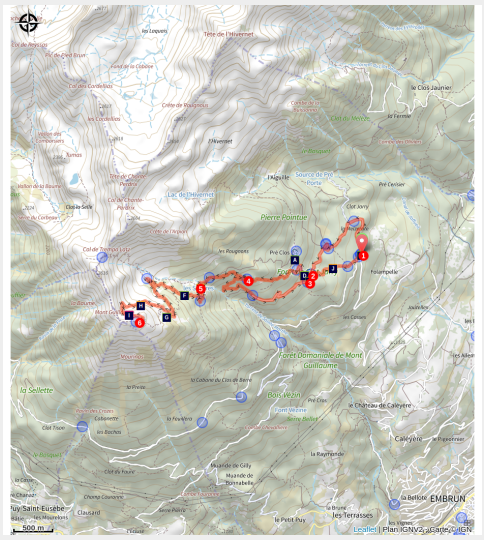
Mont Guillaume, Seyères chapel

Embrunais

Le Mont Guillaume (C. Delale - CDRP)



Following in Widmar's footsteps, climb to the summit of Mont Guillaume after a refreshing stop at the bucolic Seyères chapel.

Mont Guillaume is the most southerly of the Ecrins peaks at over 2500m!

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 5 h 30

Length : 14.0 km

Trek ascent : 936 m

Difficulty : Hard

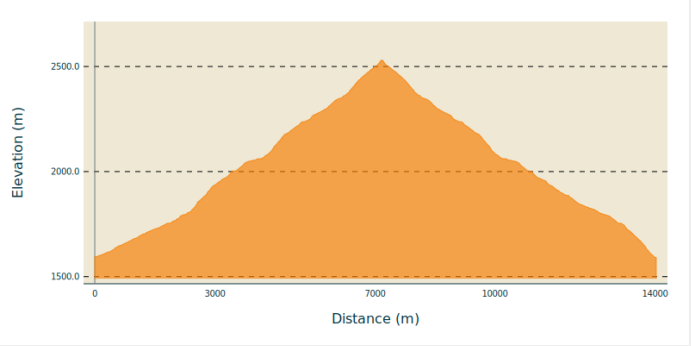
Type : Loop

Themes : Top

Trek

Departure : La forêt car park, Embrun
Arrival : La forêt car park, Embrun
Markings : PR
Cities : 1. Embrun

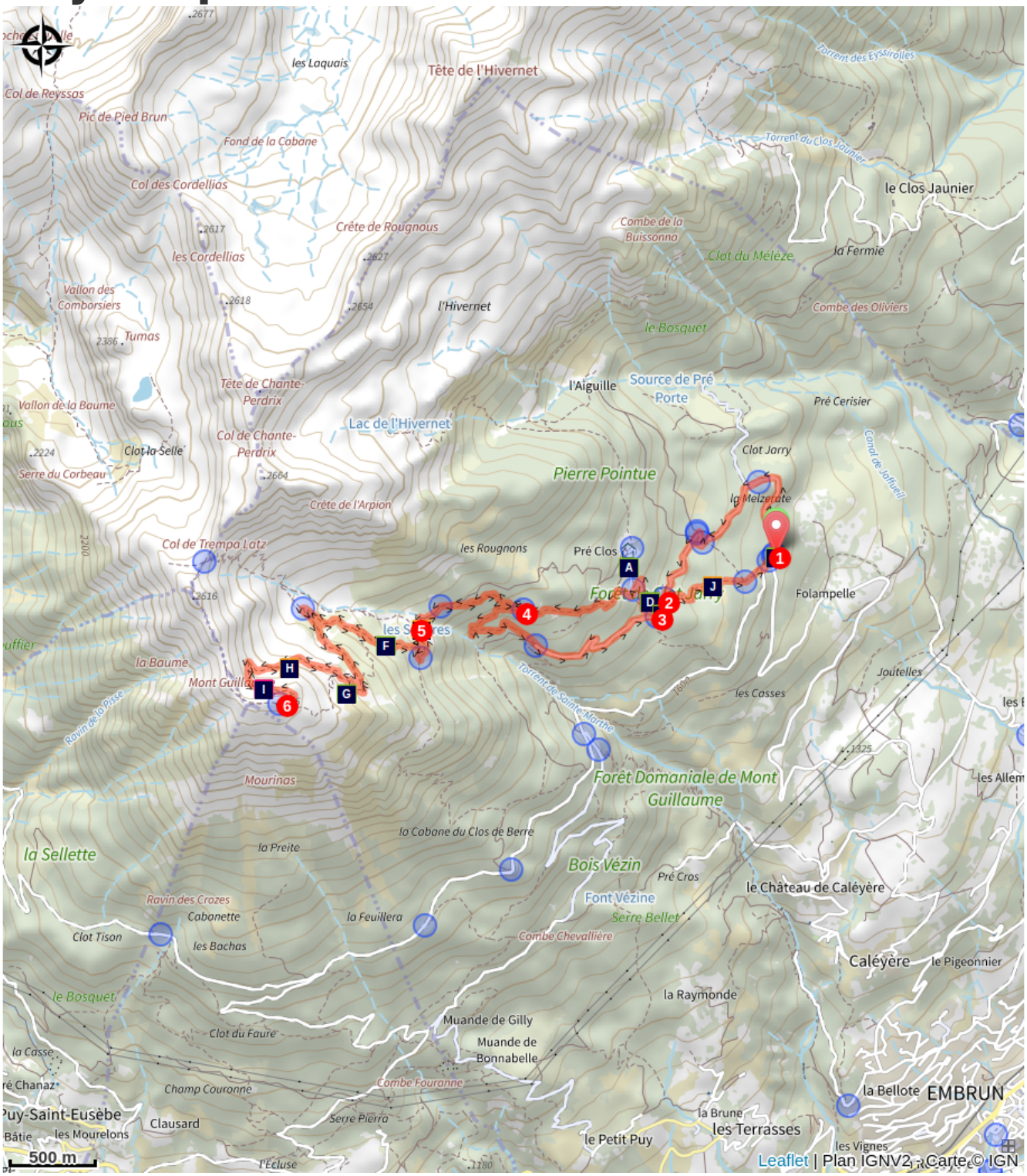
Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1590 m Max elevation 2530 m

1. Ascend via the forest road closed to traffic, to the north. At the fork, continue uphill to the left (Mont Guillaume arrow). The forest road passes the Fontaniers refuge and turns left at the Fontaniers chalet. Reach an intersection with a path coming from the left (post).
2. Continue along the main track for 250m.
3. Turn right (arrow pointing to "Mont Guillaume par Pré Clos" - Mont Guillaume by Pré Clos) and, at a bend (1809m), climb the path on the left into the larch grove (arrow pointing to "Mont Guillaume par le sentier Widmar" - Mont Guillaume by the Widmar path). Reach a fork in the road.
4. Continue along the path at the top, then follow the track on the left to the Seyères chapel (2,056m).
5. Pass the fountain, continue along the path, then go right (arrow pointing to "Mont Guillaume") until you reach a fork (2,233 m). Go up the left-hand path. It climbs up in long hairpins until it reaches a spine. Climb to the summit of Mont Guillaume, topped by the tiny, recently restored chapel of Saint-Guillaume (2,542m; panoramic view).
6. Head back down to point 4 on the same route. Take the Pépinières path on the right. Follow the forest track to the left as far as point 3. Follow the forest road from the outset for 250m. At point two, descend the path on the right and continue along a track to emerge above the car park.

On your path...



- Globe Orchid (A)
- common nettle (B)
- Dyer’s Woad (C)
- Meadow buttercup (D)
- Séyères Chapel (E)
- Rhododendron ferrugineux (F)
- Rock Partridge (G)
- Mont Guillaume Fraternity of Priors (H)
- An overview of the Embrunais (I)
- The Widman track (J)
- The larch (K)

All useful information

How to come ?

Access

Embrun State forest, 10 km north of Embrun station on the D 465 (towards Caléyères).

Advised parking

La forêt car park, Embrun

Information desks

Maison du Parc de l'Embrunais
102 rue Saint-Irénée, 05380 Châteauroux-les-Alpes

embrunais@ecrins-parcnational.fr
Tel : 04 92 43 23 31
https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tourist office Embrun
Place Général Dosse - BP 49, 05202 Embrun

embrun@serreponcon-tourisme.com
Tel : 0492437272
https://www.serreponcon-tourisme.com/

Source

CDRP des Hautes-Alpes

https://hautes-alpes.ffrandonnee.fr

On your path...

Globe Orchid (A)

In the orchid family, the Globe Orchid needs a lot of light to develop and can often be seen in the meadows. Its leaves are all on the stalk which ends in a globular inflorescence with many small flowers. These form a dense spherical spike. They possess a short spur, external sepals which are well spaced, and a speckled tri-lobed labellum.

Attribution : Cédric Dentant - PNE

common nettle (B)

Called the common nettle, this is a stinging plant. During difficult times in history – the Middle Ages or the world wars for instance, it was consumed to help survive periods of famine and scarcity. Rich in protein, vitamins and minerals, it is highly effective health cure and is taken as a soup, and added ingredient to various other dishes or as a soft drink. Apart from this usage, in the sixteenth century it was put to industrial use, in the manufacture of paper, garments etc.

Attribution : Amélie Vallier

Dyer’s Woad (C)

Punctuating the edges of the paths, this green and blue-green biennial, is also known as « Saint Philippe’s herb ». A large robust plant topped with a parasol of yellow flowers, it has many uses. While its leaves provide a blue dye used to colour clothes, façades and carts (the famous « blue cart » which had the virtue of repelling flies), its roots are used against the mumps, infectious hepatitis, sore throat or the fever.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE

Meadow buttercup (D)

More commonly called the buttercup, this is a very familiar flower. It flowers from May to September, and commonly grows in grasslands and the edges of tracks. Its stems and leaves are slightly hairy. It is seldom eaten by livestock because it is toxic, and it only loses its toxicity when dried. This plant is a member of the large family Ranunculaceae.

Attribution : Amélie Vallier

Séyères Chapel (E)

Rebuilt in 1859 by Monseigneur Depery, Bishop of Gap, the Séyères chapel is dedicated to Saint Guillaume. Near to Calme priory (under Mont Dauphin Fort), in the 12th century, little Guillaume was born without a right hand. While he was looking after the flocks belonging to the monastery, he received several visits from an angel announcing that the priory would be destroyed by a flood. With each alert, Guillaume, warned the monks but in vain. The angel gave him his missing hand in order that his message should be understood. If the convent was evacuated before the expected flood only a small chapel attached to the Western slope of the Mont Dauphin rock remains.

Attribution : Christian Couloumy - PNE

Rhododendron ferrugineux (F)

Also called the Rose of the Alps, this medium sized shrub likes the rocks, the grassland and light woodland. Its hairless smooth edged leaves are dark green and shiny underneath. A bright pink colour its fragrant flowers are grouped by 6 to 10 at the end of the branch. Be careful not to ingest its fruits, oblong 4 to 7 mm long capsules: they provoke vomiting, diverse digestive, nervous, respiratory and cardiovascular problems.

Attribution : Olivier Warluzelle - PNE

Rock Partridge (G)

Here is another gallinaceous bird, like the Rock Ptarmigan, most easily observable at mating time in Spring. Perched on the promontory to sing in its jerky fashion, the Rock Partridge is recognizable by its grey back, its striped sides, its white throat and its red beak. It lives in the mountains on slopes that are well exposed to the sun and prefers rocks and moors where the young can feed on insects which are necessary for their growth.

Attribution : Damien Combrisson - PNE

Mont Guillaume Fraternity of Priors (H)

70 members strong, this fraternity of lay men « which undertakes the maintenance of the chapels, oratories and crosses, to carry out works of solidarity, and to continue to bring to life the priory and its traditions » has existed since the 13th century. Even if each Prior is a Prior for life, every year the fraternity receives the support of two new members, chosen three years before: one living on the sunny side of the mountain (which is on the side of the town here), the other on the shadier side (the slope towards the countryside). There is no social distinction at the heart of the Priors. Lawyer, carpenter, barman, it is the same for everybody and they all share the same values.

Attribution : Christian Couloumy - PNE

An overview of the Embrunais (I)

The summit of Mont Guillaume offers a magnificent overview of the numerous summits in the Embrunais: the Pic de Morgon (2324 m), the Aiguilles de Chabrières (2403 m), the Mourre Froid (2993 m), the Tête de l'Hivernet (2824 m), the Mont Orel (2563 m), etc... At your feet you can contemplate the Durance valley, and the lakes at Embrun and at Serre-Ponçon.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE

The Widman track (J)

On the 12th February 1897, wanting to show that skiing was faster across the snow than crossing it with the snow shoes then provided to the mountain troops, Charles Eric Widman, lieutenant in the 28th Alpine battalion at Embrun, undertook the ascent of Mont Guillaume. He left at 5 o’clock from the station and reached the summit at 10h30, after having climbed an elevation of 1681m. He carried out the first ascent on skis in the French Alps. On the one hundredth anniversary of this exploit, this itinerary was named the « Widman Track».

The larch (K)

The king of mountain trees in the Southern Alps, the larch is the only conifer to drop its needles in winter. In spring, its cones are a characteristic dark purple. The larch is one of the few European tree species that is imputrescible, that is to say, it does not rot. This is why, despite the fact that it twists as it dries out, it is widely use in frameworks, drinking troughs and other water holding vessels in the mountain villages. Incapable of germinating in its own undergrowth, it needs natural openings such as avalanche corridors for the young shoots to develop. It is found at altitudes in excess of 2,200 metres, adopting dwarf forms in these "combat" zones. The larch tree growing at this point on the trail is several hundred years old.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE