

## 3-day Tour du Champsaur

Parc national des Ecrins - Saint-Léger-les-Mélèzes



Chapelle des Roranches (Parc national Ecrins - Thibaut Blais)



*A proposed three-day route offering an appreciation of the magnificent mountain landscapes of the Champsaur valley, sometimes along easy canal paths and lowland tracks, sometimes along precipitous footpaths and balcony tracks.*

After the tunnel of greenery along the Gap canal and the delights of the Plaine de Chabottes, the ascent begins at the edge of the fields and hedgerows of Champsaur, rising up to the Aiguilles de Famourou and Le Palastre. After exploring a few isolated hamlets, you drop down to the entrance to Champoléon, cross the Drac Blanc and then follow the banks of the Drac Noir to reach the Orcières leisure base ("Base de Loisirs d'Orcières"). You will then go on to admire the panoramic view from the village-resort of Serre-Eyraud and the serenity of the alpine pastures of Combeau, before returning to Saint-Léger-les-Mélèzes.

### Useful information

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Practice : Horse

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Duration : 3 days

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Length : 55.2 km

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Trek ascent : 1978 m

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Difficulty : Medium

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Type : Multi-day trekking

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Themes : Fauna, Flora, History and architecture

# Trek

**Departure** : St-Léger-les-Mélèzes

**Arrival** : St-Léger-les-Mélèzes

**Markings** :  Piste équestre

**Cities** : 1. Saint-Léger-les-Mélèzes

2. Chabottes

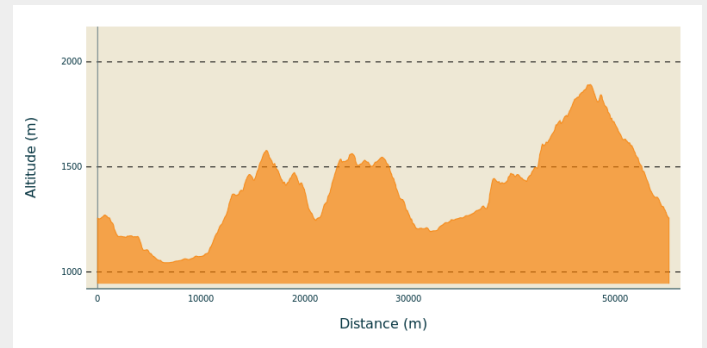
3. Saint-Jean-Saint-Nicolas

4. Saint-Michel-de-Chaillol

5. Champoléon

6. Orcières

## Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1045 m Max elevation 1893 m






From Saint-Léger-les-Mélèzes to Chabottes, you will appreciate the well-made level tracks. From Chabottes to Chaillol, the ascent offers some beautiful vantage point over Champsaur's tapestry of fields and hedgerows. You will then enjoy a breathtaking view from the foot of the Aiguilles de Famourou and Le Palastre. From Les Eyrauds to the Orcières leisure base, you will once again enjoy level tracks before climbing up a level to take in the panoramic view from Serre-Eyraud, and then another level to enjoy the view from L'Abeille and the sweeping alpine pasture of Combeau.

## Stages :

1. From Saint-Léger-les-Mélèzes to Les Marrons  
15.8 km / 480 m D+ / 4 h 30
2. From Les Marrons to Orcières (Chauffarel)  
19.4 km / 688 m D+ / 6 h 30
3. From Orcières (Chauffarel) to Saint-Léger-les-Mélèzes  
20.5 km / 811 m D+ / 6 h 30

# On your path...



-  Les Richards (A)
-  Serre-Eyraud (B)
-  Pastoral plants (C)
-  Patou (D)
-  The Combeau alpine pasture (E)

# All useful information

## **i** Herd protection dogs

In mountain pastures, protection dogs are there to protect the herds from predators (wolves, etc.).

When I hike I adapt my behavior by going around the herd and pausing for the dog to identify me.

Find out more about the actions to adopt with the article "[Protection dogs: a context and actions to adopt](#)".

Tell us about your meeting by answering this [survey](#).



## **!** Advices

Have an IGN Top 25 map on you, and the digital trace;  
Trained horses (changes in level, varied surfaces, duration, changeable weather);  
Make sure you have all the information you need before taking a shortcut;  
Passable from mid-May to mid-October.

## **How to come ?**

Advised parking

Parking Gap Bayard (golf, station service, centre d'oxygénation)

# 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 2240m.

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## Peregrine falcon

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

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

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 2200m d'altitude à une distance de 300m sol.

### **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 300m sol quand vous survolez la zone soit 1900m d'altitude pour cette zone.

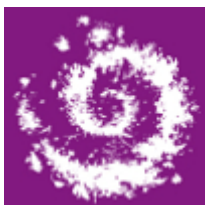
### ***i* Information desks**

#### **House of Champsaur**

champsaur@ecrins-parcnational.fr  
Tel : 04 92 55 95 44  
<http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/>



### **Source**



Parc national des Ecrins

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

# On your path...

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## Les Richards (A)

Perched up at an altitude of 1548 m above Pont-du-Fossé in the commune of Saint-Jean-Saint-Nicolas, the village of Les Richards is a haven of tranquillity. The view is breathtaking over the Autanes and the Champsaur woodlands. This is the starting point for a very popular hiking trail around the mountains or to the summit of the Palastre, and a take-off area for long-distance hang-gliders. It is not unusual for a hang-glider to land in Grenoble and sometimes even in Chamonix after a long day's flight from Les Richards! The record is 162 km, with a landing in Chamonix in 2002.



## Serre-Eyraud (B)

Serre-Eyraud is both a mountain village and a winter sports resort which overlooks the Champsaur and the confluence of the Drac Noir and the Drac Blanc, 1,450 metres above sea level, opposite the Champoléon valley.

The resort was created in 1962 by a handful of inhabitants: eight runs lead through a larch forest which is exposed to the north, which helps to conserve the snow cover. Serre-Eyraud is the smallest ski resort in the Champsaur valley.

Attribution : Parc national des Ecrins - CDTE05



## Pastoral plants (C)

Around the shepherds' cabins can be found plants with pale colours that are useful in the kitchen : nettles, which cause rashes, but are used to make delicious soups, wild spinach, also known as Good King Henry , a plant eaten as a gratin (the famous 'oreilles d'âne' (donkeys' ears) dish), with the sour leaves of the Alpine dock. For dessert, the petioles of Monks' rhubarb leaves are served as jams and compotes.

Attribution : Marcel Chaud - PNE



## Patou (D)

The patou is once again being used in the Alpine pastures by breeders and shepherds, following the reintroduction of wolves. Its role is to protect the sheep, not to herd them together like a sheep dog. The dog lives with the sheep from a very young age and considers them as members of its family. It barks and stands between the flock and whatever it sees as a threat. Since it is very protective towards the flock, hikers should make sure they keep their distance.

Attribution : Jean-Pierre Nicollet - PNE

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## The Combeau alpine pasture (E)

The Combeau alpine pasture, lying 2,000 metres above sea level.

Don't miss the superb panoramic view from the Croix de Combeau belvedere.

Attribution : Parc national des Écrins - Marc Corail