

Via de la Plata: Seville / Santiago ~ 1000 km walk
My Way of Compostela in 2017 from April 4th to May 13th
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Other stories and links - maybe useful - on my site:
www.habiter-autrement.org ... see .. : Tourisme / Compostelle

April 04 : Madrid - Seville

Iberia air lines from Geneva to Madrid
speed train Madrid / Seville



Start a new shared adventure and start a story with a blank page.

To write the story of "his Way" is to admit a discrepancy between lived experience, memories and necessarily narrative. It is not easy to relate such a journey, let alone an inner journey. Just offering a selection of brief events and impressions is reductive, while everything happens in reality at the rate of a stride that engulfs, not after, landscapes, places and even faces.

In fact, there are two parallel stories: one lived on the Path, the other rewinds as I write on a logbook the evening of each stage. This story told here has suffered many distortions between the critical view of the narrator and the time of typing the text on the keyboard of the computer. Moreover, this time, in addition to my story, I added a lot of comments on the history of these men and women who shaped the landscapes, erected majestic works, so much that past, these traces me have appeared ubiquitous throughout the journey.

To the south of the Iberian Peninsula, the start of this event, as a free man, is located in Seville, which I come from Geneva,

A flight to Madrid, with the feeling of being already in the clouds, a quick visit to the Prado, a Museum of the Imaginary, as André Malraux wrote in his "Treatise on the Psychology of Art", the shock of a few Velasquez, Rubens and Bosch, then the train, at ground level, to Seville in Andalusia, the time to immerse myself in rough landscapes, and plantations of cork oaks as far as the eye can see. It is also a question of beginning to memorize the new linguistic and cultural codes, to take the habit of the foreigner, the one who is just passing through, the opposite of the migrant who would not necessarily be welcome. Going down south in less than three hours, I geo locate on the map of the country that I print in my head. I will then have to walk up to the top of the map for forty days.

Is it really reasonable? Surely not, but I quickly forge a character in the image of all those who preceded me or those I will come across, these pilgrims and walkers who have dared to embark on this path a little crazy.

I try to justify my choice to join this mythical Via de la Plata. A pilgrimage route following the route of a string of towns from Seville. I will have to walk north, starting before dawn, taking the polar star as the first landmark. This is the path of the star.

I have the impression again to find myself in a huge theater with all these extras who play very naturally their respective roles of workers, idlers, drivers in their metal crates, turbulent schoolchildren and guard dogs. a "normal" world. They are all certainly perfect, as real! To leave this way is a way of making one's own film in which one has, of course, the role, enviable among all the characters crossed, that of the hero of course. A role shared with other pilgrims because we now form as a brotherhood. We have acquired some sort of new social status.

The Book of St. James (v.1150-1160) highlights an essential element of the pilgrimage to the Middle Ages, the sacredness of the pilgrim. As soon as his drone and his wallet were blessed, the pilgrim found himself under the protection of the Church. In 1123, the Lateran Council even decreed the excommunication of anyone who steals a pilgrim. Well, we can say that today's walker / pilgrim remains protected by this status, even if faith and devotion no longer seem so important.

I think about the fact that, at least in my head, I will have to take a step back from this active, regulated, interdependent world. One can survive the absence of daily newspaper and "news" of the world in his language. Certainly, in bars, we guess on the screens when a new disaster has occurred, but it's a bit like football games, everything seems ephemeral. We zap and we learn to live the present moment.

It will also be necessary to deal with the mystery of all these people, of whom, in the end, we will never know very much. These individuals we are going to graze and who will leave us only a few images, a few snapshots. We will have to flee our little habits and rediscover the joys of adventure, discoveries and sharpen our ability to wonder. It will also be necessary to measure oneself to the climatic hazards and to accept the evils engendered by the forced march. I sink into a kind of sublimatory halo lulled by the landscape that scrolls on the other side of the screen of the window of the high-speed train. To infinity, they are sentinel trees that create shadows of shadows on red soil streaked by some plots of crops subjected to intense watering of intense green. Contrast is magic!

In the train, looking at the documents spread out, I understand that my charming neighbor, Maria José de la Ganadara, is going to Seville to attend a conference on psychotherapy. Thanks to her smart phone she finds me the translation into French of "encina", these trees that punctuate the landscape as far as the eye can see. Cork oaks!



I learn later that these cork oaks are considered today as a tool for sustainable development and that making corks remains the most profitable use of cork. The kilo of bark would yield 4 euros for corks and only 0.40 euros for other uses. A reality that pushes many producers to postpone for one or two years what is called "deliegeage" in the hope of obtaining a better quality material. This is an operation to remove cork from the cork oak, which includes stripping, a sort of undressing or "stripping" that reveals the reddish heart of the tree. It is very beautiful. I learn that if you wait too long, it becomes impossible to remove the bark without damaging the tree. The cork workers know that if they perform the extraction in the state of the art, the cork oak tree will be able to renew its bark sixteen times over its one hundred and fifty to two hundred years of life. ... Undoubtedly an immutable landscape tamed by the man who ensures work for several generations! Who says caps, says "vino tinto o blanco".

Seville: first find the "Hostel One Catedral" which is part of a chain of hostels across Europe and that I already experienced in Porto, Portugal the year before. It is well located 2 minutes from the square of the cathedral, "free dinner" if you want, cosmopolitan, young people especially but not only. Each bed has a curtain and has an electrical outlet and a drawer that can be locked. <[Hostel-One](#)>. The bunk beds as integrated in the wall, remind me of the farm that I discovered in 1975, after a glider landing in a meadow, with its beds in alcove also closed by curtains and which occupied two walls of a very large living room. A good idea in itself for living-otherwise!

My spend : Geneva-Seville - flight / train 65 €; Madrid: water 2, meal 4, Prado museum € 7.50 - Hostel One Cathedral € 23, special beer € 3 Total of the day: 105 €

April 05 : Sevilla visits

This day is dedicated to visiting the architectural heritage of the city. Drowned in the crowd of tourists, braving the incessant flow of a human sea, I try to stand out with my pilgrim look: sandals, pants and walking T-shirt, gray or earth colors dominate, with this critical air vis-à-vis the almost ostentatious and noisy side of all these colorful fanatics. I am even a little shocked by the indecency almost, the blindness of these holidaymakers along the palaces as if they were on the croisette, favoring selfies rather than the discovery of historical works. The pilgrims, they recognize themselves and know how to share a beer and stories of their exploits far from all this sterile agitation ... "Well, me, in 2008, I did the Camino ... , and you? "

To discover the city differently, I appealed to the "City Lovers". They are young guides dressed in their orange t-shirts who offer exciting cultural tours, even if, to tell the

truth, I have already dug up a large part of their stories in the dungeons of the past <[City Lovers](#)>. In any case they avoided me queuing for hours to access the Cathedral and the Alcazar.



The fortified palace of the Alcazar (not the Alcatraz, of course!), Modified several times, is like a zest of Islamic civilization (without risk), dissolved in a Christian broth with the necessary spices, ingredients to make a heritage accepted by all, even by the disbelievers. It seems that the royal family of Spain still uses a floor of the palace today, but it is not required to queuing of course, and this is not their only privilege. Everything is beautiful, but it leaves me however like the impression of an empty shell! But what happened to all its inhabitants? It's obviously a long story. Beyond ostentation, feats of arms, blood, and fests also haunt these places.

Foreign guides, decked out with their banners, face for each of them a flock of tourists decked with pairs of auricles linked by blue Led. They march noisily from one room to another, from the garden to the underground cisterns of water, and form like a tower of Babel within the palace. Maybe one day we will be able to talk about the walls so that we can tell what really happened.

*"Seville is a tower
Full of fine archers ...
A city that spies
Long cadences,
Who wraps them
Like labyrinths.
Like shoots
Inflamed"*

from Frederico Garcia Lorca



Then visit the huge cathedral: about thirty side chapels, a colossal Gothic altarpiece with 45 carved panels, visible through a grid of several meters because you have to protect all the gold, precious woods of this temple dedicated to devotion. Elsewhere, in the windows, richly ornamented silver vessels testify to the luxury in which the servants of God lived, who alone were allowed to define the beautiful, the good and the true.

Ah, it was necessary to impress the people of the faithful and especially the indispensable donors who were promised direct access to heaven against some indulgences perhaps even without going through purgatory. How many purified souls did it take to erect such wonders that are made up of jumble of power elements? It is written that the chapter, which ordered

its construction, summed up its plan in this sentence: "Let us raise a monument which makes posterity believe that we were mad."

The tower of the cathedral, the bell tower, is in fact the old minaret of the largest mosque of Andalusia, now extinct. There still remain from this period, the court of ablutions and some vestiges of the entrance doors. We do not speak of the steeple of Santa Maria but the Giralda, a neutral denomination to avoid any misinterpretation! Many Christians would even believe, even today, that the church pre-existed at the mosque! In this imposing square tower, a helical ramp makes it possible to reach the platform at the top. In time we even mounted on horseback. From there, we dominate the city, which has always been very important for the spiritual guides of every religion. Today, one can observe those who lounging around swimming pools on the roof terraces of neighboring residential buildings. Almost a provocation!



Extract from a text by Théophile Gautier and his story:

"Trip in Spain" of 1843 - Chapter XIV 3 ":" In the cathedral, twenty thousand pounds of wax and as much oil are burned each year. The wine which is used for the consumption of the holy sacrifice amounts to frightful quantity of eighteen thousand seven hundred and fifty liters. It is true that five hundred masses are said daily to the eighty altars. The catafalque which is used during Holy Week, and which is called the "monument," is nearly a hundred feet high. The organs, of a gigantic proportion, look like the basaltic colonnades of the Fingal cave, and yet the hurricanes and thunders that escape from their pipes, as big as siege guns, seem melodious murmurs, twittering of birds and seraphim under these colossal warheads.

To try to describe one after another the riches of the cathedral would be insane insignia: it would take a whole year to visit it thoroughly, and one would not have seen everything yet; volumes would not be sufficient to make only the catalog. The stone, wood, and silver sculptures of Juan de Arfé, Joan Millan, Montanes, Roldan; the paintings of Murillo, Zurbaran, Pierre Campana, Roelas, Don Luiz de Villegas, Herrera old and young, Juan Valdes, Goya, clutter chapels, sacristies, chapter rooms. One is overwhelmed with magnificence, repelled and drunk with masterpieces, one does not know which way to turn one's head. The desire and the impossibility to see everything arouse species of febrile vertigo. Desire not to forget anything, and feeling at every moment that a name escapes you, that a pattern is troubled in your brain, a picture replaces another. Despairing appeals are made to his memory, and he recommends to him not to lose a look; the slightest rest, the hours of meals and of sleep, seem to you the flights you make yourself, for imperious necessity entails you; and soon it will be

necessary to leave, the fire already blazes under the boiler of the steamboat, the water whistles and boils, the chimneys disgorge their white smoke; tomorrow you will leave all these wonders to no longer see them again!" <[Voyage en Andalousie](#)>



It is also a question of not forgetting to be photographed in front of the monumental tomb of Christopher Columbus who died on May 20, 1506 in Valladolid, a town in North-West Spain. In 1529 his remains were transferred to the Chapel of St. Anne from the Cartuja Monastery in Seville, then in 1541 to Santo Domingo, then to Cuba in 1795, and in 1898, when Cuba became independent after the Spanish-American War, the remains of Columbus have returned to Spain to Seville! A long and last journey, perhaps corresponding to the wanderings of his soul.

Today the tax on the incomes of a good number of citizens and especially the painless VAT, replaced the tithe - tax equal to the tenth of the crops and the products of the breeding, poured to the Church until the French Revolution - and help fund our new temples: TGV stations, airports, supermarkets (Malls and Shopping Centers) with their shopping arcades capped with elegant glass and stadiums like the Roman arena, but in addition imposing. However it is not certain that one will find their traces in two thousand years <[Vimeo](#)>

We are in the middle of Holy Week and in the streets we are busy: some line rows of barriers behind which tourists can wiggle together to see pass pasos (Latin "passus" scene, but also suffering). These imposing structures worn by men advancing in step, blind, probably suffering and struggling under the heavy loads of statues. These are staged according to events inspired by the Bible, so that the people, largely illiterate at the time, can recognize them. Today, no more tithing, but a variable entrance fee depending on the distance you want to be to see these pasos scroll. Here too, a new social hierarchy based on money is at work.

The heart of the old city has even become a juicy business for some. From those who make the sleeve to the waiter, from the salesman to the cello player, everyone must occupy a parcel of territory and refine a strategy to milk a maximum of the tourists of passage who all play the game zealously and who, failing to leave feathers, participate in the local economy.

In any case, thankfully - this with a touch of irony - we have had princes, kings, prelates, powerful, even tyrants, rich, very, very rich, patrons, wealthy from birth or who have been able to buy their title of nobility

and all those who live on their rents (ah, the dream of the parvenus!) ... because finally; among them, we can admit that some have been touched by grace! They were sometimes philanthropists, humanists, protectors of the arts, donors. We owe them these churches, these palaces, these monuments in which hurry today a horde of tourists who today they want to have the privilege to approach these riches, these works of artists often extraordinary.

For example: A thought to Andrew Carnegie, who died in 1919. This American naturalized Scottish industrialist and philanthropist was one of the main actors in the development of the steel industry in the United States at the end of the 19th century. but he has also created thousands of schools, libraries around the world and worked for international peace.

Suggested book on Art Mudejar: Islamic aesthetics in Christian art - The cultural, religious and social coexistence of this major art has no equivalent in history - Collection Guides de Musée sans frontière 2002, 316 p., 19€

In the evening: A thought for all these artists sometimes anonymous or unknown during their lifetime. ... With a slight bitterness, and after a second draft beer, in a nice bar near the bullring - "una cerveza de barril, por favor" - I begin to dream of the great exhibition of my works likely to be organized for years after leaving this world as a poor, unknown, misunderstood, of course. Ah finally famous, even if only posthumously! It's a bit like disappearing by having a winning lotto ticket in your pocket. One consoles oneself as one can when one is alone at the table and without being able to be poured out to the other in his language. At this hour, three trophies of bulls, on the wall in front of me, seem to even accuse me. And then suddenly, I start to imagine what this bar would be with the effigies of some homo sapiens lambda ... wax at first but why not with the heads of real strangers, in short "plastinated human specimens". These volunteers would have been entitled to compensation, for example, to cover once a day the rest of their lives.

Offering your head to posterity <[bodyworld](#)> is a way to put your head up for a price. But yes it would work surely. Here is another idea to launch a startup according to this concept! Why not!



After the third "cerveza", the last I had promised myself, always alone in another very kitsch bar, I decided to return to Hostel One, because early tomorrow morning, it will finally be the real start.

D-1: Seville: Alcazar and Cathedral: guides and entrances 39 €
Resto tapas and 2 beers 10 €, meal Hostel donativo 5 €
Hostel One Cathedral € 23 - Total: € 77 (€ 182)

1. April 06 : Sevilla / Guillena

..... 19 km ... and less than 1.000 km till Santiago

W.E.S. : *Walk, Eat, Sleep* the three main obsessions of the pilgrim with the cry of the heart "Ultreïa" which means "further". "It is the rallying cry and encouragement of all the world's backgammon. He is the sign and strength of the universality of the Way. A true secret of exchange, it comprises the whole, that is, the unspeakable, which can not be described by words. Indeed, there are no words strong enough to describe it. Ultreïa!

When the first lights of the day blush the top of the walls of the Alcazar, I must leave the city almost on the sly. At this time we are certain to meet only natives: those who wait for the bus with that scowling air typical of workers from all countries and those who sweep the streets to eliminate the rubbish abandoned by tourists. A double fatality.

I'm looking for the first shell and I cling to the breadcrumb as the little thumb who will guide me to Santiago de Compostela.

The limit of the historic core is quickly crossed but on foot I will still have to cross for miles, all these suburbs without charm, these sometimes gloomy industrial zones that all over Europe are similar.



We are no longer in the Seville postcard, but we are still attached to these urbanized tentacles anonymous that stick to your skin! In architecture, one can just guess the ideologies of each decade of the post-war period, such as periods of reconstruction and successive extensions of the city due to the desertification of the countryside and migratory flows. Strata of sociologically typified neighborhoods. The fashion of balconies curved a time then rights later, that of the curtain walls or the pavillonnaire.

It will take me almost an hour to extricate myself from this straitjacket and free myself from the building. But it is not finished. I will still need, not without risks, spanning enormous roundabouts, along shopping complexes called - Drive, Hard Discount, Merchandising, Fun Shopping - whose signs appear to me so familiar ... ah here too! But fortunately the weight of the backpack definitely inhibit me from any temptation to let go to a possible impulsive purchase.

< [La fonction déambulatoire des lieux marchands](#) >
The ambulatory function of commercial places

One could also suggest a therapy to some bulimics of unnecessary purchases that would have to move with a backpack loaded with all the panoply of the perfect pilgrim.

Once past these temples of consumption, I had to become engrossed in the strong cast iron castles that

support the roaring highways and free me from the spider web constituted by high voltage lines that scrape the landscape.

Fortunately, after 10 km, I am invited to make a time jump of more than 2000 years. From now on I realize that I borrow well the Vía de la Plata or route of money. But nothing to do with this metal, the origin of its name comes from the Arabic "balata", meaning "cobblestone". The Vía de la Plata follows, indeed, a Roman road unchanged still today on some sections, but without however the sand cover. This route was originally built to facilitate gold trading from north to south. The amphoras filled with wine, on the other hand, made the opposite course. Via de la Plata then ran from Emerita Augusta (now Merida) in southern Spain to Asturica Augusta (now Astorga) in the north-west.



The Via de la Plata, to the south, joins the Via Augusta - the longest causeway in all of ancient Hispania - which runs along the Mediterranean Sea for some 1,500 kilometers from the Pyrenees to Cadiz Hannibal's armies and their elephants would have taken this route.

[< Voies romaines >](#) Roman ways

Until the reconquest of Seville in the 13th century, this way was used by the Mozarabic Christians who intermittently benefited from the Muslim protection to go at that time to the tomb of the Apostle James.

Arrival at the archaeological site of Italica near Santiponce, cradle of the families of Emperor Trajan who was born there in 53 and his successor Hadrian. I spend the restaurants or bars called "Romano" to devote myself to the exquisite visit of a small Municipal Museum located next to the ancient theater. Too bad most walkers are reluctant to make the slightest detour to visit these jewels. Old photos show that this ancient theater was completely buried under mounds of earth. The restoration of the site is therefore quite recent!

At the exit of the ancient theater, an autochthon, linked to five sheep in miniature, calls me in French and immediately explains that "the Spaniards are all crazy, I tell you ... especially here in Andalusia ... c' It is here that the terrorists are formed, it is necessary to warn Holland! ... Moreover it is clear, look it is only in France that the virgin appeared, it is to say everything! "Wow! I was speechless! The Romans must turn in their graves! In each era, his tragedies and his human comedies

I learn that in the ancient Roman theater to make it easier to identify the characters and therefore the text, there was a whole series of dress codes: long flowing dresses and flat shoes for comedy and costumes for tragedy. The costumes of the Romans are togas (for free), coats (for travelers), yellow fabrics (for

courtesans), tunics (for slaves) and dresses (for women). The costumes of the tragedy are sumptuous and financed by the richest. Wigs are red for slaves and white for old ... <[Le théâtre romain](#)> Roman theater



A little further, you can visit the remains of a Roman colony with its grid of cobblestone streets (the masonry was used later by quarries), baths, sewers, an amphitheater that can hold 25,000 seats and which became the medium age a cemetery, brick arenas

[< Italica >](#)

A great urban quality forgotten for centuries. What made me think of the excellent Quebec film released in 1986 "The decline of the American empire" in analogy with the decline of the Roman Empire.

[<The American Empire>](#) [<L'empire américain>](#)

What were these Roman settlers talking about before they abandoned their city?

History teaches us that the leadership position in the international system is extraordinarily difficult to hold! Would the empire inevitably lead to decline?

During the prosperous Roman period, the rapid development of the imperial cult with its many monuments proves the attachment to Rome of a wealthy bourgeoisie from Italian immigrants, veterans and Iberian notables. From the 1st century BC J-C. Hispania has even furnished Rome with knights and senators.

Land Art: I take the path and I propose to posterity my first modest work with small pebbles in the form of two words "AND NOW?" ... in truth nothing more ephemeral and contradictory



What lessons are we able to draw from these Roman remains for example? What parallelism should we construct with regard to the fate of our present world?

French-American-English dinner, menu at 8 €, a bottle of wine for two, salad or soup, pulpo or calamari, apple or banana, a liquor bonus. Enough to engage in conversations in French, English, German, aiming to remake the world! The ultimate advantage being that this evening diet makes it possible to "cotonniser" the

dormitory and to better withstand the snoring, the squeaks of bedsteads or metal structures of the bunk beds, the slamming of doors, the flushing of water engaged by these walkers hypertrophied prostates ... I speak about it knowingly and before falling asleep, I must memorize from my bed the path to the toilet. Beware of obstacles, backpacks, sticks.

Put into perspective :

The Roman mile is 1,482 km long. It corresponds to 1000 steps. Attention the Roman step corresponds to 3 strides (left-right-left). So a step of Roman = 1,482 meters. On 1000 km, the legionnaire had to follow 674,763 steps, an average of 16,870 steps per day and 25 km on average for 40 stages. For a Roman legionnaire, 25 km it was a little less than what he had to travel daily and more with 50 to 65 kg on the back! At the end of the day he had to prepare the camp, dig trenches to protect himself from intruders, wolves ...

Roman Hispania is between 218 BC. AD and the beginning of the fifth century. But these territories, occupied by Tartessos, Iberians, Celts, Cantabrians, and Asturias, have also previously established colonies there by the Phoenicians, the Greeks, and the Carthaginians. Already so many migrants!

<[Wikipedia Hispanie](#)>

The Roman cities actually appear as Roman colonies: First military garrisons in the fourth century BC. J. - C., they become in particular settlements because from the 3rd century BC. BC offers land to demobilized army veterans. <[Wikipedia](#)>

The conquests of Spain by the Muslims

... a subject still taboo? On July 11, 711, the followers of Mahomet, numbering a few hundred, defeated the troops of Rodrigue, the Visigoth king who reigns over Christian Spain. They will be expelled in 1492, year when the Catholic Kings are victorious in Granada, capital of the last emirate. <[Link](#)> Christians, Jews and Muslims in Spain> the myth of religious tolerance (8th-15th century) [Chrétiens, Juifs et Musulmans en Espagne](#)

Circulation of metals> Metals in the Old World from the fifth to the eleventh century [La circulation des métaux](#)

The Roman heritage> Pallas Revues [L'héritage romain](#)



Coffee and sandwich 3, bananas 1, Albergue with breakfast 10 €, restaurant menu Peregrinos 8 €, sandwich shop 5 - Total: 27 € (209 €)

2._ April 07 : Guillena / Castilla Blanco-de-los-Arroyos 17 km

Rise at 6am, breakfast and departure at 7am, one hour before sun casting, when it appears above the horizon. Smile smug and sense of belonging to the cosmos. An ersatz religiosity in sum.

The exit of the city is as often a little painful. The traffic is already dense, and it is a matter of making a good impression and even to make envy of all these commuters who set foot on the accelerator, looking sour, already wondering what they will be able to tell their leader for the delay in the plugs. The boss when to him,

must take the habit of the leader because he must keep his share of power and remain firm. In short, the pilgrim is there to give these workers hope that they may one day consider a possible alternative! When we come across a look we can imagine that they are almost ready to leave their job, their wife to leave finally free on the way.

The walker always has the impression of moving in a big theater. All this world in effervescence occupying only the supporting roles, there are certainly extras, but in this piece the walker, the pilgrim, is the true hero.



Land Art: After the stony "AND NOW" of the day before, a continuation: "ENJOY" in flower petals a little withered and a little further "LIFE" with small pebbles ... a whole program!



At the Albergue Municipal "donativo" the dormitory upstairs is already full arch. In addition I spotted the snoring service and suddenly I'm trying to avoid strategies. Will I have to flee in the middle of the night on the terrace carrying a mattress? I explore every corner of the house and find a large room occupied only by a young pilgrim who speaks only Russian. But the hospice is opposed to my transfer with authority. Guarded hunt or true kapo? So, too bad, I decide to leave nothing in the box provided for the "gift". Fortunately, the evening Vino Tinto will work to survive the next day.

Reflection in relation to the hospital of the day.

The hospital orders have their origins in groups of pious people who, driven by a religious ideal, associated themselves with the aim of rendering a particular service in the Church, often a service to the weakest or persons in danger (patients, travelers pilgrims). They were born at the Benedictine monastery of Santa Maria Latina, founded in Jerusalem in the middle of the eleventh century. The Hospitallers have created many hospitals on all the peregrine routes.

Most of the hospital orders were militarized in the image of the Templars and also became military orders.

To know Saint James. Understand Compostela. Military Orders and Roads to Santiago - There are three major pilgrimages: Jerusalem, Rome, Compostela and three orders are concerned: the Temple, the Hospital and Santiago.

< [Comprendre Compostelle - Alain Demurger](#) >

Understand Compostela

Albergue Municipal donativo 0 €, Coffee 2, sandwich 2, grocery 5, dinner 8 - Total: 17 € (226 €)

3. April 08 : Castilla Blanco-de-los-Arroyos / Almaden-de-la-Plata 29km

Before dawn, start with a long climb on 17km by taking a road luckily uncrowded, but still 4 hours of asphalt! I learned later that several pilgrims have "brushed" this stage (as the Walloons of Belgium say) by sharing the costs of a taxi!

But it was actually only to take a good pace, Nordic walking type, and for that you need sticks! I have fortunately found two on the low sides. Although we can imagine that they chose me! They may have just wanted to see the sea too. One is a bit quirky, frail and quite flexible, and I do not see it as likely to arrive safely. It's just a sweet "toc, knock" at the pace of my steps. He will be on my left. The other, much more massive, emits a dull sound with each shock "boom, boom". He will be on my right. We left to team up, a trio of shock. < [Youtube](#) >

As for Nordic walking, I break down and I'm trying to perfect this movement since already a few previous Paths and I think I found something extra, necessarily great, which is to add a slight lateral rocking of the body to the rhythm of the sticks and that will thus lighten one foot while the other acquires more grip ... and so I guarantee everyone an appreciable gain in speed ... You follow me? Ah if you want detailed explanations and a personalized course on a few steps, do not hesitate, call my services! ... hahaha, business, business! A future perhaps for a poor retired vagabond like me ... But I know, do not dream!

At the top, swimming, I finally reach the "Natural Park of the Sierra Norte de Sevilla" and I appreciate the transition with now a beautiful sandy path lined with plantations of cork oaks, majestic pines and mangrove forests. Heaven, a waterhole, finally! But as imprudently I have only a small bottle with me, the thirst will hound me again a little later. New painful steep climb, then a view as far as the eye can see allowing me to measure the distance traveled and send me flowers.

Land Art: Successful test of a cairn (or montjoie) of 12 stacked stones balanced on posts and a cast of bark residues, a bit like a creeping beast.

These ephemeral works take time, so I find myself alone on the road for hours already.

I imagine the worst as a bad fall, a stunning! Then they will not find me until the next day, that's for sure, and in what state! I make myself even my cinema and I already imagine the letter sent to my relatives, of the type of those received by the families of the soldiers fallen during the first world war ... death in the fight for the fatherland, no, no, dead in full effort, blah, death in

ecstasy, not really, dead in the wild on planet earth, a little better for a citizen of the world than I am.



It is also a question of taking the time to read the didactic panels - in Spanish and in English - that we find along the way in relation with the local economy: we learn that on these desolate plateaus, people lived dwarf palm that allowed men to braid ropes and women to make bags. Further, everything revolved around the exploitation of the cork oak. With the acorns of the oaks coal was made.



Next to the Albergue de Castilla Blanco a small museum of ethnography explains all this very well with excellent stagings. Exciting ! The walkers seem to sulk. Pity ! Are they just uninterested in the areas they cross, or would their neurons have migrated to the soles of their feet?

Peregrinos menu for only 7 €. Pork, as often, ratatouille with an egg, unctuous cream for dessert prepared by the "mama" of the.

Coffee, bread 2, Beverage 1, Albergue 10, Menu peregrinos 7, beer 1, grocery 5 - Total: 26 € (252 €)

4. April 09 : Almaden-de-la-Plata / Monasterio 34 km ... 6 last km hitchhiking

Restful sleep until 8 o'clock in the morning! Passages from one pen to another via gates and gates, which must be guessed the opening system. As in life, it's about opening and closing doors, turning pages..



Too long step! I can not go on with this heat. So I try a thumbs up and miraculously the first car stops ... an hour of winning! I arrive however too late to the lodging which at 17h is already full! With a Spanish one decides to take a room in a hotel 1 star, dating from the fifties. Narrow staircase, bathroom on the landing, faded wallpaper, but TV with flat screen. Occasionally, the world continues to turn with its accidents and killings, its men of power that we recognize their suits / ties and their black cars glossy

led by drivers in black. Fortunately, the weather map is a rare international language as detached from the ambitions and damage done by men. We try to identify the area in which we find ourselves and let ourselves be rocked by the gestures, almost dancing, of the presenter smiling as it should be

This time everyone will have dinner on his side. To discover alone the bars is very pleasant to me. I can then indulge in the spectacle played by the regulars at the bar, the waiters, the boss.

Coffee 1, Hostal Extremadura mit einer spanischen 12, (Full Albergue), Tapas und Bier 13 - Total: 26 € (278 €)

5. April 10 : Monasterio / Fuente-de-Cantos

..... 21 km in 4h30 start 7h30 arrival at midday

The path winds from one hill to another and halfway one sees in the distance already far Fuente de Cantos. It will still take me a good two hours to get there.

At the rhythm of my flying sticks, I approach the 5 kilometers an hour and at noon I arrive first at the Albergue. Pasta bag, ritual of washing T-shirt, underpants and socks, siesta ...

Then visit the birthplace of Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664), a painter of the Spanish Golden Age. A contemporary and friend of Velasquez, Zurbarán distinguished himself in religious paintings where his art reveals a great visual force and a deep mysticism. His paintings are surely more durable than our digital photos.



< [Wikipedia](#) > < [Francesco de Zurbaran](#) >

In a small hairdressing salon, at the turn of a few white houses, a young woman cuts in my hair. We exchange smiles and a few words without subtitles. Muchos gracias!

Mass at the church and haunting choir. Sitting cool, I hover a little. Perhaps the effects of bewitching.

The "pasos" are aligned on both sides of the nave. On these richly decorated altars, we always find the same scenes, including the weeping Virgin, Christ led by the wicked Roman, and crucified. These pasos, with their sculptures of human size or slightly higher, are indicated by their realism. Each character is represented in movement in order to accentuate the effect of reality and the dramatic aspect of the scenes evoked. It is obviously a matter of creating devotion and allowing the faithful to identify with the scenes represented. The pasos still belong today to associations on the model of historical penitential fraternities. Wooden "pasos" are brought from within by a dozen young men and sometimes it takes up to fifty of these "costaleros" for heavier ones. The processions allow to commemorate the Passion, the

death and the resurrection of Christ so it is not a question of taking it lightly!

Dinner with a couple of friendly Reunion who are at their seventh Camino! With my four for my part I'm still a novice.

Breakfast. Coffee / toasts / orange juice 3, grocery 7, Albergue 12, meal 8, hairdresser 8 - Total: 38 € (316 €)

6. April 11 : Fuente-de-Cantos / Zafra.... 25 km

Departure at 7 am accompanied by the moon on the left, near the horizon "The sun which has rendezvous with the moon" ... <Charles Trenet's song 1939 You Tube>, the star of the day which is not long in taking the top and let us know. <[You Tube](#)>,

The road gets longer and hotter, and it's only April! There is more season, I tell you, my little lady or global warming? A thought for all these pilgrims who intend to start on the Via de la Plata in July! It is said that some walk only at night, at the front! It must have its charm too.

Not vigilant enough, at a fork of the road, I commit myself on a false track and I lengthen my sentence of half an hour. Alone, no match and scapegoat, there is no claim office in sum and I can only want to myself. Hence also the interest of walking alone!



Some beginnings of discussions in English, in German according to the meetings, but one separates quickly, because the march does not lend itself to the conversation: one must concentrate on the effort of every moment, swallow the landscape, avoid ruminating of Negative thoughts and moving forward at all costs ...

"I plan to eat the world before the world eats me
Leaving far, alone in the middle of the round I'm choking
To cross the seas, to advance whatever the cost
Cost, devour the land
I had been told that we had to walk
I decided to follow my path of the cross " < [Youtube](#) >

Arrival at 14h in Zafra. The Albergue Van Gogh offers an easel in a corner with a few paint tubes, but we have other priorities. As there is only one piece of water (with a shower and a toilet) for 36 beds, it will take priority to be cunning and organize well to enjoy.it. < [La simplicité volontaire](#)> The voluntary simplicity

Set back from a shopping street that shines with all its fires for consumption, visit a haven of peace, a convent and also a beautiful museum almost empty, the "Museo del Convento de Santa Clara de Zafra". In a side chapel of the church, behind an imposing fence, sisters read, sleepy. Hush! Do not disturb them!

Very beautiful paintings and sculptures from the 15th to the 18th century, including an astonishing painting of the three archangels "Los arcangeles Gabriel, Miguel and Rafael" Oleo sobre lienzo 197x239 XVIII Monasterio de Santa Maria del Valle.



In the evening, with an Italian and an Irish, we have fun throwing crazy ideas about snorers: we could imagine for example the possibility of a particular and indelible marking on their Credential (the Notebook or Passport Pilgrim), or their grouping in a dormitory that would be assigned to them (it already exists, but this should be generalized), their geo-location on a website with photo support. We could hide trackers in their backpacks to be able to spot them by GPS. We should be able to offer earplugs really effective, invent a device that wakes them but does not disturb other sleepers. And why not even create a fund to offer them the removal of their uvula. An operation that should be able to be done on the Way in small mobile clinics ... all this in the general interest of pilgrims! Funding for these actions could be provided by ethical crowdfunding (crowdfunding) ... In any case we laughed!

As for the surgical operation that aims to treat snoring via the classic ablation of part of the soft palate, the uvula or both, and sometimes tonsils must see the video! Sensitive ones, go your way. <[Youtube](#)>

Specifically, in the pharmacy there are already anti-snoring spray, nasal strips, lozenges or tablets to melt in the mouth, bracelets or anti-snoring rings

A walker, Daniel Chabrerie, crossed paths, shares his experience in Ultralight equipment in order to take advantage of nature in autonomy and thus, at least from time to time, to have dormitories. Daniel is a gym teacher, he says that he stayed in complete autonomy for ten days on the GR10 in the Pyrenees: Eureka Speedfire tent (USA, 300 €), Neo Air floor mat Thermarest ... chabrerie.daniel (at) bbox.fr

Hearty breakfast at the Albergue, coca / pork sandwich 3, grocery store Dia (evening meal) 9, Chinese bazaar (pancho, umbrella) 3, Albergue 12 Total: 27 € (343 €)

7. April 12 : Zafra / Villafranca-de-los-Barros

.... 20 km

Numerous markers line the path. There are the Roman miliario (milestone) on the base of the Roman mile (1,481 m) and then there are small concrete terminals, quite recent, like cubes, which they specify the nature of the path taken. A blue square indicates that we are on a Roman road in its historical route. A yellow square on a recent path and a yellow and blue square on a mixed

path. The top of this cubic marker has a hollow Roman arch. We thus find a little soul of a treasure hunter.



Information:

The traffic on the Roman roads is made exclusively diurnal, in these conditions, it is difficult to exceed an average of 20 Roman miles / day is (35 km). If the conditions are exceptionally favorable, you can cover a longer distance, but more often than not, weather conditions, incidents or accidents can considerably slow down the average.

The acts of robbery: the Roman roads have never been known for their safety. Many highway robbers sow terror in some areas. If, as Juvenal emphasizes in his satires: "the traveler whose pocket is empty will sing in front of thieves", the bills of exchange do not exist yet, some traders moved with sums sometimes important for their travel expenses or for their business. One of the consequences of this insecurity: the travelers on horseback circulated on the left part of the way in order to be able to draw their sword and to fight more easily a potential enemy arriving in front ... and the British kept this sense of circulation "Roman" while, at the instigation of Napoleon, Europe adopted circulation on the right.

Land Art: "EVOL" and "LOVE" with small pebbles on concrete posts ... she will recognize herself!



Visit again of a beautiful museum of ethnography, in a building of the 18th century, which shows the evolution of Extremadura and Spain since the Paleolithic and, images, objects and technologies exploited at each time . Four rooms are dedicated to motorcycles and old vehicles quite astonishing, like a BMW R-75 sidecar that may have rolled in the desert for the Afrika Korps, a retro DS, an invented "velocipedo" it seems by a young french in 1780

<[Youtube](#)> <[Museo](#)> <[Youtube](#)>

Museo Histórico Etnográfico Villafranca de los Barros



Around a beer, between walkers, we argue about the issue of wandering.

An Irish woman tells me that she has worked with the "Travelers" who are considered in her country to be an ethnic minority. It has participated in a program,

supported by the EU, to ensure the children of these nomads better schooling and to develop stops with kitchens and sanitary. These Travelers are natives who live in camps, relegated to the margins of cities and society. Irish society is a priori hostile to wanderers, 95% of whom are unemployed. For the foreigner, it seems difficult to distinguish them from other Irish, except for their rough accent and the stigma of poverty. These "blond, brown or red gypsies" have the clear eyes of the ethnic Irish. In 2011, a genetic study showed that Travelers were among the first inhabitants of the island, undermining the idea that they would come from peasants thrown on the roads by British colonization and its policy of land confiscation. in the sixteenth century, then by the famine of 1840.

Travellers of Ireland approx. 23,000 people in the Republic and another 1,500 in the North. 15,000 Irish Travellers in England, <[Youtube](#)>

We should also propose DNA tests, to know a little more about ourselves and the populations crossed on the Way! The Californian company <[23andme](#)>, and for USD \$ 99 only, will bring us the essential information (this company was founded by the former wife of the co-founder of Google Sergey Brin!) ... "Find out what your DNA says about you and your family".

... to know for example if we are part of the great migrations of the fifth century of Bretons in Armorica, if 3.2% of our genes are attributed to the Neanderthal man, to which family of DNA we correspond <[haplogroupe](#)>, if eventually we have a half-brother or half-sister somewhere in the world.

Coffee 1 beer 3, Albergue breakfast 12 Total: 16 € (359 €)

8. April 13 : Villafranca-de-los-Barros/Torremegia

....26 km. et malade le soir ...en cause la paëlla ?

At 7 o'clock in the morning, the city is still numb. Two young women in neon vest. One pushes a garbage bin on wheels, the other sweeps the gutter ... work incognito, in the cool. We greet each other, hello and goodbye, to each one's destiny. Would not the walker be the most privileged?

An hour after the star of the day emerges from the distant haze. There is no wind, the day promises to be very hot.

Here begins the longest straight line of Via de la Plata. A straight dirt road over 20 km! Two converging lines put our pain in perspective. No bar, no water, no drop shadow. We are in the heart of Spanish Extremadura, one of the most deserted regions in Europe.



To raise one's head, to be surprised to look ahead, on the horizon, is certainly to lose one's morale. So it is better to be carried away by his thoughts, as hypnotized by the scrolling gravel under his feet. The heat, the thirst haunt my mind, however. Imprudently, I only took half a liter of water. A beginner's error.

Fortunately; a good-natured cyclist stops at my height, and no doubt at the sight of my state of fatigue, offers me what remains of water. No problem for him, he is 10 minutes away, he says, from the next town. It should be noted that his bike is driven by the electric fairy. The contribution of energy remaining proportional to the effort provided with his legs. Professor in Ecology in Barcelona, retired, he crisscrosses Europe by bike loaded with 30 kg of equipment with tent and stove to ensure its autonomy when it sings. His bike is impressive, it is a Haibike XDURO, strong and powerful.

<[Trekking Electric Bike](#)> <[Youtube](#)>

Someone wrote on a terminal "courage". In the distance finally a village in sight. It's Torremegia. The streets are lined with orange trees that bring a little shade and there miracle, at the edge of the road that crosses the village, the dream bar all along the crossing of the desert, and it is not a mirage!

The Albergue "Turistico El Palacio Los Lastra" is housed in a medieval building next to the church. The hospice, seeing at my head that I was terribly disappointed to have to occupy a bed from the top in the large dormitory because "had arrived a little late, offers me the only single room of the house normally reserved for couples . What happiness!

Menu del Peregrino 8 € with a paella tonight, which presumably was the cause of a terrible stomach ache that I had to manage a good part of the night.



Lunch 5, dinner 4, Albergue 15 Total: € 24 (€ 383)

9. April 14 : Merida / back to Torremegia

..... a day off, sightseeing, recovery - Bus

I need all the morning to recover!

Opportunity to spend the afternoon in the afternoon to Merida not even 20 minutes by bus from Torremegia.

Nice visit: Mérida has the most impressive Roman ruins in Spain and among the best preserved in the world. The ancient theater of 6,000 seats (one of the largest in the Roman world), the amphitheater can accommodate 14,000 spectators, its racecourse with a capacity of 30,000 people, the majestic Roman bridge of 792 meters overlooking the river Guadiana, the majestic Aqueduct of the Miracles (Aqueduct Los Milagros) which conveyed the water to Emerita Augusta from the Reservoir of Proserpine, located 5 km from the city (next stop on the way), Plaza de Espana, and the beautiful National Museum of Roman art designed by architect Rafael Moneo (architecture reminiscent of Rome ... bricks, majestic space under a large nave flanked by side rooms on 2 levels, monumental entrance: bronze doors, marble lintel surmounted by a female statue) This museum contains one of the world's largest collections of Roman art, including an astonishing presentation of Roman coins with effigies of the emperors, educational panels explaining the differences migratory waves, etc. In the city still and in its surroundings, the Roman Circus, the Trajan's Arc, the Roman Reservoir of Proserpine, the aqueduct of San Lazaro and the Temple of Diana, monument dedicated to the cult of the emperor.



In the inner courtyards of the Mithraeum Villa a mosaic of 4m x 5m, made in half of glass tesserae, dated from the 3rd century, has as subject cosmogonic allegories of nature (the wind, the clouds, the rivers, the sea ...). In the House of the street

Suarez Somonte we discover frescoes of the IVth century exceptionally well preserved showing a hunting deer and hare, a hunter on horseback?

In short, the perfect panoply of what we imagine to be the culture of the time of the Romans.

On the other hand, we learn little about the daily life of those who worked at the time, slaves and natives. Nothing about those who put their lives at stake in gladiatorial shows..



As we are in the middle of Holy Week candles draw on the ground arenas an immense cross. What will happen in 2000 years? What new symbols will be in use? What will we remember from our time? Ah, the Swiss all have anti-atomic shelters ... maybe interesting for our descendants.

With 60,000 inhabitants today, Mérida's economy is based on cotton, tobacco and tourism.

Merida, in Roman times, was a city for war veterans. In 29 av. AD Emperor Augustus conquered all of Hispania and was going to subdue the Cantabrian peoples and

assures after a difficult war, which lasted ten years and employed 8 legions, hard hit by the guerrilla tactics of the Celtic warriors. Defend his territory as in the game of Go.

To reward legionaries who had reached the end of their service, Auguste asked in 25 BC. BC to his legate in Lusitania and commander of the legions in charge of subduing the Asturias, to create a new city, Augusta Emerita. After his victories, Publius Carisius will therefore realize a model of Romancy that was to serve as a showcase for the conquered peoples and put in honor of civilization according to Rome.

In the fifth century, Merida suffered incursions of barbarians called Vandals, Alans and Suevi, then Visigoths. The city was later occupied in 713 by the Moors, who enlarged the alcazar built on the old Roman fort.

Foyer of opposition to the Muslim power, its ramparts are razed in 834 and a fortress, the Alcazaba, is built there to control the bridge over the Guadiana.

Merida was later taken over in 1228 by King Alfonso IX of Leon, who entrusted it to the Knights of Santiago. She lost her archbishopric to Santiago de Compostela.

< [Emerita](#) >

One of the best studies found on Merida and Roman Andalusia: <[Cahier de voyage-Andalousie-2014](#)>
Roman sculpture <[Revue-Archéologique](#)>

So goes the story!

Archaeological sites are legion in the so-called modern city and yet it is really without charms "Modern architecture gives us rather poor means. At the bottom, we have removed all the sculptures on the facades. We have removed reliefs, beautiful materials - we come back to that - but not regulations, servitudes ...".

The invisible architecture of <Bernard Zehrfuss>. L'architecture invisible de <[Bernard Zehrfuss](#)>



Albergue 12, museum 7.50, bus 2.50, dinner 4
Total: € 26 (€ 409)

10. April 15 : Torremegia /Merida/ Aljucen

..... 32 km - Saturday

Arrival at Merida again around noon, under the Aqueduct Los Milagros (miracles):

The remains of this work are impressive: 827m long, 25m high, 3 rows of arched semicircular brick arches to better solidify between them high piles of 3m side buttresses at the front and the back. They correspond to a core covered with large blocks of granite well squared. There are about fifty piles, more or less well preserved.

<[Cahier de voyage en Andalousie](#)>

Stop at the artificial lake of Proserpina, behind a Roman dike 425m long and 12m high. The water of this reservoir fed Merida after a course of 12km between the hills of which 5km in vaulted gallery of 2m of height and 1m of width ... Of course, they are crazy these Romans "Romani cum insanis", but what know-how!

I meet a Danish architect, Jens, a 71-year-old two-year-old, who is surprisingly well acquainted with the co-housing movement in Denmark and even the architect Tyge Arnfred whom I met in 1970 at Farum Midpunkt, an ensemble housing covered with corten steel plates and considered the largest rental housing complex in the world. A kind of micro democracy of 1700 homes. He knows both his son who has made a remarkable group housing Jystrup Savaerkett ... indoor street, common kitchen, workshops etc. really extraordinary for a living together of the type each for himself and all together.<[Danemark-Habiter-Autrement](#)>



Albergue Free Wifi, nice village, bars with dominating view and sunset ... in front of a beer

*Albergue 13 with breakfast, beers 2, grocery 5
Total: € 20 (€ 429)*

11. April 16 : Aljucen / Alcuescar

..... 19 km - Sunday

Beautiful path winding through the regional park.

Land Art: stone circles and flower petals: "Yin and Yang", harmony, according to the Chinese. These circles symbolize the basic principle governing the world: two complementary forces in eternal change, like a field of cosmic force.



I greet cyclists who bend their tents on the edge of the road ... The autonomy has the leap.

The low walls of properties, appear to me like real works of art by the arrangement of the stones between them, their textures and their sizes.



The projected shadow of our body acts as a sundial. As we always walk north, we start the day with a shadow pointing to the left, noon, say thirteen hours, it will be right in front of us. It is practically the time when you have to be far from the goal, otherwise the last quarter of the dial will be hard to bear with the heat. And our neck will blush as for the American "Redneck" campaigns often supposedly ignorant, alcoholic and chauvinistic (in French "péquenud" or "redneck" in Quebec "colon" or "black hock").

So also the right arm will be much more tanned than the left. A clue to recognize for sure a pilgrim who claims to have made the Camino de la Via de la Plata!

Stop at night in a Don Bosco community that runs a Center for disabled elderly people. Accommodation in Alcuescar is offered in a monastery that was once a small seminary and today is a home for disabled elderly managed by the Congregation "Slaves of Mary and the poor" .. Huge dormitory in the attic, with more than 50 beds. Group meal with a member of the community. I find the couple of Reunion and a German Bamberg who borrowed the Camino from Grenada ... alone, he says, for several days.

A jovial priest gives us a blessing in the chapel of the Center. To make the small group of pilgrims must go through the corridor of what appears almost like a deathbed and still we did not see what was happening on the floor! A little old sick man constantly repeats that "let me go to a house" (that they take me home) ... and we continue to aim at the exit door with some discomfort. Hard, hard to grow old, especially when you are abandoned by your loved ones.

Los Esclavos de María and los Pobres somos una congregación religiosa de derecho diocesano, fundada for the R. P. Leocadio Galán, in 1939

<[Los-Esclavos](#)>

"El Camino no hace, SE VIVE"

*Couvent donativo 10, Cora 2, hamburger 5
Total: 17 € (446€)*

12. April 17 : Alcuescar / Valdesalor 26 km

At dawn, when the yellow arrows are scarce, you must know the shadows that move to avoid getting lost. A moving shadow is alive and there is a good chance that it will be a pilgrim.

Roman bollards, Roman or medieval bridges succeed and fascinate us. Could it be because these works have crossed the centuries or that they surprise us by their elegance? A certain idea of beauty in simplicity?

Storks can be seen everywhere, on church steeples and also on electric pylons. I who, as a child, believed that they only came to Alsace to bring newborn babies.



The Roman road is sometimes divined by the tracks carved by the wheels of the wagons. As in a video, one can add in his head, the squealing of the vehicles, the cries of the carters, the neighing of the horses, the orders of the soldiers ... the scenes of all this small world which was there two thousand years ago!

I meet Nico, a Dutchman who travels with a camper because he has trafficked himself for a year from the chassis of an old Mazda van and recovery equipment. It cost him only 5.000 Euros. His wife stayed in the Netherlands, and he likes to get lost on the roads of southern Europe, stop here or there for a beer, this is his freedom. His corner of paradise? 16 km east of Faro in Portugal. A small port still in its juice, he says. The Paradise Beaches of Fuzeta in Algarve <[Youtube](#)>

Small nice Albergue on the edge of the village. The usual ritual: to breathe a long sigh of the one who arrives at the goal, to wallow in a sofa, to free oneself from the walking shoes, to drink a glass of water, to quickly choose the bed preferably the one of the bottom, to evaluate the distance with the toilet and the proximity of a window, the location of emergency lighting sometimes annoying. Then you have to mark your territory before washing the socks, dry them, get the stamp for his collection on the pilgrim's notebook called Credential, get a disposable bed cover, enter the wifi code on his smartphone, take a shower if possible hot and before others, eventually use soaps and abandoned champoings, take a nap and then finally head for the nearest bar!



Coffee, Coke, Sandwich 5, Albergue 6, Beer Tapas 2, Meals and Beers 10 - Total: 23 € (469e)

13. April 18 : Valdesalor / Cáceres / Grimaldo

.... 21 km + A step without shadow and without water points!

12 km to Cáceres, a fairly large agglomeration of nearly 100,000 inhabitants. The old town is a small historic core with many medieval and Renaissance monuments. I'm already there at 10am. Quick visit to avoid tourists who will soon be flocking. The shopkeepers are already unpacking their Made in China goods. The server on the terrace of a cafe is infected. I decide to flee as soon as possible and considering having already made my fill of

bondages, I decided to take a bus around 13h which will avoid me the long exit of the city. Above all it allows me once again to skip a step considered without much interest I was told. I take the walk to Cañaveral until Grimaldo where I arrive around 16:30, nine kilometers traveled in two hours.



Oh that I did well! I discover a tiny "Albergue donativo", at the top of a rather steep climb, quite in the spirit of the path. The cottage is run by the lady who also runs the adjoining café / bar. We are on the side of the road, but only a few trucks are still shuttling between I suppose quarries or mines and a processing plant for these ores. A tanker truck watered the road and marks the end of the traffic when the sun is coming to the sunset. The terrace is well oriented to benefit from the last rays with happiness. Two beers, an excellent omelet / tomato sandwich. The wifi runs behind the shelter under a tree a little like in the movie "Saint Jacques Mecca" by Coline Serreau with Muriel Robin, Artus de Penguern



I taste with delight these perfect moments in the company of other pilgrims. Surely beautiful people.

Robert Alan from Belgium has traveled a lot around the world. At the moment he has knee pain and he thinks that he will have to have surgery, but he has decided to try again to walk a few steps.

A young Spanish cyclist thinks to reach Santiago in 10 days from Seville, nearly 100km a day.

Els, a 69-year-old Dutch girl, says that since her architect husband died three years ago, she is alone in a big house. She fell in love with a guy who has a camper.

A young man with long hair walks to support an NGO that fights hunger in the world. At each step he contacts local journalists to write an article about this cause. «Caminando ... Ayudas To Caminar to Otras - Manos Unidas, Campania Contra El Hambre»

The Way is also like a photo album of pilgrims who come alive for a pot to share episodes of their lives.

Everyone has his room. Two have no windows, but it does not matter. All the doors remain between open at night, we form like a family under one roof.

Sandwich coffee 8,50, Bus 4,50, drink / dish 5, Albergue 5, dinner evening 5 - Total: 28 € (497 €)

14. April 19 : Grimaldo / Galisteo 19 km

Six am. We rub shoulders, we succeed each other in the only bathroom. I warm up quickly in the microwave the leftovers of the day, a hot tea and it's gone.



A little further, at 7 am, I meet a French couple from Saint-Etienne, who left much earlier in the front from Grimaldo taking the road not to get lost. The man and the woman follow each other as if driven by a metronome. Same sticks, same backpacks, does that make more torque (engine) as well? They pause and the discussion in the rising dawn revolves around the Islamization of their city. They are both teachers in the audience: over 80% of their students are Muslim and pull the level down they claim. They would even be in the majority in the city. "It's not the thermometer that's the problem, it's the disease" ... there in the middle of nowhere, while the dew is still attached to the herbs, in the middle of nowhere, the observation disconcerts me a little, and I do not want to argue. What's the point ! The important thing is to listen to them, to hear them! It is true that they live it with difficulty on a daily basis. What to do, what to think, when we are not really confronted with this type of situation? What distresses me is that so many politicians, experts, researchers, philosophers have looked into the matter and that no measure seems to go in the direction of better living together. Instead of uniting, collaborating, supporting each other, the fragmentation of the social body seems to me to be accentuating.

Today, especially we are lucky enough to trample the old Roman road as evidenced by the many cubic markers with a blue square on the side.

I start to think about the logistics that had to be put in place to create this way, keep it in shape and also to ensure the stops, services for horses ... some didactic panels are very well done.

Information: The road network that was gradually formed had to ensure the proper functioning of the imperial post. The "viae militares" connected all the cities of the power of the peninsular space and greatly facilitated relations between them and Rome.

The Emerita (Mérida) -Salmantica (Salamanca) route, better known by its medieval name of Vía de la Plata, was the main artery of the province.

The trip should not be so easy as that. It had to be quite risky.

Even in 1852 Théophile Gautier wrote in Les Enmes and Camees: "A trip to Spain is still a perilous and romantic venture, you have to pay for yourself, have courage, patience and strength, you risk your skin. at every step, the privations of all kinds, the absence of the things most indispensable to life, the danger of roads really impassable for anything other than Andalusian muleteers, an infernal heat, a sun to crack the skull, are the least You also have the factious, the thieves, and the innkeepers, people of bag and rope, whose probity is regulated by the number of carbines you carry with you.

The danger surrounds you, follows you, gets ahead of you; you only hear whispering stories around you that are terrible and mysterious. Yesterday the bandits have supped in this posada. A caravan was removed and driven into the mountains by robbers for ransom. Pallilos is in ambush at such a place where you have to go! No doubt there is much exaggeration in all this; However, however incredulous we may be, we must believe something, when we see at each corner of the road wooden crosses laden with inscriptions of this kind: "Aqui mataron a hombre" and "Aqui murió de manpairada".

Land-Art: several cairns and up to 13 stacked stones in balance! YES! Small satisfaction, we are happy as we can



In Galisteo, the Ahmohade walls (Muslim dynasty of Berber origin that dominated North Africa and Spain in the 11th and 12th centuries) completely surround the historic center made of small houses. We must climb on the ramparts to see the plain below. These ramparts, 11 meters high and 3 meters thick, were erected by the Moors in the 13th century. A beer alone at the bar, an opportunity to take notes and soak up this completely enclosed village.

The private Albergue only opens at 14h and no cooking!

From Snark, to meditate: "What to do with my regrets" by Raphael Enthoven. Should we banish them on the grounds that having regrets means being unhappy twice? or to cherish them, as the source of life for another possible scenario ... What would my life look like without the tiny hazards that have irrevocably decided its direction?

< [Raphaël-Enthoven](#) > < [Facebook](#) >

Tapas 6, Albergue 15, repas du soir 10 - Total: 31 € (528€)

15. April 20 : Galisteo / Caparra / Hostel-Asturias 30 km We were picked up in Caparra

New very beautiful step, small path open on the slightly hilly landscape.

Let go, let yourself be carried by the way. Crossing meadows like gardens with wildflowers everywhere. Perfect moments, for example lying in the grass, to

scrutinize the changing clouds in a beautiful bluish sky. Follow the channel. It takes a lot of water in these arid lands to grow crops.



In the open countryside, the curious Roman arch of Caparra in the shape of a niche and the four doors that have become the symbols of the Via de la Plata that can be found on these famous concrete pillars. From the Roman colony, there remains only this triumphal arch and remains of the baths. The first sporadic excavations date from 1929. New quarters have been recently discovered by archaeologists since 1963. At the time, this site was an important agglomeration at a road junction. <[Caparra](#)>

The hotel Astoria located a few kilometers from the main road sends us a car to pick us up, me with an American and a German. I appreciate an individual room with sheets, towels, champagne, soap and even a hip bath. What happiness.

The German says he has read a good book on Camino: The Way lived by Hape Kerkeling, a brilliant comedian "Ich bin dann bad weg" (Meine Reise auf dem Jakobsweg) is the title in German. Audio book: <[Youtube](#)> A film was made in 2015 from this story: "Ich bin dann bad weg" a German film by Julia von Heinz <[Extract](#)> <[Youtube](#)>

22h on Spanish TV we guess that a new attack took place in Paris ... the shock of images for lack of the weight of words. But we move quickly to the weather and the football game of the day. Circus games have priority.

Tyrants offer the people what to amuse them, to distract them: the abused people are silent and obey.

We do not stop complying and it is in excess that leaders derive most of their power.

We must organize the sharing of resources and organize the idleness of citizens. Everyone should be able to work like a writer.

La Boétie 1530-1563 - Speech of Voluntary Servitude
Discours de la servitude volontaire

Coffee toast 2, Squid 2,50, Beer, Bread 2, Hostel 19, menu 10 - Total: 36 € (564 €)

16. April 21 : Hostel-Asturias / Banos-de-Montemayor 19 km

7 am. I have to take the national road to find the Via de la Plata, but fortunately at this time there is almost no car. Asphalt pavement is like a race track, I fly almost carried away by my magic sticks, embracing with joy the landscape, our Earth.

Land Art: "VA VIS AND DEVIENS" from the film of the same name that my children loved - to watch streaming! - The story takes place in 1984, an American-Israeli mission, Operation Moses, carries many Jews from Ethiopia (often called Falashas), refugees in Sudan, to bring them to Israel. In an Ethiopian refugee camp, a Christian mother pushes her son to pretend to be a Jew in order to survive, forcing him to lie throughout his life. Neither Jew nor orphan, he is integrated in an Israeli family with this double malaise lived, that, on the one hand, of his mother who misses him, and, on the other hand, of the roots which he lost. Are not we all equally torn between several possible destinies? <[Youtube](#)>



In a village I discover a small edible garden "Agroecologicos", in the spirit of the incredible edible "La agricultura del futuro" <[Youtube](#)>

Arrival in Baños de Montemayor with its Roman baths, and a little old-fashioned air

Albergue alone, so a little sad, although the loneliness and silence accentuate the feeling of freedom.

Advertising in a showcase: Dental implant proposed 222 € (a zero more in France!) I note the address, do we ever know! Then "Ayudando a crear familias" or "Help to create families ... Insemination - Spain - With or without a donor! <[Lien](#)> Surely the grown man is (he too) on the move! Transhumanism: the march towards immortality? <[Lien](#)> But is not this what monotheistic religions already propose?

Grocery 4, breakfast 2.50, croissant coffee 3.50, Albergue 15, evening meal 10 - Total: 35 € (499 €)



17. April 22 : Banos-de-Montemayor / Fuenterroble-de-Salvatierra 32 km

Wake up at 5am and leave half an hour later at the front by the road. Crossing the forest, a crescent moon. It is still dark at the top when I pass the collar and rather cool.

Land-Art on the GR 100 of Via de la Plata: an enormous block of stone emerges in the form of an aquatic animal, I

only add what it takes to boost my imagination and those of my followers.



Crossings of desert villages: faded signs and wall paintings, traces of bars and small shops permanently closed. Happily, an exception is the Bar "El Pregriño" with its retro, friendly atmosphere, held by women. Impression of Far West, end of the world or an island of life.

Casual Meeting of a Healer: The Señor Divino Sanador T: 68 58 24 924 kept his cows free on the Way. I tried to congratulate him for his beautiful animals, but immediately he took my hands and watched them at length. I guessed that he was analyzing the evils that were confusing me and I accepted his incomprehensible comments for me, he closed his eyes and chanted a kind of prayer. Back on earth. He wrote me a kind of order in my notebook. Yes I had the privilege of crossing "The Healer" of the region. His recommendations: "Quiero that includes yesterdayba San Juan. There is a swarm there and the toma - Se of a baño in agna caliente y a kilo of sal gorda »Buyers of St. John's wort make it an infusion. Take a bath of hot water with a kilo of coarse salt Saying: "The herbs of Saint John keep their virtues all year round"

Visit a contemporary house in corten steel (rust color), rare to be reported.

Arrival at 16h in Fuenterroble-de-Salvaterra
Albergue Parroquial Santa María, Fuenterroble of Salvatierra of the priest Don Blas.

Nice dinner between pilgrims, on both sides of a very long table in a setting full of memories of Father Don Blas a celebrity of the Way. He is a strong supporter of Via de la Plata. About Camino, he says, "It's a treasure trove of values, worries, ardent desires and expectations that everyone carries in their backpacks. Each pilgrim is a treasure, because he challenges us with his presence, he invites us to go on the way and not sit, arms crossed, watching the time pass. The villages which open their doors to the traveler get richer, the villages which are not interested in the road, because their authorities or their inhabitants do not have this sensitivity, suffer an inestimable loss. By the next holy year, I hope that everyone can consider the Camino as a social phenomenon." On a wall :

"If you open the doors to the pilgrims, you open the door to the world, and everyone will go through your house"

[Youtube-1](#) < [Youtube-2](#)



Late in the evening, we celebrate the return of the wooden statues to the church after they have been shown in several surrounding villages. It's party ! Fanfare, choruses ...



On the TV bar still open: Emmanuel Macron 24%, Marine Le Pen 21% ... we know the rest!

Grocery 6.50, Beers 2.50, Albergue donativo 10
Total: € 19 (€ 518)

18. April 23 : Fuenterroble-de-Salvaterra / Morille 32 km Sunday

A path of beauty. I still tread with emotion the slabs of the Roman road.

Sometimes large Roman pillars punctuate the landscape and, on the crest of a hill, other white pillars have huge blades that seem to stir the air desperately to advance the clouds.

Black pigs, in semi freedom, bask around a muddy puddling, enough to appreciate the pork on his plate.

Discussion with Keith, an American. She had 5 children from a first marriage. Her husband drowned in the fishery because his waterproof pants were filled with water as a wave surged. She had remarried, had one more child, but her second husband was violent. Very Catholic, it took fifteen years to leave! Getting married for the best and the worst? Really ?



I leave her in an Albergue that I do not really appreciate and I continue the way on 4km again. I discovered a mini cottage next to a bar, the ideal pair. I find the alert and young Eva from Munich and a German doctor at work. Dinner at the bar carried away by the discussions of my neighbors and the background noise of the TV which retransmits, like every evening, a football game. I'm shaping a bubble of contentment

Albergue 6, meal 9, beer 3 - Total: 18 € (536 €)

19. April 24 : Morille / Salamanca 19 km

Path in the form of a sandy track and trails that dotted between a few trees. Beautiful solitude between heaven and earth, in paradise.

I see in the distance the towers of the cathedral of Salamanca, but they make illusion, it will take me another two hours to reach them.

Crossing the Roman bridge and a huge hubbub challenges me. In fact it's the annual picnic day for

students. And they are thousands! A din that forces the admiration of this youth who will see the end of the century. The future of becoming homo sapiens is in their hands.



Salamanca is a very beautiful city that can boast of being the seat of the oldest university in Spain. Due to the duration of the works (1150 to 1733) one can marvel at two adjoining cathedrals, with a part that ensures the transition between the Romanesque architecture of the initial project and the Gothic style.

< [Salamanque-Cathédrale](#) >



Visit the Museo de Art Deco and Art Nouveau, a magnificent Art Nouveau and Art Deco museum to visit absolutely! The building is an old manor dating back to 1906, the construction of which was commissioned by its first owner, Miguel de Lis, at the end of the 19th century. One of the rare examples of industrial architecture used for the construction of a house. You can discover works of glass, bronze, extraordinary dolls from 1860 and magnificent statues in gold and ivory. For example, the ballerinas of Cari Kauku 1910 or H. Holins 1930.

Visitors: 73% European, 21% American, 1% African only
<[Museo-Casalis](#)>

Discovery of a great artist: on this occasion in a publication, Lola Massieu, Gran Canaria, 1921-2007 Lola's register is the Informal Art, gathering the abstract and gestural tendencies of the abstract expressionism (Action Painting) and of lyrical abstraction ... "Inquietud abstracta". <[Expo Lola](#)> <[Youtube](#)>

The Albergue de Peregrinos - Casa la Calera - is located right next to the cathedral. Favorite place for meetings, the exchange of slices of life ... but summarize stories in a few lines, share laughter and looks, it's impossible mission and even memories fade after a while. Never mind ! As for Penelope, waiting for Ulysses, we will get back to work every day.

> Eugenia de Buenos Aires, son of 28, French passport, psychologist, interested in tinyhouses
> Karina, the hospitable San Francisco
> Nadine Hartan and the alternative Wohnformen

But, what about the Carmen: Where do we have a chance to cross this Spanish icon?

.. in the manner of Eugene Ionesco's play "The bald singer, she always wears the same hair?" A critical look at our usual conversations, our assumptions
([le monument du théâtre de l'absurde](#))

*Carmen is skinny - a feature of bistre
Spot his gitana eye;
His hair is a sinister black;
His skin, the devil, the tanna.*

*Women say she is ugly,
But all men are mad about it;
And the Archbishop of Toledo
Sing Mass at his knees;*

*Because on his neck of tawny amber
Twist a huge bun
Who, undone, does in the alcove
A mantis with his cute body,*

*And, among his pallor, bursts
A mouth with laughter winners,
Red pepper, scarlet flower,
Who takes his purple to the blood of hearts.*

*So done, moricaude
Bat the most beautiful beauties,
And from his eyes the warm glow
Makes the flame satiety.*

*She has in her spicy ugliness
A grain of salt from this sea
From where springs naked and provocative,
The acrid Venus from the bitter pit.*

Coffee toast 2, tapas noon 7, Albergue 10, menu 7, toothpaste etc 10 - Total: 36 € (572 €)

20. April 25 : Salamanca / Zamora

Bus trip on 40km. Objective: to gain another step to spend time discovering these two cities and then not to miss my plane in Santiago.

My crush: If Zamora, the contemporary resembles all these cities after the war, the historic core, the coat of arms of the city, the postcard, an area on high surveillance, is the archetype of the tourist box , an open air museum. In the 12th century, many Romanesque churches flourished in Zamora. Among the most original and interesting are San Claudio, San Cipriano, Santa María la Nueva, San Juan Bautista, Santa María de la Horta, Santo Tomé, Santiago del Burgo, Santiago de los Caballeros and La Magdalena.



But why 24 churches and a cathedral on such a small space? I do not know ! No se! Like so many other things besides.

It is said that some Romanesque churches previously attributed to the 12th century had undergone such changes that it was impossible to imagine that they could have been built in a single century. They should therefore be much earlier than the 12th century and perhaps the first millennium, at least as far as the initial construction is concerned.< [Zamora](#) >

Mystery of openings hidden by moucharabiehs - to see without being for nuns convents?... Zamora also has a rich history of battles, legendary conquests and power struggles between power-loving characters.

Book: "Zaïda: The Winds of Spain and Africa" by Bernard Domeyne - Spain, 11th century - About Alfonso VI: "I must remind you, says the Supreme Pontiff, that the property and domain of the Kingdoms of Spain belong to St. Peter and the Holy Roman Church, according to the Donation of Constantine and the ancient Constitutions. The memory of these rights of the pontificate was lost by the carelessness of my predecessors. But now that you have reconquered your on the unfaithful, who refused this ancient homage to St. Peter, I let you know, so that by your ignorance the Church will not lose the supremacy which God himself has bestowed on him. I hope you will not lose your souls by refusing to the Holy Church of Rome the honors which are due to it"

Urraque de Zamora shook her head: "It is the misfortune of time, that this madman guides Christendom..."

Violence in medieval times was constant: See "Violence in Iberian Societies in the Middle Ages - Symbolic and Ideological Functions". Cahier d'études Hispaniques Medieval by Carlos Heusch and Georges Martin 2005

< [Etudes-Ispaniques-Médiévales](#) >

In the Middle Ages, forests covered immense territories. They sheltered a lot of ferocious beasts, stray dogs, wolves and gangsters or highwaymen who did not hesitate to slay or kill the isolated pilgrim after stealing his purse.

The danger was constant on the way, it was not less at the arrival of the stage, for those including who rather to go to the chaplaincy or the hospital, chose the inn or the hotel.

The pilgrims of the eleventh century took care to put in order their spiritual affairs (via the confession) as material, before the great departure. Testimentary practice will be generalized in the Christian kingdoms of the West. Do we ever know !

Oh for my part, I confess, I do not have much to bequeath, except my humble stories and some coloring. We are only dust of stars.

I discovered an extraordinary shop, as I would have liked to have one: "Chachiandchachi Arte y Diseño del Siglo XX. Colecciónismo Vintage" - The backpack and my purse dissuaded me from buying even the smallest item ... one day maybe online? < [Chachiandchachi Arte](#) >



The delight of meetings :

Claude who runs the blog < [Marche en France](#) >

Michèle Fuster ... with whom I will from now on, and with happiness, the same steps to Santiago! She will be a little my muse, my counselor in my mistakes. We will motivate each other in moments of relaxation, we laughed a lot too, and it feels good.

Coffee 2,50, bus 3, cathedral 3, art nouveau museum 4, bus 6,50, tapas 5, Albergue donativo 0 (oops! ... an omission)
Total: € 24 (€ 596)

21. April 26 : Zamora / Montamarta

..... 19 km ... 377 km till Santiago

The thermometer approaches zero early in the morning. We have obviously crossed another climatic zone and we are passing through the region of transhumance where traditional sheep farming is very important. The province of Zamora owns the largest livestock in the country: it has 800,000 ewes. It is the 1st region producing sheep's milk in Spain. Before 1950, 40% of the workforce was transhumant since Leon, but the number is now only 10%. The two-way transhumance trails were protected by the authorities at all times and can still be traced today. Transhumance was an important factor for exchanges between communities or individuals sometimes very far apart. These "animal movements" require an extremely rigorous organizational framework based on collective agreements relating to the journey of animals to their grazing grounds, the rights holders, the distribution of forage resources, the use of manures, etc..



Wacky ideas ... again!

Organize a lottery for the pilgrims: 1st prize, a night in a Parador, other prices for example a poncho, a Led lamp, a solar charger, a trolley, earplugs, a walking umbrella, a hug ... all these objects would be sponsored of course! Propose the geo location of pilgrims for a Speed Dating likely to encourage meetings of all kinds (tick here your wishes: ... walk together, take a pot or more if affinities ...).

To offer migrants, a panoply of the perfect pilgrim, to allow them to travel through Europe almost incognito.

Open a leisure center dedicated to the Way of Compostela for all those who do not have time to walk the true path or when access will be regulated (with treadmill, lodgings every hundred meters, rain, wind and snow, heat and cold ... still enough to create a small startup (already mentioned in more detail in my previous stories ...)

In the late afternoon, pooling of what we have for dinner. The local Vino Tinto is very fruity and can be drunk with 13.5%! And that's fine

*Coffee toast 4, meal 11, grocery 4, Albergue 5
Total € 24 (€ 620)*

22. April 27 : Montamarta / Granja-de-Moreruela

..... 22 km

With the cold of dawn and lack of gloves, I found that a pair of socks would also do the trick.

Land Art: from a rock scree creation of the tail of a mythical animal that goes to meet the walkers. Further on a bridge, "COURAGE" with small stones



Desertification of the countryside. The highway being free, the national road is abandoned and suddenly almost no one stops in small villages and bars had to close!



"Pilgrim, if you love loneliness,
if you like to be one of the protagonists of this path,
melting into the grandeur of the landscape and facing the
hardness of cold and heat,
if you want the twilight to drag you into its deep silences, and
the mornings, the rays of dawn, stimulate your soul ... This is
your way! © Fabienne Bodan< [Pèlerins de Compostelle](#) >

Grocery 15, menu 12, Albergue 6 - Total: 33 € (653 €)

23. April 28 : Granja-de-Moreruela / Tabara 27 km

Beautiful perspectives along the reservoir lake.
Long straight lines, Wild West atmosphere.
First coffee at eleven o'clock only with omelet and coke.
We appreciate all the more.



Albergue de Tabara at the exit of the village, held by Jose who seems to have found there his vocation and his lair. José Almeida is the author of several books on the paths of Compostela (Espiritu Association of Santiago).

In any case he knows how to sell despite the fact that he displays "Donativo" ... bracelet "offered" on arrival, dinner and breakfast prepared by him, a small glass of a drink pulls hoses before bedtime .. a case of conscience for us, the pilgrims, when one is led to slip our obole into the box provided for this purpose for this "friendly animator".

At dinner, at 19h, as every day probably: Sopa de Fideos or pasta soup with some vegetables, then a kind of rice Zamora fashion, with vegetables and a few pieces of meat, fruit, water, wine. <[Albergue-Facebook](#)>

An American arrives late after a 50-kilometer stage, in great shape. We are not equal in front of the effort or the hardship.

An Australian accompanied by his ukulele sings us tunes of his country. However, I have the impression that he sings a little wrong, but it does not matter, only the intention counts. ... which makes me think of "The Power of Intention" <[Youtube](#)>

Michèle tells me about singer Fersen Thomas, poet and storyteller who makes the French language a feast ... Belle découverte! Fersen Thomas walks us in a universe where truculent characters, various animals and unexpected objects meet. Timeless records and modes. He hears France from the countryside as very few singers know how to do it. Fersen prefers to be the trunk in stories of suitcases, so trips (often interiors), over songs, richly sewn hands orchestrally.

<[Ouest-France-Entretien TF](#)>

<[site de Thosmas-Fersen](#)> <[Youtube 1](#)> <[Youtube 2](#)>

Coffee toast 2.50, Albergue at José 15 with dinner, pots 4.50
- Total: 22 € (685 €)

24. April 29 : Tabara / Olleros-de-Tera 35 km

Land Art ; Inspired by the burning bush, I fagot two terminals of the Way. A German walker is shocked. A cultural gap separates us.



With Michèle we have a plan to change the group and put some distance with her friend that she can not bear anymore and also with a group of "females" (it's her): we will simply accelerate, walk faster and longer. We motivate each other. "Yes We Can," poor Obama, too had good intentions at first!

Arrival very late at Olleros de Tera and stop at Bar Restaurante Albergue La Trucha.

Strange establishment! Of normal appearance in the early evening, dinner, TV, a few natives at the bar, but late in the evening you can clearly hear the bass of a disco music ... In the pants I head to the bathroom and meet a small group of young people girls in mini skirts chatting in a cloud of smoke. They seem to have seen others! Note that I should not be very sexy with my accoutrement. Even well-placed earplugs do not cover the bass. Silence at six in the morning, two hours before we prepare for departure. Moral of history, do not be fooled by appearances, or trout a priori discreet! I would have preferred to listen to Schubert Trout

<[You Tube](#)> <[Albergue la Trucha](#)>

Coffee coke 3, Albergue La Trucha (bar and nightclub) 12,
meal 10 - Total: 25 € (710 €)

25. April 30 : Olleros-de-Tera / Mombuey

..... 25 km - Sunday

Rainy day. Squalls and even hail right out of the village. But nothing will stop us.



Coffee and cupcakes, time to dry up a little, at Craig in his Albergue Rehoboth. Charming. The Pilgrim Mission « We live in a small semi abandoned village called Villar de Farfon which is on the Camino de Santiago's southern route - Camino Sanabres Newspaper article: "Unable to afford the airfares to fulfill their missionary calling to India, Craig, Dorothea and Eiel It is because Craig is convinced that it is God who has given him the mission to settle in this lost village! "We were amazed at how God provided for us everything we needed through prayer". No Comments! < [Pilgrimmision](#) >



The albergue we have targeted for tonight is still a long way off, so, with Michele, we hailed the driver of a van that takes us 3 km. A taxi parked in front of the tiny grocery store encourages us to favor a new wheelchair jump to Mombuey that we reach in five minutes.

Temeraries certainly, but not masos! We were thirsty, we were hungry and then walking down the side of the national road was not very exciting.

*Coffee sandwich 6, Albergue donativo mini and menu10
Total: € 16 (€ 726)*

26. Mai 01 : Mombuey / Puebla-de-Sanabria

..... 31 km 5 derniers km en taxi

Land Art : still the fagotage of terminals and stacks of stones. I think I'm getting better.

Visit the castle dating from the fifteenth century, opportunity to disguise himself as a pilgrim of the Middle Ages with a large cloak. To pretend for real. The dungeon is nicknamed "El Macho", it has the appropriate form.



Private Albergue "Casa Luz", all comfort, kitchen and terrace.

Reflection about the business cottages: In our room there were 4 bunk beds, so 8 people at 12 € / bed = 96 € / night ... without sheets, without towels, sanitary blocks in the garden ... a good deal, no ?.

Coffee coca 5, taxi 6, Albergue Casa Luz 12, grocery 6, museum castle 2 - Total: 31 € (757 €)

27. Mai 02 : Puebla-de-Sanabria / Requejo / Lubian 28 km

Long climb on a national wide almost free of traffic. It is better to walk on the road than on the low sides crowded with pebbles and then we can cut the turns to the rope to gain a few meters!



A snorer raged last night and killed 7 people! It will continue inevitably and they will be 70 victims in ten days! It is not fair.

We see him struggling on his bike in the climb. In my best possible German and with humor, I explain to him the hell we experienced last night ... "But I do not do it on purpose!" Was his only defense! It would also need psychologists on the way and groups of the type "anonymous snorers"!

Rhythm of hell, harmonious and almost mesmerizing swing, we approach the 4km / h uphill. At 10 hours already 11.8km traveled. Passing the pass at an altitude of 1400 meters via a dark transpiring tunnel that amplifies wonderfully what can be described as primary songs.

After the pass a bar: plate of sausages, a beer that cuts the legs, slumped on the terrace facing the road Further down in Lubian a tapas bar, Wifi to send some messages like bottles to the sea and imagine getting a problematic recognition of our exploits.

A grocery store for evening dinner. Strong and fruity wine of the Rioja.

Cuisine to share feverishly at the Albergue in successive waves Contamination of Land Art with a young Swiss girl ... everything is ephemeral.



The 10 commandments of the pilgrim?

The magazine Christian Family enumerates 8: Your bulbs you will tumble, your shoes you will use, on the

drone you will support you, of a pebble you will free you, of the backpack you will accept the yoke, the snail you will respect, of your feet will take care of you, wine you drink in moderation.

There are also other considerations that should guide the "true" pilgrims: "Ask nothing special, but your being, your whole being, be a beggar"; "Reconnect with one's inner life"; "The sacred is in the way itself"; "The Christian pilgrimage is the anti-performance, the opposite of the self-sufficiency of the survival raid"; "The purpose of the pilgrimage is not to arrive, it is to leave"; "One walks first in one's heart before walking with one's body"; "Salvation passes by the way ... of the cross"; "All life is a pilgrimage"; "To take the road is to leave one's life". blah

We are all migrants: The holy books of monotheistic religions are crossed by stories of people and peoples walking towards an elsewhere ... Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohamed ...

Animist, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish, or atheist, it does not matter ... the key is already in the moment, in the "here and now", in the complete breath.

"A journey of a thousand leagues always begins with a first step" Lao Tzu

Our peregrination opens a passage in ourselves.

And in terms of collective life, learn to go to the other ... accept the counting, the voluntary simplicity ... Good to rework again, perhaps on the occasion of a next Camino!

Coffee toast 4, plate sausages / cheese 3, coca tapas 3, grocery 8, Albergue village slates 5 - Total: € 23 (€ 790)

28._ Mai 03 : Lubian / A-Gudina 25 km

New pass to climb a path that seems very old because not maintained, with a lot of landslides, cross-tree trunks and brambles.

Passage in Galicia: new signage, other architectural codes. Roof slates, wooden bow-windows in facade.

In a desolate landscape, strewn with huge blocks of rocks, perhaps of glacial origin - an isolated overhanging man seems to observe us. We are four walkers and we are worried for a young German that we know to be a little behind. Conciliabules, we make a movie, we evoke the worst rumors and news. Thomas sacrifices himself to wait for Red Riding Hood just in case. Ah stories stories are still well rooted in our imagination.



Albergue at 6 Euros! To stay with 180 € per month is therefore possible!

Thomas knows he's snoring hard, so he's sleeping on the sofa of the entrance. A real gentleman. Like what !

The doors of the rooms and toilets creak very often and disrupt the sleep of the pilgrims. Will the pilgrim also get a vial of oil to lubricate the hinges before going to bed? We can of course imagine a "pilgrim comfort" kit, plus a bug detector, a cache to hide the emergency lighting, clothes pegs, a nylon rope...

*Coffee toast cheese 7, hamburger 7, Albergue 6
Total: € 20 (€ 810)*

29._ Mai 04 : A-Gudina / Campobecerros..... 21 km

Granite is everywhere! Blocks of 200x50x20cm constitute in this region the basic lego for mounting the facades of houses. This gives them a certain presence despite the poor architectural quality.

Land-Art: a stone snake along the road.



Landes, brooms, heather, beautiful landscapes, shades of browns and greens, palette of yellows and purples.

Here and there whole sections of hill in ashes. Beautiful spots of soft green demonstrate the vigor of nature and life.

The region is poor, hamlets seem completely abandoned.

An old railway line and wagons pulled by two locomotives testify to a subsoil rich in minerals ... is it also there that came to supply the Romans?

A multitude of machines create a huge gap in a hill for the future TGV Madrid-Orsene ... which will only pass.

Military buildings are also abandoned, except one of them has been converted into housing. Funny holiday resort.

Past and present are telescoping in this end of the world.



The bar of Campobecerros "Bar Dariosario Tienda" is a digest of the local memory. An old woman, perhaps the mother of the owner, in her corner armchair next to the stove follows the coming from the world that passes. Trophies of sports events, stuffed head of a noble deer, old photographs line the walls ... We decided to hold our headquarters until the next day.

We did well, we were spoiled by so much kindness on the part of the boss, she went straight to the heart. At noon, succulent paella and in the evening a homemade soup with white beans, cabbage and potatoes, sublime.



On TV, between a football game and a bullfight, some images of the face to face between Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen, the comments are in Spanish, we then have the option to analyze their clothing ... well, they are both in navy blue!

In March? ... do they talk about us, the walkers on a daily basis? Really ? We are certainly the avant-garde! Or we are made to walk!

Coffee toast 3, pots 2.50, soup 2.50, paëla 10, Albergue 8 - Total: 26 € (836 €)

30._ Mai 05 : Campobecerros / Villar-de-Barrio

..... 34 km

Text written on a slate under a depression of a gray stone house!

"Parate! Descansa ... Coge fuerzas breathed ... Que tengas, buen Camino" something like "stop, take time to breathe ... and good way"

and on a trestle, boiled eggs, coffee, biscuits, a guest book and a small box to leave some pieces ... the ingredients of a silent exchange between the pilgrims and the locals, giving, giving (win-win in English would sound better)

The Municipal Albergue of Villar de Barrio seems quite new and certainly the architect was pleased, but he did not have to make the path, from my point of view. I would say that the organization of spaces is pretty bad. Too many volumes lost, mezzanines without any possible affection ..

Opposite the amazing "Casa Carmiña fandada in 1932", an old restaurant with bar, benches and retro tables, cast iron legs, worn floor. An elderly lady, radiant, offers pilgrims, from 19h, and in silence and without TV, a menu for pilgrims. We feasted.



Coffee 2.50, coke / sandwich 4.50, glass of wine 2, Albergue 6, meal 10 - Total: 25 € (861€)

31._ Mai 06 : Villar-de-Barrio / Ourense..... 36 km

16km on foot and 22 by bus! We cheat again because Ourense is a vast agglomeration with endless and uninteresting suburbs.

Reflections: Oh sex on the way! Well, we do not talk about it, simply. A taboo subject ? It is said, however, that money and sex rule the world. The path seems asexual! No attributes of seduction: no high heels, no lipstick, no scented scrolls. The men are between men of the woods and serving knights, the equality of the sexes seems perfect. The single beds are under the gaze of everyone. Good to believe that all have vows of chastity, abstinence. Only the group counts that shapes us almost like a brotherhood.

And yet! The churches are full of naked cherubs and historical celebrities more or less naked



Thomas, our very nice German pilgrim, summarizes the 3 priorities in his life:

- "Innere Ruhe, keinen Ärger": inner peace, without worries
- "Erleuchtung" illumination or inspiration (?)
- "Offen für alles": open to everything, curious about everything

And he concludes: "Das Leben, jeden Tag, mit vollen Zügen geniessen !" That could be translated as "Enjoy, enjoy life, every day with enthusiasm"

Thomas is a caregiver in a geriatric house in Germany. He took 4 months off to walk from April to July. Seville, Santiago, St Jean Pied de Port ...

Set back from the bling-bling shopping street, a haven of peace, a little kitsch and serenity "El Liceo de Ourense". A cafe, which also plays a role of cultural center, organized around a covered courtyard, a patio with columns, huge paintings on the walls present bucolic scenes, very few people - Calle Valentín Lamas Carvajal <Liceo Ourense> <youtube>

We go past the thermal baths and a hot outdoor pool. Queueing at Casa da Pulpo.

Visit the cathedral, all gray outside, fascinating altarpiece by so many gilding and liturgical scenes.

Albergue municipal to avoid: there are only beds of the top, without side protection. All night I avoid turning around for fear of waltzing on the ground, especially as a pilgrim narrated the story of a sleeper who smashed the basin by falling on the tiles.

I had to be one of the first ones standing up at 5am!

*Coffee 2, Coca Sandwich 3, Lunch 25, Water 1, Glue 1, Cathedral 2.5, Taxi 5, Bus 2.5, Albergue 5
Total 42 € (903€)*

32._ Mai 07 : Ourense / Cea 22 km - Sunday

Not easy to leave Ourense! We must find the beautiful bridge "Ponte Vella" of Roman origin that crosses the river Minho and then a cafe open on Sunday ... essential before attacking a steep hill. Still interminable suburbs, suburban areas ... but then the path opens on the countryside and it is very beautiful.



We finally arrive at Cea, a charming village! There was obviously a concern to preserve this heritage made of stone houses that gives the village an air of medieval authenticity. In the center of Plaza Mayor, an amazing tower with a fountain at each corner and four clocks at the top.

To enjoy the sun we go from one bar to another. Peregrinos menu at noon with Michèle

A horreo, or corn silo Galician, can locate the entrance to the Albergue de la Xunta de Galicia,), the structure is old stone, but the interior is very modern and made with great sensitivity. Elegant wooden frame, beautiful metal structure.



At the bar, 30 minutes before the announcement of who will be the new President (French or France?) Great sharing of dishes Joyous table with a Japanese, a Canadian Vancouver, English, French Toulouse, Michele de Bordeaux , Thomas and the young girl from Germany. Yoshiro Masuda loves Europe and golf, Arigato Gazaimasu (thanks a lot in Japanese) talks about the Kumano Kodō Pilgrimage (熊野古道?), A series of ancient pilgrimage routes dating back to the feudal era that crisscross the Kii Hantō, the largest peninsula of Japan. This Camino connects 88 temples. Today, however, there are more walkers than true pilgrims! The Kumano is a bit of the Way of Santiago de Compostela of Asia with which it is also twinned.

[Wikipedia](#)

Macron 65% Many hopes but inevitably too many disappointments in sight.

So goes the yoyo of politics.

Coffee 2.50, lunch 10, Albergue 6, dinner 11, aperitif 2.50 - Total: 32 € (935 €)

33._ Mai 08 : Cea / Castro-Dozon 15 km

In the treasure hunt of our pilgrimage, it is important to follow the yellow arrows which reassure us because they must lead us safely!

Bridges, some of which date from the Middle Ages, horreo or grain silos, chapels and so on are all indications of an initiatory journey in time.

At the edge of the road, here and there, villas under construction seem obviously abandoned. Maybe still "divorce houses"! Realizing or renovating his house often leads couples on the verge of rupture, or even divorce. The pretexts for conflict are numerous. To build one's house is sometimes a way of cross if not a nightmare!

<+ [LIEN](#) on living-differently>

Arrival at 13h at the Albergue Municipal. Shower, change clothes, wash clothes, go to lunch, wifi, nap, buffer, groceries, prepare the evening meal and the bag for the next morning.

In the evening, pancakes with jam for all with the means of the edge.



Reflections on the desertification of villages:

Villages abandoned or depopulated in Spain: "Vend hamlet of 13,000 m2, consisting of five stone houses, for 62,000 euros. ". Here is what, in a nutshell, could be the real estate announcement of the hamlet of Pena Vella, in the north of Spain. Like him, nearly 2,900 villages have been abandoned in the north of the Hispanic peninsula, more than half of them in Galicia and Asturias.

The village of A Barca and its 12 houses are for sale by the town hall "for zero euro". In exchange, it is requested that the buyer proposes a global project, which will integrate all the homes!

In any case, a way of life disappears and will never come back. A way of life where people lived from what they produced and worked very hard, but who were happy with the little they had. We valued things much more than today. The small details were given a lot of importance. We took advantage of the smallest piece of land, as stony as it was. Animals had a great importance. The great patron saint celebrations were celebrated very intensely: it was the meeting of the year in each village. We made long trips by walking or riding to get to any place

<[Villages abandonnés en Espagne](#)> Villages abandoned in Spain

Young people fight against desertification in Spain: Sunseed Desert Technology. An ecovillage called Los Molinos del Río Aguas in Almeria <[eco-villages.eu](#)>

Sunseed a community-led educational center for transition to sustainability in Andalusia [www.sunseed.org.uk](#)

Los pueblos deshabitados not his alvido, his cultura.< [LIEN](#)>

Spain is a largely uninhabited country! In some places, the population density would be lower than in northern Finland.

It is also the country where we spend the most sudden overpopulated metropolises in the desert pure and simple, notes the novelist Antonio Muñoz Molina in the daily *El País*. Read *La España vacía*, by Sergio del Molino.

In fact there are two Spain, one urban and European, the other inner and depopulated, which often seem foreign to each other. And yet one can not understand urban Spain without empty Spain. The ghosts of the second haunt the houses of the first, he writes in his essay, which was crowned book of the year 2016 by the major Spanish dailies. Everything begins with what the author calls "the great trauma", the massive rural exodus that took place between 1950 and 1970. "A rural exodus, all industrial societies have known. The difference in Spain is that it is very late. And it happened in a very short time. We have not finished digesting this change. Millions of people have lived it, it's part of the memory of many people, "he says in the daily *ABC*. In question, the policy of forced industrialization led by General Franco in the 1960s. A shame for the one who seized power in 1936 promising the peasants a return to an Edenic past. "For a long time nobody has been concerned about the depopulation of inland Spain. The concentration of power and information in the big cities as well as the desire to forget a difficult past have helped to overshadow the issue," says the novelist Julio Llamazares in *El País*, whose village was engulfed for the construction of A dam in the 1960s. In 1988, his novel *The Yellow Rain*, monologue of the last inhabitant of a hamlet, had earned him to be accused of redneck by a literary milieu thirsty for modernity. Thanks to Sergio del Molino and other young writers the testimonies of inhabitants of agonizing villages. Everyone in Spain is now talking about the subject, and the government has even appointed a commissioner responsible for the "demographic challenge". - "España vacía es, sober todo, a mapa imaginario, a territorial literario, a estado (no siempre alterado) de la conciencia.". - «La [España vacía](#) es, sobre todo, un mapa imaginario, un territorio literario, un estado (no siempre alterado) de la conciencia.»

[Sergio del Molino](#) y 'La España Vacía' - L'Espagne vide

Coffee 2.50, coca 1.50, grocery 7, Albergue 6

Total: € 17 (952 km)

34. Mai 09 : Castro-Dozon / Silleda

28 km dont 9 km en stop – Santiago est à 61 km par la route

A paper posted on the entrance of the Albergue in Laxe indicates that the lodging is "in maintenance" ... The building is however very new then one can suppose that it is in quarantine due to an infection of bed bugs. The fear of pilgrims on the way.

Disappointed to have to walk another two hours along the national road, and for the last time, we raise our thumb and it works. We must have the head of the job..



Wacky idea: Propose to walk for those who can not do it anymore or who do not have the time! It was already announced in the Middle Ages!

As in "The Head and Legs" - a French TV game broadcast in the 60s with Pierre Bellemare - I will be the legs and the generous donor head (and the wallet, it goes without saying). I will have the mission to send

postcards, to stay in touch every day via Whatsapp with the sending of photos and videos. The service can go as far as burning candles, filing messages and ex-votos according to the wishes of the client.

The ex-voto? In thanks for the wishes granted, the pilgrims offered to the sanctuaries objects in direct relation with the grace obtained. It is said that divine clemency would have made it possible to release from prisons countless thousands of captives. We find hanging in handcuffs iron shackles, shackles, chains, shackles, yokes ... We could therefore propose, on a participatory site, to convey ex-voto for those who can not move to in the holy places .. yes, not for nothing, let us be mercenary at bottom, as were the nobles in the Middle Ages who bought themselves indulgences or even the publicans who extorted the pilgrims. Ah indeed, in all circumstances, the devil is not very far, it is human nature.

*Coffee / omelette 9, Albergue 10, pot 1.50, meal 11.50
Total: € 32 (€ 984)*

35. Mai 10 : Silleda / Outeiro 25 km

We are getting closer to Santiago, the feather dries up when the presentiment of a close end of the adventure is reinforced..



Last Albergue at the edge of the forest. Recent construction in concrete and rough stones. Shared showers, slippery floor, kitchen without any utensils. Modernity rhymes here coldly. You have to walk thirty minutes to find a restaurant at the edge of the national road, but it was worth it. Pulpo, pork, salad and vino tinto on the background of the football game of the day. Now we're a band, and it's almost a farewell party. I return a little later to the cottage, soaked in the midst of lightning Some are even already worried about my fate.



*Coffee toast 3, coffee 1, albergue 6, dinner 10
Total: € 20 (€ 1004)*

36. Mai 11 : Outeiro / Santiago

17 km 1.000 km in 36 stages (including 2 days of rest)

Last step in the rain!



Arrival in Santiago by the suburbs, direction the forecourt of the Cathedral. Feeling of a mission accomplished. Farewell ceremony to my two faithful sticks! I abandon them by posing them against a colonnade of the place, wishing that they quickly find a new fellow traveler. An hour later, it's done! I wished they could see the sea



Now it's time to get our Camino endorsed and get La Compostela. This document written in Latin is given to the pilgrim on his arrival at Compostela by the Office of Pilgrimages. He testified that the pilgrimage was well done and that we now have the right to recollect the tomb of the Apostle James.

Here it is, my fourth Camino!

Translation of the Latin text that appears on the Compostela:

"The chapter of this blessed metropolitan and apostolic church of Compostela, keeps the seals of the altar of the Blessed Apostle James, in order to issue a pilgrimage certificate to all the faithful and pilgrims of the whole world, coming to Saint James, our Apostle, patron and protector of Spain, moved by devotion or vow, given the circumstances, certify that ... The name of the pilgrim is inscribed in Latin!

moved by his faith, devoutly visited this most holy Temple.

In the name of this faith, I give him this certificate, bearing the seal of this Holy Church."

The "letter of proof" since the twelfth century has replaced the "scallop shell" (the "pecten") as a symbol of the arrival of the Pilgrim at the Tomb of Saint-Jacques. Formerly the Compostela was the proof that one had completed one's sentence or a public penance. Now it is a certificate of a spiritual character attesting that we made the traditional pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

However, grace is not related to the Compostela. To win grace it would still be necessary:

- Visit the apostle's tomb in the cathedral and pray there. This last condition is fulfilled by attending mass.

- Confess in the cathedral or elsewhere within 15 days before or after the visit to the Apostle's grave, and with the intention of obtaining grace.

- Communion, preferably in the cathedral.

I must confess to having zapped grace. My own self, I was satisfied with the benefits of my inner journey.

With Michele, two nights are spent at Hospedería San Martín Pinario Praza da Inmaculada opposite the eastern entrance to the cathedral. This is the fourth time I stay there with the same pleasure. On the 4th floor, reserved for pilgrims, the hotel offers very small rooms on the roof as small cells of monks. The price of the night is 24 Euros and includes a pantagruelian breakfast. The enormous buffet is served in the former refectory of the abbey. A pulpit overlooks the room from which a monk read sacred texts during the meal which was to be taken in the strictest silence. In another majestic room we can dine there for only 12 €. Ah finally sheets, a towel, an individual shower ... and the privilege of sleeping alone, without the concert of snorers. I appreciate this luxury after 36 days of walking .. <[Hostel Martin Pinario](#)>



The Parador "Hostal de los Reyes Católicos" is located in Plaza Obradoiro, the square of the cathedral. In the 16th century, the Catholic Kings built a building to accommodate sick pilgrims. On presentation of their "Compostela", they were allowed to stay there for three days. It later became the most important hospital in Galicia then the Center of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Santiago and was converted into a luxury hotel of the Parador type in 1954. However, the management of the hotel perpetuates the tradition of hospitality to the pilgrim by offering, today still, free meals to the first 10 pilgrims who come to the service entrance in the morning, at noon or in the evening. I took advantage last year! After crossing some majestic courtyards, we were treated to a lunch in a small room next to the kitchens. Nothing glitzy but we had laughed!

[Parador in Spain the 10 best](#)

Hospedería 24, midday meal 4, evening meal 12, pots 4
Total: € 44 (€ 1038)

Mai 12 – Santiago.... visit

Mass at the church, restaurants, shops, museums ... all !

Visit the excellent museum of contemporary art designed by the Portuguese Alvaro Siza "Centro-Gallego-de-Arte-Contemporaneo", exhibition "You and Me". The Galician Center of Contemporary Art is

located in Santiago de Compostela, on the edge of the historic city, in a magical space for Galicians, near the convent of San Domingos de Bonaval, where is the Pantheon of Galicians Illustrious, with the Museum of the Galician People

At the library sale of beautiful robots of the artist Satrapa "Invasion of androides na libraria do CGAC"

In, say, 50 years, it is not impossible that we can share the Way with humanoids ... bearers, bodyguards, masseurs, guides and much more. <[Satrapa](#)> ... we can buy online!

The Red Planet is here, and there have been dreaming for the last 100 years of getting there. But living will not be easy on Mars, and the only way to success in its rough conditions is with the help of robots, and that is why FACTORÍA DE ANDROIDES was born.

Playing with men's fantasy of conquering the Red Planet, SATRAPA has developed a series of amazing robot sculptures, shaping their anatomy with an industrial appearance. To do that, the great maker adds to their bodies made of wood or metal, aluminum tubes, springs and cables that work together with the most beautiful recycled pieces.



Hospedería 24, midday meal 8, evening meal 12, pots 4
Total: € 48 (€ 1096)

Mai 13 – Bye Bye Santiago

Return by plane to Geneva

5 am, the backpack is ready. A last goodbye to Michelle, already awake, my alter ego, my companion on a good part of the road. I walk the pavement of the sleeping city shining in the pale light of the street lamps ... Waiting for the bus, waiting for the plane ... I bow again to the rules of my time, my social class, my country. Rules chosen or undergone? To meditate.

In any case, I'm already dreaming about my next escape.

I also know that I still have a lot of points to work on. In particular, the question of quantity and comparison with the other, in the past.

I still want to learn how to no longer, (or less) quantify the effort, the number of kilometers traveled or the number of Caminos made. Stop the badly placed ego. Live the present time.

Illuminate the everyday and live the present moment. Thich Nhal Hanh - Zen master - "The serenity of the moment" - I read

Very recently, Google has published the ranking of searches most performed by Internet users; among them, one can find the question: "how to be happy?"

Learn to appreciate simple pleasures! A way of life. Walking on several days helps us!

Letter to Meneceus of Epicurus (died in 270 BC) <[Lien](#)>

Happiness is easy. Easy, no. Simple rather. Happiness is simple, it is within the reach of existence, so long as one ceases to compare one's state to that of others, one ceases to derive one's enjoyment only from the jealousy of the other.

But simplicity is the most difficult. Then we hurry to embrace ourselves in the excuses of allegiance, of habit, of fatigue. Beyond would begin, unpredictable, maddening, the adventure of ourselves



During the return, new wacky ideas trot me in the head.

For example this project already evoked that would provide a better understanding of migration flows through the ages via the study of the DNA of the inhabitants along the routes taken by the pilgrims since the Middle Ages.

From the middle of the eleventh to the fifteenth century, the pilgrimage lived its heyday, churches and chapels, came out of the hands of fellow builders, many monasteries and hospitals have welcomed pilgrims. Cities have sprung up from nothing for the sole purpose of meeting the needs of Jacquets which were between 200,000 and 500,000 each year. Craftsmen and merchants flocked from all over Europe. One can imagine that some of these remained on the spot.

The upheavals brought by the pilgrimage to Compostela throughout Europe are still poorly measured today. Under the impetus of the powerful Cluny Abbey, millions of pilgrims of all social classes left their homes in the direction of Galicia and its sacred sanctuary in Santiago de Compostela.

Excerpt from the excellent book: "On the tracks of Compostela" with Michelin map of Patrick Huchet and Yvon Boëlle

Ed. Ouest-France - 2010 - can be found on Amazon

Another project would be to conduct a big survey on the beliefs of pilgrims and walkers! Not only their religious beliefs, but also their expectations, their wishes, the "concrete" utopias they could adhere to ... via a questionnaire in the form of a quiz, relayed by a multilingual blog.

Opportunity to evaluate social beliefs ... because they also have a hard life.

For example, the belief in "the existence of two separate worlds: that of nature that science and technology decipher and board, that of society and the human actors that populate it".

Expenses this last day: Easyjet flight 54 € Santiago / Geneva, coffee 2 - Total: 56 € (1152 €)

Les comptes Accounts

Overall budget - Summary:

Total of my expenses 1152 €

36 stages + 1 day in Seville, 1 day in Santiago and 1 day to arrive in Seville and another to return to Geneva.

For a total of 40 days, an average expenditure of € 29 / day or € 32 / day compared to only 36 stages.

Daily budget to plan for such a trip ~ 30 € / d

A little more, though, than in Portugal.

In France between Geneva and Le Puy en Velay in 2016, I even arrived at 21 € / day only ... but there are many less temptations on this section especially if you find yourself alone at the cottage and there is no restaurant nearby. And then few tourist city crossings, no museums to visit. There are also many receptions jacquaires, finally 4 nights spent in the tent (on the 13 days of walking) help to survive with almost nothing..

Proposal for a specification for an ideal gite!

Some suggestions in bulk:

Covered area at the entrance and in the shade, with benches, accessible to pilgrims while waiting for the opening of the cottage.

Separate property spaces, taking care to avoid the possible propagation of sounds. Dormitories with some vertical separations for more privacy.

Special dorms for the disabled and snorers.

Discreet security lighting in any case not visible from the beds. Opt for low-level lighting.

Furniture: high beds with side protections, stool at the bottom of the ladder. Rigid beds to prevent swaying and squealing at night. Chairs with felt underfoot. Hooks for hanging backpacks. Sofa and armchairs in the common room. Individual burglar-proof safes.

Power outlets in sufficient numbers between the beds to charge the phones.

Possibility of concealment of frames, very narrow vertical frames with mosquito net to ensure ventilation.

Sanitary: Be concerned about the spread of noise. Silent flush, doors with sound dampers.

Well equipped kitchen. High cupboards glazed. Particular location for the victuals left by the pilgrims. Labels to date their abandonment.

Equipment and measures to prevent the spread of bed bugs: hooks for backpacks, magnifying glasses, multilingual brochure, appropriate detector if it exists, otherwise it is still necessary to invent it urgently.

NOTES

Patrick Huchet's books:

Life of pilgrims in the Middle Ages 2015 - 63p

An illustrated history of the pilgrimage in Europe in the Middle Ages. From Rome to Tours, Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle and Mont-Saint-Michel, the book describes the various motivations of travelers: devotion, request to the saints, adventure, penance, etc. It evokes the tradition of hospitality in the monasteries, the fervor of sanctuaries, signs and souvenirs of pilgrimages ...

A thousand years to Compostela: a famous epic - 2012

The work of a lover of crossroads. Beyond the history book of the ninth to the twentieth century, this book traces the epic of the pioneers of the post-war period. Before Compostelle became a phenomenon from the early 1980s - Patrick Huchet, child of May 68, who calls himself a non-believer, writes: "On the way, I almost became homeless and that's where I made the most beautiful encounters, that I saw the most beautiful landscapes ...".

On the paths of Compostela 2002 or Mille ans to Compostela. Pilgrimage of an agnostic, life experiences, encounters, the intoxication of outdoor life ...

The new paths of Compostela in the land of Spain - 2010 ... 5 routes all attested in the Middle Ages

At the Fire Heretics: A History of Heresies in France in the Middle Ages: An Illustrated Presentation of Heresies and Dissent of the Middle Ages and the Way the Church Faced It. In the Middle Ages, pilgrims converged from all over Europe. Compostela then lost its aura from the fifteenth century because of the Protestant reform that calls into question the cult of saints. In 1878, the relics of Saint-Jacques are authenticated by Pope Leo XIII. However, Lourdes gave him a lot of shade. It was easier to get there by train than to wander to Saint-Jacques. After Franco and the reopening of the Spanish border will give wings to the pilgrims of the twentieth. The coming of John Paul II in 1982 popularized Saint-Jacques. Many young people have followed their elders. And so, a signage was set up, cottages were created. Patrick Huchet, passionate about Romanesque art, lover of the great outdoors

<[Patrick Huchet](#)> <[Publications Huchet](#)>

Other links may be useful:

Celtiberia an important part of central Spain, inhabited by tribes where Celtic and Iberian elements had mixed together
www.cosmovisions.com/histCeltiberie.htm

The Middle Ages - Cultural life in Latin Europe

<http://www.cosmovisions.com/civEuropeLatine.htm>

The history of Rome

www.cosmovisions.com/ChronoRome.htm

The origin of the paths of Compostela - There are three major pilgrimages: Jerusalem, Rome, Compostela and three orders are concerned: the Temple, the Hospital and Santiago. In France, each department wants to have its end of "path of Saint-Jacques" and cities quarrel with the manna that the pilgrims are supposed to represent ... By asking the Council of Europe a recognition of the way of Compostelle, in 1982, the Spain has given it a political dimension.

<Understanding Compostela>

History and legends ... Compostela dreams. This distant Galician city, in the extreme north-west of Spain, owes its notoriety to St. James. In the Gospels, Matthew presents the apostle Saint James as "son of Zebedee and brother of John". Mark adds that Jesus gave the two brothers the nickname "Bonaergues, that is to say son of Thunder". After the death of Christ, the Acts of the Apostles tell us that Herod "removed by

the sword James the brother of John". In the seventh century, biographers inform that before he had "preached the Gospel in Spain as well as in other Western countries".

What is the origin of Compostela? Jacques was chosen in the eighth century as patron by Catholic Spain then under the Saracen yoke. In her name, she calls for help to begin the Recapture, this long struggle against the Muslim invader that will end in 1492 with the capture of Granada.

A beautiful legend was told about how the body of St. James was brought back to Galicia after his torment, "by a raft without sail or rudder". The arrival was followed by a series of incredible adventures: the disciples who had accompanied James asked a pagan queen, Luparia, to deposit the body of the Apostle in his lands. This one refuses and the unfortunate ones flee, pursued by the royal troops which, very appropriately, perish drowned thanks to the collapse of a bridge. Luparia then offers them wild oxen guarded by a dragon. They kill the dragon and tame the oxen, which converts Luparia who finally allowed burial into a place that was soon forgotten. ... Then, says the legend, it was rediscovered at the beginning of the ninth century.

<The legend of Saint Jacques> <[La légende de saint jacques](#)>

Who was Saint James? The legend of St. James ... Compostela reborn in the nineteenth, along with the pilgrimages to the Virgin - In 1884, Pope Leo XIII recognizes the relics of the apostle "in the days when the Church is particularly tormented by violent storms, while Christians need a more powerful exciting to practice virtue. " In 1936, Franco restored the patronage of Saint Jacques suppressed by the Republic.

The devotion to St. James was intensely resumed in Spain after the Second World War, Compostela appeared as a beacon for torn European countries and took a new political dimension. A century after Leo XIII, John Paul II, himself a pilgrim, gave a new beginning to this pilgrimage. Today, the paths of Compostela in France, become instruments of tourist promotion, are inscribed on World Heritage. But when it comes to pilgrimage, the true common good of humanity is neither in monuments nor in paths, but in the pilgrim approach. <[Lien](#)>

From Seville to Santiago day-to-day March 2016 <[Lien](#)>

Camino Caminando from Seville to Compostela on foot - Martine, 62 years old; Xavier 63 years old. Retired, geographers training ... a little geology, geography and history Useful links - The Clean Man is ... it's the foot, even if sometimes it happens to feel bad <[Lien](#)>

Pictures of Via de la Plata

<http://via.plata.free.fr/>

The Via de la Plata in 2008 in 41 steps <[Lien](#)>

Pathways to Compostela - Stories of a writer
<http://www.bourguignon-la-passion.fr/>

The Via de la Plata, from Seville to Santiago de Compostela
<http://compostelle.pierre-alglave.fr/santiago/via-de-la-plata.html>

The start is a risk, a rupture by Antoine de Baecque. Walking is all the more subversive because "thought was born from walking" - shepherds in transhumance, companions of the Tour de France or Duty, peddlers, smugglers ... and also the vagabond, the poor, the excluded. What sets us on? This activity, which seems self-evident, conceals a multiple story, from pilgrimages to contraband, from urban wanderings to political manifestos, from quests of

meaning to stories of survival. The journalist and walking historian Antoine de Baecque traces throughout his stimulating History of the March (Perrin) that of a conduct that is far from innocuous.

What makes the pilgrim walk? the "rupture of the departure", the "regeneration by the departure", the idea of "going towards a promised land but unknown, towards a goal which is an enigma whose solution is hope" <[Roaditude](#)>

Philosophical Dictionary and walker's vagabond To learn how to put one foot in front of the other differently, and move forward with philosophy ... by Christophe Lamoure - Walking is a world. It is home to a variety of species: the stroller, the pedagogue, the hiker; a surprising flora; boots, pumps, clogs; a contrasting geography: the mountain, the seashore, the labyrinths; original experiences: wandering, carelessness, subversion ... Walking is wisdom. It weaves, between the body and the spirit, the individual and the nature, the intimate and the common, bonds that give shape to a rich and sensible life. <[Lien](#)>

To testify that a communion is always possible beyond differences:

A Jew, a Christian, a Muslim walk from Jerusalem to Compostela - 11,000 kilometers on foot in 22 months at a rate of 30 to 40 km per day, across 16 countries. Three men of different faiths and generations who did not know each other before - Mahdi Alioui, Richard Bois and Yoann Dobensky <[Lien](#)> <[Lien](#)>

A Jew and a Muslim walk together [YouTube](#)

La via de la Plata, de Séville à Santiago de Compostelle
<http://compostelle.pierre-alglave.fr/santiago/via-de-la-plata.html>

MUSIC

The song of the pilgrims of Compostela Ultreïa <[Lien](#)>

Music of reflection and relaxation on the Path <[Lien](#)>

Traditional song from the Middle Ages, which pilgrims of the Camino de Santiago used to sing whilst entering Santiago de Compostela's Cathedral 'Ultreia!' <[Lien](#)>

LAND ART

Landart de Yves-Alain Répond. Editions Artmazia, 2004
<http://catalogue.cidoc.ch/French/ListTitl.htm>

Land Art : la démarche artistique de Sylvain Meyer
<https://www.artnet.ch/photographie/sylvain-meyer/>

Amazing Stone Balancing Art 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bZWZkWZFM4>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=df1dvHMSUk>

This man is the master of stone balancing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9AinWZARA8>

Stone Balance sur France 3

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOf2jM0W4uc>

Les Cairns, les miroirs de l'âme <[Lien](#)>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jMjDYC84Gg>

FILMS - VIDEOS

Saint-Jacques de Compostelle, un chemin magique – une excellente vidéo de Jérôme Bono qui résume bien cette aventure au quotidien. 25:26 <[You Tube](#)>

Compostelle: d'abord un chemin de rencontres! un film d'Alain de la Porte <[You Tube](#)>

Miam Miam Dodo sur le Chemin de Compostelle <[Lien](#)>

Les Chemins de Compostelle - 171 min - Depuis le IXème siècle, des millions de pèlerins du monde entier s'engagent sur cette voie initiatique. Conférence inédite de Patrick Burensteinas, alchimiste. + Carte des Chemins, <[Lien](#)>

Camino de Santiago 2013 <[Lien](#)>

Film Compostelle, le chemin de la vie - Le réalisateur Freddy Mouchard a suivi pendant 3 ans le parcours de plusieurs pèlerins qui se rendent à Saint-Jacques de Compostelle - Chemin initiatique <[Youtube](#)>

Film « Saint Jacques la Mecque » <[Lien](#)> <[Lien](#)>

Film « Va, vis et deviens » <[Lien](#)>

Film “The Way” - 2010 - A father heads overseas to recover the body of his estranged son who died while traveling the "El camino de Santiago," and decides to take the pilgrimage himself. <[Youtube](#)>

Itinéraires du Monde

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