

Cordemais / Saint-Nazaire

La Vélidéale



Départ
Cordemais

Arrivée
Saint-Nazaire

Durée
2 h 45 min

Distance
41,32 Km

Niveau
I cycle often

Thématique
Nature & small heritage

Riding between Cordemais and Saint-Nazaire, France's longest river pretty much guides you to the Atlantic, the cycle route crossing marshlands and industrial zones. This may be your last stage on the Vélidéale... or it may be your first, if you're tackling our cycle route in the opposite direction. Saint-Nazaire, a surprising garden city on the edge of the Atlantic, is a welcoming place. Along its coastline, there are no fewer than 20 beaches and creeks accessible to cyclists. The port itself is now France's largest on the Atlantic. Around town, there are unusual museums to visit, plus remarkable architecture to take in, from Belle Époque to postwar reconstruction. Riding on northwestwards, you can immerse yourself in the atmosphere of France's second-largest marshlands, the Brière. Here, birdwatchers will be in their element, as the likes of heron, tits and bluethroats find it perfect nesting territory. The Atlantic lies at the end of the Loire and the Brière, providing a fitting finale for completing this major cycle route.

The route

From Cordemais, you cycle out along very quiet minor roads. Don't hesitate to take enjoyable little detours to make the most of the bird observatories dotted along the river, plus some memorable art installations, one of the most striking the towering Villa Cheminée. Around picturesque old Lavau-sur-Loire, you ride along tracks beside l'Étier du Syl (a canal carrying sea water to the local salt marshes), then onwards, passing close to the Trou Bleu, a series of lakes that have filled old granite-mining quarries. From Donges, simply follow the cycling signs indicating the number 12 to reach the sprawling port of St-Nazaire. The roads you ride along are pretty quiet, except for a few meters on the RD4 road at Donges, and at the round-about west of Montoir de Bretagne, so take good care at these spots. Once you've reached Loncé, turn left to reach Saint-Nazaire, or right to head off on a cycling circuit to the Parc Naturel Régional de Brière, another major marshland before the Atlantic. Riding through Saint-Nazaire, follow signposting number 11 to reach the seafront here, or signposting number 12 to head straight to the railway station.

Practical information

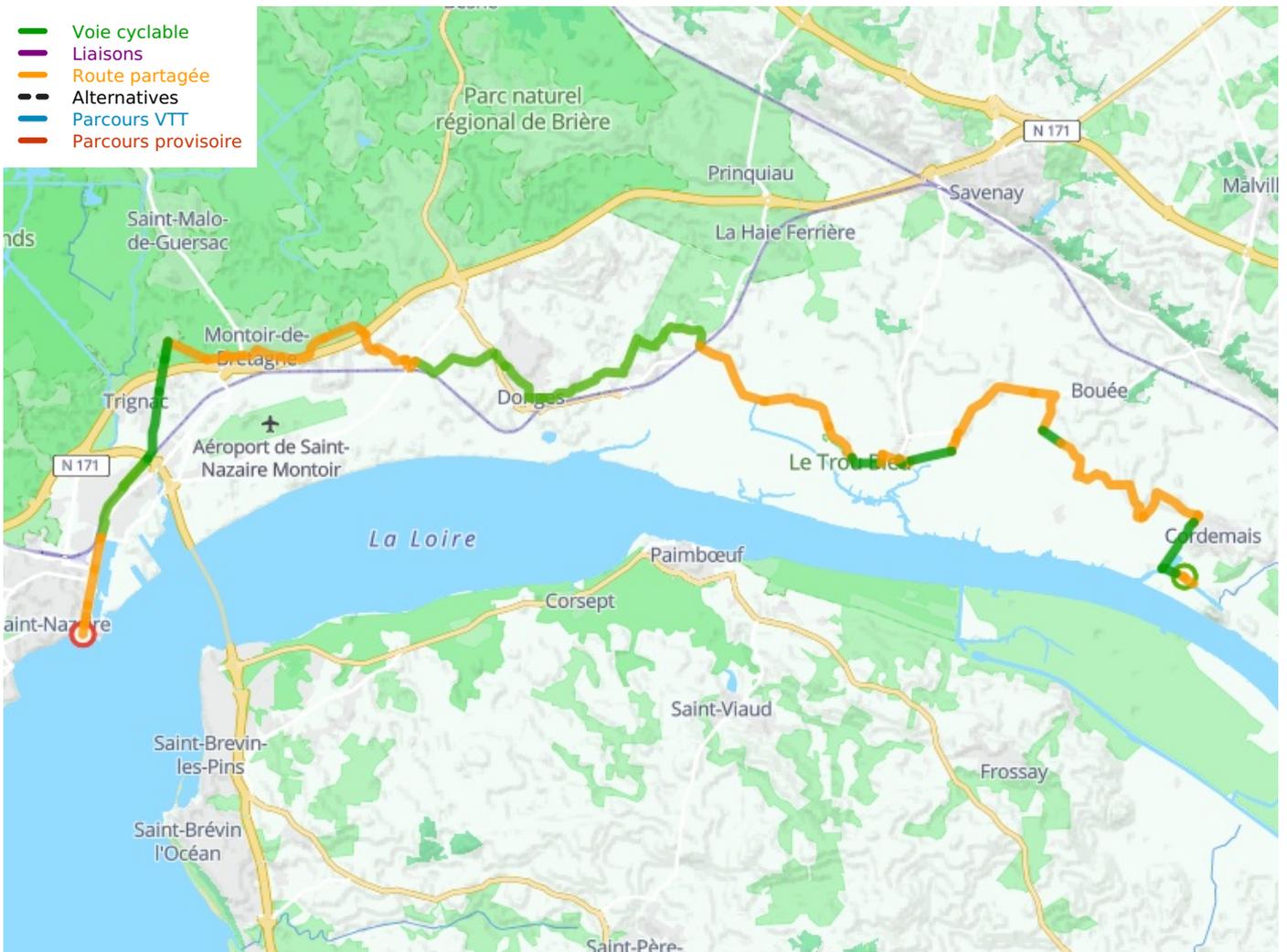
- **Office de Tourisme Estuaire et Sillon**
5 place Guépin, 44260 SAVENAY - 02 28 016 016
www.estuaresillontourisme.fr
- **Office de tourisme de St-Nazaire Base sous-marine**
12 Bd. de la Légion d'Honneur 44600 Saint-Nazaire - 02 40 22 40 65
<https://www.saint-nazaire-tourisme.com/>

SNCF

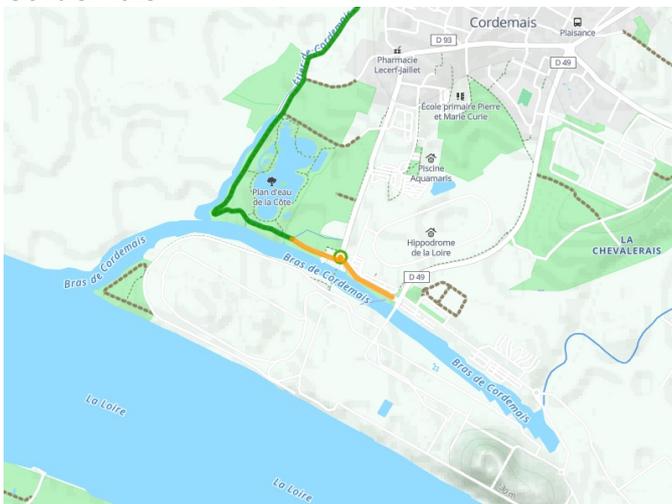
Train stations (gares) at Cordemais, Donges, Montoir-de-Bretagne and St-Nazaire - note that you can take your bike for free on board TER regional trains between Nantes and St-Nazaire.

Don't miss

- **Cordemais:** the EDF thermal power plant; the startling art installation, La Villa Cheminée, a work by Japanese artist Tatzu Nishi; the Centre Terre d'Estuaire, a cultural and leisure centre <https://www.terredestuaire.com/>
- **Saint-Nazaire:** the Base Sous Marine, the Nazi-built submarine base, featuring two of the town's four main museums, Escal'Atlantic, paying homage to the building of cruise-liners in port and the EOL Centre éolien, on off-shore wind energy, a speciality here; Espadon lies just opposite, a decommissioned French submarine you can take a tour around; the Écomusée, on local history and culture, sits opposite the Chantier Naval, the shipyards where ocean liners are built, and which you can sign up to take a tour of; Place du Commando, a wide-open square beside the town centre, looking out onto the Loire Estuary; the 20 beaches and creeks along the town's western coastline; Art en Ville art installations to seek out, plus three outsized works that form part of the larger art trail Estuaire Nantes<>Saint-Nazaire; the Parc Paysager and Jardin des Plantes, public gardens; the Sentier des Douaniers (or Customs Officers' Trail), the name for the coastal hiking trail around the whole Breton coast, the GR34.
- **Saint-Malo-de-Guersac,** Port de Rozé: the belvedere; the locks; the Réserve Naturelle Régionale Pierre Constant at the Port de Rozé
- **Saint-Joachim:** l'île de Fédrun, with many thatched cottages, the island surrounded by marshes; the local museums; the Maison du Parc Naturel Régional de Brière, highlighting the attractions and actions to preserve the Brière Marshes (Chaumière Briéronne + Musée de la Mariée)
- **La Chapelle des Marais:** the Port des Fossés Blancs, a typical Brière port
- **Saint-André-des-Eaux:** the port of La Chaussée Neuve, one of the main Brière Marshes ports, from where you can embark on punting trips.



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