

From the Château de Valmy to Banyuls via Pic Sallfort and the Walter Benjamin Trail.

Albères - ARGELES SUR MER



Vue aérienne de Banyuls (Frédéric Hédelin)

The richness of history and landscape.

A stunning hike that allows you to become familiar with some historical elements of the region. Exceptional viewpoints are also part of the experience.

Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 13 h

Length : 29.6 km

Trek ascent : 1982 m

Difficulty : Very hard

Type : Traversée

Themes : Point de vue, Sommet, Histoire, Montagne

Trek

Departure : Valmy Castle

Arrival : Tourist Office of Banyuls-sur-mer

Markings :  PR




1. From the Valmy parking lot, head towards Camping Les Mimosas.
2. Before reaching the campsite, take the DFCI AL42 track.
3. Follow the direction of the dolmens and spend a few minutes there.
4. At this point, turn right.
5. At the next junction, turn left.
6. At the following junction, turn right, and you will arrive at a picnic table.
Continue along the DFCI AL41Ter track.
7. Do not turn right towards Col de la Place d'Armes, continue towards Col d'en Verderol (787m) and the Cassagnes spring.
8. Arrive at Pic de Sailfort (983m).
9. Descend towards Pic d'Estella (Freedom Passage) and Pla de les Eres.
10. After passing the Stèle des Évadés de France (357m), arrive at Col de Banyuls.
11. Then take the dirt track to the left, which passes in front of the Border Cross 591.
12. Continue along the trail which ascends towards Col de Llop and Pic de la Calme, then proceed towards Col del Tourn (Freedom Passage, 606m), Puig Jorda (753m), Col del Teixó, Col des Empedrats, Pla del Ras.
13. Arrive at Col de Rumpissa, then descend via the rocky trail towards the track, passing by Font del Bana. Continue down this track.
14. Begin another steep descent until you reach the foot of an electrical pylon, then cut across a cork oak grove.
15. Descend gently until you reach a dirt track. Take the left trail that cuts across the hill.
16. Arrive at Col del Bast and descend towards Puig del Mas in Banyuls via a cemented track, then a dirt track. Continue on the paved road and cross the dry bed of Vall d'Auger.
17. Turn right onto Boulevard des Évadés de France. Pass by the Memorial dedicated to Liza Fittko and Walter Benjamin.
18. Continue by crossing the square, turn right, then left.
19. Cross the Pont Gris and turn right onto Avenue du Général de Gaulle.
20. Follow the "La Baillaury" river for a few dozen meters.
21. At the end of the avenue, turn right to reach the Tourist Office.



Stages :

- 1. The Pic Sallfort**
23.6 km / 1599 m D+ / 6 h 30
- 2. [Link] Col de Banyuls to Pic Sallfort**
3.2 km / 634 m D+ / 2 h
- 3. [Link] Col de Banyuls-Col de Rumpissar**
7.2 km / 571 m D+ / 3 h
- 4. "Sentier Walter Benjamin"**
15.3 km / 810 m D+ / 6 h

On your path...



-  Valmy Municipal Park (A)
-  Torn's Peak (C)
-  Lisa and Hans Fittko Memorial (E)

-  Dolmen dels Collets de Cotlliure (B)
-  Musée Maillol (D)

All useful information

Advices

Yellow and red and white markings (GR10) on the French side, and Bordeaux markings on the Spanish side.

Bring water, snacks, a cap or hat, a windbreaker, and possibly waterproof clothing. Stay on the marked trails. Respect nature. Take your waste with you. Check the weather forecast before setting out.

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

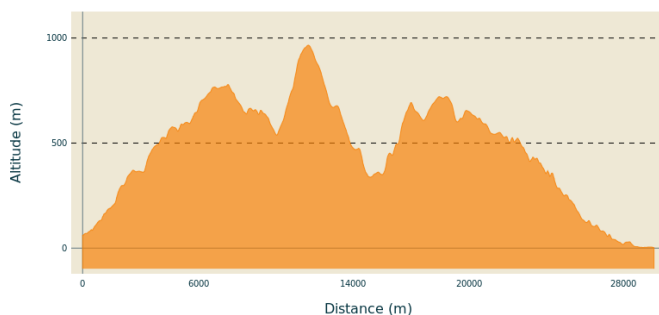
La forêt de la Massane est probablement l'aire protégée la plus inventoriée d'Europe, voire du monde. Les dernières publications montrent que cette forêt peut être considérée comme présentant une très grande diversité d'espèces à l'hectare, avec plus de 8 200 espèces répertoriées sur seulement 336 hectares.

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.).

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 2 m
Max elevation 966 m

Transports

Bus 1€

Advised parking

Port parking

Access

D914

On your path...



Valmy Municipal Park (A)

This park offers the most beautiful view of the commune and the landscapes of the Pyrénées-Orientales, bordered by the Mediterranean Sea. In this romantic, green 5-hectare setting, you can relax and picnic in the shade of the forest (there's a playground for children). Discover a walking trail dotted with unique signs that blend natural heritage with the history of the people of this land.

2024 Opening Dates:

- February 10 to April 30: daily from 10 am to 6 pm
- May 1 to September 30: daily from 10 am to 7 pm
- October 1 to November 3: daily from 10 am to 6 pm

[More informations](#)

Attribution : ot Argelès



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



Torn's Peak (C)

Peak located at 664 meters altitude.

Attribution : CCACVI



Musée Maillol (D)

Aristide Maillol did his first work at Banyuls-sur-Mer. The sculptures of female bodies with generous curves, which have been a great success, have been imagined and created here, in his house "La Métairie". Died in 1944, it is in the garden of his house that he rests today, it's a museum open to the public. We can see his tomb (free access) adorned with the statue of the artist "The Mediterranean".!

Attribution : Wikipedia



🏛️ Lisa and Hans Fittko Memorial (E)

Lisa Fittko, born Elizabeth Eckstein, was a resistance fighter, writer, and socialist activist, born on August 23, 1909, in Austria-Hungary, and passed away on March 12, 2005, in Chicago. She authored two memoirs about the war in Europe.

An anti-fascist activist, she sought to escape to Spain and made her way to Banyuls-sur-Mer, where she helped establish the "F" network (for Fittko), a passage route to Spain that operated until the spring of 1941. This network saved several hundred people, including the philosopher Walter Benjamin, who reached Port Bou. Unfortunately, Benjamin took his own life there. A beautiful memorial dedicated to him is located next to the Port-Bou cemetery.

Attribution : Elisabeth Coste