**AUTUMN IN TRENTINO: DEER LOVE SONGS AND FASCINATING HIKES**

**In Europe, few wildlife spectacles can match the autumn rut of red deer. Guided tours in all three of our Nature Parks reveal this magnificent ritual – played out against a backdrop of vivid colour and soaring mountain peaks. Take your camera and go for a hike in the blazing woods of the Nature Parks of Trentino.**

Trentino’s UNESCO-protected landscapes are famous. What fewer people know, however, is that it’s also a region of exceptional biodiversity. 30,000 wild goats, 27,000 chamois and 10,000 deer live here, along with brown bears, lynx, capercaillie and golden eagles. **In late September and early October** **the red deer** put on a display of power and aggression made all the more memorable by its mountain setting.

Dusk is the best moment to witness it, as the rays of the setting sun light up the yellowing larches. It’s at this moment that our guided walks begin. In the company of Park Rangers, guests hike up into the forests, their footsteps muffled by carpets of fallen needles, until the silence is shattered by **the bellowing stags**. The roars are a show of strength, and when another male responds, the ritual gathers pace.

First, the stags walk up and down in parallel, roaring and grunting, as they work out who is the stronger. If it’s not obvious, then **the fighting begins** – head to head, antlers locked with antlers – with each stag trying to get above his opponent, and use the slope to his advantage. The winner takes all. A dominant stag will marshal a group of hinds into a harem, and mate with each one. (Although it’s not unknown for a smaller stag to sneak into the harem while the alpha males clash).

The guided walks take place between September 7 and October 7, in all three of Trentino’s nature parks – the **Stelvio National Park,** the **Adamello Brenta Park** and the **Paneveggio - Pale di San Martino Nature Park.** There are thirteen walks in total(numbers are restricted, so as not to disturb the animals). In each case, guests assemble at the park’s visitor centre at 6.30pm for snacks made of local products, and a short presentation. This is followed by a guided tour, led by one of the Park’s wildlife experts, ending between 10.30 and 11.00pm.

**DON’T FORGET YOUR CAMERA**

Of course, there’s more than one way to enjoy this most ravishing of seasons. The cooler temperatures and crystal-clear air are tailor-made for invigorating walks, soaking up the last of the sun. Needless to say, you’ll need a camera. A selfie-stick will come in handy, too

Nowhere is the scenery more enthralling than in **the three Nature Parks of Trentino**, where both wildlife and landscape are protected, and the rhythms of the season are undisturbed. One of the most magnificent (and most-photographed) views is in the **Val Venegia**, in the heart of the **Paneveggio - Pale di San Martino Nature Park**. Here, a forest of yellowing larches spreads beneath the Pale di San Martino massif. Beneath a clear sky, with early snow dusting the crags, it’s a breathtaking scene.

In **Val di Cembra**, in the absolutely admirable spectacle of the vines growing up the hillside on a set of terraces, you can start a pleasant autumn excursion from Lake Santo above the village of Cembra. The E5 European Path takes us through the changing colours of the woods up to the Zise Pass where you can take in an exclusive view over the vineyards. From here you can continue to the Potzmauer mountain hut for a hearty seasonal lunch.

An easy and exciting route suitable for the whole family also unfolds in the beech woods around **Fai della Paganella**. Starting from La Capannina, this route reaches the numerous viewpoints above the Valle dell'Adige.

Entering the Val di Rabbi, in the Stelvio National Park, the ring of the water falls of Saènt leads to the foot of the spectacular water jumps created by the Rabbies stream. For those who want to go further, it is possible to reach from the overhanging Prà di Saènt the " **Staircase of Monumental Larches**, a one-mile circuit past the patriarchs of the Val di Rabbi: a stand of towering and contorted trees that are hundreds of years old.

In the Adamello Brenta Natural Park, you can wander through the **Val di Fumo**, one of the most spectacular and secluded glacial valleys of the Alps, surrounded by woods and rocky walls.

Again, in the area of the Adamello Brenta Natural Park, in **Val Rendena**, you can follow the itinerary that goes up to the hermitage of San Martino immersed in the vivid colours of larches and beeches. A legend tells us that the place was inhabited by one of the last hermits who lived thanks to the bread that was brought to him by a tame bear.

The **Stelvio** also organizes guided walks. On September 30 and October 7, for example, you can join a **weekend with animals and autumn colors** - two days of total immersion in the park, observing the animals in their pristine habitats, and spending a night in a mountain dairy. And for the summer, there will be a brand new programme of “forest bathing” excursions in the company of an expert guide.

For more on autumn in Trentino, visit: <https://www.visittrentino.info/en/autumn-holidays-in-the-alps>

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