



**Lead Smart  
Coaching LLC**  
*Smart school leaders achieve  
excellence in schools*

## Walk in Beauty: *Pilgrimage of El Camino de Santiago, Spain* *Frequently Asked Questions*

Valerie Brown, Pilgrimage Leader  
Lead Smart Coaching, LLC  
[www.leadsmartcoaching.com](http://www.leadsmartcoaching.com) 215-933-9978

*“To live into the future means to leap into the unknown, and this requires a degree of courage for which there is no immediate precedent and which few people realize.”*  
---Rollo May, *The Courage to Create*

### What is a sample day on the Camino with Walk in Beauty?

- Wake up & Breakfast
- Poem or Query to Walk with for Daily Individual Reflection/Gentle Yoga Warm Up with Group
- Walk El Camino in Silence/Enjoy Café Visits/Museum Visit or Other Attraction
- Lunch (We may have a lunch at the end of our walk.)
- Walk El Camino/Enjoy Café Visits/Museum Visit or Other Attraction
- Arrive at luxury Paradores or Country Farmhouse Inn
- Bathe & Rest
- Evening Group Reflection
- Dinner & Bedtime (Remember: Spaniards eat late by American standards. Generally, dinner is served about 8:00 pm.)



### Do I have to be physically fit to walk this pilgrimage?

Not necessarily. The main requirement of the Camino is your spirit. You should be prepared and know your level of physical fitness, and we recommend walking and/or training to get your body used to walking. However, in this pilgrimage, you'll receive a **customized training schedule** that includes body, mind, and spirit, to help you prepare fully. Physical conditioning is just one part of preparation for this epic journey!

### How much walking is there on this pilgrimage?

**We average from a low of light city walking to a high of 13 miles in one day.** Most pilgrims walking the El Camino independently walk an average of 15 miles daily, carrying a heavy backpack. With this pilgrimage, you have the **luxury of a fully supported van**, which carries your luggage from hotel to hotel, and carries you the extra mile if you want to hop on the van.

### What if I get tired or can't or don't want to walk?

You walk at your own pace and it is important to listen to your body. During all of our Walk in Beauty Camino Pilgrimages, the support vehicle will be of service along the entire route to cover any needs the pilgrims may have. If you do not want to keep walking for any reason, or any physical or health issues arise, you can hop on the van and take a break or stop walking for the day.

### **Will the guides walk with us/me?**

It is important for us that each person walks at his/her own pace. During the stage there will be meeting points where you will see the guide and support vehicle along the way. Usually the group will meet at the end of the stage for lunch. If for any reason you would like the guide to walk with you, you can request so. The guides are there for any support you may need.

### **What is the size of the group?**

Our groups are small, generally 12-16 people, maximum. We prefer to keep our groups under 13 people, although depending on the dates we have made a few exceptions to allow one or two more.

### **What is the weather like?**

Weather is variable; however, generally, fall has cool nights and mornings and is an ideal time for walking in the north of Spain.

Check these websites for more detail:

<https://www.thomascook.com/holidays/weather/spain/october/>

<https://www.tripsavvy.com/october-weather-in-spain-1644268>

### **Where and when do we eat lunch? What does it cost?**

Lunch is not included, except for the Camino del Norte's Pintxos Tour (Basque tapas) in San Sebastián, Spain's culinary hotspot! Lunch usually takes place after completing the daily stage, and you can also stop and eat something along the way as you walk. The guide will take you to places where you will have a variety of menu options during or after the walk. Prices vary from a couple of Euro for a simple Pilgrim's Meal to a three-course lunch at about 20 Euro.

### **What about meals?**

Eating regional-delicious meals is one of the great pleasures of Walk in Beauty. Our exclusive hotels offer a wide range of options, and food is fresh and plentiful. The custom in Spain is to eat dinner at approximately 8:00 pm and local wine is often served with meals.

### **Will we have Internet/WIFI?**

**Most of our accommodations have Internet access (WiFi).** About 30 days before your pilgrimage, you will receive a list of all the accommodation names and details, and will confirm where you will have WiFi.

### **How much should we tip the guides?**

Tips for the driver and guide(s) are not included. It is not mandatory but if you are happy with the service you received it would be much appreciated. If you wish to tip, I usually estimate a minimum of 50 Euro per person for our tours lasting 10 days or less and 100 Euro per person for our longer tours. Depending on the service you received, the assistant guide (in some cases) and driver can be given the same amount or a bit less.

### **How do we return to Madrid or elsewhere?**

There are **many flight and train options** when departing Santiago. There are a few daily flights to Madrid from Santiago, depending on the day. You can also take the train Madrid-Santiago, which takes approximately 6 hours or 10 hours for the night train. There are also direct flights to many European cities, including Barcelona, London, and Paris.

### **How do I get from the Madrid airport to the city?**

The most efficient option when carrying suitcases is to take a taxi upon your arrival to the Madrid airport. At any time of day you will find many taxis by following the taxi sign upon leaving the baggage area. The price is 30 Euro fixed rate to anywhere in Madrid. There is also an option to take public transportation: there is a metro and a bus to the city center.

### **What information can you provide about ground transportation in Spain?**

Air: <https://www.iberia.com> <https://www.vueling.com/es>

Trains within Spain: <http://www.renfe.com>

Bus: <https://www.alsa.es>

Madrid Metro: <https://www.metromadrid.es/en/index.html>

### **What is the terrain like?**

The **trails are well marked** with yellow arrows and the scallop shell tile. There are some long, slow climbs through farming areas but not Himalayan or Rocky Mountain like terrain. The paths are well worn and are not difficult. We walk along a lot of secondary farming roads, paths through vineyards, beech and chestnut forests, and old country roads.

### **What is the single supplement?**

Some people would like to be matched with a roommate. Others prefer a single room. We cannot guarantee a match and will try to place you with someone if there are any requests. **The price of the single supplement is \$1300.00 per person for both the Camino del Norte or the Camino Finisterre.**

### **What are the luggage restrictions?**

For the **Camino Finisterre**, the luggage restrictions are **30 pounds and 30 inches**. For the **Camino del Norte**, the luggage restrictions are **one medium sized suitcase per person (70 x 45 x 30 cm or 27 x 20 x 12 in) weighing no more than 20 kg (45 lbs).**

### **Should I bring a backpack?**

We take care of transferring all luggage from accommodation to accommodation. For the actual walking only a small backpack is required in order to carry personal documents, money, water, a camera, the credential, etc.. We do provide a backpack that is suitable for the daily walk, in case you wish to use it. **(See Pilgrim's Kit below for the Camino del Norte)**

### **What equipment is needed?**

**You do not need expensive equipment or clothing.** I will supply you with an equipment list of basic items to pack. On this pilgrimage, you'll receive a Pilgrim's Kit, containing a small backpack to hold

items such as your camera, rain gear and water bottle. Hiking boots and an extra pair of comfortable footwear are your most important piece of equipment. Please be sure your they are well broken in and that you have proper socks before arriving in Spain. Again, I will supply you with equipment and clothing recommendations.

**Can you recommend a travel insurance company?**

<https://www.allianztravelinsurance.com>

**How do I calculate U.S. Dollar to Euro conversion?**

<https://www.xe.com>

**What is included in the Pilgrim's Kit on the Camino del Norte?**

**You will receive these goodies:**

- Buff headband/neckerchief
- Camino Daily Program
- Pilgrim's Passport
- Baseball Cap
- Wet and Dry Wipes
- Notebook and Pen
- Snacks
- Refreshing Moisturizer
- Pilgrim's Shell
- Small backpack with padded straps

**You will also receive:**

- Waterproof Case Holder for Pilgrim's Passport
- Daily Camino Reflections
- Roadmaps
- Book marks

**Always at your disposal are:**

- Umbrellas and Ponchos
- First Aid Kits
- Mobile Phone

**How much spending money is recommended?**

Most people travel with an ATM card. Money machines are everywhere in Spain, but be sure you know your PIN number (not letters) before departing the United States or your home country. **Do not travel with Traveler's Checks** as the banking hours are held at odd times and many banks no longer accept them. Most expenses are already built into this pilgrimage. Lunches are a separate expense, again, except for our Pintxos tour (Basque tapas) in San Sebastián, Spain culinary hotspot on the Camino del Norte. The *Menu del Dia* or *Menu de Peregrino* available at local cafes costs between two or three Euros for simple Pilgrim's Meal to 20 Euro for a three-course meal.

### **What is the ‘credencial’ or Pilgrim’s Passport?**

The ‘credencial’ is your Pilgrim Passport, the document that identifies you as a pilgrim. It is the pilgrim record with which you are able to prove you have done the Camino and are able to receive the Compostela Certificate. It is obtained before starting the Camino and must be stamped along the way in places like churches, ‘*albergues*’, bars, restaurants, etc. **You need at least two stamps per day during the last 100 km of the pilgrimage to receive the certificate.**

### **What is the Compostela Certificate?**

It is the document, in Latin, that **certifies the completion of the pilgrimage to Santiago**. In order to receive the Compostela, the pilgrim is required to have covered the last 100 kilometers of any of the routes by foot, or 200 kilometers on bicycle or horse.

### **Who are likely pilgrims on El Camino?**

**The Camino welcomes people of all religions, nationalities, ages, and physical abilities.**

Anyone who wishes to walk the Camino can do so. The main requirement is spirit and heart! Everybody comes to the Camino for a different reason. My goal is to help you enjoy the Camino your way!

### **Are pre-post-Camino trips available?**

There are many options here too. It’s best to review the resources provided to prepare you for this pilgrimage to make an informed choice. Our land tour agent will have optional excursions for an additional cost and in Santiago you will find many options, including:

<https://caminoways.com/ways/santiago-de-compostela-camino-day-tour>

*Buen Camino!*

