

14-15

Gallur Alagón

21,7 Kms

Aragon...

The Ebro river will be the pilgrim's companion through part of Aragon, an extraordinary region with an extraordinary history. The Ebro makes its way to the Mediterranean Sea, and has transported not only goods and people, but also cultures. Pilgrims will sometimes see "Moorish style" ornaments and architecture, the imprint of North African Muslim cultures that once dominated parts of this region.

But Aragon is associated even more dramatically with the coming of the Christian tradition to Spain. It's told that St. James the apostle came through this region to evangelize Spain and near Zaragoza, while he was in a moment of discouragement, the Virgin Mary appeared to encourage him. Even today, in Zaragoza's cathedral, you will find the shrine of La Virgen del Pilar (Our Lady of the "Pillar"), which commemorates this appearance to St. James. Perhaps you too will find encouragement from Our Lady at this moment in your pilgrimage.

Fortify yourself before you leave Zaragoza, and consider taking a rest day here to relax in this wonderful city. Because soon after Zaragoza you will enter the most lonely and difficult part of the Camino Ignaciano, the desert of "Los Monegros," named for the black-looking hills you will see in the distance as you journey along. Los Monegros are the closest thing to desert landscape to be found anywhere in Europe. The region is scorching hot during the summer and subject to brutal windstorms during the winter. There are few hostels or shops. A pilgrim must not to underestimate this inhospitable environment. This is absolutely not the moment for foolish heroism. If you decide to walk, be sure to carry enough water, avoid walking during the hottest parts of the day, and plan your rest stops ahead. For many pilgrims, a better choice will be not to walk Los Monegros but to take a bus from Zaragoza or from Pina de Ebro to Fraga (Intermodal Bus Station, Tel: 902

490 690).

But if you choose to continue on foot, God's blessing be with you, and know that one pilgrim—Ignatius himself—has walked this very way before you, during an era when it was even more lonely and difficult.

The more desperate things seem, the more must we hope in God. When man's aid fails, God's is close at hand.

Etapa 14

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Etapa 14

We start out Parc of Pignatelli, next to the canal. From there we take the Calle del Camino Real, in homage to the old Camino Real which Saint Ignatius trod in his time; today it is road VP-24, broader and paved over.

Walking always straight ahead, we will reach Luceni, after passing a roundabout at the intersection of the road that goes to Boquinemi.

We enter town by Calle de Ramón y Cajal, which we follow straight through the town with no problem. At one point we will pass the town plaza to our left, with its banks and plane trees. We continue on straight. Upon leaving the town, we find a turnoff which would take us to Pedrola, but we keep going straight. It is highly likely that is the place at which Ignacio's mule decided to follow the Camino Real rather than the path of the Muslim who had argued with Ignacio. We are in the street Daoiz y Velarde, in front of house number 37. We continue our path straight ahead, following the Autobiography, and the tracks of the famous mule. After a few kilometres we come close to a bend of the Ebro, which tells us that we are near the town of Alcalá de Ebro. Turn left to go directly to the City Hall and Cervantes Street, where the road begins which leads towards the town of Cabañas de Ebro.

In this town it is worth having a look at the church and the monument to Sancho

Panza, a relevant figure here, since we are in the “Ínsula de Barataria,” described in *El Quijote*. It is really not an island but it does get cut off when the Ebro is in flood stage. The statue is situated behind the church. Walking along Calle Cervantes, we leave town after about 500 meters, and there we find a crossroads. We take the road to the left, toward Cabañas, which becomes a path after a little more than a kilometre and gradually takes us close again to the Ebro River.

We continue straight ahead, with the Ebro to our left, for about one kilometre, until we reach Cabañas de Ebro. With the church on our right, we enter the town and cross through it, leaving by Calle Mayor. From there we follow the CV-411 which, after 1.5 kilometres, takes us to the CV-911 which we take on our left. This road has a lot of traffic so care is needed. After 1.5 kilometres, we come upon a tunnel to our right which crosses under AP-68 highway. We go through the tunnel and then pass also under the train line by way of another tunnel. This road takes us directly to Alagón. If we cross the road and follow in a straight line, the Avenida de la Portalada will take us to the centre of the town.

Lodging

ALAGÓN

City Hall . Tel.: 976 610 300.

Hostal Baraka . , San Pedro, 13. Tel.: 976 616 011

Hotel Los Ángeles . , Plaza Alhóndiga, 4. Tel.: 976 611 340.

Pensión Jarea . Méndez Núñez 45, Tel.: 629 489 776

Pensión M^a Carmen , Portillo 3 2^a Derecha, Tel.: 670 762 554

CABAÑAS DE EBRO

Casa Rural Guadalupe . (capacity 24 people) Callizo de la Jota, 3. Tel.: 637 524 363.

City Hall . Tel.: 976 611 086.

Hostal Cubero . Av. Alagón 23, Tel: 976 611 720

GALLUR

Taxi Zueco . Tel: 976 857 318

LUCENI

City Hall . Tel.: 976 652 003.

Hotel La Imperial** . Ctra. Logroño, km 37. Tel.: 976 652 111.

Pensión Alejandro . , Calle del Horno 1, Tel.: 679 441 838

Interesting facts

LUCENI: The name of the town, which has about 1000 inhabitants, is certainly connected to an ancient Roman presence (Lucius); the town was on the road which linked the Mediterranean to the northern part of the peninsula. Archeological excavations of the first settlements have unearthed coins and medals of the emperor Antonius Pius (2nd century A.D.), as well as Visigoth coins from the reigns of Wamba and Witiza (7th and 8th centuries). The church, dedicated to the Virgin of Candelaria, dates from the 13th century.

Following the Autobiography, we are in all likelihood just in the place off the town where Saint Ignatius recalls the story about when he had to decide on the life or death of a Muslim with whom he had a discussion. God wanted to guide Ignatius in such a way that it was Life that came out victorious. Luceni offers the pilgrim a bicycle shop, restaurants, pharmacies, health centre, supermarkets, and banks. Unfortunately, for the past few years water sources in Luceni have not been drinkable owing to contamination from nearby farms.

ALCALÁ DE EBRO: The castle ruins give us a hint about the origin of the town's name: it comes from the Arabic, al-calat, the castle. In the impressive baroque church of the Most Holy Trinity (17th c.) there is a picture dedicated to St. Francis Borgia, third superior general of the Society of Jesus. There are two obligatory photos: one of the Ebro River and the other of the statue of "Sancho Panza" on the street behind the church. With just 300 inhabitants, the town offers us a restaurant, a pharmacy, a health centre, a supermarket, and a bank.

CABAÑAS DE EBRO: Small town (500 inhabitants).

ALAGÓN: This town, situated where the Jalón River flows into the Ebro, has its

origins in the Iberian city of Alaun, the most easterly of the Vascon cities. Here coins were minted with inscriptions in the Iberian alphabet. The town was conquered by Muslims in 714. From its Muslim period there is an impressive Moorish work in the church of St. Peter the Apostle. The church, situated on the site of the former mosque, is well worth a visit, especially for its main altar (16th century). In the old part of town there is a former college of the Society of Jesus, beside the church of St. Anthony of Padua. Offers restaurants, pharmacies, health centre, supermarkets, and banks. Contact can be made with the tourism office at turismoalagon@hotmail.com or by telephoning 976 611 814.

Ignatian Tips

Notes: We keep walking with Jesus, in order to see more clearly, love Him more deeply and follow Him more closely. Do not forget the “introductory prayer” both before we pray and throughout the day. Starting today, the final conversation is becoming even more important: we move into this interior knowledge of Jesus who is to strengthen our commitment to life. We talk about this with our “friend” at the end of our prayer and during the day.

Grace: I ask the Father for three things that I need and that only He can grant: a more intimate knowledge of Jesus who has become one of us; a more personal experience of His love for me so that I may love Him more tenderly; and a closer union with Jesus in His mission of bringing salvation to humankind.

Reflection: Jesus as a person who heals people may be the image that stands out most clearly in public life. The healing ministry of Jesus is also a saving ministry. Jesus heals bodies, spirits, and broken relationships with God and with others by means of forgiveness. Jesus tells a paralytic to get up and walk, rubs mud over a blind man’s eyes. His concern is not just for the withered limb or the non-functioning organ. It is also that the one whom He heals may turn from sin and believe in Him. We know His wonderful compassion, his willingness to touch and engage with the outcasts and untouchables of ancient society. Use the Ignatian practice of contemplation: that is, imagine one or more of these healing scenes from Jesus’ ministry, and imagine yourself in the scene, perhaps as a companion traveling with Jesus, or perhaps people bring me to Jesus – What is it that I want Jesus to do to heal me? On entering into these mysteries in my pilgrimage, I present myself to Jesus as one in need of healing in body, mind and spirit. I wish to keep on asking for the grace of this day.

Scripture Texts:

Luke 18: 35-43. "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

John 5:1-9. Jesus' question to a sick and crippled man is, in my contemplation, addressed also to me: "Do you want to be healed?" I show the Lord my need for healing: my pettiness, my pride, my ambition, my need for security and control, my self-deception. Yes, Lord, I want to be healed.

Luke 8:40-56. I beg Jesus to come to my home. I try to touch the hem of His cloak.

Closing Colloquy: Make a summary of the things I have meditated upon during my time of prayer, talking to Jesus as a friend talks to a friend. Be honest with him about the items I dealt with at this time. Ask Him to accept you under His banner and to become a healer like Him. End with the "Our Father".

Autobiography

At this stage of his pilgrimage, the still "very cavalier" Ignatius has an experience that could have changed the course of his life. God was aware of the danger and was ready to teach Ignatius the value of prudence and control of his impulses, even in the face of a good cause.

«As he journeyed on, he came upon a Moor riding a mule. They both fell to talking, and the conversation turned to Our Lady. The Moor admitted that the Virgin had conceived without man's aid, but could not believe that she remained a virgin after having given birth. He was so obstinate in holding this opinion that no amount of reasoning by Ignatius could force him to abandon it. Shortly afterward the Moor rode on, leaving the pilgrim to his own thoughts about what had taken place. These gave rise to emotions that sorely troubled him and he thought he had failed in his duty to honor the Mother of God. The longer he thought about the matter, the more his soul was filled with indignation against himself for allowing the Moor to say such things against Our Lady. He concluded that he was obliged to defend her honor. As a result, he felt a strong desire to search out the Moor and give him a taste of his dagger for what he had said. This battle of desires lasted for some time with the pilgrim still doubtful at the end as to what course he should follow. The Moor had gone on ahead and had mentioned that he was going to a town not too far distant from the highway. Ignatius, wearied by his inner struggle and not able to come to any clear decision, decided to settle his doubts in

the following way: he would let the mule decide, and gave her free reign up to the cross-road. If the mule took the road that led to the village, he would pursue the Moor and kill him. But if his mule kept to the highway, he would allow the wretch to escape. This he did. It happened through God's Providence that his mule kept to the highway, even though the village was only thirty or forty yards distant, and the road leading to it was broad and even.»

We add here an interpretation of this text from the Autobiography, written by Jose Luis Martin Vigil. It illustrates very well the sentiments of Ignatius Loyola at this stage of his journey:

«It happened that, when I (Ignatius) was reflecting by myself, I happened to overtake a Muslim eager to talk. I wasn't upset at him since courtesy is a habit for someone well-born. We spoke, I don't know of what, until he asked about the purpose of my journey. I said I was going to the shrine since I didn't think he would understand my desire to reach the Holy Land. In that guise we spoke about the Virgin, since I was filled with the enthusiasm of a new convert. The Moor was composed, even respectful and reasonable. He said he was not opposed to the virginity of Our Lady before her delivery, which for a Muslim says a lot. But he could not understand her remaining a virgin after giving birth. I gave him many reasons for this, but he refused to accept them. We spoke a lot in vain, without coming to any agreement on the matter. Finally he declared that he was going to Pedrola, a Moorish village just a few miles beyond the crossroads up ahead.

I remained gloomy and aggrieved and I decided that I had not acted honorably with the Moor. I worried that I spoke more than necessary about the Virgin Mary and thus offended her. Had I done well to allow this? But I have to be judged according to the time when I lived. Martin Lutero, a competent theologian and not a man of the sword, said twenty years later that it was lawful to stab a Jew if he was heard swearing. He further confessed that he "would give a blow and pierce him with his sword if he could, since it is lawful to kill a thief much more than a blasphemer. Further, more than two centuries earlier, a saintly king of France told his men: "Laymen, when they hear someone cursing the Christian faith, defend the faith not with words but with the sword, thrusting it as far as possible into the belly of the infidel.

Is it any wonder, then that the pilgrim entertained thoughts of death since the honor of Our Lady was called into question? I had a deep craving to search for the

Moor and stab him to death, yet I doubted that this was the right course of action. So I decided to drop the reins of my horse at the crossroads up ahead. If the horse went towards Pedrola I would find the Moor and slay him. But, if the horse stayed on the highway, then I would leave things alone and find peace. That Moor never knew how close he came to death that afternoon. It please God that he lived, despite his blindness in denying the virgin birth of His Mother, our Lady.”

(cf. José Luis Martín Vigil, “Yo, Ignacio de Loyola”, ed. Planeta. Pàg 64).

God saved that Muslim traveler, but he also kept Ignatius Loyola from committing an act that could have brought severe consequences. God’s presence is manifested in our personal history in many ways. We can discover the Hand of God in the simplest and most humble events, and let the mule decide which way to go. If we discern the actions of our lives from the light of the heart open to God, we then become “agents of life” rather than death.

Comments

Leave a Reply

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Comment *

Name *

Email *

Website

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[No difficulties for cyclists](#)

aunque hay un tramo de la carretera CV-911 que tiene bastante tráfico y hay que ir con cuidado.

Gallur: Km 0.

Luceni: Km 8,2.

Alcalá de Ebro: Km 12,5.

Cabañas de Ebro: Km 16,5.

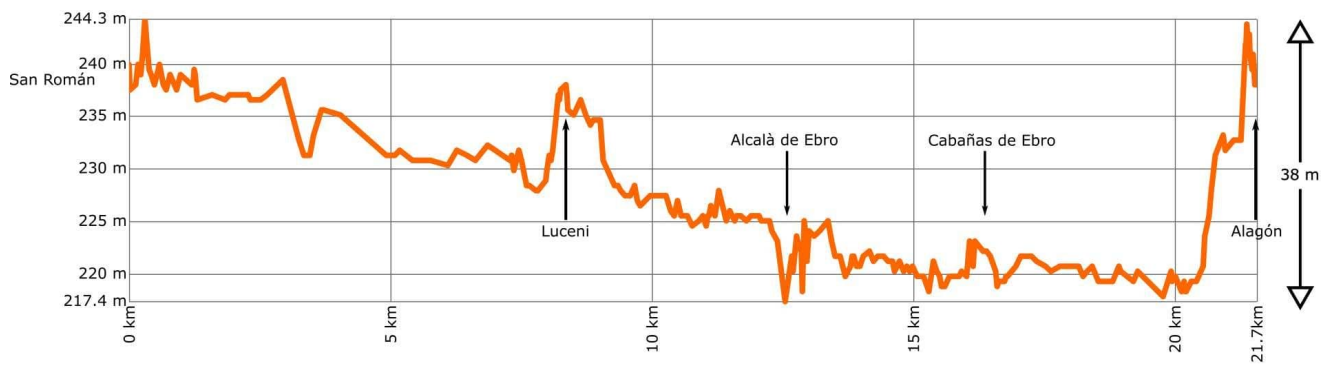
Alagón: Km 21,7.

Trail

Step's sketch



Altimetry



The weather in Alagón

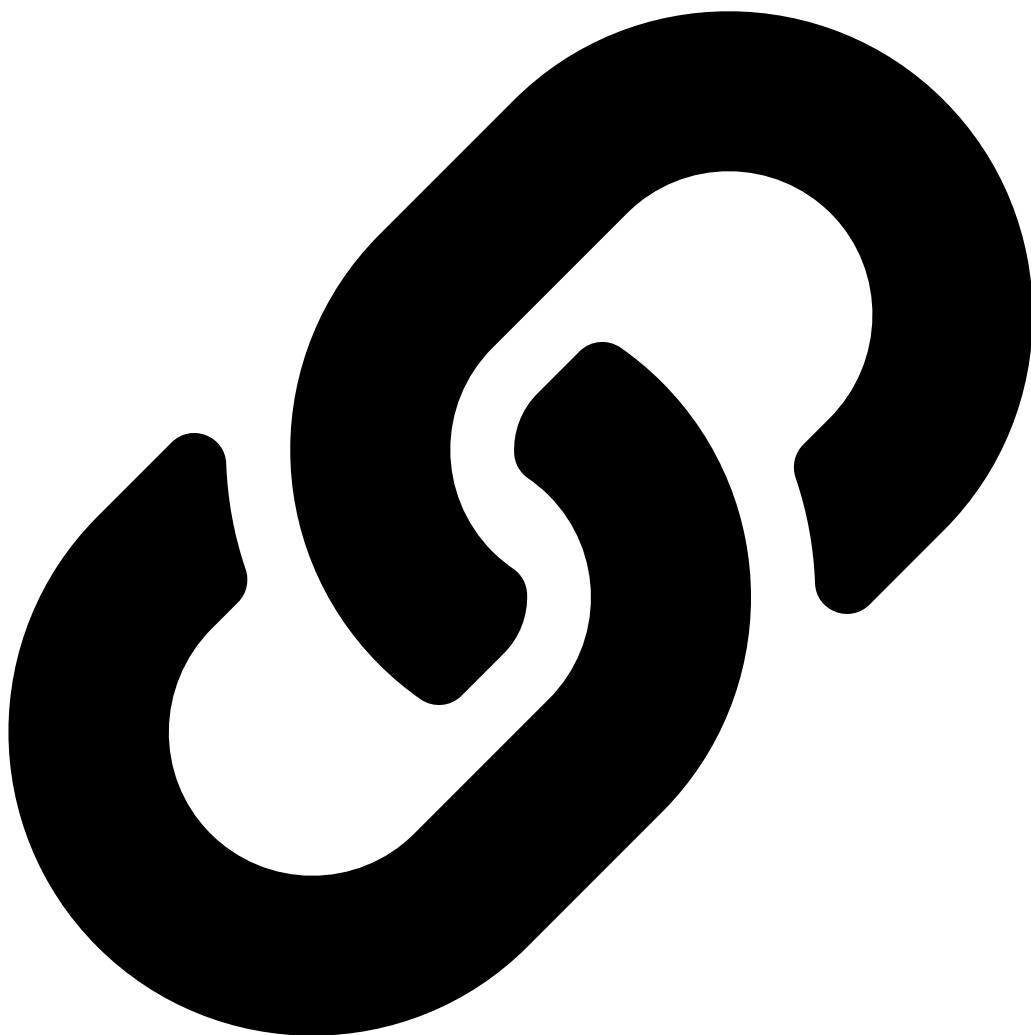
[View trail in wikiloc](#)

[download gps](#)

[download for MapOut](#)

Galery

Step's photos

































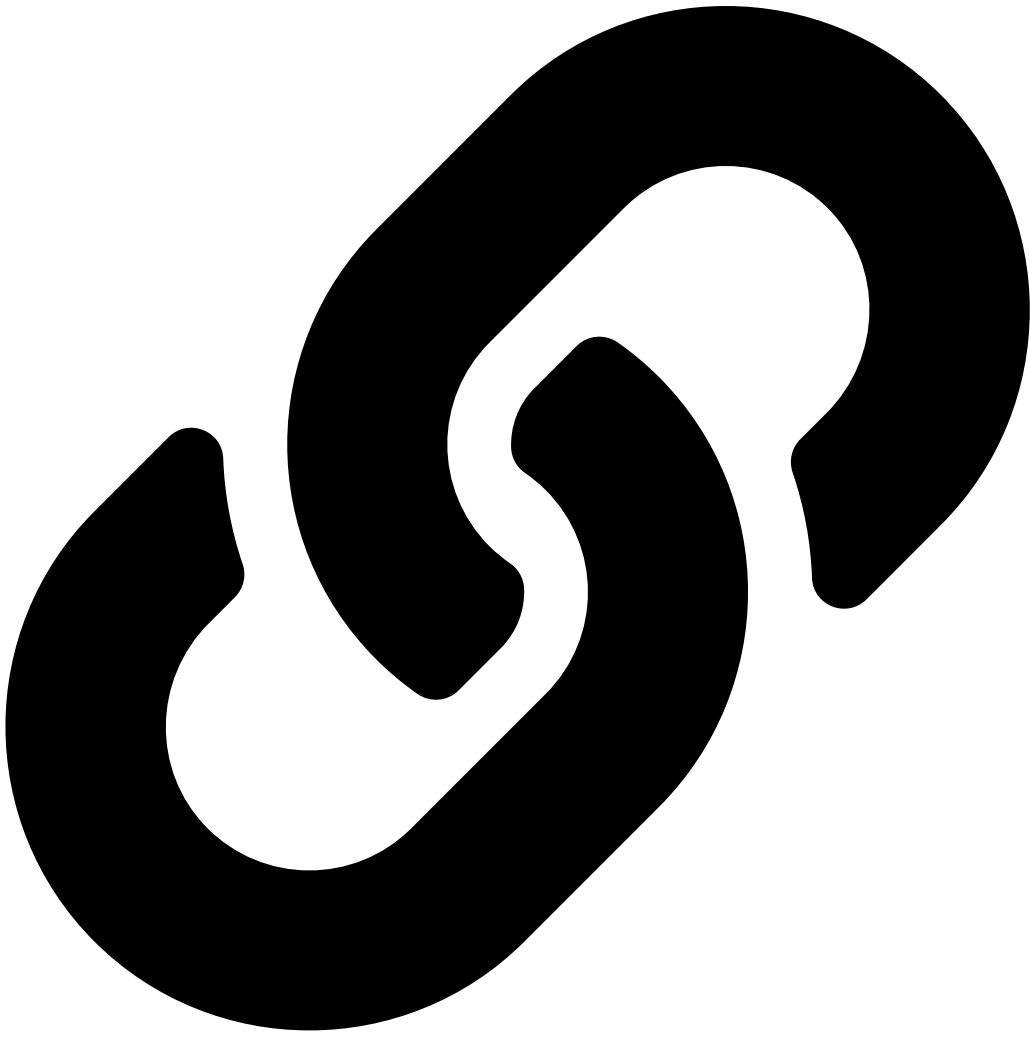












[previous step](#)

[next step](#)

STEPS IN ARAGÓN

Gallur - Alagón
Aragón

21,7 km

14

Alagón - Zaragoza

Aragón

30,5 km

15

Zaragoza - Fuentes de Ebro

Aragón

30,2 km

16

Fuentes de Ebro - Venta de Santa Lucía

Aragón

29,6 km

17

Venta de Santa Lucía - Bujaraloz

Aragón

21,3 km

18

Bujaraloz - Candasnos

Aragón

21 km

19

Candasnos - Fraga Aragón

26,8 km

20