

Le Puits à Glace et Casot del Guarda

Rated: Easy. Climb: 400 m. Duration: 2h30 without stops.

Follow: Route No. 6 & 7

Points of Interest: There are several snow and ice pits in the Albères Massif. It is thought that their origins began at the end of the 16th. / beginning 17th. Centuries. In these high areas the snow heaped up in the pits and during hot summers people were able to have ice.

From the Tourism Office, Walkers' Centre, return to the church at the old village. With your back to the church door, go up the "**Rue de L'Eglise**" and at the end, take the footpath with a small stream on the left: this footpath leaves the village. On the right hand is the old windmill - "**Moulin de la Pave**". Shortly you come to fine shady spring – "**Fontaine des Oiseaux**". The footpath then goes uphill following a half buried pipe. Arriving at a fork, go right and immediately on the right will be a small reservoir at the end of which is a crossroads with a signpost. Take the path towards "**Dolmen-Pic Neulos – Col de L'Ullat**". To the left of the footpath is a small watering canal that you follow until you arrive at a main pathway crossroads where you can hear the river below.

Then, at the main signpost by the reservoir take the left fork uphill. There is a blue and white coloured boundary marker.

The yellow marked track goes upward through low vegetation until you come to an intersection; take the path to the right. You come to another intersection with yellow writing on a stone; take the path straight ahead. The path goes through a narrow passage between two rocks. This was used, in times past, by shepherds to count their animals. The yellow marked path continues slowly upwards and South; it goes around a cliff face where there is a good view of Laroque. It then crosses a first ravine and then a river (Correc de les Teixoneres) and continues upwards twisting and turning.

It continues along a well built stone wall, to the left, then you reach a signpost marked "**PISTE**". Continue straight ahead alongside this wall. Further on you come to a sign indicating a snow pit – "**Puits à Glace**" which is a few metres below. Go back on your tracks and continue on left; you come to the river again (Correc de les Teixoneres). Go across it and follow the path which turns to the left. 50 metres further on there is another signpost indicating to the right towards "**Col de l'Ullat**" and to the left "**Casot del Guarda**". Take the left path which leads to the "**Casot**", which is basically a stone refuge.

Close by is another crossing of paths. Crossing the concrete bridge, take the descending path which is orientated firstly North and then turns East. You are now changing valleys and have to cross another ford and continue the descent. A signpost indicates "**Parraguèrres**". Continue the descent by the path to the left. After a turn you come across two ruined farmhouses to the right and slightly below you. 200 m further on, come off the track and take the path to the left which is marked in yellow. This goes down through vegetation and loose stone ravine. You next come across an intersection you used coming up: continue going down to the right. At the next crossing of paths, go left. Coming to a further intersection, take the path down toward the village, which is now the original one that you took to come up the mountain. You finish at the Church.