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A process for R(+)-1,2,3,6-tetrahydro-4-phenyl-1-[(3-phenyl-3-cyclohexen-1-yl)methyl]pyridine by a novel synthesis is described where 5-oxo-3-phenyl-3-cyclohexene-carboxylic acid is converted in five operations to the desired product, as well as processes for the resolution of 5-oxo-3-phenyl-3-cyclohexene-carboxylic acid using cinchonidine to afford (S)-5-oxo-3-phenyl-3-cyclohexene-carboxylic acid or α -chymotrypsin to selectively hydrolyze n-butyl 5-oxo-3-phenyl-3-cyclohexene-carboxylate to afford (S)-5-oxo-3-phenyl-3-cyclohexene-carboxylic acid as well as other valuable intermediates used in these processes.