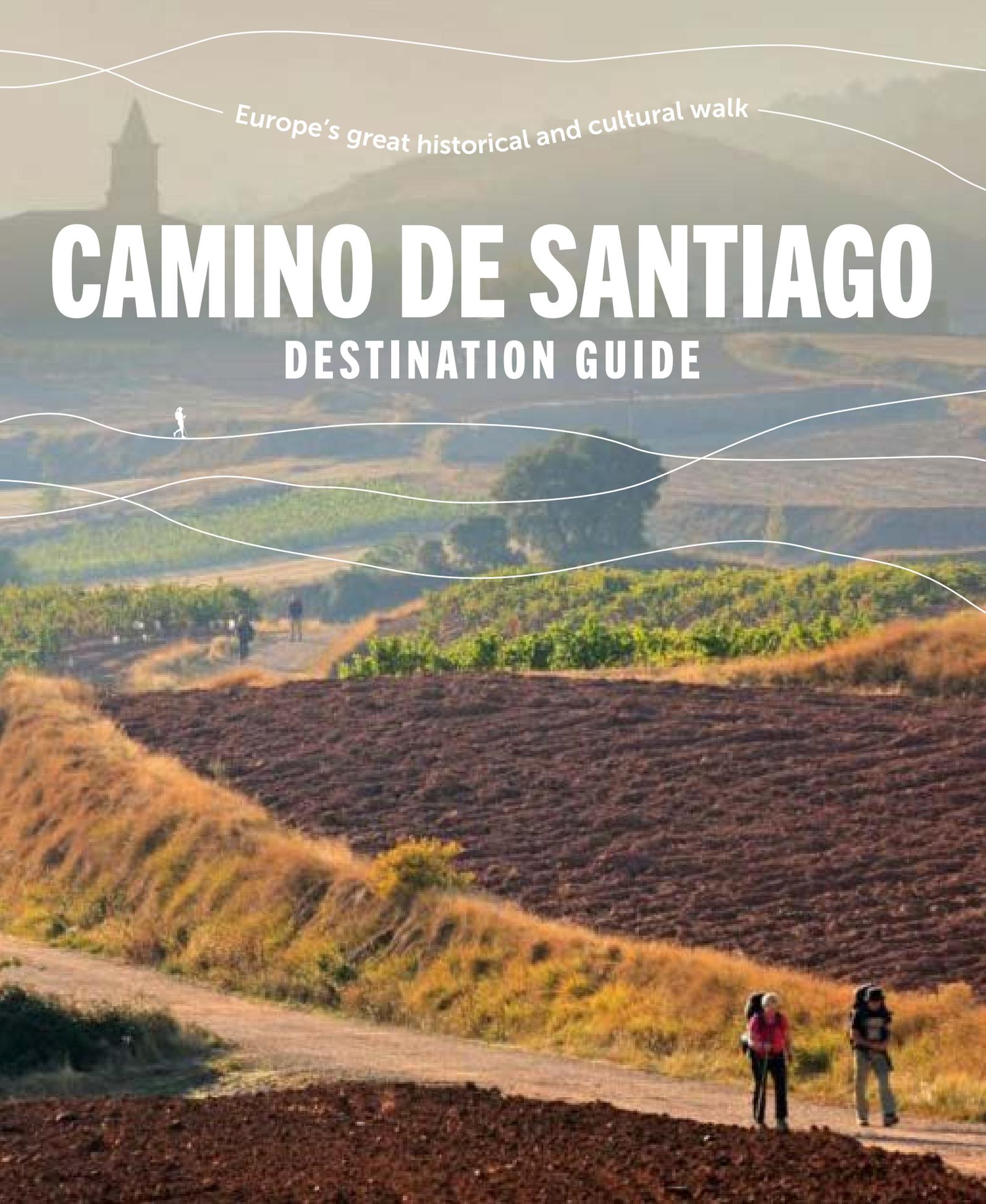


Europe's great historical and cultural walk

# CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

## DESTINATION GUIDE



**RAW** TRAVEL  
ICONIC WALKS WORLDWIDE

Certified  
  
Corporation



# THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

## EUROPE'S GREAT HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL WALK

The Camino de Santiago is an inspirational pilgrimage through traditional and modern France, Spain and Portugal to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in north-western Spain.

For more than 1200 years pilgrims have walked the Camino seeking penance, enlightenment and adventure, but you don't have to be religious to follow in their footsteps – just a keen walker!

People today choose the Camino de Santiago as a personal gift of time: to connect with their dreams, beliefs and values, to be in nature, to find inner strength and wisdom, or simply to travel slowly through fascinating landscapes and cultures.

Walking the Camino is an ancient tradition and the world's greatest spiritual adventure.

It offers a unique combination of history, scenery, food, wine, camaraderie and hospitality, and there are many ways to complete it! The walk is open to people of all ages, and you'll meet people from around the world.

As Australia's Camino experts, we can help you with expert advice and resources to plan your trip. Our dedicated Camino Team has first-hand experience of the routes, so we understand the appeal of this great

walk and can give you great advice about the daily realities.

Over the years, different Camino routes have emerged – all leading to Santiago. We can advise you which route will suit you the best and what you might like to see as highlights of your Camino adventure. We offer fully flexible custom-made trips from 3 to 70 days and will work with you to design an itinerary that best suits your interests, fitness level and travel style.

We know you will have an incredible experience with us and would love to hear all about it when you return.

Buen Camino!



Lorinda Sue Lilia Stu



Lizelle Sandra Germán Daniel Ros

**RAW Travel Camino Team**  
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Phone: (03) 5976 3763

[www.caminodesantiago.com.au](http://www.caminodesantiago.com.au)

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# THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

EUROPE'S GREAT HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL WALK



### Disclaimer

The information in this Destination Guide has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However, it is subject to change and does not form part of the contract between the client and RAW Travel.

### Contact Us

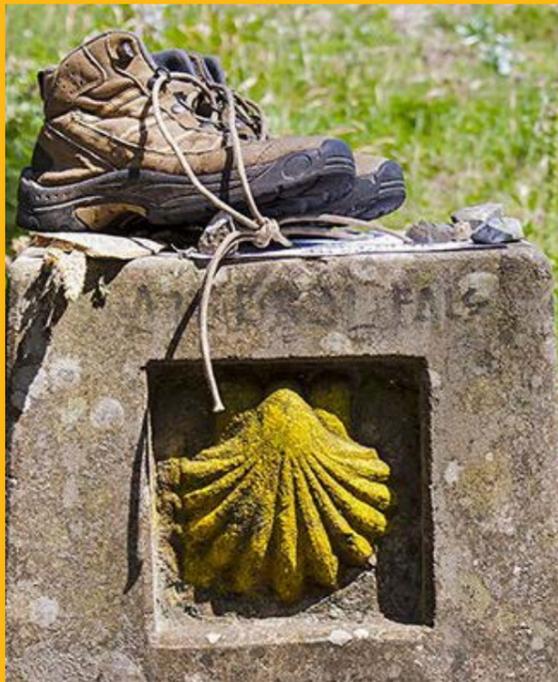
#### RAW Travel Office

Our Melbourne HQ (Victoria, Australia) can be contacted Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm on +61 3 5976 3763. If there is a genuine emergency outside of these hours, call +61 (0) 478 649 848.

## CAMINO FRANCÉS (THE FRENCH WAY)

### Spain's epic pilgrimage trail

- Also known as: Way of St James; The Way; Spanish Camino; El Camino de Santiago
- Starts: St Jean Pied de Port (France)
- Ends: Santiago (Spain)
- Total distance: 790km
- Daily distances: 20–30km (5 to 8 hours)
- Time required (full length): 40 days
- Best time to go: April–June, September–October
- Difficulty\*: 4–6 Moderate to Challenging
- Highlights: Timeless villages, vibrant cities, medieval towns and some of the best cathedrals in Europe.



## PORTUGUESE COASTAL CAMINO

### A stunning walk from Lisbon to Santiago

- Starts: Lisbon (Portugal)
- Ends: Santiago (Spain)
- Also known as: Caminho da Costa; The Friendly Camino
- Easily confused with: Camino Português (Portuguese Way)
- Total distance: 620km
- Daily distances: 20–30km (5 to 9 hours)
- Time required (full length): 35 days
- Best time to go: May–September
- Difficulty\*: 4–5 Moderate to Challenging
- Highlights: Vibrant cities, amazing coastal views, untouched natural beauty and seafood.



### \*DIFFICULTY

We have graded each RAW Travel trip from 1 (introductory) to 10 (tough). See Route Descriptions (pp13–16) for more information. See also p72 – RAW Travel Trip Gradings.

## LE PUY CAMINO

### A walk through the most beautiful medieval villages in France

- Also known as: Via Podiensis
- Starts: Le Puy-en-Velay (France)
- Ends: St Jean Pied de Port (France)
- Total distance: 730km
- Daily distances: 20–30km (5 to 9 hours)
- Time required (full length): 40 days
- Best time to go: April–October
- Difficulty\*: 5–6 Moderate to Challenging (challenging in first 2 weeks)
- Highlights: Picturesque fairytale villages, medieval abbeys, vineyards and UNESCO heritage sites.

[Watch video](#)



## CAMINO DEL NORTE

### Dramatic and challenging route along the northern coast of Spain

- Also known as: Northern Way
- Starts: San Sebastián (Basque Country, Spain)
- Ends: Santiago (Spain)
- Total distance: 800km
- Time required (full length): 40 days
- Best time to go: April–October
- Difficulty\*: 4–6 Moderate to Challenging
- Highlights: Quiet fishing villages, vibrant cities, architecture and gastronomic delights.



## CAMINO DE FINISTERRE

**A lovely extension to the edge of the world!**

- Also known as: Finisterre Way
- Starts: Santiago (Spain)
- Ends: Finisterre (Spain)
- Total distance: 90km
- Time required: 3–4 days
- Best time to go: April–October
- Difficulty\*: Moderate
- Highlights: Spectacularly beautiful route with quiet woodland paths past Galician horreos and remote moors, finishing on the Atlantic coast.



## CAMINO PRIMITIVO

**The oldest route to Santiago de Compostela, first taken in the 9th century**

- Also known as: Original Way
- Starts: Lugo (Spain)
- Ends: Santiago (Spain)
- Total distance: 107km
- Time required: 12 days
- Best time to go: April–October
- Difficulty\*: Moderate (from Lugo)
- Highlights: The final section of the original Camino steeped in medieval pilgrimage history; one of the most beautiful and challenging routes.



### \*DIFFICULTY

We have graded each RAW Travel trip from 1 (introductory) to 10 (tough). See Route Descriptions (pp13–16) for more information. See also p72 – RAW Travel Trip Gradings.

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“ JUST DO IT! THE FOOD WAS GREAT, THE BOUTIQUE ACCOMMODATION AMAZING, THE FRIENDSHIP WITH OUR FELLOW PILGRIMS, A HIGHLIGHT. THE WHOLE TRIP WAS HASSLE FREE, ALLOWING US TO ENJOY EACH MOMENT. ”

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### WHY YOU'LL LOVE WALKING THE CAMINO

- ✓ **History:** Experience 1200+ years of history on a UNESCO World Heritage trail that is one of the world's oldest pilgrimage routes.
- ✓ **Unique accommodation:** Rest your weary body in charming casa rurales, historic hotels, fine guest houses, and the famous Paradors.
- ✓ **Vibrant European cities:** Explore Pamplona, Burgos, Leon, Santiago, Paris, Le Puy, Porto, Lisbon, Madrid, Barcelona and more!
- ✓ **Gastronomy:** Savour French pastries, cured meats, tapas, seafood, custard tarts, olives, cheese, plus multi-course pilgrim menus and exceptional viticulture.
- ✓ **Reflection and self-discovery:** 'Wake up' and live more mindfully through daily walking and the simple rituals of pilgrim life.
- ✓ **Spirit and camaraderie:** Meet pilgrims from every corner of the world; share conversations on the road and food around a table.
- ✓ **Accomplishment:** Long after you take your last steps on the Camino, this journey will reward you, no matter which route you choose or how long you walk.
- ✓ **Santiago Cathedral:** Enjoy the satisfaction of walking into historic Santiago and attending the pilgrims' mass at the cathedral.
- ✓ **Flexibility:** Choose from a lattice of European pilgrimage itineraries. Walk or cycle a whole route, or just part of it; take a train or a bus if you need to.

### Walk your own Camino

The Camino is a great equaliser, where differences become irrelevant and similarities more apparent. It is often referred to as a 'metaphor for life' in that each person must

determine and find their own way – what is right for one may not be for another; there is no single right way to do the Camino, nor to live life.



### ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

#### CAMINO FRANCÉS (THE FRENCH WAY)

RAW Travel Trip Grading:  
4-6 Moderate to Challenging



The French Way is the most popular of the many pathways leading to the historical and spiritual city of Santiago de Compostela. Spanning 800km across rural Spain, this route, as you'd expect, offers an enormous variety of environments, landscapes, terrain and culture.

This route is not particularly strenuous (overall), but you'll need physical and mental stamina. It can take 50 days to walk the full Camino. Some days you will ascend up to 1200m and some days the descents will be rocky and slippery. If you are walking a 'section' rather than the overall Camino, the grading of the walk will change as some sections are physically more demanding than others.

Underfoot you will experience a variety of tracks and trails. Some sections of the Camino are on single-track paths that can be rocky in places, sometimes with steps but mostly just bare earth. Tracks are also common – gravel forest roads, walking tracks or unsealed roads. There are some sections of country lanes and, coming into the towns and cities, you follow

regular footpaths. You will always be following the yellow arrows and other markers of the way, featuring the famous scallop shell of the Way of St James.

On the Camino, walking poles are useful but not essential. They are good for balance and taking weight off your knees on descents. They can be bought locally in St-Jean-Pied-de-Port along with carved wooden staffs. They allow you to walk more efficiently, to confidently appreciate the views around you, and take pressure off the soles of your feet.

On most days you will walk from 20–30km on undulating terrain, so the time spent walking can vary between 5 and 8 hours depending on your walking speed. Allow 7 to 9 hours to complete each day. You don't need to practice map reading or navigations skills. It's nearly impossible to get lost. The Camino is a well-worn path and very well marked with boundary stones scallop shells and yellow arrows.

*The first day's walk from St Jean Pied de Port in France is through the Pyrenees mountains that divide France and Spain to Roncesvalles. We receive many questions about this day – mostly about the difficulty, but also about the options. Read more: [👉 Taking the first steps on the French Way.](#)*





## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

### PORTUGUESE COASTAL CAMINO

RAW Travel Trip Grading:  
4-5 Moderate to Challenging



The Portuguese Coastal Camino traverses the Atlantic coast of Portugal before heading inland after Pontevedra in Spain. Although cooler overall than the Spanish Camino, you'll have the sun on your back all the way to Santiago. This route to Santiago was in use from the 12th century and was followed by Queen Isabel of Portugal (1271-1336) to make her pilgrimage. A unique feature of our Portuguese trips is the chance to spend two nights in the Parador at Baiona and make a side trip to Tui.

Most pilgrims start in Porto, but many also walk the 620km from Lisbon to Santiago.

Some of the stages can be long (up to 30km or more) and can also involve a decent amount of walking on hard surfaces (although very rarely on busy roads). This is especially true for the stages between Lisbon and Porto and may be a contributing factor to why more pilgrims choose to start the pilgrimage in, or just north, of Porto. However, there are ways to break these stages.

If you are starting from the vibrant city of Porto, you'll find a quieter more picturesque alternative to the more well-trodden inland Portuguese route to Redondela.

The scenery is very diverse from the wild Atlantic coast, fishing villages and small coastal towns to forests, vineyards and farmland. Our itinerary follows closely along the Portuguese and Galician coastlines using the Portuguese Camino da Costa (Coastal Way) and the Portuguese Camino da Senda Litoral (Seashore Path).

This route is suited to those who love coastal scenery but also the more intrepid walker as you will find slightly less signage (until you enter Redondela - where the coastal track joins with the traditional Portuguese route, where the walk becomes well signed) and fellow pilgrims than on the Spanish Camino. The locals are very friendly and willing to help.

You will be walking on coastal tracks, beaches, old Roman roads and forest tracks crossing old villages and cities born from the Camino trail. There is some walking alongside the road, especially when walking into Vigo and also into Santiago on the last day.

For the most part it is relatively flat and there are no mountain ranges to cross, but you can expect some challenging hills and uneven terrain in some areas. It can be hard underfoot and therefore you need to prepare your feet properly for the walk.

On most days you will walk from 20-30km. The time spent walking can vary between 5 and 8 hours depending on your walking speed. Allow 7 to 9 hours to complete the day.



## SECTION 1: INSPIRATION

### LE PUY CAMINO (FRANCE)

RAW Travel Trip Grading:  
5-6 Challenging



The Le Puy to St Jean Pied de Port walk is one of the best-loved walks in France, and less travelled than the Spanish Camino. Also known as the Via Podiensis, it is one of the four traditional pilgrim routes that cross France and converge in Spain to continue their way to Santiago de Compostela. Le Puy Camino is a quiet 730km trail that starts in the Massif Central and takes you over several ranges and valleys including the Auvergne plateau and the Lot River Valley. It is an adventure through the mountains, wooded river valleys and forests of rural south central France.

The terrain on the Le Puy route is varied, strenuous and rarely flat, especially in the beginning stages. It is more challenging than the Spanish Camino, and you are unlikely to see any cyclists.

Starting in the volcanic Velay region, there are constant ups and downs, passing through the mountainous Aubrac plateau (at 1300m) before descending to the abbey at Conques. At times, there are descents and ascents from river valleys. Some sections are on singletrack paths that can often be rocky in places, sometimes with steps but mostly just bare earth. Tracks are also common: gravel forest roads, walking tracks and unsealed roads. There are some sections of country lanes, and coming into the towns and cities you follow regular footpaths.

On most days, you will walk between 20km and 30km on hilly terrain. The time spent walking can vary between 5 and 8 hours depending on your walking speed. Allow 7 to 9 hours to complete an average day. There are some rugged short sections of path that can be strenuous. The highest altitude of the walk is just over 1400m. For most of the walk the gradient is quite gradual once you are into the mountains.



## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

### Walking to the edge of the world

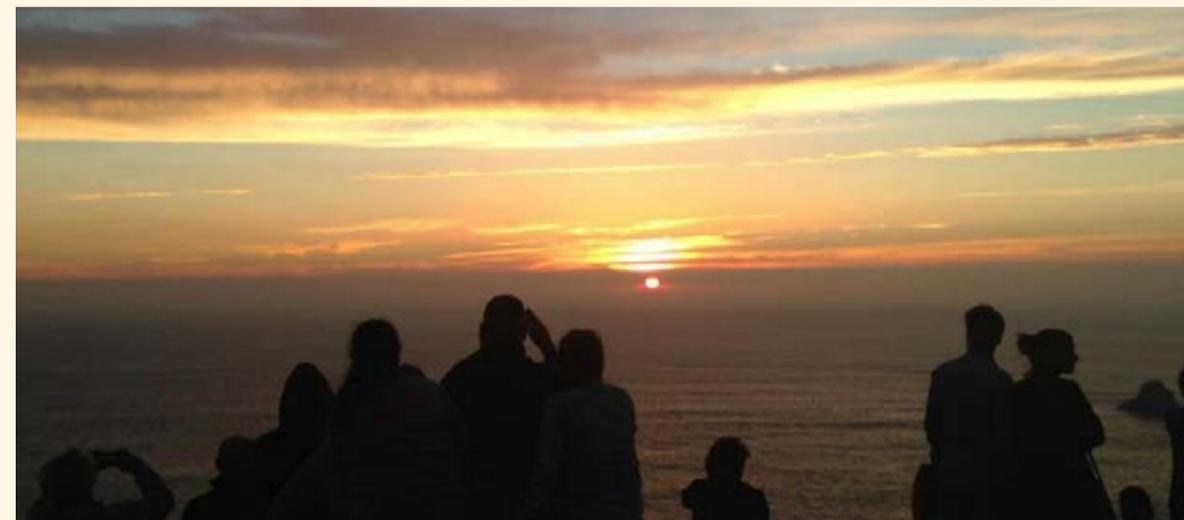
Finisterre is an increasingly popular coastal 'add on' to Camino trips and can be done as a 3 to 4 day walk (90km) to the Atlantic coast. It is also an easy day or overnight bus trip from the Santiago (~2½ hours; 6 departures per day).

Highlights of this walk include:

- Walking to the Finisterre lighthouse and looking over the Atlantic Ocean. (This point was considered to be the 'end of the world' by medieval pilgrims.)

- Eating wonderfully fresh seafood
- 12th-century Church of Santa Maria.
- 16th-century Fort San Carlos built to defend Finisterre from pirates.

You are eligible for a Finisterre passport if you walk from Santiago to Finisterre. To obtain your Finisterre passport for your compostela go to the Galicia tourist office in Santiago prior to your Finisterre walk. Alternatively you can use John Brierley's Camino Finisterre guidebook, which has space for the cellos/stamps for this section.



### WHY EXPERIENCE THE CAMINO WITH RAW TRAVEL?

RAW Travel has operated active walking trips along the Camino for many years. We are one of the most experienced operators you can choose. We enjoy providing a friendly, personal service where you're treated as an individual. We pride ourselves on our staff's intimate knowledge of the Camino routes: we really do 'know because we go' and have created walks that show you the best of the area.

When you book a trip with us you will deal with people who've done the walk and can answer your many questions about travelling there. As well as speaking to someone in the same time

zone as you, you can come along to our free [information nights](#) on the Camino routes and join us on our 'walk and talk' sessions.

We provide detailed information and notes for your walk that will help your trip go smoothly. You deal with a reputable and experienced Australian operator that has the contacts to book the most beautiful and unique accommodation along the trail.

### Why people choose us...

- RAW Travel is Australia's leading Camino support service. We directly book everything and make all your arrangements from our office on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula.



“ THANKS RAW TRAVEL FOR THE BRILLIANT PLANNING AND TAKING ME OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE. IT WAS TOO SHORT, BUT THIS JUST MEANS THAT I WILL NEED TO GO BACK FOR MORE! ”

## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

- We have a dedicated Camino Team, including our own staff in Spain who have first-hand knowledge of the Camino routes, so when you call us you will speak to an expert.
- We have a walked and cycled all the routes, and our staff on the ground in Europe are fluent in Spanish and English, so you can rely on us for local knowledge, expertise and support.
- All you carry is your daypack. We pre-book your accommodation, transport, most meals and luggage transfers.
- You will stay in authentic, quality local accommodation (casa rurales, hotels and paradors), with friendly hosts and wonderful food.
- Our in-house travel agent will book your flights and pre/post-travel arrangements.
- You'll receive a comprehensive information pack, with a Camino guidebook, phrasebook, luggage tags, detailed itinerary, maps, track notes and trip notes.
- Access to insider information and tips from our Camino experts and on our dedicated information website: [www.caminodesantiago.com.au](http://www.caminodesantiago.com.au)

### MEET OUR CAMINO TEAM

 Mel Reynolds Sales Manager	 Lorinda Childs Destination Expert	 Sue Chater Destination Expert	 Lilia Akhtanenko Destination Expert	 Stuart Holland Destination Expert
 Lizelle Adams Camino Operations	 Sandra Emms Camino Operations	 Germán Limeres Operations and Local Team in Spain	 Daniel Arias	 Rosalind Dempsey Flights Expert

### Sister pilgrimages

The Way of St James and the Kumano Kodo trail are the only two World Heritage UNESCO-listed pilgrimage routes. As sister pilgrimages, Galicia Province (Spain) and Wakayama Prefecture (Japan) have officially twinned to develop friendly relations between regions and countries, and contribute to world peace and development. Both ancient roads testify to a parallel history of faith, originating in the early 10th century. If you've

completed the Camino (or a section of it) there's a good chance you will want to walk the Kumano Kodo on Japan's Kii Peninsula, or vice versa. We often get asked about the similarities and differences of these two iconic walks.

Find out more: [You Say Camino, I say Kumano](#)



## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

### HISTORY OF THE CAMINO

The Camino is a 1200-year-old Catholic pilgrimage route to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in north-western Spain. Legend has it that the bones of the apostle St James were brought by boat from Jerusalem to northern Spain and are buried under the site of what is now the city of Santiago de Compostela.

The Camino was one of three pilgrimage routes on which all sins could be forgiven. There are many routes to Santiago de Compostela, starting from a variety of points, from as far away as Belgium to as close as 100km from Santiago. Traditionally the route starts when you leave home.

The Camino has an even more ancient history that predates its Christian heritage. The route was thought to have significance for the ancient pagan people who populated the Iberian peninsula, the Celts who settled in north-western Spain. Some of the best examples of the mega stone structures aligned to the winter sun solstice can be found in Galicia along with the remains of ancient Celtic villages.

Later on the Romans conquered Spain and the main route follows an earlier Roman trade route to Finisterre – literally the end of the world in Latin – this was then thought to be the end of the world and was a place of immense spiritual significance. Still today pilgrims often make their way beyond Santiago de Compostela to complete their journey at Cape Finisterre.

The earliest records of a pilgrimage to Santiago date from the 8th century. By the 11th century large numbers of pilgrims from abroad were making the pilgrimage to Santiago. By the 12th century the route was widely travelled and highly organised, due in part to the fact that the Jerusalem Pilgrimage was no longer possible with the Crusades. Then in the centuries that followed with the Christian reconquest of Spain from the Moors the celebration of the triumph of Christianity gave it added significance.

The wealth of Spain increased greatly with the discovery of the new world and the treasure that poured back into Spain can be seen reflected in the grandiose Cathedrals along its length. But the combined forces of the Protestant reformation, Black Death and political unrest in 16th century Europe all contributed to its decline.

By the early 1980s only a few pilgrims could be seen completing the route into Santiago.

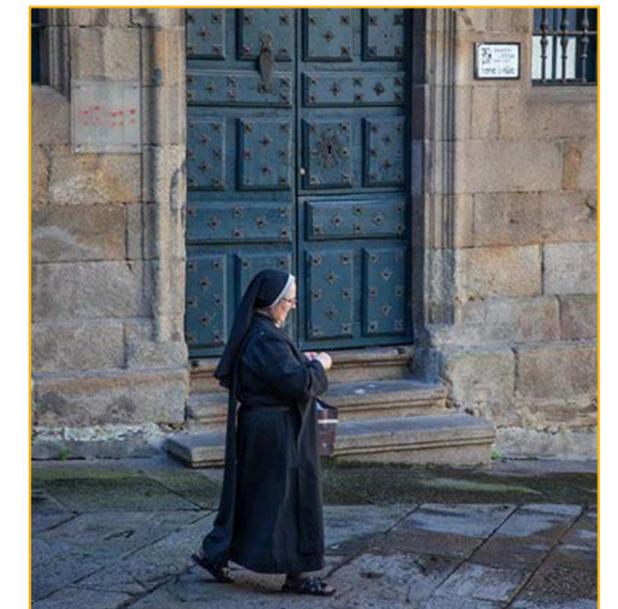
It was proclaimed the first European Cultural Itinerary in 1987 and inscribed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1993. Since then, the numbers of people completing the journey across various routes has increased every year and in 2017, 300,000 completed the pilgrimage.

During the past 10 years the Camino has witnessed an amazing revival to regain its place as the most popular Christian pilgrim route in the world.

The pilgrimage contributes to the economy of this rural area of Spain, and those who walk the Camino are very welcomed and respected.

### Read more:

[👉 Celebrating 30 years of the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim routes](#)





## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

### Scallop Shell

The scallop shell is the traditional emblem of St James the Great and is popular with pilgrims returning from the Way of St James and the apostle's shrine at Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain. Medieval Christians would collect a scallop shell while at Compostela as evidence of having made the journey. The scallop shell also served practical purposes for pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago. The shell was the right size for gathering water to drink or for eating out of as a makeshift bowl.



### THE REVIVAL OF THE CAMINO ROUTES

The ancient Camino de Santiago pilgrimage routes draw people of all different motivations and nationalities, including plenty of Australians, who are now embarking on the Camino thanks to the movie *The Way* and the inspiring tales of returning friends.

A huge variety of people from more than 130 countries walk the Camino every year: the young, the old, the fit, the unfit, the seasoned hiker, the sports lover, those on a personal spiritual journey, those interested in its ancient pagan past, those wanting to get away from the hustle and bustle of modern life, and those who simply want an adventure walking through a foreign country for a few weeks.

The Camino de Santiago is the world's greatest spiritual adventure. Walking this remarkable route is an ancient tradition. The unique combination of history, scenery, Spanish food and wine, the camaraderie, and the hospitality shown to those on the pilgrim route make it a fascinating and unforgettable journey.

There is a palpable energy on the trail and an opportunity to make genuine connections with other travellers: on the Camino, people have more freedom to share parts of themselves that they rarely would reveal.

The chance to embrace a simpler life is very much part of the Camino's appeal – the daily

rhythm of walking reduces life to its essentials. It will give you the time and space to connect with your dreams, be in nature, find inner strength and wisdom, and experience spiritual peace, which at times can be difficult to grasp.

Whatever your reason for going, the journey inevitably changes everyone who takes it, helping each person to grow in their knowledge of themselves and enabling them to be better than they were.



### Fall in love with Portugal

With its sunny Mediterranean climate, gorgeous beaches, picturesque towns, historic sites, and delicious food, Portugal is the perfect destination to hike, feast, dance and relax. Along the way, there are amazing places to visit.

- **Lisbon:** With its alluring alleys, quaint shops, Gothic cathedrals, impressive bridges, colourful neighbourhoods and vintage trams, Portugal's capital is an enchanting must-see destination.
- **The Algarve:** From tranquil landscapes of olive groves and traditional whitewashed villages to the wild, windswept coast with its dramatic cliffs dotted with summer resorts, the Algarve is one of the best places to visit in Portugal.

- **Porto:** World famous for its production of fine port wine, Porto is buzzing with live music, cafes, restaurants and street vendors.
- **Coimbra:** This charming city is home to a treasure trove of historic sites and beautiful gardens, including a gothic monastery, stunning old cathedral and one of the world's most beautiful libraries.
- **Baiona:** In this beautiful Galician seaside town you can enjoy the comfort of the opulent Parador De Baiona and savour the local delicacies: seafood, tapas and wine.
- **Cíes Islands:** Flop onto the soft, powdery sand of these magical islands (the 'Galician Caribbean') or take an invigorating swim and then go exploring on one of the walking routes.



### IS THIS TRIP RIGHT FOR ME?

When considering booking a trip it is important that you look at the descriptions in this Destination Guide about accommodation, food and level of physical difficulty to ensure that the trip matches your expectations. Particularly with the physical difficulty rating, it's vital to select a trip that is realistic for your ability. Read through this Destination Guide and the specific trip itineraries on our website before booking.

### Physical grading

Walking the Camino is a rewarding physical challenge. We have graded the walks we offer on the Camino from 4–6 (Moderate to Challenging). We have used several criteria to assess the difficulty of our walks, including the number of hours walking required each day, terrain and conditions underfoot, weather, gradient, altitude, signage and facilities along the trail. To prepare for walks of this grading, we recommend completing 2 to 3 walks per week (15km+), increasing distances while carrying an 8kg pack; some hill/stair walking is also recommended.

These gradings are intended as a guide and will depend on your individual experience, fitness level and mental attitude.

### Plan and prepare

An epic walk deserves respect, time and planning on how to best undertake it. You should prepare for the Camino with regular training before you go and let your body adjust to walking comparable distances, day in day out. On most days on the Camino you will walk between 20km and 30km but this can also be tailored to shorter days: 15–20km (6 to 9 hours). To embark on such a long distance trail without any prior experience of extensive walking is not a wise idea. For the uninitiated it's best to choose a section of the Camino to try first and see how you enjoy the experience and how you cope before you commit yourself to walking long distances on the Camino. This kind of long distance walk is very much about the mental aptitude as well as the physical.

While we often see amazing improvements in people's fitness with a program of regular training before a trip, you have to be realistic about whether you can commit to regular training with your current lifestyle. If you feel you are unable to commit to doing the training needed to achieve the level of fitness required then you should consider another trip that is less demanding. This is the only way to accurately judge whether you can cope with the demands of any given trip.

Practise hiking in a environment with the same equipment that you will take on your Camino walk. Your training should prepare you to walk several hours a day with ascents and descents. It is important to train on terrain that is similar to that which you will encounter on your chosen Camino route. See also Getting Fit for this Walk (p43).

👉 Read more: [How to prepare your mind and body for a long-distance walk](#)

### WHAT'S IT LIKE UNDERFOOT?

#### Camino Francés (Spain)

Underfoot you will experience a variety of tracks and trails on the Camino Francés. Some sections are on single-track paths that can be rocky in places, sometimes with steps but mostly just bare earth. Tracks are also common - perhaps gravel forest roads, walking tracks or unsealed roads. There are some sections of country lanes, and coming into the towns and cities you follow regular footpaths. You will always be following the yellow arrows and other markers of the way, featuring the famous scallop shell of the Way of St James.

#### Portuguese Coastal Camino

On this route you'll follow coastal tracks, beach walks, old Roman roads and forest tracks crossing old villages and cities born from the Camino trail. Underfoot you will experience a variety of tracks and trails. For the most part it is relatively flat and there are no mountain ranges to cross. There are sections of boardwalk and sometimes beach walks. Some sections of the Camino are on single-track

“ AS A FIRST-TIME LONG DISTANCE WALKER, THE CAMINO WAS THE PERFECT INTRODUCTION. ALTHOUGH CHALLENGING PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY ON THE FIRST TWO DAYS THROUGH THE PYRENEES, THE SCENERY AND CAMARADERIE MADE IT WORTHWHILE. ”



## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

paths that can be rocky in places, sometimes with steps but mostly footpaths or sometimes just bare earth. Tracks are also common – perhaps gravel forest roads, walking tracks or unsealed roads. There are some sections of country lanes, and coming into the towns and cities you follow regular footpaths. It can be hard underfoot and therefore you need to prepare your feet properly for the walk.

### Le Puy Camino (France)

The terrain on the Le Puy route is varied, strenuous and rarely flat. It is more challenging than the Spanish Camino, and you are unlikely to see any cyclists. At times, there are descents and ascents from river valleys. Some sections are on single-track paths that can often be rocky in places, sometimes with steps but mostly just bare earth. Tracks are also common: gravel forest roads, walking tracks and unsealed roads. There are some sections of country lanes, and coming into the towns and cities you follow regular footpaths. The route is well-waymarked (in both directions) as the GR65, with the red and white balises of the French Grande Randonnée network.

### WHAT WE OFFER

RAW Travel will design your Camino adventure just the way you want it to be, allowing for your interests and abilities, rather than giving you a pre-determined itinerary. Our self-guided options range from 3 to 50 days and include cycling (on the Spanish Route) as well as walking, plus there are women's trips with set departure dates.

Walking the Camino is not a race and there are no prizes given for the fastest completion time, so you are well advised to take your time and look to build in adequate rest days for the amount of time you are walking. A good rule of thumb is to have at least one rest for each week of walking, though you may require more than that.

Be realistic also about whether the daily distances of the official stages will suit your ability. There is no requirement to walk long stages each day, only your own timeframe, and you are not judged or praised on how

long it has taken you to walk to Santiago – completion is the goal and it very much about the journey within as the external one. This is the true nature of the walking Pilgrimage.

See our website for a full list of trips and itineraries on the different Camino routes.

### Camino de Santiago

Some of our most popular trips are those that we custom-make followed by:

- Full Length Camino (41 days; St Jean Pied de Port to Santiago)
- Sarria to Santiago (9 days)
- Camino Highlights (15 days)

### Portuguese Coastal Camino

- Lisbon to Santiago (35 days)
- Porto to Santiago (16 days)
- Porto to Baiona (8 days)
- Baiona to Santiago (10 days)
- Yoga & Hiking (Baiona to Santiago; 8 days)

### Le Puy Camino

- Full Length: Le Puy-en-Velay to St Jean Pied de Port (40 days)
- Le Puy-en-Velay to Conques (13 days)
- Le Puy-en-Velay to Cahors (20 days)



### Yoga Hiking Adventure

If you are looking for a holiday with a difference then our [Yoga Hiking Adventure](#) (Baiona to Santiago; 125km, 8 days) on the Portuguese Coastal Camino might be what you need. Twice daily yoga and meditation combined with the world's most spiritually charged pilgrimage provides a unique experience and journey of transformation.



### SELF-GUIDED WALKING

Travelling self-guided allows you to walk from place to place progressing from one accommodation to the next in your own time. You walk without a guide, following our trail notes and area maps. We also provide comprehensive pre-departure planning and advice.

Luggage transfers are included on all trekking days, meaning you will only trek with a daypack.

The great part about self-guided travel is that you can choose your own travel dates (dependent on the availability of accommodation of course) and itineraries can be custom-made to suit your particular travel wishes and needs.

The Camino routes are well-defined trails and well signed, so you won't need advanced orienteering skills but you should be comfortable reading a map, referring to route notes and independently navigating your way along a trail.



### CYCLING THE CAMINO

On the Spanish Camino we also offer cycling as a way to travel along the trail. You can do a full cycling trip or choose to walk some of the way and cycle some of the way. There are plenty of options. The cycling conditions faced on the Camino are highly variable and range from sealed roads through to non-technical mountain biking over rough terrain with sometimes short steep climbs and descents. We provide high quality mountain bikes that are able to handle all the conditions. If you aren't into off-road cycling there are, in many cases, alternative routes that take you along roads rather than the Camino; however, you should still expect to do some cycling on unsealed tracks or trails at some point during your trip.

[View video: Camino by bike](#)

### CYCLING FAQS

#### 1. What is a dual platform pedal?

One side is shaped like a regular pedal and the other side is compatible with Shimano cycling shoes.

#### 2. What size bike frames do we use?

15–21 inch

#### 3. What type of bikes do we use?

'Crave' Specialized mountain bikes.

#### 4. What if I have a problem with the bike en route?

The bikes are serviced between each trip and replaced new each year. There are service centres along the route and our support staff on the ground in Spain. If you have any significant problems you can catch a taxi with your bike and take it to the nearest repair centre. This would be coordinated with our cycling partners in Spain.

#### 5. What are the hardest days cycling?

On a full length trip starting in Pamplona some of the most difficult days are cycling up to the high points and where the terrain is both hilly and off road. These include going over Alto del Perdon, the section between Rabanal del Camino and O Cebriero, any days that are long, and also where you are sharing the path.

#### 6. How would you advise someone to train for a Camino cycling trip?

Cycle the distances you would be cycling on the Camino including uphill/downhill and off-road and get your body used to being in the saddle for long days before you leave home.

#### 7. Why don't you provide helmets?

Hygiene reasons.

#### 8. Why is safety more of a concern on cycling trips than walking trips?

You are more exposed to cold; you may encounter slippery, muddy conditions, and you have less control over rough terrain. You may also not be as visible to walkers you share the Camino with. The bikes do not have bells to warn walkers of your approach.

#### 9. How many kilometres does a cyclist have to ride to get their Compostela?

200km

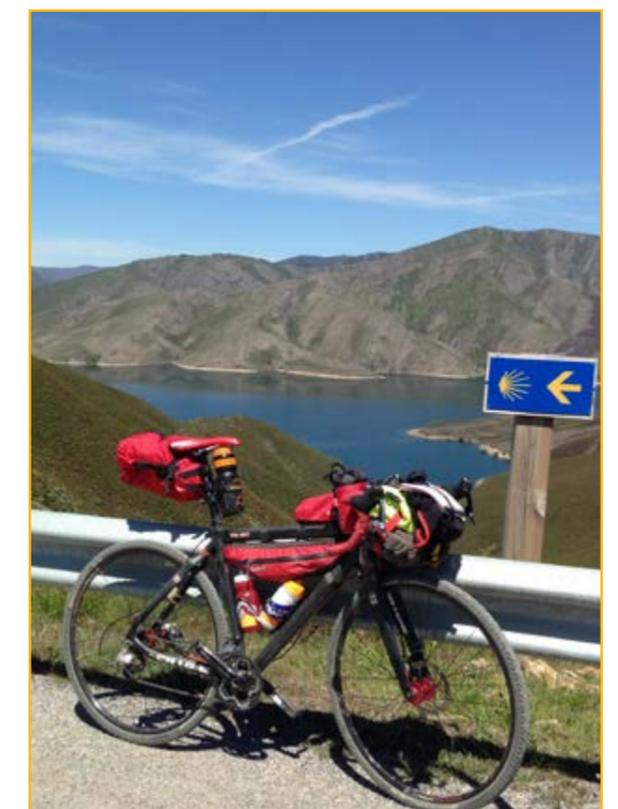
#### 10. What's the best thing about cycling the Camino?

It's one of the most epic bike rides in the world. Riders come for the spirit lifting journey and to take on a challenge like no other.

### RESOURCES

Resources to help you plan your trip:

- RAW Travel website: [www.rawtravel.com](http://www.rawtravel.com)
- Camino Information site (RAW Travel) with links to recommended books and videos, photos of all the route sections, downloads & FAQs: [www.caminodesantiago.com.au](http://www.caminodesantiago.com.au)
- Films: The Way; Six Ways to Santiago
- Camino Online Forum: Answers to every questions there is about the Camino – just type in their search term.





## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

### The Santiago Botafumeiro

The Santiago Botafumeiro (Bot A Fum Ey O) is one of the most famous and popular symbols of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. The Botafumeiro is a large thurible that hangs by a system of pulleys from the main dome of the Cathedral and swings toward the side naves.

This giant incense burner weighs 53kg, measures 1.5m and rises 20m. It is swung by eight men (called tiraboleiros) and reaches speeds of over 60km per hour above the congregation.

Its original purpose was to mitigate the smell of the thousands of pilgrims gathered in the church, who often had travelled for hundreds of miles with limited access to showers and baths.

The Botafumeiro is used for liturgical reasons, in the same way as a priest would use a censer at the altar. It operates during the Cathedral's main solemnities during the entrance procession or at the end of the Eucharist. The purpose of this great censer is to symbolise the true attitude of the believer. In the same way that the smoke from the incense rises to the top of the temple's naves, so must the prayers of the pilgrims rise to reach the heart of God.

The Botafumeiro is swung on Holy days, often at the 12 noon pilgrim mass, and when it is paid for by a group. The use of flash photography is prohibited in the Cathedral at all times.



## SECTION 1: INSPIRATION

### CAMINO INFORMATION WEBSITE

On our dedicated Camino website you'll find all you need to know about the Camino Francés, the most popular route, including photos, walking stages, videos, resources, reviews and lots more.

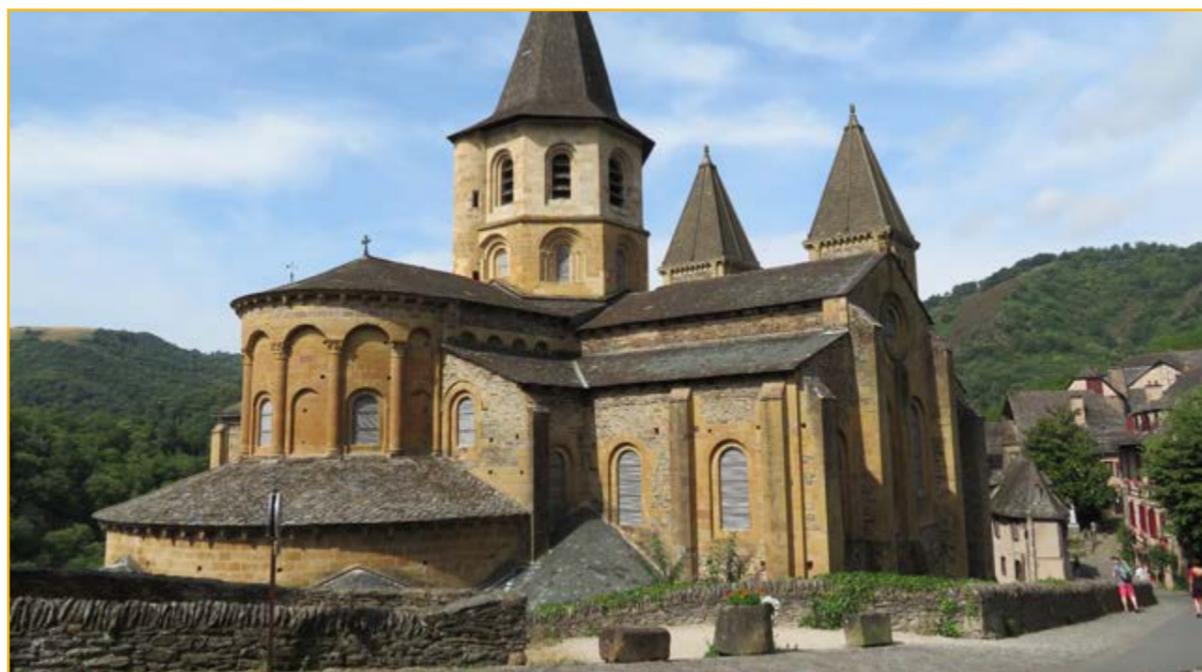
[www.caminodesantiago.com.au](http://www.caminodesantiago.com.au)

### RAW TRAVEL INSIGHTS (BLOGS)

Written by our Camino Destination Experts, our RAW Insights about the Camino routes are great background reading. Here's a few of our favourites:

- [Pilgrim passports and compostelas](#)
- [The meaning of stone crosses on the Camino](#)
- [St James Feast Day – the most iconic day on the Camino calendar](#)
- [Wine of the Camino de Santiago](#)
- [Planes, trains & automobiles: Getting to the Camino de Santiago](#)
- [Indulge your senses on Le Puy Camino](#)

- [Celebrating 30 years of the Santiago de Compostela pilgrim routes](#)
- [How to prepare your mind and body for a long-distance walk](#)
- [Culture and gastronomy at the Santiago City Market](#)
- [The story of Fatima](#)
- [Cape Finisterre – Pilgrimage to the end of the world](#)
- [Only 2 weeks on the Camino?](#)
- [Why walk the Portuguese Coastal Camino](#)
- [Washing on the Camino](#)
- [Why stay at the Parador Santiago de Compostela](#)
- [Packing for the Camino](#)
- [Getting to and taking the first steps from St Jean Pied de Port](#)
- [How to travel well in Spain with dietary intolerances](#)



## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO



- [Lunches on the Camino](#)
- [How to access money on the Camino de Santiago](#)
- [The Santiago Botofumeiro](#)
- [Trekking poles](#)
- [Hiking boots](#)
- [Information about travel insurance](#)
- [Lisbon's festival of sardines](#)
- [You know you've walked the Camino when...](#)
- [Taking my yoga on a hike through Spain](#)
- [Pamplona - more than bulls](#)

### CAMINO APPS

- [Camino de Santiago app](#)
- [TrekRight's Camino app](#)
- [www.strava.com/mobile](http://www.strava.com/mobile)
- [www.mapmywalk.com/app/](http://www.mapmywalk.com/app/)

### BOOKS ABOUT THE CAMINO

There are nearly as many books about the Camino as there are kilometers of it! Here are some of the more popular and useful ones, as recommended by RAW Travel staff. By no means is this a complete collection. These books will give you great insight into what drives tens of thousands of people of all nationalities and creeds to make long, exhausting walks across France, Spain and Portugal.

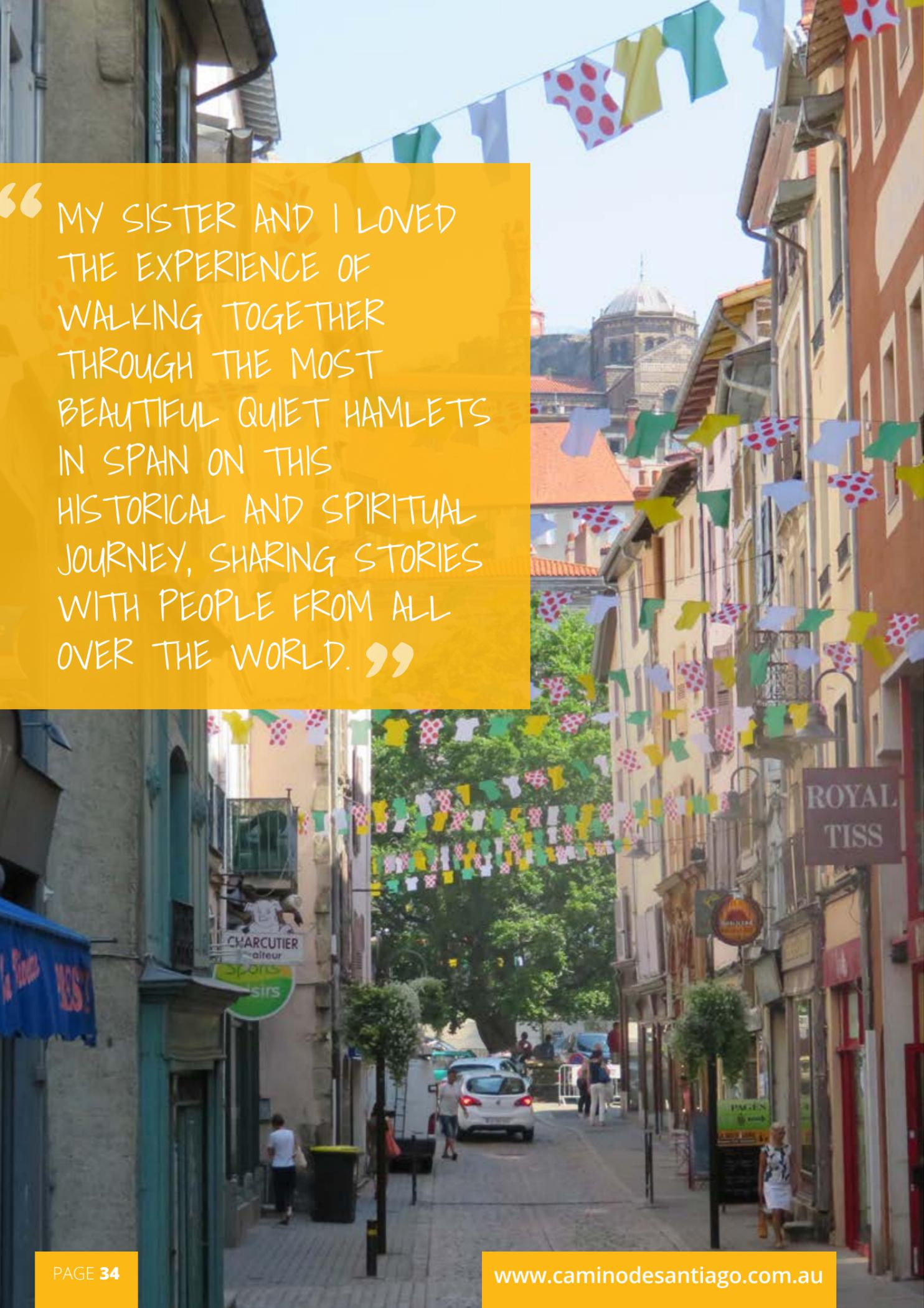


#### **A Pilgrim's Guide to the Camino de Santiago by John Brierley**

(Camino Guides, 16th edition, 2019)

Foremost among the English-language guidebooks is John Brierley's book and the one which we give to our clients who are walking

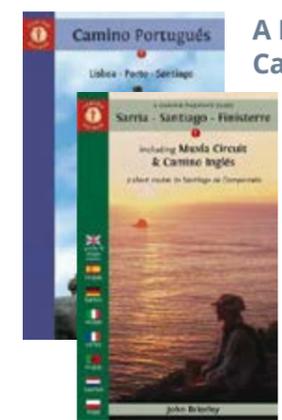
the Camino Francés. It has detailed walking stages and maps and personal reflections.



“ MY SISTER AND I LOVED THE EXPERIENCE OF WALKING TOGETHER THROUGH THE MOST BEAUTIFUL QUIET HAMLETS IN SPAIN ON THIS HISTORICAL AND SPIRITUAL JOURNEY, SHARING STORIES WITH PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. ”

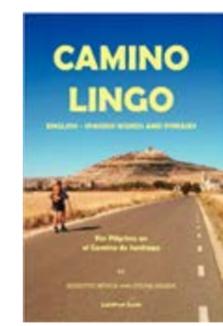
# CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

Also by John Brierley:



## A Pilgrim's Guide to the Camino Portugués

(which includes information on the Coastal Route)



## Camino Lingo

(Lightfoot Guide by Reinette Novoa)

Over 650 English/Spanish words relating specifically to the Camino pilgrimage with simplified pronunciation – including a few curse words should you need them!

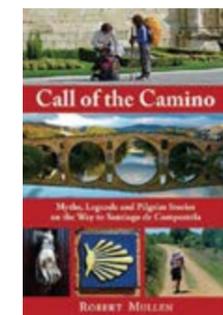


## Every Pilgrim's Guide to Walking to Santiago de Compostela

by Peter Müller

Co-published with the Confraternity of St James, the UK's leading organisation for promoting pilgrimage to Santiago.

Stage-by-stage guide with places of interest, plus prayers, blessings and spiritual exercises to nourish the pilgrim spirit and deepen the pilgrimage experience.



## Call of the Camino: Myths, Legends and Pilgrim Stories on the Way to Santiago de Compostela

by Robert Mullen

The experiences of an ordinary man on the pilgrim's path are charted

in this narrative that walks along the Camino Francés. The history of the Camino is recounted, as well as several of the myths, legends, and miracle stories that have become attached and given special meaning to this itinerary.



## A Slow Walk Across Spain

by Karen Manwaring

This book by a Melbourne-based writer is bursting with inspiration, practical information and history. It includes kit lists, diary excerpts, local recipes

and beautiful images as well as a removable map, useful websites and reading materials, and of course all written with an Australian perspective.

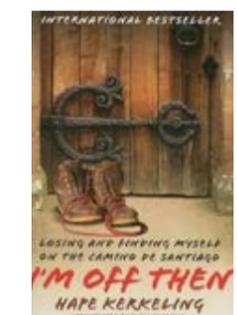


## Sinning Across Spain. Walking the Camino

by Ailsa Piper

Ailsa hiked alone to the centuries-old pilgrim destination of Santiago de Compostela. When faced with the untimely death of her husband, Peter, her

'true north', Ailsa returned to the Camino trail, this time in France, to walk through her sorrow.

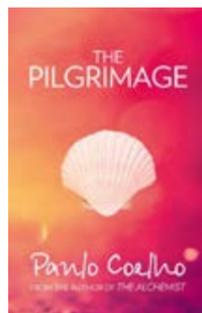


## I'm Off Then. Losing and Finding Myself on the Camino de Santiago

by Hape Kerkeling

Overweight, overworked, and physically unfit, Kerkeling was an unlikely candidate to make the arduous pilgrimage across

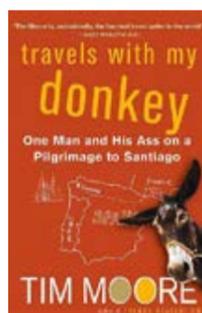
the French Alps to the Spanish Shrine of St. James.



### The Pilgrimage

by Paulo Coelho

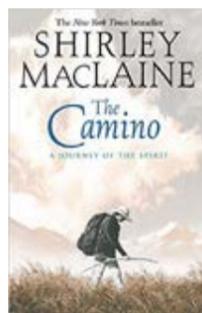
Based on the author's journey along the Camino and told of as a tale of mystery and suspense with as usual deeper spiritual meaning. It contains meditation exercises at the end of nearly every chapter.



### Travels with my Donkey; One Man and his Ass on the Camino de Santiago

by Tim Moore

Funny and deeply irreverent account of one man's journey with his donkey along the Camino.



### The Camino: A Journey of the Spirit

by Shirley MacLaine

A personal account of MacLaine's journey – along with her out of body experiences – on the Camino when it was at its nadir in the 1980s.

### Further reading

*Le Chemin de St-Jacques du Velay aux Pyrénées* by J.P. Siréjol & Louis Laborde-Balen

*Miam-Miam-Dodo* by Jacques Clouteau

*Way of St. James: Le Puy to the Pyrenees – A Walkers' Guide* by Alison Raju

*The Lightfoot Guide to the Via Podiensis: The Route to Santiago de Compostela in France, Le Puy-en-Velay to Roncevaux* by Angelynn Maya

*Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* by Robert Louis Stevenson

*The Generous Earth* by Philip Oyler

*Three Rivers of France: Dordogne, Lot, Tarn* by Freda White

*Clear Waters Rising: A Mountain Walk Across Europe* by Nicholas Crane

*La Belle France: A Short History* by Alistair Horne

*The Discovery of France* by Graham Robb

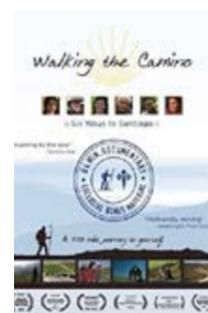
### FILMS ABOUT THE CAMINO



### The Way (2012)

A powerful and inspirational film about family, friends and the challenges we face while navigating this ever-changing and complicated world. Tom goes to France to deal with the tragic loss of his son. Rather than return home, Tom decides

to embark on the historical pilgrimage 'The Way of St. James' to honour his son's desire to finish the journey.



### Walking the Camino: Six Ways to Santiago

This documentary follows pilgrims from all walks of life as they attempt to cross an entire country on foot with only a backpack, a pair of boots and an open mind. Witness the Camino's magnetic and

miraculous power to change lives. Driven by an inexplicable calling and a grand sense of adventure, each pilgrim throws themselves heart-and-soul into their physical trek to Santiago and, most importantly, their personal journey to themselves. The characters are colorful and real and their stories are moving, deep, and relatable. Each of the pilgrims came to the Camino for a different reason and each one left changed for good.

### RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

At RAW Travel we believe in responsible travel, which means a lot more than staying safe and respecting the local culture and customs in the country you are visiting. You are responsible for making this trip the best it can be – read all your notes we send you, use the guidebook, learn some Spanish/French/Portuguese phrases, make sure you are comfortable with self-guided walking, do the right pre-trip training, read our blog posts, buy the right gear, wear in your boots, practice walking with poles – and make sure you are prepared to enjoy your Camino journey. The more prepared you are, the more you will enjoy this epic, transformational pilgrimage.

### EXTENDING YOUR TRIP WITH A RELAXING BREAK

We can design a city break to your requirements (minimum 3 night's accommodation booking required).

### Santiago

Walking through the old pedestrianised streets of Santiago is like walking back in time and you cannot help but immerse yourself in the history of the millions of pilgrims who passed here before you. The city beats around the rhythm of the Santiago cathedral but is also a wonderful place to catch up with pilgrims you have met en route and indulge in the wonderful food (lots of seafood) and vibrant Galician culture.

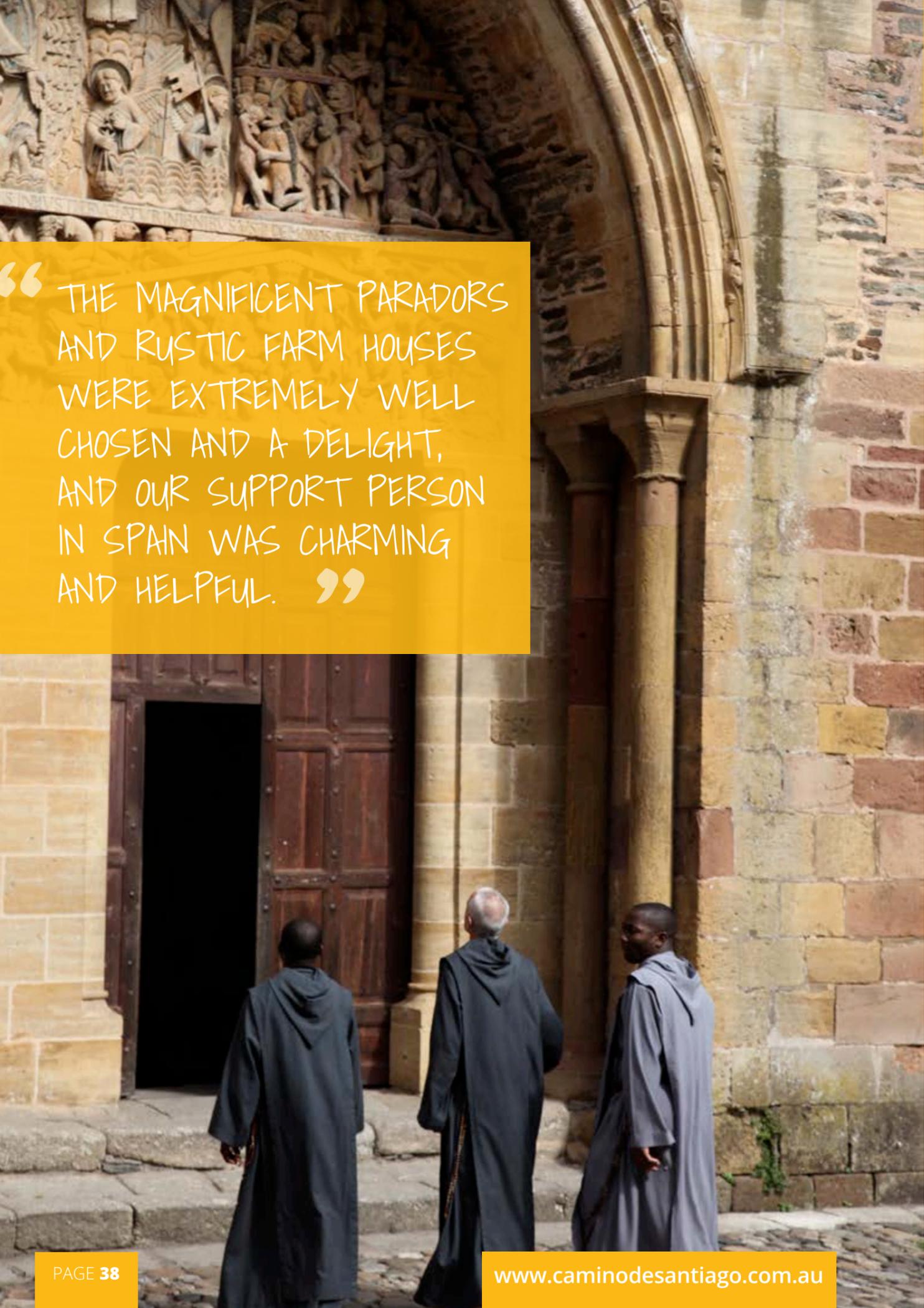
### Pamplona

Famous for the running of the bulls, Pamplona also has a rich history dating back to Roman times. It was also the home of Hemingway and has a vibrant tapas and wine culture.

### Leon

Explore the beautiful Santa Maria de Leon Cathedral renowned for its marvellous stained-glass windows, and the historical centre of the city. In the evening the narrow





“ THE MAGNIFICENT PARADORS AND RUSTIC FARM HOUSES WERE EXTREMELY WELL CHOSEN AND A DELIGHT, AND OUR SUPPORT PERSON IN SPAIN WAS CHARMING AND HELPFUL. ”

## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

streets and plazas come alive when locals flood the local bodegas, cafes and restaurants.

### Barcelona

Spend a few days in this vibrant coastal culturally city rich with art, history and fabulous food. If you base yourself near the famous Las Ramblas, many of the iconic sights are on your doorstep or can be reached by the easy hop-on hop-off bus system.

### Madrid

Madrid is a beautiful city that has evolved into one of the richest culinary capitals of Europe. It has more bars than any other city on Earth and stunning medieval and contemporary architecture. The city's world-class galleries include the Museo del Prado, Centro de Arte Reina Sofía and Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza.

### Photographing the Secrets of Santiago

While you are in Spain we highly recommend a practical half-day photo tour of Santiago (€60; minimum 6 people) with our wonderful photographer and Spanish guide Germán Limeres. The tour begins with with coffee and a brief introduction to photography (speed, composition, framing etc) then together you will discover and capture on film the magic of this city.

European cultural and artistic currents have left magnificent works of art in Santiago de Compostela. You will have the opportunity to photograph incredible scenes and places in this magical holy city, including the Santiago Cathedral, a masterpiece of Romanesque art; the Obradoiro Square, one of the world's most beautiful urban scenes; the lively Rúa do Franco; the food market with delicious local products, the charming Museum of Galician People, and more.

You'll love practicing street and architectural photography and taking that perfect shot! Any type of camera is suitable – compact, bridge, SLRs, even your smartphone camera.

If you're a foodie, Germán also offers a wonderful half-day photo tour of the gastronomic delights of Santiago, beginning with a typical breakfast of 'chocolate con churros' in the centre of the Old Town. You will visit and photograph the vibrant lively food market, with its fruits and vegetables, flowers, cheese, cured meats and fish. The tour includes tapas and finishes in the Rúa

do Franco, with tastings of the best Galician cheese and wines.

For dates, bookings and payment (required 5 days in advance of the workshop) contact Germán: phone/WhatsApp on +34 619041749 or email [germanlimeres@gmail.com](mailto:germanlimeres@gmail.com)



## SECTION 2: TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

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### WHEN TO WALK

#### Camino Francés

The cooler months of spring (March to June) and then early autumn (September and October) are good options and less busy but there can be snow on the ground into May in the mountains. Even though both times can have rainy days and cold evenings, they could be considered optimal times for walking. Accommodation is open after the winter break and generally availability is good.

July and August are hotter and busier and accommodation can fill up quickly in these months, so should be booked quite well in advance. The winter months are for fit and experienced walkers; the weather is cold and snow is common particularly on higher ground. The Napoleon route across the Pyrenees is closed between March and November, so alternative (sometimes longer) routes have to be taken. Accommodation is scarcer, the daylight hours are reduced, there are not as many people on the trail, and many of the smaller properties close for the winter season.

#### Portuguese Coastal Camino

This route can be walked from March through to October. Its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean ensures that it is perfect for walking during the European summer months (June through to August). It is even possible to pack your bathers and stop for a dip in the ocean on the hotter days!

April to May or September to October are good options for those seeking somewhat cooler weather. There can be generous rainfall in this region at times. June, July and August are the months with the least rainfall. Because Portugal sits on the Atlantic coast, the weather can change rapidly and you will need to take wet weather gear regardless of what time of year you choose to walk.

#### Le Puy Camino

The best time to walk the Le Puy route is between April and October. Outside of these months a lot of amenities could be closed. In the springtime from April to May you can

expect beautiful green scenery and flowers, but this is also the wettest time to walk. June and July are a great time to walk because you get the maximum amount of daylight: the sun rises at about 6am and sets about 10pm.

Temperatures are usually pleasant (mid-20°C), but be aware that it can get very hot if there is a heatwave. If it is particularly hot, it's best to get up with the sun, have a quick bite to eat, pack up and be on your way before 7am. By the time the day heats up, you are approaching your destination, even after a stop for a second breakfast along the way. An early start also means the opportunity for photographing in a beautiful, even light.

In August, the French themselves traditionally take their holidays. In September and October temperatures start to cool down but generally this is a great time to walk. The weather is dry and stable in September and often cooler and wetter in October.

#### Walking in winter

Participating in a trip during winter (December/February) should only be undertaken by experienced cold weather walkers. You need to train and prepare for average temperatures of between 0°C and 8°C; it's even colder in the mountains. Expect few people on the trail. There is usually snow on the mountain passes and this can be of a safety concern to some walkers. There are reduced daylight hours for walking (9am to 6pm), accommodation is limited and fewer cafés are open (for rest stops). Visibility is reduced so you must always walk with a head torch, wet weather gear and adequate food. RAW Travel support staff do not work over these months.



### GETTING FIT FOR THIS WALK

Walking is one of the most natural things to do, so you may feel that you are already in good enough shape. However, you will be walking for many hours over successive days carrying a daypack, which is likely very different to your current walking schedule.

We recommend that you undertake a training program according to your level of fitness for at least 3 months leading up to your departure. Regular exercise prior to the trip will allow you to build your fitness steadily so that you will enjoy and complete the trip with a smile and energy left over.

Moderate activities such as walking pose little health risk but before starting any new exercise program we recommend that you see your doctor for a check-up, particularly if you have a medical condition, are aged over 40 years, are overweight or haven't exercised in a long time.

- Find out more:  
👉 [Getting Walking Fit for the Camino: How to prepare for your multi-day trek.](#)



See also 'Is this the right trip for me?' on p25.

### ACCOMMODATION STYLE

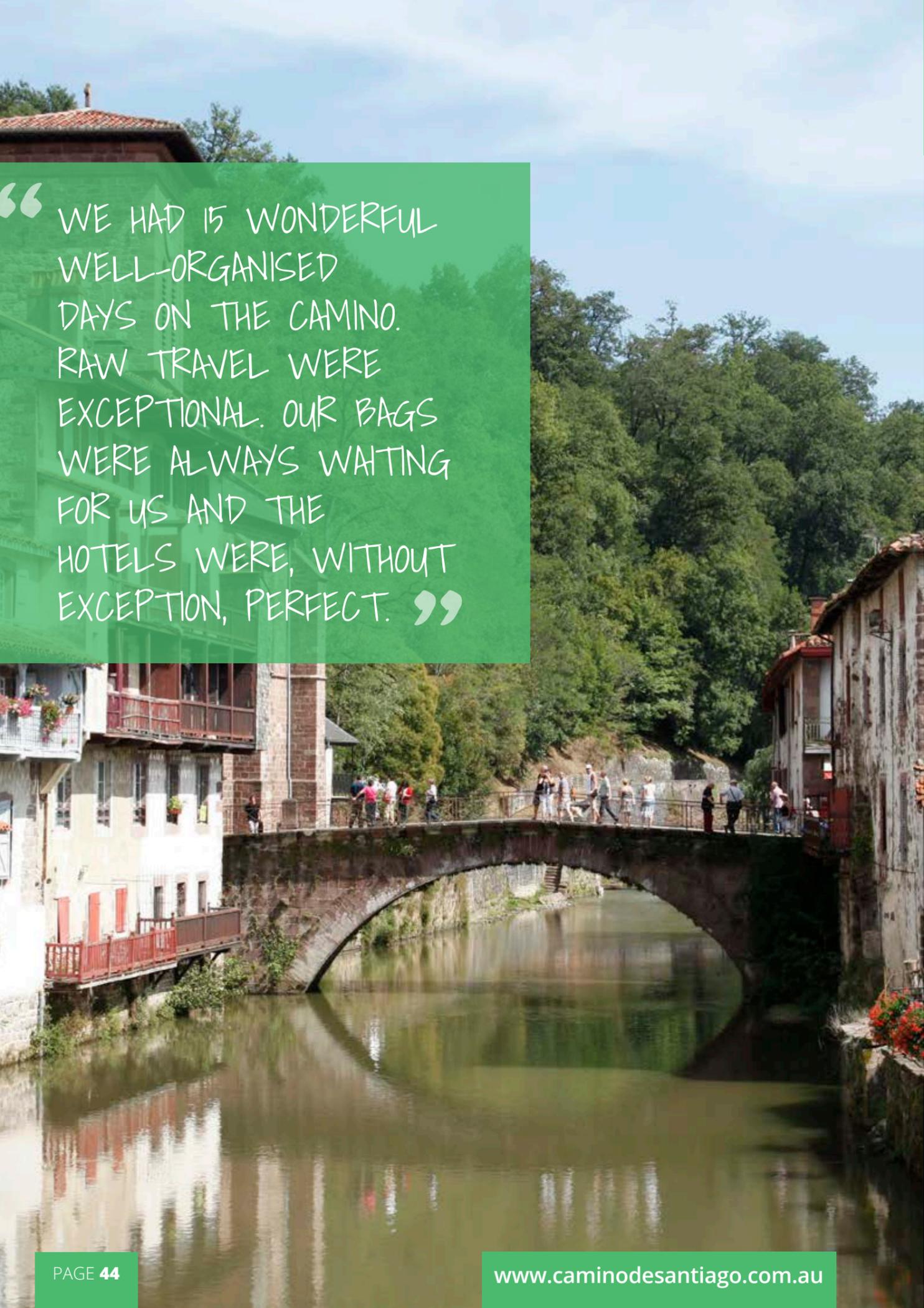
Accommodation can be one of the most memorable highlights of your Camino, especially along the Camino Francés where wonderful historical accommodation exists, like the Santiago Parador pictured below.

We have combed the trail and the surrounding villages to find the best accommodation along the Camino routes so that you enjoy each overnight stay as much as the walking.

On our Camino trips we only book places with character and welcoming hosts. You will stay in a variety of accommodation, including (depending on the route chosen), charming *casa rurales* (country B&Bs), historic hotels and fine guest houses. Bedrooms are all en suite and comfort levels are high. Most hotels along the Camino tend to have WIFI available for their guests.

The hosts enjoy sharing knowledge of the local area and history with their guests and they are accustomed to welcoming Anglophones into their establishments. As with anything in life, your extra effort will be rewarded, so practising some French/Spanish/Portuguese (however rudimentary) is highly recommended.





“ WE HAD 15 WONDERFUL WELL-ORGANISED DAYS ON THE CAMINO. RAW TRAVEL WERE EXCEPTIONAL. OUR BAGS WERE ALWAYS WAITING FOR US AND THE HOTELS WERE, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, PERFECT. ”

## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

You'll also meet lots of interesting travellers who value the same creature comforts as you.

Our commitment is to bring you your preferred accommodation option wherever it is available. A full list of your accommodation will be given to you at the time of confirming your booking; with flexible dates we have to confirm availability on your chosen days in any given property. If our preferred property is full on your chosen dates then we reserve the right to book you into an alternative (equivalent) accommodation of which you will be informed in advance of your trip.

### MEAL INCLUSIONS

On our Camino trips, daily breakfasts are included (and some dinners – see individual trip itineraries). You will be passing through many towns and villages, so there is no shortage of places to stop and eat. You can choose where to eat lunch and dinner on your own schedule and budget. We encourage you to make the most of the opportunity to sample the dishes and specialties of the regions that you walk through. There is nothing like a good day's walking to enhance your appreciation of a well-cooked meal, and it sets you up for the next day ahead.

### SPAIN

The 'menu del dia' offers excellent value at around €9–12 for 3 courses. If you prefer 'a la carte' then you need to budget €20–25 per meal.



### Typical pilgrims' menu

#### *Bebidas (Beverages)*

- Vino de mesa – roja/blanco (glass of house wine red or white)
- Agua con/sin gas (water with or without carbonation)
- Soda

#### *Entrantes (First Course)*

- Sopa (soup)
- Paella (traditional rice dish containing a variety of seafood, meat and vegetables)
- Patatas bravas (fried potatoes served with spicy tomato sauce)

#### *Plato Principal (Main Course)*

- Pollo al horno (roast chicken)
- Bistec (steak)
- Chuletas de cerdo (pork chops)
- Pescado (fish)

#### *Postres (Dessert)*

- Flan (custard with a caramel sauce)
- Yogurt
- Fruit

#### *Foods to try*

- Tapas/pintxos
- Tortilla (Spanish omelette)
- White asparagus and Chilindron sauce (Navarra, Basque Country)
- Pulpo 'Octopus', traditional Galician dish in Melide

### Read more:

[👉 How to travel well in Spain with dietary restrictions](#)

[👉 Bar Gaucho: The Best Pintxos Bar in Pamplona](#)

[👉 Lunches on the Camino](#)

### PORTUGAL

Portugal offers a wide range of culinary delights. Some of our recommendations to try are:

#### *Pastéis de Nata*

Portugal has a great selection of cakes, pastries and sweet treats. The most famous one is the custard tart from Belém and also the 'pastel de nata'. These are crunchy pastry with exquisitely sweet custard. A real treat!

#### *Cod*

You can't get more traditional Portuguese cuisine than salted cod or 'bacalhau'. You will find it sometimes grilled, steamed or with cream, accompanied with rice, potatoes, olives and salad throughout the country. A must try on the Camino.



#### *Grilled sardines*

Grilled sardines or 'sardinha assada' are another classic Portuguese dish, celebrated from North to South.

#### *Caldo verde*

Portugal's classic 'sopa de caldo verde' or simply 'caldo verde' was originally from the North of the country and is similar to its Galician 'cousin', 'caldo verde'. It includes collard greens, potatoes and onion, and sometimes also sausage or other pork meat. Vegetarians must be careful.

#### *Oysters*

Oyster lovers are in for a real treat. The best oysters in Galicia are found in Redondela, located on this Camino. Fresh and succulent ready to enjoy!

### FRANCE

A range of wonderful food is on offer in France. While you take breakfast at your lodging there is always opportunity for 'elevenes' on the trail! It is common to find a boulangerie or bar, so you may choose to buy croissants or other pastries there with a coffee.

A typical lunch is a fresh baguette with cheese, sausage, paté or a tin of mackerel, and a tomato or a few lettuce leaves for colour. When buying lunch supplies it is worth remembering that shops in small villages nearly always close between 12.30pm and about 3pm on weekdays. On Saturdays they close at 12.30pm and stay that way until Monday, or even Tuesday. However, you will be coming through a succession of towns where it is always possible to find food on any day and time.

In the early evening, in the lead up to dinner, perhaps take an apéritif at a bar in a local restaurant, if not included at your hotel. Then enjoy the rich and varied cuisine for which France is famous.



### MAPS

#### **Le Puy Camino**

The association of French walking clubs, the Fédération Française de la Randonnée Pédestre (FFRP), publishes very useful guides (topo-guides) for many of the tracks. The guides are in French but are quite easy to follow, even for non-French speakers. All the TOP 100 and TOP 25 maps, and the topo-guides, can be bought on the Institut Géographique National (IGN) website. Géoportail is the French equivalent of Google Maps, but with far greater detail. Useful for designing your own route. It is surprisingly difficult to find a useful map of all the GRs and GRPs; check out the [FFRP website](#). A good site for general information about most GRs is [GR-Infos](#).

### HEALTH

No vaccinations are compulsory. Tetanus is recommended.

Although there are no specific health requirements for this trip, to participate fully in an active travel experience you need to be in good physical health. Read the trip itineraries on the website thoroughly and then realistically self-assess your physical ability to complete the trip as described. Our Destination Experts are available to answer any questions you have to help you choose the most suitable trip for you.

You should consult your doctor if you have any medical conditions to assess your suitability before departure. You also need to declare, for assessment, any pre-existing medical conditions to your travel insurance provider.

It is essential that all guests have comprehensive travel insurance, medical insurance or ambulance insurance.

#### **First aid supplies**

We recommend that you carry first aid supplies for common ailments as well as any personal medical requirements. Your first aid supplies should include (but not be limited to):

- Band-aids, bandages and dressings
- Blister pads for your feet and zinc tape
- Antiseptic for cuts and scrapes
- High factor sunscreen
- Headache tablets
- Diarrhoea treatment

We recommend using zinc oxide tape/ moleskin to cover 'hot spots' on your feet to stop potential blisters developing.





## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

### Preventing blisters

The key to preventing blisters and avoiding unnecessary pain is to eliminate friction. Different things work for different people, but one thing's for sure: blisters can be prevented with a little bit of effort. The best strategy is to be keep an awareness of your how your feet are feeling and recognise if there is discomfort or a 'hot spot' developing. Take off your boots and see if a sore spot is developing before it turns into a blister.

Here's a range of blister prevention strategies different clients have found work for them. There are no hard and fast rules here; what works for one person may not work for another person as feet are very individual! Why not test a few out on your training walks and see if they are effective for you.

1. Buy comfortable, well-fitting walking boots.
2. Toughen up. Condition your feet by walking, gradually building intensity, pace and distance. Remember to moisturise your feet with a good quality foot cream after showering.
3. Adjust your laces during your walk so that your shoes fit perfectly. Foot swelling and different temperatures and terrain will affect the fit of your boots.
4. Hiking wool is a fine wool that wraps around your toes and prevents them rubbing together; many of our clients swear by it!
5. Put cornflour or talcum powder in your socks to keep your feet dry.
6. Keep your toenails short.
7. Invest in good socks. Use moisture-wicking socks and consider double-layers. Experiment with the thickness of your socks, and change them whenever your feet get wet.
8. Apply tape (such as Fixomul) or dressings to reduce friction. It can be difficult to perfect the technique and can be time consuming, so you'll need to practise.
9. Always carry blister pads in your daypack. The cushioned gel pad immediately reduces pain and promotes fast healing. You can even use them to prevent blisters.
10. See a podiatrist if you think the way you walk might predispose you to blisters. You might need orthotics.

### Blister treatment

Broken blisters that are leaking fluid should be disinfected and bandaged. Small blisters that are not painful should be left alone because the best protection against infection is the blister's own skin. These will heal by themselves and will be reabsorbed in a few days. If you do have blisters, shower in the evening to allow your feet to be fully dry when you dress them and set off in the morning.

### VISAS

Australian citizens visiting Schengen countries (of which Spain, France, Portugal, Switzerland and Italy are part) do not need to apply for visas if staying for not more than 90 out of 180 days. All travellers must have a minimum of 6 months validity (after their date of return into Australia) on their passport. Please confirm these requirements with your chosen airline.



### SMART TRAVELLER

Be informed. Be prepared. Stay smart while you are travelling. Smartraveller is provided by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It provides up-to-date travel advice for Australians travelling overseas. You can subscribe to receive free updates, including about widespread health or security issues.

👉 [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

If you are travelling on any trip with RAW Travel you will require comprehensive travel insurance. We sell Cover-More travel insurance and you can easily get a quote over the phone. No one plans for anything to go wrong, but if it does we want to make sure that you have adequate cover.

We highly recommend you purchase cover as soon as you start booking your travel arrangements, and include cancellation cover. Your travel insurance must also include emergency evacuation and medical cover.

Please contact your insurance provider to ensure your policy covers you for your specific needs. Carry a copy of your policy and your insurer's 24 hour contact details.

Any advice given here is a general guide only. Please research and purchase a policy best suited to your needs and circumstances.

• Find out more: 👉 [10 things you need to know about travel insurance](#)

### WHAT TO PACK

Your main luggage is transported for you on the trip, so you carry only a daypack. Your trip cost includes daily transfer of one piece of luggage per person. Pack as lightly as possible and keep the weight of your main bag to under 15kg. Because of limited space available in the vehicle please avoid taking hard, bulky suitcases.



For an additional cost we can transport an additional bag to Santiago de Compostela and store it at our base hotel.

You will need to bring a good daypack to carry a few clothing layers and personal effects. We recommend carrying 2 litres of water.

### SPECIALIST GEAR RECOMMENDED FOR THIS WALK

#### Waterproof walking boots

Waterproof walking boots with full ankle support are recommended for this walk. Make sure your footwear is well worn in and comfortable. We also recommend hiking socks with at least one spare pair, as you will find these minimise the chance of getting blisters (see p49).

• Find out more: 👉 [What boots should I buy and how do I look after them?](#)

#### Trekking poles

Trekking poles will give you extra stability, especially when you are tired. We definitely recommend them if you have – or have had – any issues at all with sore knees, ankles or hips.

• Find out more: 👉 [Do I need trekking poles and which ones should I buy?](#)

### Mobile phone

On self-guided trips you should carry a mobile phone. Mobile coverage is fairly consistent though there may be the odd place where it cannot be relied upon. Global roaming charges are very expensive and pre-paid cards such as Travel Sim are a good idea: 👉 [www.travelsim.net.au](http://www.travelsim.net.au)

### OTHER ITEMS TO PACK

#### Travel documents

- Passport (with photocopies or scanned back-up copy)
- Copy of travel insurance policy and 24-hour contact number
- Airline and other ticket(s)
- Credit card and spending money in cash (Euros)
- Guidebooks, phrasebooks

#### Personal Items

- Blister kit, rehydration salts, mosquito repellent, sunscreen and first-aid kit including any personal medication you use
- Toiletries
- Water bottle(s) or hydration pack (2+ litres recommended)
- Hat and high UV sunglasses
- Comfortable daypack
- Waterproof bags for rain protection while walking

#### Clothing

- Several pairs of walking socks
- T-shirts (lightweight quick drying fabric)
- Long-sleeved trekking shirts
- Shorts/lightweight trousers
- Warm fleece, sweater, thermals, hat, gloves (during winter, spring and autumn)
- Waterproof and breathable jacket and over trousers
- Spare pair of trainers
- Swimwear

### HOW TO BOOK YOUR RAW TRAVEL TRIP

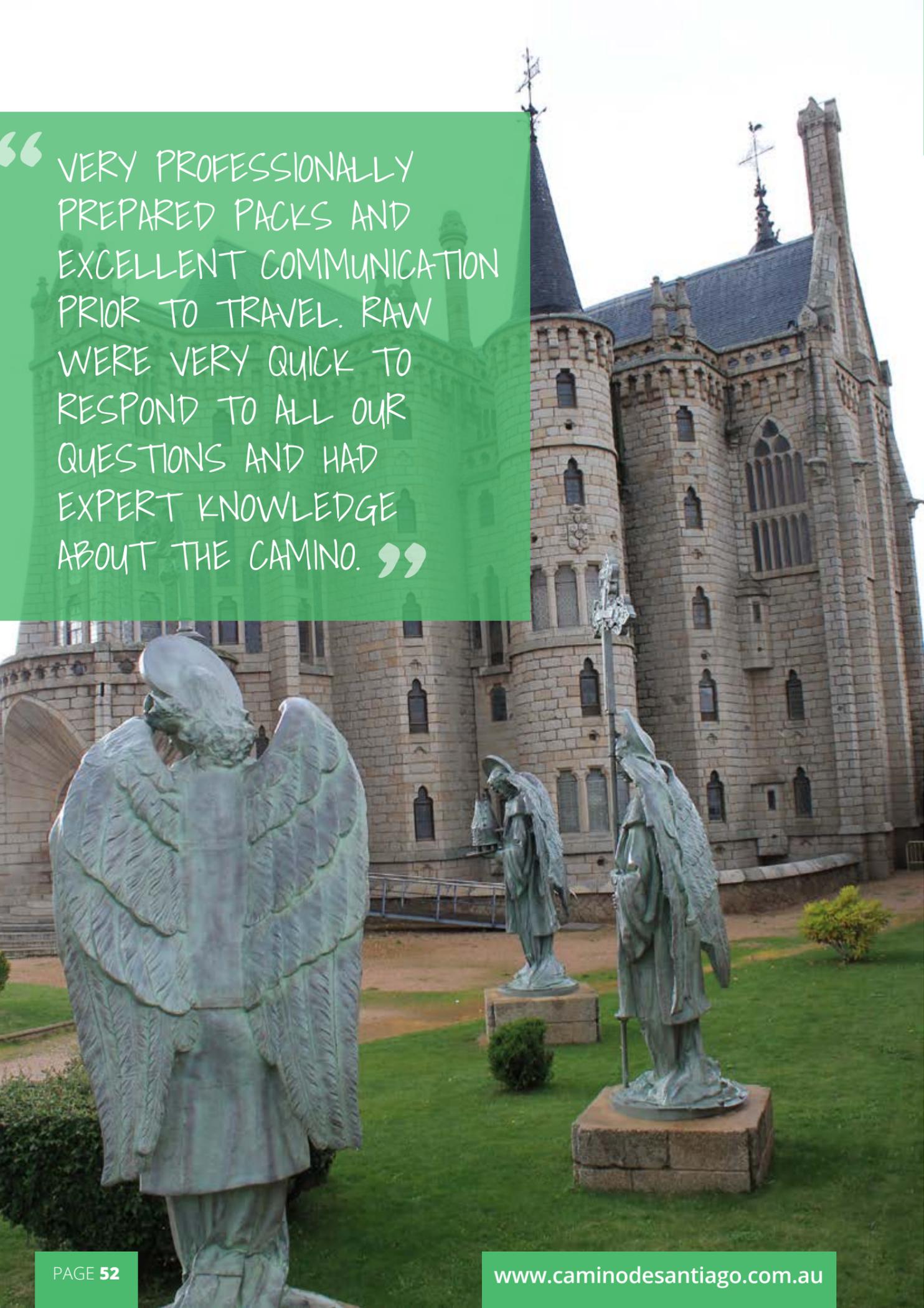
Before making a booking, please read this Destination Guide thoroughly to make sure that the Camino is the right walking trip for you. We have compiled lots of important information about accommodation, food, fitness required, weather and what to expect so that you can make an informed decision. On our website, you'll also find detailed itineraries and other important information.

A deposit of AUD500 per person is due at the time of booking and balance of payment is required 8 weeks prior to travel. All quotes are subject to availability at the time of booking and valid for 7 days. Please contact your Destination Expert for your personalised booking link.

When you submit your booking form, you are committing to an itinerary and travel dates. When arrangements are confirmed, non-refundable deposits are paid to suppliers to secure these bookings. Any changes to the itinerary and/or travel dates after arrangements have been confirmed will incur additional charges.



“VERY PROFESSIONALLY PREPARED PACKS AND EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION PRIOR TO TRAVEL. RAW WERE VERY QUICK TO RESPOND TO ALL OUR QUESTIONS AND HAD EXPERT KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE CAMINO.”



## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

### PARTICIPATION CONDITIONS

To travel with RAW Travel you must accept the [👉 booking conditions](#) (online at the time of booking), which include the following 'participation conditions':

*When booking on one of our trips the applicant understands that RAW Travel operates adventure holidays worldwide. In developing countries, the standards of accommodation, transport, safety, hygiene, telecommunication facilities, level of infrastructure development and medical facilities are not equivalent to those familiar to the applicant's usual living arrangements, or would find on a conventional holiday. This type of trip inherently involves a higher level of personal risk, which the applicant agrees to fully assume. The applicant acknowledges that travel on a RAW Travel trip requires a degree of flexibility, and understands that the trip's route, accommodation and modes of transport are subject to change without prior notice due to local circumstances. Should RAW Travel deem it advisable to amend an itinerary for any reason, it may do so by shortening, varying or re-routing any trip. These changes are binding and additional expenses will be charged to the applicant if the reason for any major alteration is outside RAW Travel's control.*

### RAW TRAVELLER'S CODE

By paying your deposit and completing your booking forms with us, you signal your agreement to the following RAW Traveller's Code:

- ✓ I have chosen a trip that suits my abilities, level of fitness, and state of health.
- ✓ I do not have any physical conditions or disabilities that are a hazard to me or other RAW travellers.
- ✓ I have a valid passport and all necessary visas and vaccinations required for travel.
- ✓ I will read the RAW Travel pre-trip materials about clothing, medical requirements, and culture-specific etiquette.

- ✓ I will respect the laws and customs of countries visited.
- ✓ I will follow environmental guidelines and regulations while on the trip in accordance with the RAW Travel leader's direction.
- ✓ I will respect the rights and privacy of other trip members.
- ✓ I understand that travel within a group invariably involves compromise to accommodate diverse desires, travel goals, personalities, and physical abilities of all group members.
- ✓ RAW Travel leaders may be required to improvise and exercise good faith, use discretion and/or make decisions based upon group consensus. These decisions may not always please each individual, but are intended to satisfy the larger desires of the group.
- ✓ I understand that RAW Travel reserves the right to refuse participation during a tour to anyone whose health or behaviour could impede the welfare or enjoyment of fellow guests. An individual may be asked to leave a trip if the leader feels that the person's continuing participation may prove detrimental to the individual or the group.
- ✓ I understand travelling off the beaten track means access to medical facilities and evacuation services may be limited.
- ✓ I understand the weather is out of RAW Travel's control.
- ✓ I will always wear a helmet when riding bikes.
- ✓ I will drink alcohol responsibly.

**RAW TRAVEL**  
ICONIC WALKS WORLDWIDE

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### GETTING TO THE START OF YOUR WALK

You will need to make your way to the meeting point hotel, which will be given to you once your booking is confirmed. If you are already in Europe, we can advise on regional airports you can use to get to your start point.

#### Camino Francés

If you are starting in...

- St Jean Pied de Port: Best international airport is Paris or Barcelona.
- Pamplona or Logrono: Best international airport is Barcelona or Madrid.
- Burgos, Leon, Sarria or Finisterre: Best international airport is Madrid.

There are trains that run to the main starting/finishing points of the Camino, including St-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Pamplona, Leon, Sarria and Santiago de Compostela.

If you are ending in Santiago de Compostela, the best departure international airport is Madrid.

- Read more: [👉 Getting to the Camino de Santiago](#)



### Portuguese Coastal Camino

International flights come into Lisbon or Porto. If your international flight arrives in Madrid, you can take a direct flight (1 hour) to Porto with airlines such as Ryanair, TAP Portugal, Air Europa and Iberia Airlines.

To travel to Porto from Lisbon by train takes about 3 hours; trains leave every hour between 6am and 9.30pm. Lisbon train stations where you can get a train to Porto are 'Lisboa Santa Apolonia' and 'Lisboa Oriente'. The best train station to arrive into in Porto is 'Porto Campanha'. You can book your train direct at: [👉 www.cp.pt](http://www.cp.pt) or [👉 www.raileurope.com](http://www.raileurope.com)

You can also take a domestic flight (50 minutes) into Porto from Lisbon with airlines such as Ryanair, TAP Portugal or Air Transat.

Travelling by bus from Lisbon to Porto takes about 3½ hours and generally runs hourly throughout the day. There are two bus companies which run this service, Rede Expressos and Autna.

- Read more: [👉 Travel to the Portuguese Coastal Camino](#)

### Le Puy Camino

International flights come into Lyon. Clermont-Ferrand Airport is the main airport of the Auvergne region. Airport transfers from both these airports are available on request. Please contact us for a quote. If you fly into Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport you will need to transfer to Lyon by train.

From the UK, take the Eurostar to Lille and change for Lyon. From Paris to Lyon by TGV is 3½ hours. From Lyon, change to the regional (TER) train to Le Puy via St Etienne (2½ hours). For more information see the SNCF (French train company) [👉 website](#)

If you travel by car to the meeting point, various parking options will be proposed. [👉 See route planner](#)

### LOCAL SUPPORT

Our local support staff are bilingual (fluent in Spanish and English). We will provide you with their contact details at the time of booking. They will be available to help you with any emergencies you may encounter along the way.

### HOW MUCH WATER TO CARRY

Dehydration is the biggest risk when undertaking a physical activity. It is vital to be aware of your fluid intake and to constantly drink water throughout the day, even when you do not feel thirsty.

You do not need to carry more than 2 litres of water on the Camino routes as there are frequent water stops along the way, including from fountains in villages. It is safe to drink (but you always assume any risks with your health) and this is how almost all pilgrims get their water. Always ensure you have enough to get to your next destination and on hot days carry at least two litres of water.

In France, any bar will happily refill your water bottles and will sometimes even offer to add 'sirop'. The other reliable source of water is graveyards, which always have a tap for people to water their flowers with.

### PILGRIM PASSPORTS & COMPOSTELAS

A pilgrim passport is part of your Camino experience and is provided by RAW Travel before your trip. While it is not strictly necessary to have one if you are not staying in Albergues they are still a great memento of your trip and will entitle you to your Compostela certificate once you reach Santiago.

You only need to walk 100km (or bike 200km) to earn a compostela, an official certificate of completion of the pilgrimage.

The Camino passport is an official Camino document and will be issued to you with your Camino pre-departure pack if you have booked a trip with RAW Travel. They can also be purchased for a few euros at one of the pilgrims offices on the Camino or from the [👉 Australian friends of the Camino](#).

The pilgrim's passport itself is a folded piece of card with space for 54 stamps. You will need to write your name clearly on the inside page before you travel.

- Read more: [👉 Pilgrim Passports & Compostelas](#)





# CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

## SIGNS AND WAYMARKERS

We will provide you with an excellent guidebook, with maps and instructions on how to get to your first day and maps showing the locations of your accommodations. You will follow the many yellow arrows and pilgrim waymarkers along the way. It's not difficult as there are thousands of them and plenty of fellow pilgrims!

### Camino Francés

The waymarking along this route is, in general, extremely good. In Spain, the official mark is the stylised scallop shell on a blue background, which is often placed on the walls of houses well above eye level to indicate the route through villages and towns. In open country you will frequently encounter these signs on small concrete pillars. There are also signboards at road crossings. The most common mark is a yellow arrow, which may be painted on trees, rocks, kerb stones and storm water gutters. Sometimes a yellow stripe is painted on trees as a continuation marker for reassurance.

### Portuguese Coastal Camino

Similarly to the other pilgrim routes, the way is marked with a familiar yellow arrow. Some sections along the Portuguese Coastal Camino are not very well signposted, so make sure you have a navigation app such as [www.maps.me](https://www.maps.me) downloaded on your phone, and keep the coast to your left. Altitude maps will be provided in your pre-departure documents. The markers become more prominent once the Coastal Way meets the Central Way in Redondela.



### Le Puy Camino

France has about 180,000 km of marked walking tracks. Long-distance walking tracks across France are called Grandes Randonnées (GRs), whereas tracks that loop around through a particular area are called Grandes Randonnées du Pays (GRPs), and shorter tracks are Promenades et Randonnées (PRs). There are colour-coded markings for these – a red and white stripe for GRs, red and yellow for GRPs, and yellow for PRs. And there are three symbols: 'straight ahead', 'turn' and 'go back'. Various other colours are used for local walks.

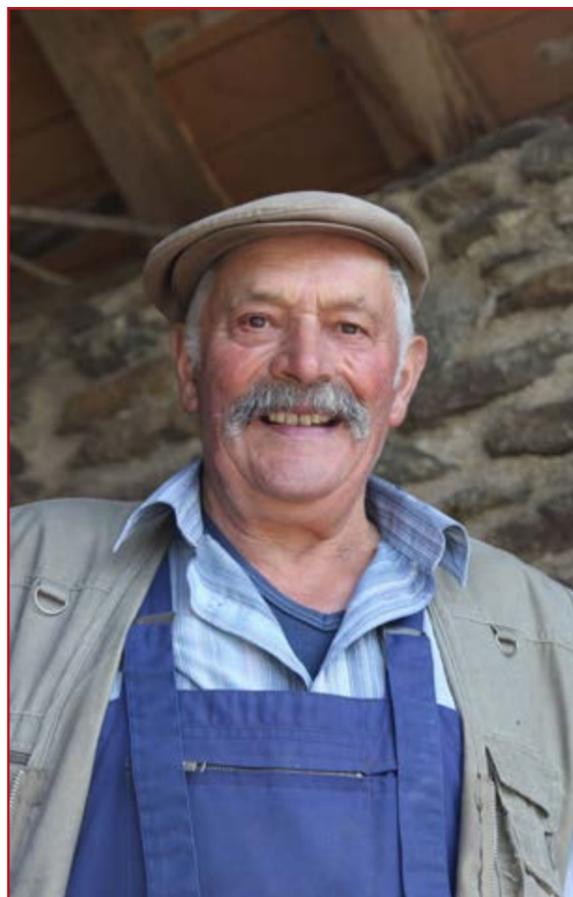
Overall, the tracks are well marked, but it takes practise to not miss some of the markings, which can be in obscure places, such as on tree trunks (often behind a clump of foliage), on fence posts or on the sides of barns. Some are even on the ground.

**LUGGAGE TRANSFERS**

Your main luggage will be transferred by private van on all walking days. It will be picked up from your accommodation each morning, so you'll need to have it packed and downstairs in time for the pick-up. After that, it is up to you when you start walking each day. In the evening your luggage will be waiting for you at your next accommodation. It is an excellent, secure and reliable service. The weight limit for luggage transfers is 15kg, but we can arrange for additional luggage.

**LANGUAGE**

As you walk you say "Buen Camino" to everyone you see. "Buen Camino" literally means *good road* in Spanish, but it can also mean good path, path being both physical and spiritual. It is the greeting shared by pilgrims, hikers, and bicyclers on the Camino and also with local people who wish you well.

**Useful Spanish phrases**

Buen Camino	Have a good Camino!
Hola	Hi
Como estas?"(formal) or Que tal? (informal)	How are you?
Hablo muy poco espanol	I only speak a little Spanish
Habla usted Ingles?	Do you speak English?
Desculpe	Excuse me
Donde esta?	Where is it?
Aqui/Alli	Here/there
Por Favor	Please
Gracias	Thank you
Buen viaje!	Have a good trip!

**Useful Portuguese phrases**

Ola	Hi
Bom dia	Good Morning
Como voce estas?"(formal)	How are you?
Eu só falo um pouco de Português	I only speak a little Portuguese
Voce fala Ingles?	Do you speak English?
Onde esta?	Where is it?
Aqui/ha	Here/there
Buon Camino!	Have a good Camino!
Thank you!	Obrigado
Please	Por Favor
Excuse me	Com licenca

**Useful French phrases**

Bonjour	Hello, Good Morning
Bonsoir	Good evening
S'il vous plait	Please
Excusez-moi	Excuse me
Oui/non	Yes/No
Quelqu'un parle Anglais?	Does anyone here speak English?
Combien coute...?	How much is...?
Where is...?	Ou se trouve...?

**MOBILE, WI-FI & INTERNET COVERAGE**

Mobile coverage is fairly consistent though there may be the odd place where it cannot be relied upon. Global roaming charges are very expensive and pre-paid cards such as Travel Sim are a good idea: [www.travelsim.net.au](http://www.travelsim.net.au) Some phone operators such as Optus offer low-cost travel packs – check with your operator for deals and coverage.

Free Wi-Fi is available in most of the accommodations we book but in smaller accommodations it can sometimes be intermittent.

We highly recommend that you download to your mobile the following free apps, which are most cost effective than standard Australian mobile phone carrier charges.

- [www.whatsapp.com](http://www.whatsapp.com)
- [www.skype.com/en](http://www.skype.com/en)
- [www.viber.com/en](http://www.viber.com/en)

**ELECTRICITY**

In Spain, France and Portugal 2-pin round plugs are used. The standard voltage is 230 V and the frequency is 50 Hz.

**MONEY****Currency**

The Euro is the local currency in Spain, Portugal and France, and abbreviated to €. At the time of publication, the exchange rate was: AUD\$1 = €0.62

**Tipping**

- **Spain:** Tipping is discretionary.
- **Portugal:** Tipping is discretionary. Service is included in restaurants, although it is polite to tip from 5% to 10% if the service has been very good. No tip is expected for a cup of coffee or a drink, although some people will leave the change rounding up from the nearest Euro for bar staff and café waiters.

- **France:** Service is included in restaurants, although it is polite to tip 10% if the service has been very good. Bar staff and café waiters expect a small tip or loose change.

**Spending money**

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping, souvenirs and other personal expenses.

**Cash & ATMs**

There are a large number of ATM cash points that accept Visa and MasterCard at towns and cities along the Camino. Credit cards are accepted in major restaurants and shops.

When walking through more rural sections always carry enough cash for a few days (in small notes).

Let your bank know well in advance that you are travelling overseas and will be making cash withdrawals so that your account is not locked due to suspicious activity. Also confirm your daily withdrawal limit, and applicable fees.

- Read more: [Access to money on the Camino](#)

**Emergency funds**

Ensure you have access to additional funds to be used if unforeseen incidents or circumstances outside our control (e.g. a natural disaster) necessitate a change to your planned route. This is a rare occurrence but we recommend being prepared. Some comprehensive travel insurance companies will make payments on your behalf in an emergency. Some more basic covers require you to pre-pay yourself then make a claims. Do your research before you travel.



# CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

## SAFETY ON THE CAMINO

Overall the Camino is very safe with a local and Camino community that supports walkers and cyclists. We also have local staff in Spain.

The more Spanish/French/Portuguese you learn, the more you will get from the trip and the more confident you will feel. It is very easy to strike up friendships with fellow walkers and we would always recommend that a solo female traveller walk with or near other walkers for added security. We also have solo traveller departures (also open to couples) where independent travellers set out on the same dates, which helps provide company and a sense of security. You can also opt to share rooms with another solo traveller to keep your costs down if you wish to.

## Emergency number

The emergency number for Spain, Portugal and France is 112.

## Fire precautions

Local laws in Europe governing tourism facilities differ from those in Australia or your home country and not all the accommodation which we use may have a fire exit, fire extinguishers or smoke alarms.

## Traffic and driving

If you come from Australia, please note that drivers in Europe drive on the opposite side of the road from what you are used to. Make sure you cycle on the correct side and look both ways before crossing any road.

## Petty theft

While travelling there is always the risk of pick-pocketing and petty theft, particularly in bigger tourist cities. We recommend that you exercise caution when walking alone at night and only on main, well-lit thoroughfares. Be particularly vigilant on public transport. Simple measures like carrying your day pack on your front, not hanging your bag over the back of your chair and wearing a money belt will reduce any chance that your valuables should go missing.

## Health

We recommend that you carry a basic first aid kit along with any medications or epi-pens if you have specific allergies. Also make sure you have emergency contact numbers in your phone or in an easy to reach place when you go out walking each day. In the event of any medical emergency, please ensure you make immediate contact with your travel insurance provider on their 24-hour assistance number.

If you are travelling on the Camino and you can no longer walk due to injury, you can contact our bilingual local representative who will assist you in arranging transport and medical services.

## Dogs

If you read some of the past literature on walking the Camino, it may make you believe that packs of stray dogs are a problem. While this may have been true in the past, generally it is no longer the case and you should not expect to be worried by angry stray dogs. Most working dogs you pass are tied up and more often than not any stray dogs are friendly, so it's not something you need to be too concerned with.

## WILD PLANTS AND WILDLIFE

The variety of different habitats along the Camino – alpine pastures, woods, fields, rivers, cliff faces and gorges – are home to a wide range of flowers, butterflies and birds, including vultures and kites. There are plenty of wild medicinal plants including bay leaves, fringed rue, wild thyme, calendula, wild rosemary and Spanish lavender. You'll see fields full of poppies and daisies, and chamomile and dandelion along the path edge.

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### ABOUT RAW TRAVEL

RAW Travel specialises in iconic walks worldwide. We are a small family owned operator on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula that is highly regarded for great value, outstanding customer service and reviews, experienced tour guides, and excellent accommodation and food.

We provide a friendly, personal and trusted service. We pride ourselves on the intimate knowledge we have of our chosen walking destinations, which allows us to create exciting journeys for our clients while taking meticulous care of all the details.

We offer walks for complete beginners through to demanding treks that will satisfy and thrill even veteran adventurers.

Over the years, we have organised countless trips to far flung corners of the globe and introduced many thousands of happy travellers to their first long distance walk or

ride. The spirit of RAW Travel remains the same – creating inspiring active journeys that offer genuine interaction with the people and cultures we visit, backed by a personal but expert service.

Come and visit us at our beachside location in the coastal town of Mornington. Make an appointment with one of our Destination Experts and afterwards browse the many shops, cafes, beaches or nearby vineyards of the Mornington Peninsula.

### OUR PEOPLE

We have an experienced, dedicated passionate [team](#) in our Mornington Head Office, as well as expert guides and support staff on the ground in Europe, Japan and Australia. Our staff have many things in common, including a passion for walking, a love of adventure travel in beautiful and historic locations, and the ability to go above and beyond to make our clients' travel dreams become a reality.



### Why book your trip with RAW Travel?

Our trips are flexible and tailored to you!

- We listen to our walkers; we'll plan an itinerary to suit your needs and ability.
- We operate our own trips, self-guided.
- We have staff dedicated to each destination: you get first-hand advice from people who know the walks.
- We have our own staff in-country, so help is never far away should you need it.
- We offer authentic travel with 17 years' experience.



### OUR COMMITMENT

We won't cut corners or ever intentionally compromise the quality of your trip. We don't want to run thousands of trips every year – because the quality of your experience is much more important than quantity to us. We're still small enough to care about our travellers as individuals and we want to stay that way!

We know that people desire a certain level of comfort along with their adventure, so great accommodation and discovering delicious local food is a hallmark of our trips. RAW owns and operates its own adventures, with our own staff on the ground in many destinations so we are able to keep control over the quality of our trips at the same time as we offer you reassurance and support. We take notice of the feedback you give us and your opinions do matter.

As a primarily 'direct to customer' company we avoid the commissions and overheads associated with the traditional travel distribution network. We charge fair prices but still provide great advice before you go, experienced leaders who love their groups, good quality accommodation and solid value for your money.

### EXPERT, FRIENDLY SERVICE

We're a specialist company and we enjoy providing a friendly, personal service where you're treated as an individual – no call centres here!

**At RAW Travel we don't just plan your travel, we take our clients on a journey. From your research and ideas we work with you to plan your dream travel experience. We consider your fitness levels, your achievements, your motivations and then together we map out every step of the journey.**

Our Destination Experts deliver a level of advice and experience that comes from being 100% focused on our chosen walks, rather than hundreds of different trips, as is often the case with bigger companies. We pride ourselves on our intimate knowledge of our chosen walking destinations and we really do “know because we go”.

Our staff take these walks each year and share their insider insights with you to help create exciting journeys where you can experience the best of your chosen destination, while being reassured that all the details are taken care of. Help is never far away should you need it from our locally based staff and suppliers.

### GIVING BACK & TREADING LIGHTLY

Our trips have helped raise over \$A18 million in funds for 40+ charities in Australia and overseas through our charity challenges. We are proud to have been part of so many great fundraising initiatives that have substantially impacted and improved people's lives.

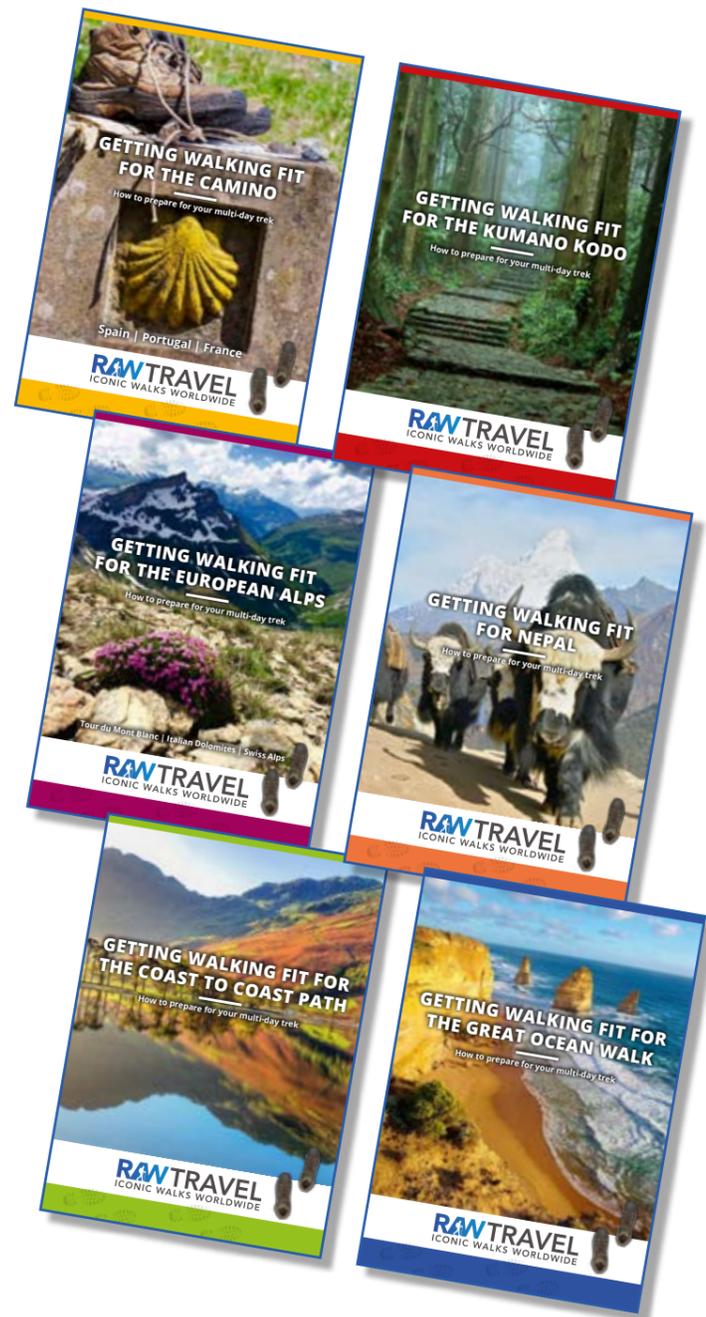
In today's world travelling lightly is no longer just an admirable sentiment but a necessity. We always look for ways to improve our impact on the ground by monitoring our group's environmental and cultural impacts. At RAW, we have achieved advanced eco-certification on our Great Ocean Walk and have always been committed to 'grass roots' tourism.

In particular we favour small local suppliers to ensure the benefits of travel are distributed equally and to the people who need it the most. We also donate to KIVA micro-lending throughout the world and encourage you to also look at this commendable scheme.

So, rest assured, your travel with us will leave a positive, lasting impact on you and the places you visit.

### FREE RESOURCES TO HELP YOU PLAN YOUR TRIP

We've got inspirational brochures, essential preparation guides, comprehensive destination guides, weekly blog posts and more!



### DESTINATION WEBSITES WITH UNRIVALLED INFORMATION

Visit our destination websites for unrivalled expert information and insights. You'll find photo galleries, route information, resources, trail history and lots more!

- [rawtravel.com](http://rawtravel.com)
- [caminodesantiago.com.au](http://caminodesantiago.com.au)
- [kumanokodo.com.au](http://kumanokodo.com.au)
- [montblanctreks.com.au](http://montblanctreks.com.au)
- [greatoceanwalk.info](http://greatoceanwalk.info)

### RAW ADVENTURES NEWS

It's easy to stay up-to-date on all things RAW with our free monthly e-news. It's bursting with traveller's stories and information about new trips and insights. If you're not already a subscriber, it's easy to register.

Find out more: <http://rawtravel.com>

### FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

We love connecting with like-minded travellers on social media and we'd like you to be part of our RAW community. We regularly share tips and resources, as well as photos and stories from other travellers and our staff. Like and follow us, and be sure to give us a shout out to say hello. We really enjoy reading comments from our community of travellers!



[www.facebook.com/rawtravel/](http://www.facebook.com/rawtravel/)

### FREE TRAVEL INFORMATION NIGHTS

We love meeting our clients face-to-face and getting to know them. Twice a year we travel around Australia and New Zealand to talk about a selection of our iconic walks. If you have ever wanted to experience an iconic walk with RAW Travel then you will want to attend one of these events. We guarantee you'll be inspired by trip insights, videos and stunning images from our staff.

Find out more: <http://rawtravel.com/talks/>



## SECTION 4: RAW TRAVEL

### 'WALK AND TALK' DAYS

We love to walk and we love to talk! During the year we regularly offer opportunities (in Victoria) to walk with our Destination Experts and ask questions about your chosen destination, pre-departure preparation and gear. We limit these walks to around 25 people (depending on the location). The pace is generally relaxed so there is plenty of time to chat.

Find out more: <http://rawtravel.com/talks/>

### BOOK YOUR FLIGHTS WITH US

RAW Travel is a Business Class and Premium Economy Flights Specialist. We will find you the best deals and make sure you arrive well-rested to start your walk. Our in-house travel agents take the stress out of planning all the travel arrangements around your walk. They can book your international flights, give you advice about land transfers to the start of your walk, organise the perfect city break, and more! For a personalised service that you won't find on online booking sites, along with specific destination knowledge you won't necessarily find with your own travel agent, contact our Flights Department today at the RAW Travel office on (03) 5976 3763 or email [flights@rawtravel.com](mailto:flights@rawtravel.com)

Find out why our flights service is a better choice: [RAW Travel Flights](#)

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

If you are travelling on any trip with RAW Travel you will require comprehensive travel insurance. We sell Cover-More travel insurance and you can easily get a quote over the phone. No one plans for anything to go wrong, but if it does we want to make sure that you have adequate cover.

We highly recommend you purchase insurance as soon as you start booking your travel arrangements, and include cancellation cover. Your travel insurance must also include emergency evacuation and medical cover.

Any advice given here is a general guide only. Please research and purchase a policy best suited to your needs and circumstances.

### CITY BREAKS

Get the most from your time in Europe with one of our city breaks - explore and get an insider view with locals, try cultural activities, and stay in unique and well-located hotels. Our city breaks take the guesswork out of the bewildering range of hotels and activities on offer in the big cities and ensure that you can make the most of your limited time. Connect with locals and find the best places to eat, instead of spending your time getting lost or feeling overwhelmed about where to start!

Find out more: [RAW Travel City Breaks](#)

### CONTACT US

All of our RAW Travel experts have one thing in common: bringing you the immediate, highly personal satisfaction of discovering a new world on your own terms.

### RAW Travel Office (Victoria, Australia)

Our Melbourne HQ can be contacted Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm on +61 3 5976 3763. If there is a genuine emergency outside of these hours, call +61 (0) 478 649 848.



# RAW TRAVEL TRIP GRADINGS

RAW Travel offers a range of multi-day walks for complete beginners through to demanding treks that will satisfy and thrill even veteran adventurers. We have graded each RAW Travel trip from 1 (introductory) to 10 (tough).

Our grading system is intended to differentiate only the walks that RAW Travel offers, so they won't necessarily match another travel company's assessment of their trips.

We have used several criteria to assess the difficulty of each walk we offer, including the number of hours walking required each day, terrain and conditions underfoot, weather, gradient, altitude, signage and facilities – basic accommodation and food in remote areas will contribute to a walk being graded more difficult. Keep in mind that if a walk is graded moderate, it doesn't mean you will never feel tired.

Our multi-day walks require a suitable level of physical preparation. More detail is provided in our essential free guides to getting walking fit, which are available for each of our destinations.

## WALKING & HIKING

Walking and hiking are mainly leisure activities that involve well-made trails and roads, often on purpose made paths, such as pilgrimage trails and low mountain trails.

## TREKKING

Trekking refers to long continuous point-to-point journeys on foot in areas where there is usually no other transport. Trekking is not mountaineering; it is walking for a number of days on often rudimentary trails in challenging environments, which are likely hilly or mountainous. Nepal, the Himalayas, Pakistan and South America are good examples of trekking countries.

## TRIP GRADINGS

### Camino de Santiago Routes

Portuguese Coastal Camino | [4-5 Moderate to Challenging](#)

Spanish Route | [4-6 Moderate to Challenging](#)

Le Puy Route (France) | [5-6 Challenging](#)

### Italy's Via Francigena

Via Francigena | [4-5 Moderate to Challenging](#)

### Japan

Nakasendo Way | [4-6 Moderate to Challenging](#)

Kumano Kodo | [6-7 Challenging to Strenuous](#)

### European Alps

Swiss Alps | [6-7 Challenging to Strenuous](#)

Tour Du Mont Blanc | [7 Strenuous](#)

Italian Dolomites | [7 Strenuous](#)

### Nepal

Annapurna Trails | [6-7 Challenging to Strenuous](#)

Everest Monasteries Trek | [6-7 Challenging to Strenuous](#)

Upper Mustang | [7-8 Strenuous](#)

Everest Base Camp | [8 Strenuous](#)

### England

Coast to Coast Path | [6-7 Challenging to Strenuous](#)

### Australia

Great Ocean Walk | [3-4 Moderate](#)

### Yoga Hiking Adventures

Great Ocean Walk | [3-4 Moderate](#)

Portuguese Coastal Camino | [3-4 Moderate](#)

Nepal | [6-7 Challenging to Strenuous](#)

	 <b>Introductory</b> Grade 1-2	 <b>Moderate</b> Grade 3-4	 <b>Challenging</b> Grade 5-6	 <b>Strenuous</b> Grade 7-8	 <b>Tough</b> Grade 9-10
<b>Fitness/experience required</b>	Basic fitness level required.	Good health and a reasonable standard of fitness.	Good base level of fitness; experience walking in remote areas.	Good aerobic conditioning recommended, along with experience walking in mountains and on longer duration walks.	High level of fitness and experience trekking in high mountains and remote areas.
<b>Overview</b>	Relatively easy walking on well-formed paths with no difficult terrain. Generally flat or undulating with no long uphill sections.	Walking that is generally moderate but with some more strenuous sections. Regular ascending and descending may be required.	Longer duration walks where conditions underfoot will be fair to uneven with potential for slippery or rocky surfaces.	More demanding walking with a fairly consistent level of effort required.	Long days; continually demanding; long ascents and descents; steep gradients. Potential for extreme variation in weather at higher altitudes.
<b>Daily hours/km</b>	Short hikes; 2 to 6 hours walking / up to 15km per day.	4 to 7 hours walking / up to 20km per day.	5 to 8 hours hiking / 25km per day.	6 to 8+ hours / up to 30km per day.	7 to 10 hours / up to 30km per day.
<b>Terrain and path quality</b>	Compacted trail. Fairly even surfaces. Well signposted, well-maintained trail.	Fairly even surfaces.	Variable terrain.	Usually mountainous terrain. May include high pass crossings in remote areas.	High pass crossings in remote areas.
<b>Max altitude Facilities</b>	Below 1000m Comfortable accommodation and good food.	1500m Comfortable accommodation and good food.	2500m Generally comfortable accommodation and good food; occasionally more basic conditions.	4000m Overnighting in basic accommodation/ mountain refugios. Food choices limited and often more basic.	5500m Basic accommodation, limited variety of food, limited recourse to medical facilities.
<b>Preparation required</b>	1 to 2 walks per week (10km each)	1 to 2 walks per week (15km each)	2 to 3 walks per week, increasing distances while carrying an 8kg pack; some hill walking stairs, or heavy sand walking recommended.	2 to 3 walks per week at a reasonable pace and longer distances with an 8kg pack; regular hill / mountain walking or stairs, heavy sand walking is necessary.	2 to 4 walks per week at a reasonable pace, and longer distances with an 8kg pack; must include long duration hikes on steep hills and in mountains.

## CAMINO De SANTIAGO

Spain's epic pilgrimage trail

## KUMANO KODO

Hiking ancient paths in traditional Japan

## PORTUGUESE COASTAL CAMINO

A stunning walk from Porto to Santiago de Compostela

## EUROPEAN ALPS

The breathtaking Tour Du Mont Blanc, Italian Dolomites & Swiss Alps

## GREAT OCEAN WALK

A walk of wild and wonderful discovery

## COAST TO COAST

Wild England - Moors, Fells, Dales and Tarns

## YOGA & HIKING TRIPS

Renew your spirit

## NEPAL

Himalayan trekking with a difference

## LE PUY CAMINO

Walk through the most beautiful medieval villages of France

## NAKASENDO WAY

Walking in the heart of old Japan



Australia's most innovative and inspiring walking company

1300 208 245 | [info@rawtravel.com](mailto:info@rawtravel.com) | [www.rawtravel.com](http://www.rawtravel.com) | 

Certified



Corporation

This company meets the highest standards of social and environmental impact



10% FOR THE PLANET

We donate 10% of our profits to give back to the planet at no additional cost to you.



Our trips are 100% carbon neutral.