

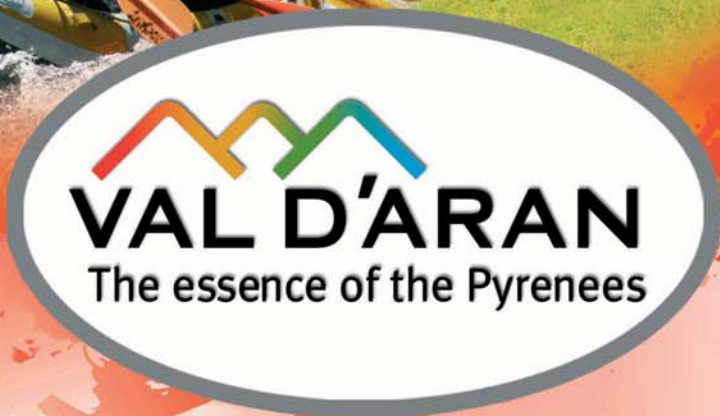
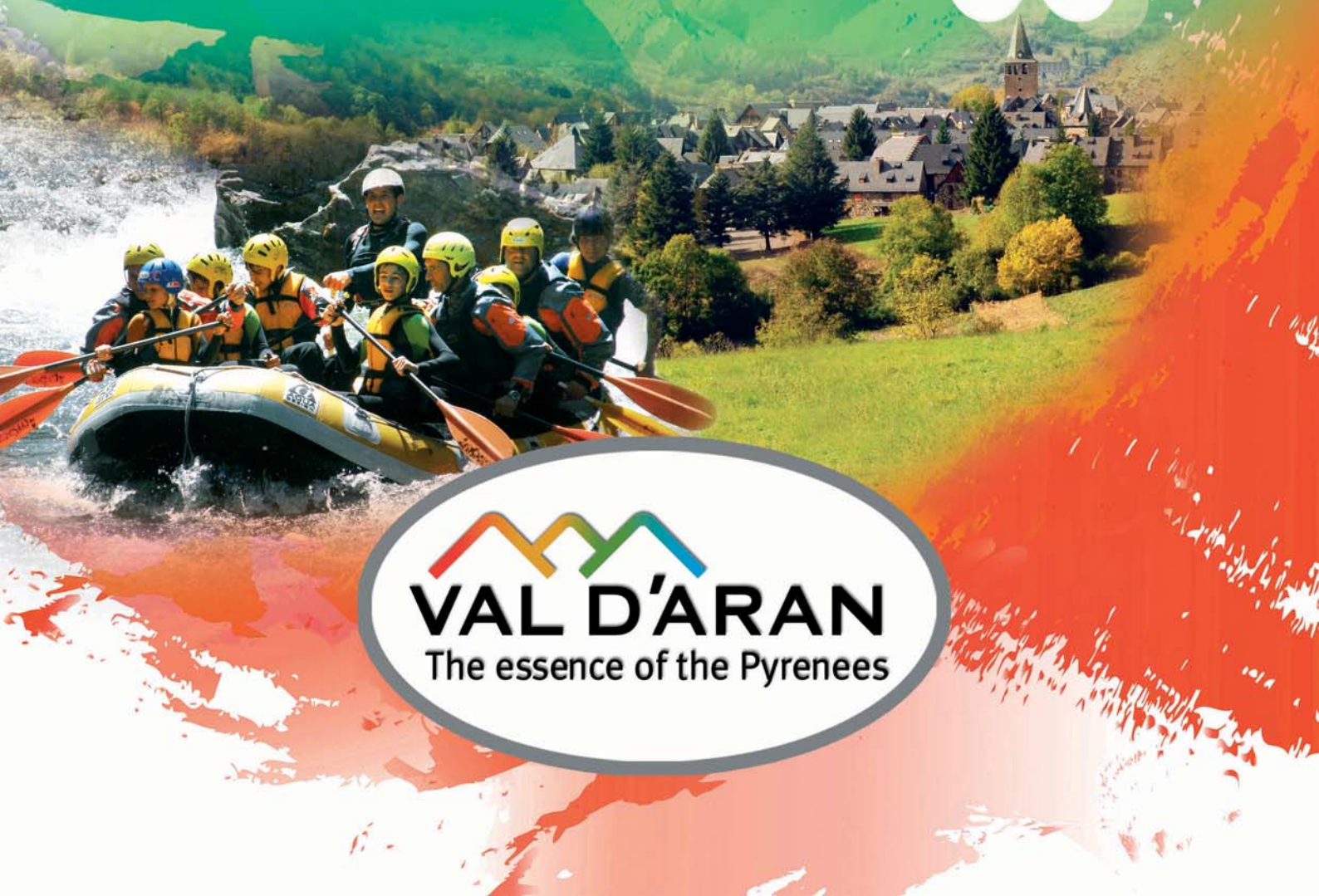


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# Press kit

2018

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**VAL D'ARAN**  
The essence of the Pyrenees

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## WELCOME TO VAL D'ARAN



Did you know that 4 of the entrances into the Aigüestortes i Estany De Sant Maurici National Park, the only national park of Catalonia, are in the Val d'Aran? Did you know that Baqueira Beret, the best ski resort in the Pyrenees, is located in the Val d'Aran?

The Val d'Aran is a small territory of high mountains with a surface area of 633 sq km, which is located in the north-west of Catalonia in the center of the Pyrenees.

The privileged location of this valley makes it unique in Spain given that it faces north towards the Atlantic. In winter, its isolation, the quality of its snow and its touristic options make the Val d'Aran one of the most popular destinations of the Pyrenees.

The Val d'Aran has many magical places just waiting to be discovered in all seasons. It has a strong and unique identity: "the Aranese" culture and language, Occitan cuisine, ancient traditions and numerous gastronomic specialties such as the Nacarii caviar.

There are many people who are familiar with the Val d'Aran and who are regular visitors: outdoors enthusiasts and mountain lovers who come to relax and enjoy nature and the heritage, culture and gastronomy of Aran.

Sports, leisure, wellness, gastronomy, shopping, heritage and culture in an exquisite natural environment along with diversified, high quality and modern touristic facilities, all in a warm and festive atmosphere make the Val d'Aran one of the most prestigious holiday destinations! Memorable moments are waiting for you here!



### Technical Information

- Inhabitants:** 10.295 inhabitants
- Villages:** 33
- Capital:** Vielha (980 m of altitud)
- Surface:** 633,46 sq km (30% of its territory is located at over 2.000 m altitude)
- Highest altitude:** 3.10 m Molières Peak.
- Official languages:** Aranese, Catalan and Spanish
- Tourist beds:** More than 14.000.



## How to reach Val d'Aran

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### BY ROAD

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#### 4 Access:

- From Spain: Túnel de Vielha N-230.  
Puerto de la Bonaigua C-28.
- From France: Puente de Rey N-230.  
Puerto de Portilhon N-141.

#### From the Spanish provincial capitals:

- Barcelona – 313 km Highway A-2 Balaguer; C-53 (C233) – Alfarràs; N-230 - Túnel de Vielha.
- Girona – 387 km Eix transversal C-55. Highway A-2 Balaguer; C-53 (C233) – Alfarràs; N-230 - Túnel de Vielha.
- Tarragona - 270 km N-340A. T-11. N-241. Highway A-27. N-240. Highway AP-2. N-230/C-13 cross Lleida direction N-230 Alfarràs - Túnel de Vielha.
- La Seu d'Urgell – 124 km N-260. C-13. C-28 – Port de la Bonaigua (crossing the village of Sort)
- Madrid – 571 km Highway A-2. Highway AP-2. Highway A-2 Balaguer; C-53 (C233) – Alfarràs; N-230 - Túnel de Vielha.
- San Sebastián – 307 km GI-40. GI-20. Highways AP-8, A-63 y A-64 Montréjeau. D-825. D-33. N-125 Saint Beat. N-230 – Puente de Rey.
- Bilbao – 404 km Highway A-8. Highways AP-8, A-63 y A-64 Montréjeau. D-825. D-33. N-125 Saint Beat. N-230 – Puente de Rey.

#### From the French capitals:

- Toulouse – 162 km Highway A-620/E-80. Highway A-64 Montréjeau. D-825. D-33. N-125 Saint Beat. N-230 – Puente de Rey.
- Bordeaux – 361 km Highways A-631, A-630, A-62, A-65 y A-64 Montréjeau. D-825. D-33. N-125 Saint Beat. N-230 – Puente de Rey.
- Bayonne – 257 km D-52. D-1. Highway A-64 Montréjeau. D-825. D-33. N-125 Saint Beat. N-230 – Puente de Rey.
- Montpellier – 398 km Highways A-9, A-61, A-620 y A-64 Montréjeau. D-825. D-33. N-125 Saint Beat. N-230 – Puente de Rey.
- París – 835 km Highways A-6A, A-6B, A-10, A-71, A-20, A-62 y A-64 Montréjeau. D-825. D-33. N-125 Saint Beat. N-230 – Puente de Rey.

### BY BUS

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- Barcelona Station Barcelona North / Lleida Bus Station – Vielha.  
Transport Company ALSA [www.alsa.es](http://www.alsa.es)
- Saint Gaudens Train Station SNCF – Les: EPTR – Arc en Ciel  
Transport Company EPTR  
Les – Vielha: Bus line Val d'Aran  
Transport Company ALSA [www.alsa.es](http://www.alsa.es)

### EN TREN

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- Lleida – Pirineus: AVE (161 km)  
Transport Company RENFE [www.renfe.es](http://www.renfe.es)
- Montréjeau: SNCF (60 km)  
Transport Company SNCF [www.sncf.com](http://www.sncf.com)
- Saint Gaudens: SNCF (68 km)  
Transport Company SNCF [www.sncf.com](http://www.sncf.com)



## BY AIR

### Near Airports from Spain:

- Barcelona: 310 km
- Zaragoza: 260 km
- San Sebastián: 308 km
- Alguaire – Lleida Pirineus: 145 km [www.aena.es](http://www.aena.es)

### Near Airports from France:

- Toulouse: 165 km
- Tarbes: 115 km
- Pau: 157 km [www.aeroport.fr](http://www.aeroport.fr)

### Heliport from Val d'Aran located in Vielha.

- Company TAFF - [www.tafhelicopters.com](http://www.tafhelicopters.com)



*Lakes of Colomers*



## NOVELTIES FOR VAL D'ARAN 2018

### *The Val d'Aran expands its hiking offer for the 2018 season*

#### *New Nature Interpretation Center and mountain refuge of the ARTIGA DE LIN*

During the summer of 2018, the Nature Interpretation Center will be inaugurated, as well as the new mountain refuge of Artiga de Lin.

This ambitious project is an addition to the offer that the natural area of the Artiga de Lin has for the thousands of people who come year after year to Val d'Aran on holiday to visit one of the most spectacular places in the Pyrenees, the "Uelhs deth Joeu". Beyond its landscape, this area had, in the past, and due to its strategic border location of the Val d'Aran with France and Aragon, a vital importance for many people. This itinerary was used for years for commercial exchanges and even at some point in history it was traveled by people fleeing wars and violence in search of a better future.

Since 2015 we have been promoting and sign posting the itinerary from the Artiga de Lin culminating with the ascent to the Aneto Mountain. It is a longer route than the usual ascent to the Aneto from the Renclusa and that leads us through the Còl de Toro (2,236 m) to the Pla d'Aigualluts, and from there, through a long climb, to the glacier of the Aneto and from there to the top (3,404 m). To complete the opportunities of this natural area, during the spring the new mountain shelter of the Artiga de Lin will be inaugurated, which will make it easier for more mountaineers to approach any of the beautiful peaks that frame this mountain area.

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

#### *New themed hiking trails in the Val d'Aran*

The Val d'Aran expands its offer of thematic routes, in stages, aimed at the family public or for individuals with little experience in the mountains. With this purpose, Camins has created 2 new hiking proposals, the "TOUR DEL ANETO" and "LAS FUENTES DEL GARONA" aimed at this segment of the public. The first of the routes reveals one of the most beautiful spots in the Val d'Aran and one of the best viewpoints of the Aneto-Maladeta massif. The route, with a 3 day duration with stages of maximum 5 hours, allows hikers to have more free time, thus it includes other complementary proposals of culture, nature, shopping or sports activities.

On the other hand, the birth of the Garonne River, like other important rivers of the world, has given rise through the times of diverse interpretations, fruit of the traditions and knowledge of man. The proposal "The Fountains of the Garonne" is a walking tour of the CAMINS VIUS, to be able to know the 3 areas that are considered the source of this river, which originates in the Val d'Aran after 600 km in the Atlantic ocean in the French city of Bordeaux.

[www.camins.net](http://www.camins.net)

Equally, the company Exciting Events has created a new tourist product ARAN TOURS & TREK. This proposal is aimed at people with some experience in mountain routes and it is possible to do them both in summer and winter ski mountaineering or snowshoeing. Depending on the number of days available, the route can be done in 3 to 7 stages and during the route, up to 3 natural parks are crossed. Within the routes of ARAN TOURS & TREK there is the option of guided fishing tours with professionals and fishing specific material.

[www.arantoursandtrek.com](http://www.arantoursandtrek.com)

[www.excitingevents.es](http://www.excitingevents.es)



### *Access to Montludé Peak (2518 m)*

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Another project to enhance the high mountains in the Val d'Aran has been the preparation of the Access to Montludé Peak route (2,518 m), from the towns of Les, Bossòst, Canejan, Arres and Vilamòs.

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

### *Hiking and mountain bike races*

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When the snow disappears from the landscape of the Val d'Aran, the trails and routes of the territory become the perfect setting, where many mountain competitions take place. With the **Vielha-Molières Trail 3010**, the Val d'Aran is consolidated as a mountain destination for the celebration of races related to cycling and trail running. In this Marathon 5 of the peaks of more than 2,000 meters of the Val d'Aran are crowned, among them the Molières, which with its 3010 meters is considered the roof of the Val d'Aran. The Pedals of Foc Non Stop MTB Ultramarathon stands out among other sports events, which will celebrate its 13th edition this year, being in 2017 the first **European MTB Ultramarathon Championship**. The race had some 800 cyclists who competed following the mythical Pedals de Foc itinerary. Other competitions that are also held in the Aranese territory are: the Carlac Trail, Ultra Trail Naut Aran, Corsa and Caminada des 15 Pòbles, Nocturna de Vielha or La Vertical d'Aran.

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

### *Val d'Aran Walking Festival*

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The Val d'Aran, an idyllic destination for hiking enthusiasts, organizes guided tours in the Aranese territory during the week of July 1 to 8.

It is a unique opportunity to get to know this hiking paradise with itineraries that discover the most beautiful corners of the Val d'Aran.

There will be 3 daily trekking excursions, of different difficulty so that participants can choose the one that most interests them. In total there will be 18 excursions, nature and heritage, visiting villages, areas of valleys such as the Artiga de Lin or Aiguamòg and mountain areas such as Lagos de Colomèrs. Cultural visits will also be made in the program and there will be a series of complementary acts.

[www.camins.net](http://www.camins.net)

### *Feasts deth Huec de Les y Arties*

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To immerse yourself better in the ancestral traditions of the Val d'Aran you have to know the dances and popular festivals rooted in the rural life of its inhabitants. Examples of these ancestral traditions are the **Fiestas del Haro de Les** and the **Taro d'Arties**, which take place on the night of June 23 and where the summer solstice was celebrated with the burning of a fir tree trunk which brings forth the purification of lands. Despite the passage of time this tradition has remained practically intact, reminding us of how life was in the valley centuries before, becoming today a party full of fire, color, dance and tradition. These festivities were declared Intangible **Cultural Heritage of Humanity by Unesco in 2015**. As of 2018, the **Center of Interpretation de les Hèstes deth Huec – Fiestas del Fuego** allows to also experience and know, year round, these traditions as they are in present day.

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)



## REASONS TO VISIT VAL D'ARAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

### *The mountain and ever-present water offering limitless possibilities*

The Aigüestortes and Sant-Maurici Lake National Park is surrounded by summits higher than 3,000 meters and holds more than 200 lakes making the Val d'Aran a natural paradise. Some of the lakes such as Mar Lake and the Tort de Riu Lake are the largest of the Spanish Pyrenees. When the snow melts water is everywhere. Adjacent to the lakes, thousands of waterfalls are formed and Garonne and Noguera Pallaresa Rivers' flow increases. The valley's vast forests are made of fir trees, pine trees, beech trees, walnut trees, birch trees and of course oaks. In the spring, wild cherry trees bloom in the valleys.

Because of its exceptional ecosystem, the Val d'Aran offers a broad range of possibilities for all the outdoors enthusiasts, lovers of wide-open spaces, sports and well-being.

From a quiet and relaxing stroll to an extreme challenge, the Val d'Aran has adapted its tourist options to meet every expectation. A wide range of activities allows you to live memorable moments, any time of the year and in all four seasons. The amateur or experienced athletes will also find exceptional facilities and products for their sport here in Aran.

### *Trekking destinations throughout the year*

Very often, the best way to discover an area is by walking. The Val d'Aran is located between the two long distance Trans-Pyrenees hiking routes, **GR11** which crosses the Catalan region and southern Aran and **GR10** which passes through France. Other Short Hiking Trails (PRs) and a multitude of routes complement this network of mountain trails. There are **more than 300 km of routes of varying degrees of difficulty**, suitable for all ages and all levels to be enjoyed with family or friends.

While walking the trails, the hiker discovers a unique region, virgin spaces of a captivating beauty and great natural value. For all the outdoors lovers, the possibilities are limitless.

In Aigüestortes and Sant-Maurici Lake National Park, easy routes allow everyone to admire breathtaking views during the strolls. For the those seeking a challenge, marked trails and shelters allow hiking of all difficulty levels, up to the conquest of mountain peaks higher than 3,000 m, such as Besiberri North (3,015 m) in the National Park or Tuc de Molieres (3,010m) at the border with Aragon from where the famous Aneto Peak can be seen in the distance.

Perfectly designed, developed and signposted<sup>1</sup>, all these trekking routes grant access to the most beautiful scenery of the Val d'Aran. You only need good walking shoes and the desire to discover what each season brings on each route.

Among the many trekking routes proposed, a few stand out, such as **Pla de Beret route to the Sanctuary of Montgarri** (an abandoned village 7 km from start), the route to the **7 lakes of Colomers**, the circuit in **the heart of Toran** or the one to **Artiga de Lin**.

From Pla de Beret, the Blanhiblar ski lift offers the possibility to discover the Val d'Aran from above. Open between July and September.

**Thematic tours** are also offered and **organized by professionals** operating in the valley ensuring that the hikers enjoy the route.





## Information and booking:

### GREAT ROUTES:

#### Camin Reiau

[www.caminreiau.cat](http://www.caminreiau.cat)

Hiking along ancient trails, which formerly served as means of communication between the different villages of the Val d'Aran and were previously used by the Romans. Total distance: 150 Km. Cumulative elevation gain: 12.000 m

#### Carros de Foc

[www.carrosdefoc.com](http://www.carrosdefoc.com)

Circular hike around the Aigüestortes and Sant Maurici Lake National Park which should be done in several stages due to the large area covered along the route. Accommodation in mountain shelters located in the National Park. Total distance: 55 km. Cumulative elevation gain: 9,200 m

#### Cuatro cumbres, Cuatro lenguas

[www.camins.net](http://www.camins.net)

Circuit which allows access to the 4 most representative summits of the region offering fantastic views on the surrounding areas. Each of the 4 areas has its own language, its own culture and its own history. Total distance: 50 Km. Cumulative elevation gain: 4,472 m

#### Encantats

[www.andandosinequipaje.com](http://www.andandosinequipaje.com)

Hiking route which proposes the crossing of the National Park through Val d'Aran, Pallars Sobira and Alta Ribagorça along historic routes that pass through the most beautiful areas of the Park. Circular route in 5 stages which starts and ends in Vielha. Total distance: 92 km. Cumulative elevation gain: 9,070 m

#### Camins Vius

[www.caminsvius.com](http://www.caminsvius.com)

Walking tour of Parc Nacional Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici with 238 km of distance and 11.200 m of positive slope. Can be performed in 5, 7 or 9 stages and also in sections.

#### Pass'Aran

[www.passaran.com](http://www.passaran.com)

A cross-border high mountain crossing (Couserans - Val d'Aran). The route follows GR-10 and GR-211 and can be done in 5 stages. Accommodation in shelters and hostels. Total distance: 64 km. Cumulative elevation gain: 10.205 m.

#### Setau Sageth

[www.setausageth.com](http://www.setausageth.com)

A journey through Val d'Aran's history, passing through its villages, rivers and mountains using GR-211. Can be done in 5 stages. Accommodation in hotels, shelters and hostels. Total distance: 103 km. Cumulative elevation gain: 9,480 m.

#### Via Calda

[www.andandosinequipaje.com](http://www.andandosinequipaje.com)

Perfect combination of hiking and discovery of the hot springs offering lodging in hotels with service packages included. Route in 4 or 5 stages. Total distance: 60 km

#### The Aneto Tour

[www.tourdelaneto.com](http://www.tourdelaneto.com) – [www.camins.es](http://www.camins.es)

The Aneto Tour is a new hiking route consisting of a full circular route around the Aneto massif. The route goes through five valleys and six mountain passes and consists of both Spanish (Catalonian) and French territory, covering 115 total kilometers in six distinct stages with a total altitude difference of 11,332 meters. The hike is facilitated by the *Andando sin Equipaje* ("walking without luggage") brand, with lodging in hotels and cottages and luggage transport services at each stage.

#### El Gran Bucle

[www.andandosinequipaje.com](http://www.andandosinequipaje.com)

Route connecting Setau sageèt with Encantats, considered among the 20 best treks in Europe. /5000. Trail of 140 km with 12.880 m of unevenness in 7 stages.

### SLOW TREK ROUTES

#### Mirador del Aneto

[www.tourdelaneto.com/miradordelaneto](http://www.tourdelaneto.com/miradordelaneto)

Tour along the border of the Val d'Aran and Valle de Luchon with 3 stages, 38 km of distance and 3.177 m cumulative elevation gain.

#### Las Fuentes del Garona

[www.caminsvius.com/fonts-del-garona/](http://www.caminsvius.com/fonts-del-garona/)

Itinerary to know 3 places of the birth of the Garonne river: Beret, Saboredo's lakes and Artiga de Lin, in four stages with 35 km of distance and 2.485 of unevenness.



## MTB destinations and Road Bike Touring

By its itinerant character, biking allows you to enter the heart of Val d'Aran with a perspective that is quite different from that offered by hiking. The plains, the steeps, winding paths or a simple obstacle turns the journey into a story waiting to be told/ something to talk about. Val d'Aran has **more than 400 km approved routes**. From easy rides fit for relaxation to steep trails requiring technique and effort, the routes are varied and appropriate for all levels of mountain biking. A great way for people of all ages and levels to enjoy the great outdoors. You only need to have the right equipment and the right company.

The **MTB Center of Val d'Aran** located in Vielha invites you to follow the **30 MTB routes** with all levels of difficulty, along the 400 km of trails. Clearly signposted, there are **circular routes** with same departure and arrival points.

The DH Val d'Aran Mountain Park and DH EnduRomies circuits in Baricauba forest and in Montromies mountain are designed to MTB pro. These spectacular circuits are composed of modules, wooden walkways and jumps. Acces is free, but it's recommended to be accompanied by professional guides for security reasons.

During the summer months, **Downhill Mountain Biking on the Blanhiblar slope** (Naut Aran), located in Pla de Beret and accessed using Blanhiblar ski lift is an invitation to a thrilling experience. There is also offered public transport or transfers for accessing each route or for returning. The MTB Center is a must for all MTB enthusiasts and cycle tourists. In addition to the information and advice concerning the routes, the MTB Center offers bike rental and bike repair if needed. For Road Bike Touring there are 7 signposted mountain passes to be ridden.

**The following biking programs offered by Aranese companies** are also available upon reservation.

### Information and booking:

#### **Pedals de foc – MTB** [www.pedalsdefoc.com](http://www.pedalsdefoc.com)

MTB route through Aigüestortes National Park, suited for all levels, in 6 stages and accompanied by a guide. For experts, there is the challenge to complete the ride in just 3 days. Distance: 220 km. Positive cumulative elevation gain: 5,800 m

#### **Pedals d'Occitania – MTB** [www.pedalsdoccitania.com](http://www.pedalsdoccitania.com)

MTB route across Occitania, Val d'Aran and Comminges regions. It is a perfect union between Val d'Aran and France taking advantage of the regional hospitality and cuisine, trails and paths. Distance: 227 km. Positive cumulative elevation gain: 6,000 m

#### **Era Roda – MTB** [www.eraroda.com](http://www.eraroda.com)

The ERARODA - 100% Aran route is based on the use of a GPS navigator and a road map

"EraRodaCard" which allows the participants to anticipate the trail and to enjoy the challenges presented following the navigation charts. Those with time to spare can use another map that indicates different activities available along the route. At the end of the course, all participants receive a T shirt and gifts. Distance: 210 Km. Positive cumulative elevation gain: 7,600 m. News ERARODA: EraRoda 120 km - 2/3 days (4,600 m cumulative elevation gain) / EraRoda 160 km - 2 days (5,900 m cumulative elevation gain) / EnduroBike 105 km - 2/3 days (4,300 m cumulative elevation gain)

#### **Occitan Challenge – Bicycle touring** [www.ledefioccitan.com](http://www.ledefioccitan.com)

High mountain itinerary of 197 km crossing Occitania by bike. In 2 stages or for the stronger riders, in a single day. Distance: 197 km. Positive cumulative elevation gain: 4,500 m



## Winter sports and Baqueira Beret ski resort

Baqueira Beret, which is regarded by many as the best ski resort in the Pyrenees, has become a **national and international reference point**. The majority of the slopes are located on the north side of the Pyrenees thus enjoying an adequate quantity and quality of snow. Each winter season, the station welcomes enthusiasts of all categories: alpine skiing, snowboarding, Nordic skiing telemark,...

Likewise, Baqueira Beret puts at your disposal more than **20** ski schools, more than **500** professional ski instructors and offers several courses, with different modalities and class with different languages

The varied accommodation options, the many upscale hotels and restaurants, health and wellness spas, the "après-ski" activities and the large number of shops, come together to make Baqueira Beret a unique destination for winter sports.

### Statistics:

- 157 Km of slopes
- 105 slopes: 6 green (5 km), 42 blue (73 km), 40 red (53 km), 17 black (20 km)
- 3 itineraries (5 km)
- 7 Km cross country skiing circuits
- Snow park, Slalom stadium and Ski Kronos
- Freeride zone
- 35 ski lifts: 1 gondola (9 seats), 19 chairlifts (10 detachable 3x6, 7x4 and 9 fixed-grip 6X3, 3x2), 8 ski lifts (4 ski lifts, 2 double ski lift, 2 telecord) and 7 moving walkways (magic carpets).
- Transport capacity: 60.144 persons/hour
- Maximum altitude: 2.510 m
- Minimum altitude: 1.500 m
- Difference in elevation: 1.010 m
- Skiable area: 2.166 hectares
- 629 snow cannons

- Machines for preparing the slopes: 15
- Capacity of the station: 18.209 skiers

### Additional services

- 5 Rental and ski repair shops
- 7 Parking areas = in total 5.040 spaces
- 26 Cafeterias, restaurants and "Pàrrecs" on the slopes
- 4 Winter sports kindergartens
- 2 Medical assistance points on the slopes
- 1 Private medical center in Baqueira sector 1.500.
- Over 500 ski instructors
- Residential area at the foot of the ski slopes including hotels, apartments, restaurants and shopping centers.

Información: [www.baqueira.es](http://www.baqueira.es)

Información: [www.marxaberet.com](http://www.marxaberet.com)

Besides the ski resort, Val d'Aran offers the visitor a wide range of possibilities to enjoy the snow and the high mountains during the winter:

- Snowshoes excursions and cross country ski allow to discover impressive and emblematic winter landscapes, that otherwise would not allow to be reached.
- The vast prairies of the Plan de Beret represent the ideal starting point for many walks and excursions like dog sledding (mushing), horseback excursions and rides, snowmobile rides, to be enjoyed as a couple, as a groups or as a family. These activities allow reach to abandoned village of Montgarri where you can enjoy a lunch or a dinner at the shelter. It is also a fantastic place for beginner skiers and children who are starting to discover the joy of snow.
- For the more adventurous people there are activities like heli-skiing, heli-boarding, heli-randonee or scenic helicopter flights to the highest peaks of the Val d'Aran where you can enjoy the beauty of the landscape and the virgin snow accompanied by specialized guides.



The practice of these activities should always be done at the hand of **the network of professionals operating as guides**. Moreover, the Government offers state of the art snow and avalanche forecasting.

**Avalanche forecasting service of the Val d'Aran Government:** The Internet site of the avalanche forecasting service of Val d'Aran offers constant updated information on the risk of avalanche in the valley.

**Information:** [www.lauegi.conselharan.org](http://www.lauegi.conselharan.org)

### *Other sporting activities to complement active holidays and the outdoors*

The rivers and waterfalls are also an ideal environment for other exciting water sports such as **canyoning, hydro speeding, rafting, and kayaking**.

In addition to the aquatic activities, **archery, rock climbing (Via Ferrata in Les and Unha), Naturaran Adventure Park in Les, horse riding, Nordic walking, wild animal park, Aran Park, in the Portillon Pass or the bird observatory** are other ways to get the most out of a visit to the Val d'Aran.

Val d'Aran has a number of professional and specialized guide companies from which to choose.

"**Naturaran**" Adventure Park, located in a spectacular natural setting within Cauarca Camping in Les, offers thrilling experiences and fun times to share as a couple, with family or friends or as a group. Here, pleasure and sport are the main objectives. The park is divided into different circuits, varying according to the difficulty level.

Naturaran offers more than 200 challenges with different configurations, with heights ranging from 50 centimeters to 11 meters. The park has two giant zip lines of 120 and 240 meters long, the second one being classified as the longest zip line in the Pyrenees. Naturaran also offers fun activities for younger children with a circuit consisting of 7 vertical elements and 11 bridges at a height of 4 meters.

Naturaran, the Cauarca Camping in Les. Open throughout the year. Offers nocturnal circuits. Entrance fees apply.

**Información:** [www.deportur.com/naturaran/](http://www.deportur.com/naturaran/)

For climbing lovers exist in the Val d'Aran two fixed climbing circuits:

\* Via Ferrata de Les, with a length of 450 m., divided in two itineraries: the lower only for experts and the upper for all the public.

\* Eth Poi d'Unha: Located in Naut Aran and consists of 3 principal routes with a total length of 775 meters and an elevation change of 500 m. The 3 routes are differentiated by their level of difficulty; the first route which is 150 m. is designed for beginners, the second is more difficult as it is 250 m and includes spectacular and aerial climbing, and the third and most difficult route is 375 m and has a "Big Wall" feel. The culminating point of Ferrata is at 1.950 m.

### *Observation of wildlife and flora in the Val d'Aran*

Although the territory of Val d'Aran covers only 633 sq. m, its large variety of ecosystems makes it one of the richest regions of the Pyrenees in fauna and flora.

The differences in altitude in this small area, as well as the influence of the Atlantic climate contribute to a rich biodiversity. The most characteristic are the brown bear, Pyrenean capercaillie, deer, chamois, marmots.... these species are visible starting in spring. Many concealed observation points, "hides", have been created in strategic locations from which the wildlife can be observed.



Val d'Aran Wildlife encourages the visitors to observe and take pictures of this exceptional environment. It is a must see for outdoors enthusiasts due to the diversified flora and fauna species.

Starting this summer, thematic hiking circuits propose the observation of the diverse species accompanied by local guides who are familiar with the area.

Photography enthusiasts can enjoy circuits accompanied by local photography guides specialized in observation of ecosystems.

### *Wildlife park "Aran Park" in Bossòst*

Set in a pristine landscape, surrounded by the mountains, "**Aran Park**" is located in Col du Portillon (10 min away from Luchon) and proposes, since its opening last April 13, various possibilities for discovering the natural habitats of the Pyrenees, and the Aranese fauna and flora through discovery trails, observation points and exhibitions.

Given that the animals live in semi-freedom they can be seen in their own ecosystem: bears, lynxes, otters, two packs of white and gray wolves, marmots, as well as large deer and all mountain ungulates.

The park has a surface area of 16 hectares and includes a museum, a shop, a classroom, a restaurant and a picnic area.

Aran Park, in Col du Portillon in Bossòst. Open: from April 13 to November 4, 2013, daily, including Sundays and public holidays. Entrance fee.

**Information:** [www.aran-park.com](http://www.aran-park.com)

### *Fishing, one of the oldest activities practiced in the Val d'Aran*

For the lovers of this sport, Val d'Aran is a paradise that attracts enthusiasts from all over Europe. When the snow melts, the high mountain lakes, the artificial reservoirs, the streams and the Garona and Noguera Rivers of Val d'Aran are vibrant and become a strong attraction for all fishermen. Many types of fishing can be practiced.

Fishing in the Val d'Aran is fully controlled and regulated to avoid excessive fishing and ensure the survival and sustainability of the river's wildlife.

### *Val d'Aran: First Biosphere certified Mountain destination*

The Val d'Aran is the first mountain destination to have been certified a sustainable tourist destination. This certification involves a new integrated tourism planning and management system which values the environment as one of the great assets of the region, along with the local cultural heritage preserved over the centuries. As a result, the Val d'Aran, which is famous for attracting tourists with its natural wealth, sets out to provide visitors with a sustainable territory acknowledged outside its borders as an exemplary tourist destination.



## THE AMAZING AND BEAUTIFUL HERITAGE

The Val d'Aran has been able to retain its entire linguistic, artistic and cultural heritage, thus preserving its own individuality.

Its **artistic and cultural heritage** is distinguished by magnificent representations of all periods. All artistic disciplines are represented here: architecture, painting and stone and wood sculpture. Some works stand out due to their exceptional state of preservation.

The mountains of the Val d'Aran have witnessed the passing of prehistoric, Roman and Christian cultures which transformed the valley into a living art and history museum. The **Romanesque Route** allows the visitor to walk back in time and experience the history of Aran firsthand.

**Many Romanesque and Gothic churches are part of this rich heritage:** Salardú, Arties, Vielha, and Bossòst to name a few. The **beautiful Romanesque sculptures** such as the Christ of Salardú and the Christ of Mijaran in Vielha, or **the baptismal fonts** of Arties, Vilac or Vilamos are also well worth visiting.

**The Gothic altarpieces and frescoes of some churches** representing amazing Biblical scenes, in Roman, Gothic and Renaissance styles constitute a unique and well preserved artistic heritage.

### Nature and spirituality

Besides the architectural heritage, in the Val d'Aran there are other elements which are important to discover the history, symbolism and traditions of Aran. Many of these represent much more than what can be seen at a first glance. Such is the case with the Marian Sanctuaries of Montgarri and Mijaran. Montgarri is located in a beautiful mountain setting close to the Noguera Pallaresa River. Every July 2<sup>nd</sup>, people from the neighboring Aranese, French and Pallars villages come together to pay homage to the image of the Virgin. According to the legend, the image was found by a bull and this small and simple shrine was built in her honor. Because the shrine soon became famous, there were 2 consecutive attempts to steal the image, but each time, the image returned to the sanctuary. The sanctuary is visited by thousands of people year round.

The Saint Andrew Church of Salardú, built in Romanesque style (12<sup>th</sup> century), houses the Holy Cross (Santa Cruz) which is also highly venerated. Every May 3<sup>rd</sup>, crosses from neighboring villages are brought in a procession which ends with a solemn mass. There are a number of miracles attributed to this image and thus, numerous legends.

Among other places of worship in the village of Bossòst 7 chapels were built which, according to the tradition, protected the inhabitants from the plague. The inhabitants continue to venerate these shrines. The 7 chapels are located nearby and can be easily reached on foot.

Throughout Aran, **various museums** invite the visitor on a discovery of the lifestyle of the previous centuries. For example, the **Val d'Aran Museum** in Vielha, the **Ecomuseum** located in the **Joaniquet House** in Vilamos, the **Snow Museum** in Unha, the **Museum of the Pyrenees "Pyrenmuseu"** in Salardú which is home to the Refugi Rosta, the oldest hotel of the Val d'Aran and the **Eth Corrau Museum** in Bagargue. Guided tours are offered.

**In the past few years, Aranese industrial sites such as the Wool factory** in Vielha, **the Salardú Mill** and the **Victoria Mines** have been rehabilitated and opened to the public.

The **villages of the Val d'Aran** share the same architectural character. Built to withstand the winter and the snow, they are made of stone, slate and wood and integrate perfectly in the valley's landscape. The oldest houses date back to the fourteenth and fifteenth century, and are authentic jewels of the Aranese architecture, such as Ço de Portolà (currently Parador d'Arties) or Ço de Perejoan, in Escunhau, dating back to 1393. Both have been declared Assets of Cultural Interest. Other houses built in renaissance, baroque or neoclassical styles are waiting to be discovered.



Moreover, the beautiful Aranese legends persist and are manifested in the most popular **Aranese traditions and dances**. The annual cycle of seasons is at the origin of a large number of these **traditional holidays**. The end of winter has always been a long awaited and celebrated event throughout the Pyrenees. It is deeply rooted also in the Gascony culture in general. In spring and summer, each village celebrates its annual feast. A few pilgrimages persist, such as that of Montgarri on July 2nd. **The lights of eth Haro, en Les and eth Taro, en Arties; celebrated on the night of St. John on June 23rd, are considered as one of the most popular of the whole territory and declared as "Bien Inmaterial de la Humanidad" by UNESCO.** There are also the livestock fairs which are organized in autumn in Vielha, Les, Bossòst and Salardú.

Finally, **one of the most important characteristics of the Val d'Aran culture is its language: Aranese**. It is a living language spoken by the people of the valley. It belongs to the Occitan linguistic group. Aranese is a variant of the Gascony language of Comminges.

**Información:** <http://cultura.conselharan.org/>

## THE GASTRONOMY, THE WARM ATMOSPHERE AND SHOPPING

Another pillar of the Val d'Aran heritage is the richness of its gastronomy. Traditional or modern, **over 170 restaurants of the Val d'Aran** are open invitations to enjoy its cuisine in a friendly and relaxing atmosphere. Diversified and of high quality, the gastronomic fare of the Val d'Aran includes dishes prepared from indigenous products of the valley. **The traditional, par excellence, Aranese dish is the Aranese soup known as the "la olla aranesa"**, but there are also wild chamois, boar and hare stews, terrines and trout to enjoy. The modern and renowned cuisine of the Aranese chefs, favors the use of products such as the duck prepared in a thousand ways, the Caviar of Les (known as the black gold of the Pyrenees) is often used for sophisticated and luxurious dishes. In addition, Aran's proximity to France has greatly influenced the Aranese gastronomy. This is apparent today in the dishes based on crepes, liver or duck confit prepared in Aranese style.

Would you like a drink and a few mountain flavored tapas? The majority of the bars of the Valley offer a wide variety of tapas. This miniature cuisine makes your stay in the Val d'Aran even more pleasant.

**Aranese products and the "Val d'Aran Products" brand** (Geographical indication and guarantee of origin) : The Caviar "Nacarii", the Aranese beer-"Immòrtela", the Aranese soup, "Olla Aranesa", deli meats with chorizo, the longaniza (dry sausage), the "pâtés", the andito and the bolh, (typically Aranese products), cheese, yoghurt, honey, the tronquets and coquilhons (pastries) are all specialties of the region which can be bought in most shops in the Valley.

**Some local manufacturers welcome visitors, such as the Caviar factory Nacarii of Les or Tarrau Cheese Factory of Bagergue or the Aranese beer "Immòrtela".**

Whether you are looking for regional products, ski or bike rental and repair shops, equipment and clothing for practicing mountain sports, children's clothing, or even home decoration articles, you will be delighted with the variety of the commercial and retail options of the Val d'Aran. In Bossòst, Les, Vielha, Baqueira and other villages, you will find what you are looking for.

Throughout the year, the Aranese shops are open each week day. During the winter season and in the month of August the shops are also open Sundays and public holidays. Activities are organized during the summer to boost the local trade.



## HYDROTHERAPY, RELAXATION AND WELLNESS IN AN EXCEPTIONAL SETTING

Thanks to its exceptional mountain setting, the Val d'Aran is known for its high standard of living. The natural environment is conducive to well-being. Its top quality facilities including the **2 spa resorts and the many Hotel & Spa accommodations** complement the health and wellness options of the valley.

History and health meet in the Aranese thermal baths, some of them being used since the Roman era. The sulfuric waters captured at a depth of more than 300 m gush forth generously at a temperature of more than 30°C, bringing with them mineral-medicinal properties, beneficial for various therapeutic treatments: rheumatism, osteoarthritis, arthritis, skin diseases, circulatory problems and respiratory track problems.

Thermal pools have been built in the village of Arties - Garòs. They are located on the Camin Reiau next to the old thermal baths building in Arties. They are sulphurous waters that bubble up at 35 °C, with a temperature of around 33 °C in the pools.

The **Thermal Baths of Baronia of Les** will celebrate their 10th anniversary in 2013. The company is known for **use of cosmetic products with caviar**. The "**Caviar Cosmetic Baronia of Les**" brand is made with extracts of caviar "Nacarii".

**Information: [www.termasbaroniadeles.com](http://www.termasbaroniadeles.com)**  
**Information: [www.caviarnacarii.com](http://www.caviarnacarii.com)**

The **thermal baths of Banhs de Tredòs** are located on the banks of Aiguamòg River, on the outskirts of Aigüestortes and Sant-Maurici Lake National Park. At 1,740 m in altitude; this Spa resort is the highest in Europe. It is a hotel resort.  
**Information: [www.banhsdetredos.com](http://www.banhsdetredos.com)**

## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

The Val d'Aran offers a complete array of services for family vacations:

1. "**Aran Park**" in Portillon pass. A wild animal park with indigenous Pyrenean animals in semi-freedom
2. "**NaturAran**", the largest and the most modern Adventure Park of the Pyrenees located in Les
3. **Beret Park**: The Baqueira Beret ski resort in the summer offers spectacular views from the Blanhiblar chairlift, with four downhill cycling or hiking trails:  
Trail 1 on foot: Mirador Val d'Aran. 30 minutes there and back.  
Trail 2 on foot: Mirador Panoràmica Pirineos. 1 hour there and back.  
Trail 3 on foot or by bike: Mirador Roques d'en Macià. 2 hours downhill.  
Trail 4 on foot: Uelhs deth Garonne - Pla de Beret. 3 hours downhill.
4. **Pony and horseback rides, white water rafting, canoeing, observation of fauna and flora and bird watching**
5. **MTB routes and hiking trails** accessible by all levels, rental facilities offering bike rentals for adults and children as well as baby seats
6. Sports facilities: Sports Complex of Bossòst, Ice Palace "**Palai de Gèu**" in Vielha including an ice skating rink with 2 heated swimming pools, solarium, gym, sauna, climbing wall, paddle court. [www.palaidegeu.com](http://www.palaidegeu.com)
7. Various museums and visits to manufacturing sites: Nacarii Caviar Factory, Tarrau Cheese Factory, beer Immòrtela, ...
8. Accommodation services offering multi-use rooms and special activities for children. Restaurants with menus for children
9. Cinema in Vielha [www.circusa.com](http://www.circusa.com)
10. A child care facility in Baqueira during the winter

**Information: [www.parquesinfantilesbaqueira.es](http://www.parquesinfantilesbaqueira.es) / [www.parqueinfantil1800baqueira.com](http://www.parqueinfantil1800baqueira.com)**





## RICH AND VARIED ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Hotels, Paradores Nacionales, farmhouses, boarding houses, hostels, guest houses, campsites, mountain shelters, apartments, houses and cottages constitute a vast range of accommodation options designed to meet the needs of all types of visitors.

- More than 14.000 PLACES OF ACCOMMODATION distributed in hotels (1\*\*\*\*\*GL, 3\*\*\*\*\* , 14 \*\*\*\*, 19 \*\*\*, 17 \*\* and 9 \*) and 6 aparthotels, 25 boarding houses, 1 hostel, 7 mountain shelters (5 high mountain and 2 medium mountain), 8 campings and 13 farmhouses. There is also the option to rent an apartment or a chalet.
- About 4.000 hotel beds are offered at the foot of the slopes of Baqueira Beret Resort.
- There are two National Parador hotels in the Val d'Aran, which are part of National Parador network (first class hotels scattered throughout Spain and located in iconic buildings or in exceptional locations, selected for their historical, cultural or artistic interest).
- **22,000 BEDS IN RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES**, in secondary residences, divided among the different villages of the Val d'Aran or at the foot of the slopes. Many of them are available for rent for the weekend, on weekly basis or longer stays.

## A DESTINATION OF CHOICE FOR CORPORATE TRAVEL AND SEMINARS

The exceptional environment, hotel establishments adapted to all needs, and the wide range of sporting, cultural and leisure activities contribute to making the Val d'Aran the ideal destination for all enterprises organizing meetings, conventions, incentive and team building trips.

A large number of hotels in the valley ( one 5\* GL hotel, three 5 \* hotels, and eight 4\* hotels) offer meeting rooms suited for different events and are equipped with the most advanced technologies. In addition to these meeting rooms, there are a number of other local halls available.

The natural environment and the wellness and the gastronomic options of the Val d'Aran provide additional ingredients to transform a business trip into an unforgettable pleasure. Sport activities such as rafting, heli-skiing or golf complement the experience and make Aran unforgettable. Participants will leave the Val d'Aran with the desire to return with their family or friends!

## A CERTIFIED "SPORT TOURISM DESTINATION"

In 2004, the Val d'Aran received the certification of **Sport Tourism Destination** for activities such as **high mountain hiking, Alpine running and Football**.

The strategic location and the variety of landscapes as well as all the sports facilities spread throughout the valley make the Val d'Aran an ideal destination for sports and nature enthusiasts. The Val d'Aran is located between the two long distance Trans-Pyrenees hiking routes, **GR11** which crosses the Catalan region and southern Aran, and the **GR10** which passes through France. Other Short Hiking Trails (PRs) and a multitude of routes complement this network of mountain trails.

Among the sports facilities, visitors will find the **Sports Area** and the **Municipal Football Field** the **Sport Technicians School** of Val d'Aran in **Salardú**, the **Football Field** and the **Thermal Baths of the Baronia** in Les.

The Catalan Tourism Agency has certified these municipalities of Catalonia, granting them the



## EVENTOS 2018

### 4 FEBRUARY

#### 39th MARXA BERET

Cross-country skiing test that is considered one of the most important in Europe.

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### MARCH

#### CAVIAR MONTH

For a month different restaurants of the Val d'Aran offer different menus with sturgeon and caviar as a star product.

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### 16 and 17 JUNE

#### TRAIL CARLAC

The routes of Trail Carlac are varied with different distances and slopes. The 5 itineraries cover the 4 municipalities of Quate Lòcs (Les, Bausen, Canejan and Bossòst).

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### 23 JUNE

#### FEASTS DETH HUEC DE LES Y ARTIES

Hestes deth Haro de Les and the Taro d'Arties, take place on the night of June 23 and celebrate the summer solstice with the burning of a fir tree trunk which brings forth the purification of lands, becoming today a party full of fire, color, dance and tradition. These festivities were declared Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by Unesco in 2015.

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### 30 JUNE to 1 JULY

#### 13th NO STOP FIRE PEDALS - ULTRAMARATÓ BTT EUROPE CHAMPIONSHIP

MTB raid of 213 km and with 6,200 m of positive slope with start and finish in Vielha. The route follows the itinerary of the mythical Pedals de Foc ...

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### FROM 2ND TO 8TH JULY

#### VAL D'ARAN WALKING FESTIVAL

During the week, mountain excursions and other activities related to hiking will be organized.

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### 14 JULY

#### TRAIL VIELHA - MOLIÈRES 3010

It is a high mountain race where 5 peaks of more than 2,000 meters are crowned; among them the Molières of 3010, roof of the Val d'Aran and the race.

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### 21 JULY

#### ERA ROD NO STOP ULTRAMARATON

With 140 km and a positive difference of 5200 m, this test is situated among one of the hardest in the Pyrenees and runs entirely through the Val d'Aran.

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**JULY**

**CAMPILARO**

Cycle route of 370 km and 8,300 m of positive elevation difference around the areas of Saint Lary Soulan, Luchon and Val d'Aran.

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**AUGUST**

**ROMÀNIC MUSICAU ENA VAL D'ARAN**

During the month of August classical music concerts are held in the incomparable setting of the churches of the Val d'Aran.

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**4 AUGUST**

**NIGHT RACE OF VIELHA (RUNEDIA)**

Night race through the streets of Vielha that includes 2 distances of 5 and 10 km.

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**AUGUST**

**ULTRA TRAIL VAL D'ARAN (RUNEDIA)**

Mountain trail race that consists of 3 distances: 20, 50 and 104 km with arrival in Salardú - Naut Aran.

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**FROM 16th to 19th AUGUST**

**HAND MADE HERE**

A Market Fair through the streets of Vielha where artisans of the Val d'Aran meet.

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**FROM 23rd to 26th AUGUST**

**SALARDÚ COUNTRY ROCK FESTIVAL**

Festival dedicated to Country Rock where all the lovers of this style are mentioned and where concerts, dances, exhibitions, master classes, workshops, equestrian shows, among other activities take place.

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**26 AUGUST**

**ARANBIKE**

MTB race that takes place in Unha with circuits of 50 km, 20 km, 10 km.

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**26 AUGUST**

**CORSA AND WALK FROM 15 POWERS**

Half Mountain Marathon that passes through 15 villages of the Val d'Aran. There are also different distances for all participants.

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**OCTOBER - NOVEMBER**

**THE MONGETADA (BEAN FEAST)**

Fair dedicated to the elaboration of the local bean of the Val d'Aran.

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## PLAN YOUR STAY IN THE VAL D'ARAN

### Aranese Travel Agencies

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- **ALPS ARAN** [www.alpsaran.org](http://www.alpsaran.org)
- **CAMINS** [www.camins.es](http://www.camins.es)
- **CARROS DE FOC** [www.carrosdefoc.com](http://www.carrosdefoc.com)
- **EXCITING EVENTS** [www.excitingevents.es](http://www.excitingevents.es)
- **KABI TRAVELS BY EDURNE PASABEN** [www.kabi-travels.com](http://www.kabi-travels.com)
- **NATURA TRAVELS** [www.pedalesdelmundo.com](http://www.pedalesdelmundo.com)
- **VIAJES BAQUEIRA BERET** [www.baqueira.es](http://www.baqueira.es)
- **WILDWATCHING SPAIN** [www.wildwatchingspain.com](http://www.wildwatchingspain.com)

### WEB, Social networks, brochures and guides

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In our website [www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com) is located all the information about trekking routes, MTB and road bike routes; artistic, cultural and industrial heritage, gastronomy, wellness, active tourism activities, snow activities,... in addition to all establishments of Val d'Aran.

<b>Facebook.</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/valldaran">https://www.facebook.com/valldaran</a>
<b>Twitter.</b>	<a href="https://twitter.com/val_daran">https://twitter.com/val_daran</a>
<b>Youtube.</b>	<a href="https://m.youtube.com/user/ValdeAran">https://m.youtube.com/user/ValdeAran</a>
<b>Pinterest.</b>	Val d'Aran <a href="http://pin.it/c-AtUhj">http://pin.it/c-AtUhj</a>
<b>Instagram.</b>	<a href="https://instagram.com/val_daran">https://instagram.com/val_daran</a>
<b>LinkedIn.</b>	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/organization/9492838/admin/overview">https://www.linkedin.com/organization/9492838/admin/overview</a>

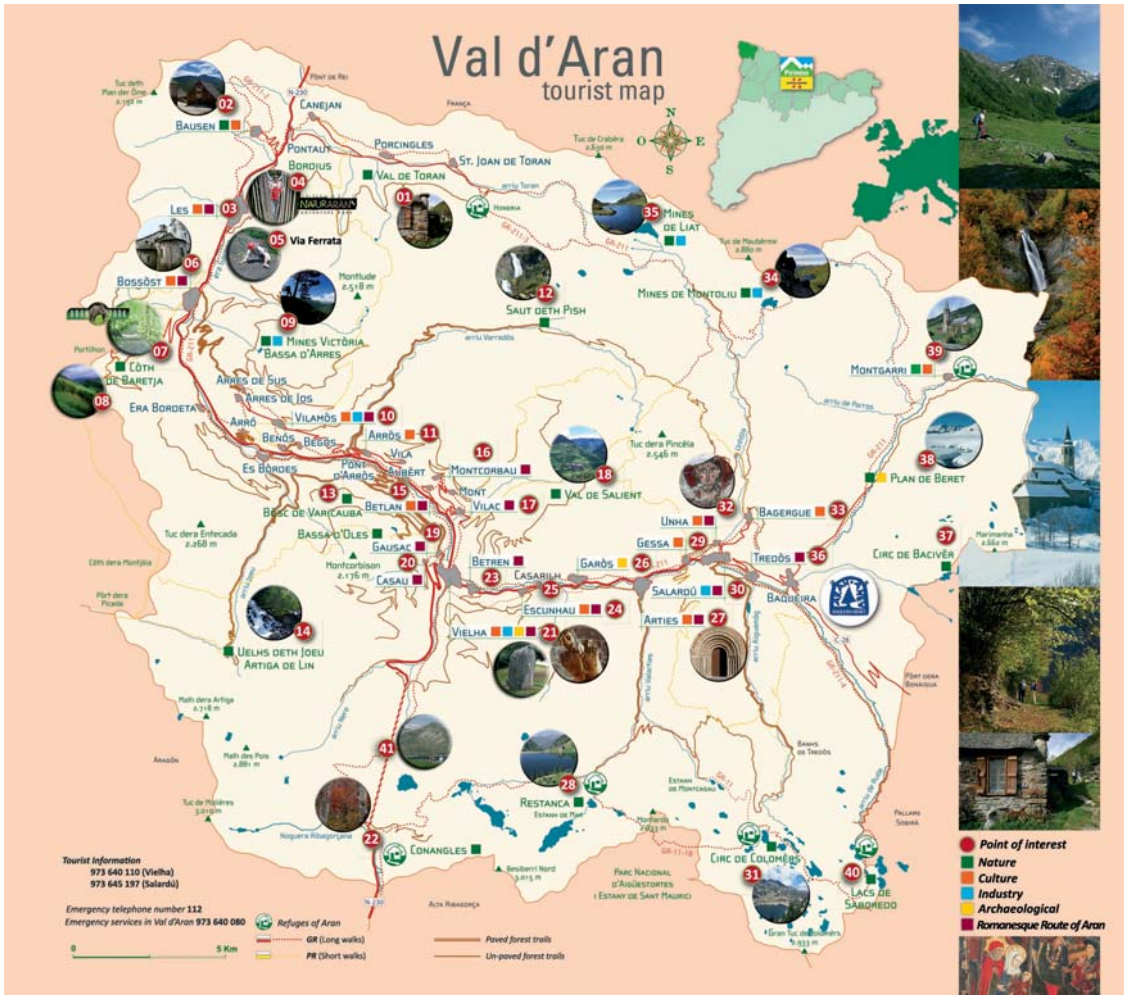
### BROCHURES AND GUIDES

"Foment Torisme Val d'Aran" annually publishes about twenty brochures and guides, which can be downloaded at [www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com).



# ANNEX

## Map of Val d'Aran



All the companies listed in this press kit are members of Foment Torisme Val d'Aran.



  
**VAL D'ARAN**  
Era essència des Pirenèus

 **Conselh Generau  
d'Aran**

**foment**  
TORISME VAL D'ARAN

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