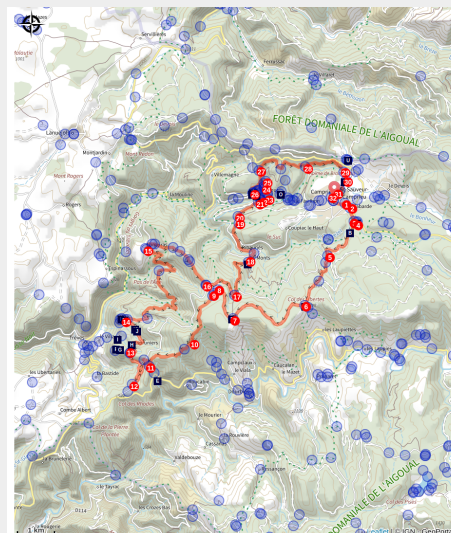


MTB 14 - The 3 rivers challenge - graded black

Gard



Village de Camprieu (Béatrice Galzin)



A superb and challenging trek through varied landscapes and atmospheres ranging from the forests of Mont Aigoual to the valleys of the Trévezet or Dourbie, alternating between rolling paths and technical single tracks.

Useful information

Practice : Mountain Bike

Duration : 4 h 45

Length : 35.6 km

Trek ascent : 1349 m

Difficulty : Very hard

Type : Boucle

Themes : Architecture et village,
Milieu naturel, Histoire et culture

Trek

Departure : Camprieu

Arrival : Camprieu

Markings : ➡ VTT

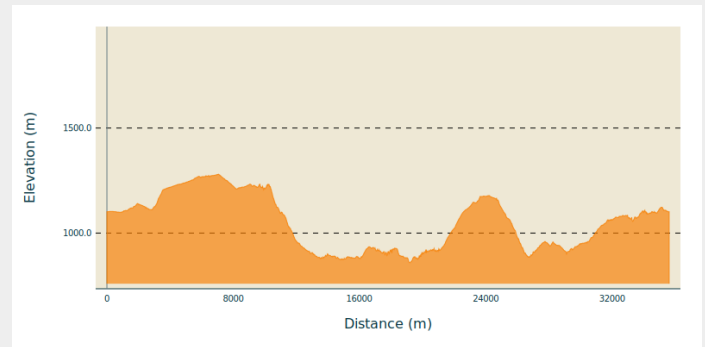
Cities : 1. Saint-Sauveur-Camprieu

2. Dourbies

3. Trèves

4. Lanuéjols

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 867 m Max elevation 1277 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:

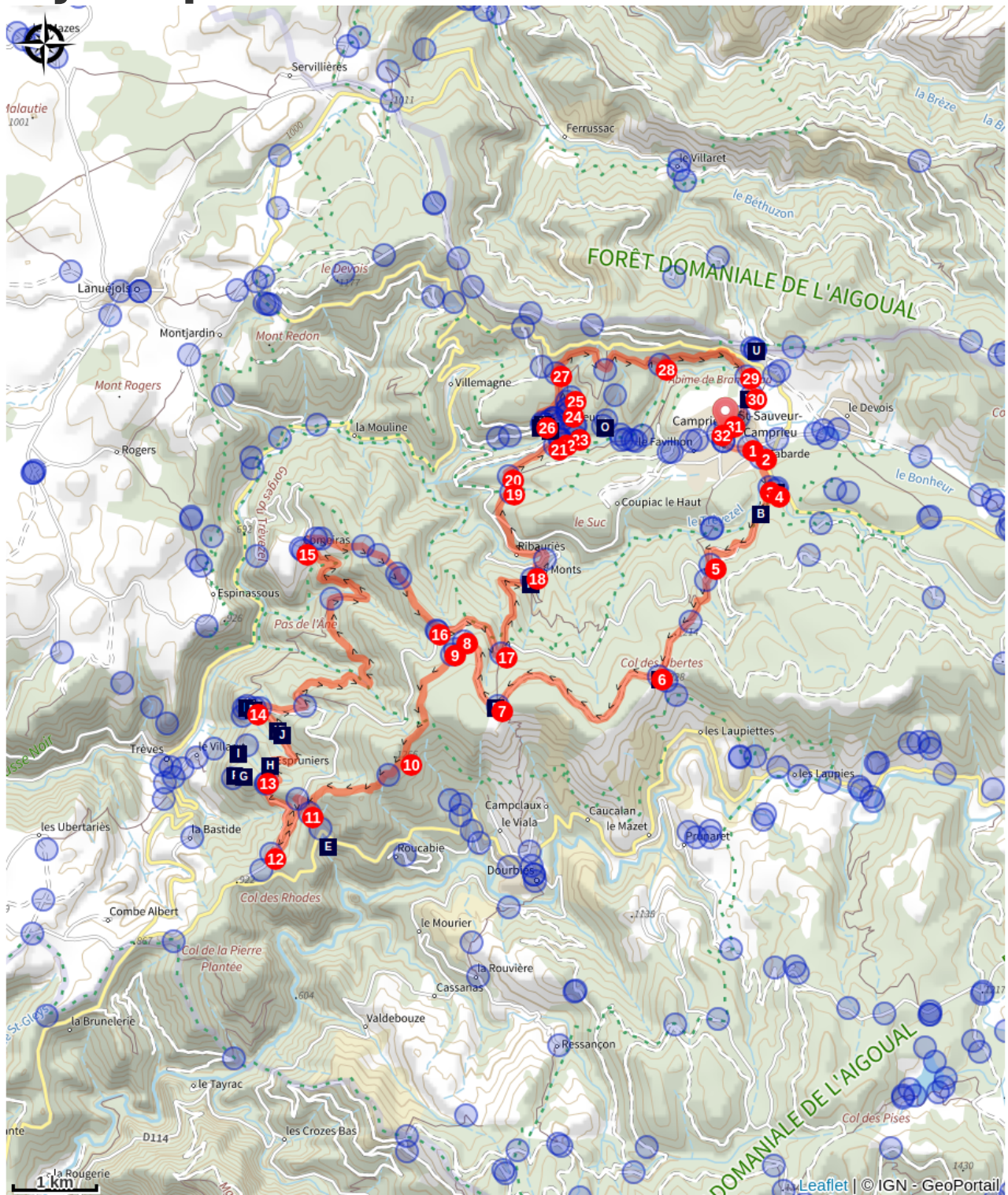
Starting from "**Camprieu**", head towards "**col des Ubertes**" via

1. "**Le Cros**",
2. "**Tabarde**",
3. "**Maison du bois**",
4. "**Tailladette**",
5. "**Terondel**".
6. At "**col des Ubertes**" follow "**Col du Suquet**".
7. At "**col du Suquet**" follow the GR® trail towards
8. "**Le Vieux Hêtre**", then turn left towards
9. "**La plaine de Vialat**",
10. "**Mont Mal**", "**Serre de Cade**".
11. From "**Serre de Cade**", there is a technical descent to the road. Turn left onto the road for 1 km till you reach
12. "**Sous le col des Rhodes**".
Turn right and follow "**Canayère**" via
13. "**Le pas du Coulet**" and
14. "**Les Pins noirs**", then continue to "**Comeiras**"
15. At "**Comeiras**" start the long climb to
16. "**La Roque**".
Take the road on the left towards
17. "**Valat de Malbosc**", then turn left to
18. "**Les Monts**". Then head towards "**Pont de l'Âne**" via
19. "**La Combette**",
20. "**La Matte**" and
21. "**Conduite forcée**".
22. At "**Pont de l'Âne**", go to "**St Sauveur des Pourcils**" via
23. "**Le Muguet**",
24. "**La Fonderie**",
25. "**Valat de la Fonderie**". Then head for
26. "**Carrefour des Pourcils**".
Turn right to return to "**Camprieu**" via

27. "**Travadaire**",
28. "**Rouveyrolle**",
29. "**Abîme de Bramabiau**",
30. "**Perte de Bramabiau**",
31. "**La mairie**",
32. "**La Croix basse**".

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...



The Mont Aigoual forest (A)

The forestry labourers' shelter (C)

The Dourbies gorge (E)



Typical grasslands on limestone soil (G)

Joulie Cave (I)



The hidden life of the forest (B)

Col du Suquet pass (D)

Open-sky geology (F)

The hamlet of Espruniers (H)



The schist/limestone contact zone (J)

Calcifugous vegetation (K)
Canayère (M)

A recent forest (L)
Les Monts wash house (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 committing yourself to a circuit, ensure that it is suitable for your activity level and ability. You must wear a helmet. Protective equipment is recommended. Respect other road users and stay in control of your speed and trajectory. Make sure your equipment is appropriate for the day's weather conditions. Remember that the weather changes quickly in the mountains. Take enough water. Please close all gates and barriers behind you. No off-roading.

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 Valleraugue, take the D 986 towards L'Espérou. At the roundabout, turn right to the col de la Serreyrède pass. At the pass, turn left onto the D 986 – car park in the village.

Advised parking

Camprieu village

Information desks

Tourism & national parc'house

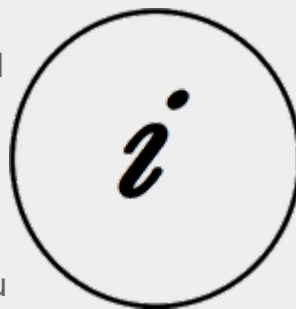
Col de la Serreyrède, 30570 Val d'Aigoual

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...



The Mont Aigoual forest (A)

“Aigoual, Forêt d’Exception”

The French Forestry Office, which manages state forests, launched a programme in 2013 called “Aigoual, Forêt d’Exception” (Aigoual: An Exceptional Forest) with the aim of highlighting the massif’s natural and cultural heritage. The Forestry Office thus tries to foreground the different aspects of its multi-faceted management: production, protection and receiving visitors. One key aspect of this approach, which complements other initiatives by local actors, is to improve visitors’ experience in the forest.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



The hidden life of the forest (B)

Trees grow upwards towards the light while mosses benefit from their shade on the ground and spread out. Like soft cushions or carpets, they hug everything that sticks out of the ground, such as old tree stumps. This soft felted surface is pleasing to see, and an undergrowth without mosses would not be worthy of the name. Legend has it that mosses show which way is north.

Wrong!

Mosses indicate a degree of moisture; they protect the soil from drying out by retaining every last drop of dew. They prepare pockets of humus for the future occupants: grasses and herbaceous plants. They also love the damp of tree trunks and can grow there, on the side that is most exposed to the prevailing rains.

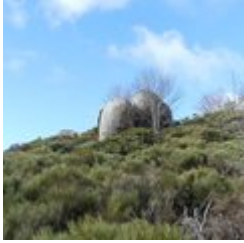
Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



The forestry labourers’ shelter (C)

Deep inside the forest, you will soon see a little house. From the 19th to the early 20th century, it gave shelter to the forestry labourers in charge of reforesting the mountain. The work site was too far from a proper foresters’ house to get back there every evening, especially since the working day was long. There was no question then of working only 35 or even 40 hours a week! The trees were planted one by one using a pickaxe; the daily minimum agreed on was 100 trees per man per day. A total of 68 million were planted...

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas



Col du Suquet pass (D)

You are at the highest point of the hike. On the right bank of the Dourbie, the path crosses a sheer slope that is alternatively made up of zones of solid granite and other zones where it has decomposed due to weathering into coarse granitic sand. To the south, the views encompass the entire Lingas massif, a high wooded plateau overlooking, further south, the region around Le Vigan and the Languedocian plain.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



The Dourbies gorge (E)

The path comes out on the Dourbie gorge. Opposite you, the western part of the high granite plateau of the Lingas joins up on its right with the limestone plateau called Causse de Larzac. On your right, you can see the granite dome of Saint-Guiral. Closer to you, in the vales that converge on the Dourbie, are the former crop terraces, pastureland, the village built on the riverbank at the valley's widest point and finally the chestnut orchard. You are seeing the upper limit of its range, which corresponds to its maximum altitude in this zone (800 m).

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



Open-sky geology (F)

The granite and schist (slate) that constitute the bedrock of the Cévennes and Causses were created in the Paleozoic. The bedrock was then flattened by erosion and covered by the sea, leading to limestone deposits. On the reliefs, erosion has eliminated the sedimentary top layer while in zones of subsidence, such as the Causses, the limestone deposits remained in place. Since then, waterways have cut ever deeper into the limestone, and continue to do so today.

Attribution : © Valère Marsaudon



Typical grasslands on limestone soil (G)

This small area of grassland is one of the rare open spaces on the Causse de Canayère. It is of interest for the preservation of certain flower species, especially the pasqueflower and several varieties of orchid. To counteract the natural progression towards more closed environments, this site is maintained by regular mowing.

Attribution : © Olivier Prohin



The hamlet of Espruniers (H)

This hamlet, which consisted of a sizeable grouping of houses, was inhabited until about 1930. You have stopped on what was probably the threshing floor for grains.

Attribution : © Fonds Flahault



Joulie Cave (I)

In March 1952, Jolly, a forestry official, showed his friend Frayssignes this cave. Deposited in it they discovered the remains of 300 humans from the Neolithic, who had been carefully laid out side by side. The cave was rapidly declared a historical monument. In the depths of the cave, a great number of bear bones was also found. This cave bear, the ancestor of our brown bear (*Ursus spelaeus*), had a skull 50 cm long! In the winter, groups of these bears would have huddled together in clay wallows at the rear of the caves. *Ursus artos* succeeded the cave bear and was succeeded in turn by the brown bear, which was hunted to extinction in the 15th century. (B. Mathieu)

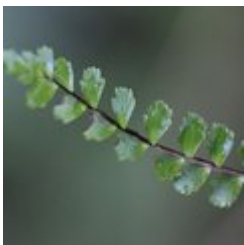
Attribution : © M. Delor



The schist/limestone contact zone (J)

Here, the layers of the schist outcrops are almost vertical in places. This contact between Causses and Cévennes, between the primary bedrock and the limestone layers, is due to a geological fault created by the various movements and constraints that have affected the Earth's crust. In this zone, the schist bedrock has been pushed upwards by several hundred metres along the fault line compared to the limestone plateau, although the latter is less old.

Attribution : © Yves Maccagno



Calcifugous vegetation (K)

This section of the path in the schist zone showcases calcifugous ("limestone-avoiding") vegetation, which only grows on acid soils (schist or granite): especially chestnut trees, ferns, heather and broom.

Attribution : © Valère Marsaudon



A recent forest (L)

The stands that were planted during the large reforestation programmes of the late 19th century onwards consist of black pines, a rustic species that is well-adapted to dry limestone soils. Underground, the Causses plateaux are characterised by networks of tunnels and cavities that have been created by water movement over millions of years. Subterranean rivers are blocked by the impermeable layers of the valley floor and flow into the Trévezet instead.

Attribution : © Sud Cévennes



Canayère (M)

A former farm turned forester's house in 1880. In the early days of the Mont Aiguol reforestation, forestry officers lived here year-round during their missions. Forestry workers working on the replanting were allowed to use the outbuildings. Later, only one official resided here. Since 1967, no official has permanently lived here. (B. Mathieu)

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



Les Monts wash house (N)

The wash house in Les Monts still has running water but the washerwomen have disappeared for good. The site is magical. The water is clear enough for dragonflies to lay their eggs in and for birds to drink

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin