Sightseeing in the Haute Tarentaise villages

A scenic route to explore the Haute Tarentaise villages.

A scenic route to explore traditional Haute Tarentaise know-how and its villages. The first stretch takes you along a lovely, shady tree-lined route on the banks of the River Isère, which climbs slightly. When you get to Sainte-Foy-Tarentaise, cross over to the other side to wind your way through such remarkable hamlets as La Masure. The rest of the trail is just as enjoyable with a mix of medium roads and slightly more technical tracks through the trees, between the hamlets of Montvalezan and Séez.

Useful information

Practice : Mountain bike (electric)

Duration : 3 h

Length : 30.4 km

Trek ascent : 969 m

Difficulty : Difficult

Type : Loop

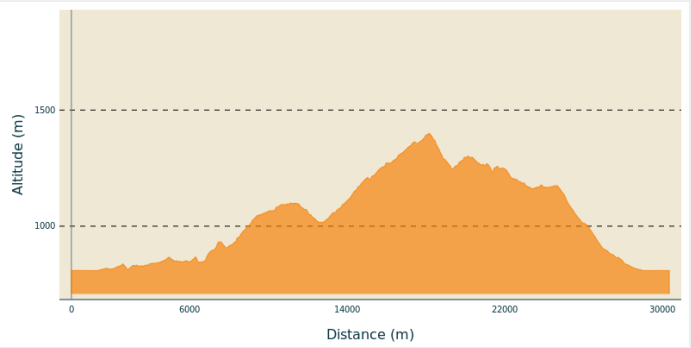
Themes : Architecture, Fauna , Flora , Geology , History , Viewpoint

Accessibility : Chien autorisé

Trek

Departure : Place de la gare (in front of the station) - 73700 Bourg-Saint-Maurice
Arrival : Place de la gare (in front of the station) - 73700 Bourg-Saint-Maurice
Cities : 1. BOURG-SAINT-MAURICE
2. SEEZ
3. VILLAROGER
4. SAINTE-FOY-TARENTAISE
5. MONTVALEZAN

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 808 m Max elevation 1400 m

Setting off from the Parc des Marais in Bourg-Saint-Maurice, the first stretch will take you along the Isère riverbanks via a pretty woodland trail. From the hamlet of La Bonneville, the route picks up the road all the way up to the highest point - the hamlet of Le Villaret (1,400m) - after crossing the hamlet of Le Villaroger, Saint-Foy and the remarkable hamlet of La Masure. On your way back, enjoy a varied ride along easy tracks, woodland trails and quiet mountain roads.

Follow the red waymarks: Les Villages.

E-bike rental shops:

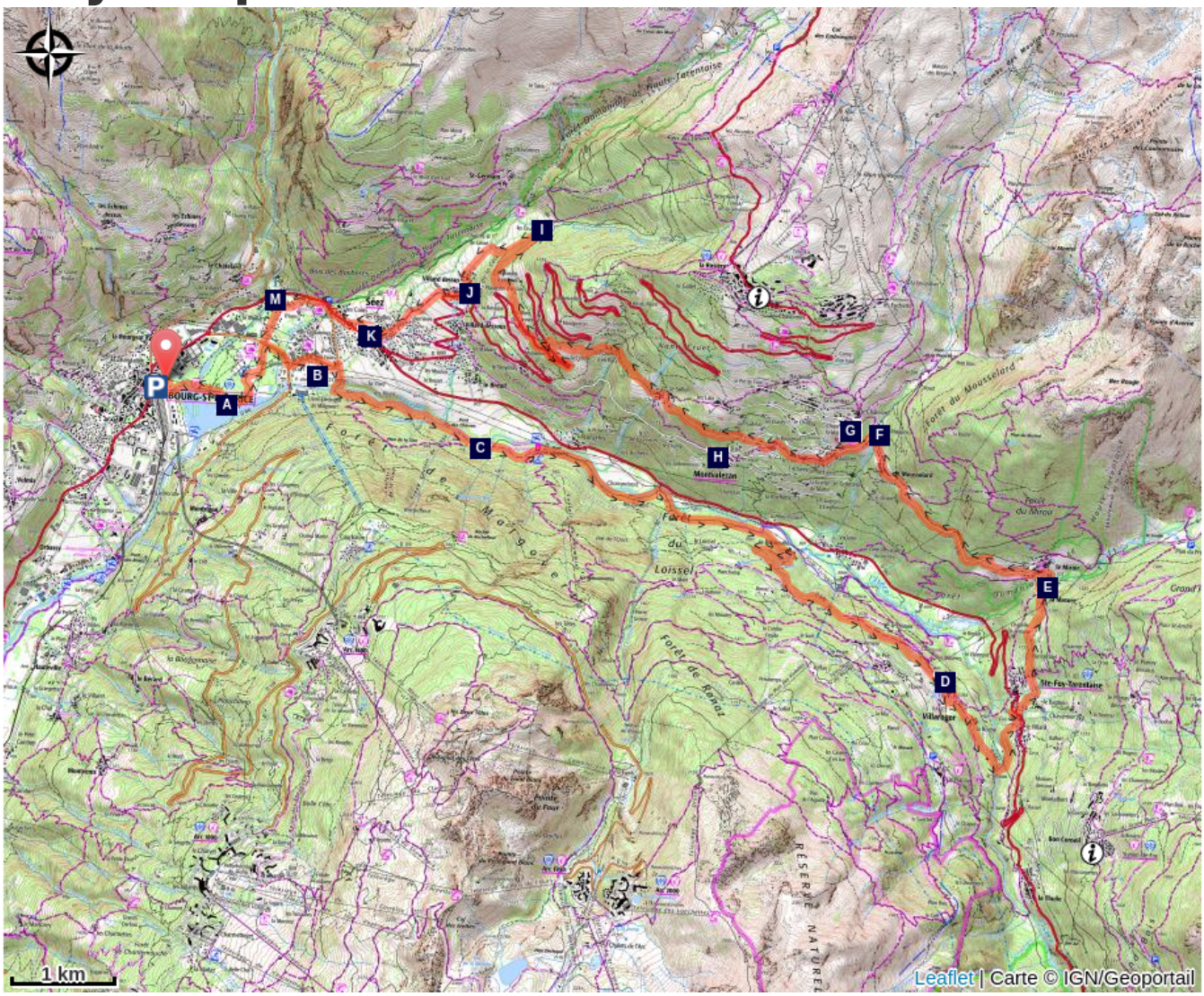
GRAVITY LAB
297 Av. Marechal Leclerc
73700 Bourg Saint Maurice
+33 (0)4-79-40-05-54

Intersport Bourg Saint Maurice
Zone commerciale de Super U
73700 Bourg Saint Maurice
+33 (0)4 79 04 04 30

Laboshop Bourg Saint Maurice
avenue du stade
73700 Bourg-Saint-Maurice
+33 (0)4 79 07 07 61

PRECISION SKI Mountain Tribu
43 Place de la Gare
73700 Bourg Saint Maurice
+33 (0)4 58 14 04 44

On your path...



Bourg-Saint-Maurice Marshland (A)
Malgovert power plant (B)
Malgovert Forest (C)
Notre Dame de l'Assomption Church (D)
The post-and-beam houses in La Masure and Le Miroir (E)
The hamlets of Montvalezan (F)
St Michel's Chapel (G)
St Jean Baptiste's Church (H)
Les Ecudets village (I)
Le Villard-Dessus village (J)
Espace Saint-Eloi (K)
Baroque Church of St Pierre (L)
Filature Arpin (M)

All useful information

⚠ Advices

Rando Vanoise has been designed to help you pick and choose your outings, but cannot be held liable where they are concerned. The mountain offers up a wide range of routes and trails for cyclists of all levels, but remember, it is a living, unpredictable environment and it is important that you head out suitably equipped. Ask advice from cycle rental operators.
If in doubt, you can take an introductory lesson in how to ride an electric bike with an instructor.

If you see a herd ahead, slow down and go round it. If there is a patou, a guard dog, climb down from your bike and walk, pushing it alongside you. Avoid making any sudden or aggressive gestures towards the dog and move away from the herd slowly and calmly. The dog will only be checking that you do not pose a threat to its herd. Respect the parkland and close gates behind you after you've gone through them.

The mountain is living, please respect it by staying on the paths and tracks.

How to come ?

Transports

Train services run as far as Bourg-Saint-Maurice. Find out more at: www.oui.sncf.com
Have you also thought about car sharing?

Access

From Moûtiers, take the RN90 road to Aime or Bourg Saint Maurice.

Advised parking

Bourg Saint Maurice: Arc-en-Ciel car park (free) located behind the station (opposite the marshland, start of the greenway)

Accessibility

Chien autorisé

Information desks

Office de Tourisme de La Rosière
705 Route du Col du Petit Saint-Bernard,
73700 La Rosière - Montvalezan

info@larosiere.net
Tel : 04 79 06 80 51
https://www.larosiere.net

Office de Tourisme de Sainte Foy Tarentaise
Route de Guersaz, La Bataillette, 73640 Sainte-Foy-Tarentaise

info@saintefoytourisme.com
Tel : 04 79 06 95 19
https://www.saintefoy-tarentaise.com

Office de Tourisme de Bourg Saint Maurice
Place de la Gare, 73700 Bourg-Saint-Maurice

contact@lesarcs.com
Tel : 04 79 07 12 57
https://www.lesarcs.com

On your path...

Bourg-Saint-Maurice Marshland (A)

This nature spot with a leisure centre deep in the Tarentaise region is home to many birds (including as a stopover habitat for migrating birds) and is the only known site for Natterjack Toads in this valley. Several streams and rivers, including the Isère, join here to form the lake. Known as an equalising reservoir, it contributes to the smooth running of the Malgovert hydroelectric power plant. Picnic tables and water supply points.

Attribution : CCHT

Malgovert power plant (B)

In the Haute Tarentaise area, EDF operates a vast hydroelectric power network comprising water abstraction points, dams and plants, including the one at Malgovert. Commissioned in 1953, it channels the water stored in Tignes dam, began in 1948, through turbines (up to 50 m3/s). Thanks to its 4 "double Pelton wheel" units, it can generate around 680 Gwh a year, the equivalent of 280,000 inhabitants' energy consumption (Savoie has a population of 400,000).

Attribution : EDF - L. Astruc

Malgovert Forest (C)

Back in the Middle Ages, the lords of Val d’Isère (Séez) and Villaraymond De Rochefort (Bourg-Saint-Maurice) couldn't agree over who controlled part of the Haute-Tarentaise territory. One day, they eventually decided to settle the boundary of their two domains in a card game... and had boundary stones bearing their arms placed across the whole forest (you can still see these today).
The name of Malgovert Forest comes from the fact that the place was "mal-governed".

Attribution : CCHT

Notre Dame de l'Assomption Church (D)

Located in Villaroger Chef-Lieu, this church is very old and has been rebuilt and renovated many times over the years.

Attribution : CCHT

The post-and-beam houses in La Masure and Le Miroir (E)

These picturesque villages are home to distinctive post-and-beam houses, most of which date back many centuries. Records have been found as far back as 1633.
Post-and-beam houses were often built by masons harking from Piedmont in Italy. Since timber was rare, they tended to build the walls out of stone and the low-sloping roofs out of lauze slate. Not only did these construction materials look nice, but they were also extremely practical. Built-up columns (as tall as 2 to 6 metres depending on the house) supported the heavy, overhanging roof, thus creating shelters and storage areas away from bad weather: hay or timber could be dried there for example... In steeply sloping areas, these columns could reach up to a dozen metres off the ground. In the village of Le Miroir, please remember to leave your bikes in the church car park so that you can visit it on foot.

Attribution : Anne Marmottan

The hamlets of Montvalezan (F)

These are typical grouped villages, huddled around their chapel, built up the slope and facing directly south. The materials that have endured through the ages in building these centuries-old houses are stone, wood and lauze slate, which are sourced locally and enhanced by the mountain dwellers' worksmanship. As you cycle through the hamlets of Le Mousselard, Les Moulins, Le Villaret and Le Solliet, you'll be able to admire them.
Once designed to cater to rural activities, these houses have now been restored either as permanent homes or to provide additional tourism accommodation for the resort of La Rosière.

St Michel's Chapel (G)

Not far from the route, this unusual little chapel, perched on the promontory of Le Châtelard at an altitude of 1,450m, enjoys an incredible view over the Haute-Tarentaise valley. A special viewing system using metal tubes means you can observe the summits and villages up the mountainside from the River Isère all the way to the Haute-Tarentaise ski resorts. This chapel is dedicated to the Archangel Michael, the patron saint of high places.

Attribution : propaganda_la rosiere

St Jean Baptiste's Church (H)

From the 13th century, the parish was attended by the Canons Regular of the Hospice du Petit Saint-Bernard. After a fire ravaged the original church in 1636, the priest Jean Ducloz organised for a new church to be built, in Baroque style, which was consecrated in 1688. He paid for the redeveloped extension of the main municipality's seigniorial residence, which became known as the Vicar's Tower. It was intended to accommodate not only the vicar but also the canons from the Hospice who came there in winter until 1760 or thereabouts.

Attribution : mlr

Les Ecudets village (I)

Located in the municipality of Séez, at an altitude of 1,176 metres, this place is the lowest point at which you can join the international ski area of "La Rosière – Espace San Bernardo". Les Ecudets Forest not only harbours a wealth of varied wildlife, but is also a wonderful natural playground for ski tourers in winter and hikers and mountain bikers come summer, thanks to specific routes for each activity that can be enjoyed safely by all users.

Attribution : AgenceMerci

Le Villard-Dessus village (J)

You can spot where Le Villard-Dessus is from the valley bottom by the big building, "Le Val Joli", set in the mountainside, which has shaped this hamlet's history.
"Le Val Joli" was built in the 1890s by a family from Séez who turned it into a hotel for travellers. In World War II, it became the headquarters for the Italian army who occupied Séez and the neighbouring municipalities of Montvalezan and Sainte-Foy. In the 1950s, French Customs moved into "Le Val Joli" and the building passed into the French State's hands. It became a widely acclaimed centre for cross-country skiing. Today, after years of restoration work, the new owners have converted it into a hotel that welcomes holiday makers and travellers in this history-steeped site.

Attribution : CCHT

Espace Saint-Eloi (K)

This old forge in the centre of Séez showcases 3 exhibition themes: blacksmithing and metalworking, jewellery and local Baroque art. In the jewellery section, a unique collection of Savoie-made jewels is on display, with over 200 crosses, hearts, brooches and other pieces. The museum's extension in 2015 enabled the jeweller's workshop and jewellery showroom to be renovated, and there is now a temporary exhibition space where the programme changes at periodic intervals.
Adult: €3 / Child (under 12): free
5 rue Saint-Pierre 73 700 Séez
+33 (0)4.79.40.10.38 or +33 (0)4.79.41.00.54 (Service Information Office) www.seez.fr

Attribution : CCHT

Baroque Church of St Pierre (L)

Located in Séez centre, St Pierre's Church (12th century) was restored from 1680 by the prior Jean Duclos. It is a striking example of Baroque art, a new art arising out of the Renaissance which expresses the Catholic reform in Savoie in the 17th century. The church is included in the “Chemins du Baroque“ sightseeing route. Don't miss the treasure trove inside: sacred pieces of gold- and silverware offered by the parish of Séez in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Most of the items are listed as Historical Monuments.
3 rue Saint-Pierre - 73700 Séez
+33 (0)7.79.41.00.54 (Service Information Office) www.seez.fr

Attribution : aptv_redac

Filature Arpin (M)

Founded in 1817, this world-famous mill for woollen cloth and fabric is renowned for crafting the famous Bonneval cloth that would be used to make a tent for the King of Italy, Victor-Emmanuel II (1858), or equipping the Italian expeditions to the Himalayas (1890) and the "French Antarctic Expeditions" led by Paul-Emile Victor (1949). This cloth gets its name from Pierre Blanc, guide and hawker in Bonneval sur Arc in Maurienne. The mill attests to a textile industry that has been present in the Alpine valleys since the early 19th century. A tour of the workshops charts this amazing tale of the master woolmakers. It also unveils all of the techniques to you: carding, spinning and weaving... on machines that have been listed as Historical Monuments. In the shop selling the mill's own crafted fabrics, you can buy clothes, shoes, hats, blankets, cushions and even the Bonneval cloth...
2, Rue de la Filature - 73700 Séez
Tel: +33(0)4 79 09 49 27
seez@arpin1817.com
www.arpin1817.com

Guided tours organised in partnership with Bourg-Saint-Maurice / Les Arcs Tourist Office

Attribution : CCHT