

Once upon a mine

CC de Cèze-Cévennes



Rochessadoule (© O.Pagès)



A hike between hamlets to discover their industrial past.

Useful information

Practice : Pédestre

Duration : 4 h

Length : 8.6 km

Trek ascent : 406 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Boucle

Themes : Architecture et village,
Histoire et culture

Trek

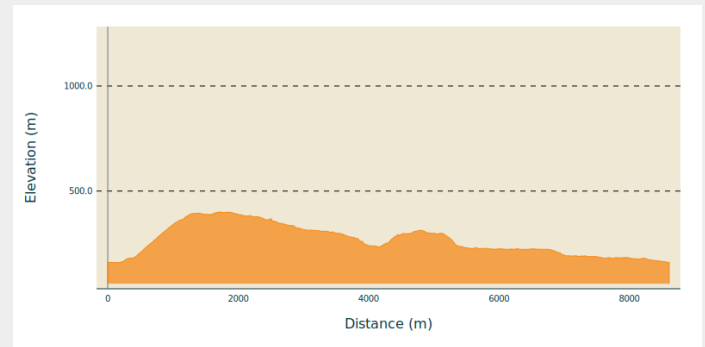
Departure : Robiac, Le Buis

Arrival : Robiac, Le Buis

Markings : — Balisage jaune et mobilier signalétique

Cities : 1. Robiac-Rochessadoules
2. Bessèges

Altimetric profile



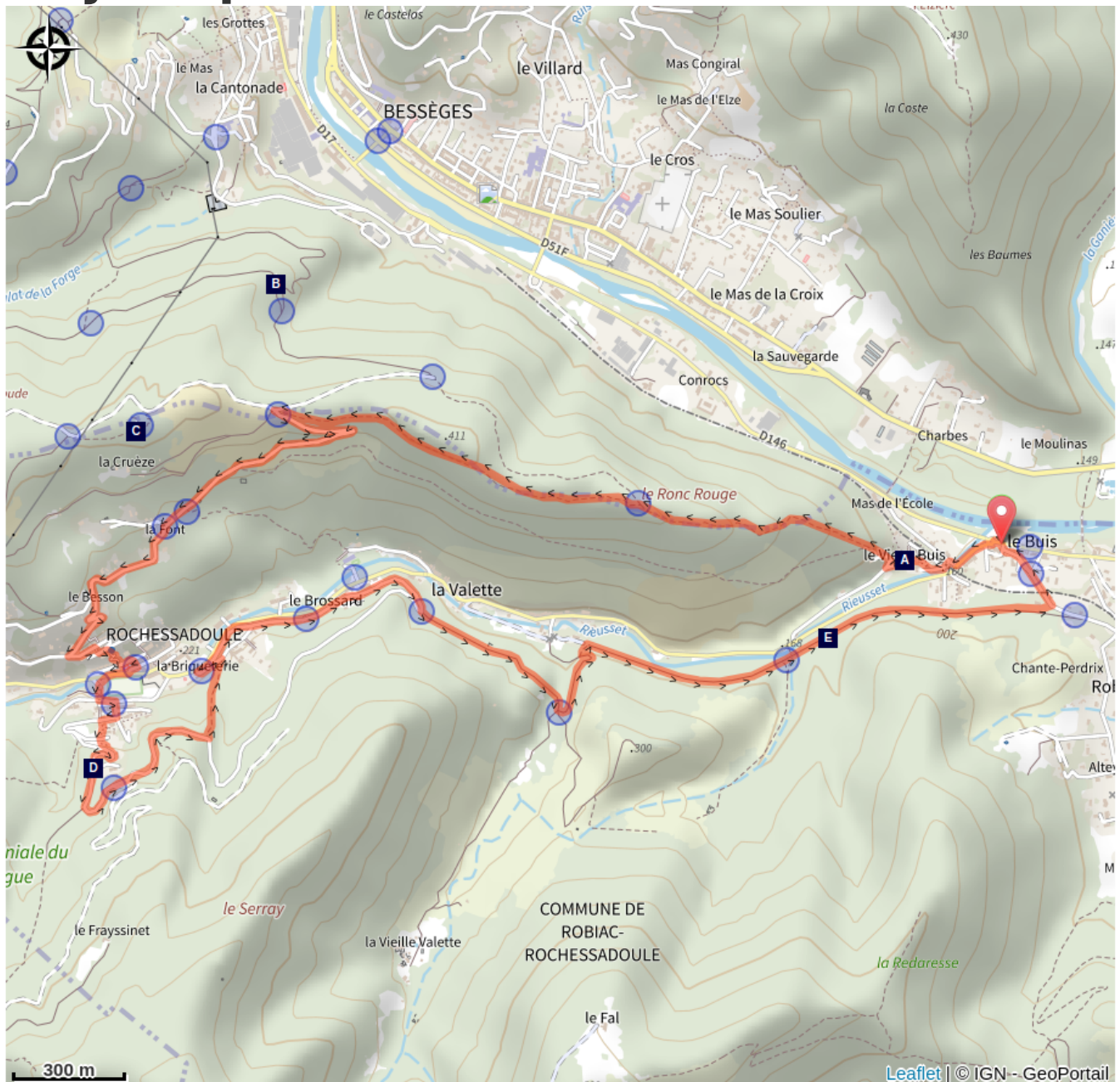
Min elevation 159 m Max elevation 394 m

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 "**ROBIAC**" follow "**ROCHESSADOULE**" via "**Robiac - Route de Chanteperdrix**", "**Conrocs**" then "**Patte d'Oie du Ronc Rouge**", "**Arbousset**", "**La Font**" and "**Rochessadoules - Mairie**". Return to "**ROBIAC**" via "**La Passerelle du Rieusset**", "**Rochessadoules - le Pialet**", "**Le Ramier**" et "**Frayssinet**", "**Rochessadoules - Église**", "**Le Puits de Brissac**", "**Le Brossard**", "**La Tintonne**", "**L'Ancienne Voie Ferrée**" and "**Robiac - Route de Chanteperdrix**".

This hike is taken from the guidebook **Cévennes Haute Vallée de la Cèze**, published by the Communauté de communes Cèze Cévennes as part of the collection Espaces Naturels Gardois and the label Gard Pleine Nature.

On your path...



Le Vieux-Buis (A)
Saint Lawrence's chapel (C)
The mining railway (E)

Slag heaps (B)
Rochessadoule (D)

All useful information

Advices

Make sure your equipment is appropriate for the day's weather conditions. Take enough water, wear sturdy shoes and put on a hat. Please close all gates and barriers behind you.

How to come ?

Transports

liO is the regional public transport service of the Occitanie/ Pyrénées – Méditerranée region. It facilitates everyone's movements by prioritising public transport. For more information, call 08 10 33 42 73 or go to www.laregion.fr

Access

From St-Ambroix towards Bessèges and Robiac.

Advised parking

Car park opposite the pharmacy (in Le Buis).

Information desks

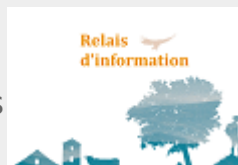
Tourism office CezeCévennes, Bessèges

14 rue de la République, 30160 Bessèges

ot.besseges@gmail.com

Tel : 04 66 25 08 60

<https://www.tourisme-ceze-cevennes.com/>



Tourism office Cèze-Cévennes Saint-Ambroix

Place de l'ancien Temple, 30500 Saint-Ambroix

ot.stambroix@gmail.com

Tel : 04 66 24 33 36

<https://www.tourisme-ceze-cevennes.com/>



Source



CC Céze Cévennes

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



Parc national des Cévennes

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

On your path...



Le Vieux-Buis (A)

This mediaeval hamlet has been in the records since the 11th century, when farming prospered on its slopes. Perched on the hillside, Le Vieux-Buis existed quietly through the centuries with no disruption until the Plague that raged unstoppably in 1348. It was not until the mid-15th century that farming was given a new lease of life in this devastated region, where everything needed to be rebuilt. Up until the 19th century, the arid hills were dedicated to farming: small livestock farms, vineyards, olive trees, etc., whose vestiges you will come across all along the path.

Attribution : © J.F.Raulet



Slag heaps (B)

These heaps are made up of the waste from coal mining. In mining days, the slopes were black and several dozen metres high. Today adapted vegetation covers them, allowing them to blend into the landscape. The slag heap concerned has recently been flattened and used to backfill the track. It is no longer covered by vegetation.

Attribution : © O.Pagès



Saint Lawrence's chapel (C)

Every year on 10 August, pilgrims come to thank St Lawrence, once reputed to cure oral diseases. Detailed archaeological study would be necessary to elucidate the mystery of this chapel. A priory belonging to the Abbey of Saint-Andéol-de-Robiac, located in the village, is believed to have stood on the chapel site. The Romanesque chapel, of which only a few traces remain, was probably built between the 11th and 13th centuries. The various types of stone-setting show that, since then, it has been reworked many times, although we do not know when exactly. St-Lawrence's chapel was stripped of its bell, which is now on the rocky spur that overlooks it.

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Rochessadoule (D)

From the top of this mountain, you overlook the new town of Rochessadoule, which as of 1886 had 3,000 inhabitants come from all over Europe to work in its coal mine. Giant smokestacks stood between its stone and brick buildings. On the side of the road below, there would have been a lamp workshop, a queue of miners awaiting their turn, a changing room, and a cable car that carried and dumped the mine waste onto the slag heap. Slowly, the buildings were turned into art galleries, artisan workshops and holiday homes. Today, what remains of the epic mining days are small santons (nativity figures) called Saint Barbara's santons (the patron saint of miners), which are produced and sold each year in November at the great exhibition and sale in Rochessadoule.

Attribution : © O.Pagès



The mining railway (E)

This walk is mostly on a section of the former railway line from Rochessadoule to Bessèges, which was above all a trunk line from Alès to Bessèges. It transported coal from the mines at Robiac, Grangier and Brissac to the factories in Bessèges. This freight line was much used until the 1960s. By 2012, the Robiac-Bessèges railway could no longer compete with the road and was discontinued.

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