

Essential Guide to Ortisei, Val Gardena, Italy: Best Base in the Dolomites for First Time Visitors

Blog > Europe > Italy > Dolomites

Ortisei (St. Ulrich in German, Urtijëi in Ladin) is a village in Val Gardena in South Tyrol, **Italy**.

With its advantageous location and charming pedestrian center, Ortisei is one of the most popular destinations in the **Dolomites** for a summer or winter holiday.

It's the largest and liveliest village in Val Gardena, boasting a wide array of hotels, bars, shops, and restaurants.

The village is surrounded by scenic high plateaus and iconic mountains like **Alpe di Siusi** (Seiser Alm), **Seceda**, and the **Resciesa Plateau** (Raschötz), which are all accessible by cableways, or funiculars.

One of the most compelling reasons to stay in Ortisei is that you don't need a car. Bus transit is free for all Ortisei overnight guests, who are staying in accommodations that are members of the Tourist Association. That's most accommodations in Ortisei excluding some apartments and all AirBnBs.

Compared to other destinations in the Dolomites, Ortisei's summer season is very long. It begins as early as end of May and ends as late as early November. So, if you're visiting the Dolomites during shoulder season, Ortisei is a great base.

In our guide to visiting Ortisei, you'll find out when to visit, what to see and do, where to stay, and suggested day trips.



- **Elevation:** 1230 meters
- **Top Attractions:** Seceda Ridgeline, Resciesa Plateau, and Alpe di Siusi Plateau
- **Summer Season:** June – late October
- **Winter Season:** December – early April
- **Top budget accommodations:** [B&B Lavi Ortisei val Gardena](#) and [Garni Hotel Mirabel](#)
- **Top midrange accommodations:** [Casa al Sole](#) and [Chalet Hotel Hartmann](#)
- **Top luxury accommodations:** [Hotel Gardena Grödnerhof](#) (5-star) and [La Cort My Dollhouse – Adults Only](#) (Adults-Only)

Ortisei, Italy Map

When to Visit Ortisei, Val Gardena

Visit Ortisei between June and October for hiking and between mid-December and March for skiing.

Winter Season

Ortisei is first and foremost a ski resort town. The ski season usually begins in early December and ends in early April. Visitors come to Ortisei in winter to ski in the **Val Gardena – Alpe di Siusi ski area**.

The Val Gardena ski resort is also part of **Dolomiti Superski**, a network of 12 ski areas across the Dolomites, which when combined, form the largest ski resort in the world. You can access all 12 ski areas using a single Dolomiti Superski ski pass.

Tip | If you want to ski the **Sella Ronda ski circuit** from Ortisei, ride the cableways to Seceda and then ski down to the Col Raiser valley station. Hop on the Gardena Ronda Express underground railway to reach the Saslong valley station. Navigate to Ciampinoi and then ski down to Plan de Gralba to start the green route.

If visiting Ortisei in **December** during the holidays, enjoy mulled wine in the village center Christmas Market, open from early December until early January.

Depending on snow conditions, the Ortisei summer season kicks off sometime between late **May** and early June and doesn't end until late, or end of October. Most cableways will operate at least until mid/late October. Some will even stay open until early November.

We've visited Ortisei in August, September, and October. We think **September** and **October** are the best months to visit Ortisei because it's less crowded and most facilities are still operating. Learn more about hiking in Ortisei in Fall:

Learn More: [Best Time to Visit the Dolomites](#)

1. Seceda Ridgeline

Seceda is a mountain in the Odle/Geisler Group. The summit of Seceda (2518 meters) is a popular destination in the Dolomites, because of its sensational vantage point of the jagged Fermada Peaks.

Atop Seceda, these peaks look like daggers, piercing the sky. It's one of the most thrilling places to visit in Ortisei.

When to Visit Seceda

Skiers can ski on the Seceda Alp between mid/late December and end of March/early April.

How to Get to Seceda

Head to the **Seceda cableway valley station** in Ortisei.

Address | Via Val d'Anna 2, I-39046 Ortisei in Val Gardena, South Tyrol, Italy |

[Google Maps](#)

If you're in the village center, take the **La Curta pedestrian walkway** and tunnel to the valley station. We've described this short-cut in our [Seceda](#)

Seceda (2500 m).

From the Seceda mountain station, it's a mere 10-minute walk to the summit lookout point.

For continuously impressive views, follow the Seceda ridgeline and walk across the Seceda meadows to the Furcella de Pana/Panascharte notch.

Seceda Hiking Trails

The gorgeous Seceda Alp is also a great place to start hikes in **Puez-Odle Nature Park**.

We recommend hiking to the Pieralongia alpine pasture and Rifugio Firenze/Regensburger Hütte. This circuit hike takes 3:00 – 3:30 hours and is 8.9 km long.

Learn More: [Seceda to Regensburger Hütte Circuit Trail](#)

2. Alpe di Siusi Meadows

Alpe di Siusi (Seiser Alm in German, Mont Sëuc in Ladin) is the largest high alpine pasture in Europe.

The expansive meadowscape of Seiser Alm romances visitors with its perfect green (or snow-covered) pastures, idyllic hay huts, and striking mountains.

Visiting Alpe di Siusi is usually a priority for most first time visitors to the Dolomites, who are determined to see the spellbinding beauty of Sassolungo, Sasso Piatto, and the Sciliar massif jutting out of a sea of rolling meadows.

In summer, Alpe di Siusi is brimming with hikers and mountain-bikers. In winter, the plateau is a popular downhill skiing/snowboarding as well as cross-country skiing destination with 80 km of cross-country tracks.

From Ortisei, reaching the plateau is effortless, requiring only a single gondola ride.

In summer, the **Mont Sëuc Gondola** is usually operating from late May until late October/early November. Check funiviaortisei.eu for opening times and prices.

In winter, the gondola is part of the Val Gardena ski resort and is usually operating from early December until early April, along with the other cableways in the region.

How to Get to Alpe di Siusi

Head to the **Ortisei-Alpe di Siusi Ropeway** (aka Mont Sëuc Gondola) valley station. If you're in the Ortisei village center, you can walk to the valley station via a pedestrian bridge (2 minutes). If you're arriving by car, there's a paid parking garage at the valley station, with a capacity of 240 parking spaces.

Ascend to Alpe di Siusi with the Ortisei-Alpe di Siusi gondola.

When you disembark the gondola, head left, and descend along **trail 9** in the direction of **Saltria**. After about 10 minutes, you'll arrive at the **Schgaguler Schwaige** alpine pasture hut/restaurant.

From here, you can continue towards Saltria along trail 9 (50 minutes), or walk to Compaccio/Compatsch, the largest settlement on Alpe di Siusi.

Another option is to [hike all the way to Monte Pana and Santa Cristina](#).

Learn More: [How to Visit Alpe di Siusi](#)

Alpe di Siusi Hiking Trails

While staying in Ortisei, it makes the most sense to access the Seiser Alm plateau via the [Mont Sëuc Gondola](#).

However, there are a number of interesting Alpe di Siusi hikes which start in **Compaccio/Compatsch**, accessible by bus or cableway from the village of Siusi allo Sciliar/Seis am Schlern.

It's a 20-minute drive from Ortisei to the [Seiser Alm Aerial Cableway](#) valley station in Siusi/Seis.

From Compaccio/Compatsch, you can hike to [Rifugio Alpe di Tires](#), a lovely refuge planted on the Passo Alpe di Tires/Tierser Alpljoch mountain pass, between the Sciliar/Schlern Group and the Rosengarten/Catinaccio Group.

We highly recommend hiking this [Rifugio Bolzano to Rifugio Alpe di Tires Circuit](#), a grand loop trail which ascends to the Sciliar plateau and then leads to Rifugio Alpe di Tires and then over the Forcella Denti di Terrarossa/Rossezahn scharde saddle back to Alpe di Siusi.

Resciesa/Raschötz is a high plateau characterized by wide meadows and pockets of stone pine and larch forest.

Rising above Val Gardena to the south and **Val di Funes** to the north, the Resciesa Alp grants visitors far-reaching views of the surrounding mountains and valleys. Like Alpe di Siusi, Resciesa is a great place for unhurried walking and hiking with children.

In winter, Resciesa is famous for its **tobogganing slope**.

How to Get to Resciesa

Take this funicular up to the plateau. It's that easy.

When to Visit Resciesa

Time your visit to Resciesa with the operating times of the funicular, which you can find [here](#).

Resciesa Hiking Trails

We love Resciesa, because it's a great place to start hikes to [Val di Funes](#), Seceda, and Val d'Anna. Here are a few ideas. All trails are marked in the interactive Ortisei map.

Resciesa Plateau Circuit (Easy)

If you're seeking a low-impact, easy hike atop Resciesa Alp, exit the funicular and follow signs to **Raschötzhütte** along trail 35A (30 minutes). Follow a stone pathway for five minutes and then at the intersection turn left. You'll see Sella, Sassolungo, Catinaccio, Sciliar, the Eisacktal valley, as well as the Italian and Austrian Alps in the distance.

From here, continue on trail 10 in the direction of **Locia da Fitz**/Flitzer Scharte. Following the ridge of the plateau, continue onto trail 31. Trail 10 cuts directly across the plateau to Raschötzhütte.

To complete the loop, you can follow 31 until you reach the intersection with trail 35. If your hike was sufficient, you can head back to the funicular mountain station.

If you want to keep walking, follow trail 35 for as long as you want, towards the ever-present Odle Peaks. It's a gorgeous trail that leads to Passo di Brogles/Brogles Sattel.

Resciesa to Malga Brogles and Seceda (Difficult)

One of the best hikes in Ortisei is hiking across the Resciesa plateau to Malga Brogles. From this mountain pasture hut, you can ascend to Seceda via the Mittagscharte saddle.

Note: In the past, it was possible to ascend to Seceda via the Panascharte saddle. However, the Panascharte trail is still closed due to a rockfall.

Learn More: [Resciesa to Seceda Day Hike](#)

Another hike you can do is follow trail 5 to Malga Brogles (like the hike above). Instead of tackling the difficult ascent to Seceda, you can follow trail 5, which starts at the Passo di Brogles/Brogles Sattel just above Malga Brogles, and hike down to the Furnes cableway middle station. From here, either continue hiking down the valley all the way to Ortisei or take the cableway back down.

From Furnes, we continued to Balest and to the S. Giacomo/St. Jacob church. This hike was a tad too long, especially because we first circuited the plateau, before heading to the Brogles saddle. But, it's also an option.

4. San Giacomo's Church

St. Jacob's Church in English, Chiesa di San Giacomo in Italian, Dlieja da Sacun in Ladin

The Church of San Giacomo is located in a small clearing surrounded by forest, just above the hamlet of San Giacomo, east of Ortisei. It's the oldest church in Val Gardena, possibly **dating back to 1181**. Facing Sassolungo, this stone chapel encircled by a wall is a lovely place for a picnic or a short-walk from Ortisei.

Here's a description of the **hike from Ortisei to St. Jacob's Church**. Note: the hike involves a 423 meter ascent and takes 2:10 hours roundtrip.

Alternatively, you can take the bus, or drive to the hamlet of San Giacomo and then walk to the church (15 minutes).

If you want to visit the interior, you can do so on a guided tour between July and mid-September.

Luis Trenker Promenade is a pedestrian walkway in Ortisei named after the famous local actor, director and mountaineer Luis Trenker.

It's a nice place to walk and enjoy the views of the valley.

You can walk along the promenade in the direction of Santa Cristina, and then hike up to St. Jacob's Church.

6. Climb Sass Rigais

Sass Rigais (3025 m) along with Furcheta (3025 m) is the highest peak in the Puez-Odle Group. To reach the peak, hikers must tackle a Grade B/C via ferrata route.

Though it's more common to start the Sass Rigais approach from Col Raiser mountain station, we started at Seceda, since we were staying in **Casa al Sole** in Oritsei.

From start to finish, this demanding route took us 7:30 hours.

Read our **Via Ferrata Sass Rigais guide** for a comprehensive overview of the different ascent routes (eastern, southwestern, and Val di Funes entrance), difficulty, and equipment.

Where to Eat in Ortisei: Top Restaurants

Tubladel is a gourmet restaurant in Ortisei with a rustic, woody interior, offset by linen-draped tables. The cuisine centers around local, high-quality ingredients, especially game. Waiters present the daily specials on a chalkboard menu. On the two occasions that we've eaten here, the courses were served in an elegantly slow fashion, though perhaps too elegant when you're very hungry.

Don't miss the stuffed courgette flower appetizer and creamy coffee sorbet dessert. All in all, Tubladel offers a very lovely, unhurried dining experience.

Reservations | [Online booking](#)

Address | Via Trebinger, 22 I-39046 Ortisei – Val Gardena | [Google Maps](#)

Turonda

Turonda is a buzzing pizzeria in Ortisei, run by a motivated team. The menu card is long and somewhat bizarre, featuring Asian-fusion tapas, pizzas, and a flamboyant cocktail menu.

Despite the restaurant's identity-crisis, you will not be disappointed by anything on the menu. We ate her twice, once opting for tapas and

Reservations | [Online Booking](#)

Address | Strada Johann Baptist Purger, 5, 39046 Ortisei BZ, Italy | [Google Maps](#)

Reviews | [Turonda on Tripadvisor](#)

Ortisei Accommodations

Ortisei Bed & Breakfasts

Budget | [Pra Palmer The Green B&B](#) is a 3-star hotel with raving reviews in **Ortisei**. 3-4 nights minimum stay.

Budget | [Hotel Garni Walter](#) is a traditional alpine guesthouse located on a steep slope near the Alpe di Siusi gondola valley station. Rooms are spotless and comfortable. The only downside is that the WIFI signal is poor. Breakfast is included.

Midrange | [Casa al Sole](#) is a newly renovated bed and breakfast in the center of Ortisei, only a short walk from the Seceda cableway and the Resciesa funicular. Highlights of staying here include the minimalist interiors, natural wine bar, warm hospitality, and homemade breakfast. At Casa al Sole, Alexandra and Manuel host with great care and enthusiasm, and are always available to offer advice and help make dinner reservations. Read our [Casa al Sole Review](#).

Midrange | [Chalet Hotel Hartmann](#) is a charming adults-only hotel featuring tastefully furnished alpine interiors, a delicious breakfast buffet, a complimentary afternoon snack, and a spa area (bio-sauna, steam bath and solarium). This is an ideal accommodation for couples and anyone traveling without children. It's a 15-minute walk to reach the town center.

Ortisei Town Center Hotels

Midrange | **Hotel Grones** is a top-rated, family-run hotel which excels in its friendly atmosphere, excellent local and Mediterranean cuisine, traditional, yet lovely rooms. The hotel spa area comprises a swimming pool, hot tub, Finnish sauna, bio sauna, and steam bath.

Midrange-Luxury | The recently renovated **Boutique Hotel Planlim** sparkles with its fresh alpine design and new wellness area. This hotel is located in a quiet area of Ortisei, only a short walk away from the village center. The Sky Spa encompasses a panoramic rooftop deck with whirlpool, a steam sauna, Finnish sauna, a Kneipp course, and relaxation room. Guests also have access to a garden pool from June until mid-October.

Luxury | **Hotel Angelo Engel** is situated directly in the town center of Ortisei, walking distance to the Resciesa funicular, Ortisei-Furnes-Seceda cableway, and the Ortisei-Alpe di Siusi gondola (Mont Sëuc Ropeway). We loved the central location, the courteous staff, and the wellness and spa area.

mountain bike tours and a weekly fitness program. Guests are treated to a welcome cocktail, generous breakfast buffet, and afternoon cakes and snacks (3 – 5 pm). The extensive wellness area comprises a fitness area, indoor pool, outdoor whirlpool, Finnish sauna, steam bath, bio sauna, ladies-only spa, cold water pool, infrared beds, sauna lounge, floating beds, and warm water beds.

Luxury | [Adler Spa Resort Dolomiti](#) is a stunning property surrounded by private grounds, advantageously located in the pedestrian zone of Ortisei. This 5-star hotel offers outstanding service, first-rate spa complex, beautiful rooms, and an on-site restaurant (half board available). 3-7 nights minimum stay.

More Hotels: [Hotel Garni Snaltnerhof](#) (midrange) and [Alpin Garden Luxury Maison & Spa – Adults Only](#) (luxury)

Mountainside Hotels Above Ortisei

These hotels are located along Strada Pinei, between Ortisei and Castelrotto. Their lofty locations afford spectacular views of Val Gardena. However, these hotels are a good 3.5 km outside the town center. So, only consider these accommodations if you're traveling with a car.

Luxury | Perched high above Ortisei, the young, fun, and newly-renovated [La Cort My Dollhouse – Adults Only](#) hotel offers 26 stylish rooms, a rooftop spa and pool, and fabulous views. La Cort is a great choice for travelers who

Luxury | The family-run **Hotel Niblea** sits proudly above Ortisei in its own beautiful oasis. Here you can experience a slice of heaven in the hotel's new wellness area (panoramic sauna, steam bath, infinity pool), which overlooks Val Gardena. Stay here for the gourmet regional food (book half board!), the unparalleled hospitality, the gorgeous facilities, and the comfort.

Ortisei Apartments

Luxury Apartments | **Gran Tubla** offers two-bedroom apartments with fully-equipped kitchens and sweeping views of Val Gardena. Guests also have access to a heated indoor-outdoor pool, sauna, and garden. Breakfast can be delivered to your room upon request.

More apartments: **Residence Cesa Sassela** (midrange), **Residence Prapoz** (midrange), and **Apartmenthotel Residence Elvis** (budget)

Ortisei Day Trips

During your stay in Ortisei, you may want to venture to nearby villages and valleys for different views and more hiking trails. Here's what we recommend.

1. Head to **Santa Cristina** and hike to **Monte Pic**.
2. Go to **Selva** and hike up **Val de Chedul and Vallunga**.
3. Ascend to Puez-Odle Nature Park via the **Col Raiser Gondola** and hike to the summit of **Col dala Pieres**, or **Piz Duleda**.
4. Head to **Passo Gardena** and hike to **Cima Pisciadu, Gran Cir**, or **Sass da Ciampac**.
5. Head to **Badia** in Alta Badia, and walk across the **Armentara Meadows**.
6. Head to **San Cassiano** in Alta Badia and hike to **Rifugio Fanes**.

8. Take the **Seiser Alm Aerial Cableway** from Siusi allo Sciliar to the Alpe di Siusi and hike the **Rifugio Bolzano – Rifugio Alpe di Tires Circuit Trail**.

Val Gardena Mobil Card

Guests staying in accommodations who are members of the Val Gardena Tourist Offices receive a **Val Gardena Mobil Card** for free.

This card gives you free access to all buses (except for the Val Gardena Night Bus, Saltria-Monte Pana Bus, and the Saltria – Castelrotto Bus). You can use this card to get around Val Gardena and to other destinations in South Tyrol.

Visiting Ortisei Responsibly

1. During your time in Val Gardena and **Puez-Odle Nature Park**, please respect the environment and adhere to the following rules:
2. Always stay on marked trails and paths. This helps prevent damage to the meadows and alpine pastures.
3. Do not pick protected flower species.
4. Respect the habitat of animals. Do not make any unnecessary noise.
5. Do not light fires.

animals.

8. Keep your dog on a leash and pick-up/dispose of your dog's waste responsibly.

9. Do not wild camp.

More Val Gardena Travel and Hiking Guides

Travel Guides:

- [Best Hotels in Val Gardena](#)

Hiking Trails:

- [Best Hikes in Val Gardena](#)
- [Col dala Pieres](#)
- [Lake Pisciadù Hike](#)
- [Piz Duleda](#)
- [Vallunga Valley and Val de Chedul](#)
- [Sassolungo Circuit Trail](#)

Via Ferratas:

- [Via Ferrata Oskar Schuster](#) (Grade B/C)
- [Gran Cir](#) (Grade A)

- **7-Day Dolomites Road Trip**
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Sabrina Brett

Hello! I'm a spirited traveler on a quest to hike in the most picturesque alpine and coastal destinations across Europe. In 2016, I left my home and job in San Francisco, California, to move to Germany, and later Austria. The following year, I created this blog to help like-minded travelers experience new and exciting ways to travel authentically. I travel to hike, and I hope to inspire your next adventure.

This post may contain affiliate links.

8 thoughts on "Essential Guide to Ortisei, Val Gardena, Italy: Best Base in the Dolomites for First Time Visitors"

Your posts are so helpful – thank you! My partner and I are planning 6 days in the Dolomites, with a few big day hikes and maybe one overnight at a hut. Ideally, we could stay in two regions to see more of the Dolomites. We could rent a car but would be happier without. Where would you recommend we stay?

[Reply](#)

moonhoneytravel

[June 14, 2022 at 11:24 am](#)

Hi Wendy,

You're very welcome!

Val Gardena, [Alta Badia](#), and [Cortina d'Ampezzo](#).

The [Südtirol Mobil Bus lines](#) cover South Tyrol (Val Gardena and Alta Badia). The [Dolomitibus lines](#) cover Cortina d'Ampezzo.

All the best,

Sabrina

[Reply](#)

Rita hartono

[April 22, 2023 at 5:37 pm](#)

[Reply](#)

moonhoneytravel

[April 23, 2023 at 10:52 am](#)

Hi Rita,

This year, the Ortisei-Furnes-Seceda cableways start operating May 27, 2023. If you're visiting before May 27th, you can hike to Seceda by following this [Monte Pic](#) hike.

-Sabrina

[Reply](#)

Karen

[July 28, 2024 at 5:19 am](#)

I love your guides, they have been so helpful in planning
I will be in the Dolomites this September without a car but would like to spend time in both Cortina de Ampezzo and Val Gardena. Due to time constraints, I am keen to know if there is an alternative and quicker option to taking the bus and train that doesn't require an expensive private driver.
Many thanks

moonhoneytravel[July 28, 2024 at 10:40 am](#)

Hi Karen,

Thank you for reading!

None that we know of. I would reach out to the local tourist offices for their help.

Kindly,

Sabrina

[Reply](#)**Shu**[January 21, 2025 at 3:12 am](#)

I'd like to thank you very much for these guides. I was wondering – do you think 7 days is too long in Ortisei? We are making our first trip to the Dolomites to do some easy hiking this September and are likely going to go without a car. We are thinking either of 7 nights in Ortisei, or possibly 4 in Ortisei and 3 in Cortina. We really just want to hike locally within the bus system and eat well. Thank you again for these guides – they are an invaluable resource!

[Reply](#)

Hi Shu,

It depends. If you plan on hiking more difficult trails like Piz Duleda, Val de Chedul, and Resciesa-Seceda, and even a few via ferratas, then you have so [many hiking options in Val Gardena](#). I outlined a 7-day Ortisei itinerary in our [Casa al Sole review](#). If, however, you're mostly embarking on mostly easy-moderate hikes, then I'd probably spend 4 days in Ortisei and 3 days in [Alta Badia](#).

All the best,

Sabrina

[Reply](#)

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