

A world from the President



Welcome to the Thouet Valley !

In this guide, you will find all the information you need for your bike ride. Acting as the real backbone of the valley, the route meanders along the River Thouet, allowing you to explore over 120 kms of the Deux-Sèvres region, starting from the river's source at Beugnon and finishing at St-Martin-de-Sanzay.

The eight different sections, which can all be completed in a day, are clearly marked out on a map, as well as the places of interest to visit in the immediate vicinity of the «Thouet by Bike» route.

Over the course of your bike ride, you will discover our water-based heritage (bridges, fords, dry stone drains, windmills and causeways), our historic heritage (Medieval cities and castles) and our fabulous, First Romanesque and Romanesque «open and welcoming» churches.

There is also a whole range of activities on offer for you to enjoy, including walks on the GR 36, canoeing and rides in horse-drawn carriages, to name but a few !

There are so many ways to discover all the hidden charms of the Riverside Reverie that is the Thouet Valley, from its countryside to its heritage.

So may I wish you all very happy cycling in the Thouet Valley !

Alain Ligné

A few rules of good conduct

- ✓ I respect the highway code by being mindful of other cyclists and of any other vehicle that I may encounter, particularly on the shared tracks
- ✓ I respect the crops, harvests, fruits, flowers and plants, as well as the wild fauna and domestic pets
- ✓ I respect residents' private properties and their right to tranquillity
- ✓ For my own safety, I will set off fully-equipped (helmets, puncture repair kits, a bottle of water and snack).

You will be cycling on two types of road surface on the «Thouet by Bike» route :

• Small lanes and farm tracks

There is very little traffic but do still be careful ! These tracks are shared and used by walkers, horse-riders and cyclists.

• The cycle paths

Especially designed for cyclists, these tracks mean that a section of your route will take place in the safest possible conditions.

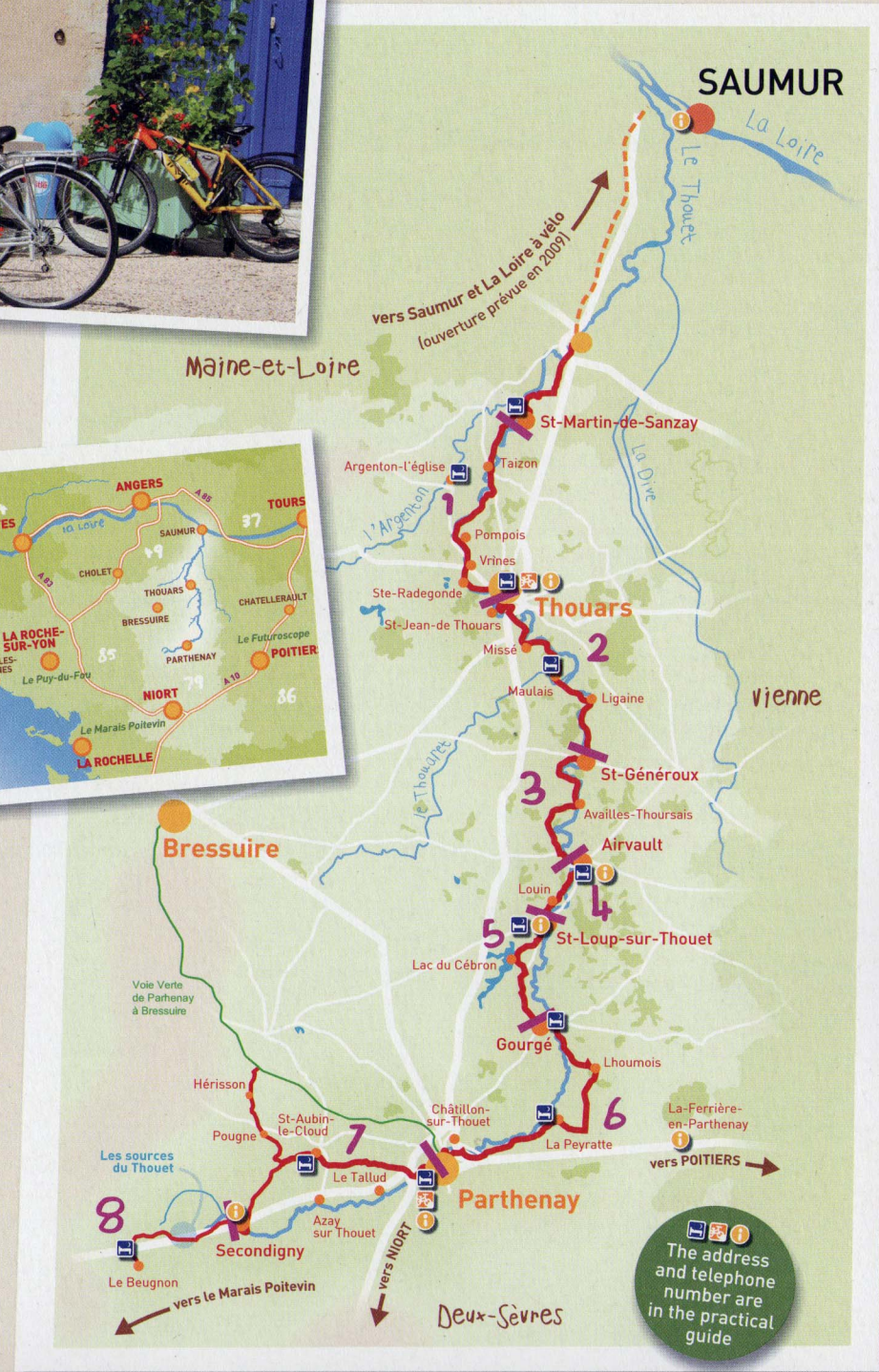
CLEAR SIGNPOSTING = CYCLING MADE EASY !

To help you find your way, markers made from local stone (limestone, granite or mica schist depending on the area) have been laid out along the entire route. They provide signposting and distance in kilometres and mark out your route.



EVERYTHING IS DESIGNED TO WELCOME YOU :

- 3 main areas in which you can park your car :
 - in PARTHENAY : Place du Drapeau
 - in ST LOUP LAMAIRE : at the Lac de Cébron in front of the Maison de la Nature
 - in THOUARS : Square Franklin Roosevelt
- 27 rest areas punctuate the route. Make the most of them for a well-earned break :
 - to enjoy the views, natural landmarks and monuments
 - and to recharge your batteries, having a picnic or a thirst-quenching drink.



Maps caption

- Cycling ways
- Stream
- Forest area
- Car park
- Resting areas
- Information
- Opened and welcoming churches of the Thouet Valley
- Regional road