

# Col Salidès pass via St-André-de-Valborgne

Aigoual - Saint-André-de-Valborgne



La maison du berger en estive (Béatrice Galzin)



*This hike at the border of the Gard and Lozère departments offers vast panoramas, the famous draille de Margeride (Margeride drovers' road) and a young forest of very diverse tree species.*

## Useful information

Practice : Hiking on foot

Duration : 6 h 30

Length : 17.8 km

Trek ascent : 787 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Loop

Themes : Forest, Water and geology

# Trek

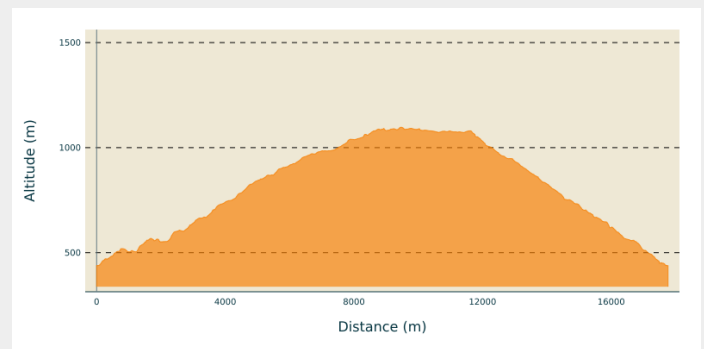
**Departure** : St-André de Valborgne

**Arrival** : St-André de Valborgne

**Markings** :  Yellow waymarks

**Cities** : 1. Saint-André-de-Valborgne  
2. Bassurels

## Altimetric profile



Min elevation 438 m Max elevation 1097 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:


Start behind the Romanesque church of St-André de Valborgne, next to the bridge. Cross in front of the church, cross the square and take the small road on the left to follow "***Col Salidès***", via "***Mas Galabert***", "***La Virevolte***", "***Les Mézariés***". Then climb to the col Salidès pass via "***La réserve de l'Hon***".


At the Salidès pass, head towards "***Aire de Côte***". At the signpost "***Bel Fats***", walk downhill to "***St-André de Valborgne***".

This walk 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.

# On your path...



 The village of St André de Valborgne (A)

 Château de la Fare (C)

 Château du Folhaquier (E)

The transhumant shepherd of the Col de Salidès (G)

 Col Salidès (I)

 One spring, five fountains (B)

 The mediaeval castles (D)

 The forest of L'Hon (F)

 Summer pastures (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

Before committing yourself to a circuit, ensure that it is suitable for your activity level and ability. Remember that the weather changes quickly in the mountains. Take enough water. Please close all gates and barriers behind you.

Caution: patous (livestock guard dogs) at the Col Solidès pass and around Caprices des Cévennes farm! 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](http://www.laregion.fr)

### Access

From St-Jean-du-Gard towards St-André-de-Valborgne on the D 907, via the villages of L'Estréchure and Saumane.

### Advised parking

In St-André de Valborgne

## **Information desks**

### **Tourism & national parc'house**

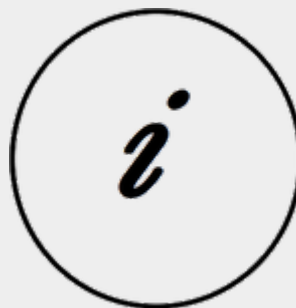
Col de la Serreyrède, 30570 Val d'Aigoual

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)



### **Tourism office Mont Aigoual Causses Cévennes, Saint-André-de-Valborgne**

les quais, 30940 Saint-André-de-Valborgne

standredevalborgne@sudcevennes.com

Tel : 04 66 60 32 11

<https://www.sudcevennes.com>



## **Source**



CC Causses Aigoual Cévennes Terres Solidaires

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



Parc national des Cévennes

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



Pôle Nature Aigoual

# On your path...

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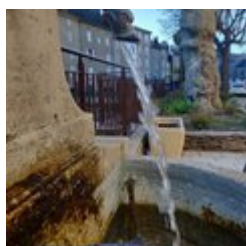
## The village of St André de Valborgne (A)

As you stroll along the quay above the river, you can still see the handsome bourgeois houses dating from the silk boom. If you look around, former spinning mills and industrial buildings dedicated to silk farming can still be seen in the landscape. A little lower down, opposite the 16th century château, you can listen to

Bernadette Lafont on the Camisard saga in and after 1702. As you reach the square again, quench your thirst at the fountain and have a look inside the Romanesque church (12th century).

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin

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## One spring, five fountains (B)

This fountain is one of Saint-André's five public fountains, all of which are supplied by the same spring (its water is thus the same as in the Fontaine du Griffon). Before houses were connected to mains water, there were many more fountains on this side of the quay.

Attribution : © Béatrice Galzin

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## Château de la Fare (C)

Following on from many battles against the Château du Folhaquier, today all that is left of the large mediaeval castle of the Lord de la Fare is this expanse of wall. Built at the summit of a schist hill, the castle is surrounded by sheer drops on all sides. The former village was fortified and located just below the expanse of wall. Sources indicate that the castle had a drawbridge and a chapel.

Attribution : capri'ces des Cévennes



## The mediaeval castles (D)

Very close to the village of St-André de Valborgne, on the edge of a cliff, stand the remains of the castrum of La Fare, a defensive castle believed to date from the 12th century. Only a wall face of the tower survives. The ruins above bear witness to the site's importance. The archives mention a well, cistern and drawbridge – but on site nothing remains. On the next spur is the majestic and dominating castle of Le Folhaquier. Transformations throughout the centuries by various owners have shaped the hamlet as we see it today. The era of silk farming strongly influenced the landscape by welcoming the “tree of gold”, the mulberry tree.

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas



## Château du Folhaquier (E)

The Château du Folhaquier is outlined on this small ridge, which was a strategic site in the Middle Ages, overlooking the Gardon de Saint-Jean river and the Château de La Fare opposite. It is separated from the hamlet by a ditch cut into the schist bedrock, and a square tower can still be seen that was built in the 16th century on 12th century ramparts, as well as the vestiges of a round tower at the other end. The foundations of the castle chapel are easy to distinguish, and the Romanesque church of Notre-Dame du Folhaquier, which remains in an excellent state, has withstood the elements for almost a millennium.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



## The forest of L'Hom (F)

From the 19th century, the forest of L'Hom was the “reserve” of a private estate of over 700 hectares. Its animal stocks were protected and used as a “savings account” in the event of unforeseen financial needs. This situation in part explains the diversity of the forest, which stretches from 600 to 1,100 m in altitude and contains many species: native (holm oak, sweet chestnut, beech, birch, wild cherry, rowan, pine, spruce, etc.) as well as exotic ones, which were introduced by the new owners (northern red oak, red maple, giant redwood, larch hybrids, etc.). This private forest has a management plan based on the prosylva principles (forestry close to nature), which was approved by the body in charge of forest management and the Cévennes National Park. There is abundant game, and you may spot a deer or stag on your walk.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin



## The transhumant shepherd of the Col de Salidès (G)

From the end of spring onwards, the Col de Salidès livens up. The transhumant shepherd moves up for the three months of summer grazing in this magical spot with almost 1,000 sheep. In all weather, the shepherd takes the animals outside so they can graze new grass. He has to both manage his pasture land and look after the sheep.

At the end of summer, each livestock farmer comes to recover his animals. Be careful around the dogs that watch over the flock!

Attribution : Office de tourisme OTMACC



## Summer pastures (H)

Since time immemorial, animals have naturally migrated from the plains into the mountains in summer. The Salidès pass has summer pastures for sheep. The shepherd's house is just below you on the Mediterranean side. The shepherd stays several months with about 800 sheep and a few dogs. Careful: patous, the big and handsome white dogs, are there to supervise and defend the herd!

It is important for the herd to graze here. The animals fertilise the soil and maintain the open spaces.

Attribution : Michel Monnot



## Col Salidès (I)

The bare ridge that rises opposite is the watershed between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Rain that falls on the Sexte valley flows into the Tarnon below (on the left) and ends up in the ocean. On your right, the Mediterranean side offers extraordinary views onto the foothills of the can de l'Hospitalet plateau and the entirety of the Cévenol mountains. On some days, the Alps and Mont Ventoux can be seen in the distance ...

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin