



# The 4 valleys circuit - Stura - Maira - Haute Tinée - Ubaye - Stage 4

Vallée haute Tinée - Saint-Dalmas-le-Selvage



Randonnée Tinée. Maisons au Pra, hameau de haute-Tinée. Quelques névés en début de printemps. (Philippe Pierini - PNM)

## Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 4 h 30

Length : 12.4 km

Trek ascent : 1015 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Walking breaks

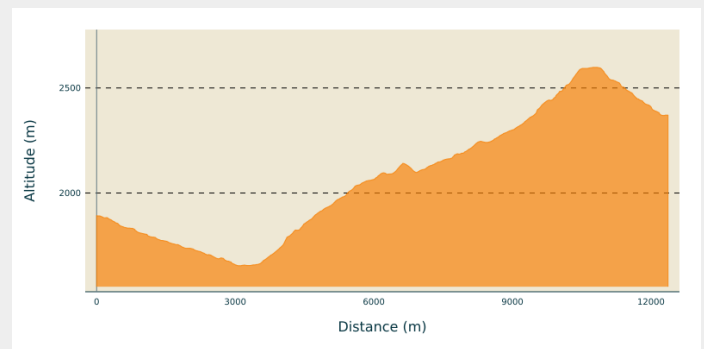
# Trek

**Departure** : Bousieyas

**Arrival** : Vens refuge

**Cities** : 1. Saint-Dalmas-le-Selvage  
2. Saint-Étienne-de-Tinée

## Altimetric profile



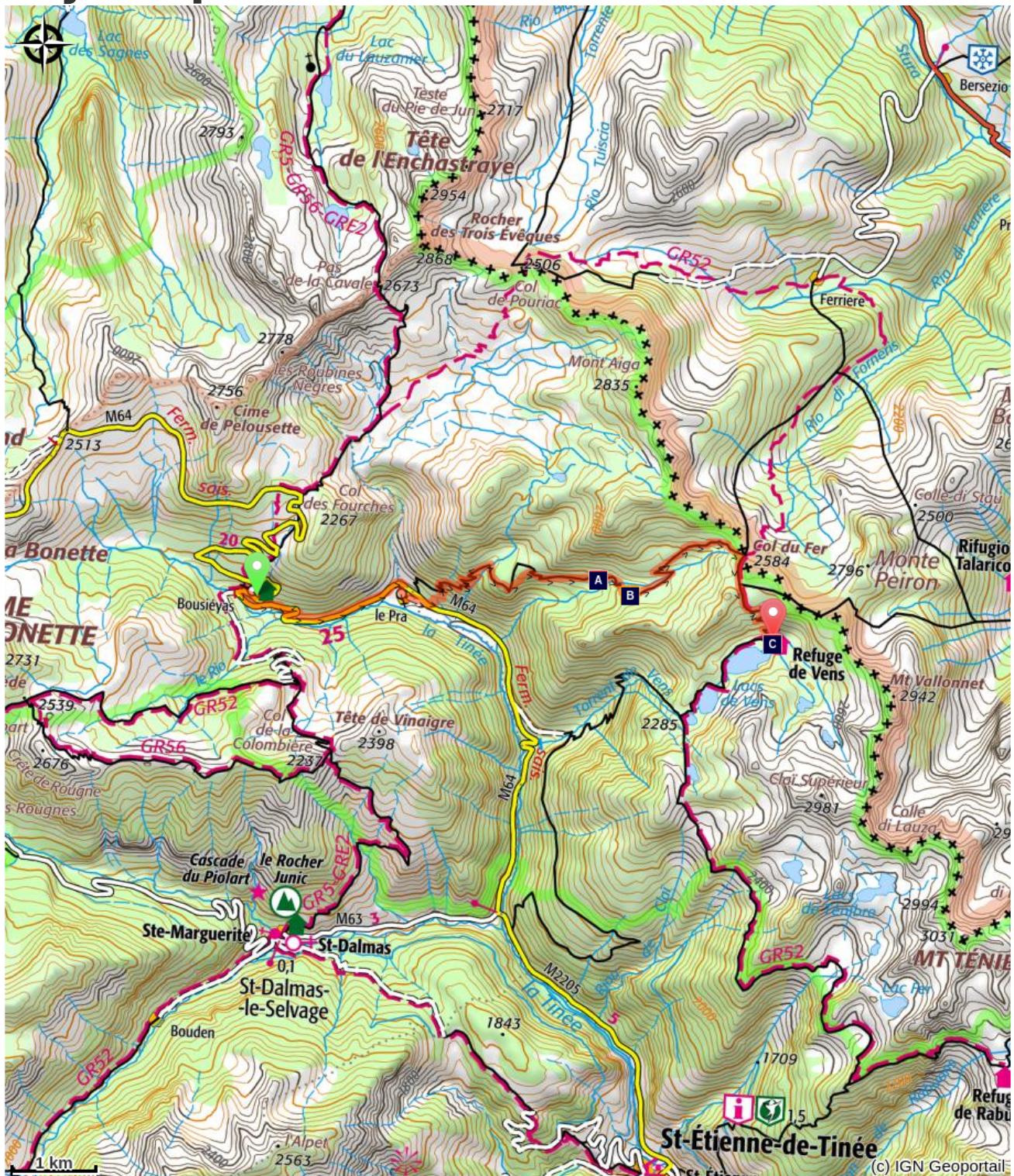
Min elevation 1654 m Max elevation 2598 m

From Bousiéyas, take the D64 downhill for around 2km towards Saint-Etienne-de-Tinée, and reach the hamlet of Pra (1700 m - m32). The path begins on your left, 300m after having crossed the bridge over the Salso Moreno valley. It has clear marker with a yellow rectangle and it initially climbs along hairpin bends on the rocky southern slope which overlooks the road before reaching the verdant Morgon plateau (footbridge). The itinerary crosses the prairie, heading over a secondary summit (b33), before heading downhill for few metres towards the Tortisse valley and, via a long uphill section which passes over the mountain stream, reaching the Tortisse plateau and forest houses. (2252m). At marker 34, turn left and head slightly uphill towards the Tortisse mountain stream, which you will need to ford and then rise along a good path opposite the worn away stacks until you reach the grasses of the Col du Fer (2584m - b35). When the weather is fine, there is a magnificent panorama over the Mercantour and Italy.

Continue along the path with signposts for the Vens refuge via an uphill section which leads to the wide secondary summit of Tortisse (2591m - b35a), at the foot of the stacks of Tortisse. Shortly after having begun the descent, you will suddenly be able to see the series of lakes which occupy the bottom of the Vens glacial cirque, as well as the CAF refuge (2380 m), which shelters on a rocky bar, to the east of the great upper lake.



# On your path...



The fountain (A)



Tortisse forest house and Tortisse stacks (B)



Lac de Vens and refuge (C)



# 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.

# On your path...

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## The fountain (A)

After a climb, often in the sunshine, a refreshing break at the fountain is very welcome.

The water emerging from the ground is very cool and provides you with the chance to take a break before continuing your climb or to have a drink before returning into the heat of the valley.

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## Tortisse forest house and Tortisse stacks (B)

Property of the National Forest Office, the Tortisse forest house is not open to the public. These buildings went up after the Second World War as accommodation for the people working for the Mountain Terrain Restoration (RTM) unit. The Tortisse plateau has been occupied by humans throughout all the ages. The rocky ridges contain iron which has often been mined and then smelted on the Morgon plateau. The slopes around the Tortisse plateau are often occupied by chamois and mouflons. If you lean in, you will also be able to smell the sweet vanilla scent of *Gymnadenia nigra corneliana*, kind of orchid.

Attribution : Philippe PIERINI

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## Lac de Vens and refuge (C)

The Vens refuge only has a warden during the summer months. In winter, only one room is open to allow hikers to shelter. The Vens refuge overlooks a series of lakes of the same name. These lakes are of glacial origin, they are the result of a long erosion process by glaciers. The lake below the refuge (the biggest) is 31 metres deep. Ibex, chamois, mouflons and golden eagles can often be seen at the site. Very close to the refuge, you can see the endemic plant which was for a long time the symbol of the Mercantour National Park: *Saxifraga florulenta*.

Club Alpin Français: Capacity: 45 in summer and 30 in winter (no warden)

Reservations only by e-mail in summer: <http://refugedevens.ffcam.fr/reservation.html>

No shower, meal included

Attribution : CAF / DR

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