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Volume 5 | Issue 1

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ADLER MOUNTAIN LODGE

Experience the Pinnacle of All-In Luxury

By: Joseph Reaney





When it comes to statistics, the Dolomites are relatively unassuming. This northern Italian mountain range doesn't boast the very highest peaks in Europe, nor can it claim to be among Italy's top tourist draws. It is not one of the continent's best known ski regions, nor is it a magnet for Hollywood stars.

Yet the sheer beauty, drama and "otherworldliness" of the Dolomites mountain range makes it one of the most spectacular and rewarding natural landscapes in the world – and one that isn't overrun with tourists. It is little wonder the Dolomites have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Venture into the very heart of the Dolomites – past the powder-white ski runs, the shimmering pine forests and the frozen waterfalls – and you'll find a remarkable construction made entirely of wood. It is a masterpiece of mountainside design: an authentic wooden lodge surrounded by 12 smaller ski chalets; an oasis of warmth, comfort and culture amidst frozen surroundings. This is Adler Mountain Lodge, and it's undoubtedly the most unique and luxurious accommodation option in the Dolomites.

A work of Alpine art

Adler Mountain Lodge opened its doors in July 2014, following a dozen intense years of planning and building. The location of the lodge – in a mountain valley at a height of 1,800 meters, within an area protected by UNESCO for its natural beauty – meant many planning battles and building challenges to overcome. But any visitor to the luxurious resort today will agree that it has been worth the wait.

Using natural raw materials from the region, plus sustainable construction methods, local architects Hugo and Hanspeter Demetz created a remarkable wooden lodge. The building's ground floor has a reception area, a lounge (with open fireplace), a restaurant and spacious sun terrace, while the next two floors are home to the 18 guest suites. The top floor is given over to extensive wellness and spa facilities, including an outdoor infinity pool with panoramic views of the Dolomites. There are also 12 stand-alone wooden chalets dotted around the lodge, bringing the total number of bedrooms to 30.

"The design ethos was inspired by African lodges in countries like Namibia," divulges Sara Vinatzer, the



Manager of Adler Mountain Lodge. “As with several African lodges, Adler Mountain Lodge has spacious open rooms for everyone to use in the house, with lots of cozy fireplaces.” Yet, in addition to its African inspiration, Sara reveals that the buildings have a strong connection to the local area. “The buildings are made only from local South Tyrolean wood, from the larch, pine, and oak trees.”

Stunning suites and chalets

The thoughtful design and its stunning execution can be seen throughout the resort, but particularly within the 18 suites. Each room is elegantly decked-out in natural spruce, from floor to ceiling, walls to balcony. The suites, approximately 45 square feet each, are comprised of a bedroom with a king size bed and large digital TV, a spacious seating area with comfy tartan chairs and a wooden coffee table, a large shower room and separate WC bidet, and a balcony with space for two to sit and soak up the scenery. Unexpected additions, from the complimentary fully-stocked minibar to the floor-lined lighting that guides you to the bathroom at night, help give the stay that extra special feeling.

Best of all, there are incredible vistas from every room within the resort. “Every suite has amazing and unique

views from spacious balconies,” says Sara Vinatzer. “Each room – as well as the saunas, the gym, the pool and the restaurant – offers fully 180 degree panoramic views of the Dolomites.”

For the ultimate luxury, guests can also experience a stay in an Alpine chalet. A dozen south-facing mountain chalets surround the lodge and are designed so the guests “feel as if they are in their own home,” according to Sara. Entirely assembled from locally-sourced wood, with each panel planed by a Val Gardena craftsman, they provide the authentic Alpine atmosphere. On the ground level, each chalet has a relaxing living area, with a soft sofa, open log fire, snug divan, digital TV and all-inclusive minibar, plus a sun terrace for sitting back and watching the sun rise and set over the mountains. On the second level, there’s a sleeping area with a super-comfortable bed-with-a-view, a shower and a bathroom, plus a large wooden balcony. It also has a private Finnish sauna for the definitive luxury.

Fine dining all day long

It can be hard to tear yourself away from the luxurious comforts of the suites and chalets, but if you make your way down to the ground floor you’ll discover another



highlight of Adler Mountain Lodge: the food and drink. Refreshments are available all day long and are included in the price of a room.

“The gourmet food is one of the best things about staying at Adler Mountain Lodge,” proclaims Sara. “Excellent quality regional food is provided around the clock, served by a caring young team, so that guests feel part of one big family.” When Sara says “excellent quality,” she is not overstating things.

Menus change seasonally, but are always full of fresh, locally-sourced ingredients. During my recent stay here, highlights of the dinner menu included homemade tagliatelle with mountain cheese and schlutzkrapfen (a South Tyrolean ravioli with a spinach filling), while daytime favorites included sour goats milk (for the breakfast cereals), regional cheeses and salamis, and unique local soft drinks. All year round you can enjoy one of the lodge’s homemade specialties, omelets with meadow flowers and herbs, while there are also wonderful northern Italian and Austrian wines available at all times.

Sara is also confident the resort’s all-inclusive nature helps

the guests feel at home. “They can forget about everything and not worry about having to pay for coffee, a glass of wine or any other extras.”

Indulgent wellness facilities

Another memorable highlight of a stay at the Adler Mountain Lodge is the wellness area. This lovely, expansive space on the top floor of the lodge is a haven for relaxation. Prioritize the outdoor, heated infinity pool, where guests can enjoy a swim and enjoy the amazing views of the Dolomites whatever the weather. Back inside, you can warm your bones in one of the saunas, lie back in the spacious spa lounge area or work up a sweat in the well-stocked gym. Every room on this level has glass walls and ceilings – including the saunas – so you will enjoy the spectacular views whatever you choose to do.

For the ultimate in relaxation, book yourself in for a spa treatment. The spa is open every day from 9am to 12pm (perfect for loosening yourself up before heading into the mountains) and again from 2pm to 8pm (ideal for some after-hike relief). The signature Adler Mountain Lodge massage is a real treat, as it uses local Alpine larch and African baobab branches for a diverse natural treatment,



while other options include a sports massage, an anti-cellulite massage and a salt peel massage. There are also a variety of beauty treatments, from bio-lifting facials to mud packs to manicures and pedicures.

All-inclusive activities

Many out-of-the-city resorts will put on some activities for their guests, but few offer such a breadth of outdoor fun, each suited to the season. During the colder months, activities include wine tasting, guided skiing, winter hiking, snow shoeing, gourmet dining experiences, night snow hiking, mulled wine cooking, tobogganing (day and night), and cross-country skiing, plus yoga (and other classes) in the gym. These are all included in your room rate, so you can sign up to as many – or as few – as you wish. All you will need to do is add your name and room number to the activities board by reception.

Sara is unequivocal in her choice of activities. “During winter, don’t miss the ski tour, guided by [my colleague] Hubi, the night toboggan tour led by Erich, and the snow shoe hike.” And what if you are visiting in spring or summer? “Then I can recommend the flower hike with Erich, the early morning dew walk, and the e-biking

all around Alpe di Siusi.”

The outdoor activities all reinforce the beauty of the Dolomites, one of Europe’s last great unspoiled natural areas. “People visit the Dolomites for their uniqueness,” says Sara. “The mountains are made from a special kind of rock, giving the landscape its characteristic shape and color, bordering on pale pink. Dramatically beautiful craggy peaks rise from high altitude plateaus, providing stunning vistas. And due to UNESCO World Heritage Site protection, the Dolomites have not been over-developed.”

With such an incredible and unspoiled natural landscape – and such a beautifully unique and lavish resort now at the heart of it – there’s never been a better time to book a vacation to the Dolomites. ✈

A seven-day stay in Adler Mountain Lodge in winter starts from £1,533 per person sharing a suite, and £1,771 per person sharing a chalet. All prices are inclusive of food, drink and activities. Check-in is on Thursdays and Sundays, and no children under eight are permitted. You can book your stay today online by visiting www.adler-lodge.com, or by calling the hotel directly on +39 0471 723000.