### List of places with pilgrim hostels

**Important cities and towns are highlighted like this**

**LEFT / RIGHT means there are two alternatives routes**

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**Right from Valcarlos 12.0km (5h30m)**

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1.6km (0h31m) to Espinosa del Camino
3.5km (1h03m) to Vilafranca Montes de Oca
12.0km (3h38m) to San Juan de Ortega
3.7km (0h59m) to Agés
2.4km (0h37m) to Atapuerca
6.1km (1h50m) to Cardenuela Riopico
2.0km (0h30m) to Orbaneja Riopico
From Orbaneja: RIGHT 11.9km (3h05m)
LEFT 12.2km (3h14m) to Burgos
10.9km (2h49m) to Tardajos
1.8km (0h29m) to Rabé de las Calzadas
7.7km (2h11m) to Hornillos del Camino
5.7km (1h45m) to San Bol
4.7km (1h16m) to Hontanas
5.9km (1h32m) to San Antón
3.3km (0h55m) to Castrojeriz
9.1km (2h40m) to Itero del Castillo
1.9km (0h30m) to Itero de la Vega
8.1km (2h11m) to Boadilla del Camino
5.7km (1h29m) to Frómista
3.4km (0h53m) to Población de Campos
LEFT 5.7km (1h29m) to Villamentero de Campos
RIGHT 10.9km (2h53m) to LEFT 4.0km (1h03m) to
Villalcázar de Sirga
5.5km (1h30m) to Carrión de los Condes
17.2km (4h28m) to Calzadilla de la Cueza
5.9km (1h37m) to Lédisgos
3.0km (0h47m) to Terradillos de Templarios
3.1km (0h50m) to Moratinos
2.6km (0h42m) to San Nicolás del Real Camino
7.1km (1h56m) to Sahagún
RIGHT 5.0km (1h20m) to Calzada del Coto
RIGHT 8.5km (2h19m) to Calzadilla de los Hermanillos
LEFT 10.2km (2h42m) to Bercianos del Real Camino
LEFT 7.2km (1h53m) to El Burgo Ranero
RIGHT 17.4km (4h29m) to LEFT 13.2km (3h23m) to Reliegos
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6.0km (1h32m) to Puente Villarente
4.3km (1h12m) to Arcahueja
8.1km (2h17m) to León
RIGHT 20.2km (5h30m) to Villadangos del Páramo
RIGHT 4.4km (1h07m) to San Martín del Camino
LEFT 11.1km (3h10m) to Oncina de la Valldoncina
LEFT 9.9km (2h36m) to Villar de Mazarife
LEFT 9.4km (2h21m) to Villavante
RIGHT 7.1km (1h47m) / LEFT 4.0km (1h01m) to Hospital de Órgigo
2.8km (0h44m) to Villares de Órgigo
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This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
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 albergues 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. They are listed here starting at the southern end (up near the Pilgrims Office).

**REFUGE MUNICIPAL / ACCUEIL PÈLERIN**
Municipal | 32 beds | 12€ | Up rue de la Citadelle, near the top on the left. The historic starting point of the Camino for generations of pilgrims. Register in the Pilgrims Office a short distance down the street. Microwaves. One private double room. Website www.terresdenavarre.fr Open 14:00

**GÎTE DE LA PORTE SAINT-JACQUES**
Private | 6 beds | 27€ | March to October | At 51 rue de la Citadelle beside the Municipal Albergue. In a nicely renovated village house. Run by an Australian pilgrim. Website www.giteportesaintjacques.com Tel 06 30 99 75 61 Open 14:00

**BEILARI**
Private | 14 beds | 42€ | March to October | (formerly L’Esprit du Chemin) at 40 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 accepted. Website www.beilari.info Tel 06 30 02 86 67 Open 14:00

**GÎTE D’ETAPE MAKILA**
Private | 8 beds | 30€ | March to October | At 35 rue de la Citadelle. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 06 63 10 13 46. Website makila-saintjean.com Open 15:00

**GÎTE LE LIÈVRE ET LA TORTUE**
Private | 13 beds | 20€ | March to October | At 30 rue de la Citadelle. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Tel 06 59 13 52 25 Open 16:00

**GÎTE ESTEBAN ETXEA**
Private | 12 beds | 19€ | February to November | At 29 rue de la Citadelle. Communal evening meal. Private rooms. Tel 06 38 22 80 05 Open 15:00

**GÎTE ULTEIA**
Private | 11 beds | 25€ | March to October | At 8 rue de la Citadelle. Kitchen. Run by two ex-pilgrims. Private rooms. Reservations from their website www.ultreia64.fr Tel 06 80 88 46 22 Open 15:00

These albergues are not on rue de la Citadelle. Following the Camino through the arch and across the bridge and you come to rue d’Espagne.

**GÎTE BIDEAN**
Private | 12 beds | 19€ | At 11 rue d’Espagne. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Tel 06 70 29 66 66 Open 15:00

**GÎTE LE CHEMIN VERS L’ETOILE**
Private | 46 beds | 23€ | January to October | At 21 rue d’Espagne. Laundry facilities. Evening meal, breakfast. Website www.pelerinage-saint-jacques-compostelle.com Tel 06 70 20 82 13 Open 14:00

**REFUGE ACCUEIL PAROISSIAL / MAISON KASERNIA**
Parish | 14 beds | 25€ | April to October | At 43 rue d’Espagne. Reported friendly with good food. Tel 05 59 37 65 17 Open 15:00
GÎTE D’ETAPE ZUHARPETA
Private | 16 beds | 32€ | March to October | From rue de la Citadelle follow the Camino across the bridge then after about 200m turn right into rue Zuharpeta. Café / restaurant. Tel 06 21 30 03 05 Open 15:00

GÎTE IZAXULO
Private | 18 beds | 21€ | April to October | On avenue Renaud, on the way from the railway station, just before Place du Trinket. Laundry facilities. Breakfast. Private rooms. Tel 05 24 34 19 00 Open 15:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
GÎTE LA VITA È BELLA
Private | 10 beds | 19€ | April to October | On Place du Trinket. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Tel 06 38 59 91 83 Open 15:00

GÎTE COMPOSTELLA
Private | 14 beds | 21€ | March to October | On route d’Arnéguy, to the right of the Camino after crossing the river. Kitchen. Breakfast. Private rooms. Tel 05 59 37 02 36 Open 14:00

LA COQUILLE NAPOLEÓN
Private | 10 beds | 18€ | On the LEFT route of the Camino 800m after Saint-Jean. Evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. In a traditional Basque farm house. Tel 06 62 25 99 40 Open 16:00

INFORMATION
Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port has all the facilities you’re likely to need. There is a wide variety of accommodation ranging from pilgrim albergues 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 22:00 in summer. There’s a Carrefour supermarket on Avenue du Jaï Alaï and a bank on rue d’Uhart. On Place du Général de Gaulle there’s a Tourist Office and a pharmacy. There are 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 been recommended, it’s 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 points north enter the town. At its south end is Porte d’Espagne / Spanish Gate, where pilgrims heading for 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 serving the pilgrims who pass as 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 in 14th century Gothic style and was built by King Sancho VII el Fuerte (the strong) of Navarra. Passing through the clock tower arch of Porte d’Espagne brings you to the River Nive (or Errobi in Basque) and a good view of the 17th century town walls. At the top of the rue de la Citadelle the Citadelle itself looks down on the town from above Porte St. Jacques, it too dates from the 17th century.

HISTORY
The town of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port dates from the 12th century when it was founded by Sancho VII in the shadow of the Castle of Mendiguren which stood on the site of the current Citadelle. It was from the first a fortified town, guarding the northern approach to the Kingdom of Navarra and serving 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

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Religion in the 16th century it was the scene of a 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 part of Gascony.

PLACE NAME St John at the Foot of the Pass. Its name in Basque is Donibane-Garazi / St John of the locality Garazi. Its original name in Spanish is slightly different, Santa Maria Cabo el Puente / St Mary at the End of the Pass.

Between here and Roncesvalles there are two routes. The (lower) RIGHT route goes through Valcarlos, and the (higher) LEFT route goes through Orisson. If you’re walking outside the summer months it’s important to ask in the Pilgrims Office about weather conditions. Both routes are difficult in snow or high winds and the LEFT route is OFFICIALLY CLOSED from the beginning of November until the end of March (ignoring this may lead to legal sanctions). Remember that in mountainous areas such as this, 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 VIA VALCARLOS

TOTAL LENGTH 23.5km
TOTAL ASCENT 1,530m, DESCENT -758m

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).

6.8km to the Spanish border, marked by a gaudy shopping centre and petrol station. Walk towards the petrol station and continue straight.
1.6km to Arnéguy, shops, cafés and restaurants. The Camino crosses the river into France again and continues on a minor road through the village of Ondarroa, where it crosses the river again back into Spain.

RIGHT 11.5km (4h12m) to Valcarlos / Luzaide

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL

Municipal | 24 beds | 15€ | 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, laundry. The hospitalero calls in the evening. Nice albergue. Tel 685 510 435

INFORMATION Shops (the one attached to café Ardandegia is the best for groceries), cafés, pharmacy and a bank.

SIGHTS Valcarlos’ village church is dedicated to St James. The presence of the border doesn’t take from the fact that the culture on both sides of the border is Basque. This region has many fine examples of Basque farmhouses. These sturdy, square buildings traditionally had an area for farm animals on the ground floor and accommodation for people above.

HISTORY The history of this 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 camped 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 albergues along its length. Recently the other (more scenic) route has become far more popular.

PLACE NAME Valley of Carlos, a reference to Charlemagne. In Basque its name is Luzaide.

Follow the main road for 2.4km until the Camino veers left on to a minor road and passes through the village of Gañecoleta before rejoining the main road after 1.7km. It then follows the main road for another 2.3km before veering left on to a lane. From there it’s 4.1km of wooded, mountainous terrain to the top at Ibañeta (apart from one place where the Camino 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. From the peak it’s 1.4km down to Roncesvalles.

At the summit of the Puerto de Ibañeta, beside a small modern chapel, is a monument to Roland (Roldán in Spanish) and the Battle of Roncesvalles. Although the current chapel is very recent, there has been a chapel here since the middle ages. When there was fog or snow the chapel bell was rung to guide pilgrims who had gotten lost.

LEFT ROUTE VIA ORISSON
TOTAL LENGTH 24.6km
TOTAL ASCENT 1,465m, DESCENT -694m

This route is sometimes known as le Port de Cize or the Route Napoléon. It follows the route of the Via Traiana, a Roman road linking Bordeaux and Astorga. In the early days of the Camino Francés this was the most popular route. Its popularity declined during the late middle-ages.

2.4km to Honto / Hontto

Ferme Ithurburia, to the left of the Camino. Evening meal. Breakfast. Laundry facilities. Singles/doubles from 70€. Tel 05 59 37 11 17

LEFT 7.5km (3h32m) to Orisson

REFUGE ORISSON
Private | 28 beds | 43€ | April to October | On the Camino on the right in an isolated location. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. During peak times they open another building (Kayola). It’s advisable to reserve well in advance. Website www.refuge-orisson.com Tel 06 38 26 97 38 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Café with sandwiches, Basque cakes, etc.

LEFT 0.6km (0h18m) to Borda

ALBERGUE BORDA
Private | 12 beds | 42€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left. Communal evening meal. Private rooms. Good reports. Reservations from their: Website www.aubergeborda.com Tel 06 61 92 97 43 Open 14:30
3.8km 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. From there it’s another 8.9km to the highest point at altitude 1427m, after which it’s another 4.2km down to Roncesvalles.

**Welcome to Spain and Navarra!**

There are two options when descending into Roncesvalles, the most popular route to the left is quite a steep descent through the forest, while the route 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEFT from Borda / Orrison</th>
<th>16.1km (5h50m) to Roncesvalles / Orreaga</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RIGHT from Valcarlos</td>
<td>12.0km (5h30m)</td>
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**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE RONCESVALLES**

Monastery | 183 beds | 14€ | In a newly renovated part of the old monastery. Microwaves, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Run by volunteers from the Dutch Camino Association. Stupendous, modern facilities. In winter pilgrims are accommodated in the main monastery building. Reservations on [www.alberguederoncesvalles.com](http://www.alberguederoncesvalles.com) During busy periods booking ahead is a good idea. Tel 948 760 000 Open 14:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés, restaurants which do pilgrim menus and several hotels.

**Tourist Office** 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 20:00 Monday to Friday and 18:00 at weekends.

**FOOD** The restaurants in the hotels all do Pilgrim Menus. If you reserve the albergue you can reserve a meal at the same time. The local trout speciality is usually on offer. In the albergue there are vending machines with snacks. The café of Casa Sabina opens at 07:00.

**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), 2.8km 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 (near the summer albergue) which dates from the 13th century, although it was substantially reconstructed in the mid-20th. It was built by the same King Sancho VII who founded Saint-Jean. It is Gothic, 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 leaf. To one side is a statue of Santiago Peregrino. The Capilla de Sancti Spiritus or Silo de Carlomagno, 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

**Updates:** [caminoguide.net/pages/updates](http://caminoguide.net/pages/updates)
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 albergue 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 came 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 which is 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 services such as beard trimming, foot washing and, if they were feeling plush, a bath!

**PLACE NAME** Ronces, prickly shrub common in this area, valle means valley. Its name in French is Roncevaux and in Basque it’s Orreaga.

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**2.8km (0h43m) to Burguete**

**ALBERGUE LORENTX**

Private | 40 beds | 20€ | On the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Tel 623 286 129 Website lorentxaterpea.com Open 14:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés, bank, pharmacy - however, most things will be closed if you’re passing through early in the morning. Several cafés on and near the Camino open for breakfast.

The Camino takes an abrupt right turn at the red Santander sign.

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**3.4km (0h59m) to Espinal / Aurizberri**

**ALBERGUE HAIZEA**


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**ALBERGUE IRUGOIENEA**

Private | 21 beds | 13€ | Easter to October | On Calle Oihanilun in Barrio Santiago which is left at the main road. Laundry facilities. Evening meals (mixed reports). Breakfast. Private rooms. Also pickups from Roncesvalles. Reservations from their website www.irugoienea.com Tel 622 606 196 Open 14:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés (although not particularly welcoming) on a small square to the right, bakery and shop, all on the Camino.

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5.2km to Viskarret, new café Bar Dena Ona before the village and the traditional Bar Juan on main square with its amazing tortillas. Small Covirán supermarket on your left at the end of the village.

1.9km to Linzoain, after that it’s 7.8km to Zubiri with a steep descent into the valley of the river Arre.

The Camino continues straight along the riverbank and doesn’t go through Zubiri which is on the other side of the bridge.

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15.0km (4h32m) to Zubiri

**ALBERGUE RÍO ARGA IBAIA**
Private | 20 beds | 15€ | In the first building on the left after you cross the bridge. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.alberguerioarga.com
Tel 680 104 471 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE ZALDIKO**
Private | 24 beds | 15€ | March to October | On the right after you cross the bridge. Microwaves, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Cramped dorms. Website www.alberguezaldiko.com Tel 609 736 420 Open 12:00

**EL PALO DE AVELLANO**
Private | 57 beds | 20€ | March to October | Turn right at the church on to the main road, Avenida de Roncesvalles, it’s on the right. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.elpalodeavellano.com Tel 666 499 175 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE SEGUNDA ETAPA**
Tel 697 186 560 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE ZUBIRI**
Municipal | 70 beds | 12€ | April to October | Across the road from Albergue Segunda Etapa. Basic kitchen with coffee and snack machines. Renovated in 2019. If locked call 628 324 186 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE SUSEIA**
Private | 8 beds | 16€ | April to October | Continue past the Municipal then past the municipal pool, after about 200m it’s on a street of new houses on the left called Calle Murelu. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.alberguesuseia.com
Tel 679 667 603 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION**
Shops, cafés, pharmacy (past the municipal pool and right) and a bank. On the square in front of the church, Bar Baserri, does a good Pilgrim Menu. Bar Valentín after the bridge turn left, opens at 07:00.

**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.

**PLACE NAME**
Zubia / bridge, herri / village. Basque.

The Camino bypasses Larrasoaña. If you want to visit the village turn right to cross the bridge.

5.3km (1h37m) to Larrasoaña

**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE LARRASOÑA**
Municipal | 52 beds | 10€ | April to December | Turn left at the church and continue to the main square. Kitchen. In two buildings a short distance apart. Run by the local community. Tel 626 718 417 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE SAN NICOLÁS**
Private | 40 beds | 16€ | March to October | Turn right at the church, it’s just past the shop on Calle Sorandi. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Good reports. Website www.alberguesannicolas.com Tel 619 559 225 Open 12:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
INFORMATION Colourful shop with Camino staples, turn right at the church on to Calle San Nicolás, and continue for 200m.

SIGHTS Larrasoaña is a pretty village and worth the short detour. It is considered a good example of a pueblo calle, having a layout 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.

3.7km (1h09m) to Zuriaín

PARADA DE ZURIAÍN
Private | 7 beds | 13€ | March to October | On the left just over a bridge. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. private rooms. Tel 699 556 741

INFORMATION Café.

3.1km (0h54m) to Zabaldika

ALBERGUE PARROQUIAL DE ZABALDIKA
Parish | 18 beds | donativo | April to October | A little off the Camino, watch out for the sign pointing right across the road and up a steep path (easy to miss). It’s beside the church mentioned in the next paragraph. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Positive reports. Website malele11.wixsite.com/zabaldika Tel 619 436 863 Open 13:00

SIGHTS The 13th century Romanesque church of San Esteban / St Stephan in Zabaldika sits at the top of a steep hill with a view over the valley of the Río Arga. The main altar is 17th century with polychrome painting, 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!

3.5km (1h05m) to Villava / Atarrabia

HERMANOS MARISTAS / TRINIDAD DE ARRE
Parish | 34 beds | 10€ | In the building on your right as you cross the bridge over the river Ultzama. Kitchen, laundry facilities. This albergue is in a beautiful old building and has a nice enclosed garden. Mass 20:00 in the albergue’s Romanesque chapel, Santísima Trinidad. Tel 691 619 028 Open 15:00

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL
Municipal | 54 beds | 19€ | After the Parish continue along the Camino and it’s to the left on Calle Atarrabía, signposted. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Evening meal. Breakfast. Website www.alberguedevillava.com Tel 649 713 943 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Shops, cafés, banks and a pharmacy on or near the Camino. Día supermarket, turn right off the Camino on to Calle Padre Murillo and keep walking until you see it to your right. Panadería Taberna, also right on to Calle Padre Murillo, opens early for lovely coffee and pastries.

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 Induráin who in 1995 became the first person to win the Tour de France.

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France five times in a row. Just before crossing the bridge another route to Santiago called the Camino de Baztán joins the Camino Francés. The Camino de Baztán starts at the cathedral in Bayonne and takes about six days to arrive at this point. It is fully waymarked and there is a number of pilgrim albergues and other accommodation available. A free guide to it is available by contacting the author at caminoguide-contact@gmail.com

**PLACE NAME** Villava comes from the Latin, villa nova / 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 again. The ‘zig-zag’ footbridge over the river is the quickest way to Casa Paderborn, otherwise continue straight along the riverbank to Puente de la Magdalena.

### 4.5km (1h15m) to Pamplona / Iruña

PLEASE NOTE: during the Festival of San Fermín (6 - 15 July) most accommodation in Pamplona will be booked out months in advance.

#### CASA PADERBORN
Private | 26 beds | 10€ | March to October | A little off the Camino before the city walls. 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. Website jakobusfreunde-paderborn.com Tel 948 395 423 Open 13:00

#### ALBERGUE CASA IBAROLA
Private | 20 beds | 20€ | 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 692 208 463 Open 12:00

#### ALBERGUE DE PAMPLONA / IRUÑAKO ATERPEA

#### PLAZA CATEDRAL
Private | 35 beds | 18€ | Opposite the cathedral a little to the left of the Camino. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Website www.albergueplazacatedral.com Tel 620 913 968 Open 12:00

#### JESÚS Y MARÍA
Municipal | 112 beds | 11€ | closed Christmas | 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 albergue. Tel 648 008 932 Open 12:00

#### ALBERGUE DIOCESANO
Religious | 14 beds | donativo | May to October | Right of the Camino at the end of Calle Mayor, at Calle Recoletas, 1 (Betania Centro Cultural). Communal evening meal. New in 2023. Open 14:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
ALOHA HOSTEL
Private | 26 beds | 18€ | Leave Plaza del Castillo by its south west corner, walk down Avenida San Ignacio to a roundabout, it’s on Calle Sangüesa opposite and a little left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.alohahostel.es Tel 648 289 403 Open 13:00

Pensión Escaray on Calle Nuevo is a family run guest house in the centre a couple of minutes walk from Plaza del Castillo, it has singles from 20€ and doubles from 45€. Popular with pilgrims. Tel 948 227 825

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Pamplona, with a population of 197,000, is the biggest city on the Camino Francés and has all services you’re likely to need. **Tourist Office** on Plaza Consistorial next to the **Ayuntamiento / Town Hall**. **Supermarket Carrefour** on Calle Mayor which is on the Camino, open all day and Sunday morning. **Pilgrim shop Caminoteca** on Calle Curia, open from 07:00 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 08:30 to 20:30 and Saturday 09:30 to 14:00. 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 to this clientele. 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 **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 try the tapas / pinxos. **Bodegón Sarria** on Calle Estafeta is good for pinxos. Restaurant **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 reminder of Pamplona’s importance in the history of this region. The site of **Pamplona Cathedral** was originally occupied by a temple to the Roman gods. This was replaced by a series of churches until the present cathedral was built in 1501. Originally entirely Gothic in style, both inside and out, an undorned 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 symbolise 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, similar to the carvings on the Portica de la Gloria in Santiago. Cathedral, cloister and museum 3€ with Credencial. It opens at 10:00 and closes at 19:00 in summer and 17:00 in winter. The **Ayuntamiento** is on the Camino. It dates from the mid-18th century and has an ornate Baroque façade. Behind it to the right is the **municipal market**, great for fresh fruit. To visit the elegant centrepiece of Pamplona, the **Plaza del Castillo**, take a left off the Camino.
ino 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 city’s main defence. Further out near the edge of the city you will pass through the campus of the private University of Navarra which was founded by Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, the founder of Opus Dei. For an interesting insight into this strange and secretive organisation make a short detour to visit the statue of La Virgen del Camino. Turn right off the Camino when you see the CIMA building and, crossing the major road junction, pass between CIMA and the building to its right, and continue for 200m until there’s a footpath going down to the left, follow this and you’ll see the grotto on your right. Sit and watch for a while. To rejoin the Camino just continue on this path down the hill. 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. It ended in victory for Charlemagne.

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 the arrival of 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, other areas were 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.

PLACE NAME 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.

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
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.

4.9km (1h25m) to
Cizur Menor / Zizur Txikia

ALBERGUE SANJUANISTA
Religious | 27 beds | 7€ | May to October | Beside the church on your left as you enter the village. Kitchen. Good reports. Tel 616 651 330 Open 12:00

INFORMATION
Cafés and a pharmacy. The restaurant 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 Hospitallers and the Order of Malta from the 12th century, and there has been a pilgrim albergue here since the 13th. 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.

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.

5.9km to Zariquiegui / Zarikiegi. Shop. Café San Andrés opens early. From Cizur Menor it’s a 300m climb to the peak of the Alto del Perdón, after which there is a steep descent on loose gravel which must be tackled with care.

5.9km (1h58m) to Zariquiegui / Zarikiegi

ALBERGUE SAN ANDRÉS

Private | 26 beds | 15€ | May to October | To the left of the Camino at the church. For check-in go to the second shop, La Tienda de Peregrino. Microwaves. Laundry facilities. Website www.alberguezariquiegui.com Tel 626 161 183 Open 11:00

INFORMATION

Sights Zariquiegui has some beautiful Basque houses with wide arched doorways. The village church, Iglesia de San Andrés, was originally 12th century Romanesque, today only the south entrance is original. 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 has begun to change from northern European to Mediterranean. Before long you’ll begin to see grapevines growing beside the Camino.

5.8km (1h49m) to Uterga

CAMINO DEL PERDÓN

Private | 16 beds | 14€ | March to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Expensive café / restaurant with a good Pilgrim Menu. Private rooms. Website www.caminodelperdon.es Tel 690 841 980 Open 11:00

CASA BAZTÁN

Private | 26 beds | 12€ | Also on Calle Mayor. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Evening meal. In a nicely renovated village house. Private rooms. Tel 602 545 791 Open 12:00

INFORMATION

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).

2.7km (0h42m) to Muruzábal

**ALBERGUE MENDIZABAL**

Private | 12 beds | 15€ | On Calle Mayor left of the Camino. Signposted. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Private rooms. Tel 678 010 119 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Café, pharmacy. The pilgrim albergue in Eunate is closed. The church has variable opening times depending on the month. Entrance is 1.50€ for pilgrims. See santamariadeeunate.es/horarios-de-apertura

**SIGHTS** From Muruzábal you can make a short detour to visit the historic church in Eunate, it’s signposted from the Camino. From Eunate you can rejoin the Camino in Obanos, adding approximately 3km to your Camino. The church of La Ermita Santa María de Eunate, to give it its proper name (ermita is Spanish for hermit-age), 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.

1.5km (0h26m) to Obanos

**ALBERGUE ATSEDEN**

Private | 12 beds | 13€ | On the right of the Camino at the end of the village. Laundry facilities, kitchen. Nice garden. Website www.atsedenhostel.com Tel 646 924 912 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés on the Camino. Small shop, 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. 2022, 2024, 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 from her journey so filled with piety 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 he flew into a rage and killed her with his dagger. Having killed his sister Guillén was racked with guilt.

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
and as 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 going down left which lead to a slightly meandering (and slightly longer) path to Puente. Alternatively, if you choose to continue straight ahead you can follow a path parallel to the road passing Albergue Jakue.

2.7km (0h42m) to Puente la Reina / Gares

ALBERGUE / HOTEL JAKUE
Private | 30 beds | 20€ | Easter to October | On the main road before the town on the RIGHT route of the Camino. 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. Private rooms. Website www.jakue.com/el-albergue Tel 638 498 313 Open 12:00

PADRES REPARADORES
Religious | 100 beds | 9€ | On the Camino near the beginning of the town. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Big garden with lots of clothes lines. The original pilgrim albergue in Puente. Tel 663 615 795 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE PUENTE
Private | 30 beds | 16€ | March to October | Turn left where the Camino crosses the main road and
then right on to Paseo de los Fueros. Kitchen. Roof terrace, laundry facilities. Evening meal. Private rooms. Website alberguepuente.com Tel 661 705 642 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE ESTRELLA GUÍA
Private | 14 beds | 18€ | January to November | On Paseo de Los Fueros, turn left where the Camino crosses the main road. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Tel 622 262 431 Open 13:00

SANTIAGO APÓSTOL
Private | 100 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | Straight up the steep (but not very high) hill after you cross the bridge leaving town. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Swimming pool in summer. Spacious dorms. Also camping. Website www.campingereal.com Tel 660 701 246 Open 12:00

INFORMATION The Camino passes along Calle Mayor where you will find shops, a bank, a pharmacy (on the left at the square) and a nice café / bakery on your left near the main road which opens from 06:00. There’s a Día supermarket, banks and more cafés left at the main road, on Paseo de los Fueros. 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 Larrasaoña, 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. No trace remains of the original town walls. 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 of the Camino, 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. Leaving the town you will pass the Convento de las Comendadoras del Espíritu Santo, now disused.

HISTORY Puente is mentioned in the opening lines of book five of the Codex Calixtinus: Quatuor viae sunt, quae 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.

PLACE NAME 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.

There is a surprisingly steep 100m climb before arriving in...
4.9km (1h38m) to Mañeru

**ALBERGUE EL CANTERO**
Tel 948 342 142 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Shop, cafés, pharmacy.

**SIGHTS** Mañeru has a well-preserved medieval street-scape, an irregular contrast to Puente’s symmetry. Watch out for the coats of arms of prominent families on many of the grander houses.

2.7km (0h50m) to Cirauqui / Zirauki

**MARALOTX**
Private | 20 beds | 15€ | April to October | To the right of the Camino behind the church. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Excellent reports. Website [www.albergecirauqui.com](http://www.albergecirauqui.com) Tel 678 635 208 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Shops, bakery, café, bank and pharmacy all on or near the Camino.

**SIGHTS** Beautiful Cirauqui 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, eight archivolts on pedestals and carvings of monstrous figures. Leaving Cirauqui, 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 are at times visible. This was a secondary Roman road, the main Bordeaux to Astorga road ran to the north of here. This region has several despoblados or abandoned villages. Between Cirauqui 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.

5.6km (1h46m) to Lorca / Lorka

**ALBERGUE DE LORCA**
Private | 12 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Some negative reports. Tel 948 541 190 Open 11:00

**LA BODEGA DEL CAMINO**
Private | 30 beds | 15€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Tel 948 541 162 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés. Excellent 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.

**PLACE NAME** From the Arabic for Battle.

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
4.5km (1h14m) to Villatuerta / Bilatorta

**ALBERGUE ETXEURDINA**
Private | 15 beds | 15€ | A little to the right of the Camino at Calle San Salvador. Kitchen. Private rooms. Website www.etxeurdina.com Tel 621 267 282 Open 13:00 (phone if it’s locked)

**LA CASA MÁGICA**
Private | 37 beds | 17€ | May to October | To the right of the Camino, on Calle Rebote. Laundry facilities. Evening meal (vegetarian). Breakfast. In a beautiful, renovated building. Private rooms. Website alberguelacasamagica.com Tel 602 259 283 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** 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, just before it to the left is the monument to the Canadian pilgrim who was run over and killed at this spot.

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4.1km (1h13m) to Estella / Lizarra

**LA HOSTERÍA DE CURTIDORES**
Private | 30 beds | 20€ | On the Camino on the right before the town. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Buffet breakfast. Website www.lahosteriadelcamino.com Tel 663 613 642 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE ANFAS**
Private | 24 beds | 10€ | May to September | 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 639 011 688 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE PARROQUIAL SAN MIGUEL**
Parish | 32 beds | donativo | Easter to October | Turn right over a footbridge before the town, signposted. Kitchen. Breakfast from 06:00. Mass with pilgrim blessing. Good reports. Tel 654 480 239 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE ÁGORA**
Private | 20 beds | 19€ | March to November | Turn right over the hump-backed bridge then left then right, on Calle Callizo Pelaires. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Modern with facilities, bunks with privacy curtains. Private rooms. Website www.dormirenestella.com Tel 681 346 882 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE ESTELLA**
Municipal | 80 beds | 8€ | February to November | Continue straight with the hump-backed bridge to your right and it’s on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 948 550 200 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE ALDA**
Private | 12 beds | 14€ | March to November | On Plaza de Santiago, which is at the end of Calle Mayor. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. New in 2022. Website www.aldahotels.es Tel 948 030 137 Open 14:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
ALBERGUE CAPUCHINOS ROCAMADOR

ALBERGUE JUVENIL ONCINEDA
Youth | 140 beds | 11€ | April to October | Continue along the Camino from the Municipal until you come to a roundabout, the albergue is at the end of Calle del Monasterio de Irache, to your right. Kitchen and laundry facilities. Evening meals

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
and breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.albergueestella.com Tel 666 199 939

**INFORMATION** Estella is a big town with all services. **Paseo la Inmaculada** is the main shopping street and has most things you’ll need, including a **Carrefour supermarket**. **Taller Gastronómico Casanella**, on Calle Espoz y Mina, just over the hump-back bridge and right from the municipal, gives cooking classes as well as serving food, recommended. Just next door **Bar Txiko Malo** is popular with pilgrims. **Restaurante Casanova** on Calle de Fray Wenceslao de Oñate, just off Plaza de Los Fueros, has also been recommended. **Café / bakery Lopez** at 07:00 with freshly baked bread and pastries. There’s a **Tourist Office** in the Palacio de los Reyes de Navarra, continue on the Camino from the municipal albergue, open Monday to Friday 09:00 to 21:00. 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. The bottom row is a representation of 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 albergue, has a main entrance very similar to the churches we’ve already seen in Ciraququi 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, just off Calle San Nicolas (which was the centre of the Frankish quarter), 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 Office**. On Plaza de los Fueros, is the Church of **St John the Baptist / Iglesia de San Juan Bautista** which has a Renaissance Altarpiece, despite being of recent construction.

**HISTORY** 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.

From stella, star in Latin. Its Basque name, Lizarra, means place of ash trees.

To leave Estella continue past the Municipal Albergue on Calle la Rua, then straight until you come to a roundabout where you continue straight towards another roundabout where there is an Avia petrol station. After this 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.

1.5km (0h32m) to Ayegui / Aiegi

ALBERGUE SAN CIPRIANO
Municipal | 42 beds | 15€ | Left of the Camino in a sports centre. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 948 554 311 Open 11:00

INFORMATION Shops, bakery, cafés. Fiestas San Cipriano 10 September.

SIGHTS Bodegas Irache and their famous wine tap is about 1km 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 fancy hotel. 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 Ayegui 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 for left and
The right routes are Ayegui to Los Arcos.

**RIGHT ROUTE 19.4km**

5.7 km to Azqueta. Nice café, open from 07:00. Vending machines.

Friendly guest house La Perla Negra, on the Camino on the left, 45€ person, evening meal and breakfast included. Tel 627 114 797

**RIGHT 7.4km (2h34m) to Villamayor de Monjardín**

**ALBERGUE VILLAMAYOR DE MONJARDÍN**

Private | 20 beds | 17€ | March to October | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 677 660 586 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE OASIS TRAILS**

Religious | 25 beds | 12€ | April to October | Turn right at the private albergue and climb the steps. Run by volunteers from a Dutch evangelical Protestant group. Daily ‘Jesus Meditation’. Evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Used to be called Hogar de Monjardín. Website albergueoasistrails.com Tel 623 428 216 Open 14:00

**INFORMATION**

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.

**PLACE NAME**

Villamayor / Major town. Monjardín from Mons, Mount and Grasini which is believed to be related to King Garcés, first king of Pamplona. 12km through open country with very little shade to Los Arcos.

**LEFT ROUTE 18.8km**

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

**LEFT 8.1km (2h48m) to Luquín**

**CASA TIAGO**

Private | 15 beds | 12€ | March to November | On Calle San Martín, near the church. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Evening meal, breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.alberguecasatiago.com Tel 626 240 862 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION**

Café / restaurant on the Camino by the swimming pool.

10.8km to Los Arcos, very little shade.

**RIGHT AND LEFT ROUTES REJOIN BEFORE LOS ARCOS**

You will pass the site of the Hospital de Cugullo of which today not much remains. It was founded in 1099 by the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

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Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
CASA DE AUSTRIA
Private | 42 beds | 12€ | March to October | (or La Fuente), on a street to the right of the Camino. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast (with black bread!). Website www.lafuentecasadeaustria.com Tel 622 184 325 Open 12:00

CASA DE LA ABUELA
Private | 30 beds | 15€ | March to October | Facing you on the corner where the Camino turns right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Evening meal, breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.casadelaabuela.com Tel 630 610 721 Open 13:00

ISAAC SANTIAGO
Municipal | 70 beds | 8€ | Easter to October | Past the church and across the bridge and it’s on the right. Run by Flemish volunteers. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Garden, good showers, pet ducks and massages. Tel 948 441 091 Open 12:00

CASA ALBERDI
Private | 30 beds | 15€ | On the Camino past the Municipal on the right. Laundry facilities, basic cooking facilities. The last resort! Website www.alberguecasaalberdi.com Tel 650 965 250 Open 12:30

INFORMATION Most of the action is on or around Plaza del Coso which is off the camino adjacent to the main road. Here you’ll find a supermarket, pharmacy, banks, a tourist office, several cafés and a pastelería. To get there continue straight when the Camino turn right at Albergue Casa de la Abuela. Restaurante Mavi across the main road from Plaza del Coso, does a good pilgrim menu from about 18:30. La Panadería de los Arcos on Plaza del Coso, opens at 07:00 with nice pastries and coffee (watch out for racing mechanics). Opposite the main entrance to the church on Plaza Santa María is a small shop which opens in the evening. 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 exter
**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.

**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 (and predictably) concluded that the plagues were a punishment from God for the poor morals of the local people and their lack of devotion (ie. donations) 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 still visible 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

7.0km (1h59m) to Sansol

PALACIO DE SANSOL
Private | 32 beds | 15€ | May to October | To the right of the Camino on Calle Mayor. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. In a renovated historic building. Website www.palaciodesansol.com Tel 617 641 852 Open early

ALBERGUE SANSOL
Private | 26 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | 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. Tel 609 203 206 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE KARMA
Private | 12 beds | 6€ | Near the church. Laundry facilities. Breakfast. Tel 665 170 116 Open 14:00

INFORMATION Shop, cafés, pharmacy, all on or near the Camino.
SIGHTS There’s a nice view of Torres del Río from beside the church.
PLACE NAME Sansol is a variant of San Zoilo, a local saint.

0.7km (0h13m) to Torres del Río

HOSTAL SAN ANDRÉS
Private | 20 beds | 15€ | On the left as you arrive. Mostly a hotel despite some dorm accommodation. Café / restaurant, swimming pool, their restaurant does a good pilgrim menu. Private rooms. Website sanandreshostal.com Tel 692 179 692 Open 12:00

CASA MARIELA
Private | 50 beds | 15€ | On the right on the Camino. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant with evening meals and breakfast. Private rooms. If it’s closed enquire in Hostal San Andrés. Website albergue-casa-mariela.negocio.site Tel 603 359 218 Open 12:00

LA PATA DE OCA
Private | 32 beds | 15€ | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website alberguelapatadeoca.com Tel 948 378 457 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Cafés and a shop in Albergue Casa Mariela. Fiestas in honour of La Vera Cruz / The True Cross, second weekend in September.
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.
PLACE NAME Towers of the River.

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
10.5km (3h20m) to Viana

ALBERGUE IZAR
Private | 38 beds | 15€ | March to October | On the left as you arrive in town. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.albergueizar.com
Tel 660 071 349 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE PARROQUIAL DE VIANA
Parish | 17 beds | donativo | June to September | On the Camino, turn right just after the church. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Prayer service in the church (no getting out of it by all accounts). Tel 649 705 317 Open 12:00

ALBERGUERÍA ANDRÉS MUÑOZ
Municipal | 46 beds | 10€ | 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. Tel 948 645 530 Open 12:00

Alternative accommodation in Pensión San Pedro on Calle Medio de San Pedro 13, doubles from 40€, tel 948 645 927.

INFORMATION
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. Café Bar El Piedra, on Calle La Solana, opens early. 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 frontiers of Navarra with the Kingdom of Castile. It has prospered, like other Camino towns, 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. On the way
into Logroño is a plaque commemorating the assassination in 1937 of 27 persons, victims of fascist repression. The inscription reads: Los pueblos que olvidan su historia están condenados a repetirla A people that forgets its history is condemned to repeat it Before entering Logroño you’ll cross the mighty Ebro River, one of Spain’s longest. It flows from here all the way to the Mediterranean. This is also where the Camino del Ebro, which follows the Ebro from the Mediterranean coast, joins the Camino Francés.

**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 Maria, 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.

**PLACE NAME** 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)

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**9.2km (2h33m) to Logroño**

**SANTIAGO APÓSTOL**
Private | 78 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the Camino just after crossing the bridge. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Can be a bit noisy.
Tel 635 371 036 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE LOGROÑO**
Amigos | 88 beds | 10€ | On the Camino shortly after crossing the bridge. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Nice patio with paddling pool. The original albergue in Logroño.
Website www.asantiago.org Tel 672 247 333 Opens 13:00

**ALBERGUE PARRÓQUIAL DE SANTIAGO**
Parish | 30 beds | donativo | On the Camino on the right near the church of Iglesia de Santiago el Real (watch out for the blood curdling statue of Santiago Matamoros above its entrance). Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Prayers with pilgrim blessing. All pilgrims welcome regardless of beliefs. Tel 941 209 501 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE LOGROÑO CENTRO**
Private | 18 beds | 18€ | On Travesía de Palacio, pass the entrance to the Municipal and continue straight. Kitchen. Private rooms. Website www.apartamentoslogrono-centro.com Tel 678 495 109 Open 14:00

**WINEDERFUL HOSTEL**
Private | 30 beds | 21€ | March to November | On Calle Herrerías, pass the entrance to the Municipal and take the second right. Café / restaurant. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Generic backpacker hostel. Website winederful.es
Tel 600 904 703 Open 15:00

**ALBERGUE ALBAS**
Private | 25 beds | 15€ | March to November | Turn left after crossing the bridge and follow Calle de San Francisco until you turn right on to Calle Senado, then continue straight and it’s on the ground floor of a semi-circular apartment block on your
Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
right, Plaza Martinez Flamarique (the old bullring). Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website albasalbergue.com Tel 688 766 475 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE LOGROÑO - LA BILBAINA**

Private | 30 beds | 15€ | In the city centre on Calle Capitán Gallarza, which intersects with Calle Portales. Kitchen. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 608 234 723 Open 10:00

**INFORMATION** Logroño has a population of 153,000 and is the capital of La Rioja Autonomous Community. All services are available. It is a prosperous and lively university city, relatively untouched by mass tourism, and the third biggest city on the Camino Francés. Shops and cafés on the Camino and around Calle Portales which is the main street. Tourist Office on the Camino just before you cross the Ebro. Supermarkets on Calle de Juan XXIII and Avenida de la Rioja. Several banks on the south side of Paseo del Espolón. Each year on 11 June the city celebrates the festival of San Bernabé when, to commemorate the resistance of the city against an invading French army in 1521, fried fish, wine and bread are distributed by the Cofradía del Pez / Brotherhood of the Fish, symbolising the food that the people ate during the siege. The week before 21 September is the festival of San Mateo or Fiestas de la Vendimia (Harvest Festival) to celebrate the grape harvest. The main events are the crushing of the grapes and the offering of the first must to the Virgin of Valvanera. Followed inevitably by the usual chasing and being chased by livestock. Every year on the last Saturday of April there is a 63km nocturnal walk called La Valvanerada to the Monastery of Valvanera. It has been organised annually since 1976 by the local Blood Donors Association.

**FOOD** As is common in cities Pilgrim Menus are thin on the ground. Fortunately Logroño is famous for its pinchos / tapas bars which are concentrated around Calle del Laurel, and nearby streets. From the cathedral walk along Calle de los Portales about 50m and veer left and then right. Each bar specialises in several different kinds of tapa so shop around until you find something you like. Some regional specialities worth sampling are patatas a la riojana / boiled potatoes with chorizo and chuletillas de cordero al sarmiento / lamb chops grilled on a barbecue fired by vine branches, and let’s not forget, orejas de cordero rebozadas / sheep’s ear in breadcrumbs. Bar Sebas on Calle del Albornoz is a good place to try them. Restaurante Bar Tólmay, near Hotel Entresueños, has been recommended. Logroño is the capital of La Rioja, one of the world’s most famous wine producing regions. It would be a shame to say the least not to take this opportunity to sample some of the local produce, as generations of pilgrims before you have. Riojan wines are aged in oak barrels and are classified according to their age and method of storage. Like in Navarra, bottles have a small colour-coded label on their reverse called the Consejo which gives information about the variety of grape and the ageing process used.

**SIGHTS** Logroño cathedral, Santa María de la Redonda, on Plaza del Mercado, dates from the 15th century, although its Baroque façade is an 18th century addition.

**HISTORY** The valley of the river Ebro was settled in pre-Roman times by the Berones who established a settlement called Vareia near the site of the modern city of Logroño. The Romans founded Logroño in its current location around 50AD. Logroño is at the upper limits of the Ebro’s navigability and under the Romans it became an important port for shipping agricultural produce to the Mediterranean. After the collapse of Rome there were periods of Gothic and Muslim rule until the city and its hinterland came under the control of the Christian kingdoms of Navarra and Castile, with each having the upper hand at different times. In the middle ages
the Camino brought commerce, cultural renewal, religious reform, capital and settlers from north of the Pyrenees, thus sowing the seeds of the modern city. The Battle of Clavijo is reputed to have happened near here around the year 844. This was the event which saw the birth of the legend of Santiago Matamoros / St James the Moor Slayer. The legend goes that the Christians army was greatly outnumbered by the Muslims and about to be defeated when, out of nowhere, there appeared a knight on a white horse with an enormous sword who set about making short shift of the Muslims. The Christians attributed this victory to the intervention of Santiago, and so the powerful image was born of the apostle who returned from the dead to help fight the infidel. Modern historians cast doubt not only on this legend but also on the question of whether the Battle of Clavijo ever happened. 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.

PLACE NAME Gronio / Gronno, ford or pass, believed to be of Celtic origin.

Supermarkets and fruit and veg market on the Camino on the way out of town (not open at the crack of dawn). Mostly concrete walking surfaces to Navarrete!

6.3km café La Parada del Peregrino. Watch out for squirrels begging for (and possibly stealing) food, and rabbits.

12.7km (3h45m) to Navarrete

EL CAMINO DE LAS ESTRELLAS
Private | 40 beds | 15€ | March to October | To the left of the Camino at the start of the village. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 695 998 038
Open 13:00

LA CASA DEL PEREGRINO ÁNGEL
Private | 18 beds | 15€ | April to October | To the right up steps shortly after entering the village, on Calle Las Huertas. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Communal evening meal. Private rooms. Website www.alberguenavarrete.com Tel 630 982 928
Open 12:00

ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE NAVARRETE
Amigos | 40 beds | 10€ | Easter to October | To the left of the Camino, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 672 247 328 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE LA IGLESIA
Private | 15 beds | 15€ | Left of the Camino in a narrow street beside the church. Café / restaurant. New in 2022. Tel 602 265 787 Open 12:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
ALBERGUE BUEN CAMINO
Private | 6 beds | 12€ | March to November | Just past the Riojan Friends albergue on the left, facing the church. Private rooms. Microwaves, laundry facilities. Tel 681 252 222 Open 12:00

EL CÁNTARO
Private | 17 beds | 15€ | March to November | To the left of the Camino, sign-posted. Microwaves, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.almbergueelcantaro.com Tel 629 942 691 Open 11:00
Guest house A la Sombra del Laurel, on the Camino about 400m after the town. Singles 30€, doubles 45€. Laundry facilities. Website www.alasombradellaurel.com Tel 639 861 110 Open 12:00

INFORMATION
Shops, cafés, bakery, banks mostly located in the lower part of town to the left of the Camino. Tourist office beside the church. Pharmacy on Calle Carretera Logroño. Several restaurants do Pilgrim Menus. Bar Deportivo, just down from the church, does good food. Bar Galería, a little further down, opens at 07:00. On the road out of town don’t miss the impressive cemetery gates (information in English).

SIGHTS
Navarrete is a beautiful hill town which has kept its medieval street plan and arched walkways. The town was founded at the behest of King Alfonso VIII of Castile, who wished to establish a fortress here to help defend the frontiers of his kingdom. Today it is a prosperous centre in the wine making industry and one of the few small towns on the Camino Francés which saw an increase in population during the 20th century. In the river valley before the town you will pass the ruins of the Hospital de San Juan de Acre founded in 1185 to provide help and shelter to pilgrims, it continued in use until the 16th century. The parish church of Iglesia Parro-
quial de la Asunción de María (which is usually open) has one of the most blingbling Baroque altars on any Camino anywhere. Massive, imposing and breathtaking, it dates from the 17th century and features imagery from the bible with the Assumption of the Virgin at its top. Well worth a visit. **1€ for illumination.** There’s a guided tour of the church and the museum in the afternoon (in Spanish), details in the church. On the eve of St James’ Day the local community organises entertainment and refreshments for any pilgrims who happen to be in town. Navarrete is renowned for its pottery, which has been made here since Roman times.

**PLACE NAME** Navarrete means something like small Navarra. Thus named because of its location close to the border between the ancient kingdoms of Castile and Navarra.

The Camino follows the road for a while before swinging away to the left shortly after the Ermita de Santa María de Jesús. A sign-posted alternative route allows you to bypass Ventosa and shorten the way by 500m.

6.9km (2h07m) to **Ventosa**

**SAN SATURNINO**
**Private | 42 beds | 14€** | On Calle Mayor, a little to the left of the Camino in the centre of the village. Nicely renovated albergue. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.jacobeos.net Tel 657 823 740 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Café Buen Camino, on the main road, opens at 06:30, it and Bar Virgen Blanca do pilgrim menus. Fiestas Virgen Blanca first weekend in July.

**PLACE NAME** Windy, presumably has something to do with the village’s windy location.

After passing under a main road don’t miss the left turn towards Nájera (unless you actually want to visit Huércanos - not recommended).

8.9km (2h24m) to **Nájera**

**ALBERGUE EL PEREGRINO**
**Private | 25 beds | 15€** | By the roundabout shortly after Bar Caribe. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Under new management from 2022. Tel 643 323 174 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE PUERTA DE NÁJERA**
**Private | 30 beds | 17€ | March to October** | After crossing the river it’s on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Cramped dorms. Website www.alberguedenajera.com Tel 683 616 894 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE NIDO DE CIGÜEÑA**
**Private | 17 beds | 15€ | April to October** | Hidden away in the old part of town, signposted from the Camino, on Calleja Cuarta San Miguel. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Run by Russian pilgrims. Website alberguenajera.es Tel 611 095 191 Open 13:00

**LA JUDERÍA**
**Private | 16 beds | 12€ | March to October** | To the left of the Camino at Plaza de España. Reception in restaurant La Judería. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website www.lajuderiasanchoiii.com Tel 630 864 148 Open 12:30

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**Updates:** caminoguide.net/pages/updates
June, San Juan Mártir y Santa María la Real 16-19 September with bulls and paella competitions.

**SIGHTS** The Monasterio de Santa María la Real is build on the spot where in 1056 King García el de Nájera, while he was out hunting with his falcon, found a cave containing a carving of the Virgin Mary lit by a lantern with a bowl of lilies nearby. He constructed the monastery and its church to house the carving and placed it under the control of Cluny in 1079. The current Gothic church dates from the 15th century and is build over the mouth of the cave, which can also be visited. Underneath the church is the pantheon where local royalty are interred. The monastery’s cloister, Claustro de los Caballeros, is also impressive. The monastery is to the right on the Camino as it crosses Plaza Navarra on the west bank of the river. During the grape harvest (September, October) Nájera is the site of a hiring fair for migrant labour. In the past it would have been men and women from southern Spain and Portugal but today the vast majority are Africans. The twin monasteries of San Millán de la Cogolla are about 20km south west of Nájera. The monasteries date from the 10th century, although there are records of a religious community on the site several centuries earlier. The present buildings are predominantly Mozarabic in character with Visigothic, Baroque and Romanesque influences. Although they have been
Mostly fairly uneventful walking. Two options before Grañón but not an awful lot to choose between them. Be careful crossing busy roads!

A steep 200m climb over 3km just after Villafranca Montes de Oca.

See the notes on San Millán de la Cogolla on page 40.
united under the Benedictine rules since the 12th century they are still known by different names, Monasterio de San Millán de Yuso (Yuso meaning Lower) and Monasterio de San Millán de Suso (Suso meaning Upper). The monasteries have the distinction of being the site of the oldest known written texts in both the Spanish and Basque languages. These are in the form of notes in the margins of a Latin manuscript, and date from the 10th century. This marks the approximate moment of the birth of Spanish (or, more accurately, Castilian) as a language, rather than a spoken dialect of Latin. Although the support given to the written language by Alfonso X el Sabio was also important. The monasteries are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Yuso can be visited without a reservation. For Suso however, you need to reserve in advance. All details on their website: www.fsan-millan.es. If you fancy a walk you can start in Azofra: 2km Alesanco, 4km Cañas, 4km Villar de Torre, then 6km to the monasteries (total 16km). Coming back walk to Villar de Torre and then straight to Cirueña in 6km. Alternatively, a taxi from Nájera will cost about 25€, ask hospitaleros for information.

**HISTORY** There is evidence of human habitation since the Bronze Age in the hills around the town. The nearby Roman town of Tritium was the main pottery producing centre in Roman Hispania. During Muslim rule Nájera was a strategic location for controlling the Lower Rioja and for guarding its frontier against attack from the north. For this purpose a castle was built on the hill overlooking the town. In the late 10th century King García Sánchez transferred his royal seat here from Pamplona when that town was destroyed by Abd al Arman, renaming his kingdom Nájera-Pamplona. Nájera was to remain the royal capital for less than a hundred years. The assassination of King Sancho IV by his brother Ramón led to the division of the kingdom and the ceding of Nájera to Castile. Nájera is the location of the legendary battle between Roland and the giant Ferragut. The legend says that the fight was long and bloody and that both men were so evenly matched that they both eventually collapsed from exhaustion. A truce was agreed and they sat down together to eat and drink. Roland however, had a plan, feigning friendship he plied Ferragut with wine until, in a
drunken state, he got him to confess his one weakness - he could only be hurt through his navel. The next day the battle continued until Roland managed to stab Ferragut in the navel killing him instantly. The place where the fight is said to have taken place is still known as Poyo Roldán / Roland’s Hill.

PLACE NAME: Poyo Roldán / Roland’s Hill.

6.6km (1h58m) to Azofra

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL

Municipal | 60 beds | 12€ | On a street to the right just past the square. Kitchen (they sell the ingredients of a basic meal, an option to consider given that the local bars aren’t getting any Michelin stars any time soon), laundry facilities. Superb, purpose-designed building, two beds per room. From the point-of-view of comfort this is one of the best albergues on the whole Camino. Less salubrious overflow accommodation around the corner, which is used as the main albergue during off-peak times (November to around Easter). Tel 638 261 432 Open 13:00

INFORMATION: Small shop, two cafés (neither recommended for food) and a pharmacy, all on the Camino. Both cafés claim to open at 06:00. Azofra also boasts botanical gardens. Fiestas La Magdalena 22 July, St James 25 July with pilgrimage to Valvanera, The Virgin Mary 15 August, harvest thanksgiving first half of September.

PLACE NAME: Azofra

SIGHTS: Azofra has had a pilgrim albergue since 1168 when one was founded here by Queen Isabel la Católica. Today the town is at the centre of a major wine producing area, as well as potatoes, cabbage and fowl.

9.3km (2h54m) to Cirueña

LA VIRGEN DE GUADALUPE

Private | 10 beds | 15€ | March to October | About 50m to the left of the Camino in a tasteful blue building, signposted. Communal evening meal (lentil soup) and breakfast. All double rooms. Eccentric. Website albergue-virgendeguadalupe.webnode.es Tel 638 924 069 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE VICTORIA

Private | 12 beds | 15€ | March to October | On the left about 300m from the Camino, signposted. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Friendly, family run albergue, traditional home cooking. Private rooms. Tel 628 983 351 Open 13:00

INFORMATION: Cafés, one in the gulf club and another in the old village about 200m off the Camino to the left, signposted. Both do food.

SIGHTS: The new part of Cirueña stands as an eerie monument to Spain’s property bubble.

Extreme care is necessary when crossing the main roads in Santo Domingo!

5.5km (1h28m) to Santo Domingo de la Calzada

CASA DE LA CONFRADÍA DEL SANTO

Religious | 185 beds | 13€ | On the right on the Camino. Microwaves, laundry facilit-
ies. Modern facilities. Vast, impersonal, noisy. If you manage to get to sleep you’ll be woken about 04:00 by the reserve cockerels greeting the dawn (they live in a building behind the albergue). Website www.albergueofradiadelsanto.com
Tel 941 343 390 Open 11:00

INFORMATION Santo Domingo is a big town with all facilities. Día supermarket on the left before the town centre and further along a small supermarket down a street to the right. Banks, pharmacy left of the Camino on Avenida Juan Carlos I. Laundermat on the Camino. Fiestas Patronales 12 May.

FOOD A local speciality is ahorcaditos, sweet almond pastry in the shape of a scallop-shell. These and other delights can be found in (to mention but one) Pastelería Isidro on Calle Pinar which is to the left of the Camino opposite the cathedral. Restaurante Los Caballeros, on the Camino just before the cathedral, has been recommended. Braseria Gran Ferreteria, on Avenida Juan Carlos I, is also good. But be warned, this is not a good town for cheap eats. Bar La Rueda on Plaza de San Jerónimo opens at 06:00 with coffee and fresh croissants.

SIGHTS The Cathedral of Santo Domingo dates from the 12th century and has Romanesque, Plateresque and Gothic influences. It is laid out like a traditional pilgrimage church with room for large numbers of people to circulate. The tomb of Santo Domingo is near the main entrance, with a crypt underneath. A cock and hen are permanently stationed overlooking the saint’s earthly repose. It was a tradition for pilgrims to take a feather from one of them, however this is no longer possible without risking life and limb, because their cage is now located too high up to reach. The birds are replaced every fifteen days. The cloister dates from the 14th century, it has been recently renovated and now houses a permanent exhibition of artefacts associated with the cathedral. It costs 2,50€ for pilgrims to visit the cathedral and cloister. That price includes a comprehensive (poorly translated) leaflet in English. The separate tower was competed in 1765 and is built in Baroque style. At 70m in height it is visible from a great distance. It houses nine bells, all of which are in regular use. The heaviest weighs 1784kg. It can also be visited but, be warned, there’s no lift!

HISTORY Santo Domingo de la Calzada is the patron saint of civil engineers, in recognition of his contribution to the subtle art of road building. He was born not far from here in the village of Viloria. As a young man he tried unsuccessfully to join a monastery but was judged by the abbot to be unsuitable. Determined to lead a religious life he became a hermit. It was a chance encounter with San Gregorio (he of
the locusts - see under Los Arcos) that caused him to be ordained into the priesthood. In collaboration with San Gregorio and with the support of Alfonso VI, who was keen to bring new Christian settlers into this largely Muslim region, he dedicated himself to works for the benefits of pilgrims, building bridges, albergues and clearing a path through the dense forest to create a more direct road from Nájera to Burgos. He died in 1109 but lives on in his many works in favour of pilgrims. The Confraternity he founded is the oldest dedicated to serving pilgrim on the Camino. It still has its headquarters (with its supply of reserve chickens) in the Casa de la Cofradía, and runs the pilgrim albergue Casa del Santo.

The Legend of the Chickens of Santo Domingo: This is also the location of one of the Camino’s best known legends, that of the Chickens of Santo Domingo, a tale of Treachery Most Fowl! A German couple accompanied by their young son were en route to Santiago when they stopped off in Santo Domingo for a couple of days rest. Then as now, dark-eyed southern ladies had a particular partiality to blue-eyed men from the north, and one of the ladies of the town took a particular shine to this couple’s son. Sadly he, out of indifference, or possibly a surplus of piousness, rejected her advances, leaving her in a much agitated state. This scorned woman vowed revenge and slyly slipped an expensive chalice from the church into the boy’s luggage. Just as the family were leaving town she came running after them raising hell and accusing him of theft. His luggage when searched revealed the chalice, and as he was unable to account for its presence there he was quickly subjected to the travesty that passed for justice in those dim and distant times, and hanged in the town square. His grief-stricken parents continued on their way and once in Santiago prayed to St James for the soul of their son. Retracing their footsteps home they arrived once again in Santo Domingo and were surprised to find their son was still strung up in the town square and, upon approaching him, they were even more surprised to find that he was alive. They hurried to see the king’s representative and explained to him what they had seen. He was incredulous and since he was eating his dinner at the time he pointed to the two fowl in the pot on his table and said, ‘Your son is about as alive as this cock and hen that I was about to eat before you interrupted me’. Whereupon the two birds jumped up and bit him on the nose! An identical legend is associated with Toulouse in France.

Saint Dominic of the Road, founder of the town (see note below).

6.8km (1h58m) to Grañón

HOSPITAL DE PEREGRINOS SAN JUAN BAUTISTA
Parish | 40 beds | donativo | Adjoining the church. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Sleeping on exercise mats on the floor. Run by volunteers with help from pilgrims. A unique, historic albergue with a great atmosphere. Tel 633 915 800 Open 13:00

LA CASA DE LAS SONRISAS
Private | 27 beds | donativo | On the Camino, just past the church. Artistic vibe. Communal evening meal. Breakfast, all donativo. Tel 630 823 767 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Shop, café, bakery which opens early, and bank on the Camino near the church. Bar Sindicato, opposite the church, is still a genuine community bar, it has good-value food and is a nice place to while away a hot (or cold) afternoon. Fiestas, this is a village that likes to party! On 1 May there’s a procession of the Virgin of Carrasquedo from her winter to her summer quarters, accompanied by bagpipes and dancing. The following Sunday she gets another outing for the Blessing of the Fields. On 24 and 25 June the feast of San Juan is celebrated with
bonfires and a procession. During August there are various (demure) celebrations of the victory of Martín García against the neighbours (see below). The last week in August, during the Fiesta de Gracias, the Virgin retires to her winter quarters and Patatas a lo Grañón, (a local dish with fried potatoes, vegetables, chilli, chorizo and wine) and Garlic soup, another local speciality, are eaten. There is also a theatrical re-enactment of important scenes from local history.

**SIGHTS** The village church of San Juan Bautista / St John the Baptist dates from the 16th century, although the tower was added later. The altar, completed in 1557, is in ornamental Plateresque style. Grañón used to have a town wall but unfortunately today no trace of it remains.

**HISTORY** Grañón traces its origins to the end of the 9th century when King Alfonso III built a castle at the summit of a nearby hill to defend against Muslim invasion. Although the castle fell into ruins within a few centuries the town prospered thanks to the Camino and at one time supported several monasteries. A survey in the 16th century records it as having 204 inhabited houses - many more than today. A local legend tells of a dispute between Grañón and Santo Domingo over a piece of land which lay between the two towns. Without a solution in sight the situation deteriorated until both sides were preparing for all-out war. Keen to avoid bloodshed, the elders of the two towns met to discuss the problem and decided that it should be resolved by choosing two men, one from each side, to fight bare-handed, and that the winner could claim the land for his town. The man chosen for Grañón was Martín García, an ordinary labourer, while Santo Domingo chose a professional fighter who was immediately put on a ‘power diet’ and training course, and who showed up on the day covered in olive oil to prevent his opponent getting a grip on him. The ensuing struggle was long and bitter but eventually Martin emerged the winner over his slippery opponent (by somewhat unconventional means which are too adult-oriented to go into in details here). This feat of ‘gallantry’ is celebrated in the town to this day and the site of the struggle is marked by a cross, la Cruz de los Valientes, beside the Camino. Castile got its name because of the abundance of castles which were built here by both sides to defend their territory. In the flat Castilian landscape these castles were often visible (like the megalith) from great distances. Entering Castilla y León. The border is marked by a ‘megalith’ which is rumoured to have appeared in the dead of night during a violent thunder storm. Local Albergue owners are rumoured to offer it a blood sacrifice every new year’s day in the hope of plentiful big spending pilgrims and possibly a sequel to The Way.

The main road here can be busy with fast traffic. Construction is underway on the new motorway and is likely to lead to some detours in the coming years.

3.9km (1h10m) to Redecilla del Camino

**ALBERGUE ESSENTIA**

Private | 10 beds | 14€ | March to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Run by an ex-pilgrim. Website turismoburgos.es/essentia Tel 606 046 298 Open 13:00

**SAN LÁZARO**

Municipal | 52 beds | 6€ | Opposite the church. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Tel 947 585 221 Open 11:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés. Tourist Office at the start of the village.

**SIGHTS** The church Virgen de la Calle has a Romanesque baptismal font dating
from the 12th century decorated with carvings of towers and walls, said to represent Jerusalem.

1.6km (0h28m) to Castildelgado

ALBERGUE BIDELUZE


INFORMATION Café on the main road which does ‘artisan’ drinking chocolate.

It is not advisable to walk along the side of the very busy main road.

2.1km (0h38m) to Viloria de la Rioja

ALBERGUE PARADA VILORIA

Private | 16 beds | 8€ | March to October | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Communal evening meal and breakfast, both donativo. In a nicely restored farmhouse. Friendly and welcoming. Tel 610 625 065 Open 11:00

ACACIO & ORIETTA

Private | 10 beds | 15€ | Easter to October | To the left of the Camino, on Calle Nueva, signposted. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Run by a welcoming Brazilian couple. Website acacioyorietta.com Tel 679 941 123 Open 13:30

SIGHTS Viloria is reputed to be the birthplace of Santo Domingo de la Calzada.

3.5km to Villamayor del Río. Cafés, both on the main road, right of the Camino, the first one has a shop.

8.3km (2h17m) to Belorado

A SANTIAGO

Private | 100 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the right of the Camino before entering the town. Laundry facilities, microwaves, swimming pool. Café / restaurant. Cramped dorms. Website www.a-santiago.es Tel 677 811 847 Open 11:00

EL CORRO

Municipal | 43 beds | 10€ | To the left of the Camino, on Calle Mayor. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Evening meal. Private rooms. Tel 636 634 459 Open 12:00

REFUGIO PARROQUIAL DE BELORADO

Parish | 20 beds | donativo | Easter to October | On the Camino beside the church, Iglesia de Santa María. Kitchen. Run by volunteers. In a converted theatre. Basic. Tel 947 580 085 Open 13:00

EL CAMINANTE

Private | 22 beds | 10€ | March to October | Left off the Camino, signposted. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website www.albergue-caminobelorado.es Tel 656 873 927 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE PUNTO B


CUATRO CANTONES

Private | 62 beds | 14€ | March to October | On the Camino on the right in the centre of town. Laundry facilities, microwaves, swimming pool. Café / restaurant.

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
Breakfast. Website www.cuatrocantones.com Tel 686 906 492 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Cafés on the Camino. On Plaza Mayor cafés, banks and tourist information, to get there turn left when you see Albergue Cuatro Cantones ahead of you on the right. Pharmacy on Calle Cercas, left off the Camino. The nearest shops are on the main road, from the Camino leaving town take a left on to Calle Redecillo del Campo then right. Café Bulevar on Plaza Mayor is good for tapas. The food in Albergue Cuatro Cantones has been recommended. Fiestas San Vitores 26 August.

SIGHTS The neighbourhood now called Barrio Nuevo was the old Jewish Ghetto. HISTORY The original settlement here is believed, from archaeological evidence, to have been built by Celtic tribes who settled here before the Romans. In the middle ages the town was important for its location on the frontier between Castile and Navarra. Like other towns in Spain at that time it was divided into several distinct and largely autonomous neighbourhoods for Castilians, Franks, Muslims and Jews. Later the Muslims and Jews were expelled, and the Franks were absorbed into the local population. Until the late 20th century Belorado had a thriving leather tanning industry. Originally the Camino passed to the north of here but in the 11th century Sancho III redirected it south.

4.6km (1h19m) to Tosantos

ALBERGUE DEL CAMINO DE SANTIAGO EN TOSANTOS
Parish | 30 beds | donativo | April to October | To the right of the Camino, sign-posted. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Sleeping mats on the floor. Very welcoming. In the evening in a funny sloping room upstairs they hold a thoughtful ceremony for pilgrims where everybody reads a note left by an earlier pilgrim explaining why they were walking the Camino. Can be a real eye-opener. Tel 947 580 371 Open 12:00

LOS ARANCONES
Private | 16 beds | 15€ | Pass the Parish albergue, cross the main road then to the right of the church. Café / restaurant. Good reports. Tel 693 299 063 Open 11:00

INFORMATION The café in Los Arancones does food.

SIGHTS The Ermita Nuestra Señora de la Peña / Hermitage of our Lady of the Mount is a troglodyte church in the rock-face north of the village. It has a Romanesque statue of the Virgin Mary, La Virgin de la Peña, which is carried in procession down to the village church every May and back up to the mountain in September. The albergue sometimes organises a tour during the afternoon to visit it. At the side of (now closed) café El Castaño is a water fountain which, until recently, had a plaque attributing its presence to the benevolence of General Franco. It was removed due to the government policy of removing symbols of the dictatorship.

PLACE NAME Tosantos is short for todos los santos, all the saints.

2.0km (0h37m) to Villambistia

ALBERGUE SAN ROQUE
Municipal | 12 beds | 12€ | closed Wednesdays | Right of the Camino, sign-posted. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 687 669 734 Open 13:00

INFORMATION Cafés. Fiestas San Roque 14-15 August.

HISTORY A local legend called the Tradición de Villambistia says that if a pilgrim entirely immerses their head in the village water fountain they will be instantly cured of all tiredness.

51 Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
1.6km (0h31m) to Espinosa del Camino

CASA LAS ALMAS
Private | 5 beds | 12€ | On the Camino on the right. Evening meal and breakfast. Laundry facilities. Evening meal, German breakfast. Run by a German couple. Website www.las-almas.es Tel 618 568 845 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE LA TABERNA

LA CAMPANA
Private | 10 beds | 17€ | February to November | On the Camino on the left. Website lacampanadepepe.blogspot.com Tel 678 479 361 Open 13:00

INFORMATION
Café.
PLACE NAME Prickly of the Camino.

3.5km (1h03m) to

Villafranca Montes de Oca

ALBERGUE SAN ANTON ABAD
Private | 49 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the Camino on the way out of the village, part of a fancy hotel. Microwaves. Café / restaurant with a good but expensive pilgrim menu. Website www.hotelsanantonabad.com Tel 947 582 150 Open 10:30

INFORMATION
Café El Pájaro has reopened and is once again serving up coffee and cognac for passing lorry drivers (and pilgrims). Small supermarket. The restaurant of Albergue San Anton Abad has been recommended.

PLACE NAME Villafranca, Free Town or Town of the Franks. Montes de Oca, Mountains of the Goose.
Ascent 214m over 3.1km

At the summit of Montes de Oca (3.6km) is a monument dedicated to the victims of a massacre during the civil war, the inscription reads: 
No fue inútil su muerte, fue inútil su fusilamiento / Their death wasn’t in vain, their execution was

In 2011 a mass grave was uncovered here containing the bodies of 60 people. These hills (mountains is hardly the word) have the reputation in Camino lore for being a den of thieves, conmen and other assorted low-life who, taking advantage of the thick undergrowth, would lie in wait for unsuspecting pilgrims and relieve them of their valuables.
Nowadays, the most dangerous thing in this area is the traffic in Villafranca. The **Montes de Oca** are at the extreme north-western end of the **Sistema Ibérico** mountain range which extends from here south-east through southern Rioja and on into eastern Castile. This mountain range is part of the watershed between the Atlantic and Mediterranean. Heavily wooded with native oak, the Montes de Oca are a paradise for wildlife, with deer and wild boar living here in abundance. You may also see otters, wildcats, foxes, badgers and wolves. Besides oak, juniper and ash are also common.

**12.0km (3h38m) to San Juan de Ortega**

**EL DESCANSO DE SAN JUAN**  
*Private | 7 beds | 15€ | To the left of the Camino, signposted. Café / restaurant. Evening meal. Breakfast. Tel 690 398 024  
Open early*

**ALBERGUE DEL MONASTERIO**  
*Monastery | 60 beds | 15€ | April to October | On your right just after passing the church. Dirty and run-down. Evening meal (inedible). Website www.alberguesanjuandeortega.es Tel 947 569 913 Open 13:00*

**INFORMATION**  
*Cafés of which Taberna Marcela does good food. There’s a blessing for pilgrims in the church in the evenings. Fiesta 2 June, when there are pilgrimages from the surrounding villages to the monastery accompanied by merrymaking.*

**SIGHTS**  
*Construction of the Romanesque monastery church began in the 12th century and continued intermittently into the 15th. San Juan’s body lies within. The artwork depicts scenes from his life as well as from San Jerónimo’s. One of the capitals shows the Archangel Gabriel on his knees before the Virgin Mary telling her that she’s going to be the mother of Jesus (La Anunciación), and a depiction of the battle between Ferragut and Roland. Twice a year on the spring and autumn equinoxes this capital is illuminated by the sun (21 March at 18:00, 22 September at 19:00).*

**HISTORY**  
*San Juan was a disciple of Santo Domingo and fellow civil engineer. He founded this monastery on his return from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, dedicating the church to San Nicolás de Bari, in gratitude for his safe return. In the middle ages San Juan became well-known for his ability to help couples who were having problems conceiving. Even Queen Isabel La Católica came here to pray at his tomb when she was trying to get pregnant. She named two of her five children Juana (La Loca) and*
Lots of concrete on the way into Burgos, for details of the alternative see page 52.

and Juan. Although this might also have been down to the fact that her father was also called Juan (II de Castilla).

**PLACE NAME** St John of Ortega. Ortega is the locality, its name is believed to come from ‘ortiga’ meaning nettle.

There are two routes from here to Burgos. The alternative one is waymarked but little-used and devoid of pilgrim accommodation. It passes through the following villages: Santovenia de Oca, Zalduerdo, Ibeas de Juarros, Castrillo del Val, San Medel, Castañares and then to Burgos. Parts of it are along the side of a main road.

3.7km (0h59m) to Agés

**ALBERGUE FAGUS**
Private | 22 beds | 15€ | March to October | On the left at the beginning of the village. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Website www.alberguefagus.com
Tel 647 312 996 Open 12:00

**EL PAJAR DE AGÉS**
Private | 24 beds | 15€ | April to October | To the left of the Camino where it joins the main road on the same street as El Alquimista.

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website elpajardeages.es Tel 686 273 322 Open 12:00

**LA TABERNA DE AGÉS**
Municipal | 36 beds | 12€ | Further up the street past El Pajar. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 616 131 376 Open 14:00

**INFORMATION** Restaurant El Alquimista has been recommended. The café of Albergue Fagus opens at 06:30. The tour bus to the archaeological digs also picks up in Agés (see under Atapuerca), ask hospitaleros for information.

**SIGHTS** Agés has a beautiful little church at the opposite end of the village to the Camino, Santa Eulalia de Mérida. Near the road to Atapuerca is a standing stone 2m high which marks the spot where the army of King García of Navarra confronted that of his brother King Fernando of Castile. The Castilian forces were victorious and as a result the hegemony of Navarra over Christian Spain was brought to an end. Inscribed on the stone are the words *Fin de Rey. García de Nájera 1054*. According to legend the king’s remains are buried in the entrance of the church in Agés. A local gentleman sometimes gives a guided tour of the village and describes its history, look for posters around the village, *donativo*.

2.4km (0h37m) to **Atapuerca**

**EL PEREGRINO**
Private | 30 beds | 11€ | March to October | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Nice rooms with six beds. Private rooms. Website www.albergueatapuerca.com Tel 661 580 882 Open 13:00

**LA PLAZUELA VERDE**
Private | 15 beds | 14€ | Turn right after the Municipal and then veer left, it’s past the square on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Website laplazuelaverde.es Tel 654 301 152 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Café and shop (which opens early and sells coffee) on the Camino at the end of the village. Restaurante Comosapiens, opposite the municipal albergue, has been recommended.

**SIGHTS** The nearby Sierra de Atapuerca is the location of one of the world’s most important archaeological sites and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It contains a rich fossil record of the earliest human beings in Europe dating back 800,000 years. There are also cave paintings and many other artefacts left behind by the Sierra’s earliest inhabitants. The Tourist Office on the main square in Atapuerca organises a tour (in
Spanish). They also sometimes show a video which gives the background to the site, so you can get the low-down without actually having to go there. Otherwise, the Museum of Human Evolution / Museo de la Evolución Humana in Burgos explains the site in detail with (explanations in English).

6.1km (1h50m) to **Cardeñuela Riópico**

**ALBERGUE VÍA MINERA**
Private | 38 beds | 10€ | March to October | Turn right just before the village, sign-posted. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Communal evening meal. Swimming pool. Private rooms. Tel 652 941 647 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE SANTA FE**
Private | 15 beds | 10€ | Down a street to the left opposite the Ayuntamiento. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant with vegetarian options. Private rooms. Good reports. Website www.baralberguesantafe.com Tel 626 352 269 Open 09:00

**ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL**
Municipal | 12 beds | 8€ | On the Camino on the right above Bar La Parada. Basic albergue. Check in in Bar La Parada. Tel 660 050 594

**INFORMATION** Café. Bocateria San Miguel has good sandwiches and open at 07:00. Bar La Parada also does food.

2.0km (0h30m) to **Orbaneja Riópico**

**EL PEREGRINO**
Municipal | 18 beds | 8€ | On the Camino above the café of the same name. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Tel 677 134 196

**INFORMATION** Café.

There are two routes when entering Burgos. They divide after Orbaneja, after crossing over a motorway where you’ll see houses and recycling containers on the left. The **right route** (10.9km from where they divide) has little shade and passes through Villafría (cafés) and an seemingly endless **industrial zone**. The **left route** (11.1km from where they divide) follows the perimeter fence of the airport to a village called Castañares (cafés) and a major road which you can cross at the pedestrian crossing to your left (out of order in August 2022, care required). Continue straight through a small park with a children’s playground to your left and a basketball court to your right, straight along a small road which crosses a stream and swings right at the entrance to a factory. Continue until you cross a footbridge over a river. Now turn right and follow the path between the river and the road, turning left to pass under the road. Now you can follow the river for a pleasant, shady walk all the way to the city. There’s a beach where you can swim (although the water is freezing). This route passes through a little-frequented nature reserve and some people may feel uncomfortable on their own.

**From Orbaneja:**

**RIGHT** 11.9km (3h05m)

**LEFT** 12.2km (3h14m) to **Burgos**

**CASA DE PEREGRINOS EMAÚS**
Religious | 20 beds | 10€ | April to October | On Calle de San Pedro de Cardeña, which is south from where the left route crosses the river to the north side. Communal evening meal and breakfast, donativo. Plush facilities in a beautifully renovated building. Run by Amigos del Camino. Mass and pilgrim blessing. Tel 947 252 851 Open 13:00

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This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
ALBERGUE DE SANTIAGO Y SANTA CATALINA (DIVINA PASTOR)
Religious | 16 beds | 10€ | April to October | Left from the Camino shortly before the municipal albergue, on a small square on Calle Lain Calvo very near Plaza Mayor. Laundry facilities. Tel 947 207 952 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL DE BURGOS
Municipal | 150 beds | 10€ | On the Camino behind the cathedral, on Calle Fernán González. Microwaves, laundry facilities. Impersonal, modern, mega-albergue. Tel 947 460 922 Open 12:00 (14:00 in winter)

HOSTEL CATEDRAL BURGOS
Private | 136 beds | 22€ | At the square just before the Municipal turn left down the steps for 100m to another long square, it’s facing you a little to the left. In a newly renovated historic building. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website hostecatedralburgos.es Tel 623 115 887 Open 13:00

INFORMATION
Burgos has all services. Supermarket (Día) on Calle Calzadas, on the Camino before the centre, the centre itself has limited grocery shopping. Tourist Office with your back to the cathedral ticket office it’s left of Restaurant Don Nuño. The main Post Office is south of the river across Puente de San Pablo. Library on Plaza San Juan. Fiestas San Lesmes 25 January, Fiesta del Curpillos 10 June, San Pedro y San Pablo 29 June.

FOOD
A local speciality is Morcilla de Burgos, which is similar to black pudding (a sausage made of pigs blood). You can try it in lots of places around the city. There are numerous restaurants on and near the square opposite the cathedral, however for cheaper (less touristy) options try the streets off Plaza Mayor. The restaurant Casa Pancho on Calle San Lorenzo has been recommended, as has Restaurante La Favorita on Calle Avellanos. Both of those streets have a good selection of restaurants and tapas bars. Pizza Station does good pizzas and is open all day, from the cathedral walk under the arch towards the river and turn left. Sidreria el Antoju on Calle Huerto del Rey has been recommended, especially for its amazing Cachopo, the Asturian Schnitzl.

SIGHTS
With a population of 178,000, Burgos is the second largest city on the Camino Francés and the capital of Burgos Province. Burgos is renowned for its Gothic architecture, of which its Catedral de Santa María is the prime example. Construction was started by Ferdinand III in 1221 and it was consecrated in 1260. It is mostly Gothic mixed with Renaissance and Baroque features to form a style said to be uniquely Castilian. The Gothic spires were added during the 15th century. Its architects were mostly French and German and its western façade with its two 13th century towers resembles the great cathedrals of Reims in northern France or Cologne in Germany, with the addition of a sword-wielding Santiago Matamoros at its pinnacle. Its 13th century eastern façade, or Sarmental, is less ornate but is considered one of the finest ensembles of classical Gothic architecture in Spain (and the world). Its northern façade, or Coronería, is also 13th century. Here the Romanesque and Baroque features are most obvious. Above its door a series of sculptures in blind arches depict seraphim, angels and scenes of the resurrection of the dead. Below is a depiction of Jesus sitting in judgement with the Virgin Mary and St John. Below that is a scene from the day of judgement with St Michael flanked by the damned and the saved (clergy, nobles, etc.) On either side of the door are life-size statues of the apostles. Inside the cathedral, besides the main chapel there are numerous smaller chapels dedicated to different saints (and packed with a mind-boggling
quantity of religious art), a **13th century cloister**, the resting place of numerous ecclesiastical notables, and a **museum** containing an interesting set of models showing the different construction stages of the cathedral. This has been the final resting place of **El Cid** and his wife **Doña Jimena** since 1921 when they were moved here from a site a few kilometres south of the city. They lie side-by-side under a simple stone in the centre of the main chapel. Another gruesome statue of **Santiago Matamoros** crowns the main altar. Watch out for the **Papamoscas / Flycatcher**, a colourful carved bearded figure high up at the top of the main nave. Every hour he opens his mouth and moves his arm to ring a bell. The cathedral is considered Spain’s finest Gothic cathedral and is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. It costs 3,50€ to visit (pilgrims with Credencial), including an **excellent audio guide** (available in various languages). Tickets from the office to the left of the Sarmental door on **Plaza del Rey San Fernando**, the square in front of the lower entrance to the cathedral. It’s well worth taking a couple of hours to see the inside of this stunningly beautiful building. Also on **Plaza Rey San Fernando** facing the cathedral is the **Arcos de Santa María** with statues of various local dignitaries. Passing through its arches brings you to the **Puente de Santa María / St Mary’s Bridge** over the Río Arlanzón. Also worth seeing (left, or up stream, just past the theatre) is the **Puente de San Pablo / St Pauls Bridge**, with its statue of **El Cid**. Burgos is also home to the **Museo de la Evolución Humana / Museum of Human Evolution**, which houses exhibits explaining the archaeological finds in Atapuerca and their contribution to the understanding of early human societies. It’s on the south bank of the river across **Puente de San Pablo**. You can get a spectacular view of the city and cathedral from the **Rosa de los Vientos** viewing point. To get the take the lift from the alleyway beside the municipal albergue and follow your nose. The builders of the new road under which we must pass a short distance before Tardajos placed a plaque on a bridge pillar for the benefit of pilgrims. It reads: Pilgrim: forgive us this small diversion. May your desires for infinite wandering come true. The river Arlanzón and we, wish you Ultreia!

**HISTORY** Although a settlement existed here before the Romans, Burgos remained a minor provincial centre until the 9th century when it became strategically important to the Castilian kings in their battles with the Muslim invaders. From 1035 until 1492 it was the capital of Castile. After 1492 that honour passed to Valladolid. Burgos’ growth continued to be driven by pilgrimage and by the end of the 15th century there were at least 32 pilgrim albergues within its walls. **Los Reyes Católicos** received **Christopher Columbus** here when he returned bearing news of the ‘new world’. **Francisco Franco** was proclaimed head of state here in 1936.

**PLACE NAME** Hamlets or villages, probably of Visigoth origin.

Finding your way out of Burgos can be a bit complicated. Exiting the municipal albergue turn right and follow the Camino past the cathedral along Calle Fernán de González for 550m until you come to the city wall. Pass through the arch and turn left down the steps and straight on to Calle Emperador as far as Calle Villalon, where you turn left. This will bring you to the river which you cross on a footbridge (Puente Malotos) straight in front of you. After the footbridge you’ll see a statue of Santo Domingo and the entrance to a park at the corner of Paseo de los Comendadores. You can either walk through the park or veer right on to Avenida de José Maria Vilaclán Rebollo and then straight on to Calle de Villadiego, then veer right on to Calle de Benito Pérez Galdós (sign pointing to Los Guindales). From there follow the yellow arrows.
### **10.9km (2h49m)** to **Tardajos**

**ALBERGUE LA FÁBRICA**  
Private | 14 beds | **13€** | 359m from the Camino on the left before the village. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. In a renovated flour mill. Private rooms. Good reports.  
Website [www.alberguelafabrica.com](http://www.alberguelafabrica.com) Tel 620 111 939 Open 12:30

**ALBERGUE LA CASA DE BELI**  
Private | 34 beds | **12€** | **March to November** | On the Camino where it turns left away from the main road. Café / restaurant with excellent food. Private rooms. Website [lacasadebeli.com](http://lacasadebeli.com) Tel 629 351 675 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE DE TARDAJOS**  
Municipal | 18 beds | **donativo** | **April to October** | On the left after the Camino turns left off the main road. Run by volunteers. Tel 676 141 025 Open 15:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés and pharmacy on the right as you enter the village. Restaurant Pececitos is good, while Bar Ruiz, does good tapas (including the unforgettable ‘Bikini’). Follow the Camino to the main square for a shop and a bakery.

**SIGHTS** Crossing río Urbel, watch out for freshwater crabs.

### **1.8km (0h29m)** to **Rabé de las Calzadas**

**ALBERGUE LIBERANOS DOMINE**  

**INFORMATION** Café La Fuente, on the Camino, is a friendly place with excellent tapas and a collection of memorabilia left by pilgrims down the years. They also rent rooms. After Rabé is the unofficial start of the Meseta, the high altitude plateau which covers much of northern Spain and across which you’ll spend the next two weeks or so walking.

**PLACE NAME** Rabé of the Roads, referring to the Roman road which passed through here. The origin of Rabé is uncertain, it possibly refers to the name of the family who founded the village.

### **7.7km (2h11m)** to **Hornillos del Camino**

**EL ALFAR DE HORNILLOS**  

**MEETING POINT**  

**HOSPITAL DE PEREGRINOS SANTI SPIRITUS**  
Private | 30 beds | **10€** | On the Camino in the right. In a beautifully renovated village house. Laundry facilities. Café, open for breakfast. Private rooms. Tel 600 056 616

**ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL**  
Municipal | 31 beds | **12€** | To the right of the Camino near the church. Kitchen. Cramped dorms. Overflow accommodation in the townhall. Website [hornillosalbergue.es](http://hornillosalbergue.es) Tel 689 784 681 Open 12:00
WALKING NOTES

Map 11
After Rabé de la Calzadas is the unofficial start of the Meseta, the high altitude plateau which covers much of northern Spain and across which you’ll spend the next two weeks or so walking.

On the Meseta here’s not much shelter, either from the sun in summer or from the cold winds in winter, so be prepared.

Map 12
Just to prove that the Meseta isn’t all flat, after Castrojeriz is a steep 150m climb. This will be the last time you’ll need your climbing muscles for a while.

*After Población de Campos there are two routes. These are described in the text and in the notes for map 13.*

Casa Rural De Sol a Sol, on the Camino on the right. Doubles from 44€. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Swimming pool. Jumbo breakfast also available. Tel 649 876 091

**INFORMATION** Shop, cafés. The shop on the left as you enter the village has a good selection of Camino necessities and does good sandwiches. Café Origen, towards the end of the village, has been reported good for food.

**PLACE NAME** Ovens, probably for firing tiles, of the Camino.

5.7km (1h45m) to

San Bol

**ALBERGUE DE SAN BOL**
Municipal | 12 beds | 10€ | April to October | To the left of the Camino in a beautiful and isolated valley in the Meseta. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. In a renovated old farm building and now equipped with electricity. For years this albergue was run by volunteer hippies and was renowned

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for its wild parties and audacious drug consumption. Today things are a lot more sedate. Website www.alberguesanbol.com Tel 606 893 407 Open 14:00

PLACE NAME San Bol is believed to refer to San Baudilio, a local saint.

4.7km (1h16m) to Hontanas

ALBERGUE FUENTE SIDRES
Private | 15 beds | 22€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right 1.5km before the village. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Breakfast from 06:00. In a modern environmentally friendly building. Website www.alberguefuentesidres.es Tel 686 908 486 Open 13:00

JUAN DE YEPES

EL PUNTIDO

ALBERGUE DE HONTANAS
Municipal | 42 beds | 13€ | On the Camino on the right. Microwaves. Breakfast. In a nice, recently renovated building. They have more beds in another building when this one is full. Tel 653 532 647 Open 13:00

INFORMATION Cafés, several of which do pilgrim menus, the one in El Puntido opens at 06:00. Municipal swimming pool at the end of the village on the right, open from 12:00, summer only. Fiestas 6 to 8 December and the night of 15 August for the Hoguera de San Roque / Bonfire of San Roque, when the young people of the village collect firewood and have a procession with songs and wine before having a big bonfire into which they throw sticks to ask the saint to protect their farm animals.

SIGHTS A wander around the back streets and alleys of Hontanas is worth the trouble. There are some interesting corners. You can see where the village gets its name.

PLACE NAME From fontanas, fountains.

For several kilometres after Hontanas the Camino runs parallel to a quite country road. In bad weather walking the road is an easier option.
5.9km (1h32m) to San Antón

**SAN ANTÓN**

Religious | 12 beds | donativo | April to October | In the ruins of an old monastery beside the Camino. Communal evening meal by candlelight and breakfast. This albergue has no mains electricity and the supply of hot water depends on the sun. Run by volunteers. Website fundacionsananton.org

**SIGHTS** The Camino passes under the pointed arches which connected the pilgrim albergue to the 14th century church of the monastery of San Antón / St Anthony. The Monks of this monastery used an unusual cross symbol which is called Tau because of its similarity to the Greek capital letter T. Several examples of it can be seen in the locality. The monastery is said to have housed the relics of saint Anthony brought here from Constantinople (Istanbul) by a knight returning from the Crusades. The ruins of the monastery can be visited.

**HISTORY** The monks of this monastery specialised in the treatment of Ergotism, also known as Saint Anthony’s Fire because it causes a sensation of internal burning in its victims. This disease whose symptoms include gangrene, convulsions, hallucinations, spasms, diarrhoea, paraesthesia, itching, headaches, nausea and vomiting, is caused by eating a fungus which infects rye. In the middle ages rye bread was commonly eaten across Northern Europe but was unknown in Spain. For this reason pilgrims suffering from this disease sometimes found themselves ‘miraculously cured’ during their journey to Santiago. The monks’ treatments included amputations of extremities. Their unfortunate patients sometimes left wood or wax carvings of the amputated body part in churches to encourage heavenly intervention.

**PLACE NAME** Saint Anthony.

3.3km (0h55m) to Castrojeriz

**ALBERGUE LA RINCONADA**

Private | 18 beds | 14€ | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Evening meal, breakfast. Private rooms. Website rinconada.net Tel 698 942 323 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE ORIÓN**

Private | 22 beds | 13€ | April to October | Left off the Camino (or on it, depending which yellow arrows you follow). Kitchen, laundry facilities. Korean-themed evening meal. Private rooms. Tel 649 481 609 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE ULTREIA**


**A CIEN LEGUAS**


**CASA NOSTRA**

Private | 26 beds | 10€ | March to November | On the left on the Camino. Kitchen, laundry facilities. No bunks. Basic. Private rooms. Tel 633 080 623 Open 11:00

**SAN ESTEBAN**

Municipal | 35 beds | 7€ | Follow the Camino to Plaza Mayor, the albergue is up steps to the right. Bright, airy, pleasant atmosphere. Donativo breakfast. Tel 679 147 056 Open 12:00

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
ALBERGUE ROSALÍA
Website www.alberguerosalia.com
Tel 637 765 779 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Cafés, shop, bakery and bank on the Camino around Plaza Mayor. Another shop (better) further along the Camino. Also supermarket, pharmacy and several banks near the Guardia Civil, a few minutes walk south from the Plaza Mayor. Several places on the Camino do Pilgrim Menus. Fiestas, around the feast day of St John the Baptist 24 June with several days and nights of music, dancing, processions, etc. El Ajo during July weekends, festival themed around the garlic harvest. Early September El Sejo with more dancing, music, processions, etc.

SIGHTS Castrojeriz is another pueblo calle with a long history of association with the Camino. In the middle ages its (very long) main street was lined with pilgrim churches, convents and albergues. The Colegiata de Santa María del Manzano at the beginning of the town to the right (only open in summer) is an impressive Gothic building with some Baroque-Rococo features. Its construction was begun in the 10th century and continued through multiple phases until the 13th. It houses a statue of Santiago Peregrino and the 13th century La Virgen del Manzano / Virgin of the Apple Tree, the town’s patron. At the top of the hill which overlooks the town you can see the ruins of a castle which used to dominate the landscape for miles around. It was built by the Visigoth King Sigerici (from whom the town derived its name) in 760, although parts of an earlier Roman building were preserved. It was substantially modified during the middle ages. Café Lagar on Calle Cordón was at one time the town synagogue. Lagar means press because this building also once served as a wine press, parts of the equipment are still there. Watch out for the skull and cross bones carved in the wall of the mostly Gothic with some neo-Classical elements Iglesia de Santo Domingo on the right before Plaza Mayor. Leaving town you’ll pass the Iglesia de San Juan which is in German Gothic (Hallenkirche) style. It was begun in the 13th century, although the main body of the church dates from the 16th century, and was designed by Rodrigo Gil de Hontañón, who was also architect of the cathedrals of Salamanca, Segovia and Plasencia. It contains some good examples of Flemish-influenced art from the 15th and 16th centuries when traders exporting Spanish wool to Flanders returned with Flemish art which in due course influenced the styles of local artists. It can be visited during the summer months. Adobe (mud), the traditional building material of the Meseta, begins to

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
make an appearance in the older buildings here. From here on these mud brick build-
ings will be common until they are replaced with stone buildings as we near the
mountains after León. Don’t miss the Casa del Alma / House of the Soul build by
Mao, a legend of the Camino, to showcase his art. It’s on the Camino on the right
just before Plaza Mayor, easy to miss, just a small sign on the door.

PLACE NAME From Latin Castrum Sigerici. Castrum, castle, defended place.
Sigerici is the Visigoth king who built the castle.

In case you were expecting the Meseta to be flat, there’s a massive
hill starting 2.5km after Castrojeriz.

9.1km (2h40m) to Itero del Castillo

ERMITA DE SAN NICOLÁS
Religious | 12 beds | donativo | June to September | In an isolated spot to the left
of the Camino. Run by volunteers from an Italian organisation who practise a ritual
washing of feet for pilgrims. The building is a very old pilgrim albergue which has
been restored. Evening meal (by candlelight because there’s no electricity). Break-
fast. Welcoming to all pilgrims regardless of background. Tel +39 3664 496 584
Open 14:00

SIGHTS Just after Ermita de San Nicolás you’ll cross a bridge over the Río
Pisuerga which marks the border with the province of Palencia. It also marks the
historic border between the kingdoms of Castile and León. The original bridge was
built by Alfonso VI to unify the two kingdoms after he defeated his brother Sancho
II in the battle of Llantada. It is mentioned in the Codex Calixtinus. Part of the cur-
rent bridge dates from the 16th century however it underwent substantial repairs in
the 18th, with further modifications in the course of the 20th.

PLACE NAME Milestone of the Castle
Entering the Province of Palencia

1.9km (0h30m) to Itero de la Vega

HOGAR DEL PEREGRINO
Private | 8 beds | 17€ | Straight on where the Camino turns left, on Calle Santa
María. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Cafè / restaurant. Private rooms. Enquire in the su-
permarket. Website albergue-hogar-del-peregrino.negocioSITE Tel 616 629 353
Open 12:00

LA MOCHILA
Private | 25 beds | 10€ | On the Camino after it turns left. Laundry facilities. Cafè /
restaurant. Tel 979 151 781 Open 11:00

INFORMATION Cafés and shops and one well Stocked supermarket beside Al-
bergue Hogar del Peregrino. The cafè of Puente Fitero opens at 07:00. During Au-
gust Itero is the unlikely location of a music festival called IteroRock or Tachurock
which brings together long-haired, motorcycle-riding, guitar-smashing degenerates
from all over Spain for a day or two of drug-fuelled chaos. Profits from the festival
go to children’s charities in Angola. More details from iterorock.com

PLACE NAME Milestone of the plain. Previously called Fitero from Latin fictus,
milestone.
EN EL CAMINO

ALBERGUE JUNTOS
Private | 11 beds | 25€ | April to November - closed Mondays and Fridays | On the Camino on the left on Calle Major. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Communal evening meal, vegetarian options, included in the price. No checkout before 07:00. Private rooms. Website www.juntos-albergue.com Tel 682 181 175 Open 13:00

INFORMATION
Cafés.
SIGHTS
The ornate Renaissance stone column Rollo de Justicia beside the church in Boadilla symbolises the independence of the region granted by King Enrique IV. It is Gothic in appearance with various Camino-related symbols. It was the place where criminals were tied to allow them to be subjected to various cruel and unusual forms of public humiliation. The village church Iglesia de Santa Maria is an imposing 16th century construction in a mix of architectural styles. Don’t miss the 8th-century baptismal fount and unusual ‘poll-dancing’ Jesus. It can be visited, ask in your albergue about the key. Many of the older houses in this village have an under floor central heating system called a Gloria based on a system invented by the Romans called hypocaust (in Latin hypocaustum). These houses are built on stilts with an enclosed space underneath them into which burning logs are thrown through a manhole, usually in the entrance hall, thus heating the entire house. Between Boadilla and Frómista the Camino follows the Canal de Castilla, part of a transport system which is one of Spain’s greatest engineering achievements. Work began on the system in the mid-18th century and took about 70 years. Originally it was intended to transport grain but the arrival of the railway in the 2nd half of the 19th century made it obsolete. It’s 207km long and goes from the north of Palencia to near Valladolid. The lock you’ll cross just before Frómista once had four separate gates allowing boats to descend and ascent the 14.2m elevation between the top and the bottom. Watch out for otters.

PLACE NAME
From Latin bovata, ox and agua, water, del Camino, of the Camino (that bit you knew).

5.7km (1h29m) to Frómista

ALBERGUE DE FRÓMISTA
Municipal | 56 beds | 14€ | Near the church of San Martín. Laundry facilities. Breakfast. Tel 686 579 702 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE VICUS
Private | 6 beds | 14€ | Turn right just before the tourist information, on Avenida del Ejército Español on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 617 483 264 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE LUZ DE FRÓMISTA
Private | 26 beds | 13€ | Turn right just before the tourist information, on Avenida del Ejército Español, then continue straight and it’s on the right shortly after a small square. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.albergueluzdefromista.com Tel 635 140 169. Open 13:00
Estrella del Camino
Private | 32 beds | 12€ | March to October | Continue past Albergue Luz de Frómista, it’s beside Hostal Camino de Santiago. Laundry facilities. Evening meals and breakfast. If it’s closed ask in the hostal for the key. Tel 653 751 582
Open 14:00

Albergue Betania
Private | 10 beds | donativo | open in winter only | Opposite Estrella del Camino, on Avenida del Ejército Español. Tel 638 846 043

Information
Supermarket on the Camino entering the town and another small supermarket on a street off the square behind the church of San Martín de Tours. Turn left at the junction where you see the Tourist Office for a pharmacy, and right in the same place for a bakery and banks. Restaurante La Venta del Boffard on Plaza San Martín, has been recommended. Frómista has train connections north to Santander and south to Palencia, from where there are connections to Madrid and León, etc.

Sights
The Church of San Martín de Tours is considered a good example of Spanish Romanesque construction. It was built in the 11th century, originally as part of a monastery which no longer exists. It has more than 300 human and animal faces carved in stone under its eaves. It was close to ruins by 1894 when it was declared a national monument. Its main façade is framed by two round towers. Restoration work which included removing some features (including sexually explicit carvings) began shortly afterwards and were completed in 1904. A model inside the church shows the state of the building before it was restored. The town also has a statue of Erasmus of Formiae or San Telmo in a boat, which may seem out of place in this high plains town. Saint Elmo, to use his name in English, is the patron saint of seafarers (among others), although he is reputed never to have set foot in a boat. He was born here sometime in the 3rd century but spent most of his life in Galicia. He is celebrated eight days after Easter Sunday with a nautical-themed, moon-light procession and the singing of traditional songs. The route of the procession is less than 1km but due to the abundant festivities involved it can take up to five hours! His statue is off the Camino to the right at the Tourist Office. If you like cheese there is a Cheese Museum / Museo del Queso on the square by the Church of San Martín de Tours.
Frómista is believed to have been the name of a Mozarabic family which settled in this area. Just before Población on the left is the Romanesque Ermita de San Miguel with a nice shady wooded area.

3.4km (0h53m) to Población de Campos

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL
Municipal | 18 beds | 5€ | On your left as you enter the village. Kitchen. To check in go to Hotel Amanecer de Campos which is next door. Tel 979 811 099 Open 12:00 (has been closed, see updates)

INFORMATION Población has two cafés, both of which have small shops. Hotel Amanecer De Campos has a restaurant which has been recommended.

SIGHTS Población is a good place to see some of the mud buildings which are traditional in the Tierra de Campos, including Palomares / Dovecotes, which are round buildings used for breeding pigeons. Tierra de Campos is famous for its agricultural produce, especially beans and lentils.

PLACE NAME Población, town. Many places in this region have the suffix de Campos, this normally means of the fields, but in this case it’s a reference to this region, Tierra de Campos.

After Población, just before crossing a small bridge, the Camino divides to rejoin in Villalcázar de Sirga.
There are two routes when leaving Población de Campos. The Right route goes through Villovieco, either by following an unpaved road or walking along a footpath beside the river. The Left route follows a purpose-built walking track along the side of a quite road.

Both routes are almost totally flat so only the Left route is shown on the altitude profile.

After Carrión de los Condes there’s a 17km stretch with no villages. Be prepared with enough food and (especially) water to last you the whole distance.

Between Terradillos de Templarios and Sahagún there’s an alternative route which runs parallel to the old main road. It’s mostly used by cyclists.

RIGHT ROUTE 10.9km
4.2km to Villovieco, café just after crossing the river. After Villovieco the Camino crosses the río Ucieza and continues alongside it for 5km until a bridge with a large house over to the left, here you turn left and follow the paved road for 1.7km to Villalcázar. This route is a quieter and more pleasant option than the left route.

LEFT ROUTE 9.7km
This route goes along the side of a road.
3.6km Revenga de Campos. Café.
2.1km to Villarmentero.
LEFT 5.7km (1h29m) to
Villarmentero de Campos

ALBERGUE AMANECER
Private | 20 beds | 10€ | March to October | On the right at the start of the village. Kitchen. Café / restaurant. Communal evening meal. Donkeys, lambs, etc. wandering around. Laid back vibe. Visible and easily accessible from the right route. Tel 629 178 543 Open 10:00
INFORMATION Café in Albergue Amanecer opens at 07:00. Fiestas 11 November San Martín de Tours.
SIGHTS The stone and adobe church of San Martín de Tours has a Mudéjar ceiling and a 16th century Plateresque altar. There’s may be a tour (Spanish only) in the afternoon, ask in the albergue.
PLACE NAME Town of Armentarius, a bishop in Galicia around the year one thousand.
4km to Villalcázar de Sirga

RIGHT AND LEFT ROUTES REJOIN IN VILLALCAZAR

RIGHT 10.9km (2h53m) to
LEFT 4.0km (1h03m) to
Villalcázar de Sirga

ORDEN DE MALTA
Religious | 20 beds | 7€ | April to October | Between the main road and the church, on Plaza del Peregrino. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Volunteer hospitaleros. Tel 979 888 041 Open 12:00
ALBERGUE DON CAMINO
Private | 26 beds | 12€ | March to October | On the way out of the village, on Calle Real. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Website turismopalencia.info/doncamino Tel 620 399 040 Open 11:00
INFORMATION Café, shop and bakery. The restaurant Mesón de Villasirga, beside the church, has been recommended.
SIGHTS The village church, Iglesia de Santa María, is an impressive fortress church with Romanesque and Gothic influences built by the Knights Templar during the 12th and 13th centuries. In the Capilla de Santiago two Gothic sepulchres contain the remains of a Templar knight Don Felipe (brother of Alfonso X ‘the Wise’) and his second wife, Leonor of Aragon. A statue of the Virgin Mary, Virgen de las Cantigas, is said to heal pilgrims who were not healed in Santiago. The main altar shows biblical scenes while the Altar of St James (opposite the main entrance) shows scenes from the Codex
PLACE NAME Villa, town in Latin, alcazar, house or castle in Arabic, sirga, road or possibly the rope for tightening a net. Also sometimes called Villasirga.

5.5km (1h30m) to Carrión de los Condes

CONVENTO DE SANTA CLARA
Convent | 30 beds | 10€ | March to November | In a magnificent old building on your left entering the town. Microwaves. The nuns also make pastries. Mass in the evenings, the nuns sit behind bars at the back of the church. Private rooms. Website clarisascarrion.blogspot.com Tel 646 163 883 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE ESPÍRITU SANTO
Convent | 95 beds | 10€ | April to October | Turn left where the Camino crosses the main road then veer right, on Calle San Juan. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Dorms segregated by sex, with no bunks. Nice patio. Described by one correspondent as ‘grandmotherly’! Website www.carriondeloscondes.org/portfolio-items/albergue-del-espiritu-santo Tel 979 880 052 Open 12:00

PARROQUIA DE SANTA MARÍA
Parish | 50 beds | 10€ | March to October | Turn right at the square (Plaza Santa María) just after the church, the albergue is down Calle del Clérigo Pastor. Laundry facilities. One word: kumbaya. Website viastellarum-comunidadadelaconversion.blogspot.com Tel 650 575 185 Open 12:00

CASA DE ESPRITUALIDAD NUESTRA SEÑORA DE BELÉN
Convent | 92 beds | 20€ | Continue through the town and go straight where the Camino turns left. Laundry facilities. Run by an order of Filipina nuns, they have their own farm. All private rooms. Tel 979 880 031 Open 12:00

Hostal Santiago has singles from 30€ and doubles from 55€. Tel 629 935 034

INFORMATION On the Camino as it passed through town are shops, cafés, pharmacies, banks, an excellent outdoor store and a Tourist Office. Café-Bar España, on
the Camino at the main road, opens for breakfast at 07:00 with freshly baked pastries. **Bar Carmen**, on the Camino on the left near the Ayuntamiento, is popular and does good tapas. **Dia Supermarket** to the right of the Camino just past Convento de Santa Clara. **Bakery Panadería la Peregrina** on Plaza Santa María opens at 07:00.

**SIGHTS** Entering the town you’ll pass the **Cuesta de la Mora / Hill of the Mooress** where there is a fountain which was cursed by King Alfonso because his Muslim lover, Zulima, was late for an illicit rendez-vous there. Tragically, when she eventually showed up she drank from the fountain and died. The **Church of Santa María del Camino**, on the right shortly after crossing the main road, is Romanesque and dates from the 11th century, as is the **Iglesia de Santiago**. The Monastery of **Santa Clara** has a museum with many works of religious art. The Monastery of **San Zoilo**, on the way out of town on the other side of the river, dates from the 11th century and has a magnificent Plateresque cloister. Fiestas: end of August San Zoilo, Feria de Turismo y Productos Artesanos del Camino de Santiago / Festival of Tourism and Artisan Products of the Camino de Santiago during the first or second weekend of August. This section follows the route of the Roman road, the Via Aquitana.

**HISTORY** In the middle ages Carrión was one of the most important cities in the Christian kingdoms with the largest Jewish quarter in the province of Palencia. Today it is the main town of the **Tierra de Campos**.

**PLACE NAME** Carrión is the name of the river you cross when leaving town, Condes, counts refers to the nobleman who funded the construction of the Benedictine Convent of San Zoilo.

You should not leave Carrión without enough food and water for a long walk.

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**17.2km (4h28m)** to **Calzadilla de la Cueza**

**ALBERGUE LOS CANARIOS**

Private | 11 beds | 17€ | Easter to October | On the right at the start of the village.
Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 659 976 894 Open early

**ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL**

Municipal | 34 beds | 10€ | On the left at the beginning of the village. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 670 558 954 Open 11:00

**CAMINO REAL**

Private | 50 beds | 13€ | March to November | Just to the left of the Municipal. Laundry facilities, small swimming pool. Café / restaurant. Same owners as Hostal Camino Real. Website [www.alberguecaminoreal.es](http://www.alberguecaminoreal.es) Tel 651 152 942 Open 11:00

**INFORMATION** Café and a small shop in Albergue Los Canarios. **Hostal Camino Real**, to the left of the Camino has a café and a restaurant which does a pilgrim menu.

**SIGHTS** The tiny **Iglesia San Martín** has an altar which was originally in the nearby monastery of **Santa María de las Tiendas / Saint Mary of the Tents**, which was so named because of its proximity to a military encampment. The remaining ruins are reported to have been recently demolished by the land owner.

**PLACE NAME** Small road on the river Cueza.

Take care crossing the main road here, traffic is infrequent but the locals have heavy feet.

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Updates: [caminoguide.net/pages/updates](http://caminoguide.net/pages/updates)
5.9km (1h37m) to Lédigos

**EL PALOMAR**

**LA MORENA**
Private | 18 beds | 16€ | Turn right at the main road after the village, signposted. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Nice modern facilities. Website alberguelamorena.com Tel 626 972 118 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés in both albergues.

**SIGHTS** The parish church, Iglesia de Santiago, is said to be the only church on the whole Camino with depictions of Santiago in his three manifestations: Apostle, Moor Slayer and Pilgrim. Unfortunately it’s nearly always locked.

The Camino goes through open country after Lédigos however there is an older route to the right, which goes along the side of the road and has some shade.

3.0km (0h47m) to Terradillos de Templarios

**LOS TEMPLARIOS**
Private | 50 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | On the left before the village (if you take the right route from Lédigos). Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Website www.alberguelostemplarios.com Tel 667 252 279 Open 12:00

**JAQUES DE MOLAY**
Private | 49 beds | 12€ | On the right in the village. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 657 165 011 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés in both albergues.

3.1km (0h50m) to Moratinos

**ALBERGUE MORATINOS**

**SAN BRUNO**
Private | 30 beds | 13€ | April to October | A little to the right of the Camino, signposted. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Genuine Italian communal evening meal, vegetarian options, excellent. Garden, massages. Tel 672 629 658 Open early

**INFORMATION** Cafés. The restaurant Bodega El Castillo, a little off the Camino to the right, has received multiple recommendations.

2.6km (0h42m) to San Nicolás del Real Camino

**ALBERGUERÍA LAGANARES**
Private | 22 beds | 12€ | April to October | On your left as you walk through the village, just after the church. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant with good food. A warm welcome in a beautifully renovated building. Private rooms. Tel 629 181 536

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
INFORMATION Cafés. The café in Alberguería Laganares is nice.

SIGHTS The small village church has a statue of San Roque in pilgrim mode with a dog. Just after crossing the main road you’ll pass the church La Ermita de la Virgen del Puente / the Hermitage of the Virgin of the Bridge, which was a pilgrim albergue in the middle ages. There are also the remains of a Roman bridge nearby and a recently erected monument to the ‘halfway point’ on the Camino Francés.

PLACE NAME St Nicholas of the Royal Camino.

Entering the Province of León

DOMUS VIATORIS
Private | 50 beds | 10€ | March to October
To the right of the Camino, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities. In a grandly renovated building with good facilities, huge stone lions and other statues. Café / restaurant, reputed good. Private rooms. Tel 679 977 828 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL DE PEREGRINOS DE CLUNY
Municipal | 64 beds | 7€ | On the right after the railway bridge. In a converted church. Kitchen, laundry facilities. They have an overflow albergue with 20 beds and a kitchen. No heating. Website www.turismosahagun.com/albergue-municipal Tel 662 147 431 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE DE LA SANTA CRUZ
Convent | 58 beds | 7€ | March to November

INFORMATION Sahagún has all facilities. On the Camino there are shops and bakery (pastelería) Asturcon which opens at 06:00 and
does excellent pastries. Supermarket on Calle de la Alhóndiga. Pharmacy on Plaza Mayor which opens on Sunday. **Restaurante Medieval San Facundo** is very good, it’s part of Hostal Codorniz across the street from the municipal albergue. On a hill a little outside the town in the magnificently restored **Iglesia de la Peregrina** is an interpretive centre for the Camino called **El Centro de Documentación del Camino de Santiago**, with an extensive library and exhibitions and art related to the history of the Camino.

**Sights**

Many Mozarabic settlers made Sahagún their home and contributed to its architectural heritage. To this day some good examples of Mudéjar architecture can be seen, such as the **Iglesia de San Lorenzo**, which dates from the 12th century and is built entirely of brick. Its 14th century tower has four rows of brick arches, the bottommost being blind arches. Another example is the **Iglesia de San Tirso**, also 12th century. Of the now defunct **Monasterio Real de San Benito** (also possibly known as **San Facundo**) the main remaining structures are **El Arco de San Benito**, which dates from the 17th century, the **Capilla de San Mancio**, which dates from the 12th, and **Torre del Reloj / Clock Tower**, which originally had a counterpart with which it guarded the entrance to the monastery. The arch is visible to the right of the Camino towards the end of the town. The **Iglesia de San Tirso** is one of the oldest Romanesque churches in Spain and is considered one of the best intact examples of Romanesque-Mudéjar architecture. Its construction began in the 12th century and has several distinct influences, with some of the lower walls being of stone, while the upper ones are exclusively of brick. The body of King **Alfonso VI** lies in the church of the **Benedictine Convent of Santa Cruz**. Stone is scarce in this region and typically houses had a wooden frames (similar to Fachwerk or Tudor) with walls made of bricks made of mud and straw, cemented with more mud (which was and is plentiful and particularly sticky). The Camino de Madrid joins the Camino Francés in Sahagún.

**History**

Sahagún dates back to Roman times when it was an important agricultural centre. Despite being sacked and partially destroyed by **al-Mansur** in the 10th century, the presence of a rich monastery and the incentives offered by King Alfonso VI to forge links with **Cluny** and attract settlers to the town led to its rapid growth and the development of a multi-ethnic community with Jews, Muslims, Mozarabs, Castilians, Basques and other ethnic groups living cheek-by-jowl. The **Benedictine Monasterio Real de San Benito** and its antecedents have been here since the 9th century. By the 11th century it was the most important abbey on the Camino Francés and Sahagún’s importance was such that it became known as the ‘Spanish Cluny’. At the height of its power it even minted its own coins. However, the tranquillity of the town was disturbed several times down the centuries by inter-ethnic violence and a series of revolts against the corruption of the abbey.

**Place Name**

A shortened pronunciation of Sanctus Facundus, a Roman convert to Christianity who was martyred near here.

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4.5km after Sahagún, at a road junction near a motorway just before Calzada del Coto. Here the Camino divides and continues on two separate paths until Reliegos. Much overpainting of arrows at this junction. The right route was a Roman Road whereas the left route is the original Camino Francés.

**Right Route 30.9km to Reliegos**

From where the two routes divide it is 500m to Calzada del Coto.
WALKING NOTES

Map 15
After Sahagún there are two routes. The Right route passes through Calzada del Coto and Calzadilla de los Hermanillos, and then 24km through open country (no water, no nothing) as far as Mansilla de las Mulas, although you can also chose to branch left to Reliegos (18km) and continue from there to Mansilla. There is no shade on this route. The Left route follows a purpose-build walking track along the side of a quiet road. Trees provide some shade. Both routes are almost totally flat.

Map 16
The approach to León, which was always quite hazardous, has been greatly improved in recent years by the construction of pedestrian walkways to keep pilgrim apart from traffic. León, being a big city, unfortunately involves quite a lot of walking on concrete (although it’s not as bad as Burgos!) After León there are two route again, they’re described in the notes for Map 17.

RIGHT 5.0km (1h20m) to Calzada del Coto
ALBERGUE SAN ROQUE
Municipal | 16 beds | donativo | On the right at the beginning of the village. Possibly volunteer hospitaleros in summer, otherwise ask for the key in Café Xanadu. A bit basic. Tel 650 979 425 Open 14:00
INFORMATION Shop with limited opening times (ie. don’t count on it being open), on the right on the Camino after the albergue, and cafés.

RIGHT 8.5km (2h19m) to Calzadilla de los Hermanillos
ALBERGUE VÍA TRAJANA
Private | 10 beds | 20€ | April to October except July and August | On the right at the start of the village. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website www.albergueviatrajana.com Tel 600 220 104 Open early
ALBERGUE DE SAN BARTOLOMÉ
Municipal | 32 beds | donativo | On your left as you walk through the village. In summer it’s run by volunteers, however in winter you’ll need to phone. Kitchen, laundry facilities.
INFORMATION There is a shop near the municipal albergue. There are three cafés of which La Casa del Cura, which is also a guest house, does a good evening meal.

SIGHTS Interesting rollo / stone pillar outside the municipal albergue.

PLACE NAME Small road of the small brothers (monks).

17.4km to Reliegos or 24km to Mansilla via an alternative route which branches right after 16.5km (signpost often vandalised). Don’t set off without adequate supplies for a long day’s walking. There is no possibility to stock up on the way. The route runs entirely through open countryside parallel to the León - Madrid railway line. It is however possible to cross over to the left route in several places. You should not cross the railway line unless you want to join the other route.

LEFT ROUTE 30.3km TO RELIEGOS.

For the left route continue straight at the road junction where the right route goes right, then veer right on to an unpaved road. Many parts of this route are gravel path along the side of a quiet road (The so-called Senda).

LEFT 10.2km (2h42m) to

Bercianos del Real Camino

ALBERGUE LA PERALA
Private | 58 beds | 14€ | In a huge industrial building on the right before the village. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Good reports. Tel 685 817 699 Open early

BERCIANOS 1900
Private | 20 beds | 15€ | April to November | On the right on the Camino. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Website www.bercianos1900.com Tel 669 282 824 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE SANTA CLARA
Private | 12 beds | 15€ | To the right off the Camino, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast buffet - good reports. Tel 605 839 993 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE PARROQUIAL DE BERCIANOS
Parish | 45 beds | donativo | April to October | Leaving the village on the left. Communal evening meal cooked by the volunteers so quality extremely variable. Breakfast. Evening prayer. Tel 692 858 498 Open 13:30

INFORMATION Cafés. Small shop Comestibles Jesús, on Calle Los Carros, left from the Camino.

SIGHTS The ruins of the Iglesia del Salvador are nearby. It collapsed in 1998 during renovations. There are also many good examples of underground storage cellars which are typical of this region. They were used to store wine and other produce at a constant temperature.

PLACE NAME Bercianos of the Royal Camino, so named because this village was resettled by people from El Bierzo after the Reconquista.
At the beginning of the village veer right for the albergues, the Camino continues straight.

**ALBERGUE DOMENICO LAFFI**  
Amigos | 30 beds | donativo | Veer right at the beginning of the village, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Run by volunteers. Lovely albergue. Tel 987 330 023 Open 13:00

**LA LAGUNA**  
Private | 20 beds | 15€ | March to October | Walk past Domenico Laffi, cross Plaza Mayor and continue to the right of the Casa Consistorial until you see it on your right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Nice garden. Private rooms. Tel 648 824 258 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** There are cafés both on the Camino and near the albergues. The restaurant of **Piedras Blancas** is good. There’s a small shop and a pharmacy on Plaza Mayor which is just beyond Domenico Laffi.

**SIGHTS** In autumn storks congregate around the local lakes before beginning their southward migration.

**PLACE NAME** Village of the frogs, presumably because of the frogs in the local lakes which at certain times of the year can be quite vocal.

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**RIGHT AND LEFT ROUTES REJOIN IN RELIEGOS**

**RIGHT 17.4km (4h29m) to**

**LEFT 13.2km (3h23m) to Reliegos**

**VIVE TU CAMINO**  

**ALBERGUE GIL**  
Private | 14 beds | 13€ | Easter to November | To the right past Bar La Torre. Laundry facilities. A recent addition to Bar Gil, mentioned below. Cafè / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 620 424 271 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE LAS HADAS**  
Private | 20 beds | 16€ | Easter to October | To the left at Bar La Torre, on Calle Real. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Vegetarian evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.alberguelashadas.com Tel 620 547 454 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE DE RELIEGOS**  
Municipal | 45 beds | 8€ | A little off the Camino, veer right at Bar La Torre, on Calle La Escuela. Good, modern facilities. Kitchen. Tel 686 527 505 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE LA PARADA**  
Private | 36 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | Also on Calle la Escuela a little past the municipal. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Cafè / restaurant. Tel 987 317 880 Open 12:00

*La Cantina de Teddy*, also sometimes known as **Piedras Blancas II**, on the left a little before the village. An extension of Piedras Blancas in El Burgo Ranero. Laundry facilities. Cafè / restaurant. Singles from 60€, doubles 75€. Tel 622 206 128 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Shop on the right near the start of the village. **Bar La Torre** /
Elvis does good food (despite its overblown advertising). Bar Gil has what must be the worst pilgrim menu on any Camino anywhere. The route of the Camino through this village has recently changed, some confusing arrows are to be expected.

**HISTORY** This was an important transport hub in Roman times because it lay at the confluence of three major roads. Reliegos was the sight of Spain’s last major meteorite strike, it happened at 08:00 on 28 December 1948 on Calle Real. It weighed 8.9kg and its impact created a crater 35cm deep. Fortunately nobody was injured. It’s currently on display in the Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales / National Museum of Natural Sciences in Madrid. Reliegos also has lots of good examples of underground storage vaults.

**PLACE NAME** Reliegos is the name of the family who claimed the land after the Reconquista. Formerly known as Reliegos de las Matas / of the Bushes.

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**5.8km (1h29m) to Mansilla de las Mulas**

**EL JARDÍN DEL CAMINO**

Private | 40 beds | 16€ | On the right near the beginning of the town on the approach from Reliegos. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website www.albergueeljardindelcamino.com Tel 600 471 597 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE GAIA**


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**INFORMATION** The Municipal Albergue has closed. A replacement is planned, however there is currently no opening date. Mansilla has all facilities. On the Camino there are shops and banks and nearby on Calle los Mesones there’s a pharmacy and another bank. There’s a Día supermarket on Plaza de Grano, right and then left off Calle del Puente. Several restaurants on Calle del Puente do Pilgrim Menus. Restaurante La Curiosa on Calle José Alvarez has been recommended. A café / bakery, Confitería Alonso, on Plaza del Pozo, beside the Ayuntamiento, opens

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This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
for breakfast with freshly baked pastries. **Fiestas** around 25 July, medieval festival in honour of Mansilla’s famous variety of tomato, with a cookery competition followed by the **Tomatina** when the young people of the town pelt each other (and any passing pilgrims) with tomatoes - although it is not quite on the scale of the more famous Tomatina in Valencia. Second Sunday in September, Virgen de Gracia, with a Romería / Pilgrimage. 11 November, festival of San Martín, this is the town’s oldest festival and includes a livestock mart, a market, procession of agricultural machinery, and local specialities in the restaurants.

**FOOD** The local speciality is *bacalao al estilo mansillés* / cod mansillés style which is cod in a tomato-based sauce.

**SIGHTS** Mansilla has an impressive **town wall** which is up to 14m high where it overlooks the river Esla. Construction took place over many years beginning in the 12th century. The building materials used were bricks composed of mud, straw and stones, with more mud used as cement. There were originally four gates of which **La Puerta de la Concepción** (in the east) is the best preserved. **Los Cubos** are six semi-circular defensive towers set along the walls about 40m apart. The Camino enters the town through **La Puerta del Castillo** which was the main gate. Arched façades called **Soportales** are considered typical of this town and good examples can be seen on Plaza del Grano. Near Mansilla are the ruins of the **Castro de Lancia**, one of the largest settlements of the pre-Roman Astur people which surrendered to the Roman invaders around 24BC. This was one of the events which caused **Emperor Augustus** to close the **Gates of Janus** in Rome signifying that all of Rome’s enemies had been subdued. This marked the beginning of the period known as the **Pax Augusta**.

**PLACE NAME** Mansilla comes from Latin, mansuetus, a reference to the power of local nobility. De las Mulas / of the mules, is a reference to its important horse fair.

### 6.0km (1h32m) to Puente Villarente

**ALBERGUE SAN PELAYO**

Private | 56 beds | 15€ | After crossing the bridge take the second street on the right then the first left and walk about 100m, signposted, on Calle El Romero. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website [www.alberguesanpelayo.com](http://www.alberguesanpelayo.com) Tel 650 918 281 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés, several bakeries and a bank. Pharmacy a little further on on the left.

**SIGHTS** The Camino crosses a footbridge beside the bridge which figures in the village’s name. It has twenty arches which are of varying sizes due to the fact that they’ve been rebuilt several times to repair flood damage. This bridge was mentioned in the **Codex Calixtinus**.

**PLACE NAME** Bridge of the Town ‘Rente’. Rente is thought to be a family name.

### 4.3km (1h12m) to Arcahueja

**LA TORRE**


**INFORMATION** Café.
It’s mostly suburban from here to León. In the city of León, as well as the usual yellow arrows the Camino is marked by metal shells set into the ground.

8.1km (2h17m) to León

**SANTO TOMÁS DE CANTERBURY**
Private | 48 beds | 13€ | March to November | On Avenida La Lastra, left off the Camino shortly after entering the city and about 3km from the centre, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Modern facilities. Private rooms. Website www.alberguesantotomas.com Tel 987 392 626 Open 10:00

**ALBERGUE CHECK IN**
Private | 40 beds | 12€ | On the Camino before the city centre, on Avenida Alcalde Miguel Castaño. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Spacious and modern. Website www.checkinleon.es Tel 686 956 896 Open 10:00

**ALBERGUE ADEMAR / SAN FRANCISCO DE ASÍS**
Religious | 60 beds | 15€ | On Avenida Alcalde Miguel Castaños, at Plaza Santa Ana, better to follow Avenida Castaño rather than the Camino. It’s on the left after 300m. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. In a slightly grim student halls of residence. Website www.alberguescapuchinos.org Tel 637 439 848 Open early

**ALBERGUE DEL MONASTERIO DE LAS BENEDICTINAS / LA CARBAJALAS**
Convent | 132 beds | 8€ | Turn right 100m after passing the city wall on to Calle Escurial, it’s about 20m up on the right. Laundry facilities. Mass and pilgrim blessing. The original pilgrim albergue in León. Separate dorms for men and women. Website www.alberguesleon.com Tel 680 649 289 Open 11:00

**ZENTRIC HOSTEL**
Private | 7 beds | 22€ | On Calle Legión, left off the Camino at Plaza de San Marcelo, just before where it turns right on to Calle Ancha. New in 2022. Private rooms, Website www.zentrichostel.com Tel 636 946 294 Open 14:00

**ALBERGUE MURALLA LEONESA**
Private | 60 beds | 16€ | March to October | From Las Benedictinas continue straight then turn right into Calle los Castañones, then straight on to Calle Tarifa. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.alberguemurallaleonesa.com Tel 987 177 873 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE LEÓN**
Private | 20 beds | 22€ | On Calle Ancha on the Camino on the left, just after Café Valor, 1st floor. Kitchen. Website www.leonhostel.es Tel 987 079 907 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE UNAMUNO**

**INFORMATION**
León is a major city with all facilities on or near the Camino. The route followed by the Camino continues more-or-less straight until an abrupt right turn on to Calle Ancha, which brings you up to the cathedral. From here it zigzags past the city’s major sites until it leaves the city centre over the footbridge beside Hostal de San Marcos. Tourist Office opposite the entrance to the cathedral. Supermarkets, Mercadona and Dia on the Camino on the way into town, in the centre on the Camino just after the Convent Albergue, more supermarkets, Coviran and Carrefour on Calle Ancha. Pharmacy, banks and an internet café on Avenida Ordoño
II, which is left where the Camino turns right on Calle Ancha. Fiestas, the patron saints of León are San Juan and San Pedro whose festival takes places at the end of June with street theatre and the usual mayhem. La Palomera 16 July. San Froilán 4 October, with a medieval street festival with costumes, music, food, donkeys, camels, owls, everything medieval basically.

FOOD There are many restaurants and cafés in the area between the convent albergue and the cathedral, this is the so-called Zona Humida / Wet Zone. Local specialities include Cecina de León, a beef sausage with a dark appearance eaten cut into thin slices; Morcilla de León, made of pig’s blood and onions, a first cousin of Morcilla de Burgos except in a semi-liquid form; Sopa de Trucha / Trout Soup with
bread, garlic and paprika; Trucha Frita / Fried Trout, sometimes eaten cold. León has a strong Tapas culture, some good places to sample it are: El Botijo on Plaza San Martín, excellent tapas as well as platos combinados. Also on Plaza San Martín Nuevo Racimo de Oro has also been recommended. La Taberna De Trastámara, on Calle Trastámara, near the convent albergue, has been recommended for lunch.

**SIGHTS** León is encircled by Roman city walls through which you will pass on your way into the city via the Puerta Moneda / Money Gate. Although the historic centre has maintained some of its original street layout and character the vast majority of buildings are recent. The Gothic Catedral de Santa María de León was inspired by the cathedral of Reims in northern France. It was built beginning in the 13th century on top of the original Romanesque cathedral which was built on a palace erected by King Ordoño II which was in turn built on top of public baths from the Roman era. Its 1,800m² of stained glass represents humankind’s supremacy on earth with depictions of paradise, flora and fauna, saints, biblical stories, hunting scenes, etc. The current stained glass dates from many different periods but the circular window on the main façade is original 13th century. The Renaissance cloister has Gothic walls with Plateresque vaults decorated with Gothic frescoes. There are guided tours but most of them are in Spanish. The Real Basílica de San Isidoro was completed in the 12th century and is Romanesque in style with Gothic and Islamic influences. A stairway leads to El Panteón de los Reyes / The Pantheon of the Monarchs where the remains of 23 Leonese monarchs are laid to rest along with various other dignitaries. It is considered a fine example of early Romanesque art with well-preserved 12th century murals depicting scenes from the New Testament as well as agricultural activities. Its two entrances have depictions of rams’ heads and biblical scenes. At the bottom of Calle Ancha is the modernist Casa Botines, designed by Gaudí and built after the Episcopal Palace in Astorga. The exterior is Gothic with a statue of St George killing a dragon above the main door. To its right is the 16th century Renaissance Palacio de los Guzmanes with towers in each corner and arranged around a central courtyard. It now serves as municipal offices. The magnificent Monasterio or Hostal de San Marcos is on the Camino when leaving town. Its origins are in the 12th century when King Alfonso VII ordered the construction of a building outside the city limits, on the banks of the river, as an albergue for pilgrims. The present building was begun in the 16th century by the Order of St James and not completed until the 18th. Its façade includes depictions of San Marcos, Santiago Matamoros at the Battle of Clavijo, El Cid, Alfonso II, the Catholic Monarchs, the coats of arms of Santiago, and the Kings of León. Underneath its windows are rows of sculpted heads intended to represent human virtue. The attached church has some shell designs similar to those on La Casa de las Conchas in Salamanca. It is considered to be one of Spain’s finest examples of Renaissance Plateresque architecture. Today it is a luxury Parador / Hotel with a sumptuous interior and a breathtaking breakfast buffet. Even if you can’t afford to stay here you can always wander in nonchalantly and have a look around. Worth seeing is the wooden ceiling of the room straight inside the entrance on the right and the cloister which is at the top of the stairs past reception.

**HISTORY** The stylish city of León dates from the 1st century AD when the Roman legion Legio VII Gemina established a military base here. It remained a minor Visigoth and later Muslim settlement until it was incorporated into the Kingdom of Asturias around 850 and shortly thereafter became the capital of the Kingdom of León and, for a time at least, capital of Christian Spain. Despite being sacked by Al-
The walk out of León is suburban as far as La Virgen. From there there are two options which rejoin in Hospital de Órbigo. Neither are particularly scenic. The Right route follows close to a busy main road all the way to Hospital. The Left route is a mix of open country and quiet roads. After Hospital there are again two options. Here it’s the left one which is the least scenic.

After Astorga the long, slow climb towards the highest point on the Camino begins. Near El Ganso you’ll pass the 1,000m altitude line and the chance of extreme weather increases. Deep snow is unusual on this route, but if in doubt, please take advice locally.

Mansur in 988, it recovered quickly and the period after the 10th century was one of prosperity and growth during which its pivotal position on the Camino de Santiago provided capital, immigrants and cultural influence from the rest of Europe. In time León became the most powerful and rich city in Christian Spain with a diverse cultural life among the different ethnic groups who lived here. This growth was interrupted around 1350 by the arrival of the Plague which caused the abandonment of many rural areas, and by the drift of the centres of power of the Christian kingdoms southwards following the advance of the Reconquista to Toledo, Seville and Cordoba. With time León reverted to being a sleepy provincial backwater until the development of coal mining at the end of the 19th century led once again to growth and prosperity. By the beginning of the 20th
century the construction of a railway network linking it with Madrid and the industrial heartland of the Basque Country had helped to make León an important industrial centre. Today León is a prosperous city with 135,000 inhabitants. Tourism pays an important part in its economy as do the many small and medium-sized companies working in metalwork, engineering, chemicals, ceramics, glass and paper.

PLACE NAME From the Latin, Legio in reference to the Roman Legion which founded the city.

The official Camino winds its crooked way around the tourist attractions of León. Don’t worry if you end up lost! The easiest way to find your way out is to find the river and walk upstream until you come to the footbridge, Puente San Marcos, which is just beside the magnificent Hostal de San Marcos. Cross the river here on the pedestrian bridge and follow the yellow arrows out of town.

Several cafés do breakfast in Trobajo del Camino south of the river. There are also several supermarkets, pharmacies, bakeries and banks along the Camino (however they don’t open until about 09:00).

7.3km to La Virgen del Camino where the Camino divides until Hospital de Órbigo

Cafés, shops and a bank on the Camino. Pharmacy on Calle Cervantes which is to the right.

The church of La Virgen del Camino is one of the very few modern churches to be seen along the Camino Francés. It was completed in 1961, replacing an older church. It is concrete with heavy bronze doors and a detached tower. On its façade is a ‘depiction’ of the Virgin Mary and the twelve apostles. Inside, the Baroque altar belongs to the church which stood here previously and dates from the 18th century. This village developed on the site of an apparition of the Virgin Mary to a shepherd in the 16th century. It is a major local pilgrimage site with annual processions from nearby villages on 15 September and 5 October. During droughts an icon of the Virgin Mary is carried from here to the cathedral in León.

Cross the main road at the church and turn right. 350m further on the Camino divides between here and Hospital de Órbigo (There is a lot of confusing signposting at this junction). The right route runs along the side of a busy main road and is 27.1km. The left route passes through open countryside and is 24.4km. The two routes rejoin in Hospital de Órbigo. The right route follows the Roman road and is considered the original Camino.
RIGHT 20.2km (5h30m) to Villadangos del Páramo

**ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL**

Municipal | 45 beds | donativo | To the right across the main road as you enter the village, in the old school building. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés, shop, bank and pharmacy on the main road, to the left of the Camino itself.

**SIGHTS** The Iglesia de Santiago has an impressive depiction of Santiago Matamoros inside, and above its door scenes from the Battle of Clavijo.

**HISTORY** Villadangos del Páramo is famous for being the scene of a battle between the armies of Alfonso I of Aragon and Doña Urraca of León who was supported by the bishop of Santiago. Had they not been married at the time the war they fought would probably have been forgotten as just another minor skirmish in the permanent jostling for position among different royal factions. Their marriage started out as an ambitious plan to unify two of Spain’s most powerful Christian kingdoms and ended up in years of civil war, of which this battle was part. Eventually the marriage was annulled and the situation returned to normal.

**PLACE NAME** Town of Eneco (a Basque family name), Páramo is the region we will be entering soon.

RIGHT 4.4km (1h07m) to San Martín del Camino

**ALBERGUE VIEIRA**


**ALBERGUE SANTA ANA**


**ALBERGUE LA HUELLA**


**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS JUNTA VECINAL**

Municipal | 46 beds | 8€ | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Large garden. Negative reports. Tel 676 020 388 Open 11:00

**LA CASA VERDE**

Private | 10 beds | 10€ | April to November | On Travesía Estación, a little off the Camino veering left at Bar Los Picos. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Tel 646 879 437 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés, bakery to the right after the Municipal.
SIGHTS
Hold on to your glasses! This area has one of the Iberian Peninsula’s few native colonies of crows.

PLACE NAME
St Martin of the Camino.
7.2km to Hospital de Órigo

LEFT ROUTE 27.1km
1.6km from where the Caminos divide to Fresno del Camino, café.

LEFT 11.1km (3h10m) to
Oncina de la Valdoncina

EL PAJAR DE ONCINA
Private | 9 beds | 12€ | March to October | Just off the Camino on the right. Microwaves. Communal evening meal with vegetarian options. Breakfast. In a beautifully renovated village house. Private rooms. Tel 677 567 309 Open 13:00

INFORMATION
Café.

INFORMATION
5.6km to Chozas de Abajo, café about 250m off the Camino to the left. Then 4.4km to Villar de Mazarife

LEFT 9.9km (2h36m) to Villar de Mazarife

ALBERGUE SAN ANTONIO DE PADUA
Private | 50 beds | 14€ | On the Camino on the right just before the village. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Modern facilities. Tel 687 300 666 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE DE JESÚS
Private | 50 beds | 10€ | To the left at the start of the village. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Small swimming pool (complete with Viking ship!) Mattresses on the balcony overlooking the courtyard provide extra places in summer. Noisy bar, especially at weekends. Tel 686 053 390 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE TIO PEPE
Private | 22 beds | 12€ | March to December | Left of the Camino near the church. Café / restaurant. Warm welcome. Private rooms. Website www.alberguetiopepe.es Tel 696 005 264 Open 11:00

INFORMATION
Shop, cafés and a bakery.

SIGHTS
Watch out for Camino related mural just before you come to the village. The parish church, built between the 16th and 18th centuries of brick and mortar, is a good example of local church architecture. Its interior has been recently renovated. On Calle Camino León there is a private phone museum, if it’s open there’ll be a sign out.

HISTORY
Mazarife was an important stop on the Roman Road between León and Astorga. It was repopulated in the 10th century with the support of the monarchs of Asturias and León by a family of Mozarabs from Cordoba

PLACE NAME
Town of Mazarife from the Cordoban Mozarabic family Mazaref.

Villavente can be bypassed by continuing straight on the road.

LEFT 9.4km (2h21m) to Villavante

ALBERGUE SANTA LUCÍA
Private | 23 beds | 12€ | April to October | A little off the Camino on Calle Doctor
Breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.alberguesantalucia.es Tel 669 378 234 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Casa rural Molino Galochas rents rooms and does meals. Website www.molinogalochas.com Tel 629 963 870

**SIGHTS** Crossing the river Órbigo you enter the region known as Páramo,

**RIGHT AND LEFT ROUTES REJOIN IN HOSPITAL DE ÓRBIGO**

**RIGHT** 7.1km (1h47m) to

**LEFT** 4.0km (1h01m) to Hospital de Órbigo

**ALBERGUE LA ENCINA**
Private | 16 beds | 13€ | Visible over to the right when you’re crossing the bridge. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 987 361 087 Open 14:00

**ALBERGUE PARROQUIAL**
Parish | 90 beds | 8€ | March to October | Karl Leisner, on the Camino on the right after crossing the bridge. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Nice patio. Tel 987 388 444 Open 11:00

**CASA DE LOS HIDALGOS**

**ALBERGUE SAN MIGUEL**

**ALBERGUE VERDE**
Private | 24 beds | 13€ | April to October | Turn left after Albergue San Miguel down Avenida de los Fueros de León, it’s on the right just before the roundabout. Laundry facilities. Nice garden, pets, hippie vibe. Friendly and welcoming. Donativo vegetarian communal evening meal using organic produce from their own garden (delicious). Breakfast. Also yoga classes. Private rooms. Tel 689 927 926 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Shop and cafés on the Camino after crossing the bridge. Pharmacy to the right just before the post office. Cafés / restaurants on the Camino and down side streets to the left.

**SIGHTS** The current bridge over the river Órbigo dates from the 13th century, although it has been partially destroyed and rebuilt several times. It has 19 arches and is 204m long. The Romans built the original bridge here as part of the road linking León to Astorga. Before the dam at Barrios de Luna was built this river was a lot bigger, whence the length of the bridge. This dam provides water for a large part of northern León for the cultivation of maize, beetroot, hops and other crops. On the bridge is a plaque with the names of the knights who fought in the tournament of 1434 (see below) and every year around the first weekend in June there is a medieval festival in honour of those events.

**HISTORY** Holy Year 1434 was unusually enlivened around these parts by a jousting tournament which was held on the floodplain just south of the bridge, a series of events described in the book Libro del Passo Honroso by Juan de Pineda. The tournament was organised at the behest of a young nobleman and knight, Suero de Quiñones, who petitioned King Juan II of Castile to allow him and his friends to
joust with any knight who wished to cross the bridge until they had succeeded in breaking 300 lances. This was a popular chivalric pastime for young knights known as a Pas d’Armes. Young Quiñones’ motivation was that he had fallen in love with a beautiful noblewoman called Doña Leonor de Tovar, and finding his amorous advances unreciprocated had vowed to demonstrate his devotion by wearing a band around his neck and engaging in acts of chivalry. On hearing this, the King, perhaps anticipating an entertaining summer, responded with a surprising degree of enthusiasm and not only laid on all the facilities necessary for a major event but also sent word round his kingdom to ensure a good turnout. His efforts were not in vain and on 10 July the jousting began with great pomp and ceremony and continued every day (except St James’ Day) until the promised 300 broken lances lay neatly ranged along the side of the field of combat. Young Quiñones declared himself to be free of his amorous entanglement and triumphantly deposited the neck band at the feet of the King and his entourage. Then he and his friends rode to Santiago to give thanks at the tomb of the Apostle where Quiñones deposited a jewel-encrusted neck band as an offering. (It can be seen to this day in the Cathedral relics room, accessible from the museum). This happy ending for the gallant knight has a sting in its tail because years later while travelling through a remote area of León he chanced upon one of the men whom he had bettered and who still bore a grudge against him. The man, clearly a devotee of the maxim that revenge is a dish best served cold, took advantage of Quiñones’ unpreparedness and struck him dead. This is also the site of a decisive battle in 456 between the Visigoths and their erstwhile allies the Suebi. The Suebi were a Germanic tribe who had arrived in Iberia in the 5th century. Their leader King Requiario was a convert to Christianity who was attempting through alliances and military campaigns, to take advantage of the weakening Roman Empire and extend his realm throughout Iberia. His plan came a cropper here at the hands of the Visigoth King Teodorico II. The defeated Requiario managed to reach his base in Porto but was later executed.

**PLACE NAME** Hospital or albergue of the river Órbigo.

At then end of the village the Camino turns right. A little-frequented alternative continues straight at this point. It is 2km shorter than the more popular route but it mostly follows a busy main road where there are no villages (or anything really) until where it rejoins the main route in San Justo de la Vega.

**2.8km (0h44m) to Villares de Órbigo**

**ALBERGUE EL ENCANTO**

Private | 10 beds | 16€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website albergueelencanto.es

Tel 682 860 210 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE VILLARES DE ÓRBIGO**


**INFORMATION** Shop to the right past Albergue Villares de Órbigo, cafés.

**PLACE NAME** Town of the river Órbigo.

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Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
2.5km (0h45m) to
Santibáñez de Valdeiglesias

ALBERGUE CAMINO FRANCÉS
Private | 24 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | On the left on the Camino. Laundry facilities. Café/restaurant, industrial food. Breakfast. Private rooms. Tel 987 361 014 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE SANTIBÁÑEZ
Parish | 20 beds | 10€ | March to October | On the Camino on the left after it turns right before the church. Communal evening meal and breakfast. Nice garden. Basic facilities. Run by local volunteers. Tel 987 377 698 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE L’ABILLEIRU
Private | 7 beds | 27€ | March to November | Continue straight where the Camino turns right, it’s on the left. Laundry facilities. Evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.labilleirualberguerural.com Tel 615 269 057 Open 13:00

INFORMATION
Cafés. It’s a local tradition to construct a Maize Maze / Laberinto de Mais, every summer (in North American English maize is corn). It’s said to be the biggest in the world! It opens on 1 August.

SIGHTS
Just after Santibáñez is maybe the strangest pilgrim monument of the whole Camino! For the next few kilometres you will walk through a low range of arid hills where grapes are grown and Mediterranean vegetation predominates. You may also spot chestnut trees.

PLACE NAME
Santibáñez of the valley of the church. Santibáñez is a reference to a local saint.

5km to David’s refreshment stand.
2.7km to San Justo de la Vega.

San Justo de la Vega, cafés, bakery and further on on the right a shop and a pharmacy, all on the Camino. Café Bar Oasis is a friendly place and claims to have the best tortilla in the world (it just might be true!)

4km to Astorga.

11.8km (3h23m) to Astorga

ALBERGUE MY WAY
Private | 13 beds | 14€ | April to October | To the left of the Camino a little before entering the old town. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Tel 640 176 338 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS SIervas de María
Municipal | 161 beds | 7€ | On the left just after you struggle up the hill through the town walls, on Plaza San Francisco. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Excellent facilities. Website www.caminodesantiagoastorga.com Tel 618 271 773 Open 11:00

SÓ POR HOJE
Private | 10 beds | 29€ | March to November | To the left of the Camino from Plaza España. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Communal evening meal (Brazilian). Private rooms. Tel 690 749 853 Open 13:00

SAN JAVIER
Private | 105 beds | 14€ | April to October | On the Camino near the cathedral, on Calle Portería. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Wood burning stove when it’s
cold. The noise from the wooden floor in the dorm can make sleeping difficult.

Tel 987 618 532 Open 11:00

INFORMATION Astorga is a large town with all facilities available on or near the Camino. **Supermarket** on Plaza de Santocildes. **Tourist Office** on the square beside the cathedral. Also on Plaza de Santocildes there’s a good outdoor shop called **Huracán** run by a Swiss gentleman. **Hotel Astur Plaza** on Plaza Mayor does a good pilgrim menu. **Restaurante Gaudí**, in Hotel Gaudí, on the same square as Gaudi’s Episcopal Palace, is reported excellent and does a special price for pilgrims. **Cubasol** is popular with the locals for tapas, it’s on Calle Señor Ovalle, with your back to the Ayuntamiento it’s to the right (not open evenings). Several **cafés** around Plaza Mayor open early. Fiestas Astures y Romanos 25 July with lots of dressing up and fake battles, Santa Marta 25 August.

**FOOD** This is an excellent place to try **Cocido Maragato** which is the **plato típico par excellence** of the **Maragatería**. It is actually several dishes traditionally served at one sitting featuring goat’s blood sausage, half a chicken, pork, a pig’s ear, a pig’s trotter, a slice of pig’s snout, chorizo, chickpeas, cabbage, potatoes and garlic. The meat is served first, then the chickpeas, then a soup followed by the veggies. It’s available in several places but **Casa Maragato II** on Calle Padres Redentoristas has been recommended. On the off chance that you can manage dessert after all that Astorga is also famous for its chocolate and pastries of which **Mantecadas** and **Hojaldres** are the most popular. Many specialist shops around the centre make and sell them.

**SIGHTS** Astorga is the capital of the historic region of the **Maragatería**. It is a hill-
top walled city which has maintained some of its medieval character. Following the Camino through the town we come to the Ayuntamiento on Plaza Mayor which dates from 1703. On its façade two Maragatos in full regalia mark the hour by striking a bell. Difficult to miss, across the square from the cathedral is the Palacio Episcopal / Episcopal Palace designed by Gaudí. It was completed in 1915, although by that time Gaudí had fallen out with the bishop and was no longer involved in the project. Despite its title it has never actually served as home to a bishop. Built with white Bierzo granite it is a fine example of modern Spanish neo-Gothic architecture. It now houses the Museo de los Caminos / Museum of the Caminos. During the civil war it was used as a barracks by the nationalist (ie. fascist) Falange movement. The Cathedral dates from the 15th century and was built on the site of an earlier 11th century church. Its façade and towers are Baroque, while its portico is Renaissance, with scenes from the life of Jesus. At the top of the apse is a statue of Pero Mato a local man reputed to have fought at the legendary Battle of Clavijo. Inside the cathedral is predominantly late Gothic with a neo-Classical cloister. The Chocolate Museum / Museo del Chocolate at Avenida de Estación 16, celebrates Astorga’s artisan chocolate makers. Website turismoastorga.es/museo-del-chocolate/In Astorga the Vía de la Plata which starts in Seville meets the Camino Francés. A free guide to the Vía de la Plata is available from www.viadelaplataguide.net

HISTORY

Astorga was the capital of the pre-Roman Astur tribe whose domain stretched from here to the north coast. In the 1st century BC it was conquered by the Roman legion Legio X Gemina who established an important military base here. It subsequently became an important strategic centre in Roman Hispania due to its proximity to the gold mines at Las Médulas and its location at the meeting of several Roman roads, including the Vía de la Plata which linked northern and southern Spain, the Vía Nova and the Vía XIX. With the exhaustion of gold reserves and the fall of the Roman empire Astorga’s importance diminished. The Muslim invasion further hastened its decline. It wasn’t until the 9th century and the resettlement ordered by Ordoño I of Asturias that, boosted by migrants from El Bierzo, the town’s population began to increase again. However, it suffered another set-back in 987 when it was sacked by the indomitable Al-Mansur in the course of one of his frequent orgies of violence across northern Spain. From the 11th century onwards the influence of the Camino brought fresh settlers and cultural influences. The most prominent groups to make Astorga their home were the Franks and Jews. The Plague and the expulsion of the Jews caused further set-backs for the town and it wasn’t until the 16th century that it began to recover economically. French revolutionary forces besieged the town during their invasion of 1794 but were soon repulsed by a combined Spanish, Portuguese and British force. With peace restored the Maragatos returned to their traditional occupation of trading and selling their produce all over Spain. To feed this trade Astorga developed industries based on locally produced raw materials, principally flour, bread and leather. Astorga’s population has been stable in recent times thanks to a flourishing tourist industry which now accounts for a significant part of its economy. Astorga, according to legend, was home to Priscillian who was one of the first people to be declared a heretic by the Church and put to death by the Romans. He has a small but loyal band of followers who believe it is he who is buried in the cathedral in Santiago, not the Apostle James.

PLACE NAME

From the Latin, Asturica Augusta, because of its proximity to Asturias.
Leaving town is a bit confusing so pay close attention to the waymarkings. Following the Camino through town (this already is a challenge) then with the cathedral main façade to you right veer left down Calle Leopoldo Panero and then at the end turn right. Continue straight across a road junction on to Calle de San Pedro, past the unusual modern Iglesia de San Pedro, until you arrive at the main road called Avenida Madrid-Coruña, which you cross on the pedestrian crossing to the right before continuing on to Calle de los Mártires. Follow this and it’s straight all the way out of town.

Astorga marks the beginning of the Maragatería but it also marks the end of the geographic region of the Meseta which we entered weeks ago near Burgos. Today the land is sloping gently upwards and we will continue to climb for the next 30km or so until we reach the Camino Francés’ highest point between Manjarín and El Acebo.

2.4km to Valdeviejas, albergue closed

4.4km (1h11m) to Murias de Rechivaldo

**ALBERGUE DE MURIAS DE RECHIVALDO**

Municipal | 12 beds | 10€ | March to December | To the right of the Camino in the old school building beside the main road. Mostly not bunks. Website alberguemurias.wixsite.com/home Tel 638 433 716 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE CASA FLOR**

Private | 8 beds | 17€ | Easter to November | To the right of the Camino just before Albergue Las Águedas. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Communal evening meal. Private rooms. Tel 644 695 872 Open 14:00

**ALBERGUE CASA LAS ÁGUEDAS**


**INFORMATION** Cafés. Bar Felix, to the right across the main road, is a traditional village bar and does Cocido Maragato, as do several other restaurants.

**SIGHTS** This is a typical Maragato village with some good examples of the traditional stone-built houses with large doors. Watch out for massive lizards and listen for amazing birdsong in the countryside around here. Castrillo de los Polvazares is not on the ‘official’ Camino. To get there from Murias follow the road rather than the Camino for 1.7km. The village itself is to the right of the road across a bridge at a place where there’s a small carpark. Castrillo has several popular restaurants and is a good place to try Cocido Maragato and other local specialities - although the restaurants, not being pilgrim establishments, keep normal hours. Architecturally Castrillo de los Polvazares is considered the jewel among Maragato villages and is well worth a visit.

**HISTORY** A survey of the town taken in 1751 to establish tax liability gives a fascinating insight into the lives of the people at that time. The village had 157 inhabitants and one priest and comprised 55 houses, nine barns, four mills, one tavern and one slaughter house. There were 22 farmers, nine carters, four labourers, three weavers, a tailor and a shoemaker. It produced mainly rye, wheat, flax, straw and vegetables. Most of the wheat and flax produced was owned by the ecclesiastical authorities, as was about 40% of total agricultural production. Livestock was as follows: 58 oxen and cows, four calves, 23 ‘beasts of burden’, 49 pigs, 741 sheep and...
lambs, 13 bee-hives (ten of which belonged to the aforementioned ecclesiastical authorities) and one donkey (again...). On 11 September 1846 much of the village was destroyed by a flood and was subsequently rebuilt on higher ground.

4.5km (1h23m) to

Santa Catalina de Somoza

ALBERGUE EL CAMINANTE
Private | 22 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the right opposite the church. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant with local specialities. Private rooms. Website www.el-caminante.es Tel 638 102 837 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE SAN BLAS

LA BOHÈME
Private | 12 beds | donativo | April to October | To the right of the Camino, on calle el Pozo. Communal evening meal and breakfast (donativo). Kitchen. Yoga, meditation area. Run by a pilgrim from France. Tel 722 233 486 Open 13:00

INFORMATION | cafés, of which the one belonging to Albergue El Caminante is quite pleasant and does good food. San Blas café opens early.

SIGHTS | Although obviously tarted up for the tourists, Santa Catalina with its wide, paved streets and stone houses maintains some of its Maragato character.

PLACE NAME | St Catherine of Somoza, Somoza is an old name for the Maragatería.

4.2km (1h09m) to El Ganso

INDIAN WAY
Private | 25 beds | 10€ | Signposted to the right near the start of the village. Café / restaurant. Sleeping in teepee. Tel 691 545 004

ALBERGUE GABINO
Private | 24 beds | 10€ | Easter to October | On the main road near the church, in a nicely renovated building. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 660 912 823 Open 12:00

INFORMATION | Cafés, small shop which does vegetarian food on the right after Albergue Gabino. Café Bar La Barraca does good home cooking and regional specialities, it has a rear entrance from the Camino.

SIGHTS | El Ganso boasts some examples of a type of thatched roof called Teitadas which are typical of this region. Just before Rabanal, to the left of the road, is the site of the Roble del Peregrino / Pilgrim’s Oak, under whose sheltering branches generations of pilgrims have found refuge, and which (almost as if mother nature is trying to tell us something) recently dropped dead. Fortunately nobody was sheltering under it at the time.

PLACE NAME | The Goose.

The climb to Cruz de Ferro begins in earnest after El Ganso, however, the ascent is mostly pretty gradual.
The climb up to the highest point on the Camino Francés is gentle enough but the descent into the valley of El Bierzo is challenging at times, especially the bit between Riego de Ambrós and Molinaseca. Caution is advised!

Map 20
Shortly after Villafranca there are two options. The right route follows a steep uphill path along a high mountain ridge with spectacular views before descending into the valley again at Trabadelo.

The left route follows the road and is flat and slightly shorter.

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
6.8km (2h05m) to Rabanal del Camino

ALBERGUE LA SENDA
Private | 22 beds | 10€ | Easter to October | On your left as you enter the village. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 620 524 247
Open early

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL
Municipal | 36 beds | 10€ | On the main road, to the left of the Camino, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Laid-back vibe, garden.
Tel 655 274 613 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL PILAR
Private | 74 beds | 10€ | To the left of the Camino next to the municipal, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant with good food and a nice patio. Private rooms. Friendly, family-run. Private rooms. Website albergueelpilar.com Tel 616 089 942 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE GAUCELMO
Religious | 35 beds | donativo | Easter to October | Just left of the Camino at the church. Kitchen. Run by volunteers, this albergue belongs to the Confraternity of Saint James, a British pilgrim organisation. Big garden. Very welcoming. Afternoon tea! Website www.csj.org.uk/refugio-gaucelmo Tel 987 631 615 Open after 13:00

INFORMATION
Shops, cafés on the Camino and off it to the left. The café of Albergue Nuestra Señora del Pilar is nice and does good food. On some evenings at 19:00 there are Vespers with Gregorian chant in the village’s small church beside Albergue Gaucelmo.

SIGHTS
Rabanal’s fate has always been directly linked to the Camino and during the long years when the number of pilgrims dropped to almost zero Rabanal’s population also dropped. Today the village has four pilgrim albergues and a collection of cafés and restaurants. The building beside Albergue Gaucelmo is inhabited by Bavarian Benedictine monks from the St Ottilien Abbey in Bavaria. They established a monastery here in 2001. Mass in the church at 19:00.
5.4km (2h03m) to Foncebadón

ALBERGUE EL CONVENTO
Private | 22 beds | 12€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 644 521 808 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE CASA CHELO
Private | 8 beds | 17€ | On the Camino on the left. Vegetarian and vegan food. Laundry facilities, microwaves. New in 2022. Tel 641 023 636 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE MONTE IRAGO
Private | 35 beds | 22€ | On the Camino on the left. Café / restaurant with vegetarian options. Evening meal included in price. Breakfast. Strong hippie vibe with alternative therapies, goats, cats, rabbits, etc. running around outside. Tel 655 329 667

LA POSADA DEL DRUIDA
Private | 20 beds | 15€ | March to October | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Tel 696 820 136 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE PARROQUIAL DOMUS DEI
Parish | 20 beds | donativo | April to October | On the Camino on the right. Microwave. Communal evening meal and pilgrim prayers (attendance voluntary, all welcome). Breakfast (Spanish / basic). Run by volunteers. Friendly and welcoming. In the renovated village church. Open 12:00.

INFORMATION
Shop on the Camino on the left, cafés. The food in La Taberna de Gaia has been recommended.

SIGHTS
The site is believed to have been used by the Romans as a shrine to their God Mercury and was then ‘Christianised’ by Gaucelmo who placed the first cross here.

HISTORY
Foncebadón is another village brought back to life by the rebirth of the Camino. At the beginning of the 20th century it had 215 inhabitants but due to poverty its population had dropped to nothing by 1990 and much of the village was in ruins. As the last village before crossing the mountains into El Bierzo, which also marks the highest point on the Camino Francés, it has always been a popular stopping point. Gaucelmo (San Gregorio) founded a Pilgrim Hospital here in the 11th century.

You can walk on the road all the way to Molinaseca if you so desire, a good option if it’s been snowing.

1.9km after Foncebadón you will come to the Cruz de Ferro.

The Cruz de Ferro is also sometimes called the Cruz de Hierro or Cruz do Fierro. It doesn’t mark the highest point on the Camino, that’s a few kilometres later, but it’s pretty high nevertheless. It’s traditional for pilgrims to deposit a pebble here which they carried from their home to ask for protection on the remainder of their journey. Today the cross stands on top of a 5m high pile of stones. Pilgrim often also leave some other memento here.

2.3km to Manjarín

Manjarín was abandoned at the beginning of the 19th century and only came back to life in 1993 when the pilgrim albergue opened. Its history, like so many other villages in this region, dates back to the early days of the Camino when there was a
Sadly the famous and iconic albergue here has closed and it seems unlikely if it will open again.

3.2km after Manjarín, after passing an antenna on your right, you will reach the **highest point on the Camino Francés at 1515m** and enter El Bierzo. Fiestas Día Del Bierzo 8 September. After the highest point you will descend 930m over 11.7km between here and Molinaseca. The path may be slippery in places, especially in winter. It is possible to follow the road all the way.

**11.2km (3h16m) to El Acebo**

**ALBERGUE MESÓN EL ACEBO**
Private | 32 beds | 10€ | February to November | On the left on the Camino. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. There’s a separate dorm in another building which they open when the main one is full. Private rooms. Tel 616 802 840 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE PARROQUIAL APÓSTOL SANTIAGO**
Parish | 24 beds | donativo | Easter to October | A little to the left of the Camino near the end of the village. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Pilgrim discussion before meal. Welcoming. Open 14:00

**LA CASA DEL PEREGRINO**
Private | 80 beds | 12€ | March to October | A little past the village on the, in a large modern building. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Swimming pool. Shop. Private rooms. Website www.alberguelacasadelperegrino.es Tel 987 057 793 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés and a small shop on the Camino.

**FOOD** The local culinary speciality is the innocent-sounding **Botillo**. This consists of a pig’s stomach stuffed with seasoned bones, tongue, ear, snout and sundry other pig pieces, with chorizo and cabbage, all cured and smoked over a period of five days and served piping hot. It’s as delicious as it sounds! The locals are very proud of it, even if it has its own confraternity, **Cofradía Gastronómica del Real Botillo del Bierzo**. It’s available in the excellent restaurant **Mesón El Acebo**. Besides pig’s stomach El Bierzo’s micro-climate and rich soil make it perfect for the cultivation of fruit such as apples / manzanas, pears / peras and cherries / cerezas. **Peppers / pimientos** are also grown here and usually eaten grilled. The local variety of apple is called La Reinata is renowned for its balance of acidity and sweetness. It can be eaten like a normal apple or used in cooking.

**SIGHTS** The architecture here is typical of mountain villages in El Bierzo. Houses are built of slate with wooden balconies overlooking the street. In the middle-ages the inhabitants of El Acebo were freed from paying taxes to the king in exchange for the maintenance of stone waymarkings over the mountain for pilgrims. Despite being part of the province of Leon, El Bierzo has a distinct character. It lies in a wide valley in the mountain fastness close to the borders with Galicia and Asturias. Its people, in their speech and their culture, reflect this mix of influences. Its climate, mild in summer and mostly snow-free in winter, makes it ideal for mixed agriculture of which market gardening and viticulture predominate on lower ground, and sheep rearing and chestnuts higher up.

**PLACE NAME** The Holly.
3.3km (0h51m) to Riego de Ambrós

ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE RIEGO DE AMBRÓS
Municipal | 25 beds | 8€ | Easter to October | On the left of the Camino, on Plaza San Sebastián. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 640 376 118 Open 13:00

INFORMATION | Café in a guest house a little off the Camino to the right, sign-posted.

PLACE NAME | Drainage ditch of Ambrós. Ambrós is believed to be a family name.

There is a long, steep descent into Molinaseca. An easier alternative if you don’t like descents or in poor weather, is to walk along the (quiet) road.

4.5km (1h11m) to Molinaseca

ALBERGUE COMPOSTELA
Private | 32 beds | 11€ | Left after the bridge, near the church, on Calle La Iglesia. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Spacious with good modern facilities. Tel 987 453 057 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE SEÑOR OSO
Private | 16 beds | 14€ | On the Camino in the centre of the village. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 661 761 970 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE SANTA MARINA
Private | 40 beds | 10€ | March to October | On the right on the main road about 500m after the village. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Modern and comfortable. Private rooms. Tel 615 302 390 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE SAN ROQUE
Municipal | 19 beds | 10€ | Past the previous albergue and it’s on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 600 501 030 Open 13:00

INFORMATION | Cafés, restaurants, shops, on the Camino. Pharmacy to the right of the Camino on the main road. Masón El Palacio on the right after the bridge does an excellent pilgrim menu. In summer there is a Playa Fluvial / River Beach by the
bridge.

**SIGHTS** The bridge over the river Meruelo over which you will cross when entering the town dates from Roman times. Along Calle Mayor (also known as Camino de Santiago) are several houses of nobility with the coats of arms of their owners on their façades. The town’s church is worth seeing. It’s on a small rise, turn left just after the bridge. It has an unusual statue of a *pilgrim with a dog*. This was the site of a Roman settlement which was an important stopping point on the road between Braga and Astorga.

**PLACE NAME** Dry Mill.

From here, unfortunately, you’ll be walking on hard surfaces most of the way to Las Herrerías.

From Molinaseca walk along the footpath beside the main road towards Ponferrada.

2.8km after Molinaseca the Camino divides. From here there are two options to enter Ponferrada. Either **continue on the main road** for 4km, or **veer left** on to a minor road to follow a longer ‘official’ Camino through a series of meanders for 5.1km.

### 7.9km (2h14m) to Ponferrada

**ALBERGUE ALEA**

Private | 18 beds | 15€ | April to November | To the right of the **RIGHT ROUTE** into town shortly after it passes under a railway bridge, on Calle Teleno, signposted. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal with vegetarian options. Breakfast. Good reports. Website [www.alberguealea.com](http://www.alberguealea.com) Tel 660 416 251 Open 13:00

**REFUGIO DE SAN NICOLÁS DE FLÜE**

Religious | 180 beds | donativo | Beside a big car park on the Camino, if you followed the ‘official’ left route it’s on the right, otherwise it’s on the left. On Calle de la Loma. Kitchen, laundry facilities. The original mega albergue. Website [www.sannicolasdeflue.com](http://www.sannicolasdeflue.com) Tel 987 413 381 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE GUIANA**


**INFORMATION** Ponferrada has all facilities. There are several **supermarkets** near the albergues and lots of restaurants and cafés near Plaza del Ayuntamiento, including *Restaurante La Fonda* which does a good menú del día, and *Pizzeria la Competencia* which does good pizzas, it’s on Plaza Virgin de la Encina. *Restaurante Mencía*, on Calle Nicolás de Brujas, has also been recommended. *Tourist Office* hidden in the main entrance to the castle. Ponferrada is a popular Camino starting-point, especially in summer. Some would say the hustle and bustle of the last 100km really begins here (especially if you’re here at the weekend).

**SIGHTS** Ponferrada Castle / El Castillo de Ponferrada is a typical Templar castle similar to many others built around the time of the **Crusades**. It was built in two distinct phases (12th and 15th centuries) on the ruins of an earlier Visigoth fortress which had in turn been build on a pre-Roman castro. A moat surrounded it on all sides except where it faced the river. Inside the outer walls are various 12th century fortifications of Templar origin, although the original construction has been much modified down the years. At the height of its power it functioned almost like a city in miniature with shops, a bakery, accommodation for visitors, a prison, and a perm
ent population of several hundred people. Not to forget various chapels and monas-
tery. It's open to visitors during the day except lunchtime. La Basílica de la Encina
on Plaza de la Virgen was begun in 1572. Its tower was added a hundred
years later. It is in renaissance style. The Ayuntamiento is 17th century Baroque.
The Museo del Bierzo on Calle del Reloj, has permanent exhibitions covering local history from pre-Roman time, including a detailed history of the castle. Some sights give free entry to pilgrims on Wednesday. Fiestas Semana Santa, La Asunción 15-16 August. Noche Templaria / Templar Night on the first full moon of July when the townspeople dress in medieval costumes to symbolically welcome the master of the Knights Templar, Guido de Garda into the town. Music, dancing, eating, drinking (no bulls). La Encina 5-9 September. From Ponferrada an alternative route to Santiago splits from the Camino Francés. Called the Camino de Invierno / Winter Camino, it was used by pilgrims in winter to avoid crossing the mountains at O Cebreiro in bad weather. It’s slightly longer than the Camino Francés and because it’s infrequently used, services along it are scarce. However it is becoming more popular, and could be a good alternative to the sometimes crowded last 100km of the Camino Francés. A ‘home-made’ but nevertheless comprehensive guide to this Camino is available from Ivar’s Camino Forum in the Camino Resources section: www.caminoesantiago.me/community/

**HISTORY** Ponferrada is the capital of El Bierzo and its largest town. From 7,000 inhabitants in 1940 its population grew to around 66,000 today, overtaking Villafranca. Its rapid growth was largely due to the development of the coal-mining industry. Today the region’s economy is based on engineering, metal working, glass making, cement production, mining, agriculture and winemaking. It is home to Europe’s largest wind turbine factory. There was already a thriving settlement here when the Romans arrived. This region’s value to the Romans was based to the mineral deposits in the surrounding mountains. The modern town of Ponferrada dates to the completion in 1082 of a bridge over the river Sil, commissioned by Bishop Osmundo to facilitate the pilgrimage to Santiago. The bridge is said to have been reinforced with steel, giving the town its name. Shortly afterwards the church of San Pedro was founded and was for a while under the control of the Knights Templars, who were charged with defending pilgrims on the Camino. Some people believe that the castle contains a hidden message related to the Knights Templar and the mystery of the Holy Grail and the Arc of the Covenant.

**PLACE NAME** Named for its steel bridge, pons ferrata in Latin, mentioned in the Codex Calixtinus.

Getting out of Ponferrada is a little complicated, follow the Camino to the castle and then turn right. The Camino leads you through the historic centre before crossing the river into the new part of town where it turns right to follow the river north for 1.4km until it turns left away from the river at a roundabout shortly after the Museo de la Energía / Energy Museum. 4.5km to Columbrianos, café. (Albergue San Blas is reported closed)

### Camponaraya

8.7km (2h19m) to Camponaraya

**ALBERGUE NARAYA**


Tel 987 459 159 Open 12:00

**LA MEDINA**

Private | 18 beds | 13€ | On the Camino on the right, just after a roundabout. In a newly renovated building. Laundry facilities. Garden. Café / restaurant with good food. Private rooms. Bar downstairs may be noisy. Tel 667 348 551 Open 13:30

**INFORMATION** Dia supermarket on the left. Shops, cafés, bank, pharmacy, all on

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
the Camino.

**FOOD** Leaving Camponaraya on the left there is an interpretative centre for the local wine industry, Centro de Interpretación de la Vid y el Vino, entrance is free, Wednesday to Sunday 09:00 to 14:00.

The Camino in Camponaraya runs along a busy road the length of the village and out the other end, then at the gates of a factory it veers up to the left beside a picnic area.

5.9km (1h37m) to **Cacabelos**

**ALBERGUE LA GALLEG A**

Private | 30 beds | 16€ | On the right on the Camino in the centre of the town. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant / pulpería. Private rooms. Tel 680 917 109 Open 11:00

**EL MOLINO**

Private | 16 beds | 15€ | On the left just before the church. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website www.elmolinoalbergue.com Tel 676 690 900 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE DE CACABELOS**

Municipal | 70 beds | 6€ | April to September | On the right after the bridge. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Two beds per room arranged in a semi-circle around a church, although without noise insulation. Facilities basic. Tel 987 547 167 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** All facilities on or near the Camino. Banks and pharmacies on Plaza Mayor, left just after Albergue El Molino.

**FOOD** At the beginning of the town on the right is vineyard / Restaurant Moncloa. If you go into their shop and say the words ‘¿Tiene un vaso de vino por un peregrino (or peregrina) que esta muriendo de sed?’, they will (or should) give you a free glass of wine and a tapa. :) Their restaurant is also recommended. This part of the route is through some of El Bierzo’s best grape growing areas. The main grape here is the Mencia a descendent of the Cabaret Franc grape, said to have been carried here by a French pilgrim. From it are produced the area’s distinctive reds and rosés. Another grape variety, La Godello is used to produce white wine.

**SIGHTS** The Archaeological Museum has Celtic and Roman artefacts.

**HISTORY** There is evidence of settlement in this area since the Bronze Age. In modern times it has been ruled over by the Celts, Romans, Visigoths and Muslims. After the Reconquista the depopulated land was granted to the Monastery of Carracedo and shortly afterwards the Bishop of Santiago funded the town’s reconstruction provoking conflict with the Dioceses of Astorga, under whose jurisdiction it lay. The conflict was solved when the town was handed over to the Dioceses of Santiago which ruled it until 1890. In the middle ages it became an important stopping point
on the Camino with, for a while, five pilgrim albergues. It also attracted a large number of Frankish and Jewish settlers who turned it into an important market town. The English and the French crossed swords near here during the Spain’s War of Independence from the French. Today Cacabelos is an important centre in El Bierzo’s wine industry and has had a pilgrim albergue since the early 1990s.

2.2km (0h43m) to Pieros

ALBERGUE EL SERBAL Y LA LUNA
Private | 20 beds | 10€ | Easter to November | Just to the right of the Camino. Laundry facilities, fireplace. Vegetarian communal evening meal. Breakfast. Yoga. Run by volunteers. Good reports. Tel 639 888 924 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Nice donative café on the right near the Albergue (summer only).

1.9km (0h35m) to Valtuille de Arriba

LA BIZNAGA

INFORMATION Café.

4.9km (1h24m) to Villafranca del Bierzo

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL
Municipal | 62 beds | 8€ | Easter to November | To the right of the Camino before the town, down some steps. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website villafrancadelbierzo.org/albergue Tel 987 542 356 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE AVE FENIX
Private | 80 beds | 10€ | On the left just after the church at the beginning of the town. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Cramped dorms. Tel 626 146 115 Open 14:00

ALBERGUE EL CASTILLO
Private | 22 beds | 14€ | Easter to November | On the Camino after the castle, on Calle del Castillo. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Good reports. Website www.elcastillovillafranca.es Tel 622 674 676 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE LEO
Private | 25 beds | 13€ | Easter to November | On the Camino where it descends towards the river, on Calle Ribadeo. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Good reports. Website www.albergueleo.com Tel 658 049 244 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE LA YEDRA
Private | 18 beds | 10€ | Easter to October | Left off Plaza Mayor, down steps on Calle Yedra. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 636 586 872 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE CONVENTO SAN NICOLÁS
Private | 75 beds | 10€ | Continue past Plaza Mayor and it’s on the right in an impressive but slightly creepy old boarding school. Café / restaurant. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Basic. Private rooms. Website www.sannicolaselreal.com Tel 696 978 653 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE DE LA PIEDRA
Private | 12 beds | 12€ | March to November | Follow the Camino through town, cross the bridge and continue on Calle del Espíritu Santo, it’s on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Excellent buffet breakfast. Private rooms. Beautifully renovated al
bergue run by a young couple from Madrid. Website www.alberguedelapiedra.com
Tel 666 655 052
Open 12:30

INFORMATION
Villafranca is a big town with all facilities. Around Plaza Mayor, a little off the Camino to the right, you’ll find shops, cafes, restaurants, pharmacies, banks, Cafetería Compostelana and Restaurante Sevilla both of which do good food. Supermarket Carrefour Express, continue straight through Plaza Mayor, past the very nice park (Jardín de la Alameda), then continue down Calle Luis del Olmo. There’s another supermarket on the Camino after the bridge. Fiestas La Esperanza 14 September.

SIGHTS The Iglesia de Santiago is on the left on the way into town. Thanks to a Papal Bull obtained by the bishop of Astorga in 1186 this church can grant an indulgence to any pilgrim who is unable due to illness to continue to Santiago. The church is a modest Romanesque building with some Gothic influences. Its northern doorway (facing the Camino), known as the Puerta del Perdón, is set in a slightly pointed arch whose archivolts contain depictions of the Crucifixion, the Three Kings, the Epiphany, acanthus leaves and mythical animals. This door, like the Puerta Santa in Santiago, is only opened during Holy Years. The interior is very simple, apart from the ornate Baroque altar with scenes from the Passion of Christ. The castle, Castillo de los Marqueses de Villafranca, is 16th century and was built as a residence for local nobility. Along Calle del Agua are many tradition houses of the nobility adorned with coats-of-arms and balconies overhanging the streets. The valley of the Valcarce River was notorious for thieves and the mafia-like practices of some of the local residents who extorted money from pilgrims in exchange for safe passage. Happily these practices were ended by the Knights Templar who took on the task of protecting pilgrims in the 11th century. The main road in the valley has been superseded by a motorway which haunts our every step as we tread through this otherwise beautiful countryside. Although tourism is increasingly the mainstay of the local eco-
nomy, the agricultural sector is still important, with **cattle** and the cultivation of **chestnuts / castañas** being the principal activities. If you pass through here in the autumn you may see them being harvested (the chestnuts). Although this is still El Bierzo the speech of the local people is more reminiscent of Galicia than Castile. The number of cows staring at you over stone walls is another clue that you have crossed an invisible line.

**HISTORY** Villafranca has been an important trading centre since pre-Roman times thanks to its location on the major route between the north-west and the centre of the Iberian peninsula. In the middle-ages it became a major stopping point on the Camino, with seven pilgrim albergues and a number of important religious sites. It is also the end of a stage as described in the Codex Calixtinus. As its name suggests, it was home to a substantial colony of Franks as well as Jews and Galicians. In the middle ages a French Benedictine monastery under the control of Cluny, **Santa María de Clunia**, was established here. Known as the **Black Monks**, they dedicated themselves to helping French pilgrims and wine making, among other activities. For several centuries the town had two representatives of the monarch, one for the Franks and one for the natives.

**PLACE NAME** Frankish or free Town of Bierzo

Shortly after crossing the bridge in Villafranca the Camino divides. The main (easiest and shortest) route continues straight ahead and follows the road along the flat valley floor beside the Río Valcarce. Passing through the village of Pereje.

**THE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE (does not go through Pereje)**
This (more scenic, hillier and longer) route goes up a narrow, steep street by Peluquería Ana / Hairdresser. (It may not be signposted due to vandalism.) It passes through beautiful mountainous countryside before rejoining the main route in Trabadelo. It has a steep 410m ascent and corresponding descent. Yellow arrows are scarce at times. Once at the top follow the unpaved road. This route passes through Pradela where there is a café and an albergue.

Private (10, 6€, March to November) **Albergue Lamas**, in the village of Pradela on the alternative route. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant with local produce and their own wine. Breakfast. Tel 677 569 764 Open 11:00

On the descend towards Trabadelo along a minor road, in a left-hand curve there’s a marked track branching right, follow this. The route crosses the road twice before arriving in Trabadelo. This alternative route is a bit of an adventure but much more beautiful than the main valley route and worth the slog (in good weather and visibility).

**4.8km Pereje, café. The municipal albergue has been closed since the beginning of Covid.**

In the 12th century the pilgrim albergue in Pereje was the scene of a territorial dispute between the Cluniac monastery of Villafranca and a rival monastery in O Cebreiro supported by the Abbey of Saint Géraud d’Aurillac. The O Cebreiro monks built a church and albergue in Pereje, in defiance of the Villafranca monks who officially administered the village. The dispute became so heated that Popes and monarchs became involved. Thankfully it was eventually settled with a minimum of bloodshed.

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Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
This guide as an app: caminoapp.net

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After Las Herrerías there’s a steep climb to O Cebreiro. After that it’s up and down for a while until after Fonfría, where it starts descending steeply to Triacastela.

Map 22
After Triacastela there are two options. The shorter right route take you more-or-less straight to Sarria. The left route passes through Samos with its magnificent monastery.

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
**ALBERGUE CRISPETA**
Private | 32 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Breakfast. The dorms are directly above the café so possibly noisy. Tel 620 329 386 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE CASA SUSI**
Private | 12 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left in a renovated village house. Excellent communal evening meal with vegetarian options made using home grown vegetables. Breakfast. No bunks. Garden and access to river for swimming. Run by an Australian pilgrim and her Spanish partner. Positive reports. Tel 683 278 778 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE PARROQUIAL**
Parish | 22 beds | 7€ | A little to the right of the Camino near the church. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 624 674 904 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE TRABADELO**
Municipal | 30 beds | 10€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left, contact details on the door. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 602 321 154 Open 13:00
Camino y Leyenda, on the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Private rooms from 30€. Positive reports. Tel 602 321 154

**INFORMATION** Cafés. Elly’s World restaurant has been recommended, vegetarian options, it’s on the Camino on the right.

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This guide as an app: caminoapp.net 114
La Portela de Valcarce

**ALBERGUE HOSTAL EL PEREGRINO**


Tel 987 543 197 Open early

**INFORMATION** Café.

**PLACE NAME** Portela, gate.

Ambasnestas

**ALBERGUE CAMYNOS**

Private | 10 beds | 10€ | April to November | On the Camino on the right before the village. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Website www.camynos.es

Tel 629 743 124 Open 13:00 (was closed for a while, see updates)

**INFORMATION** Cafés. The café in the Centro de Turismo Rural does an excellent Pilgrim Menu.

**PLACE NAME** Mixing of waters, the village is at the confluence of the rivers Valcarce and Balboa.

Vega de Valcarce

**ALBERGUE DE VEGA DE VALCARCE**

Municipal | 64 beds | 9€ | March to October | Up the hill to the right, under a motorway bridge. Laundry facilities, basic kitchen. A bit run-down. Tel 601 501 687 Open 13:00

**EL PASO**

Private | 28 beds | 13€ | April to November | On the Camino on the left after the church. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.albergueelpaso.es Tel 628 104 309 Open 12:30

Pensión Fernández, turn left on to Calle Puerte Viejo, cross the bridge and turn right. Kitchen. Singles and doubles from 30€. Tel 987 543 027

**INFORMATION** Shops, a bakery, a pharmacy and banks. Several places do pilgrim menus, none is particularly recommendable. Fiestas San Roque 16 August.

**SIGHTS** The ruins of the Castillo de Sarracín can be visited about 1km from the village, on a hill to the south west. It was built to help protect pilgrims from banditry.

**PLACE NAME** Plain of [the river] Valcarce.

Ruitelán

**EL RINCÓN DE PIN**

Private | 10 beds | 10€ | On the right on the Camino. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Tel 616 066 442 Open 11:00 (was closed for a while, see updates)

**PEQUEÑO POTALA**


Tel 987 561 322 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés.

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
1.2km (0h23m) to Las Herrerías

REFUGIO LAS HERRERÍAS
Private | 17 beds | 8€ | Easter to November | On the left on the Camino. Laundry facilities. Breakfast. Tel 654 353 940 Open 14:00

CASA LIXA
Private | 30 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the left on the Camino. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website www.casalixa.com Tel 987 134 915 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Cafés. You can hire a horse to O Cebreiro, look for the sign.
SIGHTS The single-arched bridge at the entrance to Las Herrerías dates from the 15th century although it is constructed in the Roman style. Watch out for otters chasing the fish in the stream!
PLACE NAME The Blacksmiths. In the middle ages iron was mined from the surrounding hills and smelted here on the riverbanks.

The climb to O Cebreiro begins here. In the next 8.2km the Camino ascends 619m.

3.5km (1h33m) to La Faba

ALBERGUE DE LA FABA
Religious | 52 beds | 8€ | April to October | Follow the sign up to the right before entering the village, beside the village church. Run by volunteers from a German Catholic organisation. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Breakfast. Website lafaba.de Tel 637 025 929 Open 14:00

TITO’S LA FABA ROOMS
Private | 8 beds | 12€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. New in 2022. Tel 622 475 871 Open 14:00

INFORMATION Small shop and cafés.
PLACE NAME The Bean.

2.3km (1h09m) to Laguna de Castilla

ALBERGUE LA ESCUELA
Private | 29 beds | 14€ | Easter to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Evening meal, one of the last place where you get real rural Spanish food on the Camino. Breakfast. Private rooms. Friendly. Tel 619 479 238 Open 12:00

INFORMATION Cafés, friendly with nice cakes.
PLACE NAME Lake of Castile.

WELCOME TO GALICIA, PROVINCE OF LUGO
There are few Municipal Albergues in Galicia however in their place are Xunta Albergues. These are funded directly by the Government of Galicia (the Xunta). They always have kitchens but for reasons which will not be speculated upon here their kitchens are rarely usable. ie. The cooker doesn’t work, there are no utensils, etc. For this reason Xunta Albergues which have unusable kitchens (which is most of them) are listed here as having no kitchen.
CASA CAMPELO
Private | 10 beds | 15€ | May to November | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Microwaves. Private rooms. Tel 679 678 458 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE DO CEBREIRO
Xunta | 100 beds | 10€ | On the Camino a little past the village. Laundry facilities. Cramped dorms. Tel 660 396 809 Open 13:00

INFORMATION Cafés, shops and tourist stuff. The restaurants in O Cebreiro offer Galician specialities (see below).

FOOD Octopus is perhaps the most famous Galician dish, it’s called Pulpo a la Gallega or Pulpo Galego in Galician but also sometimes called Polbo á Feira. It is boiled octopus with paprika, salt and olive oil. **Caldo Galego** is a stew made with chicken broth and ham with chickpeas, potatoes, cabbage and other vegetables, there is also an equally delicious veggie version. **Empanadas** are pies usually filled with tuna or chorizo, although there are many different kinds, including vegetarian. If you order a piece you generally won’t be given cutlery because it’s normal to eat it with your hands (like pizza in Italy). For dessert there’s **Torta de Santiago**, a delicious almond tart with caster sugar sprinkled on top, with the outline of the cross of the Knights Templar. You’ll find these dishes in restaurants all over Galicia so give them a go! This being a traditional fishing region means that fish of every description also features on the menus of good restaurants.

SIGHTS The church of **Santa Maria la Real** is a recent reconstruction of a much older church which stood on the same spot. Apart from a baptismal font which dates from the times when baptisms were done by immersion, little about it is genuine. Every year on 8 September it is the destination of a major local pilgrimage. Galicia is famous for its **Hóreos**, these are stone boxes (although long ago they were also built of wood) raised on pillars with ventilation holes along both sides. They were used for drying maize in summer (American corn) and for storage in winter.

HISTORY It would be unkind to portray O Cebreiro as a sort of a Galician Disneyland, but it’s difficult to avoid the conclusion that the place would be unrecognisable to pilgrims who passed through here as recently as twenty years ago and who described a landscape of ruin and abandon. Its new lease of life is well-deserved however given the important role this village has played in the recent history of the Camino. Its parish priest in the 1970s, **Elias Valiña Sampedro**, was instrumental in reviving the Camino by publishing a guide for pilgrims in 1971 and waymarking the entire Camino Francés in 1982 with the now familiar yellow arrows, using paint he scrounged off the local authority’s road maintenance department (or so the legend goes). He’s sadly no longer of this earth but there’s a bust of him beside the church. Despite the slightly surreal air which now pervades O Cebreiro has a long history as a Camino village and its first pilgrim albergue opened in 836.

Leaving O Cebreiro walk to the left of the Xunta albergue and through the forest on a good path. Ignore signposting urging you to walk along the road.
Shortly after Liñares you will come to Alto de San Roque with its famous statue of the pilgrim struggling forward against a headwind.

2.5km (0h51m) to Hospital da Condesa

ALBERGUE DE HOSPITAL DA CONDESA
Xunta | 18 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the right at the start of the village. Typical modern Xunta albergue. Laundry facilities. Tel 676 939 812 Open 13:00

INFORMATION Café.

PLACE NAME Hospital of the Countess.

2.7km (1h03m) to Alto do Poio

ALBERGUE EL PUERTO
Private | 18 beds | 6€ | On the Camino on the right, enquire in Café Puerto, the albergue is to the rear. Café / restaurant. Communal evening meal. A bit basic.
Tel 982 367 172 Open 11:00

INFORMATION Cafés. Excellent tortillas in Café Puerto and the restaurant in the guest house Hostal Santa María de Poio, across the road, is also excellent.

PLACE NAME Top of the Stone Bench.

3.4km (0h55m) to Fonfría

ALBERGUE A REBOLEIRA

INFORMATION Café Lucas, on the Camino on the left, is friendly and does good food (not always open in winter).

PLACE NAME Cold Spring.

2.5km to Biduedo, café

5.4km (1h24m) to Fillobal

ALBERGUE FILLOBAL
Private | 18 beds | 13€ | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities, kitchen. Nice, quiet albergue with only the mooing of the cows to disturb the peace.
Private rooms. Tel 666 826 414 Open 12:00

INFORMATION The village café (with vegetarian food) belongs to the same owners as the albergue. Good reports.

3.5km (0h54m) to Triacastela

ALBERGUE DE TRIACASTELA
Xunta | 56 beds | 10€ | To your left as you enter the town. Laundry facilities. Basic old-style Xunta albergue. Tel 982 548 087 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE LEMOS
Private | 12 beds | 12€ | Just off the Camino to the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities.
Private rooms. Website www.pensionalberguelemos.com Tel 677 117 238 Open 11:00

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
**ALBERGUE A HORTA DE ABEL**
Private | 14 beds | 11€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the right. In a nicely restored stone house. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Good reports. Private rooms. Website albergueahortadeabel.es Tel 608 080 556 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE ATRIO**
Private | 20 beds | 10€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 699 504 958 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE ORIBIO**
Private | 27 beds | 10€ | May to October | On the main road to the right of the Camino. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 616 774 558 Open 12:00

**COMPLEXO XACOBEO**
Private | 45 beds | 11€ | February to November | In a modern building on the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant, a little further along the street. Private rooms. Website www.complexoxacobeo.com Tel 982 548 037

**ALBERGUE AITZENEIA**
Private | 38 beds | 10€ | May to October | Down a street to the right near the main road. Kitchen, laundry facilities. In a nice old stone house. Website www.aitzenea.com Tel 646 565 670 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE BERCE DO CAMIÑO**
Private | 26 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 619 468 210 Open 09:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés, restaurants, a bank on the Camino and a pharmacy a little off it, signposted. Restaurante Complexo Xacobeo opens for breakfast and does a good Pilgrim Menu. There’s a very well-stocked supermarket on the corner opposite Albergue Aitzenea (off the Camino to the right).

**SIGHTS** Triacastela is mentioned in the Codex Calixtinus and is the end of its 11th stage. In the middle ages it was a major source of *limestone* and it was a tradition for each pilgrim to carry a stone from here to Castañeda, about 100km away, where the limekilns were. The lime produced was then used in the maintenance of Santiago Cathedral. In this way each pilgrim contributed in a small way to maintaining the cathedral. A small one will do!

At the end of the main street in Triacastela the Camino goes in two opposite directions. The right route goes through Calvor and on to Sarria. The left route goes through Samos. The two routes rejoin in Aguía shortly before Sarria.

**RIGHT ROUTE 13.6km TO AGUIADA**

**RIGHT 2.0km (0h40m) to A Balsa**

**ALBERGUE ECOLÓGICO EL BESO**
Private | 16 beds | 10€ | Easter to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Vegan communal evening meal with produce from their own garden. ‘Environmentally friendly’ albergue with modern facilities in a beautifully renovated farmhouse. Website www.elbeso.org Tel 633 550 558 Open 14:00

**SIGHTS** Café, art gallery a little after the village (although recently closed).

8.1km to Furela, café *Bar Franco* does good food, especially *empanadas* and *Caldo Galego* (see under *O Cebreiro*) although only in cold weather. 1.72km to Pintín, café

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
**RIGHT 11.1km (3h22m) to Calvor**

REFUGIO DE PEREGRINOS DE CALVOR
Xunta | 22 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the left at a roundabout before the village. Laundry facilities. Tel 982 531 266 Open 13:00

520m to Aguiada

**LEFT ROUTE 19.8km TO AGUIADA**

Follow the road for 4km as far as San Cristovo do Real where the Camino branches to the right.

**LEFT 4.0km (1h08m) to San Cristovo do Real**

CASA GRANDE DE LUSÍO
Xunta | 60 beds | 10€ | 300m off the Camino after the village, signposted. Modern facilities. No services in the vicinity. Tel 659 721 324 Open 13:00

1.75km to Renche, café.

**LEFT 6.1km (2h01m) to Samos**

ALBERGUE DEL MONASTERIO DE SAMOS
Religious | 40 beds | donativo | Easter to October | In the basement of the monastery by the petrol station. After descending the hill take a right towards to monastery before crossing the bridge. Basic. Website www.abadiadesamos.com Tel 982 546 046 Open 14:00

ALBERGUE TRAS DO CONVENTO
Private | 10 beds | 13€ | April to November | Opposite the monastery albergue, at the corner of Calle Salvador. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 631 557 095 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE VAL DE SAMOS
Private | 48 beds | 16€ | Easter to November | Follow the Camino across the bridge, it’s on the right opposite the Ayuntamiento. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.valdesamos.com Tel 609 638 801 Open 13:00

Guest house Casa Licerio, on the Camino on the right when leaving town, has singles from 35€ and doubles from 50€. Tel 692 022 323

**INFORMATION** Cafés, supermarket and pharmacy on the Camino after it turns left after the bridge. Tourist Office at the entrance to the monastery albergue. Swanky Restaurante Albaroque, on the Camino on the way out of town, does excellent food. The monastery can be visited by guided tour only, for info ask in the gift shop. Fiestas San Bieito Abade 11 July.

**SIGHTS** The mix of architectural styles in the monastery at Samos reflect its different building phases which began in the 11th century. They include late-Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque. Its main façade was constructed during the 18th century and is Baroque in style and distinctive for its square shape and its staircase which is reminiscent of Santiago Cathedral’s Obradoiro entrance. The monastery has two cloisters, the older, usually called pequeño / small was completed in the 16th century and surrounds the Baroque Fuente de las Nereidas. It is built in late Gothic style. (Nereidas / Nereids, in Greek mythology, are sea nymphs and companions of Poseidon, the god of the sea.) The newer cloister was completed in the 17th century and...
is 56m long and is the largest cloister in Spain. In its centre is a statue of the artist Padre Feijoo who lived here for several years. The church contains artwork from the Renaissance, Baroque and Classical periods.

**HISTORY** The history of Samos is representative of the history of monastic life in Galicia. The foundation of the monastery is attributed to San Martín Dumiense sometime before the 7th century. It was abandoned for a time during the period of Muslim rule and reopened in the 9th century by a Mozarabic migrant from the south called Argericus and has been in use as a monastery ever since. It became an important monastic site during the middle ages. It was granted control over 105 churches by the Pope in 1175, this allowed it to accumulate great wealth which attracted the attention of marauding pirates. Samos adopted the **Benedictine rule of hospitality towards pilgrims** in the 10th century and there have been pilgrim albergues here from around that time. In the 12th century, in common with most monasteries in Northern Spain, it came under the influence of Cluny. A pious head monk attempted to remove the Fuente de las Nereidas from the old cloister, considering its depiction of ample-bosomed women to be a dangerous distraction for the monks. However, as the pieces were moved away they became progressively heavier leading him to abandon his puritanical scheme.

After Samos the Camino follows the main road for 2.5km until it branches right at a restaurant called Mesón Pontenova. This route passes through beautiful countryside and the localities (you can hardly call them villages) of Pascais, Gorolfe, Veiga, Sivil and Perros.

7.9km from Samos to Sivil, café.

**RIGHT AND LEFT ROUTES REJOIN IN AGUIADA, 4.5km BEFORE SARRIA**

Once in Sarria there's a temporary (for several years now) detour where a bridge over the Río Sarria is being reconstructed.

**RIGHT** 5.0km (1h20m) to

**LEFT** 14.3km (4h17m) to **Sarria**

Albergues are listed in the order in which you will encounter them if you were walking the Camino. The first ones listed are outside the historic centre at the beginning of the town.

**A PEDRA**

Private | 22 beds | 13€ | April to November | On the right at the start of the town, beside tourist information. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Evening meal. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website albergueapedra.com Tel 652 517 199 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE OASIS**

Private | 27 beds | 12€ | March to October | Just after A Pedra on the left. In a classy, modern building. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website www.albergueoasis.com Tel 605 948 644 Open 11:30

**ALMA DO CAMIÑO**

Private | 100 beds | 13€ | March to October | On Rúa Calvo Sotelo, a wide street which branches right off the Camino, on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website www.almadelcamino.com Tel 629 822 036 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE O BARULLO**


121 Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
ALBERGUE CREDENCIAL

ALBERGUE PUENTE RIBEIRA
Private | 30 beds | 12€ | March to October | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website www.albergue-
These albergues are all on or near Rúa Maior which the Camino follows through the historic centre of Sarria.

**ALBERGUE CASA PELTRE**
Private | 22 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the Camino on the steps up to the old town. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website [www.alberguecasapeltre.es](http://www.alberguecasapeltre.es) Tel 606 226 067 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE SARRIA**
Xunta | 40 beds | 10€ | A little to the right at the top of the steps. Laundry facilities. Modern. Tel 660 396 813 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE MAYOR**
Private | 16 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the left on the Camino. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website [www.alberguemayor.es](http://www.alberguemayor.es) Tel 680 110 003 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE O DURMIÑENTO**
Private | 41 beds | 10€ | April to November | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Breakfast. Reported nice. Tel 600 862 508 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE INTERNACIONAL**
Private | 38 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website [www.albergueinternacionalesarria.es](http://www.albergueinternacionalesarria.es) Tel 982 535 109 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE OBRADOIRO**
Private | 35 beds | 11€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 653 498 621 Open 12:00

**LOS BLASONES**

**ALBERGUE EL BORDÓN DE LA CASA BATALLÓN**
Private | 6 beds | 12€ | On the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website [casabatallon.com](http://casabatallon.com) Tel 628 63 64 27 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE DON ÁLVARO**
Private | 40 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 686 468 803 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE MATÍAS**
Private | 32 beds | 10€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant, recommended. Private rooms. Website [matiaslocanda.es](http://matiaslocanda.es) Tel 683 243 335 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE MONASTERIO DE LA MAGDALENA**
Religious | 100 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the Camino 350m after turning off Rúa Maior, on Avenida La Mercede. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website [www.alberguesdelcampo.com](http://www.alberguesdelcampo.com) Tel 982 533 568 Open 11:00

These albergues are NOT on the Camino.

**ALBERGUE SAN LÁZARO**
Private | 28 beds | 12€ | April to October | From Rúa Maior turn right on to Rúa do Colexio / Calaxa and continue about 500m until you see Rúa San Lázaro on your left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website [alberguesalanlazaro.com](http://alberguesalanlazaro.com) Tel 659 185 482 Open 11:00

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Updates: [caminoguide.net/pages/updates](http://caminoguide.net/pages/updates)
HOSTEL ANDAINA
Private | 26 beds | 13€ | April to October | Near the railway station, follow the same direction as Albergue San Lázaro but instead of turning left continue straight until Rúa Calvo Sotelo, there you’ll see it to your left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website hostelandaina.com Tel 628 232 103 Open 12:00
Guest house La Casona de Sarria, same direction as Albergue San Lázaro. Laundry facilities. Evening meal, breakfast. Good reports. Website www.lacasonadesarria.es Tel 670 036 444 Open 12:00

INFORMATION
Restaurants in Sarria are suffering from the tourist phenomenon of the last 100km with US style obsequiousness common and overuse of the word amigo. One refuge from all this is Mesón Camiño Francés on Rúa Mayor, still serving traditional dishes the traditional way. Sarria is a major town with all facilities. Tourist Office on the right at the beginning of the town. Most pilgrim albergues are in the historic centre on or near Rúa Maior, where there are also restaurants and cafés which open for breakfast. Supermarket, fruit shop and bank on Rúa de Matías López, continue straight where the Camino turns left up the steps. More banks and pharmacies on Rúa Calvo Sotelo on the way to the train station. Good hiking shop and a pharmacy just before the steps. Sarria is the most popular starting point on the whole Camino Francés because it is the most easily reached point which is just before the 100km mark. Fiestas San Xoán 24 June and the last Saturday of August Noite Meiga / Witches Night.

FOOD
If you like Italian food (or the pilgrim menus are getting you down) try Matías Locanda Italiana, part of Albergue Matias, on Rúa Maior. It has been recommended.

SIGHTS
Long before the 100km rule changed its life forever Sarria was an important stop on the Camino Francés. Rúa Maior is the heart of the old town, on or near it are the Ayuntamiento / Casa do Concello and the 14th century Igrexa de San Salvador with its fortified tower. The Mosteiro de Santa María Madalena, which is now a pilgrim albergue, is late Gothic.

HISTORY
This abundantly fertile region has been inhabited since neolithic times as demonstrated by the number of castros, dolmens and rock carving scattered around the landscape. Throughout history its economy has always revolved around agriculture. The town of Sarria developed principally as a market town for agricultural produce and as a major stop on the road to Santiago. The local speciality is pork products. The Camino was a powerful motor of development for the town (even before it became the starting line for the 100km dash) with albergues, hermitages, bridges, inns and other facilities developing to serve the needs of pilgrims. Raiding by both sides during the Reconquista, the decline in pilgrim numbers in the late middle ages and the ravages of the plague, caused a corresponding decline in the fortunes of the town from which it only began to recover in the 19th century when the arrival of the railway provided wider markets for local produce. King Alfonso XI died here in 1230, while en route to Santiago.

Covid is well and truly over, proof of this is that in summer 2022 and 2023 the charity scammers were back outside Sarria. They generally accost pilgrims on a quite part of the Camino with a clipboard and a story about helping deaf children. It’s all lies. Don’t give them anything. The best thing is not to engage with them at all, look pissed-off, look straight ahead, and keep walking.

Sarria to Santiago (the last 100km)
Sarria is the main starting point for people who are walking the last 100km. If you’re
walking in summer you will notice a sudden increase in the number of fresh-looking people energetically (and often noisily) passing you by. That makes this an appropriate moment to mention: *Sarria to Santiago*

A few years ago I spent a night in the town of La Bañeza on a little-frequented part of the Vía de la Plata. It was mid-winter and already the sky was darkening when I arrived. An old lady who lived across the street from the municipal albergue gave me the key, told me where the shops and restaurants were, and where to leave the key in the morning. Then she left me to my own devices. I was alone in the albergue. This wasn’t a surprise. I hadn’t see another pilgrim in about two weeks so I was used to the solitude by now and I had my routine: shower; wash clothes; shop for the next day; then there would hopefully only remain a couple of hours to kill until the restaurants opened at 9 (this being ‘off-Camino’ restaurants worked on ‘Spanish time’). Then, immediately after dinner, bed. The municipal albergue looked like it dated from the 1950s and had once been a girls primary school. Now, besides housing the occasional errant pilgrim, it also served as the local community’s shrine to the Camino, complete with every type of Camino artefact imaginable, banners, books, posters, maps. There was even a surprisingly big piece of wood purported to come from the house where Santo Domingo de la Calzada was born. This had all been assembled by the local Friends of the Camino. But what struck me most were the photos. Loads and loads of photos carefully arranged into display cases, dated and labelled, all of them of groups of people, smiling, mostly middle-aged in summer clothes, with sticks and backpacks, the instantly recognisable paraphernalia of pilgrimhood. Sometimes it was a daytrip to a local place of pilgrimage but often too the background and labels identified places along the Camino Francés in Galicia which were familiar to me. The people were familiar too, with their tiny backpacks and their air of a Sunday outing, these were the people I’d seen many times between Sarria and Santiago, waiting at bus-stops, eating sandwiches out of the back of a van, sitting outside a café greeting their companions’ arrivals with a mixture of cheering and jeering. These were the people who we long-distance pilgrims sometimes disparagingly refer to as ‘tourists’ or ‘turigrinos’, because they sully the silence and solitude of ‘our’ Camino with their good-humoured, excited babbling. But these are also the people who provided the wonderful albergue in La Bañeza where I got to sleep for free, and many, many other albergues all over Spain which we all get to use. They’re the people who make the Camino what it is, welcoming and accessible to people like us. So, be nice to them.

4.4km (1h32m) to Vilei - Barbadelo

**CASA BARBADELO**

Private | 48 beds | 15€ | Easter to October


Tel 636 678 324 Open 12:00

Follow the Camino for 700m to:

**ALBERGUE O POMBAL**

Private | 12 beds | 12€ | Easter to October

300m to the left of the Camino, signposted. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Garden with hammocks. Basic. Website [albergueopombal.blogspot.com](http://albergueopombal.blogspot.com) Tel 686 718 732 Open 13:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
After Sarria we enter the rolling countryside of central Galicia. There are no major climbs or descents between here and Santiago, instead there are lots and lots of small ones. The only point of difficulty on this stretch is the descent to the reservoir at Portomarin. See the walking notes on the page 119.
ALBERGUE DE BARBADELO
Xunta | 18 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Tel 660 396 814 Open 13:00

INFORMATION Cafés. The restaurant in A Casa de Carmen is recommended.

SIGHTS Barbadejo’s Romanesque Igrexa de Santiago de Barbadejo dates from the 12th century. Its main entrance is decorated with animal motifs while its side entrance is decorated with scallop-shells and plants. The countryside you’re walking through was within living memory dedicated largely to subsistence agriculture. Generations of families eked a living out of farms consisting of little more than a few tiny fields, their livestock could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The advent of mechanised agribusiness made whole swathes of the countryside redundant and pushed young people to the cities of Spain and beyond.

1.7km to Café Serra.
3.1km to Molino de Marzán (the albergue here is closed)
1.6km to Peruscallo, café.
2.5km to A Brea, café.

7.7km (2h24m) to Morgade

ALBERGUE CASA MORGADE
Private | 6 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Evening meal with vegetarian options. Breakfast. Good reports. Private rooms. Website casamorgade.gal Tel 676 535 369 Open 13:00

INFORMATION Café.

1.1km (0h19m) to Ferreiros

CASA CRUCEIRO

ALBERGUE DE FERREIROS
Xunta | 22 beds | 10€ | A little to the left of the Camino opposite Casa Cruceiro. Kitchen (with very basic utensils). Laundry facilities. It seems the Xunta’s renovation fund ran out before they got to this one. Tel 660 396 815 Open 13:00

INFORMATION Cafés. The restaurant O Mirallos, a little further along the Camino from the albergues, is popular with the locals and does a good Pilgrim...
Menu.

**PLACE NAME** Galician, Blacksmiths.

900m to 100km from Santiago waymarker.
300m to A Pena, café. Shortly after A Pena, As Rozas, café in a farm yard.

### 3.8km (1h04m) to **Mercadoiro**

**ALBERGUE RURAL DE MERCADOIRO**

Private | 22 beds | 13€ | April to November | On the Camino on the left. Café / restaurant which does regional specialities. Laundry facilities. Good reports of food and albergue. Situated in open countryside. Private rooms. Website mercadoiro.com

Tel 600 030 852 Open early

**INFORMATION** Café in the albergue, small shop 360m further on.

### 3.1km (0h50m) to **Vilacha**

**CASA BANDERAS**

Private | 8 beds | 27€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal and breakfast with bacon, eggs, etc. Run by a US couple. Private rooms. Website casabanderas.com Tel 682 179 589 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés. Vegetarian restaurant Los Andantes has been recommended

600m after Vilacha the Camino divides. The left route veers on to a narrow path between high stone walls. This path is steep and can be slippy, especially after rain. The right route (the only one until 2015) branches right and follows a quiet country road. These routes rejoin at the bridge just before Portomarín. The distances are more-or-less the same.

If you’re not stopping in Portomarín and you don’t feel like climbing all those steps you can turn left just after the bridge, walk along the road and rejoin the Camino where it crosses a bridge to the left.

### 1.9km (0h30m) to **Portomarín**

These albergues are to the left at the top of those stairs.

**ALBERGUE CASONA DA PONTE**

Private | 47 beds | 14€ | First left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Café / restaurant. Website casonadaponte.com Tel 686 112 877 Open 12:00

**PONS MINEA**

Private | 24 beds | 15€ | Second left. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Negative reports. Website ponsminea.es Tel 686 456 931 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE FERRAMENTEIRO**

Private | 130 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | Second left then about a 50m walk. In a nice new building. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. One enormous dorm. Website albergueferramenteiro.com Tel 982 545 362 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE FOLGUEIRA**

Private | 32 beds | 14€ | On Avenida de Chantada, on the Camino past Albergue Ferramenteiro. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website alberguefolgueira.com

Tel 659 445 651 Open 11:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
These albergues are uphill towards the church.

**ALBERGUE AQUA**
Private | 10 beds | 14€ | March to November | Turn sharp left up Avenida Sarria, then it’s on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Tel 608 921 372
Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE PASIÑO A PASIÑO**
Private | 30 beds | 14€ | On the way up to the church, on the corner of Rúa Compostela. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website pasinapasin.es Tel 665 667 243
Open 12:00

With the church in front of you sharp left for Rúa Diputación.

**ALBERGUE EL CAMINANTE**
Private | 16 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | On Rúa Sánchez Carro, up Rúa Diputación then it’s the second street on the left. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Evening meal. Private rooms. Website pensionelcaminante.com Tel 683 302 883
Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE CASA CRUZ**
Private | 16 beds | 14€ | March to October | Off Rúa Diputación on Rúa Benigno Quiroga. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Website casacruzportomarin.com Tel 652 204 548
Open 11:00
ALBERGUE NOVO PORTO
Private | 22 beds | 14€ | April to November | Also on Rúa Benigno Quiroga. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website alberguenovoporto.com Tel 610 436 736 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE PORTO SANTIAGO
Private | 10 beds | 15€ | On the right, on Rúa Diputación. Laundry facilities, microwaves, vending machines. Private rooms. Website albergueportosantiago.com Tel 618 826 515 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE ULTREIA
Private | 14 beds | 14€ | On the left, on Rúa Diputación. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Good reports. Private rooms. Website utleriaportomarin.com Tel 676 607 292 Open 11:00

Other albergues which aren’t up Rúa Diputación

CASA DO MARABILLAS
Private | 16 beds | 15€ | March to October | Veer left at the church (as opposed to sharp left) and up Rúa de Lugo about 150m, it’s on Camiño do Monte. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website www.casadomarabillas.com Tel 744 450 425 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE HUELLAS
Private | 15 beds | 15€ | April to October | Down to the right when you arrive on the square in front of the church, then right on to Rúa do Peregrino. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website www.alberguehuellas.com Tel 681 398 278 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE DE PORTOMARÍN
Xunta | 80 beds | 10€ | Continue straight passing to the right of the church then it’s on the left. Laundry facilities. Tel 660 396 816 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL
Municipal | 50 beds | 10€ | Opposite the Xunta. Only used in busy times.

ALBERGUE MANUEL
Private | 15 beds | 14€ | On Rúa do Miño, continue straight past the Xunta then right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website alberguemanuel.com Tel 679 754 718 Open 12:00

INFORMATION There’s a supermarket, an internet café, a pharmacy and banks on Rúa Compostela as you walk up towards the church. Restaurant O Mirador, beside Albergue Ferramenteiro, does good food. Mesón de Rodriguez, near the church, open for breakfast (mixed reports about their Menú de Peregrino), closed Thursdays.

SIGHTS In 1956 construction work began on the Belesar dam whose reservoir now covers the original village. The village and bridge you see today were built from scratch. The churches of San Nicolás and San Pedro, an arch from the original bridge and the Ayuntamiento were all painstakingly dismantled and reconstructed in the new village. In times of drought, especially in late summer when the water level in the reservoir is low, the ruins of the old village and the old bridge over the river Miño can be seen. Some remaining arches from the even older Roman bridge may also be visible. When the Church of San Nicolás was rebuilt on the village’s central square it was positioned at a different angle to the original whose apse faced Jerusalem. The design of this church is sometimes attributed to Maestro Mateo (who designed much of the original cathedral in Santiago) however there is no conclusive proof of this. It is a fortress-church, dating from the 13th century and built by the
Order of St John of Jerusalem, it has some interesting sculptures, birds with human heads staring at some distant point, the Virgin Mary and an angel with a plant with three leaves from which hang the pine cones of fertility and immortality. Opposite it on the square is the Casa del Conde / Ayuntamiento.

**HISTORY** Settlement at this site dates from at least Roman times when there was a bridge over the river Miño here. Because this bridge was one of the few crossing points on this river it became an important point on the Camino Francés and the Knights Templar and the Knights of St James both had a presence here.

### 7.9km (2h35m) to Gonzar

**HOSTERÍA DE GONZAR**
Private | 20 beds | 12€ | Easter to November | Before the village on the left. Café / restaurant. Swimming Pool. Modern purpose built building. Private rooms. Website hosteriadegonzar.com Tel 689 609 407 Open 14:00

**ALBERGUE CASA GARCÍA**
Private | 26 beds | 12€ | Easter to November | To the left of the Camino, signposted. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 982 157 842 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE DE GONZAR**
Xunta | 30 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the left. Tel 982 157 840 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Café in Hostería de Gonzar.

### 1.0km (0h21m) to Castromaior

**ALBERGUE ORTIZ**
Private | 14 beds | 12€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Negative reports. Website albergueortiz.com Tel 625 668 991 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Café.

### 2.8km (0h58m) to Hospital da Cruz

**ALBERGUE DE HOSPITAL DA CRUZ**
Xunta | 32 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Modern albergue in a renovated school. Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** Café. Restaurante Labrador, near the Xunta albergue, does meals. There’s a new café a little further on.

**PLACE NAME** Hospital of the Cross.

### 1.6km (0h29m) to Vendas de Narón

**CASAS MOLAR**
Private | 18 beds | 12€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website casa-molar.negocio.site Tel 696 794 507 Open 11:00

**O CRUCEIRO**
Private | 22 beds | 12€ | March to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website albergueocruceiro.blogspot.com Tel 658 064 917 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** Cafés. 1.9km, café.

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This guide as an app: [caminoapp.net](http://caminoapp.net)
3.1km (0h49m) to **Ligonde**

**FUENTE DEL PEREGRINO**
Religious | 14 beds | donativo | May to September | On the left on the Camino, watch out for the sign. Evening meal. Breakfast. Run by volunteers. In a little stone house. One of the few pilgrim volunteer run pilgrim albergues in Galicia. Strong religious vibe with film and discussion. Website lafuentedelperegrino.com
Tel 687 550 527 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE ESCUELA DE LIGONDE**
Municipal | 20 beds | 8€ | On the Camino on the right at the end of the village. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 679 816 061 Open 13:00
800m Café Casa Mariluz with its enormous tortillas de pata.

0.9km (0h17m) to **Airexe de Ligonde**

**ALBERGUE DE LIGONDE**
Xunta | 20 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities.
Tel 982 153 483 Open 13:00
INFORMATION Café.
PLACE NAME Airexe de Ligonde, Church of Ligonde

2.1km (0h35m) to **Portos**

**A PASO DE FORMIGA**
Private | 12 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Watch out for their ant statues. Private rooms. Website apasodeformiga.com Tel 618 984 605 Open 11:00
INFORMATION Café.
800m to Lestedo, café.
1.9km, café.

5.3km (1h32m) to **Palas de Rei**
The first albergue is about 700m before the town centre where there’s also a café / restaurant:

**OS CHACOTES / PAVÍLLON DEL PEREGRINO**
Xunta | 112 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the right. Several large dorms.
Tel 607 481 536 Open 13:00
These albergues are in the town centre:

**ALBERGUE-MESÓN DE BENITO**
Private | 80 beds | 13€ | April to October | Just to the left of the Camino when entering the town, on Rúa da Paz. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Dorms a bit cramped. Website alberguemesondebenito.com Tel 636 834 065 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE OUTEIRO**
Private | 60 beds | 13€ | March to October | Right off the Camino at Rúa Outeiro, about 100m. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website albergueouteiro.com Tel 630 134 357 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE SAN MARCOS**
Private | 70 beds | 14€ | April to October | On the Camino on the right. In a modern building. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website alberguesanmarcos.com Tel 606 726 356 Open 12:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
ALBERGUE CASTRO
Private | 56 beds | 13€ | On the left on the Camino. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Cafés / restaurant which opens for breakfast. Website alberguecastro.com
Tel 609 080 655 Open early

ALBERGUE ZENDOIRA
Private | 50 beds | 13€ | February to October | Off the Camino about 500m to the left at Avenida Ourense. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Bike friendly. Private rooms. Website zendoira.com
Tel 608 490 075 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS
Xunta | 60 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the left just before crossing the main road in the town. Laundry facilities. Newly renovated in 2022. Tel 660 396 820 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE BUEN CAMINO
Private | 42 beds | 13€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left just past the Xunta. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Website www.alberguebuen camino.com
Tel 639 882 229 Open 12:00

A CASIÑA DI MARCELLO
Private | 17 beds | 17€ | On the Camino on the left leaving town. Laundry facilities. Communal (Italian) evening meal. Run by an Italian gentleman. Tel 640 723 903 Open 13:30

INFORMATION
Palas de Rei has all facilities. On the main road turning right off the Camino in the centre of the town there are supermarkets, banks and a pharmacy. Restaurante A Nosa Terra, on the main square (Praza do Concello - which the locals have very sensibly built a roof over) is good, especially for Galician specialities like Pulpo and Raxa. Fiestas San Cristovo 10 July.

SIGHTS
Romanesque architecture arrived here thanks to the Camino and was taken to heart by the local clergy who constructed an abundance of churches in this style.

PLACE NAME
Palace of the King, according to legend the king was the Visigoth Witiza who lived in the 8th century.
3.7km (1h02m) to San Xulián do Camiño

ALBERGUE O ABRIGADOIRO
Private | 16 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Tel 676 596 975 Open 12:00
INFORMATION Café.

1.0km (0h15m) to Mato

CASA DOMINGO
Private | 20 beds | 15€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Family run. Good reports all round. Website www.alberguecasadomingo.com Tel 630 728 864 Open 12:00
INFORMATION Café.

1.3km (0h29m) to Casanova

ALBERGUE DE CASANOVA-MATO
Xunta | 20 beds | 10€ | On the right on the Camino. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 982 173 483 Open 13:00
INFORMATION Cafés. Parada Taverna is good.
SIGHTS The small Iglesia de Santa María in Leboreiro is Romanesque in style and dates from the 14th century. This village gets a mention in the Codex Calixtinus.
PLACE NAME New House.
2km café.
750m cafés.
2.1km café.

8.7km (2h32m) to Melide

ALBERGUE MELIDE
Private | 45 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | To the right where the Camino joins the main road, on Avenida de Lugo. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Run by a French pilgrim. Website www.alberguemelide.com Tel 627 901 552 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE ARRAIGOS
Private | 20 beds | 13€ | On the Camino on the right opposite the park. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Website www.alberguearraigos.com Tel 600 880 769 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE O CRUCEIRO
Private | 82 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | Just to the right of the Camino at the roundabout, on Ronda Coruña. Laundry facilities. Microwaves. Website albergueocruceiro.es Tel 616 764 896 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE ALFONSO II
Private | 34 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | From the roundabout walk up Ronda Coruña about 300m and then turn right on Avenida Toques y Friol and walk 300m. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Website alberguealfonsoelcasto.com Tel 608 604 850 Open 12:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
Rúa San Antonio is on the Camino in the old part of town, the following albergues are to be found here:

**ALBERGUE SAN ANTÓN**

Private | 36 beds | €13 | March to October  | On Rúa San Antonio. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Website alberguesananton.com Tel 698 153 672
Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE O APALPADOR**

Private | 12 beds | €14 | March to December | On Rúa San Antonio. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Website www.albergueoapalpador.com Tel 679 837 969
Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE DE MELIDE**

Xunta | 156 beds | €10 | On Rúa San Antonio. Laundry facilities. Cramped dorms. Tel 660 396 822 Open 13:00

The following albergues are past Rúa San Antonio:

**ALBERGUE PEREIRO**

Private | 45 beds | €12 | April to October  | Turn left off the Camino after the Xunta, on Rúa Progreso, signposted. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Good reports. Private rooms. Website www.alberguepereiro.com Tel 981 506 314
Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE MONTOTO**

Private | 52 beds | €14 | Easter to October | Turn left off the Camino after the Xunta, signposted. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Tel 646 941 887
Open 12:00

Guest house O Candil, just to the left of the Camino, on Rúa da Principal. Singles €50, quadruples €60. Café / restaurant. March to April. Website www.ocandil.gal Tel 639 503 550

**INFORMATION** Melide has all facilities. Cafés, supermarket, pharmacy, all on the Camino, banks left at the roundabout. Fiesta San Roque 16 August.

**FOOD** Melide is famous for its restaurants which specialise in Pulpo Galego / Galician Octopus (although this is a relatively modern tradition). You’ll pass several on your way through. Good reports of Pulperia Garnacha. If you don’t fancy octopus Pizzería Xoldra, on the right on the Camino, has been recommended. Besides this Melide is known for cheese and sweets (melindres pastries and almendrados which is a hard, sweet biscuit made from almonds).

**SIGHTS** Melide has a long Camino history and its old town (after the roundabout) has an architectural heritage to match. Among its secular buildings is a collection of town houses built to accommodate the local glitterati, and the Ayuntamiento with its 17th century façade. The church of Santa Maria is Romanesque with a collection of liturgical murals. While the church of San Pedro, beside the Ayuntamiento, has one

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
of the oldest transepts in Galicia. The Museo Terra de Melide is worth a visit. This is the point where the Camino Primitivo (which starts in Oviedo) joins the Camino Francés.

4km café.

5.8km (1h39m) to Boente

**ALBERGUE EL ALEMAN**
Private | 40 beds | 16€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left before the village. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Swimming pool. Website www.albergueelaleman.com Tel 677 251 300 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE BOENTE**
Private | 40 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left opposite the church. Laundry facilities, swimming pool. Café / restaurant with decent food. Breakfast from 06:00. Private rooms. Friendly, family run. Website albergue-boente.com Tel 638 321 707 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE FUENTE SALETA**
Private | 22 beds | 14€ | On the left just past Albergue Boente. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 648 836 213 Open at 12:00

2.2km (0h44m) to Castañeda

**ALBERGUE SANTIAGO**
Private | 4 beds | 14€ | March to October | On the Camino on the right at a left turn. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 699 761 698 Open 12:00

**HISTORY** This is where you drop that bag of lime you carried from Triacastela.

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
The last couple of days walking into Santiago continue through typical Galician countryside with gently rolling hills, farmland and forests.
3.0km (0h53m) to Ribadiso

ALBERGUE DE RIBADISO DA BAIXO
Xunta | 70 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the right just after the bridge. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Nice river-side location. Big garden. Tel 660 396 823 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE LOS CAMINANTES I
Private | 56 beds | 13€ | Easter to October | Just past the Xunta Albergue on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website ribadiso.albergueloscaminantes.com Tel 647 020 600 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE MILPÉS
Private | 24 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the Camino on the right about 500m after the other albergues. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Good reports. Website alberguemilpes.com Tel 981 500 425 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE MIRADOR DE RIBADISO

INFORMATION
Cafés. Mesón Ribadiso does good food.

SIGHTS
There has been a bridge here since Roman times when it served the road from Lucus Agusta to Aseconia (Santiago). The modern Xunta albergue is in the renovated buildings of an old pilgrim albergue called San Antón de Ribadiso, which was built in the 14th century and run by Franciscan nuns.

2.4km (0h50m) to Arzúa

ALBERGUE LOS TRES ABETOS
Private | 42 beds | 16€ | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Good reports. Website www.tres-abetos.com Tel 649 771 142 Open 13:00

O ALBERGUE DE SELMO
Private | 50 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the right at the start of the town. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Website oalberguedeselmo.com Tel 689 556 424 Open 12:00

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
ALBERGUE DON QUIJOTE
Private | 48 beds | €12 | March to November | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. All beds in one large dorm. Website alberguedonquijote.com Tel 696 162 695 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE SANTIAGO APÓSTOL
Private | 90 beds | €12 | Easter to October | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Breakfast. Website www.alberguesantiagopostol.com Tel 660 427 771 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE ULTREIA
Private | 29 beds | €12 | March to October | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Good reports. Private rooms. Website www.albergueultreia.com Tel 626 639 450 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE DE CAMINO
Private | 46 beds | €14 | March to November | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Website decaminoalbergue.com Tel 678 758 296 Open 12:00

These albergues are on or near Rúa Cima do Lugar - veer left at the tourist information office

CIMA DO LUGAR
Private | 14 beds | €12 | On the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website acimadolugar.com Tel 661 633 669 Open 13:00

CRUCE DE CAMINOS
Private | 56 beds | €19 | On the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Website www.crucedecaminosarzu.com Tel 604 051 353 Open 13:00

CASA DEL PEREGRINO
Private | 14 beds | €12 | April to October | On the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 690 813 566 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE DE ARZÚA
Xunta | 56 beds | €10 | On the left. Laundry facilities. In a nicely renovated old building. Tel 660 396 824 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE SAN FRANCISCO
Private | 28 beds | €14 | March to November | On the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Breakfast. Private rooms. Website alberguesanfrancisco.com Tel 604 069 338 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE VÍA LACTEA
Private | 140 beds | €15 | 100m off the Camino to the left just after the Xunta, on

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Los Caminantes II
Private | 28 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | Continue straight on the main road at the tourist information booth, on Rúa de Santiago. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website arzua.albergueloscaminantes.com Tel 647 020 600 Open 12:00

A Conda
Private | 18 beds | 20€ | March to November | A little north of the centre on Rúa Calexa. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website pensionvilarino.com Tel 670 385 351 Open 13:00

Albergue del Peregrino
Private | 28 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the left on the Camino when leaving town, on Rúa de Ramón Franco. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website grupoperigrina.com Tel 604 053 181 Open early

Information
Arzúa has all facilities. The Camino passes along Rúa de Lugo where there are supermarkets, a Tourist Office, cafés which serve the local cheese specialities, a pharmacy and banks. Restaurante Carballeira on Rúa de Ramón Franco does traditional home cooking. The restaurant of Hostal Teodora, on Rúa Lugo, has been recommended. Fiestas Feira do Queixo / Festival of Cheese 3 March.

Food
Arzúa is the centre of a major cheese producing region with its own Certificate of Origin, Arzúa Ulloa. The type of cheese you’ll see for sale everywhere is a simple, soft cheese made from cow’s milk and known as queixo tetilla. It’s sold in round blobs starting at about 500g (just enough to get you to Santiago!) Cafés around the town sometimes do cheese platters made up of local cheese. It’s often eaten as a dessert with membrillo / quince. You’ll also see this cheese for sale in Santiago, if you want to bring some home and you don’t fancy carrying it.

Arzúa is where the Camino del Norte joins the Camino Francés.

5.0km (1h34m) to Bebedeiro

Albergue Camiño das Ocás
Private | 30 beds | 12€ | March to November | About 800m off the Camino to the left in the tiny village of Bebedeiro, signposted. Café / restaurant. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Comfortable and modern. Private rooms. Website www.caminodasocas.com Tel 648 404 780 Open 12:00

Information
Café.

0.7km (0h12m) to As Quintas

Albergue Taberna Vella - Heidi’s Place
Private | 8 beds | 17€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Website taberna-vella.business.site Tel 687 543 810 Open 14:00

2.7km (0h44m) to Outeiro

Albergue Ponte de Ferreiros
Private | 30 beds | 15€ | 250m off the Camino to the left in the village of Outeiro. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Website albergueaponte.hol.es Tel 665 641 877 Open 13:00

Information
Cafés.

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
3.6km (1h05m) to Salceda

ALBERGUE TURÍSTICO SALCEDA
Private | 8 beds | 15€ | Turn left when you see the sign, cross the main road and continue straight 450m. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Breakfast. Private rooms. Cats and dogs. Reported good. Website albergueturisticosalceda.com
Tel 981 502 767 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE ALBORADA
Private | 10 beds | 15€ | Easter to October | On the left just after Albergue de Boni. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 620 151 209 Open 12:00
INFORMATION Cafés in the village itself and another café a couple of hundred metres further beside the main road.
You’ll need to cross the main road several times between here and O Pedrouzo. Extreme caution is advised, this road can be very busy at times!
2.2km to A Brea, cafés
1.7km to O Empalme, cafés.

3.8km (1h10m) to Santa Irene

ALBERGUE ANDAINA
Private | 15 beds | 12€ | Above Bar O Empalme which is beside the main road where you cross it for the first time. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Tel 609 739 404 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE DE LA XUNTA EN SANTA IRENE
Xunta | 36 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the right 300m after Albergue Santa Irene. Laundry facilities. Luxurious. Open 13:00
INFORMATION Cafés. If you’re not going to Albergue Santa Irene you can avoid a short detour and crossing the main road again by continuing straight where the Camino goes left through a tunnel under the road.

2.6km (0h42m) to A Rúa

ALBERGUE ESPÍRITU XACOBEO
Private | 35 beds | 13€ | April to October | To the left of the Camino, signposted. Kitchens, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website espirituxacobeo.com
Tel 620 635 284 Open 12:00

CAMPING PEREGRINO
Private | 112 beds | 12€ | April to October | On the Camino on the left. Rent a space in a tent. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Mostly caters to groups. Website campingperegrino.es Tel 662 456 093 Open 12:00
INFORMATION Cafés.
The official Camino passes through the outskirts of the town of O Pedrouzo, to get to the town centre, where the albergues and most business are, turn left on to the main road at a place where the Camino crosses it just after A Rúa. WARNING: it is easy to miss this junction!

1.4km (0h24m) to O Pedrouzo / Arca do Pino

The ‘Camino’ as described here is the route most pilgrims use to pass through O
Pedrouzo, it mostly follows the main road. The ‘real Camino’ bypasses the town.

**ALBERGUE O BURGO**
Private | 14 beds | 13€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right at a roundabout. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website [www.albergueo-burgo.es](http://www.albergueo-burgo.es) Tel 630 404 138 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE DE ARCA DO PINO**
Xunta | 150 beds | 10€ | On the Camino on the left down a steep incline. Kitchen (with basic utensils), laundry facilities. Recently renovated. Tel 660 396 826 Open 13:00

**MIRADOR DE PEDROUZO**
Private | 50 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the right just after the Xunta Albergue. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Website [www.alberguemiradordepadrouzo.com](http://www.alberguemiradordepadrouzo.com) Tel 686 871 215 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE EDREIRA**
Private | 45 beds | 13€ | March to October | Turn left down Rúa das Minas and then right, on Rúa Fonte. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Good reports. Website [www.albergue-edreira.com](http://www.albergue-edreira.com) Tel 981 511 365 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE O TRISQUEL**
Private | 78 beds | 14€ | March to November | On the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 616 644 740 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE PORTA DE SANTIAGO**
Private | 54 beds | 12€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website [www.portadesantiago.com](http://www.portadesantiago.com) Tel 607 835 354 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE OTERO**
Private | 34 beds | 12€ | April to November | From the Camino at the Casa do Concello, turn right on to Rúa Concello and then immediately left on to Rúa Forcarey. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website [albergueotero.com](http://albergueotero.com) Tel 671 663 374. Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE REM**
Private | 46 beds | 13€ | March to October | Left off the Camino on Avenida da Igrexa. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Breakfast. Tel 673 381 721 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE CRUCEIRO DE PEDROUZO**
Private | 94 beds | 12€ | March to November | Left off the Camino down Avenida da Igrexa. Kitchen, laundry facilities. In a modern, nondescrip building. Good reports. Website [www.alberguecruceirodepadrouzo.com](http://www.alberguecruceirodepadrouzo.com) Tel 629 518 204 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION**
O Pedrouzo has all facilities, most of which are along the Camino. Café / bakery *Panadería A Peneira*, on the Camino on the left, opens early with delish pastries. Fiestas San Pedro 29 June, A Madalena 22 July.

To get back to the Camino continue along O Pedrouzo’s main street and turn right at the *Casa do Concello*. There are cafés every couple of kilometres from here on.

**9.5km (2h55m) to A Esquipa / Lavacolla**

**ALBERGUE LAVACOLLA**
Private | 34 beds | 13€ | To the left where the Camino crosses a main road. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website [alberguelavacolla.com](http://alberguelavacolla.com) Tel 722 117 891 Open 14:00

143 **Updates:** [caminoguide.net/pages/updates](http://caminoguide.net/pages/updates)
Café, shop (closed Sundays).

**PLACE NAME** Lavacolla is usually translated as wash neck or collar. However, another possible translation for colla is tail, cola in both Galician and Spanish. In the Codex Calixtinus it is described as the place where pilgrims removed their clothes and had a thorough wash in preparation for their arrival in Santiago. Its name is given in Latin as Lavamentula meaning wash penis.

Frequent cafés from here on. Café de Amancio in Vilamaior is nice.

### 5.5km (1h40m) to **Monte do Gozo**

**ALBERGUE DE PEREGRINOS DE MONTE DE GOZO**

Xunta | 500 beds | 10€ | On the left behind a row of trees just after you pass the small church. On a hill overlooking the city of Santiago. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Café / restaurant. Massive, impersonal, noisy. Tel 660 396 827 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE MONTE DE GOZO**

Private | 80 beds | 15€ | In the part of the Xunta complex closest to the city. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. A sleeker (and more expensive) alternative to the Xunta. Website [www.montedogozo.com](http://www.montedogozo.com) Tel 881 255 386 Open 15:00

**INFORMATION** Café. Nearby Restaurante Sousa has been recommended.

**SIGHTS** Small chapel and the (recently remodeled) monument to the visit of Pope John Paul II, on your left. You cannot see the cathedral from here but 540m away is the Monumento ao Peregrino from where you get an excellent view. It’s not signposted. To get there turn left before the chapel and follow a path for 300m until it meets a road, cross the road and veer right to a lay-by and continue on another path for 200m, until you see a statue of two pilgrims pointing into the distance. Traditionally all pilgrims continued from this point on **foot** and **barefoot**. The first of a group of pilgrims to arrive here was designated Pilgrim King (or presumably Queen).

**PLACE NAME** Mount of Joy.

It’s an urban jungle from here on. Lots of cafés, etc.

### 2.4km (0h39m) to **San Lázaro**

Although treated as a separate place here, San Lázaro is really just a suburb of Santiago. If you stay in San Lázaro you will be AT LEAST half an hour walk from the cathedral – unless you’re a very fast walker.

**RESIDENCIA DE PEREGRINO SAN LÁZARO**

Xunta | 80 beds | 10€ | After the 2nd motorway bridge and then after the next roundabout, on the right behind the Museo Pedagógico. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Deservedly popular albergue. Max three nights. Tel 981 571 488 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE DREAM IN SANTIAGO**

Private | 60 beds | 20€ | April to October | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Nice modern facilities. Website [dreaminsantiago.com](http://dreaminsantiago.com) Tel 981 943 208 Open 15:00

**FIN DEL CAMINO**

Parish | 110 beds | 14€ | Easter to September | Left of the Camino at Rúa de Roma, on Rúa Moscova. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website [alberguefindelcamino.com](http://alberguefindelcamino.com) Tel 981 587 324 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE SANTO SANTIAGO**

Private | 40 beds | 14€ | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Website [caminoapp.net](http://caminoapp.net)
www.elsantosantiago.com Tel 657 402 403 Open 09:00

**ALBERGUE A FONTE DE COMPOSTELA**
Private | 30 beds | 18€ | To the left of the Camino down a flight of steps shortly after Albergue Santo Santiago. On the ground floor of a block of flats. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website alberguesafonte.com Tel 604 019 115 Open 16:30

**ALBERGUE MONTERREY**
Private | 35 beds | 17€ | March to November | On the right on the Camino, on Rúa das Fontiñas. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website alberguemonterrey.es Tel 655 484 299 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE TURISTICO LA CREDENCIAL**
Private | 36 beds | 19€ | March to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Positive reports. Website www.lacredencial.es Tel 639 966 704 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE SCQ**
Private | 24 beds | 20€ | March to November | On the Camino on the left. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.alberguescq.com Tel 622 037 300 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE SIXTOS NO CAMINHO**
Private | 40 beds | 20€ | March to November | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website www.sixtosnocaminho.com Tel 682 721 194 Open 13:00

**INFORMATION** San Lázaro has all facilities. The café of Hotel San Lázaro does food and is open for breakfast, it’s on the Camino on the right.

**PLACE NAME** Saint Lazarus.

It’s surprisingly easy to get lost on the way into Santiago. If in doubt aim for the cathedral.

2.3km (0h39m) to **Santiago de Compostela**

These albergues are on or near Rúa dos Concheiros which the Camino follows before it enters the historic centre.

**ALBERGUE SANTOS**
Private | 22 beds | 18€ | March to November | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Was Viejo Quijote. Website albergue-santos.negocio.site Tel 881 169 386 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE PORTA REAL**
Private | 22 beds | 20€ | April to October | Also on Rúa dos Concheiros. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Tel 633 610 114 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE LA ESTRELLA DE SANTIAGO**
Private | 24 beds | 16€ | April to October | On Rúa dos Concheiros, on the left. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website www.laestrelladesantiago.es Tel 617 882 529 Open 09:00

**ALBERGUE SEMINARIO MENOR**
Religious | 173 beds | 19€ | Easter to October | Off the Camino to the left. From Praza de San Pedro turn left on to Rúa de Blevís and follow the signs. Kitchen, laundry facilities, shop. You can stay as long as you like but you must vacate the dorms between 09:30 and 13:30 and return before 00:30. Private rooms. Website www.alberguesdelcamino.com Tel 881 031 768 Open 13:30

These albergues are in the historic centre, close to the cathedral.

**O FOGAR DE TEODOMIRO**
Private | 20 beds | 20€ | On Praza de la Algalia, a few minutes north of the cathedral.
From the Camino turn right on to Rúa de Algialia de Arriba and walk about 200m. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Noisy and other negative reports. Tel 881 092 981

**ALBERGUE LINARES**
Private | 12 beds | 22€ | From the Camino turn right on to Rúa de Algialia de Arriba and walk to the top and it on the right on the corner. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website www.linaresroomsaragon.com Tel 981 943 253 Open 13:00

**THE LAST STAMP / EL ÚLTIMO SELLO**
Private | 62 beds | 22€ | April to November | Just to the left of the Camino at Praza de Cervantes. Kitchen. Good reports. Website www.thelaststamp.es Tel 981 563 525 Open 14:00

**ALBERGUE AZABACHE**
Private | 20 beds | 22€ | March to October | On the left just before the cathedral. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website albergueazabache.com Tel 692 105 603 Open 11:00

**AL BERGUE KM 0**
Private | 50 beds | 25€ | March to December | On Rúa Carretas, the same street as the Pilgrims Office, from Praza Obradoiro go left in front of the Parador and turn right. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Website santiagokm0.es Tel 881 974 992 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE MU NDOALBERGUE**
Private | 34 beds | 19€ | Two minutes walk west from Praza do Obradoiro, down the steps to the left of the Ayuntamiento and continue straight, on Rúa San Clemente. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Common room with fireplace. Website www.mundoalbergue.es Tel 696 448 737 Open 11:00

**ALBERGUE BLANCO**
Private | 20 beds | 20€ | Also down Rúa das Hortas to the end, then right, on Rúa Galeras. Laundry facilities, microwaves. Private rooms. Website www.prblanco.com Tel 699 591 238 Open 14:00

These albergues are outside the historic centre.

**ALBERGUE MEIGA BACKPACKERS**
Private | 26 beds | 20€ | March to November | On Rúa dos Basquiños, same direction as Albergue La Salle, just a little further. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Some negative reports. Website www.meiga-backpackers.es Tel 981 570 846 Open 10:00

**LA ESTACIÓN**
Private | 24 beds | 18€ | April to October | On Rúa Xoana Nogueira, near the railway station. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.alberguelaestacion.com Tel 639 228 617 Open 12:00

Other Accommodation

Santiago offers a wide variety of accommodation ranging from five star hotels to rooms in private apartments. The quality varies greatly and there have been reports of bedbugs in some of the cheaper options (not those mentioned here). Also, you’re not imagining things, in some of the small hotels you’ll get a room for the same price as a bed in private pilgrim albergue. Pilgrims mostly stay around the historic old city,
rarely venturing to the new part of town, which in any case is rarely necessary because the old city has all the facilities you’re likely to need. The following have been recommended for private rooms: Hospedaje Mera on Portal da Pena, from about 30€ for singles. Tel 981 583 867 Bar Tita on Rúa Nova has rooms from about 35€. Tel 981 583 867. Seminario Mayor, in the old monastery opposite the cathedral on Praza da Inmaculada, has ‘flexible’ pricing xxx ‘starting’ at about 30€ for single rooms, and a good buffet breakfast. You can reserve from their website: www.sanmartinpinario.eu Tel 981 583 009 Café A Campana, on Rúa da Moeda Vella, just off Praza da Inmaculada has rooms from 30€ for singles. Its location is excellent although not everybody will appreciate its ‘Fawlty Towers’ style of management. A
‘Camino Fossil aka veteran pilgrim’ (SYates on Ivar’s Camino Forum) welcomes pilgrims in her home, details from her website www.egeria.house

**Information**

In the same location as the Pilgrims Office is a **Left Luggage Office** for pilgrims, where you can leave your backpack while you’re visiting the cathedral, 2€, open until 20:30, and an office to buy long-distance **bus tickets** and a **post office**. There’s a helpful **City Tourist Office** on Rúa do Vilar, for good maps of the city, and various other leaflets about sights and events. They also organise guided tours with different

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This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
themes, have MP3 audio guides and information about the Camino to Fisterra / Finisterre. On Rúa Nova is Pilgrim House, a US-run meeting space for pilgrims which provides services such as printing boarding cards and laundry. Post Office on Rúa do Franco. Supermarket on Praza do Tural, at the other end of Rúa do Vilar from the cathedral. If you used Ivar’s luggage storage service then you can pick your things up from Casa Ivar, see www.casaivar.com for details. There’s a taxi rank on Rúa de San Francisco, just off the Praza do Obradoiro, from where taxis will take up to four people to Finisterre for about 100€ (the exact price is down to your negotiating skills). The bus to the airport is the 6A (and not, repeat NOT the 6), you can get it from Rúa do Hórreo, past Praza de Galicia, it usually runs every 25 minutes and takes about 45 minutes, cost 1€, however please ask at the Tourist Info Office for the latest on timetable and route. A new bus station opened in 2021 replacing the old one, it’s on the opposite side of the train station from the city and accessible via a pedestrian walkway. The Pilgrims Office The Pilgrims Office / Oficina de Peregrinos (or to call it by its correct name Centro Internacional de Acollida ao Peregrino) is where you go if you want a Compostela certificate. It is on Rúa das Carretas, from Praza do Obradoiro standing facing the Parador walk left down the ramp and turn right, it’s down the end on the left. It is open 09:00 to 19:00, closed 25 December and 1 January. At busy times it’s advisable to register in advance on their website oficinadelperegrino.com

THE CATHEDRAL

The cathedral is open from 07:00 until 21:00, entrance is through the door on Praza de Platerias. To avoid the crowds you may want to plan to visit at an off-peak time, early in the morning or in the evening. Embracing the statue of St James and visiting the crypt is from 09:30 to 13:30 and 16:00 to 19:30. A Choir Mass is held daily at 09:30 and a Mass for Pilgrims is at 12:00 and 19:30, at peak times be sure to arrive early. The botafumeiro is swung on holy days and ‘according to a calendar of liturgical services’. It can also be swung on request, in exchange for a donation. You are no longer allowed to bring your backpack or other luggage into the cathedral, see luggage store above next to Pilgrims Office. The cathedral website has a wealth of information (in Spanish) catedraldesantiago.es

Food

Continuing its long tradition of hospitality towards pilgrims the five-star hotel, Hostal dos Reis Católicos, which is to your left when you’re standing on Praza do Obradoiro facing the cathedral, provides daily free meals. It used to be a matter of showing up and queuing but nowadays only the first ten pilgrims to get their Compostelas on any given day are taken. The main shopping streets in the old city are a little away from the tourist drag are Rúa De Preguntorio and Rúa de Caldeireria, however the real action is in the new city around Praza Roxa. If you want traditional Galician Pulpo (octopus), one of the best places is Os Concheiros, on Rúa de Berlín, which is on the Camino Francés before it gets to the old city, from the cathedral it’s about a half an hour’s walk. Octopus prepared in Galician style is known as Polbo á Feira. If you’re tired of tapas and you never really warmed to octopus, there are lots of alternatives around town. Casa Manolo is the place to go if you need one last menú de peregrino for an affordable price with cheap wine included. It’s on Praza Cervantes, on the Camino, it’s a pilgrim favourite so it’s wise to book. Newroz, at the south end of Rúa do Franco near the park does good kebabs and excellent falafel. On Rúa da Troia, near Praza da Inmaculada, is Bar Atlantico, a friendly

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
place to hang out in the evenings, although it doesn’t kick off till (very) late (by pilgrim standards). **Petiscos Do Cardeal** on Rúa do Franco has also been recommended for tapas. **Casa de Xantar** on Rúa San Pedro has also been recommended for local cuisine. **Café Porta do Camiño**, on the Camino where it crosses the road to enter the old city, opens early. For bread and empanadas try the bakery **A Tafona do Preguntoiro**, near The Last Stamp Albergue. In the **main food market** on Rúa das Ameas, is a restaurant called **Marisco Manía** which will cook any fish you want from the market stalls. **Restaurante San Clemente** on Rúa de San Clemente - near Mundoalbergue - has been recommended for seafood. Besides that, all Galician specialities are available in the many tourist restaurants around **Rúa do Franco**. If you find yourself yearning for cheap (drinkable) wine, pay a visit to **Bar Orense** where they serve red or white the traditional way, straight from the barrel in small enamel cups. 60c a go. Ask for ‘tinto / blanco de baril’. It’s on Rúa do Franco, on a small square on the right as you’re walking towards the cathedral.

**Sights**

In order to get a feel for the sheer size of Santiago Cathedral walk around it a few times and look at it from all different directions. It has four façades overlooking four elegant squares, multiple entrances, a cloister, a museum, a library, four main towers (and a few other smaller ones) and the biggest incense burner in the world! The floor-plan of the cathedral is in the shape of a cross with the longest part (the nave) pointing west. Each of its extremities of the cross has an entrance and a distinctive façade. This guide will start at the northern end, at **Praza da Inmaculada**, and proceed in a clockwise direction. This is where the **Camino Francés** (if you managed to follow it through the city’s streets) arrives:

**Praza da Inmaculada / Acibachería Praza da Inmaculada**

Also called **Acibachería**, because it’s where jewellery made of azabache / jet, was sold. Looking at a plan of the cathedral you are now at the top of the northern transept. The original 12th century Romanesque façade here was demolished after a fire in 1758. The current façade is Baroque. It has double doors, a statue of Santiago Peregrino and Kings Alfonso II of Asturias and Ordoño II of León, praying to him, below them is a (blindfolded) statue representing faith. Across the square is the monastery **Mosteiro de San Martiño Pinario**, which was founded in the 10th century and is today the second largest monastery in Spain. Its church and museum can be visited from Praza San Martiño Pinario.

**Praza da Quintana and la Puerta Santa / the Holy Door**

Walking left (facing the cathedral) from Praza da Inmaculada brings you to **Praza da Quintana** and **la Puerta Santa / the Holy Door**, through which it’s traditional for pilgrims to pass during Holy Years. La Puerta Santa is the first door at the bottom of the steps. Outside of Holy Years it used to be bricked up but this tradition has recently been replaced with a brass door. On 31 December at the beginning of a Holy Year, the archbishop bangs on la Puerta Santa three times with a golden hammer and calls out the words ¡Abridme las puertas de la justicia. Al entrar por ellas confesaré al Señor! / Open the doors of justice. After entering through them I will confess to the Lord! The brass door is duly opened and the archbishop enters. The cathedral’s façade here is Baroque and was completed in 1611. Above la Puerta Santa are statues of Santiago Peregrino and his two disciples, Teodoro and Atanasio. On each side are twenty-four carved figures representing apostles, prophets and other figures from the history of Christianity, they were carved by Maestro Mateo for the original choir.
The imposing building which forms the east side of this square is the Convent of San Paio de Antealtares. Continuing in the same direction brings us to the southern façade on...

**Praza das Praterías**

The two arched 12th century Romanesque doors opening on to this square are known as the Silversmiths’ Doors because this was the area where silversmiths traditionally had their workshops. They are adorned with carvings depicting (among others), on the left, the temptation of Christ in the desert with various monsters, and on the right, the passion of Christ. Arranged around are saints, angels and demons. The fountain in the middle of the square is also 12th century. The 14th century clock-tower is called the Berenguela, after a 19th century bishop of Santiago, and holds the cathedral’s largest bell, a recent replacement for the 1729 original. In medieval times the streets around the cathedral were lined with shops selling every possible type of supplies for the return journey, shoes, belts and bags as well as herbs and spices, holy medals, prayer and blessing cards, which accompanied by an appropriate certificate of authenticity increased in value the further one travelled from Santiago. Continuing in the same direction we round two corners to arrive on the massive stone-paved expanse of...

**Praza do Obradoiro**

The view of the western façade of Santiago Cathedral towering over Praza do Obradoiro is one of the most stunning sights in all Spain. This imposing Baroque façade is a relatively recent addition, is dates from the 18th century and was designed by Fernando de Casas y Novoa. It is considered one of the finest examples of this style in the world. High up centred in an arched alcove is Santiago Peregrino and below him a replica of the urn in which his relics were found. The star represents the light which guided Pelayo to it. On either side are his disciples Teodoro and Atanasio. The towers to each side, which were built slightly before the façade itself, have statues of St James’ parents, Salome and Zebedee. (This façade is depicted on the obverse of the Spanish 1, 2 and 5 cent coins.) On the north side of Praza do Obradoiro is the Hotel dos Reis Católicos, commissioned by the Catholic Monarchs as a pilgrim albergue and opened in 1509. Pilgrims arriving on foot were allowed to sleep and eat there for three days. It also provided medical assistance to the sick and sometimes served as an orphanage. In the 1950s it was converted into a luxury Parador hotel. On its west side is the neo-Classical Pazo de Raxoi / Palace of the Clock, crowned by a statue of Santiago Matamoros, which nowadays houses Santiago town hall. The south side is the rear of the Colegio de San Jerónimo. To the left of the Cathedral entrance is the Palacio de Gelmirez, which was built in the 12th century to house the archbishop, it now houses the Cathedral Office. To the right of the entrance is the Cathedral Museum.

**Inside the Cathedral**

The large windows in the 18th century western façade allow the evening light to entering from Praza do Obradoiro to fall on the original 12th century Romanesque façade, the Pórtico de la Gloria. It was to protect this from the elements that the 18th century façade was added. The Pórtico de la Gloria is a masterpiece of Romanesque sculpture, encompassing in its finely detailed stonework the major personages of the Christian story. On the central column is St James, with two lions at his feet, above a column sculpted to resemble a tree, representing his family, growing out of the chest of Jesse, a figure from the Old Testament. At its base an unidentified...
man embracing two beasts. Pilgrims arriving here traditionally touch the foot of this column, now worn away from centuries of hands. At the head of the column are sculptures of angels and demons. Directly above St James, sitting on a throne, is Jesus surrounded by the Evangelists who are busy recording his words, except for Matthew who is holding an abacus. On either side figures represent the chosen people and angels. Arranged around the central arch the 24 elders of the Apocalypse face each other playing musical instruments. They represent the 12 apostles of the New Testament and the 12 prophets of the Old Testament. On the left column of the central arch are personages from the Old Testament, including Adam and Eve. The right arch has scenes from the New Testament. The left arch represents on its left, the Jewish people, and on its right, the legions of the damned and the saved. The kneeling statue just inside the entrance, facing the main altar, is known as Santo dos Croques, and is thought to be a representation of Maestro Mateo, the architect of the cathedral (see below). This statue was originally part of the Pórtico itself, but when Maestro Mateo was castigated for his vanity for putting his image next to those of the saints he had it removed and placed here instead, facing away so it could never look at the Pórtico. Traditionally pilgrims touch it three times with their heads hoping that some part of his genius will rub off on them. Since 2021 you must pay to visit the Pórtico de la Gloria, see GUIDED VISITS... below. The floor-plan of the cathedral is in the form of a Latin cross. This is typical of large pilgrimage churches, such as those in Conques and Toulouse, and is designed to allow large numbers of people to enter and circulate around the outer naves which are separated from the central nave by a row of pillars. The interior decoration of the cathedral is predominantly Romanesque with some Gothic and Renaissance / Baroque elements. The Baroque Main Altar dates from the 17th century. Standing on its peak is a statue of St James in Pilgrim guise, holding a staff in his right hand, with Kings Alfonso II and Ramiro III at his sides. Below him another statue of St James, this time sitting. Above the main altar and forming a roof over it, is an ornate pyramidal structure decorated in gold-leaf and adorned with angels and other religious and royal symbols. At its apogee is another grim statue of Santiago Matamoros, and behind it, a chest symbolising the apostle’s tomb. Below these is the coat of arms of the Spanish royal family. Beginning our tour at the Obradoiro entrance (by the Pórtico de la Gloria), looking down the central nave towards the main altar, high above, to the left and right, is the main organ, which dates from the 18th century. Following the side aisle to the left, first is the Chapel of Christ of Burgos / Capela do Santo Cristo de Burgos, 17th century Baroque with some Romanesque features at its entrance. Next is the entrance to the 18th century Renaissance / Neo-Classical Capela da Comunión (for prayer only, no photos). Now turning left on to the north transept, in an alcove, a statue of Santiago Matamoros, with the unfortunate Moors beneath his horse’s hooves obscured by flowers. Passing the Azabacharía door, straight ahead is the entrance to the Chapel of the Corticela / Capela da Corticela, which was originally a separate church built in the 9th century but later joined to the main cathedral. It is old style Romanesque. Above its entrance is a representation of the Virgin Mary and the Magi bearing gifts. Next along is the 13th century Gothic Chapel of the Holy Spirit / Capela do Espírito Santo, with a black-cloaked Virgin Mary, closely followed by the Chapel of the Conception / Capela da Concepción, which is mostly Romanesque. Turning left beside the high altar, the steps down to the crypt containing the earthly remains of St James are on your right, as are the steps up to his mantel, which it is traditional for pilgrims to embrace. Opposite is the Renaissance...
Chapel of St Bartholomew / Capela de San Bartolomé, also sometimes known as the Chapel of Saint Faith / Santa Fé / Sainte Foi (she of Conques). Next is the Chapel of Saint John the Baptist / Capela de San Xoán Apóstol, Romanesque with a Plateresque Retablo / Altarpiece. Then the Chapel of St Mary the White / Santa María A Branca, which is mostly Gothic. At the head of the apse is the Chapel of the Saviour (or Kings of France) / Capela do Salvador. Next to that is the passageway which leads to the Holy Door / Puerta Santa. Followed by the Chapel Saint Peter / Capela de San Pedro, with a Plateresque altarpiece. Then the Gothic Chapel of Mondragón / Capela Mondragón. Finally, before we turn into the south aisle, is the Chapel of Our Lady of the Pillar / Nosa Señora do Pilar, with a recent altarpiece. Around the corner on the relatively subdued south transept is the tomb of Teodomiro and a drinking font. The enormous incense burner, the Botafumeiro, is swung from the central nave. Its original function, besides carrying the prayers of the faithful up to heaven, was to mask the smell of the great unwashed masses who assembled here having walked from all over Europe. It weighs 80kg and has come crashing down on only three occasions, thankfully without fatalities! If you would like a more detailed description of the interior of the cathedral a guide is available in app format in several languages (quite a big download so best to do it in advance and over WiFi). See catedraldesantiago.es/visitas/#audioguías.

Maestro Mateo was the person in charge of the renovation of the cathedral, starting about 1168, after it had been mostly destroyed by years of neglect and Muslim attacks. He was also responsible for the design and construction of the Pórtico de la Gloria. Little is known about his life. He is believed to have worked on several other buildings along the Caminos, especially in France. The detail present in the carvings of the musical instruments held by the twenty-four Elders of the Apocalypse suggest he possessed a detailed knowledge of the musical instruments of the time. A popular legend, which one can only hope isn’t true, recounts that having finished the Pórtico de la Gloria the people gouged his eyes out to prevent him ever creating another work of art which surpassed it. He died around 1200.

Guided Visits and the Cathedral Museum

You can do an interesting tour of the roof of the cathedral costing 10€ at 17:00 and 18:00 (although best to go and ask, because the times seem to change every year). The commentary is in Spanish only but even if you don’t understand anything it’s still worth it to see the cathedral and city from above. Enquiries and booking from the Cathedral Office in Xelmirez Palace, which is just to the left of the staircase on Praza do Obradoiro. They can also provide information about other guided visits to the cathedral and its associated buildings. The Cathedral Museum is on Praza do Obradoiro. It costs 3€ (with Credencial), is open from 10:00 to 20:00 and contains many historical items related to the cathedral and the Camino. Entrance to the museum also includes the Pórtico de la Gloria and other off-limits parts of the cathedral complex. The museum houses many examples of Maestro Mateo’s work, including a model and partial reconstruction of his original choir, which occupied part of the main nave until it collapsed in 1603. Pieces of the original choir were reused in the construction of the Holy Door. There are also collections of coins, a banner used at the Battle of Lepanto, tapestries and many other historic items.

Guided Visits and Tours of the Cathedral

Visits to the closed parts of the cathedral, including the Pórtico de la Gloria and the museum, can be reserved in advance from visitas.catedraldesantiago.es. Tickets can be bought in person on the day but since visitor numbers are limited so
Other Sights around Santiago

The Convento de San Domingos de Bonaval, located to the north east of the historic centre, has one of the largest churches in Santiago. It dates from the 13th century and is in a mixture of Romanesque and Gothic styles. The convent itself is mostly Baroque and 17th century. It also houses the excellent Museo do Pobo Galego / Galician Folk Museum, with permanent exhibitions on many aspects of Galician society and culture, such as boat building, traditional architecture, fiestas, emigration, music, dance, traditional clothing, basket making, pottery, weaving, etc., and photo and painting exhibitions. Explanations in English. Opening times for both: Tuesday to Saturday 10:00 to 14:00 and 16:00 to 20:00, Sundays and public holidays 11:00 to 14:00. Closed Mondays, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day. Admission 4€. The Museo das Peregrinacións e de Santiago / Museum of Pilgrimages and of Santiago, has two locations. One is on Praza de Praterías, just next to the cathedral. It has models relating to the history of the construction of the cathedral, descriptions of its exterior and interactive computer simulations of the life of medieval pilgrims. Entrance 1,20€ for pilgrims. The other location, on Rúa de San Miguel, a few minutes north east of the cathedral, houses a brief exploration of pilgrimage in world culture and a multitude of articles related to pilgrimage to Santiago, including relics, a real Papal Bull and tonnes of statues. Both locations have explanatory texts in English. Open Tuesday to Friday 09:30 to 20:30, Saturday 11:00 to 19:30, and Sunday and some public holidays 10:15 to 14:45. The 12th century monastery, Colegiata del Sar, is also worth a visit. It’s located south east of the historic centre, across Avenida de Lugo. There are excellent views of the cathedral from Parque Alameda past Porta Paxeira.

History of Santiago de Compostela

The legend of the discovery of St James’ tomb in this remote corner of Iberia dates from between 788AD and 838AD - the exact date is unknown. What is certain is that within a couple of generations what had been a sleepy village with cows in the streets was transformed into one of the most important pilgrimage sites on earth. In 997 the Muslim leader Al-Mansur, as part of a general ravaging of the Christian north, came to Santiago bent on destruction. The story goes that he found the shrine deserted, except for a single monk who, when asked what he was doing replied that he was praying to St James. Al-Mansur told him to continue praying and withdrew his troops. However, the following day he had the shrine completely destroyed and parts of it, including the bells, taken away and used in the building of the Grand Mosque in Córdoba. But, whether out of respect or fear, he left the relics untouched. Thus destroying a symbol of Christian resistance to Muslim rule, without desecrating sacred Christian relics. The story of the destruction of the Apostolic Shrine spread throughout Christendom. The rich and powerful rallied to the cause and sent money for its reconstruction, while the poor and humble came in person, by whatever means they could. The result was a frenzy of construction in Santiago and all along the Camino Francés, which was to last into the 13th century. It can be seen to this day in the many churches and monasteries from that period which are still standing. In 1236, following the recapture of Córdoba by Fernando III, the bells of the cathedral were returned and installed in the rebuilt cathedral where space had been left for them. And so began a golden age of pilgrimage throughout western Europe. In the
following centuries the pilgrims came despite plague and war. Santiago grew and flourished, flushed with the wealth and prestige the pilgrims brought. History was not on its side though and as the **Reconquista** pushed south Spain’s centres of political power followed. Until in 1561 the newly-reunited country established its capital in Madrid. Then in 1589, fearing a raid by the English privateer **Sir Francis Drake**, who had landed at A Coruña, the archbishop of Santiago, **Juan San Clemente**, had the sepulchre containing the relics in the crypt of the cathedral bricked up to keep them safe from the marauding Englishmen, and in time the secret of the hiding place of the relics was lost. The loss of the relics made little difference because the pilgrims still came. In the following century **King Felipe IV**, a religious man and a patron of the arts and flush, for a time at least, with the spoils of Spain’s expanding empire in the Americas, provided the funds necessary for a new programme of construction which began the transformation of the cathedral from its modest Romanesque origins to the magnificent Baroque construction we see today. The fortunes of the Camino ebbed and flowed and with it the fortunes of the city. In 1879 the then Cardinal of Santiago, **Payá y Rico**, taking advantage of renovation works being carried out on the cathedral, set out to locate the relics. On the night of **28 January 1879** they were found behind a wall behind the main altar. The rest, as they say, is history. During the 20th century the flow of pilgrims continued to arrive, thanks in part to the support of the Francoist regime which made St James the patron of Spain. Few arrived on foot during this period and by the 1970s their numbers had dwindled to fewer than a hundred each year. Then from the 1970s onward each new year saw more walking pilgrims, the pace of annual growth only disturbed by Holy Years when generally more than twice as many make the trek. And the odd pandemic. Although Santiago de Compostela is the capital and ecclesiastical centre of Galicia it is only the 6th largest city coming after Vigo, A Coruña, Ourense, Lugo, Pontevedra and Ferrol. Until 1982 A Coruña was the capital.

**PLACE NAME** Santiago / St James, Compostela from Latin Campus Stellae / field of stars, or composta / established, a reference to the part of the town which lay within the town walls. The site of the city was previously known as Aseconia.

The Camino to Finisterre begins on the Praza Obradoiro: Facing the Hostal dos Reis Católicos, with the cathedral on your right, walk down the slope to the left, same direction as the Pilgrims Office, but instead of turning left continue straight ahead down Rúa das Hortas and Rúa da Poza de Bar. It’s signposted with yellow arrows from there on. West of Santiago waymarkings are far less ubiquitous than on the Camino Francés and are mostly the (official) concrete post type with a scallop-shell symbol on them, positioned at an angle which indicates the direction to follow. You may find this disconcerting at first. The general rule to keep in mind is that at each point where there is a choice of directions there will be a waymarking of some sort.

**9.6km (2h56m) to Ventosa**

**ALBERGUE A CASA DO BOI**

Private | 20 beds | 20€ | On the Camino on the left just after crossing the main road (AC-453). In a nicely renovated village house. Café / restaurant. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website [www.acasadoboi.com](http://www.acasadoboi.com) Tel 981 890 967 Open 15:00

**INFORMATION** Café.

- 1.7km to Aguapesada, café, pharmacy.
- 3.4km to Trasmonte, café.
- 1.9km to Pontemaceiro, café.

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
2km to Chancela de Abaixo, café.
1.8km to Negreira

11.0km (3h31m) to Negreira

ALBERGUE ANJANA
Private | 20 beds | 14€ | April to November | On the Camino on the right. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Website albergueanjana.es Tel 607 387 229 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE ALECRIN
Private | 39 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | A little to the right where the Camino meets the main road. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Good reports. Website www.albergueennegreira.com Tel 616 628 768 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE COTÓN
Private | 40 beds | 14€ | Easter to October | On the Camino on the left at a roundabout. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 649 253 895 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE EL CARMEN
Private | 34 beds | 14€ | On the Camino on the right where it turns left away from the main road, above Café Mezquita. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Positive reports. Website www.alberguehostalmezquita.com Tel 636 129 691 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE SAN JOSÉ
Private | 47 beds | 14€ | March to November | To the right of the Camino in the centre of the town, on Rúa de Castelao. Kitchen, laundry fa
ALBERGUE DE NEGREIRA
Xunta | 20 beds | 10€
Follow the Camino through the town, up a hill, through an archway and it’s there on your left, on Rúa Patrocínio. Run down and not very clean. Open 13:00

INFORMATION
With 2,000 inhabitants this is the biggest town you’ll pass through between here and the coast. It has all facilities. Restaurante Casa Barqueiro has been recommended. Fiestas San Cristóbal 10 July, Entroido 15 February.

SIGHTS
There’s evidence of pre-Roman habitation all around this region with many Castro-like remains. In 979 Negreira was overrun and destroyed by the (drum roll) Normans and wasn’t rebuilt until 1113.

PLACE NAME
From Latin Nicraria Tamara.

9.5km (3h18m) to A Pena

ALBERGUE ALTO DA PENA
Private | 22 beds | 17€
On the Camino. Laundry facilities. Cafés / restaurant, is reported good. Private rooms. In a nicely renovated building.
Tel 609 853 486 Open 12:00
ALBERGUE RECTORAL SAN MAMEDE DA PENA
Private | 24 beds | 17€ | April to October |
On the Camino. Microwaves, laundry facilities. Communal evening meal. Private rooms. Good reports. Tel 649 948 014 Open 14:00
INFORMATION Café.
4.0km (1h09m) to
Vilaserío

ALBERGUE O RUEIRO
Private | 32 beds | 13€ | March to October |
On the Camino. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Breakfast. Tel 659 568 139. Open 11:00

ALBERGUE CASA VELLA

ALBERGUE MUNICIPAL
Municipal | 14 beds | donativo | Unicipal (14, donativo), in the old school building at the end of the village. Mattresses. Basic but functional. Tel 981 893 506
INFORMATION Café.
6.8km to Maroñas, café.

7.8km (2h16m) to Santa Mariña

ALBERGUE CASA PEPA
Private | 40 beds | 15€ | A little to the left of the Camino opposite the church. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Also private rooms. Good reports. Website www.alberguecasapepa.es Tel 981 852 881 or 686 234 342 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE SANTA MARIÑA
Private | 30 beds | 14€ | April to November |
On the Camino on the right a little after the village. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Tel 981 852 897 or 655 806 800 Open 12:00
INFORMATION Cafés.
6.2km (1h51m) to Lago
ALBERGUE MONTE ARO
Private | 28 beds | 15€ | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Website alberguemontearo.com Tel 682 586 157 Open 12:00
INFORMATION Café.

4.4km (1h12m) to Ponte Olveira
ALBERGUE PONTE OLVEIRA
Private | 15 beds | 15€ | March to October | On the Camino on the right. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. In a nicely renovated farm building. Tel 666 950 223 Website www.ponteolveira.com Open 12:00
INFORMATION Café.

1.8km (0h30m) to Olveira
ALBERGUE CASA MANOLA
Private | 16 beds | 15€ | On the Camino on the left. Laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Very modern. Website casamanola.com Tel 981 741 745 or 646 521 323 Open 12:00
ALBERGUE HÓRREO / CASA LONCHA
Private | 53 beds | 15€ | March to November | On the Camino on right as you enter the village. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant. Also private rooms. Website www.casaloncho.com Tel 981 741 673 or 617 026 005
ALBERGUE SANTA LUCÍA
Private | 16 beds | 15€ | March to October | Across the street from the Xunta. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website alberguedeolveiroa.com Tel 602 613 393 Open 12:00
ALBERGUE DE OLVEIROA
Xunta | 34 beds | 10€ | In the village signposted from the Camino. In several different buildings. Open 13:30
INFORMATION Cafés.

3.4km (1h03m) to O Logoso
ALBERGUE O LOGOSO
INFORMATION Café.

From O Logroso 1.7km (0h35m) to

From Dumbría 4.6km (1h38m) to Hospital
ALBERGUE O CASTELIÑO
Private | 18 beds | 14€ | On the Camino. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Café / restaurant, a short distance away. Tel 615 997 169 or 981 747 387
INFORMATION Café.

Shortly after Hospital is where the routes to Fisterra / Finisterre (LEFT) and Muxía (RIGHT) divide. From here Muxía is 25km and Fisterra is also 25km. Finisterre’s modern Galician name is Fisterra. That’s

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
what you’ll see on signposts.
Direction MUXIÀ: 4km Dumbría, pilgrim albergue, cafés, shops and a bank. This route is described in detail after the entry for Muxía.

13.6km (3h39m) to Cee

ALBERGUE O BORDÓN
Private | 24 beds | 15€ | A little to the left of the Camino on the descent down to the town. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Good reports. Tel 655 903 932 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE MOREIRA

ALBERGUE À CASA DA FONTE
Private | 40 beds | 15€ | April to October | On the left on the Camino near the town centre, Rúa de Arriba. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Good reports. Website albergueacasadafonte.blogspot.com Tel 699 242 711 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE TEQUERÓN

INFORMATION
Cee has all facilities and lots of cheapish hotels.
The Camino veers up to the right away from the harbour before the village of Corcubión.

1.7km (0h30m) to Corcubión

ALBERGUE SAN ROQUE
Amigos | 12 beds | donativo | On the Camino about 2km after turning up from the harbour. The only albergue run by Amigo volunteers in Galicia. Communal evening meal and breakfast. Tel 679 460 942 Open 16:00

INFORMATION
Facilities are in Corcubión which the official route of the Camino by-passes. Cafés, shops, a bank and lots of other accommodation. Pharmacy on Travesia Carrera Fábregas.

10.8km (3h19m) to Finisterre / Fisterra

For purposes of describing the location of albergues we are considering that the Camino ends at the Xunta Albergue:

ALBERGUE CABO DA VILA
Private | 28 beds | 18€ | March to November | On the Camino on the way into town, on Avenida de A Coruña. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.alberguecabodavila.com Tel 607 735 474 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE OCEANUS
Private | 20 beds | 18€ | On the Camino on the right, opposite Coviran supermarket. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.oceanusfinisterre.es Tel 609 821 302 Open 13:00

ALBERGUE DE FINISTERRE
Xunta | 26 beds | 10€ | Follow the Camino down into the town, when you see the harbour on your left the albergue is straight ahead on the corner of Rúa Real. Kitchen, laundry facilities. One night only and only if you walked from Santiago. Admission from 13:00. Late night access using a code. Bathroom facilities are basic.

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
ALBERGUE POR FIN
Private | 11 beds | 15€ | Easter to November | Turn right at the Xunta, on Rúa Federico Ávila. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 636 764 726

ALBERGUE O ENCONTRO
Private | 14 beds | 15€ | Turn right at the Xunta then first left, on Rúa do Campo. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 696 503 363

ALBERGUE DO SOL E LÚA
Private | 18 beds | 15€ | Turn right at the Xunta, then right at the top and first left, on Rúa Atalaya. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Sometimes a communal donativo evening meal. Intense hippie vibe. Tel 617 568 648 or 881 108 710

ALBERGUE BUEN CAMINO DE SONIA
Private | 50 beds | 15€ | March to October | Turn right at the Xunta, then right at the top and first left, on Rúa Atalaya. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Website www.buen-camino-finisterre.com Tel 981 740 771 or 619 529 343 Open 11:00

ALBERGUE LA ESPIRAL
Private | 12 beds | 15€ | Turn right at the Xunta, then first left on to Rúa do Campo then continue on to Rúa Fonte Vella. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Tel 607 684 248 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE FINISTELLAE
Private | 20 beds | 12€ | Easter to October | Follow the waterfront from the harbour until you come to the little beach, then straight on to Rúa Manuel Lago Pais. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.finistellae.com Tel 637 821 296

ALBERGUE DE PAZ
Private | 14 beds | 15€ | Follow the waterfront from the harbour until you see the signs, on Rúa Víctor Cardalda. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. This is the oldest private pilgrim albergue in Fisterra. Tel 687 624 092 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE FIN DA TERRA E DO CAMIÑO
Private | 12 beds | 15€ | Same direction as Albergue de Paz but continue around the harbour and turn right into Rúa Alfredo Saralegui. Laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website alberguefindaterra.wixsite.com Tel 675 361 890

ALBERGUE ARASOLIS
Private | 16 beds | 15€ | Easter to November | Continue straight past the Xunta to Praza da Constitución, then straight and it’s on the left, on Rúa Aras Solis. Kitchen, laundry facilities, small shop. Friendly owner. Tel 638 326 869 Open 12:00

ALBERGUE A PEDRA SANTA
Private | 22 beds | 18€ | After Albergue Arasolis continue straight then right on to Travesía de Arriba. Laundry facilities. Tel 613 017 062

MAR DE FORA
Private | 34 beds | 14€ | April to November | Turn right at the Xunta, then left at the top and first right on to Rúa Potiña. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.alberguemardefora.com Tel 648 263 639

ALBERGUE MAR DE ROSTRO
Private | 23 beds | 14€ | May to November | Turn right at the Xunta, then right at the top and it’s on the right, on Rúa do Alcalde Fernández. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Tel 637 107 765 Open 12:00

INFORMATION
Fisterra is a biggish town with all facilities. There are three supermarkets, one on the Camino on the way into town, another at the little beach, and the other up the hill from the Xunta and left, on Rúa do Alcalde Fernández. Pharmacy on Rúa Real, continue straight past the Xunta towards Plaza Constitu-
ción. Travel agents for bus and train tickets across the road from the Xunta, Brigan-
tia Viaxes, they also rent apartments and houses by the day. The bus stop for busses
to and from Santiago is also right beside the Xunta, as is the taxi rank from where
taxi drivers can take up to four passengers to Santiago for (about) 100€ in a little
over an hour. There is also a bus service to Muxía, leaving three times daily week-
days only, with a change in Cee. The certificate for walking from Santiago, the Fis-
terrana, is available from the Xunta or from the Ayuntamiento. If you get the oppor-
tunity it’s well worth your while walking to Fisterra and spending a few days just
hanging out around town and at the beach (some people don’t want to leave!).
There’s a laid-back après-Camino feel and lots of hard partying, as well as tearful
good-byes.

**FOOD** Fisterra has lots of fish restaurants of varying quality most of them are
around the harbour. Mesón A Cantina is one of the better ones, from the Xunta walk
towards the harbour, it’s to your left. Maruxía is also good, it’s in the line of restaur-
ants by the harbour. Mesón A Pedra, opposite the bus stop has been recommended,
as has Restaurante A Lareira on Rúa Alcalde Fernandez.

**SIGHTS** The lighthouse at Cabo Fisterra is about 3km from the town walking
south. On the way there you will pass... The 12th century Iglesia de Santa Maria
das Areas, believed to have been built on the site of the original pilgrim albergue.
The cemetery, a group of concrete cubes facing the bay, below the road to the left.
Other highlights include Praia Foro do Mar (or Hippie Beach - because of the
hippies), which is on the west coast of the peninsula, directly opposite Fisterra town
facing the Atlantic. This is the scene of many wild parties with abundant alcohol and
other substances. Thousands of pilgrims down the centuries have sat here to gaze in
awe at the ocean and taken a dip in its cold embrace (and possibly also drowned
**because the undercurrent is very strong and very dangerous!**). There are great
views from the hills to its north. There are various semi-permanent campsites on the
beach and on the wooded hills nearby. If you want to ‘hang out’ for a couple of
weeks (or years), this is the place. Before the ‘discovery’ of the Americas this point
was considered the end of the known world. Although it held no religious signific-
ance to pilgrims it did have sufficient symbolic attraction to justify the four to six
day round-trip from Santiago. It’s traditional for pilgrims arriving here to bathe in the
waters of Playa Langosteira and to go and watch the sunset from near the light-
house at Cabo Fisterra. However, the ‘tradition’ of burning an item of clothing is a
modern invention and is now being actively discouraged because of the danger of
bush fires.

**PLACE NAME** Finisterre means Land’s End, from the original Latin name Finis
Terrae.

Between Fisterra and Muxía there are no shops and the only (regularly
open) place to eat is in Lires. Waymarking, in the form of concrete
bollards, has been greatly improved on this route and can be followed
easily in both directions.

**The Camino to MUXIA**

Leave Fisterra walking back towards Santiago up Rúa Santa Catalina.
After 600m you come to a point where there’s a stone cross and a path
leads to the right down towards the beach, here you should continue
walking along the main road for about 300m until you veer left before
Asador San Ronque. You’ll see the first Muxía bollard here. There are
also yellow arrows with M and F. The Xunta in Muxía may ask for a stamp
from Lires as proof that you walked from Fisterra (and vice a versa).
3.7km to Hormedesuxo from Fisterra. The Camino veers right at a crossroads. After 100m there is a café, Bar la Razón, to the right.

3km to Buxán, small donativo café. Pass through Buxán veering right and continue on a road through a wood for 900m, then turn left.

1.7km to Castrexe. Just before the village there is an option to veer left and walk a path which follows a coastal route into Lires, it’s about 1km longer. On this route, beside a lonely beach watch out for the Fonte Soleiros / the Fountain of the Lonely. With its motto: Se tés mal d’amores bebe da Fonte Soleiros, que a falta dun bo mozo sáenche sete zalameiros.

3.1km to A Canosa. From here it’s 1.7km to Lires.

13.3km (4h08m) to Lires

**AS EIRAS**

Private | 25 beds | 19€ | Coming from Fisterra it’s to the right of the Camino up a small hill. In the same building as the café / restaurant and run by the same family. Laundry facilities. Also private rooms. Website ruralaseiras.com Tel 981 748 180 or 662 261 818 Open 12:00

**INFORMATION** The café of As Eiras does food.

Shortly after Lires the Camino crosses the río Castro where a footbridge has replaced the stepping-stones where pilgrims used to get their feet wet.

3.5km to Guisamonde.

1.7km to Morquintián. Café.

4.7km to Xurarantes, where you join the road walking past the beautiful beach at Playa Lourido. Now follow the road straight to Muxía in 3.3km.

14.2km (4h22m) to Muxía

**ALBERGUE DE MUXIA**

Xunta | 32 beds | 10€ | On a hill at the southern end of the town on Rúa Enfesto. Kitchen. Extraordinary, modern, purpose-built albergue. You can only stay there if you walked from Santiago or Finsiterre and can show proof (stamp in Credencial or receipt from hotel and recently they’ve begun to insist on a stamp from Lires too). One night only. Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE@MUXÍA**

Private | 41 beds | 14€ | Just down the street from the Xunta. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website albergueamuxia.com Tel 609 615 533

**ALBERGUE DA COSTA**

Private | 10 beds | 15€ | On the way into town coming from Fisterra, on Avenida de Doctor Toba. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.dacostamuxia.com Tel 676 363 820 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE MUXÍA MARE**

Private | 18 beds | 14€ | On Rúa Castelao. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.alberguemuxiamare.es Tel 664 102 205 or 981 742 423 Open 12:00

**ALBERGUE ARRIBADA**

Private | 40 beds | 16€ | Near the main square, on Rúa del Rio. Kitchen, laundry facilities. Private rooms. Website www.arribadaalbergue.com Tel 981 742 516 Open 13:00

**ALBERGUE BELA MUXÍA**

Private | 45 beds | 16€ | On Rúa da Encarnación which runs north-south two streets back from the quays, near the Tourist Office. Kitchen, laundry facilities. In a modern,
Tel 687 798 222 Open 13:00

INFORMATION Muxía has all facilities. Many fish restaurants and cafés along the harbour. Pharmacy on Rúa Real, one street back from the quay. Buses leave from the quay. Services daily to Santiago taking about two hours. Also services to Fisterra taking about 45 minutes. The albergues should have up-to-date timetables. Local taxi drivers will take up to four people to Fisterra for about 40€ and Santiago for about 100€, ask around in albergues and cafés for contact details. There is a local pilgrimage to the waterfront church every year on the Sunday following 8 September. Fiestas El Carmen July, a local pilgrimage, the Romaría da Barca, takes place to the church of Santuario de A Nosa Señora da Barca on the first Sunday after 8 September. The Little Fox House / Casa do Reposito is a ‘post-Camino retreat’ a little off the Muxía - Lires Camino. Please reserve in advance on 686 315 328. It is donativo. More details from their website www.thelittlefoxhouse.com

FOOD Restaurante A Sirena on Rúa de los Condes de Maceda does good pizzas.

SIGHTS To get to the waterfront church, Santuario de A Nosa Señora da Barca / Sanctuary of our Lady of the Boat, walk north through the town and continue along a paved road which will bring you straight there. The church is named after the boat mentioned below. Between the church and the sea is a famous boulder which moves. This is said to be part of the stone boat left here by the Virgin Mary.

HISTORY A legend tells how Santiago came to Galicia during his lifetime to try to spread Christianity, but having had little success among the heathen inhabitants he fell into a great depression and despondency. One day he was sitting on a beach near Muxía contemplating giving up and returning home to Palestine when in the distance he spotted a strange boat which, when it approached the shore he saw to be made of stone and to be piloted by no other than the Virgin Mary herself. Having made land-fall she immediately set about consoling and comforting him reassuring him that both she and her son were at his side while he went about his work. Whereupon, she disappeared leaving the stone boat on the shore where it remains to this day in a place called Pedra dos Cadires. Reinvigorated by this apparition Santiago continued with his work. Although, he didn’t meet with any great success among the Pagans and subsequently returned to Jerusalem where he met a grisly end.

The following description of the route between Muxía and Dumbría is written from the point-of-view of a pilgrim starting in Muxía. The waymarkings are much easier to follow in the other direction (Dumbría - Muxía).

In Muxía, follow the waymarkings south from the quays. After 700m turn left on to the wooden boardwalk and follow this to the end and then continue straight along a grassy lane. 1.2km to Chorente, continue straight until at the end of the village opposite a large house on the right the Camino forks to the left and then at the end of this road turns right towards Os Muiños. 2km to Os Muiños, café on the main road a little off the Camino to the right. After Os Muiños continue to the left along a coastal road through a forest until just before the village of Merexo the road turns left and the Camino continues straight on a smaller road for about 100m before turning right past a house and continuing on a lane through a forest straight all the way to Vilarde. Now turn left and zigzag down the hill. 4.2km to San Martiño, from here continue straight parallel to the main road. 1.5km to Quintán, cafés. Alternatively, between Os Muiños and Quintán it’s slightly shorter to follow the main road.

This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
Albergue Etsusia has recently (2023) opened here. More details to follow.

In Quintán cross the main road and continue straight up the hill. This brings you on to a lane through farmland and forest for about 5km until you rejoin a paved road where you turn left and follow the road.

### 14.8km (4h48m) to Senande

**ALBERGUE O CABANEL**

Private | 12 beds | 14€ | 800m before Senande (approaching from Muxía direction).

Café / restaurant. Private rooms. Website albergueocabanel.com Tel 600 644 879

**INFORMATION** Cafés and a shop (in the first café).

In Senande turn right at the village square on to the main road, continue past two cafés (left and right) and, just at the edge of the village, take the small road which veers left. After about 1km this road turns a sharp left then a right then a left again. Now walk straight for about 1km until you rejoin a paved road where you turn left.

2.4km to Trasufe. Take the right turn up through the village, at the top veer right on the road and almost immediately, where there’s a small white house, take a left on to a lane which leads uphill. After 1.5km you’ll come to a disused road, take the lane to the left here and in about 300m you’ll cross the new main road and continue on a smaller road into Dumbría. From here it’s still 2km to the albergue.

### 6.3km (1h58m) to Dumbría

**ALBERGUE DE LA XUNTA DE DUMBRÍA**

Xunta | 26 beds | 10€ | At the end of the village if you’re coming from Muxía. Modern Xunta. Kitchen. The hospitalero calls in the afternoon.

**INFORMATION** Cafés, supermarket, bank. Pharmacy on Calle Buxán.

From the Xunta, to walk towards Olveiroa, turn right on to the main road and follow it (sometimes veering left and right) for about 4km until you join the Santiago-Fisterra Camino at a roundabout.

Updates: caminoguide.net/pages/updates
This guide as an app: caminoapp.net
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 carrying everything they need and sleeping in pilgrim hostels.

The route described is the Camino Francés, the French Camino, which is generally considered to start in the picturesque French village of Saint-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 Camino post Covid

I managed to walk parts of the Camino in July 2022 and again in June 2023.

It felt strange in the same way that almost everything felt strange once the Covid restrictions were lifted. Social distancing was gone, facemasks were confined to public transport and pharmacies (and later, also almost complete gone), albergue dorms were back to their normal crowded selves. The other pilgrims I met were mostly young, overwhelmingly European. There was very few organised groups.

I mostly stayed away from the busy places, took my time (I was recovering from a dose myself in 2022), enjoyed the beauty of the Meseta in mid-summer. Often I had the Camino to myself. Albergue owners complained of the lack of pilgrims. It seems not walking the Meseta is becoming a trend, which is a real pity for people who’ve never walked the Meseta.

My time was short and I never got to experience the crowds on the last 100km, which by all accounts were pretty impressive, especially during Holy Year 2022.

It was great to be back, and a relief. For a while there I thought we’d never get back to normal. Thankfully, as is nearly always the case, the doom-merchants were wrong. Long may it continue!

Online resources

In order to save space this Background Information section is extremely brief. If you’re unfamiliar with the Caminos and you’d like to read more then much more detail is available for our website www.caminoguide.net

Frequently asked questions about walking the Camino:

www.caminoguide.net/faq

If you’re currently trying to decide what to bring with you on the Camino you may find our 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 the ability to book online through Booking.com, it’s at:

www.caminoguide.net/guide

This guide as a PDF file
If you’d like a copy of this guide as a PDF file, handy for viewing on a phone or a computer, all you have to do is send me a polite email.

Contact
You can contact me at this email caminoguidecontact@gmail.com

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.

How prices are written
Spain uses the euro, the symbol for which is € after the amount, 1€. 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€. You’ll figure it out.

Pilgrim albergues (hostels)
The following information is given about pilgrim albergues: whether it is private, religious, etc. (how many people it sleeps, the cost and opening dates, if none are given then it's open all the time) its name. This is followed by a description of how to find the hostel and any other relevant information.
Some of the hostels on this Camino are basic. However, unless otherwise stated, all of them have the following:

• Electricity
• Beds with mattresses
• Toilets
• Showers with hot water
• Drinking water
• Heating (although it may not be very effective and it may not be switched on)

Any other facilities are mentioned in the guide. If the guide says 'Laundry facilities' it means there's a washing machine and drier. If this isn't mentioned then the laundry facilities available are probably a sink where you can hand wash clothes and a line where you can dry them (weather permitting).

Many hostels are not adequately heated and during the cold months (a period which varies according to latitude and altitude but means approximately November to March) it will be cold in those hostels. This underlines the necessity of having a good sleeping-bag. Not all hostels have a kitchen. Where the hostel has one and it is
in working order, it's mentioned.

**Walking notes**
The distance in kilometres and approximate walking time is given before the name of the place. The distance given here is the total distances between places with pilgrim hostels. This is the one you should use when calculating the length of your walking day.

The estimated walking time is calculated using the **Munter Method** (Munter was some German lad). This method considers 1km walked = 1 unit, and 100m climbed = 1 unit. The time needed to walk a distance is the number of units divided by 4 (4 being kilometres walked per hour by an average walker over the course of a day). Example: Walking 8km on flat terrain would take about 2 hours. Walking 8km with ascents totalling 200m would take about 2 hours 30 minutes \((8+200/100)/4=2.5\). This is an estimate and is there to give you an idea of the difficulty of the terrain.

Information about the route and things you will meet between hostels are given under the heading **Walking Notes**. Distances given in this section are NOT cumulative.

| 1.5km Café | ← 1.5km to a café |
| 2.2km Steep descents | ← 2.2km after the café |
| 1.1km Bridge | ← 1.1km after the bridge |

**Towns and villages**
The following information is given about facilities available in towns and villages:

- café / bar generally they serve food of some description
- shop, for food and a variable range of other essentials
- bank, meaning an ATM
- pharmacy

**Waymarkings**
Everywhere you will find painted yellow arrows and a variety of other official and unofficial waymarkings. Generally the painted yellow arrows are your best friend, follow them and you can’t go wrong.

**Maps**
The route of the Camino is shown as a line of black dots. When there is more than one route option both routes are shown. Route options are also described in the text.

**About me**
My name is Gerald Kelly. I’m Irish. I started walking Caminos in 2004 when I walked a small part of the Camino Francés. I returned two years later to finish the job. I’ve been back most years since then, annual leave and pandemics allowing, to do it again.

**Thanks**
*Thanks to everybody who helped me with this project.*
*Buíochas le gach duine a chabhráigh liom leis an tionscadal seo.*
*Gracias a toda persona quien me ha ayudado con este proyecto.*

**Buen Camino!**