



Interview



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David Berru  holds a State Certificate of Sports Guide 1st degree (BEES1) climbing and canyoning option and a Professional Qualification Certificate (CQP) as a rope access technician. David is also a spokesperson for the Europe Ecologie-Les Verts Pyr n es Catalanes group. He speaks French, English and Spanish. David is a graduate of sociology, a discipline in which he validated a bachelor's degree before persevering with a Master's ... but that's another story.

Canyoning is one of the most popular types of «sports excursions» today. There are beautiful canyons on the border with Spain, as well as in Andorra. In France, you can also find many canyons.

For all water activities, the minimum age is 8 years. There is also a canyon for adults and children from 12 years with descents inside waterfalls up to 27 m, jumps up to 7 m and toboggans.

David Berru  accompanies people of different ages to Canyon du Llech (France). This canyon includes 21 waterfalls, giant «pushing» descents, descents and jumps up to 9 meters (there is an alternative - 5 m), are available for those aged from 16 upwards. Canyon du Llech is the longest and probably the most beautiful in France - it is located in the heart of the Canigou massif. But remember - there is no way out of this canyon. Once you've begun, you have to continue until the end!

The profession of canyon guide, beyond the knowledge of the itinerary and the descent skills inside the canyon, is the art of animating a group where some and others do not know each other. It's learning how to laugh when possible, become serious again when necessary and live together with the special moments in the heart of nature in complete safety.

David told us why canyoning is becoming increasingly popular and shared his opinion that the trend of ecotourism development will determine our future.



DAVID BERRU 

David Berru 

canyon guide

«We must move towards a right to a «carbon-free holiday»

-Canyoning, in my opinion, refers to slightly extreme recreation. At the same time, these types of hobbies are becoming increasingly popular every year. What do you think of this trend?

-The reference to extreme sports is exaggerated. It is rather an advertising argument for effective communication. In reality, canyoning is an activity for all fairly sporty people. It can be practiced with the family, with children, with a technical or playful predominance, jumps and slides or downhill ... It all depends on your chosen itinerary. Canyoning has indeed become very popular. The activity now has its place in public performances, along with rafting or hiking.

-Canyoning is only a summer activity, or is it also possible in winter?

-This activity is easier and more convenient on sunny days. Canyoning is possible in winter, but conditions vary. A dry or semi-dry suit is strongly required, not just a neoprene suit. The crossing of the cascades is carried out on snow and on ice. This is a very responsible approach to canyoning, which is similar to the risks of mountaineering.

But in Europe, there is one exception: the thermal canyon of Thue-les-Bains, which, even in winter, even under the snow, has a good temperature thanks to the sulfurous hot springs with a temperature of +35 C that feed the river. And this is an entry-level course.

You are located near Font-Romeu and are often visited by STAPS Font-Romeu students. Are the activities organized by STAPS Font-Romeu part of sports education? Do you only cooperate with other universities who come to visit the Llech Canyon?

Many students from universities in France or Europe include canyoning in their training through university sports associations that organize internships or training courses such as STAPS Font-Romeu.

We also offer rock climbing and via-ferrata.

-What are the snowiest places in the Canigou massif?

-Northern slopes. Although the duration of snow cover in recent

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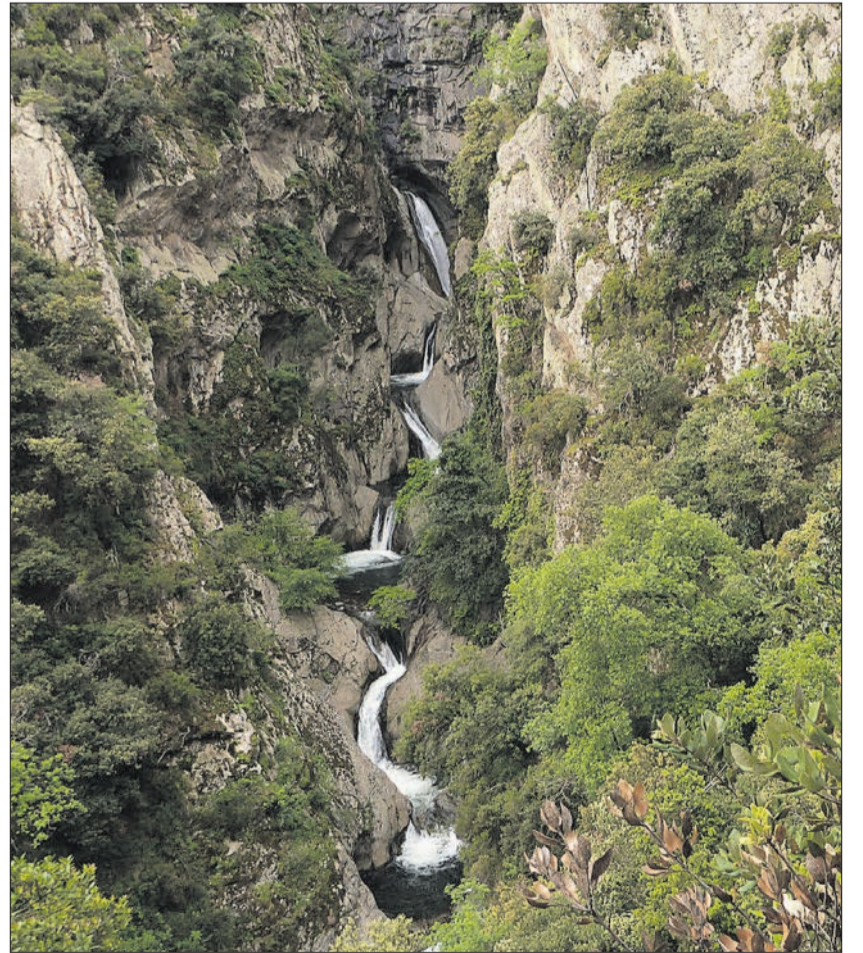
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► «Canyon du Llech is the longest and probably the most beautiful in France – it is located in the heart of the Canigou massif».

decades tends to decrease.

-Do you agree that lately, people want to spend more and more time in nature?

-It's difficult to say. Some people want to spend time in nature while still being consumers. In this case,

nature is seen as a playground, a space for relaxation with beautiful landscapes of cities and villages that seem to be theme parks. This vision is common among many officials who want to develop mountain infrastructure.

However, spending time in nature

also means not having a network for your phone. It means resigning yourself to the fact that in the shelter where you stay, you will not find cans of Coca-Cola for sale. And it also means accepting and respecting protected areas where ecosystems breathe without humans.

And all this, I'm not sure what it says about «more and more people.» Because most of them see the world through their smartphone!

-What trends in ecotourism are developing more actively today?

-With the price of fuel, vacation

travel without a personal car will evolve. We must move towards a «right to a carbon-free holiday», accompanied by public authorities' efforts. In the future, the only areas that will retain tourist appeal will be those that can be reached by public transport. ≡