

3-4

Arantzazu Araia

18 Kms

He who is zealous soars with wondrous speed in a few moments to a degree of virtue that the slothful cannot reach after many years

Step 3

Lodging

Interesting facts

Ignatian Tips

Comments

Step 3

We say farewell to the Virgin of Arantzazu and follow the red and white signs that lead from the shrine. The Sanctuary remains on our right and we take the road away from it, leading up to the last houses. We follow the signs to Urbia. We continue uphill, straight ahead. We arrive at a junction of three roads with a fountain nearby. We take the middle road which bears a signpost indicating the way to Urbia. After walking for a few minutes along the wide and shaded track, we find the spring at Erroiti on our left, which marks the place where legend has it that the Virgin of Arantzazu appeared to the shepherd Rodrigo de Baltzategi (1468).

The road zigzags as we make our way up to the mountain pass of Elorrola, following the red and white signs of the main road. We arrive at the mountain pass and start the descent. We come to the Chapel of Andra Mari de Urbia (1924), which we leave on our left to follow the dirt road and reach the shelter of Urbia, where in summer we can find refreshments in the bar at the shelter.

Without deviating, we follow the wide, dirt road which is clearly marked. Further on we pass between some shepherds' huts in the meadows. Here we can follow

the orange arrows that leave the main road, going inside the forest on our right, or just keep going on the dirt road. The grassy path goes parallel to the road, staying at the same level, while the dirt road descends steeply before it ascends once more to reach the path in the forest two km ahead. Both ways are beautiful but the forest path is easier. We pass near the Zorrotzari monolith and the nearby Perusaroi mountain shelter with its roof covered by grass. The path and the road come together and we follow the arrows and the GR signs to our left. After a while, we reach the road and **here again we have two choices:** we can follow the wide dirt road and continue towards Araia or go to the left, following the path into the wood which is marked with GR on signposts, but also going towards Araia.

The forest path is not bad for pilgrims on foot although it can be a bit difficult. First it takes us to the power lines and then, through beautiful forests, it links our path with the Camino de Santiago, coming from San Adrián. Shortly after, it leads to the road, following the yellow Santiago arrows.

If we always keep to the wide dirt road, we will also find the yellow signs of the Camino de Santiago; however, they will not take us to Araia but to Zalduondo, so after some km we will leave them and continue straight on along the road. Undoubtedly, the wide road is the best for bikes.

We reach the edge of a forest glade called Zumarraundi. To our right an asphalt road begins that leads to Araia. We continue going down along the well-marked road and reach a fork that we take to our left, in the direction of Araia. We go on walking and pass a country house to our right, named Gartzabal. Keeping to the paved road, we enter Araia after passing a swimming pool complex.

Lodging

ALBENIZ

Refugio casa de la Iglesia . Tel: 945 261 676 (in the next stage, for groups of more than 10 pilgrims)

ARAIA

Korta-Pilgrims Hostel. C/ Andra Mari, 23, <https://acortar.link/japVMT>

City Hall Tel: 945 304 006/945 314 566.

Hotel Andamur San Roman ** . At 2 km of Araia, along the road to San Roman.
Tel.: 945 31 47 83

Taxi Berasategui . Tel: 699 445 403

EGUINO

Prayer House Haiztur . (out of the Way at 5 km from Araia) San Esteban Kalea, 1.
Tel: 945 31 46 37 e-mail: mercedariase@yahoo.es

IBARGUREN

Casa Rural Legaire Etxea . C/San Martín, 2. Tel: 626 895 798. off-road, but not far

SAN ROMÁN

Hotel Andamur . (en la etapa siguiente, Polígono Okiturri) Carretera N-I, Tel: 945 314 783

Pensión El Ventorro . On the other side of the Andamur gas station. Tel: 945 304 372.

ZALDUONDO

Casa rural Aizkomendi . Errotalde Kalea, 5 Tel:679 908 531

Casa rural Arkauzetxea . C/ Errotalde, 5 Tel: 679 908 531

Casa rural Eikolara Landaetxea . Bº Arbinea, 8 Tel: 629407767/945386898

Interesting facts

This stage is hard because of the climb from Aranzazu and the sharp drop to Araia. We are in the National Park of Aizkorri-Aratz, home to the highest peaks of the watershed between Cantabria and the Mediterranean (Aitxuri 1551 m). Be careful with the weather, especially if there is fog. Our way consists of wide tracks, except at one point, near the mountain pass at 1180 m, just where the wider road becomes a gravel road although it is in very good condition and visible even in fog. After one or two kilometres, we must take care again: we must leave the path which clearly goes down to the valley and take an ill-defined grass track, which allows us to join the Camino de Santiago Vasco (Basque Santiago Way), which comes from the San Adrián Tunnel. After connecting with the Camino de Santiago, we follow the yellow arrows to the junction that leads to Zalduendo or

Araia (pools and village). We want to go to Araia, so we take the road on the left.

ARAIA: The main town of the District of Asparrena, which comprises 10 towns in close proximity to each other. With more than 1,500 inhabitants, Araia is a service center for the district. The town hall is built in a Baroque style and bears the arms of the Fraternity of Asparrena. The church of San Pedro is from the fifteenth century and has a neoclassical altarpiece inside. We can find a restaurant, supermarket, pharmacy and bank in this town.

Note: in Alda, at the end of the next stage, there are no shops or restaurants, so you have to think about bringing something to eat for the next day.

Ignatian Tips

Notes: We would like to insist on the importance of devoting some time to reflection on the introductory prayer. Remember what Ignatius tells us, that “*to know and savour something interiorly*” is more important than knowing a lot. So don’t be in a hurry. Today we begin to consider our Principle and Foundation, by reflecting on the purpose for which we were created. An overall vision is essential before going into detail later on.

Grace: Lord, grant me the grace to feel your love internally in my life, with profound thanksgiving. Help me, O Lord, to discover the foundation of my life, according to your will.

Reflections: We begin by recalling that our whole life has been a spiritual journey. As you walk today, devote some time to remembering again your own life story and letting your mind wander over it prayerfully. Recall your past and let God show you a sort of photo album of key moments in it, some painful, others joyful, which have brought you to this present stage of your life. Who am I? How have I reached this point in my life? What people, events or places have been influential in moulding the person I now am? Let these images surface, along with whatever grateful, painful, or prayerful feelings go with them.

In contrast with the good ones, are there moments, people, or aspects of your life that cause feelings of embarrassment, which you want to disown and which you can’t imagine God accepting either. Present those moments to God, with a prayer for acceptance and growth. You don’t have to feel you have become completely reconciled or to “settle” anything today; the people and moments you have

recalled and the feelings that have welled up can become matters for consideration and prayer as you walk with God on this pilgrimage. We are experiencing the process of “holding our whole life up to God”, which may at times fill us with joy and gratitude, and at others with regret and shame. The graces we seek will be gratitude, understanding and acceptance of oneself, and realisation that we are accepted by God. Think of yourself as “panning for gold,” sifting through the multitude of ideas that first come up until you find the “nugget”, the aspects of life where you may have something to learn or where you need to grow. God may be leading you to spend time reflecting on them.

Scripture:

Hosea 11,1-9. His love for me is a tender love.

Psalms 139, 1-14.17-18. In awe and reverence I remember how God has cared for me in times of joy and pain, in times of success and failure, in times of faithfulness and infidelity.

Spiritual Exercises, 5. *«It is very helpful if those who do the exercises begin them with great courage and generosity towards their Creator and Lord, offering Him all their love and freedom, so that his Divine Majesty may dispose of their person and all they have according to His holy will.»*

Final Colloquy: Sum up what has come to mind in your time of prayer, talking to Jesus as one friend does to another. Be honest with him about what you have discovered on this stage of your journey.

Comments

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Cyclists will find it difficult:

they must dismount on the ascents. It is not clear if cyclists are permitted to go through the Natural Park, where motor vehicles are not allowed.

For pilgrims on foot, in winter, precautions are strongly advised and this route is not recommended at all during snow (December – March) or fog.

Today there are two options as indicated in the description:

Arantzazu: Km 0.

Refugio de Urbia: Km 5.

Araia: Km 17. (walking on the forest path)

Arantzazu: Km 0.

Refugio de Urbia: Km 5.

Llano de Zumarraundi: Km 12.

Araia: Km 18. (if you follow the wide dirt road)

Trail

Step's sketch



Altimetry



The weather in Araia

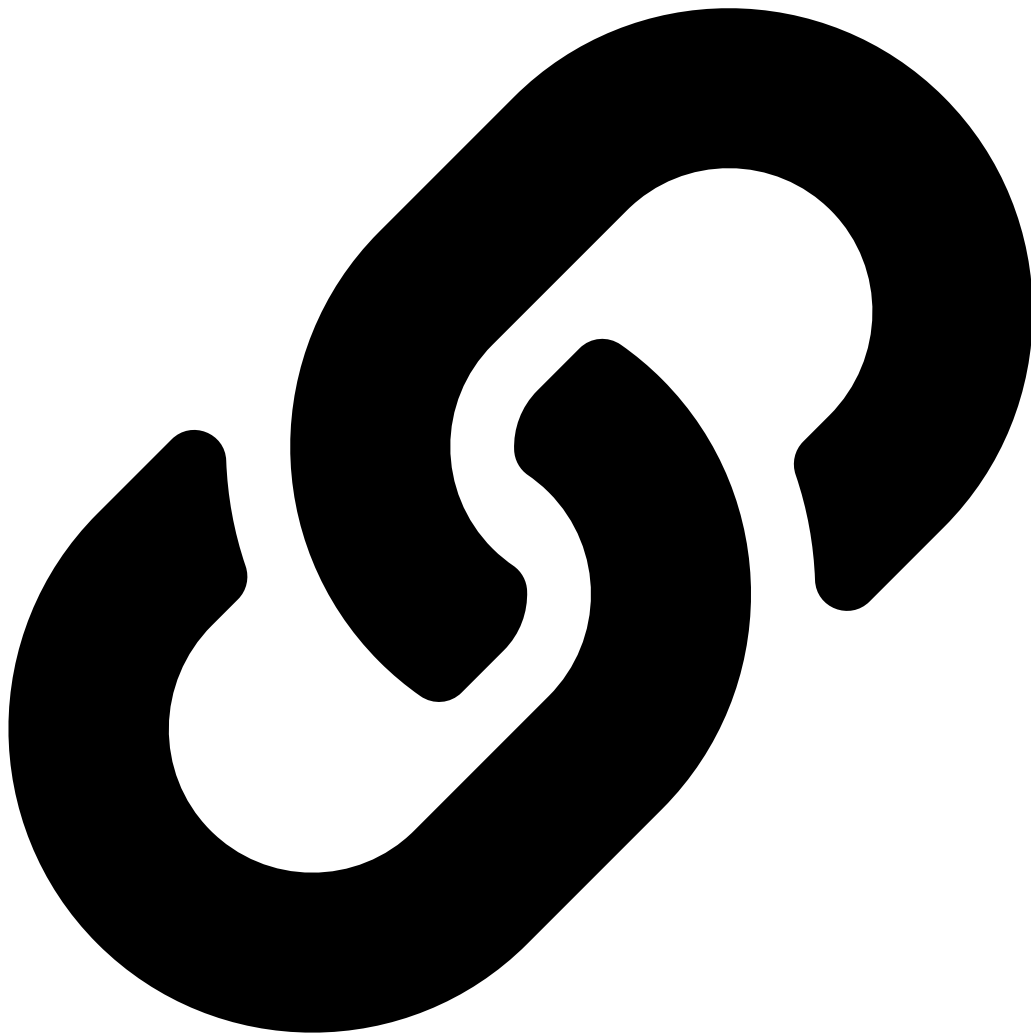
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Galery

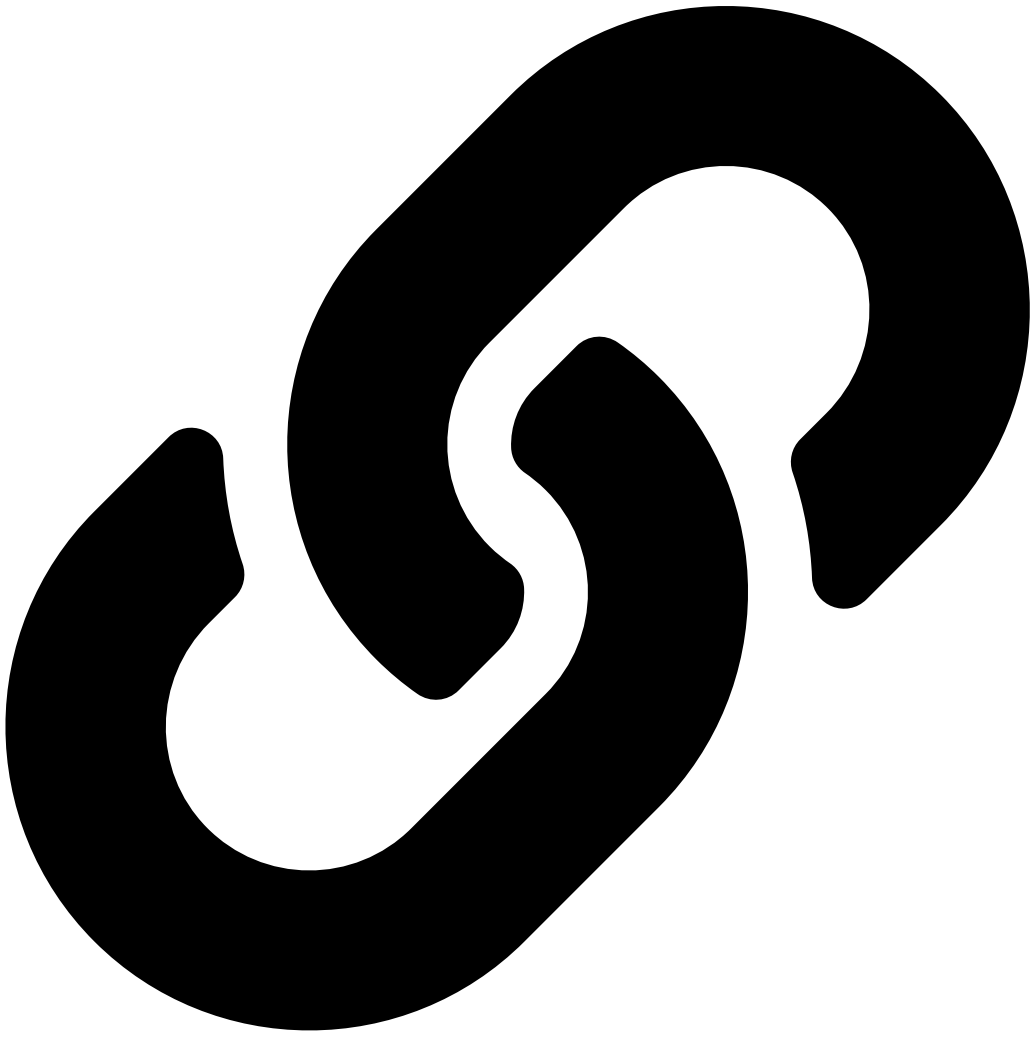
Step's photos

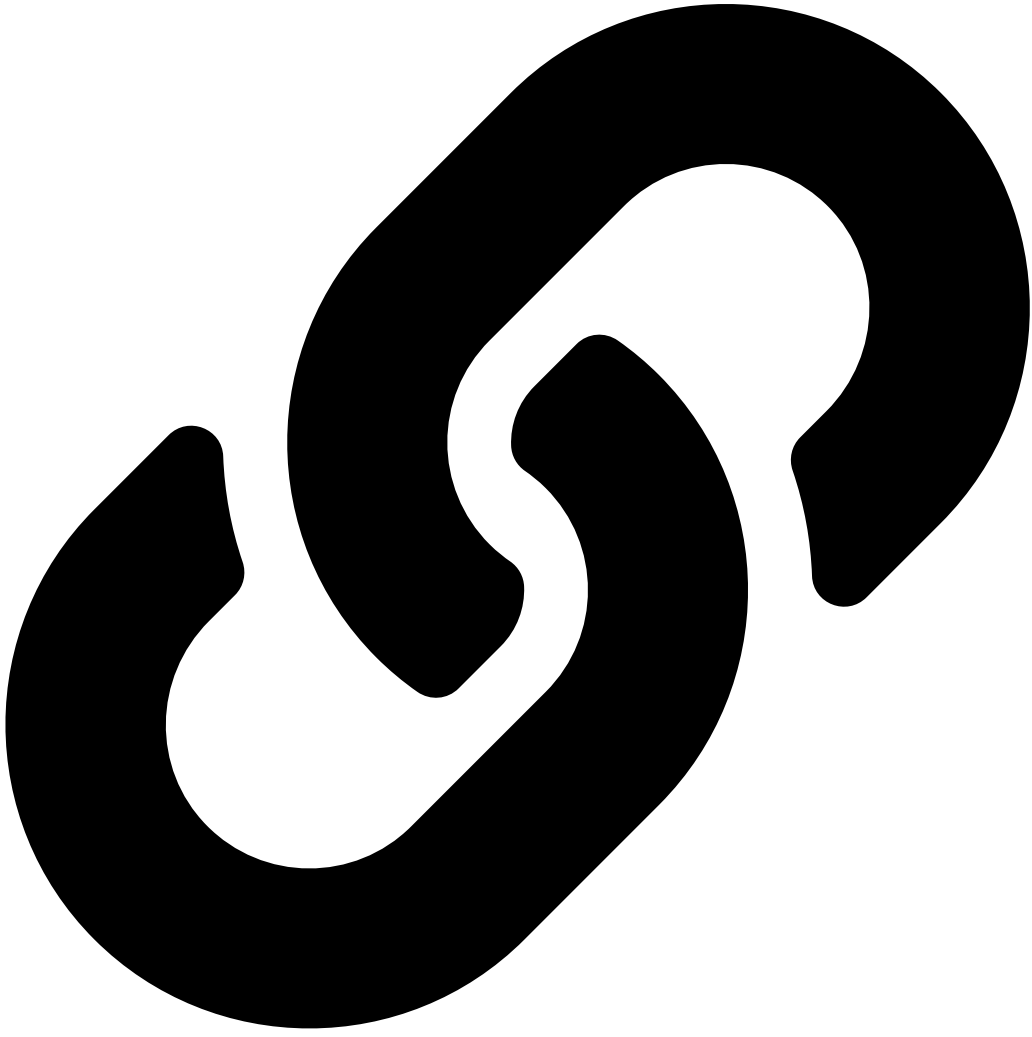






















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