



## Compostela Camino: Crossing The Pyrenees to Rioja

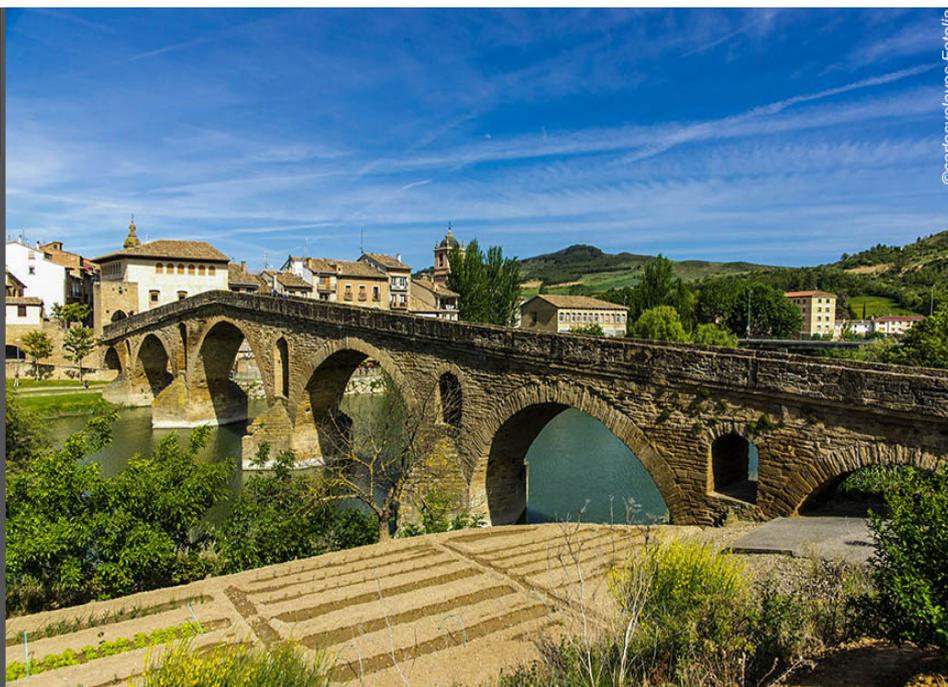


**Start here: a marvellous, once-in-a-lifetime walk on an iconic route that rightly has UNESCO Heritage status. This itinerary is for 11 days walking, but you can begin with a week, or more: it's up to you.**

**12 nights - 11 walking days**

- Minimum required 1
- From point to point
- With luggage transportation
- Self-guided

Code :  
**FR2PUS4**



### ***The plus points***

- **All the satisfaction of crossing the Pyrenees**
- **Magnificent and varied scenery with attractive, unspoilt villages**
- **Authentic, quality accommodation - great food too!**
- **Pleasantly challenging walking for those who walk regularly**

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*Before departure, please check that you have an updated fact sheet.*

[http://www.purepyrenees.com/compostela\\_camino\\_crossing\\_pyrenees\\_rioja.html](http://www.purepyrenees.com/compostela_camino_crossing_pyrenees_rioja.html)

*The Spanish call the Camino de Santiago the Milky Way (a medieval fable said it was created from dust rising from pilgrims), the French call it The Road Of Stars, and in English it is often The Way of St James. What's for sure is that since the 9th century, pilgrims have visited the supposed grave of St James (Saint Iago = Saint James), his shipwrecked body found covered with scallop shells.*

*Routes started from all over Europe, and coalesced the closer they got to Santiago, and today people come from all over the world, many to do the last 100 kms to get a pilgrim's certificate, but walkers start from much further away as indeed we do. We offer a complete 45 day walk you can begin at any point you choose, and do in as many sections as you wish. We are presenting it in three long walks, but you certainly don't have to.*

*This first camino section begins in the beautiful fortified medieval town of Navarrenx near Pau, and takes you via St Jean Pied de Port up to Roncevalles, and down wonderful Logrono, capital of the Rioja region, through Pamplona (bull free except for one week a year), and many other magical villages you may well never have heard of like Viana and Estella. The walking is comfortably challenging with ever changing scenery including rolling Basque hills, high mountains, canyons, forsts, woods, rivers and vineyards.*

*With over 20 years of offering camino walks, you can be sure we know the best places to stay, and can support you every step of the way if needed.*

## ■ THE PROGRAMME

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### DAY 1

There can be no better place to start such an historic and iconic journey than the 2,000 year old fortified village of Navarrenx, south of Pau, which is officially one of the most beautiful villages in France.

**Standard option** You make your own way to the start point

**With Extra Airport Pick Up** We collect you from Pau airport and take you to the first hotel

The two star Hotel du Commerce is exactly the sort of typically and traditionally French hotel you imagine staying at. Within the walls, well appointed rooms, good food and genuine hospitality. Just right!

### DAY 2

**From Navarrenx to Aroue.** As you walk out of the fortified gateway, the beauty and magnificence of the Pyrenees is laid out before you. That's where you are going. That's what you are going to walk across, but, taken day by day, it's going to be full of pleasures and pleasant surprises. In fact, it's going to be one of the most memorable things you will ever do, and that's a promise. You'll cross the river Gave, and enjoy the easy walking along historic paths and lanes through typically rolling Basque countryside until you arrive at the 13th century fortified chateau of Montgaston. We will meet you here for the short transfer to your hotel - and that's what we do to make sure you get to walk all the 'good bits', but few of the 'boring' bits.

The three star Domaine Agerria is a truly privileged place to stay. It's a converted monastery, complete with central cloister, that has been beautifully and tastefully adapted to ensure guests benefit from the sense of tranquillity surrounded by many acres of private land preserved in its natural state. The 17 rooms are large, superbly appointed, and are matched by a cuisine that we are confident will fulfill your expectations.

**Walking time: 4h 30 to 5h 30. Distance: 20 kms (12.5 miles). Transfer time: 14 minutes.**

### **DAY 3**

**From Aroue to Ostabat.** Today's walk is just 3 miles longer, and takes you across unspoilt Basque countryside to the famous medieval hillside village of Ostabat-Asme. Famous because it is here that three French Camino routes meet - from Tours, Vezelay and Le Puy - and hereafter all follow the same route you do. This historic rendezvous is marked by a modest stone monument, and from near here we will pick you up to take you to tonight's hotel - another rather special one we hope you'll agree.

Dominique Lalanne and her team will make sure you enjoy staying in the traditional village of Saint Palais, and at her superbly updated three star Hotel de la Paix with its contemporary and well equipped rooms, and cuisine that balances traditional recipes with modern interpretations using local produce, and, frankly, without getting too fussy about it! You can also eat on the terrace if you so choose.

**Walking time: 6 - 7h. Distance: 25 kms (15.5 miles). Transfer time: 30 minutes.**

### **DAY 4**

**From Ostabat to Saint Jean Pied de Port.** We take you back to Ostabat to follow the "true path" that leads you ever closer to the real mountains, which appear ever more magnificent. You walk through a series of lovely villages including Larceveau and Saint-Jean-le-Vieux before arriving at today's destination Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port - your last night in France with the border and mountains on this historic and attractive town's doorstep.

You face the 13th century ramparts of St Jean Pied de Port across from the appropriately named Hotel Central, which was completely renovated in 2015 and offers a terrace overlooking the Nive river, a good restaurant, and well equipped rooms, but the big plus is being able to wander round this historic town right from the hotel's front door. You will soon see why it has been designated one of the most beautiful villages in France.

**Walking time: 5h 30 to 6h 30. Distance: 22.5 kms (14 miles). Transfer time: 15 minutes.**

## **DAY 5**

**From Saint Jean Pied de Port to Roncesvalles.** Today is the big up and over day - a truly memorable and satisfying day, if, to be truthful, a fairly demanding one. It's a long steady climb up over the border (5 miles) and on to the Col de Roncevaux (or Roncevalles, or Ibaneta in Spanish, and Ibañetako Mendatea in Basque - take your pick). At 3,000 feet, it's not particularly high, but you're starting from close to sea level. We'd recommend a fairly early start so you avoid time pressure, and midday heat. It's been a significant point on the pilgrimage route because of its geographic location, but in July 1813 Napoleon's army defeated an Anglo-Portuguese army here, and, more famously, in 778 a major part of Charlemagne's army was ambushed here, the attackers hiding in the woods, and this resulted in the death of Roland among other supporters of Charlemagne. From the col it is a much less strenuous descent to Roncesvalles, one of the grandest hospices in the Pyrénées.

You stay at the prestigious and delightful Hotel de Roncevalles, once a pilgrim hospice run by monks, and it preserves that ambiance today. The rooms are spacious and well appointed, the restaurant very good - but you will immediately notice that you are now in Spain, the food being traditional Navarre cuisine nuanced with contemporary Slow Food principles. It will be a well deserved dinner, and we're sure you will enjoy it - like the whole of your stay here.

**Walking time: 7h. Distance: 26 kms (16 miles).**

## **DAY 6**

**From Roncevalles to Zubiri.** This is an altogether more relaxed day spent ambling through delightful forests and traditional mountain villages, many featuring typically Navarrian houses, before arriving at the village of Zubiri renowned for its Roman bridge and fortified houses.

Tonight it is the charming, family run Hosteria de Zubiri, a real mountain hotel that has been welcoming pilgrims and walkers for hundreds of years. It is truly bucolic. Relax. Eat well. Sleep well!

**Walking time: 6h. Distance: 22 kms (13.5 miles).**

## **DAY 7**

**From Zubiri to Pamplona.** It's a lovely walk through woods, meadows and villages down to fascinating Pamplona. Despite its bull running reputation, you will only see bulls en route not in the city unless it is the second week of July, It's the historic capital of the ancient kingdom of Navarre, originally founded by the Roman general Pompey (hence its name), and has all the trappings of a long time capital city from medieval alleys and lanes through to its magnificent cathedral (remarkable Gothic cloister), grand squares and palaces.

The four star Cathedral Hotel is a smart contemporary boutique hotel in a converted convent right in the heart of the city. Just right for a city stay. We like it a lot as do our customers.

**Walking time: 5h 30. Distance: 21 kms (13 miles).**

## **DAY 8**

**From Pamplona to Puente La Reina.** You can wave farewell to the Pyrenees to the north from the panoramic observation point on the Sierra del Perdon, and also see south to the drier, rolling Spanish landscapes you will now be walking through. Here you might also have been surprised by the life size pilgrims on foot, donkey and horseback that are silhouetted against the horizon - surprised if we hadn't told you about it here! The sense of participating in an age old experience becomes ever stronger particularly when you arrive in the lovely riverside medieval town of Puente La Reina, famous for its impressive Romanesque bridge, and for being where all routes to Santiago finally converge.

Tonight you stay at the charming and unpretentious El Cerco, which calls itself a rural hotel because of its values and attitudes, although it is located right in the heart of this medieval town. We like it, and it is undoubtedly the best place to stay and eat here.

**Walking time: 6h. Distance: 24 kms (15 miles).**

## **DAY 9**

**From Puente la Reina to Estella.** The very names of the villages you pass through seem to resonate with historical significance: Mañeru, Cirauqui, Villatuerta...and, finally, Estella, the so-called Toledo of the North, a most attractive town rich with medieval houses, spacious squares, impressive churches and aristocratic palaces, all testifying to Estella's long history of regional and national importance.

The four star Hotel Tximista in Estella is a thoroughly contemporary hotel converted from a 19th century flour factory that has made best use of its high ceilings, large rooms and riverside location to deliver both tranquillity and style. Good food too! Everything you want, except a name that's rather difficult for English speakers to pronounce!

**Walking time: 5h 30. Distance: 23 kms (14.5 miles).**

## **DAY 10**

**From Estella to Los Arcos.** The walking is now easy and enjoyable as the miles disappear under your feet as your eyes feast on landscapes and authentic villages, the highlight today being Irache with its huge 8th century monastery, next door its interesting wine museum (weekends only) and famous free so-called wine fountain. Actually a tap, it dispenses free wine to worthy pilgrims like yourselves! Enjoy - but perhaps in moderation? Your destination is the historic town of Los Arcos, enriched by centuries of pilgrims as the camino runs along its main street, which is lined with houses, hotels and minor palaces that all attest to its wealth. Charming as it is, there is not a hotel we think is good enough for you, so we have organised a short transfer to Mues.

Latorrién de Ane is a delightful rural hotel in the unspoilt village of Mues that features bare stone walls, ancient timber shutters, and a restaurant in the atmospheric wine cellar. Good country dinners, satisfying breakfasts, and a pleasant buzz as this is also the centre of village life. Well worth the ten minute transfer.

**Walking time: 5h. Distance: 20.5 kms (13 miles). Transfer time: 10 minutes.**

## **DAY 11**

**From Los Arcos to Viana.** Although not long, there are many hilly sections today, but also olive groves, ruined farmhouses, streams, rivers, traditional villages and interesting ravines to walk through between Sansol and Torres del Rio (where there are neither bulls nor a river). What's for sure is that arriving in Viana is a great pleasure. Founded by King Sancho VII 'the Strong' in 1219, Viana reached its wealthy apogee between the 16th and 18th centuries as can be seen by the mansions, wide streets and, above all, the opulence of the church of Santa Maria.

The aristocratic Pujadas family arrived in Viana in the 17th century, and, right in the centre of town, built the palace that the family converted into a marvellously characterful boutique hotel in the 21st century. The public rooms are redolent with history and luxury, while the bedrooms are spacious as well as well designed, and the restaurant is in the beautifully converted wine cellar. Enjoy!

**Walking time: 4h 30. Distance: 18 kms (11 miles).**

## **DAY 12**

**From Viana to Logroño.** A short but interesting day's walk that leaves you with plenty of time and energy to explore the medieval city of Logrono built on the banks of the river Ebre, which you can walk across on a lovely medieval bridge. But there's much more: an impressive cathedral, an historic quarter with numerous arts and crafts shops, and plenty of bodegas where you can explore the differences between Riojas (2 colours, 3 growing zones, four categories - Rioja, Crianza, Reserva, Gran Reserva) because you are now in Rioja, and wine is of no little significance here.

Another historic city, another centrally located boutique hotel in another 16th century palace with marvellous wine cellars. Oh well! Hotel Calle Mayor is, as its name suggests, on the most prestigious street in Logrono, and has beautifully contemporary rooms that complement the historic building itself. As this is a city with a wide range of interesting places to eat - from tapas bars to high quality restaurants - we leave you free to choose where to dine tonight.

**Walking time: 2h 45. Distance: 12 kms (7.5 miles).**

## **DAY 13**

After breakfast, you can begin your journey onwards or homewards as you choose.

Standard option You make your own way from the last hotel

With Extra Airport Pick Up We take you to Bilbao airport for your flight home

Elements beyond our control (the weather, logistical risks, other miscellaneous reasons) may lead us to modify the programme. We aim to please, but your safety will always be our priority.

**The next section of the Compostela Camino is from Logroño to Leon - [ES2PUS1](#)**

## **■ PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

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## **DISPOSITIONS COVID-19**

Because of the added health precautions relating to COVID, you must be equipped from the start of your trip with:

- \* a sufficient quantity of masks (at a rate of 2 per day minimum). Wearing a mask will be compulsory during any transport, in certain accommodation, crowded places etc.
- \* zipped pockets for masks and other items such as used tissues
- \* hydro-alcoholic gel
- \* a thermometer to take your temperature in case of symptoms appearing during your stay
- \* a pen (sometimes necessary to sign an agreement in certain accommodation).

The hosts who will welcome you (hoteliers, refuge guards, restaurateurs, transporters, local teams ...) are the people who will help to guarantee the smooth running of your stay and will ask you to conform with certain health related protocols. Out of respect for them and other people who frequent the same places, we ask you to commit to respecting the instructions given to you. Be reassured and optimistic, because as you know, hiking is an activity that will allow you long and enjoyable periods of time during which the wearing of a mask is not mandatory!

So breathe fresh air and smile!

## **DATES**

You can start on any day from 1 April to 8 October.

## **MEETING POINT**

**Standard option:** You make your own way to Navarrenx

**With extra airport pick-up:** We will pick you up at Pau airport and take you to the hotel (contact us for details of transfers from other airports).

## **END OF YOUR TRIP**

**Standard option:**

Your holiday ends after breakfast.

**With extra airport pick-up:**

After breakfast, we will pick you up and take you to Bilbao airport (if you choose another airport, please consult us for prices).

## **MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS REQUIRED**

1

## **LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY**

This holiday features fairly long days, but with comfortable rather than challenging walking, and is suitable for anybody who enjoys "a good walk". The only exception is the walk up and over the Pyrenees on Day 5, but that is tiring rather than difficult. On some days there are choices of itineraries, which you can decide for yourselves each day. It can get very hot in July and August as well as much more crowded. We would recommend May, June and September as the best months.

## **LUGGAGE TRANSFER**

We will transfer your luggage between each hotel, so all you need to carry when walking is a daysack with whatever you regard as essentials.

## **TRIP FORMAT**

This is an independent, self-guided holiday.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

You stay in double-twin rooms in good quality hotels with en suite facilities as described. On some days we will arrange a transfer to and from a suitable hotel when there is none where you end your walking day.

## **MEALS**

You will eat well. Dinners are based on set menus featuring regional specialities. Breakfast is included every morning, but lunches and picnics are not because there are places to make your own choices, although the night before you can ask hotels for a picnic, which you can pay for locally.

## **THE PRICE INCLUDES**

10 nights dinner, bed and breakfast, plus 2 nights bed and breakfast (7 at Pamplona and 12 at Logrono because they are cities); daily people transfers as specified; daily luggage transfers; detailed walking instructions; maps; 24/7 English speaking phone service.

## **THE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE**

The journey to the start point or from the finish point; lunches; drinks with meals ; non-standard menu items; dinner in Pamplona and Logrono; entry fees; personal and travel insurance, booking fee.

## **FORMALITIES**

You need to keep your passport with you at all times, and ideally insurance information. You need to make your own arrangements to claim local healthcare. There are requirements in France and Spain for all vehicles to carry safety equipment.

## **YOUR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

When we have received your balance of payment for your holiday, and in the month before departure, we send you all the documentation you need: detailed itinerary showing dates, times, contact details etc; a detailed guide to your walking route (with options) and lots of cultural, historical and nature background information; formal documents (invoices, contracts etc); luggage labels etc. If you book at the last minute, we can send this information to your first night hotel.

## **■ EQUIPMENT**

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## **■ INSURANCE**

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According to the regulation of our profession, Purely Pyrenees is covered by a Civil Professional Liability. However, each client must hold an individual civil liability as well as an individual multi risk guarantee in order to protect themselves from incidents or accidents that may occur before or during their hiking trip.

We remind you that a credit card covers, in general, only assistance in repatriation and not the cancellation of your trip, and this only provided you use the card to pay for the total of the trip.

We offer a choice of three insurance options which you can purchase at the time of booking.

**Package 1: simple cancellation insurance at 2.5%**

This insurance provides reimbursement of the amount incurred (excluding fees and the cost of insurance) in case of cancellation due to one of the following causes: serious accident, illness or death of insured, spouse or person accompanying them, and certain family members.

**Package 2: simple cancellation insurance and assistance / repatriation at 3.7%**

This insurance allows, in addition to the benefits described in the plan No. 1; - To benefit from assistance in case of illness or injury during the trip and covers your return home if necessary. - A reimbursement paid on a pro rata basis (excluding transportation costs and with a waiting period) in the case of an interruption of your trip following an accident, the death of a loved one or other specified accidents.

**Package 3: Package "super multi-risk": 4.8%**

This insurance offers, in addition to the benefits described in the packages No. 1 and No. 2, - A wider cancellation insurance with the repayment of amounts incurred (net of deductible) in case of cancellation for any justifiable reason including an exceptional and unexpected event. - The management of some of the costs incurred at the time in case of return not linked to an exceptional and unexpected event. - Compensation (capped) for loss, theft or destruction of baggage. - Payment of compensation for delayed baggage delivery of more than 48 hours.

**The repatriation is not valid for all countries, please check with us before subscribing the insurance.**

You will receive with the confirmation of your booking an extract of the general conditions of contract chosen (in french). Take this document with you on your journey. The validity of all guarantees corresponds with the travel dates indicated on the invoice and applies only to services sold. For departures and returns postponed, please contact us. Warning: If you buy only the contract No. 1 (simple cancellation insurance), this means that you need to have your own insurance, repatriation assistance (related notably to certain credit cards). We advise you to check your contract and cover guaranteed. In this case, we ask you to tell us when you book the name of your insurance company and your policy number. You will assume, therefore, the responsibility of certain risks, especially in the advance payments of certain costs.

Important: If you must use the assistance during the trip, you must obtain the prior consent of Europe Assistance before taking any action or incur any expenditure by telephoning: 33 1 41 85 85 85 and quoting the number of contract: 58662860

## ■ ACTING FOR RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

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Purely Pyrenees is a founding member of Action for Responsible Tourism.

The label "Action for Responsible Tourism" was awarded Purely Pyrenees in 2009. It is controlled, every year, by ECOCERT.

Based on common values of respect, solidarity and quality, ATR aims to harmonize professional practices of its members.

To win the confidence of customers, it focuses on four key commitments, which arise from many activities in the field and at home.

- Clear information and awareness of responsible tourism given to the traveller.
- Selection of providers in the spirit of responsible tourism.
- Setting up of a transfer of competencies to the providers.
- Commitment in relation to the tour operator's own structure.

More information on the label ATR on / [www.tourisme-responsable.org](http://www.tourisme-responsable.org)

## ■ CONTACT US

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EACH STEP BRINGS US CLOSER

