

Length & Breadth – Atlantic Coast

- ‘Back on a bike after many years away – your encouragement and simple cycling tips really boosted my confidence. Thank you so much. ‘

Moriah, Steyning,

- ‘We just loved Le Lavandou and the easy cycling along the coast towards St Tropez was such a surprise.’

Janet and Ron, Cheshire,

- ‘What a fantastic ride to Paris. It’s hard to put into words the euphoria I felt when we were cycling down the Champs-Élysées.’

Ian, West Sussex,

- ‘You were just wonderful guides on our first ever trip to Provence . . . we will definitely be back – in fact we’ve just booked!’

The Crane Family, Warwickshire,

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Highlights:

Brittany's Heart & Soul
Beautiful Salt Marshes
Glorious Beaches
Nights Under the Stars
Monsieur Hulot
Voie Verte Miles

Summary

Our Atlantic Coast Tour makes for a great ride through the heart of Brittany, across to France's beautiful and wilder west coast and then, hugs the coastline down through the Vendée and on to the historic seaport of La Rochelle . It is also the first leg of a potential three leg cycle tour which guides you down the length and breadth of France. Brittany is wrapped by a dramatic indented coastline with cliffs and beautiful beaches; in its centre is a complex of low rolling hills where the land has given us some of its great cultural icons, crepes, galettes and of course cider. Venture a little further south and you will be entering a landscape of dramatic seas and salt marshes, with some of France's coastal gems. This is where the north begins to merge with the south of France; watch the temperatures rise and let the pace of life slow just a little.

Isn't it time you discovered the Wilder West.

As one of our 'Length and Breadth' Fully Guided Tours, this offers the option of a closer to nature experience as nearly all of the nights can be spent on campsites, with campsite meals provided on three of the evenings (but of course, you can still choose a fully hotel based tour if that level of comfort is desired). We provide the tents and, will pitch them for you; your own sleeping bag and camping mat are the only real extras you will need to bring in comparison to our other tours. Your luggage will be transferred for you between

campsites so, the cycling remains a relaxing pleasure but the feeling of a greater escape is real and the rewards are plentiful.

Tour in Brief:

- Fellow Velo Welcome Briefing
- 8 Nights Camping
- 1 Hotel Night
- or 9 Hotel Nights
- 9 Continental Breakfasts
- 9 Lunches
- 3 Campfire Meals
- Luggage Transfers
- Cycling Guide
- Carefully Selected Routes
- High Quality Bikes
- Support Vehicle

Tour Map

Introduction

The terrain on each of our Length and Breadth legs through France provides for really entertaining and easy cycling days, only the slightly longer distances and occasional crossings of larger rivers raise them from our lowest cycling grade. So, the remarkable feeling of adventure that comes with bigger cycling tours really is there to be grasped by anyone with the spirit to match the experience.

Day 1 St Malo to Médréac – 60 km

We meet for your Fellow Velo Welcome at the port of wonderful walled town of St Malo, before crossing the estuary of the Rance on the river bus. On the other side we reach Dinard, an

elegant coastal resort sometimes called 'the Cannes of the North'. From Dinard we take the rough course of the Rance as our guide for most of the day's ride. Joining part of France's voie verte network, we head inland to the beautiful town of Dinan and then, a little deeper into the glorious Brittany countryside.

Day 2 Médréac to Le Roc-Saint-André – 75 km

Away from the coast, Brittany is a much quieter and more sparsely populated landscape of sleepy villages and hamlets, surrounded by lush green countryside. Today's ride offers that great feeling of more remote discovery and a sense of peace and real connection with the land around you. Secretive lanes and the reassuring spine of a voie verte help you glide along serenely, the miles roll gently by all the way to the valley of L'Oust.



Day 3 Le Roc-Saint-André to Port Navalo – 78 km

Today we will reach the coast but, the wonderfully intricate and gently undulating landscape of Brittany means that our first glimpse of the sea will only appear in the last handful of miles. That just means more of the great mixture of dedicated cycle tracks and quiet country lanes as you wend your way down to the sea. Home for the night is in Port Navalo with your bed almost on the beach.



Day 4 Port Navalo to Guérande – 75 km

Retracing a few miles on the Rhuys Peninsula, the ride now begins to shadow the Atlantic Coast around the Bay of Biscay. Quiet hidden lanes and some minor flirting with slightly busier roads bring us round to the picturesque crossing of La Vilaine. Back onto secretive tracks, we cut through the western edge of the Parc Naturel Régional de Brière (France's second largest protected marshland after the Camargue) to our overnight stop just north of Guérande.



Day 5 Guérande to Saint-Brevin-les-Pins – 49 km

The day begins with a short ride into the wonderfully preserved Medieval walled town of Guérande which overlooks contrasting landscapes of the 'Pays Blanc' (White Land of salt marches), and the 'Pays Noir' (with the Brière peat bog). The walled circumference runs for 1434 metres around the town. Take your lunch by the beach in St Marc-sur-Mer and share a part of Monsieur Hulot's Holiday. As the day's ride nears its end, there's one hurdle to go as you cross the languid Loire over the Pont de Saint-Nazaire.



Day 6 Saint-Brevin-les-Pins to La Barre-de-Monts – 72 km

The last of Brittany comes early in the day but with the picturesque beauty of Pornic, it still doesn't disappoint as the tour continues to head south and into the Vendée. It marks the beginning of a sequence of over a hundred miles of mainly sandy beaches and a clutch of renowned islands that lie just off this Atlantic Coast. The first of these is Île de Noirmoutier, notable for the Passage de Gois, a natural causeway across to the island which floods twice daily.



Day 7 La Barre-de-Monts to Les Sables-d'Olonne – 72 km

Just below Île de Noirmoutier is La Barre-de-Monts where sandy forest trails take you ever further south along a beautiful coastline, through small seaside villages and resorts. The day's ride draws to an end through another forest section before you reach Les Sables-d'Olonne; head down to the promenade on the seafront, cycle through the fountains and gaze out over a vast sandy beach. You have reached the spiritual home of the Vendée Globe.



Day 8 Les Sables-d'Olonne to L'Aiguillon-sur-Mer – 56 km

The last full day in the Vendée, but this great coastal ride keeps on giving. More lovely seaside villages and huge scenic vistas gradually begin to merge with a changing landscape where water seems to be all around you. You are entering the Marais Poitevin, 112,000 hectares of intertwined canals and countryside; one of the most beautiful areas of man-made landscape in France and, a specially designated Grand Site de France.



Day 9 L'Aiguillon-sur-Mer to La Rochelle – 66 km

Skirt the coastal fringe of the Marais Poitevin along hidden cycle tracks, seemingly miles away from civilisation. Crossing La Sèvre Niortaise, you have now travelled through the Vendée from north to south and shared in much of Vendée Velo. Just a few more quiet villages around the bay and sadly, the tour is drawing to a close as La Rochelle looms on the horizon. Your final night will be one with greater creature comforts, where you can toast your journey in the Vieux Port and contemplate future adventures in the saddle.



Day 10 Depart La Rochelle

Leave La Rochelle on your onward journey or homeward return; we will help you with a shuttle link to your next travel terminus (or you could stay on the trail and join us on the Entre Deux Mers Tour that follows immediately on).

Eat Sleep Drink

Eat

From when the cycling starts, to the day of your departure, breakfast is included every day on the tour. Typically that means pastries on the campsite or maybe an early stop at a tastebud tingling boulangerie. Lunches are included on each of the cycling days, either gathered up near the beginning of the ride or planned at a local hostelry (and, there may be a day when you will just come upon a picnic laid out for you around a corner on the journey). On this tour, three 'campfire meals' are included; and on the other evenings there is plenty of restaurant choice in the small towns or at the campsites where you will be staying, with at least one recommendation for each evening.



Sleep

This special Fully Guided Tour is one of our camping trips; all the campsites have been carefully selected by us and as we all know, France is one of the best places in the world to camp. Sites will vary from small family run ones to larger, beautifully equipped parks. We will provide the tents, and you'll probably arrive on site to find them put up for you. All you need to bring is whatever it takes for you to have a good night's sleep. All our Length and Breadth trips have a hotel stop where you can luxuriate in the hotel's splendour, on this tour that is on your last night in La Rochelle. You can of course opt for hotel accommodation for the whole tour if you wish.



Drink

Maintaining both your energy and hydration levels while cycling is very important. On each day of this tour, it is easy to keep yourself supplied with water and soft drinks. We will ensure you have plenty of access to places to buy drinks or obtain water. As you are in Brittany for part of this trip, you will no doubt come across ciders of the region which just have to be sampled.



France – Length & Breadth Recommended Tour Months

We normally recommend that customers undertake this tour in June, July, September or October but you could choose almost any time during our cycling season – just contact us to check on availability.

Our Atlantic Coast Tour is great as an individual ride but, is also one of three tours which can be combined to complete a cycle ride the Length and Breadth of France. It is the first natural leg of that potential combination with Entre Deux Mers and Canal du Midi being the other legs.

Atlantic Coast Camping Version – Tours from £970.00/person

**Atlantic Coast Hotel Version – Tours from £1255.00/person
(Deposit of £450.00/person)**

Booking from this Tour Page is for the Atlantic Coast Tour only – if you want to combine two or three of the tour legs into a longer holiday then, just start the booking process from the first in your chosen sequence and send us an email from Contact Us to confirm the additional elements.

Combined Leg Prices:

Two Legs Camping Version – From £1765.00/person

Two Legs Hotel Version – From £2625.00/person

Three Legs Camping Version – From £2365.00/person

Three Legs Hotel Version – From £4075.00/person

More Information

Travel to and from your Tour

- A tour starting just over the Channel means that travelling to join us by ferry is an option. Brittany Ferries operate overnight crossings from Portsmouth to St Malo, check them out via www.brittany-ferries.co.uk If you live near Poole or in the Channel Islands there are options to join via Condor Ferries, www.condorferries.co.uk
- This tour finishes in the beautiful city of La Rochelle, where you may wish to extend your stay. Various budget airlines fly to La Rochelle from the UK, from a variety of airports and days of the week. Please check the latest information for yourself via www.ryanair.com www.easyjet.com and www.flybe.com Should you decide to bring your own bike then please bear this in mind when checking information with airlines, it will probably be cheaper to use one of our specially prepared fleet bikes.
- France has a superb rail network and you could travel by train from La Rochelle back to the port at St Malo should you wish to return by ferry, leaving your car perhaps in either Portsmouth or St Malo. Up to date rail information can be found via www.voyages-sncf.com and www.raileurope.com

If you are bringing your own bike

- For anyone seeking the comfort and convenience of using their own bicycle, this is a great tour for you. Not only that but, you can even leave the car behind as well; book yourself onto the ferry as a cyclist and we will arrange to collect you in St Malo.

Fancy a longer holiday

- For anyone who wants to extend their holiday with us, we can book additional hotels for you at the start or end of your Tour, just call us on 07811 285021.

Families, and/or non cycling companions

- We think Atlantic Coast is ideal for families with older children, the fun of camping and eating al fresco will not disappoint. Ideal for families, groups of friends or even for Dads and Lads adventures, ooh and Mothers and Daughters, the perfect bonding experience. The cycling is varied with no rest days but, for anyone needing an occasional “lift”, our support vehicle would not be too far away. Call us to discuss the different cycle options available to children (tag along, child bike etc).

- A partner, spouse or friend who doesn't share your love of cycling. On any of our Fully Guided Tours, a non-cycling person can get a lift with the support vehicle from location to location.

Travel Pack

- Your personally tailored travel pack will be with you approx 3 weeks prior to your Tour start date. There will be oodles of information for you in this pack.

Any queries at all before you book

- We don't want to bombard you with masses of text to read, so anything at all that needs clarification please call us on 07811 285021 or 01788 568371 or, email us at jane@fellowvelo.com