

A hiker with a backpack is walking away from the camera on a gravel path that leads into a forest. The path is flanked by green grass and tall reeds on the left, and dense trees on the right. In the distance, a bright, golden light, possibly from a low sun, creates a strong lens flare and illuminates the path ahead. The overall atmosphere is serene and adventurous.

*La Société Française des Amis
de Saint Jacques de Compostelle
presents*

France and the way to Santiago

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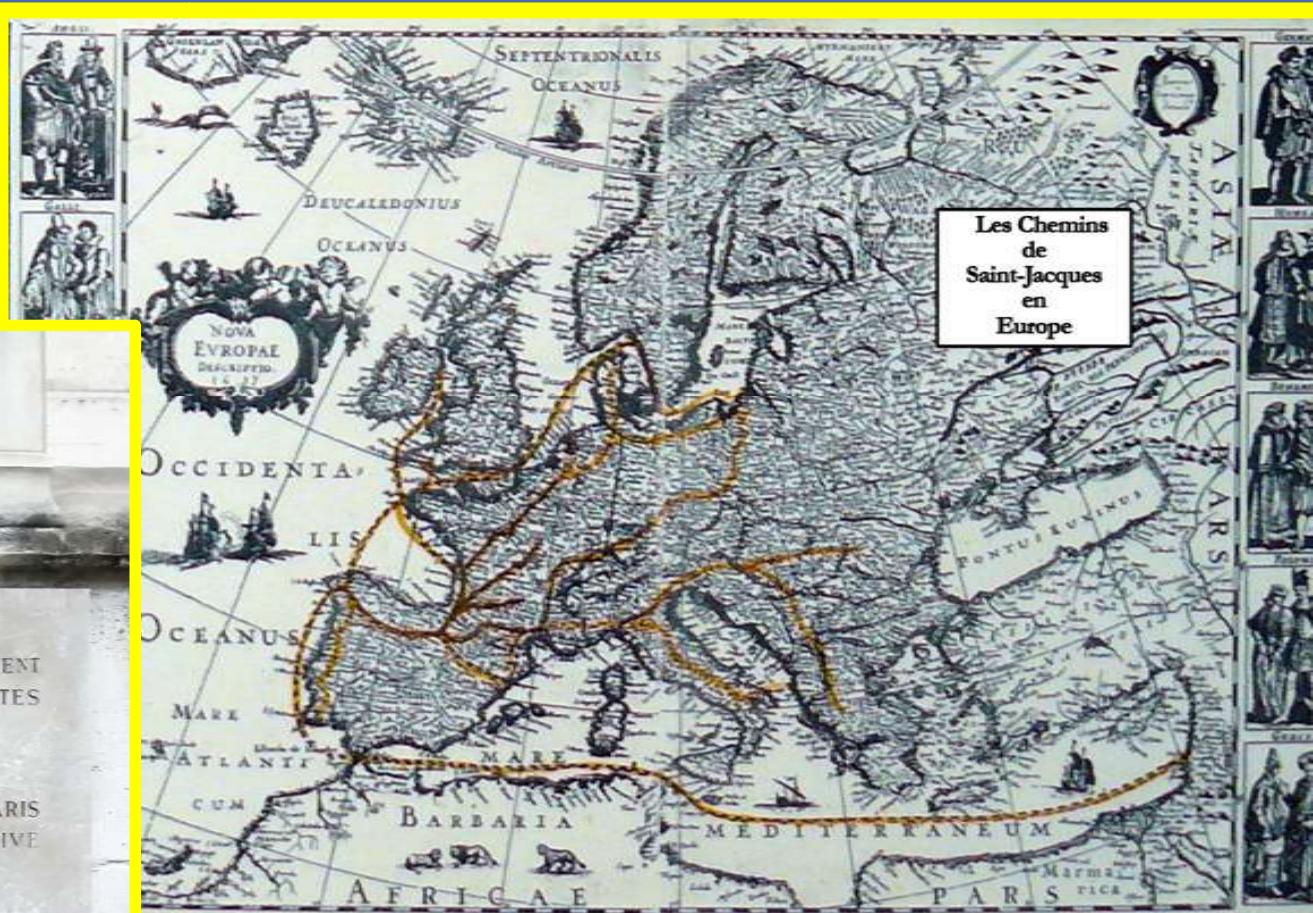
An exhibition on this theme, organized in Santiago de Compostela in 1950 underlined France's essential role in the influence of Compostela in Europe.



y virtue of its geography,

ance is the point of convergence for the many Jacobean routes
at have been taken for centuries
y crowds from all over the continent
n their way to Compostela.

Tour St Jacques à Paris



To reach the Camino in Spain,



Four main routes still attract pilgrims today :



La voie du Puy (**Via Podiensis**)

Today's best-known and most popular route, it starts at **Le Puy-en-Velay Cathedral**, home to the venerated Black Madonna. The route winds its way through Aubrac, Quercy, Armagnac and Chalosse, all small regions of South-Western France, to **Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port** and **Roncesvaux** (**Roncesvalles**)



La Romieu



Auvillar



Conques

La voie de Tours (**Via Turonensis**)

descends from Northern Europe, via the Netherlands, Belgium and Northern France to Paris, then via **Chartres or Orléans**, continuing on to **TOURS** and stretching due south through Poitou and Aquitaine to the Basque country and the passage to Spain at **Pendaye or Ronceveaux/Roncesvalles** pass .



Jacques Tower
s



Poitiers



La voie de Vézelay (Via Lemovicensis)

The Vézelay route is joined by pilgrims from North-Eastern Europe, particularly our German friends, who are very numerous on the Camino de Santiago. The Vézelay's Basilica of Sainte Marie- Madeleine is the starting point of this very rural route.

Sens Cathedral



Paray-Le-Monial



Ostabat



La voie d'Arles (**Via Tolosana**)

The so-called **Arles route** takes pilgrims from Italy and South-Eastern Europe on the East-West axis, **from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean**. It also leads to Spain by crossing the Pyrenees at the **Somport pass**.



France provides the link

between all European countries which pilgrims come from,
and Spain, which eventually welcomes them.

It is no coincidence then that in Spain, the historic Camino is referred to as **the Camino Francés**



Saint-Jacques Chartres Cathedral



In addition to these four main routes,

there are a **number of secondary itineraries** that criss-cross the country, for let's not forget : in the past, pilgrims used to set off from their homes, covering first the distance to reach one of the **great Jacobean meeting points**,
such as the Tour Saint Jacques in Paris



In 1950, the name Compostela evoked the past of Christian Europe, the time of pilgrimages belonged to the memories of history.

In Paris, a few French researchers and historians decided to **found**:

the Société Française des Amis de Saint Jacques de Compostelle
or French Society of Friends of Santiago de Compostela

« to study the historical, artistic and cultural manifestations of the Jacobean phenomenon and to provide assistance and advices to today pilgrims »

12th-century Latin text
translated by Madame
Veillard, co-founder of the
French Society of Friends
of Santiago de
Compostela



Medieval manuscript

Paris
St Jacques du Haut-Pas
Church

Renaissance of the Camino

The mission of the young Société Française des Amis de St Jacques was to revive "the exceptional richness of the Jacobean theme and scholarly research offered to us by the age-old Galician pilgrimage" as well as to rediscover these medieval pilgrim routes and bring them back to life

The routes of the old path have been unearthed. They are gradually being marked out thanks to a partnership with the Fédération Française de la Randonnée Pédestre



In the mid-1960s,

la Société Française des Amis de Saint Jacques introduced a special passport for pilgrims, the CREDENCIAL, most useful for travelling in Spain.

In doing so, it revived the medieval custom of the diplomatic letter of credence.

Even today, this pilgrim's passport gives access to the reception facilities gradually being set up for pilgrims.



CARTE DE PELERIN
DE SAINT-JACQUES
éditée par la Société Française
des Amis de Saint Jacques de Compostelle,
8, rue des Canettes, 75006 Paris
délivrée par :


M
Adresse
N° du passeport ou de la carte d'identité :

délivré par
entrepris la pèlerinage vers Compostelle, au
départ de
le
☐ à pied
☐ à bicyclette
Signature :

En cas d'accident, prévenir :

Groupe sanguin :

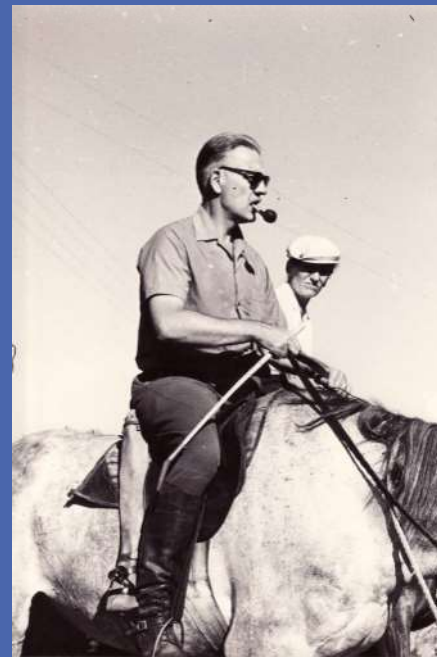
© - Les Amis de Saint Jacques - Paris



Pilgrims, as well as the curious and research-minded, have been **able to find the information** they needed for their pilgrimage, and the means to deepen their understanding for decades.

Like the group of students who set off in **1958** with a mare and cart **from Parthenay, near Poitiers to Compostela** or the 8 boys and 2 girls from the Beaux-Arts art school in Paris who also set off on foot **from Le Puy-en-Velay to Compostela** in the summer of 1963.

In 1963, « année jacquaire » organized pilgrimages took place, including one on horseback from Paris to Compostela **Les Chevauchées vers Compostelle**.



1987

La Société Française des Amis de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle actively contributed to the Council of Europe's project to define the Camino de Compostela as :

The First European Cultural Itinerary

In front of
Santiago's
Cathedral



“the fruit of the existence of a European space charged with collective memory and traversed by paths that overcome distances, borders, linguistic barriers and misunderstandings”

The Pilgrim's Way to Santiago illustrates European identity.



1998

Way to Santiago de Compostela, a World Heritage Site

On December 2, 1998, UNESCO included France's Pilgrim's Way to Santiago de Compostela on the list of World Heritage Sites, alongside the Spanish pilgrimage routes included the previous year.

UNESCO thus recognizes that the Camino de Santiago has been a meeting place for pilgrims since its emergence some eleven centuries ago. It has facilitated a constant cultural dialogue between pilgrims and the communities they pass through.

As an important trade route and channel for the dissemination of knowledge, it has fostered economic and social development along its routes.

This World Heritage listing concerns a magnificent ensemble of historically significant built heritage, created over the ages to express pilgrims' faith and meet their needs.



Walking toward the Apostle's shrine

The Camino de Santiago encompasses a vast network of pilgrimage routes, leading to the tomb of Christ's apostle, Saint James the Greater, traditionally located in Santiago de Compostela, Galicia.

According to the Gospels, Saint James the Greater and his brother, Saint John the Evangelist, both sons of Zebedee and Mary Salome, were called by Christ while fishing with their father.

Saint Jacques de Rembrandt



Did the Apostle evangelize Spain after the Ascension, as tradition has it ?

He was adopted as the country's patron saint

The tomb believed to be that of Saint James was discovered in Galicia in the 9th century, at a time when Spain was under Muslim rule.



Croix de Saint-Jacques



Pèlerins devant
la Porte Sainte Cathédrale de Santiago

Its discovery was of immense importance to the Christian world, and Compostela soon became a Christian pilgrimage site on par with Jerusalem and Rome

Pilgrims today

Heirs to the medieval pilgrimage, today's pilgrims are flocking to the Camino.

Year after year, the popularity of the Camino experience continues to grow.

The experience of walking the Camino de Santiago, irrigated by **the Spirit of the Camino**, is in tune with the expectations of our contemporaries, and often exceeds them.

This Spirit of the road is based on simplicity, encounters, welcoming and sharing, effort and self-denial - and these qualities are what make it so valuable and so beneficial.

This is the legacy of the medieval pilgrimage, **with its religious heritage and spiritual invitation, its rules of welcome and hospitality.**





The slowness of the walking pace,
communion with nature in the landscapes crossed,
a sense of time and history in the face of buildings of yesteryear,
physical effort and attention to the needs of the body,
simple living,
encounters with others, with the Other, a return to oneself...

- **On the Camino, everyone can experience**
- **discoveries, awareness and pure happiness**





If your route takes
you to Paris,
Parisian pilgrims
will be happy to
meet you, share
their experiences,
a drink and more.
Here's wishing you
« a day in
Compostela ! »
Ultreia !!



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Thanks for attention



Thanks

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