

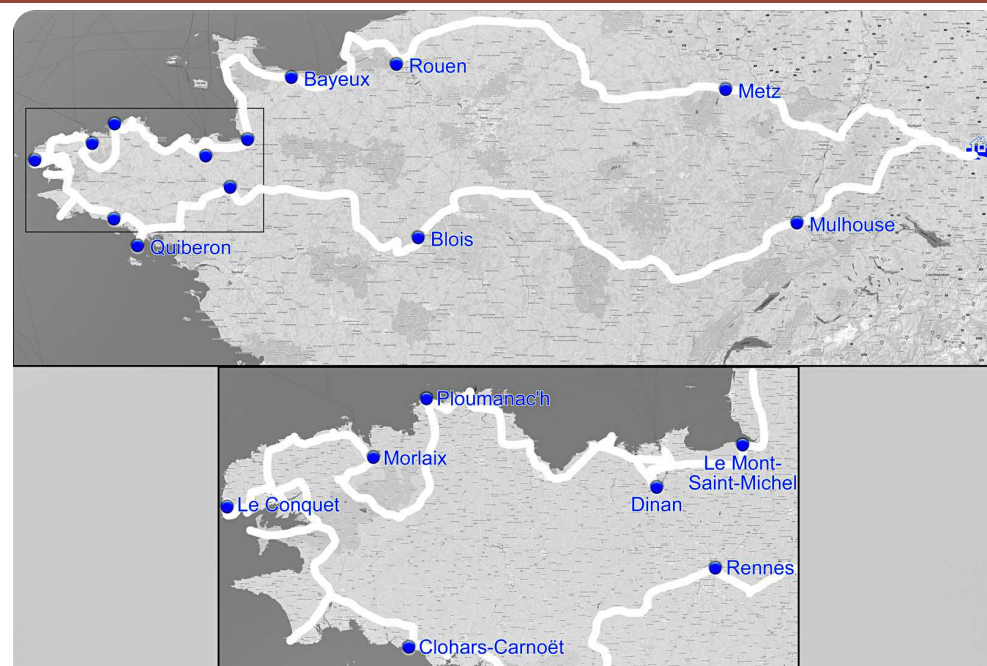
Rainy Brittany



Rainy Brittany

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Date	Destination	Hotel	Milage day [km]	Milage total [km]
Fri 13.10.	Woippy (bei Metz)	Campanile Metz Nord	408	408
Sat 14.10.	Rouen	Holiday Inn Express Rouen Centre	502	910
Son 15.10.	Bayeux	Hôtel Le Saint Patrice	240	1.150
Mon 16.10.	Mont-Saint-Michel	Hotel Gabriel	251	1.401
Tue 17.10.	Dinan	De La Porte Saint-Malo	108	1.509
Wed 18.10.	Dinan		129	1.638
Thu 19.10.	Perros-Guirec	Logis Hôtel du Parc	202	1.840
Fri 20.10.	Morlaix	Hôtel Du Port	143	1.983
Sat 21.10.	Le Conquet	Les roses	154	2.137
Son 22.10.	Le Conquet		248	2.385
Mon 23.10.	Clohars-Carnoët	Hotel Naéco Le Pouldu	274	2.659
Tue 24.10.	Quiberon	Best Western Hotel Le Bellevue	110	2.769
Wed 25.10.	Rennes	Odalys City Rennes Lorgeril	189	2.958
Thu 26.10.	Blois	Best Western Blois Chateau	344	3.302
Fri 27.10.	Mulhouse	Best Western Mulhouse Salvator Centre	602	3.904
Sat 28.10.	Öllingen		327	4.231



When we discussed options for our fall vacation, France was not the first destination that came to mind. But when Jürgen said he could also imagine a road trip to Brittany, it was a done deal. Freya even agreed to brush up on her old French from school.

The general idea was to go straight to Brittany, with only a few stops in between, so that the drive wouldn't be too long. After all, we only had two weeks in October.

There was plenty of sunshine and warm

temperatures in September and early October, but as we got closer to our vacation, the weather forecast got worse.

From the beginning we were expecting moody weather and some coastal wind, but what we got was more than we wanted.

The journey westwards

We leave home on Friday afternoon after Jürgen has finished work. The idea is to get through the usual traffic jams between Stuttgart and Karlsruhe already today and to have a more pleasant ride on the French highways starting tomorrow.

We have some minor traffic jams in Germany, but as soon as we enter the toll roads in France, there are significantly fewer cars on the highway and driving is pretty relaxed.

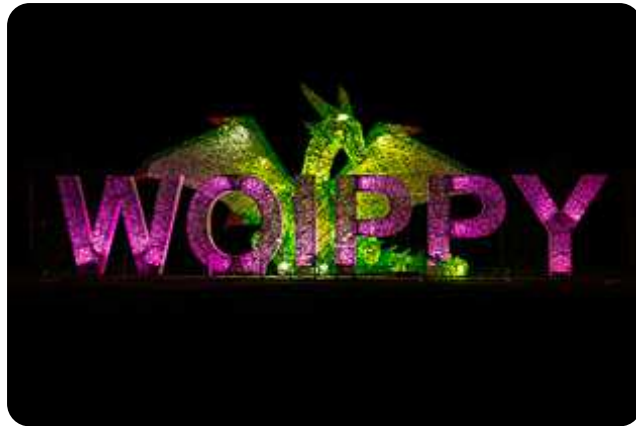
Paying the toll is quite easy as we can use our credit card. Freya has heard that some stations do not accept credit cards, so we bring a bag of coins just in case.

During the whole vacation we will only have to use them once – at a toll station where the card reader was out of order.

After 4 hours we arrive in Woippy. Woippy is a village near Metz and since this is only a stopover, Jürgen had booked a hotel near the highway. If it had been earlier, we would have taken the bus to Metz that stops nearby, but as it is, we just take a look at the dragon statue that

we saw while looking for the entrance to the hotel.

But why is there a dragon statue? Well, Woippy's coat of arms includes the Granouilly dragon, which, according to legend, was killed by St. Clement, the bishop of Metz.



Woippy – France

Next to the hotel is a French copy of McDonald's or Burger King. We have to order on a display like in many McDonald's, but here you can't change the language. But ordering a burger is quite easy, no matter if in German, English or French.

The next day is also a driving day. But first we start with breakfast at the hotel. As usual, it is a self-service buffet, but we

are positively surprised by the variety. Before getting on the highway, we visit the Auchan supermarket next to our hotel and buy some baguette, cheese and sausage for lunch on the way.

To avoid driving all day, we make a stop near Reims. Outside of Verzy is the Faux de Verzy. This is a beech forest with the



Faux de Verzy – Verzy – France

largest collection of dwarf beeches in the world. In 1998, more than 800 trees were counted. Since then, the number has decreased slightly. The most beautiful specimens have been saved from competition and fenced into a park-like area on a circular path to become a tourist attraction.

We have visited dwarf beeches in other places and especially loved the ones in

the Semper Forest Park on the island of Rügen. These trees have twisted and intertwined branches. They grow wider than tall. With their overhanging branches, they form tent-like crowns.

Since most of the trees are fenced in, it's hard to find a good composition. It would have been much easier in winter or early spring, when the leaves no longer hide the wonderful shapes of the branches. But if you walk along other paths, you will find trees that are unfenced.

Back on the highway, we look for a place to have a quick lunch with the goodies we bought this morning. The rest areas on the toll roads in France are much nicer than in Germany. They all have

clean toilets and usually some benches for a picnic. Like the roads themselves, they are not as crowded, especially with fewer trucks than in Germany.

While the weather was nice and warm yesterday, it's much colder and windy today. So it's really a brief lunch.

Back in the car, we now have to take care of it. Already on the last meters of the ascent to the forest the car asked for some

oil, but this message disappeared when the car stopped. Now the message is back and we need some gas too.

So the next stop is a gas station, but is diesel the same as „Gazol“? The stations we saw before said „Diesel“. A quick look on the internet doesn't give a clear answer, so we better take the next station. Here they have signs with both names, so it's really synonymous. But now we have another problem. Very often you have to pay at the pump, just like in the USA. But this one doesn't accept Jürgen's gas card. Freya goes to the counter, explains the problem in French – and a super nice woman helps us. The refresher course has already paid off. We also buy some oil and fill it up after a short break with coffee and cake.

And of course the only sign is right above the entrance of the garage 😊.

It's Saturday and there's some kind of festival going on downtown.

Freya will find out later that it's the „Feast of the Belly“ with street food during the day.

But we're not hungry now, so our first stop is the modern church of Sainte-Jeanne-d'Arc. This church is dedicated to



Eglise Ste-Jeanne-d'Arc – Rouen – France



Rue du Gros-Horloge – Rouen – France

the heroine Joan of Arc, who was burned as a heretic by the English on April 30, 1431. In fact, this historic site was a place of execution and shame until almost the middle of the nineteenth

From here we walk through the medieval streets to the „Gros Horlonge“, an oversized clock above a gate, to the cathedral.

The Cathedral of Rouen is one of the most important churches in France built in the Gothic style. The Norman dukes were crowned and buried here. It's too late for the sun to illuminate this church as colorfully as many of the churches to come, but we admire the windows already, not knowing how many more beautiful ones we will see in the coming days.

century. The stained glass windows come from the former church of Saint-Vincent, which was bombed during the Second World War.

The sun sets and the sky turns pink and purple, calling for more pictures of the „Gros Horlonge“ gate.

But now we have to find a place for dinner. Freya saw the dessert Baba

We still have a long way to go before we finally reach Rouen. Our hotel is a bit outside the city center, but still within walking distance. So the plan is to get rid of the car, check in and then have a look at the old town of Rouen.

The only problem is finding the parking garage, as the entrance is one block away and on a different street.



in Rouen – France



in Rouen – France

o'Rhum on the menu of one of the restaurants. Her first and only encounter with this delicious dish was in Rome. There she ate three portions because it was so delicious. For Jürgen, this is definitely not an argument to go to an overpriced tourist restaurant on the central market square, but Freya keeps nagging him until he gives up.

Across Normandy

Unfortunately, we both understand only a fraction of the menu. Jürgen's fraction is even smaller. So it's a bit like the motto: „That's fish, let's take it. You take number 1 and I take number 3. And then we'll see what we get. And of course the Baba for Freya.

And what shall I say, the food was ok, but far from what we paid for it and even the Baba wasn't as Freya remembered it.

It was quite a long day and so we head back to the hotel. Somehow the walk now seems much longer than before.

We wake up relatively early the next morning. Suddenly Jürgen starts to push. „Make sure we are at breakfast before

the 8:00 rush ...“.

Unfortunately he didn't count on the group from Lippe. The breakfast room is buzzing and humming, the bread is gone, the orange juice too. The poor waitres

ses are completely surprised by the rush.

We drive through the beautiful countryside of the Departement Seine-Maritime to our first destination today, the Jardin d'Étretat. This is a Freya destination with a mixture of art and garden. We park our car downhill at the station and walk up the narrow road. The garden is located high above the village of Étretat on the steep cliffs.

Before entering the garden, we walk along the cliff and take pictures. On the way to the entrance we make a short stop at the monument of Nungesser et Coli.

But then we enter and start to enjoy walking around the whole park. Narrow paths wind through the garden. Every bush has been trimmed. The little hidden café where we have an espresso is also nice. But the garden is best known for the oversized heads embedded in the boxwood hedges.

Our next stop is Le Havre. Freya had been there once in the early 80s and would never have thought of putting this city on a travel list again. But Jürgen found a modern church and we are there conveniently at lunchtime. So one thing fits in with the other.



Les Jardins d'Étretat – France



Aiguille und Porte d'Aval –
Étretat – France



Eglise St Joseph –
Le Havre – France



Eglise St Joseph – Le Havre – France

The beach promenade along which we drive to St. Joseph’s Church is quite attractive and yes, we see some restaurants.

But first we go to the church. It was built after the destruction of Le Havre in memory of those who died during the liberation of the city. The most striking feature is the central tower. Its shape resembles an octagon. Everything is made of exposed concrete and you might think that it looks sober and cold. The opposite is true. Countless pieces of glass have been incorporated and these bathe the interior in a soft light. Gentle choral music played during our stay. Beautiful.

At some point we leave and walk to the nearby city beach. It is surprisingly large.

We walk along the promenade for a while until we find two restaurants and decide for the one with the terrace upstairs. We both have fish & chips and are anything but disappointed.



La Cathedrale de Bayeux – Bayeux – France



La Cathedrale de Bayeux – Bayeux – France

Then we drive on to our overnight stay in Bayeux. Despite the time of year it is very touristy here. The D-Day beaches are very close and many Americans are following in the footsteps of their ancestors.

It is too late to see the famous carpet, so we just walk through the old town and visit Notre Dame de Bayeux.

We end the day in a brasserie with onion soup and cider. A beautiful day.

On the way to Le Mont-Saint-Michel

Le Mont-Saint-Michel is still in Normandy, but since it’s one of the most famous places in the area, you can’t miss it.

But we’ll start the day with a brief look at one of the beaches that all the Americans are here for. The Longues-sur-Mer Battery

on Gold Beach was part of the German coastal fortifications of the Atlantic Wall and is the only battery in Normandy to retain some of its original guns. It’s pretty cold this morning, so we put on extra fleece jackets and go to see what’s left there. There are only a few people around, all part of small tour groups, following their guides as they explain some



Batterie Longues-sur-Mer (Gold Beach) – Longues-sur-Mer – France



La Maison du Biscuit – Sortosville-en-Beaumont – France



La Maison du Biscuit – Sortosville-en-Beaumont – France



Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Coutances – Coutances – France

details on the map.

Our next stop is Sortosville-en-Beaumont. Jürgen found some nice pictures of old houses and a gas station. The old houses turn

out to be La Maison du Biscuit. They have restored a whole row of adjacent houses from the 19th century and turned them into one big shop.

Inside it is pure temptation. Of course, as you would expect from a biscuit shop, there are sweets. But also wine, sausages and much more.

We had planned to go shopping only at the end of the trip and now this.

We were very modest, but in addition to delicious meringue cookies and

other sweets, we also bought the good fish soup concentrate and the pink salt that Freya had been looking for elsewhere. Then we quickly leave this place. There was so much more we could have taken.

From Sortosville-en-Beaumont we drive to Coutances, which is more or less on the way to Le Mont-Saint-Michel. We park the car in the city center and have a look inside the cathedral. Again we admire the huge and colorful windows.

supermarkets and we are a bit lost, but finally we buy a baguette, red wine and some other things.

We put our groceries in the car and take a look at the restaurant, but we hardly find anything to our taste. Then Freya discovers roasted ham with slices cut off.

She orders a slice for Jürgen and herself, plus extra sauce and a salad. It's okay, but our expectations of French cuisine are different.

The last destination on



Le Mont-Saint-Michel – France



Le Mont-Saint-Michel – France



Le Mont-Saint-Michel – France



Le Mont-Saint-Michel – France



Le Mont-Saint-Michel – France



Le Mont-Saint-Michel – France

today's list is the Abbey of Lucerne d'Outremier. Unfortunately, it is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays outside of the French holidays. What a pity. But ok, that gives us a little more time for Le Mont-Saint-Michel.

Our hotel is near the bridge that connects the mountain to the mainland. Therefore we are allowed to park in the otherwise restricted area. We received a code by mail the day before, and after having mistakenly followed the signs to the regular parking lot at first, we are now able to open the gate that is otherwise closed.

We drop our luggage in our room. By the way: Many French hotels do not have elevators.

We don't want to be on the island too early because we want to avoid the crowds. So we walk behind the hotel onto a dam and then over a weir onto the fields to the left of the abbey. After a while we turn around and take the complementary bus over the bridge to the island.

We are here in the early evening in mid-October, but we can well imagine what it is like at midday or even in the summer. We walk up the steep, long alley, climb the stairs, and stop to look at the little church on the way. Most of the shops

and restaurants are already closed for the day, but we knew that. The abbey itself is also closed.

After a while we decide to turn back and this time we walk over the bridge.

The next morning, Jürgen gets up early to take some pictures of Le Mont-Saint-Michel at sunrise. Again, he crosses the weir and follows the same path we took yesterday. Just a little further until he finds a suitable foreground.



in Saint-Suliac – France

Freya is happy about the extra space in bed and sleeps a little longer. When Jürgen comes back we go for breakfast and here they even have whole grain bread with nuts and raisins and salty butter. A good start to the day.

And here comes the rain

After leaving Le Mont-Saint-Michel, we finally arrive in Brittany. First stop of the day is Saint-Suliac, one of the „Most Beautiful Villages in France“. This is a cultural tourism award in France. It was created in 1982 to promote small villages for tourism. A place that wants to be included in the list must not have more



ship cemetery – Quelmer – France

than 2000 inhabitants and must have a protected zone or historical protected buildings. There are only 4 of them in all of Brittany.

The weather is so-so, but the village is really nice. We walk through the narrow streets down to the sea. Even at this time of year there are still many flowers in bloom. Freya's favorite is the Spanish

daisy. She recently bought some in Germany for good money and they are spreading like weeds here. We also visit the grounds of the village church. We make friends with a pretty red cat and then we're on our way again.

From here we drive to the ship cemetery in Quelmer. Quelmer is officially part of Saint-Malo and just before you enter the village there is a small road down to the shipyard. We park at the central parking lot in the middle of the village and walk back the few meters and down to the water. You might be able to find a place to leave your car near the shipyard, but it's really not a deal to walk.

This is a strange place. Nice (and not cheap) sailboats in the background, a shipyard on the right and wrecks used as graffiti canvas in front. Nothing worth a massive detour, but if you're in the area, give it a try.

We're already close to Dinan, where we'll spend 2 nights, but it's too early to check in. So we stop at Saint-Jouan-des-Guérets, one of the countless churches of the region. And we stop briefly at

Leclerc to stock up on fresh bread and red wine.

Finally, it's 3 p.m. and we head to our hotel, which is in the middle of town, just 5 minutes from the city walls. That's the plus – the minus that comes with the location is



in Dinan – France

that parking nearby is extremely limited. But we are early enough to get one in the small parking lot around the corner.

The hotel is a small boutique hotel in an old house. All rooms are different and we can choose between two of them. One has a wider bed, the other has a small terrace leading to a



in Dinan – France

small garden in the backyard. We choose the one with the terrace and use it for a late lunch before heading into town.



Eglise Saint-Malo – in Dinan – France

restaurant with outdoor dining. They serve fish soup and cider, which is just as dark as

Dinan is the nicest old town of our trip so far. We zigzag through the town, take a look at the local church, and then walk down to the river. At the port we find a restaurant with outdoor dining. They serve fish soup and cider, which is just as dark as the beer Jürgen has chosen. All delicious. But then we have to go uphill again. Quite steep.

There are many delicious things for breakfast and Freya

spontaneously chooses „sweet“. A delicious apple tart, whiskey-salt-caramel-spread, fraise-thyme jam and nice bread. Jürgen sticks to sausage and cheese and leaves the sweets for last.

A tasty start and with today's weather any encouragement is welcome. First it rains, then it pours and in between it drizzles. The perfect weather for a dark, defiant city like Saint Malo.

We park at the harbor and walk across the bridge into the city itself. We take a look at the church and stroll through the narrow streets. We climb the city wall and walk

around the city. The city is not that big, so why don't they block the cars?



in Saint-Malo – France

and run. But we didn't. No matter.

We had a few more destinations on our list for today, but somehow we've almost run out of steam. Nevertheless, we still want to see the little chapel in the sea, St. Michel near Erquy.



Chapelle St. Michel – near Erquy – France

It's a bit unclear how to get there. Our navigation system sends us to a dead end, but as we know, Google knows everything. Anyway, we finally reach the sea, see the chapel and stay in the car for a while.

At some point we get out of the car, take some useless pictures and head back when a French couple comes out of a dune. The woman asks Freya: „Nous cherchons la soleil, avezvous la trouvé ?“ Freya laughs, she has understood the sentence – unfortunately she is not capable of a funny answer. So she just says „non“. That's all she can think of.

On the way back there is another parking lot with a different view of the chapel. While Freya stays in the car, Jürgen gets out to take some more pictures.

Now we are fed up. We don't even find the delicious wine whose label we photographed. Instead we find another one and tartlets, which we eat in the hotel. Here we drink tea, later red wine and finally we go out to eat in town. There aren't many open restaurants, but finally we find one. Jürgen has a delicious steak and Freya has a seafood salad with some prawns. The pizza at the next table looked good as well.

On the way back we hear it for the second time. One of the evening bells

rings beautifully, the second sounds tinny.

At breakfast, Freya is given a small glass of delicious whiskey caramel cream as a farewell gift. She is very happy about it.



Cap Fréhel –
near Plévenon – France

Pink Granite Coast walks

This morning nature is fresh and wonderfully clean, and since the clouds are dramatic and it's not raining, we decide to go to Cap Fréhel, which we skipped yesterday.

It was a good decision and well worth the detour. We have a nice walk and even see a group of dolphins passing by.



Maison du Gouffre – Plougrescant – France

We continue west on small back roads and stop in St. Quay Portrieux for an early lunch of goat cheese and honey crêpes. We sit outside the small café and even though the thermometer in the car says 18°C, it's quite windy and feels much colder.

Jürgen has two more sites on the agenda for the afternoon. One is Maison du

Gouffre, a house squeezed between two rocks, while the other is less specific, just a walk along the coast near our hotel.

So we drive to a parking lot near the coast where the Maison du Gouffre is located. Even Jürgen thinks that there should be a parking lot closer to the Maison du Gouffre, we decide to stay here and walk along the coast, hoping for some nice views.

Just as we put on our hiking boots, it starts to pour. So we decided to stay in the car for a while.

As quickly as the rain came, it disappeared and we started our walk. The first few meters are along the coast, but then the path turns inland. It's pretty nice right now. Maybe a little wet, but the air is fresh and not really cold.

Finally we reach the carpark near the house. There are a few houses here, but only the famous one is so picturesque. And of course there are cars parked in front of it. This seems to be the case no matter when you try to photograph the house. But Jürgen didn't expect to get a unique shot here anyway.

We turn around and slowly it starts to rain again. Then it gets heavier and heavier and we just reach the restroom

near the parking lot when it's pouring again. About 15 people are crowded under the canopy and in the hand-capped bathroom. It's actually quite amusing.

As soon as the rain stops, we continue. Our path has turned into a small river. Freya is really grateful that Jürgen insisted on bringing the hiking boots, even though she thought they were pretty useless. Unfortunately, the time until the next downpour is a little shorter and so we get another shower. But it's not too cold, the jackets are waterproof and all in all it was fun.

But now it's time to go to our hotel. It is in Ploumanac'h, officially part of Perros-Guirec. On the way we have some doubts if the Navsat is showing us the right way, but yes, we're right.

Our hotel is right at the central parking lot next to the beach. We even get an upgrade as there are only a few rooms occupied at this time of the year. So we drop our bags in the room and since it stopped raining, we immediately start our walk along the coast towards the lighthouse.



Phare de Mean Ruz –
Ploumanac'h – France



Phare de Mean Ruz – Ploumanac'h – France



Phare de Mean Ruz –
Ploumanac'h – France

The rocks in this part of Brittany are granite and have a pinkish red color – especially now that the sun is already quite low. So we walk towards the lighthouse and a little further. Freya sees faces in the rocks all over the place again.



Phare de Mean Ruz –
Ploumanac'h – France

Connected to the hotel is a restaurant (La Cotriade). Since we didn't know how long we would be walking along the coast, we didn't make a reservation when we checked in, but we manage to get a seat anyhow.



Phare de Mean Ruz – Ploumanac'h – France

Although Freya had the menu explained to her in detail (she still insists on getting the explanations in French), we end up with „You have the first fish dish on the menu and I'll have the third“. But that didn't matter this time. In the end, it was the best meal of the trip. Not cheap, but it can compete with the 1-star restaurants.

The next morning it's time again for some sunrise photos. Jürgen had already decided last night where he wanted to go. When he leaves the hotel, nobody is to be seen except for someone cleaning the road. Also on the way and at the photo spot he's all alone. It takes some experimenting to get the right exposure for the waves, but as the sun rises behind some clouds he gets good shots even without bracketing or a filter.

Back at the hotel we have breakfast, which is good, but cannot compete with last night's dinner. We could have stayed longer here.

Valley of the Saints

The weather forecast for today says that it should stay dry until the afternoon, and at the moment it seems to be right.

The distance we want to cover today is not long, so we take our time and stop every now and then.



The Valley of the Saints – Carnoët – France



The Valley of the Saints – Carnoët – France



The Valley of the Saints – Carnoët – France

„saints“ does not mean that all of them are recognized by the Catholic Church.

Admission to the area is free, but there is

10–15 cars and small buses here. At the beginning the fog still hangs in the fields and this fits very well with the

restaurant are closed. There are still about

early 17th centuries when different communities were competing to build the most magnificent one.

We visit those of Guimiliau, Lampaul-Guimiliau and Saint-Thégonnec Loc-Eguiner. All very close to each other. Unfortunately, the weather forecast is also right with the second part of its prediction. It's after-

Our first destination is the Valley of the Saints. This is a project by Philippe Abjean to commemorate the many Breton saints. A kind of Breton Easter Island, as the statues are 2.5 to 7 meters high. Ultimately, statues of 1000 saints will be created, although



in Lampaul-Guimiliau – France

a parking fee. What in the end has the same effect, except that it is easier for them to collect the money. Considering the size of the parking lot and the visitor center, it can get pretty crowded. But today the visitor center and the res-

surreal atmosphere created by the many statues of saints. Later, the sun chases away the fog and us.

This part of Brittany is known for its churches with their parish closes and calvaries. They date back to the 16th and

noon and it begins raining.



in Guimiliau – France

We arrive in Morlaix around 4 pm. We had already been informed by mail that due to a fair there is no parking available nearby. Jürgen had booked a hotel at the

harbor just outside the city center, because it was said that it would be difficult to find a parking space in the inner city, and now the fair blocked the nice big parking lot 🤦. But it doesn't matter. Jürgen drives us up a hill, where we can park for free in another parking lot.

Unfortunately, the weather has completely abandoned us. The drizzle is replaced by a heavy downpour and after standing under a shelter for quite a while, hoping that the rain will stop, we decide to call it a day.

On the way we didn't even see a restaurant we wanted to stop at, so we stock up on small treats in a little patisserie. We also have red wine, sausage and cheese, although the really tasty one is now only Freya's. In Jürgen's words: „When I see how he slimes around...“.



in Morlaix – France

To the end of the world

When we want to leave the hotel next morning, it's raining cats and dogs again. So we stay at the reception for a while, but there's no point in waiting. Eventually we leave, dragging our suitcases behind us, crossing the little river, two streets and then up the hill. Freya grumbles to herself. Good mood looks different.



in Morlaix – France

But never mind. We warm up the seats in the car and drive to the graffiti, which we didn't feel like doing the yesterday. Then to Leclerc's. With cheese, sausage, baguette and wine the

basics are covered.

We drive to beaches and lighthouses. Freya doesn't even get out of the car. It's so disgusting. Then it's time for lunch. Freya wants to eat at least something good because of the shitty weather.

In Brignogan Plage we find something

that exceeds our expectations. There's a restaurant right at the beach. It's called „La Corniche“ and is crowded. But there's still room for us. Freya chooses mussels Breton style with cream and bacon. Jürgen eats fish. It's warm and dry here and the food is delicious. The highlight of the day.

As we leave the restaurant, the rain has stopped and we take a walk along the beach and the dunes. Lots of rabbit holes, lots of wind. When it starts to drizzle, we leave and at the next beach it's so wet that Freya stays in the car again.

Now we turn south in the direction of Brest and then west in the direction of the most western points of the French mainland.

Before we reach Le Conquet, where we'll spend the next nights, we have another lighthouse on our list.

Phare du Petit Minou is located high on a cliff. We park on the official parking lot and walk the rest of the way. In the meantime it has stopped raining, but it's so cold and windy that Freya wears ear muffs.

Now the only thing left to do is to get to our place for the night. This time our choice is a private accommodation. Well, we had imagined it a bit different. We have to go up the stairs through the landlady's hallway into the former children's room. The bed is not very wide. The wifi doesn't work either, although our landlady shows up with a handwritten note and a multi-word password.

She is really nice and even makes us hot tea. Something we gladly accept after this day. Freya can finally make good use of her French. Our landlady speaks neither English nor German.



Phare du Petit Minou – near Plouzané – France

The next morning starts with a small breakfast and beautiful weather. Since the light is so beautiful, we change our program a bit and drive to Phare de Kermorvan first.

We are early enough to be alone at the lighthouse. But when we get back to the car we already see the first locals walking their dogs or riding their bikes. No wonder on a sunny Sunday morning.

Our next destination is a little further away. We bypass Brest and drive through the Crozon peninsula to Camaret-sur-Mer. This is a nice village with a



Phare de Kermorvan – near Le Conquet – France

is dedicated to the seafarers and decorated with model ships.

Conveniently, it is early lunch time and the restaurants are lined up along the promenade. We find one we like and take a seat on the



Phare de Kermorvan – near Le Conquet – France

Navsat shows is no longer there, we reach Plougastel-Daoulas, still south of Brest. Here they have another famous Calvary and we agree that this one looks even better than the ones we visited



in Plougastel-Daoulas – France

marina mainly for private yachts. They also have a shipyard there, although it's not clear if they're still in business. But what they do have are some old ship wrecks sitting at the pier. We find a parking lot at the pier and walk to the ships and the small church, which

terrace. Just after us, a couple arrives with a large, somewhat older dog. They tell him to make himself small under their table, but he doesn't want to. He wants to make himself even bigger. So he lies in the aisle, looking almost like the bearskin in Dinner for One. Everybody has to climb over him or go another way. And he looks around so cute. You have to like him.

yesterday. Unfortunately, the church is closed.

The weather is still nice and the last item on our agenda is the lighthouse and chapel of Saint-Mathieu, just a few kilometers from Le Conquet. In

around, it doesn't make sense to try to take pictures anyway.

So we park the car at our accommodation and walk into town. We walk along the cliffs and the harbor into the old town where we find a small pub where



in Camaret-sur-Mer – France

fact, it's so close that Jürgen had planned to hike there at sunrise or sunset. But since it's Sunday afternoon, it's so crowded that we don't even get a parking space. With so many people



Chapelle Notre-Dame-De-Rocamadour – Camaret-sur-Mer – France

After lunch we want to go back to Brest. With a little detour, because the gas station our



in Camaret-sur-Mer – France

we get cider but no food. We can't find a restaurant either. No problem, because lunch was plentiful. Our landlady has made us another cup of tea. There are also cookies and so we relax at the end of the day.

Again the rain

Early in the morning it's raining again and so the hike to the lighthouse of Saint-Mathieu is canceled.



Abbaye de Saint-Mathieu – Plougonvelin – France

In fact, the weather forecast is not very promising and we're prepared for a whole day of rain.

Breakfast is truly French again, very frugal. Half a baguette, two croissants, butter and jam. But our hostess is very warm and friendly.

Just as we are about to leave, the weather decides to give the rain a break and so we head to the Phare du Petit Minou again, hoping for some interesting light.



Phare du Petit Minou – near Plouzané – France

This time there is only one other photographer and since Freya is too lazy to get out of the car, Jürgen takes some pictures and returns quite quickly. Now Freya

suggests that we try the lighthouse near our hotel again, which means that we have to drive more or less the whole way back. But ok.

While yesterday it was so crowded that we couldn't find a parking space, today we are the only car. There are some construction workers around and it looks like the lighthouse needs some maintenance.

The first destination on the original list is Locronan, also one of the most beautiful villages in France. But the visit was rained out – literally. We sit in the car for a while hoping, but it's

nothing. Since the heavy rain does not stop, we change our plans and drive to the city of Quimper, which was not on our list. Since the churches so far have

been interesting and photogenic, we want to visit the cathedral and see if there is more of interest. Unfortunately, the church is closed without any notice as to

why or for how long. It was only back at home that Freya found out that it is closed in the off-season from 12 noon to 1:30 pm.

So we walk through Quimper under our umbrellas and see enough of the town to find it attractive. We have a good lunch and then we're on our way again.

We skip the next lighthouse on the list and go directly to the Phare d'Eckmühl. This lighthouse is not so much for its appearance or the



Phare d'Eckmühl Pointe de Saint-Pierre – Penmarc'h – France

beautiful landscape, but for the staircase inside. With 60 meters it's one of the highest lighthouses in Europe and for a small fee you can climb it.



Phare d'Eckmühl Pointe de Saint-Pierre – Penmarc'h – France

When Freya hears about this, she refuses to join and tells Jürgen: „You can do it all by yourself...“. And that’s what he does. Inside, some young people are decorating the tower for Halloween. Thanks to the weather there’s not much else going on and Jürgen can take pictures relatively undisturbed. Unfortunately, a ticket office has been installed on the ground floor. This means that the view straight up is no longer possible. But it is also worth taking pictures from a few curves higher up.

The view down is less attractive, and due to the weather the same applies to the view from the top of the tower.

Meanwhile Freya goes to the beach. It’s not raining at the moment and she has discovered a new „hobby“. She picks seeds from the public greenery. It smells fishy on the beach now that the tide is low, and birds and people are looking for tasty treats. There is even a sign showing what you can find and how much you can take.

Since yesterday was Sunday, we would like to stock up on our supplies today. Where? At Leclerc’s, of course. We have

grown very fond of this store. Each one is a little bit different, because the local owners don’t have to follow the central guidelines, but the fresh food always looks very tempting. The one in Quimperle has an extra large selection of beers. Jürgen finds something. Freya takes cider, but ends up taking it home.

Our hotel is in Le Pouldu, a part of Clohars-Carnoët and only a few meters

without sea view. As said, elevators are a rarity here.

It’s now about 6 p.m. and Jürgen wants to hike to an arch in the neighboring bay. By the way, the rain has stopped.

From the hotel it’s about 3.5 km along a coastal path. It’s a nice path, but a little too close to the edge for Freya’s taste. „I’m not going back on that path,“ she

right beach and photographs the setting sun from the cliffs. On the way back he tries it by chance and this big rock standing around really has a hole in it. It is only recognizable as an arch when you are down on the beach. Of course the sun doesn’t set directly behind the rock, but the sky has turned pink in the meantime. Also a nice background. But now back to Freya and a few quick photos of the sunset from where she is.



near Clohars-Carnoët – France



near Clohars-Carnoët – France



near Clohars-Carnoët – France

At the request of a single lady, we then walk back along the road 😊. To her credit, it didn’t take any longer. And since it started raining again, it was probably the best solution anyway.

from the coast. It seems to be mainly the surfers who come here, but for them the season is over as well.

First we are shown a nice room on the second floor. But when we arrive with our suitcases, the lady at the reception tells us that there is also a room on the second floor. But it would be smaller and

says, and Jürgen babbles about the headlamp she’s always forgetting.

Near the parking lot, which you would use if you came by car, there is a bench on the cliffs. Freya stays here and sends Jürgen on alone.

Jürgen doesn’t know exactly where the arch is, so he misses the descent to the

Off to the wild coast

The delicious breakfast is served the next morning in the large lobby of the hotel.

For today and the next few days, the weather is expected to stabilize a bit. That means it will be mostly dry during the day and the rain will come later in the afternoon. Okay, we can live with that.

First we drive to Lorient, to the old submarine bunkers of the German Wehrmacht. The buildings are so massive that they have withstood all attempts to destroy them.

After the war, the facilities were used by the French Navy for 50 years. Today, a number of companies have found shelter there. Especially sailing teams

with their boats for long-distance regattas have their base here. There is also a museum where you can see a French submarine.

But that wasn't really the reason for our visit. It's supposed to have some nice graffiti here. So we park our car and explore the area. We walk around for quite a while, find this and that motif, but no large-scale graffiti.

But before we give up completely,

Jürgen wants to drive through the surrounding streets again.

And look, we find them on the back side of one of the buildings we had just passed on our way. The whole area is only accessible via a small dead-end street without any connection to the actual port area.

There are some halls that are in a state of decay, but the inside of the halls have been beautifully sprayed. Since the roof

is missing, the graffiti is reflected in large puddles. Great.

Before heading to the Quiberon peninsula, we will first visit Carnac. This is where most of the menhirs registered in France are located. Menhirs, also known as „Hinkelstein“ in Germany, are large blocks of stone that were erected for reasons that are still unknown.

We park much too early because we are not coming from Carnac but from the opposite direction. As soon as we see the fenced stones, we look for a place to stop and park at a riding school. Of course you can walk from here. But you're in the opposite direction to the main attractions and you have a really beautiful, long walk.



Lorient La Base – Lorient – France



in Lorient – France



in Lorient – France



in Lorient – France

By the way, this seems to be a good mushroom forest. In addition to russulas, Freya sees a small curly hen and several other edible mushrooms, all without putting on her „mushroom eye“. It's a good thing we don't have accommodation with a kitchen, otherwise Freya would probably have been forgotten for the next few hours.

But now we're hungry, and although it's already 2 p.m., we get a fish rilette and squid with chips in Carnac. Delicious.

are offended. Freya chews dry white bread, Jürgen suffers. After an hour we decide to go for a walk by the sea. But Jürgen wants to go back to the hotel soon. We have tea and sliced apples in the room and his spirits slowly return. It's a shame, because the Cote Sauvage was one of the main reasons why he wanted to come to Brittany in the first place.

Goodbye to the sea

There was quite a storm last night. Even though it calmed down this morning, Jürgen decides to go to the Wild Coast before breakfast. But this time it's not really productive.

The breakfast is tasty and afterwards we drive along the coast and stop at a viewpoint. After all, we had to cancel most of our plans yesterday. The waves are foaming at the shore, it's still windy.

where the milky, cloudy autumn atmosphere fits particularly good.

In low season, the streets are almost deserted, but you can imagine how it looks in summer.

After a short lunch break in a nearby street restaurant, which is not really worth mentioning, we continue directly to the hotel in Rennes. We want to walk around there, and from 3 pm on there is a 60% chance of rain.



Carnac stones – Carnac – France



near Quiberon – France



near Quiberon – France

Finally we drive to our hotel at the end of the peninsula in Quiberon. Meanwhile the predicted rain has started. All well timed.

At the hotel we both notice that our stomachs are rebelling and our intestines

You can understand why this part of the country is called „Cote Sauvage“.

Finally we leave the coast. Our next destination is again one of the most beautiful villages, Rocheford-en-Terre.

There is a chateau with a castle garden

In Rennes we stay in an Appart'hotel. It's not a hotel in the traditional sense, but rather for longer stays and has a small kitchenette, which we will use for breakfast tomorrow. When we arrive, we have to wait a little while and Jürgen maneuvers the car into the hotel garage, which

is quite narrow. Luckily there's hardly anyone there, so he can choose a spot that's easy to get out of in the morning.



Château de Rochefort-en-Terre – France

From the hotel it's not far to the city center with its medieval center. The cathedral is covered with scaffolding and we have to look for an entrance. We finally get in through a small side entrance. Very impressive. The interior is decorated with a lot of gold, stucco and paintings and looks much more magnificent than many of the churches we have seen so far. These are brought to life especially by the lighting atmosphere created by the large, colorful windows.

We take a look at the old market halls, including an exhibition of contemporary art. We will return later to buy some delicacies for breakfast.

The modern cultural center Les Champs Libres is also one of our destinations, even though it doesn't quite meet our,

well Jürgen's, expectations.

It is still dry and so we have time for two glasses of rosé in one of the many restaurants. There are tables and benches everyw-

here and they are often very busy. In general, Rennes has a very nice atmosphere, which is probably due to the large university.

The next morning we have breakfast in our room. We pack early and drive to the



Cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Rennes – Rennes – France



in Rochefort-en-Terre – France

to be similar. It's dry and the air is absolutely clear, as it often is after heavy showers. It's supposed to rain again this afternoon.

The castle has a sculpture park in a beautiful woodland area. Many metal sculp-



Cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Rennes – Rennes – France

Chateau des Pères in Piré-Chancé.

This was actually planned for yesterday, but we postponed it because of the weather forecast. Today the weather is supposed



in Rochefort-en-Terre – France

tures, but also some made of wood or acrylic. Most of them are rather naturalistic. For example, you can see three strong men made of rusty metal, wolves chasing a deer,

or a bright red gorilla, but there are also abstract forms that fit into the landscape.

Since we are close to Vitré, we decide to visit this small town as well. The large, free parking garage near the train station is great. It keeps most of the traffic out of the old town. A bridge leads directly into the center.

We only visit the castle in the middle of the town from the outside. Today it houses the town hall and a small museum. Instead, we stroll through the narrow streets and visit the church, which is now more like the other churches we have seen on this trip. Again there are those beautiful windows and in one corner, overlooked by most people, there are beautiful colorful frescoes. The paintings

are said to date back to 1619. Another thing we notice is that when we look through the nave to the altar, we see that the church is not a straight line. This is probably the result of the reconstruction in the 15th/16th century, when the choir of the previous church was integrated.

We finish with lunch near the station and now have quite a drive ahead of us. Vitré is on the edge of Brittany and we finally have to start heading home.

The long way home

Near our destination for the night, Blois, we want to visit the Chanteloup Pagoda near Amboise. But a few kilometers before we reach our destination, the road is closed and the signposted detour



Château des Pères – Piré-Chancé – France



Château des Pères – Piré-Chancé – France

leads us only in front of the closure.

So we drive straight to our hotel near the Blois train station. On the way there we get annoyed with our navigation system again. Meanwhile, it is standard that partial or similar terms are found. Not so



Eglise Notre-Dame de Vitré – Vitré – France

with VW. Everything has to be entered literally – even a „Pl.“ for „place“ is not found. Anyway, our navigation system can't find the road, so Jürgen has to take out his



Eglise Notre-Dame de Vitré – Vitré – France

cell phone and ask Google Maps. The answer to the riddle is that the street is not called Rue Jean Laigret, but rather Avenue du Dr. Jean Laigret. Phew, that's super difficult to program into a navigation system...

Whatever. We find a parking space in the side street. For two euros we can stay there until the next morning at 9:00. Meanwhile it started to rain.

At the hotel we are accommodated again on the 2nd floor and get ready to carry our suitcases upstairs. Here, too, it is an old building that has been converted into a hotel. The staircase is very

impressive, including huge oil paintings. As it turns out, there is an elevator this time. Rather industrial and apparently for wheelchair users. No matter. We are allowed to use it and don't have to carry our luggage.

In the pouring rain we finally scurry under the small canopy to the restaurant next door, have a good meal, and then scurry back to chat for a while with the nice receptionist from South Africa.

The next day is pure driving and the „highlight“ is shopping at Leclerc. At least that's the plan.

We arrive in Dijon around noon and the supermarket is full of delicious things. Beer with champagne corks and rum from the French overseas territories. We fill up the shopping cart, but leave the cheese and the fish for the next day. From now on Freya's suitcase is on the back seat.



Temple Saint-Etienne –
Mulhouse – France

We booked another Best Western Hotel in Mulhouse. It's very close to the old town and there should be a hotel parking lot. But there is nothing to see near the entrance. So we drive around the block, see an arrow as we pass, and still can't figure it out.

When we get back to the traffic light near the entrance, a local police officer

comes to the side window. We explain the situation and get permission to stay in the bus lane for five minutes. Great! While we're talking, a car honks behind us and the policeman's look is indescribable. He just turns around and raises an eyebrow. And then there's silence.

Freya runs to the front desk and gets a code to open the gate to the parking lot. So we drive around the block again. Freya gets out to open the gate and just then it starts to rain heavily.

We grab a quick coffee in our room and off we go. We walk into the old town, visit the church and then cancel the sight-seeing tour. Repeated short but heavy showers have spoiled the party for us. So we have a

tarte flambée and a beer near the church and call it a day.

The next day, we want to buy cheese and fish in Mulhouse, but unfortunately, this Leclerc doesn't come close to the one in Dijon. Anyway. Freya buys some cheese and fish and later on Jürgen buys some sweets and then we start the last part of our tour.

As soon as we reach Germany, there's a traffic jam on the A5 and we leave the autobahn before Freiburg and drive home mostly on federal highways.



in Mulhouse – France