Coteaux Béarn Madiran
Tourisme & Loisirs

MONCAUP
The village of fountains

4 circuits of 3 km 7 km

In the heart of the Vic-Bilh region (Vieux Pays), Moncaup shows traces of human occupation dating back to prehistoric times, by Palaeolithic hunters (500,000 / 100,000 years ago), then the area was farmed by the first sedentary farmers of the Neolithic period (8,000 years ago). First mentioned as a border village in the 11th century, Moncaup paid homage to Gaston Phébus in 1343. It then remained part of the Viscounty of Béarn.

The village's demographics varied according to the ups and downs of the times, particularly during the wars, but the number of inhabitants grew steadily until 1841, when it reached 837. It then slowly began to decline until the 2000s, when the curve began to reverse.

In 1491, Catherine of Navarre granted Moncaup the right to build a mill and a tower on the Louet and to hold a market. Two tile works were in operation for a long time. The Vic-Bilh vineyards are very old, and have been important since the Middle Ages. There were 235 hectares of vines in 1820, but they were ravaged by the excessive diseases that affected French viticulture in the 19th century. Today, wine remains a major product of the agricultural land that is Moncaup. The commune is part of the controlled designation of origin (AOC) areas of Madiran, Pacherenc du Vic-Bilh and Béarn.

The pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela passes through the plain and the Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem had an establishment in Moncaup. The parish church, the Protestant church, the cemetery, the market, the market hall and the village hall were also located on the same hill, all of which have since disappeared following the relocation of the village centre at the beginning of the 20th century.

Every year, Moncaup commemorates the murder of two young maquisards by the Nazis on 19 June 1944.

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Names of the fontains :

Altitude : 280 m

1 Floris
2 Page
3 Puyo
4 Navarre
5 Boune Houn
6 Passe
7 Bélier
8 Latrilhe
9 L'Estipe
Clos Basté

Markings: blue, green, red and pink

D Departure: Town Hall

Church Sainte-Lucie

Useful recommendations

Preserve nature

- Take a bag with you to carry away your rubbish
- Respect the flora and fauna
- Stay on the marked trails

Protect yourself

- Don't set off without the necessary equipment: water, hiking boots, bright clothing, etc.
- Avoid setting off alone
- Don't drink water from streams.
- Find out about the weather
- Don't overestimate your abilities
- Be vigilant during the hunting season
- Do not swim in lakes

Respect activities and people

- Respect private property and crops crossed by the routes
- Do not stay in local people's homes
- Remember to close gates
- Keep dogs on a lead
- Fires are prohibited
- Respect the peace and quiet of animals

History of the fountains

Around 1830, twenty or so fountains were supplying water to all parts of the village, forming a coherent drinking water distribution network covering the whole of the commune. Today, around a dozen of these fountains remain, forgotten reminders of a way of life that only really disappeared around 1960, with the advent of running water.

These fountains are built according to a standard predetermined plan, with adaptations to suit the site and its use. The spring is always tapped into a small vaulted structure, set against a hillock and opening onto a square bay that is closed by a small wooden shutter. Below this bay, an outlet allows the water to flow out. Depending on its use, the fountain is sometimes supplemented by a drinking trough, a basin or a wash-house, which collects the water from the spring before allowing it to continue its course towards the streams and then the Adour.

Blue circuit - 2 fountains

3,8 km - 120 m of difference in altitude

The blue and the yellow circuits follow the same way.
From the townhall go left and take the Chemins des Mariés on the right. Turn left, walk past the church. At the STOP roadsign, cross the road and walk straight ahead to the « Chemin des Bourdales ». 50 meters away turn left and follow the path under the foliage to the **Fontaine de Floris**. Take the track above on the right and walk through the wood.
Walk past the ruins of the « **lavoir de Bertrand** » (an ancient washing place). Once on the road, turn left and take the path on the right. At the junction of the D142 road, turn left, then, once at the Mission Cross, turn left. At the STOP roadsign go straight ahead to the « Chemins des Marlères ». Turn left to the « Chemin de Lartigue ».
Walk down the path and take the D221 road on the right. Walk accross the road and take the path to the **Fontaine de l'Estipe.** Back on the road cross the bridge.
The blue and the yellow circuits take different routes.
Turn left to the Chemin de l'Estipe, walk up the road back to the carpark at town hall.

Green circuit - 3 fountains

6 km - 140 m of difference in altitude

From the townhall the yellow and the green circuits follow the same way. Go left then take the « Chemins des Mariés » on the right. The green and yellow trails take different routes. Walk accross the road and go to the Chemin Debat.
Once at the big house, turn left. You are back on the yellow trail. Cross the road, go left to the corner of the wood. Walk into the wood and walk along the path on the right. Reach the **Fontaine de Puyo** down the path.
Take the path back through the wood. At the edge of the wood, walk along a man-made pond. Once on the road turn left twice. At the next junction walk down the path to the **Fontaine de Page**. Back on the road turn left and walk up the road to the **Fontaine de Floris** on the right, down a path under the foliage. Back on the road, turn right at the STOP roadsign.
Walk down back to the carpark at town hall.

Pink circuit - 2 fountains

3 km - 95 m of difference in altitude

This short circuit allows you to discover the Latrille fountain.

From the townhall, turn right to the Chemin de l'Estipe.
Turn right, cross the bridge, and take the path to the Fontaine **de l'Estipe**.
Back on the road turn right.
At the junction take the road on the left.
Walk past the **Fontaine de Latrilhe** with its drinking trough and its laundry.
At the intersection, turn left.
Take the "Chemin de Lartigue" on the left.
At the road, turn right, then after the bridge, go left up the "Chemin de l'Estipe" (Estipe Road).
Go left up the road, returning to the parking lot.

Red circuit - 5 fountains

7 km - 140 m of difference in altitude

From the town hall, turn right to the Chemin de l'Estipe. Turn right, cross the bridge and take the path to **the Estipe fountain** on the left. Back on the road the red and yellow tracks follow the same way. Walk up the road and take the path on the right. You will walk past a nice house where Henry IV is said to have spent the night. On the road turn right at the junction and go right again to the **Navarre Fontain**.

Back on the road , 50 metres away, walk along a hedge on your left. At the corner of the field, walk down to the **Passe Fontaine**. Walk out of the wood, turn right then go left.

At the STOP roadsign turn left and take the road to Latisnère. At the branching junction, take ahead the Chemin des Maquisards. Take the path on the right to the **Bélier Fontain**.

Walk on and climb the steps on the left.

Once on the road, turn left, walk past the « Stèle des Maquisards », then take the path through the wood on the right. Leave the wood and walk along a field on the right. At the border of the pond, take the footbridge to the **Boune Houn Fontain**. At the end of the pond walk along the vineyards on the right. Walk up to the road, cross it and walk 20 metres on the right. Turn left, cross the bridge, then take the path on the left.

There you leave the yellow circuit.

Cross the road, go to the Chemins des Mariés leading back to the carpark at town hall.

The church of Sainte-Lucie

The old church dates back to the High Middle Ages and was demolished in 1901. The materials were used to build the new church in the centre of the village between 1903 and 1906. It contains furniture, a painting, stained glass windows and objects listed in the general inventory of cultural heritage. It is remarkable for its stained glass windows designed by René-Marie Castaing.

Open by appointment. Tel: 06 79 74 56 13.

Mission crosses

There are now four of them: one in front of the church, in the Floris district, at the crossroads of Chemin Bourdalès and in the Château district.

They played a protective role.

The ram

In 1929, a farmer installed the Montgolfier brothers' invention, the ram, at the Bioy fountain to bring water up to his property 35 m higher.