

C206-ST The Rance Valley



The Rance River, the most peaceful of the Breton rivers, flows uphill from Dinan into a large, jagged estuary to meet the sea between the cities of Dinard and Saint Malo. The magnificent landscapes change constantly according to the tide. A simple current of water, the Rance becomes submerged by the sea at high tide and rises in the valley to the city gates of Dinan. This huge force is captured and transformed into energy at La Rance tidal power station.

Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrival in DINAN. Build on a steep plateau overlooking the Rance Valley, Dinan is a city that has managed to keep its medieval character. The city preserved the entirety of its 12th-century ramparts, which protects numerous medieval wooden homes and beautiful edifices of the time – among them the tour de l'Horloge (clock tower) and the château – all of which you will discover while venturing through the narrow city streets.

Lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel.

Day 2 - EVRAN – DINAN (16 km). For the next three days you will discover the different faces of the Rance River, making your way along its banks. Today will begin with a taxi escort to Evran, located on the Canal d'Ille et Rance. You will arrive at the banks of the tranquil river and follow it through prairies and woods and around hills until you reach Lehon, a small city nestled into one of the river's curves, rich in history and recognized for its location and monuments. You will discover the fortified castle that protected the Rance Valley from Norman invasions and the magnificent Royal abbey of Saint Magloire. The abbey was founded in 850 by Nominoë, the king of Brittany, along with six monks who willfully embarked on a journey for the Ile de Serk where they stole relics of Saint Magloire, once bishop of Dol, so to place the new abbey under the protection of a patron saint...and attract donations! The first abbey having been burned by the Normans, the Benedictines rebuilt it in the 12th century and it continued to grow until the 17th century, when the Revolution left it abandoned. It has been under successive reconstructions since the end of the 19th century. *Lodging and breakfast in the same two-star hotel.*



Day 3 - LANGROLAY SUR RANCE – DINAN (23km). Escort by taxi to Langrolay, a village situated at a distance from the banks of the Rance. Here you will discover maritime Rance, changing in landscape with each incoming tide. You will come to one of the numerous little creeks of the Rance Bay, marrying with the twisted relief of the banks, and will follow the water's edge to the hamlet of Souhaitier. Here lies a lovely little chapel which is frequented by pilgrims each year on the 15th of August.

You will continue inland towards the Port Saint Hubert, with its two bridges crossing the Rance. The path curves to and away from the waterside and then arrives at the écluse du Chatelier (lock). Just beyond, the Rance becomes nothing more than a peaceful flow of water, pleasant if not placid, which you will follow to the port of Dinan. You will admire the old gothic bridge and then climb towards the old city by way of the Rue du Vieux Port and Rue du Jerzual (city streets) –

Lodging and breakfast in the same two-star hotel.



Day 4 - LANGROLAY – SAINT MALO (24 km). Transfer by taxi to Langrolay for a discovery of the maritime Rance. You will arrive at the Pointe du Chatelet (headland) and follow the Grève de Morlet (strand). You will arrive at the holds and strands which stretch across the commune of Minihic. Early in their history, the activity of the villages along the Rance turned entirely towards the sea. Men became sea fishermen or offshore carpenters, shipyards began to be numerous along the coast, and watermills were installed in the protection of the coastal recesses. You will still find remains of these mills along the path. You will follow the strands to La Richardais and its restored mill, and cross the cove of the streams to the

power plant which borders the Rance estuary. You will cross the river and continue your walk along the opposite bank to Saint Servan sur Mer and the Tour Solidor. You will then arrive in the ancient city of Saint Malo.

Lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel in the Saint Malo's old city.

Day 5 - SAINT MALO. Tour ends after breakfast. We recommend taking time to visit Saint Malo. The city is rich in history and hides numerous testimonies of the past behind its ramparts.

Season

From middle of April to end 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?

- ✓ 4 nights' accommodation in 2-star hotels
- ✓ 4 breakfasts – dinners not included
- ✓ Hotel to hotel luggage transfer along the trail.
- ✓ Taxi transfers : Dinan-Evran, Dinan-Langrolay (X2)
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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

Getting there and away

By train : You can get to Dinan from the train station Paris-Montparnasse. Connections are required at Rennes and Dol.

Several trains run between Saint Malo and Paris via Rennes for the return.

By car : Take the A11 motorway (Paris – Le Mans) to Le Mans and follow the A81 to Rennes. On the north bypass to Rennes, take route N137 towards Saint Malo. You will turn off after Pleugueneuc for Dinan, following the departmental route of D794 .

Where to park : Free parking available in Dinan. Return to Dinan by the Saint Malo – Dinan train.

From UK : Ferries between Portsmouth and Saint Malo. Regular buses to Dinan

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.