

SPAIN

Camino de Santiago

A Self-Guided Walking Adventure





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Travel Style

Our Self-Guided Walking Adventures are ideal for travelers with an independent spirit who enjoy exploring at their own pace. We provide authentic accommodations, luggage transfers, and some meals, along with comprehensive Route Notes, detailed maps, and 24-hour emergency assistance. This gives you the freedom to focus on the things that matter to you—no group, no guide, and no set schedule to stand in the way of enjoying your adventure, your way.



Overview

This unique itinerary was carefully crafted to walk the highlights of the Camino de Santiago—the Way of St. James—the ancient pilgrims’ route to the city of Santiago de Compostela in Spain’s northwestern corner. From all over Europe, a network of pathways led to the medieval “ends of the earth” where the remains of St. James were brought, one of Christianity’s earliest and most important pilgrimages. Your route is a condensed version of the Camino Francés—the French Way that traces 500 miles from the Pyrenees on the border of France and Spain through seven Spanish provinces. Each footstep touches history on this legendary trail—including medieval monasteries and the UNESCO World Heritage sites of the cathedrals of Burgos and Santiago—and traverses diverse landscapes of Basque mountain villages, the vineyards of Rioja, hilltop towns of Castile and León, and the lush pastures of Galicia. Spanish hospitality, always gracious, is heightened by camaraderie along the Way—inviting inns, a resort, and boutique hotels are combined in a deluxe inn-to-inn experience, along with some of Spain’s freshest local food and wine.



Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Arrival in Pamplona. Transfer to Roncesvalles

You are met in Pamplona by a representative who transports you northwest to the tiny town of Roncesvalles, nestled just under the Ibañeta Pass, the crossing of the Pyrenees between France and Spain. A feeling of anticipation and excitement is palpable in this hamlet that was purpose-built as a waypoint on the Camino: this is the first stop in Spain for those pilgrims, peregrinos in Spanish, who began the Camino Francés in St. Jean Pied de Port, France. Surrounded by tranquil forest, the route actually passes through your historic hotel complex, a former ecclesiastical residence. In addition to its significance with the Camino, Roncesvalles was also the site of the battle between Charlemagne and the Basque tribes who defeated him and killed the legendary Roland in 778.

Hotel Roncesvalles, Roncesvalles

This historic hotel in a beautifully renovated 18th-century former ecclesiastical residence was one of the original hostels, or *hospitales*, built along the Camino de Santiago to shelter pilgrims. Still owned by the church, the Camino actually traverses the structure and its surrounding grounds and extensive outbuildings. The careful renovation preserved the wood floors, beams, and exposed stone and has been artfully combined with modern chrome fixtures, tile, and minimalist décor and fabrics. The restaurant is the Navarre region's first Slow Food

establishment. Roncesvalles is a tiny town at 3,000 feet, just below the Ibañeta Pass of the Pyrenean border between France and Spain.

DAY 2

Roncesvalles to Bizkarreta; 7.2 miles, easy to moderate, 450-ft. elevation gain and 900-ft. elevation loss

After a copious buffet breakfast, your first steps on the Camino de Santiago literally start at your hotel and lead out through the hamlet of Roncesvalles. With the Pyrenees and the French–Spanish border at your back, the walk descends gradually throughout the day from its starting elevation of 3,000 feet to the town of Bizkarreta, the walk’s end at about 2,500 feet. Passing through a mixed forest and by a Gothic pilgrim’s cross, in a few miles you emerge at the tiny town of Burguete, one main street of Basque-influenced sturdy beamed houses. This is the trout fishing area that Hemingway described in *The Sun Also Rises*. Although you are officially in the Navarra region of Spain, the heavy stone architecture, traditions, and language are strongly influenced by the Basque region to the north and west. You finally come to the town of Bizkarreta, which in the 12th century had a pilgrims’ hostel and was a Camino stopping point, before a 30-minute transfer to your night’s lodging in the vibrant city of Pamplona. With an intriguing old quarter, lovely parks, and main square, the capital of Navarra is of course best known for the running of the bulls through its historic center, which takes place during the San Fermín festival in mid-July.

Palacio Guendulain, Pamplona

An 18th-century aristocratic residence in the heart of Pamplona’s old town, this four-star hotel is perfectly located to discover the historic city on foot. The palace has a fine-dining restaurant featuring updated seasonal Basque cuisine and the Taittinger Bar, in a unique partnership with the French Champagne producer. Spacious plush rooms, with classic décor and colors, overlook the Consejo Square, or the inner courtyard, which houses a unique fountain and collection of antique carriages.



DAY 3

Uterga to Cirauqui; 9.2 miles, easy to moderate, 700-ft. elevation gain and loss

A 20-minute transfer takes you to the start of the day's walk in the town of Uterga. You're still not far from the Pyrenees, but you have passed from an Atlantic-influenced geography to a more

Mediterranean feel of open vistas with olive groves and vineyards. The peaceful small towns you walk through today are built of the region's golden stone, in the late summer matching the hue of the grain fields nearby. From Uterga you come into the village of Muruzábal with its Baroque-era palace, now a wine cellar. Crossing some quiet roads, you enter Puente La Reina, the day's recommended lunch spot, with its 11th-century Romanesque six-arched bridge, built specifically for pilgrims to cross the Arga River. The route departs the town past the 13th-century Santiago church and follows along the right bank of the Arga. After the wine town of Mañeru, one of the Camino's most picturesque views opens up—a trail winding up through vineyards to the hilltop medieval town of Cirauqui. A short and steep ascent leads to the ancient walls surrounding the town and you make your way the San Román church. In Cirauqui, a peaceful, authentic place, there is time for refreshment, perhaps at a small bar, as you await your transfer to a new region. Surrounded by vineyards, with dramatic limestone hills in the distance, your hotel is in the town of Briñas in the wine-producing region of La Rioja. From your historic home, you can stroll along the Ebro River or take a taxi (recommended due to timing; at your own expense) to the neighboring town of Haro—the wine capital of La Rioja—to explore its enticing alleyways, bars, and wine shops.

Señorío de Briñas, Briñas

In the heart of the Rioja wine-making region, this family-owned hotel in a 15th-century *palacio*, (palace) offers simple, individually decorated guest rooms with terra cotta floors, and unique furnishings that create the feel of an authentic country home. In season, you may enjoy a glass of wine on the quaint outdoor patio.

DAY 4

Ermita de Valdefuentes to Ages; 6.3 miles, easy to moderate, 160-ft. elevation gain and 250-ft. elevation loss



This morning an hour transfer brings you to start the walk at a hermitage just off the main Camino path. A gentle climb on a gravel trail soon transitions to a wide, packed forest road. In the past, this remote and isolated wooded plateau was one of the Camino's most dangerous sections—now this forest of pine and oak, habitat of deer, wild boar, and raptors, is a tranquil haven. The route continues past the 11th-century monastery complex of San Juan de Ortega, and then into a forest before arriving at the traditional town of Agés. Nearby is the archaeological site of Atapuerca, recently designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, containing evidence—fossils and stone tools—of the earliest known Hominins in Western Europe, dating to an estimated 1.2 million years ago, and predating the French site of Lascaux. There is time to learn more about this site tomorrow. A short transfer of approximately 30 minutes takes you to the medieval historic heart of Burgos, where you refresh at your hotel before strolling out to choose from the city's many dining options. You have entered the region of Castile and León and have the opportunity to sample the traditional cuisine of this region, named “Spanish Gastronomy Capital” of 2013.

Palacio de los Blasones, Burgos

This 16th-century mansion was artfully restored to combine original exposed stone, arches, and beams with striking contemporary design and décor in its reception lounge, restaurant, bar, and glass-roofed atrium. One of six Spanish candidates for European Capital of Culture in 2016, Burgos has an incredible depth of history, scenic walks along the Arlanza River, and rich gastronomic traditions of the Castile region. Located in the old quarter of Burgos and easily accessible on foot from the hotel are the UNESCO World Heritage site cathedral, the Casa del Cordón palace, the Plaza Mayor main square, the Museum of Human Evolution, and the statue of El Cid.



DAY 5

Castrojeriz to Itero de la Vega; 6.9 miles, easy to moderate, 450-ft. elevation gain and 500-ft. elevation loss

This morning you are free to explore the culturally rich city of Burgos, integral to many key events in Spanish history. Most of the city's sites can be reached easily on foot from your hotel in the

picturesque old quarter. Serving for five centuries as the capital of the joint kingdom of Castile and León, Burgos was long an important stop on the Camino and is also home to one of the jewels of Spanish Gothic art, the Cathedral of Santa María, also a World Heritage site well worth visiting. Another Gothic architectural gem is the Palace of the Constables of Castile—or, in Spanish, *Casa del Cordón*—where Columbus was received by the king after his second voyage to the Americas. A visit to the recently opened (in 2010) Museum of Human Evolution is a must (closed on Monday), especially to learn more about the nearby prehistoric archaeological finds of Atapuerca through fascinating state-of-the-art exhibits (in English). Burgos is also the home town of “El Cid,” the 11th-century warrior and Spanish national hero, who is memorialized on a mounted statue. After this morning's explorations and lunch, you transfer 45 minutes farther along the Camino, where you begin the day's walk at Castrojeriz. This last town in Burgos province was also an important waypoint along the Camino, and once the site of several pilgrim hostels; its hilltop castle ruins attest to its long history. The route this afternoon involves a moderate climb and descent, and features wide-open scenery, with windmills on the far horizon. You make your way to the hamlet of Itero de la Vega, where you are met and transferred about 30 minutes to your home for the evening, a true culinary destination.

Estrella del Bajo Carrión, Villoldo

In a small *pueblo* (village) between the cities of Burgos and León, a three-sister team provides a warm welcome to guests at this hotel, which their father founded over 30 years ago. With a true country-house feel, guest rooms (all with balconies) and common areas are modern and elegant, artfully white with fresh flowers and unique architectural touches. The on-site fine-dining restaurant makes the hotel a weekend destination for foreign and local visitors. Using all local and seasonal ingredients, traditional dishes have light and creative touches, such as grilled octopus with rosemary potatoes and red pepper aioli. Breakfast is

a delight of homemade juices, breads and pastries, and jams of local fruits and berries. In addition to the dining room, the hotel features a library, billiard and wine room, and a willow-shaded terrace for breakfast or drinks al fresco.

DAY 6

Villares de Orbigo to Astorga; 9.2 miles, easy to moderate, 650-ft. elevation gain and 550-ft. elevation loss



A delicious breakfast of homemade baked goods and jams fuels the day—which begins with a 75-90-minute transfer to the trailhead—and the picnic lunch from the kitchen of your last hotel will also be a treat. You enter yet another one of the varied regions on the itinerary—the terrain here has a more Mediterranean feel, with an underlying geology of red stone that supports vineyards and forests of conifers and oak. The oak translates into delicious local hams, as acorns are the preferred diet of pigs. Setting off from the village of Villares de Orbigo, your route leads you through agricultural land to the village of Santibañez. A rolling path ensues through oak and chestnut forest, leading you to the flat top of the range where you are rewarded with views to the north as far as the Cantabrian range. Passing the house of one of the Camino’s modern “hermits,” you soon reach the cross of Saint Turibius, the region’s 5th-century bishop, before descending toward San Justo de la Vega and making your way toward the city of Astorga. In addition to Roman ruins and a fine cathedral, Astorga is perhaps best known for containing one of only three buildings designed by Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí outside Catalonia. The Episcopal Palace was built between 1889 and 1913 and is an example of Gaudí’s distinctive Catalan Modernism style. A transfer takes you to your beautifully renovated historic hotel, with its own antique shop and a magnificent dining room, where you are free to sample a few local specialties or treat yourself to a real feast.

Hostería Camino, Luyego de Somoza

This boutique hotel constructed in a restored home has spacious, individually decorated guest rooms with polished wood floors combining Spanish antiques with exposed beams and brick. Common areas include a fireside living room with inviting couches, a relaxed café for drinks or light fare, and a dramatically lit fine-dining restaurant. An antique shop is also on the premises. Using local and



seasonal ingredients, the hotel's elegant restaurant is especially known for mushrooms prepared traditionally, perhaps sautéed, in soups, crêpes, salads, or with foie gras. Traditional regional dishes accompanied by an extensive wine cellar include lamb, frogs' legs, excellent local ham, and fresh river fish.

DAY 7

Las Herrerías to O Cebreiro; 5.3 miles, moderate, 2,000-ft. elevation gain

A transfer of about two hours brings you west again today to the walk's start in the hamlet of Las Herrerías, and just past it the Barrio de Hospital, which housed a medieval hospital for English pilgrims. As you move toward Galicia, the landscape takes on a more "Celtic" feel; leaving behind Mediterranean vegetation, you are entering countryside that evokes the British Isles—verdant pastures, ancient stones of gray granite. Most of the day's walk is a long uphill, a challenging but important stage for all pilgrims as it leads to the long-awaited for province of Galicia. You are able to warm up on the paved flat terrain of the lush valley alongside a bubbling stream, before beginning the steady ascent. Camaraderie and excitement also grow steadily amongst walkers on this wooded path bordered by moss-covered stone walls and shaded by chestnut trees. After the village of La Faba, where you may choose to have lunch or a drink, the wooded area transitions to wide-open vistas of the forests along the Atlantic coast. The ascent eases up as you reach the village of Laguna de Castilla, also with a bar and hotel, and soon after, you cross the border from the province of León into Galicia. You are rewarded at the conclusion of the walk at the town of O Cebreiro with wonderful open views over Galicia, as well as the Royal Saint Mary's Church, built on the foundations of a pre-Romanesque church. Predating the Camino was a Roman road, and even earlier than that, the *pallozas*—prehistoric stone homes—you see nearby. Your drive down from O Cebreiro toward your next accommodation provides stunning views of the mountains of León, which, depending on the season, might be snowcapped.

Casa Grande da Fervenza, O Corgo

A beautifully restored 17th-century miller's residence within a biosphere reserve is a peaceful haven in the Galician countryside. The hotel grounds and gardens along the river include both an outdoor swimming pool and a river bathing area, and a canoe and bicycles are available for rental. Individually decorated guest rooms feature unique antiques, hand-embroidered linens, polished wood floors, and exposed beams and stone. With an excellent wine selection, the fireside fine-dining restaurant offers updated Galician cuisine from a wood-fired oven, featuring dishes such as suckling pig, lamb, and capon.



DAY 8

Sarria to Ferreiros; 8.1 miles, easy to moderate, 1,000-ft. elevation gain and 150-ft. elevation loss

Although it's your final stage on the Camino de Santiago, for many pilgrims this is their first. From the day's starting point in Sarria, it is 100 kilometers to Santiago de Compostela—the minimum distance completed consecutively to achieve the “Compostela,” the official certification of completion of the pilgrimage. Pilgrims have their Camino “passports” stamped along the way at the major local churches or official hostels. You're likely to meet many walkers and pilgrims today—people from around the globe sharing this long walk and truly creating a unique camaraderie. You begin on the main street and encounter steep stairs that bring you to the town center and the hilltop Convent of Magdalena, dating from the 15th to 18th centuries. The Way then descends to the Rio Pequeño, which you cross over via the medieval Ponte Áspera bridge, and continues through fertile pasture and small vegetable plots. Depending on the season, in Peruscallo you may be able to buy fresh berries from nearby small farms. Your driver meets you in the town of Ferreiros, allowing you to avoid outlying neighborhoods and bringing you into the final stage just at the edge of the city of Santiago de Compostela. You are dropped off at your hotel, where you can refresh before setting off again to find the trail of scallop shells embedded in the cobbled streets, flanked by stone archways, until you arrive at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela—a breathtaking sight both in its



grandeur and in the sense of overwhelming accomplishment it inspires in the walkers and pilgrims who have arrived here from the many Camino routes. The *peregrinos*' final steps lead to the statue of Saint James at the cathedral entrance. You may choose to attend an evening pilgrim mass, although the famous *botafumeiro*—a Galician term for the large incensory suspended from

the ceiling—is only used at the daily noon mass. Construction of this cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage site, began in 1075 over the remains of a pre-Romanesque church. Expansion and embellishment continued from the 16th through the 18th centuries as the cathedral gained importance as an Episcopal see and place of pilgrimage—the third-most-important destination for Christians after Rome and Jerusalem. After the excitement, you might be ready to retire at your hotel in a quiet neighborhood of the historic district. A celebratory drink is in order—the final punctuation to completing a truly fascinating walk through living and ancient history. You can step out later for dinner in Santiago, exploring its intriguing medieval streets and enticing restaurants.

Altair Hotel, Santiago de Compostela

This family-owned-and-operated boutique hotel located in a quiet corner of Santiago de Compostela's historic center has been renovated to seamlessly blend minimalist decor and soothing colors with the building's stone walls and exposed beams. A personal greeting from the owners and a welcome drink in the adjoining garden of a sister property provide an insider feel to the historic pilgrimage destination city of Santiago. The capital of the autonomous region of Galicia, the entire old town has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site for its wealth of historic buildings. Santiago's narrow granite-cobbled streets invite exploration while providing plenty of stopping points at myriad cafés, tapas bars, and restaurants.

DAY 9

Departure from Santiago de Compostela

After breakfast at your hotel, you can depart at your leisure; however it is highly recommended that you spend an additional day or two in this fabulous city. If your schedule permits, you may want to explore the cathedral museum, the open-air market, or join the 12:00 p.m. pilgrim mass (arrive early!) and maybe get a chance to observe the unique and dramatic tradition of the cathedral's *botafumeiro* incensory. You might complete your journey with another exclusive experience by joining a guided tour of the cathedral rooftops.

ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

A NOTE ABOUT TRANSFERS

The Camino de Santiago itinerary has been designed to capture the highlights of this well-known pilgrimage route that in total extends over 500 miles in northern Spain. In order to cover this distance over seven diverse regions, focus on the key cultural and historic locales, and stay in perfectly paired accommodations, daily transfers have been integrated to transport you to each walk's start and from each walk's end. Ranging from 20 minutes to two hours, the scheduled transfers allow you time to see even more of the countryside and—combined with Spain's long days—still permit a very relaxed schedule. Please note that our local drivers may only have a limited command of English. While they are friendly and professional, they are by no means intended to be your guides. Country Walkers assures you that the tour logistics have been carefully crafted to bring you a unique experience, achieving a balance between prime walking, accommodation, and dining and a minimum of driving as well as ample free time over the entire length of this historic route. Therefore, the transfers, which are scheduled well in advance, cannot be changed while on tour.

A NOTE ABOUT THE “COMPOSTELA”

According to the pilgrim's office, the requirements to be eligible for the “Compostela,” the official certification of completion of the pilgrimage, is to walk (or ride a horse) the last 100 km (or bike the last 200 km) of the pilgrimage route, continuously. In other words, one must complete stages 27 through 31 from around Sarria to Santiago de Compostella on foot, which takes approximately 5 days. A system of passport and stamps is in place to assist pilgrims in finding affordable accommodations: being in possession of a passport with stamps allows pilgrims to get preferential rates at the *albergues* along the way and some *albergues* only host pilgrims with a passport. The passport and stamps are also a way for pilgrims to track their journey and show the passport officials that they have met the requirements to obtain the “Compostela” when arriving in Santiago. Pilgrims can obtain a passport at the

passport office next door to the hotel in Roncesvalles; however, given the true purpose of the passport and stamps, they are not freely given to any visitor to the region. Stamps are collected along the way, in churches, police stations or hostels. When getting closer to Santiago, stamps are given in more locations with less strict requirements. **Please note that the Country Walkers itinerary offers a glimpse of this fascinating route but does not meet the requirements, and cannot be altered, to obtain either the passport, stamps, or the “Compostela.”**

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Here’s just one example that highlights our sustainable practices:

Assisting Pilgrims on The Way: Every year, over 200,000 pilgrims walk the various routes of the Camino de Santiago. Coming from all corners of the world—with diverse needs, expectations, and reasons for walking—these travelers require lots of care from their host country. The Federación Española de Asociaciones de Amigos del Camino de Santiago (Spanish Federation of Associations of Friends of the Camino de Santiago) coordinates a vast national network of hostels, volunteers, parishes, churches, and shelters in an effort to keep pilgrims safe, healthy, and informed about their journey. Along with organizing and managing shelters along the many routes, they train volunteers, petition for the upkeep of sections of the path, and produce publications relating to The Way. Country Walkers is proud to support the Burgos Association of Friends of the Camino de Santiago and their efforts on behalf of every Camino de Santiago guest.

Itinerary Overview

PLEASE NOTE: your detailed Route Notes will be mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure. While these Route Notes may list a number of accommodation options, **your specific accommodations are listed below.** Please make sure to bring this Itinerary Overview with you.

STARTING POINT

Pamplona, Spain, based upon individual arrival times

NIGHT 1

Hotel Roncesvalles

Calle Nuestra Señora de Roncesvalles, 14

31650 Roncesvalles

Spain

Tel 011 34 948 76 01 05

Email info@hotelroncesvalles.com

hotelroncesvalles.com

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHT 2

Palacio Guendulain

Calle de la Zapatería, 53

31001 Pamplona

Spain

Tel 011 34 948 22 55 22

Email info@palacioguendulain.com

palacioguendulain.com

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHT 3

Señorío de Briñas

Travesía de la Calle Real, 3

26290 Briñas

Spain

Tel 011 34 941 30 42 24

Email info@hotelesconencantodelarioja.com

hotelesconencantodelarioja.com

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHT 4

Palacio de los Blasones

Calle de Fernán González, 6–10

9003 Burgos

Spain

Tel 011 34 947 271 000

Email repcionpb@ricehotelsburgos.com

hotelricepalaciodelosblasones.com

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHT 5

Estrella del Bajo Carrión

Calle Mayor, 32

34131 Villoldo

Spain

Tel 011 34 979 82 70 05

Email info@estrellabajocarrion.com

estrellabajocarrion.com

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

NIGHT 6

Hostería Camino

Calle Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, s/n

24717 Luyego de Somoza

Spain

Tel 011 34 987 60 17 57

Email informacion@hosteriacamino.com

hosteriacamino.com

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

NIGHT 7

Casa Grande da Fervenza

Carretera Lugo-Páramo, Km.11

27163 O Corgo

Spain

Tel 011 34 982 15 06 10

Email info@fervenza.com

fervenza.com

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

NIGHT 8

Altair Hotel

Rúa dos Loureiros, 12
15704 Santiago de Compostela

Spain

Tel 011 34 981 55 47 12

Email info@altairhotel.net

altairhotel.net

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

ENDING POINT

Altair Hotel, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, after breakfast

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH

9 days, 8 nights

DEPARTURES

This tour is available daily, on request, from April 1 through June 30 and from September 1 through October 31, 2017. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table. Please also note that the tour price includes one arrival transfer from Pamplona to Hotel Roncesvalles on Day 1 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate arrival times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers. Please note that the Museum of Human Evolution (including the Atapuerca Exhibit) in Burgos is closed on Mondays. Please request a non-Thursday departure date should you wish to visit this museum.

TOUR PRICE

2017 group size	Per person	Single +	Solo Surcharge
1 guest	\$3,798	\$650	\$1,690
2 guests	\$3,798	\$650	-
3–5 guests	\$3,498	\$650	-
6+ guests	\$3,298	\$650	-

STARTING POINT

Pamplona, Spain, based upon individual arrival times

ENDING POINT

Altair Hotel, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, after breakfast

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 5 to 9 miles per day and no options. The terrain includes minimal elevation gains and losses, except for three days, with 700-, 1,000-, and 2,000-foot ascents. Walks are on extremely well-maintained, wide trails, sometimes paved, but most often on packed dirt or gravel paths, with occasional loose rocks. From the French border to Santiago de Compostela, the diverse inn-to-inn itinerary selects highlights of the entire “Camino Francés” of the St. James Way, including seven separate Spanish provinces with widely varying scenery: the Pyrenees, Atlantic-influenced forests, limestone-capped vineyards of the Rioja region, the open plains of Castile and León, and the verdant pastures and gray stone of Galicia. Thanks to daily transfers ranging from 30 minutes to 2 hours, this tour is a literal walk through history with a unique camaraderie shared by fellow pilgrims. Each step reveals medieval towns, cities, churches, monuments, and UNESCO World Heritage sites such as the cathedrals in Burgos and Santiago and the prehistoric site of Atapuerca. Additionally, Spain’s long days allow ample time for exploration as well as relaxation.

INCLUSIONS

- » Breakfast daily, three lunches (days 2, 4, 6), and four dinners (days 1, 3, 5, 7); beverages not included
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Local pre-paid cell phone (provided at your orientation meeting)
- » Local transfers as noted in the itinerary
- » Luggage transfers between the hotels
- » Detailed Route Notes (mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure) and maps (provided at your orientation meeting)
- » 24-hour tour-related support provided by Country Walkers’ local partner
- » 24-hour One Call International Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance
- » Orientation meeting with a Country Walkers representative
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » A Guest Information Form to complete and return at least 45 days prior to your tour
- » Luggage tags
- » Route Notes and maps
- » Your trip invoice

GRATUITIES

Standard gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers; however additional tips are always welcomed, especially by your driver(s). Should you wish to tip for meals or services not included in the cost of the tour, please do so at your discretion. Local currency is preferred.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

STARTING POINT

Pamplona, Spain, based upon individual arrival times

A tour representative will meet you at the Pamplona train station, airport, or a city hotel (holding a sign with Country Walkers and/or your name on it) and transfer you 45 minutes to the first hotel in Roncesvalles. The tour representative will provide an orientation, ensure you are comfortably settled, and answer any questions you may have.

In order to arrange your arrival transfer and orientation meeting, please provide us with your arrival and departure details by returning your Guest Information Form at least 45 days prior to the departure.

Please note that the tour price includes one arrival transfer from Pamplona to Hotel Roncesvalles on Day 1 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate arrival times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

Pamplona Airport (PNA), Pamplona, Spain (*no direct flights from the U.S.*)
aena.es/csee/Satellite/Aeropuerto-Pamplona/en/

Or Madrid Airport Barajas (MAD), Madrid, Spain
madrid-airport.info or aena.es/csee/Satellite/Aeropuerto-Madrid-Barajas/en/

Or Barcelona-El Prat Airport (BCN), Barcelona, Spain
barcelona-airport.com or aena.es/csee/Satellite/Aeropuerto-Barcelona/en/

GETTING TO THE STARTING POINT

Direct flights from the U.S. to Barcelona or Madrid are available on several major airlines. From these airports, the most convenient way to travel to the tour starting point is by train.

From Madrid:

If arriving at Madrid Airport Barajas, you may either take a taxi (approximately 30 euros and 30 minutes) or take the local train (approximately 3 euros and 25 minutes) from Terminal 4 (T4) to Puerta de Atocha train station, where trains to

Pamplona depart several times per day. The journey to Pamplona takes 3 to 4 hours and costs approximately 60 euros.

From Barcelona:

If arriving at Barcelona-El Prat Airport, take the airport shuttle to Terminal 2 (T2) and follow the signs for RENFE. The journey by train to Barcelona Sants station takes approximately 25 minutes. Or you may take a taxi (approximately 25-30 euros and 20-30 minutes; available just outside the arrivals terminal) to Barcelona Sants, where direct trains depart regularly to Pamplona depart every 2 to 3 hours. The journey to Pamplona takes just under 4 hours and costs approximately 60 euros.

If you plan on spending pre-tour time in Barcelona, you may take the Aerobus from Terminal 1 or 2, which departs every 5 minutes for the city center (Plaça Catalunya). The bus stops at the most strategic points in Barcelona: Plaça Espanya, Gran Via-Urgell, Plaça Universidad and runs every day of the year. The journey takes 35 minutes and costs approximately 6 euros. Please visit aerobusbcn.com for more information or to buy tickets online.

For further rail information, including reservations, up-to-date schedules, and fares, please visit the website of RENFE (Spanish Rail) at renfe.es or contact Rail Europe at 800.438.7245 or consult their website at raileurope.com. We recommend making train reservations in advance for major train routes. We suggest comparing the round trip point-to-point fare with that of a Spanish Rail Pass (the pass may be less expensive and have greater value).

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

We suggest arriving in Spain at least one day early in order to recover from jet lag and feel more refreshed by the time of the tour start. You may want to stay in Barcelona or Madrid and explore these fascinating cities. For hotel, restaurant, and sightseeing suggestions, please visit the following websites:

barcelonaturisme.com or turismomadrid.es/en/.

ENDING POINT

Altair Hotel, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, after breakfast

There are no walks scheduled for the last day of the tour. You may depart the final hotel after breakfast and prior to the hotel's checkout time of 12:00 p.m. The hotel staff can assist with any taxi transfers you may require.

Depending upon your destination, it may not be possible to depart for the U.S. on the last day of the tour. Please check airline schedules carefully. If you plan to schedule return flights immediately following the tour's conclusion, please call your airline directly for specific check-in requirements.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORT

Labacolla Airport (SCQ), Santiago de Compostela, Spain
aena.es/csee/Satellite/Aeropuerto-Santiago/en/

Or Francisco Sa Carneiro International Airport (OPO), Porto, Portugal
porto-airport.com

LEAVING THE TOUR

There are no direct flights from Santiago de Compostela to the U.S. Most connect via Madrid and are operated by Iberia. Other options via other major European cities are mostly on low-cost or local carriers. Flights out of Porto, Portugal, are also a convenient alternative.

Labacolla Airport is located 16 miles from Santiago de Compostela. Empresa Freire Buses depart every 30 minutes from various locations in the city center. The journey takes 25 minutes and costs 3 euros. Visit empresafreire.com for more information. Or, taxis offer a flat fare of 21 euros from the city center to the airport.

There is a direct bus from Santiago de Compostela to Francisco Sa Carneiro International Airport in Porto, Portugal. The journey takes 2 to 4 hours and costs approximately 34 euros. For more information, please visit alsa.es.

POST-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

There is a multitude of hotels to choose from; however, you may wish to stay at the Altair Hotel where you spend the final night of the tour. Country Walkers would be happy to make a reservation on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible. The cost is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies. These rooms are reserved as a service for you and include a service charge. Better rates may be available online; however, please note that if you make your pre-tour reservation directly with the hotel, you may not be able to secure the same room as assigned to you for the night on tour. Please call for current rates (Country Walkers uses standard rooms).

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*—no exceptions and no disappointments! From the moment you make your deposit, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, self-guided experience. For best availability, reserve your trip today!

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

Reservations for this tour may be made by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. A \$350 per person deposit is required at the time of the reservation request. Final tour cost is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As arrangements are confirmed at least a year in advance, the tour price is subject to change.

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost*. Please notify us in writing. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table.

**One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply. Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price.*

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Air or other travel arrangements to and from your tour are not included in the price of your trip. We encourage you to contact your local travel agent, or Better Travel, a Vermont-based agency (800.331.6996 or bettertravel@madriver.com), for any additional air, hotel, rail, or transfer arrangements you may need.