GEO TREK
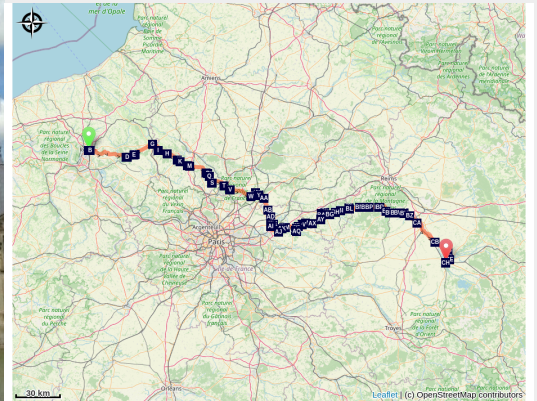
04. 590 France (2/3)
France - Normandie

Chantilly (Amis saint Colomban)

1100km long, the route that took Colomban to his destination in 590 is divided into 3 parts that can be followed successively or indistinctly. Starting in Rouen, this second part of the continental route leads to Vitry-le-François through Normandy, Hauts-de-France and the Grand-Est region.

Around 590, Colomban and his Irish monks arrived on the continent via the west coast and penetrated inland to the east as far as the foot of the Vosges Mountains where they settled for about twenty years. Their exact route is not known except for a few places listed in Colomban's biography written in 640. The proposed itinerary follows this general direction, passing through the cultural and historical highlights of this northern part of France.

Useful information

Practice : Pedestrian

Duration : 0 min

Length : 396.1 km

Trek ascent : 5439 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Multi-day trek

Trek

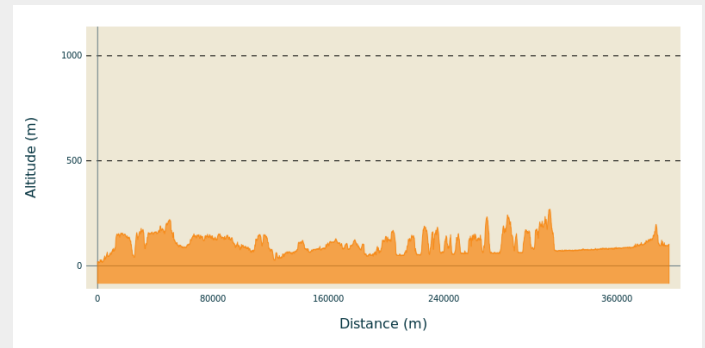**Departure** : 76000 Rouen
Arrival : 51300 Vitry-le-François
Cities : 1. Normandie
2. Hauts-de-France
3. Île-de-France
4. Grand Est

Altimetric profile

Min elevation 15 m   Max elevation 269 m

This crossing of France is quite direct, like Colomban who sought to withdraw as quickly as possible as a hermit deepest inland marked by the meeting of the first mountain range that was the Vosges.

This 1100km route is proposed in 47 stages of 24km of daily average:

1. Saint-Malo - Saint-Coulomb
2. Saint-Coulomb - le Vivier-sur-Mer
3. Le Vivier-sur-Mer - Mont-St-Michel
4. Le Mont-St-Michel - Avranches
5. Avranches - Petit Celland
6. Petit Celland - St Pois
7. St Pois - Vire
8. Vire-Vassy
9. Vassy - Pont d'Ouilly
10. Ouilly Bridge - Falaise
11. Cliff - St Pierre-sur-Dives
12. St Pierre-sur-Dives - Lisieux
13. Lisieux - Cormeilles
14. Cormeilles - Pont-Audemer
15. Pont-Audemer - Our Lady of Gravenchon
16. Notre Dame de Gravenchon - St Wandrille
17. St Wandrille - Duclair
18. Duclair - Rouen
19. Rouen - Perriers-sur-Andelle
20. Perriers-sur-Andelle - Gournay-en-Bray
21. Gournays-en-Bray - Troussures
22. Holes - Noailles
23. Noailles - Chantilly
24. Chantilly - Nanteuil le Haudoin
25. Nanteuil le Haudoin - Meaux
26. Meaux - Jouarre by Ussy
27. Jouarre by Ussy - Nanteuil-sur-Marne
28. Nanteuil-sur-Marne - Château-Thierry
29. Château-Thierry - Dormans

30. Dormans - Damery
31. Damery - Tours-sur-Marne
32. Tours-sur-Marne - Châlons-en-Champagne
33. Châlons-en-Champagne - la Chaussée-sur-Marne
34. la Chaussée-sur-Marne - Vitry-le-François
35. Vitry-le-François - St Rémy-en-Bouzemont
36. St Rémy-en-Bouzemont - Montier-en-Der
37. Montier-en-Der - Wassy
38. Wassy - Chevillon
39. Chevillon - Biencourt-sur-Orge
40. Biencourt-sur-Orge - Gondrecourt-le-Château
41. Gondrecourt-le-Château - Domrémy-la-Pucelle
42. Domrémy-la-Pucelle - Châtenois
43. Châtenois - Contrexéville
44. Contrexéville - Darney
45. Darney - Bains-les-Bains
46. Baths - Luxeuil-les-Bains
47. Luxeuil-les-Bains - Annegray

Stages :

1. Rouen to Perriers-sur-Andelle
24.8 km / 328 m D+ / 6 h 30

2. Perriers-sur-Andelle to Gournay-en-Bray
31.9 km / 499 m D+ / 8 h

3. Gournay-en-Bray to Troussures
23.5 km / 249 m D+ / 6 h

4. Troussures-Auneuil to Cauvigny
24.3 km / 230 m D+ / 5 h

5. Cauvigny to Chantilly
25.4 km / 310 m D+ / 6 h 30

6. Chantilly to Nanteuil-le-Haudouin
31.7 km / 285 m D+ / 8 h

7. Nanteuil-le-Haudouin to Meaux
28.6 km / 215 m D+ / 7 h 30

8. Meaux to Jouarre
31.2 km / 498 m D+ / 8 h

9. Jouarre no Nanteuil-sur-Marne
13.8 km / 315 m D+ / 3 h 30

10. Nanteuil-sur-Marne to Château-Thierry
21.8 km / 487 m D+ / 5 h 30

11. Château-Thierry in Dormans
24.8 km / 526 m D+ / 6 h 30

12. Dormans to Damery
22.9 km / 515 m D+ / 6 h

13. Damery to Tours-sur-Marne
24.7 km / 481 m D+ / 6 h 30

14. Tours-sur-Marne to Châlons en Champagne
23.2 km / 117 m D+ / 6 h

15. Châlons-en-Champagne to La Chaussée-sur-Marne
23.3 km / 128 m D+ / 6 h

16. La Chaussée-sur-Marne to Vitry-le-François
24.6 km / 307 m D+ / 6 h 30

On your path...
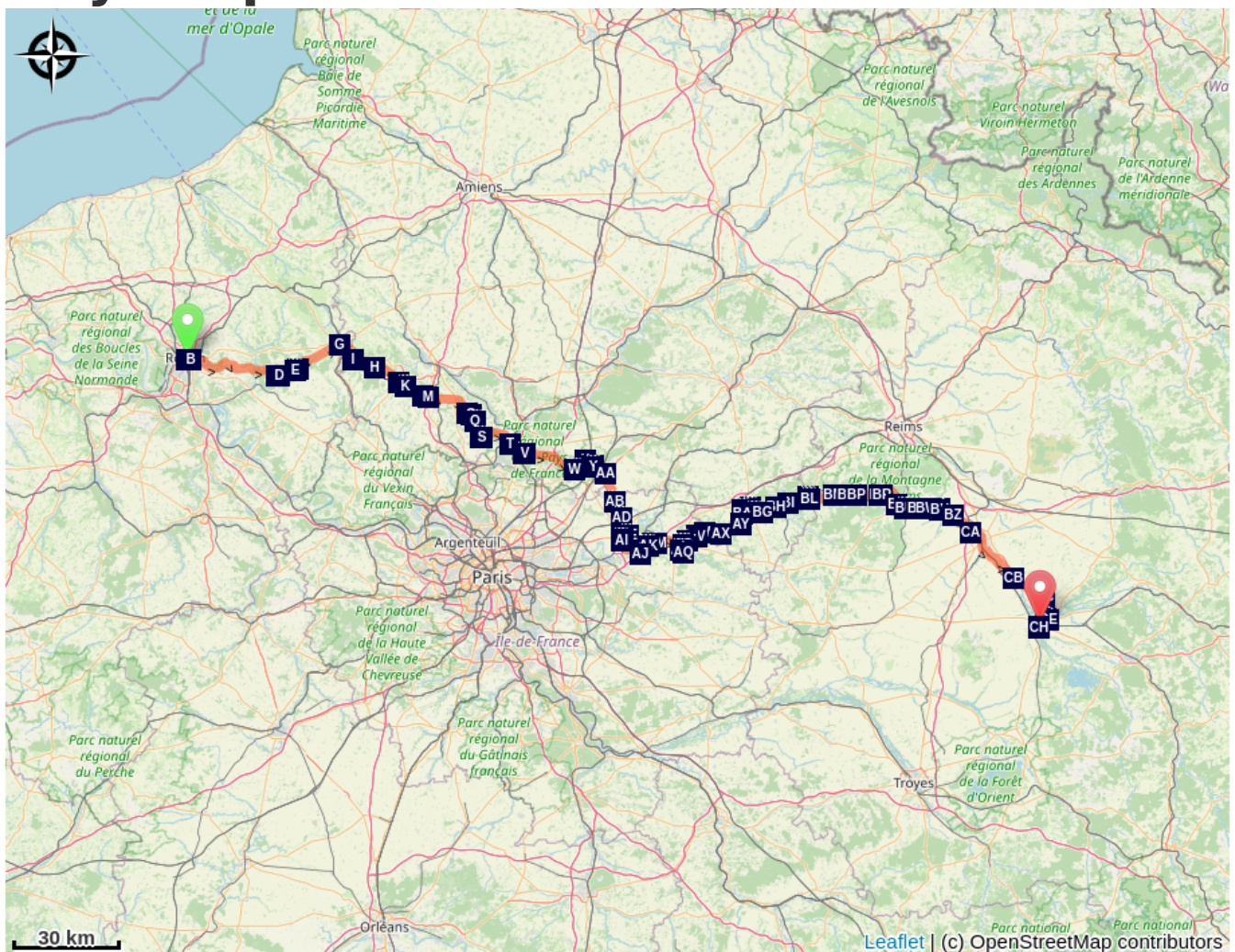
⛫ Abbey Church of Saint-Ouen Abbey (A)

🏛 Saint-Hilaire Church in à Rouen (B)

🏛 Saint-Denis Church in Lyons-la-Forêt (C)

🏛 Half-timbered houses in the centre of Lyons-la-Forêt (D)

🏰 Fleury-la-Forêt Castle (E)

🏛 Saint-Denis and Saint-Brice Church of Fleury-la-Forêt (F)

🏛 Collégiale Saint-Hildevert in Gournay-en-Bray (G)

🏛 Saint-Martin Church in Espaubourg (H)

⛫ Former abbey church and Sainte-Chapelle in Saint-Germer-de-Fly (I)

⛫ Troussures Castle (J)

🏰 Auneuil, the ceramic industry (K)

🏛 Saint-Germain Church in Berneuil-en-Bray (L)

🏛 Saint-Denis Church in Auteuil (M)

🏛 Saint-Martin Church in Cauvigny (N)

All useful information

How to come ?

Access

Rouen is a major city, accessible by bus and train.

Vitry-le-François is also accessible by bus and train.

On your path...

☼ Abbey Church of Saint-Ouen Abbey (A)

Saint Ouen, Dadon his birth name, was bishop of Rouen from 639 to 689 and was blessed by Saint Colomban during his visit to Ussy-sur-Marne at the home of his father Authaire in 610. He became a faithful disciple of Luxovien monasticism practising the rule of the good Fathers Benoit and Colomban, a formula mentioned in the foundation charters that have come down to us. It was under his episcopate that Luxovien monasteries were established in the Seine valley. Bishop Ouen will be present on the foundation charters of the abbey of Fontenelle (Saint Wandrille), Jumièges (Saint Philibert), La Trinité à Fécamp, the abbey of Montivilliers, the abbey of Pavilly.
Saint-Ouen Abbey was founded after the death of Saint Ouen around 750. The church replaced a chapel housing the tomb of Saint-Ouen.
The abbey of Saint-Ouen was one of the most powerful Benedictine monasteries in Normandy. After the Revolution, the municipality moved into the former monks' dormitory, a beautiful classical building from the mid-18th century. The abbey church, which many visitors take for the cathedral because of its majestic proportions, stands in the former gardens of the convent. Saint-Ouen is thus one of the rare examples of the radiant Gothic. Its proportions are imposing: 137m long under 33m of vaults. The interior will amaze you with its slender architecture and its exceptional luminosity. A series of 80 original stained glass windows still decorate the three levels of the church. The great organ, the last of the great instruments made by Cavaillé-Coll, another title of glory of Saint Ouen, is one of the most recorded instruments in the world.
[More information](#) Wikipedia

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Saint-Hilaire Church in à Rouen (B)

The church of St-Hilaire was located outside Rouen, in the Robec valley. The parish covered a suburb of rather poor weavers. The origins of the small medieval chapel are not known.
Destroyed several times, it was rebuilt several times and enlarged over the centuries.
It was closed in 1793 and was restored in 1802,
When it became a parish church, it was later found to be too small and unsightly. A new church replaced the old construction. Its foundation stone was laid on April 17, 1875.
It was built in a Gothic style described as "transitional". Its style borrows from Romanesque and Gothic. The building was consecrated on 14 January 1878.
The choir has two bays and a three-sided apse. It is framed by two wings terminated by apsidal chapels. One is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the other to Saint Joseph.
The very wide transept is illuminated by two roses. To the north is the sacristy and to the south, a colonnade. The nave is 16 m wide and 17 m high. It has four bays. The last bay is surmounted by the organ loft.
The bell tower is at the crossing of the transept. It carries a stone pyramid dampened by four bells.
The church has a remarkable wrought iron choir grille with ornaments made by the Rouen ironmonger Ferdinand Marrou towards the end of the 19th century. The choir is decorated with a fresco depicting the Council of Seleucia of 359, where Saint-Hilaire was represented.
The fresco of the lantern is illustrated with the patron saints of the church of Rouen.
The stained glass windows are by Boulanger. They are illustrated with the main features of the story of Saint Hilaire.

Attribution : Jean Mamez site clochers-org

Saint-Denis Church in Lyons-la-Forêt (C)

The Saint-Denis church in Lyons-la-Forêt dates mainly from the 15th century. Parts of the walls date from the 12th century; the bays of the chevet from the 13th century. The bell tower, the north chapel and the turret date from the 16th century. The vaulting dates from the end of the 16th century.
The church was built with alternating sandstone and flint. The nave is unique, the choir has three vaulted vessels visible from the outside.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

Half-timbered houses in the centre of Lyons-la-Forêt (D)

Lyons-la-Forêt, a charming village classified as one of the Most Beautiful Villages in France, nestles in the heart of France's largest beech forest, the Lyons State Forest.
The 17th and 18th century timber-framed houses and its streets form a ring around the ancient feudal mound. The market hall, which is worth the detour, dates from the same period.
Take the time to discover the streets in this postcard of Normandy.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

Fleury-la-Forêt Castle (E)

The construction of the castle dates from the 16th century by Pierre de Courcol, in the 17th century the building is the property of the de Caumont family, a fire devastated the castle in the middle of the 17th century.
Charles de Caumont had the building rebuilt by adding a chapel. At the beginning of the 18th century the knight Jacques Dauger bought the estate and harmoniously added two small buildings at the ends and restored the central part. The laying of the gate in 1789 completed this restoration.
After the Revolution the castle is sold to the Combault d'Auteuil family, several owners will succeed one another until today.
Currently the castle is a private property which offers bed and breakfast.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

Saint-Denis and Saint-Brice Church of Fleury-la-Forêt (F)

Saint-Denis and Saint-Brice church in Fleury-la-Forêt is built according to a Latin cross plan. It is divided into six bays including a narthex and a projecting transept. The chevet is semi-circular and polygonal; an annex building is grafted onto it. There is also a porch on the west façade of the church.
The west facade is flat and gabled. It is flanked by two buttresses. A porch is grafted onto it; it is pierced by a door.
At the level of the South facade: the narthex is flanked by two buttresses. The nave facade is pierced with six pointed arch openings; the south transept has a gable facade, and the bay is carved with ornaments.
The chevet has three sides. The north and south-facing sides are pierced by a semicircular arched bay. On the east side there is a gabled building with a bay in the shape of a basket-handle.
A bell tower is placed on the ridge of the roof. The arrowhead is octagonal and there are four square-shaped bell towers. There is a clock on its west side.
The roof of the church has a double slope.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

Collégiale Saint-Hildevert in Gournay-en-Bray (G)

In the 11th century, the collegiate church, then dedicated to Saint Stephen, was built. It was rebuilt in the 12th century on its remains. Its plan originally consisted of a nave with side aisles of six bays, a transept with apsidioles and a tower at the crossing, a choir of three bays and a flat chevet.
 At the beginning of the 12th century during a conflict the collegiate church was burnt down. What remains of the collegiate church are the walls of the Romanesque nave and the vaults of the choir of St. Joseph's chapel. Gothic arches cover the nave and the transept, while the choir is partly rebuilt. The new collegiate church was consecrated in 1192. The western façade was redesigned in the 13th century. The last bay is surmounted by two unfinished square towers. It is at this period that the dedication to Saint Hidevert appears following the passage of three clerics from Meaux carrying the relics of Saint Hildevert, bishop of the town of Meaux. In the 14th century, the chevet is pierced by a large window. The tower at the crossing of the transept disappeared in 1617, replaced by a lantern tower destroyed in 1649. From 1650 to 1660, the two towers were raised by a slate-covered, timber-framed bell tower. Inside, one can observe the hunt of Saint-Hildevert, and the stained glass windows of the choir that retraces his life. The organ dates from the 16th century.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

Saint-Martin Church in Espaubourg (H)

Entirely built in brick, Saint-Martin is a very representative example of the use of this material in the 16th century, the date of the church being assured by a dedication on 29th March 1541.

The bell tower was built on the facade between 1870 and 1872 to replace the old one, a frame construction located in the centre of the building.

Saint-Martin also possesses a real treasure with its lead baptismal basin, dating from the 12th century. The seven plaques that make it up are decorated with Romanesque arcatures that house alternating plant decoration and characters among whom we recognize the blessing Christ or Saint Peter, with his key. In the apse, two windows in the apse have preserved 16th century stained glass windows that have been awkwardly reassembled (2006).

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

⬡ Former abbey church and Sainte-Chapelle in Saint-Germer-de-Fly (I)

Saint-Germer-de-Fly Abbey was founded in the 630s by Saint Germer, after a solid training at the Beauvais Episcopal School he became one of King Dagobert's counsellors and then of Clovis II. He asked to leave the court to enter the monastery after his widowhood. He was sent by Saint Ouen (Dadon, son of Authaire de Ussy, received the blessing of St Colomban) to the territory of Fly to found a monastery there in 655. This foundation is part of the movement of Luxovien monasticism in the 7th century. An indication confirms this filiation between Luxeuil and Beauvaisis. In the 19th century, a manuscript of the homilies of Saint Augustine, written in the 7th century at the Luxeuil abbey, was found in the library of the castle of Troussures. It comes from the library of the Beauvais cathedral. On the last page of the manuscript, we read that it was completed in the monastery of Luxeuil, in the 12th year of a king named Clotaire.

This monastery was ravaged by the Vikings in the 8th century, then in 851, before being rebuilt from 1036 onwards. It developed a great prosperity, which grew even more after the return of part of the relics of the holy founder in 1132. Thanks to the influx of donations, the construction of a new abbey church could then begin. This vast and proud abbey church, built between 1135 and 1206 approximately, and its chapel of the Virgin, are today the main testimonies of the powerful abbey of the Middle Ages, whose monastic life died out with the French Revolution in 1790. The abbey-church became the parish church of the current village of Saint-Germer-de-Fly. It is considered a characteristic example of the first Gothic generation, not because of its size or beauty, but because of its innovative character. It is one of the oldest examples of Gothic art in France. The Chapel of the Virgin was built in the 1260s in the radiant Gothic style.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

⚙ Troussures Castle (J)

The old castle of Troussures, destroyed in 1874, was rebuilt by Ludovic Le Caron de Troussures (1829-1914) in a neo Louis XIII style. Father Doncoeur, organizer of the spiritual retreats "It takes two women to make a saint: his wife and his mother! "and Father Caffarel, founder of the Notre Dame teams, are associated with the life of this place. Troussures will see the stay of Father Chenu (Dominican), Teilhard de Chardin (anthropologist), Gaston Fessard (philosopher), Jean Daniélou (theologian and historian), Henri de Lubac, or the playwright Jean Anouilh, Léopold Delisle, historian and discoverer of the Merovingian manuscript of Luxeuil in the library of the Château de Troussures. A new chapel was built on the site of the former library of the castle in the early 2000s by the architect Michel Macary,
Since Easter 1997, the priory has welcomed the community of St. John with brothers who organize retreats and sessions, and a community of contemplative sisters. The community also occupies the old farm of the castle at the entrance to the village and has built an annex, the Montjoie house. The complex is called Notre-Dame-de-Cana Priory.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

⚙ Auneuil, the ceramic industry (K)

It is from the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century that Auneuil was to become part of the industrial world. First the brickworks develop, then it will be the tile and ceramic industry which will radically change the face of Auneuil.

A pause in this development will be observed during the war of 1870. Auneuil was then occupied by a cavalry squadron of the Prussian army. When peace returned, the industries started again and will take their full development with the arrival of the railroad in 1875. Auneuil is then connected to Beauvais and Gisors.
Ceramics was one of the traditional productions of Auneuil thanks to the brothers Aimé and Achille Boulenger who will manufacture architectural ceramics, in competition with the Colozier tiles of Beauvais, during all the XIXth century from a small workshop bought in 1848. Museum of ceramics patron's house that the last Boulenger brother bequeathed to the commune on his death in 1900.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

Saint-Germain Church in Berneuil-en-Bray (L)

The church of Saint-Germain dates from the 14th century and was built with the help of the abbey of Saint-Paul, founded by Angadrème in the 7th century and venerated in Beauvais, for the choir. The lords of Berneuil took charge of the nave and the bell tower. It overlooks a charming square decorated with an old playground, a watering hole, a well restored wash-house, and a remarkable tree, a black Italian poplar, 36m high and 100 years old.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Saint-Denis Church in Auteuil (M)

The commune is dominated by larris, the limestone grasslands that were once used for grazing herds. It is one of the last large areas of this nature in the region.
The church of Saint-Denis as we can see it now is the result of transformations, adaptations and amputations. Thus, in the 16th century, the apse, which threatened to collapse, was demolished. The choir was reduced in length and closed by a wall with a large ogival window overlooking the high altar. In place of the apse, a sacristy was built.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie

Saint-Martin Church in Cauvigny (N)

The construction of St. Martin's Church dates back to at least the 11th century, and the southern wall of the nave includes remains from this period. The church is mainly in the late Gothic style, and dates mainly from the first third of the 16th century, but there are interesting elements from two building campaigns in the 12th century. These are firstly three archaic warhead vaults from the 1140s, without their supports, in the north side aisle; then the south crosspiece from the 1150s / 1160s, which was taken up again in the Flamboyant period; and above all an elegant octagonal bell tower from the late 12th century with a lantern topped by a stone spire, which is one of the most beautiful representatives of this type of bell tower in the region. The bell tower, the southern crosspiece, the polygonal stair turret and the high apse from the 1520s form a picturesque ensemble.

Attribution : Association Colomban en Brie