

Brittany By Bike

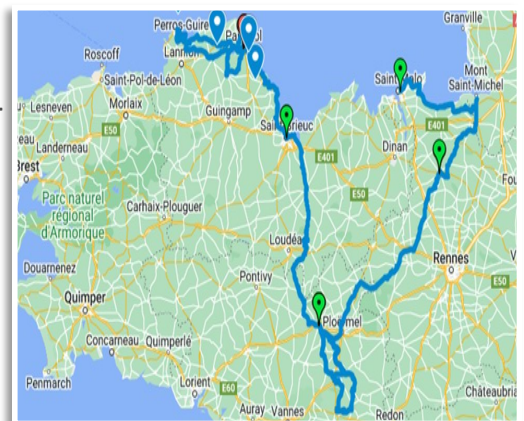


Bisiklet is the Breton word for bicycle...on our week long tour of Brittany we will soak up the Breton culture and beautiful scenery, all whilst on our bisiklets. The region is very bike friendly, with some traffic free-cycle routes and plenty of quieter roads. Indeed cycling is considered by some as the cycling is the most popular sport of Brittany, and the great French Tour de France champion Bernard Hinault hails from the region.

Beginning in the attractive coastal town of St Malo, we head across to the stunning UNESCO world heritage site of Mont St Michel on our first morning. You will see many charming castles and exquisite villages throughout the tour, a range of scenery including charming coastal views, white-sand beaches, medieval villages and undulating countryside. The route is flexible depending on how many days you choose to cycle and has a choice of routes on some days. You may wish to visit the scenic traffic-free island of Bréhat, a short distance from Paimpol. Covering a total of 335 miles, this pleasant tour (difficulty rating 4) provides another superb experience in a similar vein as our other tours—you will be well-fed and well-looked after!

Highlights

- Quiet cycle-friendly roads through beautiful countryside and coastal routes
- A real mixture of scenery, from rolling farmland to stunning coastlines
- UNESCO world heritage site of Mont St Michel
- Historical castles and picturesque villages each day
- Enjoy visiting some of the fantastic medieval towns of the region, such as Rochefort-en-Terre and Moncontour
- Unique pink granite coastline between Bréhat and Trégastel



What's included?

7 nights accommodation, 7 breakfasts, 7 lunches

Refreshment stops with our famous red brew van

Mechanical support including spare bikes and equipment

GPS files and route notes

Full logistical planning and support from the first to the last night including transfers

2 back up vans and a guide that cycles at the back of the group

Transfer from St Malo at the end of the tour

A Peak Tours cycle shirt and certificate

Lots of fun!

Itinerary

Saturday: Non-riding day

Arrival day – welcome to the tour!

Sunday: Day 1 St Malo to Combourg via Mont St Michel

Distance: 60 miles / 96km
Elevation: 1150 ft / 350m

After the obligatory group photo by the coast, we say goodbye to St Malo for the week and head east to Mont-St-Michel, the stunning UNESCO world heritage site.

The route heads inland toward Pontorson through quiet country lanes. A stained glass window at the church here, depicts King Harold's visit during the 11th Century. Castles and medieval villages are aplenty as we make our way to Combourg for our evening's accommodation. The Chateau de Combourg was the childhood home of the writer Chateaubriand and remains in the hands of his descendants today.

Monday: Day 2 Combourg to Josselin

Distance: 64 miles / 103km
Elevation: 2400 ft / 730m

Our day from Combourg starts along the river Linon and continues through cycle-friendly country lanes with little traffic. There are a few gentle hills today to stretch us a little, but nothing too strenuous.

In the afternoon, we pass through magical woodland. Don't miss Guillotin's Oak – a remarkable oak tree thought to be between 800 and 1000 years old.

Tuesday: Day 3 Josselin loop

Distance: 35 miles / 56 km or 58 miles / 93 km
Elevation: 350ft / 105m or 2150ft / 655m

Both rides today head south-east along the river towards the picturesque spot of Serent. Here you can choose a shorter or longer option. For the shorter route we recommend Malestroit for a lunch stop. The longer route continues to Saint Martin sur Oust and also

passes through Malestroit on the way back to Josselin. The longer route will be supported with a brew stop after lunch and we will all re-group in the evening.

Wednesday: Day 4 Josselin to St Brieurc

Distance: 57 miles / 92km
Elevation: 2800 ft / 850m

Today we head northwards through more beautiful villages and small towns including Brehan, Plessala and Moncontour—recognised as one of France's prettiest villages which remains largely enclosed by its medieval fortifications. Our evening is spent in St Brieurc which has many picturesque houses and buildings in the old town.

Thursday: Day 5 St Brieurc to Paimpol

Distance: 38 miles / 61km
Elevation: 1850 ft / 565m

Today is a shorter day with spectacular coastal views as we head towards the attractive old fishing port of Paimpol. The town has delightful cobbled alleyways and magnificent grey-granite houses.

In the afternoon, we have the option of cycling further up the coastline, and taking a short ferry over to the Isle de Bréhat—a traffic-free archipelago composed of two islands and well worth a visit.

Friday: Day 6 Paimpol loop

Distance: 58 miles / 93 km
Elevation: 2600ft / 795m

Weaving our way through yet more quiet undulating lanes, our last day's cycling sees us heading west to see more of the incredible pink granite coastline at Perros. Keep your eye out for guillemots, puffins and other beautiful sea birds. Shorter loop of 31 miles if you prefer

Saturday: Departure Day

After a leisurely breakfast, we will be collected and transferred back to St Malo for our onward travel, hopefully with many lovely Breton memories to share on our return.



Tour Logistics

The start of the tour

The tour starts in St Malo and finishes in Paimpol.

There will be a welcome meal in St Malo on the Saturday at approximately 7:30pm. Most people choose to arrive on the ferry from Portsmouth, arriving on the Saturday morning. With cycling beginning on the Sunday, you will have time on Saturday to explore the beautiful port of St Malo, with an impressive old town.

You may also choose to arrive on the train. Let us know if you would like collecting from the train station or ferry and we will meet you and transport you and your luggage to your first night's accommodation.

Alternatively you can fly to Rennes and then and then take a train to St Malo which takes 45–60 minutes.

The end of the tour

The tour ends on Friday where we will stay for the final meal in Paimpol. The following morning, we provide a coach back to St Malo in time in time for the ferry at 10.30.

We can transport your bike to our HQ in Glossop for you to collect at a later date or we can arrange for your bike to be couriered back to you.

Support

Usually each tour has 3 guides:

- One driving the 'brew van' – each day will usually have a morning and afternoon 'brew stop,' with a table full of snacks and drinks. You will also bring a small bag/rucksack to the morning brief and leave this in the 'brew van' which can be accessed throughout the day.
- One driving the 'luggage / lunch van' – transporting your luggage from hotel to hotel, as well as setting up your lunches.
- One riding at the back of the group – you will have detailed route notes so that you can go slower or faster than the leader if you prefer or you can cycle with the tour guide at the back so that you don't have to navigate at all.
- Mechanical support: we carry a range of spare parts so that repairs can be made en route and we also have spare bikes available in the event that your bike has a serious breakdown. If we can't fix your bike then we will get it to the nearest bike shop.
- Each guide will be contactable by phone during the day so if you have any issues you can get straight in touch with them.
- For smaller groups you might only have one guide that cycles with the group and one back up driver or for groups of 12 or less just one tour leader will provide back-up for you.



What's Included?

- 7 nights accommodation, 7 breakfasts, 7 lunches
- Refreshments from the brew van
- Mechanical support including spare bikes should anything drastic happen
- GPS files and route notes
- Two back up vans and a guide that cycles at the back of the group
- A Peak Tours cycle shirt and certificate
- Luggage transfer each day
- Transfer to Saint Malo on departure day
- Lots of fun!

Food

Breakfast

Breakfast is included in the cost of the tour, and will vary slightly between the various hotels and B&Bs that we use, but you can usually expect have a choice of some cooked breakfast options, as well as toast, cereals, fruit juices, tea, coffee etc.

Lunch

Lunches will be provided each day and will generally be a buffet at a cafe or a country pub.

Evening meals

Evening meals can be bought at your accommodation or in a nearby pub. On the first and final evenings of the tour we will have a group meal at the hotel.

Dietary requirements

Please let us know of any dietary requirements you have and we will ensure that all lunch stops and places we eat evening meals are informed.

There will also be snacks on the 'brew van' to suit any and all dietary needs!

Accommodation

You have a choice sharing a double or a twin room. If you would like your own space then you can choose the single room option, or sole occupancy of a double. Most of the rooms are en suite however there maybe a few nights where your room isn't en suite (Sole occupancy of a double room is guaranteed en suite). On this tour we stay in hotels or smaller bed and breakfasts.

What's not included?

- Evening meals / dinner
- Drinks at lunchtime
- Travel to St Malo at the start of the tour and travel home from St Malo at the end of the tour
- Cycle hire (available for a fee)
- Garmin hire (available for a fee)
- Transport to and from St Malo for you and your bike (available for a fee)
- Insurance

Kit list

Clothing for all weathers is recommended so waterproofs are essential.

A full recommended kit list is provided and we are always happy to answer any questions that you may have. You can see details of a kit list [here](#).

Luggage is restricted to a maximum of 18kg per person—we have to look after our guides and their backs as they will be carrying your luggage in and out of the hotels!

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out adequate insurance for your tour which, as an absolute minimum should cover accident & medical expenses if you are travelling outside the UK, cover for your bike and belongings and cancellation cover in the event that you have to cancel your tour for unforeseen circumstances.

You should be aware that if you have an accident or fall ill while on the tour you will lose the money paid for the trip. A travel insurance policy would allow you to reclaim most of the money as well as providing insurance in case you lose your bags or if your bike is stolen, broken etc.

Your policy should also cover cancellation costs if you cancel the tour within 8 weeks of departure. If this happens we will try to fill your space and return your funds to you but if we are unable to fill your place you will lose the funds paid for the tour.

We have partnered with Yellow Jersey who provide Travel and Cycle insurance for UK residents. You can find further details [here](#).

Am I fit enough?

Difficulty

The **Brittany by Bike** tour is a pleasant and rewarding route, full of variable landscape as you cycle from St Malo and finish 6 days later in Paimpol.

You will be expected to be able to complete an average of **55 miles / 88 km** per day (and have the option of a day's rest in Josselin and Paimpol if desired.) Day 5 is a shorter day, giving the option of a visit up to the Isle de Bréhat, a traffic-free island a short ferry trip from the mainland.

Most people on the tour will be leisure cyclists, and cycling the above distances on consecutive days will not be too challenging for them. The Brittany tour could be compared to the Hadrian's Cycleway, the Way of the Roses or the Coast and Castles Tour.

How fast do I need to be?

Generally, most cyclists completing this tour will be capable of cycling at 10-12 miles / 16-23 kmph over the whole day, keeping in mind that some days are hillier than others, and you will be stopping for breaks and lunches.

Most days start at 8:30 and given the daily distances, this should allow you time to relax and explore the places that you stay in the evenings.

Are there any hills on the tour?

The tour has some undulating country lanes and coastal paths but you will be greatly rewarded with some beautifully quiet roads and stunning views each day.

Training

The fitter you are and the more training that you do beforehand will add to the enjoyment of your tour and improve your chances of succeeding the challenge.

If you need any advice about fitness please contact us and we will be happy to discuss any questions and concerns that you may have.

We have a training document which has a suggested training programme, which you can access [here](#).

Bikes

The Brittany tour can be completed by people on all types of bikes: it is important you ride on a bike on which you are most comfortable.

You can transport your bike in the following ways:

- bringing your own - as you travel as a foot passenger on the Portsmouth-St Malo ferry.
- we can transport your bike for you if you can get your bike to us in Glossop in the Peak District

Please ensure that your bike is fully serviced and in good working order before the start of the trip. It is advisable to have your bike service a few weeks before the start of the tour. This will allow time to 'bed in' before you start your ride.

Alternatively you can hire a bike from us, please see our website for more information.

