

# The routes of Santiago de Compostela in France



31

serial properties



© ACIR, JJ Gelbart



© ACIR, JJ Gelbart

## Brief description

Throughout the Middle Ages, Santiago de Compostela was a major destination for countless pilgrims from the whole of Europe. To get to Spain, the pilgrims had to go through France and cross the Pyrenees. The four main routes started from Paris, Vézelay, Le Puy and Arles. The routes are studded with pilgrimage churches, sanctuaries, hospitals, bridges and crosses, bearing witness to the spiritual and physical aspects of the pilgrimage. While the pilgrimage was a spiritual exercise and demonstration of faith, it also influenced the secular world and played a decisive role in the birth and spread of cultural values and the arts.

The listed French routes extend the inscription of the old city of Santiago de Compostela in 1985 and of the famous "Camino francés" in Spain in 1993. The listed French route includes 64 buildings, 7 built complexes, and 7 stretches of the route from Puy-en-Velay (GR®65).

## Criteria

**Criterion (ii)** The pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela played a crucial role in the exchange and development of religious and cultural views during the Middle Ages, as illustrated by the monuments selected in France. The large sanctuaries cited in the Codex Calixtinus, hospitals where the pilgrims could receive treatment, bridges and roads, or humble places of devotion, bear witness to the routes followed by the pilgrims and the conditions under which they travelled.

**Criterion (iv)** The spiritual and physical needs of the pilgrims going to Santiago de Compostela were met by a number of specifically created buildings, many of them on the French sections of the route. The large pilgrimage basilica churches, of which few remain, are notable examples of mediaeval architecture.

**Criterion (vi)** The pilgrimage is an almost universal aspect of human spirituality. The pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela bears outstanding witness to the influence of Christian faith on people from all social classes in Europe during the Middle Ages.



**Year of inscription:** 1998

**Criteria:** (ii)(iv)(vi)

**Location:** Regions of Aquitaine, Auvergne, Basse-Normandie, Bourgogne, Centre, Champagne-Ardenne, Ile-de-France, Languedoc-Roussillon, Limousin, Midi-Pyrénées, Picardie, Poitou-Charentes and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

**Coordinates:** N45 11 2.6 43 22.6

[www.chemins-compostelle.com](http://www.chemins-compostelle.com)

association des  
biens français  
PATRIMOINE  
MONDIAL



The routes of Santiago de Compostela in France inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1998

UK