



NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2021 LE CŒUR DU CHEMIN

Spring is almost here. We want to be able to enjoy longer days, more pleasant temperatures, the sun and especially nature. Exactly 3 years ago, on this date, I took my first steps on the Camino. I will never forget the goodbye to Liesbeth who was on the quayside, when the ferry sailed across the Merwede to bring me to Sleeuwijk where my journey was to begin. It had been very difficult to get to this point with the pressure of the work.

I added a [blog](#) to my website, and there you can reread the old posts on my first trip that I originally posted on Facebook.

While walking in the Netherlands, I mainly stayed with friends. After three days I arrived at “Pilgrimshoeve in Vessem” and it was a fantastic experience. They gave me very useful practical advice but above all advised and inspired spiritually; and still today, I am grateful to Ben, Anita, Wim and Marijke. After my return, I also became a volunteer at the “Pilgrimshoeve”. The “Pilgrimshoeve” was founded by Brother [Fons van der Laan](#). After doing the Camino, he wanted to offer the Netherlands the same hospitality and inspiration that he himself had experienced. He convinced his congregation “Our Lady of Lourdes” to transform their monastery into a place of rest for pilgrims. Brother Fons managed it from 1987 to 2019. Today it operates as a foundation entirely managed by volunteers.

What else do I remember from the first trip? Too much weight in the backpack, leg pain, snow and cold in the Belgian Ardennes, chanting my Mantra of [Ben Noorloos](#) and apart from my hosts and hostesses, I did not meet a pilgrim for 18 days. Looking back, I now know that it was during this period of walking the Path, which provided me with important baggage for the rest of my life, that the foundations were laid for my current dream of creating and have a "Jacquaire Home".

So, how does the search for the ideal place go ? It's fun but also hard to find something to match. I'm convinced it exists, but how do I find it ? With the Covid lockdown, local search is impossible. So my first priority was the website, to create a community of friends and interested people, 44 people are now receiving this newsletter. I also work with Claire who is also looking for an opportunity to start a gîte. I also focus on newsletters for French pilgrims. An article has already been published in "[Le Camino](#)" by Lepère editions and next month an article will appear in "Les Zoreilles du Chemin". I also approached a Dutch real estate agent in France who is located near "Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat" (Haute-Vienne). The association "[Les amis du Chemin de Saint-Jacques](#)" also actively approaches real estate agents to find buildings.

Today, I would like to visit three buildings. They are located on the "Via Podiensis", the busy road to Puy-en-Velay. On the website you will find detailed [informations](#) about the options.

Believe it or not, I already have boxes of material ready for my "French dream" at home. I am convinced that "Saint Jacques" will be able to offer me a wonderful opportunity in a miraculous way. And if it is not Saint Jacques directly, it could be you who know or have heard of a building that could become a Jacques-Cartier welcome! So, don't hesitate, send me your tip by e-mail at lecoeurduchemin@gmail.com.

Le Coeur du Chemin

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