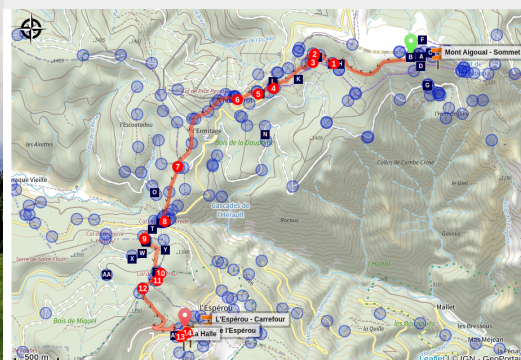


MTB 3 - Descent on the drovers' road

CC Causses Aigoual Cévennes - Terres solidaires



Vue de l'observatoire du Mont Aigoual (© Olivier Prohin)



This circuit leading downhill (370 m) from the summit of Mont Aigoual to the village of L'Espérou offers a variety of environments on tracks and paths in the vast state-owned Aigoual forest.

Useful information

Practice : Mountain Bike

Duration : 1 h

Length : 6.9 km

Trek ascent : 74 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Itinérance

Themes : Milieu naturel, Histoire et culture, Causses et Cévennes / UNESCO

Trek

Departure : Summit of Mont Aigoual

Arrival : Summit of Mont Aigoual

Markings : ➡ VTT

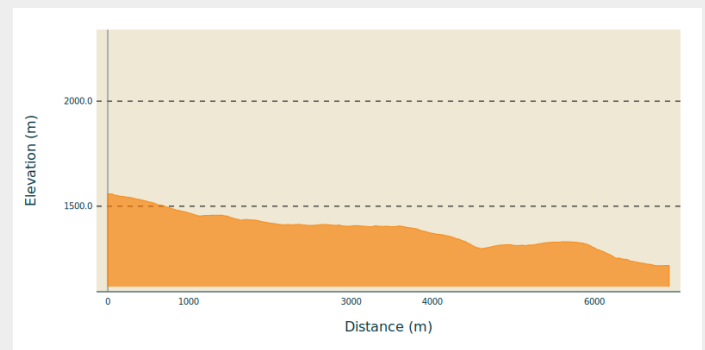
Cities : 1. Val-d'Aigoual

2. Meyrueis

3. Saint-Sauveur-Camprieu

4. Dourbies

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1217 m Max elevation 1550 m

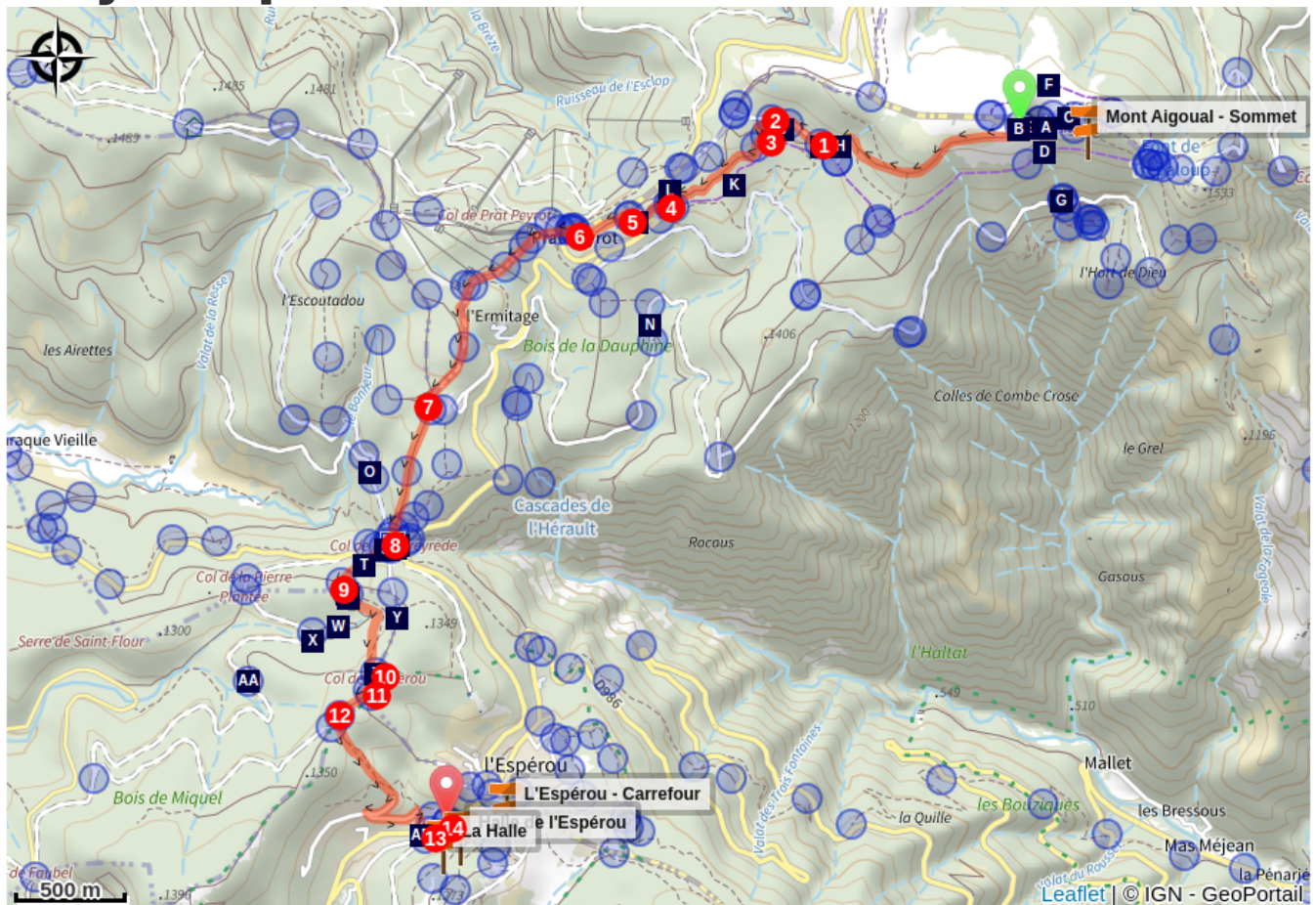
Signposts will guide you all along this route. In the description below, the signposted place names and/or directions are given in **bold italics** between quotation marks:

From the car parks at Mont Aigoual, "**Sommet du Mont Aigoual**" make for L'Espérou, via the crossroad

1. "**La Source**",
2. "**Le Pontet**",
3. "**La Baraquette**",
4. "**La Sapinière**",
5. "**Balcons de l'Aigoual-Parking**",
6. "**Prat Peyrot-Station**", then
7. "**Le Fangas**",
8. "**Col de La Serreyrède**",
9. "**Le Trévezel**",
10. "**Serre de Favatel**",
11. "**Col de l'Espérou**",
12. "**Montlau**", then
13. "**La Halle**" and
14. "**Halle de l'Espérou**".

This circuit is taken from the guidebook **Massif de l'Aigoual**, published by the Communauté de communes Causses Aigoual Cévennes as part of the collection Espaces naturels gardois and the label Gard Pleine Nature.

On your path...



Mont Aigoual weather station (A)
The meteorological observatory (C)
Summit of Mont Aigoual (E)

A site for botanical experiments (G)
The Nests (Céline Pialot) (I)
Catchment Area (Xavier Rèche) (K)
On the Verge (Yoann Crépin) (M)

Archeosmart (Marc Limousin) (B)
Seated (Marie-Hélène Richard) (D)
Tempus Fugit (Fiona Paterson,
Donald Buglass) (F)
Pôle Nature 4 Saisons (H)
Leaf-Tree (Alain Bernegger) (J)
Guardian of the Woods (Raphaël
Daynié) (L)
River capture (N)

All useful information



Is in the midst of the park

The national park is an unrestricted natural area but subjected to regulations which must be known by all visitors.



Advices

Before setting off on a trail, check that it is suitable for your activity and level of ability. Mountain-bikers must wear helmets; protective gear is recommended. Respect other trail users and stay in control of your speed and trajectory. Be careful in winter: strong winds can cause snowdrifts. Keep an eye on the forecast: violent storms and sudden floods can be dangerous. For your safety, do not venture into hunting areas – hunts in progress are indicated by signs (“Chasse en cours” or “Battue en cours”). Respect property, livestock and other users of the area. Biking off-road is prohibited.

How to come ?

Transports

D40 or D42 to Le Vigan, then CCC8 to L'Espérou

Access

Head towards Mont Aigoual on the D 896 from L'Espérou. At the Col de La Serreyrède pass, take the D 269 then the D 18, Prat Peyrot; then the D 118 to Mont Aigoual

Advised parking

Car park at summit of Mont Aigoual

Information desks

Tourism & national parc'house

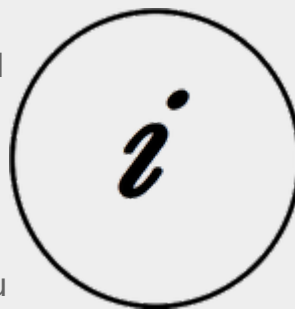
Col de la Serreyrède, 30570 Val d'Aigoual

maisonde-laigoual@sudcevennes.com

Tel : 04 67 82 64 67

<https://www.sudcevennes.com>

Accessibility : Accessible aux personnes à mobilité réduite sur les trois niveaux du bâtiment (ascenseur)



Source



CC Causses Aigoual Cévennes Terres Solidaires

<http://www.causses-aigoual-cevennes.fr/>



Parc national des Cévennes

<http://www.cevennes-parcnational.fr/>



Pôle Nature Aigoual

On your path...



Mont Aigoual weather station (A)

Inaugurated in 1894, this infrastructure is France's last mountain weather station to be inhabited. Its history is closely linked to the reforestation of Mont Aigoual. It has become a high-performance weather station with an array of modern test instruments, measuring devices for extreme conditions, and a museum/exhibition on meteorology. The 800 sq m exhibition will tell you more about climatology on Mont Aigoual and about meteorology in general.

Attribution : © Météosite du Mont Aigoual



Archeosmart (Marc Limousin) (B)

Smartphone imprints appear on the rocks: fossils of the present that will become mysterious in the future. This carved stone, like the cup-shaped marks and other rock art of the region, discloses history revealed in matter and resonates with Malraux's phrase: "The future is a present given to us by the past".

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



The meteorological observatory (C)

Inaugurated in 1824, the meteorological observatory was built on the initiative of Georges Fabre, one of the pioneers of the reforestation of Mont Aigoual. His work with the botanist Charles Flahault enabled the creation of the arboretum of L'Hort de Dieu. The first meteorological data were gathered by agents from the French National Water and Forestry Commission. Since 1943, the observatory has been managed by the National Meteorological Office. It is France's last mountain weather station that is inhabited year-round.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



Seated (Marie-Hélène Richard) (D)

Far from town, paths open the door to new rhythms. Another vision of life and time lets us breathe in the ever-present contemplation, stones, trees and skies. A physical experience of coming face-to-face with nature. A bench made of wood and branches, whose back becomes thinner as it rises towards the sky, as if to turn back into a tree.

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



Summit of Mont Aigoual (E)

At an altitude of 1,565 m, the climate is harsh: weather conditions are the same as they would be at 2,000 m elsewhere, with only four “frost-free” months a year. Winds of above 60 kph blow on 265 days a year, and the average annual temperature is 4.8°C. Trees do not have enough time to complete their life cycle. Local plant formations are those of the montane zone: subalpine short-grass prairies.

Attribution : © Nathalie Thomas



Tempus Fugit (Fiona Paterson, Donald Buglass) (F)

Time flies, conscience cries, death threatens, heaven invites, hell scolds, and man sleeps. Here, the effects of time and natural elements transform the wood used in the artwork; everything is an endless renewal at the same rate as the passing hours. How much time have we got left before everything is lost and it is too late to repair the damage? Nature will continue on its trajectory and efface the traces of Humanity on Earth.

Attribution : © Natacha Maltaverne



A site for botanical experiments (G)

Marker 1

L'Hort de Dieu is located at an altitude of 1,300 m and shaped by an extreme climate. This site with its exceptional assets is a favoured study and experimentation zone for botanists. The tree collection is just over 100 years old, and some of the specimens are declining because of old age or else because they are not well-adapted to this mountain range. Today, there are 75 species left of the 140 that have been tested over the past century. To safeguard the interest of this heritage site, the Office National des Forêts and the Cévennes National Park are currently reflecting on renewing the collection.

Attribution : © Gaël Karczewski



Pôle Nature 4 Saisons (H)

The Pôle Nature 4 Saisons of the Aigoual massif offers outdoor activities in all seasons in the central zone of the Cévennes National Park, overlooked by the legendary summit of Mont Aigoual (1,570 m). Discover our network of trails on foot, on horseback, by bike, or else by mountain-bike or with a donkey, as the fancy takes you!

Children can explore the orienteering circuit or geocaching. For the sportier among you we have laid out trail running circuits!

Prefer road biking? We have created circuits of varying difficulty levels so you can discover our villages and valleys.

Try not to make any noise! Wildlife enthusiasts can spot mouflons and other animals.

And if you would just like a gentle walk on the massif, the discovery trail “The cliffs of Mont Aigoual” is for you. There are various rest stops over its 4.5 km, with only 150 m in height difference.

We look forward to seeing you on our paths.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



The Nests (Céline Pialot) (I)

Little by little, the bird makes its nest, its cosy nest, baby cocoon, wasps' nest...

Like a bird, the artist has gathered materials offered by nature and has arranged them to build three nests, three refuges, three circles that reference perfection and invite meditation.

Attribution : © E. Fréget



Leaf-Tree (Alain Bernegger) (J)

Leaf-Trees use a veined structure to create a visual resonance between the tree and the leaf. The change of scale works like an inverted echo of this fractal structure. And as winter comes, the eternal summer of the Leaf-Trees confronts the winter of the bare branches.

Attribution : © Filature du Maze!



Catchment Area (Xavier Rèche) (K)

By its location and name, this installation evokes the nearby watershed between the Atlantic and Mediterranean. A vessel reduced to a suspended wooden framework, without strakes or gunwale, tilts in the direction of the runoff. It emphasises the first branches of a gigantic drainage system.

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



Guardian of the Woods (Raphaël Daynié) (L)

The Guardian evokes a possible connection, a dream connection, in which humans consider themselves a part of nature, developing in close union with their environment. This Guardian of the Woods overlooking the Aigoual valley was built with natural materials found on site, and gently touches a tree that is still alive.

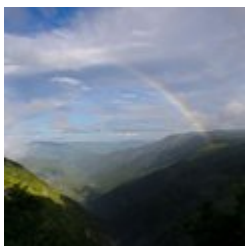
Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



On the Verge (Yoann Crépin) (M)

A doorway to a circuit of art within the natural environment. To fuse and interact with the environment and play with the seasons, time, light and weightlessness. To let humanity express itself through nature and nature express itself through humanity – a necessary interaction, a symbiotic interaction that inspires us to discover another world.

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



River capture (N)

Violent precipitation and the steep gradient of Mediterranean torrents cause regressive (i.e. upstream) erosion of the valleys through which they flow. This erosion can invert the sense of flow and thus “capture” for the Mediterranean a waterway that had, until then, flowed into the Atlantic. One example is the Hérault with its waterfalls, the capture being located at the falls. The Hérault and the Dauphine brook used to flow via L'Espérrou into the Dourbie... River pebbles found around the village by geologists attest to the existence of a waterway in the past.

Attribution : Arnaud.Bouissou