



Rochaille path

Vallée haute Ubaye - Meyronnes



Vue plongeante sur le hameau de Saint-Ours (Meyronnes), sentier de la Rochaille (ESTACHY Robert)



A path for exploring the forest (Austrian pines and larches), but also open spaces (cultivated zones, pastures), where you can find boards explaining certain aspects of local history and the natural environment.

Bearded vultures and Golden eagles often fly over this area. To tell them apart, look at the shape of the tail: the eagle's is shorter whereas the bearded vultures forms an elongated diamond shape. You may cross the path of other animals such as chamois, ibex or European crested tits (*Lophophanes cristatus*).

Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 4 h

Length : 9.0 km

Trek ascent : 526 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Loop

Themes : Archeology and history, Fauna

Trek

Departure : Meyronnes (Village square)

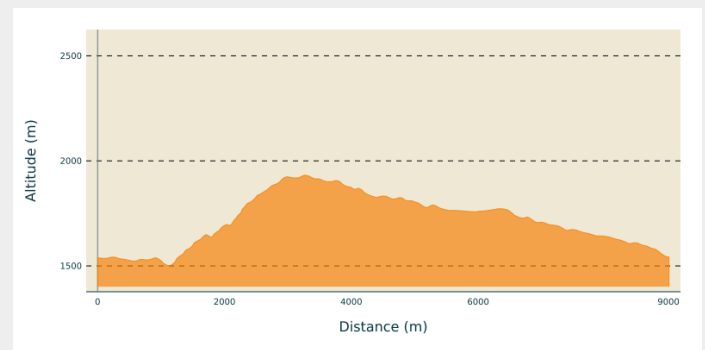
Arrival : Same (circuit)

Markings :  PR

Cities : 1. Meyronnes

2. Val-d'Oronaye

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1501 m Max elevation 1932 m

The departure point is from the village square in Meyronnes, alongside the road. Head up the village, turn left and take the little road which goes underneath the colony. The path begins off the hairpin bend on the road, where you will first have to ford a stream (to be avoided during heavy storms), then climb towards a stand of Austrian pines and larches which are the fruit of the Mountain Terrain Restoration Programme.

On the slopes of La Rochaille, 214 ha were purchased by the state in 1886 for plantation work. Today, the forest is managed by the National Forests Office (ONF). Le Belvédère du Pinas, which is located at virtually the summit of the hike provides a viewpoint over a vast unstable slope of sedimentary rocks known as Flysch; it is easy to understand why falling stones often block the road below.

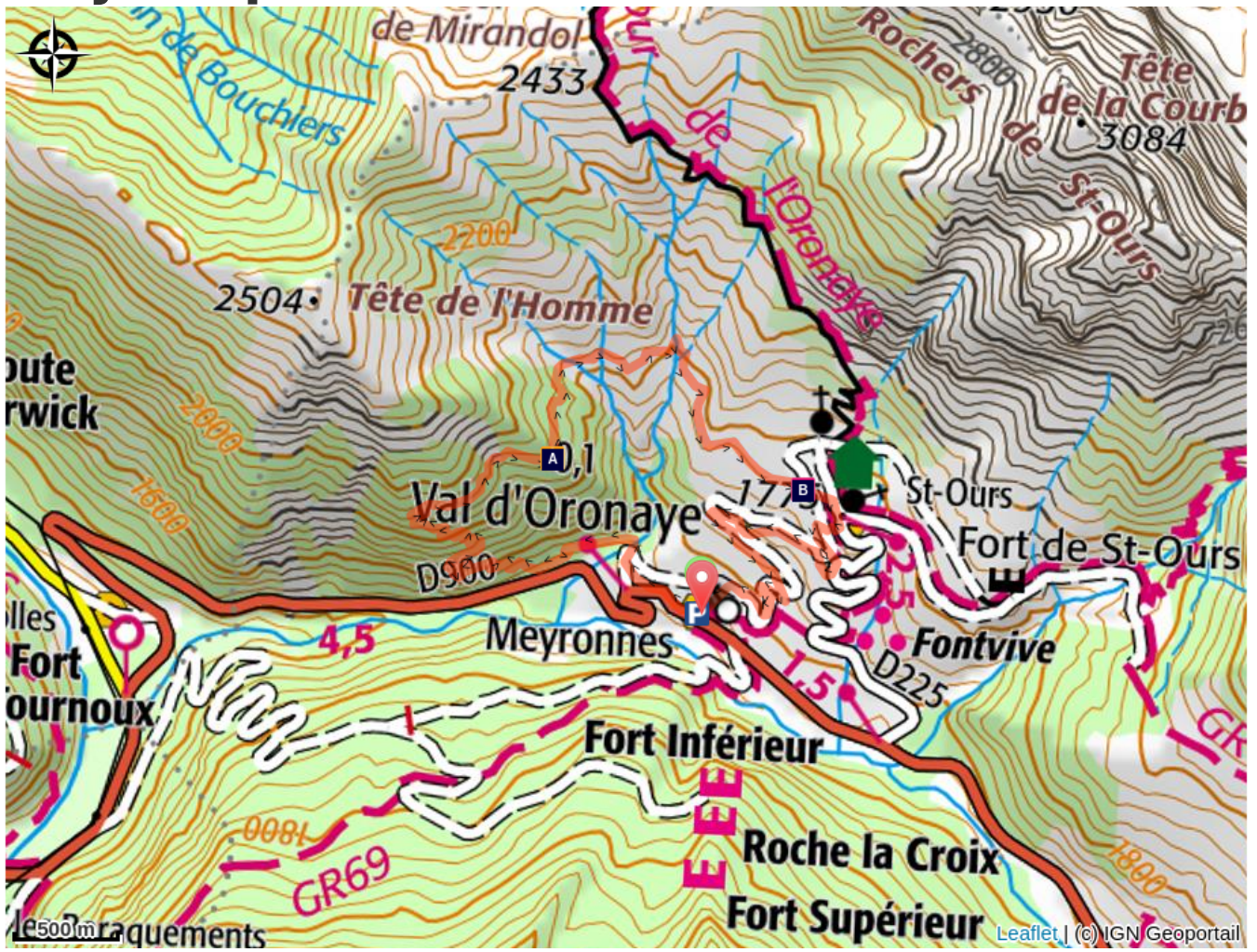
The path continues at the same altitude. If you pay attention, just below the path you will see the excavations from a former slate quarry, which closed in 1884.


You will quickly come to the Serre la Plate bunker, an element of the Maginot Line in the Alps. You can also see the great fort of Rocher la Croix at Ubac de Meyronnes and, on the south-facing slopes, the works of Saint Ours Haut and Saint Ours Bas, which were all built between 1930 and 1936.

The path continues, leaving the forest and reaching the Saint Ours plateau, a little hamlet in a haven of cultivated zones and pastures, that the great Rochers which bear the same name underscore. With the pressure on pasture land having diminished, you can easily see the dynamics at work in terms of natural recolonization on the slopes around the hamlet: common and savin junipers, dog roses and Scotch pines which are gradually taking over areas.

From Saint Ours, follow the path down to Meyronnes for the return journey.

On your path...



-  Serre la Plate bunker (A)  Saint-Ours plateau (B)

All useful information

Advices

In summer, it gets very hot on the upward journey (despite it being well shaded), so it is better to leave early in the morning.

How to come ?

Transports

Consulter les disponibilités de transport en commun sur [Zou.maregionsud](https://www.zou-maregionsud.com) et les navettes dans la vallée de l'Ubaye <https://www.ubaye.com/telechargements/brochures/horaires-navettes.pdf>

Access

Take the D900 until the village of Meyronnes, 22km northeast of Barcelonnette.

DEPARTURE POINT: At Meyronnes, park in the carpark in the village square alongside the D900.

Advised parking

Carpark in the village square of Meyronnes

On your path...



Serre la Plate bunker (A)

The Serre la Plate bunker is one of the elements of the Maginot Line* in the Alps. At L'ubac de Meyronnes, you can also see the vast fort of Roche la Croix and, on the southern slope, the constructions of Saint-Ours Haut and Saint-Ours Bas, all built between 1930 and 1936.

*Line of fortifications built by France along its borders with Belgium, Luxemburg, Germany, Switzerland and Italy from 1928 to 1940.

Attribution : François BRETON



Saint-Ours plateau (B)

This is a small plateau in a bower of cultivated zones and pastures, that the large boulders of the same name underline. Now that there is less pressure on the land due to grazing, it is possible to see the dynamics of natural recolonization on the slopes around the hamlet: common and savin junipers, dog roses, Scotch pines...are gradually gaining ground.

The warmer slopes on the Rochaille path are an area for deer, whereas the Alpine pasture and the rocks above the path are home to chamois and ibex. The latter were reintroduced by the Mercantour National Park in 1999 in the Rochers de Saint-Ours.

Attribution : François BRETON