warm ski gloves** – or mittens, if you suffer from cold hands
- **Warm hat**

### PERSONAL ITEMS

- **Water container** – at least 1 litre, or a vacuum flask
- **Personal medications and blister kit** – any regular medications, zinc oxide tape, compeed, painkillers etc
- **Ski goggles**
- **Sun glasses** – CE rated 3 or 4, with side protection
- **Sun and lip cream** – factor 30+
- **Headtorch and batteries**
- **Wallet, passport and insurance docs**

### HUT OVERNIGHT ITEMS

- **Small wash kit** – wet wipes are a good idea
- **Spare lightweight t-shirt/socks/underwear**
- **Silk sheet liner**
- **Ear plugs**
- **Hut footwear** – crocs or hotel slippers
- **Alpine Club/BMC card** – for hut discount

### TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

- **Rucksack** – 35-40L - NB rucksack MUST have straps on to carry your skis and an ice axe
- **Ski mountaineering boots** – must have good, dedicated walk mode
- **Skis with Touring Bindings** – lightweight pin binding setup required. Heavy freeride setups not suitable. Older style bar/rail bindings (Fritschi Freeride, Marker Duke etc) not allowed – please update your kit!
- **Ski Strap** – to hold skis together on your rucksack if we need to carry them
- **Ski Poles** – with good size 5cm+ baskets (telescopic poles are not needed)
- **Climbing skins** – they come with the skis if you hire your kit
- **Harscheisen (ski crampons)** – they come with the skis if you hire your kit
- **Metal snow shovel** – must be a full metal shovel (plastic blades don't work in real avalanche debris!)
- **Avalanche probe**
- **Avalanche transceiver** – must be a modern digital model (older analogue models are now obsolete)
- **Climbing harness** – with 120cm sling and locking karabiner
- **Crampons** – lightweight alloy crampons preferable on most tours, steel crampons for ski mountaineering
- **Ice axe** – lightweight model preferable (NB must have a steel head – see our advice article)
- **Ski Helmet** – lightweight ski touring or backcountry model preferred. Wearing a helmet is compulsory on descents and may be needed on other parts of the route depending on conditions

Your guide will have all other ski safety kit, first aid and survival equipment.

For more advice on ski mountaineering equipment please get in touch, or visit:

<https://www.alpine-guides.com/ski/insider-knowledge-ski/ski-touring-equipment-advice/>



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