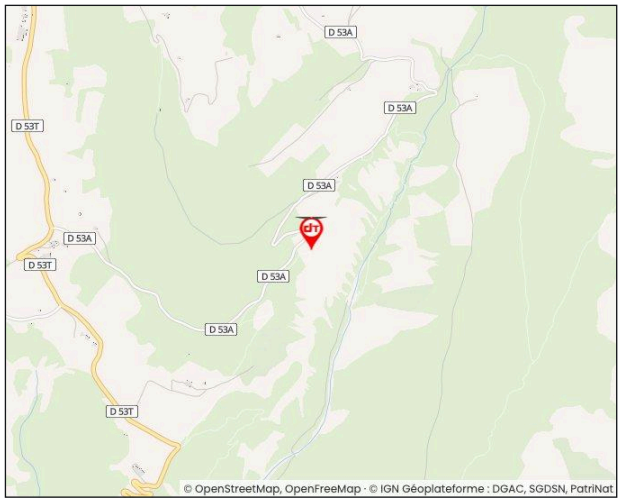
The Demoiselles Coiffées of Theus

Unusual · Hautes-Alpes

GPS coordinates	44.48808, 6.19954
Elevation	1,216 m
Maximum height	120 m max
Access	Direct access by car
Nearest aerodrome	Hôpital Heliport 13 km NW · spot 457 m higher
Spot reference	307113



Spot location and restrictions (Drone-Spot map image)

Sun (local times, UTC+01:00)

Day	Dawn	Sunrise	Sunset	Dusk	Day length	Golden hour
Sat 21 Nov	07:07	07:39	17:03	17:35	9 h 23	07:39–08:24 · 16:18–17:03
Sun 22 Nov	07:09	07:41	17:02	17:34	9 h 21	07:41–08:26 · 16:17–17:02
Mon 23 Nov	07:10	07:42	17:01	17:33	9 h 19	07:42–08:27 · 16:16–17:01

Nearby aerodromes

Aerodrome	Type	Distance	Elevation
Hôpital Heliport	Heliport	13 km NW	759 m
Gap - Tallard Airfield	Aerodrome	13 km W	605 m
Seyne les Alpes Glider Field	Aerodrome	21 km SE	1,200 m
La Motte du Caire Glider Field	Aerodrome	23 km SW	650 m

Description

Between Serre-Ponçon and Remollon, the Vallauria valley holds the largest concentration in France of Demoiselles Coiffées (or Fairy Chimneys) The Demoiselles Coiffées of Théus emerge from a ruin-like landscape on the slopes of Mont Colombis, in soft ground deposited by glaciers. In these moraines, the stones are not sorted, so elements of all sizes are mixed together, from boulders to clay. In hot periods, the water contained in the soil evaporates toward the surface but stays trapped under the biggest boulders, allowing slow, even crystallization in the "chimney". As erosion continues, it carries away the unstable material and leaves the cemented material in place. The Demoiselle is born... In Théus, the oldest of them are said to be 18,000 years old.

Scan to open the up-to-date spot page: weather, map and restrictions.

https://www.drone-spot.tech/en/fiche-spot.aspx?id=307113

Before every flight: check the UAS zones map, NOTAMs and temporary areas, the weather and the Kp index.

Preparing the flight

Pre-flight Check-List

- ☐ Area checked: UAS zones, restrictions, protected areas
- ☐ NOTAMs and temporary areas checked
- ☐ Weather: wind, gusts, rain, visibility; Kp index
- ☐ Operator number displayed on the drone
- ☐ Training certificate or licence with me
- ☐ Third-party liability insurance checked
- ☐ Batteries charged: drone, controller, phone
- ☐ Propellers, motors and frame in good condition
- ☐ Memory card inserted and empty
- ☐ Software up to date, compass and IMU calibrated
- ☐ Return to home: home point and return height set
- ☐ Electronic signalling or remote ID active
- ☐ Take-off area clear, people informed and at a distance
- ☐ Observer present for FPV flights

Key rules of the open category

Recreational flying in France: European open-category rules, applied by the DGAC.

- Maximum height: 120 m above the ground, lower where a restriction requires it.
- Always keep the drone in sight; when flying FPV, an observer keeps it in sight next to you.
- Never fly over crowds and keep the distances of your subcategory (A1, A2 or A3).
- Respect UAS geographical zones: around aerodromes, prohibited or restricted areas, protected areas, sensitive sites.
- Register as an operator if the drone weighs 250 g or more or carries a camera (toys excepted), and display the number on the drone.
- Training: online A1/A3 certificate from 250 g or for a class C1 drone; A2 certificate to fly closer to people with a class C2 drone.
- Always give way to manned aircraft and land if one approaches.
- Respect privacy: no images that identify people without their consent; aerial photography is prohibited in some areas.
- Check your third-party liability insurance.
- In France: registration and training on AlphaTango (DGAC); a drone of 800 g or more must broadcast electronic signalling (or the remote ID of class-marked drones).

Non-exhaustive summary: rules change. Reference: the DGAC open-category guide and the country's regulations.

Useful links

UAS zones map around the spot : https://www.drone-spot.tech/en/carte-uas.aspx?lat=44.48808&lon=6.19954
Drone pilot library : https://www.drone-spot.tech/en/bibliotheque
DGAC open-category guide (French) : https://www.drone-spot.tech/en/bibliotheque/guide-categorie-ouverte
Registration and training (AlphaTango) : https://alphatango.aviation-civile.gouv.fr
NOTAMs and temporary areas (SOFIA Briefing) : https://sofia-briefing.aviation-civile.gouv.fr

My flight notes

Information sheet generated by Drone-Spot from community data: it replaces neither official aeronautical information nor the regulations. The remote pilot remains responsible for the flight.