

Col des Mamelles (597m)

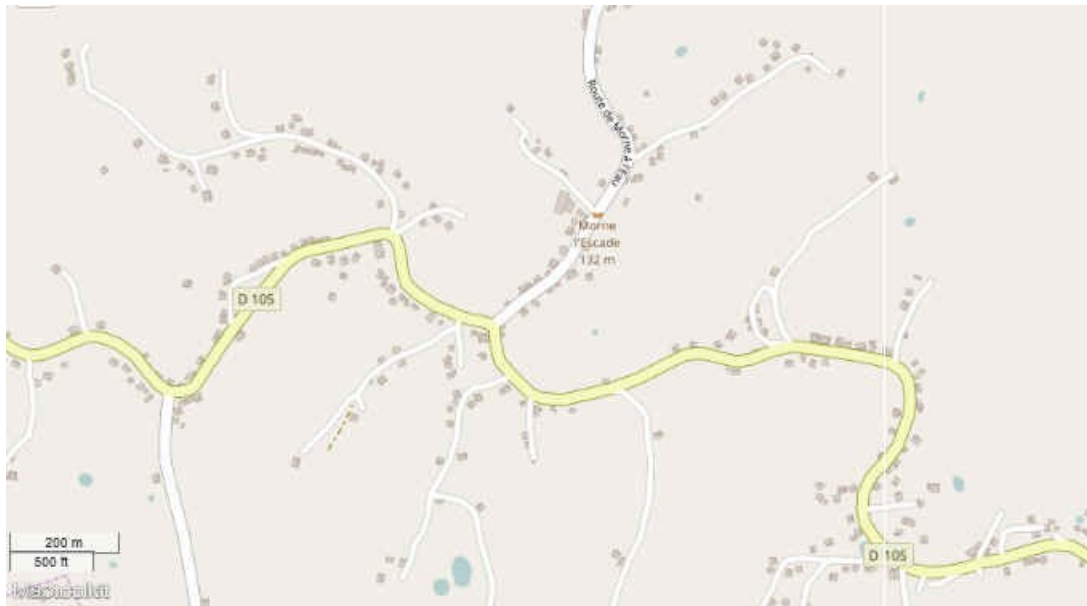
Sommet : -61.73646° 16.18150°



Topography of Guadeloupe

Guadeloupe is an overseas French Archipelago located in the Caribbean. In the strict sense, it refers to Grande-Terre and Basse-Terre ; in the broad sense, it includes smaller islands, like Marie-Galante and Les Saintes.

The two major islands are two rather different playgrounds for climbers. The highest point in Grande-Terre is situated in Les Grands Fonds, in the NW of Sainte-Anne, at **Morne-l'Escale** (132 or 136m, according to different sources). The altitudes are not much to look at, but little brooks make great rivers : the succession of the « mornes » (« hills ») can turn out to be exhausting. The climate, hot and moist, and a possible slippery road after a temporary rain, could make matters worse.



Les Grands Fonds

Basse-Terre, toponymical paradox, is quite another story. It is 1467m at its highest point, at La Soufrière, a volcano whose last eruption dates back to 1976.

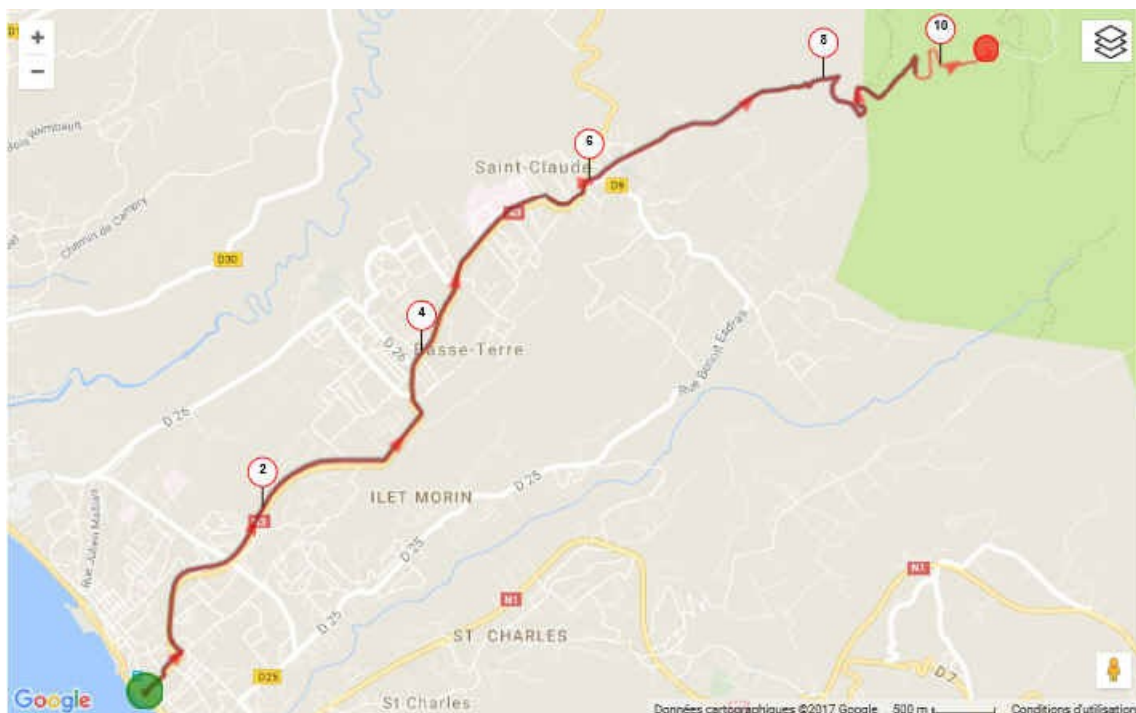
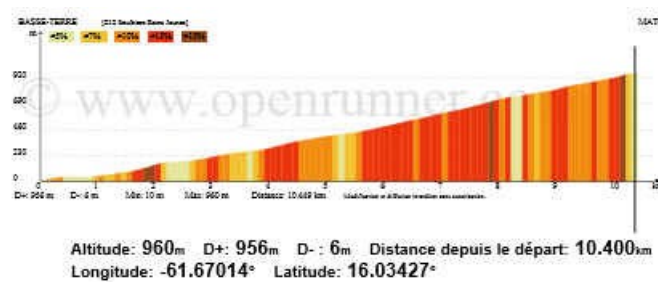
<http://zoom-guadeloupe.fr/randonnees-basse-terre/la-soufriere> (in French)

<http://www.horizon-guadeloupe.com/pages/grands-sites-naturels/le-volcan-la-soufriere-randonnee.html> (in French)

The highest currently accessible place seems to be the « wall » of **Saint-Claude** as far as les **Bains Jaunes**. A crazy « Hors Catégorie » climb : 950m in 10,4km, more than 9% average.

Km % : 3,4 10,2 6,9 7,9 10,6 / 8,7 11,6 12,7 8,7 10,3 + 10% in the last 400m.

In particular : the endless straight lines in the first part and the 2km after Saint-Claude.



The wall is very often visited by the Tour de Guadeloupe. If it is an ITT, like this year, the popular fervour reaches its height. 10 minutes with the local star, Boris Carène :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9KqYaU1VxM>



Through Saint-Claude after a heavy rain



12-13% after Sainte-Claude



Through the rainforest



The pool at the Bains Jaunes

Basse-Terre conceals other treasures, **Morne Mazeau** for instance. The average (600m in 6,7km) hides some « Angliruish » parts, among others a killing 1,2km at 18% as final assault. The wet vegetation, that grows on the road, can make the climb quite simply impossible, like on the picture below. We write it in full knowledge of the facts. The first 1200m at 10% at the foot in Deshaies look like a delicious appetizer.

Downhill MTB : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGk78kc-8ec>



No special effect : what you see is what you get



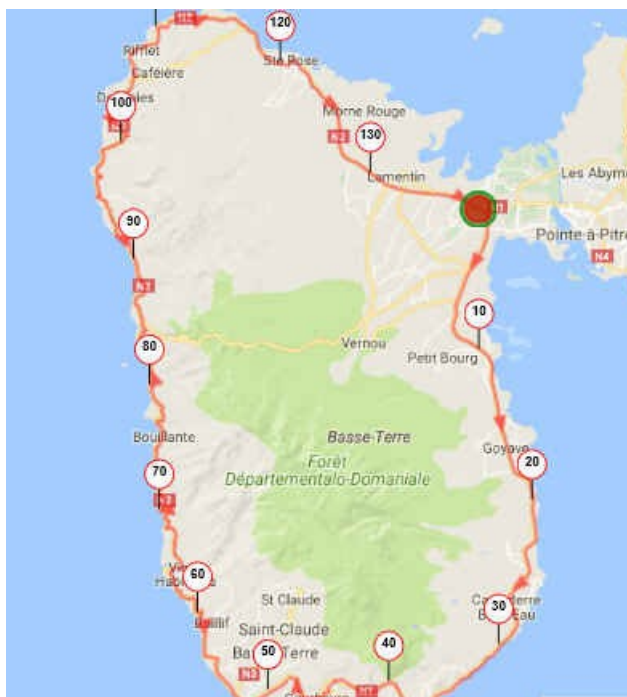
Ready for a downhill run?

Tour de Guadeloupe

It was created in 1948. The winner list is exclusively French until 1971 (most famous winner : Régis Ovion in 1970). Since then, the French dominance is very often challenged by the South Americans, the Colombians in particular. Two former « Pro Tour » riders recently won the race : Mancebo (2010) and Turpin (2012).

The two islands are small. So, the organizers have to criss-cross them to fillfull the 9 stages program. For the climbers, the dead-end roads that start on the seashore to get into the range excepted, a trip around Basse-Terre is really worth the effort.

Let's start at the velodrome Amédée Détraux, near the crossroads N1-N2 roads. Following the N1 toward the south, the war of attrition begins with some short hills (Petit-Bourg, Goyave, Capesterre). On this seashore, a cross-wind is always possible.



After a 30km warm-up, things get complicated : 2 KOM in a row (Morne Salé and Sapotille) on the south-eastern side of the volcano, and the long climb above Trois-Rivières as far as 460m high.

Then, a nice descent through Gourbeyre as far as Basse-Terre (the city), where is located the foot of Saint-Claude/Bains Jaunes. The western side of Basse-Terre (the island) is the most interesting : a coastal roller coaster where the up and down road is interrupted by beaches.

The places to be are Loquet-Pigeon (after Bouillante), Mahault (1st part of the col des Mamelles), Gommier / Baille-Argent (foot at Pointe-Noire) and Estomac à Frédéric (sic) before Deshaies.

The entire loop around Basse-Terre is 137km long, with a 2580m cumulative elevation gain.



Loquet-Pigeon



Estomac à Frédéric



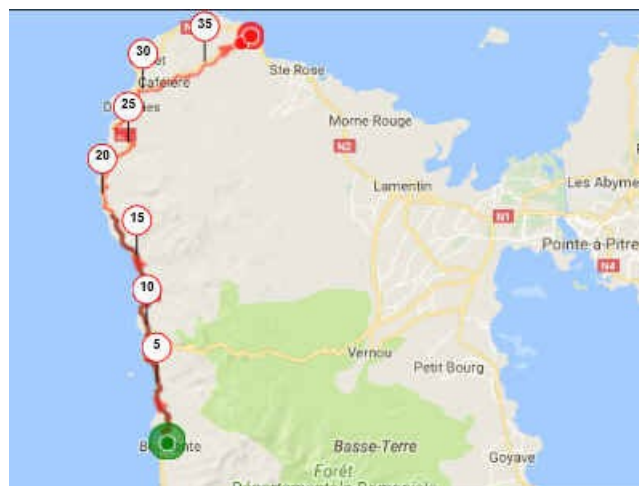
Gommier / Baille-Argent and the « col de Borromée »

The pure climbers would prefer a shorter version Bouillante – Sainte-Rose (north) and back. After the 4 climbs mentioned above, in Grande Anse, it is possible to follow a shortcut, the road Duzer-Desbonnes-Caféière.



The road Duzer-Desbonnes-Caféière and the Piton Sainte-Rose

The round trip is 77km long : 10 climbs and 2000m cum. elevation gain.



If you are insatiable, you'll add the **Piton de Sainte-Rose** (more than 20%). From Sainte-Rose (the village), the dead-end and very uneven road to **Sofaïa** (D19) is 6km long, with 300m elevation gain.

Edition 2017 - outline

Prologue - 28/07 : Pointe-à-Pitre (ITT 2km)

1st stage – 29/07 : Pointe-à-Pitre - Lamentin 167 km

Giratoire Miquel, Poucet, Salines, Sainte-Anne, Saint- François, maison Coloniale, Le Moule, Campêche, Fond-Rose, Anse-Bertrand, Port-Louis, Petit-Canal, Morne-à-l'Eau, Sainte-Anne, Le Gosier, Baie-Mahault, Lamentin.

2nd stage - 30/07

1st part : Lamentin -Gourbeyre 100 km

Pont de Bréfort, La Rosière, Baie-Mahault, Chauvel, Poucet, pont de la Gabarre, Petit-Bourg, Arnouville, Goyave, Salé, Sapotille, Trois-Rivières, Dolé, Gourbeyre

2nd part : Gourbeyre – Saint-Claude (ITT 7 km)

Rivière-Sens, Galion, Champ d'Arbaud, Saint-Claude.

3rd stage – 31/07 : Gourbeyre - Vieux-Habitants 150 km

Hermitage, Capesterre, Goyave, Petit-Bourg, Arnouville, pont de la Gabarre, Perrin, Vieux-Bourg et retour. Salé, Sapotille, Hermitage, Vieux-Habitants.

4th stage - 01/08 : Vieux-Habitants - Bouillante 135 km

Thomas, col des Mamelles, Lamentin, Wonche, Arnouville, Vernou, Bréfort, Sainte-Rose, Deshaies, Estomac à Frédéric, Baille-Argent, Pigeon, Bouillante.

5th stage – 02/08 : Bouillante - Deshaies 143,3 km

Vieux-Habitants, Baillif, Basse-Terre, Vieux-Fort, Sapotille Sud, Caranguaise, Petit-Bourg, Gabarre, Cocoyer, Chauvel, Gabarre, Lamentin, Sainte-Rose.

6th stage – 03/08 : Deshaies - Sainte- Anne 150 km

Clugny, Bréfort, Wonche, Gabare, Les Abymes, Morne-à-l'Eau, Petit- Canal, Port-Louis, Anse-Bertrand, Sainte-Marguerite, Le Moule, Saint- François, Douville.

7th stage – 04/08 : Sainte-Anne - Capesterre-Belle-Eau 158 km

Poirier, Le Moule, Campêche, Port-Louis, Stade de Petit-Canal, Morne-à-l'Eau, Dubisquet, Deshauteur, Moreau, Grand- Bois, Gabarre, Wonche, Lamentin, Castel, Arnouville, Goyave, Routhiers.

8th stage – 05/08

1st part : Capesterre - Les Abymes 110 km

Caranguaise, Montebello, Destrellan, Les Abymes, Providence, Masselas, Boricaud, Chazeau, Masselas, Tamarin.

2nd part : ITT Les Abymes 21 km

Parcours : Boisvin, Caraque, Bois-Rose, Besson, Perrin, Berlette, Boisripeaux, abri des voyageurs.

9th stage – 06/08 : Les Abymes - Baie-Mahault 126,4 km

Doubs, Caraque, Poucet, Fond-Sarail, stade de Baie-Mahault, Belcourt, la Retraite, Daubin, Amouville, Moudong, Fond Sarail, stade. 5 tours.

The race can be watched live on :

<http://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/sport/cyclisme/tour-cycliste-de-guadeloupe?r=guadeloupe>

Col des Mamelles – Portrait

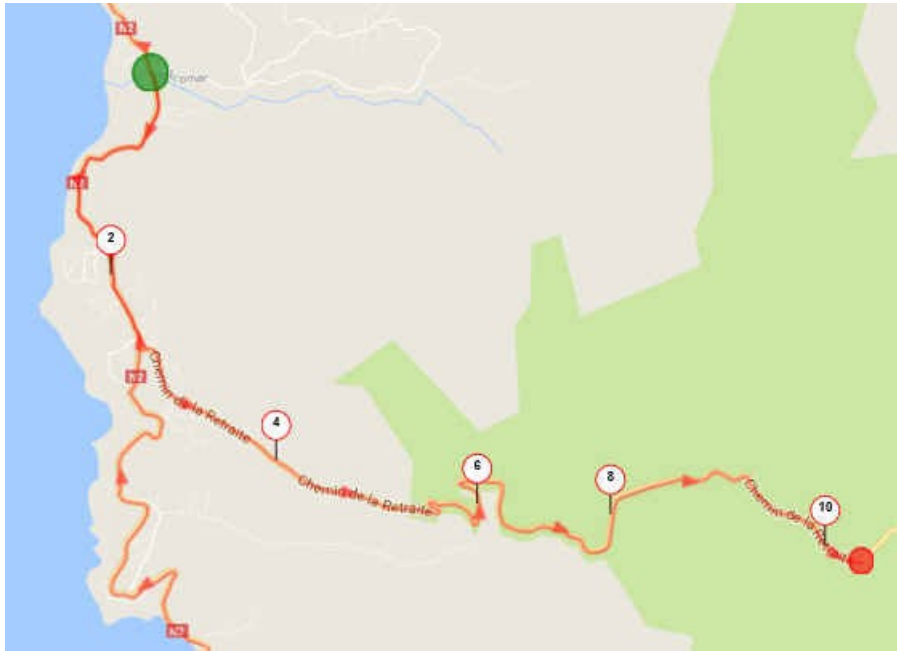


The dead-end roads excepted, the col des Mamelles is the highest paved road on the island. It is located on the « Route de la Traversée », that goes across Basse-Terre from west to east.



The difficulty of both sides is rather different, the western side is shorter and harder : 588m in 9,1km, but the average gradient (6,46%) is misleading.

Km % : 7,0 1,4 7,3 8,8 8,6 / 9,0 7,7 5,4 3,1 + 5m.



One of the feet is in the south of Pointe-Noire, near the « Maison du Cacao ». The first part (1,3km – 80m) climbs above the sea. It's called « Cramier ». It is followed by 1 more or less flat km, as far as the crossroads in Mahault, the beginning of the « Route de la Traversée ». That's the place where the climb becomes harder, from km2 to 7. The most part of the route is made of straight lines, except a few hairpins near the zoological gardens (« Parc Zoologique des Mamelles »).

Some screenshots out of : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTa18yX7yIw>



Just after the crossroads in Mahault : 7%



After the last hairpin



8th km : the hardest part is behind us



The pass

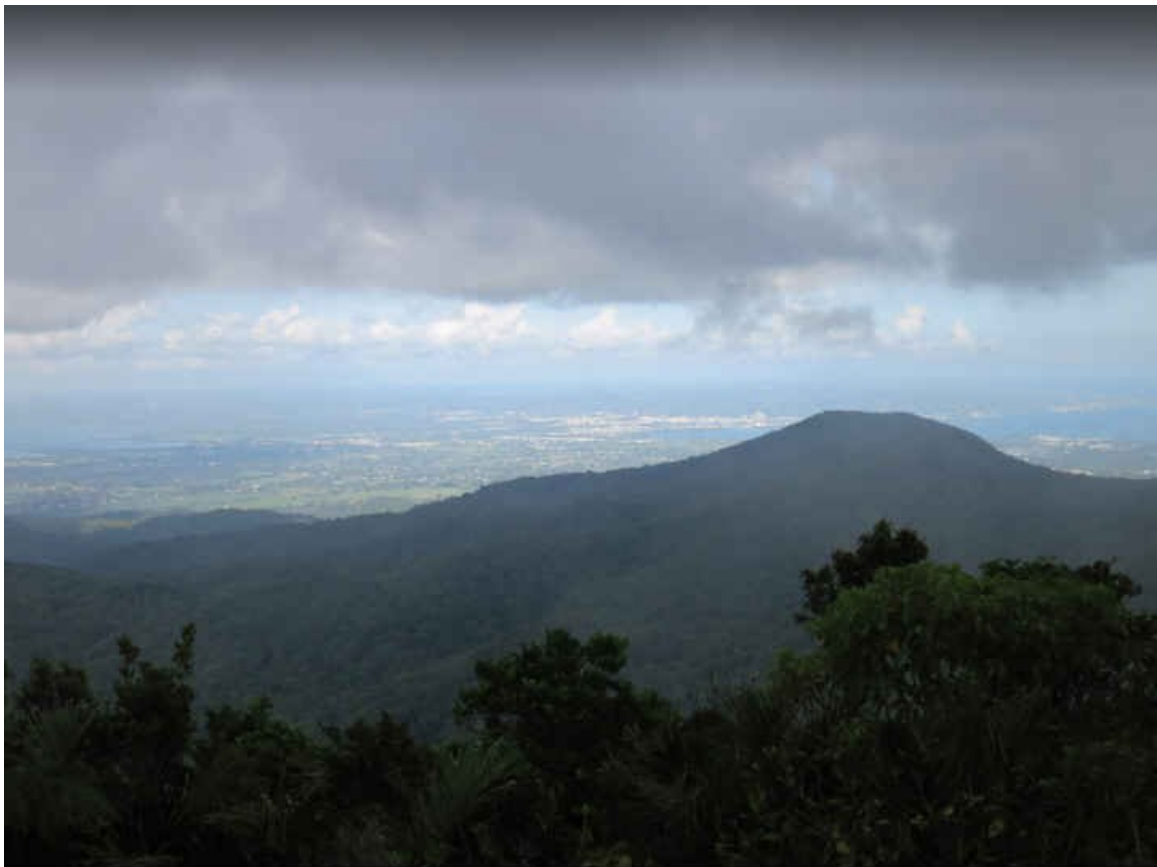
Cherry on the cake : **Morne à Louis**

900m before the top (km8,2), a concrete road leads to the mount : Morne à Louis (743m). 187m elevation gain in 3km, and some parts between 15 and 20%.





Antenna at the top of Morne à Louis



Wide panorama of the plain (eastern side - Baie-Mahault)