Walking Guide to the

CAMINO DE SANTIAGO
Camino Francés

History, Culture, Architecture

Gerald Kelly
2020 Edition
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<td>Belorado</td>
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<td>5km / 1¼ hrs</td>
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**Important cities and towns are highlighted like this.**

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<td>¼ hr to Airexe de Ligonde</td>
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<tr>
<td>2km</td>
<td>½ hr to Portos</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1½ hrs to Palas de Rei</td>
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<tr>
<td>4km</td>
<td>1 hr to San Xulián do Camiño</td>
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About this guide

This book is intended as a practical, no-nonsense guide to the Camino de Santiago for pilgrims walking it in the traditional manner and sleeping in pilgrim hostels. The route described is the Camino Francés, the French Camino, which is generally considered to start in the picturesque southern French village of St-Jean-Pied-de-Port, from where it winds its way for almost 800km across northern Spain, through the rolling hills of Navarra, the vineyards of La Rioja, the endless plains of Castile, before arriving finally in the green valleys and forests of Galicia. It ends on the magnificent square before the western façade of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

After many centuries of near abandonment this ancient pilgrimage route suddenly (and to the surprise of almost everybody) sprang back into life in the latter years of the 20th century. Today it welcomes pilgrims in numbers not seen since its heyday in the early middle-ages.

The rapid development of new accommodation and other pilgrim resources in recent years have made the Camino Francés one of the most easily accessible long-distance walks in the world. Nowadays people of all ages and abilities walk this Camino, whether just the last 100km or from much further afield.

The 2020 edition

I last walked the Camino Francés in the summer of 2018. It was my fourth time walking this Camino end-to-end. It was a pleasant experience filled with interesting encounters with people from all walks of life, only slightly marred by an unforgiving bout of tendinitis (my first in many years of walking – and a reminder to always drink plenty of water!)

In the autumn I rewrote the guide based on my experiences. For this the 2020 edition, I updated it again to take into account any changes which happened in the meantime. The 2020 edition is the ninth since the guide was first published in 2012.

If you have any comments or suggestions about this book, or there’s a question you’d like to ask, you can contacted me at caminoguidecontact@gmail.com I’m always happy to hear from my readers and it’s always useful to receive feedback from people who have actually used the book while walking the Camino.

I wish you every success and Buen Camino!

Gerald Kelly
Seville, January 2020

Online resources

Many other resources are available from our website www.caminoguide.net

If you’re currently trying to decide what to bring with you on the Camino you may find my packing blog useful, it contains information and advice about what clothes and equipment you’ll need, www.caminoguide.net/packing

There’s also an interactive version of the guide with links to loads more accommodation options and the ability to book online through Booking.com, it’s at www.caminoguide.net/guide

You can also download a set of GPS files to use in a mapping app on your mobile phone. Just go to the Download page on the website and enter your email address. You’ll receive an email with links to the free version of this guide and links to
download GPS files. The files come in .KML format and we recommend you use the MAPS.ME app to view them. It’s free and open source and available for both Android and Apple (iOS) phones.

If you’d like to have a copy of this guide in PDF format, handy for reading on a smartphone or computer, send me and email caminoguidecontact@gmail.com and I’ll send you the links to download.

How to use this guide
The heading for a town or village or any place else with a pilgrim hostel looks like this:

16km / 4 hrs Zubiri

Zubiri is the name of the village. It is 16km from the last place with a pilgrim hostel. If you walk at 4km per hour it will take you 4 hours to walk that distance. 4km is almost exactly 2½ miles. This estimated walking speed is based on an average over the entire day over typical terrain. Your actual walking speed may be very different and many factors will affect it, principally: ascents, descents, mud, wind, injury and fatigue.

How to calculate distances
Use town and village headings when calculating the length of stages. Distances are hostel-to-hostel if there is only one hostel listed in a places, otherwise they're an approximation of the midpoint between hostels in a given place. Distances are rounded up or down to the nearest kilometre. Great care has been taken to make sure the distances given are accurate.

Pilgrim hostels
Information about pilgrim hostels is given like this:

Private hostel (16, 10€) Los Arancones, pass the Parish hostel, cross the main road then to the right of the church. Café / restaurant. Good reports. Tel 947 581 485 Open 11AM

This is a private hostel, which sleeps 16, costs 10€ and is open all year. Its name is Albergue Los Arancones (Albergue is Spanish for hostel). Next comes a description of how to find the hostel, locations are always described in relation to the Camino. So, when you're following the Camino through this village you'll cross a main road and then you'll see a church, the albergue is to the right of the church. After the location we describe the facilities the albergue has (besides the basic ones, see next paragraph), followed by any comments. A phone number is given when it may be useful to reserve ahead or in winter to check if a particular hostel is open. Please remember that generally only private hostels accept reservations, and that phone numbers will be of limited use to you if you don't speak at least a little Spanish. If they have a website we’ll also give that. Then the time that they generally open.

Unless otherwise stated all pilgrim hostels have the following basic facilities:

- running water
The opening dates given are checked every year, however, please bear in mind that, especially in the case of private and small hostels, opening dates vary at the whim of the owner / administrator and some hostels close unannounced during off-peak times (for more details see Walking in Winter).

General information

General information about what you'll find in towns and villages is given in this format and follows directly after the list of Pilgrim Hostels. This will include any useful amenities available close by. Such as:

- shops
- cafés / restaurants
- pharmacies
- banks (with an ATM)
- etc.

There is no clear distinction between a bar and a café in Spain. In this guide the word café is used throughout.

Background Information

Background Information includes the following:

- FOOD local culinary specialities and where to try them
- SIGHTS the important monuments and other places of interest, with a short description of their historical significance and architectural style
- HISTORY a short introduction to any historically significant local events
- Placename the meaning of the placenames

Route information

Description of the route and information about things you will see between places are given in this format. Distances given in this format should be ignored when calculating distances between hostels, unless they refer to where two alternative routes rejoin (see example below).

When there is more than one route, where the Camino divides you will see a heading like this before the description of each route:

**Left route 11km / 2¾ hrs**
The left route is 11km long and, below, the right route is 15km long.

**Right route 15km / 3¾ hrs**
The first hostel after where two routes rejoin will not have a distance indicated because the distance to it depends on which route you took. In this case the distance will be indicated like this:

**11km / 2¾ hrs to Los Arcos, very little shade.**
When the two alternative routes rejoin you will see a heading like this just before the place where they rejoin.

**Left and right routes rejoin in...**

**Please remember the following...**

Hostels are listed in the order in which you will encounter them when walking the Camino from east to west which is the way most people walk it. The price given is the price quoted for a bed in a dormitory in summer. In recent years private hostels have begun operating **high-season** and **low-season pricing** as well as **surge pricing** (ie. The price increases when demand increases). This creates a difficult situation for pilgrims because it makes it impossible to say for certain how much a bed in one of these hostels will cost. To deal with this, and to express our disapproval of shady / non-transparent pricing practices, when a hostel quotes more than one price we always assume the highest one. There is no clear distinction between a **bar** and a **café** in Spain. In this guide the word **café** is used throughout.

**Walking in winter**

Many business along the Camino (shops and cafés as well as hostels) now cater primarily to pilgrims, so during winter months, if they open at all, they may only do so with reduced hours. For this reason walking in winter requires more planning ahead than does walking in summer. However, if you plan your stages to end in or close to a larger town or village (generally, those with several pilgrim hostels) you should be fine. It’s also a good idea to stock up on basic food (bread, cheese, etc.) when you get the chance, rather than assume you’ll be able to do so later in the day.

Parts of the Camino pass through mountainous areas where snow is likely in winter. Ask hospitaleros about weather conditions and heed any advice they give you about which route to take. This especially applies to the first stage out of Saint-Jean.

In winter many hostels close for a time, despite claiming to be open all year. This applies especially to small and private hostels. So, during December, January, February and March you may find some hostels closed which are listed in this guide (and other sources of information - including sometimes their own website) as being open all year. However, even in winter, larger places (ones with several hostels) usually have at least one hostel open and failing that there's always an enterprising individual to fill the gap. If you ever find yourself stuck for a bed try asking in shops and cafés about alternative accommodation. Hospitaleros can also often provide you with reliable information about what’s open on the next stage.

One thoughtful person has built a website with information about accommodation for winter walkers. It’s updated regularly so please contact them if you have some information which you think would be of use to other pilgrims. It’s at [www.aprinca.com/alberguesinvierno](http://www.aprinca.com/alberguesinvierno) (only active in winter).

**Urban maps**

There are 29 urban maps for all the major towns and cities along the Camino. The format of urban maps is really very straightforward and no special symbols are used. Places mentioned in the guide are also shown on the maps. The exact location of hostels is shown, if it's within the area covered, with its name or **Municipal Hostel** or **Albergue Municipal**. The route of the Camino is shown by a trail of black dots.
Rural maps
There are 30 rural maps. Symbols used on rural maps are shown below.

The route of the Camino is shown as a line of black strokes. When there is more than one route option both are shown. Alternative route options are also described in the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of hostel beds</th>
<th>Pharmacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albergue / pilgrim hostel</td>
<td>Camino route (dotted line)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café / bar</td>
<td>Motorway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop / supermarket</td>
<td>Main road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash machine / ATM</td>
<td>Minor road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Altitude profiles
There are altitude profiles for the entire Camino. Each profile covers two maps and usually appears just after the maps it covers.

Placenames
In bilingual areas different versions of placenames are shown in headings, however, the placename used in the text is the one most commonly used on the ground. In France, the French version is used rather than the Basque (Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, or simply Saint-Jean, instead of Donibane-Garazi). Likewise in Navarra, which is bilingual, the Spanish is used rather than the Basque (Pamplona instead of Iruña). In Galicia in recent years all new signposting is only in Galician so names are generally given in that language (Alto do Poio, etc.), except when another version is more commonly used (Finisterre / Fisterra).

Measurement units
All distances are given in the metric system (kilometres and metres).
Drinking water
Drinking fonts and springs are not mentioned because many of them are dry some of the time, or the water may not be safe to drink (there’s usually a sign: *agua no potable / no apta para el consumo humano*). Stock up on water in towns and villages and don’t set off without enough to get you to the next inhabited place.

How prices are written
Spain uses the **euro**, the symbol for which is € after the amount, 1€, although you will sometimes see it written before the amount, €1. Numbers are written using a point as the thousand separator and a comma as the decimal separator 2,25€ (so, the opposite of what's normal in English speaking countries). Occasionally, an apostrophe is used as the decimal separator, 2’25€. Or the euro symbol is used as the decimal separator, 2€25. Just to confuse things further, prices are also sometimes written without the € symbol and minus trailing zeros: 4,5 or 4’5 = 4,50€. This confusion reflects the fact that there is no official standard for how to write euro amounts.

Without wishing to be controversial, the **English plural** of euro is either euro or euros, according to one's personal preference. The same applies to **cent** and **cents**. Euro is written with a lower-case e, unless at the beginning of a sentence.

Donativo
If the price of a hostel or a meal is shown as *donativo* that does not mean it’s free, it means you should leave whatever amount you can afford and that you should leave **at very least** enough for the hostel to cover its costs. **Donativo** hostels are the heart and soul of the Camino, if we don’t support them they’ll disappear and we’ll all have lost something precious.

Contact
Remember, you can contact me at caminoguidecontact@gmail.com

And don’t forget to have a look at all the resources on our website www.CaminoGuide.net

*Buen Camino!*
Walking notes

Map 1

The walk from Saint-Jean to Roncesvalles is often described as the most difficult stage on the Camino Francés, and although there are two possible routes, neither of them is a stroll in the park.

By far the most popular (and most difficult) route is the track over the pass at Lepoeder (described here as the Left route, but also sometimes called the Route Napoléon). It starts with a steep 630m climb over 7km to Orisson, altitude 800m. After that there’s a less steep, but still tiring, 650m climb over 13km to Lepoeder, altitude 1450m. Followed by a steep 500m descent to Roncesvalles. You can make this stage easier by staying overnight in Orisson (reservation recommended) and spread the stage over two days. Also, for the descent to Roncesvalles there is a gentler alternative to the traditional route which branches right towards Puerto de Ibañeta.

If that all sounds too much like hard work there’s always the Valcarlos route (described here as the Right route). The climb on this route is fairly gentle until about 6km after Valcarlos where it begins to ascend steeply 400m over 5km, to Puerto de Ibañeta, altitude 1057m. After that it’s an easy stroll down to Roncesvalles.

Both routes are difficult in snow or high winds and the Left route is officially closed in winter.

Follow the advice given by the Pilgrims Office in Saint-Jean and you won’t go wrong.
Many of Saint-Jean's pilgrim hostels are on rue de la Citadelle, the main street in the historic centre of the town about a 10 minute walk from the railway station. These hostels are listed first:

**Municipal hostel (32, 10€ breakfast included)** Refuge Municipal / Accueil Pèlerin up rue de la Citadelle, near the top on the left. Register in the Pilgrims Office a short distance down the street. Microwaves. Website: www.aucoeurduchemin.org Open 2PM

**Private Hostel (18, 33€ with evening meal and breakfast, March to October)** Beilari (formerly L'Esprit du Chemin) on rue de la Citadelle opposite the Pilgrims Office. Communal evening meal where pilgrims introduce themselves, vegetarian options. They also do packed lunches. Very popular. Reservations on their website www.beilari.info or 05 59 37 24 68

**Private Hostel (12, 10€)** Sur le Chemin - Au Chant du Coq on rue de la Citadelle just down from the Pilgrims Office. Tel 06 38 38 49 85

**Private Hostel (13, 17€)** Gîte Buen Camino at 30 rue de la Citadelle. Laundry facilities. Breakfast 5€. Tel 06 63 26 12 02

**Private Hostel (11, 22€, April to September)** Gîte Ultreia at 8 rue de la Citadelle. Kitchen. Evening meal. Breakfast. Run by two ex-pilgrims. Reservations from their website: www.ultreia64.fr or 06 80 88 46 22 Open 4PM

**These hostels are not on rue de la Citadelle**

**Private Hostel (46, 17€, April to October)** Gîte le Chemin vers l'Etoile, on rue d'Espagne which is down the bottom of rue de la Citadelle and across the bridge. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Website: www.pelerinage-saint-jacques-compostelle.com Tel 05 59 37 20 71 Open 2PM

**Parish Hostel (14, 20€ with evening meal and breakfast, April to October)** Refuge Accueil Paroissial / Maison Kaserna also on rue d'Espagne. Reported friendly with good food. Tel 05 59 37 65 17 Open 3PM

**Private Hostel (18, 24€, March to October)** Gîte Izaxulo, on avenue Renaud, on the way from the railway station, just before Place du Trinkel. Laundry facilities. Breakfast 4€. Website www.gite-izaxulo.com Tel 05 24 34 19 00

**Private hostel (13, 17€ with breakfast, March to November)** Gîte La Vita è Bella, on Place du Trinkel. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. New in 2018. Tel 07 68 23 40 07

**Private hostel (15€, 14, April to October)** Gîte Compostella, on route d'Arméguy, to the right after crossing the river. Kitchen. Breakfast. Website gitecompostella.jimdo.com Tel 05 59 37 02 36

**Private hostel (10, 20€)** La Coquille Napoléon on the left branch of the Camino 800m from Saint-Jean. Evening meal. Breakfast. Also private rooms. Website lacoquillenapoleon.simplesite.com Tel 06 62 25 99 40

**Private hostel (14, 22€ with breakfast)** Gîte Antton, on the left route of the Camino 1km / ½ hr after Saint-Jean. Evening meal. New in 2018. Website gite-antton.fr/en Tel 06 65 19 50 73

Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port has all the facilities you're likely to need. There is a wide variety of accommodation ranging from pilgrim hostels to luxury hotels many of which are along the steep, cobbled rue de la Citadelle, and the parallel Place du Général de Gaulle, both about a 10 minute walk from the railway station. There are also many restaurants in this area. The Pilgrims Office / Accueil St Jacques near the top of rue de la Citadelle provides Credenciales, information and advice on weather.
conditions, and help finding accommodation, etc. Open until 10PM in summer. There's a Champion supermarket and a bank on Avenue du Jaï Alaï and another bank on rue d'Uhart. On Place du Général de Gaulle there's a Tourist Information and a pharmacy. There is also several hiking equipment shops. Restaurant Ttipia on Place Floquet does a good menu du jour (excellent confit de canard). Restaurant La Vieille Auberge - Chez Dédé on rue de la France has also been recommended, is between
Place du Trinket and rue de la Citadelle. **SIGHTS** Rue de la Citadelle is the centre of the old town of Saint-Jean and the main thoroughfare used by pilgrims down the centuries. At its north end is Porte St Jacques / St James Gate where pilgrims arriving from the north arrive, and at its south end is Porte d’Espagne / Spanish Gate, where pilgrims heading from Spain depart. The wooden-framed houses lining this medieval street are testimony to its place in history. Today, as for centuries, they house establishments dedicated to the service of the pilgrims who pass as surely and regularly as the seasons. Etched on their façades are their construction dates, some of them in the post-revolution Republican calendar. At the bottom of the street is the church of Notre Dame du Bout du Pont / Our Lady at the End of the Bridge, which is 14th century Gothic and funded by King Sancho VII el Fuerte (the strong) of Navarra. Passing through the clock tower arch of Porte d’Espagne brings you to the banks of the River Nive (or Errobi in Basque) and a good view of the 17th century town walls. At the top of the street the Citadelle looks down on the town from above Porte St. Jacques, it too dates from the 17th century. **HISTORY** Saint-Jean dates from the 12th century when it was founded by Sancho VII el Fuerte in the shadow of the Castle of Mendiguren which stood on the site of the current Citadelle. It was a fortified town which guarded the northern approach to the Kingdom of Navarra and served as a waystation for travellers and pilgrims crossing the Pyrenees. The town and its hinterlands changed hands several times down the centuries as French and Spanish kingdoms struggled for supremacy in the region, eventually becoming capital of the French Kingdom of Lower Navarre in the 16th century. After the French revolution the Kingdom of Lower Navarre was abolished along with the privileges of the local royalty and the town was temporarily renamed Nive-Franche. In the Religious Wars / Guerres de Religion in the 16th century it was the scene of bloody struggle between Catholics and Protestants. The railway line from Bayonne was completed in 1889. Today Saint-Jean is a major tourist centre in the modern département of Pyrénées-Atlantiques which takes in the whole of the French Basque Country and parts of Gascony. **Placename** St John at the Foot of the Pass. However, its original name in Spanish was, Santa Maria Cabo el Puente / St Mary at the End of the Pass. Its name in Basque is Donibane-Garazi / St John of Garazi, which is a reference to the peaks on the next stage of the Camino.

There are two routes between Saint-Jean and Roncesvalles. The (lower) right route goes through Valcarlos, and the (higher) left route goes through Orisson. If you're walking in winter it's important to ask in Saint-Jean about weather conditions. Both routes are difficult in snow or high winds and the left route is often impassable in winter and is officially closed from the beginning of November until the end of March (ignoring this may lead to legal sanctions). In mountainous areas such as these, weather conditions can change very quickly. Leaving Saint-Jean walk down rue de la Citadelle, under the arch of Porte d’Espagne and up rue d’Espagne, continuing straight under another arch and up a hill for about 100m until you reach a junction with a small sign on a lamppost indicating where the two routes divide.

**Right route 24km / 6 hrs via Valcarlos. The lower route.**

At the junction turn right on to Chemin de Mayorga and continue straight until you come to the main road which you follow to the left. After about 600m turn right on to a small road, clearly signposted Valcarlos / Luzaide and Roncevaux (French for Roncesvalles). 8km / 2 hrs to the Spanish border, marked by a gaudy shopping centre and petrol station. Walk towards the petrol station and continue straight. 1km / ¼ hr to Arnéguy, shops, cafés and restaurants. At the main road the Camino divides. There are
two options between here and Valcarlos; go right and walk along the main road, or go left and walk on a minor road through the village of Ondarrola. They're approximately the same length. At this point the river marks the Spanish / French border.

### 12km / 3 hrs to Valcarlos / Luzaide

**Municipal hostel (24, 10€ with breakfast)** past the church then turn left, walk past the old school building on the left and then down some steps. Ask for door code in the shop / bar Ardandegia, the town hall or tourist office. Kitchen. The hospitalero calls in the evening. Nice hostel. Tel 948 790 117

Shops (mostly touristy, Ardandegia has more groceries), cafés, pharmacy and a bank.

**SIGHTS** This region has many fine examples of Basque farmhouses. These sturdy square buildings have an area for farm animals on the ground floor and accommodation for people above. At the summit of the **Puerto de Ibañeta** is a monument to **Roland** (Roldán in Spanish) and the Battle of Roncesvalles, and a small modern chapel. In medieval times there was also a small chapel here dedicated to Roland. When there was fog or snow the chapel bell was rung to guide pilgrims who had gotten lost in the woods. Valcarlos' village church is dedicated to St James. The presence of the French / Spanish border doesn't take from the fact that all the locals are Basque.

**HISTORY** This entire region is closely linked to the history of Charlemagne, an 8th century French king credited with uniting France's fractious kingdoms and extending its rule throughout Western Europe. **El Puerto de Ibañeta** is where Charlemagne crossed the Pyrenees to begin his attempted liberation of Spain from the Moors. At a place later named la Croix de Charles, he is said to have fallen to his knees and prayed, his face turned towards Galicia. It became a tradition for French pilgrims to place a small cross in the ground there. Valcarlos, whose Spanish name is a direct reference to him, is where he was encamped when he heard of the defeat of his deputy Roland at the **Battle of Roncesvalles** in 778. Charlemagne was returning to France, when the rearguard of his army, commanded by Roland, was attacked and defeated by a Basque force which made off with the gold they were transporting. This is the battle referred to in the song **La Chanson de Roland** which perpetuates the myth that the attackers were Moors. The Valcarlos route, which today is often referred to as an 'alternative', became popular among pilgrims during the middle-ages due to the improved security provided by the construction of pilgrim hostels along its length. Recently the other (more scenic) route has become far more popular.

**Placename** Valley of Carlos, another name for Charlemagne. Its Basque name is Luzaide however officially it is called Luzaide / Valcarlos reflecting its location on the fault-line between multiple cultures.

From Valcarlos ascent 670m to the pass, Puerto de Ibañeta (altitude 1057m) and descending 100m to arrive in Roncesvalles after 12km / 3 hrs (allow extra time for the ascent). Follow the main road for 2km / ½ hr until the Camino veers left on to a minor road and passes through the village of Gañecoleta before rejoining the main road after 2km / ½ hr. It then follows the main road for another 2km / ½ hr before veering left on to a lane. From here on it's wooded, mountainous terrain to Ibañeta, apart from one place where it briefly meets the road again. **Off-road parts of this route may be difficult in snow, in which case it's advisable to stick to the road.**

**Left route (Route Napoleon)** 24km / 6 hrs

**HISTORY** This route is also sometimes known as le Port de Cize. It follows the Via Traiana, a Roman road linking Bordeaux and Astorga. In the early days of the Camino Francés this was the most popular route to cross the mountains. It lost in
popularity to the Valcarlos route during the late middle-ages.

Ascends 330m to...

5km / 1¼ hrs to Honto / Hontto

Private hostel (17, 16€) Auberge Ferme Ithurburia to the left of the Camino. Evening meal. Breakfast. Laundry facilities. Reservations on 05 59 37 11 17. Website: www.gites-de-france-64.com/ferme-ithurburia

Ascends 250m to...

2km / ½ hr to Orisson

Private hostel (28, 36€ with evening meal and breakfast, April to October) Refuge Orisson, on the Camino on the right in an isolated location. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. During peak times they open another building and rent spaces in tents. It's advisory to reserve in advance on www.refuge-orisson.com Tel 05 59 49 13 03 or 06 81 49 79 56 Open 12 noon

Café with sandwiches, Basque cakes, etc.

SIGHTS About 8km / 2 hrs after Orisson at a place called Pic d'Hostatéguy you'll pass the statue of La Vierge du Chemin with (weather permitting) panoramic views of the western Pyrenees.

17km / 4¼ hrs to Roncesvalles from Orisson (walking time NOT adjusted for ascent and descent). Between here and Roncesvalles the Camino ascends 650m to the pass at Col Lepoeder (altitude 1450m) before descending 500m. Entering Spain and Navarra. There are two options when descending into Roncesvalles, the one to the left is quite a steep descent through the forest, while the one to the right is slightly longer, descending more gently along an unpaved road via the church at Puerto de Ibañeta.

Left and right route rejoin in...

Roncesvalles / Roncevaux / Orreaga

Monastery hostel (183, 12€) Albergue de Peregrinos de Roncesvalles in a newly renovated part of the old monastery. Microwaves, laundry facilities. Run by Dutch volunteers. Stupendous, modern facilities. In winter pilgrims are accommodated in the main monastery building. Reservations on www.alberguederoncesvalles.com During busy periods booking ahead here is a good idea since place are limited. Tel 948 760 000 or 948 760 029 Open 2PM

Cafés. The Pilgrims Office / Oficina de Información al Peregrino is through one of the doors beside the main entrance to the monastery. They can give you a Credencial. Tourist Information in the old mill, beside the road up from the main entrance to the monastery. There is a special blessing for pilgrims during the final mass which starts at 8PM Monday to Friday and 6PM at weekends. Three restaurants do Pilgrim Menus. If you reserve the albergue you can also reserve a meal. The local trout speciality is usually on offer. In the albergue there are vending machines with snacks. Casa Sabina opens at 7AM.

SIGHTS Often referred to as a village, in reality Roncesvalles consists of little more than a (mostly disused) monastery surrounded by a number of establishments which cater to passing pilgrims and tourists. It has a permanent population of about 25. The village referred to in historical documents is actually Burguete (original known as Borgo de Roncesvalles), 3km further along the Camino. Roncesvalles monastery has several churches. The one most in use today is the Iglesia de la Real Colegiata de Santa María (situated to the rear) which dates from the 13th century, although it was substantially reconstructed in the mid-20th. It
was built by King Sancho VII (el Fuerte / the Strong) of Navarra, in a Gothic style similar to Notre Dame de Paris, and is one of the earliest examples of Gothic ecclesiastical architecture in Spain. Above its main altar is the beautiful statue of La Virgen de Orreaga, made of wood and covered in silver. To one side is a statue of Santiago Peregrino. The Capilla de Sancti Spiritus or Silo de Carломagno, on the main road in front of the monastery, dates from the 12th century and is probably the oldest building in Roncesvalles. It is an octagonal funeral chapel where masses were traditionally said for pilgrims who died in the monastery's hospital. Beside it is the small Gothic Iglesia de Santiago or Iglesia de los Peregrinos, which was reconstructed during the 20th century. Today it houses the bell which previously guided pilgrims to the Puerto de Ibañeta. There is also a Museum containing many historic objects related to the Camino including the relics of up to thirty saints. The monastery's cloister is of relatively recent and unremarkable construction and houses the earthly remains of the aforementioned King Sancho VII. The old and much lamented pilgrim hostel is across the road from the monastery's main entrance. The forest of Sorgintzaren, between Roncesvalles and Burguete, was reputed in the 16th century to be the base of a coven of witches. Rumours of witchcraft were widespread throughout northern Navarra at that time, leading to nine people being sentenced to burn at the stake by the Inquisition. Burguete features in Earnest Hemingway's novel The Sun Also Rises.

HISTORY
Throughout history waves of invaders including Romans, Celts, Barbarians and Goths, have passed this way taking advantage of the relative ease with which the mountains can be crossed. In their footsteps have come hoards of pilgrims making Roncesvalles an important and symbolic Camino landmark at the gateway to Spain. Since its creation the monastery of Nuestra Señora de Roncesvalles has always been heavily influenced by French religious orders and belonged for a time to the monastery of Sainte-Foy de Conques on the Chemin du Puy. In medieval times pilgrims could stay for three days in bad weather in order to give them time to recover from the hardships of the Pyrenees. While here they could avail of the services on offer such as beard trimming, foot washing and, if they were feeling plush, a bath!

Placename Ronces, prickly shrub common in this area, valle means valley. Its name in French is Roncevaux and in Basque it's Orreaga.

3km / ¾ hr to Burguete, cafés, bank, pharmacy shop - however, some things will be closed if you're passing through early in the morning. Several cafés on and near the Camino open for breakfast. One, in the village a little after where the Camino turns right, is also a bakery. The Camino takes an abrupt right turn at the red Santander sign.

6km / 1½ hrs to Espinal / Aurizberri

Private hostel (30, 12€) Albergue Haizea on Calle Saroiberri, left at the main road. Café / restaurant and private rooms. Reservations from their website www.hostalhaizea.com Tel 948 760 379.

Private hostel (21, 12€, Easter to October) Albergue Irugoiena on Calle Oihanilun in Barrio Santiago which is left at the main road. Laundry facilities. Evening meals. Breakfast. Also pickups from Roncesvalles and private rooms. Reservations from their website www.irugoiena.com Tel 622 606 196 Open 1PM

Café (basic) on a small square to the right, bakery and shop, all on the Camino.

5km / 1¼ hrs to Viskarret, modern café before the village and the traditional Bar Juan on main square with its amazing tortillas. Shop on your left when leaving the village.
2km / ½ hr to Linzoain, then 8km / 2 hrs from Linzoain to Zubiri with a 300m descent into the valley of the river Arre. The Camino continues straight along the riverbank and doesn't go through the village of Zubiri which is on the other side of the bridge.

15km / 3¾ hrs to Zubiri

**Private hostel (8, 15€) Alberque Río Arga Ibaia**, in the first building on the left after you cross the bridge. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Also private rooms. Website www.alberguerioarga.com Tel 948 304 243 Open 1PM

**Private hostel (24, 10€, March to October) Alberque Zaldiko**, on the right after you cross the bridge. Microwaves, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Cramped dorms. Website www.alberguezaldiko.com Tel 609 736 420 Open 12 noon

**Private Hostel (57, 18€ with breakfast, March to October) El Palo de Avellano**, at the church turn right on to the main road, Avenida de Roncesvalles, it's on the right. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Also private rooms. Website www.elpalodeavellano.com Tel 666 499 175 Open 1PM

**Private hostel (12, 15€ with breakfast, March to October) Alberque Segunda Etapa**, just past El Palo de Avellano. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Website alberguesegundaetapa.com Tel 697 186 560 Open 12.30PM

**Municipal Hostel (46, 8€, March to October) Alberque de Peregrinos de Zubiri**, across the road from Alberque Segunda Etapa. Basic kitchen with coffee and snack machines. Renovated in 2019. If locked call 628 324 186 Open 12 noon

**Private hostel (22, 15€ with breakfast, April to October) Alberque Suseia** continue past the Municipal Hostel then past the swimming pool, in about 200m and it's on a street of new houses on the left called Calle Murelu. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Website www.suseiazubiri.com Tel 948 304 353 Open 12 noon

Shops, cafés, pharmacy (past the swimming pool and left) and a bank. On the square in front of the church, Bar Baserri, does a good Pilgrim Menu and Café del Camino opens at 6AM, there's also a well-stocked sports shop.

**SIGHTS**

Entering Zubiri you will cross the Puente de la Rabia or Rabies Bridge, so named because of the local legend that herding animals around its main pillar three times would cure them of rabies. The origin of this legend appears to come from the belief that a local saint, Santa Quiteria, was buried beneath the bridge. Fiestas first weekend in August.

**Placename** Zubia / bridge, herri / village. Basque.

2km / ½ hr to Ilarratz

**Private hostel (6, 15€, Easter to September) Alberque Ezpeleku**, on the Camino on the right. Breakfast. No services nearby but food of some description available. Website albergueezpeleku.com Tel 948 304 721 Open 1.30PM

The Camino bypasses Larrasoaña. If you want to visit the village you'll have to cross the bridge.

2km / ½ hr to Larrasoaña

**Municipal hostel (52, 8€, February to December) Alberque de peregrinos de Larrasoaña**, turn left at the church and continue to the main square. Kitchen. In two buildings a short distance apart. Run by the local community, renovated in 2019. Tel 626 718 417 Open 12 noon

**Private hostel (12, 15€, February to November) Alberque Asteia**, turn right just before the church then right into Calle Errotabidea. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. New in 2019. Website www.asteiahostel.com Tel 663 371 513 Open 2PM
Private hostel (40, 12€, March to October)  *Albergue San Nicolás*, turn right at the church, it's just past the shop on Calle Sorandi. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Good reports. Website alberguesannicolas.com Tel 619 559 225 Open 12 noon

Colourful shop with Camino staples, turn right at the church on to Calle San Nicolás, and continue for 200m. Cafés. **SIGHTS** Larraoña is a pretty village and worth the short detour. It is considered a good example of a *pueblo calle*, having a layout typical in this region where the village was built along a main street lined by tall houses, rather than developing haphazardly around a church or monastery. The objective of this form of urban planning was to encourage a nucleus of economic activity in the centre of the village. There are also some beautiful examples of typical Basque houses. The village church, Iglesia de San Nicolás de Bari, is Baroque.

### 4km / 1 hr to Zuriain

Private hostel (7, 10€ or 13€ with breakfast, March to October)  *Parada de Zuriain*, on the left just over the bridge. Cafe / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Tel 699 556 741

Café.

### 3km / ¾ hr to Zabaldika

Parish hostel (18, donativo, May to September)  *Albergue Parroquial de Zabaldika*, a little off the Camino, watch out for the sign pointing right across the road and up a steep path (easy to miss). Kitchen, laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Positive reports. Website malele11.wixsite.com/zabaldika Tel 948 330 918 Open 1PM

**Municipal (60, 10€, April to October)  Albergue Municipal de Huarte** on Plaza San Juan in Huarte, which is about 2km off the Camino, signposted from a picnic area beside the main road. Kitchen, laundry facilities. The town of Huarte has all facilities. Ask in the hostel for directions back to the Camino. Tel 948 330 761 Open 1PM

**SIGHTS** The 13th century Romanesque church of  *San Esteban / St Stephan* in Zabaldika sits at the top of a steep hill with a view into the valley of the Río Arga. The main altar is 17th century with polychrome painting which is typical of the region around Pamplona. It features the Virgin Mary and St Stephan in its centre flanked by other saints. A spiral staircase leads to the tower where the smaller of the two bells, which was cast in 1377, is believed to be the oldest in use in Navarra. The nuns don't mind if you ring them!

### 4km / 1 hr to Villava / Atarrabia

Parish hostel (34, 8€, March to November)  *Hermanos Maristas / Trinidad de Arre*, in the building on your right as you cross the bridge over the river Ultzama. Kitchen, laundry facilities. This hostel is in a beautiful old building and has a nice enclosed garden. Mass 8AM in the hostel's Romanesque chapel, Santísima Trinidad. Tel 948 332 941 Open 12 noon (later in winter)

**Municipal Hostel (54, 13.50€)**, after the Parish Hostel continue along the Camino and it's to the left on Calle Atarrabia, signposted. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Evening meal. Breakfast. Website www.alberguedevillava.com Tel 948 517 731 Open 12 noon

Shops and cafés, banks, pharmacy on or adjacent to the Camino. **SIGHTS** The bridge you cross over the Río Ulzama was built in the 13th century and has six segmental arches. The *Via Traiana* intersected here with another Roman Road which came down from the Baztán Valley. Villava is the birthplace of the famous cyclist
Miguel Indurain who in 1995 became the first person to win the Tour de France five times in a row. In Trinidad de Arre another route to Santiago called the Camino de Baza joins the Camino Francés. The Camino de Baza starts at the cathedral in Bayonne and takes about six days to arrive at this point. It is fully waymarked and there are a number of pilgrim hostels and other accommodation available. A free guide to it is available by contacting the author at caminoguidecontact@gmail.com

Placename Villava comes from the Latin, Villanova / new town. Atarrabia is its Basque name.

It's suburban streets from here to Pamplona. The Camino turns right shortly before a roundabout with a fountain in the middle and crosses a main road and turns right. When you see a 'zig-zag' footbridge over the river, this is the quickest way to Casa Paderborn, otherwise continue straight along the riverbank to Puente de la Magdalena.

5km / 1¼ hrs to Pamplona / Iruña

NOTE: during San Fermínes (7 - 14 July) most accommodation in Pamplona will be booked out months in advance.

Private hostel (26, 7€, March to October) Casa Paderborn, a little off the Camino. Cross the zig-zag bridge or turn left immediately after Puente de la Magdalena. It's on the banks of the river. Run by German volunteers. Laundry facilities. Breakfast. Small garden by the river. Tel 948 211 712 Open 1PM

Private Hostel (20, 16€ with breakfast) Albergue Casa Ibarrola on the Camino on the right as it enters the old city. Kitchen, Laundry facilities. Space-agey capsule beds, good facilities, positive reports. Website www.casaibarrola.com Tel 948 223 332 Open 11.30AM


Private hostel (24, 18€ with breakfast) Plaza Catedral just opposite the cathedral a little to the left of the Camino. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.albergueplazacatedral.com Tel 948 591 336 Open 11AM

Municipal Hostel (112, 10€, closed Christmas) Jesús y María left of the Camino on Calle Compañía, turn left at Calle Curia. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Under the management of ASPACE, an organisation which offers employment to people with cerebral palsy. Comfortable, modern. Pamplona's oldest pilgrim hostel. Tel 948 222 644 Open 12 noon

Private hostel (24, 16€) Hostel Ciudadela, left of the Camino at the end of Calle Mayor, on Calle Ciudadela. Kitchen. Tel 616 786 479

Private hostel (26, 15€ with breakfast) Aloha Hostel, leave Plaza del Castillo by its south west corner, walk down Avenida San Ignacio to a roundabout, it's on Calle Sangiesa opposite and a little left. Kitchen. Good reports. Website www.alohahostel.es Tel 948 153 367

Private hostel (18, 16€) Albergue Xarma on Calle Baja Navarra. The easiest way to get to it is to continue straight across the bridge at the roundabout with the fountain where the Camino veers right, before entering the city. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Buffet breakfast. Website www.xarmahostel.com Tel 948 046 449 Open 12 noon

Pamplona, with a population of 197,000, is the biggest city on the Camino Francés and has all services you're likely to need on or near the Camino. Tourist Information on Plaza Consistorial next to the Ayuntamiento. Supermarket Carrefour on Calle Mayor which is on the Camino, open all day and Sunday morning. Pilgrim shop
Caminoteca on Calle Curia, open from 7AM every day March to October, has everything for pilgrims, run by pilgrims from Hungary. Locutorio / Call Shop for SIM cards, internet, printing, on Calle San Lorenzo, right off Calle Mayor. Free WiFi on Plaza del Castillo. If you need to forward excess luggage there's a Post Office / Correos on Paseo Sarasate, just south west of Plaza del Castillo, open Monday to Friday 8.30AM to 8.30PM and Saturday 9.30AM to 2PM. There are also has hotels to
suit everyone's pockets. However, beware! Pamplona is popular for party / stag / hen weekends and some of the accommodation around the centre also caters for this clientèle. **Pensión Escaray** on Calle Nuevo has singles from 20€ and is recommended. The famous **running of the bulls / encierro** takes place here during the **San Fermín** festival from 7 to 14 July. During this time this otherwise pleasant and beautiful city becomes something resembling Backpacker Hell. **FOOD** Pamplona is a good place to sample typical Navarran cuisine, such as **Alcachofas con Almejas / Artichokes with Clams.** Or the vegetarian **Borraja con Patata / Borage with Potatoes.** Several restaurants on Calle San Nicolás, just west of Plaza del Castillo, do regional specialities and also have cheap menús del día (from about 11€). **Restaurante Catachu** on Calle Lindachiquia is good. Historic **Café Iruña** on Plaza del Castillo was a favourite Hemingway haunt and, despite being a tourist attraction, is also a good place to eat. **Bodegón Sarria** on Calle Estafeta is good for tapas. **Restaurante Mesón El Caballo Blanco,** on Calle Redin, beside the cathedral, has been recommended, as has **Bar Oreja** on Calle Joaquín Jarauta. For vegetarian food **Sarasate** on Calle San Nicolás has been recommended, it's above a fish shop / pescadería. On the same street **Restaurante Baserri** is also recommended. **Café Valor** on Paseo de Saraste has delicious **Churros con Chocolate.** **SIGHTS** The imposing 16th century **city walls,** which you pass through at the **Portal de Francia / Gate of France,** are a fitting reminder of Pamplona’s historic importance. The site of **Pamplona Cathedral** was originally occupied by a temple to the Roman gods, which, after the arrival of Christianity, was replaced by a series of churches, which in turn was replaced by the present cathedral in 1501. Originally entirely Gothic in style, both inside and out, an unadorned neo-Classical western façade, completed in the 18th century, now conceals the original Gothic façade. Inside, at its centre, is the mausoleum of **King Carlos III** (the Noble) and his wife **Leonora de Trastámara.** The dog and lion at their feet symbolising loyalty and royal lineage. On the main altar is a 12th century wood carving of **Santa María la Real.** The Kings of Navarra were traditionally crowned kneeling before this altar. A door from the cathedral gives access to the **cloister,** which was completed in 1375 (pre-dating the current cathedral), and is considered one of the finest Gothic cloisters in Spain. The cathedral's north tower contains a twelve tonne bell called Maria which is the largest bell in regular use in Spain. The **Cathedral Museum** adjoins the cloister. Among other objects on display are carvings of medieval musical instruments which are reminiscent of the carvings on the Portica de la Gloria in Santiago. Cathedral, cloister and museum 3€ with Credencial. It opens at 10AM and closes at 7PM in summer and 5PM in winter. The **Ayuntamiento** is on the Camino as it passes through the city. It dates from the mid-18th century and has an ornate Baroque façade. Behind it is the municipal market, great for fresh fruit. To visit the elegant **Plaza del Castillo** take a left off the Camino on to Calle de Chapitela and walk about 50m. The Gothic 12th century **Church of San Cernin** (also known as **San Saturnino**), on the Camino just past the Ayuntamiento, is where **San Fermín** was baptised. The adjoining **Capilla de la Virgin del Camino** has a silver statue of the virgin in question (patroness of the city). The 12th century fortified church of **San Nicolás** has both Romanesque and Gothic elements. It houses an enormous Baroque organ. The **Museum of Navarra / Museo de Navarra** on Calle Santo Domingo, has a good collection of historical artefacts from Roman times onwards, including both Hispanic and Mudéjar art. Admission 2€. On the Camino just after the centre you will pass, on your left in a park, the **Citadel / Ciudadela,** which dates from the 16th century and replaced a fortress which originally stood on the Plaza del Castillo, as the
**Walking notes**

**Map 3**
After Cizur Menor climb 300m in 8km to the Alto del Perdón. Then a steep 200m descent over rocky ground to Uterga.

**Map 4**
There’s a sharp 100m climb before Mañeru, and then many small ups and downs before you get to Estella.

After the wine fountain in Ayegui and just before Irache there are two ways: go Right to pass through Villamayor de Monjardín, and then continue on to Los Arcos, or go Left to pass through the forest to Luquín and onwards to Los Arcos.

Both routes are approximately the same length, the left route is slightly hillier.

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**HISTORY**
The Roman city of Pompaelo was founded on the site of a Basque village called Iruña in 74BC by General Pompey (Pompeyo Magno). The Romans had good relations with the native Basques and introduced progressive urban planning and agricultural techniques to the region. Their successors, the Visigoths, found relations with the natives more difficult when they arrived in the 4th century, but nevertheless ruled over the city until the early 8th century when it came under Muslim rule for about fifty years, until this was interrupted by
Charlemagne who lay siege to the city and placed it under the control of his allies. Pamplona's location on an important access route to Iberia and on the fault line between several ethnic groups led to it being divided into walled neighbourhoods known as burgos (boroughs) in which each group was confined to its own area with contact between them mostly limited to commerce. The Navarrería district, around the cathedral, was the Basque area with other areas set apart for Franks and Jews. These divisions lasted until King Carlos III (el Noble / the Noble) abolished the boroughs and had the walls separating them torn down. In the 19th century the old city's southern walls were demolished and work began on the construction of the modern city centre to the south. Today Pamplona is a prosperous city and the capital of the Autonomous Community of Navarra. It has a per capita income well above the Spanish average. Placename Pompaelo, Latin, after the city's founder the Roman General Pompey. Its Basque name, Iruña means simply the town.

If you get lost leaving Pamplona head for the Ciudadela fortress at the corner of Avenida del Ejército and Avenida del Pio XII. The path beside the park, with the fortress to your left, is the Camino. It's clearly marked. Several cafés around here are open early.

SIGHTS The land between Pamplona and Cizur Menor is the site of the mythical battle between Charlemagne and the giant Muslim leader Aigolando said to have raged for days ended in victory for Charlemagne.

5km / 1¼ hrs to Cizur Menor

Order of Malta hostel (27, 7€, May to September) Albergue Sanjuanista beside the church on your left as you enter the village. Kitchen. Good reports. Tel 616 651 330 Open 12 noon

Private Hostel (52, 12€, March to October) Albergue Roncal, turn right at the crossroads. Kitchen, vending machines for coffee, drinks and snacks. Nice garden. Website www.elalberguedemaribel.com Tel 670 323 271 Open 12 noon

Café, shop and a pharmacy. The restaurant / café Asador El Tremendo does a Pilgrim Menu. Fiestas Exaltación de la Santa Cruz 14 September, San Andrés Apóstol 30 November. SIGHTS The unassuming, suburban village of Cizur Menor was a base for the Knights Hospitaliers and the Order of Malta since the 12th century and there has been a pilgrim hostel here since the 13th. The recently restored Hospitalier monastery is now a pilgrim hostel run by the Order of Malta. The Romanesque fortress church, Iglesia de San Miguel Arcángelo also dates from the 13th century.

On your way through you'll pass the village frontón, a two-sided concrete enclosure used to play a Basque ball game called pelota which involves hitting a ball against the end wall using a curved, scoop-like stick. It's the fastest (non team sport) ballgame in the world. A type of handball is also played. Placename Smaller Cizur, as opposed to neighbouring Mayor / Greater. Cizur is a hispanisation of the Basque name Zizur, which is related to the word zintzur / narrow gap between mountains.

Ascends 350m and descends 250m over the next 12km.

6km / 1½ hrs to Zariquiegui / Zarikiegi

Private hostel (18, 10€) Albergue San Andrés on the Camino past the church, it's on the right. Café / restaurant. Negative reports all round. Website www.alberguezariquiegui.com Tel 948 353 876

Shop. Café San Andrés opens early. SIGHTS Zariquiegui has some beautiful Basque houses with wide arched doorways. The village church, Iglesia de San Andrés, was
originally 12th century Romanesque, however today only the south entrance is original. If you're staying here the hospitaleros may be able to organise a visit. It contains a Gothic Virgin and Child. Shortly before you reach the peak of the Alto del Perdón, where the windmills tower above you like something from a modern-day Don Quijote, you'll pass a drinking fountain. This is where, according to legend, the devil appeared to a parched pilgrim and offered to buy his soul for a drink of water. The pilgrim, no doubt having weighed up his options, decided in view of the unspeakable (and eternal) horrors that awaited him in hell that he could probably manage another while without a drink and politely declined. Whereupon, in a blinding flash of light, St James himself appeared and striking the ground with his staff brought forth a raging torrent of fresh water. Thus saving the pilgrim from a thirsty walk to the next village. Today, unfortunately, of that raging torrent only a trickle remains. The peak of Alto del Perdón has fantastic views of the route already travelled and the adventures yet to come. At the top is a flat, cut-out sculpture of medieval pilgrims on their way to Santiago. The inscription reads:

*Donde se cruza el camino del viento con el de las estrellas*

*Where the way of the wind meets the way of the stars*

Observe how the fauna changes from northern European to Mediterranean as you pass the Alto del Perdón. Before long you'll begin to see grapevines growing beside the Camino.

Descends 250m, on loose gravel which must be tackled with care, to...

### 6km / 1½ hrs to Uterga

**Private hostel (16, 10€, March to October)** *Camino del Perdón,* on the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant with a good Pilgrim Menu. Friendly hostel run by three generations of women from the same family. Website www.caminodelperdon.es Tel 948 344 598 Open 11AM

**Private hostel (26, 10€, with breakfast)** *Casa Baztán* also on Calle Mayor. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Evening meal. Tel 948 344 528 Open 11AM

The café in *Camino del Perdón* does good food. • Fresh drinking water from the village drinking font with its famous inscription, *De Pamplona a Puente, en Uterga la mejor fuente* / *From Pamplona to Puente (la Reina), in Uterga the best fountain,* (although occasionally dry in summer). Vending machines.

### 3km / ¾ hr to Muruzábal

**Private hostel (10, 14€, April to October)** *El Jardín de Muruzábal,* to the left close to the start of the village. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Garden, swimming pool. Bike hire to visit Eunate. Breakfast. Good reports. Website www.eljardindemuruzabal.com Tel 696 688 399 Open 1PM

**Private hostel (10, 18€ with breakfast)** *Albergue Mendizabal,* on Calle Mayor left of the Camino. Signposted. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Tel 678 010 119 Open 12 noon

Café, pharmacy.

From Muruzábal you can make a short detour to visit the church in Eunate, it's signposted from the Camino. From Eunate you can rejoin the Camino in Obanos, adding approximately 3km / ¾ hr.
The pilgrim hostel in Eunate is closed. In July and August the church is open 10.30AM to 2PM and 4PM to 8PM. At other times opening times are shorter. See santamariadeeunate.es/horarios-de-apertura Entrance is 50 cents for pilgrims.

**SIGHTS** The church of La Ermita Santa Maria de Eunate, to give it its proper name (ermita is Spanish for hermitage), was built in the 12th century. Its location in open country and close to the meeting of two Caminos suggests it was intended primarily as a pilgrim church, however little is known for certain about its history. It is octagonal in shape and surrounded by an external gallery of 33 arches. Its shape, similar to the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, has provoked speculations about a connection with the Knights Templar. The presence of stairs giving access to the roof suggests it may have been a funeral chapel because of the tradition of placing a lantern there during the funeral. However, many features of the architecture and décor of this church, such as its shape, the external arches, some of the carvings, etc., continue to bemuse historians. The stonemasons who worked on the church left carved symbols to identify their handiwork. See if you can spot them. Eunate is the point where the Camino Aragonés an extension of the Chemin d'Arles, which enters Spain over the Col de Somport, joins the Camino Francés. A guide to the Camino Aragonés is available by emailing the author at caminoguidecontact@gmail.com

**2km / ½ hr to Obanos**

**Private hostel (42, 9€, Easter to September)** Albergue Usda, left from the Camino, near the church. Microwaves. A courtyard with a fig tree. Tel 676 560 927 Open 1.30PM

**Private hostel (12, 12€)** Albergue Atseden, on the right of the Camino at the end of the village. Laundry facilities, kitchen. Breakfast. Nice garden. Website www.atsedenhostel.com Tel 646 924 912 Open 1PM

Small shops, bakery and pharmacy on the square in front of the church. Two restaurants with Pilgrim Menus. **SIGHTS** The handsome neo-Gothic church which overlooks the village square was completed in 1912. The Mystery of Obanos (see below) is re-enacted by local people in full costume in July of even years (ie. 2020, 20, etc.) for eight days from the Saturday before St James' Day (25 July).

**HISTORY**

Obanos is the setting of a Camino legend dating from the 14th century. At that time the daughter of the king and queen of Aquitaine, Felica, decided to follow the family tradition of going on pilgrimage to Santiago. She returned some time later so filled with piousness and religious fervour that she was unable to settle back into the life of idleness and privilege that befitted one of her station, and instead, leaving it all behind, set off to live an anonymous life of service to others. • Needless to say her family were outraged and sent her brother Guillén to track her down. He found her after much searching in Obanos and when his efforts to persuade her to return to their family home proved to be for nought, flew into a rage and killed her with his dagger.

• Having killed his sister Guillén was racked with guilt and as a penance decided to follow in her footsteps to Santiago. While there he in his turn saw the light and decided to dedicate the remainder of his life to poverty and charity. On his return to Obanos he built a hermitage on a nearby peak called Arnotegui, where he lived out his days as a hermit dedicated to prayer and helping passing pilgrims. The hermitage at Arnotegui is still there on a hilltop about 3km south-west of the village, the road up is signposted from the main road.

There are two routes to get to Puente la Reina. Leaving Obanos you'll come to steps leading down left on to a slightly meandering (ie. longer) path away from the road.
Alternatively, if you choose to continue straight ahead you can follow a path parallel to the road passing Albergue Jakue.

### 3km / ¾ hr to Puente la Reina / Gares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private hostel (40, 12€, Easter to September)</strong></td>
<td>Albergue / Hotel Jakue</td>
<td>On the side of the main road before the town. In the basement of a hotel. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Evening meal. Breakfast. Their restaurant is popular with locals and their buffet-style evening meal is reported excellent. Website <a href="http://www.jakue.com/el-albergue">www.jakue.com/el-albergue</a> Tel 948 341 017 Open 12 noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious Hostel (100, 5€)</strong></td>
<td>Padres Reparadores</td>
<td>Near the church as you enter the town. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Big garden with lots of clothes lines. Popular. Tel 948 340 050 Open 12 noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private hostel (20, 11€, April to October)</strong></td>
<td>Albergue Amalur</td>
<td>Turn right where the Camino crosses the main road and then second left, on Calle Cerco Viejo. Laundry facilities. Evening meal and breakfast. Website <a href="http://www.albergueamalur.com">www.albergueamalur.com</a> Tel 696 241 175 Open 12 noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private hostel (30, 13€ with breakfast, April to October)</strong></td>
<td>Albergue Puente</td>
<td>Turn left where the Camino crosses the main road and then right on to Paseo de los Fueros. Kitchen. Roof terrace. Evening meal. Breakfast. Website alberguepuente.com Tel 661 705 642 Open 12 noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private hostel (8, 15€ including breakfast, Easter to October)</strong></td>
<td>Albergue Estrella Guía</td>
<td>Also on Paseo de Los Fueros. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 622 262 431 Open 1PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private hostel (100, 14€, Easter to September)</strong></td>
<td>Santiago Apóstol</td>
<td>Straight up the steep hill after you cross the bridge leaving town. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Swimming pool in summer. Spacious dorms. Tel 948 340 220 Open 11AM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Camino passes along Calle Mayor where you will find shops, a bank, pharmacy (on the left at the square) and a café / bakery on your left near the main road opens from 6AM. There are banks and more cafés on Paseo de los Fueros, left at the main road. **Restaurante La Coronada**, near Albergue Puente, is good. Festival: last weekend in September and involves a certain amount of livestock-related mayhem.

**SIGHTS** Puente's beautiful **Romanesque bridge** was built in the 11th century to provide a way for pilgrims to cross the River Arga safely. Subsequently the town was built on the floodplain to its east. Like Larrasoaña, Puente is a **pueblo calle**, with a regular street plan and a densely populated core. Puente owes its prosperity, and probably its very existence, to its location on the Camino. During the Reconquista many Franks settled here and for a time its Jewish quarter was big enough to support a synagogue. Of the original town walls sadly no trace remains. At the beginning of the town is the **Iglesia del Crucifijo / Church of the Crucifix**, previously known as Santa María de las Huertas, it was built by the Knights Templars in the 12th century. Its current name comes from a Y-shaped crucifix which was carried here by German pilgrims in the 14th century. The church, **Parroquia de Santiago**, on Calle Mayor has a magnificent 12th century Romanesque entrance with five archivolts which are believed, because of their similarity, to have been constructed by the same craftsmen who built the church of San Roman in Cirauqui and San Pedro de la Rúa in Estella (both of which you'll see soon). Inside the church is a famous Gothic statue of Santiago known as Beltza which means black in Basque. Down a street to the left just before the bridge is the 18th century **Iglesia de San Pedro Apóstol / Church of St
Peter the Apostle which houses a statue of the Virgin of Puy known locally as Txori. The Legend of Txori, which is Basque for bird, dates from the Carlist wars, when a bird was seen cleaning the face of the statue which at that time was in a small chapel on the bridge. This is still culturally a Basque region and although the language had died out entirely by the beginning of the 20th century it is today undergoing something of a revival thanks to local policies designed to promote regional languages.

HISTORY Puente is mentioned in the opening lines of book five of the Codex Calixtinus:

- Quatuor viæ sunt, quæ ad sanctum Jacobum tendentes, in unum, ad Pontem Reginae, in oris Hispaniae, coadunantur.
- There are four ways which lead to Holy St James, and they become one.

near Puente La Reina, in Spain. SIGHTS Leaving the town you will pass the Convento de las Comendadoras del Espíritu Santo, now disused. Placename Bridge of the Queen. The exact identity of the queen in Puente's name is unsure. Gares is believed to be related to the Basque word for grain.

Steep 100m climb before arriving in...

5km / 1¼ hrs to Mañeru

Private Hostel (26, 11€, Easter to October) Albergue El Cantero, on the Camino on the left. Kitchen. Evening meal - reported good. Website www.albergueelcantero.com
SIGHTS Mañeru has a well-preserved medieval street-scape, an irregular contrast to Puente’s symmetry. Watch out for coats of arms of prominent families on many of the grander houses.

3km / ¾ hr to Círauqui / Zirauki

Private hostel (28, 12€, Easter to October) Maralotx, to the right of the Camino behind the church. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Excellent reports. Tel 678 635 208 Open 1PM

Shops, bakery, café, bank and pharmacy all on or near the Camino. SIGHTS Beautiful Círauqui perches on a hill with the oldest buildings nearest the top. There are some fine examples of Gothic arches. The church of San Roman is medieval, although it has undergone substantial modification which can be clearly seen from the exterior. Its entrance is an example of the fusion of Muslim, Romanesque and Cistercian influences. The church of Santa Catalina has a beautiful Gothic entrance dating from the 13th century with a pointed arch and eight archivolts on pedestals. The door itself is arched with carvings of monstrous figures. Leaving Círauqui, the Camino passes over a bridge dating from the Roman era. This part of the Camino mostly follows a Roman road the remains of which at times are visible. This was a secondary road, the main Bordeaux to Astorga road ran to the north of here. This region has several despoblados or abandoned villages. Between Círauqui and Lorca you will pass through one which once covered 20km² on both sides of the Roman road. Today only the ruins of the church remain. It’s around here that vines and olive trees begin to appear, marking the transition from the more humid and cold northern climate to the warmer and dryer Mediterranean.

6 km / 1½ hrs to Lorca / Lorka

Private hostel (12, 7€, April to October) Albergue de Lorca on the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 948 541 190 Open early

Private Hostel (30, 10€, Easter to October) La Bodega del Camino on the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Website www.labodegadelcamino.com Tel 948 541 327 Open 11AM

Cafés, Albergue de Lorca’s café does nice tortillas. Drinking fountain beside the playground on the left. Leaving the village on the left there’s a shop with vending machines selling cold drinks and snacks. Placename From the Arabic for Battle.

5km / 1¼ hrs to Villatuerta / Bilatorta

Private hostel (40, 14€, May to October) La Casa Mágica, to the right of the Camino, on Calle Rebote. Laundry facilities. Evening meal (vegetarian). Breakfast. In a beautiful, renovated building. Welcoming, laid-back, make-yourself-at-home atmosphere. Website alberguelacasamagica.com Tel 948 732 313 Open 12 noon

Small supermarket near the church. Bakery, a bank and pharmacy on the Camino. The sports centre café and Bar Rebote do food. The town festival is the Fiesta a la Virgen on 15 August. SIGHTS The 14th century Iglesia de la Asunción is Gothic with a Romanesque tower and a 15th century altar. Shortly after Villatuerta you will pass the ruins of the Ermita de San Miguel dating from the 10th or 11th century. Today only part of the nave of the church remains. Shortly after that there is a new underpass under the main road which means that you could miss the monument to the Canadian pilgrim who was run over and killed here (look to your left).
4km / 1 hr to Estella / Lizarra

Private hostel (30, 15€) La Hosteria de Curtidores, on the Camino on the right before the town. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Buffet breakfast. Website www.lahosteriadelcamino.com Tel 948 550 070 Open 11.30AM

Private Hostel (34, 8€, May to September) ANFAS, turn right over a footbridge before the town, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities, pleasant communal area. Run by a local association for people with special needs. Website www.albergueanfas.org Tel 948 554 551 Open 12 noon

Parish hostel (32, donativo, Easter to October) Albergue Parroquial San Miguel, turn right over a footbridge before the town, signposted. Kitchen. Breakfast from 6AM. Mass with pilgrim blessing. Good reports. Tel 635 866 009 Open 12 noon

Private hostel (20, 20€, March to November) Albergue Agora, turn right over the hump-backed bridge then left then right, on Calle Callizo Pelaires. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Website www.dormirenestella.com Tel 948 546 574 Open 1PM

Municipal hostel (96, 6€, February to November) Albergue de Peregrinos de Estella, on the left after you pass the hump-backed bridge. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 948 550 200 Open 11.30AM


Youth hostel (80, 10€, April to October) Albergue Juvenil Oncineda continue straight from the Municipal until you come to a roundabout, the hostel is at the end of Calle del Monasterio de Irache, to your right. Kitchen and laundry facilities. Evening meals and breakfast. Website www.albergueestella.com Tel 948 555 022

Estella is a big town with all services. Paseo la Inmaculada has most things you'll need including shops and a Carrefour supermarket. Café / bakery Lopez, on the same street opens at 7AM. Taller Gastronómico Casanella, on Calle Espoz y Mina, gives cooking classes as well as serving food, recommended. Café La Rua, opposite the municipal hostel also does good food and opens early with fresh pastries. Restaurante Casanova on Calle de Fray Wenceslao de Oñate has also been recommended. There's a Tourist Information in the Palacio de los Reyes de Navarra, straight on from the municipal hostel. The library on Calle Julio Ruiz de Alda has Internet access and a big collection of books about the Camino. Open Monday to Friday 9AM to 9PM. Leaving town several cafés open early. Fiestas Patronales 2 August, San Andrés 30 November. FOOD Estella is a major wine producing centre in the wine region of southern Navarra known as Tierra Estella. Although this region may suffer from its proximity to its better-known neighbour La Rioja, Navarran wines shouldn't be discounted. Until recently Estella was known almost exclusively for its rosés but now its whites and reds are equally prized. SIGHTS On your left just before entering the town is the magnificent Iglesia Parroquial del Santo Sepulcro, which was originally built in the 12th century, although its Gothic façade is 16th century. Above the main door are sculptures representing: on the top row, the crucifixion; on the middle row, the three Marys at the sepulchre, the rescue of the innocents, and the moment when Mary Magdalene recognised Jesus after his resurrection; and on the bottom row the last supper. Above the door on either side are the twelve apostles, with St James and St Martin of Tour closest to the door. The Church of San Pedro de la Rúa, at the top of a formidable flight of steps to the left of the Camino past the municipal hostel, has a main entrance very similar to the churches we've already seen in Cirauqui and Puente
la Reina. It's built on the site of an earlier fortress. Part of its original cloister has survived affording us a rich glimpse of Romanesque symbolism, complete with flora and fauna. It is traditionally believed to be the tomb of a Greek bishop who died on his way to Santiago carrying sacred relics. It opens for visitors half an hour before mass times. The Palacio de los Reyes de Navarra, on Plaza San Martin (which was the centre of the Frankish quarter), just off Calle San Nicolas, is a Romanesque building dating from the 12th century. It is the only example of civil Romanesque architecture.
in Navarra. To the left of the gallery of four arches at the top of a pillar, are carving depicting Roland’s battle with the giant Ferragut. Also to be seen are animals playing musical instruments - meant to symbolise the unholy distractions of secular culture. The building now houses an art gallery and Tourist Information. On Plaza de los Fueros, is the Church of St John the Baptist / Iglesia de San Juan Bautista, which, despite being of recent construction, has a Renaissance Altarpiece. Estella is another town which owes much of its development to the Camino. In fact, before it was founded around 1090 by Sancho Ramírez, then king of Aragon, the Camino used to go from Villatuerta to Irache more-or-less in a straight line. To attract Frankish settlers Sancho Ramírez granted them the right to sell to passing pilgrims. Soon the town was thriving with Camino-related commerce and attracting many more settlers from among those who passed through. Like in Pamplona it developed distinct, walled ethnic neighbourhoods for its Navarran, Jewish and Frankish populations. Occitan was still spoken here until the 14th century. Estella receives a gushing review in the Codex Calixtinus, where bread is good, wine excellent, meat and fish abundant, and which overflows with all delights. • After Pamplona Estella had the second largest Jewish population in Navarra. Jews were permitted to practise the trades of dyer, baker, butcher, silversmith and painter, although they were also present in shopkeeping and trading. Along with Jews all over Spain they were expelled in the 1490s. • A star figures prominently in Estella’s coat of arms. Presumably because of its name. The town is sometimes referred to as Estella la Bella. Placename - From stella / star in Latin. Its Basque name, Lizarra, means place of ash trees.

To leave Estella continue past the Municipal Hostel on Calle la Rua, straight until you come to a roundabout where you continue straight to another roundabout where there is an Avia petrol station. Here the Camino continues uphill on a footpath. You can also continue walking along the road, Calle de Carlos VII, which rejoins the Camino after 500m, on this road is a small Decathlon (outdoor shop) and several large supermarkets.

2km / ½ hr to Ayegui / Aiegi

Municipal hostel (42, 10€) Alberque San Cipriano, left of the Camino in a sports centre. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 948 554 311 Open 11AM

Shops, bakery, cafés. Fiestas San Cipriano 10 September. SIGHTS Bodegas Irache and their famous wind tap is about 1km / ½ hr after Ayegui. The magical tap is on your right as you walk up the hill past the bodega. The magical tap has been known to run dry, especially at busy times, so the earlier you make it there the better chance you have of being able to quench that raging thirst. As an additional treat the whole scene is broadcast live on the internet www.irache.com The vineyard at Irache has existed at least since the 12th century and its history has always been closely linked to the nearby Monastery. It has existed in its modern form as Bodegas Irache since 1891. The inscription on the wine fountain reads: Peregrino si quieres llegar a Santiago con fuerza y vitalidad de este gran vino echa un trago y brinda por la felicidad! Pilgrim, if you want to arrive in Santiago with strength and vitality drink a mouthful of this great wine and overflow with happiness! The 12th century Monastery of Irache (on the left up the hill from Bodegas Irache) is now a museum and a pilgrim hostel. Its Renaissance / Plateresque cloister is unusual in having being partially constructed before the Council of Trent (which marked the beginning of the Counter Reformation) and completed afterwards. As a result it is a mixture of classical themes (ie. nudity) and more modest post reformation themes. As with Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel in
Rome where the naked figures were subsequently given clothes. 

**HISTORY**

There has been a monastery in Ayegüi since 958 and the first pilgrim hospital opened in 1050. According to a local legend, *San Veremundo*, when still a young boy and in the employ of the monastery, used to sneak food hidden under his robes to pilgrims who were staying there in order to supplement the meagre offerings given to them by the monks. Once, when he was challenged by the abbot about what he was hiding under his robes, he replied firewood, and when made to reveal what it was the food miraculously turned into firewood! • In the lead-up to the civil war the monks allowed the monastery to be used for meetings of conspirators plotting the overthrow of the democratically elected government.

The Camino splits shortly after Bodegas Irache. Distances are from Ayegüi.

**Right route 19km / 4¾ hrs**

From Irache 4km / 1hr to Azqueta, nice café, open from 7AM. Vending machines.

**7km / 1¾ hrs to Villamayor de Monjardín**

**Private hostel (28, 15€ with breakfast, March to October)** *Albergue Villamayor de Monjardín*, on the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.alberguevillamayorodemonjardin.com Tel 677 660 586 Open 2PM

**Religious Hostel (25, 11€, April to October)** *Hogar de Monjardín*, turn right at the private hostel and climb the steps. Run by volunteers from a Dutch evangelical Protestant group. Evening meal. Breakfast. Tel 948 537 136 Open 12 noon

Shop, café. **SIGHTS** On the steep hill before Villamayor you'll pass the *Fuente de Moros / Moors' Spring*, a restored Gothic cistern whose cool waters are inviting on hot days. The village church, *Iglesia de San Andrés*, is 13th century Romanesque. On top of the hill of Monjardín is the castle of San Esteban de Deyo. Originally a Muslim fortress it was captured by *King Sancho Garcés III* who is buried there. There are fantastic views from the peak which is about an hour's walk from the town.

**Placename** Villamayor / Major town. Monjardín from Mons / Mount Grasini, believed to be related to King Garcés, first king of Pamplona.

12km / 3 hrs through open country with very little shade to Los Arcos

**Left Route 19km / 4¾ hrs**

The left route passes through beautiful forested countryside and the village of Luquín.

**8km / 2 hrs to Luquín**

**Private hostel (15, 12€, March to November)** *Casa Tiago*, on Calle San Martín near the church. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 626 240 862 Open 11AM

Café by the swimming pool, only open in summer.

11km / 2¾ hrs to Los Arcos, very little shade.

**Right and left routes rejoin in open countryside**

**SIGHTS** You will pass the site of the *Hospital de Cugullo* of which today nothing remains. It was founded in 1099 by the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

**Los Arcos**

**Private hostel (42, 11€, February to November)** *Casa de Austria or La Fuente*, on a street to the right of the Camino. Kitchen. Breakfast (with black bread!). Website www.lafuentecasadeaustria.com Tel 948 640 797 Open 12 noon

**Private Hostel (24, 12€)** *Casa de la Abuela*, on the corner where the Camino turns right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast with home-made cake. Friendly. Website
Municipal Hostel (70, 6€, Easter to October) Isaac Santiago, past the church and across the bridge and it's on the right. Run by Flemish volunteers. Garden, kitchen, good showers, pet ducks and massages. Tel 948 441 091 Open 12 noon

Private Hostel (30, 10€) Casa Alberdi, on the Camino past the Municipal hostel on the right. Laundry facilities, basic cooking facilities. A last resort! Website www.alberguecasaalberdi.com Tel 650 965 250 Open 12.30PM

The Camino arrives directly on to Calle Mayor where there's Tourist Information on the right near the Ayuntamiento and a Pharmacy. Opposite the main entrance to the church on Plaza Santa María are Mesón de Gargantúa which does a good Pilgrim Menu, and a small shop which opens in the evening. On the main road around Plaza del Coso there are several restaurants and banks, Café Abascal underneath Hotel Monaco does decent food and is open for breakfast. The restaurant of Pensión Mavi has been recommended for lunch. Fiestas, Los Arcos 16 May, Nuestra Señora de la Asunción y San Roque 16 August.

SIGHTS

A prosperous frontier town in medieval times Los Arcos today retains some of the splendour of its heyday in its narrow streets and squares surrounded by arched arcades. Of its defensive wall only the Arco de Filipe / Philip’s Arch, facing on to the bridge, remains. The Iglesia de Santa María / Church of the Virgin Mary was built in various stages between the 12th and the 18th centuries. Its exterior features a plethora of different architectural styles from late Romanesque to Gothic to Renaissance to Baroque, with a bit of Plateresque and Rococo thrown in for good measure. The interior is also a mix of styles with Rococo and Baroque altars and a Gothic statue of the virgin. At the peak of the Plateresque entrance there is a statue of the Virgin Mary which is in shadow all year except the late evenings of 23 April and 16 August when its face is illuminated by the sun.
Walking notes

Map 5
Mostly fairly flat apart from a few ups and downs between Torres del Río and Viana.

Map 6
Quite a lot of concrete before and after Logroño. Besides that, fairly uneventful.

The church has an adjoining late-Gothic cloister. Leaving Los Arcos you will pass the cemetery with an inscription above the entrance which reads: Yo que fui lo que tu eres, tu seras lo que yo soi / I once was what you are, you will be what I am.

**HISTORY** San Gregorio Ostiense was sent by the Pope to help the people of the region rid themselves of plagues of locusts which were devouring their crops. Having arrived from Rome and conducted a preliminary investigation San Gregorio quickly concluded that the plagues were a punishment from God for the poor morals of the local people and their lack of devotion to the Mother Church. A clampdown on deviant behaviour was ordered and in due course the plagues stopped. As an unforeseen consequence San Gregorio was such a hit that the locals wouldn’t hear of him leaving and he was obliged to live out his days in Logroño until his death in 1044. After his death a vicious row erupted between the bishops of Nájera and Pamplona over his earthly remains. The king of Navarra, hearing of this, intervened and decreed that his remains should lie in a purpose-built basilica on neutral territory.

- Another version of this story claims that in order to settle the dispute between the two bishops San Gregorio’s remains were tied to the back of a donkey which was set lose with the intention that where the donkey died should be the place where the holy man should be buried. After much wandering and several false alarms, the unfortunate donkey died at the summit of a hill called Piñalba and San Gregorio was duly buried there. His basilica is visible on a hill to the right of the Camino between Los Arcos and Sansol.

- This legend gave the Spanish language the expression, Andar más que la cabeza de San Gregorio / Wander more than Saint Gregory’s head.

7km / 1¾ hrs to Sansol

**Private hostel (24, 12€, April to October)** Albergue Codés, on the Camino before the village. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Website www.alberguerestaurantecodes.com Tel
### Private hostel (26, 10€, Easter to October) **Albergue Sansol**, just to the left of the Camino on Calle Barrio Nuevo. Laundry facilities. They have a nice café / restaurant which does evening meals and breakfast, and a garden with a paddling pool to keep cool. In a renovated village house. Website deshojandoelcamino.com Tel 948 648 473 Open 11AM

Shop, pharmacy, both on the Camino. The café in Albergue Salsol opens early. **SIGHTS** There's a nice view of Torres del Río from beside the church. **Placename** Sansol is a variant of San Zoilo, a local saint.

### 1km / ¼ hr to Torres del Río

**Private hostel (70, 10€) Casa Mariela**, on the right on the Camino. Laundry facilities. Cafe / restaurant with evening meals and breakfast. Also private rooms. Tel 948 648 251 Open 12 noon

**Private Hostel (32, 10€) La Pata de Oca**, on the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Website alberguepatadeoca.com Tel 948 378 457 Open 11AM

Shop, café on the Camino and another shop further on near the end of the village. **SIGHTS** The church of **Santo Sepulcro** is, like Eunate, octagonal in shape and, also like Eunate, something of a mystery. It is known to date from the 12th century and its architecture is mostly Romanesque, but its domed roof supported by stone beams which intersect to form an eight-pointed star at its highest point betrays some Mozarabic influences. It may also have originally been intended as a funeral chapel as it has a space for a beacon light on its roof. **Placename** Towers of the River. It's also sometimes called Torres de Sansol.

### 11km / 2¾ hrs to Viana

**Private hostel (38, 10€, March to October) Albergue Izar**, on the left as you arrive in town. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Website www.albergueizar.com Tel 660 071 349 Open 12 noon

**Parish hostel (14, donativo, June to September) Albergue Parroquial de Viana**, on the Camino, turn right just after the church. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Prayer service in the church (participation not optional). Open 12 noon

**Municipal Hostel (46, 8€) Alberguería Andrés Muñoz**, to the left of the Camino opposite Hotel Palacio de Pujadas. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Coffee and snacks from machines. In winter call the number on the door. Open 12 noon

Shops, cafés, restaurants, a bakery (open early in the morning), a pharmacy and a bank, all on the Camino near the church. The restaurant of the hotel **Palacio de Pujadas** does an excellent Pilgrim Menu. Restaurant **Casa Armendáriz** has been recommended. Fiestas Santa María Magdalena 22 July with a full week of outdoor festivities. Fiestas de la Virgen de Nieva 8 September. **SIGHTS** The beautiful hilltop fortress town of Viana was founded in the year 1219 by the indomitable King Sancho the Strong / el Fuerte to guard the frontier with the Kingdom of Castile. It has prospered, like other Camino towns in Navarra, thanks to the passing pilgrims and inward migration. The founding of the town is commemorated by the townspeople each year on the 1st of February. **HISTORY** During an outbreak of Plague in 1599 the townspeople beseeched God for mercy and promised that when a whole day passed with no fatalities they would take that day's saint as their patron. That faithful
day came on 22 July so they duly adopted Mary Magdalene as their patroness. There's a beautiful statue of her in the church, Iglesia Santa María, which is usually open in the afternoon. Modest dress only! The church is Gothic and dates from the 11th century although the impressive Plateresque main doorway was added in the 16th century. Opposite it on the Plaza de los Fueros is the 17th century Baroque Ayuntamiento / Town Hall.

The origin of the placename Viana is uncertain but the most probable explanation seems to be that it was named by King Sancho VII, who founded the town in the 11th century, after another pre-existing town such as Vienna in Austria, Vienne in France or Viana do Castelo in Portugal.

Entering La Rioja (although if you stray a little to your right you can pass through a tiny corner of the Basque Country)

The current Autonomous Community of La Rioja has its origins in the foundation of the Province of Logroño in 1833. During the transition to democracy in the 1970s, its borders were preserved due to its geographic and economic distinctness from Castile and Navarra. Its name comes from the Río Oja, a tributary of the Ebro.

When the Romans arrived here in the 2nd century BC La Rioja was inhabited by a number of Iberian tribes, the Berones in the valley of the Ebro, the Pelendones in the mountainous south and the Vascones (ancestors of the Basques) in the north. Roman rule transformed and modernised the lives of these tribal people by creating an urban-based society with written laws and an economy based on money and trade. • With the waning of Roman power in the 5th century the region came under Visigoths rule for several centuries until they were replaced by Muslims from the south. • After the end of Muslims rule, the region was disputed between the kings of Castile and Navarra until a truce was agreed with the help of the English royal family in the 12th century.