# Tour of Vieux Chaillol - Stage 5 out of 5

Champsaur

Le Vieux Chaillol du plateau de Tresserre (© Parc national des Ecrins - Pascal Saulay)

*Following a walk up through the larch forest, you will have beautiful viewpoints over the Champsaur valley, its mountain hedges and in the distance the Dévoluy mountain range.*

*In the Champsaur, there is extraordinary biological diversity and many people. This scattered lifestyle across several hamlets away from the larger towns such as Saint Bonnet, are due to an interesting past. Religious fervour has left its mark on the area by way of crosses and chapels. It was the subject of many conflicts between Catholics and Protestants, who assembled around the Duke of Lesdiguières.*

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 7 h 30

Length : 22.1 km

Trek ascent : 689 m

Difficulty : Hard

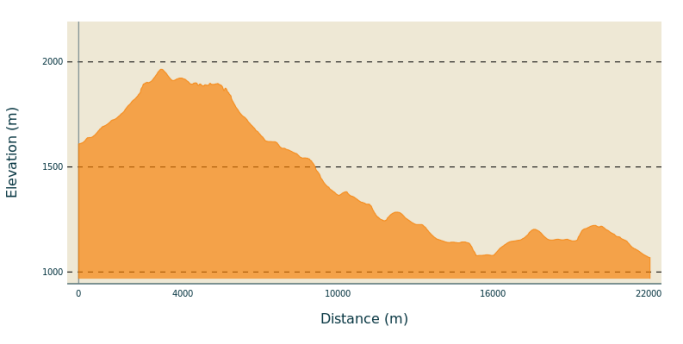
Type : Stage

Themes : Flora, History and architecture

# Trek

**Departure** : Chaillol
**Arrival** : Les Paris
**Markings** : GR
**Cities** : 1. Saint-Michel-de-Chaillol
2. Saint-Bonnet-en-Champsaur
3. Bénévent-et-Charbillac
4. Les Infournas
5. La Motte-en-Champsaur
6. Les Costes
7. Chauffayer
8. Saint-Jacques-en-Valgodemard

## Altimetric profile

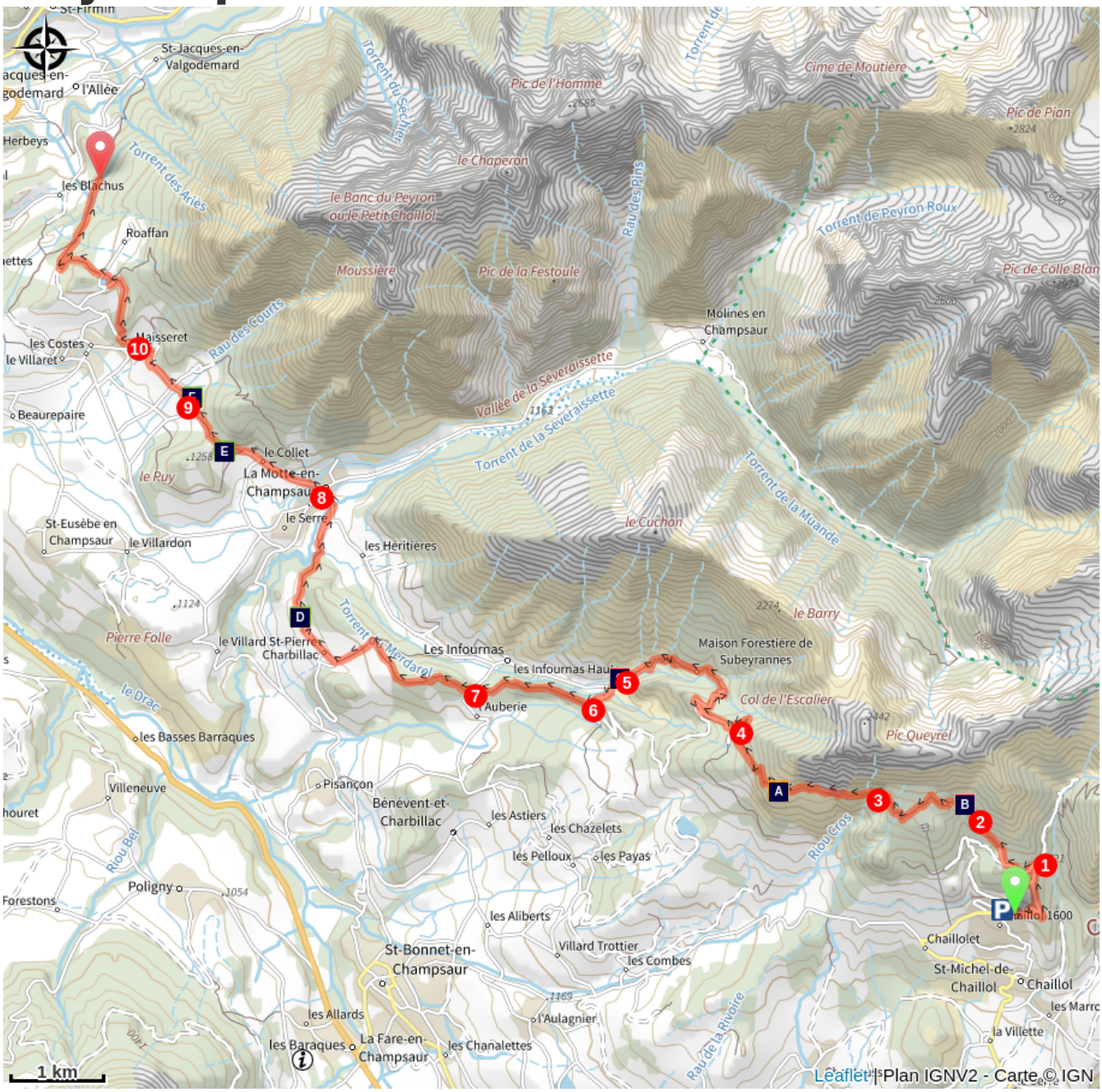



Min elevation 1069 m  Max elevation 1966 m

From the Chaillol 1600 resort, take the stony road that links up to the Bois de la Lozière forestry road.

1. Turn left and continue on the forestry road for another 500 m where, on the right, you will come to the footpath that leads into the larch forest.
2. Walk past the footpath to the right that goes to the Pisse pass, and again on the right, the one that leads to the Viallet pass, and start a descent through the woods.
3. When you leave the Lozière wood, cross the top of Les Combes. Enter the Barbeyroux wood and pick up the forestry route on the right.
4. When you reach the roundabout, follow the road to the right that goes to the Subeyrannes forestry house and then go down to the village of Infourna Hauts.
5. On the left at the exit of the hamlet, follow the paved road then the forestry road that leads to the Blache pass.
6. From there head west following the wooded ridge. Cross a paved road (5 minutes to the left is the hamlet of L'Auberie and its strange chapel of the Petêtes).
7. Go up through the Bois de Clier and as you leave it you will reach the hamlet de Charbillac along the road. Go through Charbillac and follow the road that then becomes a rough track leading to an enclosed meadow. Head down through the forest then once you have passed the Merdarel stream, go along the irrigation canal until you get to the bridge over the Séveraissette that will lead you to La Motte en Champsaur.
8. From the post office square, the path continues up to the north-west to the hamlet of Le Collet. Go over the mountain pass of the same name, then start down on a shaded route on the paved road from Les Courts.
9. Follow the road for 400 m, then a track to left, to 400 m of paved road, leading to Maisseret.
10. The GR leaves the paved road by a rough track that bends until it reaches Les Costes water storage reservoir. 400 m into the forest, link up to the forestry road that heads down north-east, changes into a footpath and crosses the Costes irrigation canal. It is possible to get to Les Paris by a small footpath to the right.

# On your path...




The origin of the name "Champsaur" (A)

Champsaur architecture (C)

Ornithologial diversity (E)

Mal Cros Canal (B)

Hedging (D)

Hayfields (F)

# All useful information

### How to come ?

Access

From the N85 head towards Saint Bonnet and follow the D43 then the D143 towards Chaillol or Chaillol 1600.

Advised parking

Chaillol 1600 or Les Marrons

# Environmental sensitive areas

Along your trek, you will go through sensitive areas related to the presence of a specific species or environment. In these areas, an appropriate behaviour allows to contribute to their preservation. For detailed information, specific forms are accessible for each area.

**Short-toed snake eagle**

Sensitivity period: March, April, May, June, July, August, September

Contact: Parc National des Écrins
Julien Charron
julien.charron@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Nidification du Circaète-Jean-le-Blanc

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec le Circaète-Jean-le-Blanc en période de nidification sont principalement les pratiques aériennes comme le vol libre ou le vol motorisé.

Merci d’essayer d’éviter la zone ou de rester à un distance minimale de 300m sol quand vous la survolez soit 1560m d'altitude !

## Information desks

**House of Champsaur**

champsaur@ecrins-parcnational.fr
Tel : 04 92 55 95 44
https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr

**Tourisme Office of Champsaur & Valgaudemar**
Les Barraques, 05500 La Fare en Champsaur
Tel : 04 92 49 09 35
http://www.champsaur-valgaudemar.com/

## Source

Parc national des Ecrins

https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr

# On your path...

## The origin of the name "Champsaur" (A)

A dozen origins explain the name "Champsaur". Obviously the prettiest one, and the least likely, is that it means "champ d'or" (Field of gold) as Napolean is said to have shouted out "what a beautiful field of gold" upon discovering the area. Other explanations are "field of lizards (sauros meaning lizard in greek) or "Sarrasins field" (campus sauracenorum) due to their numerous invasions. However, the most likely explanation is that it comes from "campus saurus" the field or the land of Saurus, the name of the owner at the time.

Attribution : IGN

## Mal Cros Canal (B)

Although it became necessary to create an irrigation system for the Champsaur as early as 1819, following a particularly severe drought, work on construction of a canal did not start until 1871. Starting at the Mal Cros glacier at 2750 m in altitude, it was built of dry stone and larch wood from the Pisse pass. Water for watering crops was distributed from the basin by a system of floodgates. Completed in 1878 it would only remain in operation for 27 years, as maintenance work was too expensive.

Attribution : Gabriel Gonsolin - PNE

## Champsaur architecture (C)

Today's landscapes and the houses are no accident. They bear the trace of humans, who were less concerned with building attractive places, than with striving to find the best rigorously functional solutions for the area. In the northern part of the Drac valley, an area often faced with a cold wind, hedges were planted, buildings were close together and almost blind on the north-facing side. On the balconies to the east, as in St-Michel-de-Chaillol or St-Julien-en-Chapsaur, the aim was to find sunlight and the facade often had a large porch.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

## Hedging (D)

Hedged landscapes were quite common in France before the war, but here, above an altitude of 1000 m, a wonderful diversity has been maintained. A patchwork of hedgerows, prairies and woods are home to an array of birds. Amongst them are many common sparrows (red-backed shrikes, stonechats, sparrows, quails and wrynecks) whose numbers are in decline in France, sometimes alarmingly so. Richness is therefore not solely due to rarity.

Attribution : PNE

## Ornithologial diversity (E)

Thirty years of careful inventories have identified 220 species of bird in the valley. This exceptional variety is not only due to the landscapes (hedges, wetlands, forests and high mountains) but also to the Champsaur's geographical position: not quite north-alpine, wide open to the south with the Manse and Bayard thresholds, ideal for exchange and for migratory birds such as herons, ducks, red-footed falcons or flycatchers.

Attribution : Damien Combrisson - PNE

## Hayfields (F)

When they have not been disturbed by modern fertilisation techniques and silage, around fifty species of plant can still be found in the hayfields. The most symbolic are the poet's daffodil, alpine salsify, meadow sage, sainfoin and globeflower that punctuate the landscape with their different colours.

Attribution : PNE