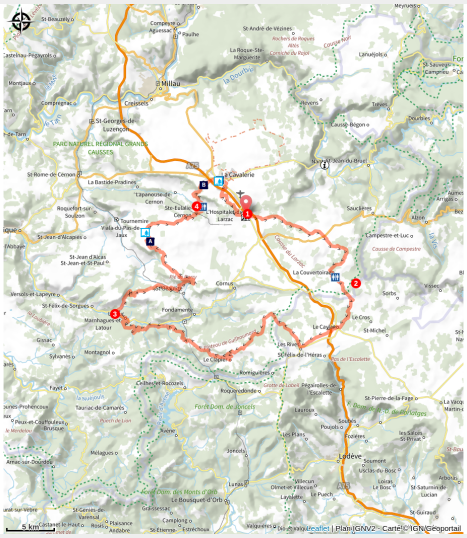
Gravel N°24 - Discovering the Templar cities

Des Gorges du Tarn au Causse du Larzac



Sur le causse du Larzac (Focal_77)



Whether it’s an ultra-sporty one-day loop or a dream bikepacking route, the Templar-Hospitalier region of Larzac will hold no more secrets for you after this breathtakingly beautiful (and challenging) ride

A distance of 115 km, 2,000 metres of elevation gain, and a mix of roads and tracks: this sums up this gravel ride between the Larzac steppe and the Sorgues valley. Wide tracks, singletrack through scrubland and three fairly tough climbs (two on stony ground, one on tarmac) punctuate this long, physically demanding loop, where the villages offer plenty of opportunities for a stop

Useful information

Practice : Gravel

Duration : 8 h 30

Length : 115.6 km

Trek ascent : 1877 m

Difficulty : Very hard

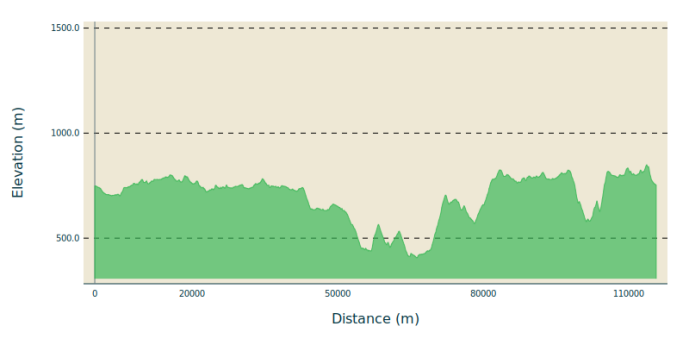
Type : Loop

Themes : Agropastoralism, History and heritage, Panorama, Top 20 à Vélo

Trek

Departure : L'Hospitalet-du-Larzac
Arrival : L'Hospitalet-du-Larzac
Cities : 1. L'Hospitalet-du-Larzac
2. Nant
3. La Couvertoirade
4. Le Caylar
5. Les Rives
6. Cornus
7. Le Clapier
8. Fondamente
9. Marnhagues-et-Latour
10. Montagnol
11. Saint-Beaulize
12. Saint-Jean-et-Saint-Paul
13. Viala-du-Pas-de-Jaux
14. Sainte-Eulalie-de-Cernon
15. La Cavalerie

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 407 m Max elevation 849 m

1. From the Place des Cygnes in L'Hospitalet-du-Larzac, head east and follow the old railway line as far as La Baraque Froide, then continue straight on along the track to reach La Couvertoirade.
2. Carry on south to the village of Caylar, then head towards the village of Les Rives, passing under the motorway, and on to Mas Raynal. Continue along the D140 and the D493 towards Le Clapier, then take the D93. Cross the Bois du Rouquet to reach the Sorgue valley (stony climb at km 51).
3. After the village of Latour-sur-Sorgues, continue northwards then eastwards to climb back up onto the plateau (stony climb at km 65) and, before Saint-Beaulize, turn left off the departmental road to tackle a lovely climb on tarmac. On the Larzac plateau, head for Viala du Pas de Jaux, then cross the plateau to descend back into the Cernon valley.
4. From Sainte-Eulalie-de-Cernon, pass Mas de Roque and Le Frayssinet before reaching La Cavalerie and returning to L'Hospitalet-du-Larzac via a mix of tracks and minor roads.

Points of interest:

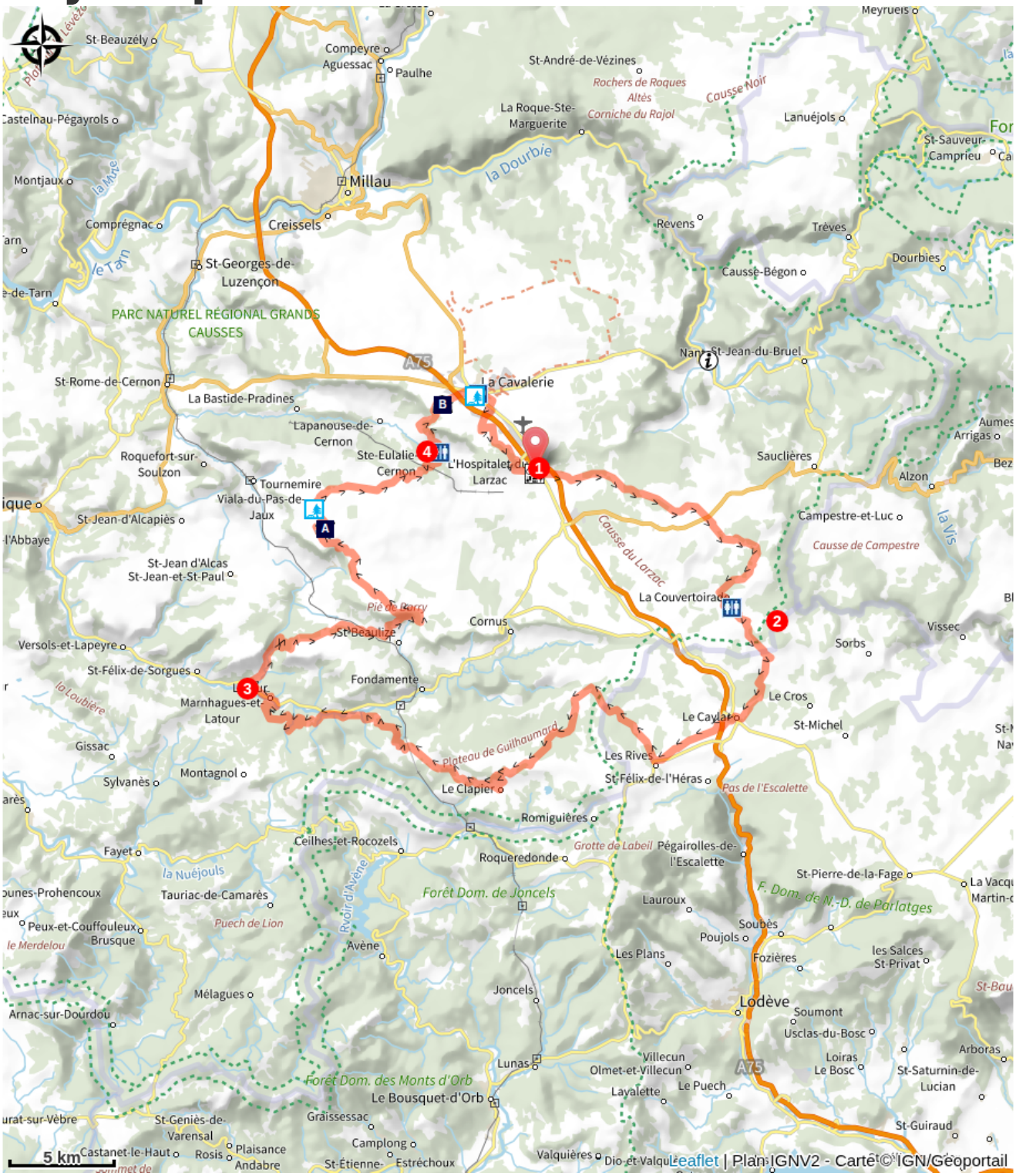
La Couvertoirade (Ramparts and refreshments)
View of St Jean d'Alcas and the Cirque de St-Paul des Fonts (km 80)
Sainte-Eulalie-de-Cernon (km 102)

Key features:

2 slightly stony climbs at km 51 and km 65
1 lovely climb on tarmac at km 75
A few singletrack sections through the scrub

50% roads and 50% tracks
Riding time depending on your ability: 7 h 30 min to 9 h 30 min

On your path...



The lavogne (cobbled watering place)of Font Rome (A)

The watering place of Lavagnol (B)

All useful information

Advices

Stay alert: there may be unmarked sections of fence, particularly on the second half of the route.

For bikepacking (2 or 3 stages) with accommodation options: Le Caylar (km 24) / the hamlet of Moulès (km 52) / Marnhages-et-Latour (km 64) / the Viala-du-Pas-de-Jaux tower.

How to come ?

Transports

Se déplacer en bus ou en train, en covoiturage Aires de covoiturage, en autostop Rezopouce

Access

25 km south of Millau via the D809.

Advised parking

Place des Cygnes

Information desks

Tourist Office Larzac et Vallées
Place du Claux, 12230 NANT

infos@tourisme-larzac.com
Tel : +33(0)565622364
http://www.visit-larzac.com/



Source

On your path...



The lavogne (cobbled watering place)of Font Rome (A)

This lavogne (cobbled watering place) of Font Rome, built in 1910 near tank wells is was first situated on a waterproof clay background. Then, it was built of stones all around and cemented. So this type offers the advantage of forming a passage that resists the trampling of sheep, and the gentle slope of the surrounding area limits the risk of slipping and falling of the animals. It is supplied by rainwater.

Attribution : Association La Tour du Viala du Pas de Jaux



The watering place of Lavagnol (B)

On the Causses, the « lavognes » (cobbled watering place), are natural clay troughs, often circular, serving as a watering place for herds and fed exclusively by rainwater.

In the second haft of the 19th century, the number of sheep was more important, and people decided to build bigger cobbled watering places. They are the only permanent water points with the natural watering place for animals and as such, they are precious and well maintained.

Attribution : Sandrine_Perego