

■ ACCOMODATION AND PROVIDING

This walk has to be planned without any accomodation and without any providing. So you must carry a tent and one week food. Think about it to reckon your load. You will often find pastoral shelters on your way. Generally, they are opened and available for all but of course we can't guaranty they are free the day you get there.

■ THE DIFFERENT STAGES

Most of them are relatively short. If you wish to walk more, several nice loops are possible from every camping spot (without the donkeys) to explore the ridges and the peaks of the area.

■ EQUIPMENT

Compass and height mesure may be useful in case of nasty weather.

Pack up with warm clothes.

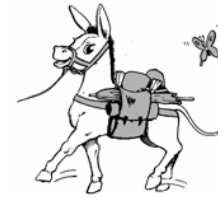
■ MAPING

1/25 000 TOP 25 reference AX LES THERMES 2148 OT and BOURG MADAME 2249 OT (INSTITUT GEOGRAPHIQUE NATIONAL edition) are compulsory.

■ PERIOD OF THE YEAR

Possible walk from July to September.

In case of bad weather forecast, you'd better cancel this type of trip, as you might be stuck in the same spot, because of a heavy mist.



LA FERME AUX ÂNES

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Smugglers' Passage

■ Tent compulsory

■ Difficult walk

■ 7 days

■ Starting point

Unac

■ End of walk

Puymorens Pass

L'Hospitalet

Près l'Andorre

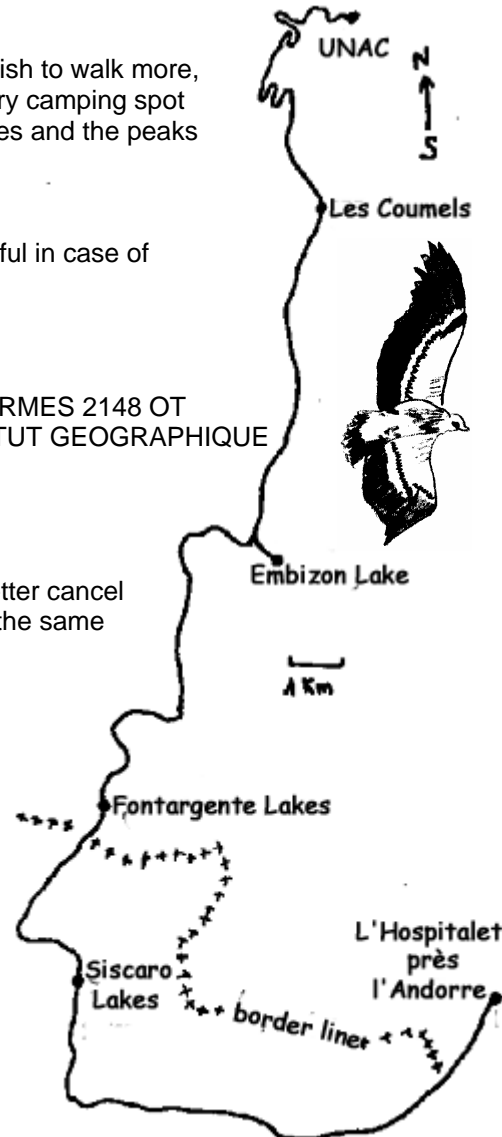
You will be taken to Andorra along the paths used formerly by smugglers, carrying wool, silk and cigarettes Sharp ridges of the border range, shelters by the lakes, clear water streams, all the charming features of the Pyrénées are offered to you.

The whole walk is on high mountain ground with no providing spot at all, mainly around 2000 m heigh, with a passage 2564 m high at Port dret (Dret Pass) in Andorra.

The ground being very hilly, the tour is no good for groups in company of young children. Some previous experience with donkeys is preferable, to face the difficulties.

The paths are not paint signed , and sometimes not visible, so, it's necessary to be able to find one's way throughout the mountain.

At last, remind that in case of mist, among which you have no way to know where you are, the only solution is...waiting.



Price

■ one week hire/one donkey- year 2012

294 €

including only the donkey, its pack-saddle and bags

■ Add donkeys transportation back to Unac

66 €



TOUR DESCRIPTION

DAY 1: from UNAC (700 m) to COUMELS WOOD (1526 m)

After crossing the Ariège valley, you walk up through the woods, along the coal workers path, used in the old days to carry down the wood coal used in the numerous catalan forges in the valley. On your way, you can have a drink thanks to "Font de l'Ours" spring (bear's spring) providing such cold water that you must warm it up to drink it straightaway! Here, the tradition is adding some pastis to it, but sweet sirup can always do.

DAY 2: from COUMELS WOOD to EMBIZON LAKE (2086 m)

The path passes several pastoral shelters and you might meet unac sheperd, looking after the collective flock of the village. Going off the path, you will discover Bretounels orry, an old sheperd's shelter, a good size one, with an impressive dry stone vault. If you wish to camp near Embizon lake, you must walk down a tricky passage.

DAY 3: from EMBIZON LAKE to RULHE LAKE (2018m)

You go up the tricky passage and follow the soft slope which takes you down to Didorte Pass. Further below, Rieutor winding stream winds among the pastures. After crossing it, you walk up to Rulhe lake, set on a balcony.

DAY 4: walk around RULHE LAKE

Rest by the lake, or nice walk to Pradet summit, here is a quiet day; if lucky enough, you can happen to watch one of those impressive vulture flight, those wild birds nest in the area.

You may as well spend an hour leading you to rulhe refuge, where you can have a nice meal.

DAY 5: from RULHE LAKE to FONTARGENTE LAKES (2200 m)

You will see the beautiful Aston valleys stretching in front of you. After a short walkdown, you will come up to the top of the valley and discover the Fontargente Lakes (meaning silver waters) Inclès Pass stands on the border. There, it's not rare to meet custom-house officers right in the middle of the mountain.

DAY 6: from FONTARGENTE LAKES to SISCARO LAKES (2400m)

You walk down to vall d'Inclès, and following Juclar stream, you reach the twin Siscaro lakes. The first one is in a small grassy valley. The second one, is more gloomy, dominated by a rocky cliff.

DAY 7: from SISCARO LAKES to L'HOSPITALET PRES L'ANDORRE (1500 m)

A steep hill takes you to Port dret, the highest spot you'll reach. A 750 m difficult walk down, along « Riu de Sant Josep » stream, takes you back to the ariège valley. Crossing la Soulane d'Andoore, a wide sunny pasture, you get to L'Hospitalet Près l'Andorre.

DAY 1	4 HOURS	<p>UNAC (700m) Luzerac Bois des Coumels (1526m)</p>
DAY 2	4 HOURS	<p>Bois des Coumels (1526m) ETANG D'EMBIZON (2086m)</p>
DAYS 3 et 5	4 HOURS each day	<p>ETANG D'EMBIZON (2086m) ETANG DE RULHE (2018m) Vallée du Rieutor (1920m) ETANGS DE FONTARGENTE (2200m)</p>
DAY 6	4 HOURS	<p>ETANGS DE FONTARGENTE (2200m) Vall d'Inclès ETANGS DE SISCARO (2400m)</p>
DAY 7	5 HOURS	<p>ETANGS DE SISCARO (2400m) Port dret (2564m) Pla de la Vaca Nostra (1791m) L'HOSPITALET (1500m)</p> <p>1cm pour 300m environ 1cm pour 1,5km environ</p>