

Welcome! I'm so glad each one of you is embarking on this adventurous spiritual journey. We may think of our journey beginning in May but let me suggest that it has already begun!

You have heard me describe this trip as an "adventurous spiritual journey". Let's find out what that means to each of us.

Pre trip Gatherings - January 14, February 4, March 4, April 1

I ask us to meet as a group before we gather together in Granada on the evening of May 1st. I plan these gatherings as I would a workshop in spiritual reflection and mindfulness.

In January and February, we gather for two workshops. We talk about "adventurous spiritual journey" and what on earth those big, broad words mean to each of us. We begin training our minds as well as training our bodies for this experience. We also go over the logistics involved in insuring our travels go smoothly.

This time together also allows us to get used to one another. As we all know, traveling together builds powerful bonds; it can also be rather challenging. We can ease some of this by getting to know one another in a relaxed, familiar setting.

The second two meetings are group hikes - one on the island, one in the Olympics. These walks motivate us all to follow the Training Plan and be sure we are in excellent shape for the journey! I need to get a sense of our pace - as individuals and as a group - so I can plan accordingly. Most importantly, we get to know one another as we train our minds and our bodies to walk long distances and to expect the unexpected.

Please mark these 4 dates in your calendar and plan on being present for all of them.

Saturday, January 14 from 10 - 1pm Bainbridge Yoga House
Workshop and logistics in Meditation Room

Saturday, February 4 from 10 - 1pm Bainbridge Yoga House
Workshop and logistics in Meditation Room

Saturday, March 4 from 10 - 2pm Kitsap Heritage Park
Day hike. Meet in the parking lot at 10am. Plan to be home by 2pm.

Saturday, April 1 (Mandatory)

Full day Hike. Meet at Grace Episcopal Church, 8595 Day Road, Bainbridge Island at 8am. Plan to be home by 7pm at the latest. Destination to be decided based on snow levels and other conditions.

Participation in April 1 hike is required. I need to be sure we are all physically and mentally able to participate fully in this adventurous spiritual journey together. I reserve the right to decline participation in the trip if I am concerned about someone's ability. If you live out of the area, please contact me and we will figure out how best to proceed.

Individual Walks

I also want to walk with each of you at least once before we leave so I have a sense of what you are hoping for from this journey - and how I might be of use.

Travel Arrangements

I am responsible for the trip beginning on the evening of May 1 in Granada and ending the morning of May 15 in Santiago de Compostela. I arrange and pay for all accommodations and travel arrangements (including train travel) during this time. I cover most breakfasts and dinners but not all lunches.

You can arrange your flights however you wish for before and after travel. It would be wise to plan for lunches, travel meals and any other expenses you might imagine.

Paying the Balance by March 1

You have already paid the deposit which is nonrefundable and holds your place on the trip. The balance of your payment is due on March 1. Please make a note of this date and help me be prompt with my payment.

Accommodations

I customarily book us with 'double' rooms - two twin beds. This year, there will be the option of paying a little more if you would like to purchase a "single supplement". Please let me know asap if you would like this so I can finalize plans with our booking agent.

Often, our first thought is a desire for privacy but many viajeros have discovered its quite wonderful to share a room with someone.

We have also discovered that if one's roommate snores, this can be very difficult so, please plan accordingly!

Keeping track of all this information

There will be lots of important information to keep track of. Your easy access to this information will provide you with peace of mind and ease of decision making in the months ahead.

It will also help me avoid 'grumpy leader syndrome' which I sometimes succumb to after repeated requests for the same already provided information.

Most information will also be posted on silversagesojourneys.com at FYI Camino if you can't locate it on your devices. Thank you.

Next on the Journey

1. Get outside and walk; start learning about hiking boots and day packs if you don't already own these. (See Gear List at FYI Camino)
2. Passport - please make sure your passport is valid for 6 months beyond date of travel and renew now if it isn't.
3. Get travel insurance. This is required by our accommodations provider.
4. Medical Information (See website)
5. Risk Release forms (See website)
6. Itinerary of our Journey (See website)
6. Training Plan (See website)
7. Guide Books and Maps (See website; available if you're interested)

We will talk about all of this in greater detail in the weeks ahead. I know it may seem like a lot but we can take it one step at a time and we will arrive together ready to embark on an amazing journey together.