

Parthenay / Bressuire

La Vélidéale



Parthenay boasts an historic quarter with some 100 timberframe houses, and puts in a claim for Rue de la Vau Saint-Jacques being the longest medieval street to have survived in Europe. As a cyclist, imagine transporting yourself back to lordly times here! Wander around the winding streets and you'll encounter wonderful views. Climb to the top of the ornate Porte Saint-Jacques and from on high you can admire the green, undulating countryside that typifies the Gâtine area. The old railway station proves a perfect place for a picnic and to refresh yourself, even to sit reading for a time, enjoying one of the selection of books left for passers-by to peruse, before you head off along the greenway towards Fenery, and then on to Bressuire.

The route

To continue along the Vélidéale and leave behind the stretch shared with the Vélo Francette cycle route, ride out towards Bressuire via Fénerly, after which you continue on towards Bressuire along a greenway closed to motorized traffic. However, do take care at the points where you have to cross certain roads, be it a minor road or a county road. Note how places where you have to cross a busy road are indicated by two staggered red barriers, while crossings of quieter roads are signalled by a simple $\frac{3}{4}$ size barrier.

This part is shaded and flat, and so highly suitable for families to tackle.

Reaching Bressuire (a town that stands at the junction of two greenways), those who wish can cycle off along the V95 guiding you to the coastal resort of Les Sables-d'Olonne. This cycle route takes you into the département (French county) of Vendée, where you can also join the great cycling loop offered by the Vendée à Vélo cycle route.

Practical information

Office de Tourisme du Bocage Bressuirais
6 place de l'hôtel de ville 79300 BRESSUIRE - 05 49 65 10

<https://www.tourisme-bocage.com/>

SNCF

Gare de Bressuire, on the line linking Les Sables-d'Olonne, on the Atlantic, to the Loire city of Tours

Don't miss

- **Gare de Clessé** : the former railway station here is being renovated at time of writing to be able to welcome tourists in the future, with accommodation, restaurant, and more.
- **La Chapelle-Saint-Laurent**: Notre-Dame de Pitié Basilica is a pilgrimage shrine, built from 1891 on a height overlooking the Bocage Bressuirais (the hedge-divided patchwork of fields in the area) and inside stands a statue of Our Lady of Pity, venerated since the 16th century.
- **Terves** (a parish that's now part of the Bressuire municipality): the Ferme aux nesses is a donkey farm that you can visit. As well as learning all

Départ
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Arrivée
Bressuire

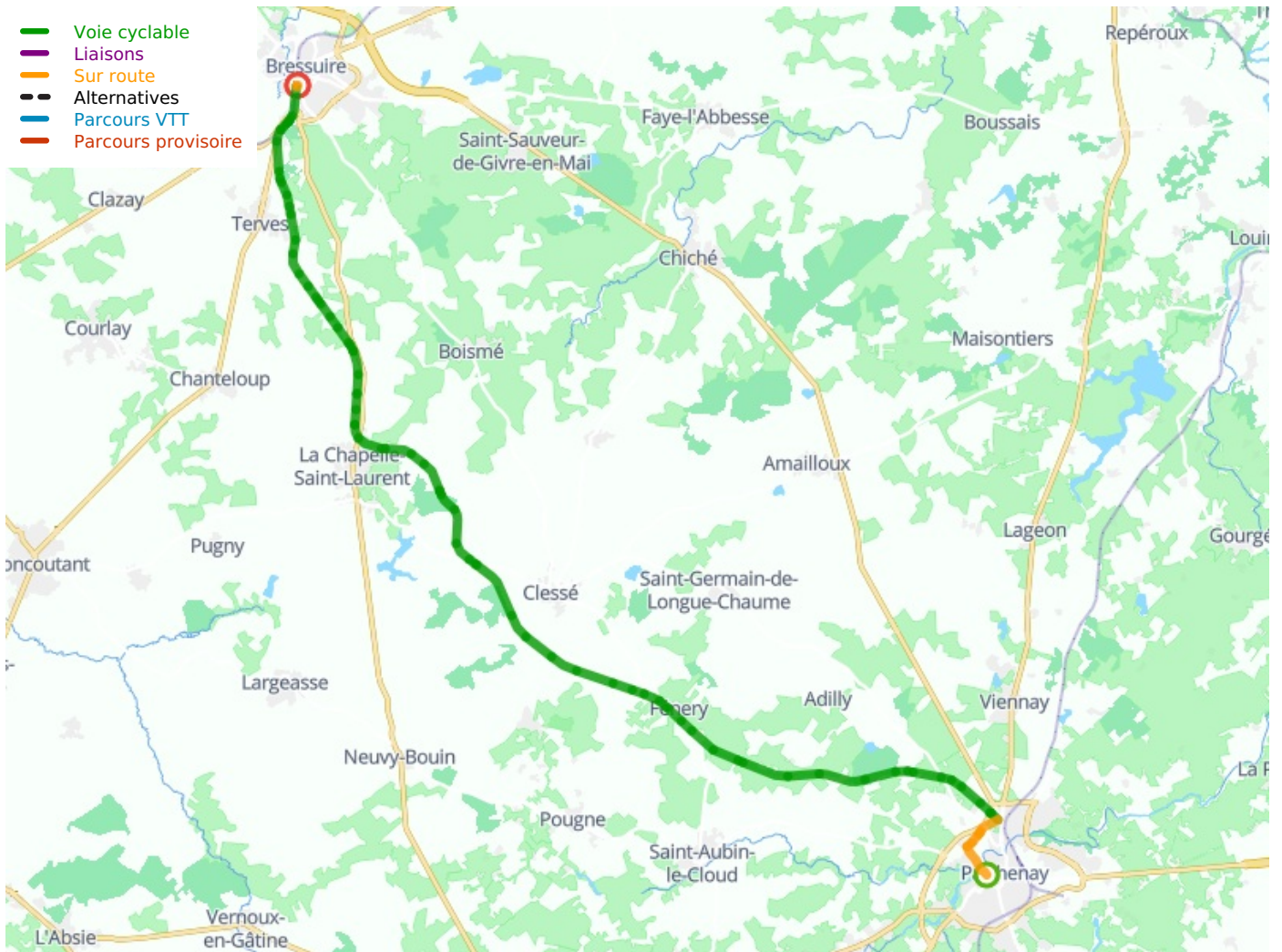
Durée
2 h 18 min

Distance
34,41 Km

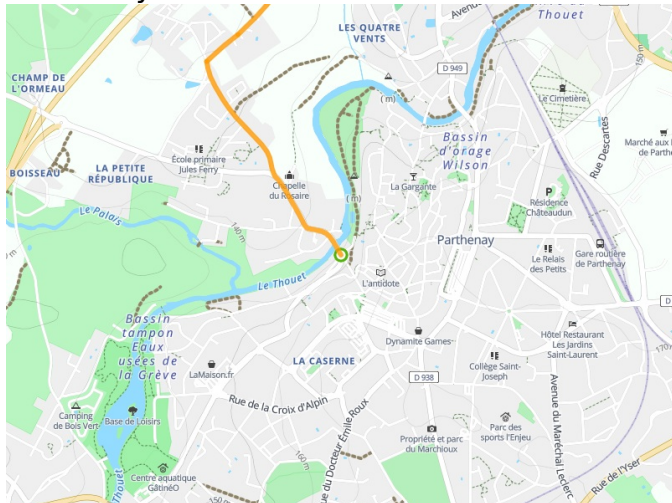
Niveau
Easy

about the donkeys and their milking, potentially even helping to feed the foals in the right season, you can see how soap is made here using donkey's milk. In addition, you can lead one of the donkeys on a walk along a stretch of greenway.

- **Bressuire:** Notre-Dame Church, with a belfry 56m in height. Inside, admire the ceiling, with its graceful vaulting in the Angevin Plantagenet style and the 16th-century choir lit by stained glass and embellished by 19th-century wall paintings. On the central square, Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, the Musée de Bressuire is a museum focusing on art and history, occupying the town's former grain lofts. Further attractions include: Bressuire Castle; la Coulée Verte, a greenway; the Verger des Sculpteurs, with sculptures displayed in an orchard; the Chapelle Saint Cyprien; and the freight station with its train set on display.



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