

The Ossau Valley

LEV
4

CIRCUIT N°31

Le lac d'Isabe

From above, the lake looks like a jewel set into the mountain. It may be sapphire or emerald depending on the light of day, and is nestled at the foot of the Pic de Sesques.

To get there, you need a good dose of motivation, but the reward is well worth the effort.



D

50m before the bridge, take the path on the left. It goes up along the right bank of the Gave du Bitet, which you will ford and reach the end of the track.

0h45

① 705505 E - 4757237 N At the end of the parking area, pass the stream below the Bitet water intake and take the path that climbs steeply into the forest. After a flat section, keep climbing very steeply.

2h00

② 704687 E - 4757098 N At the end of the forest, follow the path that winds between the boulders and take the path that climbs to the right. Beautiful waterfalls flow from the lake down the rocky outcrops on the right. Now climb up to a large scree slope dotted with shrubs and rhododendrons.

3h00

③ 704389 E - 4756450 N Cross a small stream and head to the right on rocky steps. Zig-zag your way up the steep track. The track is narrow and drops off steeply, winding between rocky outcrops. Find safe footing on a hilly plateau, which leads to the lake.

3h30

④ 704088 E - 4756319 N Take the same route back down.





D Above Eaux-Chaudes. Car park on the Bitet track at the bridge and the traffic ban sign.

GPS WGS 84 UTM 30T
706833 E - 4756257 N

6h

10,8km

1130m

★ Don't miss:

- The forest of beech and fir trees.
- Waterfalls.
- Lake Isabe.



Note:

- Given the state of the track in places, it is best to park in the car park before the Bitet track (add 3.4 km there and back).
- Do not attempt this hike when there is still snow.

Yellow markers

The bear of the Pyrenees

The brown bear is an emblematic figure of the Pyrenees fauna, and has long lived in the large forests of the Ossau Valley. With the death of Cannelle in 2004, the last bear of Pyrenean origin, they disappeared from what was known here as the "bear area". The only bear still present in the Ossau Valley is a Slovenian bear called Néré, the cub of Ziva, a bear reintroduced in 1996 in Ariège. Cannelito, Cannelle's bear cub, half Slovenian, half Pyrenean, was moved to the High Pyrenees. The current population of bears in the Pyrenees is the result of reintroduction and amounts to about twenty individuals grouped together in the central part of the mountain range.

Information :

Laruns/Artouste Tourist Information Office : +33 (0)5 59 05 31 41
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Choose your hike

For each route, you will find technical and practical information to help you choose your hike

Levels of difficulty

The hikes are classified by order of difficulty defined by a colour code following the recommendations of the French Hiking Federation:

- NIV 1** Very easy, less than 2 hours walking. Ideal for families, on well-marked tracks.
- NIV 2** Easy, less than 3 hours walking. Suitable for families, on tracks with sometimes more difficult passages.
- NIV 3** Difficult, less than 4 hours walking. For hikers used to walking, with some quite intense sections or steep slopes.
- NIV 4** Very difficult, more than 4 hours of walking. For experienced and fit hikers. The itinerary can be long and technical (strong elevation gain, tricky passages).

GPS 30T 7107030 - 4776694N

GPS coordinates

D Start



Walking time, given in hours. This estimated time takes into account the length of the hike, the elevation gain and the possible difficulties.



Elevation gain, expressed in metres. For each circuit, the value corresponds to the cumulative elevation gain.



Distance, the value expressed in kilometres corresponds to the total length of the route.

Markers

Direction	Local routes and PR®	GRP®	GR®
Right way			
Turn left			
Turn right			
Wrong way			



GR®, GRP® and PR® are registered trademarks of the French Hiking Federation. Some routes have been selected by the French Hiking Federation according to quality criteria. They are PR® certified.

Recommendations

Before you leave

Check your equipment, the difficulty of the circuit and the weather conditions
If you are going alone, communicate your itinerary to friends and family
See the map of controlled fires

In the mountains / pastoral areas

Follow the marked paths and close gates after passing through
Respect nature and bring waste back
If accompanied by a dog, make sure that it is allowed on the chosen route and keep it on a lead
During the hunting season, avoid hunting areas or turn back
Go around herds and do not approach farm dogs (do not feed them or pet them)

National Park

The heart of the National Park is a natural territory and is open to all, but is subject to a code of conduct. Dogs are not allowed, even on a lead. No fires, no mountain bikes, no wild camping, only bivouacs are allowed - a small tent can be set up for the night from 7 pm and taken down in the morning before 9 am. It must be set up more than an hour's walk from any motorised access.

European emergency call : 112

