

Pilgrim Guides to Spain #2: The Camino Mozárabe or Vía de la Plata, C: Zamora-Bragança-Santiago, 2005 ed. - February 2007 and later updates

2013 Update: I did the route, from Zamora to Braganza, in **March/April 2013** and found it to be, generally, very well marked. It was also exceedingly wet and I take exception to guides that tell me there is generally no water or that streams are small!

I have the following comments on the guide book and the previous up-date:

P 13 line 6 – the path is no longer signed to go L over a stone bridge to the Ermita, it continues up the paved road, about 2 Kms to the road junction and turns L along the road, under the motorway and onto a dirt track, this continues to be well marked until arriving at La Hiniesta.

La Hiniesta line 10 – after passing under the railway bridge there is, currently, a building site and the path deviates slightly. I imagine that how much it deviates will depend until the work finishes.

Line 14 before arriving at **Casa de Palomares** there is a stream to cross, how much water there is will depend on the prevailing weather conditions.

P 14 – Valdeperdices – 1 bar opens at 3 pm

Line 6 – the road downhill is marked as the way and leads to a picnic area, unfortunately the signs then stop. The only way to find the route out is to head back up to the church.

P 15 – Muelas del Pan line 2 – the bar Tomasita does not have a Pension but does special prices for pilgrims in the Casa Rural. The price varies according to the time of year but my experience was that it is very good value.

Line 11 – after passing bar/rte the path is signed uphill to the L, turn R passed the Guardia Civil and follow the signs which will lead back down to the dam, this is a short cut avoiding the main road.

P 16 lines 6 & 7 – the arrows don't seem to fit with the guide and I saw no evidence of Las Encruzadas at all.

B Route via Fonfria – line 5, just before arriving at the very minor road you come on a level with wind turbines, then cross the minor road where there is a mojon pointing straight ahead until it veers L downhill.

Cerezal de Aliste – the bar opens at 13.00

Line 7 – **Take care: there is a mojon on the wrong side of the cemetery, pointing straight up the road, DO NOT GO THAT WAY, the path is arrowed to the L and behind the cemetery. The village visible at the top of the road is in completely the wrong direction.**

P 17 – Bermillo de Alba – the bar/tienda opens only at weekends

Fonfria - line 2- I did not find a Bar Alfredo but there is a new Albergue, technically still under construction but it has bunks and hot water and will be really well equipped if/when it is finished!

The key is either in the Ayuntamiento(Town Hall) or Bar Paco, on the right after the Town Hall. At the moment the albergue is free.

Formillos de Aliste – I got lost here, I followed the signs past the lavadero and kept straight on, I then saw no more signs and walked in a complete circle. I was probably having a bad day but maybe I wasn't!

P 19 Alcañices – as you enter the town there are signs leading to the Albergue (€5). Bar Maria y Manolo is no longer a Pension but they do food.

As I left Alcañices I could not relate the arrows with the guide, not sure if the path has been altered, it was not until line 33 and the open grassland that it made sense, this is all well signed.

P 20 Trabazos has an albergue in the main street.

P 21 Puente Internacional has a bar/rte on the Spanish side but the one on the Portuguese side is for sale at the moment.

Quintanilha – Refugio, just after the church bear left and continue to the top of the hill. The 'hospitalero' works but his mother has the key (the white house with the kennel outside in Rua do Silo) otherwise ask in the bar and someone will probably help.

From here I can't offer much, the path went straight into a river somewhere after Refega, I think it was supposed to go along the edge of a stream but weather conditions had been extreme, after that I gave up.

Braganza – the Casa de la Misericordia is a complex of care for the elderly, the accommodation for pilgrims is in a 'Carers Residence' but you have to go to the main complex first. They provide food and accommodation and it is an interesting social experience but access to the accommodation depends on someone being home, you get no key, this can result in hanging around for a long time if you want to go out and sight see. If freedom of movement is very important to you may be better off in the Pousada de Juventude.

August 2012

p32 new Xunta refuge at Trasmiras

From Rosemary Goodchild, June 2010:

Trabanoz - albergue closed but Hostale on Main road.

Vinhais Pensoa Ribiere - adequate, old fashioned. 30 euros D.B&B

Las Muelas del Pan - El Vedral Hostal excellent at 25 euros D,B&B (5 mins from Santiago church on waymarked route.)

Earlier Updates

General New waymarking has been added since this guide was prepared, in the form of engraved stone markers. These are reported to start after Hiniesta (page 13). The information given here concerns mainly accommodation and services. You may find changes to the route in some places but these will be described in detail when a completely new edition comes out, hopefully for the beginning of 2008. In the meantime, if any user wants details of what 2006 pilgrims have reported in this respect, please email the editor: alisonraju*btopenworld.com *[To reduce the risk of spam, we're removing direct e-mail links from this site. To use this address, copy it into your normal e-mail program, but replace the '*' with the conventional '@', before sending your message.]*

Note that the route is still a solitary one and may not suit those who do not like extended periods of their own company

p.12 I.6 New *refugio* now open just below the Iglesia San Ciprián.
I.7 *Sello* also from cathedral – and free entry.

p.13 I.21 Yes, the first of the new stone markers appears here (Camino Portugués – Vía de la Plata); more at Valdeperdices, Muelas and many more to come, given the number of holes in the ground with cement bases awaiting a *mojón*. Just occasionally the arrows face in the opposite direction, but common sense should avoid you retracing your steps!

p. 14 Valdeperdices Basic accommodation (mattresses) on the floor of the community hall. Ask for Antonio at the Club de Jubilados (old peoples' centre), who is also reported to do a meal for you.

Valdeperdices. Albergue (this may be the same as the above) but only with mattresses.

Antonio Mateo is the contact for the Posada de Peregrinos 692 16 82 34.

San Pedro de la Nave: visit only between 10 to 13 and 17 to 20, not open on Monday

I.11 Signs now keep you on road, taking you past a picnic area with fuente.

I.36 May be worth adding, after *to continue*: from church, retrace your steps... (some may be tempted to continue ahead, or turn L after visiting the church).

p. 15. line 6: replace "*very well waymarked*" by "*no more waymarked*"

line 6 The *waymarking* is increasingly obscured by cistus, but plough on uphill and you should reach the track!

line 7 to 9: Replace by: Continue uphill up to a wide gravel track that comes from your L

line 16 - 19: KSO, ignoring turns, for 4 km till you reach a fence on your R. Turn right here and after 1 km turn left downhill, then uphill. ... At junction....

I.25 **Muelas del Pan** *TR El Vedal*: excellent room + meal 25€.

Ricobayo (Unmarked?) shop reported in a house (need to ask, opening hours uncertain)

I.37 **Ricobayo** Arrows very thin – thank goodness for the guide!

End of the page: From Ricobayo to Fonfria, very few and old FA (*flechas amarillas*). From Ricobayo to "Las Encruzadas", follow the signposts with white and green lines.

2,5 km Las Encruzadas: is not a village, but a crossing of many tracks.

B: Route via Fonfria

Line 9: after (... *tables to your left*), add: from here again to Cerezal, follow the signposts with white and green lines

7km (instead of 3,5) Cerezal de Aliste

p. 16 Last paragraph of section headed "Route via Fonfría" should read "1 to 2km" (not 12km).

I.6 (*waymark hard to see*) new mojón

I.12 For quite a way, between Muelas and Cerezal, there are more green and white posts than arrows.

p. 17 **5 km Bermillo de Alba** Bar/tienda no longer open. Another report, received at the same time, says: *I can confirm that bar does open, but as in most villages, opening times are to suit locals, not random pilgrims!*

From Formillos de Aliste up to Alcañices, very well waymarked.

p.18 I.5 **Ceadea** Also has a **bar**, but as above.

I.9 *Lane* is marked "Mellanes".

I.37 *a)* this is the direction of the mojón/arrow/Santiago cross.

p. 19 Alcanices Refugio facilities reported no longer available here. *Pension María y Manolo is now closed.*

line 3. No, not *LH hard shoulder* as there is now a concrete path to R of N122 all the way to the *Convento*. You pass Hostal Argentino on the way. *Pensión María y Manolo 'cerrado por reformas'*.

I.27 Road improvement means that immediately after the hotel, as *mojón* indicates, take the track to the RH side of the crash barrier.

I.32 (*not marked*) arrow on stone on ground on main track.

9 lines before the end of the page: KSO. At junction of similar tracks, turn right (not marked): take the most important track that goes downhill and uphill (150m).

4 lines before the end of the page: KSO, ignoring turns L and R for 4 km, passing after 1 km along a new farm on your left.

3 lines before the end of the page: replace the paragraph by: When you reach the first houses of Sejas, continue on the main calle, to the centre of the village

p. 20 Sejas de Aliste No shop but bar does food at lunchtime.

7 km (and not 5 km) San Martin de Pedroso

Trabazos Shop. New refugio reported here in 2006. 2008: No sign of refugio.

I.27 (*no arrows*) now a mojón.

I.31 Cross road and (*pass behind small white house*).

p. 21 Quintanilha Bar/shop, reported excellent. Refugio also has very good reports.

Quintanilha: *Refugio is very good; in the bar, there is nothing to buy and they don't sell bocadillos. There is a restaurante, a little bit beyond the refugio, near a strange tower that looks like a minaret, but it is only open during the WE. If you ask before, you may eat a very good meal.*

I.16 The restaurant with the clock tower that serves lunchtime meals is Casa do Freixo.

p. 22, line 1: "...to pick up track to its RH side." *Alternatively*: go onto road (very quiet) . Turn L , 200m later bar/restaurant with arrow at right down lane opposite, which brings you back to sports ground.

I.4 Bare is **Babe**.

Gimonde: Hotel – Restaurante on the main road: Casa de Mestra 273 302 510 www.amontesinho.com, a little bit expensive, restaurante: Casa da Escola with delicious meat!

p. 24. From Bragança to Vinhais, many blue and yellow shells, but never when you have to decide where to go!

p. 25 Castrelos The "strange white buildings" are dovecotes.

I.33 **Lagomar** Bar looks as it is simply the local social club.

Castrelos: Sixth and seventh paragraphs: to be replaced by: At next junction, KSO to cross Rio Baceiro, then turn R in front of white house on other side. Kso, following the arrows., up to the 103. Here the arrows stop. Cross the 103, take the large white track that goes KSO uphill. At the top, you see Soria in front of you. KSO up to the tarmac road.

p.25 I.29 Turn **R** not L in front of house.

I.33 **Soeira** Bar looked defunct.

p. 26. First line: replace the first sentence by: Just after the last house, go KSO downhill. (not waymarked). End of this paragraph: very beautiful section!

I.10 Very overgrown section.

Third paragraph: other option: you follow the 103 for 2 km (waymarked).

Vinhais: Tourist Office (very friendly) is on the second large modern plaza:said pilgrims can be accommodated at Seminario.

p. 27. First lines: *Originally a fortified town, a very nice town which is under a beautiful renovation.*

p. 28 Sobreiro de Baixo New bar (but not open early).

I.6 Turn **R** at junction, then turn L at junction and R at next, road soon becoming gravel track.

I.10 Just after *bus shelter* arrows now take you ½ L up hillside; at 3-way fork take R path (arrowed); at top KSO down; at T-junction R to road and in about 350m R to Santuario/Aboá/Candedo. (I.19)

I.31 At one point seemingly equal tracks (confused by tractors trails!) go L and R after a RH bend; necessary to keep R (if you go L, as I mistakenly did, you go a longer way round and lose the – all too rare – arrows).

p. 29 line 1: It may be possible to stay at the Centro Cultural/Centro de Día; the staff are lovely and the elderly interested and affectionate; hot shower, sofa and meals on top of the warmest hospitality.

Edral 2 bars. Refugio facilities now available - ask in one of the bars.

P 30. line 3: **Soutochao.** A new plaque with map of the area and places to visit shows the Camino de Santiago taking a more cross-country route, (and less tarmac) but I was not confident that I would find the arrows – and with no guidebook as back-up... Ditto later at the hamlet of Traseirexa.

Vilardevos. Second paragraph, , 4th line, after OU 301 all the time, add: After km 9, turn R to Vedesa (arrow indicates it), in a minor road: you may find your way thanks plaques with local maps. You return to the 301 at km 6. This “little” detour leads you through a very nice countryside, that is a little rest in a long section on the main road.

From Viladevos to Verin, the road is new, a little bit busy, and there are no arrows.

Verin: The tourist office hosted now also an Albergue with approx 16 beds, without kitchen.

I.15 Good picnic area by OU3210.

I.16 From here to Verin there has been major road improvement, so road is wider, faster – and possibly safer with no tight bends; at times you can walk on gravel *pista* at the side.

I.17 **OU310**

I.19 After 2nd roundabout, arrowed R – cuts off a loop in main road.

I.36 **Castillo de Monterrei.** Yes there is a 20 place refugio, but check with Tourist Office in Verin re opening times. Castle and hamlet well worth a visit. There is no need to head out on the N525: from the Verin refugio go to right of Capilla de San Lázaro and swing L then R to join the old paved way up to the castle. You can then descend by the road to the N525, some 2km from Verin and turn R for 3km to Albarelos.

P 32. Second paragraph, third line: becomes a walled lane and after a very grassy lane, very wet when it rains !

I.22 *Track* completely clear.

P 33. Couso de Limia. Replace the paragraph by: KSO on the road to enter Sandias.

I.35 The 24 bed Albergue de Peregrinos (de Sandias) is immediately on the R, after you fork L.

P 34. Sandias add: In Sandias, either fork L to go to the new Albergue, 100 m before a junction with traffic lights, onto a small tarmac road, rejoining the 525 at km 205, or continue to the lights and then turn L along the 525

I.9 Hamlet of As Pegas.

I.16 The arrows confirm that you should continue uphill – ‘desvío provisional’.

I.17 *first bus shelter*, then turn L at mojón (and cut a corner) to join road shortly before San Salvador.

p.35 I.11 **Roiroz** Turn L and then R in village and soon L (sign between houses) onto grassy path that becomes walled and leads to woodland and a hamlet of pleasant houses. After passing seating area, fork R down green lane to a spring on R. 200m later veer R down walled lane through wood and heath. Each fork has a mojón. Descend to a little ford with stepping stones and up a paved way leading to a village (Espineiro). KSO then fork L uphill and soon R on paved track; signs lead you to Turzas (not named till after) and then to minor road. KSO to T junction where you can *either*, at cross, take camino path at 20/c, (signed Vila), which comes out on road AFTER Santa Marina, or turn R on road and then divert into village. It is well worth visiting – interesting church, Pazo de Veran do Bispo, lavadero, capela, fonte. The tomb of Sta Marina was discovered here in reign of Afonso II 759-842 and first temple dates from

that time. Does that sound familiar? Actual church is late 12th century with later tower; apparently wall painting and morisco decoration inside. Back on road, pass cruceiro and Peto das Animas and then fork R onto concrete road. L at T junction soon after and down sandy track with chestnuts, oak, broom, mimosa and distant views including to Ourense. At little road, L to Aveledo and R down walled path to next village where fork R, KSO and at road (from Santa Marina) R at T and then L on main road to Ourense. This way avoids much road, is inevitably slower, but follows some beautiful, timeless paths.

I.33 *the variant...joins the present route.* Eh? But I am the variant!

p.36 I.21 On the main road, just before you join it, is a good Café-Restaurant, with *menú del día*.

p.40 I.27 For *main* read minor.

I.29 Lane now well-gravelled.

I.32 **Casas Novas:** only cross N525 if you went to bar, not if you KSO.

I.38 *school buildings*, under bridge then KSO on path; L at road and follow signs to albergue.

p. 44 I.19 Ascent is now cut by motorway but arrowed R at T, then L across bridge and up minor road (I.21).

I.30 *back L.* Soon L and R back over motorway and KSO to N525.

I.31 **Castro Dozón:** Hostal Castro Dozón now closed. No other accommodation at present though the Xunta de Galicia has plans for a refuge here: info. welcome. '*Refugio provisional* in the *piscinas*.

I.37 *Earth track* now tarmac with small factory.

I.39 *veering R*, just before tarmac ends, fork right *onto a sunken lane*.

p.45 I.1 *on its LH side*, with a section of old road off to L.

I.5 **314/66**

I.28 *trees.* Currently a diversion due to building of AVE: no doubt others to come...

I.30 As well as restaurant to L at roundabout there is another ahead on R.

I.31 *Mouriscade* is the name of a Finca; the FFCC (*ferrocarriles*) station is simply Estación Lalín.

p. 46 I.2 *on the road.* Bar/tapas on R.

I.19 **A Laxe** Good refuge reported, kitchen (but no equipment). Bars up the road serve food. I think this is the refuge which is also referred to as Bendoiro! (not to be confused with A Bandeira...). Excellent restaurant 'María José' just up from albergue on main road.

I.22 *grassy lane* upgraded to sandy track.

p.47 I.30 *camino de tierra* now a road.

p. 50 Capilla de Santiaguíño Large new refugio (buy food in Ponte Ulla).

I.15 Excellent 32 bed *refugio* goes by many names. The sello stamp is Vedra; it is also referred to as Outeiro and the hospitalera says the place is San Pedro de Vilanova. Only the one refugio!

p.51 I.36 *100m later turn R* (not L) *to cross a bridge...*

p.52 I.3 Not sure about this; arrows are for KSO, with church on R – and you soon reach the 3 lanes and pergolas.

* * * * *