



FAMILY ROCK CLIMBING IN THE DOLOMITES

Take your first family adventure rock climbing in the stunning Dolomites.

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ONE SMALL STEP FOR MOM! FAMILY ROCK CLIMBING IN THE DOLOMITES

Few places on earth can rival the stunning natural beauty and rich, cultural energy of the Italian Dolomites. Carved by millennia of harsh, Alpine weather, these towering limestone spires crest Italy like a stone crown, signalling the point at which Austrian Tyrol becomes the Italian north.

Famed for their luminous pale hue and impossibly barbed silhouette, the eighteen major peaks responsible for the Dolomites' distinctive outline have been providing inspiration for adventurers for centuries. Deep gorges and soaring rock faces rise and fall throughout the region, providing a thrilling playground for adventurers.

The tallest of them, the Marmolada, stands at an imposing 3,343 metres, and on clear days provides views of Venice. In true Italian style, the range is doused in glamour and intrigue, and has hosted Hollywood movies, Olympic games, and numerous World War One battles. These epic stories are etched into the limestone, visible through the extensive network of via ferrata paths, which follow routes used by Italian soldiers during the war.

In 2009 this winning combination of fascinating history and outstanding natural beauty contributed to the Dolomites being added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. The accolade confirmed what many adventurers already knew: magic happens in these mountains.

The region is one of the top outdoor destinations in the world, and provides a roster of activities as varied as the scenery itself.



Perfect for experienced climbers and families alike, the Dolomites attract thousands of intrepid tourists every year, and with a little elbow grease, the landscape will open itself to any explorer, no matter their age.

For families looking to introduce kids to climbing, look no further than the pretty mountain town of Cortina d'Ampezzo. Here you will find the perfect base to explore from the ground up, with fantastic access to indoor and outdoor climbing ranges, skilled instructors, and all the amenities needed to facilitate your first climb.

Tour company Dolomite Mountains s.r.l has some great options for climbers of every level, and caters specifically to families with its weeklong, family Via Ferrata experience. The trip begins on an easy sentiero – a path equipped with protective cables -- then gradually increases in difficulty depending on the ability level of your family. Your UIAGM/IFMGA Mountain Guide



will run through the basics of rock climbing, including how to use a harness, and communicate while you're on the rock. The route is adapted for each family, but promises to include the Tre Cime di Lavaredo, Passo Falzarego, and Cinque Torri.

If you're short on time and looking to cover the basics in a couple of days, Dolomiti Ski Rock also has a comprehensive introduction to rock climbing. Suitable for adults and children, this two day course covers the essential theory and techniques needed to prepare you for your first solo climb.

The majority of the practical training takes place in the scenic Cinque Torri, which is set up with all the equipment needed to take your first steps. The course runs every day from May to

October, and includes all the equipment needed for the duration of the session.

For families with members nervous about getting out onto the rocks, consider taking a lesson at the Lino Lacedelli Climbing Gym in Cortina d'Ampezzo. Classes are led by IFMGA-certified guide Join Pier, and covers basic rock climbing skills, equipment usage, basic nodes and safety manoeuvres.

The gym is a fantastic space to begin, and has a huge variety of rock walls, beginner focused areas, and a vertiginous 26-meter wall. Sessions are one hour in total, and can be combined to create a custom program depending on your needs. Book via Explore Share, or contact the Lino Lacedelli Climbing Gym directly for more information.

If you're keen to book with a smaller, more local company, then check out ViaFerrataDolomites.com. This Cortina based tour company runs intimate tours throughout the Dolomites, and has a couple of options suitable for families with beginners. The best option for total novices is the "Via Ferrata for families with kids". The guide specifies that this course is perfect for "terrified mums", as it begins with a soft climb on the Via Ferrata Col Rodella. This short route ascends the south wall of the peak, and is suitable for those with little to no experience on rocks.

On the second day of the course you will summit the Via Ferrata Roda de Vaèl, another easy climb which offers stunning views over the surrounding valleys.