

Dolomites Solo

37 Summits: Ferratas, Scrambles & Trails

Jovo Vranjes

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Disclaimer: The mountaineering tours described in this book are based on the author's personal experiences. Mountaineering is an inherently dangerous activity. The author and publisher leave all responsibility for any injuries or loss to the reader.

Published by Jovo Vranjes, mountainsforeverybody.com

Table Of Contents

Introduction	4
What is in the book	6
Antelao	8
Cima della Vezzana: Ferrata Bolver Lugli	22
Cima delle Nove	43
Cima Ombretta Orientale	54
Civetta: Normal Ferrata Route	71
Conturines (Piz dles Cunturines)	86
Cristallino d'Ampezzo, Cresta Bianca & Cima Padeon	95
Kesselkogel (Catinaccio d'Antermoia)	113
Lagazuoi Piccolo: Kaiserjäger Ferrata	130
Lavarela (La Varella) & Lavarela de Fora	143
Marmolada	154
Monte Ciaval & Monte Casale	164
Monte Cristallo di Mezzo	177
Monte Paterno (Paternkofel)	186
Monte Pelmo	202
Piz Boè and Sas Pordoi	220
Piz Selva (Ferrata Possneker), Piz Giralba & Piz Miara	231
Punta Fanes Sud: Ferrata Tomaselli	251
Ra Gusela, Nuvolau & Averau	269
Sas Rigais & Seceda	285
Sasso delle Dieci & Sas dla Crusc	299

Sasso Piatto	311
Sasso Vernal	319
Tofana di Dentro	331
Tofana di Mezzo: Ferrata Lamon	346
Tofana di Rozes	356
Digital Extras	368
MforE Via Ferrata Grading System	370

Introduction

I have never queued for a selfie at Cadini di Misurina viewpoint. Never taken the Seceda cable car for the standard postcard shot. And I have never written about “family-friendly loops with ice-cream stops.”

That’s deliberate.

I head east and south; Marmarole, the edges of Lagorai, the back of Antelao, and usually see no one.

But I don’t mind people up high. It is great to hear human voices. A shouted Buon giorno! across a pass at 2700 m is grounding. And yes, I have also been at some of the most visited places, they are too beautiful to be missed. You will see them described here.

People claim the Dolomites are “ruined by overtourism,” but they all go to the same handful of places, take the same photo, then complain it is crowded.

The Dolomites aren’t too crowded. They are crowded in the wrong places.

Alta Via 1 is the classic example of misconception. Some call it wrongly a “human highway.” But a rifugio sleeps 80–100 people. The next one is 8–12 km away over rough terrain. People start at different times, walk at different speeds, and beds don’t multiply. So, a hundred people spread across 10 km of ridge is still close to empty.

I have spent full afternoons on AV1 sections hearing only distant voices, enough to feel safe, far enough to stay real.

What stays in the hotspots is the circus: selfie sticks, drones, bus crowds. Walk 20 minutes away and it is gone.

This book isn’t about avoiding people. It is about choosing better direction. No “best gelato in Cortina.” No bus schedules to Alpe di Siusi.

If you judge a good day by the quality of silence, wind, stone, distance, and the occasional Ciao! carried across a void, this is for you.

The Dolomites are still big. Still sharp. Still easy to disappear into, if you stop walking toward the same car parks.

One final note. I wrote these texts over a period of fifteen years, from 2010 to 2025, slowly, with two fingers. The photographs here show the mountains as they are; none has been edited or photoshopped. Nature, like solitude, needs no improvement, it is already complete.

Jovo

Somewhere in the Dolomites, some month, some year.



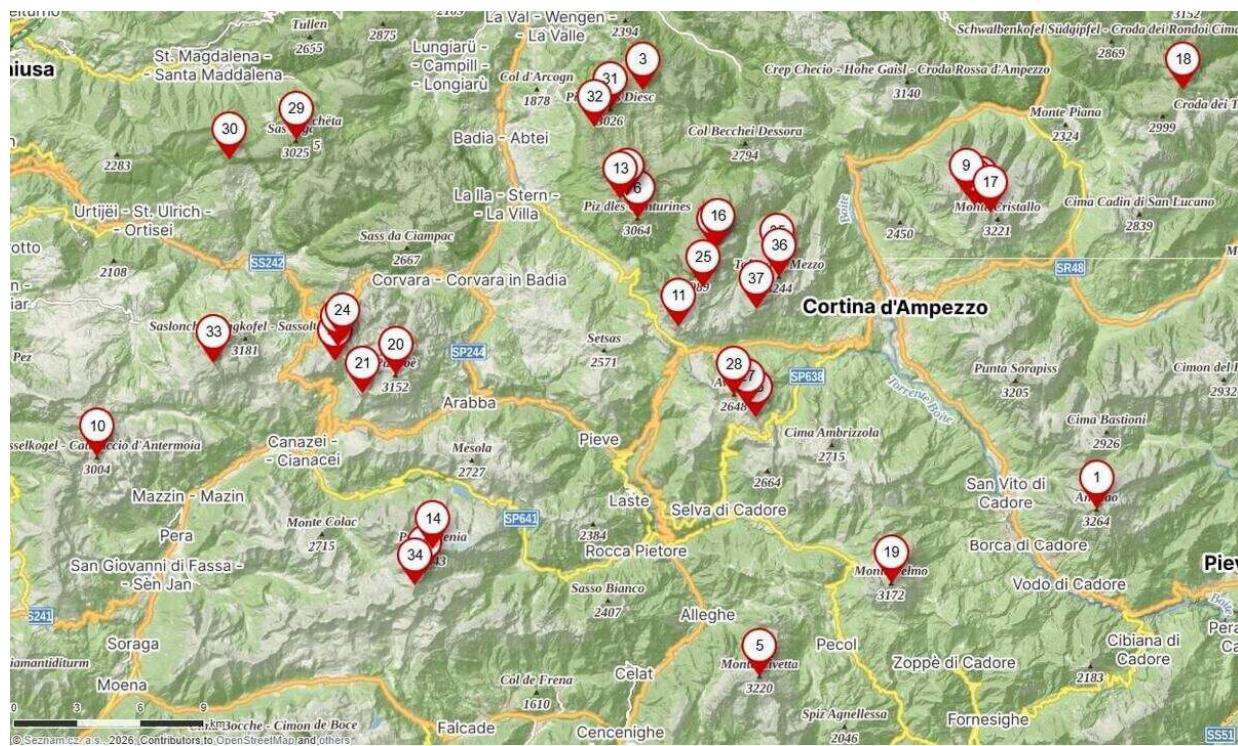
What is in the book

This book includes the following:

- Detailed reports about my climbs to 37 peaks. This includes timing, equipment, information about water on the route, bivouacs, huts.
- Rating for 18 ferrata routes based on [my own](#) 3-criteria grading system.
- Maps for all the routes with links to zoomable online versions.
- My YouTube videos covering 21 routes.
- Around 440 photos from the routes.
- Contact information for huts on the routes.

The map below shows the locations of all the peaks presented in the book. The numbers correspond to their order in the Table of Contents, starting with Antelao (1) and ending with Tofana di Rozes (37).

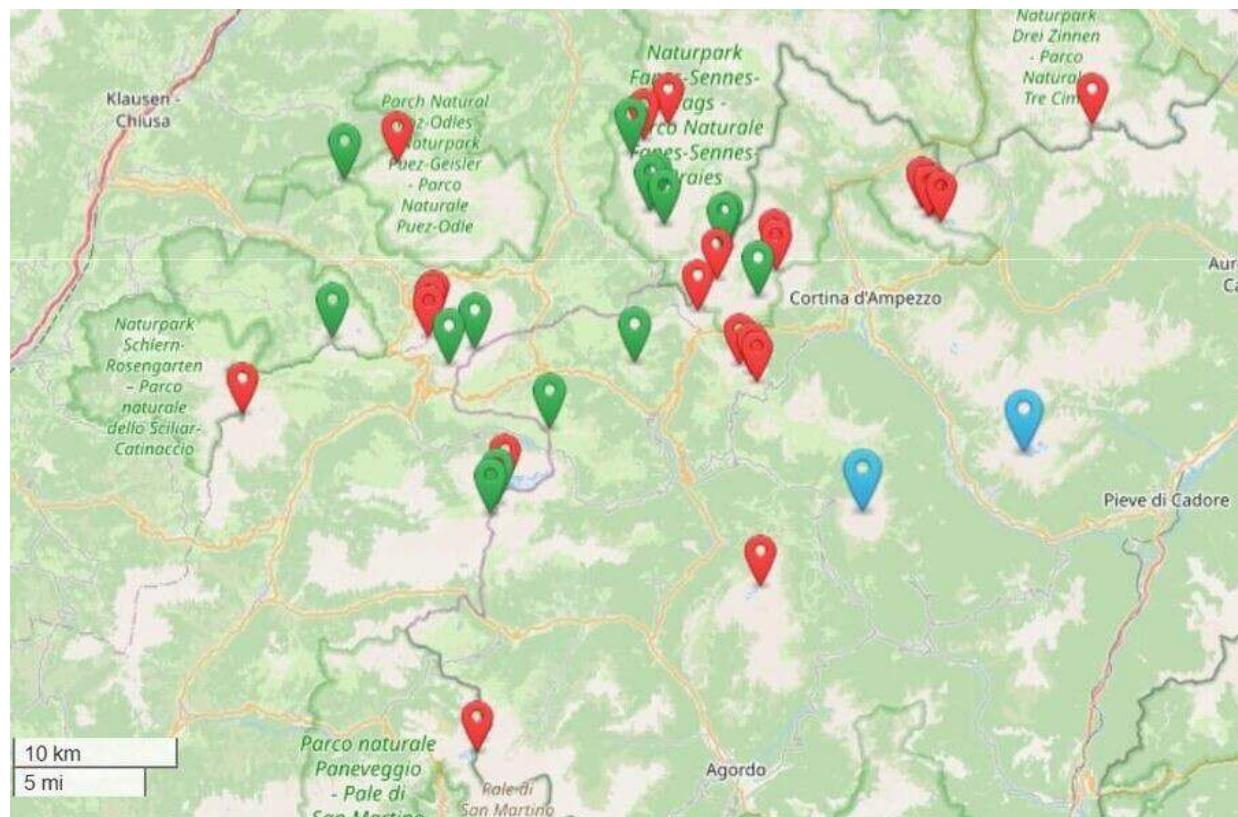
This may help in planning your climbs to peaks that are close to your current base in the Dolomites. Some markers overlap and they are not visible. But you can see them in the [zoomable version here](#) (right-click to open in a new window) and you will have the names of peaks embedded.



To provide additional help, I have also created the following color-coded map. The meanings are as follows:

- **Green** indicates peaks that I climbed using routes without via ferratas, although some of these peaks may have optional ferrata routes. If you are a beginner, you should start with some of these peaks and follow the routes described in the book.
- **Red** indicates peaks where I used via ferrata routes to reach the summit. However, for some of them there are alternative options without cables. You can ascend via ferratas and descend using walk-up routes.
- **Blue** indicates peaks without any cables, Antelao and Pelmo. However, these are exceptionally difficult mountains to climb, and I recommend them only for experienced mountaineers.

Note also that some of the peaks marked in red and green have lifts that go all the way to the summit, but these were not used on my climbs.



Locations of peaks presented in the book.

Antelao

There is only one normal route to the summit of Antelao, and the most convenient way to access it is to start from the car parking area above San Vito di Cadore.

The elevation gain is 2124 m (6969 ft), so splitting the tour into two parts by staying overnight in one of the huts, or camping in a tent, are the best options.



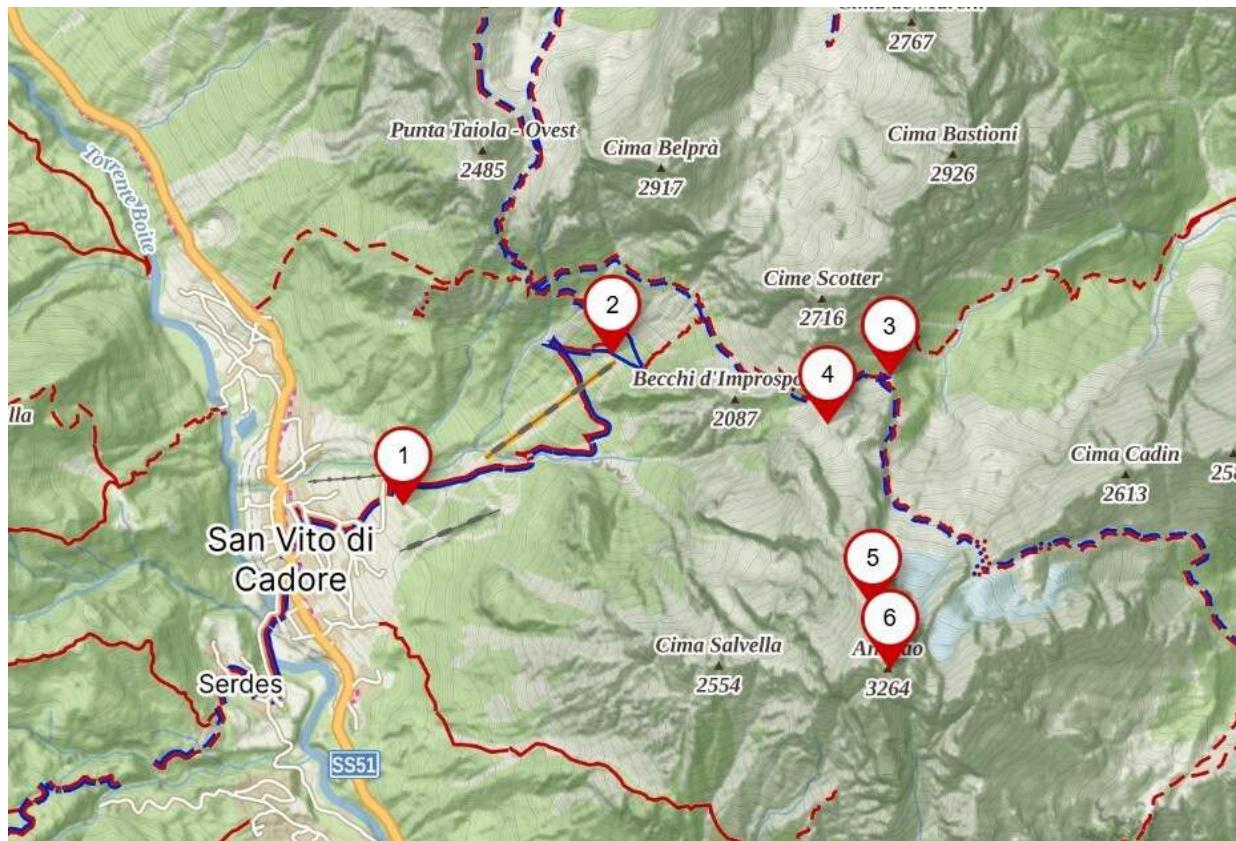
Antelao, view of the summit.

The Alta Via 3, Alta Via 4, and Alta Via 5 routes pass near the north side of the mountain, so if you are on any of these routes, you may consider Antelao as a potential detour to enhance your experience.

The map below is with markers that show the following:

1-Car parking, 2-Rifugio Scotter, 3-Rifugio Galassi, 4-My camp position, 5-Laste area, and 6-Antelao summit.

Zoomable version is [available here](#) (please right-click to open in a new tab).



Antelao: quick facts

- Elevation: 3264 m (10709 ft).
- Nearest city: San Vito di Cadore, Cortina d'Ampezzo.
- Mountain group: Dolomites, Italian Alps.
- Coordinates: 46.4517944, 12.2619078.
- Route difficulty: walk-up and scramble, many very exposed passages.
- Elevation difference from the car parking: 2124 m (6969 ft).
- Parking coordinates: 46.4623783, 12.2162672.
- Hardcopy map for the tour: Dolomiti di Auronzo e del Comelico, Tabacco 017, 1:25000.
- Huts on the route: Rifugio Scotter, Rifugio Galassi.

Climbing route description

The car parking area above the village of San Vito di Cadore is very large and free. From there, the first part of the route follows a gravel road (closed to the public) that runs through a forest.

Very soon, you will arrive at Rifugio Scotter (shown in the photo below), which is located at an elevation of 1570 m (5151 ft). If you would like to spend a night there, here is the contact phone number: +39 329 0255704.



As you can see, this is still quite low. Therefore, if you plan to sleep and continue the next day, it is better to proceed to Rifugio Galassi, which is located at around 2030 m (6660 ft) of

elevation.

The path between the two huts zigzags across a scree slope, and it is quite demanding.



Note that you do not have to go all the way up to Rifugio Galassi. The route to Antelao branches off to the right at Forcella Piccola (2120 m, 6955 ft).

This junction is marked by the sign shown in the photo, which provides some useful information.

This location is also accessible from the east, starting from the village of Calalzo di Cadore.

Looking at the clouds in the previous photo, the conditions during my climb appeared hopeless for continuing farther, so I decided to sleep on the mountain.

From that point, the route continues southward, first across a pleasant grassy area, until you reach a plateau at around 2200 m of elevation.

After that, the route follows numerous rocky ledges, and this terrain continues all the way to the summit. From the very beginning of this rocky section, there are many exposed passages, so it is necessary to be very careful.



Route goes over these ledges.

The photo on the next page shows my view back toward Forcella Piccola pass when I was already high on the mountain.

Rifugio Galassi is somewhere on the right, close to the cloud in the photo. On the left is the ridge along which the route to Antelao continues. The mountains on the opposite side belong to the Sorapis group.

Note that this rifugio is the best place to use as a base if you do not want to carry a tent. Here are the contact details: email info@rifugiogalassi.it, phone +39 340 121 4300.



View back towards Forcella Picola.

This is a high mountain, and it stands quite isolated from the surrounding peaks, so its prominence is exceptional, as are the views. Below is a glimpse of this, with a view of [Monte Pelmo](#) hidden in the clouds and the shadow of Antelao far below.



Monte Pelmo in clouds.

When you first see the summit, as shown in the photo below, keep in mind that the hardest part is still to come. The true summit lies much farther back and is only slightly visible.



The first glimpse of the summit.



The ridge in the middle of the climb ends at an area known as Laste, shown in the photo.

This is a smooth and beautiful area, but with a huge drop beneath it, which is what makes it

intimidating. The rock looks almost like concrete. Ascending here is much easier than descending, so keep this in mind.

After Laste comes the hardest section below the summit. It involves walking along narrow and sometimes very exposed ledges, occasionally covered with scree, so this is where every step must be carefully measured.

There is a huge drop of nearly half a kilometer on the left (north) side, with a small glacier at the bottom.



Above Laste and view back.

I did not take many good photos of the drop and the exposure, mainly because I was too scared and focused on my safety. When you are alone in such places, you can feel vulnerable and fragile.



The previous photo shows the summit, and the route runs below it, traversing from right to left along natural ledges.

The summit is marked by a cross, which you can see in the photos below taken by Daniele Fontana, who passed me just below the summit.



Me at the summit cross.

On the way back, you follow the same route. Make sure to memorize it on the ascent, as it can be somewhat tricky to find and follow during the descent.

My Antelao tour

I decided to split the tour into two nearly equal parts, and even then it was a hard climb. For this reason, I took my outdoor sleeping equipment with me and spent the night on the mountain.

Below you can see my camping area. It was in the clouds when I arrived there in the late afternoon, with enough time before dark to pitch the tent and prepare my coffee. The elevation at this spot is around 2200 m (7218 ft).

You have finished the preview. The full Dolomites Solo guide contains 355 more pages, 400+ more photos.

Buy now.

A book for mountain walkers
who measure a good day
by silence, distance,
and wind on stone.

