

Air Companies

By air, the closest airport is **Lavacolla** (ICAO: LEST, IATA: SCQ), about twenty minutes by bus from the city centre. The following companies operate currently at this airport:

Aer Lingus: [Dublin](#)

Air Berlin: [Palma de Mallorca](#)

Air Europa: [Fuerteventura](#), [Lanzarote](#), [Gran Canaria](#) and [Tenerife](#)

Iberia: [Madrid](#), [Bilbao](#), [Seville](#) and [Valencia](#)

Ryanair: [Frankfurt](#), [Rome](#), [London](#), [Madrid](#) and [Reus](#)

Spanair: [Barcelona](#), [Madrid](#) and [Tenerife](#)

Vueling: [Barcelona](#), [Málaga](#) and [Paris](#)

Get around

Santiago is a relatively small city and you can get anywhere by walking. Despite this, there are several bus lines that connect every part of the city. These services are offered by the company Tralusa. The ticket costs €0.90 for adults (for people under 18 it costs €0.55). If you are going to take several times the bus, you may buy a *bono* (Bus Pass) of 10, 20, or 30 tickets with a price of €0.55 for each one. You can buy these *bonos* to the bus drivers and you must pay a deposit of €3 that will be payed back to you if you return the card in good condition. The most interesting line for visitors is the number 5, that stops at the bus station and goes to the city center. Taxis are not very expensive and the taxi drivers are usually kind and willing to help tourists. Taxi from to and from the airport are at a fixed rate of €19 (2010 rates).

Talk

In the parts of the city most frequented by tourists, it's easy to find someone that speaks English or even French, Italian or German. Some restaurants even have English menu. It's more difficult, but not impossible to find menus and signs in Japanese and Chinese. Due to the high number of students in Santiago, it's not difficult to find someone with a good level of English in the streets that will be willing to help.

The official languages of the city are [Galician](#) and [Spanish](#). [Galician](#) is language with great similarities with [Portuguese](#), so speakers of this language will not have a lot of trouble understanding people.

Do

One of the best ways (and maybe one of the most comfortable) of knowing all the city and learning things about its building and history, it's to get on a little train that will take you through different parts of the city showing it in a unique way. It has an English speaking guide. It departs from the Praza do Obradoiro it costs €5 for adults and €3 for children between 4 and 12.

If you want a guided visit on foot through the Old District, just try one of the guided visits that the City Hall organized with an English speaking guide. These visits depend on the day and the season.

There are several guided visits. For example there are a night tour or a tour visiting the different churches. Although this, if you're a big group (more than 15), you could ask for them in the Official Tourism Office at Rúa do Vilar, 63 or through this email: info@santiagoturismo.com.

If you're feeling like having a different sight of the city, you could book an airplane tour upon Santiago de Compostela. Its price is high, depending on the kind of tour you want, but surely it's an original way to know the city.

Like many tourists in Santiago, you are maybe one of the hundreds pilgrims that arrive to the city following the Way of St. James, you can get a diploma certifying you've completed the pilgrimage.

Buy

The town is now a very important center for pilgrims. You can find all sorts of souvenirs related to "the camino": walking sticks, the typical water-bottles, and the shells that are typical for the camino. Also you can buy typical sweets and drinks in many shops at the *Zona Vella* (**Old District**). If you want to buy an original gift, visit the **Sargadelos** shop at Rúa Nova and see the modernist ceramics of this old and legendary factory in the province of Lugo. Also in the **Old District** you can find many jewellery shops where to buy typical jewels made of silver and jet, many of them of celtic inspiration.

If you want to buy clothes, move to the *Zona Nova* (**New District**) and visit the stores that are all over these district. Here you can find Zara, Bershka, Pepe Jeans... and other famous brands. Maybe the most original brand you could find is **Rei Zentolo** at Rúa Santiago de Chile, a Galician brand with original and really funny T-shirts and other clothes.

There are two shopping centers in the city. The first one, **Área Central**, is located at the district of *Fontiñas* (you can get there by taking the bus number 11 in the City Centre) and it has fashion shops, fast food restaurants and one big supermarket. The other one, **Hipercor**, at Rúa do Restollal, is a typical department store.

Eat

[Galicia](#) is known for "Pulpo" or **cooked octopus**. In general there are a lot of restaurants selling fish and seafood suitable for all budgets. The **local cheeses** should also be sampled, as well as delicious **cakes** like the "Tarta de Santiago". Expect long queues at popular pilgrim eating places. Also try pimientos de padrón. The saying goes, "los pimientos de padrón, unos pican y otros no" meaning that in a single serving, some are spicy while others are not.

Drink

Try the **Albariño wine**, a white wine from the south of Galicia. Other popular drinks are:

Licor café is a popular local liqueur, which tastes strongly of coffee.

Orujo, also known as **Aguardiente** or **Caña**, is also a popular local drink, made with the grapes after juicing them. It's often served in little glasses (*chupitos*) or just a trickle with the coffee. There are three kinds: *Orujo Blanco*, just eau-de-vie, *Orujo de hierbas*, often green, it has different tastes depending on the kind, it's usually served very cold, and *Tostado*, that it's the result of soaking the grapes with nuts and other fruits.

Queimada, very traditional drink, it's a mix of *aguardiente*, sugar and some fruits and coffee beans. It's set on fire before drinking it while someone recites the *conxuro* (a sort of spell)

Crema de Orujo Orujo's cream, very sweet and tasty, 15-20% of alcohol.

El Mosquito, Rua de San Pedro. A very old-fashioned bar. Everything there seems like 50's, even the customers. The bartender is a 75 years old woman. The only exception is the LCD 42` TV that displays football (soccer) matches. Very nice and local environment. They sell a little cup of Ribeiro wine for 0,40 euro (2008 price). You can ask also for a bottle of Licor Kafe or Crema de Orujo (less than 10 euro) it's all homemade, they fill an empty bottle of wine in front of you. You can also buy a bottle of Ribeiro wine (Vino Ribeiro) they fill a 2l pet bottle with it (they wash the bottles in front of you as well). This is a very local place, and seems like you need to be at least 50 years old to get in, but that's not true.

For a quiet beer and a couple of tapas on the Old District there are several places where you can sit in terraces when the weather is nice or inside where it's rainy or cold. Some of these places are for example, **Tokio** or **Alameda** at Porta Faxeira or the terraces at the Quintana Square. It's specially well-known the *Rúa do Franco*, one of the main streets, full of places where you can drink and eat something. One really famous is **Bar Orense** (Rúa do Franco), where you can have *cuncas* (cups) of wine and *licor café* for a very low price. If you like coffees, ice-creams and pastries, try **Pastelería Mercedes Mora** (Rúa do Vilar). On the New District there are bars full of university students, such as **Central Perk** (Rúa Nova de Abaixo), **Luis** (Rúa Santiago del Estero) or the multiple terraces at *Praza Roxa*.

Later in the evening, there are several places to go because Santiago de Compostela is a city with a very interesting nightlife.

If you want some beers or cocktails to begin the night, try **Nido del Cuco** or **Momo**, both at Virxe da Cerca. The last one, **Momo**, during the summer season has a big and nice garden and during the winter it has performances of singer-songwriters. Other interesting places are **Casa das Crechas** (Vía Sacra, very close to Praza da Quintana), where you can hear some folk music, **A Calderería** (Rúa da Calderería), spot where many foreigners get together and sometimes there are music performances or **Modus Vivendi** (Praza Feixoó).

To continue the night, Santiago has many pubs where drink and dance different kinds of music. The following ones are only examples of the great variety you can find in Santiago. On the **Old District**:

El Retablo: the music is mainly Spanish and International pop. It's usually full of people, mainly young people. Rúa Nova.

Avante: really famous little pub where you can dance and listen to ska and traditional nationalist music. Cantón de San Bieito.

A Reixa: well-known indie bar. Here you can listen mainly to 60's music, with a great poster of Björk decorating the pub. Rúa Tras Salomé.

Fonte Sequelo: little pub, with music of different styles. Rúa Xelmírez.

Forum: gay pub, very little and always full of people. Music of different styles. Rúa Travesa.

Meia: very popular specially between the Erasmus students (it even has discounts for them), the music is international pop. Rúa Algalia de Abaixo.

Going to the **New District**:

Blaster: popular pub, with music of very different styles and a really original decoration. Expect lots of people. Rúa República Arxentina.

Krooner: one of the most original places, depending on the day and the hour, you can listen to indie rock, 60's music or house. It's also an after party from 10.00 to 14.00. Rúa República Arxentina.

Guayaba: pub with latin music (merengue, salsa...). Rúa Nova de Abaixo.

La Ruta: popular disco and the oldest one, it has two floors. Up, indie and alternative rock, down, house and electronic music. Gay-friendly place. You must pay 5 € to get into. Rúa Pérez Constanti.

Liberty: one of the most popular discos to finish the night. Mainstream pop. The admission is not free for men (5 €) and depending on the day either for women. Rúa Alfredo Brañas.

Sleep

Santiago de Compostela is the virtual gateway takes you to the administrative, social and commercial **capital of the Autonomous Community of Galicia**; declared a **World Heritage City** by UNESCO. **Cultural Capital of Europe** and **Endpoint of the Pilgrimage Road**. Thanks to its multicultural nature and as the final destination of a thousand-year-old pilgrim route is a very touristic city and has a high level of demand for cultural activities which, together with the large number of fairs, congresses and other events of similar characteristics which are held here, taking the advantage of one city with excellent communications by air, bus and train and the number and quality of its hotels and also its long and rich history make of Santiago de Compostela one unforgettably city.

Just outside of Santiago is a small town called "**Monte do Gozo**". Some Pilgrims stop there before entering the city. It's a huge center and has almost 2000 beds. There is a frequent bus line that will take you to walking distance of the town center.

People with a bigger budget can stay in the luxury "**Hotel Dos Reis Católicos**", the former medieval pilgrim hostel, situated on the same square, O Obradoiro, as the cathedral. It is owned by the Paradores group, a large hotel-chain which operates hotels exclusively in historic buildings.

There is a 3 stars hotel near the cathedral, called Hesperia Gelmirez with very good rates.

For the budget traveler you can try Hostal R Mexico located at Republica Argentina 33. It's just a few blocks away from the train station. Another budget option is Hostal Pazo de Agra on Rúa Calderería 37. It is an easy two-minute walk from the cathedral.

NH Obradoiro, Avenida Burgo das Nacions, +34.98.1558070..

Meiga Backpackers, Rúa dos Basquiños, nº 67, ☎ 981570846. Clean backpackers hostel 5 minutes walk from the bus station. Mixed and female only dorms as well as private rooms. There's a kitchen, common room and a garden. The owners have another pension in a different location in town. 17.

Get out

70km out of Santiago is the town called Finisterre. Before the Americas were discovered, people believed this was the end of the world (finis = end; terra = earth).