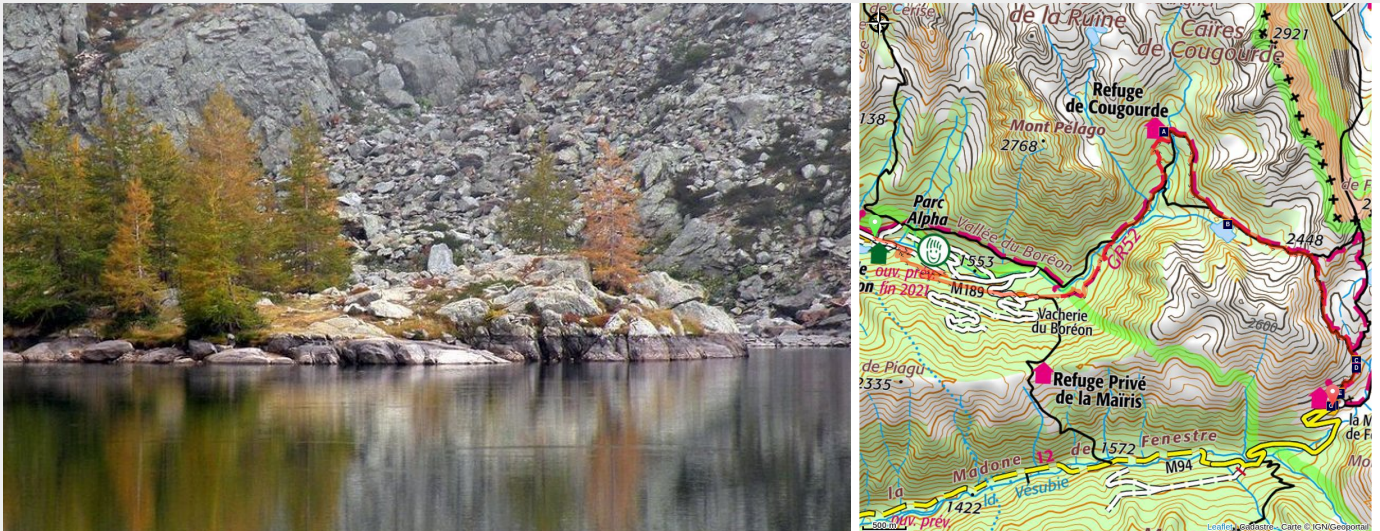




# GTM - Stage 12 : Le Boréon - Refuge Madone de Fenestre

Vallée haute Vésubie - Saint-Martin-Vésubie



Le brouillard se dissipe sur le lac de Trécolpas 2150 m. Vallon du haut Boréon. Secteur haute Vésubie. (Guigo Franck - PNM)

*A magnificent stage in the heart of the verdant Haute Vésubie valley, Nice's version of Switzerland, providing a link between the Haut Boréon and Fenestre valleys.*

The climb up the Boréon valley reaches Lac de Trécolpas and the islet which gives it so much character. When you arrive at Pas des Ladres, it is the beginning of a descent towards the emblematic Madone de Fenestre.

## Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 6 h

Length : 13.1 km

Trek ascent : 1051 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Longer treks

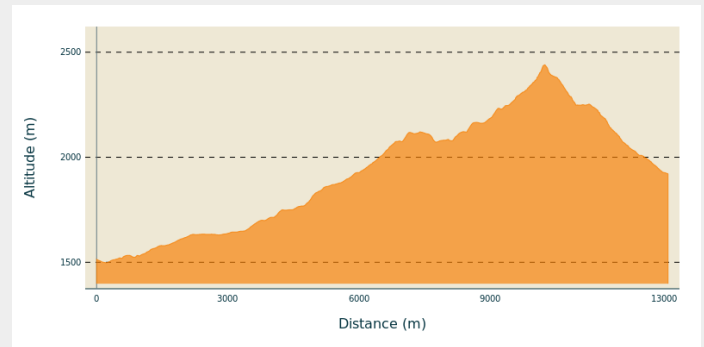
# Trek

**Departure** : Boréon

**Arrival** : Madone de Fenestre refuge

**Cities** : 1. Saint-Martin-Vésubie

## Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1498 m Max elevation 2440 m

From the lodge in Boréon, head towards the Cavalet plateau along GR52 (m371) and head tight at m377.

Head gradually upwards through the conifer forest and after a long passage above the Alpha park, continue along a flat section (m379) then go over a big avalanche corridor and head down towards the private Saladin refuge.

Go back up the path before heading downhill for a few metres (m380), crossing the Boréon mountain stream (m421a) and continuing up a short, steep section to take the path to Cougourde (m421).

Go past the Vidron chalet (m422) and its magnificent waterfall on your left and cross the Boréon again (m423).

Continue along GR52 via a slight rise towards Peïrastrèche (“narrow stone”) until Gias de Peïrastrèche (m424 and 425), then carry on due north towards the Cougourde refuge. At m426, turn right onto a path which is mainly horizontal before you see the rock bar of the lake (m427).

You will easily reach the lake of Trécolpas with the islet which constitutes its hallmark. Head around it via the north and then continue east towards you will be able to see in the distance.

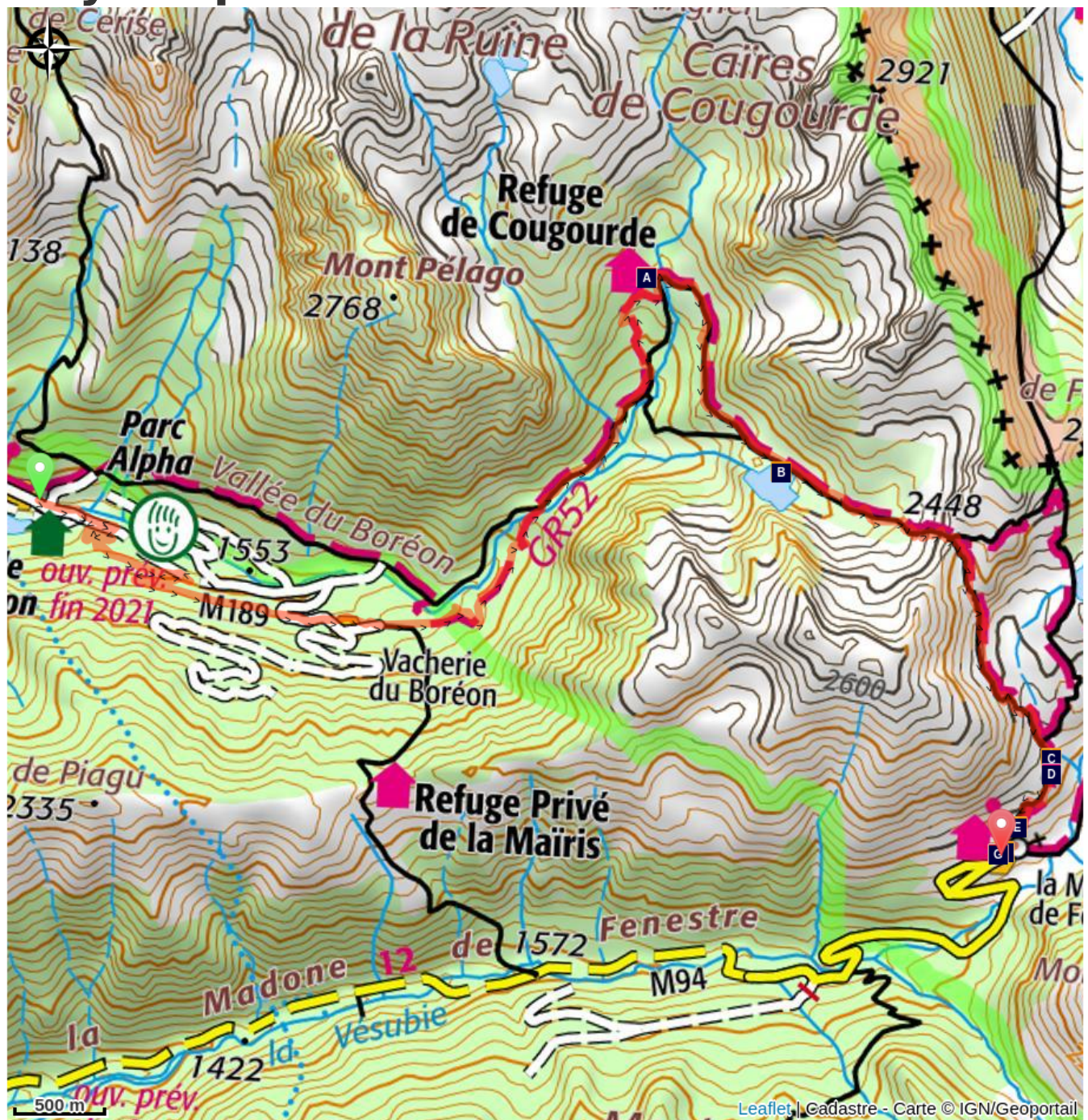
A slight rise followed by a series of hairpin bends allows you to reach Pas des Ladres (m428-2448m). Enjoy the view of the surrounding summits and over the many chamois which populate the area and then head south on the GR52 towards La Madone de Fenestre via several hairpin bends.








Continue on a long section which overlooks ancient glacial moraines dating from the quaternary era. Having reached the Magnin spring which provides water for the refuge, you will quickly reach the junction with the path which provides access to Lac de Fenestre (b368) along the right bank of the valley.

Continue the descent on GR52, where, just off the track, you can see the site of Madone de Fenestre which you will reach rapidly from this point, sometimes

accompanied by the strident calls of the marmots, as if they are telling you that you have reached your destination.

# On your path...



-  La Cougourde refuge (A)
-  Mountain climbing in the Mercantour (B)
-  Terre de cour (C)
-  The scars of erosion (D)
-  Col de Fenestre mule track (E)
-  La Madone de Fenestre sanctuary (F)
-  La Madone de Fenestre refuge (G)

# 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 heading off on a hike, ensure that you have studied the safety advice. If you are setting off on this hike in the early part of the season, you will need to take particular care as patches of snow can still be present in higher areas.

## **How to come ?**

### Access

66km from Nice (airport).

Head up the Var valley on the RD6202 until you reach Plan du Var, and then the Vésubie valley along the RD2565 to St-Martin- Vésubie.

As you leave the village, take the RD89 which leads to Lac du Boréon, which is where this itinerary leaves from.

# On your path...

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## La Cougourde refuge (A)

Club Alpin Français

Warden: June – September: Manuel Putelat

September – June: Charly Barcelo: 06 18 54 02 43

Reservations by telephone or e-mail:

[refugelacougourde@ffcam.fr](mailto:refugelacougourde@ffcam.fr)

Refuge landline: 09 78 23 31 59

Website: <http://refugelacougourde.ffcam.fr/>

Useful numbers:

St-Martin-Vésubie Tourism Office: 04 93 03 21 28

Park House: 04 93 03 23 15

Attribution : CAF / DR

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## Mountain climbing in the Mercantour (B)

At the start of the 20th century, for the first mountain climbers, the Mercantour was a taste of adventure. Little by little, the summits of the chain were conquered, initially via the normal routes and then, with the arrival of modern mountain climbing, along the most difficult routes. From Victor de Cessole to Patrick Bérhault, the greatest names have been involved in climbing in the Mercantour. Today, whether they are snowy, icy or rocky, the reputation of certain routes is well established.

Attribution : GUIGO Franck



## Terre de cour (C)

The black rock marks one of the borders of the Terre de Cour, formerly a domain of the Count of Provence, before it was returned to the House of Savoy in the 14th century. Two inscriptions on the black rock provide a reminder of the past: “B” for Belvédère, “SM” for Saint-Martin-Vésubie. Terre de Cour was located exclusively in these two communes but they have to share the ancient rights to pasture and wood with Lantosque and Roquebillière.

Attribution : RICHAUD Philippe

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## The scars of erosion (D)

When they converge, runoff streams of water leave the ground bare, breaking a fragile equilibrium. In addition, footfall due to tourism damages the ground and raises the question of preservation of natural environments. Plant cover has to be maintained as it protects the ground from erosion and guarantees its stability. Restoration work has been carried out to guide and direct the hundreds of hikers who love these wild areas.

Attribution : GUIGO Franck

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## Col de Fenestre mule track (E)

This track has been used for a thousand years and was regularly maintained to allow mules transporting salt to pass with ease. The technique used to make and maintain these tracks involved self-locking stones. Identically sized slabs were arranged vertically in close lines. Fine materials were then used to hold it all in place. Gutters provided a run-off area for rainwater.

Attribution : LOMBART Guy

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## La Madone de Fenestre sanctuary (F)

In the 8th century, a modest refuge already, providing accommodation for travellers. This sanctuary with its imposing forms was built by the Benedictines of Borgo San Dalmasso and destroyed by the Saracens in the 10th century. The Templars restored it in the 13th century shortly after the Virgin Mary appeared at the Grand Caire window. Subsequently, the sanctuary was devastated by fire several times and then rebuilt. Today it belongs to the diocese of Nice.

Attribution : LEBOUTEILLER Eric



## La Madone de Fenestre refuge (G)

Club Alpin Français

Capacity: 62 Possibility of eating and having a shower

Warden: Mid-June to late-September + school holidays and weekends in winter

Tel. 04 93 02 83 19

Out of season upon reservation: Patrick Miraillet: 04 93 03 91 02

Online reservations: <http://chaletmadonedefenestre.ffcam.fr/>

Useful numbers:

St-Martin-Vésubie Tourism Office: 04 93 03 21 28

Park House: 04 93 03 23 15

Attribution : CAF / DR