

E-BOOK

THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO



Follow
the
Camino

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INTRODUCTION TO THE CAMINO

The Camino de Santiago, or The Way of St. James, is an ancient **pilgrimage** dating back to the early **Medieval Ages**. Since then, people have journeyed from across the world to **Santiago de Compostela**. Their motivations differ, but people from all walks of life become connected as they walk – and find what they need, even if they weren't looking for it.

The Camino goes beyond just one route, but extends as a network across the continent. Throughout the Middle Ages, tens of thousands of pilgrims walked from their homes, often leaving behind their old lives, to make their pilgrimage to **Santiago de Compostela**. This paved the way for many different routes across Europe, all **culminating at the city cathedral**.

The Origins of the Way of St James

The Camino came to be when a young **shepherd** in **Galicia** was led by the **stars** to **remains** buried in a field. The local bishop of the time declared the remains to be those of **St. James The Greater**, Apostle to Jesus Christ and the first to be martyred in the name of God.

The bishop ordered a **church to be built** on the site to honour St. James (or Sant Iago). As word spread, pilgrims started walking from across Europe and beyond to the **sacred site**. The small church slowly expanded into the epic cathedral that is there today. The city also grew around the cathedral, until remote Galicia became a **hub of the Christian faith**.

The Significance of the Camino Today

Although the Camino de Santiago had waned in popularity in later centuries, in modern times the Camino has seen a **massive resurgence** in popularity with people walking for a variety of reasons – some for their **faith**, others for a personal **fitness** challenge or to **fundraise** for charity, and more to enjoy the scenery and culture of a unique part of the world.

The Camino is one of the most notable **heritage** points anywhere in Europe. This goes beyond just the significance of the pilgrimage route to those of faith. Galicia's unique culture as one of the ancient Celtic kingdoms at the western-most edge of Spain saw a blend of pagan spirituality and Christian rituals ferment over centuries into a totally unique region. With its network of walking trails across Spain, Portugal, France, and Switzerland, the Camino ties together cultures spanning different environments and ways of life in one route.





CHOOSING THE RIGHT
CAMINO FOR YOU

The Camino de Santiago is made up of **eleven main routes** of varying lengths, terrain, culture, and natural beauty. Each of these trails has something wonderful to offer, and people choose their Camino walk based on criteria such as level of fitness, weather, landscape, or how busy it is. All complete routes lead to **Santiago de Compostela**, except for the Finisterre Way, which starts in the city and heads out to 'World's End' at Cape Finisterre. You also have the option to complete different shorter sections of the Camino, such as the Last 100km, or sections running through other culturally significant cities along the Way of St. James.

Here are some factors to consider when deciding on your ideal Camino route:



Level of fitness. Most routes are **accessible** to anyone in fair physical condition, as the Camino is not a race but a journey you can undertake at **your own pace**. While some sections may have warmer days or more elevation changes, we will help you plan carefully to make the **experience enjoyable**. Consider factors like route length, road conditions, average elevations, distances between stops, transport options, and available amenities such as cafes to ensure a comfortable and rewarding journey.

Scenery. There is a **landscape for every preference** on the Camino network. The main route – The Camino Frances – is entirely inland with mountainous areas in two parts and flat to hilly for the rest, but several routes follow coastal paths, beaches, and boardwalks. Others are more mountainous, requiring walkers to scale heights of up to 1,000m (but with the reward of magnificent views). Some routes are rural, offering pure solitude, while others pass through major metropolitan areas for a more culturally diverse experience.



Travel plans. The time you have and access to transport will also play a role in your decision. The shortest Camino sections only take **3 days** to walk, while if you wanted to walk the longest Camino route it would take around **47 days!** And you can even combine routes to travel for even longer (yes really!). Additionally, while some Camino routes pass through cities with major international air and sea connections, other starting points require several hours of overland travel to get to.

Your Compostela. Before you embark on a Camino, you can get a '**Pilgrim Passport**' (provided in your holiday pack when you book with Follow The Camino). You **stamp** this document at key points on your walk, such as churches, to highlight the journey. Once in the Santiago de Compostela, you present this passport to receive a **Compostela**, or Pilgrim's Certificate. In order to qualify for the Compostela, you need to **walk at least 100km** of a recognised Camino trail.





Other factors to consider include:

- The types of **food** and wine you want to try.
- The history and **culture** of different regions.
- The number of **people walking** the same trail.
- How you travel – **walk, cycle or horse ride!**

If there is one piece of advice, it is this: There is no right or wrong Camino, no "real" or "best" Camino – there is only **your Camino**. Explore the different routes and find what captures your interest. If you want to have fun and meet lots of people, the French Way is a great fit. If you would prefer to walk along the coast to Santiago, the Portuguese Coastal Way is your choice. Or, visit the Guggenheim Museum and then walk the Northern Way between Bilbao and Santander. With so many possibilities, it can sometimes feel overwhelming. That is where our Camino Planners come in, with the **expertise** to help you choose the **route that's perfect** for you.



11 ROUTES TO CHOOSE FROM



Camino Routes (by popularity)



CAMINO FRANCES



PAMPLONA



LEON



O CEBREIRO

The Camino Frances, or the **French Way**, is the **most popular Camino route**. It is called the Camino Frances as it begins in the French town of St-Jean-Pied-de-Port in the Pyrenees.

The French Way is a remarkable route, passing through some of the most beautiful regions in Spain. It also goes through key pilgrimage towns. The Camino Frances is made most famous thanks to the inspirational 2010 film *'The Way'*, starring Martin Sheen and also the book called *'The Pilgrimage'* by Paulo Coelho.

The most travelled of all Camino sections is the **Last 100km** on the Camino Frances. This is because the Camino Frances is the most popular route and by travelling the final 100km (60 miles) of the Camino hikers can attain the **Pilgrim Certificate**. This part of the French Way has many services for pilgrims such as hotels, cafes, supermarkets and restaurants.

Major Cities and Sights

- Pamplona (famous for the Running of the Bulls).
- Logrono (in the heart of the Rioja wine region).
- Burgos (known for the Burgos Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage)
- Leon (one of Spain's best preserved Mediaeval cities).
- O Cebreiro (an ancient megalithic village in Galicia).

Nearest Airports

- Biarritz-Merignac Airport (BIQ)
- Bilbao Airport (BIO)
- Santander-Seve Ballesteros Airport (SDR)
- Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport (MAD)
- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want to walk with others
- People who want amenities as they walk
- People who want to cycle the Camino
- People walking the Camino for the first time

CAMINO PORTUGUES



The Camino Portugues, is the **second most popular route** to Santiago de Compostela. Boasting fantastic metropolitan **cities** along the way, it also passes through remote **forests**, quiet **farms**, and peaceful **vineyards**.

The Camino Portugues begins in **Lisbon** and journeys inland, passing close to the Catholic pilgrimage site of **Fatima**. Reaching Porto, it then travels further north towards the Spanish border, crossing at the beautiful old town of Tui, and onwards for just over 100km into Santiago de Compostela. This route offers as well a lot of amenities during your walking days.

Major Cities and Sights

- Lisbon (the capital of Portugal and major cultural hub).
- Coimbra (an ancient university city).
- Porto (the entire city is a UNESCO World Heritage site).
- The Minho Region (lush grape producing region area).
- Padron (where St James' body landed in Europe).

Nearest Airports

- Lisbon-Humberto Delgado Airport (LIS)
- Porto-Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport (OPO)
- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want to walk with others
- People who want amenities as they walk
- People who want mostly flat roads
- People who want to cycle the Camino
- People walking the Camino for the first time

CAMINO PORTUGUES COASTAL



The Camino Portugues Coastal Way is a **variant** of the original Portuguese Way and has become popular in recent years due to its proximity to the beautiful **Atlantic Ocean** and flat, **easy walking route** along seaside boardwalks. It is now the third most popular Camino route.

The route starts in the **UNESCO Heritage city of Porto** before running along the shoreline for several days. Along the way, pilgrims will visit the beautiful old tourist town of Baiona, the port town of Vigo with its magnificent old quarter, and the spectacular Pontevedra, the ancient capital of **Galicia**. The last leg then cuts inland through woodlands toward Padron and onwards through small villages and hamlets to **Santiago de Compostela**.

Follow the Camino has won **First Prize** at the **European Cultural Tourism Network Awards 2024** in the category of 'Transnational Thematic Tourism for Culture and Heritage', for our work in developing and promoting the **Camino Portugués Coastal hiking route**.

Major Cities and Sights

- Porto (the entire city is a UNESCO World Heritage site).
- Baiona (a city famous for its seafood).
- The Minho Region (lush grape producing area).
- Vigo (a city with a rich maritime history).
- Padron (where St James' body landed in Europe).

Nearest Airports

- Porto-Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport (OPO)
- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want amenities as they walk
- People who want mostly flat roads
- People who want to cycle the Camino
- People walking the Camino for the first time

CAMINO DEL NORTE



The Camino del Norte route, or the Northern Way, is also referred to as the **Ruta de la Costa**. This Camino was used for centuries by Spanish pilgrims coming from the **magnificent coasts of the Basque region, Cantabria, and Asturias**. From there, they turned inland towards Santiago de Compostela, the final resting place of the Apostle Saint James.

The Camino del Norte is a unique journey, unfolding across some of the most spectacular scenery on Spain's northern coast. It passes through superb cities, from San Sebastian to Bilbao and Santander to Oviedo. Ultimately, this Camino **joins the Camino Primitivo** route in Oviedo, which continues **inland**. This Camino has perhaps the most significant **food heritage** of all the routes.

Major Cities and Sights

- San Sebastian (the highest concentration of Michelin restaurants in the world).
- Gernika (a quintessentially Basque city).
- Bilbao (the home of Basque tapas, pintxos).
- Santander (the Summer residence of Spanish royalty).
- Oviedo (the cider capital of Spain).

Nearest Airports

- Bilbao Airport (BIO)
- Santander-Seve Ballesteros Airport (SDR)
- Oviedo-Asturias Airport (OVD)

Ideal For

- People who want to walk by the coast
- People who want to walk through cultural cities
- People who are foodies

CAMINO DEL NORTE COASTAL



This **variant** of the traditional Camino del Norte is a breathtaking **coastal pilgrimage** route in northern Spain. Stretching through Asturias and Galicia, this section of the Camino offers stunning views of the **Cantabrian Sea**, charming fishing villages, and lush green landscapes. Pilgrims traverse **varied terrain**, from sandy beaches and rugged cliffs to forested trails and historic towns. Along the way, travelers encounter rich **cultural heritage, delicious regional cuisine, and welcoming locals**, culminating in the spiritual and historic significance of arriving at Santiago de Compostela's iconic cathedral.

Major Cities and Sights

- Ribadesella (a city with a mix of Mediaeval and Modernist heritage).
- Gijón (houses the Museum of the Asturian People).
- El Pito (has the notable Quinta de Selgas Palace and gardens).
- Vilalba (home to San Simón smoked cheese).
- Monte de Gozo (the "Mountain of Joy" before you reach Santiago).

Nearest Airports

- Santander-Seve Ballesteros Airport (SDR)
- Oviedo-Asturias Airport (OVD)
- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want to walk in solitude
- People who want to walk by the coast
- People who want a more rural walk
- People seeking a more introspective journey due to fewer pilgrims

CAMINO PRIMITIVO



OVIEDO



LUGO



MELIDE

The Camino Primitivo, or **Original Way**, is a **rustic** and **isolated trek** through Galician countryside from Oviedo to Santiago de Compostela. The route is considered to be the **very first of the pilgrimages** to the tomb of St. James. It crosses a mountain range, climbing up to nearly **1,100m above sea level**. It's well worth the climb for the spectacular views of the Embalse de Salime, the River Navia and, of course, the surrounding towering mountains.

Starting in Oviedo, pilgrims scale the Cantabrian Mountain Range before descending into Galician countryside. There, walkers **follow old Roman roads** still standing today through isolated forests and quiet countryside to the Cathedral in the city of **Santiago de Compostela**.

Major Cities and Sights

- Oviedo (the cider capital of Spain).
- Cantabrian Mountains (offering stunning views over Galicia).
- Church of Santa María de Vilabade (a mix of architectural styles).
- Lugo (home to UNESCO Heritage listed Roman walls).
- Melide (where the famous 'Pulpo' octopus dish originates from).

Nearest Airports

- Santander-Seve Ballesteros Airport (SDR)
- Oviedo-Asturias Airport (OVD)
- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want to walk in solitude
- People who want a hillier walk
- People who want a more rural walk
- People seeking a more introspective journey due to fewer pilgrims

CAMINO DE INVIERNO



The Camino de Invierno, also known as the **Winter Way**, is a lesser-known and less-travelled route running near the more famous Camino Frances. The route was historically used by pilgrims as an **alternative route during the winter months** to avoid the harsh weather.

One of the main attractions of the Camino de Invierno is its diverse and **breathtaking landscapes**. The path takes pilgrims through dense forests, rolling hills, picturesque valleys, and charming villages, providing a closer **connection to nature and rural life**. Walkers can enjoy a sense of tranquillity and seclusion, making it a perfect option for those seeking a more introspective and reflective journey.

Major Cities and Sights

- Ponferrada (home to a famous Castle of the Knights Templar).
- Hermitage of the Remedies (has views over the Lor River and Lemos Valley).
- Monte Faro (offering panoramic views of all four Galician provinces).
- Silleda (known for busy cattle and country fairs).

Nearest Airports

- Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport (MAD)
- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want to walk in solitude
- People who want a hillier walk
- People who want a more rural walk
- People who want to walk in the winter season
- People seeking a more introspective journey due to fewer pilgrims

CAMINO INGLES



The Camino Ingles, or **English Way**, is a beautiful pilgrimage that stretches from Spain's northern-most coast to Santiago de Compostela. It was traditionally used by pilgrims from countries like Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom and Ireland, who would journey to ports and then sail to the coast of Galicia at places such as Ribadeo, Ferrol, and A Coruña.

Most pilgrims now start in either **Ferrol or A Coruña**. Although the walk from A Coruña is shorter than required to achieve the Compostela certificate, this still connects with **Celtic Caminos** in the UK and Ireland, meaning that pilgrims from these places can walk a local route and still meet the **minimum 100km walking** route needed to earn their **Compostela**.

Major Cities and Sights

- Ferrol (home to charming Museo Naval).
- Lambre River Estuary (offering views over Galician countryside).
- A Coruña (known for the Hercules Tower, a UNESCO World Heritage).
- Mariñas Gardens (historic, lush gardens).

Nearest Airports

- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want a more rural walk
- People who want to walk in solitude
- People who want a shorter walk
- People who want to complete a shorter route

LE PUY CAMINO



The Le Puy Camino, or **Via Podiensis**, is one of the main pilgrimage routes through **France**. The Le Puy route is stunning and boasts spectacular views of volcanic landscapes and stunning countryside.

Pilgrims start in Le Puy en Velay in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, with its famous Cathédrale Notre-Dame du Puy where pilgrims can be blessed before starting their walk. The route goes from the **high plateau** of the Massif Central, dropping to follow the **valley of the River Lot** passed a series of **fairytale villages**. Crossing the Tarn and the Adour rivers, the track then enters the rich undulating expanses of Gascony before finally arriving at the Basque village of **St-Jean-Pied-de-Port, the beginning of the famous Camino Frances**.

Major Cities and Sights

- Le Puy-en-Velay (home of a famous hermitage atop an inactive volcano).
- Conques
- Estaing
- Cahors (a beautiful town in the Lot Valley).
- Scenery around the Pyrenees (with striking red roofed villages).

Nearest Airports

- Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG)
- Paris-Orly Airport (ORY)
- Lyon-Saint Exupéry Airport (LYS)
- Rodez-Marcillac Airport (RDZ)
- Toulouse-Blagnac Airport (TLS)
- Bordeaux-Mérignac Airport (BOD)
- Pau-Pyrenees Airport (PUF)
- Biarritz-Merignac Airport (BIQ)

Ideal For

- People who want a mountainous walk
- People who want a more rural walk
- People who are foodies

VIA DE LA PLATA



SEVILLE



THE CAMINO



SALAMANCA

The Via de la Plata stretches across Spain from Seville in the heart of **Andalusia** all the way to Santiago de Compostela, moving up the Iberian peninsula and through centuries of **pilgrim history**. There are many names given to the Via de la Plata. One is the **Camino Mozárabe, or Mozarabic Way** of St James, because of its connections to Moorish history.

Pilgrims start out from Seville and head north through the region of **Extremadura**. Along the way they will pass notable Spanish cities including Salamanca and Zamora. The Via de la Plata also runs through large stretches of the 'Meseta', a **flat plateau** with few settlements or forestry stretching for hundreds of kilometres across the middle of Spain.

Major Cities and Sights

- Seville (rich in Islamic history and architecture, is also renowned for its Flamenco music and dance).
- Merida (founded by the Romans in the 1st Century).
- Salamanca (a Baroque-influenced city with good food options).
- Zamora (the best-preserved Romanesque city in Europe).
- Ourense (small city with the notable San Rosendo Monastery).

Nearest Airports

- Seville Airport (SVQ)
- Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport (MAD)
- Valladolid Airport (VLL)
- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want to walk in solitude
- People who want mostly flat roads
- People who want a more rural walk
- People seeking a more introspective journey due to fewer pilgrims

CAMINO FINISTERRE



Located in the western-most part of Galicia is Cape Finisterre. Overlooking the rough waters of the Atlantic, it is easy to see why this was once considered **the end of the world**. The Camino Finisterre is the ultimate way to experience a feeling of a **total end to your walk**.

Pilgrims head west out of **Santiago de Compostela** (this is the only route that starts in the city) and passes quiet farmland until they reach the rugged coast. After finishing your Camino to Finisterre you can walk a little more and make it to **Muxía**, a coastal village with rich history and beautiful legends.

On this Camino, you will not be eligible for a Pilgrim Certificate as it goes out of Santiago. However, pilgrims have the opportunity to earn two additional certificates: the **Finisterre Certificate** and the **Muxía Certificate**. These unofficial honors recognize those who complete the **extended journeys** to Cape Finisterre and the coastal town of Muxía, celebrating their dedication and achievement in reaching these significant milestones beyond Santiago de Compostela.



Major Cities and Sights

- Cee (quiet seaside village with nice beaches)
- Cape Finisterre (rugged coastline with a stunning lighthouse).
- Muxia (fishing village with great seafood options)



Nearest Airports

- Santiago-Rosalía de Castro Airport (SCQ)

Ideal For

- People who want to walk with others
- People who want a more rural walk
- People who want a hillier walk
- People who want to complete a shorter route

CAMINO ROUTES COMPARISON CHART

	OTHER WALKERS	AMENITIES	MODE	TERRAIN	DISTANCE	LANDSCAPES	GREAT FOR
FRANCES							
PORTUGUES							
POR. COASTAL							
NORTE							
NOR. COASTAL							
PRIMITIVO							
INVIERNO							
INGLES							
LE PUY							
VIA DE LA PLATA							
FINISTERRE							



OUR CAMINO PACKAGES AND
CUSTOMISATION OPTIONS

SELF GUIDED TOURS

Many of our clients prefer the freedom and **flexibility** of self-guided tours, allowing them to embark on their own unique **adventure**. With **personalized** routes and the invaluable expertise of our team, we help make your Camino unforgettable.

These tours include the following features:



Bed and Breakfast in Hand-Picked Accommodation. Our team works with the best suppliers along the Camino to give clients the most authentic experience possible. Accommodation is available at different price points and levels of amenity. Breakfast is typically light, continental options such as fruit, yoghurts, and pastries.

Our Holiday or Pilgrim Information Pack. This is split between digital information in the Client Area and items posted to your address or to your 1st accommodation. Online you can access Walking Notes, Vouchers for your accommodation and meals, and general information. You will be posted a luggage tag, a Pilgrim's Passport (if your route is at least 100km long) and a paper guidebook (if walking a complete route of the Camino).



Virtual Face-to-Face Pre-Departure Briefing. This gives general information on packing, fitness training, and answers common questions about the Camino.

Follow the Camino App and 24/7 Emergency Line. The Follow the Camino app, keeps all your trip details at your fingertips, including your route, accommodations, and included services. It also provides direct access to our 24/7 emergency line for any questions or issues during your journey. Our team is always here to support you!



All clients can customise their self-guided tour package to include features such as:



Luggage Transfers from Hotel to Hotel. Many clients include this in their package. Luggage is collected each morning at the previous night's accommodation and dropped off at the next accommodation that afternoon. This means clients only have to carry a light day backpack each day, making walking much more comfortable.



Accommodation Upgrades. See more under 'Accommodation on the Camino'.



Airport Pick-Ups and Drop-Offs. Local taxi services can collect clients from the nearest airport at any time and bring them to their night's accommodation.



Additional Nights' Stay. Certain cities along the Camino routes warrant extra time to visit and see the local sights.



Day Tours to Local Sites of Interest. Clients can choose from a range of day tours from their Camino to visit exciting cities, cultural highlights, and historical hotspots.



Dinners. Clients can arrange to have evening meals booked by Follow the Camino, anything from dining at local tavernas up to renowned, Michelin-starred restaurants. (This might not be available at every town).

*Certain self-guided packages will contain additional features, depending on the tour.



GUIDED & GROUP TOURS

While most clients prefer self-guided travel for flexibility in dates, routes, and extra days, others opt for guided group tours or private guides. Whether to learn about the cultural history of the Camino, or with a preference for **travelling with others** for a more connected pilgrimage, walking the Camino with a knowledgeable, multilingual guide is an excellent experience. These tours include the following features:



Experienced Bilingual Guide. Follow the Camino's guides are experts, getting the latest information from locals, and sharing personal stories from their experiences.

Hand-Picked Accommodation. Our team works with the best suppliers along the Camino to give clients the most authentic experience possible. Accommodation is available at different price, points and levels of amenity.



Luggage Transfers from Hotel to Hotel. Luggage is collected each morning at the previous night's accommodation and dropped off at the next accommodation that afternoon. This means clients only have to carry a light day backpack each day.

Breakfasts and Dinners Each Day. Clients can enjoy a light continental breakfast at or near their accommodation each morning, and will be booked into authentic restaurants and bars for dinner each evening.



Our Holiday or Pilgrim Information Pack. This is split between digital information in the Client Area and items mailed to your address. Online you can access Walking Notes, Vouchers for your accommodation and meals, and general information. You will be posted a luggage tag, a Pilgrim's Passport (if your route is at least 100km long) and a paper guidebook (if walking a complete route of the Camino).

Virtual Face-to-Face Pre-Departure Briefing. This gives general information on packing, fitness training, and answers common questions about the Camino.



Follow the Camino App and 24/7 Emergency Line. The Follow the Camino app, keeps all your trip details at your fingertips, including your route, accommodations, and included services. It also provides direct access to our 24/7 emergency line for any questions or issues during your journey. Our team is always here to support you!

All clients can customise their guided tour package to include features such as:



Accommodation Upgrades (only for private groups). See more under 'Accommodation on the Camino'.



Airport Pick-Ups and Drop-Offs. Local taxi services can collect clients from the nearest airport at any time and bring them to their night's accommodation.



Additional Nights' Stay. Certain cities along the Camino routes warrant extra time to visit and see the local sights.



Day Tours to Local Sites of Interest. Clients can choose from a range of day tours from their Camino to visit exciting cities, cultural highlights, and historical hotspots.



All large walking holiday group bookings can be handled for up to 70 people. Follow the Camino can also manage individual payments online or over the phone.

Our team also offers charities and schools the free creation and sharing of marketing on our social media channels and website, as well as pre-departure information talks.



ACCOMMODATION ON THE CAMINO

Follow the Camino offers various types of accommodation to fit everyone's needs and budget. Most of our packages are available at the following prices and levels of amenity:

DELUXE

Private rooms with a private bathroom, primarily in **4 and 5 star** accommodation, including **luxury** hotels and 'paradores' in historic buildings or any other boutique hotels / charming rural houses.

COMFORT

Private rooms with a private bathroom, including hotels, guest houses and rural accommodations

BUDGET

Private rooms with private or shared bathroom, usually in 1-star hotels or 'pensiones'. This varies depending on the size of the town the accommodation is in.

HOSTEL

Shared dormitories with shared bathrooms, called 'albergues'. These are usually split by gender.

These different types of accommodation can be mixed within a single travel itinerary, giving clients more flexibility on price and comfort across their walking holiday adventure.



The types of room are typically split by:



Single rooms
which contain
at least a single
bed.



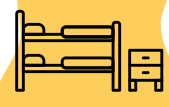
Twin rooms
which contain
at least 2 single
beds.



Double rooms
which contain a
double bed or 2
single beds
joined together.



Triple rooms
which have a
double bed (or
2 singles) and
another single.



Dorms
1 bed in a
shared room.
Usually bunk
beds.

The services available in our accommodation options, regardless of the tour, include:

- Wifi in almost every accommodation.
- Towels and toiletries in accommodation with ensuite bathrooms. In hostel accommodation, towels and toiletries are not usually included.
- Laundry - Spa - Swimming pool - Heating - AC are available in some accommodations.
- English speaking staff are available in most places.
- Most larger accommodation options (often hotels) have a luggage storage room.





PLANNING YOUR
CAMINO

BUILDING YOUR FITNESS FOR THE CAMINO

Anyone can walk the Camino, as long as you adapt your pace and choose the right trip for you. While the Camino is accessible to all, a bit of **preparation** can enhance your experience and reduce the chances of injury, ensuring you enjoy the journey to its fullest. The training you undertake also depends on which stage of the Camino you are planning to walk and how long you are going to walk for. A good time to get your programme started is about **3 months before your journey**.

The Camino 12-Week Walking Plan

WEEK	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday	Terrain
1	30 min	30 min	1 hour	 Flat
2	45 min	30 min	2 hours	 Flat
3	45 min	45 min	3 hours	 Flat
4	1 hour	Strength	3 hours	 Flat
5	1 hour	Strength	4 hours	 Gentle Hills
6	1 hour	Strength	5 hours	 Gentle Hills
7	1-2 hours	Strength	5 hours	 Gentle Hills
8	1-2 hours	Strength	3-4 hours	 Hilly
9	1-2 hours	Strength	6 hours	 Gentle Hills
10	1-2 hours	Strength	5 hours	 Hilly
11	1-2 hours	Strength	6 hours	 Hilly
12	1-2 hours	Strength		

This Camino training plan was designed with rebalance physiotherapy to prepare you for walking the Camino de Santiago.

Please stay safe and visit a physiotherapist if you need more assistance with getting physically ready for the Camino.

The Camino 12-Week Strength and Stability Plan

Easy	Week 1-4	Week 5-8	Week 8-12
Toe Taps	10x2	15x2	15x3
Bridge	10x2	15x2	15x3
Squat	10x2	15x2	15x3
Hip Hinge	10x2	15x2	15x3
Calf Stretch	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec
Quad Stretch	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec
Spinal Twist	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec

Medium	Week 1-4	Week 5-8	Week 8-12
Flutter	10x2	15x2	15x3
Single Leg Bridge	10x2	15x2	15x3
Squat	10x2	15x2	15x3
Single Leg Hip Hinge	10x2	15x2	15x3
Calf Stretch	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec
Quad Stretch	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec
Spinal Twist	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec

Hard	Week 1-4	Week 5-8	Week 8-12
Flutter	10x2	15x2	15x3
Foam Roller Bridge	10x2	15x2	15x3
Bulgarian Squat	10x2	15x2	15x3
Single Hip Hinge on Pillow	10x2	15x2	15x3
Calf Stretch	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec
Quad Stretch	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec
Spinal Twist	30 sec	30 sec	30 sec

Tips to Make your Camino Training Easier



Start as soon as you can. The more training you do, the better you will feel when out on the Camino.



Transform everyday tasks into **training opportunities**! Walk home from a bus stop 5-10km away or stroll to the store on weekends instead of driving. These small changes keep you active, motivated, and give a great sense of achievement. No excuses needed!



Combine flat and hilly **terrain** in your walks to boost endurance and strengthen your leg muscles, preparing you for varied landscapes.



Gradually increase the **distances** you are walking. You don't need to do this on every walk, but at least once a week.



Wear new **walking shoes** or **hiking boots** as much as possible to ensure they are well broken in before your Camino.



Use an app or fitness gadget to **track your progress** and keep you motivated as you see the number of steps you walk add up.



Choose different **routes**. This is so you don't get bored, and it will also help you to prepare for different types of terrain.



Pick a **time** of day that suits your schedule. This will make it easier to stick to your Camino training.



Listen to your body when walking. For example, if your shoes are pinching next time you wear them use a blister plaster or try different socks.



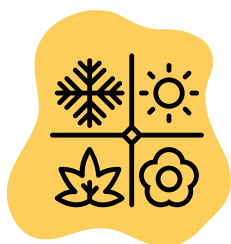
Walk with a **friend**. This lets you spend time with a friend catching up while also getting your Camino training in.



Find a **walking group**. Have a quick search online to find one near you. It's also a great way to meet other people that have similar interests.

PACKING FOR YOUR CAMINO TRIP

What you pack for the Camino will vary depending on:



The season of the year that you travel. For example, if you walk the Camino between November and March, temperatures can be cold with rain from time to time, so you'll need more clothing layers, and proper rain gear and waterproof shoes. Every trip has its own "seasonality," and you can check our weather map for current conditions to help you prepare accordingly.

Your trip duration. plays a crucial role in determining how much you need to pack. If you're carrying all your belongings, aim to keep your bag to about 10% of your body weight. It may seem like little, but remember you'll have it on your shoulders for 5-6 hours a day. If you're using a baggage transport service, you can pack more, but be considerate of your bag handler—there's no need to bring everything you own! Keep your packing efficient for a comfortable journey.



The type of accommodation you're staying in. If staying in albergues (hostels), you'll need some specific items (such as bed liner, sleeping bag and towel) that you won't need if you decide to book accommodation in advance. A private bathroom in more up-market accommodation is more convenient, so you won't need to pack some toiletries or a personal towel.

The ideal list for a 3-6 day walking itinerary includes:

- 2 short sleeved shirts.
- 1 long sleeve shirt.
- Fleece for cooler weather.
- 2 pairs of gym leggings.
- 3 changes of underwear.
- 4 changes of socks. Ideally synthetic or merino wool.
- Women: 1 hiking bra, for extra comfort and support.



Opt for quick-drying, lightweight fabrics and avoid cotton, as it traps moisture against the skin, causing chafing and taking longer to dry after washing.

Click [here](#) to access our ultimate packing list.

It's good to carry lightweight rain gear. This applies to most routes during most seasons.

- 1 pair of waterproof convertible hiking trousers with zip-off legs.
- 1 poncho. During Summer months, a light poncho can be more than enough
- A waterproof jacket / raincoat if you're travelling in any other season than Summer.
- Foil survival blankets for when you need full body coverage from the rain.

CHOOSING A BACKPACK

What you pack for the Camino will vary depending on:

COMFORT

Ensure your backpack is comfortable and **test it with weight in it**. As the majority of the weight lies on your shoulders and hips, ensure your backpack has a **padded hip strap** and good, **wide shoulder straps**. Your gender and hip build will play a role. For more stability, your backpack should have a rigid back frame. The Camino can get very hot, so a good ventilation system on your backpack is also important.

QUALITY

You want your backpack to last for many hikes to come. Some manufacturers even offer **lifelong repairs** if you buy their backpacks. Plus, having a good quality backpack for many years is more **sustainable** for the environment.

WEIGHT

You don't want the backpack itself adding too much extra weight to your walk. **Test** your backpack with some **weight** in it in-store to ensure it fits correctly. Most gear shops will let you put some heavy products into the bag to get the feel of it.

SIZE

It is important to keep in mind the **distances** you plan to hike and how long your overall journey will be here. Bag volume is usually **measured in litres**. These estimates can help you plan for what backpack you need:

- Day Hike: 10-15 L
- 1-3 nights: 15-35 L
- 3-5 nights: 35-50 L: It might not seem like a lot but the bigger the bag, the more you will put in and the more you will carry every day. 35L is ideal, a bit more if you feel you need it and cannot select items strictly enough.



If you opt for the luggage transfer service, you'll only need a small backpack to carry the essentials for your day on the Camino. Your main luggage will be waiting for you at your next accommodation.

SELECTING SHOES TO WEAR

Your shoes need to **fit the walk** that you are doing. **Terrain** will have an impact on what you choose, as will the **time of year** that you walk the Camino. Here is our recommendation on the type of footwear that is likely to be the most appropriate for the main Camino Routes:







					
	TREK SANDALS	SNEAKERS OR RUNNERS	TRAIL RUNNERS	TREK SHOES	HIKING BOOTS
CAMINO FRANCES SECTION 1	👎	👎	👍	👍👍	👍
CAMINO FRANCES SECTION 8	👍	👍	👍👍	👍👍	👍
CAMINO PORTUGUES SECTION 8	👍	👍	👍👍	👍👍	👍
CAMINO DEL NORTE	👎	👎	👍👍	👍👍	👍👍
LE PUY CAMINO	👍	👎	👍	👍👍	👍👍
VIA DE LA PLATA	👍	👎	👍👍	👍👍	👎
CAMINO PRIMITIVO	👎	👍	👍👍	👍	👍

Recommended shoes features to look for:







- A breathable / flexible upper part.
- Lightweight overall.
- Low heels that aren't flared.
- Contoured footbed.
- Wide toe box.
- Deep heel cup for ankle stability.
- Arch support if needed.

Here are the pros and cons of your different shoe options:







Sneakers / Runners

 Lightweight	The sole will be worn down 
 Good for 1 week of walking	Not great on rougher terrain 
 We all have a comfortable pair	Low ankle support 






Trail Runners

 Lightweight	If waterproof, can be very warm for your feet during Summer 
 Good all-rounder with decent ankle support	Not great on rougher terrain 
 Great to use after the walk	Low ankle support 

Trek Shoes

 Great all-rounder with great ankle support	Heavy (though this depends on the model) 
 Can be waterproof	Great for some of the Camino but can be too heavy for easier or shorter routes 
 Will be suitable for all the Camino routes	
 Suitable as a dress shoe option too	

Hiking Boots

 Comes in waterproof	Heavy (though this depends on the model) 
 Great ankle support for hilly parts	Great for some of the Camino but can be too heavy for easier or shorter routes 
 You might already have a pair	

BRINGING THE RIGHT ACCESSORIES

Here is a list of **items to bring** on your Camino journey you will likely need that won't add unnecessary weight:



First Aid Kit and Foot Care: Prescription medications - Compeed - Painkillers - Moleskin tape - Elastic bandages - Needles and thread - Antiseptic cream - Plasters - Tape - Bottle of talcum powder - Hand sanitizer - Vaseline - Tweezers - Hayfever tablets - Bug spray (for Summer) - Multivitamin tablets.



Toiletries: Toothpaste - Toothbrush - Dental floss - Soap - Sun cream SPF 30 or higher - Moisturiser - Comb - Shaving cream and razor - Toilet paper or tissues.



Walking Accessories: Cap or hat (to ensure that your ears are covered from the sun) - Sunglasses - Walking poles - Lightweight water bottle or bladder pack - Hiking headlamp or small torch for use in hostels or walking in the dark - Guidebook and Walking Notes.



Electronics: A smartphone (Bringing one can be very useful as it can be used as a camera, book reader, music player, GPS, for personal safety, and as a torch) - An EU plug socket adaptor - A battery pack - Earphones.



Documentation: Your passport or National Identity Card - Credit / debit card and cash (Euros €) - Driver's Licence, in case you decide to hire a car to get to and from your route or if you want to explore more of Spain before or after your Camino - International Medical Insurance or European Health Insurance Card - Camino Passport.



Other Accessories: Ear plugs - Small waterproof ziplock document bag for documents - Lightweight dry bag to protect clothes or electronics from the rain - Clothes pegs (or safety pins) for hanging up laundry - Energy Bars - Powdered drink mix - A book, or a diary / journal - Playing cards - Camera - Binoculars.

CHECKING THE WEATHER ON THE CAMINO

Weather on the Camino can vary depending on the route and the season. Most of the Camino routes run through the **northern part of Spain**. The weather in northern Spain is **oceanic**, characterised by soft winters, not too hot summers, and scattered rainfall. You typically experience an average of 1,584-2,223 hours of sunshine per year. So even during winter days you can have cold but shining sun. This makes for **near-perfect walking weather!**

SEASONS ON THE CAMINO



Spring: March, April, May

Spring is one of the **most popular** seasons to go on the Camino. Temperatures slowly get warmer as the season progresses; it goes from an average of 13°C (55°F) in March to 18°C (64°F) in the month of May. The days still have a tendency to be half rainy and half sunny.

Summer: June, July, August

Summer is a **peak time** on the Camino. In general, from June to August it can be very warm in Spain. However, in northern Spain it can be cooler than in the rest of the country, averaging around 25°C (77°F). The sun is shining for a majority of the days every month. However, around Sarria and inland Galicia in particular there is a higher chance of rain.



Autumn: September, October, November

Autumn is also a **very popular** season to go on the Camino. Temperatures cool to around 23°C (73°F) in September, 18°C (64°F) in October, and 13°C (55°F) in November. As the temperatures drop, there is also a higher chance of rain along the route.

Winter: December, January, February

Walking the Camino in winter can be very **challenging** due to the cold conditions, and even snow and ice. In winter, the probability of rain is very high and temperatures on the Camino average 6°C (43°F), with lows of -1°C (30°F).



For up-to-date weather information, including forecasts and conditions along your route, please visit our [weather map](#) on our website.

WHY BOOK WITH US?

At Follow the Camino, we are not just a tour operator; we are **passionate Camino enthusiasts** who have been guiding pilgrims **since 2007**. As the **first tour operator in Ireland** to coordinate walks on the **Camino de Santiago**, we offer unrivaled expertise in designing life-changing adventures.

We Care about the Camino, the Future, and Our Planet

At Follow the Camino, **our mission** is clear: *to organise sustainable and seamless active holidays that our clients love. We want our clients to make incredible memories without impacting the planet, the communities we affect, and the future of green and inclusive travel.*



We are proud to be **B-Corp certified**, a recognition that reinforces our **commitment to social and environmental responsibility**. This certification, along with our ongoing efforts to **offset carbon emissions** and promote **sustainable practices**, reflects our ambition to be the most **eco-friendly** and sustainable Camino de Santiago travel company in the world. We want to continue providing unforgettable holidays, sustainably, for many years to come.

Another sign of our commitment is **winning first prize** for **'Transnational Culture and Heritage Tourism'** at the ECTN Awards 2024. This recognizes our work developing the **Camino Portugués Coastal hiking route**, and our dedication to supporting local communities and preserving their cultural heritage along the way.



"Organising walking holidays is complex and challenging. Our experience and love for what we do makes it".

Umberto Di Venosa

Founder and CEO of Follow the Camino

We Don't Just Say It... Our Clients Say It Best!

We have earned the **2024 Traveler's Choice Award** on **TripAdvisor**, where our clients regularly praise us for providing seamless service, expert guidance, and unforgettable Camino journeys. With hundreds of **glowing reviews**, we are proud to be recognized for our attention to detail and commitment to creating the **perfect Camino experience** for each traveler.

Here are some of the reviews we've received:



Tripadvisor
Travellers' Choice Awards
Winner 2024

Follow The Camino



Reviews from millions of Tripadvisor travellers
place this winner in the top 10% worldwide.

DONNA P.



I was able to do it my way!

I am SO VERY APPRECIATIVE of the service and arrangements provided by Follow the Camino! From our very first contact, throughout the adventure, they listened to what I wanted; scheduled everything according to plan; helped me have rest/vacation days in the best locations; set daily mileage ranges consistent with my desires; made private room with en suite bathroom reservations at wonderful places; and the overall support was simply amazing. I look forward to working with them on my next adventure!

DIANA P.



Do a Women Only trip with Follow the Camino!

Our guide, Silvia, from follow the Camino (with 57hours) made our trip happen in so many ways! She was AMAZING!! I went solo on a Women only trip. Silvia was there for everyone's needs whether it be an injury or illness, handled it, moved on with the group, with a great attitude! We all became such close friends by the time we reached Cathedral it felt like family.

I can't recommend this trip higher, for the experience of the Camino, for the price and if you're fortunate enough to have Silvia as your guide! Cheers until next time on the Camino! Buen Camino!

GRETA O.



Follow the Camino with an eighty year old

Follow the Camino was excellent. Hotels included dinner and breakfast. Clean and good food. Luggage transfer seamless. Well done.

RANDY R.



Follow the Camino Frances

The Camino Frances was the best vacation experience I've ever had. Fitness, new friends, and fantastic country. Highly recommended.

BUEN CAMINO



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