

## By bike, between local produce and olives

Ansouis



Pause devant l'Etang de la Bonde (©Nelson Valbrun - VLP)

*Or how to, from your bike, ferret around the farmlands, enjoy local produce and discover the know-how*

"Man has developed many cultures on the lands of the Luberon with its geological properties; vines, fruits, vegetables. Pays d'Aigues benefits of irrigation provided by the Canal de Provence and the rich alluvial lands of the plain. The Luberon is a renowned land in several agricultural sectors and the AOC, AOP and IGP labels (European quality certifications), were accredited to this land in the 1980s." says Nathalie Charles - Market researcher for the promotion of agricultural products at the Luberon RNP.

### Useful information

Practice : BIKE

Duration : 2 h

Length : 23.9 km

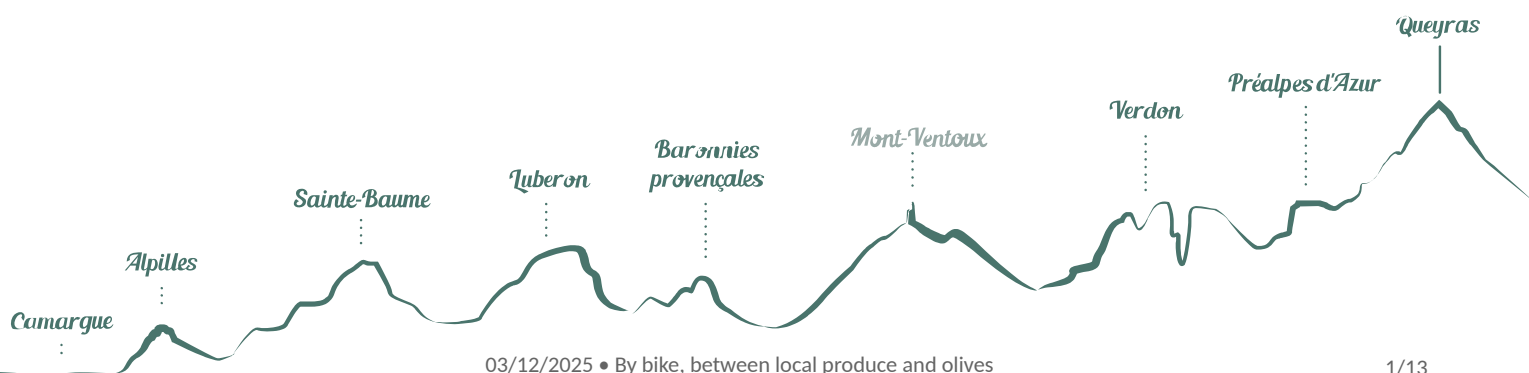
Trek ascent : 331 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Boucle

Themes : Heritage and history, Local products, Waters and rivers

Accessibility : Hybrid bike



# Trek

Departure : Tourist Office, Place de la Vieille Fontaine, Ansois

Arrival : Ansois

Markings :  Vélo

With your back to the tourist office, go left on the small road of the Grand Pibaraud area (follow the markings "Le Pays d'Aigues à vélo"). Turn right at the Y-shaped junction and 370m / 400yd further, turn right on Chemin de l'Abouaud Brinde. Come out further on the D37.

**1-** Take the D37 to the left, towards l'Etang de la Bonde Turn left (D9) and then right (D27). Pass the entrance of the pond and 500m / 546yd further, turn right (D37). Turn left and continue on Chemins des Escabots and continue to the right (D120).

**2-** Turn left (D165) to reach Saint-Martin-de-la-Brasque. At the Y turn left. At the entrance of the village, cross the alley of plane trees on the right. Turn left on the course of Mont Libre and come out on the D27.

**3-** Take the D27 to the left until Motte-d'Aigues (follow the markings "Autour du Luberon à vélo"). Go through the village and go to the stadium. Turn right and head towards Cabrières-d'Aigues (D120). Continue straight at the intersection, pass a large curve then head down the roundabout located at the entrance of Cabrières d'Aigues.





**4-** Continue straight, then take a right onto the Rue du Temple and go through the village. Take the D189 until Cucuron. At the roundabout, take a quick left and then immediately right to get to the town center.

**5-** At the corner of the Louérion winery, turn left (follow the markings "Le Pays d'Aigues à vélo"). Go down the street from the cemetery and go straight to the roundabout. At the stop sign, turn left (D27), then right towards Ansois. 250m further, take the Chemin de l'Agrie to the right. Turn left on Chemin de Saint-Estève. At the place called Long Bosquet, weave through the two houses to the left and go down the small road.

**6-** Turn right onto the Chemin du Praderet and head to the D37. At the stop sign, turn left and reach the tourist office at the foot of the Ansois village.

# On your path...



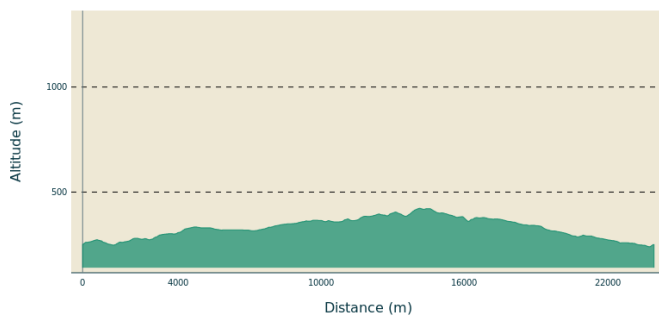
-  Ansouis, a hilltop village (A)
-  The cycle of the vine (C)
-  Etang de la Bonde (E)
-  Life is sweet in the shade of plane trees ... (G)
-  The Farmer Markets (I)
-  Motte-d'Aigues, a Vaudois village (K)
-  The deposit of Aumane (M)
-  "Cucuron-les-Olivettes" (O)
-  Olive oil, a Mediterranean symbol (Q)
-  The washhouse of Ansouis (B)
-  AOC Luberon, recognised know-how (D)
-  The source of Mirail (F)
-  2,000 years of history of grapevines (H)
-  Saint-Martin-de-la-Brasque (J)
-  green or black olives? (L)
-  The cycle of the olive tree (N)
-  Cave Cooperative Louérion (P)

# All useful information

## **AdVICES**

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

## **Altimetric profile**



Min elevation 240 m  
Max elevation 423 m

## **Access**

At 8km North of Pertuis, through the D56 and the D37.

## **Advised parking**

Car park in front of the tourist office on the way to Cucuron (D56)

## **Source**

OTI Luberon Sud Tourisme



Vélo Loisir Provence

## Information desks

House of the Luberon Regional Nature Park



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# On your path...

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## Ansouis, a hilltop village (A)

The village developed from the 10th century around the castle and the church (11th century) located at the top of a hillock. Positioned at a strategic intersection of old roads, Ansouis was the administrative and trading centre of a barony consisting of Cucuron, Sannes and Motte d'Aigues. Less influential (crisis of the 18th century), less populated (rural exodus of the 19th century), the village has kept its dense urban form of the 16th century making it its charm and a rare and precious proof.

Attribution : ©Marie Grenouilleau - PNR Luberon

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## The washhouse of Ansouis (B)

Typical with two basins - one for washing and a second one for rinsing with the arrival of water, that had to be very clean. The clothes were soaked in the water by the women, then scrubbed with "soap of Marseille" known to be one of the best detergents, then it was roughly struck several times to the "battoir" to evacuate the dirt and the soap. Rinsing required twisting and bending the laundry before draining. Some women made it their profession: The washerwomen.

Attribution : ©Commune d'Ansouis

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## The cycle of the vine (C)

In winter, the vine enters a sleep-like state. In spring, vegetative buds begin to develop - this is the period of growth for branches and leaves. In July, the leaves continue to grow and the flowers give grapes. In August, green grapes grow and mature, they turn either red or yellow. In the fall, grapes are harvested during the grape harvesting. Late in the season, the leaves will turn red, dry and fall.

Attribution : ©Françoise Delville - PNR Luberon

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## AOC Luberon, recognised know-how (D)

The AOC Luberon, created in 1988, is the result of recognized and proven know-how which is between very ancient traditions, carefully passed down from generation to generation, and the latest advances in technology and oenology. The appellation produces the three colors of wine: red, pink and white. All the AOC is nestled in the heart of the Luberon Regional Park and represents 3,220ha, and produces about 20 million bottles per year.

Attribution : ©Eric Garnier - PNR Luberon



## Etang de la Bonde (E)

The pond was created in the 15th century by Lord Fouquet d'Agoult, Baron of Sault, who decided to create a water reserve for the castle of La Tour d'Aigues, and then has an aqueduct made. The lake thus formed was for a long time the supply point for an irrigation network that supplied the valley of Aigues, contributing to the expansion of agriculture and the growth of the territory. Today, the pond is still used for irrigation and is a popular place for swimming.

Attribution : ©Aline Salvaudon - PNR Luberon



## The source of Mirail (F)

Use of the source of Mirail, upstream of the Motte-d'Aigues, dates back to the Middle Ages. Its unexpected presence in the middle of arid land has been the subject of rivalry and lust amongst the riparians of the Aigues. Source of drinking water, it quenches many small streams, direct tributaries on the right bank of the Durance, like Eze. Today it mostly feeds into the pond Bonde and therefore is used for irrigation by the network of the Canal of Provence Company.

Attribution : ©Aline Salvaudon - PNR Luberon



## Life is sweet in the shade of plane trees ... (G)

Aigues rests on the Luberon to the north and opens up onto the Durance valley to the south. This landscape with a gently rolling basin is energized by the alternating forests and vineyards. The villages of Aigues are located away from flood-prone areas, mostly on cliffs or hills and facing south. The valley, rich in building heritage (farmhouses, domains), highlighted by remarkable trees, is under increasing pressure from the living area of Aix en Provence.

Attribution : ©Françoise Delville - PNR Luberon





## 2,000 years of history of grapevines (H)

Contrary to popular belief, grape growing began here in the ancient times! Greek settlers brought the first vine stocks, but the Romans, great wine lovers, really developed viticulture in the Luberon and the Pays d'Aigues. In the Middle Ages, the members of the church among which great monasteries and Avignon popes were involved in promoting the work of the vine. The Luberon gained recognition in the 20th century as a quality local area for wine production.

Attribution : ©Eric Garnier - PNR Luberon

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## The Farmer Markets (I)

For lovers of Provençal flavors: on this great place, the brand "Marché Paysan" has been deposited by the Luberon Regional Nature Park. The goat cheeses are local productions, the fruits and vegetables are from the field "next door" and the honey has just been harvested. In these exhilarating markets, merchants are exclusively producers of the Park selling their own products (St-Martin-de-la-Brasque market on Sundays from May to October).

Attribution : ©Hervé Vincent

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## Saint-Martin-de-la-Brasque (J)

The village was built in 1506, and like Peypin-d'Aigues, it originated from an agreement between the lords and about fifteen Vaudoise families who agreed to come and repopulate fallow lands. The two villages complement each other: Peypin having a surplus of forests, and Saint-Martin of cultivable lands. During the persecutions of 1545, the village was looted and burned. St. Martin was one of the towns mentioned in the Edict of Merindol of May 20, 1545: It was enough to be a native of it to be sent to the galleys.

Attribution : ©JP-Villegas - Luberon Sud Tourisme

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## Motte-d'Aigues, a Vaudois village (K)

The village, emptied of its inhabitants by the Hundred Years' War, tried to repopulate during the second part of the 15th century. ; At the beginning of the 16th century, some Vaudois of the Italian Piedmont settled there. In 1513, the village repopulated so well that some of the inhabitants moved to La Roque d'Anthéron. A bard denounced the Vaudoise families of La Motte in 1543 and in April 1545, La Motte was part of the 24 villages looted and burned by the troops of Polin de la Garde, applying the Edict of Merindol.

Attribution : ©Susanne Kuhn - OTI Luberon Sud Tourisme

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### green or black olives? (L)

Exactly the same species, it only depends on the stage of maturation at harvest! The green olive is harvested between October and November, while the black olive from December to February. Green olives produce an oil with herbaceous flavors when winter arrives, black olives produce an oil with more subtle flavors and savor closer to dried fruit. In the Vaucluse, harvest takes place from late October to late December to avoid frost altering the quality of the olives.

Attribution : Eric Garnier - PNR Luberon

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### The deposit of Aumane (M)

This paleontological deposit is a major geological site which is recognized at international level. Geologists have discovered fossils typical of African wildlife: gazelles, elephants, saber-toothed tigers and especially *Hipparion*, a distant cousin of the horse! A new species, having identified the creation of a new geological period: Tortonian. This period is the penultimate subdivision of Miocene: a savannah stretched at the foot of Luberon 7 million years ago!

Attribution : ©Noël Podevigne - Université Lyon-1

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### The cycle of the olive tree (N)

From December to January, it is dormant. In late February, vegetation grows. In May-June, the olive tree is covered with white flowers, some of which will give fruit: The olive. In June, the stone begins to harden, the olives grow and become green. From mid-October, the olives begin to mature and have a purple color, the "rotating" olives. From late October to December, the olives have an evenly color ranging from violet to black, corresponding to their complete maturation.

Attribution : ©PNR Luberon

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### "Cucuron-les-Olivettes" (O)

In the 18th century, olive trees were one of the treasures of Cucuron. In the 50s, this mocking nickname attests the importance of this production. In 1598, Land Registry mentioned 8 mills. Several severe winters (1709, 1768 and 1956) destroyed the olive groves. Over the recent decades, the gastronomic and diet passion for olive oil has encouraged farmers to plant new olive groves. Today Cucuron has 2 very active oil mills.

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## Cave Cooperative Lou erion (P)

In 1925, winemakers decided to gather in cooperatives to work together. After several mergers, the cellars of Lourmarin, Cadenet, Lauris and Cucuron created Lou erion (name given to the Luberon by the Romans) in 2009. Today the cooperative extends over 950ha of vineyards in 15 towns of Luberon. The cooperative has 150 co-operators who produce about 47,000hl for different names. Some wines are produced in accordance with the specifications of Agriconfiance quality system.

Attribution :  Eric Garnier - PNR Luberon

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## Olive oil, a Mediterranean symbol (Q)

Imported in Provence by the Phoenicians, who founded Marseille 600 BC, the olive tree spread during the Roman era in the south of France. The olive harvest takes place from October to February. Depending on the variety, it usually takes 5 to 7kg of olives for a litre of oil. Olive oil is emblematic of the Mediterranean diet and is found in many typical dishes such as Tapenade (a traditional Proven al olive spread). In the Luberon, several mills will offer their olive oils, each with its own personality.

Attribution :  DR



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