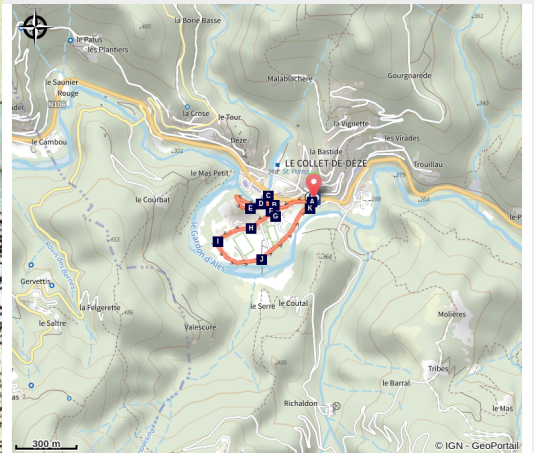


Old Collet walk

Vallées cévenoles - Le Collet-de-Dèze



Le pont Roupt (© A. Nicolas)



The walk takes you to the centre of the old village using the former Royal road, which was once the only track from Chamborigaud to Saint German-de-Calberte.

This is a walk through the historical heart of Le Collet-de-Dèze with its old Cevenol houses, to the temple (Protestant church) built in 1646 and the top of the Puech de la Sabaterie hill. The village of Le Collet-de-Dèze is located on a strategic communication route linking the Cévennes with the coast. It has been shaped throughout its existence by floods, so-called Cevenol episodes, and also bears witness to the history and memory of the Camisard War.

Useful information

Practice : Discovery trails

Duration : 1 h 30

Length : 2.0 km

Trek ascent : 43 m

Difficulty : Very easy

Type : Loop

Themes : Architecture and village

Trek

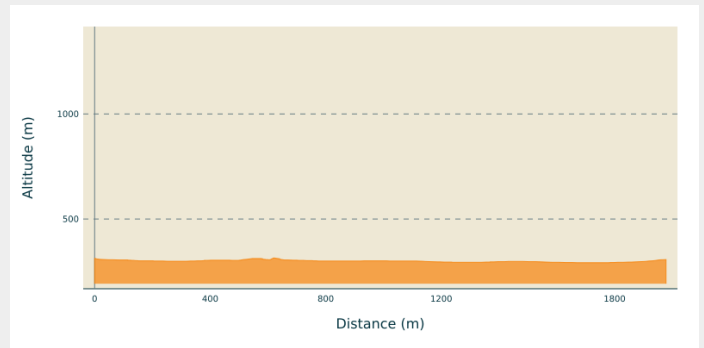
Departure : Opposite the tourist office

Arrival : Car park

Markings :  Discovery

Cities : 1. Le Collet-de-Dèze

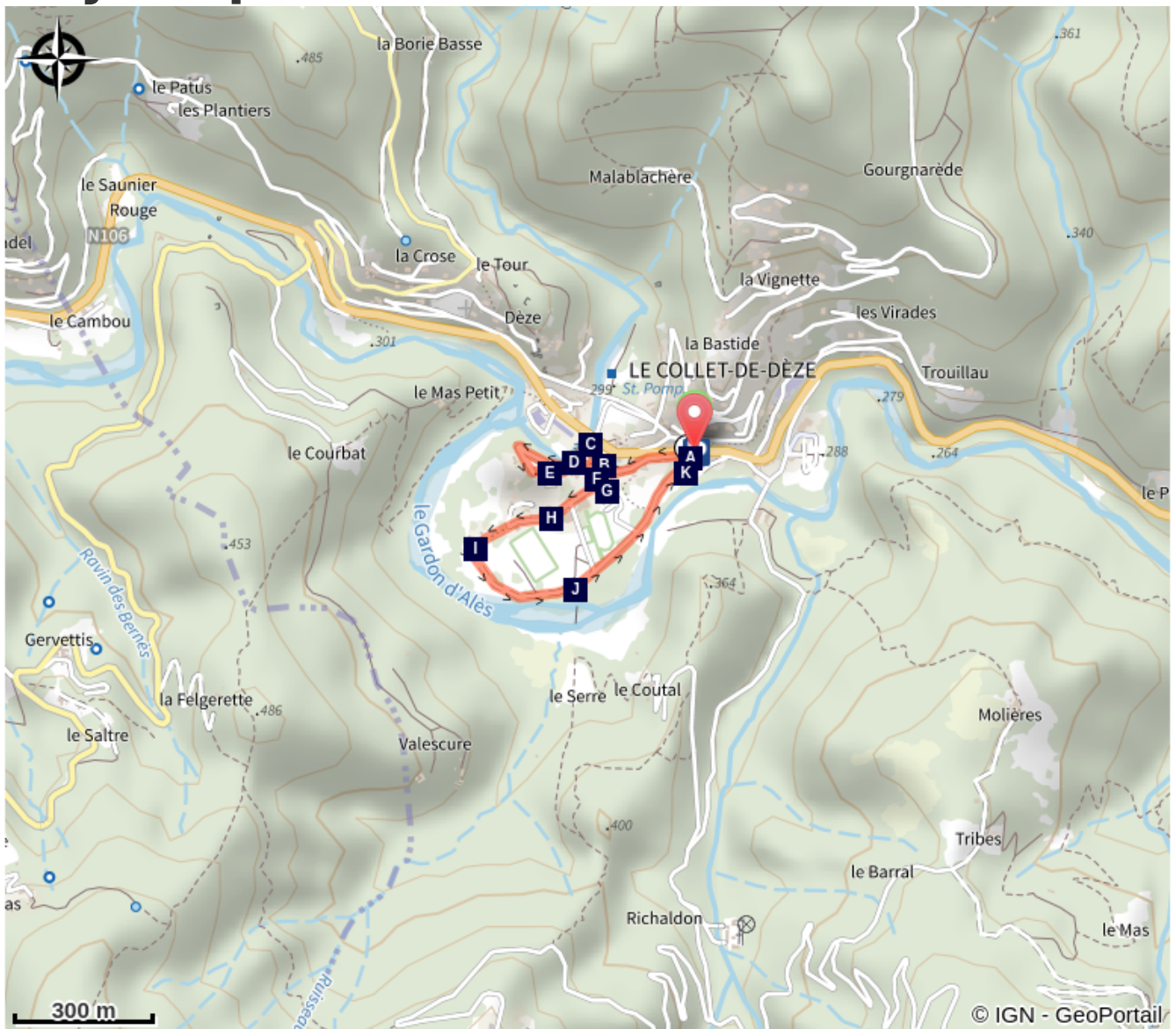
Altimetric profile



Min elevation 292 m Max elevation 315 m

This walk has eleven numbered information panels.

On your path...



- ▲ Starting-point (A)
- ▲ Mediaeval mills at the heart of the village (B)
- ▲ A junction of merchants and travellers (C)
- ▲ Remembrance of bridges past (D)
- ▲ From the cliff top: 5,000 years of history (E)
- ▲ A model of Protestant architecture: the temple (F)
- ▲ Of stone and men (G)
- ▲ Le Boutonnet hamlet (H)
- ▲ The priory of Saint-Jean-du-Chambon-de-Dèze (I)
- ▲ Bridge and gardonnades (J)
- ▲ A bridge mistreated by the Gardon river (K)

All useful information

Advices

Ce sentier comporte onze panneaux numérotés.

How to come ?

Transports

Ligne 9, arrêt le Collet-de-Dèze

Access

Le Collet-de-Dèze, on the N 106 between Florac and Alès

Advised parking

Parking du kiosque

Information desks

Tourism office Des Cévennes au mont-Lozère, Le Collet-de-Dèze

RN 106, 48160 Le Collet-de-Dèze

info@cevennes-montlozere.com

Tel : 04 66 45 81 94

<https://www.cevennes-montlozere.com/>



Source



CC Vallée Longue et du Calbertois-en-Cévennes



Parc national des Cévennes

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

On your path...

Starting-point (A)

Le Collet-de-Dèze (altitude: 304 m) sits in a vast loop of the river Gardon d'Alès. This has given the valley stretching from La Grand'Combe to the Col de Jalcreste its name of Vallée Longue. Le Collet has 711 inhabitants.

Mediaeval mills at the heart of the village (B)

There were many mills in the Cévennes, on most waterways. At Le Collet, a canal flowing under the village used to supply water to a series of three mills with horizontal millwheels. This canal, known as a trincat, passed through a partially vaulted tunnel built under the village.

A junction of merchants and travellers (C)

Le Collet-de-Dèze was an important stopping-point on the diocese road from Chamborigaud to St Germain-de-Calberte. In the Cévennes, the building of roads suitable for wheeled traffic slowed down from the 16th century onwards, partly due to the King – as a means of bullying the local populations, which had converted to Protestantism – and partly due to the Cévenol communities, which did not wish to make it easier for royal troops to reach them by these new roads. At the end of the 19th century, the village was transformed and modified by new traffic arteries when the Route Nationale was opened and the railway arrived.

Remembrance of bridges past (D)

In the 18th century, an old stone bridge crossed the Dourdon river. After it was washed away by a violent flood, an “American-style” wooden footbridge was built to replace it in the mid-19th century. The current bridge was constructed for the Route Nationale.

From the cliff top: 5,000 years of history (E)

The vestiges of the Château de Dèze, a private property not open to visitors, testify to the importance of the site from the Middle Ages onwards. The current church has replaced the former church located in Le-Chambon-de-Dèze.

A model of Protestant architecture: the temple (F)

This is the only temple to have withstood the destruction ordered by King Louis XIV after revoking the Edict of Nantes (which had made Protestantism an officially tolerated religion in France). The assassination of the Abbot du Chayla in Le Pont-de-Montvert on 25 July 1702 triggered the Camisard War. The first important action of a group of insurgents occurred in Le Collet on 8 September, during a meeting in the temple. 1703 was also the year when almost all villages in the Cévennes were reduced to ashes by the King's troops as a reprisal. The parish of Le Collet was partially burnt down on 6,7 and 8 December 1703. The "Wilderness period" (so called because Protestants had to worship in secret, often in the mountains) lasted from this violence until the French Revolution.

Of stone and men (G)

Right at the centre of the old Collet, you can see a row of facades, some of which date from the 16th and 17th centuries. Mullion windows and sculpted bands can still be seen today. Traditional Cévenol dwellings are characterised by the use of local resources (sweet-chestnut wood, stone, render, etc.) and the need to meet agricultural requirements.

Le Boutonnet hamlet (H)

This hamlet, located near the path leading to Raupt Bridge, is one of the oldest in the district. Only two small buildings and the wells still exist.

The priory of Saint-Jean-du-Chambon-de-Dèze (I)

The first church was built on this site. The hamlet of Le-Chambon-de-Dèze grew up around it. Remodelled and destroyed several times, the hamlet was finally swept away almost entirely by a flood in 1811.

Bridge and gardonnades (J)

Roupt Bridge bears witness to mediaeval bridge architecture, but also to the violence of floods in the Cévennes. Gardonnades is a local word for the “Cévenol episodes” (sudden violent floods) of the various Gardon rivers, caused by rain coming from the Mediterranean. Because the rain falls on steep terrain that is partly impermeable, rivers swell rapidly and sweep away soil and gravel. In 1907, 1,650 mm of rain fell on Le Collet in 34 days. The 1811, 1861 and 1899 gardonnades were especially devastating. Closer to our day, in 1958 a flood destroyed several road structures downstream of Le Collet-de-Dèze.

A bridge mistreated by the Gardon river (K)

The metal Richaldon Bridge, built at the end of the 19th century, served the mines. It has also experienced flood-related misfortunes. Mining profoundly shaped the economic activity of the Vallée Longue in the 19th and 20th centuries. The antimony mine was opened in the 18th century. It was in use throughout the 19th century and was complemented by a foundry in 1896. All activity at the site ceased in 1951. Lead was mined from 1860 to 1868. From the 19th century on, many farmers were also employed in the mines in La Grand'Combe, alternating mining with their work in the fields. This phenomenon persisted until the 1980s.