From La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar to the Refuge de l'Olan (Stage on the GR54 walking path)

Valgaudemar

limite du parc sous le refuge de l'Olan (Olivier Warluzelle)

A challenging ascent amidst rocky terrain on a variant of the GR&reg54 graced by a few water courses.

Continuing the ascent will take you up into the heights where you will be rewarded with a spectacular view over the Valgaudemar valley and the southern faces of the Olan (3,564 m).

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 4 h

Length : 6.5 km

Trek ascent : 1253 m

Difficulty : Medium

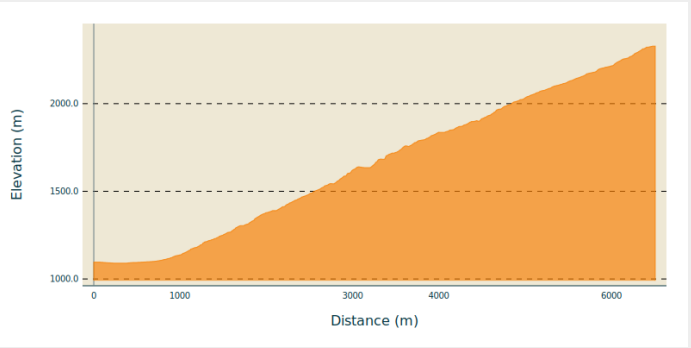
Type : Stage

Themes : History and architecture, Panorama, Top

Trek

Departure : La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar
Arrival : Refuge de l'Olan
Markings : GR
Cities : 1. La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1090 m Max elevation 2328 m

At La Chapelle en Valgaudemar, take the local road (D480), continue past the post office and then near the National Park Centre. After the campsite, the road crosses the Séveraisse river.

1. Stay on the road and cross a mountain stream.
2. Immediately on the left, a path leads upwards following the banks of this stream. Take this path and start the ascent with some winding sections among the screes and go on to cross a heather moor. The view gradually opens up onto the Navette valley and the hamlet of Les Portes which lies opposite.
3. Cross a stream and then, a few dozen metres further on, at an intersection take the upward-winding path on the right. You reach the montane zone among alpine grasslands, offering a view over the village of La Chapelle and the Refuge de l'Olan. Nearby, an old concrete slab testifies to the passage of an avalanche in the 1950s.

On your path...

- Combefroide Waterfall (A)
- Heather fields (B)
- Bourelle Gorge (C)
- Jas crossing of the Bourelle (D)
- Olan Refuge (E)

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

Préférer un départ matinal car la randonnée est exposée au sud et présente un fort dénivelé.

How to come ?

Access

A morning departure is recommended as the trail is exposed to the south and presents some very steep terrain.

Source

Parc national des Ecrins

https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr

On your path...

Combefroide Waterfall (A)

At the beginning of the path, is a big waterfall that you can approach on a narrow footpath just before climbing the coast. Situated on Combefroide torrent at a rocky escarpment, this waterfall has several projections and presents a total drop of several dozen metres.

Attribution : Olivier Warluzelle - PNE

Heather fields (B)

Over a change in altitude of a hundred metres there is a covering of heather which provides pollen for the bees and purple colour in Autumn, A small persistent shrub with tiny leaves and little pink flowers, it is called Common Heather or False Heather.

Attribution : Daniel Roche - PNE

Bourelle Gorge (C)

Since the end of the ice age, water has carved the rock and the passage of materials has created a small gorge polishing the base rock (gneiss, micaschists). The National Park has taken on the challenge of building a wooden walkway for walkers to cross this gorge.

Attribution : Dominique Vincent - PNE

Jas crossing of the Bourelle (D)

Just above the signpost, there are the ruins of a pasture shelter commonly called the, « jas ». Often built using dry stones, this kind of shelter was used to protect the flocks during the summer season.

Olan Refuge (E)

Situated at an altitude of 2350 m, this large building constructed in 1957 was carried away by an avalanche two years later. A witness to this is a concrete slab below the refuge. Rebuilt in 1966, it was definitively extended in 1978 with a capacity of 54 places. A stage of the Tour de l'Oisans (GR 54), it welcomes hikers in the summer season and provides a shelter in the winter; it belongs to the Club Alpin Français.

Attribution : Olivier Warluzelle - PNE