

Cycling Safaris

Camino de Santiago 2018 León to Santiago - Self guided Tour 297 km | 6 nights / 7 days, medium to advanced tour



Listed as the main European Cultural Itinerary, dotted with delightful monuments such as old pilgrims hospitals and sanctuaries, this route reminds us constantly to be the oldest, most celebrated and frequented route in Europe.

Running through two of Spain's northern regions - Castile and Galicia - the Camino gives way to breathtaking landscapes, unique monuments and typical villages in this part of our country. You will savor the rich Spanish gastronomy, offering traditional regional cuisine with excellent wines.

This "do it yourself"-tour gives you the flexibility to enjoy this historic pilgrimage at your own pace and brings the experience down to its essence: an individual challenge to reach Santiago...!

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1, Sunday **Arrive in León**

On arrival in León you will find the information required for your journey at the hotel: a complete package including hotel vouchers, your touring bike with all accessories, detailed documentation with maps and a road book.

Founded in 884 AD, León has abundant gastronomic and architectural riches - dinner is best enjoyed by having tapas in the atmospheric bars located along the narrow streets of the Barrio Húmedo. The cathedral is a gem from the Gothic period.

DAY 2, Monday León to Astorga 48 km

Today's route takes us through classic Castilian landscapes, complete with holm oaks, golden wheat fields and gentle ups and downs. It's hard to get lost: the route never stays far from the N120 highway. The landscape in the first half of the route is relatively dry, but gets greener the further west you get; you'll cross fields full of diverse crops, such as wheat, corn, hops and wine grapes. Wildlife isn't a big feature of this first part of the trip, though you will see geckoes, birds of prey and lot of dairy cows!.

Astorga is home to three national monuments and one of the best Romanesque facades.

DAY 3, Tuesday Astorga to Villafranca 75 km, a climb

From Astorga, the Camino starts to climb gently until it meets the first mountain on the way. Once you've reached the top of Foncebadón, take it easy and enjoy the sweeping downhill ride and the gorgeous views on the ride through vineyards to Villafranca. You will stay in the renovated Parador of Villafranca.

The town of Villafranca del Bierzo is a historical and artistic monument, was created to give refuge and sanctuary to the pilgrims before initiating the most difficult part of their pilgrimage. The monastery cloister is a Renaissance jewel.

DAY 4, Wednesday Villafranca to Portomarín 85 km, the most difficult day

Get ready for the most challenging day. From Villafranca you ride slowly towards the mythical O'Cebreiro pass, the most demanding peak along the western section of the Camino. With a little patience it's more than possible to reach the top, but in any case, a taxi is there to avoid it. Then it's downhill all the way to Sarria, and onward via a rolling route to Portomarín.

The older neighborhoods once belonged to the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, but now lie submerged, covered by the waters of the Miño River dam.

DAY 5, Thursday Portomarín to Arzua 51 km

This day provides a lovely alternative to the previous day's hard work. Several easy and long uphill and downhills go through rolling terrain, giving cyclists a view of Galicia's rural landscape.

DAY 6, Friday Arzua to Santiago Compostela 38 km. 200 mts. gradient (ascent)

Don't let the short length fool you; the final stage is short, but kind of demanding! After approximately four hours of riding, cyclists become pilgrims upon arriving at the Pórtico de la Gloria ("The Façade of Glory") at the Cathedral of Santiago. After taking a breath (and celebrating with others arriving by foot and on horseback!), you can visit the Pilgrims Office where you can obtain the "Compostela", the document certifying you as an official pilgrim (good for John Wayne jokes in the future!). Accommodation is centrally located, giving you the opportunity to explore the streets and bars of the atmospheric historic centre after dark.

This city, without any doubt, is the most important of the Christian Middle Ages. It is worldwide renowned and each year thousands of travelers come to visit its treasures.

Day 7 End of the trip

Rest your weary legs and bask in the glory as you reflect on a truly memorable journey. This is the final day of the tour.

DATES AND PRICES 2018

€1,200 per person sharing
+€190.00 single room supplement (if you are travelling with others)
+ €220.00 solo traveler supplement (if travelling by yourself)

Tour dates (Sundays only):

March 18, April 1, 15 & 29, May 13 & 27, June 10 & 24, July 8 & 22, August 12 & 26, September 16 & 30, Oct 14 & 28

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- ▶ 6 nights hotel accommodation in 3-4 & 5* hotels with breakfast
- ▶ Includes one night in the Parador de Leon and the Parador de Villafranca
- ▶ Luggage transfer each day (please bring no more than 2 bags per person, otherwise there will be a surcharge)
- ▶ Route description
- ▶ Bike rental (Specialized SIRRUS hybrid bike)
- ▶ Information pack and Maps
- ▶ Service helpline
- ▶ Optional Taxi transfer from Villafranca to O’Cebreiro on day 4

Optional:

Upgrade to Specialized Secteur road bike: +€70
Upgrade to Mountain Bike: +€30
Travel Insurance: €40
Madrid – León transfer: €480 (1-6 people)

If you bring your own bike there is a reduction of €220

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation on this tour is in selected 3-4 & 5* hotels:

Location	Hotel	Web Address
Leon	Parador de Leon*****	www.parador.es/es/paradores/parador-de-leon
Astorga	Via de la Plata****	www.hotelviadelaplata.es
Villafranca	Parador Villafranca****	www.parador.es/es/paradores/parador-de-villafranca-del-bierzo
Portomarin	Pousada de Portomarin***	www.pousadadeportomarin.com
Arzua	Casa Teodora***	www.casateodora.com
Santiago de Compostela	Carris Casa de la Troya***	www.carrishoteles.com

(*) Spanish Paradores are luxury hotel accommodation, maintained by the state, in converted Castles, Palaces, Convents, Monasteries, Fortresses and other historic buildings. The building is often part of the heritage of Spain although there are some modern hotels in a spectacular locations.

WHAT TO BRING

Specialized cycle clothing may be handy but not strictly necessary. What you do need (among other things) is following:

- shorts/ long trousers/ track suit/ legging/ shirts/ sweater/ rain clothing / good shoes
- gloves (only when you book a tour in April. It can be chilly in the morning that time of year!)
- sunglasses/ cap/ swimming costume / insect repellent