

Alternative stage L'Alpe d'Huez / Briançon

Route des Grandes Alpes® by bike



Départ
L'Alpe d'Huez

Arrivée
Briançon

Durée
5 h 03 min

Distance
73,89 Km

Niveau
I cycle a lot

Thématique
Mountains

This route we've chosen between Le Bourg-d'Oisans and Briançon, going via L'Alpe d'Huez, enables cyclists to avoid the dangerous section of road (including numerous tunnels) between Le Bourg-d'Oisans and Le Chambon Lake. Our alternative delivers stunning views over the Oisans Range and the towering La Meije Mountain. Enjoy many unforgettable discoveries along the way on this magnificent Route des Grandes Alpes® stage: the rough shepherds' route up to the Col de Sarenne pass (1999m); the village of La Grave and the little valleys around La Meije; the Col du Lautaret pass; the wild landscapes of the Romanche Gorges; the descent of the Guisane Valley; and the arrival in Briançon, designated a Ville d'Art et d'Histoire, its Vauban fortifications part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

From L'Alpe d'Huez to Briançon via the Col du Lautaret

Route North / South

↗ 1603m ↘ 2171m

From the centre of L'Alpe d'Huez (1850m), follow the road to the altiport (a mountain airstrip), then the rough road to the Col de Sarenne pass (1999m). From here, descend right down to Mizoën and Le Chambon Lake, where you then reach the main road to the Col du Lautaret, coming from Le Bourg-d'Oisans. If you wish to enjoy a detour via the resort of Les 2 Alpes, cross the bridge along the dam to take on the climb to the Oisans area's other major mountain resort. The normal route continues through the Romanche Gorges up to La Grave. It then climbs gradually to the Col du Lautaret (2057m). Once you reach this pass, leave the road to the Col du Galibier (2642m) on your left and start your descent to Briançon, riding along the wide road down the Guisane Valley, enabling you to take a good look at all the villages that make up the mountain resort of Serre-Chevalier.

Route South / North

↗ 2171m ↘ 1603m

Riding out of Briançon, take a good look at all the villages that make up the mountain resort of Serre-Chevalier as you climb through the Guisane Valley before you reach the Col du Lautaret pass (2057m). Leave the road to the Col du Galibier pass (2642m) to your right and descend towards the village of La Grave. Continue through the Romanche Gorges up to Le Chambon Lake and Mizoën. If you wish to make a detour via the resort of Les 2 Alpes, cross the bridge along the dam to take on the climb to the Oisans area's other major mountain resort. The route that we've chosen takes you on a fine climb of 1100m up to the Col de Sarenne pass (1999m). From there, you can reach L'Alpe d'Huez (1850m) speedily and with ease.

Don't miss

- **La Grave:** a world capital for mountain-biking freeride as well as off-piste skiing, what with the series of steep little valleys around La Meije

Mountain. The village itself is delightful, clinging to its slope, making a good base camp for wonderful bike trails and hikes.

- **The Jardin Alpin du Lautaret:** this garden offers a magnificent walk in a truly unique setting, amidst Alpine botanical treasures.
- **Serre Chevalier:** the mountain resort for the Guisane Valley, stretching between the Col du Lautaret and Briançon and across four communes (parishes). The highest is Le Monêtier-les-Bains, which doubles as a thermal spa resort. The others are La Salle-les-Alpes – Villeneuve, Saint-Chaffrey – Chantemerle, and, of course, Briançon Serre Chevalier 1200.
- **Briançon:** the highest fortified town in Europe, designated a Ville d'Art et d'Histoire for its rich heritage and part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its Vauban fortifications. In addition, the mountain resort of Serre-Chevalier 1200 forms part of its territory, the lowest portion of the ski area of Serre-Chevalier, joined to the rest of the domain by cable-car.
- **The Vauban fortifications:** Briançon's historic walls, bridge into town and surrounding four forts are part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site dedicated to works designed by Vauban, Louis XIV's brilliant military architect.

