

**17a** *Viana do Castelo – Caminha*

**Interim accommodation:** ➔ *Âncora* 16.4 km ➔ *Modelo* 23.2 km. (see also *Camino da Costa*). This delightful route hugs the coast with remote beaches and ancient forts. It has several beach cafes (summer) and is almost entirely by tranquil beach paths and sand dunes but exposed to coast with little shelter against sun or wind (see photo above of partly obliterated path). Unlike yesterdays stage from *Amorosa* it is easy to follow and virtually flat the entire way.



**0.0 km** *Viana do Castelo centro* From *Praça da Republica* head into r/M da *Romaria* (*Banco Santander*) turn <left into *Rua Cândido dos Reis* (*Hotel Laranjeira*) s/o over the wide *Av. dos Combatentes* into *Rua Gen. Luís do Rego* by Red Cross *Cruz Vermelha* (right). Pass the pilgrim offices *AACS* at 149/151 and turn right> into **Largo 9 de Abril** [0.5 km]. This is the point we leave the alternative *camino da costa* and turn <left into *Rua de São Tiago* passing *Recolhimento de Santiago* with image of the saint above the entrance door. We pass along the *Jardim Dom Fernando* and across busy roundabout and s/o down the busy *Av. do Atlantico* to the seafront at *Praia Norte* [1.4 km]. We take the seafront promenade to *Forte da Areosa* [1.2 km].

**3.1 km** *Forte da Areosa* [•One of several forts we pass between here and *Caminha* which were built between 1640 – 1668 to suppress the frequent pirate raids on the Portuguese coast]. We continue along the seafront passing numerous windmill *Moinho de Vento* all the way to our first refreshment stop at *Carreço*.

**5.4 km** *Carreço Praia* [*Carreço town is located inland on the camino da Costa 1.3 km with various accommodation options see previous page*]. The beach bar is a popular pilgrim pit-stop open most of the year ➔ *Areia*. Good place to contemplate the alternatives ahead at the Iron Age salt pans *Pias Salineiras de Fornelos* chiselled into the rocks at this point. **Option** [0.4 km]. Ⓐ *High level route via Moinos de Montedor 2.4 km to Paços* part of the revitalised *Senda Litoral de Norte*. Proceed up *Rua de Fornelos* to montedor windmills [0.5 km] continue to new ecopista through woodland offering shade but with intermittent views of the coastal path below. Follow the waymarks down to beach and carpark at *Paços*:

**2.4 km** *Paços Praia Estação da Biodiversidade de Montedor* and romantic ruins of *Forte Paços* (left). ➔ *Quiosque* (summer).

**Option** [0.4 km]. Ⓑ *seashore route 2.2 km to Paços*. We pass the salt pans and various prehistoric carvings *gravuras* on the rocks nearby as we scramble through a gap in the rocky foreshore to pick up a rough path that passes *Torre de Montedor* [0.5 km]. We follow the seashore to cross a beautiful sandy beach with the ruins of *Forte de Paços* to join the alternative route to *Paços car park* [1.3 km].

From *Paços* we continue onto track veering inland along the *Ecovia* past *Praia da Arda* to *Praia Afife* [2.9 km] (100m left. Bar Summer). Continue onto cobbled road *rua adoquinado* that becomes a rough track through woodland (awaiting *Ecovia* upgrading) passing (left) *Praia Ínsua* and then *Gelfa* (no facilities) to *Forte do Cão* [2.1 km].

**5.0 km Forte do Cão** Best preserved of these forts on rocky promontory. Closeby is **¶ Camarão** (You'll pay for the seaview). We continue along paths and boardwalks to **▲ rio Âncora estuary option [1.4 km]** by Âncora Praia football grounds: **Ⓐ** head inland along the Ecovia boardwalks and pathways to railway bridge and then back into the town to pedestrian bridge over the **rio Âncora [1.5 km]** (see photo>) and continue along the promenade to **Forte da Largarteira [0.5 km]**.



**3.4 km Vila Praia de Âncora Forte da Largarteira**

At option point **▲ Ⓑ** (1.0 km shorter) make your way down over the sandy estuary and up alongside woodland path at Caldeirões over pedestrian bridge to **Âncora promenade [0.5 km]**. continue along the promenade with its colourful Restaurants, Bars, Cafés and variety of Lodging to **Forte da Largarteira [0.5 km]**.

See previous pages 222/223 for details of facilities and accommodation in **Vila Praia de Âncora**. We continue along the seashore (this stretch coincides with the Camino da Costa) and turn <left by **Capela Santo Isidoro [1.9 km]** onto new Ecovia by seashore [*the 'old' route continues s/o past Cruzeiro de Santo Isidoro to rejoin new ecovia just before Moleda*] **Moleda option point [2.0 km]**.

**3.9 km Moleda option point.** [*The Camino da Costa turns inland under the rail tunnel*]. For Senda Litoral continue s/o along the promenade with various cafes and restaurants. Keep s/o after **☞ Mergulho** along cobbled road to enter a delightful woodland path [**1.0 km**] [beach bar **☞ Pé Na Praia** left]. The path continues to **Praia Foz do Minho [1.6 km]**.

**2.6 km Praia Foz do Minho.** Capela N.S. das Areias **☞ Barracuda ▲ Camping Orbitur Caminha park** from €50 bungalow **☎ 258 921 295**. Marina for **Maritime Taxi ☎ 931 636 360 [m] 967 094 630** with the colourful **Capitão Mário** who will whisk you to the beach on the other side of the estuary for €5 at anytime of day. **Note the town of Caminha is 2.4 km** around the estuary. See previous pages for facilities and accommodation if you intend to stay the night in Caminha before taking the ferry from the main port in the morning or heading up river on the ecovia to Vila Nova de Cerveira and Valenca and Tui on the camino Cental.

