

ITINERARIUM

THE TERM "ITINERARIUM" (PLURAL: ITINERARIA) COMES FROM LATIN AND, IN A HISTORICAL CONTEXT, REFERS TO A ROUTE MAP, PARTICULARLY USED IN ROMAN TIMES.

It was essentially a document that listed places (towns, stations, other stops, and landmarks) along Roman roads, often with distances marked between them. It served as a practical travel guide for officials, merchants, and military officers, as well as for pilgrims undertaking religious journeys in Late Antiquity. Unlike modern maps, itineraria were not geographic representations but rather textual or tabular lists—more like a turn-by-turn log than a map. They were often inscribed or written on scrolls and later copied into codices.

In medieval Christian literature, the term could also refer to a pilgrim's travelogue or diary, often describing visits to holy cities.

In modern times, the word "itinerarium" refers to a travel itinerary—a detailed plan of a journey, including dates, destinations, and activities.

Three important historical examples of itineraria are:

1. Itinerarium Antonini (Antonine Itinerary)
2. Tabula Peutingeriana (Peutinger Table)
3. Itinerarium Burdigalense (Bordeaux Itinerary)

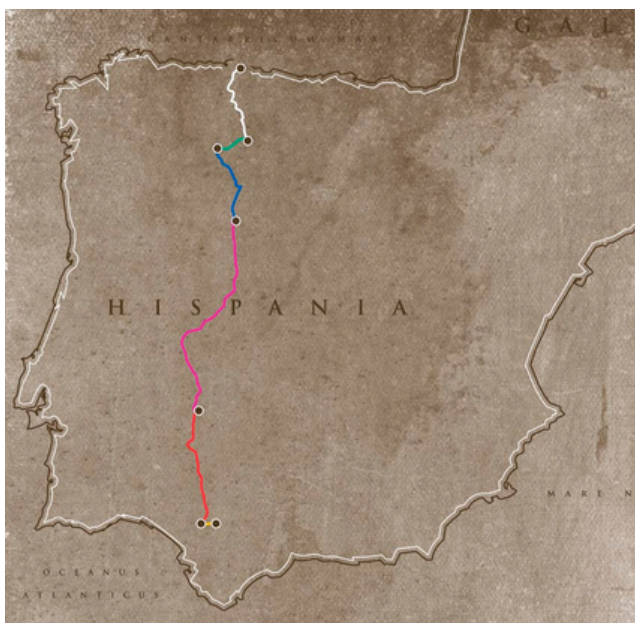
We will use the first and second itineraria as examples to explain the ancient road structure of the Ruta Vía de la Plata in modern Spain and the main Roman routes in the Srem region of Serbia. The third itinerary was illustrated in a previous "Object of the Season" to describe the functions of mansiones and mutationes along the road.

RUTA VÍA DE LA PLATA

What is known today as the Ruta Vía de la Plata is a South-North route that has run through the western part of the Iberian Peninsula since the Tartessian period.

With the arrival of Rome, it began to be used from the 2nd century BCE as a route of conquest toward the north and was established as a Roman road starting with Augustus (late 1st century BCE–turn of the era). The construction of the main bridges and the final layout of the itinerary are attributed to Trajan and Hadrian.

The configuration of the Ruta Vía de la Plata is the result of a combination of several sections, most of them recorded in the Antonine Itinerary:



- Via IX Ab Hispalis-Italica
- Via XXIII Italica-Emerita Augusta
- Via XXIV Emerita-Ocelo Duri
- Via XXVI Ocelo Duri-Asturica Augusta

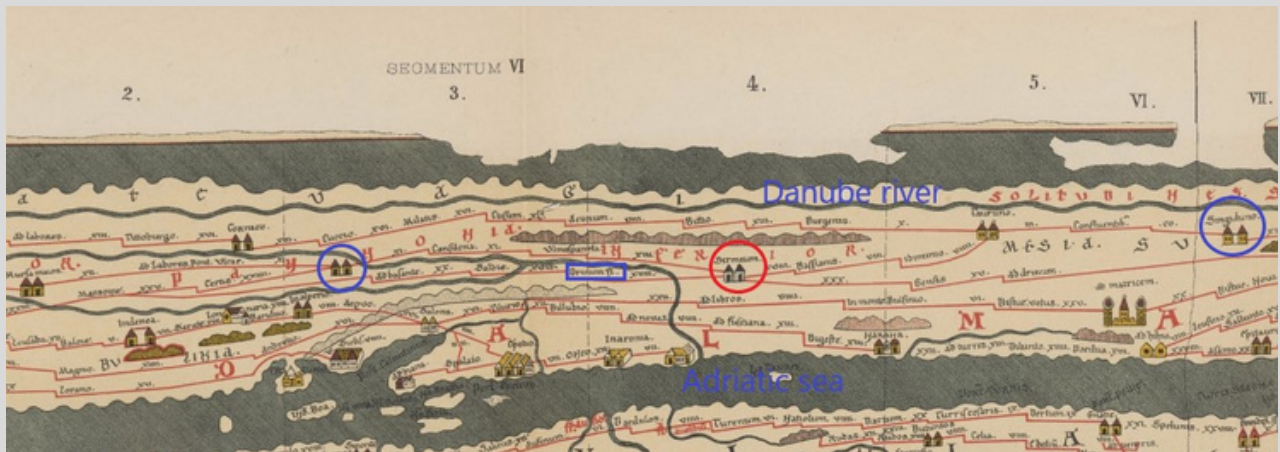
And other segments identified through archaeological studies:

- Road from Asturica to Legio Augusta
- Via Carisa (Legio VII Gemina-Noega)

The Antonine Itinerary is one of the most important compilations of routes from the Roman Empire. It is dated to the time of Diocletian, but it describes roads that were in use in the 3rd century CE, and undoubtedly from earlier times. It only includes major roads, which today would correspond to state highways, omitting all lower-category roads. This itinerary source is one of the most important for the identification and study of the Ruta Vía de la Plata.

WEST-EAST ROUTE SHOWN ON TABULA PEUTINGERIANA

Some of the most important terrestrial roads connecting the western and eastern parts of the Roman Empire passed through Sirmium, a key city, crossroads, and the most important town of the province of Pannonia Inferior in Late Antiquity.



The Tabula Peutingeriana is a medieval copy of an ancient Roman road map that shows the roads across the Roman Empire—from Britain in the west to India in the east. It is likely based on a Roman map from the 4th or early 5th century AD. The existing manuscript was copied in the 13th century, probably by a monk in a southern German monastery. The map was named after Conrad Peutinger, a German humanist who inherited it in the 16th century. It is drawn on parchment made up of 11 segments stitched together, measuring about 6.75 meters long and 34 centimeters high. The map lacks strict geographical orientation and is executed as a diagrammatic itinerary rather than a topographic map. It emphasizes connectivity rather than scale. It was designed as a scroll so that it could be easily used during travel. The surviving copy is housed in the Austrian National Library in Vienna (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek).

[More detailed info about the Peutingeriana.](#)

As in the previous link, The position of Sirmium is shown on segment 6 of the Tabula Peutingeriana. This part of the segment is stretched between two major geographic barriers on the Balkan Peninsula—the Danube River and the Adriatic Sea—showing official Roman road routes, stops/stations, towns, and distances between them, as well as the positions of mountains and rivers for basic orientation.

Tabula Peutingeriana (TP, 6.3-7.1) mentions the following way stations leading west from Sirmium:

Northern route toward Cibalae (modern Vinkovci), following the Bosut River:

Sirmium – Ulmospaneta XIII – Cansilena XI – Cibalae XI

Southern route toward the Roman province of Dalmatia, following the Sava River:

Sirmium – Drinum fl(umen) – Saldis XVIII – Ad Basante XX – Marsonie

East of Sirmium:

Northern route toward the limes and Singidunum (modern Belgrade):

Sirmium – Bassianis XVIII – Idiminio VIII – Tauruno VIII – Confluentis III – Singiduno

Southern route toward the Roman province of Moesia Superior:

Sirmium – Gensis XXX

ALÉSIA: BETWEEN THE WAY OF THE OCEAN AND THE WAY OF GERMANY

The secondary Gallo-Roman agglomeration of Alésia, probably having under High Empire the status of vicus, is not served by a major road axis. As recognized to date, four secondary axes (diverticula), give access to the city installed on the old Gallic oppidum placed at the edge of the Lingonne and Aeduan cities.

On the other hand, at the scale of the entire road network of Gaul, Alésia is just in the shared area of the Agrippa network, with to the west of the site, the main so-called ocean road (towards the English Channel) which serves the Senons territories, Parissi, Ambiens and Bellovaques of Gaul Belgium. To the east of the site, another major axis heads towards Germany, notably to serve the territories of Lingons, Leuques, Mediomatric and Treveri, up to the city of Trier. These two routes separate at Châlons-sur-Saône, north of Lyon (and therefore south of Alésia).

