

Dobbiaco Ski Holiday January 2025

I love snow and I've always wanted to learn to ski, but quite honestly the thought of downhill terrified me. Then I was introduced to Manchester Cross Country Ski Club and the idea of learning to cross country ski on roller skis.



Fast forward a year of learning to roller ski, Mark and myself joined 13 other roller skiers from Manchester, Lakeland, Yorkshire and London Roller Ski Clubs on a holiday to Dobbiaco in the south Tyrol mountains of Italy. What an amazing week we had in glorious sunshine. I'd never experienced minus 15 degrees before and apart from initial very cold fingers, I've been colder on a wet day in Manchester.



Dobbiaco is a very pretty village surrounded by mountains with lots of interesting shops and importantly a nordic arena with ski hire, skills practice tracks and tracks leading off into the forest for the more experienced. We chose to stay in a self catering apartment owned by the Hotel Tschurtschenthaler where everyone else was on half board and we joined them every evening after dinner for the briefing on tomorrow's activity plans.



The excitement of hiring our first skis was real. We took our own combi roller ski boots and the staff at the Nordic Arena were really helpful kitting us out with skis and poles. It was great to be able to swap classic skis and poles to skate and then back to classic during the week's hire (£90 ish for the week).

Every evening our dedicated coaches Alison, Ros and Rosie planned a location (eg Nordic Arena, Fischleintalboden, Prags, Gsieser Tal), how to get there on the bus, drills and routes for all levels and a restaurant for lunch (which could be reached by bus or skied to depending on our energy levels).

Sandra, who booked the group holiday and airport transfer, also booked the restaurants in advance so we knew that all requirements were catered for. She did a fabulous job.

Afternoons were your chance to explore either on skis or the local area on foot or buses, before dinner and then our evening get together.

We couldn't believe how well our practice on classic roller skis transferred onto skis and we progressed quickly. This was especially evident when we tried skate skis having had very little practice on skate roller skis and our efforts were "bambi on ice".



What did we learn as beginners on our first ski holiday. You don't need all the gear; hire skis and poles were perfectly OK, lots of layers are best as when the sun comes over the mountains it gets warm very quickly and as cold just as quickly. A £20 puffer jacket from Aldi was wonderfully warm and my normal sports leggings were fine. There is some walking to and from bus stops and over shoes are a great addition that make walking on snow/ice much easier and also protects your boots. Of course the more you practise on roller skis before you get there, the better time you'll have. On the last day we classic skied up around the lake from the Arena and back, a total of 8k, Go Us!

Thanks to everyone who encouraged us so much.
Susie and Mark