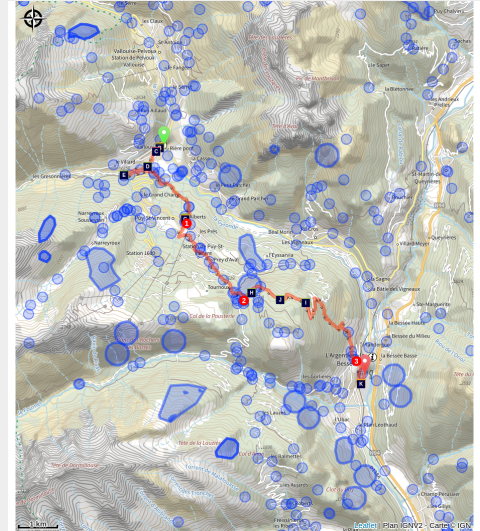


From Vallouise to L'Argentière-La Bessée

Parc national des Ecrins



Vue sur le clocher de Vallouise (Thibaut Blais - Parc national des Ecrins)



A hike that takes you through the diversity of the mountain economy from four-seasons tourism to hydropower, along the way taking in winter sports, mountain climbing and forestry!

Vallouise... its bell tower, its traditional architecture, its gardens! Puy-Saint-Vincent... its tiered and contrasting layout, its cable cars, its panoramic view! L'Argentière... its history, its shops, its white water centre! And in between these iconic locations... forest, alpine pastures, meadows!

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 4 h 30

Length : 15.8 km

Trek ascent : 720 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Stage

Themes : Flora, History and architecture, Panorama

Trek

Departure : Vallouise

Arrival : L'Argentière-La Bessée

Markings :  Trail  VTT  GR

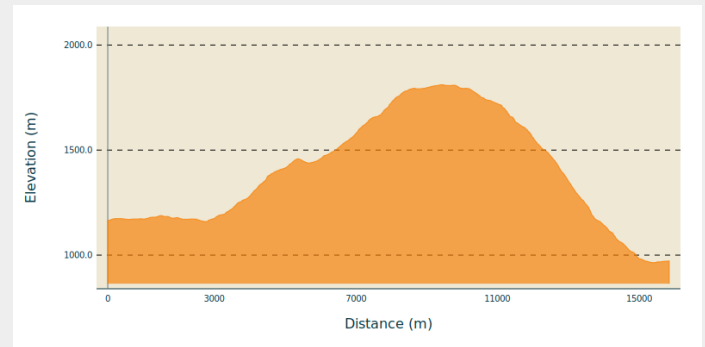
Cities : 1. Vallouise-Pelvoux

2. Puy-Saint-Vincent

3. Les Vigneaux

4. L'Argentière-la-Bessée

Altimetric profile

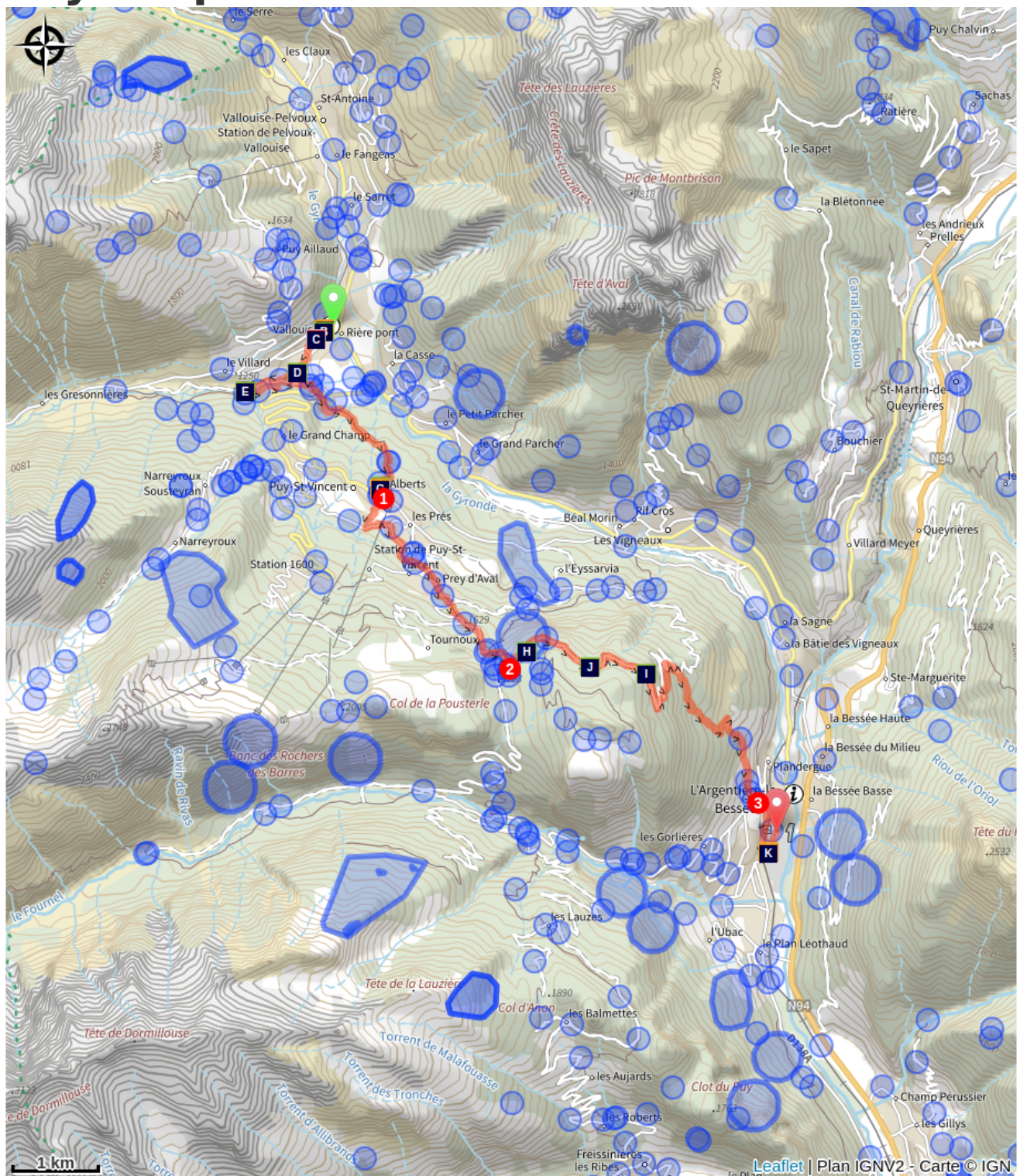


Min elevation 964 m Max elevation 1811 m

From Vallouise, follow the GR waymarking (Pont des Fontaines). At the "Vallouise 1,170" intersection, follow the sign to the Pont Gérandoine. Cross the bridge and continue along the road to the junction with the D4, where you follow the sign for Puy-St-Vincent. At the first hairpin, take the track on the left (Champ Clément, GR waysign). At the following junctions, always follow signs for Les Alberts (GR).

1. In Puy-Saint-Vincent 1400, when you reach the main road, skirt around the SDIS (fire service) building on the right (pedestrian walkway, metal steps). Take the paved road on the left as far as the chapel of St-Roch. Skirt around the chapel and take the paved road on the right (leaving the GR waymarking). Go across the car park - private property, gate. At the far end of the car park, take a narrow forest path that follows the stream Les Alberts (trail no. 15). When you come to a paved road, turn left onto it and pass underneath the cable cars. When you come to another paved road, turn right onto it (trail no. 15). Follow the road for approximately 600 metres and then take the path on the right. From here, follow the GR waysigns until you reach the Col de la Pousterle - the route alternates between path, paved road and track.
2. When you reach the Pousterle plateau, you come to the large signpost "Forêt des Vigneaux". Cross the track and the car park (flat area) and you come to a path which you turn right onto (trail no. 15). Follow this path as it rises gently (Les Vigneaux). After approximately 2 km, it starts to descend. After the third hairpin, take the path on the right which cuts across the track at regular intervals (trail no. 15). (!\steep, narrow stretches of path, poor grip). When you reach a flat area ("Champ des Ans 1,550 m"), join the track. Do not take the path opposite, but follow the track for 20 metres and join a path that leads away to the right (VTT no. 16). You then follow the mountain biking route (VTT no. 16) until you reach Les Collets above L'Argentière.
3. When you come to the "Les Collets" paved road, turn left (heading towards L'Argentière centre). After 50 metres, take the track on the right (Via Ferrata car park) and head towards the clock. Take the small path on the left which runs down under the cliff. You enter a cul-de-sac (houses). Follow this to the first roundabout. Take the pedestrian walkway which runs under the railway line. Bear left towards the centre of L'Argentière.

On your path...



- | | |
|---|--|
|  The church in Vallouise (A) |  The lesser horseshoe bat (B) |
|  Vallouise (C) |  The northern wryneck (D) |
|  The great goldenrod (E) |  The clouded Apollo (F) |
|  The Sentier du Facteur - the postman's path (G) |  Forest-dwelling bats (H) |
|  The rosebay willowherb (I) |  The pygmy owl (J) |
|  The Francis turbine (K) |  The mobile compressor (L) |

All useful information

How to come ?

Access

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.

Short-toed snake eagle

Sensitivity period: March, April, May, June, July, August, September

Contact: Parc National des Écrins
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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.

Merci d'essayer d'éviter la zone ou de rester à une distance minimale 300m sol quand vous survolez la zone ! Soit 1650m d'altitude pour cette zone.

Peregrine falcon

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

Contact: Parc National des Écrins
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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 2140m d'altitude à une distance de 300m sol.

Au site dit de Grand Bois, le couple de faucons a retrouvé son aire de prédilection dans le secteur "flamme de pierre" ; à éviter donc.

http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/actualite/amis-grimpeurs-attention-aux-pelerins-voies?fbclid=IwAR2Z8hX_38vdpW3mS499aRnY08jarhfm-5-eNV8K29k3WB3q3Ik2US_Alec

Information desks

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Tel : 04 92 23 58 08

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



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Source



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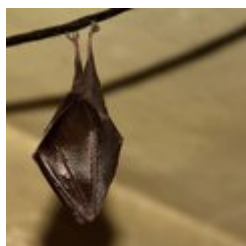
On your path...



The church in Vallouise (A)

The church of Saint-Étienne dates from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Inside is an altarpiece and a tabernacle in gilded wood dating from the eighteenth century, together with some mural paintings. Not far from the church stands the late sixteenth-century Chapel of the Penitents with a nineteenth-century painted facade.

Attribution : Thibaut Blais



The lesser horseshoe bat (B)

In summer, bats take up residence in the church roof. The species living here is the lesser horseshoe bat, which has been in serious decline over recent decades. Every year, the mothers return after hibernating in caves and each one gives birth to one bat pup. Bats are insectivore mammals threatened by the insecticides used on farmland and on wooden structures and the loss of their hunting habitats and roosts, among other things. They are all protected.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - Parc national des Écrins



Vallouise (C)

Multi-storey houses - typical of the architecture in the valley in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries - stand on the old village street. The ground floor was reserved for animals, the first floor for habitation and the upper floors for grain storage. People moved from one floor to another by means of balconies interconnected by a staircase. Many of these balconies are arcaded with stone columns. This type of arcaded balcony is found throughout the valley.

Attribution : Pierre Nossereau



The northern wryneck (D)

The old trees in the orchard are home to the northern wryneck. It has a loud song, rather like that of the green woodpecker, only slower. This bird owes its name to the extreme way it extends and twists its neck when it feels threatened. Its French name torcol fourmilier is a reference to the fact that it feeds on ants (fourmils in French). Difficult to spot because its plumage merges into the colour of the tree trunks, it gives its presence away by its song when it returns from its migration.

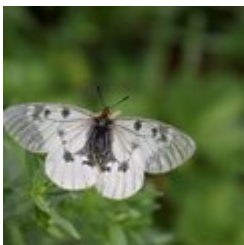
Attribution : Damien Combrisson - Parc national des Écrins



The great goldenrod (E)

In damp spots on the edge of the track, swathes of tall plants grow. It forms great plumes of tiny yellow plants. The great goldenrod, still known as the tête d'or or "head of gold" is a plant native to North America and introduced into Europe in the eighteenth century as an ornamental. Since then, it has colonised a large are of Europe and in some places it even competes with the local flora.

Attribution : Cédric Dentan - Parc national des Écrins



The clouded Apollo (F)

This butterfly with hyaline (glass-like) translucent white wings, marked with two black spots, flutters around the clearing or the edges of the forest, where the host plants of its caterpillars grow: the corydalis. Although abundant locally, it is nevertheless a species in sharp decline and is protected.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - Parc national des Écrins



The Sentier du Facteur - the postman's path (G)

In former times, the postman would take this path every day: He would set out from Vallouise, deliver letters in Puy-Saint-Vincent and drop back down to Vallouise, stopping at the hamlets of Parcher on the way. In the winter, when the snow was too deep, the Traversouires (the inhabitants of Puy-Saint-Vincent) donned their snowshoes and wielded their shovels to clear the postman's path down to Vallouise.

Attribution : Christophe Albert - Parc national des Écrins



Forest-dwelling bats (H)

Bats don't just live in caves! In summer, some forest-dwelling species shelter in old hollow trees or woodpecker holes during the day. Sometimes, the females also form little colonies here, where their young will be born (one bat pup per female). In this forest, which is still young with very few old trees, artificial roosts have been installed to help the bats and to facilitate their study.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - Parc national des Écrins



The rosebay willowherb (I)

The forest tracks are edged with great swathes of a tall plant which has purple flowers arranged in loose spikes. The rosebay willowherb is a pioneer plant and favours road embankments and disturbed ground. In late summer, its very numerous seeds, each with a little plume, float away en masse glowing in the advancing twilight...

Attribution : Thierry Maillet - Parc national des Écrins



The pygmy owl (J)

The call of this small, nocturnal bird of prey can be heard in the spring, and also in the autumn when it can utter some peculiar sounds. Active during daytime hours and at dusk, the pygmy owl is a predator of passerine birds and small forest rodents. But when they spot it, passerines will come together in large numbers to mob it, so as to prevent any attempted surprise attack. It is restricted to mountain forests where it seeks out trees with woodpecker cavities where it builds its nest.

Attribution : Christophe Albert - Parc national des Écrins



The Francis turbine (K)

The American James Francis developed the Francis turbine between 1849 and 1855. It is a “à réaction” turbine suitable for medium-sized waterfalls (with a water head of between 15 and 500 metres). The water enters the turbine and then circulates between the turbine blades, which are fixed, while the inner wheel is mobile. The pressure at the wheel intake is greater than the pressure at the outlet.

Attribution : Jan Novak Photography



The mobile compressor (L)

In the mines, compressed air is used to remove dust and to create power for the drills. The mobile compressor holds compressed air in a resistant tank. This is brought to a high pressure via a pump (the compressor). The compressed air is then distributed to the mine machinery through a conduit system.

Attribution : Jan Novak Photography