

# Les Tenailles (trail route no. 12)

Parc national des Écrins - Saint-Martin-de-Queyrières



Traileur à la croix de la salcette (Thibaut Blais)



*Climb up to a high pass, follow the banks of mountain streams, discover Bouchier, be stunned by panoramic views A rich and full itinerary to admire and discover the Pays des Écrins!*

This challenging trail is popular because of the diversity of its tracks: narrow steep paths, alpine meadow plain, forest road, balcony path, earth track, all supplemented by beautiful panoramic vistas like the view from the Croix de la Salcette!

## Useful information

Practice : Trail

Duration : 6 h 15

Length : 24.5 km

Trek ascent : 1484 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Loop

Themes : Fauna, Flora

# Trek

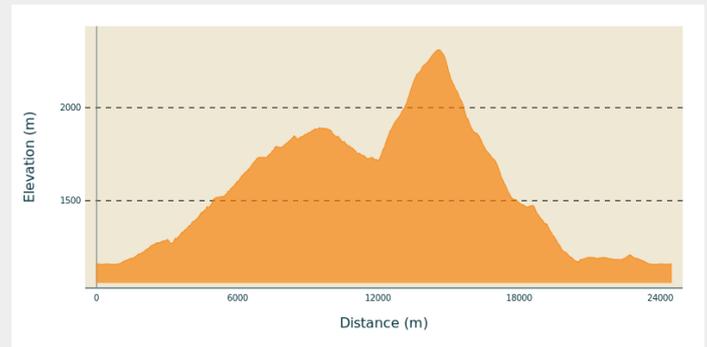
**Departure** : Camping de l'Isle de Prelles, Saint-Martin-de-Queyrières

**Arrival** : Camping de l'Isle de Prelles, Saint-Martin-de-Queyrières

**Markings** :  Trail

**Cities** : 1. Saint-Martin-de-Queyrières  
2. Puy-Saint-André  
3. Les Vigneaux

## Altimetric profile

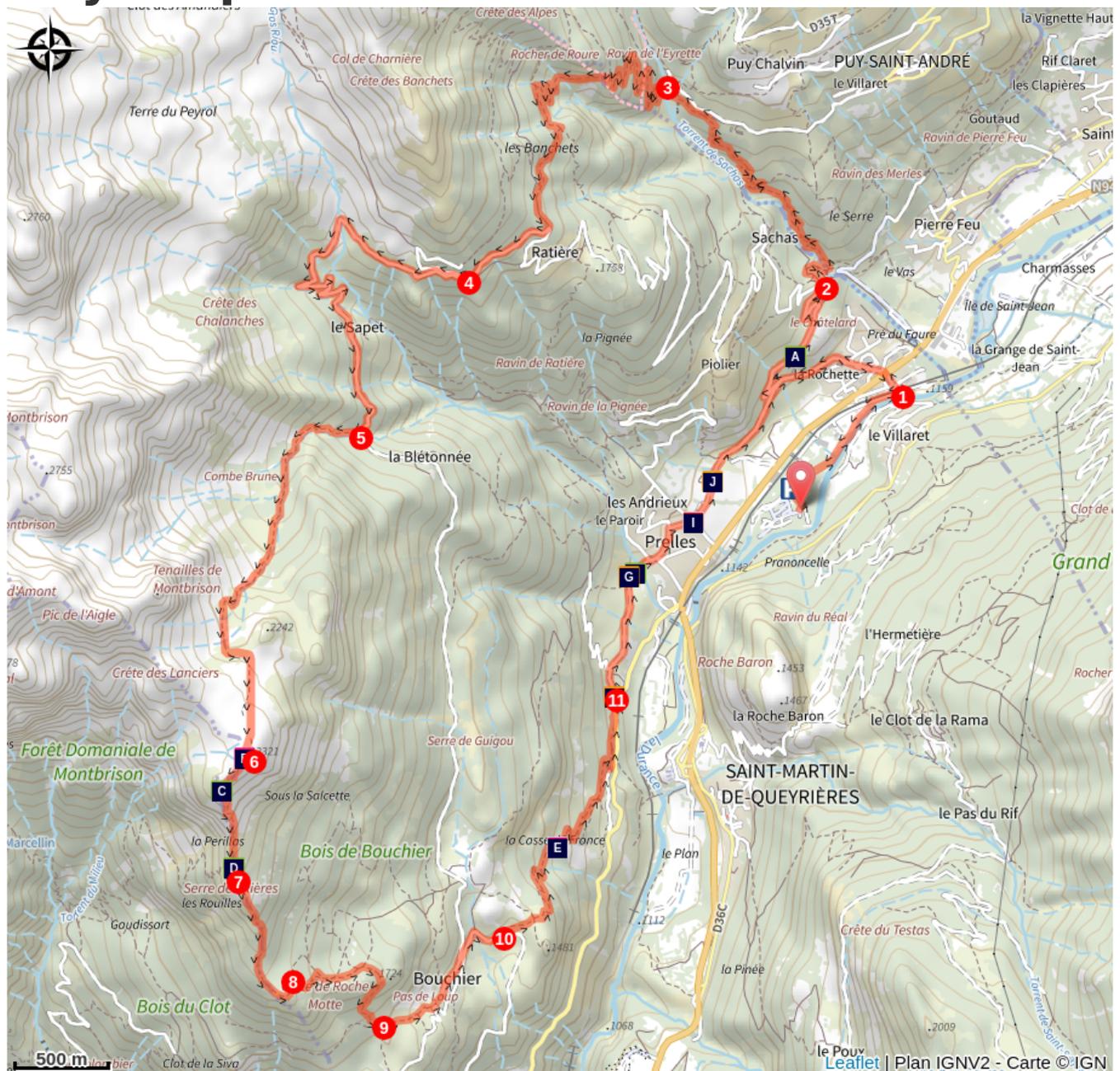


Min elevation 1158 m Max elevation 2312 m

Starting from the campsite, head towards the village of Prelles on the road running alongside the railway line.

1. Go past the railway line and the N94 to reach Prelles (exercise caution: a dangerous and busy road) and then carry on through the village. Follow signs for Sachas via the D336.
2. At the bend, keep an eye out for a path on the right. Take this and follow the banks of the Sachas mountain stream.
3. Cross the mountain stream and carry on towards Ratière. The path crosses the Pra Piouzéou mountain stream and runs through Les Banchets. Skirt around Ratière.
4. Take the path on the right and carry on until you reach the Col de la Trancolette. At the pass, turn left to start the descent.
5. Turn left to continue the descent and skirt around Le Clot des Amandiers.
6. At the mountain stream La Trancolette, continue right to the Croix de la Salcette, below Les Tenailles de Montbrison. Carry on towards the hamlet of Bouchier, and then drop back down to Prelles and back to your starting point.

# On your path...



- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
|  | The field maple (A)                        |  | The Croix de la Salcette (B)           |
|  | The alpine chough (C)                      |  | The rock partridge (D)                 |
|  | The quartzite (E)                          |  | The eco-constructed school (F)         |
|  | Eco-construction (G)                       |  | The larch, a tree unlike any other (H) |
|  | The chapel of Saint-Jacques-de-Prelles (I) |  | The GR 653D (J)                        |

# All useful information

## **Advices**

The N94 is a dangerous and busy road, take care when crossing it.

Before setting off, it is very important to check the opening periods for this route on the website: <https://stationdetrail.com/fr/stations/le-pays-des-ecrins/parcours>

Share your photographs on social networks with #stationdetrailecrins

Check weather conditions before setting off.

Rescue services contact details: Secours Montagne (Mountain Rescue): +33 (0)4 92 22 22 22 or 112

Show consideration for the work of farmers, livestock keepers and owners

Close all gates behind you

Take your litter home

Do not take shortcuts across pastureland

The trail routes are also suitable for walking

## **How to come ?**

### Transports

Public transports >> [www.pacamobilite.fr](http://www.pacamobilite.fr)

Consider car-sharing >> [www.blablacar.fr](http://www.blablacar.fr)

For more information, ask at the Tourist Information Office nearest to the trail starting point.

### Access

10 km from L'Argentière-La Bessée, take the N94.

### Advised parking

Camping de l'Isle de Prelles car park, Saint-Martin-de-Queyrières

# 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.

## RNR Partias

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

Contact:

LPO PACA antenne de Briançon  
0492219417  
hautes-alpes@lpo.fr

The Partias Regional Nature Reserve is managed by the LPO PACA and the commune of Puy Saint André. This is a protected and regulated area: dog leash, forbidden harvest, stay on marked trails, climbing prohibited except Meurseult pilami track, etc.

## 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 2550m.

## Information desks

### Vallouise Park house

vallouise@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 92 23 58 08

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



### Bureau d'Information Touristique de L'Argentière-La Bessée

23 Avenue de la République, 05120

L'Argentière-La Bessée

contact@paysdesecrins.com

Tel : +33(0)4 92 23 03 11

<https://www.paysdesecrins.com/>



## Source



Pays des Ecrins

<https://www.paysdesecrins.com>

# On your path...

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## ✿ The field maple (A)

This is the smallest member of the family of forest maples, growing to a height of 8 to 15 metres. It can live for up to 150 years. Its leaves have five round lobes; they are winged with wings sticking out in opposite directions. It is not fussy as to the dampness of the soil and it can withstand cold temperatures and drought. It is also an excellent bee forage plant, which can be enhanced by the proximity of a hive.

Attribution : Nicollet Bernard - Parc national des Écrins

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## 🚩 The Croix de la Salcette (B)

The highlight of this trail, overlooked by the southern, colourful foothills of the Montbrison massif (Tête d'Aval, Tête d'Amont, Les Tenailles), the Croix de la Salcette offers both the gentleness of a vast alpine grassland and a splendid panorama of the upper reaches of the Durance valley.

Attribution : Thibault Blais Photographie

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## 🦅 The alpine chough (C)

This small black corvid sports a yellow beak and red legs. It likes to fly in groups of several dozen or even several hundred individuals. Common in the mountains and a great acrobat, it can often be spotted whirling around cliffs or skimming over the alpine grasslands. It often hangs around picnics to gather up the crumbs!

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - Parc national des Écrins

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## 🦅 The rock partridge (D)

At the approach of intruders, rock partridges fly away with a great whirring of wings from the rocky ground where they had hitherto passed unnoticed. This bird favours south-facing slopes which are rocky and well exposed to the sun. During the mating season, at dawn the male produces an echoing, rasping and rhythmic call. It is a species in sharp decline.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - Parc national des Écrins

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## The quartzite (E)

The path passes along the edge of a big cutting, with boulders of quartzite. This is a metamorphic, siliceous rock which is very hard and formed by grains of quartz welded together. It originates from sand deposited 230 million years ago in the still-shallow waters of the nascent Alpine ocean, and brought here by the erosion of the surrounding topography.

Attribution : Jean-Pierre Nicollet - Parc national des Écrins



## The eco-constructed school (F)

The school in Saint-Martin-de-Queyrières is built out of materials that are safe and sustainable. The building is of bioclimatic design, that is to say, the architecture is adapted to the characteristics of the climate of the local area in which it is sited, in order to obtain the most natural ambient comfort possible. The environment provides power and resources through, for example, the capture of solar energy, the use of air circulation techniques, rainwater harvesting etc.

Attribution : Office de tourisme Pays des Écrins



## Eco-construction (G)

On this path, you will pass by some eco-constructed cabins. One of them is made from larch, a wood that is naturally resistant to bad weather and insects and needs no previous treatment. The other is constructed according to the “post-beam” principle, which is reminiscent of half-timbered construction. This is characterised by an exposed supporting framework. The beams support the roof, and these beams are in turn supported by the posts.

Attribution : Office de tourisme Pays des Écrins



## The larch, a tree unlike any other (H)

The symbol of the Southern Alps, this softwood tree loses its leaves in winter, and is swathed with gold and lights up the mountains in autumn. The larch forests are maintained by the grazing of flocks. Without them, other trees like the fir or other pine trees could grow, creating a different kind of forest. A pioneer species, the larch establishes freely in light conditions. Its solid rot-proof wood has always been used in the construction of houses.

Attribution : H el ene Quellier - Parc national des  Ecrins



## The chapel of Saint-Jacques-de-Prelles (I)

The chapel of Saint-Jacques-de-Prelles was built in the Middle Ages, in 1502, on the ancient pilgrims' way from Italy to Santiago de Compostella. It is surmounted by an arcade bell tower, decorated at the top with blind arcades with pointed arches. A number of wall paintings depicting historical episodes adorn the interior of the chapel, likely dating from the fifteenth century. They were restored in 1955. This chapel was listed as a Historical Monument in 1906 and it contains objects also listed as Historical Monuments, such as the bell which dates from 1639 or the eighteenth century silver, gold and brass ciborium.

Attribution : Office de tourisme du Pays des Écrins

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## The GR 653D (J)

The GR 653D is the Via Domitia. It is the second stage of the pilgrims' way to Santiago de Compostella, the Way of Saint James. This Grande Randonnée follows the route of the Via Domitia, an ancient Roman road built from 118 BC onwards. It linked Italy to the Iberian Peninsula, crossing Narbonese Gaul. 20 days should be allowed to travel its 459 kilometres of paths.

Attribution : Office de tourisme du Pays des Écrins