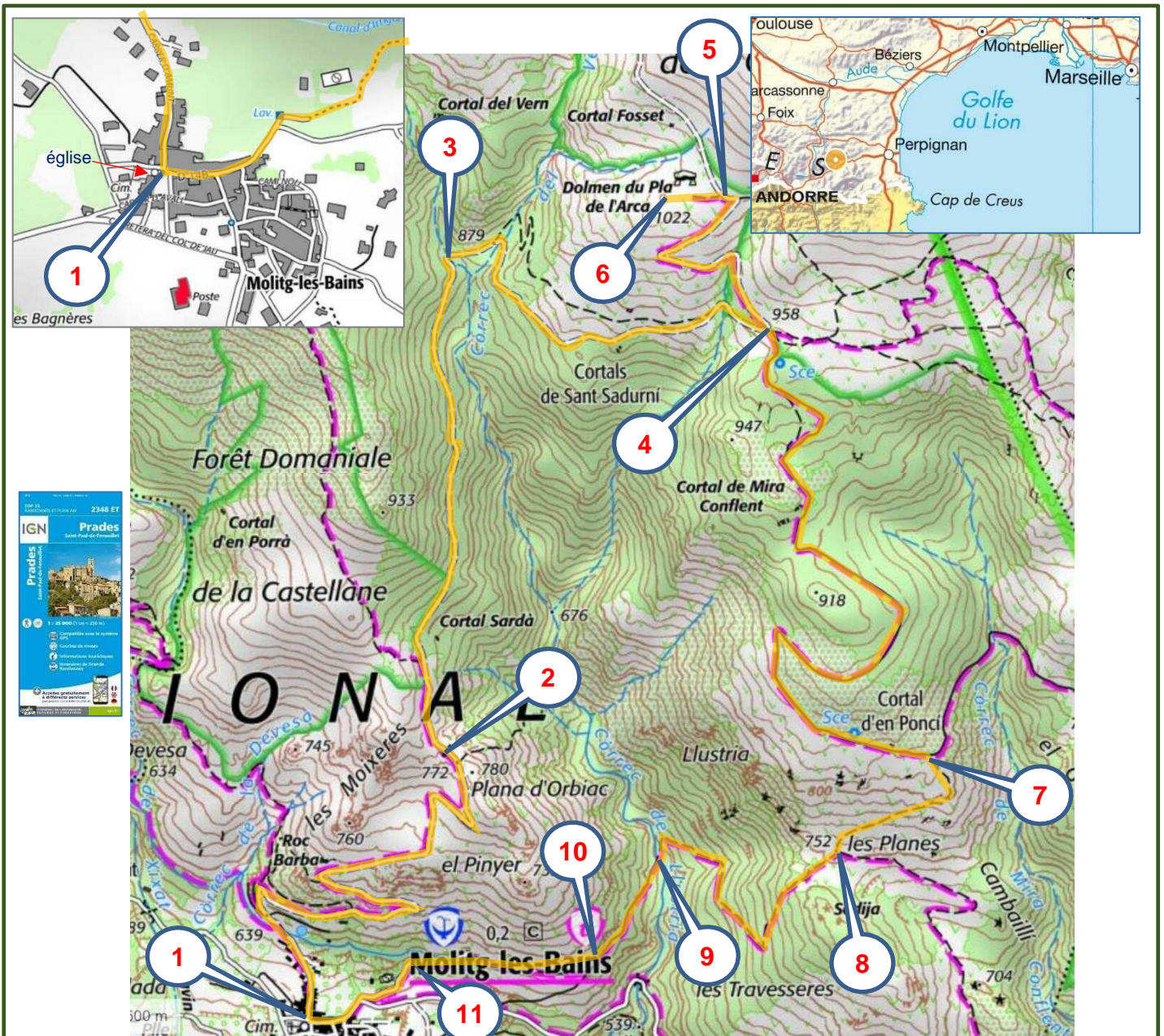


MOLITG-les-BAINS, PLA d'ARCA (dolmen), les PLANES

Pyrénées-Orientales, France

Duration and ascent: 4h00; 440m



Alan Mattingly

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This circuit starts and finishes in the charming village of Molitg, which lies a little way above the elegant spa of Molitg-les-Bains in the Castellane valley. The circuit affords a splendid half-day walk in the wild, mostly open country of the granite massif above the village. An impressive dolmen is reached at the highest point on the walk. Throughout the walk there are fabulous views across the surrounding valleys and towards the Canigou massif.

- 1 - START.** Facing the Saint-Marie church, in the upper part of Molitg village, we go to the right, up the *Carrer d'Amont*. This leads to a track which goes up steeply, away from the village. We keep to this track as it zig-zags uphill. We ignore minor tracks and paths which go off in either direction. There are marvellous views over the village, and across the Castellane valley towards the Canigou massif.
- 2 - Small col.** From here, our track makes a long traverse along the side of a valley, which descends to the right. We gain altitude all the time... After about a kilometre from the col, along this track, yellow waymarks indicate a path which goes down into a forest on the right. But we stay on the track.
- 3 - Track bend (to the right) and stream crossing.** We stay on the track. The waymarked path joins the track again. The track crosses a second stream. (In dry periods, water may hardly be flowing in these streams, or may not be flowing at all.) The track goes around the brow of a hill... The track crosses another stream bed, and it comes to:
- 4 - A junction of tracks and paths (point 958 on the map),** where our track bends sharply to the left and where there is a path signpost. We return to this point later, but now we turn to the left, and we stay on the track as it zig-zags uphill.
- 5 - Path-track junction,** just after a sharp bend to the left in the track. We go to the left, along the path. After a short distance, we arrive at the:
- 6 - Dolmen du Pla de l'Arca,** an impressive megalithic monument. It is situated at an altitude of over 1000 metres, on the highest point of this circuit.
From here, we retrace our steps, back to the track at point 5, then down to point 4.
- 4 - Junction of tracks and paths.** Here we leave the track and we go straight ahead. We pick up a grass track which contours to the right, around the brow of a hill. The track soon starts to wind downhill, sometimes in woodland, sometimes in the open... We go past an old cattle corral... Lower down, the track bends sharply to the left, with great views towards Prades and Canigou... Just after an old stone cabin on the left, and just before the track bends to the left, we arrive at a:
- 7 - Bifurcation.** We go to the right, along a signposted path which crosses grazing land.
- 8 - Path junction.** We go to the right. The path enters a forest. During the descent, the path turns sharply to the right... At the bottom of this long descent, the path approaches a rock pool in a stream. There, the path turns to the left and it goes alongside the stream for a short distance to a:
- 9 - Footbridge over the stream.** We cross the bridge. We follow the flagged path ahead, up a hillside. We meet a track and we continue straight ahead, along the track. We go through a gate.

10 - Track-path bifurcation. We go to the right, up the path. The path soon levels out, and we leave the forest. We can see Molitg village ahead, below on the left... The path descends towards the village.

11 - Lane, on the outskirts of Molitg village. We go straight ahead, along the lane. The lane goes past a washplace, and it takes us back into the village, where we return to the start of this circuit.

Photos: <https://www.wikiloc.com/hiking-trails/molitg-dolmen-pla-de-larca-les-planes-89461211>



Dolmen Pla de l'Arca

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