

Salies-de-Béarn / Orthez

The Vélosud



Départ
Salies-de-Béarn

Arrivée
Orthez

Durée
1 h 14 min

Distance
18,72 Km

Niveau
I cycle often

Thématique
Old railway, Canals & intimate rivers

On this stage, a short link across the old province of Béarn takes you from Salies-de-Béarn, an historic salt-producing town known as the Cité du Sel, to Orthez, once capital of the viscounts of Béarn. A former railway line recently converted for cyclists, including a long but well-lit tunnel, means the local slopes are simply eradicated in one fell swoop for you, taking you smoothly through to the Gave de Pau Valley! The powerful river here is fed by the snows and springs high up in this part of the Pyrenees. Now, and for some time to come, the Vélosud follows this waterway's course, today leading you as far as Orthez, on the next stage as far as Pau, the stage after that as far as Lourdes. In these open parts well suited to agriculture, you may spot how even kiwis are now being cultivated, as well as admiring the old-style architectural heritage. A small detour takes you to the ruined medieval castle of Bellocq, with the old church entrance to admire as well, while the beautiful typical Béarn houses in Bérenx make quite a sight, along with the village's old mills. By Sainte-Suzanne, you can feel the pull of the town of Orthez, which you enter in wonderful manner, via a cobbled street and a medieval bridge.

The route

As soon as you leave the town of Salies-de-Béarn, this stage begins with 5.5km of cycle path along a converted former railway line. After that, the Vélosud guides you via secondary roads shared with motorized vehicles, but with only a small amount of traffic, linking up a string of villages until the town of Orthez. Additional detour for Bellocq: branching left as indicated, enjoy a short return trip to visit the medieval grid-plan bastide village of Bellocq with its castle ruins (1.5km from the route).

Points at which to take care:

- Arriving at Bellocq Tunnel, make sure you pass slowly in front of the cells at the entrance tunnel that activate the automatic lighting system in the tunnel.
- At Bérenx, on the D933 road, take care along a 300m-stretch where you need to shift left before joining a secondary road.
- At Orthez, to reach La Moutète, the central covered market, ride along the D817 road, shifting right along a 100m-stretch, then take care turning left in front of La Moutète.

Practical information

- [Office de Tourisme de Salies-de-Béarn](#)
- [Office de Tourisme de Orthez](#)

Transports

SNCF French National Railways train stations

- Gare de Puyoô railway station: high-speed TGV trains (line Bordeaux-Lourdes-Tarbes); Intercités trains; and regional TER Nouvelle-Aquitaine trains (on these last you can take your bike onboard for free). 4km link by bike from Bellocq.
- Gare SNCF de Orthez railway station: high-speed

TGV trains (line Bordeaux- Lourdes-Tarbes); Intercités trains; and regional TER Nouvelle-Aquitaine trains (on these last you can take your bike onboard for free).

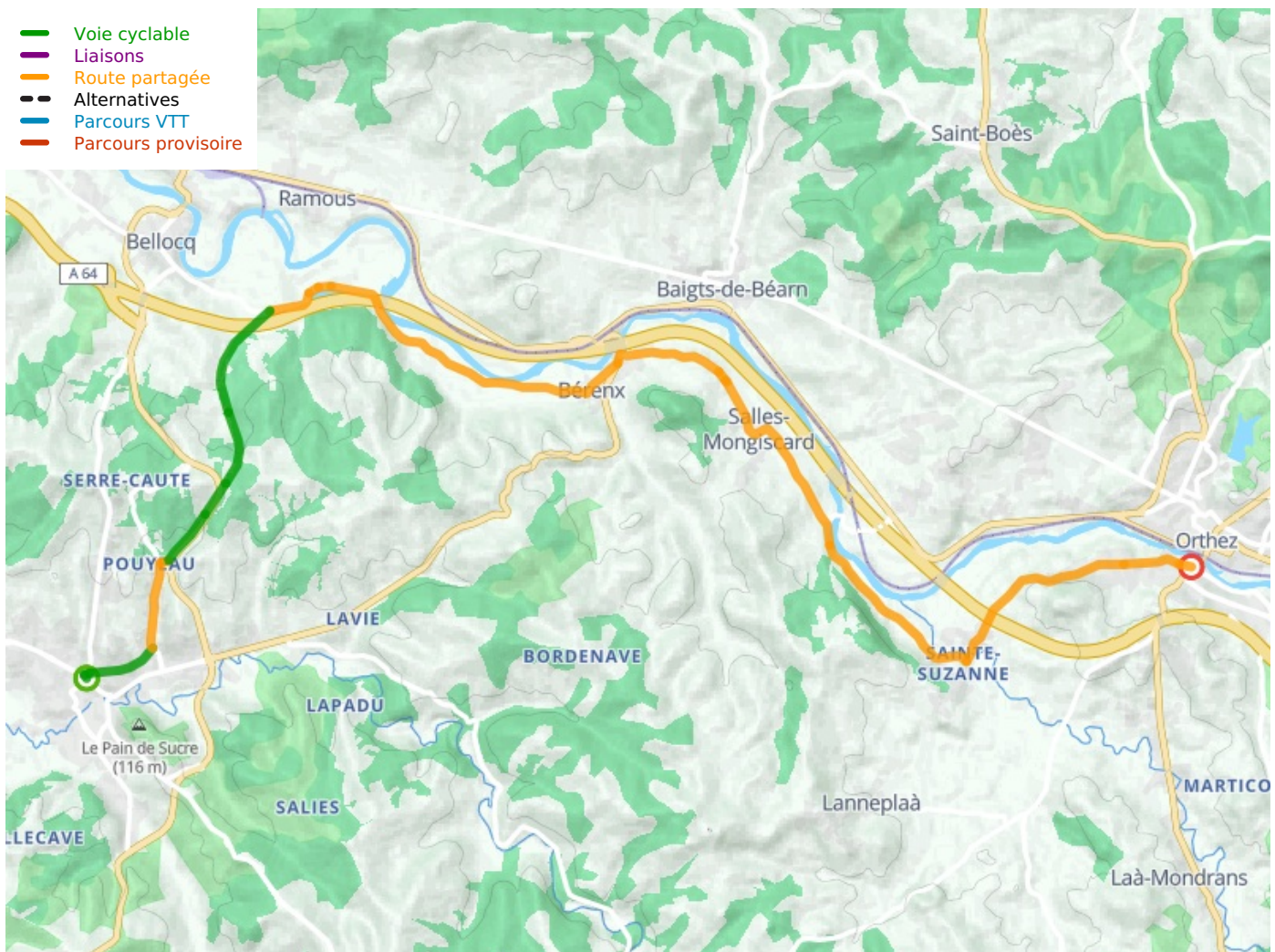
Bus services

- Nouvelle Aquitaine regional bus network, [line 523](#), going from Salies-de-Béarn (casino) to Puyoô (gare / railway station) and Orthez (gare / railway station).
- Nouvelle Aquitaine regional bus network, [line 520](#), from Orthez (gare / railway station) to Pau (gare / railway station).

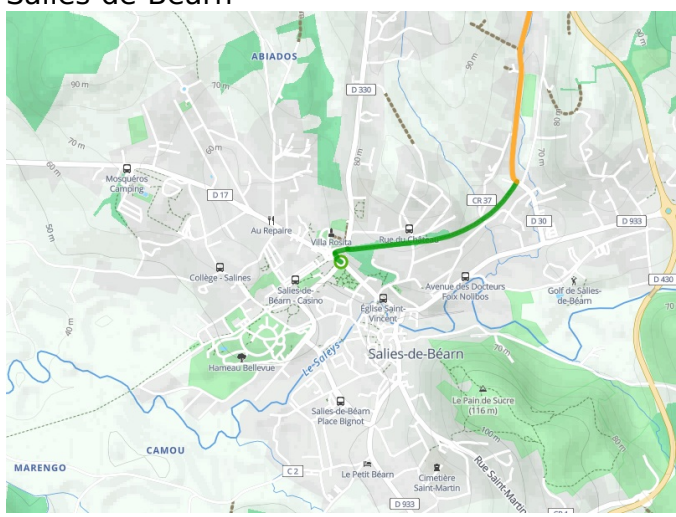
Don't miss

- **The converted Puyoô-Saint Palais railway line:** the greenway from Salies-de-Béarn has been laid out along a former railway line built to link Puyoô to Mauléon.
- **Bellocq:** the Château de Bellocq is an impressive medieval ruin standing beside one of the oldest medieval grid-plan bastides in the old province of Béarn. Built in 1250 for Gaston VII Moncade (a viscount of Béarn whose seat was in Orthez), the fort was completed for Gaston Fébus in the 14th century. Its ramparts rise to 8m in height along a 220m stretch and include no fewer than seven watch towers.
- **Bérenx:** a village crammed with typical Béarn architecture, the houses generally very solid, built out of big pebbles rounded by erosion and fixed together with mortar.
- **Orthez:** the medieval bridge, dating back to the 13th century, built under ruler Gaston VII Moncade (viscount of Béarn), constructed with three unequal arches, providing the only way to cross the rocky strait through which the Gave de Pau River runs via the heart of town.

- Voie cyclable
- Liaisons
- Route partagée
- - - Alternatives
- Parcours VTT
- Parcours provisoire



Départ
Salies-de-Béarn



Arrivée
Orthez

