

A path that runs throughout the pays du Roquefort

Des falaises de Roquefort au Rougier - Saint-Affrique



Château de Montaigut (Stelloweb)



Open the doors to the Roquefort country and get your thrills! Over five days spent walking between cause and rougiers, enjoy beautiful green areas, unexpected tracks and a magnificent medieval heritage that open up to you.

Along the Combalou cliffs and the rocky spur of the Montaigut castle, throughout the cause du Larzac and the impregnable Saint-Paul-des-Fonts amphitheatre, by the Viala medieval tower and the Sylvanès abbey, via the Sorgues and the Dourdou valleys, upon trails and into buisnières explore a land of character which is the breeding ground for a typical cheese with lots of character to!

Useful information

Practice : Trekking

Duration : 5 days

Length : 87.3 km

Trek ascent : 2961 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Itinerant stay

Themes : Agropastoralism, Geology, History and heritage

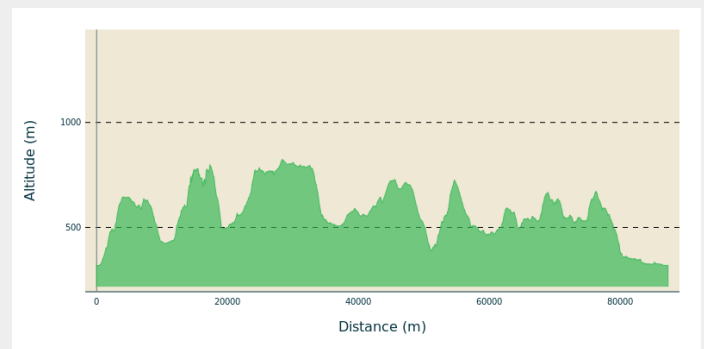
Trek

Departure : Place Leclerc, Saint-Affrique

Arrival : Place Leclerc, Saint-Affrique

- Cities** :
1. Saint-Affrique
 2. Saint-Rome-de-Cernon
 3. Roquefort-sur-Soulzon
 4. Tournemire
 5. Viala-du-Pas-de-Jaux
 6. Saint-Jean-et-Saint-Paul
 7. Saint-Félix-de-Sorgues
 8. Sylvanès
 9. Gissac
 10. Versols-et-Lapeyre

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 318 m Max elevation 823 m

This hike which is full of character starts from St Affrique and offers a discovery tour from the sometime harsh landscape of the Causse, up to the lands of the Rougier bursting with colours and promises.

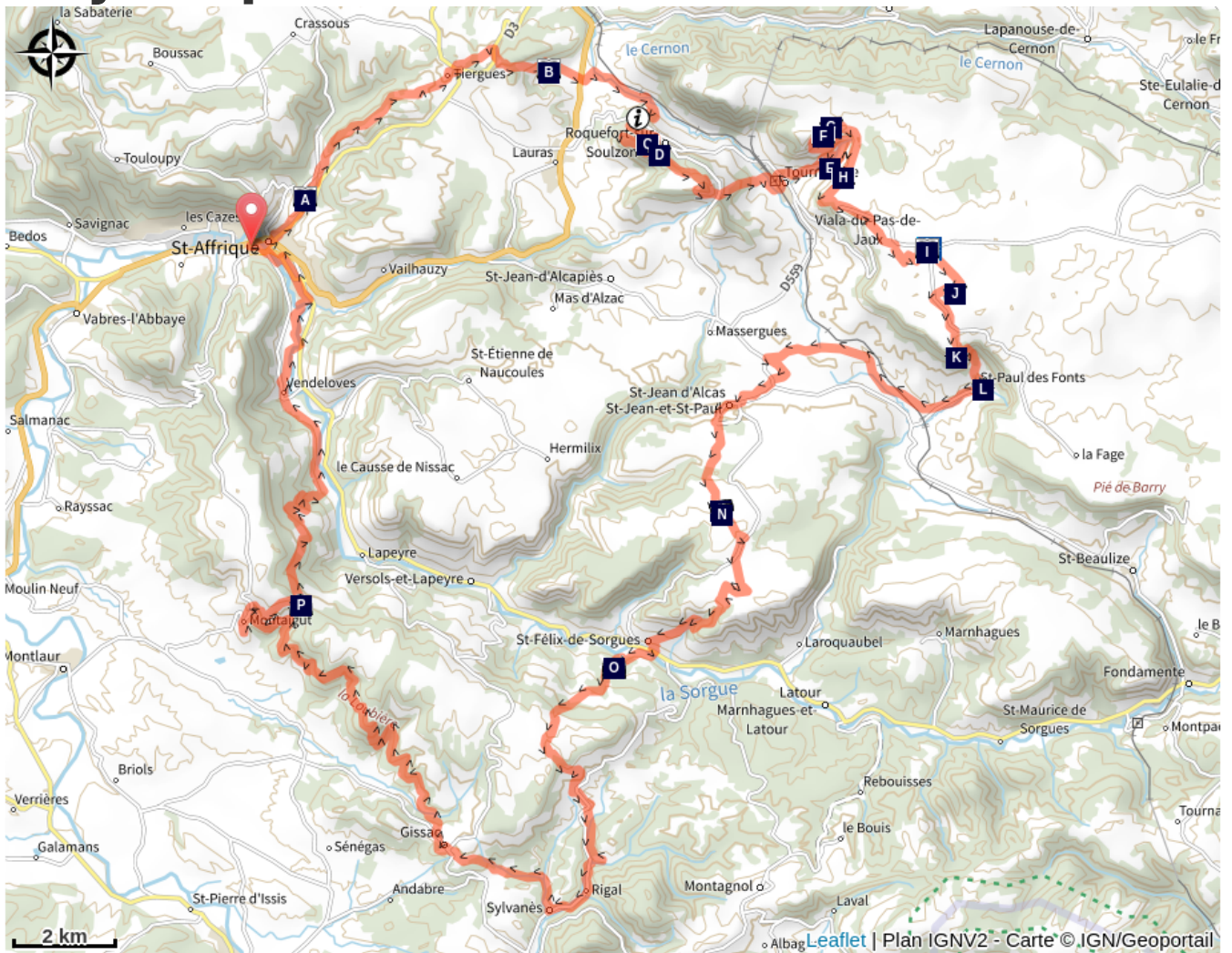
Time and people have left their marks along the route: rocky paths, long buissières (narrow passages between two rows of box trees), and sunken paths lined with dry stone walls.








You'll walk along the great geological fracture and the cliffs of the Combalou mount which gave Roquefort its reputation. You will explore the Tournemire and St Paul des Fonts amphitheatres, the Viala du Pas de Jaux Tower, the Cistercian fort of Saint-Jean d'Alcas, the pleasant village of St Félix overlooking the Sorgues valley, the Sylvanès Abbey which is one of the jewels of Cistercian art and the Montaigut castle standing proudly on a rocky spur and towering over the Rougier de Camarès.








Stages :

1. From St Affrique to Tournemire (maison de la vigne) (vine house)
21.7 km / 1125 m D+ / 5 h
2. From the maison de la vigne in Tournemire to St Jean d'Alcas
20.7 km / 550 m D+ / 5 h
3. De St-Jean-d'Alcas à Sylvanès
17.7 km / 586 m D+ / 5 h
4. To get to Saint-Jean d'Alcas via A75 (coming from Montpellier or Clermont-Ferrand), take exit 48 towards Cornus and when reachin
14.2 km / 480 m D+ / 4 h
5. From Montaigut to St Affrique
12.6 km / 211 m D+ / 3 h 30

On your path...



-  Counts of Caylus' Castle (A)
-  The Combalou scree slope (C)
-  Birds (E)
-  Lavogne (G)
-  Tower of Viala du Pas de Jaux (I)
-  Cirque of St-Paul-des-Fonts (K)
-  Mascourbe 1 dolmen (M)

-  Laumière castle (B)
-  The Combalou Jasse (D)
-  Tournemire amphitheatre (F)
-  The Tournemire cirque (H)
-  The lavogne (cobbled watering place) of Font Rome (J)
-  Botanical Museum Hippolyte Coste (L)
-  Mascourbe 2 dolmen (N)

All useful information

Is in the midst of the park

This itinerary is located in the World Heritage zone Causses and Cévennes, mediterranean agropastoral cultural landscape.

Gear

Prévoir une réserve d'eau et une tenue adaptée

How to come ?

Transports

Toutes les informations sur le site de [l'office de tourisme](#)

Access

Pour accéder à saint-Affrique, par la A75 , 46 ou 47 puis suivre la D999 en direction de Saint-Affrique / Albi.

Arrivée à Saint-Affrique par la D999, depuis Millau, traverser la ville, la place Foch est juste après avoir traversé la Sorgues ; depuis Albi, se diriger vers le centre ville, la place Foch et après le jardin public.

Advised parking

Place Leclerc ou place Foch à Saint-Affrique

Information desks

OT Pays du Roquefort

Avenue de Lauras, 12250 Roquefort/
Soulzon

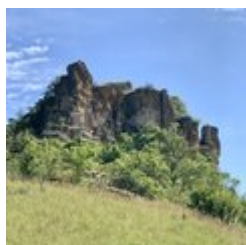
contact@roquefort-tourisme.fr

Tel : 0565585600

<http://www.roquefort-tourisme.fr/>



On your path...



Counts of Caylus' Castle (A)

This rock was used as the bedrock for the building of the Counts of Caylus' Castle of which nothing remains today

The castle was destroyed in retaliation of Count of Caylus' rebellion against his overlord Raymond VII, count of Toulouse, marquis of Provence and of Gothie.

Attribution : Roquefort Tourisme



Laumière castle (B)

The castle is situated 3 km south east of Saint Rome and was rebuilt after the French revolution. Written references to the ancient castle mention the year 1322 when it was occupied by Raymond de Vanco de Banc d'Anglars, and again in the 15th century when it was owned by the Armagnac family. It was then passed on to the Morlhon family, the Vernhet de Grandval family and the Sambucy de Sorgue family. The Laumière seigneurie was granted to the Vernhet's during the 18th century who became Vernhet de Laumière. A general named Vernhet de Laumière distinguished himself on taking command of the Imperial Guard artillery during the Second Empire. He died in Mexico during the 1863 siege of Puebla. During the 19th century, Maria de Sambucy gave the castle as a wedding dowry to the Count of Toulza

Attribution : Roquefort Tourisme



The Combalou scree slope (C)

The imposing rocky chaos that surrounds us comes from the numerous and profound movements that the plateau of Combalou has undergone: landslides, rockslides, erosion... The diagram highlights the primitive and current structures of the whole Combalou plateau.

Attribution : Roquefort Tourisme



The Combalou Jasse (D)

Once the milking season was over, shepherds and their flocks would reach the Combalou pastoral routes via the slopes to the rear of the Combalou plateau rather than climbing up the cliff using the ladders. Shepherds used these ladders to scale down directly to Roquefort and climb up the same pathways when the ewes needed to be sheltered in the jasse. The flocks would be kept on the plateau until the first cold of autumn.

The jasse was a two storey building: the ground-floor consisted of two sheepfolds, one of which had a vaulted ceiling, the first floor was a huge barn used to store the hay.

Attribution : Roquefort Tourisme



Birds (E)

The cliffs of the Tournemire amphitheatre are an important playground and nesting area for numerous birds. These cliffs are home to great variety of bird life, from the most expressive to the most secretive such as: the Rock Swallow; the Alpine Swift; the Red-billed Chough; the Wall creeper; Bats (Greater Horseshoe) and birds of prey nesting on cliffs among which is the Eurasian Eagle-Owl.

Attribution : Roquefort Tourisme



Tournemire amphitheatre (F)

The great Tournemire amphitheatre is one of the most outstanding escarpments of the western edge of the Larzac and as such is classified "Zone Natura 2000". The lower slopes are the only part where Toarcian marls are visible in the SW erosion gullies, everywhere else these marls are hidden under rocky slopes and big rock slides. At the top of the slopes, the dolomitic limestone ruin-shaped cliffs frame the outline of this amphitheatre.

Attribution : Roquefort Tourisme



Lavogne (G)

Ever since the Neolithic period, humans have kept on improving the numerous natural ponds that they came across all around the Causse. They took advantage of these small land depressions called sotch or doline that provided essential water supplies to ensure the sheep watering, but were also used as laundry places or fish ponds, although their clayey bottom have always posed problems with leakage.

In the Occitan language, the word lavanha refers to all kinds of ponds whether natural or hand built, whereas at the PNRGC, we have chosen to keep the word lavogne, or lavagne to designate ponds with paved bottoms, for they have witnessed the development of pastoralism over the 19th century. (source PNR Grands Causses).

Attribution : DelphineAtche



The Tournemire cirque (H)

Situated in the southwest of the Larzac Causse, the Tournemire Cirque is a remarkable geological area marking the bondary beetwen the fore-causses and the great causses. It presents limestone ledges and rocky escarpments with caves and cavities where raptors such as the eagle owl and the golden eagle nest.

Attribution : Claude Chambaud



Tower of Viala du Pas de Jaux (I)

The Lord of Tournemire gave to the Templars knights the lands of Viala du Pas de Jaux in 1150. In the 12th and 13th centuries, the Viala consisted of a few farms.

After 1312, when the Hospitallers took possession of the Templars' property, they decided to create in this place a village and for that they built farm buildings, managed by the brothers of the order. They constructed for them a dwelling and a church dedicated to St-Jean-Baptiste, the patron of the Hospitallers. Until 1430, the inhabitants of Viala du Pas de Jaux and the surroundings took refuge in Ste-Eulalie de Cernon during the periods of insecurity which occurred on the Larzac. Because of the high distance between the two village, the inhabitants asked the authorization to the Grand Prior of Saint Gilles, to build a fortified tower to be able to take refuge inside with their possessions. This is the first fortification built on the plateau. Today the 30 meters high tower has been restored. The vaulted ground floor, the five floors, its terrace and the dwelling dating from the 14th century are now accessible.

Attribution : Association La Tour du Viala



The lavogne (cobbled watering place)of Font Rome (J)

This *lavogne* (cobbled watering place) of Font Rome, built in 1910 near tank wells is was first situated on a waterproof clay background. Then, it was built of stones all around and cemented. So this type offers the advantage of forming a passage that resists the trampling of sheep, and the gentle slope of the surrounding area limits the risk of slipping and falling of the animals. It is supplied by rainwater.

Attribution : Association La Tour du Viala du Pas de Jaux



Cirque of St-Paul-des-Fonts (K)

The cirque of St-Paul-des-Fonts is a semi-circular natural cirque formed by karst erosion.

Attribution : Claude Chambaud



✿ Botanical Museum Hippolyte Coste (L)

Established on the ground floor of the presbytery adjoining the church of Saint-Paul-des-Fonts, the botanical space is dedicated to the life and work of the canon Hippolyte Coste who shared his life between the duties of his ministry and his passion for botany.

This rouergate of modest peasant origins, which has been nicknamed "*le curé des fleurs*" (the priest of the flowers), knew how to rise in the yard of the greatest botanists by realizing in particular the remarkable and masterful «Flore descriptive et illustrée de la France, de la Corse et des contrées limitrophes» (1901 – 1906) which constitutes its masterpiece, known and still recognized today at the European scale.

With this museum Saint-Paul-des-Fonts becomes an unmissable destination for all those who wish to learn by discovering the botanical wealth of the Larzac and Aveyron.

Open from april to septembre. Free entrance.

Attribution : OT Larzac et Vallées



🪦 Mascourbe 1 dolmen (M)

The Mascourbe dolmens are parts of the "Treilles" group. This name comes from the cave located next to the Treilles farm in Saint-Paul des Fonts where these Grands Causses "builders" hail from. They were also famous for working with copper and for their astonishing trepanations (making small openings into the skull). There are at least three dolmens located in Mascourbe.

The covering stone is broken into two pieces and the headstone has a trapezoidal shape.

Attribution : PNR des Grands Causses



🪦 Mascourbe 2 dolmen (N)

The Mascourbe dolmens are parts of the "Treilles" group. This name comes from the cave located next to the Treilles farm in Saint-Paul des Fonts where these Grands Causses "builders" hail from. They were also famous for working with copper and for their astonishing trepanations (making small openings into the skull). There are at least three dolmens located in Mascourbe.

This megalith is a simple dolmen with a covering stone, sidestones, but without a headstone.

Attribution : PNR des Grands Causses