

Hut-to-Hut Supported Alpine Adventures

We're excited to offer two 3-day supported hut-to-hut trips this summer season! You'll travel ten to twelve miles through awe-inspiring alpine terrain from Telluride to the OPUS to the Thelma and back to Telluride. Each evening, you'll relax with



nourishing food, a yoga session to sooth your muscles and a wood-fired sauna. We'll transport your gear so that you can travel light and run or hike between the huts. We'll also provide route descriptions—the routes include both well-trafficked trails and less trafficked cross-country travel. These trips will be unguided so you can move at your own pace. If you're interested in having a guide, please let us know and we'll connect you with one. Also, if our dates don't work for you, but you're interested in a supported hut-to-hut adventure, please email us at events@opushut.com about a customized trip.

- Dates:
 - Wednesday, July 8th – Friday, July 10th
 - Friday, September 11th- Sunday, September 13th
- Cost:
 - \$350 per person
 - *The rates are based on a shared room, if you'd like a private room, please inquire via email.*
- What's included:
 - Gear transport, lodging, meal packages (afternoon soup, dinner & breakfast) & evening yoga.
- To learn more or register:
 - Email us at events@opushut.com

TENTATIVE ITINERARY

Day One (Wednesday, July 8th or Friday, September 11th)

- Gear drop in Telluride at a location TBD by 7:00 AM.
 - *If you need to leave a car in Telluride, overnight long-term parking is available at the parking Garage on Pacific Street across from the Library or in Mountain Village at the Gondola in Market Plaza.*
- Run or hike from the town of Telluride to the OPUS Hut. See Route Descriptions for options.
- Afternoon soup at the OPUS, followed by evening yoga, dinner, and wood-fired sauna time. We'll also review the route from OPUS to Thelma.

Day Two (Thursday, July 9th or Saturday, September 12th)

- Breakfast & gear drop for departure around 8 AM.
- Run or hike from OPUS to the Thelma via high alpine meadows. See Route Descriptions.
- Afternoon soup at the Thelma, followed by evening yoga, dinner, and wood-fired sauna time. We'll also review the route from Thelma to Telluride.

Day Three (Friday, July 10th or Sunday, September 13th)

- Breakfast & gear drop for departure around 8 AM
- Run or hike from the Thelma back to town of Telluride. See Route Descriptions.
- Gear will be available for pick up in Telluride at location TBD.

ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

DAY ONE: TELLURIDE TO THE OPUS HUT

LONGEST LEAST TECHNICAL ROUTE : APPROX. 14.78 MILES +5,843 FT. -4,674 FT.

There are many different trail and route combinations to choose from between Telluride and the OPUS Hut. The routes we describe here are the most established and easiest to follow.

Here's a brief overview of the route options that are described in detail below: There are two alternate routes through Bear Creek above Telluride. One leaving from the San Sophia Gondola Station on Coonskin Ridge between Telluride and Mountain Village. Another leaves Telluride at the South end of Pine Street at the Bear Creek Trailhead. Both routes rejoin at Wasatch Junction in the east fork of Bear Creek then continue east to McCarron Junction in upper Bridal Veil Basin. From McCarron Junction, again you're presented with two options to get to Lewis Lake where the options rejoin on the East end of Lewis Lake. A third possibility leaving from Telluride passes Bridal Veil Falls, Colorado's tallest water fall then continues up Bridal Veil Creek to Lewis Lake. From Lewis Lake the common route crosses over Columbine Pass into upper Mill Creek and Columbine Lake. From the Columbine Lake area there are again two options to finish the trek to the OPUS Hut. A shorter more technically challenging route descends to Ruby Lake on loose talus then on to the OPUS. The longer less technical route follows the Columbine Lake Trail east to tree line then traverses west back towards the OPUS Hut.

Note: We recommend the Latitude 40 map, and will refer to it in our descriptions.

Segment 1, Option 1: San Sophia Gondola Station to Wasatch Junction

Approx. 5.48 miles +2,938 ft. -1,468 ft.

Experience the high country above Telluride in true European fashion. Take the free Gondola to San Sophia station on Coonskin Ridge. From the gondola station climb the See Forever trail No.415 to Gold Hill. 700 feet above the Alpino Vino restaurant, go left on the Wasatch Connector trail No. 508.1B, dropping to upper Bear creek then climbing to Wasatch Junction in the East Fork of Bear Creek.

This Route offers spectacular views of the Wilson and La Sal Ranges west of Telluride and with slightly less vertical gain to Wasatch Junction. At this location, trail 508.1B, the Wasatch Connector, joins trail 508, the Wasatch Trail.

Segment 1, Option 2: Bear Creek Trailhead (Pine St.) to Wasatch Junction

Approx. 4.81 miles +3,349 ft. -157 ft.

From the Bear Creek Trailhead, follow the Wasatch trail into the upper east fork of Bear Creek to Wasatch Junction. At this location, trail 508.1B, the Wasatch Connector, joins trail 508, the Wasatch Trail.

Segment 2: Wasatch Junction to Columbine Lake – routes converge for this segment

Approx. 5.25 Miles +2,187 ft. -1,482 ft.

From Wasatch Junction, follow the Wasatch Trail (#508) to McCarron Junction. There's a sign. From there, dip down Bridal Veil creek on trail 507 to trail 509 and then climb to Lewis Lake and Columbine pass. This is the pass between Bridal Veil Creek and Mill Creek, which leads to Columbine Lake.

The trail descending from the pass to the Columbine lake is not marked on the map.



There are often Cairns leaving the pass that soon disappear. You'll need to navigate this section by aiming for the lake. Columbine Lake is located in the obvious depression southeast of Columbine Pass. Head Southeast over rolling alpine terrain and the lake will come into view. *From Columbine Lake, there are two options to get to the OPUS Hut, one is more technical but shorter, the second is longer without technical terrain.*

Segment 3, Option 1: Columbine Lake to OPUS Hut via Ruby Lake

Approx. 2 Miles + 474 ft. -1,454 ft.

The most direct, more difficult route to the OPUS from Columbine lake is to descend steep loose slopes to a small lake known as Ruby lake (not labeled on maps). From the east end of Columbine lake, climb 200+ feet on grassy slopes to a small col (pass). Follow a slippery game trail down towards the visible small lake in the basin below, "Ruby Lake". From the south side of Ruby lake there is an old mining mule trail descending southeast of the lake. Follow this down 400+ feet to a bench. At the bench you will see a sheep trail on the right, follow this traversing above a small cliff band, then turning west around the ridge and onto grassy south facing slopes. From this point, the hut can be seen in front and below you to the west, in the direction of Ophir pass. The trail is faint but marked with cairns, leading directly to the hut. Note: the col route into Ruby requires some exposed moves at the top. The route is steep and very loose. Difficulty will be increased if you have a heavy pack. Only recommended for the experienced, fit hiker.



Segment 3, Option 2: Columbine Lake to OPUS Hut along the tree line traverse
Approx. 4.5 Miles + 1,447 ft. – 2,421 ft.

From the outlet of Columbine Lake, follow the Columbine Lake trail proper, descending east toward highway 550. Just before you reach treeline there is a large visible game trail leaving the drainage to your right (south). Follow this game trail over the ridge then descend 200 vertical feet following a faint trail marked with cairns. This trail will take you

southeast to treeline. Follow cairns to a more visible mining mule trail leaving these meadows heading west just below 11,800 ft. This trail traverses west all the way to the OPUS along treeline (11,800 ft.). You will cross two open meadows (avalanche slide paths) then come into a large open meadow. Cross the Ruby creek drainage then follow the obvious



trail out of the drainage continuing south then west. The trail will intersect with a four wheel drive road, follow the road for 500 feet, then leave it on single track mining mule trail at a perennial creek crossing. Back on the trail, it will cross an open bowl (“The Sound of Music”) then climb to the hut (400 vertical feet), through open meadows of wildflowers. Note: Please do not follow this route during the months of May and June as it’s disruptive to elk calving.

DAY TWO: OPUS HUT TO THELMA HUT HIGH ROUTE

APPROX. 9.74 MILES +3,283 FT. -3,831 FT.

This route takes you back towards Columbine Lake then you'll follow a combination of old mining trails and a sheep herders route to Porphyry Basin down a jeep trail to the Thelma Hut.

From the OPUS, the first step is to reverse the treeline traverse described above. Follow the mining mule trail east toward the Columbine Lake Trail. Once you've reached the Columbine Lake Trail, you'll follow that, climbing up, towards Columbine Lake. The trail will come to a large open flat alpine area. From this vague junction you'll be following the route of the black dashed mine trail shown on the Latitude 40 map "Telluride, Silverton, Ouray". Cross Mill Creek below Columbine Lake at about 12,300 feet. Keep an eye out for cairns. You'll be following the remains of the old mining mule trail shown on the Latitude 40 map . Following high alpine benches along the mine trail just below the 12,500 ft. contour to the north. You'll traverse through the unnamed Cirque between Mill Creek and Porphyry Gulch, onto an old sheep herders trail, with two 13,000 ft. peaks above you to the west. Head



toward Porphyry Basin. When you get to Porphyry Basin, you'll start descending toward Bullion King Lake on the remnants of an old mining road shown on the Latitude 40 map, to the Porphyry Basin jeep trail (forest Rd. 822). Descend following this road. When you reach tree line, there is fork in the jeep trail, take the right hand option, and look for a steel gate and sign for the Thelma Hut, which is just to the south of the jeep trail.

DAY THREE: THELMA HUT TO TELLURIDE

APPROX. 12.35 MILES +2,064 FT. -4,490 FT.

From the Thelma, you'll retrace your steps on the Porphyry Basin Rd. (forest Rd. 822) by Bullion King Lake to Porphyry Lake. From Porphyry Lake, you'll traverse north on the continued herders trail along a high alpine bench toward Mineral Basin. The trail becomes vague when you reach Mineral Basin. Continue northwest to Black Bear Pass. From here, descend west on Black Bear Road (#648). You'll follow the jeep trail down into Ingrahm Basin then on to the base of Bridal Veil falls and into Telluride.

A FEW MORE DETAILS

Getting to Telluride:

The Montrose Regional Airport (MTJ) is the primary airport for Telluride, and is a scenic 65 miles away. Several transportation companies provide service from Telluride to Montrose. Rental cars are also available at the Montrose Airport. If you need assistance or have questions about getting here, let us know, we're happy to help.

Payment & Cancellation:

Please contact us via email at events@opushut.com to register and arrange for payment. A 50% deposit is due to hold your place, with the remaining due two weeks before the trip (either June 24th & August 28th). Payment can be made via check, payable to OPUS Hut and mailed to the OPUS Hut at P.O. Box 833, Ophir CO 81426 or via credit card, over the phone.

Cancellations will be issued a refund *only if* a waitlisted participant fills the space.

Other Preparation:

We'll send out a final itinerary and suggested gear list in advance of the adventure. If you have any more questions in the interim, please don't hesitate to reach out at events@opushut.com.

We look forward to seeing you on the trails!