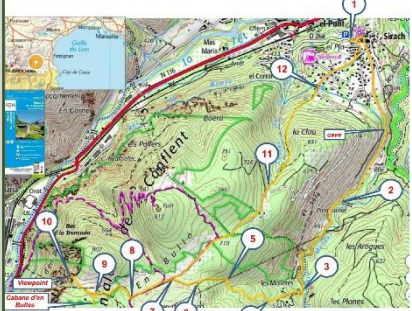


RIA-SIRACH - les MOLLERES - AMBULLAS (plateau)

Duration and ascent: 3h00;
330m

Photos: www.wikiloc.com



1 - START. From the entrance to Sirach, with the "Foyer" building on our right, we go into the old part of the village. The church is on our left. We bear to the right (*Rue d'Aragon*), and then right again (*Rue de la Grotte*).



We go straight ahead, along this street, which takes us out of the old village... The street becomes a track... We go past, on the right, an enclosed cave opening (a protected area occupied by bats)... The Bohère Canal descends from the right and runs alongside the track.

2 - Canal aqueduct, on the left. The canal goes under the track and crosses the valley on the left, on this fine monument. We continue straight ahead, along the track... At a track crossing, we continue straight ahead... We enter woodland. The valley narrows.

3 - Track bifurcation. We go to the right. The track zig-zags uphill... At a bifurcation, we go straight ahead. We pass, on the right, a disused transformer tower and a house ("Molleres"). The track becomes a path.



4 - The path crosses a former irrigation canal. The path then climbs through woodland for some distance... We eventually enter a semi-open area where the path climbs quite steeply. (About 200 metres to the left of the path here, buried in woodland with no obvious means of access, are a long-disused quarry and associated stone cabins. A manganese mineral was once extracted here.)

5 - Path-track junction, by a large electricity pylon. We go to the left, along the track.



6 - After crossing a wire barrier, we enter a semi-open area. We continue straight ahead. We join another track, and we continue to:

7 - A track junction, on an open plateau (Ambullas). We go to the left, along what is the main track across the plateau... At an intersection, we continue straight ahead (the path to the right goes down to Villefranche).



8 - Track junction. We go to the right (in 2022 there was a sign here to "Bergerie")... The track bears to the left... At an intersection, we go to the right, and we enter woodland.

9 - Track-path junction. We go to the left. After a short distance, we reach the *Cabane d'en Bullas* (the "bergerie"). In this superb, centuries-old, 9-metre long drystone cabin, shepherds used to house livestock, and make cheese from the animals' milk. We return to point 9.

9 - Track-path junction. We go to the left... The track becomes a path and other paths appear. We follow the most-used path. This path bears to the right, and it climbs steadily. We emerge into semi-open country.



10 - Viewpoint (with a safety fence) at the top of a cliff. From here there is a fabulous view down to Villefranche-de-Conflent and its nearby railway station, and up the Têt valley, with mountains on all sides. We retrace our steps back to point 7.

7 - Track junction. We continue straight ahead... Where another track goes to the left, we continue straight ahead. The track descends to:



11 - A sharp right bend in the track. We go straight ahead and we leave the track. We immediately turn right and we follow a path which descends a steep bank. We then follow the path to the left. The path enters woodland... We follow the path as it winds downhill... The path emerges from the woodland and it crosses an open hillside. Near the bottom of the hill, the path becomes a track.

12 - The Bohère Canal, on the edge of Sirach. We go straight ahead, along a road through Sirach (*Rue de Bellevue*)... We approach the village centre. Opposite a lamppost, we go down a street on the left (*Rue Saint-Jean*). This street winds to the right, then to the left, and it brings us back to the start of this circuit, opposite the *Foyer*.

