

Pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago

18 Days
Fully Escorted
25th Sept – 13th Oct
2020

ATTEND EITHER OF THESE INFORMATION EVENINGS

WHEN: Friday, 30th August 2019, 7pm *RSVP to Matt by 28th Aug*
WHERE: Hoskins Memorial Uniting Church, Parish Centre, Bridge St, Lithgow

WHEN: Friday, 6th September 2019, 7pm *RSVP to Matt by 4th Sept*
WHERE: Blacktown Uniting Church, 59-65 Bungarribee Rd., Blacktown

* Meet your fellow travellers * Enjoy a full briefing * Have all your questions answered



Escorted by Rev Matt Trounce

The Camino de Santiago is an ancient path that has been used by the Romans, Charlemagne and Napoleon amongst others. It has been walked as a pilgrimage for over a thousand years to Santiago in western Spain, where it is believed the apostle James is buried. There are many routes, but we will be following the most popular, known as the

Camino Frances, with thousands of pilgrims from around the world. Our pilgrimage will take us through cities, villages, pretty countryside and the lush green hills of Galicia. Highlights include; the starting point of Leon, with its magnificent cathedral; the city of Astorga, with its Roman origins, medieval city walls and palace designed by Gaudi; Cruz de Ferro (the Iron Cross) the highest point along the Camino where pilgrims often leave a stone, or token; and the completion at Santiago, where you will receive a Compostela, or certificate, of completing the pilgrimage in Latin, and observe the Santiago Mass, with the massive botafumeiro, or incense burner, swinging above us. A pilgrimage is much more than moving from A to B, but a deep spiritual journey, of simplification and experiencing something larger, fuller and more profound than the day to day. Join me for a life changing experience.

Bio - **Rev Matt Trounce** is a Minister in the Uniting Church who walked the pilgrimage of the Camino de Santiago from Saint Jean in France, to Santiago in Spain, a distance of about 800kms, in 2012. He has degrees in exercise science and psychology, as well as theology. He is interested in the connections between mind, body and spirit that come together in activities such as pilgrimage. He has read extensively on the history and mythology of the Camino and is looking forward to sharing 'The Way' with others.

DAY 1: FRI 25TH SEP Depart Australia

We depart Sydney today on our Emirates flight to Dubai with an onwards connection to Madrid.

DAY 2: SAT 26TH SEP Arrive Madrid, Leon

Upon our arrival to Madrid today we will meet our coach and driver and transfer directly to León, the starting location of our Camino. We have free time this afternoon to discover and explore León at leisure. In the year 910, León became the capital of the kingdom we know today as Spain. Its medieval importance is reflected in monuments such as its breath-taking cathedral, where several ancient kings and queens are buried. León offers Romanesque style works of art in the form of paintings, sculpture and architecture within the Basilica San Isidoro, and one of the most important collections of stained glass in its Gothic Cathedral. Overnight in León. (D)

DAY 3: SUN 27TH SEP Leon To Villadangos Del Paramo (20 km)

Today we will walk the El Camino from Leon to Villadangos del Paramo. Leaving Leon, the route will take us through to the village of Virgen del Camino, where legend states that the Virgin appeared in front of a shepherd in 1506 and asked him to build a shrine. We then follow the route through the villages of Valverde de la Virgen and San Miguel del Camino until Villadangos del Páramo, with its local church dedicated to the Apostle Santiago. This town of Roman origin was the site of a battle that took place between the Queen Dona Urraca of Leon and her husband, Alfonso I of Aragon in the year 1111. Overnight in Villadangos del Paramo or surrounding village. (B,D)

DAY 4: MON 28TH SEP Villadangos Del Paramo to Astorga (27 km)

Around three kilometres from Villadangos we will arrive to the small village of San Martin del Camino, on the river Orbigo where a beautiful medieval bridge is located. From there we will continue to Hospital de Orbigo, a templar town with a 12th century church. After a stop in this quaint village we will go through the small towns of Villares de Orbigo, Santibanez de Valdeiglesia and San Justo de la Vega before reaching Astorga, another city of Roman origin, with its medieval city walls, Gothic Cathedral and modernist Episcopal Palace, designed by famous architect Antonio Gaudí. Overnight in Astorga. (B,D)

DAY 5: TUE 29TH SEP Astorga to Rabanal Del Camino (19.5km)

Be ready for today! Although the distance we will walk today is only around 20 kilometres in length, it is a steady climb uphill to our eventual destination Rabanal Del Camino. We will leave Astorga and reach the village of Valdevejas, pass a polar grove and the River Jerga before arriving at the village Murias de

Rechivaldo, with its church dedicated to San Esteban. We then continue to the village of Santa Catalina de Somoza and onto El Ganso. The landscape will change into densely populated oak trees, heather and conifers as we ascend "los Montes de Leon" before reaching Rabanal Del Camino, a charming mountain village. Overnight in Rabanal del Camino or surroundings. (B,D)

DAY 6: WED 30TH SEPT

Rabanal Del Camino to Molinaseca (24.3km)

Passing through forested areas we will continue our ascent to the famous "Mount Irago". By the mountain pass we will see the "Iron Cross". The route then continues downwards to Bierzo. Passing by a coniferous forest we will come to Cruz de Ferro and the Hermitage of Santiago. At Cruz de Ferro pilgrims can place a rock taken from home to the already existing pile of rocks here. A rock left at this cross symbolizes a burden left behind. We will continue our walk to the small village of Manjarin, where we will be able to see the valley floor and the Leon mountains. A descent into the Ponferrada Valley passes the quaint villages of El Acebo and Riego de Ambros before we arrive to Molinaseca, a pleasant and relaxing town with slate roofs, wooden balconies and welcoming bars. Overnight in Molinaseca. (B,D)

DAY 7: THU 1ST OCT Molinaseca to Ponferrada (7.7km)

Today we will traverse one of the most authentic and untouched sections of the Path of Saint James starting in the beautiful mountain village of Molinaseca where a Romanesque bridge over the River Meruelo is found. We end today at Ponferrada, known for its famous castle of the Knights Templar. Overnight in Ponferrada. (B,D)

DAY 8: FRI 2ND OCT

Ponferrada to Villafranca del Bierzo (23.3km)

We will enjoy the wine region of the Bierzo today. Upon leaving Ponferrada we will pass through the Compostilla, a former mining town, followed by Columbranos, Fuentes Nuevas and Camponaraya which are very close to each other. We will discover the Church Santa Maria de la Plaza in Cacabelos and then see Pieros and Valtuille de Arriba before arriving to Villafranca del Bierzo, the ancient capital of El Bierzo, with its Romanesque church of Santiago. Overnight in Villafranca del Bierzo. (B,D)

DAY 9: SAT 3RD OCT Villafranca del Bierzo to O Cebreiro (27.8km)

Our final day in the El Bierzo area is one of the most beautiful and the most challenging. The route passes through woodlands of chestnuts, conifers, oaks, heather and bracken. Our walk today is quite difficult, because it is long and because the last part of the journey consists of a 600 metre climb. There are two possible routes but we will take the main road that passes through Pereje before reaching Trabadelo. Then we will go through La Portela de Valcarce, Ambasmestas, Vega de Valcarce, Ruitelan, Las Herreias de Valcarce, La Faba and La Laguna de Castilla. The road will start its ascent after the village of Las Herreias de Valcarce and we will go up until O Cebreiro, which is the first village in Galicia. This hamlet is a lovely surprise with its unique architecture and the legend that surrounds its humble church. Overnight in O Cebreiro. (B,D)

DAY 10: SUN 4TH OCT O Cebreiro to Triacastela (21.2km)

Most of the villages we will see today (Linares, Hospital de la Condesa, Padornele, Alto do Poio, Fonfria, Biduedo, Filloval, As Pasantes, and Ramil) are tiny, with just a few dozen inhabitants. After Ramil we will reach the small town of Triacastela. Overnight in Triacastela. (B,D)

DAY 11: MON 5TH OCT Triacastela to Sarria (21km)

Our walk today is very scenic and quiet. We will pass through the small villages of San Cristobal, Lusio and Renche. We will have the opportunity to see the impressive monastery of Samos from the 18th century. We then continue our walk to Sarria, which is located just 100 kilometres from Santiago. Sarria is located on a hilltop with a river on either side affording you great views of the region. We recommend that you take the time to visit the the Convento de la Magdalena and church before leaving town. Overnight in Sarria. (B,D)

DAY 12: TUE 6TH OCT Sarria to Portomarin (21.5km)

We will continue our journey through the green countryside of Galicia passing through the villages and hamlets of Barbadelo, Peruscallo, Morgade, Ferrerios, A Pena, Mercadoiro and Vilcha until arriving at the Miño River in Portomarin.

There we will discover the Romanesque church-fortress of Saint Nicholas. Overnight in Portomarin. (B,D)

DAY 13: WED 7TH OCT Portomarin to Palas De Rei (23.9km)

Today the first village we will visit is Gonzar; we will visit small hamlets starting their name with "Castro". There is Castromaior with its small Romanesque church, Castro Lardeiros and Castro Simone. Then we will pass through Hospital de la Cruz, Vantas de Naron, Ligonda, Eirexe, Portos and O Chacotes before arriving in Palas de Rei. Overnight in Palas de Rei. (B,D)

DAY 14: THU 8TH OCT Palas De Rei to Aruza (28.6km)

The first village we see today is San Xulian do Camino which has a church dedicated to San Julian. From here we continue to Pallota before descending to Outeiro da Ponte. Then continue via Pontecampana and Mato Casanova to Campanilla and Lobreiro, which has a beautiful Romanesque church. We will cross the Roman bridge over the river Seco and enter Furelos. We will see Melide with the Church of San Pedro and then pass through Boente de Baxixo, Castaneda, Ribadiso da Baixo and Ribadiso da Carretera before reaching the town of Arzuza. Overnight in Arzuza. (B,D)

DAY 15: FRI 9TH OCT Aruza to Arca / O Pino (19.4km)

In the first part of today we will pass through several hamlets. We will take time to stop in Santa Irene, where a small 18th century chapel is located. We will then continue our walk to Arca or O Pino to rest before the last stage of our Camino journey. Overnight in Arca / O Pino. (B,D)

DAY 16: SAT 10TH OCT

Arca / O Pino to Santiago De Compostela (19km)

After leaving Arca / O Pino and Amenal, the Camino continues to Lavacolla. We will have a first glance of the Santiago Cathedral at the Monte del Gozo. From here it is only a small walk downhill to our final destination of Santiago De Compostela, where we will see the Santiago Cathedral, the reliquary of the body of Apostle Saint James. Overnight in Santiago de Compostela. (B,D)

DAY 17: SUN 11TH OCT Santiago De Compostela

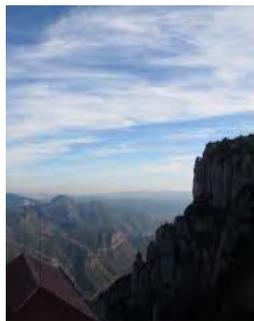
Today we take a walk through the narrow streets of the historical district which will lead us to the Santiago Cathedral, which, since its construction, has been the object of almost all the Christian pilgrimages. We also see the monumental Plaza del Obradoiro, surrounded by granite works of art. Overnight in Santiago de Compostela. (B,D)

DAY 18: MON 12TH OCT Depart Santiago De Compostela

Our journey ends today with a transfer to the Santiago De Compostela Airport for our flight home via Barcelona and Dubai. (B)

DAY 19: TUE 13TH OCT Arrive Australia

Arrive back to Australia today with wonderful memories of our trip.



TOTAL ESTIMATED PACKAGE PRICE TO SPAIN:

Price per person based on 10 - 14 full paying passengers:

Price per person based on 15 - 19 full paying passengers:

Price per person based on 20 + full paying passengers:

AUD\$7,200*

AUD\$6,600*

AUD\$6,200*

Optional single room supplement: **AUD\$975**
(limited to 4 rooms)

* Price is subject to change. Conditions apply.

PROPOSED HOTELS (OR SIMILAR):

Leon	Hotel 4* Silken Luis De Leon	1 Night
Villadangos Del Paramo	Hotel 2* Avenida Iii	1 Night
Astorga	Hotel 3* Astur Plaza	1 Night
Rabanal Del Camino	La Posada De Gaspar	1 Night
Molinaseca	Hostal El Horno	1 Night
Ponferrada	Hotel 3* El Castillo	1 Night
Villafranca Del Bierzo	Casa Mendez	1 Night
O Cebreiro	Casa Carolo	1 Night
Triacastela	Casa David	1 Night
Sarria	Hotel 2* Villa De Sarria	1 Night
Portomarin	Hotel 3* Pousada De Portomarin	1 Night
Palas De Rei	Hotel 3* Las Cabañas	1 Night
Arzuza	Hotel 2* Suiza	1 Night
Arca - O Pino	Hotel 1* Suiza	1 Night
Santiago De Compostela	Hospederia 1* San Martin Pinario	2 Nights

- Pilgrims Card and Pilgrims Shell couriered to the starting point of the pilgrimage in Spain
- Emergency support 24/7
- Tips & gratuities throughout
- All tips, portering and gratuities

PRICE EXCLUDES:

- Lunches
- Entrance Fees
- Beverages with meals
- Entrance/sightseeing/meals other than those in the itinerary
- Single supplement
- Travel insurance
- Incidental expenses of a personal nature such as phone calls, laundry, room service etc.
- Any services not listed in 'Price Includes' above

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Return economy class airfares from Sydney - Madrid /Barcelona - Sydney with Emirates Airlines
- One way airfare from Santiago de Compostela to Barcelona
- 16 nights hotel accommodation with half board (breakfasts and dinners)
- Tour Manager with you from start to finish
- Bus Services, Airport pick up on the 26/9 and return on the 12/10

WHAT TO DO NEXT:

1. Register your interest and obtain a booking form from Matt Trounce or the team at Olive Tree Travel
2. To secure your place, a deposit of \$500 per person is required by Monday 16th September, 2019
3. Full payment will be required by Monday 20th July, 2020

WHO TO CONTACT:

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