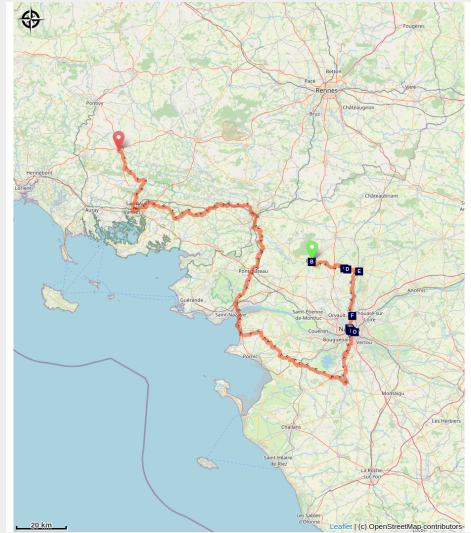


19. Brittany Region (2/5)

France - Pays de la Loire



Nantes (Amis saint Colomban)



The regional tour of Brittany links 45 sites that perpetuate the memory of Saint Columban and his Irish companions. The 1700km route is divided into five parts, which can be followed one after the other or indiscriminately.

Starting in Blain, this second part leads to Locminé via a diversion south of the Loire before returning to Brittany.

Alternating between coastal and inland routes, this great Celtic loop combines the traditional Tro Breizh, which links the towns of the seven founding saints of Brittany, with the more personalised Tro Breizh of Saint Columban - two pilgrimages in one.

Useful information

Practice : Pedestrian

Duration : 0 min

Length : 348.2 km

Trek ascent : 3480 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Multi-day trek

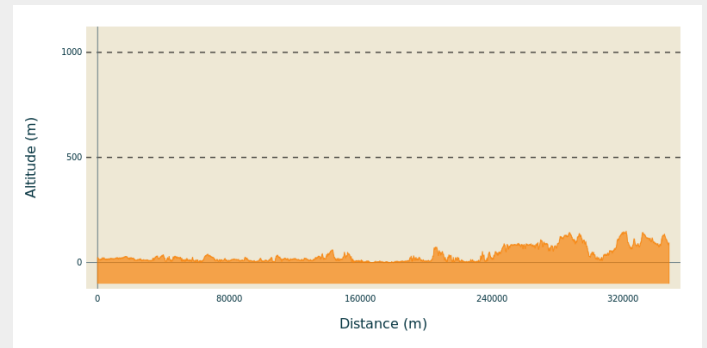
Trek

Departure : 44130 Blain

Arrival : 56500 Locminé

Cities : 1. Pays de la Loire
2. Bretagne

Altimetric profile



Min elevation -1 m Max elevation 149 m

With Saint Colomban, the route offers the opportunity to discover Brittany in all its diversity.

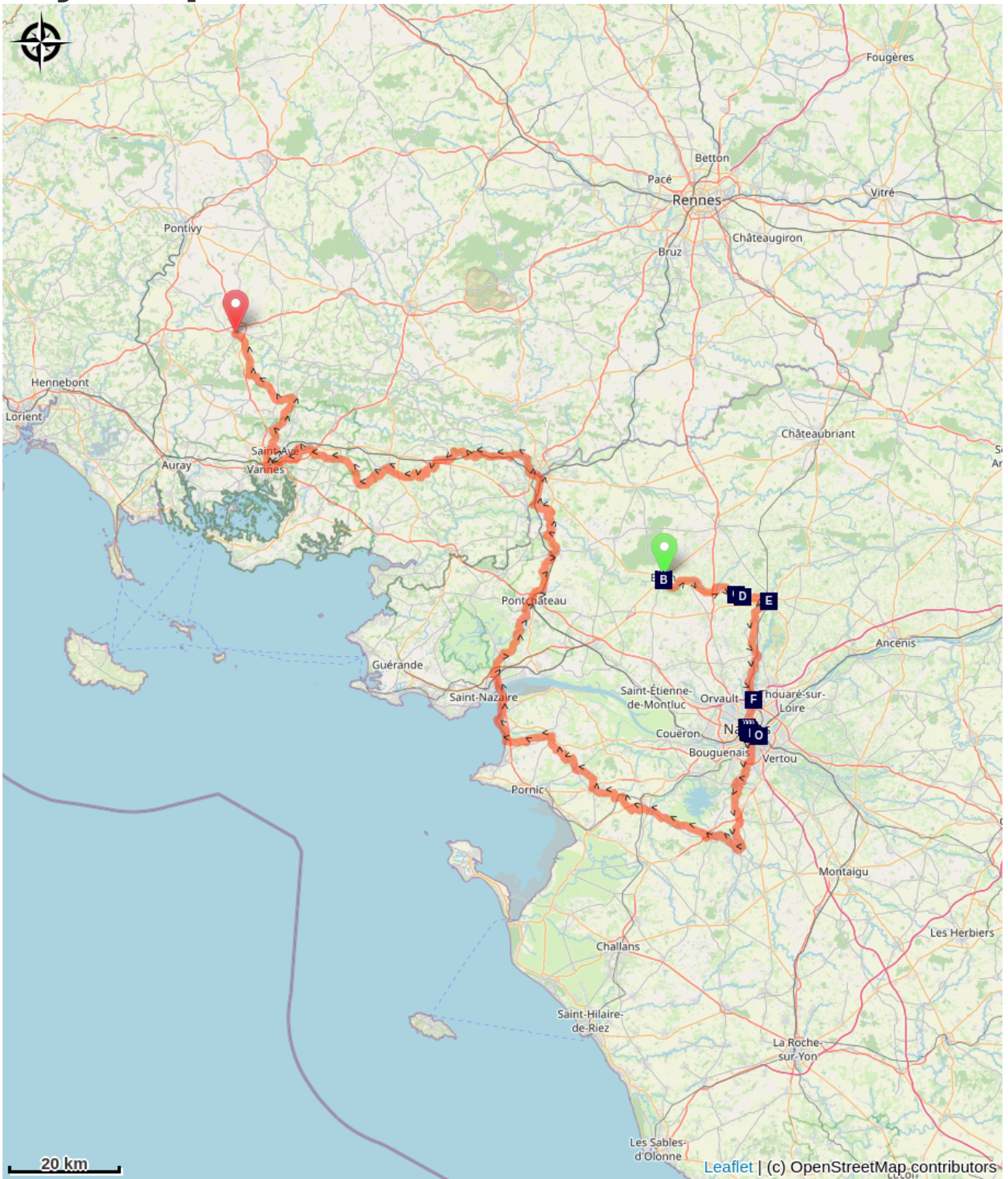
This second part (2/5) offers 15 stages with an average daily distance of 24km:



1. Blain - Nort-sur-Erdre
2. Nort-sur-Erdre - Nantes
3. Nantes - Pont-St-Martin
4. Pont-St-Martin - St Philbert de Grand Lieu
5. St Philbert de Grand Lieu - St Hilaire de Chaléons
6. St Hilaire de Chaléons - St Père en Retz
7. St Père en Retz - St Nazaire
8. St Nazaire - Pontchâteau
9. Pontchâteau - Redon
10. Redon - Malansac
11. Malansac - Questembert
12. Questembert - Sulniac
13. Sulniac - Vannes
14. Vannes - Plaudren
15. Plaudren - Locminé



Stages :

- 1.** from Blain to Nort-sur-Erdre
26.2 km / 154 m D+ / 6 h 36
- 2.** from Nort-sur-Erdre to Nantes
31.6 km / 299 m D+ / 8 h
- 3.** from Nantes to Pont-St-Martin
16.8 km / 136 m D+ / 4 h 12
- 4.** Pont-St Martin à St Philbert de Grand Lieu
22.7 km / 115 m D+ / 5 h 48
- 5.** St Philbert de Grand Lieu à St Hilaire de Chaléons
23.6 km / 178 m D+ / 5 h 54
- 6.** St Hilaire de Chaléons à St Père en Retz
23.7 km / 190 m D+ / 6 h 6
- 7.** St Père en Retz à St Nazaire
27.5 km / 275 m D+ / 5 h 48
- 8.** St Nazaire à Pontchâteau
19.6 km / 125 m D+ / 5 h 24
- 9.** Pontchâteau à Redon
35.6 km / 413 m D+ / 8 h 54
- 10.** Redon à Malansac
25.0 km / 416 m D+ / 6 h 18
- 11.** Malansac à Questembert
18.4 km / 211 m D+ / 4 h 18
- 12.** Questembert à Sulniac
15.6 km / 206 m D+ / 4 h
- 13.** Sulniac à Vannes
20.7 km / 241 m D+ / 5 h 18
- 14.** Vannes à Plaudren
19.7 km / 280 m D+ / 4 h 48
- 15.** Plaudren à Locminé
21.5 km / 241 m D+ / 5 h

On your path...



-  The Pilgrim (A)
 -  The canal from Nantes to Brest (C)
 -  Nort-sur-Erdre Church (E)
 -  Versailles Island (G)
 -  St Peter's Gate (I)

 -  The Psallete (K)
 -  The Unique Place (M)
-  Blain's Acoustic Galleries (B)
 -  The food channel of the canal (D)
 -  La Desnerie Castle (F)
 -  The Nantes fillings (H)
 -  Saint Peter and Saint Paul's Cathedral in Nantes (J)
 -  Castle of the Dukes of Bretagne (L)
 -  Port Saint-Félix in Nantes (N)

All useful information

How to come ?

Access

Blain is just as accessible by bus as Locminé.

On your path...



The Pilgrim (A)

Blain has long seen the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela or the Mont St Michel cross paths. In 2018, Jo Le Nouveau created this work that reminds him of this.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomban



Blain's Acoustic Galleries (B)

In the 6th century, a whole network of galleries linking different points of the town started from the arch located on the site of the latter. By speaking through an opening in the arch, the voice was propagated through the galleries and came out at the different listening points. Unfortunately, these galleries were drowned when the canal was dug in the 19th century. At the beginning of the 20th century, Émile Mouette, known as "the whisperer", replaced the network and transmitted the information entrusted to him. At the same time he tried to restore the network.

An identical network exists in Koblenz (Germany).

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomban



The canal from Nantes to Brest (C)

The Nantes to Brest canal is 360km long and crosses the whole of Brittany. The decision to build it was taken by Napoleon I in 1804. The aim was to link the military ports of the West (Nantes, Brest Lorient and St Malo) and bypass the English naval blockade. It connects 8 rivers (including the Isac here) and is punctuated by 236 locks.

We are here on the Bief de partage, the high point between the Erdre and Isac rivers. The canal is fed by the gullies connecting the reservoirs to the canal.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomban



The food channel of the canal (D)

At each lock passage, a barge moves 300m³ of water. To compensate for this, the canal is fed by gullies connecting reservoirs located at a higher altitude to the canal.

This 22km long gully connects the Grand réservoir de Vioreau to the canal. It includes viaducts or underpasses. The constant slope is 14cm/km and the speed of the water is 1Km/hour.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomban



Nort-sur-Erdre Church (E)

The church of Nort-sur-Erdre, was built at the beginning of the 20th century. It is remarkable for its stained glass windows. For budgetary reasons, it was not completed. Thus remains, isolated from the building, the bell tower of the previous church built in 1833.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomaban



La Desnerie Castle (F)

Numerous castles are located along the Erdre river. They are visible when you go up the river by boat.

The castle of La Desnerie, is also built on the banks of the Erdre. It is mentioned as early as 1371. It is then the property of a companion of Du Guesclin and Olivier de Clisson. It has a private chapel dated 1624. It is registered as a historical monument since 1985.

The wood of 15ha which surrounds it was acquired by the department in 2001 and has become a place of walk for the people of Nantes.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomaban



Versailles Island (G)

This 1.7 hectare artificial island, created in 1831 and originally occupied by tanners and marine carpenters, was transformed into a Japanese garden in 1983. The composition of the rock gardens and waterfalls is based around 3 buildings inspired by traditional Japanese habitat. Among them, the Maison de l'Erdre, which is surrounded by a Zen garden, serves as a setting for exhibitions devoted to the river and its aquatic environment.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomaban



The Nantes fillings (H)

Urban development in Nantes between 1926 and 1946 led to the filling in of two branches of the Loire (the branch of La Bourse and the branch of the Hospital). This led to the diversion of the Erdre, which joined the Loire through what became the Cours des 50 Otages. A tunnel was dug between 1930 and 1934 under the Cours St Pierre and St André and the St Félix canal was built with a lock to join the Loire.

[To find out more...](#)

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomaban



🏰 St Peter's Gate (I)

The first ramparts protecting Condevicnum, capital of the city of Namnètes, date back to 270. The stones visible on either side of the passage are the remains of the gate that then controlled the way to Juliomagus (Angers). A new enclosure was built in the 13th century. It was reinforced at the end of the 15th century. Each time, St Peter's Gate is modified or even rebuilt.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colomban



☀️ Saint Peter and Saint Paul's Cathedral in Nantes (J)

Tradition dates the first building back to the arrival of St. Clair in the 3rd century. He had brought from Rome a nail from the cross of Christ.

Archaeological excavations at the beginning of the 20th century identify a building from the 6th century. This cathedral was consecrated between 567 and 580.

Saint Columban probably prayed in this building during the days spent waiting for a ship to Ireland, which was too loaded to take to the sea and put the Irish saint and his companions on the shore who set out again towards the north of Gaul.

The Romanesque Cathedral led to the modification of the choir which dominates the 12th century crypt.

The present building was begun in the 15th century and the work lasted until the 17th century. During the Revolution the cathedral escaped destruction.

Violent bombings in 1944 led to a complete restoration of the building.

The nave shelters the tombs and the tombstones of Duke François II of Brittany and his wife Marguerite de Foix (parents of Anne of Brittany).

One can admire the cenotaph of General Louis Juchault de Lamoricière, his decisive military actions contributed to the rapid pacification of French Algeria in the 19th century, a monument erected in 1878.

A very beautiful exhibition of the history of the cathedral is presented in the crypt, accessible from the outside at the chevet level.

[More details](#) : Wikipedia

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban



The Psallete (K)

A la fin du 15ème siècle, le développement du château et de la cour ducale entraîne la construction, par les hauts dignitaires, d'hôtels à proximité. L'hôtel de la Psallete est ainsi édifié en 1462 par Jean Gougeul de Rouville qui y mène une vie publique et privée.

Au 19ème siècle, l'hôtel accueille la maîtrise de la cathédrale (la psallete) qui lui donne son nom.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colombran



Castle of the Dukes of Bretagne (L)

Located in the historic heart of Nantes, the Castle of the Dukes of Brittany is the flagship monument of its urban heritage, along with St Peter's Cathedral.

On the city side, it is a defensive fortress whose 500-metre-long rampart walk is punctuated by seven towers linked by curtain walls founded in the 13th century.

On the courtyard side, it houses an elegant 15th century ducal residence made of tufa stone, in flamboyant Gothic style bearing the first signs of Renaissance inspiration, and other buildings dating from the 16th and 18th centuries. These contrast in their whiteness and sculpted refinement with the harshness of the exterior walls made of granite blocks separated by schist layers.

[More info at](#): Wikipedia

Attribution : Amis saint Colombran



The Unique Place (M)

The "Petits Beurres" LU biscuits with their teeth were born in Nantes. The Lefèvre-Utile company started the construction of the production plant in 1895. Only one of its two Art Nouveau towers remains today. In 1986, production was transferred outside the city. The cultural milieu then appropriated the industrial wasteland and the Lieu Unique was created in 2000.

Attribution : Amis Bretons de Colombran



Port Saint-Félix in Nantes (N)

The Via Columbani crosses the Saint-Felix lock.

The river, the Erdre, runs through the city centre of Nantes. A 700 m long tunnel leads into the port of Saint-Félix. This river tunnel was dug in the 1930s as part of the work to fill in the Erdre river to allow the Nantes-Brest canal to flow into the Loire. The lock and landfill works were built at the same time as the tunnel in the early 1930s. This structure ensures the outlet of the Erdre into the Loire. It consists of a 50 m long by 7 m wide lock for the passage of boats, a removable weir and two bottom gates for regulating water levels.

Attribution : Amis saint Colomban