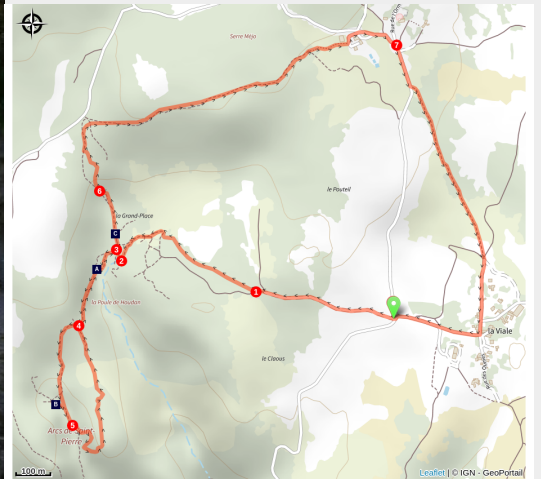


# The arches of Saint-Pierre

Causses Gorges - Saint-Pierre-des-Tripiers



Les arcs (Nathalie Thomas)



*A very unusual site awaits in this Scots pine forest !*

Erosion has sculpted the rock into strange shapes and opened up arches, under which are rock shelters, a large square with a hoodoo (fairy chimney) and a cave tomb, where around 3,500 BC audacious trepanning was carried out.

## Useful information

Practice : Hiking on foot

Duration : 2 h 15

Length : 5.3 km

Trek ascent : 167 m

Difficulty : Easy


Type : Loop

Themes : History and culture,  
Water and geology

# Trek

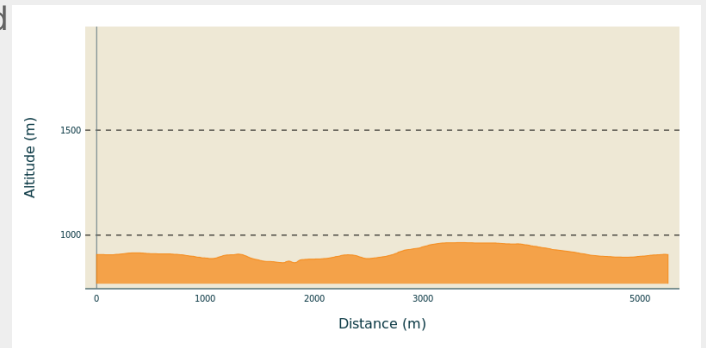
**Departure** : Crossroads with La Viale road

**Arrival** : Crossroads with La Viale road

**Markings** :  Yellow waymarks

**Cities** : 1. Saint-Pierre-des-Tripiers

## Altimetric profile

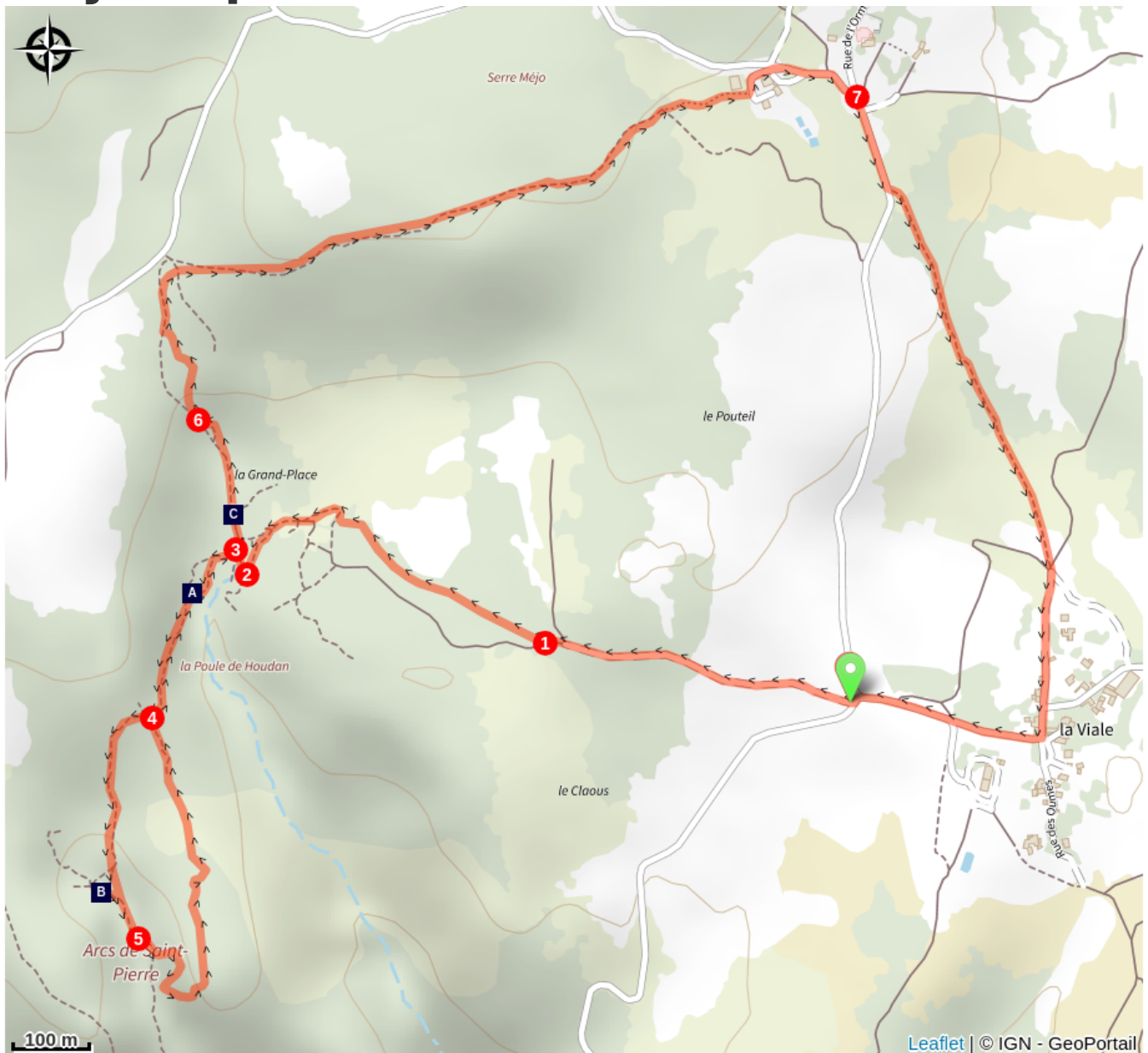


Min elevation 869 m Max elevation 965 m

From the parking area at the crossroads of the roads to La Viale and Le Truel, take the sandy path, close the gate and continue for 400 m.

1. Leave the path for a small path on the right that runs alongside a fence. It follows an old track bordered by low walls.
2. Turn downhill on the right, pass between two rocks and immediately take the path on the right (stepped section).
3. Turn left and immediately right. The path goes uphill, including on stairs.
4. Take, on your right, the steep descent. Then turn left and continue to go downhill towards the arches.
5. Pass under the first arch, then under the second arch on your left. Go uphill on the path that heads to the right, then to the left, to reach Point 4. Go right to get back to Point 3.
6. Turn left and go uphill to La Baumelle cave, which you cross to the left. Continue uphill until you reach the road. Head right, pass between two new houses, and turn right onto the road to return to the village of Saint-Pierre des Tripiers.
7. At the crossroads, take the road on the right, towards Le Truel. After 150 m, at the cross, turn left to return to the hamlet of La Viale. In the hamlet, take the road on the right to return to your starting-point.

# On your path...



🏠 L'Homme-Mort (Dead Man's) Cave (A)

🏠 Village of resin workers (B)

🏠 The ancient village, too hastily called prehistoric, was in fact a resin workers' village from the Gallo-Roman period. You can see (C)

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

## **How to come ?**

### Access

From La Parade, take the D63, then head towards Saint-Pierre des Tripiers, then towards La Viale.

### Advised parking

Parking area at the crossroads of La Viale and Le Truel roads.

## **Information desks**

### **Tourism'house and national Parc at Florac**

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

[info@cevennes-parcnational.fr](mailto:info@cevennes-parcnational.fr)

Tel : 04 66 45 01 14

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



## Source



CC Gorges Causses Cévennes

<https://www.gorgescaussescevennes.fr/>



Parc national des Cévennes

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

## On your path...

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### ⚠ L'Homme-Mort (Dead Man's) Cave (A)

In 1867 Dr Barthélémy Prunières and Prof Paul Broca discovered some 50 human skeletons from the Chalcolithic or Copper Age (2,200 to 1,800 BC) in this cavity with its almost round entrance. It was the first ever discovery in France of skulls bearing signs of trepanning-style lesions that were in the process of scarring over. Trepanning was carried out using a flint drill. The surgeon operated rather brutally to begin with, but once the cancellous bone had been penetrated, he seems to have drilled into the internal table of the skull bone more carefully. The individuals treated in this way were normally adults.

In some cases, where the skull had previously been staved in, the purpose was probably to relieve the injury.

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas



### ⚠ Village of resin workers (B)

The ancient village, too hastily called prehistoric, was in fact a resin workers' village from the Gallo-Roman period. You can still see some dry-stone walls and, on certain rocks, notches to hold up the beams that supported the roofs. The resin workers collected pine resin to heat the potters' kilns in La Graufesenque (Millau), which was transported by floating it to the River Tarn. The resin was extracted by distilling bark and branches left on-site and stored in urns. The pitch produced in this way was used to caulk\* boats.

(\*filling holes in a boat's hull using tarred fibres)

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas



🌐 The ancient village, too hastily called prehistoric, was in fact a resin workers' village from the Gallo-Roman period. You can see (C)

This blockfield was shaped by the elements, which dissolved the soft limestone, leaving behind the less soluble dolomite\* looking like lanes, squares, crossroads, etc. The "large arches" and the "large square" seem to be the only remnants of a very old and very substantial underground network, which has collapsed. Only a few parts of the vault remain: the arches.

*(\*a sedimentary rock composed of a carbonate that is equal parts calcium and magnesium)*

Attribution : Nathalie Thomas