

# Untold Italy Episode 165 - Trip Consultation: Dolomites and South Tyrol

This is the Untold Italy Travel podcast, and you're listening to episode number 165.

Ciao a tutti and Benvenuti to Untold Italy, the travel podcast, where you go to the towns and villages, mountains and lakes, hills and coastlines of Bella Italia. Each week your host Katy Clarke takes you on a journey in search of magical landscapes of history, culture, wine, gelato, and, of course, a whole lot of pasta. If you're dreaming of Italy and planning future adventures there, you've come to the right place.

## Katy

Ciao, hi everyone. I hope you're all happy and well and dreaming of Italy every day, just as I do!

I thought we'd try something different for a change that I hope will help you out with your trip planning. Today I'm joined by my friends Kate and Vin, South Tyrol and the Dolomites specialists who run the amazing website Throne and Vine and they're going to review my trip itinerary for this region that we're planning to visit in September 2023 and help adjust it for some particular circumstances of our trip.

We didn't record the original consultation but I found it so helpful that we've repeated it as I know it's going to help many of you, not just to learn how to travel in this region but also to understand how much value you can get by engaging specialists in any region that you visit in Italy or any other country for that matter.

As you know I have a lot of experience traveling in Italy but I was really getting stuck with a few things before chatting with Kate and Vin. Because, and I can't stress this enough, most of the really great information about South Tyrol and basically anywhere outside of the major tourist areas in Italy cannot be found by doing a Google search. Why? Because if it is there it is in Italian, and basically Italians are not as advanced with sharing their businesses online or even knowing what people search for.

Even in our Facebook group which is full of amazing helpful people, it's unlikely that you'll find someone available who has the depth of knowledge and experience that Kate and Vin have about this or any other region unless they live there or travel there regularly

Their advice has been invaluable, has undoubtedly saved us a lot of time and money but also our trip is going to be full of the experiences we love and wanted to include but didn't know how. I can't wait for you to hear this conversation and we'll get started after this quick break...

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**Katy**

Ciao, Benvenuti, Kate and Vin. Welcome back to the Untold Italy podcast.

**Vin**

Ciao.

**Kate**

Thank you. Ciao.

**Katy**

Great to have you here. Now, we're doing something a little bit different today because I'm going to be in the spotlight a bit with our trip. But before we get started, can you remind everyone who you are and what you do and your specialty when it comes to Italy?

**Kate**

Absolutely. Yeah. We have a blog that started out focused on South Tyrol, and it's now since expanded into a travel advisory business where we help people who may not be familiar with South Tyrol, since it's still such a hidden gem, and help those folks get there and explore it and have the best experience possible.

**Vin**

Our goal is to make it as easy as possible because it's the geography of South Tyrol and the Dolomites - it's very complex. Almost weekly we get a question, people are just confused. So we're trying to make it easy.

**Katy**

And the name of your site is Throne and Vine. Can you let everyone know what's behind the name?

**Kate**

Yes, absolutely. When we first came to the region, we liked that there were over 800 castles in the region. We focused on the throne side where you can see so many castles compared to so many other areas in Europe. Then Vine, because we're obsessed with the wine there, they just have the most exceptional wine.

## Katy

I love that. That's so good. All right. So now everyone, what we're going to do today is I'm actually going to be sharing some trip ideas that we had, and I was getting a little bit stuck. So we're going to Italy in September, and it's a trip that covers a few regions. But where I was really getting stuck is this section in South Tyrol and the Dolomites. And I think everyone knows by now that I've done a lot of travel in Italy. My Italian is okay. My husband's is excellent, and we're very comfortable driving in Italy. But planning this trip, I was frustrated. I couldn't work out how to do things, and we had a few little extra complications that I'm going to share with you as well. But what I wanted to do was go through... We've actually done this consultation before, but I wanted to get Kate and Vin back online to actually share this with you because it's so important to see how... If you're going into one of the regions of Italy that's not terribly well known or well documented in English, you need some help to make sure that your trip is really great.

## Katy

Everyone's got a limited amount of time. Everyone's got different needs and, I guess, requirements from their trip. And if you are trying to do it based on what's on Google, I think you're going to find yourself running into a few challenges. Anyway, I did. And I think I've got a lot of experience in this area. So I wanted to share what was happening with our trip with everyone. So before we get started, I'm going to give everyone a quick rundown of our trip. So we're going to be arriving - we're spending a little couple of nights in Tuscany, and then we're driving up to this region. And who's coming on this trip? Well, it's going to be me, my husband, our children who are nine years old, and my parents who are in their 70s. And so there's six of us, so there's six of us. So we will have a van. My husband loves driving the van. He doesn't understand why we don't have a van at home, and I'm not driving a van. He can get to drive the van this time. But just as an aside, we're looking at the van prices now, and whoa! are they pricey? This is for September this year. And so if anyone's looking at renting a van, get onto it very quickly, because I think there's limited availability and it's really pricey. Anyway, we will be in the South Tyrol and Dolomites region for about eight days. And because it's a large region, I wanted to find two places where we could explore from. What we're looking for is the wow scenery that's up there, the incredible mountains, the lakes, the beautiful vineyards, and the castles, all of that, the history, the food, the wine, and the outdoors, of course. However, my dad has a bit of mobility challenges and he can walk actually quite long distances, but he's slow. And uneven ground and steep paths is probably not the best option. And we really want dad to have an amazing time on this trip because it might be his last trip to Europe. So we want him to have an amazing time. He's a keen photographer. So all of these beautiful scenery and the beauty all around, he'll just lap it all up. But we do have these challenges. And so I wanted to ask Kate and Vin and I was like, I was thinking, God, I need help with this. Who do I ask? And I was like, Of course, Kate and Vin.

## Katy

And so we had this chat, and it was so good that I really wanted to share it with you because what I was thinking was to stay in Bolzano because it's a city and it looked like it was going to be good for a base and then probably go into one of the smaller villages, like Ortisei. That was my original plan. Thank goodness I talked to Kate and Vin because they had really given me some great options. Guys, why don't we just start? Maybe you've got some comments on how we can start approaching these because I just found it so valuable.

## Vin

There's so many destinations in the Dolomites to pick from, but given that you have some mobility issues with your parents, we thought probably the best place to base yourself would be Val Gardena. Where are there's three villages, Ortisei, Santa Cristina and Sëlva. Ortisei is the biggest town. The beautiful thing about Ortisei is that you can show up there - either you take a public transit bus to your hotel. You can walk everywhere. You can take lifts up to pretty much virtually any place where it's easy to hike. You have the Alpe di Siusi on one side of the valley and Seceda on the other. When we were talking with Katy, we thought you can make it really complicated if you want to dive in and out of valleys and stuff, but since you're going to have some issues with your father, we figured basing yourself on Alpe di Siusi itself - this area surrounded by Sassolungo, Schlern Mountain, Rosengarten. You have some of the major peaks of the Dolomites right outside the door.

## Katy

Yeah. And this was like, I was mind blown. I was like, Whoa, I would never have thought of that because it's right on top of the mountain. And so the beauty of that was that you can actually do quite a few day trips from there, right?

## Vin

Yeah. Alpe di Siusi itself is 20 square miles. We'll picture basically Manhattan, 5,000 feet up off the valley floor. There's countless trails. The wonderful thing about it is it's rolling meadows, so you don't really have any steep inclines to deal with. The trails are all really nice and you can pretty much walk out because it's an alpine meadow. You can just wander. You can't get lost. The other beautiful thing about that is eventually you're going to run into a mountainside tavern where you can stop and have a drink or a meal. It's one of our favorite places to explore.

## Katy

It sounds amazing. I think one of the other things that really, when we were talking about it, really attracted me was the accommodation and the type of accommodation that you have there. Maybe you can tell people a little bit about that.

## **Kate**

Yeah, absolutely. I think one of our favorite options is staying within some a local bed and breakfast tavern environment. So you really get to know the locals, stay with the locals, and experience something a little bit more authentic and genuine.

## **Vin**

Yeah. So there's the farm stays, which is what Kate's referring to, where you stay with a family that actually has a farm and you can help out on the farm if you want, or you can just watch them. I like to watch them. Then the other really amazing accommodations in South Tyrol are the wellness resorts. That's where you can experience some of the different wellness treatments. There's the Kneipp Path I don't know if anybody's familiar with that. You basically walk on ice cold water through a trail, and supposedly it has some therapeutic effects. But at these alpine wellness resorts, there's all sorts of different treatments from taking pine oil baths to hay baths. So it's just a really neat experience. After you've been hiking or biking all day, you come back to the resort and just let them pamper you.

## **Katy**

And there's no real need to leave as well. This was another great question that came up. Now we were going a little bit backward and forward when I was booking the accommodation, there's the option to do a half board, which I know it's very common in Europe to offer that service. Half board actually means they offer you two meals a day breakfast and usually dinner. I asked Kate and Vin, should we do the half board option? What did you tell me?

## **Vin**

Well, if you're going to be staying in a place that's a little bit more secluded like Alpe di Siusi, you're going to want to do a half board for sure because there are mountain taverns all around you but after a day of hiking and you've probably already wandered six hours, you're really not going to want to go wander down the road to another place to eat again. So if you're going to be staying on the mountains, definitely do the half board option. We like to stay sometimes a little closer to the towns because that way we get a little bit more variety with the restaurants. You can walk into the town, but it really depends on your experience. The problem when you stay in one of the towns in the valleys is that you don't get the sunrise and the sunset over the Dolomites. And where you'll be staying, you'll be able to look out your window and take it all in.

## **Katy**

Those mountains are so spectacular, aren't they? Just they're jagged. They're really dramatic.

**Vin**

They're amazing. And then the other thing we love about the Dolomites is that you can wander almost like on pedestals, the way that they formed. I don't know of any other mountains in the world where you can walk around the entire massif and you take it in from all these different vantage points and it looks entirely different. So even if you walk the same trail out and back, everything looks different.

**Katy**

Incredible. And I think that's going to be really special and unique. So even though my gut instinct was to stay in the town because you'd have more variety, I feel like, well, what are we really here to see? Well, we're here to see the mountains, so let's stay.

**Kate**

Excactly.

**Vin**

If you want to go into the towns, you have Castelrotto, which is probably 20 minutes away, like I said, Ortisei. So it's not like you're removed from them. But just from a convenience standpoint, I think you're much better off staying on the plateau itself. Yeah, it.

**Katy**

Sounds like it. And how about driving up there? Is that fairly straightforward?

**Vin**

Yeah, you can only access it from Castelrotto. So Alpe di Siusi, it's a little bit confusing because you have the plateau itself, which is called Alpe di Siusi. And then there's a holiday region called Alpe di Siusi. And then there's Val Gardena. So there are two separate holiday regions to make it more confusing. You cannot drive up from Val Gardena. The only way you can get to the plateau is from taking the lift or hiking up. And then in Castelrotto, you can take a lift up from Seis, which is a suburb of Castelrotto, or you can take a road up to Campeche. I don't even want to call the village on it's a little community cluster of some houses up on Alpe di Siusi, and there's parking right there. I think you pay, I think last time it was 20 euros to park there. But a lift ticket is going to be at least that. So you're better off driving if you don't want to deal with taking a lift up or waiting in line or anything like that. So it's pretty easy drive. There's a couple of hairpin turns, but overall, if you're used to driving a little bit in some mountain areas, it'd be fine.

**Katy**

And what about the van? Because it's going to be slightly larger than a normal van.

**Vin**

Yeah, I would never take a van in the Dolomites.

**Katy**

Oh

**Vin**

I'm kidding! No don't worry - you'll be fine. The one thing that we really like about South Tyrol, and it might be like this in other mountain regions of Italy, is that the roads are immaculate. They really take good care of them. There's plenty of places where if you're driving... And of course, the locals could drive those roads blind folded. So they're zipping through those roads and they come up behind you. And then, of course, you get nervous because you don't want to slow anybody down. But the nice thing with the roads over there is they have a lot of pull-offs. So if somebody's behind you and you just don't want them riding your tail, just pull off to the side of them and go by.

**Katy**

Yeah. And that's actually a good tip because I feel like if someone is riding your tail or right up the back of your car, we say it a little bit differently in Australia, but you do pull over. Because it's the etiquette thing to do. We have actually here, we have a very famous road, the tourist road that goes down the Great Ocean Road here, and people somehow don't get that memo. And it can be very frustrating for all concerned if people don't pull over. So take advantage of that. And those roads in Northern Italy, especially the ones that border Austria and Germany, are very nice. It's good to know that that's a really safe option.

**Vin**

If somebody's worried about mountain driving, as long as you're not scared of death of heights, you'd be fine driving in the mountains of Italy and the Dolomites. It's nothing to be concerned about.

**Katy**

Okay, that's good to know. My husband loves driving in Italy, so he will lap it all up.

**Kate**

Perfect.

## **Katy**

I'll be the navigator and all of that. How about Google Maps? Is that work okay up there? Or is it one of those things where you need the paper map?

## **Kate**

No, Google Maps is something we rely on pretty heavily. So we usually make sure that we have access to our service when we're over there. And then I do the same thing that you're describing where I'm the navigator and Vin is driving. So that's always worked really well for us. And then I can let them know if there are hairpin turns coming up. He gets a little bit of warning watching on the map.

## **Vin**

Yeah, that's actually a great point because a lot of times we end up driving at night if we go out to dinner and then we're driving back to our hotel or our farmstay and you're going up some roads and night time driving, it's really nice to have Kate say, We're coming up, there's going to be a sharp right turn here. It just adds a little bit more confidence on those roads. If you are driving over there, yeah, make the person in the shotgun do some work.

## **Katy**

Exactly. You can get the in-car GPS, but I actually think when you're in somewhere that's not familiar, that it's better to have you concentrating on the road and having that person next to you describing what to do.

## **Vin**

Yeah, absolutely. In most parts that we've been, you do have cell reception. It can be spotty, but it's really improved over the last, I'd say, eight years. So you can rely on Google Maps, but we also recommend people download them so you can have them offline, too, especially if you're hiking and you're not using an app, a hiking app, or following some other map, it's nice to have that.

## **Katy**

Because you do chew data as well if it keeps pinging the server. That's a good tip, too. It's really... So for me, this was a huge relief when Kate and Vin said, Okay, for so many reasons, we can stay up on the mountain. We have those beautiful sunrises. We can have the dinners up there. We can come back to the base. But then I said to them, What if we want to go somewhere else? Is it going to be difficult to get to other places? Because obviously, we wanted to see some of the lakes and some of the other places in the area. And what did you tell me?

## **Kate**

In general, it's very easy to get around, especially if you have your own transportation. So if - some of the sites might be a little bit more popular, so you want to get there a little bit earlier, especially some of the lakes, like you mentioned. So because you have that flexibility with your own vehicle, it can be a lot easier.

## **Katy**

So what day trips could we do from the Alpe di Siusi?

## **Vin**

From Alpe di Siusi, yeah. You could drive to Lago di Braies, which is probably the most popular lake in the Dolomites. And that drive will be a little over an hour from where you're located. So again, it'd be especially the time of year you're going. You're going to want to be there as soon as possible to avoid.

## **Katy**

All the Instagrammers.

## **Vin**

The crowds. All the Instagrammers and the models, yes. But they also shut down the main parking area and close down the road. And they do that from I believe it's the end of May through the end of September. They're trying to control the amount of traffic, especially now after Covid. Everyone's traveling and restricting that road quite a bit. It's not the end of the world. If you show up and it's closed, there is a place that there's a tavern. You just pull off the side there and you can park and they shuttle you in. Once you're being shuttled in, you're probably the number 3,000 person getting in there. So you're already late.

## **Katy**

Right. That's a nearly start that day. Breakfast at 7 and out the door. And then we can come back.

## **Vin**

Out the door, yeah. When you're at Lago di Braies, too, the nice thing is that there's a couple of different places you can eat. When you're driving away from your base, you don't have to worry about packing anything. There's restaurants pretty much around almost all the natural attractions that you can hike to. And on Lago di Braies, there's Hotel Lago di Braies, which is a really historic property. They have a wonderful restaurant, but it's a little bit more elegant. What we like to do is you hike halfway around the lake and then you duck down another trail about I think it's about a half hour and there's a gorgeous mountain tavern there just surrounded by these sheer cliffs. They have a little farm and the dessert there is amazing.

When you go to Lago di Braies, I would plan on at least half a day just exploring there, take your time and it's an amazing place.

**Katy**

It looks spectacular. What's the name in the German? Because in this region, obviously, they speak Italian and German and probably mostly German, actually, don't they?

**Vin**

Mostly German. I think 70 % of South Tyrol speaks German. The name of Lago di Braies in German is Pragser Wildsee. Probably getting that wrong. It's Wildsee, but it's pronounced Vildsee.

**Katy**

Wildsee? Yeah. actually, I did German at school, so maybe I'll have to pull that out when I'm there.

**Vin**

Perfect. It'll come in handy. It's interesting because there's certain destinations that go just by the German name more common than the Italian name. That's another part of the confusion is that people will hear different names at different places, and then they can't picture exactly where it is. In Val Gardena, not only do you have German and Italian, you have Ladin, which is an ancient language. I think there's five valleys in the Dolomites where the Ladin culture has its own language. So you'll see signs and menus in three different languages.

**Katy**

I mean, that's part of the charm, isn't it? It's so cool.

**Kate**

Absolutely.

**Vin**

You feel like when you're there, you're separated from your own culture and you get to experience this other culture that's just fascinating on top of the natural beauty all around you.

**Katy**

So cool. And can you tell us maybe another day trip that we could do? Because we're going to have a few days up there. I think we're going to have five days that we're going to stay up on the Alpe di Siusi.

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**Vin**

So the next trip I would do from Lago di Braies would be Val di Funes. Val di Funes, it's Villnöß in German, is the valley - actually, it's the valley right next to you, more to the east. The nice thing with Val di Funes is it has the Saint Magdalena Church, which is probably one of the more famous church backdrops. I'm sure everyone's seen it on Instagram or on the web where you have these jagged peaks and this little church in this really lush, green valley. Then there's another famous church, probably two miles from there, called Saint Johann - another tiny Chapel. You get to see the mountains from a different perspective. Two famous churches in that valley.

**Vin**

A lot of people go there and they just go to the main viewpoints because you can probably go in there and be in and out of there, I would say, in a couple of hours. But what we'd recommend is hiking. You go there, check out the churches, get your Instagram shots, but then hike the Adolf Munkel Trail. Okay. Adolf Munkel Trail, it's an incredible hike. I think you can probably hike it all day if you want it, but tying it in with the churches and hitting part of that trail, you're probably looking at five hours.

**Vin**

But there's some incredible places to eat up on there. The nice thing with that trail is it brings you right underneath the peaks of Seceda. It's the Odle Mountain and so Seceda is on the other side. But you see the mountains from an entirely different perspective, you would never guess it's at the same peaks.

**Vin**

Wow. I always ask this for you and I always love your answers. Are these difficult hikes? If we got some children that may or may not be interested in hardcore hiking?

**Vin**

The hikes that we're recommending to you, they're not hardcore. So anybody that's reasonably fit can definitely do them. One of the things that we tell people is if you're hiking in the Dolomites or anywhere, and if you're constantly stopping to catch your breath, you're going too fast. You're not in a rush. The thing that I think a lot of people make the mistake is that they arrive in the Dolomites and they think the next day they can go hike some incredible, difficult path, and you can't because you're not adjusted to the altitude. So where you're going to be staying, it's really nice because you have some really easy hikes, so you can really get acclimated before you take on anything more rigorous.

## **Katy**

Amazing. It sounds perfect. Then we were talking about another base for our trip, and I was thinking, Bolzano, now this is where I really got stuck in is where I hit the panic button and called you because what I was getting stuck with is that, well, first of all, there's parking issues there and it's got a historic zone. But also there's a lift up into the mountains, but that's quite far away from the center of town. So I was like, Where do we stay? And then you said to me.

## **Kate**

Oh, okay. Well, Bolzano is a great place to stay, but it's very city-like. So we recommended staying somewhere a little bit different. We recommend to stay more in the Dorf Tirol area, where you're elevated and you're overlooking everything. You have beautiful views of castles, and it's a little bit more quaint and a little bit more authentic and rustic. So we thought that might be a little bit more of a charming experience. Yeah.

## **Vin**

And Dorf Tirol is located north of Bolzano. It's about probably a half hour, 40 minutes drive north of there. You go towards Merano, which Merano is a beautiful resort town. I recommend you could stay there as well. But what we like about Dorf Tirol is that it's part way up the mountainside a little bit. So you're staying there and you're looking back towards Adige Valley, towards Bolzano. It's just this wide open valley with mountains on both sides and you can't really get that perspective by staying in Merano. If you're looking for a place with a view, definitely Dorf Tirol.

## **Vin**

The other thing that's great about it is that some of our favorite hikes are right outside that village. You can take the Algunder Waalweg, which is a trail that runs along an irrigation channel. So you're walking through vineyards and orchards and forests and chapels and castles all around you. Or you can take the Tappeiner promenade from Dorf Tirol, which is a gorgeous promenade that runs above Merano. Then you take another promenade and you can walk all the way down into Merano itself. From Dorf Tirol, you can pretty much walk everywhere if you want.

## **Katy**

It sounds so beautiful. It sounds like a fairytale. It's something straight out of a fairytale, so beautiful. I think that region is where the wine is really good, right?

## **Kate**

Yes, it's exceptional.

## Vin

There's a place right in Dorf Tirol that we really love. The main castle of the region, Castle Tyrol, is located right next to Dorf Tirol. When we were hiking there, I think it was our first time there, we saw this little stand underneath the vines. You can see the duck underneath the grapevines to get to it and saw a sign there. We saw a sign there and we didn't have any idea what we were doing. The gal asked if we wanted some wine. She didn't speak English. She just showed us. We tried it and this was in autumn and it's the new wine. It wasn't quite done but that's a tradition in South Tyrol is to sample the newest wine from that year's vintage. It was really sweet, tasted like juice. The area where we did that, it was just beautiful. You could go sit on some different benches up on the vineyard and you're looking through the vines to the castle.

## Katy

Yeah. I think, well, the kids aren't into wine just yet, but how we'll enjoy that experience very much. I think that it's nice to have that contrast because it's a very different landscape, isn't it, there compared with the Dolomites? Yeah.

## Vin

The Merano area is very Mediterranean in the valley, so it's very lush. You have palm trees, all sorts of cypress trees, and then you have orchards, we have apples, and you have pears. Looks like a garden of Eden. And then on top of that, you have the snowcapped mountains all around you. So we always say that in South Tyrol, you get the experience of Germany and Italy in one place, and then you also get the experience of the Mediterranean and Alpine in one place. You get a huge variety of things to experience from a cultural standpoint and just from contrasting landscapes.

## Katy

And the other thing that I mentioned to you is that my mom really likes gardens and gardening, and there's some beautiful ones there, too, isn't there?

## Kate

Yes, absolutely. There's also the gardens of Trauttmansdorff, and those are gorgeous. And they're continually changing throughout the seasons what they have within their garden. And it's circling a castle, too. So it's a really beautiful setting.

## Vin

Yeah. The way they built the garden, it climbs up the mountain. So you can see different, I guess, different landscapes as higher you go, it reflects the elevation. So really neat place. That's located just outside of Merano. So if you are staying in Bolzano, you can be to the gardens of Trauttmansdorff, probably within 30 minutes. From Merano - it's literally you could

walk from downtown Merano to the gardens if you wanted. Otherwise, it's maybe a 10 minute drive.

**Katy**

And is the driving easy around there as well?

**Vin**

Yeah, very easy around there. It seems to be a little bit, once you get higher up, the roads are a little bit less marked. They're not as marked, quite as well. And so there's been a few times where we've gotten lost in that part of South Tyrol. But when you get lost, you find something new. So it's never a problem, really.

**Katy**

This was the other great thing is, and I really like this idea of Dorf Tirol because it's flat as well. So we don't even though we're surrounded by mountains, you've still got these generally flat paths that are suitable for everyone, which just made me feel so relieved because when you're planning a trip to a mountain-like area, you're thinking, Oh, my goodness - you're like "that's not going to work", but with this plan, I'm really happy with this plan now. I really feel like it can work. We've also got to include a stop in Bolzano, per your suggestion, because we can just stop for the day and just park the car closer to the center of town and then just do our walking while we're and so it ticks all the boxes.

**Vin**

Yeah, you really can. In Merano and Bolzano, they both have a vibrant center. So you're getting a lot of history. Plus, if you like shopping, it's incredible. They have open-air markets. We love going to those towns. We're just more mountain people, nature people. But like I said, we hike during the day and then in the evening, we like to stay and check out the different towns, villages, just because you get more exposure to the locals and the culture and you find amazing restaurants.

**Katy**

This is the thing. I think I had a picture in my head of what it was going to be. I don't really know. Now, looking back on it, it was - It did involve a lot of villages, but I'm so happy with this plan. And I can't thank you enough because I was really stressed about it. And I just want to reinforce to everyone, I can't have lost count how many times I've been to Italy, but this was really completely different. The terrain is different, the language is different. It's a different area. And for me, getting the input and advice from you has been absolutely invaluable. And I just can't thank you enough for that. So, Kate and Vin, how can other people reach out and get some help planning their trips to this gorgeous area of Italy with you?

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**Vin**

On our [website](#), we have a page that talks about our different itinerary planning services. So we can just do a consultation call like this. It's 45 minutes and you can ask us questions. We can pull up a map and guide you to help you understand where things are located - how far away. Or we can develop a personalized itinerary for how many days that you would like. And we send you a travel questionnaire and we start from there. And then also, if you're a do-it-yourself planner, we have some great resources just on our website that you can download from hiking guides to how to find the best airfare. We really try to make it as simple as possible. We like to plan everything ourselves - others want to have somebody else do it. So try to find whatever would work for that individual - we have something.

**Katy**

Honestly, if you're stuck, just come and check out Kate and Vin because it's very helpful. And like I said, I really feel very confident that we're going to have an amazing time. Thank you so much for being and helping me out with my trip. I really appreciate it. You're welcome. I'll be reporting back.

**Kate**

Please do.

**Vin**

Ciao

**Katy**

Ciao everyone.

**Kate**

Ciao

**Katy**

Honestly, I think our trip would have been a bit of a hot mess without Kate and Vin's help. Well, that's a bit dramatic. It would have been fine but we probably would have had a few logistical challenges and hit the popular/busy spots without getting to my favorite "untold" places and experiences. So now I know it's going to be amazing and September can't come soon enough.

If you'd like to find out more about traveling in South Tyrol and the Dolomites or book a consult with Throne and Vine we've put all their details into the show notes at [untolditaly.com/165](https://untolditaly.com/165) You'll also find links to the previous episodes they've recorded with us

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which they share a lot of wonderful things to do and see in this region which is spectacular in both summer and winter.

Thanks for your ongoing support of Untold Italy. We truly appreciate all of you, our listeners joining us from around the world. We'd love it if you helped spread the word so we can reach more Italy-loving travelers just like you. And the best way you can do this is by leaving us a 5-star rating or review on your favorite podcast app or forwarding this episode onto a friend who also loves colorful towns, delightful local customs and the magic of regional Italy.

That's all for today, next week we'll take another dip into the magic of Italy... "ciao for now".