

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. The French Associations have established a common waymarking with a “standard” Camino shell symbol. (See the figure right.) There will be some signage that follows the methodology of the Grande Randonnée system. However, 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 below) The consolidating of the various waymarks will likely take quite some time.

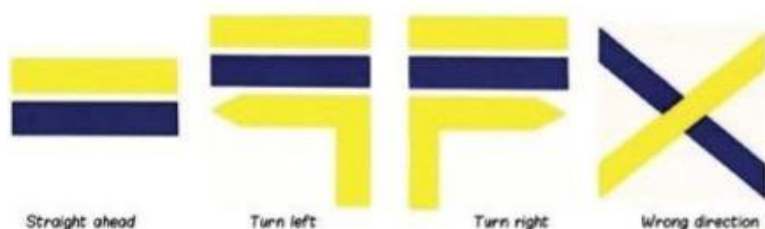


Image courtesy of Nederlands Genootschap van Sint Jacob

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 and it passes

many historical sites and monuments. 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 Association of St James makes the only English-language guide to this route. [Miam Miam Dodo: Voie de Vézelay](#) (2024-2025) can be ordered as a book or ebook from the the Confraternity of Saint James by [following this link](#).

Internet links: The [Confraternity of Saint James](#) has an excellent overview page for the Vézelay Route.

On the website of the [Dutch Association of St James](#) you will find: the complete route from Vézelay to Saint Jean Pied de Port (including variants) and the entire infrastructure along the route (accommodation, shops, cafes, restaurants, etc.). The corresponding files can be downloaded free of charge. These include the PDF-version of the English guide made by the Dutch Association. Instructions for installing and using the data on frequently used applications are also available in English. You can find all this information via [their English-language welcome page](#).

Other remarks: This is a demanding route through a sparsely settled, rural environment. Nonetheless the route has simple but sufficient facilities. Getting to Vézelay is 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](#).

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](#).

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](#).

Rev 03/04/2024