

A Kinder (Gentler) Camino

- an adventure from our backyard -

11 days & 10 nights: The Last 112 km to Santiago



The crown jewel of Spanish walking trails, the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela began as an act of faith as Europeans crossed Spain to visit the sacred tomb of Saint James.

Similar to our standard full-service Camino de Santiago, our Kinder (Gentler) Camino means shorter days with all the full features of a Fresco Tour!

As we will cover the last 112 km, A Kinder Camino also allows you to request the Compostela certificate in the Pilgrim's Office in Santiago.

Day 1: León

In the afternoon, your Fresco Tours guides meet and greet you at your Orientation Meeting. Afterwards, our local guide takes us on visit of León's magnificent Gothic Cathedral, whose stained-glass windows have led people to say that it is made of more glass than stone. We finish our evening with a meal fit for the kings!

Accommodations: León (D)

*We are happy to provide assistance in arranging your transportation from Madrid to León.

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch & D=Dinner



Day 2: León to the Iron Cross to Sarria

After breakfast, we hop in the van and set our eyes on the Iron Cross or Cruz de Ferro, where pilgrims ask for protection while on their journey. In keeping with the long-standing tradition, make sure to bring a stone to leave at the foot of the cross. After lunch, we continue our journey to the mountaintop village of O Cebreiro to learn about the famous miracle that took place here in the 15th century. Finally, we unwind at our accommodations for the evening.

Accommodations: Sarria (B,L,D) / Walking: 7 km or 5 mi

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Day 3: Sarria to Ferreiros

As we leave the market town of Sarria, make sure to keep an eye out for the ruins of Celtic castros hiding in the vegetation along the Camino. Our destination today is the 100 km marker, a mitone (or kmstone!) for the millions of pilgrims who have traversed this same spot during the last millennium. We return to our hotel for a rest before heading to the Benedictine Monastery of Samos and a wonderful dinner of local fare.

Accommodations: Sarria (B,L,D) / Walking: 14 km or 8 mi



Day 4: Ferreiros to Gonzar

Continuing from where we left off the day before, we walk along the Camino de Santiago to Portomarín, where the 12th century Church of San Juan, a fortified church, once stood guard over the banks of the River Miño before it was moved, stone by stone, to the new center of town – your Fresco Tour guide will tell you more about that! After lunch, the Camino takes us through farmland and woods and brings us to the agricultural hamlet of Gonzar.

Accommodations: Portomarín (B, L, D) / Walking: 16 km or 10 mi

Day 5: Gonzar to Palas de Rei

Walking from Gonzar to Palas de Rei is a walk back into time! The Way takes us through many small hamlets and villages of historical importance. Some sights that we should not miss are the 17th century Cross of Lameiros, the 16th century hospice where Carlos V stayed on his journey to Santiago, and the 13th century Romanesque Church of Santiago in Eirexe. In Palas de Rei, we regroup and return to our hotel in Portomarín for a well-deserved rest.

Accommodations: Portomarín (B, L, D) / Walking: 17 km or 11 mi



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Day 6: Palas de Rei to Melide

Following the now very familiar yellow arrows, we ramble up and down gentle rolling hills along quiet footpaths. Little has changed in this serene corner of Spain. The peaceful rural environment of local farmers tending to their lazy cattle, which graze near old stone houses creates, a scene from another time. We quickly arrive back to the present in the bustling market town of Melide, where tender octopus, or pulpo, is still boiled in large copper kettles by the street.

Accommodations: Melide (B, L, D) / Walking: 15 km or 9 mi

Day 7: Melide to Arzúa

We leave Melide early morning and wind our way across the Galician countryside. Our journey is filled with tiny churches dating back to the 12th and 14th century dedicated to Santiago and Santa Maria. Arzúa is the ideal opportunity to set out in search of their famous local cow cheese or perhaps a bit of empanada, a light crusty pastry filled with either beef or tuna.

Accommodations: : Arzúa (B, L, D) / Walking: 14 km or 9 mi



Day 8: Arzúa to Santa Irene

Today we continue to enjoy expansive and verdant landscapes, occasionally embellished by the charming atmosphere of tiny three-house villages. Get a feel for the people by greeting a local villager with a “Buenos días” or “Hola”. You’ll see how these quiet and reserved people will quickly wish you well on your journey to Santiago. On this trek, you are no longer a tourist, but a pilgrim on the Camino de Santiago!

Accommodations: Arzúa (B, L, D) / Walking: 15 km or 9 mi

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Day 9: Santa Irene to Lavacolla

Our day starts with a morning excursion to the 13th century Santa Maria Monastery of Sobrado, whose Benedictine monks welcome those pilgrims coming from the Northern Route. Afterwards, we return to the Camino and walk our way into Lavacolla. In the Middle Ages, weary pilgrims would wash themselves here before entering the Holy City of Santiago, our destination tomorrow!

Accommodations: Lavacolla (B, L, D) / Walking: 12 km or 7 mi



Day 10: Lavacolla to Santiago

Nine days, 114 kilometers, and we have arrived to Santiago de Compostela. Congratulations! You are going to love this magical city filled with fantastic monuments and a lively buzz from the international pilgrims and university students that fill its medieval streets. After requesting our Compostela certificates at the Pilgrims' Office, we head to our hotel and get ready for our evening celebratory dinner!

Accommodations: Santiago (B, L, D) / Walking: 11 km or 7 mi



Day 11: Santiago de Compostela

After breakfast, our local historian gives us a closer look at the amazing Cathedral that has seen so many transformations since the original chapel, built in the 9th century. After the tour, we sadly say our last "Buen Camino" as we leave you at the Cathedral in time for the Pilgrims' Mass at noon.

Tour end: (B)



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The Compostela & the Camino de Santiago Tour

This itinerary gives you the opportunity to walk the last 100 km into Santiago. This is a requirement needed to request the Compostela, the certificate granted by the church of Santiago upon the completion of the pilgrimage. It is not mandatory, however, to walk 100 km (60 miles) to participate in this Fresco Tour.

As with all our trips, your walk is accompanied by a support van and shorter walk options are available on a daily basis.

DATES AND PRICING



Scan or click the QR code to Book.



What to expect?

Expect to have a wonderful time! We've designed each trip to enjoy the stunning beauty of the Spanish landscape, while giving you a true sense of the soul and magic of these exciting people and their culture. We love to share this magnificent country and want you to feel a part of it.

Please note: this itinerary is subject to slight modifications due to hotel availability, weather, festivals & other occurrences.

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WHAT'S INCLUDED?

2 Guides:

Our greatest resource! We know Spain because it is our home. Both of your Fresco guides are experienced professionals that are either Spanish or live in Spain year-round – no hired out summer help!

When specified, local art historians will join us to provide further insights of the specific monument / museum that we visit.

* Groups of 3 - 6 pax are accompanied by only 1 guide.



Meals:

Food speaks volumes about a culture and we love to eat! During our walk days, when possible, we prepare gourmet picnics using the freshest of local ingredients and selecting the tastiest recipes of the region. All breakfast, lunches and dinners are included. We are proud to cater to vegetarians and those with food allergies – milk, egg, wheat, etc... as well!

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch & D=Dinner

Accommodation:

Fresco Tours selects a combination of 3 & 4-star hotels and restored country manors that offer the best in hospitality, comfort and location. In Galicia, these are known as Pazos and are very unique and special - some date back to the 15th century!

All rooms have in-suite baths. Tour prices are based on double occupancy.



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WHAT'S INCLUDED?



Limited Group Sizes:

Fresco Tours are in small groups to ensure that you receive the individual attention that you deserve. We want to be able to treat each of our clients with a personal touch and we limit the groups to a maximum of 15 participants. We also recognize that each person's Camino is their own personal experience and if you wish, we encourage you to walk on your own – with the assurance that we will be there for you!

Support Vehicles:

Your walks will be accompanied by 2 support vehicles (minimum 6 pax) that are there to provide assistance when needed and look out for your safety. You will have access to the bus every couple of hours, so you won't need to carry a heavy backpack. In addition, the possibility of shorter routes and pick-up options will be offered and explained on a daily basis.



Ground transportation:

All ground transportation between our meeting point in the city of León, Spain, and the Cathedral in Santiago de Compostela is provided on your Fresco Tour.

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Luggage transfers:

Your luggage will be transported between hotels. You do the walking, we'll do the lifting!

Pre-Tour Assistance:

We will help with your travel arrangements prior to and after the tour start and finish of your Fresco Tour, including assistance with hotel reservations and train tickets.



Click on the map for a full description of each stage.



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