

THE MANDEMENT VINEYARDS

From Geneva railway station we take the RER (regional train) direction La Plaine and alight at Russin. After less than fifteen minutes, we reach the Teppes de Verbois, a protected 250-acre national nature reserve that lies between the Rhone, the railway line and the



Verbois dam. Numerous boards provide interesting information on flora and fauna. Once inside the reserve, special markings have to be followed. Leaving the reserve via the Allondon River delta, we follow the signposts up to the Dardagny plateau, passing La Donzelle above the Rhone and the hamlet of La Plaine (RER station). We cross Dardagny village with its castle, its beautifully restored farmhouses and dwellings and descend to the small valley of the Allondon. We continue to Granges, passing the **mediaeval chapel of Malval**.

Once over the Granges Bridge across the Allondon, we can choose to continue our itinerary, cross the cantonal campsite, move upriver through Grands-Bois and leave the forest at Moulin-Fabry behind us. We climb up the hillside to Chouilly, a wine-growing village with a castle and beautiful dwellings. From there we walk down a steep incline to Satigny station where we pick up the RER again. Along the way, we make a stop at the priory at Satigny-Dessus with its very special gothic choir.

As an alternative, after arriving at the Granges Bridge, we can reach the RER station at Russin via the Petets woods and the Monts-de-Russin with its panoramic view of the Geneva basin. (approximately the same walking time).

Walking time : approximately 3.5 hours.



THE RHONE AND ITS NATURAL TREASURES

The River Rhone, that has seen millennia old cultures, sung the praises of Liguria customs and the splendour of great cities, flows 812 km from the Saint-Gothard to the Mediterranean Sea, and, on its way, crosses 27.2 km of Geneva territory. A walking trail called "du Rhône" follows practically the whole length of the left bank.

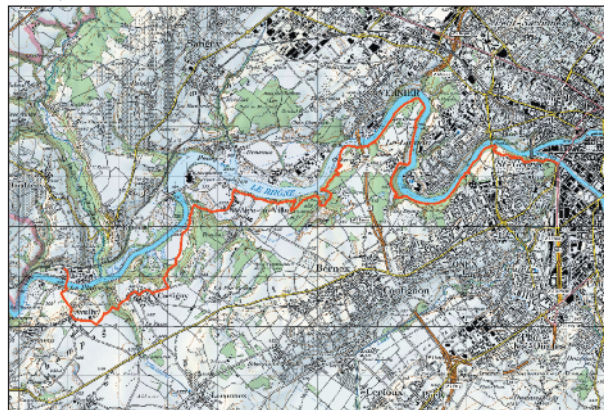


We start from the Bois de la Bâtie. We go past the Saint-Georges cemetery in a southerly direction and descend below the Pont Butin. The path leads us close to the river past woods which host a great variety of animal and floral species, often originating from the Rhone corridor. We reach the end of the Loël peninsula, whose hamlet faces the **city of Lignon** on the right bank. This residential complex boasts 12 floors, two towers and 2800 apartments. The path continues facing the Vernier hillside from which emerges the highway. We pass under it at Chèvres. A little further along, we enter the Planfonds and Châtillon woods.

As we leave the woods, the extraordinary panorama of La Champagne opens up before us. We cross the village of Aire-la-Ville and pass the Verbois hydroelectric dam to reach the village of Cartigny. The old Rhone riverbed serves today as a nature reserve (Moulin-de-Vert). In the distance we can see the Fort de l'Ecluse. We now follow the chemin des écoliers towards the Nant des Cruets, a path that has connected the villages of Cartigny and Avully for centuries. In Avully we stop to admire the Desbaillet house, one of the most beautiful Geneva dwellings. It was at the foot of the Avully embankment, above the Rhone, that Julius Cesar built a stockade in 58 B.C. to keep the Helvetians at bay...

We cross the Rhone to reach the RER (regional train) station at La Plaine.

Walking time: approximately 5 hours.



FROM FOREST TO LAKE

We take the "Z" bus from Geneva railway station direction Collex-Bossy. This half-hour trip gives us an amazing glimpse of the beautiful countryside around Chambésy, Bellevue and the Jura mountains. We leave the bus at the "Seuchat" bus stop right after Collex. We walk towards La Bâtie, a hamlet nestled in one



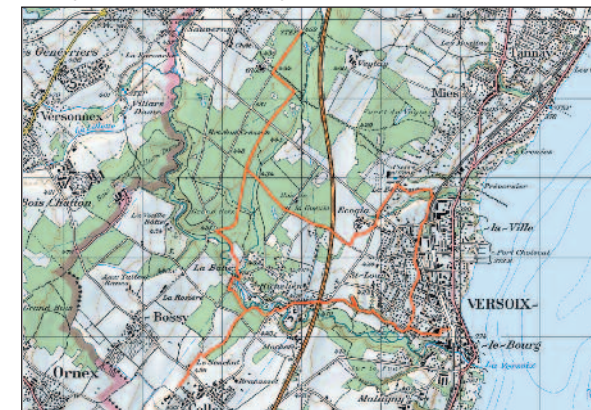
of the Versoix River troughs. We pass La Bâtie and take a wide, beautiful path through the Sainte-Marie Forest. From there on, we hike in the Forest of Versoix, which spreads as far as Chavannes-de-Bogis in the canton of Vaud.

At the Sauverny Observatory we have a choice: either we leave the canton of Geneva to reach Coppet in the canton of Vaud (train and boat) via Commugny, or we stay in the canton of Geneva. In the latter case, we should already take a different direction at Sainte-Marie (shelter), cross the Douve forest (shelter), cross the Ecogia estate and reach La Bécassière sports ground on the outskirts of Versoix.

From there, we can take the "V" bus direction Geneva railway station. From La Bécassière it is also possible to continue towards Versoix, following the Nant de Braille, then the Versoix canal to reach Pont-Céard or Versoix railway stations.

A shorter option is to follow the Versoix downstream from the end of the **Collex canal**. We cross the Estier canal. It owes its name to the family that still runs the small electric power plant. We continue along the canal to the hamlet where the old mills of Richelien can still be seen. We cross the Versoix, this time to reach the Saint-Loup canal, a romantic route much appreciated in the summer thanks to the shade provided by the sycamore trees and which leads us to La Colombière. We can then continue along the Versoix canal to Pont-Céard railway station or we can continue to La Bécassière (bus "V") or amble down gently to Versoix railway station.

Walking time: 2-3 hours, depending on the option taken.



AT THE GATES OF GENEVA

We take the tram direction Bachet-de-Pesay, and alight at the "Ancienne" tram stop. (Carouge City Hall). We walk five minutes towards Sigismond Place, near the cemetery. We cross the Val d'Arve road using the Moraines foot bridge, climb up to the Pinchat plateau, cross the Pinchat College school grounds and continue towards the Salève via the Tower of Pinchat. We cross the "pré-promenade de la Guinguette" to reach the back of the Vessy hospital complex and then take the steps down to the Arve River and the sports complex at "Grande-Fin". Above us is the residential area of Champel-Conches. At the Vessy hydroelectric plant, we follow the left bank of the Arve and climb the steps up the cliff to reach the Pin woods. The path continues on top of the cliff, along a line of trees until we reach the Sierne Bridge, which, however, we do not cross. Instead, we cross the cantonal road and walk uphill to the hamlet of Sierne, which is of significant architectural interest. Without noticing, we have been in France for 600 meters to return by the Jewish cemetery at Veyrier. From there, we have the choice of several bus routes to take us back to town.



Walking time: approximately 2 hours.



GENÈVERANDO AND SUISSE RANDO

The Geneva Cantonal Hiking Association, known today as "GenèveRando", was founded on February 15, 1973, 40 years after the Swiss Hiking Federation, now known as "Suisse Rando". Why the long wait? The cramped nature of the territory and the high level of motorization was probably the reason.

Yet, hiking was already well established thanks to the support of the *Geneva Electric Tramway Company* and since 1970 by the *Swiss Touring Club*. In 1987 various local and federal decisions were taken to protect the Swiss hiking network. However, only in 1998 did this become Geneva cantonal law, followed by the master plan in 2002 and its implementation in 2003.

Today, following an agreement with the cantonal authorities, "GenèveRando" is responsible for signposting some 350 km of walking trails.

(See national map, the yellow Carte d'excursions, Genève 270 T, 1:50'000th.)

To this must be added 43 km of the two national itineraries numbers 3 and 4 and around 110 km of cross-border walking trails marked according to the Charter of the Departments of Ain and Upper Savoy.

"GeneveRando" offers its members a well-rounded program of one-day excursions, summer and winter (*in winter with snow shoes*), as well as longer hikes ranging from 2 days to one week in Switzerland as well as abroad. In every case, hikers are accompanied by experienced guides who will have conducted a reconnaissance of the route beforehand. Our website www.geneverando.ch gives details of each excursion, illustrated with photographs, as well as general useful hiking information.

Recommendations

Markings and signposting are essential for hikers unfamiliar with the region. But they also serve the dual purpose of leading them away from ecologically sensitive areas.



The itineraries are bi-directional (a loop when we cross to France) and public transport is always available. The hiker is responsible for organizing his itinerary according to the time he has available and the prevailing weather conditions. Walking speed of 4.2 km per hour is a good rule of thumb. Around Geneva, low mounting shoes are usually sufficient. Note, however, that after rain, forest trails can be muddy and high mounting shoes that cover ankles and well-profiled soles are recommended, especially in the Salève and Jura mountains. Finally, take into account that *the itineraries described below also include steps*.

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Translated from "Randonner à Genève... 4 propositions parmi d'autres!"

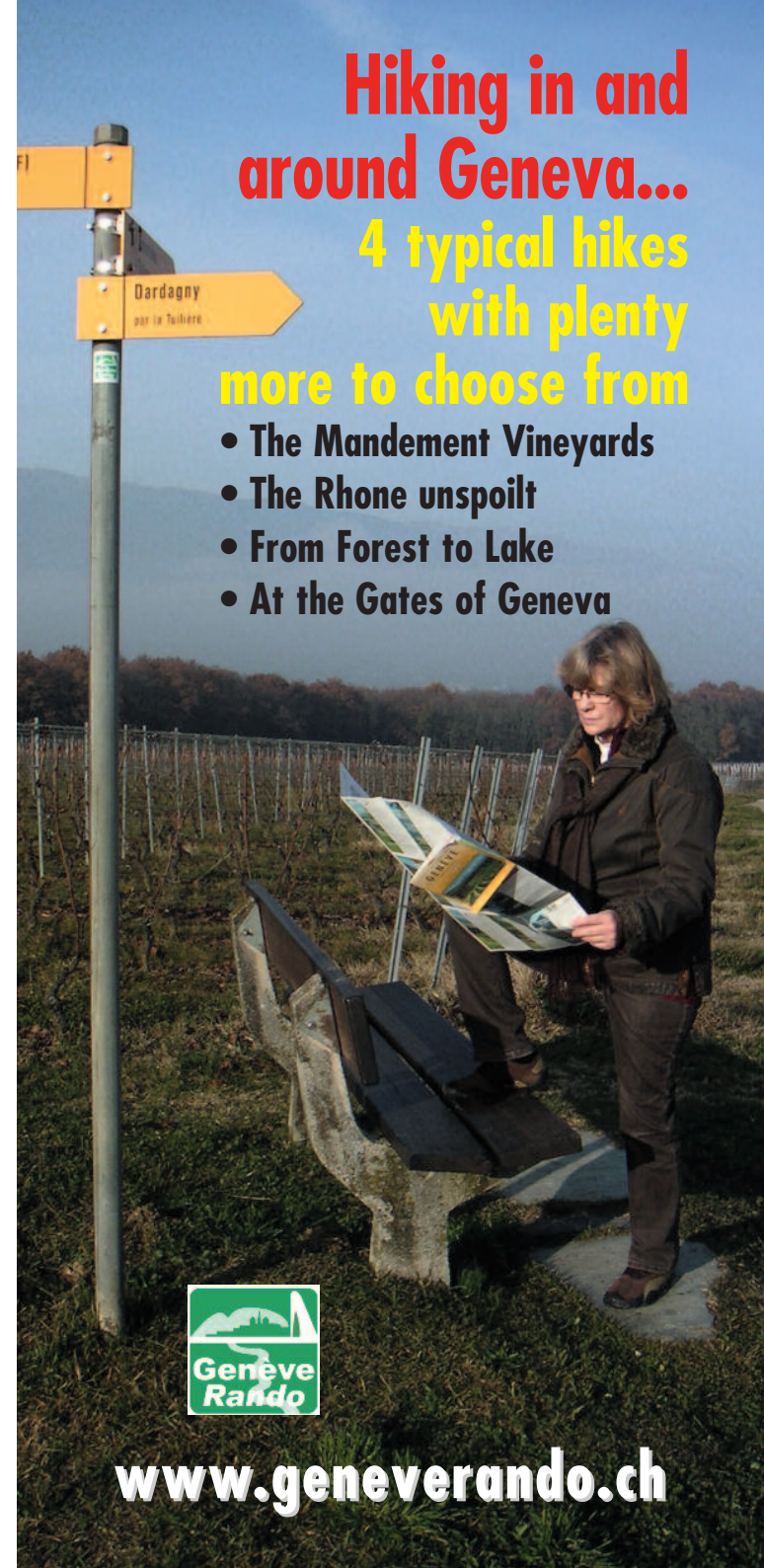
Proposed by Jean-Claude CIMA - Translated by Steve PALLAY

www.geneverando.ch

Hiking in and around Geneva...

4 typical hikes with plenty more to choose from

- The Mandement Vineyards
- The Rhone unspoilt
- From Forest to Lake
- At the Gates of Geneva



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