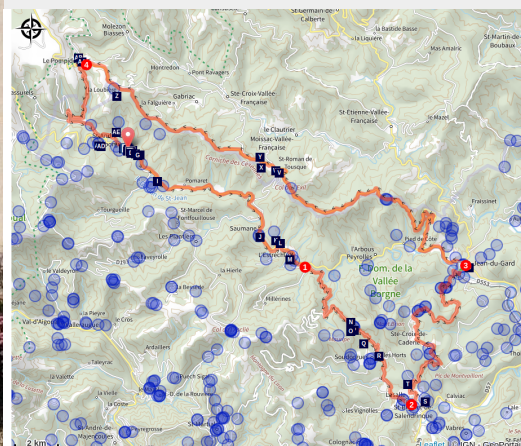


the Cévennes ridge

Cévennes



Le village de St André de Valborgne (Béatrice Galzin)



A long but very varied circuit.

Remember to stroll over the squares, along the river's edge and through the lanes before you depart again for the heights !

Valley bottoms, ridge roads: an enchanting circuit with surprising landscapes. Dismount to drink from the water fountains in the villages you bike through. Look up to admire the roof of the Cévennes just in front of you.

Enjoy ! Everything is beautiful here, and true !

Useful information

Practice : Cycling

Duration : 5 h

Length : 80.9 km

Trek ascent : 2233 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Boucle

Trek

Departure : St-André de Valborgne

Arrival : St-André de Valborgne

Cities : 1. Saint-André-de-Valborgne

2. Saumane

3. L'Estréchure

4. Soudorgues

5. Lasalle

6. Sainte-Croix-de-Caderle

7. Saint-Jean-du-Gard

8. Saint-Étienne-Vallée-Française

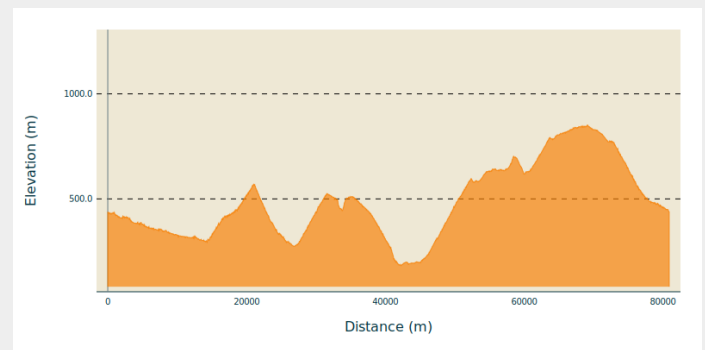
9. Moissac-Vallée-Française

10. Sainte-Croix-Vallée-Française

11. Gabriac

12. Le Pompidou

Altimetric profile

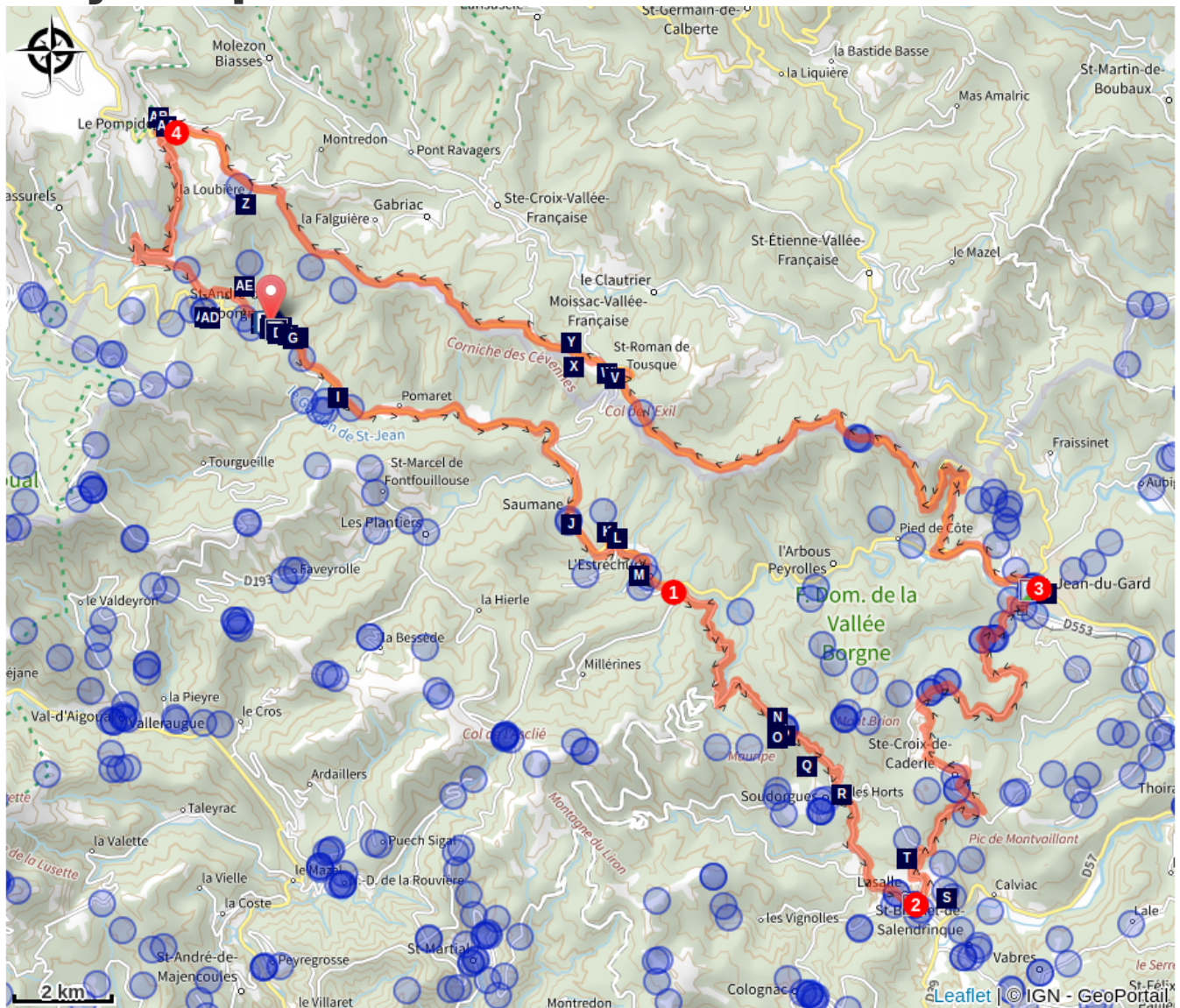


Min elevation 188 m Max elevation 851 m

From St-André de Valborgne, take the D907 towards St-Jean du Gard to L'Estréchure.

1. At L'Estréchure, take the D39 to Lasalle.
2. At Lasalle, take the D153 to St-Jean du Gard via Ste-Croix de Caderle.
3. At St-Jean du Gard, bike towards Florac on the D260 and the D9, known as the Corniche des Cévennes road, until Le Pompidou.
4. At Le Pompidou, go downhill on the D10 to St-André de Valborgne.

On your path...



One spring, five fountains (A)

The gardonnades (C)

Well-supplied (E)

 Fish and other animals... (G)

Cévenol housing (I)

Cabrigoule (K)

Château de L'Hom (M)

The village of St André de
Valborgne (B)

Water! (D)

Two in one (F)

Electrified... (H)

Saumane (J)

Cévenol episodes and gardonnades
(L)

Cobbled paths and retaining walls
(N)

All useful information

Advices

Before committing yourself to a circuit, ensure that it is suitable for your activity level and ability. Respect traffic laws and other road users; stay in control of your speed and trajectory. Make sure to be seen and travel in single file when in a group. Remember that the weather changes quickly in the mountains. Take enough water. Safe trip !

How to come ?

Access

From St-Jean du Gard, take the D907 to St-André de Valborgne, through the villages of L'Estréchure and Saumane.

Advised parking

Car park in the village

Information desks

Tourism & national parc'house

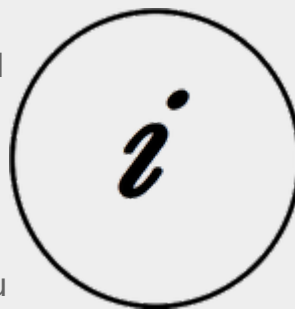
Col de la Serreyrède, 30570 Val d'Aigoual

maisondelaigoual@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 Cévennes Tourisme, Saint-Jean-du-Gard

Maison rouge, 30270 Saint-Jean-du-Gard

contact@cevennes-tourisme.fr

Tel : 04 66 85 32 11

<https://www.cevennes-tourisme.fr/>



Tourism office Mont Aigoual Causses Cévennes, Lassale

Centre Viala, rue de la Place, 30460

Lasalle

lasalle@sudcevennes.com

Tel : 04 66 85 27 27

<https://www.sudcevennes.com>



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>

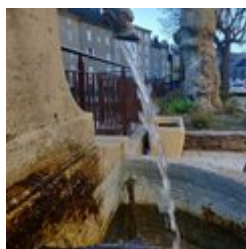


Source



Pôle Nature Aigoual

On your path...



One spring, five fountains (A)

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 (B)

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).

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin



The gardonnades (C)

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



Water! (D)

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



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 bancelles (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



Two in one (F)

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



Fish and other animals... (G)

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



Electrified... (H)

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



Cévenol housing (I)

Houses normally occupied the centre of the cultivated area. Built from schist, they were tall and narrow to save the level ground for crops. When houses needed expanding, people either added another storey to existing buildings or built a new wing parallel to the contour lines. Hamlets were always constructed near water sources and often at mid-slope because the valley floors are susceptible to brutal flooding as well as difficult to access. Good exposure to sunlight was not a decisive factor in choosing sites.

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas



Saumane (J)

Centrally located in the Vallée Borgne, Saumane suffered heavily during the conflicts between Camisards and the King's troops in 1703. The village and its outlying hamlets were pillaged and burnt, the villagers deported. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Golden Age of silkworm farming, Saumane was resplendent again. It had two silk spinning mills and about 500 inhabitants.

During World War II, Saumane was a support centre for the Cévenol Resistance.

Today, its inhabitants focus their energy on nature discovery and sustainable tourism.

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas



Cabrigoule (K)

The land register of 1663 has toponymic traces of cabri in the Occitan expression cabrigoule, which could be translated as "goat ravine".

Attribution : Gabin Lasherme



Cévenol episodes and gardonnades (L)

Flooding is a recurrent phenomenon in the Cévennes, including in the Borgne valley. Catastrophic inundations have been recorded since 1295, especially in 1790, 1826, 1848, 1890/1891, 1900, 1907, 1958 and 2002. In the most recent flood to date, on 19 September 2020, the villages of the Borgne and Valleraugue valleys were hit hard.

The sea is about a hundred kilometres away, and the south wind (the marin), pushes clouds full of water towards the Cévenol massifs where, depending on circumstances, they can cause violent storms. The Cévennes mountains are steep, making the rain run off into the torrents. The Gardon river below swells impetuously in a few hours, displacing a lot of matter and ripping out vegetation.

Attribution : Gabin Lashermé



Château de L'Hom (M)

Originally, the name of L'Hom indicates that an elm tree – the tree of justice – was planted outside the building. The massive square building is first mentioned in 1405. It has had a long painful history, emblematic of the Wars of Religion. The château was home to a garrison until 1767, when it was bought a family of industrialists, the Teissonnières. In the summer of 1944, it was the HQ of the general staff of the French Forces of the Interior (united Resistance units) of the Gard and lower Lozère, under the authority of Commandant Audibert.

The association L'Enfance Ouvrière subsequently bought it to turn it into a holiday colony. It is now a campsite.

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas



Cobbled paths and retaining walls (N)

Under your feet, you will see traces of all this old built road heritage on the paths. Cobblestones make roads more comfortable and suitable for vehicles.

The retaining walls are regular and, in places, built on very steep areas or carved into the rock. The traces left by humanity are impressive.

After the Château de Bussas, you will see piled-up tyres by the side of the path. There is also a thick cable. The taut-cable system made it possible to transport materials and wood all the way to the road. When the load arrived, it had sometimes picked up too much speed because of its weight. The pile of tyres was there to stop it.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin