

## The trail of Blanc Martel

La Palud-sur-Verdon



Grand canyon du Verdon (©Stefano Blanc - PNR Verdon)



*At the heart of the Great Gorges du Verdon, the trail of Blanc Martel takes you to a spectacular scenery and breathtaking views.*

The Blanc-Martel trail allows you to enter into the depths of the gorges du Verdon. By following the course of the river, you will discover beautiful panoramic views often causing dizziness.

### Useful information

Practice : WALKING

Duration : 6 h 30

Length : 12.7 km

Trek ascent : 942 m

Difficulty : Difficult

Type : Traversée

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



# Trek

Departure : Chalet de la Maline (rest house) in La Palud sur Verdon

Arrival : Point Sublime in Rougon

Markings :  GR®

From the chalet de la Maline, follow the GR 4 (Red and white marking!) and then the road below. Go down to the bottom of the gorges (Many curves, stay on the trail!). Take the stairs of the Pas d'Issane (Tricky passage!). Regain the intersection.

**1** - At the intersection, at the foot of the winding paths, go left towards the Point sublime (Sign). Walk along the Verdon until the stairs of Guègue (Go down carefully!). Continue on the trail that rises above the Verdon, in front of the cave "Baume aux Boeufs" and reach a second intersection.

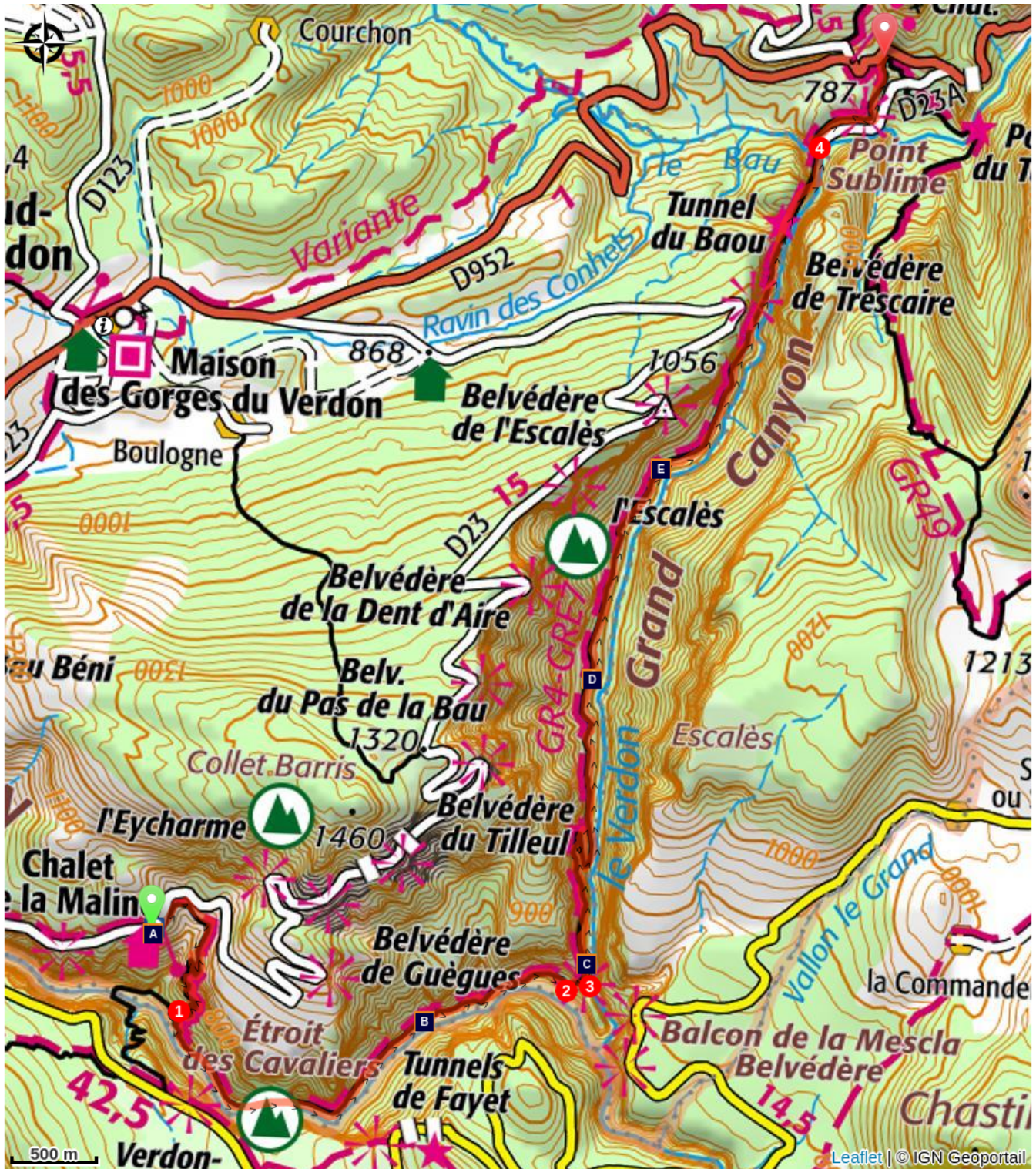
**2** - At the intersection, turn left towards the Point Sublime and continue until the brèche Imbert (difficult climb!). Turn right at this intersection to reach the confluence between the Verdon and the Artuby rivers (1km round trip marked in yellow).

**3** - Reaching the brèche Imbert means you have reached midway through. Before starting the descent, access to the gazebo is possible by climbing cautiously the rock on the right (delicate passage with handrail!) Go down the steep and narrow metal staircase of the brèche Imbert, (For those prone to vertigo, this is a delicate passage!) which can be daunting (Be careful when crossing others!). Get off at the edge of the Verdon after a few winding paths, at the Baume aux Chiens (Tricky passages!). From this point, continue walking to reach the first tunnel (110m) and a second, much longer (610m). The exit of the last tunnel connects with one of the narrowest areas of the gorges, the Couloir Samson. Go back down near the river and cross the torrent of Bau by going over a small bridge. Then, go up towards the Samson belvedere (turning area of a dead end road).

**4** - Cross the turning area through the left. Continue on the path above the road and walk along the bottom of the cliff (150m of ascending elevation!). Reach the main road. From there, take a left towards the Point Sublime.



## On your path...



Chalet de la Maline (A)



The Imbert gap (C)



Wild animals, you said wild animals? (E)



At the bottom of the gorges, a boat trip adventure (B)



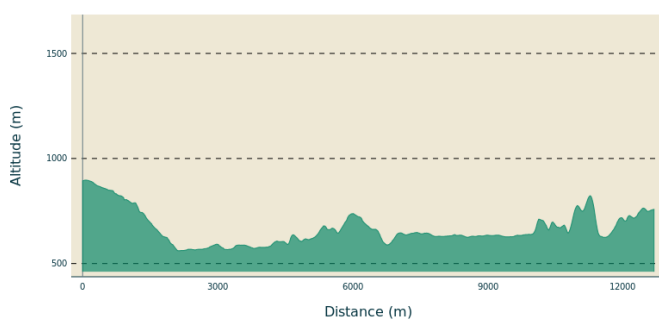
The Verdon at the bottom of the Gorges (D)

# All useful information

## **Advices**

Children under 8, dogs and mountain bikes are not allowed on this trail. Avoid this trail if you are prone to vertigo. Tricky passages. Careful! If you go near the riversides, the water level may vary rapidly with water releases from upstream dams. We recommend hiking boots, a lamp, 3L of water per person, high-energy foods, warm clothing and a hat. Careful! This trail is not a circuit in a loop but a one-way route between la Maline and Point Sublime.

## **Altimetric profile**



Min elevation 561 m

Max elevation 897 m

## **Transports**

A shuttle bus runs from April to September, from Castellane (with stops at campsites). It is advised to take the shuttle or a taxi which will drop you at the start and will pick you up at the arrival. If you arrive at the gorges through Moustiers-Sainte-Marie, it will take you to La Palud-sur-Verdon.

## **Access**

From the Plaud-sur-Verdon, take the D23 towards the Chalet de la Maline (C.A.F).

## **Advised parking**

Chalet de la Maline (rest house)



## Information desks

House of the Verdon Regional Nature Park



Domaine de Valx, 04360 Moustiers-Sainte-Marie

[info@parcduverdon.fr](mailto:info@parcduverdon.fr)

Tel : +33 (0)4 92 74 68 00

<http://www.parcduverdon.fr/>

OT la Palud sur Verdon - Rougon

Le Château, 04120 La Palud-sur-Verdon

[office-tourisme@lapaludsurverdon.com](mailto:office-tourisme@lapaludsurverdon.com)

Tel : +33 (0)4 92 77 32 02

<http://www.lapalud-verdontourisme.com/>

# On your path...

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## Chalet de la Maline (A)

Refuge of the C.A.F (French club promoting mountain sports) - this cottage is located on one of the most open viewpoints on the Verdon Gorges. This is a unique accommodation on the Route des Crêtes with a typical Provençal charm. An exceptional location on the Grand Canyon, starting from the famous Blanc-Martel and Imbut trails, a stage of the GR4, at the core of the Verdon Regional Nature Park, for your hiking, climbing, mountain biking and white water trips. Jean Faure, the new guard will welcome you as of March 26, 2016

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## At the bottom of the gorges, a boat trip adventure (B)

To understand the origin of the name of the trail (Blanc-Martel) you must go back to August 11, 1905, at the edge of the river. There is Alfred Martel appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture to explore the Verdon. 3 men from Rougon will accompany the team, including Isidore Blanc, the local cantor of the beauties of the place, without whom the exploration could not have been possible. The adventure will last 3 days and a half, during which the boats turn over and split. The adventure continues, the exploration of the gorges is done.

Attribution : DR

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## The Imbert gap (C)

The Imbert gap is made of 6 ladders and 274 steps!! The view from above is spectacular, do not miss the viewpoint at the top of the rock to the right before going down the metal stairs, one can't pass by without seeing, it would be a shame.

Attribution : Stefano Blanc - PNR Verdon

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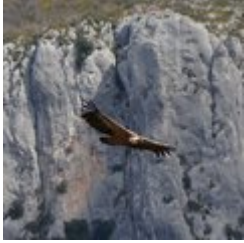


## The Verdon at the bottom of the Gorges (D)

5 million years ago, the desiccation of the Mediterranean Sea provoked the erosion of mountains through which rivers travelled. The Verdon will carve at great speed the Jurassic mountains and the gorges will dig through a maximum. When the Mediterranean sea reaches its normal level, the digging of the gorges stops.

Attribution : Jordan Lacoste - PNR Verdon

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## Wild animals, you said wild animals? (E)

They are back in the Verdon since the past ten years, they have been reintroduced in Rougon. Admire their great glide on bedrocks, or their nonchalant rise in the air when using the updraughts. It's the griffon vultures (*Gyps Fulvus*). Make sure you have your binoculars: you will see their long necks, their white heads contrasting with their brown feathers and their large beaks of the scavenger raptors they are.

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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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