



WALKING THE CAMINO

When it comes to epic walks, nothing quite beats the Camino de Santiago.

THE Camino is a series of pilgrimage trails throughout Europe leading to Santiago de Compostela — the burial place of St James.

More than 240,000 pilgrims trekked at least 100km of the Camino de Santiago last year alone, with thousands more walking the different routes and sections across France, Portugal and Spain each year.

The majority choose the

French Way, the most famous Camino route — which features in Martin Sheen's film *The Way*.

Starting in St Jean Pied de Port, it takes you 800km across northern Spain through bustling cities, medieval towns and lush vineyards.

Towns

The entire route takes a month to complete or two weeks if you are cycling.

But if you don't have a whole month, 'don't worry, as many pilgrims start in other towns along the way — the most popular being Sarria, Leon and Ponferrada.

The second most popular route is the Portuguese Way, which begins in Lisbon and winds through towns like Coimbra and Porto.

This route is perfect if you are a nature lover as you will walk past miles of forests and vineyards.

The Northern Way or Camino del Norte is the third Camino route. It begins in San Sebastian and takes you along Spain's coast through towns and cities such as Santander, Ribadesella, Luarca and Ribadeo.

There is also the Finisterre Way from Santiago to Cape Fisterra.

Fit

A great one-stop shop if you are planning a trip along the Camino is CaminoWays.com, which organises guided and self-guided tours on the routes all year round.

And if you don't think you're fit enough, they even organise practice walks around Ireland!

Standard packages include half-board accommodation, luggage transfer from hotel to hotel and a holiday pack with pilgrim passport and information.

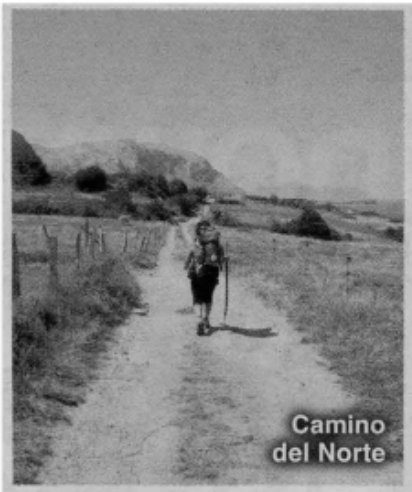
The average price is around €500, depending on which leg of the Camino you pick. That doesn't include flights, transport or insurance, but airport transfers and hotel upgrades are also available.

See caminoways.com or call 01 5252886.

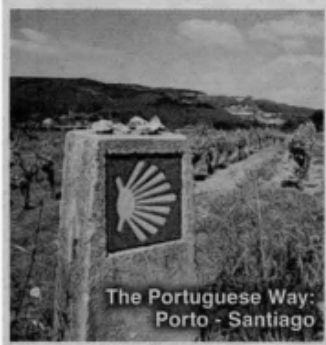




Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela



Camino del Norte



The Portuguese Way:
Porto - Santiago