Walk the Camino De Santiago



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided trails	Spain	8	427kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The 1000-year-old pilgrimage route to the Spanish city of Santiago de Compostela – believed to be final resting place of St James the Apostle – is one of the world's most-walked network of trails. There are nine routes that make up the official Camino de Santiago, but our favourite is the so-called Camino Frances (the French Way). While the full trail measures a leg-aching 497 miles, the final 70-mile stretch is undoubtedly the most scenic. Pass through medieval villages in the golden countryside of Sierra de Ligonde and catch your first sight of the finish line from the hilltop monument in Monte de Gozo Park.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking one of the world's most famous trails
- Following a network of ancient pilgrimage routes
- Exploring medieval villages and monasteries
- Marvelling at the Santiago de Compostela Cathedral
- The shared sense of achievement at completing this special route with others
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 16 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Gatwick, including baggage and transfers
- Guided trail walking with a local leader
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation
- 7 breakfasts & 6 dinners
- All in-destination transport
- Luggage transfers on walking days

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Transfer from La Coruna Airport to Sarria, where you spend your first night.

Day 2 **Sarria to Portomarin**

Your first Camino walk is easier than it looks on the route profile and you'll immediately get into a rhythm on the peaceful country roads and quiet paths. Tree-lined sections provide welcome shade on sunny days and tiny hamlets are strung close together, it seems you have just left one as you enter the next. You'll find plenty of places to pause for snacks and swap stories with other pilgrims.

Walking from the monastery of La Magdalena in Sarria to the Gallician vineyards and along the banks of the Mino River, our route is lined by shaded groves of chestnuts and oaks, fields enclosed by traditional Celtic 'chantos', and examples of Galician Romanesque architecture in a landscape little changed for centuries

13.5 miles (22km) with 1,230 feet (375m) of ascent and 1,312 feet (400m) of descent

Day 3 **Portomarin to Palas de Rei**

Stroll down the steep high street out of Portomarín then 'switch gears' on a gentle uphill track alongside the main road. Crossing the N-540 at Hospital de la Cruz, you can take a breather at today's highest point, Monte San Antonio. The rest of the day offers nothing but easy walking through gently rolling countryside with a pleasant 10-kilometre section on tarmac. The final 3 km veer off onto a dirt track again, as you approach the humming pilgrims' town of Palas de Rei

15.5 miles (25km) with 1,640 feet (500m) of ascent and 951 feet (290m) of descent

Day 4 **Palas de Rei to Arzua**

From Palas de Rei you embark on a long but technically easy route, free of steep prolonged ascents or descents. Join the traditional pilgrim countdown as stone markers sprout up showing the distance left to Santiago Cathedral. Encountering cool shady stretches, you amble along to Melide, historic crossroads where the Original Way or

'Camino Primitivo' meets the popular French Route or 'Camino Francés'. Just past this point, you're treated to an aromatic section through eucalyptus trees and oak groves, trekking toward Arzúa and a well-earned coffee... or glass of local wine!

18 miles (29km) with 820 feet (250m) of ascent and 1,312 feet (400m) of descent

Day 5 Arzua to Rua-O Pino

At first glance, this stage seems to provide little interest with its monotonous movement alongside the main road. Yet today ends up being one of the most exciting of the whole week as you feel the collective energy grow, joining hordes of fellow pilgrims all excited to be nearly there! Tiny hamlets dotted with shingle houses, hidden amidst wooded glades and eucalyptus trees, line the trail to Rua. Visit the ancient church of San Verisimo and the 18th century chapel in Santa Irene. It's a relatively short day, leaving time to relax at your hotel and meld with the peaceful surroundings.

11 miles (18km) with 660 feet (200m) of ascent and 740 feet (225m) of descent

Day 6 Rua to Santiago

Burst back into modern life as you rush along past the regional airport and cross the highway, railway and ring-road drawn by an immense, irresistible magnet: Plaza Obradoiro. The urban hustle and bustle will not deter you and it's still easy to imagine ancient pilgrims weeping with joy as they glimpsed the distant spires. Historically, pilgrims pause at Monte do Gozo to set their sights then make one last stop at the spring in Lavacolla, to cleanse their face and feet before meeting their beloved saint. This is a triumphant your eagerly awaited goal awaits you at the impressive cathedral, the final resting place of the Apostle St James.

13 miles (21km) with 1,150 feet (350m) of ascent and 1,215 feet (370m) of descent

Day 7 Santiago de Compostela

Celebrate your journey's end and explore this magnificent city.

Day 8 Departure Day

Transfer to La Coruna Airport

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Challenging walking grade 8

Challenging walks for fit, experienced walkers. Expect rugged or mountainous terrain, or some longer distances than typical for this grade. Typically, 12-13 miles (19-21km) with around 2,300ft (700m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Alfonso IX, Sarria

The Hotel Alfonso IX is a warm and friendly 4-star hotel located in the town centre of Sarria. It has a total of 60 rooms spread over 3 floors. All rooms have Wi-Fi, air conditioning, hairdryers, telephones & TV.

Swimming pool facilities, where available, are open seasonally and subject to local weather conditions and hotel management discretion.

Hotel Pousada de Portomarín, Portomarín

Located on the Camino, the Pousada has everything you need for a good night's rest. Rooms are clean and spacious, while the restaurant and bar feature a panoramic terrace from where you can wind down and watch the sun go down. You can even dip your toes in the outdoor pool, too. Wi-Fi is available throughout the hotel plus there's self-service laundry should you need it.

Hotel Arzúa, Arzúa

A welcoming sight for walkers nearing the final stage of the Camino de Santiago, the Hotel Arzúa offers stylish, modern rooms that are fully air-conditioned. Each comes with its own private bathroom, free Wi-FI, and flat screen TV. Located near the edge of rural Arzúa, there are a host of low-key local bars and restaurants nearby, ideal for fuelling up before the final part of the journey.

Swimming pool facilities, where available, are open seasonally and subject to local weather conditions and hotel management discretion. Please note that not all hotels featured on this holiday have a swimming pool.

Hotel Alda, Palas del Rei

Located in the charming village of Palas de Rei, the Hotel Alda offers guests a warm welcome. The comfortable bedrooms are equipped with flat screen TV, hairdryer and Wi-Fi. A buffet breakfast will set you up for the day ahead, and lovely gardens and a terrace provide peaceful surroundings to relax at the end of the day.

HolaCamp Camino, O Pino

Nestled in the peaceful Galician countryside near Santiago de Compostela, HolaCamp Camino offers a relaxing retreat for walkers on the Camino. Set amongst gardens and green spaces, this welcoming property features comfortable villa-style accommodation and a range of facilities including an outdoor swimming pool, bike hire and free Wi-Fi. The tranquil setting provides the perfect place to unwind after a day's walk, while the well-equipped rooms offer modern comforts in a picturesque rural setting.

Swimming pool facilities, where available, are open seasonally and subject to local weather conditions and hotel management discretion.

Hotel San Bieito, Santiago De Compostela

Hotel Alda San Bieito is a modern and elegant 3-star hotel from the 18th century, located in the very heart of Santiago de Compostela, 10 minutes' walk from the Cathedral. The Abastos Market and Quintana Square are also a few minutes away. All rooms come with en-suite facilities as well as hairdryer, TV, Wi-Fi, telephone, air conditioning and heating.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

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Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Ticks information

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/

Pilgrim's Passport

Pilgrim's Passport

Your local leader will give you a Pilgrim's Passport, which is stamped on each stage of the route and certifies that you have completed the 100 km minimum need to qualify for completion of the pilgrimage. Your leader will register you online and with this you will receive the "Compostela", the accreditation in Latin.

The scallop shell is a symbol of the pilgrimage and some walkers like to carry it as they walk. Scallop shells can be purchased at souvenir shops along the way for a few euros.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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