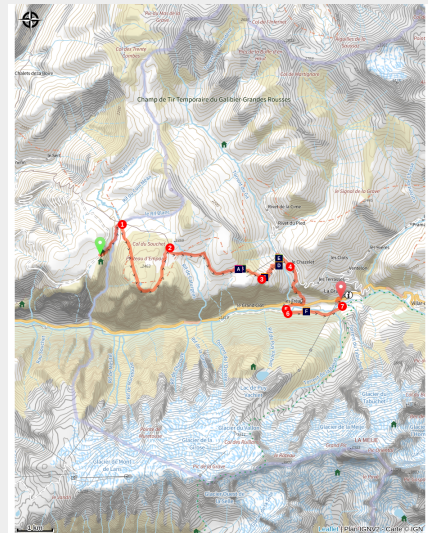


# The refuges of Les Mouterres and Le Fay via the Plateau d'Emperis

Oisans - Mizoën



Lac Noir (© Parc national des Ecrins - Bertrand Bodin)



*Taking in lakes and small mountain villages, this not-too-taxing day entails a pleasant descent as far as La Grave.*

From the refuges of Les Mouterres and Le Fay, the ascent up to the Plateau d'Emparis offers a unrivalled panoramic view over the summits of Les Écrins, its small lakes inviting a contemplative break. The descent down to La Grave is dotted with high mountain hamlets. This stage comes to a close in complete tranquillity, lulled by the waters of the Romanche river, outside the small hamlet of Les Fréaux, a source of inspiration for numerous artists.

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 5 h 30

Length : 16.1 km

Trek ascent : 478 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Stage

Themes : History and architecture, Lake and glacier, Panorama

# Trek

**Departure** : Refuges des Mouterres et du Fay

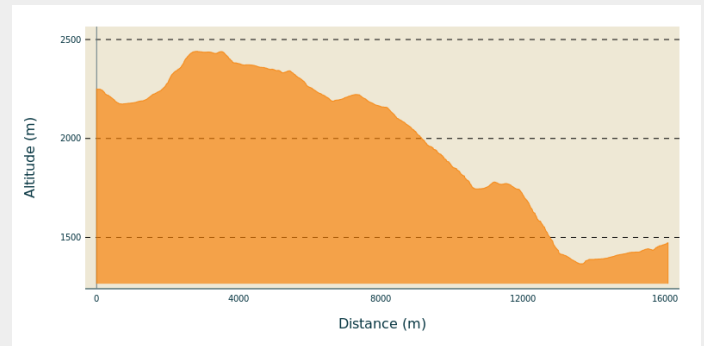
**Arrival** : La Grave

**Markings** :  PR  GR

**Cities** : 1. Mizoën

2. La Grave

## Altimetric profile



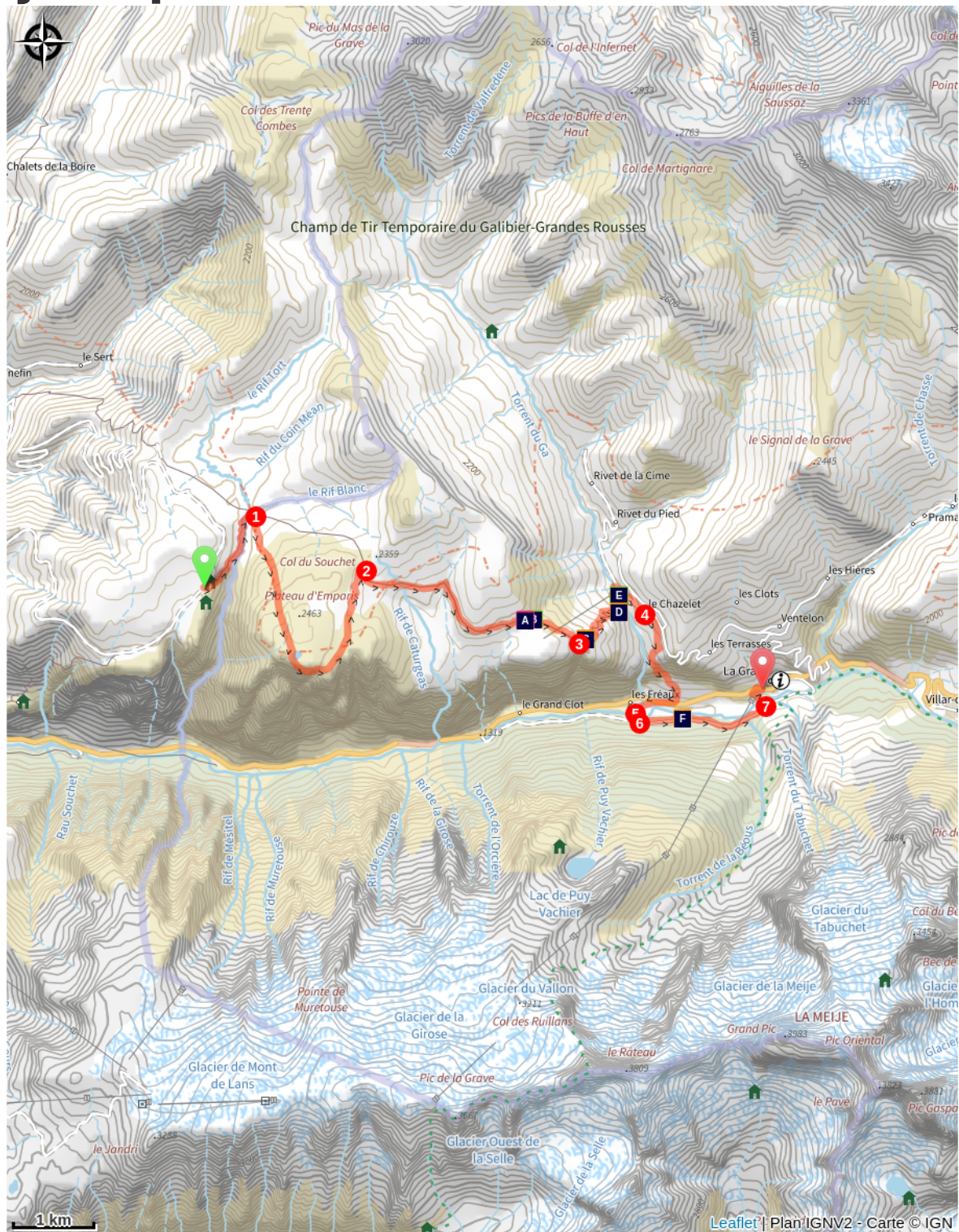
Min elevation 1367 m Max elevation 2441 m

From the refuge, join the track again and then immediately take the path running downhill to the Rif Tort. Follow the bank of the Rif until you come to the confluence of two mountain streams where you will find several directional signs.

1. Follow the first footpath on the right (off the GR) which leads to Lac Noir and Lac Lerié. Poorly marked initially, the footpath first takes you to the small crystalline lake (2,360m) across a stretch of bouldery terrain. Continue uphill until you reach a flat area, ignoring the path leading off to the left, and you come to the shores of Lac Noir. Carry straight on due east until you come to Lac Lerié. At the next intersection, ignore the right-hand path to rejoin the GR54 downhill from the Col du Souchet.
2. Take the GR54 on the right. Cross the Rif des Caturages and Rif de Galan at the foot of the Serre Bernard and pass above the ruins of Pré Veyraud. Continue underneath the Le Plateau ski lift.
3. Ignore the narrow path on the left which leads to the hamlet of Le Clot Raffin. Continue downhill on the steeply winding path (ski lift) leading down to the bridge over the mountain stream Le Gua (1,735m). The road on the right leads to Le Chazelet.
4. When you come to Le Chazelet, take the first road on the right which skirts around the village. Then follow the Paul Louis Rousset (No. 16) footpath and you arrive at Les Fréaux after crossing the local road. Then follow the mountain stream as far as the intersection with a road.
5. Turn left along the local road and then cross the river Romanche.
6. Go left along the narrow paved road (D233) following it for approximately 2km.
7. Turn left and once again cross the Romanche to reach La Grave and your starting point (cable car car park).



# On your path...



-  The Emparis Plateau (A)
  -  Agricultural work in Spring and Summer (C)
  -  White-throated dipper (E)
  -  Small Apollo (B)
  -  Agricultural work in Autumn and Winter (D)
  -  Les Fréaux près de la Grave, Charles Bertier (F)

# All useful information

# 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 2450m.

## Short-toed snake eagle

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

Contact: Parc National des Écrins  
Julien Charron  
julien.charron@ecrins-parcnational.fr

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 de 300m sol quand vous la survolez soit 2160m d'altitude !

## **Information desks**

### **Oisans Park house**

Rue Gambetta, 38520 Le Bourg d'Oisans

[oisans@ecrins-parcnational.fr](mailto:oisans@ecrins-parcnational.fr)

Tel : 04 76 80 00 51

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



### **Tourist information office of La Grave**

RD1091, 05320 La Grave

[lagrave@hautesvallees.com](mailto:lagrave@hautesvallees.com)

Tel : (+33) 04 76 79 90 05

<http://www.lagrove-lameije.com>



## **Source**



Parc national des Ecrins

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



# On your path...

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## The Emparis Plateau (A)

The mule path follows the edge of the Southern border of the plateau which is completely dedicated to pastoralism and tourism. It offers an exceptional view of the Meije whose marked relief contrasts with this gentle landscape. It welcomes 7 refuges and pastoral cabins as well as remarkable fauna, like the Mountain Hare and the Mountain Apollo butterfly. The challenge for this site is to preserve its pastoral character.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE

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## Small Apollo (B)

The Small Apollo is a rare and protected butterfly. It has finely striped black and white antennae, and a tiny red ocellus (eye) on each of its forewings. With a wingspan of 60 to 80 mm, it is the lord and master of the orangey-yellow beds of mountain saxifrages where it takes care of its eggs and feeds its caterpillars.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE

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## Agricultural work in Spring and Summer (C)

In Spring the soil had to be moved up the land using crates pulled by mules. Ploughing, sowing, planting followed rye (which stayed in the ground for two years), barley, oats and potatoes. Summer was not finished until the barns were full of hay. Scythes that had been beaten on an anvil, rakes, and nets were used every day. In order to ensure the overwintering of the animals, a certain number of loads (around 80 kg of hay) were necessary: 25 for each dairy cow and 5 for each sheep.

Attribution : Cyril Coursier - PNE

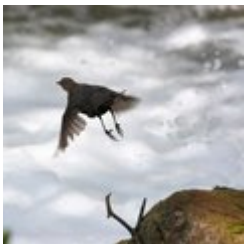
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## Agricultural work in Autumn and Winter (D)

From September, cereal crops were cut with the scythe and the sickle, dried in “bourles” (small stacks of ten sheafs) on the top of the land (fields). Once beaten, the grains of rye were dried in the sun «soleillaient », they were taken to the mill and then to the oven to be made in to black bread. From the end of November until the beginning of May, the animals had to be tended to in the stables. The manure from the cows was transported to the fields using sledges, while the sheep dung was dried and cut in to, pieces, and burnt to produce heat and energy for cooking. In the dairy, milk was made in to butter and cheese.

Attribution : Denis Clavreul



## White-throated dipper (E)

Perched on a large, partly immersed pebble, the dipper sways to and fro with its tail aloft, and then dives down head first into the swirling water. This surprising passerine is unusual in moving underwater against the current in search of food. Thanks to a thin membrane protecting its eyes from the water, it can spot its prey (worms, small shellfish, water insect larva), before lifting its head out of the water and letting the current carry it gently along. It then takes up a new surveillance position and starts the process all over again.

Attribution : Robert Chevalier - PNE



## Les Fréaux près de la Grave, Charles Bertier (F)

The Romanche valley was a source in inspiration for numerous painters of mountain landscapes. It inspired Charles Bertier (1860-1924) to paint the oil on canvas *Les Fréaux près de la Grave* in 1894. Introduced to landscape painting by J. Achard and to mountain landscape painting by Laurent Guétal (who was a priest so was also known as L'Abbé Guétal) this Grenoble-born artist thought nothing of setting up his easel on the highest peaks of the Dauphiné Alps. With canvases such as *L'approche de l'orage en Oisans* (1900), he made it his mission to give his contemporaries an understanding of the mountains.

Attribution : © Musée de Grenoble