

C020-ST West of Cornouaille



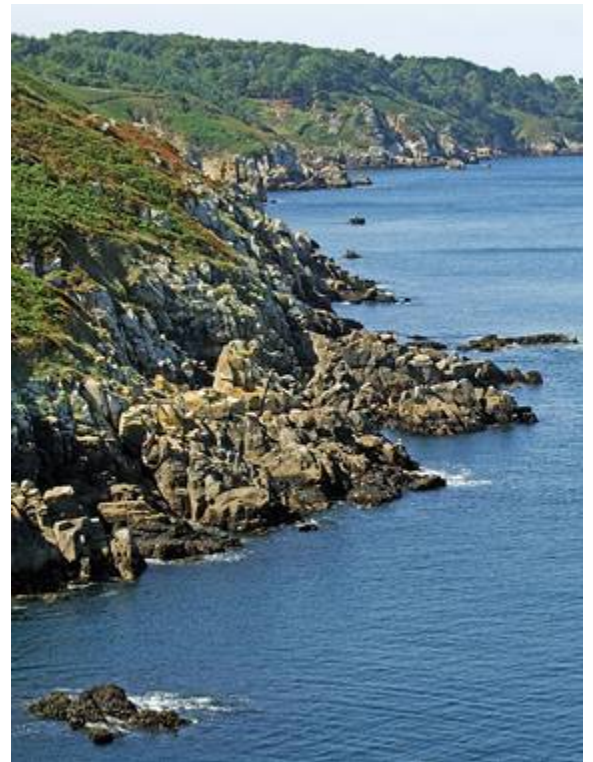
Where the land meets the sea, La Cornouaille advances boldly into the ocean, offering us an amazing spectacle! You will leave Quimper to reach the port of Douarnenez via the magnificent medieval village of Locronan, a little jewel a few kilometres from the sea. Then you will walk along the coastal path to discover Cornouaille's north coast, one of the wildest coastlines in Europe. You will walk from headland to headland along steep cliffs bordered with countless rocky outcrops. You will discover the Cap Sizun nature reserve, with its dusting of heather and plants suited to the iodized, salty sea spray. Many birds nest here, cohabiting with a scattering of sheep. Past the Pointe du Van headland you will discover the extremely beautiful Bay of Trépassés before admiring the grandiose and wild spectacle of the Pointe du Raz. You will continue this journey on Cornouaille's South coast, which is a bit less wild. Sheer cliffs and

rocks give way to a few beaches and even banks of sand dunes, before you reach Audierne and the Goyen estuary. Then you will enter Bigouden country and see the landscape change dramatically. The coast becomes an endless beach, stretching over 15 kilometres right to the Pointe de Penmarc'h headland, bordered by a string of sand dunes and pebbles behind which lie the marshy areas that are home to a rich and varied flora and fauna. Finally, you will discover the fishing ports of Le Guilvinec and Loctudy before reaching Pont l'Abbé and its famous inhabited bridge.

The walk

Day 1 – Arrive in QUIMPER – Situated on the Odet river at the end of a narrow valley invaded by the sea, the town sprung up after the Roman conquest and has been a trading port ever since. The town houses many monuments, including the Saint Corentin cathedral, the Palais des Evêques (Bishop's Palace) and a number of timber-framed houses. *Night and breakfast in a 3-star hotel.*

Day 2 – From the hamlet of TROGOUR to LOCRONAN (18 Km) – *Taxi transfer from Quimper to the hamlet of Trogour at the beginning of the morning.* You will head down into the Steir valley that you will then walk along. You will pass under the railway line, climb back up onto the hills, then descend once more towards the river before joining a small road that will lead you to the village of Saint Albin. You will continue cross-country via some small paths and small hedge-lined roads towards St Thélaou chapel at the foot of the Locronan mountain. This mountain was a sacred place in Celtic times, and was then adopted by Christianity. Every six years there is a Day of Atonement, 'Le Troménie', that follows the twelve stations in the Celtic initiation route. Via a small path, you will climb to the mountain's summit, towards the Ar Sonj chapel. After admiring the stunning view across the Bay of Douarnenez, you will head down towards Locronan, a magnificent little medieval village that prospered thanks to the sailcloth industry, *Dinner, night and breakfast in a 2-star hotel.*



Day 3 – From LOCRONAN to DOUARNENEZ (16 Km) - You will reach and cross the Névet forest, an ancient Druid forest where St Ronan established his retreat in the 6th century. The Finistère department has bought and restored the wood as a botanical reserve that contains some rare species. Then, cross-country, you will reach the sea close to the Plage du Ry beach. You will walk along the coast to reach Douarnenez, the town with three ports, city of sardines, capital of fish canning. Most canneries have now disappeared but a stroll through the town and the backstreets that lead to the port will bring this glorious era to life. *Dinner, night and breakfast in a 2-star hotel.*



Day 4 – From DOUARNENEZ to BEUZEC (25 Km) – You will discover Port Rhu, one of Douarnenez’ ports that houses museum-boats and a visitor centre telling the story of life at sea and long sea voyages. You will go around the Tréboul marina to reach the Sables Blancs (White Sand) beach. Leaving the town behind you, you will take the coastal path to discover a wild and rebellious Brittany. Past the Pointe de Leydé headland, the path runs along the cliff tops, affording wonderful views of the Bay of Douarnenez. You will head down to sea level at the mouth of several streams before climbing once again onto the cliffs to follow the path to the Jument and Millier headlands. Just before the latter, you won’t think twice about leaving the shore to follow a stream right up to the Moulin de Keriolet and the Barque de Saint Conogan (a recumbent dolmen). A few kilometres further on, you will appreciate the peace of Pors Péron beach then pass the Pointe de Trenaouret headland to reach the Pointe de

Beuzec where an oppidum stood a very long time ago. You will leave the coast to reach the village of Beuzec where a taxi will pick you up and take you to your hotel in the Baie des Trépassés. Dinner, night and breakfast in a 2-star hotel.

Day 5 – From the POINTE DE BEUZEC to the BAIE DES TREPASSES (26 Km) A taxi will collect you at the beginning of the morning to take you to the Pointe de Beuzec. You will pick up the path again and from there, head West! Your route will take you along rugged cliffs from headland to headland with a few beautiful beaches like Lesven, to reach the Goulien Cap Sizun nature reserve. These 50 hectares of rocks and heathland, beside the sea, are protected and are really beautiful. You will continue along the coastal path, still on the cliffs, enjoying the magnificent and grandiose surroundings, to reach the Pointe du Van. From this rocky outcrop, you can see the Ile de Sein, out at sea, that looks as if it's floating on the water. You will pass in front of the Saint They chapel, sheltered by its wall, before heading down into the Baie des Trépassés.

Dinner, night and breakfast in the same hotel.

Day 6 – From the BAIE DES TREPASSES to AUDIERNE via the POINTE DU RAZ (25 Km) – You will walk along the beach before climbing onto the cliffs covered with heathland and heather to reach the Pointe du Raz. The site has been completely restored to welcome a growing number of visitors and especially to preserve a nature already harshly treated by the elements. You will be blown away by the grandeur and beauty of the Raz de Sein, a passage of water so feared by sailors, between the Vieille (Old Lady) lighthouse and the Ile de Sein. However, the spectacle continues on the path that runs the length of the cliffs and leads you south to the small port of Bestrée, protected from the sea’s attacks by a few large rocks. The cliffs then progressively become smaller, less rugged, and a few beaches appear, like in the foot of the Anse du Loc’h and Anse du Cabestan coves. Past the Pointe de Lervilly headland and its lighthouse, you will walk along the wide Sainte Evelle beach and reach the hotel on the outskirts of Audierne. Dinner, night and breakfast in a 2-star hotel.



Day 7 – From AUDIERNE to the Plage de PENHORS beach (17 Km) – You can start the day by exploring Audierne, which was once a major fishing port and has now been reborn as a sailing marina. You will walk along both banks of the Goyen estuary, the river that flows through Audierne, to reach the coast once more. The maritime landscape has completely changed. There are still a few low cliffs and some rocky headlands that border the long beaches. After the Pointe du Souc’h headland, you will make a detour to visit the Ménez Drégan covered pathway, then reach Pors Pouilhan with its small port. You will continue along the shore, which stretches for kilometres, bordered by rocky areas that appear at low tide, or trapped between the sea and the marshland’s brackish waters, where many birds nest. Dinner, night and breakfast in a 3-star hotel.



Day 8 – From the TRONOAN chapel to LESCONIL (26 Km) – *The day begins with a taxi transfer to the Tronoën chapel because the path goes around large marshy areas. From this 15th century chapel, particularly famous for its sculpted calvary, one of the oldest in Brittany, you will reach the sea once more and the Pointe de la Torche, a natural peninsula that marks the end of the Audierne Bay. A mecca for boardsports fans, the headland is crowned by a covered pathway and...a bunker! You will walk along the fine sandy Pors Carn beach before reaching the famous St Guénolé rocks, upon which huge waves crash in stormy weather. These cliffs and the sea wall protect the port where you can discover the world of coastal and deep sea fishing, the fish auction and many cold storage units. You will continue this walk along the shore, passing in front of Notre Dame de la Joie (Our Lady of Joy) chapel and reach the Eckmühl lighthouse that faces the Pointe de Penmarc’h, signalling the danger of all these rocks that barely break the surface of the water. You can stroll along the quays of the marina in Kéerty, once a major commercial port, follow the shore once more, then along the long Ster beach to reach Guilvinec, a hamlet that has developed thanks to small-scale fishing. You will walk around the port before continuing your walk towards Lesconil, along beautiful fine sandy beaches. Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a 2-star hotel.*

Day 9 – From LESCONIL to PONT L’ABBE (19 Km) – From the hotel, you will head back to the port of Lesconil, known for its crayfish and its sailing marina. You will reach the white sandy beach and continue along the coastal path that runs along several beaches and follows a few small roads to reach the Pointe de Kérafédé headland. There, you will head inland, going through the village of Loctudy to reach its port at the estuary entrance to the Pont L’Abbé River. Here you will visit St Tudy church, a magnificent 11th century building. You will walk along the banks of this estuary dotted with islands when the sea rushes in at high tide. Along the way, you will discover several manors and châteaux that bear witness to the prosperity of this area in centuries gone by. Finally, you will reach Pont l’Abbé along the towpath that leads into the heart of the town, close to the port and château. Taxi transfer at Quimper for the last night. *Night and breakfast in a 3-star hotel.*

Day 10 –QUIMPER – The walk ends after breakfast.

Best Season

From April to middle of October but be careful this area is very crowded in summer time and we recommend you (if you can) to come outside this period. Nevertheless this area attracts a lot of tourists and you have to reserve earlier to get the best rooms.

What's included?

- 9 nights' accommodation in selected 2 and 3-star hotels
- 9 breakfasts – 7 dinners
- Hotel to hotel luggage transfer along the trail.
- Taxi transfers as above listed
- A set of maps (1/25 000 scale) with the route marked on and detailed route notes describing the trail.
- A daily itinerary together with information about facilities and places of interest along the trail.
- Phone emergency assistance with English-speaking support(24/24 7/7 days)

Visa fees – transportation fees to and from the walk area - Insurance (strongly recommended on all trips) - Transfers except those mentioned above – Drinks – Entrance fees – Additional meals - Spending of personal nature e.g. laundry, souvenirs, phone calls, are not included

Getting there and away

By plane: Domestic Airport Quimper Cornouaille, 3 flights from Paris Orly – Shuttle to Quimper centre.

By train: Direct trains from Paris Montparnasse rail station to Quimper. Bus from Pont L’abbé to Quimper rail station or taxi

By car: Toll motorway from Paris to Rennes. Free highway to Quimper - Back from Pont l’Abbé to Quimper by bus

Where to park your car: car park in Quimper.

Walk difficulty

Grade 3 - walks of between 5 and 8 hours a day with some sustained short ascents and descents. Some hiking experience is advisable. A reasonable level of fitness and some stamina are required for these walks. You may cover long distances in remote countryside and the terrain will be rough underfoot.