

A Fresco Start Camino 115 km

- an adventure from our backyard -

8 days / 7 nights. The Last 115 km to Santiago



I first walked the Camino de Santiago in 1999 and since then I've led over 100 groups along the Way. Over the years, I've seen many pilgrims walk, cycle, horseback, and a few wheelchairs on their way to Santiago de Compostela. While we are very proud of our high-quality, full-service, guided cultural walking tours of the Camino de Santiago, we also recognize that some people would rather not have 2 guides with them and there are others that just do not like "group tours", despite the fabulous gourmet picnics we prepare!

In addition, we also understand that people do want to walk the Camino, BUT....

→ Would rather not sleep in albergues, the communal dormitories available along the trail. Some pilgrims enjoy having their own bedrooms with a door, an en-suite bathroom, and plenty of hot water!

→ Do not want or cannot carry all their belongings with them. In fact, they enjoy being able to add some extra weight to their load and have some creature comforts, such as that iPad!

→ Are nervous and scared! Coming to a foreign country to walk for a couple of weeks is daunting, no matter how many books and web forums you have read. You want more than just an Orientation Packet sent to you in the mail - you want a LIVE person to answer your questions and help you take those first steps on your journey.

→ Don't want to eat alone. Independence can be great when traveling, but it is also nice to have some occasional companions to share those tales from the trail and a meal or two!

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With these thoughts in mind, we created “A Fresco Start Camino – Self-Guided Walk to Santiago”. On this journey, you will cover the last 115 km of the trail on foot as you start from the town of Sarria. This will allow you to request the Compostela certificate for having walked the Camino. We will take care of your hotel arrangements, breakfasts, and luggage transfers as you go along the trail. All walking will be from inn to inn, so no need for shuttles in taxis or regrouping points at the end of the day.



Remember, A Fresco Start Camino means just that – a Fresco Tours guide will meet you at the Start! On the first evening in Sarria, we will personally meet you to give you an Orientation Meeting, hand out your Welcome Packet that includes the Pilgrim’s Passport, and take you out for a fine meal of local cuisine! On the very next morning, your guide will be on hand to answer any questions that may have popped up overnight and walk with you out of town to help get your “feet wet” and introduce you to the symbols and markers of the Camino! Just a bit of experienced guidance, before you head out to Santiago on your own!



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Day 1: Sarria

At 7:30PM, we meet the group in the market town of Sarria, where many pilgrims begin their journey to Compostela. Your Fresco Tours guide will hand out your Orientation Packets and review all the materials to get you ready for your Pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago! Afterwards, we'll take you to get your first stamp in your Pilgrim's Passport before dinner, where we will continue to answer your questions in a more informal atmosphere – and with a glass of wine!

Dinner included



Day 2: Sarria to Portomarín

With our boots and scallop shells on, your Fresco Tours guide escorts you out of town indicating the various Camino markers and the famous yellow arrows. You stroll through the countryside on a combination of tiny backroads and country footpaths as you pass the 100 km marker, a milestone (or kmstone!) for the millions of pilgrims who have traversed this same spot during the last millennium. Onward you continue to Portomarín, where you see the 12th century Church of San Juan, a fortified church, standing guard over the River Miño.

Breakfast included / Walking: 23 km or 14 mi



Day 3: Portomarín to Lestedo

Leaving Portomarín the walk begins with a gentle climb out of the river valley and through typical Galician villages, decorated with hórreos, raised corncrubs, and the occasional carved granite cross that marks the way to Santiago. In the hamlet of Lameiros pay special attention to the 17th century Cross showing the Crucifixion of Christ. As you work your way into Palas de Rei, you will begin to notice the many eucalyptus forests of Galicia.

Breakfast included / Walking: 20 km or 12 mi



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Day 4: Lestedo to Melide

Following the yellow arrows, you continue to ramble up and down gentle rolling hills along quiet forest paths. Little has changed in this quiet corner of Spain, and the peaceful rural environment of local farmers in stone houses accompanies us back to another time. You quickly arrive to the present-day at the bustling market town of Melide, where octopus (pulpo) is boiled in large copper kettles next to the street!

Breakfast included / Walking: 19 km or 12 mi

Day 5: Melide to Arzúa

On the outskirts of Melide, stop to admire the 12th century church of Santa Maria, a gem of the Romanesque period. Following the Camino through eucalyptus forests, you quickly come into Boente, whose tiny Santiago Church has a simple, but lovely wooden altarpiece.

Breakfast included / Walking: 14 km or 9 mi



Day 6: Arzúa to Arca

Today, you start to get closer to Santiago and the excitement starts to build! Get a feel for the people and greet a local villager with a “Buenos dias” or “Hola”. You will see how these quiet and reserved people quickly wish you well on your journey to Santiago. On this trek, you’re no longer a tourist, but a pilgrim on the Camino de Santiago! Just a few steps from Santiago...

Breakfast included / Walking: 18 km or 11 mi

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Day 7: Arca to Santiago de Compostela

Six days, 115 kilometers, and you have arrived at Santiago de Compostela. Congratulations! Head to the Pilgrims' Office for your last stamp in your passport and request that well-deserved certificate, the Compostela, for having walked to Santiago. You are going to love this magical city filled with fantastic monuments and with the lively buzz from the international pilgrims and university students that fill its medieval streets.

Breakfast included / Walking: 21 km or 13 m



Day 8: Santiago de Compostela Itinerary Ends

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.

Breakfast included

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

DATES AND PRICING



Scan or click the QR code to Book.



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WHAT'S INCLUDED?

Orientation Meeting:

A Fresco Tour guide will hand deliver your Orientation Packet and give you a detailed meeting on the first night in Sarria. Your Welcome Packet is filled with all the materials you'll need to transform into a pilgrim: Your credentials (Pilgrim's Passport), a scallop shell, daily maps of the route, a guidebook with historical information of the villages that you will pass through, and a few other goodies for the trail! We will answer any questions that you have before starting your journey to Santiago and on the next morning, lead you out on The Way! Minimum of 3 people for this service to be provided.



Accommodations:

Seven nights in a combination of 3 & 4- star hotels, restored manor homes, and small inns located on the Camino. All rooms have their own bathrooms. We have chosen places for their hospitality, comfort, and location.

*Keep in mind that as you will be walking through rural countryside, the availability of 3 & 4- star hotels all along the route is not possible.

Meals:

All breakfasts are included with your hotels. We have arranged that they will be supplemented from the standard Spanish breakfast of coffee & toast. The first night of the itinerary, our guide will take you for dinner at one of our favorite places in Sarria - wine and beer included. Afterwards, we will provide you with a list of places along the Camino with food recommendations. Let us know if you have any dietary restrictions and we can ask our hotels to accommodate for those as well!



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WHAT'S INCLUDED?



Limited Group Size:

Although this tour is Self- Guided, we have limited the size of each departure to 16 passengers. Availability is on a first come, first serve basis.

Luggage transport:

We will arrange for the transfer of 1 suitcase / piece of luggage (45 lb) per person between your hotels on your walk along the Camino. If you require more than 1 bag, please contact us for details.

Guided Visit:

In Santiago, our local art historian will provide you with a guided visit of the Cathedral and the surrounding squares. A minimum of 5 people is necessary for this service to be provided.

Pre / During / Post Service:

We are here to help! Need assistance with hotels prior to or after your trip? Train tickets to Sarria? Returning from Santiago? Questions about what to wear? Need a taxi while on the trail? Based in Spain, we are here to make sure that your trip runs as smoothly as can be – please don't hesitate to ask for our help!



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