

Day 1 – Valenca/Tui to Porrino, 19km



“I first heard of walking the Camino when Paul Rice spoke about getting better and doing it himself before he sadly passed away. Later that year I had a personal illness that led me to think of going on the walk and though it took many years for me to take up the challenge I am so glad I finally got to complete it. It’s been one of the most brilliant experiences I have had in my life. My brother-in-law has prostate cancer and the chance to go on this walk and try to raise funds for and awareness of the disease was a no-brainer.”

Kieth Culvin

“I walked the Camino de Santiago with some fantastic people. Some I knew beforehand but many I didn't know. Walking the Camino is both gruelling and fantastic at the same time and we did it to support a specific cause, prostate cancer. One of our group has the disease and it's something which could happen to any of us (men). We decided to do this after a chat among friends in the Fulwood Arms and though it was tough the pleasure and reward you get out of completing it far outweighs the pain. We have met some wonderful people on the way from all over the world, who you end up walking with and then meet them again at different stages. For me it's been a life changing experience. I have had many personal experiences at Liverpool FC, both good and bad, and walking the Camino is up there with the best of them.”

Sammy Lee

Day 2 – Porrino to Redondela, 16km



“When my brother Brian was first diagnosed with prostate cancer, we found out that it could be hereditary. Myself and my other two brothers arranged a PSA test. I had no symptoms whatsoever but within a couple of days of having the test my doctor called me to say that my PSA result was high and further tests revealed a lump inside. On a scale of 2 to 10 my Gleason score was 8 indicating I had a high-grade cancer. I had an operation within 6 weeks and my prostate gland was removed through surgery. If it wasn’t for the fact my brother Brian had prostate cancer I would never have been tested and the cancer could easily have spread outside my prostate. I strongly recommend to all men aged over 45 that they should have regular PSA checks.”

Gary Omar

“It’s been a very inspiring journey walking. From Valença in Portugal to Santiago de Compostela. Something I had never done but so glad to have achieved it while meeting people from around the world with a gang of ambassadors from the best city in the world – Liverpool. At the same time raising much needed funds for several local charities, thank you all for all your support. Buen Camino!”

Stephen Monaghan

“I had never heard of El Camino until Paul Rice, ex-SOS Chair, spoke about wanting to do it when he was ill, so it was the least I could do to give it a go when the opportunity arose. I am so glad I did. It was one of the best things I have ever done.”

John Nicolson

Day 3 – Redondela to Pontevedra, 19km



“The first time I heard about El Camino was when my dad and two uncles told me they were going to walk through Portugal and Spain to raise awareness of prostate cancer.

My uncles Brian and Gary have both had prostate cancer and Brian has been working with Marina Dalglish and decided to start Lads At Larks where men can talk about their cancer journey and also help each other through the lows so they're not alone. On one of the stages of the walk, one of our group, Mark, spoke about how Lads At Larks had helped his dad. How it had given him his smile back and how positive his dad now is. He now talks about things that he would previously keep to himself. Brian and Gary told Mark that at the start his dad was quiet and observant but now he's a big character and the first there helping others with an arm round them.

So many of us walking over 6 days in the same t-shirts were noticed a lot by other walkers and we spoke to many people from all over the world. We gave everyone we met the same message.

Prostate cancer when detected early can be beaten but left to fester it can travel through your body to harder places to fight.

With a simple PSA blood test, you can find out if you have it. Please get yourself tested regularly! ”

Paul Omar (Junior)

“My mum loved travel and history; we often spoke of the Camino. I took her to Santiago 10 years ago. When she recently passed away, I thought it fitting to return her ashes and spread them at the famous cathedral. Love you mum!”

Neil Walker

Day 4 – Pontevedra to Caldas de Reis, 23km



"I decided to join the group to walk the Camino as my dad, three of my uncles and my cousin Paul were doing it. Once it started, I was shocked. It was a lot tougher than I expected. Paul and I were two of the youngest and we ended up talking and realising that what we were doing will be something we both will tell our kids about. A journey with our dads and uncles that we will cherish and share with our own families for years to come."

Ollie Omar

"My wife Angie and I walked the French Camino last year from the Pyrenees to Santiago and, as result, we impressed about 45 friends to share the Portuguese Camino with us. Their faith in us was repaid in spades by the Camino. We all walked the same Camino but for many reasons: the Lads from Larks raising money for Marina Dalglish Appeal; Debbie and Paul for Motor Neurone Disease, others for Alzheimer's. Selfless pilgrims working together for others less fortunate. 'Chapeau'!! Friendships have been forged for a lifetime because of El Camino, and your invaluable support will help many not so fortunate. Buen Camino!"

Gerard Gibbons

"Every day, life throws challenges at all of us in different ways. Physically, mentally, emotionally and financially. That's why it's so important to try and do anything which takes you out of your comfort zone. El Camino we loved you, we grew, and we helped raise awareness!"

Caroline Sweeney



Day 5 – Caldas de Reis to Padron, 19km



“Anyone considering walking the Camino De Santiago should stop considering and book it! It genuinely was one of the best experiences of my life and on reflection it was because it just brought the best out of people with its innate simplicity of purpose. Every single person on the walk from all four corners of the globe had a common goal which was to reach the end in Santiago.

It was that commonality of purpose which binds everyone together in genuine comradeship. If society was built on these simple values, we would be in a far better place than the unequal & unfair world we currently live in.

But it was also a privilege to share the experience with SOS stalwarts and the conversation on the walk often turned to the game and its future.

And this is where football can also learn so much from the Camino De Santiago.

The participants on the walk are treated with genuine respect by the authorities & businesses who oversee the walk, you are not ripped off by extortionate pricing for your participation because they understand your value and what we individually & collectively bring to the areas we walk through. Think about that how that would transform the experience of following our football clubs.

For us all on the walk it was so refreshing to see how the greed that is currently ripping through our game & society at large had not instilled itself into the Camino.

If the club owners & authorities that run the great game took the values of the Camino to the running of football how different it could be.”

Ian Byrne MP



Day 6 – Padron to Santiago de Compostela, 26km



“I’m not a religious person so before doing this walk my idea of a pilgrimage was something that people do to show their commitment to their religion, and some people do, which is great. But it can also be something you can do for yourself and for others like family and friends. My reason for doing it was that over the last 5 years two of my brothers have been diagnosed with prostate cancer and subsequently had their prostate removed.

One of them, Gary, had no symptoms at all and only went for a test because our older brother insisted on it. The results showed he had a very aggressive tumour on his prostate. However, he is now doing great because they caught it early. Sadly, for my oldest brother Brian it was too late, his cancer had already escaped. He has subsequently developed tumours in his kidneys, aorta and lower back so he has been and will again soon be on more doses of chemotherapy.

Brian, who isn’t one to sit back or give up on anything, set up a charity to help men with prostate cancer and to raise awareness. It’s called Lads At Larks, and it is part of the Marina Dalglish Appeal.

At Lads At Larks men affected by prostate cancer meet up regularly to discuss their challenges in an open and comfortable environment with others who are in the same position. They’re all able to help each other through their journeys by talking about their own experiences and giving advice and comfort to each other. They’re also trying to raise awareness of prostate cancer so other men will be encouraged to do the same as my brother Gary and take a PSA test that might possibly save their life.

As well as me and my brothers, son and nephew we were joined on our walk by many others, some were doing it for prostate cancer and others for their own personal reasons. A total of 52 of us completed the walk, Brian ‘bussed’ it from town to town and joined us every afternoon at the end of that day’s walk.

I’d never heard of El Camino before, and I wanted to share this because it’s probably the best experience I’ve ever had. A real challenge to test your resilience and join like-minded people on an emotional and spiritual journey. If you are struggling with your mental health, go for a walk. Then go for a longer walk. Set yourself daily targets. Then walk El Camino!”

Paul Omar