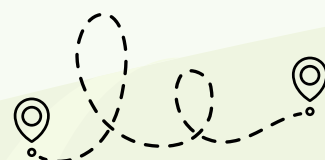




BICYCLE TOURS

France World War Heritage

Pas-de-Calais - Somme - Aisne - Meuse



LENS - OLHAIN

Pas-de-Calais

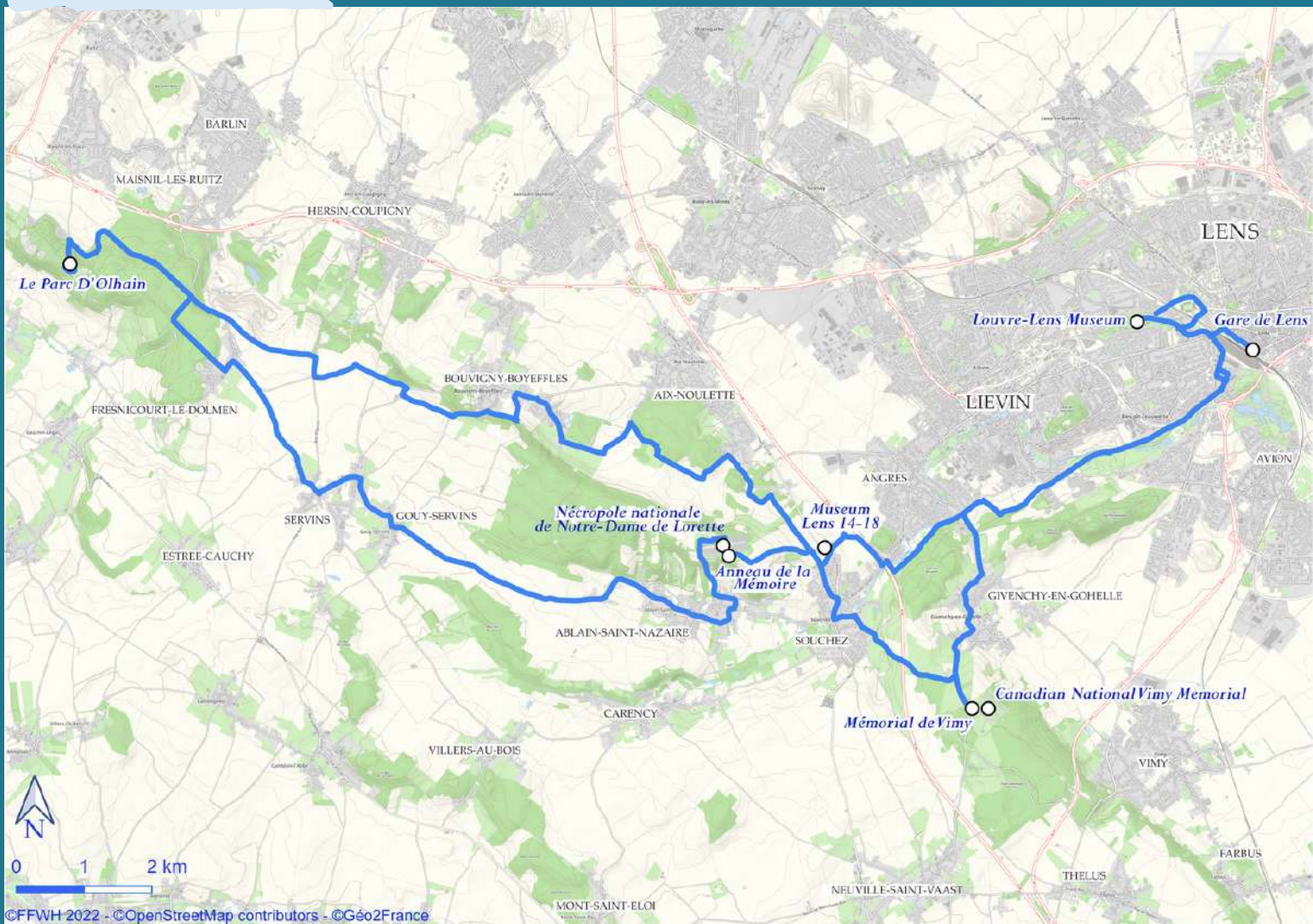
60 km



Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



In the 19th century, thanks to the exploitation of coal, the town of Lens experienced a remarkable boom as well as a solid increase in population. After the 1st World War, the town had to be completely rebuilt. Some beautiful buildings are a testimony of this reconstruction.



Lens Art Déco trainstation

The Art Deco style inspired many architects during the interwar period. Observing the Lens' railway station from a distance, it looks like a steam locomotive. It was designed by Urbain Cassan, built in 1926, and constructed in concrete. The style is Art Deco. Inside the building, the 4 remarkable mosaics depict life in this mining region during the industrial revolution.





A signposted and paved cycle path takes riders from Lens to Olhain. From the station, the Rue Jean Letienne leads to a large roundabout that is best avoided. It is recommended, on the pedestrian crossing, to cross both Rue Letienne and Rue Cassan and further on Ave. Alfred Maes on foot and ride under the railway tunnel. As soon as you exit the tunnel, you will see crossings for cyclists. Over an island in the middle of the road, you'll come to the other side and onto bike path V32.



On exiting that tunnel, you will also see a signpost to the Louvre-Lens Museum. A 3km-long path now runs on an old mining railway track. For both pedestrians and cyclists, this is the connection from the station to this museum.

For cyclists who have parked their vehicle in the (free) car park at Bollaert stadium, they get to path V32 by riding under the railway line on either Allée Marc-Vivien Foe or Rue Georges Bernanos.



Crédit photo : Yannick Cadart CD62



Le musée du Louvre-Lens

This museum, a branch of the Louvre in Paris, stands on the site of an abandoned coal mine. The park stretches over 20 hectares. The Louvre-Lens does not own its own collection but organises annual exhibitions. These temporary exhibitions are organised in collaboration with foreign museums and always have an international appeal.

www.louvrelens.fr



The signposting of the V32 is quite clear. Near the "Parc d'activités du Gard", you have to be careful where the path gets its own bed, next to and parallel to Rue de la Grossouvre. The cycle bridge takes you safely over the Route d'Arras and then continues along an abandoned railway line that has now become a pleasant cycle path. At the intersection of the D 51 and Rue d'Avion is the start of a 47 km loop.



At the forest of Olhain you are halfway. At the indication "fin provisoire de la V32", take the road leading up to the park's welcome desk. In the central buildings of the park, which covers as much as 170 hectares, you will find four restaurants, accommodation, a washing station for bikes.... and public toilets.



You then leave Olhain park on the same road you came in on. After about 2 km you find the car park and the roundabout.



Crédit photo : Yannick Cadart CD62



At the roundabout take D 57 e3 (on the carriageway) for about 400 m.





Take Rue du Bois, across the forest, then take a left on D 57. However, a 600m stretch is unpaved.

In bad weather, you can choose to stay on the D 57 e3 and carry on.



Leave the D 57 after 740 m ↙ and take the country road " voie agricole interdite aux véhicules ".

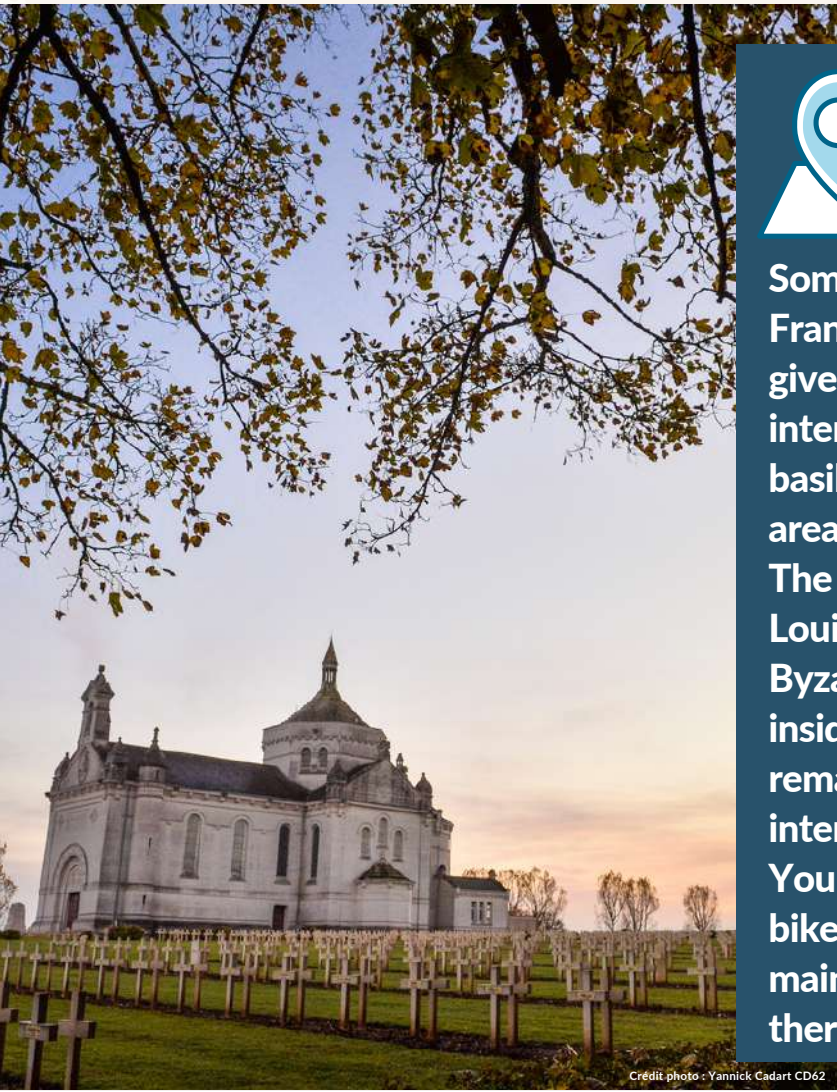


This country road brings you back on the D 57, which you then continue to follow in the direction of Gouy-Servins and then Ablain-Saint-Nazaire, and enjoy a nice downhill ride to Souchez.



At a former gothic church, of which only a ruin remains, take Rue de la Blanche Voie. The climb is fierce!

Imagine what it must have been like in 1915 for the French infantry to storm that hill under enemy fire. From this battlefield on the hill of Notre Dame de Lorette, a thousand metres of trenches and a collection of 3,000 objects are still preserved and can be visited at the Musée Vivant 1914-1918.



La Nécropole Nationale de Notre-Dame-de-Lorette

Some 42000 French dead were interred in France's largest military cemetery. Half were given individual graves and the rest were interred in eight mass graves. The cemetery, basilica, lantern tower and museum cover an area of 25 hectares.

The basilica was designed by Lille architect Louis Marie Cordonnier and erected in neo-Byzantine style. The stained-glass windows inside depict war scenes. In 1955, the ashes and remains of victims of the Nazi camps were interred in the crypt.

You traverse the cemetery on foot with your bike by the hand, and that's how you get to the main entrance. There is room to park your bike there.

The viewpoint, where the wall still bears the inscription "ETAT CIVIL", provides a good view of the city of Arras and explains the strategic and military importance of this 165 m high hill. Public sanitary facilities are located under the platform and you find the entrance by descending the stairs.



The Anneau de la Mémoire (Ring of Remembrance) was erected in memory of all the soldiers who died between 1914 and 1918 on the territory of the Nord and Pas-de-Calais departments.

The 580,000 names are listed in alphabetical order, regardless of rank, creed, gender or nationality. The first name, "A Tet", belongs to a soldier from Nepal and the last name, "Zschiesche Paul", belongs to a German soldier.

Women's names are also included in the list. For instance, the Canadian nurse, Katherine Maud Mary Mac Donald, is listed who died during an artillery shelling in 1918.



Mémorial'14-18

At the bottom of the hill, the history centre of the Memorial 14-18 is free and informative.

www.memorial1418.com



When descending the hill, on the D 58 e 3, it is best not to ride too fast so that you can safely take the right turn into rue dr. Henri Wagon towards Souchez.



Right at the traffic lights, follow the D 937 over 300m, until you reach the square in front of Souchez's lovely town hall.



Take Rue Raoul Briquet, towards Souchez church, then follow the (green CWGC) signpost indicating the direction to the Givenchy-en-Gohelle military cemetery.



The road uphill is steep and in poor condition, but much safer to cycle on than on the busy D 937.

The Givenchy-en-Gohelle military cemetery was established by the Canadian Corps in 1917 and is therefore still called "Canadian" Cemetery. The epitaph on Major W.T. Hooper's tombstone testifies to the Canadian Corps' loyalty to the British Empire. He says he was "content" to have given his life for England.





A dirt road, 600m long, takes you from the cemetery to the D 55. In dry weather, this dirt road is quite passable. If the weather is bad, walk 600 m on foot to the D 55 or the Chemin des Canadiens. Unless you want to connect with the other loop, "Arras - Mont-Saint-Eloy", the D 55 goes downhill at speed to the village of Givenchy-en-Gohelle.

*If you do want to connect with the other loop, you will ride up 700m to the Canadian monument.



Don't pick up too much speed on the D55, or you will miss the junction to Givenchy in the bend.



On Rue Marcel Semblat follow the D 51 and after 1 km,

at the traffic lights,

at the roundabout you will recognise the early section of this loop and make your way back to the station or car park.



Practical information

Lens Liévin Tourisme

📍 16 place Jean Jaurès, 62300 Lens
☎ +33 (0)3 21 67 66 66
🌐 www.tourisme-lenslievin.fr



To see on the way

Base 11/19 et Terrils jumeaux

📍 Rue de Bourgogne, 62750 Loos-en-Gohelle
☎ 03 21 67 66 66
🌐 www.tourisme-lenslievin.fr/fiche/base-11-19-et-terrils-jumeaux/

Musée Alexandre Villedieu

📍 Foyer Omer Caron, Pl. de la République, 62750 Loos-en-Gohelle
☎ 06 60 40 06 22
🌐 www.tourisme-lenslievin.fr/fiche/musee-alexandre-villedieu



Accommodation

Hôtel du Louvre-Lens

📍 168 rue Paul Bert, 62300 Lens
☎ +33 (0)3 66 98 10 40
🌐 www.hotel-louvre-lens.com

La villa Louvre-Lens

📍 8 rue Gustave Spriet, 62300 Lens
☎ +33 (0)7 82 88 45 58
🌐 www.villa-louvre-lens.com

La maison d'ingénieur

📍 4 rue Vasco de Gama, 62750 Loos-en-Gohelle
☎ +33 (0)9 83 55 05 65
🌐 www.porte-mine.com



Practical information



Restaurants

L'Estaminet de Lorette

- 📍 2 pl. de Notre-Dame de Lorette
- ☎ +33 (0)3 21 45 29 07
- 🌐 L'Estaminet de Lorette (Facebook)

Le Pain de la bouche

- 📍 14 bis rue de la Gare, 62300 Lens
- ☎ 03 21 67 68 68
- 🌐 www.lepaindelabouche.fr

L'Etiquette

- 📍 10 pl. Jean Jaurès, 62300 Lens
- ☎ 03 21 70 16 29
- 🌐 www.letiquette-lens.com

Parc d'Olhain

- 📍 Rue de Rebreuve, 62620 Maisnil-les-Ruitz
- ☎ 03 21 27 91 79
- 🌐 www.parcdolhain.fr

- 📍 Possibility to eat in Lens and Souchez.



Bike repair shops

Vélo service Center

- 📍 94 rue Etienne Flament
62300 Lens
- ☎ 03 21 75 04 05

Orbea center Lens

- 📍 58 bd Emile Basly
62300 Lens
- ☎ 03 21 78 97 52

Cube Center Lens

- 📍 32 route de Béthune
62300 Lens
- ☎ 03 21 49 39 82

ARRAS - MONT-SAINT-ELOI

Pas-de-Calais

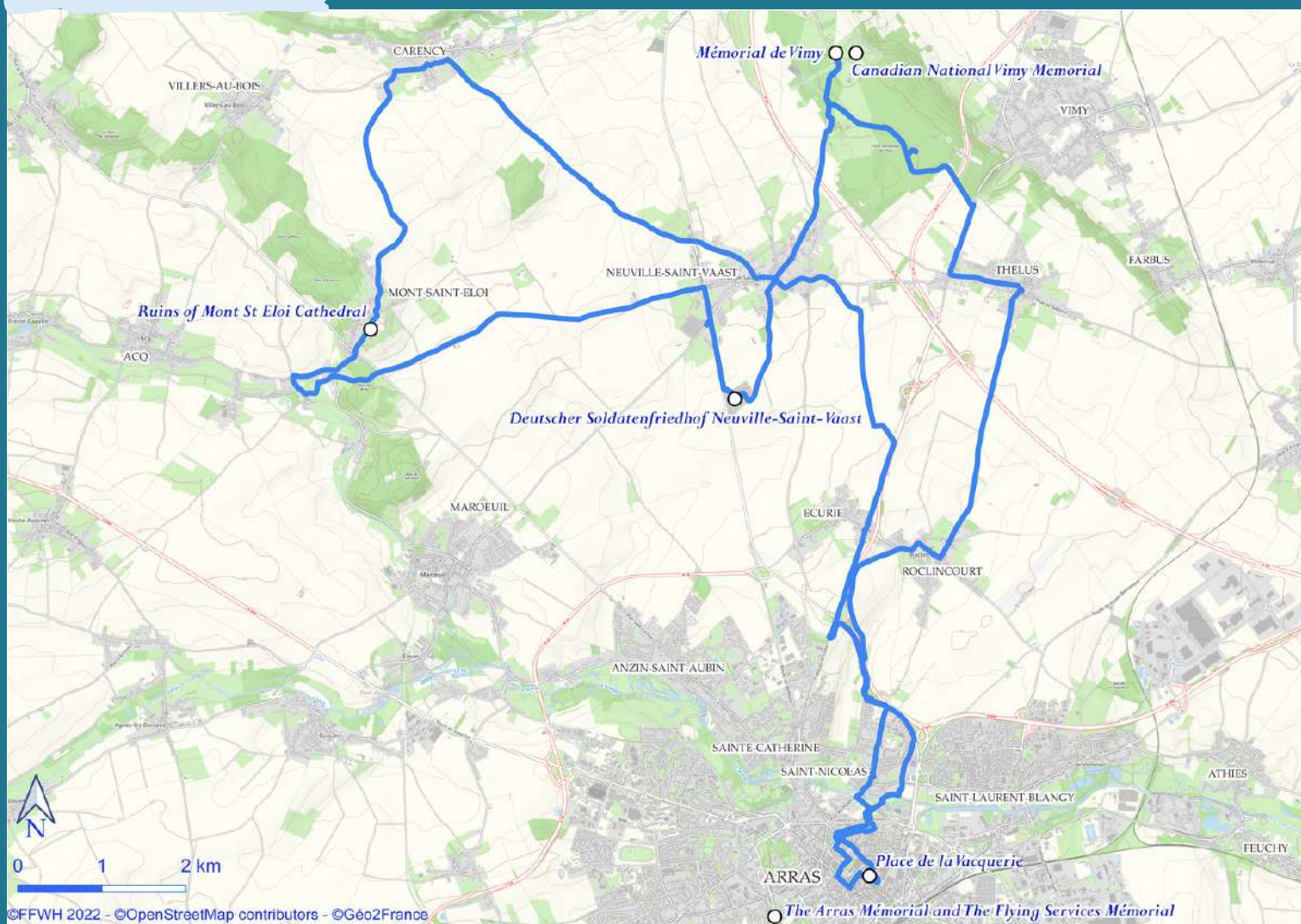
47 km



Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



Arras, the historic capital of the Artois region - today the Pas-de-Calais department - is famous for its belfry and two magnificent market squares that are seven centuries old.

The belfry is a paragon of flamboyant Gothic architecture like the belfry of Oudenaarde (Be) and also Brussels.



Les Places d'Arras

Both the Place des Héros and the Grand'Place form a very regular and homogeneous ensemble.

The facades of the houses on each of the two markets show the influence of Flemish Baroque in a classical French architecture of the 17th century.

The start of this 48 km lap, is the Place de la Vacquerie, located just behind the town hall and belfry. Some nice Art Deco elements on the facades give this square a unique atmosphere. The ride starts here, drive to the micro-brasserie on Rue Neuve des Ardents.





Rue des Trois Visages and then gently down la Rue de Méaulens



At the height of the old inner harbour of Arras, built in the 17th century, ride along the quay, Quai du Rivage, and under the bridge of the ring road, continue along the river.



Then take the cycle bridge, at the level of the lock, and this will take you across the Scarpe onto the towpath.



Barely 200 m further on, you leave the towpath for the path at right angles to the towpath, well hidden behind a hedge!



Past the traffic lights, it goes uphill on Rue du Général de Gaule and then Rue du Timon.



At the second roundabout, be sure not to take the express road but rather the third exit, a service road that runs parallel to the D 917.



Down the descent, exit the service road via the passage under the D 917 and drive on the agricultural road that takes you uphill to Roclincourt.



On the D 60 to Roclincourt.



At roundabout near Roclincourt town hall.



At roundabout in Thélus commune.



At the traffic lights, by the monument to the Royal Artillery (photo) , take Rue des Artilleurs Canadiens.



Follow the signpost PARC ET MÉMORIAL CANADIEN, take the D 55 e 2 or the Rue des Canadiens.



At the end of Rue des Canadiens follow D 55 towards Monument.



With a major offensive launched on 9 May 1915, the French wanted to regain control of the strategic heights of Vimy and the lower plain from Lens to Béthune.

The Moroccan division overruns the enemy positions and occupies the highest points. Without supplies, however, they had to relinquish that position under the pressure of an intense German counterattack. The monument here honours the bravery of the fallen soldiers of the Moroccan Division.



*700 m further along the D 55, is the connection with the other loop: « LENS – OLHAIN »



Le Mémorial national du Canala



On April 9, 1917, it was up to the troops of the British Empire to attack a 22 km long front of German positions, stretching from Souchez to Croisilles. The four Canadian divisions recapture Givenchy and Vimy ridge. The National Canadian Memorial celebrates the bravery of the Canadians who won a decisive victory here. Canadians who died or went missing during the First World War are also commemorated on this Memorial.

One of the most valued effects of this victory was that the city of Arras was safe from artillery bombardments, after more than 4000 homes and also its finest buildings; the town hall, the belfry and the cathedral, were laid in ruins.

In 1922, the French government donated 250 hectares to the Canadian government for the construction of their memorial and park.

It is highly unusual for the French government to cede land to a foreign power and, moreover, with perpetual exemption from duties and taxes.



After this visit, retrace your steps, on the D 55, and continue to the visitor center with parking for bicycles.



This information center explains why Canada participated in the war and why this battle has a special place in the history of this country.

At the welcome desk you can book a free guided tour of the trenches and the tunnel. This in both French and English.

In addition to the neat sanitary installation, there is a tap with cooled water to fill your drinking bottle.



Leave the car park on the D 55 towards Neuville-Saint-Vaast (Saint Vedastus).



Drive 200 m on the D 49.



Take the Chemin de Gazois ↑ over the D 937 (!) and continue on the Route de Carency



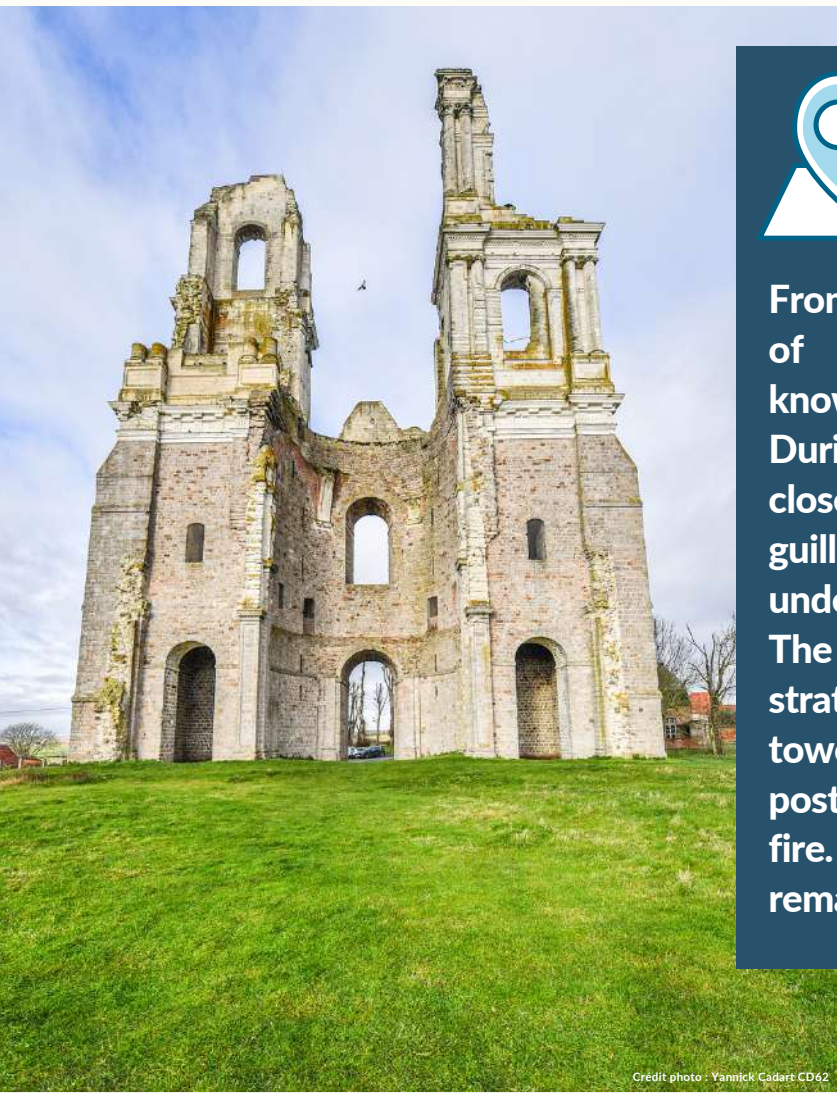
Arriving in Carency



continue on the D 58 for about 150 m



The C1 or Rue du Huit Mai



L'Abbaye du Mont-Saint-Eloi

From the 11th to the 18th century, the Abbey of St. Eloi was an influential center of knowledge and power in the region of Artois. During the French Revolution, all abbeys were closed. The last abbot was beheaded on the guillotine. Churches were sold and demolished under the new regime.

The hill, more than 150 m high, proved to be of strategic importance during the War. The towers of the abbey served as an observation post and were therefore under heavy artillery fire. Today, only the west facade of the abbey remains. The ruin of the towers is still 44m high.



Ride gently down the Rue du Général Barbot and be sure to stop before crossing the D 341 (!).



In Rue de la Cavée



La Rue de Douai



Rue Jean Baptiste Oboeuf and then the D 49 past the church and the Ecoivres British Military Cemetery. Most of the graves are of Canadian soldiers. They were interred in chronological order, according to date of death, as much as possible that were.

Again on the D 341 and then follow the D 49 to the D 937 in Neuville-Saint-Vaast.



Briefly leave the D 937 towards the D 55 (Rue de Maroeuil) and you will find a British and a French cemetery. The latter stands out for its vastness and the symmetrical arrangement of the rows of crosses.

The national necropolis La Targette is a collection cemetery for 12,010 French soldiers who died in the Artois area during the fierce fighting of 1914-18. In 1965, the remains of 225 French and 169 Belgian soldiers, who died during the Second World War, were interred in one of the three charnel fields or mass graves. A sign with interpretation stands along the road, just past the British military cemetery.

In March 1916 the British Imperial Army took over this sector of the front from the French. From 1917 onwards, soldiers of the British Empire were interred in a new plot adjacent to the French.



Credit photo: Rémi Vincent



Make your way back to the D 937 towards Arras for 650 m. Then, with caution, cross the road to the German military cemetery.



Le cimetière allemand de Neuville-St-Vaast



Crédit photo : Rémi Vimont

This German collection cemetery was established after the end of the war, between 1919 and 1923, by the French government. This is the largest German military cemetery on French territory. Under the impressively large granite crosses, 8,040 soldiers rest in seven mass graves.

From 1975 to 1983, the VDK renovated this cemetery. The crosses in cast iron have replaced the provisional wooden crosses. However, the names of 131 soldiers of Jewish faith were inscribed on a tombstone.



Walk respectfully across the cemetery and with your bicycle in hand until you reach the other side.



On the country road, which then becomes the Rue du 8 Mai, it goes ↶ to the municipality of Neuville.



Near the town hall, turn on the D 49 or Rue de la Barre as far as the Neuville cemetery. There you exit the D 49 and take the country road up to the remains of a fortified mill. The base of the mill was turned into a concrete-reinforced enemy observation post.



The route continues the country road that is called la Route de Lens and suddenly becomes much busier. At the roundabout take the service road (3rd exit) which runs parallel to the N17.





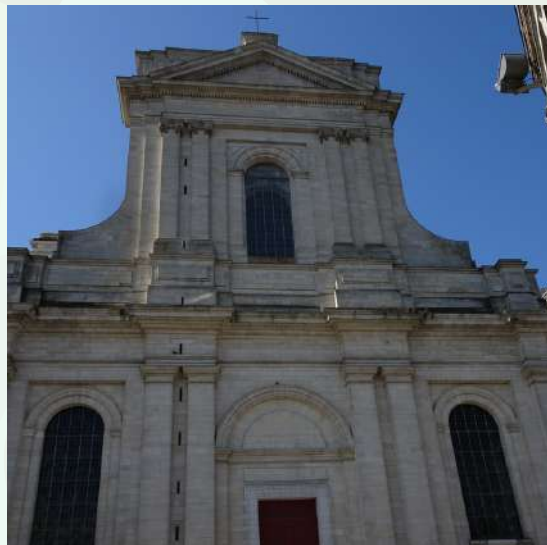
At the second roundabout



take Rue Raoul Briquet as far as the town hall of Saint-Nicolas and then continue down Rue Anatole France.



Once you have crossed the river Scarpe, take the road on the left until there is only a narrow path between hedges and it leads to riverbank and the former inland port of Arras, which you already know.



Now you enter the city again.



Now take the Rue Saint-Maurice



Rue du bloc



At the cathedral park, take Rue des Teinturiers to Rue Ernestale

Drive past the Italianate theater building, typical 18th century architecture, on the Place du Théâtre. This will take you back to the squares of Arras.



Practical information

Office de Tourisme des Loisirs et des Congrès Arras Pays d'Artois

📍 Hôtel de Ville, Place des Héros, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 21 51 26 95

🌐 www.arraspaysdartois.com



To see on the way

Carrière Wellington

📍 Rue Arthur Delétoille, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 21 51 26 95

🌐 www.arraspaysdartois.com

Les Boves

📍 Hôtel de ville, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 21 51 26 95

🌐 www.arraspaysdartois.com

Citadelle d'Arras

📍 boulevard du Général de Gaulle, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 21 51 26 95

🌐 www.arraspaysdartois.com

Musée des Beaux-Arts

📍 22 rue Pual Doumer, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 21 71 26 43

🌐 Musée des Beaux-Arts Arras (Facebook)



Accommodation

Hôtel de l'Univers

📍 3-5 pl. de la Croix Rouge, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 21 71 34 01

🌐 www.hoteluniversarras.com

Ibis Styles Arras Centre

📍 22 avenue Michonneau, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 22 88 41 10

🌐 www.all.accor.com/hotel/B5E7/index.fr.shtml#section-facilities

Hôtel Moderne Arras

📍 1 Bd Faidherbe, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 21 23 39 57

🌐 www.hotel-moderne-arras.com

Hôtel Mercure Arras Centre Gare

📍 58 Bd. Carnot, 62000 Arras

☎ 03 21 23 88 88

🌐 <https://all.accor.com/hotel/1560/index.fr.shtml>



Practical information



Restaurants

La Table des Tours

📍 21 rue du Général Barbot, 62144 Mont-Saint-Eloi
☎ 03 21 22 31 80
🌐 www.latabledestours.fr

L'Oeuf ou la poule

📍 13 rue des balances, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 24 69 81
🌐 www.loeufoulapoule.fr

Le Pêché Gourmand

📍 142 rue de Cambrai, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 51 45 06
🌐 www.restaurant-lepechegourmand.com

Le Biotifull

📍 22 Bd de Strasbourg, 62000 Arras
☎ 09 86 77 83 30
🌐 Biotifull Arras (Facebook)

📍 Possibility to eat in Arras.



Bike repair shops

Cyclo d'érable

📍 585 rue de Vimy
62580 Thélus
☎ 06 15 55 15 59

Capsule cycle

📍 18 rue Diderot
62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 71 03 67

Le lion à vélo

📍 1 rue des dominicains
62000 Arras
☎ 06 74 90 01 09

Secteur pavé

📍 142 route de Bapaume
62217 Archicourt
☎ 03 21 16 35 68

ARRAS - CROISILLES

Pas-de-Calais

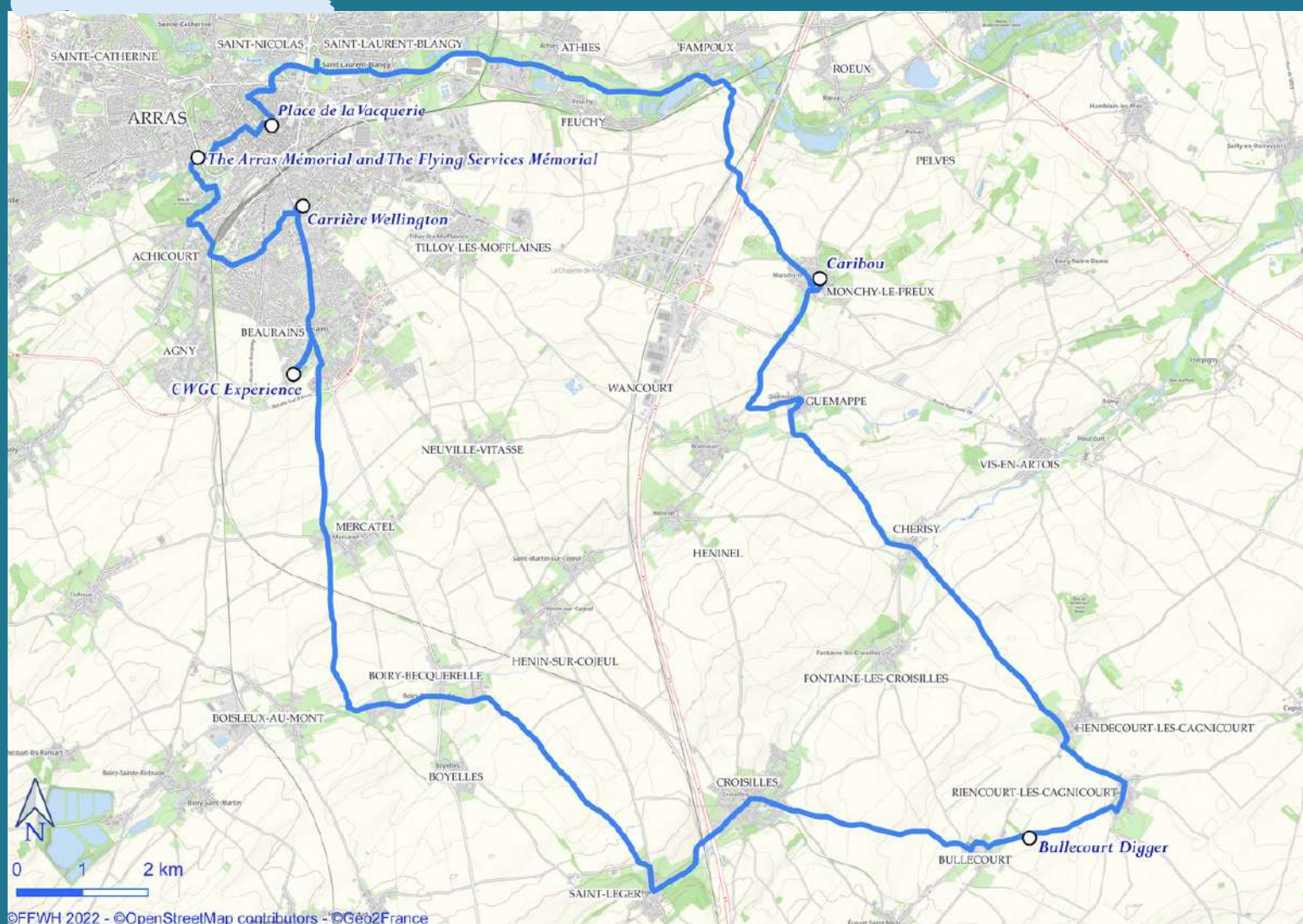
54 km



Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



Arras, the historic capital of the Artois region - today the Pas-de-Calais department - is famous for its belfry and two magnificent market squares that are seven centuries old.

The belfry is a paragon of flamboyant Gothic architecture like the belfry of Oudenaarde (Be) and also Brussels.



Les Places d'Arras

Both the Place des Héros and the Grand'Place form a very regular and homogeneous ensemble.

The facades of the houses on each of the two markets show the influence of Flemish Baroque in a classical French architecture of the 17th century.



This ride to the hills south of the city starts, just like the "Arras-Mont-Saint-Eloi" ride, at the place de la Vacquerie. Past the artisan brewery l'Arras' in the rue Neuve des Ardents



Rue des Trois Visages and further down the rue de Méaulens



At the old inner harbour of Arras, built in the 17th century, follow the quay, Quai du Rivage, and continue under the bridge of the ring road along the canalized river.



At the bicycle bridge, near the lock, stay on the cycle path until you reach the passerelle where you cross and find the towpath on the other bank. Follow this path for 6 km. At pont Sud de Fampoux you leave the towpath and take rue des Moulins. Past the railway crossing it goes uphill to Monchy-le-Preux.



At the bicycle bridge, near the lock, stay on the cycle path until you reach the passerelle where you cross and find the towpath on the other bank. Follow this path for 6 km. At pont Sud de Fampoux you leave the towpath and take rue des Moulins. Past the railway crossing it goes uphill to Monchy-le-Preux.



During a major spring offensive in 1917, on a front from Vimy to Croisilles, the 37th British Division took the hill of Monchy-le-Preux.

A handful of brave soldiers from Newfoundland prevent the enemy - in the British flank - from retaking the adjacent hill, 'Infantry Hill'.



From the church of Monchy-le-Preux it goes downhill on D 33 or rue de Wancourt.



Cross the D 939 (!) or la Route Nationale down on the D 33 exit



take the D 34



In Guémappe take the D 38 towards Hendecourt-lès-Cagnicourt



150m on the D 956



again D 38 ↰ Riencourt-lès-Cagnicourt



In Riencourt-lès-Cagnicourt, exit the D 38



Rue de Bullecourt



Bullecourt

Bullecourt was in German hands since 1914. In the spring of 1917 the village is part of the defensive "Hindenburg" position. Part of the offensive in northern Arras (Vimy), the British 62nd Division mounts an attack on Hendecourt while the Australian 4th Division runs a charge against Riencourt-lès-Hendecourt. The battle tanks that serve to protect the advancing infantry didn't show up.

Under a merciless barrage of machine guns and artillery, without effective support from artillery or tanks, the attack breaks. A second attack, on May 3, was cancelled the next day after again suffering heavy losses.

In the Australian park, the "Digger" stands with its gaze fixed on the trenches. At the foot of the church, a monument commemorates the British and Australian units.



Crédit photo : Rémi Vimont



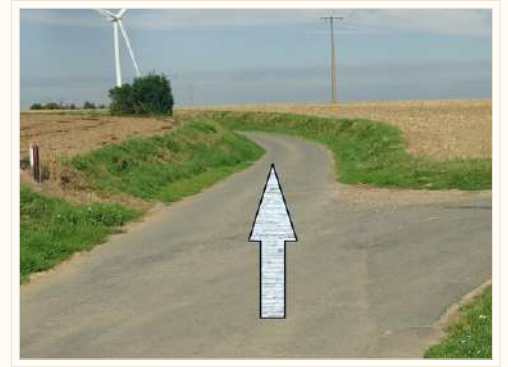


The local museum is located 1Bis Rue d'Arras.



Rue de l'Ecole and then Rue d'Arras about 100 m, until the C 4.

Follow the field road to Croisilles, it is better not to take the exit that leads to the wind turbines, but follow the road towards Croisilles.



On 2 April 1917, the 5th British Army captured the forward position of the Hindenburg Line between Croisilles and Doignies.



D 9 or la Rue de Saint-Léger to Saint-Léger.



At the town hall, take the D 12 in the direction of Hamelincourt. Leaving Saint-Léger, after the bend, leave the D 12 there and take the Boiry-Becquerelle country road, which will automatically lead you to the D 35.



Cross the D 917 and continue on the D 35 for another 1.5 km.



Past the flow, Le Cojeul, at the CWGC signpost to the British military cemetery "Sunken Road Cemetery", take Rue d'Arras which leads to Mercatel.





In Mercatel, cross the D 34. The Rue d'Arras will lead you straight to the D 917 or also la Rue Pierre Curie in Beaurains. Barely 200 m further, follow the signpost to «THE CWGC EXPERIENCE». 600m away in the Rue Angèle Richard, is the office and workshop of the CWGC.



The CWGC Visitor Centre is a rather unique visitor centre. Located in the heart of the old battlefields, it interprets and shows the work of this organization that maintains the cemeteries, replaces and etches the tombstones, places signposts and keeps the memory of the fallen soldiers alive. This not only in France but also worldwide. Free to visit during office hours.

www.cwgc.org



Return to the D 917 and continue towards Arras on the Rue Pierre Curie which - past the traffic lights - is called Avenue Fernand Lobbedez. The entrance to the Wellington Quarry is on the right, between the houses, just before a large grocery or department store.

In the spring of 1916, the Arras sector was handed over by the French to Commonwealth troops. In preparation for the great offensive of April 1917, a network of tunnels was dug under the city. The Wellington Quarry preserves some of these underground galleries and passages that once housed and sheltered thousands of soldiers. The visit to this site, 20 m deep under the car park of the supermarket, is guided only and takes over an hour. Practical information at www.carrierewellington.com



To continue take Avenue Jean Jaurès, opposite the entrance to the quarry.



Rue Zamenhof.



Rue Stephenson. At the end of Rue Stephenson D 916, opposite the Saint-Christophe church.



D916 or Route de Bucquoy about 100 m.



Rue Pierre Curie



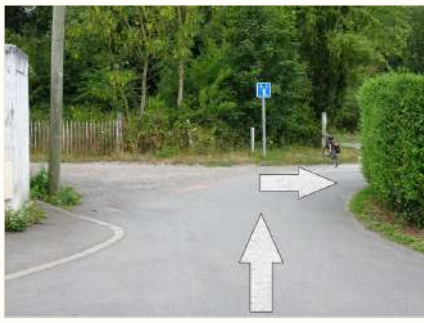
D5e4 or Rue Pascal, roundabout Rue Gondry



D5e4 or Rue Charles Ferrand



At the traffic lights in Rue Raymond Souillart



Rue Lucien Distinghin only 60 m away



Cycling & walking path along the gardens of the Citadel



Take the bridge over the Crinchon to the Cité du Polygone district



Enter the domain or park of the Citadel

The citadel of Arras is one of the first fortifications of Vauban, the famous master builder of Louis XIV, and was built in less than two years. The distance from the border is too great to be of real strategic importance. This gives the citadel the reputation of being “the pretty useless”.



In 2010, the citadel and the adjacent grounds lost their military purpose and were included in the development of the city of Arras. The former military fortress is now a city district with offices, accommodation, commercial premises and space for recreation. The park around the fortress wall is now a green lung of the city.



Leave this domain to the Avenue du Mémorial des Fusillés. At the traffic lights and the intersection with the Boulevard du Général de Gaulle, is located the British military cemetery “Faubourg d’Amiens”.



Le cimetière "Faubourg d'Amiens"



This cemetery was first used by the French and expanded until in March 1916 when the army of the British Empire took over this sector until the end of the war. After the armistice, the cemetery was further expanded by the British, while the French regrouped their earlier graves to be reinterred in other cemeteries. Where the French graves lay, a memorial wall now stands for the 35,000 missing Commonwealth soldiers who died in this sector. In front of the gate is a column with the names of the fallen and missing pilots of the British Air Force.



Cross the Boulevard du Général de Gaulle to the parking square, which you cross all the way to the Cour de Verdun.



Rue du Général Barbot



Rue Saint-Aubers



Via Place du Théâtre you return to the market squares in the centre of Arras.



Practical information

Office de Tourisme des Loisirs et des Congrès Arras Pays d'Artois

📍 Hôtel de Ville, Place des Héros, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 51 26 95
🌐 www.arraspaysdartois.com



To see on the way

Les Boves

📍 Hôtel de ville, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 51 26 95
🌐 www.arraspaysdartois.com

Montée au Beffroi

📍 Hôtel de ville, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 51 26 95
🌐 www.arraspaysdartois.com

Cité Nature

📍 25 Bd. Schuman, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 21 59 59
🌐 www.citenature.com

Musée des Beaux-Arts

📍 22 rue Pual Doumer, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 71 26 43
🌐 Musée des Beaux-Arts Arras (Facebook)



Accommodation

Hôtel de l'Univers

📍 3-5 pl. de la Croix Rouge, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 71 34 01
🌐 www.hoteluniversarras.com

Hôtel Moderne Arras

📍 1 Bd Faidherbe, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 23 39 57
🌐 www.hotel-moderne-arras.com

Hôtel Mercure Arras Centre Gare

📍 58 Bd. Carnot, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 23 88 88
🌐 <https://all.accor.com/hotel/1560/index.fr.shtml>

Ibis Styles Arras Centre

📍 22 avenue Michonneau, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 22 88 41 10
🌐 www.all.accor.com/hotel/B5E7/index.fr.shtml#section-facilities

Domaine Natureza

📍 Lac des Sapins 3 rue de la Blanchisserie, 62118 Roeux
☎ 06 22 30 67 13
🌐 www.domainenatureza.fr



Practical information



Restaurants

Le Chantilly

📍 10B rue de Saint-Léger, 62 128 Croisilles
☎ 03 21 07 67 28
🌐 www.bar-restaurant-croisilles.com

L'Oeuf ou la poule

📍 13 rue des balances, 62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 24 69 81
🌐 www.loeufoulapoule.fr

Les jardins de Saint-Laurent

📍 1 rue Laurent Gers, 62223 Saint-Laurent-Blangy
☎ 03 21 50 81 00
🌐 jardins-de-saint-laurent.com

Friterie Boyelles

📍 6 route nationale, 62128 Boyelles
☎ 06 42 69 17 91
🌐 Friterie Boyelles (Facebook)

📍 Possibility to eat in Arras.



Bike repair shops

Cyclo d'érable

📍 585 rue de Vimy
62580 Thélus
☎ 06 15 55 15 59

Capsule cycle

📍 18 rue Diderot
62000 Arras
☎ 03 21 71 03 67

Secteur pavé

📍 142 route de Bapaume
62217 Archicourt
☎ 03 21 16 35 68

Absolubike

📍 1 rue Léon Foucault
62000 Arras
☎ 03 74 39 19 39

ON THE POPPY FRONT



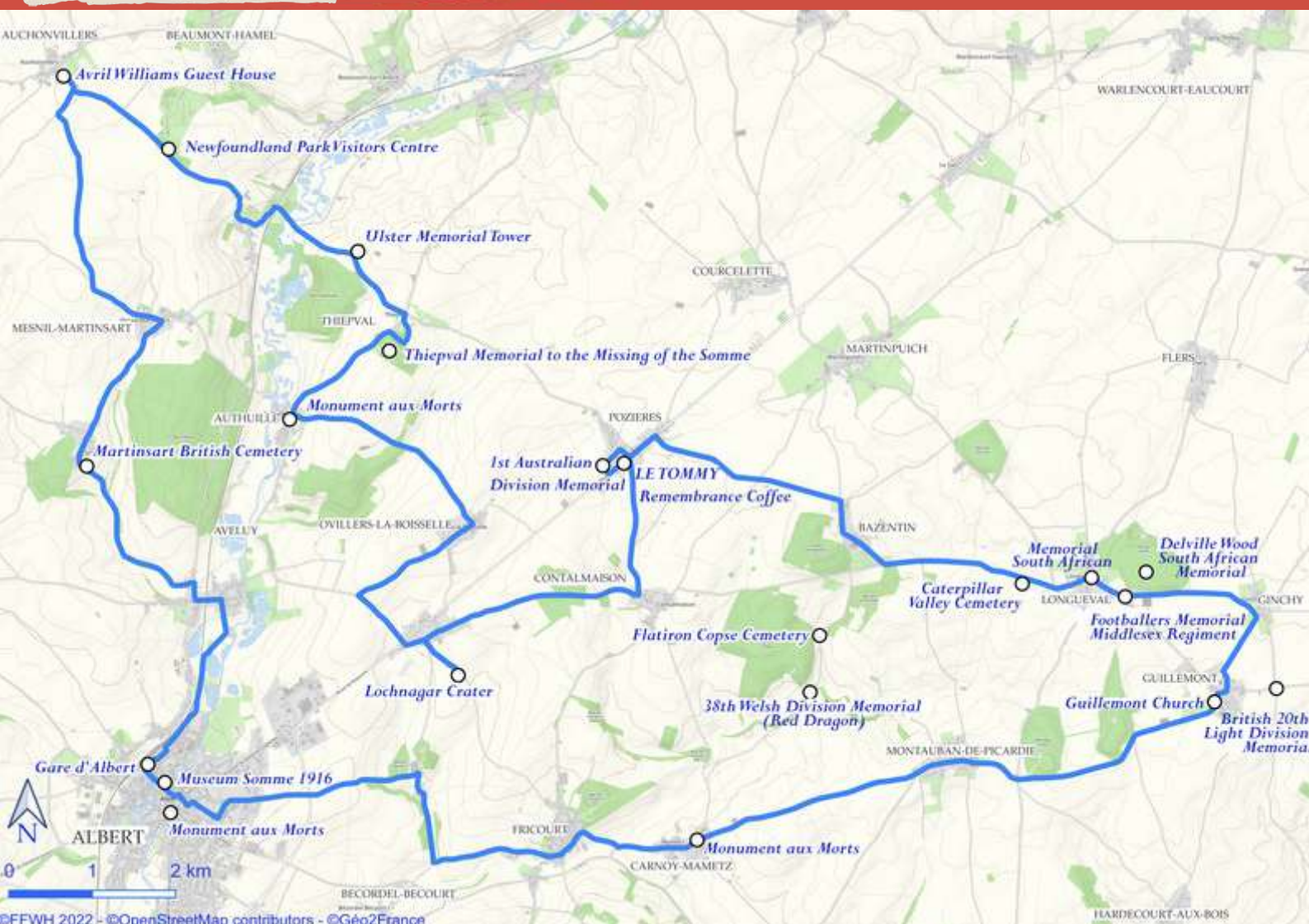
In the footsteps of the British in the Somme

 55 km

Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



The town of Albert is located where the old Roman road from Amiens to Bavay crosses the river Ancre, a tributary of the Somme. Traces of early habitation have been found along this Roman road and indicate that Albert was already inhabited during the time of the Roman Empire.

In 1916, during the Battle of the Somme, Albert was situated immediately behind British lines. In the 20th century, the poppy (Coquelicot) became the symbol of remembrance for Commonwealth soldiers killed during the 1st World War. "Le Pays du Coquelicot" is the name chosen by the inter-communal organisation of which Albert is now the principal town.



Albert's train station

During the war, the town was largely razed to the ground.

The station, the starting point of this ride, was subsequently rebuilt in the Flemish style.

A plane by Potez is suspended floating in the hall. The aviation industry is a major contributor to the economic development and prosperity of this city.



You leave the car park at the station via Rue Pasteur.



At the end of the street to the path that takes you along the railway line to the park and lakes of the Vélodrome.



In 1897 the bicycle manufacturer Rochet built a cycling track along the Ancre to test their bikes. Hence the name "Vélodrome". Today this is a 24-hectare estate, 7 hectares of which are protected nature reserve. On the path, pedestrians have priority over cyclists.





At the end of rue du Vélodrome, up to the crossroads.



Drive 140 m on the D 50.



Take the D 129 which takes you up the northern flank of the valley.



Arriving at the Martinsart military cemetery, you immediately notice the unusual colour of the tombstones. Instead of white sandstone from Portland (UK), red sandstone from Corsehill or Locharbriggs was used here. The CWGC decided not to use this at other sites.



©C.Ooghe



Leave the D 129 in Martinsart.



Take rue de Mesnil and then rue d'Enbas as far as Mesnil church.



Take the D 175 or rue d'Auchonvillers, up to the junction with the D 73, which you then take ↗ towards Newfoundland Park and Memorial (La Terre-Neuve).



© S. Crampton



The Newfoundland Memorial Park

For a long time, Newfoundland was a quasi-autonomous part of the British Empire. In 1914, Newfoundland sided with the British Empire and sent a first batch of volunteers to the battlefield in the Middle East before fighting at the Somme in 1916.

Newfoundland's regiment there was virtually destroyed on the morning of the first day of the battle, 1 July 1916. The next of kin put money together to buy this part of the battlefield and set up a memorial.

Apart from the 3 cemeteries, the trenches are still clearly visible as well as monuments and an original and cosy Canadian visitor centre that is free to visit.



Back on the D 73, it goes first downhill to the valley of the Ancre.



Once down at river level, take the D 50.



on the D 73, across the Ancre and there starts a nice uphill climb.



The Ulster Tower

The Ulster Tower is the 36th Division's memorial and memorial to all Ulster soldiers who died in the Great War.

On 1 July 1916, soldiers of the 36th or "ULSTER" division left their trenches 10 minutes before the planned attack. The German defences had not yet recovered from shelling and so the Irish were able to capture the enemy "Schwaben Redoubt" and penetrate deeper.

Right on top of that former German position with trenches, machine guns, underground shelter, communications centre and dressing station now lies Mill Road Cemetery.

Advancing faster than the other units, the Irish came under their own fire while also being shelled by the Germans.

Take a detour through this cemetery, original by the position of the steles: they are placed on the ground because the movements of the ground could damage them in the event of a fall.



©Lwood L.Desbois



At the junction of D 73 with D 151.



Just 50m onwards to the British Memorial and visitor centre.



The Thiepval ridge provided the Germans with a strategic overview of their defences and was therefore quite built out and fortified. Its capture was planned by the British on 1 July but this objective had still not been achieved by 26 September. After a large-scale offensive on the eastern flank of the hill, it took until 11 November 1916 to finally capture the last enemy trench.



The Thiepval Memorial

It is the Thiepval Ridge that was chosen by the British government to erect a memorial.

The victory arch commemorates the successful cooperation between the French and British as well as the 72,000 soldiers of the British Empire who died in the Somme and have no known grave.

The visitor centre houses a book shop, souvenir shop, information centre, sanitary facilities and a (paying) museum.





When leaving the car park, take the D 151 towards Authuille. The descent is a little too fast to really enjoy the panoramic view over the Ancre valley.



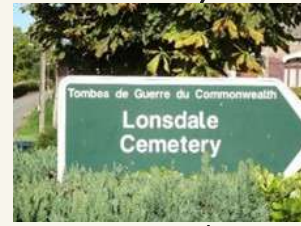
Take the Rue Bustière towards Ovillers.



At the end of that road, in Ovillers, rue Bréart de Boisanges, ride to the end.



Onto the D 20, towards La Boisselle until the STOP sign.



Continue on the D 20 as far as the signpost "La Grande Mine".



©Garry



La Grande Mine

In preparation for the Battle of the Somme, Welsh miners dug a tunnel under the German lines to lay an explosive charge to blast a gap in the enemy defences.

Today, the crater is still 100 m wide and is 30 m deep. This La Boisselle mine crater, also known in British circles as the "Lochnagar Crater", is one of the iconic memorial sites and free to visit.



Return to the D 20.



Take the direction of Contalmaison until the junction with the D 147.



Towards Pozières.





Division Memorial for the 1st Australian Division

The highest point of the battlefield was near the village of Pozières, through which a double network of trenches ran. The guarding of this position was essential to the German defences. When the 1st Australian Division succeeded in taking this position, Pozières became the focus of three attempts to retake it at a cost of 5,285 killed or wounded; all three were repulsed.

Pozières is the place in Europe where in 1916 the 1st Australian Division saw its first action. The obelisk or Division Memorial for the 1st Australian Division commemorates the sacrifice of the Australian volunteers to relieve this village during the Battle of the Somme.



©G.Wasikowski



Go back on the D 929.



After 250m, D 73 towards Bazentin.



Go towards Longueval on the D 20, cross the D 197, until the fork. From there, follow Ginchy .





The South African Memorial and Delville Wood

The South African Park and its original museum tells pictorially how South Africa participated as an ally in the 1st and 2nd World Wars and again during the Cold War.

Since the political changes in South Africa, more space has been made to highlight the role of coloured South African soldiers.

In the forest behind the museum, the trenches are still clearly visible. The only tree that survived the battle is cherished there.



©Somme Tourisme



Guillemont is the next village on this lap. Either return to the D 20, or cross Ginchy and take to Guillemont there.



In Guillemont, leave D 20 and go straight to the church and Celtic cross for the 16th Irish Division.

If the church porch door is unlocked, take a moment to read the colourful message of peace painted on the truss.



©C.O. Oosh



Follow the D 64, and continue on the D 64 through the village of Mametz.



At the bend, take the exit for Fricourt and turn on the D 464.



Cross the village of Fricourt and when leaving r^{de} de rue du 8 mai 1945.



Turn to Bécourt.



Beyond the recycling park, this road is rough paved for a while. A road bike may have a hard time there, but ordinary bikes get through without real difficulty.



After a nice uphill climb, at the (former) castle of Bécourt, take rue d'Albert , a street that passes the Bécourt British Military Cemetery.

To get to Albert you first have to climb a 110 m elevation. If you stop at the top, you get a view over the factory where the nose of the A320 and other Airbus aircraft is built. On the other side, Thiepval's monument also stands out pretty well.



When you enter Albert from Bécourt, the rue d'Albert becomes the rue de Bécourt.



Turn into rue Roger Salengro.



Turn behind the town hall of Albert, place Emile Leturcq.



©C.Ooghe



Rue Jeanne D'Harcourt and then you will arrive back at la place d'Armes. There you will find the entrance to the Museum 1916.

This museum is located in a former air-raid shelter dating from the Second World War, 250 meters long and 10 meters underground.

There are also the tourist office with bike rental and a bistro opposite the basilica.

During the First World War, the Basilica of Our Lady of Brebières was the subject of a legend: in 1915, a shell hit the statue of the Golden Virgin, tipping it over at an angle. French and British soldiers declared that 'when the Virgin of Albert falls, the war will end'. In April 1918, the basilica was bombed again and the Golden Virgin crashed to the ground.



Practical information



Tourist Office Haute Somme

📍 1 Rue Louis XI, 80200 Péronne
☎ +33 (0)3 22 84 42 38
🌐 www.hautesomme-tourisme.com/



Tourist Office Pays du Coquelicot

📍 9 Rue Gambetta, 80300 Albert
☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 16 42
🌐 www.tourisme-paysducoquelicot.com



To be seen on the way



Somme 1916 Museum

📍 Rue Anicet Godin, 80300 Albert
☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 16 17
🌐 www.musee-somme-1916.eu/



Thiepval Museum

📍 8 Rue de l'Ancre, 80300 Thiepval
☎ +33 (0)3 22 74 60 47
🌐 www.historial.fr

South african museum

📍 Route de Ginchy, 80360 Longueval
☎ +33 (0)3 22 85 02 17
🌐 www.delvillewood.com/museum.htm



Lodgings

Hôtel de la basilique

📍 3-5 Rue Gambetta, 80300 Albert
☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 04 71
🌐 www.hotelbasiliquesomme.fr

Camping Bellevue

📍 27 Rue d'Albert, 80300 Authuille
☎ +33 (0)3 22 74 59 29
🌐 www.camping-bellevue.meilleurhotel.top

Chambre d'hôtes B&B du bois Bernafay

📍 55 - 57 Grande Rue, 80300 Montauban-de-Picardie
☎ +33 (0)3 22 71 22 70
🌐 www.bandb-somme-bernafaywood.com

Camping du Vélodrome

📍 Av. Henri Dunant, 80300 Albert
☎ +33 (0)3 64 62 22 53
🌐 www.camping-albert.com



Restaurants

Bistrot Albert

11 Pl. d'Armes, 80300 Albert
+33 (0)9 72 83 03 62
<https://m.facebook.com/people/Le-Bistrot-Albert/100066746779341/>

📍 **Ovillers-la-Boisselle** - *Le poppy*
📍 **Albert** - *Hôtel Restaurant de la basilique*
📍 **Thiepval** - *Le cottage Geniève et Auguste*



Bike repairer


MBK Brasselet Tony

📍 14 Place Emile Leturcq, 80300 Albert
☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 05 11
🌐 <https://brasselettony.site-solocal.com/>



THE MEANDERS OF MEMORY

From the Ancre Valley to the Lakes of the Somme

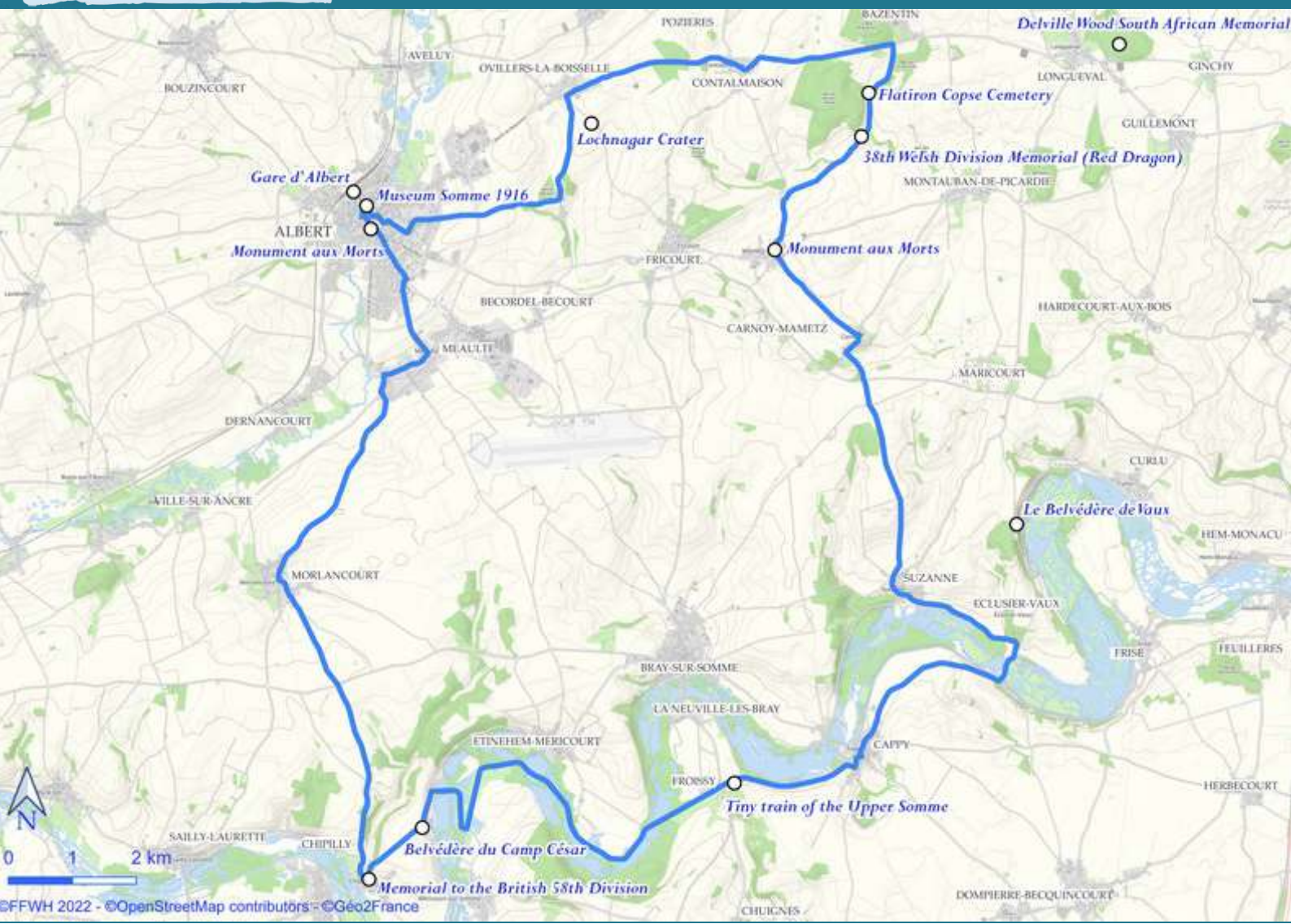
 50 km



Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



This lap starts at the square, Place d'Armes, and the 1916 museum. With your back to the church,



©Somme Tourisme-RD



Tourist Office Poppy Country



The 1916 Museum



The museum is located in an underground tunnel dating from the Middle Ages, designed to protect the population of the town during various invasions over the centuries.

During the Second World War, this tunnel was used as an air raid shelter for the population of Albert during the German bombardments. It could house 1500 people with only one water point and one toilet!



©Somme Tourisme-JC



Cross the place, ride the rue de Bordeaux down

and into rue Pierre Curie and then

rue Gallieni and then continue to rue Victor Hugo



©C.Ooghe





Past the monument to the fallen soldiers.



At the cemetery

rue Jean Mermoz D 329 Méaulte



©C.Ooghe



©C.Ooghe



At the roundabout (near the Mr. Bricolage department store)

The chemin de Méaulte



and next the rue du cimetière



At the crossroads take the Grand Rue / D 64 .

At the end of the Grand Rue , past the monument to the fallen soldiers



D 42 Morlancourt



Even before the church of Morlancourt follow Cerisy / Bray



After 150 m continue to Chipilly



At the Stop, Cross D 1 to Chipilly



©C.Ooghe





During World War I, cavalry was gradually replaced by armoured vehicles. On the battlefield, the horse lost its offensive function but its presence remained important for the full duration of the war. Eight million horses served for reconnaissance, moving artillery and evacuating wounded.

This faithful ally of the infantry soldier was treated with respect. This memorial shows an artillery soldier comforting his dying horse. It is exceptional to see wounded animals depicted on war memorials.



In front of the church, take the Rue d'Etinehem and climb up to the Belvedere du Camp de César




Belvédère du Camp César

Enjoy a panoramic view of the marshes, peat bogs and ponds of the Somme. In the past, while extracting peat, a chalky "causeway" was discovered, the remains of a Roman road.

The exploitation of peat has left its mark on the history of the river and the Samarian landscape, leaving extraction holes that today form a multitude of ponds. These marshes and peat bogs are unique because of their physical, ecological, landscape, historical and cultural qualities.



Leaving the vista point with picnic area, it is important to keep your speed under control on the steep descent. Once down, it immediately goes  to the valley (Méricourt).



Across the bridge at the lock



and join the Véloroute de la Somme V30.

For 12 km, the towpath runs between the canal and the lakes of the Somme. Although this path is not paved, it is perfectly usable for all types of bikes.

Over the last half century, the canal has traded in its commercial role for purely recreational use.





Leave the towpath at the signpost "Proyart 4.4 km" to visit the Froissy-Dompierre train museum.

The narrow-gauge railway was built by the French army.



The Little Train of Haute Somme

www.petittrainhautesomme.fr

After the war, the Dompierre - Cappy section of the network was put into service from 1921 to 1926 by the " Sucrerie centrale du Santerre " company and remained operational with this company until sometime in 1970.

Volunteers first opened a tourist train route in the summer of 1971. In later years, a length of 7 km was gradually returned to active service and maintained by the association APPEVA.





Back on the towpath,



carry on along the canal to Cappy lock. There, take Chemin du Bois and



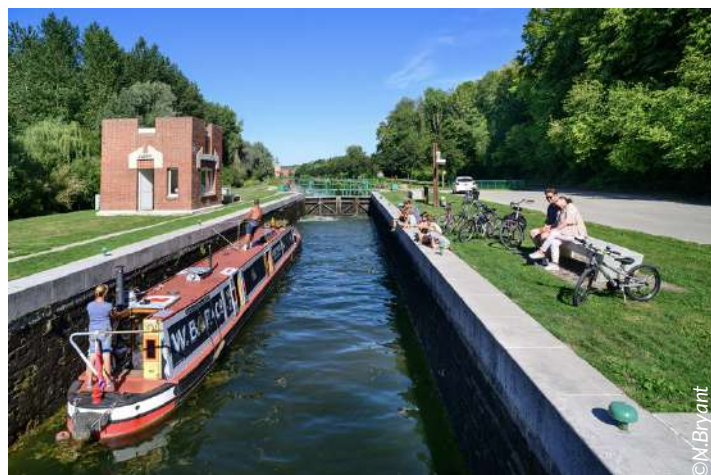
then rue des Vergeaux towards the signpost.



At the monument to the fallen,



turn onto the D 1 to the marina restaurant (Le Graal Accueil Vélo)



Before continuing your journey, take the time to stop off at the pretty port of Cappy, where there are 3 bicycle reception points, accommodation for 6 people, a tourist office in the summer and a restaurant/bar, before continuing your journey.



Once you continue on the rue du 8 Mai



you will pass the church of Cappy and return to the canal at Eclusier-Vaux.





©N.Bryant



At Eclusier-Vaux,



cross the valley and enjoy one of the most beautiful passages of the Somme Valley .



Continue to the roundabout and then



Go to the church of Suzanne. .



©C.Ooghe



At Suzanne church go up rue du Calvaire



and on to Carnoy. Cross the D 938 with the greatest care and attention to the fast traffic. Go



by the cross of Carnoy into the Grand rue and



keep following it until you reach the signpost



©C.Ooghe



At the little monument , follow the CWGC signposts for the Welsh Division Memorial



©C.Ooghe



©C.Ooghe



©C.Ooghe




The Welsh Dragon

In July 1916 the Welsh Division was to take Mametz Wood. Faced with a deluge of fire that prevented any progress, the divisional commander aborted the attack. He was replaced by a British general who then re-launched the assault. After fierce bayonet fighting and very heavy casualties, the wood was taken by the men of the 38th Division.

Opposite the wood the memorial to the Welsh division is adorned with a red dragon, the symbol of Wales. With its wings in motion, it holds barbed wire in its claws and sends balls (fire) of fire towards Mametz Wood, a reminder of the fierceness of the fighting.

This dragon is one of the most unusual monuments.



 750m of road to the British Military Cemetery is only half-paved but still usable.

Dans le cimetière militaire de Flatiron Copse reposent trois paires de frères côte à côte. Tregaskis, Philby et Hardwidge.

Le registre alphabétique fournit plus d'informations sur l'emplacement de leurs tombes.





Further onwards , the road is nicely paved again, up to the D 20 - la Boisselle.



D 20 to Contalmaison , continue to La Boisselle



Rue de Bécourt



Rue d'Albert



Heading down Albert Street will take you past the unusual entrance to Bécourt Military Cemetery



Then cross a bridge before reaching the town of Albert again.



1966

©CWGC
© Copyright CW



2015



Lt Col. Arthur Joseph Berkeley Addison, commanding the 9th York and Lancaster Regiment, fell on 1 July 1916 at the age of 49.

His body was not found in the no-man's-land between Aveluy and Ovillers until September. Addison, who is said to have survived for 2-3 days before his death, wrote in his notebook: 'Tell the Regiment I hope they did well'. He is buried at site I. W. 23.



Practical information



Tourist Office "Haute Somme"

📍 1 Rue Louis XI, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 84 42 38
 🌐 www.hautesomme-tourisme.com



Tourist Office "Pays du Coquelicot"

📍 9 Rue Gambetta, 80300 Albert
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 16 42
 🌐 www.tourisme-paysducoquelicot.com



To be seen on the way



Musée Somme 1916

📍 Rue Anicet Godin, 80300 Albert
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 16 17
 🌐 www.musee-somme-1916.eu

Petit Train de la Haute Somme (APPEVA)

📍 58 Route de Roye, 80340 La Neuville lès Bray
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 76 14 60
 🌐 www.petittrainhautesomme.fr



Lodgings

Camping du Vélodrôme

📍 Av. Henri Dunant, 80300 Albert
 ☎ +33 (0)3 64 62 22 53
 🌐 www.camping-albert.com



Logis Hôtel de la Basilique

📍 3-5 Rue Gambetta, 80300 Albert
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 04 71
 🌐 www.hotelbasiliquesomme.fr



Chambre d'hôtes L'Escal'ibur

📍 22 Chaussée Léon Blum, 80340 Cappy
 ☎ +33 (0)6 70 43 69 97
 🌐 www.booking-somme.com



Le Logis d'Anne-Sophie

📍 1 Grande Rue, 80340 Chuignolles
 ☎ +33 (0)6 71 32 80 99
 🌐 www.le-logis-danne-sophie.business.site



Restaurants



Le Bistrot Café-Brasserie

📍 11 Place d'Armes, 80300 Albert
 ☎ +33 (0)9 72 83 03 62
 🌐 www.facebook.com/Le-Bistrot-Albert



📍 Cappy - Le Graal

📍 Frise - La Sarcelle

📍 Eclusier-Vaux - Domaine des P'tits Bouchons

📍 Froissy - La Halte Gourmande



Bike repairers

Cycles Nicolas Dubois

📍 9 Rue du Faubourg de Bretagne,
 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 84 42 47
 🌐 www.facebook.com/cyclesdubois

MBK Tony Brasselet

📍 14 Pl. Emile Leturcq, 80300 Albert
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 05 11


AN INTERNATIONAL MEMORY



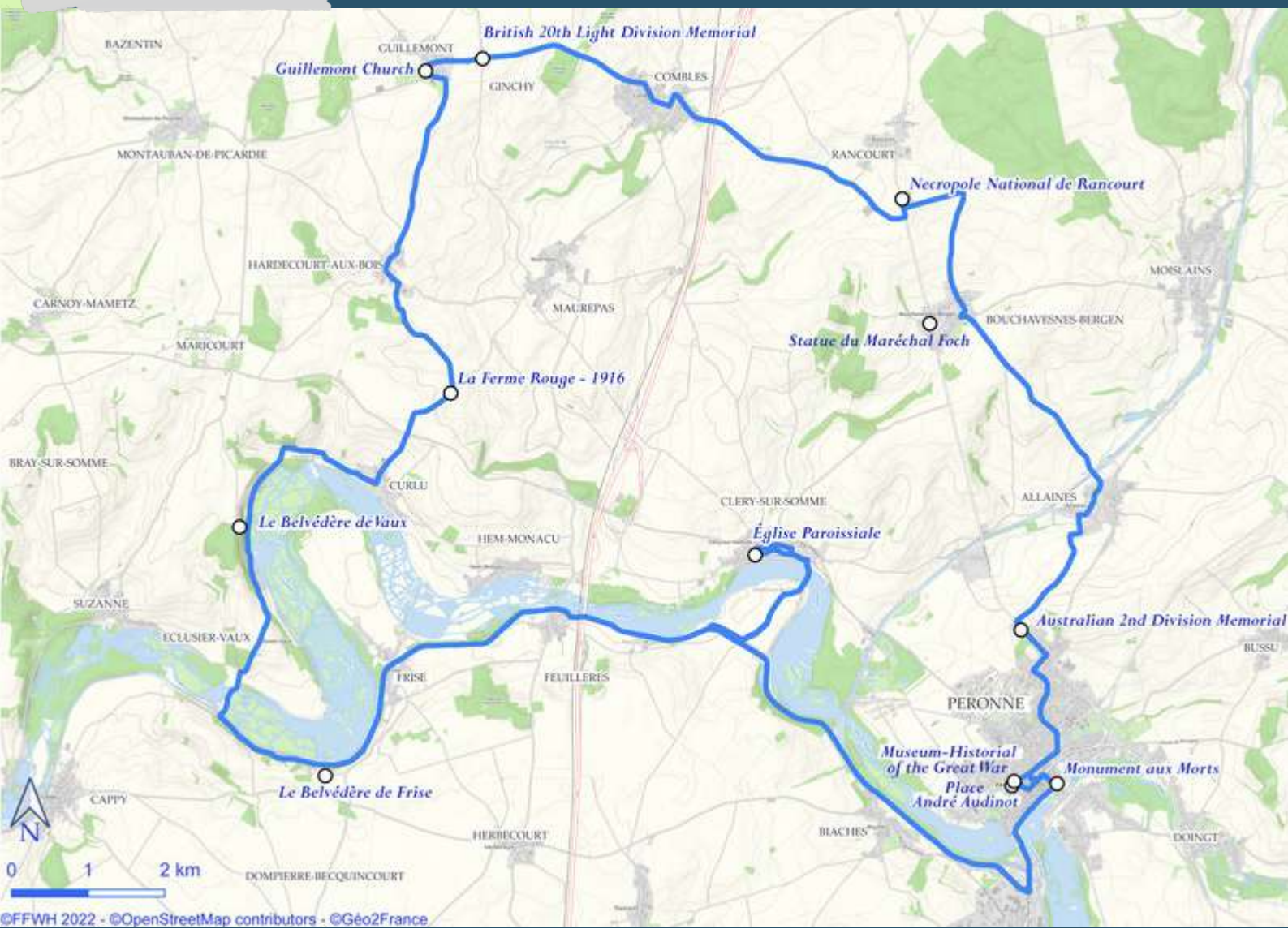
**Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps**

From the Belvederes to the Historial de la Grande-Guerre



 52 km

Itinerary





Situated on a hill and almost entirely surrounded by lakes and watercourses, the Cologne and the Somme, Péronne is a strategic position that is difficult to take. The shelling by the Prussian army in 1870 and by the planes of the Nazi German army in 1940 caused quite a lot of damage. But it was during the 1st World War that the city was completely shot to rubble.

Today Péronne is the heart of the memorial tourism. Built with its back to the medieval castle, the Historial de la Grande Guerre museum tells the story of both the soldiers and the population under the occupation.



Riding from the square André Audinot (located next to the museum) to the square of ct. Louis Daudré can be done on the D 1017 but is safer to walk the pedestrian rue du Gladimont.

The town hall was rebuilt but looks like the pre-war town hall.



Leave the square cdt. Louis Daudre via rue du Vert Muget.



Right at the post office building, turn rue Georges Clémenceau.



Rue de Jules Verne



Ride the avenue du Général de Gaulle all the way to the roundabout and # with the D 938.



on D 938 to the next roundabout, intersection with D 1017



on D 1017 to the Memorial for the 2nd Australian Division.





The Australian War Memorial at Mont Saint-Quentin

Mont Saint-Quentin is the top of the hill that is situated in a bend (meander) of the Somme. The view across the river makes this position the keystone of the city's defence, and especially its northern and western flank.

In April 1918, during the German army's (last) major offensive, Mont Saint-Quentin was recaptured. The Allied counter-offensive ushered in the turning point of the war, driving the enemy from the Marne, before the gates of Paris, back onto the Somme.



©C.Ooghe

Mont Saint-Quentin, overlooking the city and the river, was then the last bolt or cornerstone of the German defensive position on the Somme. During the battle for this hill, the 2nd Australian division stormed the hill and finally liberated the town of Péronne.



©C.Ooghe



Leave the D 1017 and turn at right rue d'Allaines



Turn Rue du Pont for a nice donw hill ride to the church of Allaines.



There take the Grande Rue, across the canal and keep driving along the route d'Allaines to the church of Bouchavesnes-Bergen.



©C.Ooghe

When the wealthy owner of a Norwegian shipping company visits France after the war, he is impressed by the destruction. He asks Marshal Foch to designate a village that he can adopt and assist in rebuilding.

The French commander names the village Bouchavesnes. Numerous donations from the city of Bergen, Norway, then flow to this village in Picardy. In gratitude for this support, the village is henceforth called Bouchavesnes-Bergen.



The rue de Bergen climbs steadily to Rancourt and its three military cemeteries.



To make your way to the French military cemetery involves 700 m of dirt road.



©C.Ooghe

You can avoid this dirt track if, in the rue de Bergen you turn ↶ at house n° 26, then take the busy D 1017 all the way up to the Chapelle du Souvenir Français.



La Chapelle du Souvenir Français et son cimetière

It was erected by the parents of Lieutenant Du Bos in memory of him and his fellow soldiers killed on 25 September 1916.

For financial reasons, the project was not completed and today it is the Souvenir Français that manages it and at the end of 2022, a museum was inaugurated there.

The Rancourt cemetery is the largest French necropolis in the Somme (8,566 soldiers).



©C.Ooghe

The Rancourt British Military Cemetery is across the road from the French Cemetery. The poignant inscription on Private Buckingham's grave testifies to the solidarity among soldiers in the trenches :

"It is better to die for others, dear lad, than to live for oneself alone".

The commune of Rancourt is home to the graves of around 20,000 combatants from the three warring armies.



©C.Ooghe

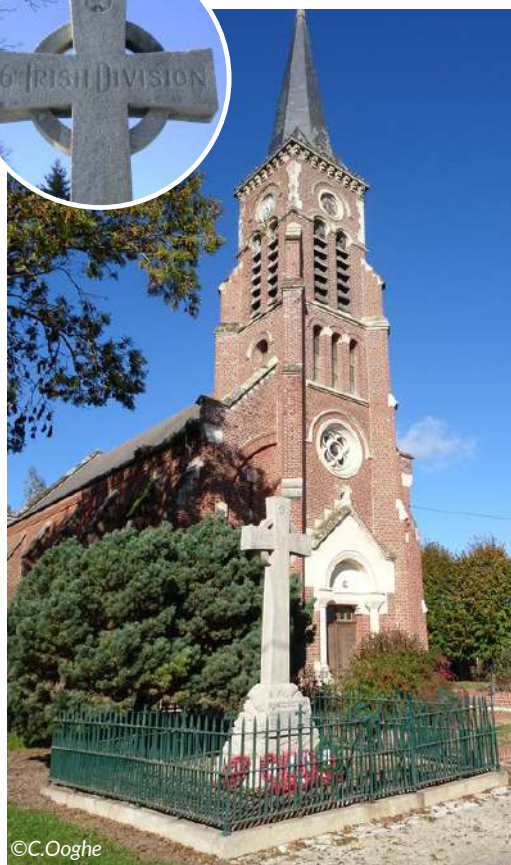


On the D 1017, briefly return towards Péronne before finding the D 20 ↗ to Combles and the German Military Cemetery. Thus Rancourt has a British, a French and a German (collection) cemetery on its territory.



Continue to follow the D 20, straight through Combles to Guillemont.





©C.Ooghe



Turn to D 64 where it connects with the "Le Pays du Coquelicot" lap from Albert
Past the church and then

In front of the church in Guillemont is a Celtic cross, decorated with an Irish shamrock.

This monument is dedicated to the 16th Irish Division who fought and recaptured the village on 3 September 1916 during the Battle of the Somme, but also commemorates all the Irish who died in the Great War.



©C.Ooghe



into rue Ernst Jünger



rue de Combles towards Hardecourt aux Bois.



Ernst Jünger is a German writer and veteran of two world wars: at the front during World War 1 and as an officer in the administration of Nazi-occupied Paris.

During fighting from 3 to 6 September 1916, Guillemont was recaptured by Irish and British units. In his book, Storm of Steel, (In Stahlgewittern) he recounts the misery he experienced in the trenches, including in the Guillemont sector, but also the fascination he experienced from the violence of war.



Drive past Hardecourt church and



take rue de Péronne or the D 146 B.



Leave the D 146 on the outskirts of the village and turn to Curlu.





Then turn rue La Ferme Rouge



cross the D938



Turn rue du four and rue de Fargny.



Continue to rue de la Pierre St-Vaast and Eclusier Vaux.



©N.Bryant



The Belvedere of Eclusier-Vaux and its landscapes

Don't miss the Belvédère de Vaux and its superb panorama of ponds and marshes, it's worth the diversions.

As you cross the Somme and its ponds, you will notice the Eclusier-Vaux fishpond.

The marshes of Eclusier-Vaux are part of the vast natural heritage of the peat marshes of the Upper Somme Valley.



The ponds and lakes of Eclusier-Vaux are part of an extensive network of pits left by a century of mining peat. Keep following the canal on rue de Frise and further on the towpath or the V 30, Véloroute Vallée de la Somme.



At the Sormont lock, leave the cycle route for a detour to Cléry s/Somme where you will find its Art Deco church, its listed marshes and its bird sanctuaries.



Follow rue d'Omiécourt and cross the Somme valley once more,



Then turn rue Anne-Marie Vion.



Pour les plus curieux vous pouvez aller faire une halte au La Chapellette British and Indian Cemetery.



Retrace your steps along the same route until you find the Véloroute 30 where you left it.



Turn to Péronne.



At the end, at the marina, cross the D 1017 and then



and then continue, turn on the cycle path to the old city wall.



Cross the "Blackburn" bridge on the Boulevard des Anglais where the monument to the fallen sits in a park at the end of the street.



The Picardy woman cursing war

Inaugurated in 1926, this war memorial is pacifist in nature.

The central figure, the bent stone woman, almost lying over the body of her husband (or son), holds out a vengeful fist towards invisible enemies.

One can read determination, grief and anger on her fierce face.



The rue Béranger leads back to the D 1017 and



Turn towards the Place du Ct. Louis Daudré where the town hall is located and inside, the Alfred-Danicourt museum offers you the opportunity to admire one of the largest national numismatic collections (Gallo-Roman coins).





Practical information



Tourist Office "Haute Somme"

📍 1 Rue Louis XI, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 84 42 38
 🌐 www.hautesomme-tourisme.com



Tourist Office "Pays du Coquelicot"

📍 9 Rue Gambetta, 80300 Albert
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 75 16 42
 🌐 www.tourisme-paysducoquelicot.com



To be seen on the way



Historial de la Grande Guerre

📍 Place André Audinot, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 83 14 18
 🌐 www.historial.fr

Musée Alfred-Danicourt

📍 2 Pl. du Commandant Louis Daudre, Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 73 31 00
 🌐 www.musenor.com/alfred-danicourt-peronne



Lodgings



Auberge des Remparts

📍 17 Rue Beaubois, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 88 41 10
 🌐 www.aubergedesremparts.fr



Camping du Port de Plaisance

📍 Rte de Paris, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 84 19 31
 🌐 www.camping-plaisance.com



Le Noir Lion

📍 16 rue du Noir Lionm, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)6 87 22 18 33
 🌐 www.noirlionperonne80.fr

Hôtel le Saint-Claude

📍 42 Place Louis Daudré, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 79 49 49
 🌐 www.hotelsaintclaud.com



Restaurants

Le Bistrot d'Antoine

📍 8 Place André Audinot, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 85 84 16
 🌐 www.bistrot-antoine.fr

📍 **Curly** - Bar des îles

📍 **Frise** - La Sarcelle

📍 **Péronne** - Le Métissage, Louis XI, Shana, Central
 Gars du Nord, Chouette Gourmande, ...

📍 **Feuillères** - Restaurant du Port



Bike repairer

Cycles Nicolas Dubois

📍 9 Rue du Faubourg de Bretagne, 80200 Péronne
 ☎ +33 (0)3 22 84 42 47
 🌐 www.facebook.com/cyclesdubois



www.somme-tourisme.com/accueil-velo

THE SAINT-QUENTIN CANAL

The Americans on the Somme

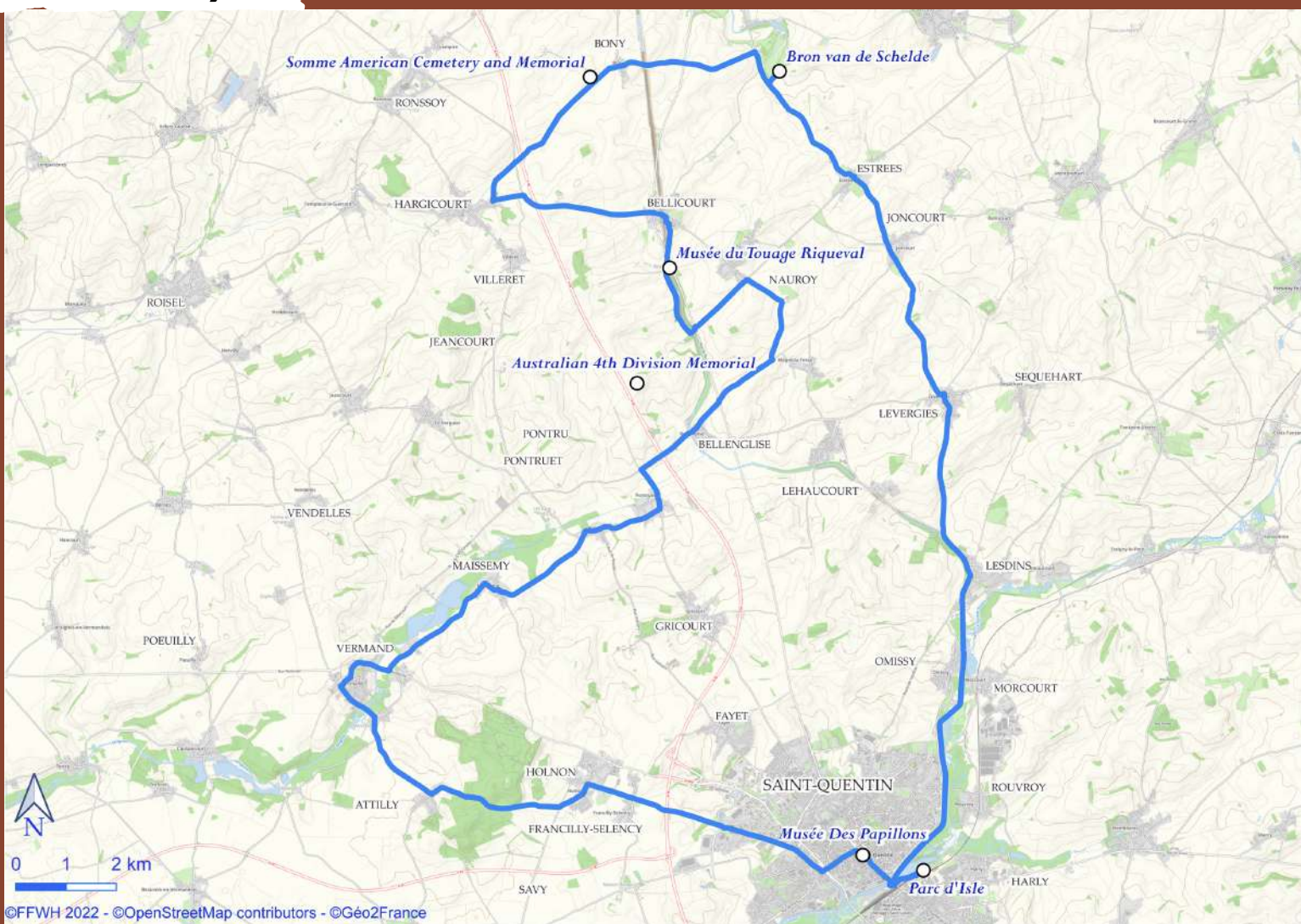
63 km



Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



The city of Saint-Quentin is situated on the Somme river. During the German occupation (1914-18), the town was integrated into their fortified "SIEGFRIED" position, looted, the factories destroyed and the looms demolished with hammers. In September 1918, a major Anglo-French offensive was launched by Douglas Haig (GB) to liberate Cambrai and Saint-Quentin. After four years of war, many cities like Lens, Arras, Saint-Quentin, Reims, etc. had almost ceased to exist. To establish a lasting peace after the war, Germany had to pay reparations to rebuild those cities.



L'hôtel de ville de Saint-Quentin

Miraculously, the shells of World War I missed the town hall. Saint-Quentin's town hall is a jewel of flamboyant Gothic art and opens onto the main square with its Flemish look.



Leave the square by following rue de la Sellerie to the traffic lights.



Take rue d'Isle. The Conservatory of Music and Theatre (at No 51) and the towers (lighthouse mast) at the four corners of the bridge over the river are part of this art city's particularly rich Art Deco heritage.



At the roundabout, then rue du Général Leclerc to cross the bridge with the towers.



under the bridge, in front of the station, towards Isle park.



After crossing the Saint-Quentin canal to the Parc d'Isle.



Parc d'Isle

Parc d'Isle is an urban recreation area and a nature reserve home to many plant and animal species. You can fill your water bottles there, but you are not allowed to ride your bike in the park!



Before heading for the towpath, the War Memorial deserves your attention. The semi-reliefs are by Paul Landowski. This French artist of Polish origin has created many sculptures. The most famous is the Christ the Redeemer on the hill above Rio de Janeiro.



The Saint-Quentin canal connects the Paris basin, northern France and Belgium. It unites the waters of the Scheldt, the Somme and the Oise. It consists of several sections. Here, the Saint-Quentin canal connects the Somme and the Scheldt between the cities of Saint-Quentin and Cambrai. It was one of the most important canals in France until the 1960s/70s.



Follow the towpath for 7.6 km.



In the absence of adequate ventilation, the Tronquoy tunnel is not accessible to pedestrians and cyclists. Therefore, leave the path and continue on the D71 towards Levergies.



D 31.



D 71 Levergies (after barely 100 m).



Towards Joncourt and then Estrées.



250 m after the "Sources de l'Escaut" sign, take the agricultural road that does not seem to have been named!



Carefully cross the D 1044 and continue on the D 442 towards Bony.



the D 57 (in Bony).

In late September 1918, two US infantry divisions, side by side with two Australian divisions managed to break through the Hindenburg Line that lay at the top of the canal.



Somme American Cemetery

The cemetery is in the department of Aisne, but is officially called "Somme" American Cemetery. Besides the graves of American soldiers killed in the Battle of the Hindenburg Line, there are also graves of soldiers who fought on the Somme during the great German offensive of 1918. It is one of eight US World War I military cemeteries. The visitor centre offers tranquillity and information.



Take the D 57 to Hargicourt.



D 331 to Bellicourt.



You cross the D 1044 to the D 93.



Before the church in Bellicourt.



At the end of the street, cross the D 1044 for the second time.



Souterrain de Riqueval

To build a canal between Cambrai and Saint-Quentin, the higher limestone plateau separating the Somme and Scheldt valleys was a major obstacle. The idea of crossing the plateau via an underground canal seemed too ambitious at the time and was abandoned. Napoleon ordered to resume the construction works. The 5,670-metre-long Riqueval tunnel was dug between Bellenglise and Vendhuile. On 28 April 1810, the canal was inaugurated by Emperor Napoleon I and Empress Marie-Louise. The Musée de Touage tells the story of the canal and the electric winch boat towing barges through the canal tunnel.

 <https://youtu.be/H-ZbtfGmtzs>

Located on the Hindenburg Line, the Germans turned the underground canal into a veritable fortress. With the support of 275 tanks, a mixed corps of Australian and American units took this strategic position. The 46th British Division was the first to cross the Riqueval Bridge and break through the Hindenburg Line. By early October, victory was within reach.



Leave this area via the country road that runs along the verge of the canal bank to a bridge.



Cross the Riqueval bridge and then the D 1044 to follow the D 932 to the cross.



Take the Chemin Bourré or the D 93 which you no longer follow at the top of the ridge.



To the D 1044 which you cross for the fourth time towards Bellenglise on the D 33.



On the D 31.



D73.



Rue du Calvaire towards Pontruet, Maissemy, Vermand on the D 1029.



Centre village.



Rue de Charles de Gaulle.



Rue de la Chapelle D 33, the Vermandois Museum and the Omignon.



D 33 towards Attily.



D 685 towards Holnon.



Rue du Maréchal Foch.



Rue de la Chaussée Romaine, Francilly-Selency et Saint-Quentin.



In the autumn of 1914, the German High Command decided to create a temporary cemetery. Kaiser Wilhelm decided to have a chapel erected there for the victims of the three nations. Most of the graves in the cemetery date from the German spring offensive of 1918. After the end of World War I, the French military authorities interred the bodies of the German dead from the Saint-Quentin area at this site. German soldiers previously buried in field graves were collected from more than 98 nearby cemeteries.



At the end of Rue de la Chaussée Romaine, follow the sign "Hôtel de Ville".





Practical information

Office de tourisme et des congrès du Saint-Quentinois

📍 3 rue Emile Zola - 02000 Saint-Quentin
☎ +33 (0)3 23 67 05 00
🌐 <https://www.destination-saintquentin.fr/>

Office de tourisme du Vermandois

📍 Hameau de Riqueval – RD1044
- 02420 Bellicourt.
☎ +33 (0)3 23 09 37 28
🌐 <https://www.ot-vermandois.com/>



To see on the way

Musée Antoine Lécuyer

📍 28 rue Antoine Lécuyer – 02100 Saint-Quentin
☎ +33 (0)3 23 06 93 98
🌐 <https://www.saint-quentin.fr/109-musee-lecuyer.htm>



Accommodation

Maison de l'Omignon

📍 1 rue des Fontaines – 02490 Vermand
☎ +33 (0)6 20 04 29 30
🌐 <https://www.maison-omignon.fr/>



Restaurants

📍 Possibility to eat in Saint-Quentin, Holnon, Vermand and Estrées.



Bike repair shops

Cycles Evasion

📍 Route d'Amiens, Centre Commercial de Saint-Quentin,
les Marlettes – 02100 Fayet 80200 Péronne
☎ 03 22 84 42 47
🌐 <https://www.cyclesevasion.com/>

FROM LAON TO THE CHEMIN DES DAMES

On this lap you will explore the Laonnois,
region of Laon, and the main historic sites
of the Battle of the Aisne (1917).

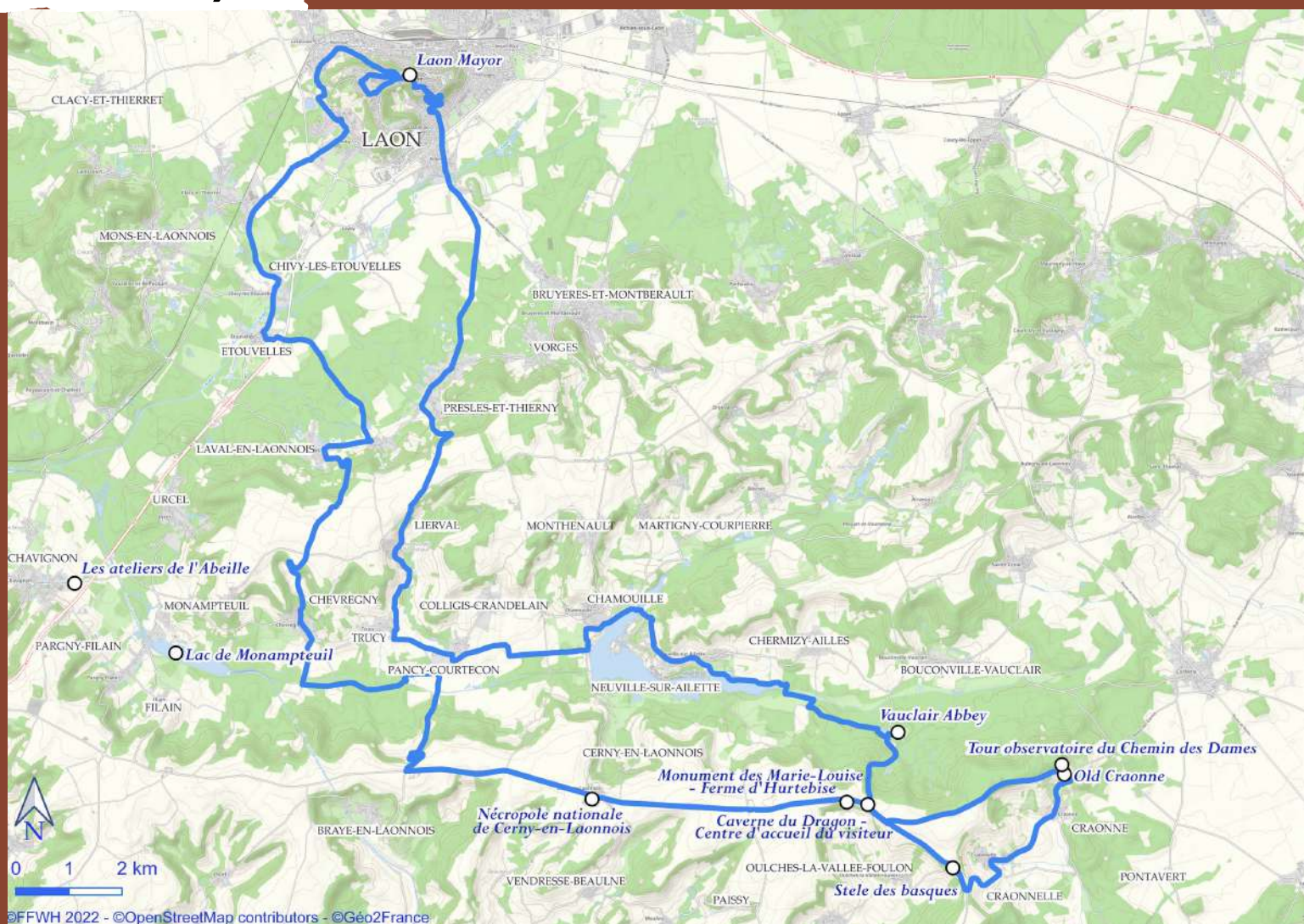
63 / 73 km

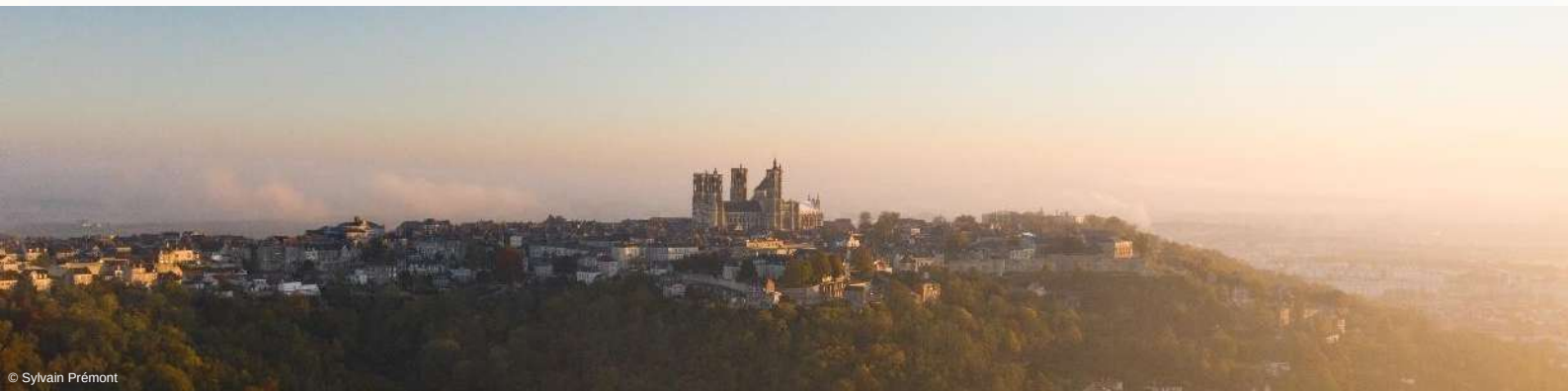


Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary





On this lap you will explore the Laonnois, region of Laon, and the main historic sites of the Battle of the Aisne (1917).

Laon sits on a relief a hundred metres high, dominating the entire surrounding plain. The river Ardon flows at the foot of the southern slope of the hill. With its steep flanks, the topography defined the status of this city for centuries; a natural fortress difficult to take. The city became a refuge from outside aggression or invasion.

The occupation of the upper town began only in Gallo-Roman times. It became an important city in the early Middle Ages, as a royal residence, episcopal city and important cultural centre. During the French Revolution, Laon became the capital of the department of Aisne (02).

The historic centre remained relatively immune from destruction by the Prussian army in 1870 and the First World War. Laon fell on 2 September 1914 and remained one of the main German strongholds until 13 October 1918, and one of the closest to Paris.



Laon's town hall

Laon's neoclassical town hall overlooks the Place du Général Leclerc and will be the starting point of this lap.



Follow the sign "REMPARTS SUD".



Take rue Châtelaine and then Rue Paul Doumer.



Rue de Signer, at the prefecture.



Rue Enguerrand Quarton.



Porte d'Ardon , one of the gates on the city ramparts, take the road descends to the Faubourg d'Ardon. Drive carefully down the Ardon slope and stay on the D 54.



At the first and second traffic lights. Now, follow Rue Arsène Houssaye, the D 967, until you leave Laon.



Find the D 54 towards Presles-et-Thiorny.



In the village, follow the D 25 for 750 m.



Find the D 54 towards Lierval.





© Sylvain Prémont



In Lierval, stay on the D 54.



Rue des Basses Vignes, then D 54 after leaving the village D 90.



On the D 19, at the end of the D54, towards Crandelain.



Before the church in Crandelain, leave the D 19.



Take the Voie Verte de l'Ailette.



Cross the D967 and follow the Voie Verte to the pedestrian bridge over the Ailette.



Towards the **Abbaye de Vauclair**, after crossing the Ailette.



© Bruno Gouhoury



© Sylvain Prémont



L'abbaye de Vauclair

In the Ailette valley, at the foot of the northern slope of the Chemin des Dames, an abbey of Cistercian monks was founded in 1134. The monks decided to build a much larger abbey. Its construction took until 1527. Quarries were dug to extract the stone available in the surrounding area. During the Great War, some underground galleries were used as hiding places by the French and Germans. Damaged during the French Revolution of 1789, the abbey became national property, sold and completely destroyed during the 1917 offensive, known as the Battle of the "Chemin des Dames".

Return to the zebra crossing where you previously crossed the D886 to make your way to the abbey. Take the D886 to the plateau between the Aisne Valley to the south and the Ailette Valley to the north.

This plateau is a magnificent observatory and a formidable defensive position. Numerous plaques testify to the bloody battles for the control of this plateau. The bronze statue depicts a soldier of the imperial guard and a poilu. This monument thus commemorates both Napoleon's battle on the plateau and the battles of the Great War.



To visit their tutor, a road was built for the comfort of Adelaide and Victoire, the daughters, "Dames", of Louis XV. This road was subsequently named "Chemin des Dames". Together with Verdun, Argonne, the Somme and Ypres, the battle of the "Chemin des Dames" became known as one of the worst battlefields of the 1914-1918 war.

* An additional 10 km loop joins the 63 km loop here. You choose here if you make this ride 10 km longer or not.



For this 10 kilometer hike, take the D 18 towards Craonne.



After 500 m.



You pass a vista point on your way to the old village of Craonne. The observation tower of the Chemin des Dames, 20 m high, is 200 m from the road, in the wooded part. The signposted path that starts at the car park, opposite the ruined village of "vieux Craonne", brings you there.



© Sylvain Prémont



Continue on the D18.



D 18 CD Craonnelle, at the Monument aux Morts.



3,934 bodies, including 24 British and 2 Belgian soldiers, are interred in the Craonnelle national cemetery.



© Conseil Départemental de l'Aisne



Keep following the D 18, past the Basque obelisk, to the Caverne du Dragon.

* Arriving at the 1814 - 1914 monument (Monument des Marie-Louise), the little loop is closed.



Caverne du Dragon

The Germans converted the galleries of the former quarry into underground barracks, dormitories, shelters, first-aid station and communication centre. The Germans named the cave "Drachen-höhle" because, according to German reports, the smoke from the kitchens was reminiscent of the lair of the dragon Fáfnir, slain by the hero Siegfried in the Nibelungen epic, and so the name appeared. Today, the Dragon Cave has been converted into a museum space dedicated to World War I, with an information desk, shop, sanitary building and a beautiful terrace.



Take the D18 towards the French national military cemetery of Cerny-en-Laonnois.



2 km further on, leave the D18 towards LAC DE MONAMTEUIL or the valley of the Ailette.



Follow "Voie Verte " until over the narrow bridge. Here is the connection with * the lap from Coucy-le-Château.



Onto the D191.



Before the church in Chevregny, rue du Mont des Vaches



Towards Laval-en-Laonnois.



At the war memorial in Laval-en-Laonnois on the D 25.



At the entrance to the village of Nouvion-le-Vineux, rue des Chauds Prés.





Cross the N2 with great caution.



In Etouvelles, take the D 542 towards Chivy-lès-Etouvelles.



Before the Saint-Pierre-aux-Liens church in Chivy-lès-Etouvelles, rue de Clacy.



On the D 652.



Do not stay more than 100 m before you come to a path that leads you directly to the D 5. The profile of the city with its cathedral has earned Laon the nickname "Montagne Couronnée" or coronated ridge.



In ave. Du Maréchal Foch, before the old barracks to the roundabout.



To go from the roundabout to the upper town, the medieval city of Laon, you have the option of staying on the D 5 and sharing the road with vehicles, or taking the steep slope of St-Just. Be prepared to finish on foot! Below is this route.



Follow "Camping".



Take the path before the campsite entrance. Ancien Chemin de Semilly.



Rue Daniel Tarpin



Roundabout des Cisterciens , D 740 towards CENTRE VILLE



Only 100 m further on Rampe Saint-Just.



When you arrive in the upper town, take rue Saint-Cyr.



Rue John Fitzgerald Kennedy.



Rue du 13 Octobre takes you back to the heart of the city and the starting point of this lap.





Practical information

Office de Tourisme du Pays de Laon

📍 Place du Parvis – 02000 Laon
☎ +33 (0)3 23 20 28 62
🌐 <https://www.tourisme-paysdelaon.com>



To see on the way

Souterrains de la citadelle

📍 Place du Parvis – 02000 Laon
☎ +33 (0)3 23 20 28 62
🌐 <https://www.tourisme-paysdelaon.com>

Caverne du Dragon

📍 Chemin des Dames
02860 Oulches-La-Vallée-Foulon
☎ +33(0)3 23 25 14 18
🌐 <https://www.chemindesdames.fr/>

Axo'Plage, Lac de Monampteuil

📍 Lieu dit – 02000 Monampteuil
☎ +33 (0)3 23 80 92 41
🌐 <http://www.ailette.org/Axo-Plage>

Center Parcs Domaine du Lac d'Ailette

📍 1 Parc Nautique de l'Ailette
02830 Chamouille
☎ T : +33 (0)3 23 25 00 00
🌐 https://www.centerparcs.fr/fr-fr/france/fp_LA_vacances-domaine-le-lac-d-ailette



Accommodation

Les Hôtes d'Eloïse

📍 13 rue du Cloître – 02000 Laon
☎ +33 (0)6 70 14 12 20
🌐 <https://www.booking.com/hotel/fr/les-hotes-d-eloise.fr.html>

Hôtel-restaurant du Golf de l'Ailette

📍 23 rue du Chemin des Dames
02860 Chamouille
☎ +33 (0)3 23 24 84 85
🌐 <https://www.ailette.fr/fr/hotel-spa-golf-reims>

Center Parcs Domaine du Lac d'Ailette

📍 1 Parc Nautique de l'Ailette
02830 Chamouille
☎ +33 (0)3 23 25 00 00
🌐 https://www.centerparcs.fr/fr-fr/france/fp_LA_vacances-domaine-le-lac-d-ailette

Ferme du Château

📍 21 rue de la Chaussée Romaine
02000 Monampteuil
☎ 33 (0)3 23 23 48 49
🌐 <https://www.la-ferme-du-chateau.fr/>



Restaurants



Possibility to eat Laon, Etouvelles, Pargny-Filain, Cerny-en-Laonnois and Chamouille.



Bike repair shops

Mégacycles



1134 Avenue Georges Pompidou – 02000 Laon

+33 (0)3 23 20 29 29

<https://veloland.com/magasins/veloland-laon-megacycles.php>

FROM COUCY CASTLE TO MONAMPTUIL LAKE

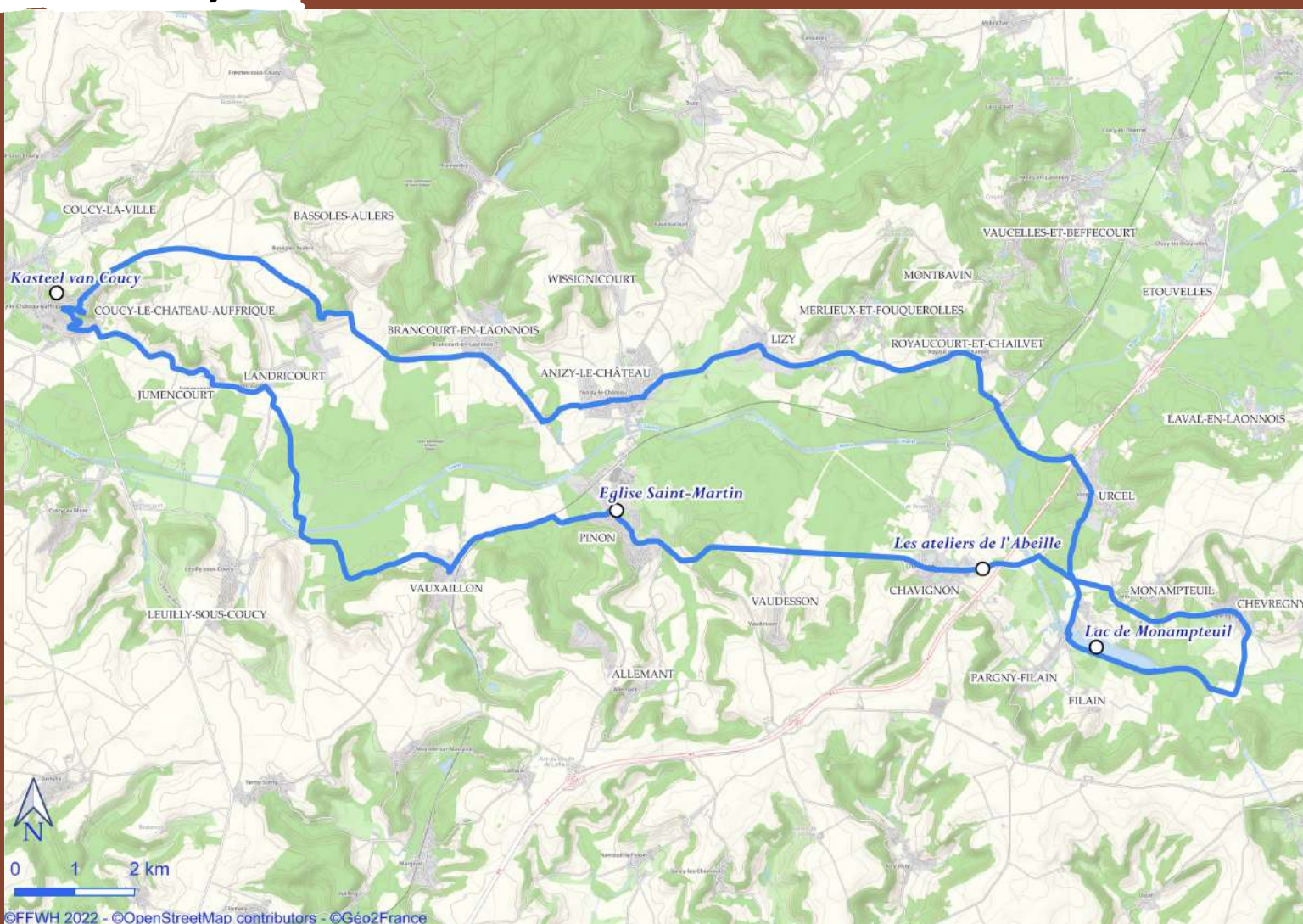
 54 km



Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary





For 200 years long, the Lords of Coucy were one of the most powerful families in northern France. Coucy castle is considered one of the most important fortified seigneuries of the Middle Ages. Louis XIV ordered its dismantling, which happened in 1652.

During the French Revolution, the castle became national property and was sold. The imposing ruins were bought by the state in 1829. The castle ruins were then consolidated by several architects, including Viollet-le-Duc. Before 1917, Coucy castle was known for its imposing master tower, donjon, which, along with the donjon of Vincennes castle, was the tallest ever built in the West.



The town of Coucy-le-Château was occupied by the German army for three years long. When military operations on the Somme and Meuse caused a shortage of German manpower, the German general staff decided on a strategic withdrawal to the so-called "Hindenburg" position. A methodical evacuation plan included the destruction of the keep, the town, the castle towers and city gates.

The ruins of the castle are now being restored. The site still bears the traces of its former power and medieval glory. The ruins of Coucy-le-Château are grandiose and are now one of the most emblematic tourist sites in the Aisne department.



The Porte de Laon

Fortunately, a smaller blast was used for the Porte de Laon, one of the three city gates.

The medieval history of the Lords of Coucy is told in the book "A distant mirror - the calamitous 14th century" . Barbara Tuchman, Publisher: 987 by Random House Trade ISBN 9780345349576.



The lap starts at the Porte de Laon. From there, follow the D 5, with a few rolling hills, towards Brancourt-en-Laonnois.



D 5 Anizy-le-Château.



D 5 Lizy .



Leave the D 5 as you enter Royaucourt-Chailvet.



Chemin de l'Usine.



At the STOP sign.



D15 Urcel, under the bridge.



Over the Ardon.



At the STOP sign, on D 23.



Go under the N 2, then drive through Urcel.



At the exit of the village, you will find the D 15.



Lac de Monamppteuil.



D 19 towards Monamppteuil.



Chevregny.



D19 Chevregny.

At the church of Chevregny you find the connection with the lap from Laon.



D 191 , rue du Clos du Pavé , then follow the signs
VOIE VERTE DE L'AILETTE.



Lac de Monampteuil

Monampteuil Lake was dug to provide the water supply for the canal connecting the Aisne and Oise rivers. Its suitable for all types of water sports.

The VOIE VERTE (17 km) takes you through the forest, meadows and wetlands, and is mostly situated between the lake and the canal.



At the end of the lake you follow the bike path in parallel with D 15.



D 15, at the roundabout.



At the junction of the D15 and the D19, take the D19.



At the end of the D 19, no longer follow the signs for the " VOIE VERTE" but now follow the D 23.



Chavignon.



You will cross the canal from the Oise to the Ailette. Note the German bunker on the side of the road!





In Chavignon, leave the D 23 to find the D 19 Pinon.



D 14 Pinon, at the STOP.



D551, at the Monument to the Fallen.



D 1990, just before Vauxaillon.



Leuilly s/Coucy.



Courson.



D532.



Jumencourt.



D1500 towards COUCY LE CHÂTEAU.
End of this lap.





Practical information

Office de Tourisme Cœur de Picard

📍 Rue du Port – 02300 Chauny

☎ +33 (0)3 75 30 00 21

🌐 <https://coeurdepicard.com/>



To see on the way

Château de Coucy

📍 Rue du Château – 02380 Coucy-Le-Château- Auffrique

☎ +33 (0)3 23 52 71 28

🌐 <https://www.chateau-coucy.fr/>

Axo'Plage, Lac de Monampeuil

📍 Lieu dit – 02000 Monampeuil

☎ +33 (0)3 23 80 92 41

🌐 <http://www.ailette.org/Axo-Plage>



Accommodation

Domaine du Lion Rouge

📍 62 avenue d'Altenkessel - 02380 Coucy-Le-Château-Auffrique

☎ +33 (0)6 84 28 80 46

🌐 <https://domaine-du-lion-rouge.com/>

Hôtel -restaurant Le Belle Vue

📍 2 Porte de Laon - 02380 Coucy-Le-Château-Auffrique

☎ +33 (0)3 23 52 69 70 -

🌐 <https://www.hotel-bellevue-coucy.com/>

Ferme du Château

📍 21 rue de la Chaussée Romaine
02000 Monampeuil

☎ +33 (0)3 23 23 48 49

🌐 <https://www.la-ferme-du-chateau.fr/>




Restaurants


📍 Possibility to eat in Coucy-Le-Château-Auffrique, Anizy-Le-Grand and Pargny-Filain.




Bike repair shops

RSCycles

 102 Rue de la Chaussée – 02300 Chauny

 +33(0)3 64 14 67 81

 <https://rscycles-chauny.myshopify.com/>

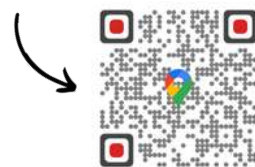
THE FORTRESS OF VERDUN



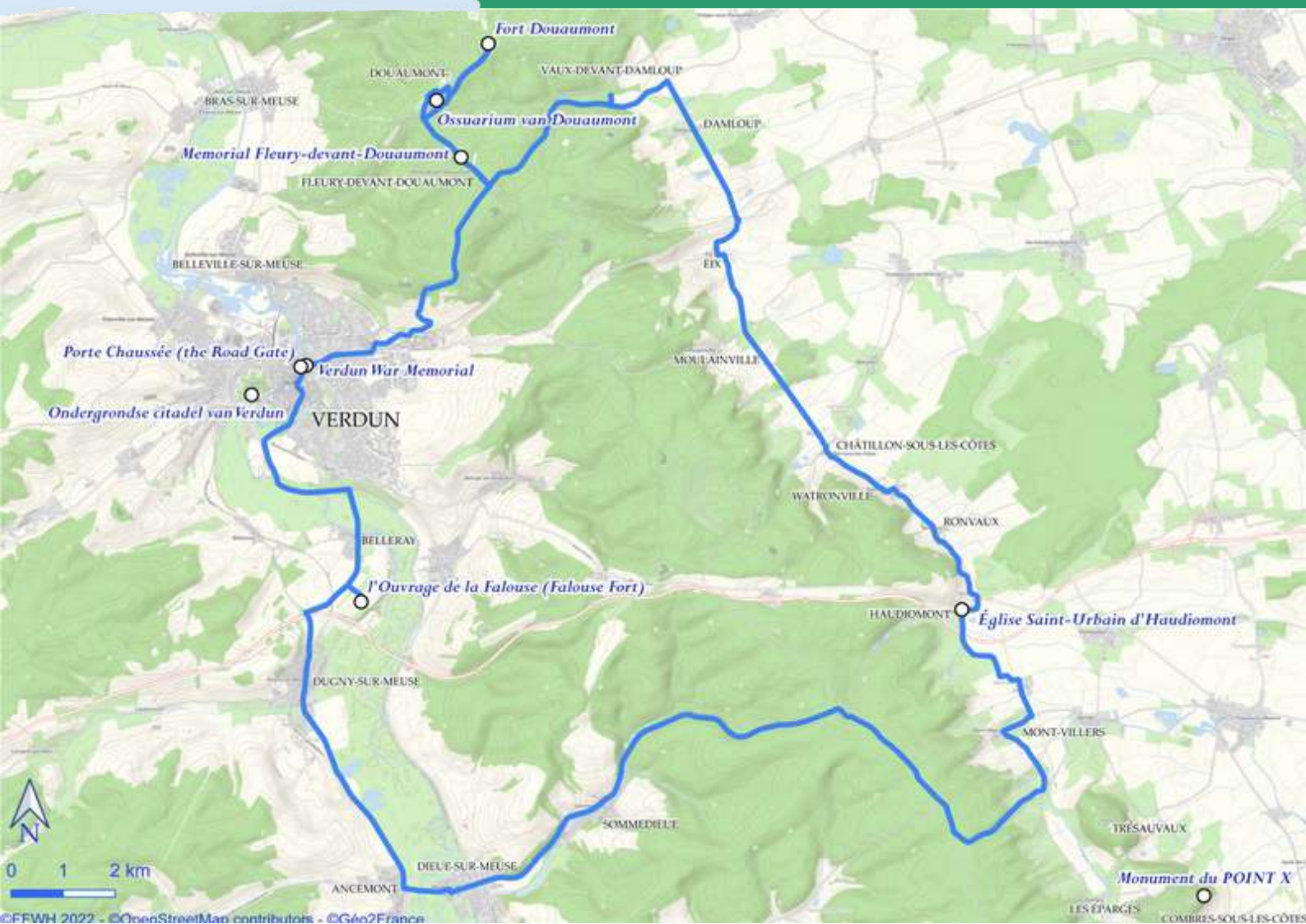
Through the battlefield of Verdun

 66 km

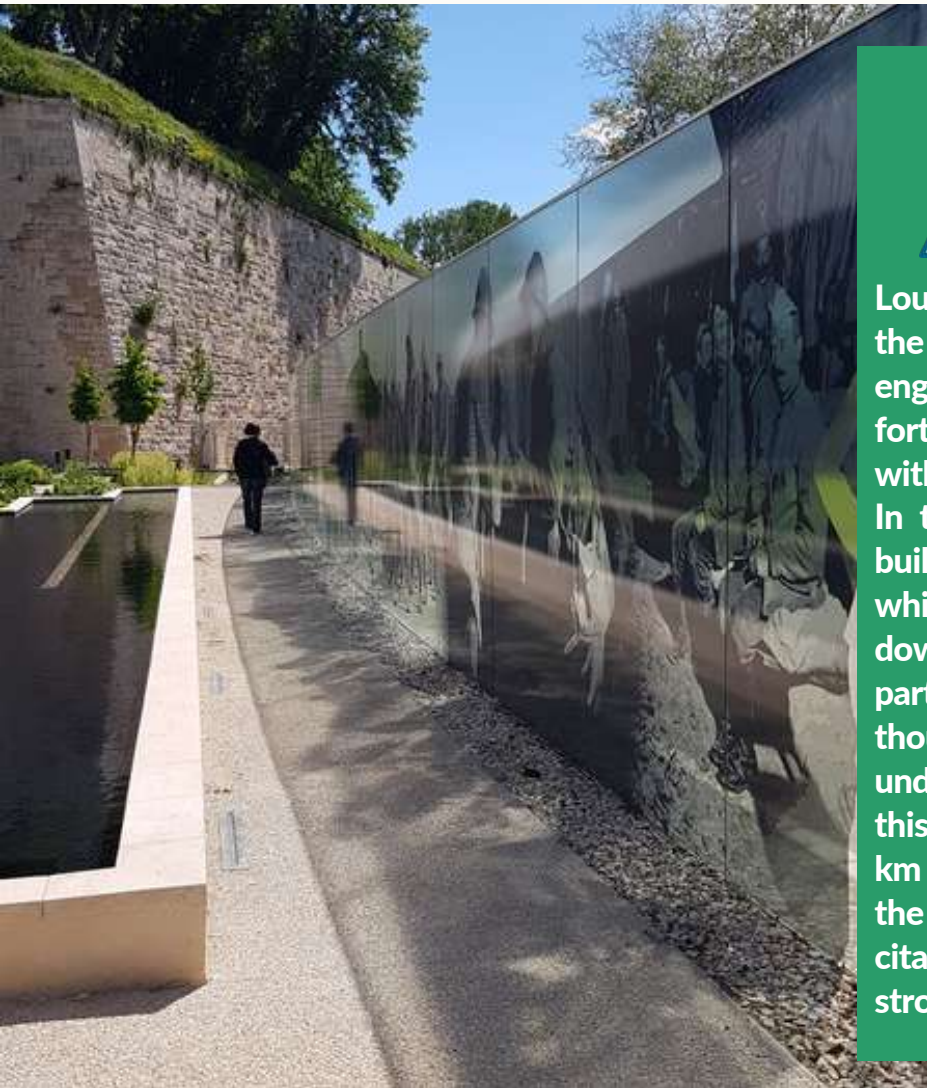
Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



Verdun is built on both banks of the Meuse, the river that flows through the city from south to north and also through the French department, La Meuse, named after the river. In 843, the Treaty of Verdun divided the Carolingian empire among Charlemagne's three grandsons. The county of Verdun then fell under the middle kingdom of Lothar the 1st. After the treaty of Münster (1648), the city and diocese of Verdun definitively became part of the French kingdom.



The underground Citadel

Louis XIV entrusted the task of modernising the defence of Verdun to Vauban, an engineer and architect. The medieval military fortifications were reinforced and completed with a citadel and seven bastions.

In the late 19th century, military engineers built a belt of advanced defensive positions of which the citadel, with a network of galleries down to 16 m deep under the rocks, was also part. During the battle of Verdun, in 1916, thousands of soldiers find shelter in this underground citadel. By the end of the war, this underground stronghold counts almost 7 km of corridors. It is possible to learn about the living conditions of the soldiers under the citadel, as part of this underground stronghold can be visited .



At the monument to the Sons of Verdun, place de la Nation, this ride departs. Do not cross the Meuse on the bridge that opens onto Porte Chaussée.

Take the towpath, parallel to the Quai de la République, as far as lock n° 19.



At the Belleray lock on D 301



Cross the Meuse and in the direction of Billemont



Ouvrage de la Falouse

The fortified stronghold of La Falouse has remained almost intact and is now fully restored by a team of volunteers who want to preserve the heritage of the Great War and tell the story of the living conditions of the French soldiers.



D 34 towards Dugny s/M, drive through Dugny and continue on rue de Saint-Mihiel or the D 34.

Leave the D 34 at Ancemont





D 159 towards Sommedieue. Cross the village of Dieue s/ M.



No longer on the D 159, in Dieue follow the signposts towards Sommedieue



Cross the Meuse and, again on D 159, head towards Sommedieue.

In Sommedieue, continue to follow the D 159 towards Haudiomont, until you reach the junction with the D 331.



Head towards Hattonchâtel on the D 331. Then follow direction Saint-Rémy-la-Calonne on the D 332.

Connection with the lap "Lac de Madine ".



Direction Haudiomont on the D 154.



D 154 to Fresnes and Haudiomont



D 21 Haudiomont



D 154 Haudiomont 3 km



At the church of Haudiomont, still on the D 154 until intersection with the D 903 .



Cross the D 903 with due consideration for traffic and then on the D 24 and continue towards EIX and Damvillers.



Carefully cross the D 603 and continue on D 24 to Damloup.



The 118 milestones in pink granite, designed by Vauthier, indicate where the front lay on 18 July 1918, the tipping point of the war. The Adrian helmet, developed as the first steel helmet for trench warfare, rests atop laurel wreaths.



D 913 towards the Mémorial and Douaumont fortress



The statue of the Lion of Souville indicates how far the German advance came and was stopped at that place during the Battle of Verdun.



Verwoest dorp Vaux

The village of Vaux, one of the nine villages wiped off the map by shelling during the battle, was rebuilt and now lies 500m from the road. The message from the then French president, Raymond Poincaré, deserves a moment of reflection.



Le Mémorial de Verdun

The memorial museum began in 1967 on the initiative of a veteran of the battle of Verdun. Its purpose is to let visitors experience and understand what it was like on the battlefield during the fighting. To mark 100 years of remembrance, the museum was redesigned and equipped with visual communication that appeals to the younger generation.



The cornerstone of the outer belt of defence for Verdun, Fort Douaumont, was taken by German forces in February. From then on, it was French artillery that wreaked death and destruction over the fort and its surroundings. The bulky concrete shield largely disappeared if not was left thoroughly damaged by this shelling.



It is not until October of the same year that the French manage to retake the fort. Military engineers then repair and reinforce the fort as best they can with barricades, chicanes, gun posts ... but the fort will not be besieged again.

After this visit, return on your steps to the military cemetery and Memorial



D 913 towards Stenay, past the memorial to the Muslim soldiers



D 913 c towards the Ossuaire de Douaumont, and the memorial wall for the soldiers of Jewish faith.



Douaumont Ossuary

In the final days of the armistice, the Bishop of Verdun, Bishop Charles Ginisty, visits the battlefield where numerous corpses still lie. Thereupon, he decides to establish a charnel house so that those 130,000 French and German soldiers will have a dignified grave and the family will have a place to mourn. With the support of General Valantin, governor of the fortified city, he travelled France and the world from 1920 to 1932 in search of the necessary funds. Of the numerous towns and communities that contributed, their name or emblem can be seen on the facade.



The tower of the central building can be seen as an artillery shell or the hilt of a sword sticking into the ground. Today, it is also a symbol of reconciliation between France and Germany. The Douaumont National Cemetery stretches over 14 hectares at the foot of the memorial. 16,142 French soldiers rest there, including six from World War II

It was President Jacques Chirac who inaugurated the memorial to the French Muslim fighters in 2006, on the 90th anniversary of the battle of Verdun. The memorial wall for French soldiers of Jewish faith was designed in 1938 by architect Stern, a Verdun resident, and honours the numerous Jewish war victims of World War I



Past the cemetery, again on the D 913, leave the Memorial Museum to your right to the destroyed village of Fleury-devant-Douaumont, then back at the Lion of Souville.



D 112 towards Verdun, arriving at the monument to André Maginot.



André Maginot is promoted sergent thanks to his dedication and courage. Struck by two bullets, he is rescued and taken behind the lines and cared for. However, pain in his knee remains his fate for the rest of his days. Several times minister of the French government, he obtains approval to release the necessary funds to build a new defence on the Franco-German border. This new defensive ensemble is named the "Maginot Line" a few years after his death, in 1935.



Descending into the valley of the Meuse is smooth. At the crossroads with the D 603 on rue de Fleury, head towards CENTRE VILLE .






D 630 or the avenue Maréchal Joffre. Go through Parc Japiot at the roundabout, back at the start of the ride : la place de la Nation and the Monument aux Enfants de Verdun.





Practical information




Tourist Office of Verdun

 Place de la Nation 55100 Verdun
 +33 (0)3 29 86 14 18
 <https://www.tourisme-verdun.com/>






Places to visit

Memorial of Verdun

 1, avenue du Corps européen - BP 60048
Fleury-devant-Douaumont
55101 Verdun Cedex
 +33 (0)3 29 88 19 16
 <http://memorial-verdun.fr/>




Citadel of Verdun

 Avenue du Soldat Inconnu
55100 VERDUN
 +33 (0)3 29 84 84 42
 <https://www.citadelle-souterraine-verdun.fr/>



Accommodation

Maison Mirabeau

 15 Avenue du Troyon – 55100 VERDUN
 +33 (0)7 87 13 82 11
 <https://lamaisonmirabeau.com/>






Restaurants

There are plenty of restaurants in Verdun



Bike rental service

Atelier Cycle

 48 rue du Pré Pommere – 55100 Verdun
 +33 (0)9 81 99 99 29
 <https://www.ateliercycle.fr/>

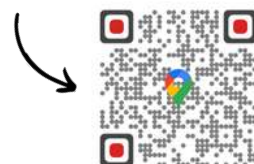
THE « SAMMIES » IN ARGONNE



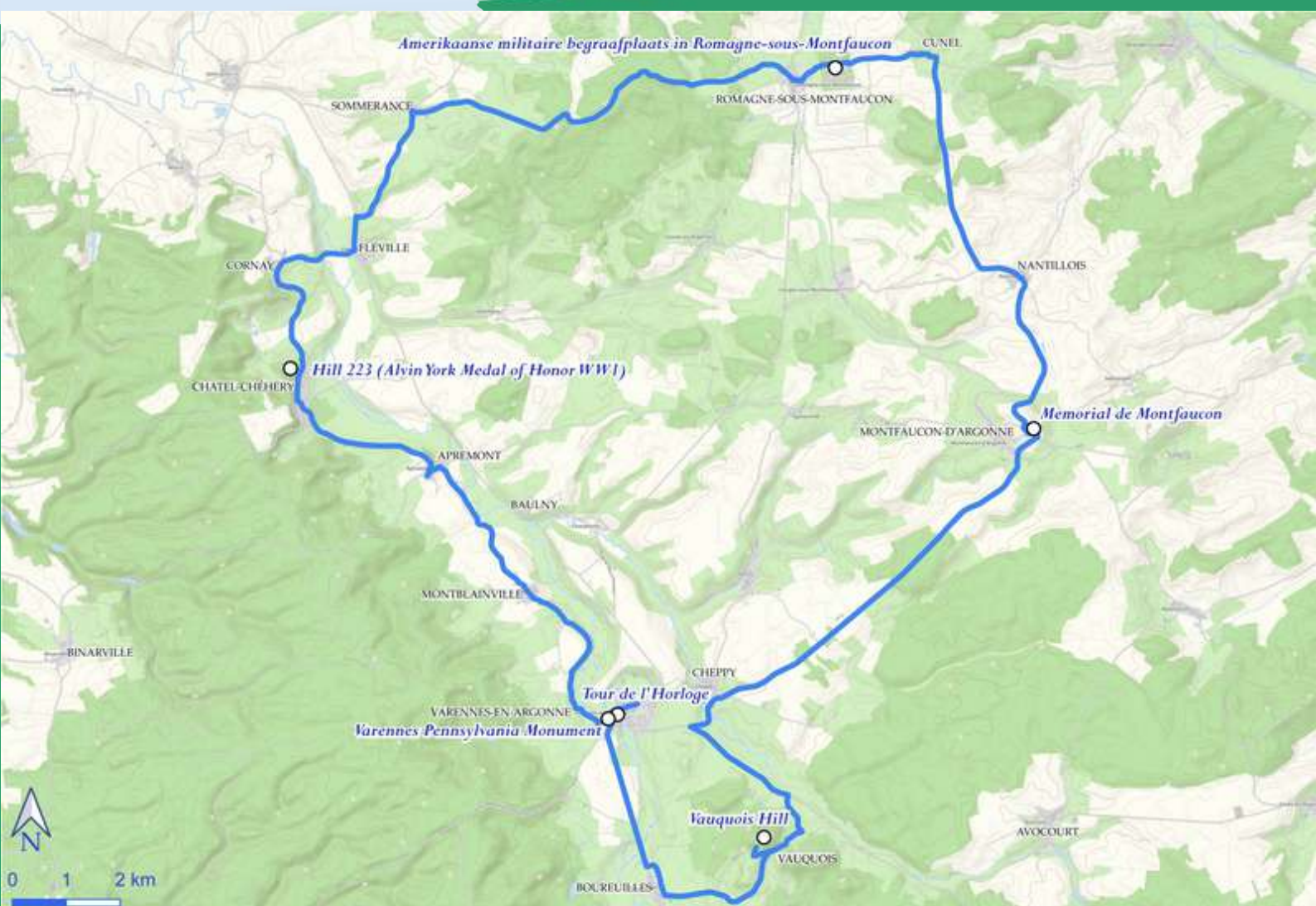
A walk through the Argonne

 59 km

Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



The starting point of this ride is Varennes-en-Argonne. This village holds a particular place in the history of France, is located on the edge of the Argonne forest and is crossed by the river Aire. During this exploration of the Meuse country, you will discover typical Argonne villages and places emblematic of World War I confrontations, where American soldiers made their mark.



Varennes-en-Argonne

In 1791, King Louis XVI and his family were quasi-prisoners in Paris. An escape plan was to reach the border and join the regiments loyal to him to unleash a counter-revolution. On their flight, the royal family's carriage was halted at Varennes, where the king was formally recognised, charged and sent back to Paris under military escort. Supporters of the abolition of the monarchy will use this escape to declare Louis XVI an enemy of the revolution.



Go to the bridge over the Aire to reach Place Maginot. From here, take the D964 along Louis XVI street.





American Monument of Pennsylvania

Like so many other towns, Varennes was destroyed by fire and shelling during the German invasion. The 28th US Division, with mostly soldiers from the state of Pennsylvania, managed to liberate Varennes on 26 September 1918. Where the castle once stood, the imposing monument of the US state of Pennsylvania now stands. The terrace offers a beautiful panorama of the Aire Valley.



Drive past the Musée d'Argonne and keep following the D 946.

Cross the river Aire again, then leave D 946

At the end of the Chemin des Rosiers, route de Vauquois, or D 212



Go up rue Jules Pérot to the car park and continue on foot from there to the trenches. You can tie up your bike in the car park.





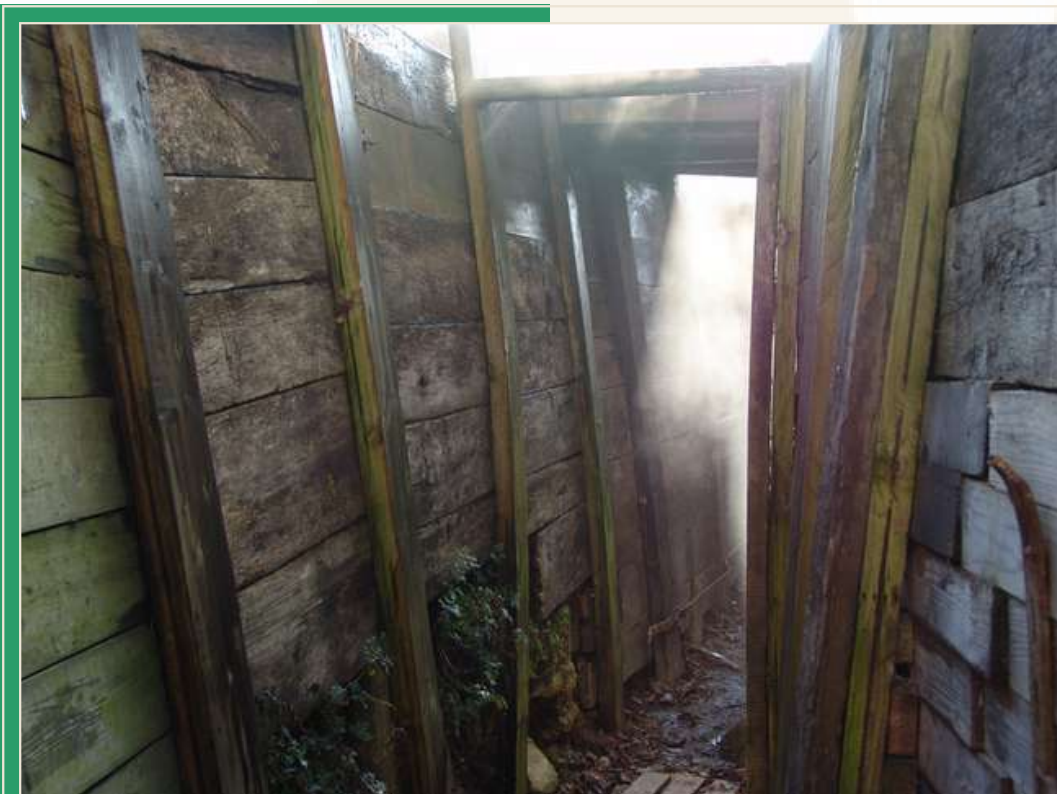
Vauquois hill

Vauquois overlooks the entire region east of the Argonne, making it an important observation post offering a commanding view over the area. With an unobstructed field of vision over the connecting roads to Verdun and Sainte-Menehould, the artillery controls every enemy movement. On 24 September 1914, the Germans took Vauquois and immediately started building extensive defences.

The French carried out several military operations to regain control of the hill to liberate the Argonne area. After several failed attempts, neither side succeeded in completely capturing the hill. The trenches were too close together to deploy artillery. An underground war then turned the hill into a giant termite mound with tunnels that sometimes went down to 90 metres deep.

The deep craters, still visible today, testify to the violence of the 519 explosions caused by dozens of tonnes of explosives. Do not hesitate to call in advance for a tour, the volunteers will be happy to tell you about the history of the hill.

The monument for the 46th IR bears witness to the merciless battle between the French and the Germans.





Take rue d'Orléans, after your visited the Vauquois hill, then the D 38 .

D 38 Varennes-en-Argonne

D 19 Cheppy.



Future general Patton was wounded in the fighting at Cheppy, while future US president Harry Truman, a native of Missouri, fought in this area.

Montfaucon tower



Ruins of the church of Montfaucon



You will arrive in Montfaucon d'Argonne at the monument commemorating the American victory in the Meuse-Argonne offensive of 1918. During opening hours, access to the observation platform - after 234 steps - offers a stunning panorama of the terrain captured in 1918.





Take the D15 towards Nantillois, either via the path behind the church ruins or on the D15 road



To Cunel



D 123 Romagne follow the signposted direction to: American Cemetery





American cemetery of Romagne-sous-Montfaucon

The largest US military cemetery in Europe rests 14,246 bodies, many of whom died during the Meuse-Argonne offensive. The names of 954 American missing soldiers, whose remains were never recovered or identified, are inscribed on either side of the chapel at the top of the hill. The crosses, with a name engraved in gold letters, honour those who received the Medal of Honor.

The visitor and interpretation centre on the other side of the hill brings the stories of some of the soldiers through archives, photographs and films, highlighting the importance of this decisive offensive.



Freddie Stowers was the first African-American soldier to receive the Medal of Honor, the United States' highest award, for his bravery in the First World War. Grave location F-36-40



Frank Luke 'the Arizona Balloon Buster' is a pilot of the 27th US Aero Squadron. His 19 victories make him his country's second most successful pilot. Grave location A-26-13



Leave the cemetery on the D123 towards the church in Romagne
At the Monument aux Morts, cross the D 998 and pass the local cemetery. Always stay on the D 123.



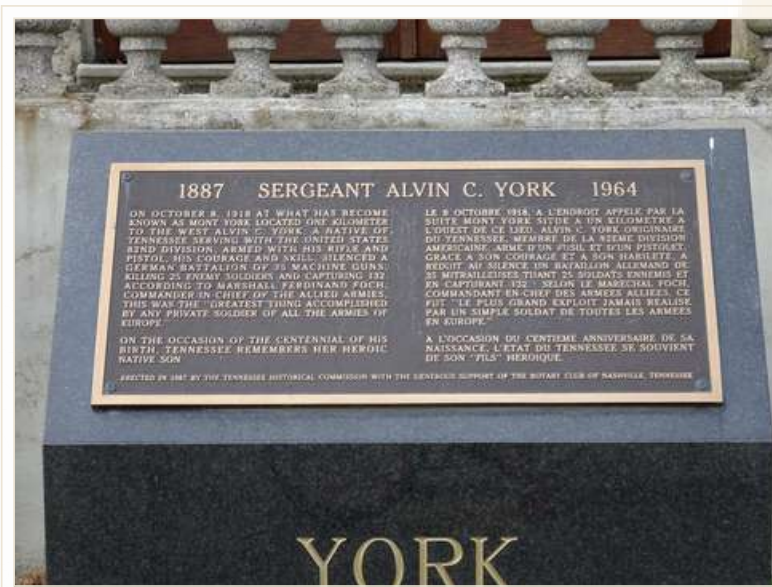
At Sommerance, take the D 4 towards Fléville
D 946 for 500 meters towards Fléville



At Fléville, leave the D 946 to take the D 4 towards Cornay.



The bronze panel in front of Chatel-Chéhéry town hall commemorates the exploits of Private Alvin York. This sniper neutralised a German machine gun post, shot 28 enemies and captured 132 soldiers. He was promoted to sergeant and later awarded the Medal of Honour for what French Marshal Foch described as "the greatest thing accomplished by any soldier of all the armies of Europe".



D 42 towards Apremont s/Aire

Stay on D 42, pass the church and town hall of Apremont and descend to the Aire.

D 42 towards Montblainville. The D 42 now becomes the D 38a in the Meuse department (55)



At Montblainville

The soldiers of the United States forces present in France at the end of World War I were called the "Sammies" by the French people, in reference to Uncle Sam; but also a pun on the French "les amis", the friends who came to liberate France.



You return to Varennes via Rue Neuve, which passes by the Pennsylvania monument you met at the beginning of this ride. This bike ride ends at the church of Varennes.





Practical information

Tourist Office of the Argonne

📍 6 place de la République - 55120 Clermont-en-Argonne

☎ +33 (0)3 29 88 42 22

🌐 <https://tourisme-argonne-meuse.fr/>



Places to visit

Les Amis de Vauquois

📍 Vauquois - 55270

☎ +33 (0)3 29 80 73 15

🌐 <https://butte-vauquois.fr/>



Accommodation

Hôtel-Restaurant du Commerce

📍 1, rue de la Louvière - 55120 AUBREVILLE

☎ +33 (0)3 29 87 40 35

🌐 <https://www.hotel-restaurant-aubreville.com/index.php>

Usine de Consenvoye

📍 5 rue de la Boulonnerie - La Côte des Grands Prés
55110 - Gercourt-et-Drillancourt

☎ +33 (0)3 29 80 69 35

🌐 <https://alusine.com/>



Restaurants

You can eat in Aubreville (Hôtel-Restaurant du Commerce)



Bike rental service

Atelier Cycle

📍 48 rue du Pré Pommere - 55100 Verdun

☎ +33 (0)9 81 99 99 29

🌐 <https://www.ateliercycle.fr/>

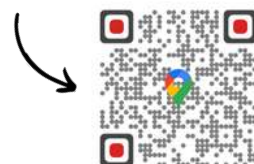
LES CÔTES-DE-MEUSE



Between the war and the vineyards

 74 km

Routes and junctions
available on Google Maps



Itinerary



The Côtes-de-Meuse is part of the nature reserve Parc Naturel Régional de Lorraine, a sparsely populated area of orchards, vineyards and varied nature, which lends itself perfectly to this recreational tour.



The church of Les Eparges is the starting point of this lap

Northwards is the D 154 that connects with the ride starting in Verdun.
Follow the D 154 towards Haudiomont and Mesnil-sous-les-côtes



At the end of that road and the T-junction take the D 332 towards Verdun over 800 meters



D 331 towards Hattonchâtel & Vigneulles les Hattonchâtel.



Leave the D 331 here and follow an old military railway line in the forest, built by the German Engineers.



Fosse d'Alain Fournier



The underground shelters, quite well preserved, indicate that you are standing behind German lines. In the clearing is the monument in honour of Lt. Alain Fournier whose name is mentioned on the wall of the Pantheon in Paris, in the list of authors who died during the war.



Back on the D 331 to Hattonchâtel

1.4 km from Hattonchâtel, a field road, at right angles to the D 331, leads to Chaillon.

Not paved for 5.9 km, but usable for cyclists

In case of rain or after heavy thunderstorms, you might want to stay on the D 331 to Hattonchâtel, Vigneulles and there the D 901 Chaillon



Near the satellite (communication) dish mast, the road becomes perfectly passable again. Enter Chaillon, go through the village and follow the D 901 to the town hall. D 133 over 5 km.



D 908, drive into Heudicourt, past the town hall (Mairie) of Heudicourt.



Rue du lac, follow the signpost to "observatoire ornithologique" and find the gravel road, the trail around the lake "Tour du Lac" and follow it to the base nautique.





Madine lake

Besides practising various water sports, the Madine domain also offers various forms of accommodation, whether you are travelling alone or with a group of family members or friends.



Stay on the path along the lake until you reach BAR DU LAC
leave the domain here, at the entrance to the campsite



D133 to Vigneulles.



D 179 to Vigneulles



At the roundabout :

D 908 towards Vigneulles in just 300 m

In Vigneulles, leave the D 908, now take the Raymond Poincaré.



Back on the D 179 to Hattonchâtel & Site des Eparges



After the war, several Americans financially supported the reconstruction of the destroyed villages. For instance, Miss Skinner, an American lady from a wealthy family, is particularly well known. She took care of the village of Hattonchâtel, which was almost totally destroyed by the violence of war. So she paid for a new town hall, school, library, castle and also the provision of running water in the village. To commemorate and honour her generous support, the village's main street is named after her.



The village of Hattonchâtel



The castle of Hattonchâtel



Instead of following the D 179, in Hattonchâtel, ride up rue Miss Skinner to house n°4.



Towards Saint Maurice & Fresnes and Woëvre. The descent requires focus.



D 908 in the direction of Fresnes. In rain or after a thunderstorm, it is better to stay on the D 908.



D 215 Vieville-sous-les-Côtes. Follow the signpost to the German military cemetery. The road back to the D 908 is a bit rough, not paved, but usable.



After 500m on the D908 to the German military cemetery of St-Maurice s/ les-Côtes.



At the local fountain and spring, take rue Deuxnouds or D 101 up to the crossroads.



D 332 to Saint-Rémy-la-Calonne & Site des Eparges



D 154 Les Eparges & Site des Eparges



D 113 Combres-sous-les-Côtes. On the southern flank of the ridge of Les Eparges, the Germans built numerous shelters. These were connected to the other shelter bunkers via tunnels.



Away from the D 113, take rue de Muzy et arrive at the Domaine de Muzy.

Take the time here to meet the Liénard family and get to know their winery ! They will be happy to let you discover their famous sparkling wine !





Muzy vineyard



D 203 to Trésauvaux



D 203 Les Eparges & Site des Eparges



D 203 to Crête des Eparges



La crête des Éparges

The ridge of Les Eparges lies on an east-west axis, with steep flanks that are difficult to climb. From an altitude of 346 m, this location provides commanding views over the Woëvre plain. For both camps, this ridge is of strategic importance.

Aiming to completely encircle the French in the region of Verdun, the Germans had taken Les Eparges on 14 September 1914, digging successive lines of trenches to make this position impregnable. After three months of scorching battles, the French manage to recapture the central point of the ridge.

The Germans still manage to cling on to point X , on the edge of the ridge. The infantry attacks were followed by an underground war. The numerous craters today testify to the mine battle that took place here. It was only after the American victory at Saint-Mihiel that the crest of the hill could be completely relieved in September 1918



Before the highest point of the climb, near an open space, the monument to the 106th regiment is clearly visible. The stark depiction of skulls and hands reaching to the edge of the trench allude to the terrible experience of the fallen.

At the foot of the crest is the French national cemetery for 2960 fallen soldiers.






After visiting this remarkable site, descend carefully, across the watercourse. At Michelin's original milestone on the D 154, the lap has been completed !





Practical information

Tourist Office of Coeur de Lorraine

 Rue du Palais de Justice - 55300 Saint-Mihiel
 +33 (0)3 29 89 06 47
 <https://www.coeurdelorraine-tourisme.fr/>



Places to visit

Domaine de Muzy

 3 rue de Muzy
55160 Combres-sous-les-Côtes
 +33 (0)3 29 87 37 81
 <https://www.domainedemuzy.fr/>



Accommodation

Hôtel-Restaurant du Lac de Madine

 22, rue Charles De Gaulle 55210 Heudicourt-sous-les-Côtes
 +33 (0)3 29 89 34 80
 <https://www.hotel-lac-madine.com/>




Restaurants

You can find places to eat in Heudicourt-sous-les-Côtes, Hattonchâtel.



Bike rental service

Atelier Cycle


 48 rue du Pré Pommere – 55100 Verdun
 +33 (0)9 81 99 99 29
 <https://www.ateliercycle.fr/>

CONTACT



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Touristique de l'Aisne, 71 avenue
Maréchal Foch, 02000 Laon.


 Christelle Clément

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 c.clement@aisne-tourisme.com

 www.aisne-tourisme-pro.com
www.jaimelaisne.com
www.randonner.fr



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réservation touristique, 54, rue
Saint-Fuscien, 80 000 Amiens.

 Léa Manot, Jérôme Chauchard.

 +33 3 22 71 22 71


 l.manot@somme-tourisme.com
j.chauchard@somme-tourisme.com

 www.somme-tourisme.com



 Pas-de-Calais Tourisme, Route de
la Trésorerie - 62126 Wimille.


 Benoît Diéval

 +33 3 21 10 34 60


 benoitdieval@pas-de-calais.com

 www.pas-de-calais-tourisme.com



 Meuse Attractivité, Centre d'affaires
Cœur de Meuse - ZID Meuse TGV
F-55220 LES TROIS DOMAINES.

 Armel Guénec

 +33 3 29 45 78 40

 a.guenec@lameuse.fr

 www.lameuse.fr

Find all the routes on
<https://bit.ly/3SAJFls>