

In the choir, the sculptures correspond more to the gothic style that place itself more in the gothic tradition of the Bourbonnais and the Ile-de-France. The chapel called "chapel of the kings", orientated at the North, is also marked by the gothic style, but later (gothic flamboyant) because it dates back to the 15th century. The name of this chapel is related to the altarpiece extremely rare in Auvergne. It has unfortunately been burned during the French Revolution in 1793. It has been rediscovered only in 1976. The frame keeps features of the gothic style but the pilasters Renaissance allowed to date this altarpiece between the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century.

Remarkable furniture in the Northern chapel: « Le Beau Dieu ». It is a chest in marble dating back to the 14th century (Historical Monument in 1903). It would come from the chapel of the castle constructed by the Duc de Berry. The sculpture would be attributed to André Beauneveu, sculptor from Valenciennes who had worked for the Duc in Nonette in 1387.

In 7 Km
9th STOP-OFF : NOTRE DAME DE MAILHAT IN LAMONTGIE



👍 Come back on the D722 and take the D123 in direction of Orsonette – Lamontgie, and then the one of Mailhat.

This church (classified Historical Monument since 1859) is located on the way to Compostella and on the clunisian, cultural European itinerary. It is an old parish which depends today from the municipality of Lamontgie. Situated on a old place of worship, then on a little Gallo-roman temple became church (1900: cartulary of Sauxillanges). The actual church has been reconstructed by the monks of Sauxillanges (end of the 12th century) in an elegant and decorated style which contrasts with the regular severity of the Romanesque in Auvergne. From the original temple remain only six small columns that are used in the south porch and in the choir. The capitals and the modillions are full of flair and originality. But, if we know that some of them tell with shells that Mailhat was a step on the way to Compostella, others keep staying a mystery to solve.

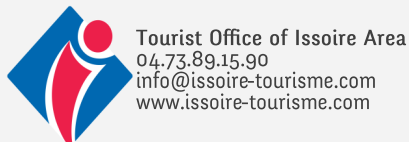
In 2 Km
10th STOP-OFF: THE CHURCH SAINT-JULIEN IN BANSAT



👍 Take the direction of Saint-Martin des Plains on the road D123, and then the D24 in direction of Bansat.

This church and its priory (today disappeared) depended on the abbey-church of La Chaise-Dieu in the end of the 11th century. However, the actual building doesn't seem to be before to the first third of the 13th century. Located in the centre of the fortified village of Bansat, the building has in all probability been fortified in the 15th century. The church, in a gothic style, is composed of a polygonal choir of the 13th century and a nave covered with a vault divided with cross-springers. She might have been constructed secondly in the 13th century-early 14th century. The nave presents capitals sculpted with vegetables, contrasting with the choir decorated with faces or masks, and with crowned people. We notice the transition between Romanesque and Gothic sculptures which slides from an imaginary world to a more realistic representation.

Return to Issoire - 13 km



Tour freely downloadable on www.cirkwi.com and www.issoire-tourisme.com
 Retrouvez l'application Cirkwi for tablets and smartphones.

Map : Open street map - IPNS (Printed with care) - PLEASE DO NOT LITTER



Palette of Religious Buildings Nuanced with Romanesque Art

86 km



The area of Issoire is located in a territory scattered with religious buildings, especially from the Romanesque period: the Auvergne region counts single-handedly with almost 250 buildings, having kept all or a part of their Romanesque structure. From the abbey-church Saint-Austremoine to the abbey of Mègemont, with of course the perched chapel of Dauzat-sur-Vodable or also a lot of others buildings in a perfect harmony with the landscape. In granite, in sandstone or in lava, these churches have the print of the floor in which they are constructed.



START
1st STOP-OFF: THE ABBEY-CHURCH SAINT-AUSTREMOINE IN ISSOIRE



👍 Meeting point place Altaroche to begin your visit

This masterpiece of the Romanesque art in Auvergne was constructed in the 12th century by Benedictine monks from Charroux in the Poitou area. It has been listed Historical Monument in 1840. This church has been devoted to Saint-Austremoine, one the 7 evangelists sent by the Pope to evangelize the Gaul. According to Grégoire de Tours, Saint-Austremoine would be at the origin of the foundation of the abbey of Issoire. In the 16th century, Issoire is particularly affected by the Religion Wars. In 1575, the abbey has been vandalized by the captain Huguenot Merle, and the archives have been destroyed. The cloistered life of the city of Issoire ended under the French Revolution, further to the suppression of religious orders. This church forms the group of the 5 major Romanesque churches of the Puy de Dome with Notre-Dame du Port (in Clermont-Ferrand), Saint-Nectaire, Saint-Saturnin and Notre-Dame d'Orcival.

The Romanesque Art Centre Georges Duby : located next to the Romanesque abbey-church Saint-Austremoine, it presents the vestiges of the old Benedictine abbey-church, which, in the middle Ages, adjoined the church. Two period of restoration gave back to these vaulted rooms their original aspect. With its stone collection and its expositions, it forges a link between the past, the present and the future of human beings. Free access. Phone number: 04.73.89.56.04.

In 12 Km

2nd STOP-OFF : THE SITE OF CHASTEL IN SAINT-FLORET



Go up to the church of Chastel following the direction of the place called "Orphanes" (road D627)

The site of Chastel dominates the village. The chapel from the 12th and 13th century, with its tower bell from the 16th century, is surrounded by a unique archaeological site with anthropomorphic rupestrian graves from the Early Middle Ages, dominated by an ossuary in a conical shape. The church is a building with a unique nave, covered with broken cradle, with a flat chevet, lighted with three gothic bay windows. The northern chapel is decorated with a votive and familial fresco representing Jehan de Bellenave, chamberlain Jean de Berry, with his wife and his 4 kids, all on their knees, presented to the Virgin by Jean-Baptiste, around 1410 (HM in 1914). You will also discover a "Virgin with a bird", statue in polychrome rock from the 14th century (HM in 1914).

In 8,5 Km

3rd STOP-OFF : NOTRE-DAME DE RONZIÈRES IN TOURZEL-RONZIÈRES



Meeting point in the place called Ronzières to begin your visit

Identifiable thanks to its bell tower from the 19th century in a shape of a dome and thanks to its imposing Virgin statue, the church of Ronzières is devoted to Notre-Dame and to Saint-Baudime, one of the first evangelists of Auvergne. Going inside by the arch portal from the 15th century, under a porch added in the 17th century, you'll discover in the northern chapel from the 13th century (restored in 1882), a "Virgin with a child" (HM in 1908) in polychrome wood related to virgins in Romanesque majesty of Auvergne. The Marian piety began by Saint-Baudime provoked a radiant pilgrimage around the diocese of Clermont for this statue full of legendary traditions.

In 4 Km

4th STOP-OFF : ÉGLISE DE COLAMINE À VODABLE



Meeting point in "Colamine" following the direction of Antoing, at the South of Vodable (road D124).

The municipality of Vodable is the old capital of the Dauphins d'Auvergne. This church is a typical example of the Romanesque art. The first mentions of Colamine came out at the end of the 10th century. Further to the clearings by the monks of Sauxillanges, a parish and a church have been constructed, between the end of the 10th century (choir) and the middle of the 12th century (nave). The building has been completed probably in the 17th and 18th century by the Northern chapel and the sacristy. The parish disappeared when the diocese of Clermont was reorganized after the Revolution of 1789, and the church entered in lethargy. It took life again in the end of the 1970's thanks to few volunteers.

In 8 Km

5th STOP-OFF : THE ABBEY OF MÈGEMONT IN CHASSAGNE



Go back to Vodable and follow the direction of Tourzel-Ronzières by the D124 and then the one of "Le Malnon" (road D23).

The Cistercian abbey of Mègemont (HM in 1954) was created in 1206 by Dauphin, count of Auvergne, for nuns. Around 1575, the Huguenots of the captain Merle destroyed some buildings and burned the archives. In 1612, the young abbess Françoise de Nérestang left Mègemont to swap places with her brother Claude, abbot of the Cistercian abbey of La Bénisson-Dieu in the Loire area. From then on, the clergymen were in charge of Mègemont. In 1743, the building was reconstructed. In the Revolution, the abbey was sold as national property and became an agricultural building.

And this until the municipality bought it back, in partnership with the Association "Les Amis de l'Abbaye de Mègemont" created in 1992. Thanks to the numerous restoration works, you can still see the transept and the choir of the abbey-church from the 13th century and the eastern part of the conventual buildings from the 18th century, the ruins of the nave and a part of the surrounding wall.

In 6,5 Km

6th STOP-OFF: THE PERCHED CHURCH IN DAUZAT-SUR-VODABLE

Follow the direction of Ardes-sur-Couze (road D23) and the one of Dauzat-sur-Vodable (road D32).

The church Saint-Géraud (HM in 1987) was constructed in the end of the 12th century-beginning of the 13th century, near an old parish which belonged to the abbey Saint-Géraud d'Aurillac. The church had, before, several statues of Saint-Géraud, but the establishment of the capital of the Dauphins d'Auvergne in Vodable at the end of the 13th century stopped this development of Dauzat. The painted decorations on all the building date back from the 16th to the 20th century. On the whole, the sculptures of the capitals datable to the 13th century reveal a transition between the Romanesque and the gothic art, with naturalist representations peculiar to the gothic art and visages or masks keeping the fantastic character of the Romanesque style (faces, not much realism). They take part into the movement of the capitals of Ardes, Nonette or Saint-Austremoine in Issoire.

In 9 Km

7th STOP-OFF : THE CHURCH SAINTE-CLAIRE IN SAINT-HÉRENT



Keep on the D32, and then take the D48 in direction of Ternant, and the D127 in direction of Saint-Hérent.

The church and the ossuary of the cemetery (HM in 1987) take place on the extremity of a rocky spur, in a site formerly fortified, which belonged for a long time to the lords of Montmorin. It was constructed in the Romanesque period, in the end of the 11th century/beginning of the 12th century, with volumes very legible from the outside. The choir is composed of a right part place side by side with a semicircular apse. This one is decorated with a painting dating back to the 16th century: thanks to a recent restoration, we can see a Christ in majesty taking centre stage in the middle of the 4 evangelists represented in a Tetramorph shape: Saint-Matthieu, Saint Luc, Saint Marc and Saint Jean (respectively related to the angel, the bull, the lion and the eagle). The whole building has mural paintings dating back to several periods, which the oldest date back to the 14/15th centuries. Most of them represent false devices painted or friezes of palmette and interlacing. You will also discover a reliquary shrine in painted wood that would date back to the 14/15th centuries.

In 16 Km

8th STOP-OFF : THE CHURCH SAINT-NICOLAS IN NONETTE



Keep driving on the road D127, and then take the D48 and D909 in direction of Saint-Germain-Lembron, the D214 in direction of Auzat-sur-Allier and the D123 in direction of Nonette.

This church, mid-Romanesque, mid-gothic was at the origin the headquarters of a priory of La Chaise-Dieu, which was under the patronage of Saint-Nicolas since the second part of the 11th century. The big building adjoining it would be the work of the Benedictines. The armorial of Revel, dating back to the middle of the 15th century, shows a quite different image of the actual building, especially on the representation of the bell tower. The nave still have Romanesque sculptures (on the baskets figured), completing the bestiary of the Western portal.