

Val D'Herault France Spring Meet 2020 - The Low Down

The Climbing and Guides

As far as we know the 2011 Rockfax is still the only English language guide for the area. We found it a bit limited. It covers just three crags, Thaurac, Hortus and Claret, the largest admittedly, but somewhat dominated by hard routes. Claret has almost nothing below 6b. Rockfax excludes some newer routes in the 5 to 6a range at Thaurac and Hortus & excludes altogether quite a number of good smaller crags that have a lot of 5s & 6s between them.

However, there are quite a few good French guides which we'd recommend getting.

- Escalades au Thaurac by Roumanille et Fabre. 2017. 837 routes single & multi pitch. 37 x 4s, 130 x 5s, 355 x 6s.
- St Jean de Bueges Escalade by FFME (Federation Francaise de la Montagne de l'Escalade Herault). 2015 ish. 80 single & multi pitch routes. 20 x 5s, 40 x 6s plus 16 short 4s, 5s & 6s at le Moulin de Bertrand.
- Escalade a l'Hortus, Roumanille et Fabre. 2003. 99 multi pitch routes 3 to 6 pitches. Mostly 5s & 6s but complicated and some not fully equipped. The Online update useful for a few new routes & update on equipment.
- St Bauzille de Montmel. Puech des Mourges. 2019. 230 single pitch routes. 40 x 5s
- Site du Joncas. Commune de Montpeyroux. Date 2011? 70 single pitch. 20 x 5s.
- Claret. by P. Rouzo 2011. Covered in the Rockfax. 100+ routes but mostly 6b to 8b.

The above are all available to buy online from French climbing shops and websites, such as [Expe](#), except Le Joncas which was available at Office de Tourisme, Saint Guilhem. The Thaurac Topo was available at the Gange Office de Tourisme.

In addition there are other crags in the area which have no paper guide available, including Valflaune, Clocheton de Matelles, Saugras, Cazevieille, Pic St Loup and St Guilhem. However some of these have good online topos which can be printed off. All the routes at St Guilhem and the new routes at Thaurac and Hortus are on this website <http://www.topo-thaurac.com/> If you want any of the French guides we'd recommend getting them in advance. We struggled to find them locally. The St Jean de Buege guide is supposed to be available in the village bar but was sold out. Pete had to go into Montpellier to buy guides and although it's not that far it's pretty much a day trip. [The Climbing Away Website](#) is useful for finding out location and access to crags.

Gear. Many of the routes are fully bolted sports routes but some are not, particularly some of the older multi pitch routes at Hortus but also some at Thaurac & St Guilhem. The guides give good information on this. You definately need a rack for these. Looks like a long rope might be useful for some of the rappels off multi pitch routes.

Finding The Campsite

This is the [Camping Le Val D'Herault Website](#). The address, Saint Etienne d'Issensac, 34190 Brissac, Languedoc-Roussillon, works in Googlemaps. If you don't have access to online maps the easiest directions are from Ganges. The campsite is about six miles South of Ganges, West of the Herault River. Leave the Ganges ring road on the D4 following signs for Cazilhac and Brissac. Follow the D4 all the way. The campsite is two miles South of Brissac on the left travelling South.

Ganges is the nearest place for supermarkets and Office de Tourisme. Daily bread etc can be ordered at the campsite reception.