

Mill Trail

Mont Lozère - Ventalon en Cévennes



Vimbouches (nathalie.thomas)



A circuit around the upper Gardon valley that explores the hamlets on the east slope of the Bougès, amidst heather and sweet chestnut trees.

Useful information

Practice : Hiking on foot

Duration : 3 h

Length : 9.1 km

Trek ascent : 639 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Loop

Themes : Agriculture and livestock farming, Fauna and flora

Trek

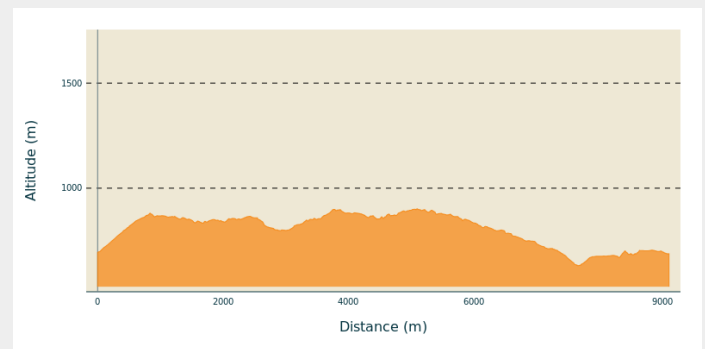
Departure : Hamlet of Vimbouches, Ventalon-en-Cévennes

Arrival : Hamlet of Vimbouches, Ventalon-en-Cévennes

Markings :  Yellow waymarks

Cities : 1. Ventalon en Cévennes
2. Pont de Montvert - Sud Mont Lozère

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 631 m Max elevation 902 m


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


Starting at **“Vimbouches”**, walk towards **“Draille de Vimbouches”**. Continue towards **“Poumeyrol”** via Le Masmin and Le Tronc. At the **“Poumeyrol”** intersection, return to **“Vimbouches”** via **“Le Salson-Nord”**. The walk takes you right past the mill.

This hike is taken from the guidebook **Mont Lozère - Pays des sources, Sommet des Cévennes**, published by the Pôle de pleine nature du Mont Lozère.

On your path...



 The road to Le Masmin (A)
Le Salson (C)

 Le Tronc (B)
The mill (D)

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 ?

Access

On the D35, 3km after Croix de Berthel, towards Le Masmin. Via the valley (main road N106), just before Saint-Privat-de-Vallongue, towards Saint-Frézal-de-Ventalon (D 29).

Advised parking

As you enter Vimbouches (NB: careful not to park in private spaces).

Information desks

Office de tourisme Des Cévennes au mont Lozère

le Quai, 48220 Le Pont de Montvert sud
mont-Lozère

info@cevennes-montlozere.com

Tel : 04 66 45 81 94

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



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



CC des Cévennes au Mont Lozère

<http://www.cevennes-mont-lozere.fr/>



Parc national des Cévennes

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



Pôle pleine nature Mont Lozère

On your path...



The road to Le Masmin (A)

This lane represents the limit between the sweet chestnut zone and the broom and heather zone. This east-facing slope was once one of the largest pasture areas in the Cévennes, grazed by local and transhumant flocks of sheep. Higher up, callune, a type of heather which flowers earlier at altitude, covers the Bougès massif in mauve in August and provides its precious nectar to bees. This moor of heather and broom (common and Pyrenean or purging broom) is dotted with hawthorns, rose hips and blackthorns, and is slowly being taken over by the forest.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



Le Tronc (B)

This hamlet used to live the traditional Cévenol way. The chestnuts fed its human inhabitants and fattened the pigs. Sheep, goats and cows were raised. The crop terraces below the houses supplied the grains and garden vegetables. After a long period of abandonment, Le Tronc has come alive again. Today the ruins have become houses again, a sheep farmer maintains the open spaces, the chestnut orchard has been restored, and pélardon cheeses are waiting to be savoured.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



Le Salson (C)

(from: salaison, meaning “salting (meat)”)

This hamlet amidst meadows is very exposed to the winds but benefits from several springs, which are a crucial asset for farms. The diversity of the farm buildings (granges, sheepfolds, stables, clèdes or chestnut-drying buildings, etc.) bears witness to the size of these farms in the old days.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



The mill (D)

The mill, whose construction dates to 1790, was built and used by several landowners at Le Salson. It was the largest mill in the valley and had been cleverly designed. Its well-thought-out water course could activate several millstones at once. The mill was thus used to make groats while another millstone ground rye or wheat or buckwheat for flour and yet another crushed walnut kernels for oil.

In another building, pieces of caddis cloth were fulled. The water of the Gardon d'Alès was partially dammed and collected in a gourgue (basin) to activate the mill's horizontal wheels.

When the water re-emerged, it was channelled into béals (irrigation channels). A 2 km-long béal irrigated meadows and chestnut trees all the way to below Le Grenier.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas