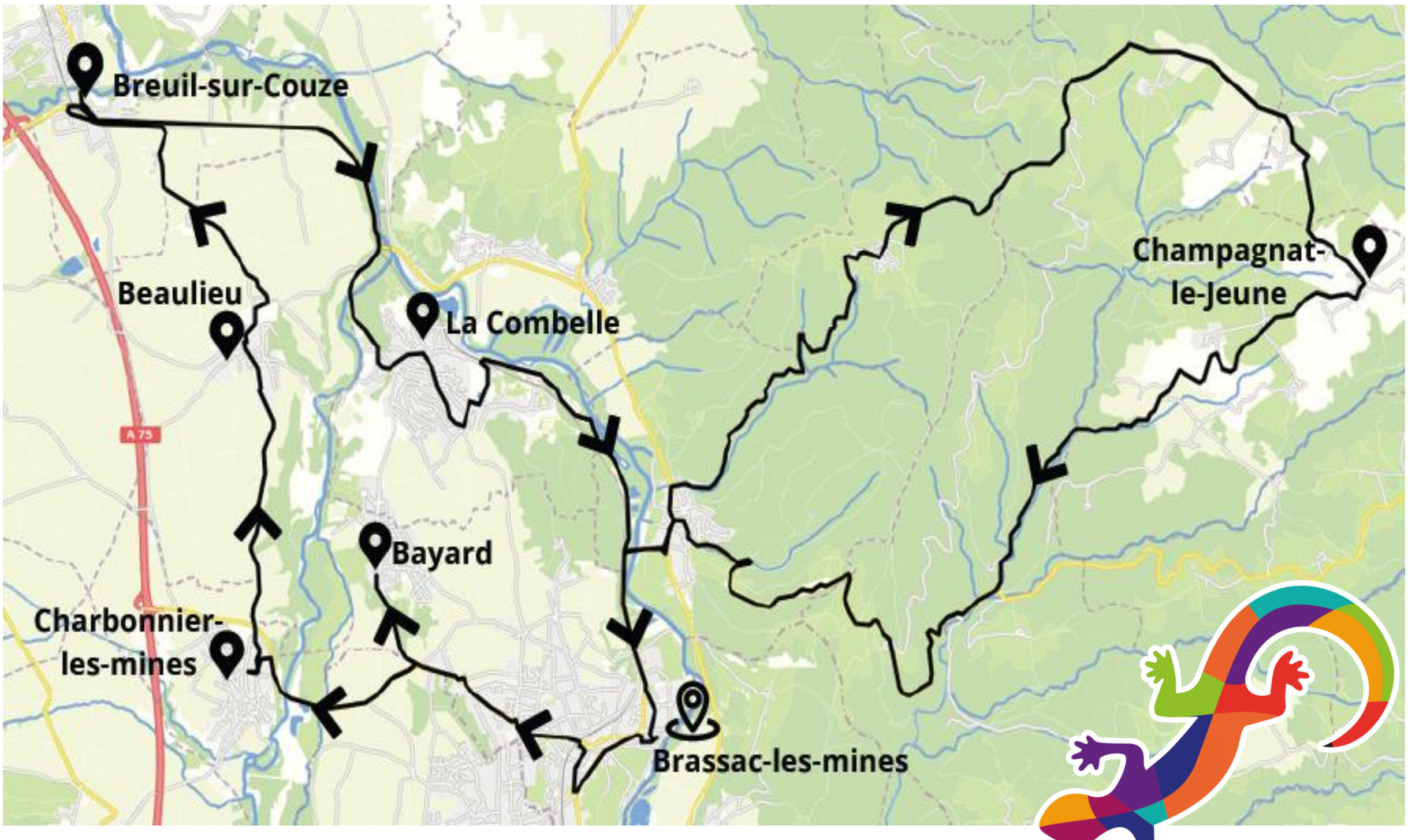
Auvergne Pays d'Issoire

Ressentez-Vibrez-Savourez

46 km

In the footsteps of the miners



Coal mining shaped local history from the 15th to the 20th century. Evidence of this flourishing past can be found in the Mining Basin area. Place names are highly evocative of the region's history : Brassac-les-Mines, Frugères-les-Mines, and Charbonnier-les-Mines. From the 17th century onward, mining activity developed in the region, becoming industrialized in the 20s and reaching its peak after World War II. Mining operations officially ceased in 1978.

Step 1 : Brassac-les-Mines : mining town and Bayard Site

Start



Starting from Rue du Port, explore the **Brassaget district**. Its importance grew in the 17th century with the combined development of water transport, viticulture, and mining, continuing until the arrival of the railway in the mid-19th century. In 1795, approximately 300 riverboatmen earned their living from river activity on the Allier River, and many of them lived in this district. The flat-bottomed boats, known as "sapinière," were made from fir wood. They traveled downriver, carrying cargo to Paris, a one-way journey. The ferry connecting the two banks at Brassac remained in operation until 1950.

Follow the signs for Charbonnier-Les-Mines (D76) and then La Combelle (D710) to reach the **Mining Museum**. Created in memory of generations of miners nicknamed "black faces," 160 meters of tunnels have been reconstructed. You will discover the daily work of the miners extracting coal, a bounty of ancient forests. You can also see the headframe and the lamp room, now a cultural center.





Step 2 : The mining town of Charbonnier-les-Mines

4 km
5 min

Starting from the site of the former mine yard, on Impasse Bel-Air, discover the **northern housing estate**, known as "Cité Germinal," built in 1910 to house the miners. Continue to the **southern housing estate**, "Cité des Laquets," built later in 1926. **The Church of Saint-Bonnet** features a bell gable and a stained-glass window dedicated to Saint Barbara, patron saint of miners.



Step 3 : The village of Beaulieu

3 km
5 min

This village boasts a **castle**, remodeled several times, which is now a private residence. It notably features a quadrangular tower. The **church**, dedicated to Saint Martin, is perched on a rocky outcrop. The remains of a round tower south of the apse are the last vestige of the fortifications that once surrounded the building. Take the time to retrace the steps of the miners by following **the « Miners' Road »**, a path once used by the inhabitants of Beaulieu who worked at the Combelle mine.

Step 4 : Le Breuil-sur-Couze

5 km
8 min

Meet at Place de la République to begin your visit. Between the town and the Allier River stood a feudal castle, replaced in the 17th century by the **current castle** visible at the end of the courtyard.

A branch of the Couze River, called a **béal**, flows through the village and once powered a mill, still visible on Rue du Moulin. Continue up the Chemin de Treize Vents to discover the **Madonna** statue overlooking the village, facing the Nonette hill. The monument consists of a statue of Our Lady of Peace and an altar.



Step 5 : La Combelle Mining Town

6 km
10 min

Your exploration begins on Miners' Avenue. The La Combelle headframe was the first in the area; it allowed the cage, which could hold 32 miners, to be lowered and raised from the mine. It operated from 1924 to 1978.


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It is part of the "Graves complex" which also includes **the Lampisterie** (a building used to store the lamps used by the miners) and the **Chambre Chaude** or "hanging room" which served as a changing room, the miners hung their belongings high up using a chain, hence the nickname of the building.

Step 6 : Pégut ravine and its amethyst

14 km
20 min

The amethyst stone, with its brilliant purple color, was mined for more than 5 centuries in the Livradois-Forez region for jewelry and ornamentation. From Champagnat-le-Jeune you can discover the Pégut deposit during guided tours with **"Améthyste d'Auvergne"**, passionate miners who dig by hand to exploit the vein.


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\+ Also discover in Vernet-Chameane **the Maison de l'améthyste** and its activities around stones.

Back to Brassac-Les-Mines 14 km – 20 min

Free downloadable itinerary on
www.cirkwi.com et **www.issoire-tourisme.com**
Download the app Cirkwi for tablets and smartphones.

Updated by the Tourist Information Centre of Auvergne Pays d'Issoire in june 2026 - tourisme@capissoire.fr - 04.73.89.15.90