

## CYCLING THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

**NEW TOUR**

7-days / 6-nights **Self Guided**, cycle touring from León to Santiago de Compostela



The Way of St James or Camino de Santiago is possibly the oldest tourist trail. Many thousands walk or ride the pilgrim's routes each year but increasingly cyclists are following the route to the burial place of the apostle, the third most holy Christian city, Santiago de Compostela in the northwest corner of Spain. Without doubt this is the best cycling tour in Spain for anyone who wants to experience the tradition and history of this ancient land and the important pilgrimage cities along the route plus a varied itinerary with flat plains, undulation and with some challenging hills.

Our Camino de Santiago self-guided tour from Leon allows you to follow the ancient pilgrimage trail at your own pace. Starting at the Gothic Cathedral in Leon cycle across the rolling plains of Castile-Leon, once at the historic seat of the Spanish Empire, over the mountains and into the more isolated and culturally independent Galicia. Along the 250km biking trail from Leon to Santiago enjoy soaking up the history of the regions, stopover in exclusive lodging and sample authentic cuisine and wine from the Castilian and Galician regions.

**Departs:** León on Sundays, March to October

**Cost León to Santiago:** from **\$2750** per person (twin share) Single room supplement from \$845

**Includes:** 6 nights' accommodation in 3/4 and 5-star hotels and Paradors, 6 buffet breakfasts, multi-gear hybrid touring bike, detailed road book and maps, daily luggage transfer between hotels, helmet if required. Optional taxi transfer from Villafranca to O'Cebreiro on day 4.

**Not included:** Meals not mentioned, drinks, personal expenses or gratuities.

**Bike hire:** a touring bike is included in tour cost – you can upgrade to aluminium road bike, carbon road bike, or **E-bikes are available** for a supplement - ask when making a booking for details and costs.



**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations**



## Suggested itinerary – From León to Santiago:

### Day 1 Arrive León

On arrival in León, you will find the information required for your journey at the hotel: a complete package including hotel vouchers, your touring bike with all accessories, detailed documentation with maps and a road book.

### Day 2 León to Astorga

**cycling @ 50km on gently rolling terrain**

Today's route takes us through classic Castilian landscapes, complete with holm oaks, golden wheat fields and gentle ups and downs. It's hard to get lost: the route never strays far from the N120 highway. The landscape in the first half of the route is relatively dry, getting greener the further west you get; crossing fields full of diverse crops, such as wheat, corn, hops and wine grapes. Wildlife isn't a big feature of this first part of the trip, though we see geckoes, birds of prey and lot of dairy cows!

### Day 3 Astorga to Villafranca

**cycling @ 80km gradual ascent & long descent**

From Astorga, the Camino starts to climb gently until it meets the first mountain on the way. Once you've reached the top of Foncebadón, take it easy and enjoy the sweeping downhill ride and the gorgeous views on the ride through vineyards to Villafranca. The town of Villafranca del Bierzo is a historical and artistic monument, was created to give refuge and sanctuary to the pilgrims before initiating the most difficult part of their pilgrimage. The monastery cloister is a Renaissance jewel.

### Day 4 Villafranca to Portomarin

**cycling @ 55km with challenging ascents & long descent**

Get ready for the most challenging day. From Villafranca you ride slowly towards the mythical O'Cebreiro pass, the most demanding peak along the western section of the Camino. With a little patience it's more than possible to reach the top, but in any case, a taxi is there to avoid it. Then it's downhill all the way to Sarria, and onward via a rolling route to Portomarín. The older neighborhoods of the town once belonged to the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, but now lie submerged, covered by the waters of the Miño River dam.

### Day 5 Portomarin – Arzua

**cycling @ 55km on rolling terrain**

Even though we're out of the mountains, doesn't mean that the going gets easier. Today's riding follows the Camino for 55 kilometres (with an optional side trip to a 700 year-old castle) through some of Galicia's prettiest countryside. Even though we're gradually losing altitude, the rolling Galician hillside might make you think otherwise. The route shows pilgrims the Celtic heart of Spain in one of the most un-Spanish places you've ever seen. Take your time and enjoy the sights! Cycle side by side with other pilgrims and locals while enjoying the deep inside Galician landscapes. At some points, you have the chance to choose between cycling on minor roads next to pilgrims or on nice trails. You cycle through Palas de Rei and Melide, this last one is well known for its tasty Galician octopus recipe, don't miss it!



## Day 6 Arzúa to Santiago de Compostela

cycling @ 40km on rolling terrain

Don't let the short length fool you; the final stage is short, but a little demanding! After approximately four hours of riding, cyclists become pilgrims upon arriving at the Pórtico de la Gloria ("The Façade of Glory") at the Cathedral of Santiago. After taking a breath and celebrating with others arriving by foot and on horseback, you can visit the Pilgrims' Office where you can obtain the "Compostela" the document certifying you as an official pilgrim. Accommodation is centrally located, giving you the opportunity to explore the streets and bars of the atmospheric historic centre after dark. This city, without any doubt, is the most important of the Christian Middle Ages. It is worldwide renowned and each year thousands of travellers come to visit its treasures.

## Day 7 Depart Santiago

Tour ends in Santiago after breakfast.



**Outdoor Travel** offer small group guided or self-guided inn-to-inn cycling tours in Europe - including rides from Passau to Vienna along the Danube, from Vienna to Budapest, in Tuscany and Umbria in Italy, in Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Ireland, England, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. We also offer group guided **Bike & Barge** or **Bike & Boat** cruises in destinations such as France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Italy, Scotland, the Dalmatian Coast of Croatia, the islands of Greece, and Vietnam.

**Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations**

- Call Toll Free 1800 331 582 or (03) 57551743 or Fax (03) 57501020
- Email: [info@outdoortravel.com.au](mailto:info@outdoortravel.com.au)
- Web: <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au>
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright, VIC 3741, Australia