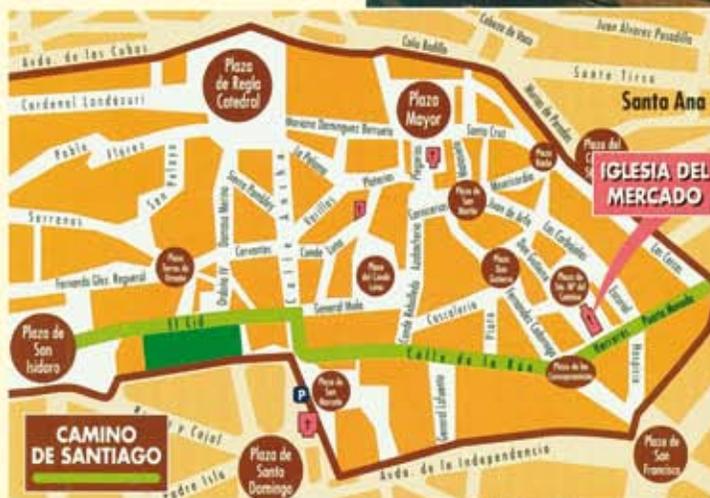


The way of St. James comes into León through Puente Castro district and Av. de Madrid, where the hospitals and hermitages from St. Thomas of Canterbury and St. Lázaro were built. It continues through Pz. de Santa Ana, Saint Anna's church before was devoted to the Saint Tomb, the pilgrims' charnel house was near it: C. Barahona and to his right, C. Prado de los Judíos, where their graveyard was, coming into the town walls through C. las Cercas built from the 11th to the 14th centuries. It goes on through C. Puertamoneda, its name recalls the medieval mint; C. Herreros, where the smiths were established together with the bell founders, the enamel painters and the silversmiths. Saint Mary of the Way or of the Market was erected here, maybe by the Francs, who gave the name to the C. Rúa de los Francos, by which the Way of St. James continues.

Romanesque capital with fabulous animals



THE PLACE



Cover photo:
Paintings in the small chapel behind the altar:
Prophets, scenes from the garden of Gethsemane and the apparition of the Virgin of the Market.

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Translation:
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PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

Opened: 11:00 to 12:00
19:30/20:30 in Summer
19:00/20:00 in Winter

Phone:

Parish office
987 251 159

Festivals: La Aparición
(9th of February)

The Passion Sunday (two weeks
before Easter) And the Friday
before Palm Sunday



AYUNTAMIENTO DE LEÓN
CONCEJALÍA DE PATRIMONIO



AYUNTAMIENTO DE LEÓN

CONCEJALÍA DE PATRIMONIO

SANTA MARÍA DEL MERCADO CHURCH



Virgin of the Market or of the Way

In the district of the Market important rests from the Romans (archaeological crypt in Cascaerías) have been discovered and also some Roman inscriptions maybe connected to a place of pre-Christian cult.

The legend of Santa María del Mercado church said that a shepherd found an ancient sculpture from the Virgin, hidden among some brambles where nowadays we can see the cross in the Plaza del Grano. That happened in the 6th century, after the Arian pursuit, the same as the historical

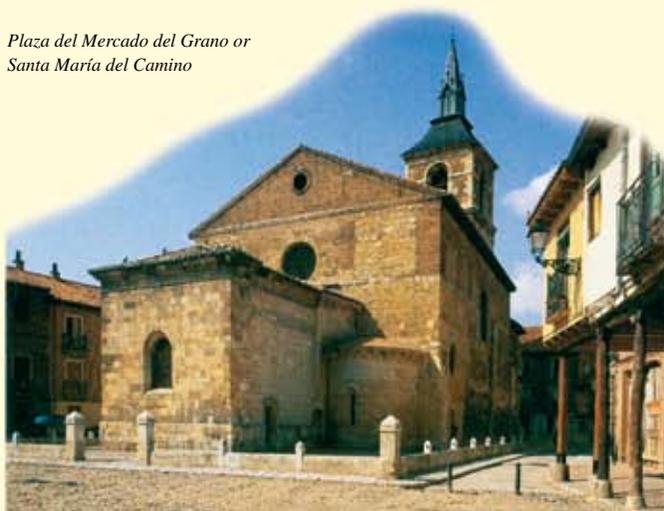
fact of Saint Vincent martyrdom, abbot from Saint Claude monastery.

This church was already documented in 1092 and his Romanesque part belongs to that period; two lateral apses, the first section from the central, the north and south outer walls, with their windows and lateral doors. The stonemason's marks, the capitals and the modillions link this building to Saint Isidore of León, Saint Mary of Arbás and Saint Mary of Tera (Zamora)

The ground plan is quite irregular, maybe because it's on the site of a previous building or because it was erected among the buildings of a street (they were demolished from 1691 to 1976)

From 1366 to 1484, the arcs from the aisles, the chapel, the bell tower and the porch which is under it, were renovated in Gothic style. Here there is a bracket that shows a bakery, we can find also this scene in a capital in the cloister of the Cathedral of León. During the Renaissance Felipe de la Canija (1598) built the actual tower, the two lower storeys. In the 18th c., the temple was renewed; the arcs from the nave, a spire of the tower which doesn't exist anymore, and the highest storey from the tower by Fernando de Compostizo. In 1740, Manuel de la Lastra Alvear built the small chapel behind the high altar whose walls were painted in 1761.

Plaza del Mercado del Grano or Santa María del Camino



In the 19th c. it was necessary to rebuild the church: the Benedictine Miguel Echano finished the lateral walls and the actual vault after a collapse produced in 1853; in 1880, Juan Bautista Lázaro, ended the tower. The spire of the tower belongs to the modernist style (over 1930).

The main altarpiece (18th c.) has got the sculpture of the Virgin of the Way (15th); people are very devoted to her. In spite of the name coming from the Way of St. James, the typology of the image belongs to the Virgin of the seven sorrows, connected to some verse by the prophet Jeremy: "You, who walk today by the Way, look and see if there is a sorrow as mine", Franciscans' cult, settled from the 12th century in the parish area.

The two altars from each side are by José Suárez Gavilanes and they are dedicated to St Joseph (1732) and St Francis and St Eloy (1750).



St Joseph (from the St Domingo's monastery)

The church has an organ in bad condition from 1821, two rare Romanesque gratings, glass windows by Bolinaga and Luis García Zurdo, interesting funeral inscriptions (from noble families: Cabeza de Vaca, Garavito, Condes de Rebolledo) and religious votive offerings.

As one of the ancient church of the city and kingdom of León, has inherited pieces from the old St. Michel from la Corredera church; the Dominican and St. Claude monasteries closed

in 1834, from which came the image of St. Joseph and the relic of the crown of thorns, which is exposed the Passion Sunday: from the chapels that there were on the doors of the medieval walls (Virgin of the Refuge in the Galician door and St. Catherine in St. Anna's door).

From this past there are lots of evidences in the parish archive and also in the Cathedral's museum where there are important pieces from this church.