

C109-ST At edge of Sologne



Land of hunting and fishing, stretching from the Loire to the Cher rivers, just to the south of Orléans, the Sologne appears to us a wild land, mysterious, and inaccessible. We invite you to come and get to know this region. Along the forest paths or small, pleasant country roads winding and spiraling through the forests and moors, passing along the numerous ponds, crossing at the foot of ancient churches in picturesque little villages, you will discover magnificent châteaux, of which the most famous are Chambord, Chevemy and Villesavin. You will pass through Fougères sur Bièvre, dominated by its fortified château, and arrive in Chaumont sur Loire and Blois, following the majestic Loire River.



Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrival in BEAUGENCY. This old, medieval city developed on the right bank of the Loire close to a raised bridge many, many centuries ago. Since, it has undergone numerous alterations. For a long time, this bridge was the only one on the Loire between Tours and Orléans and thus aroused much envy. The city was protected by a wall of which, in some places, there remain a few ruins, including the Porte Tavers. The square-shaped keep is a gorgeous example of the military architecture of the time. The walk through the old, medieval quarters are very pleasant, and the city offers much in historic monuments : the Abbey of Notre Dame, the Saint Firmin Church with its impressive bell-tower, and the Hôtel de Ville with its Renaissance façade. You will spend the day visiting the city and the château. *Lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel.*

Day 2 - BEAUGENCY – LA FERTE SAINT CYR (22 km – 5 hour walk). You will leave Beaugency by crossing over the famous bridge. You will make your way through the farming lands to the forest. The path crosses vast areas of woods and moors, and along the banks of ponds to bring you to La Ferté Saint Cyr, a charming little village on the banks of the Cosson River – *Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a 3-star hotel.*

Day 3 - LA FERTE SAINT CYR – CHAMBORD (15 km – 4 hour walk). You will continue your hike through the forest and the magnificent park to the Château de Chambord. One of the principle masterpieces of the French Renaissance, the château was built under François I. In the 32 years of his reign, he would only stay in this castle a total of 42 days! Transfer by taxi to Bracieux in late afternoon. *Lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel.*



Day 4 - CHAMBORD – BRACIEUX (15 km – 4 hour walk). Transfer by taxi to Chambord in the morning. Taking one last look at the splendor of the château, you will turn towards the path that follows the Cosson. It will bring you to La Chaussée au Comte. From here, you will pass through the Boulogne National Forest and circle around the park of Chambord – enclosed by a 31-kilometer-long wall and reserved for hunting – to arrive at the Château de Villesavin. The château is a beautiful Renaissance structure that holds in its park a magnificent 16th-century pigeon-house. You will then arrive in Bracieux, a pleasant city on the banks of the Le Beuvron River which holds a lovely 16th-century covered-market. *Lodging and breakfast in the same hotel.*

Day 5 - BRACIEUX – COUR CHEVERNY (16 km – 4 and a half hour walk). This stage is short, but it allows you to discover several châteaux and private residences, as well as to cross through forests and along the ponds' edges to the city of Cheverny. We recommend visiting the beautifully decorated chateau and the kennels which house the hunting dogs. You will then arrive in Cour Cheverny, a picturesque little village surrounding the 12th-century Saint Agnan Church –
Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a 3-star hotel.

Day 6 - COUR CHEVERNY – FOUGERES SUR BIEVRE (17 km 6 4.30 hours' walk). You will arrive at the Château de Troussay, a Renaissance manor that was restored and enriched in the 19th century with edifices of the region. Inside, there is an interesting museum on the life in Sologne throughout the ages. Then, crossing through woods and moors, you will reach Fougères sur Bièvre and its château-fort. Transfer by taxi to Chaumont in late afternoon.. *Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a 3-star hotel.*



Day 7 - CHAUMONT SUR LOIRE – BLOIS (20 km – 5 and a half hour walk). The morning will begin with a visit of the château overlooking the Loire. Then, following the heights of the valley wall, you will arrive in Candé and continue along the river banks to Blois. *Lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel.*

Day 8 - BLOIS. The tour ends after breakfast. Don't leave before visiting this little medieval city, built on the edges of the hillsides: the narrow streets that end in staircases, the old residences, richly decorated and full of charm. The impressive château dominates a large public square that overlooks the Loire. The old quarter of Blois holds such beautiful edifices as the Saint Nicolas Church and the Saint Louis Cathedral.

Season

From April to October

What's included?

- 7 nights' accommodation in selected 2 or 3-star hotels
- 7 breakfasts – 3 dinners
- Hotel to hotel luggage transfer along the trail.
- Taxi transfers
- A set of maps (1/25 000 scale) and detailed route notes describing the trail.
- A daily itinerary together with information about facilities and places of interest along the trail.
- Emergency assistance.

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

Walk difficulty

Grade 2 - walks of 4 to 6 hours a day. Some stages could be more 20 km (13/15 miles) and rolling uplands, ascents mainly gradual than steep of up to 500 m. An average level of fitness or some experience with walking is recommended.

Getting there and away

By plane: from London (Stansted) to Tours airport with Ryanair and bus shuttle to Tours rail station. Trains to Beaugency

By train: Beaugency and Blois are on the Paris – Tours railway line,

By car: Beaugency is not far from the A10 motorway. Exit Meung sur Loire and follow N152 road

Where to park: free unguarded car paks in Beaugency. Return from Blois by train