

From the Muzelle refuge to Bourg d'Arud

Oisans - Les Deux Alpes



Coucher de soleil sur le lac du Lauvitel (© Parc national des Écrins - Bertrand Bodin)



After the well-deserved rest after the climbs of the day before, there is nothing like an early morning ascent to Col du Vallon to admire Lake Muzelle and the Barre des Ecrins, followed by a fine descent with a view over the total reserve of Lauvitel and the lake.

Two lakes, two atmospheres. The view over Lake Muzelle from Col du Vallon reveals a bare, lunar landscape. But the descent towards Lake Lauvitel is through preserved vegetation that is a hallmark of the area.

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 6 h

Length : 13.3 km

Trek ascent : 506 m

Difficulty : Medium



Type : Stage

Themes : Flora, Lake and glacier, Pass

Trek

Departure : Muzelle refuge

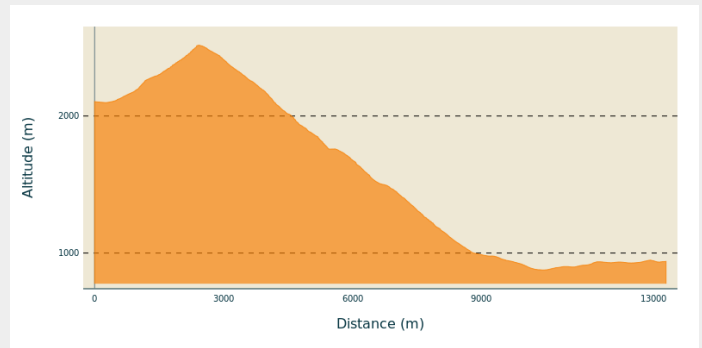
Arrival : Bourg d'Arud

Markings :  PR  GR

Cities : 1. Les Deux Alpes

2. Le Bourg-d'Oisans

Altimetric profile












Min elevation 877 m Max elevation 2517 m

Start off by walking round Lake Muzelle anticlockwise then turn onto a path through the mountain pastures, after a section through the scree, followed by a steep climb with small zigzags arriving just below the Col du Vallon. You can admire the Barre des Ecrins, which is seldom seen from this direction, and Lake Muzelle and its refuge. The descent towards Le Lauvitel starts off in an environment scattered with slabs of roches moutonnées (or sheepback), followed by a fine path with lush vegetation overlooking the lake from start to finish. During the descent, you will have to cross the mountain stream a few times and there are a few sections with handrails. At the lake, you can enjoy the "beach" for a rest before finishing the descent towards La Danchère. The path is mainly shaded, but there are sometimes a lot of people. After passing by a water supply point, continue the descent as far as La Danchère (you can take a drinks break in the lovely country gardens), cross the village, pass the hotel and then take the right-hand fork at the chapel, then left at the next intersection. Follow the road for a few dozen metres and then take the path that begins opposite in the bend in the road. After a few metres, turn into a large path on the right, along the powerful River Vénéon, and continue into the forest. At "Parc Aventure", continue straight on as far as the village of L'Alleau and then go down as far as the car park.

On your path...



-  Muzelle refuge (A)
-  Lac de la Muzelle (B)
-  Griffon vultures (C)
-  Golden eagles (D)
-  Réserve intégrale du Lauvitel (E)
-  Marmots (F)
-  Traditional Paving (G)
-  Danchère Hamlet (H)
-  Danchère Chapel (I)

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

Mains courantes dans la descente entre le col du Vallon et le lac du Lauvitel.

Après le lac, au niveau d'une prise d'eau, le sentier dallé peut parfois être glissant par temps humide (prudence).

Le sentier entre le lac du Lauvitel et la Danchère est parfois très fréquenté.

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.

Réserve intégrale du Lauvitel

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, Decembre

Contact: Parc national des Écrins.

Réserve intégrale, accès interdit.

Golden eagle

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August

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

Nidification de l'Aigle royal

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec l'Aigle royal en période de nidification sont principalement le vol libre et les pratiques verticales ou en falaise, comme l'escalade ou l'alpinisme. Merci d'éviter cette zone !

Attention en zone cœur du Parc National des Écrins une réglementation spécifique aux sports de nature s'applique : <https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/thematique/sports-de-nature>

Golden eagle

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August

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

Nidification de l'Aigle royal

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec l'Aigle royal en période de nidification sont principalement le vol libre et les pratiques verticales ou en falaise, comme l'escalade ou l'alpinisme. Merci d'éviter cette zone !

Attention en zone cœur du Parc National des Écrins une réglementation spécifique aux sports de nature s'applique : <https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/thematique/sports-de-nature>

Peregrine falcon

Sensitivity period: February, March, April, May, June

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

Nidification du Faucon pèlerin.

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec le Faucon pèlerin en période de nidification sont principalement le vol libre et les pratiques verticales ou en falaise, comme l'escalade ou l'alpinisme. Merci d'éviter cette zone !

En cas de survol merci de rester au-dessus de 1910m d'altitude à une distance de 300m sol.

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.

Attention le survol motorisé dans la zone cœur Parc National des Écrins est interdit en-dessous de 1000m sol et une réglementation spécifique s'applique au survol non-motorisé.

Voir la réglementation pour les survols non-motorisés : <https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/les-survols-non-motorises>

Voir la réglementation pour les survol motorisés: <https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/les-survols-non-motorises>

Information desks

Oisans Park house

Rue Gambetta, 38520 Le Bourg d'Oisans
oisans@ecrins-parcnational.fr
Tel : 04 76 80 00 51
<http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/>



Source



Parc national des Ecrins

<https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr>

On your path...



Muzelle refuge (A)

The bottom of the valley comes up to the rock wall at Muzelle, the pic du Clapier du Peyron and the head of the Muraillette. The modern history of this place is marked by mountaineering. It was on the 2nd July 1875 that Coolidge guided by Almer father and son opened the normal way to Roche de la Muzelle by the East North East face and the North-East ridge.. At this time, even if a pastoral cabin was used by the mountaineers the bivouac was still often used in the Muzelle valley. In 1967, it was in the rocky cirque that the community built the refuge on the shore of Muzelle lake.

Attribution : PNE - Albert Christophe



Lac de la Muzelle (B)

The Lac de la Muzelle is a glacier lake with cold waters, poor in life. The fish population is limited to salmonids (Arctic char, brook trout, etc.). Their active period is limited to summer. Since their food sources are low, they suffer from dwarfism. Each year, scientific monitoring is carried out by various universities and the National Park: samples of fish, phytoplankton, zooplankton and physical measurements.

Attribution : PNE - Telmon Jean-Philippe



Griffon vultures (C)

From the Col du Vallon, you can sometimes see griffon vultures. The bird returned to the mountains a few years ago. Bigger than an eagle, with beige and brown plumage, it generally glides in flight, and its movements are broad and slow. But what characterises the species above all is its gregariousness: griffon vultures like to be together, whether on the ground or in the air. This behavioural adaptation makes it easier for them to find the animal carcasses they feed on.

Attribution : Damien Combrisson - PNE



Golden eagles (D)

Several birds of prey cross the skies above L'Oisans. Among them are two couples of golden eagles that share the Muzelle and Lauvitel valleys. They have an impressive wingspan (2.30 m on average), are mostly brown colour, and often hunt marmots at low altitude.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE



Réserve intégrale du Lauvitel (E)

The Lauvitel full reserve area was created on 9 May 1995, and is a first in France in a National Park. It lies at the end of the valley and has been owned by the state since 1980. This area, where all human activity is forbidden, is a site for scientific observation of an environment over the long term. Vegetation, animals, water and climate are studied and compared with the data from other sites. Access to the reserve is strictly forbidden except for scientific purposes.

Attribution : Denis Fiat - PNE



Marmots (F)

The marmots are some of the permanent inhabitants of the grassland at the alpine level. . The view is very open, the herbaceous food is abundant and the soil sufficiently soft for them to be able to dig their burrows which are necessary for their survival. Although this animal is wild animal, it can become accustomed to the presence of humans and some marmots have started the bad habit of begging for pieces of biscuit from hikers, crisps and apples. Please do not feed them ! These foods, which are unsuitable to their needs, damage their health and survival. Would you think of eating grass in order to survive?

Attribution : Jean-Philippe Telmon - PNE



Traditional Paving (G)

The Lauvitel path is often used especially during the summer. To limit the occurrence of erosion linked to the impact of human use but also to water flowing from melting ice or rain water it is covered with traditional paving, maintained thanks to annual restoration.

Attribution : Cyril Coursier - PNE



Danchère Hamlet (H)

With its paved lanes, its fountains and its stone wash-house, the Danchère offers an ideal starting point for going to Lauvitel which attracts 30 000 visitors every year. It is one of the numerous hamlets that make up the commune of Vénosc.

Attribution : PNE



Danchère Chapel (I)

Dedicated to Saint Louis and to Saint Claude, Danchère Chapel displays its agreeable proportions to visitors. The stones forming the arc of a circle above the entrance and the window do not only have aesthetic value. They are rightly called "a relieving structure" because they help to redistribute the weight of the facade on both sides of the openings. In the recess hidden behind wire netting is a ceramic statue of Saint Louis created in the Tarn region.

Attribution : Cyril Coursier - PNE