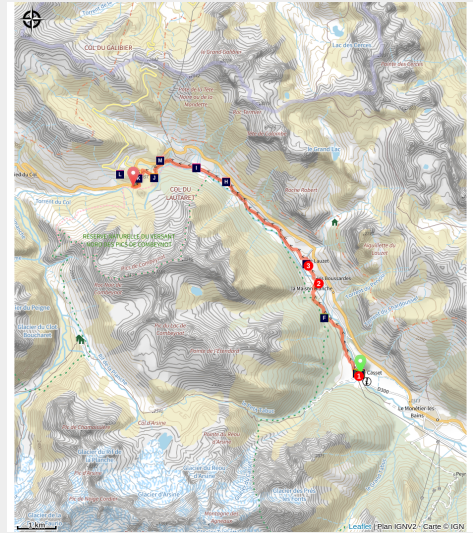


Du Casset au col du Lautaret

Briançonnais - Le Monêtier-les-Bains



Randonneurs - Le Casset (© Parc national des Ecrins - Carlos Ayesta)



Parcourir de hameau en hameau un sentier ancestral le long de la Guisane qui cloture ce Tour du Combeynot en douceur.

Le torrent de la Guisane accompagne le randonneur le long du sentier en apportant son lot de fraîcheur lors des chaudes journées d'été. Cette dernière étape, riche de ses hameaux et chapelles typiques des hautes vallées, permet d'emprunter, après Le Lautzet, une partie du mythique GR®50.

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 4 h

Length : 10.8 km

Trek ascent : 561 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Stage

Themes : Fauna, Flora, History and architecture, Pass

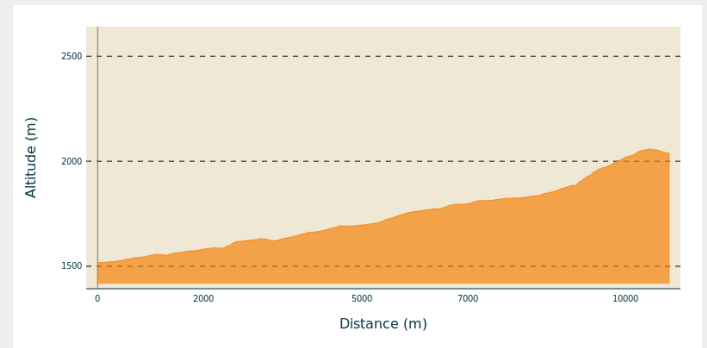
Trek

Departure : Le Casset

Arrival : Col du Lautaret

Cities : 1. Le Monétier-les-Bains
2. Villar-d'Arêne

Altimetric profile

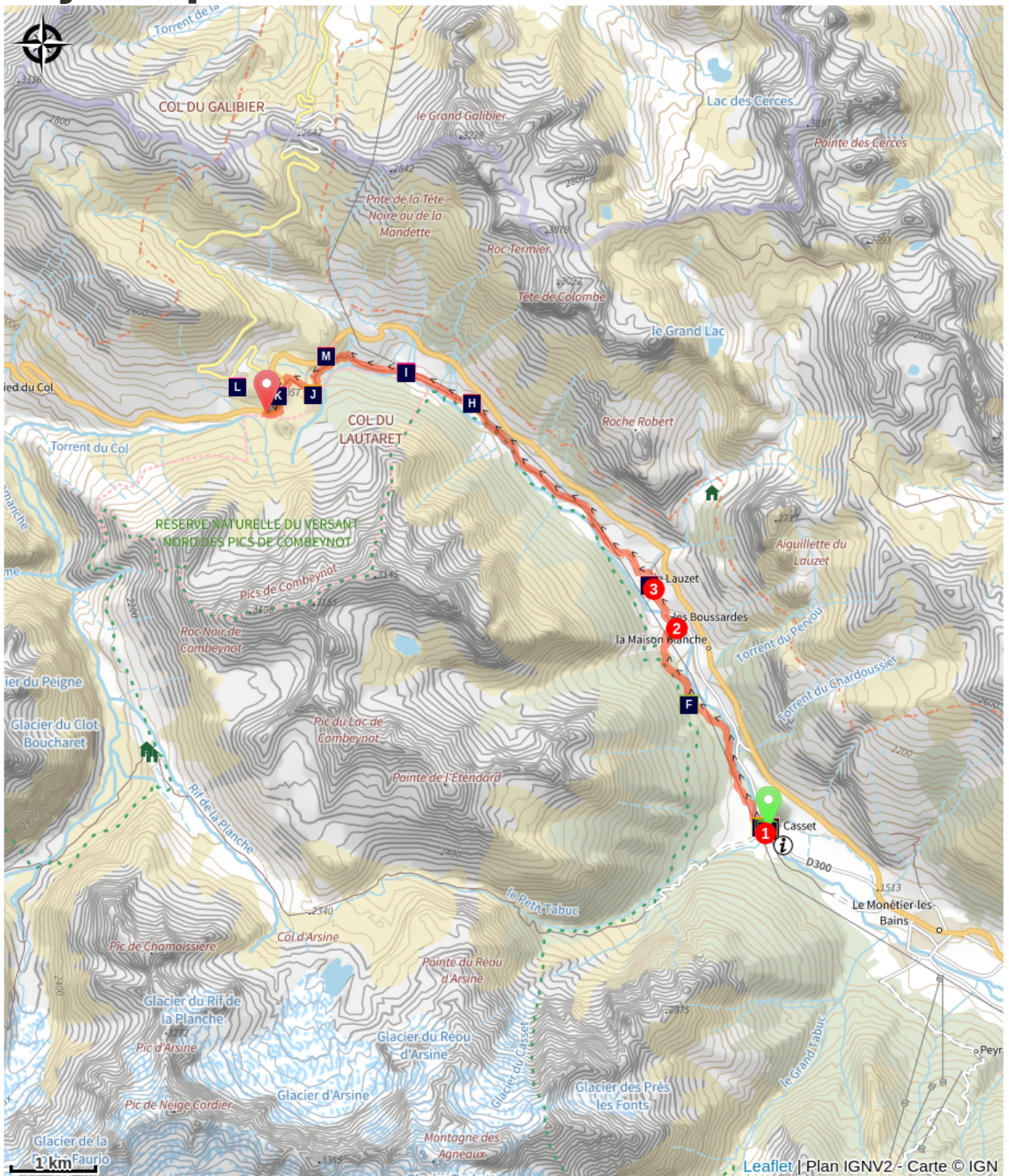















Min elevation 1518 m Max elevation 2059 m

Pour cette dernière étape, rejoindre la passerelle (empruntée la veille) sur la Guisane pour sortir du hameau.

1. Tourner à droite juste après la passerelle et suivre ensuite le balisage (panneaux jaunes). Le sentier passe au pied du vallon du Fontenil, à proximité du hameau du même nom avant de traverser celui des Boussardes.
2. De là, la suite de l'itinéraire est sur le goudron de la route communale qui mène au cœur du plus haut hameau de la vallée : Le Lauzet.
3. Arrivé au Lauzet, au premier croisement, prendre à droite et suivre la rue étroite jusqu'à un petit pont au dessus du torrent du Rif. Le traverser et aboutir un peu plus loin à un croisement (face à des places de stationnement) où il faut prendre le chemin à droite qui remonte vers le nord-ouest, le long du torrent de la Guisane jusqu'au col du Lautaret.

On your path...



-  Rock sparrow (A)
-  Whiskered bat (C)
-  Mill of Le Casset (E)
-  Le Lauzet (G)
-  View over the Pic de Rochebrune (I)
-  The Col du Lautaret climate (K)
-  Marionnaise snow fence (M)
-  Doors and courtyards (B)
-  Lover of old stones (D)
-  Larch (F)
-  Madeleine Hospice (H)
-  Le Massif de Combeynot, W. Brockedon (J)
-  The tuffaceous ground of the Col du Lautaret (L)

All useful information

Advices

Merci de suivre le sentier et de ne pas piétiner pas les prairies.

Prendre le temps d'observer le patrimoine architectural et religieux de cette haute vallée.

Le col du Lautaret est souvent venteux.

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.

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 et de privilégier un survol de la zone à une distance de survol de 300m sol soit à une altitude minimale de 2350m.

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 2500m d'altitude à une distance de 300m sol.

Information desks

Information center "le Casset" (summer only)

Le Casset, 05220 Le Monétier-les-bains

brianconnais@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 92 24 53 27

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



Maison du Parc du Briançonnais

Place Médecin-Général Blanchard, 05100
Briançon

brianconnais@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 92 21 08 49

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



Source



Parc national des Ecrins

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

On your path...



Rock sparrow (A)

The rock sparrow is here at the north-western limit and highest altitude of its home territory and regularly nests in the area. The species is in decline nationally and is on the endangered 'red' list in Rhône-Alpes and is being studied in the PACA region. People sometimes pay little attention to house sparrows since they are so familiar, which is a pity. The rock sparrow is bigger and although its plumage is similar to a female house sparrow's, its call sets it apart at once: pi-yip or pi-yui or even a chay sound that is similar to a brambling's!

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien



Doors and courtyards (B)

As you stroll through the streets of Le Casset, some house doors will attract your notice, as they bring together most of the decorative elements of the facades. Made of larch wood, they have been moulded or sculpted with geometric or floral patterns and have a tympanum above them, often with a grating. Behind the door is the courtyard, the shared entrance for people and animals. The way people lived and organised their homes resulted in this single entrance, an area giving access both to the stable and to the living quarters. Between the world inside and outside, the courtyard provided a passageway, insulation, but also storage space.

Attribution : Claire Broquet - PNE



Whiskered bat (C)

The whiskered bat is a dark-faced bat. It is quite common in certain mountain regions and is one of the most frequent species after its cousin the common pipistrelle. It likes trees, be they on the banks of a river or in the high altitude forests, but it is also possible to catch sight of them in gardens and villages such as the hamlet of Casset. This small mammal lives on flying insects and thus helps in controlling their numbers. Like all mammals, the female feeds her sole offspring with her milk.

Attribution : PNE - Corail Marc



Lover of old stones (D)

The rock sparrow is a sedentary bird. It generally settles in well-exposed, agricultural areas where there are lots of stones, stone terraces, ruins, piles of stones, old buildings. This southern sparrow can be found up to an altitude of 2000 m provided there is an open landscape and many mineral elements. It nests in the hole of a rock, in a wall and sometimes under the roof of a house. It will then mingle with the house sparrow. A sociable bird, it lives in small, dispersed colonies.

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien



Mill of Le Casset (E)

The almost complete building "over" the Guisane is the former mill of Le Casset. Its three sets of millstones were in operation until the early 1950s. There, they produced farine belle (fine wheat flour) for pastry making, a coarser flour for sweet bread (wheat and rye) and barley Gruau for soup. The bran and barley were fed to the cows, hens and pigs. Since wheat is a less robust plant and doesn't grow well at high altitudes, the inhabitants of the valley had to buy it in.

Attribution : PNE



Larch (F)

On the right-hand bank of the Guisane, larch trees are everywhere. At the bottom of the slope, the forest is privately owned. The municipally-owned section of the forest starts a little further uphill. Both the private owners and the municipality fell a little of this hard and rot-proof wood, which has long been a valuable and versatile resource for local people.

Attribution : H el ene Quellier - PNE



Le Lauzet (G)

As you descend from the Col du Lautaret, Le Lauzet is the first hamlet of the municipality of Monêtier-les-Bains, lying at an altitude of 1,660 metres. It has retained its mountain character with more traditional houses than those in some other hamlets, its distance from the ski resort being a factor in this. It is built on the left-hand bank of the Guisane, sheltered from the avalanches crashing down from the Combeynot massif. Before the annexation of Savoie by France in 1860, the hamlet was also a customs post for travellers passing through the Col du Galibier, as evidenced by the seventeenth century barracks, now converted into a gîte.

Attribution : © Parc national des Ecrins - Pascal Saulay

Madeleine Hospice (H)

At an altitude of 1,810 m, below the present-day Col du Lautaret road, the Madeleine hospice helped travellers cross the pass in all weathers and provided pilgrims with a chance to rest on their way to Rome or the Holy Land. The foundation of the order of the Holy Penance in these buildings dates from 1228. There is a chapel on the site, and it is located on a former road from Briançon to Grenoble. An avalanche destroyed the Madeleine hospice in 1740, and the building was rebuilt, then abandoned, when the road to Lautaret was modernised.

View over the Pic de Rochebrune (I)

The Guisane valley descends towards Briançon to the south-east. The view opens up in the distance towards the Massif du Queyras, with one of the summits clearly visible. The Pic de Rochebrune, at an altitude of 3,320 m, stands proudly above the Cervières valley, 10 km from Briançon and from the Guil valley in the Queyras region, linked by the Col de l'Izoard (2,361m). This enormous dolomite rock bastion is accessible to experienced hikers, since the last part is somewhat steep and you need to use your hands to climb up in places.

🕒 Le Massif de Combeynot, W. Brockedon (J)

In the work by W. Brockedon, [*Illustrations of the Passes of the Alps*](#), published in 1828, one of the engravings illustrating the Col du Mont-Genèvre shows, according to the title: *Mont d'Arcines and the Val de Guisane from the Col du Lautaret* (p. 25). The view is described as follows: "Across a deep ravine, the River Guisane is seen tumbling down the mountains from its source in the distant glacier of Mont d'Arcines, and thence flowing on to the Durance, through the narrow valley which is bounded by rugged and pinnacled mountains ". On the previous page, it says that "Le Casset is near the foot of the Glacier de Lasciale, which descends from the Mont d'Arcines". So it is clear that Mont d'Arcines is the present-day Les Agneaux mountain, and the Lasciale glacier is the Casset glacier, which must have reached much lower down. However, Paul Guillemin thinks that this is the first printed depiction of La Meije, and he marks it as n° 2 in his inventory (PG: 2). This was an error of interpretation on his part. In fact, it is the view over the Massif du Combeynot from the old Lautaret road. From this viewpoint, Les Agneaux (or Mont d'Arcines) cannot be seen.



📌 The Col du Lautaret climate (K)

The Col du Lautaret is a climatic limit between the northern and southern Alps. It works like a barrier for rough weather, and it is not unusual that the Romanche valley to the west is filled with snow, while the Guisane valley to the east is dry, and vice versa. The Romanche valley runs down directly to the region of Grenoble, where the climate at the same altitude has twice as much precipitation, and so works as a corridor for rough weather coming from the area. This explains why the Col du Lautaret and the neighbouring Col du Galibier mark the limit for many plants with Mediterranean affinities. This transitional position is characterised by a climate with a strong Mediterranean influence in the direction of Briançon.

Attribution : © Parc national des Ecrins - Cyril Couriser

The tuffaceous ground of the Col du Lautaret (L)

Tufa is a sedimentary rock produced by the precipitation of limestone dissolved in water, which comes to the surface from a water course or spring. In the course of this mineral solidification of carbonates, a great deal of plant or animal debris is trapped and becomes fossilised. This is how an excavation operation carried out between 2008 and 2010 was able to reconstruct the flora on the pass when the rock was deposited long ago. Tufa is also a soft rock which can be sculpted easily and was highly valued for the construction of public buildings or the houses of local dignitaries. The church of Villar d'Arène is built from tufa from the Le Lautaret quarry, a resource it almost exhausted. The tufa zone of Le Lautaret is listed as a habitat of community interest within the Natura 2000 site «Combeynot Lautaret Ecrins».

Marionnaise snow fence (M)

In the Guisane valley, the Col du Lautaret road is in places highly exposed to the risk of avalanches. From when it was first built, a number of measures were taken. The first was a long, semi-open snow fence that lets snowslides flow above the road and arrive lower down the slope. A little further downstream is another, quite original solution: since the layout of the land was not adapted to a traditional snow fence, two diversion tunnels were dug at the sides (the Rif Blanc and the Vallois). If there is a major avalanche risk, the road is closed and the traffic temporarily diverted through the tunnels. Once the risk is over, the road is cleared and reopened to traffic.