



Fostering the enduring tradition of the Camino

Vía Turonensis (Paris)

General Description: The Vía Turonensis is one of the four medieval pilgrim routes described in the Codex Calixtinus in the 12th century. 1012 km starting in Paris then passing through Orléans, Tours, Portiers, Bordeaux and Vieux-Ricet to Ostabat, the small town where three of the French routes converge a short distance north of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. In addition, leaving Paris there is a parallel route that passes through Chartres to rejoin the main route in Tours.

Waymarking: There is no uniformly waymarked route from Paris but the *peregrino* can assemble a route using the long-distance GR (*Grande Randonnée*) and local paths. Consequently there are numerous possible routes. This will all require prior planning.

Terrain: The routes are generally quite flat with no steep gradients. The routes cross the wide, forested river valleys that run east to west to the coast.

When to go: The route can be used any time of year. Parts of the routes lie in areas that are prime destinations in the spring and during the July and August vacation period. Climate tables for [Paris](#) and [Tours](#).

Accommodation: There are few pilgrim-specific accommodations, the exceptions being the Centre de Culture Européen at Saint-Jean d'Angély, the Priory of Cayac at Gradignan and the Franciscan convent at Saint-Palais. There are numerous *gîtes* and *chambres d'hôtes* but these are tourist not pilgrim oriented.

Guidebooks: Confraternity of Saint James: *Paris to the Pyrenees* (presently in revision). *Le Chemin de Paris et de Tours vers Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle*, J-Y Gregoire & J Véron, rando Guides, 2003, ISBN 978-2841823105, has maps, accommodation and directions in French for route via Orleans and Tours. (French) As there are numerous possible route variations available, local French associations will be useful resources.

Internet links: The Confraternity of Saint James has an [overview page for the Vía Turonensis](#). The site for [Chemin de Compostelle en Touraine](#) has copious amounts of information including a very detailed set of itineraries. (French) The [Société Landaise des Amis de Saint Jacques et d'Etudes Compostellanes](#) has a [section on the Turonensis](#) with a list of stages, albergues and general information. (French, English and German) The four original routes to Santiago de Compostela through France have been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. For further information, visit [UNESCO's site](#).

Other remarks: The various possible routes will take the *peregrino* through one or the other of the most attractive sections of France - the vineyards of the Loire and Burgundy, the Loire Valley with its châteaux and vast areas of forest and agricultural use.