



VANDERBILT
Alumni Association



El Camino de Santiago

A Walking Tour In Northern Spain

with Dr. W. Frank Robinson, Assistant Professor of History

April 25 – May 7, 2025



VANDERBILT Alumni Association

Dear Vanderbilt Alumni and Friends,

Are you ready for a journey that will inspire you? In April 2025, join Vanderbilt along the world's most famous pilgrimage route, Spain's Camino de Santiago. Over the past thousand years, both secular explorers and religious pilgrims have followed this revered path. Travel through Galicia's stunning landscapes to the Camino's final destination, the Shrine of the Apostle in Santiago de Compostela.

On this active program, you will hike the most breathtaking sections of the Way of St. James. Traverse wooded bluffs and flower-filled meadows. Along the way, go behind the scenes at splendid Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals, many recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. **Dr. W. Frank Robinson**, Assistant Professor of History, will accompany you as your Vanderbilt lecturer. With his deep expertise in Iberian history, Professor Robinson will add rich context to the Camino's storied path, connecting the region's political, social, and cultural movements to centuries of pilgrimage tradition.

To conclude the journey, attend Mass at the Cathedral of Santiago, where you will witness an unforgettable highlight. You will see the traditional *Botafumeiro* incense-burning ceremony, watching in amazement as an enormous, 120-pound thurible, suspended by a system of pulleys operated by eight men, swings through the cathedral.

Walks along the Camino average three to four miles per day, with rest days for sightseeing off the trail. Reconnect with friends from Vanderbilt while savoring the region's exquisite cuisine, local wines, and trademark hospitality. Enjoy accommodations in some of the world's most historic hotels.

As this program is co-sponsored by Tulane University, spots will fill quickly. **To reserve your space, please return the reservation form or call the Vanderbilt Travel Office at 615-322-3673 for more information.** We hope you will join this cultural journey in one of the world's most magical places.

Sincerely,

Cary DeWitt Allyn
Director, Vanderbilt Travel Program



Activity Level:



Pace Level:



Visit Arrangements Abroad's website for more information about Activity and Pace Levels [here](#).

The Vanderbilt Travel Program strives to engage Vanderbilt alumni, parents, and friends of all ages, keeping them connected with each other and Vanderbilt. Each carefully designed trip offers unparalleled educational opportunities, many with Vanderbilt professors, for an exclusive "beyond the classroom" experience.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

EXPERIENCE the most interesting sections of the Camino de Santiago, the world's most famous pilgrimage route, with expert guides

WITNESS spectacular history and share moments of beauty and reflection as travelers along the Camino have done for centuries

BEGIN a series of walks along the Camino in Roncesvalles, Spain, one of the main entrances to the route, and end in Santiago de Compostela, the capital of Galicia and a UNESCO World Heritage Site

ADMIRE awe-inspiring cathedrals and monasteries in Nájera, Burgos, León, and other pilgrimage cities along the way, and enjoy leisure time to explore Spain's lovely Galicia region

ATTEND midday Mass at the magnificent Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, where the famous *Botafumeiro* ritual will be performed

GO behind the scenes of several UNESCO World Heritage Sites that line the Camino, including the French Gothic-style Burgos Cathedral, with its opulent Renaissance *retablo*

ENJOY private tours of two of only three structures that the great architect Antoni Gaudí built outside of Catalonia, his home region

JOURNEY to Cape Finisterre, once considered the end of the Earth, to watch the sunset over the Atlantic Ocean

HEAR Gregorian chants performed by the world-famous monks of the monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos, whose two-story cloister is considered a masterpiece of Romanesque art

TRAVELING WITH YOU



W. Frank Robinson, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of History at Vanderbilt University. He specializes in the history of Iberia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, focusing on 20th-century political and social movements, nationalism and populism, and Caribbean migrations. He teaches courses covering colonial and national periods, including the rise and decline of the Spanish and Portuguese seaborne empires. With an interest in the Atlantic world, he has traveled extensively throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe. He completed his undergraduate studies at Johns Hopkins University. He received graduate degrees from the University of Florida and Auburn University with concentrations in African Area Studies and Latin American history.

El Camino de Santiago

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Old Quarter, Pamplona

MONDAY, APRIL 28: PAMPLONA / MURUZÁBAL / PUENTE LA REINA / ESTELLA / LAGUARDIA

Travel by coach to the Romanesque Church of Santa María de Eunate. Renowned for its distinctive octagonal structure, this 12th-century sanctuary has been a historical waypoint for pilgrims converging from different routes on the Camino de Santiago. Next, a brief walk along the Camino leads you to Puente La Reina, a medieval town named after its iconic “Queen’s Bridge,” which spans the Arga River with seven semicircular arches. There will be time to explore and enjoy lunch on your own.

Continue your journey to Estella, where you will explore the Church of San Pedro de la Rúa, celebrated for its exquisite 12th-century cloister. Conclude your day in the Rioja Alavesa wine region and the fortified town of Laguardia. The Hotel Villa de Laguardia, surrounded by lush vineyards, will be home for the next two nights. Dinner is at a local restaurant, featuring regional cuisine and wines. B,D
Approximate walking distance: 4.5 kilometers / 2.75 miles.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29: LAGUARDIA / LOGROÑO (Rest Day, with walking for sightseeing only)

Following a morning lecture, drive to the lively university city of Logroño to see its lovely Old Quarter. Amid its charming streets lies the 12th-century Church of San Bartolomé. Once a fragment of the ancient city walls, the church’s bell tower now serves as a vantage point, offering climbers panoramic vistas of Logroño’s beauty. At the Co-Cathedral of Santa María de La Redonda, take a special look at *The Calvary*,

FRIDAY, APRIL 25: DEPARTURE

Depart home independently on an overnight flight to Pamplona via Madrid.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26: MADRID, SPAIN / PAMPLONA

Arrive in Pamplona in the late afternoon. Transfer to the Hotel Maisonnave (or similar), centrally located near Castillo Square. This evening, meet fellow travelers at a welcome reception for an *aperitif*. R

SUNDAY, APRIL 27: PAMPLONA / RONCESVALLES / PAMPLONA

A morning lecture will set the stage for a walking tour of Pamplona’s Old Quarter. Explore landmarks across the city’s history, including the Town Hall with its Baroque façade, the Gothic Church of San Saturnino, and the 13th-century Cathedral of Santa María la Real, the final resting place of King Charles III of Navarre.

After lunch, our journey leads to Roncesvalles, a historic starting point on the Way of St. James. Here, receive your *credencial* (pilgrim passport) to mark your route.

Return to Pamplona early this evening and gather for a welcome dinner. B,L,D

Approximate walking distance: 6.5 kilometers / 4 miles.



Santa María de Eunate, Izarbe Valley



a painting attributed to Michelangelo, and the carvings of Spanish Baroque sculptor Gregorio Fernández. Lunch is at Bodegas Baigorri, where Rioja Alavesa is produced.

Return to Laguardia and visit the late 12th-century Church of Santa María de los Reyes, which once was part of the town's fortress. Its sanctuary, a more recent addition from the 15th century, bears the hallmarks of Gothic, Renaissance, and even Baroque influences. Stroll through the medieval streets of Laguardia, stopping in some of the numerous cellars to taste or buy some magnificent local wines. Back at the hotel, the remainder of the day is at leisure. B,L

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30: LAGUARDIA / NÁJERA / AZOFRA / SANTO DOMINGO DE LA CALZADA / BURGOS

Depart for Nájera, the former capital of the Kingdom of Navarre, where you will visit the Monasterio de Santa María La Real de Nájera. Built as a royal foundation in the 11th century, the monastery is the burial place of many of the kings, queens, and knights of Navarre.

Continue walking on the Camino to Azofra, then drive to Santo Domingo de la Calzada for lunch and a visit to the cathedral and the 12th-century Pilgrims' Hospital, now a hostel for pilgrims situated among its network of medieval streets.

Upon arrival in Burgos, visit the Monasterio de las Huelgas, a 12th-century Cistercian monastery, royal burial place, a spiritual retreat for noble women, and an influential center of religious and political power in Castile. Check into the Hotel NH Palacio de Burgos, our home for the next two nights. Dinner is at leisure. B,L

Approximate walking distance: 5.8 kilometers / 3.6 miles.

THURSDAY, MAY 1: BURGOS

This morning, discover the sumptuous Burgos Cathedral, one of the largest churches in Spain and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The cathedral's Gothic façade, dating back to the 12th century, ranks among Europe's most awe-inspiring architectural marvels. Admire its resplendent interior featuring myriad chapels, a cloister, appended structures, and 38 altarpieces, all created by numerous craftsmen over more than four centuries.

Then drive to the monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos, which dates from the seventh century and is a masterpiece of Romanesque architecture. While there, experience a Gregorian chant performed by the world-famous monks of Silos. Later, stroll along a delightful Camino path through an oak and pine forest leading to the peaceful valley of the Río Vena. Dinner is at leisure. B,L

Approximate walking distance: 6.1 kilometers / 3.8 miles.

FRIDAY, MAY 2: BURGOS / CALZADA DEL COTO / CALZADILLA DE LOS HERMANILLOS / LEÓN

Drive this morning to the little village of Calzada del Coto to begin a beautiful hike along this stretch of the Camino to Calzadilla de los Hermanillos. After a *tapas* lunch at a popular pilgrim restaurant, continue to León, where you will check into the Parador de León and have the remainder of the day and dinner at leisure. Take a stroll and see the 14th-century Palacio del Conde Luna, the former seat of the Kingdom of León. The palace, distinguished by its 16th-century three-story Renaissance tower, underwent an extensive \$26 million restoration in 2009. Stop at the Casa de las Carnicerías, with its lovely 16th-century Renaissance architecture and ornate carvings. B,L

Approximate walking distance: 8.7 kilometers / 5.4 miles.

SATURDAY, MAY 3: LEÓN

Start your day with a lecture, then follow the Camino within the walls of León. Here, discover Antonio Gaudí's neo-Gothic, late 19th-century palace Casa Botines, one of



only three buildings by Gaudí beyond Catalonia. (You will see another Gaudí creation tomorrow.) Visit the soaring 13th-century León Cathedral, a masterpiece of Gothic architecture, with nearly 2,000 square feet of stained glass from the 13th through to the 20th centuries, encompassing 130 church windows and three rose windows. Then see the Basilica of San Isidoro, the most important Romanesque church of the Iberian Peninsula, featuring the Pantheon of Kings, known as the “Sistine Chapel of Romanesque Art.” The remainder of the day is at leisure. **B**
Approximate walking distance: 2.1 kilometers / 1.3 miles.

SUNDAY, MAY 4: LEÓN / ASTORGA / PONFERRADA / VILAFRANCA DEL BIERZO

Today’s journey on the Camino ventures into the glorious open countryside of the *páramo* (treeless grassland) with its rich red earth. Drive to Astorga, the crossroads of several major pilgrim routes. Admire Gaudí’s Bishop’s Palace, which features a museum devoted to the pilgrimage, before lunch at leisure. Continue to Ponferrada and the magnificent 12th-century Templar Castle, which towers over the town’s historic quarter and houses the Templars’ Library. Dinner and overnight are at the Parador de Villafranca del Bierzo. **B,D**
Approximate walking distance: 6.7 kilometers / 4.2 miles.

MONDAY, MAY 5: VILAFRANCA DEL BIERZO / MONTE DO GOZO / SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA / CAPE FINISTERRE

Experience the history of Villafranca del Bierzo, the final major stop on the Camino. Enjoy a brief walking tour here to view the town’s significant monuments, including Plaza Mayor, Calle del Agua, and Los Marqueses Castle, before driving to Monte do Gozo for lunch. The spires of the magnificent Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela will be visible as you join other pilgrims walking the last few miles of the Camino. Then check into the San Francisco Hotel



Monumento in the heart of Santiago de Compostela. Late this evening, an optional excursion is arranged to “the end of the Earth” at Cape Finisterre. Enjoy the sunset from the cape with a glass of Cava. Otherwise, enjoy a free evening with dinner at leisure. **B,L**
Approximate walking distance: 4.7 kilometers / 2.9 miles.

TUESDAY, MAY 6: SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA (Rest Day, with walking for sightseeing only)

A morning walking tour includes the highlights of this UNESCO-listed historic town, which is the final destination of the Camino. Complete the pilgrim experience at the majestic cathedral’s noon Mass, where you will witness the famous *Botafumeiro* ritual, in which a massive censer swings high above the cathedral’s nave, operated by eight *tiraboleiros*. Crafted by goldsmith José Losada in 1851, the five-foot-tall, 120-pound golden *Botafumeiro* ranks among the largest censers globally. Lunch and the afternoon are at leisure. Visit the Plaza del Obradoiro or Raxoi Palace, or stop at the city’s food market. You can also enjoy *tapas* on Franco or Reiña Streets before gathering tonight for our farewell dinner. **B,D**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7: SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA / MADRID / RETURN

Depart the hotel and transfer to the Santiago de Compostela airport early this morning for the flight home with a connection through Madrid. **B**

DISCLAIMER: *The itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of Vanderbilt University and Arrangements Abroad. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms.*



Botafumeiro ritual, Santiago de Compostela

ACCOMMODATIONS

HOTEL MAISONNAVE (or similar), PAMPLONA

This painstakingly refurbished four-star hotel boasts exceedingly well-appointed rooms and exquisite cuisine at the Caravinagre Café Bar.

HOTEL VILLA DE LAGUARDIA, LAGUARDIA

This four-star property, nestled among vineyards in Rioja Alavesa, offers 84 rooms, a luxurious spa, and two top-notch restaurants serving up delectable gastronomic and wine experiences.

HOTEL NH PALACIO DE BURGOS, BURGOS

This 16th- and 17th-century building houses 110 elegant and spacious rooms, featuring a clever fusion of classic and contemporary design.

PARADOR DE LEÓN, LEÓN

Originally built in the 16th century to house the Military Order of Saint James, this magnificent property features stately function rooms, a spectacular cloister and chapter house, elegant guest rooms, a library, and a wonderful restaurant serving up beautifully prepared traditional cuisine.

PARADOR DE VILAFRANCA DEL BIERZO, VILAFRANCA DEL BIERZO

Discover this beautiful *parador* in the charming El Bierzo district, nestled among picturesque mountains and surrounded by cherry and fig trees, chestnuts, poplars, and small farms at the entrance of Villafranca del Bierzo.

SAN FRANCISCO HOTEL MONUMENTO, SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Minutes from the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, enjoy the tranquility of an 18th-century Franciscan convent with four-star amenities, including a heated swimming pool and Jacuzzi.

PROGRAM RATE

\$8,499 per person, double rate

\$9,999 single rate

RATES INCLUDES

- Eleven nights accommodations as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine at welcome and farewell dinners
- Airport/hotel/airport group transfers for all participants on suggested flights
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Taxes, service, and portorage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers

NOT INCLUDED IN RATES International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; airport transfers other than for those on suggested flights; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.



VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

EL CAMINO DE SANTIAGO • APRIL 25 – MAY 7, 2025 RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place, please contact the Vanderbilt Travel Office at 615-322-3673 or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$1,000 per person (of which \$500 is non-refundable for administrative fees), payable to *Arrangements Abroad*. Mail to: Arrangements Abroad, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

Address

City State Zip

Telephone (home) (business)

Fax E-mail

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel room preference One bed Two beds Single

I wish to share a room with _____

FORM OF PAYMENT

Enclosed is my check (payable to *Arrangements Abroad*)

Debit card Credit card

Name on credit card

Credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code

Expiration date

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the Terms & Conditions of this Program (see www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms to review or call for a copy). I/We agree to full payment 120 days prior to departure. Each participant must sign below.

Signature (required)

Date

Signature (required)

Date

Photos clockwise from top left: Hotel Villa de Laguardia, Laguardia; Parador de León, León; San Francisco Hotel Monumento, Santiago de Compostela; and Parador de Villafranca del Bierzo, Villafranca del Bierzo.



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Front cover: Camino de Santiago trail.
Back cover: Shell along the Camino route (top) and Puente La Reina (bottom).
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