

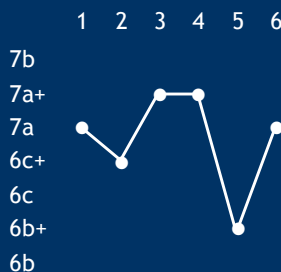


## The wonderful metamorphosis of an aid climb

In the new millennium several wonderful routes have been set up in the Verdon Canyon, many of them on the northbound cliffs. The presented route "Les Salades de l'Apocalypse" ("the apocalypse is a lie" in a free translation), however, is a route of the old millennium, also on a north face, but so steep and overhanging that in 1997 G.Sauget and H.Guigliarelli thought that an ascent would be feasible only by aid climbing. In later years in that area the very hard Klettergarten "La Ramirole" was

**Les Salades de l'Apocalypse**  
ED, 7b (6c), S1-2  
N, 780 m a.s.l.

G.Sauget, H.Guigliarelli (1997)  
C. Louis (2015)  
160 clm (-160 vam)



overall impression ★★★★★  
climbing ratio 89%  
variety ●●●  
scenery ●●●  
exposure ●●●  
rock quality ●●  
steepness \|\|  
fun factor

established with routes up to 9b. It is all the more astonishing that in 2015 C.Louis was able to transform this old aid climb by only small changes in its course to currently the easiest free ascent through this wall. The result is a well protected, very steep to overhanging athletic climb along natural cracks with a fantastic exit over a gray wall with many holes. Attention: The route is dry only after long periods of no rain.

P1 starts relatively easy on still mediocre yellow rock up to a ledge. From there on the climb becomes steep and the rock quality is good or excellent. This pitch is still well chalked and probably serves as a warm-up for the numerous new hard routes nearby (in our opinion rather 6c+ than 7a as in Dobel-Ober's topo). At the end there are two possibilities for the belay. The lower lying left one is the better choice for the next pitch and the possibility to take pictures. P2 is an overhanging crack with excellent handholds which becomes steeper and steeper towards the belay (6c+). Brilliant! P3 begins with a difficult face climbing straight up from the belay, then slightly left and up (7a+). P4 is the hardest pitch, in our opinion rather 7b than 7a+ as rated in the topo by Dobel-Ober. A lay back with good holds at the beginning becomes steeper and steeper and ends in a traverse below a roof with underclings which is very technical for the feet. The roof is exited by a small, but difficult overhang. The right traverse continues for a few meters and leads to the utmost exposed belay. The subsequent pitch P5, rated with 6b+, is nominally the easiest pitch, but requires strange moves in mediocre rock. These short 15 meters of somewhat minor quality are more than compensated by the 45 meters of P6 along a beautiful gray wall with holes. Being slightly inclined at the beginning the wall steepens, and among the numerous holds it is often not easy to find the best ones in a reasonable time. The lower part of the wall is comparable with the steep face sections in "Hold up Mental" on l'Imbut. Higher up the rock becomes somewhat more lichenic which is not bothering, and finally ends in a steep, almost white wall with good holds. Without a single meter of bad rock this pitch ends at the belay on top of the cliff.

After a few meters from the belay a hiking trail is reached that leads back to the parking within 5 minutes.

**Approach:** Parking slot between the two tunnels of Fayet (940 m a.s.l.) on the left side of the Verdon Canyon (la rive gauche), about 50 minutes by car from La Palud sur Verdon.

**Start of the route:** Climb over the balustrade down to a tree, from there ropes secure the further way down. At the end of the ropes a good trail leads along the cliff until the sector Ramirole (about 25 minutes). The start of the climb is on the right side of a small cave, directly left of a fix rope rail.

**Guidebook and further information:** <https://www.escalade-grandesvoies-verdon.com/topo-les-salades-de-l-apocalypse>; <http://greenspits.com/fr/topo/la-ramirole-2/>, S.Aldinger, O.Dobel-Ober, P.Faudou: 52 ans et 520 voies d'escalade au Verdon, 2017



**L6: 7a, 45m**

Wonderful steep face climbing on mostly good holes in a gray wall. Stamina.

**L5: 6b+, 15m**

Not easy and mediocre rock quality.

**L4: 7a+, 25m**

Steep lay back climbing with a difficult traverse and overhang at the end. Rather 7b.

**L3: 7a+, 20m**

Difficult start.

**L2: 6c+, 20m**

Overhanging crack with buckets. Stamina. Terrific.

**L1: 7a, 35m**

Easy start left of fix rope, then nice face and crack climbing. Rather 6c+.



The overhanging crack of P2.



In the lower part of P1 where the steepness begins. One can see the course of the route up to P4.



At the end of the difficulties of P3.



The lay back in P4. Way up one can see the right traverse below the roof.



The wonderful gray wall with holes of P6.