

Gulf of Morbihan Scenic Drive

Vannes | Sarzeau & Suscinio | Arzon & Port-Navalo | Locmariaquer | Auray | Île-aux-Moines

Route	Vannes, a loop around the gulf via the Rhuys peninsula, Locmariaquer and Auray
Distance	About 70 miles (110 km) as a loop
Driving time	About 2h30, allow a full day or ideally two
Nearest airport	Nantes (NTE), about 1 hour 15
Roads	Toll-free throughout, gentle and well surfaced
Best time	May to September for the light and island ferries
Car hire from	£20 a day in the quiet season

The Route, Stop by Stop

1. Vannes (14 miles / 23 min to Sarzeau)

The medieval walled capital at the head of the gulf. Ramparts, half-timbered old town, wash-houses, and the port. Base for the drive. Park outside the walls.

2. Sarzeau & Suscinio (12 km / 14 min to Arzon)

The Rhuys peninsula and the moated Château de Suscinio, ducal castle by the beach. Mild microclimate, golden beaches. Park at the château.

3. Arzon & Port-Navalo (around the head to Locmariaquer)

The gulf's mouth, where the little sea meets the Atlantic in a clash of currents. Lighthouse, coastal path, Crouesty marina. Park at Port-Navalo.

4. Locmariaquer (13 km / 18 min to Auray)

The great Neolithic megaliths: the Table des Marchand and the Grand Menhir Brisé, older than the pyramids. Oyster village. Park at the megaliths site.

5. Auray & Saint-Goustan (to Port-Blanc for the ferry)

The storybook old river port of Saint-Goustan, cobbled quays and a stone bridge where Benjamin Franklin landed in 1776. Park in the upper town, walk down.

6. Île-aux-Moines (5-min ferry from Port-Blanc)

The Pearl of the Gulf. Park at Port-Blanc (Baden), take the Izenah passenger ferry (every 30 min, all year). Explore on foot or by rented bike. Cars stay ashore.

Getting to the Île-aux-Moines

Drive to Port-Blanc near Baden on the Northern shore and park. The Izenah ferry crosses to the island in 5 minutes and runs every 30 minutes all year round (around 6.80 EUR return). Cars stay on the mainland, so explore the 7km island on foot or by rented bike. It is the perfect gentle finale to the loop.

Where to Eat

Vannes: creperies in the old town and seafood by the port.

Auray (Saint-Goustan): lunch on the quay.

Rhuys & Locmariaquer: oyster cabins by the beds.

Local specialities: flat Belon-style oysters, mussels, langoustines, Muscadet, far breton.

Note: many kitchens close between about 2pm and 7pm. Time your lunch.

Driving Tips

Drive on the right. Roads are toll-free, gentle and well surfaced, easier than the far-Western capes. There is no bridge across the mouth of the gulf, so the loop goes round the head via Vannes and Auray, about 70 miles. Limits: 50 km/h in towns, 80 km/h rural, 110 km/h dual carriageways, lower in the wet. Watch for priorite a droite. The gulf is dictated by its tides, so check ferry times and allow plenty of time for the loop.

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