

# From Les Gondouins to Orcières (Chauffarel)

Champsaur - Champoléon



Randonneurs à cheval (© Parc national des Ecrins - Carlos Ayesta)



*A short day trail on which you can visit the Les Borels Shepherds' Centre ("Maison des Bergers"), relax at the Orcières leisure centre, climb up towards the lakes or on to Prapic.*

As you leave the Champoléon valley, broad and fast tracks running along the Drac Noir lead to the Orcières leisure centre ("Base de Loisirs").

## Useful information

Practice : Horse

Duration : 2 h 30

Length : 8.6 km

Trek ascent : 146 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Stage

Themes : Pastoralism

# Trek

**Departure** : Les Gondouins

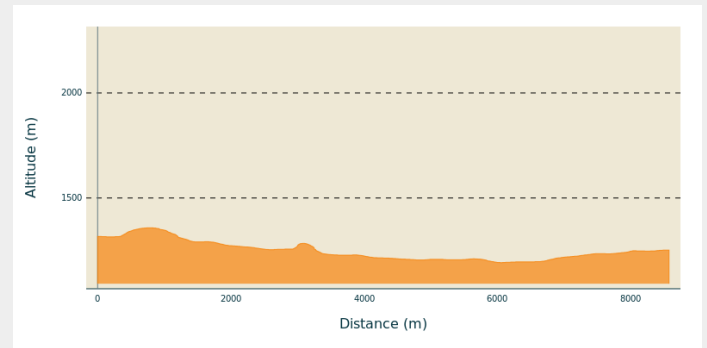
**Arrival** : Chauffarel

**Markings** :  Piste équestre

**Cities** : 1. Champoléon

2. Orcières

## Altimetric profile






Min elevation 1193 m Max elevation 1359 m

As you leave Les Gondouins, follow the grassy track uphill until you reach Les Fermonds. Drop back down due east until you come to the car park and arrive at the Pont des Eyrauds. Cross the bridge and continue straight on along the GR50 route until you reach Les Garnauds. Turn left onto the D944.

1. In a recess in the road on the right, take the track leading from it along the GR50; now follow the Drac Noir and go past the Gîte de Chauffarel until you come to the Orcières leisure centre, straight ahead.

# On your path...



-  The old landscape (A)
-  Tardons (C)
-  Alpine ibex (E)

-  The chapel in Les Gondouins (B)
-  Les Borels (D)

# All useful information

## **Advices**

Do not approach Prapic via the Perron Roux, and do not take the path passing via Les Tourengs: rock falls!

# 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

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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 2240m.

# On your path...

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## The old landscape (A)

While roaming the Champoléon valley, you will have noticed the size of the Drac riverbed. At the time that the valley had 600 habitants (in 1789 compared to 110 nowadays), it is said that people threw the scythe hammer from one bank to the other over this impetuous stream...An abundant workforce built and maintained the walls and dikes that retained the earth and was carried on the backs of men or donkeys. After the devastating floods of 1914, the Drac washed away land and pasture. Several hamlets, such as Gondouins, were abandoned.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

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## The chapel in Les Gondouins (B)

Built in 1700 by the Pourroy family, the chapel of Saint-Jean-Baptiste stands at an altitude of 1,311 metres, in the hamlet of Les Gondouins. It has a worked doorway surmounted by a small cross, an unusual feature for a mountain chapel, and an elegant bell turret (a "panelle") with a bell which extends above the roof ridge. The interior is simple and unembellished, apart from a painting depicting Jesus being baptised by Saint John the Baptist.

Attribution : © Parc national des Écrins - Marc Corail

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## Tardons (C)

"Tardons" are lambs that are raised on mother's milk in the pastures of the Ecrins massifs. These lambs are celebrated every autumn at the Champoléon agricultural fair. This event spotlights pastoralism and assembles breeders, shepherds and the general public. On the agenda: the sale of sheep, produce market, lamb-based meals and entertainment.

Attribution : Dominique Vincent - PNE



## Les Borels (D)

This is most important village in the Chamoléon district (no hamlet bears this name). Until towards the first world war in 1914, the valley lived in a closed circuit for all everyday items. At the Borels there was a weaver (wool and hemp), a miller-baker, an ironmonger, a mason, a breeches-maker and in the other hamlets, a cobbler, two millers, a joiner and two shoemakers. The latter worked from home.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

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## Alpine ibex (E)

If you take a few minutes' walk at the end of the valley, you will be able to see some Alpine ibex. In September 1994, in Champoléon, some thirty animals from Vanoise area were released by Ecrins National Park rangers. This superb animal is heavier (100 kg) and less timid than the chamois, and is closely related to the domestic goat. It was almost extinct in the Alps. Today it is totally protected in France and is now safe extinction.

Attribution : Rodolphe Papet - PNE