



CHARTER OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR **For Pilgrims and users of the Basque mountains**

My name is BASAJAUN.
I am a character from the Basque mythology. From time immemorial, I have been watching the Basque mountains, animals, plants, and tomorrow I will be watching you.

Dear Pilgrims, Tomorrow you will walk up this mythical mountain of the Santiago way. This road, even if mainly used by pilgrims and walkers, is nonetheless not for your sole use. Indeed, you will walk through one of the main pastoral areas of the Pyreneans, counting thousands of ewes, horses... and the many Basque shepherds who look after them. Because of the sometimes uncivil behaviour of some walkers, the relationship between the latter and professionals of the mountain can be tense at times.

Below are a few good behaviour tips:

- Closely follow the markings (cairns, mark posts...) as you walk and don't disturb the nearby herds ;
- If cattle is on your way, keep going forward avoiding big gestures and loud noises, do not try to pet them, they can have unpredictable reactions ;
- While on tarred areas, walk on the same side of the road and in a single file if you are in a group – shepherd's vehicles (sometimes heavily-loaded) are bound to cross your way or overtake you ;
- Leave the area free of litter: tins or broken glass can cause injuries to cattle, and most importantly, you will help preserving a "clean mountain" ;
- Natural or artificial cave shelters can be occupied by cattle –in this case the first "occupier" has priority ;
- Bivouac is acceptable where necessary (between 7pm and 7am). Avoid sites where herds are used to spending the night –ask shepherds, they will appreciate you asking ;
- When coming across a shepherd or their vehicle, a little waving sign will always mean more than saying hello in your native language –this will also be taken as a mark of respect ;
- October is ring-dove hunting season on Basque mountain passes –please quickly pass hunter posts (little brick walls) in order not to disturb hunters on the lookout ;
- Dogs must be kept on a leash, please also push back dogs if they have been following you for too long.

Have a nice journey

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