

THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO PILGRIMAGE ROUTE - MUCH MORE THAN JUST A TRIP THROUGH SPAIN



Cultural interest? Spiritual motives? Adventure? A personal challenge? A different, original way to travel? These are just a few of the reasons why millions of pilgrims have been doing the Camino de Santiago route for years and years. It is a route through Spain that many people find hard to describe and that almost all are keen to repeat.

One thing is for sure. The **Camino de Santiago** is an exciting and unforgettable adventure. It is a different way to discover Northern Spain, by following one of several itineraries whose common goal is the **cathedral** in **Santiago de Compostela, Galicia**, where you will find the tomb of the apostle Santiago (St. James). This network of pilgrimage routes to Santiago gained UNESCO World Heritage status in 1993. But why take the time to do the Camino? Have you ever wondered what is so special about this journey through inland Spain? Why does it attract thousands of people year after year?

The motivations that drive each pilgrim to put on a good pair of boots, sling a rucksack over his or her shoulder, and start walking, are widely varied. There are almost as many reasons for doing the Camino as there are people out there walking it. Mostly, however, it is a combination of personal challenge, time for getting to know oneself, interest in history, art, nature and sport.

Many people approach the Camino as an adventure. They are not mistaken. Year after year pilgrims cover hundreds of miles on foot, by bicycle or on horseback, on trails running through stunning landscapes and hidden, isolated villages, where time seems to have come to a standstill. No day is the same on this long journey, which is sub-divided into manageable stages and is signposted all the way. Equipped with no more than a rucksack and a few basic supplies, pilgrims are challenged by the difficulties that arise along the route. Once they have completed the journey and reached Santiago, all pilgrims agree on one thing: that the effort has been well worthwhile.

In touch with nature

Doing the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route provides an opportunity to discover landscapes full of contrast, with plateaus and mountains, meadows and coastline. Different areas of countryside unfold one after another from start to finish. On the route you will find national parks and exceptional ecological areas: the peaks of the **Pyrenees**; the banks of the River Ebro, with their fertile vegetable gardens; the broad plains of **Castile-Leon**, with their fields of cereal crops; climbs to lofty mountain passes; the green meadows and pastureland of Galicia and **Asturias**. Areas of stunning natural beauty, where pilgrims feel at one with the countryside as they continue their journey towards the Galician capital. Surrounded by these picture postcard landscapes, walkers can relax completely, forgetting about their day-to-day routine. The mind runs free. There is only the route, the countryside and plenty of time for reflection.

The chance to discover Spanish culture

You will find a surprise in the form of art, culture and monuments around almost every corner on the Camino de Santiago. On the way you will come across cathedrals, bridges, Roman roads, monasteries, palaces, stately homes, traditional regional architecture... thousands of buildings, priceless each and every one. Besides discovering this rich historic heritage, you will also have the opportunity to take part in the region's fiestas and experience the folklore and local cuisine. You can be sure that no other journey enables travellers to immerse themselves so completely in the real life of the region.

Self-discovery

For many people, the Camino de Santiago has a mystical element. This is for a good reason - its origins are religious: a tribute to the apostle Santiago (St. James). In any case, apart from devotion to the saint, many pilgrims set out on the Camino inspired by a different kind of spirituality, which manifests itself in the need to find out more about oneself, to find the answers to certain personal questions and to discover inner peace. For many, this journey through Spain also becomes an inner journey, where each person can get to know himself or herself better. This is an experience that will stay with you for years to come.

Get to know all kinds of people

Pilgrims are never strangers on the route. You will meet friendly, hospitable folk. People you have never seen before might even offer you a place to stay in their houses. On this very special trip through Spain, you will also share extraordinary experiences with pilgrims of all ages, from all over the world, whether in the hostels, on the trails or out on the road. You will have the chance to make new friends and become a better person.

Whatever your motives, it is clear that doing the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route will be a highly rewarding experience. Come and try it for yourself. You will be captivated by the unique magic of this special route through Northern Spain.

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YES

NO

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Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela

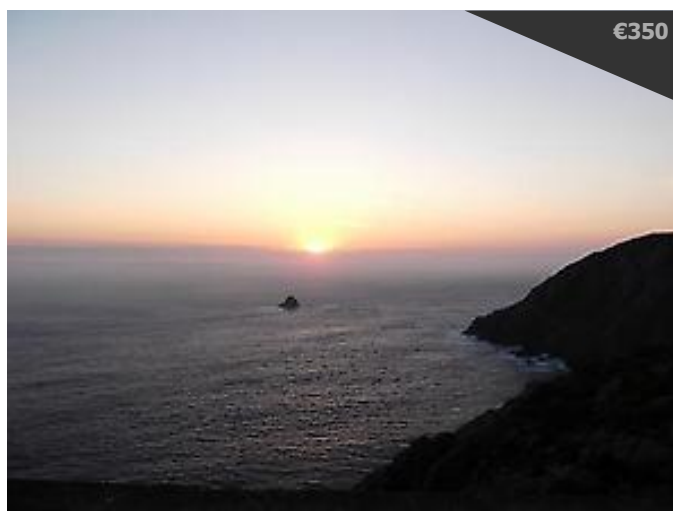


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CAMINO DE SANTIAGO: THE LAST 100 KILOMETERS

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Gilda Niles · Universidad de las calles

Coming to Galicia September 2016 with a group of friends. Would like to get advise on getting around the entire area. Like to get a driver and stay in Santiago de Compostela as the primary point of interest.

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Hello Gilda. I enclose links. Regards.

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Sharon Williamson Estes · Universidad de Cincinnati

Has anyone done the Camino de Santiago (in northern Spain), leading to Galicia's cathedral and the tomb of the Apostle St. James? I'd be interested in your experience, recommendations and/or advice. This trip is on my bucket list! Thanks.

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Hello Sharon. Te deputy interesting links where you can get all the information. regards

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