



Parc national
de la Vanoise



Veru easy (loop)



4 h 30



7,8 km



+ 537 m



*Architecture, Flora,
Geology*

The monolith

Haute-Maurienne
Sollières-Sardières

A tour through the forest in discovery of the geological and historical heritag

The scent of pine and the pale-coloured rock are evocative of the South, so much that one could almost hear the guitar of Nino Ferrer. Here the Maurienne marks the place of transition between the Northern Alps and those of the South. A walk in these adret forests is soothing, almost surprising, when the Monolith suddenly rises at the corner of a bend, leaving nothing but vertical drops. A lunch break at the Chappe telegraph invites the observer to fly over the multitude of peaks at more than 3,000 m forming the border chain with Italy. Perhaps you will spare a thought for those men charged with operating the telegraph who were stationed in this place, for days, scanning the horizon, like Giovanni Drogo awaiting the enemy in "The desert of the Tartars".



On your path...

The mountain pine

The trail you go up crosses the old meadows now colonised by conifers, especially the mountain pine.

This pine (*Pinus uncinata*) takes its name from its cones which carry hooks on the scales. Its dark green needles are joined together in pairs and measure 4 to 8 cm. The mountain pine favours the dry, steep slopes. You may confuse it with the Scots pine that you will also find along your way.



The winter heath

The winter heath (*Erica carnea*) owes its name to its early flowering (May-June) which sometimes makes it spring up from a layer of freshly fallen snow. It is a protected plant in the Rhône-Alpes region and, although very rare throughout the rest of France, is common in Maurienne. Because of its local abundance, the winter heath lines the undergrowth with its pink colour upon flowering. The winter heath is part of the family of ericaceae such as the bilberry or cranberry.



Chappe telegraph

The Chappe telegraph is an optical signal transmission system created in 1793. Napoleon I decided to use the process between Lyon and Milan.

Telegraphs were then installed along the valley of Maurienne. The telegraph only worked from 1807 to 1814, as Savoy was attached to the Kingdom of Sardinia.



The Monolithe de Sardières

Erosion has made way for this cagneule needle over time. There are many similar formation peaks in the surrounding forest but this one is the most spectacular. The Monolithe de Sardières looms over you at 93 metres high. This target which is covered by climbing enthusiasts was climbed for the first time in 1957 by Michel Paquier. Several paths of varying difficulty today criss-cross its faces. The Monolithe de Sardières is in the heart of Vanoise National Park. It was at the foot of this natural obelisk that the Park was inaugurated on 26th June 1965.



Cagneule

The cagneule, a carbonate sedimentary rock, with a decayed and frequently brecciated appearance, often takes on yellow, brown or rusty hues. The cagneules form lightly stratified or unstratified masses and give ruiniform reliefs. You can see these towers before you, evocative of ancient castle ruins. The transformation of dolomite or limestone into calcite by waters loaded with calcium as a result of the dissolution of gypsum is called cagneulisation.





To go there...

Access and transport



At Modane, take the D 215 in the direction of Aussois. Once at Aussois, cross the village towards Sardières. After one kilometre, park in the car park with a cross and information signs.



Rail connection to Modane.



Then transport by coach to Aussois



Suggested hitchhiking organised in the Haute-Maurienne valley : www.rezopouce.fr

Information desks

- ✓ Office de tourisme - Musée archéologique Sollières Envers
Sollières-Sardières 73500 Val-Cenis (04 79 05 99 06)
- ✓ Point Information Vanoise - Maison cantonale
9 Place Sommeiller, 73500 Modane (04 79 05 57 94)

Useful information

This hike is in the core of the national park. The national park is an unrestricted natural area but subjected to regulations which must be known by all visitors (www.vanoise-parcnational.fr). The route is marked but some sections are not on the IGN map. Take appropriate footwear. The viewpoint from the Chappe telegraph overlooks the unsecured cliffs.

More hikes on rando.vanoise.com

