Did you know ?

→ THE CASTLE OF USSON

Possession of the Counts of Auvergne then of Duke Jean de Berry, son of King Jean Le Bon, the Usson castle became part of the royal estate in 1416. It is considered in the 15th century as one of the strongest places in the kingdom. According to a depiction in the armorial of Revel (illustrated manuscript, collection of coats of arms, composed around 1456 by Guillaume Revel), the castle was dominated by a quadrangular keep preceded by three enclosures. A fourth enclosure protected the village and the church. The fortress was demolished in 1633 in the context of asserting royal power over the local nobility.

→ QUEEN MARGOT

Daughter of King Henry II and Catherine de Medici, Marguerite de Valois married in 1572 Henri de Navarre, leader of the Protestants and future King Henry IV. She is imprisoned in the castle of Usson in 1586 on the orders of her brother Henry III, in the midst of the political and military confusion of the religious wars. "Queen Margot» is an essential princely figure of this period of unrest. As early as 1587, she negotiated the conditions of her freedom and regained her status as castelaine, with Usson castle as part of her dowry. She resides there for 19 years, maintains a princely court patronised by the Auvergne aristocracy and the artists of the time, wrote her memoirs, up to her return to Paris in 1605 after the de-marriage from Henri IV (1599).

CONTACT
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Hiking guide

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Le pic d'Usson
Starting point : St-Rémy-de-Chargnat

Auvergne Pays d'Issoire
Ressentez - Vibrez - Savourez

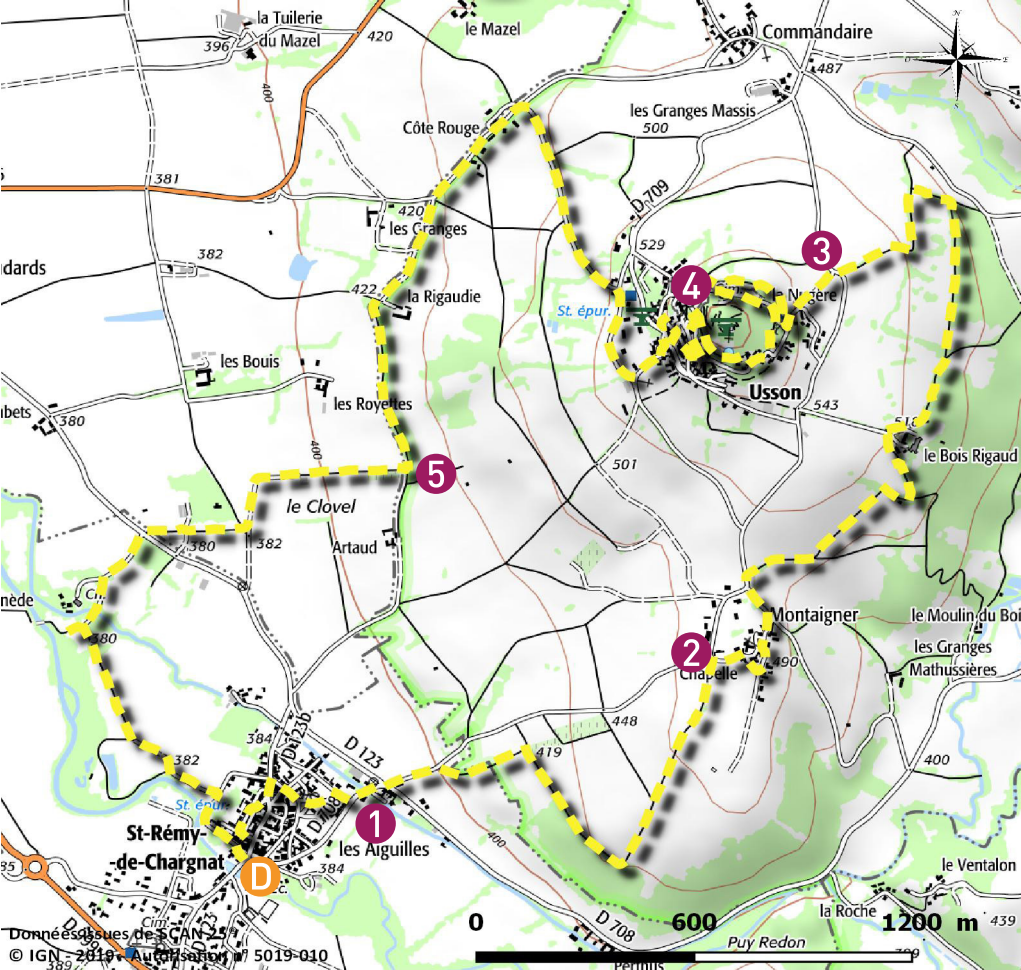|	
🗺	Distance : 11 km
🕐	Hiking Time : 3 h
🚶	Difficulty : Medium
✝	Marking Out : Yellow
⛰	Height Difference : 290 m

D Starting point - From the starting sign, at the bus shelter after the Town Hall, turn right towards the fairground. Go on rue H. Pourrat on the right. At the next intersection turn left, then take the second street on the right, rue des vignerons. Turn right at the first street (at the bottom of the stairs), then turn left at the next street, rue au Chanvre. Continue to the left across the Place de l'Ormeau and then take the Varennes road. Turn right into rue de la Forge. Go around the church on the right by the rue de la Reine Margot, 100 m further on the right, then on the left until the crossroads with the D123.

1 Cross this crossing towards Usson, go up the first grassy road on the right. At the T-junction, go to the right, take the path along a coppice forest, then go up between fields, facing the peak of Usson, to a first house (view on the Cézallier and the Sancy massif).

2 Go to the right, cross the hamlet; at the end of the street, go to the left. At the exit, go around a hangar and turn right onto a balcony path. At the first fork, continue to the left. In front of the castle turn right and then walk along a property (Bois Rigaud, 17th century). Turn left three times and reach a road.

3 Cross the road and pass in front of the transformer and head towards the village of Usson. Facing the cross and the fountain, go to the right. At the perimeter wall, go under the porch, then left (picnic area). Follow the small road passing between the houses. At the sight of the cross, take the path to the right and reach the top of the village of Usson (at the water tower, beautiful basalt organs). Go to the Romanesque church (panorama on the Sancy massif and the Cézallier).

4 From the church - educational signage in enamelled lava, historical on Queen Margot - (possibility to go back and forth to the top of the site of the Virgin of Usson, 360° view), go down into the village. At the exit of Usson, turn right by the road. At the last house, continue to the left. At the crossroads turn left. In a curve, take to the left a wide stony and then grassy path to a vineyard.

5 Go to the right on the dirt road along a very old clay wall for about 700 m, then turn right. Cut the road, go in front. At the entrance of the castle (château de la Vernède, mill), continue to the left. Back to the mill, go opposite on a grassy path to the village of Saint-Rémy-de-Chargnat.