

The Camino portugués

Notes on and clarifications and corrections to the Confraternity of St. James
Camino *portugués* downloadable PDF file

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We walked the Camino portugués in late June 2009 using the Confraternity of St. James' *portugués* guide downloaded from their website (csj.org.uk). As usual for the CSJ guides it contains the needed information and we like the light weight. We kept some notes as we went along and would like to offer some thoughts on the content.

First of all we walked only from Tui so cannot make any comment about the route before that.

I think our most important observation has to do with distances as they are presented in the guide. There is of course an extensive system of milestones on this route, at least on the Galician portion. These milestones give distances to Santiago in kilometers, ostensibly to the meter (*e.g.*, 85.152 km). The distances in the guide are using some other system and they differ from those on the milestones generally it seemed by several kilometers. The guide should absolutely use the milestone distances, probably rounded to the nearest tenth of a kilometer (*e.g.*, 85.2 km). It was quite difficult keeping track of distances and locations with the two systems in play. Secondly there is the format of distances in the guide which is 1) distance to the present location from the last described location with a distance, 2) the accumulated distance from Porto and 3) the total distance Porto to Santiago. This last number is always 240.5 km and repeating it at every instance is not of much value. What *would* be of great value is the remaining distance to Santiago.

Now for some specific suggestions, most of which are – we think – clarifications, although a few are – we think – corrections.

Pg 27: The Hostal Generosa was serviceable and well located for a night in Tui but “quaint” is not a descriptive word that comes to mind. “Rundown” or “dingy” perhaps.

Pg 28: The description of the entry into O Porriño doesn't come close to doing it the horrific justice that it deserves. “Shortly turn Left and KSO for approximately 3 km” is in reality a 3 km slog through an industrial zone, straight as an arrow, no shade, dusty, noisy and a horrendous amount of car and truck traffic immediately at one's left elbow. Decidedly one of the *worst* 3 km stretches we have encountered on either the *francés* or the *portugués*!

Page 29: In the information on O Porriño in the box I would suggest this clarification: “To reach it, at the roundabout with five street lamps cross through

bearing slightly left of straight on. Do not make a hard left turn. KSO some blocks to arrive at a pedestrian zone. Where this ends, turn left, cross the railroad tracks and the Río Louro to reach the albergue immediately LEFT on the other side of the river. NOTE: If arriving in O Porriño to stay at the albergue, near the end of the pedestrian zone stop at the *Oficina Consistial* (sp?) in the castle-like building first in order to pay and to obtain your sello and sheet.”

Pg 29: We never saw a tunnel or slip road and would suggest “KSO passing under the motorway and, just beyond a few businesses on the right side of the road, turn RIGHT up a lane with a sign “Carracido” then LEFT and shortly...” We never found the partially (totally?) obscured waymark.

Pg 31: “...Casa Figueron on your Right. Shortly after this turn LEFT...” not RIGHT. The restaurant is named Choles, by the way.

“KSO downhill at times on minor roads sometimes *very* steeply...”

Pg 32: Albergue in Redondela posts hours of 13.00 to 22.00, at least in late June 2009.

Pg 33: “Cross the road carefully, continue uphill away from the highway bearing slightly left and after several hundred meters turn LEFT steeply uphill to a *f fuente...*”

Pg 33: In the paragraph “Cross the road VERY carefully...” the instruction to “Take a loop off to the Left and rejoin...” we never saw the loop. This stretch of walking on the highway verge, not to mention the crossing was incredibly dangerous!! We cannot stress this too much!

Pg 33: In the sentence “Follow the road round to the Left...” we would delete “to the Left”.

Pg 33: Concerning getting through Arcade we lost the arrows and shell tiles at the first traffic signal at the bottom of town (100 m before the RR crossing) and had to ask for directions. The route turns RIGHT at this first traffic signal and a shell tile picks up the route on the LEFT after one block.

Pg 33: The diversion described in the last paragraph is still in place (June 2009).

Pg 34: The albergue in Pontevedra posts hours of 13.00 to 22.00, at least in late June 2009.

Pg 39: Concerning the albergue in Briallós, there are indeed cooking facilities but we found essentially no cooking implements – pots, pans, utensils, knives, nothing. There may be a restaurant and tienda 1.5 km away but on the opposite side of the paved road that one follows arriving in the village there is a *tienda* with

basic supplies in a private house. There is no sign or other marking but perhaps look for empty beer bottle cases outside. Ring the doorbell. This is perhaps 200 m distance from the albergue.

Pg 42: We would suggest for the first sentence "After passing under a high roadway bridge KSO country trails for about 4 kms..."

Pg 43: Second paragraph, first sentence we suggest "Past the bridge, turn RIGHT and shortly thereafter pass a rest area on your LEFT."

Pg 43: Padrón has a large Sunday market which might make finding waymarks problematical but just KSO with the river on your left. The shady rows of plane trees will lead you to the Igrexa Santiago. There you turn RIGHT to continue on the route or LEFT over the bridge to go to the albergue.

Pg 44: In the paragraph about the albergue we would suggest that the first sentence read "Facing the side entrance to the Igrexa Santiago turn LEFT..." The albergue has poor clothes washing facilities with the sink indicated for this being the kitchen sink. Wouldn't pass public hygiene regulations on the western side of the Atlantic!

Pg 46: Suggest "Follow the arrows passing behind the church and on reaching the roadway follow the large peregrino sign RIGHT into a lane. Cut through a hedge and cross the railroad tracks, then LEFT following the waymarks."

Pg 46: "...Hotel La Scala on your left. Cross the road CAREFULLY before the Talleres R. Casal, turning LEFT onto a path as you reach this business." Note the name and LEFT, not RIGHT.

Pg 47: After the sentence about Novo Milladoiro you might note that detouring about 200 m to the right, past the chapel, will bring the hot, thirsty *peregrino* to a business street with many shops for food and drink. There was a decided lack of such before this point. And nothing after until in Santiago.