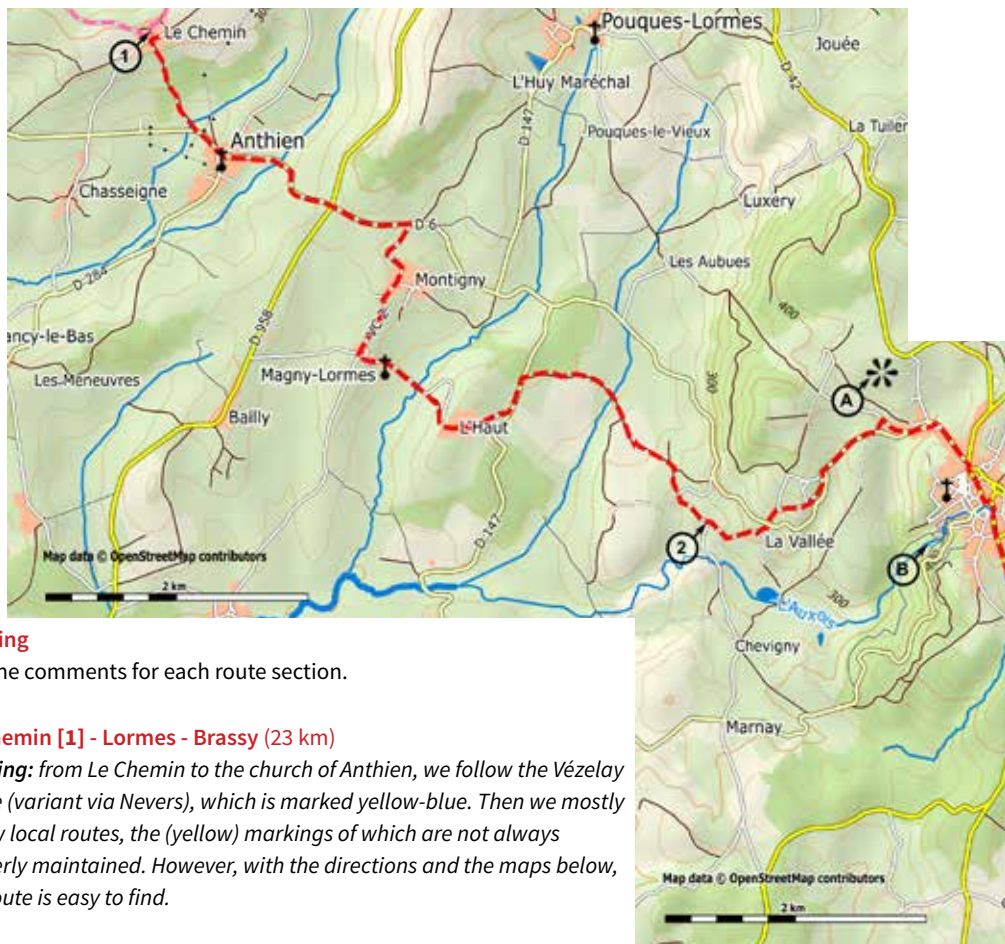


# Tour de Vézelay - EAST - 73 km

From the hamlet of Le Chemin (municipality of Anthien) you can well see the hills of the Morvan. That is the next goal. First, the route goes to Lormes, which is already a lot higher. From there you walk through the landscape that is so typical of the Morvan: forests, lakes, small-scale meadows and fields, bordered by hedges, rows of trees, and stone walls.

Halfway between Brassy and Chastellux, the route rejoins the Cure, to follow it - sometimes at a greater distance, sometimes very close - downstream, to the Saint-Père campsite.



## Marking

See the comments for each route section.

### Le Chemin [1] - Lormes - Brassy (23 km)

*Marking:* from Le Chemin to the church of Anthien, we follow the Vézelay Route (variant via Nevers), which is marked yellow-blue. Then we mostly follow local routes, the (yellow) markings of which are not always properly maintained. However, with the directions and the maps below, the route is easy to find.

At the wayside cross of Le Chemin: descend via a grassy path, to an asphalt road (the D6). Follow the D6 to the left, to the church of **Anthien**. Pass the church on the left and keep following the D6, direction Lormes. (*The Vézelay Route turns right at the church.*)

At the junction with the D958: continue straight on, still following the D6, direction Lormes, first up again, then down. Take the first road to the right (the VC2), to Montigny.

*Marking:* From here, follow the yellow markings of a local route until just before La Vallée.

In **Montigny**: go straight on, to Magny-Lormes.

In **Magny-Lormes** (0.6 km past Montigny), at the junction near the 'Mairie': turn left, down. Just past the stream: leave the asphalt to the right and walk up a dirt road. Almost at the top: arrive again on the asphalt road. Turn right, to the hamlet of l'Haut.

Cross **l'Haut** and descend to the right, to the D147. Follow the D147 to the left, up, to a forest edge (right). Turn right there, onto an unpaved road, descending, first along the edge of the forest (left), then through meadows. At the lowest point is a stream. Cross it and walk up, to an asphalt road, near a few houses. Turn right.

*Marking:* you leave the yellow marked local route, which turns left.

Shortly after, at a T-junction (with a well, left): turn left. Keep following this road. Ignore the side road (right) opposite a gîte [2]. Follow the road up, to the village of **La Vallée**. At the first traffic sign (priority, 'stop' 20 m): turn left, steeply up, to the D6. Cross straight on (watch out!) and continue, still ascending. Ignore two roads from the left. Shortly after the road starts to descend: arrive on the D6 again. Follow the D6 to the left, until 50 m before the sign '**Lormes**'.

Leave the D6 and turn half left, onto an unpaved road. A little further: arrive on an asphalt road (Rou-  
te de Richateau). Follow this to the right, again to the D6. Follow the D6 to the left.

**Lormes.** The town is located on the edge of the Morvan, a granite low mountain range. The valley of the Yonne, characterized in part by limestone, is now behind us. You can experience this transition with an 'ascent' of Mont Justice (470 m) [A] and / or a descent in the Gorges de Narvau [B].

[A] **Mont Justice** (there and back: 1.5 km, height difference: 65 m): follow the D6 for another 90 m, until the first road on the left. From that corner: follow the (three) signs 'La Justice' to the viewpoint. On the way back, at the said corner: follow the D6 to the left. After about 90 m, the main itinerary also joins the D6

A little further on: turn half right, onto a small road, first down, then up, to the D6 again. Follow the D6 to the right and keep following it, up, until a stop sign, next to the Office de Tourisme (opposite the hotel restaurant Perreau). Turn right, then straight on. Continue via Rue Paul Barreau.



**[B] Gorges de Narvau** (waterfall; there and back: 1.5 km, height difference: 50 m): turn right at the end of Rue Paul Barreau (Route de Narvau, sign 'Quartier des Moulins'). After more than 100 m: follow the same sign to the right (Rue des Moulins, dead end). Seven mills used to run here, powered by the small Auxois river. At the end of the road: turn right onto a path (sign 'Gorges de Narvau'). At a T-junction, near the sign 'Quartier des moulins' (pointing back): turn left, descending. At the next fork, with three yellow signs: turn left to the waterfall ('cascade') or visit it at the end of the 'Tour des Gorges' (about 1 km). Return the same way.

At the end of Rue Paul Barreau: turn left, towards the town hall ('Hôtel de Ville'). Turn right there (Rue du Pont National). Continue to follow this Rue and exit Lormes via a long straight road (the D944, direction Château-Chinon). Just before L'Étang du Goulot: turn left, towards the campsite.

**Étang du Goulot.** This lake, like many lakes in the Morvan, was created in connection with firewood rafting. (See p. 14.) The lake feeds the small Auxois river, which flows into the Yonne. You can swim in the lake. Around it are picnic spots.

**Tacot du Morvan.** Until the 20th century the railway lines did not go beyond the edges of the Morvan. Between 1901 and 1908 a narrow-gauge railway ('Tacot') was built through the northern Morvan, from Corbigny via Lormes to Saulieu, for the transport of passengers and goods. Due to increasing competition from transport via an ever-better road network, the railway was closed in 1939. The former Lormes station now houses the reception and restaurant of the camping.

**Marking:** the local walking route Lormes - Brassy is marked yellow (sometimes: orange-brown). The marking is mostly applied a long time ago and not always very frequent. However, with the directions and the maps below, the route is easy to find. The **[capital letters]** in the directions refer to the relevant places on the maps.

**[C]** Lormes campsite: follow the asphalt road past the campsite (right). At the end: turn right, onto a dirt road.

**[D]** Near a low wall of stacked stones: turn right, descending. A little further: cross a stream, via a small stone bridge. Then up again. Shortly afterwards the path ends at a wider road. Follow that road to the left.

Near a small lake (Étang du Moulin) and some houses: turn right. (On the side of the house to the left, you see the paddle wheel of the mill ('moulin')). A little further: keep left. After about 200 m: ignore a small road to the left. After about 150 m:



**[E]** Turn left, up considerably, in a straight line. After about 500 m, the road descends, then ascends again. (Just before: ignore a road to the left). After about 500 m: cross a larger, semi-paved road, still going straight on and up. After more than 100 m, descending: arrive again on the road you just crossed and follow it to the left. After about 350 m:

**[F]** at a junction: turn right, descending. (Attention: another yellow marked route turns left here). Ignore a small, steeply descending road to the right. After 300 m, at a fork: follow the dirt road to the right, still descending. (Some yellow markings, plus markings of a mountain bike route (VTT). Along the way: views to the right.)

At the hamlet of **Les Gaux**: turn left immediately after the first house (left). At a junction near telephone poles and a 'Station Sismique': continue straight on, still descending.

**[G]** Keep right. Just past the stream: go up, to the right. Note: follow the small, hollow road.

At a fork, near a sign 'attention chiens BREBIS': turn sharply left, up. Shortly afterwards, at the end of the pasture (right) **[3]**: turn sharply right.

A little further: turn right again. (The same pasture is still on the right; again, marking for VTT routes.) Descend further, to the D17. Cross it (watch out!) and continue on the other side.

**[H] Watershed.** After about 50 m you walk underneath the dyke of the Étang de l'Ormée. On our route, this is the last lake in the Yonne drainage basin. The next lake, l'Étang des Vernois, is in the drainage basin of the Cure.

A little further, at a yellow sign 'Gâcogne - alt. 500 m': straight on. (The VTT route turns right here.) Cross the D17 again. Continue on the other side and keep right. At a sign 'Brassy-Les-Vernois': fork right, descending. Shortly after: ignore a path to the right. After about 300 m, descending: turn left and walk along the lake (Étang des Vernois) and continue in the same direction, up. (On the way: occasional marking, yellow and/or orange).

After about 750 m, past a large plot where the forest has been cut (left, views), at a junction: keep half right and continue, about 1,2 km, more or less straight, to **Rivières**.

Here the road is asphalted. At the end: arrive on another asphalt road and follow it to the left. After about 50 m: turn half right, onto a semi-paved road. (Sign 'No cars and motorcycles'.) After about 200 m: ignore roads to the right and left and continue, still up slightly, then descending. At a fork: do not descend further, but take the small road to the left, up. Further on the road descends to the Chalaux river (picnic area). Cross it and ascend.



[I] At the first junction past the river: turn half left, into a forest, still up, then descending.

Arrive on an asphalt road: turn right and enter **Brassy**. (Or turn left, to the campsite.) After 250 m: arrive on the D171 (not signposted as such). Turn right and descend further to the village center (shops, hotel, etc.). Or turn left, up, to continue the route. At the junction with the D6: cross straight on (slightly to the right), onto a paved road and continue following the markings (see below).

### **Brassy - Mazignien Coutolles [4] - (nearby) Chastellux (24 km)**

**Marking:** from Brassy to the connection to the GR13 (point [L] on the map concerned) we follow two converging routes:

- the Tour du Morvan, which is marked yellow-red, and
  - the Chemins Pèlerins, marked by signs as shown on the right.
- On the way, the two markings complement each other.



From point [L] we follow the GR13, which is marked red-white.

In fact, these markings are enough to find your way, even without the maps.

That is why below you will only find a few directions, indicated with a **[capital letter]**, which refers to the spot on the corresponding map. (Other **[capital letters]** provide background information about a place.)

Note: in particular until point [L] the route goes through large forests. When trees are felled, the marking sometimes disappears too.

**Lacs de Chaumeçon et du Crescent.** In 1910 Paris is inundated by major floods. It is then decided to build large dams in the Seine and its tributaries. These dams should not only prevent new floods, but also ensure a minimum water level of the Seine in summer, provide drinking water for Paris, and produce electricity. The Lac du Crescent (1929-1932, fed by the Chalaux and the Cure) and the Lac de Chaumeçon (1931-1933, fed by the Chalaux) are part of these large water works.

[4] **Mazignien Coutolles:** Before the hamlet there is a sign (left), which refers to the accident mentioned below [J]. Past the hamlet there is a picnic table, with a water tap ('eau potable') across the road.

[J] **Drop zone 'Peinture'.** The Morvan is a rugged, wooded area. During the Second World War it provided therefore a good shelter for refugees and resistance fighters. During the Allied landings in Normandy (June 1944) some 30 resistance groups ('Maquis') were active. Some of these were supported by the SAS (Special Air Service), a special unit of the British Army. Together they would liberate the area, but the toll was high. Also, for the civilian population, who suffered under German retaliatory measures.

Near Mazigny there was a zone (code name 'Peinture') where weapons and supplies were regularly dropped, for the Maquis Camille and the SAS. On July 18, 1944 things went terribly wrong: two planes collided with each other. The 15 crew members were killed. 500 m from our route is a small monument. [J] At a fork with the sign 'Maquis Camille' (which does not refer to the monument): straight on, via the D 210 (not indicated as such). The monument is on the left side of the road.

[K] **Tombeau du roi Viking.** Some 1,100 years earlier, another battle is said to have been waged near here, against the Normans, who carried out their raids via the Yonne, the Cure and other rivers. The Normans were defeated and one of their chiefs is said to have been buried near a special rock formation,



*which is still called 'Le tombeau du roi Viking' (the tomb of the Viking king). (Much later this site served as a quarry. You can still see a worked, but broken, stone slab.)*

*Were these the same raids that eventually led to the decision to move the Abbey of Saint-Père to a safer place, now called 'Vézelay'?*

*You will find the Tombeau [K] a little to the left of the sharp bend where you leave the wide forest road, to descend steeply via a much narrower path to La Chaume-aux-Renards [L].*

**[L]** Connection to the Chemin d'Assise and the pilgrimage route between Vézelay and Le Puy-en-Velay (here via the GR13), near the gîte La Chaume-aux-Renards.

**Marking:** from here follow the red-white marking of the GR13.

**[M]** Connection to the Chemin des Abbayes (Way of the Abbeys, a pilgrimage route).



### [N] Marigny-l'Église

**Marking:** just in front of the church, the Chemins Pèlerins and the GR13 split, to reunite shortly afterwards. Continue to Pont de Queuzon, across Lake Crescent [5], and then on.

**[O] Marking:** here the GR13 turns left, while the Tour de Morvan and (an eastern variant of) the Chemins Pèlerins keep right. Follow the red-white marking of the GR13.

**[P]** Chastellux castle.

**Château de Chastellux.** The castle (11th century) is built on the left flank of the Cure valley, on an old Roman road. It can be visited. The tours are given by the owner or another member of the family who has owned the castle for over 1000 years.

To the castle (there and back: 3 km, height difference: 75 m): turn right. (Leave the GR 654, which turns left, to [Q], at about 100 m.) After 50 m: fork left, following the sign 'château' (castle). Return the same way.

**[Q]** A war memorial. Opposite is a sign 'Gîte d'étape, 500 m'.

### (Nearby) Chastellux – camping Saint-Père (25 km)

**Marking:** keep following the red-white marking of the GR13 to Pierre-Perthuis. Then we follow the Vézelay Route (variant via Nevers) to the Saint-Père campsite. As we follow this pilgrimage route in the opposite

direction, we cannot use the marking. (Unlike GR's, which are marked in two directions.) However, with the directions and maps below, the route is easy to find.

**[R] Abbaye Saint-Martin.** *On the other side of the Cure, in a loop of the river, once stood the Benedictine Abbey of Saint Martin (10th or 12th century). From the bridge over the Cure, you see a round tower. This is one of the few remains of the abbey.*

**[S] Notre Dame de La Lumière.** *The statue of Our Lady of the Light (1951), on a viewpoint above the Cure, symbolizes a new era. Once the river transported firewood for Paris, now it produces electricity. Notre Dame is its patron saint, and of industry and cinemas.*

*To the statue (back and forth: 200 m, height difference: 30 m): about 400 m after the small bridge over the Cure [R], at a 'Croix de Mission' (1847), the GR turns left, onto an unpaved road. Opposite, a path goes up to Notre Dame (the start is marked by a red and white cross).*

*Alternative: a viewpoint on the GR, shortly after the said turn off.*

**[T] Barrage de Malassis.** *This dam was built in the same period as the dams of the Lacs de Chaumeçon et du Crescent (see p. 30.) It is the smallest dam in this area.*

**[U] Moulin de Gingon.** *About 1.8 km after the Malassis dam you pass the remains of a mill. A mill is mentioned on this site as early as the twelfth century.*

About 1 km after the Moulin de Gingon: cross a small stone bridge (1770) over the Cure. (On the right you see the 'new', large bridge (1874) over the Cure, which you will cross later.)

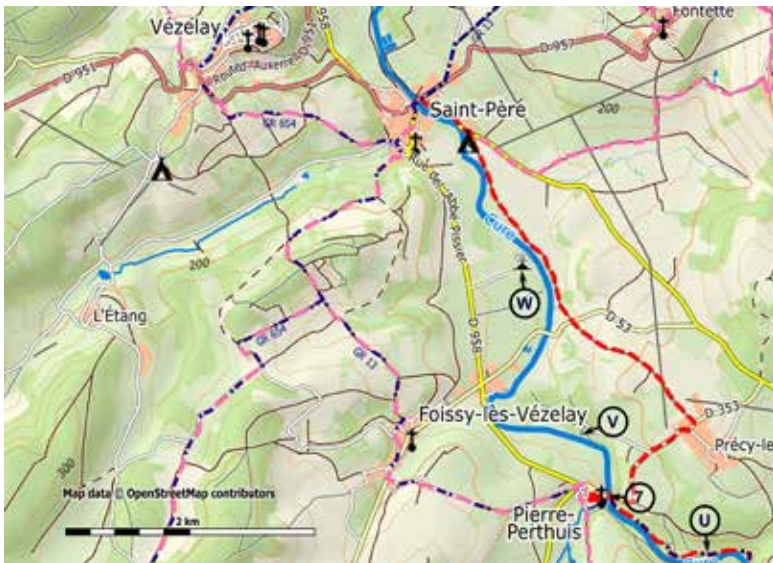
Immediately afterwards: follow a steep path to the right, up, to the D353 [7]. Once there, you will see a large house with two round towers (left), and the village of **Pierre-Perthuis**.

**Château de Pierre-Perthuis.** *In fact, you just entered the former castle. (Just before the house mentioned was the south castle wall.)*

*The castle (10th century) was built on the edge of a gorge of the Cure. It has been under siege sixteen times and was eventually largely destroyed during the Wars of Religion (late 16th century). The D353 now runs right through it. If you follow the D353 to the left for a short while, you will see the remains of the castle gate on*







*both sides of the road. (And a main building, right.) The village church was originally the castle's chapel. The house with the round towers was built shortly after the castle's destruction, using stones from the ruins.*

**[7]** Leave the GR13 and follow the D353 to the right (and keep following it until shortly after the village of Précý le Mout.) A little further: cross the large bridge over the Cure (*viewpoint, at the bottom right you*

can see the small bridge you just crossed). After about 200 m, a local walking route joins our route from the right.



**Marking:** follow the yellow markings of this local route to Précý le Moul't and then to the Saint-Père campsite.

**[V] La Roche Percée** is a rock formation in the shape of an arch, about 20 m above the Cure. The turn off to 'La Roche Percée' is about 700 m after the large bridge of Pierre-Perthuis and is indicated by two signs. Then it is about 600 m (picnic area). Return the same way.

In **Précý le Moul't**, at a fork (in the middle: trees and a bench): keep following the D353, direction Avallon. After more than 50 m: turn left, onto an unpaved side road and keep following it, through the fields. The road descends almost all the time, to the D53, at about 1.4 km. (*On the way: views to Saint-Père and Vézelay.*) Cross the D53 and continue straight on, again via an unpaved road. (*Left, more or less close: the river Cure.*) After about 1.8 km: arrive at the campsite of Saint-Père, near the D36.

**[W] Fontaines Salées.** On the other side of the Cure are the 'Fontaines Salées'. The name comes from the saltwater sources that were drawn off from 2300 BC, among other for the production of salt. In the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, a Gallo-Roman sanctuary was built near the wells, with baths and other buildings.

As of 2017 there is an archaeological museum. Remains of the former buildings can be seen on the site. The museum can only be reached via the D 958, from Vézelay to Pierre-Perthuis. Therefore, cross the Cure via the D 53, mentioned above, or via the bridge in Saint-Père. ◀