

# *Ultreia et Suseia! The Newsletter.*

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**Vol 2, No 3.**

**August 2022, Christchurch Camino Group**



'Smart phones help us to avoid the normal adversity offered by the Camino thereby diminishing its power as a growth experience.' Nancy Frey

## **Editorial**

### **The Camino as a Mystical/Magical Space**

I'm wondering if you noticed a number of coincidences and synchronicities while walking your Camino? Did things happen which just shouldn't? How often did you hear, 'The Camino provides,' in response to a fortuitous happening? You are not alone if the answer was 'yes' to one or all of these questions. David Gitlitz, '**The Pilgrimage Guide to Santiago, The Complete Cultural Handbook,**' tells of a coincidental meeting in the museum at the Episcopal Palace in Astorga. Walter Starkie the author of the book, 'The Way of St James,' who sparked David's Camino curiosity just happened to visit while he was viewing exhibits.

In the article, 'The Camino Provides,' recounted below, I tell of some amazing coincidences which have occurred to me over several Caminos.

We hear about the power of ley lines, lines of magnetic energy converging at specific sites, in relation to mystical happenings on the Camino. Created in 1921 by Alfred Watkins, Ley lines as a scientific theory has not been widely supported. The Camino as an example of a 'thin place' has also been posited. This is a Celtic term for places in the world where earth and heaven meet. Others believe we can sense the energy in sacred places. That the energetic presence of pilgrims who have gone before is available to us today is mentioned by Catholic nun Joyce Rupp, 'Each sacred site has a spiritual energy for those who deliberately visit it.'

These ideas are roundly dismissed by detractors as 'New Age' thinking. How then can we explain the occurrence of mystical/magical happenings reported by numerous pilgrims? Are these events confined to the Camino, or are they experienced by people in other places in the world? Maybe we are tapping consciously, or unconsciously into the 'Laws of the Universe!'

Being open to 'all that is,' is possible on the Camino with the shedding of our daily roles and responsibilities. Perhaps as we step outside of normal time on the Camino we become more observant, more attuned to our surroundings and we notice things that would normally pass us by?

Ultreia Philip

**'Walk in a Relaxed Manner, Life Lessons from the Camino,** Joyce Rupp, 2005, Christchurch City Libraries, 263 RUP, [4 copies]

**'The Pilgrimage Road to Santiago The Complete Cultural Handbook,** David Gitlitz, Christchurch City Libraries, 946.1, [2 copies],

**'Estrellas Moments of Illumination Along El Camino de Santiago: a memoir,'** Suzanne Maggio, 2021, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 MAG [4 copies]

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### Noticeboard

#### Scheduled 2022 Christchurch Camino Group Gathering Dates

The following is the remaining scheduled meeting date for 2022: Monday 7 November.

#### Pilgrimage of Hope

Colleen has drawn attention to the Pilgrimage of Hope in South Africa. It can be walked at any time of year. Pilgrim Assist can arrange pilgrimages for groups of 4 or more.

<https://pilgrimstogvanhoop.com/stellenbosch-to-cape-agulhas/>

#### Christchurch City Libraries Camino Resources Holdings

The Christchurch City Library has an extensive collection of resources regarding the Camino de Santiago. These include memoirs, eBooks, guidebooks, DVDs. Recently I conducted a campaign regarding the library's culling policy. The head of acquisitions is now aware of the existence of our group and the keen interest we have in things Camino. I explained that there was a core collection which a number of us have been building, and that I had noticed several books had disappeared from the shelves. A commitment to repurchase them was made. It's pleasing to see they are coming back on to the shelves, **'Walk in a Relaxed Manner, Life Lessons from the Camino,'**

Joyce Rupp, 263 RUP, Christchurch City Libraries, [4 copies]. Please borrow them!!  
The library has the 2022 edition of, ' **A Pilgrim's Guide to the Camino de Santiago,**' John Brierley, 946 BRI, [4 copies]. There is also '**The Pilgrimage Road to Santiago The Complete Cultural Handbook,** David Gitlitz, Christchurch City Libraries, 946.1, [2 copies], and '**Pilgrim Stories On and Off the Road to Santiago,**' Nancy Frey, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 FRE,

### **Camino Movie on TVNZ+**

The documentary '**Camino Skies,**' 2019, [1hr 20 min], is currently available for viewing on TVNZ+. (Pulse channel).

### **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](mailto:chchcaminogroup@gmail.com) Please time these to arrive at least a week before a scheduled meeting.

### **Meeting Contributions Request- November**

Hopefully contributions from 2022 Returned Pilgrims.

If you have any other ideas regarding meetings please contact Philip at the above email.

### **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](mailto:chchcaminogroup@gmail.com).

**Image:** Captain Thomas walk

### **Camino Covid Update**

'**How Has COVID Changed Camino de Santiago,**' Camino Guide, February 2022, You Tube, [9.29]

Jeremiah discusses several aspects of the Camino he noticed had changed and a couple of key features which continue.

### **Update on Obtaining a Compostela**

Ivar has posted a brief video on the new way to obtain your Compostela. Please see the following link. Casa Ivar – A Short Update ± How to get your Compostela at the Pilgrims Office. [caminodesantiago.me](http://caminodesantiago.me)

### **ETIAS Requirement**

From May 2023 all visitors from visa waiver countries visiting schengen countries in Europe will be required to apply for, and purchase in advance (€7) an ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorisation System). Please see <https://www.etiasvisa.com/> to see the ramifications for you.

## New Albergue

A new albergue, Auberge Borda, further on from Orisson has been opened recently. This provides another option for those who wish to break the journey over the Pyrenees.

## Advice Given to Pilgrims

We wish to emphasise that all information and answers given by our presenters, organisers, meeting participants and via the newsletter 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 adapted to suit individual circumstances.

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## August 2022, Christchurch Camino Group Gathering Follow Up

‘As we habituate ourselves to it, the technology comes to exert more power over us, not less.’

Nicholas Carr

It was a cool winter evening and we were treated to a very warm Sydenham Room.

The following **apologies** were received: Sue, Jo, Elma, Sandra, Gemma, Gythlian, Elizabeth, Liz.

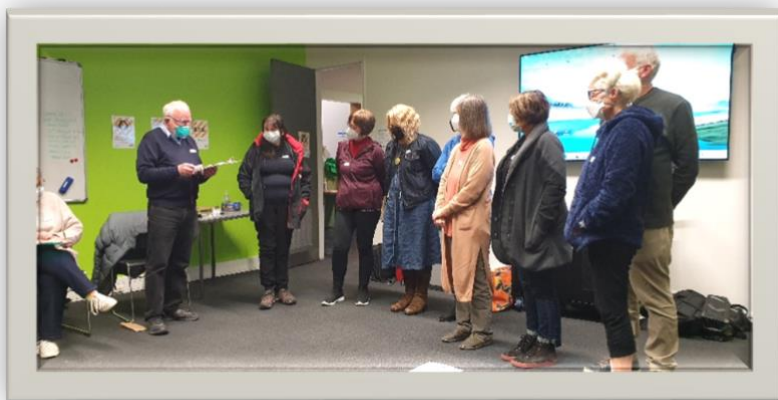
Philip thanked the people who had prepared contributions as presenters for our cancelled meetings. These topics will be rescheduled. Since our last meeting in November 2021 further recommendations for Camino library books have been made, Alan has continued to develop our website, two newsletters have been published and our Walking Group has completed a monthly walk.

## Things to Share: Information/Resources/Gear

Colleen spoke about the South African **Pilgrimage of Hope**. Further enquiries may be made to Colleen: [chchcaminogroup@gmail.com](mailto:chchcaminogroup@gmail.com)

Philip recommended ‘**Estrellas Moments of Illumination Along El Camino de Santiago: a memoir**,’ Suzanne Maggio, 2021, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 MAG [4 copies]

A new segment, the **Departure Ceremony** was introduced. Anyone departing for a Camino before our next meeting in November was invited to participate. The following participated: Claire and Steve, Sharon, Doryan, and Nelida, Midge, Glenda, Michelle, (and Gythlian and Elizabeth). A ‘**Returning Home**’ ceremony will be offered at the November gathering to officially recognise their achievements. These ceremonies were instituted to formally recognise the departure and return of these pilgrims. They will also fulfill the community recognition aspect of Camino as a “Right of Passage.” (See the November 2022 Newsletter for an explanation.)



**Image:** The Departure Ceremony, Marie-Therese.

Philip was the presenter in the ‘**Ten Minute Talk**’ slot. His topic was **The Primitivo - Walking A Lesser Known Camino**. He discussed the pros and cons for walking this Camino route utilising a PowerPoint presentation. Philip

then screened a 5 minute film showing the highlights of The Primitivo section of his 2018 Camino. Finally time was spent answering questions.

**Summary:** Primitivo is derived from the Original Way, can be walked in conjunction with the San Salvador, commence at Oviedo, or divert from the del Norte, a quieter Camino with less

infrastructure, more physically demanding, and rural with historic Roman walled Lugo. The final 55 km are on the Camino Frances. (Joins at Melide)

### **Christchurch Camino Walking Group Report**

Cecelia presented her report for the Christchurch Camino Walking Group. Since our last newsletter the Christchurch Camino Walking Group has completed 4 walks. The first was on the Waipara Wine Trail. There was some drizzle but this didn't dampen the spirits and the walk was completed with a visit to the Waipara Springs vineyard Café and bar. Once again there was some drizzle as the group set out on the Kennedy's Bush Track to Summit Road and Beyond walk in June. In August a segment of Christchurch 360 Trail ~ Spencer Park, Dunes to Travis Wetlands track was walked. We found out why it is a wetland!



**Image:** Waipara Springs Vineyard Walk

The **main topic** of the evening was: **Making Use of Technology on the Camino Journey: What am I gaining/losing by being connected?**

As a warmup this was preceded by the **Camino Buddies** segment where the following questions were discussed: What is your attitude to, and experience of being connected on the Camino? Did it help or hinder your inner development?

As an **Introduction** to the topic a graphic by Nancy Frey was displayed comparing the pilgrim in pre-internet times with the current situation. This showed how the mind nowadays is bombarded with information thus reducing the opportunity to walk with awareness and to leave the pilgrim's usual world behind.

Several returned pilgrims then related stories regarding their Caminos and connectivity. This was followed by a **Small Group Discussion** regarding the real possibility of inadvertently allowing technology to intrude on our experience and what might be done to mitigate this followed.

#### **The following questions were discussed**

1. What part did being connected play in your Camino journey/s?
2. List/consider some examples of use: Pilgrim to home, home to pilgrim, pilgrim to pilgrim, pilgrim to accommodation, pilgrim to work, phone, emails blogging, pilgrim to responsibilities eg computer banking, work?? etc.
3. Being connected and solving issues. Were any unforeseen issues resolved via the internet?
4. What were the implications for your physical/interior journey?
5. Ideas for utilising connectivity while limiting its possible downside/downstream effects. How could your loved ones/work colleagues be prepared before departure for limited connectivity?
6. How would you handle connectivity and your Camino next time?

During '**Bringing it Together**' participants had the opportunity to share key ideas from the Small Group discussions: Individual circumstances will determine choices. Strategies and options included: placing country's emergency number in phone contacts, setting all notifications to silent; arranging type, time and frequency of contact with loved ones, solving issues encountered without resorting to Google etc., refraining from utilising social media, utilising progress emails as a time of reflection, end of day albergue bookings,, keeping connected with Camino Family particularly in

latter stages, Google Translate, weather forecast, luggage tracker, use of offline GPS and offline maps, no to playlists, overuse an age related thing? Use with awareness on future occasions. The evening concluded with **Small Group Discussion**.

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### **Camino Skies**

As mentioned **'Camino Skies,'** is currently available to view for free on TVNZ+. It is a documentary featuring 6 pilgrims from Australia and New Zealand walking the Camino Frances while dealing with grief.

Terry Wilson, one of the cast, subsequently wrote a Camino memoir **'God's Cocaine: The Addiction of the Camino,'** Terry Wilson, 2019, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 WIL, (3 copies), Reviewed in the July, 2020 Follow Up Newsletter.

Claude Tranchant, an Australian cast member wrote **'Boots to Bliss,'** after walking from Vezelay several years earlier.

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### **Featured Topic**

**Making Use of Technology on the Camino Journey: What am I gaining/losing by being connected?**

#### **Digital Detox**

Are you game? Are you up to solving issues without resorting to high tech? Are you willing to feel the power of solitude whilst walking? What about boredom? Do we look to ourselves to solve the issue or depend on the internet to find a solution. What happened to trusting the road, and silence, solitude and struggle! Are we in fact hampering the likelihood of inner transformation by reversing the 'letting go' process and filling our newly freed up head space? Is over planning and resorting to Google eliminating meeting and dealing with setbacks and uncertainties, thus stunting growth opportunities!

#### **[www.walkingtopresence.com](http://www.walkingtopresence.com)**

This is Nancy Frey's website where she has chosen to publish her latest research. Here she shares her findings from 25 years of research walking, observing and researching the Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage. Interestingly her surveys occurred before the rise of the internet, and during the internet age.

'The site offers resources for pilgrims, and potential to Santiago to help deepen their pilgrimage experience along the Camino ' Nancy Frey.

'The website promotes strongly the idea that our relationships with new media technologies (social media, mobile phone addiction constant connection and distraction) strongly impact our ability to be present and connect meaningfully with ourselves, nature, others and the world around us.' Nancy Frey.

#### **Locating Reliable Information on the Camino and Being Internet Connected.**

A good introduction to this area is Nancy Frey's article 'About – Walking to Presence.' Just Google it, or locate it at [www.walkingtopresence.com](http://www.walkingtopresence.com)



**'15 Tips for Keeping Your Head Out of the Cloud: Pilgrimage in Body and Mind,'** Nancy Frey, 25 March, 2018

This article can be found on Nancy Frey's website, [www.walkingtopresence.com](http://www.walkingtopresence.com)

In it she presents 15 contemplations regarding internet connectivity and your Camino. She invites the reader to reflect on the reasons for their journey and consider the place technology might play. Nancy includes a discussion on down stream effects of too much planning and being too connected. To mitigate these her suggestions include taking steps before departure to set a connectivity plan, and communicating this to family, friends and work colleagues. Tips include, considering information overload, simple and yet profound actions like silencing alarm notifications, being aware that sadness, and loneliness are part of the process, establishing a 'switch off zone.

**'The Smart Camino: Pilgrimage in the Internet Age,'** Nancy Frey, January, 2017. You Tube, [1 hr.14.min 59 secs] text see [www.walkingtopresence.com](http://www.walkingtopresence.com)

Nancy voices the You Tube video with excellent use of images as no filming of the talk took place at the time of its presentation. The talk is divided into before, during and after Camino experiences and 1995 and 2016. Various aspects between 1995 and 2016 eg. Numbers, nationalities, rise of commercialism, are compared. At 33 minutes a discussion on the rise of technology on the Camino commences. Aspects examined include; fragmented experience, mind elsewhere and body on the Camino, connected pilgrims have different needs eg. more charging points, better band width, being alone together, and a reduction in need to look within to solve issues.

The You Tube presentation includes an excellent cartoon of a Pilgrim having his learning curtailed by a helpful wifi connection.

A thought provoking and valuable talk.

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## Articles on Connectivity

### **Disconnect From Technology on the Camino de Santiago**

The commercial company, 'SantiagoWays,' features an article titled, 'Doing the Camino de Santiago and Disconnect.' They promote the idea that walking the Camino de Santiago can function as excellent therapy to disconnect from technology.

'The pilgrimage is a spiritual journey that serves to combat a multitude of addictions.'

The article then proceeds to discuss ways walking the Camino can be enhanced for the pilgrim. Headings include: 'How to do the Camino de Santiago without your mobile,' and 'Tips on how to bring your mobile on the Camino de Santiago and disconnect.'

Some of the tips and solutions are simplistic. One, 'How to manage your accommodation on the Camino de Santiago without wifi,' even suggests contacting CaminoWays prior to setting out and they will manage the bookings!

As this is possibly a new area of exploration for most pilgrims the site is worth a quick read.

'The combination of being completely unplugged from the stresses of work, computers, and phones causes some kind of mental reboot,' Justin Skeesuck, **I'll Push You,'** p132 eBook

**'Top Tech Tips – A Pilgrim's Guide to the Camino de Santiago 0205,'** 2017, Andrew Suzuki, Don't Stop Walking, [4.43]

Some useful tech tips.

## Essential Camino Viewing

The following Nancy Frey references appeared in our May 2021 newsletter.

Nancy Frey is an anthropologist and veteran pilgrim who has posted her speech to the AGM of the Confraternity of St James regarding **'Pilgrimage in the Internet Age,'** on You Tube.

In it she compared pre and current internet age pilgrimage. It really is a wake up call to consider where we stand on this issue and what kind of Camino experience we might wish to have. She talks about the pressures on the current pilgrim enhanced by connectivity. The degree of mental activity for the pilgrim now is huge as they connect with home and with each other on the Camino. It is also possible to listen to this talk as a podcast. The video is accompanied by photographs taken between 1994 and 2016 and includes essential diagrams. Both video and podcast are

available via Nancy's website: [www.walkingtopresence.com](http://www.walkingtopresence.com) 'Pilgrimage in the Internet Age,' was scheduled as our main topic for August 2022.

**Pilgrimage in the Internet Age**, Nancy Frey, Keynote CSJ AGM 28 Jan 2017, You Tube, [1.14.59]

### **walkingtopresence.com**

A gathering place for Nancy's research on the Camino. Well worth a look.

### **A Traveller's Thoughts on Being Connected**

This poem was a very early pondering on the changes I was noticing on my travels with the increase in connectivity. I reflect on my situation in the 70's when one simply dropped off the radar for months at a time. And if one was lucky perhaps a couple of 'old' letters were waiting at a predesignated spot. Then around 2010 there were smokey internet cafes in Greece etc. where one struggled with the cigarette smoke and a slightly different keyboard, and ticking minutes! The appearance of devices owned by the individual changed the landscape completely.

### **Camino Poem**

#### **Modern Travellers**

Today's traveller

iPod, iPad, iPhone in hand

is instantly connected.

Not really getting away from it all,

to feel the freedom, and at time desolate isolation.

Now Facebook charts every move, and can be 'liked' within seconds.

Post Restante,

was king for the 70's traveller.

Letters containing months old news,

collected from dusty post offices

in foreign climes brought loved ones closer.

Forever tangible reminders of an earlier life.

© Philip, 2012

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### **Connectivity Resource**

**'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). A new acquisition.

This volume is a very recent addition to the growing collection of Camino books on our city's library shelves. It is a landmark and definitive work on the Camino de Santiago, and the Frances in particular. Frey has written a book which combines her experience as a pilgrim with the stories she collected from pilgrims during her research. These are retold under a number of chapter headings: Journey Shaping, Learning New Rhythms, Landscapes of Discovery etc. These stories caused me to reflect on my own Camino stories, and to place them within a wider context.

A well researched volume for those who have more than a passing interest in the Camino.

### **Reference**

**'Best Camino App and Why You Shouldn't Use It!' Camino Tellers, YouTube [9.52]**

An off beat presentation with some great questions asked.

### **Seeking Stillness and Silence**

As part of my preparation for my first Camino (Frances), in 2013 I would regularly walk before dawn down the hill via Purau Terrace to the Ernle Clark Reserve alongside the Heathcote River. To actually ensure I made the effort to get out and walk, it had to be an automatic response to waking in the morning. Once in the reserve I revelled in the abundant tranquility.

## Camino Poem

### Seeking Stillness and Silence in the Dawn

Within urban limits a hidden gem surrounded by bush  
provides a stream side sanctuary of stillness and silence.  
In wakeful slumber the city moves forward into a new day.  
Winter trees, illuminated by distant street lights  
and errant car headlamps  
starkly stand silhouetted against the sky.

Wafts of cool air rise from the damp earth.  
Overhead stars twinkle through the canopy.  
With a chirp and a chatter the dawn chorus begins.  
A loon honking goose calls in vain,  
while an iPod cocooned jogger  
securely anchored in everyday minutiae  
briefly intrudes.

Aspiring to divine connection  
the seeker  
enfolded in nature's beauty, smiles.

© Philip, 2013.

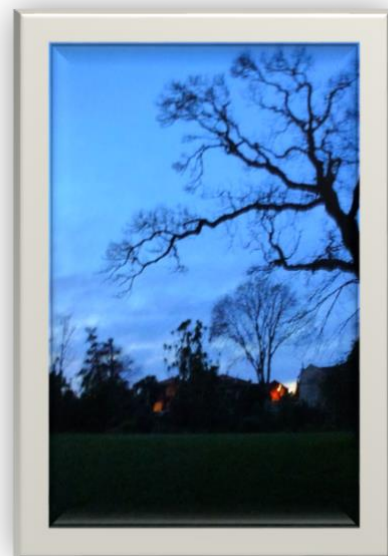


Image: Ernle Clark Reserve

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## Article

### References for the Primitivo

'Camino de Santiago – Camino Primitivo,' Evaldas Karalius, 2019, You Tube [22.07]

**A guide to the Camino Primitivo,**' Carl Prosser, February, 2022, You Tube, [7.25]

A concise overview of key aspects of the Primitivo.

'01| Primitivo 2021 | The one that that started it all,' Efren Gonzalez, You Tube, [18.09]

This series is ideal for those wishing to have an indepth look at the Camino Primitivo. He commenced this Camino after reaching Oviedo from the San Salvador. This is the first of Efren's daily vlogs. There are 14 episodes each around 14 to 22 minutes in length. He provides an on the spot commentary as well as his wonderful drone birdseye views.

'**Breathtaking Views of Oviedo's Cathedral,**' Efren Gonzalez, You Tube, [2.54]

It's great to see drone views of this cathedral as it's hard to appreciate it fully from the Plaza. Plus wonderful shots of the interior and cloister.

'**Camino Primitivo | Oviedo - Fisterra,**' Efren Gonzalez, 2021, You Tube, [48.00]m

This is a highlights package.

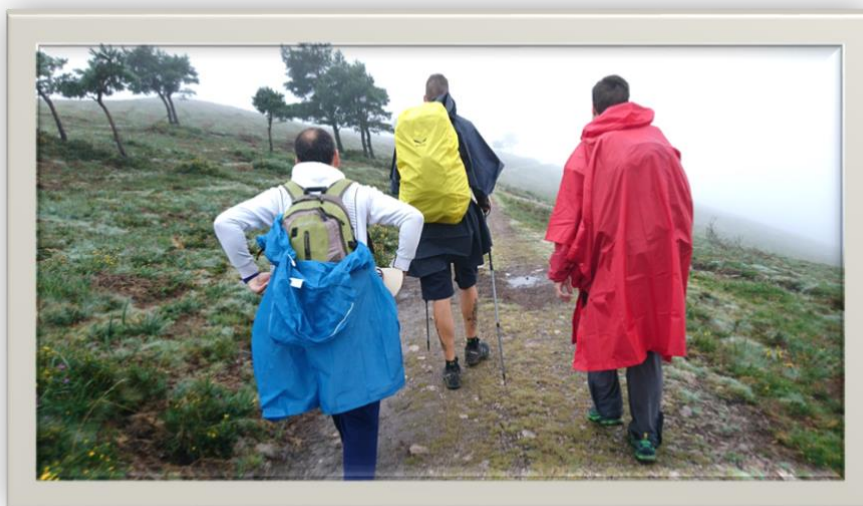


Image: Climbing over Hospitales, Primitivo.

**Day 1: Camino Primitivo, Oviedo to Cornellana, Nadine Walks, August, 2021, You Tube, [15.23]**

Nadine is from the USA and is walking during Covid times. Her temperature was taken upon entry and it was compulsory to wear a mask.

Nadine is a very amiable host. This is the first in this series.

**Hospitales Route (Camino Primitivo, Editorial Buen Camino de Santiago, YouTube [5.39]**  
Everything you need to know about making the Hospitales crossing.

### **Guidebook**

**'The Camino Primitivo, A Wise Pilgrim Guide to the Camino Primitivo from Villvicoso, through Oviedo to Santiago de Compostela,' Michael Iglesias, 2022 edition.**

### **Memoir**

**'The Santiago Pilgrimage, Walking the Immortal Way,' Jean-Christophe Rufin, Christchurch City Libraries, 946.1 RUF**

An account of a pilgrimage commencing on the Norte and taking the Primitivo option. Well written.

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### **Featured Article**

#### **The Camino Provides**

On a number of occasions I have been amazed how easily I have replaced items whilst walking. On my first Camino in 2013 my walking pole rubber tips had worn out. I could hear the metal on the bitumen. I thought about replacements, looked up and right in front of me was a hiking shop. Bingo! Five minutes later I was back on the trail. Three years later, and on the Del Norte I was sitting outside a café having caught up with my Camino family. I pressed the shutter on my group photograph and the 'Card Full,' sign appeared. I glanced at the line of adjacent shops. To my surprise this small town boasted a Camera shop, only two doors down!

On two occasions my footwear has needed replacing. The first time was on the Del Norte. My Timberland boots were simply not up to the job. Feet issues compounded by constant road walking led to a decision to purchase replacement footwear. A hard day's walking between Gjon and Lines had brought matters to a head. Finding a trail runner which fitted was an issue. The second shop had one pair of Salomons my size. I walked out of the store and back on to the Camino. No 'wearing in,' and no issues!

I simply wore out my 'new' trail runners 900 km in to my Le Puy-en-Velay to Finisterre pilgrimage. The tread was almost nonexistent. I walked into the shoe shop in Viana. They had one pair of Salomons my size! Coincidence? I wonder!

#### **Capturing the Mystical and Engagement With the Sacred on Film**

Following my second and third Caminos I explored my thoughts and experiences regarding mystical and sacred experiences as I drafted and amended scripts for two documentaries. I had felt moved to delve into these two areas once home in an attempt to make some sense of my time on the Camino. 'Walking the Camino, the Mystical Way,' was the title which sprang to mind as I walked along the Northern Way. I had been amazed by what might be called 'mystical happenings.' Things kept happening to me, and around me that I couldn't explain. On several occasions on the Norte I had deviated from the marked route to escape the bitumen and walk more



scenic coastal trails. Just as I had hesitated at a cross roads a local helper would materialise, seemingly out of nowhere and indicate the way.

**Image:** Primitivo

My second documentary, **‘Walking the Camino, Engaging with the Sacred,’** was an exploration of practices which might enhance the spiritual connection as I made my next pilgrimage along the Camino Portugues.

Links to ‘Walking the Camino, The Mystical Way,’ and ‘Walking the Camino, Engaging with the Sacred,’ are available from Philip @ [chchcaminogroup@gmail.com](mailto:chchcaminogroup@gmail.com)

## **Article**

**‘Trail Magic on the Way of St James,’** ~ perceptiontravel.com

In this article Bebee Bahrami discusses several instances of Camino magic as she walked. She puts this down to synchronicity and non-linear travel.

**‘The Camino Magic – It’s not just a hike – Some Magical Moments,’** robscamino, You Tube, [26.16]

He arrives at the first magical moment at 8 minutes.

## **Two Camino Classics Featuring Magical/Mystical Elements**

**‘The Pilgrimage, A Contemporary Quest for Ancient Wisdom,’** Paulo Coelho, 1995, (Originally published 1987), Christchurch City Libraries, 946 COE, (4 copies), eBook 2009, Downloadable Audiobook, 2009.

**‘The Camino A Journey of the Spirit,’** Shirley MacLaine, 791.43028 MCL, [copies 1]

This book was published in 2000. The library’s copy is kept in the store and would need a hold placed on it.

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## **Camino Story**

### **Magic on the Camino – Be Careful What You Wish For!**

I had read the caution. If taking the scenic diversion stock up on provisions as there are no services. By some mismanagement I found myself on the scenic route and too far in, to return to the main route. As promised the track wound its way up and a long a ridge, and through a series of glades. Far down below were the promised villages strung like pearls on a necklace. Lunch time arrived. Well prepared pilgrims began settling on the grass spreading out their picnic lunches. Hunger pangs real or imagined surfaced as delicacies were produced from packs like the proverbial rabbits conjured up from magicians top hats! In one of those moments of food envy I wished for a wholemeal baguette. Downcast I walked along with thoughts of what might have been. The promised village hove into view. As predicted the sole café was shuttered. My last hope! With steps of weary resignation and pilgrim fortitude I pressed on. My beautiful surroundings providing some consolation. Suddenly I heard in the distance the horn of an approaching mobile vendor. Around the corner appeared a bread van. It pulled to a stop in front of me and out popped the driver. He slid open the door, reached inside and produced one wholemeal loaf, pocketed my payment and drove off. Next time I’ll have the presence of mind to visualise a wholemeal baguette with a mouth watering filling!

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## **Article**

### **Some Rituals Performed/to Perform Along the Camino Frances/Finisterre**

Medieval pilgrims performed rituals at certain points along their Camino. Many modern day pilgrims have adopted some of these rituals. Two are now forbidden for conservation reasons.

### **Bell Ringing at the monastery at Zabaldika, Iglesias de San Esteban**

Ring the monastery bell while walking between Zubiri and Trinidad de Arre. See Day 6 of **‘Camino de Santiago Faith Walk with Kristin and Peter,’** Spirit and Nature Productions. 39 videos, You Tube.

### **Cruz de Ferro**

At the top of Monte Irago (1505m) pilgrims encounter La Cruz de Ferro (The Iron Cross). This formerly marked the boundary between Maragateria and Leon. According to legend passing pilgrims would add a rock to the base of the cross. In previous times they would select a stone as they walked through Foncebadon. Today many pilgrims bring a stone from home to place on the pile. The tradition has evolved where the stone represents things pilgrims wish to 'let go' and or remember loved ones.



**Image:** The cross at Cruz de Ferro

I always make a point of walking down to the river's edge and performing a cleansing ritual by dipping my hands in the water for a symbolic cleansing.

### **Tree of Jesse**

A Tree of Jesse column is located at the entrance to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela on the Portico de la Gloria. It forms part of the portal masterminded by Maestro Mateo. Upon arrival pilgrims would place their palm on the pillar. Prayers and wishes were commonly made as pilgrims pressed each finger into its respective groove.. This practice is now forbidden as over time damage to the stone work has occurred due to the constant rubbing. (Joyce Rupp in her opening chapter notes how the placing of her palm on the column gave her connection with pilgrims of the past.)

### **Hugging the Apostle**

Located high above the altar is a statue of St James. Pilgrims are encouraged to enter the stairway and briefly hug the statue. It is quite bizarre seeing, during a mass, arms suddenly appear around the statue.

### **Kneeling Before the Apostle's Casket**

Many pilgrims descend the stairs into the crypt by the altar to kneel before the St James casket.

### **Swinging of the Botafumeiro**

Most pilgrims are eager to see the swinging of the giant botafumeiro. Nowadays this is swung at the conclusion of certain masses. Arrive early to get a seat. Sitting in a cross wise direction has this huge object flying directly overhead leaving a trail of incense smoke.

### **Purification at the Cathedral**

Medieval pilgrims would burn their clothes outside the cathedral as an act of purification. When the horse fountain was constructed they moved this activity to the cathedral roof!

Alexander John Shaia counsels against performing this traditional act at this juncture. Instead he advocates delaying the clothes burning until several months following the return home. He believes the pilgrim garb can play an important role in the processing of the journey. Only when this has been concluded would he approve of some items being burned.

### **Saturday Evening Vigil**

Participate in the special pilgrim Vigil held immediately following the Evening Mass in the cathedral. Visit the key places of importance to pilgrims over the centuries. A highlight is a ceremony held in the cloisters where each pilgrim is invited to toss a black card symbolising all that we wish to be free of into a burning cauldron.

## Finisterre

A tradition, now discouraged by local authorities was the ritual burning of clothing at Finisterre as a rite of purification.

## Observation of the Sunset at Finisterre

Another interesting activity is the observation of a sunset at Finisterre. Most pilgrims walk to the lighthouse and perch on a rock. A beach known as the 'hippy beach' located behind the town provides another interesting sunset viewing point. (Unsafe for swimming).



## Wayside Markers/Crosses

An observable tradition is the making of ritual stone piles on wayside markers and at the foot of some wayside crosses.

## Ocean Cleansing

'Another common form of purification or rebirth is stripping, bathing, and washing one's clothes in the frigid Atlantic waters, drying in the sun, and thereby cleansing the body. Pilgrims Stories p175 There is a small secluded beach just before Finisterre where pilgrims still perform this ritual.

**Image:** Sunset at the Hippy Beach (Mar de Fora), Finisterre

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## Things to Do in Lugo

Lugo is the capital of the province of Lugo and is on the Camino Primitivo around 99.2 km from Santiago de Compostela. It is one of the most populated cities in Galicia. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century the Roman's built a defensive wall. Enjoy excellent views from the top of the countryside and the city as it is as tall as 15 metres in parts. The walls were declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000.

- Complete the circuit on top of the **city walls**, some 2 km long, 71 towers (or 85!) and 10 gates.
- Watch out for great views of the **cathedral's Gothic flying buttresses** from atop the city walls.
- Attend the **pilgrim service** in the cathedral de Santa Maria de Lugo.
- Inspect the **cathedral's fine architecture**, with examples from a Romanesque nave to Baroque and Rococo chapels in the apse.
- Cross a **Roman bridge** (renovated) during the walk out of town.



**Image:** Lugo Roman City Wall

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## Camino Tip

Purchase a light pepper shaker and half fill it before leaving home. A very useful item to have when making a picnic lunch.

## Resources

For an interactive planner for most Camino Routes try 'Godesalco Camino Planner.' It is useful for working out stages etc. Just select English.

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## Reviews

### Books

**'Estrellas Moments of Illumination Along El Camino de Santiago: a memoir,'** Suzanne Maggio, 2021, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 MAG [4 copies]

Suzanne opted to walk the Camino Frances solo, leaving St Jean Pied de Port on 31 May, 2019. As the journey progresses Suzanne describes the places she passes through and recounts her interactions with other pilgrims. Each chapter is focused on one pilgrim and the light they brought to her journey. As well she comments on her feelings, past experiences, and the impact the Camino experience is having. One year later she notes that the Camino is still transforming her life. She is an established author and has an easy writing style.

Highly recommended. I read it twice and it was even better the second time.

**'Suzanne Maggio - Estrellas you meet on the Camino,'** The Camino Café Podcast, [56.23] ~ on both You Tube and podcast.

A great complement to the book. Suzanne explains the meaning of the title and how she structured the chapters. One of the best podcasts I've heard.

**'There's Something Going On! Walking the Camino de Santiago,'** Simon Donlevy, 946 DON, Christchurch City Libraries, [5 copies]

This memoir told in 156 pages is an interesting read. The author recounts his journey chronologically with enough detail to bring memories to mind. Blisters, snoring, wonderful international friendships all get a mention. There are daily face time conversations with various friends and family members, playing of favourite playlists, podcasts and audio books and meeting up to walk briefly with friends. Perhaps if he had left his usual life behind whilst walking his Camino there might have been space for personal transformation.

Overall there's not too much out of the ordinary going on!

**'The Way of the Gardener. Lost in the Weeds Along the Camino de Santiago,'** Lyndon Penner, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 PEN, [3 copies]

This is certainly a different take on the Camino Frances pilgrimage journey. It's amazing how much richer the landscape is when there is a working knowledge of the local flora. (And of the European bird life!) Lyndon is a landscape gardener back home in Canada and he has an assured writing style, as he recounts his journey from St Jean Pied de Port to Santiago de Compostela with friend Carol. His account includes references to the major cathedrals, Cruz de Ferro etc. I couldn't help but think of the myriad weeds I saw along the way, and which I recognise on my property! These didn't rate a mention even though the book's subtitle is; 'Lost in the Weeds along the Camino de Santiago,' although some are referenced in the 'Plants of the Camino de Santiago,' sections. There are also useful illustrations of the foliage of a number of the plants.

A very worthwhile read.

**My Camino – the podcast, 10 August 2021, Pt 1.** [42min]

Canadian gardener and author, Lyndon Penner wrote, **'The Way of the Gardener, getting lost in the Weeds along the Camino de Santiago.'** Dan Mullins manages to draw out complementary information.

**My Camino – the Podcast**

**17 August Pt 2.** [46 min] Lyndon Penner. ~ the conversation continues.

**'The Man With the Camino Tattoo, Searching for Sanctuary on the Camino de Santiago'**

Dermot Breen, from a private collection.

Dermot hails from Belfast, Northern Ireland and in 2016 walked the Camino del Norte. He's walking in memory of his wife Jacqui who had died from ovarian cancer fifteen months earlier. The book is generously illustrated with Dermot's photographs and a number of local legends are articulated.

A solid read.

**'Into the Thin, A Pilgrimage Walk Across Northern Spain,'** Stephen Drew, 946 DRE, 2020, Christchurch City Libraries, (3 copies.) Reviewed November 2021 newsletter.

This memoir is very well written and will bring back memories as Stephen describes his Camino journey. As promised in the title he does deliver regarding his inner journey.

Stephen discusses his book in the following podcasts.

**Episode 47 - Into the Thin,** The Camino Podcast, [54.14]

An interview with Stephen Drew. A walk towards love and away from guilt and shame.

**Stephen Drew, - 'How the Camino helps us process grief and life's many challenges,'**

Camino Café podcast, July 3, 2021, [56 min].

This book received favorable mention during the meeting so the original review has been reproduced.

## **You Tube**

**Via de la Plata / Sanabres 2022 (1): Salamanca – Grant de Moreruela,** Anna Sar, You Tube, [16.27]

This is the first of a series of vlogs for the route Murray spoke about at our May Meeting last year. It's filmed in the CinemaScope ratio so looks really great. Distances and clips including names of albergues are included. The sound track playing unrelated music is a little distracting and there are no natural sounds.

**Camino de Santiago- Camino Portugues 2022 | Porto to Santiago,'** David Wen, You Tube, [19.51]

This is a wonderful compilation of his 11 day to day vlogs. He walks the Coastal out of Porto, then transfers to the Central, moves on to the Variante Espiritual before joining the Central again at Padron.

A window into walking during Covid in 2022.

**'Camino Safety for Women with Sara Dhooma,'** robscamino, You Tube, [13.14]

A very worthwhile chat with Sara Dhooma who has walked over 12 solo Caminos. She gives some great tips on enhancing safety. Search "Sara Dhooma" for coverage of many Caminos. Her exuberance may be an acquired taste!

**'Harry's Camino, An Unsugarcoated Vlog About Walking The Camino de Santiago Compostela,'** Harry James Photography, You Tube, June, 2022, [10.13]

As promised the commentary is real. Harry uses still images, and drone shots to great effect. He walked in April, 2022.

## **Primitivo Follow Ups**

**'Solo Hiking 320 km to the End of the World along the Camino Primitivo,'** Efren Gonzalez, [47.59]

This is Efren's introductory documentary of the whole route skillfully edited to show all aspects of his trek along the Camino Primitivo. The drone footage gives another perspective. Included are two pilgrims demonstrating the Spanish way of making the famous potato tortilla. Great to see the inclusion of more pilgrims.

**'Camino Aragonés The Lesser Travelled Routes,'** Nadine Walks, You Tube, [9.26]

An excellent briefing on this Camino which commences at the Somport Pass in France and connects with the Camino Frances at Puente La Reina.

Also see 2 videos under created playlists filmed while walking the Aragonés.

## **Other You Tube Documentaries**

**'Walking the Camino de Santiago with Andrew McCarthy,'** Rudy Maxa's World, You Tube, 2021, [40.15] Andrew McCarthy. Actor, director, writer, (Pretty in Pink, St Elmos Fire, walked the Camino Frances with Sam his 19 year old son. Andrew's book (below) is referenced in the You Tube video.

**['The Longest Way Home, One Man's Quest for the Courage to Settle Down,'] Andrew McCarthy, Christchurch City Libraries, 791.43028 MCC**

I requested the library purchase this book when I heard Andrew reference the Camino de Santiago and the crucial role it played in freeing him from fear ~ his crippling limitation. What I didn't realise was his life changing journey on the Camino would feature on only 4 pages! The rest of the book is about places he visits in his new career as a travel writer.

This is a wonderful example of personal transformation arising from his Camino.]

**'What Every Pilgrim Should Know Before Starting Camino de Santiago this year!' Camino Tellers, You Tube, February, 2022, [29.12]**

This video covers many topics concerning preparing for a Camino. There is even some advice on connectivity!

## **Podcasts**

**'My Camino – the podcast Nancy Frey Spain based US anthropologist,' 27 March, 2018, [50 mins]**

After discussing various Camino legends regarding St James, Nancy discusses the Camino, the pilgrim and internet connection (at 35 mins) and its negative impact on creating crucial mental space. She gives a caution about keeping your head out of the iCloud. Nancy also hints at the dangers of over planning blunting the Camino experience.

Both interesting and thought provoking. (Previously published in May 2022. )

**'Travelling Through...The London Podcast,' 10 January, 2022**

045 'From Forest Bathing to Just Sitting Outdoors – Holly Worton talks about the Positive Effects of Nature on Your Mindset.'

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'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, Vol 1. No 2.

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'Sacred Sites, Historic Villages, Local Food and Wine,' Beebe Bahrami, 2019, 498g. Christchurch City Libraries, 946 BAH, (4 copies). Vol. 2 No 1.

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'New technology is not good or evil and of itself. It's all about how people choose to use it.' David Wong



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