





# *Santiago de Compostela*

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*Santiago de Compostela is the capital of northwest Spain's Galicia region. It's known as the culmination of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route, and the alleged burial site of the apostle St. James. His remains lie within the Catedral de Santiago de Compostela, consecrated in 1211, whose elaborately carved stone facades open onto grand plazas within the medieval walls of the old town.*

*Pilgrims came from all over Europe following the Camino de Santiago.*

The Camino de Santiago (the Way of St. James) is a large network of ancient pilgrim routes stretching across Europe and coming together at the tomb of Santiago in Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, a stone apparition in the midst of the green forests of Northwest Spain and the nearby Galician “rias”.

Santiago de Compostela was originally a stopping point on a Roman road, but the discovery of the Apostle James' tomb at the beginning of the 9th century gave rise to a place of workshop in the corner of the Iberian Peninsula, which was then dominated by the Moors. From then on all of Europe started walking towards Santiago, a holy city of Christendom where the grace of plenary absolution awaited them. A Romanesque cathedral then arose there. The grand heart of Santiago, the cathedral soars above the city centre in a splendid jumble of moss-covered spires and statues. Built over several centuries, its beauty is a mix of original masterpiece of Romanesque architecture (built between 1075 and 1211) and later Gothic and the majesty of Baroque splendour. The artistic high point is the Pórtico de la Gloria inside the west entrance, featuring 200 masterly Romanesque sculptures. However, the authentic symbol of the city is the Baroque western façade of the cathedral, which forms one of the sides of the square of Obradoiro, one of the world's most beautiful urban areas. Attendance to the pilgrims mass at 12 noon daily is recommended, when following a schedule of liturgical celebrations you can normally see the botafumeiro censer in action. Once inside the basilica, you should not miss the opportunity to visit the Cathedral rooftops.









## *The city of Santiago de Compostela has World Heritage status.*

The Old Town of Santiago de Compostela, together with the outlying Santa Maria de Conxo Monastery, constitutes an extraordinary ensemble of distinguished monuments. The squares and narrow streets of the Old Town contain Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, and Neoclassicist buildings. Tradition is still alive and the continent's spirituality still looks towards Compostela, as shown by the last Holy Years, which will undoubtedly be the case in the Jubilee year of 2021. The city's visitors will find its treasures exhibited in sixteen museums as well as the surprising richness of its contemporary architecture, designed by Eisenman, Hedjuk or Siza, surrounded by Galicia's largest area of parks and gardens –the area formed by the Alameda park, the Santa Susana oak grove and the South University Campus, plus the San Domingos de Bonaval and Belvis parks- which are some of the city's most emblematic places. Santiago de Compostela plays host to several million visitors who immerse themselves in the permanent celebration that is the city's life, especially during the Apostle Festival, declared of International Tourist Interest. This setting is alive with cultural expressions – annual music, cinema and theatre festivals, permanent and travelling exhibitions and traditional festivals organised by both the public and private sector, led by the five-hundred-year-old University of Santiago. Santiago, as the capital of Galicia, exemplifies all the gastronomic tradition and variety of a cuisine admired for the magnificent quality of its ingredients, from the land and the sea, ranging from the most traditional to the most innovative. Therefore, gastronomy is undoubtedly one of the city's main attractions.





*If you ask anybody from Spain about Galicia, the first thing that will come to their mind is the word: Seafood.*

The “Mercado de Abastos” is the city’s second-most visited site after the Cathedral. Apart from admiring its architecture and visiting its stands featuring fresh molluscs, fish, meat, cheeses and vegetables, visitors can also buy and immediately sample the produce in the Market’s bar. For a small percentage of the price of your shopping, the Market’s bar (Marisco Manía) will cook the produce while you wait, enabling you to enjoy the freshness accompanied with a glass of wine. Alternatively sample typical Galician portions in one of the many gastronomic restaurants. Galician-style octopus, pic, razor clams, or sardines and pilchards, if in season, or “zorza” (marinated pork), ham foreleg, “carne ao caldeiro” (boiled meat) and, of course, Padrón peppers, also in season, always accompanied by Galician wine with “tarta de Santiago” (almond cake) for dessert. Fun, happy and jovial. Santiago’s university atmosphere is infectious with joy and vitality. The 33,000 students who attend the university each year give the city a special atmosphere. Be sure not to miss the nightlife in Santiago, when its pubs, bars and clubs open their doors. The city never sleeps. The areas of the city where people go out are evidence of this, with an array of nightspots and terrace bars for all tastes. Art and culture, but nature too. Santiago has many parks and gardens. An intense green pervades everything, not only within the city, but also in its surrounding area, where mountains and forests with luxuriant vegetation await. Santiago is not a cultural destination only on account of its heritage and monuments, but also thanks to its impressive year-round programme of events: music, conferences, theatre, film, concerts, exhibitions, festivals... Entertainment and art are always to be found, in the city’s museums and at a host of other venues too. Come to Santiago and make the most of your visit to discover Galicia, a fascinating region in the north of Spain you will want to come back to. Here you will find beaches, magical forests, unusual traditions, charming villages... Come and discover them for yourself.

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