

(On disk filename/dossier ref: Razès Quercorb)

COMMUNITY OF COMMUNES
The Razès Hillside

Razès Quercorb Footpath via Peyrefitte-du-Razès and Gueytes

Access routes:

Motorway A61. Take the BRAM exit, between Carcassonne and Castelnaudary, and follow signs for Limoux. At the third roundabout, take the road to Belvèze and follow signs for Bellegarde and Mirepoix.

Limoux. Take the Carcassonne road. At sports stadium junction, turn left onto D623, marked to Castelnaudary and Belvèze. In Belvèze, follow signs for Bellegarde and Mirepoix.

Carcassonne. Take the Montréal road. After Montréal follow signs for Fanjeaux and Mirepoix. At the foot of the hill, after the little bridge, turn left signposted to Belvèze. In Belvèze, follow signs for Bellegarde and Mirepoix.

Mirepoix Take the Limoux road. As you leave Caudeval, turn left onto D18, marked to Escueillens and Belvèze.

Castelnaudary. Take the Limoux road. After Villasavary follow signs for Limoux and Belvèze. At the second roundabout, take the road to Belvèze. In Belvèze, follow signs for Bellegarde and Mirepoix.

Peyrefitte-du-Razès.

Exhibitions in 'Salle Petra Ficta' on the second weekend of every month.

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ESCUEILLENS SAINT JUST DE BELENGARD

The original church was the chapel for the castle, but this was destroyed in a fire, leading to plans for a new church. Because of lack of space and for practical reasons, the building of the church changed the initial layout of the village streets. By looking closely, one can see that the original circular shape of the village has been altered by the new church, which is positioned north/south. The circular streets still exist.

Facilities: Post Office

Quercorb

This region extends across two valleys – that of the Hers to the south, and the Ambronnes to the north, and one cannot fail to notice its great characteristic natural richness. Tourism has an important place with castles, lakes, museums, an art gallery and many outdoor activities.

The Ambronnes Valley

This footpath takes you through the northern part of the Quercorb, where you will be on the edge of several different regions; Quercorb, the Razès, the areas around the towns of both Mirepoix and

Limoux, as well as the Ariège. Mixed farming is dominant (animal fodder and cereal growing) and this hilly scenery is made up of farming land still divided into small plots, separated by copses and spinneys. Heathland is gradually taking over the non-cultivated areas. Small farms still breed horses, sheep and cattle which live on the hillsides, together with lambs and calves raised naturally in the open air. Listen carefully and you will hear the animals' bells.

Peyrefitte-du-Razès

This formerly fortified village still has an old half-timbered house with the characteristic stonework on the exterior. Situated at 360 metres above sea-level, the village has a tranquil seductive charm. Drinking water is available in the Square by the church.

Gueytes-Labastide

This commune, which is full of historical importance, occupies a strategic point in the region. Dominating the Ambronnes valley due to the Castle of Labastide d'Enrichard (private property) the village could control the access along the valley to Limoux, Mirepoix and also the Razès. The agricultural land is attractively laid out in terraces, which enables an active and well-balanced rural life to still carry on today.

Description

Point of Departure: **ESCUEILLENS**
(yellow waymarkers)

Take the minor road to the right of the war memorial and after a few metres, turn left. Follow the track to the level crossing of the old railway line (no rails remain), taking the pathway opposite and follow it, ignoring all paths to left and right, until you reach a junction (impossible to go straight ahead) and turn right. When you meet another track which comes off a tarmac road, turn left, and then take the first path to the right (down an embankment) to then come up to the village of :

LA PENNE. When you reach the road, turn left and walk through the hamlet. As you leave, take the road to the right marked to the 'Pouillierie'. After the bridge turn left into the field, leaving the building on the right to go through a gate, and walk round the lake on the right hand side (anti-clockwise). At the end of the lake, turn right to take the lane that rises. Cross a tarmac road and take the lane opposite which goes down (building on the right) and follow the track which skirts the wood as far as :

CD63. Go straight opposite towards the Cloterie. As you enter the hamlet, go right and cross a small square, passing between a few houses, and then follow the grassy track which leads up in front of you. Pass some ruins, and after a downhill slope, turn right. At a larger track (La Roquerie on your right) turn left and follow this lane as far as the CD63 (small col). Cross the road and follow the track that leads off to the left above the road, ignoring a first track to the right, to come down to some fencing. Take the small grassy track that leads downhill and follow it as far as the CD63. Turn right and keep going on this road as far as :

PEYREFITTE. As you enter the village, turn right and go in front of the church. Cross the square and go as far as the last road before the main Limoux-Mirepoix road (rue du Presbytère). Turn right towards the far end of the village and take the track that leads off to the right. Follow this, ignoring all tracks to left and right, as far as :

GUEYTES. Cross the village, pass in front of the church, and follow the road which leads down to a transformer. Turn right, cross a small bridge and ignore all lanes to left and right until you come to an old rusty pylon. Turn right along the field, climb up the little track and turn left to follow the edge of a wood. Pass in front of a building, turn right and continue to follow the edge of the wood until you meet a larger lane and a bridge. Take the track which rises in front of you, and then turn immediately left to go on what is left of the railway line (no rails remain). Do not go over on the bridge, but go to the right and follow the track as far as the point where it narrows (barrier on your right). Turn left to take the path that climbs up. At the top, follow the track going left, to arrive at :

CD18. Go straight ahead to climb up to the village of Lignairolles, and continue straight ahead, ignoring a track to the left (Seignalens direct). When you meet another track, turn left and follow this path as far as :

GR7. (red & white markers). Turn right as far as the crossroads, then leave the GR7 to take the track in front of you which goes downhill (yellow markers). Follow this as far as the tarmac lane. Take the track in front of you, later turning left, and continue until you meet a track arriving from your left. Turn right and continue until you meet :

CD463 (cross). Turn right and follow the road to Escueillens.

Useful Information:

IGN Map: Montréal 2246 East.

The footpath leaves from Escueillens and firstly travels up and down through gently undulating countryside, before making its way across a series of small hamlets and isolated farms, made up of meadows and woods scattered in a highland landscape around the villages of Peyrefitte-du-Razès and Gueytes & Labastide.

Look out for fields of horses, sheep and cattle, reared naturally in the open air.

Razès Quercorb (1 page)

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Look out for fields of horses, sheep and cattle, reared naturally in the open air. You can also hear the tinkling of bells if you listen carefully.

Further information:
Community of Communes
The Razès Hillside
Tel: 04 68 69 55 32

(ends/fin)