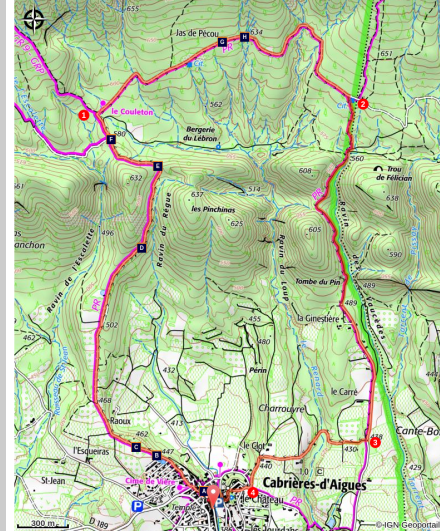


## Geological trail

Cabrières-d'Aigues



(Vincent Damourette - Coeurs de nature-Sipa)

*This stroll on the slopes of southern side of the Grand Luberon is intended for the curious hiker for whom geology remains a mystery...*

« Cabrières d'Aigues is a favourable location to discover geology. We have designed a geological trail to answer a few simple questions: What type of rock is this? When and how was it formed? What is the origin of landscapes? Here, the hiker travels through millions of years, from the ocean from the Mesozoic era, responsible for the limestone of the Grand Luberon, to the use of these same limestone by man in the 19th century. ». Stéphane Legal, geologist of the Luberon RNP.

### Useful information

Practice : WALKING

Duration : 3 h

Length : 9.3 km

Trek ascent : 303 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Boucle

Themes : Geology

Accessibility : Donkey hiking



# Trek

Departure : Facing the town hall of Cabrières d'Aigues

Arrival : Town hall of Cabrières d'Aigues

Markings :  GR®  PR  PR local

From the town hall, go up the slope of the Gaye, then take a left at the fountain. At the crossroads "Cime de Vière", turn right and take the rise. The tar gives way to a track. Take the track and head towards the massif along the farmlands. Then, 350m after a left turn, reach a small mountain pass. Continue straight on the track.

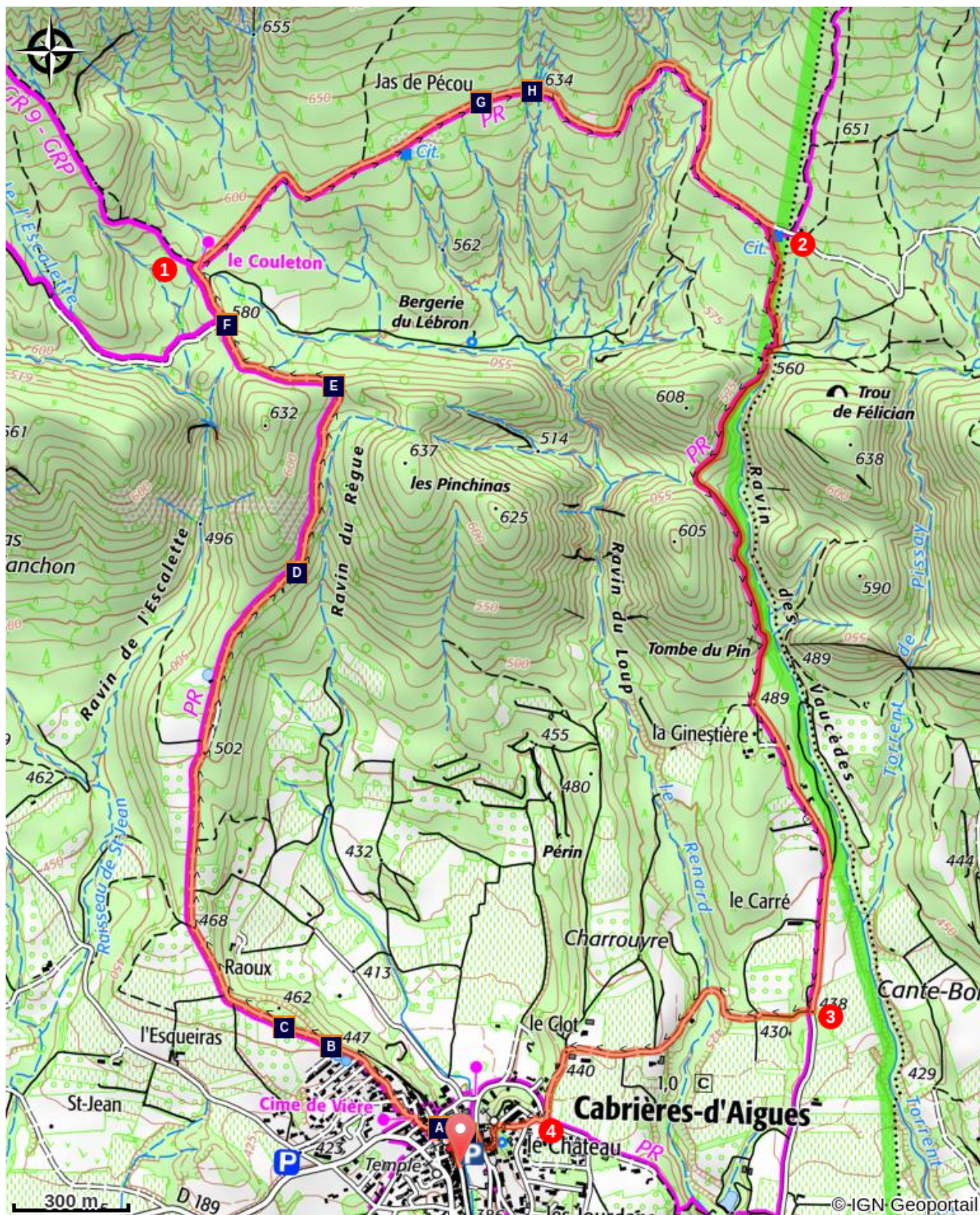
**1** - At the crossroads "Le Couleron" (point 586), continue on the track to the right. Pass the sheep pen Jas de Pécou, then the "Ravin du Loup", and finally reach a tank (point 609).

**2** - At the tank, turn right and go down the path. Lower down, go back on the track and continue down to reach a paved road. Continue straight along several croplands and reach the altitude point 439, 1km / less than a mile further.

**3** - Take a right onto the path. After the grove, move forward between two fields, go straight at the next intersection, then cross the "Ravin du Loup" to the right. Continue by passing several houses, turn left once and come out on the upper streets of Cabrières d'Aigues.

**4** - At the crossroads, turn right and take an immediate right again. At the bottom of the ramp, turn left to return to the starting point.


# On your path...





 The little fountain (A)


 The Durance river (C)


 Tropical sea in Cabrières-d'Aigues (B)

 Heating limestone to make whitewash. (D)

 The Luberon: a mountain with a tender heart (E)

 The Jas de Pécou, a precious sheepfold (G)

 Wildlife of the villages (I)

 The Patou (Pyrenean Mountain Dog), a faithful keeper! (F)

 Shaping of the landscapes (H)

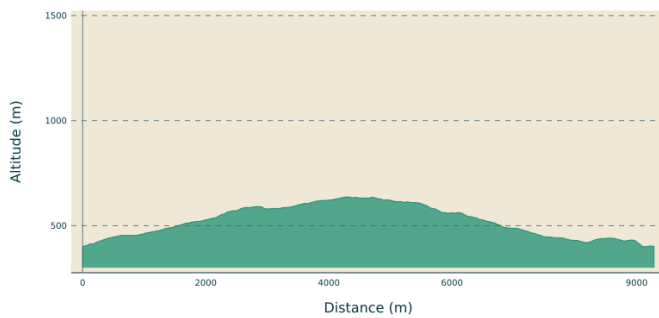
# All useful information

## **AdVICES**

After point 2, caution with your ankles in the descent.

Follow carefully the specific markings of the geological trail, made up of arrows on wrought iron stands.

## **Altimetric profile**



Min elevation 400 m

Max elevation 637 m

## **Access**

At 11km from Pertuis (A51), through the D9.

## **Advised parking**

8 mai 1945 car park, below the town hall.

## **Source**

Luberon Géoparc mondial  
UNESCO



## Information desks

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Tel : +33 (0)4 90 04 42 00

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Tel : +33 (0)4 90 07 50 29

<https://www.luberon-sud-tourisme.fr/>

# On your path...

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## The little fountain (A)

Down the street, lies a fountain directly carved in the rock. The stone wall located above the basin closes the entrance of an horizontal tunnel, a water pit, which was dug several metres. This drains the seepage water until the pipe. The excavated rock is a limestone, relatively hard, made up of many fragments of organisms (shells, corals ...). This rock, called molasse, allows the seepage water to flow: it is permeable (spongelike).

Attribution : Stéphane Legal - PNR Luberon

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## Tropical sea in Cabrières-d'Aigues (B)

The cliff that dominates the Règue valley is made of limestone. It outcrops westward almost continuously, on nearly 15km until Vaugines, through Cucuron. Geologists have called this geological formation the Molasse de Cucuron. This rock is very rich in sand grains, gravel and fossil remains (scallops, oysters, corals ...). Fossils evidence the presence of a warm sea right here, about 10 million years ago.

Attribution : Stéphane Legal - PNR Luberon

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## The Durance river (C)

Many pebbles cover the ground. Some are black, green, red. They share the same composition with some rocks in the Alps. They were transported to Cabrières by powerful streams: the ancestor of the Durance, 10 million years ago!

Some pebbles have small holes. This is the result from the activity of marine molluscs, the Angelwings (Piddocks), which dig a hole in the rock to live in it. These bivalves live today in coastal areas.

Attribution : Stéphane Legal - PNR Luberon

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## Heating limestone to make whitewash. (D)

On the roadside, the bank is hollowed out by a hole with reddened walls at the top and varnished in the lower part. This is a lime kiln which has no doubt been used for local purposes. We don't know how old it is. Several days were needed to dig this type of kiln, build a corbel arch just like the bories, and place the limestone blocks. Cooking it, around 1000 °C, required constant monitoring for about 4 days.

Attribution : ©Eric Garnier - PNR Luberon

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## The Luberon: a mountain with a tender heart (E)

On the right, a track lets you follow a little escarpment which highlights the rift in the passage and marks the northern border of a line of hills. The limestone that make up these hills is as old as those of the Luberon ridges. In between, the marly rocks are more recent. These information help in the outlining of the geometry of the Luberon: an asymmetrical arch-shaped bend (anticlinal). The heart of the massive, much more gentle, has been hollowed out by erosion and forms a valley.

Attribution : Stéphane Legal - PNR Luberon



## The Patou (Pyrenean Mountain Dog), a faithful keeper! (F)

In these grazing areas, you can come across a patou between January and April. This big white dog is an impressive keeper. His task is not the easiest: he has to protect his flock against wolves. The patou takes his role very seriously, so no threats or shouts, keep your dogs on a leash and do not dare cross his flock! Go around it and walk quietly, the patou will sniff you and go back quietly to his task.

Attribution : Eric Garnier - PNR Luberon



## The Jas de Pécou, a precious sheepfold (G)

These foothills were heavily grazed and cultivated before the agricultural decline, the pine forest has since taken over. This sheepfold serves today as a shelter for a herd in late winter or spring. In addition to the bush clearing provided by man, this sheepfold maintains this strategic firebreak. It dates back to the 1980s and it was established on the southern slope of the massif on either side of the track and is equipped with a water point.

Attribution : Bénédicte Beylier - CERPAM



## Shaping of the landscapes (H)

Here, many pebbles cover the ground. It is limestone fragments torn from the Luberon due to repeated freezing and thawing during the last cold phase of the quaternary. These deposits, called "gélifractions" are very common in the limestone mountains where they can reach up to 40m of thickness! In this quaternary period, the mountain streams have also shaped the landscape, by either deeply digging their beds or by accumulating sediments, under the influence of climatic variations.

Attribution : Stéphane Legal - PNR Luberon





## Wildlife of the villages (I)

Even in Cabrières, one can observe nature, so stay tuned! In the Luberon, the villages are home to nesting birds. In summer, you can watch the Common Swifts or the Common House Martin on the roof linings. The black redstart is present throughout the year on the walls of the pretty villages of the Luberon.

Attribution : PNR Luberon



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L'outil Geotrek a été financé par l'Union européenne, le Parc national des Ecrins et le Parc national du Mercantour.

Le projet Chemins des Parcs est financé par la Région Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur et les Parcs naturels régionaux des Alpilles, de Camargue, du Luberon, du Queyras et du Verdon.

Ce projet partenarial rassemble également le Comité Régional du Tourisme, les agences départementales de développement touristique, les offices de tourisme et les syndicats d'initiative.

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This project was developed in partnership with the Regional Tourism Committee, the departmental tourist development agencies, and tourist offices.

Avec le soutien de



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- Luberon Géoparc mondial UNESCO