Saint James Way Small Group Walking Tour (The Camino)- Spain
09 Jun 20 to 27 Jun 20

Small Group Walking Tour of the Camino.

Walking the Camino is a small group walking tour through northern Spain and Portugal. Taking the active senior traveller through some of the most pleasant sections of this historic walk in Spain and Portugal, our tour embraces history and culture. Over a 19 day period we experience the breathtaking scenery and picturesque sections of the Way of Saint James, while following the pilgrim path along some of its most beautiful landscapes. This walk takes in Cape Finisterre, the symbolic end for many who have been walking the Camino. This article published by Odyssey Traveller about the history of pilgrimage routes is...
useful to understand the historic significance of this walk.

Odyssey has selected relevant sections 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 walk.

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.

What you will experience on our small group tours Camino Spain

The Saint James Way Small Group Walking Tour is escorted by an Odyssey program leader. Odyssey’s local guides also share 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.

Other Highlights on the Camino

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, but not Lisbon.

Frequently Asked Questions about our Camino walking tours:

- How long does it take to walk the Camino de Santiago?

Given that there are several routes, which attract travellers of varying
fitness levels, there’s no set time that the walk takes. On our tours, we spend about nine days walking the trail, with side trips at the beginning and at the end of our nineteen-day tour.

**When should you walk the Camino?**

Travellers make the pilgrimage at all times of year. However, July and August tend to be hot and crowded, while winter can bring snow and rain. We leave in June and September each year, so that you can enjoy mild weather without the crowds of peak summer.

**About seniors walking tours from Odyssey Traveller.**

Odyssey Traveller offers a range of walking tours each year paced for senior travellers. The collection of walks are for active mature and senior travellers, particularly those who seek out walking tours that are typically off the main circuit. Click through to see the complete list of small group walking tours offered.

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

To help you prepare for any walking program whether with Odyssey or another company this ist if articles is intended to help you prepare for your holiday.

- articles on Selecting walking shoes for women
- article on footwear and walking shoes
- article on what to pack when travelling.
- article on maintaining muscle fitness in senior and mature age travellers
- article on selecting socks for walking
- article detailing six great short walks in Britain
- article on preparing for a walking holiday
- article on Pilgrim walks in Europe
- article on walking in the Lake District
Articles about Spain published by Odyssey Traveller.

The following list of articles published by odyssey Traveller for mature aged and senior travellers to maximise their knowledge and enjoyment of Spain when visiting;

- [15 of the best places in Spain to visit.](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)
- [Travel notes for Barcelona](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)
- [Ten of the best books published on Spain](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)
- [Ten of the Best art galleries in Europe to visit.](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)

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

- [What should I know about Walking the Camino](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)
- [Meals on the Camino, advice on what to eat](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)
- [Selecting your coffee on the Camino](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)
- [The history of the Camino ancient secret; The BBC.](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)
- [Camino pathways explained.](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au)

Via de la Plata pilgrimage walk.

Odyssey Traveller also offer this pilgrimage walk from the South to the North of Spain where it joins the Camino each year. To learn more [click through on this link](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au).

Other Odyssey Tours:

Walking the Camino is only one of many [Spain](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au) and [Portugal](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au) tours offered by Odyssey Traveller.

The Saint James Way small group walking tour is one of many [walking programs](https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au) offered by Odyssey Traveller. These active tours are designed for the mature traveller to enjoy in a small group holiday and learning environment.

For more details, 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.

About Odyssey Traveller

We specialise in educational small group tours for seniors, typically groups between six to 12 people from Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and Britain. Our maximum number of people on a tour is 18 mature aged travellers. We have some 150 tours and offer 300 scheduled departures on offer each year. Odyssey has been offering this style of adventure and educational programs since 1983.

Odyssey Traveller is committed to charitable activities that support the environment and cultural development of Australian and New Zealand communities.

Odyssey Traveller scholarship for Australia & New Zealand University students.

We are also pleased to announce that since 2012, Odyssey has been awarding $10,000 Equity & Merit Cash Scholarships each year. We award scholarships on the basis of academic performance and demonstrated financial need. We award at least one scholarship per year. We’re supported through our educational travel programs, and your participation helps Odyssey achieve its goals. Students can apply for the scholarship by clicking on this link to find out more details.

Join our loyalty program when you join an international small group tour.

Every International small group tour taken typically contributes to your membership level in our Loyalty Program for regular travellers. Membership of the alumni starts when you choose to take your first international small group tour with Odyssey Traveller, discounts in tour pricing for direct bookings accrue from your third tour with Odyssey Traveller. To see the discounts and benefits of being a Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Diamond alumni member with us, please see this page.
For more information on Odyssey Traveller and our educational small group tours, visit and explore our website., remember to visit these pages in particular

- Terms and conditions applicable for booking an Odyssey Traveller tour.
- FAQ's about Odyssey Traveller

Alternatively, please call or send an email.

Tour Notes

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

Top 5

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 Abando 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 Abando or similar.

Day 3

Locations: Bilbao to Leyre

Overview: From the hustle and bustle of Bilbao we go straight to the middle ages. 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.

Accommodation: 1 night at Hospederia de Leyre or similar.

Day 4

Locations: Leyre to Pamplona

Overview: We put our walking shoes on, leave our luggage to our coach driver to assist us with arrival and departure each day and begin. Today we walk from the Old Monastery to the Balcon de Pirineos (roughly one hour), across an impressive landscape to the convent of San Juan de la Pena. Behind those thick walls, once, according to legend, the holy grail was kept. We continue to Pamplona.

Accommodation: 2 nights at NH Iruna Park Hotel or similar.

Day 5

Locations: Pamplona

Overview: In the morning we have a city tour in Pamplona, and in the afternoon we walk the trail of Ernest Hemingway, who ran the bulls in this town. We will see the capital of Navarra also. From there, we take another walk across fields and forests (roughly 3km, taking around 40 minutes), where we certainly will encounter pilgrims with whom we can
talk about their reason to do The Way. We will end the day with a visit to the convent of Roncesvalles.

**Accommodation:** NH Iruna Park Hotel or similar.

### Day 6

**Locations:** Pamplona to Laguardia

**Overview:** Today we walk in Navarra and see the octagonal Church of Eunate, built by the Templars. We cross the ancient pilgrim's 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 hear about the legend of the fowl in the Cathedral of Santiago de la Calzada. From here, we walk the Way to Villafranca Montes de Oca (roughly 6kms, taking around an hour).

**Accommodation:** 2 nights at Hotel Silken Gran Teatro or similar.

### Day 8

**Locations:** Burgos

**Overview:** Today, we 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 Covarrubias where nearby start our walk amidst oak trees to San Pedro de Arlanza (approx 1.5hrs / 6.7kms). We then take a scenic walk from Hortiguela to Mambrillas de Lara (approx 1hr / 4.6kms). From there, we drive back to Burgos and have dinner at the hotel.

**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. We have a picnic on the way. We continue on to Leon.

**Accommodation:** 2 nights at Parador de Leon.

Day 10

**Locations:** Leon

**Overview:** Today we enjoy a guided Tour of Leon, capital of Asturias from the 10th century and the centre of Christian Spain. It is now a lively university town.

**Accommodation:** Parador de Leon.

Day 11

**Locations:** Leon to Villafranca

**Overview:** This morning, we walk 2km from Leon to Manjarin (roughly half an hour). We stop for a refreshment break in El Acebo de San Miguel. Later in the day, we walk to Moliaseca via Riego de Ambros (8kms, taking roughly two hours), stopping for a picnic lunch en route. In the evening, we enjoy a three-course dinner in our hotel.

**Accommodation:** 1 night at Parador de Villafranca or similar.

Day 12

**Locations:** Villafranca to Sarria

**Overview:** Once driven over the Cebreiro pass, we discover the green side of Spain, with storks on the chimneys. 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. For many taking the Camino it is the Sarria to Santiago section of some 100 kilometers that represents the pinnacle of the walk to pay homage on
this religious walk. For those on this tour, we take in some of the sections but save ourselves for following day.

**Accommodation:** 1 night at Hotel Carris Alfonso IX or similar.

### Day 13

**Locations:** Sarria to Santiago

**Overview:** This morning, 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 and sample its produce and enjoy a guided tour of Santiago de Compostela. The afternoon is free to explore the city further on your own.

**Accommodation:** Hotel Gelmirez or similar.

### Day 15

**Locations:** Santiago de Compostela

**Overview:** Today we take a full day excursion as we drive to Cape Finisterre "end of the world" and contemplate the agitated Atlantic. This at one time in history was the end of the world! 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 contributed to the history of Portugal. We start with a drive to Braga via the Portuguese leg of the
Way, Ponte de Lima, 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 is 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 Portuguese 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 start 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 you can discover Portugal. The entire historic town centre is a Unesco World Heritage site. An expert guide explains us the birth of Portugal. In the afternoon we enjoy a visit and tasting to a Port Cellar.

**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.

**Accommodation:**

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**Inclusions / Exclusions**

**What's included in our Tour**
• 18 nights of accommodation.
• 18 breakfasts, 7 lunches, and 13 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.

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