

Pont-Réan < > Rennes

19.5 km 4h50

Directions :

0.00 - Pont-Réan - Leave from the rest/parking area on the right bank of the Vilaine opposite the Grand Hotel. Cross to the right the lovely nine-arch bridge to head left onto the other bank of the Vilaine. After 300m, there is a passage in front of the lock Écluse de Pont-Réan with a lock-keeper's house with pretty blue shutters. The towpath winds alongside the river through wooded and agricultural areas. After 3.5km, there is a passage under the motorway D177 Rennes-Redon.

1h00 3.7 – Lock : Écluse de Mons, with beautiful floral displays and situated on a section of the river Vilaine which has been canalised. 250m further there is an intersection with the D35. Continue straight ahead.

1h45 7.0 – Lock : Écluse de Cicé, with its very original mobile bridge which serves the lock-keeper's house, at the start of another section of canal which ends after 1.7km, at the point where your Way meets the D434. There is an active mill here, and two lovely houses on either side of the towpath. With a little luck, it is possible to see, as you go along the Vilaine, herons, egrets or even birds of prey. 2h 20 9.3km : You enter an area, which is perhaps private, for 500m after a little bridge. Several hundred metres further, the pilgrim goes by a gravel pit, still active, on his right.

3h05 12.4 - Intersection with the tarmac road at Moulin d'Apigné. Before continuing, it is possible to take a break at the bar-restaurant which is on the right after having crossed the road (reduced visibility, danger!) Continue straight ahead, noticing to the left the lock Écluse d'Apigné. Go by, on your right, the leisure area of Landes d'Apigné, much enjoyed by the citizens of Rennes, whose ponds are in fact old gravel pits.

3h50 15.4 – Enter the built-up area of Rennes via the passage under the western bypass. Soon after, on the right, there is the large commercial centre of Cleunay then, on the left a little further on, the imposing structure of the Rennes football stadium. After 700m, admire the magnificent lock Écluse du Comte, with its floral decoration in summer. Carry on along the Vilaine for a bit more than 600m, pass under a railway bridge then by an area of housing, apartment blocks and some detached houses on the right. The city has built-up the banks of the river here (Quai d'Auchel) which you follow for 500m to get to...

4h15 17.1 ... the bridge Pont Robert Schuman which you take (acces by granite steps) to cross the Vilaine, going towards the left while staying on the near side of the road. Cross this dual carriageway after a little less than 200m by the pedestrian crossing (caution, dangerous crossing !) then carry on opposite on a dirt road called Promenade du Lavoisier between buildings and this branch of the Ille. Further on, after 100m, leave a level crossing of the MJC La Paillette to the left and continue along this lovely walk, passing under a bridge then across an overbridge which comes out 200m further on Rue Vaneau. Cross it and continue opposite onto Promenade Emile Masson (100m) alongside the Ille. Cross Rue de Brest (Caution : 2 dual carriageways !)

and carry on as before along by the Ille [notice on the right the famous « Horizons » towers, the tallest buildings in Rennes (100m)] to take Allée Sylvestre de la Guerche.

This pleasant passage, which winds between buildings and the Ille allows us to discover, half-way along, some remains of the cloisters of the monastery of Bourg-l'Évêque which adjoins the Square Guy-Houist before reaching Boulevard De Lattre de Tassigny (18.5km). Fork left to go along this boulevard for 400m before going right at the traffic lights across the first bridge (Legraverend), straddling the canal from Ille to La Rance. At the end of the bridge, take a left along Boulevard de Chézy on the footpath then on the trail wich follows the canal and passes under the Rue Saint-Malo, before finding on your left the lock and the marina of Saint-Martin.

4h50 19.5 – In front of you, to the right, is the **Auberge de Jeunesse de Rennes (Rennes Youth Hostel)**, the end of this stage.