

THE SAINT JAMES OF COMPOSTELA PILGRIMS' WAY

From Aire to Saint Jean Pied de Port

For hundreds of years, these tracks have been used by pilgrims and walkers. Following these footpaths which are steeped in history and visit so many different places, you will be captivated by both the variety and interest of the countryside you pass through. This long-distance walk may be the world's oldest, following as it does the Roman road known as the "Via Agrippa" which linked Lyon and Toulouse.

PROGRAMME

10 days, 9 nights and 8 days of walking

DAY 1 : AIRE-SUR-ADOUR ou BARCELONNE DU GERS

Arrive at the hotel at the end of the afternoon; have dinner and pass the night in Aire or in Barcelonne du Gers.

DAY 2 : AIRE-SUR-ADOUR - MIRAMONT SENSACQ 20 km about 5 hours

From Aire, an ancient roman town (with a cathedral), at the end of the town, you will walk closed to the lac du Brousseau among cultures for arrive at Pontet which is 12 km away. After that, go to Pimbo. On the way you will pass the church of Sensacq, which is built in a Romanesque style and dates from the 11th century.

DAY 2 : BARCELONNE DU GERS – MIRAMONT SENSACQ 21 Km 4 h 30 environ

Your walk start from Barcelonne du Gers to Aire an ancient roman town (with a cathedral), you will walk at the end of the town closed to "Le lac du Brousseau" among some cultures to the small village Les Bosquets then to the village of Miramont sensacq. From here begin the nice view to the mountains.

DAY 3 : MIRAMONT SENSACQ - LARREULE 25 km about 5 hours 30 minutes

After Pimbo, carry on until you reach ARZACQ. After leaving ARZACQ, head for the church of St Martin de Louvigny. Then follow the road along the ridge until you get to Fichous-Riumayou. Keep going until you reach Larreule. You will pass the night at Casteide Candau (Morlane). When you reach Larreule, you can call the hotel keeper so that he can come and find you.

DAY 4 : CASTEIDE CANDAU - MASLACQ 23 km about 5 hours

At the start of the morning's walk, the hotel keeper will be able to drive you to to Poms. (See him about this when you are at the hotel.) In any event, go to Poms, passing first through Uzan, (there is a 17th century château with an octagonal tower at Poms). Next, go through Castillon, before arriving at the chapel of Caubin. Then go to Arthez de Béarn, before continuing to MASLACQ. (Very little uphill walking)

DAY 5 : MASLACQ – NAVARRENX 116m 20 km about 5 hours

Leave MASLACQ take the way leading to Sauvelade which is 8km further on. (There is a bar and you can get a snack at Sauvelade.) Next we go past the farm of Labarthe which is private property, but walkers are allowed to pass through it. After crossing the ford, follow the way to NAVARRENX. (Biggest uphill climb: 130m)



DAY 6 : NAVARRENX – LICHOS**18 km about 4 hours 30 minutes**

After leaving the fortified town of NAVARRENX, go to Castetnau-Camblong. Pass through the old part of the village and then make your way to the Château de Montgaston which is 12km away. Next you pass the Château de Joantho (which is private).

DAY 7 : LICHOS - ST PALAIS 50m 18 km about 4 hours 30 minutes

Aroué, which is off the GR (main footpath) marks the boundary between the area called the Béarn and the Basque country. At way-point 86 on the topo-guide map take the alternative route which leads you to ST PALAIS. (Little uphill walking).

DAY 8 : ST PALAIS – LARCEVEAU 160m 17 km about 4 hours

ST PALAIS is off the GR. Follow the directions in the topo guide to get back on to the GR 65. You can then make for Hiriburia, go past the chapelle de Soyarza from where there is a wonderful view; then go to Ostabat-Asme, a meeting point for large numbers of pilgrims. After this you arrive at LARCEVAU. (Biggest uphill walk: 210m)

DAY 9 : LARCEVEAU - ST JEAN PIED DE PORT 180m 18 km about 4 hours 30 minutes

This is the last stage, which takes you to ST JEAN PIED DE PORT. Before getting there you first pass through Ainhice Mongelos, Bustince (which has an ancient chapel, well worth seeing); then you go through St Jean le Vieux and finish up at St Jean Pied de Port. (Biggest uphill climb: 120m).

DAY 10 : SAINT JEAN PIED DE PORT 180 m

The walking holiday ends after breakfast.

DATES

These walking holidays can be arranged between the 1st May and the beginning of November, at any time convenient to you and subject to the availability of hotels.

Please indicate on the booking sheet any other dates which would suit you (for example if you were able to change the dates of your walking holiday by one or two days either before or after your preferred date ...): this is in case one or several hotels etc are not available on your preferred date.

We would also ask you to **make your booking as early as possible**. We don't keep permanent reservations and certain places of accommodation can be filled up several months in advance.

THE PRICE INCLUDES

- Half board
- The carriage of luggage
- The transportation on Day 3
- A guidebook (one guidebook for 1-2 people)
- The tourist tax ('taxe de séjour')

THE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- The midday picnic
- Insurance, drinks; personal spending
- The cost of getting from your home to the starting point, or getting home again after the holiday
- Any taxis or shuttles taking you back to your car; any extra transport for shortening sections of the walk



- Parking fees.
- Booking fees
- Extra charge for postage outside France.

RECEPTION/CONCLUSION

Reception for the walking tour takes place at the first hotel, the evening before your first day's walking. For those arriving by car, you can leave your cars at the bed and breakfast or at the hotel. Your walking tour ends the morning after your last day's walking, after breakfast.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

Maximum daily uphill climb: from 50-150 metres (roughly 150-500 feet).

ACCOMMODATION

This will be in one and two star hotels and bed and breakfast. Showers and WCs may be on landings or on the next floor in certain establishments.

NB: Bedrooms will only be available after 4pm.

When two hotels are full, we will have to arrange for you to pass two nights at the same establishment and organise transport for the walk. (This will not change the route of your day's walk.) Details of this kind will be noted on your booking confirmation, should they be necessary. *You may be asked to pay a supplement.*

FOOD

Breakfasts will be traditional (often taking the form of buffets) and are served at around 8am.

If you want an earlier breakfast than this, talk about it to the hotel-keeper the evening before to find out if it is possible.

Dinner is usually served from 7.30pm onwards. It usually consists of the meal of the day. Most hotels do not offer a choice of menu unless you pay a supplement.

MIDDAY MEAL

Packed lunches are not included in our prices.

You can order them directly from the hotel the night before (by paying around 6-9€ for each person at the time – depending on the establishment). Alternatively you can buy food in the villages, where there are shops etc.

TRANSPORT OF BAGGAGE

Your baggage will be transported between each of the places where you spend the night, **during the course of the afternoon (around 4pm).**

A supplement may be payable for the transportation of baggage after October.

NB: We ask you to put your bags in the hallway/lounge of each hotel every morning at 8am. We also insist that each person has only one bag of belongings for transportation, and that no bag must weigh more than 14 kilos. If you have more than one bag, or if your bag weighs more than 14kg, the transporter can either demand a



supplement at the end of the walking tour, or simply refuse altogether to carry your baggage if it is too cumbersome. You are advised not to take ordinary suitcases, but to use a strong, solidly-made travelling bag.

You are advised to take a small day-sack or rucksack to carry your personal belongings during the day's walk.

If you are part of a group, we require you to show clearly on your luggage labels the name of your group leader (i.e. the person who booked your walking tour).

TRAVELLING TO AND FROM THE WALKING TOUR

Train:

*Arriving:

Aire railway station: Gare SNCF at Aire sur l'Adour (tel: 05 58 71 64 65).

Pau railway station: Gare SNCF at Pau then take the bus to Aire with the coach company SITRAM (tel: 05 59 27 22 22).

Auch railway station: Gare SNCF at Auch then the bus to Aire with the transport company RIVIERES (tel: 05 62 05 46 24).

*Returning:

St Jean Pied de Port railway station: Gare SNCF at St Jean Pied de Port (tel: 05 59 37 02 00).

Railway timetables, fares etc: Informations SNCF : tel: 36 35 or at website: www.sncf.com

Car:

*Arriving:

Aire sur l'Adour is in the department of les Landes, on the main road: RN 134.

Michelin map N° 82.

You can leave your car at Aire sur l'Adour, close to the hotel.

*Returning:

Transport from St Jean Pied de Port to Aire sur l'Adour : we can reserved this journey for you.

WE ADVISE YOU TO BRING WITH YOU

- a small rucksack for your packed lunch and anything else needed for the day's walk
- basic first aid – eg plasters, antiseptic fluid, alcohol for feet etc
- a good pair of walking boots or shoes, suitable for hill walking. Beware of new boots – test them or break them in first.
- sun-glasses, sun-cream and sun-hat
- waterproof garments
- light shoes for the evening
- water bottle; it is important to drink 1.5 to 2 litres per day
- a knife
- torch (optional)
- binoculars (if desired)
- paper handkerchiefs
- needle, thread, safety pins

Mobile phones

Mobile phones do not work everywhere along the route. You may wish to have a phone card with you as well.



INSURANCE

Our insurances, Contrat Assistance Plus (Assistance étendue) and Contrat Sérénité (Premium) are individual and optional. If you sign up for them it must be **AT THE LATEST, 14 WORKING DAYS** after booking the holiday, and the insurance cannot take effect until after you have paid the full cost of the holiday. Anybody can take out one of our insurances, whatever their country of residence.

The total cost of the Contrat Assistance Plus (insurance for Assistance/Rapatiation) is set at 1.70% of the cost of the holiday. It takes into account only the cost of the holiday.

The total cost of the Contrat Sérénité (insurance for Assistance/Repatriation, cancellation and interruption of the holiday) is set at 3.6 % of the price of the holiday. It takes into account the cost of the holiday and the extra charges (for individual bedrooms, for a single holidaymaker, extra nights and possible extra transportation etc).

If you cancel the holiday yourself, if you haven't taken out our insurance for cancellation, the cancellation fees will be retained by us.

The size of the cancellation fee depends on the date of cancellation:

- 1) more than 30 days before the planned departure: 50 € of administration fees per person.
- 2) between 30 days and 22 days before departure: 25% of the total cost of the holiday.
- 3) between 21 days and 15 days before departure: 50% of the total cost of the holiday.
- 4) between 14 days and 8 days before departure: 75% of the total cost of the holiday.
- 5) between 7 days and 2 days before departure: 90% of the total cost of the holiday.
- 6) less than two days before the departure date: 100% of the total cost of the holiday.

In all cases of cancellation, even if it is more than 30 days before the planned starting date of the holiday, a fee of 50 € per person will be retained by us to cover administration costs.

➤➤ If the person with whom you planned to share a bedroom cancels their holiday, you will be billed for the individual supplement for that bedroom.

If you have to cancel your holiday **before you set off**, contact La Pèlerine on +33 (0)4 71 74 47 40, and we will do whatever is necessary.

During your holiday, your first action in such a situation should be either to contact **ASSISTANCE MUTUAIDE** on +33 (0)1 45 16 43 47 (if you have taken out the insurance contrat assistance plus) or **SERVICE SINISTRE ASSURANCE** on +33 (0)5 32 09 21 81 (if you have taken out the insurance contrat sérénité).

If you have any questions about your insurance contract, please contact the Hot Line on **05 32 09 21 81**.

Not turning up at the beginning of the holiday, or abandoning the holiday after you have begun it with no explanation, will disqualify you from reimbursement.

An example of an insurance contract, detailing the guarantees it gives you and the procedures you have to follow to make a claim, will be sent to you either at the time you make your booking – or at any other time if you ask for it.

CHANGING YOUR BOOKING:

ATTENTION!

Administration fees (50 €) will be kept by us for **any change you make in a booking already made** (e.g. for type of bedroom, departure dates, number of people etc).

If you want to book **extra nights** at the beginning or the end of your holiday this **must** be done **at the time of booking** and be specified on the booking confirmation sheet. Once bookings have been confirmed, if you want to arrange extra nights this must be done directly with the establishments concerned, and paid for at the time.

