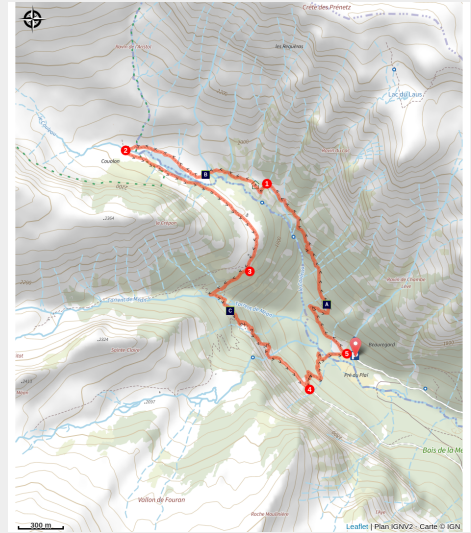


# The Couleau valley

Embrunais - Saint-Clément-sur-Durance



Vallon du Couleau (Kinaphoto - Parc national des Ecrins)



*A pleasant route through the unspoilt Couleau valley, unveiling its varied landscapes to the curious walker.*

From streams to waterfalls, from pine forests to mountain pastures, this short hike is a real gem for walkers in search of peace and quiet.

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 3 h

Length : 6.7 km

Trek ascent : 469 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Loop

Themes : Geology, Pastoralism

Accessibility : Family

# Trek

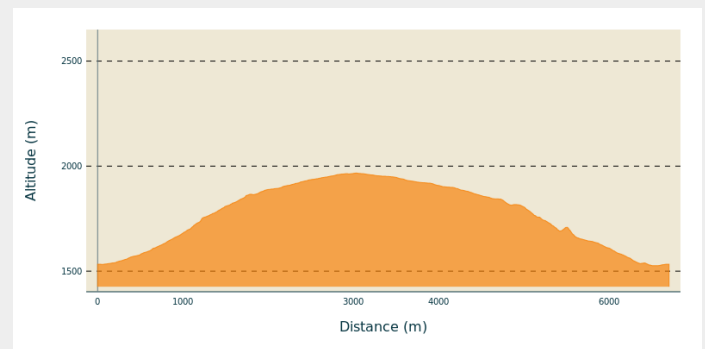
**Departure** : Pré du Plaï, Saint-Clément-sur-Durance

**Arrival** : Pré du Plaï, Saint-Clément-sur-Durance

**Markings** : — PR

**Cities** : 1. Saint-Clément-sur-Durance  
2. Châteauroux-les-Alpes

## Altimetric profile

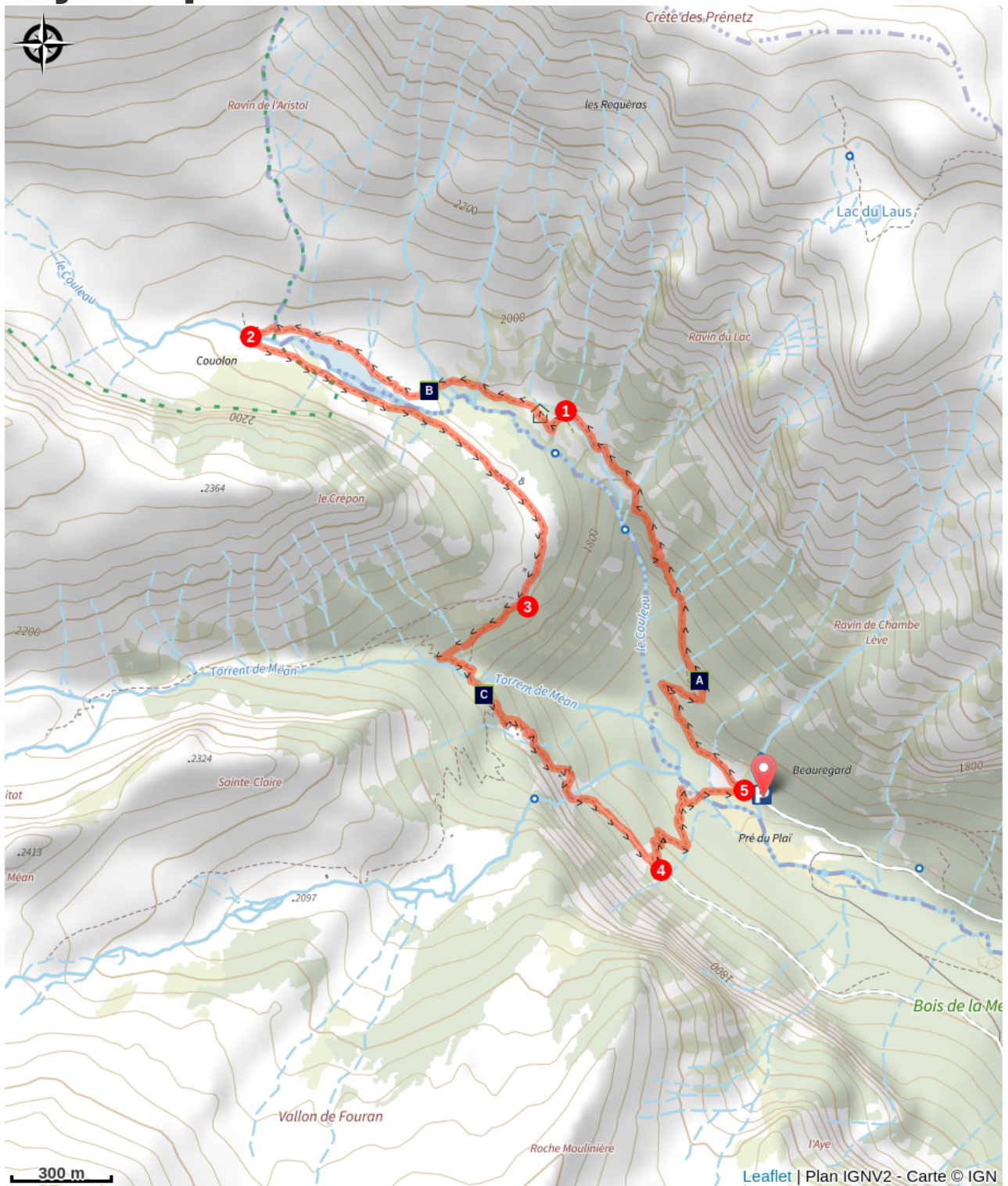


Min elevation 1527 m Max elevation 1968 m

Go straight ahead on the track, which then narrows into a path and climbs more steeply after it crosses a stream a few times.

1. Follow the cairns to cross the stream and reach the St Clément hut. From here, cross the clearing to the left just above the hut to pick up the well-marked path that continues along the Couleau to the footbridge.
2. Cross the stream and then descend to the right bank following the path which then passes under the Pré Charnier hut.
3. Continue downhill on the main path, leaving the directions to the Méan and then Fouran huts on the right. Shortly after the old slate quarry and the stream crossing, the path widens into a track. Follow it for about 200 m.
4. At the cairn, take the path down to the left and cross the Couleau stream by the footbridge. Follow the path back up to the start of the trail near the car park.
5. Turn right to get back to the starting point.

# On your path...



Scots (A)

Larch (C)



Chamois (B)

# All useful information

## **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](#).



## **Is in the midst of the park**

The national park is an unrestricted natural area but subjected to regulations which must be known by all visitors.





## **Advices**

La piste d'accès au parking depuis le village de Saint-Clément (5 km) a des revers d'eau assez creusés, rouler doucement. Vous pourrez y admirer une colonne coiffée à mi-chemin.

Plusieurs clôtures sur le sentier ferment l'enclos des vaches qui pâturent sur la partie basse de l'itinéraire, bien les refermer derrière soi.

## **How to come ?**

### Access

From the RN 94 (towards Briançon), turn left at the Saint Clément exit, signposted Réotier. Follow Les Clots to the left and climb up into the village. About 1 km after crossing it, take the track to the left (just before the hamlet of Les Clots). Follow it to the end (approx. 25 mins).

### Advised parking

Pré du Plaï (at the end of the track)

## **Accessibility**

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Family

## **Information desks**

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

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

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

Tel : 04 92 43 23 31

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



## Source



Parc national des Ecrins

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

## On your path...

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### Scots (A)

The Scots pine can be identified by its long reddish-brown trunk and its sparse foliage. The grey-green needles and slightly curved and are grouped in pairs. It requires plenty of sun and copes in poor, sandy soil that is not suitable for other trees. Its wood is light and of good quality.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - Parc national des Ecrins

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### Chamois (B)

Present, yet hard to spot, the chamois takes refuge at high altitude during the summer to escape the hot temperatures. The females and the "éterlou" (young male under a year old) like to stay in a large herd whereas the males are more solitary and only join the females for the mating season. It is possible to see them in the Couleau valley that overlooks the Rougnoux pass.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE

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### Larch (C)

With its wide array of colours that change with the seasons, the larch has been designated tree of light. In the spring, it has tender green needles that are so soft you can stroke them. Female red current-coloured catkins and pale yellow male catkins adorn the branches. Like an autumn colour chart, it marvels us with its numerous golden shades. However, when winter comes, it is the only European conifer to lose its needles, consequently letting light through to the undergrowth.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE