

Camino del Norte (The Northern Way)

When the Peninsula was again under the control of Christian rulers, the French Way took center stage over the other routes, including the Northern Way. In the last decades the Northern Way recovered its peak and today it is one of the favorite options, due to the beauty of its surroundings and the absolute prominence of the Cantabrian Sea.

Also called Camino de la Costa, the Route starts in Irún and crosses the communities of the Basque Country, Cantabria and Asturias, to enter Galicia through the beautiful town of Ribadeo. The diversity of the territory and the landscape is one of the attractions of this itinerary, which encounters the hardest stages throughout the stages of Euskadi.

Cantabria will be a rest for the pilgrim who, however, will circulate on roads and tracks. Asturias and Galicia will return the walker to rural and mountainous terrain, with the last stages already far from the sea.

Some sections of this coastal route are literally attached to the coastline, offering great views of beaches and cliffs. From the surfer beach of **Zarautz** to the stately beach of **El Sardinero** in Santander or the famous inland beach of Gulpiyuri in the Asturian town of **Naves**.

Others pass through the interior, combining the mountains, valleys and forests. The itinerary always runs close to towns, medium-sized towns and cities such as **San Sebastián** or Bilbao, Castro Urdiales already in Cantabria, the beautiful Santillana del Mar or Comillas with Gaudí's Capricho.

Upon arriving in Asturias, the pilgrim will be able to enjoy Llanes and its Indian houses; Villaviciosa, famous for its cider; or Mondoñedo, one of the old seven capitals of Galicia.

Continuation with the Primitive and French Way

As it passes through Asturias, the Northern Way connects with the Primitive Way at the height of Sebrayo. The pilgrim must choose at this point between continuing to Oviedo and completing the 14 stages of the Primitive Way or continuing the Route along the Cantabrian coast to Gijón.

In Arzúa, where more than 780 kilometers have been traveled from Irún, the Northern Route joins the French Way to reach Santiago de Compostela. It is the second longest route to the Galician capital, after the Vía de la Plata, very intense and attractive.

The Northern Way is a well-marked route, especially as it passes through the País Vasco. The increase in pilgrims registered in recent years has led this itinerary to reinforce its network of hostels and accommodation, so far enough to cover the demand for walkers and bicigrinos.

We remind you that from Easter to October 31, **the backpack transport service is available on the Northern Way.**

The Northern Way under sail

The North is one of the few Jacobean routes that can also be done by sea. Under the name 'Sail the

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way' or Navigate the Way, pilgrims will be able to travel the Cantabrian coast in sailing boats. The ports of Ferrol, A Coruña or Finisterre will be the first stop on this journey, which must continue on foot to Santiago. Whoever makes the Camino de Santiago by sailing will be able to get the Compostela as long as they complete a hundred miles of sailing and travel the last stretch on foot, from Monte do Gozo to the Cathedral, to receive the Compostela.

How to get to the starting point?

How to get to Irún:

How to get to Irún by train: There are long-distance trains to Irún from Madrid and Barcelona with a stopover in Saragossa and connections to other Spanish cities such as Pamplona, Segovia, Burgos, Valladolid or Lleida, for example. You can check the timetables at [Renfe](#) (+34 934 61 67 08). Besides, there are non-stop trains from Donostia-San Sebastián at [Euskotren](#) (+34 943 450 131). To check the trains from France to Irún, go to [SNCF](#) (+33 0892 353 535).

How to get to Irún by bus: [Alsa](#) connects Irún with Madrid, and also other cities in Spain such as Oviedo, Santander, Burgos or Vitoria. Those who want to come from Valencia, Murcia or Teruel have bus lines with [Bilmanbus](#). From Barcelona, you can come with Vibasa - [Monbús](#).

How to get to Irún by car: There are some 470 kilometres from Madrid to Irún, it takes at least 4 and a half hours to get there using the toll-free motorway A-1 (autovía) and then the toll highway AP1 (autopista), which you can avoid using toll-free alternatives such as other autovías or regular roads, but they increase the distance and duration of the drive.

How to get to Irún by plane: The nearest airport to Irún is that of [San Sebastian](#) (+34 943 668 500). It does not offer many destinations but it has daily flights to Madrid and Barcelona, as well as an interesting list of city buses that take passengers to Irún for an affordable price.

Asociaciones del Camino de Santiago

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El Camino

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