

## LAMASTRE - LE COL DE MONTREYNAUD

*A great walk through the woods and over the airy uplands around Lamastre, offering stunning views of the highest peaks in the region.*

Walking time: 5½ hrs  
Distance: 15,7 km / 9.8 miles  
Overall altitude difference: 587m / 1,923ft

**Lamastre** 370 m / 1,200 ft

Jacquamet 700m  
Saint Basile 5,1km

Starting from the fountain, cross the road and take the steps up between the butcher and the café. Cross the next street and take the lane opposite as far as an intersection. Turn left and immediately right onto a path. From here you have a good overall view of Lamastre.

**Peychelard** 410m / 1,345ft

Jacquamet 700m  
Saint Basile 5,1km

*The path takes you past the ruins of the chateau of Peychelard, the earliest residence of the lords of Lamastre. Built in the 10<sup>th</sup> C, very little remains today, as the ruins were used for generations as a quarry for building material for the houses in the lower town. It is common to see a finely carved lintel stone or mullions re-used in later domestic dwellings.*

Follow the path through the woods and up through the meadow to reach the hamlet of JACQUAMET.

St Basile 4 km

**Jacquamet** 504m / 1,654ft

Follow the main path which leads into the woods.

*As you climb, the chateau of Urbilhac comes into view on the far side of the Condoie valley. Dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> C, the chateau was energetically restored in uncompromising 19<sup>th</sup> C style. This was the first country house hotel to open in the region, and was an extremely fashionable rendezvous in the 1980's. It has recently been re-launched, offering luxury bed and breakfast accommodation.*

Col de Montreynaud 5,2km  
St Apollinaire de Rias 8,8km

**La Trappe du Loup** 586m / 1,923ft

Follow the track which will take you through a cherry orchard.

*You will be able to see the rounded peak of Mont Gerbier du Jonc rising among the mountains. It is here that the Loire, the longest river in France, rises at an altitude of 1 551m or 5,088ft*

**Pelison** 605m / 1,985ft

Col de Montreynaud 4,6km  
St Apollinaire de Rias 8,2km

Follow the lane as far as the hamlet of LA GRANGE.

**La Grange** 610m / 2,001ft

Col de Montreynaud 4,4km  
St Apollinaire de Rias 8 km

Turn left onto the main road, walking downhill, then take the first lane to the right. After about 500m/550 yds turn off the lane to the right and take the path which leads through the

chestnut plantations to the hamlet of RISSOAN. Walk through the hamlet and continue to LES SAUGES.

*Look out for a beautiful piece of craftsmanship in one of the garden walls along the right of the lane, where jutting stones have been placed to make a step ladder up into the garden.*

After passing through the hamlet, take the path to the left which drops down into the valley of the Condoie. A little footbridge crosses the stream - a good place to make a break before the climb up to VAGELAS. Keep to the path leading up to the COL DU MONTREYNAUD and when you reach the main road turn right and continue uphill.

**Col du Montreynaud** 757m / 2,500ft

St Barthélemy 5 km

Following the red and yellow markers, take the stony track to the left and walk uphill to the hamlet of MONTREYNAUD.

**Montreynaud** 800m / 2,625ft

St Barthélemy 4,5km

*Looking west from the sign, you have a splendid view of the Mont Mézenc with its distinctive squared-off outline. This is the tallest peak in the Ardèche, (1 753m / 5,751ft).*

Bear left onto the tarred lane and pass above the hamlet.

**Chomasse** 830m / 2,723ft

St Barthélemy 4,1km

*You have reached the highest point of your walk!*

Turn left, following once again the yellow and white markers, and take the path which leads out of the wood and skirts a cultivated field.

*From here, on a clear day, you have a spectacular view of the Mont Blanc rising to 4807m or 15,771ft.*

The path then drops down steeply through woodland and joins a tarred lane at HIERES. Turn left and then immediately right.

**La Rouveurette** 710m / 2,329ft

Lamastre 5,8km

Take the path to the left leading into the woods above the lane. At the fork bear left onto the upper track and keep on it until you join the tarred lane. Turn left and continue to a T junction. Here you turn left and almost immediately right onto a grassy track. Follow this into the woods and continue downhill to

**Le Buisson** 550m / 1,804ft

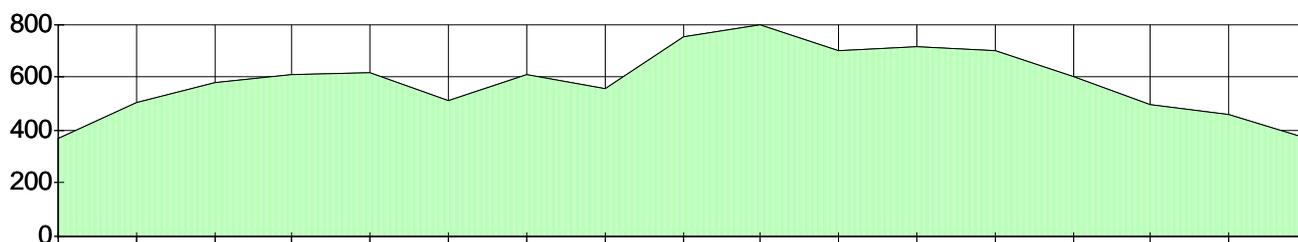
Lamastre 2,4km

Continue walking down through the woods.

**La Chirouse** 475m / 1,558ft

Lamastre 1,7km

When you reach the tarred road turn left and continue downhill into Macheville. Walk past the restaurant "Chez Germaine" and take the steps down to the left which lead you to the Parc Seignobos. Walk through the gardens, turn left across the bridge over the Condoie and back to the main square of Lamastre.



Altitude per km

### Lamastre and Macheville.

Originally two separate towns, Macheville was the older and more important and still today has a more picturesque charm, with its little houses clustered around the church, narrow crooked lanes and the ruins of the chateau of Psychelard looming above. From this fortress, ideally situated on a rocky outcrop dominating the Condoie valley, the lords of Lamastre held sway until the 15<sup>th</sup> C. Frequent attacks from the neighbouring castle of Retourtour were repulsed from the central tower, the "magistra" which, according to some, gave Lamastre its name.

In more modern times, Lamastre flourished thanks to its fortunate situation at the confluence of four rivers (the Doux, the Condoie the Grozon and the Sumène) and at the crossing point of important routes linking Valence with le Puy and Annonay with Nîmes. In a region of such difficult terrain, connections to major trade arteries were vital, and Lamastre received a further boost in the late 19<sup>th</sup> C with the arrival of the Tournon-Lamastre railway.

An energetic programme of agrarian reform following the French Revolution, combined with industrial development, led to a huge increase in the population and expansion of the town and its hinterland. Water power from the rivers was harnessed to drive mills, silk production was encouraged and Lamastre also became a centre for furniture production. Traditional agricultural needs were well served, with the weekly market and important cattle and pig fairs drawing in farmers from all the surrounding areas.

Today the town relies heavily on tourism and has made a big effort to attract "green" initiatives. There are still two small factories, producing shoes and camping equipment and a multitude of artisans and local craftsmen.



EMERGENCY NUMBERS:	LES SARZIERS	04 75 06 72 05
	MOBILES	0666 22 35 81    0674 02 36 30