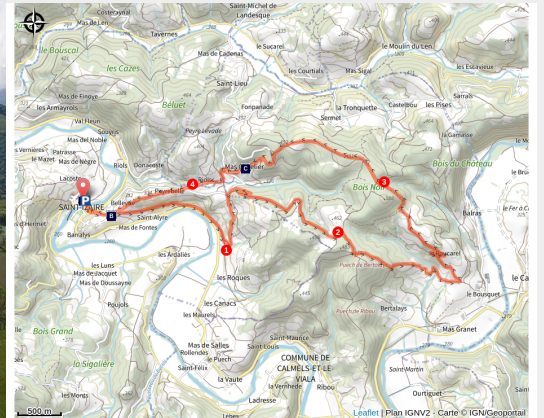


# The black wood N°10 VTT

Des falaises de Roquefort au Rougier



Saint Izaire (Roquefort Tourisme)



## Useful information

Practice : VTT

Duration : 1 h 30

Length : 13.6 km

Trek ascent : 507 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Loop

Themes : History and heritage,  
Panorama

This circuit offers to get back in time along the paths of history: episcopalian castle, carved standing stones, former railway line, native home of abbot Hermet the well-known archeologist. All of these bear witness to the rich and diverse cultural past of the region.

This easy biking tour follows rather playful trails that wind their way through the undergrowth and a few singletrack paths

## Trek

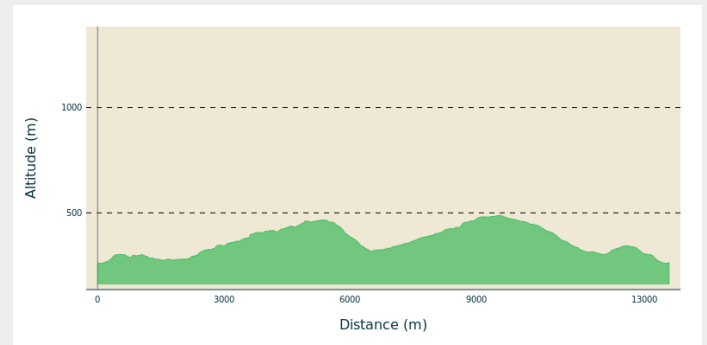
**Departure** : In St. Izaire the bridge side viilage

**Arrival** : In St. Izaire

**Markings** : ➡ VTT Parc

**Cities** : 1. Saint-Izaire  
2. Calmels-et-le-Viala

### Altimetric profile

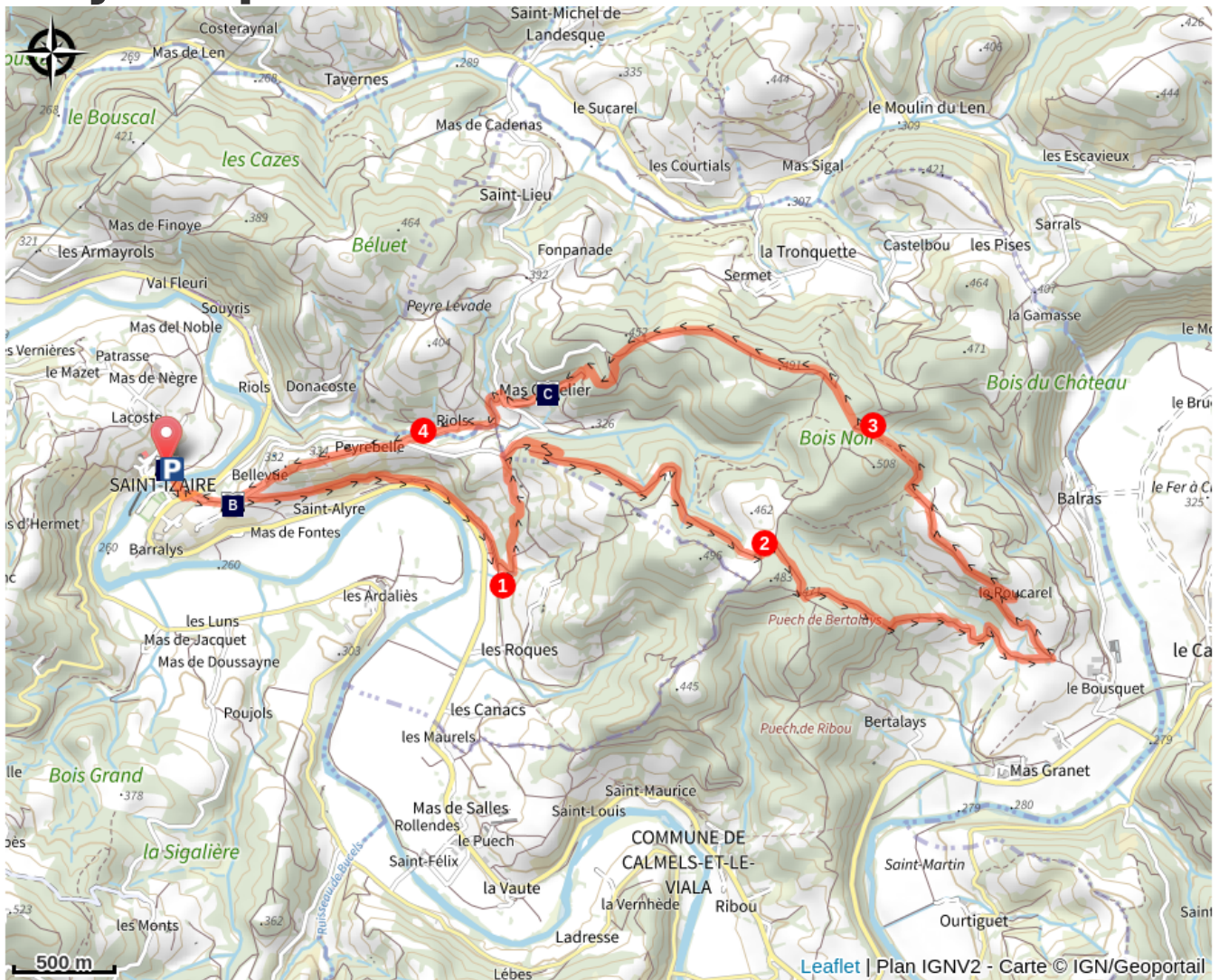



Min elevation 260 m Max elevation 488 m

Cycle up to the chapel of Notre Dame de Grâce, go round to the left of the chapel and join the former railway line. Carry on along this line which leads towards the hamlet des Roques.

1. Follow a red earth trail on the hillside until you reach a carved standing stone. Take the path to your right that leads you to the top of the woodland
2. Head East, before cycling down towards the Cambon plain, which is close to the Bousquet farm. Follow the trail to the left which takes you back to the top of the "Bois Noir".
3. A shady path then takes you back towards the Mas de Capelier, which is the house where Abbot Hermet was born. Carry on until you reach a road. Cross that road and cycle through the hamlet of Riol.
4. Farther along the road, a path to your left allows you to cycle back to the chapel and to enjoy the view overlooking the village of Saint-Izaire.

# On your path...



-  Village of Saint-Izaire (A)
-  Abbot Hermet's House (C)

-  Notre Dame de Grâce chapel (B)

# All useful information

## **Advices**

Box tree moths are active from May to October. During the caterpillar phase, they feed on the leaves of box trees. They crawl down trees and move on long silken threads, although these threads are annoying when hiking they do not pose any health risk

## **Gear**

Prévoir une réserve d'eau et une tenue adaptée

## **How to come ?**

### Transports

Travel by bus or train: <https://lio.laregion.fr/>

Carpooling : [BlaBlaCar](#), [Rézo Pouce](#), [Mobicoop](#), [Idvroom](#), [LaRoueVerte](#), [Roulez malin](#)

### Access

From St-Affrique head towards Albi up to the roundabout before Vabres l'Abbaye where you take a right turn onto the D25 road that leads to St-Izaire.

### Advised parking

Apprenez à prononcer At the edge of the river Le Dourdou right after the bridge

## **Information desks**

### **Saint-Affrique Tourist Office**

Boulevard Aristide Briand, 12400 Saint-Affrique

[contact@roquefort-tourisme.fr](mailto:contact@roquefort-tourisme.fr)

Tel : 0565585600

<http://www.roquefort-tourisme.fr/>





# On your path...

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## Village of Saint-Izaire (A)

The history of this village is intertwined with that of the old Episcopalian castle, which was formerly the Bishop of Vabres summer palace. The name of the village was first made mention of in an official document dating back to 862 AD.

During the 12th century, continual invasions, acts of banditry and battles between feudal lords created a tremendous insecurity. This led to the building of battlements to improve the defensive system and provide a safe haven to the neighbouring people during periods of turmoil. The castle and the fortified village date back to the time of the Vabres bishops who made the village their summer residence and a safe refuge.

When the religious wars were over and peace restored, the protective wall lost its primary function and so today the façade of the castle has windows inserted along its length. The fortified gates were also demolished to allow the passage of carts or to expand the neighbouring houses. The village street, footpath and house pattern has remained unchanged since the Middle Ages, and the beautiful 15th century facades and windows can still be seen in some streets today. The old church part of the battlements had its vault lowered in 1635 to provide housing to the schoolmaster and guards. In 1650 repair works were started by the Consuls.

Attribution : Roquefort Tourisme



## Notre Dame de Grâce chapel (B)

This sanctuary which was founded by Alix de Castelnau has existed since at least the 15th century, when it was called Ouradou (oratory). This chapel was refurbished in 1730 and during the 19th century, the stairway door of the castle was then brought back into use.

Attribution : Roquefort Tourisme



## Abbot Hermet's House (C)

Born in Calmels in 1856, Abbot Frédéric Hermet developed a passion for menhir statues from a young age. At the age of ten, he made his first archaeological discoveries, but it was in 1888, when he stumbled upon the “Dame de Saint-Sernin,” that he truly embarked on a quest for other carved slabs. He studied these monuments and brought them to the attention of the scientific community between 1892 and 1926. In 1898, he coined the term “menhir statues” for these mysterious sculptures. Alongside his work on these prehistoric monuments, Abbot Hermet became a pioneer of archaeological excavations at Graufesenque, near Millau, where he explored Gallo-Roman remains starting in 1901.

Attribution : Delphine Atche