

PART ONE LLANES-LOS CALLEJOS (15,6 KMS.)

Llanes is located in the east of Asturias, a centre for tourism which, due to its beautiful coast and stunning beaches, offers a wide range of attractions for the visitor. In addition, this route for walkers is almost guaranteed to leave unforgettable memories in the mind, not to mention in the camera!

This first section of the route traverses the Municipality of Llanes, taking the walker from the old quarter of the town towards the entrance of the Valley of Ardisana. Next to the well-known tourist attraction, the beach at El Sablón, you can see the ancient wall of the town, as well you can see the Basílica Santa, María del Conceyu, (Holy Mary of the Borough of Llanes) and here, too is the departure point for this walk, El Camín del Oriente. (16Km.)

The parish church, the Basilica, is dedicated to Our Lady of the Assumption. It has three naves, of which the largest is finished off with a headboard. The church is in the Gothic style and is one of the most important in Asturias, retaining as it does, elements of the Romanesque tradition in its west entrance. Its construction began in 1240 and continued during the following centuries. The building was finished about 1494. Inside the most impressive works are the altarpieces of the main chapel and those of the chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity, in the northern nave. This was created by Juan Pariente, one of the most important mayors of the town. The main altarpiece, which alternates wooden statues and paintings, is in the Plateresque style and is one of the most significant examples of the genre in the principality.

The altarpiece in the chapel of the Holy Trinity is in the Marienista style. The oldest door in the church is in the west façade, where the bell tower is located. The south door is protected by a portico, built in the seventeenth century and is decorated with five archivolts with motifs of animals, plants and humans.

The palace of the Valdés-Posada family, from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these days houses the Cultural Centre of the town. Close by is the Tower of the castle, a military defence position in the Middle Ages. It is a circular tower, topped with battlements and had, in its day, a ditch and drawbridge. Since 1876 it has been listed as a National Heritage site.

After this brief visit, the traveller says goodbye to the town of Llanes to begin the route, leaving the town in the direction of Poo, (pronounced Poooe.) Almost at once red and white signs become visible on the left hand side of the route. The route is wide and crosses the train tracks, passing next to the cemetery of Poo and entering the village next to the church of San Vicente, (St. Vincent) built in the year 1869. This was erected with money sent from South America, Indiano money, and is a modest chapel, in the traditional style. Even from the outset, while following this route, the traveller is able to see stonening views towards the south of the Sierra del Cuera

The houses in the village of Poo give way to a much less inhabited stretch; the path follows old wagon ways, leading to tracts of farmland. The traveller passes under and over the railway tracks and through a tunnel over which runs the Cantabrian motorway. Passing to the north of the village of Porrúa, and continuing on the wide pathway, you notice El Cabezo and La Requejada. The wide track has to be abandoned here as we turn to the right, taking a route which will lead to more interesting walking with a wide variety of vegetation, the area known as Las Mañangas. You are now in the northern reaches of the Sierra de Peña Llabres, which is visible on the left.

It's really important to keep an eye on the white and red signs on your way, which can be seen on rocks and trees. In this way you can keep on the route without danger of getting lost. There are old wagon tracks which cross this route, but the signs are an easy guide, if you follow them. Later on, the route takes you across the stream, La Bola. The stream is worth a look, simply to see the fine white sand around it. It is worth noting

too, that in this area walking can be a complicated business, if you don't follow the signs carefully, it is because these signs are perishable. This is due to the fact that they are painted on eucalyptus trees, to better look after the environment. This, after all, is their habitat and we are the invaders, consequently, when we deal with their environment, we do it with the care that these species merit.

The route continues and leaves behind the village of Lledias on its right hand side. Follow this track on the far left hand side until you reach a maize field. Here you leave the fields to join the old route next to the wall, not far from a crossroads. Very soon you leave this woody region and return to a place where the open sky can be seen; a rocky area which borders the footwills of the mountain of Peña Llabres.

The signs, on rocks indicate our route, which goes upwards to the road, just next to the house, El Toral. On the left you go up along the road to the plaza of Rioseco. The sea can be seen behind you. In this plaza you will find some benches and a table as well as a fountain. There's a small bar, La Calle del Sol, where you can "refuel", if necessary. Later, on the upper part of the road, you will be at the highest point in this first section of the route. Here, we leave the road for a small path and go down towards the village of Vibaño. Very soon you will see all of the Cordal del Benzú and a part of the Valley of Ardisana, as well as the village of Los Callejos, where we come to the end of this first section of the route. The village of Vibaño is situated among fields and is divided into two distinct quarters, Santoveña and Mediavilla. The parish church, dedicated to San Pedro, (St. Peter) can be found close at hand after you cross the bridge which goes over the little river of Vibaño.

The village of Vibaño was the headquarters and centre of operations of the Spanish guerrilla forces during the occupation of the town of Llanes by Napoleon's troops in 1808.

Leaving the village via a narrow roadway, come out to cross the road of Río de las Cabras, at La Herrería. Here you find the street and, on the left, on the other side of the street, there is the palace of Cardenal Inguanzo. This is a Grand House of the typical Asturian style, with two balconies in the main facade, facing south. We cross the Roman style bridge which has two pointed arches. It was ordered to be built by the cardinal himself, primarily to get to his own house, and so to the village of Allende de Vibaño. The bridge has been recently rebuilt, having been in ruins since the floods of 1983.

After going over the bridge, carry on to the right. We leave the road for a little while here and walk along an old cart track on your left. Go straight along this route, ignoring the turnings to the left and right until you come to a right hand turn close to the water purifier at the village of

Los Callejos. Along this stretch of the route you can see the houses of the village of Puente Nuevo and Venta los Pobres. Here there is time for a stop and some food.

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