

Case Walk No1: Loubens -Le Pech de Limouzy

Use with Topo Guide 'L'Ariege ...a pied' Walk no: 17

Time/Distance: 2hours/5.5 kms Difficulty rating: GREEN

Start: Loubens in the centre of the village. To find on a map: 10 minutes north of Foix off the main route D919 Foix-Toulouse.

Parking: a car park is located in the centre of the village.

Difficulty: Suitable for children 10+. There is about 300m of ascent/descent. Good walking shoes/boots are essential. Water should be carried (always June-Oct as the temperature is generally 25 degrees plus).

Points of Interest: Spectacular views of the Pyrenees range. Flowers & Butterflies. Oak woods.

Refreshments/Accommodation: 10 minutes from the historic medieval town of Foix, the capital/administrative centre of the Ariege Department.

Chambres et Table d'Hotes, Restaurants at Le Fossat 15 minutes. www.pyrenees-midi.com

The walk starts in the picturesque village of **Loubens**, nestling in the foothills of the Pyrenees, hidden from the main tourist route from Foix to Toulouse. The route climbs out of the village up to the top of the ridge above, along the ridge line past a TV mast at the highest point, before returning to the village in an anti-clockwise loop. On leaving the car park next to the tennis court, head west out of the village past the church, in the direction of Pamiers. At the cemetery, adjacent to the church, turn left onto the yellow way marked path leading through the trees directly up the hillside. Follow this path upwards and to the right. You will enter the edge of an oak wood; the path continues up and to the right following a small ridge line. You will after about 25-30 mins come out on to a metallic road; turn left on this farm road following the sign 'Le Pech de Limouzy'. After passing a farm on your right on a bend, 200m further on you take a signposted and yellow marked track up the side of a field and into the woods. This track will bring you out on the top of the ridge after about another 20-25 mins. Continue straight ahead. You will now get fantastic 360 degrees views from the Montagne Noir in the east all the way towards Pic du Midi in the west. Continue along the track up to the high point 'Le Pech de Limouzy' passing the television mast. After a partial descent the main track bears to the left at an old ruin. Take this track, which immediately descends; after approximately 800m the track levels out and turns right; you must continue straight on at this point; look out for a yellow VTT mountain biking sign with dots and an arrow which is attached to a tree. Carefully follow this path observing the yellow markers that direct you back to the village which can be seen in the valley in front. In the village centre turn left towards the church, returning to the car park.