



## Camino de Santiago Pilgrims Route – Chapter 1 – Trip Notes October 1-17, 2019

### ***What I like about Fresco Tours:***

- Excellent administration. Includes two English fluent guides, a bus with driver and Wi-Fi, and a back-up van. Daily sheet shows a town map on one side with emergency information, all the days checkpoints for water refills, mile markers, elevation, weather with temperature predictions, location of toilet facilities, and lunch stop.
- Low price. All inclusive. Includes wine and beer, loan of trekking poles, snacks, some mementos at start and more at end. Small Fresco backpack they call a “locker” for storing/retrieving from the bus along the route.
- Reasonably simple with nothing over-the-top.
- See the area close-up, with cultural and historical lectures, museum visits, village walking tours, small quaint towns at start and finish. Ancient and medieval history abounds. Imagine walking over Roman roads and medieval bridges. Visiting a 9th century monastery. Walking on top of Caesar Borgia’s grave.

### ***Pictures from the start, on the trail, and at the finish.***



### ***Difficulties:***

- Getting to the start and getting home from the finish is a challenge. Made more so by protests/demonstrations.
- Single rooms in Europe are dreadfully small. Consider paying for a double.
- In-room coffee or tea pots are nonexistent as are washcloths, bar soaps larger than a quarter, tissues, and sometimes no conveniently located plug ins.
- Small inns might only give a croissant, butter and jam, coffee, and a piece of cheese for breakfast. In Spain they eat a lot of sweets and minimal breakfast.
- Dinners are terribly late. In Spain that can’t be helped. I skip some dinners and eat food I brought or hoarded food from earlier meals.
- Camino stretches can be boring, hot and dusty with no shade, or all of the above. A real pilgrim would use that time for meditation.

Yet I’m near to signing up for Chapter 2 next October . . . .

**Our anniversary** – it was October 4 and it was 51 years. What a guy to encourage me to go hiking instead!

**Fresco gives us a thumb drive with pictures:**



### **Observations on Spain:**

- Farmland abounds. We walked through farmlands with three kinds of peppers, two kinds of squash, some fruit trees, and then in another area many olive trees and Vineyards. Some areas have vineyards or olive trees as far as the eye can see. But I confirmed, like down in the south of Spain, most of the olive trees provide for Italian processing. Italian olive oil was likely grown in Spain.
- The English language is either very good or nonexistent. We think much of it has to do with leftover Franco regime's lack of education. Then you have the distinctly different Catalan and Basque languages.
- The Basque people probably should be a different country. Clean, neat, super smart, and a different world. The Catalonians want to be a different country and if they keep protesting, they might be soon. I think every time we've been in Barcelona there were protests.
- Trains are convenient and reasonably priced, though pricing is crazy confusing and ticket sales only open 60-days ahead. My locations weren't serviced by air. I couldn't do much on the train for the rock and roll. Maybe too for all the cell phone usage.
- Like the rivers Rhine and Danube, the Camino de Santiago brought settlements. Such as the Jews from Jerusalem stopped and set up camp and stayed. Then another group of people settled across the River. Then another. Until finally they merged into a town. Thus Camino Pilgrims can expect food, hostels and some hotels, water and comforts all along The Way.

## **Missives sent home from the trip**

### Another Camino de Santiago Adventure #2

Last May I hiked 11 days and covered a small section of this famous and ancient pilgrim's route from Leon into Santiago de Compostela. It was with [frescotours.com](http://frescotours.com) and billed as the Kinder Camino for being not too many miles and not too many hills. The guides got me interested in doing what some think of as the original French Way and ancient section out of the Pyrenees but I was hesitant because they jokingly called it the Meaner Camino. Yet here I go! Thinking is, try to do it while you can.

But first, an overview of this adventure: I am flying into Barcelona, transferring to downtown train station to get to Pamplona. After two days being a tourist in Ernest Hemingway's old stomping grounds, (without the running of the bulls), we are taken into the Pyrenees to start the trek.

We finish our 11 days in Logrono where I will take a couple additional days to tour the wine country of La Rioja and see some of the famous architectural gems. Finally taking a train back to Barcelona airport.

What is the Camino? It was about six years ago that I even learned about the Camino. I was hiking in Portugal and did pieces of the Camino out of Porto with a bunch of runners. I would like to do that entire feeder trail one day.

<http://santiago-compostela.net/>

What's my section this time? The French Way. You might have seen the movie The Way with Martin Sheen or read the book by Shirley MacLean. But stop right there and know that I'm doing it in a much more civilized manner. No tents, no hostels, but a van to pick us up and take us to a nice Pasada or Inn each night and then return us the next day to the same spot.

<http://santiago-compostela.net/camino-frances/>

From the owner of [www.FrescoTours.com](http://www.FrescoTours.com) - We start our Camino at the border of Spain. We come down from Roncesvalles, the launch pad of the Camino de Santiago, into Hemingway's Pamplona, and finish your trip stroll through the vineyards of La Rioja.

Chapter 1 – The Camino de Santiago 11 days & 10 nights: 144 KMs / 88 miles -

All good endings start with a great beginning! 3 years ago a group of my friends from Spain and I began walking the entire Camino de Santiago. As we all work, have families and other commitments, we decided to tackle our goal by doing portions of the trail over the course of many weekends. We hope to finish in 3 years' time! As you can imagine, it has been a wonderful experience for me on a personal level. My original days of guiding in 1999 had me walking through the tiny villages of the Pyrenees from Roncesvalles, the start of the Way in Spain. Being back on the trail following the yellow arrows has inspired me to make good on an idea that I have been touting for years. I am happy, proud and above all excited to present to you Chapter 1 – The Beginning! End.

Me? I'm a little bit spooked about the miles, the hills, and as much the smaller and simpler hotels. I'm getting spoiled, I'm getting old, and equally getting lazy.



Extremes? On our last and luxurious trip Tom and I were discussing our favorite areas and I realize how very different they are from this upcoming adventure. In no exact order, we brainstormed our favorite places: the French Riviera, Grindelwald in Switzerland, Cortina in the Dolomites, Lucerne in Switzerland, the Julian Alps and Ljubljana in Slovenia, the Piedmont area of Italy, and Vancouver Canada. (If you wonder why Paris is not on the list, it's because that is mostly mine of which I would add Florence, the Grand Canyon and Yosemite).

Getting to the start was not exactly easy. A direct night flight to Barcelona I've done plenty of times before and it was easy but then how to get from the airport to the downtown train station and then train to Pamplona. I gave up the cheap way which entailed finding the bus to a different terminal, figure out how to do the train to downtown, etc. I took a taxi. By 5pm I was happy but drowsy in my hotel having a long FaceTime visit with Tom before heading out for some basic groceries.

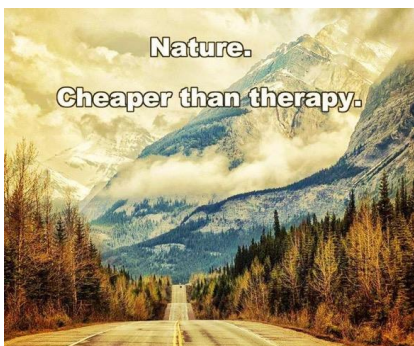
Wow! I found a mini San Sebastián area, Ernest Hemingway's haunt, streets with pintxos bars one after another, and Cafe Iruna on a square. That woke me up.

What I did NOT find was English speakers. Enough pointing and I turned glutton with three choices, a glass of wine, a full tummy and only 8.30€ poorer.

Cafe Iruna where The Sun Also Rises was written - <https://cafeiruna.com/>  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/europe/the-old-man-and-the-city-hemingways-love-affair-with-pamplona-2305392.html?amp>

Ten things to do in Pamplona - <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/spain/articles/the-top-10-things-to-do-and-see-in-pamplona/>

And on that I found by 10 PM, having been up all night and all day, it was easy to fall asleep and stay asleep for a number of hours.



This is why we hike? Not that I need therapy. . . .

My ride through Barcelona on the way to the downtown train station reminded me of their beautiful and larger block/squares and balconies everywhere.

This famous bull ring is now a shopping center.

A reminder of how Europe is so much more "green" than we are. Here are solar panels in the front and miles of wind turbines in the background.



I need to know more. It looks like miles of old Roman aqueducts. Later I learned that these are NOT Roman but modern 18<sup>th</sup> century. Ha.

I upgraded my rooms for the entire trip and this one was on the top floor, a corner room, with a super view out both sides of the room. Spanish decor is not what we are used to. Smile.



Yes there are these streets and I walked some of them at night but this is a picture at the end of my hotel hallway. Speaking of walking streets, twice I found myself totally lost and had to retrace my steps. Once I gave up and went into a café and found the rare English speaker to point me towards home.

Their big square also thought of as Pamplona's living room, reminds me of San Sebastian. It also has this famous Hemingway haunt where he is said to have written "the Sun also rises". I would be challenged here to figure out how to order their little tapas. Also challenge to find any English. But don't call them tapas because in this area they are called pintxos. I would choose plenty of fish and even a little goat cheese with sweet fried onions.



### ***On being a tourist in Pamplona***

The weather was near perfect. Cool in the evening and near 70° afternoon. Slight sprinkles day one was fine with me. Bright blue skies for day two even better. Ernest Hemingway's old stomping grounds sitting outside under the umbrellas with the sound of an accordion made it perfect.

First we had a group of Asian women singing something I presume was religious and having to do with the Camino that runs through town. The ladies seem to be soliciting help from a higher being whereas the accordionist passed the hat for more material things. The pigeons underfoot seemed to be doing quite well but not as well as I did with my spicy pintoxs and glass of wine. I could live on pintoxs. All pending a walking tour following my own earlier self guided one.

What is the Difference Between Pintxos, Pinchos, and Tapas?. 'Pintxo' is a 'Basque-ified' take on the Spanish word 'pincho', which itself comes from the verb 'pinchar', which is 'to pierce'. ... However, as Basque cuisine has evolved, the food is now less likely to be pierced to a piece of bread than before. Me? I'm very fond of either or both. Can you tell?

My Pamplona tour - Found through: <https://www.guruwalk.com/walks/32102-pamplona-through-the-way-of-saint-james> - Pamplona by Locals gathers a group of Official Tourist Guides to Pamplona and Navarre organised as a cooperative management system. We are local professional guides passionate about what we do. We love our city, its history, culture and traditions. And we want you to be part of it! Would you like to feel 'like a local' and make the most of your time in Pamplona? Join our walking tours! Our guided visits have something for everyone. We put the expertise and enthusiasm to make our city accessible and enjoyable to all our visitors. \*We are registered in the Tourism Activities Registry.

About the tour from the website: Welcome to Pamplona, walker! Do you feel like discovering the centennial history of my city and the current way of life of its people?

Together we will walk through the most emblematic streets of the old city, in a journey through time ... from the old Iruña to the Romanization of Pompey, the rise of the Kingdom of Pamplona, the beginnings of el Camino de Santiago and the battles between "the three Burgos" in medieval times, the Privilege of the Union and the outer walls of the city...

Discover how el Camino de Santiago and its millions of pilgrims have transformed with their presence, for centuries, the life of our city.

Places that we will visit, walk and experience:

- Pamplona Cathedral (exterior): the history of the cathedral complex
- San José Square and Caballo Blanco inn: local gems
- Baluarte del Redín viewpoint: France to the north
- Gateway of France: follow in the footsteps of thousands of pilgrims to The Way of Saint James
- Nabarrería: the oldest borough
- Mercaderes Street: where the pilgrims' path and the route of the bulls meet
- Town Hall Square: medieval battlefield where the Fiesta 'explodes' every July 6th
- San Saturnino Church: religious center and military fortress
- Plaza del Castillo: the heart of the city - Meeting point. End.

Guide Javier was excellent. Because he had attended high school in Bakersfield California, his English was perfect. He has at least eight languages and working on more and was very educational, entertaining, and certainly worth hiring again if I or friends come this way.

There were only three of us; one lady was from Athens in Pamplona on business, and another from Australia. Because both were well educated and had questions of interest, we probably got even more out of our tour guide. Javier was ready for them with interesting answers. For the record:

Javier Del Valle, tele: 0034618700133, email: [indraveda@gmail.com](mailto:indraveda@gmail.com)

Coming up: I start my Camino now and probably will be silent for a couple days since we only have one night in each hotel and a lot of miles to cover.

I would say “pray for me“ but if my legs don’t provide it’s my own fault. Any superior being can’t help them. The legs did provide for about six hours on them in little ballet flats walking on cobblestones, so was that wise or was that good feet and legs. . . .



I'm still collecting manhole cover pictures for my sister. Many of them are lovely and or fascinating. Still the craziest are the ones that are listed as “Made in India“.

This will be my next entry into Pamplona on my third (or fourth?) day. It is an old ancient villa moved here stone by stone. Down this street exist many hostels for the pilgrims. Me, I choose a real hotel!

## The pilgrims gate.



There are yellow arrows, some signs, some pillars, and these markers embedded in the street. Always with the shell. Most pilgrims also carry a shell.

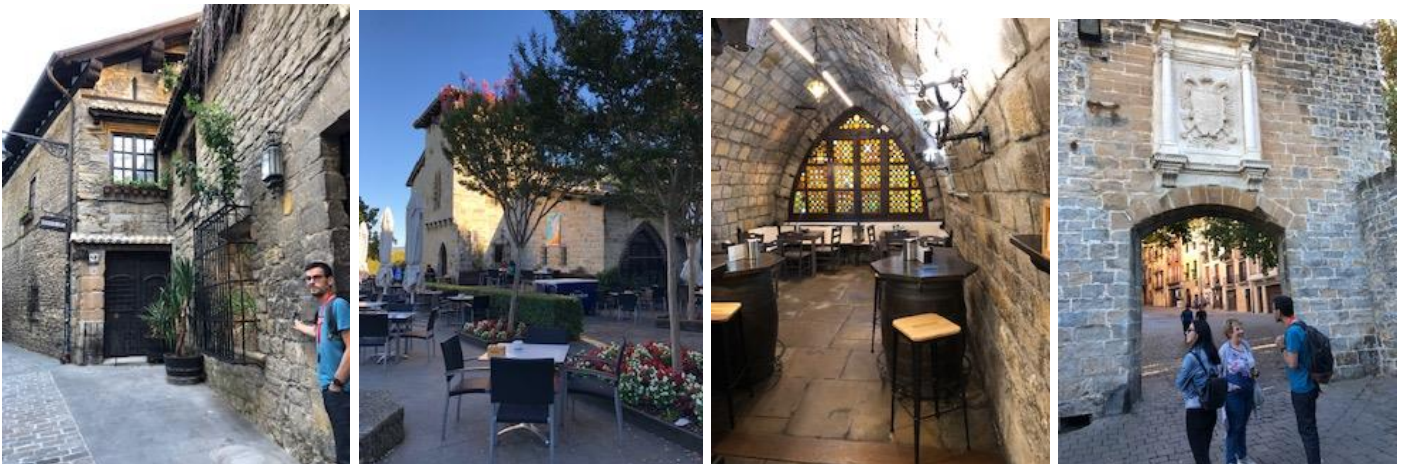
The old ancient market had been updated and was a little bit of a disappointment but I always like looking at food.



Underneath this building, which is a private casino, is the café where Ernest Hemingway hung out. Me too, I hung out here at least three times.

More pintoxs: A favorite of the local fish with sardines on top plus an empanada filled with some spicy meat. As you'll see by the pigeons, there was something for everyone.

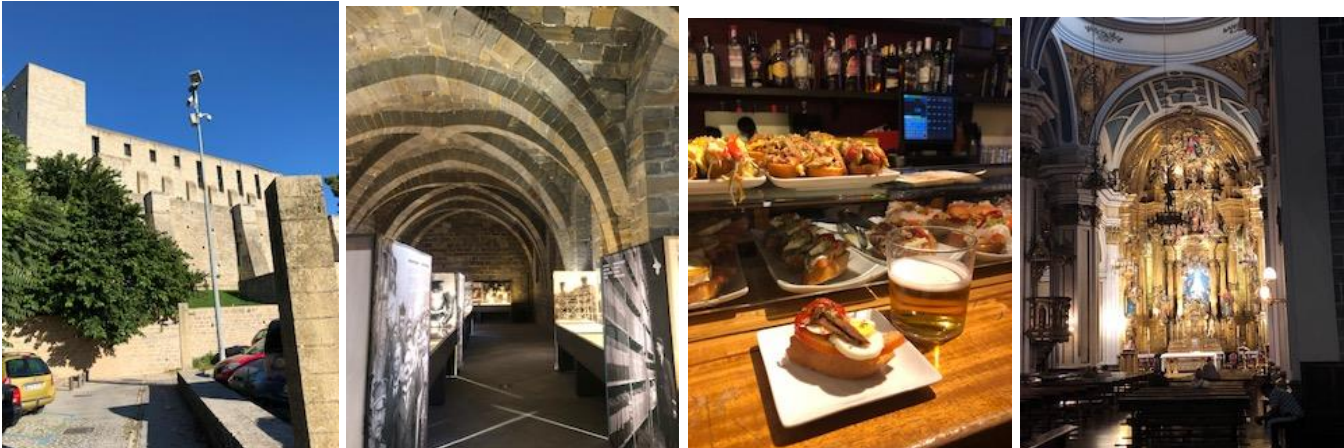
The cathedral is a big deal and maybe the second largest in the area and the resting home of kings of the past kingdoms. It is almost next-door to some homes from the 1400s. Above the door is an unusual plant that is not a sunflower but is intended to ward off evil spirits. It is common in the Basque region.





The old palace and it's inside vaulted ceiling.

Again, at the pilgrim's gate with my guide and the two other tourists.



There was a huge old palace that became in ruins and later renovated and enclosed in glass and now contains the archives. The vaulted ceilings were from the 1100s. This palace overlooks the river.

It was easy to convince our guide and fellow tourists to stop for a little snack and drink.

This is the big “living room of Pamplona”. I am always pleased to see bookstalls but I’ve never seen so many. What you see in the picture is one of four strips of bookstores. This love of printed books is a phenomenon that I see in Europe more than in our country.

More later but maybe much later. I’m worried. . . .  
Can I do this? Smile.



### **From the trail after two days**

I’ve said it before and unfortunately, I’ll probably say it again. I thought jet lag was behind me but only my first and second day did I feel like superwoman. We call it the 4 o’clock syndrome: 4am wide awake and 4pm needing a nap.

Our tour leaders — fortunately we have Roberto, a real pro, who was on my last Camino trip and was very good to me. The second Guide Irene has potential of being quite good too.

After two days, I feel like I might survive. But that’s risky to say because on day three we do quite a bit of climbing and a dissent that is said to be super steep and slippery. Rain is due mid-day.

Fri Oct 4 – Day 4 and Day 1 of walk - Pamplona and Roncesvalles - Walking: 5 KMs or 3 miles  
We were met by our Fresco Tours guide in the lobby of Hotel Maisonnave in Pamplona for a private transfer to the foothills of the Pyrenees. (Some others had started two days before on what they called the prologue. I was grateful that I already had my air ticket and couldn’t do it because I knew that portion of the French border was extremely steep. I believe it turned out to be a climb of about 4000 feet). We start our Camino with a gentle walk down into Roncesvalles, where we attend a moving Pilgrim’s Mass. The blessing at the end is an appropriate way for us to start our journey.

Afterwards, we have our first night's feast – perhaps some trout, like the ones Hemingway used to catch in the local river!

Hotel Roncesvalles – 1 night only - From website <http://www.hotelroncesvalles.com> - This streamlined, understated hotel is 4 minutes' walk from Real Colegiata de Santa María de Roncesvalles, a medieval church, and 2 km from the Roncevaux Pass. The simply furnished rooms provide complimentary Wi-Fi and flat-screen TVs; some feature slanted wood ceilings. A polished restaurant features stone walls and a terrace. There's also a bar. (See video on website.)

Sat Oct 5 – Day 5 and Day 2 of walk - Roncesvalles – Linzoain – Walking: 14KMs or 9 miles  
Leaving our hotel, we follow the yellow arrow through pastures and fields that make this part of Basque Navarra so famous for its local fresh produce. We walk by “caseríos”, giant stone farm houses that have been in the same family for generations and generations. Tradition is the theme here! Our day ends at the “fronton”, the court where Basques Pelota is enjoyed by the youngsters.

Accommodation: Hotel Akerreta – 1 night - From website <http://hotelakerreta.com/> - Rustic rooms in a relaxed hotel featuring a restaurant & complimentary breakfast. A small and cozy rural hotel located in Navarra. You will find a family atmosphere in this house of corners full of history in which to enjoy the tranquility that the whole house and its environment emanate.

History: The Akerreta Hotel is a small and cozy hotel with a family atmosphere, the result of a careful restoration over four years. Casa Sastrearena, which was as it was once known, is protected by the Institute for the Conservation of the Prince of Navarre Heritage, both for its historical interest and for its architectural interest. The house still retains its primitive Pyrenean style kitchen while maintaining its bread oven. Its huge intertwined oak beams show the strong historical load of the place. All this without sacrificing the comforts of sXXI. The hotel also has several rooms and small corners where you can read quietly enjoying the panoramic views of the valley and the surrounding meadows. In winter by the fireplace and in summer on the terrace or garden.

In 2009 [the hotel was] a stage in the filming of the movie "The Way". Martin Sheen under the direction of his son Emilio, starred in a lunch in our hotel with other pilgrims of the Camino de Santiago. End.

This moving in and out of hotels for just one night I find tiring. But equally it's rather exciting to see these unique Posada's or country homes and learn the history of them. We now move back to Pamplona, will walk through the northern gate I pictured before, and have three nights in the same more modern and larger hotel I started in. I have mixed emotions about new vs old. Large room vs small. Fortunately, I arranged ahead of time to pay for upgrades. But they aren't always available.



We started our hike in very heavy fog. I didn't mind at all because it's rather mystical. Plus, we were heading into the forest where we wouldn't have seen the sun anyway.

Coming into the monastery, now the hotel complex, were pilgrims from 1000 years ago would have entered.

This is an area of vegetables and this is the asparagus time. I would have preferred to have real asparagus because I don't call soup "food" if you drink vs eat it. It was followed by a whole fish with a side of potatoes. The dessert was OK but I'm not all that fond of desserts and it's nothing to write home about.



This sweet priest looked like somebody you would want to hug. He was doing the blessing of the pilgrims but I felt like a bit of a hypocrite so I didn't stay.

Our start. Those four near to me would be who I stayed with much of that day.



Nancy serving as a nurse to a Dr Craig. The first blister. This was all very amusing to everyone but Craig – he is a runner and his shoes were well worn in, but apparently hiking moves the foot differently than running.

On another trip we were given thistles in an egg omelet. But they were more as expected because they were green and tart. These thistles, which you know of as weed, were grown under cover like white asparagus and turned out to be quite tasty and said to be nutritious. We ate it all.

Then came my favorite of all. It is a mixture of vegetables and rice and a bit of meat put into a thick sausage roll, sliced, lightly fried, with a traditional tomato sauce. It was followed with a heavier meat dish but we were all full by then. Full also of wine.

The bus and our driver were there, able to give us a ride if we drank too much wine.



If you read the description of the hotel above you will know that this was the location of the first big lunch where Martin Sheehan of the movie “the way” met some of his characters.

Finally. Some real asparagus. Followed by a choice of pig’s cheek or a cod dish. The chef was very proud of having a small facility that only serve their guests and was able to cook the pig’s cheeks for a full six hours whereas he claimed that couldn’t work in a restaurant.

And to that, good night. We didn’t watch the sunset because we were probably having a nap.

Lots of stories, but like lots of places to visit, so little time.

***Into Pamplona via the Camino.***

Weather is holding with only a slight chance of rain on our way into Pamplona. Lucky!

The legs are holding up too. Thank you, Jeff because I did so little Pre-hiking I probably didn't deserve them to hold up. Yet at the end of the day I thought my hips were going to fall out and Rigamortus set in, but after a little walking, I was fine. The wine at dinner didn't hurt.

I'm taken care of. We are only eight hikers and three of them have included me and watched out for me and saved me from going the wrong direction at one point.

How does a day go? At the little Inns the first two days we met for breakfast at 8am and basically ate what they gave us. That was tough because we were close enough France that they thought breakfast of a croissant, butter and jam and a little bit of cheese was sufficient. Our guides managed to get us boiled eggs and a bit more.

Our suitcases having been already delivered before breakfast, we then had about 20 minutes before departing at 9 AM. The bus is plenty luxurious and includes Wi-Fi. Lunch is generally a picnic if the weather is desirable.

Before dinner, maybe at 7:30 PM, we would have a meeting and be given a sheet with a map, showing emergency info, bathroom locations, lunch location, bus check points, mileage and elevation.

Dinner hour is problematic in Spain because generally people don't eat until 9 or 10 PM. Our guides would beg the inns or restaurants for an earlier dinner or maybe take us for a walking tour before dinner. I would say that I don't know when the Spanish people sleep except that the stores are closed from about noon until either 3 PM or 5 PM — so there's a clue.

Sun Oct 6 – Day 6 and Day 3 of walk - Linzoain – Zuriain – Walking: 17 KMs or 11 miles  
After a good morning climb and decent, we come across the Gothic bridge known as “La Rabia,” which was used by farmers in a ritual to prevent their livestock from developing rabies (rabia) in Zubiri. We continue to Larrasoaña, a town with strong ties to the Camino as it was mentioned in the 12th century Codex Calixtinus, the official Camino guide book of the time! Keep an eye out for several Jacobean signs and armor shields on the stone buildings.

Accommodation: Hotel Maisonnave – 3 nights – this is the same hotel where I started my Pamplona stay and they kindly gave me the same very comfortable suite. <http://www.hotelmaisonave.es/en/>

Mon Oct 7 – Day 7 and Day 4 of hike - Zurianin – Pamplona – Walking: 12 KMs or 7 miles  
A lighter day today, we work our way into Pamplona, where we come across the 15th century Cathedral of Santa María la Real, with its beautiful cloisters and interesting façade. Pamplona's patron saint is San Fermín, and in keeping with tradition, this energetic university city is always filled with tourists and locals, ready to keep the festivities going!

Before our walk we had a 30 minute bus ride out of town to a super museum by an architect, sculpture, later poet, that thought I didn't know. The museum was closed we were given a one hour 15 minute private tour.

Oteiza - [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jorge\\_Oteiza](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jorge_Oteiza)

But it turned out I did know some of his work and especially from my Basque hiking trip a couple of years ago I was at a rather famous cathedral that featured his architecture and sculptures. I should give you more information and pictures but frankly I am tired but if you are interested here is another link. Those of you who are interested in art, those who like Henry Moore, or just curious, I think it is worth checking out.

Museo Oteiza - <https://www.museoteiza.org/>

Now for some selected pictures. Darn but I have far too many; I put about 100 pictures on iCloud shared drive which only encompasses these two days so that should tell you how excited I felt about what we were doing and seeing. You are welcome to join the share drive, just tell me if you want access.



Sometimes on the very steep grades, the UNESCO funds they got in the early 90s allowed for paving or steps.

There was no paving here but there certainly were a lot of mornings and the 2 miles worth of straight downhill really did a job on the hips.

Some of these medieval bridges are said to be 1100 years old. These are my protectors – three Californians.



Our first day's festival also included a trail run and we watched the winner come in. Best of all were these unusual costumed men (women not allowed) who earn the right through the generations and probably average eight generations in order to be included. The sound is quite unique and some of my iCloud pictures include the sound.



We are standing in front of a noted sports area called something like Highline. We had a demo and some of our people did quite well.



Pedro is our bus driver and we have various checkpoints where we must sign with him, and he notes the time so it would be hard to get very lost. Just as important, he is there with the bus and we can bail out and ride sections of the course.



In the museum, I thought the work was a bit more modern than I might choose but the work done when he trained with Henry Moore was very appealing.

This was some of his work done on a noted Basque cathedral where I'd visited a couple years ago.





We had walked the streets from where the bulls start the running of the bulls. I was amazed at how narrow the streets were. We learned how the locals can generally manage to not get hurt but why the tourists do. Also about the wine drinking with Roberto giving us an example.

Second festival with lots of music and these characters interacting with the children.



One crosses another medieval bridge and starts up through the archway to the entry to the city a Pamplona. I had walked this route with my tour guide. Next stop is the cathedral to say your prayers, maybe that you made it this far, and just as importantly to stamp your Camino passport.

And on that I am ready to retire. But only retire for the day. My goal is to wake from natural causes — not that damn alarm clock that rings and I have to figure out where I even am.

### ***Days 5 thru 9 of the Camino.***

What doesn't kill you makes you stronger? Or crazier, since I am considering doing chapter 2 of the Camino next year. It is much longer ....

Chapter 1 is completed in something under 100 miles. The weather was wonderful, the leaders and fellow pilgrims were a delight, and I made it with only a few small glitches. My having been silent for most of the days tells you something — I was generally tired and pretty much walked to my capacity.

At the end of each day I thought Rigamortus was setting in but then I eased up with a bit of in-town walking. My alarm clock always woke me from the dead.

Speaking of the dead: No joke. One of our pilgrims was thought to have expired. Truly. He didn't show up for breakfast, he didn't answer his phone, he didn't respond to banging on the door, so the hotel took the guide and the family into the room, the brother thought he was gone, the sister-in-law screamed and shook him, whereas he eventually woke from his sleeping pills. It was a scary few moments and because of other sad situations currently ongoing with our friends, I lost at least my eye make up.

Tue Oct 8 – Day 5 of hike - Pamplona – Uterga – Walking 17 KMs or 11 miles -  
We leave Pamplona and make our way to Cizur Menor, where we can see the Church of San Miguel Arcángel. To get the blood going, the Camino gives us our first steady climb to the crest of the Alto de Perdón, where we enjoy the views of the surrounding valleys. After coming down the hill, we regroup and return to Pamplona, where we have some time to explore the main sights.

Wed Oct 9 – Day 6 of hike -Uterga – Ciirauqui – Walking: 16 KMs or 10 miles -

Our day begins with a special treat as we visit the 12th century Romanesque Church of Santa Maria de Eunate, one of the jewels of the Camino! Was this a stronghold for the Knights Templar? Following the scallop shells, we come to Puente la Reina, named in honor of Doña Mayor, who had the bridge built to make sure pilgrims coming from the French & Aragónés routes, could continue walking safely.

Accommodation: Hotel Tximista – 2 nights - From website: <https://www.hoteltximista.com/en-GB/index.aspx> - Set in a converted 19th-century flour factory, this laid-back hotel on the leafy banks of the Ega River is 4 km from Monasterio de Iratxe, a former medieval monastery with an adjacent winery, and 8 km from the A-12 highway. Unassuming rooms come with flat-screen TVs, Wi-Fi access and minibars. Suites add loft bedrooms. A relaxed restaurant features exposed beams, and serves dinner. Other amenities include an industrial-style cafe/bar, a furnished deck and a garden.

The Hotel Tximista is a charming hotel 4 stars, located in an old flour factory, in Estella, a beautiful city on the way to Santiago. Spectacular industrial set of the s.XIX rehabilitated as a hotel complex. 29 rooms modern and elegant. Surrounded by nature, next to the Ega River, where you can go hiking, fishing, or visit vineyards. It has a 100% self-sustainable management system with solar panels and hydroelectric facilities.

Thu Oct 10 – Day 7 of hike - Cirauqui – Estella – Walking: 14 KMs or 9 miles -  
Leaving Cirauqui, we walk through rich agricultural fields of olives, grapes, almonds and fruit trees and will suddenly find ourselves along ancient Roman roads and bridges leading into Lorca. After a few ups and downs, we enter the once magnificent town of Estella, where we still see evidence of its importance in the 11th century as a merchant town. Pilgrims were also greatly respected, and their rights specifically protected in Estella's town charter.

Fri Oct 11 – Day 8 of hike - Estella – Los Arcos – Walking 22 KMs or 13 miles -  
Walking out of Estella, we come across the ancient Benedictine Monastery of Irache, where the winery still honors the ancient tradition of providing free wine to pilgrims! Have a sip, but not too much as you still have KM's ahead! The tower of the 12th century Church of San Andrés lets you know you've arrived in Villamayor de Monjardín, before continuing on to Los Arcos, whose ancient entrance was known as the Gate of Shells and was the access point to the Jewish quarter.

Accommodation: Hotel Palacio Pujadas – 2 nights -  
From website <http://palaciodepujadas.com/> - This understated hotel in a 16th-century building is 9 km from Concatedral de Santa María de la Redonda and 10 km from Museo de La Rioja. Warmly decorated rooms come with flat-screen TVs, minibars and safes. Suites add in-room whirlpool tubs, 4-poster beds and/or open-plan bathrooms. High-speed Internet access is available. There's a polished lobby lounge, a relaxed cafe/bar, and an airy restaurant featuring stone walls. A steakhouse/wine cellar has stone arches and barrel-vaulted ceilings. Located within the historic centre of the city of Viana, at the foot of the Santiago pilgrim route in the historical part of Viana (Navarre). It combines the historical building charm of the 16th century and the comfort of a modern hotel establishment.

Sat Oct 12 – Day 9 of hike - Los Arcos – Viana – Walking: 18 KMs or 11 miles -  
Our walk today takes us through kilometers and kilometers of vineyards. While in Torres del Río have a look at the Iglesia de Santo Sepulcro, attributed to the Knights Templar, before continuing to Viana. Viana is an energetic town with a lot of Camino history. Take in the sights and enjoy this lovely town. End

That's a lot to cover and we had so many lovely experiences that I only hope I can remember them all. (I'll cover going into Logrono, the end of this chapter walk, later).



A typical lunch which would be very healthy and eaten trail side with a little wine.

As you can imagine there are a lot of characters on the trail. Not that we aren't. This gal had walked from Austria, said she was an accountant, traveling with her little pooch and a saxophone, and possibly begging along the way. Our group fed her and one of them gave her money and then we saw her stop at a cafe again just a few feet away surrounded by some fellows.

After getting up this high hill, we thought we were going to be blown apart, but certainly worth a picture.



The church of the hundred gates was rumored to be built by the Knights Templar. Either Roberto or Irene would give us a historical lesson and a tour at many stops.

Note the illusion play of the doors.

This is the chiropractor, past 2:50 marathoner, who we thought was a goner. The sleeping pill took at least 12 hours to wear off.



There were many ancient bridges with some having been built by the Romans. We also walked on Roman roads. Oops I lost that picture. There were equally many hilltop towns that we enjoyed mostly once we were up at the top. Not getting there. I was pretty much at the back all the time going up the hill but then could catch up on the flats.

I had arranged to upgrade my rooms and this was a duplex in a converted flour factory with a huge river running in the back with gardens full of weird modern sculptures.



Of course we had to go up to the top. Many stairs. Who were the crazy pilgrims?

We all enjoyed our walking tour of Estrella and would have been happy to stay a few days. Yes, of course, I did all these stairs too.



Dinners are typically simple with a choice of either fish or meat and this evening was duck. Always free-flowing wine but little did we expect a find wine on the trail. Next is called the wine wall. Bring your own cup.

Our picnic lunches were always unique but we all had a big laugh about these bananas turned into dolphins.



Converted palaces must offer a lot of challenges and certainly give unique hotel rooms. A Jacuzzi in the middle? Skylights. A huge shower steam room so modern I had to do a double take and then a lot of figuring out how to make the high-tech work.

In Viana with a guided tour in the evening we learned that the pope's son, the famous Cesar Borgia, had died here. I think by the time he was buried there was plenty of discussion about whether he should be in the church and he was then moved to the outside sidewalk. You might recall that the pope made him a cardinal and a bishop during his teenage years but Caesar gave up those positions to become a warrior. Did he really father a child with his sister? Or was that the pope himself that fathered the child? This family might have given the church some of their most colorful history.



Birthday boy is the same chiropractor that we thought we lost. As most of the pilgrims had been like one big happy family, there was a lot of laughing about the need to celebrate his being alive.

Tuna pie for lunch. A local favorite. With a bit of entertainment during our picnic watching the horses go by. The Camino might be traversed by horses, donkeys, lots of bicycles, some struggling pilgrims and some fast marathoners.

Next up, the last couple days into Logroño and then my tourist add-on days.



### ***The end of the Camino - for now***

The end of the Camino is not exactly as planned. Ha ha. The story of a closed town and airport: <https://www.thelocal.es/20191015/flights-cancelled-roads-closed-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-barcelona-protests/amp>

It was very confusing when United sent an alert that my 11:15 AM flight was “delayed” to 8 AM. They were not clear that it was one day later. Hotels were sold out but eventually a room became available where I was staying so I was two days (so far) holed up in an airport hotel. Paying 2 1/2 times the regular rate on my second day.

I had been warned by the US Embassy. (I sign up for state department travel alerts.) But there was no real way for me to avoid it as Madrid was also on alert. From The US Embassy:  
Location: Barcelona, Spain

Event: Significant demonstration activity in Catalonia is expected this week in response to the verdict in the trial of 12 pro-independence Catalan leaders. There are demonstrations anticipated in Barcelona, Lleida, Tarragona, Girona and other towns in the region. Most demonstrations are planned around Spanish government offices, including a large gathering on October 15th at 7pm at the Delegacion del Gobierno, Carrer Mallorca 278, in Barcelona.

Some recent demonstrations have led to clashes between law enforcement and protesters and disrupted public transportation, including rail lines and road access to the Barcelona airport. End. Spanish friends plus the police at the Barcelona train station suggested I take a taxi to my airport hotel instead of the train because some rails had been barricaded by protestors. End.

My airport hotel told me that there were two days this week that they could not get their shuttle to the airport. And that tomorrow could be much worse with protesters walking from outside village expected at the airport and in town. I have a 4:30 AM shuttle to try.

This is an interesting political conundrum. Much of Catalonia income comes from tourists and what better way to alienate them. (We have been here with major protests before.) But if you want to get the world's attention, what better place than airport customers. Even the hotel should have mixed emotions in that I am alienated at having to pay 2 1/2 times the going rate and my next year's trip I will try to avoid them. I talked to them about short-term versus long-term profit but they wouldn't budge on the increased rate.

Spain's extreme verdict against Catalans is an attack on democracy:  
Here's the Catalan side: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/10/15/spain-has-no-interest-political-solution-catalonia/>

So it is unfortunately easy to forget my last couple days in Logano. I had a full day wine and architectural tour that was a delight. I had a dinner with my past Camino tour guide Dora and I had intended to come in early but were out till almost midnight.

My last day at the hotel was unique in that we had Camino pilgrims coming in from the tour that was two days behind mine and at the same time we had pilgrims coming in ready to start chapter 2. It was easy to tell the difference. Chapter 1 folks coming in didn't have clean clothes but they sure had happy smiles on their faces and they were all hugging and kissing each other hellos and goodbyes.

Chapter 2 pilgrims were in new clean attire, all fixed up, but shy and retiring, looking with amusement at all these hugging smiling folks. Fun! Evidence that we may not come as a pilgrim but rather as a hiker but some of it does wear off on us.

Would you like to be a fly on the wall and walk some of the Camino from your computer? Hiking leader friend Nola sent me this link of southern Dixie on the same route that we were on. It's rather cute. It is very familiar. Episode 3: For The Wine - Camino de Santiago 2019 - <https://youtu.be/u4uRTOO35hk>

Going backwards and from itinerary:

Sun Oct 13 – Day 10 of hike - Viana – Logroño – Walking: 9 KMs or 6 miles -

This morning, we continue on and enter Logroño, the capital of La Rioja, and famous for its superb red wines. As today is a shorter walk, we hop on the bus to Laguardia and visit the 14th century Santa Maria de los Reyes church with its astonishing Gothic façade. A true jewel that you will never forget! Afterwards, we return to Logroño, where we finish the evening with a fine meal to finish our first Chapter along the Camino de Santiago! (We substituted the walking tour of LaGuardia for a winery tour and tasting. But I would do the LaGuardia tour two days later.)

Accommodation: Hotel Calle Mayor – 1 night with Fresco plus 2 nights on own -

<https://www.hotelcallemayor.com/en> - From website: A small urban hotel that overlook the historic city centre of Logroño through a completely restored XVI century small palace. An architectural piece of work that brings together past and present.

A XVI century small palace in one of the most emblematic streets of Logroño's historic city centre, route of Camino de Santiago. Through the XX century this historic building served as a popular wine cellar and a lodging house before it was converted into a hotel. An integral restoration intended for a unique character. Thinking about design as well as your comfort. A high-quality model where special care is taken down to the smallest detail. A truly authentic family atmosphere where everything is design for your enjoyment. Twelve rooms that overlook the historic city centre of Logroño through a completely restored XVI century small palace. An architectural piece of work that brings together past and present. From the past remains the roman arch that serves as the main entrance, its stone masonry façade, its original staircase and stone pillar, wooden beams, balustrades and wrought iron railings. The present offers a minimalist design, top quality materials, the soft lines of its furnishings, and the range of colors that inspires tranquility and relaxation and, above all, a new way of perceiving the hospitality industry. Aims to provide the guest with a personalized stay ensuring privacy and attention to detail. End.

We spend our last night with the tour group at Hotel Calle Mayor in Logroño and the tour comes to a close the following day after breakfast. In order to properly explore this impressive city, we recommend that our clients stay on in Logroño for at least one more night.

Mon Oct 14 – Day 11 of hike - After breakfast, we wish you well and hope to see you on Chapter 2!

Info about Logroño - <https://lariojaturismo.com/en/poblacion/logroo/b7d10bba-9e65-4a1f-9209-69d736283607>

Tue Oct 15 – Day 15 - 9:00am Start full day tour with Thabuca. Wine Tasting at Gomez Cruzado, an old and small boutique winery located in the historical Railway Station District in Haro. You will taste 5 different wines.

Wine Tasting at Bodegas El Hombre Orquesta in Briones. This is a very small winery with limited production. We will be welcomed by the winemaker at their cave with an amazing viewpoint over the Ebro river and the vineyards. Tasting of wines with an appetizer of local products.

Wine Tasting at bodegas Luis Cañas, a family owned winery in Villabuena, with high quality wines which have been awarded several times. There will be a tasting of 3 wines.

Lunch at Villa Lucía a seasonal fresh market cuisine restaurant where traditional dishes are cooked with a modern twist. Young red wine and coffee or tea included.

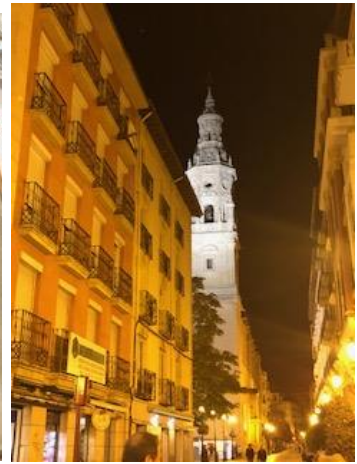
After lunch, walking tour in Laguardia. Then a gratis driving tour of Logroño.

From [www.thabuca.com](http://www.thabuca.com)- Boutique Rioja -A selection of 3 boutique wineries with extensive tastings, at least 3 wines at each winery. We will visit 3 boutique wineries with top wines during the morning. After a 3-course lunch, time to explore the history and secrets of the beautiful walled town of Laguardia with a walking tour.

Wednesday mid-morning I took a taxi to the Logroño train station and caught a 4 hour train to Barcelona city center. It was then iffy whether to take the train to the Barcelona airport and then taxi to the hotel or a taxi but the recommendation in view of the protest and demonstrations best to do a taxi. It was a very busy and full town and difficult to get around. Police were on every corner in mass. Then I was expecting to get up early and catch a flight the next morning but above describes why I got another full day of total rest and relaxation.







A Frank Gehry architectural wonder. It is a winery and a hotel with very limited numbers of rooms. And yes below is their Statue of Liberty.

This building is intended to represent a wine carafe.



Our second wine stop had us meeting two delightful men that had invested in a small cave within the hillside. It looked like a condominium of doors with many different caves owned or leased by others.

The town had a noted church as much because it contained St James on a horse and lots of gold.

Another architectural wonder which kept going down the hillside with one layer after another. I remember this building from Tom's pictures. I was hiking in the Basque region and Tom was driving around have any good time in La Rioja. Next is the founder and owner of our third wine stop. This place was huge and beautiful and new looking with a number of family members running it. The wine tasting included these little sacks around the glass that hung around your neck.



Santiago Calatrava is known to me by his worldwide famous bridges. He might be known to you by the New York City transit center at the 911 area called The Oculus.



You'd think I'd be sick of food, but lunch was absolutely super with a bean soup that was not from dried beans but rather fresh picked. Prior was a foie grad pate in these little pots.

Tom and I had stayed at LaGuardia for two nights during my Basque hiking trip. But I don't think we had a real walking tour of the town. Later the guide would take me to this mass burial ground from thousands of years ago.



I think I was tired after the whole day of all those wine tastings but I livened up when I met Dora, my hiking leader from May 2018 Camino. I was going to have a short evening since I was tired but I don't think we got in until about midnight. And there was a full moon.

Sent to Tom only: Maybe my best meal of the trip. Ricardo told me to check out the lovely café moderno. Not modern at all but modern for when it was built. They celebrated 100 years a few years back.

The menu is €12 and includes a choice of three courses, wine, and water. I don't know what will happen about the full bottle they gave me. If they charge me for the extra wine, I don't care. (Later – apparently the entire bottle was mine to consume.)



**The story of a closed town and airport --** <https://www.thelocal.es/20191015/flights-cancelled-roads-closed-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-barcelona-protests/amp>

**Warning from Fresco's Alissa:** Dear Friends, I am writing to you in regards to your travels in Barcelona. As I imagine you already know, there is some unrest right now due to the political climate.

I just want to ask you to extreme caution and stay safe. I am hoping things will calm down in the next few days, but as several of you will be traveling in the next day or two, I ask that you be careful, perhaps opt to stay in your hotel and check your flights home, as some flights have been delayed. Please let me know if I can be of assistance, and of course, if you have any questions or concerns. Kind regards & safe travels, Alissa

**Me again. I'm not where I'm supposed to be.** There are demonstrations and protests in Barcelona. Apparently, they are enough to close the airport so I will be coming home at least a day later. Even that does not have a good prediction as the protesters are walking into Barcelona and expected to arrive on Friday. The hotel eventually found a room for me to stay over and I am currently booked to come home on Friday early afternoon. All is well, life goes on, and because of the US Embassy warnings, I will be hunkered down in the airport hotel and not being a tourist tomorrow. A rest of the legs could be good.

**Checking in with Alissa** - You asked that I check in with you when I got home. Apparently, that's going to be at least a day late. Barcelona train station to the airport was unusually busy but the police checked their records and told me that there weren't any stoppages at least. So I went ahead with the taxi. Checking in for my flight I see that everything is canceled tomorrow and I am booked on a flight on Friday. Hopefully.

I'm guessing that the situation is such that I should probably just hunker down in the airport hotel and not try to go be a tourist. Just FYI and no response needed. I'm giving myself plenty of sympathy anyway. Smile.

**Warning report** - I'm currently stuck in Barcelona

Hello pilgrims, I had a lovely dinner with Dora and she has sent a special Memento gift to each of you.

It is my hope that I will be able to deliver them. Smile. And tell you plenty of interesting and basically OK stories about Dora's current life. Do you know about the protests and demonstrations in Barcelona? About the airport being closed due to the demonstrations?

I am now in my second day of a closed airport and/or not being able to get to the airport. My hotel reported two days of being unable to get their shuttle through the protesters. With any luck, starting tomorrow at 4:30 AM, I am hoping to get to my plane and that United is able to get enough crew to takeoff. It's been interesting, and I did need a rest, but not this much. We shall see and I'm not too stressed because it's out of my control.

More info after tomorrow.

**Last report:**

To Dora: Lots of Barcelona stories. The airport was quite the scene. Not any floor space left with lines and sleepers everywhere. I went at 4:30am so to miss the protestors.

The hotel had been unable to get their shuttle to the airport two mornings. Thus I went extra early. Then the plane was even more delayed to 10am.

Security like I've never had before. Touched every body part and tore thru every spec of my luggage. Took 40 minutes in total as they took us to another location. That after moving the gate to another wing. Crazy. Not sure I want to go thru Barcelona again, though I do feel for the protestors.

So I am home and all as well and I'm recovering and trying to make up for my lost a day and a half. Thanks for asking. I'll copy Alissa who asked too.

**Was I done?** Nope! I knew that European airline regulations would have given me 600 Euros for my late and troubled departure. Would United Airlines? My letter to them did NOT get me the hoped for rebate but it did give me a \$300 certificate. Here's an outline of what my Barcelona airport trip home entailed.

United #121 Barcelona to Newark October 17 delayed 23 hours!

I really can't think who to blame but this flight was probably one of my worst experience. The word "Stressful" is not defining enough.

Obviously I like United. A lot. The crew was just as sweet and helpful as they could be. It was just EVERYTHING else.

Chronologically:

My United Delay Notice for the Thursday, October 17 11:15 AM flight came in saying that it was delayed to 8 AM. That was confusing because it didn't say 8AM the next day. I had to make telephone calls, from Europe, to figure it out.

The Notice said the airport was closed. But that proved not to be true. Maybe some people couldn't get to the airport. Maybe the crew couldn't get to the airport. But the airport was not closed. Later the notice said something about having no crew.

I had just come in from the Camino de Santiago and was expecting one night in an Airport Hotel. That hotel was sold out for the second unexpected night caused by the delay. But fortunately, as I hung around with no place to go, a room became available. However it was a shocking 2 1/2 times the regular rate.

The delay not only cost the crazy-high hotel price but breakfast, lunch and dinner over and above my allotted budget. The protests meant the hotel and my Barcelona friends warned me not to go outside for my own safety.

The protests and demonstrations were pretty spooky so I agreed to an early 4:30 AM hotel shuttle to the airport. Hoping to get to the airport while protestors were sleeping. Arriving to the airport it was wild! There was basically no floor space due to everyone either standing in lines or sleeping on the floor. I stood in the United line for 1 1/4 hours until they opened at 6 AM. There was no first-class line — only a Premier long line.

In the lounge, I had less than 10 minutes before boarding which was allegedly due at 6:30AM per my boarding pass.

I went to the gate D15 only to find that it had been changed to E76 in another wing. Having been on my feet since 4:45 AM I felt like I was doing another Camino or a marathon.

Arriving at the gate, there was no United rep and the sign said 6:55 AM for boarding. What? Wasted running! Wasted stress! Wasted loss of breakfast!

At 7 AM my name and many more were called for additional screening. We were walked quite a ways away to a private area where I went through 40 minutes of extreme screening. Every body part was felt, every single item in my backpack and in my suitcase and even all my papers were gone through. Everything was emptied. My wallet was opened. My shoes were bent in half. They needed to see and feel the top of my knee highs. In my couple million miles of flying United I have never had this happen

in such a manner. Not even going to Israel. I have had random secondary screening, but nothing as tedious and stressful as this.

Returning to the gate, worried I could miss boarding, I learned that we were AGAIN delayed.

Then adding insult to injury, did United not pay for a real gate? We had to pick up our suitcases and navigate stairs to get onto a bus. Then up the aircraft stairs with the masses just like in a third world country.

Then, can you believe, more delay. At 9:30AM still adding fuel. At 9:40AM still doing paperwork. At last, we were set to take off at 9:55AM. (What happened to 8AM - 2 hours earlier?) They didn't know they needed fuel and paperwork earlier? Ugh.

Pain continued. Not having eaten since 3AM, not having time to acquire food since, nuts nor express dining didn't show up until 10:45AM.

I understand Europe has a law requiring a reasonable compensation for delays. I don't know if American carriers must abide. Also, if it is \$600, that seems pretty small compared to my United business-first ticket.

### ***History -- From Friend Angie — once a local.***

When I visited that area in 1959, we had to carry the dirty kitchen dishes, in a basket, propped on top of our heads, walk to the center of town where the river ran through & that was our dishwasher....that's how far behind Spain was from the rest of Europe - they were still recuperating from the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).? If I remember correctly, there's still a popular tourist town that has not changed since the mid-evil days.? Quite a "wine country" area.....most of the wineries are closed on Mondays.....as you'll notice, the grapes are left to grow on the ground (in a bush form) as California stakes them up off the ground - don't know why.

Later - after enduring my chatter:

Thx Diana.....sounds like a very exciting trip - I'll follow you all the way back to Logrono.

Just a little more tidbits (from my mother). San Sebastian - my grandfather (on my mothers side) was an engineer in San Sebastian in the late 1920's early 1930's. He was in charge of the water system for the city. They lived high up on the mountain where he oversaw the running of the aqueduct. My mother (being a youngster at this time) said it was very lonely & desolate for a young person. She learned how to speak Basque from the employees which is a very difficult language to learn - quite different than Castilian. History tells us they don't know where the Basque language originated from (not Latin). The only form of transportation into town were bicycles or four legged animals - easy going down, but VERY difficult going up;-). They lived there till the civil war broke out (1936) and immigrated to Buenos Aires, Argentina - my mother (being very rebellious) refused to go w/ them & stayed in Spain during the course of the war - where she met my father. I never knew my grandparents (only through correspondence) until my grandmother stopped to visit us on her way back to Spain to bury my grandfather's ashes in the 1960's. I still regret not making a trip down to Argentina to meet them in person:-).

***See Ten Reasons to Walk the Camino*** – at the end after itinerary

## ***Itinerary***

### **Tue Oct 1 – Day 1**

7:30pm Depart Newark EWR via UA#120

### **Wed Oct 2 – Day 2**

9:00am Arrive Barcelona BCN

Transfer from Barcelona airport via train or taxi to Barcelona Sants Train Station

Barcelona BCN Airport to Sants: RENFE train from BCN and get off at Estació de Sants (Sants Estació also known as Barcelona Sants station); the journey is around 20 minutes. If arriving into Terminal 1 - take a free shuttle bus from the terminal to the train station, as it is not in walking distance. Cost 4.20 Euros. Taxi approximately 40 Euros depending on meter.

12:10pm Alvia train to Pamplona/Iruna

4:06pm Arrive Pamplona – hotel says taxi at about 15 Euros is best

Hotel Hotel Maisonnave - 2 nights on own  
Calle Nueva, 20, 31001 Pamplona, Navarra, Spain Tele: +34 948 22 26 00  
[informacion@hotelmaisonave.es](mailto:informacion@hotelmaisonave.es) <http://www.hotelmaisonave.es/en/>  
Reservation made by Alissa of Fresco, upgraded to a superior room.  
Conf in file. Includes breakfast. Note that we return here Oct 6, 7 and 8  
Yes Nespresso coffee maker

The hotel is centrally located in Pamplona, the capital of Navarra, and offers the possibility of enjoying the sights of Pamplona.

*From website: Quality, style, elegance, warmth, peace and tranquility. A caring hotel, inspired by you, to make sure that you experience an unforgettable stay. After fully refurbishing our hotel in 2013, we now have a 4-star rating. During this refurbishment, we carefully supervised every little detail, to successfully create some exceedingly well-appointed rooms, striving to provide our guests with all the comfort and convenience that they expect and deserve. Our hotel has specifically been designed to make our guests feel at home; that's why they come back time and time again, and also rate us highly and recommend us to their friends and acquaintances. Within the hospitality industry in Navarra, our hotel has a long, outstanding history. Whether you've chosen to stay for reasons of business, family or leisure, congress tourism, during your pilgrimage along the Way of St James, or for the San Fermin festivities in July.... this is your home.*

*The best way to explore Pamplona: This is the perfect place for exploring the city on foot and discovering the real lifestyle and ambience of Pamplona. Our hotel is ideally located for taking a stroll through the city to visit its most iconic sights and discover a host of magical spots. This is the best way to really get a feel for the city, where everything is right on your doorstep. Historical Pamplona, its Citadel and impressive city walls, the Bull running route and the beautiful Town Hall, the Plaza del Castillo square, Cathedral, Museum of Navarra, buildings and fortifications, extensive parks and gardens... our hotel is close to the most surprising spots in the capital city of Navarra.*

*It's well worth taking your time to visit Pamplona and Navarra. This peaceful, inspiring destination boasts a rich cultural heritage and an inimitable variety of scenery. Navarra is a land of deep-rooted traditions and unique fiestas, reflecting the friendly, hospitable, extrovert nature of its people whilst offering an exceptional place for enjoying nothing but the best cuisine. The Old Quarter of Pamplona, where our hotel is located, is the busiest shopping and business area in the city. It's always a real pleasure to stroll around the city, exploring the streets and discovering some really original shops. After a tiring day, there's nothing better than getting to your hotel, crossing the lobby and having a rest. Our warm and welcoming lounges and peaceful corners are just right for reading, having something to drink or simply chatting. They're the final touch to an unforgettable day for our guests!*

From [www.FrescoTours.com](http://www.FrescoTours.com) - October 4 - 14, 2019 Tour! We start our Camino at the border of Spain. We come down from Roncesvalles, the launch pad of the Camino de Santiago, into Hemingway's Pamplona, and finish your trip stroll through the vineyards of La Rioja.

Chapter 1 – The Camino de Santiago 11 days & 10 nights: 144 KMs / 88 miles

All good endings start with a great beginning! 3 years ago a group of my friends from Spain and I began walking the entire Camino de Santiago. As we all work, have families and other commitments, we decided to tackle our goal by doing portions of the trail over the course of many weekends. We hope to finish in 3 years' time! As you can imagine, it has been a wonderful experience for me on a personal level. My original days of guiding in 1999 had me walking through the tiny villages of the Pyrenees from Roncesvalles, the start of the Way in Spain. Being back on the trail following the yellow arrows has inspired me to make good on an idea that I have been touting for years. I am happy, proud and above all excited to present to you Chapter 1 – The Beginning!

### **Thu Oct 3 – Day 3**

On own.

### **Fri Oct 4 – Day 4 and Day 1 of walk**

Pamplona and Roncesvalles - Walking: 5 KMs or 3 miles

At 2:00PM you will be met by your Fresco Tours guide in the lobby of Hotel Maisonnave in Pamplona for your private transfer to the foothills of the Pyrenees. We start our Camino with a gentle walk down into Roncesvalles, where we attend a moving Pilgrim's Mass. The blessing at the end is an appropriate way for us to start our journey. Afterwards, we have our first night's feast – perhaps some trout, like the ones Hemingway used to catch in the local river! (D)

Accommodation: Hotel Roncesvalles – 1 night  
C. Nuestra Señora de Roncesvalles, 14, 31650 Roncesvalles, Navarra  
Tele: +34 948 76 01 05 [hotel@roncesvalles.es](mailto:hotel@roncesvalles.es) – NO coffee in room

From website <http://www.hotelroncesvalles.com> - *This streamlined, understated hotel is 4 minutes' walk from Real Colegiata de Santa María de Roncesvalles, a medieval church, and 2 km from the Roncevaux Pass. The simply furnished rooms provide complimentary Wi-Fi and flat-screen TVs; some feature slanted wood ceilings. A polished restaurant features stone walls and a terrace. There's also a bar. (See video on website.)*

### **Sat Oct 5 – Day 5 and Day 2 of walk**

Roncesvalles – Linzoain – Walking: 14KMs or 9 miles

Leaving our hotel, we follow the yellow arrow through pastures and fields that make this part of Basque Navarra so famous for its local fresh produce. We walk by “caseríos”, giant stone farm houses that have been in the same family for generations and generations. Tradition is the theme here! Our day ends at the “fronton”, the court where Basques Pelota is enjoyed by the youngsters. (B, L, D)

Accommodation: Hotel Akerreta – 1 night  
Calle Transfiguración, 11, 31698 Akerreta, Navarra Tele: +34 948 30 45 72  
Asked about coffee pot in room

From website <http://hotelakerreta.com/> [info@hotelakerreta.com](mailto:info@hotelakerreta.com)

*Rustic rooms in a relaxed hotel featuring a restaurant & complimentary breakfast.*

*A small and cozy rural hotel located in Navarra, very close to Pamplona. You will find a family atmosphere in this house of corners full of history in which to enjoy the tranquility that the whole house and its environment emanate.*

*History: The Akerreta Hotel is a small and cozy hotel with a family atmosphere, the result of a careful restoration over four years. Casa Sastrearena, which was as it was once known, is protected by the Institute for the Conservation of the Prince of Navarre Heritage, both for its historical interest and for its architectural interest. The house still retains its primitive Pyrenean style kitchen while maintaining its bread oven. Its huge intertwined oak beams show the strong historical load of the place. All this without sacrificing the comforts of sXXI. The hotel also has several rooms and small corners where you can read quietly enjoying the panoramic views of the valley and the surrounding meadows. In winter by the fireplace and in summer on the terrace or garden.*



*In 2009 [the hotel was] a stage in the filming of the movie "The Way". Martin Sheen under the direction of his son Emilio, starred in a lunch in our hotel with other pilgrims of the Camino de Santiago.*

### **Sun Oct 6 – Day 6 and Day 3 of walk**

Linzoain – Zuriain – Walking: 17 KMs or 11 miles

After a good morning climb and decent, we come across the Gothic bridge known as “La Rabia,” which was used by farmers in a ritual to prevent their livestock from developing rabies (rabia) in Zubiri. We continue to Larrasoana, a town with strong ties to the Camino as it was mentioned in the 12th century Codex Calixtinus, the official Camino guide book of the time! Keep an eye out for several Jacobean signs and armor shields on the stone buildings. (B, L, D)

Accommodation: Hotel Maisonnave – 1<sup>st</sup> of 3 nights – See more info at Oct 2  
Calle Nueva, 20, 31001 Pamplona, Navarra, Spain Tele: +34 948 22 26 00  
[informacion@hotelmajonnave.es](mailto:informacion@hotelmajonnave.es) <http://www.hotelmajonnave.es/en/>  
Yes Nespresso coffee pot in the room

### **Mon Oct 7 – Day 7 and Day 4 of hike**

Zurianin – Pamplona – Walking: 12 KMs or 7 miles

A lighter day today, we work our way into Pamplona, where we come across the 15th century Cathedral of Santa María la Real, with its beautiful cloisters and interesting façade. Pamplona’s patron saint is San Fermín, and in keeping with tradition, this energetic university city is always filled with tourists and locals, ready to keep the festivities going! (B, L)

Accommodation: Hotel Maisonnave – 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3 nights

### **Tue Oct 8 – Day 8 and Day 5 of hike**

Pamplona – Uterga – Walking 17 KMs or 11 miles

We leave Pamplona and make our way to Cizur Menor, where we can see the Church of San Miguel Arcángel. To get the blood going, the Camino gives us our first steady climb to the crest of the Alto de Perdón, where we enjoy the views of the surrounding valleys. After coming down the hill, we regroup and return to Pamplona, where we have some time to explore the main square. (B, L, D)

Accommodation: Hotel Maisonnave – 3<sup>rd</sup> of 3 nights

### **Wed Oct 9 – Day 9 and Day 6 of hike**

Uterga – Ciirauqui – Walking: 16 KMs or 10 miles

Our day begins with a special treat as we visit the 12th century Romanesque Church of Santa Maria de Eunata, one of the jewels of the Camino! Was this a stronghold for the Knights Templar? Following the scallop shells, we come to Puente la Reina, named in honor of Doña Mayor, who had the bridge built to make sure pilgrims coming from the French & Aragón routes, could continue walking safely. (B, L, D)

Accommodation: Hotel Tximista – 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights  
Calle Zaldu, 15, 31200 Estella, Navarra Tele: +34 948 55 58 70  
[info@hoteltximista.com](mailto:info@hoteltximista.com) - No coffee in room.

From website: <https://www.hoteltximista.com/en-GB/index.aspx> - Set in a converted 19th-century flour factory, this laid-back hotel on the leafy banks of the Ega River is 4 km from Monasterio de Iratxe, a former medieval monastery with an

adjacent winery, and 8 km from the A-12 highway. Unassuming rooms come with flat-screen TVs, Wi-Fi access and minibars. Suites add loft bedrooms. A relaxed restaurant features exposed beams, and serves dinner. Other amenities include an industrial-style cafe/bar, a furnished deck and a garden.

*The Hotel Tximista is a charming hotel 4 stars, located in an old flour factory, in Estella, a beautiful city on the way to Santiago. Spectacular industrial set of the s.XIX rehabilitated as a hotel complex. 29 rooms modern and elegant. Restaurant, free Wi-Fi, spaces for the celebration of any kind of Event and a wide variety of services. Surrounded by nature, next to the Ega River, where you can go hiking, fishing, or visit vineyards. It has a 100% self-sustainable management system with solar panels and hydroelectric facilities.*

### **Thu Oct 10 – Day 10 and Day 7 of hike**

Cirauqui – Estella – Walking: 14 KMs or 9 miles

Leaving Cirauqui, we walk through rich agricultural fields of olives, grapes, almonds and fruit trees and will suddenly find ourselves along ancient Roman roads and bridges leading into Lorca. After a few ups and downs, we enter the once magnificent town of Estella, where we still see evidence of its importance in the 11th century as a merchant town. Pilgrims were also greatly respected, and their rights specifically protected in Estella's town charter. (B, L, D)

Accommodation: Hotel Tximista – 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights

### **Fri Oct 11 – Day 11 and Day 8 of hike**

Estella – Los Arcos – Walking 22 KMs or 13 miles

Walking out of Estella, we come across the ancient Benedictine Monastery of Irache, where the winery still honors the ancient tradition of providing free wine to pilgrims! Have a sip, but not too much as you still have KM's ahead! The tower of the 12th century Church of San Andrés lets you know you've arrived in Villamayor de Monjardín, before continuing on to Los Arcos, whose ancient entrance was known as the Gate of Shells and was the access point to the Jewish quarter. (B, L, D)

Accommodation: Hotel Palacio Pujadas – 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights  
Calle Navarro Villoslada, 30, 31230 Viana, Navarra Tele: +34 948 64 64 64  
[info@palaciodepujadas.com](mailto:info@palaciodepujadas.com)  
Asked about a coffee pot

From website <http://palaciodepujadas.com/> - *This understated hotel in a 16th-century building is 9 km from Concatedral de Santa María de la Redonda and 10 km from Museo de La Rioja. Warmly decorated rooms come with flat-screen TVs, minibars and safes. Suites add in-room whirlpool tubs, 4-poster beds and/or open-plan bathrooms. High-speed Internet access is available. There's a polished lobby lounge, a relaxed cafe/bar, and an airy restaurant featuring stone walls. A steakhouse/wine cellar has stone arches and barrel-vaulted ceilings.*

*Located within the historic centre of the city of Viana, at the foot of the Santiago pilgrim route in the historical part of Viana (Navarre). It combines the historical building charm of the 16th century and the comfort of a modern hotel establishment.*

### **Sat Oct 12 – Day 9 of hike**

Los Arcos – Viana – Walking: 18 KMs or 11 miles

Our walk today takes us through kilometers and kilometers of vineyards. While in Torres del Río have a look at the Iglesia de Santo Sepulcro, attributed to the Knights Templar, before continuing to Viana. Viana is an energetic town with a lot of Camino history. Take in the sights and enjoy this lovely town. (B, L, D)

Accommodation: Hotel Palacio Pujadas – 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights

### **Sun Oct 13 – Day 13 and Day 10 of hike**

Viana – Logrono – Walking: 9 KMs or 6 miles

This morning, we continue on and enter Logroño, the capital of La Rioja, and famous for its superb red wines. As today is a shorter walk, we hop on the bus to Laguardia and visit the 14th century Santa Maria de los Reyes church with its astonishing Gothic façade. A true jewel that you will never forget! Afterwards, we return to Logroño, where we finish the evening with a fine meal to finish our first Chapter along the Camino de Santiago! (B, D)

Accommodation: Hotel Calle Mayor – 1 night with Fresco plus 2 nights on own  
Calle Marqués de San Nicolás, 71, 26001 Logroño, La Rioja  
Tele: +34 941 23 23 68  
<https://www.hotelcallemayor.com/en> info@hotelcallemayor.com  
Extended reservation made by Alissa of Fresco and upgraded to deluxe room.  
NO coffee in room, only room service.

From website: *A small urban hotel that overlook the historic city centre of Logroño through a completely restored XVI century small palace. An architectural piece of work that brings together past and present.*

*A XVI century small palace in one of the most emblematic streets of Logroño's historic city centre, route of Camino de Santiago. Through the XX century this historic building served as a popular wine cellar and a lodging house before it was converted into a hotel. An integral restoration intended for a unique character. Thinking about design as well as your comfort. A high-quality model where special care is taken down to the smallest detail. A truly authentic family atmosphere where everything is design for your enjoyment. Twelve rooms that overlook the historic city centre of Logroño through a completely restored XVI century small palace. An architectural piece of work that brings together past and present. From the past remains the roman arch that serves as the main entrance, its stone masonry façade, its original staircase and stone pillar, wooden beams, balustrades and wrought iron railings. The present offers a minimalist design, top quality materials, the soft lines of its furnishings, and the range of colors that inspires tranquility and relaxation and, above all, a new way of perceiving the hospitality industry. Aims to provide the guest with a personalized stay ensuring privacy and attention to detail.*

We spend our last night with the tour group at Hotel Calle Mayor in Logroño and the tour comes to a close the following day after breakfast. In order to properly explore this impressive city, we recommend that our clients stay on in Logroño for at least one more night.

### **Mon Oct 14 – Day 14 and Day 11 of hike**

After breakfast, we wish you well and hope to see you on Chapter 2! (B)

Info about Logrono - <https://lariojaturismo.com/en/poblacion/logroo/b7d10bba-9e65-4a1f-9209-69d736283607> - need to book a local walking tour

Hotel Hotel Calle Mayor – 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3 nights

Note that Gerstmayer Dóra [gerstmayerdora@gmail.com](mailto:gerstmayerdora@gmail.com) from my other Camino will be in Logrono starting Chapter II.

### **Tue Oct 15 – Day 15**

9:00am Start full day tour with Thabuca. Meet at Gran Via, 5. Next door to Hotel Mercure Carlton, an 8-9 minute walk.

Wine Tasting at Gomez Cruzado, an old and small boutique winery located in the historical Railway Station District in Haro. You will taste 5 different wines.

Wine Tasting at Bodegas El Hombre Orquesta in Briones. This is a very small winery with limited production. We will be welcomed by the winemaker at their cave with an amazing viewpoint over the Ebro river and the vineyards. Tasting of wines with an appetizer of local products.

Wine Tasting at bodegas Luis Cañas, a family owned winery in Villabuena, with high quality wines which have been awarded several times. There will be a tasting of 3 wines.

Lunch at Villa Lucía a seasonal fresh market cuisine restaurant where traditional dishes are cooked with a modern twist. Young red wine and coffee or tea included.

After lunch, walking tour in Laguardia.

5.00p.m. Drive back to the meeting point and end of services.

From [www.thabuca.com](http://www.thabuca.com)- Boutique Rioja - Wine tastings only tour. A selection of 3 boutique wineries with extensive tastings, at least 3 wines at each winery. We will visit 3 boutique wineries with top wines during the morning. After a 3-course lunch, time to explore the history and secrets of the beautiful walled town of Laguardia with a walking tour.

[info@thabuca.com](mailto:info@thabuca.com), Tele: +34 945 33 10 60, C/Mayor, 4-Labastida - Rioja Alavesa (Alava)

Hotel Hotel Calle Mayor – 3<sup>rd</sup> of 3 nights

### **Wed Oct 16 – Day 16**

10:21am Depart Logrono via Intercity Train to Barcelona Sants

2:20pm Arrive Barcelona Sants – ask hotel best way to get from train station to them  
There is a train to airport then a free airport hotel shuttle

Hotel Hotel Salles Ciutat del Prat at Barcelona airport  
Avinguda del Remolar, 46, 08820 El Prat de Llobregat, Barcelona  
Tele: +34 933 78 83 33 <https://www.hotelciutatdelprat.com/en>  
Yes Mini-bar and coffee service

Reservations made by Alissa of Fresco. Confirm in file. Does not include breakfast

*This contemporary conference hotel is a 10-minute walk from El Prat De Llobregat train station, 6 km from Barcelona-El Prat Airport.*

Free shuttle - how to obtain: The pick-up takes place at the stops "Hotel Buses" located outside Terminal 1 (parking G or [PG]) and Terminal 2 (between buildings B and C, next to "Bloc Tècnic"). Approximate frequency: 30-45 minutes.

If you arrive at Terminal 2, once you have collected your luggage, you need to call reception (+34 93 378 83 33) and the shuttle will come to pick you up.

Limited English – download translator

### **Thu Oct 17 – Day 17**

11:15am Depart Barcelona BCN via UA#121

1:50pm Arrive Newark EWR

### **Participants:**

Diana – NJ

Craig – CA

Gary and Nancy – CA

Andy and Leslie – CA

Tom – MT

Rosanne – WA Australia

Guides Roberto and Irene

**Emergency Info:**

Registered with STEP at travel.state.gov  
Carl Greeson, brother in law, 573 999 2119

Tom is home and with Pandora, but here are close contacts:

Randy Fritts	732 671 5510	Neighbor to the west – has key
Adam Basile	732 673 2582	Helper – knows house and pond
Kathy/Gary Kestler	732 671 5311	Neighbor to the east – has key

**Emergency Assistance** Plus Program – 24/7 – card in file and in Diana’s wallet

United Mileage Plus member #0186014

Tele: 866 816 2073 or 60 328 1752 collect

**U.S. Embassy** - Consulado General de los Estados Unidos de América

Passeig de la Reina Elisenda de Montcada, 23, 08034 Barcelona, Spain

Tele: +34 932 80 22 27

**Fresco Tours** - Viajes SLU Colón de Larreategui 26 - 7°C 48009 Bilbao, Vizcaya Spain

Tele: +34 94 424 89 89 info@frescotours.com [www.frescotours.com](http://www.frescotours.com)

To call Spain, dial your international access code - for the USA or Canada (011) - followed by Spain’s country code (34) and the phone number. The best time to reach us will be in the afternoon and evening at the hotels.

Tour guides cell: Roberto +34 619 774 330 / Irene +34 687 543 723

**Packing and Reminders**

Washcloth, bar soap and powdered laundry detergent

Plug adapters

Coffee pot and instant coffee

Trekking poles or are they provided?

Download Google Offline Maps for major cities; Download Google Offline Translator

Cards and gratuities for 2 guides and bus driver; extra cash for housekeepers

**Links:**

Video - <https://www.facebook.com/184786328961/posts/sab%C3%ADais-que-la-ciudad-vieja-de-santiago-de-compostela-fue-declarada-patrimonio-d/10156781912683962/>

I walked the Camino de Santiago across Spain. Here’s what I learned. - The Washington Post

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/i-walked-500-miles-across-spain-heres-what-i-learned/2019/08/16/148cf612-beac-11e9-9b73-fd3c65ef8f9c\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/i-walked-500-miles-across-spain-heres-what-i-learned/2019/08/16/148cf612-beac-11e9-9b73-fd3c65ef8f9c_story.html)

<https://trailtoppeak.com/2015/06/09/24-photos-that-will-make-you-want-to-walk-camino-de-santiago/>

Camino maps - <https://www.caminoadventures.com/camino-maps/>

**10-reasons-to-walk-the-camino-de-santiago**

People walk the Camino de Santiago for many different reasons: religious, adventurous, spiritual, for the outdoors or simply to do something special with their holidays...

The Camino can mean very different things to different people but there is one thing that binds all Camino pilgrims together: it is a very unique experience, a walking holiday like no other.

#### 1. SIMPLE PLEASURES

Holidays are about taking a breather from everyday life and the Camino takes that idea to another level: it is about getting back to basics and enjoying some of the most simple pleasures in life, like walking. It is also about savouring every step of the journey, not just the destination. No wonder so many people find it such a great soul-searching exercise, applying that philosophy to all aspects of their life after they finish their Camino.

#### 2. EXERCISE

Walking, walking and more walking...Not many holidays will get you back home in better shape!

#### 3. CULTURE AND HISTORY

Along the Camino, you will pass cities, towns and villages of all sizes, with stunning churches, monuments and other cultural and historic landmarks. The Camino trail has been used by pilgrims for centuries so the route itself has a long history and tradition.

#### 4. AMAZING LANDSCAPES

From the French Pyrenees to the lush hills and woodlands of Galicia or the coastal paths of the Northern Way, the Camino de Santiago takes walkers across many different landscapes, all beautiful and unique.

#### 5. EASY AND APPROACHABLE WALKING

If you can walk, you can do the Camino. The walking paths are well marked (particularly along the French Way) and most of them are suitable for all fitness levels. It is also a flexible holiday, so if you need more days to complete the journey, just adapt the walking distance you want to cover daily to your ability.

#### 6. BRUSH UP YOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS

Not just with some of the locals but also with fellow walkers you will meet along the way. You will encounter many different nationalities and, of course, languages: French, German, Italian, Spanish, Basque, Galician...

#### 7. FABULOUS FOOD

Sample the local cuisine along the way. Each route and each region has its flavours, traditional dishes and specialities. Our advice? try them all!

#### 8. MAKE FRIENDS

You shouldn't come back home from your Camino without making at least one new friend. The social element makes it a great holiday for people travelling alone. Particularly along the last stretch of the French Way, you will never feel lonely!

#### 9. FAMILY FRIENDLY

It can be a fantastic family holiday for bonding and quality time together: whether you are walking or cycling.

#### 10. ALL ROADS LEAD TO SANTIAGO

If you have walked the Camino de Santiago along the French Way (the most popular) before, there are many more routes you can try next!! All different and all with their unique sites and trails.

**24 Camino d Santiago pictures:** <https://trailtopeak.com/2015/06/09/24-photos-that-will-make-you-want-to-walk-camino-de-santiago/>

More ideas? <https://www.classicjourneys.com/servlet/servlet.FileDownload/?file=01550000003Ehq5>

Video at

<https://www.facebook.com/184786328961/posts/10156781912683962?s=1174546452&v=e&sfns=m>  
[o](#)

5 Pilgrimages Every Traveler Should Take - Look what is Number One!

<https://www.thediscoverer.com/blog/5-pilgrimages-all-travelers-should-take/>

Oct 5-13 Zaragoza in Aragon, Fiestas del Pilar with flowers, floats and giant puppets. About 1 ½ to 2 hours away?

**Book suggestions:**

Shirley MacLean's Santiago walk

Kurt Koonz "A million steps"

Simon Armitage's Walking Home: A Poet's Journey

Movie "The Way"

Ernest Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises

Lesley M. M. Blume's Everybody Behaves Badly: The True Story Behind Hemingway's Masterpiece

The Sun Also Rises

