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Circuit du Bit

Lovely circuit
on the Belledonne slopes
offering beautiful views
of Saint-Martin d'Uriage

Distance	Cumulative climb & descent	Time to walk circuit	Effort	Technicality	Risk
 9km	 500m	 3h30			

FFR rating system - See last page

From the park in Uriage to the slopes of the Belledonne Massif, passing by the enchanting Vernon valley, this circuit offers beautiful views of Saint-Martin d'Uriage, the Vercors and the Chartreuse Massifs.

This circuit has 20 geocaches, serving as a useful introduction to this activity (see geocaching.com)

► **Departure** ➡ Behind the Tourist Office near the Casino, a signpost shows the departure of 4 circuits.

- ① **Alt. 410 m** ➡ Head towards the park and walk past the Grand Hotel on your left. Once past the hotel, turn left towards the thermal baths and then right passing in front of the carousel and tennis courts. (As you walk, turn to notice the three bell towers all aligned, as well as the special trees.) Turn slightly left and follow the path towards the crossing by the roundabout. Cross the Saint-Martin Road and take a small path diagonally left towards a wood, where you'll follow a small asphalt road. Turn left, pass between the two apartment buildings and follow the hedge to the edge of the wood. Cross the stream and follow the path uphill as it passes through fields to an intersection. Take the path that goes up to the right and leads to a small road at the level of an interesting "bathtub fountain".
- ② **Alt. 500 m** ➡ Turn right following the chemin du Vacher for 100 m, then turn left passing along the edge of a field, to arrive at a paved road (chemin de Champ Robert) which you cross. Continue straight on following a wide path which arrives at the Belmont Road (route du Vernon). Turn left then take the first road on the right, then cross through the chestnut grove and continue uphill to follow the chemin des Albarettes which will lead you into a wood. At the junction of paths, turn right (rather than climbing straight on which is the variant*.)
- ③ **Alt. 640 m** ➡ Leaving a path on the right, turn left to descend gently towards the torrent du Vernon. Don't take a path on the right that goes towards the torrent but continue straight on to cross the Vernon on an elegant footbridge. The path climbs gently up to the right to a crossing, then turns left in front of a little forest house. This path climbs quite steeply then leads to a level path. Turn left to gently descend to another bridge crossing the Vernon. Continue following this forest track for 150 m, then turn right following a gently sloping path until arriving at an intersection where the variant* ends. Turn completely right walking uphill on the rather steep path which ends on a horizontal road, the chemin Naclard.
- ④ **Alt. 910 m** ➡ The circuit continues by turning left, but if you'd like a picnic, there's a picnic table 150m or so on your right. When you've eaten, retrace your steps enjoying magnificent views of the Chartreuse, the Vercors and the Barque valley. Continue straight on for about 500m, then 50m before the barrier take the path which descends to the left to arrive at the Hamlet "Le Bit". Follow the road to the right for 200m then continue down on the small road to the left. (This eventually brings you to an intersection with the Roux Circuit).

- ⑤ **Alt. 770 m** ➡ Take the slope downhill to the left towards the Chavanoz (admire the beautiful view on the right as you descend). You'll arrive at the impasse du Geai. Continue to descend taking the path before you to arrive at the Meffrey. Continue to go down until the asphalt road (chemin de Chavanoz). At the crossing, continue straight down the path opposite. As the path curves to the right, turn right by the concrete bench. Turn right, passing the swimming pool and cross the road.
- ⑥ **Alt. 585 m** ➡ Turn left for a few metres, then right into allée du Méarie, then immediately left onto allée des Petites-Maisons. Continue downhill passing in front of the schools and then turn right for a few meters before turning left onto chemin de la Richardière. At the crossroads, turn right onto chemin des Mures and follow the path around a house to the left taking a shady path which descends to cross the mill stream on an elegant footbridge (see the ruins of the old mills on the right). You'll arrive at the castle's private car park. Go straight ahead crossing the entrance road of the chateau and take the path which descends below the chateau. Take a moment for the short detour to visit the site of the Giant of the Alps (with a sign explaining all). Follow the path downhill. You might want to take in the view from the allée des Tilleuls by climbing right again through the ancient castle gate. Retrace your steps turning right onto chemin du Colombier and finally left to take the path that descends to the Tourist Office where you started.

** This variant shortens the circuit a little but is quite difficult and steep. It leads through some steep steps onto a wide track and turns right and immediately left. Eventually you'll climb some new steps and continue until you'll arrive at the junction with the classic circuit.*

Uriage-les-Bains is a spa resort with typical early 19th century architecture, surrounded by a beautiful park.

Uriage castle perches upon a rocky outcrop overseeing the surrounding land and woods. In the 12th & 13th centuries, texts mention an "old castle". In 1339, the castle was said to be surrounded by an enclosure and to have two towers. In the 15th century a new building called «Châteauneuf» was built and was connected a century later to the old castle by a gallery. The exterior appearance of the castle has changed little since the 15th century. The castle was bought privately in 1978, restored and converted into private apartments. The present «Maison des Associations» was originally an educational farm built around 1877 by the owner of the castle. The hotel "Le Belvédère" in Saint-Martin d'Uriage was restored as a Cultural Centre in 2000. The swimming pool opposite «Le Belvédère» was completed in 1955 and remains popular.

This trail rises very quickly above the Bourg or town centre and its houses. The 500m climb above the town exposes differences in flora, as well as giving the opportunity to take in beautiful views. The Chemin de Naclard actually marks the transition between the pine forest above and the agricultural and urbanised areas below.

From it you can enjoy the beautiful panorama over the valleys of Uriage and Vaulnaveys before descending again into the woods.



The blue crosses correspond to the UTM-WGS84 kilometric grid - Mogoma map

In and around Uriage, many rural paths have been restored and incorporated into circuits of varying difficulty and length. Some can be walked in half a day, others take longer. They may be interesting for their views, for nature or for local heritage. Most are in the forest in a wild environment, despite the nearby urbanisation. Trail runners will be quick to realise that these circuits can be combined to create alternative routes to suit every level of runner.

Please respect nature and leave no trace of your passing. Nature will thank you!
 Don't over-estimate your capabilities - these circuits are, after all, hiking trails.
 Please help us maintain our circuits by reporting any work which needs to be done.

[asso-des-sentiers-de-smu.eklablog.com]

Rating system of the FFR*

To rate the difficulty of a hike, three characteristics are graded from 1 to 5



Effort - the length and climb involved in the hike



Technicality - need to use hands or place feet carefully



Risk - consequence of a fall

*Fédération Française de Randonnée pédestre

The Signposts

7 Circuit number

7a Circuit variation number



Direction to follow



Continue



Alternative route



Turn right



Turn left



Wrong direction

The editor and author of this document cannot under any circumstances be held responsible for any incident or accident which may occur on the hike, no matter how it occurs.

In an emergency call 112  beware signal dead zones

Uriage

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