

MTB 11 - Descent to Meyrueis - graded red

Aigoual - Val-d'Aigoual



Chemin de crêtes (Béatrice Galzin)



One of the emblematic descents of the area, which presents no particular difficulty except for speed management. The contrast between the summit of Mont Aigoual and the “southern” bustle of Meyrueis is always striking...

Useful information

Practice : Bike

Duration : 2 h

Length : 19.8 km

Trek ascent : 257 m

Difficulty : Difficult

Type : Roaming

Themes : Agriculture and livestock farming, Architecture and village, Forest, History and culture, Water and geology

Trek

Departure : Summit of Mont Aigoual

Arrival : Meyrueis

Markings : 🏠 mountain-bike

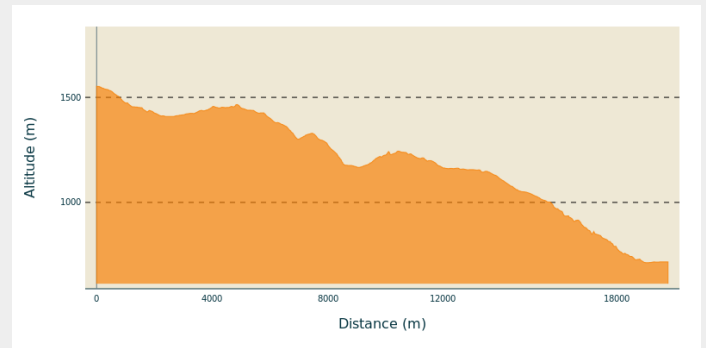
Cities : 1. Val-d'Aigoual

2. Meyrueis

3. Saint-Sauveur-Camprieu

4. Lanuéjols

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 713 m Max elevation 1553 m

Signposts will guide you all along this route. In the description below, the signposted place names and/or directions are given in ***bold italics*** between quotation marks:

From the weather station, head down to the left on the **GR® 6-7-66** trail towards ***“le Pontet”***.

1) Then turn left and follow ***“Station de Prat Peyrot”***.

2) At ***“Station de Prat Peyrot”*** take the **GR® 6** towards ***“Col de la Caumette”*** and, on the descent, make sure you take the turn-off on the left onto the former escape lane.

3) Go towards ***“Col de la Croix de Fer”***. Stay on the ridge until you reach ***“La Pierre Plantée”***.

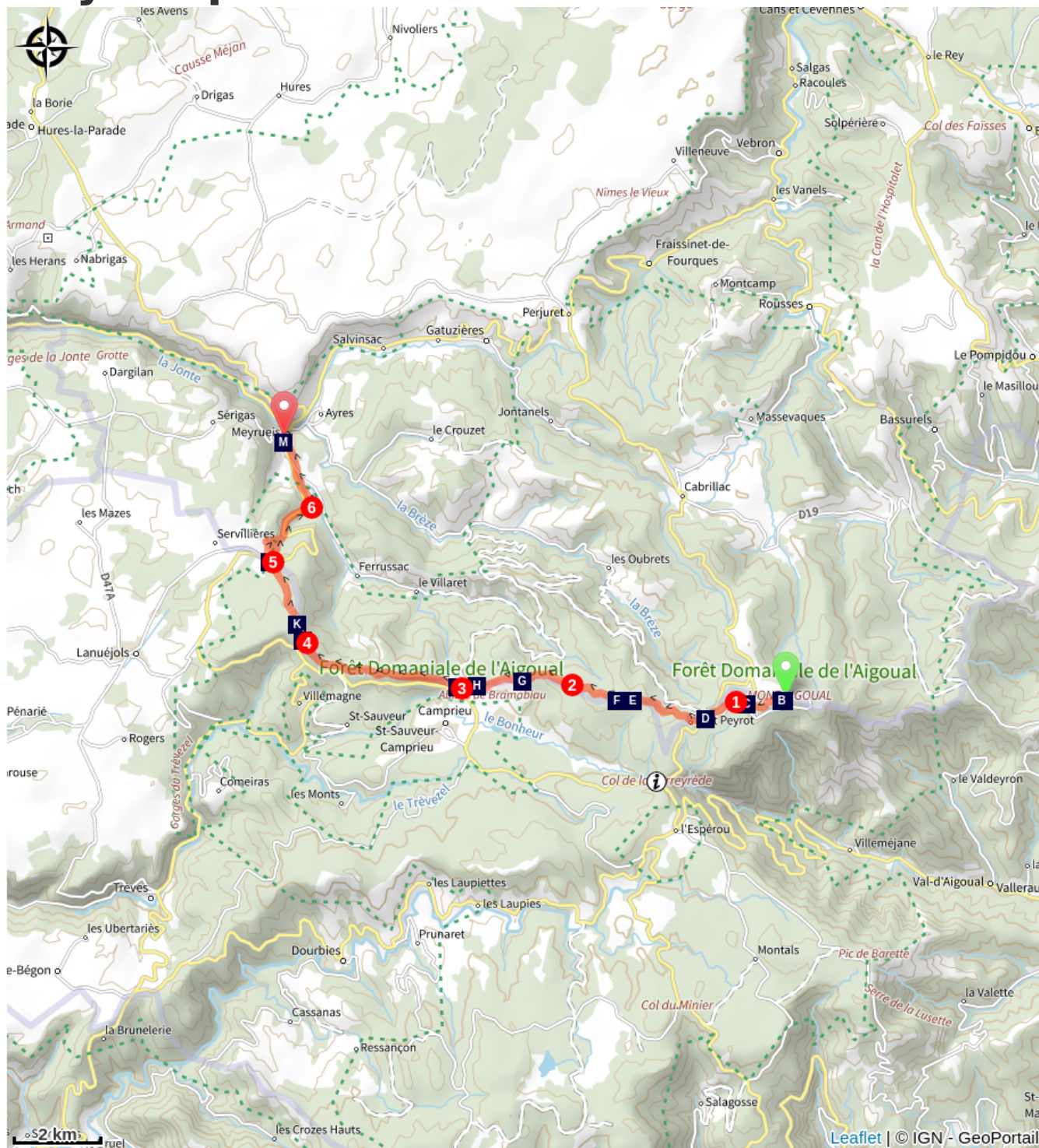
4) At ***“La Pierre Plantée”***, start the descent towards ***“Meyrueis”***.














5) At ***“Bout de côte”*** cross the road and continue on the track (the GR® 6).

6) Reach the D 986, take the path on the other side and continue to ***“Meyrueis”***.

This circuit is taken from the guidebook **Massif de l'Aigoual**, published by the communauté de communes Causses Aigoual Cévennes as part of the collection Espaces naturels gardois and the label Gard Pleine Nature.Nature.

On your path...



- | | |
|--|---|
|  Summit of Mont Aigoual (A) |  Archeosmart (Marc Limousin) (B) |
|  Pôle Nature 4 Saisons (C) |  On the Verge (Yoann Crépin) (D) |
|  Beech trees and the Mont Aigoual forest (E) |  The salt road (F) |
|  From canons to the King's Road (G) |  Wetlands (H) |
|  Col de la Croix de Fer pass (I) |  Pierre plantée (Pierre plantée) (J) |
|  The Commanders (K) |  Forest management (L) |
|  The village of Meyrueis (M) | |

All useful information



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

NB: The starting point and arrival are not in the same place. Make sure you organise return transport for yourself. Before committing yourself to a circuit, ensure that it is suitable for your activity level and ability. You must wear a helmet. Protective equipment is recommended. Respect other road users and stay in control of your speed and trajectory. NB: The circuit is also used by horse riders. Make sure your equipment is appropriate for the day's weather conditions. Remember that the weather changes quickly in the mountains. Take enough water. Please close all gates and barriers behind you. No off-roading.

Caution: patous (livestock guard dogs) on Mont Aigoual! Seek advice on how to behave near these dogs from tourist offices and National Park information centres!

How to come ?

Transports

liO is the regional public transport service of the Occitanie/ Pyrénées - Méditerranée region. It facilitates everyone's movements by prioritising public transport. For more information, call 08 10 33 42 73 or go to www.laregion.fr

Access

From Meyrueis, take the D986 towards St-Sauveur-Camprieu. After the village, stay on the D 986 and take the road on the left towards the col de la Serreyrède pass. At the col de la Serreyrède, turn left towards mont Aigoual on the D 269, then take the D18 to the car park at the summit of Mont Aigoual.

Advised parking

Summit of Mont Aigoual

Information desks

Tourism'house and national Parc at Florac

Place de l'ancienne gare, N106, 48400 Florac-trois-rivières

info@cevennes-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 66 45 01 14

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



Tourism & national parc'house

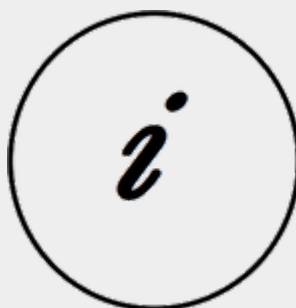
Col de la Serreyrède, 30570 Val d'Aigoual

maisonde-laigoual@sudcevennes.com

Tel : 04 67 82 64 67

<https://www.sudcevennes.com>

Accessibility : Accessible aux personnes à mobilité réduite sur les trois niveaux du bâtiment (ascenseur)



Source



CC Causse Aigoual Cévennes Terres Solidaires

<http://www.causse-aigoual-cevennes.fr/>



Parc national des Cévennes

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



Pôle Nature Aigoual

On your path...



☁ Summit of Mont Aigoual (A)

At an altitude of 1,565 m, the climate is harsh: weather conditions are the same as they would be at 2,000 m elsewhere, with only four “frost-free” months a year. Winds of above 60 kph blow on 265 days a year, and the average annual temperature is 4.8°C. Trees do not have enough time to complete their life cycle. Local plant formations are those of the montane zone: subalpine short-grass prairies.

Attribution : © Nathalie Thomas



🏹 Archeosmart (Marc Limousin) (B)

Smartphone imprints appear on the rocks: fossils of the present that will become mysterious in the future. This carved stone, like the cup-shaped marks and other rock art of the region, discloses history revealed in matter and resonates with Malraux’s phrase: “The future is a present given to us by the past”.

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



🌿 Pôle Nature 4 Saisons (C)

The Pôle Nature 4 Saisons of the Aigoual massif offers outdoor activities in all seasons in the central zone of the Cévennes National Park, overlooked by the legendary summit of Mont Aigoual (1,570 m). Discover our network of trails on foot, on horseback, by bike, or else by mountain-bike or with a donkey, as the fancy takes you!

Children can explore the orienteering circuit or geocaching. For the sportier among you we have laid out trail running circuits!

Prefer road biking? We have created circuits of varying difficulty levels so you can discover our villages and valleys.

Try not to make any noise! Wildlife enthusiasts can spot mouflons and other animals.

And if you would just like a gentle walk on the massif, the discovery trail “The cliffs of Mont Aigoual” is for you. There are various rest stops over its 4.5 km, with only 150 m in height difference.

We look forward to seeing you on our paths.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



🪄 On the Verge (Yoann Crépin) (D)

A doorway to a circuit of art within the natural environment. To fuse and interact with the environment and play with the seasons, time, light and weightlessness. To let humanity express itself through nature and nature express itself through humanity – a necessary interaction, a symbiotic interaction that inspires us to discover another world.

Attribution : © Filature du Mazel



🌲 Beech trees and the Mont Aigoual forest (E)

Beech is the main species of the Mont Aigoual forest, which consists of a large variety of trees adapted to the diverse soil types and exposure. Like most deciduous trees, beech stumps put out many shoots after a tree has been felled. Foresters select the best of these for timber. Old beeches can attain remarkable sizes, such as the beech in Le Suquet forest in the municipality of Camprieu, a vestige of the original forest that has come down to us through the centuries and has a circumference of six metres and a height of 25!

Attribution : Michel Monnot



🏰 The salt road (F)

La Caumette pass is on a former salt road. From Antiquity to modern times, salt has been a precious merchandise used for preserving food and tanning leather. Salt has always been traded and taxed during its transport inland from the Mediterranean coast. The sentry box at the pass was built in the 16th or 17th century at a strategic point at the crossroads of several roads, both to levy the salt tax and for surveillance against smuggling.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas

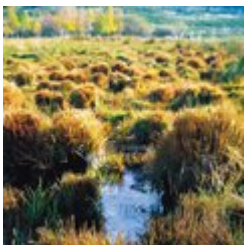


🚩 From canons to the King's Road (G)

Have you noticed that you are on an ancient path?

Let's plunge into history... Around the year 1000, this track was called Camin Ferrat and was used by transhumant shepherds and their flocks, pilgrims and merchants between Meyrueis and Le Vigan. From the latter, it passed through Mandagout, L'Espérou and the Col de la Serreyrède pass before descending to Bonheur Abbey and going back up to La Croix de Fer and reaching Meyrueis. This important mule track enabled trade between the Mediterranean and Meyruies. The Baron de Roquefueil, the region's lord, had an abbey built below it, in the Bonheur valley, to aid travellers lost in the mountains. In the late 11th century, he founded a religious community of six canons who performed religious services and, in bad weather, rang the "bell for the lost" at regular times to guide passers-by in danger. The Abbey was abandoned in 1790. In the 18th century, the Camin Ferrat was disused in favour of the King's Road, which you follow from the Col de la Caumette pass to Meyrueis. This new route went via the Col de la Serreyrède and the Col de la Caumette, after which it followed the ridge. The wall that you walk alongside from La Caumette and La Croix de Fer might be a vestige of the King's Road or else the limit of the Bonheur Abbey estate. The secret remains, only our ancestors knew...

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



🌿 Wetlands (H)

Above the path, the soft sound of trickling water... These are wetlands, a fragile zone that must be protected. The peatbog is made up of rushes, sedge and many types of moss, such as sphagnum. Numerous insects live here, such as the large marsh grasshopper and dragonflies, as well as the common frog. If you make little noise, you may see deer here, or other animals that have come to cool down.

Attribution : MALAFOSSE Jean-Pierre



⚠ Col de la Croix de Fer pass (I)

At the col de la Croix de Fer pass, which is a strategic crossroads of several tracks, there used to be an inn for travellers. The magnificent ruin with its two impressive vaults was also a sizeable farm, owned by the Baron de Roquedols. It was located at the limit of the municipalities of Meyrueis and St-Sauveur-Camprieu on the route of the Camin Ferrat and the King's Road. In the days of religious persecution, the preacher François Vivens* organised secret Protestant gatherings in the small valley just below the buildings. (*Vivens was killed in 1692, 10 years before the Camisard War)

Attribution : nelly Carel



⚠ Pierre plantée (Pierre plantée) (J)

Since ancient times, stones have stood along the Camin Ferrat: directional markers indicating a crossroads. Above all, they marked the boundaries of two parishes. Since the creation of Departments in 1790, they have outlined the border between Gard and Lozère.

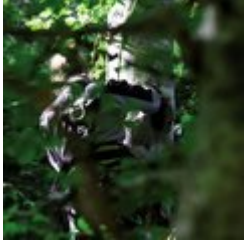
Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



⚠ The Commanders (K)

You are on a ridge path on the so-called "Commanders' crests". It is the last trace of the fact that this area belonged, from 1312 onwards, to the Knights Hospitaller and then to the Knights of Malta, who were based at the nearby hamlet of Servillières, at their "Commandery of Meyrueis and Servillières". You are here on the border between the Gard and Lozère, marked by a standing stone. This ridge path is called the "wolf pen drovers' road", a variant thousands of years old of the main drovers' road of La Lusette between L'Espérou and Meyrueis. Transhumant livestock would overnight here, in a closed-off space safe from wolves.

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas



🌳 Forest management (L)

The Mont Aigoual forest.

The wood harvested here comes from a forest that was reforested from the late 19th century onwards, after a period of overgrazing. This forest begins, grows and dies like all living beings. The job of foresters is to manage and support its development while respecting the laws of nature. They harvest trees before they die to make room for young trees. These tree trunks supply an entire economic sector, from the lumberjack to the skidder operator, the saw operator and the carpenter or cabinetmaker. Wood also accompanies you throughout your lives, from your cradle, furniture, woodwork and the wooden frame of your house to your coffin.

Attribution : Gaël Karczewski



🏰 The village of Meyrueis (M)

The geographical location of Meyrueis is remarkable, nestled between the Aigoual massif, the cause Noire and the cause Méjean. Here the Camin Ferrat crosses the Jonte river. Pilgrims and transhumant flocks of sheep stopped in the village before continuing their journey. Many merchants came to its large fairs. Stroll through the lanes and relive the flourishing past of the belle époque. From the prosperous bourgeois residences to the marketplaces, everything still speaks of the past! Sheep's wool from the plateaux was woven here, silk was spun. There was intense economic activity. In the 17th century, Meyrueis became a centre for hat-making. By 1860, 17 milliners were busy making hats for Languedoc and Provence, beautiful and exceptionally high-quality hats made from felted wool and silk bourette. Discontinued as of about 1920, this activity left room for tourism, which today animates the village.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin