

The Route of Stevenson by mountain bike From Puy-en-Velay to Saint-Jean-du-Gard

6 days, 5 nights, 5 days of biking
In double bedroom or 'gite'

Physical Difficulty Level 2/3
Technical Level 2/3



What if your mountain bike could replace Modestine, Robert Louis Stevenson's famous donkey?

From Le-Puy-en-Velay to Saint-Jean-du-Gard, this mountain bike route follows in the footsteps of Robert-Louis Stevenson. It takes you over the volcanic hills of the Velay, the rugged highlands of the legendary Gévaudan, Mont Lozère and then the crests and valleys of the Cévenne des Camisards.

A 250km mountain biking adventure which alternates between valleys, volcanic plateaus and forests, crossing villages filled with history, before taking some height and passing over the tops of the Goulet, Mont Lozère and the Bougès Massif.

Finally, after some physically demanding climbs and pleasant descents, you arrive in Saint-Jean-du-Gard, just as Stevenson and Modestine did in 1878.

KEY POINTS :

- A historical and mythical route, following in the footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson.
- Diverse landscapes: volcanic plateaus, highlands, the Lozère, the Cévennes...

PROGRAMME

Day 1 : Arrival in Puy-en-Velay

In the afternoon, you arrive in Puy-en-Velay, the first step for Robert Louis Stevenson in 1878, before he set off for Monastier-sur-Gaveille.

Before heading to your accommodation, let yourself be transported in this story-filled town with a stroll through the medieval streets in the old centre. Don't miss a visit to the cathedral with its magnificent Roman cloister, the Statue of the Black Virgin of Puy, and St Michel chapel, built atop an 80m rocky peak.

Night in Puy-en-Velay.

Day 2 : From Puy-en-Velay to Bouchet-Saint-Nicolas

41km Alt: +1430m

For your first stage, you will climb up to the Plateau du Pays Vellave, a volcanic platform at around 1000m altitude, from where you can enjoy wide views across the Puy-en-Velay basin. Next, you head south, taking on a beautiful descent towards the Rivers Loire and Coubron, before climbing back up to the plateau towards Le-Monastier-sur-Gazeille, the true starting point of Robert Louis Stevenson and his donkey Modestine's adventure, in September 1878. Following the Gazelle Valley, you reach the volcanic plateau once again. Then a very technical and narrow descent to Goudet before a slight portage in the following climb. You then cross through meadows to arrive in Bouchet-Saint-Nicolas.

Night in Bouchet-Saint-Nicolas.

Day 3 : From Bouchet-Saint-Nicolas to Laveyrune

Level 2 : 47km Alt+820m

Level 3 : 59km Alt+1180m

For this second stage, you finish your crossing of Velay to arrive in Gévaudan. Pass by Pradelles, a medieval village which has been officially named as one of the most beautiful villages in France, and Langogne, the entry point into the territory of the Beast of Gévaudan, which terrorised inhabitants for 100 years. Once you have arrived in Luc, which is home to one of the most significant châteaux from the Middle-Ages, you have another climb before descending once more, into the forest, towards Laveyrune.

Night in Laveyrune in a 'gite' (no double bedrooms on this day).

Day 4 : From Laveyrune to Bleymard, via Notre Dame des Neiges

43km Alt: +1270m

Today, starting from Laveyrune, you will pass over the summit of Espervelouze (1225m), the Notre-Dame-des-Neiges (where Stevenson spent three days), the Mourade (1310m), the Gardille Forest and Chasseradès, before a climb towards the hilltops of Goulet from where you will be lead on to Bleymard, at the foot of Mont Lozère.

This stage is physically demanding, with several steep but short climbs (Mourade and Goulet).

Night in Bleymard.

Day 5 : From Bleymard to Florac

48km Alt: +1170m

It's the arrival in the mountains ! Today you will take a little more altitude as you arrive in the Cévennes by climbing Mont Lozère through forests, moors and grassy fields. A technical descent leads you to Pont-de-Montvert, an iconic place for the Camisards movement in 1702.

You then cross the River Tarn before a physical climb up to the Bougès Massif (1421m) and, from there, a fast descent to arrive at the end of the stage in Florac.

Night in Florac.

Day 6 : From Florac to Saint-Jean-du-Gard

54km Alt: +1285m

Follow the old railway through the Moment Valley towards St Julien d'Arpaon and Cassagnas. Via the Fontmort Forest and the Col de la Pierre Plantée, you cross the Cévennes National Park. Then, through the Gardon Valley and a few climbs up fast forest tracks to arrive at Saint-Etienne-Vallée-Française.

Further on, from the Col Saint-Pierre, you reach Saint-Jean-du-Gard via a final descent which is both very steep and narrow. You can carry your bike if necessary or this section can be avoided completely.

This final stage is very pretty, with several engaging sections with fast and technical descents.

Saint-Jean-du-Gard marks the end of your mountain bike trip, following in the footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson.

End of trip, option of a return transfer.

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.

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 carry what is needed for the day and your picnic. Luggage will be transported by vehicle (or by the assistance vehicle).

1 bag/person and limited to 13kg/bag.

Possibility to take an extra bag

ACCOMMODATION:

- **Double bedroom option :** a double or triple room in a 'gite', B&B or hotel, with private toilet and bathroom most of the time. On certain stages, and subject to availability, you may be offered sanitary facilities on the landing, either private or shared with other bedrooms. We will keep you informed on this point. Sheets and towels are provided. One night in Laveyrune in a dormitory in a 'gite' (no double bedrooms on this stage).
- **Gite option:** you stay in basic accommodation, most often in a dormitory, to truly experience Robert Louis Stevenson's adventure. One night in a hotel in Florac. **Sheets and towels are not provided (don't forget to pack them in your luggage).**

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.

Picnics are not included.

Option of 5 picnics

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

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 Tél +33(0)5 61 65 20 93 Ou +33(0)6 81 53 77 75

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.
- We recommend travel insurance with repatriation included.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL:

The route is, in general, fast with varied technicality and some parts on single track roads.

Physical Difficulty Level : 2/3

You are in good physical condition and regularly practice mountain biking. Stages vary from 41 to 55km per day, with accumulated positive altitude gains of 1430m 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 sometimes fast and sometimes technical (steep, with small obstacles).

PERIOD :

From April to October.

DEPARTURE:

Depart from Puy-en-Velay.

How to get there:

By car: National Route 88 or 102.

By train : Puy-en-Velay SNCF train station.

By plane : Le Puy-Loude Airport then train to Puy-en-Velay.

THE PRICE INCLUDES :

- Accommodation and reservations
- Electronic GPS tracks (in .gpx format)
- Half-board and picnics starting from dinner on Day 1 to the picnic on Day 6.
- Daily luggage transfers, maximum of 13kg/bag.

THE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Drinks,
- Picnics
- Personal expenses
- Personal mountain biking equipment (helmet, gloves)
- Mountain bikes
- Transport to the meeting point
- Insurance
- Return transfer to the departure point
- CGPS (if requested) and GPS holder

OPTIONS :

- Return transfer to Puy-en-Velay
- Picnics for the days of mountain biking
- Tailor-made programme of stages chosen by you
- Extra accommodation for the night before or after the trip
- Single bedroom at an additional cost.

See prices on our website or ask 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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N° SIRET : 502 157 076 00014 NIF FR 33502157076 APE:7911Z

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:

- > Carefully check that the chainrings and number of teeth are suitably adapted to both the route and you
- > A well set-up 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
- > The wheels are well attached
- > The brakes are in a good state (concerning wear)
- > The headset and steerer 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)

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- > '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 your 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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