

SION
SWISS CAPITAL OF THE ALPS

LEISURE BISSES OF SION

Enjoy scenic walks along picturesque paths by the water, through the vineyard and its wall terraces, or through forests, orchards and pastures. Admire the beautiful panorama of the city of Sion, its hills and castles, and the Rhône Valley.





Musée
valaisan des Bisses



Botyre - Ayent - Anzère



musee-des-bisses.ch

THE BISSES OF VALAIS

Traditional irrigation canals and hiking paths

Popular with hikers for their gentle slope, the bisses are as much a part of Valais' heritage as mountains, raclette and wine. Nevertheless, their original purpose, to bring water from the glaciers to the cultivated land on the slopes, remains essential to farming in the region.

These centuries-old structures underwent two major phases of development, in the 15th century and the second half of the 19th century. Today, they still play a crucial role in local agriculture: over 80% of the irrigated land in Valais relies on the water supplied by these canals. More than 700 bisses have marked the history of Valais! About 300 are today considered of touristic and cultural relevance, of which 200 are still in use for agriculture.

The decline of mountain farming and the introduction of new irrigation systems could have sounded the death knell for the bisses in the second half of the 20th century. Fortunately, their heritage significance together with their high potential for tourism have allowed the bisses to renew themselves and fulfil new functions. The paths beside the bisses invite you to contemplate nature and admire the views of the mountains while passing through a heritage dating back several centuries.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Along the bisses, you will rarely find refreshment stands or restaurants, so don't forget to take a drink with you. We advise you to wear sturdy footwear and adequate clothing for the season.

When the snow cover is low, it is also possible to follow them in winter.

All start and finish points are reachable by public transport.

BEHAVIOUR ALONG THE BISSES

Respect other hikers. Remove anything that could block the canal. Warn the bisse guards in case the canal would be overflowing or blocked. Keep dogs on a lead.

DISCOVER OUR 6 BISSES

The city of Sion is fortunate enough to feature six bisses on its territory, and there are many others in the region. If you'd like to find out more, please contact us and we'll hand you a general map of the bisses in Valais.



INFORMATION

Tourist Office
Espace des Remparts 19
1950 Sion
T +41 (0)27 327 77 27
siontourisme.ch
#visitsion

If you're interested in the epic of bisses throughout history, the Musée valaisan des Bisses (bisses museum), located in Botyre-Ayent (20 min. from Sion), welcomes you to discover this jewel of Valais heritage!

musee-des-bisses.ch



BISSE OF CLAVAU

The Bisse of Clavau, built around 1450, overlooks the Rhône Valley between Sion and St-Léonard.



DURATION
2 ½ hours

Itinerary

From the train station, take the following streets:
> Avenue de la Gare > Rue de Lausanne >
Rue du Grand-Pont > Rampe St-George >
Rue du Vieux-Moulin

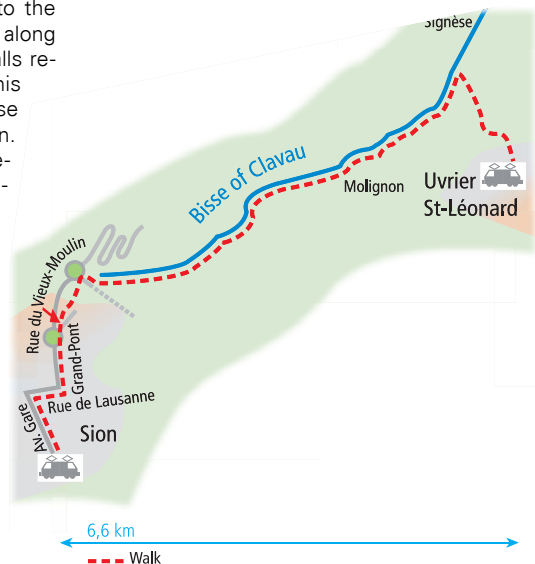


LENGHT
6.6 km

Next to the « Brasserie valaisanne » take the stairs on your right and follow the steep path up to the Bisse of Clavau, start of your walk. The path along the bisse overlooks the Rhône Valley. The walls retaining the vineyards are very high making this side of the Valley look like giant steps. The bisse passes through the vineyard region of Molignon. Then, the path dives into the Lienne Valley, below the village of Signèse. From that point, follow the path leading to Uvrier and St-Léonard.

In St-Léonard, you can visit Europe's largest underground lake (lac-souterrain.com).

Return to Sion by train or by bus (cff.ch).





BISSE OF LENTINE

The Bisse of Lentine begins in the Sionne then irrigates the vineyard of Savièse and Sion before ending its course in the Lake of Montorge.

 **DURATION**
2 ¼ hours

Itinerary

From the train station, take the following streets:
 > Avenue de la Gare > Rue de Lausanne > Rue du Grand-Pont > Route du Rawyl

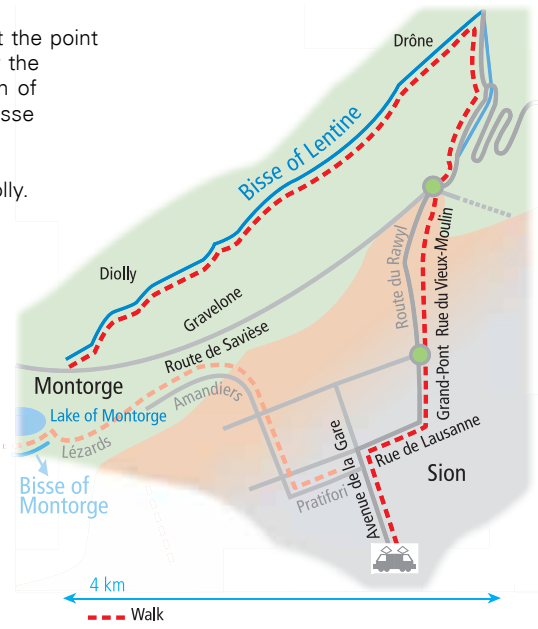
 **LENGTH**
4 km

You need to leave the Route du Rawyl at the point where it crosses the Sionne river. Follow the river on its western bank in the direction of Drône village. Below the village, the bisse crosses the road.

Follow the bisse to reach the hamlet of Diolly.

Return to Sion either:

1. by following the Route de Savièse
2. with the path leading to Montorge
3. by post bus (cff.ch).





Discover an exceptional vineyard in the wonderful protected site of Montorge at the gates of Sion.

The Domaine is part of the natural site of Montorge, listed in the inventory of natural sites of national importance.

Built in 1885, the Montorge irrigation channel brings water from the lake to the southern slope of the hill, irrigating the oldest wine-growing estate in Valais: the Domaine du Mont d'Or.

Hikers will have the opportunity to wander through a 24-hectares vineyard, a rarity in a country where most winemakers manage a patchwork of small plots.

Here, Johannisberg is king and covers half of the Domaine's surface area.

It consists of 220 terraces, supported by 15 km of dry stone walls and dotted with 12 "guérites", reminding us that this heritage site combines natural diversity and the hard work of humans over the centuries.

In the cellar, we find the wisdom of the ancients who carved this sanctuary out of the rock, creating a beneficial coolness. Most of the wines are vinified and then aged in large oval oak barrels called "foudres", allowing for the harmonious development of the personality of the famous Mont d'Or wines.

The Domaine offers numerous wine tourism activities, including: an Escape Game in the heart of the vineyard, wine tastings, an educational visit with a mobile application, an adventure between treasure hunt and orienteering race with geocaching.

You can also discover the Caveau du Mont d'Or, a wine bar and local shop that enhances the local products of the Domaine.



Visit us

BISSE OF MONTORGE

The Bisse of Montorge, built in 1885, collects the water from the Lake of Montorge and distributes it on the southern slopes of the hill, including the famous Mont d'Or vineyard.



DURATION
2 hours

Itinerary

From the train station, take the following streets:

> Avenue de la Gare > Avenue de Pratifori > Rue des Amandiers > Chemin des Lézards > Rue de Gravelone



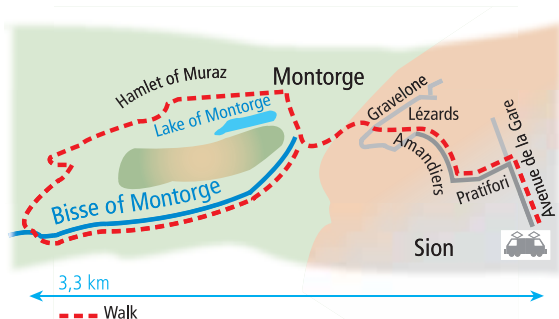
LENGTH
3.3 km

At the end of Rue de Gravelone, above the retirement home, take the small path on your right up to the Lake of Montorge through the vineyard. From there, follow the edge of the hill along the path up to the top. There you will discover the ruins of a castle built by the Duke of Savoy at the beginning of the 13th century.

To return:

1. Go back on the bisse and follow it to the west to get round the hill and reach the hamlet of Muraz. You can return to Sion via Route de Savièse.

2. Continue along the bisse until Pont-de-la-Morge. Return possible by post bus (cff.ch).



BISSE OF SALINS

First mentioned in 1435, the Bisse of Salins, collects the water in la Printse, in Plan Désert, to irrigate the orchards, pastures and raspberry bushes of Beuson, Bioley and Salins.

The walk goes through various environments: alders on wetlands, dry grasslands on the sunny slopes, sea buckthorn with its red berries in autumn, spruce forests and raspberry crops.

Itinerary

This bisse can be combined with the Bisse of Baar.

You can start your walk in Bramois. Walk up in the direction of la Crête and la Vernaz. After crossing the village of Salins along the main road, you will reach the start of the bisse after 4 hairpin bends. From there, follow the path along the bisse to Veysonnaz/Nendaz. Continue until the hydrant in the Printse river above the village of Beuson.

> Bisse of Baar (see previous page).



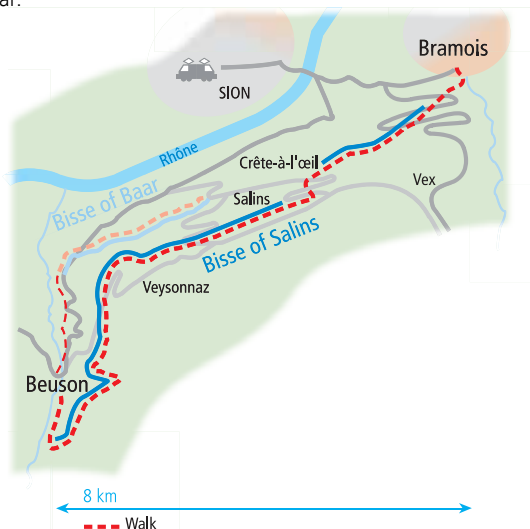
DURATION

3 ½ hours



LENGTH

8 km



GRAND BISSE OF VEX

© Aline Fournier

Built at the beginning of the 15th century, this bisse has been renovated and the water has flowed along its entire length since 2001.



DURATION
3 ¼ hours

Itinerary

Take the bus from Sion towards Mayens-de-Sion (1325 m). From there, follow the road just above the restaurant « Le Relais des Mayens » to reach the start of the bisse.

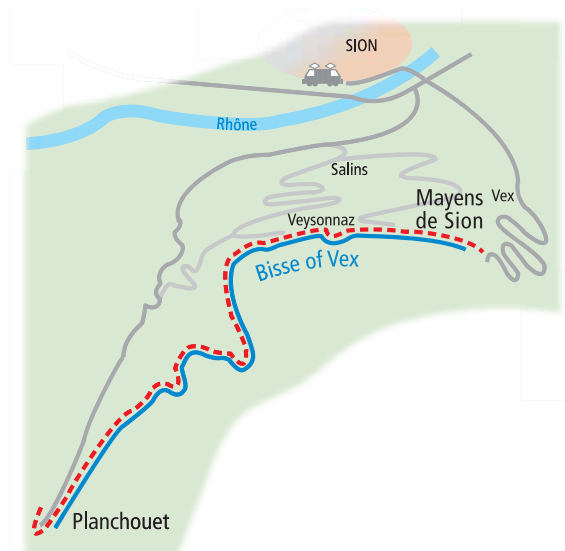


LENGTH
11 km

When you arrive in Veysonnaz (1360 m), continue along the bisse right next to the cable car station.

Follow the bisse in the direction of Planchouet (1505 m).

Return to Sion by bus (cff.ch).



11 km
--- Walk



ALSO TO BE DONE!

anzère

BISSE D'AYENT

Nicolas Sedlatcchek



11.3 km | 3:00 h | D+68 m | D- 519 m | Level medium

Built in 1442, the **Bisse d'Ayent** draws its water directly from the Lienne river below the imposing dam wall. The bisse irrigates the pastures and vineyards of Ayent and Grimisuat, either in the traditional way or by spray irrigation, and ends up in Revouire lake. To reach it, you start your hike on the wall of **Tseuzier Dam** and then head down into the Lienne valley until you meet the bisse. From here you can marvel at a piece of history and see the incredible work done by our forefathers, some of whom lost their lives building these canals to the vineyards below. Since 2018, the Bisse d'Ayent appears on the 100 Swiss franc banknote.



THE ROUTE




www.anzere.ch

BISSE OF BAAR

© Laetitia Scharaschia

The Bisse of Baar was built before 1450. It is located on the left side of the Rhône Valley, above Sion. It collects its water underneath Brignon castle and irrigates the beautiful apricot trees and vineyards of Baar and Salins.

 **DURATION**
1 ½ hours

 **LENGTH**
5 km

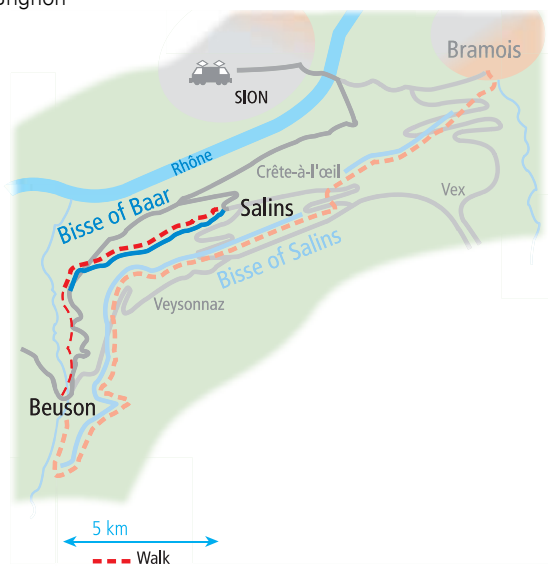
Itinerary

This bisse can be combined with the Bisse of Salins.

When you arrive in Beuson from the Bisse of Salins, follow the ancient road which leads down to Brignon castle.

From the castle of Brignon, go down towards the Printse. At the end of the village, take the path that crosses the last stable and follow the path of the bisse up to the village of Pravidondaz.

From this point, you can take a post bus to go back up to the start of the bisse of Salins (cff.ch).





Nature

Rue des Châteaux



Valais Cantonal Museums

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Sion

History

Bourg of Valère



Art

Place de la Majorie

musees-valais.ch

October – May: 11:00 – 17:00
June – September: 11:00 – 18:00



Musées cantonaux du Valais
Valais Cantonal Museums