



fresco
TOURS

El Camino Portugués Tour 2019


- an adventure from our backyard -



El Camino Portugués Tour 2019

11 days & 10 nights : The Last 153 KMs to Santiago

Join us as we adjust our compass to North and head to Santiago de Compostela starting from Portugal. Our neighbors to the south are closely tied to Galicia and we will get a better feel for them as we cross through the lush countryside and quiet villages. Our good friend, the yellow arrow, will keep us company as we cross over the River Miño and enter back into Spain. Our Camino takes us through the town of Padrón, where Santiago's stone boat brought him back to Spain.

<p>2019 El Camino Portugués Tour</p> <p>May 8 – 18, 2019 June 3 – 13, 2019 Jul 1 – 11, 2019 Aug 26 – Sep 5, 2019 Sep 23 – Oct 3, 2019</p> <p>Price (11 days / 10 nights): 2,800€ Single Supplement: 400€</p>	
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Day 1: Porto to Guimarões

We pick-up the group in the afternoon in Porto and head for the countryside to the birthplace of Portugal as an independent country, Guimarões. In 1100, Portugal's first King, Afonso Henriques, was born inside the thick walls of the medieval castle that overlooks the town. Before dinner we have a stroll and then sit down for our Orientation Meeting to discuss our journey along the Camino de Santiago.

Accommodations: Guimarões (D)

Day 2: Vitorino de Piaes to Ponte de Lima

After breakfast, we hop in the van and shuttle to Vitorino where we hit the trail and have a warm up of our week to follow. We lace up our boots to take our first steps on the Camino, getting our first stamp in the parish town of Vitorino de Piaes! We finish in the lovely river valley town of Ponte de Lima. What are all those Roman soldiers doing here?

Accommodations: Ponte de Lima (B,L,D) / Walking: 15 KMs or 9 miles

Day 3: Ponte de Lima to Rubiães

Yesterday's walk into the river valley means that today we have to climb out on the opposite side! Our most difficult climb (while you are still fresh!), we head up and over the Alto da Portela Grande, the highest point of our walk at a mere 400 meters. Coming down to Rubiães, follow the Roman Via XIX and pass by a *miliáro*, ancient mile marker used by the Romans.

Accommodations: Ponte de Lima (B,L,D) / Walking 16 KMs or 10 miles

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Day 4: Rubiães to Tui

With our boots on, we take to the trail for our last complete stage in Portugal. We wander through various wooded pathways that lead us into the fortress town of Valença. Here we prepare our passports for a border crossing over the Miño River into Spain. Actually, as both are part of the European Union, you'll only need your Pilgrim's Passport and know that the word for stamp will change from Carimbo to Sello!

Accommodations: Tui (B,L,D) / Walking: 18 KMs or 11 miles

Day 5: Tui to Porriño

Remember to change your watches as Spain is 1 hour ahead of its neighbor. We begin our day admiring the views from the 12th century Santa Maria Cathedral in Tui. We end our day with an excursion that takes us back over 2000 years to the Celtic remains of the Castro de Santa Tecla, where the views of the Atlantic and Portugal are unmatched!

Accommodations: Tui (B,L,D) / Walking: 17 KMs or 10 miles

Day 6: Porriño / Fonte do Chan to Redondela

Saying goodbye to the granite cutting mills of Porriño, we get the blood going with a good climb up to the Monte de Santiago de Antas, where we find another Roman mile marker. Continuing along the Camino towards Redondela, we get our first glimpse of the Estuary of Vigo, where mussels and scallops are farmed on floating barges! Sounds delicious – anyone for a tapa and Galician white wine?

Accommodations: Pontevedra (B,L,D) / Walking: 15KM or 9 miles



Day 7: Redondela to Pontevedra

We hit the trail and soon come to the lovely stone bridge in Pontesampaio where Napoleon's troops were defeated in the War of Independence. Here we can dip our toes into the Verdugo River before preparing for our walk into the pedestrian-friendly city of Pontevedra. Here, we must stop in and get a stamp at La Peregrina, the 18th century chapel whose floor is in the shape of a scallop shell!

Accommodations: Pontevedra (B,L,D) / Walking: 19 KMs or 12 miles

Day 8: Pontevedra to Caldas de Reis

Leaving the city of Pontevedra, we quickly return to nature, crossing through quiet paths where we come to the granite Cross of Amonisa with the carved figure of Santiago facing our destination. We arrive in Caldas de Reis, whose natural thermal springs have made this a place to soak your weary feet for thousands of years!

Accommodations: Padron (B,L,D) / Walking: 22 KMs or 14 miles

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Day 9: Caldas de Reis to A Esclavitude

Today we arrive in Padron (or *pedrón* – Galician for big stone) and pay homage to the famous rock where the boat that contained Saint James was moored to upon its arrival from Jerusalem after he had been martyred. Padron is also famous in culinary circles for its little green peppers, some which are hot and others that are not.

Accommodations: Padron (B,L,D) / Walking: 25 KMs or 15 miles

Day 10: A Esclavitude to Santiago de Compostela



9 days, 153 kilometers, and we have arrived in Santiago de Compostela. Congratulations! You are going to love this magical city filled with fantastic monuments and a lively buzz from the international pilgrims and university students that fill its medieval streets. After requesting our Compostela certificates at the Pilgrims' Office, we head to our hotel and get ready for our evening celebratory dinner! Accommodations: Santiago de Compostela (B,L,D) / Walking: 17 KMs or 10 miles

Day 11: Santiago de Compostela

After a buffet breakfast, our local historian gives us a closer look at the amazing Cathedral that has seen so many transformations since the original chapel built in the 9th century. After the tour, we sadly say our last "buen camino" as we leave you at the Cathedral in time for the Pilgrims' Mass at noon. (B)

The Compostela & the Camino de Santiago Tour

This itinerary gives you the opportunity to walk the last 100KM into Santiago. This is a requirement needed to request the compostela, the certificate granted by the church of Santiago upon the completion of the pilgrimage. It is not mandatory, however, to walk 100km (60 miles) to participate in this Fresco Tour. As with all our trips, your walk is accompanied by a support van and shorter walk options are available on a daily basis.



** Please note: this itinerary is subject to slight modifications due to hotel availability, weather, festivals & other occurrences.*



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WHAT TO EXPECT:

Expect to have a wonderful time! We've designed each trip to enjoy the stunning beauty of the Portuguese and Spanish landscape, while giving you a true sense of these mysterious people and their culture. We love to share this magnificent country and want you to feel a part of it.

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

2 Guides: Our greatest resource! We know Spain, because it is our home. Both of your guides are experienced professionals that are either Spanish or live in Spain year round – no hired out summer help! In Porto and Santiago, we will be joined by local art historians, who will bring the monuments and cities to life! * Groups of 3 - 6 pax are accompanied by only 1 guide.

Meals: Food speaks volumes about a culture and we love to eat! During our walk days, when possible, we prepare gourmet picnics using the freshest of local ingredients and selecting the tastiest recipes of the region. All breakfast, lunches and dinners are included. We are proud to cater to vegetarians and those with food allergies – milk, egg, wheat, etc.

Accommodation: Fresco Tours selects a combination of 3-4 star hotels and restored country manors that offer the best in hospitality, comfort and location. In this area, these are known as *Pazos* and *Pousadas* and are very unique and special - some date back to the 15th century! All rooms have in-suite baths. Tour prices are based on double occupancy.

Limited Group Sizes: Fresco Tours are in small groups to ensure that you receive the individual attention that you deserve. We want to be able to treat each of our clients with a personal touch and we limit the groups to a maximum of 15 participants. We also recognize that each person's Camino is their own personal experience and if you wish, we encourage you to walk on your own – with the assurance that we will be there for you!

Support Vehicles: Your walks will be accompanied by 2 support vehicles (minimum 6 pax) that are there to provide assistance when needed. You will have access to the bus every couple of hours, so you won't need to carry a heavy backpack. In addition, the possibility of shorter routes and pick-up options will be offered and explained on a daily basis.

Ground transportation: All ground transportation between our meeting point in O Porto, Portugal and the Cathedral in Santiago de Compostela is provided on your Fresco Tour.

Luggage transfers: Your luggage will be transported between hotels. You do the walking, we'll do the lifting!

Pre-Tour Assistance: We will help with your travel arrangements prior to and after the tour start and finish of your Fresco Tour, including assistance with hotel reservations and train tickets.