

Drenthe Gravel Experience - Ride the Oerprovincie of the Netherlands

Two-day gravel discovery tour for tour operators

Drenthe, known as the *Oerprovincie* (the primeval province) of the Netherlands, offers vast landscapes, ancient heritage and an exceptional network of unpaved roads and forest tracks. With its glacial ridges, heathlands, quiet country lanes and prehistoric monuments, Drenthe is an ideal destination for gravel cycling holidays.

This two-day gravel experience is designed for international tour operators who wish to discover the potential of Drenthe as a cycling holiday destination. The route combines high-quality gravel riding with strong storytelling: ice age landscapes, hunebeds (megalithic tombs over 5,000 years old), traditional 'brinkdorpen' villages and the tranquility that defines this region.

The total distance of the route is approximately 155 km, divided over two days. The terrain is varied but accessible, making it suitable for experienced recreational gravel riders and e-gravel users.

Day 1 – Groningen to Annen (Breeland)

This tour starts Tuesday after lunch in Groningen, the group departs by gravel bike towards the province of Drenthe. Within a short distance, the urban surroundings give way to open countryside, forests and unpaved roads.

The route follows sections of the Hondsrug, a unique ice age ridge that forms the backbone of the Drenthe landscape. Riders experience quiet gravel tracks, forest roads, traditional villages and open heathland.

Arrival in the late afternoon at **Breeland in Annen**; informal and welcoming accommodation ideal for small cycling groups. Dinner and overnight stay.

Day 2 Annen to Diever (Landhotel Diever)

The second day continues south-west through increasingly diverse landscapes. Long gravel stretches through forests and heathlands alternate with quiet rural roads and sandy paths.

The route approaches the area of the Drents-Friese Wold National Park, one of the largest continuous nature reserves in the Netherlands.

Arrival in Diever at **Landhotel Diever**, a comfortable and charming accommodation and an excellent base for extending the stay with additional cycling days.

Good to Know

Drenthe is positioned as a destination for space, tranquility and authenticity rather than mass tourism. The region offers:

- Excellent cycling infrastructure
- Clearly navigable routes via GPX
- Accommodation suitable for small to medium-sized groups
- Easy train connections to Groningen and onward to Amsterdam and Schiphol Airport
- Strong potential for 3–7 day scalable gravel products

Optional extensions may include visits to hunebeds, local food experiences, national park loops or dark sky storytelling.

Bikes

Gravel bikes or e-gravel bikes are recommended.

The route consists primarily of:

Compacted gravel roads

Forest tracks

Heathland paths

Quiet secondary asphalt roads

Wide gravel tyres (minimum 38–40 mm recommended) are advised for comfort and stability.

Bikes are available in multiple frame sizes. When applying, please provide rider height to ensure the correct frame size. The bikes will be ready for you at the 6th.

Technical Route Profile

Total distance: approximately 155 km (two days combined)

Elevation range: from approx. -3 m to 32 m above sea level

Total elevation gain: limited, with gentle rolling sections along the Hondsrug ridge

Surface composition (approximate):

60–70% unpaved (gravel roads, forest tracks, compacted sand paths)

30–40% quiet secondary asphalt roads

Technical level: moderate

Physical level: suitable for experienced recreational gravel riders and e-gravel users

Traffic exposure: minimal, predominantly rural and natural areas

Navigation: GPX-based

The elevation profile shows a gradual build-up across the Hondsrug ridge area, followed by gently undulating terrain towards the south-west of the province. There are no steep climbs, but the rolling character adds variation and rhythm to the ride.

Organizer

Marketing Drenthe