

## Philip's Top Camino Tips



**Image:** Pilgrims approaching Cirauqui, Camino Frances.

Leave the ear buds in their case, or preferably at home. Leave the old world behind. Fully experience the new one unfolding around you.

Tea drinkers bring your own supply of black tea bags, even for cafes and bars. Unless your preference is peach, or apricot!

Walk proactively. Stop the moment pain is felt in the feet. Check for hotspots. Place tape over red areas. Avoid having to deal with blisters.

There is no prize for being first to Santiago de Compostela. Slow down, enjoy the experience.

Save the seats for those who need them.



Camino gear and clothing. Find out what works.

Use the red-light option when utilising the flashlight in the dormitory.

Remember, not everyone wants to wake and leave at 5 am. Pack the evening before.

Walking poles utilised correctly will give stability, and help bear the load. They can also keep dogs at bay,

Practise walking at home with your

Drink plenty of water.

A pilgrim is grateful.

Be respectful of farmers' crops.

It's okay to say you wish to walk alone and in silence. Perhaps meet up for a second breakfast!

Travel light. Your body will thank you.



**Image:** A Fuente with a potable sign.

Remove footwear and socks at mid-day. Give them a good airing.

Use plastic bags for used tissues and toilet paper. A littered Camino trail is a potential health hazard, and not a good look,

Ticks may be found in southwest France and Northern Spain, particularly in spring. Some carry Lyme disease. Immediately remove the tick completely with tick tweezers and disinfect the region around the bite. If you are unsure how to remove seek, the assistance of a hospitalero, pharmacist, or medical clinic. Always check for ticks if you have been off trail.



**Image:** Resting on the Chemin Le Puy



**Image:** An informal directional arrow.

Seek out the whereabouts of the first arrow for tomorrow's journey. This is particularly important if you are departing in the dark. Another strategy is wait until others leave the accommodation and follow them until you are all securely on the trail! There are tech solutions too!

When lost go back until the last arrow is sighted.

Be aware that establishments may prepare a bocadillo for you, even when there is no evidence that this might be possible. I've been surprised when a bocadillo has magically appeared following an order being placed by a Spanish speaker.

Place ferrules on your walking pole tips. Villagers and pilgrims will thank you. (It pays to temporarily remove the ferrules on swampy ground.)



Solo walkers could temporarily team up with others if negotiating tricky conditions. eg. passing through an isolated forest, early morning departure through say, Pamplona.

Remember "Donativo" doesn't mean free. Pay market rates if able.

**Image:** A marginal day crossing Hospitales, (1132 m) on the Primitivo. I joined up with some Spanish and Italian pilgrims. Safety in numbers.

Wish pilgrims "Buen Camino in Spain, Bom Caminho in Portugal and Bon Chemin in France, See it as sharing a salutation and blessing.

