



Adventure Details

Camino de Santiago Northern Spain

Trip Dates: May 5 – 15, 2024

Length of Trip: 11 days / 10 nights

EARLY BOOKING RECEIVE ONE MORE NIGHT FREE!

from \$6498USD

A deposit of \$750 is due with registration.

This trip begins in Bilbao, Spain (BIO) on the morning of May 5, 2024.

This trip ends in Santiago de Compostela, Spain (SCQ) after breakfast on May 15, 2024.

(Book Early and Receive One Additional Night in Santiago, your trip will end on May 16)

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FEATURE: Our private minibus means that there is flexibility to shorten walks, skip some entirely, or be picked up at midpoints along the way.

Guest Itinerary

Please note that the details of this itinerary including the specific hotels subject to change. Many of the planned activities are organized according to availability, events or seasonal dates, appropriate weather conditions or the discretion of our guides. We make every effort to provide the experience described in the itinerary with the understanding that some things may change.

Day 1 – Pyrenees

Early morning arrival to Bilbao (BIO). Optional one- or two-pre-night stays are available. See price and payments.

Starting in Bilbao, we take a morning drive up into the foothills of the Spanish Pyrenees to Roncesvalles, the traditional start of the Camino in Spain. The landscape is one of lovely small villages set in the rolling pastures and forests of the Basque Pyrenees. Over the course of the day, you gradually descend through villages and woodland towards the village of Zubiri where you end today's walk.

After a refreshment in the village bar, you are picked up for the short drive to your hotel in the heart of the old city of Pamplona. Take time this evening to stroll around the heart of the city with your guides, following the route of the encierro, also known as the running of the bulls, made so famous by Hemingway. Tonight, enjoy a welcome dinner in a local restaurant.

Walk Options: For your first day's walk on the Camino enjoy an introduction to the week ahead. With very little elevation change you can do an easy warm up for just a few miles or trek up to 7 miles (11.5km). **Your choice!** With our own expert hiking guide leading the way we will have access to our private vehicle along with a driver guide for flexibility.

Meals Included: Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Tres Reyes

Day 2 – La Rioja

A short transfer from Pamplona brings you to the start point of today's walk. As you are now moving away from the mountains, the terrain changes to open, rolling landscapes punctuated by villages rich in history, including Puente de la Reina, one of the prettiest villages along the entire Camino. Cross Medieval and Roman bridges, passing olive groves and small vineyards as you continue your journey along the Camino towards the hilltop village of Cirauqui.

At the end of today's walk, you transfer around an hour to the Rioja area where we visit one of the famous wineries before settling in the Parador of the historical town of Santo Domingo do la Calzada.

Walk Options: Passing through various villages along the way there will be several points where you have the choice to finish your walk and enjoy the local life. For those that would like to walk the full distance your total for the day will be 9.25 miles (14.8km).

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Parador de Santo Domingo Bernardo de Fresneda

Day 3 – Burgos

Start the day with a one-hour transfer to the start point of today's walk in the Montes de Oca. In the olden days, the traverse of the Montes de Oca was one of the most feared stretches of the pilgrimage due to bandits. Follow a wide track to the forest until you reach the beautiful monastery, built by San Juan de Ortega to offer support to pilgrims.

Today's route finishes near Atapuerca, which is arguably the most important archaeological site on earth. At the site, 1 million years of human presence is being excavated, the oldest evidence of humans in western Europe. Stay in the heart of Burgos, famous for its enormous gothic cathedral and its particularly good food. Enjoy an early evening city tour with our local guide before dinner. There is also a fantastic museum in Burgos which contains the world's largest hominid collection and an exhibit on Human Evolution.

Walk Options: Walk through varied terrain from bird-filled forests to more barren landscapes for a distance of 6.2 miles (10km). If you prefer to explore on your own, you have the option to go directly to Burgos after the hikers are taken to the start of their walk.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Palacio de los Blasones

Day 4 – Leon

From the old town of Castrojeriz, set off across the Tierra de Campos with its huge cereal fields and enormous skies. The landscape is dotted with small villages and impressive churches with nesting storks. This really is deep Spain and leaves you with a fantastic sense of the vast emptiness of central Spain.

Spend the night in the town of Leon at a beautifully renovated parador, where you can enjoy the famous stained-glass windows of its gothic cathedral and the lively bars and restaurants of El Humedo quarter.

Walk Options: With endless cereal hills stretching out before you, set out across the vast plains for a 7 miles (11km) walk. A shorter walk is available for those that choose or enjoy free time in nearby San Martín de Frómista, a village filled with interesting churches.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Parador de Leon

Day 5 – Picos de Europa

From Leon, transfer north into the Cantabrian range to hike down into the Liebana Valley, admiring the high vertical peaks of the Picos de Europa as you follow the Camino Vadiniense. This route was historically used to visit the important relics that were hidden in the Liebana Valley in the 8th century, to keep them from the Muslims conquering the Peninsula from the South.

The Picos de Europa is the first National Park established in Spain in 1918 and a unique reserve of wildlife and traditional farming culture. Walk past mountain pastures and beech forests to arrive in Fuente De, a remote setting deep in the mountains. From here, a short transfer will deliver you to your cozy, family-run hotel.

Walk Options: Walk 7.15 miles (11.5km) along the Camino Vadiniense into the Picos de Europa National Park. For anyone that prefers not to walk today you will be transferred by our driver/guide to our next hotel and enjoy an optional free day.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Del Oso

Day 6 – Three Caminos in One!

Walk on three different Caminos in one day. Start the day walking along the Camino Vadiniense, traversing forests, pastures and villages under the towering Picos de Europa. Close to the town of Potes, you reach the Monastery of Santo Toribio de Liebana, where the famous relics of the Lignum Crucis have been kept since the 8th century. From this point, you join the Camino Lebaniego to finish your walk in the historic town of Potes.

Enjoy a walk around its cobbled streets and bridges and refresh yourself before you transfer to the Cantabrian Coast. Settle for the night in the picturesque fishing town of Llanes, one of the loveliest villages along the Camino del Norte and an excellent place for free time to dine on seafood at one of the numerous restaurants.

Walk Options: Our hike will take us along the Deva Valley and past Santo Toribio Monastery on your way to Potes. If you opt for the full distance, you will cover 7 miles (11km) or for a shorter walk you will have two pick up locations to choose from along the way. Enjoy the walk your way!

Meals Included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel Don Paco

Day 7 – Llanes

Enjoy a relaxed morning in Llanes with time for an early morning stroll along the Medieval town and port before taking the local narrow-gauge train for 10 km to the village of Pendueles. From here walk back to Llanes along the Northern Camino de Santiago, walking past small villages and enjoying great views of the rough Cantabrian coastline. In the evening explore the great options for dinner in town, ranging from local fish and seafood places to Michelin starred restaurants.

Walk Options: We will be staying in Llanes for two nights so that you can have several options. Start walking today along the Camino del Norte and the rugged Cantabrian coast for a complete day's walk of 10 miles (16km) with two possible pick up locations or take a day off and enjoy Llanes on your own.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel Don Paco

Day 8 – Astorga

Today we travel south across the Cantabrian range towards Leon to start hiking to the town of Astorga. Your starting point is the village of Orbigo, you traverse holm oak forests and open fields.

In Astorga, you meet another historic path of Iberia as you reach the Via de la Plata, a branch of the pilgrimage which comes up from Seville following an old Roman road. In Roman times, Astorga was the administrative center of a region rich with gold deposits. As early as the 3rd century, the town was a bishopric and this rich history is evidenced today by the sheer number of important religious buildings built here through the ages. Of particular note is the Episcopal Palace, designed by Anton Gaudi.

Walk Options: Walking the Camino Frances we will follow the way to the old Roman town of Astorga with a choice of a 1.5 mile or 6.2 mile (10km) walk.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel Via de la Plata

Day 9 – Lugo

Prepare yourself for a big change in scenery as you cross into the lush greenery of Galicia, home to the city of Santiago. The walk today is relatively short, but all uphill as you walk out of the region of Leon. At the top of the hill is the village of O'Cebreiro, rich in Camino history and site of one of the oldest inns on the walk. It's been serving meals to pilgrims since the 9th century, so how could we pass up a warm lunch?

After lunch, we travel to the next hotel in the town of Lugo. An important stop on the Northern Camino, Lugo is famous for its fully preserved Roman wall circling the city center.

Walk Options: The scenery changes completely as you walk into Galicia -- Spain's greenest corner. This rewarding hike is an uphill climb with a total gain of 700 meters. Walk halfway for a village pick up at 2.5 miles (4km) or climb the rest of the way to complete the ascent with 5.28 miles (8.5km).

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Monumento Pazo de Orban

Day 10 – Santiago de Compostela

It is a short drive to the town of Sarria, where you will begin your walk. In this town many pilgrims gather, as this is the start point for those completing a shorter version of the Camino. The path follows ancient trails passing small hamlets and magic "corredoiras", the traditional Galician pathways lined with oak and chestnut trees. You also enjoy views of the wide-open countryside.

At the end of your morning walk, you travel by road to Santiago to stop at the Monte do Gozo and hike into town to reach the Cathedral. Take in the atmosphere in the Plaza del Obradoiro, watching as pilgrims finish their long journey, and celebrate yours. Settle into your comfortable small hotel near the city center and get ready for a very special farewell dinner.

Walk Options: Walk one of the prettiest stretches of the Camino, following ancient paths through the forests. Depending on time there will be several options for short walks or a longer trek up to 8.14 miles (13.1km). For our final stage we will walk together 1 mile into Santiago de Compostela.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Altair

Day 11 – Depart or Stay!

Santiago is a very special city. Resolutely and obviously Spanish, it has also welcomed visitors for millennia, so has a relaxed cosmopolitan feel, which is otherwise difficult to come by in Spain. The city is always full of pilgrims who are delighted to have just arrived, so it is hard not to be infected by their positivity.

If you have the time to stay a day or two after the Camino, enjoy visiting markets and museums, and try a few restaurants. We are happy to extend your stay. See price and payments.

If you must go, a transfer to the Santiago de Compostela airport (SCQ) or train station can be made after breakfast.

Meals Included: Breakfast

**BOOK EARLY AND RECEIVE ONE MORE NIGHT COMPLIMENTARY
IN SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA!**

Inclusions

This Walking Connection trip includes:

- Unique itinerary designed by Walking Connection co-founder, Jo Ann Taylor in partnership with our local team in Spain
- Trip will be escorted by Jo Ann Taylor.
- *Two expert local hiking guides and a transport driver for flexibility in the distance of daily walks.
- 10 nights lodging at boutique hotels, as indicated in the itinerary.
- Daily meals, as indicated in the itinerary.
- Complimentary local wines with some meals.
- Wine tasting at a local winery in Rioja.
- Ground transfers throughout.
- Transportation of luggage each day.
- All activities and tours detailed in the itinerary.
- Detailed *Know Before You Go* information, including recommended website, current Covid-19 protocols including resource information for testing needed for entry and departure, reading lists, packing list, and weather forecast.

*Two local guides if over 8 guests, 7 or less there will be one local guide.

This Walking Connection trip DOES NOT include:

- Local guide and driver gratuities
- All international and domestic airfares with tax.
- Airport transfers at beginning and end of trip.
- All items of a personal nature, including beverages and shopping.
- All passport and visa application fees, vaccination, and medical consulting fees.
- Covid-19 testing if required for entry into Spain or returning to country of origin.
- All international departure taxes collected at airport of departure.
- Additional hotel stay pre- or post- scheduled itinerary.
- Early check-in or late check-out of rooms.
- Optional tours.
- Photographs or phone calls.
- Discounts/Refunds on any unused portion of the tour.
- Travel Insurance.
- Certificate of Compostela.
- Anything that is not expressly stated in the itinerary or on the inclusion list above.

Price & Payments

Price per person:

- Double Occupancy: *from* \$6498 USD **BOOK NOW and receive an additional night free!**
- Single Occupancy: *A limited number of single rooms are available for a \$875 supplement.*
- Optional pre-night hotel stays in Bilbao at a 5* hotel: 325 USD/ dbl room/night, 300/ sgl room/night
- Optional post-night hotel in Santiago de Compostela: 250 USD/dbl room/night, 210 USD/sgl room/ night.
(One post-night free with Early Booking)

Our tour prices are subject to change due to currency fluctuation at the time of final payment.

Deposits:

An initial deposit of \$750.00 USD per person is required to reserve your space. No space will be held without a complete deposit. (Deposits from postponed trips can only be transferred and not refunded.)

Payments:

Payments must be made according to the schedule & are subject to cancellation and penalty policy. Final payment is due on or before 75 days prior to the trip. We request that all final payments be made by check, wire transfer or credit card/PayPal/Venmo. Credit card and PayPal payments for final amount due are subject to a 3% surcharge of total due. Canadian (or other non-U.S. Credit cards) are subject to a 4.5% surcharge. Payments can be made online or by phone.

Price Variation:

Prices are based upon the current government fees for park, concession fees and sanctuary entry and all taxes at the time of publication of this information. Should the government impose any new taxes, raise the current tax or increase the entry cost to any park or sanctuary, the price increase will be passed along and charged to you. You will be notified of this increase at the time that Walking Connection is notified. All payments received by Walking Connection are subject to the cancellation policy already published and in effect.

Cancellation, Penalty & Refund Policies:

Should you have to cancel your tour the following terms will apply:

A full refund of your deposit (less a \$100 service fee) will be given if we are notified 6 months or more prior to this trip. If your deposit was a credit from a previous trip postponement, the amount will be used as a future credit.

After that:

- For cancellations 76 days – 6 months your \$750 deposit is non-refundable.
- For cancellations 75 days or less prior to the trip that are due to Covid-19 or government sanctioned travel restrictions, 100% of amount paid can be used as a future trip credit. (Less any 3rd party expenses incurred.)
- For cancellations and no shows 75 days or less prior to the trip, 100% of the trip price is nonrefundable.
- No refunds will be made for any unused portion of the tour.

All cancellations must be made in writing and delivered to Walking Connection via e-mail and/or US Postal Service. Your cancellation date is the date your notice is received and confirmed by Walking Connection, not the date of postmark.

Travel Arrangements

Travel Roommates and Single Supplements:

There is limited availability, and a supplement will apply. Please contact us for details. If you have registered for double occupancy but don't have a travel roommate, you may be charged for a Single Supplement for any portion of the trip where you will be rooming as a single.

Trip Minimum and Maximum:

Minimum of 8 full paying guests. Walking Connection specializes in traveling in small groups, many times we stay in boutique hotel properties, historical inns, private homes and bed & breakfasts. For this and contractual related reasons, some trips may require a minimum number of guests traveling together to go. FOR THIS TRIP, an additional Small Group Surcharge of \$300.00 USD may be assessed, or the trip may be canceled at the option of Walking Connection if sign-ups do not meet the 8-person minimum. This trip will be guaranteed to be conducted either when we have reached the minimum number of guests or evaluated 90 or 60 days prior to departure. Also, should the minimum not be met, Walking Connection is at its sole discretion to elect to operate the trip without a Walking Connection host. **Please do not make your international or domestic air arrangements until the trip is confirmed.**

Maximum of 14 guests

Covid-19 Protocols

The Walking Connection follows all health and safety protocols mandated by the local government and recommended by the CDC.

Spain Passports/Visas:

Valid passports must have 3 blank pages and a minimum of 6 months remaining before expiration. Visas are NOT required for all US and Canadian citizens to enter Spain.

For passport applications and renewals:

<http://www.passportvisasexpress.com/?affid=992183579f5e584ff2a965b511618cc9>

Air Arrangements:

Arrival airport: Bilbao (BIO), if you are arriving on May 5/Day 1 we request that you schedule an early arrival. We will be transferring out of Bilbao that morning. We recommend an optional one- or two pre-night stay which we can arrange for you.

Departure airport: Santiago de Compostela (SCQ), this trip ends on May 15/Day 11. **(May 16/Day 12 if you have received the early booking bonus)** If you would like to explore more of Santiago de Compostela, we recommend a departure of May 16 or 17.

BEFORE you make your international airline arrangements, please contact Walking Connection by phone – (800)-295-9255 to reconfirm the details of the trip. Walking Connection will provide you with recommended arrival and departure airports, times and any additional information you may need **BEFORE** you book your flights.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance companies like our preferred partner, [Generali Global Assistance](#), are seasoned professionals. Their sole purpose is to ensure your health and safety. They have been insuring our guests for more than 20 years and we rely upon them not only to take great care of our guests, but we use them personally every time we travel. Please check out their website here for a free quote: [Travel Insurance](#) - Don't leave home without it. Here is their direct URL: <https://www.generalitravelinsurance.com/?partner=81350509>

More Details

Trip Grading – Moderate:

- Each day usually consists of 3-5 hours of activities, most centered around walking over various terrains
- Most days have a range of activity available-- we will be accompanied by a hiking guide and a driving guide, so there will be shorter hike options on most days.
- Terrain includes city streets, village cobblestone walkways, well-worn countryside paths with uphill and downhill components
- Your day pack will include a liter of water, snacks, rain gear, sunscreen, personal items, and a camera

Gear & Personal Items:

We will provide a detailed list of personal items you will need that will make your journey safe and convenient. There is no special gear required for this trip, though you will receive a list of recommended items, including supportive hiking boots and socks. We can help with information on types, brands, and what to look for if you are purchasing new gear items for the trip.

Special Supplier Gifts & Items:

As a local custom, vendors, suppliers, ground operators, restaurants, and hotel properties may offer complimentary beverages that may or may not contain alcohol. Should you elect not to accept this gift, complimentary water may not be offered as a replacement and may only be offered for sale. This is a local custom beyond the control of Walking Connection.

Your Local Guides and Trip Host/Escort:

At Walking Connection, our philosophy is simple: Each trip is designed in partnership with locals and delivered by local legends. We work with a small number of trusted travel partners to deliver the best experiences in the safest way possible. During this trip, you and your small group will be accompanied and led by one of our highly trained professional guides. Walking Connection Co-Founder, Jo Ann Taylor, will be hosting this trip. ****PLEASE NOTE** that another host and guide may be substituted should Jo Ann be unable to lead this adventure for any reason.

CONTACTS:

Jo Ann Taylor - +1 623.561.0846 ja@WalkingConnection.com

QUESTIONS TO ASK? READY TO BOOK? If you want to get in touch, please send us an email or give us a call. We accept bookings online, by email, or over the phone. A deposit of \$750 USD is required at the time of booking to secure the trip with the balance payable 75 Days before departure. If booking less than 75 days before the trip start date, full payment of the adventure is due with registration.

Walking Connection – Person-to-Person Guest Hotlines: Info@WalkingConnection.com is your best way to ask and receive information about all departures. To chat directly, please call +1 623.561.0846.

**We will do everything within our power to ensure that you have a great adventure.
Thank you for choosing the Walking Connection.**

“We Know The Way”