



Insider's
C A M I N O

St Cecilia's Episcopal Church Walks The Portuguese Way

Classic Walking Camino Pilgrimage

Porto to Santiago

27th September - 7th October 2027

Itinerary

Walking the ancient paths in
faith, fellowship, and discovery

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Welcome To Your Portuguese Way Pilgrimage



For centuries, pilgrims from Portugal have walked to Santiago de Compostela, following paths that wind along rivers, through ancient forests, and across medieval bridges. This 11-day pilgrimage traces the final 127 kilometers of that journey—from Porto's historic waterfront to Santiago's great cathedral square.

Unlike the busier French Way, the Portuguese route offers quieter paths and a gentler rhythm. You'll walk through Portuguese wine country and Galician villages, cross the River Minho into Spain, following riverside paths, ancient Roman roads, and woodland trails in the footsteps of countless pilgrims who have made this journey before you. Along the way, you'll stay in carefully chosen hotels, from Porto's riverside to historic properties in Pontevedra and Santiago, gathering each evening for good food, reflection, and fellowship.

Each day offers optional walking stages of 8-14 miles, with a private coach traveling alongside the group. This means confident walkers can complete full stages while others choose shorter distances or travel by coach—without anyone feeling pressured or left behind. Luggage is transferred between hotels, so you carry only a daypack with water, rain gear, and what you need for the day. We walk, we pray, we eat well, and we make time for silence and conversation. This is pilgrimage shaped for church communities—honoring the ancient tradition while caring for the needs of a modern parish group.

Buen Camino!

At A Glance



The Portuguese Way: Porto To Santiago

Quick Reference

Duration	11 days / 10 nights
Walking Days	8 days
Total Distance	~79 miles / 127 km
Daily Stages	8-14 miles (13-23 km)
Terrain	Gentle to Moderate
Group Size	16-30 pilgrims
Compostela	Yes (100km+ walked)
Price per person	\$ 6725
Single supplement	\$ 1100
Deposit	\$ 700 per person

Route Overview

Porto → Valença do Minho → Tui (Spain) → O Porriño → Redondela → Pontevedra → Caldas de Reis → Padrón → Santiago de Compostela

Walking Profile

Most days involve 4-6 hours of walking at a gentle, group-friendly pace. Terrain includes riverside paths, country lanes, village streets, and woodland tracks. There are some gentle hills, particularly approaching Tui and between Pontevedra and Caldas de Reis, which are of mild steepness but nothing technical. The path is well-marked with yellow arrows, scallop shell Camino markers and milestones.

Flexibility Built In

- A private coach travels with the group each day, offering:
- Option to skip sections and rejoin the group later
- Scheduled stops for water, a snack and a rest
- Support for anyone needing a shorter day

Spiritual Rhythm

Each day includes opportunities for:

- Morning prayer or reflection before walking
- Silent walking or conversation as you prefer
- Visiting churches and sites connected to the Camino story
- Evening gatherings for worship (shaped with your church leaders)
- Pilgrim's Mass at Santiago Cathedral

What's Included



Accommodations

- 1 night in Porto 4★ hotel
- 7 nights in comfortable 3-4★ hotels along the Way
- 2 nights in Santiago 5★ hotel

Meals

- Breakfast daily
- Dinner with wine and non-alcoholic options each evening
- Welcome dinner in Porto
- Farewell dinner in Santiago

Transportation

- Private coach throughout from Porto to Santiago
- All luggage transfers between hotels

Guidance & Support

- Insider's Camino host traveling with your group
- Local Camino guide
- Pre-trip online Q&A sessions
- Private pilgrim web page for your group with detailed information
- On-the-ground support throughout

Experiences & Visits

- Guided tour of Porto's Sé Cathedral
- Port wine tasting in Porto
- Visit to Tui Cathedral
- Guided tour of Santiago de Compostela
- Pilgrim's Mass at Santiago Cathedral (when scheduled)
- All entrance fees as per itinerary

Pilgrimage Essentials

- Pilgrim's Passport (Credencial)
- Scallop shell
- Daily route briefings
- Opportunity to receive Compostela certificate in Santiago

Built-In Charitable Giving

- \$200 per pilgrim donated to Friends of the Anglican Pilgrim Centre in Santiago, supporting their ministry to pilgrims from around the world

What's Not Included



Travel Arrangements

- International flights to Porto and travel from Santiago
- Travel insurance (required—see details below)
- Visas (if required for your nationality)

Additional Meals

- All lunches (typically purchased at cafés or bars along the way—budget €10-15 per day)
- Drinks beyond those included with dinner
- Snacks, coffee stops during walking

Personal Items

- Gratuities for guides, drivers, and hotel staff (budget €300-350 per person for the full trip)
- Personal spending money
- Laundry services (available at most hotels)

Optional Extras

- Single room supplement (if you prefer private accommodation)
- Extensions in Porto, Santiago, or elsewhere in Spain/Portugal

Travel Insurance — Required

All pilgrims must have comprehensive travel insurance covering:

- Medical expenses and emergency evacuation
- Trip cancellation/interruption
- Lost or delayed baggage
- Personal liability

We recommend purchasing insurance at the time of booking to maximize coverage for pre-existing conditions and unforeseen cancellations.

What To Pack



Before You Begin to Pack

The Portuguese Way is a walking pilgrimage, which means the size and weight of your luggage really matter. Pack only what you truly need — think light and tight.

You carry only a daypack during the walking day, but there will be moments when you'll need to handle your main bag or suitcase yourself. Before the trip, practice carrying both your main bag and daypack together to make sure you're comfortable with the weight.

A downloadable packing checklist is available on our website at insiderscamino.com/packing-guide

Footwear: The Foundation of Your Journey

- **Broken-in walking boots** — Your most critical piece of gear. Choose boots with good ankle support and break them in thoroughly — aim for 10-20 miles of walking before the trip. Do not bring new boots on the Camino.
- **Sneakers** — A versatile backup and perfect for evenings after a long day's walk
- **Sandals or flip flops** — Great for letting your feet breathe in the evenings, especially in warmer weather
- **Optional smarter shoes** — If you like to dress up for dinner, a pair of smart casual shoes is perfectly reasonable. Entirely optional.

Clothing: Comfort and Layering

- **Water-repellent outer layer** — A lightweight, packable rain jacket is essential. Weather on the Portuguese Way can be unpredictable, particularly in Galicia.
- **Warmer outer layer** — A fleece or pullover for cool mornings and evenings

- **Lightweight hiking pants and shorts** — Loose-fitting, quick-drying fabrics. Bring a mix depending on the season.
- **Quick-wicking hiking shirts** — Avoid cotton. Synthetic or merino wool fabrics that wick moisture away from your body are far more comfortable on walking days.
- **Undergarments** — Quick-drying, moisture-wicking underwear
- **Hiking socks with silk liners** — Invest in good-quality hiking socks. Silk liners provide an extra layer of protection against blisters and are well worth packing.
- **Loose, comfortable clothes for evenings** — After a day of walking, you'll want something easy and relaxed to change into

Health & Wellness

- **Compeed gel plasters** — The gold standard for blister prevention and treatment. Available in Spanish pharmacies, but bring a supply from home.
- **Vaseline** — Apply to your feet before putting on socks or liners to reduce friction and prevent blisters. A small tub goes a long way.
- **Sunscreen and sun hat** — A hat with a brim is essential for shade and comfort on open stretches
- **Insect repellent** — Depending on the season, insects can be a nuisance in Galicia's forests and river valleys
- **Personal medications** — Bring enough for the full trip plus a few days' extra
- **Basic first aid** — Antiseptic wipes, pain relief, any prescription medications

What To Pack



Essential Gear

- **Daypack** — Choose a backpack (20-30 liters) with both chest and hip closures, or a waist pack if you prefer. These closures distribute weight properly and make a significant difference on longer days.
- **Water bottle or Camelbak** — Staying hydrated is crucial. A 1-1.5 liter bottle is sufficient most days, or consider a Camelbak hydration system for hands-free drinking on the go.
- **Hiking poles** — Invaluable for stability on uneven terrain and for reducing strain on knees and joints, particularly on descents. Collapsible poles work well for coach travel.

Personal Items

- **Hand-wash soap for laundry** — For those times when you want to wash clothes in the sink rather than use a hotel laundry service
- **Washcloth** — Not all accommodations provide washcloths, so bring one if you're used to having one
- **European power adaptor** — Spain and Portugal use the European two-pin plug (Type C/F). Essential for charging phones, cameras, and other devices.
- **Phone and camera** — The Portuguese Way is beautiful; you'll want to capture it

Nice to Have (If You Have Space)

- **Travel kettle** — If you love your morning tea or coffee before breakfast, a small travel kettle is a welcome luxury as many hotels do not supply them
- **Small notebook and pen** — For journaling, sketching, or noting down things that strike you along the way
- **Devotional items** — Prayer book, Bible, or whatever you like to carry in your faith life

What NOT to Bring

- **Heavy books** — Download to your phone or e-reader instead
- **Valuables** — Leave jewelry and anything irreplaceable at home
- **Cotton hiking clothes** — They hold moisture and cause chafing on long days
- **New, unbroken boots** — This is the single most common mistake on the Camino

Luggage Guidelines

- **Daypack:** Everything you need for the walking day — water, rain gear, snacks, personal items, phone
- **Main bag:** Maximum 20kg / 44lbs

Preparing For Your Pilgrimage



Physical Preparation

The Portuguese Way is one of the gentler Camino routes, and our flexible format means you can walk as much or as little as you wish each day. That said, some preparation will help you enjoy the experience fully.

Recommended Training:

3-4 months before departure:

- Walk 3-4 times per week, gradually building distance
- Start with 3-5 miles and work up to 8-10 miles
- Practice on varied terrain (not just flat sidewalks)
- Wear your Camino shoes to break them in
- Practice carrying a loaded daypack (3-5kg / 6-10lbs)

1 month before departure:

- Aim for at least two 10-mile walks
- Practice walking on consecutive days (if possible)
- Test your gear and clothing in different weather
- Notice what causes blisters or sore spots and adjust

Remember:

- You won't be alone - there will always be someone just in front or just behind
- You won't be rushed - we encourage you to walk at your own pace and to enjoy your surroundings
- The coach is available at regular stops if you need it
- Many pilgrims in their 60s, 70s, and 80s walk the Portuguese Way successfully

If you have mobility concerns, medical conditions, or haven't been active recently, please consult your doctor before the trip. Let us know about any limitations—we're experienced at supporting mixed-ability groups.

Spiritual Preparation

Pilgrimage is as much an inner journey as an outer one. Consider these practices in the weeks before you depart:

- Set an intention. What question, prayer, or hope are you bringing to the Camino?
- Make space for silence. Practice walking without music or conversation—the Camino offers gifts in the quiet.
- Pray for your fellow pilgrims. You may not know everyone yet, but you'll be walking in community.
- Release expectations. The Camino rarely unfolds as we imagine—and that's often where the grace is.

Preparing For Your Pilgrimage



What to Expect Each Day

A typical walking day unfolds like this:

Morning (7:00-8:15 am)

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Brief gathering for route overview and weather check
- Luggage out for transfer
- Departure by coach or on foot

Walking (8:30 am-3:00 pm)

- Gentle, group-friendly pace
- Regular opportunities for pauses for water, coffee, photos
- Coach available for shorter days or fatigue
- Lunch at a bar-restaurant along the way, at your own pace

Afternoon (3:00-6:00 pm)

- Arrival at next hotel
- Check-in and rest time
- Shower, laundry, explore the town

Evening (6:00-9:00 pm)

- Group gathering for dinner (typically 7:30-8:00 pm)
- Brief look ahead to the next day
- Optional worship or reflection (shaped with your leaders)

Some days include cultural visits (cathedrals, historic sites, tastings). We balance structure with spaciousness—time for the group and time for yourself.



Gathering by the Douro in Porto

Today's Journey

We begin where the River Douro meets the Atlantic. Porto—a UNESCO World Heritage city of layered history, azulejo tiles, and port wine cellars—is where our pilgrimage community gathers. Pilgrims arrive independently throughout the day and settle into our riverside hotel. By mid-afternoon, we're ready to begin together.

We meet in the lobby to gather as a group for our welcome talk. We then take the funicular across, above Porto's old quarter to the 12th-century Sé Cathedral that overlooks the city. Inside, away from the tourist crowds, we gather for a guided visit and an introduction to the Portuguese Way. Here we receive our Pilgrim's Passports—the credencial that will be stamped at churches and hostels along our route—and scallop shells to mark us as pilgrims. This is the moment the journey officially begins.

From the cathedral, we descend back toward the river and cross the Dom Luís I Bridge to Vila Nova de Gaia, where port wine has been aged in riverside cellars for centuries. We visit one of the traditional port houses for a guided tasting, learning how this fortified wine became Portugal's gift to the world. As the light softens over the Douro, we gather for a welcome dinner overlooking the city—a chance to meet fellow pilgrims, hear what's ahead, and begin to settle into the rhythm of walking together.

Today at a Glance

Walking	City walk, 2 mi
Terrain	Cobbled streets
Key Sites	Sé Cathedral, Port cellar, Douro River

Insider's Tip

Porto's historic center is beautiful but steep—wear comfortable shoes for today's city walking. The Sé Cathedral's terrace offers one of the best views in the city, so bring your camera. And if you're nervous about the wine tasting, don't worry—port is sweeter and gentler than you might expect, and there's no pressure to drink if you prefer not to.



Gathering by the Douro in Porto

Today's Rhythm

- Independent arrivals in Porto and check-in at the hotel by the Douro River
- Afternoon 2:00pm meet-up in the lobby to begin our time together as a group
- Take the funicular across the Douro and walk up to the 12th-century Sé Cathedral
- Guided visit inside the cathedral with an introduction to the Portuguese Way
- Receive Pilgrim's Passports and scallop shells to mark the start of the pilgrimage
- Cross back over the river to a traditional port cellar for a visit and tasting
- Share a welcome dinner with views over the city before returning to the hotel

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Hotel Forte de Gaia, Vila Nova de Gaia, Porto
- **Meals:** Dinner included (with wine and with non-alcoholic options)
- **Notes:** Arrive in Porto by mid-afternoon if possible. If your flight is delayed, don't worry—we'll save you dinner and brief you in the morning.

Spiritual Focus Today

Beginning our pilgrimage together—gathering as a group, praying in the cathedral, and receiving the symbols of the Camino we'll carry with us. What intention, prayer, or hope are you bringing to this journey?



Porto → Valença do Minho (coach) · Walk: Valença → Tui → Ribadelouro · Return to Valença (coach)

First steps on the Portuguese Way

Today's Journey

This morning we leave Porto and travel north by coach to Valença do Minho, a hilltop fortress town on the Portuguese-Spanish border. The journey takes us through the Minho region—green, hilly, and dotted with vineyards and small farms. We arrive mid-morning with time for a coffee before we start walking to Ribadelouro.

Our first steps on the Camino take us across the graceful metal bridge over the River Minho—a threshold moment. Halfway across, you're in Portugal; by the time you reach the far side, you're in Spain. We pause here as a group to mark the crossing, stamp our Pilgrim's Passports on both sides, and look back at where we've come from.

On the Spanish side, the medieval town of Tui rises steeply from the riverbank. We climb up to visit its 12th-century cathedral—part fortress, part church—where pilgrims have prayed for centuries. We take a break for lunch and time to explore. From Tui, the Camino guides us down through the town and out along riverside paths, fields, and quiet woodlands. The path is well-marked with yellow arrows and blue tiles bearing the scallop shell. We follow them toward the small village of Ribadelouro, noticing the shift from fortified town to open countryside and farming hamlets as the day unfolds.

At Ribadelouro, the coach meets us and we return to Valença for the evening. There's time to rest, explore the town, stroll the fortress walls at sunset before gathering for dinner inside the old town.

Today at a Glance

Walking	5.5 miles / 9km
Terrain	Moderate
Key Sites	Portuguese-Spanish border, Tui Cathedral, riverside paths

Insider's Tip

The bridge over the Minho can be windy—hold onto your hat! Tui's cathedral is less visited than Santiago's but equally atmospheric; if you have time, step into the cloister. Also, keep an eye out for your first hórreo—a traditional raised granary you'll see throughout Galicia. They're built on stilts to keep the harvest dry, and they've been part of the landscape here for centuries.



Porto → Valença do Minho (coach) · Walk: Valença → Tui → Ribadelouro ·
Return to Valença (coach)

First steps on the Portuguese Way

Today's Rhythm

- Checkout and luggage down by 8:30 am; depart by coach at 8:45 am for Valença do Minho on the Portuguese–Spanish border
- Arrive mid-morning and explore the hilltop fortress, with time for an early lunch at leisure
- Begin walking in Valença, crossing the bridge over the River Minho into Spain and entering Tui
- Visit Tui's 12th-century cathedral overlooking the town and river
- Follow riverside paths, fields and woodland, guided by yellow arrows and scallop shells, towards Ribadelouro
- Notice the shift from fortified town to quiet countryside and small farming villages as the day unfolds
- Finish the walk in Ribadelouro and return by coach to Valença for an evening stroll and dinner together

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Pousada de Valença, Valença do Minho
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included
- **Notes:** Today is a gentle half stage. Take your time, and enjoy the walk. Don't hesitate to stop at the bus if you need water or a snack.

Spiritual Focus Today

Crossing the border together—reflecting on thresholds, hospitality, and moving into new territory as pilgrims. The Camino is full of borders: between countries, between silence and conversation, between who we were and who we're becoming. What thresholds are you crossing in your own life?



Valença → Ribadelouro (coach) · Walk: Ribadelouro → O Porriño → Mos ·
Coach to Baiona

Into Galicia's countryside

Today's Journey

We pass the three stone crosses or *cruceiros* before entering the forest. The path leads us deeper into Galicia's countryside—through strands of pine and eucalyptus that scent the air, along by streams and through the forest. The route is gentle, and the yellow arrows keep us on track.

We approach O Porriño, a working town—not picturesque in the way medieval villages are, but alive with local life. We follow the Camino around its edges, along a riverside path that skirts the town rather than cutting through it.

From O Porriño, an alternative route takes us past the small Angustias Chapel and along a quieter path where we can hear the Louro River flowing below. The contrast between dense forest and open farmland is striking—eucalyptus gives way to rolling fields and the landscape softens as we continue our path.

We finish today's walking in Mos, a village gathered around its 16th-century Church of Santa Baia. From here, it's a 40-minute coach ride to Baiona, a historic town in the southern Rías Baixas region. This is where the *Pinta*—one of Columbus's ships—first brought news of the New World to Europe in 1493. Tonight we stay in the *Parador*, a refurbished Gallician Manor House built in the style of a fortress overlooking the bay. With time to settle in, there is time to relax, walk along the ramparts and admire the views before our dinner together.

Today at a Glance

Walking	11 miles / 18km
Terrain	Gentle to Moderate
Key Sites	Eucalyptus forest, Mos church, Baiona bay

Insider's Tip

*Eucalyptus trees were planted across Galicia in the 20th century for timber, and while they're controversial (they're not native and drain water from the soil), they're undeniably beautiful—and the scent on a warm day is unforgettable. As you walk, notice how the Camino uses old *corredoiras*—narrow stone lanes that once connected farms and villages. These paths are centuries old, worn smooth by feet, hooves, and cart wheels.*



Valença → Ribadelouro (coach) · Walk: Ribadelouro → O Porriño → Mos ·
Coach to Baiona

Into Galicia's countryside

Today's Rhythm

- Checkout, luggage down by 8:15 am and 8:30 am departure by coach back to Ribadelouro
- Walk through pine and eucalyptus woods, reaching O Porriño and following the river around the edge of the town
- Continue from O Porriño to the small Angustias Chapel and take an alternative route, hearing the hidden Louro River below
- Arrive in Mos, with its 16th-century Church of Santa Baia de Mos, where today's walk ends
- Take a 40-minute coach ride to the coastal town of Baiona in the southern Rías Baixas region
- Settle in and share dinner together, with time to enjoy the views of the Bay of Bayona

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Parador de Baiona, Baiona
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included
- **Notes:** Baiona is a treat—one of Galicia's loveliest historic towns, with a beautiful bay and impressive fortress. If you have energy after the walk, explore the Parador's castle walls and enjoy the scenery.

Spiritual Focus Today

Walking into quieter rural landscapes through forests and farmland—time for personal reflection and conversation as the rhythm of the pilgrimage settles in.. On pilgrimage, silence is as important as speech. When do you find it easier to pray: in conversation, or in quiet?



Baiona → Mos (coach) · Walk: Mos → Redondela → Arcade · Coach to Pontevedra

Bridges, estuaries and ancient roads

Today's Journey

We leave the coast and return by coach to Mos, where we pick up the Camino again. Today's walking takes us through countryside marked by layers of history—stone crosses, ancient pathways, and a Roman milestone from the Via XIX, the old Roman road that once connected Braga to Astorga.

The route climbs gently through oak and woodland tracks, passing the milestone and continuing through stretches of pine and eucalyptus forest. As we approach Redondela, views open up of the valley below as we make our descent by a narrow road to the historic town of Redondela.

Redondela itself is a town shaped by pilgrimage—there's a 16th century hostel that now serves as a pilgrim hostel, and the Camino has passed through here for centuries. From here we walk into the parish of Cesantes with spectacular views of the Vigo estuary and San Simon islands behind us.

We walk along stone paths to Arcade with the iconic medieval Sampaio Bridge before us.

From Arcade, it's a short coach transfer to Pontevedra, one of Galicia's most elegant cities. We check into our hotel—a beautifully restored property in the old town—and have the rest of the afternoon free to explore before gathering for dinner.

Today at a Glance

Walking 12 miles / 19km

Terrain Moderate

Key Sites Roman milestone, Vigo estuary views, Sampaio Bridge

Insider's Tip

The Roman milestone on today's route is easy to miss if you're not paying attention—it's a weathered stone column with faint Latin inscriptions. Your guide will point it out. It's humbling to think that Roman legionaries, medieval pilgrims, and modern walkers have all followed this same path. Also, Pontevedra's old quarter is pedestrian-only and perfect for evening strolls—don't miss the arcaded Plaza de la Leña.



Baiona → Mos (coach) · Walk: Mos → Redondela → Arcade · Coach to Pontevedra

Bridges, estuaries and ancient roads

Today's Rhythm

- Checkout and luggage down by 8:15 am; depart by coach at 8:30 am back to Mos
- Begin walking near a stone cross and chapel, climbing gently through oak and woodland tracks
- Pass a Roman milestone from the ancient Via XIX and continue through stretches of pine and eucalyptus forest
- Approach Redondela, walking past a former convent-turned-pilgrim hostel and enjoying expanding views over the Vigo estuary
- Follow the Camino to Cesantes parish with views of the Vigo Estuary and the San Simon islands behind us
- Continue on the old stone paths to Arcade and the medieval Sampaio Bridge where today's walk ends
- Take a short coach transfer to Pontevedra to settle into our hotel and share dinner together in the old town

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Parador de Pontevedra, Pontevedra
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included
- **Notes:** Pontevedra is one of the most beautiful stops on the Portuguese Way. If you're a fan of seafood, tonight's dinner will be a highlight—Galicia is famous for its octopus, scallops, and percebes (goose barnacles).

Spiritual Focus Today

Noticing the long history of the route—from Roman roads to medieval bridges—and giving thanks for those who have walked this Way before us. We're part of a tradition that stretches back centuries. What does it mean to walk in the footsteps of pilgrims who came before?



Pontevedra → Arcade (coach) · Walk: Arcade → Pontevedra / Alba · Overnight in Pontevedra

Chapels, city squares and the Pilgrim Virgin

Today's Journey

Today we have a lighter day—luggage stays in our rooms at the hotel in Pontevedra, and we return by coach to Arcade to continue the Camino back toward the city. We walk in the morning, return to the same hotel by early afternoon, and have the rest of the day to enjoy Pontevedra at leisure.

From Arcade, the route follows forest trails and quiet roads through gentle countryside and small hamlets. We pass the small Santa Marta chapel, a simple roadside shrine where pilgrims pause to rest and stamp their Pilgrim Passports. The landscape here is quintessentially Galician—green fields divided by stone walls, hórreos perched on granite pillars, and farmers working their small plots of land.

As we draw closer to Pontevedra, we begin to encounter the edges of the city. The Camino enters and leads us to the Church of the Pilgrim Virgin—Virxe Peregrina in Galician—a distinctive 18th-century church with a curved baroque facade shaped like a scallop shell. This church is dedicated to the Virgin Mary in her role as the one who guides and protects pilgrims, and it's an important landmark on the Portuguese Way. Those who wish can step inside to visit or pray.

From the church, it's a short walk back to our hotel. The afternoon is free to explore Pontevedra's pedestrian-only old quarter, rest, or simply sit in a café and watch the world go by. We reconvene in the evening for dinner together at the hotel.

Today at a Glance

Walking	9 miles / 14km
Terrain	Easy
Key Sites	Santa Marta chapel, Church of the Pilgrim Virgin

Insider's Tip

The Church of the Pilgrim Virgin is designed in the shape of a scallop shell—look at it from above (or on a map) and you'll see the curve. Inside, there's a small statue of the Virgin dressed as a pilgrim with staff and scallop shell. It's a reminder that Mary, too, is imagined as a fellow traveler on the Camino. If you have time in Pontevedra, visit the Basilica of Santa María la Mayor—its western facade is one of the finest examples of Galician Plateresque architecture.



Pontevedra → Arcade (coach) · Walk: Arcade → Pontevedra / Alba · Overnight in Pontevedra

Chapels, city squares and the Pilgrim Virgin

Today's Rhythm

- Begin the day with luggage staying in rooms and no checkout required
- Depart by coach in the morning back to Arcade to rejoin the Camino
- Walk from Arcade on country paths and quiet roads towards Pontevedra and Alba
- Pause at the small Santa Marta chapel to rest and stamp Pilgrim Passports
- Continue through gentle countryside and hamlets towards the edges of the city
- Enter Pontevedra by the Church of the Pilgrim Virgin, with time to visit or pray for those who wish
- Enjoy some free time in the old quarter before returning to the hotel to rest and gather for dinner together at the hotel

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Parador de Pontevedra, Pontevedra
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included
- **Notes:** This is an easier day by design. After several days of walking, it's good to have a shorter stage and time to rest or explore.

Spiritual Focus Today

Focusing on guidance and accompaniment—the tradition of the Pilgrim Virgin and the ways we are led in our own journeys. Who has guided you in your faith? How do you experience God's guidance—through people, through circumstances, through prayer?



Fields, forests and healing waters

Today's Journey

We check out of our hotel in Pontevedra and begin walking directly from the city, crossing the Lérez River on the old Burgo Bridge and skirting the wetlands of A Xunqueira de Alba. The route today is quintessentially Galician: a mix of farm tracks, quiet country lanes, and woodland paths, passing through small hamlets where the loudest sounds are birdsong and the occasional bark of a dog.

Near the village of Valbón, we pass several stone crosses—cruceiros—that mark crossroads and boundaries. One of these shows St. James carved as a pilgrim, looking toward Compostela, staff in hand and scallop shell on his cloak.

The Camino continues through gentle countryside, past roadside bars where pilgrims can pause for a drink or snack, and finally into Caldas de Reis. This town has been known for its thermal waters since Roman times—Caldas means "hot springs"—and pilgrims have stopped here for centuries to bathe sore feet and rest weary bodies. Caldas has four romanesque churches, all of them are worth visiting.

From Caldas de Reis, we take a short coach transfer to our hotel for the next two nights. Torre de Río is a converted textile mill with beautiful gardens and space to rest before gathering for dinner together.

Today at a Glance

Walking	14 miles / 22km
Terrain	Gentle to Moderate
Key Sites	Lérez River, stone crosses, Caldas thermal springs

Insider's Tip

Caldas de Reis has a public fountain fed by thermal water—it's warm year-round (around 40°C / 104°F). Many pilgrims stop to soak their feet. If you're interested, bring a small towel and take a few minutes to rest by the fountain; it's one of the Camino's simple pleasures. Also, keep an eye out for albarino vineyards as you walk today—this is the heart of Rías Baixas wine country.



Pontevedra → Caldas de Reis (walk · short coach to hotel)

Fields, forests and healing waters

Today's Rhythm

- Checkout and luggage down by 8:30 am; depart on foot from Pontevedra at around 8:45 am
- Cross the Lérez River on Burgo Bridge, skirting the wetlands of A Xunqueira de Alba
- Follow a mix of farm tracks, quiet lanes and woodland paths through small hamlets
- Pass stone crosses near Valbón, including one with St James shown as a pilgrim looking towards Compostela
- Continue via gentle countryside and roadside bars where pilgrims can pause for a drink or snack
- Arrive into Caldas de Reis, known for its thermal waters, Romanesque church and riverside setting
- Take a short coach transfer to our beautiful riverside hotel to rest before gathering for dinner together

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Torre do Río, near Caldas de Reis
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included
- **Notes:** Today is one of the longer walking days (around 14 miles), but the terrain is gentle. Take your time, stay hydrated, and remember the coach is available if you need it.

Spiritual Focus Today

Pilgrimage as a balance of effort and rest—reflecting on healing, water, and renewal as we arrive in a town famed for its springs. The Camino is full of symbols: water for cleansing and renewal, bread for sustenance, the shell for journey. What symbols carry meaning in your own spiritual life?



Viewpoints over the Ulla valley

Today's Journey

We rejoin the Camino at Caldas de Reis and walk north through countryside that becomes increasingly wooded and hilly. The route passes through areas associated with local resistance to Napoleon's troops in the early 19th century—these valleys and forests were sites of guerrilla resistance, and the Galician people defended their land fiercely.

As we continue, the path leads us into shady forest with the sound of water never far away. We pass small waterfalls, old stone mills, and streams that feed the Ulla River. The landscape here is lush and green, even in summer, and there's a sense of entering deeper into Galicia's interior.

The climb to the Pino Manso viewpoint is one of today's highlights. From this elevated spot, we look out over the Ulla valley and the town of Pontecesures far below. It's a moment to pause, catch our breath, and take in the wide views—an expansive landscape of river, forest, and farmland stretching toward the horizon.

From the viewpoint, the Camino descends steadily into Pontecesures, a town with Roman and maritime roots. It sits at a strategic point on the Ulla River, and in centuries past, it was an important crossing for pilgrims and traders alike. We finish our walking here and meet the coach for a short transfer back to our hotel.

Today at a Glance

Walking	12 miles / 19km
Terrain	Moderate hills
Key Sites	Forest paths, Pino Manso viewpoint, Ulla River, Pontecesures

Insider's Tip

The climb to Pino Manso is the steepest of today's route, but it's manageable if you take it slowly. Once you reach the top, don't rush off—savor the view and the sense of accomplishment. Also, Pontecesures is where the Ulla meets tidal waters, and depending on the time of day, you might see fishing boats or notice the smell of the sea mixing with river and forest. We're getting closer to the coast again.



Viewpoints over the Ulla valley

Today's Rhythm

- Short journey by bus to Caldas de Reis to rejoin the Camino and walk through rural lanes and small village towards Casal de Eirigo
- Cross areas associated with local resistance to Napoleonic troops, continuing into woodland and river valleys
- Follow forest tracks past small waterfalls and old stone mills, with opportunities for pauses along the way
- Climb gently towards the Pino Manso viewpoint for wide views over the Ulla valley and town below
- Descend into Pontecesures, noticing its riverside setting and long links with river trade and pilgrimage
- Meet the coach and transfer a short distance to our hotel near Padrón to rest and gather for dinner together

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Torre do Río, near Caldas de Reis
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included

Spiritual Focus Today

Remembering courage and care for local communities, and praying for our own parishes and places as we walk through these valleys. Pilgrimage isn't just about personal transformation—it's also about returning home with renewed love for the people and places we serve. What are you learning about your own community as you walk?



Pontecesures → Padrón → Iria Flavia → Rúa Francos (walk)

Padrón, Iria Flavia and peppers

Today's Journey

We return by coach to Pontecesures and rejoin the Camino at the Roman bridge that crosses the Ulla River. This ancient stone bridge has carried pilgrims for centuries, and crossing it marks an important moment in the journey—we're now less than 30 kilometers from Santiago.

On the far side, we follow the riverside route into Padrón, a town with deep connections to the story of St. James. According to tradition, this is where the boat carrying the body of St. James arrived from Jerusalem in the first century, guided by angels and pulled up onto a stone mooring post—the *pedrón* that gives the town its name. For those who wish, there's time to visit churches connected with this Jacobean tradition, including the church that houses the legendary stone.

From Padrón, we continue to Iria Flavia, pausing at the collegiate church and cemetery with their literary and historic connections. (The poet and Nobel laureate Camilo José Cela was born here, and the cemetery is a quiet, atmospheric place where many Galician writers are buried.) There's free time in and around Padrón to sample the town's famous green peppers—*pimientos de Padrón*—which are fried in olive oil, salted, and served hot. The saying goes, "some are hot, some are not," and that's part of the fun.

We walk on through gently rolling countryside, passing the sanctuary and viewpoints associated with A Escravitude, and finish today's walk at Rúa de Francos. The coach meets us for a short transfer back to our hotel near Padrón, with time to rest before music and dinner.

Today at a Glance

Walking	10 miles / 16km
Terrain	Gentle
Key Sites	Roman bridge, Church of Santiago, Padrón, Iria Flavia, famous peppers

Insider's Tip

*Padrón is one of the most significant stops on the Portuguese Way, but it's easy to rush through without realizing its importance. Take a few minutes to step inside the Church of Santiago, where you'll see the stone (*pedrón*) under the altar—a tangible link to the Jacobean legend. As for the peppers: most are mild, but every so often you'll get one that's fiery hot. It's a Galician tradition to eat them with your fingers, and locals laugh when someone gets a spicy one.*

Day 8 continued →



Pontecesures → Padrón → Iria Flavia → Rúa Francos (walk)

Padrón, Iria Flavia and peppers

Today's Rhythm

- Checkout and luggage down by 8:45 am; depart from the hotel back to Caldas de Reis
- Cross the bridge over the Ulla River and follow the riverside route into Padrón
- Visit the Church of Santiago connected with the Jacobean tradition and the arrival of St James
- Continue on to Iria Flavia, pausing at the collegiate church and cemetery with their literary and historic links
- Enjoy free time in and around Padrón to sample the town's famous green peppers and explore the streets and square
- Walk on through gently rolling countryside, passing the sanctuary and viewpoints associated with A Escravitude
- Finish today's walk at Rúa de Francos and meet the coach for the short transfer back to our hotel near Padrón, with time to rest before dinner

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Pazo de Arretén, near Padrón
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included
- **Notes:** Today's walk is moderate and the terrain is gentle. This is a good day to linger in Padrón if you're interested in history, legend and local life—your guide can point you toward the key sites.

Spiritual Focus Today

Spending time with the story of St. James and reflecting on how the gospel travels from place to place—including through our own communities. The legend says James's body was brought to this shore by boat, guided by providence. How has faith been carried to your own parish, your own life? Who were the bearers?



Final footsteps into Santiago

Today's Journey

This is the day we've been walking toward. We return by coach to Rúa de Francos and set out on the final stage of the Portuguese Way, walking through villages and gentle countryside toward Santiago. The landscape is still rural—fields, farms, woodlands—but there's a growing sense of anticipation in the group.

Near Milladoiro, we reach a high point where the towers of Santiago Cathedral come into view for the first time. It's an iconic Camino moment: after days of walking, the goal is suddenly visible on the horizon. Many pilgrims pause here to take photos, say a prayer, or simply stand and look. We're almost there.

From Milladoiro, the Camino descends steadily toward the city, crossing the river and gradually entering the outskirts of Santiago. We follow the final streets through the old quarter, joining other pilgrims arriving from different routes—French, Northern, Primitive, English—all converging on the same destination.

We walk the last kilometer together as one group into the Paraza do Obradoiro, the great square in front of the cathedral. We've arrived. There's time to pause, take photos, embrace, give thanks. Some pilgrims sit on the steps and simply take it in. Others walk straight to the cathedral to hug the statue of St. James or visit the crypt where his remains are said to rest.

We check in to the Parador and meet later for our group's Eucharist at 12th century San Fiz church followed by dinner at a local favourite.

Today at a Glance

Walking	11 miles / 18km
Terrain	Gentle
Key Sites	First view of cathedral towers, arrival in Praza do Obradoiro

Insider's Tip

The final approach into Santiago is beautiful but can feel emotional. Some pilgrims feel joy, others feel unexpectedly tearful, and some feel—strangely—a bit deflated. All of these reactions are normal. The Camino doesn't end when you reach the cathedral; in many ways, it's just the beginning.

Day 9 continued →



Final footsteps into Santiago

Today's Rhythm

- Checkout and luggage down by 8:45 am; depart by coach to Rúa de Francos to rejoin the Camino
- Walk through villages and gentle countryside towards Milladoiro
- Pause near Milladoiro for the first clear view of the towers of Santiago Cathedral on the horizon
- Continue down towards the city, crossing the river and gradually entering the outskirts of Santiago
- Follow the final streets of the Camino through the old quarter, joining other pilgrims on the way to the main square
- Arrive together in the Praza do Obradoiro in front of the cathedral, with time to pause, take photos and give thanks
- Walk to the hotel to check in, rest, and later come together again for worship and an evening meal in the city

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Parador de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included
- **Notes:** When we arrive in Santiago, your guide will collect your Pilgrim's Passport to organise your Compostela for you. Tonight's dinner is celebratory but not a formal "farewell" yet—we still have a full day in Santiago tomorrow. Rest well; you've earned it.

Spiritual Focus Today

Arrival—giving thanks for the journey, one another, and all that has unfolded along the Way, and beginning to notice what this pilgrimage might mean for our lives at home. The Camino is not just the path to Santiago; it's the person you become along the way. Who are you now? What has shifted?



Santiago de Compostela (on foot – city exploration)

A day to savour Santiago

Today's Journey

We spend today in Santiago, with no packing, no walking stages, and no need to be anywhere but here. This is a day to savor the city, to rest, and to reflect on the journey now behind us.

The morning begins with a guided walking tour of Santiago's historic center and cathedral surroundings. We hear stories of the city's history—from its origins as a pilgrimage destination to its role in medieval Europe to its life today as a vibrant university city and Galician capital. We visit the cathedral itself and its museum, learning about its architecture, its art, and the layers of history embedded in its walls. For many pilgrims, this is when the magnitude of what we've done begins to sink in.

We are invited to visit Casa Anglicana, the Anglican Pilgrim's Centre that you have donated to as part of this journey. We continue for Pilgrim's Mass at the cathedral.

This is one of the most moving experiences on the Camino - a liturgy conducted mainly in Spanish with pilgrims from around the world in attendance. If the botafumeiro (the massive incense thurible) is in use, we'll witness it being swung by eight men using ropes, filling the cathedral with incense and spectacle. It's an ancient ritual, deeply moving, and a fitting culmination of our pilgrimage.

After Mass, your time is free for lunch and to enjoy the afternoon. We have plenty of suggestions of what to do.

This evening we gather for our farewell dinner in a private dining room at the Parador, overlooking the Cathedral. It is tonight we receive our Compostela certificates and give thanks for each other.

Today at a Glance

Walking	City walking
Key Sites	Cathedral Museum tour, Anglican Pilgrim's Centre welcome, Pilgrim's Mass, old quarter exploration

Insider's Tip

Before we visit the Cathedral with our group, enjoy the atmosphere in Obradoiro square as pilgrims continue to arrive, emotional with their journey.

Enjoy the smaller streets of Santiago, their churches and small family businesses. The Mercado de Abastos, the local market is a feast for the senses for produce but also to enjoy a glass of albariño and sample local delights.

Day 10 continued →



Santiago de Compostela (on foot – city exploration)

A day to savour Santiago

Today's Rhythm

- Begin the day with a relaxed breakfast and no need to check out of the hotel
- Meet in reception for a guided walking tour of the old city, the Cathedral Museum and the Cathedral itself
- Hear stories of Santiago's history, architecture and the life of the city today
- A welcome to Casa Anglicana, the Anglican Pilgrim's Centre we have donated to
- Pilgrim's Mass at the cathedral
- Enjoy free time in the afternoon for lunch, cafés, shopping, additional church visits or quiet reflection
- Return to the hotel to pack and rest before the journey home the following day
- Enjoy our farewell dinner at the Parador and receive our Compostela certificate

Spiritual Focus Today

Reflecting on what the pilgrimage has meant, giving thanks for those we've walked with, and beginning to consider how the Camino might shape our lives and parish when we return. The question now is not "Did I finish?" but "What comes next?" How will you carry the Camino home?

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** Parador de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago
- **Meals:** Breakfast & dinner included
- **Notes:** Tonight you receive your Compostela Certificate. No need to visit the Pilgrim's Office as this is handled for you and your pilgrim's passport will be stamped and handed back to you tonight.



Carrying the Camino home

Today's Journey

After breakfast, our organized time together comes to an end. Pilgrims make their way to Santiago airport or continue traveling, taking home not just a Compostela certificate and scallop shell, but the memories, conversations, and insights of the Camino.

Some will leave early; others will linger over a final coffee in the square. Goodbyes are often harder than expected—after 11 days of traveling, eating, and praying together, the group has become a deeper community. The conversations and connections made on the Camino often last far beyond the journey itself.

For those extending their stay in Santiago or elsewhere in Spain, your hosts can offer suggestions and assistance. For those heading straight home, safe travels—and may the Camino walk with you.

Today at a Glance

Travel day

Departures throughout the morning

Insider's Tip

If your flight allows, consider one last visit to the cathedral square before you leave. The morning light is beautiful, and the square is quieter before the tour groups arrive. Stand where you stood when you first arrived, notice what's different now, and give thanks. Many pilgrims describe a strange mix of relief and sadness on departure day—relief to rest fully, sadness to leave. Both are valid. The Camino has a way of staying with you long after you've returned home.



Carrying the Camino home

Today's Rhythm

- Begin the morning with breakfast at the hotel
- Allow some final moments to look out over the city or visit the square one last time
- Check out of rooms and organize luggage for departure
- Make your own way to Santiago airport or onward destination.
- Say goodbyes to fellow pilgrims as departure times begin to stagger
- Travel home or onward, with time in transit to rest and reflect on the journey
- Arrive back home or at your next stop, beginning to re-enter daily life after the pilgrimage

Practical Details

- **Overnight:** (travel day)
- **Meals:** Breakfast included
- **Notes:** If you're leaving early, breakfast boxes can usually be arranged with the hotel.

Spiritual Focus Today

Carrying the Camino home—giving thanks, noticing what has changed in us, and asking how this experience might deepen our faith and community in the months ahead. The medieval pilgrims returned home and told their stories, shaping their communities with what they'd seen and learned. What story will you tell?

Testimonials



After Your Pilgrimage

The Camino doesn't end when you step off the plane. Many pilgrims find that the weeks and months after they return home are when the journey's meaning deepens, when insights become practices, and when the experience begins to reshape daily life.

"You and your insider travel team have gifted us the most hospitable visit to Spain. You gave us the confidence to conquer the Camino. You gave us the tools we needed to get through each day. You gave us your word, your prayers and your resources! You gave us beautiful places to stay in, delicious food, wonderful entertainment, and all the special touches that gave us rest when we needed it most! For all of that, plus so much more, I am so thankful, so grateful and so proud to say I was able to travel with Insider's Camino"

— Erin King, St Paul's Episcopal Church, Mount Lebanon

"I cannot begin to thank you enough for creating the most amazing travel experience of my life and how your planning, execution and enthusiasm came forth in every aspect of our joint adventure. Much kudos to you and your team!"

— Jamie Wilson, Rhode Island

"One of our most memorable holidays ever. What an experience, with several wonderful chances that could not have happened without the truly "insider" experience of the company. led with enthusiasm, energy and charm."

— Molly Browning, Pilgrim

"You could not have any more gracefully combined sublime competence, gracious hospitality and keen intelligence/judgment. The trip was informative, "divertido" and spiritual. It was a nice group of people, but even the best orchestra needs a good conductor."

— Robert Kennington

Pricing & Booking Information



Pricing

The price of this pilgrimage is \$ 6725. A non-refundable deposit of \$ 700 per person secures your place on the pilgrimage.

Single room supplement is \$ 1100.

Payment Schedule

- Deposit due at booking
- Balance due 90 days before departure (by 29th June 2027)

Cancellation Policy

- 89-60 days before departure: 25% of total cost forfeited.
- 59-31 days before departure: 50% of total cost forfeited.
- 30 days or less: 100%

We strongly recommend purchasing travel insurance at the time of booking to protect against unforeseen circumstances.

Travel Insurance — Required

All pilgrims must have comprehensive travel insurance covering:

- Medical expenses and emergency evacuation
- Trip cancellation and interruption
- Lost, stolen, or delayed baggage
- Personal liability

We can recommend insurance providers if needed.

Group Size & Minimum Numbers

This pilgrimage is based on a minimum of 16 pilgrims taking part. If your group falls below the minimum, we'll work with you to find a solution—this might include merging with another church group, adjusting the itinerary, or rescheduling.

Maximum group size is typically 30 pilgrims, ensuring intimacy and logistical manageability.

Single Room Supplement

Single rooms are available for a single supplement charge of \$ 1100. If you're willing to share but don't have a roommate, we'll do our best to pair you with another solo traveler.

Dietary Requirements

We accommodate vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, and other dietary needs wherever possible. Please inform us at the time of booking. Note that rural Spain has fewer options than cities, so some flexibility may be required.

Mobility & Accessibility

Our pilgrimages are designed to accommodate a range of mobility levels, but they do involve walking on uneven terrain, cobblestones, and country paths. If you have specific mobility concerns, please discuss them with us in advance. We can often adapt the itinerary to suit your needs, but complete accessibility cannot be guaranteed on a walking pilgrimage.

Pricing & Booking Information



Passports & Visas

- US and Canadian citizens do not need visas for stays up to 90 days in Spain or Portugal. However, US travellers will need to purchase an ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorization System) digital visa scheduled to be implemented from the last quarter of 2026.
- Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond your return date.
- Check visa requirements for your nationality if you're traveling from outside North America.

Final Details

Emergency contacts and any last-minute updates will be provided closer to departure. Your itinerary and hotel details are as shown in this document.

Questions?

Contact olga@insiderscamino.com or schedule a call through our website.

You're Almost There

Your place on the St Cecilia's Episcopal Church Portuguese Way Pilgrimage is waiting. Everything has been arranged — the route, the hotels, the guides, the experiences. All that remains is to confirm your place and pay your deposit.

Your Pilgrimage

St Cecilia's Episcopal Church walks the Portuguese Way
27th September – 7th October 2027
Porto to Santiago de Compostela

In Collaboration With



Friends of the
Anglican Pilgrim Centre
in Santiago

Every Insider's Camino pilgrimage includes a \$200 per pilgrim donation to the Friends of the Anglican Pilgrim Centre in Santiago, supporting their ministry of welcome, hospitality, and spiritual care for pilgrims from around the world.



Insider's
C A M I N O

**The Camino is not just about reaching
Santiago. It's about being transformed
along the way.**



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