

Ultreia et Suseia! The Newsletter.

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February, 2022 Christchurch Camino Group Newsletter



‘Each sacred site has a spiritual energy for those who deliberately visit it.’
Joyce Rupp

Editorial

Architecture and the Camino

The Camino landscape is enriched with a built infrastructure that is attractive, historical, and culturally fascinating for New Zealanders. Pilgrims will walk along a World Heritage route seeing sites of historical importance, many created to meet the needs of medieval pilgrims. These structures which include; cathedrals, churches, hospitals and bridges have been conserved, and are substantially authentic in form and design, materials, use, and function. Pilgrims are able to worship in cathedrals and churches and cross bridges which have been in service for over a millennium.

A basic knowledge of architectural styles over the centuries will add to the appreciation of the pilgrimage. Taking time to soak up the village atmosphere and culture by explorations, and relaxing with fellow travellers over refreshments in the town square adds another dimension. To sit in a medieval church enthralled by the beautiful singing of the old ladies is a memorable experience to be treasured. With the passing of time, dwindling congregations and number of priests these opportunities are to be savoured. Guide books contain town maps often with a walking route included. At the end of a tiring day of walking it is tempting to rest on the bunk or sit with a drink in the shade. Forays into local history are rewarding and will add further texture to the fabric of your Camino.

Ultreia Philip

Editor's Note

As the quarterly newsletter is now being published on our website, the copy posted will be an edited version, removing identifying photographs etc. (chchcamino.net)

This Newsletter Includes:

- Noticeboard: – Remaining meeting dates p 2
- February Meeting Follow up:
- Featured Articles: on Camino de Santiago Architecture p 4
- Article: Historical Site Fatigue p 6
- Article: Useful Historical Resources for the Camino Frances p 4
- Article: Top Historical Sites on the Camino Frances p 6
- Article: Medieval Cloisters p 6
- Camino Poem: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao p 7
- Featured Topic: 'Liminality and the Camino de Santiago p 8
- Camino Poem: Moving Beyond p 9
- Article: Bed Race; A Personal Transformational Story From the Camino del Norte p 10
- Things to Do In: Muxia/Lires p 11
- Article: Pack Weight, a Very Important Consideration p 13
- Camino Story: Taking the Samos Detour ~ A Night In the Samos Monastery Albergue p 14
- Camino Tip: Wet Sneakers/Boots p 14 p
- Reviews: p 14



Noticeboard

Scheduled 2022 Christchurch Camino Group Meeting Dates

The following are the remaining scheduled meeting dates for 2022: Monday 2 May, Monday 8 August, Monday 7 November.

Christchurch Camino Walking Group

The Christchurch Camino Walking Group is for people who have attended our quarterly meetings. We meet on the third Sunday of the month, usually at 10 am. The walks are a mixture of flat and hill walks around Christchurch and surrounding areas. They provide an opportunity to try out new walks, and exercise with people who share a love for the Camino. Walks are usually completed by around 3 pm.

Please contact Cecilia for more information and to join the separate mailing list:
chchcaminogroup@gmail.com



Image: The Packhorse Hut

Newsletter Camino Items of Interest

Please submit any items of Camino interest for consideration of inclusion in our quarterly Newsletter to Philip at: chchcaminogroup@gmail.com Please time these to arrive at least a week before a scheduled meeting.

Upcoming Meeting Contributions

Offers of contributions for meeting presentations are always welcome. We are particularly seeking presentations for our 'Ten Minute' meeting segment on Camino journeys. If you have any **ideas** regarding meetings please contact Philip at the above email.

Our May meeting will be devoted to 'Walking the Camino as a Pilgrimage,' and 'The Camino As a Hero's Journey.'

Advice Given to Pilgrims

We wish to emphasise that all information and answers given by our presenters, organisers and meeting participants are provided in good faith, and have been found to work for them/us on that particular occasion.

The information provided is a starting point for your research so that there is a range of possibilities to investigate and can be adapted to suit individual circumstances.

Upcoming Local Events

Path of Miracles

A spellbinding choral depiction of the famous Camino 'Walk.' Sunday 20 March, 2022, 5 pm.

Venue The Great Hall. Tickets are available from iTicket.

2022 Agenda No 1. Postponement (Future Date to be determined.)

Things to Share

Resources

A time to share Camino books, You Tube etc.

Gear

Items found useful on the Camino etc.

7.20 pm

Ten Minute Talk

'What Makes a Great Camino Photograph and How to Achieve This?

Peter will discuss his thoughts regarding the ideal photographic Camino image and his selection of camera equipment he packs to achieve this. He will include tips for capturing that perfect Camino photograph, management of SD cards, and battery charging. He will also discuss ideas for managing the photos once home.

Christchurch Camino Walking Group Report

Cecilia presented her report for the Christchurch Camino Walking Group. Since our last meeting the group's final walk for 2021 was from Gebbies Valley to the Packhorse Hut and return. The weather held with the promised rain arriving in the form of a few spots as we arrived at the Packhorse. We made good use of the hut as a lunch venue as the wind buffeted the walls. In December a social event was held at one of the walkers' homes to celebrate our very successful year. Our thanks go to Cecilia for another great walking programme. A new programme for 2022 is already underway with a walk on the Urumai Loop Track from Lyttelton.



Image; Lyttelton Harbour

7.40 pm

Whole Group Discussion/Panel

Secrets For Successful Caminos: Planning, Preparing, Walking, Experiencing, Improving/Reflecting

Tips for a rewarding Camino. What are the key resources to assist with my planning? How can I prepare my body? How can I make the most of my Camino experience? What do I put the success of my Camino down to? For subsequent Caminos what do I wish to do differently?

7.45 pm

Camino Buddies

Turn to the person on your right. Take turns to discuss one (or both if time allows,) of the following; What were two 'secrets' leading to my successful Camino?

7.50 pm

Panel

Panel members share key factors contributing to a satisfying Camino experience. Gythlian, Sandra, Philip

8.10 pm

Members of the panel answer your questions.

8.20 pm

Small Group Discussion

A time for asking questions, sharing information and reminiscing in a smaller setting. (Also a time for refreshments.) Please include prospective pilgrims in your group.

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Featured Articles on Camino de Santiago Architecture

As we prepare for our Camino there is much to attend to in the way of planning and preparation. Some tasks like the purchasing of a guidebook, and suitable clothing are, with a little bit of research, readily sorted. Determining what to give our attention to as we make our way is another matter. There is so much of historical interest, particularly for New Zealanders. How then does one determine what to seek out, ignore or make a detour to view? Below are some key resources which are readily available from the Christchurch City Libraries network and via You Tube. As mentioned in the editorial there are competing demands for the attention of pilgrims. Giving some thought to this aspect of the journey prior to departure should prove useful.

Useful Historical Resources for the Camino Frances

'The Pilgrimage Road to Santiago de Compostela, The Complete Cultural Handbook,' David Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson, 2000, Christchurch City Libraries, 946.1 GIT, (3 copies).

This must be the definitive step-by-step guide to the cultural history of the Camino de Santiago. Organised geographically from the Pyrenees to Santiago de Compostela, this book covers aspects of the terrain, places of interest, history, artistic monuments, and each town and village's historical relationship to the pilgrimage. (For the full review see Vol. 1. No. 3.)

Both David Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson may be heard in conversation with host Dave Whitson on **'Episode 23 – The Pioneers, The Camino Podcast.'** August 29 2016, [1 hr, 03] An interesting point made was that in 1974 they didn't set foot on one stretch of pavement on the Meseta between Burgos and Leon, and that 75% of the Camino was off road with no pilgrims sighted. (Resource also for the Camino Aragones.)

'Sacred Sites, Historic Villages, Local Food and Wine,' Beebe Bahrami, 2019, 498g.

Christchurch City Libraries, 946 BAH, (4 copies)

Looking for an alternative to Brierley, then look no further! Bahrami's guide to the Frances is a weighty tome at 520 pages, so perhaps best utilised as a pre-Camino planning resource. Look under; Highlights, Sights for information on architecture and key sites/sights. There is a generous offering of photographs of key buildings etc. throughout the book.

A mine of information. Read the paperback, take the eBook?

Beebe was a guest on **'My Camino the Podcast,'** [60 mins] on 8 December, 2020, and **'The Camino Podcast Episode 46 – 'The Newest Guidebooks to the Camino Frances,'** [1 hr 9 min])

'A Pilgrim's Guide to the Camino de Santiago, Camino Frances, St Jean Pied de Port – Santiago de Compostela. The Ancient pilgrim path also known as The Way of St James,' John Brierley, 280g, Christchurch City Libraries, 2015, 12th edition, 946 BRI (2 copies).



Image: Episcopal Palace, Astorga.

historical significance.

‘Reasons Not to Skip the Meseta,’ Nick Leonard, spiritofthecamino.com

This insightful essay references historical and architectural structures dotted along the Meseta.

You Tube

‘The Camino de Santiago: Journey of Self-Discovery, Part One’ [57.53 mins], and ‘Part Two,’ [47.53 mins]

This documentary includes architectural and art information to be found along the way.

‘Camino de Santiago Full Doumentary (sic) (The Way of St James,’ Planet Doc, [49.05]

A full history of the building of the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela. There are useful enactments and wonderful aerial scenes. Time is taken to recount the history of the discovery of the original burial site and the various ‘interruptions’ over time to the whereabouts of the casket. Key features are highlighted.

Viewing will give a greater understanding of the present structure and the reasons for its current form.

‘Camino Aragones,’ Linnea Hendrickson, 2018, [14.37]

Mostly images with several brief clips. Covers the route sequentially so provides a great guide as to what to expect from Toulouse to Puente La Reina. A great eye for detail.

Worthwhile. A great summary of the route.

Some Useful Resources on Architecture For Other Camino Routes

Website

spiritofthecamino.com

Nick has written an article on ‘Islamic Architecture,’ which focuses on routes in Southern Spain.

Books

Camino Portuguese, Lisbon - Porto - Santiago, Camino Central, Camino de la Costa

A Practical and Mystical Manual for the Modern Day Pilgrim,’ John Brierley, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 BRI, 2015, 6th Edition. (Same format as for the Frances guide.)

This guide contain a wealth of information regarding the route and architectural features of note, (easy to follow hand drawn maps), key sights/sites, accommodation and restaurants etc. There are town maps with a walking tour marked and numbers which related back to the descriptions. Be aware that the library edition is at least 6 years old and doesn’t contain the Senda Litoral pages, or the Coastal route between Lisbon and Porto as do later editions.

I am reviewing from my copy, the 16th edition, fully revised and published in 2019. While the library copy will provide an idea of what to expect from this guide, the latest editions are an improvement. A valuable tool before, during and after the journey.

Significant buildings feature on town maps, and architectural information is scattered throughout the text. Perhaps highlight items of interest like medieval bridges access to cloisters etc. so that these stand out as the journey unfolds. A useful feature is the use of town and city maps detailing sites/sights of usually

Article

Historical Site Fatigue

I had arrived in Astorga with an interesting walking companion. She admitted she was suffering from a common condition ~ chronic historical site fatigue. I had expressed an interest in visiting the cathedral. She said she would sit outside and wait. I went in and found myself passing by the historical features and historical treasures at an alarming pace, not really taking anything in. Instead I was thinking of my pilgrim friend waiting outside! I soon rejoined her as we resumed our westward walk, a cascade of blurred images passing through my mind. So what to do? One option could be to construct a list of 'must sees' prior to departure. The list could include points of historical interest and items contained within the structure, eg. Stained glass, Black Madonna, 14th Century crucifix. Rather than being overwhelmed focus would be placed in the first instance upon this. Following that attention and direction could be followed by your heart. So having seen my item of interest I would be happy to rejoin my waiting friend, or agree to meet up further along the trail if a significant period of time was required.

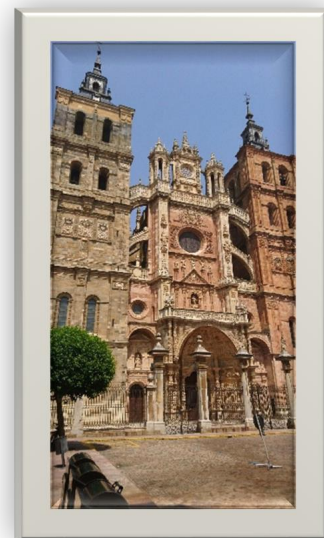


Image: Astorga Cathedral

Top Ten Historical Sites on Camino Frances

There are a numerous examples of fine architecture on the Camino Frances. Here in no particular order is my top 10:

- Cathedral Santiago de Compostela – particularly Master Mateo's Porta Gloria,
- Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary, Leon - those stained glass windows!
- San Martin de Tours de Fromista – one of purest examples of Spanish Romanesque architecture,
- Church of Santa Maria de Eunate – Eunate, octagonal in shape, with disputed origins. It's an easy and worthwhile detour which rejoins the Camino without backtracking.
- The Puente La Reina Bridge – Romanesque 11th Century with 7 arches,
- 12th Century Church at Torres del Rio – marvel at the early 13th Century crucifix,
- Basilica Isadorra – Leon, for the medieval murals,



Image: Puente La Reina Bridge

- Cathedral of Saint Mary Burgos – a masterpiece of Spanish Gothic architecture, with over 28 altars and countless chapels. Tomb of El Cid,
 - Episcopal Palace - Astorga, fine example of Gaudi's work, Neolithic modernist style,
 - Castrillo de Polvazares Village - example of Maragato architecture. (restored)

Honourable Mentions:

- Casa Botines – Burgos, architecture Antonio Gaudi,
- St Jean Pied de Port – walk up Rue de la Citadelle through the medieval town to La Citadelle,

- San Anton Monastery ruins – walk a few minutes beyond the roadway arch and be amazed by the extent of the complex, stay in the albergue?

- Puente del Paso Honroso – medieval bridge at Hospital de Orbigo, reconstructed numerous times but still a sight!
- Samos Monastery ~an active monastery founded in the 6th Century. It has Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque elements.
- Iglesia de San Salvador de Vilar de Donas (See article below)



Medieval Cloisters

One of my favourite activities on any of the Camino de Santiago routes is to seek out the medieval cloisters associated with monasteries and cathedrals. The style of the cloister depends on the religious tradition be it Benedictine or Cistercian, etc. This is where the members of the order were cloistered, separated from the workers and servants. Nowadays cloisters are often only accessible upon the purchase of a ticket to the associated museum.

There is usually a covered walk or gallery forming a hollow square. The supports of the cloister and the ceilings are frequently beautifully carved. In the central area there is a garden and perhaps an ornamental feature like a fountain or sculpture. Often there are ancient 'treasures', a time worn sarcophagus, maybe the odd medieval decorative embellishment no longer fit for purpose. What I delight in is the peace and tranquility. A haven from the bustle of the surrounding town or city.

Article

The Romanesque Church of Vilar de Donas

The Iglesia de San Salvador de Vilar de Donas near Pals de Rei, is a 4.2 km return detour from the Camino Frances. The church and associated order played an important part in Camino life of medieval pilgrims. 'The stone effigies of the knights and its unique frescoes are hauntingly expressive.' Brierley, p 257. Check on opening times prior to departing Portos.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/vwWhjrEepWy-Lw>

Article

Interesting Places ~ Torres del Rio

This is a town, opposite San Sol, located in the province of Navarre, Northern Spain. (The next large town is Logrono.) Torres del Rio is known for its 'Templar' octagonal 12th Century church (Church of the Holy Sepulchre). It features a stunning vaulted roof of intertwined ribbed which reminds one of Hispanic- Moorish art. It also has a wooden 13th century crucifix. In recent times it is hosted by a tourist authority and has regular opening hours. In the past a local woman with a definite love of, and passion for the building had to be contacted to unlock the door. This is a companion to the church at Enuate. (They both had lights shining from the top of the building to guide pilgrims.)

Well worth the small cost of admission.

Article

Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

Pilgrims on the Camino del Norte will find themselves walking past the striking Guggenheim Museum. I had toured the interior of the building on an earlier visit so I limited myself to a walk around the exterior before continuing on my way. The building was designed by Canadian architect Frank Gehry with a particular sensitivity towards his building's surroundings. Pilgrims walking the Arles Camino will be able to see Gehry's latest building in France, the Luma Arles. For those

walking the Camino Frances who don't mind taking side trips, a bus from Logrono will take you to a Frank Gehry designed hotel in the village of Elciego.

Camino Poem

Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

Stunning architecture offering a kaleidoscope of shapes and angles
stands alongside the Ria del Nervion.

Titanium tile cladding reflects spasmodic
sunshine,
adding to the mystique of this other worldly
building!

A bewildering maze-like interior of
interconnecting rooms,
features cavernous spaces.
Glass panels blur the boundaries of exterior
and inner sanctum.

Riotous Baroque art adorns third floor walls
and exhibition spaces
confronting viewers with bawdy, crass and
frequently vulgar images.
More than a match for an iconic building!

© Philip, 2013.



Image: Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

Building Safety on the Camino

Give some thought to the safety features of the albergue when selecting accommodation. This will depend to some extent on your personal risk tolerance when deciding whether to stay. A visual check from the street before committing will reveal the presence of fire escapes, bars over windows etc. Check the albergue for safety features. Are there fire exits, (that work), are there smoke detectors, night lights, is there an alternative route to the stairs utilised? Ask about the overnight policy; is the building locked? How do pilgrims exit in an emergency, (one way door, key on adjacent hook?), Is there an emergency plan? When selecting a bed consider its placement in relation to escaping easily in the dark. Formulate an escape plan and walk it before retiring.

Remember it could be dark and a crush of panicking pilgrims.

Personal comment. On the Camino I have brought building safety into my awareness as I check in at albergues, but after reading the forum posts listed below, (and without the real pressure of a bed race,) I've decided in future to be proactive and decamp if fire precautions don't meet my safety threshold.

Reference: 'Fire Safety in Albergues,' Camino de Santiago Forum.

Liminality and the Camino de Santiago

Featured Article Explanation ~ May Meeting

The article below has been included in this newsletter as background information for the main topic at our May meeting, '**Experiencing Your Camino As a Pilgrimage/ Hero's Journey.**' What is the difference between a long walk and a pilgrimage? How does this relate to 'The Hero's Journey?' Some familiarity with the notion of 'liminality,' and the Camino as a 'liminal space' would be useful.

Liminal Space definition: a place of transition, is the moment in time caught between then and now, the past and the not yet.

Featured Article

Liminality and the Camino de Santiago

I have been long fascinated by the concept of liminality, the crossing of the threshold into a space filled with the potential of 'becoming,' particularly with reference to the Camino. This article will be of interest to those who are enchanted by the factors which make the Camino such a memorable place to experience.

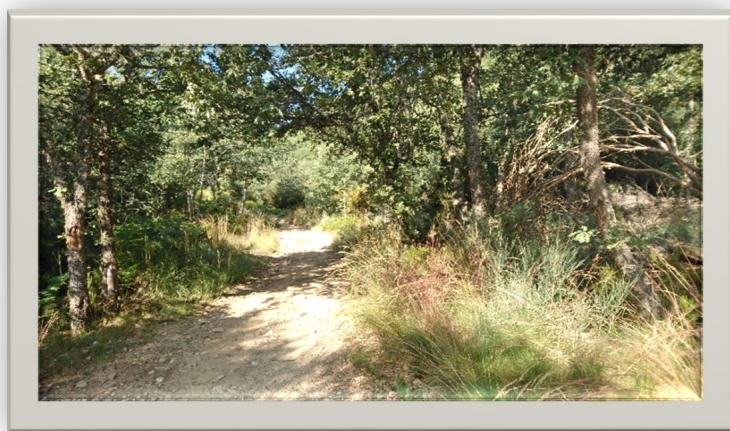
Moving Beyond

Familiar pathways provide security and a knowing certainty.
Stepping beyond them,
leaving comforting signs and familiar settings
is a leap of faith.

New signs are noticed, accepted unconditionally and fully experienced by the pilgrim.
Securely grounded in a new reality centred on what matters,
the path becomes a cherished gift which is offered to the universe, with gratitude.

© Philip, 2016

'When we embark on an intentional journey like a pilgrimage, we are making a commitment to live in the space of threshold. Threshold is a liminal space, the place of not knowing how things will turn out. I believe it is the place of possibility.' Christine Valters Paintner.



On the Camino the pilgrim has the opportunity to step over the threshold leaving their old world behind. In doing so they are allowing the possibility for personal transformation.

'It is wise in your own life to be able to recognise and acknowledge the key thresholds: to take your time, to feel all the varieties of presence that accrue there, to listen inwards with complete attention until you hear the inner voice calling you forward. The time has come to cross.' John O'Donohue

The pilgrim will need to face down long held fears, and learn to trust that all will be well. As they move through the landscape numerous obstacles and challenges will need to be faced, and overcome.

Celts had a term for in-between moments and places. They believed that heaven and earth came together in 'thin places.' On the Camino it has been my experience that in such times of need things happen. A 'Camino Angel' will appear at the right time offering the assistance required. The pilgrim will need to be willing to accept



this help. Sometimes events identified as coincidences will occur, the challenge is met, and obstacles overcome.

For a really good understanding of the concept of liminality framed within the context of the Camino view via You Tube '**Cultivating Wisdom, A Conversation Series: Adam Wells and Julian Power.**' Here Adam, a Camino mentor, and Julian discuss how our current 'Covid – 19' journey may be compared to a Hero's Journey along the liminal space that is the Camino de Santiago. (Read about this in the accompanying notes as the conversation is totally about the Camino). Adam explains that the Camino provides a space of freedom to choose how we might react to the things that beset us as we make our journey. We meet helpers, discover inner resourcefulness due to our goal of reaching Santiago de Compostela and in the process undergo a transformation of consciousness with the Camino being the catalyst. All this is explained beautifully via a true Camino story. The key takeaway being that for the transformation to occur we must persist and avoid taking an easier option, or giving up. This makes for very interesting listening.

Another interesting resource is the article, '**The Lasting Benefits of a Retreat or Pilgrimage.**' Here returned pilgrim Belinda Chui discusses the opportunity the Camino as a liminal space affords us if we have the emotional intelligence and understandings arising from Mindfulness training to withstand the uncertainties of such a journey.

The Lasting Benefits of a Retreat or Pilgrimage,' Belinda Chiu, June, 2018, keystone-media.com

Bed Race. A Personal Transformation Story from the Camino del Norte

While on my Camino Nordt pilgrimage in 2016 I was increasingly aware of a bed race occurring. There were just too many pilgrims for the infrastructure. I had seen evidence of the race. It was dominating people's thoughts... 'I need to get to my day's destination to ensure a bed.' So pilgrims were taking the direct route along the road rather than the scenic option along the stunning coast. Once at the albergue they would sit in a queue until opening time. As I climbed out of a picturesque harbourside village just off the Camino path, I had a sudden realization that this bed race was driven by fear.

The ramifications of not joining the race had earlier been realised when upon arriving in Pobena I was shown up the road to the church flagstones to join four other pilgrims. (We settled for the churchyard grass.) I had ignored the guidebook advice and eschewed the train ride through the "boring abandoned riverside docklands." It turned out to be a place of beauty with the rusting detritus of an earlier river port life reflected in the moody waters, and an industrial area filled with glimpses of everyday workers' lives, plus enjoying a glorious swim on Playa de La Arena. I awoke in the morning, a little sore from the hard ground, and alive!

My mind cast back to my overland journey from London to New Zealand via the Middle East and Asia in the early '70s. Then I was filled with hope, joy and wonder. It didn't occur to me to 'worry' about where I might put my head. I determined to 'let go' of fear and once again operate from my heart, and trust that the Camino would provide.. And things worked out. There was often a bed in an annex, or invalids' room. (Reserved until late for pilgrims requiring assistance and released if unoccupied.) And I was able to enjoy all that this most beautiful of Caminos had to offer.

With the acceptance of the challenges and the assistance of numerous 'Camino Angels' the process of transformation continued. There may be a number of thresholds still to cross. Who knows, a further Camino journey may be required!

Reference

'Benedictus, A Book of Blessings,' John O'Donohue, 242.8 ODO, (1 copy).

Episode 47 - Into the Thin, The Camino Podcast, [54.14]. An interview with Stephen Drew, author, '**Into the Thin: A Pilgrimage Walk Across Northern Spain,**' 2020 Christchurch City Libraries, [3 copies.] A walk towards love and away from guilt and shame. It would appear to be the best account of an inner journey I have come across to-date.

Santiago de Compostela as a Liminal Space

Once we cross the threshold and walk into Santiago de Compostela we are entering a space of possibility. This is a place of transition where we will experience liminality in a meeting point of

past, present and future. We will be saying goodbye to newfound friends on tight itineraries who are beginning to disperse and return to their homelands. With others we will be celebrating our arrival and the arrival of those still entering Obradoiro plaza. We are elated to meet up with pilgrims who have been consistently on our path. Perhaps we will meet for drinks and a meal together to exchange stories. At the same time we will be deciding on our next move. Will we too join the exodus and return home, or continue our pilgrimage to Finisterre and Muxia thus prolonging our journey? Things for a time are not regulated by the rhythm of the walk. We might ask ourselves are we still pilgrims, or are we becoming tourists?

Entering the city marks the end of the physical pilgrimage for those who have Santiago as their turning point. However for all pilgrims it marks the beginning of a new journey. One which will involve a sorting process as we attempt to carry forward into our "normal" lives our new learnings and understandings.

Reference

'Pilgrim Stories On and Off the Road to Santiago, Journeys Along an Ancient Way in Modern Spain,' Nancy Louise Frey, 1998, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 FRE, (4 copies). p223

'Liminality as a Space of Self Reflection on El Camino de Santiago del Norte,' Amanda Redpath, Syracuse University, 2011. (Available freely as a download.)

This is an interesting paper on the notion that the Camino is a *liminal space*, where pilgrims make their way along the Camino and undergo a transformation, rather than arrive at Santiago de Compostela where they might undergo change as a result of being in the presence of a holy relic (St James) housed in a holy shrine (Santiago de Compostela cathedral.)

This is an interesting work for those seeking greater understanding of what makes walking the Camino an attractive proposition in the journey of self transformation.

'Cultivating Wisdom, A Conversation Series: Adam Wells and Julian Power,'
www.agoldendencivilization.com

'Cultivating Wisdom, A Conversation Series: Dwelling in the Empty Space of not knowing,'
Alison Hogan and Julian Power, www.agoldendencivilization.com

This is a conversation about being in a liminal space, 'dwelling in the fertile void.' The practice of Mindfulness is important here. Being with people who resource you. Focus on being rather than doing. She encourages us to approach the fertile void with joy and excitement rather than fear and anxiety. And reconnect with others, which is easily done on the Camino.

Perhaps best to view the Adam Wells conversation first.

'Liminal Spaces' | Sarah Sawin Thomas | TEDxLincoln, You Tube, [16.03 secs]

Discovers her journey through the liminal space of her brain aneurysm, and compares it to Persephone's fall into the underworld and her subsequent return.

'Mark David Walsh – Outer Journey, Inner Transformation,' Camino Café, YouTube, [1 hr, 06 min]

Mark Walsh talks about his inner and outer Camino. He discusses how to simplify life, trust the inner journey is the important one and regular reflection on your day, each day – to be open, and attentive to the movement of God or joy experienced within that day, moments that were enriching and enlarging, and also in the day when things didn't go so well, how you might have diminished your or someone else's day, and then to resolve not to repeat these occasions.

Things to Do in Muxia/Lires

Lires

- Stay in Lires (15 km), from Finisterre and Muxia, hotel with attached **albergue**,
- Swim in the **lagoon**,
- Enjoy the **view** from the cliff top bar.

- Collect your **stamp** from the self stamping kiosk, an essential requirement for the Muxiana certificate.

Muxia

- Visit the **Virxe da Barca Sanctuary** (17th century) built on the site of a pre-Christian Celtic shrine and sacred spot. Shrine marks the spot where the Virgin Mary arrived in a stone boat and appeared to St James.
- Visit **Praia de Lourido beach** just south of Muxia. (Check swimming conditions.)
- Obtain the **Muxiana** certificate. Must (show credential with Lires/Santiago de Compostela/ Finisterre stamps.
- Climb the **hill** for a panoramic view.
- Eat at a **sea food restaurant**
- Capture a sunset image of the 'split rock' sculpture called **Ferida** which reminds people of the tragic break up of the M V Prestige oil tanker and the subsequent destruction of coastal life and the environment.
- Spend several days **resting/contemplating** at Albergue Bela in Central Muxia, or The Little Fox House, (A Casa Do



Image: Muxia

Raposo, around 4.5 km out of Muxia in Morpeguite. (5 places). Walkers qualify for a certificate. The Finisterre- Muxia bus stops outside. Directions on website.

Article

Previous Newsletter Follow Ups

May 2021

Camino Vloggers ~ Andrew Susuki, (Sydney, Australia)

This is one that got away!

Currently Andrew has 3 series regarding the Camino de Santiago; 'Don't Stop Walking,' a practical series (Season 01, 6 episodes, Season 02, 13 episodes), involving tips for good practice, 'Beyond the Way, Season One (10 episodes), regarding his pilgrimage along the Camino Frances, and 'Beyond the Way, Season Two, 7 episodes) on the Caminho Portugues from Porto to Santiago de Compostela, including a bonus episode on the Variante Espiritual. These documentaries may be accessed via You Tube or his website beyondtheway.net

He professes to be broke, single and forty, looking for faith, guidance and wisdom along The Way. Exquisite cinematography with a wry commentary. The pick of the crop?

Camino Vloggers ~ Lisa & Josh ~ World Adventurers, August, 2021

Lisa and Josh are world travellers who recently stumbled across the Camino Frances and decide to walk it. They have the notion of pilgrimage and assemble their gear and begin.

I found after sampling bits of episodes which "popped up" they grew on me so I went to the Playlist on their website (scroll write down), and watched their adventure unfold as they encounter, and solve challenges, cultural, mental and physical. Each episode focuses on a different theme peculiar to their Camino experience. Scroll through their website to the Camino de Santiago 2021, Playlist beginning with Episode One: 'Here We Go.'

An insight into walking the Frances in Covid times.

'What the END of the Camino de Santiago is REALLY like, 2021,' You Tube [20.38]

An interesting on the fly revelation regarding arrival in Santiago de Compostela. Perhaps this demonstrates that some prep work before departure is important after all!

Their Camino episodes are best accessed through their website 'Lisa & Josh,' Camino De Santiago 2021 playlist.

Santiago de Compostela

'The city under the stars – A pilgrims' guide to the Camino de Santiago 0208, Beyond the Way, Andrew Suzuki, 2017, [8.14].

Since this was made a new bus station has been opened alongside the railway station. Also check on the post office (Correros) rules for holding parcels. (I utilise Ivar's service, no time limit.)

August 2021

Portuguese Caminho

'BTW S2 2019 Trailer' Andrew Suzuki, Beyond the Way, You Tube, [2.31]

An evocative teaser for Andrew Suzuki's series on his Portuguese Camino.

Camino de Santiago - Beyond the Way 'Season 02 Ep 00 El Camino de Santiago, Caminho Portuguese ' [5.40]

This is the introductory episode to Andrew's second series, El Camino de Santiago, this time focused on the Camino Portuguese. Here he is in search of faith, guidance and wisdom from the way.

'Porto eu te amo. A Pilgrim's Guide to the Camino Portuguese starting in Porto,' Don't Stop Walking, Beyond the Way, Andrew Suzuki, 2018, YouTube or beyondtheway.net [8.44]

A handy introduction to Porto, sights and experiences. A parallel series to 'Beyond the Way,' 'Don't Stop Walking,' is designed to provide additional information for prospective pilgrims.

'Camino de Santiago - Beyond the Way 'How the light gets in' - 0209,' [14.52]

Andrew Suzuki walks the Variante Espiritual of the Camino Portugues. As it's the off season there isn't a boat so he must walk to Padron.

November 2021

Finisterre

'Camino de Santiago - Beyond the Way 'Sanctuary' - 0210,' 2021, Andrew Suzuki, [12.55]

This documentary is focused on Fisterre (Finisterre), as a sanctuary for pilgrims, and is a welcome addition to his library after some absence.

Beautiful photography, thoughtful, sensitive commentary.

Camino Life Lessons Follow Up ~ 'Lessons from the Camino | James Herman|', TEDxTAMU Salon, You Tube, [17.14]

In this talk James presents 5 Life Lessons he learned whilst walking the Camino Nordt with his university age son. They were : Engage, Know your signs, A Pilgrimage walks, Be a blessing, Be grateful. He concluded by describing how these were integrated into his life once home and exhorted his audience to reflect on their lives in relation to the lessons.

A great reflective exercise illustrated with images from the Camino del Norte.

'18 Camino LIFE Lessons, The Camino Teaches US So Much,' robscamino, November 23, 2021, You Tube, [19.53]

Rob outlines an excellent series of life lessons he experienced while walking his 3 Caminos. Some great lessons, some novel, to bring into our current lives.

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Article

Pack Weight A Very Important Consideration

Remember everything you pack has to be hauled all the way to Santiago de Compostela, or wherever your turning point is. On my first Camino I thought I had packed lightly. My body wasn't convinced!! One day I sorted through my belongings and managed to pack a kilo and a half into a Correos container and post it to Santiago de Compostela.

What are the simple steps to packing light? Firstly shop with ready access to an electronic scale. Another method is to click on product specifications when shopping on line. Remember Spain is a first world country and replacements can be purchased while on the journey. Buy light weight and avoid cotton. Synthetics and merino dry quickly.



I work on the principle, one on, one off, except for underpants. I find it's the last minute things which add the weight. I use one cake of soap for ablution and laundry. With a pharmacy on almost every corner just a starter first aid kit is required initially. Supplies of products frequently used can easily be replenished. Give away any excess and you will find everything you require flows back to you. Remember when packing avoid listening to the voice of fear, if it's required buy it once on the Camino.

Image: Farm Accommodation – Le Puy Route

Camino Story

Taking the Samos Detour ~ A Night In the Samos Monastery Albergue

On my 2013 Camino I continued on to Santiago rather than take the detour to Samos and the Monastery. Cecilia had mentioned the Samos detour as one of her Camino highlights. It was an easy decision when I stood once again at the detour sign in 2019. The walk in was rather rustic being less traveled and was well signposted. Maybe worth making the detour just to experience the path. The view of the Monastery as I entered the town was well worth the additional mileage. I was determined to stay in the albergue which occupies a space inside the complex. The hospitalier was welcoming. I checked carefully for bed bugs as the interior was slightly doubtful. I joined the conducted tour of the Monastery which unfortunately for me was in Spanish. In the evening I went to mass with the monks in attendance.

A very worthwhile detour.

Camino Tip

Wet Sneakers/Boots

With the rain comes wet foot wear. Look out, or ask for newspaper at the albergue to roll into a ball and push inside to soak up the moisture. Leave overnight.

Reviews

Books

'The Kiwi Sisters' Camino de Santiago, Sue Dwan, 2009, Rakuten Kobo, \$NZ 2.74

This memoir written by our Sue Dwan is the story of her and sister Catherine's pilgrimage along the Camino Frances. I'm writing this several years after my initial reading, and the consuming of many Camino memoirs. And I'm enjoying it even more this time. The writing is first class and lets the reader experience the journey also. Each chapter has a Life Lesson focus, one of the factors which elevates this volume to being one of my all time favorites.

An essential Camino read.

'Revelations,' Mary Sharratt, 2021, Christchurch City Libraries, SHA, [9 copies], eBook available.

This is a fictionalised account of the life of Margery Kempe who was a pilgrim during the Middle Ages. The story has a truly authentic feel as it was based on her own autobiography (Available from Christchurch City Libraries). Margery travels as a pilgrim to Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostela via The Camino Ingles (The English Way), after receiving a blessing from Julian of Norwich. She travelled to Santiago de Compostela in April of the holy year of 1417 and then on to Finisterre. Even in those times there was a shortage of beds and Margery found herself sleeping on the floor on her ship mat!

A fascinating window on a different world!

'The Book of Margery Kempe,' 1373 (approx), A Modern Version, 1954, Christchurch City Libraries, 942.04 KEM, [1 copy], dated 1436 - 38 in Sharratt's book.

'Keep Pressing On, Brother,' Noel Braun, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 BRA, (3 copies).

This is the third in a series of memoirs recounting the author's inner and outer journeys. This time Noel, at 84 years is walking parts of Via de Vezelay and Via de Vezelay via Gebennensis (From Geneva to le Puy-en-Velay). He also discusses two stints as an hospitalier and a week long course at the monastery in Taize in France.

While this book is well written, I felt the content was a little formulaic, with a tendency to include too much detail regarding churches, people met etc. It does provide a great blue print for walking in your eighties; walking shorter distances and being prepared to utilise motorized transport. This series has been about Noel coping with the suicide of his wife and his journey through grief to a new life.

An interesting, detailed read, particularly for pilgrims contemplating walking the Vezelay.

'Great Pilgrimage Sites of Europe,' Derry Brabbs, Christchurch City Libraries, 940 BRA (3 copies)

This is a beautiful coffee style book. The photographs are fantastic. I flicked through the sites I have visited; Le Puy, Fatima, and Santiago de Compostela. I was intrigued to read about the Our Lady of Covadonga, Caovadonga, Asturias. The sight of the temple cave on the side of the mountain looks very tempting. The text is informative with just the right level of detail.

Great to peruse.

'Buen Camino, beyond the journey,' Thea Hughes, 2009, HUG (Fiction), Christchurch City Libraries, (2 copies).

This is a story set on the Camino Frances which speaks of the healing power of the Camino de Santiago. In alternating chapters for the first part of the book, we hear about Ana's progress on the Camino and then her childhood. The Camino chapters are a faithful recount of all that happens to the typical pilgrim. The childhood chapters are a little disturbing in that Anna has a secret she's been warned not to share. She meets Richard a pilgrim with early dementia. Together they make their journey to Santiago.

A well written tale.

Book Review With a Slight Camino Connection

'The Dream Weavers,' Barbara Erskine, Christchurch City Libraries, Fiction ERS, 2021, (16 copies).

Readers familiar with Barbara's time travelling books will recognise the formula utilised during her latest endeavour. She has a degree in medieval Scottish history so her settings are brought to life with a mixture of historical and fictional characters interacting across time with authenticity.

What of interest here is that briefly one of the main historical characters makes a pilgrimage along the Via Francigena from Aachen to Rome and then travels to Canterbury with returning pilgrims. In the resolution of a storyline a modern day character makes preparations to walk the Camino de Santiago from St Jean Pied de Port to Compostela as an act of contrition.

A compelling read, even without the Camino connections.

Audio Books

The Attachment: Letters From a Most Unlikely Friendship, Ailsa Piper, Tony Doherty, 2019, Christchurch City Libraries, Downloadable Audiobook. (Always available.)

This book is narrated by the authors, both being accomplished public speakers.

You Tube

'Stephen Drew: Day 1 to Roncesvalles had it all. Hear a Pilgrim & Camino Author's powerful story,' Camino Café, [54.42]

Stephen is the author of the pilgrim memoir, **'Into the Thin: A Pilgrimage Walk Across Northern Spain,'** 2020, Christchurch City Libraries. This book focuses on his inner journey and coming to terms with grief. (Also a podcast.) A thoughtful exploration of an inner and outer journey.

A very worthwhile conversation.

'Camino de Santiago - 2021 – Pathway to the Soul,' Wade Harman, You Tube, [10.57]

A short beautifully framed and filmed documentary on the Camino Frances. All the iconic scenes of this route are included.

Elevated by a sensitive and excellent commentary, really a fine essay with a Christian theme.

Websites

Confraternity of St James - www.csj.org.uk

This is the website of the charity which promotes the Camino de Santiago. A click on the Menu button will reveal the treasures contained within.

There is a shop where Camino guides and books may be purchased. Under Events there is a list of Webinars. Interestingly tickets can be purchased for £2 to access these after the event. (Quite useful for those on the opposite side of the world.) Another interesting category is 'Camino Stories,' where returned pilgrims relate aspects of their journey.

Index of Main Topics

Editorial: Welcome to Ulteia et Suseia! Vol. 1. No. 1.

Via de la Plata, main topic, Vol 1. No. 1.

Featured Article: A Selection of You Tube Documentary Producers/Vloggers, Vol. 1. No. 1.

Things to Do in: Santiago de Compostela, Vol 1. No. 1.

Useful Camino de Santiago Resources, Vol 1. No. 2

Editorial: Christchurch Camino Group, Vol 1. No. 2.

Featured Topic: Selecting a Portuguese Camino Route Vol 1. No 2.

Editorial: 'Putting It on the Record' Vol. 1. No. 3.

36 Camino Memoirs by Routes, Vol. 1. No. 3.

Camino Life Lessons main topic Vol. 1. No. 3.

Article: Useful Camino de Santiago Resources, Vol 1. No. 3.

Things to Do In: Finisterre, Vol 1. No. 3.

Article: Reviews of Key Camino Frances Guide Books, Vol. 1. No. 3.

Editorial: Architecture and the Camino Vol. 2. No. 1.

Featured Useful Topic; Historical Resources for the Camino Frances, Vol 2. No 1.

Article: Top Historical Sites on the Camino Frances Vol. 2. No. 1.

Historical Sites on Camino Frances, main topic, Vol 2. No. 1.

Featured Topic: Liminality on the Camino de Santiago Vol. 2.

'Architecture is a visual art, and the buildings speak for themselves,' Julia Morgan



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