



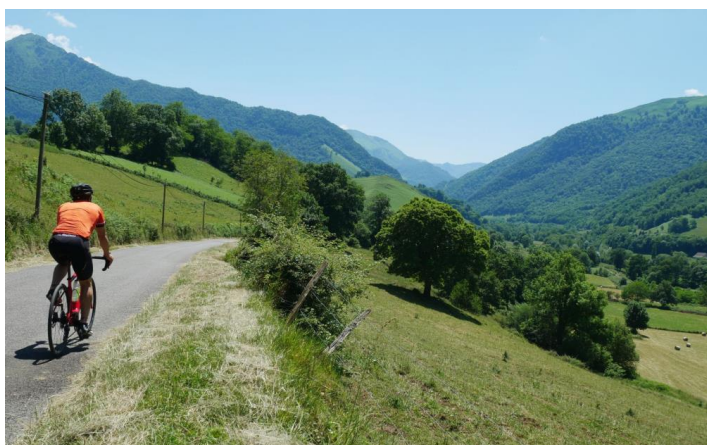
VAE N°1 - Col de Marie Blaque

📍 ASASP-ARROS

ELECTRIC-ASSIST BIKES#CYCLING



After crossing the Gave, the quiet departmental road runs through the Aspe Valley in a truly bucolic setting. There's no difficulty on the horizon except for a few mounds to overcome with the electric assistance and relaxation. However, Col de Marie-Blaque on its side of the Aspe Valley will surprise you and, after a bend, you will quickly understand why the Tour de France has passed through here thirteen times. Beautiful pages of this legendary event have been written here, beginning with Thévenet in 1978 who had to get down the bike and Hinault, a young beginner who broke his teeth there. The electric assistance gets quite helpful in getting the most out of this short but intense journey. This challenge is more technological than physical, you need to make your legs work by correctly managing the available watts to reach the 1035 m of this highly coveted pass without incident



📍 **Départ : ASASP-ARROS**
Arrivée : COL DE MARIE BLANQUE

📏 **Distance :**
15.2 km

🏔️ **Dénivelé :**
802 m

🕒 **Durée :**
1/2 jour

P Parking face à la boucherie

☎️ Appel d'urgence : 112

⚠️ Les montagnes basques et béarnaises sont des espaces pastoraux. Evitez de partir avec votre chien. Dans tous les cas, tenez-le en laisse. Merci !

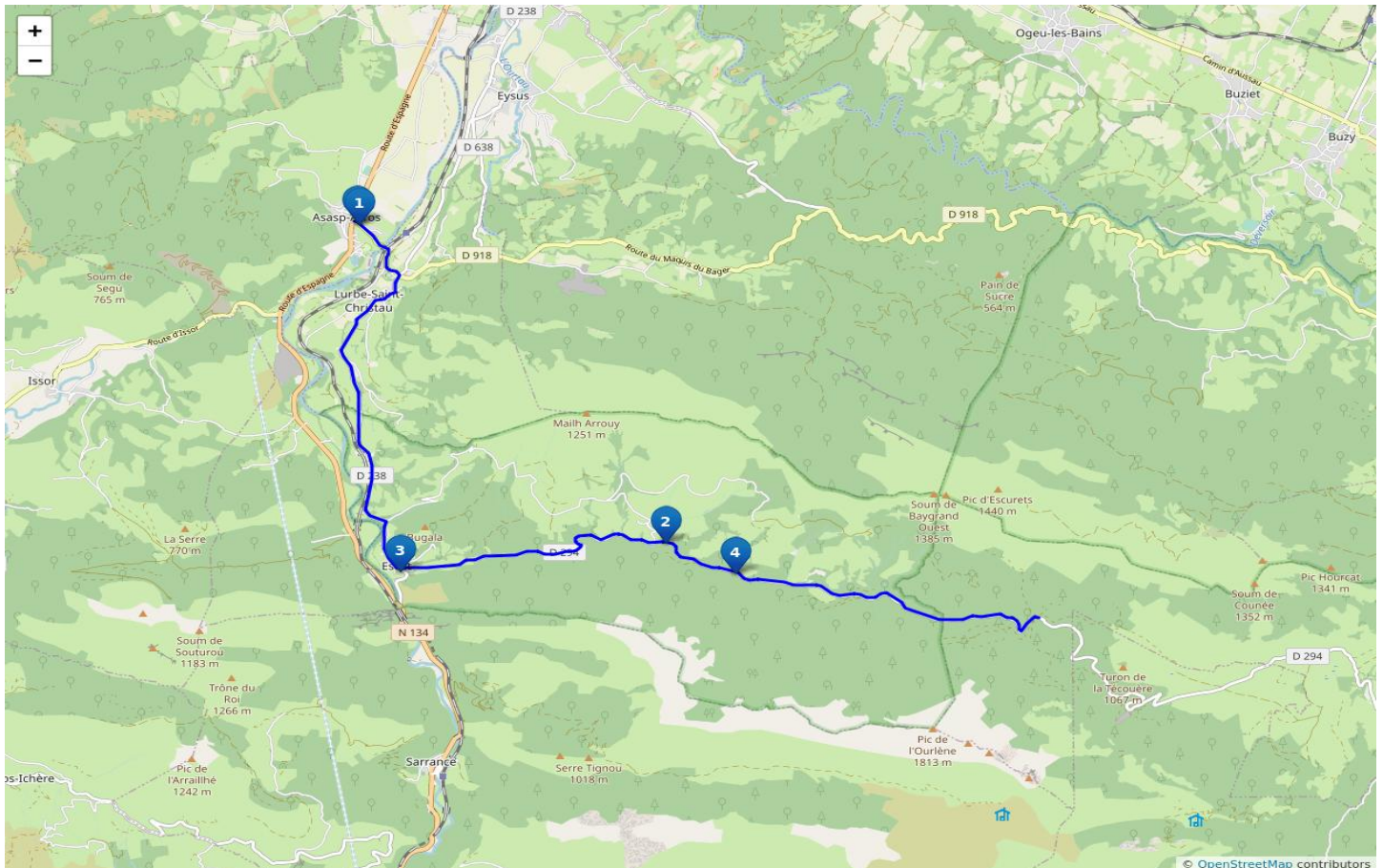
★ À ne pas manquer

- **Le gave d'Aspe (0,5 km).** Having its source at the foot of some border peaks, the Gave d'Aspe merges in Oloron Sainte-Marie with the Gave d'Ossau. These pure and oxygenated waters end their course in the ocean and thousands of salmon frequent them. This migrant, after spending three years off the

coast of Norway, returns to its waters at the Bearn to reproduce and die.

- **The Saint-Christau thermal baths (1.5 km off-route).** In a corner of the forest at the confluence of valleys, Saint-Christau was a spa famous for its copper-coloured waters, suitable for the treatment of dermatosis and other mucosal disorders. Witness its beautiful hotels and the majestic trees of its park. The hermitage is also a stopover on the road to Santiago on the *Vía Tolosana*.

- **La Marie-Blanche (15,22 km).** Before being the name of this pass, Marie-Blanche is the name of a migratory bird that remains in the Pyrenees from April to September, the Egyptian vulture, which usually roams near the herds. Of a marked white, underlined by a band of black feathers, it was nicknamed in the valley the Marie-Blanche.



★ Étapes

Step 1. From Asasp to Lurbe-Saint-Christau. Exit the car park and follow the D934 to the right. The road descends to cross the Gave d'Aspe bridge and the railway line before starting a straight climb towards Lurbe-Saint-Christau. This is an opportunity to test the power assist and make sure the battery is charged. Enter the town until you reach the junction with the D238. Turn right onto Escot. Once outside the town of Lurbe, the warm-up phase can begin.

Step 2. From Lurbe-Saint-Christau to Escot. This route on the slope of the valley alternates a succession of mounds and landings where you have to play with electric assistance. The quiet departmental rises to the Aspe Valley from where you can see the river of the same name below. The sunken perspective with the high peaks of the Bearn in the background makes this seldom-visited section a beautiful moment of plenitude. Once you enter Escot, turn left towards Col de Marie-Blanche. This is how you enter the Barescou valley; the pass is just in front.

Step 3. From Escot to km 10. Once out of Escot, the trail is smooth and offers little resistance. The first 5 km (2 to 3%) are of the same type and allow you to appreciate the landscape. The little Gave du Barescou waters the few hay meadows when it does not pass through old mills. To complete the picture, beautiful farms line the countryside. Moderate assistance makes the climb easier, but the hardest part is yet to come. The valley narrows gradually and, from km 10, things get harder.

Step 4. From km 10 to Col de Marie-Blanche. A little less than 5 km before reaching the finish line, the slope increases at the same rate as the forest becomes denser. There is no choice but to maximize the power of the electric assistance to get to percentages with double digits. A few passages at 15% will make you love technology and in the end, a sharp curve will announce the end of hostilities. The pass is finally visible and the 1035 m are reached 400 m further on. Being the Ossau valley the easiest side to access, it is usual to find people at the top. The descent is particularly fast and requires caution.

★ Équipements

- Power Point (supermarket, restaurants)

★ Attention

- Descent of the Col de Marie-Blanche over 6 km, steep slope, sometimes-slippery path

