

The Emerald Coast

From Cap Fréhel to Mont-Saint-Michel via Saint-Malo and Cancale

DISTANCE

129.2 km

DRIVING TIME

2 h 44 min

TIDES UP TO

15 m


The name Côte d'Émeraude, the Emerald Coast, was coined in 1894 by Eugène Herpin, a lawyer from Saint-Malo, for the emerald green the sea sometimes takes on, and modelled on the Côte d'Azur. It runs from Cap Fréhel to the Pointe du Grovin, on either side of Saint-Malo and the Rance estuary.

This roadbook follows it from west to east: Cap Fréhel and Fort la Latte, the resorts of Saint-Cast, Saint-Briac and Dinard, over the Rance tidal barrage into the corsair city of Saint-Malo, then the carved rocks of Rothéneuf, the Pointe du Grovin and the oysters of Cancale. It finishes facing Mont-Saint-Michel, at the La Caserne car parks, from where shuttles run to the Mount.

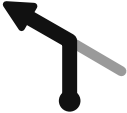
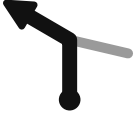
About 130 km of minor roads, often within sight of the sea, from the pink sandstone cliffs of Cap Fréhel to the shores of the bay. There the sea goes out some ten kilometres but comes back very fast, over sands that hide quicksand: do not walk out without knowing the tide times.

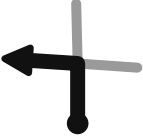
Text: Dryv, adapted from Wikipedia (CC BY-SA 4.0) – https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Côte_d'Émeraude, https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baie_du_Mont-Saint-Michel · Map: full sources on page 2

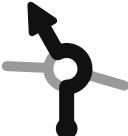
PLACES ALONG THE ROUTE

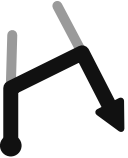
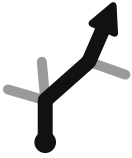
1 Cap Fréhel	km 0.0	4 Saint-Briac-sur-Mer	km 43.6	7 Saint-Malo	km 63.0	10 Cancale	km 87.8
2 Fort la Latte	km 4.1	5 Dinard	km 51.4	8 Carved rocks of Rothéneuf	km 70.0	11 Le Vivier-sur-Mer	km 103.0
3 Saint-Cast-le-Guildo	km 22.0	6 Rance tidal power station	km 56.5	9 Pointe du Grovin	km 83.2	12 Mont-Saint-Michel	km 129.2

NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
1	0 m total 0.0 km	—		Start: Cap Fréhel (place 1). Head south on D 34A
2	580 m total 0.6 km	D 34A Route du Cap		Turn left onto D 34
3	1.12 km total 1.7 km	D 34 Route du Cap		Turn left
4	1.57 km total 3.3 km	—		Turn left onto Rue de la Pointe de Rohain
5	830 m total 4.1 km	Rue de la Pointe de Rohain		Stop: Fort la Latte (place 2). Head south-west on D 117
6	660 m total 4.8 km	D 117 Rue de La Latte		Turn left to stay on D 117
7	950 m total 5.7 km	D 117 Rue de La Latte		Bear left to stay on D 117, which becomes D 16A
8	2.49 km total 8.2 km	D 16A		Turn left onto D 34, then after 100 m left onto Rue de la Saudraie
9	330 m total 8.5 km	Rue de la Saudraie		Turn right to stay on Rue de la Saudraie, which becomes Route de Port-Nieux

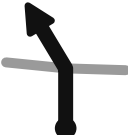
NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
10	2.51 km total 11.0 km	Route de Port-Nieux		Turn left onto D 786
11	250 m total 11.3 km	D 786 Port à la Duc		Turn sharp right
12	790 m total 12.1 km	–		Turn right
13	210 m total 12.3 km	–		Turn left onto D 786
14	1.39 km total 13.7 km	D 786		Turn left
15	1.06 km total 14.7 km	–		Bear left
16	170 m total 14.9 km	–		Bear right
17	470 m total 15.4 km	–		Turn left
18	1.06 km total 16.4 km	–		Turn left
19	830 m total 17.3 km	–		Keep left onto Chemin Blanc

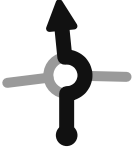
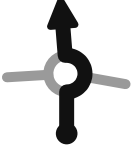
NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
20	1.12 km total 18.4 km	Chemin Blanc		Turn right onto Rue des Rompais
21	330 m total 18.7 km	Rue des Rompais		Turn left onto Rue de la Ville Orien, then immediately right onto Rue des Has
22	140 m total 18.9 km	Rue des Has		Turn left onto Rue Auguste Léontine
23	420 m total 19.3 km	Rue Auguste Léontine		Turn right onto Rue de la Fresnaye
24	430 m total 19.7 km	Rue de la Fresnaye		Turn left onto D 13
25	450 m total 20.1 km	D 13 Boulevard de la Côte d'Émeraude		Turn sharp right onto Rue des Carouges, then after 80 m bear right to stay on Rue des Carouges
26	310 m total 20.5 km	Rue des Carouges		Bear right onto Rue de la Fossierolle, which becomes Rue Tourneuf
27	870 m total 21.3 km	Rue Tourneuf		Bear left onto Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, which becomes Rue de la Colonne
28	490 m total 21.8 km	Rue de la Colonne		Turn right onto Rue Antoine Morin
29	200 m total 22.0 km	Rue Antoine Morin		Stop: Saint-Cast-le-Guildo (place 3). Head south-east on Rue Antoine Morin

NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
30	330 m total 22.4 km	Rue Antoine Morin		Turn left onto Rue du Chêne Vert
31	70 m total 22.4 km	Rue du Chêne Vert		At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto D 19
32	1.12 km total 23.5 km	D 19		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 19
33	3.53 km total 27.1 km	D 19 Rue du Combat des 5 Chemins		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto D 786
34	1.49 km total 28.6 km	D 786 Rue de la Croix aux Merles		At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit to stay on D 786
35	2.43 km total 31.0 km	D 786 Place Gilles de Bretagne		Turn left onto Rue du Vieux Château, which becomes D 26
36	3.00 km total 34.0 km	D 26		At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto D 768
37	1.57 km total 35.6 km	D 768		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 768
38	530 m total 36.1 km	D 768		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 768
39	480 m total 36.6 km	D 768		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto D 786

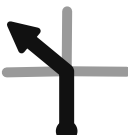
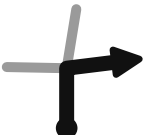
NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
40	550 m total 37.1 km	D 786		At the roundabout, take the 1st exit to stay on D 786
41	2.62 km total 39.8 km	D 786 Rue du Ponce		Bear left onto Rue de l'Église, then after 80 m right onto Place du Souvenir, which becomes Rue de l'Église
42	260 m total 40.0 km	Rue de l'Église		Turn right onto Place Guy Bétaux, then after 80 m left onto Rue Lemonnier
43	200 m total 40.2 km	Rue Lemonnier		Bear right onto Rue du Vieux Clocher, which becomes Rue d'Armor
44	220 m total 40.4 km	Rue d'Armor		Turn left to stay on Rue d'Armor, then immediately bear left onto Rue du Chanoine Auguste Lemasson
45	130 m total 40.6 km	Rue du Chanoine Auguste Lemasson		Turn right onto Avenue du Poudouvre, then immediately bear left to stay on Avenue du Poudouvre
46	120 m total 40.7 km	Avenue du Poudouvre		Turn right onto Rue de l'Hermo, then after 110 m left onto D 786, which becomes D 603
47	1.10 km total 41.8 km	D 603		Turn left onto D 786
48	1.10 km total 42.9 km	D 786 Balcon d'Émeraude		Turn right, then immediately right onto D 3
49	320 m total 43.2 km	D 3 Grande Rue		Turn right onto Rue du Moulin, then after 90 m bear left onto Rue François Méli

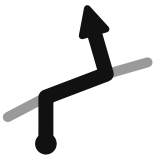
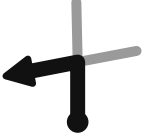
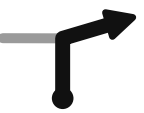
NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
50	370 m total 43.6 km	Rue François Méli		Turn left onto D 3
51	50 m total 43.6 km	D 3 Grande Rue		Stop: Saint-Briac-sur-Mer (place 4). Head north-west on D 3
52	90 m total 43.7 km	D 3 Grande Rue		Bear right onto Rue du Four de la Houle, which becomes Rue de la Ville Marqué
53	440 m total 44.2 km	Rue de la Ville Marqué		Turn left onto Rue de la Saudrais
54	180 m total 44.3 km	Rue de la Saudrais		Turn right onto D 786, which becomes D 64
55	3.27 km total 47.6 km	D 64		Bear right onto Rue du Piloni, then after 80 m left onto D 503
56	110 m total 47.7 km	D 503 Rue des Écoles		At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto Rue de Starnberg
57	2.76 km total 50.5 km	Rue de Starnberg		Bear left onto Rue de Saint-Lunaire
58	160 m total 50.7 km	Rue de Saint-Lunaire		Turn right onto Rue des Minées
59	150 m total 50.8 km	Rue des Minées		Turn left onto Avenue Édouard VII

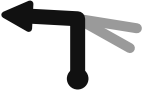
NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
60	510 m total 51.3 km	Avenue Édouard VII		Turn right onto D 66
61	130 m total 51.4 km	D 66		5. Dinard On the left
62	140 m total 51.6 km	D 66 Rue Gardiner		Bear left to stay on D 66
63	480 m total 52.1 km	D 66		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 66
64	450 m total 52.5 km	D 66 Rue de la Croix Guillaume		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 66
65	160 m total 52.7 km	D 66 Rue du Douet Fourché		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 66
66	60 m total 52.7 km	D 66 Rue du Douet Fourché		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto D 266
67	760 m total 53.5 km	D 266 Boulevard de la Libération		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 266
68	200 m total 53.7 km	D 266		At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto D 168
69	2.78 km total 56.5 km	D 168		6. Rance tidal power station

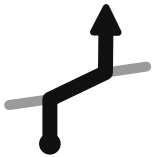
NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
70	1.59 km total 58.1 km	D 168		Take the exit on the right onto D 201
71	200 m total 58.3 km	D 201 Boulevard de la Rance		Stay on D 201: keep left, then immediately right
72	550 m total 58.8 km	D 201 Boulevard de la Rance		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 201
73	690 m total 59.5 km	D 201 Rue Doutreleau		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto D 137
74	300 m total 59.8 km	D 137 Rue de la Balue		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 137
75	1.19 km total 61.0 km	D 137		At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto Rue des Grèves de Chasles
76	160 m total 61.2 km	Rue des Grèves de Chasles		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto Quai du Val
77	210 m total 61.4 km	Quai du Val		Keep right to stay on Quai du Val
78	210 m total 61.6 km	Quai du Val		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto Quai de Trichet
79	430 m total 62.0 km	Quai de Trichet		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto Chaussée Éric Tabarly

NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
80	160 m total 62.2 km	Chaussée Éric Tabarly		Keep right to stay on Chaussée Éric Tabarly
81	360 m total 62.5 km	Chaussée Éric Tabarly		At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto Quai Saint-Vincent
82	350 m total 62.9 km	Quai Saint-Vincent		Bear right
83	90 m total 63.0 km	—		Stop: Saint-Malo, Quai Saint-Vincent car park (place 7). Head east
84	210 m total 63.2 km	—		Turn right onto Quai Saint-Vincent
85	140 m total 63.3 km	Quai Saint-Vincent		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit
86	120 m total 63.4 km	—		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto Quai de l'Esplanade
87	150 m total 63.6 km	Quai de l'Esplanade		At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto Quai Duguay-Trouin
88	750 m total 64.3 km	Quai Duguay-Trouin		Keep left to stay on Quai Duguay-Trouin, which becomes D 137
89	170 m total 64.5 km	D 137		Turn right onto D 155

NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
90	1.19 km total 65.7 km	D 155		Turn left onto D 201
91	3.70 km total 69.4 km	D 201		Turn left onto Rue de l'Abbé Fouré
92	170 m total 69.6 km	Rue de l'Abbé Fouré		Turn left to stay on Rue de l'Abbé Fouré
93	130 m total 69.7 km	Rue de l'Abbé Fouré		Turn left onto Chemin des Rochers Sculptés
94	210 m total 69.9 km	Chemin des Rochers Sculptés		Bear left
95	100 m total 70.0 km	—		Stop: Carved rocks of Rothéneuf (place 8). Head south
96	80 m total 70.1 km	—		Bear right onto Chemin des Rochers Sculptés
97	210 m total 70.3 km	Chemin des Rochers Sculptés		Turn right onto Rue de l'Abbé Fouré
98	130 m total 70.4 km	Rue de l'Abbé Fouré		Turn right to stay on Rue de l'Abbé Fouré
99	170 m total 70.6 km	Rue de l'Abbé Fouré		Turn left onto D 201

NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
100	11.97 km total 82.6 km	D 201		At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit
101	650 m total 83.2 km	—		Stop: Pointe du Grouin (place 9). Head south
102	610 m total 83.8 km	—		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto D 201
103	2.90 km total 86.7 km	D 201 Avenue de la Côte d'Émeraude		At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto Rue du Stade
104	430 m total 87.2 km	Rue du Stade		Turn right onto Rue Cancaven, then after 90 m left onto Rue du Docteur Alexis Carrel, which becomes Rue du Général Fauchon
105	300 m total 87.5 km	Rue du Général Fauchon		Turn left onto Rue de Saint-Malo
106	200 m total 87.7 km	Rue de Saint-Malo		Bear right onto Place de Bricourt, then immediately bear right onto Rue du Port
107	120 m total 87.8 km	Rue du Port		Stop: Cancale (place 10). Head south-west on D 76
108	400 m total 88.2 km	D 76 Rue du Maréchal Juin		Bear left onto Rue du Commandant Charcot
109	240 m total 88.4 km	Rue du Commandant Charcot		Turn right onto Rue de la Basse Ville Garnier, which becomes Rue de la Haute Ville Garnier

NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
110	330 m total 88.8 km	Rue de la Haute Ville Garnier		Turn left onto Rue du Lavoir, which becomes Rue de la Basse Ville Garnier
111	240 m total 89.0 km	Rue de la Basse Ville Garnier		Turn left onto D 76
112	280 m total 89.3 km	D 76		At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit to stay on D 76
113	2.79 km total 92.1 km	D 76		Take the exit on the right to stay on D 76
114	700 m total 92.8 km	D 76		Turn sharp left, then after 110 m left onto D 155
115	10.10 km total 102.9 km	D 155		Bear left at Rond-point du Centre, then follow D 797
116	140 m total 103.0 km	D 797		11. Le Vivier-sur-Mer On the right
117	4.05 km total 107.1 km	D 797		Keep right to stay on D 797
118	2.87 km total 109.9 km	D 797		Turn left onto Route de Petite-Jugandière
119	870 m total 110.8 km	Route de Petite-Jugandière		Turn left onto Route de Cherrueix

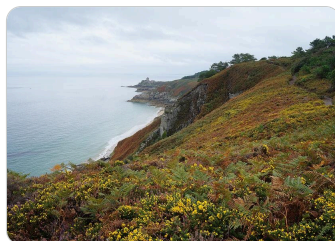
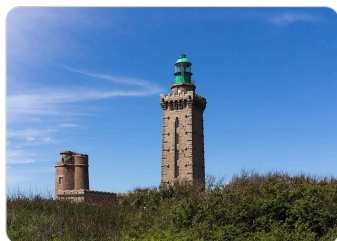
NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
120	190 m total 111.0 km	Route de Cherrueix		Turn right
121	550 m total 111.6 km	–		Turn right onto Chemin de Sainte-Anne
122	540 m total 112.1 km	Chemin de Sainte-Anne		Turn left onto Chemin des Landes au Manoir Hamelin
123	1.82 km total 113.9 km	Chemin des Landes au Manoir Hamelin		Turn right onto D 89, then immediately left back onto Chemin des Landes au Manoir Hamelin
124	810 m total 114.7 km	–		Turn right onto Chemin du Pont de la Motte
125	1.42 km total 116.2 km	Chemin du Pont de la Motte		Turn right
126	210 m total 116.4 km	–		Turn left onto Route de la Poulrière, then after 80 m bear right onto Chemin du Pont de la Motte au Dy, which becomes Chemin de la Grange au Bois
127	2.02 km total 118.4 km	Chemin de la Grange au Bois		Turn left onto Rue des Quatre Salines
128	980 m total 119.4 km	Rue des Quatre Salines		Turn right onto Route de l'Expérience, which becomes Route du Polder Saint-Yves
129	4.49 km total 123.9 km	Route du Polder Saint-Yves		Turn left onto Route de Saint-Yves, which becomes Route de la Faréole

NO.	DISTANCE	ROAD	DIRECTION	INSTRUCTIONS
130	1.58 km total 125.4 km	Route de la Faréole		Turn right onto D 478
131	210 m total 125.6 km	D 478		Turn left onto D 776
132	2.10 km total 127.7 km	D 776		At the roundabout, take the 1st exit to stay on D 776
133	450 m total 128.2 km	D 776		Turn left
134	650 m total 128.8 km	–		Turn right
135	260 m total 129.2 km	–		Finish: Mont-Saint-Michel, La Caserne car parks (place 12)

ALONG THE WAY

1 Cap Fréhel

Cape · km 0.0



A point of pink sandstone with a rugged outline, Cap Fréhel separates the Bay of Saint-Brieuc from the Bay of Saint-Malo; its red cliffs, cut by dykes of diorite, rise some 70 m above the sea. Protected for its coastal heath and seabirds, it has formed a Grand Site de France with Cap d'Erquy since 2019.

Two lighthouses stand on the point. The stone tower built by Siméon Garangeau, after Vauban inspected the coast in 1694, was first lit in November 1702; it still carried a temporary light until 1950, when the present lighthouse, built from 1946 to 1950, came into service. Its 145 steps lead to a gallery overlooking the heath, Fort la Latte and the Saint-Malo roadstead.

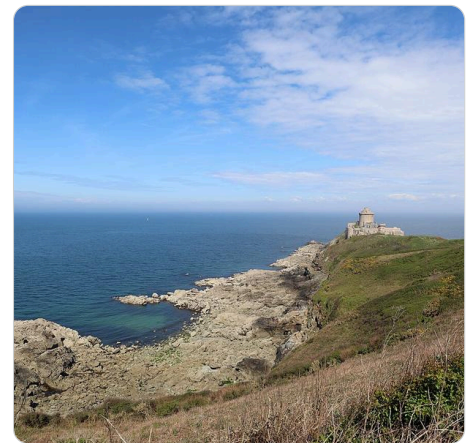
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(3) Pierre André Leclercq, CC BY-SA 4.0, Wikimedia Commons · (4) W. Bulach, CC BY-SA 4.0, Wikimedia Commons

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2 Fort la Latte

Fortress · km 4.1



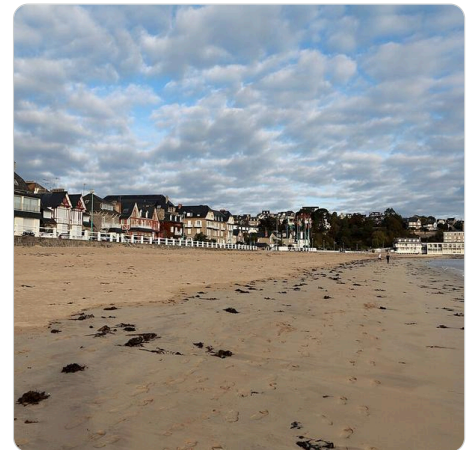
Set on the Pointe de la Latte facing the sea, Fort la Latte, or the Château de la Roche-Goyon, was built from the 1340s by Étienne III Goüyon, lord of Matignon; its keep dates from 1365–1370. A mermaid, the emblem of the Goyon-Matignon family, crowns one of its passages, and Prince Albert II of Monaco, their descendant, came here in 2012 in his ancestors' footsteps.

The way in is through two gatehouses, each with its own drawbridge; the one at the barbican has been restored to working order. In the lower court, a furnace was used to heat cannonballs red-hot before they were fired. Its outline against the sea has served as a set for several films, among them *The Vikings* (1958), with Kirk Douglas and Tony Curtis: the film's final fight takes place on the keep.

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3 Saint-Cast-le-Guildo

Seaside resort · km 22.0



A seaside resort since the early 20th century, Saint-Cast-le-Guildo sits on a peninsula between Cap Fréhel and Saint-Malo, with its Grande Plage, its coves and other beaches such as Pen Guen. On 11 September 1758, in the Seven Years' War, General Bligh's British army, which had landed at Saint-Briac to attack Saint-Malo, was caught here by the Duc d'Aiguillon's troops as it re-embarked: the battle was fought against its rearguard on the Grande Plage, and the British left some 2,000 dead and 740 prisoners.

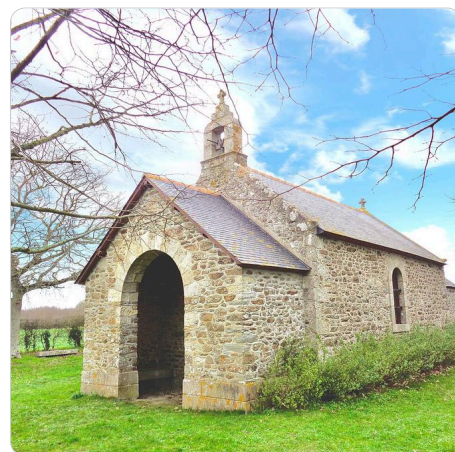
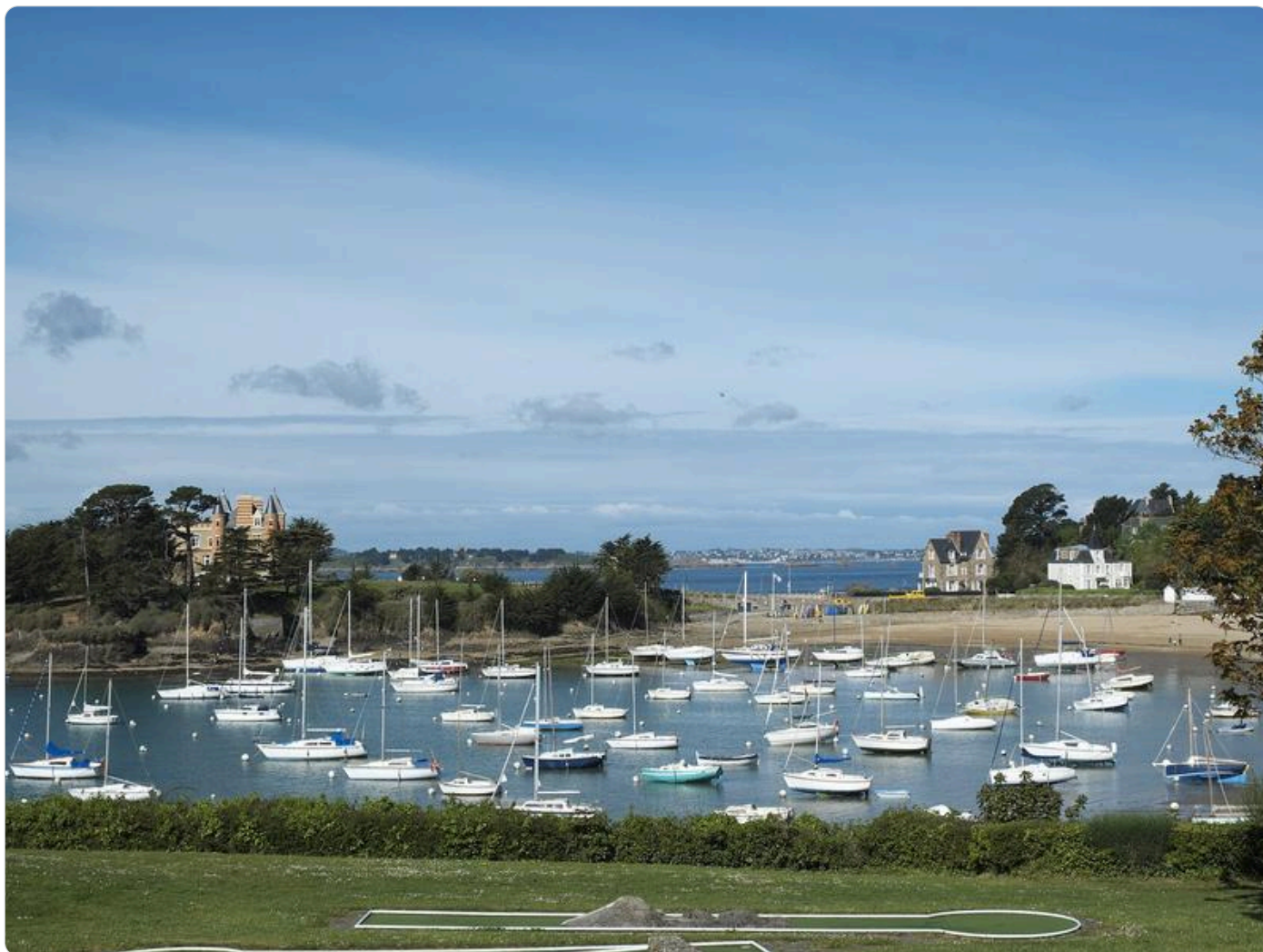
Across the Arguenon, at Créhen, the ruins of the Château du Guildo recall Prince Gilles of Brittany, son of Duke John V, who lived there before being imprisoned and then murdered in 1450.

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4 Saint-Briac-sur-Mer

Village · km 43.6



At the mouth of the Frémur, where a bridge crosses to Lancieux, Saint-Briac drew painters in the late 19th century: Paul Signac stayed here in 1884, Auguste Renoir painted a country woman and her cow by the mill, and Émile Bernard decorated his room at Madame Lemasson's inn, in the cobbled street that now bears his name.

Their paintings and the photographs of the time show a treeless coast: it was the summer visitors who planted trees here, of every kind. The Dinard golf course has run along the shore of the commune since the late 19th century; its Art Deco clubhouse of the 1920s, designed by Marcel Oudin, has been a listed historic monument since 2014. The chapel of L'Épine-Notre-Dame, also called the chapel of Saint-Adam, is recorded as early as 1628.

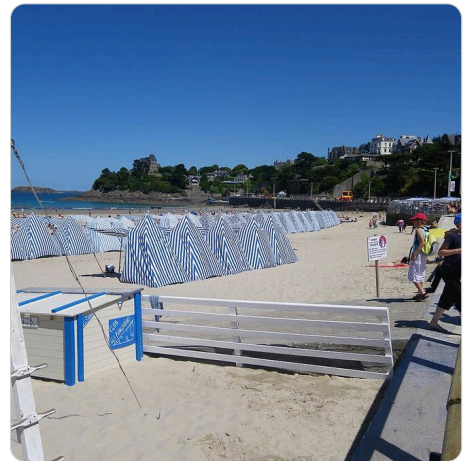
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5 Dinard

Seaside resort · km 51.4



Around 1840 an English consul, Alpyr Thomson, settled in Dinard, and in 1858 James Erhart Coppinger built the first seaside villa here, on the Pointe du Moulinet. Houses built on the point and sold to English speakers from Dinan were the start of the town's British colony, and a sea-bathing establishment on the Plage de l'Écluse launched the resort.

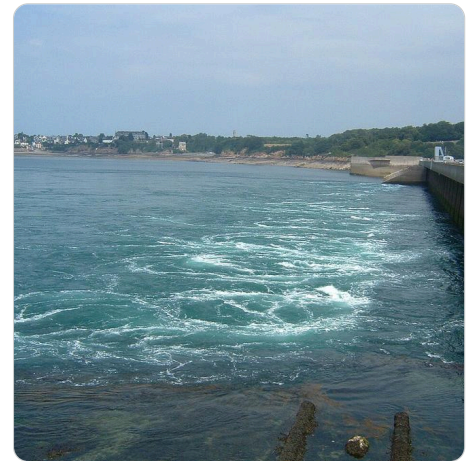
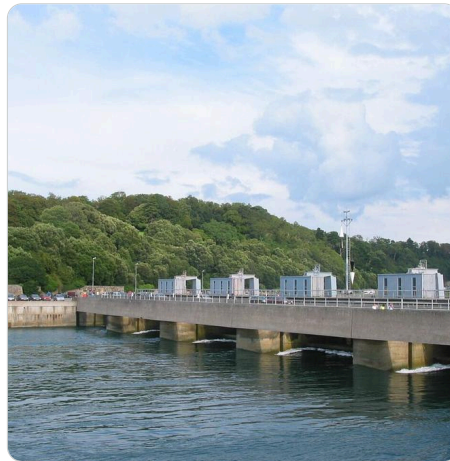
Its many listed villas from the 1900s and 1910s, its casino and the Promenade du Clair de Lune make it one of the most prestigious seaside resorts in France. Since 1989 Dinard has hosted the British Film Festival every year. The route crosses the town along Avenue Édouard VII before heading for the Rance barrage.

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6 Rance tidal power station

Tidal barrage · km 56.5



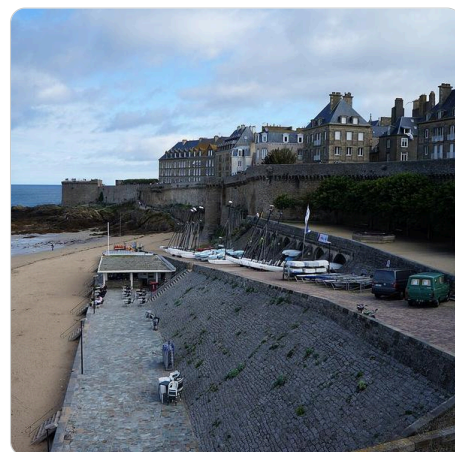
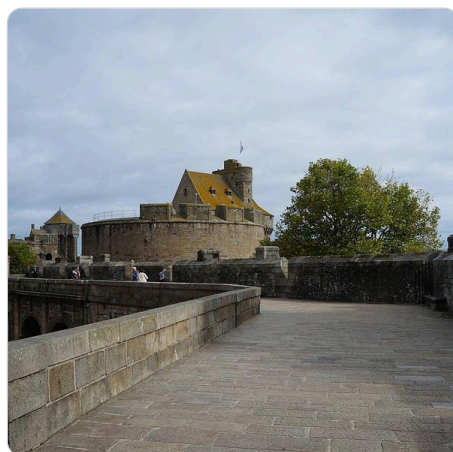
Between Dinard and Saint-Malo, the D 168 runs across the 750 m barrage of the Rance tidal power station. Work began in January 1961 and was finished in 1966; General de Gaulle opened the station on 26 November 1966, and the road over it opened on 1 July 1967. Its 24 reversible turbines generate electricity on both the rising and the falling tide. With 240 MW installed, it remained the largest tidal power station in the world for 45 years, until the one at Sihwa, in South Korea, came into service in 2011. It produces about 500 GWh a year, as much as a city the size of Rennes uses. A lock at the western end lets boats through beneath a lifting road bridge.

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7 Saint-Malo

Heritage town · km 63.0



Home of the corsairs Duguay-Trouin and Surcouf, birthplace of Jacques Cartier, who explored Canada, of Maupertuis and of Chateaubriand, who lies buried on the islet of the Grand Bé, Saint-Malo shelters behind its ramparts. They were begun in the mid-12th century, and three quarters of them were replaced between 1708 and 1742 by Siméon Garangeau, whom Vauban had asked to turn the town into a fortress of the seas.

In August 1944 American bombing and the fires it caused destroyed 80% of the old town. As the ramparts had held, it was rebuilt within them, in a historic style but not as an exact copy; only a few houses were rebuilt with their original stones, numbered and reused. The Quai Saint-Vincent car park, at the foot of the ramparts, lets you explore it on foot.

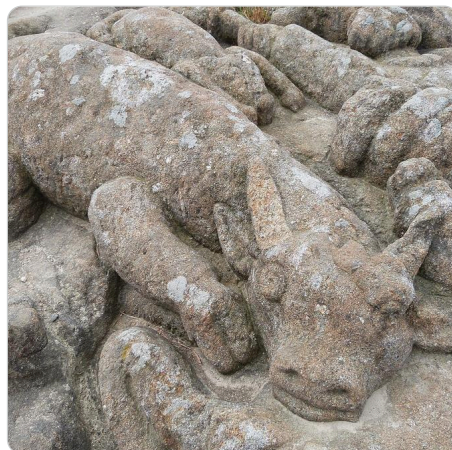
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8 Carved rocks of Rothéneuf

Artwork · km 70.0



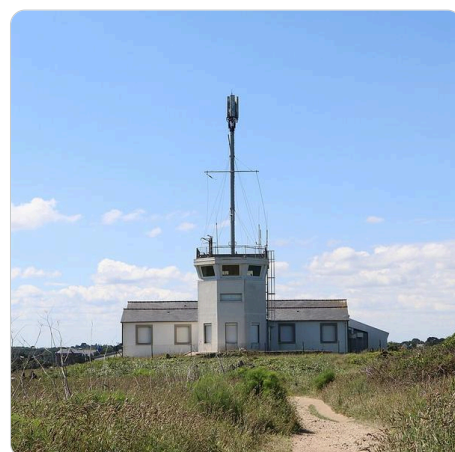
From late 1894 to 1907 Abbé Adolphe Julien Fouéré, known as Abbé Fouré, a priest who had retired to Rothéneuf after being made to leave his parish of Langouët, carved more than 300 figures into the granite rocks above the sea. Cut straight into the rock and left to the erosion of the sea, this open-air work is one of the best-known examples of outsider art in Brittany.

Contrary to what is often said, it does not tell the legend of a family of smugglers or corsairs, but portrays well-known figures from the news of his day. The abbé also carved wood in his house in the village, the “Haute Folie”; struck by paralysis in 1907, he had to stop altogether and died in 1910.

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9 Pointe du Grouin

Viewpoint · km 83.2



A wild rocky point 40 m above the sea, the Grouin marks the eastern end of the Emerald Coast, between the Bay of Saint-Malo and the Bay of Mont-Saint-Michel. The view stretches from Cap Fréhel to Granville, with the Chausey Islands out to sea; off the tip of the point, the Pierre-de-Herpin lighthouse, lit since 1882, marks the entrance to the Bay of Mont-Saint-Michel.

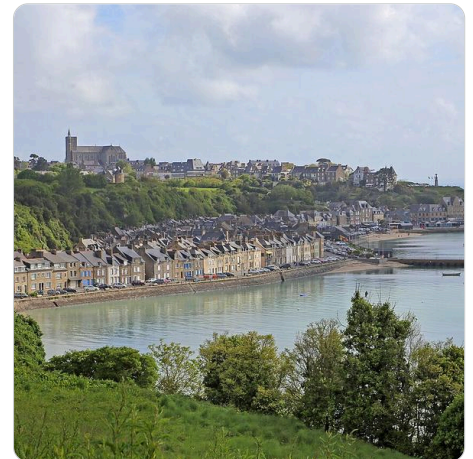
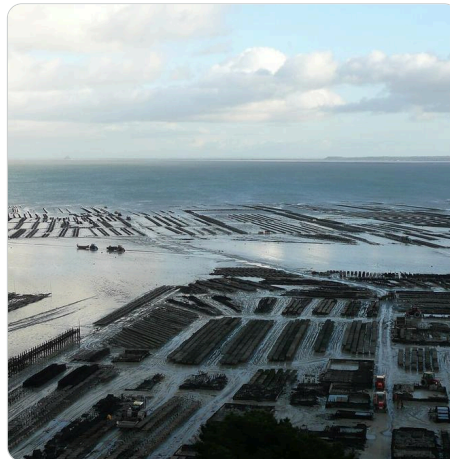
Just across the water, the Île des Landes is a bird reserve. The signal station of 1861, which watched the passing ships, was replaced in 1974 by the present building, set further back and decommissioned in 1999. Between 1982 and 2009 the dry coastal heath lost 85% of its area, largely because grazing stopped.

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10 Cancale

Town · km 87.8



Cancale owes its fame to its oysters. In 1545 Francis I raised the village to the rank of town because it supplied flat oysters to the royal table: the aldermen of Paris had contracted for deliveries twice a week. Around 1950 farmed cupped oysters joined the wild flat oysters dredged from natural beds in deep water.

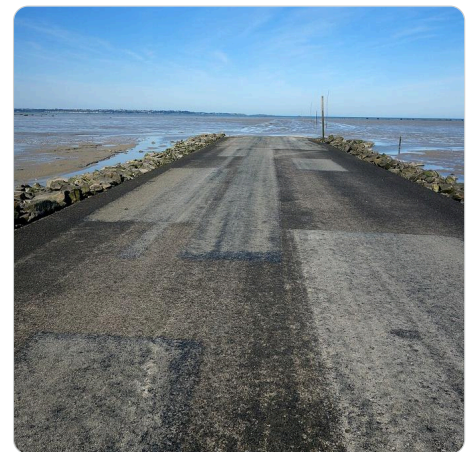
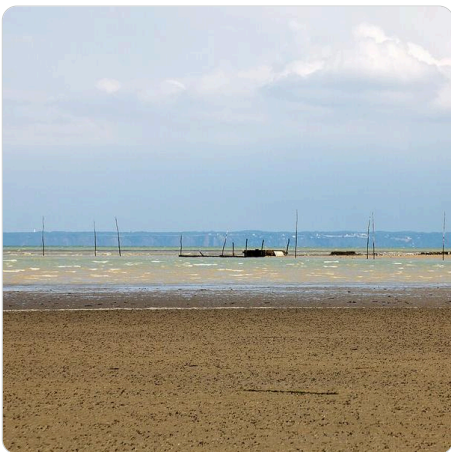
The town grew up around the port of La Houle, from which, as early as the 16th century, sailors set off for the great cod fishery off Newfoundland; its yards built fishing ships for Newfoundland until the great seamen's strike of 1911. At low tide the oyster beds appear in the bay below the town.

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11 Le Vivier-sur-Mer

Village · km 103.0



Near the middle of the bay, Le Vivier-sur-Mer is the centre of mussel farming in the Bay of Mont-Saint-Michel: in 2005 its farmers produced 9,000 tonnes of mussels, more than 10% of the French total. The farming is recent: it dates from 1954, when mussel farmers from the Charente brought the bouchot technique, in which mussels grow on wooden stakes; the young mussels come from the Atlantic coast, as mussels do not breed in the bay.

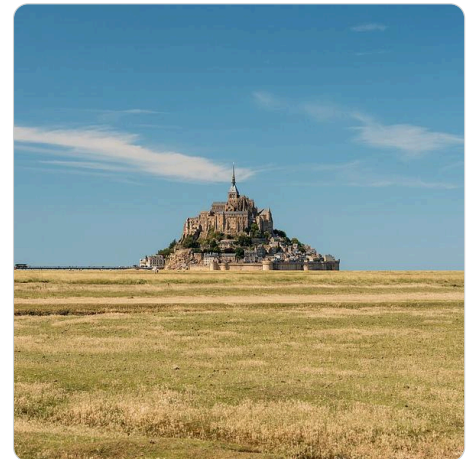
To reach the stakes without waiting for the tide, the farmers use amphibious craft. Behind the shore, the Duchesse-Anne dyke, some thirty kilometres long and probably begun in the 11th or 12th century, gradually turned the marshes of Dol into polders.

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12 Mont-Saint-Michel

Abbey · km 129.2



In 708 Aubert, Bishop of Avranches, built an oratory to the Archangel Michael on Mont Tombe and installed twelve canons to serve the shrine and receive pilgrims. The Mount and its bay, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1979, are the most visited site in Normandy, with nearly two and a half million visitors a year.

The bay has one of the greatest tidal ranges in Europe, up to 15 m at exceptional spring tides; the sea goes out some ten kilometres and comes back very fast. Cars stop at the La Caserne car parks on the mainland; since 2014 visitors have reached the Mount on foot or by shuttle over the access works designed by the architect Dietmar Feichtinger.

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