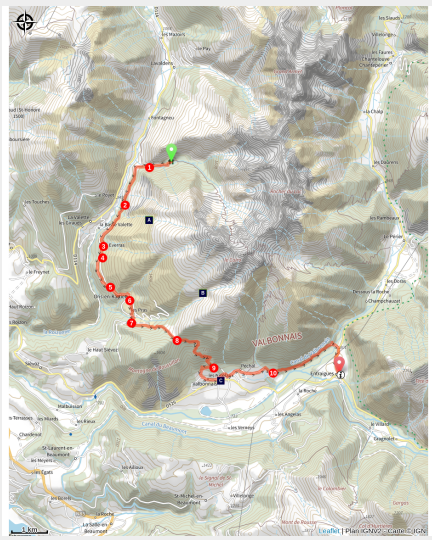
From Rif-Bruyant to Valbonnais

Valbonnais - Lavaldens

Famille longeant les champs et le canal des Moines (© Parc national des Écrins - Thibaut Blais)



From the untamed Rif Bruyant valley, you enter the peaceful Roizonne valley and cross the former passageway between the two, arriving at the town of Valbonnais with its lake.

Here we are following the traditional trade route between the Roizonne and the Bonne valleys. After a stay in a mountain village with a very strong character, you return to civilisation via Plan Collet and the descent to the busiest village in the Valbonnais region.

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 6 h

Length : 17.1 km

Trek ascent : 543 m

Difficulty : Medium

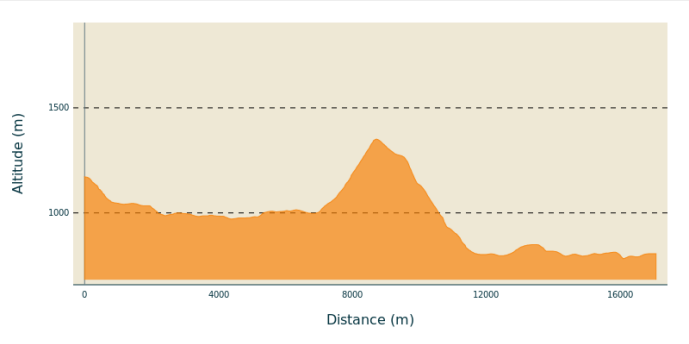
Type : Stage

Themes : History and architecture, Panorama, Pass

Trek

Departure : Hamlet of Rif-Bruyant
Arrival : Valbonnais
Markings : PR GR
Cities : 1. Lavaldens
2. Oris-en-Rattier
3. Valbonnais
4. Entraigues

Altimetric profile

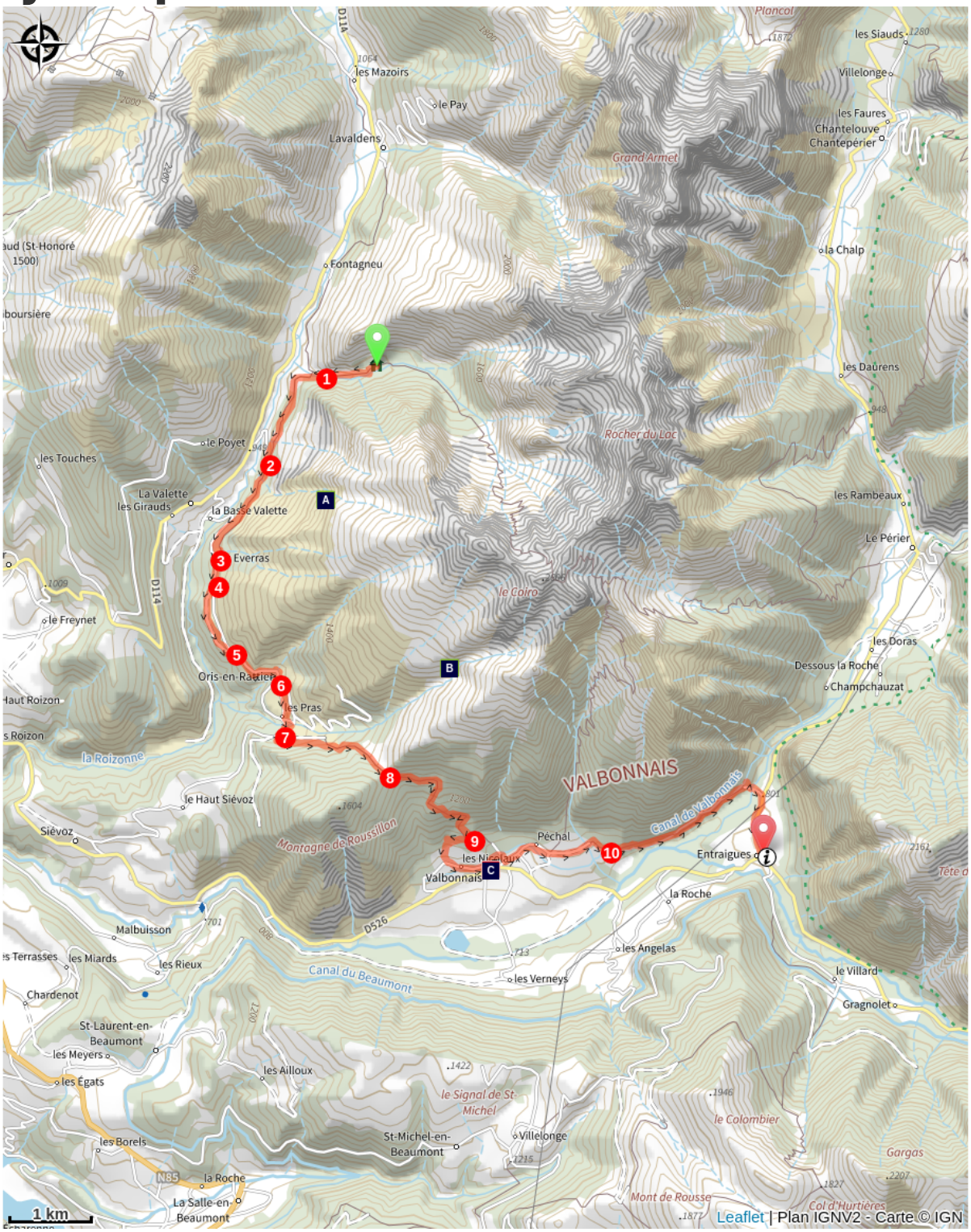


Min elevation 783 m Max elevation 1352 m

From the houses in Rif Bruyant, go down as far as the bridge.

1. Follow the path lined with trees towards "La Valette". The path leads down towards the banks of the Roizonne, then joins up with the small road in the village of La Rochette.
2. Follow "La Valette" and go through La Rochette. The scenic route provides some great views and there are very few people. You arrive at the RD 114a road in the village of Les Eyverras.
3. Follow the road towards Oris-en-Rattier.
4. 200 m after Les Eyverras, turn right onto a path through the fields.
5. After the path, you rejoin the road towards Oris-en-Rattier for 1.5 km.
6. In Oris-en-Rattier, follow "Valbonnais".
7. 300 m after the bridge, leave the RD114a and turn left onto a track, still heading towards "Valbonnais". The path climbs slowly into the forest then becomes steeper at the edge of the mountain pastures. At 1,356 m, you arrive in Plan Collet, the historic passageway between the two valleys.
8. Continue along the path towards "Valbonnais". After a short descent, you arrive at a crossroads. Follow the left-hand path (fine European beech tree) as far as a meadow and some ruins (1,144 m). The path becomes a lane paved with large stones in places and leading to Bourcheny (Alpine chalets, attractive fountain).
9. Below the chalets, turn right into the path leading to the village of Les Nicolaux. Follow the Valbonnais canal as far as the centre of the village. Take rue du Champ de Foire towards Péchal / Col d'Ornon. At the Péchal crossroads, follow the path towards Col d'Ornon. After the Grande Dreyre footbridge (856 m), the track narrows and descends.
10. Then join the Canal des Moines, which you take as far as La Barrière. After 2.5 km, leave the canal to go to Entraigues (bakery, butcher's shop, Maison du Parc des Ecrins).

On your path...



Cinereous vulture (A)

The Mouflon (B)

Village in Valbonnais (C)

All useful information

Advices

Avant Oris en rattier, la route est peu fréquentée mais les virages masquent la visibilité.

Information desks

Maison du Parc du Valbonnais
Place du Docteur Eyraud, 38740 Entraigues

valbonnais@ecrins-parcnational.fr
Tel : 04 76 30 20 61
http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/

Source

Parc national des Ecrins

https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr

On your path...

Cinereous vulture (A)

The Aegypius monachus, an immense bird of prey, all dressed in black, glides through the air in search of a cold meal. Very often to be found in the company of griffon vultures, it draws closer to the ground with a wide and heavy beat of its wings, turning its greyish head with its huge beak right and left, its eye seeking out every detail in the landscape. The subject of many myths and legends, its ash-grey plumage gave it its name... The four species of vulture in France never compete with one another. While the griffon vulture, with the help of its weak and large beak, prefers to eat the softer parts of carrion (viscera and muscles), the cinereous vulture likes the hard parts (skin, tendons and cartilage), which it rips using its strong, sharp beak. The fine beak of the Egyptian vulture means it can be a perfectionist... it picks the skeleton perfectly clean.

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The Mouflon (B)

Introduced in 1949 into the Alps from breeds from Corsica and central Europe, this is an ancestor of the sheep with ammonite horns. Even though the European Union recommends strict protection of the mouflon, it can be hunted in certain conditions. It is ill-equipped for extreme Alpine conditions, and its population levels may fluctuate with the severity of winter.

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Village in Valbonnais (C)

Since the Middle Ages, Entraigues and Valbonnais have been the two major towns in the valley.

The towns produce an impression of coherence, despite a wide variety of architecture.

In Valbonnais, we can see, in particular, the castles and fortified manor houses with their impressive dimensions and well-ordered façades, with sculpted wooden doors made for the local notables.

Another witness to the town’s history is the train station: from 1926 to 1950, Valbonnais had a meter-gauge railway with electric engines (La Mure – Corps line), with a line running to the cement works downstream, near Le Pont-du-Prêtre.

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