

Ultreia et Suseia! The Newsletter

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November 2023, Christchurch Camino Group



'Walk slow, don't rush. That place you have to reach is yourself.' Jose Ortega y Gasset.

Editorial

It's All About the Journey (Not the Destination)

How often have we heard this and wondered what was meant in relation to the Camino? Some pilgrims boast about the number of days they took to complete their Camino, the fewer the better! This could be due to limited leave and the desire to complete the whole Camino and arrive in Santiago de Compostela in the available time. Other pilgrims with more time are preoccupied with the least number of days taken to complete the journey. A Camino memoir, '**Camino de Santiago In 20 Days, My Way on the Way of St James: St Jean Pied de Port to Santiago de Compostela**' by Randall St Germain, (2011), 946 ST, (Christchurch City Libraries, [3 copies]), is a case in point. His raison d'être being to get the job done!

Let's unpack, 'Its all about the journey.' What is meant when this statement is uttered? Experience, and observation informs me that the arrival in Santiago de Compostela can be something of a let down. The city is crowded, pilgrims being a minority amongst the throngs of tourists. As the cathedral draws closer the commercialism increases. The few pop up stalls on the city's outskirts are replaced by dozens of shops selling allsorts of bric-a-brac. The sight of the 'Noddy train' wending its way to a halt in front of the cathedral is almost the final straw! Gone are the quiet oak woods and the oasis of calm as one leans over the side of a medieval bridge to gaze at the reflections below. The endless skies and trails of the meseta with the time and space to tend to the inner journey, is remembered fondly. Arrival is almost an anticlimax. A hankering for the journey past begins! Perhaps next time the opportunity to linger a little longer will prevail.

Ultreia Suseia
Philip

Image: Resting on the Chemin Le Puy

Reference:

'The Camino de Santiago - A Destination or a Journey?' robscamino, You Tube. [10. 41].

'The Camino is a Reset Button: Why the Camino de Santiago is More than a Hike,' Days We Spend, YouTube, [4.02]

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Noticeboard

Christchurch Camino Group Gathering Dates 2024

It is anticipated that there will be 4 gatherings next year, all being held in the Sydenham Room at the South Library. Watch out for our 29 January agenda email in mid January! Our second gathering is scheduled for 8 April, 2024.

Thanks

Deb and I wish to take this opportunity to thank everybody for their help in bringing about our 2023 programme. A big thank you to the presenters. Your generosity of the gift of time and effort enable us to present a rich and varied potpourri of topics. Thanks also go to Cecilia for once again masterminding an excellent programme for the Christchurch Camino Walking Group and to Alan for updating our website. Finally thanks to those who assisted with the room set up and to everyone for helping with a fast pack down at the conclusion of our meetings.

Christchurch Camino Walking Group

The Christchurch Camino Walking Group meets on the second Sunday of the month, (note the change for 2024), usually at 10 am. The walks are a mixture of flat and hill walks around Christchurch and surrounding areas. They provide an opportunity to try out new walks, and exercise with people who share a love for the Camino. Walks are usually completed by around 3 pm. Please contact Cecilia for more information and to join the separate mailing list:

chchcaminogroup@gmail.com



Image: Purau Walk, Lyttelton Harbour

Advice Given to Pilgrims

We wish to emphasise that all information and answers given by our presenters, organisers and meeting participants and in our 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 can be adapted to suit individual circumstances.

November, 2023 Christchurch Camino Gathering Follow Up

November 20, 2023

The following **apologies** were received: Clare and Steve, Gythlian, Liz, Elma, Jan, Shelly. Following the **Welcome** and **Introductions**, the **Returning Pilgrims' Ceremony** was held for three pilgrims; Gemma,, Sheldine and Diane. There were no **Departing Pilgrims**. Allan requested Camino stories and a photo if possible for our website. They can be emailed to www.chchcamino.net

There were three **Pilgrim Presentations**.

Philip's PowerPoint presentation was titled ~ **"Trails, Trials, Triumphs, Buses and Bandits."**

And was described as being an adventure on the Mozarabe, Via de Plata and Sanabres Caminos, 27th April to 27th June.

The full Camino was approximately 1400 km. Due to a number of factors: stage length (up to 48 km), sickness, and lack of accommodation he walked approximately 1240 km. The departure point was Almeria on the Mediterranean sea. He arrived in Madrid and flew down on 23rd and stayed at the Gran Hotel Almeria. Philip then stayed 2 nights accompanied by Genevieve and Hervey, and several other pilgrims in Nely's albergue apartment. Philip had met Genevieve and Hervey in 2019, and walked with them from Le Puy-en-Velay until Puente la Reina, approximately 825 km.

Following a pilgrim blessing at the Almeria cathedral Philip and his French friends and Svetlana, a Serbian/Russian pilgrim set off on the 27 April.

The Mozarabe proved to have stunning landscapes with Moorish white architecture. Philip found the going tough. It was tough! The temperatures were high, especially on the Mozarabe and the terrain was challenging. A series of pre-Camino injuries saw him less than fit for this challenge!

Two days were spent in Granada at a former monastery with a stunning view of Alhambra. We took an afternoon guided tour of the complexes including the Nasrid Palaces. (Tickets were purchased a couple of months earlier.)



Cordoba proved to be an enforced resting place. An outpatients visit confirmed Philip had bronchitis and around a week was spent resting in a beautiful Moroccan style guest house with a rooftop rest area. He spent a couple of days catching up by bus and taxi with G and H. Fear of bandits rumoured to be in the Pinos Puente region caused the other pilgrims to take a bus. Genevieve, Hervey and Philip decided to walk. They survived!

An interesting river crossing was made before the trio arrived in Merida, the beginning of the time on the Via de la Plata. A day and a half was spent exploring the numerous Roman ruins. Walking on the Deseha for hundreds of kilometres proved to be interesting. It tended to be flat, with oak trees, and some would say monotonous. Philip was walking by himself, he'd been left behind. He could see Salamanca in the distance but accidentally began walking the wrong way after a break, whoops! He was astonished to see the morning tea stop again! He finally arrived in Salamanca by taxi late in the day! There were more flat and stunning landscapes on the way to, and after Zamora.

At Granja de Moreruela the Sanabres commenced. Even here it was unusual to see another pilgrim on the trail. The landscape gradually changed into the well known wetter, hillier Galician green. The last city on the trail was Ourense, and it was down to the final 100km. Upon arrival a blessing from Father Manny at the Mass in English in Santiago de Compostela was appreciated. After two visits for debriefing sessions in R6 above the Pilgrims' Office Philip headed for several days rest and contemplation at Finisterre. The highlight here being the sunset cruise.

To cap things off Philip flew to the Canary Islands and Las Palmas where he had rented an Airbnb at Las Canteras beach for a week, followed by a cultural holiday in Madrid. Genevieve and Hervey headed for a well deserved holiday in Porto.

These are challenging Caminos with limited infrastructure and fewer pilgrims. Carrying extra water and several meals adds to pack weight. There are great rewards: stunning landscapes, historical influences, (Roman, Moorish), walled medieval towns and renaissance castles.

It is important to avoid walking in the months with high temperatures. These Caminos are highly recommended for those seeking a beautiful, quieter and slightly more demanding Camino experience.

Gemma ~ "Hiking the Te Araroa Trail," Gemma encountered Trail Angels, and became part of a Trail Family. Sound familiar!

Over a period of 5 months and 3 days (November to April), with some time off trail, Gemma completed her mammoth trek from Cape Reinga to Bluff. During her presentation we were treated to a sample of her several thousand photographs. Her selection beautifully illustrated various aspects of her journey. We met her Trail Family. These were trampers she was to meet up with on the trail repeatedly over the months. A number were present for the obligatory group photographs at Bluff and at the famous signpost a little further south. Gemma noted that there were a number of kiwis in her Trail Family, which bucked the popular perception that it was mostly an international "thing."

We were shown images of camp set up, tents dotted across a clearing, perhaps alongside a three sided shelter. Often shelters were draped with belongings hopefully drying before the next lot of rain or mist approached. There were images of fearsome terrain, stunning landscapes, fellowship, and even a clip of a Trail buddy seemingly permanently stuck in the mud! What was evident was the great spirit, friendship and mutual support emanating from the images. Essential was the support offered, and supplied by Trail Angels. Our own Clare and Steve fulfilled this role locally by providing a wonderful meal and transport between Trail heads.

It was evident that great decision making was being utilised particularly when snow was imminent and stopping at an empty hut proved to be the correct decision rather than pressing on to the next. (As it happened it was over full.)

Gemma travelled by small plane between islands and we were treated to a cockpit image of a rather hair raising landing strip ahead. Earlier in the journey she spent 5 days paddling down the Wanganui river.

Trail magic was in evidence when several members of her original Trail Family coalesced as Bluff loomed. The delightful and playful photographs at both Bluff and Sterling Point signpost showed happy and healthy trampers delighted to have achieved their goals.

Our third and final presentation was from Sally and Alec, and was titled ~ **“Al and Sal's Camino: Saint Jean to Fisterre.”** ~ Notes from a Lonely Walk.

Alec began by saying he noticed that the majority of the pilgrims were in some form of transition eg. Changing, jobs, relationships etc, but that this didn't apply to them. Instead they were there for the adventure and the physical, mental and emotional challenge.

He then spoke to four points: Judgment, “Shoulds”, Presence, Spirituality. Alec elaborated on each point and how he and the Camino experience interacted over the journey.

He noticed he was initially quick to judge. When that fell away new horizons opened and things like great conversations resulted. He was able to release himself from “shoulds.” An example given was self imposed rules as to how things should happen. It had been assumed that all of the trail would be made on foot. It proved to be of great relief when that shackle was broken by a taxi ride to answer a celebration invitation. Alec had noticed that he wasn't really present as he walked. He was seeing the picturesque landscapes as though they were emanating from his wide-screen television set. He didn't feel as though he was *actually* there. Sally suggested he activate another sense by touching rock walls, tree bark, etc. This dramatically altered his experience. Finally he spoke about his Camino and spirituality. The journey provided the opportunity to engage and access other parts of his brain (he works as an engineer). He began asking the big questions of himself. The magic of the Camino swung into action and Alec found himself walking with Joe, a pastor on a Reservation from the USA. (The Camino provides what you *need*.) He listened to Alec and shared insights, showing great kindness and saying it was perfectly okay to have these questions.

Sally spoke about their spontaneous decision to walk on to Fisterre to have a swim in the Atlantic. They had allowed plenty of time when requesting leave. Initially they had a concern that continuing on might take away some of the gloss from their time in Santiago de Compostela. A pilgrim asked if she could join them. Sally said that on the Frances they had walked as a couple. Having this third person changed the dynamic somewhat, particularly with regard to decision making.

Both Alec and Sally enjoyed their time in Fisterre and shared an image of a stunning sunset on Praia da Mar de Fora (Hippy Beach) beach.

Cecilia reported on the latest activities of the **Christchurch Camino Walking group**. The following walks were undertaken since the August meeting: August ~ Coastal Cliff Walk from Hays Bay to Purau and return, September ~ Estuary and Southshore walk, October ~ Waimakariri Braids from Whites Crossing along the Otukaikino Trail. (This was a departure from the programme due to the bad weather in the mountains.) November ~ Rakaia Gorge Walkway. To complete the year a country picnic will be held in December.

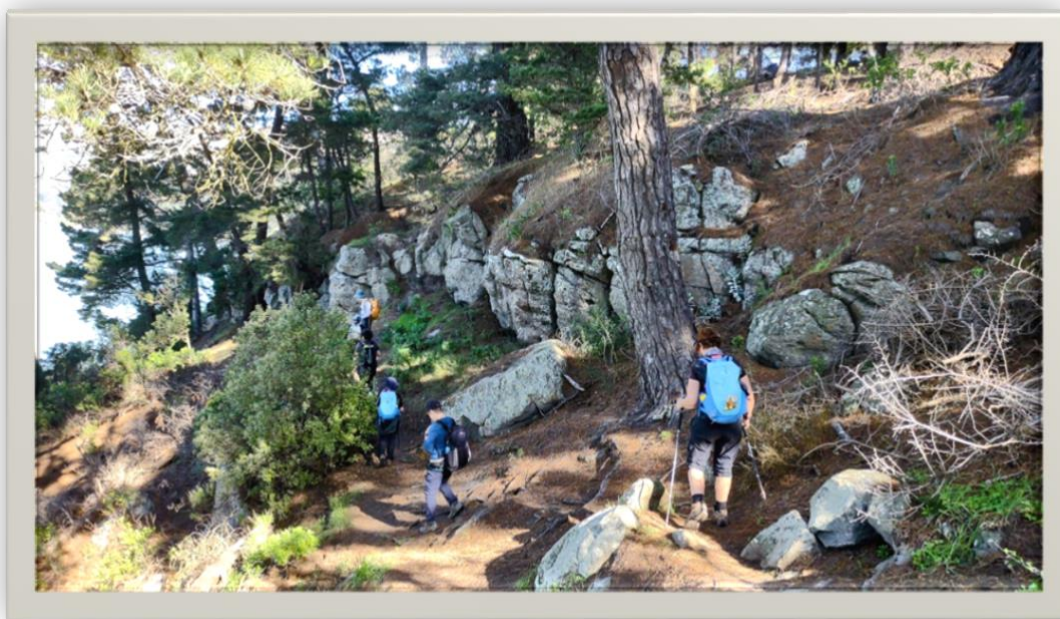


Image: Members of the Christchurch Camino Walking Group on the Purau walk.

The evening finished with **Small Group Discussion.**
Corrections from August Newsletter

The Macs Adventure package for Marie-Therese included breakfast only. Hammond's correct blog site is: thecuriouskiwistoryteller.substack.com

Featured Topic

Landscape, the Pilgrim and the Camino de Santiago

I began reflecting on the effect the Camino landscape was having on me from the outset. I was moved to write the following as I sat resting on the hillside with St Jean Pied de Port well below, 'Mist shrouded hills add a layer of mystery, while a biting wind keeps us firmly anchored in the moment. Overhead circling Griffon vultures bolster flagging determination...' And this environmental influence was noticeable before Orisson was reached!

First Camino Footsteps

A Camino combo is formed.

The first of many miracles!

Janice, Alvera and Philip stride out fearlessly together
each holding heartfelt hopes and dreams.

Cobbled streets give way
to an ever rising ribbon of bitumen.
Country smells invade the nostrils
and labored breathing emanates from one
of our number!

Mist shrouded hills add a layer of mystery,
While a biting wind keeps us firmly
anchored in the moment.
Overhead circling Griffon vultures bolster
flagging determination.
Thankfully Orisson magically appears!



© Philip 2013.

Image: Orisson albergue and restaurant

My intuition says slow down, enjoy the sounds and smells, the light dancing on the leaves of the trees. This is John O'Donohue's advice too. 'And if you go towards it with an open heart and a real watchful reverence, that you will be absolutely amazed at what [landscape] will reveal to you.' Of course the speed with which the 'Camino family' is walking can be an influential factor. And the temptation is to keep up. It is hard seeing beloved people disappearing over the horizon. One solution is meet up at the end of the day, after spending the day sauntering, lingering and savoring the silence and solitude these landscapes provide.

As the weeks pass, the body becomes attuned to the rhythms and cycles of nature. This is particularly noticeable on a longer pilgrimage where a change in the seasons becomes readily discernable. On the Frances as well as the Chemin Le Puy there are a series of dramatic landscapes, clothed in nature's vestments. Early in the year spring heralds promise as the landscape is traversed. All the while we are witness to abundant life. Insects busying themselves with seasonal chores, mirroring the work of the increasingly sparse numbers of local inhabitants. Tinges of autumn become evident as the months pass. More readily seen is the cycle of dusk, sunset, darkness, dawn and sunrise and the beauty this adds to the landscape appearance. Surrounded by nature's beauty, walking for hours each day, immersed in nature leads to great feeling of all is well, even when tired.

Jean Christophe Rufin describes his take on Camino walking thus, 'When on foot on the Camino you can sense the telluride presences, the magical auras, the spiritual emanations from a hidden spring in the depths of a valley or on a rocky peak arising out of a forest.' Joyce Rupp goes further saying, 'The soul of the world and our own souls intertwine and influence one another.'

And then we have our inner landscape. 'Embrace imperfections, they are "the landscape of the journey," the detours you take on other paths which are not your own.' Christine Valters Paintner.



I was moved to note this quote whilst researching for my 2018 documentary, 'Walking the Camino, Immersing in Nature.' In 2021 upon seeing it again this statement resonated once more. "The landscape of the journey within." What a wonderful image to ponder!

It has always puzzled, and fascinated me when I hear of pilgrims skipping bits of the Camino because they might not like those sections. They are too industrial or lack the beauty of other portions. I see my journeys along the Camino as a metaphor for life. We have this inner landscape

with its high and lows, all part of life's journey. And hopefully making us a better person for having had that experience. These less than desirable episodes are part of the journey and provide the opportunity to 'learn life lessons,' and gain a sense of gratitude for what we have.

Near and Far

As I walk in the pure land,
people emerge from the shadows,
friends of many a year, cast in a different light.

Confidently I stride across the terrain
gaining a sense of purpose and self,
while watching for potholes, and lurking debris.

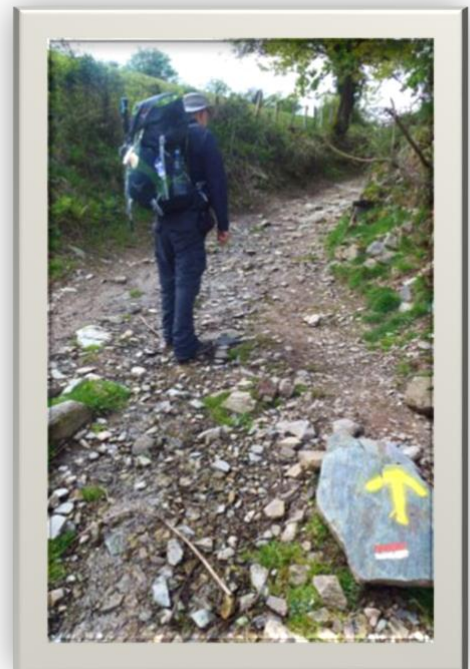
Gradually and with reflective practice
more of the landscape is traversed
and bounteous rewards continue to flow.

© Philip 2014.

John O'Donohue puts it brilliantly, 'Being fully present in the 'Now' enables us to fully reconnect to our intuitive wisdom as the varied terrain of our inner landscape is traversed.'

'And you? When will you begin that long journey into yourself?' Rumi

Maybe as a result of walking your Camino in Spain, France or Portugal you are still travelling through your inner landscape?



Images: Church in Portugal, Walking early stages of Camino Frances

References

'**The Soul, of a Pilgrim, Eight Practices for the Journey Within,**' Christine Valters Paintner 263 PAI Christchurch City Libraries,
'**The Santiago Pilgrimage, Walking the Immortal Way,**' Jean-Christophe Rufin, 946.1 RUF, City Libraries, (Del Norte and Primitivo)
'**John O'Donohue Quotes,**' – Goodreads
'Walking the Camino, Immersing in Nature.' Available via YouTube link from chchcaminogroup@gmail.com

Interesting Camino de Santiago Landscapes

The Paramo

For me the Paramo is a striking landscape, and one I enjoyed walking through. Paramo means 'wasteland,' or desolate territory. On the Camino Frances this landscape may be found after Leon and on to Hospital de Orbigo. The Paramo is clearly indicated on Brierley's Leon to Villadangos del Paramo (or Villar de Mazarife) and Villadangos de Paramo to Astorga maps. He recommends taking the scenic route via Mazarife. In some ways I enjoyed this perhaps more than the Meseta, certainly more than its final stages which are increasingly showing more development. Brierley urges pilgrims to detour through the Maragato stone village of Castillo de Polvazares.



Image: The Paramo with its unique colour.

Meseta

Over the years there has been much bad press written about the Meseta. On the Camino Frances this landscape may be found between Burgos and Leon. It is a large, expansive plateau. It takes seven or eight days to walk the 220 kilometres and is renowned for its treeless, relative wilderness aspect. There are amazing skies, and peace and quiet, ideal for periods of contemplation. There are some amazing villages, and beautiful ruins. The landscape changes markedly with the seasons. The sunflower crop looks amazing.

The Causses du Quercus Natural Park

The Causses are a group of limestone plateaus which border to the east, Aubrac and the Cevennes, and are located on the Massif Central. The landscape is noted for its stunted oak trees and limestone chips covering the ground. In some places the Camino moves through areas bordered by limestone cliffs and unusual limestone canyons. While



on the Chemin Le Puy I walked on an extremely hot day and ran out of water, there was none readily available, and surely felt the heat. The next day I walked through persistent rain, was completely soaked and had a slight touch of hypothermia. Luckily my host provided me with spare clothes and wielded a portable hair drier to great effect! For a time I walked many kilometres on an old Roman road.

Image: Chemin Le Puy. Trail with limestone chips and stunted oak trees.

The Aubrac Plateau



The Aubrac Plateau is composed of volcanic and granitic rock. It is an area of high plateau pastures of wild beauty.

I crossed this Chemin Le Puy landscape in late May. As predicted it was bleak walking, with sleet on occasion. I had immersed my hands in the free airline socks as due to pack weight constraints I had omitted gloves from my 'essentials' packing list. There was a feeling of isolation as I walked along the trail between the stone fences. I was impressed by the stark beauty of the place. There was a stone shepherds' shelter, but I pressed on towards my accommodation.

The Deseha

The Deseha consists of vast expanses of a unique ecosystem of mixed grassy pastureland and woodland of evergreen oak trees. The oaks shed acorns and Iberian pigs, best known as Jamon Iberico, forage for the acorns.



Image: The Deseha. Around 30 km from Salamanca on



the Via de la Plata.

Image: Spring flowers on the Deseha

Galicia

One of the treats of entering the province of Galicia is the verdant landscape. Everything is so green, even tree trunks have lichen growing on them. Another clue is the appearance of cows, and horreo (grain stores.)

Image: An Horreo on the Camino Sanabres



Selected Landscape Documentaries

'El Camino de Santiago - Landscapes of the French Way,' El Camino Frances Blog, 2017, YouTube, [3.02]

A selection of urban and rural landscapes enhanced by the time lapse photography. Beautiful.

'Camino Landscape, My Walk in Spain, Jean Pothier, 2019, YouTube, [2.14]

A stunning series of mainly rural spring landscapes images.

Love the red poppies!

'Walking the Camino, Immersing in Nature,' Philip, [18.57]

This documentary examines the effect Camino landscapes might have on pilgrims as they walk the Camino de Santiago.

A link to this documentary is available from Philip: chchcaminogroup@gmail.com

Camino de Santiago - Landscapes, JanSur Video, YouTube, [2.42]

Great selection of evocative Camino landscapes.

'Landscapes on the Camino – Camino Frances,' robscamino, YouTube, [3.29]

A selection of landscapes on the Camino Frances.

Article

'How To' YouTube Camino Videos

The following You Tubers have produced 'how to' You Tube videos designed to assist pilgrims with their Camino preparation. Some of the producers walked several years ago, while others eg. Jeremiah Gibbs and Rob are still producing. All have pertinent things to say. While these videos can at times be useful one needs to be aware that too much information can produce 'monkey mind,' a Buddhist concept where a surfeit of information could be a hindrance. An essential element of the inner journey is to be confronted by challenges and learn how to overcome obstacles. If all is plain sailing perhaps all we end up with is a pleasant journey!

Andrew Suzuki

Andrew has 3 series regarding the Camino de Santiago; 'Don't Stop Walking,' is a practical series (Season 01, 6 episodes, Season 02, 13 episodes), involving tips for good practice.

Excellent viewing and commentary.

Camino Guide ~ Jeremiah Gibbs

Jeremiah is an American pastor who takes groups on the Camino Frances only, so his information may not be relevant for more robust routes. He has just completed a year as Camino Guide. He has around 60 videos. Topics include: Which Shoe is Best for Camino de Santiago? 5 Mistakes I Made on Camino de Santiago, Walking as Spiritual Practice: Camino de Santiago and Spiritual Health

Nadine Walks

Nadine is a confident Camino walker (pilgrim). Her portfolio includes walking a variety of Caminos, eg. San Salvador, Primitivo, plus she has made several 'How to' Videos about her Caminos, particularly light weight summer packing. See her "Nadine Walks, You Tube channel.

robscamino Rob is an affable Australian pilgrim who produces a regular podcast on Camino related matters. He sometimes interviews a guest. He has around 68 episodes covering topics as diverse as: Camino Mindset, The Camino Bed Race -What is it and how to avoid it. What's in my Pack for the Camino? – Camino de Santiago Packing List.

Worthwhile.

Days We Spend

Lainey and Shawn have produced helpful videos on the Frances and del Norte. There is an excellent Packing list.

Anniesantiago13

'Camino Etiquette,' Anniesantiago13, YouTube, [27.23]

Lots of great ideas.

Camino Hacks and Tricks

Camino Hacks and Tips is a very recent addition to the information YouTube Camino channels. I was rather doubtful about this website. (Just look up the meaning of "hack.") However despite the title there is some good information.

Stingy Nomads

The Stingy Nomads began walking Caminos in May 2018. Their current output indicates they have moved on. (Everest!) They have a mixture of vlogs and videos about topics like; Public vs Private Albergues, Packing for the Camino de Santiago ~ light packing list 2019.

Sacred Steps Podcast (A Pilgrimage Journal)

This series is also a podcast, and is run by Kevin Donahue

Camino 101, How to Sleep Comfortably on the Camino de Santiago, Should I Take a Sleeping Bag on the Camino de Santiago?

Lindsey Kay

Lindsey last posted around 5 years ago. She was posting several years before that. As she is an experienced pilgrim I'm sure her choices will still ring true. Topics include: Camino Packing List: 3rd Camino!, Camino Tips: 5 Items Worth the Weight (8 years ago), Camino Tips: What Time of Year? etc.

Homemade Wanderlust

Jessica "Dixie" Mills aka Homemade Wanderlust has made several, "How to," Camino videos. Her long form Camino Documentary, 'Camino de Santiago Documentary: 'DOS CHICAS,' is an account of her Camino Frances pilgrimage accompanied by her sister. [splints.]

Walking the Camino

Sandy is a 'senior' pilgrim whose short 'How to,' videos are directed towards seniors and novices. Topics include; Training and Preparation, Footwear; Boots vs Hiking Shoes, Rain wear.

David Wen

David lives in Amsterdam. He completed the Camino Frances in 2019. 'Lessons from the Camino... 1 Year Later (during COVID-19),' 'Camino de Santiago Interview... 2 Years Later.' Camino de Santiago - September (2019) | Camino Frances |33 Days | 500 Miles (800km) [15.43] 1M views! An excellent compilation all in 15 minutes.

Camino Tellers

This pilgrim (Richard) has a selection of videos about the Camino. A rather interesting one is entitled, 'How I Cure Camino's Depression, Try It Santiago's Secret Taste,' [14.47]

Sara Dhooma

As well as her very complete catalogue of Camino vloggs Sara has a number of 'How To' videos.

Hank Leukart

Hank is a world class adventurer who has filmed his many adventures around the world. His ones on New Zealand are very interesting: 'The Neverending New Zealand Story – Hiking New Zealand: Te Araroa Trail and Packraft.'

He has made a film of his pilgrimage, 'To the End of the World Along the Camino de Santiago,' YouTube, [35.04], is an excellent documentary, with a thoughtful commentary.

He also produced, 'Hanks Camino Packing List (ultralight:4.5kg/10lbs,)', YouTube, [29.16].

Mike On The Camino

Mike has a great sense of humour and he brings this to his videos.

Article

Things to Do In: Padron

Padron is on the Portuguese Camino about a day's walk from Santiago de Compostela. Brierley has over 4 pages including a town map showing key sites.

- View the **Pedron stone** located in the Church of Santiago and "Santiaguino del MoMonte. It is believed to be the stone St James boat was moored to on arrival in Spain.
- Climb the steps to **Monte Santiaguino** where St James commenced his ministry on the Iberian peninsula.
- Visit the key sites in Padron including Monte Santiaguino to qualify for a **Pedronia certiado**
- Sample the Padron peppers. (Remember 20% are hot!)
- Take the detour to Hebron to stay at the **Monasterio Franciscano de Hebron** donativo (5.7km return.)

Image: The Pedron

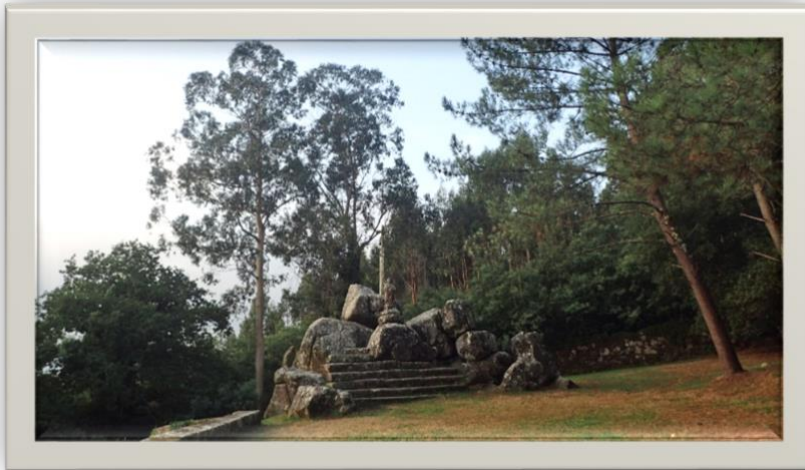


Image: Mount Santiaguino ~ left.

Camino Story

An Unexpected Adventure on the Primitivo

I was sitting on the ground leaning against a wall resting in the shade, eating a snack.

Earlier I had placed my still damp zip off trousers/shorts securely held by a couple of rocks in the sun on the side of a nearby bridge. Suddenly a wind flurry arose and sounded alarm bells. I had a premonition! I raced towards the bridge to retrieve my washing, only to see my zip off shorts lift into the air momentarily before plunging down, and catching on an overhanging bush. This was serious as I had only one pair. Was I destined to walk to Santiago in my swimming togs! Armed with sticks and rocks I pelted the bush until my shorts were released. They fell down into the water far below and floated some distance before becoming snagged.

With my eye on the prize I climbed down to the river, crossed it at a suitable point and made my way back towards the bridge. Luckily my shorts were still snagged on the rocks and after wading back into the water I was able to retrieve them. Note to self, only utilise a washing line in future!

Camino Tip

Here's a Tip ~ refrain from taking a Bluetooth speaker with you on your Camino.

Reference: **'Bluetooth Speakers on the Camino de Santiago?'** [49 secs]

Is this the funniest Camino video?

Resources

Buen Camino App

The following is a very helpful tutorial which demonstrates the features of this app.

'How does the Buen Camino de Santiago App work?' Editorial Buen Camino de Santiago, YouTube, [8.37]

The commentary commences in English at 1.14.

Reviews

Books

'The Gathering Place, A Winter Pilgrimage Through Changing Times,' Mary Colwell, (2023), 946 COL, Christchurch City Libraries, [5 copies]

This well written volume is a treat to read. This is not your typical pilgrim Camino memoir. Trip details appear sparingly as Mary weaves her journey around a plethora of Camino aspects including myths and legends, historical sites landscape, events, and architectural history. There is a comprehensive index, references and tips for further reading.

Note: p47 In June this year there was no sign of the statue depicting St James as Santiago Matamoros in the recently renovated cathedral.

"The Gathering Place" by Mary Colwell.

This is about a winter pilgrimage on the Camino Frances. The writer describes current events, history, people and places and relates them in the context of a world that is under the blanket of Covid. A moving account that touched me with her philosophy on the natural world, the benefits of walking, grief, the disenfranchisement of women - in both church and secular society. "The Gathering Place" has brought back so many memories of my own Caminos. ~ Marie-Therese

'Walking With Sam, A Father, A Son, and Five Hundred Miles Across Spain,' Andrew McCarthy, (2023,) 791.43028 MCC, Christchurch City Libraries, [5 copies]

Actor Andrew McCarthy re-walks the Camino Frances this time with his 19 year old son. As the journey progresses we are party to the changing relationship between the two, set against a detailed Camino background. The author is a travel writer by profession, and this volume is a treat to read.

'Life Changing': Why Andrew McCarthy walked the Camino de Santiago twice | Salon Talks,' Salon, YouTube, [23.05]

Andrew walks the Camino 27 years after his first time, this time with his 19 year old son. He discusses the motivation for re-walking the trail, and the benefits gained.

'Andrew McCarthy discusses his forthcoming Camino memoir,' American Pilgrims on the Camino, YouTube, [58.28]

An excellent account of his journey and the writing process.

You Tube

'First Impressions of the VDLP – Via de la Plata Camino,' robscamino, YouTube, [11.01]

Filmed on location. Rob compares his 5th day impressions with his Frances Caminos.

'Via De La Plata – Final Impressions - Last day of the VdIP,' robscamino, YouTube, [21.20]

A comprehensive comprehensive summary of his positive and negative experiences.

Camino Portuguese Documentary: From Porto to Santiago de Compostela,' Drew Robinson, YouTube, [26.21] Drew, two year old son and wife walk the Central route from Porto.

Podcasts/YouTube

'John Brierley – Ch 1 – “The Camino: A Path of Awakening “ – The Docuseries,' Camino Café, [4 min] (Also on YouTube)

'John Brierley – Ch 2 – “The Camino: A Path of Self Discovery“ – The Docuseries,' Camino Café, [5 min] (Also on YouTube)

Podcasts

My Camino – the Podcast

Dan Mullins has recovered his health and his Camino podcasts recommenced on 19 September.

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[Back copies of the newsletter have been archived on our website: www.chchcamino.net

'Landscapes as objects of beauty were an invention of Romanticism, and a concept completely unfamiliar to medieval pilgrims.' Gail Simmonds.



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