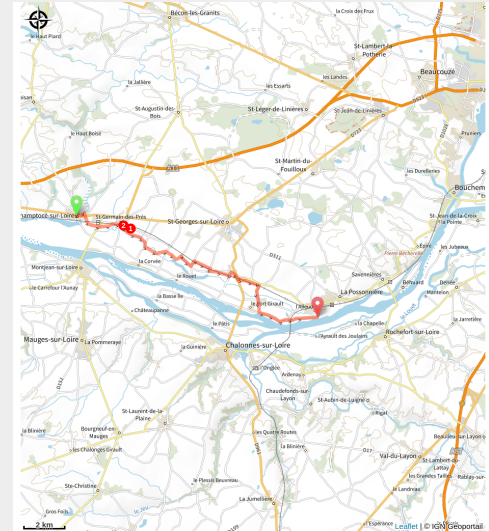


# Along the Loire - Champtocé sur Loire



Balades et randos région de Brissac Loire-Aubance



*Discover the charm of the Loire Layon countryside on foot! This walk will take you from Champtocé sur Loire to La Possonnière. You'll discover the hedged farmland of the Loire Valley via Saint Germain des Prés, the south of Saint Georges dur Loire and La Possonnière.*

*south of Saint Georges dur Loire to reach La Possonnière and its harbour full of traditional Loire boats.*

*Blue signposting. Start: Place de l'église, Champtocé sur Loire Linear route - 21 km one way.*

## Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 4 h

Length : 16.4 km

Difficulty : Hard

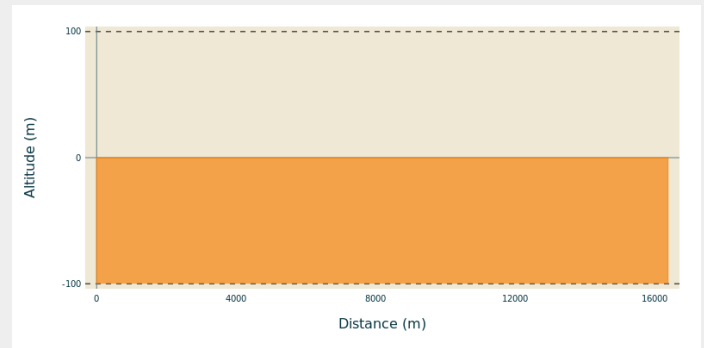
Type : Crossing

Themes : River and stream

**Departure** : Rue de la Rome

**Arrival** : Route de la Levée

## Altimetric profile



Min elevation 0 m Max elevation 0 m

### 1. Château de la Touche Savary PRIVATE PROPERTY

Château de la Touche Savary was built in the 16th century and the vaulted hall, bearing three coats of arms, dates from this date back to this early construction period. The classical triangular pediment bears the date 1776. The château, the outbuildings (all the buildings and areas of a large property or château reserved for service purposes, such as the kitchens and stables) and the fuie (small dovecote) are set in parkland with formal and formal gardens. The fuie is a round building with very thick walls topped by a tufa stone vault. Originally, the fuie was lined with around 500 boulins, indicating that the owner at the time owned 500 arpents, or around 250 hectares. A boulin is a horizontal piece of scaffolding fixed in the masonry or the hole left by this piece after it has been removed. These holes were cavities in which pigeons nested. In the middle of the 19th century, the owner converted the fuie into a chapel. The chapel, facades and roof have been listed as a Historic Monument since 27 December 1972.

### 2. Rue aux Oies

This little street owes its name to the old Saint Germain des Prés goose trade, which took place right here. As you enter this narrow street, we ask you to imagine a street full of shopkeepers selling their geese, and the sound of their clucking that must have been heard from a long way off. You can then get a sense of life at the beginning of the 20th century, the changes that have taken place and the calm that reigns here today.

### 3. Le Café des Prés

Privately owned.

This café was originally called the "Hôtel du Cheval Blanc", then the "Hôtel Levron" and finally the "Café des Prés". It was renovated to showcase a tufa fireplace and an earthenware-covered kitchen garden. A potager is a charcoal oven, created in the 18th century, which operates with two fireplaces. This kitchen garden was used to keep the soup warm over the coals for visiting guests.

### 4. Saint Germain Church

According to legend, this church was built around the 9th century. It was rebuilt between 1846 and 1849 because it had suffered extensive damage during the Vendée wars (1793-1796). Its

architecture is classical in character, combining the three orders (the Doric order, the oldest and most unadorned of the three orders in Greek architecture. Then there is the Ionic order, which is heavier and less graceful, and finally the Corinthian order, characterised by a wealth of elements). This Greek Revival style can be seen in various parts of the building, such as the pediment on the façade. The barrel-vaulted central nave is supported by a double row of four columns and a square pillar in the transept. The pulpit is located at the end of the main aisle on the left. The church's Stations of the Cross were painted by Ferdinand Dubois in 1850. He trained in Delacroix's studio. Dubois was seriously ill with tuberculosis and was unable to complete his work. He died in 1851 in the town house where the Café des Prés is now located. He is buried in the local cemetery. The various paintings around the church, starting on the left, were completed by the painter Magu.

#### 5. Château de la Missonnière

PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, this château has a wide courtyard bordered by buildings and a moat separating the terrace from the parklands. The two facades of the main building, terminated by two pavilions, are crowned by a central triangular pediment. A bell tower dominates the whole. Around 1922, two low wings were added at either end of the building. The neo-Gothic chapel, unfinished, was built around 1825. The garden at La Missonnière is a Ligérien-style garden that consists of a series of 4 corners dug into or raised above the original ground. You can see squares of lawn and flowers that highlight the style of 18th-century residences.

#### 6. The Loire

Since 30 November 2000, the Val de Loire has been a UNESCO World Heritage site, stretching 280 km from Sully sur Loire in the Loiret to Chalonnes sur Loire. Whether it's for transporting goods or fishing, or because of the floods that punctuate the lives of the people of the Loire, the river is a vital part of their lives. The Loire has always had a very strong link with its inhabitants.

#### 7. Pont de l'Alleud

The Pont de l'Alleud, the largest stone bridge spanning the Loire, was once a meeting place for many professional fishermen. Construction work began in 1863 and 30 months later, in September 1866, the Angers-Niort railway line was officially inaugurated. The bridge is more than 600 m long and the arches are more than 10 m high. These measures were imposed by the authorities to allow steamboats to travel on the lower Loire between Nantes and Angers. The bridge therefore comprises 17 large arches, each 30 m high. It was designed to accommodate two railway lines, but in 1866 the first trains ran on a single track. Later, the second track was used to run "Le Petit Anjou" (a small departmental steam train). Until the Second World War, the bridge was subject to stormy waters and flooding. But in June 1940, the French army blew up several arches to slow down enemy troops. Reconstruction began in September of that year and was completed in January 1942. In 1944, the Allies cut the main communication routes to hinder the enemy. The Alleud bridge bore the brunt of this: seven bombings in June and July 1944! Reconstruction work took 21 months, culminating in the bridge we know today.

#### 8. Port of la Possonnière

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the local economy depended above all on the Loire, which provided the main means of transport. All boats were, and still are,

obliged to pass the port of La Possonnière. But in the 19th century, work began on building the railway and at the beginning of the 20th century, La Possonnière became a major hub in the regional rail network - so transport via the Loire diminished. Today, the port of La Possonnière has two slipways and a picnic area. You can also admire traditional Loire boats: futreaux, toues, toues cabanées...

#### 9. The Priory

Private property.

The priory was a large property with parkland, gardens and meadow in the centre of La Possonnière. The settlement

formed around this property, the oldest in the town. According to numerous texts, it corresponds to

the remains of a monastic complex dating back to the 12th century. The Benedictine monks of Saint-Serge Abbey in Angers established a priory here, confirmed by a papal decree in 1159. In 1328, a court ruling authorised the monks to open a tavern. The building dates from the 13th century. The monks who came here did not pay for their accommodation, but in exchange they had to say three masses for the people who had served them. The Taverne du Prieuré has often changed name over the years. It was known as the "Auberge du Croissant Couronné", the "Hostellerie de la Marine" and the "Hôtel de l'Ancre de la Marine". The staircase turret was originally round, but was transformed into an octagonal tower in the 15th century.

#### 10. Saint-Jacques Church

René-Marie de Romain (1727-1812) had a church built in the 19th century, which he designed himself.

The base of the bell tower, which was added around 1825, still exists, but the rest of the church was entirely rebuilt on the same foundations between 1860 and 1862. However, the church was extended by a transept and a choir. Several works followed: the bell tower was raised and decorated in 1880, The exterior of the church was restored by the commune in 1960. Inside, a 15th-century Virgin and Child has adorned the church since it was built.

#### 11. Le Porche

A private property.

This large tufa stone bourgeois house dates from the 18th century and its turret with bell-tower is

at the junction of two buildings constructed on an L-shaped plan. The façade is decorated with 3 medallions

and the floors of the ground floor rooms are decorated with beautiful marble inlays.

#### 12. Castle of Gilles de Rais

Champtocé sur Loire's strategic location dominates the Loire Valley. This castle is now in ruins,

cannot be visited. The first castle was built in the 10th century as the centre of a vineyard. In 1080, it was converted into a church and later back into a castle. In the Middle Ages, it was the region's first stronghold on the right bank of the Loire.

The castle belonged to Gilles de Rais (1404-1440), a very powerful lord who owned numerous properties in Brittany and Anjou. He was a comrade-in-arms of Joan of Arc and was awarded the title of Marshal of France in 1429. At the time, he owned one of the largest fortunes in the Kingdom of France. He was sentenced to death for murder and witchcraft, and executed in Nantes.

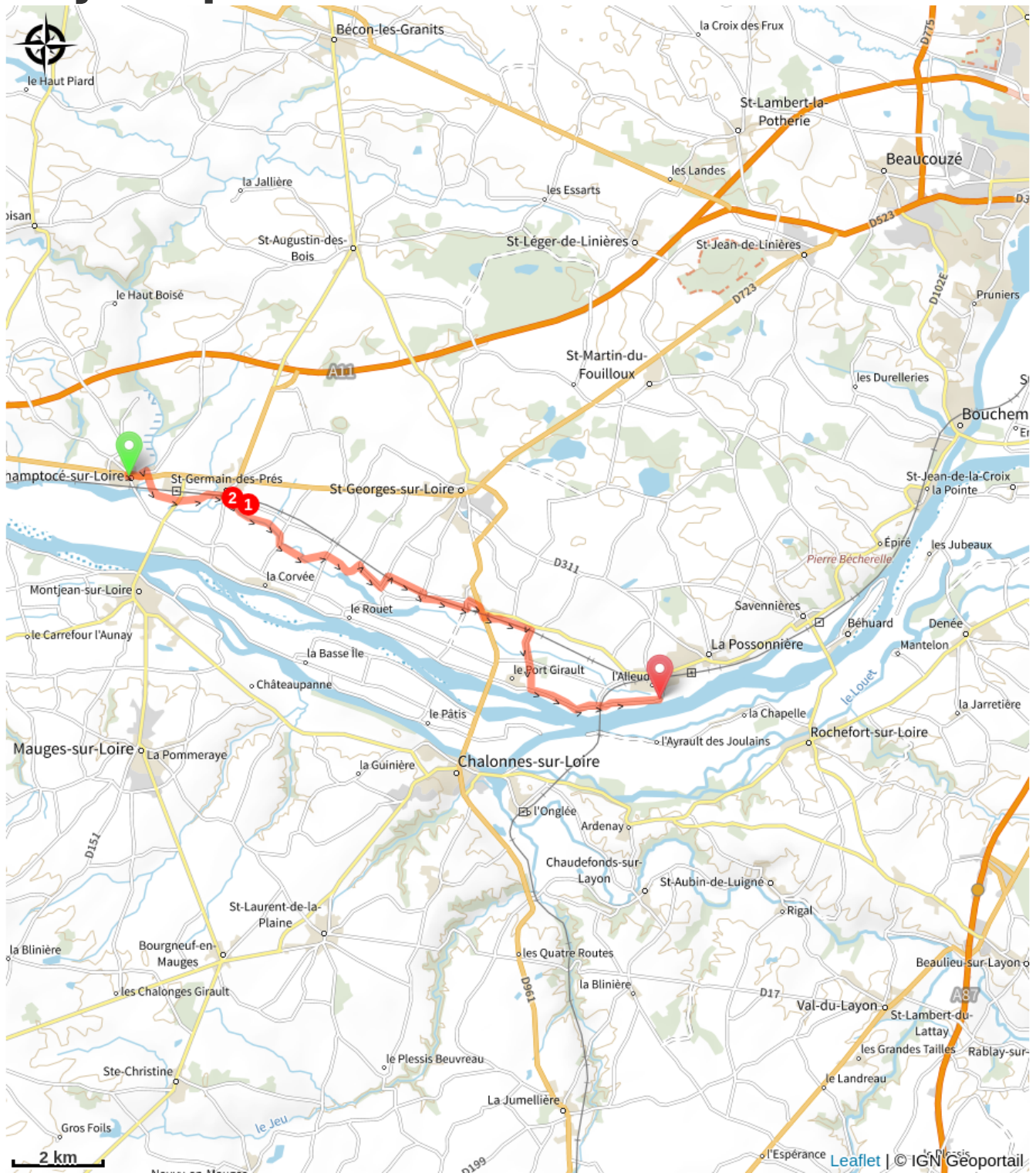
The château was built in three phases:

-the 13th century: the enclosure was adapted to the rocky terrain. remains from this period.

-The 15th century: the castle was fortified on the initiative of the Dukes of Brittany, with the aim of adapting it to the new weapons.

-16th century: the castle took on a more elegant character with its tufa stone bands. It was destroyed in the 18th century. All that remains today is a split tower and some internal staircases.

# On your path...



# All useful information

 **At the water's edge**

## **Information desks**

### **Office de tourisme Brissac Loire- Aubance**

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