Maintenon / Chartres
Veloscenic : Paris to Mont-Saint-Michel cycle route

Départ
Maintenon

Arrivée
Chartres

Durée
1 h 19 min

Distance
20,20 Km

Niveau
I begin / Family

Leave Maintenon by cycling under the château's aqueduct, the majestic remnants of a madcap idea of Louis XIV's, to divert the waters of the Eure River as far as Versailles. Continuing through country parts, follow the river and the little lakes beside it, offering lovely refreshing spots at which to stop. Reaching Chartres, the breathtaking view of its cathedral is the highlight on this stage full of visual delights.

Stage description and details:

You cycle off from Maintenon along the D18 county road, so take care, as traffic can be heavy along it at certain times of day. After one kilometre, leave this road to your left to follow a road that meanders along the Eure Valley, serving a series of typical villages: Saint-Piat; Jouy; and Saint-Prest.
From Saint-Prest, the Veloscenic signposting then guides you along a pretty greenway leading you as far as Chartres.

Don't miss:

- **Maintenon**, its château and splendid gardens in formal French style created in the spirit of André Le Nôtre. Famously, Louis XIV and Madame de Maintenon carried out their romance here, and the romantic atmosphere lives on in the stunning gardens, with Vauban's Aqueduct forming the backdrop.
- **The mills beside the Eure River**, offering places for a shaded break, along with the little lakes close by.
- **Chartres's lower medieval town**, stretching beside the Eure, marked by washhouses, little bridges, timberframe houses and picturesque streets.
- **Chartres en Lumières**, free illuminations after nightfall: with more than 20 major buildings around town lit up (including the cathedral), from April to January, from nightfall to 1am.
- **Tour of Chartres cathedral's towers**, to look down on town from on high, and to see the edifice's impressive metallic roof structure.
- **The Centre International du Vitrail** a stone's throw from the cathedral, enabling you to discover all about the making of stained-glass windows, a craft so closely associated with Chartres, known as international capital of stained glass. If you wish to learn more on the subject, note that a few of the many specialist stained-glass workshops based in town offer guided tours (notably the Atelier Picol and the Ateliers Loire).
- **The Maison Picassiette**, an astonishing work of art somewhere between art naïf and art brut, the whole house here covered in mosaics, from floor to ceiling, the decorations even spreading into the garden. You can't fail to see the passion of Raymond Isidore, a self-taught artist who dedicated his life to transforming his modest house in such fascinating manner.

Food and drink en route:

- **Maintenon**: with many stores and a market on Thursday mornings on Place du Château.

- **Saint-Piat**: with a boulangerie, a butcher-cum-delicatessen and a bar in a typical village that makes for a perfect place to find refreshments.
- **Chartres**:
  - Rue de la Pie, the street with the greatest array of stores selling local produce with which to put together a splendid picnic.
  - The Saturday morning market on Place Billard, ideal for buying provisions from local producers while enjoying their unfailing sense of humour!
  - Chartres's guinguette (a waterside, outdoor restaurant), La Petite Venise, to enjoy a glass of wine and a platter of local produce beside the Eure River.

 Bring up **Accueil Velo accredited restaurants** by clicking on the icon on the map. De-select "only show accueil velo accredited services" to view further possibilities.

Repair Service:

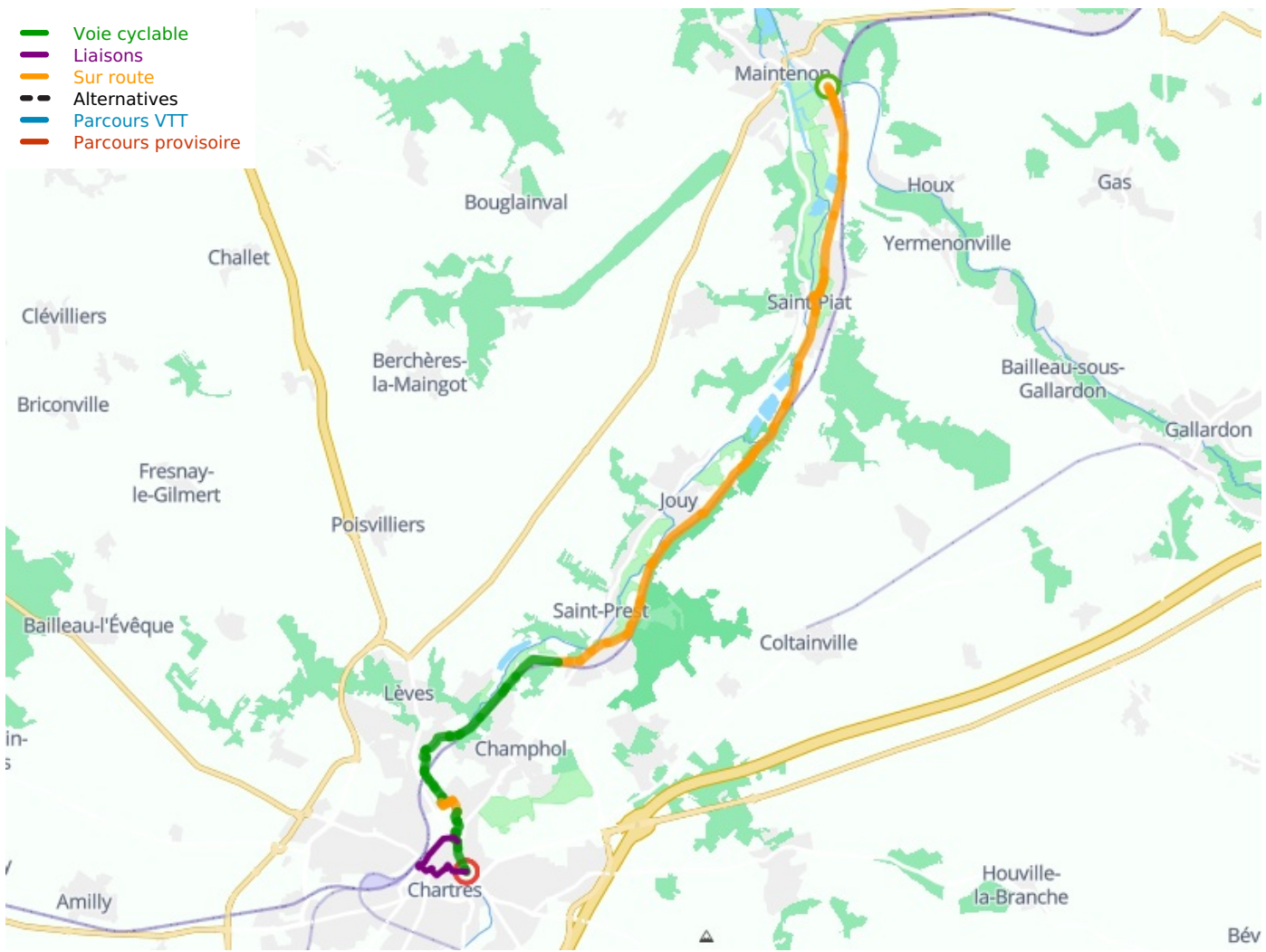Consult **the list of all the bike repairers** along or near the route.

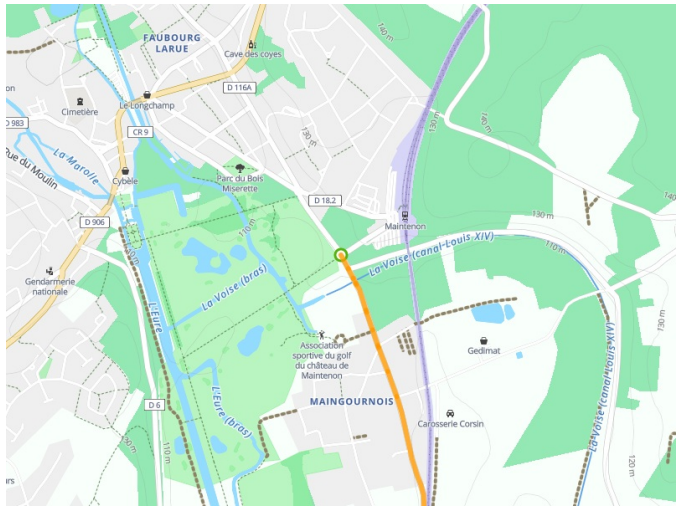## Train stations nearby:

- **Gare d'Épernon**
- **Gare de Maintenon**

These two stations are located on the regional TER line Paris – Chartres (on which you can take your bike, without dismantling it, for free).

 Also see our section on **reaching the veloscenic cycle route**, including conditions for taking a bicycle on board trains.

Légende:
- **Voie cyclable** (vert)
- **Liaisons** (violet)
- **Sur route** (orange)
- **Alternatives** (noir, pointillé)
- **Parcours VTT** (bleu)
- **Parcours provisoire** (rouge)

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