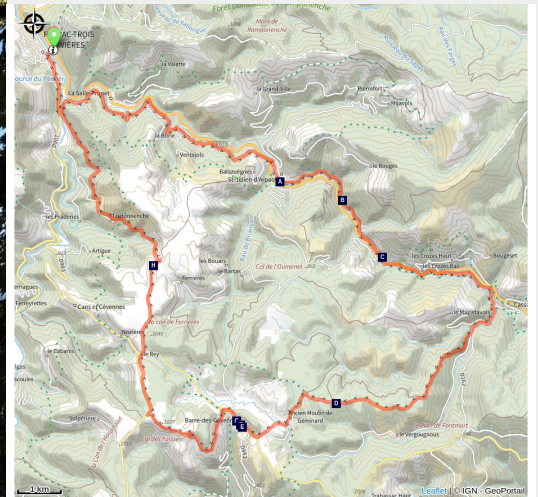


Discovering the Upper Cévennes

Causses Gorges - Florac Trois Rivières



Vue sur les Cévennes (© OTGCC nc)



From Florac-Trois-Rivières, where the Cévennes National Park has its headquarters, enjoy a three-day immersion in the Cévennes, moving between schist valleys and small limestone plateaux with uninterrupted views of the Upper Cévennes.

Starting in Florac, a town built at the confluence of three rivers, this route follows the Stevenson Trail upstream into the Mimente valley on the former railroad. It then joins Barre des Cévennes, a village strategically located on one of the most frequented passages between the lower and upper Cévennes, two different and complementary regions. To round off the hike, you cross the cans, small limestone plateaux, with dominant views onto the Tarnon valley and the edge of the Causse Méjean plateau.

Useful information

Practice : Hiking on foot

Duration : 3 days

Length : 41.6 km

Trek ascent : 1345 m

Difficulty : Medium


Type : Roaming

Themes : Agriculture and livestock farming, Architecture and village, Causses and Cévennes / UNESCO, Fauna and flora, Forest, History and culture, Water and geology

Trek

Departure : Florac

Arrival : Florac

Markings :  GR (long-distance hiking path)

Cities : 1. Florac Trois Rivières

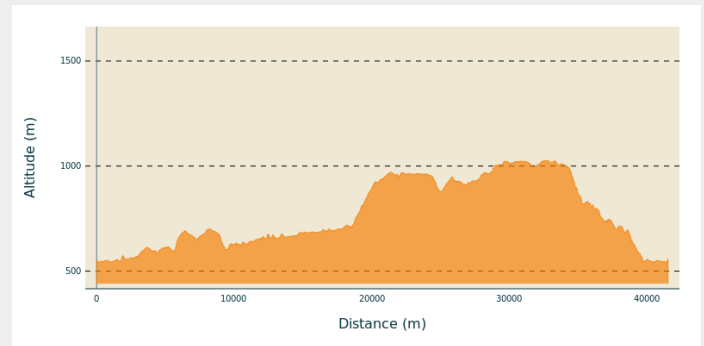
2. Cans et Cévennes

3. Cassagnas

4. Barre-des-Cévennes

5. Vebron

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 540 m Max elevation 1026 m

- **Day 1**: 18 km from Florac to the former train station at Cassagnas or 21 km from Florac to Cassagnas village, on the GR® 70 long-distance hiking path (waymarked white and red).

- **Day 2**: 9 km from the former train station at Cassagnas to Barre des Cévennes or 12 km from Cassagnas village to Barre des Cévennes, on the GR® 72 (waymarked white and red).

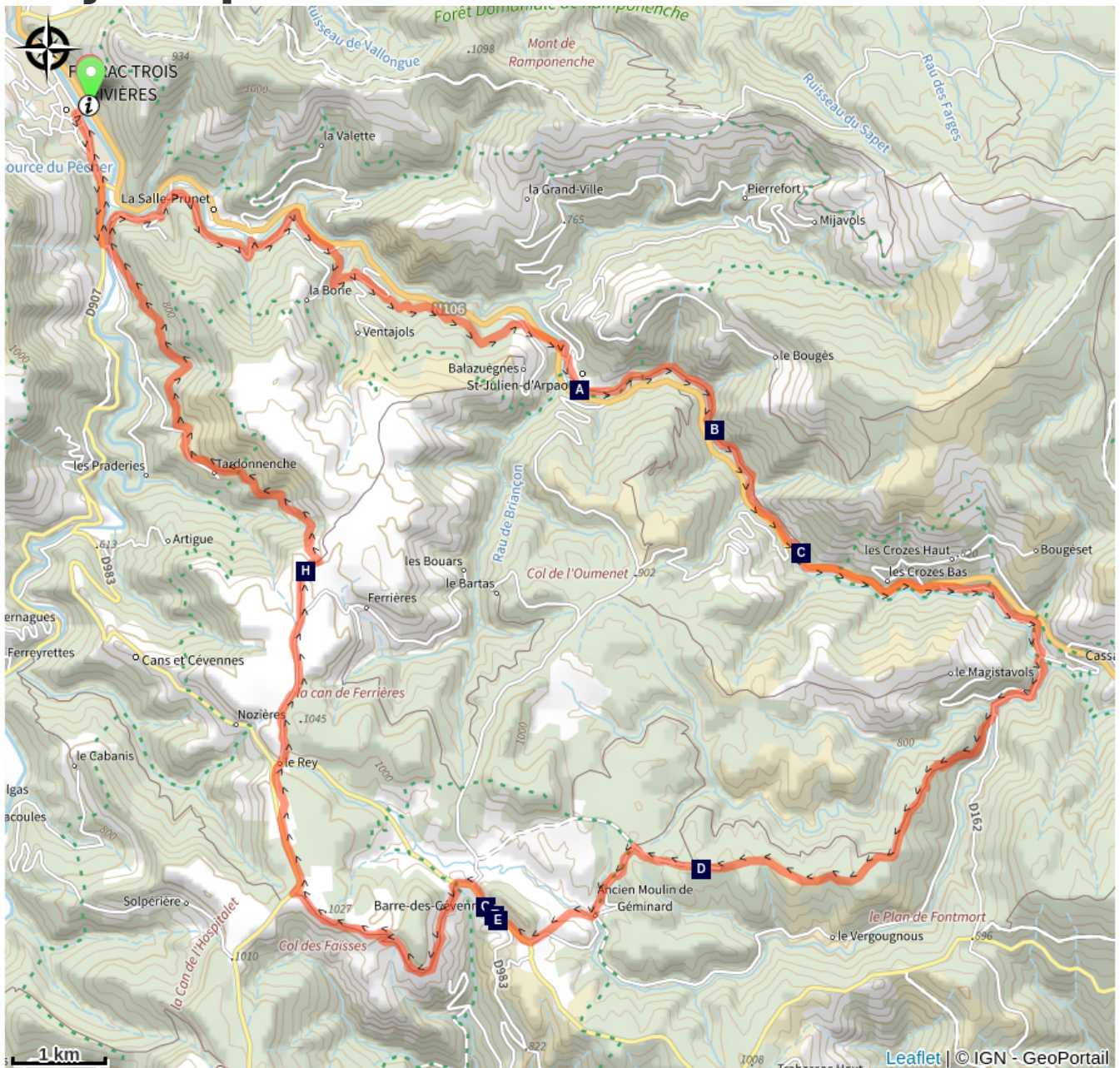
- **Day 3**: 15 km from Barre des Cévennes to Florac on the GR®7-67 / GR®43 (waymarked white and red).

You first take the GR®7 and GR®67 to the Col des Faïsses pass, then the GR®43 to Florac.

Stages :

1. Discovering the Upper Cévennes (Day 1).
17.5 km / 592 m D+ / 6 h
2. Discovering the Upper Cévennes (Day 2).
8.4 km / 409 m D+ / 3 h
3. Discovering the Upper Cévennes (Day 3).
15.7 km / 345 m D+ / 5 h

On your path...



- ▲ Château de Saint-Julien-d'Arpaon (A)
- ▲ The disused railway (CéFÉDé) (C)
- ▲ Place de la Madeleine (E)
- ▲ Place de la loue (Hiring Square) (G)
- ▲ The CFD (mountain-bike route) (B)
- ▲ Short-toed snake eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*) (D)
- ▲ The Château (F)
- ▲ The Can de Ferrières (H)

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

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 sturdy shoes and put on a hat. Please close all gates and barriers behind you.

How to come ?

Transports

Former train station car park

Bus line Florac-Mende

Daily year-round bus line, Monday to Saturday (except public holidays)
https://lio.laregion.fr/IMG/pdf/oc-1903-fhbus-48-251-3v_bd_04_.pdf

Bus line Florac Ste-Enimie Le Rozier, every day in July and August
https://lio.laregion.fr/IMG/pdf/oc-1903-fhbus-48-258-3v_bd_04_.pdf

Bus line Alès-Florac (by reservation only if departing from Ispagnac) Boulet bus company +33 (0)4 66 65 19 88

Daily bus line (except Sundays and public holidays) from 15 April to 31 October.

<https://fr.calameo.com/read/003034667db3a5b1c0788>

Access

Florac-Trois-Rivières on the RN 106.

Advised parking

3 car parks: by the former train station, on Place François Mitterrand, by the church.

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>



Source

Maison du tourisme et du Parc national, Florac

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



Parc national des Cévennes

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

On your path...



🏰 Château de Saint-Julien-d'Arpaon (A)

This 13th century castle was the property of the Lords of Anduze, who owned the barony of Florac in what was then the Gévaudan. In 1618, when the Gabriac family owned it, the castle was demolished. In the 18th century, it was inherited by the Montcalm family from Rouergue province, which owned several properties in the Gévaudan. The family restored the building, but it has suffered from effects of time and is currently in ruins – though in a better state of preservation than other castles in the Gévaudan.

Attribution : © com com Florac Sud Lozère



🏰 The CFD (mountain-bike route) (B)

Users and employees still talk of the former railway (CFD) with regret and emotion:

“To go to Montpellier on Mondays, I could leave at 6 in the morning, and arrive in Montpellier at 10, and you could get back here in the evening. The train arrived at 10 o'clock in the evening. Now (with the coach), you can go down, but you have to wait for the next day to come back up. It was very useful. Nowadays, if you don't have a car, what do you do? You hitch-hike, you walk!” (P. Grime)

“Two years after the train was shut down, we had the idea of putting it back on the track and turning it into a tourist train. We managed to get a railcar to start... We hadn't told anyone: apparently we didn't have the right to do it, we even risked getting a correctional sentence. Nothing happened... Except that at St-Julien-des-Points we gave a blast of this kind of horn that we had, and M., from the restaurant, came up with a litre of pastis, and two or three farmers from the area arrived too. We all cried like babies. We had the impression that the heart of the area was beating again.” (Revue Cévennes, issue 15)

Attribution : © com com Florac Sud Lozère



🚶 The disused railway (CéFéDé) (C)

From 1909 to 1968, this railway line linked Florac and Sainte-Cécile-d'Andorge (50 km). A metre-gauge single-track line, it was managed by the department's railway company. It was linked to the SNCF state railway network. The trains transported passengers and merchandise: ore from Ramponenche mine near Florac; baryte from the mine at Jalcreste, and plums, chestnut wood, dried boletus mushrooms, etc., destined for northern France. As you move along the disused line, you will see former engineered constructions (bridges, tunnels, etc.).

Attribution : © Cévennes Evasion



🦅 Short-toed snake eagle (Circaetus gallicus) (D)

This bird of prey nests in the surrounding woodland. The best times of year for spotting it are March/April and July to September. It spends winters in sub-Saharan Africa, returning to France in early March. Along with its mate, it will spend five months incubating a single egg and bringing up the chick.

Attribution : © Régis Descamps

🚶 Place de la Madeleine (E)

Marker 5

The fountain dates from the 18th century. At the end of the 19th century, the bust of Marianne – the personification of the French Republic – was added. At the same time, a poplar was planted by republican youth as a symbol of freedom. From here, you can see several bourgeois houses, which mostly date from the 17th and 18th centuries. They bear witness to the village's thriving past, when it had some 20 voituriers (merchant-carters), who would drive their carts down to the plains laden with wool and chestnuts and return with salt, wine and oil. Under the houses' large porches, harnesses and carts were kept. During fairs, the seed market took place in these vaults and those of the town hall.

🏰 The Château (F)

Marker 6

Constructed in the 12th and 13th centuries, the Château was entirely rebuilt in the early 16th century. From 1710 to 1715, it was modified by the Lord of Barre, who had his coat of arms carved above the entrance. Two towers were also added at this time. During the 1789 Revolution, the coat of arms disappeared under vigorous hammer strokes. In the early 19th century, during an expansion, the main tower was removed.

🏰 Place de la loue (Hiring Square) (G)

Marker 1

This little square, located at the north-eastern entrance to the village, was where the “loue” (hiring) used to be held during the great spring and autumn fairs: shepherds, domestics and chestnut gatherers would sit on the parapet and hope for an employer to take them on. The village hosted 12 to 15 fairs every year. The spring and autumn ones could attract up to ten thousand people from neighbouring departments, but also from the Var, Vaucluse and Bouches-du-Rhône. This village-rue (one-road village) was protected at each end by a fortified gate. One of them, called the Florac Gate, stood near the Place de la Loue. It was destroyed in the early 19th century.



The Can de Ferrières (H)

This limestone plateau continues to be grazed by flocks of sheep. Note the piles of stones, called clapas. They are not there by chance! They are the result of locals clearing their fields and pastureland of stones. These piles shelter many species.

Attribution : © Guy Grégoire