



Fostering the enduring tradition of the Camino

Vía Lemovicensis (Vézelay)

General Description: The Vía Lemovicensis (*Vézelay*) is one of the four medieval pilgrim routes described in the Codex Calixtinus in the 12th century. The route runs ~900 km starting in Vézelay (Burgundy) to the foot of the Pyrenees where many pilgrims start their Camino *francés*. The route divides leaving Vézelay, one branch going through Nevers and the other through Bourges. After reuniting at the village of Gargillesse the route passes through Limoges and Mont de Marsan to Ostabat, the small town where three of the French routes converge a short distance north of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port.

Waymarking: The whole route is waymarked, although at the moment the waymarking is rather diverse. However, starting in 2014 some French Associations started to apply a common waymarking, by following the methodology of the Grande Randonnée system. Instead of the red and white or red and yellow colors of the GR routes, the colors used are yellow and blue. (See the figure)

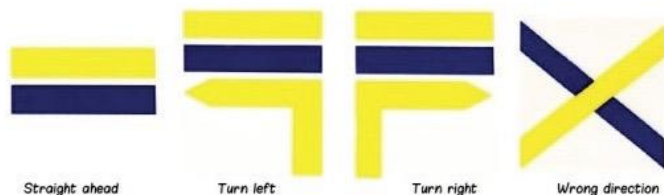


Image courtesy of Nederlands Genootschap van Sint Jacob

The replacement of the various present waymarks will likely take quite some time. (On the site of the [Dutch Pilgrims Association](#) you will find a document, in English, explaining present signposting). Care should be taken to not confuse the waymarking of the Jacobean associations with the waymarking of the long-distance footpath GR654, also known as the Sentier de Saint-Jacques

– Voie de Vézelay, which follows neither the original route nor the historic stopping-places, and which is mainly intended for long-distance walkers. If the GR654 is followed, the total distance to Santiago is closer to 2000 km. However note that after Sainte-Foy-la-Grande the new GR654 West is almost identical with the route waymarked by the Jacobean associations.

Several sites with good information on the GR routes: [GR Chemins de Grandes Randonnées](#) and more specifically [a list of GR routes](#) and [le Chemin Saint Jacques de Compostelle](#). And [cicerone.co.uk](#).

Terrain: Covering a distance of some 900 km from Vézelay to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port the route traverses a wide variety of terrain. Much of the land is agricultural or forested.

When to go: The recommended times are the spring and the fall. Summers can be hot. In spite of the great beauty of the area traversed, there is not a great deal of pressure from tourism or vacationers. Climate table for [Vézelay](#).

Accommodation: There are more and more pilgrim-specific and pilgrim-sympathetic accommodations along this route. There are a scattering of *albergues* and there are the usual hotels, *chambres d'hôtes* and *gîtes d'étape*.

Guidebooks: The Dutch Pilgrim Association has produced two guides in English (latest version: 2017) from Vézelay to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port: one covers the variant via Nevers and the other of the variant via Bourges. These are available as books or in PDF format, please see their website for details: santiago.nl/english/vezelay-main-page. Both the Nevers and the Bourges books are available from their online shop. Accommodation updates for these guides can be found at santiago.nl/english/updates-guides-v%C3%A9zelay-route

[Miam Miam Dodo: Voie de Vézelay](#) (2019) is available from the Confraternity of Saint James.

Internet links: The [Confraternity of Saint James](#) has an excellent overview page for the Vézelay Route. [Les Amis et Pèlerins de Saint Jacques sur la Voie de Vezelay](#) (French) maintains a comprehensive website which has information on accommodations, packing lists, credentials and more. The [Société Landaise des Amis de Saint Jacques et d'Etudes Compostellanes](#) has a [section on the Vézelay](#) 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](#). An American pilgrim has created a [Facebook page on the Vézelay](#).

Other remarks: This is a demanding route through a sparsely settled, rural environment. Getting to Vézelay not as complicated as it was in the past. There are several trains per day from Paris Bercy station to the Sermizelles-Vézelay station. There you can change to a bus or walk (10 km) to Vézelay. More information can be obtained from the [Vézelay Tourist Office](#).

Special thanks and attribution for much of this information go to the [Confraternity of Saint James](#) and to the Dutch Camino association, [Nederlands Genootschap van Sint Jacob](#).