



The Afsluitdijk disappearing into the distance of the Zuiderzee

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LF Kustroute

LOCATION Netherlands **START/FINISH** Cadzand-Bad/Bad Nieuweschans **DISTANCE** 610 km (379 miles) **TIME** 11 days **DIFFICULTY** Easy **INFORMATION** www.lfkustroute.nl.com

Tracking the North Sea coast from one Dutch border (Belgium) to the next (Germany), the LF Kustroute is 11 stages of wind-in-your-hair, salt-on-your-skin pedalling through one of the least densely populated parts of the Netherlands. Long stretches of dunes punctuate the route, forming a sandy foreground to the islands of South Holland and Zeeland, while seaside resorts, artists' colonies and traditional "mound" villages – built on hills of earth and manure – provide charming pit stops en route. This being the Netherlands, there are plenty of dykes to cycle along as you work your way up to Bad Nieuweschans, notably the Afsluitdijk, although the most momentous crossings might just be along the series of defensive dams that protect the exposed mainland here from North Sea floods – the imposing Oosterscheldekering, or Eastern Scheldt Storm Surge Barrier, is the largest and best-known link in this remarkable system.

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The Moselle

LOCATION Luxembourg and Germany **START/FINISH** Schengen (loop) **DISTANCE** 112 km (70 miles) **TIME** 2 days **DIFFICULTY** Easy **INFORMATION** www.visitluxembourg.com

Rising in France's Vosges mountains before meandering northeast to Koblenz, the Moselle is one of Europe's prettiest rivers. And its central stretch along the Luxembourg–Germany border is perhaps the most beautiful of all.

This cycling trail begins in Schengen, a little-known border village with a world-famous name. Head north on the Luxembourg side of the Moselle to follow a riverside path that gently winds through charming villages backed by lush vineyards. Before you know it, you'll be across the German border and into Trier, a city with stunning Roman remains, including a blackened city gate and vast amphitheatre.

After a good breakfast on day two, jump in the saddle and head back south; this time on the German side of the river. This is a more rural stretch, so stop often to soak up the stunning scenery and sip a small Riesling at a village *winzer*, before crossing borders again back into Schengen.

THE SCHENGEN AGREEMENT

Signed in 1985 in the border village of the same name, the Schengen Agreement allowed free travel between five neighbouring Western European countries: Luxembourg, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and West Germany.

Today, the Schengen Area comprises no less than 26 European countries, stretching from Iceland to Greece.