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USEFUL NUMBERS

- FRANCE HAUTES-PYRÉNÉES WEATHER**
0 899 71 02 65 (PAYABLE NUMBER)
- EMERGENCY**
112
- MOUNTAIN RESCUE**
+33 (0) 5 62 92 41 41

REFERENCE MAPS & TOPOGUIDES

This map does not replace a topographic map or a topographical guide. You will find opposite the references of the maps and topoguides covering this geographical area. On sale in shops and Tourist Information Points in the Gavarnie Valleys.

TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS:

- IGN 1/25000 1748 OT Gavarnie / Luz Saint-Sauveur
- Rando Editions 1/50 000 n°4 Bigorre (Cauterets / Gavarnie / Saint-Lary)

TOPOGRAPHIC GUIDE REFERENCES:

- Lacs et sommets du Pays Toy... à pied*, FFRandonnée
- Randonnées pittoresques en Pays Toy*, Comission Syndicale de la Vallée du Barèges

PATRIMOINE EN BALADE (THE HERITAGE WALK):

Via a free downloadable application, discover 15 easy audio-guided walks throughout the valleys. Each walk has a theme, related to a historical event or to a specific place. Self -guided.



GUIDED HIKING

Throughout the year, local guides and mountain guides in the valley offer outings adapted to all levels and with very varied themes: the discovery and observation of flora and fauna; night outings under the stars; walks that take you off the beaten track; high-mountain walks and climbs up to mythical peaks...

Find the list of professionals on valleesdegavarnie.com.
A program of guided hikes is available at Tourist Information Points.

ADVICE & PRECAUTIONS

PERIODS OF ACCESSIBILITY

The routes presented in this document can be undertaken in summer conditions, that is to say in the absence of snow or ice. Some routes located at high altitude or on shady slopes may retain late snowfalls (until late spring, or even late summer for some routes). Before planning an itinerary, always check with the Tourist Information Points as to whether the walking routes are operational.

WEATHER AND EQUIPMENT

Bad weather conditions (fog, rain, wind, cold storm, etc) can also turn an easy course into a real ordeal. It is essential to check the weather forecast before departure and to adapt your outings to the daily conditions. Essential equipment: suitable shoes, warm clothes, windbreaker, headwear, sunglasses, sunscreen, water, a snack or a picnic.

RESPECT FOR OUTDOOR AREAS AND THEIR USERS

- Keep your dog on a lead.
- Stay away from herds.
- Park in dedicated spaces.
- Leave nothing behind (picnic leftovers; toilet paper; stone balancing, etc).

REGULATIONS IN PROTECTED ZONES

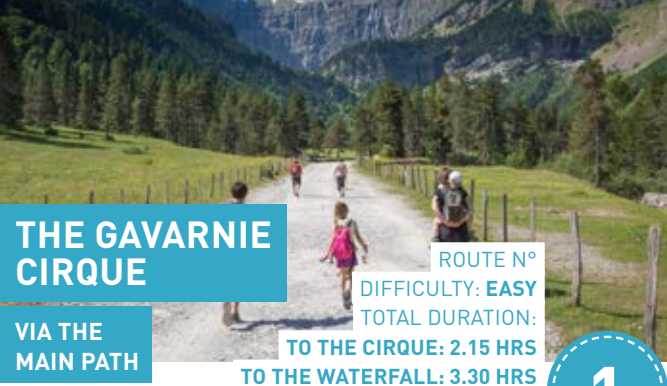
IN THE CORE ZONE OF THE PYRENEES NATIONAL PARK



A National Park is an exceptional territory open to all. In order to protect this outstanding heritage, the heart of the Pyrenees National Park is protected by regulations:

- Dogs are not allowed in the heart of the park, even if they are kept on a leash.
- Gathering and collecting minerals or flora is forbidden.
- Noise and other disturbances are forbidden.
- Fires are strictly prohibited.
- Bivouacs are restricted.

 The core zone is announced at the start of the trails and is marked with specific signposts and painted markers.



THE GAVARNIE CIRQUE

VIA THE MAIN PATH

ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: EASY
TOTAL DURATION: 2.15 HRS
TO THE CIRQUE: 3.30 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 220 M
TO THE CIRQUE: 220 M.
TO THE WATERFALL: 377 M.


1

* dogs on a lead allowed up to the Hôtellerie du Cirque.

This is the easiest route and the most classic way to discover the Gavarnie Cirque. Following this wide path, you are able to reach the very heart of the site and arrive at the “Hôtellerie du Cirque”, from where you have the most complete view of the large Gavarnie waterfall: in front of you is a wall measuring nearly 1 500 m high and one of the largest waterfalls in Europe at 417 m high. From the “Hôtellerie du Cirque”, you are able to walk to the foot of the large waterfall. Beware: the climb is steep and covered with shingle and stones.

STARTING POINT: GAVARNIE VILLAGE.
At the end of the main street. Paid parking.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
Follow signs for “Cirque de Gavarnie / Hôtellerie du Cirque”.



THE GAVARNIE CIRQUE

VIA THE BELLE-VUE PLATEAU


ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
TOTAL DURATION: 3 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 350 M

2

This route has an unrivaled view of the whole of the Gavarnie Cirque. By gaining a little height while staying away from the heart of the cirque, the view from the Bellevue plateau allows you to take in the full expanse of this colossal natural site. The bucolic and flower-filled summer pastures on the plateau and the return journey through the undergrowth adorned with beautiful waterfalls is the icing on the cake!

STARTING POINT: GAVARNIE VILLAGE.
Church and cemetery. Paid parking.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
Follow signs for “Cabane de Pouey-Aspé / Plateau de Bellevue”. Once on the plateau, go down to the left towards “Cirque de Gavarnie / Plateau de la Prade”. At the bottom of the forest, turn left towards the village and follow signs for “Gavarnie”.



THE GAVARNIE CIRQUE

VIA THE ESPUGUES CORNICHE

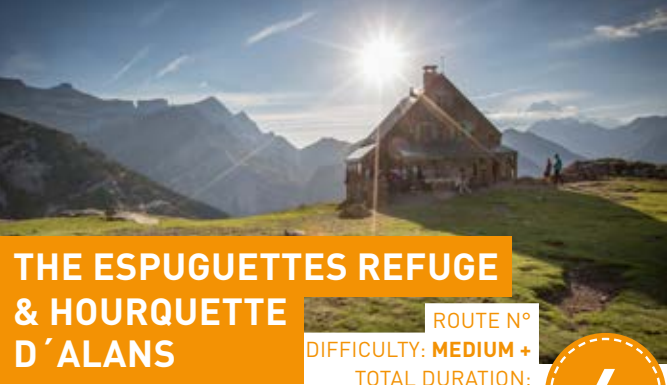
ROUTE N°
TOTAL DURATION: 3.30 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 390 M
DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

3

As it passes through very varied landscapes, this unusual path cuts a narrow passage through the limestone cliffs of the cirque, sometimes it is as if you are under a veritable stone vault, sometimes surrounded by steep slopes. You will discover endemic plants such as the Pyrenean Ramondia or the Grassette with its long leaves. Then, at the end of the ledge, around a bend, the Cirque de Gavarnie suddenly reveals itself - full height! **be careful, some short outdoor aerial passages along a ledge.*

STARTING POINT: GAVARNIE VILLAGE.
at the end of the main street. Paid parking.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS. First follow signs for “Cirque de Gavarnie”, then quickly turn left towards “Refuge des Espuguettes”. After a winding ascent, at the end of the forest, turn right towards “Cirque de Gavarnie”. At the Hôtellerie du Cirque, return via the main path towards “Gavarnie”.



THE ESPUGUETTES REFUGE & HOURQUETTE D'ALANS

ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM +
TOTAL DURATION: 4.30 HRS
REFUGE: 4.30 HRS - H. D'ALANS: 6.30 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 665 M - H. D'ALANS: 1070 M

4

The path winds up through a beech-fir forest. It emerges, halfway through, onto the splendid Pailla plateau where mountain pines dot the summer pastures, beneath the imposing peaks of Astazous and Pic rouge de Pailla. The refuge is in sight, and this time the route leads you through the pastures. Once at the refuge, the view is picture-perfect: The Brèche de Roland gap, the Taillon and the Vignemale and its glacier... more athletic types can continue the ascent to the Hourquette d'Alans, a pretty pass which separates the Gavarnie and Estaubé valleys.

STARTING POINT: GAVARNIE VILLAGE.
At the end of the main street. Paid parking.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
First follow signs for “Cirque de Gavarnie”, then quickly turn left towards “Refuge des Espuguettes / Hourquette d'Alans”.



DES TENTES & PAHULE PEAKS


ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: EASY
TOTAL DURATION: CA. 1.30 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 260 M

5

This is a very easy to access route which offers one of the best views of the valley. You quickly reach the Pic des Tentes and its orientation board and it is from here that you can see the Brèche de Roland and peaks such as the Taillon, Piméné, Pic Long and even the Néouvielle. The trail continues along a wide panoramic ridge overlooking the wild valley of Pouey Aspé. The highest point of the route is the rounded summit of the Pahule, which offers one of the most spectacular views of the Gavarnie Cirque. Seen from above, the cirque has an unusual face, however, this vantage point only serves to reiterate the extraordinary grandeur of this site.

STARTING POINT: COL DES TENTES Car Park.

ROUTE MARKERS: UNMARKED.
When you are at the start of the tarmac road to the Col de Boucharo, take a small path to the left that leads up to a grassy outcrop (the “Pic des Tentes”). Follow this path.



ESPÉCIÈRES AND DE SAUTARO LAKES


ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: EASY +
TOTAL DURATION: 40 MIN - SAUTARO: 2 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 50 MIN - SAUTARO: 250 M

6

From the Col des Tentes, a flat and easy path leads you to Lac des Espécières, a lake nestled in a small, steep cirque. As you continue towards the Col des Espécières, with the high peaks of Gavarnie in the background, the lake takes on a new appearance. For families with children, it is best to stop at this first lake. For those who carry on, the trail then rises above the lake, on a steep but fortunately short slope (beware of a short steep section). It ends at the border with Spain. The view here is splendid! To the south, Lake Sautaro and the colourful Spanish peaks of the Sierra Tendeñera. To the north, an extensive view of Gavarnie's peaks: the Pic Long and maybe even the Néouvielle peak.

STARTING POINT: COL DES TENTES Car Park.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS. From the Car Park on the right, follow signs for “Lac et Col des Espécières”.



BERNATOIRE LAKE

ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
TOTAL DURATION: 4.30 HRS
500 M FROM THE DAM
650 M FROM THE HUT

7

This is a discovery route that will show you the green summer pastures of the Canau valley, home to herds of Spanish cows. The path alternates between small steep slopes and flatter areas. The landscape has a more rocky feel to it at the mountain pass/border, where you can see into Spain. There are views of the strange Bernatoire Lake, which is nestled at the bottom of a crater with no apparent water outlet!

STARTING POINT: OSSOUE PISTE.
From the “Cabane de Milhas” hut or from the Ossoue dam.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS. If starting from “Cabane de Milhas” hut: go 300 m up the track, then turn left at the yellow signpost towards “Lac de la Bernatoire”. If starting from the dam: cross the footbridge downstream from the dam and follow signs for “Lac de la Bernatoire”.



THE ESTAUBÉ CIRQUE

ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: EASY
TOTAL DURATION: CA. 2.30 HRS - 3 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 100 M

8

Smaller and more discreet than its two neighbouring cirques (Troumouse and Gavarnie), the Estaubé Cirque is a remarkable natural site. A high altitude grazing site in the valley, nearly 400 cows and 1 200 sheep graze here every summer! Take a walk around Gloriettes Lake then along the very bucolic Estaubé stream. This is an easy route and an ideal place to see marmots! Along the way, you will appreciate the rich meadows and the turquoise waters of the river. From the Gloriettes dam, as you pass the summit ridges of the cirque, you will be able to see the mythical Mont Perdu at an altitude of 3 355 m, the third highest peak in the Pyrenees.

STARTING POINT: GLORIETTES DAM. Car Park: limited spaces.
Do not park along the access road.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
Follow signs for “Cabane d'Estaubé”.



THE TROUMOUSE CIRQUE

LOOP

ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
TOTAL DURATION: AROUND 4.30 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 600 M

9

The Troumouse Cirque is the largest and most open of all the glacial cirques in the valley, with a fairly marked horseshoe shape and a circumference of around 11 km. Faithful to its pastoral tradition, Troumouse is home to many cow herds and sheep flocks. As you make your way up through the Touyères valley, you may be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of marmots and chamois. Then, all of a sudden, the cirque opens up before you! From here on, it is an easy walk - a great reward.

STARTING POINT: HÉAS. Car Park 300 m after the chapel.
Access to the cirque is possible from Maillet Car Park.

ROUTE MARKERS: PARTIALLY MARKED. As you leave Héas, follow signs for “Cabane des Aires / Cirque de Troumouse”. When you get close to “Lac des Aires”, you will cross a rocky area (the stream bed), and come upon a beautiful path on the other side, which will take you to the shuttle bus Car Park. Follow the road for a few hundred metres until you find a path that crosses the road several times on the way up to the “Auberge du Maillet”. Take the path that starts just behind the hostel up to the Héas Chapel.



THE RIPEYRE PASS


ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT
TOTAL DURATION: 3.45 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 650 M

10

Perched above Gèdre, the Ripeyre pass is no mean feat. But once you get there, it is worth it. If not just for the amazing view! The climb up takes you along the southern slope of the pass, through Mediterranean undergrowth. Throughout the climb, the slopes are steep and relentless. It is only at the very end of the route that you leave the forest floor and come upon the grassy meadows of the pass. The view is magnificent: the Gavarnie Cirque, the Brèche de Roland, the Bué valley, the Ardiden massif, etc. You can head up to the pass from the other side, (from Pragnères) which affords a radically different type of landscape, with a beech-fir forest, typically found on the northern slopes.

STARTING POINT: GÈDRE VILLAGE.
Opposite the Tourist Office - Gèdre-Dessus road.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
Follow signs for “Col de Ripeyre”.



THE ERES LITS CIRQUE

ITINÉRAIRE N°
DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
TOTAL DURATION: 4.30 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 690 M

11

Starting your walk from the hamlet of Pragnères, you will discover the wild and deep Barrada valley, with its austere beauty. You will pass through different natural and landscaped environments. First you pass through undergrowth, then boxwood shrubs or beech-fir forests, then the landscape gradually opens up, always following a tumultuous stream. Halfway along, the trail leaves the forest and enters into pastures surrounded by steep slopes and imposing peaks and finally ends in the heart of the Eres Lits cirque, which is patois for “Cirque of avalanches”.

STARTING POINT: HAMEAU DE PRAGNÈRES. EDF Car Park.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
Follow signs for “Cirque d'Eres Lits / Cabane de Matte”.



CESTRÈDE LAKE

ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
TOTAL DURATION: 4.30 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 525 M

12

The route starts in the superb “quartier des granges” (barn neighbourhood) in Bué, and their pastures located on the edge of the forest. Then the path gradually rises up a fairly steep grassy slope, hard on the thighs but affording a nice view of the Soutarra waterfall. Along the way, you will be able to look down over the Gave de Cestrède river below. In summer, there are a lot of flowers in this area. A good excuse to take a break. At the end of this slope, the path runs alongside the stream and emerges into the splendid, suspended valley which shelters the Cestrède Lake.

STARTING POINT: GRANGES DE BUÉ.
At the end of Bué forest track.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
Follow signs for “Lac de Cestrède”.



THE POURTEILLOU PASS

ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
TOTAL DURATION: 3.15 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 600 M

13

The climb up to the Pourteillou pass (2 238 m) allows you to really explore the splendid Saugué Plateau. Shortly after setting off, you can see your final destination, nestled at the foot of large limestone cliffs. The route winds its way through the beautiful summer pastures of the plateau, with its soft and rounded reliefs. As you gain height, the view of the surrounding peaks opens out. Then, as you approach the pass, the scenery changes and the mountains are more apparent. When you get there, the view down over the Ossoue valley is impressive. And before you, loom the Gavarnie Cirque, the Brèche de Roland and Mont Perdu (only the summit is visible). This is a very serene and calm area, at the foot of these imposing limestone cliffs overlooking the pass.

STARTING POINT: SAUGUÉ PLATEAU.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
Follow signs for “Col du Pourteillou” and yellow paint route markers.



THE SAUGUÉ PLATEAU

ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: EASY
TOTAL DURATION: 1.15 HRS
ELEVATION GAIN: 50 M

14

Discover the splendid “plateau de Saugué” blessed with a rich and rare natural and cultural heritage. Pastoralism is still very much alive on the plateau, and has created harmonious landscapes and environments which aid the development of biodiversity. Information boards along the route will help you to understand this landscape and the interaction between man and the mountain. You will pass through superb “barn neighbourhoods”, walk beside hay meadows and their dry stone walls, observe the ingenious network of irrigation canals... And don't forget your binoculars, because in summer, the plateau welcomes numerous birds (songbirds, birds of prey...). And don't forget the 180° view of the Gavarnie Cirque, the Piméné or “Pic Long” massifs...

STARTING POINT: SAUGUÉ PLATEAU.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.



THE WATER MILLS AT GÈDRE-DESSUS


ROUTE N°
DIFFICULTY: EASY
TOTAL DURATION: 1.15 HRS
DÉNIVELÉ POSITIF: 120 M

15

This small and easy route begins at Gèdre village and takes you to the hamlet of Gèdre-Dessus where five water mills have been restored. The route begins with a short but steep climb on a path that characteristically connects villages and hamlets. Once you have reached the tiny “route du hameau” (hamlet road), follow it to the right, and enjoy the views until you reach the mills. The small and pleasant interpretive trail along the watercourse will help you to discover how these mills worked and the role they played in the community.

STARTING POINT: GÈDRE VILLAGE.
near the “La Grotte” restaurant.

ROUTE MARKERS: YELLOW SIGNPOSTS.
Follow signs for “Moulin” then when you get to the small “Route de Gèdre-Dessus”, follow it to the right until you reach the mills.



GAVARNIE-GÈDRE

IDEAS FOR WALKS FOR ALL LEVELS

3€
37€5
NO

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TOURIST INFORMATION POINTS

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