



French Way By Bike / Camino Frances By Bike Section 3

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Difficulty:


Cycle from Ponferrada to Santiago – 231 km

7 Days/6 nights

half Board

en-suite

available year round

From €730

This Cycling Holiday explores the final section of the Camino Frances / French Way by Bike, the most traditional of all the pilgrim routes to Santiago de Compostela and the best known internationally. The route, which was established in the late 11th century reaching the tomb of St James the Great, crosses the North of the Iberian Peninsula, through the Basque Country, Navarra, La Rioja, Castilla y Leon and Galicia regions of Spain. Nowadays, cycling on the Camino has become an incredibly popular way of enjoying this once-in-a-lifetime journey to Santiago de Compostela.

Starting in the mountain-hugging town of Ponferrada and finishing in Santiago de Compostela, this section covers both the Castilla y Leon and Galicia regions. Leaving the medieval city of Ponferrada behind us, this Camino crosses the magnificent O'Cebreiro Mountains before heading towards the heart of Galicia and its lush green hills. This section can be physically demanding and requires a good level of fitness, but it is also a highly rewarding leg of the Camino, offering beautiful landscapes and numerous cultural sights.

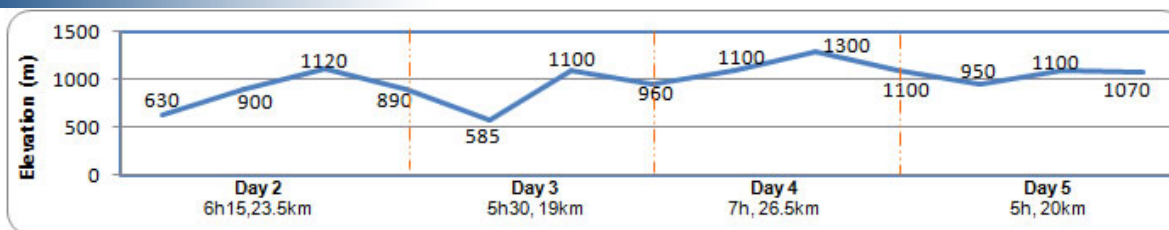
[maps](#)

[View Camino Bike](#) in a larger map

French Way in Yellow

Use the navigation tools on the left to zoom-in

Day By day



» Day 1 - Ponferrada

Ponferrada is a lively city with a pretty, medieval town centre, guarded by the Templars' Castle. The old part of the city is a nice pedestrian quarter where tourists and local people like to chill out on the terraces of Plaza del Ayuntamiento and Plaza de la Encina.


Town: Shops, all facilities

» Day 2 – Ponferrada to Villafranca del Bierzo (24km, +150m -120m)

The first cycling day of this section is also the only full day that you will spend in

» Day 4 – O'Cebreiro to Sarria (46km, +400m -950m)

As we continue up and down on our way out of the Galician mountains, the route offers more spectacular sights and historical buildings. Finally, we reach Sarria, where all pilgrims travelling by any means seem to know each other!


Town: ATM, Shops, all facilities

Accommodation: 3* hotel 100m

from the historical centre, en-suite

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

» Day 5 – Sarria to Melide (75km, +800m -750m)

This stage starts with a climb up through oak woods, passing by the Romanesque Church of Barbedelo, before crossing over the Belesar Dam in Portomarín. Then,

the province of Castilla y Leon, cycling through the valley of Bierzo, surrounded by mountains. You then spend the last few kilometres passing through red earth vineyards until you reach the charming Villafranca del Bierzo. This first day is of short length and with no particular difficulty, so it enables you to warm up before the more difficult day tomorrow. Because of this, you can take it easy with the cycling and enjoy the lively buzz of Villafranca del Bierzo later on!



Town: ATM, Shops, all facilities
Accommodation: 2* family-run hotel, en-suite.
Meals: Breakfast, dinner

» **Day 3 - Villafranca del Bierzo to O'Cebreiro (32km, +1000m -300m)**
 Prepare for a challenging day with an ascent of 1000m. You will pass through the narrow valley of the river Valcace before tackling the ascent of O Cebreiro. Situated between the ranges of "Los Ancares" and "La Sierra do Courel", this stage involves a steep climb in the course of only a few kilometers. Take your time, we have designed this cycling day to be short, taking its difficulty into consideration. So, enjoy the magnificent scenery as you ascend higher and higher throughout the day, and say hello to Galicia as you arrive in O'Cebreiro!



Town: ATM, Shops, all facilities
Accommodation: 1* family-run hotel, in the centre of the village, en-suite.
Meals: Breakfast, dinner

the Camino route to Melide is not too difficult - despite its typical Galician ups and downs!



Town: ATM, Shops, all facilities
Accommodation: charming 2* hotel in front of the "Refugio de Peligrino", in the centre of the town.
Meals: Breakfast, dinner

» **Day 6 – Melide to Santiago (54km, +400m -450m)** This is probably the most exciting day of the whole Camino, as today we finally reach Santiago de Compostela! Before that, we will have to go through the now-usual highs and lows, the nicest of which is probably on reaching El Monte de Gozo (Mount of Joy). From here, you can see the cathedral in the distance for the first time, before even entering Santiago de Compostela!



Town: ATM, Shops, all facilities
Accommodation: 3* hotel in the historic centre. Renovated 18th-century family house, en-suite
Meals: Breakfast

» **Day 7 – Santiago**
 After breakfast, we bid you farewell



Town: ATM, Internet, shops, all facilities
Meal: Breakfast

how to get there

It is best to fly to Santiago de Compostela or to Madrid / More info: <http://www.spanish-airport-guide.com/>

To Spain

1 - Fly to Santiago de Compostela, Spain
 Ryanair and Iberia/BA fly direct to Santiago de Compostela from the UK. Ryanair fly from Stansted, Nottingham East Midlands and Liverpool and Aer Lingus operates from Dublin.

Many of the flights that arrive at the airport are from internal Spanish destinations. Iberia and Spanair offer the best selection of flights and you can fly to and from Santiago De Compostela from: Frankfurt, Paris and Rome and Barcelona, Bilbao, Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Madrid, Malaga, Palma, Seville, Tenerife and Valencia.

2 - Fly to Madrid, Spain
 Virtually every company flies to Madrid
 Spanish national company: www.iberia.com
 Spanish low-cost: www.spanair.com

To the beginning of the trip: Ponferrada

1 - From Santiago.

- Take a shuttle bus to the bus station. Then a direct bus to Ponferrada (3-4hrs). See: <http://www.alsa.com>

- Take a train to Ponferrada. Takes 4hrs, 2 per day. See: <http://horarios.renfe.es/hir/ingles.html>

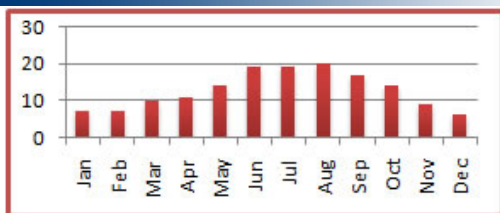
2 - From Madrid. Train (5-6hrs)

See: <http://horarios.renfe.es/hir/ingles.html>

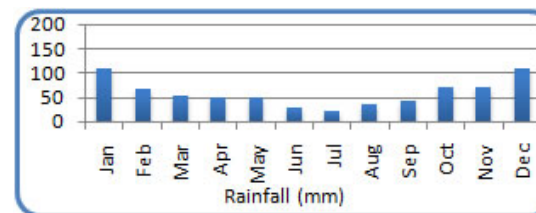
Back home from Santiago

Shuttle buses from Santiago city center to the airport (20mins).

WEATHER



Average temperatures



Average rainfall

about the cycling holiday

accommodation

These hotels and guesthouses have been carefully selected for their comfort, location, friendliness and character, and are subject to availability. If the hotel described is not available we provide an alternative with the same standard of comfort & price.

Luggage

We will transport your luggage from one hotel to the next. You only need to carry your backpack during the day!

Bikes

We provide you with a mountain bike, and can also provide accessories or other cycling gear - so all you need to do is cycle and enjoy your holiday, hassle-free! The bicycles provided are standard mountain bikes. We deliver your bike to the hotel on Day 1, which means you are ready to go the next morning! At the end of the trip, simply return your bike to our drop off point in the city centre. See our table of Options below for further details.

Bikes are subject to availability. If the bicycle described is not available, we provide an alternative of the same standard of performance & price.

Standard Bike: BH 18 speed Mountain Bike

Bike frame: Steel; Gears: 18 speed; Suspension: TITAN; Brakes: V-Brake; Gear-changes: Grip-Shift on handlebar.

Upgraded Bike: BH 21 speed Mountain Bike

Bike frame: Aluminium; Gears: 21 speed; Gear-changes: synchronized; Adjustable forks: Suntour SR.

Included

- Mountain Bike, steel frame, 18 speed
- Helmet & water bottle holder
- Bike delivery to your hotel in Ponferrada
- Bike return in Santiago de Compostela
- Luggage transferred from hotel to hotel
- En-suite Rooms
- Half-board during the cycle
- Detailed cycling guidebook
- Map
- Pilgrim passport

Not Included

- Flights
- Insurance (recommended)
- Drinks
- Dinner in Ponferrada and Santiago
- Transfer from/to airport
- Bike accessories (See Options below)

prices & Options

Period	Price (€)	Single Room (€)	Solo departure (single room included) (€)	Picnic lunches (€)
High Season April, May, June, September	970	228	245	50
Mid Season July, August, October	880	195	230	
Low Season January, February, March, November, December	730	162	230	

Options & Accessories

Period	UPGRADE to Mountain Bike, Aluminium frame, 21v	Water Bottle holder	Helmet	Travel Bag	Gel Saddle Cover
Price (€)	10	included	included	11	6

Extra Night in Santiago				Extra Night in Sarria (€)				Transport To Ponferrada from Santiago airport (€pp)
3* Hotel B&B (€)		5* Parador de Santiago, B&B (€)		2* Hotel B&B (€)		3* Hotel B&B (€)		
Single	Double (pps)	Single	Double (pps)	Single	Double (pps)	Single	Double (pps)	
95	65	205	145	60	44	95	65	For info on transfers for more passengers or from other airports, please ask us .
		or Upgrade last night +110	or Upgrade last night +110					2-8 people €100pp

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