



RCC Pilotage Foundation SOUTH BISCAY

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Caution

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this supplement. It contains selected information and thus is not definitive and does not include all known information on the subject in hand; this is particularly relevant to the plans, which should not be used for navigation. The Author and Imray Laurie Norie and Wilson Ltd believe that its selection is a useful aid to prudent navigation, but the safety of a vessel depends ultimately on the judgement of the navigator, who should assess all information, published or unpublished, available to him.

This supplement contains amendments and corrections sent in by cruising yachtsmen and women, in addition to those taken from official sources such as *Notices to Mariners*.

Along the North Spain coast the majority of the *Notices to Mariners* record changes to the characteristics of harbour lights. There has also been development of ports and harbours. However, very little of this is for the visiting yachtsman.

In 2007 we received Visitors' Reports from Rupert Darbyshire, Martin Nash and Camilla Herrmann.

In 2008 we have been pleased to receive feedback from Graham Adam, Peter Adam, Brendan Bradley, Jeremy Parkinson, Chris and Patsy Watney, and Zumaia Marina.

For 2009 we thank Brian Alexander, Tony Boas and Charles Lambrick.

The updating of pilot guides is an ongoing process and the publisher is always pleased to receive information, sketch charts or photographs for incorporation in future supplements or new editions or for publishing on the Pilotage Foundation's website.

This Supplement is published by Imray. Additional supporting files to this book may be found on the Pilotage Foundation website www.rccpf.org.uk. These now include a downloadable waypoint file, additional pictures and updating material and direct access to Google Maps at Gironde. This offers the opportunity to use Google Earth imagery to assist with passage planning – and easy use of the Google search engine to provide assistance and information during the cruise. The website also includes comprehensive passage planning information.

Page references are made to *South Biscay*, 6th edition, 2006. *Notices to Mariners* numbers can be obtained on www.nmwebsearch.com.

The last input of information was February 2009. These notes cover known corrections and feedback from visiting yachtsmen. Users should refer to *Notices*

to *Mariners* for the latest official corrections, including all changes to lights, since 2006.

This Supplement is cumulative, and information added since the last Supplement is highlighted in **Blue**.

Page iv Caution

The Caution notice has been revised and is attached at the end of this Supplement.

The Atlantic Coast of France

Page 17 Royan History

The memorial to the Cockleshell Heroes is a pleasant 1.5 mile walk east of the marina along the beach and around the headland.

Page 23 Port Médoc Approach and Entrance

The entrance breakwaters have been changed. Check in is now at the *Capitainerie*. Train station is nearby for exploring up to Pauliac etc, ferry is convenient for re-provisioning from Royan.

Page 30 Port d'Arcachon – Berthing

Contact the Harbourmaster on Ch 09.

Page 35 Capbreton Entrance

2008 report of entry at HW+1 with moderate swell until inside the breakwater. Best water found to port for 300m then close to starboard up to the marina.

Deepest berths are on starboard side just upstream of passenger ferry. A boat with a 2m draught grounded at LW, so check carefully! The welcome pack from the harbour office included a mass of helpful information and maps plus a bottle of local white wine.

Ashore in Capbreton

A Leclerc hypermarket is about 300m east of the bridge.

Berthing

Contact the Harbourmaster on Ch 09.

Page 38 Bayonne

Pilotage – Entrance by day and night

Amend to read: From... on 091° (front – lattice structure thin vertical red band with broader vertical white bands either side; rear – lattice structure thin vertical white band with broader vertical red bands either side. Both Dir.Q intense on line) and proceed... line on 111°. (Front – lattice structure vertical WGW bands Dir.FG; rear – Dir.FG in front of the upper window of a pagoda type building with sloping red roofs that is the Port *Capitainerie*'s headquarters) and pass through... observe the lateral buoyage.

Page 42 St Jean de Luz

Visitors' Report 2007: Moorings

There is a *Passe d'accès* (WSW/ENE) into Socoa (see SHOM 6526L) that is marked with lines of port and stbd buoys. There are three white or red buoys marked 'Passage' to the N of this fairway in shallower water, and five white or red buoys marked 'Passage' to the S of this fairway in deeper water in a line running NW/SE to the E of local mooring buoys. The 'Passage' buoys are all spherical with picking-up buoys attached.

Page 44 Plan

2008 It is reported that there is no bar at the river entrance and a least depth of 3-6m up to the entrance to Hendaye. Hondarribia reported to be an excellent base from which to explore the area. A ferry operates every 15 minutes between Hondarribia and Hendaye. In 2008 fuel was significantly cheaper in the former harbour.

Page 45 Socoburu. Arrival

The reception pontoon is in the NW corner of the marina.

The North Coast of Spain

Cruising the Spanish Coast

Page 46 The coast

In June and July 2006 no fog was encountered.

Page 49 Swell

2006. The swell generally died down once the vessel was well into the harbour entrance.

Page 54 Weather forecast areas

The Coastguard MRCC forecasts are broadcast in Spanish and in English. Gijon MRCC on Channel 10 is not included in the list. Broadcasts are two hourly starting at 0215.

Page 58 Pasajes

2006. There have been some developments in the Industrial Port and there is a new light Fl(2+1)G.10s on the harbour wall between the Industrial Port and the Fishing Port.

Page 65 Getaria Visitor's Report 2006

Berthing and Mooring

The visitors were not welcomed in the marina for a stay of more than two days. It was possible to stay on the fishing boat wall while the fleet was out as long as fishing operations were not disturbed.

Ashore in Getaria

The climb up the Isla de San Anton provides great views and, in addition, there is a monument to a steam roller that gave 50 years service to the town.

Page 66

Add url www.marinaurola.com

Page 67 Zumaia Berthing

Visitors should go to the welcoming berth in front of the Capitanery and await instructions.

Page 73 Lequeitio

Visitors' Report 2006. Berthing

When the fishing fleet is out much of the wall is free for visitors.

In 2008 the pontoon on the W side was reserved for three minute pick up only.

Mooring

In 2006 there were only two mooring buoys in the harbour.

Ashore in Lequeitio

There are two yacht clubs, one on top of the other. The upper club is a 'social' club and is not welcoming to visitors. The lower club, for fishermen, is welcoming and provided showers and beer.

Page 80 Bermeo Berthing

2008. Piles were being laid in area marked for yachts on plan. Berthing found to the west on Y shaped quay with high wall but two ladders. On occasions large yellow buoys just beyond the spur may be available for fore and aft mooring.

2009. 'Developments for yachts' are not yet in place. There is a pontoon on the north wall just west of the ice factory but this is for dinghies and yachts are required to moor alongside the north wall to the east of the ice factory and west of the spur. Piles are being laid in area indicated as yacht berths. Berthed further west on Y shaped quay, just W of P Zaharra. Now a marina for small local craft. Quay has a high wall but with two ladders.

Page 85 Bilbao Approaches

There are five large easily identifiable wind generators on the western breakwater which help identify the harbour entrance.

There is a new marina development to the west of the Portugalete breakwater.

Page 86 Marina del Abra, Las Arenas

Marina fees include guest membership of the YC with its many facilities.

Page 87 Bilbao – Getxo

2006. A new cruising berth is being constructed at Getxo and the end of a new breakwater is marked with a light Fl(2+1)R.10s7m1M 43°20'34N 3°01'58W. It is believed that this replaces a yellow light buoy Q.Y. The recommended track of 125° will no longer be appropriate.

Facilities

2008 good facilities reported along with helpful staff. Good anchorage to SE of marina in thick mud and clear of the hourly well buoyed ferry route.

Ashore

10 minute walk to excellent underground to city centre.

Page 90 Castro Urdiales

Good holding in anchorage. No visitors' moorings but enquiry at YC may produce a vacant berth. The YC *Blancona* launch service runs two boats 24/7 during July and August. Cost is €15 for a 24hr period but includes use of YC facilities showers etc. The club is very welcoming (2009).

Page 92 Laredo

2008 large new harbour under construction. See photo under Publications in www.rccpf.org.uk.

Page 95 Santona

The yellow mooring buoys of Punta del Pasaje and the Colindres channel are very busy but anchorage may be found inside the yellow buoys marking the channel. The anchorage west of Punta del Pasaje offers good holding in mud. Fuel is not available to visitors. There is a garage 10 minute walk north of the harbour. Camping gas is available in town.

Santona Plan

Delete the 'v' from the NE wall of harbour. This area is now occupied by a ferry. Berthing is only available on the N wall.

Facilities

There is a new small boat harbour to SW of South harbour. The F.G on the chartlet is now further south on the new breakwater and the F.G on the chartlet is replaced by F.R. Dinghys can be left here rather than South harbour. Pontoons have gated access and are mostly locked but there is a slip with rings and public access.

Good supermarket in town. Free maps from tourist office giving detailed guides to walking on Monte Ganzo.

Anchoring

There is an anchorage off Santana Beach near the pier. It is steeply shelving but the holding is sound. Identify the route used by the fishing boats when they are approaching or leaving the North Harbour.

Page 96 Punta del Pasaje

Visitors' Report 2007: Moorings

There are no longer yellow visitors' moorings. The original anchoring area to the N of the moorings is now taken over by further moorings.

Page 99 Santander

2007 Pilotage from NE by day or night

Amend first paragraph to read:

... Punta Rabiosa (front Q, rear Iso.R.4s). The marks are vertical rectangular metal frame structures but Arenal de Puntal's white ... by day.

2008. There is now a pontoon W of Yacht Club. Good anchorage reported outside swimming buoys in bay just W of islet near Horada Lt. Good holding in sand with little swell and easy walk to city centre.

Page 100 Santander. Marina del Cantabrico, Parayas

Visitors' Report 2006 Entrance

Note that the harbour wall on the starboard side of the marina entrance is barely visible at high water. It is not recommended that a first visit is made at night.

Ashore at Parayas

It is possible to get a taxi into town fairly cheaply. The marina is expensive according to the price list but big discounts are available.

Page 100 Santander Visitors' Report 2007

Approaches by day or night

Approx one mile north of buoy in 43°29'2N 3°52'9W is reported to be a tall (100m) unstayed mast.

Delete last sentence and amend paragraph to read:

"... the W of the entrance. Do not turn to starboard onto the 236° transit until past No. 15 buoy in the main channel noting that (2007) the bank to the NW of the transit appears to have shifted to the SE a little."

Entrance

Amend to read:

The entrance transit ... spindly posts just in line with the left hand edge of a blue roofed building beyond the fuel pontoon. (See photo on page 102). By night..., turn to port into the marina and berth on the arrival berth immediately to starboard as indicated to await instructions from the harbourmaster.

Plan

Note that what appears to be a short breakwater on the S side of the marina entrance is in fact two more pontoons on the outer corner of which is the arrival berth.

Anchorage off RCMS: Club reported to be friendly to visiting yachts. Call on Ch 9.

Page 100 Pedreña Marina

Facilities

Very small marina with only 2 x 12m berths in 1.8m water (usually occupied by local craft).

Page 102 Santander Visitors' Report 2006

Ashore in Santander City

The food and tapas are excellent and Saturday evenings are particularly recommended for strolling, eating and sampling the wine.

Page 112 San Vicente de la Barquera

Visitor's Report 2006

The plan shows depths of 6m in the entrance. However, the entrance has already silted and there was only 2m at the entrance with 1.5m a little further up (above chart datum).

San Vicente de la Barquera

Visitors' Report 2007. Pilotage Warning

The depths in the entrance channel vary considerably with time because of silting. For example, in 2004 a reported depth of 6m straight down the fairway after dredging had changed (2007) to a calculated depth of 2.5m but hugging the starboard (NW side) on entry.

Pilotage

Entrance by day or night

Delete and replace with:

From the entrance a track hugging the starboard (NW) side of the channel should be followed to avoid silting that occurs on the port (SE) side in years following dredging operations. A consequence of this is that Punta de la Espina (F.G.) can barely be seen beneath overhanging trees on the approach. When abeam however continue on 240° to the quay. (Note: the large white mooring buoy at the entrance to the creek to port no longer exists and the small marina to east of bridge, (12m x 4m berths in 2m water) opposite the quay is for locals only. The courtesy of asking the fisherman if your berth is OK is appreciated by them). Note that the training wall mostly covers at HW.

Pilotage. Mooring

The communal white buoy no longer exists.

Page 119 Ensenada de Poo

Visitors' Report 2006

A 'magic' anchorage although swell is to be expected. 2008 confirmed as providing wonderful shelter in a violent westerly blow with good holding in 4m on sand.

Page 122 Ribadesella By day and by night

There has been considerable increase in buoyage, lights and light beacons at Ribadesella. To port there are now four lights, in order Fl(4)R.11s, then Fl.R.5s, Fl(2)R.7s and Fl(3)R.9s. There are two new SHM indicating the narrow part of the bend, their characteristics are Fl(2)G.7s and Fl(3)G.9s. *Notice to Mariners* 3479, dated 2006.

Lit North Cardinal Buoy on the central sand spit which divides the marina channel from the river. Note that this is not actually at the northern end of the spit which also extends well to the E.

Page 128 Tazones. By night

The characteristic of the breakwater light has changed to Fl(2)G.7s10m5M

Page 130 Gijon Visitor's Report 2006

Berthing

The pontoons are being upgraded and modernised.

The depth in the basin is only just 3m and visitors are advised not to stray beyond the hammer heads in the main basin or the visitors' pontoon and pontoons closes to the entrances of each of the sub-basin.

2008 nasty surge reported in marina (4m swell offshore).

2009 There are now six reception pontoons, four of around 12m and two of 14m.

Facilities

Wi-Fi is available in the marina and charged for but it hardly worked even in the harbour office where one can find a pay as you go computer.

Anchoring

The anchorage just outside the harbour may be too exposed and too shallow to be safe.

Page 131 Puerto de Musel

A very large mole has been constructed to the N of the Dique Principe. It appears to have its root at Pena de la Balle a and extends out to approx. 43°35'3N 05°40'5W.

Page 132 Candas. By day or by night

The light on the north breakwater head has changed to Fl(3)G.9s11m3M.

Page 134 Luanco. Approaches

The leading lights on 255° have changed. The front light, is Fl.WG.5s3m5M and the rear is Oc.G.4s6m5M. The light at the Juan de Melao anchorage is changed to Fl(2)G.7s10m5M.

Notices to Mariners reports that many depths in the approaches to Luanco are less than charted. Proceed with caution.

A very substantial new mole is reported one cable to N of existing one at Juan De Melao. Purpose unknown (2009).

Page 139 San Esteban de Pravia

The Author does not recommend a first entry by night as the leading lights are limited. In 2006 there were considerable changes to the lights some were inserted, some amended and some deleted. *Notices to Mariners* number 3688, dated 2006 gives all the details.

Page 141 Cudillero Moorings and Anchoring

Note that the bottom close to the pontoons appears to be foul.

Page 142 Cudillero. Plan

Amend $\oplus 591$ to 43°34'54N 06°08'65W with bearing of 185° from WP with the two lights in line.

Plan

This is seriously in error in that the rear leading mark should be shown on the W side of the entrance to the old harbour and not the E as shown.

Berthing

Six pairs of fore and aft moorings opposite Repsol sign on the lonja quay.

Page 144 Luarca By day or by night

There have been some changes to the lights. The breakwater lights have changed to Fl(2)G.7s6m3M and to Fl(2)R.7s19m5M. There is a new SHM Fl(3)G.9s at the end of the inner breakwater.

Berthing

Buoys reduced from six to four (2009). Easy pick up ring but cased in unfriendly metal frame. On the third buoy from W, 2m rpt. LWS. Even less water on fourth buoy.

Page 145 Punta del Cuerno

2008 some shelter found from 2m swell, uncomfortable but holding good.

Page 154 Approaches to Ribadeo By day or by night

Amend to read:

$\oplus 606$ is on the outer... arch of the bridge; this (front white column with red diamond VQ.R on Porcillan breakwater, rear red diamond on end of octagonal house between windows Oc.R.2s) is not easy... will assist.

Las Carrayas have a new light beacon FL(4)WG 15s 5M.

Lights marking centre span of bridge reported to be further to W marking span of bridge closest to the town.

Facilities

Free Wi-Fi in harbour office. Good supermarket 300 metres from marina. Good walk to Isla Panca (west side of Ria).

Page 156 Berthing at Porcillan Visitors' Report 2006.

Facilities at Porcillan are now in good order. There is a Wi-Fi connection available.

Page 161 Burela

The light characteristic of Burela breakwater end has changed to Fl(2)RG.7s16m5M.

Page 162 San Ciprian. By day or by night

The light on San Ciprian jetty has changed to Fl(2)R.7s9m3M.

San Ciprian Anchorage

The plan shows an anchorage in the bay on the east side of San Ciprian but chart BA 1122 shows lots of rocks, both awash and drying. Approach with caution.

Page 164 Portocelo to La Coruña

Some of the waypoints are in the wrong positions. In particular $\oplus 620$ should be N of I. Colleira and $\oplus 629$ should be off Cabo Prior not Cabo Prioriño Chico.

Page 168 Viveiro Visitors' Report 2007

Facilities in Viveiro

Amend to read:

The amenities... on the pontoons, a 32-ton travel-lift, and an 8-ton crane. There are separate male and female communal showers and a toilet each in the building behind the harbourmasters portacabin on the south side of the marina. Two *supermercados* ... and restaurants. There are numerous internet terminals at the Telecentro upstairs in the cloisters of the Iglesia de Santa Maria del Campo in the old town uphill from the smart new tourist office.

[Alternative toilet arrangements in adjacent sports centre.](#)

Page 170 Bares Visitors' Report 2007. Anchoring

Anchored here in a W blow Force 5/6 and found good holding in sand.

Page 174 Carino

The light on the end of the Commercial Wharf has changed to Fl(3)G.9s5M.

Berthing

The pontoon now has small fingers, mainly for locals. Anchorage in SW corner of plan in 4m and landing just north of west groyne.

Page 175

Correct spelling to Ortigueira.

Santa Maria De Ortigueira plan

The marina is further to the SE than indicated on the chartlet.

Page 176 Facilities

Water and electricity are now available on pontoons. Showers and a café restaurant are at the Club Nautico.

Page 177 Cedeira. Visitors' Report 2007

A hoarding was sighted showing an artist's impression of a new marina around the travel-lift and old quay.

No sign of any changes in 2009.

Page 179 Cedeira Approach

There is an additional light Fl(3)R.9s on mole to NE of existing Fl(2)R7s.

Facilities

The travel-lift and fuel facilities on the old quay are for fishing boats only. Rpt 2008. Daily weather updates – including windguru – posted on Cruz Roja office near dinghy landing on old quay. Supermarket in *Avianda de Castelao*, close to *Praza de Lopez Corton*.

Anchorage

Good holding reported in grey sand.

Page 181 El Ferrol

The light on the end of the Breakwater at Cabo Priorino Chico has been changed to Fl.R.5s23m7M, radar beacon, Racon (N).

Anchorage

The anchorage at Ensenada de Carino is still good despite the port development. The new breakwater gives good shelter from the swell.

Page 182 Ares

Extension to marina built in 2008. The west pontoon has been extended seawards connecting to a new northern pontoon that runs parallel to the shore and ends just before the fishing boat quay. The E end of this pontoon is lit Fl(4)G.20s. This new pontoon essentially closes the marina. Now takes yachts to 14m. Clubhouse and meteorological information in marina office.

Page 185 Sada Marina. Berthing Visitors' Report 2006

Pontoons fill much of the harbour making manoeuvring difficult around the fuel dock. The facilities are very good and Sada would be a good place to prepare to cross the Bay of Biscay.

Facilities

There is free Wi-Fi which still worked from the outer berths. Lots of new pontoons in west of harbour but visitors still use outer berths from eastern breakwater.

Page 186 La Coruña

Marina Coruña, www.marinacoruna.es. A large and reportedly finished Marina now offers a more comfortable alternative to the older Darsena Deportivo, now taken over by the RCN.

Access

The newly completed pontoons are situated between big breakwater (*Dique de Abrigo*) with white Port Authority tower to north and *Castillo de San Antón* to south. A yellow buoy with X topmark at entrance, lying approx 150 metres to east of *Castillo de San Antón* peninsula. Wave breakers/floating breakwater striped black and yellow lies to northeast of yellow buoy; notice on this breakwater gives directions to visiting yachts. These breakwaters seem to make this marina more peaceful than the alternative.

Facilities

Fuel pontoon due to open 1st July 2009. 25% discount for a stay of five days or more. Laundry, €10 but for all day, multiple load use. Wi-Fi.

Excellent chandlery reported opposite the southern end of the lonja and has a bright yellow signboard outside.

Page 188 La Coruña. Travel. Visitors' Report 2006

An excellent train service goes from La Coruña to Vigo via Santiago. This makes it excellent for flight connections in La Coruña, Santiago, Vigo and Porto.

Page 193 Tazones

Tazones Breakwater head light characteristic has changed to Fl(2)G.7s10m5M.

Candas

Candas Mole head light characteristic has changed to Fl(3)G.9s11m3M

Page 194 Ensenada de Santa Marta

Carino Mole head light characteristic has changed to Fl(3)G.9s5M

Page 194 Burela

Breakwater head light characteristic has changed to Fl(2)RG.7s16m5M.

Page 195 Ria de El Ferrol

Cabo Prioriño Chico light characteristic is Fl.5s34m23M

Cabo Priorino Chico breakwater head light characteristic is Fl.R.5s23m7M, radar beacon, Racon (N).

Page iv Caution

Whilst the RCC Pilotage Foundation, the author and the publishers have used reasonable endeavours to ensure the accuracy of the content of this book, it contains selected information and thus is not definitive. It does not contain all known information on the subject in hand and should not be relied on alone for navigational use: it should only be used in conjunction with official hydrographical data. This is particularly relevant to the plans, which should not be used for navigation. The RCC Pilotage Foundation, the author and the publishers believe that the information which they have included is a useful aid to prudent navigation, but the safety of a vessel depends ultimately on the judgment of the skipper, who should assess all information, published or unpublished. The information provided in this pilot book may be out of date and may be changed or updated without notice. The RCC Pilotage Foundation cannot accept any liability for any error, omission or failure to update such information. To the extent permitted by law, the RCC Pilotage Foundation, the author and the publishers do not accept liability for any loss and/or damage howsoever caused that may arise from reliance on information contained in these pages.

Positions

Positions given in the text and on plans are intended purely as an aid to locating the place in question on the chart. Over the past few years the Spanish Authorities have been updating their charts/documents to WGS 84 datum although many charts in current use may be to European 1950 datum or other. The differences are usually only ± 0.1 (that is 200 yards or 180 metres) but, as always, care must be exercised to work to the datum of the chart in use.

Waypoints

This edition of the *South Biscay* pilot includes the introduction of waypoints. The RCC Pilotage Foundation consider a waypoint to be a position likely to be helpful for navigation if entered into some form of electronic navigation system for use in conjunction with GPS. In this pilot they have been derived from electronic charts. They must be used with caution. All waypoints are given to datum WGS 84 and every effort has been made to ensure their accuracy. Nevertheless, for each individual vessel, the standard of onboard equipment, aerial position, datum setting, correct entry of data and operator skill all play a part in their effectiveness. In particular it is vital for the navigator to note the datum of the chart in use and apply the necessary correction if plotting a PS position on the chart. Our use of the term 'waypoint' does not imply that all vessels can safely sail directly over those positions at all times or sail between adjacent waypoints. However, skippers should be aware of the risk of collision with another vessel, which is plying the exact reciprocal course.

Verification by observation, or use of radar to check the accuracy of a waypoint, may sometimes be advisable and reassuring. We emphasise that we regard waypoints as an aid to navigation for use as the navigator or skipper decides. We hope that the waypoints in this pilot will help ease that navigational load.

Plans

The plans in this guide are not to be used for navigation – they are designed to support the text and should always be used together with navigational charts. It should be borne in mind that the characteristics of lights may be changed during the life of the book, and that in any case notification of such changes is unlikely to be reported immediately. Each light is identified on the plans (where it appears in magenta) by its international index number, as used in the *Admiralty List of Lights*, from which the book may be updated. All bearings are given from seaward and refer to true north. Symbols are based on those used by the British Admiralty – users are referred to *Symbols and Abbreviations* (NP 5011).