



The little town of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port is the starting point for the Camino Frances - the most popular route to Santiago de Compostela.

But, it's an interesting route into Spain even if you're not on foot. Take the train from Bayonne and then carry on to Pamplona by coach, which provides fab views of this gentle and lush part of the Pyrenees.

Tip: The bus does not run all year so book your ticket on the [Alsa](#) website or app which will let you know if/when it is running.



## Strolls

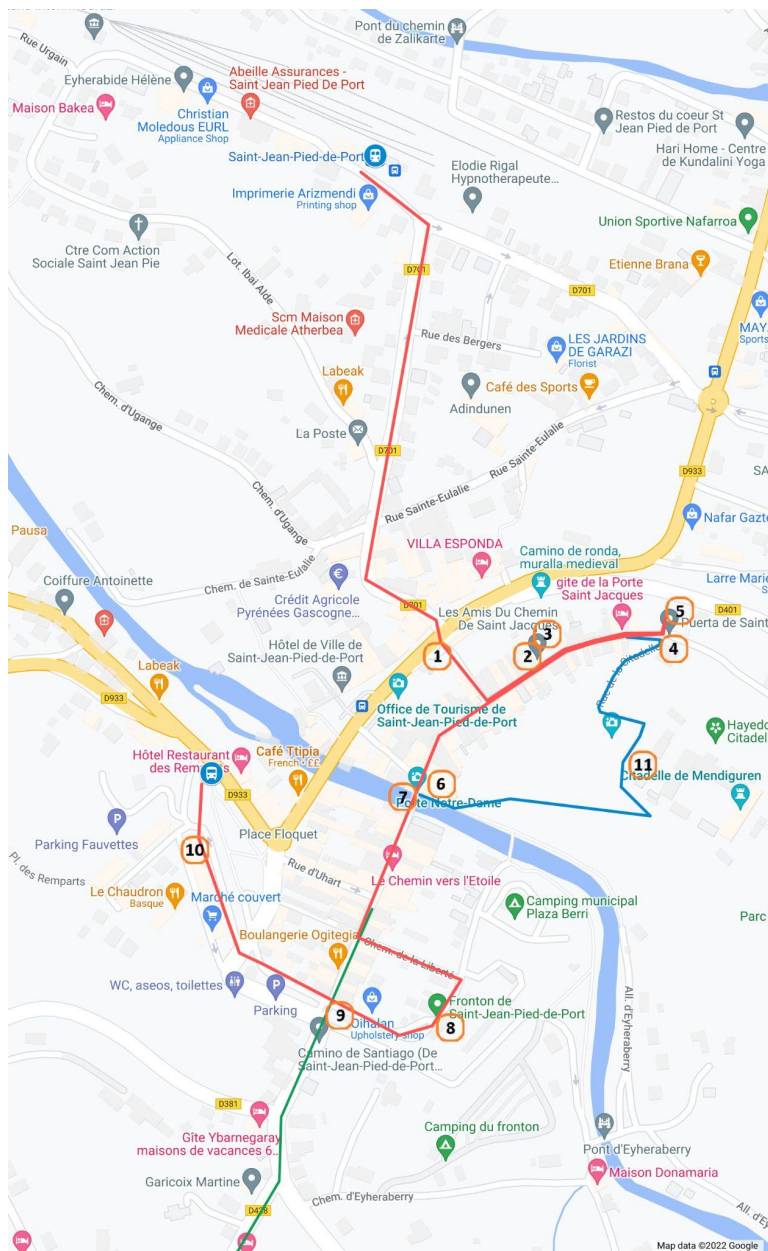
- [Train station to bus station \(1km red\)](#)
- [Citadel stroll \(1km blue\)](#)
- [Camino taster \(up to 25km green\)](#)

## Interactive Map

Here is a [link to a map](#) that can help you find your bearings.

## Train station to bus station (1km red)

This route will give you a feel for this neat little town and its sense place as the starting point for hundreds of pilgrims each day in season.



- 1 Porte de France
- 2 Pilgrim Information Office
- 3 La prison des Evêques
- 4 Puerta de Saint Jacques
- 5 Mirador de la ronda
- 6 Notre-Dame Church
- 7 Vieux Pont
- 8 Fronton (pelota)
- 9 Porte de Espagne
- 10 Market
- 11 Citadel

The way from the train station to the town centre is well signposted. After leaving the train station go left along the Avenue de la Gare and then take the first right to head to the town centre along Avenue Renaud with its smart suburban villas.

At the end of the avenue cross the road and go through the small pointy arched entrance to the old town, the Porte de France (1).



*Porte de France - google*



*Rue de la Citadelle*

Head up the 50 metres or so of Rue de France to the end where it meets the Rue de la Citadelle. Turn left up the street which will take you past the Pilgrim Information Office(2) where pilgrims get their documents in order and sort out things like their first night's stay in the town. A little further on, is the ominously named Bishop's prison (3), which is now a museum about Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port's pilgrimage story. At the end of the street is Port Saint Jacques (4) which has a little door to a path down to a viewing point over the surrounding hills (5).

If this view isn't cutting the mustard, you could go take the path up to the Citadelle (see blue route).

Otherwise, make your way back down the road and join any pilgrims with their backpacks, walking sticks and seashells plodding down the street - the first few steps of their 800 km adventure.

At the bottom is Porte Notre-Dame (6), which also serves as a bell tower for the adjoining church of Notre-Dame.

Each evening, the church holds a service for the pilgrims passing through, which given the various reasons for them making their journey can be quite moving.





*Porte Notre-Dame*



*Vieux Pont*

Pass through the port which leads onto the Vieux Pont/old bridge (7) which runs over the trout and midge filled Nive de Beherobie.

To see a feature of most Basque towns, continue up the Rue d'Espagne and then take the first left down the Chemin de la Liberté, which leads to a Fronton (8) - a pelota court where one of around 22 different permutations of the game.

Follow the road around which will bring you back to the Rue d'Espagne where it meets the slightly worse for wear Port d'Espagne (9). If you have the time and inclination to make your way up a long incline which is the first part of the Camino, you could follow the Camino taster route below (green).

Otherwise, continue following the walls which lead to the covered market and the stop for buses to Spain at Place Juan de Huarte.



## Citadel hike (1km blue)

From near Port de Saint Jacques, take the gentle path up to the citadel (10), which like so many other fortifications in France was designed by [Vauban](#). From here you can get fab views.



*Ramparts*



*Citadel*

A path runs from the far side along the walls to the right and down to the church of Notre Dame.



## Camino taster (up to 25km green)



If watching all the pilgrims getting ready for their 800 km walk to Santiago de Compostela is getting you curious, you could join them - at least for a bit.

Roncesvalles which is about 25 km away. Much of the journey is hilly (mostly up) so make sure you have allowed plenty of time to catch the bus - or stopover at Roncesvalles.

The route is well sign posted and unless you are in the middle of winter, there will be a steady stream of pilgrims heading along here.

From the Rue d'Espagne go through the Porte de Espagne - well you are heading for Spain (7). You will be walking in roughly a straight line, which starts off briefly on Route de Saint-Michel and as the road curves to the left, you will keep straight on by joining Rte du Maréchal Harispe and then Route Napoleon.

Buon Camino!



*Camino Frances*