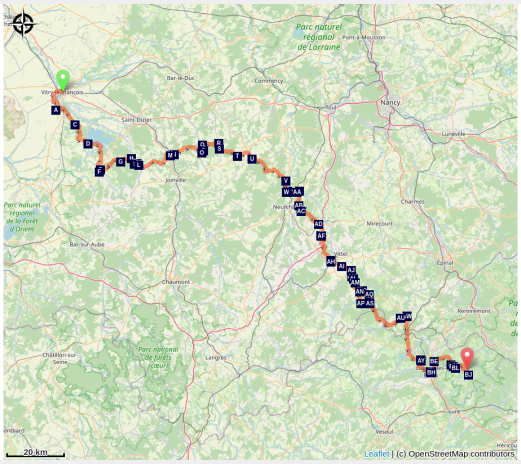
05. 590 France (3/3)

France

Chapelle Saint-Colomban (Amis saint Colomban)



1100km long, the route that brought Colomban to his destination in 590 is divided into 3 parts that can be followed successively or indistinctly. Starting in Vitry-le-François, this third and final part of the continental route takes you to Annegray through the Grand-Est and Bourgogne Franche-Comté regions.

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 : 310.3 km

Trek ascent : 5246 m

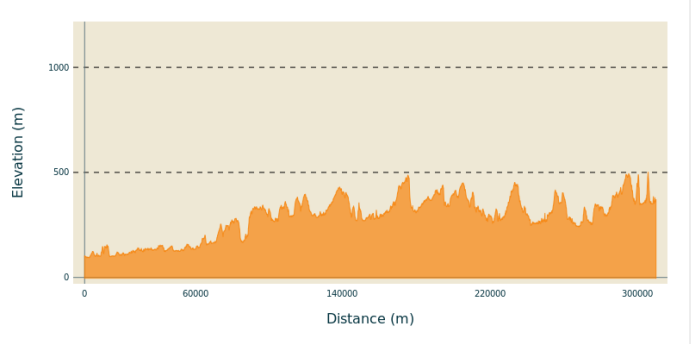
Difficulty : Medium

Type : Multi-day trek

Trek

Departure : 51300 Vitry-le-François
Arrival : 70310 Annegray
Cities : 1. Grand Est
2. Bourgogne-Franche-Comté

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 94 m Max elevation 501 m

This crossing of France is fairly straightforward, in the image of Colomban, who sought to withdraw quickly as a hermit as far inland as possible.

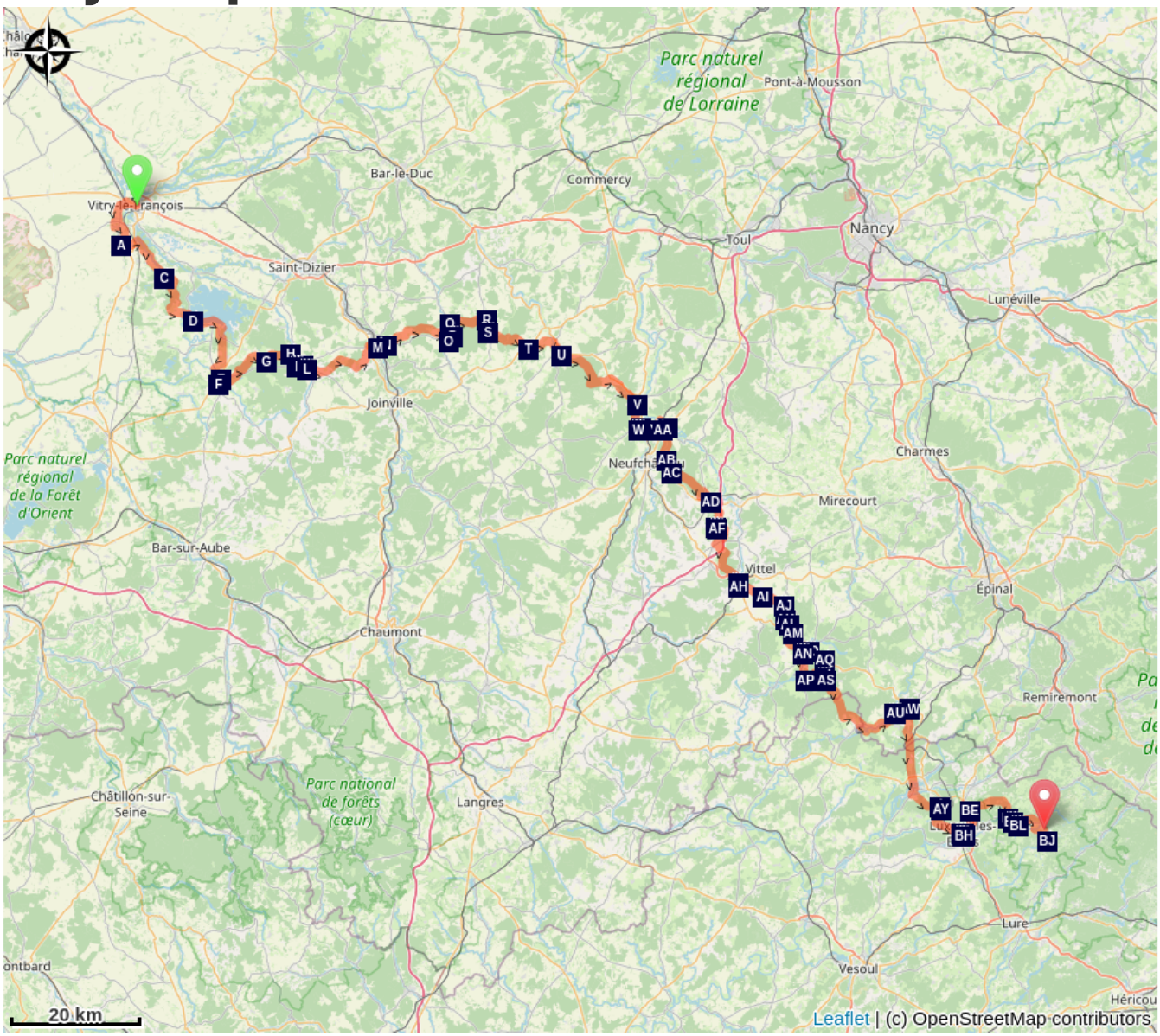
The third part (3/3) consists of 13 stages averaging 24km a day:

1. Vitry-le-François - St Rémy-en-Bouzemont
2. St Rémy-en-Bouzemont - Montier-en-Der
3. Montier-en-Der - Wassy
4. Wassy - Chevillon
5. Chevillon - Biencourt-sur-Orge
6. Biencourt-sur-Orge - Gondrecourt-le-Château
7. Gondrecourt-le-Château - Domrémy-la-Pucelle
8. Domrémy-la-Pucelle - Châtenois
9. Châtenois - Contrexéville
10. Contrexéville - Darney
11. Darney - Bains-les-Bains
12. Bains-les-Bains - Luxeuil-les-Bains
13. Luxeuil-les-Bains - Annegray

Stages :

1. Vitry-le-François to Saint-Rémy-en-Bouzemont
21.3 km / 212 m D+ / 5 h 30
2. Saint-Rémy-Bouzemont in Montier-en-Der
28.7 km / 241 m D+ / 7 h 30
3. Montier-en-Der to Wassy
19.6 km / 197 m D+ / 5 h
4. Wassy to Chevillon
16.9 km / 252 m D+ / 4 h 30
5. Chevillon to Biencourt-sur-Orge
25.0 km / 507 m D+ / 6 h 30
6. Biencourt-sur-Orge to Gondrecourt-le-Château
18.2 km / 267 m D+ / 4 h 30
7. Gondrecourt-le-Château to Domrémy-la-Pucelle
18.7 km / 299 m D+ / 5 h
8. Domrémy-la-Pucelle to Châtenois
30.6 km / 622 m D+ / 8 h
9. Châtenois to Contrexéville
19.9 km / 284 m D+ / 5 h 30
10. Contrexéville to Darney
21.1 km / 368 m D+ / 6 h
11. Darney to Bains-les-Bains or La Vôge-les-Bains
35.1 km / 732 m D+ / 9 h
12. Bains-les-Bains or La Vôge-les-Bains to Luxeuil-les-Bains
29.3 km / 506 m D+ / 7 h 30
13. Luxeuil-les-Bains to Annegray
27.6 km / 792 m D+ / 6 h 30

On your path...



Houses in Champagne with wood panelling (A)

Haras national in Montier-en-Der (B)

The Bird Farm (C)

Lac du Der-Chantecoq (D)

Abbey Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in Montier-en-Der (E)

Saint-Rémi Church in Ceffonds (F)

Saint-Luc Church in Voillecomte (G)

Wassy Canal (H)

Abandoned railway lines that bear witness to significant industrial activity over the past centuries. (I)

Former convent of the Capuchins in Wassy in the 16th century (J)

History of Wassy (K)

The Brousseval Foundry (L)

Iron production in Haute-Marne (M)

Chevillon Castle (N)

All useful information

How to come ?

Access

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

Annegray is a small hamlet accessible only by car. To get there or to be picked up there, contact the Friends of Saint Columban in nearby Luxeuil-les-Bains.

On your path...

Houses in Champagne with wood panelling (A)

At the beginning of your stage you cross the cereal-growing Champagne and then the vineyards of the Perthois. Take the time to admire the timber-framed houses. The scarcity of building stones leads craftsmen to marry this clay soil with oak beams to form half-timbered houses filled with cob.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Haras national in Montier-en-Der (B)

In 1808, Napoleon I set up a stallion depot within the walls of the former Benedictine Abbey of Montier-en-Der, which was closed during the Revolution. The current buildings date from the mid-19th century and are adjadcent to the 10th and 13th century abbey church. The site, planted with trees and flowers, shelters vast courtyards and stables.
The site is home to a gîte.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

The Bird Farm (C)

Located at 1 Route de Drosnay, cross the village in the direction of Isson on the D58 and at 800 meters you will discover this bird observatory on the Der lake which is very busy from February to March and from October to November.

Attribution : image Jean-Pierre Gurga

Lac du Der-Chantecoq (D)

Lac du Der-Chantecoq or Lac-Réservoir de la Marne (often abbreviated to Lac du Der) is located in the Grand Est region, on the border of the Marne and Haute-Marne departments. Designed to protect Paris from flooding, the Marne reservoir known as "Lac du Der-Chantecoq" is intended to increase the flow of the Marne at low-water levels and reduce the extent of flooding. It owes its name both to the Pays du Der, the natural region where it is located, and to the village of Chantecoq, which was destroyed along with the villages of Champaubert-aux-Bois and Nuisement-aux-Bois during work on the lake in the 1960s and 1970s.
More information Wikipedia

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Abbey Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in Montier-en-Der (E)

The monastery of Montier-en-Der was founded at the end of the 7th century by Abbot Berchaire or Bercaire, a monk from Aquitaine who had attended the Saint-Hilaire monastery in Poitiers and the school in Reims run by Bishop Nivard. To complete his training he went to the monastery of Luxeuil governed by Abbot Walbert on his return to Champagne and founded the monastery of Hautvillers near Epernay before that of Montier-en-Der.
Berchaire founded a women's monastery in Puellemontier, near Montier, a few years later.
From the foundation of the monastery of Montier-en-Der, the monks lived under the rule of the good Fathers Benedict and Colomban, a formula that was consecrated until the Council of 818.
The glass roof of the church choir is composed of 10 stained glass windows with abstract decoration and 6 stained glass windows representing: bay 106: Benedict, bay 104: Remi, bay 102: Paul, bay 101: Peter, bay 103: Berchaire, bay 105: Colomban.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Saint-Rémi Church in Ceffonds (F)

The church of Ceffonds has only kept the Romanesque bell tower at the crossing of the transept from the 12th century. Most of the Gothic architecture dates from the 16th century, the glass roofs made between 1511 and 1518, which alone are worth the detour, bear witness to the wealth of the master glassmakers of the Aube. The stained glass window of the Tree of Jesse, a family tree that traces the ancestors of Christ to Jesse, father of King David, is often represented by the Trojan master glassmakers in the Middle Ages.
Take the time to admire the tomb on the north aisle.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Saint-Luc Church in Voillecomte (G)

The lordship of Voillecomte originally belonged to the lords of Rosnay (Aube), which was partly passed on to the abbey of Montier-en-Der. The choir and the tower of the bell tower of the church of Saint-Luc were built in the second half of the XIIth century, the nave and its collaterals had to be rebuilt around 1779, and the church is topped by a bell tower in the romanesque style.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Wassy Canal (H)

The construction of the side canal dates back to 1881. It branched off from the Marne à la Saône canal. This small canal of 23 Kilometres and 8 locks, appelé also the Blaise canal, gave a river débouché to the forges and foundries of the Wassy region and supplied these same factories with green sand (foundries) and shore wood (Pont-Varin mines). It was supplied with water by the Blaise river and the Lac des Leschères (Wassy). Its size was identical to that of the Marne à la Saône.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Abandoned railway lines that bear witness to significant industrial activity over the past centuries. (I)

The railway line was recognized as being in the public interest in 1879 with a depot of wagons and locomotives to export timber, grain and livestock. This line was strategic during the First World War. The Montier-en-Der station was closed in 1991 due to a lack of passengers and merchandise.
Some of the tracks were converted to greenways.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Former convent of the Capuchins in Wassy in the 16th century (J)

A hospital was built in the 16th century on the banks of La Blaise and outside the city walls. In 1643 French Capuchins settled there. They were replaced in 1685 by Irish Capuchins, victims of the tyranny exercised against Ireland by the King of England. They were military monks, carrying the sword, and were to train missionaries destined for Ireland. But they also provided rescue services to the inhabitants of Wassy and even started a fire-fighting service. Their convent was destroyed by fire in 1756. It is buildings rebuilt after that date that we see today.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

History of Wassy (K)

Marie Stuart, born on December 8, 1542, queen of Scotland then queen of France, wife of François II, received in gift to enjoy all her life, the incomes of the lands of Wassy, Chaumont and Saint-Dizier but no document can attest that she stayed in Wassy, even if the legend claims that she invented there the recipe of the "boxes of Wassy".
In the 19th century, Camille and Paul Claudel lived in Wassy for two years (their father was a mortgage trustee there). The first work of Camille Claudel, a head of Bismarck, was carried out in Wassy, the work is still visible in the town hall. Camille Saint-Saëns came there many times to his grandmother's house (as a small child, he complained to his grandmother because her kettle "sang fake"!...).
On June 7, 1892, the President of the Republic Sadi Carnot, (back from Lunéville, Nancy and Toul, by presidential train) came to inaugurate the magnificent Wassy station and the direct Troyes-Nancy line, via Brienne, Wassy and Sorcy. (The Wassy station is now run by the Association of Friends of the Wassy station and was used as a shooting site for two feature films: Je m'appelle Victor film by Guy Jacques and Un vrai bonheur, the film by Didier Caron).
Wassy was the seat of a sub-prefecture, until the suppression of the district of Wassy in 1926. In 1940, the borough was restored, but with a new chief town, Saint-Dizier, a town which had become much larger than Wassy, which thus remained a simple canton chief town.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

The Brousseval Foundry (L)

In 1853 the ore from the Haut-Marne was processed in 211 installations. The iron ore has an iron content of 20 to 45%. The driving force of the water and the wood of the Der forests made this region an important producer of cast iron in the 19th century. In the district of Wassy, the most industrialized of the department, there were 44 active mines in 1881. In 1856, the Haute-Marne was the leading department for the production of cast iron and iron, providing 20% of national production, 64 metallurgical sites are still clearly visible in 2010. On the other hand, the department is the undisputed cradle of artistic cast iron with the Val d'Osne and Sommevoire plants.
This industry developed the means of communication in the 19th century in the department with railways and the development of canals of which some remains remain today. The extinction of the blast furnaces and the attachment of Lorraine, rich in coal, to France after 1918 was a fatal blow to the exploitation. The last mines, those of Pont-Varin, ceased their activity in 1922.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Iron production in Haute-Marne (M)

The tradition of ironworking in Haute-Marne has been attested since prehistoric times thanks to the exploitation of its natural resources: the omnipresent iron ore, charcoal from the abundant forests and the driving force of water.
As the leading metallurgical department in the mid-19th century, Haute-Marne boasts an industrial heritage that can be discovered along this tourist route through its valleys. The Blaise valley, for example, is the oldest and most active in France, and is home to Metallurgic park, the first interpretation centre for ancient and contemporary metallurgy, as well as many witnesses to the metallurgical history of the area.
The Haute-Marne is also the cradle of artistic cast iron with the Val d'Osne, Durenne, Capitain-Gény, Brousseval and the Saint-Dizier Foundries, companies that produced between 1830 and 1930 statues, fountains, vases and decorative elements in cast iron that are found throughout France and the world.
Paris is the showcase of their know-how, notably with Guimard's Art Nouveau metro entrances and Wallace fountains. The pedestrian of Paris, the one who takes the time to stroll on the bridges, the one who goes from Saint-Germain to Réaumur in the 16th arrondissement at the Porte de la Chapelle, constantly encounters cast iron.
The canals were built to export the production of the Haute-Marne, the canal from Champagne to Burgundy is an illustration of this.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban

Chevillon Castle (N)

Dating from the Middle Ages, the "Château Jaune", former hunting lodge of the Lords of Joinville, has been transformed into a media library. At its feet, a medieval garden with more than 50 different plant species has been reconstituted.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban