

Saint-André de Valborgne

CEVENNES



(© Sud Cévennes)



Discover the multiple facets of Saint-André de Valborgne on its streets and lanes, calades (cobblestoned slopes) and paths along the riverside.

Built alongside the Gardon river, the village of Saint-André de Valborgne has always lived by its rhythm. This walk reveals aspects of its history and the extent to which water has always played an important role: its presence has marked the landscape – from rivers to fountains, from spinning mills to hydroelectric equipment. This itinerary gives you a pretty overview of the village.

Useful information

Practice : Sentiers de découverte

Duration : 1 h 30

Length : 3.4 km

Trek ascent : 163 m

Difficulty : Very easy

Type : Boucle

Themes : Architecture et village,
Eau et géologie

Trek

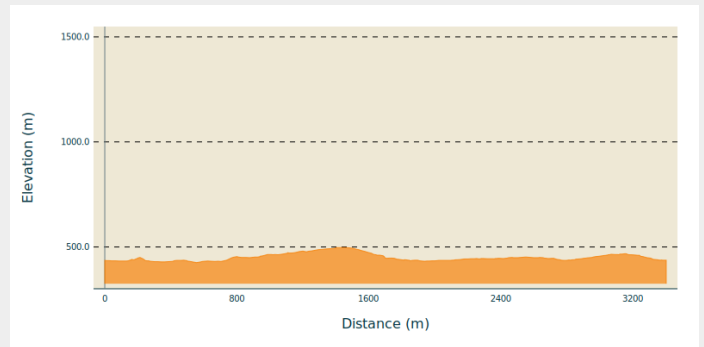
Departure : New Bridge

Arrival : New Bridge

Markings : 🌀 Découverte PNC

Cities : 1. Saint-André-de-Valborgne

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 435 m Max elevation 497 m

On your path...



- Water! (A)
- Two in one (C)
- Well-supplied (E)
- The age of silk (G)
- Traces of giants? (I)
- The village of St André de Valborgne (K)
-  Fish and other animals... (B)
- Electrified... (D)
- The gardonnades (F)
- The tanners' district (H)
- One spring, five fountains (J)

All useful information

Advices

This path has rocky sections and overhangs the river. For your own safety, you must stay on the marked path.

How to come ?

Transports

Lio 109 Saint Jean-du-Gard – Saint-André-de-Valborgne

liO est le Service Public Occitanie Transports de la Région Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée. Il permet à chacun de se déplacer facilement en privilégiant les transports en commun.
<https://lio.laregion.fr/>

Access

From Saint-Jean du Gard: D907 towards Saumane – Saint-André de Valborgne.

Advised parking

Parking spaces alongside the Gardon river.

Information desks

Tourism & national parc'house

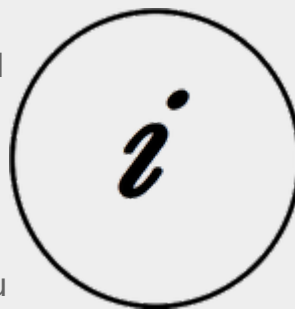
Col de la Serreyrède, 30570 Val d'Aigoual

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)



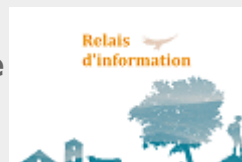
Tourism office Mont Aigoual Causses Cévennes, Saint-André-de-Valborgne

les quais, 30940 Saint-André-de-Valborgne

standredevalborgne@sudcevennes.com

Tel : 04 66 60 32 11

<https://www.sudcevennes.com>



Source



CC Causses Aigoual Cévennes Terres Solidaires

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



Parc national des Cévennes

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

On your path...



Water! (A)

The Griffon fountain is known for its pure water, which will quench any walker's thirst. In the old days, the whole neighbourhood used it not only for drinking but also for cooking, washing, washing clothes, watering plants, etc. The fountain was not only a supply point but also an important meeting-point in village life.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



Fish and other animals... (B)

On the river banks, a pretty white, grey and black bird paces up and down looking for insects, bopping its long tail up and down: the white wagtail. The more colourful grey wagtail is often seen alongside it. The white-throated dipper resembles a blackbird with a big white stain on its breast. It often disappears underwater to hunt insect larvae. Trout, which like the same prey, also live in the Gardon, where they keep anglers happy.

Attribution : © Régis Descamps



Two in one (C)

This cobbled path going uphill is a calade. It is not only a path but also a brook, allowing rainwater to be evacuated. Caution: slippery when wet!

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



Electrified... (D)

The village's inhabitants had access to electricity as early as 1919. The inconspicuous little hut on the opposite bank sheltered a little turbine supplied with water by a béal (irrigation channel). It was built by a villager, Mr Teston, and produced enough electricity for one lightbulb per household.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



Well-supplied (E)

Cévenol gardens are supplied by béals (little canals), which bring water from rivers or springs to cultivated land. The latter is usually laid out in bancels (terraces). By retaining the soil, the low walls make it possible to have level plots and deeper soils. Water can seep into the ground slowly and remain there for longer.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



The gardonnades (F)

The village benefits from the water that the Gardon brings – but it also has to put up with the river's sporadic bad moods. Abundant rain can rapidly raise river levels. It is often in autumn that the torrent overflows its banks. The worst floods can have dramatic consequences in both material and human terms. Many can still remember the floods of September 1958 and 2002, which caused much damage.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



The age of silk (G)

From the 19th century onwards, the silk industry developed in the Cévennes: tanneries gave way to spinning mills. The mills used water not only to treat the silkworm cocoons (which were boiled to prepare the silk) but also for the steam-driven spinning machines. In the second half of the 19th century, diseases strongly reduced silk production, which was also subject to competition from foreign silks and then from artificial silk. The silk industry went under in 1965.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



The tanners' district (H)

La Calquière district gets its name from that of the ditches in which the tanners soaked their animal skins with limestone, which is called cauç or calç in Occitan. All along the Gardon there were tanneries because its acidic water was good for rinsing the skins, which was indispensable for obtaining high quality products.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



Traces of giants? (I)

“Giant’s cauldrons” have formed in the rock at the base of the waterfall. These regular, rounded cavities are only created in rapidly flowing waters. They are caused by the repeated friction of stones caught in a depression and moved by swirling currents.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



One spring, five fountains (J)

This fountain is one of Saint-André’s five public fountains, all of which are supplied by the same spring (its water is thus the same as in the Fontaine du Griffon). Before houses were connected to mains water, there were many more fountains on this side of the quay.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



The village of St André de Valborgne (K)

As you stroll along the quay above the river, you can still see the handsome bourgeois houses dating from the silk boom. If you look around, former spinning mills and industrial buildings dedicated to silk farming can still be seen in the landscape. A little lower down, opposite the 16th century château, you can listen to

Bernadette Lafont on the Camisard saga in and after 1702. As you reach the square again, quench your thirst at the fountain and have a look inside the Romanesque church (12th century).

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