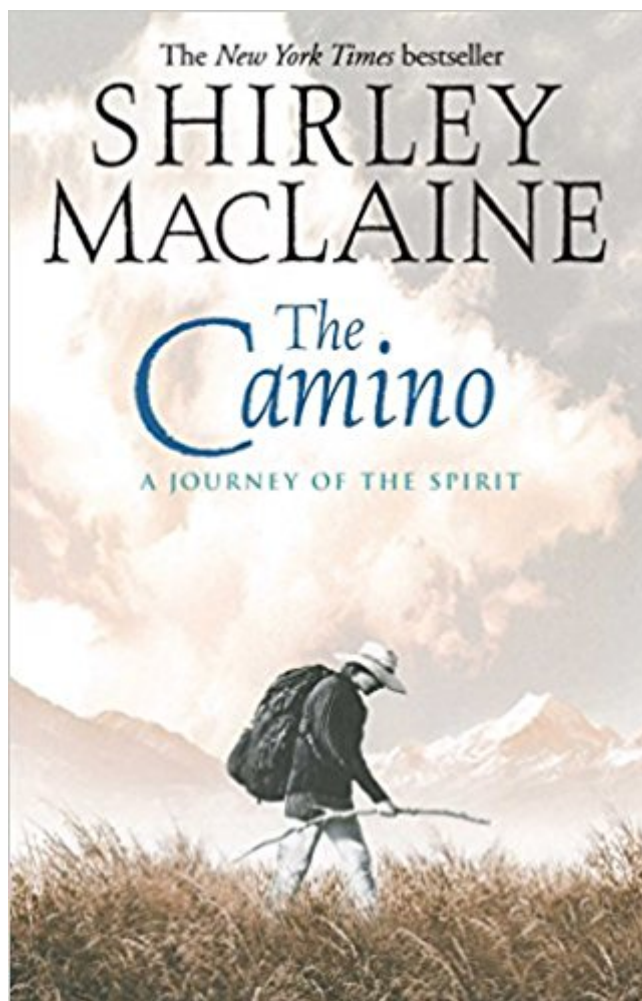


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# The Camino: A Journey Of The Spirit



## Synopsis

It has been nearly three decades since Shirley MacLaine commenced her brave and public commitment to chronicling her personal quest for spiritual understanding. In testament to the endurance and vitality of her message, each of her eight legendary bestsellers -- from *Don't Fall Off the Mountain* to *My Lucky Stars* -- continues today to attract, dazzle, and transform countless new readers. Now Shirley is back -- with her most breathtakingly powerful and unique book yet. This is the story of a journey. It is the eagerly anticipated and altogether startling culmination of Shirley MacLaine's extraordinary -- and ultimately rewarding -- road through life. The riveting odyssey began with a pair of anonymous handwritten letters imploring Shirley to make a difficult pilgrimage along the Santiago de Compostela Camino in Spain. Throughout history, countless illustrious pilgrims from all over Europe have taken up the trail. It is an ancient -- and allegedly enchanted -- pilgrimage. People from St. Francis of Assisi and Charlemagne to Ferdinand and Isabella to Dante and Chaucer have taken the journey, which comprises a nearly 500-mile trek across highways, mountains and valleys, cities and towns, and fields. Now it would be Shirley's turn. For Shirley, the Camino was both an intense spiritual and physical challenge. A woman in her sixth decade completing such a grueling trip on foot in thirty days at twenty miles per day was nothing short of remarkable. But even more astounding was the route she took spiritually: back thousands of years, through past lives to the very origin of the universe. Immensely gifted with intelligence, curiosity, warmth, and a profound openness to people and places outside her own experience, Shirley MacLaine is truly an American treasure. And once again, she brings her inimitable qualities of mind and heart to her writing. Balancing and negotiating the revelations inspired by the mysterious energy of the Camino, she endured her exhausting journey to Compostela until it gradually gave way to a far more universal voyage: that of the soul. Through a range of astonishing and liberating visions and revelations, Shirley saw into the meaning of the cosmos, including the secrets of the ancient civilizations of Atlantis and Lemuria, insights into human genesis, the essence of gender and sexuality, and the true path to higher love. With rich insight, humility, and her trademark grace, Shirley MacLaine gently leads us on a sacred adventure toward an inexpressibly transcendent climax. The Camino promises readers the journey of a thousand lifetimes.

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## Customer Reviews

Known as the Camino, the Santiago de Compostela Camino is a famous pilgrimage that has been undertaken by people for centuries across northern Spain. It is said that this 500-mile path lies directly under the Milky Way and that it reflects the energy of the star systems above it. Facing her sixth decade of life on earth, writer and actor Shirley MacLaine decided to go on this trek. She wasn't sure why, she only knew that the Camino had been traveled for thousands of years by "saints, sinners, generals, misfits, kings and queens. It is done by the intent to find one's deepest spiritual meaning and resolutions regarding conflicts in Self." Typical of MacLaine, this is a personal story with enormous adventure, a smattering of flashbacks, and a hefty serving of cosmic revelations. Like a true pilgrim, MacLaine travels solo, willing to strip herself down to the backpacking essentials and find deeper meaning in all the bizarre, frightening, and coincidental events she encounters along the way. It is no small feat that this sixtysomething woman walked the grueling path in 30 days. Readers can expect vivid stories of stalking paparazzi, icy showers, bouts of hunger, lost paths, a worshipping young man, a deranged woman screaming in a roadside shelter, saintly truck drivers, a fellow pilgrim in a wheelchair, bouts of constipation and diarrhea, and a cosmic crescendo that will knock the socks of MacLaine's fans. --Gail Hudson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Following a centuries-old tradition, entertainer MacLaine walked nearly 500 miles across northern Spain's Camino Santiago de Compostela. This memoir of her formidable journey, like her other books, is a likely candidate for bestsellerdom as well as for ridicule in some quarters. An effort to "feel human again," her physical feat was daunting: she hiked for 10 hours a day on her own, often in intense heat, and slept in refugios--crowded, dirty shelters. Though she observes the small villages, historic cathedrals and other trekkers along the way, MacLaine is most interested in her

interior journey. The actress, who has written before about her numerous past lives in such books as *Out on a Limb* and *Dancing in the Light*, senses that she's walked the Camino before as a coffee-colored, dark-haired woman of Charlemagne's time. Visited in dreams by a spiritual guide, she connects her various lives and soul mates, revealing that her former lover (in this life) was Olaf Palme, the assassinated Swedish Prime Minister. As the journey progresses, she revisits the origins of the human race in the edenic Lemuria, then the dawn of Atlantis and on to ADAMic civilization. On the earthly plane, MacLaine seems to enjoy evading the press, which she compares to fearsome dogs, and whose pursuit escalates as she gets closer to the end of the journey. Though she completed the Camino in 30 days instead of the planned 40, her arrival in Santiago lacks a Hollywood finale. Instead, she slips into the famous cathedral and leaves immediately for Madrid. Major ad/promo; author tour; 20-city TV satellite tour; 20-city radio satellite tour. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have read many of Shirley MacLaine's books. As a retired science teacher, I just have to say "hmmmm." Could it be so? I do like a little evidence to support a fact, but MacLaine leaves that door open. She doesn't claim the phenomena she experiences to be everybody's truth. I love that her books expand my thinking. I love the courage it takes to write a book like this or any of her books. The characters in the book make me giggle. But what if past lives are happening concurrently through parallel universes. It would make access on a spiritually energetic route a possibility and it would make for a very fun walk!!!

There are other books written about the Camino. My reason for preferring Shirley MacLaine's version is how she invited the reader in to her spiritual preparation, her spiritual journey and how she met her many challenges and distractions, including paparazzi. At times she met fear, (hiking in preparation, walking the Camino at night, challenges in the "dorms"), yet she kept her peace and met her goals. This was not an amazing actress acting, this was an amazing woman challenging herself physically, mentally and spiritually. She is a good model of determination and not giving up on life's challenges. I felt as though I actually walked the Camino through Shirley MacLaine's story. I highly recommend.

Really interesting...very New Age-y, mystical slant...but Hey! It was her Camino. No punches pulled! I really enjoyed the difference between her Camino and Sonia Choquette's. Sonia, who is a

professional and respected psychic, had a deeply personal transformational experience in this reality. Shirley was vaulting through the ages! Fascinating... Two very honest, emotionally generous women.

I identified with this book on almost every page to the point that I would actually be thinking about something the day before and then read about it that evening. One example is this: I sleep with earplugs when I am in a noisy environment and I started wondering if this was unhealthy in some way. The very evening I was thinking about this there was a passage in her book regarding the same concerns. This happened a lot throughout the first half of the book. It rather "creeped me out" but it did make the book a lively and fun read. I enjoy the way Shirley Maclaine writes and her account of "The Camino" added a realistic comparison to Paulo Coelho's travels. After reading Coelho, I was ready to pack my backpack and go, after reading Maclaine, I am having some serious second thoughts. Shirley did mention a message she received in Brazil telling her to walk the road, when I read this line I instantly thought it was Coelho who sent it. Then the reader comes to the last part. I don't want to spoil this for anyone and I applaud Shirley Maclaine for her candor in writing about her visions. I for one, do not think she is whacked, in fact I admire her and believe in a lot of her assumptions, I just felt the book fell off a bit at the end. Perhaps I am confusing a spiritual awakening with a day dream. (?) I would still recommend this book and actually bought it as a gift for a very dear friend.

Well written - as is always the case with Shirley. Amazing journey that helped me realize that I want to do it too!

As much study as I've done about Spain, I only recently stumbled upon the walk people do, referred to as the Santiago de Compostela Camino. I found other books that chronicle the authors' trek on the Camino--and will probably buy one or two of these soon--but because I've read some of MacLaine's books in the past, I thought I would get this one. I don't really have any regrets about doing so, but many of her 'experiences' are way too esoteric for me. As I was reading MacLaine's account of her journey, I was reminded of an interview I heard years ago with a man who does the Iditarod, the annual long-distance sled dog race in early March from Anchorage to Nome. He was talking about the fact that the Mushers (the human who controls the sled/dogs) usually experience profound hallucinations on the journey, due to the combination of the physical exertion, isolation from others, and lack of diverse stimulation. As he was leading his sled one year, for example, he

said his long-deceased father was sitting at the edge of the sled. Though he was aware on some level that this was hallucinatory phenomena, he also managed to carry on a conversation with his dad. Was MacLaine's experience a hallucination or revelation, as she would have us believe? I'm not too sure. I'm certainly open to the notion of influences in our lives we don't understand, but some of what she wrote (experienced) just seems bizarre; Atlantis, UFOs, androgynous beings, finding jewelry owned in a past life in a shop window, Adam and Eve ... At times, I simply had to skim over those parts, as it was too surreal for me. That aside, I mostly enjoyed reading her accounts of the trek, though the general theme is that her experiences weren't particularly positive. Granted, some of this was because she was hounded by the press, but she also seemed to have a lot of negative or problematic encounters with the native population, people and dogs. I doubt this is common. Anyhow, if you want one person's perspective on doing the Camino, I wouldn't discourage you from reading the book. In some ways, however, it is less about the Camino and more about MacLaine's physical experience of it---blisters, bugbites, and fatigue---as well as her, well, spiritual (for lack of a better word) experiences.

The sections about the Camino were somewhat interesting, but there are great swaths of badly written fantasy fiction that reads like L. Ron Hubbard. If you're into magic-crystal-quantum-mumbo-jumbo, though, you just might like it. I found it as tedious as I find most of this genre.

Fascinating journey along the Camino, which I hope to do someday. I hadn't realized the depth of Shirley MacLaine's spiritual experiences before reading this book, but the visions she has of past-life experiences were really fascinating. Another great account of the Camino is *Walking Home* by Sonia Choquette. This one is worth a read for the unique perspective of the Camino that it provides.

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