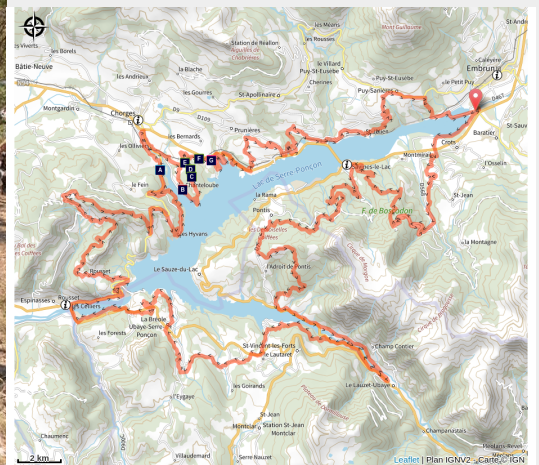


# Lac de Serre-Ponçon 5-day Mountain Bike Tour

Embrunais - Embrun



VTT Baie St-Michel (Parc national des Ecrins - Thibaut Blais)



## Useful information

Practice : Mountain bike

Duration : 5 days

Length : 153.7 km

Trek ascent : 5690 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Multi-day trekking

Themes : History and architecture, Lake and glacier, Panorama

*Almost 150 km of mountain bike trails hugging the shores of one of the gems of the Hautes-Alpes: Lac de Serre-Ponçon. An itinerary unique of its kind, punctuated by perfectly clearly waymarked and single-track trails, with easy-to-negotiate uphill stretches and bracing descents.*

With stunning waters and the thrills of the mountain environment, and never straying far from the shoreline of Lac de Serre-Ponçon, this 5-day mountain bike tour will introduce you to unspoiled nature, deserted villages, a beautifully preserved historic abbey... And of course the monumental dam that has tamed the River Durance.

# Trek

**Departure** : Embrun

**Arrival** : Embrun

**Markings** : ▶ Itinérance VTT

**Cities** : 1. Embrun

2. Baratier

3. Crots

4. Savines-le-Lac

5. Pontis

6. Le Lauzet-Ubaye

7. Rousset

8. Espinasses

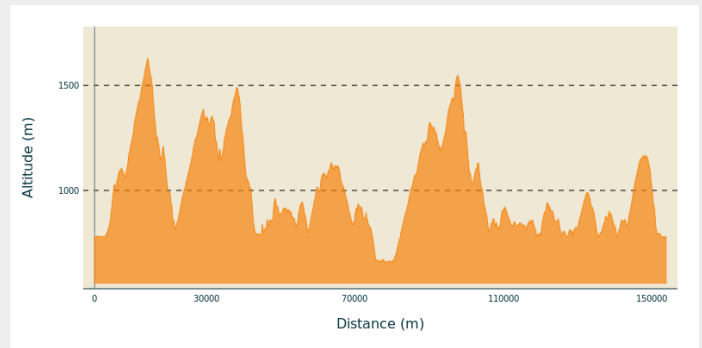
9. Chorges

10. Prunières

11. Saint-Apollinaire

12. Puy-Sanières

## Altimetric profile



Min elevation 657 m Max elevation 1629 m

From Embrun, the route rises rapidly into the dense forests of Boscodon. A halt at the Abbey is an opportunity to recharge your batteries mid-way up. A pretty descent down to Savines-le-Lac sets the tone for what is to come: this tour will be fun, technical at times and panoramic.

From Savines, a straightforward ascent leads to the belvedere of Pierre Arnoux. A succession of balcony paths lead down to the perched village of Pontis. You gradually leave the coolness of the beech forest behind to enter a more open landscape of terraces, old hamlets and a dolmen, yet with the magnificence of the lake always within eyesight. The final stretch of this second stage takes an unused railway line along the Ubaye: don't forget to take lamps for the tunnels!

The third stage is the least challenging but just as pretty, running through the plateaus and hills of Ubaye Serre-Ponçon and La Bréole. The trails leading to L'Escoubaye and its belvedere and the descent to the foot of the dam will take your breath away..

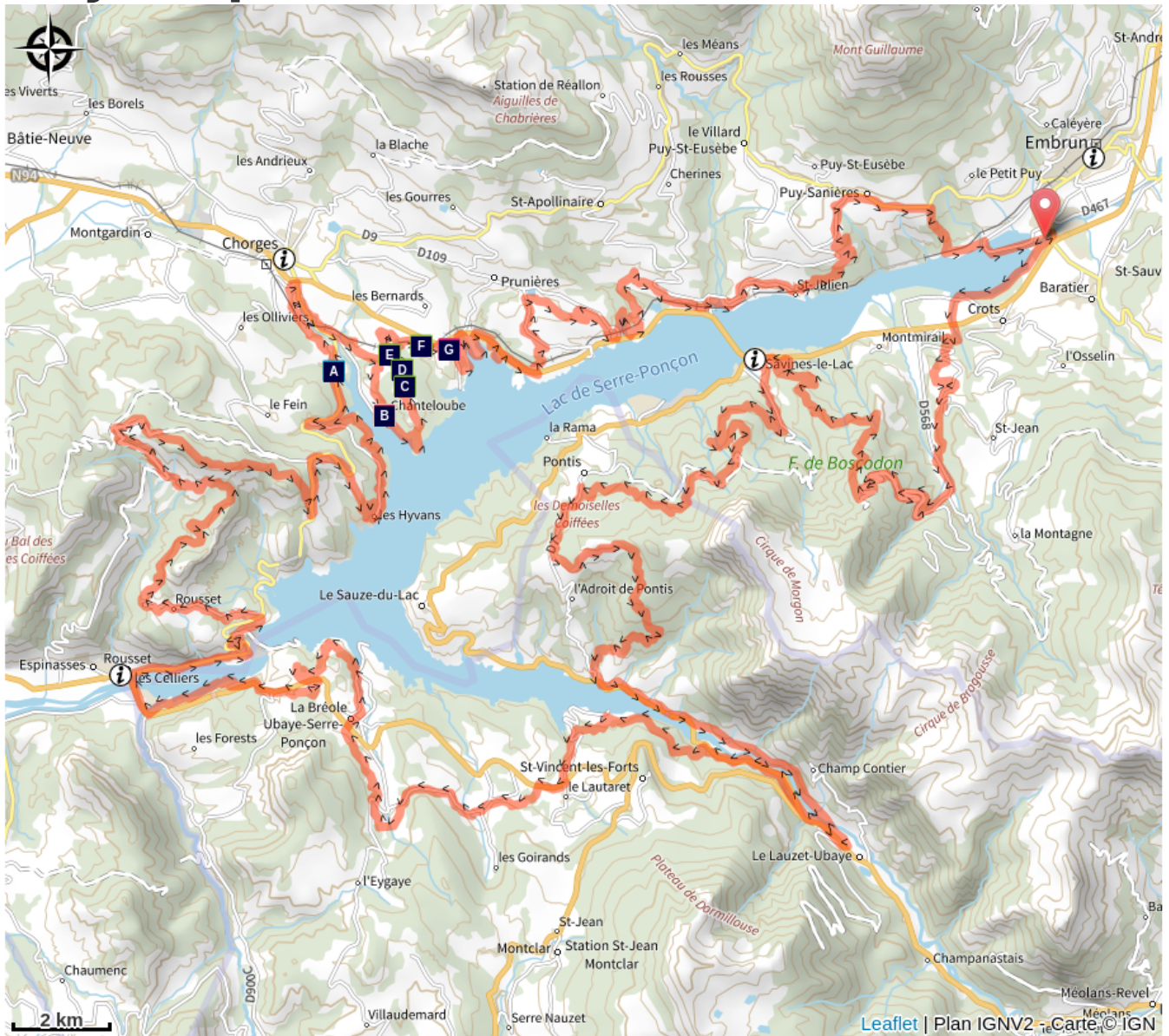
From this imposing dam, a long ascent takes you to an important World War Two Resistance monument, the Croix des Prés, before reaching "Le Ruban". The view from here is undoubtedly the finest on the route. It follows numerous technical descents down to the shores of the lake. Proceed with caution!








The final stretch from Chorges runs past a succession of bays and inlets, an ever-present temptation to take a swim, before heading uphill to Puy-Sanière. Brace yourself for the Descente des Tourniquets. This helter-skelter section is a must-ride for mountain bikers in the Embrunais area.

## Stages :

- 1.** From the Embrun lake to Savines-le-Lac  
21.4 km / 988 m D+ / 4 h
- 2.** From Savines-le-Lac to Le Lauzet-Ubaye  
29.0 km / 1340 m D+ / 5 h
- 3.** From Lauzet-Ubaye to Rousset  
33.2 km / 955 m D+ / 4 h
- 4.** From Rousset to Charges  
30.9 km / 1178 m D+ / 5 h
- 5.** From Charges to Embrun  
40.0 km / 1142 m D+ / 4 h 30

# On your path...



-  Addos mountain stream (A)
-  Common magpie (C)
-  The field cricket (E)
-  Panorama of the Baie Saint-Michel (G)
-  Chapel of St-Jacques (B)
-  Common juniper (D)
-  Messicole plants (F)

# All useful information

## **Advices**

Service your bike before you set off. Carry a derailleur hanger, pump, repair kit etc. In the interests of comfort, avoid carrying more than 5kg.

Book your accommodation in advance. There may be no vacancies on the day. According to your skill level, consider calling on the services of a trip organiser and a mountain biking instructor. They will simplify your organisation and make your trip so much more enjoyable, as well as saving you time.

## **How to come ?**

### Transports

Direct train lines : Paris/Briançon ou Marseille/Briançon  
TGV to Grenoble, Valence, Aix en Provence.

Booking information and ticketing :

<https://www.oui.sncf/>

TER PACA (Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur) - Chorges railway station or Embrun railway station.

[www.ter.sncf.com/paca](http://www.ter.sncf.com/paca)

### Access

From Gap or Briançon, via the N94.

### Advised parking

Plan d'eau d'Embrun

# 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  
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 un distance minimale de 300m sol quand vous la survolez soit 1310m d'altitude !

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## Information desks

### **Maison du Parc de l'Embrunais**

Place de l'Église, 05380 Châteauroux-les-Alpes

embrunais@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 92 43 23 31

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



### **Tourist office Charges**

Grand rue, 05230 Charges

charges@serreponcon-tourisme.com

Tel : 0492506425

<https://www.serreponcon.com>



### **Tourist office Embrun**

Place Général Dosse - BP 49, 05202 Embrun

embrun@serreponcon-tourisme.com

Tel : 0492437272

<https://www.serreponcon-tourisme.com/>



### **Tourist office Savines-le-Lac**

9 Avenue de la Combe d'Or, 05160 Savines-le-Lac

savineslelac@serreponcon-tourisme.com

Tel : 0492443100

<https://www.serreponcon-tourisme.com/>



### **Bureau d'information touristique de Rousset**

Les Celliers, 05190 Rousset

tourisme@ccspva.com

Tel : + 33 (0)4 92 54 41 18

<https://www.serreponconvallees.com>

## Source



Parc national des Ecrins

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

# On your path...

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## Addos mountain stream (A)

The Addos mountain stream (torrent in French) is 4 kilometres long. A mountain stream is a natural water course located in the mountains. The flow regime is characterised by a steep gradient, with a very fast and therefore turbulent water flow producing significant erosion. It is also defined by a significant variation in flow rate depending on precipitation levels. In this mountain stream, as in many others, numerous small sills (small dams) have been created to slow down the water flow and limit the impact of floods.

Attribution : Amélie Vallier

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## Chapel of St-Jacques (B)

Located in Chanteloube, this church is thought to date back to 1510. It has retained all its authenticity, with its exposed stone. It is dedicated to Saint James, one of the 12 apostles and one of the first martyrs of the Catholic church. Its recent restoration has made it possible to hold the traditional celebrations there, in honour of Saint James. The purpose of each one is to commemorate a historical event connected with the saint. When he died, he was taken to Compostella in Spain, hence the name of the pilgrim's Way of Saint James to Santiago de Compostella, a religious route passing along the shores of the Serre-Ponçon lake.

Attribution : Amélie Vallier

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## Common magpie (C)

This bird can be identified by its black and white plumage with blue-green tints on the wings and tail. Its tail is remarkably long. It can be found all year round in varied open environments. Its omnivorous diet consists of invertebrates, seeds and berries, small rodents, eggs and nestlings and even human rubbish. Except during the nesting period when it is solitary, the magpie is a gregarious species which gathers into rather raucous groups in the winter.

Attribution : Pascal Saulay - PNE





## ✿ Common juniper (D)

This bush is a resinous evergreen conifer. It is characterised by its greenish to blue (glaucous) needles with a white line on their upper side, and fruits resembling blue-black berries. It usually tends to grow in warm environments receiving plenty of sunlight. It grows in grassy or scrub covered areas up to 2,000 metres above sea level.

Attribution : Jean-Pierre Nicolle - PNE



## 🦗 The field cricket (E)

Just 18 to 26 mm long, this little insect has a black head which looks a little like a helmet. The female can be told apart from the male by the presence of a third long appendage at the rear of the body. The cricket's song is heard from April onwards. The male sings his chirping song from the entrance to his burrow. The fertile females lay their eggs in the ground, which remain there for two weeks before the larvae emerge.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE



## ✿ Messicole plants (F)

A feature of messicole plants is that they live among crops, even though not sown there deliberately. They are biologically adapted to open areas, and in particular areas that are regularly worked, such as fields. In fact, they use various strategies such as adapting their life cycle and producing large amounts of seeds in order to make up for the disturbance that occurs in their germination area. Many of them are common, such as the poppy, the cornflower and the corn buttercup...

Attribution : Amélie Vallier



## 📍 Panorama of the Baie Saint-Michel (G)

This area, which has been provided with picnic amenities, offers the most picturesque panorama over the Lac de Serre-Ponçon. In fact, the lake is 2 kilometres wide at this point, and in front of you are the Chapelle Saint Michel and the Pic Morgon, an iconic view of the lake. On your left, to the east, you can see Savines-le-Lac and its bridge. On the right, you can see the secret île de la Tortue.

Attribution : Amélie Vallier