

My body is an organ of memories well as perception.

Jena Shinoda Bolen

Dear Pilgrimage 2007 Participant:

Welcome to the Seattle Jung Society Camino Pilgrimage Event. It promises to be a fine time together walking through some ancient, sacred precincts of the Earth.

Conditioning is obviously a key factor in assuring full enjoyment of this experience. Pilgrimage is by nature a physical ordeal, designed to test the body as a way of opening the spirit. Adequate advanced preparation can assure that this ordeal is not distraction but soulful opening—in things of deep-Psyche, too much ordeal is as bad as too little.

Solvitur ambulando
..... It is solved by walking

Some tips:

Check with your doctor about any physical conditions which would make walking 10+ kilometers a day (approx 6.2 miles) in hilly terrain a problem for you. Galicia is part of the “green” area of Spain with territorial views and “feel” much like the Cascade foothills of our region. But it is warmer during the day, often cool at night.

Get good, comfortable boots with plenty of arch and sole support. Wear these boots in your training so that they are well broken-in. Seriously consider using walking poles—they take considerable stress off your skeletal and muscular frame for such long distance walking. Get a wide, full-brim breathable sun and water hat.

Consult with a professional trainer (like at the Y etc) regarding a fitness program best designed to prepare you to walk 10 + kilometers a day while carrying a back pack (weighing no more than 10% of your total body weight). If you are out of condition, start light and gradually work up to walking 10+ kilometers a day, if possible, for at least two weeks before you leave for Spain.

Have a good, comfortable backpack with good top and bottom padded strapping.

Make each walk a contemplative experience, using whatever body and breath meditation techniques best honor your unique personal psych-spiritualities and sensitivities. Walk with trusted companions if you can. Notice what intentions emerge for your Pilgrimage—what will you be seeking to better understand and perhaps change about your life and spirit as result of this Pilgrimage. Practice walking in a mindful and heartfelt rhythm-of-silence that is not competitive or driven, but compassionately body, self, and earth open.

While training and while on the Pilgrimage itself, keep yourself well hydrated by carrying and consuming lots of water. A good rule of thumb—if you are not frequently urinating, you are not drinking enough liquids.

*[it] will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for this first time.*

T. S. Eliot [Cousineau, 227]

Read and study in preparation. Surf the net out of your interests and consider the following possible books (some are out of print and may require checking out such web URLs as abeboks.com):

Jean Shinoda Bolen (2004). *Crossing to Avalon: A Woman's Quest for the Sacred Feminine*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.

Lovely evocation of the Celtic Pilgrim sensitivities. Great prelude for an ancient Celtic walk.

John Brierley (2003). *A Pilgrim's Guide to the Camino Frances: From St. Jean de Port to Santiago de Compestela*. Findhorn: Findhorn Press.

The definitive guide in English, Great sections on gear and preparations.

Jean Dalby Clift and Wallace B.Clift (1996). *The Archetype of Pilgrimage*. New York: Paulist Press.

A Classic Jungian exploration and cross-cultural overview of pilgrimage from a depth psycho-spiritual perspective.

Phil Cousineau (2000). *The Art of Pilgrimage: A Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred*. New York: Conari Press.

The best single volume current on the renaissance of pilgrimage journeying.

Linda Leonard (1994). *Meeting the Madwoman: Empowering the Feminine Spirit*. New York: Bantam.

The Camino path honors and echoes the ancient Deep Feminine Goddess. This book elegantly outlines some of Her poignant re-emergences within contemporary experience.

Solvitur ambulando,

Warmly,

Terrill Gibson

Linda Leonard

An individual's harmony with his or her own deep self requires not merely a journey to the interior but a harmonizing with the environmental world.

James Hillman, A Psyche the Size of the Earth