

Crozant / Bénévent-l'Abbaye

Saint-Jacques à vélo - Via Vézelay

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Départ
Crozant

Arrivée
Bénévent-l'Abbaye

Durée
3 h 19 min

Distance
49,77 Km

Niveau
I cycle often

Thématique
Castles & Monuments

You ride into the old province of Limousin via the Creuse's Vallée des Peintres (Artists' Valley) starting from Crozant, marked by its dramatic medieval fort at the confluence of Creuse and Sédelle Valleys. Passing the village of Saint Germain Beaupré, the Saint-Jacques à Vélo cycle route then heads down to La Souterraine, a medieval town, signs bearing Santiago de Compostela scallop shell showing you the way via the Porte Saint Jean Gateway and the Church of Our Lady. Cyclists who enjoyed Crozant's ruins should appreciate a detour to the medieval site of Bridiers just east of La Souterraine, with an imposing keep, plus vestiges of the lordly lodgings and ramparts. After La Souterraine, the cycle route takes you along the Gartempe Valley, leading to Le Grand Bourg, followed by the town of Bénévent-l'Abbaye, designated a Petite Cité de Caractère© for its heritage riches, including its admirable 12th-century abbey.

Cycle route from Crozant to Bénévent-l'Abbaye

All along this stage, follow the Tour de Creuse à Vélo cycle route. Forget the zigzagging roads you've cycled along through the départements (or counties) of Cher and Indre (in the old province of Berry); here, the way is straight, following the D72 road up to La Souterraine.

Note that although you're on a road shared with motorized traffic, it's quite safe for cyclists and traffic is light, with under 500 vehicles a day using the road, on average. After leaving La Souterraine, you join the D72 road at the level of Lizières. On this stage, you have to do a relatively significant amount of climbing, but without there being any major slopes to tackle.

Merging routes

On this stage, signage doubles up, marking both the Tour de Creuse à Vélo and the Saint-Jacques à Vélo - Via Vézelay cycle routes, which merge in these parts. This doubling up carries on as far as Chatelus-le-Marcheix.

For further information on the [Tour de Creuse à vélo](#).

Tourist information

- [Agence française des chemins de Compostelle](#) - 05 62 27 00 05
- Office de Tourisme de la Vallée de la Creuse - Bureau d'Éguzon-Chantôme - 36270 - 02 54 47 43 69
- Office du tourisme du Pays Sostranien, 2 Pl. de la Gare, 23300 La Souterraine - 05 55 89 23 07
- Office de Tourisme Monts et Rivières Ouest Creuse, 2 Rue de la Fontaine, 23210 Bénévent-l'Abbaye - 05 55 62 68 35
- [Creuse Tourisme Limousin](#)

SNCF train services

- The railway station at La Souterraine is on national lines, with direct services with Limoges Bénédictins, Cahors, Vierzon, Brive-la-Gaillarde and Paris Gare d'Austerlitz.

Don't miss

- **Crozant:** the historic fort, badly damaged during the 16th-century French Wars of Religion, was brought down further by an earthquake in 1606 and today lies in ruins, but it's still easy to imagine the exceptionally powerful effect this perched fortress once had; the Hôtel Lepinat, a heritage centre proposing an interactive immersion into works by renowned artists inspired by local Creuse landscapes, plunging visitors, via multimedia tools and original backdrops, into the creative life and genius of Impressionist artists come to paint en plein air, or out in the open and in the moment, around the end of the 19th century.
- **Saint-Germain Beaupré:** artist René Esposito opens his atelier to the public, exhibiting colourful canvases and leading visitors on quite a sensory journey, his studio also opening onto the garden.
- **Saint Agnant de Versillat:** the Artbotanic garden presents a surprising, zen space, this enchanting place looked after by Lionel, passionate about his landscape gardening.
- **La Souterraine:** the Porte Saint-Jean, a Gothic gateway, is the town's best-known monument and also its symbol, the original rectangular edifice greatly extended to its soaring height in the 15th century.
- **Bénévent-l'Abbaye:** the Scenovision, a vibrant visual show set across six rooms, using cinema and theatre techniques, stirring the emotions and teaching you a good deal about life along the Creuse Valley.

