

Roc des Hourtous

Causses Gorges - La Malène



Vue sur La Malène (© Marie-Amélie Péan)



This physically challenging loop leads from the banks of the river Tarn to the Causse Méjean plateau, and offers gorgeous panoramic views onto the Tarn Gorges and the Causse de Sauveterre.

Useful information

Practice : Hiking on foot

Duration : 4 h

Length : 9.6 km

Trek ascent : 568 m

Difficulty : Difficult

Type : Loop

Themes : Agriculture and livestock farming, Architecture and village, History and culture, Transports en commun

Trek

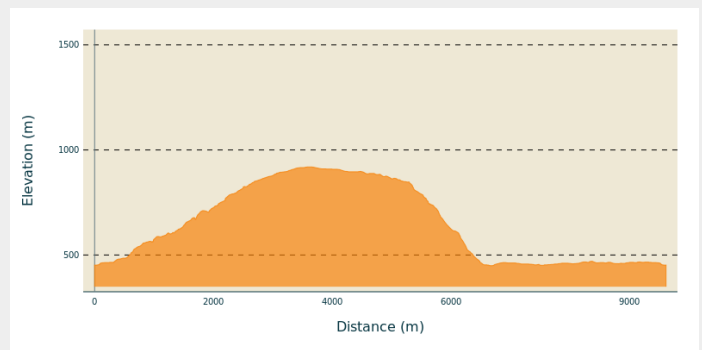
Departure : La Malène

Arrival : La Malène

Markings :  Yellow waymarks

Cities : 1. La Malène

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 449 m Max elevation 919 m

From the carpark in La Malène, cross the river Tarn and take the path on the right after the bridge. Take the first footpath on the left (after 300 m) and climb onto the Causse Méjean plateau. Go through Rieisse and, on leaving the hamlet, continue straight ahead towards the Roc des Hourtous. At the panoramic viewpoint of Les Hourtous, walk past the snack bar on its right to take a path that runs parallel to the ridge for 800 m. Then take the path downhill on the left to join up with the path overlooking the Tarn. Turn right onto it to return to the starting-point.

On your path...



- The boatmen of La Malène (A)
- Black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) (C)
- Common chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) (E)
- Red-billed chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) (G)
- Black tit (*Periparus ater*) (I)
- Little anecdote (K)

- Rieisse (B)
- Hourtous (D)
- Common chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*) (F)
- Eurasian wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) (H)
- Chapel (J)

All useful information

Advices

Make sure your equipment is appropriate for the day's weather conditions. Remember that the weather changes quickly in the mountains. Take enough water, wear good shoes and put on a hat. Please close all gates and barriers after yourself.

How to come ?

Transports

Bus stop: Devant les bateliers

- Bus line 258 “Florac – Sainte-Enimie – Le Rozier”. Every day in July and August

<https://lio.laregion.fr/>

Access

From Florac towards Ispagnac / Sainte-Enimie on the D 907 bis

Advised parking

La Malène

Information desks

Tourism office Cévennes Gorges du Tarn, Ispagnac

Place de l'Église, 48320 Ispagnac

info@attractivite-tourisme-gcc.com

Tel : 04 66 45 01 14

<https://www.cevennes-gorges-du-tarn.com/>



Tourism office Cévennes Gorges du Tarn, La Malène

Village, 48210 La Malène

info@attractivite-tourisme-gcc.com

Tel : 04 66 45 01 14

<http://www.cevennes-gorges-du-tarn.com/>



Source



Agence d'Attractivité Touristique Gorges Causses Cévennes

<http://www.cevennes-gorges-du-tarn.com>



Parc national des Cévennes

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

On your path...



The boatmen of La Malène (A)

“La Malène” means “bad hole”... But for several decades now, it has been more accurate to call it a little jewel that delights tourists. What is its secret? Using the boats which were once strictly utilitarian, back in the days when the Tarn was a transport and trade route! On 29 December 1952, the Cooperative Society of Boatmen of the Gorges du Tarn was officially created. In 1985, the Cooperative became a Worker Cooperative. Once on the water, the boatmen will help you discover sites that can only be seen and approached by boat, such as La Momie Cave, or the Woman with a Parasol rock formation above La Croze. That's at least two good reasons to treat yourself to this journey by water accompanied by the boatmen of La Malène.

Attribution : © Guy Grégoire



Rieisse (B)

"On the square in the hamlet of Rieisse, you'll be able to admire a communal oven. The gable of the house right next to it has gutters which lead into a former cistern inside. All the rainwater from the roof converged on this tank, inside the kitchen, via gutters that were made first of wood and later of zinc. The cistern has a depth of 2 to 5 m and a capacity of 10,000 to 30,000 litres. When the foundations of the sheepfold were dug, Roman pottery for keeping resin was found. Indeed, whenever pine trees were felled, the resin was extracted and sent to the coast, where it was used to caulk boats. (M.P Leroy-Delmer)

Attribution : © Nathalie Thomas



Black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) (C)

A hyperactive on its perch. With its long pointed wings, it flutters very rapidly, swallowing insects in the process. It has difficulty hiding its agitation as it perches in well-exposed places, rapidly flexing its legs and moving its tail as if it has the hiccups.

Attribution : © Chantal Daquo



Hourtous (D)

"Hourtous means 'small gardens' In Occitan. This cliff promontory is a private and designed space, and displays the Occitan cross. Let your eyes be drawn down the 400 m plunge to the narrows and then westwards to the Cirque des Baumes topped by the Sublime Point. At mid-slope you can make out the profile of the Woman with a Parasol and her Court, famous dolomite rock formations." (M.P Leroy-Delmer)

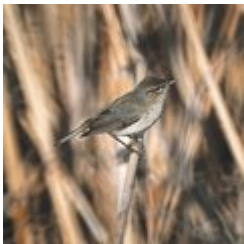
Attribution : © Marie-Amélie Péan



Common chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) (E)

The cheerful idler. When it is not dashing about on the ground looking for insects and seeds, it flutters, displaying white stripes on its wings and tail. You often hear it make a short and clear "pink pink", but it also sings short, well-rounded notes.

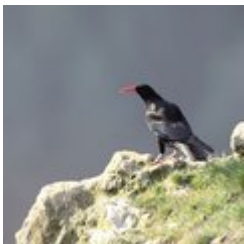
Attribution : © Régis Descamps



Common chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*) (F)

The money-changer. Its nickname comes from its song consisting of three metallic notes. At feeding time, this volatile stirrer makes a series of short outings, with a fondness for stationary flight. It won't shy away from swallowing insects just above the surface of the water either.

Attribution : © Jean-Pierre Malafosse



Red-billed chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) (G)

The charming crow. This dandy in its black dinner jacket stands out due to its curious curved red bill and its proud and noble look. Slipping gracefully in between cliffs using its primary flight feathers, it seems to wear gloves at the tips of its wings.

Attribution : © Régis Descamps



Eurasian wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) (H)

The little chubby one. Despite being a featherweight, it is respected for its piercing call. It often starts songs in flight and continues after landing. To feed, this resourceful little bird moves through thickets, rummaging like a mouse.

Attribution : © Ph. Lucas



Black tit (Periparus ater) (I)

The tit without a tie. Within the tit family, it is difficult to distinguish from the great tit. Though it has neither vivid colours nor a “tie”, its loud fluted call makes it as cheerful as the rest of its family.

Attribution : © Bruno Descaves

Chapel (J)

"300 m from the hamlet, the ruins of the Château de Planiol dominate a flat area (planiol) of the river, which is 8 m deep here. Then the Romanesque 12th century chapel appears, probably built on the site of a Carolingian oratory. An 'expiatory chapel' has been added, which contains the remains of the martyrs of La Malène. Another chapel is occupied by the Virgin Mary standing in a boat. It is brought out every May for the boatmen's pilgrimage. As for the bridge, it was built in 1856 in the place of a former ford crossed by the Esperelle draille (path for seasonal livestock migration). Because of its scant height, it did not survive the devastating floods of 1875 and 1900." (M.P Leroy-Delmer)

Little anecdote (K)

"Traditionally, a hillclimbing race is held in this small town on the first Sunday in July. The first races were goat races. Marthe marshalled her goats at the bridge, climbed the slope of La Canourgue by herself and then called to them from up there. The goats ran to her. The winner was rewarded with a fragrant bouquet of bartas (box)." (M.P Leroy-Delmer)