

## SPECIAL ISSUE



*el Camino*

*Monasterio de Poio  
Galicia - Spain  
25/31 May 09*

Z3N February 2009 Nr 1

### [THE GATHERING 'EL CAMINO', 23 - 31 MAY, SPAIN](#)

#### *The road to El Camino*

Last year April at the zone3 meeting in Pisa it was suggested to have in 2009 a combined meeting with the other European zone, embedded in a large gathering. The idea to have a combined meeting with zone 4 had been around for a long time, because in principle we could learn from each other, support each other and maybe combine activities. But, at their own meeting in September, zone 4 decided it was too early for them, they still had a lot to do for themselves. They decided to have their meeting in 2009 in Russia.

After some discussion the zone3 council decided to go on with a gathering. There were enough reasons to do that: Subud people like to meet and the last opportunity to do this at an international scale was already two years ago in Ascot. And it could give an opportunity to discuss and start initiatives as a preparation for the World Congress in New Zealand. And, not in the least, there might be a substantial number of members who for various reasons could not go to New Zealand in 2010, and still would like to participate in an international event.

So, the invitation went out to all the eight countries of zone3 to investigate the organisation of a gathering in 2009 with about 350 participants for a reasonable price in an interesting location. Particularly France and Spain went researching and in October it seemed Spain had found the ideal spot. The final decision was made during the French national congress early November with part of the zonal council present and some international helpers. Then the preparations really started. We named the gathering 'El Camino', because the Camino is of course the famous pilgrim's road to Santiago, but it means 'the way', open to many interpretations.

### **The location.**

The Monasterio de Poio in the province of Pontevedra, the most southern sea facing province in Galicia, lies approximately 50 kilometers south of Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain. Poio is a small village some 10 kilometers from the provincial capital, also named Pontevedra. Poio is on the coast of an estuary. For a view of the geography, go to <http://maps.google.com> and type Poio. The monastery was founded by San Fructuoso in the 7th century. The Benedictine monks abandoned the monastery in 1835, and in 1890 the Order of La Merced established itself.



The cloister is from the 16th century, the church is Renaissance style, with Baroque elements in the choir balustrades. It holds the remains of Santa Trahamunda, supposed to cure deafness.

The Monasterio was completely renovated, and it is now operated as a conference center. In more than 200 comfortable double rooms it can house 450 people. Most rooms have a bathroom, some have a washbasin with facilities in the corridor. There are many meeting places and a church for latihan. The city Pontevedra is situated on the rias baixas (or lower bays) of Galicia . It is bisected by the rio Lerez. The parts of this city that a tourist would want to visit are nearly all on the south side of the river where the original old town is situated The city is historically famous, culturally rich and has a significant number of architectural attractions worth seeing. It has a very well preserved medieval town centre with many small and popular plaza's, most of which have cafe's and bars around them.

On the coast of Pontevedra province you will find rugged landscapes and beautiful beaches. Towards the capital, Pontevedra, heading around the Morrazo peninsula and continuing along the coast, there are hidden spots such as the coves of San Simón, Aldán and Bueu, the “crucero” (stone cross) at Hio (the most beautiful anywhere in Galicia) and, at the mouth of the estuary, the Islands of Ons and Onza, whose interesting fauna includes cormorants. Combarro is a stone's throw from Pontevedra. It has one of Galicia's best-conserved examples of hórreos (traditional grain stores), as well as stone crosses. At Armenteira Monastery legends tell of a monk who spent 300 years under the spell of a bird's song. If you continue around the coast you come to Lanzada beach and Grove, a town famous for the curative properties of its waters; and then Vilanova, joined to the Island of Arousa by a two-kilometre bridge.

### **How can it be reached**

The monastery is in the village of Poio, some 10 km from the city of Pontevedra, some 50 km from Santiago de Compostela, and 42 km from the international airport of Santiago. Next to other airlines there are daily flights to Santiago by Ryanair from several European airports. There are several flights per day from Madrid and Barcelona. Also there are comfortable trains and buses from Madrid to Pontevedra, with a connection by subway between Madrid airport and the bus and train station. On the days of arrival and departure (23 and 31 May) we'll run buses between Poio and the airport.

### **What are we going to do**

Well, within limits it all depends on what you want. On the booking forms there is a space where you can fill in what kind of activities you would like. We have set up a framework organisation, which will answer to the needs and wishes of the participants. In the framework Subud Portugal will coordinate Sica, SES and Siha activities. We assume there will be performances, concerts, workshops, etc.

Subud France will coordinate the children and youth activities. There will be a childcare and a programme for youngsters. Subud Spain will arrange the touristic activities, visits to interesting places, hikes, etc. The kejiwaan councillors and international helpers will take care of the kejiwaan activities and daily latihans. Susila Dharma will have a meeting of its European national committees and representatives, and it will organise workshops and presentations.

As we are very near the famous pilgrim's road to Santiago de Compostela, the Camino, it is too good an opportunity to miss that experience. We aim to keep the Wednesday free of other activities, take the bus to a spot along the Camino at a fair distance from Santiago, and walk the last stretch. In Santiago we meet in the cathedral and then spend the afternoon in that famous city.

Further there will be committee meetings. Zone3 will have its annual meeting of delegates of the eight countries in the zone. Delegates are the two kejiwaan councillors, the national chairperson and the committee councillor. Normally there are plenary sessions and sessions were the kejiwaan councillors and the committee split up. Special about this particular meeting will be the testing and election of the new zonal coordinator for the next period after the world congress in New Zealand. Probably the zonal meeting will have a plenary session during the Monday, testing and election on Tuesday morning and two half days for meetings later in the week.

The Muhammad Subuh Foundation will have a meeting during the last three days of the gathering. And the World Subud Council will meet after the gathering with arrivals on Friday 29 and the first meetings on Sunday 31. The WSC meeting will continue till Thursday 4 June.

But, on top of all these activities or maybe instead of them, you can meet your friends in the cafeteria or outside in the sunshine and relax. And concluding with a citation from an article of Matthew D'Haemer on his experiences of the snowcamp in Swizerland:

'Subud events are more than cool holidays with quality Latihans, they can be transformative... they help reach critical momentum, they make us grow and they are crucial in the development of Subud. Our inner connected level is subtly higher and we allow ourselves to be closer to the state we really want to be in all the time.'

### **The timing**

Timing of the gathering has been looking for a balance between cost and time of the year. For those depending on school vacations, summer would have been better. But we found that prices in interesting places in that time of the year were prohibitive for a meeting of the size we aimed for. Because of the combination with a zonal meeting a time after summer would be too late, too close to the world congress. So, we decided to aim for May, June. We then focussed on the last week of May, when there is a general vacation period in Britain. We apologise for the inconvenience this gives to all those dependent on school holidays and to students preparing for exams, but we hope that you will find a way to come anyway.

### **Practical information.**

Booking forms are available from your national committee. A detailed programme and any further information will be made available at [subudworldnews.com](http://subudworldnews.com) under events.