



Parc  
naturel  
régional  
de Brière



6

## SALT & FRESH WATERS

## Saint-Lyphard / Saint-Molf / Mesquer



16,8 km



1h15



**Starting point:** Village of Kerhinet - Saint-Lyphard



**Circuit ends:** Place de l'Hôtel - Mesquer

### Type of circuit:

- Route using low-traffic density roads & dedicated cycle paths
- CAP à vélo and Vélocéan cycle routes.



**Tourist Office Mesquer-Quimiac (44420)**

Place de l'Orée du Bois - Quimiac  
Tel. 02 40 42 64 37 - [www.labaule-guerande.com](http://www.labaule-guerande.com)  
[mesquer-quimiac@bretagne-plein-sud.fr](mailto:mesquer-quimiac@bretagne-plein-sud.fr)



**Tourist Office Brière - Saint-Lyphard (44410)**

Village of Kerhinet - Tel. 02 40 66 85 01  
[www.parc-naturel-briere.com](http://www.parc-naturel-briere.com) - [briere@bretagne-plein-sud.fr](mailto:briere@bretagne-plein-sud.fr)



**Tourist Office Saint-Molf (44350)**

City hall - 1 rue des Epis - Tel. 02 40 62 58 99  
[www.labaule-guerande.com](http://www.labaule-guerande.com) - [saint-molf@bretagne-plein-sud.fr](mailto:saint-molf@bretagne-plein-sud.fr)



### WHERE TO HIRE YOUR BIKE

- **Tourist Office** - Village of Kerhinet - Saint-Lyphard - Tel. 02 40 66 85 01
- **Camping site Le Beaupré** - Route de Kervarin - Kercabellec - Mesquer - Tel. 02 40 42 64 16

The Guérande Peninsula is an eclectic mix of land and water. This unusual circuit will take you from the wetlands of Brière to the salt marshes which open out on to the vastness of the Atlantic Ocean. The common element to be 'followed' is water... Before experiencing the sea breeze and savoury flavours of Mesquer you'll go through villages typical of the area such as Saint-Molf. Here's a challenge for you: guess what is the given name of its inhabitants!



### THINGS TO SEE ALONG THE WAY...

#### • The dolmen at Kerbourg - Saint-Lyphard

At the end of the path which runs along the side of the windmill you will find the dolmen of Kerbourg which dates back to the Neolithic period. Often considered to be a gallery-grave it is in fact a passage-grave. The part of the megalithic structure is well preserved and is to this day still covered by four slabs of granite.

#### • St Germain's Chapel - Saint-Molf

In the centre of the village of Saint-Molf be sure to take a look around the St Germain's Chapel, a Neo-Romanesque style chapel surrounded by a hedge of beautiful and colourful hydrangeas. Its stained-glass windows depict St Molf and St Yves.

#### • The salt marshes of the Mès river bassin

The salt marshes of close to the river Mès extend over some 350 ha across the areas surrounding the villages of Mesquer, Saint-Molf and Assérac. They form part of the 2 000 ha of salt marshes present across the Guérande Peninsula.

For almost 1 500 years, generation after generation of 'paludiers' (salt workers) have meticulously designed and maintained this unique landscape. Their traditional methods of harvesting the salt are in total respect of the precious environment in which they work and contribute to its ecological richness which resulted in it being classified as such in 1996.

A salt marsh is irrigated daily with sea water via a sea water inlet channel, according to the tides. During the salt harvesting period the 'paludier' allows the sea water to enter the 'vasière' (decantation pond) via a trap. With the help of a gentle gradient the water then flows gently around the salina, via a succession of basins 'cut-out' in the clay. With the combined action of the sun and the wind the water rises in temperature, evaporates and the concentration of salt increases: the water becomes 'saturated'. In the last basins the 'œillelets' (evaporation basins) the salt crystallises. The fine light crystals which subsequently float at the surface in large 'patches' ultimately become the famous 'Fleur de Sel'. The coarser grey salt 'gros sel' or 'sel gris' of which the gathering is far more productive, forms at the bottom of the 'œillelets'.

The exceptional quality of the salt from Guérande was awarded the 'Label Rouge' back in 1991 - for produce of outstanding culinary quality. In 1994 the salt marshes were awarded the quality label of 'Site remarquable du goût' - Site of outstanding culinary quality and interest.



### DID YOU KNOW THAT...

#### • Thatching

Almost 60% of the thatched cottages in the whole of France are to be found in the Brière Nature Park. Characteristic of the local rural architecture, thatch covers almost 3 000 houses in the area. The conservation of this architectural feature owes its continued existence to the skills and knowhow of the craftsmen thatchers. Even if the roofs are always thatched from lower edge towards the ridge, two different methods are to be noted: the Dutch method which consists thatching the roof with successive horizontal rows of reeds and the Brière traditional method which consists of thatching the roof in vertical 'bands' some 70 cm in width.



### TO GO A LITTLE FURTHER...

- **Circuit n°4** 'Thatched cottages & marshlands'
- **Circuit n°5** 'From the river Mès to the 'bocage''







16,8 km



1h15

