RouteXpert's Handbook

PUBLISHED BY MYROUTE-APP
REVIEWED BY THE RX MENTOR GROUP
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Changes

New: Pink always a via point, Yellow your choice via or shaping point. (12-01-2024)
New: Yellow and Pink route point as via point (26-07-2023)

The major change to the manual is that we would like you to try and equalize your routes with the OpenStreetMap. So, turn on both TomTom and OpenStreetMap in the Compare With tool. This is because there are several navigation apps including Calimoto that use the OSM map and we would like our RX routes to be accurate for these navigation apps too.
We are aware that the OSM map is more difficult to align with the Here map than the TomTom map and if by trying to align the OSM track affects the original route, just do the best that you can.

Who are the RouteXperts?

We were founded in December of 2018 with one goal: to create and review amazing routes for everyone, usable on every device, available on every continent. With that goal in mind, we set out into the world.

In 1961, Japanese electrical engineer Hidetsugu Yagi first introduced the idea of a wireless communication and navigation system. At this time, such ideas where so new and futuristic that nobody considered the idea that such technology would ever be used for something other than military campaigns and the exploration of space.

Today we live in a new century. A century where the future is brighter than ever, where technology advances at a pace that has never been seen before and where Mr. Yagi's original idea for a military navigation system is now adopted by many companies to make things that are not military at all. Garmin, TomTom and Google (to name a few) have built amazing devices that clip onto your car or bike that show you your route through the power of space satellites. These so-called satnavs not only navigate from A to B, these days they also allow users to enter their own custom-made routes that take them on amazing road trips all over the globe.

As RouteXperts we have taken it upon ourselves to create a symbol of quality that is both recognizable for everyone and holds true quality as well. For this purpose, all who now wish to join us in our goal to create and review amazing routes for everyone, usable on every device, available on every continent, must now first complete the RouteXpert accreditation program. This manual will inform you of everything you might ever need to know about completing the programme and becoming a RouteXpert. Additionally, this manual serves as excellent reference material for existing RouteXperts looking to refresh their memory.

MyRoute-app Academy

Rewards!

What are the benefits of Being a RouteXpert?

The RouteXperts are facilitated, sponsored by MyRoute-app, the #1 all-in-one routing tool for motorcyclists and motorists alike.

If a RouteXpert does something for the group, such as reviewing a route, he or she gains RX points. These points stack up and you will receive rewards at each milestone reached. A full list of rewards is listed further on in this document.

What is an accreditation programme?

An accreditation is an action or process of officially recognizing someone as having a particular status or being qualified to perform a particular activity.

The RouteXpert accreditation programme is the process to attain the status of RouteXperts and to be qualified to create and review routes that comply with the quality level of RouteXperts.
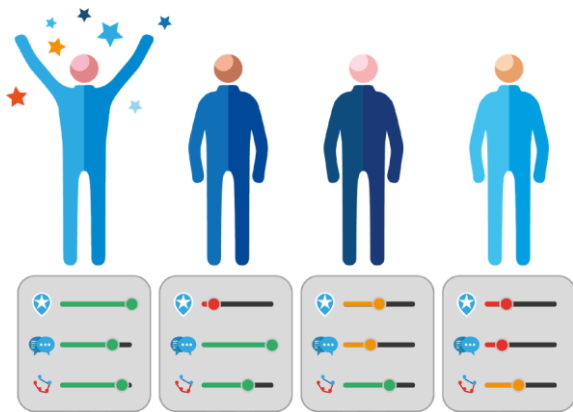
The Road to becoming a RouteXpert

To become a RouteXpert, you must complete three steps. After this, you are a certified RouteXpert. Below you can read what these three steps mean.

Step 1:
Approving your application

Starting May 2019, all RouteXpert applications will be reviewed before approval. This way we will be able to improve the way in which we verify that participants will be able to comply with the minimum quality standards applicable for RouteXperts.
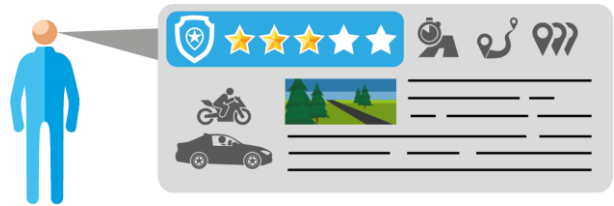
Step 2:
Routing Exam

The Routing Exam tests your abilities in making and reviewing routes. The manual you're reading right now forms the backbone of the theoretical knowledge you will need to complete the exam. You can take the exam up to three (3) times. After this you will be exempted from re-applying for one (1) year.

Step 3:
The RX Trial Period

After the Routing Exam you will enter the RX trial period. In the trial period you will be guided through the process of becoming a full RouteXpert by the RouteXpert mentors. The trial period is completed by successfully creating 12 unique route reviews in one year, so you maintain the status of RouteXpert with the associated benefits.

The history of trial periods
A Novitiate is someone who has just started to learn something. Someone who has yet to prove himself to the outside world. In the distant past, completing a novitiate (trial period) was usually the only way to truly join a group of craftsmen, a guild or an order of knights. Today, we continue that tradition.

RouteXpert Rewards

As an official MRA RouteXpert you can earn rewards through a scoring system. You gain scores in the form of RX points. If you accumulate enough RX points you automatically become eligible for a varied number of gifts.

The rewards structure is available to view on the website and may be subject to change, the value of the rewards will remain approximately the same. It's important to mention that a review is only counted as an official review once it has been approved by a mentor. You do not have to keep track of the number of reviews you've made, our system does that automatically. The gifts cannot be transferred and/or exchanged for money. The rewards table on the website is self-explanatory. As of mid-March 2019, we started working with a points system, each review that is accepted is one point, reviews in some regions are worth more than one point. This will also be presented in an MRA RouteXpert Dashboard as of mid-March 2019, a secure environment where only MRA RouteXperts can log in, the dashboard can be found under your profile picture. As a RouteXpert, you will also have free access to MRA Navigation Next after completing the trial period and all the time that you are active as a RouteXpert.

Rewards table as of January 1st 2023

RX level	Title	Score	Reward*
1	Starter	10	Badge on your Profile
2	Newbie	25	1 MyRoute-app Snood
3	Rookie	50	1 MyRoute-app T-Shirt + Gold Lifetime **
4	Advanced	100	1 MyRoute-app Sweater
5	Senior	250	1 MyRoute-app Summer Jacket
6	Senior +	350	
7	Master	500	1 MyRoute-app GPS watch

* Rewards are subject to change and will be communicated through the MRA rewards table on the RouteXpert dashboard, found on the MRA website.

** Gold 1 year issued every consecutive year during the period in which the receiver stays an accredited RouteXpert as part of MyRoute-app B.V.

RouteXpert Regions

Use the map to choose locations where more RX points can be gained.

Some areas award you with more than one RX point. To view this, visit the "Region map" in the RouteXpert dashboard.

- Blue : 1 RX is awarded for every route in one of these regions.
- Green : 2 RX points are awarded for every route in one of these regions.
- Red : 3 RX points are awarded for every route in one of these regions.

Additional rewards: MRA may give out additional rewards for certain regions. Keep an eye on Slack for this purpose. (Slack is a communication platform that MRA uses, you will be invited to join).

Review Checklist!

Every RouteXpert route will be checked based on this checklist. Know it and use it when designing your trips.

Route title

- o The route title should contain the name of the departure and/or arrival place name. Nicknames, handles or other unique geographic identifiers such as Swiss Alps or Exmoor are also permissible. This is to allow for the route to be searched for within the RouteXpert library. The route title (Name) can be found in the menu option: Route information.

Route Description

- o The route description appears under your header picture at the top of your review. It is the first text that users will see and therefore it needs to be mouth-watering to encourage the user to read on and possibly download your route. The route description must contain a relevant summary of the route. For example: whether you have already ridden the route and in what year, or if it is part of a multi-day tour. It should also describe the type of landscape that it uses, mountain, coastal, rural or urban. Include any information for tolls or ferry crossings. Alert users of any particularly difficult sections for novice riders, such as gravel roads or multiple hairpins, or if there are sections where Garmin and TomTom disagree. And finally, add the reason why you have awarded your star rating. Try to keep the route description short but concise. The **Route Description** text box can be found in the left side column: **Route information**.

Route planning

- o Always use the Here planning map for constructing your routes, this is because MRA Navigation Next also uses this map. Use the **Compare Route With** tool from the toolkit and select both the TomTom and OpenStreetMap options. Making the route equal with the red TomTom line is <u>essential</u> and if possible, use enough route points so that the blue OpenStreetMap line is also equal.

Route points

- o Place the route points accurately, away from bridges, roundabouts and junctions (20 metres if possible). This is to allow for any inaccuracies from the satellite signal from when the map was made and in satnavs devices while using a route. Position route points where the black (Here) and red (TomTom) tracks converge or at intersections of the tracks if they crisscross. This makes the route compatible with MRA – Navigation, Garmin and TomTom satnavs. If this is not possible, place the foot of the route point on the black Here line. In this case, make sure that the red (TomTom) and blue (OSM) route lines follow the black (Here) line. If this is not possible, place 2 pink shaping points at the start and end of the deviation.

Route points (coloured)

- o The coloured route points used should match the key found in this RouteXpert manual below. The name of the coloured route point should be adjusted to reflect what it is indicating. Use English language for names and notes. Notes that have been added to coloured route points can be read by users using MRA Navigation and on a .PDF file. You can only enter a maximum of 512 characters in the note. If you paste text into a note, check that all of the text is visible after pasting.

Shaping, via-points and Insert pause

- o Choose whether your route point is a Shaping point (balloon shape) or Via point (hand shape). Shaping points are just used to shape your route, Via points must be visited. Some satnav devices can ignore Shaping points should the user decide to wander off course but will need to pass a Via point. If a Via point is missed, the user will be routed back until it has been visited. Use via points for important route points that must be visited. All Red and Green points should be Via points.
- o Note: Do not use more than 29 via points in 1 route; Garmin devices can only process a maximum of 29 via points in each route without splitting the route into two routes!
- o If you plan a stop at any route point you can add a pause break by selecting **Insert Pause** and choose for how long. You can also add a separate icon by clicking the clock.

Route point photos

- o To embellish your route further, you can add photos to your coloured route points by clicking on the Add Photo icon. Only use photos that you have permission to share. Normally, a screenshot of the Streetview from MRA makes a good route point photo. This can be useful for showing what there is to photograph at green route points or what can be seen at a yellow route point or maybe a tricky section for pink route points. Only add a maximum of four photos to a route point, this is to keep the .pdf version of your route tidy.

Route points (sum)

- o Use as few route points as is required to construct a route that is equal for Here, TomTom and possibly OpenStreetMap. Try to use fewer than 200 route points. When more than 200 route points are used this should be mentioned in the description of the route as some satnav devices will not function correctly when more than 200 route points are used.
- o Tip: Depending on the environment and type of road, place a Shaping point every 3 to 5 kilometers.

Skip Function

o If the route refuses to go along a section of road or to cross a river via a ferry, you can use the **Skip** function to enable your route to continue. This effectively switches off the route planner between two route points and will draw a straight line. Only use this when you have thoroughly checked why the planner did not want to use the road or ferry. Maybe the road is now closed or the ferry no longer operates. To use the Skip function, place a route point on either side of the closed section of road or river crossing. Select Skip on the farthest route point and you will see a straight line drawn between the two.

POIs (points of interest)

o Use a POIs to indicate the location of a restaurant, museum or other attraction that you have used a coloured route point for. If there are no POIs in the MRA library, use the **Manage** tab and then **Add** to add your own. POIs can then be made visible on select Garmin and TomTom satnavs. POIs are also visible in MRA Navigation.

Checking the route

o It is very important to thoroughly check the route when finished by fully zooming in on each route point whilst having the **Compare Route With** tool activated with both TomTom and OpenStreetMap selected. Use the magnifying glass in the first route point and then use the right arrow > to move to and check the next route point, do this for all route points. Ensure that the overall route is also checked when zoomed out. Pay attention to any coloured route points when making adjustments, as each time you move a coloured route point it will have to be named again. When making adjustments, be aware that it can also affect your review when inserting route points later, if you have already written your review and have referred to route point numbers in the review. It is probably better not to refer to route point numbers in your written review.

The Review Editor

o Open the RX Review section from the left side information column. This section is only available for RouteXperts and it is where you add your **Expert opinion** or star rating for your routes. RouteXpert routes should only be 3 star or above, only select whole stars as only whole stars are visible in your finished review. Try and be consistent with your star ratings and only use 5 stars for exceptional routes. Your mentor will be able to give you more information for star ratings. Now click **Edit review** to open the review editor. Click on both language boxes to choose which language you will be writing your review and description in. Now click the **Header image** button to add your header photo.

Photographs

o Add 3 photographs to the route that correctly reflect the visuals of the route. Attached photographs must be of high resolution and include a title that identifies where or what they show. Always check that you have permission to use the photographs especially if downloaded from the Internet. The header image should have a resolution size of approximately 1920 x 520.

Written review

- o The review should be written in the style of a travel brochure and not a travel blog. The experiences that you had may not be what the user will experience. Try and make your review sound exciting, this is your chance to sell your route. Write about the fantastic landscape and beautiful scenery along with any attractions that the route visits. Tip: Use Notepad or Word to write your review and paste it into the review editor. Be mindful not to copy any url hyperlinks from websites like Wiki.

Hyperlinks

- o A maximum of 5 Hyperlinks for hotels, restaurants or attractions that are visited or mentioned should be included below the review. Check that they work and use the English version of the website if possible.

MRA Animation

- o Now that you have made your route, click on Animate to make a great MRA Animation of your RX route. Have a play around with the settings until you are happy with the result and change the setting on **public** from No to **Yes.**

Facebook Share

- o Your mentor will invite you to become an admin for the RouteXperts Facebook group. Only admins can post directly to the group. As an admin you may receive notifications to allow new members to join the group or to participate, please ignore all of these, we have group admins that take care of these.
- o Now it is time to share your route to the RouteXperts Facebook group. Use the link that was emailed to you as this will link to your review (not just the route). Add as many photos as you like but make the first one a screenshot of the map of your route. You can even add your MRA Animation to make your Facebook post even better. Use English for the text and include a description for each photo please. Once it is posted, you can share the post to your friends or any groups that you may belong to.

The Rules

As a RouteXpert you will have to adhere to the rules dictated in the latest edition of the RouteXpert manual. Always make sure to download the latest version through the MRA RouteXpert dashboard. The dashboard can be found under your profile picture.

- Accreditation
  1. RouteXpert accreditations may only be issued by an issuing authority;
  2. The sole issuing authority for RouteXpert accreditations is MyRouteApp B.V.;
  3. An accreditation is valid for one (1) year unless explicitly stated otherwise in writing by the issuing authority after June 1st 2019;
  4. Accreditations cannot be passed from one person to another and cannot be granted to a group;
  5. Accreditations may be lost due to inappropriate behavior, breaking the rules or performing an act deemed unworthy of RouteXperts by MyRouteApp B.V.;
- Registration
  1. In order to become a RouteXpert, any applicant is required to have a registered MyRoute-app account due to the fact that RouteXperts work solely through the MyRoute-app platform;
  2. Applicants may withdraw their registration at any time free of consequence, however registering and withdrawing should not be done in a harassing manner;
- Routing Exam
  1. Grading of the Routing Exam and giving a verdict on its completion is a right solely reserved by MyRouteApp B.V.;
  2. All applicants may take the Routing Exam up to three (3) times before being exempted from further participation in the RouteXpert accreditation program for a period of one (1) year;
  3. The version of the Routing Exam that is to be completed is indicated by MyRouteApp B.V. in writing;
- RX-trial period
  1. The RX trial period is a period lasting a maximum of one (1) year, starting from the day that the issuing authority communicates the completion of the Routing Exam to the applicant and ending exactly one year later, unless explicitly stated otherwise in writing by the issuing authority after June 1st 2019;
  2. The RX trial period is completed upon successfully submitting and completing at least twelve (12) RouteXpert reviews by the applicant. After this period, your routes will continue to be mentored before being moved to the RX library;
  3. RX trial period participants may not wield, wear or publicly display RouteXpert visual branding unless clearly indicated that they are still Novitiates;

- Behavior
    1. RouteXperts are expected to behave in a socially acceptable manner while wearing or publicly displaying RouteXpert visual branding or while otherwise directly recognizable as a RouteXpert;
    2. RouteXperts are not to advise illegal, criminal or otherwise unsavory activities in their reviews, routes or route points;
    3. While judging how to act on the behavior of a RouteXpert, MyRouteApp B.V. retains the right to consult senior RouteXperts;
- Rewards
    1. MyRouteApp B.V. facilitates the production and shipping of the rewards and retains the right to change this on the go, for example in order to produce the best results;
    2. Rewards are singular with exception of the Gold 1 year reward, this reward can be extended for a period deemed necessary by MyRouteApp B.V., for example the entire period in which a RouteXpert remains accredited

Step By Step Review Guide

First Time Checklist

New RouteXperts follow this checklist:

- ✓ Make a separate folder in your MyRoute-app library for reviewing routes with the name **MRA RouteXpert Reviews**. Make this folder private but the routes inside **MUST** be public.
- ✓ You can do this by going to profile, click on routes, then click on New for a new folder.
- ✓ In your MRA RouteXpert reviews folder you can make sub-folders! This is handy if you plan on making many reviews!

Step 1: Using a route

A. From your own library. Just drag the route from your library to your new MRA RouteXpert Reviews folder.

B. From someone else's MRA library. In this case you have to open the route and check if the route is usable. If it is a good route, click **+ use route**. Click **Confirm** when copying the name, you can change this later. The route will now open in your library. Return to My Routes and then drag the route into your MRA RouteXpert Reviews folder. If the basis for your RouteXpert route is from another MyRoute-app user, please credit them in your route description.

C. From .gpx file upload. You can also upload .gpx files via the **Upload** button in the **Route lab**. Once uploaded, drag the new route into your MRA RouteXpert Review folder and work on it to bring it up to RouteXpert standards.

Coloured route point colour key and type.

Blue	This is a standard shaping point used to shape the route.	Shaping point
Yellow*	From this exact position you can see something.	Shaping point or Via point
Green	A viewpoint or something interesting to photograph.	Via point
Red	Stopping point, for coffee, lunch, fuel, hotel etc.	Via point
Pink	Route information or warnings. examples optional route, local information, road condition.	Via point

* Yellow: Use a Via point for any route point that contains interesting or important information in the note.
Please remember that a <u>maximum of 29 Via points</u> can be used in a single route. There is no need to add a pause or icon.
Exception: You can add 10 min pause in a pink via point when used for a short ferry crossing.

ROUTE POINT ICONS AND PAUSE BREAKS:

In addition to using coloured route points, please add the following icons and pause breaks by clicking on the yellow clock and Insert pause buttons:

Yellow	Add the viewpoint icon, no pause break as yellow does not indicate a stop.
Green	Add the camera icon and a minimum of 10 minutes as a pause break.
Red	The icon could be food, coffee, fuel or drinks, add a pause of 10 minutes for a fuel stop, 30 minutes for coffee or drinks and 1 hour for a lunch stop.
Pink	Add warning icon for any obstacle where you use the pink point. Example: Ferry icon for Ferry crossings.

POIs for coloured route points:

Use a POIs to indicate the location of a fuel station, restaurant, museum, viewpoint or other attraction that you have used a coloured route point for. If there are no POIs in the MRA POI library, use the **Manage** tab and then **Add** to add your own. POIs can then be made visible on select Garmin and TomTom satnavs.

Step 2: Going into review mode

With your route open, click on the **RX Review** tab in the left side column to open the RouteXpert mode and start reviewing your route.

    A. Choose your Expert opinion or star rating based on what you think of the route.
        o *Tip: you shouldn't review routes that you consider are less than 3 stars*.
    B. Click on **Edit review** to open the review editor.

Step 3: Checking the route

    A. Plan the route on the Here map (MRA Navigation uses this map) and check all route points by fully zooming in on them, check if the route points are on the correct side of the carriageway and are not too close to junctions, exits, merging lanes, roundabouts and viaducts.
    B. Now you can flesh out the route by adding stops (red via points), sights (yellow via points) and photograph moments (green via points) to the route. Add relevant information in the notes of all coloured route points. We use pink route points to draw the user's attention to something. For example: 'Attention: tight hairpin turns up ahead!' or if TomTom and Garmin disagree.
    C. Make sure that the colour of the route points match the MRA RouteXpert colour key. Check those icons, pause breaks and POIs have been added.
    D. The Here and TomTom maps don't always agree, you will see this when using the Compare with tool. When adding or moving a route point, try to place it where the black and red lines converge or cross, if this isn't possible, place the foot of the route point marker on the black Here line. If the black and red lines will not follow the same course, add a pink route point with information and mention it in the route description and offer a solution.

Step 4: Adding a description & star rating

Now that you are fully accustomised with your route this is a good time to write your route description. How to do this can be found in the Review Checklist above.

RouteXpert routes should only be 3 star or above, only select whole stars as only whole stars are visible in your finished review. Try and be consistent with your star ratings and only use 5 stars for exceptional routes. Your mentor will be able to give you more information for star ratings.

Step 5: Writing the review

After choosing, checking, updating and embellishing the route, you are all set for writing an amazing review. You choose the style of your review and how you phrase it. It's all up to you.

You can find a list of links to good reviews for you to read through at the end of this manual.

Click the **RX Review** tab in the left side column and then click on **Edit review**. Select the language that you will type in for the review as well as for the route description. This is necessary for language recognition as your review will be automatically translated.

Each review requires 3 good quality photos. You can select a photo from your hard drive. If you don't have beautiful photos of your own, then you can also download photos via Google Images (always check copyright usage). You can also for example, add beautiful MRA Streetview screenshots of the route.

Add the photo and then you can adjust its position in the photo box. Now add a title to the photo that describes where the photo was taken. A good photo can make the difference of somebody reading your review or finding another route to use!

Now type your review in the text box, keep it concise and write it in the style of a travel brochure and not a travel blog. Make it exciting but factual, highlight the good parts but also advise of any tricky sections. If the route includes tolls or ferries, mention this in the Route description as well. Be creative, check out routes made by other experts for inspiration. You may find it easier to write your review using a word processor programme like MS Word or Notepad and then pasting the text into the review editor.

Add hyperlink URLs for hotels or attractions in the boxes below the review text box. You can only see the hyperlink URL boxes when you first open the review editor. If they are not visible, click **Save**, close the route and open it again from your library.

When you have finished click on **Save** and then **Close** to save your review.

Final step: Submitting the review

You can submit your review by clicking **Add to RE library** in the RX Review section.

You will see a short notification that you are about to submit your route. Make sure you are only submitting a route that you want to submit! Now copy the route url from the address bar and paste it into the New Reviews channel in Slack and tagging your mentor. Your mentor will need time to evaluate your route and guide you through the process of creating a superb RouteXpert route.

Outcome 1: Review accepted.

If your review was accepted, then that means it is now part of the great MRA RouteXpert library, the largest verified route library in the world and you have been awarded RouteXpert point/s.

Keep writing RouteXpert reviews to gain more points to go towards great gifts.

Outcome 2: Review not accepted

If your review was not accepted, then it has not yet reached the standard required to be entered into the RouteXpert Library. Your mentor will have left you a message in Slack containing suggestions on how to improve.

Advanced tips:

- Earning more points
    - o Certain regions give more RX points than others. Look at the "Region map" for more info. Red coloured regions give the most RX points for your reviews.
    - o Additionally, you can always make a collection (worth 2 RX points) or see if the community manager has an ongoing request for help.
- A great big audience
    - o There is a library of photos compiled by all RouteXperts on the RX Facebook group, your photos will also be included.
    - o These photos may then be uploaded alongside a link to your route review on Instagram, Facebook and all other interesting channels.
- Giving feedback
    - o You may be selected to become a RX mentor or to give feedback on submitted route reviews. It is absolutely crucial that all feedback is given in a constructive and appropriate manner. Bashing and negative comments hardly ever help people improve. Aside from that, helping each other learn is a part of life.

Example Reviews & Collections.

We have collected some great example reviews for you to get inspired by. There's a selection of both short and long reviews, illustrating how you can apply your own style whilst writing reviews

Roundtour : (**Isle of Skye roundtrip from Dornie**)

A to B Route : (**Estadens-to-Montory-over-the-Tourmalet-and-Aubisque**)

A to B Route : (**Corte-to-Vescovato**)

Roundtour : (**Rurtalsperre-Schleiden**)

A to B Route : (**Von-Welschnofen-nach-Lazzo-di-Cadore**)

Roundtour : (**Szombathely-via-Burgenland-en-Orsegi-National-Park**)

Roundtour : (**Melton-Mowbray-via-Market-Harborough-and-Bourne**)

A to B Route : (**Bessans-to-Les-Gets**)

A to B Route : (**Eugene-to-Roseburg**)

A to B Route : (**Vicksburg-New-Orleans**)

A – B Route : (**Frederiksoord-Willemsoord**)

Collections

Finland
Sweden & Norway
Canada
Germany
Poland Slovakia and the Czech Republic

MyRoute-app
Academy