

Sample Inntravel Cycling Notes

These documents demonstrate the supportive style of the notes that we supply with the ticketing pack for your independent holiday. Please note that details in sample documents are not updated or checked for accuracy, and in some cases they are for holidays no longer available through Inntravel.

Brittany's Land's End

Explore the Finistère region of Brittany on two wheels, cycling from hotel to hotel and exploring the stunning coastline and peaceful countryside. You will have ample time, too, to enjoy the fine Breton cuisine and discover the delightful town of Quimper.

We wish you a very enjoyable holiday.

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We hope that you're looking forward to your holiday with Inntavel. You should already have received the following documents:

- Your insurance policy documents (if applicable)
- Preparing for your Cycling Holiday
- Driving in Europe (if applicable)
- Eurostar (if applicable)
- France Country Information

This pack now completes all of the documentation that you will need for the trip; in addition to the following pages, you should also find in this pack:

- Itinerary
- Tickets or e-tickets (please double-check these)
- Travelling by Rail in France information (if applicable)
- Taxi vouchers (where relevant), unless the transfer is carried out by the hotel which will be indicated on the enclosed itinerary.
- Maps:
 - IGN Plein Air Ouest Cornouaille 1:50 000
- Cycling – Tips & Advice
- Luggage labels

These notes are divided in to three sections – General Information, Travel Information, and Route Information.

You will find important contact details in the **General Information** section, along with advice on practical matters, the weather, and some background information for the holiday.

Travel Information includes details for travel to the start of the holiday, as well as returning from the end, and information on arriving at your first accommodation.

In addition to the daily cycling notes, the **Route Information** also gives more detail on the overall route, and advice on how to make the most of the notes.

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Contact details

The following pages contain contact information for emergency services, Inntravel, your hoteliers and your cycle supplier. We recommend that you take this information with you each day.

In the rare event that you should encounter any problems during your stay, please contact the owners/agents in the first instance as they act as our representatives. Please do not wait to report any dissatisfaction until you return home as problems can only be rectified if you give us the chance to do so at the time.

Emergency:

The local emergency services in France can be summoned on **112**.

If you need to contact Inntravel on urgent matters, please phone **+44 (0)1653 XX XX XX**.

Note that the international dialling code for the UK is +44.

Outside office hours, your initial call to this number will be taken by our emergency assistance service. Please provide them with your contact telephone number, location, booking reference number (if you have this easily to hand) and a brief description of your problem; they will then immediately contact Inntravel's 24-hour Duty Officer, who will call you to assist. If you are unable to reach us on this number at any time, you should call **+44 (0) XX XX XX XX XX** as an alternative way of reaching our emergency assistance service.

Please do not call the emergency numbers for routine matters or enquiries. These can be most effectively handled by our full team during office hours by calling **+44 (0)1653 XX XX XX**.

The international dialling code for France is **+33**

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Accommodation and important contact numbers

Hotel Le Gradlon

30 rue de Brest, 29000 Quimper

Tel: +33 (0)2XX XX XX XX / Email: XXX@XXXXXX.com

Le Clos de Vallombreuse

7 rue d'Estienne d'Orves, 29100 Douarnenez

Tel: +33 (0)2 XX XX XX XX/ Email: XXX@XXXXXX.com

Hotel Le Goyen

Place Jean Simon, 29770 Audierne

Tel: +33 (0)2 XX XX XX XX/ Email: XXX@XXXXXX.com

Le Domaine de Lesvaniel

Lesvaniel Huella, 29710 Landudec

Tel: +33 (0)2 XX XX XX XX/ Email: XXX@XXXXXX.com

Other:

Taxi: Audierne Taxis Tel: +33 (0)6 XX XX XX XX

Cycle Hire: Cycletty, Bénodet. Tel : +33 (0)2 XX XX XX XX

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Practicalities

NB It is important that you read the enclosed 'Cycling –Tips & Advice' for our full advice regarding cycling holidays, and we trust that you have read the 'Preparing for your cycling holiday' leaflet. The following information below is additional to these, and should be read in conjunction with them:What you need to take: Although cycle helmets are available free of charge from the cycle hire supplier, we recommend you bring your own cycle helmet for your safety. You would need to pre-reserve helmets should you require them.If you are interested in birdwatching you might want to bring binoculars, particularly if you are considering the detour to the bird reserve.

Your bicycle:

The bikes will be delivered to the first hotel usually on the evening of your arrival (at 1930) or early in the morning before your first day of cycling.

The bikes are of the VTC (hybrid) type with 21 gears, and come equipped with:

- rear panniers
- a waterproof map case on the handlebars
- lock
- lights
- puncture repair kit with a spare inner tube

Unfortunately, our cycle hire company is unable to supply odometers on this holiday. You may find it useful to take your own device or a GPS with handlebar mounts if you have one.

It is very important that you keep your cycles in a safe place at all times and lock them when you are not with them.

All the bikes are expertly serviced and maintained but if you have difficulty with the bicycles during your ride, please telephone the hire shop. If possible, it is usually best to try to reach your next hotel and call from there unless you require urgent assistance. If you are unfortunate enough to have a puncture, please first have a go at repairing it yourself with the kit you have been given.

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At the end of your holiday, please leave your bicycles and all accessories at the hotel in Quimper. Remember to leave the bike lock keys!

Bike check: Conduct a quick check before every ride

- inflate tyres, if necessary, to maintain appropriate pressures;
- take a quick ride to check that gears and brakes are working properly;
- inspect the bike for loose or broken parts;
- pay extra attention to the bike during the first few kilometres of the ride.

Luggage transfers:

On each of the mornings when you are moving on, please make sure you leave your luggage in reception and inform someone that it is there, ready for the transfer. Please use the Intravel luggage transfer label to indicate the name of each hotel you will be visiting and the date.

Diet: We have informed the hotels of any special dietary requirements you may have, but we suggest that you reconfirm this with each hotel on arrival.

Swimming: Swimming pools are usually available from May to September, although the exact opening dates will depend on weather conditions and other circumstances.

Meals: Dinner is included at your hotels in Douarnenez and Audierne and at the country inn near Landudec. In Quimper your stay is on a B&B basis and there are plenty of restaurants within a short walk of the hotel.

Money: Cards are widely accepted including at all your hotels. There are banks/ATMs in the three towns you stay in: Quimper, Douarnenez, and Audierne and we also spotted them in Locronan, Pont Croix , Landudec and Plogoff (at least one on each cycling day).

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Your Holiday

Finistère, literally 'land's end', is set on the rocky coast of north-west France, in the heart of Brittany. Its ancient Celtic culture has left the area rich in churches, *calvaries* and chapels, hewn out of the local granite rocks of this rugged landscape. Picturesque lighthouses stand sentinel on rocky cliffs that contrast with the broad sandy beaches at the southern end of the Bay of Audierne and fascinating Quimper, the oldest Breton city and capital of the ancient kingdom of Cornouaille.

This is the quiet side of Brittany and it makes for great cycling, both along the coast and through some delightful inland terrain. Our undulating coastal route leads you from bustling fishing ports to traditional whitewashed farming communities, past menhirs and dolmens of an ancient bygone culture, and to small hotels and restaurants where you will sample the local cuisine.

Your starting point is the Hotel Le Gradlon, in the historic town of Quimper, the capital of modern day Finistère, but formerly the ancient capital of Cornouaille. It retains its rustic charm, with footbridges spanning the river it straddles, narrow cobbled streets hiding a wide array of inviting shops and *crêperies* in half-timbered houses.

On your first morning, after exploring Quimper, you leave the town along a quiet cycle path that follows a disused railway line. Take time to visit Locronan, a beautiful hill-top village on the edge of the Fôret du Duc, before reaching Douarnenez, a colourful seaside town nestling in a pretty bay. You stay overnight at the Le Clos de Vallombreuse.

The next day begins with an uphill section, after which the terrain soon levels off and you ride along the northern coast of the Finistère Peninsula, always within easy reach of rocky bays, rugged cliffs and the occasional solitary lighthouse. You then head inland past pretty villages to Audierne and your base for the next two nights, the Hotel Le Goyen. The next day we suggest that you cycle to the Pointe du Raz, one of the

most westerly points in France, and the wonderful sandy Baie des Trépassés. The villages you cycle through are all centred on medieval chapels, the most beautiful being in Plogonnec. Alternatively, you can leave the bikes behind and take a boat ride from Audierne to the picturesque Île de Sein.

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Head south from Audierne along the sweeping sandy bay, meandering through picturesque villages and narrow lanes. This is a relatively short day, so spend your morning exploring Audierne, before setting out. There is plenty of time to stop off at a quiet sandy beach en route, before heading inland to your next destination, Le Domaine de Lesvaniel, in Landudec.

On the last day you return to the Hotel Le Gradlon in Quimper, for your final night, cycling through quiet, winding country lanes. Enjoy a final stroll through the town before enjoying dinner as you reflect on your journey through this unspoiled region of France.

A little history

The Celts are thought to have lived in the Breton peninsula from about the 6th century BC, taking over from pre-Celtic peoples who constructed many of the megaliths which dot the area. For five centuries Brittany was part of the Roman Empire, but after its demise in the 5th century AD the region's Celtic characteristics were reinvigorated with waves of immigration from south-western England as the Angles and Saxons invaded and settled, driving out the Celts. But by the 10th century the Norsemen were over-running Brittany, and there followed several centuries of war and poverty. The greatest period of Breton history came in the 14th and 15th centuries, when the Dukes of Montfort ruled the region more or less independently of France. Brittany was only reunified with France in 1532.

After this and after the French Revolution, which Brittany supported with enthusiasm, the French influence became stronger, but the region still retains many distinct cultural features.

Brittany, Finistère and Cornouaille

Divided into four départements, Brittany forms the largest peninsula in France, protruding west into the Atlantic Ocean. (Your holiday takes place in the département of Finistère, the southern part of which is known as Cornouaille.) Brittany is a low-lying, hilly area forming the western part of the ancient uplands of the Armorican Massif (Armor meaning 'by the sea' in Breton), with the wooded Arrée Mountains to the north and the heathlands of the Black Mountains to the south, both running east to west. The highest hill in Brittany is the Roc'h Ruz in the Monts d'Arrée, at 385m. Much of these uplands used to be covered in forest, of which only fragments remain today as the region became more and more intensively farmed. However,

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the jewel in the crown is the 750-plus mile heavily-indented coastline, characterised by dramatic cliffs, capes and beautiful sandy bays dotted with a string of small fishing villages and several hundred offshore islands.

Starting in the north east, around St Malo, is the Côte d'Emeraude (Emerald Coast), so named because of the colour of the sea at certain times. It is a succession of small coves, granite headlands and peninsulas with steep cliffs that jut into the sea backed by a landscape of gorse and heather. West of this is the famous Côte de Granit Rose (Pink Granite Coast), a section known for its fantastical rock formations and the stunning pink hue of the granite rocks.

On the north coast of Finistère is the Côte des Abers, characterised by deep, fjord-like estuaries where the blend of freshwater and seawater creates a unique environment. This section of coastline is where the English Channel becomes the Atlantic Ocean. Heading south and lodged between Douarnenez and Brest is the rugged Crozon peninsula, a craggy outcrop of steep cliffs and tiny coves and a mecca for rock-climbers and windsurfers. The Côte de Cornouaille is a succession of beautiful beaches and fishing ports and includes the spectacularly wild and windswept Point du Raz, France's equivalent to the UK's Land's End and one of the most popular natural sites in France.

Finally, in the very south of Brittany is Côte des Mégalithes, not as rugged as the rest of the region with long sandy beaches and some of France's most impressive megalithic monuments.

Menhirs, Dolmens and Other Big Stones

Brittany has a superb variety and number of megalithic sites. The megaliths were erected by Neolithic people settled in Brittany from about 5000BC onwards, although their usage often continued into the Bronze Age. The earliest monuments are burial chambers; given the name dolmen meaning 'stone table' as some resemble this form.

Menhirs, which means 'long stone' in Breton, are single upright stones, often put up at freshwater springs or near a tomb, and frequently on a slope. Many of the remaining menhirs may be the isolated remnants of larger groupings. Their purpose is unknown, but they possibly marked boundaries or offered landmarks or were used for ritual purposes.

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Celtic at heart

Breton language, traditions and place names

Breton is a Celtic language closely related to Welsh and Cornish. Today about 210,000 people speak the language, 35,000 of whom use it on a daily basis, mainly in western Brittany. The Revolution in the C18th imposed a single French language and the number of Breton speakers slowly dwindled. From the late-19th century to the middle of the 20th century, Breton was banned in schools. In the 1950s the Deixonne Law, named after an official from Brittany, was the first post-war concession to regionalism and ensured for the first time since the Revolution that regional languages could be taught within the public education system. Originally it only included four languages: Basque, Breton, Catalan and Occitan; others, including Corsican, have followed since. Since then a number of schools and colleges have been set up providing either education in Breton or bilingual Breton/French education. Regional folk festivals have also helped with the revival of Breton traditions through song and dance, and Breton is finally shaking off its tarnished reputation by association with German occupiers in WWII.

Anyone with even a smattering of French will soon realise that many of the place names do not appear 'French'. While the Breton language may not have managed to survive as vibrantly as Welsh, the revival is alive and well in place names, many of which are now expressed in both languages. You will however, be sure to experience a bit of a 'groundhog' moment each day as you pass through the tenth village beginning with Ker....!

The majority of towns and villages have either suffixes or prefixes, here are a few of the most common ones:

- *Ker, Kear, Car, Cré, Quer* (all unique to Breton), means house or dwelling-place.
- *Ploue*, from the Latin plebs (people) came to mean "church" in the Middle Ages and by extension 'parish'. Plou, Plo, Pleu, Ple are all derived from ploue, and combined with suffixes, give rise to names such as Plogoff, Pluebian, Pleumeur.
- *Tré, Trév or Tref* meaning a subdivision of a parish, gives you Trégastel & Trémeur.
- *Loc* (Holy place) gave rise to Locronan

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- *Lann*, Lan (sanctuary or church) e.g. Lannion, Lampaul

Other common words relating to physical features of the landscape which you may spot:

- *loc'h* - coastal lake, lagoon
- *nevez* - new
- *men* - stone
- *ti (ty)* - house
- *pen* - headland/end
- *armor, arvor* – coastal

Traditions and customs

The Pardons

Catholicism too has been a strong regional influence since the C5th, when missionaries from SW England, Wales and Ireland started converting the local population to Christianity.

The Pardons ('pilgrimages') of Brittany are popular, lively festivals celebrating religious devotion, when people ask for forgiveness or for special grace. They are held throughout the region based on the local churches, chapels and cathedrals, with special services and parades of people in traditional costume bearing the banners of the local saints. These occasions are some of the few times when the traditional black dresses and the finest lace aprons and caps are worn. Music and dancing follow the mass and procession.

A legacy of lace

Brittany is known for its fine lace head-dresses or Coiffes which form part of the traditional dress worn by Breton women. The design and shape varied depending on the geographical area, however, the tall round coiffe from Pont l'Abbé, known as the Bigoudène is probably the best known. The great variety of different shapes and styles, which used to be worn is depicted in the paintings of the Pont-Aven school of Finistère / Cornouaille, especially those of Paul Gauguin, such as *La Belle Angèle* painted in 1889.

Nowadays, the lace head-dresses are worn on special occasions only, such as *pardons*, or the main religious days and festivals. The

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accompanying traditional costumes are richly-coloured embroidered dresses which are usually worn with a white apron to compliment the *coiffe*. Men don't miss out either – their traditional dress consists of a black felt hat with a large ribbon and a velvet embroidered waistcoat which will match the design of the ladies. Wooden clogs (*sabots*) were the traditional footwear for men and women, but these are rarely worn nowadays.

Festival de Cornouaille

If your holiday is in late July, you may be lucky enough for it to coincide with the annual Festival de Cornouaille. If so, you won't find a better manifestation of Breton culture than this event - for a week in late July each year (www.brittanytourism.com/to-see-to-do/events/brittany-s-main-events) the streets of Quimper ring to the music of traditional instruments like the biniou (bagpipe) and bombard (a sort of double-reed chanter which makes a noise most akin to a trumpet), marching bands and the songs of children in a costumed parade.

The modern festival grew out of the 1920s Fête des Reines when the post-war years saw a broadening of its compass to include music, song and dance not only from Brittany but around the world. It shows Brittany at its absolute best – incredibly proud of its own rich culture and ever open to the contributions of others.

Gastronomy

With almost 3,000km of coastline, the gastronomy is unsurprisingly dominated by seafood. Brittany actually accounts for nearly 80% of France's total shellfish production. It is still possible to buy straight from the fishing boats while they are unloading for the *Criée* (fresh fish auction).

Oysters are widely farmed all across the region. Cancale near Saint-Malo on the Emerald Coast is the most important centre for oyster farming in the whole of France. Although oysters can be enjoyed all year round, they are at their best between September and April. Typically, they are served with salted butter, rye bread, lemon and a shallot and red wine vinegar mixture that you pour on your oyster before eating.

The local mussels, cultivated extensively in the Bay of Mont-Saint-Michel, are small, yet incredibly fleshy and rich in flavour, and are usually served as Moules Marinières (with white wine, parsley and shallots) and accompanied by a glass of Muscadet wine.

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Other fishy delights include *Cotriade* – a fish stew or soup of several kinds of fish and potato rather like the bouillabaisse of Provence, although less rich than the Provençal version and usually does not contain shell fish. It is usually served over toasted baguette.

From the land, the sheep raised on the salty pastures around the coast are renowned throughout France, and local game such as wild partridge and hare figure on menus as well as domestic livestock such as duck and chicken. Breton casseroles and sauces tend to be less rich and creamy than in neighbouring Normandy. *Andouille* is a typical Breton sausage made from pork meat, pepper, onions, wine and seasonings, and it can be served either hot or cold. It is finally wrapped in beef casing, smoked and then dried (up to nine months sometimes) before being cooked slowly in stock flavoured with hay. Brittany is also an important vegetable growing area of France for potatoes, cauliflowers, artichokes and the delicious *Coco de Paimpol* – white beans.

The *crêpe* or *galette* (pancake) is possibly The signature dish of Brittany and practically part of Breton folklore! They can be eaten sweet or savoury and there are many different recipes and ways to enjoy them, from a simple classic accompaniment of sugar and lemon juice, to much more elaborate gourmet versions with seafood and sauces. The traditional crêpe recipe simply includes flour, eggs, milk and melted butter and historically was a staple food in rural Brittany. Crêpes are usually sweet, feather-light and often almost crispy. They are made from wheat flour, while galettes, being made from darker, buckwheat flour, are thicker and will usually have a savoury filling. Interestingly, batter made from buckwheat flour is gluten-free, as buckwheat is actually classed as a fruit.

Brittany is also known for its dairy products, particularly creamy butter and butter and rarely is it put to better use than in the traditional *kouign amann* (pronounced kween ah-man) or butter cake. The authentic Breton recipe consists of multiple layers of alternating brioche dough, butter, and sugar. The layers are arranged in a large circular cake mould called *roue de charrette* (carriage wheel). The rich pudding is then slowly baked until the sugar caramelises. It is believed that the original Kouign Amann was the result of a failed bread dough. It is said that in 1865, a Breton baker from Douarnenez may have brilliantly turned the spoiled dough into a cake by adding sugar and butter thus the Butter Cake was born, rapidly becoming the speciality of the village and ultimately the whole region. In 1999

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Douarnenez patissiers created an association to ensure their expertise and authenticity would be recognised – do look out for the *Véritable Kouign Amann de Douarnenez*.

The tittle here, as in neighbouring Normandy, is most definitely cider, produced from local apples: *cidre bouché* is sparkling, *brut* is dry, *doux* is sweet. It is traditionally drunk out of small ceramic bowls – ask for a *bolée de cidre*. Until the mid-20th century, cider was the second most-consumed drink in France (after wine, naturally!) but an increase in the popularity of beer displaced cider's market share beyond traditional cider-producing regions. Try also a *kir* Breton made with cider rather than white wine, with a dash of cassis.

Brittany only produces one wine, a Muscadet (actually from an area technically in the Loire), which is a good companion to fish and seafood and, of course, crêpes!

There are various other local liqueurs such as *chouchen* (mead, produced from honey), *liqueur des fraises* (from strawberries) and *Pommeau* (apple liqueur). Many are surprised to discover whisky distilleries in Northern Brittany, the climate and source of water being conducive to producing this alcoholic beverage.

Climate

The Breton climate is rendered mild by the Gulf Stream so that sub-tropical plants such as pomegranates and figs flourish in more sheltered areas. At the same time, the summers are never too hot because of breezes from the sea. The table below shows the average monthly rainfall and average daily temperature for the region you are visiting. Remember that as these are averages; daytime temperatures can be much higher, and night-time ones lower!

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Rainfall (mm)	48.6	52.8	40.5	33.2	30.4	53.8	84.7
Temperature (°C)	9.4	12.1	14.4	17.0	17.4	16.3	13.6

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Directions by Air and Rail

From Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport to Montparnasse:

Coaches depart every 30 minutes between 0500 and 2340 daily and the journey from CDG to Paris Montparnasse takes 1 hour 15 mins. To allow time for luggage loading, we recommend that you are present at the boarding point at least 10 minutes before departure.

Boarding points at Charles de Gaulle Terminals:

Terminal 2a & 2c: Coaches depart at 00mins & 30mins past each hour from Porte C2

Terminal 2e and 2f: Coaches depart at 05mins & 35mins past each hour from Porte E8 and F9.

Terminal 2b and 2d: Coaches depart at 10mins & 40mins past each hour from Porte B1

Terminal 1: Coaches depart at 15mins & 45mins past each hour from Porte 32.

You will receive one e-ticket per person. Tickets are not fixed to a specific time or date and remain valid for 1 year. There is no specific luggage allowance.

From the point where you are dropped off, keep the Hotel Pullman on your right, and the station building on your left. After 100m, you should see the side entrance to the station on your left. Take the flight of steps or escalators up to the main hall and TGV platforms. Follow the directions from Paris Montparnasse below.

On your return to the airport, as you exit the TGV platforms into the main hall, then turn right heading for the exit "Sortie Rue du Commandant René Mouchotte" and take the escalator down to street level and turn right towards the bus stop. Coaches to the airport depart at 00mins and 30mins past the hour.

From Paris Montparnasse

Where possible, Inntravel will provide e tickets for your TGV journey but these are not yet available for all trains and fares, in which case we will provide the traditional French rail tickets, which **you must validate**

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(composter) before commencing your journey – insert it into one of the machines on entry to the platform to get it stamped.

If a change of train at Rennes or Nantes is required, this will be indicated on your itinerary.

On arrival in Quimper you should make your way from the station to Hotel Le Gradlon. It is a 3 minute taxi journey or a 10 minute (900m) walk.

To walk to Hotel Le Gradlon from Quimper SNCF

- Turn R out of the station
- SA down Avenue de la Gare.
- Keep R (rue Jacques Cartier) where the road divides, crossing the river Odet and passing the memorial statue by François Bazin on R (women from the is lands of Ouessant and Sein in traditional dress).
- Turn R onto Rue Aristide Briand (note the Ceili pub, renowned locally for Celtic music and good beer).
- Turn L onto Rue des Réguaire.
- At the end, turn R onto Rue François Marie Luzel which brings you to a roundabout
- Take the first exit R and the hotel is just ahead on the L

From Brest or Lorient Airport by direct taxi transfer: If you have asked us to arrange a taxi direct to your hotel, you will be collected from the airport at the time shown on your itinerary by Audierne Taxis (tel +33 6 XX XX XX XX). **Return journey:** Your return transfer will also be handled by Audierne Taxis.

From Nantes Airport by rail and taxi: The shuttle bus runs every 20 minutes between the airport and the railway station (every 30mins on Sundays and holidays). Tickets cost €7.50 for the 20-minute journey. Alternatively, taxis cost between €25 & 30. See your itinerary for rail timings between Nantes and Quimper.

On arrival at Quimper station, you can either walk or get a taxi to the hotel. See directions above

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Directions by Car

From Calais: It is around 480 miles to Quimper.

- Leave Calais on the A16 (E402) towards Boulogne, taking the A28 (E402) when the motorway splits near Abbeville;
- North of Rouen, at the next split, take the A29 (E44);
- This leads to the Pont de Normandie toll bridge over the River Seine;
- After about 7km, the motorway ends and you follow the slip road round to the right to join the A13 (E46) which leads to Caen;
- Follow the Caen ring road (N814) round the north of the city following signs for the A84 (E401) to Avranches;
- Leave the ring road down the A84 (E401) and follow it to Avranches;
- At Avranches, the A84 becomes the N175 for a short while - but continue straight ahead, remaining on the A84 heading south;
- Stay on the A84 (now the E3) following signs for Rennes;
- As you approach Rennes, turn R, onto the Rennes ring-road (N136);
- Turn off down the N12 (E50) signed to 'Montauban de Bretagne';
- In Montauban, follow the slip road off to the right that leads onto the N164 west taking you through St Méen le Grand and Merdrignac;
- Remain on the N164 passing Loudéac (where it temporarily ceases to be dual carriageway)
- Just after Rostrenen, turn off L (green sign Quimper) on the D3 and after 14km follow Quimper signs around Gourin (via D769 and D27) to D1, which soon becomes the D15.
- Follow D15 via Coray for 30km to Quimper.

From Cherbourg: It is around 250 miles to Quimper.

- Use the N13 to the Valogne by-pass;
- Join the D2/D900 to Coutances;
- Take the D971/973 to Avranches, where you pick up the N175/A84 as above.

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To find the Hotel Le Gradlon:

- Arriving in Quimper by car on the D15 - cross motorway on bridge and at roundabout take first exit (signed Quimper centre).
- Enter Le Rouillen and continue ahead through traffic lights. At next roundabout take first exit and pass Quimper town entry sign.
- Continue ahead and at large roundabout take 2nd exit (signed Quimper nord/Brest/Morlaix).
- Continue on dual carriageway to next roundabout and turn left (3rd exit, signed Quimper centre).
- At next roundabout take 2nd exit (straight on) with cathedral spires ahead. Continue ahead for 650m – after level crossing, Hotel Gradlon is on the right.
- To continue to the car park*, take the third exit at the roundabout beyond the hotel and along rue Toul al Laer.
- Turn left into rue du Frouit and continue ahead taking the 2nd right just past the Hotel Kregenn and along rue Aristotle Briand crossing over the river.
- After 250m turn right along rue Jean Jaurès and after a further 250m turn right into rue Théodore le Hars. The carpark is situated after 50m on the left hand side.

*Private parking is not available at the Hotel Gradlon. However, there is a secure public carpark a few minutes' walk from the hotel in rue Théodore le Hars charged at around 14€ per 24 hours (pay locally).

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Arrival in Quimper

Hotel Gradlon

Tel: +33 (0)2 XX XX XX XX

Conveniently located five minutes' walk from the charming Old Town, the Hôtel Gradlon provides a comfortable and relaxing starting and finishing point to your cycling tour. With a variety of restaurants to choose from on your doorstep, you stay on a bed & breakfast basis here. The ample buffet breakfast (served from 0700) usually consists of bread & croissants, a selection of jams and marmalades, home-made yoghurts, cheese, cold meats and the ubiquitous crêpes.

Rooms are elegantly furnished with modern bathrooms and the majority overlook the inner courtyard. Unusually, they have tea/coffee & a kettle. There is also a small bar, lounge and reading area.

Restaurant recommendations:

- L'Ambroisie at 49 rue Elie Fréron, closed Sunevening and Mon.
- Fleur de Sel at 1 Quai Neuf, closed Sun
- L'Assiette at 5b rue Jean Jaurès
- L'Epée at 14 rue du Parc, open daily

Quimper

You will have plenty of time on your final day to visit the splendid town of Quimper, with its old town of cobbled streets and half-timbered houses.

Pronounced 'Kam-pair', the town is the capital of the modern-day Finistère Department and also the capital of the ancient kingdom of Cornouaille. The name comes from the Breton *kemper* meaning 'confluence' – due to its site at the confluence of the Odet, Jet and Steir rivers. It is the oldest Breton city and has a rustic atmosphere with footbridges spanning the rivers.

The Tourist Office is in Place de la Résistance. Cross the river in front of the cathedral and turn R. The tourist office is on the far side of the car park.

Opening times: Mon-Sat: Apr to Jun & Sep: 0930-1230 & 1330-1830; Jul & Aug: 0900-1900

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Sun & Bank Holidays: Jun & Sep: 1000-1245; Jul & Aug: 1000-1245 & 1500-1745

A City Pass is on sale at the Tourist Office providing reduced rates on a guided walking tour of the city and also entry into the Fine Art Museum, Breton Museum, Faience Museum, and Contemporary Arts Centre.

Festivals

Quimper holds numerous events, the largest being the Festival de Cornouaille, held annually during the 3rd and 4th week of July celebrating Breton culture, with folk art, traditional music, dances and songs from Brittany (www.festival-cornouaille.com)

The Semaines Musicales de Quimper is a classical music festival during the first three weeks of August www.semaines-musicales-quimper.org)

During the main summer season, there are often concerts and performances by traditional folk dancers on a Thursday evening in the Bishop's Garden – Le Jardin de l'Evêché.

Places to visit

The town's imposing Gothic cathedral is named after Saint Corentin and is remarkable for its kink in the construction of the nave and choir. There are several theories surrounding the reason why: one being that it represents the angle of Christ's head on the cross whilst technicians argue the foundations veered away from the course of the river Odet in search of more stable footings. The existing cathedral with its 19C twin spires and vaulted ceiling was founded in 1239 on the site of a Roman cathedral. Restoration work on the lime-washed interior has left the cathedral with a bright and appealing atmosphere.

Opening times: Sep-Jun: 0945-1200 & 1330-1830 except Sun am

Jul-Aug: 0945-1830 except Sun am

Sun & Bank Holidays: 1400-1830

Also worth visiting is the exceptional **Musée Départemental Breton** in the adjoining Bishops' Palace (*l'ancien Palais des Evêques de Cornouaille*). This museum contains many fine examples of archaeology, as well as popular and decorative art representative of the Finistère region.

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Opening times: Tue-Sat: 0900-1230 & 1330-1700; Sun: 1330-1700

Mon: closed all day

For a contrast, visit the **Locmaria area** 800m downriver for a remarkable Romanesque church, working pottery and medieval-style riverside garden.

The old town of Quimper is to be found between the cathedral, the River Odet and its tributary, the Steyr. In these *vieux quartiers* many fine examples of half-timbered houses (*maisons à pans de bois*) with granite floors can be seen, the names of the streets recalling the many trades once represented here.

A daily covered market is held in Les Halles Saint François – opened in 1847, with an additional outdoor market taking over the streets at the side of the river Steir on Wed and Sat mornings.

The town's best-known product is Faïence pottery which has been made here since 1690 when Jean Baptiste Bousquet built the first Breton earthenware factory. The pottery's most famous design depicts the 'petit Breton' – a naïve representation of a Breton man or woman in traditional costume. The Petit Breton became popular in the 1870s and is the main design in the many tourist shops. Original Quimper Faïence is much sought after by collectors and commands good prices at auction. It is possible to visit the workshops of the Faïencerie Henriot-Quimper.

Opening times: 10 Apr-30 Jun – Mon to Fri, tours at 1400 & 1600

Jul & Aug – tours at 0930, 1030, 1115, 1400, 1415, 1515, 1615 and 1700

Brittany's Land's End

The Route:

We have included a suggested route based on our experience and knowledge of the area, and you can use the map provided to extend or shorten the routes according to your own requirements. Do be aware though that the main (D) roads can be busy and certainly best to be avoided at most times of year, but especially at weekends and in summer months – an area this pretty is hard to keep secret! Note also that Brittany, or at least Finistère, is hillier than most people expect. We have tried to find the routes with the gentlest inclines wherever possible, so you may find that deviating from our route also increases the challenge.

We have opted to include the Ouest Cornouaille 1:50,000 map for this holiday which covers the whole area and all of our routes. There are more detailed 1:25,000 maps from the IGN series available for this area, but you would need four maps, which we found to be impractical while cycling.

Cycling network : There is a well-waymarked local cycling network: la véloroute: la littorale which is waymarked in both directions from the Pointe du Raz all the way down the west coast via Audierne to Pont-l'Abbé. Part of days 3 and 4 make use of this network. The signage is a green bike on a white background with occasional place names and distances. Where there is no signage we make use of the obvious road signs.

On day 1 you will also follow part of the *voies-vertes* (greenways i.e. following reconditioned traffic-free disused railway lines).

A word about Breton villages: Some of the 'villages' you pass through are no more than a cluster of houses, some consist of one house, and any do not feature on the maps (if they do they may be spelt differently). In our notes we have mentioned those that aid navigation of our route, but please don't be alarmed if every place name is not mentioned.

Important: Do read each day's notes well before setting out. Because of the nature of the terrain some of the sites of interest are off the main route so we suggest small detours throughout the day to see them. It will be worth working out in advance which ones may be of interest to you. Naturally they add distance to the day which is not included in the total tallies. For each detour we have mentioned approximately how much extra cycling is involved.

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Abbreviations

Our cycling notes are written in a concise style. Please familiarise yourself with the following abbreviations before setting off:

L	left
R	right
LH(S)	left-hand (side)
RH(S)	right-hand (side)
J	junction
TJ	T-junction
X-road	crossroad
SP	signpost / signposted to
SA	straight ahead, straight across or straight on
YJ	fork or Y junction
PD	partial or split distance
TD	total distance

On some days we will be making use of the signage of the local network, a green cycle on a white background on an arrow indicating the way. To distinguish these signposts from normal road signage we have used the following abbreviation

CSP **Cycling SignPost**

There are **cycle repair shops** along the way should you need one. The ones we know about are in:

Audierne: near the Goyen bridge

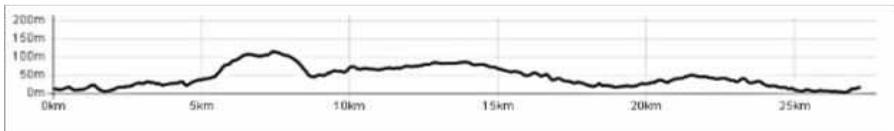
Lescoff: (small hamlet between Plogoff and Pointe du Raz)

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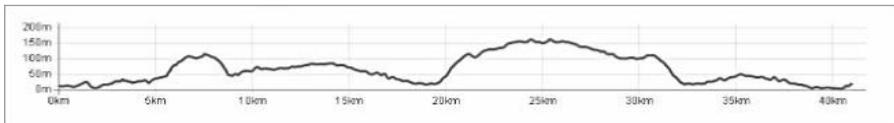
Day 1: Quimper to Douarnenez

Distance	Total ascent	Total descent
Option 1: 27.9km	356m	352m
Option 2: 42km via Locronan	537m	530m

Route profile option 1:



Route profile option 2:



Overview:

Today's route starts with a bit of a baptism of fire and a stiff climb out of Quimper. Your efforts, however, are then rewarded with a leisurely traffic-free, flat cycle path which follows the course of a disused railway (greenway) all the way to Douarnenez if you take the shorter route (option 1). For a longer, more challenging day we highly recommend adding the detour from Le Juch, on the greenway, to the delightful hilltop town of Locronan with its well preserved medieval houses, good selection of restaurants, a couple of bakeries and excellent cake and chocolate shop. It is the perfect lunch stop. From Locronan you return to the greenway via a slightly different route with glimpses of the sea and continue all the way to the centre of Douarnenez as per option 1.

Food & drink: If you are going straight to Douarnenez to enjoy an afternoon in the port and on the nearby beaches, you should easily get there in time for lunch. On the longer route, Locronan has several bars and restaurants and a bakery that makes good-value sandwiches to order.

Important: The section through the Forêt de Névet on the way to Locronan is rough forest track and care needs to be taken. On the outskirts of Quimper and Douarnenez there are some short sections on busy roads

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without a cycle lane. The climb out of Quimper is demanding and there is also a short steep section just after leaving the cycle path near Le Juch.

Map: Ouest Cornouaille 1:50,000

On the map: You leave Quimper in a NW direction passing St Conogan's Church on the D63 which you soon leave near the village of Loscoat. You follow a minor road to the W of the main road which joins the greenway just E of the village of Kerveguen. You then follow the greenway NW through le Juch all the way to Douarnanez. Your hotel is on the northern tip of the eastern part of the harbour on the seaward side of the church (on the map). The detour to Locronan leaves the greenway at le Juch heading NE through Le Rohou and on forest tracks (not on map) through the Forêt de Névet to enter Locronan on the D7. You return to Le Juch back via the D7 then W through Porastel and Kernair before heading S back through Le Rohou to Le Juch (all roads are on map on the return). You continue to Douarnanez as per the direct route.

Cycling notes:

PD		TD
	Turn R out of the hotel	
50m	At roundabout Alexandre Massé take 2 nd exit (essentially SA) down Rue Toul Al Laer	50m
120m	Turn R towards the cathedral (keep L) onto Rue de la Mairie	170m
100m	Keep R across the square – La Place Corentin	270m
100m	Exit square SA along narrow Rue de Guéodet to the L of Crêperie Corentin	370m
75m	At TJ with Rue des Boucheries, turn L, downhill	445m
50m	At next X-roads, turn R onto Rue Keréon and SA	495m
135m	Cross over the Pont Médard bridge, and SA along Rue du Chapeau Rouge	630m

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220m	At end of street meet main road at traffic lights go SA along rue Saint Marc	850m
100m	Keep R as street forks, still on rue Saint-Marc heading gently uphill	950m
100m	Take 2 nd R onto rue de Kerlerec heading more steeply uphill, with stone wall on R	1.1km
400m	At top of street at traffic lights SA downhill SP Locronan & Moulin Vert (D63)	1.5km
250m	Go SA at Pontigou roundabout SP Locronan . The river is on RHS	1.75km
650m	At next traffic lights turn R downhill SP Locronan & Moulin Vert (D63)	2.4km
250m	Go SA at Pontigou roundabout SP Locronan . The river is on RHS	2.65km
350m	Cross mini-roundabout SP Locronan	3km
500m	SA at a second mini-roundabout (cycle path along RHS of some of this road)	3.5km
470m	At large roundabout take 3 rd exit, SP Guengat (still on D63) and pass immediately under a road bridge.	3.97km
230m	2 nd exit at next SP D63, the road bends to L through trees	4.2km
1.4km	At end of the wood and next to a road sign for a X-roads take small turning L, SP Guengat, Ty-Hoant & Belle Vue on Route de Loscoat. A long uphill section!	5.6km
2km	At top of hill ignore L turning to Belle Vue and Kersacar	7,6km
850m	On brow of hill at X-Roads turn down R (just before bus stop on LHS), SP Kerval & Kerveguen. ! Care – steep winding descent	8.45km

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1.3km	Near the bottom, pass the old railway signalman's house (no 519) on R and turn L onto the greenway (wooden barrier across the path), SP Douarnenez 17km	9.75km
For the direct route you follow this vehicle-free disused railway line (greenway) all the way to Douarnenez – sometimes it is tarmacked, sometimes it's hardcore. There are chicanes and wooden barriers each time it crosses a road, so do take care as you cross these roads.		
10.1km	Pass a black sign La Gare – Commune de Juch , opposite the white station house (on L) and a chicane of wooden barriers indicating crossing a road*	19.85km

* for the longer option 2 and the detour to the charming village of Locronan turn R onto the road here and then follow the notes at the end of option 1. You will return to this point to continue along the greenway after visiting Locronan.

Note the information board with interesting old photos of the railway line at this crossing which explains:

The arrival of the train during the second half of the 19th century also coincided more generally with a switch from the use of cattle-drawn carriages to horse-drawn methods of transport. Indeed, until the 1950s, pony and traps were the most commonly used method of transport; taking anything from bride and groom to church; farmers to Douarnenez market; and families to the religious ceremonies celebrating Sainte Anne de Palud. The first cars arrived after the 1914-18 war and various bus and coach companies also began to emerge in the area. By 1936, around 20 farms in the local area had a car but it wasn't until the 1950s that the car began to take over as the most common form of transport.

Between the two world wars, the bicycle was the most common form of transport – and then gradually the motorbike came on the scene. The train made its final journey in 1988. Nowadays the old railway line has been transformed into a cycle path...

...which you already know!

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Le Juch

The name of this ancient settlement means 'the mound', and traces of this remain on its hill today. The church is 16th century, and has a very fine stained glass window, as well as wooden sculptures and statues worth seeing. The village has a bar just beyond the church.

To continue on the direct route to Douarnenez follow the cycle path all the way to Douarnenez

3.35km	Cross a road on pedestrian crossing by an industrial estate Black sign on L says ZI Lannugat	23.2km
1.2km	Cross D57 (on pedestrian crossing) road sign on L says (end of) Douarnenez	24.4km
600m	On the outskirts of Douarnenez at the Bréhuél crossing you come to busy main road D7 in Douarnenez: cross main road on zebra-crossing to continue SA on Promenade Paul Edouard Paulet <i>Station house with large palm tree no 537 to L just before you cross.</i> <i>Note this next section going through the houses is quiet but not traffic-free.</i>	25km
600m	Meet the main D207 (Total petrol station on L) ! CARE Turn R uphill to leave the green way and keep L on main road – can be busy <i>You are going to turn L very soon</i>	25.6km
Note the PC does continue SA here but it would take you round the wrong side of the estuary, so if you cross the estuary you have gone too far.		
100m	Fork off to the L SP to the port and continue SA with the estuary on LHS	25.7km
1km	Pass under a blue metal road bridge and keep SA, following the headland round to the R, with the île Tristan ahead of you	26.7km

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1km	Follow the headland round to the R and ignore a street off to the R	27.7km
200m	Take next R after a stone wall on your R. You will see the back entrance to the hotel on RHS and a large stone (war memorial) on L	27.9km
100m	Take the 2 nd entrance (back gates) to the hotel (the first is accessed via a stone staircase) If this is locked, continue round corner to the R to find the main entrance on your R opposite the church	28km

Option 2 – detour to visit Locronan – you will return to this point on the greenway after visiting Locronan (14.2km)

	At the black sign La Gare – Commune de Juch , opposite the white station house (on L) leave the PC and turn R – unsigned	19.8km
350m	Turn R at TJ with D39 SP Plogonnec	359m
200m	Turn L as road bends round to R, SP Le Rohou & Kergwénen . This is an uphill route into the forest	550m
500m	Keep L at fork SP Le Rohou & Kergwénen	1.01km
100m	Pass a farm on L still climbing and winding steeply through woodland	1.11km

Bois du Névet

This wood formed part of the Druidic sacred grove or *nemeton*, a large area devoted to the celebration of Celtic nature deities. St-Ronan christianised the *nemeton* into a 12km circuit representing the months of the Celtic year. Every 6 years La Grande Troménie takes place – a celebratory walk around the twelve 'stations'.

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PD		TD
300m	Just after passing Kergwénen (a large farmhouse on R) the road becomes a rough track Still climbing, wire fence to R	1.14km
800m	Track becomes tarmac again by metal gates on L And stopped climbing	1.94km
150m	Turn into a large parking area on the RHS which you cross and exit, passing a wooden barrier	2.09km
250m	Turn R on broad track	2.34km
500m	Turn L at X-tracks onto wide track with good surface and low wooden post SP Kroas-Hent Ar Pemp Hent Having ignored a wooden pontoon on L and another L on earth track	2.84km
1.46km	Pass by forestry house on L	4.3km
80m	Pass wooden barrier and car park to R to leave the forest SA	4.38km
150m	Meet Give Way sign and turn R at TJ onto road heading gently downhill Views of Douarnenez Bay out to L	4.53km
1.1km	Cross bridge over main road (D63) to enter Locronan	5.63km
300m	Turn L at STOP sign TJ	5.93km
150m	At next TJ with crucifix and car park opposite turn R into village centre. There are public toilets here in car park	6.08km
300m	Reach main square with the church in front of you	6.38km

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Locronan

Lok-ronan – literally 'Ronan's place' – is named after Ronan, an Irish bishop who came to the area in the 7th century to Christianise the locals (the area was still under Druidic influence). Carved on the pulpit in the church of St Ronan you can see the story of how he first set up his oratory in the woods of Névet on the site of a former Celtic nemeton or sacred grove. It is believed that he introduced weaving to the community which later became the primary industry of the town. His tomb is in the adjoining Chapelle du Pénity. Classified as a Petite Cité de Caractère, the beautiful village of Locronan with its handsome Renaissance houses with traditional roofs and cobbled streets has been the backdrop for many films, including Roman Polanski's 'Tess'. The impressive 18th-century houses built in the local granite are a reflection of wealth brought to the town by the manufacture of hemp and high quality ship-rigging canvas. The first reference to this dates from 1469, and exports (mainly to England and Spain) reached their height in the 16th century when Locronan's factory equipped many of Europe's navies.

Locronan has long been associated with the creative arts and there are many artisans working here today, with sculpture, ceramics, glassware and art on display and for sale. There are a handful of bars and restaurants, and bakeries in and around the main square. Locronan's food market is every Tuesday morning.

A stroll around Locronan

You may want to do this little tour on foot, so find a suitable place to lock up your bike. It takes about 45-60mins without stops.

As you enter the square (Place de l'Église), the church is in front of you. The **Comptoir de Voyageurs** restaurant is on your R – a high-quality restaurant (fixed menus from approx. 20€), closed Mon (and Tues in low season). Down to the L at the bottom of the square is the **Boulangerie le Guillou** (closed Mon), a bakery now run by the fifth generation of the same Family where fresh sandwiches are made to order. Opposite, on the other side of the square is Ty Kouign Amann, Biscuitier & Chocolatier – a veritable treasure trove of chocolates and pastries and the best butter cakes we have tried in Brittany! Open daily (closes for lunch on Mon). Notice, too, the old well (*les vieux puits*) in the centre of the square.

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From the square head up the narrow street (rue de Four) on the LHS of the church as you face it to enter a second square, Place de la Mairie where you will find a pleasant bar/cafe on the **L'Ostaliri ti Jos** and, a little further on, next to the Mairie (town hall) is the **tourist office**, where you can pick up a map of the village with local information (English versions are usually available). The tourist office closed Mon except Jul & Aug) also houses an interesting small **museum of local art and history**. The ground floor is dedicated to weaving and the history of this significant industry to the area. The first floor houses a small collection of Breton paintings, costumes and traditional artefacts relating to local culture.

Heading further up rue de Four you pass a small crêperie on the R and a little further on, the glass-making workshop (*verrerie*) on the L after a small car park. For views out over the village turn R up out of the village on Venelle des Templiers just before reaching the glass workshop. Head up this narrow road, pass the entrance to the cemetery on the R and continue SA for another 100m where you turn R. Along this road there are views back down to the village on your L. After passing the Manoir de Kerguérolé turn down R back to the village and the main square.

Cross the square (church on R) and this time head down out of the square passing the Ty Kouign Aman (chocolate and butter cake shop) also on your R. As you round the corner take the next L down a narrow street between two small art galleries – this is the rue Moal. Head down this little street lined with more craft shops to reach the small chapel of **Notre-Dame de Bonne Nouvelle** (Good News) with a monumental fountain on the L after 200m. Turn L here, then L again after the chapel to head back up towards the village. At the road turn L then after only 20m turn R onto rue Lann. The road bends round to the L passing more beautiful examples of local architecture, now the smaller cottages that belonged to the workers rather than the richer merchants of the old hemp trade. Continue SA to reach the church.

To return to greenway at Le Juch and Douarnenez

The first 1.7km is retracing your steps

	With your back to the church head out of Locronan the way you entered SA along Rue de Prieuré	6.38km
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240m	Turn L by the crucifix - car park on R	6.62km
160m	Turn R SP Latitude Ouest & Kernevez	6.78km
100m	Exit Locronan and cross main road on bridge	6.88km
1.2km	Road bends round to R (ignore road down towards the forest which is the way you came - now no longer retracing steps) Along this road views of Douarnenez Bay open out	8.08km
2km	Road swings round to R between 2 houses and heads down to main road (D7)	10.08km
200m	Turn L at TJ on main road (D7) ! CARE main road no cycle path	10.28km
500m	Turn L just after zebra crossing SP Bois de Névet	10.78km
600m	Pass entrance to Vieux Châtel	11.38km
400m	Pass carpark on L continue SA Now retracing steps downhill back to Le Juch	11.78km
70m	Road turns to track	11.85km
500m	Pass large metal gates on L and wire fence now running down LHS	12.35km
350m	Track becomes tarmac – still downhill towards farm	12.7km
300m	Pass farm on R ! CARE steep section	13km
450m	Meet TJ at give way sign and turn R onto D39	13.45km
250m	Turn L as road swings R SP le Juch on C2	13.7km
500m	Meet greenway at old station in Le Juch and turn R Continue as above on direct route to Douarnenez	14.2km

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Douarnenez

This is an energetic town of three ports: **Rosmeur**, the working fishing harbour, **Tréboul**, packed with pleasure boats, and in between, the living boat museum of **Port de Rhu**. The latter has a wide-ranging display of boats and boating paraphernalia inside, and further examples on the water which visitors can explore. The name of the town, *Douar an enez*, means 'land of the island' suggesting that Tristan island (at the mouth of the estuary), was the site of the first settlement. The most infamous holder of the island, Guy Eder de la Fontenelle, arrived in 1595 and became the scourge of the whole area in the Wars of Religion, raiding and burning entire villages at whim. He then became involved in political intrigues with the Spaniards and was executed in Paris at the age of 29.

Douarnenez's economic history revolves around the sardine industry. The disappearance of fish stocks between 1902 and 1912 caused enormous hardship. 1924 saw a strike by sardine workers over appalling pay and conditions, and social action has always been a feature of the town, which elected the first communist mayor in the whole of France in 1921.

On the eastern side of Douarnenez is the green oasis of the Plomarc'h, inspiration for many artists such as Renoir and Boudin. There are the remains of a Roman factory here fish paste was made for export, and fine views of the Bay of Douarnenez.

The town boasts all the usual amenities (bank, pharmacy etc). The tourist office is located on rue Dr Mével, opposite which is a market every Monday morning. You can buy picnic provisions from the covered market, Les Halles, which is open Monday to Saturday.