

The Ossau Valley

LEV
4

CIRCUIT N° 38
National Park



Le tour des Lacs d'Ayous



With their picture-postcard landscapes, the Ayous lakes are inseparable from the silhouette of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau reflected in these natural mirrors.

This loop links four large lakes that lie at the foot of the north face of the peak.

Its accessibility and the beautiful scenery will delight both novice and experienced hikers.

D

From the car park, take the track that runs alongside the lake. At the first fork in the track, at a holding pen, continue straight ahead. After a bridge, the track climbs a steep hill to a metal barrier. Walk 100 m further.

0h40

① 707721 E - 4747789 N Turn right onto the well-marked path that climbs through the forest (white and red GR@10 marker). Continue until you reach the end of the forest where you come to a small plateau with two huts.

3h00

1h00

② 706878 E - 4747714 N Continue along the wide, clear track that rises through some beech trees and then pasture. After a steady climb to the left, you reach Lake Roumassot. Follow the edge of the lake to the left until you reach a hut.

3h45

1h30

③ 705961 E - 4747231 N Climb along the waterfall, then turn right around the small Lake Miey. Then head to the edge of the Lake Gentau spillway from where you can see the Refuge d'Ayous.

4h15

2h00

④ 705304 E - 4747224 N At the fork in the track, leave the climb to the Col d'Ayous on your right and continue along the lake to the refuge (guardian present from 1/06 to 1/10).

The route then follows the winding path that continues past the hut to the large Lake Bersau, the highest point of the hike. At the end of the lake, there is a small pass, dominated by Pic Casterau on the left, which marks the beginning of the descent. After a few zig-zags, there is a fork in the track at a distinctive patch of red scree.

⑤ 704993 E - 4745505 N Leave the track that goes straight towards the Col des Moines and turn left towards Lake Casterau,

visible below. Go around the lake to the right and continue down to the Cabane de la Hosse.

⑥ 706257 E - 4745910 N Follow the track to the left for 100 m then turn right onto a path that leads down to the stream. Cross a bridge and walk along the right bank to the Cabane de Cap de Pount. The track continues along the right side of a small canyon. After a short descent, you reach a vast plateau and join the track again.

⑦ 707044 E - 4746811 N Follow it back to the Bious car park.



D Bious-Artigues car park.

GPS WGS 84 UTM 30T
708436 E - 4749389 N

5h

14 km

650 m

White and red markers except between **4** and **5**

★ Don't miss:

- A mosaic of rocks (red sandstone, green serpentine, volcanic rock...).
- Dolines and chasms around Lake Casterau.
- Birds of prey, vultures and others in the summer period.
- The Cap de Pount canyon.

⚠ Note:

- National park, special regulations.
- Dogs are not allowed on part of the walk.
- Many herds on the grazing areas.

The formation of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau

The Pic du Midi d'Ossau is one of the oldest geological formations in the Pyrenees. The volcanic rocks it is made up of, such as andesite, place its genesis during the Paleozoic Era. All that remains of this volcano is a caldera (circular wall) several kilometres in circumference. The jagged ridge of Moundelhs provides visible evidence of this period, extending the silhouette of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau to the north. During the Tertiary period, the tectonic forces that caused the Pyrenees to rise gave the Pic du Midi d'Ossau a second genesis. The caldera broke up, one part overlapped the other to take on the appearance of a prow reaching for the sky.

Information :

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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 710703O - 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