



Credits Photos : Norbert Duranony

## Did you know ?

→ FROM ONE PIT TO ANOTHER, THE MINING CITY OF LA COMBELLE

Coal mining in the Brassac Basin has left its mark on the landscape and the local economy. In the 17th century, production became national thanks to river transport on the Allier river and with the arrival of the railway in 1855. At the beginning of the 20th century, the peasantminers became worker-miners. In order to attract and retain the workforce, mining companies built cities with airy public spaces, wide streets, bright and practical houses, gardens. At La Combelle, the cité des Graves is built around the art deco style water tower and the church square (1925). On the outskirts are the infirmary and the huge school unit. But the mines closed in 1978. The shafts were filled and most of the infrastructure was dismantled, but the Bayard and La Combelle pit heads were saved. The well is surmounted by a headframe, made of wood and then metal. Operated from the engine room, it supports the gears that engage the mechanics of the cage leading the miners to the bottom. There are also the buildings of the lamp factory, the forge and the «hot room», composed of a central volume, a vast cloakroom called the «hanging room», where the miners hung their work clothes to dry. They then showered in the side aisles.

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# Hiking guide

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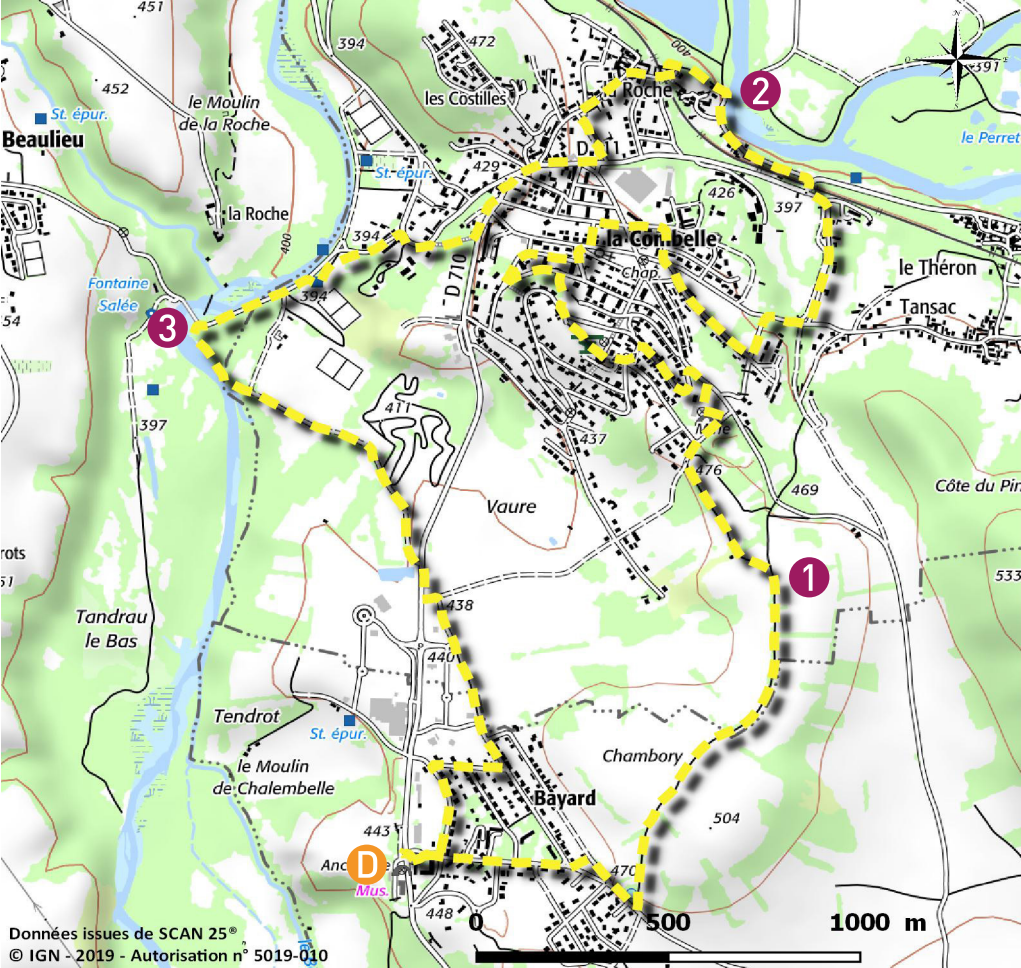
## Des geules noires aux bateliers

Starting point : Brassac-les-Mines



- Distance : 9,5 km
- Hiking Time : 3 h
- Difficulty : Medium
- Marking Out : Yellow
- Height Difference : 146 m





**D** Starting point - From the car park, cross the D710, go around the Communauté de Communes building on the right, go under the porch, cross the road of La Combelle and take the rue de Solignat opposite until you reach the avenue des Gueules-Noires. Take the dirt road on the left for 50 m, continue on the right and join the asphalt road, follow it on the right for 60 m and then turn left to go up on the plateau (view on the Nonette hill, the headframes and the Sancy) until a fork (leave the circuit Des Pas des Mineurs).

**1** At the cabin, go down on the left on La Combelle. At the houses, turn right until you reach the entrance of the old mine (Le puits des Graves, hot room, memorial), go down and turn left. After 80 m on the left, go up avenue du Puy-de-Dôme, turn left avenue d'Usson towards the orientation table, cross the plateau and join the road. Take the stairs on the right to the street below, turn left then 200 m (Galerie d'apprentissage des Mines. École Papillon) turn right onto rue Pelle-Fesse, leave the street on the left. At the stop sign, turn right, then turn left immediately towards the chapel, take the alley on the left, then right on avenue de la Poste. At the stop sign, cross over and leave rue de Petit-Puits on the right, take the 1st street on the right and in the housing estate turn right into rue des Grises then left into rue Descente des Grises. At the stop sign, turn right onto Avenue de

Tansac and then left onto Rue du Bac towards Brassac. Continue to the left, pass under the railway and take rue de La Batterie towards l'Allier (old footbridge).

**2** Go up on the left, turn off towards the houses, continue on the right ignoring the rue du 19 Mars 1962, turn left on rue de la Roche and follow the rue des Écoles. At the stop sign, turn right onto rue Germinal until you reach the crossroads (bus shelter) towards Bayard. Before the esplanade, go down the stairs on the right to the street below. Turn left and after the bend follow rue Marcel-Renesio until you reach the old pumping station, on the banks of the Allagnon river.

**3** Take the track to the left of the road, at the sports field, turn right, join the road and follow the Allagnon. Before the footbridge follow the path on the left along the river, continue on the wider path and join the D710, cross it. Turn right for 80 m then left and right on the road to the houses. Follow the rue des Chambettes, then the avenue d'Armois, take the first right, then the 2nd street on the left route de la Combelle. Go under the porch and get back to the starting point.

