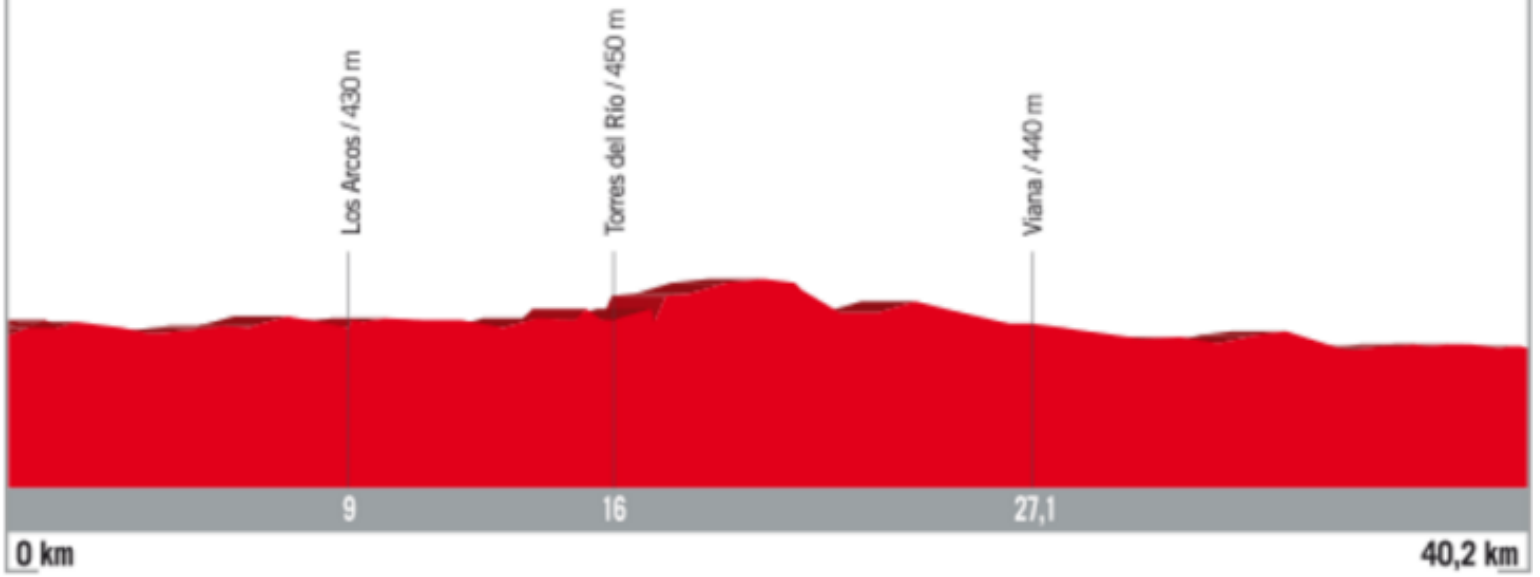


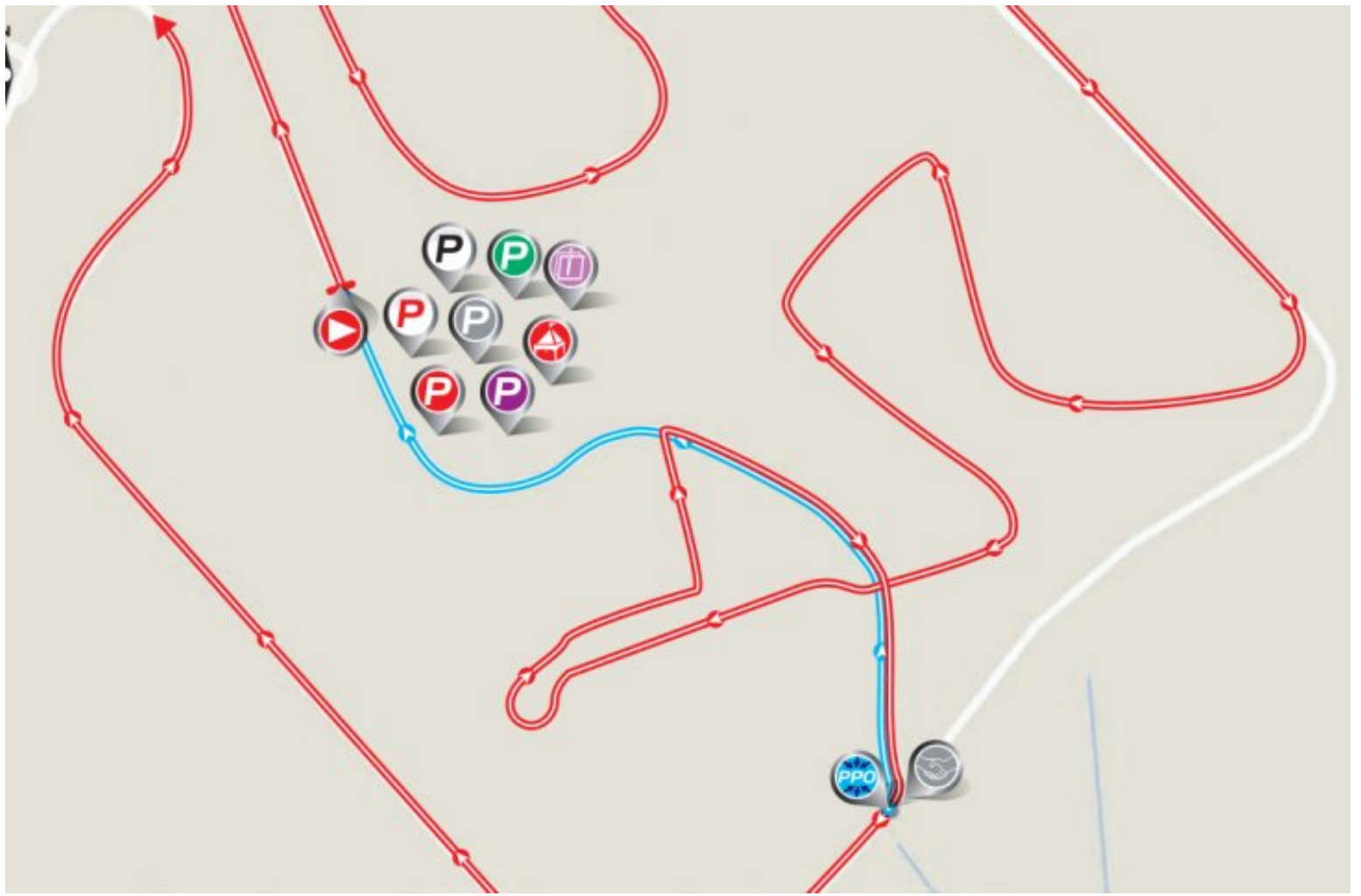


**CIRCUITO DE NAVARRA**  
410 m

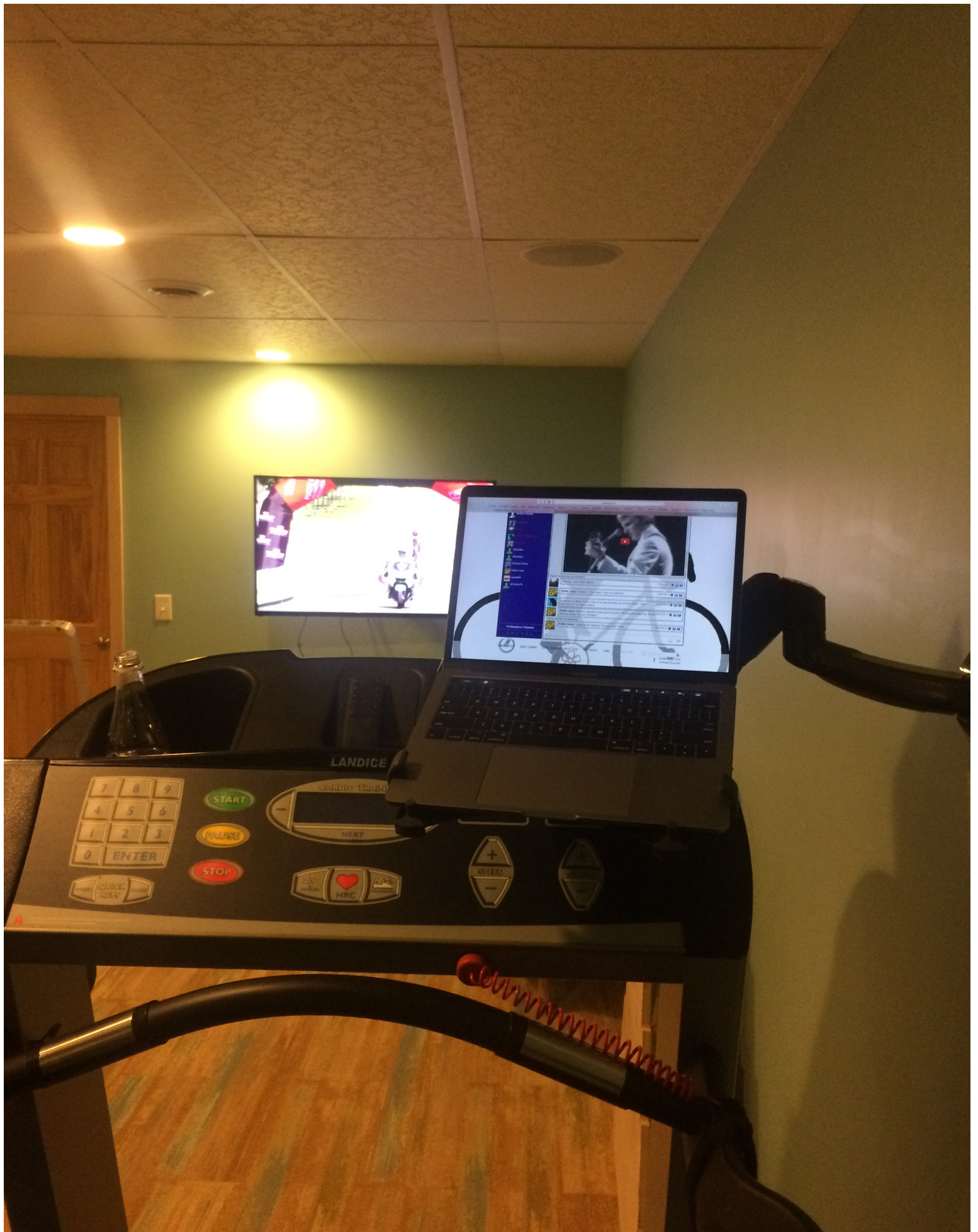


**LOGROÑO**  
375 m





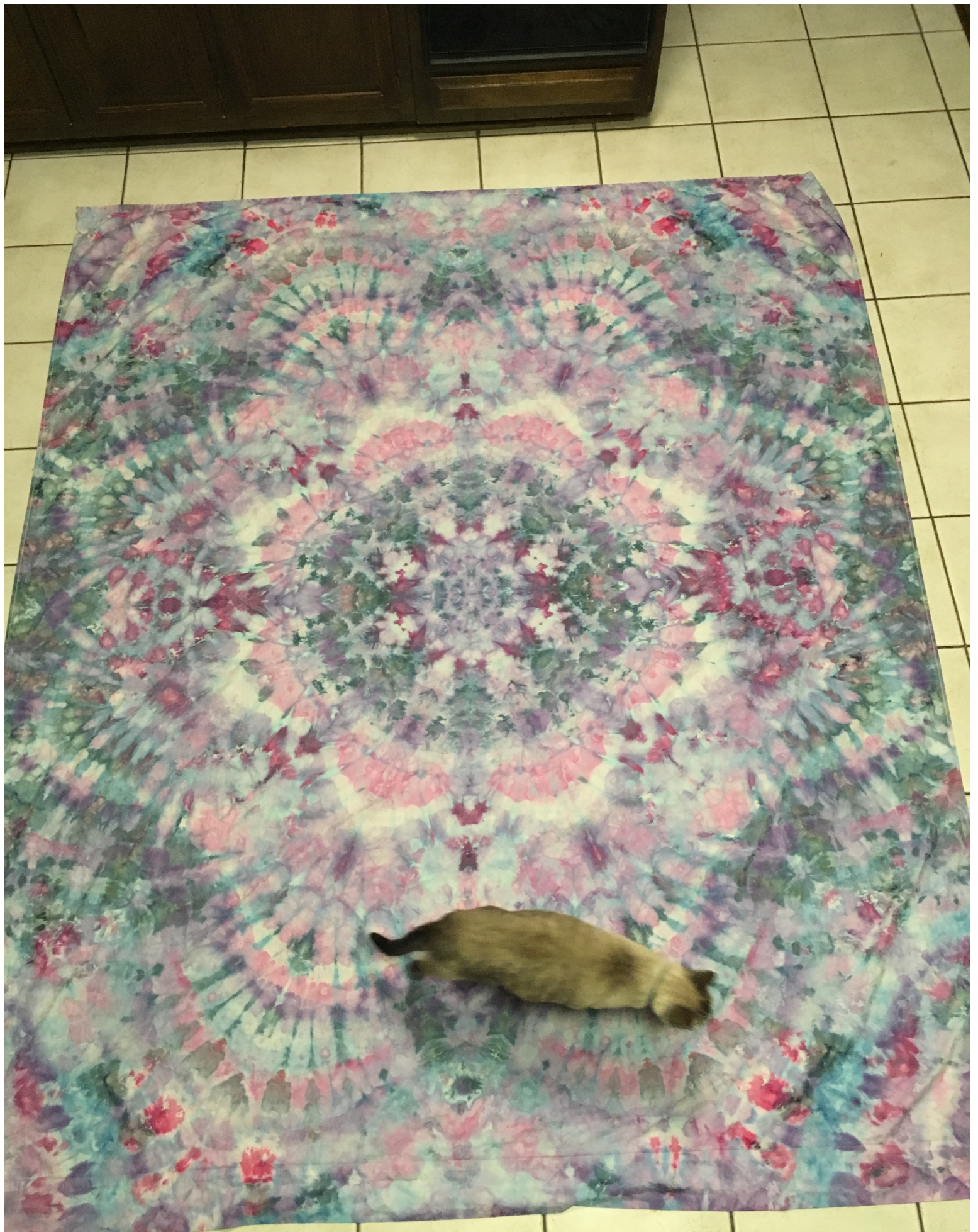


























"Everyone knows." Sometimes we make a bit of sport over the regions of Europe through which our brave cyclists pass every year, because in those provinces "everyone knows." What do they know? Everything. That is, people often know things connected to their regions instinctively, and in isolated areas, perhaps like the Italic or Iberic peninsulas, they are never challenged or presented with other ideas, and so they just assume that "everyone knows." Everyone knows in Rome, for instance, that even the large grocery stores which are "Open Sunday" are closed on Sundays between the Epiphany, January 6<sup>th</sup>, and Easter. Everyone knows that to get a hose nozzle you need to visit one of the stores with hose nozzles, near a certain piazza, which, of course, everyone knows. I didn't know, but I found out, and then visited that neighborhood, and found the nozzle I wanted in one of the 9 stores I found there. Boy has Amazon.it made life easier.

"Everyone knows" is not just a Mediterranean phenomenon. I don't know how many times I have heard an American say "everyone knows they use the metric system in all countries of the world except the United States." Yes, well, kind of. "Everyone knows that it is called football everyone else, it's just us (usually said with a sneer) who call it soccer," but it is really not, you see, in many places, like Ireland and Australia it is Soccer, or in places like Italy other derivations (Calcio). "Everyone knows" one hears in anglophonia," that the Magna Carta was, in 1215, the first document in the world by which a king granted rights to normal people." Well, no. With apologies to Runnymede and the beautiful and evocative visions formed in our minds by our grade school teachers. No. First in the Anglophone world?. Perhaps that. Long-lived? No.

Spain, indeed, was a place where rights were granted to common folk, and early in history, including in the finish city of today's time trial, Logroño. In 1095 Alfonso VI, King of Castile and Leon (and of Galicia) issued the Fuero de Logroño, which conceded all kinds of rights to all kinds of Spaniards, from the bottom to the top. What today we would call civil protections and civic rights were extended, for instance, prohibiting illegal search and seizure in the house of anyone who lived in the village. Some punishments for crimes were specifically spelled out. For instance, a man who hit a married woman, if it could be attested to in court by two men or a man and woman of good reputation, was fined 60 days wages, half to be paid in land. Logroño had been sacked by El Cid some decades before, as it was under the protection of one of his archenemies, so the granting of the Fuero was seen to be a calming tactic, but one which was carried out in town after town by Alfonso.

Logroño was not just home to military action through history, but also home to culture. Manuel Bretón de los Herreros, is a well-known Spanish playwright from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, who was raised in Logroño. He was successor to Leandro Moratin, who was a classicist, as when the Bourbons arrived in Spain after the War of the Spanish Succession in 1715, they imposed neo classical culture upon the country, sapping buoyant Spanish creativity for almost a century. Moratín followed the rules of neo classicism, while producing a few beautiful plays. Manuel Bretón de los Herreros, on the other hand, pushed forward into the next century and wrote plays which are well

done, and caught the popular imagination. Between 1824 and 1828 he composed 39 plays, so prolific was he. Tastes were no longer frenchified and sissy (afrancesado could be a slur in 19<sup>th</sup> century Spain), instead they were turning toward a melodramatic and patriotic romanticism, and Bretón de los Herreros could give that, but with great comic portrayals. He is primarily remember for four plays "A la vejez, viruelas" (1824) (In Old Age, Chickenpox), "Marcela o ¿Cuál de las tres?" (1831) (Marcella, or Which of the Three?), "Muérete y verás" (1837) (Die! And You'll See!) (sounds like something an upset teenager would scream at parents, no?) and "La escuela del matrimonio" (1852) (The School of Marriage). The 19<sup>th</sup> Century theatre in Logroño is named for him.

Well I suppose you thought I would talk about either the Witch Trials, or about La Rioja Wine, no?



Enjoy the Vuelta. Enjoy the Day!