

The Great Crossing of the Massif Central by mountain bike Part 1

From Clermont-Ferrand to Laubert or Mende
6 days - 5 nights including 6 days of mountain biking

Compatible with electric mountain bikes ⚡

Physical Level 2/3
Technical Level 2/3



The GTMC VTT : The Great Crossing of the Massif Central by mountain bike (La Grande Traversée du Massif Central en VTT). Setting off from Clermont-Ferrand, you cross through an incredible array of landscapes: volcanoes of the Auvergne, the Cézaillier, Margeride and Lozère. The Massif Central is the largest expanse of mountainous 'massif' in France, and is perfectly adapted for mountain biking ! This itinerary takes you on a trip to discover the Puy de Dôme, Puy de Sancy (1886m), Lac Chambon and the Truc de Fortunio, and with a warm welcome from our partners, who are used to accommodating mountain bikers, guaranteed at the end of each stage !

Stages are, on the whole, relatively physical, but always rolling and with climbs.

In the Margeride, you will pedal between 1000 and 1500m of altitude, through beautiful forests, constantly criss-crossing between imposing blocks of granite which stand as witnesses to the early ages. From the heart of the Auvergne to the Lozère, via the high altitude forests of Margeride, you ride through a perfect mix of climbing tracks and playful descents !

KEY POINTS :

- A legendary crossing of a massif perfectly adapted to mountain biking.
- 6 days of self-guided mountain biking without transfers, crossing the volcanoes of the Auvergne, the Cézaillier, Margeride and Lozère.
- Saint-Flour, town of art and history. Compatible with electric mountain bikes.

PROGRAMME

Day 1 : From Clermont-Ferrand to Laschamps

42km Profile : +1320m

It's the departure of your Great Crossing of the Massif Central ! You set off from Clermont-Ferrand, heading north towards Volvic, which you reach after a few challenging climbs. You gain altitude to discover the chain of Puys and all of its famous volcanoes. Be careful, the Puy de Dôme (1464m) is watching you!

Riding along beautiful and lively paths, you climb a little more, crossing through some pretty villages. From Vauriat, staying under the gaze of the impressive Puy de Dôme, you pass between undergrowth and small single-tracks, before descending the slope towards Laschamps, for a first and well-deserved rest.

Night in Laschamps.

Day 2 : From Laschamps to Besse

55km Profile : +1400m

Along superb trails, you slalom between the Puy Pelat, Mercoeur, Montellet and Pourcharet, before arriving at Recoleine and descending towards Orcival, a very pretty, well-known village with a Roman basilica.

You arrive in the Massif du Sancy.

The next part of stage offers a climb along a path up to the Lac de Servières, the highest point of the stage (1212m), which merits a break. You then relaunch yourself along some lively tracks, through the forest, to reach Pessade. A succession of demanding climbs leads you to a beautiful descent towards the Lac Chambon, where a quick swim shouldn't be missed! After that, a new climb along tracks leads you to the medieval village of Besse where you will be transported back in history.

Night in Besse.

Day 3 : From Besse to Allanche

56km Profile : +1110m

Setting off from Besse, we enter the Cézaillier, passing by the Lac and Puy de Montcineyre. Here, on the great plateaus, we can see the Puy de Sancy, the highest peak of the Massif Central (1886m).

After Jassy, you take on the standard ascension of the Col de Fortunier, switching between roads and tracks which offer you a magnificent view over the peaks of Sancy and Cantal.

From there on, only happiness ! A long and technical descent, fast and playful, takes you into the department of Cantal and to Allanche.

Night in Allanche.

Day 4 : From Allanche to Saint-Flour

47km Profile : +845m

Today, the stage with the lowest altitude gains of the trip, takes you initially through the woods of Pinatelle towards Chalinargues. You descend first along a trail and then a single-track to quickly arrive at Neussargues.

The next part of the stage is much less shady as you leave the forests to experience beautiful farmland, rich in history, where you can discover numerous dolmens and chateaux. You then cross the Planèze, an ancient place much-loved by the builders of megaliths, before arriving in Saint-Flour, city of art and history with 15 centuries of architecture to discover.

Night in Saint-Flour.

Day 5 : From Saint-Flour to Chanaleilles

61km Profile : +1600m

Stage 5 takes you into the Margeride. The first part takes you through various hamlets and rivers to arrive in Ruynes, at the foot of the massif of Margeride.

Via a physically demanding climb through the forest, you gain altitude and find yourself at more the 1400m! Along a ridge top path you cross through a high point of the French Resistance.

From Mont Mouchet, you gain speed as you head downhill and arrive in Paulhac, entering the department of the Haute-Loire.

A fairly standard but physical climb along a forest track takes you to 1400m altitude before a pleasant descent towards Chanaleilles. Night in Chanaleilles.

Day 6 : From Chanaleilles to Laubert or Mende

Laubert : 57km Profile : +1050m

Mende : 65km Profile : +1135m -1545m

For this final stage, you continue your crossing of the Margeride, taking the famous trail of Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle for a few kilometres of climbing in order to reach a plateau at 1400m of altitude, offering you several beautiful viewpoints of the surroundings, in the heart of the Margaride nature. Along beautiful forest tracks, then some technical paths from the Col des Trois Soeurs, you descend towards the typical village of Giraldès.

Passing along a track, the route takes you up to the Truc de Fortunio, where you will pass above 1500m altitude before a great single-track descent towards the Lac de Charpal. In the heart of the Lozère, the final part of the stage takes you to Laubert, via a succession of descents, with Mont Lozère in sight.

End of trip in Laubert or Mende.

The programme is susceptible to change depending on the availability of accommodation.

For organised groups, we adapt the level, duration, price and programme on demand.
Don't hesitate to contact us!

DURING YOUR STAY

KEY INFORMATION:

Self-guided mountain biking with luggage transfer by taxi. (For 2+ people):

You set off alone, equipped with the orientation equipment provided by us: maps with marked routes and GPS tracks to discover the circuit which has been designed by our team. The use of GPS is indispensable and allows you to orientate yourself with ease. It is possible to rent a GPS from LaRébenne, subject to availability.

Self-guided mountain biking with assistance vehicle. (From 6+ people):

The assistance vehicle will meet you at several points throughout the day's stage, and will bring you your picnic, water, your extra clothes, as well as a complete toolkit in case of any mechanical issues. As a result, you can fully enjoy your day with only a light bag. The driver will also give you advice for each stage, helping you to manage your ride and progress and will, most of the time, be able to answer any questions you may have about the local area.

Mountain biking with a mountain bike guide with luggage transfer by taxi: (From 6+ people):

Accompanied by a professional who has obtained a state-sponsored mountain biking qualification, you ride without any worries about having to follow a map. Our qualified specialist, who has an in-depth knowledge of the region, will guide you throughout the trip and, if you wish, provide you with advice to help you become an outstanding mountain biker. Thanks to their detailed knowledge of the route, they will adapt the itinerary to your group and manage the schedule and effort required throughout the day. Free from having to manage the group, your only worry will be to enjoy your mountain biking!

LUGGAGE:

You only need to carry your personal belongings necessary for a day at a time. Bags will be transported by vehicle or assistance vehicle. Please respect the luggage limit of one bag per person, **maximum weight of 13kg/bag**

ACCOMMODATION:

Double bedroom option : You will sleep in a hotel, B&B or, sometimes, in a 'gite', in a comfortable bedroom for 2 people. Sheets and towels are provided. A bathroom and toilet will be reserved for you in the majority of cases.

FOOD:

This is not the time to go on a diet! Instead, it is an opportunity to taste local cuisine and specialities. The quality of your food is paramount and we take great care to ensure a good dietary balance, sufficient calorie intake and that each meal includes local specialities.

For picnics, you have two options:

- You organise your own picnic.
- You take the proposed picnic option.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

Departure from 2 people.

BEFORE YOUR DEPARTURE

PRICES:

See the price table on our website <http://www.larebenne.com>

REGISTER:

At La Rébenne, we place great importance on having contact with our travellers. We love to talk to you about our travels and trips and would like to maintain a close relationship with you. Exchanging, sharing and enjoyment remain the key objectives for every La Rébenne trip.

To contact us and register it's easy! Call us or send us a quick email.

contact@larebenne.com Tel +33(0)5 61 65 20 93 Or +33(0)6 81 53 77 75
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Sales contract and deposit

We will send you the sales contract, the insurance form, as well as the general sales conditions and any special sales conditions. Registration is complete once we have received your signed contract with a deposit of 40% of the total cost of the stay. A receipt will then be sent to you for your records.

Payment of outstanding balance :

The total balance must be paid one month before the departure date. If you register less than one month before departure, you will pay the full cost of the trip when you register.

Validation and confirmation :

Upon receipt of the total balance, you will be sent your 'trip file'. This will include details of the meeting point, the list of required equipment as well as all necessary contact details, etc.

Formalities

- A valid official ID.
- Carte vitale
- Insurance with repatriation advised.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL:

Physical Difficulty Level : 2/3

You are in good physical condition and regularly practice mountain biking. From 47 to 65km per day with positive altitude gains of 1600m maximum.

Technical Difficulty Level : 2/3

You have control over downhill braking and the trajectory of the bike. You will ride along tracks and paths that can be both fast and technical (steep, with small obstacles).

PERIOD:

From May to October.

DEPARTURE AND MEETING POINT:

Depart from Clermont-Ferrand.

How to get there:

By car : A75 motorway

By train: Clermont-Ferrand SNCF train station.

By plane : Clermont-Ferrand Auvergne Airport

THE PRICE INCLUDES :

- Reservation of accommodation
- Digital TopoGuide
- Half-board starting from dinner on Day 1 and until breakfast on Day 6
- Daily luggage transfer
- With the option with assistance vehicle: 1 vehicle + driver to assist the group for the duration of the trip
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THE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Accommodation for the night before departure
- Drinks
- Picnics
- Personal expenses
- Personal mountain biking equipment (helmet, gloves)
- Mountain bikes
- Transport to the meeting point
- Return transfer
- Insurance

OPTIONS :

- Return transfer to Clermont-Ferrand.
- Extra accommodation for the night before or after the trip
- Single bedroom at an additional cost.
- Picnic option

See prices on our website or contact us.

INSURANCE:

In accordance with the regulations of our profession, La Rébenne is insured for Professional Civil Liability. However, each participant must hold an individual liability policy as well as individual multi-risk coverage in order to protect themselves from incidents or accidents that may occur before or during the hike or trip.

Any additional insurance shall be invoiced on an individual basis and must be purchased on the day you register for the trip.

We offer 2 options - Multi-risk and Cancellation

Package no. 1 - Multi-risk: full guarantee in the case of cancellation, loss of luggage, repatriation assistance, medical expenses, interruption of stay. Coverage provided by APRIL Voyages.

Package no. 2 - Cancellation: guarantee only in the case of an impediment prior to departure. Coverage provided by APRIL Voyages.

Please refer to the price list on our website, practical information - insurance (infos pratique - assurances): <http://www.larebenne.com/infos-pratiques/assurances.html>

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RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT (non-exhaustive list):

As good preparation is synonymous with a successful trip, here are a few tips regarding equipment you should take to ensure your trip goes as smoothly as possible.

BIKE

In order to avoid your trip turning into a lesson in bike mechanics, it is strongly advised that you thoroughly service your bike before hitting the road:

- >A well set-up mountain bike computer
 - >The tyres are well inflated and in good condition
 - >The cables and chain are in good condition
 - >Transmission elements are clean and oiled
 - >There aren't any leaks around the suspension
 - >The wheels are well attached
 - >The brakes are in a good state (concerning wear and any leaks)
 - >The headset and steering tube have been checked.
- And remember, anomalies are easier to spot on a clean bike!

EQUIPMENT FOR REPAIRS:

To avoid any unforeseen mechanical problems, it is always better to be well-prepared and carry the basics with you:

- >3 spare inner tubes (anti-puncture tubes are strongly advised, or anti-puncture strips)
- > A pump
- > Tyre levers
- >A tube repair kit consisting of patches and glue
- > A multi-tool
- > Small pliers
- > A spare tyre
- >A piece of tyre
- > A chain tool

In addition to that, you can put together your own repair kit and we will transfer it along with your larger luggage. You should include:

- > Brake cables (front and back)
- > Cable covers
- > spare spokes
- > Quick release seat post
- > Derailleur cable
- > A derailleur hanger
- > Chain oil
- > A rag

EQUIPMENT

As we say in France, "l'habit ne fait pas le moine" (the tunic doesn't make the monk), and wearing tight shorts won't turn you into a biking champion. However, a minimum of specialist mountain biking equipment is necessary to ensure you stay comfortable on the pedals:

- >A mountain bike helmet (obligatory!)
- >Mountain bike gloves
- >Glasses/sunglasses
- >Shoes adapted to mountain biking (without insoles that slip)
- >Cycle shorts or leggings
- >Breathable t-shirt (avoid cotton)

DAILY BACKPACK

As it can be uncomfortable to carry a backpack which is too heavy, think carefully about what to include:

- > A CamelBak and/or a bike water bottle (3L/day/person minimum)
- > 'Race food' (energy bars, dried fruit etc.)
- > Basic equipment for repairs to your mountain bike(see above)
- > A windbreaker (waterproof)
- > Picnic
- > A head torch in the bike bag
- > A knife
- > Suncream (and lip protection)
- > Toilet paper and a lighter
- > A first aid kit
- > Two new (or rechargeable) LR6 batteries for each day (for the GPS)
- > Your mobile phone
- > A compass for self-guided trips, an altimeter (optional)
- > A map holder for self-guided trips (to fix on the bike))

PICNIC

To avoid unnecessary waste at picnic time, please carry:

- > An airtight and waterproof plastic lunchbox, with a section for salad and with your initials marked on both the lid and box, and a large elastic band.
- > Cutlery (fork, folding knife, spoon).

LUGGAGE

Your luggage will be transferred for you during your trip and will be waiting for you at your accommodation each night. In order to make sure you do not forget something important...:

- >A sleeping bag (for trips in 'gites')
- >Changes of clothes
- >A light pair of shoes for the evenings
- >A big jumper or fleece jacket
- >A toilet bag and towel

PHARMACY

On all accompanied stays, the guide will carry a first aid kit. However, it is indispensable to carry some personal medical supplies. Here is a list of some basic supplies to carry with you:

- >Insect repellent
- >Disinfectant and gauze
- >Tape
- >Protective cream for the buttocks
- >Personal medications
- >Water purification tablets
- >A survival blanket

A more complete medical kit should be compiled with the advice of your doctor.

AFTER YOUR STAY

Let us know what you think! And to make sure that these fond memories of your trip live on, we'd be delighted to receive any photos, videos, montages or comments you may have made during your tour.

CONTACT

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