



COEUR DE PETITE CAMARGUE

Office de Tourisme



The Way of Saint James

Wander and Wonder

The Way of Saint James pilgrimage

Santiago de Compostela was a prime destination for countless pilgrims throughout the Middle Ages. Pilgrims from all over Europe would make their way through France to reach Spain. The legend surrounding the life of Saint James the Great and the discovery of his tomb in Galicia (830 AD) immediately attracted pilgrims to the end of the earth, **finis terrae**, to offer their devotion.



Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture



Chemins de Saint-Jacques-
de-Compostelle en France
inscrits sur la Liste du
patrimoine mondial en 1993

Outstanding Universal Value

UNESCO listed the cultural asset as a World Heritage site as part of the "Routes of Santiago de Compostela in France" in 1998. The listing is an extension of the "Routes of Santiago de Compostela in Spain", a serial site listed in 1993 and 2015.

Wander and Wonder...

Centuries of pilgrimage have seen the Way of Saint James become an adventure for the past, present and future!

The entire route gives believers, non-believers, hikers and visitors an endless voyage of discovery as they get to know themselves, their fellow travellers, the local history and landscapes. Whether you're here for a sense of community, soul searching, connection or well-being, people from all horizons come here to be part of the same adventure.

The route takes hikers, pilgrims and tourists a real voyage of discovery on a walk, bike ride, horse ride or even a drive.

The Via Tolosana or Way of Arles

Pilgrims from the East and Italy travelled on the Via Tolosana from Arles to Puente la Reina in Spain. The southern route opens the doors to the land of the Langue d'Oc which set the scene for the Wars of Religion, Roman history and myriad cultural influences from the Mediterranean and Atlantic.

It takes you to Santiago de Compostela and Rome on a signposted trail known as the GR®653.

The Way of Arles runs east to west through the southern Gard. It starts in Saint-Gilles-du-Gard and its famous abbey before stopping in Vauvert, deep in the Petite Camargue, and ending in Gallargues-le-Montueux, the last stop in the Gard.



Saint-Gilles du-Gard

Saint-Gilles Abbey was built in the 12th century and was the fourth most popular Christian pilgrimage site in the Middle Ages after Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostela.

What made Saint-Gilles so popular among pilgrims was the medieval town's prime location, on the crossroads of trade routes that were heavily frequented by merchants and pilgrims on their way to Rome, Santiago de Compostela and Northern French towns. The transport networks, tales of miracles and stories about the abbey's founder, Saint Giles, spread all over medieval Europe and made the town famous.

The abbey still has the epic proportions you'd expect of a leading pilgrimage site. The opulent religious iconography on Saint-Gilles Abbey's external walls showcases the talent of medieval stonemasons. Their craftsmanship stands out in the expertly-sculpted frieze depicting the main scenes from the Passion of the Christ. The abbey has two storeys. The "Upper Church" was originally 98m long and home to a true masterpiece of stonemasonry: a spiral staircase. These original features are fine examples of the architectural feats that stonemasons could achieve. The lower floor of the abbey houses the crypt and Saint Giles's tomb. The "Lower Church" stands out for its mammoth proportions, making it one of the biggest crypts in France.

The abbey was listed as a national heritage site in 1840 and became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1998 as part of the Way of Saint James in France.



A helping hand along the way

NÎMES TOURISME

Saint-Gilles Visitor Centre
5 place de la République
30800 Saint-Gilles
+33 (0)4 66 58 38 00
www.nimes-tourisme.com



Visitor services



- Free entry to the abbey crypt (please present your Pilgrim Passport)
- Stamp for your Pilgrim Passport
- Water fountain
- Information about the other stages on the Way of Saint James
- Free Wi-Fi
- Information about shops, restaurants and healthcare providers
- Transport (bus and taxi)

MAISON DU PÈLERIN MARCEL AVIGNON

3, impasse du cloître
33 (0)6 10 39 87 07 | 33 (0)4 66 87 47 60
wix.com/stgillespelerin/accueil
roland.morcillo@wanadoo.fr

Pilgrim hostel with 14 beds and a kitchen area. Open March 1st-November 11th. Reception: 3pm-7pm.



Vauvert

Vauvert and the pilgrimage... past!

Notre Dame de Vauvert was one of the oldest places of worship in the Nîmes diocese as well as being one of the biggest pilgrimage sites in France.

Its life began in 810 AD and ended during the 16th century Wars of Religion, when Saint Giles protestants destroyed it in the 1540s.

The church on the Way of Saint James played host to illustrious figures including Pope Clement V and French kings such as Louis IX, Charles IX and Francis I.

It was so important that the village of Posquières was gradually named after the church and became Vauvert in the 14th century.

Vauvert and the pilgrimage... present!

Vauvert is the third stage on the Way of Arles, after Arles and Saint-Gilles. The route goes through Beauvoisin just behind Château Beaubois before it reaches Vauvert.

It continues into Gallargues-le-Montueux through the "lands" of Le Cailar.

The GR®653 hiking trail through town opened in 1990 and is the last of the 4 Ways of Saint James. It's uninterrupted, well-signposted and has lots of places to stay. It's achievable no matter the season.



The route works both ways: to Rome and to Santiago de Compostela.

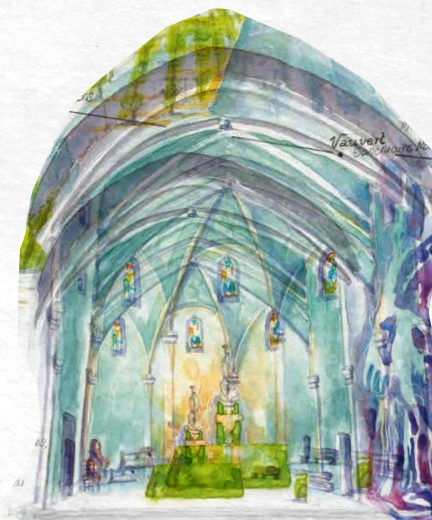
More and more people from every nationality are flocking to the Way.

The originally Christian pilgrimage is attracting visitors for all kinds of reasons: a spiritual journey, self-reflection or a break from the distractions of the modern world.

The Vauvert stage of the Way of Arles to Santiago de Compostela is now home to a new rest area and information point.

Keep your eyes peeled for the iron figure of a pilgrim deep in a lovely, shaded pine forest in Le Courrier!

The benches, information board and services provide a welcome break for pilgrims and hikers alike!



The back of beyond

During the Middle Ages, Notre-Dame du Val-Vert attracted flocks of pilgrims often from far-flung regions. When the Church deemed a penitent's wrongdoings particularly serious, some were advised to go on a pilgrimage to Notre-Dame du Val-Vert to seek forgiveness. It was a popular pilgrimage among sinners. Val-Vert being so remote made the penance even harder for anyone who had to complete it.

Some pilgrims had to travel hundreds of miles to get there. The idea was that the journey to Val-Vert took you to a strange land, worlds away from your regular life.



A helping hand along the way

CŒUR DE PETITE CAMARGUE TOURIST OFFICE

Place Ernest Renan

30600 Vauvert

+33 (0)4 66 88 28 52

www.coeurdepeticamargue.fr

accueil@otpetitecamargue.fr

Visitor services



- List of pilgrim hostels (please present your Pilgrim Passport)
- Stamp for your Pilgrim Passport
- Water fountain
- Route exploring the town's history
- Information about the other stages on the Way of Saint James
- Free Wi-Fi and tablet use
- Information about shops, restaurants and healthcare providers
- Transport (train, bus and taxi)

MÉDIATHÈQUE "MEDIA CENTRE"

Place Dr Arnoux 30600 Vauvert

+33 (0)4 66 73 17 30

mediatheque@vauvert.com

Opening times

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: 3pm-6.30pm

Wednesday: 9.30am-6.30pm

Saturday: 9.30am-5pm

Gallargues-le-Montueux

Gallargues is a stage on the Way of Saint James which has always been renowned for its warm welcome. As a matter of fact, an impressive medieval building in the town centre was once a rest stop for pilgrims on the Way of Saint James: Hôpital Saint-Jacques.

Gallargues was a popular stage among pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela on the Way of Arles throughout the Middle Ages. And it still is, with the town welcoming pilgrims with open arms.

SAINT-MARTIN CHURCH AND ITS NEW DOOR

The Romanesque Saint-Martin Church was built in the 13th century in La Vièle on Place Esprit Fléchier, before being extensively renovated and rebuilt in the 17th century. The columns and stone-setting in the cul-de-four apse bring to mind Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert Abbey.

Tour Royale and Chappe semaphore telegraph

The Tour Royale was once the castle's watchtower and keep. It stood at the top of Gallargues and was used as a relay for the Chappe semaphore telegraph in 1830. The Gallargues tower was listed as a national heritage site in 1840 and was home to one of 534 Chappe optical telegraphs between 1832 and 1852.



Following the tower's restoration, the Association du Patrimoine Gallarquois (Gallargues Heritage Association) joined forces with the local authority, HISTELPOST Association (History of Postal and Telephone Communications in the Bas-Languedoc) and FNARH to design a complete and working model true to the original, which was inaugurated on November 6th 2010.

A helping hand along the way

PÈLERINS À GALLARGUES ASSOCIATION

5 rue Marcel Dublet
+33(0)7 82 42 81 40
gallarguespel.canalblog.com
pelerinsgallargues@yahoo.fr
pelerinsgallargues30@gmail.com

Visitor services

- Council-run hostel with 7 beds
- Information about shops and restaurants
- Stamp for your Pilgrim Passport
- Information about the other stages on the Way of Saint James
- Transport (train, bus and taxi)



Everything you need to know!



Start	Finish	Distance
Arles	Saint-Gilles	20.5km
Saint-Gilles	Vauvert	16.5km
Vauvert	Gallargues-le-Montueux	13.5km

Useful phone numbers

AFCC, FRENCH WAY OF SAINT JAMES ASSOCIATION

+33(0)5 62 27 00 05
chemins-compostelle.com

REPORT A PROBLEM ON THE GR653 TRAIL:

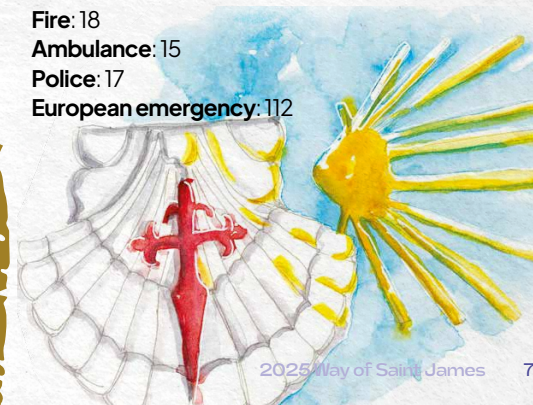
sentinelles.sportsdenature.fr

Emergency numbers

Fire: 18
Ambulance: 15
Police: 17
European emergency: 112

Our dear pilgrims, we wish you a wonderful journey on the Way as you connect with new friends, the real France and the great outdoors.

"Follow your dreams, they know the Way"
Ultreia!





COEUR DE PETITE CAMARGUE

Office de Tourisme



Cœur de Petite Camargue Tourist Office

📍 Place Ernest Renan - 30600 Vauvert

☎ 33(0)4 66 88 28 52

✉ accueil@otpetitecamargue.fr

🌐 coeurdepetitecamargue.fr

📘 [OfficedeTourismeCoeurdePetiteCamargue](https://www.facebook.com/OfficedeTourismeCoeurdePetiteCamargue)

📷 [otcoeurdepetitecamargue](https://www.instagram.com/otcoeurdepetitecamargue)



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restaurants, shops and what's on
during your break.

