O CEBREIRO
> TRIACASTELA

21,8 km
154,7 km to Santiago via San Xil
161,7 km to Santiago via Samos


Santa María a Real Church, O Cebreiro

O Cebreiro is where the Way enters Galicia. On our ascent we have left behind El Bierzo, the Valcarce River and towns with names such as Herrerías (literally, "blacksmith's"), a reminder of the former local industry. O Cebreiro is a village of pre-Roman origin; it belongs to the municipality of Pedrafita do Cebreiro and is in the province of Lugo. It stands at an altitude of 1,300 meters, allowing us to marvel at the captivating Galician landscapes with age-old mountains and gentle contours.

In the 1980s, the area's most famous parish priest, Elías Valiña (1929-1989), undertook the task of signposting the entire route with yellow arrows. Since then, the yellow arrow has been the symbol of the Way.

With regard to nature, O Cebreiro forms a part of a Community Interest Area, wich belongs to the Natura Network, and includes the mountain ranges of Os Ancares and O Courel, two price-less examples of the rich landscape and ethnography.

This stage sees the French Way reach its highest altitude in Galicia, the O Poio pass, some 1.335 metres above sea level. Before and after the summit, various villages emerge along the Way, such as Hospital da Condesa, Padornelo, O Biduedo, Fillobal, Pasantes or Fonfría, and pilgrims will also walk through lush indigenous forests.

WHAT TO SEE

In O Cebreiro, the **sanctuary of Santa María a Real**, temple of pre-Romanesque origin (9th-10th centuries) linked to the legend of the Holy Grail. There is a group of *pallozas* –pre-Roman circular-shaped homes–, one of which serves today as an ethnographic museum. And from a culinary point of view, there's the **Queixo do Cebreiro**, a famous local cheese with its own Designation of Origin.

This stage sees us pass through several villages with deep Jacobean roots, including: **Hospital da Condesa**, a reminder of the centre founded towards the end of the 9th century by doña Egido, and the village of **Padornelo**, where the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem was founded.



SARRIA
> PORTOMARÍN

22,2 km
114,9 km to Santiago


La Merced Convent, Sarria

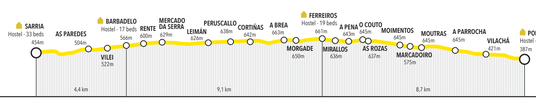
The combination of forest and monumental art continues to preside over the Camino Francés route. As we leave Sarria, we make our way through native *carballos* (oak) forests and stunning rural landscapes. The Camino, which passes through Barbadelo, offers an alternative route that heads straight towards Ferreiros. At this point we find ourselves in the municipality of Paradela, as we pass the parish church of As Cortes. The original church – now known as Santa María de Loio – was the mother of the Order of St. James of the Sword, founded in 1170 in Extremadura.

Indeed, the dual status of cleric and knight which members of the Order of St. James held, came from the merging of the warring factions of Cáceres and the canons of Loio.

As we walk downhill toward the Miño River, we come to Portomarín. The village that now stands on the other side of the river was rebuilt during the 1960s, as the old, medieval village lies beneath the waters of the Belesar reservoir. Stone by stone, the old village was moved, including the church-fortress of San Nicolao – San Xoán today – to the new village– which belonged to the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, later called the Order of Malta –, including the door of the church of San Pedro and one of the arches from the Roman bridge, currently at the foot of the shrine of Santa María das Neves.

WHAT TO SEE

The **Romanesque churches of Santiago de Barbadelo and Santa María**, the latter in the village of Ferreiros. The **reservoir of Belesar**, which, mainly in the summer, allows us to see the submerged ruins of the old **Portomarín**, including the ancient medieval Roman bridge over the Miño River. In the village as it stands today, the Romanesque church of San Pedro and, especially, the church of **San Nicolao** (presently called San Xoán), built by disciples of Maestro Mateo. Portomarín produces one of the most well-known **aguardientes** (a liquor obtained by distilling grape bagasse) in Galicia and a festival in its honour is held every year.



PALAS DE REI
> MELIDE

14,6 km
67,7 km to Santiago


Santa María de Melide Church

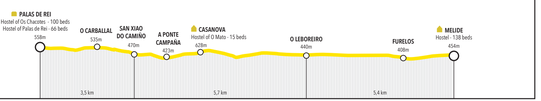
The route continues under the foliage of the forests, which open out every so often, and to our surprise, to delight us with some wonderful monuments, such as the castle of Pambre or the old quarter of Melide. We are now in the region of A Ulloa, immortalized by the writer Emilia Pardo Bazán in her famous novel *Los pazos de Ulloa* (1886).

We leave Palas de Rei by way of the Campo dos Romeiros, a meeting place for pilgrims where, traditionally, groups who had embarked on the pilgrimage joined together spontaneously. A small detour has to be made in order to reach the castle of Pambre – the sole surviving fortress from the social unrest of the *irmandiños* against the feudal lords (15th century). Back on the main Way, we venture into the province of A Coruña and come across the villages of O Leboreiro, Desecabo and Furelos, which capture the true beauty of the landscape.

Melide (450 m) is the geographical centre of Galicia and has a deep Jacobean tradition. Here, the French Route welcomes the pilgrims from the oldest Jacobean Way, the Camino Primitivo (Primitive Way). The historical monuments of its old quarter are a testimony today to the splendour of the pilgrimages. Its Town may be of Roman origin and was repopulated in the 8th century by King Alfonso IX.

WHAT TO SEE

The **castle of Pambre**, built by Gonzalo de Ulloa, and open to the public since 2010. The Romanesque church in **O Leboreiro**: the tympanum of the façade and the 16th century mural paintings. In **Furelos**, there is a magnificent medieval bridge. In the **historical quarter of Melide**: the doorway of the Romanesque church of San Pedro; one of the oldest gothic stone crosses in Galicia (14th century); Santa María de Melide and the church of Sancti Spiritus (14-15th centuries); the **Museo Terra de Melide**, an ethnographic museum. The **cheeses with Designation of Origin** from Arzúa-Ulloa, and the **melindres** (ring-shaped pastry). About 8.5 km off the Way is the **pre-Romanesque church of Toques** (11th century).



ARZÚA
> ARCA (O PINO)

18,5 km
38,7 km to Santiago


Santa Irene Hermitage, O Pino

From Arzua the last kilometres of the Route lie before us: 38.7 in total. We will divide them into two stages of 18.5 and 20,2 km respectively. Some people prefer to complete the remaining part of the route in a single day, staying the night at Monte do Gozo but it is more advisable to do it in two stages, stopping in Arca.

We leave the town of Arzúa by way of the Rúa do Carme. On this stage we alternate landscapes of forests and meadows (oaks, eucalyptus, fruit trees and crop fields) with sections on the paved surface of the Nacional 547 road. We should be very careful with vehicles, as we will have to cross the road several times.

We cross the River Raído and then go through several villages: Cortobe and Pereiriña. Some names reflect the Jacobean cult, like A Calzada, A Calle, Ferreiros (again, with reference to the former industry, which among other functions, repaired horseshoes). A Salceda Santa Irene – where there is a hostel for pilgrims –and A Rúa, which is at the gates of Arca, capital of the municipality of O Pino, the last town before Santiago. Throughout this stage we come across bars and taverns where we can always have a drink, and natural springs where we can have some refreshing water.

WHAT TO SEE

In the village of **Santa Irene**, there is a chapel devoted to the Portuguese martyr of the same name, built with the contribution of two nobles (18th century), and the "holy fountain" (17th century): according to tradition, its waters cure skin ailments.

O Pedrouzo is the core of the parish of Arca (O Pino), a service area by the side of the N-547. It has a varied selection of bars and restaurants. Throughout the year cattle fairs, cousine festivals, horse shows and concerts with popular bands and folk music are held here.



TRIACASTELA
> SARRIA

18 km via San Xil
25,1 km via Samos
132,9 km to Santiago via San Xil


Santiago de Triacastela Church

The authentic Galicia, with all the magic of its age-old forests and folk architecture, is especially attractive in this stage.

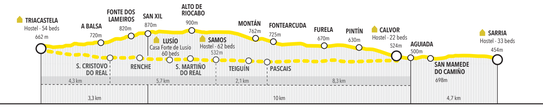
Triacastela – a name which apparently originates from "tres castros" (which are pre-Roman settlements) – appears in the *Codex Calixtinus* as the endpoint of one of the stages of the French Way. Here, pilgrims were shown hospitality and there was even a pilgrims' prison; the vestiges of this past remain today.

On leaving Triacastela, we have two options; either to proceed directly to Sarria via a series of typical villages with a marked Jacobean tradition – A Balsa, San Xil, Montán, Pintín, Calvor and San Mamede do Camiño – and beautiful landscapes, or to head south towards the Benedictine monastery of Samos, which was the first monastic community to follow the ascetic ideals of the Coptic desert monks (4th century) and whose old hostel remains in operation today.

Sarria is, with its 8,500 inhabitants, the French Way's most populated town in Galicia. This is where its founder, King Alfonso IX – also the founder of Triacastela – died in 1230, on his pilgrimage to Santiago. The Jacobean fame of Sarria was already a reality at the start of the 13th century, when the pilgrims' hospital was built.

WHAT TO SEE

In **Triacastela**, the **church of Santiago** with its Romanesque apse. The **monastery of Samos**, dating back to the 6th century, where Alfonso II, one of the driving forces behind the pilgrimages, was educated. The tomb of Santiago was discovered during his reign. This monastery is one of the largest monastic cloisters in Spain (18th century) and its chapel of the Saviour (10th century) is also called the chapel of the Cypress because it has a huge cypress tree which is over 1000 years old growing next to it. The cloister of the Nereids (16th century) contains a beautiful fountain and a Romanesque doorway, the only vestige of the 12th century monastery. Padre Feijoo lived here for 14 years. In **Sarria**, the tower of the now non-existent medieval castle and the convent of A Madalena (13th century).



PORTOMARÍN
> PALAS DE REI

25 km
92,7 km to Santiago


Vilar de Donas Church, Palas de Rei

Castromaior, which we come to via the village of Gonzar, certifies by its very name, that here there was indeed a *castro* – a typical pre-Roman settlement in the northwest of the peninsula. We then come to Vendas de Narón, which was the scene of a fierce battle between Christian and Muslim troops in the year 820. Further along, we find Ligonde, which had an important pilgrims' hospital, even providing accom-modation for Emperor Charles V and his son Philip II. The traditional architecture of the town is yet another one of its attractions.

The temple of Vilar de Donas (12th-13th centuries) is the historical symbol of this stage. It was a former Priory of the Order of St. James. In fact, as of 1184 and for centuries after, the journey between Ligonde and Palas de Rei was protected by the Knights of this Order. The monastery of Vilar de Donas is situated off the main Way, as it was reserved as a place for devotion and prayer.

We return to the main Jacobean Way and reach the town of Palas de Rei. This town, which was very lively when pilgrimages were at their height, might owe its name to a supposed Royal Palace built remotely in its vicinity. The pilgrims' hostel is located in the town.

WHAT TO SEE

Vendas de Narón which has a **chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene**, and Os Lameiros, with its **chapel of San Marcos** and its original **cruceiro**, or stone cross (typical in Galicia, Portugal and Brittany). **Vilar de Donas** is one of the most significant Romanesque monuments in Galicia. Its a ground floor is in the shape of a Latin cross with three vaulted apses. The **mural paintings of the central apse**, dating back to the Holy Year of 1434, stand out. Inside are several tombs of Knights of the Order of St. James. And, once again on the main Way, Palas de Rei, whose modern **church of San Tirso** maintains a Romanesque façade.



MELIDE
> ARZÚA

14,3 km
53,1 km to Santiago


Ribadiso Hostel, Arzúa

Upon leaving Melide we pass through two towns with a great Jacobean tradition: Boente, with a parish church dedicated to St. James, and A Castañeda where Aymeric Picaud, author of the fifth volume of the *Codex Calixtinus*, locates the lime furnaces used in the construction of the cathedral, which pilgrims supplied with limestone from Triacastela. This fact symbolised the general participation in the great constructive effort involved in the cathedral and also demonstrated the joining of forces and solidarity that the Way endows on each act of pilgrimage.

A bridge of medieval origin takes us across the Iso River. The first house on the right, next to the riverbed, used to be the hospital of Ribadiso, the last historical space that remained open for pilgrims on the French Way. It was restored in 1993 and reopened in the last Holy Year as a hostel for pilgrims. It is set in a natural environment of great beauty.

We now come to the town of Arzúa (388 m). Here is where pilgrims coming on the Northern Route join the French Way. About 10 km away from our route is the Portodemouros reservoir, which offers a wide range of rural tourism and water sports.

WHAT TO SEE

In **Boente**, the church of Santiago. At the foot of the Iso River, the **recreational area of Ribadiso** with a hostel for pilgrims that in medieval times was a hospital. In Arzúa, the **church of Santiago**, the **Gothic chapel of A Madalena**, belonging to another hospital, now lost, and the **chapel of A Mota**, next to an **oak grove** of the same name. 5 km away from the route, the **stately home of Brandeso**, where Ramón María del Valle Inclán locates part of his novel Autumn Sonata (the inside is closed to visitors). And 10 km away, **Portodemouros reservoir**. We are still in the **cheese-making region**, with the Designation of Origin Arzúa-Ulloa.



ARCA (O PINO)
> SANTIAGO

20,2 km to Santiago


Praza do Obradoiro, Santiago de Compostela

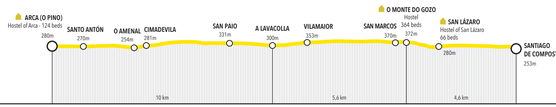
We leave the parish of Arca behind and walk through eucalyptus woods and villages such as Santo Antón and O Amenal, in an ascent that will take us to the core of A Lavacolla, in the vicinity of Santiago airport. Here is where pilgrims would wash their entire body in the brook that flows through the area. In fact, the etymology of "Lavacolla" is derived from *lava colea*, in an uninhibited reference to the hygiene of the genitals.

We now reach the Monte do Gozo (380 m), a small hill where pilgrims enjoy a distant view of the cathedral for the first time. The first pilgrim in the group to reach the peak was declared "king of the pilgrimage". In 1993 a large hostel was built here.

We still have a 5 km descent on the route. The Camino enters the city through the San Lázaro neighbourhood and leaves the Fontiñas neighbourhood on the left (nearby, there is a wide range of restaurants and amenities). Further along, we find ourselves on a street named calle de Os Concheiros, in the former guild district of artisans, who used to sell scallop shells, and in the historic and authentic San Pedro neighbourhood, where the route leads us towards the Porta do Camiño. It continues, on the final stretch, on pedestrian streets and squares like Casas Reais, Praza de Cervantes and A Acibechería, from where we go into the cathedral – the alternative entrance, during Holy Years, is the Holy Door in A Quintana.

WHAT TO SEE

From the **Monte do Gozo** there is an excellent panoramic view of the city. The **Pavillón de Galicia**, in the neighborhood of San Lázaro. **The Museum of the Galician People**. The **Pantheon of Illustrious Galicians**, next to the Museum, in the only Gothic church in the city. The **Galician Centre of Contemporary Art** (CGAC), designed by Portuguese architect Álvaro Siza. The **chapel of As Animas**, with its neoclassical altarpieces; the **Praza de Cervantes**, where the Town Hall stood until the end of the eighteenth century. The museum of the **Casa da Troia**, a famous student residence dating from the early twentieth century, and the monastery of **San Martiño Pinario**.

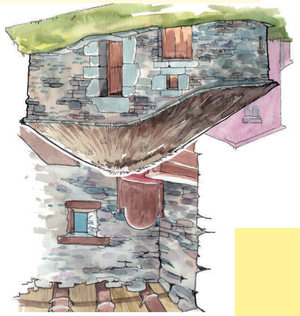


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XUNTA DE GALICIA

THE FRENCH WAY

The Pilgrims' Ways to Santiago in Galicia



Xacobeo

galicia

Emergency Telephones

061 (Galicia)

112 (National)

085 (Galicia forest Fires)

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App "Camino Santiago"
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XUNTA DE GALICIA

Cultural route of the Council of Europe
Itinéraire culturel du Conseil de l'Europe

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Camino de Santiago de Compostela
Camino Francés y Caminos del Norte de España
Patrimonio Mundial
Patrimoine Mondial

SAINT JAMES WAY

BEYOND THE CAMINO...
THE FRENCH WAY ->

You have reached Compostela. Now is the time to put away your walking boots and don the attire of a traveller: curious, sensitive, active. Retrace your steps. All that you were unable to see or enjoy along the way awaits you. Other equally enticing paths open up ahead. Have a look at these recommendations we have put together for you.



O Cebreiro Mountains, Pedrafita do Cebreiro

The climb up **O Cebreiro** and its village of traditional *pallozas* (pre-Roman dwellings) was an incomparable gateway on the pilgrimage route. The road descends to Triacastela and Samos. But just a short distance away, a little to the south, still within the province of Lugo, lie A Cruz do Incio and O Courel. Perfect for lovers of the most authentic Galician landscapes: ancient mountains, native forests and unique sights such as **Hospital do Incio**, the only marble Romanesque church in Spain, built in the 12th century by the Order of Malta. In actuality, it was a pilgrim hospital (on a diversion from the French Route) which was also used to care for the needy. Today, the hospital stands in the midst of a quintessential natural setting.



San Pedro Fiz Church, O Incio

From O Incio a road leads to O Courel, at a distance of some 35 kilometres. The **Serra do Courel** is a mountainous area and green reserve. Its mountains and valleys contain the greatest plant diversity in Galicia. Leisure options include walking the **Devesa da Rogueira**, a spectacular 8.8-kilometre route (3 hours and 15 minutes).

O Courel also contains incredible pre-Roman ruins such as the settlements of **Castro de Vilar** and **Castro da Torre**, and **ancient smithies** (known locally as *mazos*), some of which have been converted into unique tourist accommodations. Between the 16th and 19th centuries, the southern part of Lugo province was home to a sizeable iron and steel industry. Nearly hamlets such as **Seceda** and **Seoane**, are notable for their purely traditional architecture.

To the north of the Camino, continue your journey through the unique natural surroundings of inland Lugo. Options include: **Cruzul Forest** (municipality of Becerreá), an atypical landscape made up of holm oaks, the northernmost on the peninsula; and the spectacular *Soutos de Agüeira*, enormous chestnut trees in an area that is part of Os Ancares Nature Reserve.



Herreria de Seoane (Ferreria de Locay), Folgoso do Courel



Devesa da Rogueira, Folgoso do Courel



Piornedo, Ancares

And it is here that we continue our explorations, in Os Ancares. While the Serra do Courel lies to the south of the French Way, the mountains of the **Serra de Os Ancares** rise to the north. Like O Cebreiro, the village of **Piornedo** is famous for its *pallozas*. Surrounded by a wealth of natural and scenic delights, this mountain range – part of a nature reserve, after all – boasts incredible hiking trails, including one that starts in A Degrada (Cervantes) and climbs up to Tres Bispos Peak (a journey of some 17 kilometres, 5 1/2 hours on foot), as well as offering views of castles such as **Doiras** and **Donís**.

The scenic beauty of eastern Galicia never fails to astonish. Another of the enticing landscapes near the French Way is located some 15 kilometres from the city of Lugo, **A Fervenza Forest**, situated along the upper reaches of the Miño River. Listed as a Biosphere Reserve, it is one of the most important freshwater swamp forests remaining on the Iberian Peninsula. In other words, the river periodically floods the ancient oak trees (over three centuries old) and monumental alders that make up the forest.



Santo Antoiño de Toques Church

From woodlands, we shift to art in stone and wood: **Santo Antoiño de Toques** is another historic and artistic wonder. Some 7 kilometres north of Melide (French Way), in the magnificent surroundings of inland A Coruña province, stands a pre-Romanesque church which still features elements from even earlier than the 10th century. The interior contains delightful polychrome paintings on wood.

Late May is the perfect time to visit **Vila de Cruces**, which has celebrated the **Galo de Curral** culinary festival on the last Sunday of the month since 1993. The event has been listed as a Galician Tourist Attraction and is the perfect place to sample this native Galician breed of chicken (also available year-round). Let us not forget that all of inland Galicia specializes in producing ly high quality meats, which are even more characteristic and important than its poultry products.

Pendellos de Agolada is a traditional stone market dating from the 18th century, which has somehow managed to survive down to today.

If you want to enjoy the natural surroundings in a different and dynamic way, the entire region of Galicia sets the standard for **adventure sports** in Spain. Some areas offer kayaking, horseback trail rides and ATV trails. Other options include mountain biking (MTB), archery and, for the most daring, even bungee-jumping and rappelling. Turismo de Galicia can provide contact information for companies specializing in these activities.



Cidade da Cultura, Santiago de Compostela

And now, **secret Compostela**: because there is another **Santiago** beyond the unique historic centre, featuring genuine cuisine and a lively cultural atmosphere. This new Santiago is closely linked to nature and leisure, centring on its poetic rivers, the Sar and Sarela, and the gentle mountains which protect them. The new **walkways along the Sar River** – to the east of the city in an area known as As Brañas do Sar – open up before you, near the trails running upwards through the new **Bosque de Galicia Park**. This newly created 24-hectare space occupies the slopes of **Mount Gaiás**, presided over by the **Cidade da Cultura (City of Culture)**. To the west, on the other side of town, **Mount Pedroso** offers what is perhaps the best panoramic view of the historic city. It can be reached by following an old **Way of the Cross** , which runs beside a large park known as **A Granxa do Xesto**.

THE
FRENCH WAY ->

The quintessential, most travelled and most documented of all the Ways. It was described as early as the year 1135 in the *Codex Calixtinus*, a fundamental work, whose "Volumen V", attributed to French religious author Aymeric Picaud, can be considered today as Europe's earliest cultural and even tourist guide. This volume specifies each stage and provides detailed information on hospitals, sanctuaries and local customs.

The French Way enters Spain on the western side of the Pyrenees. Here, the four historial itineraries already described in the *Codex* merge, and they are still in use today: the via Tolosana – which starts in Arles – the via Podiensis – which begins in Le Puy – the via Lemovicensis – beginning in Vézelay and with a stopover in Limoges – and the via Turonensis – which comes from Paris and stops over in Tours. The via Tolosana enters Spain through Somport and the other three routes converges at Ostabat to cross the Pyrenees by way of Roncesvalles. From here there are 760 kilometres left to Compostela.

From Puente La Reina (Navarra) the route converges into a single path that will cross the northern part of the Peninsula passing through a compendium of landscapes: the beech and pine forests of Navarra, the vineyards of La Rioja, with the scent that emanates from the grapes, the wide plains and steppes of Castile, until it reaches the mountains and the oak chesnut forests of Galicia.

Along the route, some of the places that form a part of the living history of the Way are: Estella/Lizarra, where the relics of St. Andrew are venerated; or Logroño, a city the Way literally crosses from south to north; Nájera, with the collegiate church of Santa María La Real; or Burgos, which is the core of the route, with a Gothic Catedral that has been declared a World Heritage site.

Once in Palencia, Frómista proudly exhibits the authentic European Romanesque church os San Martín, and Sahagún, in the region of León, bears witness to the one-time power of the order of Cluny, having left behind Carrión de los Condes. The city of León, founded by the Romans and reemergent as a result of pilgrimages, dazzles with its Gothic cathedral and Romansque frescoes of San Isidoro's Royal Pantheon.

We are now approaching Galicia: in Astorga, the French Way joins the Vía de la Plata and, here, we will be as pleasantly surprised by the mark left by the Romans as by the art of Gaudí. Ponferrada, in the region of El Bierzo, is one of the birthplaces of the Order of the Templars, with a splendidly preserved castle which belonged to this order, and Villafranca del Bierzo, which enjoys the privilege of granting the "Jubilee" or plenary indulgence, to pilgrims who are unable to continue on to Santiago.

We enter Galicia via the O Cebreiro pass. From here there are 154,7 kilometres remaining to Santiago or 161.7 from Samos.



THE
GALICIA WAYS ->



CAMINOS OFFICIALLY MARKED OUT
Signposting executed

- The French Way
- The Primitive Way
- The Northern Way
- The English Way

CAMINOS RECOGNISED
Pending Official Marking Out

- The Silver Way or "Camino Mozárabe"
- The Portuguese Way
- The Portuguese Way of the coast
- The Winter Way
- The Route of the Sea of Arousa and River Ulla
- The Fisterra and Muxía Way

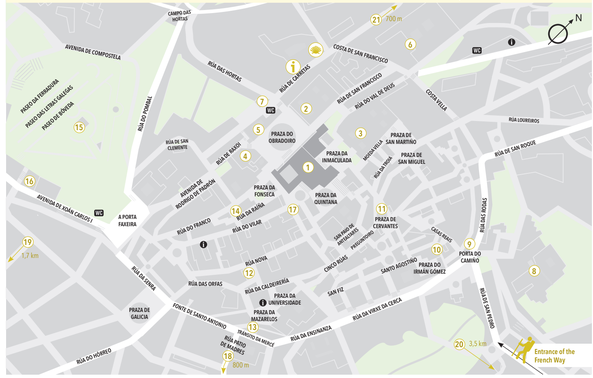
MAP OF SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA
PLACES ASSOCIATED WITH THE WAY OF ST. JAMES ->

1. Santiago de Compostela Cathedral
2. Royal Hospital (now Hostal dos Reis Católicos)
3. San Martiño Pinario
4. Vice-Chancellor's Office, University of Santiago de Compostela (USC)
5. Pazo de Raxoi
6. Monastery of San Francisco and Monument to St. Francis, by the sculptor Asorey
7. San Fructuoso Church and location of the old pilgrim cemetery
8. San Domingos de Bonaval
9. Camino Gate (Porta do Camiño)
10. Santa María do Camiño Church
11. Praza do Campo Square (now Cervantes) and San Bieito do Campo Church
12. Santa María Salomé Church
13. Mazarelos Gate (Porta de Mazarelos)
14. Santiago Fountain, Rúa do Franco
15. Santa Susana Church
16. Pilar Church
17. Praza das Praterías Square and Museum of Pilgrimage and Santiago
18. Santa María a Real de Sar
19. Santa María de Conxo
20. Monte do Gozo
21. San Paio do Monte Chapel (O Pedroso)

International Pilgrim Welcome Centre:
Camino de Santiago Research and Information Centre

Information

Pilgrim's Office:
981 568 846



HELPFUL TIPS FOR PILGRIMS

CREDENTIAL OF THE PILGRIM

This is the document in which you collect stamps from the places you pass through and that will allow you to obtain the "Compostela" (Council document that certifies completion of the pilgrimage for religious or spiritual reasons). It must be proven that at least the final 100 kilometres have been done on foot or on horseback, or the final 200 km if by bicycle, or 100 nautical miles and then walking the last few kilometres of the Camino from O Monte do Gozo if sailing.

HEALTHCARE CARD

- Spanish pilgrims should always carry their health insurance card.
- If travelling from another EU member state, it is advisable to carry the European health insurance card.
- If travelling from a non-EU member state, there may be an agreement in effect with Spain, therefore pilgrims are advised to obtain this information before their pilgrimage and travel with the corresponding documentation.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In addition to the general recommendations which all pilgrims should observe, disabled pilgrims should:

- Before leaving, learn about the difficulties they may encounter and the accessibility of the different services found along the Way of St. James (hostels, catering facilities, etc.).
- Exercise caution when crossing roads if they have a hearing impairment and, in the case of pilgrims with visual impairments, always be accompanied when walking, due to crossings, detours and difficulties in the terrain.

IF TRAVELLING WITH ANIMALS:

- Make sure that animals are vaccinated and have been de-wormed and that their obligatory health cards are up-to-date.
- Plan and adapt the route and the stages to include accessible accommodation.

Before starting the pilgrimage

- Prepare physically for the journey, and bear in mind that stages should be planned depending on individual physical ability, the difficulty involved, and plan more frequent or longer breaks to suit individual needs.
- Once pilgrims start their journey, they should not try to walk too quickly and keep a regular pace, at least over the first few days.
- Foot care is essential for preventing blisters; pilgrims should wear comfortable and broken-in shoes (two pairs are advisable), with thick, light rubber outer soles. Socks should be breathable, linen or cotton, and should be dry and worn properly to prevent scratches. At the end of the day, pilgrims should wash their feet with soap and water and change their footwear.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that is light in colour (reflective), and appropriate for the time of the year.
- Take a lightweight raincoat to cover backpacks.
- Bring a hat or other protection for the head, as well as sunglasses. Avoid the midday heat and use sunscreen.
- Drink water frequently but make sure it is suitable for drinking; it is not advisable to drink from streams, rivers, springs or fountains that are not certified. A minimum daily intake of 2 litres of water is recommended to prevent dehydration. Isotonic beverages are ideal, as their sodium and potassium content will enable pilgrims to remain hydrated.
- Pilgrims must camp in official campsites. They should be cautious when lighting bonfires and, at the start of the day's stage, make sure that it has been fully extinguished. RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT.
- Never leave the marked paths, avoid walking when it is dark and obey the rules. If pilgrims are cycling, remember that the use of a helmet and high-visibility jacket is obligatory.
- Always walk on the left-hand side of the road.
- When tiredness or cramps set in, rest in a cool place and drink plenty of fluids.
- To keep up their strength along the Way, pilgrims should eat high-energy food (dried fruit, figs, chocolate, etc.).
- As part of their luggage, pilgrims should bring: a sleeping bag, a Swiss army knife, a torch, a mobile phone, and a small first-aid kit.
- The basic first-aid kit: antiseptic cream, gauze, adhesive tape, betadyne, band-aids, sunscreen, and a needle and thread to treat blisters, nail scissors, Vaseline, mosquito repellent, antihistamines for allergy sufferers and aspirin.

FRENCH WAY

