

Camino de Santiago – The Way



The Way of St. James or "Camino de Santiago" has existed for over a thousand years. Legend holds that St. James's remains were carried by boat from Jerusalem to northern Spain where he was buried on the site of what is now the city of Santiago de Compostela. Today thousands of travelers set out each year to make their way to Santiago. Most travel by foot, some by bicycle.

In addition to people undertaking a religious pilgrimage, the majority are travelers and hikers who walk the route for non-religious reasons: travel, sport. Many consider the experience a spiritual adventure or retreat to remove themselves from the bustle of modern life.

Symbols of the Camino de Santiago: The Scallop The scallop shell, has long been the symbol of the Camino de Santiago. It is found along each route on markers and posts along the way guiding the pilgrim towards Santiago.

"Credencial" or pilgrim's passport: Most pilgrims carry a "Credencial", or pilgrims passport which is stamped at each town where the pilgrim has stayed. It serves as proof that the journey is accomplished according to an official route. The stamped "Credencial" is also necessary if you want to obtain a "Compostela": a certificate of accomplishment given to pilgrims on completing the Way. To earn the "Compostela" one needs to walk a minimum of 100 km or cycle at least 200 km.

Here follows a selection of packages available if you want to do "The Way" with all the details taken care of in advance. All of these are independent, with the exception of #2. No changes and no refunds can be made to the packages once reserved.

1. CAMBADOS & MARITIME WAY OF SANTIAGO 5 days/4 nights

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy to Medium

For all walkers, although some prior training is recommended. Only 1 walking stage. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads.

- By private car & driver , 4 participants required. Cambados, Padron, Santiago de Compostela

2. RIAS BAIXAS & SANTIAGO - WITH COOKING CLASS 5 days 4 nights

Private tour with local guide and cooking class. No walking on the trail but lots of fun with seeing the sights around Santiago and a wonderful cooking class. Also some fun wine tastings,

4 participants required

Pontevedra, Cambados, Fisterra, Santiago de Compostela 4 participants required

3. LUGO TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA - THE LAST 100 KMS 7 Days - 6 Nights

THE PRIMITIVE WAY - Unescorted

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium

For avid walkers, prior training highly recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

Lugo, Ponte Ferreira, Melide, Arzua, Rua, Santiago de Compostela

4. TUI TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA 7 Days - 6 Nights

THE PORTUGUESE WAY - Unescorted

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium

For avid walkers, prior training highly recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

Tui, O Porriño, Redondela, Pontevedra, Caldas de Reis, Padron, Santiago de Compostela

5. O CEBREIRO TO SANTIAGO - The Best Stages of the Way 7 Days - 6 Nights

O Cebreiro, Samos, Mouzos, Portomarin, Palas de Rei, Melide, Ribadiso, Rua, Santiago

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy to Medium

For all walkers, although some prior training is recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads.

THE FRENCH WAY - Unescorted

6. SARRIA TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA - LAST 100 KMS 8 days 7 nights

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium

For avid walkers, prior training highly recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

THE FRENCH WAY - Unescorted

Sarria, Portomarin, Lestedo, Melide, Arzua, Rua, Santiago de Compostela 8/7

7. RONCESVALLES TO LOGROÑO 8 days 7 nights

THE FRENCH WAY - Unescorted

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium to High

For avid walkers, prior training expressley recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

Roncesvalles, Zubiri, Pamplona, Puente la Reina, Estella, Los Arcos, Viana, Logroño 8/7

8. LEON TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA BY MOUNTAIN BIKE - THE LAST 200 KMS 8 days 7 nights

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium to High

For avid bikers, prior training highly recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

THE FRENCH WAY - Unescorted

Leon, Astorga, Ponferrada, O Cebreiro, Portomarin, Arzua, Santiago de Compostela 8/7

9. SAN SEBASTIAN TO BILBAO 8 days 7 nights

THE NORTHERN WAY - Unescorted

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium to High

For experienced walkers in excellent shape. Prior training expressly recommended. Uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

San Sebastián, Getaria, Deba, Markina, Gernika, Lezama, Bilbao 8/7

10. PONFERRADA TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA 13 days 12 nights

THE FRENCH WAY – Unescorted

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium

For avid walkers, prior training expressly recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

Ponferrada, Camponaraya, Villafranca del Bierzo, Herrerias, O Cebreiro, Triacastela, Sarria, Portomarin, Lestedo, Melide, Arzua, Rua Santiago de Compostela 13/12

11. LEON TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA 16 days 15 nights

THE FRENCH WAY – Unescorted

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium

For avid walkers, prior training expressly recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

Leon, Hospital de Orbigo, Santo Toribio, Astorga, Rabanal del Camino, Molinaseca, Ponferrada, Camponaraya, Villafranca del Bierzo, Herrerias, O Cebreiro, Triacastela, Sarria, Triacastela, Sarria, Portomarin, Lestedo, Melide, Arzua, Rua, Santiago de Compostela 16/15

12. RONCESVALLES TO SANTIAGO 35 days 34 nights

THE ENTIRE FRENCH WAY OF ST. JAMES - Unescorted

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Medium to High

For avid walkers, prior training expressly recommended. Moderately uneven grade, some dirt and stone roads

Roncesvalles, Zubiri, Pamplona, Puente de la Reina, Estella, Viana, Logono, Najera, Santo Domingo de la Calzada, Atapuerca, Burgos, Carrion de los Condes, Sahagun, Leon, Astorga, Ponferrada, Villafranca del Bierzo, O Cebreiro, Sarria, Portomarin, Lestedo, Melide, Arzua, Rua, Santiago de Compostela 35/34

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Can I get a detailed, day-to-day itinerary?

Yes, Tom Smith Travel will be happy to send you a detailed itinerary on any of the above 12 itineraries.

What type of accommodations can I expect?

There are two classes of accommodations: Comfort Class and Superior Class. You will choose which type is in your budget. As an example for a 8 day/7night Camino package in June based on two people sharing a room the total package price using Comfort Class Hotel is \$785.00 and for Superior Hotel Class it is \$935.00. Includes accommodations, breakfast daily, luggage transfer and more.

How do I arrive to the starting point?

Camino de Santiago "The Way"

Petrabax can help you arrange a transportation from the closest airport to your starting point. We can also arrange train tickets through Renfe (Spanish Railways) from most Spanish cities. Contact Petrabax for additional information about the best way to arrive to your starting point.

What can I expect from this trip?

You will live an unforgettable experience, away from the bustle of everyday life. This is a trip that you can do in total liberty, on foot or by bicycle, and at your own pace as this is not a race. Your luggage (maximum 1 piece, 44 lbs) will be carried for you from one destination to the next. We provide you with all the necessary expert advice, information and documentation that you require to complete your journey safely: local maps detailing your route, vouchers for your lodgings, tags for your luggage and a travelers notebook for your trip with descriptions on each daily walking or biking route.

What is the “Compostela”

The “Compostela” is a certificate of accomplishment given to pilgrims that have completed the Camino de Santiago upon presentation of your stamped "Credencial" or Pilgrims Passport. In order to receive the “Compostela” you must complete the last 100 km walking or 200 km cycling. You obtain the “Compostela” at the Office of the Pilgrim located a few meters from the Platerias façade of the Santiago Cathedral.

Where do I obtain a Pilgrims Passport?

The "Credencial" or Pilgrims Passport will be provided to you by Petrabax in Spain at the beginning of your trip. It is part of the travel materials and insurance information provided upon arrival to your starting point.

Where do I receive my trip documentation?

You will receive most of your documentation prior to your departure so that you can review it and prepare for your Camino. Other documentation will be delivered at your first hotel.

When can I take this trip?

You can take this trip starting any day of the year. The Camino offers diverse countryside and conditions depend on the season and time of year. Consult the weather of Galicia before arranging your trip. Rainy season is from November through February. March through June and September through October are optimum months for the Camino. The summer months of July and August can be somewhat more challenging due to the warmer weather.

What is the profile of the traveler on this trip?

This trip is suitable to any person who enjoys a normal physical condition. We do however highly recommend that you do some training, especially those persons who are not accustomed to walking or cycling for longer periods of time.

Camino de Santiago “The Way”

Can I travel with children?

Yes, older children are welcome on the trip as long as they are energetic and accustomed to walking long distances on successive days.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE TRIP

Do I need physical preparation prior to the trip?

Although this trip is suitable for for any person with normal physical condition, we recommend training for a few weeks prior to your trip, especially for those not accustomed to walking or biking for longer distances. We highly recommend taking very comfortable walking/biking shoes that have been previously broken in, so as to avoid blisters, bruises and discomfort.

What items do I need to complete the Camino?

We recommend a light, comfortable weatherproof backpack which you will carry on every stage and that must contain indispensable items for your walk (water bottle, personal documents, a cell phone, snacks, etc. We recommend broken in walking shoes/boots with which you are used to walking, light comfortable clothing, rain gear, a cap or hat, sun screen and sun glasses. During nighttime, warmer clothing such as a sweater or jacket are necessary. A walking stick can help you walk in a more relaxed manner during the more challenging stages. A photo camera and a notebook are also very recommendable. You should always start you day with a hearty breakfast and always take some snacks with you every day such as fruit, dried fruit, energy bar or chocolate. The most important is a full water bottle.

ABOUT THE CAMINO AND ITS SERVICES

Where does the Camino take place?

The route will take you through many rural country roads and paths as well as local roads with light traffic. On occasions the camino will take you through roads near larger towns and villages with higher density of traffic.

How is the grade?

There are no major grade changes. The beautiful Galician countryside is filled with mostly mild inclines and declines, valleys and mountains, rivers and streams. It can be said that the Way is relatively easy, it is always very beautiful. The major difficulty could be the total distance covered to complete your route, especially in the colder months (Nov-Feb) or warmer months (Jul-Aug).

Is the Camino dangerous?

Absolutely not. The Camino does not present any danger whatsoever. However, it is recommended that you take the normal safety precautions as you would anywhere else.

Camino de Santiago "The Way"

Is the Camino well outlined/marked?

You will see many markers along the Camino, they are well positioned and clear throughout the route. Look for the scallop shell which is the symbol of the Camino de Santiago. We also provide you with our travelers notebook in case you have any doubts throughout your journey at any given time. It is very rare to get lost. If you do, there are many places to stop and ask other travelers or the locals for directions.

What services are available along the Camino?

You will find many small hamlets, towns and villages along the Way where you will find all sorts of services: pharmacies, medical services, supermarkets, restaurants, cafes and local tourist offices. In some villages, during the summer you can even swim in the local pool or in the nearby river or creek. You can also find massage services after a long days walk.

How are the dinners?

If you have booked your itinerary with dinner included, these will take place either at your hotel or in a local restaurant nearby the hotel. All dinners include water and wine. They consist of menus containing three plates (appetizer, main dish and dessert). Coffee and tea is normally not included. In some cases the menu will be a specialty menu with a hearty variety of tapas and local specialties of the region of Galicia.

Is lunch available along the Way?

There are many options available for you to have lunch along the Camino: from sandwiches to drinks to sit-down meals at restaurants or pic-nics on the side of the road, etc. Your travelers notebook contains recommendations for lunch.

WHEN ON THE CAMINO

What is the starting time for each stage?

We recommend starting early, after enjoying a hearty breakfast, at about 8:30am. The majority of hotels and manor houses offer breakfast service from very early in the morning. In any case you can start your walk according to your wishes. You should normally finalize your stage at or about normal lunch time – this way you can relax and enjoy the rest of the day at your leisure and discover these fantastic towns and villages.

How does the luggage transportation work?

You can only take 1 piece of luggage (max 44 lbs). We will transport your luggage every day from your originating town to the next town while you travel. Your luggage will be waiting for you at your next hotel. You will be provided with special luggage tags for your luggage with your documentation. Please make sure that your luggage is closed and properly locked.

Camino de Santiago “The Way”

What happens if I'm on the Camino and no longer able to continue?

If you can no longer continue your walk or bicycle, we provide you with support telephone numbers that you may call and we will send a car in a short time to pick you up and take you to the next location.

Can I drink from the water fountains found along the Camino?

Although the water from the fountains along the Camino are usually safe, we do not recommend you drink from them and highly recommend drinking only bottled mineral water.

Pricing and cost. Each of the different itineraries has a price. Call Tom Smith Travel for the current rates.

And here is my recommendation for the best place for dinner in Santiago: Los Caracoles

<https://loscaracolesrestaurante.com/>



Tom Smith Travel -The Travel Society - A Virtuoso Member

P.O. Box 28134 Portland OR 97228 USA

Tel. 503 477 5341 Email: tom@tomsmithtravel.com

