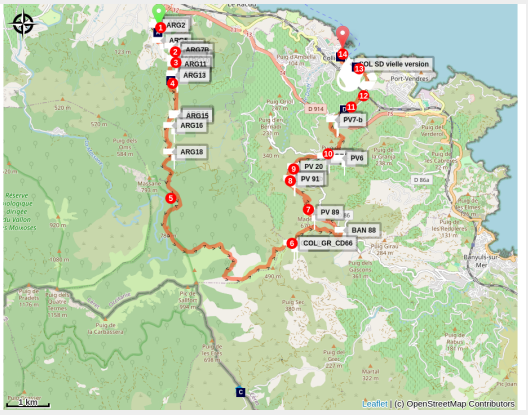
From Château de Valmy to Château Royal via the Madeloc Tower

Albères



Vue sur Collioure (Frédéric Hédelin)



Castles, fortifications, watchtowers, dolmens, and other heritage sites await you throughout this hike, offering stunning landscapes and breathtaking views.

A challenging hike marked by rich heritage, allowing you to explore the Albèra forest area above Château de Valmy and the Massane Forest Nature Reserve, leading to Collioure via the mountain passes and the Madeloc Tower.

Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 9 h

Length : 22.5 km

Trek ascent : 1319 m

Difficulty : Very hard

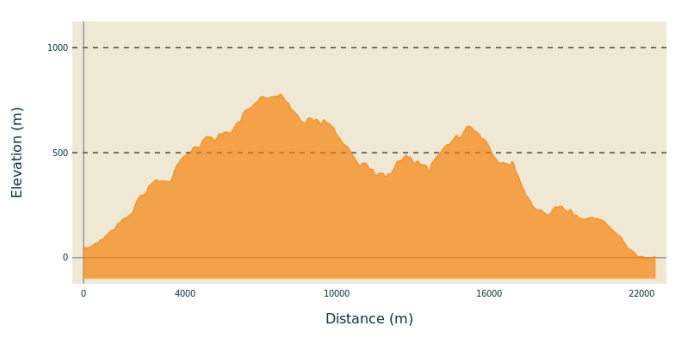
Type : Traversée

Themes : Montagne, Patrimoine, Histoire, Sommet, Point de vue, Art

Trek

Departure : Valmy Castle
Arrival : Boramar Beach in Collioure
Markings : GR PR
Cities : 1. ARGELES SUR MER
2. COLLIOURE
3. BANYULS SUR MER
4. PORT-VENDRES

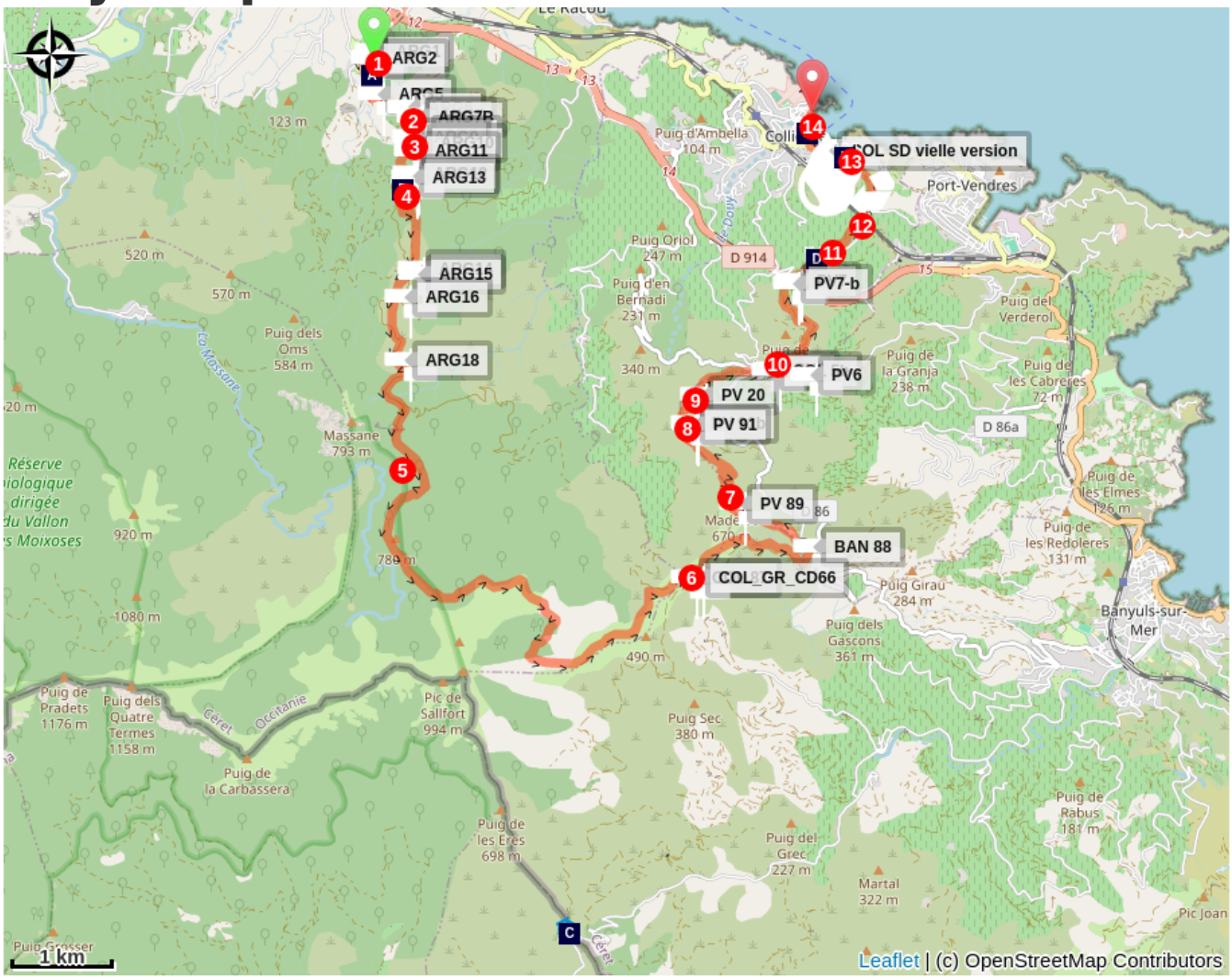
Altimetric profile



Min elevation 0 m Max elevation 779 m

1. Start from the parking lot towards the Mimosas campsite. Before reaching the campsite, take the trail on the left (DFCI AL42). Take the path to the right above the castle park, then reconnect with the trail further along.
2. Climb the path directly ahead towards the dolmens. After the first dolmen, follow the path, then take the right fork and continue uphill to the second dolmen.
3. After the second dolmen, take the right path. At the junction, stay on the trail that connects to the DFCI AL41 ter (picnic table). Continue until you reach the Col de la Place d'Armes (670m).
4. Head towards the Col d'en Verderol (787m). You will be in the Massane Forest Nature Reserve. Continue along the trail towards the Madeloc Tower.
5. At the trail crossroads, take the middle path and follow it to the tower.
6. After the tower, head towards the Col de Taillefer (468m).
7. At the col, take the path on the right.
8. At this point, take the Col Maillo Taillefer trail to the Col de Mollo (231m).
9. Head towards Puig de les Danes (333m) and descend to the Col d'en Raixat (200m). Head towards Fort Dugommier along the Chemin del Coll de Mala Cara.
10. After the fort, take the path on the left.
11. At the trail intersection, continue on the path that passes left of Fort Saint Elme and descend towards Collioure.
12. Upon reaching the mill, continue towards the Collioure Modern Art Museum. Then head down to the Port-Vendres road in the typical "Faubourg" neighborhood facing the bay, and take the left promenade along the Royal Castle.
13. After the square, turn left onto the bridge and head towards the sea. The Church of Saint Vincent and its famous bell tower await walkers. Arrival at Boramar Beach.

On your path...



Château de Valmy (A)
Col de Banyuls-sur-Mer (C)
Collioure Mill (E)
Dolmen dels Collets de Cotlliure (B)
Fort Dugommier (D)
Royal Castle of Collioure (F)

All useful information

⚠ Advices

Let’s respect forest ecosystems to preserve our biodiversity!

Part of the trail passes through the Massane Nature Reserve.
The Massane Forest is a scientific research laboratory, home to nearly 6,500 species across just 336 hectares.
Overcrowding in this area could have irreversible effects on the habitat.
This site is therefore subject to regulations and prohibitions aimed at protecting the natural heritage.
The introduction or destruction of plants, animals, or any activities that could harm the natural environment are prohibited.

The complete list of restrictions for the Reserve is available by clicking here.

Check the weather before you leave. Bring water, a cap or hat, a windbreaker depending on the weather, and walking shoes. You may want to pack a picnic.

You are on a hiking trail where regular waste collection points are provided for your convenience.
Out of respect for this exceptional area, used by tens of thousands of hikers and walkers each month, we kindly ask that you dispose of all your waste (glass, paper, food scraps, etc.) at these collection points, as well as any litter you might encounter during your walk.

Through these simple but essential actions, let’s keep this site clean, just as nature graciously offered it to us.

How to come ?

Transports

Bus 2€

Access

D914

Advised parking

Château de Valmy Parking

Environmental sensitive areas

Along your trek, you will go through sensitive areas related to the presence of a specific species or environment. In these areas, an appropriate behaviour allows to contribute to their preservation. For detailed information, specific forms are accessible for each area.

Zone Natura 2000 Directive Habitat

Sensitivity period:

Zone Natura 2000 Directive Oiseaux

Zone Natura 2000 Directive Oiseaux

Sensitivity period:

Zone Natura 2000 Directive oiseaux

Réserve de la Forêt de la Massane

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, Decembre

Réserve Naturelle de la Forêt de la Massane.

Porté par l'Etat français, la hêtraie de la Réserve Naturelle de la Forêt de la Massane a rejoint le patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO le 28 juillet 2021 sur la liste des "Forêts primaires et anciennes de Hêtres des Carpates et autre régions d'Europe".

Ce classement international prestigieux reconnaît l’ancienneté et le fort niveau de naturalité de cette vieille forêt du bassin méditerranéen en libre évolution depuis plus de 150 ans. Il est le fruit du travail exemplaire mené tant sur la connaissance que sur la gestion de la réserve depuis sa création en 1973 par les organismes cogestionnaires : l’Association des Amis de la Massane et la Fédération des Réserves Naturelles Catalanes.

Un haut lieu de biodiversité

La forêt de la Massane est probablement l’aire protégée la plus inventoriée d’Europe, voire du monde. Les dernières publications montrent que cette forêt peut être considérée comme présentant une très grande diversité d’espèces à l’hectare, avec plus de 8 200 espèces répertoriées sur seulement 336 hectares.

Un patrimoine commun à préserver

Si la hêtraie de la Massane a conservé ce patrimoine naturel exceptionnel depuis les dernières glaciations, elle n’en est pas moins menacée par les changements globaux brutaux (climat, activités humaines, etc.). De par ses caractéristiques biogéographiques, la Massane est considérée comme un poste avancé du changement climatique en zone méditerranéenne. Elle accuse certaines années des taux de mortalité 6 fois supérieurs à ce que l’on observe dans les autres hêtraies.

Afin de répondre aux enjeux actuels de gestion, un plan d’adaptation a été élaboré à partir d’un diagnostic de vulnérabilité établi selon les prédictions du GIEC et toutes les connaissances acquises sur le site (Life Natur’adapt). Pour préserver ce bien commun, il est donc indispensable de garantir sa tranquillité et son intégrité, notamment au regard des risques majeurs actuels (changement climatique, pollutions, surfréquentation, etc.).

On your path...



Château de Valmy (A)

An amazing space leaning against the Albères, embracing the vineyards and the Mediterranean: welcome to the Château de Valmy. Art Nouveau style, it is the work of the Danish architect Viggo Petersen. It is Pierre Bardou, a Peruvian industrialist creator of the brand JOB, who controls this castle for his daughter Jeanne from 1888 to 1900. His descendants are still owners of the castle. They relaunched the wine business and created guest rooms at the Château. Go check it out !

Attribution : CCACVI



Dolmen dels Collets de Cotlliure (B)

Find this dolmen on the path that connects the Château de Valmy to the Tour de la Massane. The path will lead you first to the Dolmen de la Cova de l'Alarb, then you will arrive directly at the Dolmen del Collets area. Open your eyes and look around. The dolmen is there but in poor condition.

Attribution : Jean-Philippe Lapeyre



Col de Banyuls-sur-Mer (C)

This incredibly wild and unspoiled site, which serves as the border between France and Spain, has been the scene of many twists and turns in the history of refugees. Discover the beauty of the place and let yourself be amazed by the unique panorama of the site.

Attribution : François-Xavier Hallé



Fort Dugommier (D)

Fortress built to monitor the towns of Collioure and Port-Vendres, Fort Dugommier was born in 1893. Because of its strategic location, it sweeps the coast of the eye. However, the Second World War did not spare him by destroying a large part of the fort. He now belongs to an association. Walk pleasant, but beware of the wind because there, it blows!

Attribution : CCACVI



Collioure Mill (E)

This windmill is quite rare in the area, most of which are water mills. It ceases its activity in the nineteenth century and gradually turns into ruins. Perfectly restored in a traditional way by the municipality in 2001, it is now in working order for the elaboration of Collioure olive oil. Near the city, it is a perfect destination for a nice little walk.

Attribution : CCACVI



Royal Castle of Collioure (F)

Built in the 13th century to house the court of the Kings of Majorca, the Royal Castle of Collioure has been listed as a historical monument since 1922. Reinforced many times, the castle eventually pushed the city back to the foot of the cape turned into a citadel in the 17th century. It is inseparable from Collioure as the city can not be separated from the sea. To return to the heart of the world of the Royal Castle of Collioure, do not forget the guided tours!

Attribution : CCACVI