

# It's the Pilgrimage, Not the Hike: A Journey to Santiago de Compostela

The Camino de Santiago is a pilgrimage route that has been attracting pilgrims for over 1,000 years. The route stretches across Europe from France to Spain, and it is said that walking the Camino is a transformative experience. In this article, we will explore the history of the Camino, the different routes that you can take, and what to expect when you walk the Camino.



## Savoring the Camino de Santiago: It's the Pilgrimage, Not the Hike by Julie Gianelloni Connor

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## History of the Camino

The Camino de Santiago began as a pilgrimage route to the tomb of Saint James the Great, who is said to have been buried in Santiago de Compostela. The first pilgrims began walking the Camino in the 9th century, and the route quickly became popular. By the 12th century, the Camino was one of the most important pilgrimage routes in Europe. The route has

been walked by millions of pilgrims over the centuries, and it continues to be a popular destination for pilgrims today.

## **Different Routes of the Camino**

There are a number of different routes that you can take to walk the Camino de Santiago. The most popular route is the French Way, which starts in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port in France and ends in Santiago de Compostela. The French Way is about 500 miles long and it takes about 5-6 weeks to walk. There are also a number of other routes that you can take, including the Portuguese Way, the Northern Way, and the Via de la Plata. These routes are all shorter than the French Way, and they take different amounts of time to walk. The Portuguese Way is about 400 miles long, the Northern Way is about 500 miles long, and the Via de la Plata is about 600 miles long.

## **What to Expect When Walking the Camino**

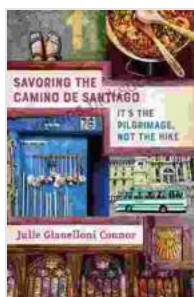
Walking the Camino is a challenging but rewarding experience. The route is often difficult, and you will need to be prepared for long days of walking. However, the Camino is also a beautiful and spiritual journey, and it is an experience that you will never forget. Here are some of the things that you can expect when you walk the Camino:

- **Beautiful scenery:** The Camino passes through some of the most beautiful scenery in Europe. You will walk through forests, mountains, and countryside. You will also see historic towns and villages along the way.
- **Spiritual journey:** The Camino is a spiritual journey, and many pilgrims find that it is a time of reflection and growth. You will have the

opportunity to meet other pilgrims from all over the world, and you will learn about different cultures and religions.

- **Physical challenges:** The Camino is a physically challenging route, and you will need to be prepared for long days of walking. You will also need to carry all of your belongings on your back, which can be difficult. However, most people find that the physical challenges of the Camino are also one of the most rewarding aspects of the experience.

The Camino de Santiago is a pilgrimage route that has been walked by millions of pilgrims over the centuries. It is a challenging but rewarding experience, and it is one that you will never forget. If you are considering walking the Camino, I encourage you to do so. It is an experience that will change your life.



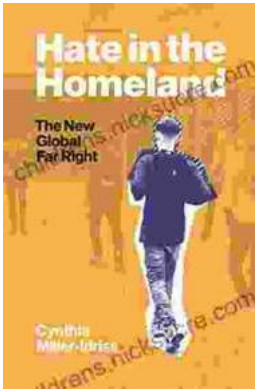
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