

Mortagne-sur-Sèvre / Clisson

La Vélidéale

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Départ
Mortagne-sur-Sèvre

Arrivée
Cugand

Durée
2 h 34 min

Distance
38,57 Km

Niveau
Medium

Enjoy a cascade of viewpoints over the Sèvre Nantaise Valley on this Vélidéale cycle route stage. Many mills were built along the banks of the river here, exploiting its sometimes very lively character, often for preparing flour or textiles. There are several nice spots to pause at beside old mills dotted along this undulating stretch that guides you through the hedge-divided patchwork of fields that makes up the Bocage Vendéen. The main stop along this stage is the arresting Château de Tiffauges, the largest medieval fort in central western France. Wending your way from Cugand to the little village of Gaumier, you arrive at the only fulling mill in France still in operation. Reaching the end of the stage, you arrive at Clisson, a very pretty valley town largely rebuilt in Italianate style after the French Revolution.

The route

Riding along the road to Evrunes, you pass a number of mills on the Sèvre Nantaise River. At Bertré, climb towards La Chaillouère and then descend to Grenon via the cycle path provided. Carry on by following closely the D53 road (both on the road and on stretches of cycle lane) up to La Petite Bouffardière. Next, join the D111 road for a time, then continue towards Les Pageries. Carry on along the track to La Roche, to eventually reach Tiffauges by road. The way is steep as you approach the village of Tiffauges on its hill. Note also that there's a dangerous crossing of the D753 road, after which you ride along minor roads perched above the Sèvre Nantaise Valley. In spite of having to cross both the D62 and D755 roads, virtually the whole way up to Cugand doesn't present any major difficulties, as you alternate between stretches on quiet minor roads and on farm tracks. Before reaching the town of Clisson, you need to cross the Sèvre Nantaise via a little bridge along the road named L'Arsenal.

⚠ Stage not recommended for bike trailers some hilly sections, in particular a track on the outskirts of Tiffauges.

Practical information

- **Office de tourisme du Pays de Mortagne**
2 avenue de la gare 85290 Mortagne-sur-Sèvre -
02 51 65 11 32
<https://www.paysdemortagne.fr/tourisme-loisirs-culture/tourisme/office-tourisme-pays-mortagne/>
- **Office de tourisme Terres de Montaigu**
02 51 06 39 17
<https://www.terresdemontaigu.fr/annuaire/office-de-tourisme/>

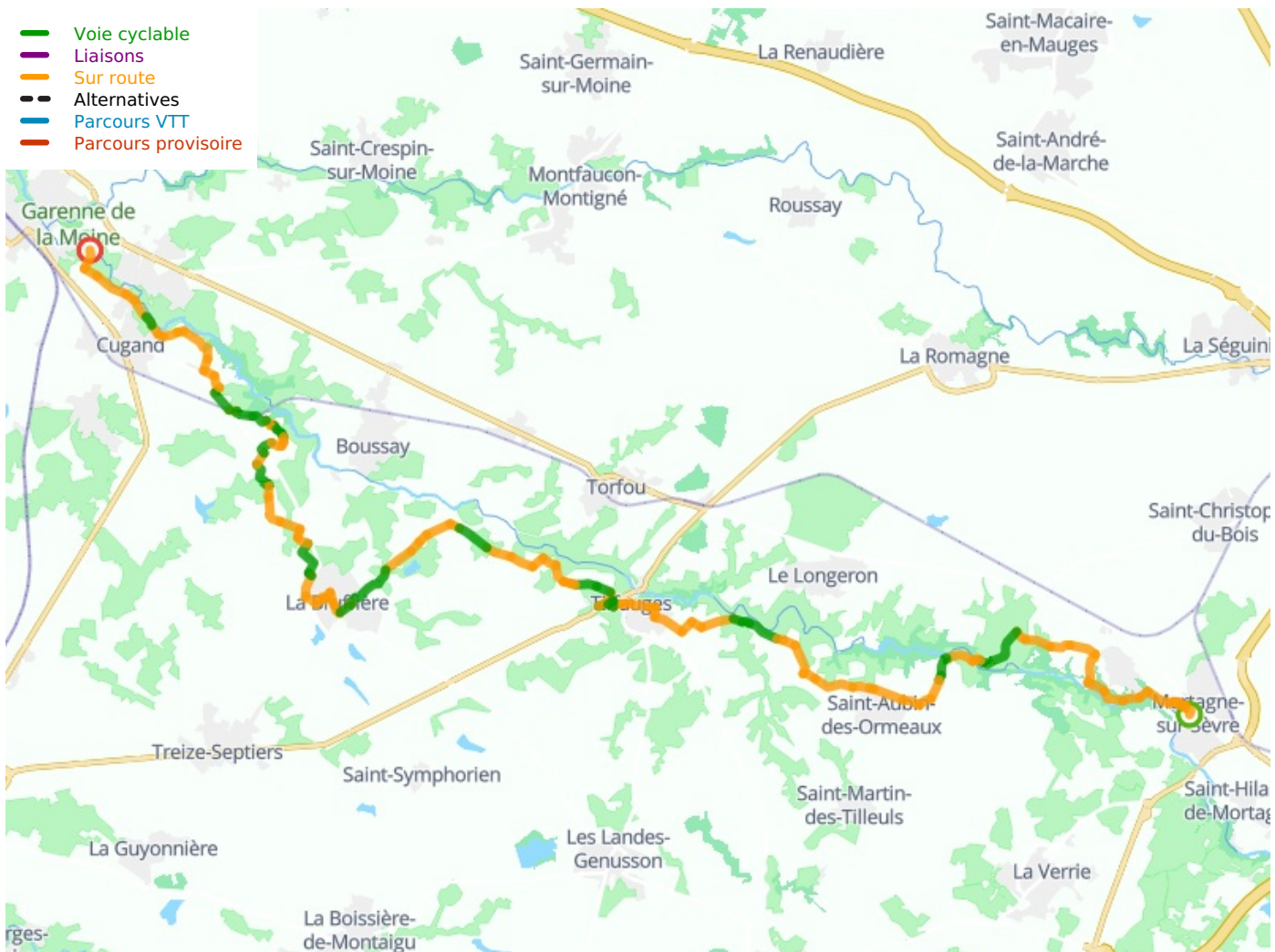
SNCF

Gare de Mortagne-sur-Sèvre: since 1 June 1985, this station serves as the start and end point for tourist trains run by the Association du Chemin de Fer de la Vendée. Board its steam train to enjoy a unique outing, with commentary, or even with lunch served in the Voitures des Grands Express on the Train Restaurant.

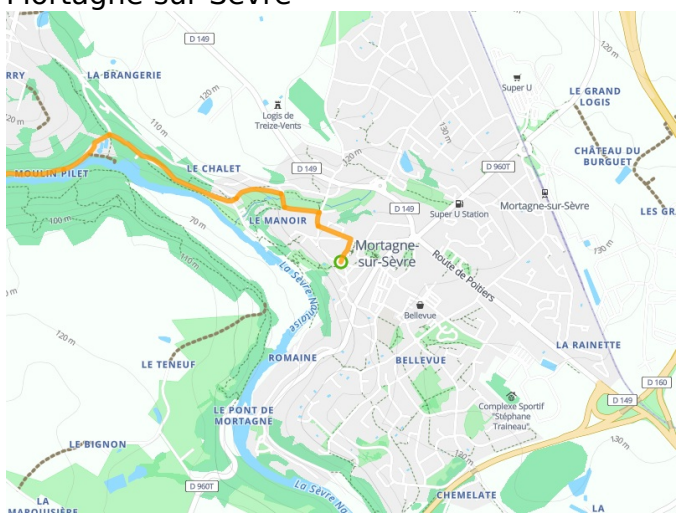
<https://www.vendeetrain.fr/accueil.html>

Don't miss

- **Mortagne-sur-Sèvre** : another historic small town awarded Petite Cité de Caractère status for its heritage, with the old streets and lanes to explore, as well as the remnants of a medieval castle, while the public gardens, Les Jardins de la Cure, offer views over the Sèvre Nantaise Valley. Do stop to visit Vendée Vitrail, an interactive, entertaining and educational presentation on the art of stained-glass making, set within Saint-Hilaire Church.
- **Tiffauges**: the largest medieval castle in Western France, now known as the Château de Gilles de Rais, explains the history behind the name, displays period war machines and puts knightly life to the fore.
- **Cugand**: the Moulin à Foulon de Gaumieris a fulling mill long dedicated to transforming wool, making use of the hydraulic power of the Sèvre Nantaise River.
- **Clisson**: the ruined medieval castle dominating one river bank, with the historic town below including fine timberframe covered market and shops; on the other river bank, the Domaine de la Garenne Lemot, an Italianate neo-classical manor turned art and history museum, with follies dotted around the grounds descending to the river; the riverbanks themselves, with an historic stone bridge connecting both sides.



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