

# Pays basque



Niveau  
**TRÈS  
DIFICILE**

## Col d'Arnosteguy (15 km)



*“the unclassifiable”  
for extraterrestrials*



You are still high up because you are on a nice hilltop with staggering views... clear horizons alternating with a few stands of beech.

### Starting point:

● on the A64 Pau-Bayonne motorway, take exit n°7 for Salies-de-Béarn, follow the D430 then the D933 after Salies, via Sauveterre-de-Béarn and St Palais and Larceveau. Keep going straight on the D933 and 6km before St Jean Pied de Port, turn left on the D2933 to reach St Jean le Vieux, the starting point for the ascent (water point ok, all shops).

● from Bayonne, take the A63 Bayonne-Hendaye motorway, getting off at exit n°5 and following the D932 then the D918 after Cambo, via Louhossoa and St Martin d'Arrossa until St Jean Pied de Port (water point ok, all shops).

**D** From the car park, descend and cross the bridge over the Nive, then go straight ahead towards St Michel / Estérençuby. A first small climb at 13% to get you into the swing of things is followed by a flat leftward curve on the D301 then one to the right which takes you to a fork in the road (km 0.6; 182m).

① Turn right in the direction of the St Jacques path and prepare to ride the first 200m at 20% before a very welcome false flat! The climb gets going again with 10-12% slopes then a fairly rough hilly section until you reach a crossroads (the Etchebestéa farm km3; 307m).

② Keep straight on the main road until another fork in the road marked by a huge chestnut tree: follow the 11% slope to the left for 100m until you reach a typical farm on almost flat ground at the level of a small col (Erreculus, km 4; 342m).

③ This is the most brutal section: a 13% to get going, a gentler slope as you negotiate the left-hand bend, and then you must stand up on your pedals to get up the record km at 16% with some slopes of more than 20%. The flattening of the col after the hamlet of Honto brings no comfort (although it does have a nice view of the crests of Iparla to the right) because it is followed by 1.5 km at

only 10% (thanks to the left-hand bend) but by 300m and 23% in the next bend, on the right (orientation table). Another very harsh 500m at 14% then a downhill false flat descendant takes you to the auberge at Orisson (km 8; 797m)... phew! And there is no disgrace if you had to put your feet on the ground!

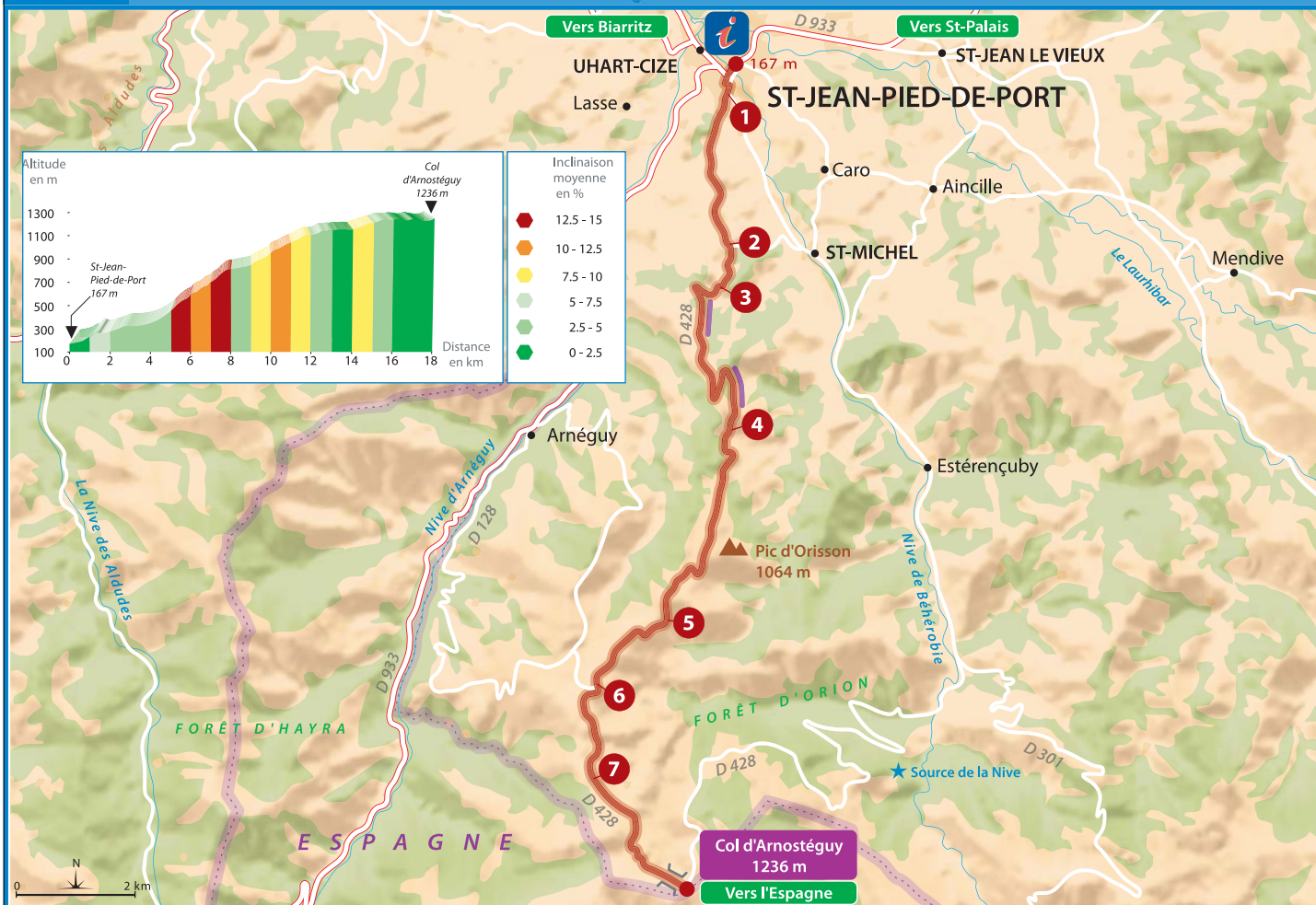
④ You will find the next 600m almost easy at 12% before a false flat, repeating for 3km before a crossroads and the shrine to the Madonna in Orisson (good view to the south-east of the col d'Arnosteguy and the summit of Urculu, km 11.6; 1095m).

⑤ Stay to the right on the main road, pass a small col (400m at 7%) and relax a bit as you finally reach some more reasonable slopes; the peak of the col is close now. Reach the crossroads with Arneguy to your right (km 13.4; 1145m).

⑥ Keep going straight and this is the penultimate effort to get through 600m at 10% before reaching the col d'Urdanasburu with the help of a downhill false flat (1191m) and finally the last push at 11% over 300m to reach another small col (km 15.2; 1230m, Thibaud cross) which is where the path veers off from that of St Jacques.

⑦ The last 3km, on a balcony, are a pleasure to ride, and you arrive at the Spanish border nice and gently...





The town of St Jean Pied de Port  
Parking: the tourist office car park, opposite the mairie and the church. Please note that, in summer, the car park may be full. More parking spaces are available above the citadel.



Record time: 1h06  
author's time: 1h 27



Distance: 25 km



Min/max altitude: 323 m - 1760 m

Cumulative ascent: 1500 m

Average percentage: 6 %; over 10km: 9,2 %;  
over 7km: 9,85 %; over 4km: 10,38 %

Maximum slope: 15% over 400m

Recommended gear ratio: 38X26  
corresponding to a climbing time of 1h55

Motor traffic: average

Road surface: good

Carte IGN au 1/25000 : 1346 OT

### Strong points:

the "Napoléon" road follows the St Jacques path as it crosses the Pyrenees, the very wild 'shepherds' route' (with views all along it), first on a beautiful hilltop then surrounded by a wide plateau, the site of Urculu.

### Nearby:

the climb to Arradoy, the climb to Jara, the col d'Urdanzia, the col de Sourzay, the summit of Erozaite.

### Other sides:

One starting in Estérençuby, a long route going through the forest of Orion (about 19km and 1130m), and 3 starting from Arnéguy with roads that converge just before the col d'Arnosteguy and with very uneven slopes, including sections as steep as 13% (about 15km and 1000m).

### Difficulties/tips:

it is important to warm up properly before beginning the climb because there are some severe slopes in the first few hundred metres. Make sure your brakes work because the descent, coming back the same way, is quite scary! Water point at the gite in Orisson; no service at the summit.

Renseignements complémentaires auprès des offices de tourisme de :



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