

What to Do Around Paimpol? Our Top Picks in the Côtes-d'Armor

By Floriane

The northern coast of the Côtes-d'Armor is one of those places that completely surprised us during our road trip through Brittany. We had come mainly to explore the famous Pink Granite Coast, but we ended up falling in love with the area around Paimpol.

Between the quaint little harbors, the stone villages, some of Brittany's highest cliffs, and the rugged landscapes along the GR34, there's more than enough to keep you busy for several days.

Here are our favorite spots around Paimpol—places we've discovered for ourselves and would recommend without hesitation.

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Strolling through the narrow streets of Paimpol

Paimpol is often known as the gateway to the island of Bréhat. However, it would be a shame not to take a few hours to explore the town itself.

We immediately loved the atmosphere there. The harbor is charming, lined with terraces and old shipowners' houses that evoke the city's maritime past. Even in September, the atmosphere remains lively without being overwhelming.

We were lucky enough to be there on market day. The stalls run by local farmers

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brought even more life to the town center, and we enjoyed strolling through the narrow streets before heading to the harbor.

▣ Our practical tips

- Set aside **half a day to** explore Paimpol at your own pace.
- If possible, come **on a market day** to enjoy the atmosphere.
- If you're looking for a place to grab a quick lunch without ending up at one of the touristy restaurants by the harbor, we highly recommend **the Vivre grocery store**. We had delicious sandwiches there, made with fresh, local, and organic ingredients. Special mention goes to their homemade lemonade flavored with rhubarb syrup, which remains one of our fondest culinary memories of Brittany to this day.

If you're planning a trip to the Côtes-d'Armor, we recommend taking the time to stay there for two or three nights. To make the experience even more exotic, you can, for example, book a [treehouse in Brittany on sport-decouverte.com](https://sport-decouverte.com/treehouse-in-brittany). It's a unique way to explore this part of Brittany while enjoying the tranquility of nature.

Discover the medieval charm of Tréguier

About 20 minutes from Paimpol, the village of Tréguier is well worth a stop.

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We were immediately charmed by this little village's authenticity. The historic center is remarkably well-preserved, with its **half-timbered houses, granite facades, and cobblestone streets** that invite you to take a leisurely stroll.

You can't miss **Saint-Tugdual Cathedral**. Its architecture is impressive, and it literally towers over the heart of the city. Even if you're not particularly interested in religious heritage, we found that a visit was well worth the detour.

What we particularly enjoyed about Tréguier was its peaceful atmosphere. Unlike other, much busier villages in Brittany, we felt like we could take our time without ever being jostled by the crowds.

□ Allow one to two hours to explore the historic center before heading out to the other must-see sites in the area.

Admire Brittany's tallest cliffs in Plouha

About 20 minutes from Paimpol, we recommend continuing your journey to the cliffs of Plouha. At **104 meters high**, these are the tallest cliffs in Brittany and offer magnificent panoramic views of the English Channel.

We discovered this place while chatting with shopkeepers in Paimpol, who assured us it was a must-see in the area. We took their word for it... and they were right!

Unfortunately, the weather wasn't on our side that day. Gray skies and a few showers somewhat spoiled the view. Seeing the photos taken on a sunny day—with the turquoise water contrasting against the cliffs—we already know we'll be back.

Even on a cloudy day, the walk is worth the trip. The Sentier des Douaniers, the famous GR34, runs along the cliffs and offers numerous scenic viewpoints. Depending on how much time you have, you can either take a short 30-minute walk or set out on a much longer hike.

□ Our tips for enjoying the cliffs

- Choose a sunny day: the colors of the sea change completely.
- Be sure to bring a windbreaker; the wind often blows quite strongly on the cliffs.
- Wear sturdy shoes; some parts of the trail are a bit rocky.

- Avoid visiting in the middle of the day during the summer to enjoy more pleasant light and fewer crowds.

Explore Île Grande, a little slice of paradise

If there's one place we didn't expect to visit, it's Île Grande.

Connected to the mainland by a small stone bridge, this former granite-quarrying island is located in the heart of the Pink Granite Coast. Yet, unlike some of the more crowded sites in the area, we found the atmosphere here to be much more peaceful.

We decided to explore the area by bike, but the route is just as pleasant on foot.

The loop is about **7 kilometers** long and runs almost entirely along the coast. We passed through small ports, walked along several beaches, saw a few marshes, and enjoyed magnificent views of the sea.

In September, we ran into very few people. On several occasions, we had that feeling we often seek out on our travels: the feeling of being alone in the midst of the scenery.

The island was once a major granite-mining site. This connection to the mineral world is still evident today in the thousands of small stone blocks that dot the coastline.

□ Allow about **2 hours** to take a leisurely tour of the island; allow more time if you like to take photos or stop at the small beaches.

Discover the spectacular Pink Granite Coast

Before planning our road trip, we had never heard of the Pink Granite Coast.

However, after doing a little research, we quickly realized that this was a must-see in Brittany. And once we got there, we understood why.

For about 30 kilometers, the coastline is dotted with huge, pinkish-hued rocks, sculpted by millions of years of erosion. The landscapes are truly unique in France.

Renote Island, our favorite spot

We began our exploration on **Île Renote**, north of Trégastel.

From the parking lot, a short loop of about **2 kilometers** makes it easy to explore the site.

We recommend that you first take the main trail, which leads to a stunning viewpoint overlooking the entire coast as well as the **famous Mean Ruz Lighthouse**. Then, continue on to the eastern part of the island. Much less crowded, it offers several small coves that are perfect for taking a break.

We especially liked this wilder stretch where the rocks seem to rise straight out of the sea.

Ploumanac'h, a village you won't want to miss

You can't leave the Pink Granite Coast without stopping in Ploumanac'h.

[Voted the French people's favorite village in 2015](#), it immediately charms visitors with its small harbor, its beaches, and above all its famous Mean Ruz lighthouse, built of pink granite.

We took part of the Customs Officers' Trail to reach the lighthouse. The walk is easy, accessible to everyone, and offers magnificent views along the entire route.

Our Tips for Exploring the Area Around Paimpol

After exploring this part of the Côtes-d'Armor, here are a few tips we wish we'd known before we left.

- **Plan on spending at least two or three days** to fully enjoy the various sites.
- **September is a great time of year.** We got to enjoy some magnificent scenery while avoiding the summer crowds.
- **The wind is always blowing**, even when the weather is nice. A windbreaker always comes in handy.
- **Be sure to wear good shoes.** Even short hikes often follow the GR34, a trail that can be rocky at times.
- If you're traveling in a motorhome, we've found several really nice spots using Park4Night, particularly in Pleumeur-Bodou and Tréguier.

□ If you'd like to extend your stay in Brittany, we also recommend checking out our article about our [two-week road trip through Brittany in a motorhome](#), where we share our complete itinerary.

A region we'll definitely return to

With its charming ports, impressive cliffs, quaint little villages, and the unique landscapes of the Pink Granite Coast, the area around Paimpol truly won us over.

We never imagined we'd discover such a variety of landscapes within just a few dozen kilometers. It's an ideal destination for a long weekend or as a stopover on a road trip through Brittany.

One thing is certain: there's still so much for us to explore in this part of the Côtes-d'Armor... and we're already really looking forward to coming back.

We hope you have a wonderful stay! Thank you for reading all the way to the end. Please feel free to leave us a note below, here or on [Instagram](#), and ask any questions you may have. We read all your messages and are always happy to reply!

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