

Saint James Way Small Group Walking Tour (The Camino)- Spain

Reading List

Spain: The Centre of the World 1519-1682

by Robert Goodwin

In the sixteenth century, the Spaniards became the first nation in history to have worldwide reach; across most of Europe to the Americas, the Philippines, and India. Goodwin tells the story of Spain and the Spaniards, from great soldiers like the Duke of Alba to literary figures and artists such as El Greco, Velázquez, Cervantes, and Lope de Vega, and the monarchs who ruled over them.

At the beginning of the modern age, Spaniards were caught between the excitement of change and a medieval world of chivalry and religious orthodoxy, they experienced a turbulent existential angst that fueled an exceptional Golden Age, a fluorescence of art, literature, poetry, and which inspired new ideas about International Law, merchant banking, and economic and social theory.

Moorish Spain

by Richard A. Fletcher

Written in the same tradition as John Julius Norwich's engrossing accounts of Venice and Byzantium, Richard Fletcher's Moorish Spain entertains even as it enlightens. He tells the story of a vital period in Spanish history which transformed the culture and society, not only of Spain, but of the rest of Europe as well. Moorish influence transformed the architecture, art, literature and learning, and Fletcher combines this analysis with a crisp account of the wars, politics and sociological changes of the time.

Beginning in the year 711 and continuing for nearly a thousand years, the Islamic presence survived in Spain, at times flourishing, and at other times dwindling into warring fiefdoms. But the culture and science thereby brought to Spain, including long-buried knowledge from Greece, largely forgotten during Europe's Dark Ages, was to have an enduring impact on the country as it emerged into the modern era. In this gracefully written history, Richard Fletcher reveals the Moorish culture in all its fascinating disparity and gives us history at its best: here is vivid storytelling by a renowned scholar.

Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago, Journeys Along an Ancient Way in Modern Spain

by Nancy Louise Frey

Each year thousands of men and women from more than sixty countries journey by foot and bicycle across northern Spain, following the medieval pilgrimage road known as the Camino de Santiago. Their destination is Santiago de Compostela, where the remains of the apostle James are said to be buried. These modern-day pilgrims and the role of the pilgrimage in their lives are the subject of Nancy Louise Frey's fascinating book.

Unlike the religiously-oriented pilgrims who visit Marian shrines such as Lourdes, the modern Road of St. James attracts an ecumenical mix of largely well-educated, urban middle-class participants. Eschewing comfortable methods of travel, they choose physically demanding journeys, some as long as four months, in order to experience nature, enjoy cultural and historical patrimony, renew faith, or cope with personal trauma.

Frey's anthropological study focuses on the remarkable reanimation of the Road that has gained momentum since the 1980s. Her intensive fieldwork (including making the pilgrimage several times herself) provides a colorful portrayal of the pilgrimage while revealing a spectrum of hopes, discontents, and desires among its participants, many of whom feel estranged from society. The Camino's physical and mental journey offers them closer community, greater personal knowledge, and links to the past and to nature.

But what happens when pilgrims return home? Exploring this crucial question Frey finds that pilgrims often reflect deeply on their lives and some make significant changes: an artistic voice is discovered, a marriage is ended, meaningful work is found. Other pilgrims repeat the pilgrimage or join a pilgrims' association to keep their connection to the Camino alive. And some only remain pilgrims while on the road. In all, *Pilgrim Stories* is an exceptional prism through which to understand the desires and dissatisfactions of contemporary Western life at the end of the millennium.

"Feet are touched, discussed, massaged, [and] become signs of a journey well traveled: 'I did it all on foot!' . . . Pilgrims give feet a power and importance not recognized in daily life, as a causeway and direct channel to the road, the past, meaningful relations, nature, and the self."

Walk in a Relaxed Manner: Life Lessons from the Camino

by Joyce Rupp

At age 60 Joyce Rupp didn't know what she was getting into when she began a 47-day pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago in Spain. Joined by her walking friend Tom, a retired pastor, Joyce learned lessons that can help all of us travel on life's up and down journey with more grace and lightness. She shares them in this enjoyable recounting of her journey across mountains and valleys, cities and farms. - Set Out with Hope and Enthusiasm - - Travel Lightly - - Acknowledge the Kindness of Strangers - - Let Yourself Be Humbled by Weakness - - Savor Solitude - - Return a Positive for a

Negative - - Look for Unannounced Angels - - Trust in the Divine Companion -

I'm Off Then: Losing and Finding Myself on the Camino de Santiago

by Hape Kerkeling

From one of Germany's most beloved celebrities, a cross between Bill Bryson and Paulo Coelho. It has sold over 3 million copies and been translated into eleven different languages. Pilgrims have increased along the Camino by 20 percent since the book was published. Hape Kerkeling's spiritual epiphany has struck a nerve.

Overweight, overworked, and physically unfit, Kerkeling was an unlikely candidate to make the arduous pilgrimage across the French Alps to the Spanish Shrine of St. James, a 1,200-year-old journey undertaken by nearly 100,000 people every year. But that didn't stop him from getting off the couch and walking. Along the way, lonely and searching for meaning, he began the journal that turned into this utterly frank, engaging book. Simply by struggling with his physical limitations and the rigors of long-distance walking, he discovered a deep sense of peace that transformed his life and allowed him to forgive himself, and others, more readily. He learned something every day, and he took to finishing each entry with his daily lessons.

Filled with quirky fellow pilgrims, historic landscapes, and Kerkeling's self-deprecating sense of humor, *I'm Off Then* is an inspiring travelogue, a publishing phenomenon, and a spiritual journey unlike any other."

Journey to Portugal: In Pursuit of Portugal's History and Culture

by Jose Saramago

When José Saramago decided to write a book about Portugal, his only desire was that it be unlike all other books on the subject, and in this he has certainly succeeded. Recording the events and observations of a journey across the length and breadth of the country he loves dearly, Saramago brings Portugal to life as only a writer of his brilliance can. Forfeiting the usual sources such as tourist guides and road maps, he scours the country with the eyes and ears of an observer fascinated by the ancient myths and history of his people. Whether it be an inaccessible medieval fortress set on a cliff, a wayside chapel thick with cobwebs, or a grand mansion in the city, the extraordinary places of this land come alive.

Always meticulously attentive to those elements of ancient Portugal that persist today, he examines the country in its current period of rapid transition and growth. *Journey to Portugal* is an ode to a country and its rich traditions.

A Short History of Spain

by Mary Platt Parmele

The history of Spain dates back to the Early Middle Ages. In 1516, Habsburg Spain unified a number of disparate predecessor kingdoms; its modern form of a constitutional monarchy was introduced in 1813, and the current democratic constitution dates to 1978. After the completion of the Reconquista, the kingdoms of Spain were united under Habsburg rule in 1516. At the same time, the Spanish Empire began to expand to the New World across the ocean, marking the beginning of the Golden Age of Spain, during which, from the early 1500s to the 1650s, Habsburg Spain was among the most powerful states in Europe.

Written in an engaging style, Mary Parmele's concise study *A Short History of Spain* introduces readers to the key themes that have shaped modern Spain.

Paris to the Pyrenees: A Skeptic Pilgrim Walks the Way of Saint James,

by Downie, David

Part adventure story, part cultural history, an exploration of the phenomenon of pilgrimage along the age-old Way of Saint James in France.

Driven by curiosity, wanderlust, and health crises, David Downie and his wife set out from Paris to walk across France to the Pyrenees. Starting on the Rue Saint-Jacques and trekking 750 miles south to Roncesvalles, Spain, their eccentric route takes seventy-two days on Roman roads and pilgrimage paths? a 1,100-year-old network of trails leading to the sanctuary of Saint James the Greater. For Downie, the inward journey met the outer one: a combination of self-discovery and physical regeneration. More than 200,000 pilgrims take the highly commercialized Spanish route annually, but few cross France. Downie had a goal: to go from Paris to the Pyrenees on age-old trails, making the pilgrimage in his own maverick way.

The New Spaniards

by John Hooper

A fully revised, expanded and updated edition of this masterly portrayal of contemporary Spain.

The restoration of democracy in 1977 heralded a period of intense change that continues today. Spain has become a land of extraordinary paradoxes in which traditional attitudes and contemporary preoccupations exist side by side. Focussing on issues which affect ordinary Spaniards, from

housing to gambling, from changing sexual mores to rising crime rates. John Hooper's fascinating study brings to life the new Spain of the twenty-first century.

Spain

by Jan Morris

Passionate, evocative and beautifully written, *Spain* is a companion to the country: its people, its history - and its character. First published in 1964 and no less compelling today, Jan Morris's classic work is back in print, bringing Spain, its glory and its tragedy, vividly to life.

Jan Morris's collection of travel writing and reportage spans over five decades and includes such titles as *Venice*, *Coronation Everest*, *Hong Kong*, *Spain*, *Manhattan '45*, *A Writer's World* and the *Pax Britannica Trilogy*. *Hav*, her novel, was shortlisted for the Booker Prize and the Arthur C. Clarke Award.

'The most evocative book ever written about Spain.' *Independent*

Pilgrimage: The Great Pilgrim Routes of Britain and Europe

by Derry Brabbs

Pilgrimage in Europe is thriving on a massive scale. This century the cathedral at Santiago de Compostela alone has seen 40 times the number of pilgrim visits. Author Derry Brabbs' previous book, *Roads to Santiago*, focused exclusively on the 'camino' through France and Spain to Santiago de Compostela; *Pilgrimage* revisits this classic route, and nine other inspirational journeys across Europe.
