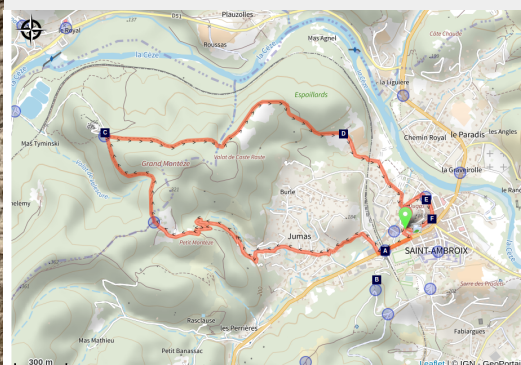


Les Montèzes

CC de Cèze-Cévennes



Porte de la ville (© OT Cèze Cévennes)



A walk discovering Montalet Castle and its panoramic views.

Useful information

Practice : Pédestre

Duration : 2 h

Length : 5.9 km

Trek ascent : 232 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Boucle

Themes : Architecture et village, Eau et géologie, Transports en commun, Agriculture et élevage

Trek

Departure : Saint-Ambroix, Esplanade

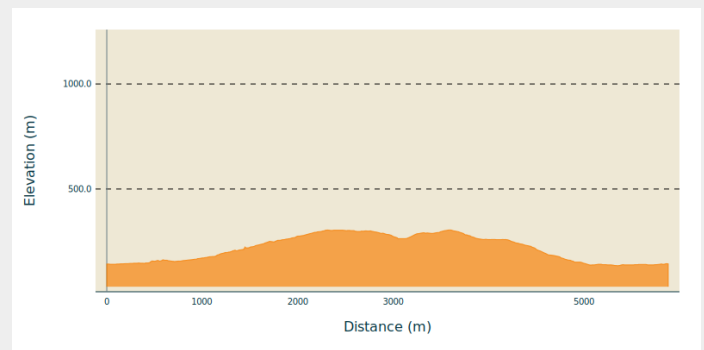
Arrival : Saint-Ambroix, Esplanade

Markings : — Balisage jaune et mobilier signalétique

Cities : 1. Saint-Ambroix

2. Molières-sur-Cèze

Altimetric profile



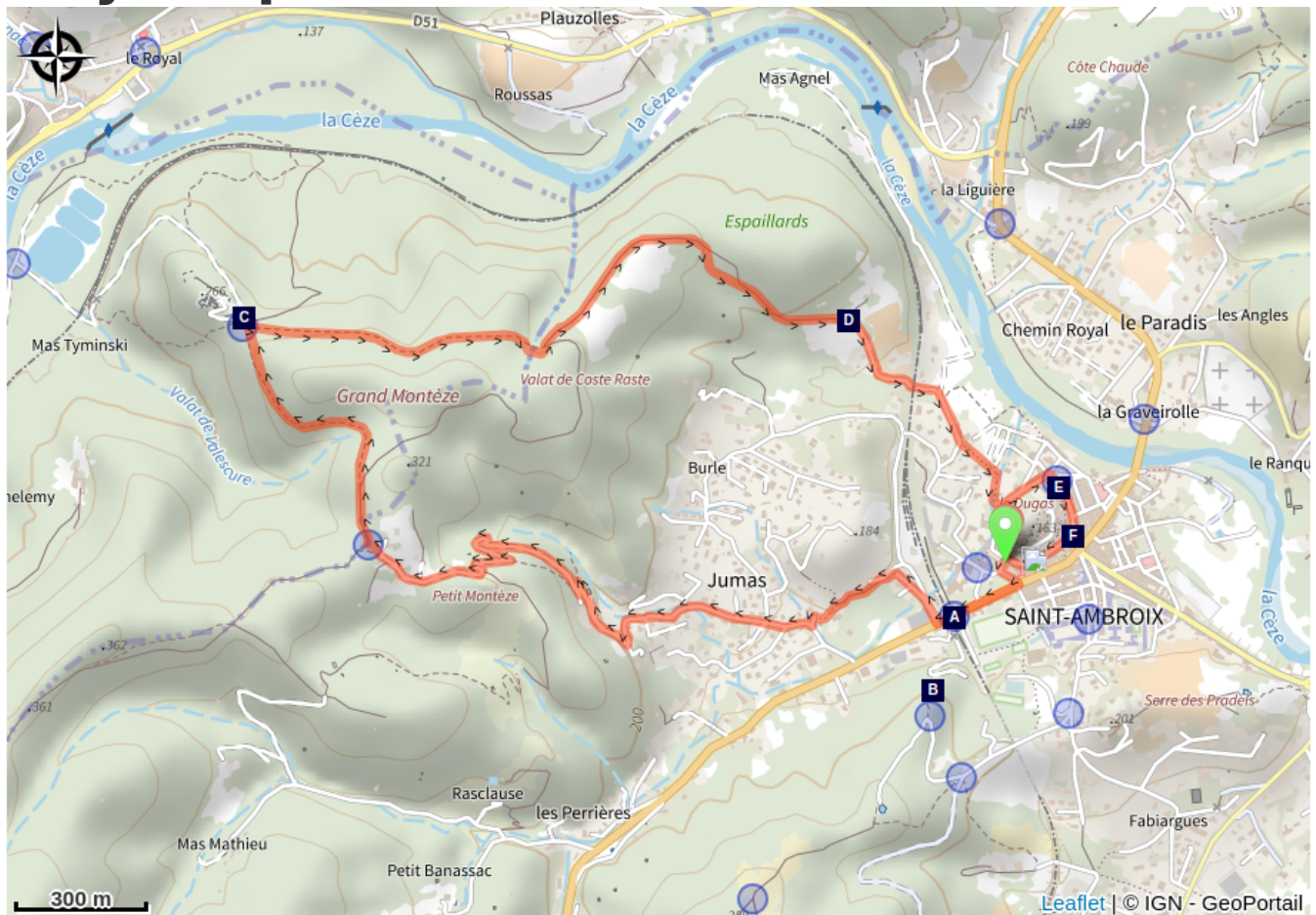
Min elevation 137 m Max elevation 304 m

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:

Start at "**SAINT-AMBROIX**". Head towards "**CHÂTEAU DE MONTALET**" via "**Le Pont de la Gare**" and "**Le Petit Montèze**". There is a viewpoint at the castle. Return to "**SAINT-AMBROIX**" via "**Boulevard du Nord**". Use the mediaeval lanes of the old town centre to reach the plateau of Le Dugas.

This walk 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...



The legend of Volo biou (A)
Montalet Castle (C)
The spinners (E)

Guisquet Tower (B)
Olive trees (D)
Le Dugas (F)

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

Bus stop: near the Pont de la Gare (station bridge)
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 Alès on the D 904.

Advised parking

Car park behind the kiosque (bandstand)

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 Cèze Cévennes

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



Parc national des Cévennes

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

On your path...



The legend of Volo biou (A)

In the old days vineyards surrounded St-Ambroix. One year during the Middle Ages, the harvest was so abundant that locals did not know what to do with all the wine. To avoid it going to waste, a consul arranged for proclamations in the neighbouring villages that an ox was going to fly in the sky over St Ambroix on a certain evening. The whole day was festive and very hot, with only one refreshment allowed: the sour wine that the town needed rid of! (...) The drunk and cheerful populace was convinced that an ox really had taken off from the cliff. Today, the ox still goes for a flight one evening every summer, after a day of festivities. Be reassured: the winged ox is only an imitation, but a handsome one that is well worth the detour!

Attribution : © O.Pagès



Guisquet Tower (B)

The tower stands proudly on the rock at the end of the path. Each of its windows gives you panoramic views. It was built here in 1850 by a Mr Guisquet to celebrate his victory in a lawsuit against another “pretender to the rock”.

Attribution : © JF.Raulet



Montalet Castle (C)

This is one of the largest feudal castles in the Cévennes. Its purpose is believed to have been surveillance of the area located between the Régordane Way and access to the Ardèche valley. Its ramparts were originally flanked by seven towers. Its shape on the ground seems to represent a bird's wing, perhaps as a reminder of the coat of arms of the Bérard de Montalet family. The castle seems to have been abandoned by the Bérard de Montalet as early as the 15th century. Since 1985, an association of volunteers has been working to restore it. A mediaeval day is organised in the first half of May.

Attribution : © JF.Raulet



Olive trees (D)

Silvery olive trees are everywhere, whether around the houses or on the slope opposite. Olivaie, oliveraie, olivette: all these names refer to an olive plantation. The tree is the symbol of peace and has been cultivated for 4,000 years. It can be recognised by its knotty trunk and silvery green foliage. In November and December, the olives are harvested in a net laid over the ground. Once separated from the leaves, they are transported to the mill and pressed cold to extract their oil.

Attribution : © O.Pagès



The spinners (E)

More than 1,500 women worked in the town's 21 spinning mills in the 19th century. During a spinners' congress in 1908, the work was categorised as "female slave labour" because the women (or girls) worked 14 hours a day for miserable pay. One strike followed another all over the region, the first of them taking place in Saint-Ambroix in 1879. The thankless work was among the worst paid in the textile industry, and yet spinners spoke of it nostalgically once they had left the labourers' life.

Attribution : © Com com Cèze Cévennes



Le Dugas (F)

Narrow cobblestoned lanes, arched passageways, staircases, and lanes as narrow as paths: this perched area is inaccessible by car and shelters vestiges of the dawn of time. Prehistory, Antiquity, the Middle Ages, the religious crisis of the 16th century Reformation and all centuries since then have left their mark on this slope. A Pagan sacrificial altar, a grandly crenelated 19th century chapel, three 12th century gates, a castle and its ramparts razed in 1629 on the order of Louis XIII...

Attribution : © O.Pagès