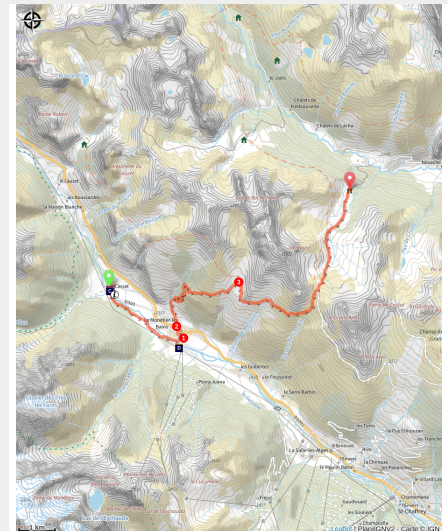


From Le Casset to the Buffère shelter

Parc national des Ecrins - Le Monêtier-les-Bains



Pause au Casset (© Parc national des Ecrins - Carlos Ayesta)



A mountain stage amid the peaks of Les Écrins, before climbing to the heights of the Clarée river valley.

After a gentle start in a rich and varied pine forest, the path rises gradually as the horizon opens out onto the Guisane valley, the massif of Les Écrins and the peak of Rochebrune, the gateway to Le Queyras. The atmosphere shifts in the Clarée valley. This hanging valley is dominated by the limestone peaks of Le Grand Aréa and Tête Noire. As it descends, the footpath passes through pretty alpine pastures dotted with larch.

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 6 h

Length : 14.7 km

Trek ascent : 1014 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Stage

Themes : History and architecture

Trek

Departure : Le Casset

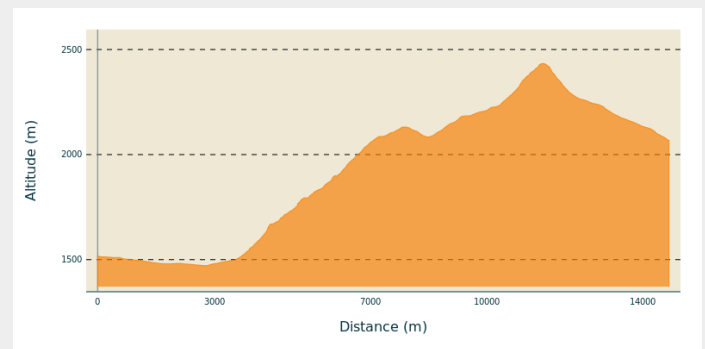
Arrival : Buffère shelter

Markings :  PR  GR

Cities : 1. Le Monétier-les-Bains

2. Néevache

Altimetric profile

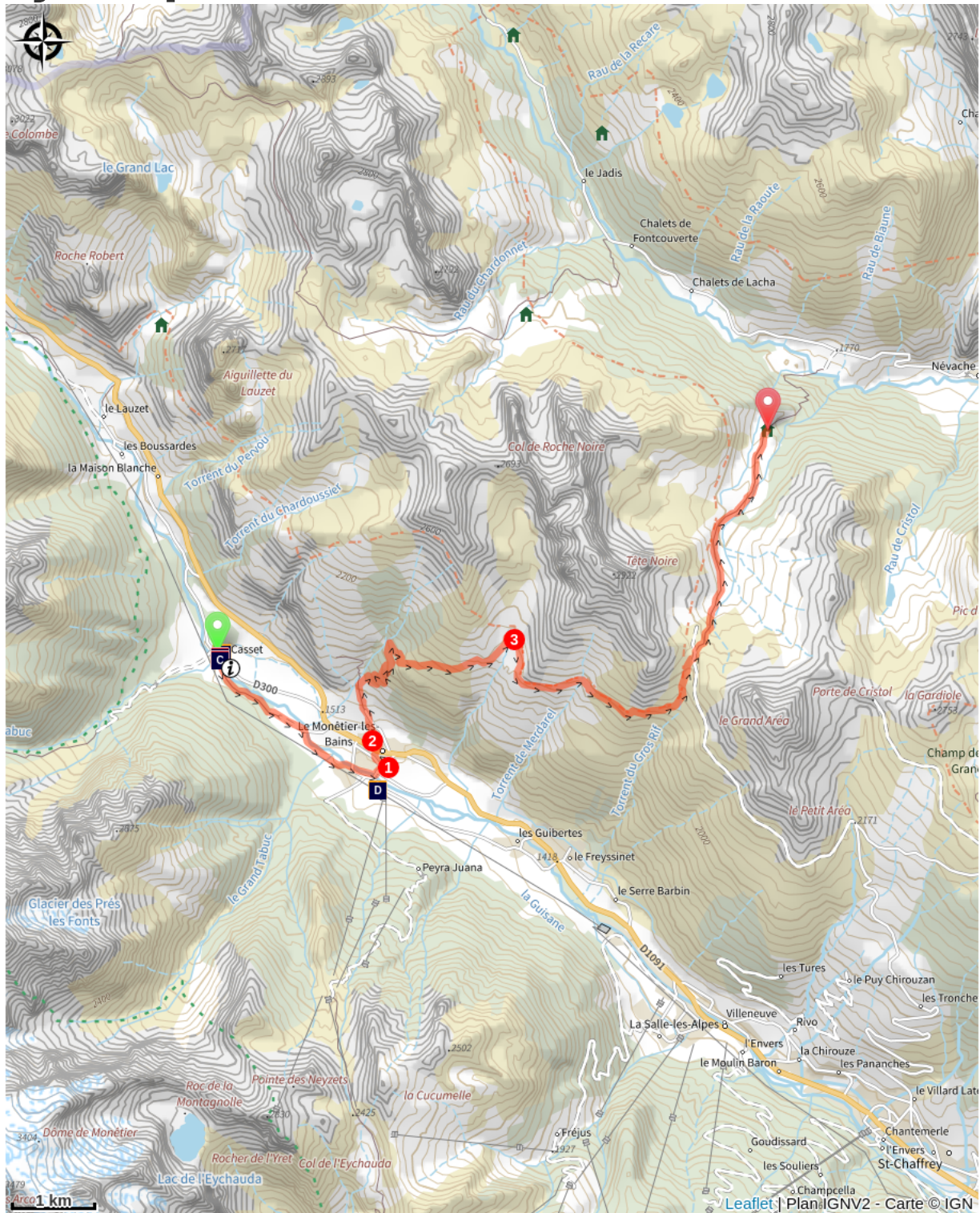


Min elevation 1472 m Max elevation 2434 m

To reach Monétier-les-Bains, simply follow the path along the banks of the Guisane (signed). The route is fast and easy until you reach the thermal spa Les Grands Bain du Monétier. Then take the path along the river and fork left onto the Rue de la Grande Turière.

1. Then, from the Chapel of Saint-André turn left again onto the Rue de la Petite Turière and carry on until you come to the Rue de l'École and the Route de Grenoble, which you cross over to the town hall. Turn left onto the Rue du Château which runs past the church and leads you straight on towards the building La Rotonde.
2. Opposite this, go across the field and take the Route Saint-Joseph which joins the roads leading towards the Vallon de la Moulette (signed). This soon turns into a path which continues to rise towards the forest. After entering the forest, at the first intersection turn left, still heading towards the Vallon de la Moulette (signed). The footpath winds gently uphill, passes a hut and comes out onto the Plateau des Conchiers and its alpine pastures. Here, turn left towards La Moulette (signed). The path runs into a relatively wide track which rises steadily up to La Moulette (signed). Join the GR50 and then the GR57 and fork right towards the Col de Buffère.
3. The track drops back downhill for a short distance before rising again; ignore the GR50 on the right. Before the pass, the path becomes rather steep. At the pass, head back downhill, ignoring the bunker on the left, heading towards the Buffère refuge (signed). The footpath is rather steep and stony at the top, but levels off gradually further down. The roofs of the chalets of Buffère come into view. The GR is clearly signposted and runs evenly and directly to these chalets.

On your path...



Le Casset (A)



Saint Claude's church in Le Casset
(C)



Sundials (B)



The Serre Chevalier resort (D)

All useful information

Advices

Very exposed to the sun. It can get very hot so set off early.

Information desks

Information center "le Casset" (summer only)

Le Casset, 05220 Le Monétier-les-bains

brianconnais@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 92 24 53 27

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



Tourist information office of La Clarée

Hameau de Ville-Haute, 05100 Névache

claree@hautesvallees.com

Tel : (+33) 4 92 20 02 20

<http://www.claree-tourisme.fr>



Source



Parc national des Ecrins

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

On your path...



Le Casset (A)

At the entrance to the valley, Le Casset is a stone shell village surrounded by farming landscapes. Its name comes from the verb 'cassare' ('to break, to shatter' in late Latin), describing a place covered with stones. In fact there are many such villages in this mountain valley carved out by a vast glacier. Le Casset, on the left bank of the Guisane, is sheltered from avalanches beneath the watchful eye of the prestigious summits and glaciers that “move” in a different time scale from our own.

Attribution : PNE - Masclaux Pierre



Sundials (B)

As you walk through the village of Lauzet, you will see recently made sundials made in traditional style. Easy to see from the main village streets, they adorn the beautifully restored facades of the old houses.

Attribution : Claire Broquet - PNE

Saint Claude's church in Le Casset (C)

With its disproportionately high spire, the Casset church never goes unnoticed. Its four-sided Comtois steeple was modelled on the collegiate church in Briançon. The church is listed as a Historic Monument and is placed under the protection of Saint Claude. In its present condition, it dates from the 18th century. The previous building was constructed prior to the 16th century. Inside, the eye is immediately attracted by the choir ogives, creating an intimate atmosphere, particularly since the unusually large spire does not suggest an interior of such a small size. The choir was rebuilt in 1716-1717, probably after the previous chapel burnt down. Traces from this period can be seen on the keystone. The wrought-iron choir gate has the inscription "HM 1717", a date that can also be seen in the apse, on the wrought iron railing of the impost of the axial window, and on the baptismal font.



The Serre Chevalier resort (D)

At the edge of the Ecrins National Park, the Serre Chevalier ski resort extends over several towns and villages on the right bank of the Guisane, from Monêtier-les-Bains to Briançon. Founded in 1941 with the Chantemerle cable car, it has the biggest ski area in the southern Alps with 61 ski lifts on all levels from an altitude of 1,200 m to 2,830 m to Pic de l'Yret (Le Monêtier-les-Bains). The resort's logo is an eagle, in reference to Baron Borel du Bez, Briançon's representative in 1792 at the Legislative Assembly, which ruled France between 1792 and 1795, during the French Revolution. Le Bez is a hamlet in Villeneuve that was united with the Chantemerle ski resort in the 1970s.

Attribution : © Parc national des Écrins - Jean-Pierre Nicollet