

Spain Camino Series

by Ong Hwee Yen

About the Series

The Spain Camino Series created from end 2010 through 2011 is an expressionist journey inspired by Yen's sojourn on the Camino de Santiago de Compostela (the Way of Saint James) medieval pilgrim route in Spain in 2010 which happened to be a Holy Year, declared whenever St. James day (25 July) falls on a Sunday. The next one is 2021..

About Camino de Santiago

Saint James' Way or El Camino de Santiago has existed over a thousand years. Tradition has it that the remains of apostle Saint James were carried by boat from Jerusalem to the site of what is now the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain. The Way can take one of any number of routes and began in the old days, from one's home to end at the pilgrimage site, but a few became considered the main ones like the French Way or from the Pyrenees on the French-Spanish border. The route is today a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Now the fun modern bits.. Carry a Credencial (pilgrim's passport) and collect stamps from churches, refugios, tourist offices, and nowadays most public establishments along the way, and they will serve as proof to the Pilgrim's office in Santiago to obtain a completion certificate of the Way. But this is only if one walks the last 100km (or cycles the last 200km) to get to Santiago de Compostela. The Camino is really much more than that last bit and many take weeks or even months, armed with the pilgrim's staff and scallop shell, both symbols of St James.

For the record, Yen did walked more than 100km, just not the last bit, but many beautiful portions along the way. Upon return to Singapore, it became a one year journey of reminiscing in painting the various places, people and sights she encountered, as she hiked from the lil' villages on the Meseta plains, the historical towns of Burgos and Leon, into Galicia and many a quaint camino village along the way, to finally arrive at the city of Santiago de Compostela and its Cathedral. And her emotions are infused in her highly personal interpretation of the Way.

So Buen Camino! (Camino greeting) And enjoy the paintings.