Spain Itinerary – Sept 28 to Oct 8, 2025

## Flights

* **Sept 28**: Muskegon → Chicago (KG 5760, dep 12:05 pm, arr 11:55 am)
  + Connection at Chicago ORD: Arrive Terminal 3 (Denver Air Connection). Iberia also departs Terminal 3.
    - You can access the **American Airlines Flagship Lounge** in T3 near Gate K19 with your Iberia business class boarding pass.
* **Sept 28**: Chicago ORD → Madrid (Iberia IB 342, dep 4:30 pm, arr Sept 29 7:55 am)
* **Oct 8**: Madrid → Chicago ORD (Iberia IB 341, dep 11:35 am, arr 2:15 pm)
* **Oct 8**: Chicago → Muskegon (KG 5775, dep 6:00 pm, arr 7:50 pm)

## Train

* **Sept 29**: Madrid Chamartín → Sarria
  + 10:04 — Depart Chamartín (AVE 05273, Confort, seat 05B)
  + 12:18 — Arrive Ourense
  + Follow signs to the connecting MD (Media Distancia) platform.
  + Your ticket already includes the connection; no need to revalidate, just check the platform number on the departure board.
  + The transfer window is short (~14 minutes), so move directly from arrival platform to the regional train platform.
  + 12:32 — Depart Ourense (MD 12694)
  + 13:47 — Arrive Sarria

*Combinado Cercanías included → free airport-to-Chamartín commuter ticket.*

## Itinerary

### Day 1 – Sun Sept 28

* Drop off Gus
* Depart Muskegon midday.
* Connect through Chicago.
* Overnight flight to Madrid.

### Day 2 – Mon Sept 29

* 07:55 — Arrive Madrid Barajas T4.
* **08:50–09:10 — Transfer to Chamartín (Cercanías train):**
  + Follow signs for **Cercanías / Renfe** at T4.
  + Go down to the Cercanías station located beneath T4.
  + Use your Renfe ticket’s “Combinado Cercanías” code to get a free Cercanías ticket from the red/white Renfe ticket machines.
  + Select Chamartín as your destination.
  + Take line **C1 or C10** (~20 min, trains every 15–20 min).
* ~09:30 — Arrive Chamartín, coffee/snack.
* 10:04 — Train Chamartín → Ourense (Confort).
* 12:18 — Arrive Ourense.
* Follow signs to the connecting MD (Media Distancia) platform.
* Your ticket already includes the connection; no need to revalidate, just check the platform number on the departure board.
* The transfer window is short (~14 minutes), so move directly from arrival platform to the regional train platform.
* 12:32 — Train Ourense → Sarria.
* 13:47 — Arrive Sarria.
* Check-in: **need to book**
* Afternoon: explore old town.
  + Pick up pilgrim credential (credencial) at Iglesia de Santa Mariña, the Tourist Office on Rúa Maior. Monastery of La Magdalena is another option. (~€2–3 cash)
* Evening: pilgrim dinner.
  + Recommended to join a lively spot such as Mesón O Tapas do Peregrino or O Descanso for the set pilgrim menu (starter, main, dessert, wine/water). These places are popular with walkers and a good way to meet fellow pilgrims before starting the Camino.
* Overnight: **need to book**

### Days 3–7 – Sept 30 to Oct 4 (Camino Francés – last 115 km)

* **Day 3 (Sept 30):** Sarria → Portomarín (~22 km)
  + Cross the Miño River into Portomarín, where the Church of San Nicolás was relocated stone by stone when the original town was flooded for the Belesar reservoir.
* **Day 4 (Oct 1):** Portomarín → Palas de Rei (~25 km)
  + Pass historic pilgrim hospices at Hospital de la Cruz and end in Palas de Rei, whose Church of San Tirso preserves remarkable medieval carvings.
* **Day 5 (Oct 2):** Palas de Rei → Arzúa (~29 km)
  + Often stop in Melide, famous for pulpo a la gallega (octopus) and the Romanesque church at Leboreiro.
  + Arzúa is known for its cheese production and nearby Ribadiso hosts a medieval pilgrim hospital.
* **Day 6 (Oct 3):** Arzúa → O Pedrouzo (~19 km)
  + En route visit the chapel of Santa Irene and experience the atmosphere of anticipation in O Pedrouzo as pilgrims gather for the final day.
* **Day 7 (Oct 4):** O Pedrouzo → Santiago (~20 km)
  + Highlights include Lavacolla, the traditional cleansing site, Monte do Gozo offering panoramic views of Santiago, and attending the Pilgrim’s Mass featuring the Botafumeiro.
  + Collect Compostela certificate in Santiago.
  + Overnight: Santiago.

### Day 8 – Sun Oct 5

* Full day in Santiago.
* Morning: Pilgrim’s Mass or cathedral museum/rooftop tour.
* Afternoon: wander the old town, Alameda Park, and relax at a café.
* Evening tapas crawl on Rúa do Franco.
* Overnight: Santiago.

### Day 9 – Mon Oct 6

* Day trip to Finisterre & Muxía.
* Morning bus to Finisterre (~2.5 hrs). Visit lighthouse, beach, and port.
* Continue to Muxía for the Sanctuary of Nosa Señora da Barca on the rocky coast.
* Evening bus back to Santiago (~2.5 hrs).
* Overnight: Santiago.

### Day 10 – Tue Oct 7

* Leisurely morning in Santiago — final cathedral plaza coffee or stroll.
* Afternoon train or short flight to Madrid (~3 hrs AVE train, ~1 hr flight).
* Evening: tapas crawl in La Latina or Malasaña.
* Overnight: Madrid (stay near Sol, Gran Vía, or La Latina).

### Day 11 – Wed Oct 8

* 11:35 — Flight Madrid → Chicago ORD.
* 18:00 — Flight Chicago → Muskegon.
* Pick up Gus
* Home.

## Packing List

### Documents & Money

* Passport
* Flight & train tickets (digital copies on phone + 1 printed copy as backup)
* Credit + ATM cards

### Pack Setup

* REI Trail 40 backpack with built-in rain cover
* 1 small dry sack (for electronics/passport)
* Plastic bags + a couple lightweight packing cubes (organization, laundry separation)

### Clothing

* 2 Patagonia Capilene Cool Daily tees (short-sleeve, quick-dry)
* Smartwool Merino 150 Quarter Zip (long-sleeve thermal, doubles as evening shirt)
* Patagonia R1 Air Pullover (light fleece mid-layer)
* 1 lightweight rain jacket (waterproof, breathable)
* 1 REI Sahara Stretch Convertible Pants (trail use, doubles as shorts)
* 1 Prana Stretch Zion Pants (town/exploring Spain)
* 1 lightweight shorts (backup rotation)
* 3 pairs quick-dry underwear (2 ExOfficio + 1 Smartwool synthetic/merino)
* 3 pairs hiking socks (merino blend)

### Footwear

* Altra Lone Peak 9 Trail Running Shoes (primary walking shoes)
* Xero Shoes Z-Trail EV Sandals (evenings / backup)

### Toiletries

* Toothbrush + small toothpaste
* Dr. Bronner’s Organic Liquid Soap – 2 oz (body + laundry)
* Optional: Laundry detergent sheets (½ sheet per sink load, fresher smell, easier rinsing)
* Travel deodorant
* Razor + small shaving cream
* Quick-dry towel (microfiber)
* Sunscreen (50 ml to start; refill in Spain)
* Lip balm with SPF
* Nail clippers
* Disposable contacts as glasses backup
* Optional: Small travel shampoo or shampoo bar (can skip or buy in Spain)

### Health & First Aid

* Walgreens blister pads (Compeed-style hydrocolloid)
* Ibuprofen
* Hand sanitizer + tissues
* Earplugs + eye mask (for noisy albergues)
* Disposable contact lenses (a few as backup)

### Electronics

* Phone + USB-C cord
* EU Plug adapter
* AirPods
* Apple Watch + charger
* 13″ MacBook Air (with power bank/cord)

### Other

* Sunglasses
* Hat
* Safety pins or clothesline for drying
* Sleep sack / liner (for albergues)
* 2 × 1 L bottles (Smartwater style — bring 1 from home, buy 1 in Spain)

## Lodging Notes

* **Sept 29 (Sarria):** Albergue Internacional O Durmiñento (book ahead).
  + Backup: Casa Barán (pensión, private rooms).
* **Camino towns (Sept 30–Oct 4):** book 1–2 nights ahead, especially Portomarín & Arzúa.
* **Santiago (Oct 4–5):** reserve hotel now (city fills with pilgrims).
* **Madrid (Oct 6–7):** stay near Sol, Gran Vía, or La Latina.

## Notes & Next Steps

* Confirm Camino lodging
* Book Santiago (Oct 4–5) and Madrid (Oct 6–7) hotels.
* Print or store Renfe QR code + Combinado Cercanías info on phone.