Day 7
Monday
September 1, 2025

Los Arcos to Logrono
Destination: Pension Muro de la Mata

Time on the Trail: 8 hours, 17 minutes
Distance Travelled: 18.65 miles (30 km)

Speed: 2.3 mph (3.6 km/hr)
Pace: 27 minutes/mile (17 minutes/km)



Note of the Terrain Graph:
Not a bad day terrain wise. The initial climb in the morning was rather gradual. The only challenging part that I remember was that steep decline toward the end down to the river bed. And that was probably made more difficult because we had already hiked about 17 miles. We had plenty of company throughout the day. And I realize that by now we weren't noticing the rolling hills as much as we did at the start of the Camino.

Jim´s Daily Trail Notes:
¨Well, we made it…..trail wasn't too bad, cloudy on the first part, sunny and warm on the last. Two more long days before we get a bit of a breather¨

September 1st!

A whole new month ahead of us!

While Valerie was already in Logrono, touring the city and waiting for a train back home to Germany, we were getting an early start on one of the longer hikes of our Camino.

We were able to get started by 6:30 in the morning, well before sunrise, and were treated to the sight of the sun rising beneath a blanket of clouds, and then rewarding us with a rainbow appearing ahead of us for almost 30 minutes as the clouds decided whether to rain upon us or not. (It didn't) We soon passed a large flock of sheep in an enclosed pasture next to the road, and a group of 5 shepherding dogs greeted us amiably as we walked.



Just two of us now…. Look out Camino!



We walked toward this rainbow for miles





Sheep and sheep dogs

In the town of Torres Del RIo we stopped briefly at the octagonally shaped Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which appeared in the movie ¨The Way.¨ I paid the 1 Euro requested donation to tour the small and rather stark interior, but photos were prohibited.



A view of the next town in the distance Sansoll



Our Lady of the Holy Sepulchre, seen in The movie ¨The Way¨

We also passed the local municipal cemetery. The first of many on our Camino. It was odd to see the high wall surrounding the cemetery, and looking through the wrought iron gate at the varied assortment of tombstones and monuments inside presented a memorable sight. There is a sign at the entrance that reads “Yo que foi lo que tu eres, tu seras lo que yo soy” “I was once what you are, and you will be what I am.”



Passing our first trailside cemetery



There were few cafes, but grapes were ripe

There were only a few towns along the entire route today, and so we had to make sure we were prepared with water and food.

It was along one of these empty stretches that we first encountered SunHi. I was struggling on a long uphill stretch, and stopped on a shaded stone bench about a hundred feet from the summit. The woman already sitting there offered me a tangerine. It was, for me, a wonderful and even revelatory gift. Her generosity to a stranger was so touching. It really touched me that this woman who spoke almost no English would recognize my fatigue and offer me some of her nourishment. From that point on, I tried to find small ways to imitate her generosity. (That proved harder than I thought it would, because almost every one we met seemed in better condition than I was…)

The woman spoke almost no English, but we managed to introduce ourselves. She was SunHi (not her real name, but a nickname), a grandmother from South Korea. And we were always "Mike-and-Jim". Our own little comedy team. We saw her often between there and Burgos.

It was easy to tell if she was on the trail ahead of us: whenever she got tired, she would let both of her hiking poles drag in the dirt as she walked. So whenever we saw two straight lines traced in the trail dirt, we knew she was close ahead. It took me quite a while to remember her name. So for many days, whenever we met, I would greet her with "Buen Camino" and gesture that I did not remember her name. And she would always smile and politely remind me of her name, and say "Buen Camino Mike-and-Jim".

It was also on this stage where we passed an impressively large memorial to a Camino pilgrim who had died on the trail. There was a large plaque bearing his image and name - Aaron Hewitt. Not only was there a plaque, but the whole site was filled with scores of small rock cairns, many marked with photos and handwritten cards. There were also several small trees whose branches were festooned with ribbons and flags and banners. I thought of Jenny & Terry, but did not feel the need to leave a memorial for them amongst the crowd here.






Multitude of memorials left at the Aaron Hewitt site

When I reached Logrono, I Googled ¨Aaron Hewitt,¨ to whom the memorial was created. I read that he was a 49 year old American who was a four-time marathon runner, an avid CrossFit athlete, and a hiking enthusiast who was walking the Camino for the first time, when he died at that spot of cardiac arrest. But I could not find any explanation of why that one particular site has since become such an extensive memorial tribute site for obvious scores of hikers.

It was shortly after the memorial that we first came upon the answer to a question many of our family back home had been asking us. "What happens when you have to go to the bathroom while hiking on the trail? Especially the women!"

We were hiking along a busy part of the trail, near a small building with a mural of Virgin Mary & Child which read "Nuestra Senora del Popo: Bendice al Pueblo de Bargota protege a las peregrinos" ("Our Lady of Popo blesses the people of Bargota and protects the pilgrims")



As we approached the building on the opposite side of the trail, I noticed a "commotion" around a tall rectangular cement holding reservoir. Two male pilgrims stood at either end of the other side reservoir, facing outward and extending rain ponchos on their outstretched arms, blocking any views of a woman while she crouched down out of sight and did whatever she had to do.

So, to answer the Camino trail bathroom question: When you've got to go on the trail, you try to find privacy wherever you can. And a little help from a friend (or two) is always appreciated. It was nice to know that chivalry is not dead. At least on the Camino.

Obviously it was usually so much easier for the guys. I could always tell when Jim had to take a leak… he would speed up a little and keep turning and looking behind him to see if anyone was within sight behind us. Then followed a little off-trail interlude and I would be able to briefly pass him by….

I seldom had to use the roadside…. I wonder if Jim was envious. He mentioned once that someone told him if you were on the trail and still had to pee, it meant you weren't walking fast enough to sweat it out….

I am sure that after three days on the Camino, we all learned never to pass by an opportunity to use a real bathroom. You could never be sure how far away the next one would be.

Before reaching Logrono, there is a very steep decline with a choice of steps or rocky path, leading to a small bridge before going up an equally steep climb on the other side of the valley. It was along this valley that I witnessed with amazement the “flip flop” woman and her young companion (Roxanne and Wyatt) I had seen a few days earlier in Villatuerta. She was still wearing flip flops (and carrying a silver sun umbrella) and speedily passed us by going downhill. Then, even more remarkable, gained even more ground on us going up the other side of the valley trail. I still can’t believe that anyone could walk that valley passage so confidently while wearing flip flops. Didn't her feet ever slip out of those flip flops. How is that even possible going uphill????

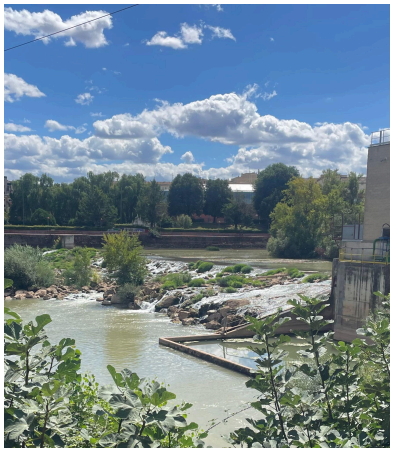
From there it was on to Logrono. The biggest and busiest city we had yet entered.

Our hostel (actually, a “pension” or semi-private room) in Logrono was rather unique. It was actually a modern apartment in a very busy location near the heart of town. It was difficult to find among a row of office and store fronts. In order to access it, we had to contact the proprietor, who came to greet us and then took us to an elevator where we were shown our small two bed room on the third or fourth floor.

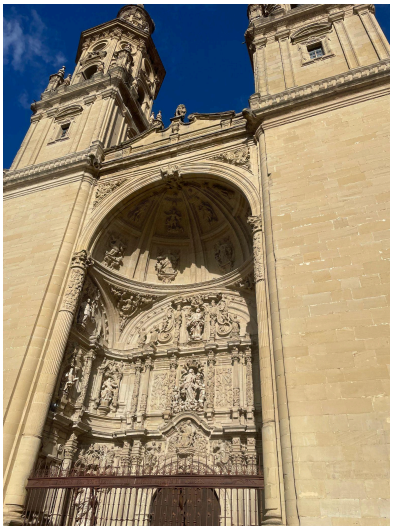
We were given keys for the building entrance and for the elevator and for the room. It was one of the least Camino-like residences of our entire Camino, with the possible exception of the one we stayed in later in Burgos.

It was very modern and clean, but we met no other pilgrims. And, seeing how difficult it was to get into the building and up to our room, I was very worried about whether the Donkey Service had successfully dropped off my backpack. It seemed like a lot of steps just to get myself up to our the pension floor. How would my backpack make itś way up to my room?? (I was also worried that it might not pick up my backpack the next morning.) Fortunately, my backpack was treated with professional respect. Not just here but throughout the Camino. I was amazed at the extra service and care the Donkey Service provided. I made sure to add extra euros to the destination envelopes in gratitude.

We did tour the nearby old town area of Logrono, primarily looking for a place to eat (and perhaps a game store as well). I do remember a nice restaurant with good food. And probably some ice cream. BUt regretfully, no game store.



The rapids on Rio Ebro going into Logrono



The facade of cathedral Santa Maria de la Redonda



The night view Logrono from our pension window

We did miss Valerie. Our number of daily photos dropped precipitously, so fewer memories were recorded that day, and for many days thereafter. (I don't remember JIm ever taking a photo on his phone.) And Jim lost his hiking companion. He and Valerie were almost always slide-by-side, while I was almost always about 10 feet behind him, walking at my own pace and stride. Plus, having Valerie there was a rare opportunity for all three of us to share stories of our respective families. We had spent a whole week - 24 hours a day - catching up with what we missed after decades of just brief occasional visits.