



## Terrific route of moderate difficulties on the north-facing Estellié massif

The Verdon Canyon is one of the largest and most versatile climbing areas in the world. Small crags and multi-pitch routes extend from Castellane to Moustiers-Sainte-Marie over a distance of 40 km. A good overview of all routes up to 2014 provides the magazine Grimper # 158, Destination Verdon with B. Clement's Topos.

The here presented route was designed and bolted after 2014 by one of the most active developers of this area, Pascal Faudou. His special gift is to find the best

climbing meters in a large wall by means of several traverses. It is striking that the traverses are always very well protected, while for the rest the bolts are further apart, but always placed in a well-considered way. The climbers owe him some of the best newer routes in the Verdon Canyon, such as Les fils de l'haltère et du pan, Tandem pour une évidence (with L.Catsoyannis), Une pincée de ketchup (with N.Salvagiot), Dans les yeux d'Hervé, Les deux pieds dans le pas, Ras le bolchoi, Dédale et fantaisie, Tarabiscotage verdonnesque. At this point a big thank-you to Pascal!

"Petra Aliena" is a north-facing route on the orographic left side of the gorge, ideal for the summer. It has moderate difficulties and offers diverting climbing, both concerning the climbing movements and the rock variations. The first pitch starts with steep endurance climbing in black, sintered rock which for a few meters only is a bit dirty and prone to wet. Thereafter the rock becomes perfect and turns yellow in the upper part (6b). A short pitch (5c), essentially a traverse to the right, leads to the beautiful P3 in gray and steep rock (6b) with good, but widely spaced holds. After a short traverse to the left and over a small bulge (pay attention to rope drag because P4 is very long) the next meters consist of easy climbing in an extraordinary rock formation up to a huge flake that one follows in a right-left curve to the belay on a ledge (6b). In P5 one traverses a few meters further to the left, then one follows a light-gray pillar in exposed climbing up to the belay (5c). Continue straight up on good holds until it gets difficult. Right at the crux leave the direct line towards the left and climb in a large arc to the route exit. From there the road is only a few meters away. Turn left and you will reach the Auberge des Cavaliers in a few minutes.

**Approach:** Parking at the Auberge des Cavaliers on the road along the left riverside of the Verdon Canyon (la rive gauche), about 50 minutes by car from La Palud-sur-Verdon.

**Start of the route:** A few meters behind the Auberge des Cavaliers (looking downstream) on the right side of the road, the Sentier des Cavaliers leads into the gorge. About 5 minutes before one reaches the river, the path becomes less steep and one gets a glimpse of the other side of the Verdon river. In a right turn (cairn) leave the official hiking trail and follow the small path to the left which leads up and down through the forest for about 300 meters. At its (not well defined) end scramble up left to a terrace (about 5 meters above the path). The route starts at the left end of the terrace and is marked with an arrow and the initials "PA" (30 minutes from the parking).

**Guidebook and further information:** VERDON 2017 - 52 ans et 520 voies au Verdon, Simon Aldinger, Olivier Dobel-Ober et Pascal Faudou (Okt. 2017); <https://www.camptocamp.org/routes/759794/fr/verdon-varois-petra-aliena>

<b>Petra Aliena</b>	P. Faudou (2015)
TD, 6b+ (6b), S1-2	180 clm (-160 vam)
N, 640 m a.s.l.	
	overall impression ★★★★★
	climbing ratio 83%
	variety ●●●
	scenery ●●●
	exposure ●●
	rock quality ●●●
	steepness √





# Petra Aliena – Verdon (F)

Multi-pitch climbing routes in the Alps



## P6: 6b+, 30m

At the beginning straight up. When it gets difficult, traverse to the left into a gray wall with good holds. Inspiring endurance climbing.

## P5: 5c, 25m

Traverse further to the left and climb up an exposed, but easy pillar to the belay.

## P4: 6b, 40m

Short traverse to the left, over a small bulge (pay attention to rope drag) into a wall of extraordinary rock (built-in bombproof sculptures). Continue right, then left up to a ledge with the belay. Extraordinary!

## P3: 6b, 30m

Steep gray wall with good holds. Endurance climbing. Terrific.

## P2: 5c, 15m

Short traverse to the right, at the end somewhat dodgy rock.

## P1: 6b, 30m

Start on slightly dusty black rock that gets easily wet (left of the incised initials "PA"). Steep endurance climbing that ends in yellow rock.





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Multi-pitch climbing routes in the Alps



When it becomes difficult in the last pitch P6 (where the climber is currently located), one unexpectedly climbs left and then up in a large arc to the route exit, always in the very best rock.





# Petra Aliena – Verdon (F)

Multi-pitch climbing routes in the Alps



The first meters of P1. PA is carved in the rock.



The last meters of P1 after the rock has turned yellow.



The wonderful P3.



At the end of the long P4, before the traverse to the left.