



WANDERING the WORLD
BESPOKE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

Trip Brief

Portuguese Way: Porto to Santiago de Compostela

15-day, 230 kilometre Pilgrimage through Portugal and Spain

ESCORTED/HOSTED & SELF-GUIDED

DEPARTURE DATES: June 10, September 17 & 23, 2017

TRIP LENGTH: 15 days/14 nights

GROUP SIZE: Maximum 14

MEALS: 14 Breakfasts, 12 Dinners

OTHER: Luggage Transfer – 15KG

TRIP GRADE: Moderate

PRICES FROM: Euro1,850 per person
twin share. A single supplement
applies if no gender share option

SINGLE SUPP: Euro650



Portugal emerged as a country in 1143, and is steeped in history. From the mid-12th century, the way of Saint James and the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela has been a feature on the paths and roads across Portugal. This route was used by Queen Isabel of Portugal (1271 – 1336) to

make at least one pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. The hospitality offered to pilgrims started in the Middle Ages by monks and clergymen, still continues today along the less travelled Portuguese Way ('the friendly Camino') where all villages and towns participate with their generosity and warm welcome. The route heading north through rural areas, along the Atlantic coast has the sun on your back all the way to Santiago, with farmhouses, forests, rolling hills and cobbled stone paths a feature of the journey.

Walking the Camino is a time for reflection and recognition and a time to shake your worries for another time and place. It provides thinking time to crystallise the 'where to from here', or if you prefer, don't bother thinking at all.

You start in Porto, a beautiful town and a shame to miss. Transfer from Porto, rather than walk, to Vilar de Pinheiro to avoid the less interesting outskirts of Porto. You then start your walk of the last 230 kilometres to Santiago de Compostela, a journey that will be etched in your memory for a lifetime.



ESCORTED/HOSTED

This trip is escorted/hosted to welcome Wandering the World travellers at the joining hotel on the arrival day. It is also designed so you can share the journey with like-minded people and enjoy each other's company. Your escort/host provides assistance, support and guidance to ensure you have an exceptional experience, with camaraderie and fun for all to enjoy.



ABOUT THE WALKING

Although this trip is escorted/hosted, the walking is SELF-GUIDED. You are therefore free to walk at your own pace in your own time, hence the description of self-guided. You will be equipped with easy to read maps and instructions complete with directions to guide you on the well-marked paths and tracks, following the yellow arrows. Wandering the World takes care of all your

accommodation and daily luggage transfer so you can relax and enjoy your journey. This itinerary is carefully designed for easy to manage walking days. There is a basic level of fitness required and some uphill stretches in part, however, given you only need carry a lightweight day bag and your water supply, which can be replenished in the various villages on route, and other essentials such as snacks, it makes this trip very manageable for any inexperienced walker.

ACCOMMODATION

Your stay will be in an excellent combination of centrally located hotels and charming village accommodation. The character, comfort and often the uniqueness of the property all adding to the experience. The local cuisine is also a highlight. On occasion, mama will be in the kitchen preparing a three course hearty meal known as the pilgrim's staple which comes complete with a bottle of wine, (which can be returned to the kitchen if you wish, or if you are under age!). There is also a variety of impressive cuisine from Michelin recognised chefs, and all dietary requirements are taken care of in advance. The language is Portuguese and Spanish. English is difficult to find, which adds an exciting dimension and a great reminder that you are travelling in a foreign land.



DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

ARRIVE PORTO - (Day 1/Night 1)

Porto is the second largest city in Portugal after Lisbon, and has a population of 1.4 million. It was registered as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1996. One of Portugal's internationally famous exports, *port wine*, is named for Porto. The Porto region is also a major producer of cork.

We meet in the reception of our hotel at 6,30pm for a briefing and introduction, followed by a welcome dinner, and exchanging stories of why you chose to walk the Portugal Camino. Usually you have an early night, although with the excitement and anticipation of the days ahead, it can make sleeping a bit of a chore. The following morning, we depart as a group, as you take your private transfer to Vilar de Pinheiro at 8.30am to avoid the less interesting section of town.

PORTO - VILAR de PINHEIRO - SAN MIGUEL DE ARCOS 19km.

Estimated walking time approx. 4 to 5 hours - Day 2/Night 2

During this section, you will pass through a wide variety of landscapes, leaving the urban sprawl of Porto to green hills and quiet coastline.

You farewell Porto with some reluctance, due to its beauty, and take your transfer by road to Vilar de Pinheiro. There is a café at the end of town where your walking journey begins. Cafes are always a welcome sight, to enjoy a coffee, use the facilities and sample some homemade goodies to either eat on the spot or take away. This stage takes place almost entirely on cobbled and tarmac roads, and tarmac tracks in rural surroundings. An enjoyable introduction to the Camino before arriving at San Miguel de Arcos.

SAN MIGUEL DE ARCOS - BARCELOS 21km. Estimated walking time approx. 5 hours - Day 3/Night 3

Continuing to follow the yellow arrows today, we head to Barcelos, a beautiful city that will draw you into its medieval atmosphere from the moment you see it from the other side of the River

Cávado. Its high location with the river at its base and its walled structure with the Torre da Porta Nova, give visitors a good insight into its history. A good place to rest for a night.



BARCELOS - BALUGÃES 17km. Estimated walking time approx. 4 hours - Day 4/Night 4

Today will be another picturesque day, walking along rural roads with small villages separated by forests that are quickly traversed. This stage contains a few ascents, which are not too arduous. Woodland roads, pine trees and ancient bridges are all main attractions, and olive and orange groves pave some of the way, before you feel welcome to Balugaes.

BALUGÃES - PONTE DE LIMA 19km. Estimated walking time approx. 5 hours - Day 5/Night 5

Making our way to the beautiful village of Ponte de Lima, we recommend wandering through its narrow streets and past the historical buildings that date back to the medieval period. It is allegedly the oldest city in Portugal and probably has one of the prettiest riverbanks in the country.

This stage of the Camino is practically all downhill, mainly along rural roads with small villages, passing by plenty of grapevines.



"Thank you for an amazing experience in Portugal and Spain. Just being able to get up each day and walk in the lovely countryside and villages has been one of the best experiences of my life. The food and wine was a highlight along with some of the beautiful accommodation." Tula Sahinidis

PONTE DE LIMA - RUBIÃES 18km. Estimated walking time approx. 4 hours - Day 6/Night 6

Today starts by crossing the impressive Roman bridge in Ponte de Lima, then onto the beautiful paths that will take you ever deeper into mountainous terrain. An irresistible spot at the top for a picnic before making your way down to Rubiães, which has a population of less than 500 people.

RUBIÃES - TUI 20km. Estimated walking time approx. 4 to 5 hours - Day 7/Night 7

Today we reluctantly farewell Portugal, however embrace Spain. Making our way to Tui a city notable for its collection of historical buildings, in particular the Cathedral, an obligatory stop on the Camino de Santiago. The historical centre of this city is an old walled section from the 13th century, which has been declared an historical-artistic heritage site.

Before we arrive in Tui our itinerary will cover mainly very quiet rural roads until you arrive in sleepy town of Valena. We are now approximately 100 kilometres from Santiago.

TUI - Day 8/Night 8

Tui will be a rest stop for an extra night, giving you time to explore its beauty. A FREE DAY.

The Tui International Bridge which connects Tui and Valena was completed in 1878 under the direction of *Gustave Eiffel*. Tui sits above the banks of the majestic Mino River, and is a beautiful town of approximately 17,000 people. It is an ideal place for an additional night to give you the opportunity to explore all the attractions this town has to offer. There are two interesting museums, which offer fascinating history dating back to the 10th century when Tui was raided by Vikings.

TUI - O PORRIÑO 16km. Estimated walking time approx. 3 to 4 hours - Day 9/Night 9

O Porriño is an industrial town and its main industry is granite production. It is more of a convenience stop as it is on the trail, however you won't be disappointed with the walk and the city square has some excellent places for Tapas.

O PORRIÑO - REDONDELA 17km. Estimated walking time approx. 4 to 5 hours - Day 10/Night 10

An easy walk to Redondela and our way to a small fishing village just off the Camino. It is renowned for its rich oysters as well as fish. Our accommodation is by the water and its worth a paddle before the tasty evening meal.



"I've done a lot of things throughout my life, but this will always be at the top as one of the best ... a fabulous experience." Lois

REDONDELA - PONTEVEDRA 18km. Estimated walking time approx. 4 hours - Day 11/Night 11

Winding through the old town of Redondela takes us towards Pontevedra, which has some of the most beautiful historical-artistic monuments in Galicia. Enjoy the narrow local roads at the beginning of the route today. There are a few food temptations along the way.

PONTEVEDRA - CALDAS DE REIS 21km. Estimated walking time approx. 5 hours - Day 12/Night 12

Welcome to the flattest stage of the Camino. It runs along dirt roads, mostly weaving among village houses and fields. Leaving Praza da Ferreria, you cross Pontevedra's old town and go over the O Burgo Bridge, entering the green landscapes of rural Galicia, one of the most unforgettable provinces in Spain. Arriving in Caldas de Reis, the home of thermal springs.



CALDAS DE REIS - PADRÓN 17km. Estimated walking time approx. 4 to 5 hours - Day 13/Night 13

The road out of Caldas de Reis takes us straight to the fields, before reaching the outskirts of Padrón, famous for its celebrated writers – monuments bearing witness to this include the Museum-House of Rosalia de Castro and the Camilo José Cela Foundation. It is also renowned for its peppers – some very spicy!!



PADRÓN - SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA 24km. Estimated walking time approx. 6 hours

Day 14/Night 14

Our destination today is Santiago de Compostela - a rare and special city with a particular magic that can only be enjoyed by walking around its streets. Its historical centre has been designated a World Heritage Site, offering dozens of churches and religious buildings. The most important being the impressive cathedral, which is both Baroque and Romanesque at the same time and contains the sepulchre of the Apostle St James (known in Spanish as Santiago). The plazas of A Quintana, Praterias, Acibecheria and O Obradoiro escort the Cathedral and each one stands as an open-air museum. Plaza de O Obradoiro marks the location of the Hostel dos Reis Católicos, which is today a parador hotel, the office of the vice-chancellor of the city's university and the Pazo de Raxoi, which is home to the regional government and the City Hall. The cathedral marks the beginning of Rúa da Raiña and Rúa Franco, which are laden with bars and restaurants where you can enjoy all the specialities of Galicia and, at the end of the street, the beautiful Paseo da Ferradura offers impressive views of the city on one side and the university campus on the other. Another part of the historical centre contains the beautiful marketplace, which is of neo-Romanesque style. It is impossible to summarise the beauty of this great city in only a few lines. Wander around the streets and enjoy the character of this amazing city, enjoyed by pilgrims and the like from all around the

world. Time to sample some Tapas and to reflect on the journey that has lead you to Santiago de Compostela.

Usually an emotional day, not wanting the journey to come to an end. We gather in the square in front of the Cathedral, congratulate and celebrate the amazing journey. It is worth attending a pilgrim's mass, which is at midday and in the evening.

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA (Day 15)

Although the trip finishes after breakfast today, the memories of the Camino will live on.

Wandering the World hope you have had a journey of a lifetime and welcome your choice to wander with us again.



Full booking conditions and payment details are available upon request.

For more information www.wanderingtheworld.com.au