

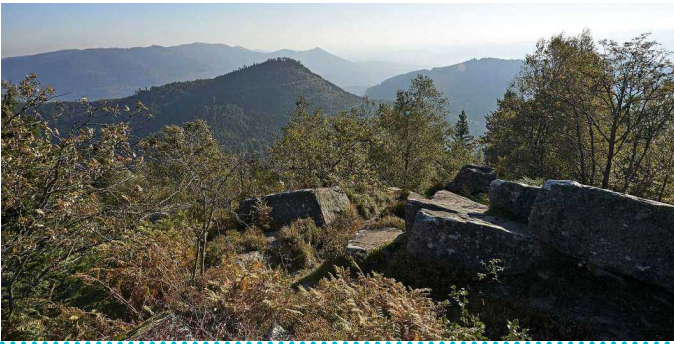
HIKING TRAIL D02: THE TWO DONONS



Sportive level



Start : Grandfontaine



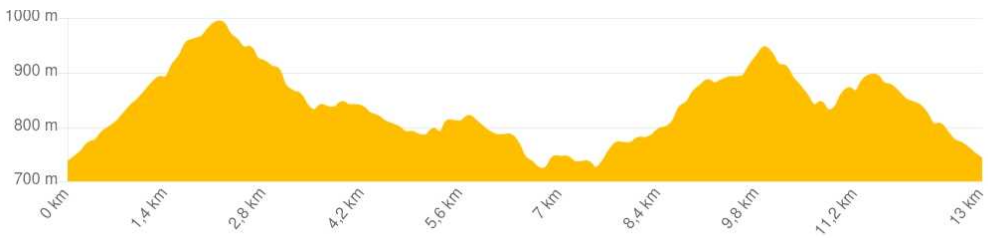
This is a mythical site packed with history and legend. A fabulous place where your body and soul can roam free. The Donon mountain range is a unique site packed with legends. Its key role between the Rhine plain and the Lorraine plateau has only grown since prehistoric times.

	13 km
	Half-day
	560 m

Upper Donon forest house
- Col du Donon

P Upper Donon forest house
- Col du Donon

10 Km - Schirmeck



USEFUL INFORMATION

N'oubliez pas d'emporter une carte !
IGN N° de la carte : 1/25 000 Bruche 25
N° carte Club Vosgien : Secteur carte : 1/25 000
3716 ET



GPX Track

CONTACT

Office de tourisme de la vallée de la Bruche
03 88 47 18 51 - rando-bruche.fr







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STEPS



1 Towards the Donon temple (alt. 1009 m - viewpoint)

From the forest house car park, cross the road and take the "Chemin du Haut Donon" opposite. Follow the GR5 trail markings  / Sentier du Donon  for 1.6 km. The trail  /  then follows some sandstone steps called the "Escalier de l'Empereur" and arrives at the Donon platform (archaeological remains). Continue for 500 m, following the same markings, to reach the temple du Donon. *① This summit has been sacred at least since the Iron Age. It was a place of worship of Toutatis for the Celts and of Mercury for the Romans. Many vestiges point to its character as a fortress and a place of worship. The rock at the summit is crowned by a Greek-style temple built in 1869.*

2 To the pass between the two Donons




Continue following the markings  -  to go down the other slope of the Great Donon ( narrow and rocky path). After 1 km, you come to the Col "Entre-les-Deux Donon". *① At the start of the descent, engraved on a stone to your right beside the path, is an inscription marking the spot where Victor Hugo was conceived. Myth or reality?... A little further on, to the right, below a sheer rock, you can see a shelter dating from the Great War, filled with many inscriptions and even a game of hopscotch engraved on a bench by the soldiers posted here. At the pass between the two Donon mountains is a shelter/picnic area, as well as a monument commemorating the field artillery men who fought here.*

3 Towards the Col de l'Engin



After the Col Entre-les-Deux-Donons, take the path opposite, marked  -  for 1.5 km, towards Col de l'Engin (you come to the road).

① At the Col de l'Engin is an example of a First World War shelter built under the road. When the Great War broke out in 1914, the Donon summits had been part of the Reich since 1870. France claimed the Alsace-Moselle regions. The Donon mountains feature many military structures built during the war. You can explore the fortifications by following the trails recommended by the Bruche Valley Tourist Office on rando-bruche.fr.





4 Towards the German military cemetery

Cross the road ( be careful!) and walk along it to the right for 150 m. When you come to a path on the left, turn onto it and then straight away follow the path to the right marked  -  for 500 m to get to the German military cemetery.







5 Back to the Col de l'Engin

Retrace your steps as far as the Col de l'Engin and cross the road again. From the parking area, go straight head along the Petit Donon forest road (barrier). 10 m after the barrier, turn left onto the unmarked path going down steeply. Continue for 400 m and you will come to a path marked  - . *① The Donon forests are dedicated to protecting certain animals: the wood grouse, hazel grouse, woodpeckers, typical shrikes, peregrine falcons, lynxes, wildcats, bats, amphibians, reptiles and insects, plus a wide range of plants: bracken and plants growing in peat, rocks or scree. Part of the mountain range is listed as a "Natura 2000" site (zones for preserving outstanding natural habitats).*








6 Below the Petit Donon

Follow the path marked  -  to the right for 1 km ( after 500 m, there is a zigzag towards the left, watch out for the markings). 100 m after crossing a forest road, turn right (sharp bend) onto the path marked  (watch out, the trail soon turns to the left, keep an eye on the markings). *① On 20 August 1914, 15,000 German soldiers launched an attack on the Petit Donon by the steepest slopes to guarantee a surprise effect. German artillery fire began at 11.20 am and lasted for 8 hours. The 1,600 French soldiers stationed on the two Donons and in the pass were overwhelmed and gradually fell back. Several hundred French and German soldiers were killed here in 24 hours.*

7 At the summit of the Petit Donon (alt. 981 m - viewpoint)

After 600 m, at the end of the path, turn right onto the forest road, then turn again at once to the right onto the path marked  - . After a 800 m climb, the trail turns left (markings  -  - ), then, 200 m further on, at the crossroads, you go up to the left following the single markings  to the summit of the Petit Donon. *① In 1916, the German authorities built a cemetery for all the soldiers who died here, engraving their nationalities and regiments (180 are engraved in all). The summit of the Petit Donon has the main German memorial. On the same summit, on the western side, a commemorative plaque for French soldiers was placed here more recently.*

8 Back to the Col du Donon

Retrace your steps as far as the crossroads and turn left onto the path marked  -  - . After about 400 m, turn right onto the path with double markings  -  -  and go as far as the Col "Entre-Les-Deux-Donons". Lastly, follow the path marked  for 2 km to return to the starting point, the Forest House at the Col du Donon.

🍷 Restaurants at the Col du Donon: Restaurant Le Velleda (tel. 03 88 97 20 32 - 4 Col du Donon): varied menu, refined and traditional local cuisine made from fresh, high-quality ingredients. - Pizzeria du Donon (tel. 03 88 97 20 69 - 15 Col du Donon): snacks with a selection of home-made dishes.

