YOUR GUIDE TO THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO
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INTRODUCTION

El Camino de Santiago, otherwise known as the Way of St James, is a network of ancient Christian Pilgrimage routes leading to the tomb of St James in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela Galicia, Northern Spain.

Our aim is to introduce the Camino de Santiago and provide useful information to help the prospective pilgrim plan and prepare for their journey to Santiago de Compostela.
The Camino de Santiago has existed for over 1000 years and dates back to the 8th Century when the remains of St James the Apostle were first discovered in Northern Spain.

It is believed that St James preached the Gospel in present day Galicia and on return to Jerusalem he was beheaded by King Herod in 44AD. His followers are said to have transported his remains to Northern Galicia where they lay undiscovered until 813.

The discovery of his remains in the 9th Century led to the creation of a religious shrine which marks the beginning of Santiago de Compostela and the Camino de Santiago.

In 997 the first shrine of St James was destroyed by the Moorish army of Al-Mansur but by the 12th century the Cathedral of Santiago had been rebuilt and was attracting pilgrims from all over Europe.

In 1140 the Codex Calixtinus, the first guidebook of the Camino de Santiago, was published. This guidebook detailed the routes and infrastructure leading to the Santiago de Compostela and is widely interpreted as the first tourist guidebook.

Throughout the Middle Ages the Camino de Santiago remained as popular as pilgrimages to Jerusalem or Rome. Its popularity only began to decrease during the 16th Century with the
Protestant Reformation in Northern Europe. Its popularity decreased further with European wars and revolutions in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, which restricted travel and cross-cultural integration.

For most of the 20th Century the Camino de Santiago remained restricted to the Iberian Peninsula due to the First and Second World Wars, as well as the Spanish Civil War (1936-39).

It was only in the 1980s that the process to widespread rediscovery of the Camino de Santiago began thanks to the parish priest and academic Don Elías Valiña Sanpedro, who dedicated the last 10 years of his life to way marking the Camino Francés.

As well as Don Sanpedro, pilgrim associations and local governments have also contributed to the rebirth of the Camino Francés which has led to the rediscovery of various routes through France, Portugal and Spain.

From the rebirth of the Camino in the late 1980s, there has been a year on year increase in the number of recorded pilgrims making the journey to Santiago de Compostela. This popularity has continued into the 21st Century with a recorded 270,000 pilgrims reaching the Cathedral of Santiago in the holy year of 2010.
WHY SHOULD I DO THE CAMINO?

“I have worked for over 30 years in the corporate environment – fast paced, long hours, hard work. My decision to walk the Camino was to slow down and walk into a new pace of life, more aware of my surroundings and more in touch with the environment. And I love Spain!”
Margot Smith

Today, the Camino is still very popular with traditional Roman Catholic pilgrims who travel to Santiago as a demonstration of their faith. All of the routes to Santiago pass by holy shrines, magnificent Cathedrals, historic monasteries and rural churches which give a real sense of the traditional reasons for travelling to Santiago.

The Camino is not limited to exclusively religious with many people walking the Camino for spiritual reasons.

Many others walk the Camino for an excellent break and holiday, and to achieve something special. With a variety of accommodation on offer, ranging from hostels to boutique hotels, a holiday on the Camino de Santiago can be tailored made to personal preferences and budget.

PILGRIM PASSPORT & COMPOSTELA

While walking the Camino de Santiago, pilgrims carry a credential, known as the Pilgrim Passport. It is a small document which can be obtained before arriving at the Camino de Santiago by contacting your local Confraternity of St James. The credential can also be obtained at pilgrim offices and churches in the main towns along the Camino de Santiago. The credential must be stamped daily to gain access to pilgrim hostels. Your passport can be obtained in bars, hotels, town halls, museums churches, police stations and all refugios along the way.

On arrival at the Cathedral in Santiago, pilgrims take their credential to the nearby Pilgrim Office where a Compostela will be issued to certify the completion of your pilgrimage.
You must have walked a minimum of 100 km (the last 100 km) or cycled at least the last 200km, and you must have undertaken the Pilgrimage for religious / spiritual reasons.

If you have not made the pilgrimage for religious / spiritual reasons, you may ask for a ‘Certificate’ of Pilgrimage.

**WHEN TO GO ON THE CAMINO?**

From the month of May until September is the most popular time of the year to travel the Camino due to the more comfortable weather conditions. Bear in mind that not all Caminos share the same weather conditions. Travelling in the height of summer on the southern routes is not recommended as temperatures can reach up to 40 °C (104°F). During the winter months the weather in Northern Spain is cold and wet with snow in mountainous areas.
TO WALK OR TO CYCLE THE CAMINO?

The Camino can be walked or cycled, and though walking is the most popular way to travel, there are many people who cycle.

WALKING

**Pros:**
- Traditional pilgrim experience.
- Time to take in the sites and environment.
- The best way to experience the camaraderie of the Camino.
- All paths are suitable for walkers.
- More sociable.

**Cons:**
- Takes more time.
- More expensive as walking takes twice as much time as cycling.

CYCLING

**Pros:**
- Takes less time and so can be fitted into a summer holiday.
- On the Camino Francés, it takes 14 days to complete rather than 36 days by foot.
- Best for the longer southern routes, which have very long distances between towns.

**Cons:**
- Travelling at such a high speed - you can miss out on the sociable side of the Camino.
- Requires more equipment and planning.
- Some paths and routes are not suitable for cycling so more time is spent on roads.
WAY MARKING

Way marking on the main Caminos (Camino Francés, Via Podiensis and Camino Portugés) is excellent. The routes are generally marked by two main symbols: a yellow arrow or seashell. It is very easy to follow these Caminos with every turn and twist of the route being clearly marked.

We recommend taking a guide book as they are very useful for planning your day to day trip.

If you are taking an alternative route (many of which are not as well way marked as the Camino Francés, Via Podiensis and Camino Portugés) you should consult forums and helpful websites to thoroughly research your Camino.

ACCOMMODATION

There are two main accommodation options available:

Hostels, known as Refugios, are exclusively for pilgrims walking the Camino de Santiago. The hostels are provided by a loose network of groups ranging from the local government to individuals and churches.

REFUGIOS

**Pros:**
- Besides camping, refugios are the most inexpensive form of accommodation.
- It is part of an authentic and real pilgrimage.
- Some hostels providing meals included in their price.
- Unique to the Camino de Santiago.

**Cons:**
- Cannot be booked in advance.
- Demand is high during the summer months.
- Most are based on dormitories with double bunk beds.
- Some are not open throughout the year.
- Crowded.
- Basic – no frills accommodation.

HOTELS

**Pros:**
- Ensures that you are well rested for the next day of walking.
- You will always have a clean and comfortable room to return to for the evening.
- Private rooms and bathrooms.

**Cons:**
- More expensive.
- Not part of a traditional pilgrim experience.
- You may not meet as many fellow pilgrims.
PART 2: CULTURE

LANGUAGE

Language: Having some knowledge of Spanish will certainly enhance your trip. The local people with appreciate a few words of Castellano. You should, however, be aware that Spanish (Castellano) is not the only language spoken in Spain.

Once in Northern Spain you will pass through autonomous regions with their own language and distinct culture. Regions with their own language are Catalonia (Catalan), Galicia (Gallego), and País Vasco (Basque). Being aware of these distinctions will set you apart from the traditional tourist and allow you to fully appreciate the local people and their culture.

As for the routes outside Spain – the Camino Portugés and Via Podiensis – learning basic phrases in Portuguese and French will help you interact more with local people and pilgrims.

GAstronomy

One of the greatest parts of any Camino is passing through varied and interesting places which come with a distinct cuisine.

Many restaurants on the Camino have a ‘menu de peregrino’ (costing around €10) they tend to be good value for money and often include a free bottle of good quality wine.

While on the Camino path even the smallest of villages will have a small restaurant, bar or shop to pick up provisions.

Public Holidays

Spain has a lot of festivities and bank holidays (12 national ones and at least 4 regional and/or local ones) during which all banks, shops and government institutions are closed: 01/01, 06/01, 01/05, 15/08, 12/10, 01/11, 06/12, 08/12, 25/12 and of course the Thursday, Friday and Sunday of Holy Week (Semana Santa; normally at the end of March/ beginning of April, depending on the Catholic calendar)

Saint James' Day is 25th July, and celebrated as a public holiday in Galicia, with many festivities taking place in Santiago. Although businesses are closed and public transport may be affected, many celebrations and events take place on this day in Santiago.
PART 3: WHICH ROUTE SHOULD I TAKE?

SUMMARY

Primarily the Camino Francés, Portugés and Via Podiensis (Le Puy Route) are more suited to first-time pilgrims as there is a well established infrastructure and clear way marking supporting these routes.

The less popular Camino Levante and Via de Plata offer the returning pilgrim new challenges and experiences travelling over 1000km from the South of Spain.

It is not only distance which can offer a challenge to returning pilgrims, the relatively short Camino Primitivo also attracts adventurous pilgrims due to its steep climbs and descents on mountain paths.

The Camino Primitivo is the continuation of the coastal Camino del Norte, which offers an enjoyable alternative to the mainly landlocked routes.

There are many other routes which can be travelled as part of a longer Camino such as the Camí Sant Jaume, which connects with the Camino Aragonés to later join the Camino Francés.

The Camino Inglés is the shortest route, starting in the towns of A Coruña and Ferrol which no more than 110km away from Santiago.
As well as routes to the Santiago de Compostela, there is an extension to Finisterre on the Galician coast. Traditionally, it was the end of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.
The **Camino Francés** is the most popular and well known pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. The route starts in the beautiful town of St Jean Pied de Port, in the French Pyrenees, where it takes 780km to reach Santiago de Compostela.

After the spectacular scenery of the Pyrenees, it passes through northern Spain’s green countryside, traditional villages and the impressive cities of Pamplona, Burgos and Leon. Throughout the journey pilgrims are never far from historical sites such as the 9th century church at O’Cebreiro and the medieval Cathedrals of Burgos, Pamplona and Leon.

Although walking the whole Camino Francés from St Jean Pied de Port takes 36 days, it can be shortened into stages which begin at the main cities and towns along the way.

**Pros:**

- Excellent way marking along the full length of the route.
- Well-established infrastructure to support pilgrims.
- It can be walked at almost any time of the year. (It is recommended to walk between May and September)
- Meeting many fellow pilgrims from all around the world.

**Cons:**

- Accommodation is in high demand during the summer months.
Le Puy-en-Velay, a picturesque French town, is the most popular starting point of the Via Podensis. There are, however, several starting points ranging from Paris to Arles in Southern France.

The Le Puy route is 736 km to St Jean Pied de Port in the Pyrenees and takes around 4 weeks to complete. It passes through charming French villages and towns such as Mosaic where you can visit the former Benedictine Abbey of St Pierre.

Although it is not as popular as its Spanish counterpart the Camino Francés, it is becoming the most popular and well known pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in France.

Unlike the Camino Francés, you are more likely to meet experienced walkers along this route due to the steep mountainous climbs of the Central Massif (GR65).

Pros:

- Part of the GR65 – excellent for walking enthusiasts.
- Experience the French countryside.

Cons:

- The climbs over the Central Massif are not suitable for inexperienced walker
The **Camino Portugés** is the second most travelled Camino. Officially starting in Lisbon, it is 615km to Santiago de Compostela. Walking the Camino Portugés takes around a month to complete.

Starting in Porto only 239km from Santiago significantly shortens the length of this route. The route’s popularity increases at the town of Tui, on the Galician-Portuguese border, as it is the last town where you can start the Camino Portugés and gain a Compostela in Santiago.

The almost entirely flat route is a dramatic contrast with the other Camino routes, which tend to be hillier, with their several climbs and descents.

**Pros:**

- It’s the most suitable Camino for Cyclists, with most of the route on minor roads.
- There are various alternative routes through Portugal.

**Cons:**

- Limited pilgrim accommodation between Lisbon to Porto.
- The route becomes busy after the town of Tui at the Portuguese-Spanish Border.
The Camino Aragonés begins high in the Pyrenees at Somport on the French-Spanish Border. The route descends from the Pyrenees to the town of Jaca, where it follows a series of climbs and descents over the dramatic and desolate Aragonés Valley. After 170km through the region of Aragon it reaches Navarra where it joins the Camino Francés at Puente La Reina.

**Pros:**
- Quiet route.
- An extension and alternative starting point of the Camino Francés.

**Cons:**
- There is a steep path and decent from the starting point at Somport.
The Camí de Sant Jaume is the Catalan route to Santiago de Compostela. There are two main routes which start at the Monastery in Montserrat; 40km from Barcelona. Both routes descend from the Sierra de Montserrat and then pass the towns of Igualada, Cervera and Tàrrega.

From Tàrrega the route splits in two directions, one route joins the Camino Francés at Puente La Reina via the Camino Aragonés. It goes north-west via Balaguer, Monzón and Huesca to the Monastery of San Juan de la Peña, where it then joins the Camino Aragonés at Santa Cilia de Jaca.

The other route takes the less known Ruta Del Ebro, it passes the historic city of Zaragoza, and joins the Camino Francés at Logroño (70km further than Puente La Reina).

**Pros:**

- The Montserrat starting point is a short 1 and half hour train journey from Barcelona.
- It offers a more individual experience with very few pilgrims taking the routes in comparison with busier routes.

**Cons:**

- The way marking and infrastructure on both routes are not as well developed as some of the other alternative routes.
The Camino del Norte offers a great maritime walking experience through Northern Spain. Starting in Irun, at the French border, the route runs parallel to the sea and passes through the stunning seaside town of San-Sebastián; the cosmopolitan Basque city of Bilbao; and the elegant city of Santander in Cantabria. The route is 825km long.

**Pros:**

- Experience the beautiful coast of northern Spain.
- Less challenging than the mountainous Camino Primitivo.
- The way marking and infrastructure for pilgrims have improved a lot over the years.
- Part of the Camino del Norte can be travelled in conjunction with the Camino Primitivo making it 867km from Irun to Santiago de Compostela via Oviedo and Lugo.

**Cons:**

- The terrain is more challenging than the Camino Francés.
The Camino Primitivo is a wonderful route which offers tranquility and a challenge as it crosses the rugged and diverse landscapes of Asturias in Northern Spain. Originally an essential part of any medieval pilgrimage, diverting to the “Camara Santa” of Oviedo’s Cathedral was just as important as arriving at the tomb of St James in Santiago de Compostela.

Starting in the coastal town of Villaviciosa then passing through Oviedo, the former medieval capital of the Kingdom of Asturias, you can gain a real feel for the medieval pilgrim at the beginning of this shorter Camino.

It tends to be walked by those who already have a Camino under their belt and are looking for a more challenging experience. Spanning 322km (200miles) the Primitivo is considered an ideal shorter alternative to escape the traditionally busier Camino Francés.

**Pros:**
- Quieter alternative to the Camino Frances.
- Physically demanding.

**Cons:**
- Some knowledge of Spanish is really recommended to get the most out of the Primitivo; many of your fellow pilgrims may only speak Spanish.
- This route is not recommended for those who are uncomfortable walking along paths with steep climbs and descents.
- The mountain terrain can be muddy and infirm.
- Excluding the summer months, you are almost guaranteed snow covered landscapes and paths, which will be more challenging.
The **Via de la Plata** is one of the longest alternatives to the Camino Francés. The route begins in Seville and is a 1000km long journey to Santiago de Compostela. It offers the pilgrim a long and rather secluded walk from Andalucía to the very north of Spain in Galicia. Once at Astorga in Galicia the route joins the Camino Francés where it is another 100km to Santiago de Compostela.

The Via de Plata dates back to Roman times and even today a significant part of the Camino follows the old Roman road. Not only does the route follow parts of the exposed roman road and passes by many historic Roman monuments, which are excellent for historic detours.

Although this route features some of the most solitary countryside in Spain, it equally takes the pilgrim through some great historic Spanish towns notably Caceres, Merida, Salamanca and Zamorra. However, there are not as many traditional pilgrim hostels along the way and meticulous planning is required.

**Pros:**
- Not only does this offer a great opportunity for seeing the wonderful cities mentioned above; it also gives a great choice of accommodation.
- The longer stages make it more suited to cyclists.

**Cons:**
- The beginning of the route should not be attempted in height of summer due to extremely high temperatures.
- Stages are longer and need to be planned meticulously.
- Some knowledge of Spanish is needed to get the most out of this route as it is mainly travelled by Spanish pilgrims.

**View Details**
The Camino de Levante is arguably the most intensive and longest of all the individual Camino routes in Spain. It takes 1100km to reach Santiago de Compostela from Valencia on the Mediterranean coast. From the Mediterranean Coast the route makes its way through barren and remote landscapes of La Mancha, passing through the ancient city of Toledo, and joining the Via de Plata route at Zamora (400km from Santiago de Compostela).

Pros:

- Long distance journey through the heart of Spain.

Cons:

- Attempting the southern part of this route in the height of summer is dangerous. (You should be especially meticulous while planning this route)
- Way marking is basic and some stages of the route are unmarked.
Traditionally walking to Finisterre, at the very edge of the Galician Coast, was seen as the completion of the Camino de Santiago.

The route to Finisterre is 87km long and walked over 3-4 days, gives the pilgrim a peaceful excursion over Galician mountains to the Port of Finisterre.

Pros:
- Many parts of the route are on small country paths.

Cons:
- The large distances between the stages of the Camino Finisterre make it a tiring 3-4 days extension to the Camino Francés.
The Camino Ingles route has two starting points A Coruña and Ferrol on the Galician coast. It is common for pilgrims to travel the route from Santiago, and travel the Camino to either of the two coastal towns.

The slightly longer 110km route from Ferrol is enough to gain a Compostela in Santiago.

Pros:

- The route has some excellent views.
- Travel on busy roads and through industrial areas is kept to a minimum.

Cons:

- You will not gain a Compostela from the starting point in A Coruña.
PART 4: TRAVEL

TRAVEL INFORMATION

It is easy to access the Camino de Santiago; no matter where you are travelling from. With so many different Caminos on offer, there is an infinite amount of possibilities when it comes to getting to a starting town of one of the Camino.

VISAS AND PASSPORT

All nationalities require a full passport or ID card valid for at least three months after your intended departure from Spain.

Citizens of countries in the European Union and the European Economic Area and the European Free Trade Association do not need a visa for Spain. Australians, US Citizens and Canadians do not need a visa as long as their stay is not for more than 90 days.

Passport and visa requirements do change so although this information is supplied in good faith. Please check with your local Spanish consulate or advice authority.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

No matter where you are travelling from, make sure you arrange travel insurance for peace of mind.

HOW DO I GET TO ST JEAN PIED DE PORT?

With the beginning of the Camino Francés on the French-Spanish border there are several different ways of getting to St-Jean-Pied-de-Port.
FROM THE UK TO ST JEAN PIED DE PORT

Via Biarritz:

- Fly to Biarritz from London Stanstead.
- From Biarritz Airport take a bus to the town of Bayonne.
- From Bayonne you can connect with St Jean Pied de Port by Mountain Railway.

  Journey time: 2-3hrs. (Excluding flight)

Via Paris:

- Fly to Paris
- High Speed train to Bayonne
- From Bayonne you can connect with St Jean Pied de Port by Mountain Railway.

  Journey time: 8-9hrs (Excluding flight and connection between Airport and TGV high speed train)

Via Madrid:

- Fly to Madrid
- From Madrid 3hrs train journey or 8 hrs bus journey to Pamplona
- From Pamplona you can take a bus to Roncesvalles.
- From Roncesvalles you can take a taxi to St Jean Pied de Port

  Journey time: more than 10hrs (Excluding flights and connections in Madrid)

We recommend travelling via Biarritz. It is the quickest and simplest way to reach the starting point of the Camino Francés. Travelling via Paris or Madrid will take more time and effort.
TRAVELLING INTERNATIONALLY

If you are travelling from outside Europe you must fly to London, Madrid, Barcelona or Paris where you will then connect to St Jean Pied de Port.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arriving at:</th>
<th>Transfer:</th>
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| London      | • Fly to Biarritz from London Stanstead.  
|             | • From Biarritz Airport take a bus to the town of Bayonne.  
|             | • From Bayonne you can connect with St Jean Pied de Port by Mountain Railway. |
| Madrid      | • Public transport from Airport to Atocha Train Station  
|             | • 3hr train journey from Atocha train station to Pamplona or  
|             | • 5hr bus journey from Terminal 2 Madrid to Pamplona,  
|             | • From Pamplona take a local Bus to Roncesvalles  
|             | • From Roncesvalles you must take a taxi to St Jean-Pied-de-Port. |
| Barcelona   | • Public Transport or Taxi to Sants Train Station or Barcelona Nord Bus Station.  
|             | • 3-4hr train journey to Pamplona or more than 6hrs bus journey to Pamplona.  
|             | • From Pamplona take a local Bus to Roncesvalles  
|             | • From Roncesvalles you must take a taxi to St Jean-Pied-de-Port. |
| Paris       | • Bus/Train/Metro to train station  
|             | • TGV (high-speed train) from Central Paris to Bayonne.  
|             | • Once at Bayonne, a mountain railway takes you to St Jean Pied De Port.  
|             | • There is also a TGV from Paris Charles De Gaulle Airport to St Jean Pied De Port via Bordeaux & Bayonne. |

**We Recommend:** flying to Paris (Airport Charles De Gaulle) and then taking a high speed train (TGV) to Bayonne in the Pyrenees. From Bayonne you can then take the mountain railway to St Jean Pied De Port.
HOW DO I GET TO SARRIA?

You can fly into Santiago Airport from London Stansted with Ryanair, London Gatwick with Easyjet, or internally from many other operators. Fly from Madrid, Barcelona and Paris with Iberia or Vueling. Ryanair also fly internally Madrid-Santiago.

To reach Sarria take a bus from Santiago de Compostela to Lugo. From Lugo you connect to Sarria with a local bus: www.monbus.es/index2.htm

To reach Sarria from Santiago can catch the ALSA bus to Lugo and then another bus to Sarria.

Total journey time from Santiago to Sarria: 3hrs

TO REACH O’CEBRIERO

On www.alsa.es/portal/site/Alsa/ O’Cebriero’s stop is called ‘Piedrafita do Cebreiro’. From here it’s about a 5km walk or taxi journey up the hill to O’Cebreiro

RETURNING FROM SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

RETURNING TO THE UK:

- Ryanair operate a regular direct service up to 5 times a week between London Stanstead Airport and the Airport Santiago de Compostela.
- Easyjet operate a direct service up to 3 times a week to London Gatwick

RETURNING TO PARIS:

- Veuling fly direct from Santiago de Compostela to Paris CDG.

RETURN TO MADRID/BARCELONA:

- Veuling and Iberia airlines fly direct from Santiago de Compostela to Madrid and Barcelona.
- You can also take a trains or bus from Santiago de Compostela to Madrid. Train journey to Madrid - 7hrs.
  Bus journey to Madrid - 8hrs.

You can consult www.aena-aeropuertos.es/csee/Satellite/infovuelos/en/which which will give you a comprehensive list of other airlines and destinations.
TRAVEL LINKS:

Rail Europe: www.rail-europe.com

French Rail: www.sncf.com

Spanish Rail: www.renfe.com

Spanish Bus network: www.alsa.es

Portuguese Rail: www.cp.pt

TRAVELLING TO THE ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

- Camino Portugés is easily accessed from the airports of Lisbon and Porto.
- The Via Podiensis can be reached from the airports of Paris or Lyon by train via St Etienne.
- The Camí de Sant Juame is one and a half hours by train from Barcelona.
- The Camino del Norte and the Camino Primitivo can be reached from the airports of Biarritz, Bilbao, Santander and San Sebastián.
- The Camino Finisterra and Camino Inglés can be reached from the Airport in Santiago de Compostela.
- The Via de Plata can be reached from the Airport of Seville and the Camino Levante from the Airport of Valencia.
As a general rule, no matter the distance and difficulty of your Camino, you should travel light. The less you carry the more you will enjoy the experience.

Things to consider:

- Planning what to take with you will largely depends on your accommodation and whether you are going to be carrying everything you need or using a baggage transfer service.
- By using a baggage transfer service and choosing hotels and guesthouses your kit list will be altered, though making provisions for longer stages of a Camino are necessary, you will only carry what you would normally carry on a day walk. Adjust your kit according to the time of year and the route you are taking.
EXAMPLE: KIT LIST

(Not everything on this kit list is completely necessary and what you take with you should always come down to personal preference) All Pilgrims will need:

**Clothing**
- Hat
- Short sleeve T-Shirt 1
- Long sleeve Crew Shirt
- Vest
- Rain Jacket
- Underwear
- Trousers 1
- 1 Pair of shorts
- Waterproof Trousers
- Evening wear

**Footwear**
- Walking boots
- Soft shoes (evening)
- Socks 1
- Socks 2
- Socks 3

**Backpack & Support**
- Rucksack
- Trekking/Walking Poles
- Water bottle

**First Aid Kit**
- Complete First Aid kit
- Blister Kit

**Toiletries**

**Extras**
- Flashlight/torch
- Compass
- Swiss army knife
- Needle & Thread
- Scissors
- Pen & Notebook

**Documents & Papers**
- Passport
- Identification
- Insurance, Bank Cards
- Notebook
- Wallet
- Documents pouch
- Guidebook

**Pilgrims staying in Hostels will also need:**
- Sleeping Mat
- Sleeping bag
- Earplugs
- Sandals for communal showers.

**Cyclists:**
- Helmet
- Cycling shoes
- Cycling jacket
- 1 pair of padded tights
- Cycling gloves
- 2 underlayers
- Padded cycling shorts.
- Light rain jacket
- Evening wear.
**FITNESS**

**How fit do I need to be for the Camino?**

There are many who travel the Camino without any physical preparation and they get through it and reach the tomb of St James in Santiago de Compostela. You will have, however, a far more pleasant experience if you do some hill-walking or aerobic exercise in the months before going on the Camino. If you intend to cycle the Camino you should be comfortable cycling 100km per day.

If you do not currently enjoy a good level of fitness it may take many months of training to reach a suitable level of fitness to enjoy the Camino. It is important to start slowly and gradually increase your fitness. Try to exercise for between 30 and 45 minutes three times per week (walking, running, cycling or swimming) and go for longer walk or bike rides on the weekends, which should include some hills.

A good local gym will be able to draw up a fitness program for you on request.

**HEALTH**

**You must consult your doctor prior to embarking on this trip if you answer yes to any of the following questions:**

- Has your doctor ever told you that you have a heart condition?
- Have you had any pains in your chest or heart?
- Do you frequently lose your balance, feel faint or have spells of severe dizziness?
- Has your doctor has ever said that your blood pressure is too high?
- Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity?
- Are you taking any prescription medications, such as those for heart problems, high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes?
- Do you know of any other reason why you should not engage in physical activity?
- Are you pregnant?
FURTHER READING

MACS ADVENTURE CAMINO & PILGRIMAGE TOURS


BLOGS:

- www.caminodesantiago.me.uk/camino-blog/
- http://www.theculturalvoyager.com/el-camino-de-santiago
- caminobuddies.com/blog/
- www.britannica.com/blogs/2011/12/walking-world-camino-de-santiago/

BOOKS

- Camino Royale by Chris Showell. Pearl Press.
- Travels with My Donkey: One Man and His Ass on a Pilgrimage to Santiago by Tim Moore. St. Martin’s Griffin.

FILMS AND VIDEOS:

- Macs Adventure Youtube video.
- theway-themovie.com/
- The Naked Pilgrim - Road to Santiago with Brian Sewell.
- Pilgrimage (BBC) with Simon Reeve http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01kqjg3
FORUMS:

- www.caminodesantiago.me/board/
- www.tripadvisor.co.uk/ShowForum-g187508-i966-Santiago_de_Compostela_A_Coruna_Province_Galicia.html

GUIDEBOOKS:

- For more camino guides by John Brierly: www.caminoguides.com/

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- www.xacobeo.es/en (Regional Government of Galicia’s dedicated website)
- www.catedraldesantiago.es/
- elcaminosantiago.com/
- www.caminodesantiago.me.uk/
- www.caminosantiagodecompostela.com/

KIT:

- rohantime.com/19922/santiago-de-compostela-kit-list/

PILGRIM ASSOCIATIONS AND CONFRATERNITIES:

- www.csj.org.uk/ (UK)
- www.americanpilgrims.com/
- www.stjamesirl.com/ (IRELAND)
- www.santiago.ca/ (CANADA)
MACS ADVENTURE ITINERARIES, ADVICE & INSPIRATION

BLOG

•  http://www.macsadventure.com/walking-holidays/category/walking/camino/

CAMINO WALKING TOURS

•  All Camino & Pilgrimage  http://www.macsadventure.com/camino-tours/
•  Camino Frances  http://www.macsadventure.com/camino-tours/camino-frances/

CAMINO CYCLING

•  http://www.macsadventure.com/holiday-1494/cycling-camino-frances-leon-to-santiago

IMAGE GALLERY

•  Browse a gallery of inspiring images  http://www.macsadventure.com/about-us/adventure-inspiration/galleries/camino-pilgrimage-gallery/