

Walk in Beauty: Pilgrimage of El Camino de Santiago, Spain
September 16-25, 2016
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*“...even before you sat down with them,
broke bread and drank wine,
wiped the wind-tears from your eyes:
pilgrim they called you again. Pilgrim.”*

---David Whyte, from Camino

Daily Itinerary

Day 1 Friday 16 September Santiago de Compostela Theme: Inner Hospitality: You Are a Multitude

Arrive and settle. Group organizational meeting in Santiago at 7:00PM followed by a ‘welcome group dinner’.
(Dinner included) Hotel: Montenegro and Altamira Welcome dinner at Hotel San Miguel

Day 2 Saturday 17 September Santiago to Negreira - 21km Theme: Peregrinatio & Following the Thread

At 9:00 am we begin our pilgrimage from the Plaza de Obradoiro in front of the famed Santiago Cathedral. The route leaves the winding city streets, past the Carballeira (oak forest) of San Lourenzo and soon we are in the countryside with lovely pastoral scenes. A mix of large, modern houses and traditional red roofed stone houses accompany us for much of our route before we arrive at the medieval bridge of Augapesada. We walk through Carballo, Trasmonte and the gorgeous village of Ponte Maceira home to an elegant 14th Century bridge. Our day ends in the modern town of Negreira, known for its pastry shops and the fortified, medieval Pazo de Cotón. **(Breakfast & Dinner included) Hotel: Casa Bola**

Day 3 Sunday 18 September Negreira to Las Maroñas – 20km Theme: Nature as Mentor & Soul Friend

Today’s route passes through a mix of forest and farms. Facilities from here to Muxía are very limited and you will feel very much ‘out in the countryside’. Following an old *camino real* (royal road) with fabulous views across multiple valleys, the route winds its way in and out of oak forest, thick with ferns and ivy and past the tiny hamlets of Zas, Peña and the evocatively named Porto Camiño. Arriving into Las Maroñas, we note the Romanesque Church of Santa Maria and delightful examples of raised stone granaries. **(Breakfast & Dinner included) Hotel: Casa Bola**

Day 4 Monday 19 September Las Maroñas to Dumbría – 23.5km Theme: Inner Blocks & Resistance

Leaving Las Maroñas, we follow quiet paved roads around Monte Aro with superb views of the Fervenza Reservoir. En route, the village of Corzón has an interesting church with a detached bell tower and a rare gallery cemetery. Stunning rural architecture awaits us in Olveiroa with its precariously balanced stone *hórreos*, the village cross, a communal wash house and thick stone houses. From here water dominates for a while as we cross over the Xallas River heading towards Hospital, a village that used to have a pilgrims hostel but is now dominated by a carbide factory. Here, we will leave the heavily trodden trail to Finisterre and head northwest for a few more kilometers to Dumbría where we will end our day. **(Breakfast & Dinner included) Hotel: Casa Catiniera and TBD**

Day 5 Tuesday 20 September Dumbría to Muxía – 23km Theme: Thresholds & Thin Places

Our route leaves the sleepy village of Dumbría and takes forest tracks, quiet roads, grassy trails & stone paved segments of the old *camino real*. The ubiquitous eucalyptus is a large part of our day, as well as the small villages of Senande, Quintáns and San Martiño de Ozón known for its enormous granary and Benedictine Monastery. We climb then descend to Merexo before heading around the bay leading to the small fishing community of Muxía. Our day culminates at the Punta da Barca, the rocky headland where the 17th century chapel of Nosa Señora da Barca stands. Here we can find the hull, sail and rudder of the stone boat that brought the Virgin Mary to this magical spot. **(Breakfast & Dinner included) Hotel: Casa Catiniera and TBD**

Day 6 Wednesday 21 September Muxía to Lires – 14km Theme: Inner & Outer Landscapes

We leave Muxía via the main road, following the coastline past the sweeping white sands of Lourido Beach before beginning an ascent of Monte Facho, up through pine and eucalyptus plantations. Our views from here are extensive of the surrounding area. We descend past the Romanesque church of Santa Maria at Morquintián, through Guisamonde to the village of Lires nestled on the River Lires, home to a large trout farm and numerous sea birds that make their home in the protected lagoon. We'll head out to the beach to enjoy lunch and an afternoon of relaxation by the sea. **(Breakfast & Dinner included) Hotel: Casa Catiniera and TBD**

Day 7 Thursday 22 September Lires to Finisterre – 18km Theme: Weaving Threads Together

The sound of the sea pounding its waves is our constant companion, as we skirt the shoreline for much of the day. Our trail begins by following the River Lires on its short journey to the ocean, taking in the beaches of Nemiña and Lires. Southwards we go over the headland, past the tiny community of O Rostro. Then we wind our way on small country roads through the communities of San Salvador, Escaselas and San Martiño de Duio. We are afforded vistas of the huge bay of Langosteira as we approach the town of Finisterre from above.

Once in the center of Finisterre, it's onwards and upwards for a few more kilometers to the end of your journey and the ancient world, at Cape Finisterre. Here stands the old lighthouse keeping watch where the sea, spirit, and nature come together dramatically, boldly, and beautifully. Before we scout out our hotel on the hill we'll enjoy a glass of wine in the quiet port of Finisterre, a small town of robust sailors and fishermen. **(Breakfast & Dinner included) Hotel: TBD**

Day 8 Friday 23 September Finisterre Sabbath Rest Day Theme: Ripening & Seasonal Wisdom

Today is free to enjoy some leisure time, wandering the narrow streets of the town, shopping or relaxing by the sea. We will gather together for a ritual on the wild and dramatic *Mar de Fora* beach before a final and celebratory dinner. **(Breakfast & Dinner included) Hotel: TBD**

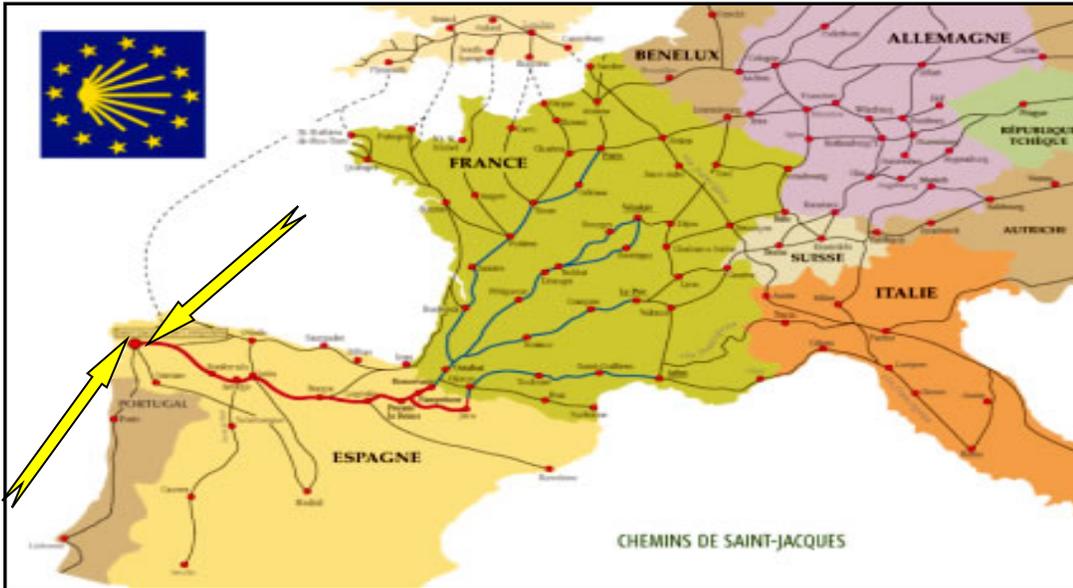
Day 9 Saturday 24 September Santiago Theme: Returning Home Again After breakfast this morning, a pleasant drive along the coast of Galicia will lead us back to the center of Santiago. For those that wish to there is an optional 4-5km walk into the city, to arrive as a pilgrim on foot. The afternoon and evening will be at your leisure upon arrival in Santiago. **(Breakfast included) Hotel: San Francisco**

Day 10 Sunday 25 September Depart Santiago (Breakfast included)

PLEASE NOTE:

*This itinerary may change slightly due to accommodation availability, rain, festivals and spontaneous side trips.
** We have the luggage van to transport your luggage and you if you feel you need some assistance while on this journey.

*** This is not an endurance race, nor a competition. Please be respectful of the different paces and walks of life that come together on this pilgrim's journey.



How many miles or kilometers do we hike per day? We average between 10-15 miles per day or 14-25 kilometers. Most pilgrims walking the trail independently walk 15 miles or 25 K a day carrying a heavy pack. With our local Spanish tour guide, we have the luxury of a fully supported van with healthy snacks, which carries our baggage from hotel to hotel, and carries us the extra mile when you need it.

What kind of hotels do we use? We use beautifully restored farm houses known as Casa Rurales, and family run Pazos, Galician manor homes and hotels. They are located near to the Camino Finisterra, situated in small towns and villages, away from the large cities and will involve a group shuttle at the beginning and end of each day. All rooms have private baths. The smaller inns have no phone or TV in the room.

Is there WIFI at our hotels? Our hotels nearly always have free WIFI available although it is often just in the lobby/public areas. We generally stay at historical hotels, which often have thick walls so WIFI rarely works in the rooms. Most bars and cafes enroute have free WIFI also.

Meals: All breakfasts and 8 dinners are included in the price of this pilgrimage. Lunches and the last evening (dinner) in Santiago are not included in the pilgrimage price, however, there are a few stores along the trail to purchase sandwich items and fruit, or plan to eat at one of the cafes that cater to pilgrims. The van will be stocked with healthy snacks and water. We will do our best to accommodate any dietary requirements. Please let us know in advance as much as is possible.

How to get to Santiago de Compostela?

I suggest you fly directly to Santiago de Compostela (SCG) and spend the night at the hotel listed for Day One of the pilgrimage. You can also take a train or bus from Madrid. From the airport, a shuttle bus leaves for the city center every 30 minutes or you can take a 15 minute taxi ride (around 25€).

By train from Madrid: www.renfe.es

Bus from Madrid: www.alsa.es

Equipment: The hikes are not fancy. I will supply you with an equipment list of basic items to pack. You are limited to one bag weighing 30-lbs and one-day pack to hold items such as your camera, rain gear and water bottle. Hiking boots or comfortable walking shoes will be your most important piece of equipment. Please be sure they are well broken in and that you have socks suitable for hiking before arriving in Spain. Please bring hiking poles with you if you wish to use them.

Spending Money: 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 US. **Do not** travel with TRAVELLERS CHECKS as the banking hours are held at odd times and many banks no longer accept them. Most expenses are already built into the cost of this pilgrimage. Lunches will be a separate expense. The *Menu del Dia* or *Menu del Peregrino*, available at local cafes, will cost between 9 and 12 Euros. These are three course meals with wine and water included – great value!

What is the average age of the group? Generally, the average age of pilgrims walking El Camino today is 50 years old during the spring and fall months, but younger during the summer months. I anticipate that this pilgrimage will be a mix of a 40/60 ratio of men to women. With an eager heart and a mind full of curiosities, any age is able to walk the Camino.

Gratuity for local guides As a general guideline, it is customary to tip around **10 Euros per day, per guide.**

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, forested tracks, through small, charming villages, and old country roads.

Single Supplement: Some people would like to be matched with a roommate. I can't guarantee a match but will try to place you with someone if there are any requests. The price of the single supplement is **\$650.00** per person for this 10-day trip.

References: I would be delighted to share references of former clients who have accompanied me on other pilgrimages. My website www.leadsmarrtcoaching.com contains information about the Camino.

Buen Camino!