



Fostering the enduring tradition of the Camino

## Camino de Levante

**General Description:** The Camino de Levante starts in Valencia and covers approximately 1,200 kilometers to Santiago. It passes through the monumental cities of Toledo and Avila, and it joins the [Vía de la Plata](#) in Zamora. Between Albacete and Medina del Campo, the Levante intersects and occasionally merges with the Camino del Sureste, which goes from Alicante to Santiago, but confusion is minimal and the two routes are generally well distinguished. From Zamora, pilgrims can choose to continue on the [Via de la Plata](#) through Benavente, connecting with the [Camino francés](#) in Astorga; or they may take the more westerly [Camino sanabrés](#), which passes through Ourense on its way to Santiago.

**Waymarking:** This route is well marked by yellow arrows and official Camino bollards. The signage is generally quite adequate but is occasionally sparse in some small towns. The guidebook published by the [Asociación de Amigos del Camino de Santiago de la Comunidad Valenciana](#) (available in both Spanish or English) has excellent maps and is essential.

**Terrain:** The terrain is for the most part not difficult, but the long distances involved on some stages, combined with the heat of much of the year, can be exhausting. The first four days are almost exclusively on asphalt and this can very hard on the feet. A *cercanías* (commuter) train line runs as far as Moixent if you wish to avoid some of that. There will be many days with little or no shade—this is a camino of wide open spaces. Until Zamora, most of the Camino crosses flat or undulating land dedicated to agricultural uses—from the rice, orange and fruit orchards of Valencia, to the vineyards, olive trees and fields of grain that predominate in the other provinces of this Camino. The big skies and endless horizons are majestic, with beautiful sunrises and sunsets, but there is not a lot of variety in the landscape. There are two days of mountain walking before Ávila that rank right up there with the Poladura-Pajares stretch on the Salvador, the Fuenfria pass on the Camino de Madrid, Hospitales on the primitivo, O Cebreiro on the francés, and the Senda de Remona on the Vadiniense. It is awe-inspiring and spectacular. This is castle country, and you will spend many hours walking towards impressive ancient fortresses perched on hills and peaks. The stages on this Camino frequently end in small historic towns or cities with beautiful plazas, churches, museums and castles—places such as Xátiva, Almansa, Chinchilla, Arévalo, Medina del Campo, Tembleque, San Clemente, Toro and El Toboso are all towns where you can easily fill an afternoon.

**When to go:** This route will be very hot in July and August, particularly between Valencia and Zamora. Spring would be ideal—the fields bright green, the wildflowers rampant and you can follow spring northward. In the fall there are harvests to enjoy. Even in the "shoulder" months it can be very hot.

**Accommodation:** Between Valencia and Zamora, nearly two-thirds of the customary stopping points have albergues. All of the other destinations have small hostales, pensiones, casas rurales or hoteles. These accommodations almost always cost 20 € or less (2013), but

are occasionally as high as 30 €. These prices are for single rooms; sharing a double reduces the cost quite a bit. New albergues seem to be coming on line continually. At least three new albergues (Alpera, Torrijos and San Clemente) opened in the spring/summer 2013.

**Guidebooks:** The guidebook and maps published in English and in Spanish editions by the [Asociación de Amigos del Camino de Santiago de la Comunidad Valenciana](#) is absolutely necessary. It has excellent maps, great walking directions, details about things to see and lists of accommodations. The book can be purchased in Valencia at the association's office (limited hours and days) or ordered online. Although the bank charges for the money transfer may double the price of the book, do not leave home without it! Information is also available on their [website](#). One can also e-mail for information to [info@vieragrino.com](mailto:info@vieragrino.com).

**Internet links:** Internet links: The ultimate resource on the Internet is the site of the [Asociación de Amigos del Camino de Santiago de la Comunidad Valenciana](#). This is the source for the guidebook. (site is in Spanish; guide is available in both English and Spanish editions) [The Confraternity of Saint James](#) has an overview page on the Levante. For a general description of stages and accommodations, consult [Mundicamino](#). These two blogs will prove to be very useful:

- From 2013: [levante2013.blogspot.com](http://levante2013.blogspot.com).
- From 2009: [pilgrimpace.wordpress.com](http://pilgrimpace.wordpress.com).

The Levante posts can be found by scrolling down on the left side of the blog to the "Archives" tab. Look through September, October, and November of 2009. The Camino de Santiago forum has a section dedicated to the [Camino de Levante](#). Check out this [post from 2013 in the Camino de Santiago forum](#) for detailed nuts and bolts information on stages and accommodation.

**Video links:** From the Camino video series produced by the Spanish television channel TVE:

- [Camino de Levante, part 1](#), 0:26:41, Spanish, 2004
- [Camino de Levante, part 2](#), 0:25:28, Spanish, 2004

**Other remarks:** The Camino de Levante has five or six unavoidable stages of 30 to 35 kms, so some longer days are necessary. However none of these days has any elevation gain at all which makes them manageable. Generally, it is easy to plan stages that are 28 kms or less. In spring 2013 many people living on the Camino de Levante commented on the growing number of pilgrims. The numbers are increasing at a rapid rate, but the totals are still low. This camino is attractive to cyclists because so much of it is on unpaved agricultural roads. Because this route is largely away from tourist areas, reasonable Spanish language skills will be very useful.

Many thanks to Laurie Reynolds who walked this route in 2013 and who provided this much needed update on this route. She is willing to respond to queries at <mailto:laurie.reynolds@gmail.com>.