

THE LADY HELENE ROUND WALK

→ SITUATION : L'Hospitalet, 13 kms south of Cahors via the N20 then the D659.

→ START POINT : L'Hospitalet church

GPS Coordinates : N 44.361308° E 1.407975°

DURATION : 3hrs

LENGTH : 10,4 kms

WAYMARKING : Yellow



“ In 1232, Lady Hélène, who had power of justice, had a hospital and an oratory built, whose upkeep was entrusted to poor passers-by. ”

TO SEE IN THE AREA...

• L'hospitalet : church of Notre Dame de la Nativité built on the former hospita

→ FOOD SHOPS/
RESTAURANTS ETC :
Castelnau-Montratriet and
L'hospitalet

→ INFORMATION :
Cahors - Lot Valley
Tourist Office
Montcuq Office
05 65 21 84 39

D Facing the church, take the lane on the left then turn round. At the bend, go straight ahead on the white track then, at the crossroads, turn right towards the D54.

1 Cross this and walk up to the D659, leaving behind all the tracks going off to the left.

2 Turn on to this road on the left then, after the bridge, cross over and take the track opposite to «Lestang». Continue straight ahead, going past tracks on the right and left, up to the D54.

3 Walk 50 m on the roadside on the left, then cross over to take the stony track opposite going uphill. At the road, turn right.

4 At «Trigodina», turn left. A few steps further on, you can see on your right the Château de Labastide-Marnhac, and the Trespoux relay tower. At the crossroads, turn right. Go past a pretty forester's house and a little further on, the «Aygues Mortes» well, then continue straight on to the crossroads.

5 Go right towards L'hospitalet for 1 km, and take a right fork up to the D659, then turn right to return to the village.

WHERE DOES «LHOSPITALET» COME FROM ?

Legend has it that one day between 1095 and the middle of the 13th C. (depending which chronicler you believe) Lady Hélène of Castelnau and her maidservant became stuck in the mud at the bottom of a marshy valley. Lady Hélène made the vow that, if she managed to get out of that perilous situation, she would devote the rest of her life to pilgrims and to the poor. Having succeeded in regaining firm ground, she founded a hospital, a place where travellers could rest safely and receive care if needed. This hospital welcomed pilgrims en route for the Holy Land, Santiago de Compostela and also for Rocamadour, whose Black Virgin was already drawing the faithful from well beyond the confines of Quercy. All that remains nowadays of this modest hospital is one single arcade – probably a vestige of the chapel – now set in one of the walls of L'hospitalet village.

