

TOURAINNE,

LOIRE VALLEY

Amboise

St Denis

East of Tours

The church was built in the XIIc, but it was enlarged in the XVIc. It has subsequently been heavily restored. From the appearance of the church and the sculptures round the North door and the capitals inside there is very little that is authentically Romanesque.

Avon-les-Roches

Notre Dame

South-west of Tours

The interest here lies in the XIIc porch and the door to the South of it. The church itself is of little interest. The porch has a stepped entrance with a large window or open bay each side. The door is flanked by pairs of pilasters that are topped by sculptured capitals. The windows on each side are similarly decorated. The capitals depict griffins, foliage, lions etc. On each side of the door arch is a bas-relief of a saint or bishop (or abbot). There is a decorated door to the right of the porch; (it leads nowhere).

Artins

St Pierre

North of Tours and East of Vendôme

This is a small church with a single nave that was built in the XIc. The West and North walls are built using small even stone that are typical of the XIc. The West door is simple and stepped between columns with worn capitals. Above the doorway are 'bosses' for a wooden porch and scaffold holes. The apse is XVIc but it appears to have been built on much earlier foundations.

Autrèche

North of Amboise

This XIc church has a plain, short, rounded apse and a single nave which has three cylindrical buttresses on the North and South walls and two on the West wall; these and the walls themselves are built from flints and small stones. There is a simple West door and four high windows on the nave walls. On the apse are two small, strange 'oven-like' cavities.

Barrou South of Tours	Originally XIIc, it has been almost entirely rebuilt and lacks character. It has a single nave and a polygonal apse; there is a square tower over the crossing.
Beaulieu-lès-Loches Abbey South of Tours	The abbey of the XI/XIIc was severely damaged during the One Hundred Years War and a smaller one was rebuilt within the framework of the old one. This new one is Gothic. The most obvious part of the old church is the tower at the North-west corner and the North wall of the nave. These have some capitals with foliage patterns. The later Gothic church incorporates some original elements of the two transept arms. The ruins of the original apse and ambulatory lie round the present church. See leaflet
Beaulieu-lès-Loches St Laurent South of Tours	This was the parish church; it is now disaffected. The most obvious element of the XIIc church is the square tower which has pairs of open arches; unusually, these are stepped.
Blois St Nicolas	Most of this church, the former Abbaye de Laumer, was rebuilt in the late XIIc following a fire. Of the earlier church, only the chapel on the North-east side remains. It has foliage capitals round the windows and at the entrance from the ambulatory. See leaflet
Bonneval Notre Dame	Of the late XIIc church only the rounded apse and the Eastern part of the nave remain. The upper part of these and the West part of the nave were rebuilt in the XIIIc. There are no XIIc sculptures.

South-east of Chartres	See Leaflet
Bueil en Touraine North of Tours	This was a collegial church of XIc origin. The original church was small, with a single nave and a short rounded apse. This was extended East in the XIVc with the construction of the Gothic church. A side aisle was added on the South side of the nave and a tower was added. The only original parts of the present church are elements of the North wall of the nave.
Cangey St Martin North-east of Amboise	The nave is XIc with original windows. The window in the South-east corner has a frescoed 'Pan' on the frame. At the XIIc crossing are two groups of capitals. Those on the North have harpies and birds with human heads. Those on the South side are unfinished. The apse is XVIc and the narthex is XVIIc.
La Celle St Avant South of Tours	This church has a short, narrow rounded apse with some modillions. There is a two storey tower over the crossing; it has a modern spire. There is a single nave and a modern porch at the west end.
Chartres Cathedral	The crypt is XIIc; the remainder of the cathedral dates from the XIIIc and later and is Gothic. See leaflet and 'The Pilgrims Guide' pages 168 to 173
Chartres Rue Chantault	No 29 has a number of XIIc sculptures that include two helmeted heads, and acrobat heads with foliage.

<p>Chinon</p> <p>St Mexme</p>	<p>This was a collegiate church but is now disaffected. It comprises a XIc façade with a XVc West door. On the façade are a number of re-used sculptures: flowers, interlacings, patterns and a large leaf. Behind the façade is a narthex which is also XIc; there is a sculpture of Christ crucified. The nave is later; the lower part of the South wall has been removed and the apse destroyed.</p>
<p>Cravant les Côteaux</p> <p>St Léger</p> <p>East of Chinon</p>	<p>This former parish church is now disaffected. It dates from the IX/Xc. The stonework on the nave resembles that at St G�n�roux (79). The West façade, South door and apse are XIIc.</p> <p>See special leaflet</p>
<p>Faye-la-Vineuse</p> <p>St Georges</p> <p>North of Poitiers and South-west of Tours</p>	<p>Though in Touraine, this church is in the style that relates to Poitou. It was founded in 1039 but suffered subsequently, especially during the Wars of Religion. It had a major restoration programme between 1873 and 1888. It has a single nave, transepts and a long apse with an ambulatory; there are three radiating chapels. At the crossing is a cupola on trompes, above which is a three storey tower and spire. Below the choir is a crypt with radiating chapels; the South one is missing. In the choir are sculptured capitals depicting foliage, lions, soldiers (recalling the Battle of Poitiers against the Moors), the Capture of Jerusalem. In the crypt is a capital depicting Pilgrim Knights (or Magi). The capital at the centre of the choir on the left is a capital inscribed; ‘Gosbertus me fecit pro anima patris’. The exterior has been over restored and lacks much interest except on the apse.</p> <p>See ‘Haut Poitou Roman’ pages 334 to 335 and 369</p>

<p>Germigny des Prés South-east of Orléans</p>	<p>This was founded as an oratory for his villa by Theodulf, an adviser to Charlemagne, in the IXc; it was later restored and altered. When built it comprised a building with four equal lobes. The East one is largely as it was, with a fine glass tile mosaic of Mozarab style in the cul-de-four vault. This work by a Byzantine craftsman is modeled on the Ravenna school. The North and South lobes have been rebuilt and the West one destroyed and replaced by a nave. The East lobe has a line of eleven small arches below which are three windows. Over the crossing, the walls have small triple arches. In the porch on the South side of the church is an octagonal tank that dates from the IXc. Theodulf was bishop of Orléans and counselor to Charlemagne, but he died in Angers prison in 820 AD, having quarreled with Charlemagne.</p> <p>See 'Val de Loire Roman' pages 149 to 165</p>
<p>Huisseau en Beauce North-east of Tours and South-west of Vendôme</p>	<p>This church has a XIc apse with three windows between small columns that are topped by small capitals depicting heads. The central window is polylobed, with five lobes. Above is a line of modillions. The single nave has been rebuilt in recent times.</p>
<p>Ile Bouchard St Gilles South-west of Tours</p>	<p>This church has XIc origins, but it has had a lot of subsequent alteration and the interior has been over restored. The West door is XIc and it is stepped with a pattern of cones and daisies on the arches. The nave has five bays and on the South wall there is a line of modillions that include twins, an angel, beasts a bottom-shower that is very similar to one at Parçay sur Vienne. There is a XIIc North side aisle and a stepped North door which has a leaf pattern on the arch. There is a square tower over the crossing; it has pairs of arched openings and weathered modillions.</p>
<p>Ile Bouchard</p>	<p>This church is ruined. The apse and ambulatory</p>

<p>St Laurent</p> <p>South-west of Tours</p> <p>Lancé</p> <p>St Martin</p> <p>South of Vendôme and North-west of Blois</p>	<p>remain. The surviving columns have splendidly sculptured capitals that depict the life of Christ.</p> <p>This is a former priory of Marmoutiers abbey, near Tours. It dates from the XIc. The most interesting and best part of the church today is the rounded apse, which has some similarities with the one at Nourray. It has three windows; the central one is off-centre. Above are groups of blind arches that are between small columns. The groups that comprise 3, 4 and 6 arches are divided by large columns. Above is a line of modillions depicting heads of animals and monsters. Inside, at the crossing, are groups of columns with capitals that have simple carvings. The nave was horribly restored in the XVIIIc.</p> <p>See 'Val de Loire Roman' pages 33 and 34</p>
<p>Lavardin</p> <p>St Génist</p> <p>South-west of Vendôme</p>	<p>This church is mostly of XIc construction, with some minor changes to the windows in the early XIIc and the addition of a new West door in the XVc. It comprises a rounded apse and two rounded side chapels that lead to a nave with side aisles. The nave has a high timber vault. The side aisles are divided off by square pillars each with a small line of foliage near the top. The cul-de-four vault of the choir has a fresco of Christ in Majesty and there are scenes of the Crucifixion on the sides of the choir vaults. The pillars of the nave and side aisles are also frescoed. Near the choir, the pillars have unusual capitals that include images of Mary and Jesus, a Bishop (or Abbot) giving a blessing, a head and animals. At the windows on the North aisle are small capitals that include the depiction of a bishop or abbot. At the West end is a bell wall over the porch. Outside there are a number of re-used stones, some of which may have come from an earlier church. They include a snake, Christ in Majesty, the Ascension (on the North wall) etc.</p>

<p>Limeray</p> <p>North-east of Amboise and East of Tours</p>	<p>See leaflet and 'Val de Loire Roman' pages 277 to 288</p> <p>This church has a plain rounded apse and a fine square tower. The tower is XIIc and it is over the North transept It has modillions depicting heads. There is a single nave with XVIIc windows. The West door is plain and between two late XIIc capitals that depict foliage patterns.</p>
<p>Loches</p> <p>St Ours, now Notre Dame</p> <p>South-east of Tours</p>	<p>This church was built from the XIc to the XVc; it was heavily restored in the XIXc. The oldest parts are the tower and porch, the lower parts of the nave walls and elements of the North transept. The apse and the remainder of the transepts, along with the East tower were completed in the XIIc. The church originally had a single nave until the XIV/XVcs. The side aisles were only fully joined to the nave in the XIXc. The West door leading into the narthex is stepped with capitals that illustrate lions and monsters. In the porch is a Gallo-roman monument (altar?) that is now used as a stoop. The West door to the nave is also stepped with capitals depicting monsters, foliage, birds etc. The arches have animals and birds, jugglers and acrobats, hares and monkeys. Above the doorway are the mutilated statues of St Peter, a bishop or abbot and, perhaps the scene of the Visitation. The nave is vaulted by two unusual octagonal cupolas. Round the choir are arches with capitals the include images of two Greenmen. On the apse is a capital with a head in foliage and there are several modillions.</p> <p>See Leaflet</p>

<p>Mésland West of Blois</p>	<p>This church has a single nave, a square tower and a small, flat ended apse. The West door is between four capitals; two depict heads uttering foliage and two of griffins. Over the door is an arch with bearded heads that represent the Wise Men of the Apocalypse. These are perhaps rather crudely modeled on those on the door arch at Parçay sur Vienne.</p> <p>See 'Val de Loire Roman' page 35</p>
<p>Montoire Chapelle St Gilles West of Vendôme</p>	<p>This chapel dates from the XIc except the North wall of the nave. It consists of a small single nave, a short rounded apse and two side chapels at right angles to the main axis. The main interest is in the XIIc frescos.</p> <p>See 'Val de Loire Roman' pages 289 to 335 and 'La Fresque Romane' pages 146 to 147</p>
<p>Neuvy le Roi North of Tours</p>	<p>This is a XI/XIIc church. It was built on the site of a VIc chapel that had been built to house the remains of St Vincent. The Romanesque church was extended in the XVIc. Only the rounded apse and elements of the South and West walls of the nave are Romanesque. These walls show the outlines of the original large blind arches.</p>
<p>Nourray Notre Dame South of Vendôme and North-west of Blois</p>	<p>This Church has a number of characteristics that are similar to those at Lancé. It has a long apse which is rounded and has three windows; the central one has three lobes that suggest an influence from the pilgrimage route to Santiago. Above is a line of blind arches. The pillars on the windows are topped by capitals with small heads. There are modillions around the top of the apse. On the South wall of the apse is a small area of herring-bone stonework. The West door is between two pillars topped by worn</p>

<p>Parçay sur Vienne St Pierre South-west of Tours</p>	<p>capitals. The door arch is decorated with a zigzag pattern.</p> <p>See 'Val de Loire Roman' pages 37 and 38</p> <p>This mid XIIc church was restored in the XVIIIc and XIXc. It is a large building with side aisles to the nave. The transepts each have a rounded side chapel and the apse is rounded. There is a large square tower over the crossing. The main interest is in the West façade which consists of a fine stepped door between two very narrow blind arches. The door has three arches, two with foliage patterns and the third with 33 very strange bearded heads. Some similar, but more crudely modeled ones are to be seen on the door arch at Mésland. They probably represent the Wise Men of the Apocalypse. The blind arches have scalloped stonework. There are a number of interesting capitals including a man fighting a lion (Samson?), a head uttering foliage, a man holding a large fish (Tobias?), and foliage. Above the doorway is a line of modillions including twins, heads, and a bottom-shower. There are more modillions along the North wall of the nave.</p>
<p>Pézou St Pierre North-east of Vendôme</p>	<p>Of XIIc origin, but only the West façade and the first two bays of the nave of this church are XIIc. The West door, from the early XIIc, is stepped with sculptured capitals each side. The arches are decorated with a 'saw-teeth' pattern and an unusual roundel. Above the doorway is a line of weathered modillions.</p> <p>See leaflet and 'Val de Loire Roman' pages 38 and 39</p>
<p>Poncé</p>	<p>This church has a nave with wide side aisles divided by rectangular pillars; these have thin engaged</p>

<p>St Julien</p> <p>North of Tours and West of Vendôme</p>	<p>columns at the corners and they are topped by capitals that have several monsters heads uttering foliage and others with foliage. There are several small capitals at the crossing; these appear to be later in style - late XII/early XIIIc. The vaults of the nave are of timber. The choir has a low cul-de-four vault that is frescoed.</p> <p>See 'La Fresque Romane' pages 148 and 149</p>
<p>Preuilly sur Claise</p> <p>St Pierre</p> <p>South of Tours</p>	<p>This is a former Benedictine abbey church. It is of XIc origin. It consists of a huge, irregularly shaped nave with side aisles, a long transept with a rounded side chapel off each side and a short choir with an ambulatory. The North chapel dates from the XIXc and the South one from the XVIIIc. There is a Romanesque chapel off the ambulatory; it is set off-centre. There are some interesting capitals including illustrations of the Annunciation, Mary with Elizabeth, St Benoit, Builders having lunch, a fight, a beard-puller etc.</p> <p>See booklet</p>
<p>Rivière</p> <p>Notre Dame</p> <p>South of Chinon</p>	<p>Of the original X/XIc church only one pillar to the South of the chancel remains. It is covered with graffiti. The garish choir with XIXc neo-Romanesque capitals is above a small crypt. The apse is flat ended and has Romanesque bas-relief sculptures.</p>
<p>Rochechouart</p> <p>Notre Dame</p>	<p>This church has a single nave, transept and a short, rounded apse. The West door is stepped and between very worn columns and capitals. The West end of</p>

<p>East of Tours</p>	<p>the nave is XIIc and it is constructed using limestone blocks. There are some modillions over the door that depict heads; some are modern replacements. The East end of the nave is XIc and it is built using small, even stones. There are three original windows on the South side. The transept and apse were rebuilt in the XVc. Inside the church there are no Romanesque details to be seen.</p>
<p>St Benoît sur Loire. South-east of Orléans</p>	<p>The porch, which dates from 1020, is the oldest part and the most interesting part of this abbey church. The porch, which is square, has memorable capitals. The large church has a crypt below the choir; it was built to house the remains of St Benoît. It comprises three semicircles with broad, stubby columns to support the roof vaults; there are three small chapel bays. The choir is large and has an ambulatory. The transepts are broad and high with fine arches. The choir and transepts were completed in 1108. The nave was built between 1150 and 1218.</p> <p>See leaflets, two booklets and 'Val de Loire Roman' pages 55 to 147</p>
<p>St Christophe sur Nais North-west of Tours</p>	<p>Of the XIIc church the parts that remain have been altered. The original rounded choir with its engaged columns and parts of the South wall of the nave are XIIc. XIIc window arches may be seen each side of the XVIc door. At the base of the tower are some tacherons including A x 2 and I x 1.</p>
<p>St Christophe sur Nais Chapelle St Gilles</p>	<p>This small chapel is of XIIc origin. It has been almost entirely rebuilt. It was a pilgrim chapel with a flat ended apse and a very short nave that was extended in the XVc. It was ruined by 1980 and was</p>

<p>North-west of Tours</p>	<p>subsequently rebuilt.</p>
<p>St Georges sur Loire East of Tours</p>	<p>This is a small XIc chapel. It has a very short flat ended apse with a square tower to the North of it. There are modillions on the tower; they depict heads. The nave is short and a little wider than the apse. It has a plain South door. On the South-east corner of the nave wall are four blocks that have differing patterns of interlacing. Inside are XIIc frescos.</p>
<p>St Maure de Touraine South of Tours</p>	<p>The original XIIc church has been entirely rebuilt. Below the choir of the present church is a XIc crypt. It is large with three naves separated by thick walls with very short stubby pillars. These have capitals with simple foliage designs. It is thought that only the central nave is original.</p> <p>See book extract.</p>
<p>St Vincent de Lorouer South-east of Le Mans and North of Tours</p>	<p>The tower at the West end is XIc. The nave is wide. It and the flat ended apse were rebuilt in the XVc at which time the South aisle was added.</p>
<p>Tours St Martin</p>	<p>This was once one of the great pilgrim churches of France. It was largely destroyed after the Revolution. Only fragments remain. In the crypt of the XIXc basilica below the altar are elements of the tomb of St Martin. To the North of the basilica is a tower that was part of the North transept. On the South side of the tower is a large capital. To the West is the South-West tower of the old church. Both towers have simple foliage capitals in their bays.</p>

<p>Tours – Ste Radagonde</p> <p>Abbaye Marmoutier</p>	<p>On the East outskirts of Tours is the site of this once large abbey; the site is now occupied by a lycée. On the North side of the site is a tower and to the sides the flanks of the cliffs are arcaded; these are the grottos where the nuns lived.</p>
<p>Trôo</p> <p>St Martin</p> <p>West of Vendôme and North of Tours</p>	<p>This large hill-top church was a collegial church. It has a large single nave and broad transepts, each arm of which has a rounded chapel. The one to the South is XIc. At the crossing are some good capitals; one is a modern replacement. They depict centaurs, two men holding up the earth a pair of birds with a chalice etc. The church has been heavily restored.</p>
<p>Vernou sur Brenne</p> <p>Ste Trinité</p> <p>East of Tours</p>	<p>The original XIc church had a single short nave and a rounded apse. The nave was extended in the XIIc and a South aisle was added in the XVIc. The choir was rebuilt in the late XIIc. The West door is below a line of modillions and a fine window set between short columns with foliage capitals. To the sides of the door are capitals. Those to the left are very weathered. To the right is one of foliage and one with an abbot beside two men fighting. Over these two is a small frieze with very small heads in foliage. Over the door arch are birds. To the right of the door, on a buttress, is a long inscription. Inside is a plain XIc font.</p> <p>See leaflets</p>
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