

Les Douves du Grand Cumont

14 km 4h15

Start: Bretoncelles, 'complexe sportif' car park.
Direction: clockwise
Signing: yellow signposts and way markings
Ease of walking: quite good (steep section, some wet stretches)
Ground condition: dirt or stony paths and some tarmac lanes
Points of interest: panoramic views, remains of the Grand Cumont (ancient moated fortification).

1. Follow the path to the left of the children's play area to access the **l'Espace Naturel Sensible (Vallées et Marais de Bretoncelles)**. When you arrive behind the care home (EHPAD) follow the path through the conservation orchard. The hives of the black bee are to your left. Cross the main road to follow the tarmac opposite which leads on to a dirt path. Keep left and continue straight on to the hamlet of **La Dougère** (ancient bread oven to your left). Leaving the hamlet, walk on down the dirt path and then take a sharp right turn to climb a stony path to **La Louveterie**.
2. Take the woodland path to the left which ends in a tarmac lane. Turn left for the hamlet of **La Beaudorière** (panoramic view of the Corbionne valley). Go straight ahead at the crossroads and cut across the entrance to a former sandpit, cross the stream (ruisseau de la Madeleine) via a footbridge and follow the path down to **La Pestière** (rustic staircase on the left to see the **Étang (lake) de la Madeleine Bouvet**). Go back to the path and continue up to the left as far as a tarmac road.
3. Cross the tarmac road and continue straight on up (at the top great view of the village of **La Madeleine Bouvet**). At the tarmac road 400 metres further on, turn left to go **to la Motellerie**.
4. When you get to the houses take the road to the right towards **La Nouebernon** and, in a charming setting, **La Régeolière** and its calvary cross. Turn left and quickly right to follow a path between fields which goes down to the left towards **La Gilardière** and **La Rue Ferrée**.
5. Follow the private path (authorised access for walkers) through woodland which goes down to the **Moulin Viel** (former winnowing site, picnic table). Follow the D38 to the right for a few metres then take a stony path to the right which goes up past an eco-house. Go up this path to **Cumont**, then take a path to the left followed by one to the right. The area of woodland on your right hides the remains of the **Grand Cumont**, whose moat is just visible. Take the road to the left towards **La Godefraise**.
6. Follow the tarmac straight on to **Frou**. Continue straight ahead (do not take the paths non the left!) on the dirt path towards the woods (**le Bois des Cracotières**). At the entrance to the wood, bear to the left and follow on down along the sunken path (views over Bretoncelles). As you arrive in the hamlet of **La Pezassière**, take the left road and continue to the D918. Follow this road to the left past Launay (the farm on the left. Cross the Donette and turn right back to the start.

