



FROM THE MEDIEVAL CITY TO THE MARSHES Guérande / La Turballe / Saint-Lyphard

Itinerary 1: **13 km** **1 hour**

Itinerary 2: **10 km** **50 min**

Departure: Place du Marché au Bois - Guérande

Arrival itinerary 1: Pointe de Ben Bron, La Turballe

Arrival itinerary 2: Port de Bréca, Saint-Lyphard

Characteristics:

- Itinerary on quiet roads and cycle paths
- CAP à Vélo and Vélocéan routes

Guérande Tourist Office (44350)
1 place du Marché au Bois - BP 45304
Tel. +33 (0)2 40 24 34 44 -
contact@labaule-guerande.com
www.labaule-guerande.com/guerande.html

La Turballe Tourist Office (44420)
Place Charles-de-Gaulle Tel. +33 (0)2 40 24 34 44 -
contact@labaule-guerande.com
www.labaule-guerande.com/la-turballe.html

Brière Tourist Office - Saint-Lyphard (44410)
Village of Kerhinet - Tel. +33 (0)2 40 24 34 44
contact@labaule-guerande.com - www.labaule-guerande.com/le-parc-naturel-regional-de-briere.html



BIKE RENTAL COMPANIES

- **Tourist Office** - 1 place du Marché au Bois - Guérande
Tel. +33 (0)2 40 24 34 44 - From 01/04 to 30/09
- **Tourist Office** - Village of Kerhinet - Saint-Lyphard -
Tel. +33 (0)2 40 24 34 44

Guérande is the central point here, connecting you to one or to both marshes! Guérande, classified as a 'Town of Art and History', is well worth a visit: you can walk along its ramparts, a masterpiece of medieval architecture, and take a stroll through the cobbled streets as you admire the beauty of the historic buildings all around you. Which marsh will you choose to explore? On one side, the salt marshes, with multiple panoramic views, and at the end, the magnificent beach of Pen Bron. On the other, a peaceful country setting, leading to the enchanting Brière marshes. Two unmissable itineraries, that are representative of two powerful features of the Peninsula.

TO SEE ON THE WAY...

• **The collegiate church of Saint Aubin**

Place Saint-Aubin - Guérande - Tel. +33 (0)2 40 24 34 44
contact@labaule-guerande.com - www.labaule-guerande.com/guerande.html
To better understand the strategic position of the town of Guérande in the Middle Ages, the guided tour 'Panorama sur Guérande et les marais' offers you access to the balconies of the collegiate church by climbing the spiral staircase of the western tower and discovering a panoramic view of Guérande town centre within the walls and the salt marshes Duration: 30 min. Tour organised by Guérande Tourist Office, regularly throughout the year. For more information, please call: +33 (0)2 40 24 34 44

• **The ramparts of Guérande and the Porte Saint-Michel**

Place Saint-Jean - Guérande - Tel. +33 (0)2 28 55 05 05
www.ville-guerande.fr - patrimoine.musee@ville-guerande.fr
Historical Monument dating from the mid 15th century, the Porte Saint-Michel is the main entrance to the fortified town of Guérande. From April to October, the logis-châtelet with its two towers houses a temporary exhibition organised by the heritage department of the town of Guérande. Intramural access, Place Saint-Jean. Opening period: all year round



• **The Guérande heritage discovery trail**

From the entrance gates to the churches, from the market halls to the town houses, you can find out everything you need to know about the history of Guérande on the information panels. Free access. For those who do not have the time to stop for an in-depth tour, they can still learn about the monuments and significant events that have shaped the medieval city. Guided tours from April to October, ask at the Guérande Tourist Office.

• **Maison du Patrimoine de Piriac**

3 place Henri Vignoboul - Tel: +33 (0)2 40 15 59 71
www.patrimoinepiriac.fr - patrimoinepiriac@gmail.com
Discover the history and heritage of Piriac-sur-Mer, thanks to the permanent exhibition dedicated to the 1950s, and a focus on schoolchildren from the 1900s to the present day. A journey into the past of this village with granite houses, which has become a tourist resort and marina over the years. Each year, there are also temporary exhibitions and film showings. Opening period: April to September - please enquire for opening times.

CONTINUE ON YOUR WAY...

- **Itinerary n°8** "The soul of the fishermen"
- **Itinerary n°10** "From the Salt to the Sea"
- **Itinerary n°12** "From the Bay to the Briere"

FIND OUT MORE...

• **The medieval town of Guérande**

Even today, the name Guérande is automatically associated with salt. It was thanks to this precious commodity that the town experienced its golden age at the end of the Middle Ages. Guérande benefits from a strategic location: as well as overlooking the production basins, it also boasts open access to the sea and is close to two river routes. It acquired a significant maritime fleet and flourished thanks to the salt and wine trade. Guérande also became the diplomatic capital of the duchy after the victory of Jean de Montfort in the War of the Breton Succession (1341-1381). The town is surrounded by ramparts flanked by six towers and with four entrances. Within the city walls, at the crossroads, stands the collegiate church of Saint Aubin. There is a wide range of shops and numerous private mansions around the square bearing the same name and along the shopping streets such as the Rue Saint-Michel. The increasing sand deposits in the port from the 16th century led to the decline of commercial activity in favour of Le Croisic or Batz-sur-Mer. The disappearance of the vineyard and the removal of the canons during the Revolution further weakened the town. When Balzac discovered the town, he described it as 'une ville à part' (a self-contained town): "Thrown to the end of the continent, Guérande leads nowhere, and nobody goes there. Happy to be ignored, the town only thinks about itself". He saw the town as a "magnificent jewel of feudalism, proudly set to command the links between the sea and the dunes" (...), and whose "fortifications seem to have been completed only yesterday". It is perhaps to this episode in its history that Guérande owes its current state of preservation, which has earned the town the "Town of Art and History" label.



• **The salt marshes of Guérande**

Known throughout the world and particularly in Japan, Guérande 'fleur de sel' is an iconic product. Shaped by man, the salt marshes form a mosaic of shapes and colours that are entirely dependent on the seasons. Guided by the salt worker, the production of 'fleur de sel' and then coarse salt is a clever and subtle alchemy that combines sea water with the sun and the wind. Over the centuries, salt, its harvesting and trade have shaped not only the landscape but also the architecture of the salt-making villages, ports and fortified squares. Today, the Guérande peninsula is made up of nearly 2,000 hectares of marshland. They are divided into two salt production basins:

- the Batz-Guérande basin, which covers nearly 1,650 hectares, spread over the communes of Batz-sur-Mer, Guérande, La Turballe, Le Croisic and Le Pouliguen, with the Le Croisic strait flowing through;
- the Mès basin covering approximately 350 hectares in the communes of Saint-Molf, Assérac and Mesquer, with the Mesquer strait flowing through.

 It is from this very special trade that the town of Guérande was named, or 'Gwenrann', meaning 'Pays blanc' in Breton. In 1996, the Guérande salt marshes were awarded the French 'Site Remarquable du Goût' (Place of remarkable taste) label, which showcases the significant heritage value in terms of agriculture, culture, environment and gastronomy.

• **The Brière marshes**

Brière Regional Nature Park <http://www.parc-naturel-briere.com/fr/>

"It was indeed her: ten thousand hectares of silence and nakedness, an immense blue lotus blooming in the midst of the circus of the atmosphere."

So said Alphonse de Chateaubriant when he discovered the Briere for the first time.

The Brière marshes cover 7000 hectares, making this the second largest marshland in France, just behind the Camargue. It is made up of a mosaic of freshwater canals, nearly 140 kilometres long, of water bodies, reed beds and meadows, with a remarkable biodiversity and a major interest for the wintering and reproduction of birds. As such, it is protected by various networks (Natura 2000, Ramsar, etc.), and is part of the Brière Regional Nature Park, and was even behind the creation of the park.

To explore the marsh and experience the emotions described by Chateaubriant, we recommend a ride on a barge, a traditional marsh boat guided along using a pole. The Brière Regional Nature Park has a list of recommended guides.



The Brière marshes from the sky



The Pen-Bron Dunes is one of the Natura 2000 sites

• **What is Natura 2000?**

Initiated by the European Union, Natura 2000 is a network of European sites whose objective is to halt the loss of biodiversity. The Natura 2000 network comprises sites designated by the States according to two directives:

- the Birds Directive, signed in 1979, aims to protect certain remarkable bird species and their habitats (in France, 371 sites covering approximately 46,000 km²);
- the Habitat Directive, signed in 1992, aims to protect remarkable natural environments (lagoons, moors, peat bogs, woodlands) and certain animal and plant species (in France, 1,334 sites covering approximately 52,000 km²). There are six Natura 2000 sites on the Guérande peninsula: two in the Guérande basin, two in the Mès basin and two in Grande-Brière.



Itinerary 1 13km 1 h Itinerary 2 10km 50 min

