Arpenaz

Create: 2023-11-20 21:15:07	**Update:** 2024-11-11 14:08:31	**Print:** 2026-10-30 01:10:29
Country: France **Region:** Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes **Subregion:** Haute-Savoie **Town:** Sallanches		
Difficulty: very difficult	**Grading:** v6 a3 V	**Total time:** 10h30
Approachtime: 2h30	**Tourtime:** 8h	**Returntime:** 0min
Altitude entry: 1550m	**Altitude exit:** 550m	**Delta Altitude:** 1000m
Canyon length: 2250m	**Highest rapell:** 145m	**Amount rapells:**
Transport: on Foot	**Rock type:**	**Drainage area:** km²
Season:	**Orientation:**	**Best Time:**
Rating: ☆ 3.8 (3)	**Info:** ★ 3 (2)	**Belay:** ★ 2 (2)

Specialities:

Gear:
Ropes: 2x 60m

Summary: (machine translated)
Data translated by Descente

Hydrology:

Access: (machine translated)
If you are coming from the Bonneville side of the A40 white highway, take the Cluses exit and then the N205 towards Sallanches. Drive past Magland and turn off in Oëx on a small road towards Luzier. You pass a first watercourse: Le Nant de la Rippaz, and 2-3 km later you cross the Torrent d'Arpenaz. 250 m after this bridge, you will find a path on the left that leads to the parking lot.

Note that there is a dirt road that is closed for part of the year (generally open from September) and can only be accessed with an off-road vehicle. It is the slope that leads up to the Verran hut by continuing the slope of the intermediate access from Crève Coeur.

Approach: (machine translated)
Follow the path that leads to the Veréran hut. You enter the canyon 500m before the hut, when the path crosses the torrent. Caution: follow the direction of the hut to the exit. Branches cross the torrent several times before entering the canyon.

Tour: (machine translated)
The first part is long, with fewer large waterfalls. However, there is a 120 m long waterfall and a 90 m long one. The rest of the trail is largely hidden by trees. This part has beautiful, deep parts and is less busy.
The second part consists mainly of the impressive succession of more than 250 m of vertical drops, with the main waterfall being a C200 with three relays.
On September 6, 2023, the large waterfall of Arpenaz was re-equipped by SDIS 74 in close collaboration with CDPC 74, which provided the material for the re-equipment. The aim was to clean the obsolete equipment and refit the relays with chain-shaped stainless steel pin seals.

So the topographic view is as follows:

In the pool at the exit of the big waterfall: a fixed handrail is placed on the right bank to get to the relay for the first rappel.
Be sure to make an abseilable handrail on the left bank on two sealed pins and use the fixed handrail to get to the first abseil relay. There is a sealed clipable pin in the middle to attach your abseilable handrail and make it easier to overcome this difficulty.

1st rappel: Relay Full Throttle (Mood!!!). Two pedals are set up to help with the rappel. Then 48 m rappel with spider web. For the tall ones, there is the option of touching the wall with the tip of your foot to swing and reach the next station. The others can easily swing or help themselves with a stick.

2nd rappel: 45 m rappel in the axis to reach the next rappel, which is on a ledge (obvious to find).

3rd rappel: Make sure this abseil is new and changes the information of all TOPOS. Rappel for 55 meters, pulling slightly to the right as you rappel. You will pass the old relay (we have left a dot to show you the way). Continue down for about 5 to 8 meters to come across a small, clearly visible ledge. The relay is visible in the last few meters. Relay with 3-point chain.

4th rappel: Rappels of about 40 meters. Past the first pool to the exit of the next waterfall. Chain relay with handrail.

5th rappel: Approx. 35 m.

Walk from the base of the large waterfall and descend the riverbed. The relay of C23 has been redone. Relay on chained spits 2 m above the old relay. The last abseil is a C45 which allows you to reach the pool at the foot of the waterfall with regular crowds.

Some old resting places have been preserved and restored. They serve as storage relays for group abseils. There is a handrail to reach the new stainless steel relays for rappels.
However, the new equipment does not change the fact that very good experience is required for such combinations!

There are two possible escape routes through this canyon, which are very easy to find as the paths meet the watercourse there! However, this canyon is very long and once you have started the different parts, there is no escape for the first 2 to 3 hours and for the last at least 3 to 4 hours!

This canyon can only be tackled with little water, otherwise the sequences are deadly. A light wind is enough to move the water jet 20 m sideways at the last chain!
Excellent control of the large verticals is required.
Plan to retrofit, as the ice puts the anchors to the test in winter.

For your information, the LPO (Ligue de Protection des Oiseaux) informs us of the presence of a pair of eagle owls (for 15 years). Seen from the parking lot, the nesting sites are located on the ledges on the right side of the waterfall. Its nesting season, during which it needs absolute peace and quiet, lasts from December to the exit of June (rather outside the optimal time for canyoning - which is a good thing). Given the distance between the rappelling routes and its nesting sites, cohabitation with canyoneers is not a problem for it. This species is fragile, there are only about 20 pairs left in Haute Savoie and only about 1000 in France.

Return: (machine translated)
After a few seconds in a field, you will reach the parking lot on the left bank. You will find some spectators picnicking below the waterfall in summer!

Coordinates:
Canyon Start 45.9772 6.6710
Canyon End 45.9756 6.6407
Parking at Exit 45.9744 6.6406
Alternative Canyon Start 45.9778 6.6598

Reports:

2026-09-23 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Arpenaz Intégrale faite avec Lucas et Mathieu (math74) en 8h, du haut en bas, avec pause pique nique sur le replat du grand final.Montés à Veran en 4.4, et une voiture en bas.Départ à 7h15 du haut, ça faisait 9 degrés sans soleil, pas chaud le départ..L encaissement intermédiaire est superbe, dommage qu il y ait ces troncs géants qui ralentissent pas mal.Final de fou avec juste ce qu'il faut d eau pour se faire copieusement refroidir quand le vent détourne la cascade. Merci le K way !!Amarrages ok, pas mal de cordelette à priori assez récente. (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2411/observations.html)

2026-08-06 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Low | 👎 Not done
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Arpenaz (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2411/observations.html)

2026-07-31 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Arpenaz DC-, on aurait bien voulu un poil plus d'eau ou un vent plus favorable pour nous rafraîchir. Dernière partie du canyon parcouru à deux.Équipement avant la grande cascade un peu aléatoire, on a réussi à coincer la corde sur l'un des rappels en RD avant la grande cascade (frottements + huit bloqué sur une aspérité de la paroi) nous poussant à faire une petite remontée sur corde avant de descendre sur le tronc à gauche.Rien à dire sur l'équipement de la grande cascade, c'est nickel. Le second relais est pas évident à atteindre mais on s'y attendait, mieux vaut être grand ou bien équipé. (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2411/observations.html)

2026-07-27 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Arpenaz Superbe cascade. Avions fait que la partie basse, 1h de marche environ jusqu'à rejoindre le ruisseau. L'équipement est globalement correct. Il y aurait mieux à faire quand même. Dans la grande aucuns soucis, le topo est ultra clair. Dans la 55m (3eme rappel), ne pas exagérer en allant sur votre droite en descendant, c'est quasi dans l'axe. On retrouve tjrs le goujon témoin et le relais est juste après. Quelle ambiance ! On a pas fait les malins le cul dans le vide au 1er rappel.Bises Suze51 (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2411/observations.html)

2026-06-23 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Arpenaz L'enchainement final est très beau, sinon c'est long et désagréable. On a changé quelques cordelettes, des relais à surveiller. 5h15 à 3 pour l'intégrale.Pas mal de charognes et d'embacles dans le canyon. C'est zipette-land. (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2411/observations.html)

2026-06-18 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Normal | 👎 Not done
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Arpenaz Vu de la route : DC. (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2411/observations.html)

2026-06-14 | Jeanne Picart | ☆ ☆ ☆ |🕮 ★ ★ ★ |⚓ ★ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Very old anchors at the top. Slippery canyon with lots of log jams, especially in the second section (with 2 surprise chamois). In the last broken section, couldn't find the belay after R55 (after the third pitch), so drilled about 70–80 m from the third belay in the wall... (machine translated)

2026-06-14 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Arpenaz Fait l'intégrale avec une nuit au refuge de Veran.Les ancrages de la partie supérieure sont vraiment vieillissants et mériteraient d'être remplacés à court ou moyen terme. Les ancrages de cette partie sont souvent reliés avec de vieilles cordes fixes à même les plaquettes ce qui limitent un peu leur durée de vie... néanmoins, ça passe encore en l'état.Le 2ème encaissement est bien encombré d'arbres et la fin de celui-ci est vraiment pénible à cause des troncs et du rochers super glissant.Le dernière cascade est magnifique avec des ancrages de qualité. Malheureusement, on a manqué le 4ème relais et dû installer de nouveaux ancrages pour finaliser la descente.Bien que discontinue et glissante, la descente intégrale vaut vraiment le détour!A faire uniquement avec une équipe expérimentée! (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2411/observations.html)

2026-06-05 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Crazy | 👎 Not done
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Arpenaz La cascade est jolie mais de loin (Quelle: