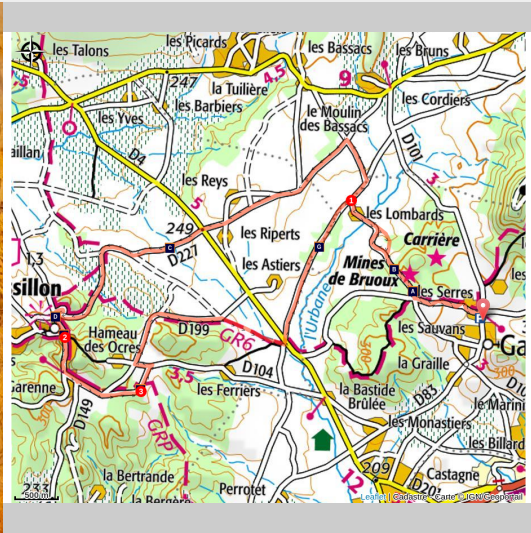


## The Ochres by bike

Gargas



Sur les Ogres à vélo (©Eric Garnier - PNR Luberon)

*A colourful route! With exceptional landscapes, ochre sites, underground or open-air quarries and colourful villages.*

« Through small picturesque roads, this ride follows the western part of the route "The Ochres by bike". Accessible to all, it goes through the Mines of Bruoux in Gargas, through Roussillon, one of the most beautiful landscapes and villages of Luberon, then stops at the Conservatoire of Ochres. I love this land of many substances, textures and colours, where the light plays along with the changing seasons. Immerse yourself in the stunning beauty of these places! » Sylvie Palpant, Managing Director of Vélo Loisir Provence.

### Useful information

Practice : BIKE

Duration : 1 h 45

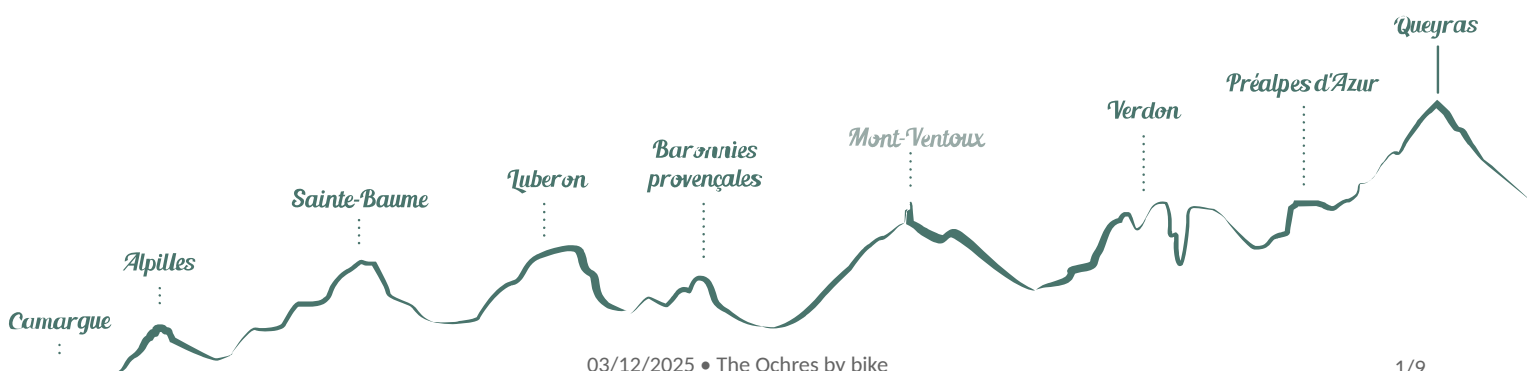
Length : 17.8 km

Trek ascent : 251 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Boucle

Themes : A lookout, a viewpoint,  
Geology, Heritage and history



# Trek

Departure : Car park near the pharmacy, central Gargas

Arrival : Gargas

Markings :  Vélo

Across of the pharmacy, go right to reach below the small roundabout and turn left towards Lombards. Calmly climb to reach a crossing. At the stop sign, turn right and follow the route "The Ochres by bike". Reach the Mines of Bruoux. Then continue to the hamlet of Lombards. Exit through the right and get to the crossroads.

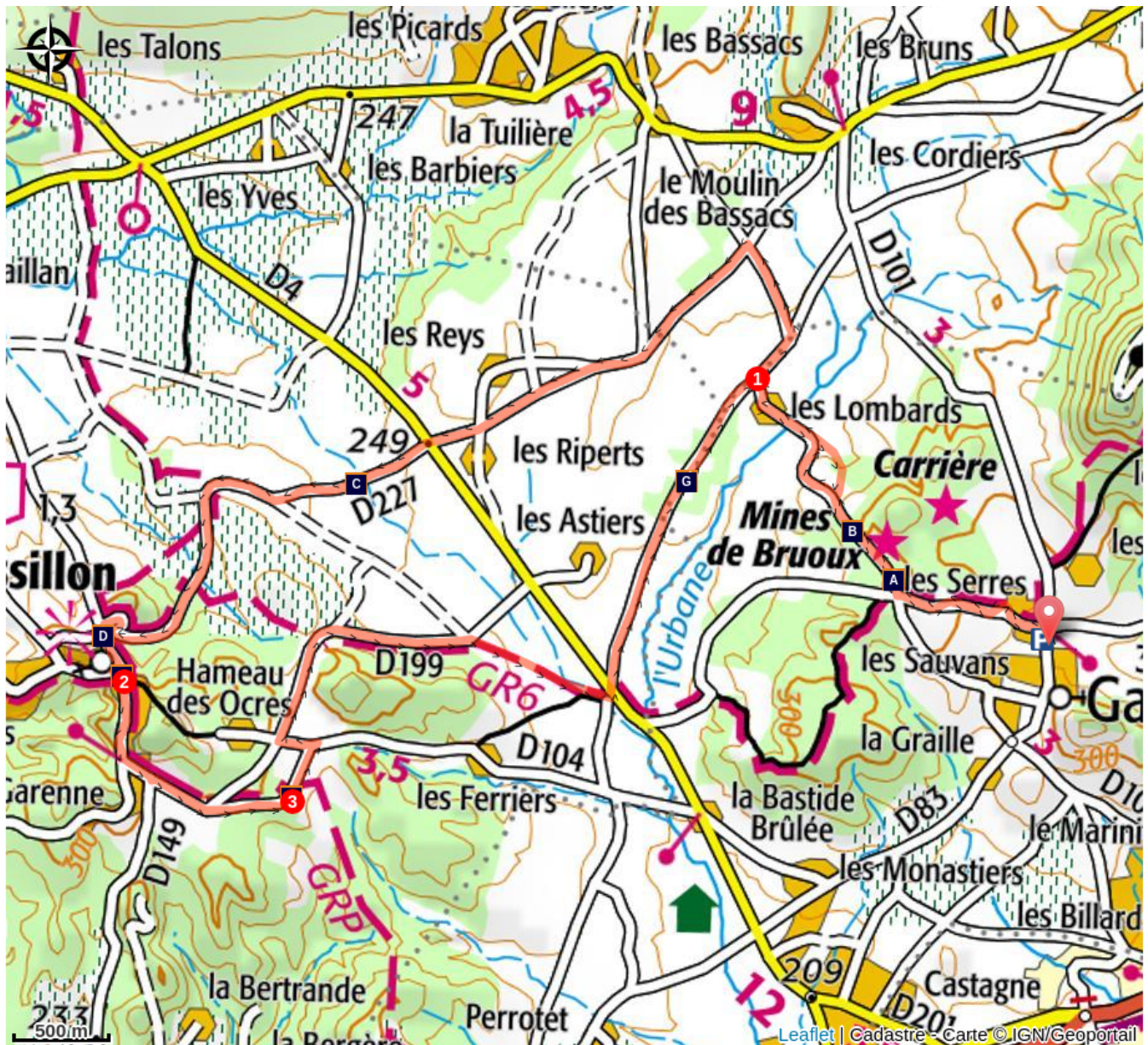
**1** - Take a sharp right and at the corner of the campsite, turn left. Come out on the D227 and take a left for 2km. At the crossing with the D4, continue across on the D227 towards Roussillon. Climb two hairpin bends, take two lefts and enter the village streets. Go around a block and reach to the left foot the ramp leading to the ochre trail.








**2** - Go forward to La Burlière avenue (D105), pass a speed bump and at the next junction, go left. Reach a roundabout and continue left towards Apt. Reach another speed bump and at the Y junction, continue straight on the D104 towards Apt. Get to the Conservatoire of Ochres.

**3** - Follow the D104, glide through the curves and at the straight line, look out for the small road to the left. Follow it and reach the D4. Cross with the utmost caution and take the small road across, leading to Lombards. Enter a residential area and reach the crossroads you didn't pass on your way going (point 1).

**1** - Turn right and return to Gargas by the same route as the one used to go.

# On your path...



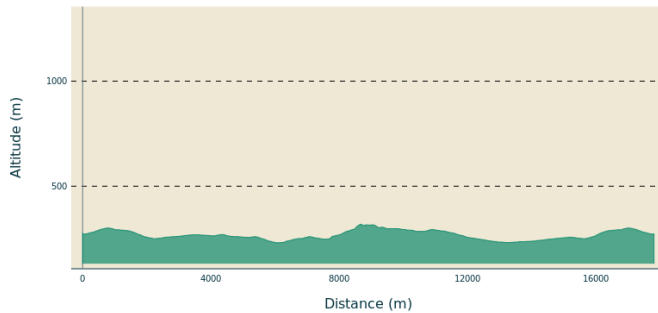
-  Ochre (A)
-  Ochre processing (B)
-  Nesting boxes for Athena (C)
-  Stones and ochre of the Calavon valley (D)
-  A viewpoint on the ochre (E)
-  Ochre Conservatory (F)
-  Cherry in the Luberon (G)

# All useful information

## **Advices**

This route follows streets opened to public traffic; under all circumstances, so it is therefore essential to respect the highway code. Wearing a helmet is highly recommended, for children as well as adults.!

## **Altimetric profile**



Min elevation 231 m  
Max elevation 319 m

## **Access**

At 5 km northwest of Apt by the D900 and D101.

## **Advised parking**

Car park near or across the pharmacy, in central Gargas.

## **Source**



Luberon Géoparc mondial  
UNESCO



Vélo Loisir Provence

## 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/>

Luberon UNESCO Global Geopark

60, place Jean Jaurès, 84400 Apt

[stephane.legal@parcduluberon.fr](mailto:stephane.legal@parcduluberon.fr)

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

<https://www.parcduluberon.fr/unesco-geoparc/>

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<https://www.veloloisirprovence.com/>

# On your path...

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## Ochre (A)

The ochre sands result from a deep chemical modification of green marine sands. About 100 million years ago, green sands emerged and were altered under a hot and humid climate which transformed into ochre sands. It is from these sands extracted in underground quarries or open-pit mines that ochre has been operated. Warning, sampling of ochre sands in the natural environment is prohibited!

Attribution : ©Eric Garnier - PNR Luberon

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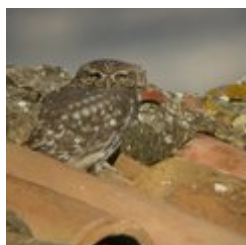


## Ochre processing (B)

Through washing, then decanting in large basins, to drying, crushing and baking, a large scale of natural pigment was made, with a variety of colours. Developed in the late 18th century, the industrial process for making ochre pigment reaches its high point in the 1920s. Today, the Société des Ogres de France still operates a quarry in Gargas and produces 1200 tons of ochre per year.

Attribution : ©Société des ogres de France

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## Nesting boxes for Athena (C)

The Little Owl (also known as the Owl of Athena) is a cave-dwelling species needing to find holes in old trees and small rural buildings. During the renovation of the farm huts, it is necessary to either make as little noise as possible or to put a replacement nest box for the owl's reproduction.

Attribution : ©DR-Gilles Viricel

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## Stones and ochre of the Calavon valley (D)

This agricultural valley with cherry trees, vineyards and orchards, is opened onto many hilltop villages which are strong calling points in the landscape. The exceptional presence of ochre in the form of richly coloured cliffs and structures with multicoloured coatings are the special features of this territory.

Attribution : ©Françoise Delville - PNR Luberon

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### A viewpoint on the ochre (E)

Make a detour through the landscaped viewpoint of Roussillon, a securing project carried out in 2015 by the Luberon RNP as part of the "Opération Grand Site" (Sustainable Tourism project). This way, you can enjoy the panoramas opening on ochreous cliffs and views of the village of Roussillon, proof of the ochre activity (coloured coated façades ...). Following the signage on site, you will be able to discover the origin of these colourful cliffs and ochre uses.

Attribution : ©Françoise Delville - PNR Luberon

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### Ochre Conservatory (F)

The Ochre Conservatory is established in the Mathieu factory. It is an old ochre factory which used to produce about 1000 tons of ochre per year between 1921 and 1963. The washing systems, the town oven and the mills have been restored in order to understand the different stages of ore processing, from extraction to shipping. Through visiting the site and the workshops, discover one of the finest jewels of the industrial ochre heritage, turned into a training centre on ochre and colour!

Attribution : ©Philippe Durand

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### Cherry in the Luberon (G)

With the Gard department, the Vaucluse department is the largest producer of table cherries. The "Burlat" and the "Bigarreau" (also known as the Royal Ann cherry) are the most cultivated varieties in the Luberon. You can consume while fresh in summer or enjoy the main speciality of Apt:: candied cherry. Apt produces more than 10000 tons of candied fruits annually.! Many fruits have been preserved there since the 14th century, a real know-how.! Today, Apt remains the world capital of candied fruit.

Attribution : ©Jean-Pierre Talichet - PNR Luberon

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Le projet Chemins des Parcs est financé par la Région Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur et les Parcs naturels régionaux des Alpilles, de Camargue, du Luberon, du Queyras et du Verdon.

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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- Please don't litter

The Geotrek tool was funded by the European Union, the Ecrins National Park and the Mercantour National Park.

The Chemins des Parcs project is funded by the Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur Region and the regional nature parks of Alpilles, Camargue, Luberon, Queyras and the Verdon.

This project was developed in partnership with the Regional Tourism Committee, the departmental tourist development agencies, and tourist offices.



Avec le soutien de



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- Luberon Géoparc mondial UNESCO
- Vélo Loisir Provence