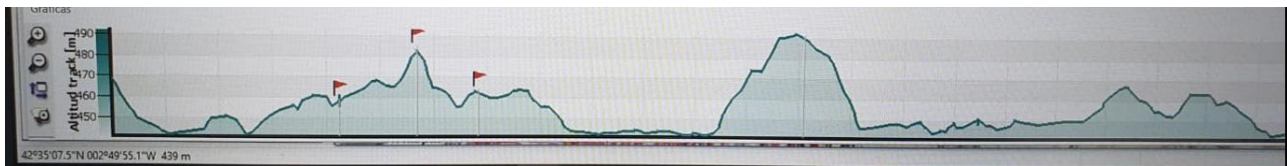


## HONDON TRAIL (HIKING)

### TRACK



### PROFILE



- Distance: 10,26 km
- Trail : Circular
- Accumulated elevation gain: 126m.
- Maximum altitude: 490m Minimum altitude: 440m
- Difficulty: low.
- Trail sign: (signposted in metal sheet)



## Description:

The Hondón route is a circular route that begins and ends at the "Plaza de la Paz", in the historic center of Haro. Following the posts that mark the route we will not have any difficulties. This hiking route, which is also ideal for Nordic walking, takes us first of all to stroll through the "Barrio de la Estación", where most of the centennial wineries of Haro are located. The peculiar architecture of the wineries is worth admiring. After leaving the station quarter we will walk along a rural path that takes us into the place known as Hondón (also called Tondón), which is a meander that forms the Ebro river as it passes through Haro. Here we will enjoy the authentic landscape of vineyards that define the wine environment of our region. An environment that fills the senses at any time of the year; the austerity of the bare winter vines, the freshness of spring shoots and the aromas of wild plants that line the paths, rockrose, thyme, fennel, lavender ... The resounding splendor of leafy vines in summer and in autumn, the ripe fruits and, after the harvest, the thousand shades of autumn colors. The route soon becomes a dirt road, a parcel, used by farmers for work in the vineyards. During the route we will find some points of interest that are marked with posts and QR codes. From them, being in elevated areas, we will be able to discover different views of the entire environment of the Rioja Alta, and enjoy a vivid and ever-changing picture of one of the most beautiful landscapes in Spain, candidate for Intangible Heritage of Humanity of the Unesco.

**Note:** respect the environment and the vineyards. Some of the paths are private.

## Points of interest:

- **Remains of a medieval tower (out of the route, path with some difficulty)**
- **Vineyard shelter and necropolis**
- **Celtic temple (out of the route, easy path)**
- [Viña Tondonia castle:](#)
- **Medieval Bridge.**

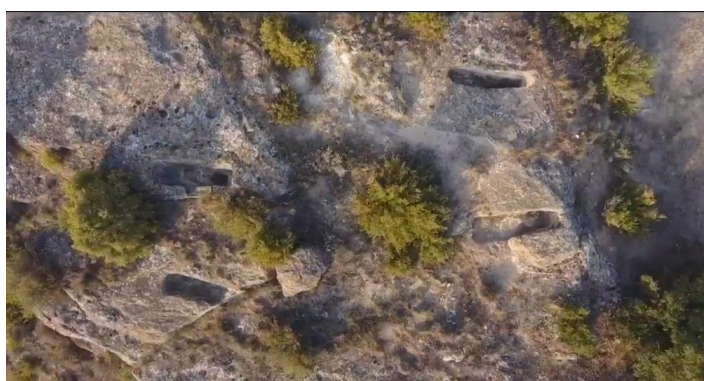
## Chozo and Necrópolis del Perdigón

**Chozo** or **guardaviñas (vineyards guard)** is a simple field construction typical of the area since the 19th century. These stone constructions have a solid base with a truncated cone shape without mortar. Its main function was to offer refuge to the vintners who worked in the nearby vineyards.



Chozo's side view and surroundings. Photograph by Darío Traspaderne Larrea.

Near the **chozo**, on a limestone rock platform, there is the medieval necrópolis of "Perdigón", a repopulation necrópolis formed by approximately five tombs, which make up a small group compared to other similar ones such as that of "Santa María de la Piscina" (Peciña, La Rioja).



Tombs aerial view.  
Frame of <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFwK6eY2i0&t=12s>

Necropolises of this type were very common between the 10th and the 14th centuries AD, the tombs are anthropomorphic and there were covered with a stone slab. They are of various sizes, both for adult and younger individuals.

References: De Boüard, Michel; Riu, Manuel; I Castanyer, Inmaculada Ollich. *Manual de arqueología medieval: de la prospección a la historia*. Teide, 1997.  
<https://vinosybodegasderioja.com/enoturismo/que-son-chozos-guardavinas/>



## Celtic temple of Peña Redonda

At the top of one of the hills that define the topography of the Hondon meander, there is a solitary rock surrounded by vineyards, it is called Peña Redonda.



View of Peña Redonda. Photograph by Jesús Ángel García Gamarra

It is believed that it could have been used in antiquity as a ritual temple by one of the Celtiberian peoples who inhabited the area, specifically the Berones, Vascones or Pelendones, among others. Although no archaeological studies have been conducted as such, some amateur studies, although not conclusive, can serve as a guide to point out this natural accident as a possible sanctuary, some of the evidences are:

1. The location of the temples in a prominent natural site, such as a rock, a tree or a river, is very common among Celtic peoples.
2. The existence of some marks in the rocks that could have been made by human hands, such as:
  - a. Some access stairs to the top of the rock.
  - b. Multiple **holes** at the top, which may have been formed by natural action of erosion, or have been made by human action, forming several **bowls** for ritual use.
  - c. A possible concavely sacrificial pile, drilled at one end, next to a small pool, where the sacrifice would be deposited.
  - d. The existence of a mark on a vertical surface to the right of the stairs with a wave shape, which has been intended to be interpreted as a moon or bird symbol, closely related to death.



Pile view. Photograph by Jesús Ángel García Gamarra



Mark. Photograph by Jesús Ángel García Gamarra

References: Duque, Angel Montenegro. *Colonizaciones y formación de los pueblos prerromanos (1200-218 a.C.)*. Editorial Gredos, 1989. <https://santuarioceltibero.jimdofree.com>, page of the study made by Jesús Ángel García Gamarra.

# Star Tower

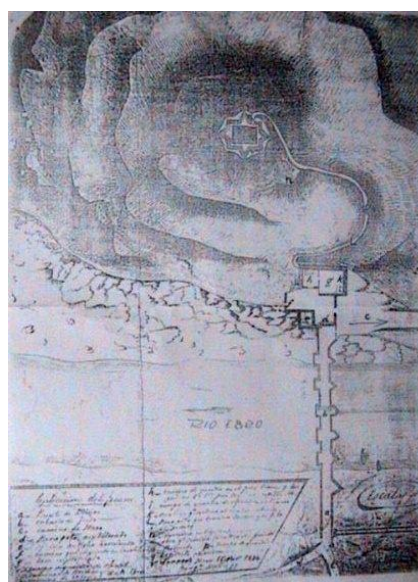
These remains of an old fortified tower are placed on the top of the hill that stands out over the Briñas Bridge, whose origin is possibly late medieval (S. XIII AD) and it is closely linked to the bridge. Its main function would be to monitor the entire surrounding area and the bridge itself, where the guard posts were located.



Front view of the ruins of the tower. Photograph by Darío Traspaderne Larrea.

Its name comes from its last remodeling during the Carlist wars (19th century AD) when its eight-pointed star-shaped plant was remodeled, as reflected in the plans drawn up in 1834.

Finally, after the destruction in 1842 of the castles of La Mota (Haro, La Rioja) and that of Santa Lucía (Ocón, La Rioja) it was occupied by the Haro police force until they left it on an uncertain date.



Complete plan of 1834, with the tower on top.

Source: <http://fresno.pntic.mec.es/~josa0000/puentebrinas/plano.htm>

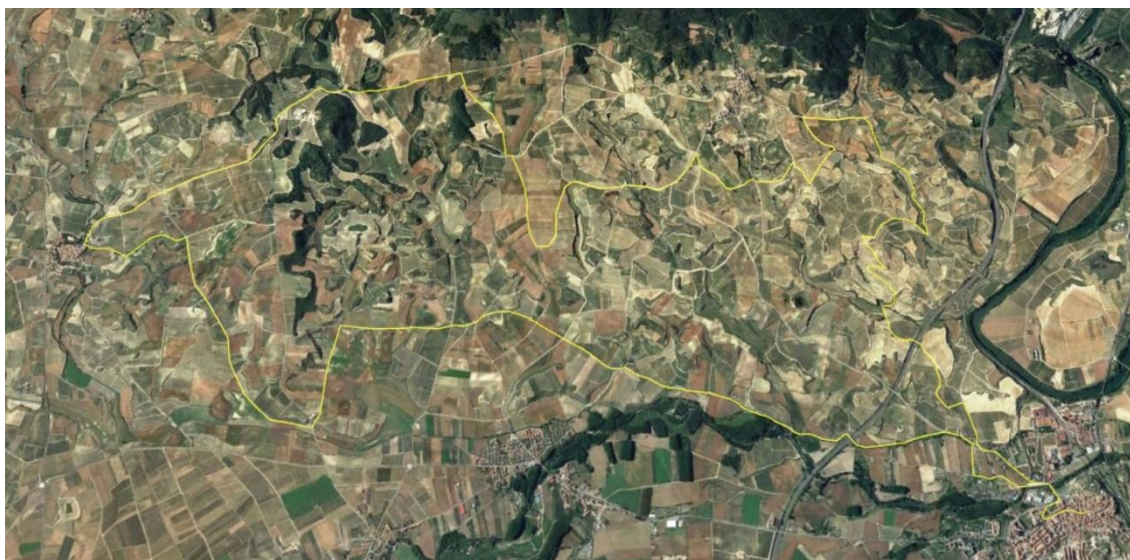
Reference documents: Sáenz Rodríguez, María. Haro Histórico. El patrimonio artístico de la ciudad de Haro. Universidad de La Rioja. Herrero, Jorge Sáenz. Bienes de Interés Cultural, patrimonio de toda La Rioja. Belezos: Revista de cultura popular y tradiciones de La Rioja, 2015, no 29, p. 78-85.

References: Duque, Angel Montenegro. Colonizaciones y formación de los pueblos prerromanos (1200-218 a.C). Editorial Gredos, 1989. <https://santuarioceltibero.jimdofree.com>, page of the study carried out by Jesús Ángel García Gamarra.

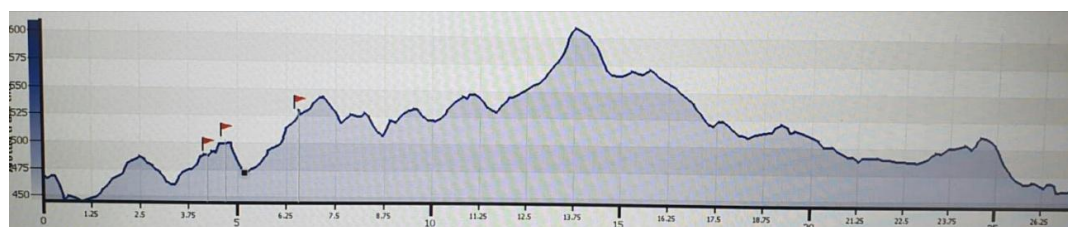


## THE VALLEYS ROUTE (BICYCLE)

### TRACK



### PROFILE



- Distance: 29,190km
- Trail: Circular
- Accumulated difference in altitude: 278m.
- Maximum altitude: 610m Minimum altitude: 445m
- Technical difficulty: low-medium.
- Trail sign: (signposted in metal sheet)



### Description:

Beautiful route that runs through the northern part of the region, between the Obarenes Mountains and the River Tirón. The route begins in the Plaza de la Paz, in the historic center of Haro, strolls through the city to go north after crossing the bridge over the River Tirón. It runs along a paved road towards San Felices, pay attention to take the track of land in the "Cuervo". From here we ride along a dirt track, parcel roads that are used for field work. The road goes up and down, comes and goes, between vineyards, cereal fields, wild areas and some pine groves. Attention to the indications of places of interest (Chozo and Lagar Rupestre), which give us an idea of the antiquity of vine cultivation in this area. A few kilometers later we will reach to an intersection that indicates the possibility, if we have time and strength, to extend the route (4 km round trip) to the right to reach the fields of San Felices de Bilbio, a place declared the most beautiful corner of Spain in 2014, and the place where the famous Battle of Wine is held every year. It is worth walking up to the Ermita del Santo to be amazed by breathtaking views of the Ebro valley and the city of Haro in the background. Once you get back to the route, we head west, and the track runs smoothly between the foothills of the Obarenes mountains and the vineyards, surrounds Villalba de Rioja and continues up and down between vineyards, until it connects to a wider and more comfortable track, a place ideal to take a breath and admire again the views of the vast fields of vines gliding smoothly to the horizon. We continue riding along this wide track until we reach the town of Sajazarra, we can rest a bit, refresh ourselves and stroll through the gardens that surround the castle. Special attention to the point where the route follows, which is right next to the entrance arch of the town. We change the orientation, we ride east to return to Haro, the path takes us little by little towards the River Tirón, always surrounded by vineyards. When we get to the river, the track is a little more complicated, due to the potholes and stones that force us to go slower, but it allows us to

enjoy the sounds of the water and the shade of the trees on the riverbank. When we get back to Haro, we once again join the road along which we started the route and after going up the last slope of our trip, we again reach the Plaza de la Paz, where we can have a well-deserved aperitif in any of its terraces. Good route!

**Note:** respect the environment and the vineyards. Some of the paths are private.

**Points de interest:**

- Chozo;
- Stone winepress
- San Felices Hermitage
- Sajazarra castle

## Chozo de Cubillas

**Chozo** or **guardaviñas (vineyards guard)** is a simple field construction typical of the area since the 19th century. These stone constructions have a solid base with a truncated cone shape without mortar. Its main function was to offer refuge to the vintners who worked in the nearby vineyards, as well as to store occasionally the farm tools.



Chozo frontal view. Own source

Source: Pastor, Luis Vicente Elías. *El paisaje del viñedo en La Rioja: cruce de miradas*. Berceo, 2014, no 167, p. 39-60.

## Stone winepress of Cubillas

The stone winepresses are small centers for grape pressing and wort processing located in the open air, carved on the multiple limestone and sandstone platforms that dot the landscape of La Rioja. The vast majority are dated from the 10th century AD on, although all dating has been done through references in ancient texts (the oldest being from 959 AD) or through **stratigraphic correlation** with the surrounding necropolis



Stone winepress general view. Own source.



Generally there are two types of winepresses, ones for grape pressing and others for grape treading, the main difference between them is that the pressing ones once had a wooden press, with its corresponding structure. Those of this type are usually located in places where the terrain allows the structure to settle on a wall.

The second type, and the oldest ones, are the winepresses, which do not require any structure other than the stone to perform their function, being the farmers themselves who would tread the grapes to extract the wort. Taking that winepress as an example, we can say that they are made up of a treading pool (the largest pool), channels or pipes through which the wort would circulate, and finally a settling basin, where the wort would be left to rest and would be collected.



Winepresses and surroundings view. Own source.

Sourec: Arqueología, Labrys. Los lagares rupestres de San Andrés (San Vicente de la Sonsierra). Belezos: Revista de cultura popular y tradiciones de La Rioja, 2012, no 19, p. 20-25.

## The Hermitage of San Felices

The Hermitage of San Felices is situated at the top of the Bilibio cliffs that make up the Haro shells, next to the Buradón cliffs. These cliffs have been a special place of worship since ancient times, developing various religious centers in the vicinity such as the Cueva de Páqueta (Álava), or the Monastery of Herrera (Herrera, La Rioja).



The fortification "**Castro de Bilibio**" had been inhabited since the First Iron Age (7th-5th century BC), and there is also some evidence of contact with the Romans, such as the remains of **Hispanic terra sigilata** (ceramics) in the remains of some fortifications, some references to "**Baelibio**" in the nearby hermitage of San Bartolomé (Angostina, Álava), and the existence of a **Roman road** in the vicinity of Bilibio that communicated the Ebro valley through La Rioja to Burgos.



According to the tradition, San Felices (6th century AD) retired to pray to the cliffs of Bilibio. During this period as an anchorite lived San Millán with him, to initiate himself as an anchorite in the year 493. Finally, San Felices died in 520 and was buried in one of the caves of the mount itself, where he rested until 1090 when his remains were transferred to the San Millán Monastery and some of his relics were preserved in the church of Santo Tomás in Haro. The first hermitage consecrated to San Millán was erected in Haro itself, but the current one was built in 1710 just where the anchorite's first resting place was located.

References: Mayoral, M<sup>a</sup> P. Pascual, et al. *La cueva de Páceta: Castro Bilibio (La Rioja)– ¿Un oratorio rupestre? Antigüedad y cristianismo*, 2006, no 23, p. 719-737. Bodegas, Pablo Díaz. *En torno a la traslación de San Felices de Bilibio, patrono de Haro*. Berceo, 1992, no 123, p.31-47

## Sajazarra castle

This castle was built with sandstone masonry in the second half of the 15th century, where before was a small fortified house and possibly a church because of the tombs founded, next to the moat, in the small square in front of it, although now they are covered, in the past they formed a necropolis (possibly) from between the 9th and 12th centuries.



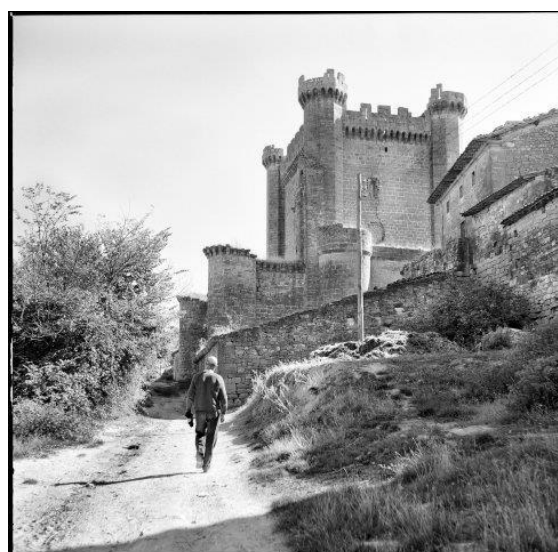
Castle frontal view with the current church on the left.  
Source <http://www.nikonistas.com/digital/foro/topic/379662-castillo-de-sajazarra>

Great strategic situation, since the road from Haro to Miranda passed under its north wall, in the highest area of the town. The outer enclosure has a rectangular floor plan, except for the northwest corner that joins the "torre del homenaje" (Homage tower). The perimeter is guarded by 7 circular towers, 4 in the front area and the other 3 in the back, in addition to a triangular spur in the center of the east side wall. The two towers that flank the main door would have the family's coat of arms, of which there is a rectangular visible gap today.

The Homage tower, where the warden's residence was located, has a rectangular floor plan with octagonal towers at the corners.

Most of the defense systems are preserved in this building, such as **machicolations**, **arrow slits**, **embrasures** and **battlements**. It had four floors divided by wooden floors, judging by the holes in the walls that would supported the original structure.

References: Valgañón, José Gabriel Moya. *Notas sobre Sajazarra medieval: urbanismo, cerca, fortaleza*. Brocar. *Cuadernos de Investigación Histórica*, 1990, no 16, p. 93-144



Old road from Haro to Miranda.  
Source: <https://www.larioja.com/comarcas/201706/10/aquel-camino-detras-castillo-20170609235803-v.html>



## **OTHER PATHWAYS YOU CAN ENJOY...**

### **EBRO GR 99 NATURAL TRACK (STAGE 13) - HARO – BRIÑAS – BRIONES - SAN VICENTE (HIKING AND BICYCLE)**

The Ebro GR 99 Nature Trail begins in Fontibre (Cantabria) and ends in the Garxal Lighthouse (Tarragona). This route runs along the entire bank of the Ebro river and has a total length of 1280 km.

This stage of the GR 99 begins in Haro, crossing the medieval bridge of Briñas, Briones and ending in San Vicente de la Sonsierra. During this stage through La Rioja Alta, in addition to enjoying the grandeur of the Ebro river, the vineyard landscape is the main protagonist. The route is perfectly signposted, the marks are two white and red horizontal bands respectively.

Link - <https://www.mapa.gob.es/es/desarrollo-rural/temas/caminos-naturales/caminos-naturales/sector-noreste/ebro/etapa13/default.aspx>

### **OJA – TIRÓN GREEN ROUTE (HIKING AND BICYCLE)**

The route is divided into two stages. The first section runs along the old railroad tracks for 26 km from Ezcaray to Casalarreina, crossing Santo Domingo de la Calzada; and the second one from Casalarreina to Haro through 12 km on a conditioned road.

Link - <https://www.larioja.org/medio-ambiente/es/senderos/vias-verdes/red-vias-verdes/via-verde-oja>

### **RIOJA ALTA WINE TRAILS (RIOJA ALTA WINE ROUTE) - (HIKING AND BICYCLE)**

Link - <https://www.rutasdelvinorioja.com/descargas/>

### **TRAIL NETWORK OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LA RIOJA**

Link - <https://www.larioja.org/medio-ambiente/es/senderos>