



NEWS RELEASE

TAKE A TOUR AT YOUR OWN PACE: CYCLE VELOSCENIC FOR THE BEST IN HERITAGE, FOOD AND COUNTRYSIDE

Enjoy a *Tour de France* at your own pace along the enchanting [Veloscenic](#) a 270 mile itinerant cycle route from Notre-Dame-de-Paris to Mont Saint-Michel which crosses the starting line of the 2016 *Le Tour* yet explores deeper than the main roads of the official route allow. Swap the speed of the yellow jersey for a cycling saunter on quiet backroads to unravel the beguiling heritage, gastronomy and countryside which surrounds Paris, Yvelines, Essonne, Eure-et-Loir, Orne and Manche. Download an A5 English [map-guide](#) with key highlights of the route.



Breakaway from the main routes to uncover a secret heritage



Royal Mistress – explore the enchanting Château de Maintenon, which in the 17th Century was the private residence of the second wife of King Louis XIV, Madame de Maintenon. The gardens were designed by Le Nôtre and there is an impressive aqueduct. [chateaudemaintenon.fr](#)

Fragrant Versailles – stop-off at the world's only fragrance archive – Osmothèque – which curates over 3,200 different scents in one location, including 400 which are no longer available. Attend one of the talks on set dates through the year or make an individual appointment. [osmotheque.fr](#)

Regal Versailles – a spectacular gallery of horse-drawn carriages reopens at the Palace of Versailles from 10 May. Having been kept under lock and key since 2007 it is a delightful step-back-in-time to the French renaissance. [chateauversailles.fr](#)

Chartres by candlelight – enjoy a night walking tour from 22 April to 7 October as the mediaeval centre of Chartres comes alive at dusk with illuminated animations projected onto the old buildings from the cathedral crypt to the surrounding waterways. [chartresenlumieres.com](#)

And relax - Revive weary muscles with a sports massage in the spa town of *Bagnoles-de-l'Orne* the only thermal spring in the



Northwest of France. Boasting beautiful 'belle époque' architecture, its waters are said to cure rheumatism. bo-resort.com

Plantagenet pause - the historic castle town of Domfront paid host to a succession of English Kings and Queens: wonder at the mediaeval machinations following one of three, brand new sign-posted historic routes via a mobile app. ot-domfront.com

Monastery and fortress - uncover the little-known treasures of the Abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel. Dating from the 8th Century it boasts fascinating dungeons and at its heart is a beautifully preserved Carolingian chapel. abbaye-mont-saint-michel.fr

Swap protein bars and energy drinks for quality, regional produce

Pick your own – Pause a while to pick up a pannier and scour the 125 acres of fields and orchards of la ferme de Viltain. Fill baskets galore with the finest seasonal fruit, vegetables and flowers – an ideal interlude for children. Entry is free - pay for what you pick. viltain.fr

Michelin restaurant - In the heart of the medieval Chartres, Le Saint-Hilaire is owned by a young couple who source only the best local produce (farm cheeses, Percheron snails) for their high-quality table which is listed in the Michelin Guide. restaurant-saint-hilaire.fr

Handmade ice-cream – Cool off with an extraordinary handmade ice cream or sorbet by the hand of Herdis Paesen, who excels at creating wonderful flavours – from mocha to mint - in the village of St Langis les Mortagne. r10glaces.com

Seeding for saffron - Bruno Slagmulder is an actor who produces a range of saffron-infused goodies in the heart of the Perche Natural Regional Park. His *Za'faran* range includes breads, chocolates, macaroons and jams made in collaboration with local producers. <https://fr.ulule.com/zafaran/>



Salt marsh lamb – Prized throughout the ages, this lean and succulent lamb can be found in season at good butchers and restaurants along the Veloscenic route and is noted for its darker appearance and tender texture.

Loose the peloton in the three regional natural parks

Wildlife - *Espace Rambouillet Sonchamp* is home to deer, wild boar, owls, hawks and eagles and offers a range of activities for big and little kids, from horse riding to falconry displays and feeding the animals. espacerambouillet.fr

Waterfalls - Pause in the heart of the Chevreuse Valley to enjoy the cascading waterfalls of Vaux de Cernay. Take a moment to recharge and imbibe its purifying negative ions, before returning to the route.



Ascent - Between Thiron-Gardais and Nogent-le-Rotrou lie some of his most beautiful panoramas of the Perche, including the Route the

Balconies loop which offers a steep climb for seasoned cyclists. Its highest point at 285 metres is still a long way off the challenging ascents of *Le Tour*!

A bird's eye view – Soar like an eagle over Alençon in a glider plane retracing your steps along the Veloscenic as far as the eye can see: from £55 for a 30 minute flight [.aeroclub-alencon.org](http://aeroclub-alencon.org)

Shifting sands – Enjoy a guided tour of the Bay of Mont Saint-Michel which enjoys some of the highest recorded tidal shifts and whose gorgeous sands can be safely explored with an expert. manchetourisme.com

Getting here: Trains booked through Voyages SNCF (www.voyages-sncf.com; 0844 848 5 848) from London-Paris and back from Pontorson (the nearest station to Mont Saint-Michel) to London (via Paris) start at £89.50 per person. Alternatively, Brittany Ferries (www.brittanyferries.com; 0871 244 1400) offers return channel crossings to Caen, Cherbourg and Saint Malo from £110pp for a car and two passengers.

For more information visit www.veloscenic.com

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