

# Camino de Santiago Trek

Trip Code: CDS

Version: CDS Camino de Santiago Trek



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



MODERATE



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Walk through rural Galicia, from Sarria to Santiago de Compostela Cathedral
- Fully guided, with baggage support, and cosy hotel/guesthouse accommodation
- Earn your 'Compostela' certificate by collecting stamps in your 'Pilgrim's Passport'
- Discover historic towns, romanesque churches, medieval bridges and roman ruins
- Experience Spanish culture and delicious regional cuisine

## AT A GLANCE

- 6 days walking
- Max altitude - 600 metres
- Join at Sarria, Ends Santiago de Compostela

## ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 7 Breakfasts
- 6 Lunches
- 6 Dinners
- 7 nights Hotel

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

# Introduction

Take a journey through history on this fully guided walking holiday following Spain's Camino de Santiago, The Way of St James. Since the middle ages the Camino has been considered one of the holiest pilgrimages in world. Legend has it that the remains of the apostle St James, having been carried by boat from Jerusalem, were interred in northern Spain, at what is now Santiago de Compostela. For centuries Christians have journeyed here to pay homage; nowadays, these pilgrims are also joined by explorers from around the world, drawn in by the fascinating history of the route. We will join the Pilgrim's Way in Sarria, from where we follow the iconic scallop shell route markers all the way to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela, thus completing the last 100km stretch that qualifies us for our 'Compostela' pilgrimage certificate.

We set out from the pretty, tree-shaded streets of Sarria, armed with our 'Pilgrim's Passports', which we'll enjoy filling with stamps each day in the small cafes and Romanesque churches we pass by. Our route leads us beside waterways, through woodland and picturesque rural villages. Along the way we will be sure to encounter a variety of friendly fellow pilgrims and, after greeting each other with a "Bon Camino, Peregrino!", we can enjoy sharing stories as we walk. Finally we arrive at the ancient town of Santiago de Compostela, with its cobbled streets and welcoming cafes and tapas bars, where we visit the impressive Baroque Cathedral, now a shrine to St James, where we can attend a Pilgrim's Mass to mark the end of our journey if we wish. During the week we'll stay in small, family run hotels and our baggage will be transferred for us, allowing us to walk with just a light pack. With our experienced guide always on hand to explain about the history of the Camino, the villages and churches we pass, this fully guided walking holiday really allows us to enjoy the very best of this 1000 year-old pilgrimage route.

## Is this holiday for you?

This hotel based walking week involves 6 days of hiking along well marked and well established paths, which will vary from forest tracks to cobbled pathways. The route will be signed with the classic scallop shell symbol, but we will have our guide with us to also help lead the way and to tell us all about the history of the route and region! For the most part we will be walking on lightly undulating or relatively flat paths. We should be prepared for 4 - 7 hrs of walking each day and distances will vary from 23km to just 15km, we will be walking at a relaxed pace and will take plenty of stops for refreshments, to collect stamps in our passports, and to visit some of the churches/monuments we pass along. This holiday is fully guided and includes baggage transfers on all days allowing us to walk with just a light day pack. With all but one meal included we can also enjoy sampling all the delicious food from this region of Spain!

# Itinerary

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## DAY 1

**Meet at the group hotel in Sarria. A single timed transfer from Santiago Airport is provided.**

The holiday starts at the group hotel in Sarria. A single timed transfer from Santiago de Compostela Airport will be provided. The transfer takes 1-2hrs. Sarria with its Celtic origins was a major medieval centre for pilgrims and today is a popular starting point for those with limited time but still wanting to gain a 'Compostela' certificate at the cathedral in Santiago. You may want to take the opportunity to pick up a scallop shell, marked with the cross of St James, which pilgrims traditionally hang from their backpacks. At dinner our tour leader will present us with our Pilgrim's Passports, in which we will collect stamps over the coming days to prove we have walked the correct distance to qualify as official pilgrims and gain our Compostela certificates.

Meals: **D**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel

## DAY 2

**Walk from Sarria to Portomarin, via Pena dos Corvos (660m).**

After collecting our first stamp in our passports from our hotel, we bid farewell to Sarria. Crossing the beautiful Bridge of Aspera we climb up along a 'corredoira' through delightful ancient woodlands. Passing many rural stone hamlets, orchards, vineyards and pretty forests we reach the high point of our route today, Pena dos Corvos (660m) which with panoramic views over the reservoir, highlights rural Galicia at its best. Descending into the Rio Mino valley our route is on quiet country roads and natural pathways. We can visit the delightful hamlet of Mercadoiro with an official population of 'one'! A modern bridge over the deep Mino basin announces our arrival into Portomarin. In the 1960s this town was moved brick by brick to higher ground as the original area was flooded for the reservoir. The imposing church of San Nicolás, in the main square and the smaller church of San Pedro were moved stone by stone from the old to the new Portamarín. It is still possible to see the numbers on the stones. Overnight Portomarin.

Meals: **B L D**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Ascent**  
420M



**Descent**  
450M



**Time**  
6 hrs walking



**Distance**  
24KM

## DAY 3

## Walk to Palas de Rei, via the Sierra Ligonde (720m). Visit the church at Vilar de Donas en route.

From Portomarin we have a varied day of landscapes as we contour round the reservoir, Embalse de Belesar, which we saw from the high point of yesterdays walk. This area was the scene of a bloody battle in 840 between the Moors and Christians, and we will pass the tiny stone chapel Capela de Magdalene. Climbing the ridge beyond the tiny hamlet of Ventas de Naron, we arrive at the high point of our route in the Sierra Ligonde (720m). Having enough time and energy we can make a small detour to the Romanesque church of El Salvador at Vilar de Donas, which is a national monument and ancient seat of the Knights of Santiago. The church is primarily 14th century and its effigies and frescoes are particularly impressive. A gentle climb around the side of Rosary Heights drops down to our overnight stay at Palas De Rei. Overnight Palas De Rei.

Meals: **B L D**


	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 520M		<b>Descent</b> 300M		<b>Time</b> 5 - 6 hrs walking		<b>Distance</b> 25KM
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## DAY 4

## Walk to Melide via the traditional villages of San Xulian, Leboreiro and Furelo.

Today we have a slightly shorter day as we cross successive river valleys through beautiful farm countryside dotted with traditional villages. Soon after leaving Palas De Rei a woodland path brings us to the classic camino village of San Xulian with its tiny 12th century church, close to the banks of the Rio Pambre. Climbing gently through ancient oak woods we ascend the Pass of the Oxen (Porto de Bois) the scene of a bloody battle and reach Campanilla (515m) the high point of the day. Crossing a medieval bridge we enter the quintessential camino village of Leboreiro with its 13th century Romanesque church and attractive carvings over the main entrance. A large monument of the sword of Santiago starts a short section which crosses the Rio Furelos into another very traditional village, Furelos. It's a final short climb through modern suburbs before we cross into the old quarter of Melide. Huddled around the central square is the austere church, Sancti Spritus, once a 14th century Augustinian monastery. Melide is a delightful spot to spend some relaxing time, with its narrow winding streets and many little cafes and restaurants serving local specialities such as the renowned octopus, pulpo a Galega. Overnight Melide.

Meals: **B L D**

	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 240M		<b>Descent</b> 380M		<b>Time</b> 3 - 4 hrs walking		<b>Distance</b> 17KM
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## DAY 5



## Walk to Arzua via Boente and Casteneda.

We leave Melide on a cobbled pathway past St Mary's Romanesque church and San Lazaro where many years ago there used to be a leprosy hospice. As we make progress across several river valleys the wooded forest vegetation of oak and chestnut slowly transforms to eucalyptus and pine. The village of Boente, has an interesting church, Igrexa Santiago, with a friendly priest who offers blessings to passing pilgrims. Further on is the village of Casteneda, which used to fire stones for their lime, which would then be used in the building of the Cathedral at Santiago. After a short climb up to 440m we drop down crossing the attractive Rio Iso over its historic bridge and arrive in the medieval village of Ribadiso and into Arzua. Arzua has 2 churches to visit, Santa Maria and La Magdalena and is the last major town we will visit before we arrive in Santiago, Arzua is famous for its local cheese. Overnight Arzua.

Meals: **B L D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 270M		<b>Descent</b> 330M		<b>Time</b> 4 hrs walking		<b>Distance</b> 15KM
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### DAY 6

## Walk from Arzua to Rua.

A lovely ancient track from the historic quarter of Arzua town, leads through attractive woodland and streams interspersed with the tiny hamlets of Raido, Cortobe, Fondevila and Ponteladron. Alternating between tracks and quiet country lanes, landscaped by the farmers for local agriculture, we meet more and more pilgrims converging from the various routes over the North of Spain. After the village of Salceda, there is a monument to pilgrim Guillermo Watt who sadly died here, only a day away from his goal of Santiago. Continuing to the top of a gentle climb (540m) is the beautiful 18th chapel of Santa Irene with its unique carvings, named after an early Christian martyr. We make our way downhill, through a small eucalyptus wood to arrive at the pretty village of Rua. Overnight Rua.

Meals: **B L D**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 290M		<b>Descent</b> 400M		<b>Time</b> 5 hrs walking		<b>Distance</b> 20KM
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### DAY 7

## The final leg of our journey, over Mt Joy and down into Santiago de Compostela.

Starting off amidst tall stands of eucalyptus trees, we should savour this simple tranquillity, for as we get closer and closer to Santiago there is a converging of pilgrims, asphalt and expectancy as the mood starts to intensify. After the village of Amenal we pass Lavacolla, which historically was where medieval pilgrims washed and purified themselves before entering Santiago. One last climb on asphalt brings us to Monte Del Gozo (Mount Joy) at 370m. So close to our final destination this is a special moment as we get our first glimpse of the towers of the cathedral of Santiago. Our final 4kms becomes more urban and

mainly downhill as we walk all the way into the magnificent centre of Santiago, along beautiful Rua de San Pedro and Porta do Camino which lead to the pedestrian area of the historical centre and square of the Cathedral of Santiago - where we can congratulate each other on reaching the end of our pilgrimage. Next, we head to the Pilgrim's Office where we can present our Pilgrim's Passports (in which we will diligently have been collecting stamps!) and receive our long awaited 'compostela' certificate. We'll check in at our hotel and freshen up before heading into Santiago to explore. Santiago de Compostela is a very special city and its magic is best enjoyed by walking around its cobbled streets. Its historical centre has been designated a World Heritage Site and offers dozens of churches and religious buildings, including the impressive cathedral which is both baroque and Romanesque at the same time. We can visit the cathedral and, in the evening, those that wish to will have the opportunity to attend a special Pilgrim's Mass, which lasts around 30mins. If you are lucky you may even witness the swinging of the cathedral's 'Botofumerio', one of the largest incense burners in the world. This is only swung on special occasions, so this is a treat to witness. With so many amazing restaurants on offer in Santiago, tonight's meal is not included so we can make our own choice of where to eat. It is usual for the group to head out with the guide to celebrate the end of our Pilgrimage and our guide will be able to assist with making a restaurant reservation. Overnight in Santiago de Compostela.

Please note that the Cathedral de Santiago is undergoing restorations in preparation for the 2021 holy year celebrations. The exterior of the cathedral is now complete and works have begun on the interior. While the cathedral remains open as usual throughout 2019 access to some sections of the interior will be restricted while works are undertaken and the daily pilgrim's mass will be held at the nearby San Francisco Church.

Meals: **B L**

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	<b>Accommodation</b> Hotel		<b>Ascent</b> 370M		<b>Descent</b> 390M		<b>Time</b> 5 hrs walking		<b>Distance</b> 22KM
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## DAY 8

**Departure day. A single timed transfer to Santiago Airport is provided.**

The holiday ends after breakfast. A single timed transfer to the airport is provided. Those unable to take advantage of this transfer can utilise the reliable airport bus service, which picks up from nearby our hotel.

Meals: **B**

# Holiday Information

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## What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- Single timed group airport transfers
- All accommodation as described
- All meals as described in the Meal Plan
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- All baggage transfers

## What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Visas (if applicable)
- Tips
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks and souvenirs etc...

## Joining Arrangements & Transfers

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### TRAVEL TO YOUR DESTINATION

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive than low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

The group will meet at the group hotel in Sarria.

There will be a single timed transfer from Santiago de Compostela airport to the group hotel on in the afternoon of Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary.

On the last day of the Land Only itinerary there will be a single timed transfer back Santiago de Compostela Airport. This transfer will be in the morning.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost. Taxis are also available.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

## Meal Plan

All meals except 1 dinner are included in the holiday price. We have also not included the final dinner in Santiago de Compostela as we have found that this evening is more enjoyable when the group and the leader decide on a final restaurant together. This also leaves you free to decide on your number of courses and budget.

## 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.

Breakfasts will be 'continental' in style, with tea and coffee, orange juice and plentiful bread/toast, fruit, jam, honey, cheese, meat and sometimes eggs. Packed lunches are provided and will be sandwiches, with some fruit and a snack. You may wish to bring along a few of your favourite energy snacks from home for the walking days. Our evening meals will be taken at our overnight accommodation or at a nearby restaurant chosen by our guide, we will pick from a special 2 course 'Peregrino Menu' with a mix of vegetarian, meat and fish options on offer, accompanied with some local wine - this menu is designed for hungry pilgrims and portions will be generous! the final evening meal in Santiago is not included, there are so many amazing restaurants in Santiago that it is nice to leave the choice of where to dine with you! It is of course traditional for the group to dine together with the guide to celebrate the end of the pilgrimage and our guide will be able to help out with some restaurant suggestions and with making a reservation. Those looking to sample some local delights from the Galicia region of Spain should look out during the week for the Galician Pie/Empanada (most commonly filled with tuna and red peppers), Santiago Tart (a delicious almond cake, decorated with the cross of St James and made from a recipe that dates from the middle ages) and when in overnighting in Melide it is a must to visit a 'Pulperia' to try the towns signature dish of Octopus (or 'Pulpo'). Traditionally the octopus is boiled, sprinkled with sea salt, olive oil and Spanish paprika, and served on a wooden platter - it's delicious! Though more common in southern Spain than in the north, we are also sure to enjoy some incredible tapas during our week!

## 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

In the small towns of Sarria, Portomarin, Palas de Rei, Melide and Arzua we stay in comfortable family-run hotels and guesthouses. In Rua we stay in a charming rural property, which has all the flavour and charm of Spain. In Santiago we stay in a comfortable hotel in the old town.

All accommodation is en suite and is based on twin sharing. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired with another single client of the same sex. Single rooms are available for a supplementary cost. If you are planning to extend your holiday, additional nights are available on request.

## Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader. There will also be a driver who will transfer the luggage from each accommodation.



## Spending Money

We estimate that €100-150 will be sufficient to cover all personal expenses including the not included meal and some beverages. This should also allow you to pay tips to the local staff. We recommend that you carry your travel money in the form of Euros since there will be not be many opportunities to change it once you arrive in Sarria. ATM's are available in Santiago de Compostela at the end of the trek. If you are intending to buy considerable quantities of soft drinks or beer, or expensive souvenirs you should budget accordingly.

## Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to you trekking leader and local team. Tipping is entirely voluntary and should be dependent on good service. We advise you to tip as a group.

## Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack. Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

## Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

# 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

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

## 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.

## Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

## Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience.

You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking up to 6 hours for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardiovascular fitness and stamina.

## Climate

The temperatures that we can expect to encounter during the day will vary according to what time of year you travel. In the Spring and Autumn temperatures will be cooler than mid-summer and temperatures can range from 18 to 30 degrees Centigrade. This is a lush part of Spain, and the reason is that rain is likely at any time of year!

## Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](https://www.gov.uk/travelaware)' 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](https://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](https://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

- A Pilgrim's guide to the Camino de Santiago. John Brierley.
- The Way of St James, Spain (Pyrenees-Santiago-Finisterre). Cicerone Guide.
- A practical & mystical manual for the modern day pilgrim. Camino Francs: St-Jean-Pied-de-Port Santiago de Compostela.
- 'The Way' (2010 film), starring Martin Sheen and directed by Emilio Estevez *'life is too big to walk it alone'*

## Maps

### Spain: The Way of St James 50K Topographic Survey Maps

Camino de Santiago from the Pyrenees to Santiago de Compostela on double-sided topographic maps at 1:50,000 from the Spanish civilian survey organization, overprinted with the route and sights, plus information of accommodation and other facilities, route profiles, etc. For the full route that we walk you would require stages 27 - 32

## 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

## Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

**You SHOULD bring the following items:**

- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts
- T-shirts and/or casual shirts

- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Lightweight windproof/waterproof jacket
- Lightweight thermal gloves
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Daypack c. 30 litres
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including for lips)
- Water bottles 1 Litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial handwash
- Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite)

**The following items are optional:**

- Trainers or sandals
- Gaiters
- Shorts
- Trekking poles

- Spare laces
- Insect repellent - (DEET)
- Camera
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

## 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

We sell this holiday on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method that best suits you. The holiday starts at the group hotel in Sarria and ends in Santiago de Compostela. A single transfer is provided from/to Santiago de Compostela Airport.

# Why Choose KE

## Why KE

'The Way' to a great value holiday.... fully guided, with all but one meal included, our Camino trek is fantastic value for money.

**Please Note** This document was downloaded on 17/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change