



# walk & write the camino with stephanie dale

## explore europe your way



At UTracks, it's all about u + the tracks you want to explore, be it walking the scenic tracks of the Austrian Alps, a leisurely cycle along the backroads of Tuscany, or trekking the famous Compostela Trail. We are specialists in active walking, cycling, barge & bike, walk or cycle and sail, winter trekking and snowshoeing tours throughout Europe and Morocco, with creative itineraries that feature the best of each region at the greatest possible value to you. There are more than 200 different self guided and small group guided itineraries on offer, lasting as few as four days or as many as 15 days throughout France, Germany, Portugal, Iceland, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, England, Romania, Belgium, Czech Republic, Holland, Spain, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Greece, Turkey, Sweden, Montenegro, Italy, Scotland, Ireland and Morocco. The physical demands of the tours range from introductory to challenging - yet all offer unique opportunities to discover the 'untrodden' Europe, spanning postcard landscapes, centuries-old culture, rural lifestyles and tempting culinary delights. In short, they're flexible, unique adventures of 'undiscovered' corners that offer you a great deal of independence yet provide support when you need it. Best of all, they start on virtually any day of the week, so you can combine any tour to create exactly the holiday you want. Compare the price and you will see that we offer great value active programs that are virtually all-inclusive, giving you more time to enjoy the wonders you've come to experience.

**TRIP COST**  
 Joining Sarria : **\$2990**  
 Trip Concludes:  
 Santiago de Compostela

All prices are per person

### OPTIONS & SUPPLEMENTS

As the trip price is based on twinshare, a single supplement is payable if a single room is required. If you would like to share a room with someone of the same gender, please request and we will do all possible to match you. However, if we are unsuccessful you will be required to pay the single supplement. Please refer to the price options above or ask our office for details.

<b>TRIP NAME:</b>	WALK & WRITE THE CAMINO WITH STEPHANIE DALE	
<b>TRIP CODE:</b>	SDS	
<b>TRIP DURATION:</b>	11 DAYS	
<b>GRADE:</b>	INTRODUCTORY TO MODERATE - 2 	
<b>ACTIVITY:</b>	SELF GUIDED WALKING	
<b>ACCOMMODATION:</b>	10 NIGHTS IN A COMBINATION OF 3-4 HOTELS AND COMFORTABLE GUESTHOUSES	
<b>DATE DETAILS:</b>	→ 2018   09 APR - 19 APR	

## highlights

- Experience the history of the trail marked by crosses, statues and grain silos
- Walk the last 110kms of the Camino at a relaxed pace and qualify for the pilgrims certificate
- Reach Santiago on foot and experience the famous pilgrims mass
- Enjoying the camaraderie of fellow hikers and pilgrims
- Stay overnight in comfortable guesthouses and hotels
- Exclusive writing workshops
- Real time record of your Camino adventure
- Trip escorted by journalist, author, travelling writer, Stephanie Dale

## the trip

"When you are in a car beautiful places are a moment, when you stop the car they are a cluster of moments; when you walk, beautiful places are an eternity carved into the soul."

Stephanie Dale, author My Pilgrim's Heart

This trip is an adventure writing experience that will lead you through the final 9 days of Spain's famous Camino pilgrimage. You will literally 'write' your journey home.

A hike along the Camino in northern Spain is one of the world's great walking experiences. The pace is relaxed, walking 10 - 18 km a day and staying in handpicked hotels and guesthouses. Completing the final 110kms to Santiago means you are eligible to receive the official Compostela certificate.





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On this specially crafted trip, the walk will include a series of writing workshops in beautiful villages, forests, farms and cities, as well as writing about people and local cultures. At certain junctures along the way, such as gentle streams and open hilltops, in afternoon cafes and iconic village squares, we will stop, rest and write.

Along the way you'll also gain a wonderful appreciation of the historic significance of the trail while reflecting on the meditative role that walking offers the pilgrim. The gates of Galicia lead on to the fabled Santiago de Compostela with its famous cathedral, site of the tomb of St James and home to the cathedral's extraordinary incense ritual. Each night you will stay in comfortable 3-4 star hotels and guesthouses, and enjoy the hospitality of your local hosts.

It's important to note that the relaxed pace of the walking ensures there is plenty of time in the day for writing and reflection, however you also need to keep in mind that this is a walking trip so you need to be of a good fitness level to complete the walks.

ON THIS WALK & WRITE ADVENTURE, YOU WILL:

- \* clarify your writing purpose, learn to use writing as a tool for everyday well-being, rest in productive time out each day, tune into the rhythms of the world around you as you explore your writing voice
- \* engage in gentle productive purpose as you wander the beautiful trails of Spain's northern interior
- \* receive writing support, guidance and encouragement throughout the journey.

Stephanie Dale specialises in helping new writers get started on their writing. Whether you want to blog your journey, share fabulous social media updates, take notes for a novel, unlock your inner writer or break through writers' block - this journey will meet your writing needs in productive time out from everyday life.

Walk & Write will encourage you to sit quietly, patiently, like the hunters of old, tuning your senses to the rhythms of life around you. You will learn to rest in productive time out. You will find your creative rhythm. You will discover new ways to incorporate writing into your everyday life. You will be offered support, guidance and encouragement to write your story, your way.

TAKEAWAYS will include:

- \* real time record of your Camino adventure
- \* concrete writing direction
- \* increased writing confidence
- \* solid notes for future writing
- \* a group of interested writing buddies
- \* enthusiasm to do it again!

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## your leader

Stephanie Dale is an award-winning author and journalist with a passion for pilgrimage, who has found true purpose in sharing her writing skills with others.

In 2014, Stephanie founded The Write Road, a creative wellbeing initiative that makes writing and communications training and support available to isolated Australians.

After three years in rural and remote areas in and around the Outback, she expanded The Write Road's mission to include her love of walking long distances, launching Walk & Write in 2017.

Stephanie has walked The Camino from St Jean Pied du Port to Santiago de Compostela and, in 2007, joined her son on the middle leg of his pilgrimage from Canterbury to Jerusalem (7000kms, 16 countries, 9 months). Stephanie walked with him for 1500kms across Italy and through the Balkans, before the snow-bound, thunder-struck mountains of Macedonia put an end to her overland journey.

Stephanie is the author of several books, including the widely-acclaimed travel memoir, *My Pilgrim's Heart* (which featured in the Huffington Post: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joan-gelfand/walk-it-out\\_b\\_4153412.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joan-gelfand/walk-it-out_b_4153412.html))

"My Pilgrim's Heart by Stephanie Dale...tests the author's resourcefulness and is a journey of often painful self-discovery, as all good travel writing should be. It (demonstrates) the kind of humour and pluck for which Australians like to think we are famous."

Susan Kurosawa, *The Australian, Travel*

"A born storyteller with a gift for adventure."





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Susan Maushart, author & broadcaster

“Like other great travelogues, the story drew me in right from the start. The path, the imagery and insights made me long for the joys and obstacles of hitting the road with an open mind, and seeing what the world has to teach us.”

Vlad P, Amazon reviewer, New York City

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Do I have to be an experienced writer?

Absolutely not! Everyone is welcome. New writers, experienced writers, writers who are not yet confident enough to call themselves a writer. Our program is about your individual writing journey.

What kinds of writing do you cover?

Walk & Write adventure writing is designed to open your senses to experiencing whatever it is you'd like to write, including:

- travel writing
- blogging
- social media messaging
- food writing
- fiction
- short stories
- memoir
- letters
- speeches
- family and community histories
- landscape writing
- writing wild places
- architecture writing
- journaling.

## itinerary at a glance

<b>Day 1</b>	Arrive in Sarria
<b>Day 2</b>	Walk to Morgade, transfer back to Sarria (3.5hrs, 13km, +260m)
<b>Day 3</b>	Transfer to Morgade, walk to Portomarin (2-3hrs, 10km, +50m, -385m)
<b>Day 4</b>	On foot to Ligonde, transfer to Lestedo (4hrs, 16km, +420m)
<b>Day 5</b>	Transfer to Ligonde, walk to Coto (4hrs, 16km, +50m, -270m)
<b>Day 6</b>	Walk to Castaneda (4hrs, 15km, +20m, -120m)
<b>Day 7</b>	Continue to Salceda, transfer to Lavacolla (4.5hrs, 16.5km, +120m, -370m)
<b>Day 8</b>	Transfer to Salceda and on foot to Lavacolla (5hrs, 18km, +100m, -300m)
<b>Day 9</b>	Walk to Santiago (3hrs, 10km, +70m, -110m)
<b>Day 10</b>	Free day in Santiago
<b>Day 11</b>	Trip concludes Santiago de Compostela

## detailed itinerary

Note: A note about the transfers on this itinerary - their timing can be a little flexible, eg during the walk, you can phone locally during the day or on arrival at the meeting point, to have the transfer brought forward.





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It's also important to note that the relaxed pace of the walking ensures there is plenty of time in the day for writing and reflection, however you also need to keep in mind that this is a walking trip so you need to be of a good fitness level to complete the walks.

## DAY 1 Arrive in Sarria

Make your own way to the first hotel in Sarria. Sarria is located on a hilltop with a river on either side affording you great views of the region. It was a major medieval centre for pilgrims, and the ancient atmosphere can still be felt in the Old Quarter.

### WALK & WRITE

When the whole group has arrived we will spend our first evening (or morning of Day 2) together clarifying our writing purpose and setting our walking and writing intentions for the journey ahead. No idea about your writing purpose? No worries! Through a short series of specially-crafted exercises, we'll find it.

**meals: D**

## DAY 2 Walk to Morgade, transfer back to Sarria (3.5hrs, 13km, +260m)

We recommend before leaving town that you take the time to visit the Church of the convent of La Magdalena. Today you will walk through lovely tree-lined paths, roads and gravel tracks, en route to Morgade. On the way you will pass through many small hamlets. This afternoon you will be transferred back to the hotel in Sarria, where you will overnight.

### WALK & WRITE (DAY 2 - 9)

Over the next 8 days Stephanie will conduct 2-3 formal writing workshops as a group that focus on specific writing projects of participants. We will also gather together in common purpose to write in designated places, such as cafes and village squares, hilltops and forest glades. There will be ongoing support and guidance available from your facilitator, as we wander along the Camino trail to Santiago de Compostela as well as regular group conversations that share our daily walking and writing challenges and triumphs.

**meals: B,D**

## DAY 3 Transfer to Morgade, walk to Portomarin (2-3hrs, 10km, +50m, -385m)

Today you will be transferred back to Morgade, where you will continue walking. As you head on foot to Portomarin you will pass through many hamlets dotted along areas of cultivated land, grazing pastures and woodlands and view the first "horreos", typical raised grain silos. A relatively easy walk until your descent, crossing the Dam of Portomarin where you can see ruins of the ancient flooded village, and into the town for your accommodation.

**meals: B,D**

## DAY 4 On foot to Ligonde, transfer to Lestedo (4hrs, 16km, +420m)

The route takes you through the brooms which have a magnificent fragrance. Along the path you will pass charming hamlets and calvaries. Over this stage you will pass through Ventas de Naron where you can fill your water bottles, over the gentle Sierra de Ligonde, then downhill through Previsa, Lameiros and Ligonde where you will find a church dedicated to the apostle St James. Emperor Charles V stayed here in the modest village of Ligonde, on the 24th of March 1520. This afternoon you will be transferred to your hotel in Lestedo.

**meals: B,D**

## DAY 5 Transfer to Ligonde, walk to Coto (4hrs, 16km, +50m, -270m)

After breakfast you will be transferred back to Ligonde, where you will continue walking. Today you will continue on a quiet country road, passing a 17th Century Wayside Cross en route. You will pass through Palas de Rei and other small villages until you arrive in your destination for today, the hamlet of Coto.

**meals: B,D**





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DAY 6	Walk to Castaneda (4hrs, 15km, +20m, -120m) Today you will walk through Melide, which is one of the larger towns along the Galician section of the Compostela Trail. We recommend you try the local speciality of 'Pulpa a feira', octopus usually served boiled and cooked with red pepper and paprika. After sampling the local delicacy, continue on to Castaneda, where you will overnight. <b>meals: B,D</b>
DAY 7	Continue to Salceda, transfer to Lavacolla (4.5hrs, 16.5km, +120m, -370m) The terrain becomes much easier today as you walk through forests full of Eucalyptus trees. You will be able to stop at one of many villages for lunch. Today you will walk through Arzúa in the province of La Coruña, before continuing on to Salceda. This afternoon you will be met and transferred to your hotel in Lavacolla. <b>meals: B,D</b>
DAY 8	Transfer to Salceda and on foot to Lavacolla (5hrs, 18km, +100m, -300m) A transfer this morning will return you Salceda, where you will continue walking from where you left of yesterday. The walk today is lovely, as you pass Eucalyptus trees, large green fields and rural landscapes. Overnight again in Lavacolla. <b>meals: B,D</b>
DAY 9	Walk to Santiago (3hrs, 10km, +70m, -110m) Today you will pass many ancient sites including monuments, chapels and bridges – all have a story to tell. Follow country lanes and forest paths through increasingly populated countryside. The last day on the trail is always a special one. Continue downhill to the city. Arriving in the fabled Santiago de Compostela there is plenty to see and do – or simply relax and celebrate the end of the journey. Dinner is not included tonight so you can try one of the many restaurants in town. <b>meals: B,D</b>
DAY 10	Free day in Santiago Today you have a free day to enjoy the many cultural and gastronomic attractions Santiago has to offer. Alternatively you can take a bus to Finisterre to see the Atlantic coastline or you may wish to take in the 12pm Pilgrims Mass at the Cathedral today. <b>WALK &amp; WRITE</b> Final group workshop: Where to from here? We will refine your writing goals, create a mud map for your ongoing journey and develop a plan to keep going! You will be given the opportunity to continue to engage with your writing buddies in an ongoing writing support group. <b>meals: B,D</b>
DAY 11	Trip concludes Santiago de Compostela Trip arrangements conclude after breakfast. <b>meals: B</b>

## inclusions

- 10 breakfasts, 10 dinners: Breakfasts are usually continental inclusive of breads, cheese, ham, tea, coffee & juices. Dinner will consist of 3 courses, usually starting with a salad, followed by chicken, red meat, fish or a pasta dish & finishing with a dessert of fruit or cakes.
- 10 nights in a combination of 3-4 hotels and comfortable guesthouses on a twin share basis with ensuite facilities
- 1 walking guidebook, 1 map holder, 1 detailed day-by-day description of the itinerary for each room booked
- Luggage transfer (max 20kgs per person)
- Visitor tax
- Emergency hotline
- Transfers as noted in the itinerary
- Trip escorted by journalist, author, travelling writer, Stephanie Dale





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## items not included

- Travel to Sarria and from Santiago
- Drinks, lunches,
- Items of a personal nature
- Entrance fees
- Local/Cultural Guide - this is a self guided tour
- Transfers not noted as included
- Travel insurance

## getting there

### BY TRAIN

Sarria is on the train line and can be reached with one train change from Santiago, and from Barcelona there is a direct train a couple of times a day taking between 11 and 12 hours. If travelling from Santiago it is better to go by bus as the train connections are usually poor and the bus travels from the airport (with one change - see below for details). For train timetable information for other points through Spain see <http://www.renfe.com/EN/viajeros/horarios.html> or ask our consultants for assistance.

### BY AIR

The closest airport to Sarria is Santiago de Compostela. There are a number of airlines with services to this airport including Ryanair, Iberia, British Airways and Aer Lingus. Spanair is another option from points through Europe. From the airport you need to take a bus to reach Sarria (see below). We are happy to assist you with your flight arrangements or speak with your travel agent for more details.

### BY BUS

In order to reach Sarria from Santiago de Compostela you need to take two buses (if travelling from the airport and generally from the city centre). Cost of the two buses is approximately 15 Euros and the process is quite simple. Firstly you take a bus from the airport direct to Lugo which takes around 1 hour 50mins. see [www.empresafreire.com](http://www.empresafreire.com) which has details in English of the 7 buses most days. Another option is to take the bus from Santiago bus station (20 minutes from the airport) where there are extra services to Lugo (note that there are less options on the weekend). From Lugo you need to change onto the Monbus service ([www.monbus.es](http://www.monbus.es)). This website is not in English but you can still find out the timetables by clicking on "Horarios" on the left then entering Lugo (estacion de autobuses) in the first box, Sarria on the next and choosing your date of travel on the following box and clicking enter. You will see that there are regular services between the two towns (taking 35minutes). Alternatively there is also a direct bus (6pm) between Santiago bus station and Sarria which operates Monday to Friday and takes 3 hours. \*Timetables are subject to change. Make sure to check the relevant websites before your departure. If you need further details please speak with your UTracks consultant.

## trip grading - introductory to moderate

The walking is graded introductory - moderate (2). Daily walks are between 10 and 18km on well marked trails over diverse terrain – from relatively flat to mountainous. This is a well worn path where route finding will be reasonably straight forward (refer below for further details on self guided adventures). The main areas to concentrate on route finding are arriving and leaving towns and cities. The accent is on keeping a steady pace to take in all of the attractions, with time to stop and take photos. You will need a good level of fitness to participate fully in this adventure.



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## dietary requirements

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (at least 1 month prior to your trip) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

## a note on our self guided adventures

Self guided walking or cycling requires individuals to use problem solving skills, be adaptable and have a keen eye. It is recommended that you are comfortable map reading, referring to route notes and that you have a good sense of direction (or are willing to work on improving this!) Sometimes route finding, losing your way, finding it again and asking the locals for help is all part of the adventure. If you've never been on a self guided trip, after the first couple of days you will get the hang of it as the vast majority of our first time travellers attest. Please be assured that our written material issued to you for route finding is updated regularly and we provide a 7day service hotline in the event of any problems. Using directions and maps can be more difficult for solo travellers as often two heads are better than one when it comes to finding your way. There is a certain level of the unknown that comes with self guided trips, however with a methodical approach potential problems will be averted. The freedom of a self guided trip is something that, once experienced, is sought time and time again.

## joining instructions

On confirmation of your booking you will receive details of the hotel and joining instructions. A few weeks before you leave you will receive your hotel list. On arrival at your first hotel you will receive all the necessary documentation for your tour. This will include:

- Detailed route notes
- Maps

## the region

The walk takes you through the Spanish region of Galicia, known as "green Spain", due to its lush green countryside. Located in the northwest Iberian Peninsula, the region is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the bay of Biscay to the north, Portugal in the south and Asturias in the east. Galicia is made up of four different provinces, la Coruña, Pontevedra, Ourense and Lugo, and its capital is Santiago de Compostela. The Galician's have their own language - Gallego - but do also speak Spanish.

## fast facts

<b>COUNTRIES VISITED</b>	Spain
<b>VISAS</b>	Visas not required for citizens of Australia, Canada, USA and New Zealand for up to 90 days in a period of 180 days for all Schengen countries (see <a href="http://www.schengenvisainfo.com/schengen-visa-countries-list/">www.schengenvisainfo.com/schengen-visa-countries-list/</a> for countries part of the Schengen). Please ensure your passport is stamped on arrival in the Schengen area. For all other nationalities and for longer stays in countries covered by the Schengen Agreement (Australian New Zealand, Canadian and US passport holders), please contact the relevant embassy. Stays of longer than 90 days in the Schengen area require a long stay visa for the country you are spending





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most time in. However long stay visas are unlikely to be issued unless there is a valid reason (eg. studying in country). Unfortunately we cannot assist in obtaining visas for long stays due to individual country visa requirements.

<b>CLIMATE</b>	Oceanic climate in Galicia: it can be cooler in Summer than other areas of Spain (with average highs in the mid 20's Celsius), but is often more humid.
<b>MIN GROUP SIZE</b>	8
<b>SPECIALIST GEAR REQUIRED</b>	Wet weather gear, sunscreen, good walking boots / shoes, sun hat and walking poles. A comprehensive gear list is included in the pre-departure information provided on booking.

## special notes

**MEALS:** Breakfast is served from 8am which is not always conducive to an early start, particularly required in the summer months. You may choose to skip breakfast and take a bread roll and cheese from the breakfast buffet. Dinner is served late in traditional Spanish style starting from 9-9:30pm. An afternoon siesta may be required!

**SINGLE ROOMS:** The single supplement guarantees the privacy of your own room, however, rooms can at times be small and in some places may not enjoy the same facilities as double/twin rooms.

## how to book

To book a UTRACKS trip, complete our booking form which is found at the back of our brochure or can be downloaded from our website [www.utracks.com](http://www.utracks.com). On completion, fax or post the form to your nearest UTRACKS or World Expeditions office along with full payment by cheque or credit card (note: surcharges apply for credit card payments). World Expeditions/UTRACKS has access to competitive airfares to Europe. Call your nearest UTRACKS/World Expeditions office or travel agent for assistance with your travel arrangements including flights, travel insurance & additional accommodation.

## follow us

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[https://twitter.com/UTracks\\_Travel](https://twitter.com/UTracks_Travel)

There's even more tips and ideas on our blog at <http://www.utracks.com/discover>

## slide shows

UTracks invites you to attend our inspiring adventure travel slide shows. These special evenings are designed to inform and entertain and are hosted by our most experienced and passionate adventure travellers. Ask our staff for a slide show schedule or register on our website – [www.utracks.com](http://www.utracks.com). Shows can fill early so it is important to register your attendance so we know to save a seat, or two!

## e-newsletter

To keep up to date with our new and exciting adventure opportunities, special promotions and adventure news, subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter! You can do this on line through our website, [www.utracks.com](http://www.utracks.com) or contact our office.

## IMPORTANT NOTE

THESE TRIP NOTES REPRESENT THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR THIS ITINERARY, AND SUPERSEDE ANY INFORMATION DETAILED IN THE CURRENT BROCHURE, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE ITINERARY AND PRICE.





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- Melbourne
- Brisbane
- Adelaide (Thor Travel)

For address and office phone numbers visit [www.worldexpeditions.com](http://www.worldexpeditions.com)

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