

CELTIC TOUR ON PETIT-SALEVE

A journey into history and culture of ancient Celtic civilisation from ruins on Petit-Salève

Start & Arrival
Bus stop in Veyrier
"Veyrier-Douane"
(bus line #8)

- 1 **PIERRE A CUPULE**
Alt. 890m / Size 2x2m
- 2 **CAMP DES ALLOBROGES**
Alt. 899m / Size 250x200m
- 3 **PIERRE VIEILLE**
Alt. 853m / Size 6x1.5m

France métr...



Echelle 1 : 17.081 0 200 m

1. Pierre à cupule



At the southern limit of the Camp des Allobroges, a well stone is exposed above the cliffs in front of the Grand Salève. Well stones were very frequent in that period, and were used by Celtic druids as places for religious worship.

They were believed to benefit from a high cosmoteLLuric vibration, and centered on a vortex or a positive cosmo-telluric chimney as well as on a crossing of geomagnetic networks.

Celtic druids filled these well stones with water, and macerated medicinal plants to use them to treat sick people. To increase the benefits of these macerations, the lunar calendar was taken into account and the deities were ritually solicited. This is also the reason why the well stone is located in a tree-free area, with view on the sky.

2. Camp des Allobroges



At the top of Le Petit Salève, you can see the remaining banks of a fortified Allobrogian oppidum dating back to between the 5th and 1st centuries BC. The Allobrogiens were a Celtic population part of the Gauls who settled in the area that later became Savoy. An oppidum (plural oppida) is a large fortified Iron Age settlement. Most were built on fresh sites, usually on an elevated position. Such a location would have allowed the settlement to dominate nearby trade routes and may also have been important as a symbol of control of the area.

The development of oppida was a milestone in the urbanisation of the continent as they were the first large settlements North of the Alps that could genuinely be described as towns. While hill forts could accommodate up to 1'000 people, oppida in the late Iron Age could reach as large as 10'000 inhabitants. This 3-hectars settlement is partially surrounded by natural cliffs and was made more effective by the "ramparts" formed by banks of earth and stones supporting high wooden fences.

The Allobrogian oppidum on the Petit Salève was a lot more modest than its Geneva counterpart. The strategic location overlooks the Léman Basin and key thoroughfares including the Roman bridge over the Arve in Etrembières and the roads on either side of Le Salève and on the ridge.

3. Pierre Vieille



At about 500m North-East from the Camp des Allobroges some recumbent megalithic granitic stones can be found in the forest. Those stones were carried by the former glacier covering the top of Salève 20'000 years ago.

It is believed that they might have been used as dolmens or menhirs by local Celtic druids for religious worship.