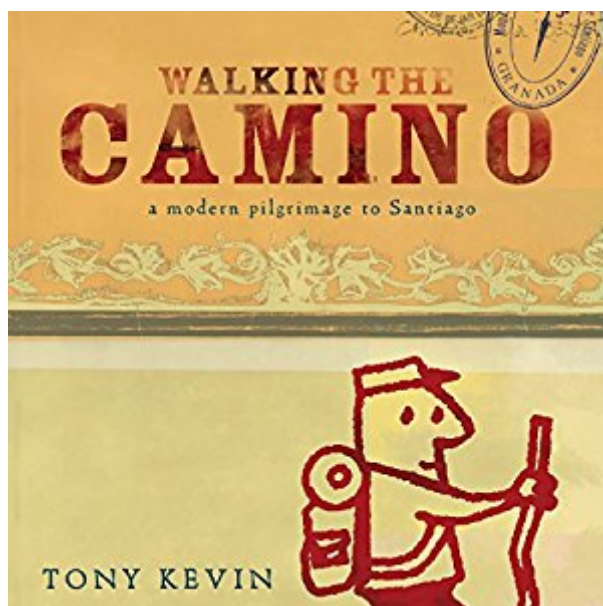


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# Walking The Camino: A Modern Pilgrimage To Santiago



## Synopsis

In May 2006, armed only with a small rucksack and a staff, Tony Kevin, an overweight, sedentary, 63-year-old former diplomat, set off on an eight-week trek across Spain. But this was not just a very long walk - it was a pilgrimage. From Granada, in the southeast, to Santiago de Compostela, in the far northwest, Tony followed the Via Mozarabe and the Via de la Plata, two of the many pilgrim trails that crisscross Spain and Portugal and that all lead to a single destination. In the Middle Ages, the cathedral city of Santiago de Compostela was Europe's most famous centre of pilgrimage, and in recent years it has enjoyed a remarkable revival; every day towards noon, hundreds of hot, tired, and dusty pilgrims stream into Santiago Cathedral for the daily Pilgrim's Mass. What, in our busy, materialistic 21st century, is this apparently anachronistic phenomenon all about? What drives tens of thousands of people of all nationalities and creeds to make long, exhausting walks across the cold mountains and hot tablelands of Spain, to take part finally in a medieval Christian liturgy of spiritual renewal and reconciliation with God? Walking the Camino beautifully captures the flavour of what it was like to walk the camino, and is filled with fascinating observations and anecdotes about the nature of contemporary Spain. And because pilgrimage is such a deeply personal experience that has the potential to unlock the deepest recesses of hidden memory and conscience, it is also a profound personal meditation on the nature of modern life. It will be of interest to people who contemplate making, or who have made this walk; to those interested in the politics and culture of contemporary Spain; and indeed anyone who appreciates fine travel writing. Tony Kevin served in the Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister's departments over a 30-year period, and was Australia's ambassador to Poland and Cambodia. His other award-winning book is *A Certain Maritime Incident: the sinking of SIEV X*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I found this to be a very interesting read about the pilgrim walk to Santiago. The author take a less well know rout from Granada in the south east to Santiago in the north west. He starts out in the journey very unfit and suffers a lot from blisters and fatigue, this all changes after a few weeks once his body get into the rhythm of the walk. He talks a lot about the history of Spain with great detail and the way the talks about the villages he visits make you feel like you are with him. As he gets near the end of the walk he start to talk about his philosophy on life and you can see how his ideas change. Either way if you are planning on doing the walk or are just interested in it you should find it a great read.

I've read several books written by people musing on their Camino experience. All have been interesting and deeply felt. I enjoyed this book but I felt the author had so much more to say but held back. Worth the read along with discovering the background of Tony Kevin - very interesting.

I'm more than halfway through and still am enjoying the book. I really like the Spanish history and politics that author has included; I find it really interesting. But what REALLY ANNOYS me is the terrible Spanish pronunciation of words!! I wish the narrator knew Spanish because as he butchers most of the names of places and words, I want to scream at him, lol! Ok, I have now finished the book. Although Tony didn't have any mishaps on the road or any "exciting" events to recount, I thoroughly enjoyed it. The history he included, the Spanish politics, the brief telling of his own story, his reasons for the pilgrimage, and more, were very interesting to me. He was the same age I am now when he walked the Camino (63), so I really wanted to read it from the perspective of someone my age. As a Catholic myself, I could also relate to his story about his spiritual journey as a Catholic along the Camino. Also, I had not heard of the route he took, from Seville to Santiago; I only had heard of the Camino Frances, Ingles and Portuguese. He walked most of the way by himself, choosing to socialize at night with the pilgrims he met on the way during the day. I think I would prefer to walk with someone, but that's me. As I listened to the book, I have no idea if the print version included any pictures. I would really like to see them, if there were any! This book has rekindled my interest in reading even more travel adventure books about walking the Camino, or

which I have a few. And, of course, I will watch the movie, *The Way* (with Martin Sheen, on Netflix), yet again - one of my favorite movies.

I was looking forward to an account of a Camino pilgrimage that was other than that of the Camino Frances. Unfortunately, I found the browbeating in this account too much. To his credit, the author states the reason for his pilgrimage early - it is his conservative government's policy on refugees, "boat people" as they are called in Australia. Fair enough. He is an ex public servant and uses this stick to belt the reader into submission to his view of the world. I thought they were there to implement the government's policy! Silly me! However, his politics were too often intertwined with the historical and political views on Spain - which I held suspect. Consequently, I found sorting his political views from the story of his pilgrimage just too time consuming. I gave up.

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