

WALKING THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

IS IT YOU THAT'S INTERESTED IN THE CAMINO?

OR IS IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND...

WHAT IS THE CAMINO?

- Some very long walks...
 - Walked for many different reasons:
 - Physical and Mental Challenges
 - Seeking Romance
 - Christian pilgrims seeking refuge
- Many paths lead to Santiago de Compostela
 - Popular: French, Portuguese, del Norte
 - Gained popularity because of a movie The Way
- A Focus on The French Way
 - Approx 500 Miles (optional routes)
 - 33 Days (average 25km p/day or 15 miles)
 - Mountains & Valleys
 - Cities & The Meseta











A BRIEF BACKGROUND

• Not a huge hiker

- Used two, three and four mile flat loops for my training
- Rarely carried any type of day or backpack
- Never used hiking sticks before the Camino

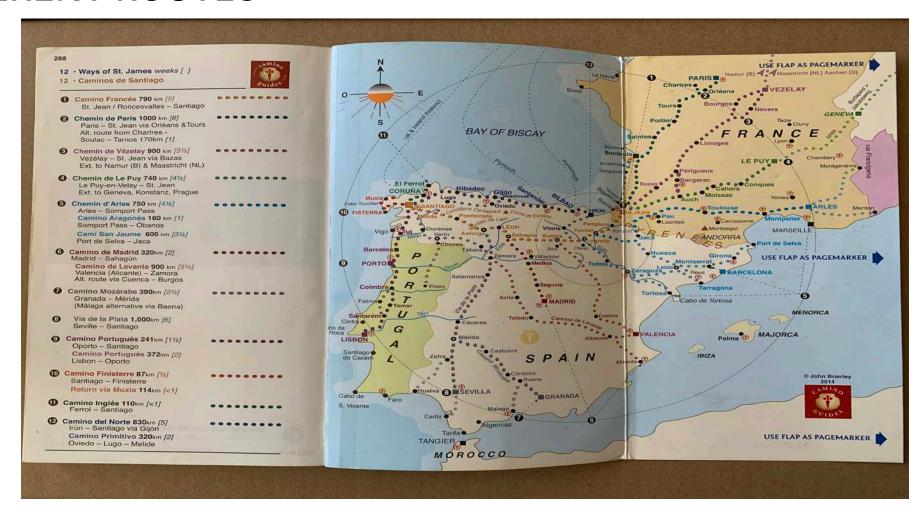
• Horrible lower back pain few months before

- SI joint and discs annoyed, right leg pain 10
- Pain free after Radio Frequency Ablation

Walked the Camino with Cancer

- In my lymph nodes in my neck and tonsils
- Got in GREAT SHAPE for the fight

DIFFERENT ROUTES



From the book: Camino de Santiago by John Brierley

WHO WALKS THE CAMINO?

- A lot of people!
 - Although it never seems too crowded you can have you own space.
- Walked now for many reasons
 - People from over 150 nationalities seeking:
 - Spiritual enlightenment, physical challenge, stress relief, the food, create new relationships, a break from reality, etc.
- In 2022, over 450,000 completed a Camino
 - A high point due to publicity
- All shapes and sizes, physical conditions, etc.









WHO WALKS THE CAMINO?











WHY DO PEOPLE WALK THE CAMINO?

- I don't know. I found my own reason on the Camino, and it's pull was undeniable.
- I love this passage from John Brierley's guide:

"We have a sacred contract, a divine function and reason why we came here. Pilgrimage provides an opportunity to delve deeper into that purpose and the time to or-orientate our lives towards that fulfillment."



Picture and excerpt from the book: Camino de Santiago by John Brierley

HOW DO YOU GET THERE

- Fly into Paris and connect to Biarritz
- Train, Shuttle or Group Taxi to Saint Jean
 - Some Albergues will pick you up for a fee





THE FRENCH WAY – SAINT JEAN TO SANTIAGO

- Broken down into 33 stages
 - Approx: Longest 22 miles, Shortest 12, Average 16
 - Approximately 6-8 hours of walking and resting
 - Planning your day Spain has different hours
 - Leave late Be hungry. More later...
- Walking sections of the Camino
 - Popular starting points and time frames
 - Don't have a month? No worries!
 - From Leon 13, Sarria 7, Porto 12 lots of other options
 - Pilgrims joining along the route
 - Credential mileage requirements



From the book: Camino de Santiago by John Brierley

THE FRENCH WAY – SAINT JEAN TO SANTIAGO, THEN FINISTERRE (LANDS END)



Source: caminoways.com

EQUIPMENT - RECOMMENDED

- Twenty pound or less full backpack I used an Osprey Stratos 36 with built-in rain cover
- Day pack with support belt/chest strap I used a 30L day pack bought in Leon at Decathlon (big sports store)
- Hiking poles with shock absorbers use them properly
- Friction socks two-layer Wrightsock no blisters!
- Lightweight high top hiking boots, with extra inserts
- Waterproof rain jacket, pants, shoe/boot covers
- Lightweight towels & thongs for the showers
- Zip-locks, toilet paper, pack shovel (more later...)
- Lightweight & waterproof hat with big rim
- Lightweight sleeping bad liner if you stay in Alberques
- Foot glide, Cannelloni's, Body Guide
- Rechargeable headlamp

- Knee and ankle supports if you've ever had any pain
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray buy it there
- Sunglasses with hard case
- Hand sanitizer
- Lightweight European power adapter plug
- Cell Phone, 2 charger cords & hard (Otter like) case
- Lightweight water bottle and a disposable bought there
- Small garbage bags
- Assorted sizes of ruck sacks for clothes
- Alkaline/Hydration tablets, like nuun, etc.
- Lightweight/convertible pants & moisture wicking shirts
- First Aid kit Band-Aids, Neosporin, Moleskin patches

What is the word used most on this list?

EQUIPMENT - OPTIONAL



Considerations

- Shampoo & conditioner, soap Buy it there
- Covid test kit buy it there if you need it, you'll be fine
- Body wipes
- Lidocaine patches or heat pouches/patches
- Water filter you can get or buy water everywhere. Only place you might need it is on the Mesata (high plateau)
- Inexpensive duffle bag for checking your backpack

• Please don't bring

- A Drone! I almost tackled a dude hovering it above me
- A Bluetooth speaker to play along the way
- Your "baggage" to your journey. If so, you'll find you get tired of thinking or hearing it. Lose it along the way.

APPS TO USE ON THE ROUTE

Buen Camino

- Offers maps, elevation changes, lodging details, food, laundry, points of interest and more for all Camino de Santiago routes. <u>Follows your</u> movement.
- Book lodging yourself 2-3 days ahead for transfers

• Booking.com

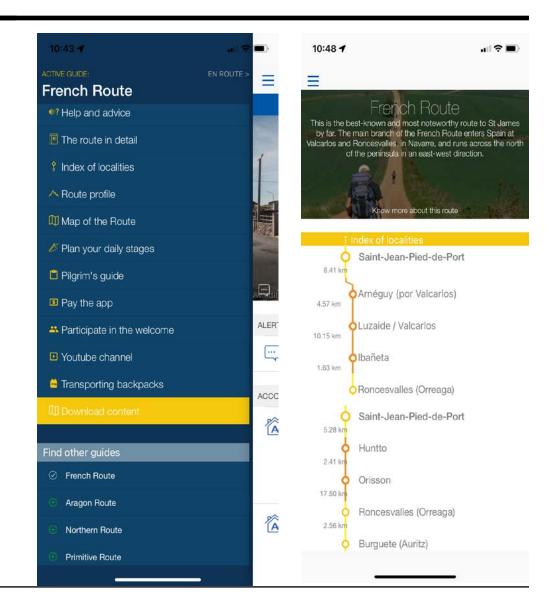
• Most places on the Camino are listed.

• FarOut

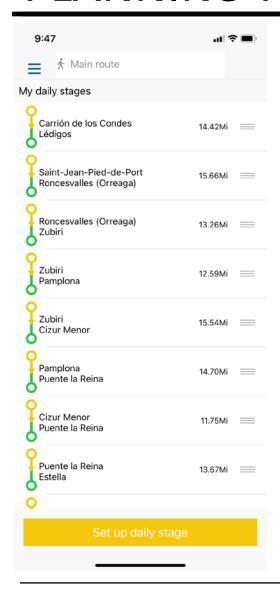
• Like Buen Camino but not the detail/selection

Google Maps

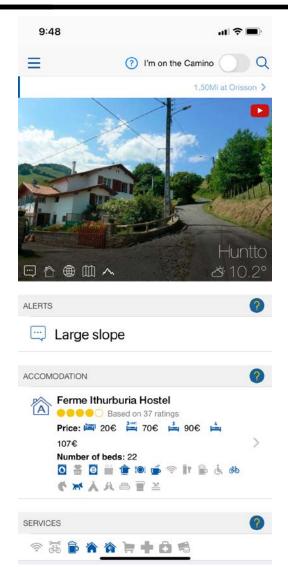
• The trusty verification you may need, or to find specific locations such as historic sites, sports stores, groceries, restaurants, government offices, etc.



PLANNING YOUR DAILY STAGES ON THE CAMINO











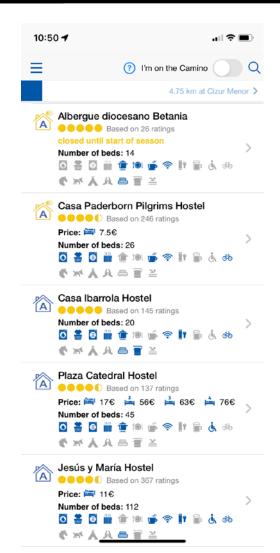
Today we are passing by the ancient Puertos de Cize to the town of Honto or Huntto, having already overcome more than 320 metres of slope on the tarmac. Upon leaving the town, you have to take a path to the left, which climbs up to an orientation table. This is a tough one-kilometre stretch that covers a 160 metre slope.

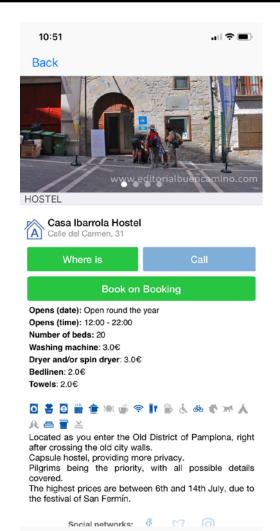


BUEN CAMINO SCREENS – GUIDANCE AND LODGING

















LODGING ON THE CAMINO

- Albergues typically reserved for Pilgrims
 - A lot of places fall under the term Albergue...
 - Hostels, Pensions, Tepee's, Dorms, etc.
 - Public and private
- Convent or Monastery
 - Like a Hostel but typically with a Pilgrims Mass
- Hotels
 - Everything from Motel 6 style to five-star hotels
- Camping / RV Parks
 - Camping is generally not allowed on the Camino
 - There are several RV parks along the way









LODGING ON THE CAMINO

Hotels

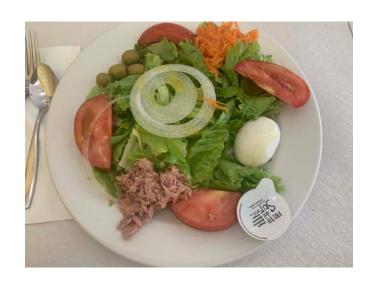
- Stayed in the nicer hotels on the weekends
 - Pamplona, Burgos, Logrono, Leon, Santiago, and Paris (headed back)
- Pamper yourself a little you're walking 500 miles!
 - Nice hotels are between €75- €200
- Don't ask me how much my Camino cost...
 - It was worth every euro!
 - You can do it on €30- €50 per day, without those big hotels. Stick to Albergues



PILGRIMS MEAL

- Albergues typically offer a Pilgrims meal
 - From €8 to €12
 - Bread, bottle of wine, appetizer, main entrée and dessert yes, a <u>bottle</u> of wine!
 - Dinner is typically at 8:00PM, maybe 7:00PM
- Dining out?
 - Restaurants don't open until 8:00PM
 - Bars offer <u>lighter</u> meals all day
- The food on the Camino! More later...

PILGRIM MEALS – ALBERGUE IN MAZARIFE (AFTER LEON)









PILGRIM MEALS













WHEN TO WALK THE CAMINO?

• Generally, the best times to walk the Camino

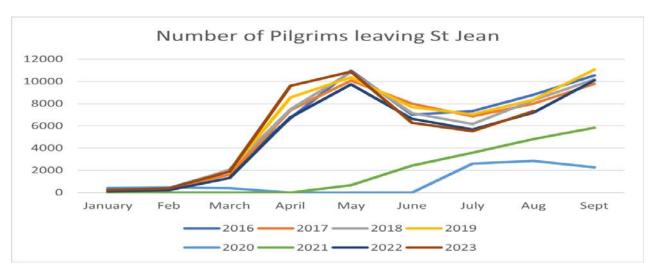
- Spring late March end of May
- Fall second week of September Oct 31st
- Pretty much closed November 1st March 15th

• Do Not Walk in the Winter!

- Camino Frances generally closed and dangerous
 - Snow, slippery rocks, floods, fog, high winds
- Few Pilgrim related businesses are open

• Weather interactive maps

• https://followthecamino.com/en/caminoweather-map/

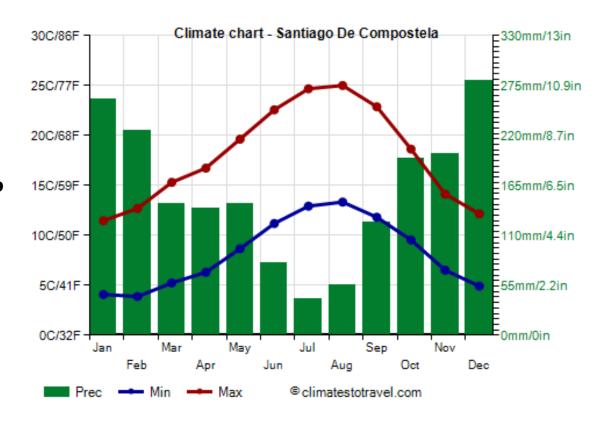


	January	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2016	302	392	2040	6698	10964	7016	7338	8815	10546	3972	546	324
2017	324	376	1602	7430	10071	7993	6867	8010	9778	3937	605	302
2018	292	320	2077	7499	10837	7148	6173	8320	10189	4135	602	289
2019	296	359	1914	8557	10358	7694	7049	8363	11064	4397	695	358
2020	428	465	409	0	0	0	2600	2854	2270	988	0	0
2021	0	0	0	0	664	2425	3589	4810	5852	2695	390	161
2022	121	231	1321	6769	9743	6635	5690	7193	10093	4172	680	278
2023	236	373	1903	9604	10890	6290	5540	7329				

Source: caminonow.com

WEATHER ON DIFFERENT ROUTES

- Camino Frances (The French Way) Saint Jean France
 - Spring: 48°-70°
 - Summer: 59°-82°
 - Fall: 43°-57°
- Camino Portugues (The Portuguese Way) Lisbon/Porto
 - Spring: 52°-68°
 - Summer: 59°-77°
 - Fall: 46°-63°
- Camino del Norte (The Northern Way) North Coast
 - Spring: 50°-68°
 - Summer: 57°-77°
 - Fall: 46°-63°



Source: climatestotravel.com

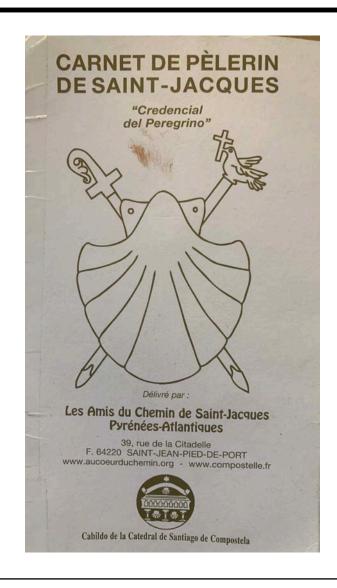
PILGRIMS CREDENTIALS

- Everyone should register at the Pilgrims Office at the start of each route
 - The center of Saint Jean, staffed by volunteers
- A Pilgrim passport is generally required to book a room in a Albergue
- Required to get your certificate of completion in Santiago at the Pilgrims office more later
 - Certificates are also available for distance
- Get your Camino shell!
 - Available in the office and shops in Saint Jean





PILGRIMS CREDENTIALS





BACKPACK AND LUGGAGE TRANSFERS

- Transfer services offer daily pack and luggage transfer to next lodging
 - €4-12€ daily depends volume and location
 - Totally safe and reliable, I never paid more than €5
- Tour services use these transfer services
- Well worth the € considering 20-30lbs packs
 - Use day pack for essentials
- Services include Jacotrans, Caminofacil & Pilbeo
 - They cover nearly all routes and Finisterre
 - You can decide at any time during your Camino
 - Uses the little envelope for € and the next address



BED BUGS AND MOSQUITOS

- Bed Bugs Warnings are over blown!
 - I never got them and only heard of one case on the entire 500-mile Camino
 - If you are concerned, use the liner & spray
- Mosquitos Bigger issue on my Camino!
 - If you hike in early morning hours use spray! They are a big annoyance, especially near areas with rivers and crops of any kind.
 - I carried spray and made a bunch of friends!
 - Pharmacies are in many towns and have spray





ONE LAST THING BEFORE WE HIKE – I GOTTA GO! ENOUGH SAID...

- Everyone has the urge at different times
 - The Camino deserves your respect
 - I found areas littered with TP, generally off the path and just out of town.
- Please, carry a pack shovel, TP and bags!
 - Don't go where crops are grown Duh!
- If you stop in the morning for coffee, do your business in town! If you can't, think about someone leaving goodies behind in your yard
 - Pack out your paper!

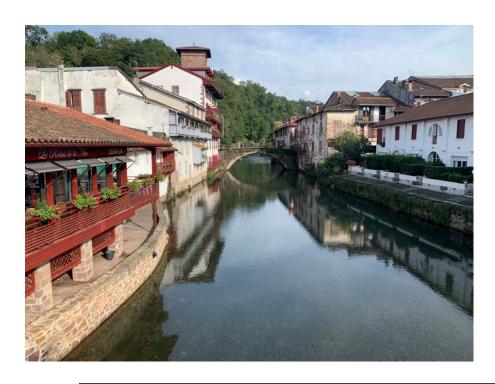






LET'S TAKE A HIKE!

- Arrived mid-day into Saint Jean at the foot of the Pyrenees
 - Obtained our credentials, relaxed and had an incredible French dinner









LET'S TAKE A BREAK!

- We did things a bit different...
 - Because of Jet Lag we did a short first day
 - Target was just 3 miles up the hill to the first Albergue: Ferme Ithurburia





IT GETS BETTER!





DAY 1 DONE







Hemingway lodged in this building in 1924 and 1925 on a fishing trip to the Irati river, described in his novel The Sun Also Rises. We stayed here and crossed over the river in the morning.





DAY 2 BEAUTIFUL: BURGUETE TO AKERRETA







HOW WELL MARKED IS THE CAMINO?

• Hiking in the Countryside

- Yellow arrow or shell is everywhere!
- Very difficult to get lost
- West of Burgos, concrete way markers

• Navigating the Big Cities

- Arrows painted on nearly every building
- Shells embedded in the sidewalks
- Apps are a huge help in the big cities











MOST COMMON MISTAKES ON THE CAMINO



From the website: The Gallivanting Gallos

- #1 Packing too much weight
- #2 Starting off too fast
- #3 Lack of time and no rest days
- #4 Walking to keep up with others
- #5 Racing for a bed
- #6 Incorrect clothing
- #7 Ill prepared for rain
- #8 Underestimating care for your feet
- #9 Forgetting to take photos
- #10 Carrying too much water
- #11 Lack of respect for others

MOST COMMON INJURIES ON THE CAMINO









- #1 Blisters, chafing and lacerations glide & socks
- #2 Sprained ankles incorrect foot/ankle support
- #3 Plantar Fasciitis (inflammation of the heal)
- #4 Tendonitis stretch every morning and at night!
- #5 Meniscus not distributing the load use sticks!
- #6 Fractures tripping, falling use sticks!
- #7 Sunburn and heat stroke walk when cooler!
- #8 Dehydration sip throughout your journey
- #9 Heat rash wear shorts, I didn't

I got something very strong at a pharmacy in Los Arcos and again in Estella. Rash gone in two days!



WALKING WITH OTHER PILGRIMS

- Walking together or alone
 - Finding your pace and connection with the Camino
 - Meeting new people Helping each other (with bugs)
 - Breaking it off from someone the famous ways
 - Staying extra nights in big cities or special places
- Big groups can get noisy be respectful
 - Break into smaller groups bigger issue last 100km
- Long lasting friendships are formed on the Camino
 - The moving groups of Pilgrims Albergue reunions

INTERACTING WITH LOCALS

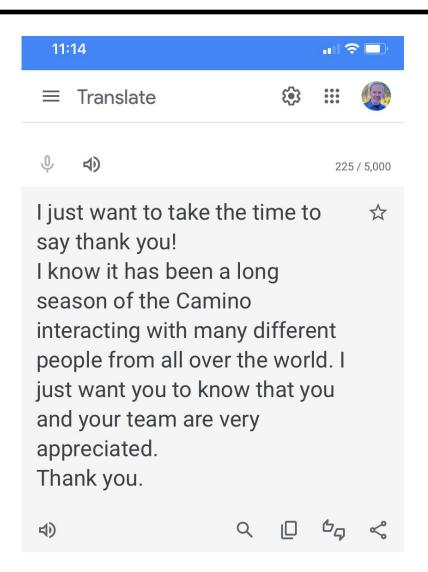
- Dealing with some Pilgrims can be difficult, especially late in the Camino season
 - Late Summer and Fall
- Please be kind –these people work hard and deserve the same kindness we would like along the way
 - Attitudes may have been affected by those who passed through before us
- I prepared a little note on my phone for shop and restaurant staff to read every chance I got.



¡Solo quiero tomarme el tiempo para decir gracias! Sé que ha sido una larga temporada del Camino interactuando con mucha gente diferente de todo el mundo. Sólo quiero que sepas que tú y tu equipo sois muy apreciados. Gracias.

INTERACTING WITH LOCALS

- The Result
 - There were a lot of hugs, tears and smiles
- Late in the season we must do more to make up for what might have come before us
- Express your gratitude the best you can
 - Tipping is not normal
 - Stopping to do little things, like a note, will brighten even the most bitter server
 - Be creative



PASSES THROUGH FOUR MAJOR REGIONS

- Basque Country France and into Spain
 - Includes Saint Jean Pied de Port (foot of the pass)
 - Their own language, things painted red, white & green
- Navarra
 - Includes Roncesvalles, Pamplona & Estella
- Castile / Leon
 - Includes Leon, Astorga, Sahagun (1/2 way) & Villafranca
- Galicia Oh my goodness, The Food!
 - Includes O'Cebrero, Sarria, Portamarin & Santiago









PASSES THROUGH 4 MAJOR CITIES

• Pamplona

• Running of the Bulls in July of each year, Great Food!

• Burgos

- Cathedral, fortress, artwork & big city life
- Tomb of El Cid, popular Spanish Knight

• Leon

- Cathedral, artwork, antiquities, night life
- Tourists, travel hub, Decathlon, France-like street café's

• Santiago de Compostela

- Cathedral, Pilgrims Mass, The Pilgrim museum
- Pilgrim credentials, gathering of hikers in the square









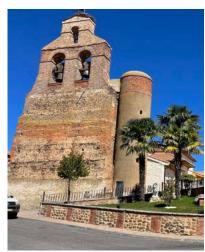
NOTABLE SIGHTS – STROKES, VINEYARDS AND SMALL TOWNS

• Stroke nests on top of so many churches









- Vineyards and beautiful small hilltop villages
 - Cirauqui truly a breathtaking experience. Medieval village picturesque streets, stone houses w/centuries old shields on doors



NOTABLE FOOD – END OF DAY, EVERYTHING DEVOURED



















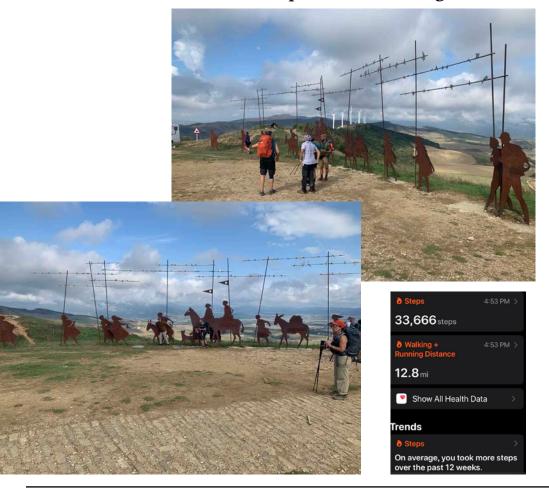
NOTABLE PLACES ALONG THE CAMINO

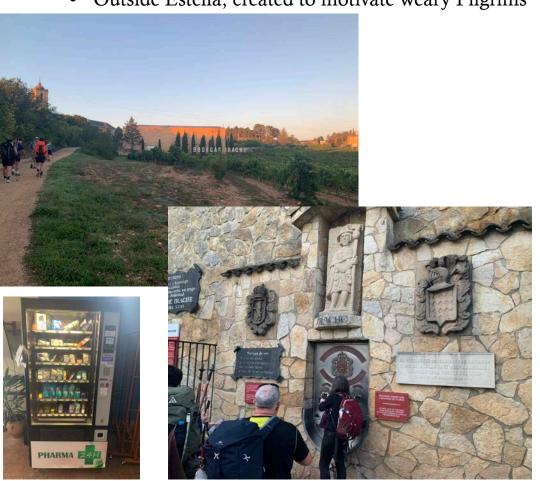
- Very special places too many to list
 - Roncesvalles first stop over the Pyrenees
 - Akerreta The hotel filmed in The Way
 - Pamplona city center square
 - Burgos the Cathedral and surrounding area
 - Sahagun the halfway point on the Camino
 - Leon the Cathedral, city center and nightlife
 - Astorga A masterpiece of Antonio Gaudi
 - Villafranca Church built in 12th century

- O'Cebreiro Beginning of Galician region
- Triacastela The food, horse riding break
- Sarria Starting point for many Pilgrims
- Portomarin Home of the Camino almond cake
- Ribadiso Beautiful flowers, river and cows
- Santiago Bustling city and your sweet reward
- Finisterra -Lands end, the lighthouse and ocean
- Muxia Famous small port and church
- And everything and everywhere in between!

NOTABLE PLACES – THE PILGRIM MONUMENT AND WINE SPOUT

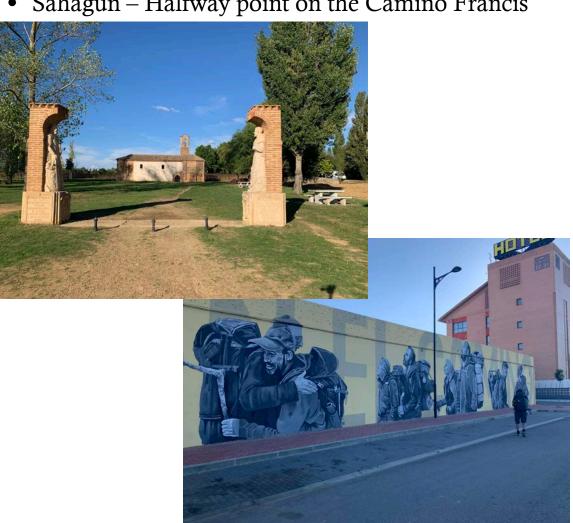
- Pilgrim Monument
 - Outside and above Pamplona Metal Pilgrim statues
- The Wine Wall spout at Bodegas de Irache winery
 - Outside Estella, created to motivate weary Pilgrims





NOTABLE PLACES – SAHAGUN & ASTORGA

• Sahagun – Halfway point on the Camino Francis



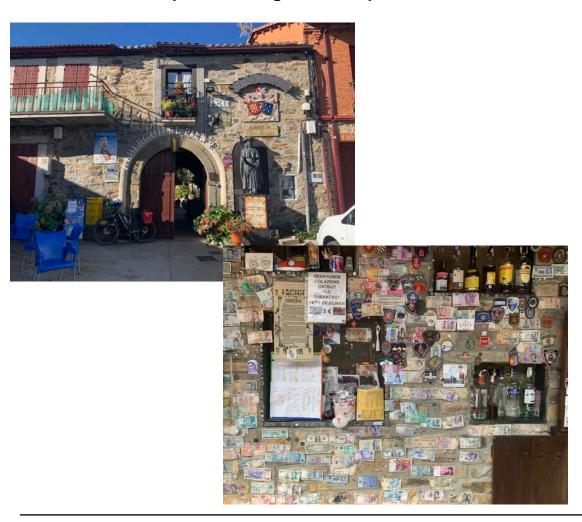
• Astorga – A masterpiece of Antonio Gaudi



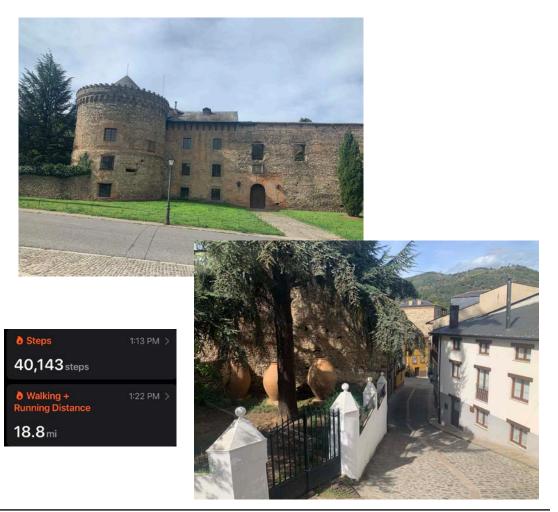


NOTABLE PLACES – RABANAL & VILLAFRANCA

• Rabanal – Really old Alberque / Really old roads



• Villafranca - Church built in 12th century



NOTABLE PLACES – BETWEEN RABANAL & MOLINASECA

• The Iron Cross

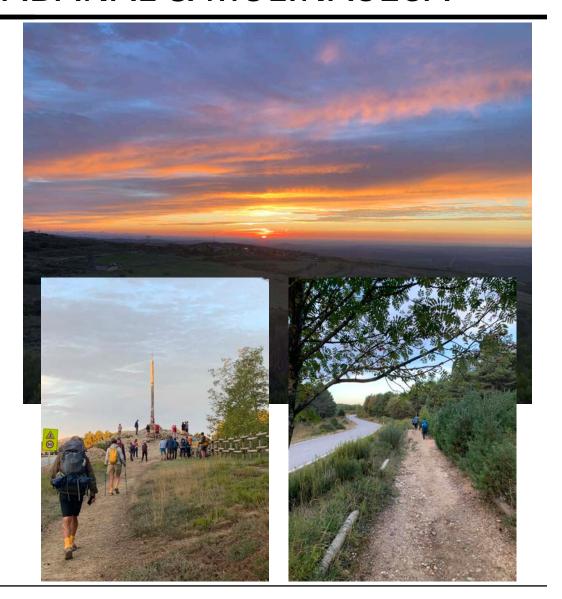
• Its general meaning: A reminder of the hardships and challenges each Pilgrim faces on the Camino

• It is a place where Pilgrims seek forgiveness

 Placing a small item there to represent sins left behind before moving on to Villafranca or Santiago for pardon or forgiveness

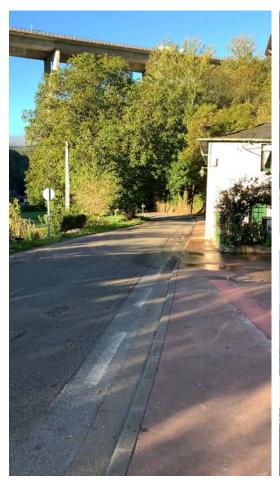
• Incredible morning and odd landscape changes

- A place where Pilgrims are greeted with incredible sunrises after walking very old roads
- Somewhat barren leading to The Iron Cross
- Incredibly beautiful green forest moving West



NOTABLE PLACES — O'CEBREIRO

• O'Cebreiro – Beginning of the Galician region









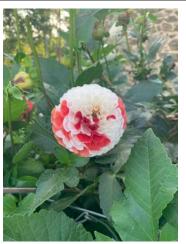




I LEARNED TO STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES, AND OTHER FLOWERS























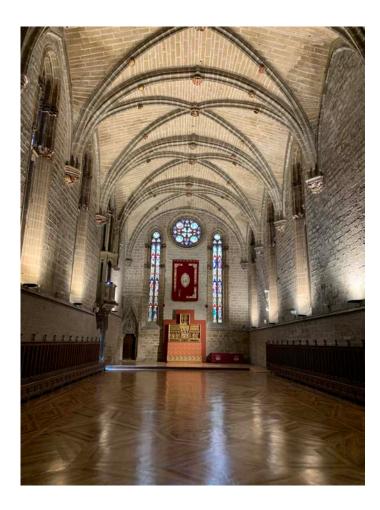


THE CATHEDRAL: PAMPLONA

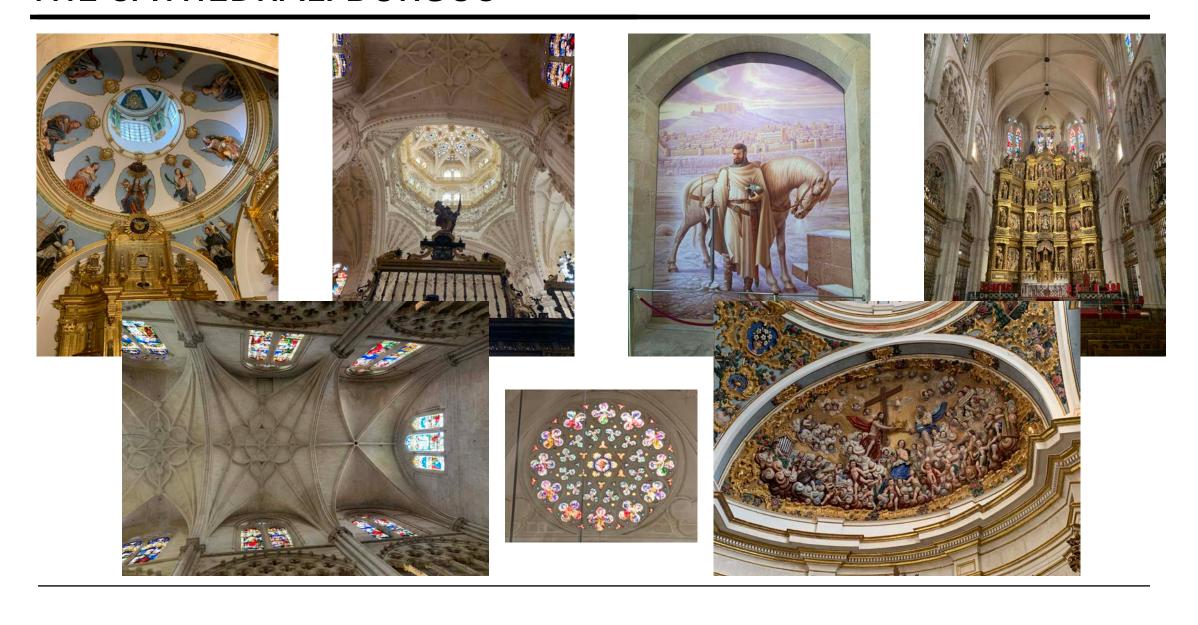
• The Cathedrals: Pamplona







THE CATHEDRAL: BURGOS



THE CATHEDRALS: LEON









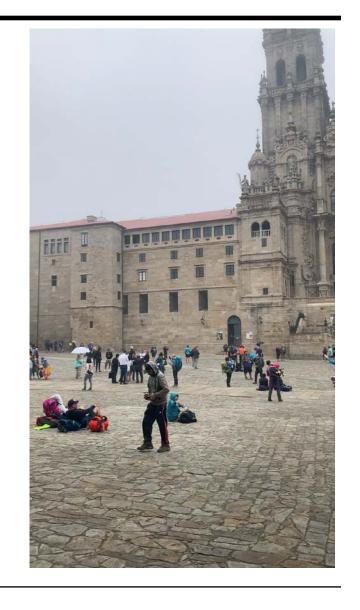


737 windows, 1800 Sq m (19,375 sq ft) of stained glass

ARRIVING IN SANTIAGO







CATHEDRAL SQUARE REUNIONS













GETTING YOUR CREDENTIALS

- Pilgrims Office
 - Below the Cathedral to the West Ask
- Preregister ahead of time get QR code
 - Go to: <u>www.oficinadelperegrino.com</u>
 - Choose language, fill in form and you will receive a QR code to scan at the door
- Get your certificate of completion
 - And the tube!
- Certificate of distance also available
 - Stamped Pilgrim book required









MY COMPLETED PILGRIM PASSPORT



THE TOMB OF SAINT JAMES

Tour of Saint James crypt typically done right after the Pilgrim's Mass. Located directly under the main alter.









PILGRIM'S MASS

• The Botafumeiro

- A Thurible or Censor, or "smoke spreader"
- Weighs 175lbs, 45-50mph, travels the length and height of the Cathedral. Operated by 6 Monks
- Used in the middle ages to clean the air (fumigate the place) when crowds of stinky Pilgrims came in after completing their Camino de Santiago

• It doesn't happen every day

- In general, 7:30AM Pilgrim each Friday, except Good Friday
- Busy season, sometimes twice or three times daily. Someone (dignitaries) can donate to have to done.
- Follow-up with a tour of Saint James' crypt and the Pilgrims museum







NOTABLE PLACES – FINISTERRA AND MUXIA

• Finisterra – The added pull of the Camino: End of the Earth • Muxia – Beautiful small port town,







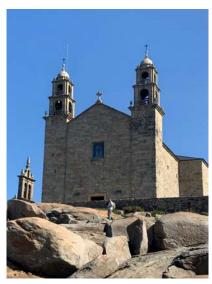










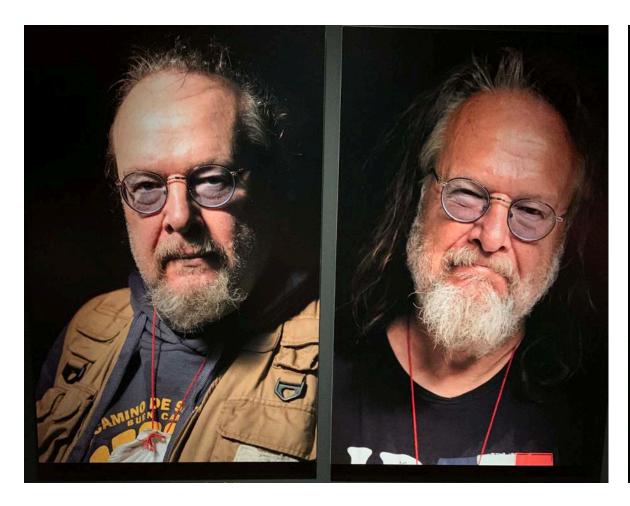




• Off Cathedral Square – The museum is a Must See



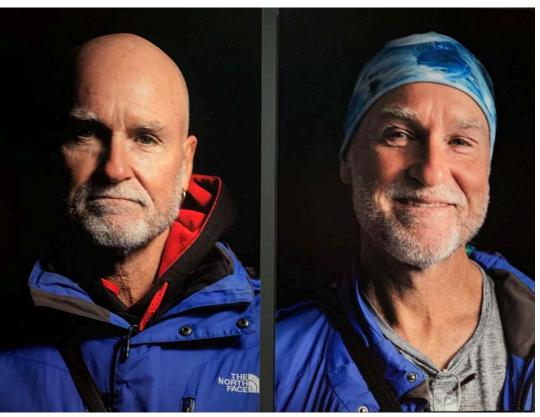






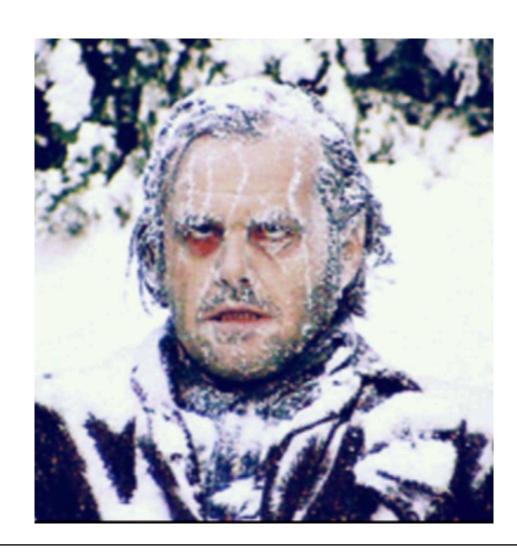


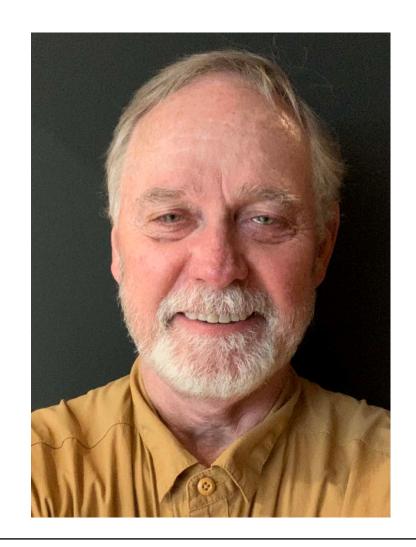












TRAVEL BLOGS, RESOURCES, TOUR SITES, ETC.

- Other Resources
 - Santiago-compostela.net
 - Stingynomads.com
 - Thecaminoprovides.com
 - Exploreworldwide.com
 - Americanpilgrims.org
 - Thejollyapp.com
 - A little company created here in Bend

- Tours, includes by foot and bicycle
 - Caminoways.com
 - Followthecamino.com
 - Galiwonders.com
- By Bicycle
 - Macsadventure.com
- By Horse
 - caminosantiagoacaballo.com

THANK YOU

