

## Rennes < > Pont-Réan

**STAGE PROFILE: 19.5 km 4h50**

**Going through the town of Rennes** is just a suggestion and is for each person to choose to adapt according to their wishes and priorities. However, the town deserves a visit which it would be a shame to miss out upon. If it is difficult to make time here to do this, let us say a half-day would be sufficient to get to know the old quarter of the city. If a stroll through these charming streets is undertaken, don't leave Rennes without taking a drink or a meal in one of the numerous bars and restaurants of the city centre. Your visit will allow you to discover the classical town (City Hall/hôtel de ville and Place du Parlement) designed by Jacques Gabriel.

For pilgrims who want to go into Rennes, here is the route you can take :

### **DIRECTIONS to get to the cathedral of Rennes and the city centre.**

Having arrived at the bridge Pont Legraverend, continue along the canal d'Ille et Rance as far as the next bridge, below Place des Lices. Turn left towards Les Lices, then take a right onto Rue de Juillet, (3rd road from the bottom of Place des Lices, where you have on your right the Portes Mordelaises.) Pass under them to arrive just opposite the Cathedral via the Rue de la Monnaie.

Then, choose between two possibilities : go back to Pont Legraverend and pick up the waymarks, or go to Pont Robert Schuman, where you can also pick up the waymarking.

### **To rejoin Capitals Way (Chemin des Capitales) at Pont Robert Schuman (1.3 km)**

Leaving the cathedral, take a left onto Rue de la Monnaie as far as Place de Bretagne which you go round by the left to get to the left bank of the river Vilaine. Go along the Quai de la Prévalaye for 60m and down a little granite steps (7 steps) which allows you to follow the towpath of the Vilaine as far as the second bridge, Pont Robert Schuman, under which you go to rejoin the waymarked Chemin des Capitales.

### **DIRECTIONS :**

**00.0 - Rennes.** Leaving the youth hostel, the St James Way/Chemin de Saint-Jacques goes along the towpath of the canal d'Ille-et-Rance towards the city centre.

At the start, go under a bridge and follow the pedestrian/cycle path for about 400m. Keep left to follow the Chemin de Saint-Jacques which goes up a slight incline along Boulevard de Chezy before Pont Legraverend ; cross the road at the traffic lights before going over the canal staying on the left hand footpath as far as the next traffic lights. You are now at Boulevard de Lattre de Tassigny which you cross at the traffic lights, before going along it to the left for a little less than 400m. .

Leave Rue du Canal to the right in order to take, just after the bridge over the river Ille, the Allée

Sylvestre-de-la-Guerche (1.0km). This pleasant passageway which weaves between buildings and branches of the river Ille allows you to get away from the urban busyness and discover, mid-way, some remains of the cloister of the monastery of Bourg l'Évêque which adjoins Square Guy-Houist.

Keep slightly right after a little less than 300m and cross Rue de Brest over both carriageways (Attention danger !) to get to Promenade Emile-Masson (100m) as far as Rue Vanneau.

Go opposite onto it, after having crossed the recently built and beautiful overbridge to get to Promenade du Lavoir.

The Way goes again between buildings and branches of the river Ille. On the right bank rises the brick chimney of the wash-house Lavoir Saint-Cyr, then the wash-house itself, a superb construction, as well as other buildings of the domain. A lovely view over it all from the little Place upon which you arrive.

Leave to the right the overbridge which leads to Parc St Cyr and to MJC La Paillette, and continue straight ahead via a little dirt track which comes out 100m further onto Mail François Mitterand. Go across it by a pedestrian way. Head left in the direction of Pont Robert Schuman and cross over the river Vilaine. At the far end of the crossover, take a granite steps on the right which leads to Quai d'Auchel (2.3km).

Continue on your way, towards the south, via this quay along the left bank of the river Vilaine, the course of which you generally follow from now on as far as Redon. On its right bank, after a little less than 1km, you will notice the beautiful lock/écluse du Comte, and further on the modern structure of the stands of Stade Rennais. This towpath, very comfortable for the feet of the walker, brings you away from Rennes, which you leave near the Quartier de Cleunay.

**1h00 3.9** – On the left, just before the western bypass, a large commercial centre at Cleunay and a shopping mall offer the opportunity for refreshment. You retake your path which follows the course of the river Vilaine for about 90km before getting to Redon. For now, we leave the capital of Brittany, giving a last glance to the buildings and factories of the industrial zone which is situated on the opposite bank.

Little by little the walk regains its serenity, hardly disturbed by the base nautique of étang d'Apigné. A few hundred metres further, the Moulin d'Apigné rises impressively above a weir no longer in use.

**1h45 07.0 - Moulin d'Apigné.** Cross the tarmac road above the bridge (reduced visibility, caution ! Bar/Restaurant nearby) and continue straight ahead on the towpath. This pleasant dirt path winds along by the Vilaine and a series of ponds which you find during the next few kilometres. These ponds are in fact old gravel pits or quarries, some of them are still active.

**3h10 12.5** Having passed **lock/écluse de Cicé**, the Vilaine goes very close by the flooded gravelpits of Giraudais, then Gandonnière, as well as the pond of Louveterie. Cross the D36 (caution) (15.6km) and continue straight ahead towards the lock, then the area of Cornillet, after having passed under the D177 Rennes – Redon motorway. This time the ponds-gravelpits are

on the opposite bank.

All along this walk, you will notice the presence of some beautiful properties on the bank opposite the towpath, residences – most often second homes – of the industrial magnates of Rennes from the end of the 19th Century. This pleasant day comes to an end in the village of...

**4h50 19,5 - Pont-Réan.** Cross the stone bridge (classified as an historic monument) to head into the centre.