

L'ARGENTIÈRE-LA BESSÉE

HAUTES ALPES

20
TERRE
DE JEUX
24

PREPARATION FOR OLYMPIC GAMES

CANOË KAYAK

SPOT GUIDE



PAYS DES ÉCRINS

The **Barre des Écrins**, at an altitude of 4102 m, is the highest peak in the Hautes-Alpes. Local history is awash with the feats of pioneering mountaineers. **Vallouise** and **Ailefroide** are mountain hot spots, France's second mountaineering site after Chamonix. A spectacular environment that naturally led to the creation of the Écrins National Park, France's largest National Park, in 1973.

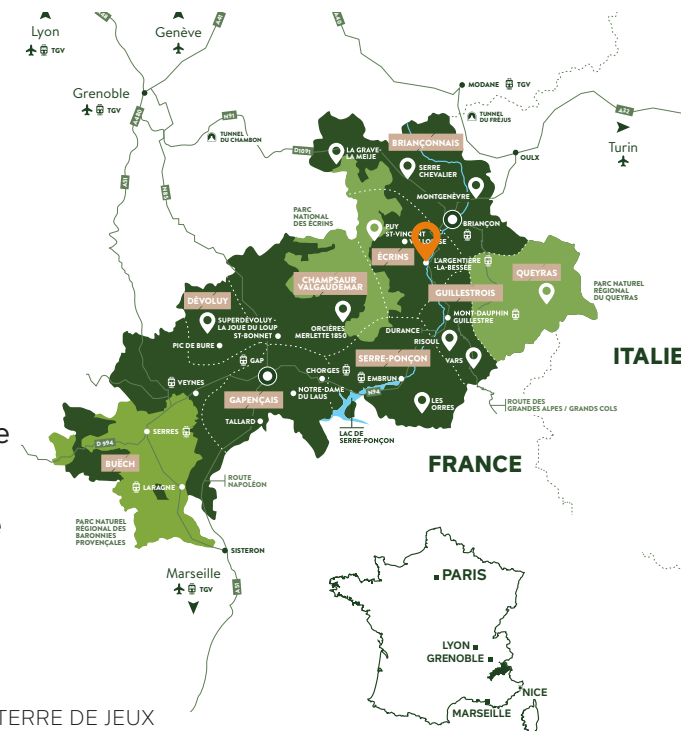
If the summits have earned the area its reputation, the Pays des Écrins also has two resorts. **Puy Saint-Vincent**, surrounded by the high peaks, and **Pelvoux-Vallouise**, made up of a succession of hamlets.

When the snow melts, white water takes the lead on the Durance River in **L'Argentière-La Bessée**. A fabulous conversion for a town with an industrial and mining history that you can learn about by visiting the Fournel silver mines, Les Claux hydroelectric museum and the high valley villages.

ACCESS

By plane
Marseille Provence Airport (240 km)

By train
Direct lines between Marseille and L'Argentière-La Bessée or TGV to Aix-en-Provence (230 km) + bus shuttle





SETTING

ALTITUDE TRAINING

The benefits that altitude has on health are well known. Besides the white-water stadium in L'Argentière-La Bessée, the Pays des Écrins offers many nearby

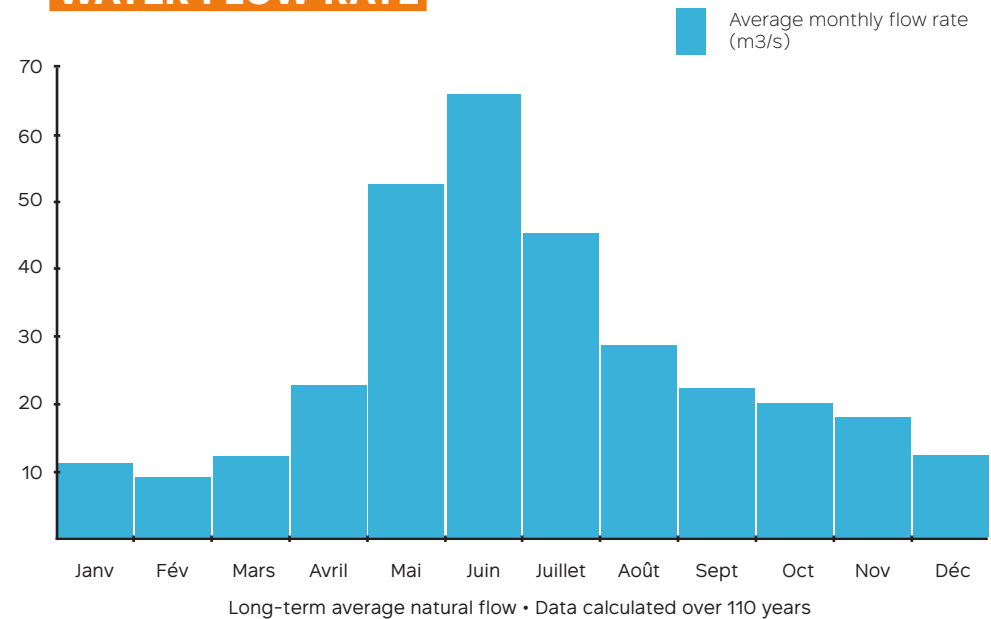
rivers for various descents with a natural flow.

ACTIVITIES

- Hiking
- Mountain biking, cycling
- Climbing, mountaineering
- White-water activities
- Recreational aviation
- Culture and heritage



WATER FLOW RATE







THE SPOT

As part of its restructuring, following the closure of the industrial site, the town of L'Argentière-La Bessée turned to sports tourism with the main objective of highlighting the natural elements: water, ice, rock.

L'Argentière, at the start of the longest navigable section of the Durance River (35 km without disembarking), is one of Europe's largest natural white-water centres.

CHARACTERISTICS

- Artificial layout in the Durance riverbed
- Length: 400 m
- Drop of 4 m or a 1% slope
- Usable flow rate between 15 and 80m³
- 50 permanently mounted slalom gates
- Versatile thanks to the width of the bed, the layout of the obstacles, and movement of the water
- High scope of use depending on the flow, from beginners to high-level training, from department-level competition to national and international championships
- **NEW IN 2023** : kayak cross start tramp



A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE



MICHEL BAUDRY

[THE STADIUM BEARS HIS NAME!]

« The slalom stadium in L'Argentière-La Bessée has a natural layout on one of the most beautiful rivers in France, the Durance.

Since its creation in 1993, I've made sure that it is in good condition and that the stadium and its annexes are constantly improved for further efficiency and performance.

The Durance River and its tributaries provide an exceptional playground among the mountains and under the

beautiful Hautes-Alpes sun. We strive to maintain them and manage them correctly.

It would therefore be delighted to welcome you to this wonderful area, on this perfectly equipped slalom stadium where there is always water.

The access is free and unrestricted, with a natural flow, no pumps, no energy expenditure! You can also borrow kayakers for cross-country kayaking. »

LE MOT DU CHAMPION



FRANK ADISSON

[OLYMPIC CHAMPION IN ATLANTA IN 1996, 3 OLYMPIC PARTICIPATIONS, FIVE-TIME WORLD CHAMPION, PRESIDENT OF THE KAYAK CLUB IN L'ARGENTIÈRE-LA BESSÉE]

« At the end of my sporting career, I settled in L'Argentière-La Bessée, one of the most beautiful natural competition stadiums that I have competed on in the whole world. As we are in a mountain setting, we have the particularity of being able to navigate from April to November.

But over this period, what training conditions: Plenty of water in spring for the thrills and to gain confidence in rushing white water, less water in summer to work on refining preparations for the most demanding competitions.

The stadium hosted the European Championship in 2006 and the World Cup in 2011.

The often-favourable weather means the site is appreciated and used to organise quality training sessions. The stadium boasts many gates and is well maintained. We are always available to welcome those who come to train here, occasionally offering a few coaching sessions.»

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