

RIBADEO > VILANOVA DE LOURENZÁ

27,9 km / 189,7 km to Santiago

SANTIAGO DE ABRES > MONDOÑEDO

31,1 km / 184,1 km to Santiago

Illa Pancha, Ribadeo



WHAT TO SEE



We start off from the historic port town of Ribadeo. From its noble past, and sitting upon a natural vantage point overlooking the ria, it boasts interesting medieval and modern architecture. The Way continues along an ancient route, perhaps Roman or late-Roman, to reach the end of the stage in Vilanova de Lourenzá.

The first villages the route passes through after leaving Ribadeo are Ove, Vilela, Couvelas, A Ponte de Arante – where a pilgrims' hospital was established after the 16th century –, Vilamartín, Gondán and O Conveiro, all places where a traditional way of life still greets us.

Vilanova de Lourenzá is the capital of the municipality, built around the magnificent Benedictine monastery, founded by Count Don Osorio (the "Saintry Count") in 969.

There is an alternative to this stretch, Ribadeo-Lourenzá, which takes us directly to Mondoñedo via Trabada, without going through Vilanova de Lourenzá. This route takes us through the lower area of the Eo River, before passing through the municipalities of Castropol, Vegadeo and Santiago de Abres (all being Asturian) and then reaching Trabada, in the province of Lugo. It continues along the lowest paths in the valley – passing through places such as San Tomé de Lourenzá and O Castro – and re-joins the route that comes from Vilanova de Lourenzá in Mondoñedo.

In Ribadeo, the church of **Santa María do Campo** (originating in the 13th century), **Santa Clara convent** (15th century), **A Trindade Chapel** (14th century), **Atalaia vantage point**, **Town Hall**, neo-classical palace belonging to the Marquis of Sargadelos, **The Torre dos Moreno**, modernist manor, **And Pancha Island**. The ria is a **Special Protection Area for Wild Birds** (herons, gannets, cormorants...) and the Eo is an important salmon river. **A Ponte de Arante chapel**, **Vilanova de Lourenzá Baroque monastery**, whose church was designed by Fernando de Casas Novos, who also designed the façade of the Obradoiro. Its church contains the famous marble **Paleochristian sarcophagus** (6th century). Lourenzá's **Religious Art Museum**.



VILANOVA DE LOURENZÁ > ABADÍN

21,5 km / 161,7 km to Santiago

Vilanova de Lourenzá Monastery



WHAT TO SEE



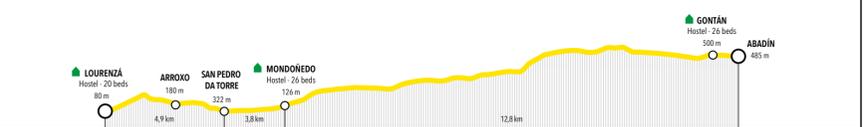
We say goodbye to Vilanova de Lourenzá on our way to Mondoñedo. Our route, which begins with a steep upward hill, then a descent, takes us along an old medieval track which crosses the pretty valley of Lourenzá, known as the Camiño da Brea (from the Latin *boreas*, or northern wind, which became "brea" in Galician, that is, strong, wet wind.).

We pass through the villages of Arrox, Ogrobe, San Pedro da Torre, O Reguengo and San Paio, most of which boast charming little churches open to visitors. We are following a path parallel to the N-634 road.

We enter Mondoñedo through the San Lázaro district. Mondoñedo, designated a historic-artistic heritage

site, is one of Galicia's Episcopal sees with the greatest cultural tradition and one of its most historic towns. It was the provincial capital up until 1833. It is also the birthplace of writers such as Álvaro Cunqueiro or musicians such as Pascual Veiga (author of the Galician anthem), in which became "brea" in Galician, that is, strong, wet wind.). We leave Mondoñedo via Fonte Vella, heading south. Our destination is Abadín, the municipality capital, and the outskirts of the region known as A Terra Chá. We continue through Cesuras; if we take the complementary one, we will pass through Lousada, A Xesta and Gontán, where the hostel is located.

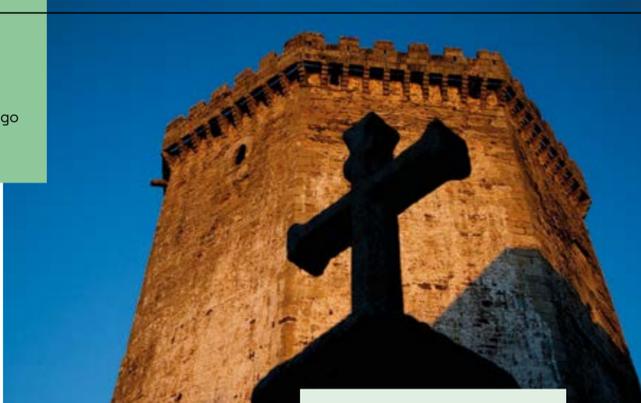
A Virxe de Guadalupe chapel, in Ogrobe. In Mondoñedo, the **Os Muíños district**, with the legendary **Ponte do Pasatempo**, linked to Marshall Pardo de Cela; the **Fonte Vella** (1548), the **cathedral** (13th century) whose medieval façade and rose window are especially impressive, as is the central nave, with its late-Gothic mural paintings (16th century), the cloister, presided over by a Gothic stone cross, the **19th century and Diocesan Museum**, the church of **Santiago** (19th century), **Mondoñedo cake**, made from almonds and squash in syrup. In Abadín, the **Romanesque church of Santa María**.



ABADÍN > VILALBA

20,3 km / 140,2 km to Santiago

Andrade Tower, Vilalba



WHAT TO SEE



A 20 km, completely flat, stage. As with the previous stage, we are walking through the A Terra Chá, a vast plain (the largest in Galicia along with the A Limia region in Ourense), which takes in various municipalities in the province of Lugo. UNESCO declared this region a Biosphere Reserve in 2003, with the name "Terras do Miño".

On leaving Abadín, the route passes through the parishes of Castromaior and Goiriz. First, we cross a medieval bridge over the River Arnela. In A Pontevela, we are pleasantly surprised by another magnificent medieval bridge, with three arches, which crosses the River Batán.

The layout of the land means we are now in an area of wetlands, like the one we come across after As Chouzas. There are also charming examples of religious and popular art: farmhouses, stone crosses and stone washing places welcome us on our way.

We then reach Vilalba, the heart of A Terra Chá, famous for its gastronomy – a special mention is given to the San Simón cheese, free-range chickens or capons. This town, which dates back to the 13th century, is a crossroads presided over by the Andrade tower (15th century), a monument that is now home to a National Parador tourist hotel.

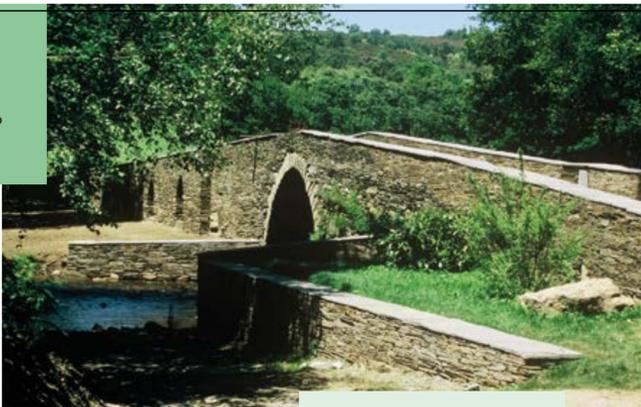
The cemeteries of **Castromaior** and **Goiriz** are aesthetically impressive, of a style somewhere between Gothic and Gaudian. In **Vilalba** – apart from tasting the **San Simón da Costa cheese**, smoked with birch, an exquisite product with its own designation of origin, or the "capons", free-range chickens fattened and then stuffed before roasting, with a popular market day the Sunday before Christmas –, we are met by the **Andrade Tower**, octagonal, the remains of the Andrade family fort and today a National Parador hotel. Vilalba's **Museum of Prehistory and Archaeology**. This region is well known for its numerous **mamoas**, or tumuli, and dolmens.



VILALBA > BAAMONDE

19,1 km / 120 km to Santiago

Saa Bridge, Vilalba



WHAT TO SEE



On leaving Vilalba, the Way continues along possibly medieval and even royal tracks, already documented in the 17th century. We cross a small bridge over the River Labrada and come to Penas Corveiras and then Cova. We are greeted by traditional architecture, accompanying us through the villages of A Seara, Sabugueiros, Gabin, O Castro and Regovide.

Approximately 6.7 km from the start, we reach San Xoán de Alba. At this point, we are walking parallel to the regional C-634 road. We pass through A Torre, Pedrouzos, Costián, O Coutado and Goiriz, from where we head downhill towards the River Labrada. We cross the

river over the magnificent medieval Saa bridge, built using thick slabs of slate and which has several depressed arches or "eyes". We descend as far as As Casas Novas and enter A Fonte Pequena. From As Penas, we will continue on to Pigara, a parish church in the municipality of Guitiriz, where we can taste the water from the Fonte das Verrugas. Around us, the Ladra River offers captivating views and fascinating nooks and crannies, where, in the summer months, we can cool down in the shade of the birch trees.

Penas Corveiras Country House. **The Muíño do Rañego**, an old restored water mill. **The Church of San Xoán de Alba**. **Saa bridge**, medieval, which crosses the River Labrada. **Fonte das Verrugas** fountain, in Pigara (Guitiriz): popular belief has it that the waters have the special power to cure warts. **The church of Santiago de Baamonde**, Gothic (14th century), with the stamp of Romanesque. Its atrium has a recreation of the crucifixion, made up of three crosses and an ancient oak tree, on whose trunk a chapel dedicated to Our Lady is carved, the work of the sculptor Víctor Corral. There is a **house-museum** in the upper part of the town.



BAAMONDE > SOBRADO

40,3 km / 100,8 km to Santiago

Sobrado dos Monxes Monastery, Sobrado



WHAT TO SEE



We leave Baamonde on the Carretera Nacional VI highway, parallel to the railway and the Parga River, until we reach the Chapel of Santo Alberte, where a popular pilgrimage takes place every May. We continue through San Paio de Seixón, in the municipality of Friol, and Ponte Leixosa, until we arrive at Santiago de Miraz.

Veering slightly away from the Camino, the imposing San Paio de Narla fortress stands tall. In Marco das Pias we leave the province of Lugo entering the province of A Coruña.

Passing through A Esgueva, we reach the Cistercian monastery of Santa María de Sobrado. This spectacular monument was built in 952 and founded as a mixed

monastery, for nuns and monks. It was one of Galicia's most important centres of power. At the height of pilgrimages halfway through the 12th century, the monastery became part of the Cistercian Order, acting as a hospital, the first in Spain to do so. At present, it is still actively involved in religious and social life, with special attention given to pilgrims.

There is also an alternative, shorter route from Baamonde (about 8 km shorter), which will take us straight to Sobrado. In Boimorto, it joins the route described above, but then deviates once again, bypassing Arzúa. It crosses through Santiso and then, near the Santiago airport, it rejoins the main route and the Camino Francés itself, with which this route coincides from Arzúa.



SOBRADO > ARZÚA

21,9 km / 60,5 km to Santiago

Ribadiso Hostel, Arzúa



WHAT TO SEE



This stage sees the conclusion of the Northern Way, as it meets the French Way in Arzúa. We leave the grandiose monastery in Sobrado and continue on our way through the villages of Vilarchao, O Peroxil and Carelle. We then come to As Corredoiras and, after passing the crossroads, continue on towards the municipality of Boimorto. Here, once more, the Way captivates us with its beautiful and lush Galician scenery and the numerous examples of popular architecture.

In the town of Arzúa, the Northern and French Ways meet. The Primitive Way also passes through here, having joined the French Way in Melide. The three Ways

head together towards the common destination of Compostela.

In Arzúa, very well-known gastronomically for the region's cheeses – with the designation of origin Arzúa-Ulloa –, the Way becomes much more urban. Documentary sources from the 13th century call this stage the "Oviado Way", the street today being called "Rúa do Camiño". Arzúa undoubtedly owes its growth to the Jacobean Way. Today, it is an important regional nucleus, with an economy based on agriculture and cattle farming.

The church of San Lourenzo in Carelle. In Arzúa, the church of **Santiago**, the **Gothic chapel of A Madalena**, belonging to another, now non-existent, hospital, and **A Mota chapel**, beside a splendid "carballeira", or oak wood, of the same name. 5 km away (and off the track), the **Pazo de Brandeso**, the inspiration behind Ramón María del Valle Inclán's *Autumn Sonata* (the inside not being open to visitors). 10 km away, also off the track, is the **Portodemouros reservoir**, with a more than ample selection of rural accommodation for those who enjoy water sports. The cheeses from Arzúa (D.O. Arzúa-Ulloa) are soft and smooth to the palate.



ARZÚA > ARCA [O PINO]

18,5 km / 38,7 km to Santiago

Santa Irene Hermitage, O Pino



WHAT TO SEE



From Arzúa the last kilometres of the Route lie before us: 38.7 in total. We will divide them into two stages of 18.5 and 20.2 km respectively. Some people prefer to complete the remaining part of the route in a single day, staying the night at Monte do Gozo but it is more advisable to do it in two stages, stopping in Arca.

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

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

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

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



ARCA [O PINO] > SANTIAGO

20,2 km to Santiago

Praza do Obradoiro, Santiago de Compostela



WHAT TO SEE



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

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

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

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



BEYOND THE CAMINO...

THE NORTHERN -> WAY

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



Lias Beach, Foz

Between Foz and Viveiro, passing through Burela, Cervo and Xove on the way, there is a sea coast just waiting to be discovered: vast beaches with the purest sands and rough seas, attractive countryside free from crowds outside the busier areas.

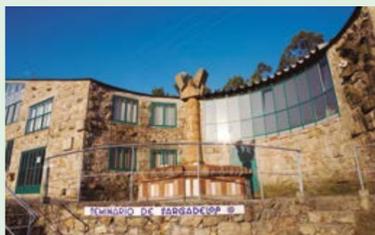
Literally rising up out of the sea in Fazouro (municipality of Foz) is an ancient Castro (fortified settlement), the only one on the northern coast of Galicia to be preserved as a museum, of which 700 m² have been excavated. Five kilometres inland from Foz is San Martiño de Mondoñedo Basilica, considered the oldest cathedral in Spain. Built in the 6th century, it housed the ancient episcopal see of Mondoñedo. Inside is an extremely valuable stone piece, an antependium from the early 12th century, possibly the original Romanesque altarpiece, quite a rarity in European art.



San Cibrao, Cervo

We are in the A Mariña district of Lugo. Heading north along the coast from Foz we come to Burela, one of northern Spain's most important tuna fishing ports. Its bars and restaurants are the ideal place to sample what is perhaps the best tuna on the Bay of Biscay, the so-called 'blue prince'. Along the route lie beautiful beaches such as Llás, Peizás, As Pólas and A Areoura, among others.

Continuing this pleasant journey, we reach Cervo. Beside the Xunco River is what remains of the original Sargadelos factory, the first complete iron and steel factory in Spain, which brought the Industrial Revolution to Galicia in 1791. It has been declared an Asset of Cultural Interest and several of the original structures still stand (crossed by the path known as 'Lovers' Walk'). In 1970, Isaac Díaz Pardo and Luís Seoane re-established the historic Sargadelos ceramics factory, with the unique and prized lines and aesthetic we know today.



Sargadelos Factory, Cervo



Santa María de Viveiro

Viveiro is an attractive historic town. It was important in the 15th century, when the Catholic Monarchs forced Marshall Pardo de Cela to surrender it. From its time of splendour and great city walls there still remain three gates (including Carlos I, a National Historic Monument since 1942), as well as the medieval layout of its streets. It has borne the title of 'city' since 1891 and has long been the most important population centre in the Mariña Lucense area. The coastline is also extremely beautiful.

Moving south through the province of Lugo, the terrain becomes flatter and the landscape opens up in a way it hardly ever does in Galicia. We arrive in the ATerra Chá district. This is home to one of the leading spas in Galicia: Guitiriz, famous for its very special cool medicinal mineral waters, which are especially recommended for the digestive tract and the kidneys. The countryside here is beautiful and serene. Let us not forget that we are in Terras do Miño, which has been declared a Biosphere Reserve. The Parga River offers delightful paths, ancient mills and refreshing waterfalls as it runs through native woodlands of alders, birches, oaks and chestnuts.



Santo Alberte Bridge, Guitiriz

The northern pilgrimage routes, both the Primitive and the Northern ways, have a powerful historical point of reference in the two-thousand-year-old city of Lugo. Its Roman ruins, cuisine, monuments and surrounding woodlands all call for a more leisurely visit. Let us return to Roman Lugo, which is sure to delight history and archaeology enthusiasts. It boasts the only Roman walls preserved intact - built between the 3rd and 4th centuries AD and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since the year 2000; Roman baths on the left bank of the Miño River, older than the walls themselves and once the largest in northwest Hispania; and the unique Temple of Mithra, between Santiago Gate in the city walls and the neoclassical entrance to the cathedral.

The Roman baths are inside the building which also houses the Balneario de Lugo (spa). They date from the 1st century. Today, two thousand years later, their sulphurous waters are still being used for multiple therapeutic purposes.

Less than fifteen kilometres from Lugo we find one of the most enigmatic monuments in the west: Santa Baia de Bóveda. Experts date the structure to the late Roman period (perhaps the 4th century). It may have been a large mausoleum associated with the martyr Priscillian. Architecture, sculpture and painting all engage in a dialogue within this esoteric temple located on the ancient Roman road known as Via XIX. The unique building has two floors, an interior pool and pictorial reliefs of human subjects and exotic birds. An enigma, as we have said.



Cidade da Cultura, Santiago de Compostela

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

THE NORTHERN WAY ->

Along with the Primitive Way, this route, which runs along the coastline of Asturias and enters Galicia via the ria of Ribadeo, became increasingly significant early in the history of pilgrimages. At that time (9th and 10th centuries), the capital of the Kingdom of Asturias and Galicia was Oviedo. The monarch, Alfonso II the Chaste, was to travel to Compostela to verify the news that the remains of James the Apostle had appeared and order the first church to be built at the site.

The French Way would then become the most travelled of the ancient routes, when the capital of the Kingdom was transferred from Oviedo to León. Even so, the Northern Way maintained its vitality up until the 18th century. And not only did it attract devout followers from across the north of the peninsula, and indeed - via land and sea - from countries such as England, Flanders, Germany or Scandinavia; many pilgrims made their journey to see the relics held in the sanctuary of San Salvador in Oviedo and, of course, the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela.

Many illustrious pilgrims have travelled along the Northern Way, including St. Francis of Assisi, who, tradition has it, made the pilgrimage to San Salvador in Oviedo and to Santiago in 1214. At the end of the 15th century, the Armenian bishop, martyr of Azerbaijan, would use this route, both on his way there and back. And in the 16th century, Jakub Sobieski, father of King John III of Poland



would follow the same route, as would the Frenchman Jean Pierre Racq, at the end of the 18th century, confirmed by his written testimony.

After Castropol, the last town on the route in Asturias, the Northern Way enters Galicia along the Cantabrian coast, crossing the beautiful ria of Ribadeo. Some pilgrims choose to go around it, avoiding the River Eo, to cross the estuary further inland at the Santiago de Abres bridge. Today, the Os Santos bridge joins Asturias and Galicia.

Thus, the starting point of the Northern Way in Galicia is Ribadeo, in the province of Lugo. 189.72 kilometres separate Ribadeo from Santiago. The entire route is signposted by boundary stones decorated with a ceramic scallop shell. Pilgrims will undoubtedly welcome this information, which supplements the basic yellow arrow indications.

Along this route, apart from the importance of the historic town of Ribadeo itself, we can appreciate the artwork belonging to the monastery of San Salvador de Lourenzá, as well as Mondoñedo - which was one of the seven capitals of the ancient Kingdom of Galicia and the birthplace of the writer Alvaro Cunqueiro - Vilalba, and the magnificent monastery of Sobrado dos Monxes, having left Lugo and entered the province of A Coruña.

In Arzúa, the Northern Way meets the French Way.

THE GALICIA WAYS ->



- CAMINOS OFFICIALLY MARKED OUT: The French Way, The Primitive Way, The Northern Way, The English Way. CAMINOS RECOGNISED: The Silver Way or "Camino Mozárabe", The Portuguese Way, The Portuguese Way of the coast, The Winter Way, The Route of the Sea of Arousa and River Ulla, The Fisterra and Muxia Way.

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

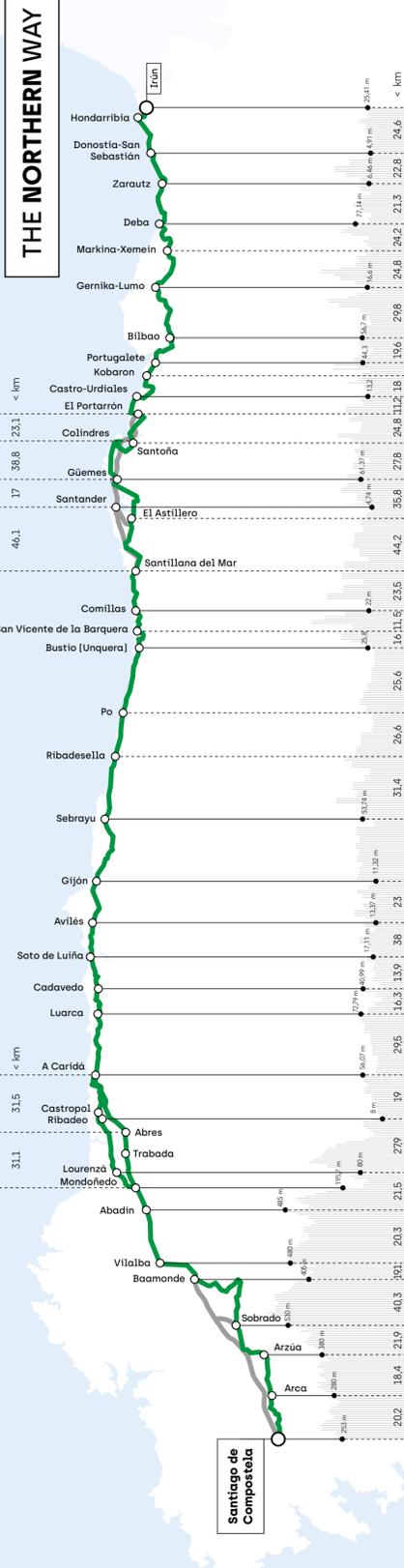
Map of Santiago de Compostela with 21 numbered locations and a legend. Locations include: 1. Santiago de Compostela Cathedral, 2. Royal Hospital, 3. San Martiño Pinaro, 4. Vice-Chancellor's Office, 5. Pazo de Raxoi, 6. Monastery of San Francisco, 7. San Fructuoso Church, 8. San Domingos de Bonaval, 9. Camino Gate, 10. Santa María do Camiño Church, 11. Praza do Campo Square, 12. Santa María Salomé Church, 13. Mazaelos Gate, 14. Santiago Fountain, 15. Santa Susana Church, 16. Pilar Church, 17. Praza das Praterias, 18. Santa María a Real do Sar, 19. Santa María de Conxo, 20. Monte do Gozo, 21. San Paio do Monte Chapel. Legend includes: International Pilgrim Welcome Centre, Information, and Pilgrim's Office.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR PILGRIMS

- CRÉDENTIAL OF THE PILGRIM: This is the document in which you collect stamps from the places you pass through... HEALTHCARE CARD: Spanish pilgrims should always carry their health insurance card... PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: In addition to the general recommendations which all pilgrims should observe... IF TRAVELLING WITH ANIMALS: Make sure that animals are vaccinated and have been de-wormed...

Before starting the pilgrimage

- Prepare physically for the journey, and bear in mind that stages should be planned depending on individual physical ability... Never leave the marked paths, avoid walking when it is dark and obey the rules... Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that is light in colour... Drink water frequently but make sure it is suitable for drinking...



Emergency Telephones: 061 (Galicia), 112 (National), 085 (Galicia forest Fires). www.caminodesantiago.gal

