

# Parthenay / Champdeniers-St-Denis

La Vélo Francette: Normandy / Atlantic by bike



**Départ**  
Parthenay

**Arrivée**  
Champdeniers-St-Denis

**Durée**  
1 h 54 min

**Distance**  
28,61 Km

**Niveau**  
I cycle often

**Thématique**  
Nature & small heritage

From Parthenay, the Thouet à Vélo cycle route branches west via Secondigny towards the Thouet's source, heading into the county of Vendée. La Vélo Francette continues southwestwards towards the town of Niort. You cross the Pays de Gâtine, a hillier area; turning many a corner, magnificent views open up of the unspoilt countryside and hedgerows. Savour this stage along quiet country roads.

## The route

Up until the exit to the town of Parthenay, follow the signs for Le Thouet à Vélo, but then switch to the signs for La Vélo Francette. Most of this stage is on roads shared with motorised traffic, with two stretches on dedicated cycle tracks around Parthenay, beside the Thouet, plus a short portion on a greenway at Mazières-en-Gâtine.

## Tourist Office

- [Gâtine Tourist Office](#)
- [Syndicat Mixte de la Vallée du Thouet](#)

## Buses

Parthenay SNCF station. Many places nearby can be reached by bus: line 10 Thouars <> Parthenay / line 12 Thouars <> Parthenay <> Niort / line 32 Thouars <> Poitiers  
<http://mobilite79.fr/>

## Don't miss

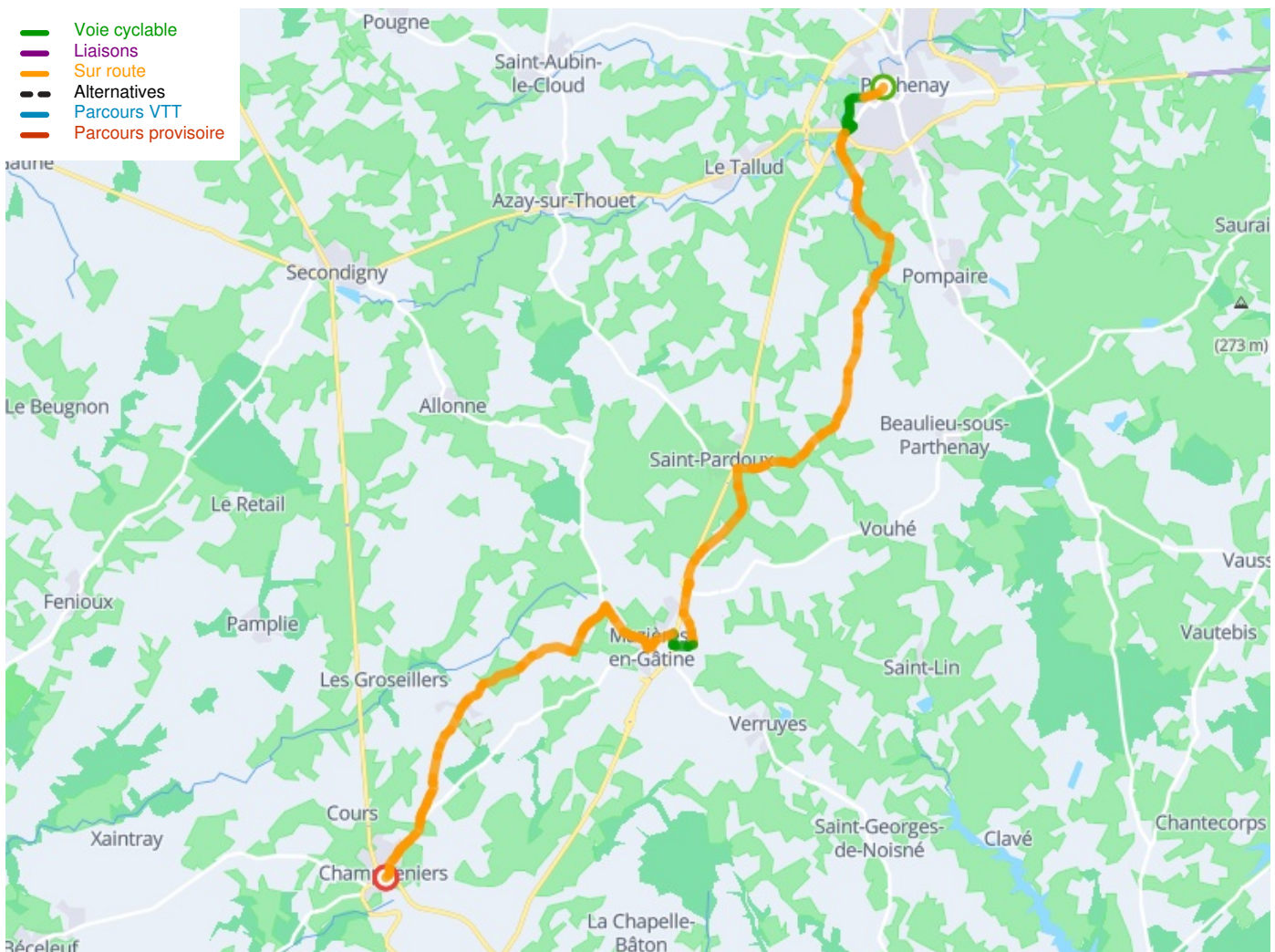
**Parthenay:** the historic St-Jacques Quarter and its medieval gateway; the old château; the churches of St-Pierre and Ste-Croix; the ramparts

**Mazières-en-Gâtine:** the church with its Romanesque apse; the Château du Petit Chêne, with its golf course; the washhouses; the Belvédère des Rouleaux, for views over the blue-stone quarry

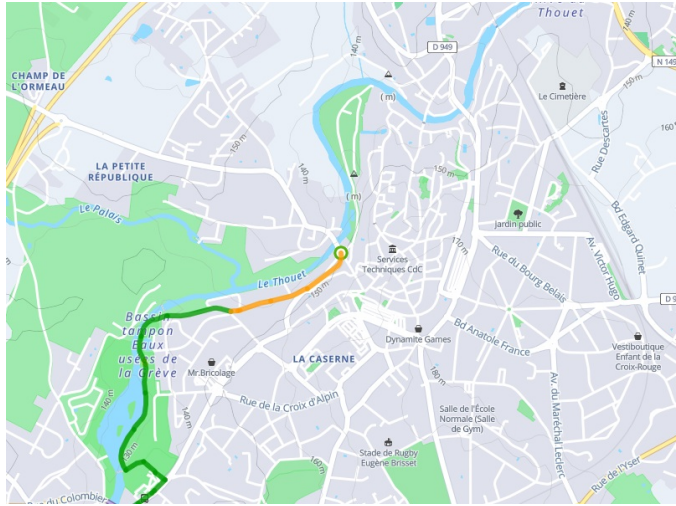
**Soutiers:** stop at the Jardin Val de Flore. The floral garden extends over 3 hectares beside La Viette River, in a lovely natural setting.

**Saint-Marc-la-Lande:** The impressive collegiate church, dating back to the early 16th century, is the biggest Flamboyant Gothic edifice in the county of Deux-Sèvres. Also visit the Commanderie des Antonins (built for a medieval monastic order), the conservation orchard and the medicinal plants garden

**Champdeniers-St-Denis:** This hilltop village looks down on the Vallée de l'Egray to the south. Tanneries were established here in medieval times; nowadays you can still see vestiges of tanneries from the 17th century. Also see the washhouses, the underground river, the fairground and the Château de Nuchèze.



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