DOLOMITES
UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

The Earth's history book

Geology: a legacy of the Puez-Odle Nature Park. In the north of the valley of the Val di Funes, on the road to St. Christina/Santa Cristina above St. Christina, the Rodelwald/Selva di Val Gardena valley, on the road to Badia valley. The rocks are typical of the dolomites, which the layers were formed in a marine environment about 260 million years ago. The Puez-Odle Nature Park is dominated by the main Dolomite complex, which consists of numerous strata of rock, including the Main Dolomite, the Calcareous Conglomerates, the Bressanone Dolomite, the Schlern/Sciliar Dolomite, the Cassian Dolomite and the Villnösser/Dolomiti di Funes Dolomite. The Main Dolomite is the largest and most important of these, being composed of finer, reddish to greenish-gray limestones and dolomites. The Schlern/Sciliar Dolomite is a characteristic feature of the Puez-Odle Nature Park. It is known for its characteristic stratification and is a major geologic feature in the area.

The Puez-Odle Nature Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recognized for its unique and irreplaceable natural and cultural heritage. The park covers an area of 42,500 hectares and is situated in the heart of the Dolomites, one of the most beautiful mountain ranges in Europe. The park is known for its diverse wildlife, stunning landscapes, and rich cultural heritage.

The park is home to a wide variety of plant and animal species, including the endangered ibex, the alpine chough, and the Pyrenean chough. The park is also home to a variety of rare and endangered plant species, including the edelweiss, the Pyrenean alpine lily, and the lady's slipper.

The park is a popular destination for hikers, climbers, and nature enthusiasts, and offers a variety of trails and activities for visitors to enjoy. The park is managed by the Puez-Odle Nature Park Foundation, which is responsible for the conservation and management of the park's natural and cultural heritage.

The park is a testament to the beauty and diversity of the Dolomites, and a reminder of the importance of protecting our natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Dolomites and forests

The Dolomites are characterized by a unique combination of limestone and dolomite rock, which gives the mountains their distinctive appearance. The dolomite rock is particularly well-suited to the climate of the Dolomites, as it is able to retain moisture and support a wide variety of plant life.

Forests

The forests in the Dolomites are a mix of coniferous and deciduous species, including the larch, the silver fir, and the spruce. The forests provide important habitat for a variety of wildlife, including the ibex, the chough, and the alpine marmot.

The forests also serve an important role in the park's ecosystem, as they help to regulate the climate and provide a home for a wide variety of plant and animal species.

The forests are also an important part of the park's cultural heritage, as they have been used for centuries by the people who live in the area. The forests are home to a variety of traditions and customs, including the practice of forest management and the harvesting of forest products.
South Tyrol Nature Parks

Nature parks are of particular importance for the preservation of nature and the development of outdoor tourism and provide an opportunity to experience nature. The concept is based on five guiding principles:

1. South Tyrol Nature Parks protect and preserve the diversity of the mountains with their features, plants and cultures.
2. Information, environmental education and a special nature experience offer unique new understandings of nature and promotes good preservation.
3. The Nature Parks contain mountains, pastures and forests;
4. Forest and alpine farming and maintenance are maintained using sustainable methods.
5. No construction is permitted (except for the forest and alpine farming), and felling of trees is only implemented in case of natural causes, severe weather events or for water hydroelectric production purposes.

A Brief Overview of the Nature Park

Established in 1979, the Puez-Geisler/Puez-Odle Nature Park is bordered on the north by the Walser Valley/Valle Aurina and to the south by the Gader Valley/Giudicarie Plateau. In the north, the park extends to the Gries Valley/Val Gries (Udine), the south to the Val di Funes and the Grödner Valley/Val Gardena. This latter valley, which reaches the same altitudes as the peaks in the park, was once part of the Cortina Dolomites and was later added to the Nature Park.


Conservation is an integral part of the culture in South Tyrol. A local initiative known as the ‘Cultura del Territorio’ was started in the late 1960s. This initiative aims to preserve the landscapes and cultural heritage of the region. The South Tyrol Nature Parks have contributed to this through the successful implementation of various nature conservation programs and initiatives.

The Nature Parks include a variety of ecosystems, including forests, grasslands, and alpine meadows. The forests are dominated by coniferous species, while the grasslands and meadows support a diverse array of plant species. The alpine meadows are home to a variety of wildflowers and herbs.

Within the Nature Parks, visitors can experience a range of activities, including hiking, mountain biking, and wildlife watching. The parks are also home to a variety of wildlife, including birds, mammals, and insects.

Key information about the South Tyrol Nature Parks:

- **Established:** 1979
- **Size:** Approximately 3,183 hectares
- **Conservation:** Focus on biodiversity, landscape, and cultural heritage
- **Activities:** Hiking, mountain biking, wildlife watching
- **Wildlife:** A diverse range of species, including birds, mammals, and insects
- **Facilities:** Visitor centers, hiking trails, information centers

Nature Park communities:

- Val di Funes
- Grödner Valley
- Val di Landro
- Val di Sole
- Val d’Armentarola

Nature Park areas:

- **Puez-Odle Nature Park:** Approximately 3,000 hectares
- **Puez-Geisler Nature Park:** Approximately 1,800 hectares

Nature Park communities:

- **Val di Funes:** Approximately 3,000 hectares
- **Grödner Valley:** Approximately 1,800 hectares
- **Val di Landro:** Approximately 1,500 hectares
- **Val di Sole:** Approximately 1,200 hectares
- **Val d’Armentarola:** Approximately 600 hectares

Nature Park areas:

- **Puez-Odle Nature Park:** Approximately 3,000 hectares
- **Puez-Geisler Nature Park:** Approximately 1,800 hectares

Nature Park activities:

- Hiking
- Mountain biking
- Wildlife watching

Nature Park facilities:

- Visitor centers
- Hiking trails
- Information centers

Alpine emergency signals:

- **Danger:** Use extreme caution
- **Caution:** Use caution
- **Familiarize with safety signals:** Familiarize with the signals
- **Emergency:** Contact emergency services

Park regulations:

- **No camping:** Strictly prohibited
- **No fires:** Prohibited
- **Stay on the trails:** Protect wildlife
- **Park closure:** In case of severe weather conditions

Emergency number for mountain accidents:

- **118:** Region’s emergency call center
- **118:** European emergency call center

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