

## Green Route, Route Verte -- A Ribbon Of Friendship With France

Ha, you'd think with a name like the Green Route a.k.a. Route Verte a.k.a. Grüne Strasse that it'd be all about some sort of plant, or flower, or even a veggie. Nope, this Green Route is a 365km/227mi car & bicycle route through the Vosges and Alsace, France, the [Upper Rhine Valley](#), and the southern [Black Forest](#) in Germany.

The Green Route started 50 years ago and was designed to bridge "a ribbon of friendship" between France and Germany. It worked. Now thousands of people every year find themselves traveling between Contrexeville, France (passing along French towns with German names like Munster and Turckheim) and [Donaueschingen](#), Germany.

A couple of things first. It's believed that the best time to enjoy the Green Route is anytime from late March to late September. Now, not all of you might like the cooler weather, but for those of you who do, you can easily enjoy making the trek in early March and even towards the end of October. Heck, even winter is fine in my books with all the winter heavens in the Black Forest.

### Start of the Green Route (in Germany)

In Germany, the Green Route catches up at [Breisach](#), a charming medieval town with a 12th century Cathedral (St. Stephensemünster), a few towers and gates (the *Rheintor*, the Hagenbach Tower, and the *Radbrunnenturm*), and a Jewish cemetery. Breisach's oldest building is a charming half-timbered one from 1498.

Do you see how old this town is? That's not even including the Stone Age exhibits found in the Municipal Museum.

After Breisach, what about exploring the nearby [Kaiserstuhl](#) region, with all its wine hills and hiking trails (great vistas included)?

[Freiburg](#) is your next big stop on the Route Verte. Come to an annual Tent Music Festival in July, a Natural History Museum (where else better to appreciate all the natural scenic beauty you've been traveling on), an Archaeological History Museum, a medieval tower (with a museum too), and a mineral spa.

Don't you feel better already? Hey, biking is hard work — you deserve to pamper yourself. ;-)

Oh, I can't believe I almost forgot about Freiburg's annual Film Festival (which is not the same as its Gay Film Festival in late-April/early May). And of course, there's always hiking or Nordic Walking along the Schlossberg.

Hmm, don't you deserve another spa treatment? I think so.

The Green Route takes you next to [Kirchzarten](#), a former Celtic town. It's also home to a few castle ruins, a 9th century church, and a couple of chapels. Over at the Chapel of St. John, there's a wonderful smelling Herb Garden.

Hinterzarten is a sports town — known for Nordic Walking, the Black Forest Ultra Bike Marathon, and its ski jump. If you don't mind, I'll be at the Weekly Farmer's Market on Friday. Whatever you choose to do, the Black Forest around here is terrific.

Found within the Southern Black Forest Nature Park is the wonderful town of [Titisee-Neustadt](#). Here you can hike and/or take a boat ride on the Titisee, as well as campout, climb the observation tower (what a view), or soak the toes in the Kneipp area.

Of course, a stop to the Local History Museum would be another good idea.

I can't believe we've just about ended our tour — it seems like we just got started...

[Löffingen](#) is another medieval town on the Green Route. It's also where you'll find wild orchids growing in the Black Forest Trail Park (where you'll also see yaks, wolves, and other kinds of animals), and prehistoric grave mounds. If you time it right you'll be here for the yearly Lake Festival in July.

I've been having so much fun that it seemed like no time at all to get to [Donaueschingen](#). Besides the 18th century schloss, the annual Carnival (usually February), the Horse Show in July, and the chance to travel along the Danube Cycle Trail — the best part is a 725 year old brewery that's still going strong.

Ah, beer — for those of you who think that's the perfect way to end the day, imagine how good it'll taste after trekking 365km. ;-)

## **Green Route Web Site**

Here's the official Web site about the [Green Route \(a.k.a. Route Verte, Grüne Strasse\)](#).