



If you  
are  
looking for  
a Camino  
that  
awakens  
your  
senses,  
this is  
your  
Camino.

**¡ ULTREIA  
ET SUSEIA  
¡!!!!!**

## Guide to the Camino Olvidado

(the Forgotten Camino)

*With the mountains as your  
witness*

JOSE ANTONIO  
CUÑARRO

# CAMINO OLVIDADO

The Camino Olvidado starts in Bilbao and merges with the Camino Francés in Cacabelos, which is about 7 km before Villafranca del Bierzo.

The route spans 532 kilometers and can be walked in approximately three weeks. It is a route filled with history, having its origin in Roman times, when the road was important for soldiers and commerce alike.

Used by the Moors, and then by the Christians during the time of Reconquest, the route became an important branch of the pilgrimage to Santiago. In 1120, Hugo, a papal envoy, traveled on this route to Santiago in order to bring the Papal Bull announcing the appointment of Gelmirez as the delegate of Pope Calixto II.

The many hospitals, churches, and monasteries along the route attest to the importance of this Camino during many centuries. But for years, the route had become forgotten by all but a few, hence its name, Camino Olvidado, the Forgotten Camino.

In the past decade, with renewed worldwide interest in the Camino de Santiago, efforts have been made to restore the Camino Olvidado to the place it deserves alongside the many other Caminos that take us to Santiago.

Thanks to the tireless dedication of many unsung heroes, the Camino Olvidado has been marked with arrows, GPS tracks have been recorded, and albergues continue to open.

This guide is one part of the effort to promote the Camino Olvidado and highlight its many beauties. This route passes through some of Spain's most beautiful natural areas, and its mountain stages are glorious.

Many historical monuments, beautiful villages, mountain paths through spectacular scenery, and rich agricultural lands await!

This guide has divided the walk from Bilbao to Villafranca del Bierzo into 22 stages. At several points, a stage will have alternative options.

The alternatives will be marked, for example, as Stage 2A and Stage 2 B.

Those options are summarized here:

STAGE 2. These options have different ending points but coincide for most of the day. Staying in Villasana de Mena provides an opportunity to take a well marked circular walk to beautiful Romanesque churches nearby.

STAGE 2A. Takes us from Güeñes to Nava de Ordunte. The stage ends in a town with basic accommodation in an old school. From Nava, pilgrims can also arrange transportation and lodging in nearby towns.

STAGE 2B Takes us from Güeñes to Villasana de Mena, where there is private lodging. This alternative adds about 5 km onto the day's walk.

STAGE 3. The main difference between Stages 3A and 3B is that 3B adds directions for us to get back to the Camino from Villasana de Mena.

STAGE 10. Both alternatives take us from Guardo to Puente Almuhey.

STAGE 10A. Is shorter than its alternative and has very little elevation gain. It essentially follows the provincial road CL-626.

STAGE 10B. Is almost twice as long, (31.7 km as opposed to 16.7) but it takes us up as high as 1584 m in the mountains of the province of León. Nearly all off-road, it goes through several villages and beautiful forests.

STAGE 12. Both alternatives take us from Cistierna to Boñar. Stage 12A is about 3 km shorter than Stage 12B, has a bit more elevation gain, and goes through a few more villages.

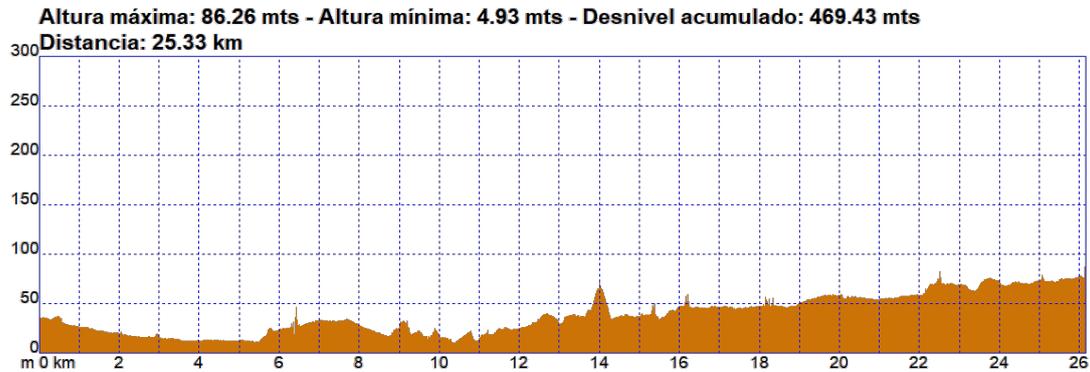
STAGES 13, 14, and 15. These alternative routes diverge substantially. The preferred route takes us through the mountains from Boñar to Vegacervera (27 km), the next day from Vegacervera to Buiza (16 km), and the third day from Buiza to La Magdalena (27 km). This route is full of mountain splendor in all its majesty.

The alternative is one day shorter, usually alongside the road. It goes from Boñar to La Robla (33.6 km), and the next day from La Robla to La Magdalena (16 km).

# THE CAMINO THROUGH VEGACERVERA

## STAGES FOR THE MOUNTAIN

1: (Vizcaya) **Bilbao**, 11km. Alonsotegui, 8km. Sodupe, 6,3 km. **Güeñes. 25,3 Km.**



We can receive the pilgrim blessing in the cathedral of Santiago in Bilbao, which is the start of our pilgrimage.

Gratefully, we begin this first stage, a pretty stroll on the side of the river. We go past the Guggenheim Museum and step by step, we leave the large city.



Once we pass the Devil's Bridge (Puente del Diablo), the Camino Olvidado splits from the Camino del Norte.



We proceed until Alonsotegui, where we can take a break and enjoy their famous pinchos (little plates of appetizer-type food, similar to what are called tapas in other parts of Spain). We pass through Sodupe and end in Güeñes, where we can visit a pretty bonsai garden and the magnificent church of Santa María.



**BILBAO:**

Albergue de peregrinos de Bilbao

609 031 526

Albergue de peregrinos Santa Cruz de Begoña

687 529 627

Albergue Claret Enea

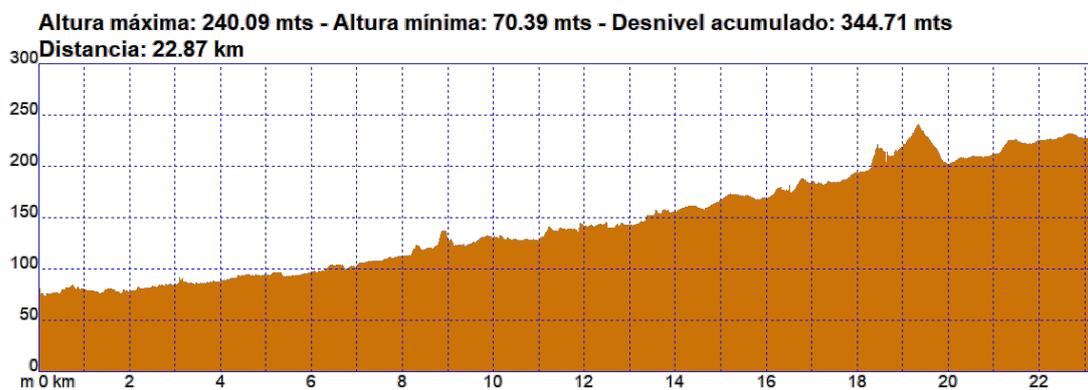
609 087 620 / 946 510 171

**GÜEÑES:**

Hotel Erreka Güeñes

946 69 03 45

2.A **Güeñes**, 4 km. Zalla, 8 km. Balmaseda, (**Burgos**) 5 km. El Berrón, 1,2 km. Santecilla, 0,8 km. Gijano de Mena, 3,9 km. **Nava de Ordunte. 22,9 Km.**



A comfortable and easy stage. The pleasant path leads us to Zalla and then to Balmaseda. Balmaseda deserves a stop to visit the Boinas Museum, named La Encartada (boinas are the typical Basque berets worn traditionally and today by many men). The museum is in an old factory and has preserved the workers' apartments. More information here: <https://www.visitenkarterri.com/en/view-do/museums/boinas-la-encartada-museum.html> The Museum of the History of Balmaseda and the Interpretative Center of the Passion of Christ are also worth a visit. There are several important historical monuments as well, including the Urrutia Palace, Church of San Severino, Bridge of La Muza (also called the Puente Viejo, Old Bridge) and the Horcasitas' o Buniel Palace.



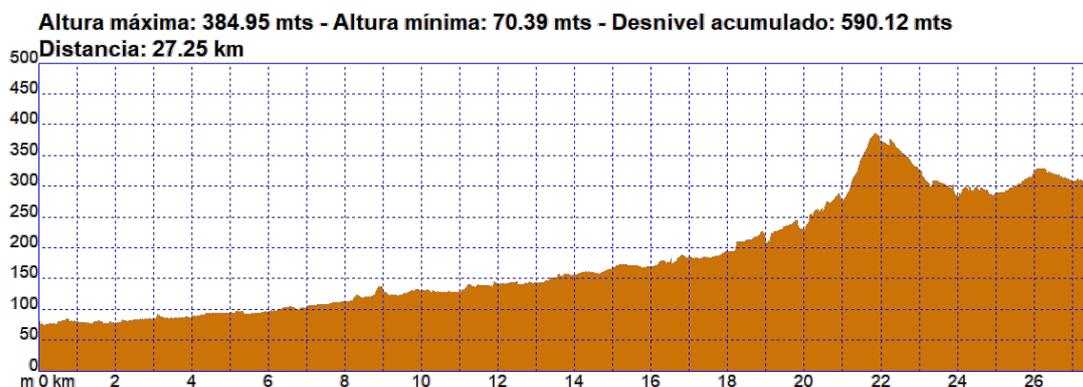
We leave the province of Vizcaya, entering into the province of Burgos over the bridge of Las Oleas. We walk through the Mena Valley alongside the Berrón River, and we arrive at Santecilla. There, we take the option to go to Nava de Ordunte, which will be our ending point for the day.

**BALMASEDA:** Municipal albergue, telephone: 688810773 Call between 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Charge is 10 €, paid on the internet or through a bank transfer. The town has all services.

**NAVA DE ORDUNTE:** there is no accommodation. you can go on to **Villasana de Mena**, where there is a hotel:

Hostería Foramontanos: 947 12 64 84 / 607 948 286.

**2.B Güeñes**, 4 km. Zalla, 8 km. Balmaseda, (**Burgos**) 5 km. El Berrón, 1,2 km. Santecilla, 5,1 km. Menamayor, 1,5 km. Entrambasaguas, 0,8 km. Mercadillo, 1,9 km. **Villasana de Mena. 27,5 km.**



Stage 2.B. If you wish to walk to Villasana de Mena and spend the night there, take this alternative. This stage is the same as 2A, except that when you arrive in Santecilla, instead of following the markings towards Nava de Ordunte, continue straight, going under the train tracks. This alternative will take you directly into Villasana de Mena, there are several private accommodations.



This path is a beautiful ascent crossing the Little stream in the shade of a forest until we arrive in Menamayor. From there, we descend towards Villasana de Mena, an important town that has all services. spectacular Romanesque churches of San Lorenzo (in the hamlet of

Vallejo) and Santa María (in Siones) are well worth a visit. You should call ahead because the keys are held by the neighbors. There is a well marked, easy and pleasant off-road path marked from Villasana.



**Mercadillo:**

Hotel D.Pablo

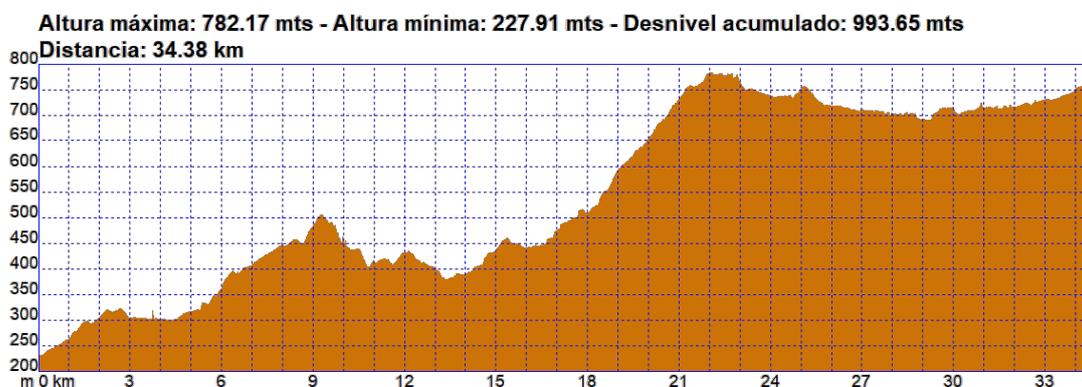
947 14 12 05

**Villasana de Mena**

Hostería Foramontanos:

947 12 64 84 / 607 948 286.

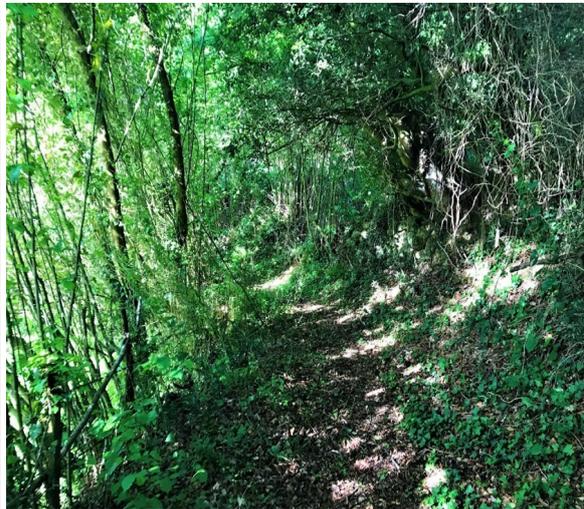
3.A Nava **de Ordunte**, 1,2 km. Partearroyo, 0,5 km. Ayega, 4,8 km. Hornes, 3,9 km. Ordejón de Mena, 1,2 km. Taranco, 1 km. Hoz de Mena, 1,1 km. Concejero, 1,6 km. Arceo, 2,9 km. Irús, 6 km. Bercedo, 3,1 km. Villasante, 2,1 km. Loma de Montija, 5 km. **Espinosa de los Monteros. 33,2 Km.**



We leave Nava de Ordunte going around the reservoir until we come to the Chapel of Taranco. Follow the camino through the village of Hoz de Mena, where we can see houses with the coats of arms of the Knights of Santiago. We go through Arceo and then by the Irus waterfalls, walking on the Roman road, which is very well preserved.



Enjoy this stage, listening to the splashing water while walking through the trees in a very pretty forest. Then we have to go up the Hill at Cabrio, and we will pass the ancient oaks of Villasante. Continue through the village of Loma de Montija to arrive at Espinosa de los Monteros. This is a town with historical architecture that is well worth a visit.



**VILLASANTE:** Albergue Villasante

626825930

**ESPINOSA DE LOS MONTEROS:**

Albergue juvenil :

947 12 04 49 / 947 14 36 60

Casa Rural El Montero de Espinosa

695 59 58 95

Hostal Sancho García

947 12 00 42

Posada Real Torre Berrueza

947 14 38 22

La Casa Encanto

695 595 895

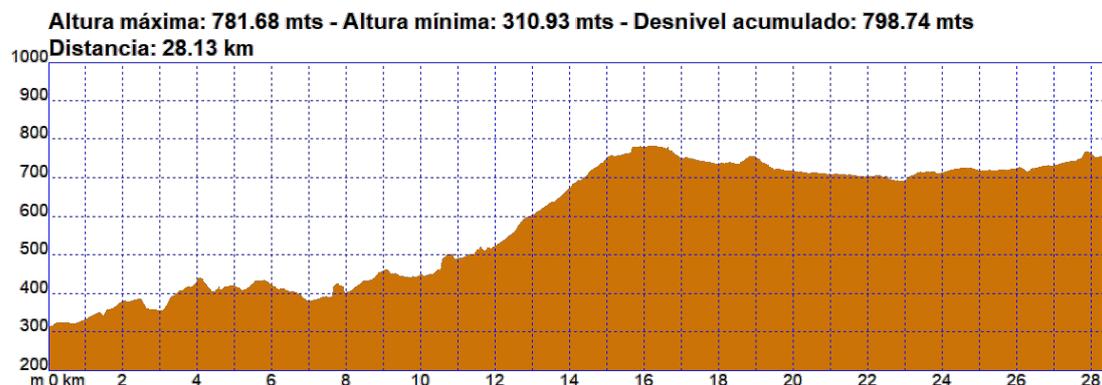
Hotel El Rincón

947 120 070 / 650 152 615

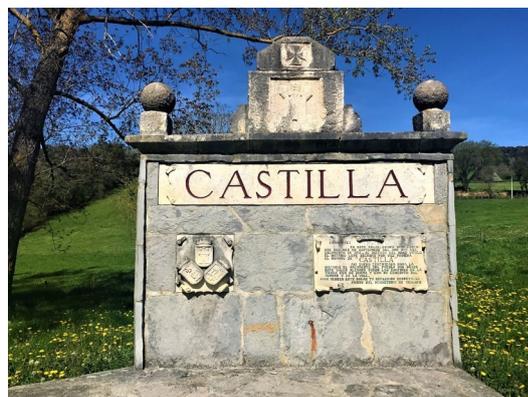
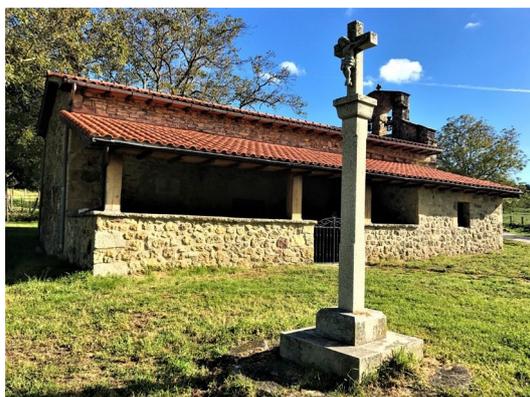
Casa Rural Los Monteros

947 143 752 / 670 428 740

**3.B Villasana de Mena**, 2,1 km. Caniego, 2 km. Ordejón de Mena, 2,2 km. Hoz de Mena, 1,1 km. Concejero, 1,6 km. Arceo, 2,9 km. Irús 6 km. Berceo, 3,1 Villasante, 2,1 Loma de Montija, 5 km. **Espinosa de los Monteros 28,1 km.**



We leave Villasana towards Caniego, passing through Ordejón de Mana, and we arrive at the Taranco Chapel.



Here we continue on with the route described in Section 3A above.



**VILLASANTE:** Albergue Villasante

626825930

**ESPINOSA DE LOS MONTEROS:**

Albergue juvenil :

947 12 04 49 / 947 14 36 60

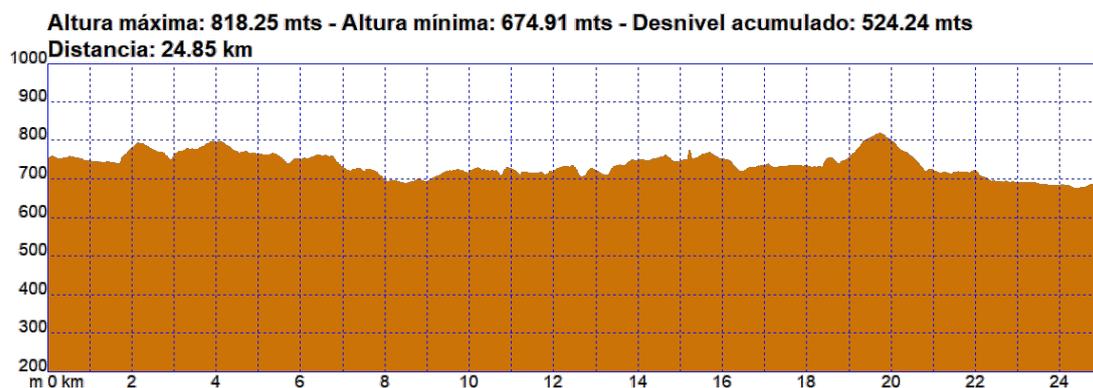
Casa Rural El Montero de Espinosa

695 59 58 95

Hostal Sancho García  
Posada Real Torre Berrueza  
La Casa Encanto  
Hotel El Rincón  
Casa Rural Los Monteros

947 12 00 42  
947 14 38 22  
695 595 895  
947 120 070 / 650 152 615  
947 143 752 / 670 428 740

**4: Espinosa de los Monteros**, 2,2 km. Santa Olalla, 2,3 km. Para, 2,3 km. Redondo, 0,6 km. Herrera, 1,5 km. Quintanilla del Rebollar, 4,5 km. Quisicedo, 1,1 km. Villavascones, 2,3 km. Quintanilla de Sotoscueva, 1,4 km. Entrambosríos, 3,6 km. Rozas, 1 km. San Martín de Porres, 1,3 km. Pedrosa de Valdeporres, 0,4 km. Merindad de Valdeporres, 0,4 km. **Santelices 26,2 Km.**



We begin the stage on the banks of the Trueba River. Here the Camino coincides with a local trail, “Senda de la Sonsierra,” which we take until we arrive at the national natural monument called Ojo Güareña. This is a huge limestone formation, which contains many kms of caves, many paleolithic graves, and medieval chapels carved into the rocks. In Quintanilla there is an Interpretative Center of Ojo Güareña. We then go through the town of Quisicedo, whose church is dedicated to Santiago.



From Quisicedo, the Camino takes us on the trail whose name is simply “Senda del Valle” (Valley Trail). This takes us into Villavascones. On the way, we shouldn’t miss the necropolis — anthropomorphic tombs which provide hints of earlier times. We enter the town of Entrambosríos, where the Camino splits into two possibilities. One takes us to the Engaña Tunnel, part of a never-completed railway. The tunnel was on the route of the proposed Santander–Mediterranean railway line, an attempt by the Spanish government to connect the Bay of Biscay with the Mediterranean Sea.

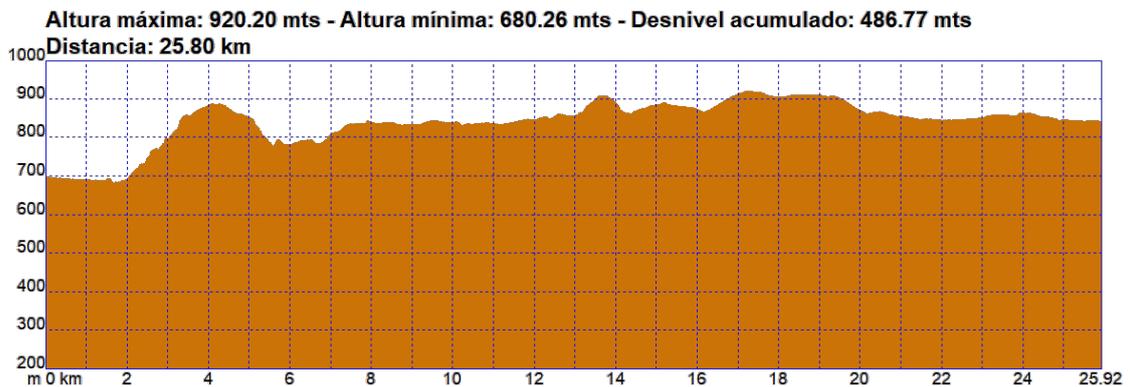


The other alternative, shorter, takes us to Santelices on a path that goes through a leafy forest.

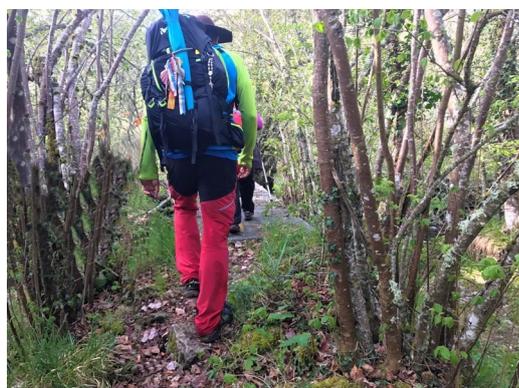
**SANTELICES:**

Albergue in the old railway station of Santelices.: 667 43 17 26

5: **Santelices**, 2,2 km. San Martin de las Ollas, 2,3 km. Argomedo, 3,7 km. Soncillo, 4,6 km. Virtus, 2 km. Cilleruelo de Bezana, 2,8 km. Quintanilla de San Román, 0,9 km Villamediana de San Román, 1,6 km Herbosa, 3 km. San Vicente de Villamezán, 2,7 km. **Arija. 25,8 km.**



We begin the Camino crossing the Engaña River on a viaduct of the old unfinished railway, which has been converted into a trail system.



We continue to San Martín de las Ollas, ascending until we find a strange rock bridge.

Continuing our ascent, we arrive at Argomedo, and then Soncillo, which has all the services necessary to take a rest.



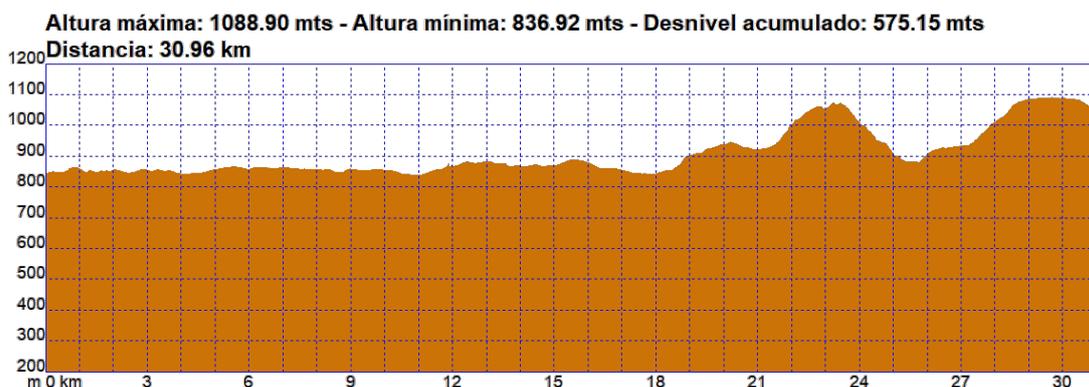
Continuing on the Camino, we pass through various towns until we get to Arijia. There we can enjoy its beaches of fine sand, on the shores of the reservoir of the Ebro River. This reservoir divides the town into two neighborhoods, The Upper or Old Town, and the Lower part (along the reservoir) named “Barrio de la Virga.”

**ARIJA:**

Camping Playa de Arijia (peregrinos 11 €)	942 773 300
Albergue de Arijia:	665 82 32 32
La Casa De Arijia	699 38 50 03
Hotel Rural La Piedra	615 30 71 87

6: **Arijia, (Cantabria)** 2 km. Bimón, 1,6 km. Llano, 2,5 km. Renedo, 1,4 Villanueva de las Rozas, 1,5 km. Las Rozas de Valdearroyo, 2,4 km. Arroyo, 7,1 km. Villafría, 1,1 km. Retortillo, 6,1 km.

Cervatos, 5,3 km. **Olea. 32,5 Km.**



The Camino goes around the reservoir of the Ebro, giving us pretty views of the water and its reflections.



As soon as we leave Arija, we find the sign announcing our entrance into the region of Cantabria.

We go through Bimón, the first Cantabrian town on our route, and that's where a mountainous area begins. We go through an oak forest till we arrive at Quintanilla, and quickly thereafter, into Retortillo. In Retortillo we see clear evidence of our ancient history, the Roman ruins of Juliobriga.



The interpretative center is worth a visit, and then we begin to ascend through a pretty beech forest.

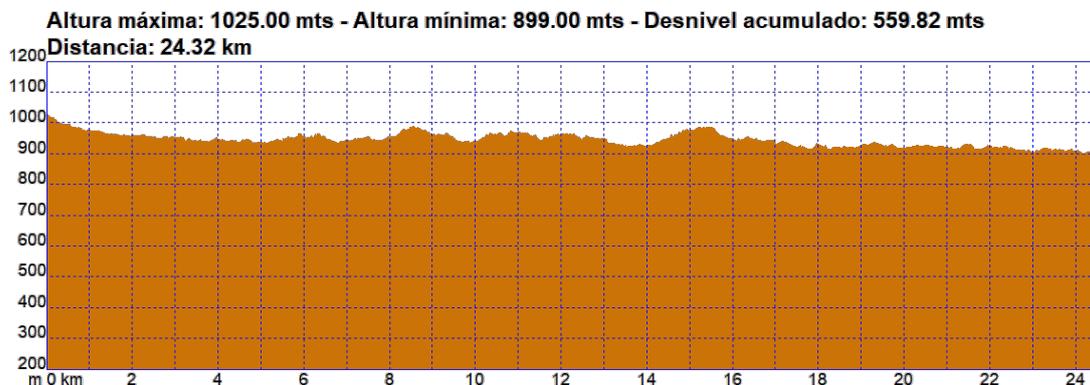
In the town of Cervatos, you can visit the 12th century church, San Pedro de Cervatos. It is a Romanesque jewel. The iconography of some of the capitals may be shocking to some because of its explicit eroticism. Other capitals follow the more usual patterns of animals, monsters, and fruits. Phone number is on the door, and the señora with the keys will come at any reasonable time provided she is in town. When we cross over the superhighway on an elevated pedestrian pathway, we begin our last ascent of the day, and finish in Olea.

**OLEA:**

CTR: Casa Miguel (25 € habitación)  
Los Eros

657 49 13 21 / 653 923 036  
942 75 04 05 / 657 904 635

7: **Olea**, 5,3 Km. Casasola, 1,6 km. La Cuadra, 1,6 km. Las Quintanillas, 0,9 km. La Quintana, 1,2 km. Las Henestrosas, 1,4 km. Bercedo, 2 km. Cuenca, (**Palencia**) 3,4 km. Nestar, 3,5 km Grijera, 3,4 km. **Aguilar de Campoo. 24,3Km.**



We leave Olea, passing by the church of Santa Eulalia and a very pretty restored mill. As we continue on the camino, we come to one of the many menhirs (an upright prehistoric stone) that we will see on this stage.

We arrive in Reinosilla and can see the Tower of the Cossio family, with its impressive coat of arms.



Then we go through Casasola, and we can see more menhirs in the distance, named “La Matorra I and II.” Passing through Quintanilla and Quintana, we arrive in Las Henestrosas. We will pass through planted fields that are (in growing season, at least) many shades of brilliant green. Cuenca is the last town in Cantabria. We enter the province of Palencia and the town of Nestar by crossing the Roman bridge, named The Partridge Bridge (Puente de la Perdiz).



The path takes us to today's destination, Aguilar de Campoo. It is a very pretty town, with its castle and watch tower. Its ancient walls have seven doors, and it is well worth your effort to spend a few hours walking around town. To visit the Romanesque church of Santa Cecilia, which sits below the castle on the hill, call 620 09 28 48. You must go to the casa del cura (priest's house), which is located across from the Colegiata de San Miguel in the town center. Leave your passport in exchange for the keys. The church of Santa Cecilia is about a ten minute walk. The keys both open the doors and give you access to the illumination system. The capital depicting the slaughter of the innocents is exceptional."

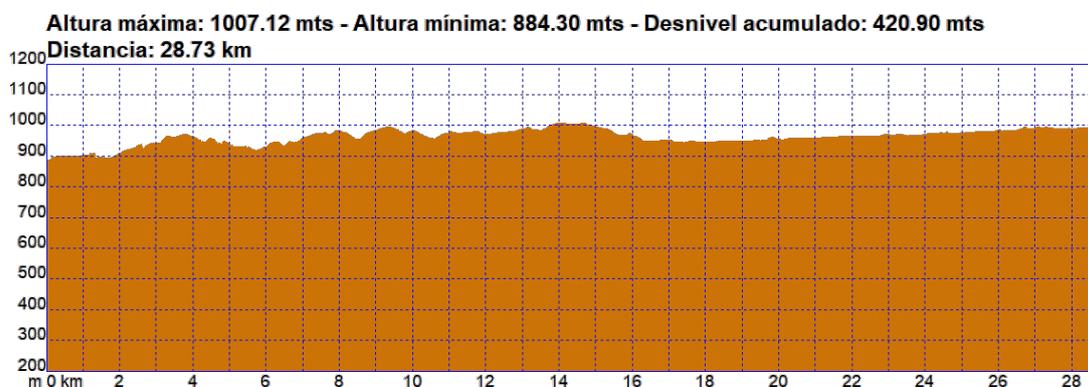


#### AGUILAR DE CAMPOO:

Hotel Restaurante Villa de Aguilar	979 12 22 25
Posada Santa María La Real	979 12 20 00
Hotel Valentín Restaurante	649 99 27 97
Hostal Restaurante Los Olmos	979 12 55 05
Hostal Cortes	979 12 50 80
Hostal Siglo XX	979 12 29 00 / 979 12 60 40
Camping Monte Royal	979 18 10 07 / 979 18 13 99

8: **Aguilar de Campoo**, 5,9 km. Corvio, 4,8 km. Matamorisca, 6,3 km. Salinas de Pisuerga, 3,3 km. Barcenilla de Pisuerga, 1,2 km. Quintanalungos, 2,9 km. Liguerezana, 2,6 km.

Vado, 1,7 km. **Cervera de Pisuerga 28,7 Km.**



We leave Aguilar on a pedestrian path that takes us past the monastery of Santa María la Real. We follow the river walk until we get to the dam. We go up the stairs to the dam, but do not pass over it. Stay on the right side of the reservoir.



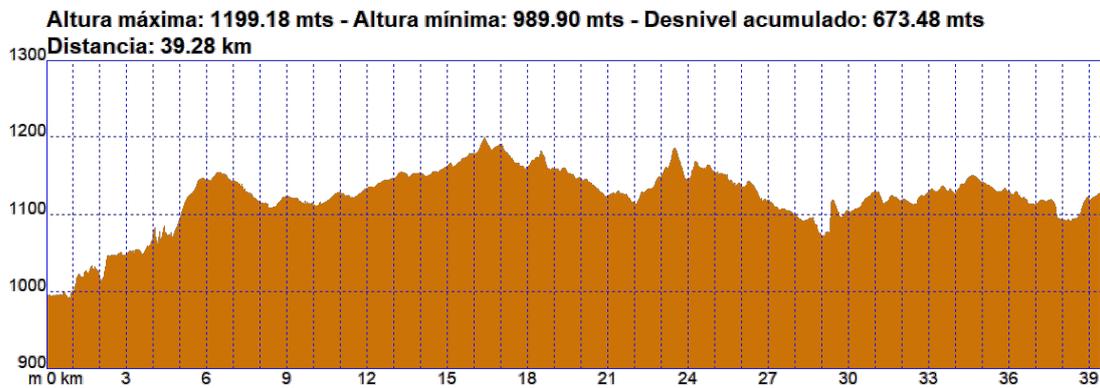
The path takes us to Corvio Just outside the village, you will pass by several interesting anthropomorphic tombs. The Camino continues on agricultural tracks passing by small towns until we arrive at Vado, where we can see another necropolis, slightly off the Camino to the left. This turn off is marked and worth the short detour. The necropolis is impressive and somewhat startling. There is an unusual rock chapel, dedicated to San Vicente, as well as a number of tombs carved out of the rock.



**CERVERA DEL PISUERGA:**

Albergue turístico Rivera del Pisuerga	689 58 32 11
Albergue Juvenil de Arbejal	979 870 174 / 687 499 306
Hostal Restaurante Casa Victor- Pineda	979 87 03 90
Hostal Restaurante La Galería	979 87 02 34
Hostal Restaurante Pacho	979 87 44 34
Hotel Rural Restaurante Peñalabra	979 87 00 37
Hostal Residencia El Resbalón	979 87 06 12
Hotel Almirez	979 87 06 48
Hotel Cafetería El Roble	979 87 44 29
Hotel Rural Molino de Valdesgares	979 87 10 29
Parador Fuentes Carrionas	979 87 00 75

9: **Cervera de Pisuerga**, 8,1 km. Cantoral de la Peña, 1,7 km. Cubillo de Castrejón, 3,6 km. Traspeña de la Peña, 2,3 km. Villanueva de la Peña, 4,5 km. Tarilonte, 3,9 km. Aviñante, 2,9 km. Santibañez de la Peña, 1,6 km. Las Heras de la Peña, 3,4 km. Villanueva de Arriba, 2 km. Muñeca, 5,3 km. **Guardo 39,3 Km.**



We walk through Cervera and take the path through an oak forest where some of the 100 year old trees are more than two meters in diameter. We walk through an abandoned mining site. We then enter the town of Tejada de Tosande.



We go through Cubillo with its Romanesque church, and Castrejón de la Peña, a town with all services. It's a good spot for a well-deserved rest. We continue on to Tarilonte with its crucifix, and we arrive in Santibañez, then Villanueva, and we finally arrive in Muñeca, which is right outside the pretty town of Guardo. In Guardo we can visit the Romanesque baptismal font in the church of San Juan, as well as its Baroque style ayuntamiento (town hall), which is called the Casa Grande (big house). Guardo offers all services needed to relax and enjoy.



**GUARDO:**

Albergue de Guardo "Cara Norte"

979 04 30 08 / 693 448 184

Hotel El Tremazal

979 85 07 69

Real Hotel

979 85 26 51

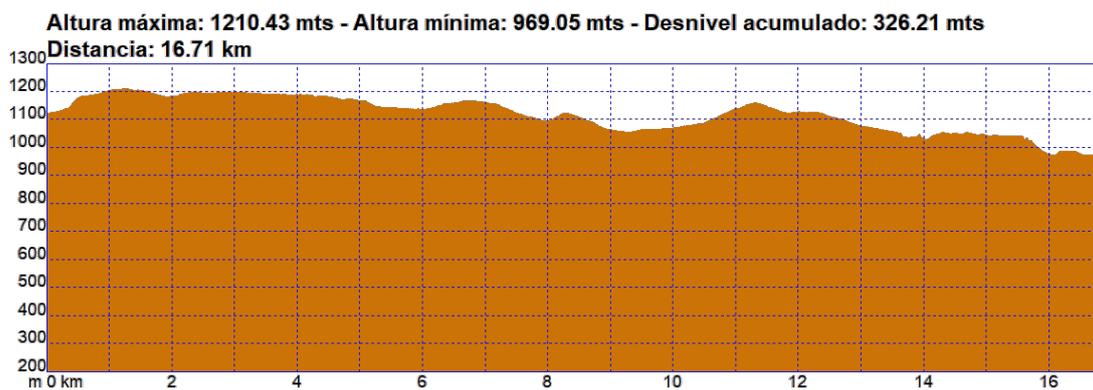
Hotel Montaña Palentina

979 85 15 20

Hotel El Tremazal

979 85 07 69

10 A: **Guardo**, 8,1 Km. San Pedro de Cansoles, (León) 2,3 Km. Valcuende, 3,3 Km. Cegoñal,  
3 km. **Puente Almuhey. 16,7 Km.**



If we take this route, which is shorter and more simple, from Guardo we will go up to the Chapel of the Virgen of Carmen and Christ of Amparo



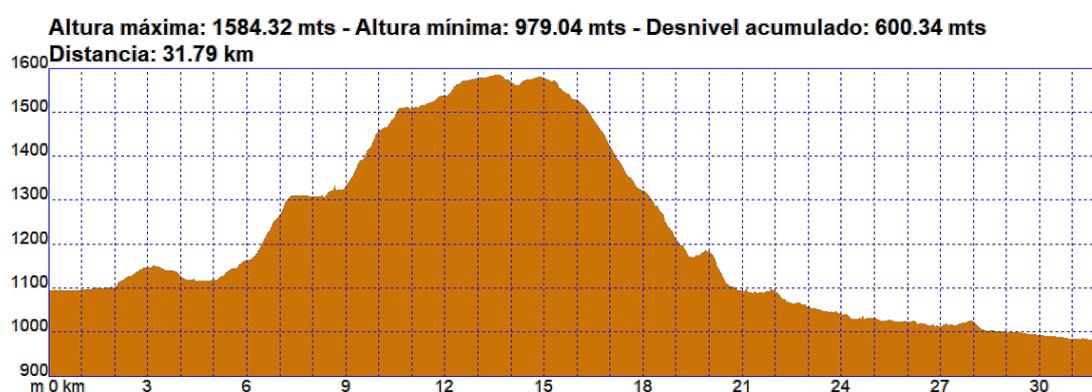
We continue through oak forests and open fields, following a branch of the Royal Leonese Channel, until we arrive at San Pedro de Cansoles. Here we cross into the province of León. We will go through Valcuende and on to Cegoñal, where we take a pretty path through the forest that brings us to Puente Almuhey. History tells us that there was a pilgrim hospital here, in the place that was then called “Puente de Muhey.” We can visit the romanesque chapel of Our Lady of the Sorrows (Nuestra Señora de las Angustias) where we can see the cross of the Order of the Knights of Jerusalem, and we can also enjoy the town’s medieval bridge.

#### PUENTE ALMUHEY:

Apartamentos Turísticos El Duende de Carricuende 629 585 247 / 658785527

10 B: **Guardo**, 4,4 Km. Velilla,(**León**) 14 Km. Caminayo, 5,6 Km. Morgovejo, 2,7 Km.

La Sota, 1,1 Km. Valderrueda, 3,9 Km. **Puente Almuhey. 31,7 Km.**



We leave Guardo towards Velilla del Río Carrión, where we can see the Tamaric Fountains or springs.



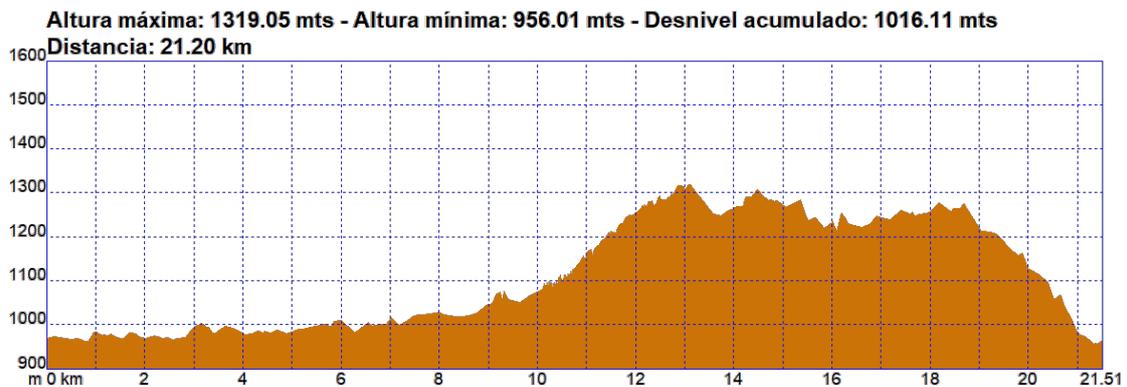
The Camino takes us into a huge forest of beech trees and oaks, and we go up the hill of Torales, which separates the province of Palencia from the province of León. There are beautiful mountain views as you walk along the ridge



We continue on the path that takes us, in a gentle descent, to Caminayo, which is a beautiful mountain village.

We go through Morgovejo, La Sota and Valderrueda, crossing the Cea River. Finally, there are several flat kms alongside the road but on a separate path, until we enter Puente Almuhey.”

**11: Puente Almuhey, 2 km. Taranilla, 2,5 Km. S. Martín de Valdetuéjar, 0,5Km. Renedo, 3 Km. Otero, 2,2 Km. La Mata de Monteagudo, 11 Km. Cistierna. 21,2 Km.**



The beauty of this stage is astonishing. We follow the course of the Tuéjar River, and the first surprise will be the legendary stone carved mermaids enticing pilgrims from the Romanesque capitals of the church San Martín de Valdetuéjar. These mermaids remind us of the legend involving several female pilgrims on their way to Santiago. Upon their arrival at a monastery, they seduced some of the monks. The abbot, once he had confirmed that the amorous escapades had in fact taken place, decided upon a punishment. He turned the pilgrims into stone mermaids in the Tuéjar River, where they now sing every year on the festival of Saint John. The abbot obliged the monks to build the church of San Martín, sculpting the capitals with images of the mermaids, as a reminder of their sins.



The Sanctuary of Our Lady of la Velilla impresses with its majesty



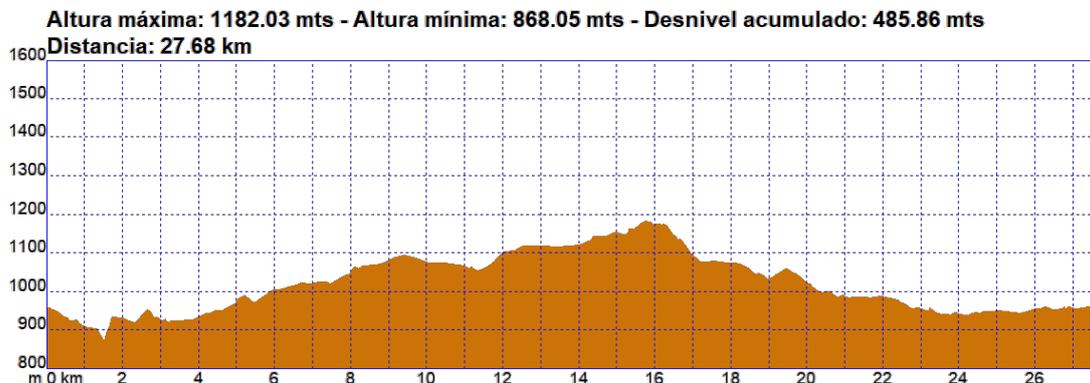
As we ascend through forests of old oak trees, the camino soon turns into an unpaved path, with the Peñacorada mountain peak overhead. We can see the Valley of the Tuéjar from the tracks of Roman legions. As we enter a pretty pine forest, we then descend to Cistierna.

#### **CISTIerna:**

Albergue de peregrinos San Guillermo	987 701 370/ 620 554 801/ 630 433 571/ 619 355 051
Albergue Montaña Oriental de León	649 802 641
Hotel Río Esla y SPA Aguasalio	987 701 025
Hostal Residencia El Cruce	987 700 041
Hostal Restaurante Moderno	987 700 170
Casa Rural de Pepa	987 700 147/ 676 735 101
Camping Reino de Vadinia	649 432 399/ 600 873 647

12 A: **Cistierna**, 8,2 Km. Yugueros, 2,9 Km. La Ercina, 6 Km. Acisa, 2 Km. Barrillos, 2,3 Km.

La Devesa, 2,9 Km. La Losilla, 2 Km. La Vega, 1,4 Km. **Boñar. 27,7 Km.**



Cross the Esla River on the Puente del Mercadillo (Flea Market Bridge). We go by the mill's cross and the ancient sanctuary of Saint Bernabé.



When we reach the church of Yugueros, we can go inside to enjoy its beautiful Plateresque altarpiece. In La Ercina, there is an albergue. If you are ready for a rest, there are bars, an ethnographic museum, and a route taking you to ancient hill forts. After La Ercina we go through Acisa and Barrillos de las Arrimadas, leaving by way of the old "Gateway to Galicia." We follow the "Route of the Donkeys" (camino de los rocines) and arrive in Boñar. The name of this trail is a reminder of the fact that townspeople used to bring produce and other products to the Boñar market on the backs of donkeys. In Boñar, the Camino Olvidado intersects with the Camino Vadiniense, which takes pilgrims to the monastery of Santo Toribio de Liébana. We will continue towards Santiago on a path that will take us up through oak forests and cross the Arrimadas *región*, on the old livestock path that was used seasonally to move flocks to better grazing areas depending on the time of year.



**LA ERCINA:**

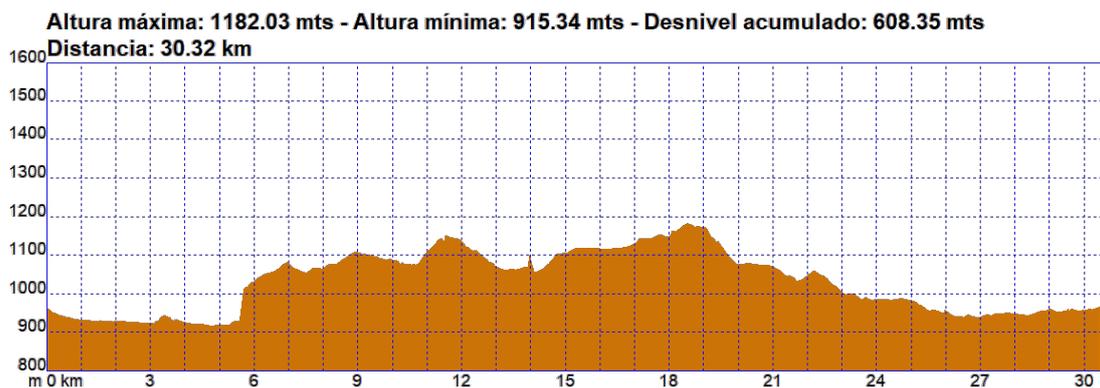
Albergue municipal de La Ercina 648 035 831

**BOÑAR:**

Albergue Juvenil El Soto	646 150 806
Albergue de Turismo Rural Las Caldas de Boñar	651 698 318
Hostal Nisi	987 735 210
Hostal Inés	987 735 086
Casa rural El Negrillón	987 735 164
Casa rural La Loma	987 741 617 / 638 045 647
Casa rural Antaño	987 734 141
Casa Rural La Salona	676 700 063
Casa Rural Hompanera y Marivi	667 425 705
Casa Rural Posada de Boñar	987 734 146

**12 B: Cistierna**, 10,5 Km. San Pedro de Foncollada, 2,2 Km. La Serna, 1,1 Km. La Ercina, 6 Km. Acisa, 2 Km. Barrillos, 2,3 Km. La Devesa, 2,9 Km. La Losilla, 2 Km. La Vega, 1,4 Km.

**Boñar. 30,3 Km.**



We cross the Esla River on the Puente del Mercadillo (Flea Market bridge). We go by the old mill's crucifix and the ancient sanctuary of Saint Bernabé. We continue towards Modino until we come to an intersection on our right that takes us to the Chapel of San Pelayo.



We continue on the Camino, ascending in the middle of forests of pines and oak. The crucifix of Valderrubios and the crucifix of the chapel remind us that we are arriving at San Pedro de Foncollada, where there used to be a monastery that offered lodging and assistance to the pilgrims.



We can see a pretty Romanesque doorway with a circular arch decorated with checkerboard squares. In La Ercina there is an albergue, and we can also take a rest stop in one of its bars or visit its ethnological museum and the route of the hill forts. We pass through Acisa and Barillos de las Arrimadas, through the “Gateway to Galicia” and along the Route of the Donkeys, till we enter Boñar.

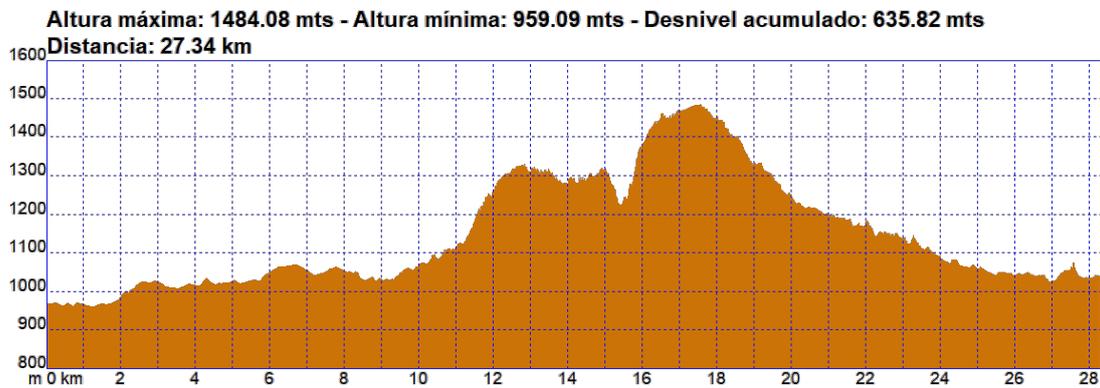
**LA ERCINA:** Albergue municipal de La Ercina 648 035 831

**BOÑAR:**

Albergue Juvenil El Soto	646 150 806
Albergue de Turismo Rural Las Caldas de Boñar	651 698 318
Hostal Nisi	987 735 210
Hostal Inés	987 735 086
Casa rural El Negrillón	987 735 164
Casa rural La Loma	987 741 617 / 638 045 647
Casa rural Antaño	987 734 141
Casa Rural La Salona	676 700 063
Casa Rural Hompanera y Marivi	667 425 705
Casa Rural Posada de Boñar	987 734 146

13: **Boñar**, 1,8 Km. Barrio de las Ollas, 6 Km. Ranedo de Curueño, 1,2 Km. Valdepiélagu, 1,2 Km. La Mata de la Bérbula, 6,3 Km. Correcillas, 8,4 Km. Villalfeide, 2,4 Km. **Vegacervera**.

**27,3 km.**



We leave Boñar on the Old Bridge, located next to the Pilgrims' Hospital. On this stage, we will go along several important trout-filled rivers, the Porma, Curueño and Torío.



Once we cross the Roman bridge that takes us over the Curueño River and brings us into Valdepiélagu, we start a beautiful all-mountain stage. We ascend on a Roman Road that puts us in the heart of the mountains.





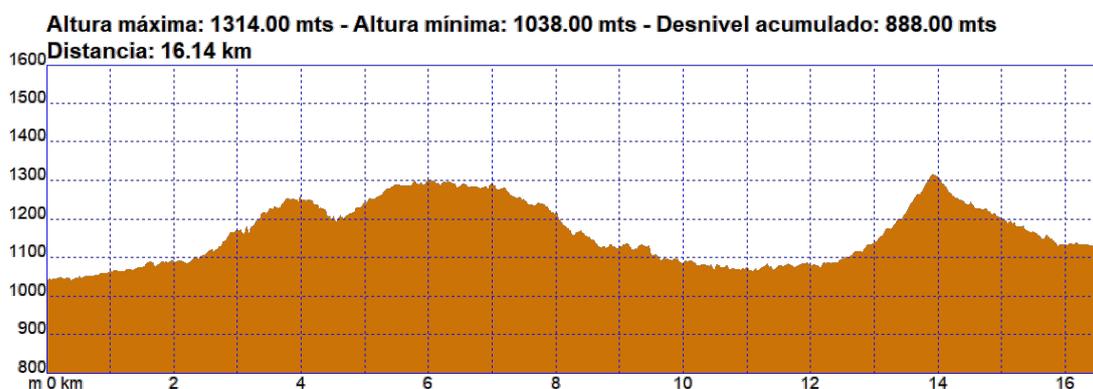
Through the boulders, we can catch a glimpse of the chapel of Valdorria with the town at its side, in the shadow of the peak that is also named Valdorria. We continue at the foot of another peak, named Galicia, and then finally, as we descend, the town of Correcillas appears. We continue our descent and arrive at Villalfeide with its medieval bridge and its Romanesque church. The next town is Vegacervera with its beautiful gorges and a rich gastronomical offering. From Vegacervera, we can also take a short trip to visit the famous caves of Valporquero.

#### VEGACERVERA:

Albergue "El Chaltén"	660 007 648 / 686 045 743
Albergue Cueva de Valporquero	987 591 009
Casa rural La esquina de Vegacervera	987 59 15 65
Camping las Hoces de Vegacervera	616 40 96 78
Hotel Rural Chousa Verde	987 57 82 22

14: **Vegacervera**, 2,1 Km. Coladilla, 2,8 Km. Valle, 1,8 Km. Villar, 3,9 Km. Ciñera, 1,3 Km.

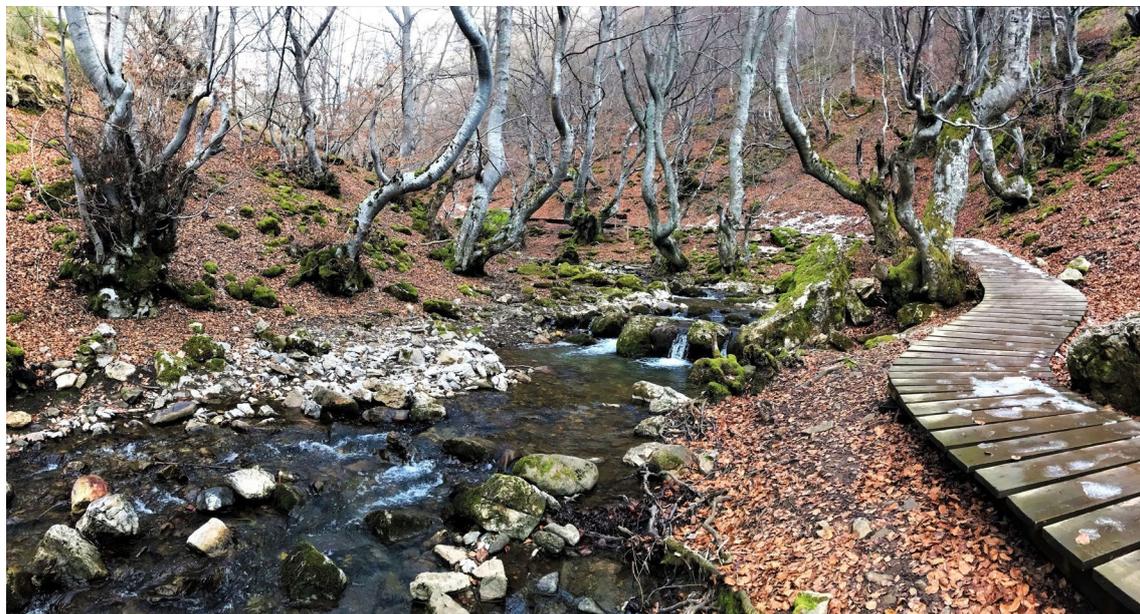
La Vid, 4,2 Km. **Buiza. 16,1 km.**



We ascend to the town of Coladilla where we can see how the church has a strong Camino connection — its arch has three carved scallop shells. We continue our ascent passing through Valle and Villar, from where we take a dizzying descent through the gorge. We follow the steep-sided gulley with its Giant’s Kettles (also known as Giant’s Cauldrons, these are large, cylindrical potholes drilled in solid rock, either as the result of water rushing downward or by gravel rotating in the bed of a subglacial stream). We then enter a magical forest that leaves us speechless, the Faedo of Ciñera. It is an enchanted forest, and we won’t want to leave.



The Camino takes us to Ciñera and La Vid with its watchtower, ascending again on the Buiza Hill. Our path takes us through a tapestry of leafy beech trees. Then through an oak forest, we go down to Buiza with its houses with coats of arms and its old pilgrims’ hospital, the Hospital of San Antón.



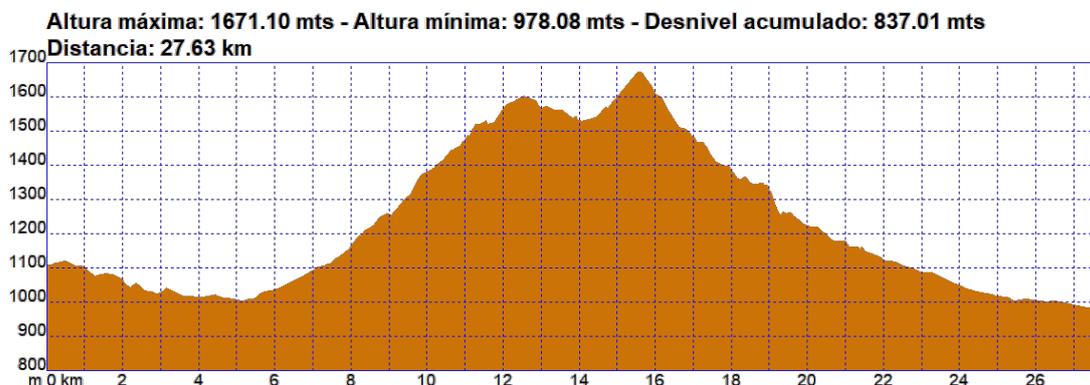
**BUIZA:**

Albergue de Peregrinos de Buiza  
Casa rural BuizaRural  
Casa Rural Finca La Castañona

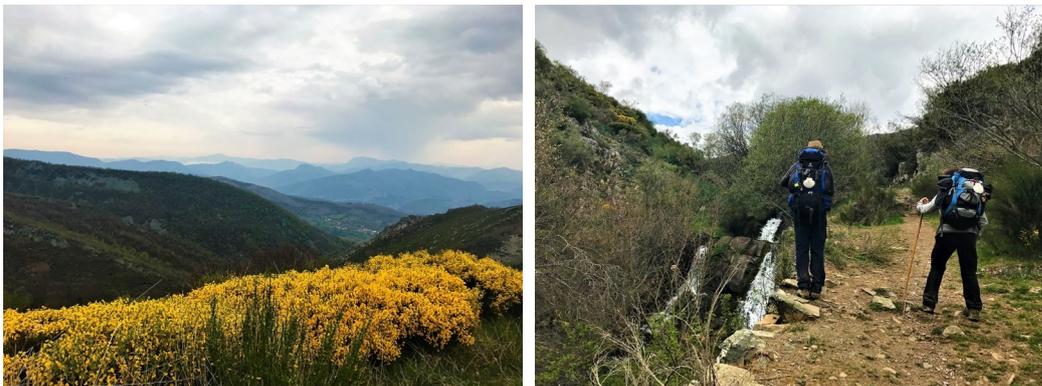
987 59 70 31 / 679 86 03 72  
636 48 35 06  
636 483 506

15: **Buiza**, 3,5 Km. Beberino, 1,4 Km. La Pola de Gordón, 2,4 Km. Los Barrios, 13,2 Km. Piedrasecha, 3,9 Km. Viñayo, 0,7 Km. Otero de las Dueñas, 2,5 Km. **La Magdalena**.

**27,6 km.**



We follow the Folledo River, and then continue along the Casares River, which flows into the Bernesga River in Pola de Gordón. We are in the Biosphere Reserve of the Upper Bernesga River, with an enormous geological diversity, as well as a wide variety of mountain flora and fauna. The surrounding beauty truly invigorates us on our Camino.



We arrive at Pola de Gordón. This is a town with all services. Leaving town, we immediately begin to ascend. The mountain looks like a barrier in front of us, one that we will conquer step by step, and in the process we will be able to enjoy the amazing views that it offers us.



But it is in our descent when we encounter another natural marvel, the Calderones, which are naturally formed arches and cracks in the mountains. We walk right through in awe.

Piedrasecha is our next town, and from there we go through Viñayo and Otero de las Dueñas until finally arriving at La Magdalena.

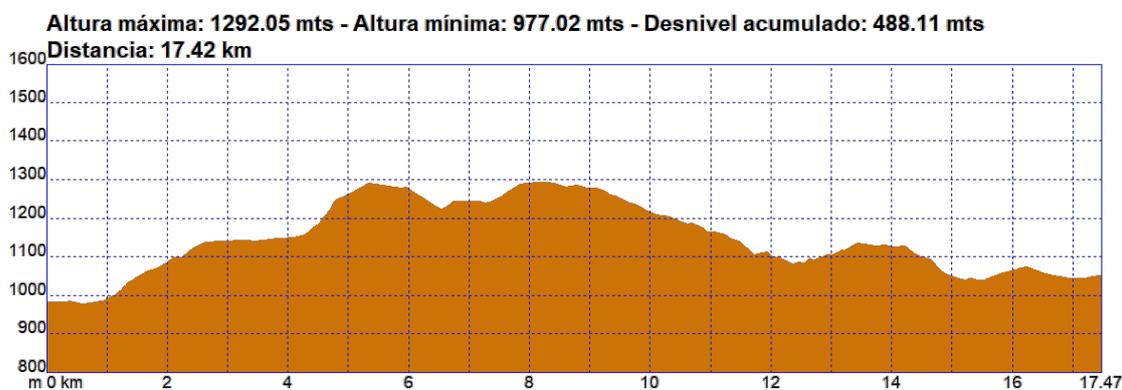
**POLA DE GORDÓN:**

Pensión 15 de Mayo	619 44 40 00
Pensión El Arenal	987 58 83 03

**LA MAGDALENA:**

Albergue de acogida peregrinos	685 920 895
Hostal El Crucero	987 581 024
Hotel Santa Lucía	630 079 737

16: **La Magdalena**, 0,8 Km. Canales, 10,4 Km. Villayuste, 2,7 Km. Lago de Omaña, 1,6 Km. Oterico, 1,9 Km. **Riello. 17,4 km.**



We begin an ascent on a path through oak trees, and it takes us to the Cordel de las Merinas (The Sheep Line Path, an old trail used by shepherds to take their flocks south to the region of Extremadura for the winter months, to return again the following year in warmer weather). We keep going up through a pine forest that brings us to an oak forest.



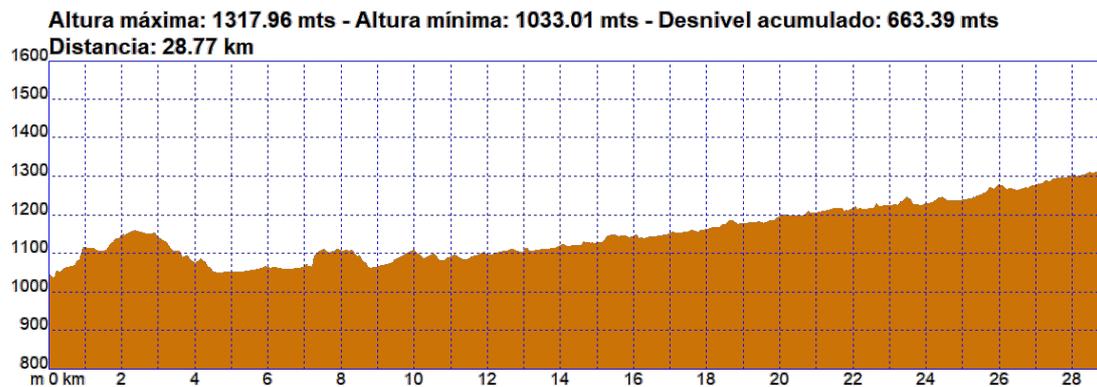
Then we descend on a path through a field to arrive at Villayuste and then Lago de Omaña. We continue going down to Oterico and on a path parallel to the road, we arrive at the Omaña River. Crossing the bridge, we enter the beautiful town of Riello.



**RIELLO:** Casa Rural La Panera Del Conde

987 271 060

17: **Riello**, 2,6 Km. Pandorado, 1,9 Km. La Omañuela, 2 Km. Guisatecha, 2,5 Km. El Castillo, 1,8 Km. Vegarienza, 2 Km. Aguasmestas, 1,4 Km. Cirujales, 2 Km. Villaverde, 1 Km. Marzán, 4,7 Km. Barrio de la Puente, 2,4 Km. Posada, 1,4 Km. Vegapujín, 2,2 Km. **Fasgar 28,7Km.**



We leave Riello going up through a leafy oak forest until we reach Pandorado. From there we descend to the pretty little town of Omañuela and we continue along the banks of the Omaña River on a green path that pleases our senses with its many sounds and colors.



The Omaña River will be our companion now, and we cross it several times, as we pass through pretty towns with chapels, churches, and standing crosses.



Barrio has a magnificent medieval bridge, which explains its nickname “Barrio de la Puente.”

There is another roman bridge in Vegapujín, with a few remains of the Roman Road, and it takes us on the path of the Valle Gordo (Fat Valley), along the river with the same name, till we get to Fasgar. This village has beautiful homes of stone and slate, bridges, and a chapel dedicated to Santiago.



**VEGARIENZA:**

Albergue de acogida peregrinos

680 799 927

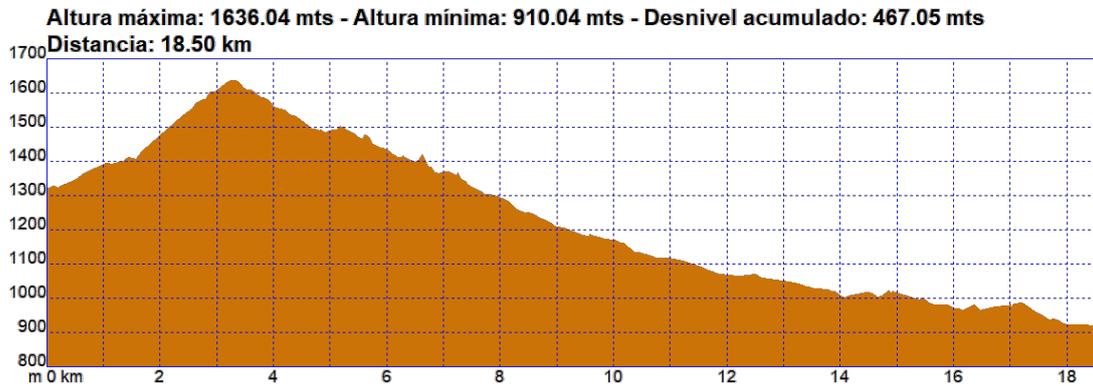
**FASGAR:**

Albergue Fasgar

607 027 949

18: **Fasgar**, 11,6 Km. Colinas del Campo de Martín Moro Toledano, 6,9 Km. **Igüeña**.

## 18,5 Km.



The three kilometers of ascent that await us as we leave Fasgar are compensated by the beauty of the route, as we follow a path through forests of great variety with mountain ash, birch, holly, oaks, and yews.



The Abedul Fountain, with its three spigots of delicious water is a good place to rest and reenergize our bodies. And from the top we can see the Sierra de Gistredo in front of us, with the Catoute and the Tumbarón (the names of two mountain peaks), and we will be amazed by the large valley below. We can see the Campo de Santiago (Santiago's Field) and its beautiful little chapel. On this field, and during the years of the Christian Reconquest of Moorish Spain, a great battle occurred. Legend has it that in 981 A.D., Santiago appeared here on a white horse to help the Christian troops of Ramiro II defeat the Moors, led by Martín Moro (Martin the Moor, also called the Toledano, because he came from the city of Toledo). The legend goes on to report that many angels also appeared to help the Christians, and on that day, 70,000 Moors lost their lives.

We descend to the field, and from there the Camino goes along a stream, which we cross several times, until we arrive in the town of Colina del Campo de Martín Moro Toledano (named after the defeated Moorish commander and also holding the record as the town in Spain with the longest name). This beautiful and elegant little place has received the Spanish designation of BIC (Bien de Interés Cultural, Place of Cultural Interest). From that town, we continue on the camino until we arrive in Igüeña, today's destination.



## IGÜEÑA:

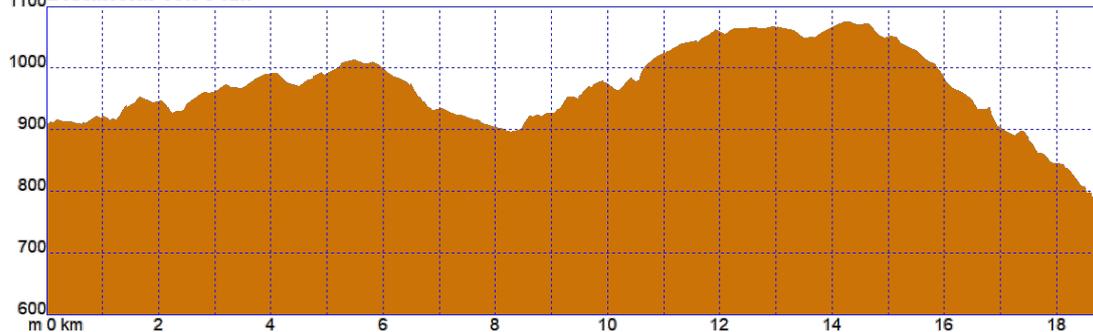
Albergue Catoute

629 251 182

19: **Igüeña**, 6,9 Km. Quintana Fuseros, 11,8 Km. **Labaniego. 18,7 km.**

**Altura máxima: 1075.09 mts - Altura mínima: 778.05 mts - Desnivel acumulado: 367.24 mts**

**Distancia: 18.73 km**



This stage begins with an ascent in an oak forest where we can see several anthropomorphic tombs right along the Camino. We arrive at the Severed Cross, which is where the Via Nova (a Roman route connecting Braga, Portugal with Astorga) intersects with the Camino Olvidado. The monastery of San Martino was once located near this spot, to provide attention and help to pilgrims.



We continue on agricultural tracks to Quintana de Fuseros, with views of the entire valley from between a large variety of trees. The pine forest leads to the oaks, the holms oaks, the beech trees, and strawberry trees. They accompany us the entire way until we arrive in Labaniego.

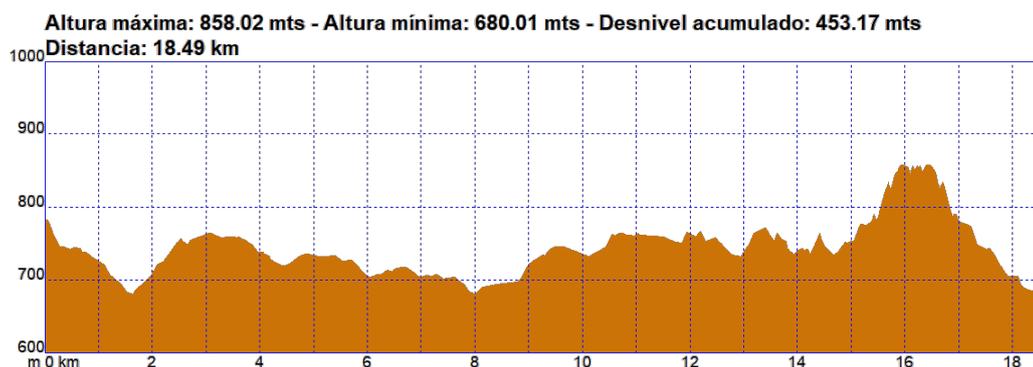


### LABANIEGO

Albergue de acogida peregrinos

661 013 566

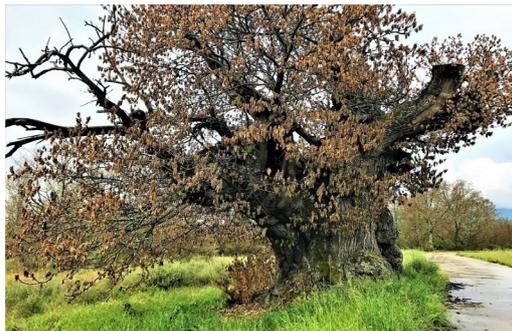
20: **Labaniego**, 1,8 Km. Arlanza, 3,3 Km. Losada, 2,5 Km. Rodanillo, 5,2 Km. Cobrana, 5,7 Km. **Congosto. 18,5 Km.**



We walk through chestnut groves until the town of Arlanza, and then the Camino abruptly changes. The scenery is now through vineyards and we go through Losada and then Rodanillo, with its crucifix. We remain on agricultural tracks and arrive at Cobrana, where the Botanical Route of the Zofreral (route of the cork tree grove). We continue on that path through the cork trees until we arrive at another one of the jewels of this Camino, the Sanctuary of the Virgen of the Peña (Virgin of the Rock).



From this beautiful place of worship, truly the balcony of the Bierzo region, we can see the entire valley with the reservoir of Bárcena in the distance. We then descend to Congosto, the end of this stage.



**LOSADA:**

Bar y Pensión:

680 35 07 08

**COBRANA:**

Vivienda uso turístico La vieja fragua

647 156 802

**CONGOSTO:**

Casa Rural Álvaro de Mendaña

657 036 817

Casa Rural La Calzada Real

655 142 290

Casa Rural Vita

618 952 486

**21: Congosto, 13,5 Km. Cubillos del Sil, 6,6 Km. Cabañas Raras. 20,1 Km.**

Altura máxima: 720.02 mts - Altura mínima: 540.06 mts - Desnivel acumulado: 284.05 mts

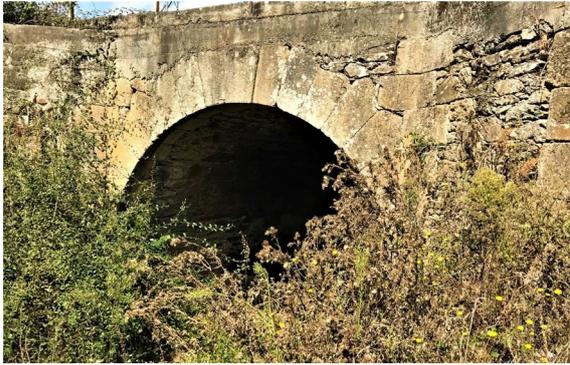
Distancia: 20.09 km



The reservoir of Bárcena dominates this stage. We must go around its edge in order to continue our Camino. The pine trees make the walk more agreeable, and the view from the top of the dam is impressive. During seasons of drought, we can see the Roman bridge “Via Nova,” which was the name of the road that connected La Coruña with Madrid. The bridge is now submerged under the waters of the Sil River and is well preserved.



We arrive in Cubillos del Sil, which has several restored hill forts. We can also see its chapel to San Roque, and then we continue straight, crossing on two Roman bridges where travelers used to have to pay a toll to enter Cabañas Raras.



**CUBILLOS DEL SIL:**

Albergue turístico El Bosque de los Sueños

987 457 175 / 661 502 582

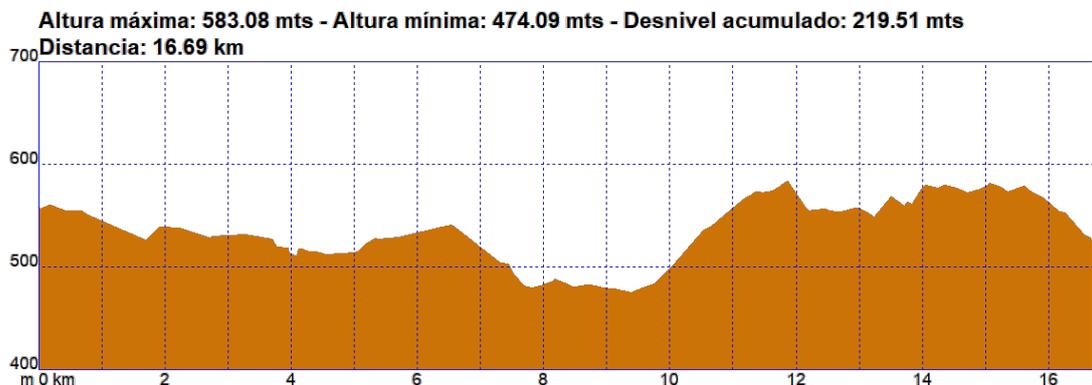
**CABAÑAS RARAS**

Acogida peregrinos

626 963 055

22: **Cabañas Raras**, 7,5 Km. Cacabelos, 2,6 Km. Pieros, 6 Km. **Villafranca del**

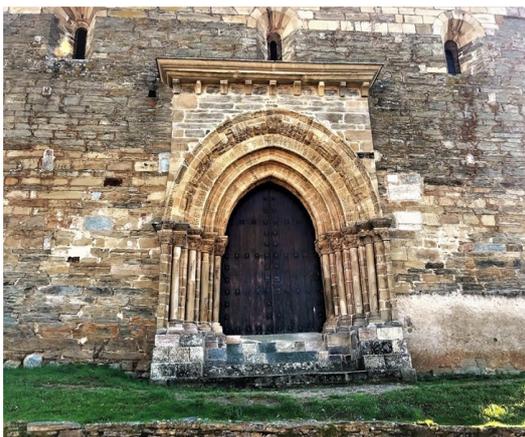
**Bierzo. 16,1 Km.**



Today we will be totally immersed in the huge diversity of cultivated crops in the Bierzo region: farms of peppers, apples, pears, grains and all kinds of fruit. They compete for our attention with all the vineyards in this lush area. We walk on a flat dirt path, easy on our feet, and it takes us to the town of Magaz de Abajo. The sounds of water remind us of the children swimming and splashing in the ponds in this pretty spot. Soon the Camino goes down to Cacabelos, and we cross the Cúa River. At this point, the Camino Olvidado merges with the Camino Francés, and we soon enter the impressive Villafranca de Bierzo.



The Puerta del Perdón (door of pardon) of the Santiago church welcomes us at the entrance to this monumental town. Churches, monasteries, convents, palaces, castles, and a very rich cuisine await.



### VILAFRANCA DEL BIERZO:

Albergue municipal

987 542 356 / 987 540 368

*Continue on the Camino Frances.*

**23: Villafranca del Bierzo – O Cebreiro: 28,4 Km**

**24: O Cebreiro – Triacastela. 21,1 Km.**

**25: Triacastela – Sarria. 18,3 Km.**

**26: Sarria – Porto Marín. 22,4 Km.**

**27: Porto Marín – Palas de Rey. 25 Km.**

**28: Palas de Rey – Arzua. 28,8 Km.**

**29: Arzua – Pedrouzo. 19,1 Km.**

**30: Pedrouzo – Santiago. 20 Km.**

**Villafranca del Bierzo – Santiago 183,1 Km.**

## ALTERNATIVE CAMINO THROUGH LA ROBLA

### STAGES FOR THE VALLEY

This alternative goes from Boñar to La Magdalena in two, rather than three stages. It is easier, does not take you through the mountains, and presents a lot of road walking.

**13: Boñar**, 1,8 Km. Barrio de las Ollas, 6,2 Km. Otero del Curueño, 1,5 Km La Vecilla, 2,5 Km. Campohermoso, 1,5 Km. Aviados, 4,2 Km. La Valcueva - Palazuelo, 1,9 Km. Robles de la Valcueva, 3,8 Km. Robledo, 0,8 Km. Solana, 1,6 Km. Candanedo, 1,9 km Rabanal, 0,7 km. We leave Boñar on the Puente Viejo (old bridge) going by the old Pilgrims' Hospital. Brugos, 5,2 km

**La Robla. 33,6 Km.**



This is a flat stage that takes us along the important trout-filled rivers, the Porma, Curueño and Torío, and finally takes us to the Bernesga River. We go by the palace and watchtower of the Álvarez de Acevedo family, and we arrive at La Vecilla. There we see the medieval tower of the Condes de Luna and can visit their Museum of the Feather, where you will learn about their proud claim that they have the best roosters in the world for making fishing flies.

We are on an important path, used by many over the centuries: the Romans, the shephards traveling with their flocks, and pilgrims. The route takes us into the heart of the mining areas of Matallana and the Bernesga River, the place where the industry of Bilbao used to get its coal.



From Robles de la Valcueva we go on a pretty path to the Chapel of Boínas. This ancient chapel was destroyed during the Spanish Civil War and has been rebuilt.



A strange carving remains from its original construction, however. On the right side of the main door, you can see a sculptured feminine figure, who is holding something circular in one hand and something rectangular in the other. Historians note that a church in Galicia has a similar, but more elaborate, carving. The carving's significance is unknown. We continue on a comfortable walk that crosses the Valley of Fenar till we arrive in La Robla. In La Robla, this branch of the Olvidado crosses with the Camino del Salvador from León to Oviedo. It is a good place to rest, with an albergue and all services.



## AVIADOS

Albergue fuente del oso

987 741 402/666 605 835

## LA ROBLA

Albergue de peregrinos de La Robla

659 093 647/987 572 202

Pensión Mundo

987 57 07 33

14: **La Robla**, 0,9 Km. Llanos, 2,5 Km. Sorribos, 2,7 Km. Olleros, 4,7 Km. Carrocera, 2,7 Km.

Otero de las Dueñas, 2,5 Km. **La Magdalena. 16,0 Km.**



We leave La Robla on an elevated overpass, go through Llanos de Alba, and then immediately enter a pretty oak forest and ascend gently. We pass through Sorribos, where we can see a house with a huge coat of arms, and then we continue to Olleros de Alba. From there we descend on a path to the town of Carrocera, and we continue to Santiago de las Villas. There we continue on another comfortable path to Otero de las Dueñas, where we can see the Cistercian convent of Santa María. And from there it is only 2.5 kilometers to arrive in La Magdalena, the end of today's stage.



## LA MAGDALENA:

Albergue de acogida peregrinos

685 920 895

Hostal El Crucero

987 581 024

Hotel Santa Lucía

630 079 737

LINK TO DOWNLOAD THE GPS TRACKS OF THE STAGES:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1XWsgN8Ah-eDC8qeUQo6oUDFHcScOmu1d>

LINK TO WEB PAGE:

<https://caminoolvidado.com/>

LINK TO FACEBOOK WEB PAGE:

<HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ASOCIACI%C3%B3N-LEONESA-DEL-CAMINO-OLVIDADO-638038153073918/?REF=BOOKMARKS>

APP FOR IOS AND ANDROID:

“CAMINO OLVIDADO”

Bilbao – Villafranca del Bierzo: **532 Km**

Bilbao – Santiago: **715 Km**