

The ramparts of Dieusse

CC de Cèze-Cévennes



Le village de Saint-Brès (© J.F.Raulet)

A walk that showcases pastoral constructions: walled pens, capitelles (drystone huts), faïsses (terraced cropland), mazets (southern one-room stone houses on farmland) and water troughs as well as splendid panoramic views.

Useful information

Practice : Pédestre

Duration : 3 h

Length : 8.4 km

Trek ascent : 308 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Boucle

Themes : Architecture et village, Histoire et culture, Transports en commun, Agriculture et élevage

Trek

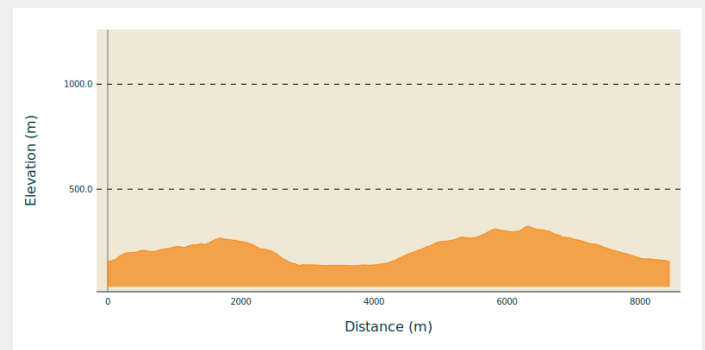
Departure : Saint-Brès: at the mairie (town hall)

Arrival : Saint-Brès: at the mairie (town hall)

Markings : — Balisage jaune et mobilier signalétique

Cities : 1. Saint-Brès
2. Saint-Ambroix

Altimetric profile



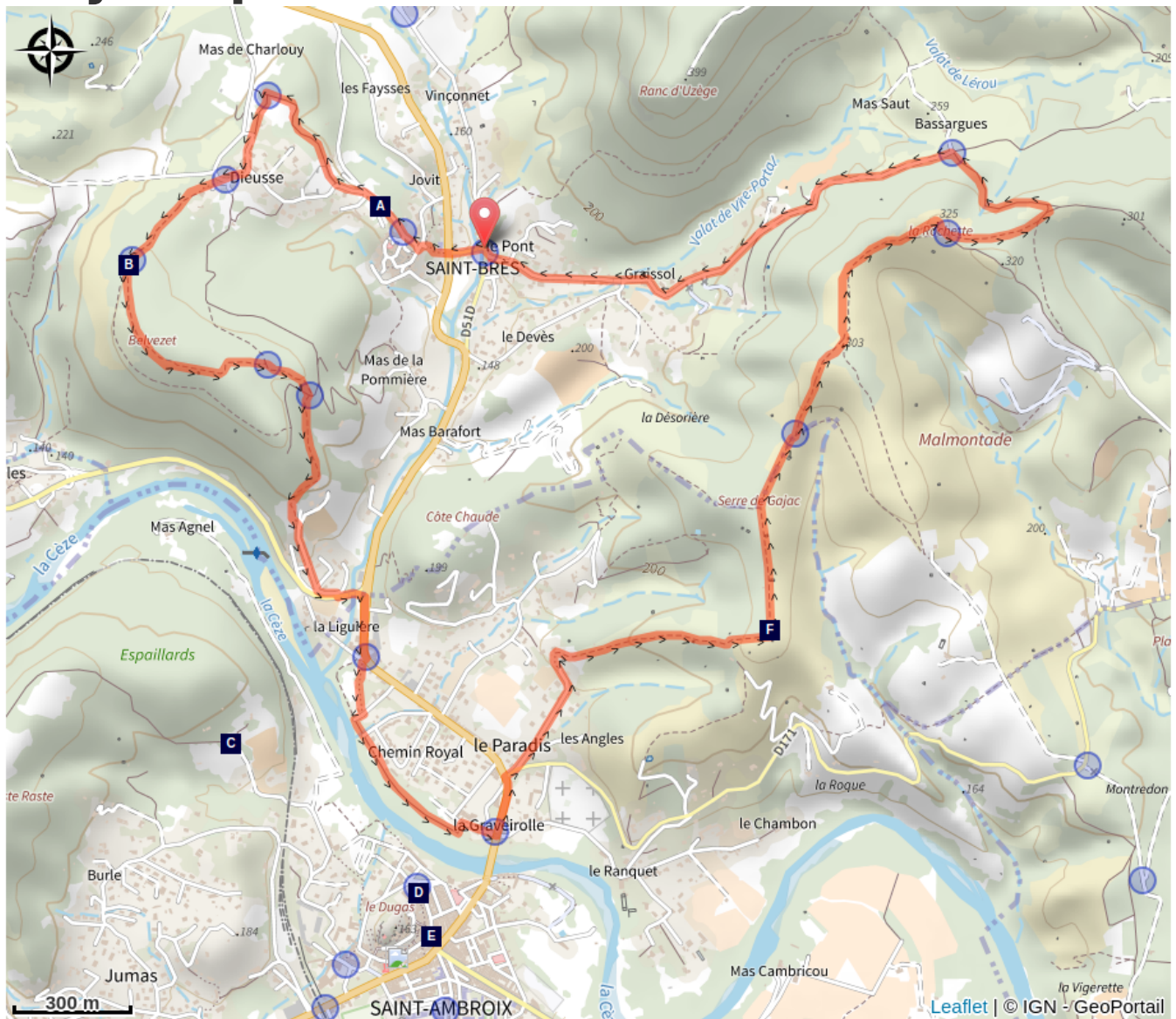
Min elevation 137 m Max elevation 319 m

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 "**SAINT-BRÈS**", head towards "**VILLAGE**" and then "**DIEUSSE**", via "**Coste de Bonne**". Continue on "**Chemin Royal**" till you reach "**LES REMPARTS DE DIEUSSE**", then continue via "**Mas de la Pommière**", "**La Croisée**" and "**La Digue**" to "**SERRE DE GAJAC**". Admire the views from here to "**La Rochette**". Return to "**SAINT- BRÈS**" via "**Bassargues**".

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...



The terraces of Saint-Bress (A)
Olive trees (C)
Le Dugas (E)

The King's Roads (B)
The spinners (D)
A maset (typical one-room
southern house) (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: on the D904 between the signposts SAINT-BRES and VILLAGE .

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 on the D 904 to St-Brès.

Advised parking

Near the mairie (town hall)

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 terraces of Saint-Brès (A)

The terraces used to be planted with grapevines, but the vines did not survive an invasion in 1880 by the phylloxera bug, which had arrived in France at the same time as new American grape varieties. The only way to rebuild the vineyards was to graft local varieties onto American ones, which were the only resistant ones. That is how the Clinton, Jaquez and Isabelle varieties appeared, which were all three originally from the US. Vinification of these was later forbidden by law in favour of varieties with a lower ethyl and especially methyl alcohol content. Many farmers were so discouraged that they abandoned grapevines altogether.

Attribution : © O.Pagès



The King's Roads (B)

King's Roads have a prestigious name, but they were built in fear and pain. By order of King Louis XIV dated 29 December 1689, they had to be improved or created "so as to allow troops to march in and disperse [Protestant] assemblies and keep the wayward population at heel". A network of 24 King's Roads and a great number of side roads, including this one, was therefore built to establish a grid over the region. For 10 years, the inhabitants of the Cévennes were forced under duress to construct these side roads. The ten wealthiest families of each parish had to provide the funds, and the less well-off inhabitants were made to provide the labour. Those who refused were sent to the galleys!

Attribution : © J.F. Raulet



Olive trees (C)

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 (D)

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 (E)

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



A mazet (typical one-room southern house) (F)

This rustic little house with its single room was of unexpected social importance. The mazet appeared in the mid-19th century and corresponded to the city labourer's deeply felt attachment to his ancestors' land, where he would come to work in the vineyards and olive groves or to cut wood. He might keep a few rabbits at the mazet, or some fowl, and store some firewood or his tools there. The mazet was his great family project, his dream, his return to the original land, and the means of forgetting his lowly labourer's circumstances. These buildings multiplied in the 1930s. After the war, many were extended and made more comfortable so as to become a place of rest and relaxation as a family or among friends.

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