

Camino 101

An introduction to the Camino de Santiago





Pruitt Layton

Camino Frances 2015 – Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to Santiago

Camino Dos Faros 2019 – Laxe to Finisterre

Camino Portuguese 2022 – Porto to Santiago (Coastal)

Kath Stoll

Camino Ingles 2018 - Ferrol to Santiago

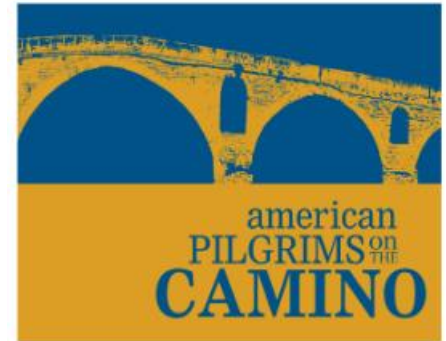
Tina Strickler

Camino Frances 2018 – Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to Santiago
- partially by bicycle

Valley of the Sun Chapter - American Pilgrims on the Camino

American Pilgrims on the Camino

- National organization 501(c)(3)
- Supports pilgrims & pilgrimage
- Provides approved credentials
- Provides grants to support Camino infrastructure
- Website of extensive resources: www.AmericanPilgrims.org
- Facebook group



Valley of the Sun Chapter

- Restarted in 2021. Activities planned and led by volunteers
- Share Camino information with Phoenix metro community
- Offer informal mentoring to new pilgrims
- Provide support and camaraderie for returning pilgrims
- Host activities in the local area (31 hikes in 2023; 24 YTD '24)
- Facebook page, monthly newsletter



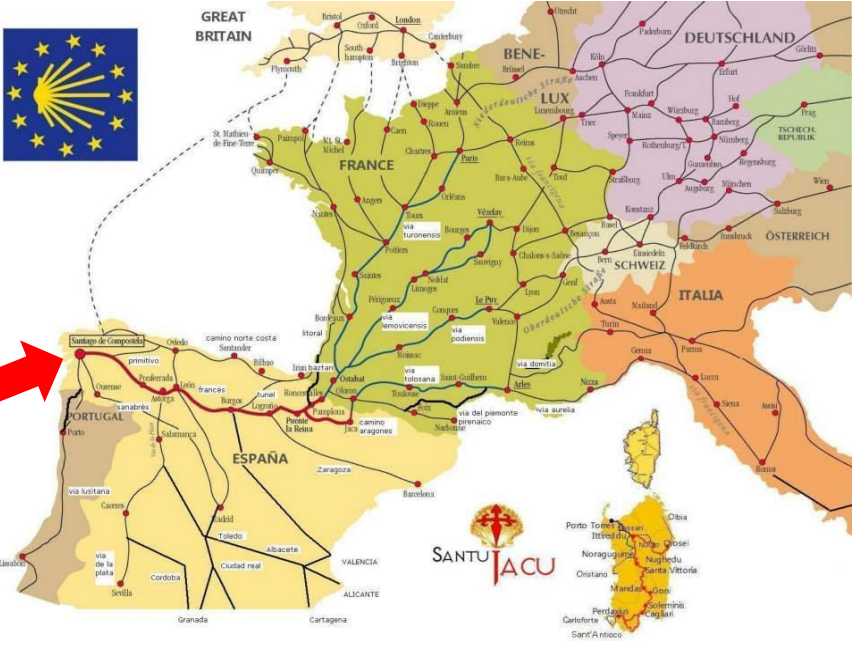
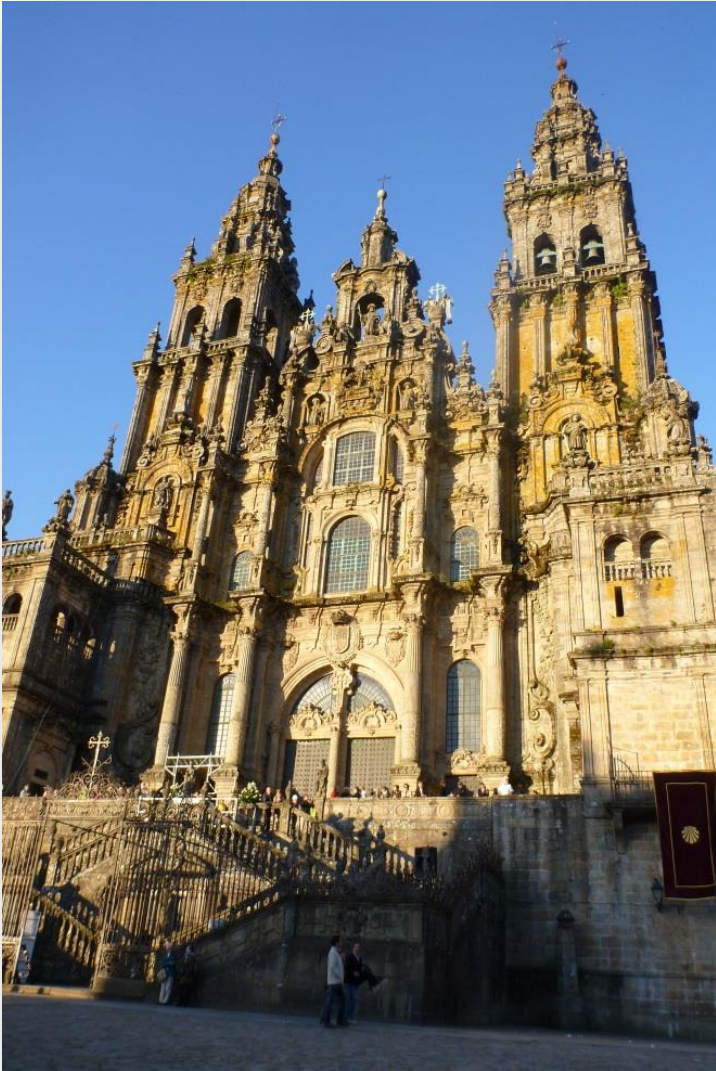


Topics

- **What is the Camino de Santiago**
- **Routes to Santiago**
- **Different Ways to be a Pilgrim**
- **A Typical Day on the Camino**
- **Preparation**
- **Resources**

Please save your questions to the end

What is the Camino de Santiago?





History

- 950 - First recorded Camino pilgrimage.
- Middle ages - pilgrimages became very popular: Rome, Jerusalem, Santiago
- Plagues, Wars, Religious reformations, etc.
- 1970's - a few hearty adventurers began to explore the route
- 1998 – Santiago UNESCO World Heritage Site
- 2010 - 272,000 walked a Camino*
- 2010 - The Way (movie) - US attention
- 2019 - 350,000 walked a Camino*
- 2020/2021 – Spain essentially closed due to the global pandemic
- 2022 – more than 438,000 walked a Camino*
- 2023 – 446,035 walked a Camino*
- **2024 – 407,053 as of Sept 21 (approx. 13% more than 2023)**

* Walked, biked, rode a horse, wheel chair, etc. Quantities are the number of Compostelas issued by the Pilgrim Office in Santiago

Credential and Compostela

Credential/Pilgrim's Passport - official document to recognize you as a pilgrim

- Required to stay at an albergue or buy pilgrim meals.
- Available from American Pilgrims



Compostela – completion certificate issued to pilgrims who:

- Make the pilgrimage for religious/spiritual reasons.
- Walk at least 100km and end in Santiago.





Why Walk a Camino?

- Spiritual and Religious
- Looking for new challenge –physical or mental test
- Health and exercise – kickstart a new lifestyle
- History and culture
- Diverse experience – learn more about another culture
- Get away from daily life and connect with nature
- Expand social experiences
- Bucket List

Your goals make your camino unique



Who walks a Camino?

Compostelas issued in 2023	446,035
Women / Men	53% / 47%
Spain / US	45% / 7%
Pilgrims by age:	
>65	11%
46-65	41%
18-45	40%
< 18	8.40%

Many routes lead to Santiago



2023 Pilgrim Stats

446,035 = NEW Compostela Record!

TOP 12 Countries

Spain
USA
Italy
Germany
Portugal
France
United Kingdom
Mexico
Korea
Ireland
Australia
Canada

Most Popular Routes

Francés
Portugués Central
Portugués Coastal
Inglés
Primitivo
Norte

TOP 5 Starting Points

Sarria
Tui
SJPP
Porto
Ferrol



How do you pick your Camino?

Considerations:

Time limitation

Budget

Health & Overall Fitness

Solace or Socialize

Physical Challenge or Leisure

Flexibility or Reservations

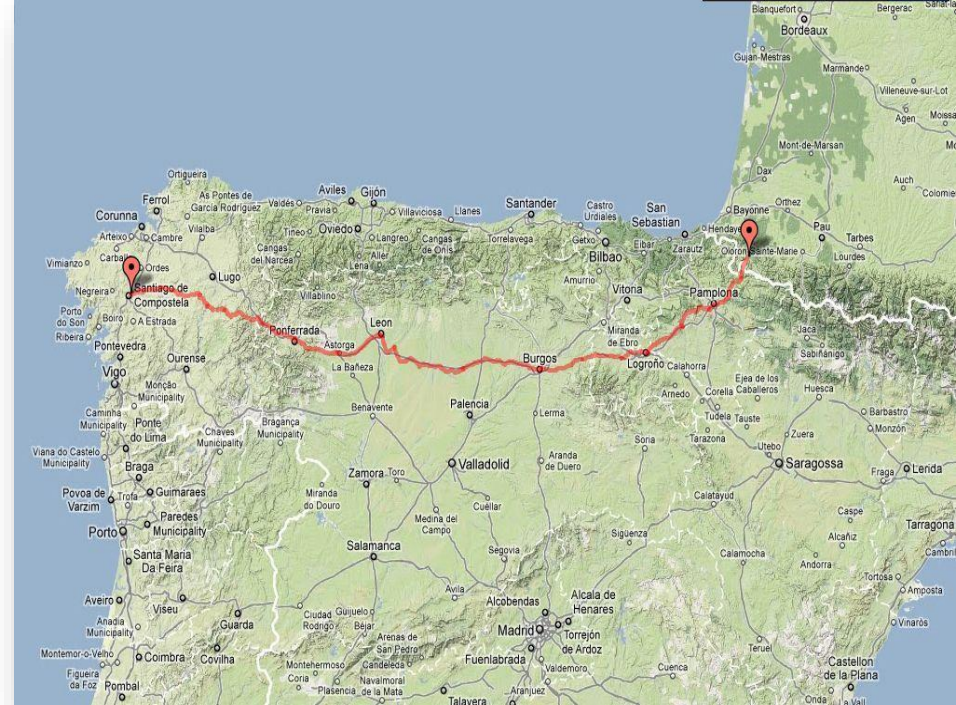
Economy or Comfort

Spiritual Renewal (Holy Year, 100km)

Others: History, Nature, Family Roots

Camino Francés

- † *Most popular route (50% 2023)*
- † **Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port (SJPP) to Santiago - 490 miles (800 km); 30-35 days**
- † **Sarria–Santiago 65 miles(100km); 5 days**
- † *Average 15 miles/day walking average 6 hours*



Camino Portuguese

- † *2nd popular (32% 2023) & fastest growing route*
- † Lisbon to Santiago
 - † Ave. 24 days /400 miles (640 km)
- † Porto to Santiago
 - † Ave. 10 days /150 miles (240 km)
- † Tui to Santiago
 - † Ave. 5 days /65 miles (100 km)



Day 5 - A Guarda, Spain



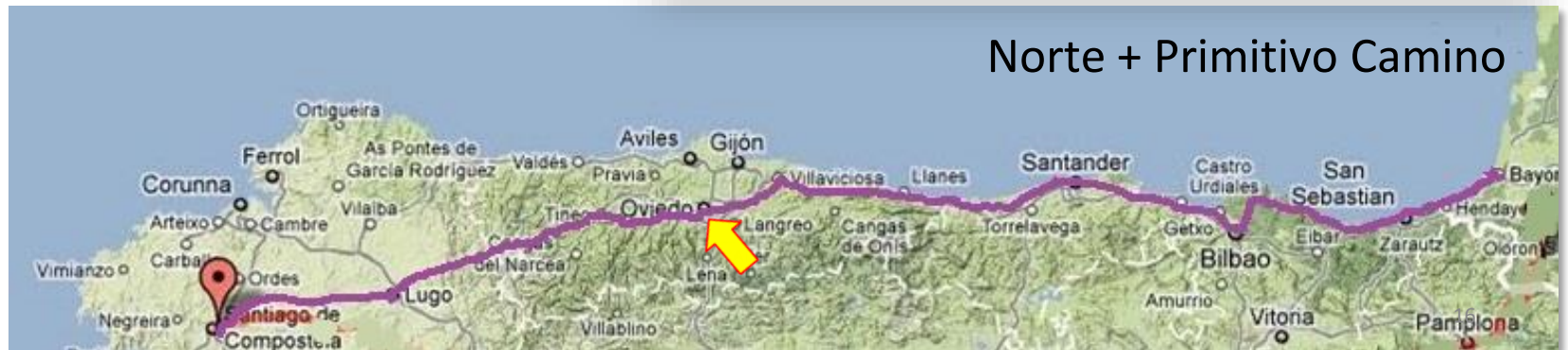
Camino Inglés

- † 3rd popular – 5.5% 2023
- † Ferrol to Santiago
- † Avg 5 days/75 miles (120 km)



Camino Primitivo

- † 4th popular – 4.7% 2023
- † Rural mountainous route
- † Ave. 14 days / 220 miles (353 km)



Camino Norte

† 5th popular – 4.6% 2023

† Ave. 33 days/ 510 miles (820 km)

† Ocean vistas & resort towns

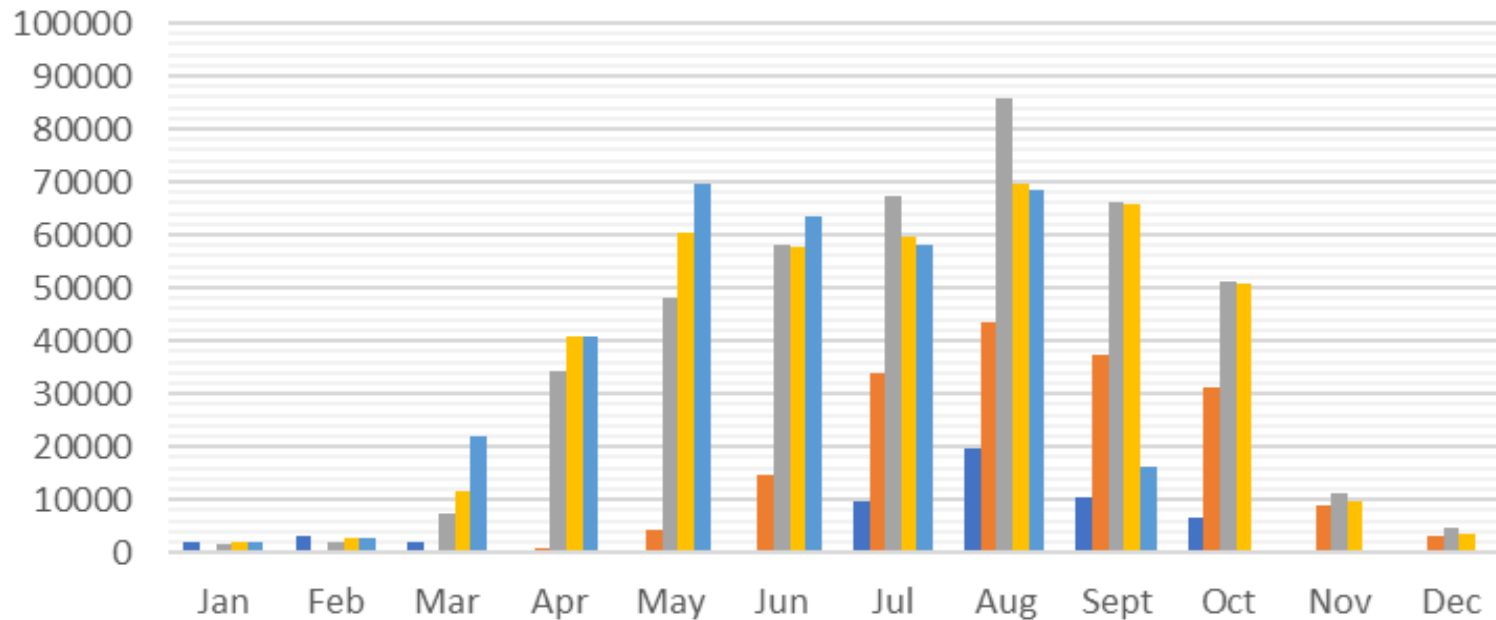


When to go?



Compostelas Issued

■ 2020 ■ 2021 ■ 2022 ■ 2023 ■ 2024



(source <https://oficinadelperegrino.com/en/statistics-2/>)

'Monthlypilgrims 2020-2024' file

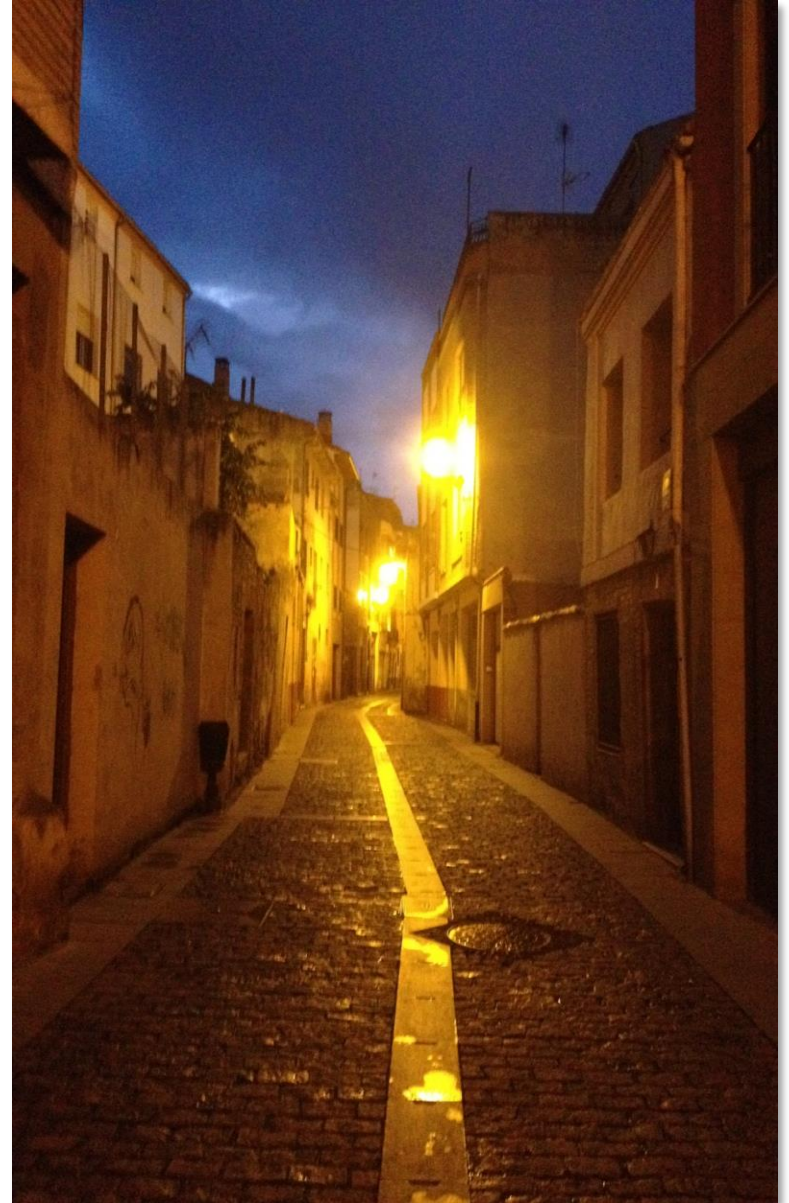


Making your Camino your own

- Traditional Pilgrim experience on the Camino Frances. Carry your backpack, stay in rustic albergues, walk the entire route.
- Alternative camino experiences. Ship your backpack, stay where it's comfortable, walk any of the camino's.

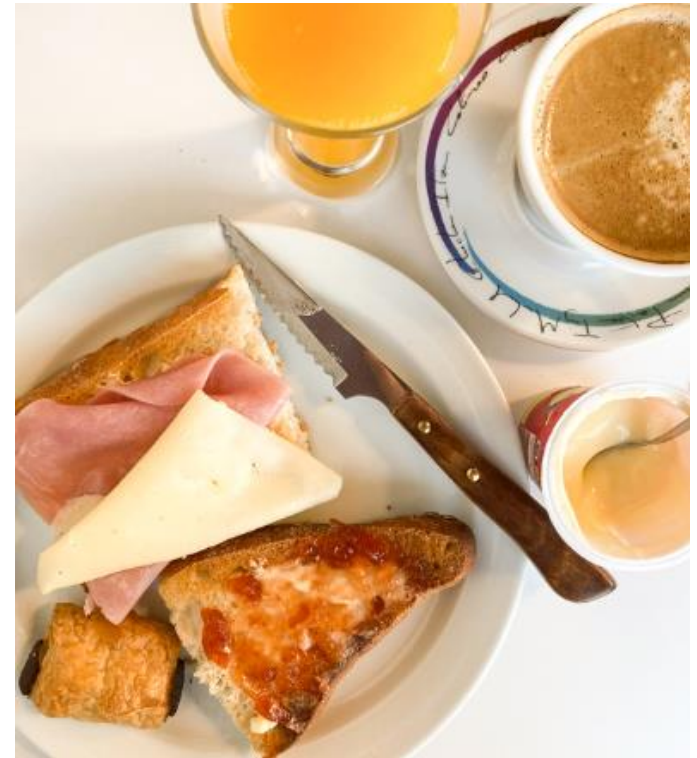
Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

Up at sunrise, on the camino early. Carry your bag, stay in Albergues



Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

Coffee, breakfast early / Spain cafes open ~ 9am



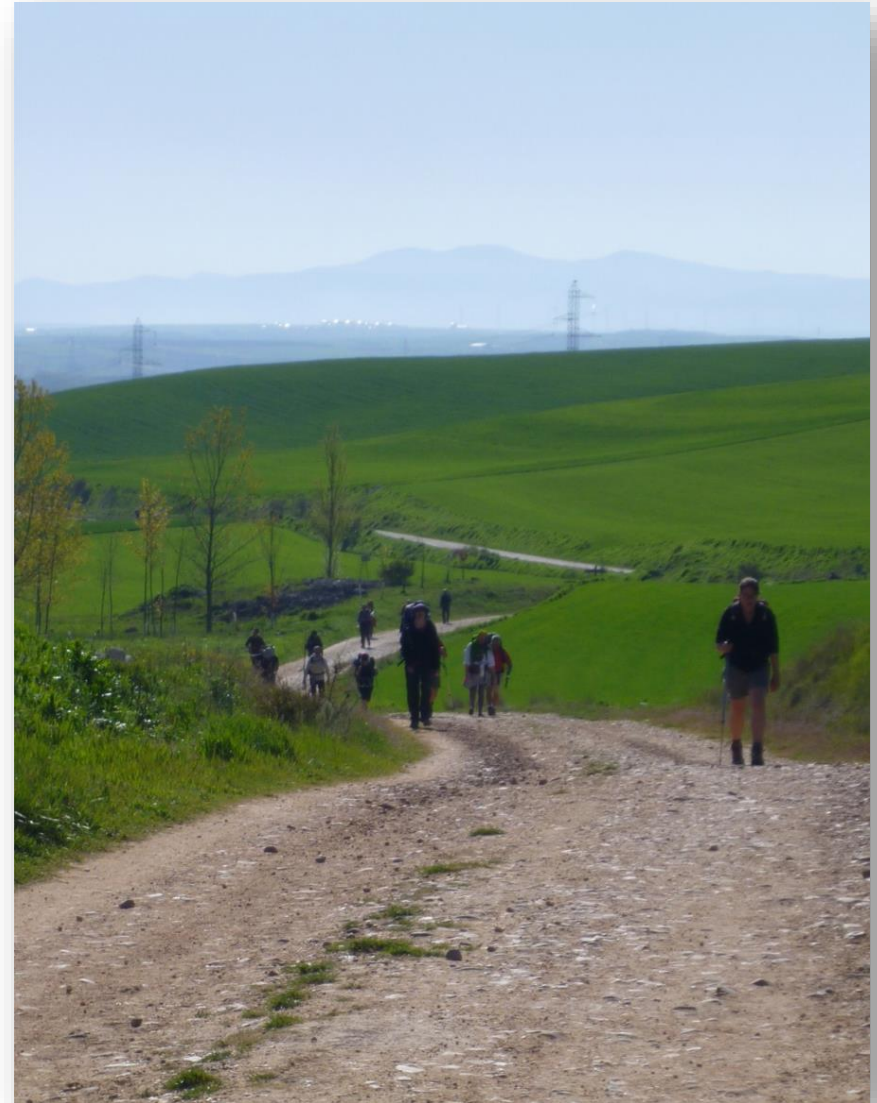
Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

Stop for 2nd Breakfast.



Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

Walk 6 to 8 hours a day. Pass thru 4-6 villages/towns each day



Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

Stop early afternoon. Stay in Albergues

Check in, hiking shoes and sticks stay outside sleeping areas

Find bed and do laundry.



Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

Explore the town & dinner. Daily Pilgrim Dinner available.



Menú del Día	Day Menu
1 Plato Sopa de verdura Sopa de pescado Judías verdes Macarrones Ensalada	1 Starter Chick vegetable soup Fish soup Green beans Macaroni Salad
2 Plato Ternera en salsa Filete de ternera Lomo de cerdo Pollo asado en salsa Calamares a la romana Lenguado con salsa Huevos fritos con jamón Huevos fritos con chorizo Huevos fritos con bacon Huevos fritos con queso	2 Main dish Veal with sauce Fillet of veal Pork chop Chicken with sauce Squid Sole in sauce Fric eggs with fried bacon Fric eggs with sausage Fric eggs with ham Fric eggs with cheese
Postres Pastel de la casa Flan de buco casero Natillas Crema catalana Yogurt Helado Fruta	Dessert Home made cake / tart Home made caramel Culin custard sing Card Yogurt Ice cream Fruit
Vino / Agua / Pan Incluido	House wine / Water / Bread Included



Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

Prepare dinner when kitchens are available



Special Diets

Spain is a country of meat eaters

.8% vegan / 4% vegetarian / 7% flexitarian

Greater chance of vegan options in larger cities on Francis. Research restaurants in cities on the internet

Tour companies - cheese sandwich

Carry a card with your diet restriction written in Spanish. No Carne, No pollo. Ask if there are any other foods available.

Most soup bases are beef, chicken, or pork even if a vegetable soup.

Learn food names in Spanish.

European breads are made with white wheat – lower gluten level.

You are a guest on the Camino. Don't expect restaurants to meet your needs. Have a back up plan.

TAPAS RANKED*

www.tasteatlas.com/tapas



tasteatlas

BEST

★ 4.5+



GAMBAS À LA PLANCHA
4.7



BOQUERONES
EN VINAGRE
4.6



GAMBAS AL AJILLO
4.6

GREAT

★ 4.0+



PATATAS BRAVAS
4.3



CROQUETAS DE JAMÓN
4.3



ALBÓNDIGAS
EN SALSA
4.3

OK

★ 3.5+



CROQUETAS DE POLLO
3.9



PINCHITOS
3.8



ANGULAS
3.6

WORST

★ <3.5



TIGRES
3.3



ESPINACAS CON
GARBANZOS
3.3



BERENJENAS
CON MIEL
3.4

*According to TasteAtlas audience

Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

In bed by 9pm. Up at sunrise and start again!




Traditional Pilgrims Day - Camino Frances

How do you know where to go? Just follow the arrows



What to bring



american PILGRIMS ON THE CAMINO

OUR MISSION
We foster the enduring tradition of the Camino by supporting its infrastructure, gathering pilgrims together and providing information and encouragement to past and future pilgrims.

OUR VISION
We inspire all who seek the spirit of the Camino to connect with the global community of pilgrims.

OUR VALUES
• Community • Gratitude • Service • Simplicity

AMERICAN PILGRIMS ON THE CAMINO . . .

- Provides credentials for all Camino de Santiago routes (americanpilgrims.org/request-a-credential/)
- Trains hospitaleros for service in Camino albergues (americanpilgrims.org/hospitalero-training/)
- Supports local chapters across the United States (americanpilgrims.org/local-chapters/)
- Offers grants to enhance the Camino infrastructure (americanpilgrims.org/grants/)
- Publishes "La Concha," a quarterly newsletter by pilgrims for pilgrims (americanpilgrims.org/newsletter-la-concha/)
- Hosts Facebook groups for up-to-date Camino information sharing (facebook.com/groups/AmericanPilgrims/)
- Maintains a website with routes, abundant advice and more (americanpilgrims.org)
- Organizes an annual nationwide Gathering of Pilgrims (americanpilgrims.org/annual-gathering/)

To learn more about these programs and services visit americanpilgrims.org

Join us at americanpilgrims.org/membership/
American Pilgrims on the Camino is a 501(c)(3) national, nonprofit registered in California.
¡Buen Camino!

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

- 2 pair of pants (zip-off style)
- 2 - 3 short sleeve shirts
- 1 long sleeve shirt
- 2 - 3 pair of underwear
- 2 - 4 pair of socks (heavy & liner)
- waterproof jacket/ poncho with hood
- rain pants (optional)
- fleece jacket
- lightweight pair of gloves
- lightweight sandals
- hat
- bandana
- 1 quick-dry towel
- sleeping bag, liner, or body sheet
- backpack rain cover
- camera
- guide book
- headlamp
- journal
- water bottle/water bladder
- 2 large garbage bags and ziplocks
- lip balm
- safety pins/clothespins for laundry
- safety pouch for passport/money
- sunscreen
- sunglasses
- toiletry bag (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, deodorant, razor, etc.)
- first aid kit (bandaids, waterproof tape, antiseptic wipes, pain reliever, etc.)

- † Try everything before you go.
- † Wear your shoes in the rain, heat & cold.
 - † Do you still like them?
- † Washing your clothes in the sink.
 - † Did they dry overnight?
- † Walk with your pack fully loaded.
 - † Is there room for snacks & lunch?
- † Goal ~ 10% of your body weight



Don't overthink it!

Shoes – *the best shoe is the one that fits your feet.* Try on different brands and different types.

Packs – *you want the one that fits your body.* try on different brands. Have it fitted. Use packing cubes. Train with pack on your back.

Rain gear – *consider ease of getting on & off.*

Clothes – *technical fabrics – avoid cotton.* REI, 32 Degree(Costco)

Bedbugs – *be aware.* Permethrin (Amazon, REI). Check your bed. Put nothing on bed.

Footcare – *be prepared!*

Getting there – *investigate.* Fly into major city and use local transportation to get around. Fly into one city and out of another. Consider travel insurance.

YOUR CAMINO!

- WAKE. WALK. EAT.
- WALK. 2nd BREAKFAST. WALK.
- LODGING. FEET/PHARMACIA.
- EXPLORE. VINO. EAT.
- REFLECT/CONNECT. SLEEP.
 - REPEAT





Alternative Camino – Independent

**Reservations & private
rooms available**

- Private Albergues
- Casa Rurals (like B&B's)
- Private Homes
- Room Rentals
- Hotels
- Check [Airbnb.com](https://www.airbnb.com) & [booking.com](https://www.booking.com)
Ask if Pilgrim's rate is available



www.JACOTRANS.com
 TRANSPORTE DE EQUIPAJES / BACKPACKS TRANSPORT / TRANSPORT DE BAGAGES
 SERVICIOS AL PEREGRINO / SERVICES TO THE PILGRIM / SERVICES AU PÉLERIN

Nombre/Name/Nom _____
 Mail _____ Tel. _____

LUGAR DE ENTREGA / PLACE OF DELIVERY / LIEU DE LIVRAISON
 Anote aquí todos los alojamientos/Entrez ici tous les hébergements/Enter here all accommodations

Para pedir el servicio o cambios de destino, es necesario avisar con un día de antelación
 You must call for the service or for any destination changes the day before.

Alternative Camino Bag Transport – Lighten Your Load

- Private Baggage transport - Jacotrans
- Cerreos – Spanish Postal Service
- 7-10 euros per day
- Details in most accommodations



Tour Companies

- Many tour companies available – compare offerings
- Ask fellow pilgrims about their experiences – use our Facebook page to post questions. Many other Facebook groups to post questions.
- Search American Pilgrims on the Camino fb “tour company”
- Consider Camino Ways, Santiago Ways, On Foot Holidays
- Compare packages and prices. Different currencies & exchange rates.

Pampered Pilgrim

PROS

- Bring More
- Carry Less Weight
- Better Sleep
- Know You Have a Bed
- Nice Hot Showers
- English Speaking

CONS

- Bring More (Too Much)
- Unable to Stop Whenever
- More Expensive
- Smaller Pilgrim Family
- Miss Special Pilgrim Experience
- Less Sunrises

Pampered Pilgrim vs Touregrino

Hybrid Camino

Between the traditional and pampered experience lies the hybrid.

Requires your research and planning

- **Pre-book hotel/AirB&B stays** via Booking.com or direct. Some may be off the Camino path.
- **Easy to ship your bag** when you know where you are staying next
- **Your schedule** - stop where you want and when you want knowing you'll have a room.
- **Eat** what you want and where you want – not limited to prearranged meals. But be aware of times.
- **Start and end your day** as you feel like it.
- **Stay at albergues** on a limited basis (limits ability to ship a bag)



Facilities

WATER

- Potable Water Available - *Frances*
- Buy in Cafes - **ESPECIALLY** if you use bathrooms
- 2 Liters sufficient (most days) - *Frances*
- Bladder or Bottles
- Consider Bottle w/ Straw

NATURE CALLS

- LEAVE NO TRACE
- First 5 days on Frances from SJPP longest without facilities
- Bring toilet paper from lodging each morning
- Products for women



Money

MONEY

- Spain uses Euros
- ATM (cajero automático) machines in larger towns. Check which banks have reduced fees before you leave.
- Many albergues & bars are **cash only**
- Exchange larger bills in super mercados / grocery stores
- Minimum 2 debit/credit cards. Tell bank you are out of US.
- Consider a travel debit/credit card (Charles Schwab)

BUDGET

- ~ 25 Euro/day Traditional - Very economy
- ~ 30-50 Euro/day - Comfort
- ~ 70 Euro/day - Very Comfortable

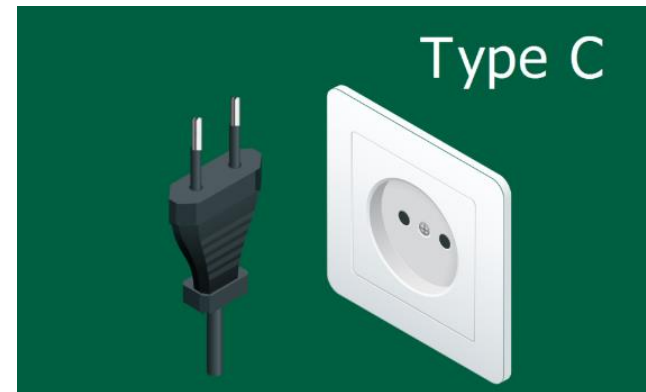
Search American Pilgrims on the Camino FB 'budget'



Communication and Electricity



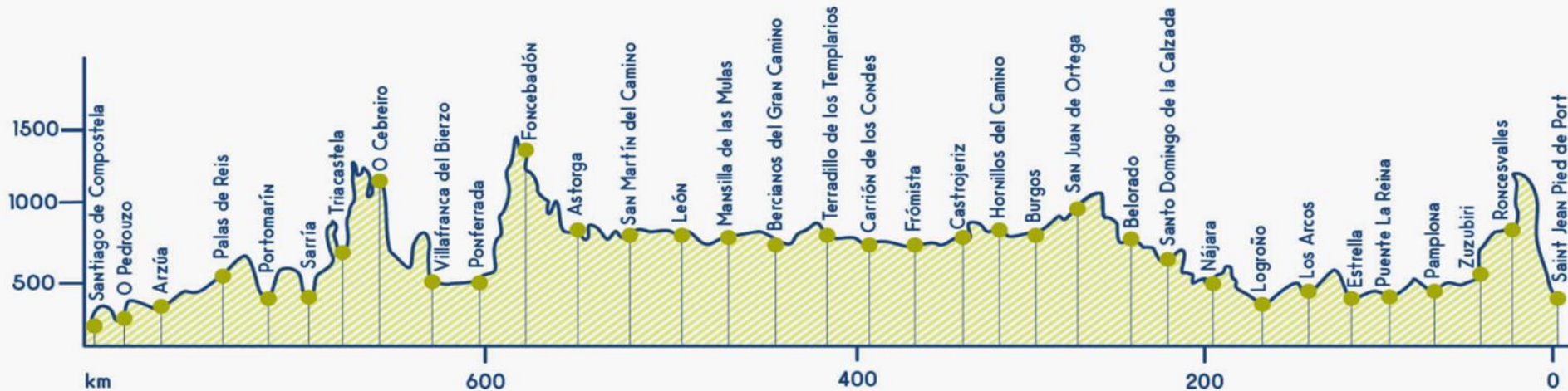
- † Wi-Fi (WeeFee) everywhere
- † Take a power bank.
- † No international plan? Turn off your data!
- † Consider Pre-paid Spanish sim card. New phone #. Have your phone unlocked? Be sure it works before leaving the shop!
- † Consider buying a disposable phone in Europe.



Spain uses Type “C” plugs

Training

- **Metric** in Europe. Meters, not Feet
- **Train with Backpack**
- **Hill training** (Ridgeline, National Trail, Piestewa Peak, Tom's Thumb, Bell Pass, Silent Sunday at South Mountain to Towers, Picket Post, Peralta)
- **Walk 2 days back-to-back** 10 miles each day - even if along canal path.
- **Walk every day** with 1 long walk per week.
- **Add 10% to long walks each week.**
- **Walk to Grocery Store, Church, Chiropractor, etc.**



But be extra thoughtful about...

Your camino goals. Plan your camino so you achieve them.

Training your mind as well as your body.

Overcoming challenges is part of the journey.

Passing Through but communities and people live there & depend on pilgrims.



Travel Companions

Discuss your reasons for walking.

- Do your companions respect them, and do you respect their reasons?

How will you get along for 5 days, 10 days, 35 days?

- Personality differences: introvert or extravert, driver/competitive vs laid back/enjoy the scenery
- Physical differences snoring, eating, when to take & what kind of rest breaks

How will you each handle the unexpected?

The Camino is 49% physical/51% mental



Tips for beating the crowds on the Frances

- Start on a week day
- Don't stay in the towns recommended in the Guide Books
- Wait for the surge to pass
- Take a taxi back and forth
- Get started early to get to your destination before the crowds, especially if staying in donativos



Tina's Takeaways

(from 2018 Camino Frances)

- **Take your time - YOLO**
- **Count your Blessings**
- **For Tour Company, Check Distances & Modify Accordingly**
- **Sacred Journey**
- **Represent America**
- **Leave No Trace**
- **Don't Over Think It**
- **Don't Worry - You Will Get thru the Suck**

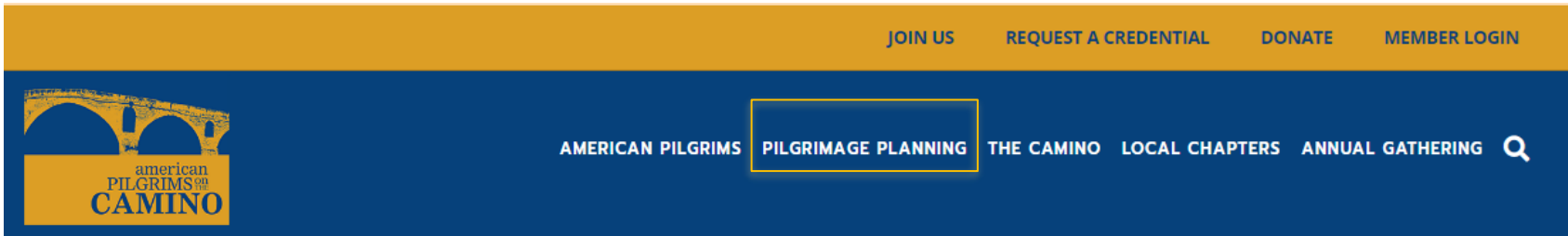


THE WORLD NEEDS MORE PILGRIMS!!!

- Overcome challenges, fear or anxiety (pain, language, weather, etc.)
- Touched by Holy Spirit & Pilgrims Across Ages
- Knowledge that You Are Not Alone
- Shed Your ID to Become a Pilgrim
- Tapped Into Simple Life
- Met Amazing People from All Over the World
- Benefitted from the Generosity of Others
- Recognized Your Blessings
- Experienced Grace
- Gained Insight into Burdens Carried & Shed by Yourself and/or Others
- Restored Hope in Fellow Mankind
- **TRANSFORMED...RENEWED...**



Additional Resources



www.americampilgrims.org

Pilgrimage Planning - information you need to plan a Camino - route overviews, how to prepare, packing list.

Guidebooks

A Pilgrims Guide to the Camino De Santiago – John Brierley is most popular

Apps

Camino Ways, Buen Camino, Wise Pilgrim, Wisely: Camino Forum Places

Website

Camino de Santiago Forum – www.caminodesantiago.me

Luggage storage in Santiago

Casa Ivar - <https://casaivar.com/luggage-storage-in-santiago-de-compostela/>

Facebook: CAMIGAS - A Buddy System for Women on the Camino

Valley of the Sun Chapter - Upcoming Activities

Hikes

October 19 – White Tanks

October 26 – White Tanks 10 miler

Nov 10 – San Tan

Nov 23 – Surprise AZ

Dec 15 – Full Moon Hike to Helipad Christmas Tree



Meetings/Presentations

September 25 – Camino 101 Chandler REI

October 17 – Zoom Presentation

October 21 – Camino 101 Chandler REI

October 24 – Camino 101 PV REI

November 16 – Welcome Home Ceremony – Papago Park

January 4 – Camino 101 – Scottsdale Civic Center Library



Join our mailing list or follow us on Facebook for details

Keep in contact with us

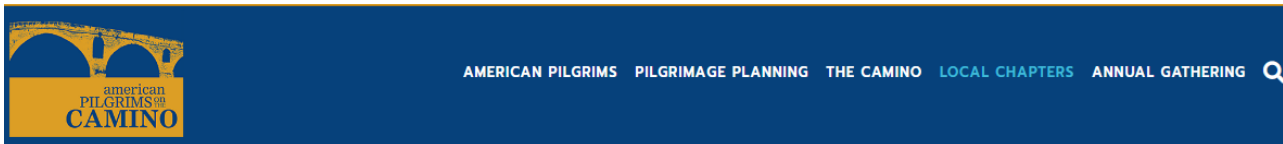
JOIN OUR CHAPTER/EMAIL US: phoenix@americanpilgrims.org

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/valleyofthesunpilgrims>



American Pilgrims on the Camino - Valley of the Sun Chapter

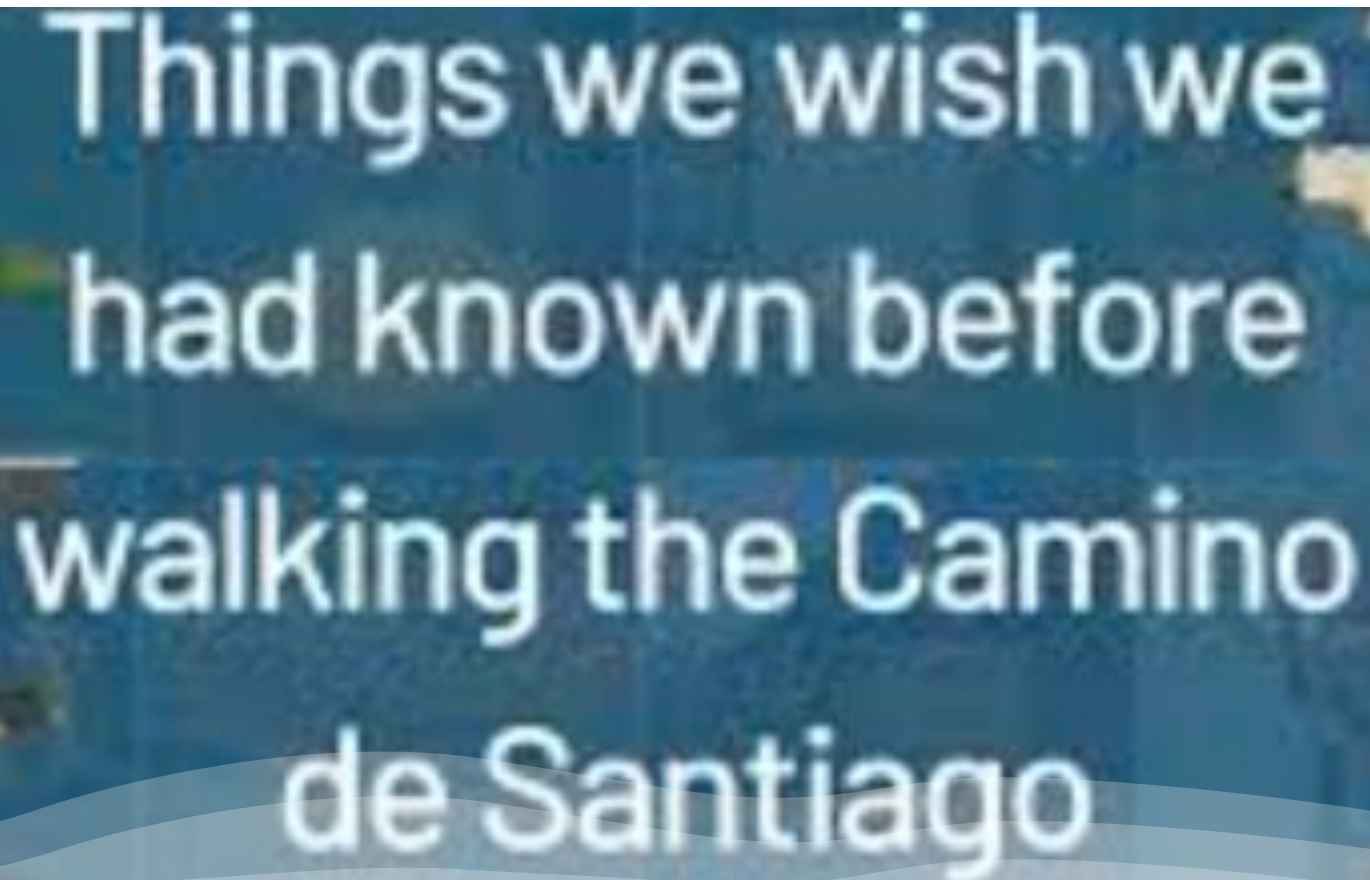


VALLEY OF THE SUN CHAPTER PAGE

https://americanpilgrims.org/iwpmmap_directory/valley-of-the-sun/

CHAPTERS CALENDAR

<https://americanpilgrims.org/calendar/>

A blue sign with white text and a yellow sun logo. The sign is outdoors, with a white wall and greenery visible in the background. The text on the sign reads: "Things we wish we had known before walking the Camino de Santiago".

Things we wish we
had known before
walking the Camino
de Santiago

QUESTIONS?

A dramatic sunset over a desert landscape. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow across the sky and illuminating the edges of scattered clouds. The foreground shows a dark, rocky hillside with several saguaro cacti. In the distance, a range of mountains is visible under a hazy sky.

ULTREYA!

phoenix@americanpilgrims.org

Key Lessons Learned

(from Pruitt's 2015 Camino Frances)

- **Take your time**
- **Keep a journal and/or blog**
- The **first third** of the journey is for your body; the **second third** is for your mind; the **last third** is for your spirit/soul.
- **Meet as many people as possible**
- **Traveling with others helps**, especially the first few days
- **Learn a little bit of the local language.**
- **Be open minded.**



Kath's Reflections

(from 2018 Camino Ingles)

- **Enjoy** the scenery. Stop and pet the friendly dogs & cats.
- **Allow the Camino to provide** - take a breath when things don't go as planned. It will work out.
- **Turn around** on the way and be amazed at where you've been & what you've accomplished.
- **Ask people** to recommend things – conversation starter.
- ***Be a pilgrim, not a tourist.***
- There is **no right or wrong way** to do your Camino. **Just do it.**
- Remember **you are a guest** of the country you are walking in.

