

Camino Primitivo 2013: feedback from Paul and Rob Smith, June 2015

We were following the 2013 guide. We found it very useful and still pretty much up to date.

P 16 Albergue in Escamplero: 30 places not 12 and €5 not €2 (the municipal albergue bed cost seemed to be uniformly €5). 3 bathrooms.

P 17 between Premono and Paladin (slightly off the main camino, but rejoinable from it) is a new bar and shop in Valduno. Casa Dylsia opened Nov 2014 Well advertised from Escamplero and with a pilgrim friendly owner. They are on Facebook (with full address details) if you need more info. We had an excellent breakfast there.

P 19 We had difficulty finding the albergue in Cornellana monastery. It would be better in my opinion to instruct pilgrims to look for the iron archway to the right of the monastery building and go through it, turning left into the courtyard of the albergue.

P20 Casazorrina – the route instructions mentions a ford and wooden bridge. We stopped at the first ford we saw with a wooden bridge, but it appeared to lead to a field path which didn't go anywhere. But we were tempted to follow it. Only after we had doubts did we press on a little further and discover the ford and bridge being referred to. Perhaps it can say to ignore the first smaller ford and neighbouring bridge and press on to the next one.

P31-2 Berducedo. There are beds available in the Casa Corondeno in addition to the municipal albergue and Camin Antiguo. I'm afraid I don't have any further details, but that make three possible places to stay after doing the Hospital part of the route, or going round via Pola Allende which we did as it was a very foggy day. But it did make for our longest day – 30km and we ended up walking into Berducedo at about 7pm. Fortunately it is high summer so the daylight lasts until 10pm.

The meagre breakfast described in the guide amounted to tea and coffee etc being available, but anything to eat you had to have bought the night before in the village shop.

We got as far as Fonsagrada and stopped walking at that stage, hoping to return and complete it sometime soon. We then caught a local bus into Lugo, spent a night there and then got ALSA coaches (very comfortable indeed) via Ponferrada back to Oviedo for our flight home.

The Primitivo is rewarding, if much harder work than the Frances. We caught a glimpse of a seemingly unending stream of pilgrims at Valcarce when the bus stopped briefly there. Some may feel that the Frances is becoming overcrowded and less of an adventure. We met a few on the Primitivo who specifically had sought out the quieter, more solitary feel it has because they had found the Frances too noisy. It seems it's become something of a victim of its own success.