

El Buen Camino An 11-Day Pilgrimage

(9 nights/11 days)

Life is a book. Those who do not travel read only one page! (St. Augustine). Far more than just experiencing a new land or seeing new sights, our Pilgrimage along El Camino de Santiago de Compostela takes us through the spiritually rich and beautiful countryside of Galician Spain where we will reflect, come closer to God, and gratefully consider the sacrifices and dedication of those who have gone before. As we walk on holy ground, behold sacred shrines and experience timeless works of art regarded as the most awe-inspiring and important of the world – we will renew our commitment to the roots of our Catholic faith. The masses and meditations we celebrate along the way will draw us together as a community. They will remind us of our blessings and the call to stewardship as followers of Jesus Christ.

Day 1: Departure from the USA

Known as the mystical center of the Church, Spain offers hope and healing for its pilgrims.

Our pilgrimage begins with an overnight flight to Madrid, Spain.

Day 2: Madrid

History is in a manner a sacred thing, so far as it contains truth; for where truth is, the Supreme Father of it may also be said to be (Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, pt. II, III, 6, p. 479).

Welcome to Madrid, the capital and largest city in Spain! Although we will find Madrid a modern city, we can't help but be captivated by its rich history, art and spirit. After arriving, we will meet our Faith Journeys representative and visit the Prado Museum which hosts one of the finest art collections in the world including important Spanish and Flemish paintings, classical statues purchased from Italy, medieval religious treasures and even some Romanesque frescoes. We will also explore Buen Retiro Park, founded in 1631, and the immense Royal Palace of Madrid. We'll enjoy dinner and overnight in our hotel in Madrid

Day 3: Sarria

We'll travel by modern motorcoach to Sarria. We will take a panoramic tour of the city before visiting the Monastery of Samos, one of the most important Monasteries of Spain because of its influence on the history and culture of the region. In the middle ages it was the wealthiest and most powerful monastery on the peninsula and educated the sons of nobility along with maintaining an important pilgrim's hospice, a pharmacy, a forge and many farms. It was severely damaged in a 1536 fire, rebuilt over 200 years, and then in 1951, a fire destroyed the library and monastery refectory. We enjoy dinner and retire to our hotel in Sarria for an overnight stay.

Day 4: Sarria to Brea to Portomarin

I sing of his elegance with words that groan, and I remember a sad breeze through the olive trees (Federico Garcia Lorca – best-known writer of modern Spain re some of the tragic events in his country).

We arise today and enjoy breakfast before heading towards Brea to visit the Church of San Salvador. From Brea, we'll walk to Portomarin (6.7 miles) through the beautiful Galician countryside to Ferreiros where we will visit the Church of Ferreiros, Vilachá to



visit the Church of St. Nicholas and finally in Porotmarin to visit the Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows. We'll return, by motorcoach, to Sarria for dinner and overnight.

Day 5: Portomarín to Eirexe

By a small sample we may judge of the whole piece (Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, and pt. I, I, 4, p. 25).

After breakfast we'll transfer by motorcoach to Portomarín where we will begin our walk to Eirexe (10.5 miles) stopping in Gonzar to visit the Church of Santa Maria, Ventas de Naron to visit the Chapel of Santa Magdalena, and Ligonde to visit the Church of Santiago. From Eirexe we'll transfer, by motorcoach, to Palas de Rei for dinner and overnight.

Day 6: Eirexe to Casanova

The angel appeared to me to be thrusting the spear of fire into my heart and piercing my very entrails; when he drew it out, he seemed to draw them out also, and left me all on fire with a great love of God (St. Teresa of Avila).

We depart from Eirexe this morning after breakfast for Casanova where we will begin our walk to Casanova (8.3 miles) visiting along the way, the Church of San Xulian do Camino, the Church of Vilar de Donas, which was once part of the Villar de Donas Monastery and derived its name from being a women's-only monastery. It was passed on to the Order of Santiago and became a very special place where the most important members and leaders of the order were buried. We will then return to Palas de Rei, by motorcoach, for dinner and overnight.

Day 7: Casanova to Furelos to Melide

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints (Psalms 116:15).

We depart from Eirexe this morning after breakfast for Casanova where we will begin our walk to Ribadiso de Baixo (12.85 miles) stopping by the Snow Church in Furelos, then over the hill to Melide. Here we will visit the Church of the Holy Spirit and the Church of St. Mary. Continuing to Boente to visit the Parish Church of Santiago. We'll transfer, by motorcoach to Melide for dinner and overnight.

Day 8: Ribadiso de Baixo to O Pedrouzo

Live as if you had to die tonight, work as if you had to remain forever in this world (Archbishop Bartolomé de Raxoi whose bust and motto can be found at the Paxo de Raxoi near the Cathedral of Santiago).

After breakfast we make our way to Ribadiso de Baixo by motorcoach to begin our walk to O Pedrouzo (13.85 miles). In As Barrosas we'll visit St. Lazare Chapel, in Santa Irene we'll visit the Hermitage. Continue to O Pedrouzo for dinner and overnight.

Day 9: O Pedrouzo to Monte do Gozo

For it is in giving that we receive (Portion of prayer attributed to St. Francis of Assisi).

We walk today through beautiful green country side, farms and forest from O Pedrouzo to Monte do Gozo (13.85 miles). Continue to Santiago de Compostel, by motorcoach, for dinner and overnight.

Day 10: Santiago de Compostela

Know this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience (James 1:3).

Today we will make our way down the narrow streets of the city to the shrine of St. James in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela known in English as the Way of St. James and in Spanish as the Camino de Santiago. The cathedral, built on the spot where the remains of the Apostle James were said to have been found, borders the main plaza of



the old and well-preserved city. We'll enjoy a 4-hour guided tour of the city. The remainder of the day is at leisure to relax or visit the city. We might explore sites near the cathedral including the Praza do Obradoiro, the expansive square named after the workshops set up during the construction of the cathedral in the 11th century, the Colexio de San Xerome, witness to Santiago's status as a seat of learning since the late middle ages, or the Paxo de Raxoi – an elegant neoclassical palace and former seminary which today houses the regional government of Galicia. On the north side of the square is the Hostal de los Reyes Católicos, a Renaissance building commissioned by Isabella and Ferdinand in 1499 as a pilgrims' sanctuary. At the end of the day, we will enjoy a farewell dinner and our final overnight stay in Spain.

Day 11: Depart for Home

We will let the power of the holy shrines, priceless relics, and spiritual marvels of Spain settle over us, then like other pilgrims of other times, go back to our lives with renewed faith and readiness.

We leave our hotel and head for the airport to return to the U.S.

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***This is a very flexible itinerary.** Except for confirmed appointments, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable*

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