The Ossau Valley

LEV 4

Le tour du Sanctus

Although relatively short in distance, this hike is classified as black (very difficult) because of its big elevation gain, over 1100m, which means some steep slopes! But it's worth the effort: a succession of high-altitude lakes, wild landscapes and an exceptional panorama of the high Pyrenean peaks from the 2482m-high Sanctus peak. A little adrenaline rush as a bonus: near the Uzious lake, there's a narrow and tricky passage along an old penstock that you cross with the help of a handrail.



D From the Cardet car park, at the foot of the signs, head south-east down the access road to the tennis courts.
Walk up the GR®10 into the forest (footbridge). Leaving the Bois de Saxe, the path overhangs the Valentin River to reach Coste de Goua (and its hut on the other bank). Stay on the right side of the river and follow the GR for a further 200m.

1h00 1 ***718502 E – 4757739 N*** Leave the GR®10 for a wide track slightly to the left. 200m further on, turn right onto the well-marked path up the Valentin valley. After crossing a scree slope and admiring a pretty waterfall, it's time to tackle the first penstock. It's essential to use the handrail (chain) to get over this obstacle and protect yourself from the void. The second penstock is, by contrast, a simple formality!

2h25 2 ***719047 E – 4756218 N*** Uzious, the first and largest lake. Follow it to the left to quickly reach its little brother, the Lavedan. The Col d'Uzious, at 2236m, is now close. An ideal place to stop and contemplate the magnificent panorama to the south...

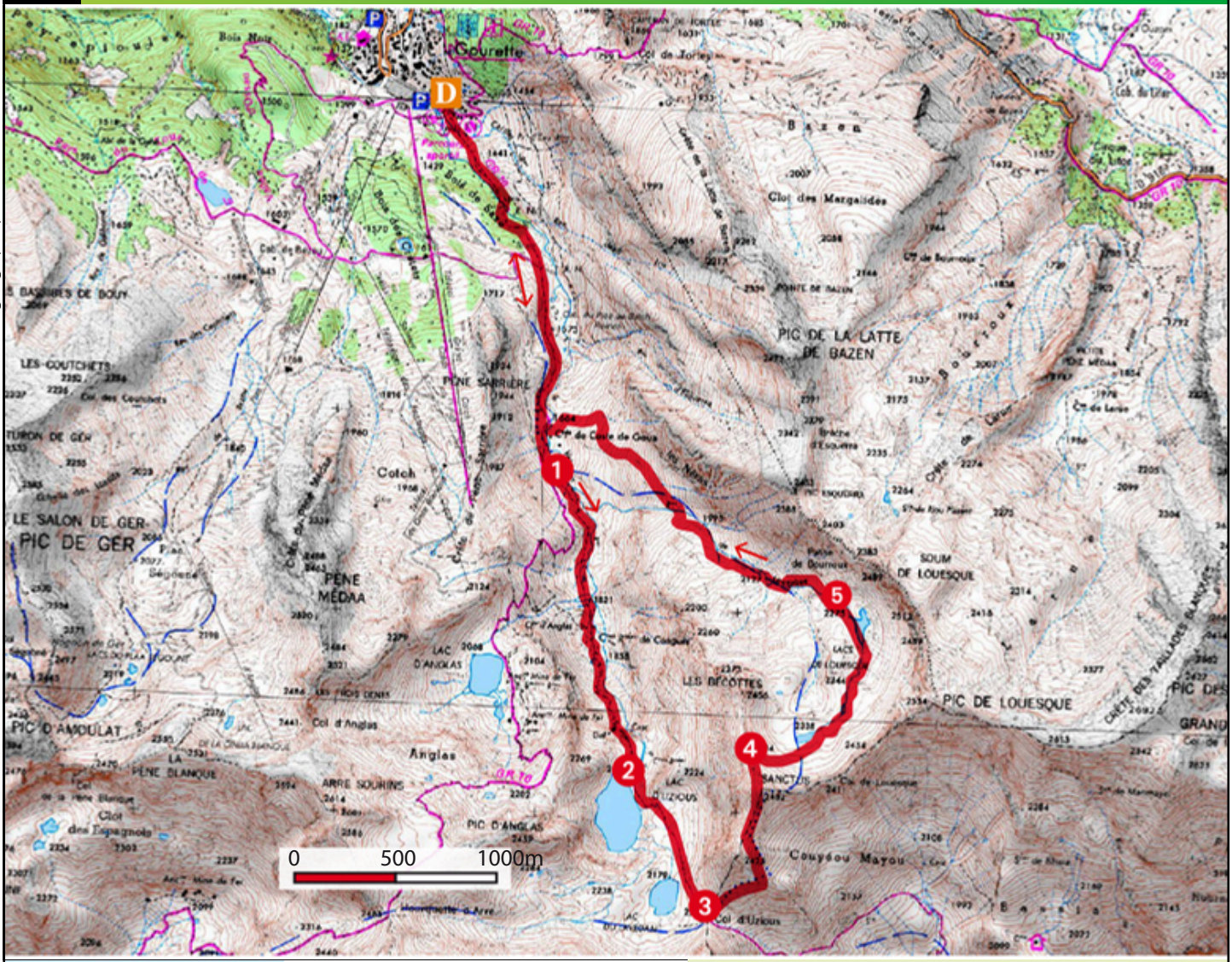
3h00 3 ***719481 E – 4755547 N*** ...and "recharge the batteries" before the final, difficult and brittle section to the summit. 250m of elevation gain to climb in 3 short sections: crossing a scree slope, winding up a steep slope and then, climbing the final ridge at a more reasonable percentage.

3h45 4 ***719700 E - 4756197 N*** After enjoying a 360° panoramic view from the summit of Sanctus, it's time to go to the first Louesque lake, clearly visible below. In a wild landscape, the path descends gently to reach the last lake, at the foot of an impressive cirque.

4h15 5 ***720102 E – 4757029 N*** Now it's time for the descent to the west, which is sometimes steep, but offers beautiful views of the peaks overlooking the Valentin valley or, further away, of the Moulle de Jaout massif. In the distance we can see the Coste de Goua hut, which we must reach this time before crossing the Valentin River on an improvised footbridge. We catch up with the path we took on the outward hike, which takes us back to the starting point.

LEV
4

Le tour du Sanctus



Extrait de Carte 1 :25 000 Institut géographique National

D Gourette,
Cardet car park

GPS *WGS 84 UTM 30T*
716891 –4759451

6h

11,6 km

1120 m

Don't miss:
- The succession of lakes
- The panorama from the summit of Sanctus
- The diversity of high-altitude flora

Note:
- Stay well hydrated (no shade) and be well equipped
- Be careful when climbing the penstock (danger, handrail)
- Respect the work of shepherds and avoid herds and their guardian dog

Yellow markers

Mountain lakes

This hike offers the chance to discover the lakes of Uzious, Lavedan and Louesque along the route, all perched at over 2,000 metres above sea level. Many of these small natural lakes dot the Ossau Valley, but to see three of these gems in a single walk is truly exceptional! All the more so as each lake offers a unique experience, depending on the season, through the interplay of colours, wind, shadows, and the surrounding mountains… Although it is rather rare, you might even find ice there in the middle of summer! A favourite spot for seasoned anglers, they are also a prime target for hunters… of images, captured by day… and by night.

Made by:
Communauté de Communes de la Vallée d'Ossau
1 avenue des Pyrénées – 64260 Arudy +33 (0)5 59 05 66 77

Information :
Ossau Valley Tourist Office, Pyrenees - Headquarters in Laruns - +33 (0)5 59 05 31 41
www.valleedossau.com

All outdoor sports activities are available on the Vallée d'Ossau Pyrénées mobile app...
and on the website ***terredaventures.valleedossau.com***

Choose your hike

For each route, you will find technical and practical information to help you choose your hike

Levels of difficulty

The hikes are classified by order of difficulty defined by a colour code following the recommendations of the French Hiking Federation:

NIV 1 — Very easy, less than 2 hours walking. Ideal for families, on well-marked tracks

NIV 2 — Easy, less than 3 hours walking. Suitable for families, on tracks with sometimes more difficult passages.

NIV 3 — Difficult, less than 4 hours walking. For hikers used to walking, with some quite intense sections or steep slopes.

NIV 4 — Very difficult, more than 4 hours of walking. For experienced and fit hikers. The itinerary can be long and technical (strong elevation gain, tricky passages).

GPS Coordinates

GPS *30T 710703O - 4776694N*

D **Start**

Walking time, given in hours. This estimated time takes into account the length of the hike, the elevation gain and the possible difficulties.

Elevation gain, expressed in metres. For each circuit, the value corresponds to the cumulative elevation gain.

Distance, the value expressed in kilometres corresponds to the total length of the route.

Markers

Direction	*Local routes and PR®*	*GRP®*	*GR®*
Right way			
Turn left			
Turn right			
Wrong way			



GR®, GRP® and PR® are registered trademarks of the French Hiking Federation. Some routes have been selected by the French Hiking Federation according to quality criteria. They are PR® certified.

Recommendations

Before you leave

Check your equipment, the difficulty of the circuit and the weather conditions
If you are going alone, communicate your itinerary to friends and family
See the map of controlled fires

In the mountains / pastoral areas

Follow the marked paths and close gates after passing through
Respect nature and bring waste back
If accompanied by a dog, make sure that it is allowed on the chosen route and keep it on a lead
During the hunting season, avoid hunting areas or turn back
Go around herds and do not approach farm dogs (do not feed them or pet them)

National Park

The heart of the National Park is a natural territory and is open to all, but is subject to a code of conduct. Dogs are not allowed, even on a lead. No fires, no mountain bikes, no wild camping, only bivouacs are allowed - a small tent can be set up for the night from 7 pm and taken down in the morning before 9 am. It must be set up more than an hour's walk from any motorised access.

European emergency call : 112

All outdoor sports activities are available on the Vallée d'Ossau Pyrénées mobile app...
and on the website ***terredaventures.valleedossau.com***