

Steeple and ponds circuit

Vallée de la Vienne – lac de Vassivière - Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat



Quartier du Pont et église Saint-Martial (Office de tourisme de Noblat)



A hike for lovers of local architectural heritage, along the water and rolling landscapes.

Starting from the old quarter of Le Pont de Noblat, on the banks of the Vienne river and after crossing the medieval bridge, the trail gradually leads up through the countryside, revealing beautiful panoramas of the historic city of Saint-Léonard de Noblat (Plus Beaux Détours de France, an outstanding heritage site). The path goes through the villages of Chigot, Chenour, La Chapelle, and Le Surzol between traditional local buildings, peaceful ponds and lively watercourses.

Useful information

Practice : Pedestrian

Duration : 3 h 45

Length : 15.3 km

Trek ascent : 354 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Loop

Themes : Heritage site and architecture, Lakes and rivers, Viewpoint

Accessibility : VTT

Trek

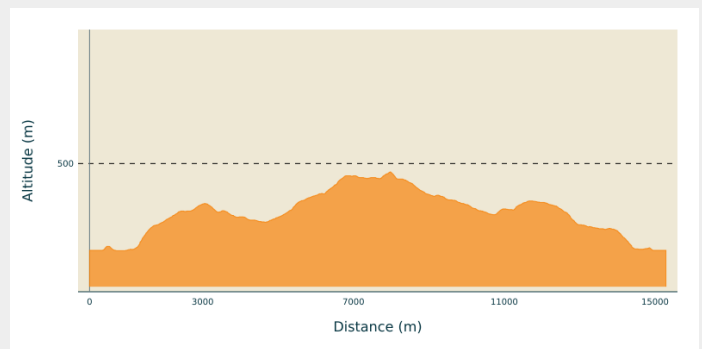
Departure : Fitness trail car park, Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat

Arrival : Fitness trail car park, Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat

Markings : — Yellow markers

Cities : 1. Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat
2. Royères
3. La Geneytouse

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 258 m Max elevation 477 m

1. Follow the path along the Vienne river and head towards the village of Noblat. Pass between the gardens (Place des Chambonnauds) and continue to the right using the small passages between the houses, then to the left. You will arrive at the bridge.
2. Go across it. At the D7bis, turn right. Arriving at the D941, follow it on the left using the pavement, passing in front of the mills of Noblat on the banks of the Vienne.
3. At the first crossroads, turn left. At the end of the porcelain factory, continue up a steep slope and follow the path that climbs to Chigot.
4. At the top of the hill, at the crossing of five paths, at the cross, take the second path on the right. Possible variant.
5. At the crossing, continue straight ahead for 10 mins and then follow the path on the right. In the woods, turn left following the GR 654.
6. At the crossroads, turn left onto the hairpin path.
7. Once you reach a wide path, turn right and then turn left at the next crossing, leaving the farm path to the right. Leave the GR654 on the right and continue straight ahead. At the "y" crossroads, turn right, go past the pond, cross the stream and climb up to the village of Chenour.
8. Pass behind the houses, go left at the last one and follow the small road on the right. Turn around to admire the village.
9. At the crossroads, turn left towards Surzol, and then, 30 mins later, follow the path on the right. Continue and follow the road to the left. Round trip to the Saint-Martin fountain.
10. At the next crossroads in a "T" shape, turn right and continue until the next crossroads with the RD. Continue opposite in the direction of Surzol.
11. Go through the village and follow the pathway that leads to the pond: go along it. Then turn right when you reach the roadway. At the crossroads, turn left until you reach the La Pronche road.
12. Turn left and, after the climb, follow the ridge path to the right. In Beaubiat, turn left. Just before the hamlet of Bel Air, follow the grassy path on the right, going down the small road. At the D7bis, turn left, follow it for 300 metres. In front of the church, turn left, cross the stone bridge and follow the same path as on the way to the starting point.



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On your path...



 Natura 2000 site in the Haute-Vallée de la Vienne (A)

 Saint-Martial Church (C)

 The Chigot Cross (E)

 Saint-Martin fountain (G)

 The Noblat Bridge (B)

 The mills of Noblat (D)

 Le Château de la Chapelle (F)



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All useful information

Advices

Variante du point 4 : traverser le village de Chigot. Prendre à droite la rue à l'angle du lavoir. Poursuivre, la route se transforme en chemin de terre. A la route, tourner à gauche, traverser le village de la Chapelle. Poursuivre sur la route et au croisement, continuer en face à gauche de la croix. Arrivé avant le Peyret, suivre en face le sentier en terre qui s'enfonce dans le bois. A la route tourner à gauche et reprendre le descriptif au point 10.

How to come ?

Access

25 km from Limoges in the direction of Clermont-Ferrand, via the D941. From the town centre of Saint-Léonard de Noblat, take the D41 towards Limoges then, after crossing the railway, turn left, Rue de la Vallée on the D39A.

Advised parking

Fitness trail car park, Quartier du Pont de Noblat, Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat

Accessibility



VTT

Information desks

Office de Tourisme de Noblat

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On your path...



Natura 2000 site in the Haute-Vallée de la Vienne (A)

The Vienne is recognised as one of the last rivers in France to retain so many of its remarkable natural ecological characteristics. From Saint-Léonard, the river flows through wooded gorges, moors and peat bogs to the Plateau de Millevaches. An important ecosystem for the preservation of environments and the conservation of rare species in Europe. You can encounter the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, the White-clawed Crayfish, six species of bats, the Great Capricorn beetle and the Yellow-bellied toad...

Attribution : Office de tourisme de Noblat



The Noblat Bridge (B)

Originally crossed by a ford, the Vienne was bridged half-way through the Middle Ages by a wooden structure. This stone bridge replaced it in 1270, connecting the upper town to the fortified site of Noblat and welcoming a large flow of pilgrims to Compostela and the tomb of Saint-Léonard. The bridge is supported by four broken arches. Its triangular almond-shaped 'noses', typical of medieval Limousin bridges, break the current, limiting damage to the piers.

Attribution : Office de tourisme de Noblat



Saint-Martial Church (C)

L'église Saint-Martial was built by the inhabitants of the Noblat district between 1870 and 1880 in a neo-Gothic style very popular at that time. It replaced the old parish church, sold during the Revolution and used as a ballroom before being destroyed. Unlike most churches, it does not face East, its chancel looks north, a particularity due to the topography of the site. Very light, it is built of limestone and pierced with 18 stained glass windows.

Attribution : Office de tourisme de Noblat



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The mills of Noblat (D)

These mills are known to have been here since the 12th century. The headrace ends in a rocky basin and a channel guides the water into the chambers that accommodate the paddle wheels. Mills were built by those who operated them, and were adapted to local techniques and materials and their use; very strong foundations to resist water and pressure, half-timbered walls and mud floors (earth, lime and hay or brick). In 2009, the porcelain company J.L. Coquet established an exhibition and sales space in the large mill.

Attribution : Office de tourisme de Noblat



The Chigot Cross (E)

Dating from the 17th century, it rises 3 metres above a granite plinth topped by a monolithic shaft. On one side of the base, there is a shield decorated with prisoner's shackles, attributes of Saint-Léonard, and two masks on either side of the shaft. In 1980, the cross was in a ruinous state; the crosspiece had disappeared, and the shaft leaned over on a partially demolished plinth. It was then restored and decorated with a new simple metal crosspiece. Don't miss: the lavoir when you go through the village.

Attribution : OT Noblat J. Lardy



Le Château de la Chapelle (F)

The original castle (late 17th century), which was completely redesigned at the end of the 19th century, has recently undergone restoration work. It has a rectangular main building with a square tower on the southeast corner. The front door is a remnant of the old castle. The whole is covered with slate with discreet geometric motifs on the sides of the tower. Two finials decorate the edges of the roof with fine bouquets of flowers. Private property.

Attribution : Office de tourisme de Noblat



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Saint-Martin fountain (G)

This was originally a well, marked by a wooden cross; the water was famous for treating rheumatism. A chapel was built more recently on this site; small square plan construction opened on one side by a basket-handle arch surmounted by a small granite cross as a keystone. Inside are some objects bearing witness to the passage of pilgrims through the ages: porcelain cup, votive, candlestick... At the rear of the building, a niche houses several statues of saints.

Attribution : Office de tourisme de Noblat