

## St-Michel l'Observatoire on horseback

Saint-Michel-l'Observatoire



Sur le plateau, avec le Luberon au fond (Steve Latruffe)

*A horseback ride in full which reveals the diversity of the landscapes and the harmony of the rural heritage of the Luberon.*

Easy and varied route, with two thirds of trails, wide paths and tracks, offering beautiful views of the Craux de Saint-Michel, the Lure mountain, but also the Luberon Oriental, the plateau of Valensole and the entry of the Gorges du Verdon far away. The crossings of Saint-Michel-l'Observatoire and Lincel suggest their rich heritage; churches, chapels, Romanesque tower, windmill, castle, old façades, beautiful doors and fountains.

### Useful information

Practice : HORSEBACK

Duration : 3 h 30

Length : 12.2 km

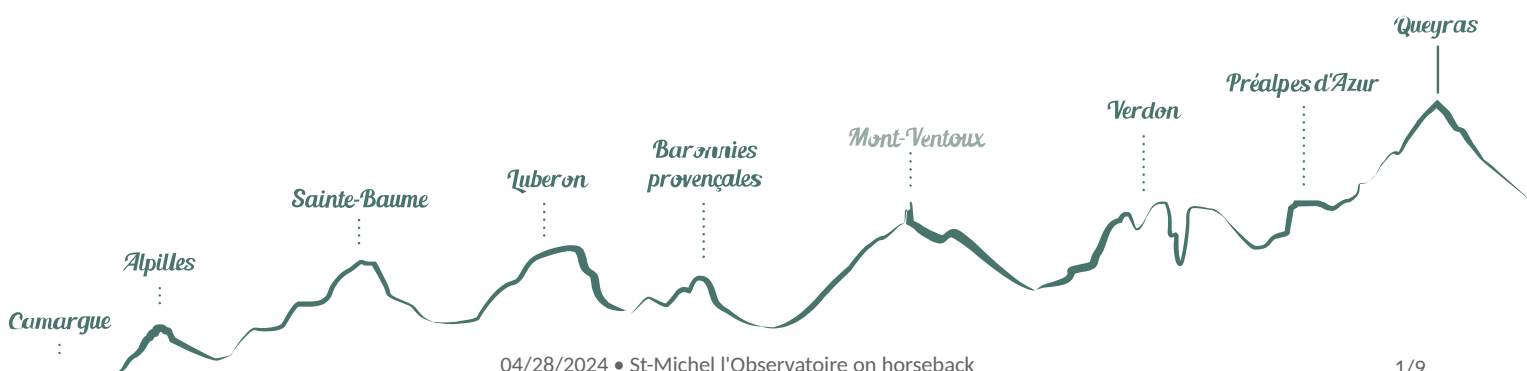
Trek ascent : 267 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Boucle

Themes : Heritage and history, Waters and rivers

Accessibility : Donkey hiking



# Trek

Departure : Car park of Bardouin, south of the town hall, Saint-Michel l'Observatoire

Arrival : Car park of Bardouin, south of the town hall, Saint-Michel l'Observatoire

Markings :  Equestre  GR®  PR

Turn left at the back of the parking lot, pass the town hall and follow the street to the right for 300m.

**1** - Take two rights. Pass in front of the cemetery, take a left at the 1st intersection and turn right after the steep path. Further down, climb the narrow path to the left. At the top, take the track to the right, then continue straight. At the crossroads "Tour de Porchères", turn left, pass a house, then turn right. Head into the woods (stony passages) and go around by the right the old quarries (private property). Take a right at the Y-shaped fork.

**2** - At the crossroads "Petit Sauvan", turn left towards Saint-Jean. Turn left after 150m and continue straight (low branches). Continue the track, pass a house and turn left on the small road. Descend on the D305 and follow to the left for 200meters (traffic!).

**3** - Turn right, go past the shed and ascend calmly (pebbly section). Turn left at the first crossroads, go along an old wall and go down to go up on the plateau. At a series of crossroads, continue straight. Reach to the D5 (traffic!), descend 50m to the right, then turn left. At the crossroads "Le Roure", continue straight. then pass over a home. Take two lefts and reach the D205. Continue on the right until Lincel (traffic!)



**4** - In front of the church, turn left and continue straight when exiting the village. Leave the GR on the right to continue on the small road. At the end, go across and pass under a rocky ridge (source) and continue on the path into the woods (smooth slope). After a steep path, take the path on the right going down until the D205.

**5** - Follow the road to the right that leads back to St-Michel-l'Observatoire (traffic!). At the entrance of the village, do not turn across the narrow one-way, but continue on the right. At the stop sign, go straight to reach the car park of the starting point.



## On your path...



-  Take root in the limestone (A)
-  O3HP: the oak forest with a magnifying glass (B)
-  The ICOS (Integrated Carbon Observation System) tower (C)
-  Largue, river of Haute-Provence (D)
-  The Largue river by Jean Giono (E)
-  Goat cheese (F)

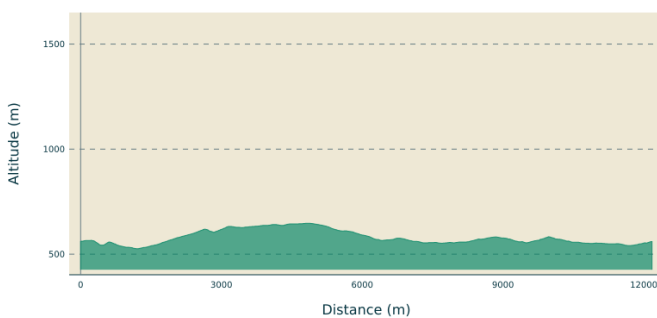
# All useful information

## **Advices**

Difficulties on specific fields:

- (before the point 2), two rocky passages.
- (after point 2) low branches.
- (after point 3); a rocky section;
- (Between points 4 and 5) walk on the slightly overhanging slabs.

## **Altimetric profile**



Min elevation 526 m  
Max elevation 647 m

## **Transports**

## **Access**

Village of Saint-Michel-l'Observatoire, at 16km from Manosque by the D907 and D105, or 21km from La Brillanne by Forcalquier and the D4100 and D105.

## **Advised parking**

Car park of Bardouin, south of the town hall, St-Michel l'Obs. (just to the right upon entering the village through the D105).

## Information desks

House of the Luberon Regional Nature Park



60, place Jean Jaurès, 84400 Apt

[accueil@parcduluberon.fr](mailto:accueil@parcduluberon.fr)

Tel : +33 (0)4 90 04 42 00

<https://www.parcduluberon.fr/>

OTI Forcalquier-Montagne de Lure

13, place du Bourguet, B.P. 15, 04301 Forcalquier

[bienvenue@haute-provence-tourisme.com](mailto:bienvenue@haute-provence-tourisme.com)

Tel : +33 (0)4 92 75 10 02

<http://www.haute-provence-tourisme.com/>

# On your path...

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## Take root in the limestone (A)

Do not dig, there is only limestone. Here the soil is not deep, the calacil is thin. And so, each crack is an opportunity for an acorn to find something to root on and grow on a holm oak. Slow growing, it measures up to 30cm in diameter despite being a centenarian. To prevent water loss through evaporation, this species has evolved over thousands of years by keeping small leaves.

Attribution : ©Axelle Baumard - PNR Luberon

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## O3HP: the oak forest with a magnifying glass (B)

On the site of the Observatoire de Haute-Provence, O3HP (Oak Observatory at OHP) studies the dynamics, functioning and biodiversity of the forest of pubescent oak against the climate changes. ambitious project to predict future changes through a gateway instrumented system, a rain exclusion system, and sensor network (temperature, humidity ...).

Attribution : ©Sophie Bourlon - PNR Luberon

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## The ICOS (Integrated Carbon Observation System) tower (C)

In atmospheric sciences: the geophysics station is one of the largest global network of detection of changes in atmospheric composition (NDACC). The measurements are performed by LIDARs (including a laser), spectrometers and weather balloons. A tower 100m high, allows the multiple sampling on the composition of the air.

Attribution : ©DR

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## Largue, river of Haute-Provence (D)

The right bank tributary of the Durance, the river basin of the Largue is modest with its 372km<sup>2</sup>. It is a varied territory stretching from the Lure mountain to the plain of the Durance, through the hills and plateaus of the central region and the Luberon Oriental mountainous areas. The Largue, and its main tributary the Laye, are the identity of several living areas. The diversity of the territory is shown in land use and activities related to water availability.

Attribution : ©Marjorie Grimaldi - PNR Luberon

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### The Largue river by Jean Giono (E)

"[...]. A stream is located far back, under the willows. It's the Largue river. A Largue quite large. It doesn't flow like all streams, equal torrents, but sleeps in deep holes then the water slides from one hole to the other, carrying fishes, then everything stops and rain is expected on the plateaus. When we look at these water holes, [...], I understood why the girls were drowning: it's the door to a country, it is a departure point [...]"

Attribution : ©David Tatin

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### Goat cheese (F)

In the Luberon, the goat farms are small farms where the milk from the herds is processed. The choice is yours to enjoy delicious goat cheeses! The Banon, honoured by a PDO, is a curd and mild goat cheese with a powerful taste, refined sometimes with brandy.! Wrapped in chestnut leaves, it is the most recognizable cheese from Provence. It is sold from March to October at the farm or at the markets.

Attribution : ©PNR Luberon



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Ce projet partenarial rassemble également le Comité Régional du Tourisme, les agences départementales de développement touristique, les offices de tourisme et les syndicats d'initiative.

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[www.cheminsdesparcs.fr](http://www.cheminsdesparcs.fr)

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