Camino *primitivo*

**General Description:** In addition to those pilgrims arriving at the French-Spanish border via the *Ruta de la Costa*, many medieval pilgrims on the Camino *francés* left that route at León to travel north to the cathedral in Oviedo and the Camino *primitivo* (meaning "early") was the shortest route to return to the *francés* from there, 285 km from Oviedo through Lugo to Melide where it joins the Camino *francés*.

**Waymarking:** Waymarking is variable although it is reported to be extremely good from Oviedo to the Galician border which is about half the route. Yellow arrows and splashes of yellow paint appear.

**Terrain:** This is a difficult route as it passes over the western end of the Cordillera Cantábrica with a number of ascents and descents of 6 to 8%.

**When to go:** Weather on the Camino *primitivo* is a product of the mountains and the sea and as such can be harsh, even in the summer. It is suggested that the *primitivo* be attempted only during the summer months. Climate tables for Oviedo and Lugo.

**Accommodation:** There are a number of pilgrim albergues along the route as well as some hostales and pensiones.


**Internet links:** The Confraternity of Saint James has an overview of the Camino *primitivo*. The Xunta de Galicia has a section with extensive information on that portion of the Camino *primitivo* within Galicia including history, tourism, albergues, other services and Santiago itself. There is a site maintained by Eric Walker that has good material on the Camino *primitivo*.

**Video links:** The organization Where Is Asturias has two videos on the part of the *primitivo* within Asturias: The *Original Way of Saint James* and The Route of Saint James Familiarization Trip.

**Other remarks:** The mountain scenery is very dramatic in places, especially Grandas de Salime. "Primitivo" means 'early' or 'original' not 'primitive'.