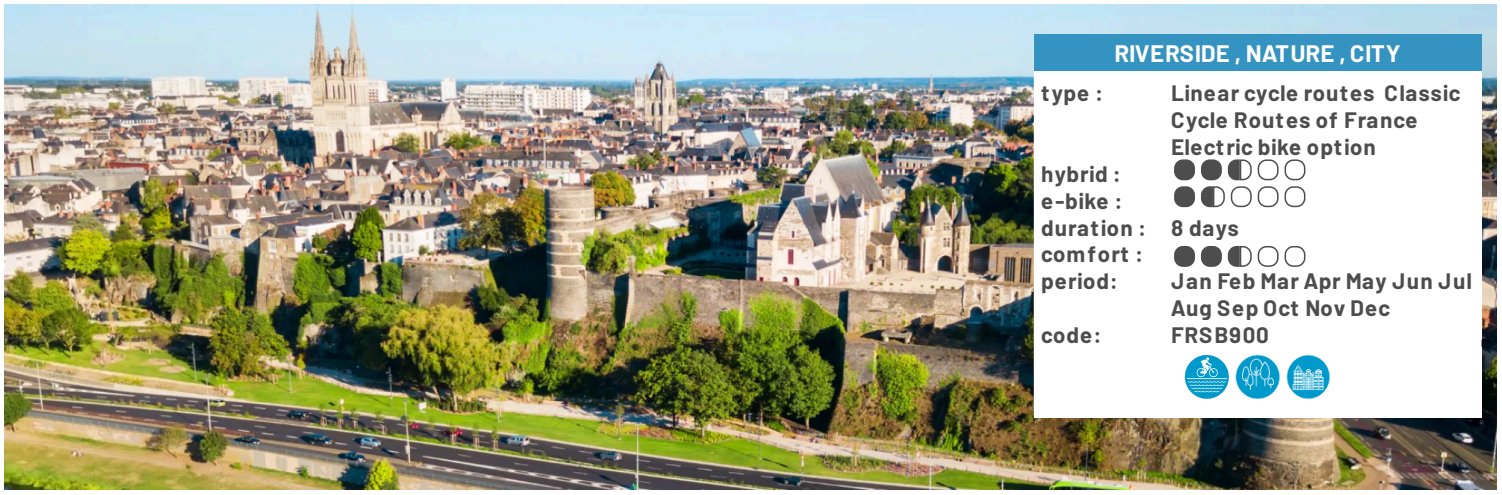
FRENCH BIKE TOURS

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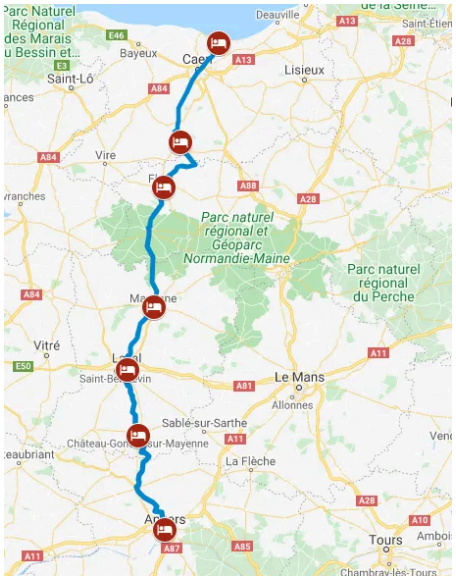
RIVERSIDE , NATURE , CITY

type :	Linear cycle routes Classic Cycle Routes of France Electric bike option
hybrid :	●●◐○○
e-bike :	●◐○○○
duration :	8 days
comfort :	●●◐○○
period:	Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec
code:	FRSB900

From Normandy to the Loire Valley

8 days, *€ 1175*

Introduction



Starting from the English Channel and descending towards the Atlantic, the Vélo Francette® cycle route lets you discover the flavors of a gentle France, crossing Normandy, the Pays de la Loire and Poitou-Charentes.

Created in 2015 and voted best cycle route in Europe in 2017, the Vélo Francette has not finished surprising! This cycle route provides interconnection between the major routes of the West: the Véloscénie, the Loire à Vélo and the Vélodyssée.

The route begins on the emblematic Landing Beaches, or in the city of **Caen**, and crosses the Normandy 'bocage' countryside following the Orne valley, and through an area known as 'Suisse normande'. Then you pass through the medieval city of **Domfront**, and charming towns of Mayenne, Laval and Château Gontier. Your cycling trip ends in **Angers**, the city of King René d'Anjou, between the rivers Maine and Loire.

Highlights :

- Follow the magnificent 'Vélo Francette'; from the Channel to the Anjou town Angers
- Enjoy the atmosphere of 'La Douce France'
- Cross Normandy and the Pays de Loire
- Stop to admire surprising, monumental treasures
- Discover the charm of authentic French towns and villages

Check out our video to discover Normandy:

Day to Day

Day 1 **Arrival in Ouistreham or Caen**

You independantly travel to the point of departure: Ouistreham or Caen. The sea side resort of Ouistreham, situated on the coast and well known for its D-Day beach - 'Sword' from WW II, is the official start of the 'Vélo Francette'. The choice of historic Caen, situated more than 10 km inland, is more practical, easier to reach by train and a shorter route the next day.

Day 2 **Ouistreham or Caen - Clécy**

Starting from Ouistram you follow the old tow path along the canal de l'Orne that connects the coast with Caen. On the way admire the Pegasus bridge, a historic place from WW II. A track takes you, past the marina, to the town, the history of which goes back to the time of William The Conqueror. Caen is well known for its castle, abbeys and 'Mémorial', the important war museum. After that you follow a track to the south along the L'Orne that leads you into the green hills of 'Suisse Normande'. You follow a disused railway, an Eldorado for nature lovers. After Thury-Harcourt you reach Clécy on the banks of the river L'Orne. When starting from Caen, todays tour is 41 km.

Challenge : 55.8km or 41km, 681m ascent, 648m descent.

Day 3 **Clécy - Flers**

On the way to Flers you follow a beautiful country route straight through the hilly 'Suisse Normande'. The route first leads you along the winding river L'Orne that later on makes way for the Noireau. Until the Condé-sur-Noirreau the river valley is surrounded by steep hills. You have to climb considerably when you leave the valley. However, when the Mont de Cerise comes into sight the route shows more mercy for the calves and you reach Flers with its beautiful castle. 2 options for today.

Challenge : 45.5km, 562m ascent, 409m descent ***OR*** *43km, 495m ascent, 347m descent.*

Day 4 **Flers - Mayenne**

As soon as you leave Flers the route leads you via a relaxed descent to the valley of the river Varenne. You can still see that besides agriculture there used to be mining here. A wonderful track, often quite close to the river, takes you along past historic places like Moulin de Varenne, Moulin d'Amboise and Pont des Planches. This cyclists' paradise is heaven. In Ambrière-les-Vallées you take a last look at the Varenne and you continue your way along the bank of the Mayenne to the town of the same name.

Challenge : 65km, 249m ascent, 345m descent.

Day 5 **Mayenne - Laval**

After a visit to the historic town of Mayenne, with its castle, the history of which goes back to Carolingian times, you follow the Mayenne valley full of splendid scenery. It's a relaxed and shady route that follows the former tow path along the river. You pass old, characteristic lock houses, monumental mansions and villas. The tour ends in Laval, a 'Ville d' Art et d' Histoire' where you have plenty of time left for a stroll along amongst the beautiful historic heritage.

Challenge : 35.2km, 180m ascent, 221m descent.

Day 6 **Laval - Château Gontier**

The start of this route offers amazing views of Laval with its two castles. The railway bridge with its nine arches, connecting the eastern Mayenne bank with the town centre and its port, has an separate track for cyclists and hikers. Before going further through the scenic beauty of the Mayenne Valley you should admire just south of town the well known Abbey of Port Salut, the name of which is linked to the creamy cheese of the same name.

Challenge : 34.8km, 235m ascent, 255m descent.

Day 7 **Château Gontier - Angers**

With each bend the Mayenne Valley surprises you again and again; a beautiful castle, further on an antique water mill. The village ports along the bank invite you to take a short break. Before Le Lion- d'Angers you cycle through the picturesque L'Isle Briand with its castle and world famous stud farm. After the confluence of the Mayenne and Oudon you cross an interesting marshy area. You reach the historic Anjou town of Angers via Jean Moulin's bridge.

Challenge : 56.4km, 217m ascent, 223m descent.

Day 8 **Departure from Angers**

After breakfast your trip ends. You (and your bike) travel back to Caen by train. From there a bus takes you to Ouistreham (every hour).

Prices, Data, Booking

Practical Info



7 Nights included



2/3 Star Hotels or 3/4 Star Hotels (supplement applied)



Breakfast included, Halfboard optional on request



Maps and tourist information on all the places of interest



24/7 Bilingual Emergency hotline



Luggage transport to your next accommodations. Luggage accepted per person: 1 suitcase or travel bag (20 kg maximum)

For time tables and further information check the **website of SNCF** or **rome2rio** for all French National trains (SNCF).
We strongly advise you to **download the sncf mobile app** prior to departure.
If you want to travel on a train with your bike, you can find more information **via this link**.

Parking informations on request

We will supply the directions of this trip with a personalized code which gives you access to our travel App.