

# Self-Guided Camino: The Portuguese Way

Trip Code: SGPS

Version: SGPS Self-Guided Camino: The Portuguese Way



WALK & TREK



SELF-GUIDED



MODERATE



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Complete the Camino from Porto to Santiago de Compostela
- Explore historic Porto, home of Port wine and opulent buildings dressed in azulejo decoration
- Discover quaint villages and walk through the vineyards of the Minho

- Enjoy delicious Galician cuisine and relax with a glass of vinho verde

#### AT A GLANCE

- Self-Guided
- 12 days walking
- 225 km of the Portuguese Way
- Join at Porto / End in Santiago

#### ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 13 Breakfasts
- 2 nights Hotel with swimming pool
- 7 nights Hotel
- 4 nights Guesthouse

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

## Introduction

It is said that there is the Camino you walk and the Camino you live. This 2 week walking holiday allows you to live the Portuguese Way from Porto to Santiago de Compostela. Taking the route less travelled you will start your journey in the UNESCO city of Porto, before stepping out to discover beautiful peaceful landscapes, vineyards, and quaint Portuguese villages with rich histories and legends. You will follow in the footsteps of ancient pilgrims; discover the legend behind the symbolic rooster of Portugal and cross the Spanish border to embrace Galician culture. You will even spend the night in Pontevedra, where great explorer Columbus's flagship, the Santa Maria, was crafted.

Along the way you will stay in a welcoming selection of hotels and guesthouses, close to the Camino on a bed and breakfast basis, giving you opportunity to dine on the fantastic seafood dishes the locals love so much. The jewel in the crown is your arrival at the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, an emotional moment for many walkers as you realise your achievements over the past 2 weeks, the memories you have made and the Camino you have lived!

### Is this holiday for you?

This 2 week Camino is perfect for those looking to take on a spiritual challenge, your first long distance route or those who simply desire to see the quieter side of Portugal away, from the busy beaches of the south and discover Galicia and all its splendid traditions. Guided by the traditional scallop shells and your route notes, you should be comfortable walking for 5-6 hours a day and an average of 15-20km on quiet paths, byways and cobbled tracks. The Portuguese Way is relatively flat, taking you through the undulating terrain of the Minho and into Galicia making it the ideal first time long distance route for those seeking a new challenge. Staying in a great selection of hotels and guesthouses, we will transport your luggage for you so all you need to do is relax and enjoy the journey.

# Itinerary

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## DAY 1

### Arrive in Porto and explore the city.

Arrive in Porto, home of port wine, merchant history and stately bridges joining the city over the River Douro. Depending on your arrival time you may wish to explore this beautiful coastal city, we recommend paying a visit to Igreja de Sao Francisco for views over the river and walking through the Ribeira district where the medieval streets house many welcoming cafes and photogenic corners.



**Accommodation**  
Hotel

## DAY 2

### Your first day as a Pilgrim as you walk to Arcos.

Your day begins with a short transfer out of Porto to nearby Vilar do Pinheiro, avoiding an urbanised section of walking and allowing you to enjoy the changing scenery, from urban to rural, much sooner. Setting off you will begin your pilgrimage along the way of the yellow shells. Your route will wind its way first to Vilarinho, a small village known for its textile industry, and on to cross the medieval bridge over the Ave to reach Arcos. Your stresses will soon melt away as you enjoy your first day as a pilgrim and absorb the green countryside of the Camino de Portuguese. Arriving in Arcos you will have time to relax at your accommodation and enjoy an evening meal, perhaps with a glass of wine.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Time**  
4-5 hours



**Distance**  
17KM

## DAY 3

### Walk to Barcelos and discover the legend of the Rooster.

Feeling refreshed, your route today will take you to the medieval village of Rates with its pretty Romanesque church located in the town square. The church was once part of the former convent which the town was built around. Today, it is a sleepy village which welcomes pilgrims along their way to Santiago. Continuing, your route will take you through the pleasant shade of the woodland and through



welcoming small villages, including Courel and Pedra Furada. Before long you will once again see the landscape change as you reach the urbanisation of Barcelos and your home for the night.

It is here in Barcelos where the Rooster became a popular Portuguese symbol. Legend has it that a pilgrim was accused of stealing cutlery from a wealthy person. While convicting the pilgrim the judge was eating a rooster and the pilgrim announced that if he were innocent the rooster would crow 3 times, and with that it did. The tale was spread and the pilgrim later returned to build a statue of the crow which had spared his sentence.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Time**  
5-6 hours



**Distance**  
20KM

## DAY 4

### Enjoy a shorter day on your feet as you wind your way to Balugaes.

After a relaxed breakfast you will once again put on your walking boots and continue on your journey to Santiago. Today is a little shorter and a little easier on your legs. This is a quiet, rural part of Portugal and your route will take you along minor roads, through vineyards and to the River Neiva. From here you will cross the medieval bridge before entering into your final goal of the day, Balugaes. This peaceful village is the perfect spot to unwind after a day of walking, we recommend enjoying a good book in the gardens of your guesthouse before dinner.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Guesthouse



**Time**  
4 hours



**Distance**  
15KM

## DAY 5

### Discover Ponte de Lima, a gem of northern Portugal.

Your route today will take you through a series of small hamlets including the quaint hamlets of Facha, Seara and Correlha along quiet roads and footpaths to your final goal, Ponte de Lima. Named after the bridge which crosses over the River Lima, Ponte de Lima is the oldest town in Portugal. This characterful town is full of charm not to mention history. Sitting on the banks of the Lima River the towns history is reflected in its array of historical buildings, built in the styles of various periods interspersed with pretty plazas and grand religious buildings. You will have time to explore all the town has to offer, visit the colourful botanical gardens and enjoy a coffee in a café on the Plaza before checking into your hotel for the evening.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Guesthouse



**Time**  
4-5 hours



**Distance**  
18KM

## DAY 6

### Say farewell to Ponte de Lima and walk through tranquil farmland and forestry to reach Cossourado.

This morning you say farewell to Ponte de Lima, crossing the impressive Romanesque-Gothic bridge over the river Lima with its 22 arches. Arriving on the far side, the way will soon take you into the work of rural Portugal as you walk towards the farming parish of Arcozelo and onwards to the small village Labruja. Here, the landscape once again begins to change as you make your way uphill through tranquil tree covered scenery, passing the Cruz dos Franceses to reach the top of your climb. With the most demanding part of your way achieved you have time to take a moment to appreciate how far you have already come before you take an easy walk to your accommodation for the evening and a welcoming cold drink.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Guesthouse



**Time**  
5-6 hours



**Distance**  
22KM

## DAY 7

### Cross the border into Galicia, a step closer to Santiago de Compostela.

Today is the last leg of your journey in Portugal as you make your way from the valley of the river Coura through rolling countryside. Today is a peaceful one as you make your way through this sparsely populated region on ancient cobbled tracks, first to the pretty village of Fontoura with its quaint church, and on to Valenca marking the end of your route in Portugal. This border town dates back to the 13th century and has been a safe crossing point for pilgrims who wear the scallop shell of St James despite many battles with neighbouring Galicia. Steeped in history, we recommend taking time to stroll around the historic medieval fortress and the original walled town. When you have finished exploring Valenca you continue to your final goal of the day, Tui, just across the river. Crossing the bridge inspired by the work of famous Gustave Eiffel into Tui to commence the Spanish section of the way.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Time**  
5-6 hours



**Distance**  
16KM

## DAY 8

### Cross the border into Spain and walk through the picturesque valley of the River Louro.

Feeling rested, today you will begin your Spanish section of the way. This is a proud moment for any pilgrims; symbolic of the half way point of their pilgrimage from Porto, and is a popular starting point for many pilgrims who seek to undertake the final stages of the Camino de Portuguese. Making your way through the medieval streets you reach Tui's impressive cathedral. You will have time to stop and admire this famous cathedral before continuing on your way, crossing the Veiga Bridge to walk along the Valley of the River Louro, perhaps one of the most beautiful stretches of the route, before entering O Porrino, your final goal of the day.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Guesthouse



**Time**  
5-6 hours



**Distance**  
17KM

## DAY 9

### Discover Galician delicacies in Redonela and enjoy views of the Ria de Virgo on your way to Arcade.

Leaving O Porrino behind your walk today takes you further north passing through the hilltop village of Santiaguino das Antas with its pretty park, which houses the Chapel from which the town derived its name. There is time to take a welcome rest in the park before descending to the town of Redonela. This is a great spot to stop for a well-earned lunch and enjoy a typical Galician delicacy such as Caldo Gallego (a hearty stew with chorizo) to fuel you on your way. Continuing you will soon reach Outeiro de Penas for excellent views over the Ria de Vigo estuary, one of the most sublime natural harbours in the world. Your final goal is your hotel in Arcade at the head of the estuary, renowned for having the best oysters in Galicia.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Time**  
5-6 hours



**Distance**  
22KM

## DAY 10

### Walk through medieval architecture and Spanish vineyards to reach Pontevedra.

This section of the Camino will take you out of Arcade passing fishing boats on the banks to cross the photogenic medieval bridge over the Verdugo River which feeds the Ria de Vigo. Reaching the opposite side you make your way through the pretty narrow streets, guiding you to the beautiful byways up to the rolling hills to Cacheiro. Crossing the hillside your route soon opens up to display colourful fields,

vineyards and orchards. Winding your way across the fruitful landscape you soon reach the beautiful largely traffic free city of Pontevedra, your home for the evening. Once Galicia's largest city, Pontevedra has a fantastic old town to discover. It was here where Columbus' flagship, the Santa Maria, was constructed. Local legend says that Columbus was in fact a Pontevedra nobleman named Pedro Madruga who took on a new identity. We recommend taking time to explore San Francisco Convent, an impressive convent which is said to have been founded by Saint Francis himself back in the 13 century.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Time**  
3-4 hours



**Distance**  
13KM

## DAY 11

### Explore Pontevedra market and absorb the scenery of the Grand River as you walk to Caldas de Reis.

Before heading on your way this morning we recommend paying a visit to Pontevedra food market, Mercado de abastos. Split over 2 floors the market is bustling with locals, tourists and pilgrims in search of the fantastic fresh produce of Rias Baixas; seafood, Albarino wine and fantastic cheeses. The perfect place to pick up snacks for your journey. Leaving the city via the millennial bridge, O Burgo, you once again commence your journey to Santiago. Your way, today, will take you along the beautiful valley of the Gandra River as it winds its way to San Mauro. Continuing your path widens and you will begin to spot the first of the crosses of Saint James, some magnificently carved and making a serene and peaceful atmosphere. You will soon pass the curious church of Santa Maria where the Templar, a type of monk responsible for protecting pilgrims, were stationed. Your home for the evening is just beyond the church in the thermal town of Caldas de Reis.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel with swimming pool



**Time**  
5-6 hours



**Distance**  
22KM

## DAY 12

### Walk through beautiful forest and meadows to reach Padron.

As you become ever closer to your final goal you will notice more crosses and an increase in small villages and towns to welcome pilgrims. This stage of the Camino will take you across medieval bridges and through some enchanting sections of scenery, first to the village of Cruceiro and on through forests and meadows to the church of Santa Maria de Carracedo. From here you follow the pretty scenery of the Valga River for some time before heading on to Pontecesures and perhaps a coffee stop before the final section of your route today. Feeling refreshed you cross the Ulla River to reach your accommodation in Padron, an important stop along the way for pilgrims. It is said that the granite block

which was tied to the boat carrying Saint James is located under the altar of Santiago de Pedron.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**

Hotel with swimming pool



**Time**

5 hours



**Distance**

19KM

**DAY 13**

## Stand proud at the foot of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

Today is the day you will complete the Camino de Portuguese from Porto! Leaving Padron you will make your way north passing Iria Flavia where the Church of Santa Maria was rebuilt in the 12th century in the place of the first cathedral in Galicia. You continue passing quaint Galician villages to reach the magnificent sanctuary of Nossa Senhora da Escravitudes before making your way through the streets to finally begin to see your ultimate goal, Santiago de Compostela. Making your way further into the city you will soon arrive at the Faxeira gate, the entrance of the Portuguese Way to join fellow pilgrims from around the world in reaching the resting place of Saint James in the spectacular cathedral. This is a proud moment and you will have time to absorb it before making your way to your final hotel for a well-earned rest.

Obtaining the Compostela: To cope with large numbers of pilgrims during the busiest part of the summer months, the pilgrim office has installed a numbered ticketing system for processing your pilgrims' passport. Please be aware that you may have to return to collect your certificate the morning after presenting your passport.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**

Hotel



**Time**

6 hours



**Distance**

23KM

**DAY 14**

## Departure Day

Enjoy a relaxed breakfast and absorb the accomplishment of completing the Camino Portuguese before making your onward journey.

Meals: **B**

# Holiday Information



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## What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Luggage transfers
- Private transfer from Porto to Mosteiró on day 2
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- Pilgrim kit including a pilgrim passport and shell

## What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to Porto
- Travel from Santiago
- City taxes (payable locally) usually under 5 Euros per person per night
- Public buses and taxis
- Visas (if applicable)
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

## Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit, about the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook and all your relevant documents no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start date. We will send your documents using signed for courier so that you can track your package and know that they are safely on their way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our sales team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker so please remind them to pack it before you set off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start date, please do inform our sales team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

## Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking holiday for your family, a centre based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a days walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool or visiting museums is calling.

Please discuss this further with our sales team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

## Joining Arrangements & Transfers

This trip starts at your hotel in Porto. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a land only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. The nearest airport for this trip is Porto Airport with many departures from regional UK airports.

The public transport network from Porto are extremely good. If you are flying into Porto Airport it is possible to take the Metro to Porto city for approximately €3. The journey takes approximately 30minutes and the metro runs every 20 minutes. For more information please visit [www.metrodoporto.pt](http://www.metrodoporto.pt)

Alternatively, we offer a private transfer from Porto Airport to your accommodation. Please ask our sales team for a quotation.

The trip ends in Santiago de Compostela. It is possible to return to Porto via Flixbus or train. The journey takes approximately 6 - 7 hours for more information visit [www.rome2rio.com](http://www.rome2rio.com) Alternatively, it is possible to fly direct to London from Santiago de Compostela Airport or we can offer a private transfer from Santiago de Compostela to Porto Airport. Please ask our sales team for a quotation.

## Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis to allow you the most flexibility during your trip.

## Food & Water

Water is drinkable from the taps on this holiday. Please fill your personal bottles for your day in the morning. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

The Portuguese are passionate about food. It is a reason for celebration, time with family and socialising with friends, and as is typical on the Med, evening meals are enjoyed late into the evenings with a glass of wine. Portugal's national obsession is Bacalhau, a dried salted cod which will feature heavily on menus alongside other delicious seafood. After all Portugal has almost 1800km of coastline. But it is not all just seafood as Portuguese cuisine is all about simple, fresh cooking with many meaty stews such as Cozido a Portuguesa which includes beef, pork and chicken served with fresh vegetables and usually accompanied by one of the countries fantastic wines.

Crossing the border into Galica and you can see that this too is a region passionate about food. Galicia's cuisine is less about paella and more about delicious Pulpo a la Gallega, a traditional dish of the region which comprises of succulent boiled octopus on top of a bed of thinly sliced potatoes and topped with oil and paprika. And let's not forget the tasty treat of Santiago, the Tarta de Santiago made from ground almonds and covered in icing sugar and the cross of Santiago. Yummy!

## Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

## Accommodation

On this trip you will stay in a selection of comfortable guesthouses and 2\* or 3\* hotels each offering warm hospitality and close proximity to your route. Each hotel brings its own charm whether it's a small family run guesthouse offering beautiful gardens to relax or a 3\* hotel with a relaxing communal lounge area or a swimming pool to cool down after a day on the on your feet.

All our accommodations are booked on bed and breakfast basis in a twin or double room and have wifi available too. Many accommodations have restaurants and some offer a set 'pilgrims menu', a tradition along the Camino and offer a hearty 3 course meal for approx. 15 euros payable locally. Please ask your host for more information.

It is possible to arrange additional nights accommodation if you would like to extend your time in Porto or Santiago. Please speak to our sales team for more information.

## **Baggage Allowance**

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your pilgrimage. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is under 15kg and that your luggage is ready for collection each morning. You will also need a daypack to carry your daily essentials with you.

# General Information

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## Passport & Visas

### Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

## Health & Vaccinations

### Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

### GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

## Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided walking holiday is that you decide the pace however getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable your walks will be. You should be comfortable with walking 5-6 hours for consecutive days.



## Climate

The climate in this part of Portugal and Galicia is mild with wet winter months and warm pleasant summers for walking with the cooling breeze of the Atlantic. The hottest months are July and August with temperatures reaching up to 25-30 degrees.

## Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at [travelaware.campaign.gov.uk](http://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk) and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

## Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

## Books

- The Portuguese: The Land and its People, Marion Kaplan
- Pocket Porto, Lonely Planet

## Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

# Equipment Information

## Self Guided Equipment List

- Hiking boots with good grip soles
- Functional base layer
- T-shirts
- Hat
- Windproof jacket
- Fleece / extra layer
- Long/short hiking trousers
- Hiking socks
- Waterproof Jacket
- Waterproof Trousers
- Rucksack (approx. 20 l)
- Small first aid kit for your rucksack
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Camera (batteries/memory card)
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Sun glasses

- Personal wash kit
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Tupperware for picnics
- Walking poles
- Headtorch & spare batteries
- Your self-guided route notes

## Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers.  
[>> Find out more](#)

## Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons on twin or double occupancy, however we can quote for any number of travellers, including solo travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this trip part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our sales team to find out more about this.

Our sales team will be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

We offer some transfers to your hotel from the nearest airports, please refer to the 'joining arrangements and transfers' for further details for this trip.

# Why Choose KE

## Why KE?

Stand proud at the foot of Santiago de Compostela with your certificate of distance, in the knowledge that you completed the 225km route of the Portuguese Way under your own steam from Porto. With your luggage transfers and your pilgrim kit included, all you have to do is put one foot in front of the other and enjoy your journey.

**Please Note** This document was downloaded on 18/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change