



Santiago de Compostela

DURING medieval times, the Way of St. James, or El Camino de Santiago was the most renowned of the three major pilgrimages that people would embark upon; the other two being the Via Francigena to Rome, and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

The earliest records of visits paid to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela date from the 8th century. Tradition holds that St. James, the apostle of Jesus, found his way to Spain and preached there, and that his bones are buried beneath the Cathedral.

During the Middle Ages, the route was highly travelled. Pilgrims would walk the Way of St. James, often for months, in order to pay homage to St. James. So many pilgrims laid their hands on the pillar just inside the doorway of the church that a groove was worn into the stone. The need to accommodate huge crowds of pilgrims resulted in the construction of massive archways in the Cathedral, a new kind of architecture called Romanesque.

One of the motivations for walking the Camino de Santiago was as a form of penance. Pilgrimages were recognized by the Church as a suitable means of atoning for sins committed, and they were even used as punishment for those who were guilty of crimes. There is still a tradition in Flanders of freeing one prisoner a year, under the condition that this person walk to Santiago carrying a heavy backpack, accompanied by a guard.

The Black Plague, the Protestant Reformation, and political unrest in 16th century Europe resulted in the gradual decline of the Way of St. James. By the 1980's, only a few pilgrims arrived in Santiago annually. Since then, however, the route has attracted a growing number of modern-day pilgrims from around the globe. The route was declared the first European Cultural Route by the Council of Europe in October 1987; it was also named one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites in 1993.

Ordinary Time | Temps Ordinaire

Sunday dimanche	Monday lundi	Tuesday mardi	Wednesday mercredi	Thursday jeudi	Friday vendredi	Saturday samedi
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

