



Col des Fours

Vanoise - BONNEVAL-SUR-ARC

Vue vers le Col des Fours (Nathalie TISSOT)



Immerse yourself in the high altitude following the traces of the ancient glaciers

Without too much effort this route allows you to immerse yourself in the high mountains, to walk on the snow and to redefine the contours of the ancient glaciers of which only the traces remain. Marvel at the arctic-alpine plants which bloom where the ice has retreated. The view of the pass is one of the most beautiful in the Vanoise National Park and the icing on the cake.

Useful information

Practice : Walking hike

Duration : 4 h

Length : 5.0 km

Trek ascent : 452 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Return

Themes : Flora , Lake and glacier, Viewpoint

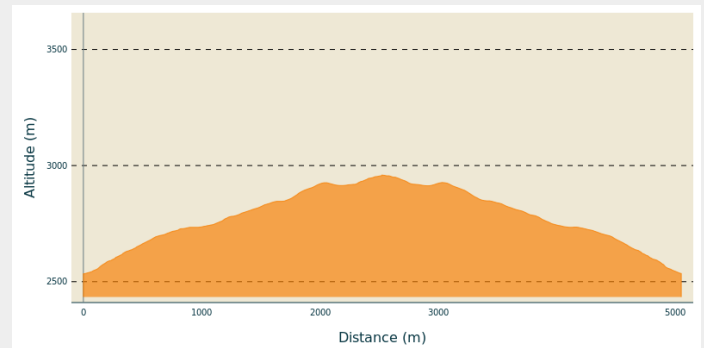
Trek

Departure : Pont de la Neige, Bonneval-sur-Arc

Arrival : Pont de la Neige, Bonneval-sur-Arc

Cities : 1. BONNEVAL-SUR-ARC

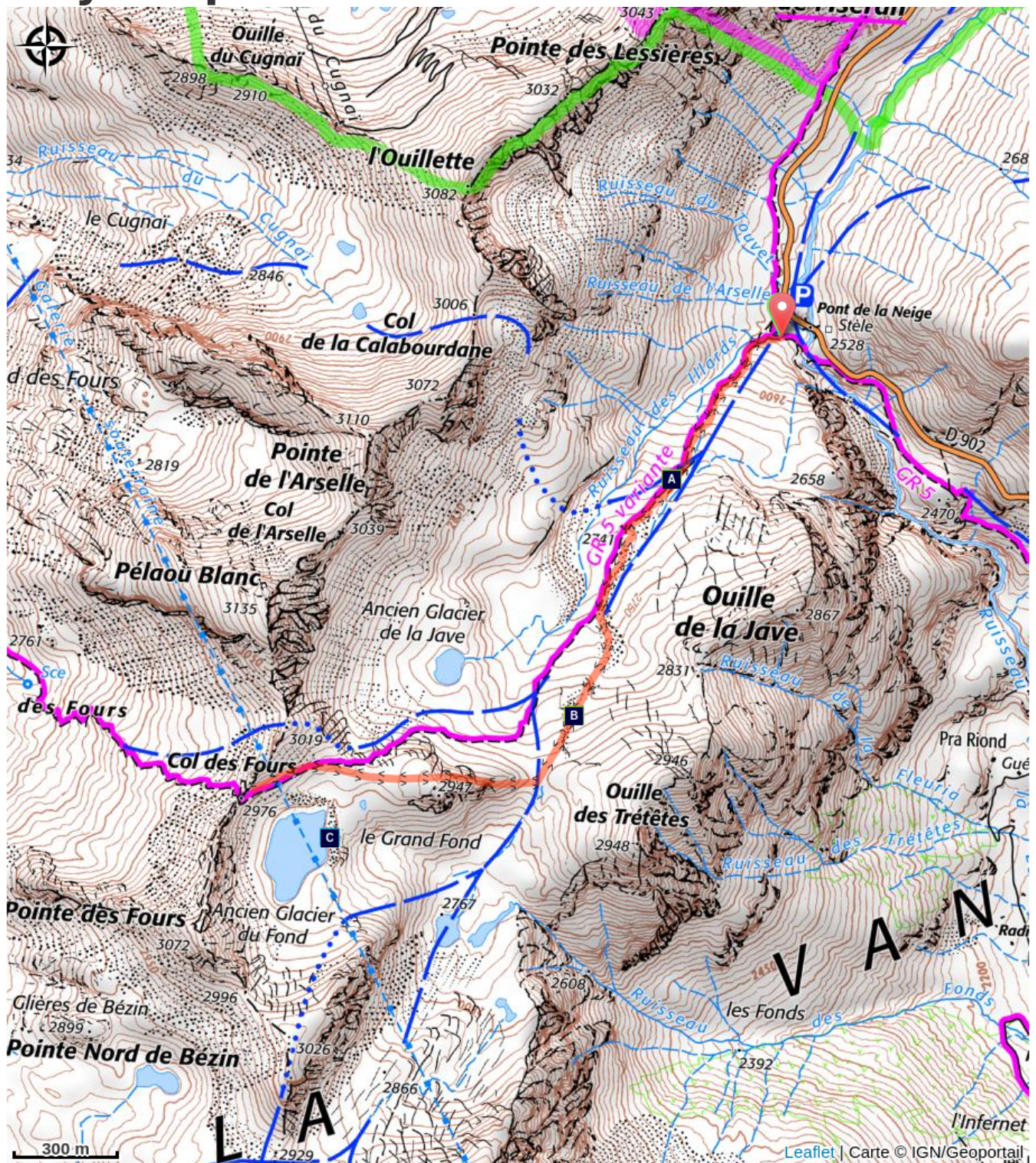
Altimetric profile





Min elevation 2534 m Max elevation 2959 m

Coming from Bonneval-sur-Arc, on the D902 road, in the direction of the Col de l'Iseran, the departure point is located at the Pont de la Neige car park at 2,530 m. From there, take the only path towards the South South-West. Very quickly, 100 m further on, leave the trail that leads down to the left in the direction of Bonneval-sur-Arc and take the trail on the right which climbs into the coomb and crosses through the Illards stream. The path is well marked towards an altitude of 2,700 m. It then approaches an area corresponding to the old Jave glacier where a great névé persists into the early summer. You then have to follow the tracks in the snow until an obvious pass (not named on the IGN maps)... If you happen to be the first to pass, you will have to trace your steps taking care when moving through the snowy terrain. At the end of summer, the snow disappears leaving a path marked by cairns among the scree. From the pass you discover the Lac du Grand Fond and the path becomes visible again on the right climbing the last 50 metres of incline, up to the Col des Fours at 2,976 m in altitude. The descent follows the same route.

On your path...



-  Labrador tiger moth (A)
-  Lac des Fours (C)

-  Androsace alpina (B)

All useful information

Is in the midst of the park

The national park is an unrestricted natural area but subjected to regulations which must be known by all visitors.

Advices

Please note that the upper section of the route can be very snowed over in the early summer. A névé can even persist late into the season. Proper equipment is essential.

How to come ?

Transports

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Rail connection to Modane. Information: www.voyages-sncf.com

Then transport by coach to Bonneval-sur-Arc. Information: www.transavoie.com

From the 1st July to 31st August, the n. 3 bus line will serve the Col de Iseran from Bonneval-sur-Arc.

From the Col de l'Iseran, you will walk (about 30 minutes) to the Pont de la Neige car park via the GR5.

Suggested hitchhiking organised in the Haute-Maurienne valley. Information: www.rezopouce.fr

Additional information:

<http://www.haute-maurienne-vanoise.com/pratique/se-deplacer-sans-voiture>

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Access

From Bonneval-sur-Arc take the D902 road in the direction of the Col de l'Iseran. Before the Pass, the departure point is located at the Pont de la Neige car park at 2,530 m in altitude.

Advised parking

Pont de la Neige car park

Accessibility

None

 **Information desks**

**Office de tourisme de Bonneval sur
Arc**

La Ciamarella, 73480 Bonneval-sur-Arc

info@hautemaurienne.com

Tel : 04 79 05 99 06

<https://www.bonneval-sur-arc.com>

On your path...



Labrador tiger moth (A)

With luck, the attentive observer may be able to detect, in the short grasses, beyond the Pont de la Neige, a unique moth with black and white zebra stripes, known as the Labrador tiger moth (*Grammia quenseli*). This Arctiidae, found all over the world located around the polar circle ... and at high-altitude in the Alps, is a Boreo-Alpine species. An adult lives for only one to two weeks and has one essential mission: to reproduce. The caterpillar will take at least two years before it pupates.

Attribution : PNV - BLANCHEMAIN Joël



Androsace alpina (B)

When the snows are gone and sometimes late in the summer, the scree and moraines around the Lac des Fours are adorned with dense mounds of small pink or white alpine rock-jasmine flowers (*Androsace alpina*). These densely packed rare and protected flowers are an adaptation to the intense cold prevailing at these altitudes. *Androsace alpina* is endemic to the Alpine arc.

Attribution : PNV - BLANCHEMAIN Joël



Lac des Fours (C)

Set into the Grand Fond valley under the Col des Fours are some real gems: the Lac des Fours (not named by the IGN [French National Geographic Institute]) is a glacial lake which culminates at 2,899 metres. It is the result of the erosion created by the Fond glacier which retreated to leave a frontal moraine acting as a natural barrier and thereby creating this pretty lake often covered in snow and ice at the beginning of summer.

Attribution : PNV - BLANCHEMAIN Joël