

## “Astouin” cycling circuit

Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer



Vélo sur le bac du Sauvage (Juliette Pimpier - PNR Camargue)



*Walk along the banks of the Petit-Rhône to observe the exceptional environment of this stream!*

A route in the heart of Camargue landscapes between land and water! On the water side, observe the meeting of the Rhone with the sea and cross the Petit-Rhône with the Sauvage's ferry. While the Grand Rhone was channelled for navigation, the Petit-Rhône remained wilder. Rich in fish, especially catfish, it is also home to a population of nutria. Land side, enjoy this circuit that runs along the rice fields and find you closer to the Camargue horses!

### Useful information

Practice : BIKE

Duration : 3 h

Length : 31.3 km

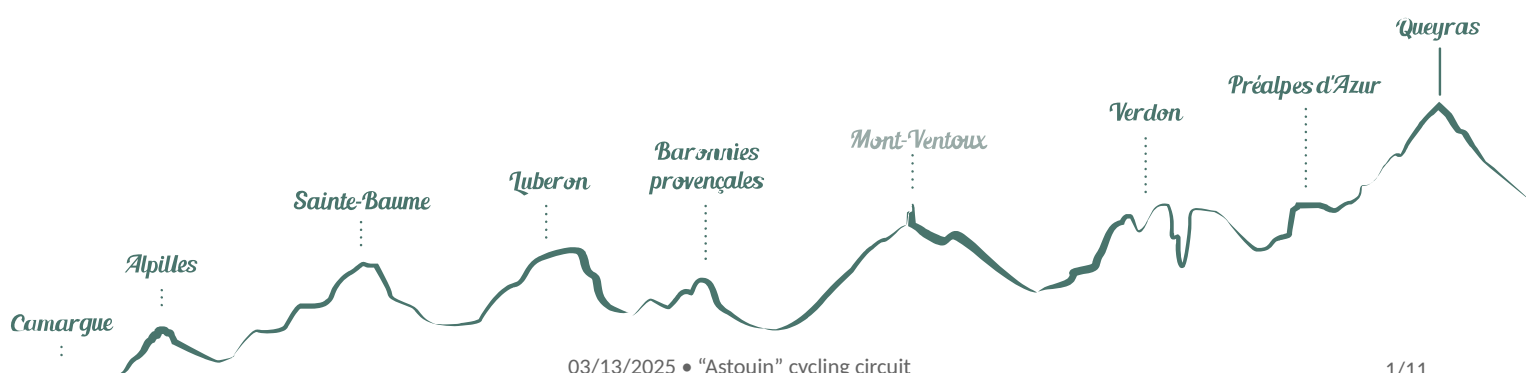
Trek ascent : 69 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Boucle

Themes : Waters and rivers

Accessibility : Hybrid bike



# Trek

Departure : Tourist Office, les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer

Arrival : Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer

Back to the Tourist Office, head left on Van Gogh Avenue, towards Aigues-Mortes. Continue straight for 6 km and follow the Grau d'Orgon and the Petit-Rhône, on the D38.

**1** - Turn left on the D85 and take the Sauvage ferry (information about ferry times at the Tourist Office). Continue on the D85 towards Aigues-Mortes and cross the small bridge that spans the Peccais Canal at Sylvéréal.

**2** - At the intersection of the D58, turn right and continue for 350 m towards Arles. Take the bridge over the Petit-Rhône.

**3** - Then turn right towards S33. Walk 2 km and reach the Astouin hamlet. Leave on the left the Astouin Castle estate.

**4** - At the intersection with the D38, go to the right and continue the D38 for more than 3,5 km.

**5** - Take the D38A, turn left and continue straight until you reach the D570.


**6** - At the intersection with the D570, turn right and continue for about 4.5 km.

**7** - After the Le Boumian hotel, take the small dirt road on the left, parallel to the D570. Continue straight for about 1.5 km.

**8** - Turn left before the roubine (stream). Continue the path that runs along the roubine. Pass the small bridge and continue to the right. Continue straight and turn right on the road to Cacharel and cross the village to regain the starting point of the circuit, the Tourist Office of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

# On your path...



-  The Amarée Mas (A)
-  The Gardian Hut (C)
-  The arenas of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer (E)
-  The Port Gardian (G)
-  The Camargue Biosphere Reserve (I)
-  The Astouin castle estate (K)
-  The Horses of the Camargue (M)
-  The Departmental Reserve of Imperialists (O)
-  The fortified church of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer (Q)

-  The Petit-Rhône estuary (B)
-  The Camargue Cross (D)
-  The Camarguaise Race (F)
-  Sauvage's ferry (H)
-  Rice fields (J)
-  The bull of Camargue (L)
-  Le Bouvau d'Aubanel (N)
-  The eel (P)

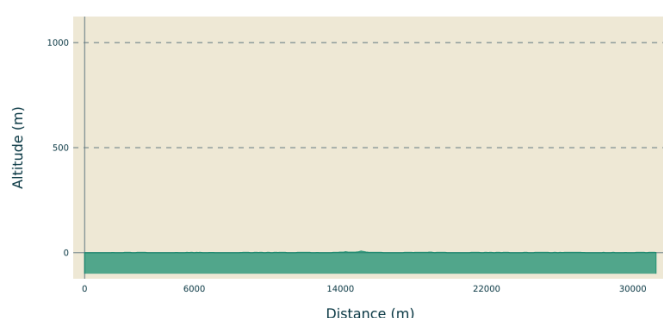


# All useful information

## **Advices**

Caution on the D38!  
D58 up to Sylvéréal, dangerous road!  
Stay alert on the D570, busy road.  
Respect the rules of the road on roads open to public traffic.

## **Altimetric profile**



Min elevation 0 m  
Max elevation 8 m

## **Transports**

Envia transport network : Line 20 > Arles/Les  
Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer by Albaron (free bikes  
racks) >> [www.tout-envia.com](http://www.tout-envia.com);  
[www.pacamobilite.fr](http://www.pacamobilite.fr)

## **Access**

24 km south of Arles, by the D570 then the D36.

## **Advised parking**

Parking Avenue Théodore Aubanel, Les Saintes-  
Maries-de-la-Mer

## **Information desks**

OT Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer - Tourisme en  
Camargue



5 Avenue Van Gogh, 13460 Saintes Maries de la Mer

[info@saintesmaries.com](mailto:info@saintesmaries.com)

Tel : 04 90 97 82 55

<http://www.saintesmaries.com/>

the Camargue museum

Mas du pont de rousty, 13200 Arles

[info@parc-camargue.fr](mailto:info@parc-camargue.fr)

Tel : +33 (0)4 90 97 10 40

<http://www.parc-camargue.fr/>

# On your path...

---



## The Amarée Mas (A)

The Amarée Mas was rented in 1899 by the Baroncelli marquis, writer and manadier who developed the Camargue, he exploited the traditions of the territory such as the Camargue race and the Gypsy pilgrimage. The Amarée mas which extends over 200 ha, the main house adjoins a stable. Due to financial problems, Baroncelli is forced to leave the Amarée, the Saintois contribute to offer him the land of Simbèu mas where he builds a farmhouse similar to the one of Amarée.

Attribution : Juliette Pimpier - PNR Camargue

---



## The Petit-Rhône estuary (B)

The Petit-Rhône is one of the two arms of the Rhone Delta that leaves the main riverbed north of Arles to jump into the Mediterranean Sea. The Petit-Rhône estuary is located 2 km west of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer and is called Grau d'Orgon. The Clos du Rhône beach, located at the Petit Rhône estuary, is the last beach of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer. On the other side of the Petit-Rhône, there is the Espiguette Port Camargue beach.

Attribution : Juliette Pimpier - PNR Camargue

---



## The Gardian Hut (C)

Traditional home of guardians of Camargue, the hut has whitewashed walls and a roof of sagne (reeds marshes). The architecture of these cabins is original : straight walls on all sides except the one exposed to the mistral (north-west) which is in apse (of rounded form) to offer less catch in the wind. At the top of this apse, there is usually a form of cross or horn that used to stow the cabin on the ground during windy days.

Attribution : Juliette Pimpier - PNR Camargue

---



## The Camargue Cross (D)

The painter and sculptor Hermann Paul conceives the Camargue Cross in 1926 following the request of Marquis Baroncelli, « inventor » of the Camargue. It associates the guardians and the fishermen and symbolizes three virtues: the Cross for Faith, the Anchor for Hope and the Heart for Charity. The guardians and the Camargue soul are represented by the tridents. The original cross was made in wrought iron by Joseph Barbanson and inaugurated on July 7, 1926.

Attribution : Juliette Pimpier - PNR Camargue



## The arenas of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer (E)

The arenas of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer were inaugurated in 1931 and can accommodate 4,500 people. They are built in hard material and have a circular shape.. Part of the arena collapsed in 1931, and was rebuilt in 1932. In 1985, they were redesigned by the architect André Marchetti. They offer three forms of bull races: the Camargue race, the Spanish race, and the rejón bullfight where the bull is fought by a rider, the rejoneador.

Attribution : Juliette Primpier - PNR Camargue

---



## The Camarguaise Race (F)

Originally, the race is a taurine game where animals and farmhands fight and play with the bull. Towards the end of the 19th century, this bullfighting game becomes less violent and only the man plays with the bull. We fix the attributes on the horns of the Camargue bull intended to be removed by the raseteurs dressed in white, now only protagonists of the race. A cockade is fixed on the horns of the bull and bonuses are awarded to the one who will pick up the attribute.

Attribution : Marjorie Mercier - PNR Camargue

---



## The Port Gardian (G)

The creation of the marina, Port Gardian, dates back to the development of tourism in the Camargue in the mid-twentieth century. Built in June 1984, it has managed to keep its family atmosphere and its human dimension. This harbour has 380 rings. The village church, located not far from the port, 200 m from the wharves, is used as bitter, a landmark fixed and unambiguously identifiable. It guides boaters and fishermen sailing on the Mediterranean Sea.

Attribution : Juliette Primpier - PNR Camargue

---



## Sauvage's ferry (H)

Put in circulation in 1972, Sauvage's ferry was completely renovated in 2004. It allows to connect the two banks of the Petit-Rhône for free. It is powered by two side impellers with no possibility of steering and its circulation is facilitated by a cable. The ferry can carry 8 cars, 30 passengers and the crew for a crossing of a duration of 2 min. The nearby equestrian centres offer ballads for which you have to take the ferry, so it is common to see horses on board.

Attribution : DR



## The Camargue Biosphere Reserve (I)

The Camargue was classified as a Biosphere Reserve in 1977. Between these folds still partly wooded, you will find low lands occupied by lagoons lined with salt steppes, reed marshes and ponds. The agricultural lands are composed of wet meadows and grazers dedicated to the grazing of bulls and horses, old marshes converted into rice paddies of lagoons designed for the exploitation of salt and vegetable crops and viticulture on the dunes.

Attribution : Opus Species - PNR Camargue



## Rice fields (J)

Rice farming has been present in the Camargue since the post-war period. Complex, this culture follows several stages: lifting, tillering, bolting, return and flowering. The land is flooded to promote the germination of rice grains and prevent the proliferation of fungi. Rice farming therefore requires freshwater irrigation and extensive drainage to develop the saltiest land. Huge amounts of water between the two arms of the Rhône (400 million m<sup>3</sup> per year) are needed.

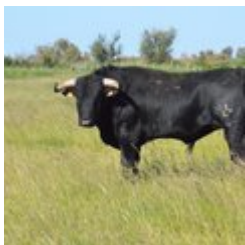
Attribution : Laurie Vannel - PNR Camargue



## The Astouin castle estate (K)

The Astouin castle estate was able to develop itself thanks to the containment of the Rhône, close to agricultural activities, between Petit-Rhône and the Vaccarès pond. The Astouin castle estate consists of a farmhouse dating from the eighteenth century, an old chapel and a large park and is surrounded by rice paddies. It is at the foot of the cross located in the Astouin castle estate that the Crusaders in the 11th century would have gathered before embarking for the Holy Land.

Attribution : Opus Species - PNR Camargue



## The bull of Camargue (L)

The bull of Camargue, also called bull of Raço di Bioù (in Provençal), is slender and fiery. The Camargue bull is a French bovine breed. It sports beautiful horns shaped lyres. Its breeding is mainly intended for the Camargue race, also called race "with the cockade". It can also be admired during ferrades, during which the anoube, a young bull of one year, is separated from the herd to be affixed a fire brand.

Attribution : Marjorie Mercier - PNR Camargue



## The Horses of the Camargue (M)

The Camargue horse is a very old breed (1978) and would descend from the prehistoric horse of Solutré. Symbol of the Camargue, with a gray-white dress, short ears and a shaggy mane, it is small, about 1.45 m at the withers. His dark hair of birth takes its final colour white-gray when he is around 4 years old. Raised in the Camargue, he is the companion of the guardian and the working tool for raising bulls. Breeding and reproduction criteria are strict to preserve his breed.

Attribution : Marjorie Mercier - PNR Camargue



## Le Bouvau d'Aubanel (N)

The Baroncelli marquis, famous character of Camargue life, gave to his manade the name of Manade Santenco which means, in Provençal, manade of Saintes-Maries. At the death of the marquis, his son-in-law Henri Aubanel then manages the Santenco manade.. On June 15, 1996, the Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer inaugurate the Henri Aubanel bouvau, a circular enclosure where bulls are grouped after selection. At the death of Henri Aubanel, his son Pierre manages the manade that he renames Aubanel Baroncelli Santenco manade.

Attribution : Juliette Pimpier - PNR Camargue



## The Departmental Reserve of Imperialists (O)

Classified Departmental Reserve, Imperial and Malagroy Ponds were acquired by the Departmental Council of Bouches-du-Rhone in 1964 to protect these fragile natural environments (2,770 ha) which are home to many species of birds. The fishing, a traditional activity in Camargue, is practiced in the Imperial reserve in a boat without motor which imposes the use, as formerly, of the "partygue" (pole). Fishermen are looking for shrimps, eels.

Attribution : Chloé Scannapiéco - PNR Camargue



## The eel (P)

At the graus level (or passages), communication canals between the sea and the littoral ponds, you will find fish, towards the flooded sansouïre and the ponds or towards the sea. Migrating species include mullet, sea bass, but also sea bream, sole and especially eel. Born in the Sargasso Sea, she joined the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts after a long journey. She comes to grow in the coastal ponds or rivers where she spends several years of her life.

Attribution : Julien Faure - PNR Camargue





## The fortified church of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer (Q)

True highlight of the Camargue (15 m), the church offers a breathtaking view of the village and all the Camargue. The 53 steps of a spiral staircase lead to the roof of the church where the panorama unfolds in all its splendour : up there, you can take advantage of a wide angle vision on the city, the sea and the ponds. Intense and sparkling blue of the Mediterranean Sea, purple hue of the Imperial pond The wind, the sun, the view of the calm expanse of the sea invite you to discover this landscape.

Attribution : Chloé Scannapiéco - PNR Camargue



- En aucun cas les auteurs des contenus de ce site ne sauraient être tenus pour responsables de problèmes ou d'accidents sur les itinéraires cités.
- Cependant, nous comptons sur vous pour signaler toutes contradictions importantes entre cette fiche et le terrain.
- Pensez également à signaler les éventuels problèmes rencontrés pendant votre balade sur <http://sentinelles.sportsdenature.fr> (erreur de balisage, panneau défectueux, pollution, conflit d'usages...).
- La vente de cette fiche est autorisée au coût d'impression.
- Ne pas jeter dans la nature.

L'outil Geotrek a été financé par l'Union européenne, le Parc national des Ecrins et le Parc national du Mercantour.

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.

- The authors of this website will in no case be held responsible for problems or accidents on the routes mentioned.
- We count on you to point out any inconsistency between this content and the field itineraries
- Please report any problems encountered on the routes (route marking problems, defective panels, pollution, conflict of uses ...) on <http://sentinelles.sportsdenature.fr>
- The sale of this sheet is authorized at the cost of printing
- 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.

**www.cheminsdesparcs.fr**

*Tours et détours dans les Parcs naturels régionaux  
de Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur*

Avec le soutien de

