

# The Thaurion gorges discovery trail

Sud Creuse – Aubusson – lac de Vassivière



Aire de pique nique les Gorges du Thaurion (Nathalie Manaud)



Discovering the Thaurion Gorges, a site listed since 1983 and classified as Natura 2000, is like diving into the heart of nature and human history.

To the sound of the Thaurion cascading between the rocks that dot its bed, you will follow its path through a leafy forest encountering an old bridge, a heather-covered moor and monumental rocky outcrops. You can also observe the unobtrusive fauna that gravitates to the Thaurion, whose ecological wealth is well known (Wagtails, White-throated Dippers, traces of European otters).

## Useful information

Practice : Pedestrian

Duration : 45 min

Length : 1.2 km

Trek ascent : 17 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Loop

Themes : Landscape

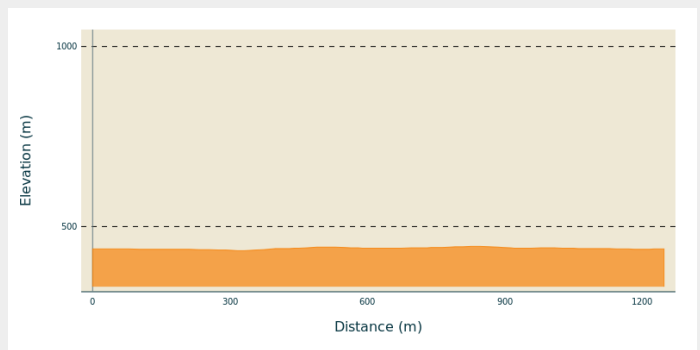
# Trek

**Departure** : Thaurion Bridge, between the villages of Thauron and La Chaise

**Arrival** : Thaurion Bridge, between the villages of Thauron and La Chaise

**Cities** : 1. Thauron

## Altimetric profile



Min elevation 433 m Max elevation 445 m

1. From the bridge, take the path along the river until it rises up to an old bridge.
2. At this bridge, the path forks to the left.
3. Turn left at the crow's foot to start the return trip. This wide path climbs, and then you reach a ledge.
4. Take the first pathway on the left that goes down to the river, then turn right before you get there. The path goes up in parallel with the road.
5. At the intersection, do not return to the starting point on your left, continue straight ahead by the trail that joins a wide path and then, immediately, the road.
6. Take the road on the left, then a few metres further on, the first trail on the right that climbs into the woods to a small heather moor.
7. Once on the heathland, cross it by turning to the left following the ridge. Go down a narrow path that joins the road.
8. Take the road to the right to finish the walk.




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# On your path...



 The Gaperde (A)

 The magic of electricity (C)

 Evolution of the landscape (E)

 The Thaurion Gorge, summer 1944 (B)

 The dry heath of Thauron (D)



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# All useful information

## **Advices**

The trail is narrow and strewn with roots and rocks by the river. Not accessible to pushchairs or people with reduced mobility.

## **How to come ?**

### Access

At 4 km from Pontarion, follow the D10 towards Thauron / Gorges du Thaurion and at 1.5 km head south from Thauron.

### Advised parking

Thaurion Bridge, heading south, 1.5 km from the village of Thauron

## **Information desks**

### **Bureau d'information touristique de Bourganeuf**

Place du Champ de Foire, 23400  
Bourganeuf

bourganeuf@tourisme-creuse-  
sudouest.com

Tel : 05 55 64 12 20

[http://www.tourisme-creuse-  
sudouest.com](http://www.tourisme-creuse-sudouest.com)

### **Bureau d'information touristique d'Ahun**

12 Place Defumade, 23150 Ahun

ahun@tourisme-creuse-sudouest.com

Tel : 05 55 62 55 93

[http://www.tourisme-creuse-  
sudouest.com](http://www.tourisme-creuse-sudouest.com)



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# On your path...

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## The Gaparde (A)

In 1833, the Thauron Municipal Council decided to build a bridge. But the first construction, made of wood and stone, proved too fragile to withstand the Thaurion flooding. In 1876, the municipality decided to rebuild it in stone. Imagine the farmers walking with carts and oxen towards Bourganeuf to get to the cattle market on Wednesdays. Crossing the bridge marked a pause before starting the terrible ascent of the road to La Chaise, nicknamed "La Gaparde" for its ability to "cut the legs out" from under the walker.

Attribution : Nathalie Manaud

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## The Thaurion Gorge, summer 1944 (B)

The end of the summer of 1944 was marked by the withdrawal of German troops and the exodus of the militia from Limoges towards Allier. To hinder their movement, the Maquis carried out sabotage and ambushes throughout the road network. One morning in August, the inhabitants of Thauron were awakened by the rumble of an explosion, echoing throughout the valley... The bridge had been sabotaged: only one arch remained, making it impassable.

Attribution : Nathalie Manaud

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## The magic of electricity (C)

The canal you walk along is the result of the ingenuity of a few inhabitants of Le Mas, a village very close to here. It is a headrace, a water supply canal that supplied a hydroelectric turbine located below. This hamlet was the first in the commune to welcome the magic of electricity into its houses at the beginning of the last century. However, this installation was quickly abandoned when the whole town was supplied with electricity in the 1930s. Before that, a mill for collective use already existed.

Attribution : Nathalie Nanaud



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## The dry heath of Thauron (D)

You have here an example of a heather moor, a type of land that was, in the 19th century, predominant in the landscape of the Thaurion gorges. Today, it is a relic preserved and maintained for its biodiversity qualities. It consists mainly of Callune (one of the heather species) and Gorse.

Attribution : Nathalie Manaud

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## Evolution of the landscape (E)

It is difficult to imagine, in the middle of all this vegetation, that in the 19th century there was no forest. At that time, the demographic peak in the countryside led to the exploitation of the smallest parcel of land. Thus, the communal heath, where the villagers grazed their livestock in turn, stretched out in front of you as far as the eye could see. After the Second World War, the rural exodus that started at the beginning of the 20th century accelerated. The ensuing agricultural decline led to the gradual abandonment of the less fertile land and its natural afforestation.

Attribution : Joel Damase / PSC