

CYCLING CIRCUIT D01: TOWARDS THE DONON



Easy level



Start : Schirmeck



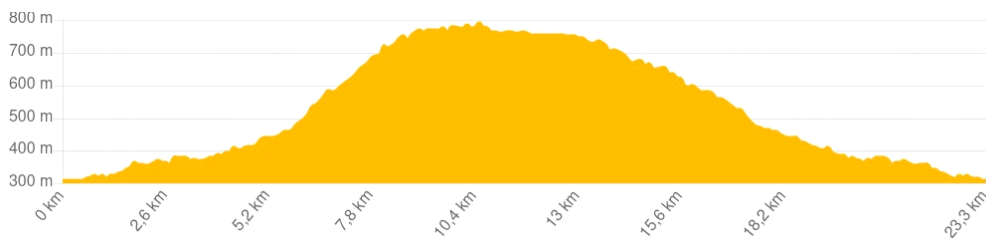
Climb one of the Bruche valley's legendary passes, the Col du Donon. This is a site as rich in history as it is in legend. A magnificent place to let your body and mind wander. The Donon massif is a unique site, steeped in mystery, whose role as a hinge between the Rhine plain and the Lorraine plateau has been asserting itself ever since prehistoric times.

		22 km
		3h
		546 m
		> >

Bruche Valley Tourist Office

Parking Place du marché

0,5 Km - Schirmeck - La Broque



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

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STEPS

1 From Schirmeck to La Broque



With your back to the Tourist Office, cross Grand'Rue and go up Avenue de la Gare opposite. At the end of the avenue, in front of the station, turn left. Continue for 300 m. At the intersection with the D 392, turn right towards **COL DU DONON - GRANDFONTAINE >**. You go over the railway line. Then take the third on the left, "Rue de la Roche" (opposite the restaurant, Le Romain), marked **X**.

i Schirmeck - La Broque

Schirmeck Castle dates from the 13th century. It was destroyed by Swedish soldiers during the Thirty Years War in 1633. It is possible to visit the ruins on the hills of Saint-Georges church. Work has been done on the ruins, and they are now known as the "Castle Tower". From here, you have a clear view over the town. Before the French Revolution, the site was the crossroads between three independent territories. The County of Salm (La Broque), the lands of the Archbishop of Strasbourg (Schirmeck) and the Ban de la Roche (Rothau). In La Broque, after crossing the railway line, you will see a Protestant Gothic church on the right, dating from 1900. It was built when German Lutheran civil servants arrived here after the annexation of

2 From La Broque to Grandfontaine **X**



For this stage, follow the markings **X**. Continue straight ahead on Rue de la Roche then along a forest path. Continue for 2.5 km and go through the hamlet of Vacquenoux. You then continue along a forest path for 1.5 km. Once back on the tarmac road, go straight ahead through Grandfontaine and at the crossroads turn left when you see a fountain.

i Framont and the Grandfontaine mines

Although the first mines date back to an earlier period, Grandfontaine was an important mining centre from the 17th century to the 19th century. It was famous for its iron production. From these activities, only the old ironmaster's building still remains in the lower village of Grandfontaine, beside a stream called "Le Framont". The name may come from the Latin "ferratis mons" (iron mountain)

🍷 Brasserie de Framont (tel. 06 63 07 64 94, 1 Rue du Haut Fourneau, Grandfontaine): a brewery producing beers with French malts, Alsatian hops and mountain spring water.

3 Les Minières ✕

Continue along Rue des Minière marked ✕ . Keep to the left for 1.5 km (no longer following the markings ✕). Little by little you move away from the houses, and the tarmac road becomes a forest path. After 200 m, at the crossroads, turn left at the bend and continue your climb for 500 m. At the next crossroads, turn right in the bend onto the Tête Mathis forest path. After 1.5 km you will arrive at the meeting point of the forest roads, "Etoile II".

i Geology of Grandfontaine

The Grandfontaine valley is made up of marine volcanic rocks, 370 million years old and covered by thick sedimentary layers that have given rise to red sandstone, among others. The formation was strongly disturbed by tectonic activity and then eroded. The rocks you are walking over today are the deep roots of the old Hercynian mountains. The Grandfontaine soil is rich in iron, which explains the numerous mines winding their way into the mountains, and which are now forgotten or closed off for obvious reasons of safety. Some mines were named after colours: red, yellow, grey, black... perhaps due to the different crystals that were found there.

4 To the Col du Donon +



Continue along the Prayé forest road to your right. After 1.7 km, you will come to the "Etoile 1" crossroads. Continue straight ahead along the tarmac road marked + . After 1.8 km, you arrive at the D 392. Continue straight ahead along this road as far as Le Velleda hotel restaurant, 500 m further on.

i Le Donon, bunker mountain

From 1870 to 1918, the Donon mountain range was the border between France and Germany. During the First World War the site played a major defensive role for the Germans. The Donon range was fortified with bunkers throughout the war. But the biggest Battle of Donon took place at the beginning of the war, on 19 and 20 August 1914. During the battle, the French positions at the Petit and the Great Donon were attacked by the Germans, forcing the French to retreat to Lorraine at the cost of some 2,000 soldiers on both sides. 500 m after the Etoile I crossroads, just after the shelter on your right, the path marked ● leads to the remains of a few military structures a short distance away.

5 Col du Donon



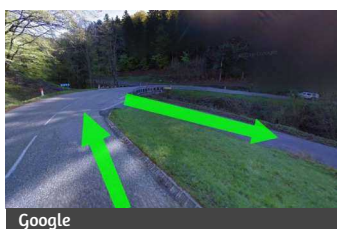
From the hotel-restaurant Le Velleda, continue along the D 392 to the right, towards **STRASBOURG - SCHIRMECK >**.

📍 - Restaurant "Velleda" (tel. 03 88 97 20 32): traditional, authentic and refined French dishes made with fresh, high-quality ingredients.
- Pizzeria du Donon (tel. 03 88 97 20 69): snacks, high-quality ingredients.

i Sights to see at the Col du Donon

On the D 392, off the road to your right, is the Donon military cemetery, dating from 1920. A little further on, also on the right, is a viewpoint indicator and the reproduction of a column with a capital above it featuring four figures, apparently representing the four seasons. At the top of the column is an equestrian statue with the god Jupiter defeating a giant with a snake's tail, the Anguiped, symbolising the evils arising from the earth. For your next hike, explore the themed trail "Donon, sacred mountain" taking you to the Great Donon temple and a 360° view over the surrounding areas (more details at the end of this document).

6 Back towards Grandfontaine



After 3 km of steep descent (**⚠ be careful!**), at the second hairpin bend on the right, take the little road going down to the right in the bend. Continue straight ahead for 1 km, keeping to the left all the way to Grandfontaine. You will come to the crossroads with the fountain that you passed on the way out. Go down Rue Principale to the left. From this point onwards, you will be retracing your steps.

i The Donon forest

The Donon range has an exceptional forest. the Donon-Schneeberg sites are mainly forest areas on crests and slopes. They are dedicated to certain bird species - wood grouse, hazel grouse, woodpeckers, typical shrikes and peregrine falcons - as well as other species, such as lynxes, wild cats, bats, amphibians, reptiles and insects. There is also a wide range of protected plants: ferns, plants growing in peat, rocks or scree. Part of the mountain range is listed as a "Natura 2000" site. This is the European programme defining areas for the preservation of outstanding natural habitats.

7 Back towards La Broque ❌



In this stage, follow the markings ❌. Go straight ahead through Grandfontaine. Take the forest road to the left of the Framont brasserie restaurant. Continue down for 1.5 km. Go through the hamlet of Vacquenoux and then rejoin the forest path for 2.5 km. You then return to Rue de la Roche, and continue to the intersection with the D 392.

🍴 Restaurants in La Broque

- *Pizzeria Le Romain (tel. 03 88 97 99 68, 26 Route du Donon): a varied menu, traditional pizzas and flammekueche, 100% made on the premises*
- *Restaurant Le Sabayon (tel. 03 88 50 58 35, 4 Rue de la Gare): meat grilled over a wood fire, carefully selected, high-quality ingredients*
- *Restaurant La Schlitte (tel. 03 88 97 06 07, 26 Rue de Frécorupt): generous dishes on the menu, market-fresh suggestions, varied starter buffet, all the year round with flammekueche on the last weekend of the month*

8 Back to Schirmeck




Turn right onto the D 392. Continue along the road for 650 m (you go over the railway line). At the crossroads, go straight ahead towards **STRASBOURG >**. Follow the main road, you pass the River Bruche and after 500 m, you will be back at your starting point with the tourist office on your right.

📍 Specialities & restaurants in Schirmeck

- *Weekly market in Schirmeck: Place du Marché, every Wednesday morning*
- *Petit Organic Store, organic products, some local (140 Grand Rue)*
- *DK Patisserie and Tea Room (129 Avenue de la Gare)*
- *Coffittivallee Tea Room (165 Grand Rue)*
- *Pizzeria Le Castello (tel. 03 88 97 01 02, 87 Rue de l'Eglise)*
- *Restaurant de la Bruche (tel. 03 88 97 04 21, 142 Grand Rue)*
- *Restaurant La Taverne de la Perle (tel. 03 88 19 92 20, 131 Grand Rue)*
- *You can also find a selection of regional products at the Tourist Office*

▼ Visit to Donon temple

From the Velleda hotel-restaurant you can go to visit the temple at the summit of the Grand Donon along the Donon archaeological and historic footpath. The round trip is 4.5 km (2 hrs 30 mins - 270m elevation gain), marked . A themed booklet describing the trail is available from the Tourist Office or on bit.ly/brochuresOTVB.

