

EL CAMINO - THE WAY OF ST. JAMES - SPAIN

Tour 70

11 Days

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Madrid · Foncebadon · Iron Cross · O' Cebreiro · Sarria · Portomarin · Palas de Rei · Arzua
Arca do Pino · Monte do Gozo · Santiago de Compostela (St. James)



El Camino Trail, Spain

YOUR TRIP INCLUDES

- Round-trip airfare from your desired Airport
- book without airfare (land only option)
- All airport taxes & fuel surcharges
- Classic and Quaint Hotels and Inns along the Camino: (or similar)
- 1 ni: Catalonia Atocha, Madrid
- 1 ni: Alfonso IX, Sarria
- 1 ni: Pousada de Portomarin, Portomarin
- 1 ni: Palas de Rei
- 2 ni: A Painza, Arzua
- 1 ni: Amenal, Arca/O Pino
- 2 ni: San Francisco Hotel Monumento, Santiago de Compostela
- Breakfast daily
- 7 Lunches (All Walking Days)
- Dinner Daily
- Wine and mineral water with dinners
- Transfers by air-conditioned coach

- Vehicle available to assist pilgrims who are unable to complete any leg of the tour
- Camino local Tour Escort
- Transfers as per itinerary
- Catholic Priest
- Mass Daily
- Hotel taxes and service charges
- Flight bag & portfolio of all travel documents

NOT INCLUDED:

Lunches on days 2, 3 & 10, Tips to your guide & driver

OPTIONAL Travel Insurance

Providing you coverage for both pre-existing conditions and those that may arise during your trip, including medical and dental emergencies, loss of luggage, trip delay, and so much more.

SUPPLEMENTAL CANCELLATION PROTECTION

A Cancellation Waiver - allowing you to cancel your trip and receive a refund anytime - up until 24 hours

prior to departure. The “Waiver” expires once you are within 24 hours of departure.

ABOUT YOUR TRIP

The El Camino:

The Way of St. James or St. James’ Way, often known by its Spanish name, el Camino de Santiago, is the pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain, where the remains of the Apostle, Saint James the Great, are buried. The Way of St James has existed for over one thousand years. It was one of the most important Christian pilgrimages during medieval times, as it was considered one of three pilgrimages on which a plenary indulgence could be earned; the others are the Via Francigena to Rome and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. St. James’ remains were carried by boat from Jerusalem to northern Spain where they were buried at the site of what is now the city of Santiago de Compostela.

Day 1: Depart for Madrid

Make your way to your local airport where you will board your overnight flight(s). Your meals will be served on board.

Day 2: Arrive in Madrid

(Tour Day: 2 miles / 3.2 kilometers / 4,500 steps)

Upon arrival in Madrid, you will collect your luggage in the baggage claim area, and continue to the Arrival’s Hall where you will be greeted by your driver and transferred to your hotel. In the afternoon, walk to the Cathedral of Almudena and following Mass, you will visit the Cathedral. You will continue your walking tour of Madrid to include the exterior of the Royal Palace. Next, walk through the Plaza Mayor and Puerta del Sol and make a stop at the Church of Saint James. Lastly, return to your hotel, where you will enjoy a nice meal before having a restful overnight in Madrid before your walking tour begins!

Day 3: Madrid - Foncebadon - Iron Cross - O Cebreiro - Sarria

(Walking Day: 8 miles / 12.8 kilometers / 18,000 steps)

This morning, you will enjoy breakfast and then transfer to Sarria. Sarria is located in the northwest of Spain and is noted for being the entry point to the oriental side of the region, Galicia. Your transfer will end and you will begin on foot from Foncebadon. In the eleventh century, this village was a common resting place for pilgrims on El Camino due to its hospitals, hospice, and church. Currently, the structures that have served so many are now in ruins. While in Foncebadon, you will walk to view the “Iron Cross”, a common pausing place for pilgrims as they leave a stone at the foot of the cross to symbolize

a sin or burden that they are leaving behind. Your tour continues as you leave your burdens behind and continue onward to the village nestled in the mountains, O’ Cebreiro. Many pilgrims pause at this site due to the Eucharistic Miracle that occurred in the year 1300. Additionally, be sure to have your cameras ready as this village is suspended 1,300 meters in the air and provides a breathtaking panoramic view. Your first walking day culminates with a delicious meal and an overnight in Sarria.

Day 4: Sarria - Portomarin

(Walking Day: 16 miles / 25.7 kilometers / 38,000 steps)

Today is the day that your walking pilgrimage (El Camino) to Santiago de Compostela officially begins! With the guidance of Our Lord, and through the spirit of St. James the apostle, you will become an authentic pilgrim by journeying along the physical road, as well as the spiritual one. Your first official day of walking will culminate in Portomarin. This town dates back to the Roman Ages and was an important halt along the route in the Middle Ages. Due to the creation of a dam in 1962, the Old Portomarin is currently underneath the Mino River. As a result of the dam creation, many of the old buildings were moved, brick by brick. Among these buildings is the Church of St. John of Jerusalem. In Medieval Times, this church was strategically set along the route of El Camino in order to protect the tomb of Santiago. At Portomarin, you will enjoy dinner followed by an overnight.

Day 5: Portomarin - Palas de Rei

(Walking Day: 18 miles / 28.9 kilometers / 42,000 steps)

This morning, you will enjoy breakfast at your hotel and journey from Portomarin, through the woods, to the Palas de Rei. This was a noteworthy town in the Middle Ages, as it contained a Royal Hospital and the church of St. Tirso. As the rugged walk continues, you will continue through fields, forests, and granaries. Additionally, you will see a prominent characteristic of Galician Landscape, Los Cruceiros. These wayside crosses depict Christ and the Virgin Mary. Dinner and enjoy a restful overnight in Palas de Rei.

Day 6: Palas de Rei - Arzua

(Walking Day: 19 miles / 30.5 kilometers / 44,500 steps)

Breakfast will be served at your hotel. Your pilgrimage continues as you will travel from Palas de Rei to the bustling small town of Arzua. Before arriving in Arzua, your group will stop at Melide. This town is a crucial point of El Camino because it is where the French and Oviedo routes converge. Upon arrival in Melide, you will notice the old roads that date back to the fourteenth century, which are some of the

oldest in the region of Galicia. After lunch, you will leave the Lugo province and enter into the province of A Coruna. As your group continues to Arzua, you will cross the beautiful, medieval bridge over the Iso River to Ribadiso. Following your visit to this Chapel, your day will culminate with the arrival in Arzua, where you will enjoy dinner and an overnight.

Day 7: Arzua

Rest Day: 4.5 miles | 7.2 kilometers | 10,500 steps

Today, you will take a break to rest your bodies and shake off any fatigue. After Mass, there will be time to reflect on the journey thus far and to spend at your own leisure. Dinner and overnight will be provided in Arzua.

Day 8: Arzua - Arca de O Pino

(Walking Day: 16 miles | 25.7 kilometers | 37,700 steps)

Your journey is almost over as you walk to the largest community before Santiago, Arca de O Pino! Upon walking this route, you will immerse yourselves in the fragrant eucalyptus groves and experience the breathtaking scenery. At a point throughout your walk, you will stop and enjoy a picnic lunch. Following lunch, you will continue your journey and arrive in Arca de O Pino. As you explore this village, you will notice joy etched on the faces of the pilgrims. Although they have traveled a long distance, they are not weary. With God and St. James guiding their paths, excitement and anticipation continues for their arrival in Santiago.

Day 9: Arca de O Pino - Monte del Gozo - Santiago de Compostela

(Walking Day: 16 miles | 25.7 kilometers | 37,700 steps)

Today, you will culminate the walking portion of your journey! Before arriving at your final destination, you will first stop for Mass on Mount Joy (Monte del Gozo). You will know that you are approaching Santiago because, at this point, you will be able to see the spires of the Cathedral. Following lunch, you will complete your walking journey and arrive at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Upon arrival, feel free to say a small prayer in thanksgiving to Our Lord for keeping you safe throughout the walking pilgrimage. At this time, you will check-in to your hotel and enjoy free time to explore Galicia's capital, Santiago. This evening you will enjoy a marvelous dinner, followed by a very restful overnight in Santiago de Compostela.

Day 10: Santiago de Compostela

(Tour Day: 3.6 miles | 5.7 kilometers | 7,480 steps)

This morning you will awaken in the beautiful city of Santiago de Compostela! Formed by Galician granite,

the Cathedral is one of the finest architectural examples in Europe as it encompasses Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque styles. Additionally, the Cathedral contains numerous and valuable pieces of art that truly captivate the eye. Upon entering the Cathedral, the tradition will lead as you will hug the dazzling statue of St. James. Following this intimate embrace, you will descend into the crypt where the Patron Saint of Pilgrims' relics is kept. Following your visit, you will enjoy free time for lunch on your own before your sightseeing tour of the city. Some stops on your tour include the Obradoiro Square, Fonseca Palace, Gelmirez Palace, Franco Street, and much more. Your evening will be free to spend at your leisure until a final dinner with your group. You will spend a final overnight in Santiago de Compostela.

Day 11: Return Home

Your last day in Spain will begin with breakfast at your hotel, followed by a transfer to the Santiago Airport for your return flight(s) home. You will say 'hasta luego' (see you later) to your new friends made on this journey.

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