



MS Climb 2010
Walking the Camino de Santiago – SPAIN
15 days/13 nights
09 – 23 October 2010

Day 1 Saturday October 09

Depart Canada

Depart today for your overnight transatlantic flight to Spain.
Intercontinental flights arranged on your own.

Day 2 Sunday October 10

Arrival in Madrid

After arrival in Madrid, transfer to your centrally-located hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure to explore this wonderful city on your own.

Overnight: Hotel Mediodia (2 star hotel). Madrid. 1 night.

Superbly located, in the heart of "Old Madrid", the Hotel Mediodia is close to the famous "Art Triangle of Madrid", and also close to the Retiro Park. Rooms are simple yet comfortable.

Day 3 Monday October 11

O Cebreiro

Transfer to Madrid airport to catch your 1-hr flight to Santiago de Compostela. Upon arrival in Santiago, you'll be met by your local guides and transferred to the first night's accommodations in the legendary village of O Cebreiro. This beautiful hamlet is located on the top of a mountain and on the Galician side of the León-Galicia border. The village is famous for its primitive, circular thatched-roofed huts called *pallozas* and a chapel where one of the famous legends on the Camino took place. Relax and enjoy your first evening on the "Camino".

Overnight:

Hotel O Cebreiro/Hospedería de San Giraldo de Aurillac, O Cebreiro (rural inns). 1 night.

These two traditional country inns are located in the middle of the village of O'Cebreiro. The Hospederia has offered room and board to pilgrims since the 1960's. Situated right next door to the church; the restaurant also features a boisterous Meson serving delicious Galician food.

Day 4 Tuesday October 12

Triacastela to Sarria (Walk: 17.3 km)

The coach will transfer you from O'Cebreiro to Triacastela (a village meaning "three castles"). Although there are no castles remaining, there is a lovely 18th century church still standing. From Triacastela, commence the walk and follow the picturesque trail via the hamlets of San Xil and Furela. In Furela a lovely carved capital can still be seen, dedicated to San Roque, one of the patron saints of the pilgrimage). Arrive in Sarria and walk straight to your hotel.

In the evening, there is an option to tour the nearby Benedictine monastery of Samos (one of the oldest in Spain), and attend Vespers with the monks of this hospitable order.

Overnight: Hotel Oca Villa de Sarria (2 star hotel). Sarria. 1 night.

The Hotel Oca Villa de Sarria is located in the centre of the bustling pilgrim town of Sarria. Simple yet comfortable rooms, decorated in typical Castilian style.

Registration contact:

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Day 5 Wednesday October 13 Sarria to Portomarin (Walk: 21.5 kms)

Today's section of the Camino is considered to be one of the most picturesque. Walk through bucolic countryside, traversing enchanted forests and small patches of farmland to the banks of the Miño River. En route to Portomarin you'll pass the 100 km marker (only 100 kms until Santiago de Compostela!) – a milestone for pilgrims who travel the Camino.

Portomarin is a picturesque village with an interesting history. Most of the old buildings of the town (including the Romanesque Church of San Juan) were moved stone by stone to higher ground in the 1960's when the Rio Miño was damned to create a reservoir.

Overnight: Hotel Villajardin (1 star hotel). Portomarin. 1 night.

Located in the lovely village of Portomarin, the Hotel Villajardin is a popular hotel with pilgrims. Featuring spacious, light and airy rooms, friendly service and a relaxed ambience.

Day 6 Thursday October 14 Portomarin to Palas (Walk: 23.9 kms)

Passing through small villages decorated with *cruceiros* (carved stone crosses that mark the way to Santiago) and containing only three or four houses, you'll meet other *peregrinos* on the trail. But although you share a quest and a sense of camaraderie with fellow pilgrims from around the world, there are always moments of solitude to contemplate this special journey.

The undulating countryside is studded with meadows and forests of eucalyptus and pine as you approach Palas de Rei and your rustic, rural hotel.

Overnight: La Cabaña (3 star rural hotel). Palas de Rei. 1 night.

La Cabaña (the Cabin) is a charming hotel built completely of wood. It is situated on ample grounds, surrounded by gardens and pine and chestnut trees. Located right on the pilgrim's trail.

Day 7 Friday October 15 Palas de Rei to Melide (Walk: 15.2 kms)

After breakfast, depart Palas de Rei and begin walking along quiet paths through hamlets and woodlands, crossing an occasional stone bridge along the way. Stop to admire the tiny 12th century church dedicated to St. Julian – one of the many Romanesque treasures along the Camino.

Melide is a small town with a wonderful square and church and a good pilgrims' atmosphere. Here, other pilgrims' trails merge with the "Camino Frances", and you are likely to see more *peregrinos* from here to Santiago de Compostela.

Overnight: Pousada Chiquitín (2 star hotel). Melide. 1 night.

This family-run inn housed within an historic building in the centre of Melide. Renowned for its friendly service and excellent local cuisine.

Day 8 Saturday October 16 Melide to Arzua (Walk: 13.4 km)

Trace the Camino as it weaves along country lanes and ancient stone pathways called *corredoiras*. Farmers tend their fields and the chimes of cow bells accompany the sounds of your footsteps. In this area of rural Galicia it is not uncommon to see villagers still using scythes to work the land. Be sure to try the creamy cows' cheese from Arzúa and *empanada*, a light crusty pastry-pie filled with beef or tuna.

Overnight: Pensión Casa Teodoro (2 star guesthouse). Arzua. 1 night.

This small and friendly guesthouse has offered lodging to pilgrims for a century. The renovated guestrooms are comfortable and cosy, and the restaurant is popular with locals for its home-made dishes.



Day 9 Sunday October 17 Arzua to O Pino (Walk: 19.4 km)

Today's section of the Camino weaves through meadows and forests and eucalyptus, passing through tranquil villages along the way. In the village of Santa Irene, there is a small Romanesque chapel dedicated to the saint of the same name, St. Irene. The trail rises and falls through river valleys crossing rushing streams. Stroll under shady fig trees and fragrant eucalyptus to reach O Pino, where this evening we spend our last night before arriving in Santiago.

Overnight: Hotel O Pino (1 star rural hotel). O Pino. 1 night.

Located only 19 kms from Santiago, the Hotel O Pino is a small hotel featuring spacious rooms decorated in traditional style. The hotel features gardens and a good restaurant and coffee shop. Located right on the Camino de Santiago.

Day 10 Monday October 18 O Pino to Santiago de Compostela (19 km)

Excitement mounts as the trail brings you closer to Santiago de Compostela. Walk through rolling terrain towards Lavacolla, where medieval pilgrims traditionally bathed in the river to purify themselves before arriving in the holy city of Santiago. From here you'll begin to ascend the Monte del Gozo ("Mount of Joy"), the point where pilgrims first catch sight of the spires of the Cathedral of Santiago, these days surrounded by the bustling city of Santiago de Compostela.

Arriving in the Obradoiro square - in front of the immense Cathedral - is an exciting moment, and after performing the traditional pilgrim rituals inside the Cathedral, check into your hotel to rest. Later in the evening, we enjoy a sumptuous feast featuring delicious Galician dishes to celebrate our arrival.

Overnight: Hotel Miradoiro de Belvis (2 star hotel). Santiago de Compostela. 2 nights.

A small, modern and functional hotel with a great location in the old quarter of Santiago de Compostela. Close to the Obradoiro square and the Cathedral.

Day 11 Tuesday October 19 Sightseeing in Santiago de Compostela

After a leisurely breakfast, enjoy a private tour of the magnificent Cathedral with a local art historian. You'll also explore the narrow streets or *rúas* of the Old Quarter, where the vibrancy, history and magic of Santiago de Compostela come alive. Your historical visit will end in time for pilgrims' mass at noon in the Cathedral. Rest of the day at leisure to explore this wonderful UNESCO designated city full of pilgrims from all corners of the globe.

Day 12 Wednesday October 20 Santiago de Compostela to Madrid

Transfer to Santiago de Compostela's airport, where we take the short flight to Madrid. Transfer from Madrid airport to your centrally located hotel.

Overnight: Hotel Mediodia (2 star hotel). Madrid. 3 nights.

Superbly located, in the heart of "Old Madrid", the Hotel Mediodia is close to Madrid's famous Art Triangle of Madrid, and also close to the Retiro Park. Rooms are simple yet comfortable.

Day 13 Thursday October 21 Sightseeing in Madrid

A local art historian will meet you at your hotel to commence a walking tour of Old Madrid. Life in Madrid revolves around talking, toasting and tapas-eating! In a walk through this vibrant city, we'll stroll from our central hotel to the 17th century Plaza Mayor, a grand square where every sort of human drama has taken place in history such as trials of faith, public burnings of heretics, royal marriages, the canonization of saints and countless balls and bullfights.



Continue on to the Puerto del Sol – the bustling centre of Madrid where each December thousands of madrileños traditionally see in the New Year as they eat 12 grapes (one grape on each strike of the clock), during the final 12 seconds before midnight!

Depending on the groups interest, the walking tour can include a visit to the Prado Museum or the Royal Palace (entrances not included at this point in overall costing).

Day 14 Friday October 22

Madrid at Leisure

Day is at leisure to explore Madrid on your own.

Day 15 Saturday October 23

Departure

Farewell España! Transfer to Madrid airport to catch your onward flight home. Arrive back in Toronto same day.



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What's included:

- 13 nights double room accommodation (all with private bathroom) in budget accommodation
- All breakfasts daily
- 1 group dinner in Santiago de Compostela (bottled water, wine and tea/coffee included)
- 7 lunches on walking days (includes bottled water)
- Arrival transfer Madrid airport to hotel on Day 2
arrival transfer outside of general group is subject to additional charges or can be arranged on your own
- Group Transfer hotel to Madrid airport on Day 3
- Group Transfer Santiago airport to hotel on Day 3
- Coach & driver available for 7 Walking days Days 4 to 10
- 2 bilingual tour leaders to accompany group from arrival at Santiago airport on Day 3 until (and including) the farewell dinner on Day 10.
- Private 2 hr guided tour with English-speaking art historian in Santiago de Compostela on Day 11
- Group transfer hotel to Santiago airport on Day 12
- Group transfer Madrid airport to hotel on Day 12
- Private 3 hr guided tour with English-speaking art historian in Madrid on Day 13 (does not include entrance fees).
- Departure transfer hotel to Madrid airport on Day 15
departure transfer outside of general group is subject to additional charges or can be arranged on your own
- Walking notes and maps

Climbers Expenses:

- Items not explicitly specified in the inclusion list
- Flights to and from Toronto if originating from elsewhere
- International return airfare between Toronto and Madrid
- Items of a personal nature (laundry, bar, phone expenses etc.)
- Lunches in Madrid and Santiago de Compostela
- Dinners (with exception of 1 dinner in Santiago de Compostela)
- Domestic airfare: Madrid-Santiago-Madrid
Approximately €126 per person as of November 11, 2009
Prices are subject to change and is not guaranteed until ticketed
- Travel/Health Insurance (climbers MUST have travel insurance to participate – recommended purchase of Deluxe Travel Insurance Package including Trip Cancellation & Interruption Insurance and Medical Coverage in case of medical injury, family emergency, etc.)



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FUND-RAISING

Registration Fee: \$500 (non-refundable, non-transferrable fee - no tax receipt will be provided)
Upon completion of the total fund-raising target, \$250 of the registration will be credited back to you.

Funds to Raise: \$7500

Minimum to raise: \$5625 in order to be eligible to purchase the trip on your own.
If unable to raise the minimum, all funds raised will go directly to the MS Society and you will be unable to participate in the Climb.

Date to complete fund-raising: September 1, 2010

Cancellation policy: Details provided in MS Climb Participant Agreement

Travel insurance: required including cancellation and medical insurance (in case of medical injury, family emergency, etc.)

Refer to “**MS Climb Participant Agreement**” and “**Tour Operator Terms & Conditions**” for further details.