

Alternative stage Oulx / Briançon

Route des Grandes Alpes® by bike

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Départ
Oulx

Arrivée
Briançon

Durée
2 h 59 min

Distance
44,93 Km

Niveau
I cycle a lot

Thématique
Mountains

An innovation along the Route des Grandes Alpes®! You can of course take the classic route via the Col du Montgenèvre, just above Briançon. However, we can suggest this other route, via the Col de l'Échelle pass (1762m) and the splendid Clarée Valley, one of the gems of the county of Hautes-Alpes. You cross the Les Cerces Range, its pointed mountains dominated by the iconic Mont Thabor, drawing many hikers as well as skiers. Running beside the Italian border, the Clarée Valley is a protected natural area, ranging between 1400m and 2000m above sea level, that boasts unspoilt nature and heritage. Briançon, at the beginning or end of this beautiful stage, has Ville d'Art et d'Histoire status, given its rich heritage, and its fortifications form part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site covering works designed by Vauban, Louis XIV's great military architect.

From Oulx to Briançon via the Col de l'Échelle and the Clarée Valley

Route North / South

↗ 719m ↘ 543m

From Oulx (1100 m), you climb to the mountain resort of Bardonecchia, which played a starring role during the 2006 Turin Winter Olympics. A further 12km on, you arrive at the Col de l'Échelle pass (1762m), where marvels await. Entering the Clarée Valley, you won't see any ski lifts and if its unspoilt delights appeal, you could head north up the valley for the sheer pleasure of it. However, you need to leave the valley via its southern end, crossing the charming village of Val des Prés. Having joined the road to the Col de Montgenèvre, you descend to Briançon, inspecting Vauban's fortifications as you pass.

Route South / North

↗ 543m ↘ 719m

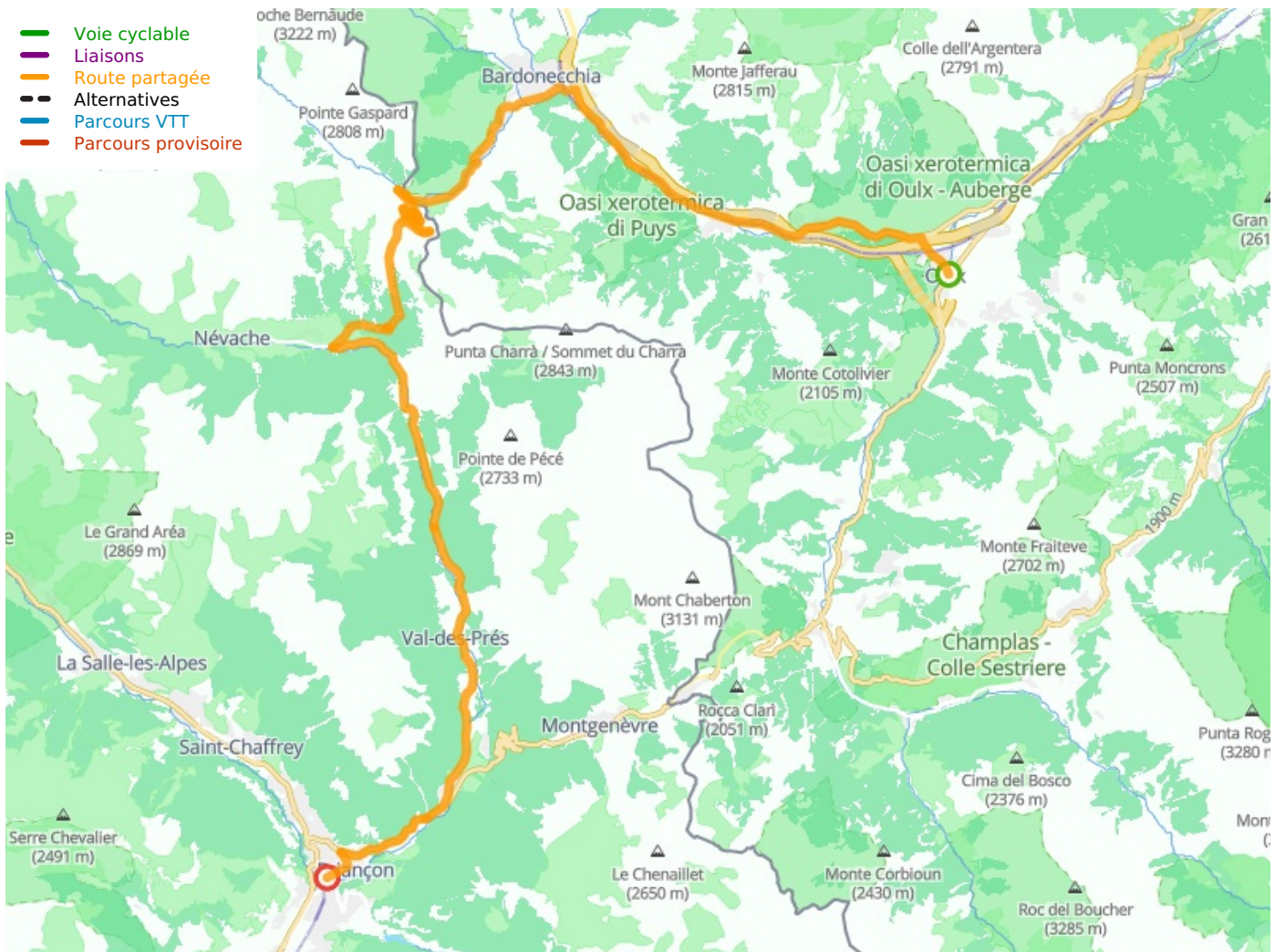
Head out of Briançon via the Col de Montgenèvre road, which you leave midway along to enter the Clarée Valley. Cross the village of Val des Prés, continuing to Roubion and the junction with the steepest part of the route up to the Col de l'Échelle pass (1762m) close by. As this stage isn't very long, you might enjoy a detour north up the Clarée Valley for the sheer pleasure of it, before taking on the Col de l'Échelle. From the pass, a dozen kilometres of descent lead down to the mountain resort of Bardonecchia, which played a starring role during the 2006 Turin Winter Olympics. Then you just have to ride on to Oulx (1100 m), another dozen kilometres further down.

Don't miss

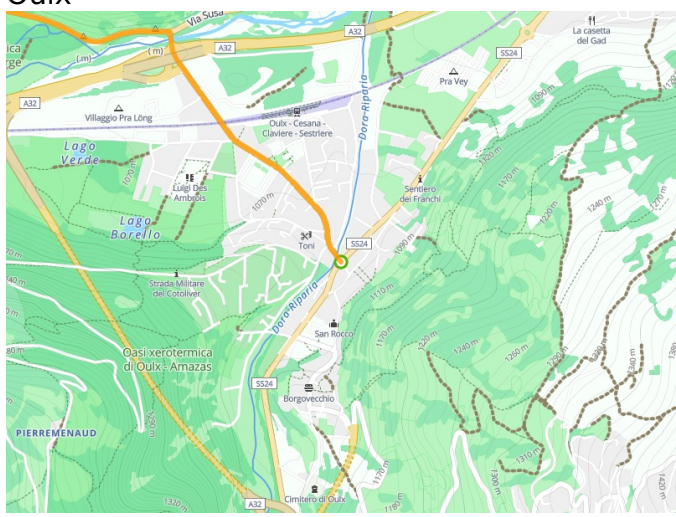
- **Briançon:** the highest fortified town in Europe, designated a Ville d'Art et d'Histoire for its rich heritage and part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its Vauban fortifications. In addition, the mountain resort of Serre-Chevalier 1200 forms part of its territory, the lowest portion of the ski area of Serre-Chevalier, joined to the rest of the

domain by cable-car.

- **The Vauban fortifications:** Briançon's historic walls, bridge into town and surrounding four forts are part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site dedicated to works designed by Vauban, Louis XIV's brilliant military architect.
- **Serre Chevalier:** the mountain resort for the Guisane Valley, stretching between the Col du Lautaret and Briançon and across four communes (parishes). The highest is Le Monétier-les-Bains, which doubles as a thermal spa resort. The others are La Salle-les-Alpes – Villeneuve, Saint-Chaffrey– Chantemerle, and, of course, Briançon Serre Chevalier 1200.
- **The Clarée Valley:** two villages, Val-des-Prés and Névache, lie along this unspoilt, listed valley with its exceptional Alpine pasturelands and larch forests.



**Départ
Oulx**



**Arrivée
Briançon**

