

First Rutor Waterfall Snowshoe Hike

- **Arrival:** First Rutor Waterfall 1700 m
- **Departure:** Preylet 1475 m
- **Elevation Gain (one-way):** +240 m / -35 m
- **Distance (one-way):** 4.2 km
- **Hiking Time (one-way, without breaks):** 2 hours
- **Difficulty:** Medium
- **Signage:** Snowshoes 3-green “Sentiero delle Miniere”; 3-orange “La Joux”
- **Coordinates:** 45°42'36"N 6°56'57"E

How to get there: Park at the ski lifts in La Thuile.

For whom: Suitable for all, keeping in mind the distance. Beyond La Joux, some sense of direction is needed as the signage becomes sparser.

Why go: A captivating snowshoe hike starting from the center of La Thuile, following the calm Rutor stream with ice formations and natural sculptures, before reaching the striking first Rutor waterfall.

Description:

From the parking lot (1475 m), leave the ski lifts behind and follow the asphalt road. Take the first right fork, then turn left and start ascending, putting on snowshoes. Follow the snowshoe signs through a conifer forest. At a fork near a bridge, go left to follow the banks of the Rutor stream, enjoying ice and water formations. Switch to the orange snowshoe trail leading to the waterfall.

Reach an asphalt road and walk along it (remove snowshoes if necessary to avoid damage). Pass the biomass heating plant of Pierre Carrée and re-enter the forest. Continue past the buildings of Promise (1525 m), some ruined, some restored.

At the bridge, take the road to the right (blue “La Joux” sign), gradually climbing through a scenic forest. Each curve opens views of the Dente del Gigante and the Grandes Jorasses. The forest thins, and at a rustic painted bench (1630 m), the view opens to the La Joux basin, which is reached after a short descent.

Near the bar (1607 m), ignore summer yellow signs and cross the snowy meadow toward the houses of Soudara. Enter the forest on the right, following the sometimes faint orange 4 trail markers. The path reaches the highest point (1710 m), then descends briefly to a wooden bridge (1700 m) over the Rutor stream, directly above the impressive waterfall.

After the bridge, take the trail to the right leading to a viewpoint with a railing (1670 m) to admire the waterfall in all its spectacular width. **Note:** this final section may be icy with low snow and should be assessed for safety.

Return via the same route.