

# Archeotrail: the domain of Neanderthal

Royans-Isère-Coulmes - Presles



Lapiaz dans les Coulmes à Presles (Fabien da Costa (m))

*Discover the forest of Coulmes, occupied from the man of Neanderthal to the present day, passing by the lumberjacks of the last century.*

*Circuit developed in partnership with*

[logo Paleotime](#)

Covered with a thick and intriguing forest, the Plateau des Coulmes is often mysterious during its first discovery. This forest mainly populated with hardwoods is a bit the "Brocéliande" of the Vercors.

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 3 h 30

Length : 10.0 km

Trek ascent : 510 m

Difficulty : Moyen

Type : Boucle

Themes : Histoire et patrimoine, Point de vue, Archéologie et préhistoire

# Trek

Departure : Fontaine de Pétouze (parking)

Arrival : Fontaine de Pétouze (parking)

Markings :  GRP  GR  GTV à pied

Departure from the car park near the Fontaine de Pétouze. Go through Sous Pétouze 1 and then take a piece of the road momentarily to join Resiron 2. From there, go through the undergrowth of the path of the Tour des Coulmes (yellow and red markings) and reach the Haut de la Goulandière 3 then the Abri de la Goulandière 4. Continue south to the Belvedere du Ranc 5, Warning near the cliff!

After having admired the magnificent panorama, retrace your steps, then once back at the crossroads of the Haut de la Goulandière take on the right the nice path to reach Beauregard 6 and Prélétang 7. Finish this pleasant stroll by joining Sous Pétouze and the Fountain of Pétouze.

[Vercors, terre de préhistoire](#)

Find more information in the guide Vercors, land of prehistory, available in bookshop and in the shop of the Parc du Vercors.



# On your path...



The Goulândière (A)  
Cave of Preletang (C)

Circus of Bournillon (B)  
Fountain of Pétouze (D)

# All useful information

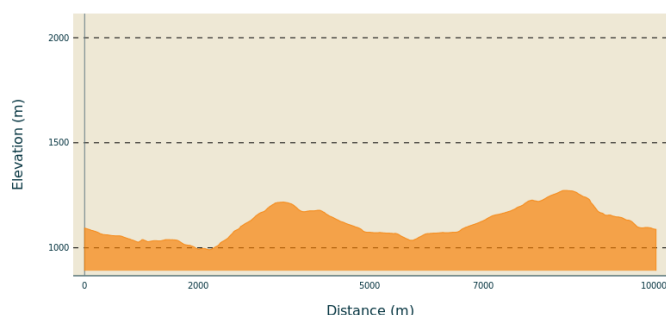
## **Advices**

Use the passageways to cross the fences, close the gates and barriers.

Staying on marked trails also means respecting private property.

Caution when approaching the cliff, hold your children by the hand!

## **Altimetric profile**



Min elevation 991 m

Max elevation 1273 m

## **Transports**

**En Autostop** : Depuis Pont en Royans, retrouvez tous les arrêts pour aller ou repartir, sur [www.rezopouce.fr](http://www.rezopouce.fr) en autostop

**En covoiturage** : Partagez ou réservez votre covoiturage avec [Mov'Ici](http://Mov'Ici), la plateforme de covoiturage régionale.

## Access

From Pont-en-Royans, take the D531 towards Choranche, then turn left onto the D292 before the Chartreux. Turn right at Jalline, just before arriving at Presles. Reach the Charmeil, and continue north on the forest road from Prélétang to the car park of Pétouze.

From Villard-de-Lans, take the Jarrands road (D531). Continue on the road that follows the defile of the Bourne gorges. Join Rencurel. At the exit of the village, take the road on the left which goes towards the hamlet of Glénats and then that of Les Ailes. Go past the Prélétang pass and continue on the forest road until you reach the Pétouze fountain and its parking lot a hundred meters away.

From Grenoble, take the D35, known as the Route des Écouges, from Saint-Gervais. Continue past the Col de Romeyrer until the entrance to Rencurel. Take at the entrance of the village the road on the right which leads towards the hamlet of Les Glénats and Les Ailes, then proceed as above.

## Advised parking

Near the Fontaine de Pétouze

## Information desks

Office de tourisme Saint-Marcellin-  
Vercors-Isère, bureau d'information de  
Pont-en-Royans  
48 Grande Rue, 38680 Pont-en-Royans  
tourisme@saintmarcellin-vercors-  
isere.fr  
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[http://tourisme.saintmarcellin-vercors-  
isere.fr/](http://tourisme.saintmarcellin-vercors-isere.fr/)



# On your path...

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## The Goulandière (A)

The ruins of Goulandière tell the story of men who came to cultivate the land in this hamlet lost in the heart of the forest of Coulmes, without any water, as a challenge to nature. The houses are built on the rock, not to reduce the fields gained on the forest. The recent rehabilitation of the hamlet makes it possible to imagine this rude existence. Theme circuits invite you to discover the lifestyles of the Middle Ages.

Attribution : OTSI Pont-en-Royans

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## Circus of Bournillon (B)

From the path, a belvedere allows you to admire the waterfall of Moulin Marquis and the Cirque du Bournillon. With its 400 m of fall, it is one of the most important waterfalls in France. At its foot stands the cave of Bournillon with its magnificent porch. This cave is today the temporary emergence of the largest karst basin of the Vercors.

Attribution : M. Rocheblave

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## Cave of Preletang (C)

The cave of Preletang is the witness of human and animal occupations dating back several tens of thousands of years. Indeed, it has been the den of cave bears, species now disappeared, as evidenced by the rock made smooth by their repeated friction against the walls of the cave ("bear polis"). And the collapse of part of the porch sealed the traces of the Neanderthals who had stayed there 46,000 years ago. More than 300 flint tools were discovered on the site. They are made up of scrapers, spearheads, and waist chips. Most of the tools were not made locally but brought by the Neanderthals who were sheltering under the porch of the cave during hunting expeditions. The remains of wildlife brought to light consist of stag, deer, wild boar, marmot and ibex. Thus, thanks to this exceptional site, it is known that Neanderthals traveled the plateau of Vercors before the last glaciation. These men, our distant cousins, knew perfectly where to shelter, hunt and collect flint. It will be necessary to wait until the end of the last ice age (the Würm) so that the man, this time modern, ventures again on the massif.

Attribution : S. Caillault



## Fountain of Pétouze (D)

Near the parking lot, a little further up the road you will find the Pétouze fountain and its picnic area. This fountain is one of the few permanent sources of the Coulmes massif, which has very few water points on the surface. Indeed, on a karst ground, water tends to infiltrate quickly and deep into the ground to reemerge further and lower. On the Coulmes massif, the rain and melting water emerge in the valleys of the Nan, the Isère and the Bourne.

Attribution : M. Rocheblave