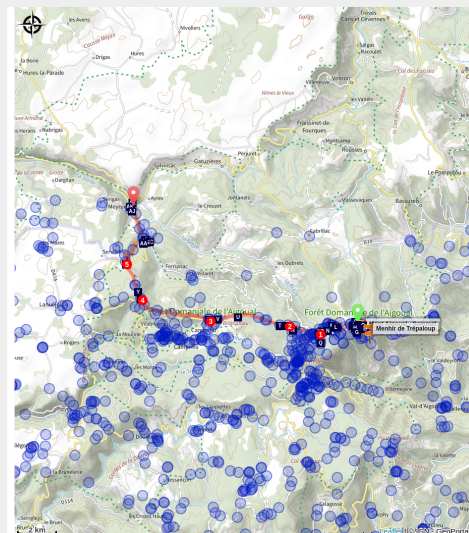


From Meyrueis to the summit of Mont Aigoual (Day 2).

Cévennes



Le sommet de l'Aigoual vue sur Valleriaugue (© Nathalie Thomas)



From the top of Mont Aigoual with its panoramic views, you return to Meyrueis through the forest.

You walk steeply downhill to the small ski resort of Prat Peyrot, before descending more steadily to Meyrueis on the ridge between the Brèze and Béthuzon valleys.

Useful information

Practice : Pédestre

Duration : 6 h

Length : 20.1 km

Trek ascent : 261 m

Difficulty : Hard

Themes : Milieu naturel, Faune et flore, Architecture et village, Histoire et culture, Agriculture et élevage, Eau et géologie, Causses et Cévennes / UNESCO

Trek

Departure : Mont Aigoual

Arrival : Meyrueis

Markings :  GR®

Cities : 1. Bassurels

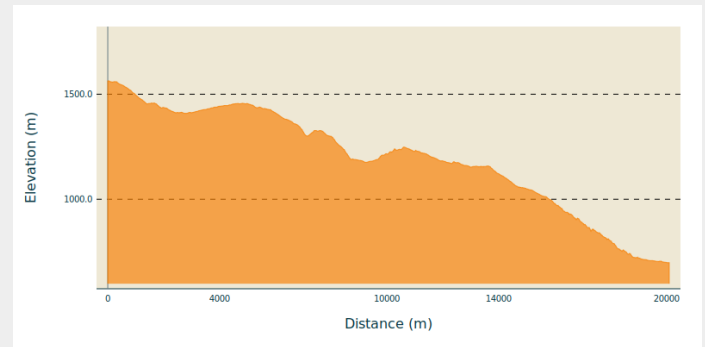
2. Val-d'Aigoual

3. Meyrueis

4. Saint-Sauveur-Camprieu

5. Lanuéjols

Altimetric profile

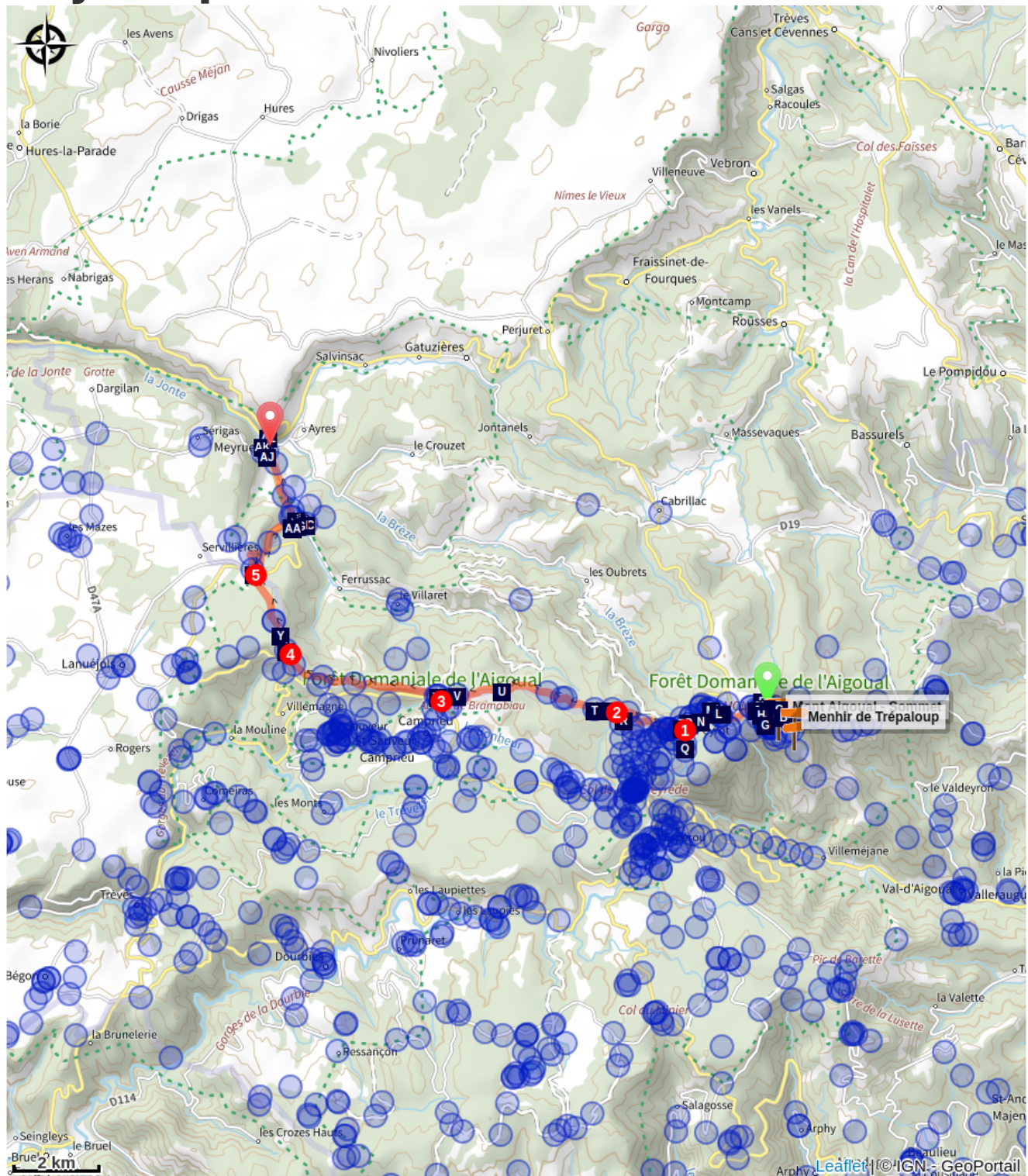


Min elevation 713 m Max elevation 1559 m

From the summit, take the RD 118 road to the signpost “**Sommet du Mont Aigoual**”, where you take the GR®66/ 7 / 6 long-distance hiking path on the left towards “**Station de Prat Peyrot**” via “**La Source**”, “**Le Pontet**”, “**La Baraquette**”, “**Balcons de l’Aigoual**”.

1. At “**Balcons de l’Aigoual**”, cross the road and continue straight ahead alongside the RD 18 to reach “**Station de Prat Peyrot**”. At the small resort, take on your right the GR®6/6A, towards “**Les Fayards**”.
2. At the signpost for “**Les Fayards**”, via GR®6 go to « **Col de La Caumette** », then « **La Croix de Fer** ».
3. At “**La Croix de Fer**”, via GR®6 go to “**Goulet**” then “**La Pierre Plantée**”.
4. At “**La Pierre Plantée**”, go to “**Bout de Côte**” via GR®6.
5. At “**Bout de Côte**”, go to “**Meyrueis**” via “**Roquedols**”, “**Béthuzon**”, via GR®6.

On your path...



Cell (Marie Gueydon de Dives) (A)
 Short-grass prairies and heath on
 the summit of Mont Aigoual (C)
 Tempus Fugit (Fiona Paterson,
 Donald Buglass) (E)
 A site for botanical experiments (G)
 Summit of Mont Aigoual (I)

The evolution of plant life (B)
 The meteorological observatory (D)
 Mont Aigoual weather station (F)
 Seated (Marie-Hélène Richard) (H)
 Archeosmart (Marc Limousin) (J)

 Pôle Nature 4 Saisons (K)
Leaf-Tree (Alain Bernegger) (M)

 The Nests (Céline Pialot) (L)
Catchment Area (Xavier Rèche) (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

Make sure your equipment is appropriate for the day's weather conditions. Remember that the weather changes quickly in the mountains. Take enough water, wear sturdy shoes and put on a hat. Please close all gates and barriers behind you.

How to come ?

Access

Sommet du Mont Aigoual, RD 118.

Advised parking

Car park at the top of Mont Aigoual

Source



Comité départemental de la randonnée pédestre 48

<http://lozere.ffrandonnee.fr/>

Maison du tourisme et du Parc national, Florac

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

On your path...



Cell (Marie Gueydon de Dives) (A)

This artwork, natural in architecture but artificial in execution, represents a passage between the interior and exterior worlds. Posing or opposing while questioning the notions of limit, porousness and opening.

This work encourages you to come inside but feel outside. To be the contemplative eye, the receiving ear, the conscience that objectifies reality.

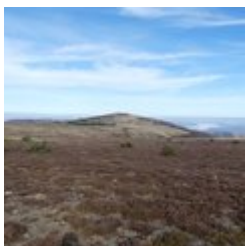
Attribution : © Filature du Maze!



The evolution of plant life (B)

At the pass stands a schist menhir (standing stone). To the north, in Trépaloup ravine, hewn flint implements bear witness to a human presence in the region since prehistoric times. Palynological analyses (studies of pollen fossilised in peatbogs) have allowed scientists to piece together the plant life on Mont Aigoual from 8,000 to 5,000 BC. Pine predominated, accompanied by birch and hazelnut. Then pine populations gradually diminished. The damp climate warmed up, favouring the spread of oak and hazelnut. Finally, the increased damp and cloud cover at altitude allowed fir and beech to develop. From the end of the first century BC, the substantial percentage of grasses shows that forest had receded in favour of pasture and prairies. This was the start of the great deforestation.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



Short-grass prairies and heath on the summit of Mont Aigoual (C)

Here, only species with a short reproductive cycle can settle due to the frequently glacial climate. The heath has been invaded by heather and mountain pine. This zone is barely wooded due to the violent winds and is comparable to subalpine vegetation, consisting of short-grass prairies and heather and blueberry moor. It is sometimes called pseudo-alpine.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



The meteorological observatory (D)

Inaugurated in 1824, the meteorological observatory was built on the initiative of Georges Fabre, one of the pioneers of the reforestation of Mont Aigoual. His work with the botanist Charles Flahault enabled the creation of the arboretum of L'Hort de Dieu. The first meteorological data were gathered by agents from the French National Water and Forestry Commission. Since 1943, the observatory has been managed by the National Meteorological Office. It is France's last mountain weather station that is inhabited year-round.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



Tempus Fugit (Fiona Paterson, Donald Buglass) (E)

Time flies, conscience cries, death threatens, heaven invites, hell scolds, and man sleeps. Here, the effects of time and natural elements transform the wood used in the artwork; everything is an endless renewal at the same rate as the passing hours. How much time have we got left before everything is lost and it is too late to repair the damage? Nature will continue on its trajectory and efface the traces of Humanity on Earth.

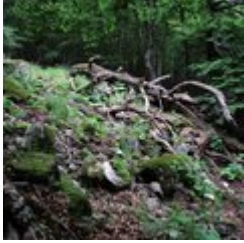
Attribution : © Natacha Maltaverne



Mont Aigoual weather station (F)

Inaugurated in 1894, this infrastructure is France's last mountain weather station to be inhabited. Its history is closely linked to the reforestation of Mont Aigoual. It has become a high-performance weather station with an array of modern test instruments, measuring devices for extreme conditions, and a museum/exhibition on meteorology. The 800 sq m exhibition will tell you more about climatology on Mont Aigoual and about meteorology in general.

Attribution : © Météosite du Mont Aigoual



A site for botanical experiments (G)

Marker 1

L'Hort de Dieu is located at an altitude of 1,300 m and shaped by an extreme climate. This site with its exceptional assets is a favoured study and experimentation zone for botanists. The tree collection is just over 100 years old, and some of the specimens are declining because of old age or else because they are not well-adapted to this mountain range. Today, there are 75 species left of the 140 that have been tested over the past century. To safeguard the interest of this heritage site, the Office National des Forêts and the Cévennes National Park are currently reflecting on renewing the collection.

Attribution : © Gaël Karczewski



Seated (Marie-Hélène Richard) (H)

Far from town, paths open the door to new rhythms. Another vision of life and time lets us breathe in the ever-present contemplation, stones, trees and skies. A physical experience of coming face-to-face with nature. A bench made of wood and branches, whose back becomes thinner as it rises towards the sky, as if to turn back into a tree.

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



Summit of Mont Aigoual (I)

At an altitude of 1,565 m, the climate is harsh: weather conditions are the same as they would be at 2,000 m elsewhere, with only four “frost-free” months a year. Winds of above 60 kph blow on 265 days a year, and the average annual temperature is 4.8°C. Trees do not have enough time to complete their life cycle. Local plant formations are those of the montane zone: subalpine short-grass prairies.

Attribution : © Nathalie Thomas



Archeosmart (Marc Limousin) (J)

Smartphone imprints appear on the rocks: fossils of the present that will become mysterious in the future. This carved stone, like the cup-shaped marks and other rock art of the region, discloses history revealed in matter and resonates with Malraux's phrase: “The future is a present given to us by the past”.

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



Pôle Nature 4 Saisons (K)

The Pôle Nature 4 Saisons of the Aigoual massif offers outdoor activities in all seasons in the central zone of the Cévennes National Park, overlooked by the legendary summit of Mont Aigoual (1,570 m). Discover our network of trails on foot, on horseback, by bike, or else by mountain-bike or with a donkey, as the fancy takes you!

Children can explore the orienteering circuit or geocaching. For the sportier among you we have laid out trail running circuits!

Prefer road biking? We have created circuits of varying difficulty levels so you can discover our villages and valleys.

Try not to make any noise! Wildlife enthusiasts can spot mouflons and other animals.

And if you would just like a gentle walk on the massif, the discovery trail “The cliffs of Mont Aigoual” is for you. There are various rest stops over its 4.5 km, with only 150 m in height difference.

We look forward to seeing you on our paths.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



The Nests (Céline Pialot) (L)

Little by little, the bird makes its nest, its cosy nest, baby cocoon, wasps' nest...

Like a bird, the artist has gathered materials offered by nature and has arranged them to build three nests, three refuges, three circles that reference perfection and invite meditation.

Attribution : © E. Fréget



Leaf-Tree (Alain Bernegger) (M)

Leaf-Trees use a veined structure to create a visual resonance between the tree and the leaf. The change of scale works like an inverted echo of this fractal structure. And as winter comes, the eternal summer of the Leaf-Trees confronts the winter of the bare branches.

Attribution : © Filature du Maze!



Catchment Area (Xavier Rèche) (N)

By its location and name, this installation evokes the nearby watershed between the Atlantic and Mediterranean. A vessel reduced to a suspended wooden framework, without strakes or gunwale, tilts in the direction of the runoff. It emphasises the first branches of a gigantic drainage system.

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel