

French leave

Most people zoom through northern France. Don't. Ride Mike Werner's roads

ROUTE FACTS

Start: Yvetot, northern France

Finish: St Valery-en-Caux, Normandy, northern France

Three must-sees:

- Mineral water spa-cave in Hericourt-en-Caux
- Chateau de Auffy in Oherville
- Les Terrasses restaurant in Valery

Useful websites:

- www.visitnormandy.org
- www.motorbiker.org
- www.poferries.com

Directions

1 Yvetot is a large-ish city, easily accessed from the A28/A29 from Calais and even more easily via the N15 from Le Havre. To start your ride follow signs for Gare SNCF (train station) located on the D131. Once you're on the D131 ride it towards Cany-Barville.

2 Shortly after leaving Yvetot you'll pass through Hericourt-en-Caux and the start of the Durdent valley. Look to your right when you exit the village and you'll see a small cave. It's a natural spring and you can fill up with water here. Carry on along the Durdent river and keep an eye out for the picturesque watermills.

3 Remain on the D131 and continue onwards to Oherville. Once there you'll notice a sign for Chateau de Auffy at the crossing – follow it and take a five-minute



detour to visit this stripy chateau in its wooded grounds.

4 Stay on the D131, ride through Oherville and into Le Hanouard. If your belly's starting to rumble then why not refuel at the Le Champetre restaurant – a pretty little establishment with a great menu?

5 Rested and refuelled, stay on the D131 and into Grainville-La-Teinturiere. After a couple of miles you'll arrive at a fork in the road: peel off onto the right-hand road – the D268 towards Cany.

6 On the D268 you will pass the Chateau de Cany-Barville on your left. It's a beautiful building set in acres of grounds and helps give a real taste of Normandy. Upon entering Cany-Barville you should continue straight ahead and through the traffic lights. If you're passing though on a Monday morning, take a detour left at the lights and onto the main street to see the fantastic open air market.

7 Leave Cany-Barville and head towards Vittefleury and Paluel on the D10. The roads here are wide and smooth – enjoy the views.

8 Go through Paluel and join the D68. This road starts with a sharp right hand turn then climbs steeply. It's a fabulously twisty road but watch out for lorries and caravans struggling with the sharp bends.

9 Once the road levels out again, you'll continue forward on the D68 and through a crossing. A little further down the road you'll notice a huge castle to your left – it's privately owned and there's rarely anyone there but the grounds are spectacular.

10 Half a mile further on there's a small airstrip, but exercise caution. Don't be tempted to turn on the speed down this flat, straight piece of road as aeroplanes use the crossing here to get from the hangers to the runway (see left).



11 Past yet another picture-perfect castle and the D68 soon meets the D925. Take a left at the T-junction and head towards St Valery-en-Caux. Go straight over at the next roundabout and you'll soon arrive at St Valery town centre.

12 When you see the harbour, turn left and ride past the hotel, over the bridge and then head towards the beach. Alongside the beach road there's a fabulous restaurant called Les Terrasses: park up here, order some food and enjoy the view of the beach. Magnifique!