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From
$14,135 AUD

Single Room
$15,595 AUD
Twin Room
$14,135 AUD

Prices valid until
30th December 2024

19 days
Duration

Portugal, Spain
Destination

Level 3 - Moderate to Challenging
Activity

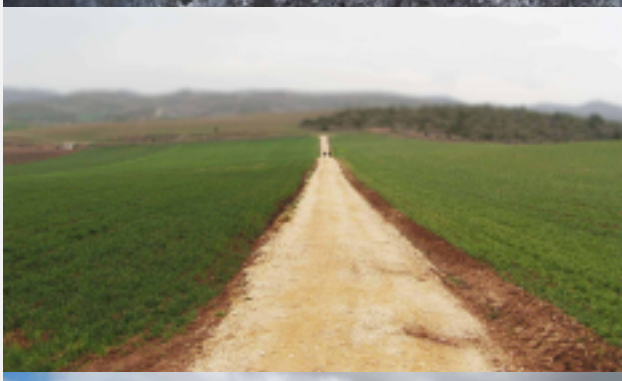
Saint James Way Small Group Walking Tour (The Camino)- Spain

Sep 02 2024 to Sep 20 2024

Small Group Walking Tour of the Camino de Santiago

Walking the Camino is a small group walking tour through northwest Spain and Portugal on the Iberian peninsula. Taking the active senior traveller on the walking tour of Spain's Camino de Santiago through some of the most pleasant sections of this historic walk in Spain and Portugal. This Camino de Santiago tour for seniors is a pilgrims walk

that embraces history and culture.



Over a 19 day period our Camino de Santiago tours for seniors experience the breathtaking scenery and picturesque sections of the Way of Saint James on a guided walk collecting a few of pilgrim passport stamps (compostela certificate) in the charming towns, sleepy villages and the gothic cathedral of Burgos are all encountered on this guided walking tour. The itinerary for this walking holiday while following the pilgrim path along some of its most beautiful landscapes through the flat, up into the undulating hills into medieval villages set deep in the beautiful countryside that defines el camino de Santiago as the Camino walk. This walk takes in Cape Finisterre, the symbolic end for many who have been walking the Camino route. Odyssey Traveller's article about the history of pilgrimage routes is useful to understand the historic significance of this hike.

Odyssey has selected relevant sections, not the entire camino, so that you experience Saint James Way, eventually reaching the historic destination Santiago de Compostela. Not since the Middle Ages has this adventure for body and mind been more popular as a pilgrimage or just a great walking tour of Spain's camino de Santiago route over 19 days with an achievable itinerary for mature and senior travellers joining this guided walking tour as a couple or solo traveler . The walking surface out on the camino trail, varies from gravel and farm tracks to paved road.

There are alternative routes such as the Camino Del Norte or del norte (Northern Way), which takes pilgrims along the Northern coast, from the Basque Country, across Cantabria, Asturias and on to Santiago de Compostela, in Galicia.

The history of Saint James way or Camino de Santiago

The Camino de Santiago, also known as the way of St James, is an ancient Catholic pilgrimage route to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northern 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.

Saint James way has been considered to be an important Christian pilgrimage route for more than 1000 years. It was considered by the church to be one of the three pilgrimage routes on which 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.

Experience the Camino with Odyssey's small group tour

The Saint James Way Small Group Walking Tour is escorted by an Odyssey program leader. Odyssey's local guides are Camino experts, sharing with you their knowledge of the medieval pilgrims and the route walked to Santiago de Compostela.

As we understand differences in travel style, our tour is designed to be as demanding as you choose. You or your partner may elect to enjoy a slower day during the tour. Or you might decide to walk the appointed section that day. Odyssey has a fitness program designed to bring you up to a comfortable activity level prior to the tour that we circulate to all participants.

As we walk the Camino we discover the artistic highlights and rich history of Northern Spain and Northern Portugal. We make sure to take lunch breaks at local restaurants and tapas bars, so that you can sample the local wines and enjoy exquisite food selected by our local guide. We also stop in at the impressive Guggenheim art temple in Bilbao and have a night's accommodation at a monastery in Leyre, where we get to experience a centuries-old tradition of choir singing. From Sarria to Santiago we enjoy some of the most spectacular scenery on the Camino ways. Finally, we arrive at our destination, where we attend the Pilgrim's Mass and explore the local market.

The Saint James way small group tour is structured for the senior or mature couple or solo traveller. It is a tour that ultimately allows you

decide how much activity you wish to enjoy. It also allows your travelling companion to participate in the walk whilst you enjoy yourself prior to meeting up again in the evenings. Of course the coach and program leader arranges all the luggage transfers freeing you up to enjoy the journey. We include a few days to enjoy a short trip to Portugal, that includes Porto. The timing of this tour allows senior travellers to join the Via de la Plata walking tour as well, which crosses Spain from South to North.

You can learn more about Spain and Portugal with Odyssey's country profiles, where all other departures to these destinations are listed as well. You can also take a look at other walking tours offered by Odyssey Traveller.

For more details about this tour, click the 'Top 5' or 'Itinerary' buttons above! If you're keen to experience this tour, please call or send an email. Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right hand side of this page.

Articles published by Odyssey Traveller for Walking and Hiking tours for seniors

- Selecting walking shoes for women
- Footwear and walking shoes
- What to pack when travelling
- Maintaining muscle fitness in senior and mature age travellers
- Selecting socks for walking
- Six great short walks in Britain
- Preparing for a walking holiday
- Pilgrim walks in Europe
- Walking in the Lake District

External articles to assist you on your visit to the Camino (St James Way)

- What should I know about Walking the Camino
- Meals on the Camino, advice on what to eat
- Selecting your coffee on the Camino
- The history of the Camino ancient secret; The BBC
- Camino pathways explained

Refreshed January 2021.

Tour Notes

- A reasonable level of underlying fitness is required fro this tour.
- Group size is limited to a maximum of 18 participants.

Highlights

1. Be amazed in Burgos with the history of El Cid & the Cathedral
2. Spoil the hedonist in you with La Rioja wine tasting in a bodega.
3. Familiarize yourself with the century old choir singing which is still practiced in the convents along our route.
4. Immerse yourself in the impressive Guggenheim art temple in Bilbao.
5. View the vast Castilian plains and mountain passes on the Way of St. James.

Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: Bilbao

Overview:

Upon arrival in Bilbao we will come to the hotel individually. We will enjoy a welcome dinner in Bilbao.

Accommodation:

2 nights at Hotel Silken Indauxtu or similar.

Day 2

Locations: Bilbao

Overview:

We will spend the day discovering this lively city, which was a centre of the Spanish industrial revolution in the 19th century. It rose out of post industrial decay by repositioning itself as a cultural hub with the stunning Guggenheim Museum at its heart.

Accommodation:

Hotel Silken Indauxtu or similar.

Day 3

Locations: Bilbao to Leyre

Overview:

From the hustle and bustle of Bilbao we move on to the sleepy town of Yesa, a place forgotten by time. We will have the perfect introduction to a pilgrim's life overnight in a convent. In the evening we might witness the Monks rehearse in choir, before dinning at the hotel as a group.

Accommodation:

1 night at Hospederia de Leyre or similar.

Day 4

Locations: Leyre to Pamplona

Overview:

Today we will visit the monuments of San Juan de la Pena, where, according to legend, the holy grail was once kept hidden. For today's walk we head out from the Old Monastery to the Balcon de Pirineos (roughly one hour) across an impressive landscape, with a picnic provided along the way. We continue to Pamplon and will have dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation:

2 nights at NH Iruna Park Hotel or similar.

Day 5

Locations: Pamplona

Overview:

In the morning this small group walking tour enjoys a city tour in Pamplona, visiting the magnificent Cathedral and the world famous bull run. In the afternoon we walk a trail made famous by Ernest Hemingway. We will end the day's activities with a visit to the convent of Roncesvalles, and a potential walk to Burguete. We then return to the hotel for a meal and wine.

Accommodation:

NH Iruna Park Hotel or similar.

Day 6

Locations: Pamplona to Laguardia

Overview:

Today we will visit the octagonal Church of Eunate, built by the Templars, before crossing the ancient pilgrims' bridge Puente de la Reina. From here, we walk to Maneru (roughly 5kms, taking around an hour). Pilgrims and wine go together, so this evening, we enjoy a wine

tasting in a bodega.

Accommodation:

1 night at Hotel Villa de Laguardia or similar.

Day 7

Locations: Laguardia to Burgos

Overview:

Today, we will have a guided tour of the Cathedral of Santiago de la Calzada. In the afternoon we will follow the beautiful forested walk to San Juan de Ortega, with time for a picnic lunch along the way. (roughly 6kms, taking around an hour). We will end the day with a group dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation:

2 nights at Hotel Silken Gran Teatro or similar.

Day 8

Locations: Burgos

Overview:

Today, we will enjoy a self-guided visit of the Miraflores Convent, which shimmers with gold from the new world. We'll enjoy some free time to explore on our own before transferring to Burgos, where we will take a guided walk to the gate of the nearby cathedral. The rest of the afternoon is left free for you to further explore the local area, and we will meet back at the hotel for dinner.

Accommodation:

Hotel Silken Gran Teatro or similar.

Day 9

Locations: Burgos to Leon

Overview:

Today, we we walk 6kms (roughly 1.2 hours) over the Castillian plains, from Boadilla del Camino to Fromista, with a picnic on the way. We will then continue on to Leon, where we will have dinner in a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

2 nights at Parador de Leon or similar

Day 10

Locations: Leon

Overview:

In the morning we can enjoy a guided tour of Leon, capital of Asturias from the 10th century and the center of Christian Spain. The tour will included a visit to Leon Cathedral, known locally as the House of Light, which is one of the most emphatic examples of Spain's Gothic tradition, and is widely considered to have the most impressive collection of medieval stain glass windows in Europe. It is now a lively university town, and we will get the change to taste the local cuisine during a group dinner at a local restaurant in the evening.

Accommodation:

Parador de Leon or similar

Day 11

Locations: Leon to Villafranca

Overview:

This morning we will travel to the city of Astorga, where there is the option of a scenic walk to San Justa de la Vega. We will then visit the local cathedral, which reflects Spain's rich architectural history, as the original 15th century Gothic structure has since been complimented by Renaissance, Baroque and Neo-Classical additions. Later in the day we will transfer to the iconic Iron Cross landmark in Cruz de Ferro, where

there is another optional short walk to Manjarin . In the afternoon we will stop for a picnic lunch near the river Meruelo, which is the perfect place to cool down from the summer warmth with a gentle swim. We will then return back to the hotel in the evening in time for another group dinner.

Accommodation:

1 night at Parador de Villafranca or similar.

Day 12

Locations: Villafranca to Sarria

Overview:

Having driven over the Cebreiro pass, we start our journey into the greener side of Spain. We take a 45-minute walk (3kms) from O Cebreiro to Linares. After a bus ride to Pasanta, we then walk the 2kms to Traicastela (taking around half an hour). After stopping for a picnic lunch, there is an option to walk the 22kms (roughly four hours) to Sarria, or alternatively, to ride the bus. The option to walk is a great opportunity to cover some of the most important parts of the Camino pilgrimage.

Accommodation:

1 night at Hotel Carris Alfonso IX or similar.

Day 13

Locations: Sarria to Santiago

Overview:

Today we take a 1.5 hour walk (roughly 6kms) in Galicia to reach our ultimate destination: praza do obradoiro and the famous Santiago Cathedral. We experience the emotional scenes of pilgrims arriving at their long-awaited destination. At noon we attend the pilgrims mass at the Cathedral.

Accommodation:

3 nights at Hotel Gelmirez or similar.

Day 14

Locations: Santiago de Compostela

Overview:

This morning we explore the local market, sample its produce and enjoy a guided tour of Santiago de Compostela. The afternoon is free to explore the city.

Accommodation:

Hotel Gelmirez or similar.

Day 15

Locations: Santiago de Compostela

Overview:

Today we drive to Cape Finisterre, a place that was once seen as the “end of the world”, with expansive views across the Atlantic. Later we drive south and explore the beautiful coastal Rias Bajas area.

Accommodation:

Hotel Gelmirez or similar.

Day 16

Locations: Santiago de Compostela - Braga

Overview:

Today we start a short tour of Portugal. The group visits several destinations in Portugal that have contibuted to the history of Portugal. We start with a drive to Braga via Valenca do Minho, winding through woodlands, farmlands, villages, and towns. According to legend, St. James named the first bishop of Braga in the 4th century. Since then, Braga has been the capital of Catholic Portugal.

Accommodation:

1 night at Hotel do Parque or similar.

Day 17

Locations: Braga - Oporto

Overview:

We start the morning exploring Braga, a traditional Portugese city. In the city center, medieval Braga Cathedral is home to a sacred art museum and the Gothic-style Kings' Chapel. At the Bom Jesus do Monte complex a neoclassical church sits atop an elaborate 17-flight stairway. The courageous amongst us can tackle the endless stairs to the top of Portugal's most spectacular sanctuary. Fortunately, for the others there is the funicular railway. We later depart for the city of Porto.

Accommodation:

2 nights at HF Fenix Porto or similar.

Day 18

Locations: Oporto

Overview:

Today we spend the day in Porto, where a local guide will help you make the most of this fascinating city. The entire historic town centre is a Unesco World Heritage site. We will finish the day with a tour of the Port Cellar, followed by a tasting session.

Accommodation:

HF Fenix Porto or similar.

Day 19

Locations: Oporto

Overview:

After breakfast marks the end of our services. We suggest flights back to Madrid or Barcelona from Oporto's International Airport.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 18 nights of accommodation.
- 18 breakfasts, 7 lunches, and 14 dinners.
- Services of a Tour Leader for the duration of tour.
- Applicable entry fees and services of local guides.
- Gratuities and necessary tips.
- Detailed tour information booklet.

What's not included in our Tour

- International flights and departure taxes.
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as telephone calls and laundry.

Level 3 - Moderate to Challenging

Participants must be in excellent health, extremely mobile and live an active lifestyle. Program activities may include up to 6 hours of continuous strenuous, moderate to fast paced activity per day over varied terrain.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.