

Ultreia et Suseia! The Newsletter.

Vol 2. No 4.

November 2022, Christchurch Camino Group



'At its heart, the journey of each life is a pilgrimage through unforeseen sacred places that enlarge and enrich the soul.' John O'Donohue

Editorial

Changes to Reasons For Walking the Camino Over Time

People walk the Camino for a myriad of reasons. In its modern reincarnation walkers are more likely to do so for the experience, or spiritual rather than religious reasons. In medieval times sacred sites with their relics of saints had great pulling power. In the case of Santiago de Compostela it was believed that the mortal remains of St James had been interred in the city's cathedral. Indeed many pilgrims today will make their way down the stairs to view, and maybe pray before the silver casket. Nowadays the number of pilgrims who cite religious reasons has dwindled.

Beebe Bahrami the author of '**Camino de Santiago, Sacred Sites, Historic Villages, Local Food and Wine,**' gives 12 reasons to undertake the journey. Google 'reasons for walking,' and her article on the subject will appear. Her opening line says it all, 'The Camino de Santiago, a sacred pilgrimage, and an outdoor trek across Northern Spain, is a great adventure.' (See article below which expands on this.)

Her twelve reasons are: For a life changing adventure, To tune more deeply into life and yourself, For the food scene, To unplug, To be part of history, To let go, For the physical challenge, To explore the many churches, For the wine, For solitude, For comradeship, For the Compostela. How many boxes do you tick?

Over time the Christchurch Camino group has heard from numerous pilgrims whose journeys have touched upon most of these reasons. Perhaps the food and wine scene as primary reasons has yet to be given by one of our presenters.

Next year we will explore aspects of pilgrimage, and hear about the post Camino realisation that a 'Hero's Journey,' has been undertaken, and indeed may still be unfolding. Many of us have found that our journey was a transformative inner experience. This view of the journey as one of personal transformation is explored in the featured article, 'The Camino as a Rite of Passage,' below.

Some recent research concluded that despite the increase in secular motives, the majority of pilgrims showed some form of spiritual connection to the Camino. 'Concurrent with the

contemporary shifts in in the 'idea of 'religion', Camino continues to be a religious place driven by inner goals, albeit in a more personal, interpretive, and "spiritual" way.'

'Motivational Landscape and Evolving Identity of a Route-Based Religious Tourism Space: A Case of Camino de Santiago,' H Kim, (Pusan National University), S Yilmaz, (California State University, East Bay), Soyoun Ahn, 2019.

'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). Chapter 1 Motives, p 21

'Camino de Santiago, Sacred Sites, Historic Villages, Local Food and Wine,' Beebe Bahrami, Christchurch City Libraries, 946, BAH (4 copies)

Ultreia Suseia
Philip

Banner photograph - Ruins of San Anton.

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Noticeboard

Scheduled 2023 Gathering Dates

We hope to hold 4 gatherings during 2023. The first two are set to be held in our current venue. We will be advised of revised library rebuild timeline updates midyear. Our confirmed dates for 2023: 20 February, 24 April.

2023 Gathering Contributions Request

We welcome presentations from our returned pilgrims. We would love to hear about your experiences. Please contact Philip: chchcaminogroup@gmail.com
It is not unusual for the Camino to be influencing changes in the pilgrim's life long after the footsteps have fallen silent. If you are willing to share we would love to hear about your continuing journey.

Christchurch Camino Walking Group

The Christchurch Camino Walking Group meets 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: Cecilia chchcaminogroup@gmail.com

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 These could include Camino Stories and Poems, and articles. Time these to arrive at least a week before a scheduled meeting.

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

Christchurch Camino Group Gathering Follow Up November 2022

Apologies

The following apologies were received: Doryan, Glenda, Midge, Annette, Cecilia.

Returning Ceremony

A brief ceremony recognising the following returned pilgrims was held: Gythlian, Elizabeth, Clare and Steve, and Sharon.

Departure Ceremony

A Departure Ceremony was conducted to recognise Gemma's imminent departure for her 5 month solo pilgrimage along the Te Araroa Trail.

Things to Share

Resources/Gear etc.

Elma brought an excellent Camino documentary to our attention. **'The Camino Voyage,'** 2018, [94 min], is currently on Amazon Prime. (See Reviews below.) She showed a book documenting Kiwis in Spain in the 1950's, **'Where Wine Flows Like Water, A Gastronomic Pilgrimage Through Spain,'** John McInerney. Marie-Therese discussed a new addition to the library's growing Camino/Pilgrimage section, **'10 Paths to Santiago: Ten Personal Stories About Walking the Camino Told by Pilgrims from Around the World,'** Marianne Sommer, 946 SOM, 2022, Christchurch City Libraries, [3 copies]. She gave it a qualified recommendation. The book will be reviewed in the next newsletter.

Philip showed another recent addition to the library collection, **'The Way of the Wild Goose: Three Pilgrimages Following Geese, Stars and Hunches on the Camino de Santiago,'** Beebe Bahrami, 2022, Christchurch City Libraries, 203.5 BAH, [4 copies]. (A review of this book may be found in the review section of this newsletter.) He also showed, **'Pilgrim Stories On and Off the Road to Santiago,'** by Nancy Louise Frey, Christchurch City Libraries 960 FRE. (Reviewed November 2021.) This is an academic work and would be of interest to those who wished to explore pilgrim motivations, and experiences both on, and after their Caminos. It also has a section on changes Nancy has noticed in pilgrims over time. Articles regarding her recent research may be found at: walkingtopresence.com

Presentation One ~ The Variante Espiritual

Our first presentation for the evening was given by Steve utilising PowerPoint. The topic was his and Clare plus cousin Sharon's time on the The Variante Espiritual section of their recent Portuguese Camino. This is an official variant and therefore qualifies for the Compostela, It takes 3 days. The extra day involves a 1 and a half hour boat ride (€25) and a 2 km walk into Padron. Many pilgrims walk on from Padron to make a shorter last day into Santiago de Compostela.

(There are a number of St James related sites in Padron and a certificate if all are visited is available.) The route was created around 10 years ago. Authentic or not the three days are filled with delights. There are picturesque seaside villages, monasteries, medieval stone mills and relaxing streams hence 'the route of stone and water.' Steve showed us images of forts designed to withstand Viking onslaught, petroglyphs, (carvings in rocks mostly dating from 4000 years ago,) and a tidal estuary filled with fish and birdlife.

Noticeable changes since they last walked in 2019 was the accommodation squeeze, and the requirement for masks in pharmacies and on public transport. The presentation was very informative with a mix of images and clips. A Q and A session concluded this part of the meeting.

Resource ~ Podcast

Spirit of the Camino, '3.9 – The Portuguese Coastal Route,' [41 min]

In this interview Nick compares walking the Central, Coastal, and Senda Litoral.

Christchurch Camino Walking Group Report

Since our last meeting there have been 3 walks, namely: Bowenvale Track and Beyond, Governor's Bay Coastal Walk, and Rakaia Gorge Walkway. Philip thanked Cecilia for her sterling work in formulating a yearly programme and coordinating the Leaders for each walk. He also thanked the Walk Leaders for checking out the route to be walked and for their leadership on the day.



Camino Buddies

Attendees had the opportunity to share with their neighbour what their next Camino would be, and why.

Presentation Two ~ Walking the Portuguese Senda Litoral Camino

Gythlian and Elizabeth have recently returned from Portugal and Spain and they shared their pilgrimage along the Portuguese Senda Litoral (including the Variante Espiritual.) While there was much to enjoy (stunning sunsets, beautiful beach landscapes,) it wasn't until crossing into Spain that the "Camino Vibe" was apparent. Walking surfaces were found to be tough on the feet. They recommend sorting distances in conjunction with affordable accommodation. This was a challenge in the first week and led to some budget over runs. They recommend booking accommodation. Pilgrim menus were not widespread and now cost €12 to €13.

Overall daily costs had increased significantly from \$60 three years ago to between \$100 to \$110. We were then treated to a photographic display of their favourite things on this Camino. A key one was the interaction with locals and pilgrims. I was taken by the high quality street art which featured in a number of the photographs.

Following the PowerPoint presentation our attention shifted to favourite items of gear ranging from packs to a sarong, including Injinji socks. This session also concluded with a Q and A. We are grateful that they agreed to present at very short notice.

Prior to commencing their walk in Porto Elizabeth and Gythlian participated on the '516 Arouca Suspension Bridge Day Tour.'

Near Vigo they purchased tickets for the Cies Islands tour. (There are limited tickets each day as the whole archipelago is now the Galacia National Park.)

Small Group Discussion

The evening concluded with Small Group Discussions where there was an opportunity to ask Camino related questions, share information and reminisce.

Featured Topic

Camino and Memory

'As a memory the Camino exists on at least two levels: that which is shared and re-created for an audience and that which exists privately for the pilgrim, the place that is revisited and remembered, bringing back the journey's discoveries.' p199, Nancy Frey, Pilgrim Stories.

Pilgrims return from the Camino with memorabilia which may be utilised as an aid to memory and sharing. Compostelas and possibly credentials are framed, photographs are turned into coffee table books and ornamental representations of sign posts displayed. Some may pin badges to hats and sew or stick fabric badges to their pack.

The viewing of You Tube videos detailing the exploits of others, and the reading of pilgrim memoirs is a favoured way of keeping in touch with our memories. A number are moved to write and publish their memoir thus reaching an international audience.

The Christchurch Camino Group is an example of an 'imagined community' which pilgrims feel they are part of as they walk their Camino. Pilgrims once home form or join associations of like minded people linked by various routes and shared experiences. In this way meetings provide the opportunity to maintain a connection to their pilgrimage and other pilgrims. 'No one else understands,' is a commonly heard remark and given as a reason for attendance.

Memories can also form part of the private world of the returned pilgrim. They may take home an internalised viewpoint as part of their transformation. They might seek to show more generosity and kindness towards others as a result of example and practice on the Camino.

'As a memory the Camino is not only a mental process but also a sensory experience.' Nancy Frey.

The pleasure gained from experiencing silence whilst walking might be replicated in the home by shunning background music, and radio. The scent from plants and flowers can be a trigger to bringing back vivid memories, perhaps of specific Camino events. Alexander John Shaia recommends keeping your Camino clothing (not burning it at Finisterre or throwing it out) as an aid to adjusting to home life. 'Simply putting on the clothes may powerfully evoke the experience of the Camino.' Alexander John Shaia

Featured Articles

The Camino de Santiago – Reasons for Walking ~ A Trek, Adventure or a Pilgrimage?

'The Camino de Santiago, a sacred pilgrimage, and an outdoor trek across Northern Spain, is a great adventure.' Beebe Bahrami

In the quote above Beebe Bahrami encapsulates the motivation of modern pilgrims. When describing their journey on the Camino de Santiago some refer to a trek, while others to a pilgrimage. A common definition of pilgrimage is a journey with intention to a sacred place, while a trek refers more to the physical challenge of a task to be completed. People might make a pilgrimage to a secular site connected to a famous person they idolise. Making a pilgrimage to Graceland or to the Pere Lachaise cemetery comes to mind.

Modern day pilgrims walk for a multitude of reasons, and for many the tomb housed in the cathedral at Santiago de Compostela alleged to contain the mortal remains of St James is not their prime focus.

For most pilgrims the *journey* along the Camino de Santiago is the prime reason. Walking through nature experiencing the Camino's gifts of time, space and connection is the reward. Whatever their motivation for embarking almost all returned pilgrims attribute changes in their life to the Camino experience. They recognise that in parallel to the physical outer journey there has been an inner journey of ongoing transformation. If asked, how would you describe your Camino experience?

The Camino as a 'Rite of Passage'

A chance meeting with a Hungarian pilgrim and anthropologist at the Lires albergue in 2018 sparked a curiosity about the Camino as a 'rite of passage.' I immediately requested comment for the documentary 'Walking the Camino, Communing With Pilgrims,' I was currently filming. Edna obliged and an interview was conducted after breakfast. She explained that pilgrims interviewed

had reasons for undertaking their Caminos, like reviewing a relationship, sorting out their life following a sudden redundancy, and that walking the Camino was undertaken as a time to process these changes. She said they were undergoing a modern form of the rite of passage. This interview subsequently was featured in my documentary and 'Rite of Passage,' was incorporated as a subtitle.

I was given occasion to rethink this position during an after dinner conversation in Le Puy-en-Velay. It was the eve of my 2019 Camino from Le Puy-en-Velay to Finisterre and I was presented with the view that the Camino couldn't possibly be an example of a modern day rite of passage. My new found friend said the Camino lacked the key element, 'social observation' of the changes in the individual wrought by the journey. I pondered upon his point. Perhaps pilgrims leaving their

gathering and who have publicly announced their journey might qualify? They would be returning to the fold upon completion of the physical portion of their pilgrimage, and changes in them might be detected...

The missing piece of my puzzle was found in Alexander John Shaia's book, **'Returning from Camino.'** Here a chapter is devoted to steps to incorporate the social recognition aspect so that pilgrims can experience their pilgrimage as a 'rite of passage.'



'Alexander John Shaia, Returning From Camino, - A must-read for walking the Camino!'

Camino Café, You Tube, [58 mins].

Towards the end of this podcast Shaia outlines the various elements of a 'rite of passage' which when present help the pilgrim to undergo transformation. These include being aware of the importance of trials and tribulations and having a mentor who will listen repeatedly to your story once home, and help you hear it changing as transformation occurs. It is very helpful hearing the author expand on Chapter 11 'A Classic Rite of Passage.'

References

'Returning From Camino.' Alexander John Shaia, Christchurch City Libraries, 263 SHA (1 copy)
A book about preparing for the inner journey, maximising the benefits while on the pilgrimage, and options to deal with inner changes brought about by the journey.

A must read if your interests extend beyond preparation for the physical journey.

'Returning From Camino,' Alexander Shaia (Original Review, Follow Up Newsletter, 24 February, 2020)

This is a book for those who see the Camino as a pilgrimage and who wish to make it a transformative experience.

A major component deals with re-entry once the 'turn around point' (eg. Santiago de Compostela) on the journey has been reached. It is best read as Camino preparation as there are a number of decisions and tasks to be completed prior to departure. eg. Am I completing this as a pilgrimage with the idea of personal transformation? Do I view this journey as a component of a 'rite of passage'? There are also chapters which offer pointers while walking eg. 'While You Walk,' and 'Arriving at the Cathedral.'

The point is made that the book has relevance even to those who may have completed the pilgrimage years ago and are still processing events, acknowledging gifts etc. A book for those seeking more than a pleasant walk! Also available from Amazon Books, (Kindle version \$10.03)

The Camino Podcast Episode 34 - 'How Strange it Will Be To Come Home' Dave Whitson

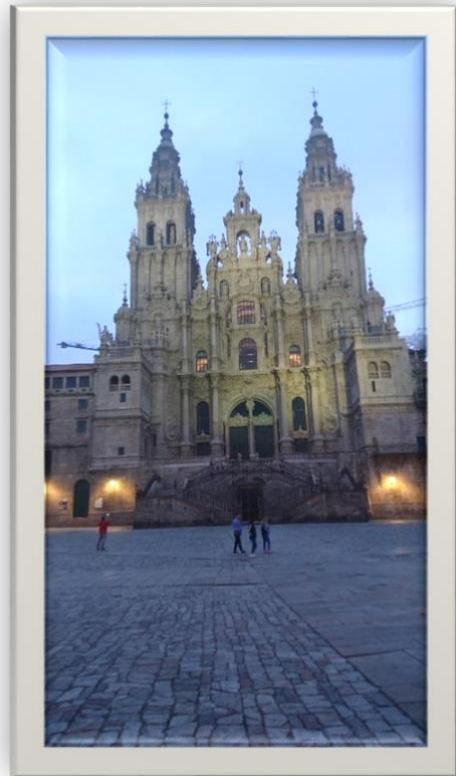
First half particularly the interview with Alexander John Shaia. The process of return, and the steps a pilgrim can take before departure, to assist with making the pilgrimage a genuinely transformative experience - should they desire it.

Alexander Shaia is the author of, 'Returning From Camino.' This book is available in paperback and kindle from Amazon, Christchurch City Libraries, 263 SHA, and is reviewed above.

Episode 93 - Dr. Alexander Shaia 'Returning from Camino' The Deconstructionists Podcast series.

Another podcast examining the book 'Returning From Camino,' and exploring the nature of pilgrimage and the pilgrim, and the history of the Camino Frances. Shaia is once again excellent value, although I prefer Dave Whitson as interviewer.

Image: Santiago Cathedral



www.moon.com>trip-ideas

The above is the official website, however its easier to Google, '**12 Reasons to Walk the Camino de Santiago.**' This is travel publisher Moon's website for the promotion of Beebe Bahrami's book, 'Camino de Santiago, Sacred Sites, Historic Villages, Local Food and Wine.' Included under the heading, 'More Camino Tips:' is an interesting article entitled, 'Camino de Santiago Route Planner.' Here the Camino Frances is divided into sections. Even the subtitles make for interesting reading, For Mountains and Huddled Hamlets, For Stunning Churches (and a Wine Fountain,) For Peaceful Monasteries and Plentiful Poppies, etc. Just reading the headings is a delight!

Review reprinted from Follow Up Newsletter August, 2021, Vol. 1. No. 2.

'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. Each section of the Camino is visited under the following headings: Highlights, Recommended Overnight Stops, Planning Your Time, Getting There, Local Markets, Highlights of Local Food and Wine. There are also chapters on: Planning Your Trip, Make the Trek, History and Essentials. There is a pullout map of the route, and a bonus chapter devoted to Finisterre and Muxia (Beebe was a guest on 'My Camino the Podcast,' [60 mins] on 8 December, 2020.)

The Camino As a Path of Mindfulness

'The past no longer exists, and the future is not here yet.'
Buddha

Walking on the Camino is an ideal time to be in the present moment and to practise mindfulness as pilgrims make their inner journey. Books I have found to be useful in this regard are listed and reviewed below.

As part of my Camino preparation and training I try out, and practise several meditations. I then note the key steps in the notebook which always accompanies me on the Camino.

Camino Poem

Stillness

The transition is made.
Imperceptibly I move into the stillness of Now
where there is no future and no past.

Others are called into my presence
Attracted by invisible rays of energy.
We dance like moths
And move into the light.
There is no future, and no past.

At times I am drawn to others,
Some ancient recognition?
We share deep and intimate understandings
as we travel through the landscape
Another call is heard, and answered.. .
There is no future, and no past...

The process is repeated.
Old souls exchange greetings
and enrich the occasion with new understandings.
There is no future, there is no past.
Just Now!

© Philip 2013.

Mindfulness Resources

'Peace is Every Step, The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life,' Thich Nhat Hanh,
Christchurch City Libraries, Downloadable Audiobook.

'You Are Here, Discovering the Magic of the Present Moment,' Thich Nhat Hanh, The Book
Depository, \$NZ 20.65 (free postage)

"You can practise 'I am here' through mindful breathing and mindful walking. ...'With each step you take, you arrive in the here and now....take your steps mindfully....co-ordinate your steps with your breath. As you breathe in, you practise arriving.'

A link to Thich Nhat Hanh speaking about walking mindfully to heal the body and the earth.

<https://fb.watch/6Mw43Rjr0t>

'Five-Minute Mindfulness Walking - essays and exercises for mindfully moving through the world.' Douglas Baker Christchurch City Libraries 158.12 BAK

This is an eminently readable book on walking and mindfulness. Baker concludes with the following, 'A walk taken with intention reinforces mindfulness. As you set out, pause and close your eyes, focusing your mind on the intention you wish to bring to fruition.'

A very worthwhile read.

'Walking in Wisdom, A Journey into the extraordinary richness of the present moment,' by Tarchin Hearn, greendharmatreasury.org (available free) Book version, \$18, plus postage.

A simple, easy to read and powerful step by step guide to accessing the present moment via a series of walking meditations.

Tarchin, a former Buddhist monk writes eloquently, the meditations offered well grounded in practice. He advocates utilising 4 supports as the basic meditation; smiling, breathing, awareness of physical movement and awareness of the support of innumerable beings beneath our feet, to explore the richness of the present moment. Once the walker has become confident with this foundational meditation Tarchin then explores a number of additional options.

Highly recommended. e-Book (free/donation)



Image: The meseta

Article

An Addition to Our Quarterly Gathering Proceedings

Camino Departure or Sending Out and Welcome Home Ceremonies

The ceremonies provides us with the opportunity to recognise that some of our number are leaving on their Camino quest and to wish them well in their endeavors. It is also an opportunity to formally recognise their departure as per 'Rite of Passage.' ~see article above.

Similarly upon their return, a brief ceremony will be held to formally welcome them back, express thanks for a safe return and offer our support as they incorporate lessons learnt on the Camino into their everyday life. This formal recognition of the returned pilgrim is also an integral part of the 'Rite of Passage.'

Article

Connectivity and the Camino

Our August gathering had a focus on 'Pilgrims and Connectivity on the Camino,' This article is based upon the outcomes of our Small Group discussions.

The mobile phone is ubiquitous as is wifi on the more travelled Caminos. Being connected has become part of most people's lives. The mobile has been added to the Packing List as an essential item, plus the charger! A good percentage of pilgrims are setting out on a "pilgrimage." They're hoping the very long walk westwards to Santiago de Compostela will somehow bring new understandings about themselves and others, and maybe a closer relationship with God. A necessary part of this process is the stepping away from the familiar and becoming immersed in a new rhythm. With a focus on the present moment the pilgrim becomes attuned to the surroundings, aware of birdsong, the aroma of roadside herbs, the waving of the crops in the wind, and perhaps the footfall of the ancients. All of this is available and, for weeks at a time.

And then we have the mobile. Do we have the internal fortitude to resist its attempts to lure us back to the world we have spent a small fortune to leave?

So what can be done? What did our mix of pilgrims past and future suggest? It became clear that the mobile is a useful tool. The offline maps and GPS are great back ups, particularly on the more remote Caminos. Having the country's local police help-line on the call list was seen as being essential. An examination of potential mobile uses showed that there were apps classified as social media, eg. Facebook, emails, and apps to assist with the journey eg. Booking.com, weather forecast app. Apps such as email and blogs might be valuable tools in aiding reflection.

Personal circumstances are important. A pilgrim may need the reassurance of a loved one's voice to take the first step. The checking on the wellbeing of an elderly parent needs to continue.

A chat with loved ones prior to departure will help sort communication frequency and set expectations. Suzanne Maggio in her memoir said that daily texts from her husband revealed a side of him she, after 30 years of marriage didn't know. And that this was an important factor in them refreshing their marriage.

For those making a pilgrimage or Hero's Journey it is important to remember that trials and tribulations along the way are to be expected and perhaps contain essential learnings as part of personal growth. Maybe the mobile can be a fall back?

The mobile phone has a camera function which has improved significantly. This means it is kept handy, ready for that picture of a life time. This coupled with the notifications feature of most apps makes responding to prompts highly likely thus pulling the pilgrim back into the world left behind. Silencing all apps and setting communication frequency and timings with loved ones will help minimise intrusions.

A relevant memoir is listed below. As John walks the Frances he discusses the lessons he is learning. Many of them relate to connectivity and gradually minimizing it. Here are two pertinent quotes amongst many, 'The phone is no longer the arbiter of my day,' and 'Silencing it has been a joyful liberation from its strident insistence on having my attention.'

'Go Your Own Way: Following in the Footsteps of Martin Sheen, 2020, on the Way of St James,' John Lloyd, Kindle, US\$3.27. (See "Book Reviews," section for a full review.)

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

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Article

Camino "Go to" Books Available from Christchurch City Libraries

The following Camino books have been reviewed in previous newsletters. This is the first time they have appeared in this format. In my opinion these are key books, and are on my essential reading list.

Inner Journey/The Journey/ Homecoming

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

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

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.

'Returning From Camino.' Alexander John Shaia, 263 SHA (1 copy)

A book about preparing for the inner journey, maximising the benefits while on the pilgrimage, and options to deal with inner changes brought about by the journey.

A **must read** if your interests extend beyond preparation for the physical journey.

Kiwis Camino Frances

'Just a Mum on the Camino de Santiago, Put down the peeler and have an adventure,'

Rachel Goodman, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 GOO, (4 copies).

Part Two focuses on a 39 day chronological account of Kiwi Rachel Goodman's journey on the Frances while Part One explores the reasons for making the journey. An Afterword containing; an Epilogue, Glossary, Pack List and visit to Muxia complete the book.

Or as an alternative;

'Kiwi on the Camino, A Walk That Changed My Life,' Flintoff, Vivianne, 2017, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 FLY (4 copies).

Vivianne recounts her journey of transformation amidst the pain, fears, anxieties, challenges, and fun as she walks to Santiago and on to Finisterre.

Thoughtful Frances Journey Accounts

'Walking in a Relaxed Manner, Life Lessons from the Camino,' Rupp Joyce, Christchurch City Libraries

This is an account of a journey along the Camino Frances as a pilgrimage, written around themes/life lessons rather than days walked.

'A Slow Walk Across Spain, Walking the Camino de Santiago,' (Second edition, 2015,) Karen Manwaring, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 MAN (3 copies)

This is a 'go to' manual to be read prior to walking the Camino Frances. It includes helpful preparation tips, recounts life lessons learned and 5 Spanish recipes. The factual material is supplemented with diary entries from her 3 Caminos. There is a useful chapter on the history of the Camino, and suggested readings and websites.

Pilgrimage

'The Art of Pilgrimage, The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred,' Phil Cousineau 203.5 COU, Christchurch City Libraries (3 copies).

If your interest is in making your walk a pilgrimage this is a great resource. This is a substantial literary work about pilgrimage encompassing a number of faiths, to be dipped into, rather than as a solid read.

'The Soul of a Pilgrim, Eight Practices for the Journey Within,' Christine Valters Paintner, Christchurch City Libraries, 263 PAI, (3 copies).

As the title indicates this is a practical guide to making an inner pilgrimage, from a Christian perspective. Paintner sets out a number of practices to assist with the journey. Each chapter deals with a different aspect of inner pilgrimage closely following the stages of a physical journey. The same practices are utilised in an exploration of each chapters' theme. This helps simplify the actions required and allows the seeker to focus more easily on the task in hand.

Guidebooks

'A Pilgrims's Guide to the: Frances/Portuguese/Finisterre and Muxia, John Brierley, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 BRI (1-2 copies.)

These guides contain a wealth of information regarding the route (easy to follow hand drawn maps), key sights/sites, accommodation and restaurants etc. The guides' subtitle is: 'Practical & Mystical Manual for the Modern Day Pilgrim.' Some dislike these inclusions, however his ponderings can be thought provoking and help see beyond the physical.

'Sacred Sites, Historic Villages, Local Food and Wine,' Beebe Bahrami, 2019, 498g. Christchurch City Libraries, 946 BAH, (4 copies)

A book about the Camino Frances to explore and savour. (See review p 14)

Naming and Understanding Buildings and Monuments on the Frances

'Pilgrimage Road to Santiago, The Complete Cultural Handbook,' David Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson, 2000, Christchurch City Libraries, 946.1 GIT, (1 copy).

This book is also available as an e-book which would be more practical to carry as the paperback is weighty. Although rather dated it carries a wealth of interesting historical and architectural information about the Camino Frances. (This is not a guide book.)

Changes on the Camino

'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).

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.

Walking

'A Philosophy of Walking,' Frederic Gros, Christchurch City Libraries, 128.4 GRO, (3 copies), This book is about different types of walking. Especially relevant are the chapters on the philosophy of long distance walking.

Article

16 Things to Experience on the Camino Frances

Here are 16 interesting things to watch out for/experience while walking the Camino Frances. I haven't experienced all of them. Maybe next time! Perhaps you have some experiences to add to my list.

- Enjoy pintxos (Basque Tapas) in Pamplona.
- Bathe your feet in the spring at San Bol on the Meseta.
- Admire the oldest roadside cross (14th Century), Cruceiro do Melide at Melide
- Try some pulpo (octopus) in Melide
- Take a 200 metre detour to explore the partially excavated Castro de Castromaior, an Iron Age hilltop fortress. (After Portomarin)
- Join in the singing with the Augustian sisters in the Santa Maria albergue foyer and staircase at Carrion de los Condes
- Listen out for the clatter of storks' beaks nesting high on bell towers etc.
- Experience the hospitality at the albergue in Granon
- Listen to the Gregorian singing monks at Rabanal del Camino

- Experience the foot washing ceremony at San Nicolas albergue
- Visit the Mercado de Abastos produce market in Santiago de Compostela, one of the best in Europe. – more locals than tourists!
- Walk across Puente del Paso Honroso, noticing the downward slope as it descends into Hospital de Orbigo
- View the rooster and hen in Santo Domingo de la Calzada cathedral.
- Admire the reflections of the Puente la Reina Bridge arches in the River Aga, maybe take a photo?
- Experience a blessing from Father Manny during Mass in English at the Pilgrims' Office chapel.
- Sight the Wild Goose game board in Plaza de la Orca in Logrono and maybe play it?

Things to Do In: Rabanal del Camino

Rabanal del Camino is an example of a Maragato village just before Cruz de Ferro. The Camino passes along one side of the town and its treasures can therefore be easily missed.

- Stay at the Confraternity of St James hosted albergue Refugio Gaucelmo located opposite the chapel. Enjoy their special afternoon tea in the garden.
- Attend a service at the chapel.



(Monasterio Benedictino de San Salvador del Monte Irago.) Be enthralled by the monks' Gregorian chanting.

- Visit the Monastery shop and chat to the monk in attendance.
- Perhaps request a retreat at the monastery (minimum stay of 3 days).
- Appreciate the Maragato architecture. (Stone houses etc.)

Camino Story

An Amusing Incident

As I plunged my broad brimmed sun hat up and down in the sudsy water recently a wry smile began to spread across my face. My mind had turned back to my 2016 Camino Nordt pilgrimage and an amusing incident. I had been walking with my multinational Camino family for around a fortnight when we spied a brand new pilgrim across the street. We knew he was brand new as his clothes and trail runners were sparkling in the sunshine. As luck would have it we caught up with him while he waited for the 'walking man' signal. There was soon a slight rearrangement as we all moved to stand downwind and then inch closer. He quickly noticed something odd was occurring! We equally quickly explained that we were all enthralled by the fresh aroma emanating from him and were making the most of the situation. He still looked a little perplexed. So one of our number went on to say that given a week or two he would fully understand! Off he went still slightly mystified and with his own "Camino Story" to tell.

Camino Skies

One of my delights is being continually amazed by the myriad Camino Skies. I enjoy the clear skies, and the cumulus clouds drifting above the Meseta. Often there is just the horizon, the blue sky and



the brown land. While not relishing walking in a downpour there is something special watching the sky darkening and waiting for the ensuing the storm.

Camino Tip

Shower Hooks

Add a small hook (obtainable from garden centres) and a water proof bag to your pack. Ideal for putting all your valuables in one place and in sight while showering, particularly where shower stalls are devoid of hooks!

Resources

www.caminodesantiago.me

An interesting section to check out is 'Tales from the Camino – A good read.' This features stories selected by the site's moderators. Currently I'm accessing it through, 'My book about walking the Camino Frances – I Will Find My Way.' C Clearly has provided a link within her comment.

Reviews

Books

'The Way of the Wild Goose: Three Pilgrimages Following Geese, Stars and Hunches on the Camino de Santiago,' Beebe Bahrami, 2022, Christchurch City Libraries, 203.5 BAH, [4 copies].

Beebe is on a quest to find out about the significance of geese and their relationship to the divine feminine, locals and the medieval Camino de Santiago. She's keen to understand the Game of Geese, the rules, and the significance of the symbols on the game board. This results in a journey involving 3 Caminos where Bebee recounts both her outer and inner Caminos. Beebe has utilised her skills as an anthropologist to research her discoveries and provide the reader with useful background information regarding churches along the way, energetic presence and the inclusion of pagan symbols in church artwork. I'm sufficiently motivated to be joining in the Wild Goose chase on my next Camino!

One beginning clue; sight the Wild Goose game board in Plaza de la Orca in Logrono and maybe play it?

Two interesting quotes from the book: Javier a memorable character said to Beebe, 'Remember that the Camino is what you make of it. It's not linear and it's not about starting in one place and

ending up in Santiago de Compostela. It's about being where you are and being open to the road, its gifts, and its lessons.'

'Or what if the Golden Goose is within? Could that be what the Game of the Golden Goose guides us toward, finding our own Golden Goose through a path of inner spiritual transformation? p 292

My Camino – the podcast, 12 April, 2022, Beebe discusses her latest book, [59 min]

Camino Café podcast - 'The Way of the Wild Goose,' Beebe Bahrami, May 14, 2022, [1hr,14]

Reprinted from November 2021 ~ A useful resource during planning.

Camino de Santiago, 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. Each section of the Camino is visited under the following headings: Highlights, Recommended Overnight Stops, Planning Your Time, Getting There, Local Markets, Highlights of Local Food and Wine. There are also chapters on: Planning Your Trip, Make the Trek, History and Essentials. There is a pullout map of the route, and a bonus chapter devoted to Finisterre and Muxia
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])

'Returning From the Camino: Lessons from a Life-Changing Journey,' Theresa A. Fersch, 2021, eBook, Amazon, US\$ 6.99.

This book was written 5 years following Theresa's return from her Camino. (She had published an account of her journey in the meantime, see below.) In my experience it is rare to find a book which is devoted to: 'So I've reached Santiago what next!' For Theresa it was post Camino blues and brain fog. In the following chapters we hear about her disconnect from almost everything. She had difficulty in finding anyone who was firstly interested and secondly could relate to her experiences. The book includes the lessons she learned, the steps Theresa took to find her new direction, and purpose.

A positive read which may help with some guidelines for those pilgrims who find themselves in similar situations.

'Sunrise in Spain: Finding the Good Life Hiking the Camino de Santiago,' 2014, Theresa A Fersch, Jessica Heid which is a day by day account of her pilgrimage, and published soon after. Available in paperback and kindle.

'I Got up and Walked the Camino De Santiago With My Other Half, April – May 2015,' David Till, Susan Till, 2020, Christchurch City Libraries, 946 TIL, [4 copies]

This is a self published book produced to a very high standard by the publishing company. It is very helpful having the photographs interspersed with the text. Both writers relate their respective days which results in much repetition. If you wish to read about every person met and every meal eaten then this book is for you.

'Go Your Own Way: Following in the Footsteps of Martin Sheen, 2020, on the Way of St James,' John Lloyd, Kindle, US\$3.27

John writes well and with a wry sense of humour. Here is an example. This after spending the night at the Roncesvalles monastery albergue, 'Many proved both capable and willing to make noises come out of their bodies that could only be described as unusual, alarming and/or medically unlikely.' This memoir is well illustrated with great photographs. A bonus is the mention of our Gythlian and Elizabeth with whom he had a cheerful chat on the descent into Zubiri. John's story telling ability brings the Camino journey alive satisfying both soon to be, and returned pilgrims. This is a great read.

‘Sauntering the Variant Espiritual of the Camino de Santiago, Kenneth Cline, 2021, Amazon Kindle, and Paperback.

The author and his wife in May/June 2019 walked the Espiritual Variante which leaves the Portuguese at Pontevedra and rejoins it at Pontecesures near Padron. It purports to follow the route taken by the body of St James. A chapter is devoted to how and why this route was in 2013 accepted by the church as an official route. This is the first book I’ve come across which has this route as its focus. There is a route map, great photographs and plenty of information about historic buildings, bridges and square. There are also appendices dealing with Volunteering at the Pilgrims Office, St James, Accommodation along the Variante Espiritual.

This book is a companion to **‘Sauntering to Santiago: The Camino de Santiago for Slow Walkers,’** Kenneth Cline, 2019, Kindle \$US 6 ~ Porto to Santiago on the Senda Litoral. (This book will be reviewed in February 2023 Newsletter.)

‘Buen Camino! A Father-Daughter Journey from Croagh Patrick to Santiago de Compostela,’ Natasha and Peter Murtagh, 946 MUR, Christchurch City Libraries, [3 copies] Father and daughter begin their Camino in their home country of Ireland and then continue on the Camino Frances. They take turns giving their account of the day's events. They tend to focus on different aspects of the journey so there is very little repetition. Natasha writes simply about her experiences while her father drills down into a lot of historical detail. As one reviewer put it, their book is a cross between a memoir and guidebook. Great photographs included.

A solid read.

My Camino – the podcast, 18 January, 2022, [1 hr 1 min]

A Contemplative Camino: Four Ways to Solitude, Stillness, and Silence, Kate King, 2021, Kindle, \$ US 4.82

Kate is an Australian pilgrim who has walked 4 Caminos namely: Frances, Sanabres, Le Puy, Finisterre, (by bus) hence Four Ways to Solitude etc. She is a superb writer and soon draws the reader into the narrative. She concludes the Frances section pondering journey or destination, having met pilgrims boasting about how quickly ‘the task’ had been completed! She acknowledges she carried home with her a sense of serenity and an “in the moment” presence she hadn’t felt before. Her daily habit of journaling has resulted in rich description and garners, for the reader, a feeling of being present. During final chapters Kate reflects on her Caminos, both inner and outer journeys. She found she is practising the lessons learnt in her life at home.

An interesting read by a thoughtful pilgrim.

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Camino Movie

‘The Camino Voyage,’ 2018, [94 min], Amazon Prime

This Camino documentary commences with 4 pilgrims making a 2500 km sea voyage in a 24 foot curragh rowboat (with a sail) along the coast where possible, from Eire to A Corona in Spain. To avoid the Bay of Biscay they travel via canal. It’s great to see them problem solving like true pilgrims. There’s a great Celtic soundtrack, wonderful cinematography, with great carousing. The journey takes place over three years.

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You Tube

‘Camino Companions - Sister Katherine O’Flynn,’ – Season 3, Episode 1, The Camino Café Podcast, YouTube, [52.16]

This is an introduction to the service offered by the Faithful Companions of Jesus upstairs and above the Pilgrims Office. I regard a visit or two as an essential part of my Camino, and an opportunity to process the experience and a wonderful conclusion to that part of the journey. Sister Kathleen provided a beautiful statement for my documentary, ‘Walking the Camino, Engaging With the Sacred.’

Sara Dhooma

Sara has vlogged from most Camino Routes. It's best to use the YouTube search and view from her channel. In that way each episode arrives in chronological order. She speaks directly to camera and adds additional information with captions. Sara is an acquired taste as she is full on!

Sara on the Camino Frances

Day 1 – Camino Frances 2022: Climbing out of St Jean Pied de Port, Sara Dhooma, YouTube, [6.07]

Sara vlogs and then edits and posts her videos whole on the Camino and within a few days. She stays at the new Albergue Bord beyond Orisson.

Camino del Mar

'Day 1 - Camino del Mar | Exploring As Catedrais Beach Sea Caves,' YouTube, [10.15]

This Camino route commences in Ribadeo on the del Norte Camino. I walked the first day to the cathedral rocks when I deviated from the del Norte.

'Heat Exhaustion on Camino with Dr Terrance Bergmann,' robscamino, August 2022, YouTube [35.37]

A really useful discussion regarding signs and remedies of heat exhaustion. Interestingly pilgrims over 70 years are at risk due to failing autonomic response. The discussion focused on avoiding getting into heat related situations. If the situation arises get into the shade, cool the body with water etc.

'Walking the Camino de Santiago in 2022,' Jake Kobrin, July 2022, YouTube, [4.48]

A fast paced look at a spring Camino.

Part 1 The Camino de Santiago – Camino Frances 2022 | St Jean Pied de Port to Puente la Reina, GettingLostonthetrail August 2022, YouTube [29.45]

A novel Camino. A family of 5 push a stroller carrying their packs and occasionally the odd child to Santiago. There's also a scooter! Its interesting to see how obstacles for the stroller are overcome. The background music makes it difficult to hear at times. Excellent photography.

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

Camino Lessons main topic Vol 1. No 2.

Things to Do in Finisterre, Vol 1. No 2.

Useful Camino de Santiago Resources, Vol 1. No 2

'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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Back copies of the newsletter have been archived on our website.

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‘What matters most on your journey is how deeply you see, how attentively you hear, how richly the encounters are felt in the heart and soul.’ Phil Cousineau



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