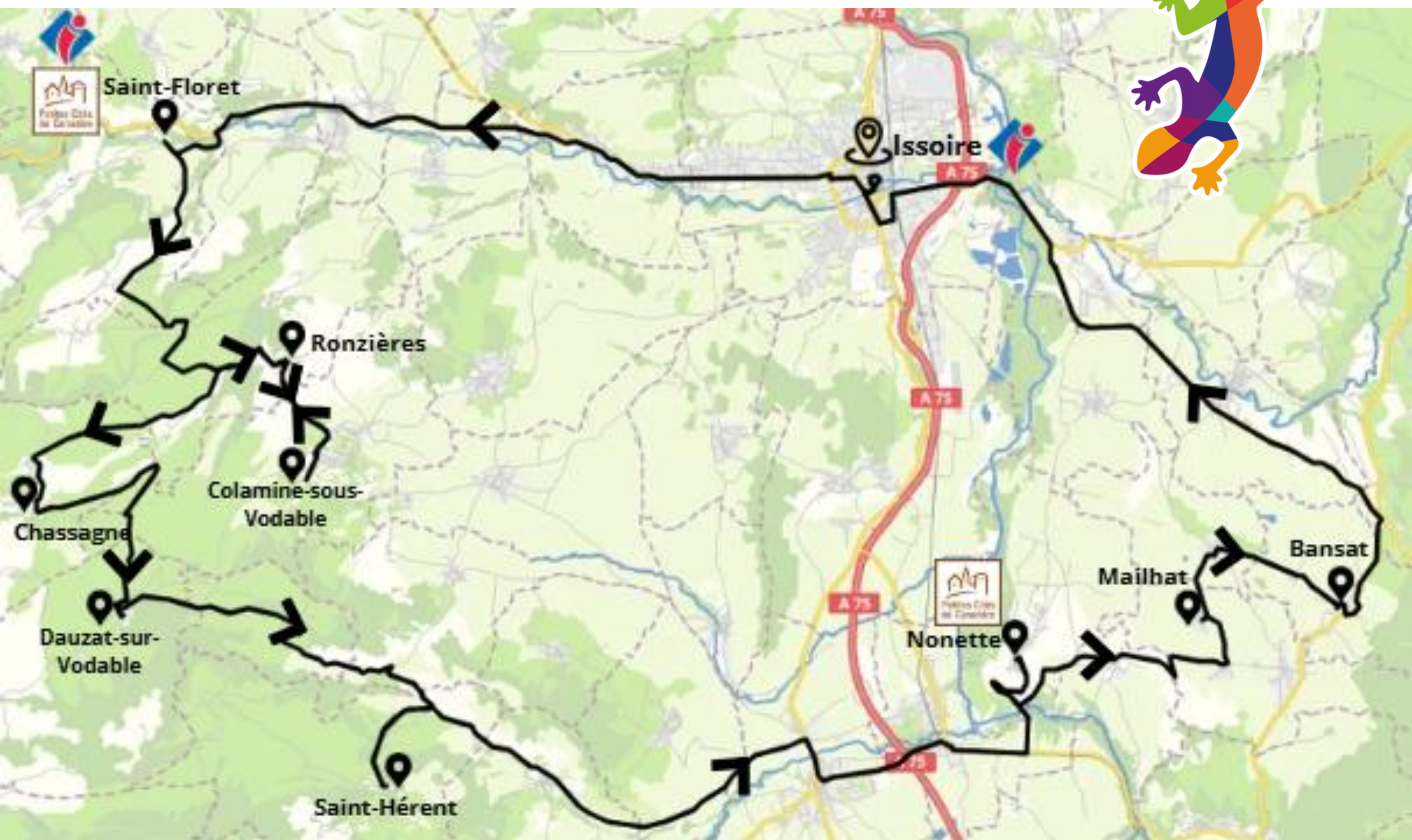




A Romanesque art palette



The Puy-de-Dôme department alone boasts some 250 buildings that have retained all or part of their Romanesque structure. During the Romanesque period (11th and 12th centuries), the entire Auvergne region experienced a remarkable spiritual and artistic flourishing.

For more informations, you can download online or pick up at the Tourist Office the booklet of the Abbeys and Churches of the Pays d'Issoire creates by the Pays d'Art et d'Histoire.



Step 1 : The Abbey Church of Saint-Austremoine in Issoire

Start

The Abbey Church of Saint-Austremoine is one of **the five major Romanesque churches of Lower Auvergne**. This masterpiece of Auvergne Romanesque art, dating from the late 11th and early 12th centuries, is the largest Romanesque church in Lower Auvergne: 65 meters long and 17 meters high! It is built partly of arkose, a blond sandstone. Its apse boasts rich decoration: small columns, capitals, corbels, mosaics with geometric patterns, and sculpted medallions of the zodiac signs. It also possesses remarkable interior polychromy and magnificent historiated capitals in the choir.

The abbey church is open to the public every day from 8:30am to 6:30pm. The Last Judgment painting room at the entrance is open depending on volunteer availability.

You can download the Issoire heritage trail and activity booklet online or pick them up at the Tourist Office, next to the abbey church. Guided tours are organized during the summer.



12 km
17 min

Step 2 : The Chastel site in Saint-Floret

A unique archaeological site with anthropomorphic tombs from the Early Middle Ages, dominated by a pyramid-shaped ossuary and a 12th- and 13th-century chapel. Inside, many treasures await, including a Virgin and Child and a 14th-century mural. Take the opportunity to explore; the site offers a lovely view of the village of Saint-Floret and the keep of its castle below! The village is listed as a "Petite Cité de Caractère" (Small Town of Character).

The church is open for guided tours organized from April to September, departing from the tourist office. The rest of the year, keys are available for loan at the town hall.

10 km
14 min

Step 3 : Notre-Dame-de-Ronzières Church

On the edge of the Allier valley, the pre-Romanesque church, remodeled at the end of the 12th century, occupies the summit of a basalt plateau. Excavations carried out on this site have unearthed various remains from the Merovingian and Carolingian periods. **The church is open to the public.**



3 km
4 min

Step 4 : Church of Saint-Mary de Colamine-sous-Vodable

Go to the place called Colamine by following the direction of Antoingt D124, south of Vodable.

Standing alone amidst the fields, the church of Colamine is a typical example of Auvergne Romanesque art. During its restoration in 1979, seven statues, including a Romanesque Virgin in Majesty, hidden behind the altarpiece of the high altar, were rediscovered. Listed as Historical Monuments, they are now on display in the church. Free guided tours (individuals or groups) are available year-round by reservation. **The church is open during the summer months and hosts concerts and temporary exhibitions.**

Step 5 : Mègemont Abbey in Chassagne

16 km
22 min

The abbey is considered one of the most beautiful Cistercian abbeys in Auvergne. It was founded in 1206 by Dauphin, Count of Auvergne, for nuns. It affiliated with the Cistercian abbey of Montpeyroux. During the French Revolution, the abbey was sold as national property and became a farm building. **Open, guided tours and concerts from May to September.**



Step 6 : Church of Dauzat-sur-Vodable

9 km
13 min

In this village on the edge of the Cézallier plateau, the 12th and 13th-century church of Saint-Géraud occupies a lovely spot perched atop its basalt outcrop. Discover its Romanesque sculpted capitals.

Opening upon request at the town hall.

Step 7 : Church of Saint-Hérent

Situated on a rocky spur, the site, comprising the cemetery and the church, follows the contours of the rock. The Church of Saint-Claire is a Romanesque building dating from the 11th or early 12th century, featuring a double bell gable. At the far end of the cemetery rises the conical roof of the Ynard Tower, named after the first known lord of the manor. It served for a long time as an ossuary.

Opening by appointment with the town hall.

9 km
12 min



Step 8 : Church of Saint-Nicolas de Nonette

16 km
20 min

The village of Nonette is one of the villages designated as a "Petites Cités de Caractère" (Small Towns of Character). The church of Saint-Nicolas in Nonette, a blend of Romanesque and Gothic styles, has retained a splendid sculpted Romanesque portal. The nave also preserves Romanesque sculptures on its figurative corbels, complementing the bestiary of the western portal. Inside, the "beautiful god" is a superb marble bust from the late 14th century. **The church is currently closed for restoration; work will begin at the end of 2025.**

Step 9 : Church of Notre Dame de Mailhat in Lamontgie

7 km
10 min

The most charming of the small churches on the Issoire plain was built at the end of the 12th century, primarily from arkose stone. It is prized by lovers of Romanesque art because of its numerous sculpted capitals and corbels. The exterior is richly decorated with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic heads: a man holding a purse, a fish, a woman suckling snakes. Inside, motifs of mermaids, eagles, and griffins remind us of the influence of Antiquity during this Romanesque period.

Open from 9am to 5pm and from 8am to 8pm from April to October.



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Step 10 : Fortified Church of Saint-Julien de Bansat

4 km
56min

In the Livradois-Forez Regional Natural Park, the church is an integral part of a fortified village. Its unique feature lies in the fact that it was fortified, likely in the 15th century. This is evidenced by the presence of a machicolation and the foundations of two watchtowers.

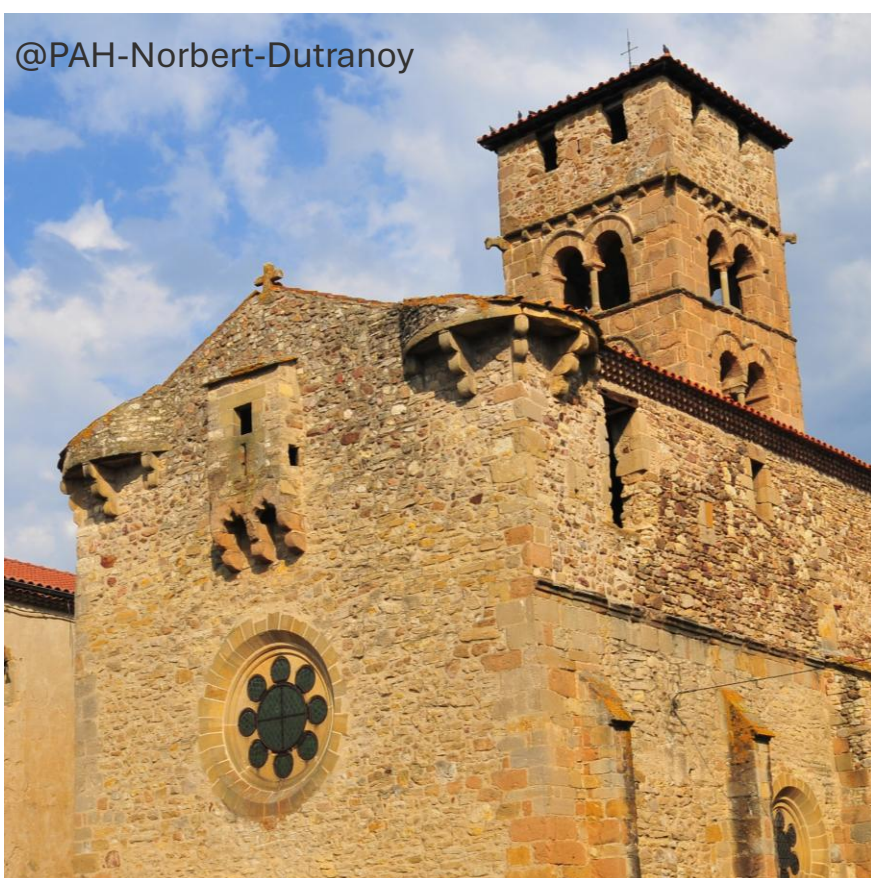
Visits can be arranged upon request at the town hall.

Back to Issoire 15 km – 17 min

Free downloadable itinerary at

www.cirkwi.com and www.issoire-tourisme.com

Download the app Cirkwi for tablets and smartphones



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