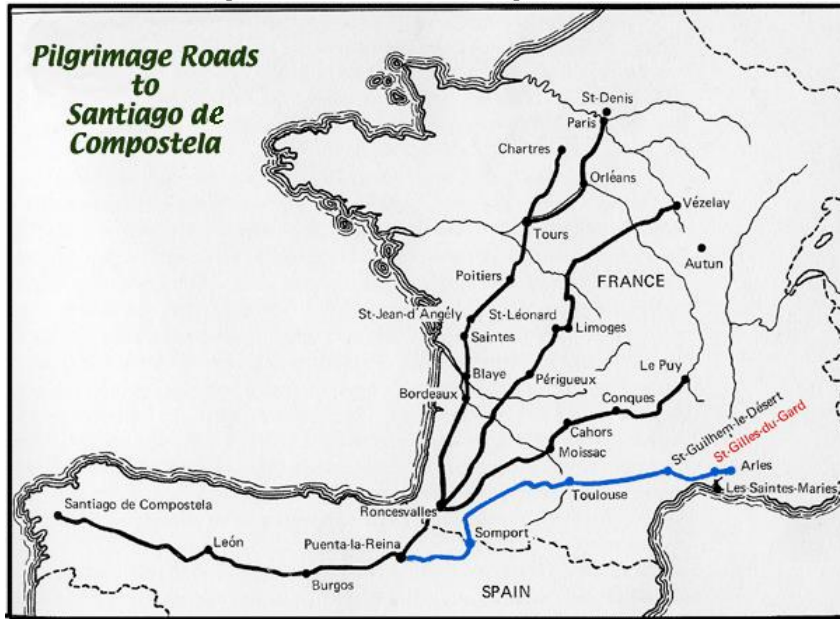


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Four different pilgrims' roads crossed France and merged at the foot of the Pyrenees, then one single "Way to St. James", the Camino Frances or "French Road," continued through northern Spain, all the way to Santiago de Compostela, in the region known in Antiquity as Finis Terrae, the "End of the World".

"THE ROAD TO SAINT JAMES OF COMPOSTELA"

From the French Basque Country to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, via Pamplona in Navarra and Burgos and León in Castile, and returning via Altamira and Bilbao in the Spanish Basque Country.

17 days, Tuesday, October 10, to Thursday, October 26, 2017

Tour cost, based on double occupancy, from Toronto: \$4,795, INCLUDING all airport taxes/security fees/fuel surcharges - "land only": \$4,030 - Single room supplement: \$875

A fascinating "pilgrimage" along the legendary "Road to Saint James," leading from the Pyrenees and the former Kingdom of Navarra via the Castilian highlands to the most popular sanctuary in medieval Europe, Santiago de Compostela, situated on Spain's Atlantic coast near Cape Fisterra - the "end of the world" to the Ancients. Unlike their medieval forerunners, participating "pilgrims" will be permitted to enjoy material pleasures such as motorized transportation, fine food and wine, and very comfortable first-class inns; heavenly visions of Romanesque and Gothic art and architecture await them, but they will also be exposed to sermons on myth, religion, and medieval history, dispensed by the not-so-pious "Frère Jacques", a.k.a. Jacques Pauwels.

PROPOSED ITINERARY:

Day 1 - Tuesday, October 10:

Evening departure for Brussels with SN Brussels Airlines. Dinner and a light breakfast will be served on board.

Day 2 - Wednesday, October 11:

Arrival in Brussels, and connecting flight to **Toulouse**. Arrival around noon, and immediate transfer to the nearby town of **Albi**. Check into the first-class/4-star Hotel Mercure, a converted water mill overlooking the scenic Tarn River and the picturesque old town and its magnificent Cathedral. Free time to settle in and get some rest after your overnight flight. Dinner in the restaurant of our hotel.

Day 3 - Thursday, October 12:

Morning walking tour of Albi's old town, classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the Middle Ages, Albi served as headquarters of the mysterious heretic movements known as the Cathars or "Albigensians", with focus on the magnificent and fascinating, fortress-like red brick Cathedral. Also visit to the neighbouring museum devoted to the life and work of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, who was born here (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cyritc9VLHo). Dinner in a typical restaurant.

Day 4 - Friday, October 13:

Full-day excursion to **Toulouse**, the vibrant metropolis of the Languedoc, a region with a language and culture quite different from that of the rest of France. The city gave its name to one of the four roads taken by "Jacobean" pilgrims through France as they made their way to distant Santiago de Compostela, namely the one coming in from Italy and the Provence, the 'Via Tolosana.' Our tour will include the superb Basilica of St. Sernin, a prototypical Romanesque pilgrims' church, very similar to the great basilica of Santiago itself; the Jacobin Monastery, featuring fabulous Gothic architecture as well as the tomb of the great medieval scholar, Thomas Aquinas; the Capitole, the imposing city hall; and a look at the Canal du Midi, a UNESCO World Heritage site described as "a 360-km network of navigable waterways linking the Mediterranean and the Atlantic via a system of aqueducts, bridges, tunnels, etc., one of the most remarkable feats of civil engineering in modern times, built between 1667 and 1694" (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/770>). Return to Albi in late afternoon and dinner in the hotel.

Day 5 - Saturday, October 14:

Departure from Albi after breakfast. We motor to **St. Jean-Pied-de-Port**, the picturesque village at the foot of the Pyrenees Mountains where three roads to Compostela converged. After our lunch break, we follow the footsteps of the pilgrims to the top (at a modest altitude of 1057m) of the mountain pass of **Roncevaux** (or Roncesvalles), where Charlemagne's legendary paladin, the brave knight Roland, died heroically in a battle against the Saracens. Visit to the monastery church, burial place of the monarchs of Navarra, a medieval kingdom that is now a province of Spain. On to Navarra's capital, **Pamplona**, home of the world-famous annual "running of the bulls" described by Hemingway, for overnight in the centrally-located first-class Hotel Tres Reyes (www.hotel3reyes.com/web). Dinner in the hotel or in a nearby restaurant.



< *Monuments in Roncevaux*

Day 6 - Sunday, October 15:

A full day of leisurely sightseeing in the Pamplona area, with visits to the **Monastery of Leyre**, the greatest spiritual centre of Navarra, featuring impressive early Romanesque architecture; the mysterious little pilgrims' church of **Eunate**, a fine example of Spanish Romanesque architecture; and the old town of **Puente de la Reina**, where we will be greeted by the statue of a *Jacquet* (Compostela pilgrim) in traditional costume, at the historical crossroads where the fourth and final pilgrims' route from France joined the others to form one single road, the *Camino Frances*; it is this road, classified in its entirety as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/669>), that we will follow from here all the way to distant Compostela! Also symbolic walk (about 1 km) through this quaint town and across the

medieval bridge, used by thousands of pilgrims in the past, which gave its name to the town. Return to Pamplona in time for dinner in the hotel or in a nearby restaurant.



Panoramic view of San Sebastian

Day 7 - Monday, October 16:

Full-day excursion to nearby San Sebastian, the most beautiful city and resort of the Spanish Basque Country. Highlights will include the superb Concha Beach, comparable to Rio's Copacabana; Monte Igueldo Hill, featuring grandiose panoramic views of the city and the Bay of Biscay; the pretty old town; and the *Peine del Viento* ("Comb of the Wind"), a quixotic open-air masterpiece of the world-famous Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida. Also free time to shop and enjoy tapas or a gourmet lunch in this city, Spain's gastronomic Mecca! Return to Pamplona and dinner in the hotel.



Medieval Bridge of Puente de la Reina



San Isidoro, "Sistine Chapel" of Romanesque painting

Day 8 - Tuesday, October 17:

Departure from Pamplona after breakfast. We descend from the foothills of the Pyrenees into the Ebro River Valley, the world-famous Rioja wine region, whose "cultural landscape" was recently placed on the tentative UNESCO list (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5793>). Stop in **Santo Domingo de la Calzada**, a small but very interesting town where it is de rigueur to visit the cathedral, associated with the fascinating "miracle of the cock and hen"! Then we enter Old Castile, the heartland of Spain. In **Burgos** we visit the magnificent cathedral with the tomb of El Cid, classified as a UNESCO site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/316>), and in late afternoon we reach **León**, a proud ancient city, founded by Roman legionnaires and full of mementoes of a glorious past. Dinner and overnight in the first-class Hotel Conde Luna (www.hotelcondeluna.es).

Day 9 - Wednesday, October 18:

Morning visit to León's Gothic cathedral with its superb stained-glass windows, reminiscent of those of Chartres, and to the Romanesque San Isidoro Basilica, whose amazing crypt, featuring the finest frescoes in Spain, is known as the "Sistine Chapel" of Romanesque painting! We will also view the Roman city walls and Casa Botines, one of the rare edifices by Gaudi to be found outside of Barcelona. The afternoon is free to enjoy this great city on your own. Group dinner in a typical restaurant.



< *Panoramic view of Las Medulas (Wikimedia Commons photo by Rafael Ibáñez Fernández/Rayet)*

Day 10 - Thursday, October 19:

Departure from León after breakfast. We motor to another UNESCO World Heritage Site, **Las Medulas**, a strange but beautiful landscape created two millennia ago by the Romans who mined here for the most precious of all metals (“medulas”), gold (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/803>). Then we rejoin the ancient pilgrims’ road to Compostela and head for the hamlet of **Pedrafita** on top of the mighty **Cebreiro Mountain Pass** (alt.: 1330m), associated with pious legends and featuring

wonderful panoramas as well as intriguing traditional stone houses, possibly of Celtic origin, known as *pallozas*. Lunch of regional culinary specialties in a hostel for pilgrims. We are now in the hilly and very green province of Galicia, situated in northwestern Spain on the rugged shores of the Atlantic Ocean and the Bay of Biscay. And in late afternoon we finally arrive in the remote sanctuary that used to attract more pilgrims than Rome or Jerusalem: **Santiago de Compostela**.

It was in this town, according to legend, that the body of St. James the Apostle was discovered and buried. St. James – “Santiago” in the Galician language - subsequently became the patron saint of Spain and played a crucial role in the so-called Reconquista, the Spanish war of independence against the Moors. Today, Compostela is still a wonderful, almost mystical town with a magnificent partly Romanesque, partly Baroque cathedral dedicated to St. James as well as many other places of interest.

Accommodation in one of the finest hotels in the city, the 5-star/deluxe NH Collection, located within walking distance (1 km) of the historical city centre (www.nh-hotels.com).



< *Compostela Cathedral*



Cabo Fisterra, “the end of the earth” >

Day 11 - Friday, October 20:

Morning sightseeing tour of Santiago, yet another UNESCO World Heritage Site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/347>). The highlight will of course be the Cathedral, located on majestic Obradoiro Square; this sanctuary, a shell of Romanesque architecture overgrown with barnacles of exuberant Baroque decorations, features the Tomb of St. James as well as the sublime sculptures of Master Mateo’s *Portico de la Gloria*, the Holy Gate, and other treasures. And it will hopefully be possible to witness the swinging of the great censer known as “Botafumeiro” (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Botafumeiro>; watch the swinging here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QFd_55EIII). The afternoon is free to explore Compostela on your own. Dinner in the restaurant of our hotel.

Day 12 - Saturday, October 21:

Today we take a sidetrip along the rugged Galician coast with its many fjord-like inlets. Our destination is **Cabo Fisterra**, the cape of "the end of the earth," long considered to be continental Europe's westernmost point. Pilgrims already flocked to a pagan shrine on this site hundreds of years before Christianity appeared on the scene, and it is here that medieval pilgrims searched for the sea scallop (*Pecten Jacobaeus*) whose shell became emblematic for the cult of St. James - the *coquille St. Jacques*! A simple but delicious lunch of Galician seafood will be served in a typical restaurant. Return to Compostela in late afternoon and rest of the day at leisure.



The Sea scallop, “pecten jacobaeus” in Latin, “coquille St. Jacques” in French: emblem of the “Jacobaeen” pilgrims . . . But why? Not to worry, your tour guide will come up with the answer!

Day 13 - Sunday, October 22:

This morning we leave Galicia and cross into the neighbouring province of Asturias. We first follow the scenic road along the rugged “*Costa Verde*”, Spain’s window on the Bay of Biscay, then enter the rugged mountain range known as the Picos de Europa. Visit to **Covadonga**, site of the first Christian victory against the Arabs (in 722), starting point of the Reconquista, and cradle of the Spanish Monarchy. In the afternoon we continue through the green Asturian hills and along the shores of the Bay of Biscay to **Santillana del Mar**, a showcase of Spanish Medieval and Renaissance architecture, often described as the prettiest village in Spain. Dinner and overnight in the local Parador, a converted noble mansion of the 17th century! (<http://www.parador.es/en/paradores/parador-de-santillana-gil-blas>)



< *Old: Cave paintings of Altamira*
New: Bilbao’s stunning Guggenheim Museum:



Day 14 - Monday, October 23:

Morning sidetrip to **Bilbao**, the metropolis of the Basque Country, for a visit to the world-famous Guggenheim Museum, a masterpiece of the architect Frank Gehry (www.guggenheim.org/about-us), followed by lunch in a nearby restaurant. On our way

back to Santillana, we pause in the Bilbao suburb of **Portugalete** to admire the Vizcaya Bridge, a transporter/suspension bridge across the Nervion River, built in 1893 and inspired by Gustave Eiffel's achievements; this bridge is considered a marvel of engineering and has therefore been classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the "industrial heritage" category (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vizcaya_Bridge).

Day 15 – Tuesday, October 24:

Morning visit to the museum of the **Altamira Cave**, another "Sistine Chapel" and UNESCO site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/310>), this one of prehistoric art; the cave itself is unfortunately not open to visitors, but the museum features a superb facsimile of the cave paintings. Afterwards we explore the nearby seaport and cosmopolitan resort of **Santander**, featuring superb beaches, lush gardens, and attractive city centre where there will be some free time for shopping and individual exploring. Return to Santillana in late afternoon and rest of the day at leisure. No group dinner.



Panoramic view of Santander (Wikimedia Commons photo)

Day 16 – Wednesday, October 25:

Departure from Santillana after breakfast. Via a fine motorway we cross the Basque Country, in Spain as well as in France, then follow the Garonne River Valley to the medieval village of **St. Bertrand de Comminges**, officially ranked as one of "Most Beautiful Villages of France"; a magnificent former Cathedral bears witness to the importance of this place in the past, when it was a famous station on one of the four "ways to St. James" in France, namely the *Via Tolosana*. After the city of **Toulouse**, where we will stay for a final group dinner and overnight in the first-class Hotel Radisson Blu (www.radissonblu.com/en/hotel-toulouseairport).

Day 17 – Thursday, October 26:

After breakfast, transfer to Toulouse Airport and return flight to Canada, via Brussels.

Tour cost, based on double occupancy, from Toronto: \$4,795, INCLUDING all airport taxes/security fees/fuel surcharges - "land only": \$4,030 - Single room supplement: \$875

Included in the tour price are:

- Return flight with SN Brussels from Toronto to Toulouse;
- Airport taxes, security fees, and fuel surcharges;
- Accommodation in 4- and 5-star hotels as shown in the above itinerary and based on double occupancy – the single room supplement is \$875;
- Breakfast (mostly buffet-style) and dinner (or sometimes full lunch) daily, except on day 15;
- Overland transportation by private coach;
- All transfers, sightseeing, and excursions as described in the itinerary;
- Portage of one suitcase per person at all hotels when available.
- Gratuity for the coach driver.

Not included are:

- All items of a personal nature;
- Wine, beer, mineral water and similar beverages with dinners;
- Travel Insurance is available on request.

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES VISITED ON THIS TOUR:

- Old town of Albi
- Canal du Midi
- The Road to Santiago in Northern Spain (*Camino Francés*)
 - Rioja cultural landscape (tentative list)
 - Burgos Cathedral
 - Las Medulas
- Old town of Santiago de Compostela
 - Vizcaya Bridge of Portugalete
 - Altamira Caves (facsimile)

SUGGESTED READINGS:

- Paulo Coelho, *The Pilgrimage: A Contemporary Quest for Ancient Wisdom*.
- Michael Jacobs, *The Road to Santiago de Compostela*.
- William Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela*.
- Jane V. Blanchard, *Women of the Way: Embracing the Camino*
- Cees Nooteboom, *Roads to Santiago: Detours and Riddles in the Lands and History of Spain*.

Many more interesting books about Compostela may be found in all good libraries, and we also recommend taking a look at these particularly informative websites: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Way_of_St_James - <http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/santiago/iagohome.html> - <http://www.csj.org.uk/routes.htm>

...AND A HOLLYWOOD PRODUCTION:

“The Way” (2010), with Martin Sheen
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Way_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Way_(film))



Pilgrims taking a break,' by Jacques Callot

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Ont. Reg. #1034992

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

RESERVATIONS AND DEPOSITS:

Reservations should be made as early as possible to ensure the departure of your choice. A deposit of \$750.00 is required at the time of registration. Your reservation is confirmed upon receipt of your deposit and application form. No reservations will be accepted without a signed application form.

REFUND OF UNUSED ARRANGEMENTS:

Because the rates of Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. are based on group participation, no refund can be made for any tour accommodation or tour service or tour feature not taken. If cancellation occurs while the tour is in progress, no refund can be made for the tour portion not taken. We strongly suggest that to allow for any unexpected contingencies, you purchase the all-inclusive insurance.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

Refund of deposit is made in full if cancellation is received in writing by Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. more than 90 days prior of the departure date of the tour less a \$500.00 non-refundable administrative fee per person. For cancellation received in writing 90 days prior or less the following cancellation charges apply:

90 days to 46 days before departure: 25% of tour cost
45 to 31 days before departure: 50% of tour cost
Within 30 days prior to departure: 100% of tour cost

RESPONSIBILITY:

Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. reserves the right without notice, to withdraw any part or all of the tour. Factors such as airline schedule changes, hotel overbookings, inclement weather, etc. necessitate changes in the itinerary as outlined. There may also be other circumstances in which changes become necessary or advisable. Any savings realized by these changes will be passed on to the passengers, any resultant expenses shall be borne by the passenger. Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. acts only as an agent in securing hotel, transportation and other travel services and in no event shall be held responsible for the failure by any person or company to render any transportation, lodging or other travel service to be provided on the tour. All hotel, transportation and other travel services are provided to tour members subject to all the terms and conditions under which they are offered to the public generally. The acceptance of the initial service to be provided under the tour shall be considered an acceptance by the tour member of those conditions. Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. also reserves the right to decline, to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour, in which case equitable refund will be made at the discretion of the tour operators.

AIR TRANSPORTATION:

Transatlantic economy flight by scheduled IATA carrier(s), based on an economy class group fare. All fares are subject to specific rules and regulations, to changes and to government approval. Deviations from the group flights are possible but subject to higher rates. Pauwels Travel will research any request for date or routing changes at the time they are requested. Should any individual rate be less than the group fare plus airline and administrative fees, the lower rate will be offered to the tour participant. Individual airfares are subject to immediate ticketing and the fare plus taxes must be paid at the time the ticket is issued by the participant requesting the change. Should the group airfare be the lowest available rate, an administrative fee of \$50.00 plus any airline charges will apply.

APPLICATION FORM

Please book ___ seat(s) on the "Road to Compostela tour" from October 10 - 26, 2017.

Enclosed is my/our deposit of _____ (\$750 per person, *plus* insurance premium if taken.)

Please indicate with an X if you intend to travel on Group flights _____ or Land only _____.

Deposit and insurance premium, if taken, are due with registration. You will be invoiced for an interim payment of \$1500.00 and the balance due 45 days prior to departure.

WE REQUIRE A COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT (INFORMATION PAGES ONLY) VALID 3 MONTHS AFTER TOUR TO BE SENT IN WITH YOUR APPLICATION.

PASSPORT NAME(S): Please indicate the appropriate title (Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr., Ms.)

Surname _____ First _____ Middle(s) _____

Surname _____ First _____ Middle(s) _____

If applicable, give your commonly used first name as you would like it to appear on your name tag: (e.g. "Liz" for "Mary Elizabeth")

ADDRESS _____

Postal Code: _____ PHONE: _____ (Email) _____

If traveling alone, is a SINGLE ROOM REQUIRED? YES _____ NO _____

If sharing, what is your bed preference: twin _____ double _____?

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: We find the earlier a request is made, the more success we have in filling it, so please list any dietary requests, allergies, any special physical needs or frequent flyer numbers etc here. We cannot ensure requests made 30 days or less prior to departure will be possible.

Insurance, Please call the office for premiums then record it on application and add premium to deposit.

I/we would like to purchase (please check and record your rate):

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

All-inclusive Package _____ Non-medical Package _____

Other _____ **OR** Decline Insurance _____

PAYMENT: Cheque payable to Pauwels Travel Visa Mastercard American Express

Amount Paid: _____ Card Number: _____

Expiry: _____ Security Code: _____ Signature: _____

"I/we agree to the terms and conditions attached to the program, have indicated our insurance choice, indicated any special requests and included payment".

Date _____ (Signature)(s) _____

Please forward this completed and signed form, copy of passport and payment to:

PAUWELS TRAVEL BUREAU LTD.

95 Dalhousie Street, Brantford, Ontario N3T 2J1

Tel: 519-753-2695/1-800-380-3974/519-753-2695 – Fax: 519-753-6376 Email:tours@pauwelstravel.com

