

Men's Ultralight Camino de Invierno Packing List (Winter) | Camino de Santiago Guide

Days We Spend | 18:43 | transcript saved 23 Aug 2026

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHIP_vwYhTw

Intro

Hi, welcome to my men's minimalist Camino Invierno winter packing list. Walking a 10-day Camino Invierno, we started on February 28th from Ponferrada and finished on March 8th in Santiago. So this is every single piece of gear — clothing, shoes, poles, electronics, toiletries — everything I recommend bringing. Three and a half kilos, which is just over seven pounds — kind of amazing actually, with all the stuff in here — so that you can prepare for a really good Camino Invierno, especially in the winter. I'm Sean, and this is Days We Spend, and this is your ultimate Camino Invierno packing list.

The Backpack

Any good Camino packing list starts with the bag. This is my fourth Camino, and this time around I went with a slightly more robust bag instead of something ultra ultra light, because I wanted to make sure my gear stayed dry, just in case we ran into some bad weather — which we did, but not as much as we expected.

So I packed the USWE Hajker Pro 30-liter bag. Thirty liters is a lot bigger than I normally recommend, but because this is a roll-top bag, it can compress down to the volume of the things you're actually carrying. While it might look like I have a lot of stuff here, I was usually wearing most of this stuff. There's even an additional dry bag that rolls top to keep things extra dry.

It has a chest-strap suspension system, so it's kind of like a vest — it hugs you. It's got a really nice waist belt, stretchy pockets for stuffing things you need during the day, and it has a built-in bladder, Camelback style, three liters. If you want to upgrade your bag, the USWE is very good.

Base Layer and Pants

I'm wearing a Western Rise Merino t-shirt. I wore this as my base layer every single day, all ten days. I washed it one time, but it's Merino, so it kept me warm, kept me dry, and breathable — it never really got very funky.

The pants I'm wearing are actually hiking pants from Kirkland Signature — I got these at Costco, kind of as a joke. I thought they'd be terrible, but they're amazing. They're super stretchy, you can roll them up or down, and they have great pockets with a lateral cut, which means when you sit down your stuff doesn't fall out. If you have pockets that aren't cut this way, things can fall out. There's a zipper pocket in the back, another pocket out here, and it even has thigh storage for your passport or pilgrim's passport.

The Camino Invierno is a winter Camino, so you're not likely to be wearing shorts, unless that's your thing — you're going to be in pants pretty much all day, all the time. But you don't need to spend a million dollars on a nice pair of hiking pants — just get something flexible and durable enough for the hike.

I actually packed a second pair of pants, also from Western Rise. I really like Western Rise and I enjoyed these pants, but I think it was an overpack. If I redid my packing list, I wouldn't bring a second pair of

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pants — I'd bring a pair of gym shorts or trail shorts, something to change into at the end of the day or to wear if it got freakishly hot. So a second pair of pants, in my opinion, is overkill.

I actually did pick up a very lightweight pair of shorts on the Camino, at a grocery store, for about eight euros — kind of like a swimsuit, with mesh lining. Very comfortable. They gave me something to sleep in as well, so you're not sleeping in your underwear. One pair of pants, one pair of shorts — it's really all you need.

Underwear and Socks

Speaking of underwear, I'm wearing Merino underwear from Unbound Merino — they're fantastic, my favorite pair of underwear. I only brought two pairs: the pair I'm wearing, and a pair of ExOfficio hiking underwear. If you really want to bring three, you can — they're lightweight enough, it's not a big deal. But I found that on a 10-day Camino, doing laundry, you just wash them when you shower, so I didn't need a third pair. I wouldn't recommend it, but three is totally normal and makes sense.

I'm just wearing a generic pair of wool socks. Even in the tail end of winter, the Camino Invierno is still fairly mild — we hiked through a bit of snow, a bit of wet, puddly days — and my shoes aren't waterproof, so I wanted something a little thicker just in case it got cold, but it never really did.

I brought one pair of REI silk sock liners to prevent blisters. I really recommend these — I might actually bring a backup pair on a longer Camino. And another pair of socks, the Darn Tough crew-length sock. So: two pairs of underwear, two pairs of socks, and a pair of sock liners — more than enough.

Mid Layers

Every day I'd wear this — it's an Unbound Merino piece, I forget the exact name, kind of a minimalist sweatshirt. This isn't something I'd normally bring on a Camino, but I'm glad I did. That extra layer of full-sleeve insulation without adding a lot of bulk was really great for hiking, because it let me de-layer throughout the day. Most afternoons I'd wear just this. It even has a hood if things got really cold.

Since this is a winter Camino, there's one more layer: a Smartwool fleece. I got this at a secondhand store for about thirty dollars. It even has a little reflective strip and a kangaroo pouch. I wore it every day, and it doesn't smell or take up much space in the bag. So bring some kind of fleece.

Rain Jacket

The final layer is a rain jacket, or a shell. The Camino Invierno is in Galicia — I picked this up in Spain for about 35 euros, which I think is a bargain. This is a great rain jacket. It overperformed, has great pockets, even interior pockets, and it's very lightweight and very good at keeping me mostly dry.

On our last day going into Santiago we just got dumped on, and I arrived fairly dry, which is great. Really good hood, with cinch-downs for windy days. On really cold mornings it just locked in my heat. I'll take this off now though, because it's kind of loud.

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Extra Shirt and Knee Brace

I have one more shirt here — this is a long-sleeve Merino tee from Unbound Merino. I'm a big Merino wool guy, if you can't tell. When we got into town or stayed at the albergue, I wanted something clean that I hadn't hiked in, to change into so I could feel like a human for a few hours before we went to sleep — and also because it doesn't smell.

I wear a knee brace. There's a lot of road walking, so make sure you bring the things you need to be comfortable on the Camino Invierno, because unlike the Francés, or even the Norte, you'll spend long stretches of time between cities. And if you do it in the winter, like we did, very few things are open — even pharmacies don't carry this sort of stuff. What you pack is what you're going to have, so if you need a knee brace, an ankle brace, an insole, or anything like that, pack it just in case.

Buff and Head Gear

I wore this all day, every day — this is my Buff, the Merino wool winter version, so it's quite a bit longer. They have a summer version, but I didn't think it would cut it, and I was right — this was great. Sometimes I'd just put it over my ears along with a hat. If you want to protect your neck and face from the wind without having to put your hood up, the Buff is fantastic.

My beanie, or fleece cap, whatever you want to call it — this is the Wed'ze, two euros, I bought it at Decathlon. Ultra lightweight, it was amazing. I wore this all the time, especially in the mornings, but it's light enough and small enough that you can just tuck it in a pocket as you hike. So bring a lightweight fleece cap.

Sun Hat

I have a Sunday Afternoons hat, a basic ball cap. You're not getting nearly as much sun on the Camino Invierno, this time of year, and you're wearing a lot of sleeves, hoods, and gaiters, so I didn't feel like I needed a really big sun hat. I wanted something with a brim to protect me from direct sunlight when you're walking west, which is most of the time, and to protect you when you're walking into the rain — you just put your hood up and you're good to go. Get a hat that you can fold up and stuff back in your bag — this thing is tiny.

Gloves

I also picked up these gloves from a sporting goods store here in Galicia for like two euros — these little fleece-tipped gloves. They're very basic; you can't use a phone when they're on or anything. But they were a game-changing, life-saving thing. It's really cold in the morning, and if you don't have something on your hands, you're not going to be able to use hiking poles for very long. Get a pair of gloves.

Sunglasses

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You can get a cheap pair of sunglasses, but I think it's worth the extra investment if you want to get something that's built for the trail or built for hiking. The sun is really low in the sky during the winter, so if you're walking west, you're going to be staring into it for a large part of the day. I went with this pair of Valen sunglasses just to see how they performed. I wore these things a lot — they're this cool alpine style. I found them incredibly comfortable and easy to see and hike with, even though they have these peripheral blockers, which block a lot of the wind and any kind of side light. I also recommend Nooz — the Nooz flat-pack sunglasses — if you want to keep it really minimal.

Hiking Poles

Just generic 35-euro hiking poles. Again, I bought these once I arrived in Spain. I do recommend hiking poles — if you think that you don't need them, think again, they're very, very helpful. Go above the cheapest brand, and I think you'll be quite happy with what you find.

Shoes

I've tried a number of hiking shoes on several different Caminos I've done — regular tennis shoes my first time; don't do that. I've done approach shoes, which are kind of like rock climbing shoes; those worked really well, but I don't think they were the most ideal shoe for the job. So this time I finally tried what everyone's been telling me to try: the Altra Lone Peak 6, and they're so good. These are built for wide feet, they're zero drop, but they've still got plenty of cushion — they're not really like barefoot shoes. They're not waterproof, but they got wet and then dried out really quickly, which is even better than being waterproof, honestly. They're lightweight, they're durable, I love these shoes, I completely recommend them. You're going to end up doing 30, 35 kilometers some days — you want a pair of shoes that you can trust. I trust these very much, and they're going to be my Camino shoe of choice. I already bought another pair.

Bring a pair of shower sandals. I've had these for a really long time — I actually don't think these are the best. I would rather have a pair of sandals I could slide my feet into while wearing socks, like when I'm walking around town, so I didn't have to put my hiking shoes back on. I'll be on the lookout for a pair of lightweight foam, soccer-style shower sandals, but these did the trick for this Camino.

Electronics

Moving on to the rest of the gear — the electronics. I just packed two cables, one for my phone, one for my other devices. I bought this little dual-USB European plug adapter when I got here, for like five euros. This is all you need. This is my phone case — my phone is filming this right now.

I did not bring a headlamp, because you're just not hiking that early on the Camino in winter — it's just miserably cold, and the sun stays up fairly late here in Galicia even in winter, setting around seven o'clock. You should hopefully be back in town by then. Also, the albergues were really not very crowded, so I didn't have to turn a headlamp on to pack my stuff in the morning. What I did instead was get a bike

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light — if you need to use it, you can, you can even hook it to your buff. I just strap it onto one of the daisy chains here and kind of forget about it. So you don't need a headlamp on this Camino.

I like to listen to podcasts and music and things — these are definitely not a requirement, they're actually fairly heavy. The other thing I brought was this Supernote — it's kind of like a Kindle e-reader, but it also has a stylus, so I was able to write and read and journal. Bring a notebook if you want, or something — you don't have to bring anything quite this bulky, but that just shows that when you pack really light with clothing, you have room for a few things that make the Camino more enjoyable. For me that's an e-reader and a journal.

Documents

You'll also need to bring your passport and your pilgrim passport, where you get all the stamps. I kept them in this simple Ziploc bag, and then a larger Ziploc bag just in case the waterproofing didn't work out — but it worked out really well, so this is kind of redundant.

Sleeping

For sleeping, I didn't bring a sleeping bag at all — I thought it was too bulky, too much, and I was completely right. We stayed at a number of municipal albergues, pensions, which are like small private hotels, and then something you'd describe as guest houses, sort of in between, and they all had more than sufficient bedding for the weather. I just wanted some kind of sleep sack, just in case the bedding was sketchy or I needed a little extra warmth. I got this at the same sporting goods store I got the gloves — super lightweight, rolls down to nothing. If you want to cut weight from your bag, you can go with just a sleep sack, and I was completely fine for all ten nights.

Also, you want to bring a sleep mask. My wife painted this for me — we each have one. This one even has a little pocket for keeping earplugs, which is great. Albergues can be quite noisy and full of light — even in a pension, they'll have the emergency lights on, or the TV light on, or light pollution from outside. So bring a sleep mask, you'll use it at least a few times, and make sure you have earplugs.

Masks

If you're staying — well, Spain has removed most of their mask requirements, for buses and restaurants and stuff. However, they still require a mask to go into pharmacies, which you'll probably need to do to buy ibuprofen or Band-Aids or anything like that. If you want to get into the pharmacy, you have to have a mask.

Wallet and Toiletries

Wallet, pocket — obviously you need money — and my bathroom stuff. Look at all this: travel-size toothpaste, a cheap folding travel toothbrush, a pill case for melatonin in case I had trouble sleeping — I actually didn't, but it was nice to have. I put it all into this airplane care-bag thing I got on the flight over

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to Spain. It's made of paper, weighs nothing, worked great.

Towel

This is my towel — the only towel I brought with me. I've used this for all my Caminos. I dry off in the shower with this, you just pat yourself dry and wring it out. I think I finally hit the point where this is too small — on my next Camino I'm going to upgrade to a slightly larger towel.

Skincare

I bought some chapstick along the way — my lips got really wind-chapped from the cold. Also, this is the sunscreen I use: the All Good tinted mineral sunscreen butter, a fancy zinc sunscreen you can put on your face, really reliable. I've used this for multiple Caminos, really big fan, especially with how small it packs.

Clothing

That's kind of it — there's really not that much you need to bring. I'd say make sure your everyday hiking clothing is comfortable, durable, and warm. Bring a few layers, bring something comfortable to change into when you get to town — you want to feel like a human when you get out of the shower. Nothing sucks more than putting on dirty clothes.

Packing the Bag

That's it — I'm going to pack all this up and show you what the bag looks like packed, and then weigh it real quick without any water, so you can get an idea of what my bag would typically weigh. So here we go.

It's really small, really compact — plenty of room to take off layers as you go. I never even came close to filling this up, and I wanted to leave a ton of room for snacks and food, which you will need to buy and carry on this Camino — unlike the Camino Francés, if you've ever hiked that. You actually do have some pretty long days here where you're really not close to any kind of services.

Packing for the Camino de Invierno

In the off-season, a lot of the cafés, restaurants, and stores were just closed for the season. There's not a lot of demand on the Camino de Invierno until April, May, or June. We only saw six pilgrims the entire time, and we didn't see our first pilgrim until day three or four. It's a very quiet Camino, which is lovely, but that means you need to be a little more self-sufficient when it comes to food. You want a bag that has room for snacks and full-on meals, because some of the albergues, and even the pensiones, are in very, very small towns.

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My Pack

That's it, that's what it looks like — this is my bag. Let's weigh it: dry weight, three and a half kilos, which is just over seven pounds. That's kind of amazing actually, with all the stuff in here, and it's why it was such an easy bag to carry.

Wrapping Up

So that's my Camino de Invierno packing list and recommendations. I've linked all the items I recommend in the description below. If you want to check out my wife's packing list, she has a very similar list of items with a few changes that she loves — I'll put the link somewhere.

Thank you so much for watching. I really hope you have a great Camino de Invierno. I think it's one of the more underrated Caminos — I absolutely loved it, and I'll probably do it again, maybe in a different season. But this packing list is going to carry over to any Camino you want to do that might be a little colder — Camino Francés in the fall or spring, Camino del Norte anytime, because it's cold up there.

Let me know in the comments if you guys have any gear you recommend or absolutely swear by for your Camino — I'd love to learn more. I'm Sean, and this is the day I spent.

Frames



at 0:08

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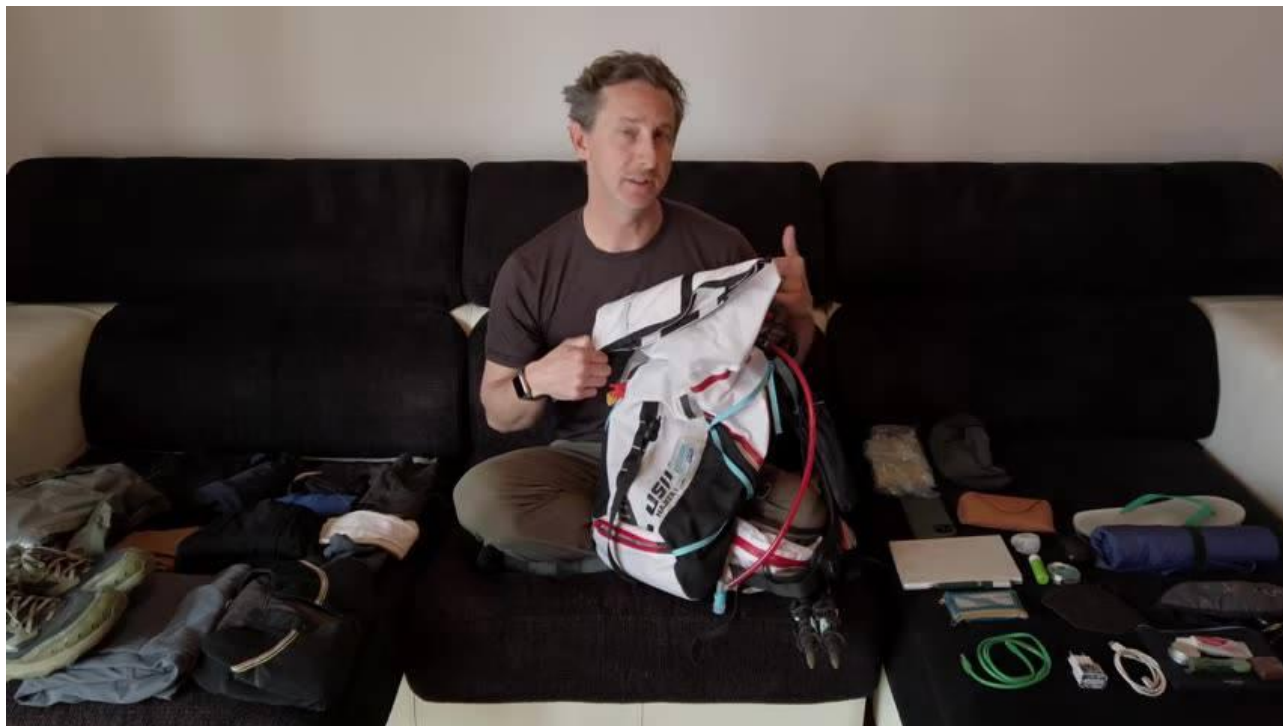


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