

Bicycle Tours in Spain: Cycling the Camino de Santiago - León to Santiago

OVERVIEW



The Camino de Santiago across northern Spain is one of the world's oldest pilgrimage routes. Gothic cathedrals, medieval monasteries, and miles of unspoiled rural scenery are just some of the attractions that draw visitors from around the world annually to make this historic trek.


We designed our ride from León to Santiago for those of you who don't have the time to commit to our longer Roncesvalles to Santiago 15-day ride along the Camino; it is also a slightly easier tour with a 301 level rating.

HIGHLIGHTS

Cathedral of St. James, Spanish castles and cathedrals, Continue a Thousand-year-old tradition, León, Basilica de San Isidoro, Pilgrim's Passport

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	 Classic: Learn more about our Classic tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/tours/bike-tour-styles/classic-tours
Includes	8 days, 7 nights accommodation, meals as noted in itinerary, and the usual (see below).
Countries	Spain
Begin/End	León/Santiago de Compostela
Arrive/Depart	Madrid-Barajas Airport (MAD) / Santiago de Compostela Airport (SCQ) or Madrid
Total Distance	364 km (226 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	61 km (38 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	
Keep in Mind	We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour. Though we try and arrange dinners together as early as possible in Spain this means 8:00 to 8:30 p.m. There are times when we will divert from the traditional Camino route because it is gravel, or because we've chosen a more scenic way with less traffic.

Please Note: We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the  [online itinerary](#) for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:

<https://www.experienceplus.com/guided-bike-tours/spain/biking-camino-de-santiago>

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DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
📅 Aug 26-Sep 2, 2022	📄 USD\$4195	📄 USD\$550
📅 May 26-Jun 2, 2023	📄 USD\$4355	📄 USD\$550
📅 Jun 16-23, 2023	📄 USD\$4355	📄 USD\$550
📅 Aug 25-Sep 1, 2023	📄 USD\$4355	📄 USD\$550

*We are happy to match solo travelers who would like to share a room with someone of the same gender. If no match exists, due to hotel pricing, we will charge 50% of the single supplement rate. This fee will be collected at the time of the final payment. If a roommate assignment is available this fee will be refunded at the conclusion of the tour.

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	61km / 390m (38mi / 1279ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
3	76km / 880m (47mi / 2886ft)	Very hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
4	60km / 1328m (38mi / 4356ft)	Mountainous	▶▶▶▶▶	
5	51km / 729m (32mi / 2391ft)	Mountainous	▶▶▶▶▶	
6	77km / 1326m (48mi / 4349ft)	Very hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
7	40km / 759m (25mi / 2490ft)	Hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
8	Last day			

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ARRIVAL INFO

Note:

As you are planning, remember that the hotels listed in our itineraries are our primary hotels and are - in rare cases - subject to change. Before you make arrangements, [check with us](#) if your tour departure is guaranteed. If your tour departure is out further than 6 months, please also check with us as there might be slight changes to the itinerary.

Meeting time 2 p.m. on Day 1, meet your fellow cyclists and Tour Leaders at the Day 1 Hotel specified on your itinerary.

The below information will help you plan your arrival. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#). The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

The closest airport is the Leon airport (LEN). The Madrid airport is about a 3.5-4 hr train ride.

From the LEN airport or Leon train station to the Day 1 hotel:

- Taxi (20 min/EUR 15-20)

Look up Spanish train schedules at [Renfe.com](#) or [Trainline.eu](#). Questions? See our information on taking trains in Europe [here](#) or [ask us](#).

DEPARTURE INFO

The tour ends on the final day after a tour of Santiago this morning. You may also want to stick around for the Pilgrim's Mass at noon. If you would like to participate in these activities, schedule flights after 3:30 p.m.

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#).

We recommend flying out of the Santiago de Compostela Airport (SCQ).

- A train or bus to Madrid or Barcelona is at least a 9-hour trip.
- Iberia airlines provides one-way flights to numerous destinations from Santiago.

Flying out of SQL

- Taxi from the Ending Hotel to the airport (20 min/EUR 21)

Look up Spanish train schedules at [Renfe.com](#) or [Trainline.eu](#). Questions? See our information on taking trains in Europe [here](#) or [ask us](#).

Bicycle Tours in Spain: Cycling the Camino de Santiago - León to Santiago**Arrive León, Spain**

Highlights Former capital of Spain, visit the Cathedral without Walls, introductory dinner

We'll meet this afternoon at our hotel in León, just a few meters away from the "Cathedral without Walls." This splendid example of Spanish Gothic architecture is renowned for its marvelous stained glass windows. After fitting bikes this afternoon, you can explore town and visit the local sites. Then, we'll gather this evening for dinner together in a traditional Spanish wine bodega and meet others of the group.

DAY 1: Fri, Aug 26th

Meals Dinner

Lodging  Hotel NH Plaza Mayor

León to Astorga

Highlights Visit to cathedral and palace designed by Antonio Gaudí

On your way to Astorga you will cross the Puente de Orbigo, one of the oldest and longest bridges on the Camino. Astorga is home to the 15th-century cathedral and neo-Gothic palace designed by the famous Catalan architect Antonio Gaudí.

DAY 2: Sat, Aug 27th

Distance 61 km (38 mi)

Gain 390 m (1279 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level 

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Hotel Via de la Plata

Astorga to Canedo

Highlights Scenic cycling through the Spanish countryside, Cruz de Ferro (don't forget to bring your pebble from home!)

Leaving Astorga today, we head toward the hills that separate the provinces of León and Galicia. As we pass through tiny hamlets and monuments untouched since early Christianity, it's easy to imagine the awe that original pilgrims making this trek must have felt. By mid-afternoon, we'll arrive at our destination.

DAY 3: Sun, Aug 28th

Distance 76 km (47 mi)

Gain 880 m (2886 ft)

Terrain Very Hilly

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  Palacio de Canedo

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Cacabelos to Triacastela

Highlights Countryside of Galicia, historic Villafranca del Bierzo, optional hiking opportunity

We head into the green fields of Galicia today. On the way, you'll pass through the old Camino town of Villafranca del Bierzo, founded by French pilgrims as a place of absolution for those too weak to continue their pilgrimage. There is the opportunity to cut the ride short and do an optional 8km (5 miles) hike so be sure to pack sneakers or light hikers if you are interested as the trail is fairly steep.

DAY 4: Mon, Aug 29th

Distance 60 km (38 mi)
Gain 1328 m (4356 ft)
Terrain Mountainous
Level >>>>>
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging 🏠 Casa Pacios

Triacastela to Portomarín

Highlights Galician culture, visit Samos monastery

You will get a real taste of Galicia today - a region with a culture and musical style reminiscent of Ireland - as we pedal our way to Portomarín, where our hotel overlooks the Minho River.

DAY 5: Tue, Aug 30th

Distance 51 km (32 mi)
Gain 729 m (2391 ft)
Terrain Mountainous
Level >>>>>
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging 🏠 Hotel Santa Marina

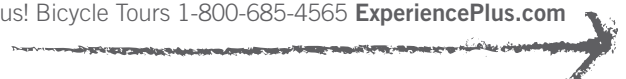
Portomarín to Touro

Highlights Quiet & scenic roads, stay in a country manor

One of the prettiest rides on the tour awaits you today as we meander along forgotten country roads through the beautiful Galician countryside. Rolling hills and green pastures lead us to our destination for the evening near Touro, where we'll stay in one of the traditional country houses (similar to B&Bs) that dot the landscape.

DAY 6: Wed, Aug 31st

Distance 77 km (48 mi)
Gain 1326 m (4349 ft)
Terrain Very Hilly
Level >>>>>
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging 🏠 Hotel Pazo de Andeade



Bicycle Tours in Spain: Cycling the Camino de Santiago - León to Santiago**Arrive in Santiago de Compostela**

Highlights Arrival in Santiago, Cathedral of St. James, farewell dinner

Today's ride is a fitting end to the Camino, as we pedal along rural roads through woodlands and pastures to Santiago. Once in town, you'll have plenty of time to look around the famous Cathedral of St. James that forms the city's heart. Tonight, we'll celebrate our journey's end with a great farewell dinner together.

DAY 7: Thu, Sep 1st

Distance 40 km (25 mi)

Gain 759 m (2490 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  Hotel San Francisco

Tour ends in Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Highlights Pilgrim's Mass at Noon

Remember that we will offer a tour of the roof of the Santiago cathedral this morning. You will also want to stick around for the Pilgrim's Mass at noon because you may not arrive in time to take part on Day 14. If you would like to participate in these activities, schedule flights after 3:30 p.m. Buen viaje!

DAY 8: Fri, Sep 2nd

Meals Breakfast

INCLUDED

WHAT'S INCLUDED

When you book a tour with ExperiencePlus! our goal is to ensure your only focus each day is to hop on your bike and explore scenic cycling routes in new destinations. Inclusions may differ depending on which tour style you pick but all ExperiencePlus! tours include the three most important aspects of a guided bike tour.

- Superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bi-cultural experts, and cycling enthusiasts. They will support you and help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- High quality bikes selected for the terrain you are cycling on and correct bike fitting to ensure comfortable cycling. More details on our bikes page: <https://www.experienceplus.com/what-to-expect/our-bikes/>
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel.

PRE-TRIP SUPPORT

- Bicycle training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Planning tips on what to pack, hotel recommendations and other helpful details from our Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/>
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing ExperiencePlus!
- *Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (*Not included on Explorer Tours.)

ON TOUR

- See "What's Included" on your tour Itinerary for tour-specific inclusions.

BICYCLES

For a full list of what's included with your bike see our bikes page (<https://www.experienceplus.com/what-to-expect/our-bikes/>) . If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so. On Explorer tours we include a GPS device on all bikes. We ask that you bring your own helmet to ensure the best fit. Please ask if you would like us to provide you with a gently used helmet and we will do so.

NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:

Each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map. About 14 days prior to your tour, we will provide you with access to RideWithGPS Experiences, our platform

to distribute information on each tour day's activities, meals and ride, as well as GPS-routes.

Daily information also includes Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information. On Classic, Bike and Boat, Spotlight and Expedition tours we also navigate using our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map. On Explorer tours the terrain and destinations are not always conducive to using chalk arrows so we'll ride as a group or you can navigate on your own with the GPS tracks. On tour you will have a support van providing water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, a lift for tired cyclists, and luggage transfers. On some itineraries the van will not be able to follow sections of the route that stray from the road for example onto cycling paths.

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Need More Miles? On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your options.

Need Fewer Miles? If you aren't sure about your abilities or how much you want to ride remember the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. You are on vacation and we're here to help make it perfect for you.

TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADER TEAM:

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5% of the tour cost per traveler – this is for the entire tour leader team, not each tour leader. You can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your tour leaders did not quite meet your expectations, please let us know. *Tips are included in Expedition pricing.

PHOTOS:

By reserving space on tour, you agree that ExperiencePlus! may use, re-use and reproduce any images, photos or videos sent to us, or taken by our guides or travelers free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you on tour, you must inform your tour leader in writing at the start of the tour.

STYLES **OUR TOUR STYLES**

We realize that one size does not fit all and there are as many ways to travel by bike as there are different types of cyclists and travelers. No matter what you are looking for in a cycling vacation, we have a tour with just the right pace for you.

Classic Tours: Dream of traveling through a region by bike? then our Classic style bike tours are for you! Our unique chalk arrows lead the way as you explore small villages and world-class cities while traveling at your own pace.

- Tour Length: 7-15 days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars, most itineraries include at least one two-night stay at the same hotel.
- Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4.5

Explorer Tours: Travel further off the beaten path - we let the destination dictate where we ride, not the road surface.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days
- Hotels: 2-3 stars, occasional multi-night stays at the same hotel.
- Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Group riding and GPS
- Price: \$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Spotlight Tours: Multi-nights stays, loop rides, choose from a selection of activities or enjoy hotel amenities during your free time.

- Tour Length: 6-7 days
- Hotels: 3-5 stars, typically 3-nights spent in one hotel and 2-nights in the other.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Multi-night Stays: Min 2 night stays
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Bike and Boat Tours: Spend days cycling and your evenings relaxing on a private boat as you cruise to your next port.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days, some itineraries have land-based extensions available.
- Barge/Boat: 3-4 star, same cabin for the entire boat trip.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Expedition Tours: Multi-week tours where you spend long days on the bike with the added satisfaction of pedaling across multiple countries.

- Tour Length: 15-40 days
- Hotels: 2-4 stars, typically there is a 2-night hotel stay every 5-7 days.
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.
- Multi-night Stays: On rest days
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 4-5

**LEVELS**

We know that travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. We have rated each day of our tours on a scale of 1-5. Our Tour Level's are an average of the day rating on tour. We recommend looking at the daily summary on the PDF and Website Itinerary to see details about each day's ride.

LEVEL 1 - 1.5

Level 1 - 1.5 days will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 50 km. Level 1 - 1.5 tours are suitable for beginner cyclists, those traveling by bicycle for the first time, or multi-generational groups with a desire for a nice and easy bike tour with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the scenery.

- **Average daily mileage:** 20 - 50 km. (12-30 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 0-400 M (0-1200 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly flat with occasional gentle climbs at a grade of less than 3%, that are sustained for a maximum of 3km. There might be a steeper but short climb.

LEVEL 2 - 2.5

Level 2 - 2.5 days are ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge.

- **Average daily mileage:** 30-60 km (18 - 38 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 400 - 600 m (1200 - 2000 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly rolling terrain around 3%. Presents multiple 3% to 4% climbs. May present an occasional steeper climb.

LEVEL 3 - 3.5

Level 3 - 3.5 days are great for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50-70km (30-45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 600 - 900m (2000 - 2800 ft)
- **Terrain:** Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 - 6%.

LEVEL 4 - 4.5

Level 4 - 4.5 days are the best riding days for avid cyclists or very active individuals who are excited to challenge themselves on a bike.

- **Average daily mileage:** 70-90km (45-55 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 900-1000m (2800-3600 ft)
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 – 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITION)

Our Expedition tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages mean limited van support so we recommend these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 500-2000 m (1600- 6500 ft)
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

A tour level is the average of the days so we recommend you look at the day level on each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.

CHECKLIST

TO DO ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- Read through your Reservation Confirmation (link sent to you by e-mail), it has important information to help you plan your trip!
- Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country.
- Complete the Customer Information Form: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/customer-information-form/>
- We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details at <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/travel-insurance/>
- Choose a bicycle training program: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/>
- Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/>

6 TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Review the arrival and departure information under the "Travel Information" tab to see meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, and other important information to help you plan your arrival and departure.
- Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed.
- Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights.
- Begin your chosen training program
- Final payment is due 90 days (120 days for Bike & Barge/Boat tours) prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Deposit Payment Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail you have received for detailed instructions.

6 TO 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Reading and Movie Lists: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/>.
- Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists on our website at <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/packing/>
- We'll email you your access code to Digital Daysheets, Hotel Itinerary, Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders, emergency phone numbers, and other important departure information about 2 weeks prior to your tour start date. All this will be provided to you via a feature called Experiences via the RideWithGPS App (tracks available but not necessary for navigation on Classic, Expedition, Spotlight and Bike & Boat tours).

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack one day of cycling gear in your carry-on just in case. See you soon!