

The Mills of the Dure river

Cabardès - Montolieu



The waters of the Dure, loaded with shale, have the property of degreasing sheep's wool. Very early on, fulling mills were installed there: the wool was entirely processed here to be transformed into cloth.

To the north of Montolieu, the Dure and Alzeau gorges converge and almost meet, sculpting the spur on which the village is built. You will enjoy the view on the Pyrenees and the small paths in the undergrowth. The outward journey goes up on the right bank of the river Dure. The return is on the left bank of the Alzeau. A short detour will allow you to admire the bridge of Izoule, in the descent which leads there: traces of the intense traffic in the past centuries are marked in the rock.

Useful information

Practice : By foot

Duration : 2 h

Length : 6.1 km

Trek ascent : 177 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Boucle

Themes : Archéologie et histoire, Lac ou rivière

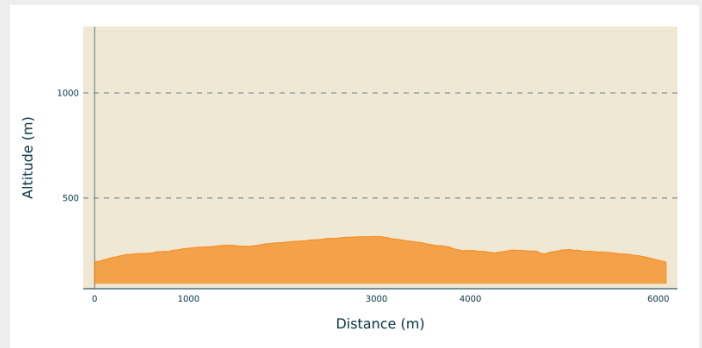
Trek

Departure : MONTOLIEU – Parking lot “Porte de Saint Denis”

Arrival : MONTOLIEU – Parking lot “Porte de Saint Denis”

Cities : 1. Montolieu

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 192 m Max elevation 317 m

Signs: Yellow Markings

Departure from the parking lot at the north exit of the village.

Just after the Saint-Denis gate, take the D8 for 150m uphill. At the first fork in the road on the right, go past the farm "Bellevue". View of the Alzeau and Dure gorges and the village on its promontory. On the first part of the circuit, the paths leading to the various (private) mills follow one another. These took advantage of the driving force of the water to turn mill stones and other machines.

The particular quality of the water of the Dure, which had the necessary properties for cleaning and wool degreasing, allowed the development of a textile industry.

After crossing the hamlet of "Franc", cut the D8 and take the road opposite, the path heads west towards the Alzeau valley.

You will enjoy the view of the Pyrenees.

Arriving at the pig farm, turn left on the downhill path.

600 m further on, a fork on the right will make you join the Alzeau river by going down in the undergrowth. The river lost its mills in the 13th century when part of its water was captured to feed the Canal du Midi (gully of the Montagne Noire).

Follow the river up to the bridge of "l'Isoule" dating from the 12th century: observe the two arches and the remarkable ferns on the nearby banks. Go back on the path for 100m, take the time to observe the traces of cart wheels in the stone and then turn right. Slight ascent in the shade of the vegetation then pass under a power line.

At the crossroads with the track, continue straight ahead. Then quickly the markers will guide you back to the undergrowth, allowing you to discover a capitelle (dry stone hut). It is visible from a small layon on the left.

When you get back to the main track, a little further on the right, a promontory with a view of the “Chateau de Villeneuve” and the gardens below.

At the exit of the wood, a large open area with a breathtaking view over the Pyrenees; and back to the village of Montolieu.

On your path...



All useful information

Advices

You will not see mills directly (as they are now demolished)

You will pass close to the river by the end of the loop.

How to come ?

Transports

[Line D - RTCA](#)

Access

D 629 then D8 direction Saint Denis

Advised parking

parking Porte de Saint Denis

Information desks

Office de Tourisme - Antenne Cabardès

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<https://www.grand-carcassonne-tourisme.fr/votre-sejour/pratique/loffice-de-tourisme/nos-bureaux-dinformations/antenne-de-montolieu-cabardes/>