

Le Pays de Champagne à vélo



Epernay
Pays de
Champagne
Commissariat de Commerce

Vélofiche n°4

Bicycle ride n°4

Price: 0,50 €

Cumières, a Marne Valley village



Nestling between a meander of the Marne and the vines climbing up the slopes of the «Montagne de Reims», Cumières is a wine-growing village whose south-facing hillsides and chalky subsoil placed its terroir in the “Premier Cru” category.



Originally a mere hamlet dependent on Damery and Hautvillers (where Dom Pérignon, the Abbey's cellarer, developed the blending of various “crus” of champagne and the use of corks in the 17th century), Cumières became independent in the early 18th century.



The village faces the River Marne and the canal. For many years, life was regulated by the waterways which were used to transport a wide variety of goods, especially champagne. As a staging post on the main route to Paris, Cumières provided horses which walked along the banks, pulling the barges, and highly-skilled pilots to help the bargees navigate on a river that was full of traps for the unwary.



Nowadays, you can see Eric Slezziak's amazing sculptures depicting work in the vineyards and the wine cellars. Stop for a meal in a real cellar or enjoy a cruise on a paddleboat.

Recommendations from the French Cyclists' Federation

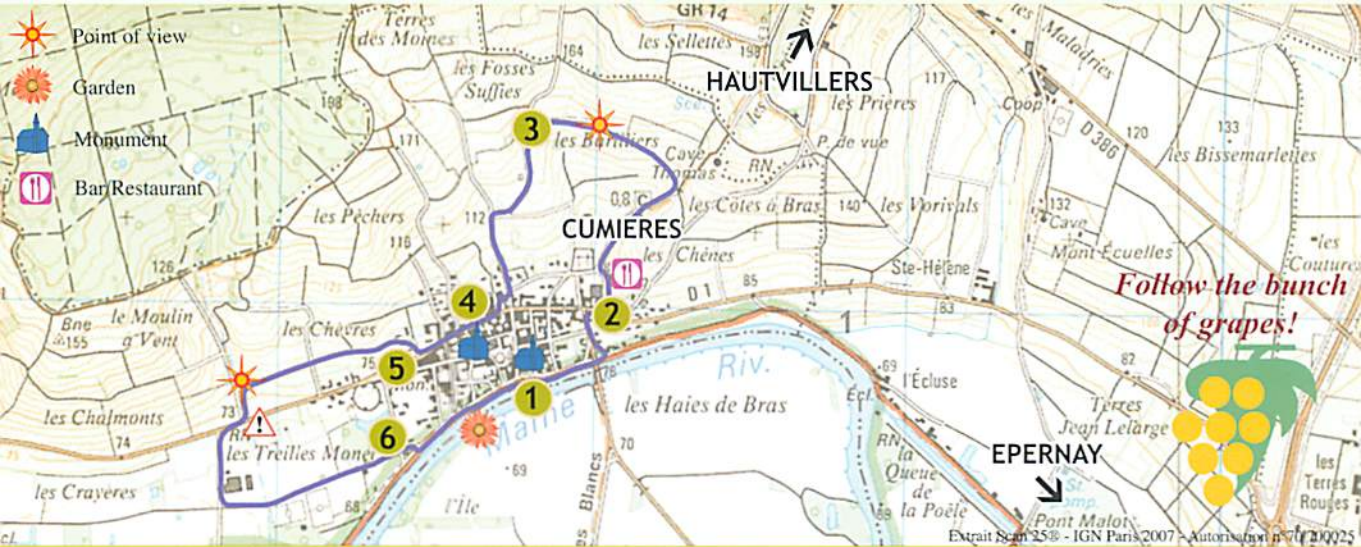
«Don't forget your helmet. Always follow the highway code and ride two abreast only under appropriate circumstances.

Mountain bikers: please wear your body protection.»

Distance: 5 Km
Length: 35 mn
Level
of difficulty: easy
(with a difficult part)

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- 1 Departure: from «Quai de la Marne», take «Rue du Bac» to the Cumières Bridge. The street is named after the ferry that plied from one bank to another before the bridge was built in 1872 and again after it was blown up by the Germans in 1940. Pass under the bridge and immediately turn left towards the hillsides overlooking the village.
- 2 The route takes you past one of the oldest cooperatives in Champagne, a joint wine-producing entity for those winegrowers in Cumières who are members. Beyond it, you start climbing the slopes above the village.
- 3 There is a delightful view of the vines covering the hillside and extending to the edge of the forest and the village. At this point, return to the village.
- 4 Take «Rue Gaston Poittevin», a street named after a village celebrity and a champion of winegrowers' trade unionism in the early 20th century. He militated in favour of limitations on the area permitted to use the name "champagne" and contributed to setting the boundaries. There is a memorial to him on the left.
- 5 «Rue des Ligniers» on the right again takes you on a short excursion into the vineyards before carefully crossing the RD1 road and heading for the banks of the Marne.
- 6 When you reach the Cumières boat moorings, continue along the river banks until you reach your point of departure. Take time to look at the sculptures on the river bank or the 18th-century church amid the houses. Stroll through the narrow village streets lined with flower-decked houses. You will find many producers who are only too pleased to give you a sip or two (moderation in all things!) of their champagne and their "Cumières rouge", a fruity red wine aged in oak barrels.