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Introduction

The Way of St James as described in this book and its sequel covering the section through Spain is a long-distance footpath with a difference. People have been walking it – as a pilgrimage route – for over a thousand years, and in 1987 the section from the Spanish monastery at Roncesvalles in the foothills of the Pyrenees to Santiago de Compostela became the first European Cultural Itinerary. The 1500km route, from Le Puy-en-Velay in the Haute Loire to the City of the Apostle in the western reaches of Galicia, has changed little in all that time. For although parts of it have now become modern tarred roads, and many of its ‘hospitals’ and other accommodation set up by religious orders along the way to minister to the needs of pilgrims have long since disappeared, the route through France – and the camino as it is known in Spain – still pass through most of the same villages, climb the same hills, cross the same rivers and visit the same chapels, churches, cathedrals and other monuments as did the path taken by our predecessors in centuries gone by.

The Way of St James is also a long-distance footpath with a difference in that many of those who walk the route through France and the vast majority of those who start on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees are not experienced walkers. Many have never done any serious walking in their lives and many will never do any again; for here, as in the past, walking is a means of transport, a means to an end, rather than an activity for its own sake. Most long-distance footpaths also avoid not only large towns but also even quite small villages; the Way of St James, on the other hand, because of its historic origins and the need for shelter, deliberately seeks them out. Several thousand people walk the Way every year, whether from points on the camino in Spain, from the Pyrenees, from different parts of France, or from even further afield: it is not uncommon, even nowadays, to meet Swiss, German, Belgian or Dutch pilgrims, for example, who have set out from home to make the entire journey on foot. However, one of the differences between the modern pilgrim and his historical counterpart, whether he walks, goes by bicycle or on horseback, is that very few return home by the same means of transport. The modern pilgrim route has thus become a ‘one-way street’ and it is unusual, today, to encounter anyone with either enough time or the inclination to return to their point of departure by the same means as they used on their outward journey.

People make the journey from Le Puy-en-Velay to the Pyrenees and then on to Santiago for a variety of reasons. For some it is just another long-distance walk. For others the motives may be historical, cultural or religious; while for many it may also be a significant action or event in their lives: to mark their retirement, or to fill the gap between studying and taking a first job, or the opportunity to take time out to decide which way to go next after a turning point of some sort.

Twenty-first-century pilgrims are people of all ages and from all walks of life. The majority of those on the Le Puy route are from France, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland and Germany, but pilgrims come from all over the world – though relatively few from
Britain at present. Some travel alone, some in twos and threes, some in quite large groups, particularly those on foot. Many complete the entire journey in one stretch, and this is recommended wherever possible as otherwise the journey tends to become just a series of holidays, rather than an actual pilgrimage. Others, however, with more limited time, cover a section at a time over several years. Most who walk the Way of St James, and especially those who have been able to do the whole route in one go, would probably agree that it has changed their lives in some way, even though they may not have set out with this intention.

This book replaces the present author’s previous guide published by Cicerone Press and which covered the entire route in one volume: Way of St James: Le Puy to Santiago: A Walkers’ Guide (1999). The Way described here thus begins in Le Puy-en-Velay, following the GR65 of the French long-distance footpath network, and continues through southern and southwestern France to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. The Spanish section of the route is covered in the same author’s companion volume: The Way of St James (Camino de Santiago): Pyrenees–Santiago–Finisterre). However, for those who wish to break their journey into two, and would prefer to cross the Pyrenees at the end of their French walk (when they will be fit) rather than at the start of their Spanish journey (when they may not be), details of the section from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to Pamplona (two to three days more, and well served by public transport) are given in Appendix A. This is followed by an outline guide to the variante along the valley of the Célé (Appendix B) and a summary of St James’s and other pilgrim references along the way (Appendix C). There is also a list of suggestions for further reading (Appendix D) and a glossary of geographical and other frequently encountered terms (Appendix F).

The walk from Le Puy to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port can be completed in four to five weeks by anyone who is fairly fit and who also likes to visit places of interest along the way. It can be undertaken in sections, too, by those who lack the time to do it all in one go or who would just like to cover certain stretches, and indications are given in the text as to how to reach (or leave) the main towns along the Way. Anyone in Britain who is thinking of walking, cycling or riding any part of the route should certainly consider contacting the Confraternity of St James for advice and membership: their annually updated guide to accommodation and facilities on the route are extremely useful (see Appendix E for the address). The walker’s route is not suitable for cyclists, especially those on mountain bikes, but anyone wishing to cycle by road should obtain John Higginson’s Way of St James: Le Puy to Santiago – A Cyclist’s Guide (1999), also published by Cicerone Press.

History

Pilgrims have been travelling to Santiago de Compostela on foot or on horseback (and more recently by bicycle) for over a thousand years. Godescalc, Bishop of Le Puy, who went there in AD951, was one of the first. At the height of its popularity in the 11th and 12th centuries over half a million people are said to have made the pilgrimage from different parts of Europe each year, the majority of them from France.
Pilgrimages had been popular amongst Christians ever since Constantine the Great had the Church of the Holy Sepulchre built over the site of Christ’s burial in Jerusalem in AD326, and the discovery, shortly afterwards, of the Holy Cross itself. Those journeying to this shrine were known as palmeros (palmers). Romeros went to Rome, the burial place of Saint Peter, the other great centre of Christian pilgrimage in the Middle Ages, along with Santiago de Compostela after the finding of the remains of Saint James the Great (son of Zebedee, brother of John and Christ’s cousin). The high point of this third pilgrimage occurred between the years 1000 and 1500. But although numbers dwindled after that due to the Reformation and other, political, factors, the stream of pilgrims making the trudge westwards from different parts of Europe to the far reaches of Galicia in northwest Spain never completely dried up, and since the late 20th century has been making something of a comeback. The numbers of pilgrims on the Spanish section of the route has increased astronomically in the last decade (from some 4000–5000 per year in 1990 to over 155,000 in the 1999 Holy Year), and the number of pilgrims along the Le Puy route has also increased steadily, with approximately 3000 people walking the route in 2001.

Legend

After the death of Christ, the disciples dispersed to different parts of the then known world, to spread the Gospel as they had been bidden. Little is known about the life of St James, but he went to Spain, where he spent a couple of years evangelising, though apparently without a great deal of success. He returned to Jerusalem but was beheaded by Herod shortly afterwards, in AD44. Immediately following his martyrdom, his followers are said to have taken his body to Jaffa, on the coast, where a ship was miraculously waiting for them and they set off back to Spain. They landed in Iria Flavia on the coast of Galicia, present-day Padrón, some 20km from what is now Santiago de Compostela, after a journey (and in a stone boat!) which is purported to have taken only a week, thereby providing proof of angelic assistance. The body was buried in a tomb on a hillside, along with two of his followers later on, and forgotten for the next 750 years.

Early in the 9th century Pelagius, a hermit living in that part of Spain, had a vision (which he subsequently reported to Theodomir, bishop of Ira Flavia) in which he saw a very large bright star, surrounded by a ring of smaller ones, shining over a deserted spot in the hills. The matter was investigated and a tomb containing three bodies was found there, immediately identified as those of St James and two of his followers. When Alfonso II, King of the Asturias (791–824), went there he declared St James the patron saint of Spain. He built a church and a small monastery over the tomb in the saint’s honour, around which a town grew up. It was known as campus de la stella or campus stellae, later shortened to compostela – one explanation of the origin of the name. Another is that it derives from the Latin componere (to bury), as a Roman cemetery or early Christian necropolis is known to have existed under the site of the present-day cathedral in Santiago – and where the remains of St James are still believed to be housed today.
The Pilgrimage

News of the discovery soon spread. It was encouraged to do so, both by Archbishop Gelmírez and the cathedral authorities (anxious to promote the town as a pilgrimage centre, thus attracting money to the area), and by the monks of Cluny (who saw in it the opportunity to assist the Spanish church in their long struggle against the Moors). Both factions were also helped by the fact that the Turks had seized the Holy Sepulchre in 1078, thus putting a stop to pilgrimages to Jerusalem. However, Santiago was attractive as a potential pilgrim ‘venue’ in other respects too, as it fulfilled the various criteria necessary to make a pilgrimage there worthy of merit. It was far away (from most parts of France, for example) and difficult to reach, thus requiring a good deal of hardship and endurance to get there (and back again). It was sufficiently dangerous (wolves, bandits, fever, rivers that were difficult to cross, unscrupulous ferrymen) as well as being in Spain, then locked tight in struggle with the Moors, and for this reason many pilgrims travelled in quite large groups. (A considerable corpus of pilgrim songs from previous centuries still exists, sung by the pilgrims as they walked.)

The road itself, both through France and in Spain, was also well supplied with shrines, relics and other sights worth seeing. As traffic increased roads, bridges and hospices were built. The pilgrimage churches, characterised by their ambulatories round the inside of the building in order to facilitate viewing of the relics exposed behind the high altar, were endowed with a growing number of such items, thus ensuring that pilgrims would pass that way to see them. Many churches in Spain were dedicated to St James, though there are very few today along the Le Puy route through France. Many others contain his statue, whether as apostle (Saint-Jacques apôtre) or pilgrim (Saint-Jacques pèlerin). (In Spain there is a third, important representation: St James the Moor-slayer, or Santiago matamoros, though there are only very few examples of this category in France.) He is featured in paintings and stained glass too, with a halo as St James the Apostle; without when he is portrayed as a pilgrim. There are, however, a considerable number of very tiny chapels along the way that are dedicated to St Roch, the pilgrim saint from Montpellier. After a pilgrimage to Rome he devoted his life to caring for plague victims, but withdrew to live in a forest when he contracted a disease which left him with an unsightly sore on his left thigh. (For this reason St Roch is depicted in art with the front flap of his coat turned back, to warn people to keep away from him, and is accompanied by the faithful dog – who brought the saint his daily rations – often with a loaf of bread in his mouth.) Legend has confused him with Saint-Jacques pèlerin at times, and he not infrequently appears in a ‘pilgrim version’ as well, with added hat, staff and scallop shells on his clothing, and there are many representations of him along the Le Puy route. Many churches and chapels of St James changed their dedication in the 16th and 17th centuries in recognition of Saint Roch’s role in curing plague victims. This explains the apparent scarcity of churches and chapels of St James along the route from Le Puy to the Pyrenees today, in contrast to the pilgrim road through Spain.

So why did people go on pilgrimages? For a variety of reasons: as a profession of faith, as a form of punishment (a system of fixed penalties for certain crimes/sins was in
operation during the Middle Ages), as a means of atonement, as a way of acquiring merit (and thus, for example, reducing or, in certain cases, cutting in half, the amount of time spent in Purgatory) and as an opportunity to venerate the relics of the many saints available along the principal routes to Santiago. (Indulgences were available to those who visited shrines.) No doubt, too, there were some who were just glad of the opportunity to escape their surroundings. Later there were professional pilgrims who would (for a fee) undertake to do the pilgrimage on behalf of someone else who could afford the money but not the time to do it him or herself. Those with the means to do so went on horseback, and some wealthy people made the pilgrimage along with a considerable retinue. The majority of pilgrims went on foot, however, and even amongst the rich there were some who preferred to walk, rather than ride, because of the greater ‘merit’ they would attain.

The pilgrim in former times was not at all sure that he would reach his destination, let alone return home in one piece, so before setting out he took leave of his family and employer, made his will and generally put his affairs in order. He (or she) obtained his credentials (pilgrim passport) from his bishop or church, which he could then present in order to obtain food and lodging in the many pilgrim ‘hospitals’ and other establishments along the way. This was both a precaution against the growing number of *coquillards* or pseudo-pilgrims and a means of providing proof of his journey: he had his papers stamped at different stages along the way so that once he arrived in Santiago he could obtain his Compostela or certificate of pilgrimage from the Cathedral authorities there. This in turn entitled him to stay in the pilgrim shelters on his return journey as well as furnishing evidence, if needed, that he had actually made the pilgrimage successfully.

The pilgrim had his staff and scrip (knapsack) blessed in church before setting out and travelled light, carrying little else but a gourd for water. The scallop shell – the *coquille Saint-Jacques* – which has for many people become an essential ingredient of ‘pilgrim uniform’ was, in former times, something that was carried back from Santiago by the returning pilgrim; these were found on the Galician coast and served as additional proof that the pilgrim had reached their destination. It was also the symbol embedded above doorways and elsewhere on the many and varied buildings that accommodated pilgrims along the different roads to Santiago.

Pilgrims with funds could obviously stay in inns and other publicly available lodgings, but the vast majority probably stayed in the different hospices and other facilities specially provided for them. Some of these were in towns (either in the centre, or outside the walls to cater both for latecomers and possibly contagious pilgrims). Others were in the countryside, often by bridges or at the crossing of important pilgrims’ feeder roads: examples are the former hospital by the Pont d’Artigues near Saint-Antoine, run by the Order of the Knights of Santiago, and the Chapelle d’Abrin, shortly before La Romieu, the surviving part of the Commandery of St John of Jerusalem at the junction of the routes from Le Puy and the road from Moissac to Aire-sur-l’Adour via Agen. Much of the pilgrim accommodation was provided by religious orders such as these, the Benedictines and the Antonins, by churches and civic authorities, as well as by benevolent individuals. The facilities offered varied considerably from one establishment to another, and surviving records from many of them indicate exactly what was provided
for the pilgrim.

There are different explanations as to the origins of the *coquille Saint-Jacques*, but one is that when the followers of St James arrived in the port of Iria Flavia with the apostle’s body they saw a man riding along the beach (a bridegroom in some versions). His horse took fright and plunged into the sea. When the pair re-emerged both horse and rider were covered from head to foot in scallop shells (even today the beaches in this part of Galicia are strewn with them).

It was customary to set out in the springtime in order to reach Santiago for the feast of St James on 25 July and return home for the winter. This was especially true in Holy Years, when 25 July falls on a Sunday (the next ones are in 2004, 2010, 2021, 2027 and 2032 – a pattern of 6–11–6–5 years), the only time the *Puerta Santa* or Holy Door of the Cathedral of Santiago is open. This is sealed up at the end of each such year and then symbolically broken down again by the Archbishop in a special ceremony in the evening of 31 December preceding the new Holy Year, a year during which special concessions and indulgences were, and still are, available to pilgrims. On returning home many joined confraternities of former pilgrims in their own countries, the forerunners of the modern-day associations of ‘Friends of St James’ that now exist in several countries to support, promote and encourage the different routes to Santiago.

Many pilgrims wrote accounts of their experiences, but as early as the 12th century the first real ‘travel guide’ was produced, probably between 1140–50. Its author was for a long time believed to be one Aimery Picaud, a cleric from Parthenay-le-Vieux in the Poitou region of France, and it formed part of a Latin manuscript known as the Codex Calixtinus. However, instead of relating the journey of one particular individual this was intended as a guide for the use of prospective (especially French) pilgrims. It describes the four most important roads through France (see below) and divides the route from the Pyrenees to Santiago into 13 (somewhat unequal) stages. It lists, with comments, the places through which the route passes in Spain, indicates some of the hazards pilgrims may encounter, and contains advice on the rivers along the way, indicating which are safe to drink from and which should be avoided. The author also describes in some detail the inhabitants of the different regions through which the prospective pilgrim will pass, their language (including one of the earliest lists of Basque words), customs and characteristics, none of which compare at all favourably, in his opinion, with those of the people of his native Poitou. He includes a list of shrines to be visited along the different roads through France, a description of the city of Santiago and its churches, and a detailed account of the Cathedral’s history, architecture and canons. It is now thought that this guide was not written by one person but was a compilation, designed (under the influence of the energetic bishop Diego Gelmírez) to promote Santiago de Compostela as a pilgrimage centre. Regardless of its authorship, this guide was certainly instrumental in popularising the itineraries of the four main pilgrim roads through France and the *camino francés* (or ‘French road’) in Spain. It has recently been translated into English (see Appendix D).

**Routes to Santiago**
The route described in this book is not the one and only ‘Way of St James’. In former
times, when pilgrims set out from their own front doors and made their way to Santiago
from many different places, several well-established routes grew up (see map). In France,
for example, there were four main departure points, each with several ‘feeder roads’
such as the one from Rocamadour to Moissac) joining them at different points along the
way. The route from Paris, the Via Turonensis, passed through Orléans, Tours, Poitiers,
Bordeaux and Dax. From Vézelay pilgrims took the Via Lemovicensis through Limoges,
Périgueux, Bazas and Mont-de-Marsan, while those from Le Puy took the Via Podensis
and passed through Conques, Cahors, Moissac, Aire-sur-l’Adour and Navarrenx. All
three routes joined up near Ostabat on the French side of the Pyrenees, to continue over
the mountains to Roncesvalles and on across the north of Spain as the Camino francés.
The fourth way, from Arles, and known as the Via Tolosana, visited Saint-Gilles du
Gard, Toulouse, Auch and Oloron but crossed the Pyrenees further east at the Col de
Somport, from where it is known as the Camino aragonés, before merging with the other
three at Puente la Reina.

Although the name Camino de Santiago has nowadays become synonomous with the
Camino francés in Spain there were other important routes there too. These included the
northern one along the Costa Cantabrica, the one taken by many English pilgrims, who
went by ship as far as Bordeaux and then continued on foot, whilst others sailed to La
Coruña and then walked the rest of the way along one of the Rutas del Mar, one of which
was known as the Camino inglés. The Vía de la Plata or Camino mozárabe, on the other
hand, was the road taken by pilgrims from the south of Spain and others joining it by sea
in Seville, passing through Mérida, Cáceres, Salamanca and Zamora before joining the
Camino francés at Astorga. There were also routes from the east coast of Spain, as well
as two caminos, south to north, through Portugal, one inland, the other along the coast, as
well as a whole network of routes reaching France from Austria, Switzerland, Italy,
Germany, the Netherlands and countries much further afield. The ‘Way of St James’
described here therefore corresponds to only a very small part of this complex web, to the
section known as the Via Podensis. One of the most widely used and best-documented of
the many pilgrim roads through France, it begins in Le Puy-en-Velay and passes through
Conques, Figeac, Cahors, Moissac, Aire-sur-l’Adour and Saint Jean-Pied-de-Port.

**Sample Route: Figéac to Moissac**

To continue: turn L down Avenue Jean-Jaurès. About 150m later turn (second) L up street (marked ‘Cingles Bas’) alongside high wall, veering R then L under railway line. Turn R and then fork L uphill. Road becomes forest track through woods, climbing steadily up side of hill and veering L, passing TV mast to reach war memorial, an enormous concrete cross, with the names of the 145 people deported on 12 May 1944. Picnic area with view over town of Figéac.

Continue ahead on road, mainly uphill, for 1.5km to second monument (obelisks marking limits of 8th-century Benedictine abbey, another picnic area): this is the place where the GR65A variante meets up with the GR65 again*.

To continue on GR65, turn R (the waymarks ahead are those of the GR65A). About 200m later KSO(R) along D922 and 100m later fork R down wide road past factories and marked ‘Z.I.Aiguille.’

KSO along level road on ridge, ignoring turns to L and R. (On the skyline you can see the water tower in Faycelles as a reference point.)

Continue along road, passing Malaret, passing above Buffan and just after a crossroads KSO to…

**5km La Cassagnole 311m (265/475)**
Birthplace of Louis the Pious, son of Charlemagne and second Holy Roman emperor. Gîte d’étape (Relais Saint-Jacques, 05.65.34.03.08, 35pl, open all year, also CH). KSO(R) at fork and continue on road, KSO(L) at junction in Ferrières (modern stone cross). KSO(R) at next junction (note dovecote to R). Join road from back L. Cross D662 and continue into village, veering R uphill to church in…

**3.5km Faycelles 319m (268.5/471.5)**
Bar/restaurant/shop. CH on main street. Continue ahead L, past church, KSO(L) up walled lane, turn L on road (D21). Good view over Lot valley.

KSO(R) at junction. Note caselles in this area. Also steeply pitched barns, two stories, with grassy ramp leading up to first-floor entrance.

Continue on D21 for 2km till just past RH turn for Ayrens (hard R), then fork L down shady lane for 300m to road. (200m ahead on L is La Planquette, a gîte d’étape, 05.65.40.01.36, 10pl + 8 in marquee in summer, campsite, April–Sept.) Turn R almost immediately down FP and at end turn R onto D18 just before its junction with the D21 in hamlet of…

**3.5km Mas de la Croix 327m (272/468)**
This is where the GR651 starts, the (waymarked) variante route along the Vallée du Célé:
see Appendix B.

a) For GR651: KSO on D21 to Béduer (0.8km, shop, two restaurants).
b) For GR65: fork L by bus shelter down minor road, pass above château and then, at small crossing (iron cross) turn L up narrow walled lane which then becomes a minor road. When it bends R downhill turn L down a (wider) walled lane and KSO, ignoring turns, as it wends its way downhill (lavoir/fountain, the Fontieu, to R) and then up to minor road.

Turn L and immediately R uphill at junction (marked ‘Surgues’) then turn L down track 120m later and KSO, ignoring turns. When it becomes a walled lane (farm of Combes-Salgues to L) KSO. At crossing of paths 100m later turn R along another walled lane.

KSO, ignoring turns, to road (D38). Turn L for 250m then down track. KSO. In a grassy clearing where track forks L fork R up grassy lane. KSO ahead at crossing and continue uphill to road in hamlet of Le Puy Clavel. Turn R and 100m later turn L down grassy track. KSO to road and turn R uphill to D19. Cross over and KSO (iron cross to L).

In this area the footpaths are often broken by roads/staggered short stretches on road, hence the complicated junctions/ instructions.

Turn L after waterworks building, then R (épicerie/tabac to L) and arrive at the church in…

9km Gréalou 374m (281/459)
Hotel/bar/restaurant des Quatre Vents (meals by reservation only). Romanesque church of Notre-Dame de l’Assomption. There are a lot of dolmens in this area.

Turn R at church, pass cemetery (R) and continue on lane. At junction with road KSO ahead on track along ridge, continuing along open heathland to small stone cross (thought to be the oldest such cross in the region). Opposite a dolmen veer L down green lane alongside wall and continue down to road (D82) and KSO on other side down walled lane, ignoring turnings. KSO ahead at junction and continue until you reach a road. Turn R and then at a T-junction turn R again to hamlet of…

4km Le Verdier 316m (285/455)
In bad weather you may want to take the variante route through the woods to Cajarc (2km shorter, via the GR65A, waymarked with a diagonal white ‘bar’ through the red-and-white balises). If so KSO on here on road then turn L onto a minor road leading to the D21. Turn R along it then 50m later KSO(L) down grassy walled lane which bends L 500m then R 200m after that, track descending to rejoin D21 2km later. Turn L along it into the Place du Forail in the centre of Cajarc.

Otherwise, to continue on GR65, turn R into hamlet and KSO on road, uphill for 500m, to crossroads (iron cross), KSO ahead (marked ‘Chemin des Vignes’), continuing to climb until you reach another road. Turn L and 150m later fork L up unsurfaced road and KSO through fields, track then becoming a green lane. At crossing KSO ahead (level) and continue to road. Cross over and continue on other side on track which becomes walled lane, descending till you reach a T-junction with ruined building on L.

Turn L along track and KSO, ignoring turns, uphill to road. Cross it and continue ahead
down green lane, descending to join road coming from back L. KSO(R) for 20m then KSO(L) (at bend to R in road) down walled lane. This becomes tarred lane, descending all the time.

About 150m after road joins from back R turn R along green lane under the cliffs (Cajarc below L). This becomes a stony track that descends continuously in a straight line until you reach a field at the bottom. Turn R alongside a wall on a grassy path and then KSO along minor at end and turn L onto D922.

The GR65 does not enter Cajarc. To visit town: KSO. To continue: turn R immediately (after turning L onto D922).

To leave from town centre (Place du Forail) continue on Boulevard de la Tour de Ville and turn R into Avenue de la Capalette then L into Rue de Cuzoul and KSO past campsite. Continue alongside railway line (on LH side) and just before second tunnel underneath it turn R along side of garden and then L up stony FP to road (D922, above R under cliffs). KSO(L) ahead and then KSO(L) again at junction with the ‘Chapelette’ (on L) and huge wooden cross (on R). Picnic area.

KSO(L) here (Chemin de la Route Veille) and fork R 100m later. KSO(R) at fork after 1km and descend to five-way junction. Take second R (brickworks to R) then join D19 coming from back R. (Church in Gaillac up on clifftop ahead of you.) Cross suspension bridge over the Lot and turn L on other side, continuing uphill on road to entry to…

Á 6km Cajarc 160m (291/449)
All facilities, gîte d’étape (05.65.40.71.51, 20pl, open all year), municipal campsite (on GR out of town, May–Sept), three hotels.
Town situated in a ‘circus’ of chalk cliffs. Pilgrim bridge over the Lot built in 1320 and a hospital existed in 1269. Chapelle de la Madeleine (only the chancel remains, known as ‘Chapelette de Cajarc’ today, the chapel of former 13th-century leprosarium).
NB After Gaillac the causse begins, with no food or water until Cahors, except in Limogne, so stock up on both before leaving Cajarc.
The Way of St. James – France: A Walkers Guidebook

Overall Route Map

Sample Route

Map 7: Figeac to Gaillac
Overview Map

Pilgrim Roads to Santiago through France and Spain
Sample Photo