



**The legend of Flaine:** A giant, exhausted by crossing the mountains and valleys, between Léman and the Mediterranean, rested at this mountain, nestling his head in the bowl of the valley, which old maps call «Flainoz, meaning «pillow» in Savoyard dialect. The legends ends there, lost along with the dreams of the giant... Flainoz became Flainaz, then Flaine.

**An exceptional, unspoilt site for the future ski resort:** It is the geomorphology of the site which makes Flaine attractive: a valley oriented east-west, and a southern flank exposed to the north, moderately inclined, where the snow is long-lasting; a steep north side, facing south, with a succession of three plateaus separated by vertical cliffs of grey marly limestone. Each plateau neatly accommodates a group of buildings: Flaine Front de Neige, Flaine Forum and Flaine Forêt.

**A prototype ski resort:** Designed in the 60s by Marcel Breuer, one of the great American architects of the 20th century and former master at the Bauhaus, Flaine, located in the Haute-Savoie region, nestles at the summit of one of the largest linked ski areas in France, the Grand Massif. It is resolutely modern and radical.

The raw concrete buildings in a high-altitude mountain setting fascinate some and disturb others. Even now, in the 21st century, the architectural expression of Marcel Breuer is somewhat misunderstood by the public. In Flaine, we should focus not only on the form but on the content, which is particularly rich if one takes the time to explore it. A remarkably profound piece of work, at once human yet unrelenting, it brings, to those who want to discover it, great satisfaction. Flaine does not set out to win approval.

«Modern architecture is not a style, but an attitude.» Marcel Breuer



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## Grandes Platières Circuit

Hike n°1 fact sheet:

### View points to discover

1. Views over a vast Urgonian Limestone formation - Le Grand Lapiaz – with undulating, rugged terrain. A typical limestone region landscape demonstrating the corrosive effects of water. This natural karst landform is known as “Les Lapiaz” in France.
2. From Les Grandes Platières, enjoy wide panoramic views over the Haut Giffre mountain ranges (Avoudrues, Montagne du Criou, Grenier de Commune, Le Buet...) and the Mont Blanc mountain range. La Pointe de Nyon and Angolon.

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## Itinerary description

From the Grandes Platières cable car station, take the GR96 (variant), towards Platé. This path to the Col du Colonney winds through a vast mineral labyrinth known as "Le Grand Lapié". At Le Col du Colonney, take the path on the left that leads you past a firm of little rock projections, to a large ridge: Les Grandes Platières. From Les Grandes Platières, follow the path that leads to Les Cols de Platé, then Pelouse. At the Col de Pelouse, return to Flaine via La Combe de Balacha.

## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ! Difficult section
- 30 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

## Facilities

- T Tourist office
- P Car park
- X Food and drink
- G Stopover gite
- R Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

## Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- G Golf

## Heritage

- \* Panoramic views
- W Waterfall
- A Alpine pasture
- M Marmots
- B Birds of prey
- I Ibexes
- C Chamois goats
- C Church, chapel

**Mountain rescue: 112**  
**Weather forecast: 3250**

## START:

28 Grandes Platières Cable Car station - Forum

## END:

Grandes Platières Cable Car station - Forum

## DIFFICULTY: Difficult

**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,752 metres  
876 metre climb + 876 metre drop

## TIME: 5 hours

## SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:

Firns, Crossing Le Grand Lapiaz, high-altitude weather conditions, long circuit.

## ITINERARY:

- 28 Gare du DMC Forum > Start
- 86 Chalets du Michet > Platé
- 29 Poya > Platé
- 30 Plan des Chardons > GR96 (variante)
- 35 Grand Grenier > Col du Colonney
- 98 Les Languard > Col du Colonney
- 80 Le Chapeau > Col du Colonney
- 2 Col du Colonney > Les Grandes Platières
- 1 Les Grandes Platières > Flaine via col Pelouse
- 3 Col de Platé > Flaine par Col Pelouse
- 6 En dessous du col > Lac de Gers (via Combe de Gers)
- 5 Col pelouse
- 11 Cabane de Balacha > Balacha
- 94 Bois quartier > Balacha
- 85 Balacha > Col du Cou
- 29 Poya > Col du Cou
- 86 Chalets du Michet
- 28 Gare du DMC Forum > End

**Please be aware of the cable car closing time when planning your return journey**

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**The Aujon community:** Aujon mountain has an unusual legal and land tenure status, as it doesn't belong to property owners but to a community of "communiers" or "albergataires"(alberger: gîte). Aujon mountain should be considered as an indivisible, joint-ownership property belonging to residents of the following hamlets: Pratz, Grangeat, Luth, Colonney and Oex; which means that simply by owning a property in these hamlets, you have the right to belong to the "Aujon community". Aujon mountain is therefore jointly owned and grants its users communal rights of way and farming rights.

**Aujon's unusual status** is down to ancestral custom, likely dating back to the late Roman Empire. In order to avoid property tax, people who owned "Roman latifundia" (large areas of land featuring extensive growth), devoted a section of their land to use as long term tenant farms, charging minimal fees and allowing farmers the same rights as the property owners. This practice of leasing in perpetuity has gone on for centuries, especially in the Alps: a place governed by written, not common law where high altitude Alpine pastures are only occupied for part of the year. In 1790, after the French Revolution, a law was passed to remove ground rent charges, giving locals legal right more or less in perpetuity to the land without actually having to own it!

**This led to the creation of the Aujon community,** which prevented the mountain from being parcelled up and sold off. This wasn't without its problems due to the Magland community demanding rights to the same land. They had to wait until 1860 and then 1944 for Aujon's status to properly come into force, resolving the dispute with Magland's residents. Nowadays, Aujon's community practices still exist and every year, several herds of cattle and sheep graze on Aujon Mountain's Alpine pastures.

Photo credits: Flaine Tourist Office, N. Berthelot. Please do not filter. felix-creation.fr

## Aujon Circuit

### Hike n°2 fact sheet

#### View points to discover

1. Going up the Lapiaz d'Aujon: Cluses and the Arve Valley
2. Aujon viewpoint:
  - looking west south-west, you will see over the Arve Valley where the town of Sallanches is located. The mountainous area above Sallanches is La Pointe Percée, with the Aravis mountain range in the background.
  - to the east, views from left to right: la Tête du Pré des Saix, les Grands Vans, la Tête de Balacha, la Tête Pelouse, les Grandes Platières, l'Aiguille d'Aujon, la Croix de Fer.
  - below: the resort of Flaine.

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- START:**  
28 Grandes Platières Cable Car - Forum
- END:**  
Grandes Platières Cable Car - Forum
- DIFFICULTY:** Difficult
- ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 862 metres  
431 metre altitude climb + 431 metre altitude drop
- TIME:** 3 hours
- SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:**  
You are advised to take particular care in the Lapiaz d'Aujon.
- ITINERARY:**

- 28 Gare du DMC Forum > Start
- 86 Chalets du Michet > Aujon
- 29 Poya > Aujon
- 30 Plan des Chardons > Belvédère d'Aujon
- 31 Chalets d'Aujon
- 33 Aujon > Belvédère d'Aujon
- 36 Belvédère
- 33 Aujon > Bois d'Aujon
- 79 Bois d'Aujon > Flaine
- 55 Stade
- 62 Pré Michallet
- 28 Gare du DMC Forum > End

## Itinerary description

From the Grandes Platières cable car station head to the GR96 (variant). At Plan des Chardons, leave the Col du Colonney path to take the trail: Chalets d'Aujon. Pass through the small hamlet of Chalets d'Aujon and see its little tucked-away chalets. From there, follow signs to the viewpoint. Walking up the Lapiaz d'Aujon, you will see views (n°1) over Cluses and the Arve Valley. The Aujon viewpoint offers the following views (2). Return to Flaine via "Bois d'Aujon".

## Key

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: red;">—</span> Described trail</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed gray;">—</span> Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid gray;">—</span> Others hiking trails</li> <li><span style="color: red;">▲</span> Difficult section</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">30</span> Signs in Flaine</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">—</span> Ski lift open in summer</li> <li><span style="color: blue;">—</span> Ski lift</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid green;">—</span> Nature reserve boundary</li> </ul> | <p><b>Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Tourist office</li> <li> Car park</li> <li> Food and drink</li> <li> Stopover gite</li> <li> Staff mountain refuge (summer only)</li> </ul> <p><b>Leisure activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">—</span> Themed and discovery trail</li> <li> Golf</li> </ul> | <p><b>Heritage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Panoramic views</li> <li> Waterfall</li> <li> Alpine pasture</li> <li> Marmots</li> <li> Birds of prey</li> <li> Ibexes</li> <li> Chamois goats</li> <li> Church, chapel</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|

**Mountain rescue:** 112  
**Weather forecast:** 3250



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**Le Désert de Platé** is a limestone plateau encircled by a series of distinctive ridges: Châteaux de Crans, Croix de fer, Grandes Platières... Not forgetting the majestic Aiguilles de Warens and Véran mountain. This is a prized mineral site, largely uninhabited and with very little forestation beyond 1,800 metres. Beyond that, grass becomes scarcer, in favour of rock. Access is via Flaine, over the Plateau d'Assy and La Combe de Barnerousse, or via the GR96 to the north and to the east. The site offers exceptional panoramic views over the Mont Blanc mountain range to the south-east and the Aravis mountain range to the west.

**Incised water channels:** Lapiaz de Platé is renowned as the largest incised limestone plateau in Europe. It covers the majority of the plateau, truly earning it the title of "Desert". First, glaciers stripped the rock bare, then the plateau was subjected to snow, ice and flowing water. Next, water eroded it through a joint process of mechanical and chemical erosion, to varying degrees depending on the type of rock, which led to the creation of an extraordinary variety of rock shapes. Cracks and channels up to a metre deep are found next to basins, flutes, platforms, river bends, spikes, potholes... These micro-landscapes extend for kilometres and create the ideal conditions for grasses, moss and lichen to grow, all of which produce carbon dioxide, accelerating chemical corrosion.

**Specially adapted animal and vegetable species:** rocky high-altitude areas are particularly inhospitable for plantlife and wildlife alike. Drought, variations in temperature, snow cover, lack of soil... all these factors lead to the appearance of specially adapted, often rare and sometimes protected species. Plantlife includes orchids, gentian violets, sedge and ferns. Wildlife includes prestigious species: ibexes and Chamois goats, golden eagles and red grouse, black grouse and great grouse, grouse and rock partridge.



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## Colonney Circuit

### Hike n°3 fact sheet

#### View points to discover

1. Les Grandes Platières offers panoramic views over the Haut Giffre's major mountain ranges: Avoudrues, Criou, Grenier de Commune, Buét, Rochers des Fiz... and the beautiful Mont Blanc mountain range.
2. La Tête du Colonney.

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## Itinerary description

Circuit reserved for experienced hikers only.

From Grandes Platières (viewpoint n°1), head towards "Refuge de Platé". The path leads to the Col du Colonney via a succession of rocky projections and the deeply incised "Les Lapiaz" limestone plateaux. From this Col, follow the path that climbs steadily to the Tête des Lindars, then to the Tête du Colonney (viewpoint n°2). After having passed through a stretch of Les Lapiaz, scree and patches of snow, this path continues up a majestic ridge with views over La Combe de Monthieu, glacial cirques and the Reliques du Colonney to the north, Les Forts de Platé to the south, and the vast Assy plateau below. Retrace your steps for the return journey.



## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ⚠ Difficult section
- 90 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

## Facilities

- Tourist office
- Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

## Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

## Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

Mountain rescue: **112**  
Weather forecast: 3250

## START:

- 1 Grandes Platières  
Top of the cable car

- END: Grandes Platières  
Top of the cable car

- DIFFICULTY: Very difficult

- ALTITUDE CHANGE: 1,048 metres  
524 metre climb + 524 metre drop

- TIME: 3 hours

- SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:  
Plateau sections, path including a ridge that may become exposed (Tête des Lindars, Tête du Colonney), long circuit.

## ITINERARY:

- 28 Grandes Platières > Col du Colonney
- 2 Col du Colonney > Tête du Colonney
- 90 Tour verte > Tête du Colonney
- 51 Lindars > Tête du Colonney
- 52 Tré L'Épaule > Tête du Colonney  
Colonney > Retour
- 52 Tré L'Épaule > Col du Colonney
- 51 Lindars > Col du Colonney
- 90 Tour verte > Grandes Platières
- 2 Col du Colonney > Grandes Platières
- 1 Grandes Platières

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**Gers Forest** is one of the rare places you will find larches growing in the French Prealps. Larches grow in high valleys between mountain ranges as they are better suited to coping with such regions' very harsh climates than spruces, and they seek out light summers. They barely grow at all in the humid limestone Prealps region (Chartreuse, Vercors).

You often find them on north-facing slopes and on siliceous rock, because larches transpire a great deal and therefore require a good water supply.

Gers Forest's larches, growing in a prealpine limestone mountain range are an exceptional case. The following reasons may be given for their presence:

- Haut Giffre's climate is harsher than that of other prealpine mountain ranges so the larch, which adapts well to the cold, has an advantage.
- in this northern resort, larches enjoy fresh soil on scree and don't have any competition.

**Gers Lake** owes its existence to quaternary glaciations. When the ice mass retreated, the glacier left behind an assembly of the elements it had contained: moraines. One of these moraine deposits formed a dam so that water draining from La Combe led to the creation of Gers Lake.



Photo credits: Haut Giffre hiking trail département. Please do not litter. felix-creation.fr

## Gers Circuit

### Hike n°4 fact sheet

#### View points to discover

1. From the Grandes Platières cable car upper station, vast panoramic views extend over the Haut-Giffre mountain range, as well as Criou Mountain, Le Grenier de Commune, Le Buet... and above all over the impressive Mont Blanc mountain range. When the weather is good, you can recognise each of the major mountain ranges using the viewpoint indicator. La Combe de Gers lies ahead in a deep hollow, the cross-section of which is shaped like a 'U' with flared sides.
2. La Combe de Gers owes its morphology to quaternary glaciation (-300,000 to -100,000 years BCE), which reshaped part of the terrain. During these glacial episodes, a glacier squeezed in uphill of the Gers Valley, between La Tête de Balacha and La Tête Pelouse. This glacial structure extended a little ice tongue, which hollowed out Le Vallon de Gers. That's why we can call La Combe de Gers a little valley in a glacial trough.

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## Itinerary description

From Les Grandes Platières (viewpoint n°1), head north along the ridge of Les Platières, which leads to Tête Pelouse (Towards Col de Pelouse). At Col Pelouse, follow signs to Gers Lake. While you descend the valley, admire the view over the entire Combe de Gers (viewpoint n°2).

After having walked around the lake and crossed Les Chalets de Gers, take the right-hand path to Les Chalets des Foges. The path passes through a beautiful larch forest that takes you to the foot of the Pas des Foges. Climb back up La Combe des Foges. Uphill from the small valley, admire the views over Haut Giffre's mountain ranges. At Le Col de Platé, return to Les Grandes Platières.

## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- Difficult section
- Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

### Facilities

- Tourist office
- Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

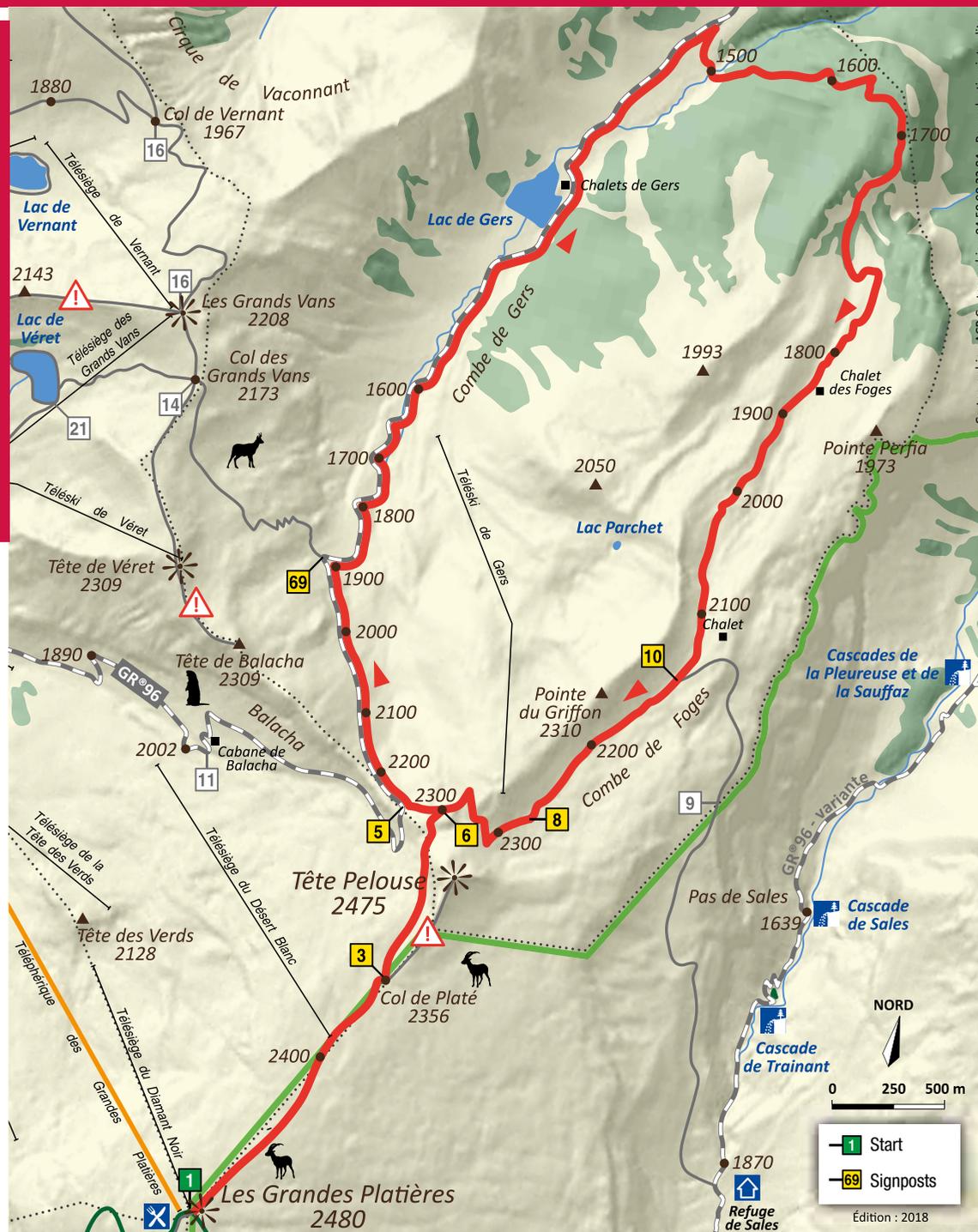
### Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

### Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

Mountain rescue: **112**  
Weather forecast: 3250



### START:

**1** Top of the Grandes Platières cable car

### END:

Top of the Grandes Platières cable car

### DIFFICULTY: Difficult

**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,896 metres  
948 metre climb + 948 metre drop

### TIME: 6 hours

**SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:**  
Altitude change, long circuit.

### ITINERARY:

- 1** Grandes Platières > Gers Lake via La Combe de Gers
- 3** Col de Platé > Gers Lake via La Combe de Gers
- 6** Below Le Col > Gers Lake via La Combe de Gers
- 5** Col Pelouse > Gers Lake
- 69** Les Lanches Fleuries > Gers Lake  
Gers Lake
- 10** Combe des Foges > Grandes Platières
- 8** Combe des Foges Les Foges > Grandes Platières
- 7** Les Verdets > Grandes Platières
- 6** Below Le Col > Grandes Platières
- 3** Col de Platé > Grandes Platières
- 1** Grandes Platières > End

Please be aware of the cable car closing time when planning your return journey



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### Access to La Tête de Balacha:

Warning, includes difficult sections: itinerary reserved for experienced hikers. From Le Col des Grands Vans, you can reach La Tête de Balacha from where you can admire vast panoramic views extending over La Combe de Gers, the hollow of Flaine and surrounding area (to the west: Tête Pelouse; to the south-west: Grandes Platières; to the south: Aup de Véran, Aiguille d'Aujon and in the background, La Tête du Colonney.

**Building the resort** at the foot of Véret Mountain required a certain number of adjustments be made, including the installation of an avalanche barrier at the top of the mountainside. This stepped series of racks effectively stops avalanches when they start, or at least minimises their impact.



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## Les Grands Vans Circuit

Hike n°5 fact sheet

### View points to discover

1. From Grands Vans, a vast viewpoint looks out over the hollows that encircle this summit:
  - to the north-north-west: La Combe de Vernant
  - to the east: La Combe de Gers
  - to the south: La Combe de Véret.During glacial episodes, these three hollows were the sites of local glaciers that extended short ice tongues.
2. From La Pointe de Véret, you can see the entire Flaine resort and the hollow in which it sits.

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## Itinerary description

From the Grandes Platières cable car station (DMC), go to Le Chalet du Bissac (Flaine Forêt), and take the path leading to La Combe de Véret (towards Grands Vans).

Climb the vast, lush green Combe to Le Col des Grands Vans.

At Le Col des Grands Vans, follow the signposted path, which climbs up to Grands Vans (viewpoint n°1). From this summit, walk down to Le Col de Vernant then into the Vernant hollow (towards Lake Vernant). When you get to the lake, walk around it and take the path that climbs up to La Pointe de Véret (viewpoint n°2).

From this Col, walk down to La Combe de Véret to return to Flaine.



## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ! Difficult section
- 30 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

### Facilities

- Tourist office
- P Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

### Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

### Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Hexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

### Mountain rescue: 112

Weather forecast: 3250

### START:

- 28 Grandes Platières cable car station - Forum

### END:

- Grandes Platières Cable Car - Forum

### DIFFICULTY: Difficult

- ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,656 metres  
828 metre climb + 828 metre drop

- TIME:** 3hrs 20mins + 1hr 20mins for the Col des Grands Vans, Tête de Balacha itinerary.

### SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:

- The Col des Grands Vans-Tête de Balacha itinerary requires particular care.

### ITINERARY:

- 28 DMC station Flaine Forum > Start
- 86 Chalets du Michet > Grands Vans
- 29 Poya > Grands Vans
- 85 Balacha > Les Grands Vans
- 23 Traverse des Flaine woods > Col des Grands Vans
- 21 Lac de Véret > Col des Grands Vans
- 14 Col des Grands Vans > Les Grands Vans
- 15 Les Grands Vans > Col de Vernant
- 16 Col de Vernant > Vernant Lake
- 93 Sous Corbalanche > Col de Veret
- 92 Lac de Vernant > Col de Veret
- 17 Lac de Vernant > Col de Veret
- 22 Col de Veret > Flaine
- 21 Combe de Veret > Flaine
- 23 Traverse des bois de Flaine > Balacha
- 85 Balacha > Col du Cou
- 29 Poya > Col du Cou
- 86 Chalets du Michet
- 28 DMC station Flaine Forum > End

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**The resort of Flaine** is located at the bottom of a vast basin, surrounded by ridges:

- from north to east: via l'Arbaron, La Pointe de Véret, La Tête de Balacha and La Tête Pelouse.
- to the south, via Les Grandes Platières and the Aup de Véran and Aiguille d'Aujon terrains.
- and to the west via the low Col du Cou.

As well as the irregularity in the sloping sides of Flaine basin, you will notice a range of different geological terrains in the surrounding landscape.

To note:

- grey sandstone (Taveyannaz de l'Oligocène sandstone) out of which the following ridges developed: La Pointe de Véret, Les Grands Vans, Tête de Balacha, Tête Pelouse as well as the upper part of the summits, from l'Aup de Véran to l'Aiguille d'Aujon.
- white Urgonian limestone mountain ranges characterised by vast, grooved, ridged stretches on the shoulder of Aujon and Le Grand Lapiaz, which is on the southern slope of the Flaine hollow. Flaine's basin owes its topography to its structural configuration, which means the way its rock materials are organised: Flaine is located in a synclinal trough facing east-west. During the quaternary glaciations, Les Grandes Platières and the Désert de Platé was topped by a large ice cap, which extended an ice tongue that reached all the way to Flaine Lake.

**Flaine glacier** scraped the urgonian limescale from its sandstone layer, which is where the Grand Lapiaz and Aujon's large limestone slabs came from. When the glacier retreated, the materials it extracted were left scattered around, which is what formed moraines.

Additionally, the steep 250-metre sides of La Plaine de Flaine in the Urgonian limestone mountain range were due to the hollow being carved out by the glacier, which resulted from the Grandes Platières ice-cap. Flaine Lake owes its origin to this hollowing out and the natural dam formed by Le Col du Cou.



Photo credits: Les Carroz, Tourist Office, M. Balmasso. Please do not litter. felix-creation.fr

## Les Crêtes Circuit

### Hike n°6 fact sheet

#### View points to discover

##### 1. Pointe de Véret

The Crêtes trail offers a beautiful viewpoint over Flaine and its surrounding environment.

- To the north, a line of ridges outlines the huge Vernant hollow, looked over by La Tête du Pré de Saix and Les Grands Vans, at the bottom of which is Lake Vernant, which provides Flaine's water supply.
- South of the line of ridges is the Flaine basin.

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## Itinerary description

Circuit reserved for experienced hikers. From the Grandes Platières cable car (DMC), climb up to Le Chalet du Bissac (Flaine Forêt), to reach the path leading to Le Col de Pierre Carrée.

At the Col, take the path that continues up the ridges (a section of the Pas de l'Écureuil). Follow the ridge path to La Pointe de Véret (viewpoint N°1). From this summit, take Le Col de Véret and follow the ridge path to Grands Vans (over this section, you will be able to see Lake Vernant below you via a large opening in the rock.)

Return to Flaine via the Combe de Véret path.



## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ▲ Difficult section
- 80 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

### Facilities

- Tourist office
- Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

### Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

### Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey

- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

Mountain rescue: 112  
Weather forecast: 3250

- START:**
  - 28 Grandes Platières Cable Car - Forum
- END:**
  - Grandes Platières Cable Car - Forum
- DIFFICULTY:** Very difficult
- ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,208 metres  
604 metre climb + 604 metre drop  
Time: 3hrs 15mins
- SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:**  
Aerial passage, ridges
- ITINERARY:**
  - 28 DMC station Flaine Forum > Start
  - 86 Chalets du Michet > Col de Pierre Carrée
  - 29 Poya > Col de Pierre Carrée
  - 85 Balacha > Col de Pierre Carrée
  - 77 Cabane des bûcherons > Col de Pierre carrée
  - 105 Chemin à Féfé > Col de Pierre Carrée
  - 106 Cabane des bûcherons
  - 45 Col de Pierre Carrée > Les Grands Vans (difficult itinerary)
  - 72 Pointe de Veret > Les Grands Vans (difficult itinerary)
  - 22 Col de Véret > Les Grands Vans (difficult itinerary)
  - 15 Les Grands Vans > Flaine
  - 14 Col Grands Vans > Flaine
  - 21 Lac de Véret > Flaine
  - 23 Traverse des bois de Flaine > Flaine
  - 85 Balacha > Col du Cou
  - 29 Poya > Col du Cou
  - 86 Chalets du Michet
  - 28 DMC station Flaine Forum > End

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## Flaine Lake and basin

Flaine's endorheic basin is the largest closed hollow in the limestone Hautes-Alpes. The lake is fed by a drainage basin with a surface area of 16.5 km<sup>2</sup> and a vertical drop of over 1,000 metres. It floods the lower part of Flaine's plain, known as a "poljé", which means a flat-bottomed hollow that does not drain out to other areas.

**Flaine Lake**, which is fed by several tributaries, does not have any aerial outlets through which the lake's waters can escape; this is notable in the landscape where the lake is surrounded by imposing limestone cliffs and blocked to the west by Le Col du Cou. The lake's waters escape via fissures on the bottom of the lake and resurface 920 metres lower down the Arve Valley in Magland. However, these sub-lake outlets are not able to absorb large quantities of water, which explains the variations in the lake's water levels, notably during the thaw.

**These variations** are clearly visible at the bottom of the plain (a stretch of grass with clay deposits). It is highly probable that Flaine Lake was once larger than it currently is, something we're led to believe by the richness of Flaine plain, which remains lightly notched by Flaine's meandering stream.

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Photo credits: Flaine Tourist Office, M. Dalmasson. Please do not litter.  
felix-creation.fr



## Flaine Lake Circuit

### Hike n°7 fact sheet

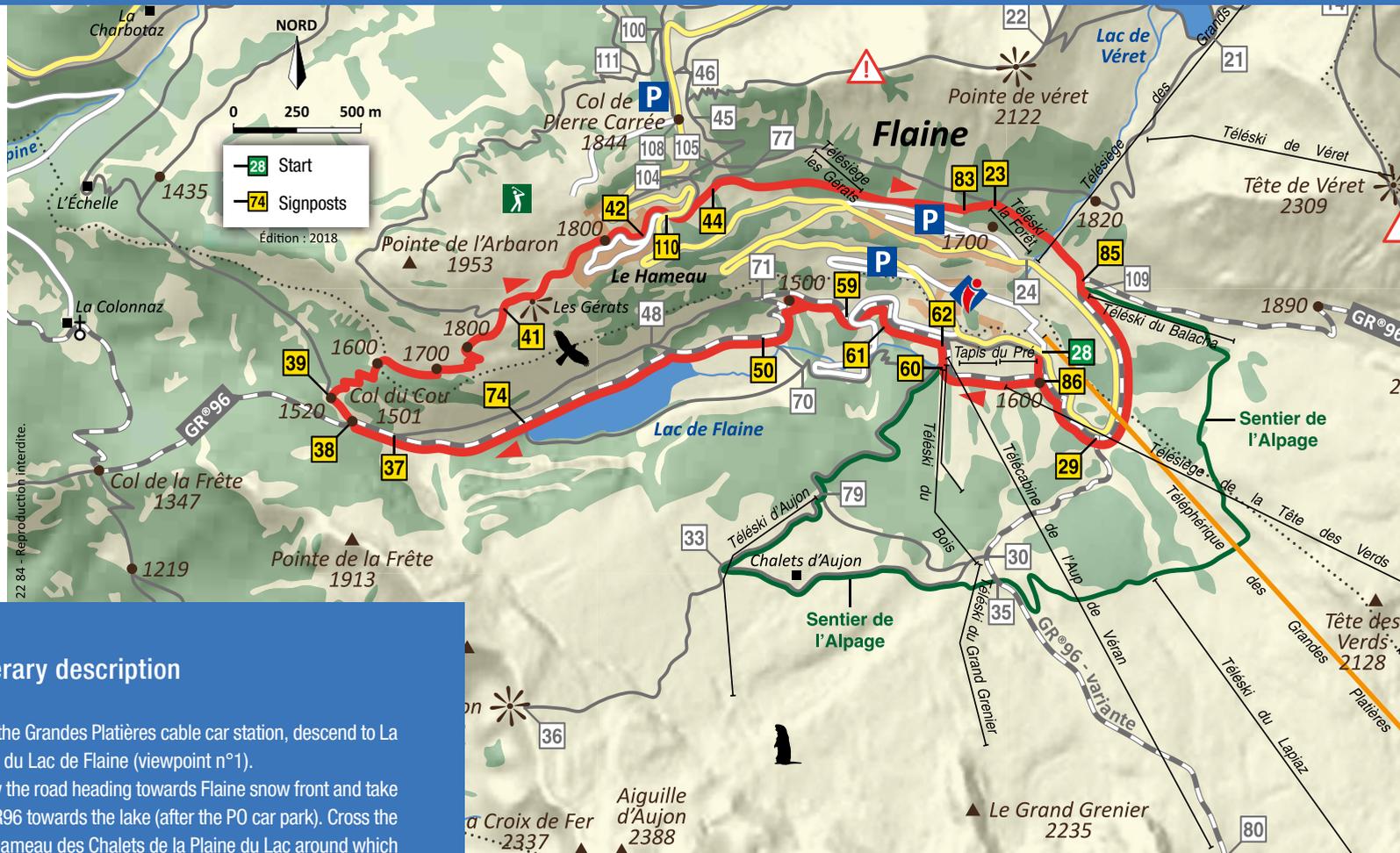
#### View points to discover

1. Views of the lake and La Plaine de Flaine surrounded by impressive 250 metre limestone ledges. L'Aiguille d'Aujon, Croix de Fer (to the south) and the Massif de l'Arbaron (to the north) overlook this hollow.
2. View over La Pointe Percée and the Aravis mountain range.

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www.acp-cartographie.fr

**flaine.com**



## Itinerary description

From the Grandes Platières cable car station, descend to La Plaine du Lac de Flaine (viewpoint n°1).

Follow the road heading towards Flaine snow front and take the GR96 towards the lake (after the PO car park). Cross the little Hameau des Chalets de la Plaine du Lac around which several herds of cows graze. Leave the path to follow the trail that remains at the foot of the cliffs to get to the Col du Cou. *Variant route through caves (more difficult): follow the signposted path that goes around the lake's right bank leading to Le Col du Cou.*

At the crossroads of the Col du Cou, head towards "Les Gérats-Plaine Joux". At the next crossroads, follow signs to Les Gérats. The path zig-zags over Le Flan de l'Arbaron on its way to Les Gérats chalets, now a ruin (viewpoint n°2). Cross the Gérats Alpine pasture to reach Le Hameau de Flaine, Flaine Forêt (Chalet Le Bissac), and finally, the Grandes Platières cable car station.

## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ▲ Difficult section
- 30 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

## Facilities

- Tourist office
- Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

## Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

## Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

Mountain rescue: 112  
Weather forecast: 3250

## START:

28 Grandes Platières Cable Car - Forum

▲ END: Grandes Platières Cable Car - Forum

▲ DIFFICULTY: Medium

▲ ALTITUDE CHANGE: 840 metres  
420 metre climb + 420 metre drop

▲ TIME: 3 hours

▲ SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:  
Stony, steep climb to Les Gérats

## ITINERARY:

- 28 DMC station Flaine Forum > Start
- 86 Chalets du Michet > Flaine Lake
- 62 Pré Michalet > Flaine Lake
- 61 Chalet du Michalet > Flaine Lake
- 59 Chalet du Crêt > Flaine Lake
- 71 Le Crêt > Flaine Lake
- 50 La Plaine du Lac > Col du Cou
- 49 Chalets de la Plaine > Col du Cou
- 48 Le Lac > Col du Cou
- 74 Le Bout du lac > Col du Cou
- 37 Creux du Lavouet > Col du Cou
- 38 Col du Cou > Les Gérats
- 39 Chalets du Col > Les Gérats
- 40 Dalle des Gérats > Hameau des Gérats
- 41 Les Gérats > Flaine par le hameau des Gérats
- 42 Le Hameau > Flaine
- 101 Le Hameau (rond point) > Flaine
- 102 Chalet des Suisses (Hélios) > Flaine
- 44 Bassin de la Pallud > Flaine
- 66 Aigue marine > Col du Cou via Flaine Lake
- 83 Alt 1,725 metres > Col de Vêret
- 85 Balacha > Col du Cou
- 29 Poya > Col du Cou
- 86 Chalets du Michet
- 28 DMC station Flaine Forum > End



## Arbaron circuit

Path offering magnificent panoramic views, between Le Col de Pierre Carrée and the Hamlet of Flaine. This easy trail is accessible to everyone and circles Arbaron's summit, offering year-round views and different landscapes depending on which side of the mountain you're on and the light at that time of day. La Pointe de l'Arbaron offers exceptional panoramic views.

Extraordinary panoramic Alpine views: viewpoint over the Arve Valley, Aravis and Beaufortain mountain ranges...



Photo credits: Flaine Tourist Office, H. Baudement. Please do not litter.  
felix-creation.fr

## Arbaron circuit

### Hike n°8 fact sheet

### View points to discover

- Moorland and high-altitude forest where the local plantlife is characterised by blueberry bushes and rhododendrons.
- Numerous viewpoints over the Faucigny and Chablais summits.
- The landscape looks over Les Aravis and Le Beaufortain.

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**flaine.com**

# Arbaron circuit

## Itinerary description

From the car park to Le Col de Pierre Carrée (don't take the golf road), walk alongside the main road following signs to "Les Gérats de l'Arbaron". Then, after around 700 metres, take the large path on the left through a wooded pasture. You will reach an area of moorland, where the local plantlife is characterised by blueberry bushes and rhododendrons. The path gently climbs, with one or two steeper sections, all the way to Arbaron. Enjoy a number of viewpoints over the Faucigny and Chablais summits.

From Arbaron to the Aigue-Marine P3 car park, follow the right-hand path towards "Les Gérats", passing through a rocky stretch, then follow signs through a high-altitude grassy area. Back on the Flaine side, walk back down to "Les Gérats". The landscape looks out onto the Aravis and Beaufortain mountain ranges. Follow signs back up towards "Flaine" then down to the "Hameau des Gérats" and its stunning contemporary chapel. Take the tarmacked road following signs to the D106, which you cross to end up facing a large esplanade.

At the crossing, take the path on your left towards Le Col de Pierre Carrée. After around 200 metres, take the smaller uphill path on the left. When you can see the 27<sup>th</sup> BCA building, at the crossroads near a pylon, take a right to go around the building and get back on the Col de Pierre Carrée road, passing the transformer on your left.



### Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ▲ Difficult section
- 46 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

### Facilities

- Tourist office
- P Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

### Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

### Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

**Mountain rescue: 112**  
Weather forecast: p250

# Hike n°8 fact sheet

- START:**  
108 Col de Pierre Carrée car park
- END:** Col de Pierre Carrée car park
- DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 500 metres  
250 metre climb + 250 metre drop
- TIME:** 2hrs
- SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:** None
- ITINERARY:**
  - 100 Barne Rosta
  - 111 Barne Rosta
  - 82 Arbaron > Les Gérats
  - 41 Les Gérats > Col de Pierre Carrée
  - 42 Les Gérats > Col de Pierre Carrée
  - 101 Le Hameau > Col de Pierre Carrée
  - 102 Chalet des Suisses > col de Pierre Carrée
  - 104 le chalet des Suisses 1778m > Col de Pierre Carrée
  - 105 Chemin à Féfé > col de Pierre Carrée
  - 106 La cabane des Bûcherons
  - 45 Col de Pierre Carrée > End



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## Croix de Bérard Panorama

- To the south-east lie the grey sandstone summits of the Grands Vans (2,203 metres), Pointe de Véret (2,387 metres) and Tête Pelouse (2,475 metres). The Rochers des Fiz natural amphitheatre (2,800 metres) extends along the backdrop.
- To the south-south-east, you will get a glimpse of Flaine's cable car upper station and the whitish limestone expanse of the Grandes Platières, Désert de Platé. The Mont Blanc mountain range is on the horizon.
- To the south, the Colonney (2,692 metres), Aup de Véran (2,437 metres) and Aiguille d'Aujon mountain ranges rise up (2,389 metres), with the glacial Monthieu Valley emerging between.
- To the south-west, beyond the Arve Valley you can see the Aravis mountain range.
- To the west and below, at the opening of the Arve valley (in Cluses) lies a flat-bottomed valley (created by a glacial lake) where the town of Bonneville is to be found.
- To the north-north-east, enjoy views over Giffre valley and the market town of Samoëns, which is located at the intersection of Giffre Valley and the Clévieux mountain stream.
- To the east, the icy summits of Ruan, Grenier de Commune and Buét rise up.



Photo credits: Les Carroz Tourist Office, M. Dalmasso. Please do not filter. felix-creation.fr

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## Pré des Saix Circuit

Hike n°9 fact sheet

### View points to discover

1. Discover beautiful panoramic views over La Pointe Percée (2,752 metres), the highest point in the Aravis mountain range that rises up like a high wall above the Arve (2,200 metre altitude drop). The Aravis limestone mountain range was substantially shaped during quaternary glaciations, as was the beautiful Doran glacial cirque that feeds the powerful waterfalls located below Pointe Percée.
2. From La Croix de Bérard, there are extensive panoramic views over the surrounding mountain ranges: see description on previous page.

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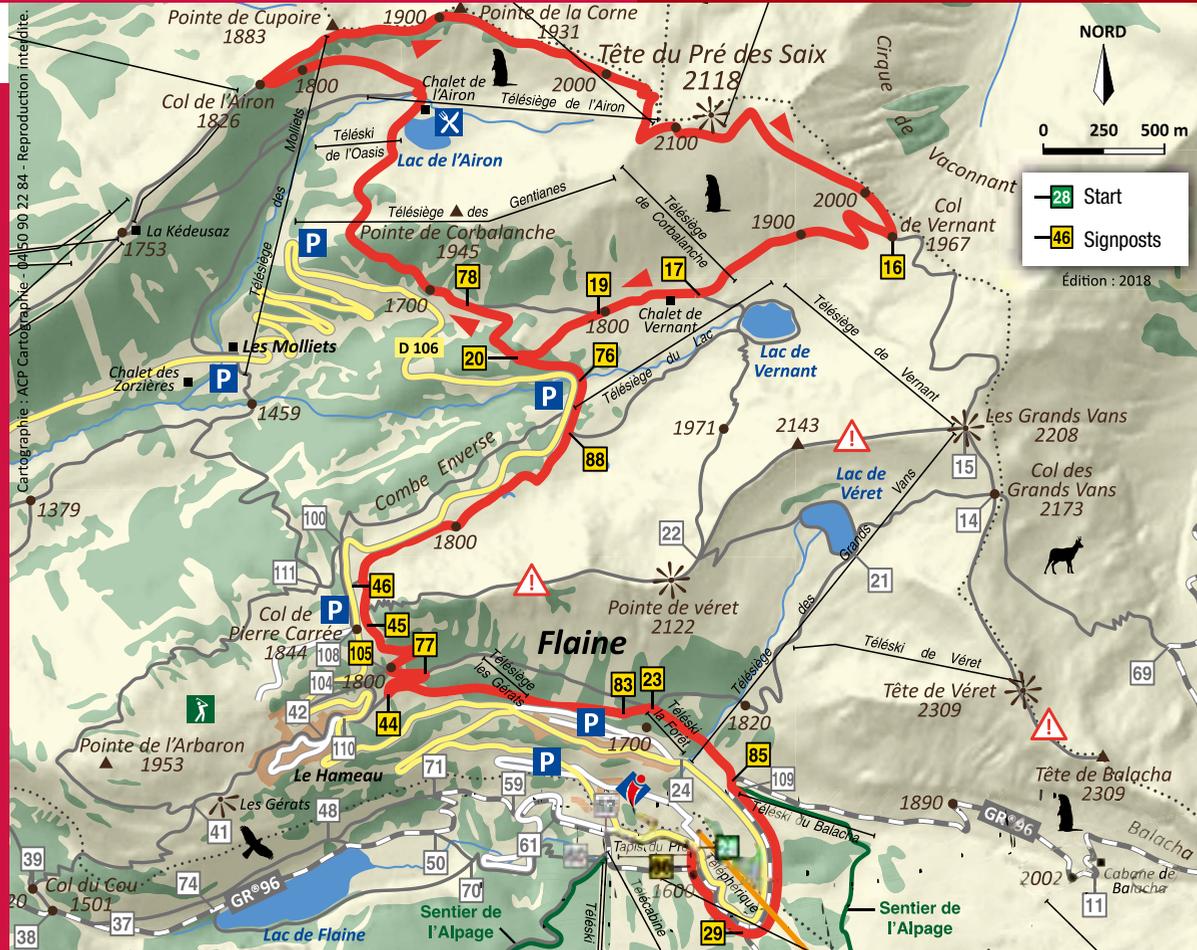
**flaine.com**

## Itinerary description

From Les Grandes Platières cable car station (DMC), climb to Chalet Le Bissac (Flaine Forêt) to join the path leading to the Col de Pierre Carrée. At the Col, head towards the Chalets de Vernant (Carroz-Flaine road), take the path through Corbalanche woods towards the Chalet d'Airon. As you come out of the woods, enjoy a wonderful view over the Aravis mountain range and the Arve Valley (viewpoint n°1). The path winds through dwarf willow trees (as a result of the forest adapting to climate conditions and avalanches). Before you come to the Chalet de l'Airon, cross the "marshy" ground of the hollow, which was once home to a small lake during the last glacial episode (Little Ice Age = Middle Ages).

From the Chalet de l'Airon, take the forest road that climbs to La Pointe de Cupoire from where you can see Les Carroz d'Arâches and the Arve Valley (viewpoint). From the summit, follow the ridge path east, which takes you to the Tête du Pré des Saix, 2,114 metres up, this lofty spot provides magnificent views of the surrounding area: Croix de Bérard (viewpoint n°2). From La Tête du Pré des Saix, go back down heading south-east on Le Col de Vernant.

At Le Col de Vernant, head towards Vernant Lake, then return to the Chalets de Vernant along the track.



## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ▲ Difficult section
- 30 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

## Facilities

- Tourist office
- P Car park
- X Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

## Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

## Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

Mountain rescue: 112.  
Weather forecast: 3250

- START:** 28 DMC station, Flaine Forum
- END:** DMC station, Flaine Forum
- DIFFICULTY:** Difficult
- ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,030 metres  
515 metre climb + 515 metre drop
- TIME:** 5 hours
- SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:** Long circuit
- ITINERARY:**

- 28 DMC station Flaine Forum > Leave
- 86 Chalets du Michet > Col de Pierre Carrée
- 29 Poya > Col de Pierre Carrée
- 85 Balacha > Col de Pierre Carrée
- 23 Traversée des bois de Flaine > Col de Pierre Carrée
- 77 Flaine woods > Col de Pierre Carrée
- 105 Chemin à Fédé > Col de Pierre Carrée
- 106 Cabane des Bûcherons > Col de Pierre Carrée
- 45 Col de Pierre Carrée > L'Airon
- 46 Barne Rosta > L'Airon
- 88 Combe Enversse > Lake Airon
- 76 Porte carte de Vernant
- 20 Vernant > Lake Airon
- 78 Bois de Corbalanche > Lake Airon
- Corbalanche haut > Tête de Pré de Saix
- Airon stream > Lake Airon
- Lake Airon > Pointe de Cupoire
- L'Airon > Pointe de Cupoire
- Pointe de Cupoire
- Tête de Pré de Saix > Lac de Vernant
- 16 Col de Vernant > Vernant (parking)
- 93 Sous Corbalanche > Vernant (parking par les chalets)
- 92 Vernant Lake > Vernant (parking par les chalets)
- 18 Torrent de Corbalanche > Vernant (car park)
- 19 Near Corbalanche > Vernant (car park)
- 20 Vernant > Vernant (car park)
- 76 Take Vernant map
- 88 Combe Enversse > Col de Pierre Carrée
- 46 Barne Rosta > Flaine
- 43 Col de Pierre Carrée > Col de Vêret
- 45 Col de Pierre Carrée > Flaine
- 77 Flaine woods > Flaine
- 106 Cabane des Bûcherons > col de Pierre Carrée
- 105 Chemin à Fédé > col de Pierre Carrée
- 44 Bassin de la Pallud > Flaine
- 66 Aigue marine > Col du Cou via le Lac de Flaine,
- 83 Alt 1,725 metres > Col de Vêret
- 85 Balacha > Col du Cou
- 29 Poya > Col du Cou
- 86 Chalets du Michet
- 28 DMC station Flaine Forum > End



## Lake Airon

This little 2-hectare man-made lake is situated at an altitude of 1,500 metres, offering magnificent views over the Aravis mountain range. It is used as a water reservoir for snow cannons and is a prized trout fishing destination. Fishing permits are available to buy from the Tourist Office.

## Alpine farm

On the shores of Lake Airon you will find an Alpine farm with a sunny terrace and typical mountain restaurant.

Authentic dishes made from farm produce. Cheese for sale.

L'Alpage de l'Airon: +33 (0)4 50 90 33 84.

You are strongly advised to book in advance for meals or afternoon snacks!



Photo credits: Flaine Tourist Office, M. Dalmasso. Please do not litter.  
felix-creation.fr

## Airon Lake Circuit

## Hike n°10 fact sheet

### View points to discover

- Lovely family walk!
- Views over the Aravis mountains and the Arve Valley.
- Meet Alpine pasture animals.

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**flaine.com**



Cartographie : ACP Cartographie - 04 50 90 22 84 - Reproduction interdite.

- START:**
  - 76** Vernant car park (4 kilometres from Flaine)
- END:** Vernant car park (4 kilometres from Flaine)
- DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- ALTITUDE CHANGE:** -
- TIME:** 1hr 15mins
- SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:** None
- ITINERARY:**
  - 76** Le Lac and Vernant chair lifts > Start
  - 20** Vernant > Lac de l'Airon
  - 78** Bois de Corbalanche > Airon Lake  
Chalet de l'Airon > Return
  - 78** Bois de Corbalanche > Vernant
  - 20** Vernant > Vernant (car park)
  - 76** Le Lac and Vernant chair lifts > End

## Itinerary description

From Vernant car park, take the path to the left of the chair lift towards Lake Airon. It is a very easy walk along a path with hardly any altitude change. The path goes through Corbalanche woods. When you come out of the woods, you will discover a beautiful viewpoint over the Aravis mountains and the Arve Valley. Next, you will come out into an Alpine pasture, with herds of cows and goats, before reaching the lake. Retrace your steps for the return journey.

## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ⚠ Difficult section
- 30 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

## Facilities

- Tourist office
- Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

## Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

## Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

**Mountain rescue:** 112  
**Weather forecast:** 3250



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Flaine's endorheic basin is the largest closed hollow in the limestone Hautes-Alpes. The lake is fed by a drainage basin with a surface area of 16.5 km<sup>2</sup> and a vertical drop of over 1,000 metres. It floods the lower part of Flaine's plain, known as a "poljé", which means a flat-bottomed hollow that does not drain out to other areas.

**Flaine Lake**, which is fed by several tributaries, does not have any aerial outlets through which the lake's waters can escape; this is notable in the landscape where the lake is surrounded by imposing limestone cliffs and blocked to the west by Le Col du Cou. The lake's waters escape via fissures on the bottom of the lake and resurface 920 metres lower down the Arve Valley in Magland. However, these sub-lake outlets are not able to absorb large quantities of water, which explains the variations in the lake's water levels, notably during the thaw.

**These variations** are clearly visible at the bottom of the plain (a stretch of grass with clay deposits). It is highly probable that Flaine Lake was once larger than it currently is, something we're led to believe by the richness of Flaine plain, which remains lightly notched by Flaine's meandering stream.



Photo credits: Flaine Tourist Office, M. Dalmasson. Please do not litter. felix-creation.fr

## Tour around Flaine lake

### Hike n°11 fact sheet

### View points to discover

- The flat land and lake are surrounded by majestic limestone cliffs reaching up to 2,500 metres
- The lakeside chalets are reminders of the area's pastoral farming
- Herds of cattle can be seen throughout the summer months

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**flaine.com**



Cartographie : ACP Cartographie - 04 50 90 22 84 - Reproduction interdite.

- START:**
  - 28 Grandes Platières Forum cable car station
- END:** Grandes Platières Forum cable car station
- DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE:** 340m  
Positive 170m Negative 170m
- TIME:** 1hr 30mins
- PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES:** going back back to Flaine - a long stretch for children
- ITINERARY:**
  - 28 Gare du DMC Forum > Start
  - 86 Chalets du Michet > Lac de Flaine
  - 62 Pré Michallet > Lac de Flaine
  - 61 Chalets du Michallet > Lac de Flaine
  - 59 Chalets du Crêt > Lac de Flaine
  - 71 Le Crêt > Lac de Flaine
  - 50 La plaine du Lac > Le bout du lac
  - 49 Les chalets de la plaine > Le bout du lac
  - 48 Le lac > Le bout du lac
  - 74 Le bout du lac > Flaine (Rive sud)
  - 87 Le pied du torrent > Flaine (par GR)
  - 50 La plaine dac > Flaine (par GR)
  - 71 Le Crêt > Flaine (par GR)
  - 59 Chalets du Crêt > Flaine (par GR)
  - 61 Chalets du Michallet
  - 62 Pré Michallet > Les Grands Vans
  - 86 Chalets du Michet
  - 28 Finish at DMC

## Itinerary description

Leave Flaine via a section of tarmac road to join a 4X4 track. A long downhill section takes you to the plain where the lake is located. The mountain stream meanders to the lake down the valley. Pass through the chalets by the lake and then head backup towards Col du Cou. Take a look behind you- the quiet little resort is above you! You might well come across a fisherman or two on the homeward stretch.

## Key

- Described trail
  - Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
  - Others hiking trails
  - ▲ Difficult section
  - 30 Signs in Flaine
  - Ski lift open in summer
  - Ski lift
  - Nature reserve boundary
- 
- Facilities**
    - P Tourist office
    - P Car park
    - X Food and drink
    - A Stopover gite
    - A Staff mountain refuge (summer only)
  - Leisure activities**
    - Themed and discovery trail
    - G Golf

## Heritage

- \* Panoramic views
- W Waterfall
- A Alpine pasture
- M Marmots
- B Birds of prey
- I Ibexes
- C Chamois goats
- C Church, chapel

**Mountain rescue: 112**  
**Weather forecast: 3250**



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## Flaine woodland

This hike takes you through Flaine forest at the foot of south-facing slopes.

At altitudes of 1,900 metres/2000 metres, trees and bushes do not grow due to unfavourable climate conditions. This limit between the supalpine and alpine zones is referred to as the combat zone.

Measures have been taken to ensure the slopes overlooking the resort are safe: new trees have been planted at the intermediary level above the forest and avalanche fences have been installed at the top.



Photo credits: Flaine Tourist Office, M. Dalmasso. Please do not litter. felix-creation.fr

## Flaine woodland

### Hike n°12 fact sheet:

#### View points to discover

- Enjoy stunning panoramas of l'Aup de Vérán from the top of Les Gérats chair lift
- Mont Blanc will be on your left
- Admire views of the resort and the lake beneath you
- On your way back, you'll see a waterfall at the end of a wide path that takes you through greenery (when the snow is melting)

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**flaine.com**

## Itinerary description

Set off from Flaine Forum from the Grandes Platières DMC station and head up to Flaine forest via a short but sustained climb.

Go round the lower Gérats chairlift station and past the Hélios and Éos apartment buildings. There are tables and benches available at the top of the Gérats chairlift, allowing you to stop a while and enjoy the view of the Aup de Vêran area. You'll see the resort and the lake below you. The route back takes you a long gently sloping, green and shady trail. You'll see a waterfall below the Grandes Vans chairlift on your way down. Return via the Flaine Forêt sports complex (archery, tennis paint ball, climbing etc.).



## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- ▲ Difficult section
- 30 Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

## Facilities

- Tourist office
- Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

## Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

## Heritage

- Panoramic views
  - Waterfall
  - Alpine pasture
  - Marmots
  - Birds of prey
  - Ibexes
  - Chamois goats
  - Church, chapel
- Mountain rescue: 112**  
**Weather forecast: 3250**

- START:**
- 28 Grandes Platières Forum cable car station
- END:** Grandes Platières Forum cable car station
- DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE:** 400m  
Positive 200m Negative 200m
- TIME:** 1hr 30mins
- PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES:** none
- ITINERARY:**

- 28 Gare du DMC Forum > Start
- 86 Chalets des Michets > Col de Pierre carrée
- 29 Payon > Col de Pierre carrée
- 85 Balacha > Col de Pierre carrée
- 23 Traversée des Bois > Col de Pierre carrée
- 83 Altitude 1725 > Col de Pierre carrée
- 66 Aigue Marine > Col de Pierre carrée
- 44 Bassin de la pallud > Col de Pierre carrée
- 77 Les Bois de Flaine > Combe de Veret
- 23 Traversée des Bois > Flaine
- 85 Balacha > Col de Cou
- 29 Poya > Col de Cou
- 86 Chalets des Michets
- 28 Finish at DMC



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**The Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval / Passy natural Reserve** - On 9,445 ha in the Haut-Giffre limestone massif, the Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval / Passy nature reserve covers the different mountain levels. From 900m to over 3000m, there is a great variety of natural environments: Cliffs, lakes, alpine lawns, lapiaz, mixed forests, wetlands ... Particularity of this natural reserve, traditional agricultural activities have left a heritage built in pastures still exploited.

From forest areas to the highest peaks, around 800 plant species have been identified in the nature reserve, including 28 orchids!

The distribution of the environments according to the altitude favors a great diversity of fauna: deer, wild boar, marmot, variable hare... which benefits from the tranquility of the reserve: ibex, bearded vulture, ptarmigan, golden eagle, black grouse.

Certain areas where the black grouse nests are maintained (in partnership with the ACCA, the FDC, the municipality and the climbers) in order to preserve the presence of this bird.

The Reserve also shelters archaeological vestiges which are studied through the Collective research project (PCR) conducted under the aegis of the Departmental Council of Haute-Savoie.

The objective is to cross scientific approaches around the Sales mountain pasture in order to establish a common vision between archaeological / historical and environmental research.

You can use the top carte 253530 ET

Mind the rules inside naturals and listed sites. Dogs are not allowed!

**Please be aware of the cable car closing time when planning your return journey**

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Photo credits: Sales refuge - Haut Giffre hiking trail department. Please do not litter. felix-creation.fr



## Hike n°13 fact sheet

# Platé and Sales Refuges Circuit

## View points to discover

One of the largest "lapiaz" formation in Europe. Facing Mont Blanc, this 1980 acre limestone plateau is composed mainly of limestone pavements dug by glaciers and meltwater. Recognized as one of the greatest lapiaz in Europe, the Désert de Platé is accessible on foot, which earned him the name "desert".

A spectacular local wildlife, classified since 1998 for its outstanding scenic interest, the Désert de Platé attracts with its extraordinary appearance. It's like "walking on a petrified glacier", "over the moon" ... the references are numerous.

A vast limestone plateau formed by glaciers and sculpted by meltwater, hikers who venture out here will feel as if they're walking on a stone glacier or even the moon! Encircled by imposing walls, the Platé Desert is a secret garden that will delight nature lovers with its rich plant life, abundant wildlife and spectacular geology. See the fossilized remains of a mountain that was once seabed 30 millions years ago! And marmots, ibex and other iconic animals are often at the rendez-vous.

**Flaine Tourist Office**  
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**flaine.com**

# Platé and Sales Refuges Circuit

# Hike n°13 fact sheet

## Itinerary description

From the Grandes Platières cable car Forum take the GR 96 variante on the way to Platé. At the col du Colonney, follow GR96 direction of Platé. You enter to the Désert de Platé, a natural classified site. At the Col de Portette, the Platé Refuge is below, on the right. You will reach Sales and its refuge through "Châteaux de Cran" mountains by the col de Portette. Enjoy the view on the Désert de Platé and Combe de Sales.

On the way down the col de Portette stay on the GR96 to reach the Grand Pré and the refuge de Sales.

You are about to leave the refuge de Sales, take the path on the left on the way to the Combe des Foges. Walk up to Verdet. Now walk down to Flaine by the col Pelouse following the GR96.

## Key

- Described trail
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- Difficult section
- Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

### Facilities

- Tourist office
- Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gîte
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

### Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

### Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

Mountain rescue: **112**  
Weather forecast: 3250



**Refuge de Platé - Booking mandatory:**  
Sylvain Dal cortivo et Federica Furlanetto :  
0033 (0)6 47 20 05 87 [refuge.deplate@yahoo.fr](mailto:refuge.deplate@yahoo.fr)  
[www.refugedeplate.fr](http://www.refugedeplate.fr)

**Refuge de Sales - Booking mandatory:**  
Christophe 0033 (0)9 88 18 42 93  
[refugedesales@orange.fr](mailto:refugedesales@orange.fr) - [www.refugedesales.com](http://www.refugedesales.com)

- START:** Grandes Platières cable car station - Forum
- END:** Grandes Platières cable car station - Forum
- DIFFICULTY:** Important
- DAY 1 =** 2hrs 58mins ; FLAINE (1600m) > Col du Colonney (2321m) > PLATÉ (2032m)  
**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,010 metres = 721m climb + 289m down
- DAY 2 =** 2hrs 01mins ; PLATÉ (2032m) > Col de la Portette (2354m) > SALES (1877m)  
**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 799 metres = 322m climb + 477m down
- DAY 3 =** 3hrs 15mins ; SALES (1877m) > les Verdets (2385m) > FLAINE (1600m)  
**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,293 metres = 508m climb + 785m down

**SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:** Crossing le Grand Lapiaz, firs, high altitude weather conditions, long circuit.

## ITINERARY:

- Gare du téléphérique des Grandes Platières - Forum
- Chalet du Michet > Platé
- La Poya > Platé
- Le Plan des Chardons > Platé
- Le Grand Grenier > Col du Colonney
- Les Langards > Refuge de Platé
- Le Chapeau > Refuge de Platé
- Col du Colonney > Refuge de Platé
- Les Forestiers > Refuge de Platé
- Refuge de Platé > Refuge de Sales
- Col de la Portette > Refuge de Sales
- La Portette > Refuge de Sales
- Lac des Laouchets > Refuge de Sales
- Combe à L'Ours > Refuge de Sales
- Le grand Pré > Refuge de Sales
- Refuge de Sales > Refuge et Lac de Gers
- Chapelle de Sales > Combe des Foges
- Pierre Carrée > Col Pelouse
- Combe des Foges (downstream) > Combe des Foges (upstream)
- Combe des Foges (upstream) > Les Verdets
- Les Verdets > Col Pelouse
- En dessus du Col > Col Pelouse
- Col Pelouse > Flaine
- Cabane de Balacha > Flaine
- Bois Quartier > Flaine
- Balacha > Col de Cou
- La Poya > Col de Cou
- Chalet du Michet > Le Forum
- Gare du téléphérique des Grandes Platières - Forum

GR96

GR96 variante

GR96



**The Platé refuge** is a small, rustic stone refuge. It is an old alpine chalet, acquired by the Alpine Club, almost a century ago. It was the seat of a maquis during the war.

It is located in the Platé Desert, a Natural Classified Site, due to its geological interest.

The bivouac is authorized and free.

Dogs are allowed, but keep them on a leash around the refuge, because we have free range hens which lay good fresh eggs !! And remember, with your four-legged friend, you won't be able to tip over into Reserve territory.

#### Booking

The reservation is now made online: <https://refugedeplate.ffcam.fr/>

and for any information or problem you can reach them by email at [refuge.deplate@yahoo.fr](mailto:refuge.deplate@yahoo.fr)

or by phone at (0033) 06 47 20 05 87



### Hike n°14 fact sheet

## Platé Refuge Circuit

### View points to discover

One of the largest "lapiaz" formation in Europe. Facing Mont-Blanc, this 1980 acre limestone plateau is composed mainly of limestone pavements dug by glaciers and meltwater. Recognized as one of the greatest lapiaz in Europe, the Désert de Platé is accessible on foot, which earned him the name "desert". A spectacular local wildlife, classified since 1998 for its outstanding scenic interest, the Désert de Platé attracts with its extraordinary appearance. It's like "walking on a petrified glacier", "over the moon" ... the references are numerous.

A vast limestone plateau formed by glaciers and sculpted by meltwater, hikers who venture out here will feel as if they're walking on a stone glacier or even the moon! Encircled by imposing walls, the Platé Desert is a secret garden that will delight nature lovers with its rich plant life, abundant wildlife and spectacular geology. See the fossilized remains of a mountain that was once seabed 30 millions years ago! And marmots, ibex and other iconic animals are often at the rendez-vous.

Photo credits: Platé Refuge - Flaine Tourist Office, M.Berthelot. Please do not litter.  
felix-creation.fr

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[www.acp-cartographie.fr](http://www.acp-cartographie.fr)

**flaine.com**

# Platé Refuge Circuit

# Hike n°14 fact sheet

## Itinerary description

From the top of The Grandes Platières cable car take the direction of Platé. At the Col du Colonney, follow GR96 direction Platé. You enter to the Désert of Platé "natural classified site"

At the Col de Portette, the Platé Refuge is below, on the right.

Retrace your steps for the return journey. **Please be aware of the cable car closing time.**

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## Key

- Described trail
- Described trail, variante version
- Grande Randonnée hiking trail (GR)
- Others hiking trails
- Difficult section
- Signs in Flaine
- Ski lift open in summer
- Ski lift
- Nature reserve boundary

### Facilities

- Tourist office
- Car park
- Food and drink
- Stopover gite
- Staff mountain refuge (summer only)

### Leisure activities

- Themed and discovery trail
- Golf

### Heritage

- Panoramic views
- Waterfall
- Alpine pasture
- Marmots
- Birds of prey
- Ibexes
- Chamois goats
- Church, chapel

Mountain rescue: **112**  
Weather forecast: 3250



- START:** Grandes Platières cable car station - Forum
- END:** Grandes Platières cable car station - Forum
- DIFFICULTY:** Important
- CIRCUIT** by cable car

- THE OUTWARD JOURNEY BY CABLE CAR =**  
0hrs 56mins ; Cable car Platières (2500m) > Col du Colonney (2321m) > PLATÉ (2032m)  
**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 468 metres drop
- THE RETURN JOURNEY BY CABLE CAR =**  
1hrs 34mins ; PLATÉ (2032m) > Col du Colonney (2321m) > Cable car Platières (2500m)  
**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 468 metres climb

### VARIANTE VERSION (no cable car)

- THE OUTWARD JOURNEY =** 2hrs 58mins ; FLAINE (1600m) > Col du Colonney (2321m) > PLATÉ (2032m)  
**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,010 metres = 721m climb + 289m drop
- THE RETURN JOURNEY =** 2hrs 24mins ; PLATÉ (2032m) > Col du Colonney (2321m) > FLAINE (1600m)  
**ALTITUDE CHANGE:** 1,010 metres = 289m climb + 721m drop

### SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES:

Crossing le Grand Lapiaz, firns, high altitude weather conditions, long circuit.

### ITINERARY:

- Les Grandes Platières > Refuge de Platé
- Col du colonney > Refuge de Platé
- Les Forestiers > Refuge de Platé
- Refuge de Platé > Les Forestiers
- Les Forestiers > Col du colonney
- Col du colonney > Les Grandes Platières

### Variante version (no cable car) Flaine / Col du Colonney

- Chalet du Michet > Platé
- La Poya > Platé
- Le Plan des Chardons > Platé
- Le Grand Grenier > Col du colonney
- Les Langards > Refuge de Platé
- Le Chapeau > Refuge de Platé
- Col du colonney > Refuge de Platé

### The return version (no cable car) Col du Colonney / Flaine

- Col du colonney > Flaine
- Le Chapeau > Flaine
- Les Langards > Flaine
- Grand Grenier > Flaine
- Plan des Chardons > Flaine
- La Poya > Col de Cou
- Chalet du Michet > Le Forum

Cartographie : ACP Cartographie - 04 50 90 22 84 - Reproduction interdite.

GR96 variante

GR96

GR96 variante

GR96 variante

GR96

GR96