

La Couvertoirade / Lunas

Grande Traversée du Massif Central Gravel

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Départ
La Couvertoirade

Arrivée
Lunas

Durée
4 h 30 min

Distance
45,93 Km

Niveau
Hard

Thématique
Panoramic view,
Natural parc, Cultural
heritage

Leaving the Larzac behind, the GTMC takes you into the Parc Naturel Régional du Haut Languedoc. The village of Le Caylar en Larzac is full of surprises, surrounded by box bushes and ancient stone statues, with a remarkable sculpted tree too. The place serves as a good stopping point.

Consider visiting Labeil Cave before entering the mysterious L'Escandorgue Forest. A Buddhist temple and lovely views of the Haut Languedoc's mountains mark the way before you plunge down into the Gravezon Valley, where you'll discover Joncels Abbey. Lunas makes a refreshing stop, with its fine river and an outdoor leisure centre based around a pretty lake.

Leaving from La Couvertoirade, the GTMC Gravel route adopts the GRP Tour du Larzac Méridional hiking trail. So, you quickly leave the classic GTMC VTT mountain-biking route for a time to reach Le Caylar via a path that isn't so technically challenging. Then you rejoin the classic GTMC VTT route, followed by a section on road before the village of Joncelets. Continue on to Lunas on the Via Tolosana hiking trail. Overall, this is a GTMC Gravel stage that's smooth to ride along, without any major difficulties. The end section of the crossing of the Larzac Plateau, around Le Caylar, is on good tracks or on quiet roads. After some lovely forest tracks taking you through the Forêt de l'Escandorgue, and a pretty country road after Roqueredonde, the route guides you along smooth, comfortable paths with some great views onto the Gravezon Valley.

Link n°1 Millau / La Couvertoirade (purple line on the map - see GPX below)

For a good warm-up, leave Millau for Creissels, cycling along beside the Tarn River. Then it's time to take on a challenging climb, first on tarmacked road, then on a broad track, leading up to the Larzac Plateau, and the hamlet of Bouissan, where you rejoin the main GTMC route.

Do take care on the 3.5km stretch before arriving at La Cavalerie, which is tricky for inexperienced gravel users; if you feel unsure on the difficult terrain, then opt to remain on the départementale D809 road. Once on the Larzac Plateau, enjoy the wide tracks across it as you cross the villages of La Cavalerie and L'Hospitalet-du-Larzac to reach a portion of converted railway line. Then you ride along paths well suited to gravel bikes to reach the village of La Couvertoirade.

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