

Tour of Vuzelle

Vanoise - PRALOGNAN-LA-VANOISE



La pointe et les cascades de la Vuzelle - Commune du Planay (PNV - GOTTI Christophe)



A two-day hike amidst moraines, alpine pastures and forests. A change of scenery around a peak of the Vuzelle to be rediscovered at every turn.

La randonnée du Tour de la Vuzelle est à la fois une expérience sportive et contemplative ! **L'itinéraire déroule alpages et forêts, avant de découvrir un magnifique cirque minéral, vestige des glaciers disparus.** En chemin, à ne pas manquer : **l'hospitalité et la convivialité du refuge du Grand Bec ou encore la spectaculaire Cascade de la Vuzelle**, nichée sous la pointe éponyme et classée au patrimoine naturel.

Useful information

Practice : Walking hike

Duration : 2 days

Length : 16.7 km

Trek ascent : 1799 m

Difficulty : Difficult

Type : Loop

Themes : Fauna , Viewpoint

Trek

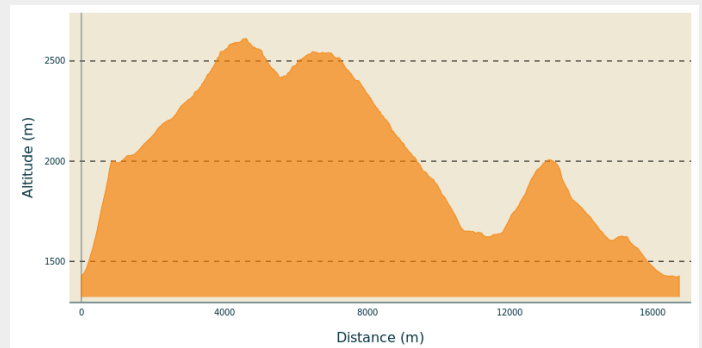
Departure : Departure station of the Bochor ski lift

Arrival : Village church

Markings : → Parc

Cities : 1. PRALOGNAN-LA-VANOISE
2. PLANAY

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1422 m Max elevation 2613 m

"From Pralognan-la-Vanoise, take the Bochor ski lift and follow the trail up to the Col de Leschaux, then follow the trail in the direction of "Refuge du Grand Bec". After the night at the shelter, take the trail that goes down to the valley to the north, in the direction of "Plan Fournier". After 450 m of downhill ascents, at the first fork in the path, take the left path; follow the direction for "Mont Chevrier / Pralognan-la-Vanoise". After 300 m of downhill ascents, at the intersection of the Touros wood, take the path that goes south. After 250 m of a "downhill flat" path, take the path that goes flat at this intersection. After about 300 m, cross the Vuzelle stream. 150 m after this stream, take the intersection in the clearing, the path on the left that goes up (390 m) to the crest of Mount Chevrier. At the 1st intersection, take the lower trail. At the 2nd intersection, take the trail on the left and follow the direction of "Pralognan-la-Vanoise". At the next 2 intersections, follow the branch on the left. At the next intersection, take the trail on the right that goes down. After the thalweg of the Combe des Pariettes, take the trail that goes down the combe. After walking for about 600 m, take the paved road to Pralognan village centre."

On your path...



-  Leschaux (A)
-  Rock ptarmigan (C)
-  Alpage de la Vuzelle, yesterday and today (E)
-  Lodgers, one after another (G)
-  Ruisseau de la Vuzelle Waterfall (I)
-  It gurgles under our feet! (K)
-  Alpine clubmoss (B)
-  Androsace alpina (D)
-  A helmet and vest are compulsory (F)
-  Procession of titmice (H)
-  Viewpoint from Mont Chevrier (J)
-  The Darbelays (L)

All useful information

Advices

Please note that the crossing of the trail between the Aiguille du Bochor and the Col de Leschaux is overhead and can be covered in late névés. This tour is best made late in the season, not before the end of July. Book your overnight stay at the refuge and your picnic for the 2nd day.

How to come ?

Transports

"

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

Then transport by coach to Pralognan-village. Information: www.transavoie.com

"

Access

RD 915 to Pralognan la Vanoise

Advised parking

Village centre, Pralognan-la-Vanoise

 **Information desks**

Office de Tourisme de Pralognan-la-Vanoise

290 avenue de Chasseforêt, 73710
Pralognan-la-Vanoise

info@pralognan.com

Tel : 04 79 08 79 08

<https://www.pralognan.com>

Maison du Parc national de la Vanoise - Pralognan

Maison de la Vanoise, Avenue
Chasseforêt, 73710 Pralognan-la-Vanoise

info.pralognan@vanoise-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 79 08 71 49

<https://www.vanoise-parcnational.fr>

On your path...

Leschaux (A)

"You are at the Col de Leschaux, overlooking the eponymous ravine on its south-facing slope. The term "leschaux" most likely comes from the pre-Roman "calmis" which translates as "pastureland", "meadows" or even "alpine pasture"."



Alpine clubmoss (B)

The alpine clubmoss (*Diaphastrum alpinum*) is bound to the short, dry moors, on an area of bare ericaceous shrubland (heather). It is an arctic-alpine species, which, as the adjective describes, is native to northern Europe. It found refuge at altitude in the Alps when global warming took place after the last ice age. It is a protected species in France. Other than autumn when its light green reproductive stems are visible, it is barely detectable to the layman's eyes.

Attribution : PNV - STORCK Frantz



Rock ptarmigan (C)

The rock ptarmigan is also an arctic-alpine species. It is beholden to the moraines, screes, and short grasslands at high altitude. It is part of the mountain galliformes such as the black grouse, the hazel grouse or the rock partridge dear to Marcel Pagnol. To adapt to the rigours of winter, it trades its summer grey plumage for an entirely white plumage, has claws covered entirely in feathers and, takes shelter in a snow igloo during intense cold periods.

Attribution : PNV - MOLLARD Maurice



Androsace alpina (D)

The *Androsace alpina* is a species protected at national level. It likes the fine screes and moraines on siliceous soil. Its altitudinal record is 3,350 m in Bessans. The data-gathering carried out by the Vanoise National Park's rangers has made it possible to localise the species across all potential territories; and to index 50% of the known populations in France.

Attribution : PNV - BALAIS Christian



Alpage de la Vuzelle, yesterday and today (E)

The alpine mountain pasture of Vuzelle is one of 3 communal mountain pastures of Planay. Historically it welcomed a part of the hamlets' dairy cows and the cheese was made on site in the summer. Currently, only one herd of heifers occupies the place in summer. A peculiarity of the mountain people is that some towns have mountain pastures over towns at higher altitude, thus the town of Planay has the mountain pastures of Ritort and Nants over that of Pralognan-la-Vanoise.

Attribution : PNV - GOTTI Christophe



A helmet and vest are compulsory (F)

You cross a forest boundary! It's nothing to be alarmed about, it's an area where the forest gradually colonises the rhododendron moors. This area at the upper limit of the forest is a vital habitat for the black grouse (*Tetrao tetrix*). Effectively, this concentrated area allows it, by turns, to nest (semi-woody cover), to raise the young (insects, berries and grasses), to feed in autumn (bilberries) or even in winter (tree buds) and to host its courtship displays. The gîte and the cover.

Attribution : PNV - BENOIT Philippe



Lodgers, one after another (G)

In the spruce trees before you, two birds use the same nest successively. Indeed, in the big spruces, the black woodpecker (*Dryocopus martius*) hollows out its nest, a box, directly in the trunk. After one breeding season, the woodpecker abandons its house. The Tengmalm's owl follows it the year after, in order to lay its eggs and raise its offspring. So, if there are no old spruces, there are no black woodpeckers; no black woodpeckers and there are no Tengmalm's owl!

Attribution : PNV - GARNIER Alexandre



Procession of titmice (H)

Different environments coexist along this route: spruce, alder, mixed forest with deciduous trees. Thus, the guild of tits presents a complete spectrum of species such as the great tit (the biggest), the coal tit, the European crested tit or the slender long-tailed tit. It often happens that during the winter, all these species gather together in large flocks (several dozen birds) to protect themselves better from their winged predators (Eurasian pygmy owl or Eurasian Sparrowhawk).

Attribution : PNV - PLOYER Jean-Yves



Ruisseau de la Vuzelle Waterfall (I)

The Vuzelle waterfalls collect the waters of the watershed which goes from Grand Bec up to the Pointe de Leschaux, via the Pointe du Creux Noir. Advice: in the mountains, do not rely on the freshness and purity of the water for drinking. In effect, the corpse of a wild or domestic ungulate in the watershed can lead to a bacteria proliferation which is invisible to the eye! This being said, the sight of a waterfall is always a moment of inner calmness.

Attribution : PNV - GARNIER Alexandre

Viewpoint from Mont Chevrier (J)

As you descend the valley's axis, you will see Mont Jovet (2,558 m in altitude), on its right before you, you recognised it, the Aiguille de la Vuzelle (2,573 m in altitude). To the back of the village of Pralognan-la-Vanoise, you can admire the Vanoise glaciers, the largest continental European ice cap covering nearly 1,960 ha, culminating at the Chasseforêt dome at 3586 m. Returning to the west, the Dents de la Portetta and the Crête du Mont Charvet bring you north to the Dent du Villard (hidden).



It gurgles under our feet! (K)

Here you will find yourself directly above one of the many tunnels piercing the Vanoise mountain range. The "white coal" is the only industrial electrical production in Savoy. The hydroelectric plant located at the Villard du Planay turbine, in addition to the water of the Champagny-le-Haut valley, part of the waters of the Vanoise and the Doron de Chavière, via a tunnel in the mountain and a pressure pipe-line. And please, no laser sight!

Attribution : PNV - GOTTI Christophe



The Darbelays (L)

"You are in the locality of "Les Darbelays". In local Patois, a darbel is a young spruce plant. Thus, the Darbelays translates to a spruce nursery; the locality of ""Les Darbelots"" in Planay, probably translates to a spruce forest, known as "pessièrè" in French."

Attribution : PNV - JORDANA Régis