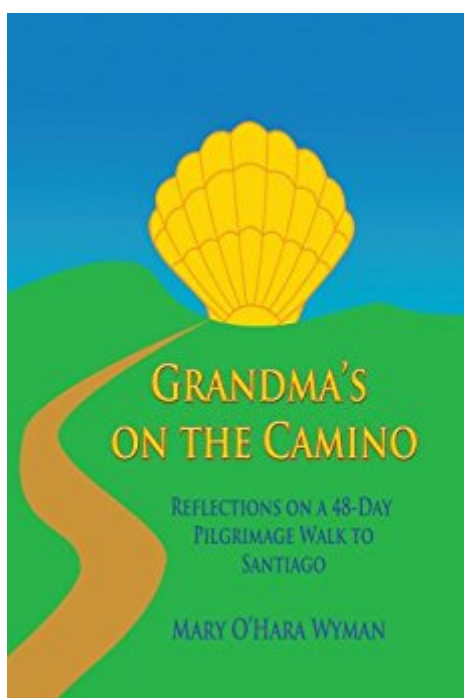


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# Grandma's On The Camino : Reflections On A 48-Day Walking Pilgrimage To Santiago



## Synopsis

In *Grandma's On the Camino*, author Mary O'Hara Wyman, a 72-year-old grandmother from San Francisco, relates her 2010 adventures walking 500 miles alone as a pilgrim on the Camino Frances. Her journey takes her from St. Jean Pied de Port in France, across the Pyrenees to Spain, then westward to the ancient spiritual destination of Santiago de Compostela. Through back-home reflections based on journal entries and postcards sent to her grand daughter, Mary describes engaging encounters with pilgrims of all ages and motivations, close-range observations of numerous animals on the trails, and the daily tasks of finding food and a bed each evening. Readers will gain keen insight into the physical day to day rigors facing a walking pilgrim, as Mary endured several falls on the trails, a serious foot injury, copious rain, mud and unseasonal cold and hot weather. *Grandma's On the Camino* will inspire pilgrims and armchair readers of any age with Mary's adventures and coping mechanisms, calmness under pressure, humorous outlook on life and truly spiritual approach to walking the Camino Frances to Santiago de Compostela. You will walk as a pilgrim with Mary through every word in the book.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I am at the start of planning my own 2015 Camino. So many books and blogs were tempting and then I saw this one. Honestly, I bought it on a whim because I'm a grandma. To my delight, the author writes a postcard to her granddaughter every day of her trip. Her granddaughter is named Elena and was 5 yrs old while Mary walked. Oddly, my oldest granddaughter is named Elena and is 5 yrs old as I read this. But there is more to this memoir. Mary, the author, has an entry for every day on her very long trip. (At 70 yrs of age she wisely took her time....48 grueling days!!) Each entry is in 3 parts. The text of her postcard to Elena, an entry written upon arrival each evening, and a reflection/ expansion on that day written some time after her return to San Francisco. Brilliant. I felt each blister, feared for her safety, and felt justified in the belief that I too could make my Camino dream a reality.

Wow! Where to start? I've just started writing reviews to "pay it forward." This is my first 5-star review. Mary's story will definitely appeal to women "of a certain age," but also, I think, to older men walking at a slower pace. Though anyone leaving behind a young friend or relation would benefit from the daily postcards to her granddaughter. Loved how she gives distances in kms and miles, and the fact that she stopped to smell the flowers. Her observations and interactions made the whole Camino experience more meaningful. Some people, and I realize not everyone has extra time, seem to be too concentrated on doing the miles. Mary's daily average was approx. 10 miles. She took her time, but this frequently caused her to hear the dreaded "completo" as the beds were all taken. How she walked with the blisters and hanging toenail is beyond me. What impressed me most was the writing style without grammatical or typographical errors (Well, mostly; i.e., should be "primer" plato and "segundo" not "premier" or "secundo"). Toward the end she mentioned graduate studies in American Lit - AAHHH...that explains it. The stories flowed smoothly and the continuity -- day 1, day 2, etc. made it very easy to follow. You could almost read it as four separate books: first, read all the postcards; then all the journal entries; followed by the daily quotes; and then the expanded journal written after she got home. I think that, toward the end, she went off course a few times (e.g. The Maher project in India and that whole conversation), but skimming worked for me! Once I realized what a treasure this was, I checked to see if there was a paper version and there is, but it's \$17 more. Bottom line: this is an absolute bargain for \$3. I hope she sells thousands.

I went to this book because it was about a Grandma on the Camino as it's title promised. The consistent use of the author's clear structure was an excellent tool and it worked well to keep the book from rambling. The author's struggle through physical pain and damage to her feet as she walked definitely spoke to her strong will, but I cringed at her repeated refusal to allow herself to heal more effectively before getting back to the trail. It was the nurse in me clucking her tongue. I found the structure however, created too much repetition in the way so much of the information was unnecessarily repeated in the journal and the reflection section. The redundancy was at times (often) distracting. I appreciated the reflections expressed after time had passed and the observations and feelings had been reflected on. Perhaps a more skeletal structure in the daily journal writing would have created a better flow. The author was a strongly spiritual pilgrim and she reflected her concepts well. This was not a source of interest so I often skipped over some parts, but she was able to describe feelings about the actual path and places that did help me find a better sense of the physical reality of the travel and I appreciated it most for that. And I will write daily postcards to my deeply loved granddaughter as I walk my own Camino this Fall.

Mixed w/ humor & sentimental memories, this read captured the adventurous spirit of a Grandmother fulfilling a life-long dream of the rigorous outdoors, while applying the spiritual insights of meditation. One part authentic action-adventure- mixed beautifully w candid daily meditation reflections, this book finds the author hiking her way into the hidden mysticism of prayer through Silence & mindfulness.. A spiritually sincere read, the author paints a masterpiece descriptively revealing the Camino's remarkable hidden secrets & daily dynamics, as well as the origins of ancient pilgrimage motivations.. For someone at my stage in life, interested in sacred journeys into the spiritual oneness found within our relationship w/ nature, I could not have found a book filled w more vividly & aesthetically described perspectives of the pilgrim's journey into the unknown. I recommend this book to each and every Pilgrim in search of their Camino..

The Camino de Santiago seems so far out of my reach, but it is something I want to accomplish, so I've begun reading books from pelegrinos. Mary Wyman's book was very much more than I expected. Beginning each day with the text of the postcard she mailed to her granddaughter (along with a picture of the card), then her journal entry for that day and wrapped up with her reflections on that day once she was safely back home was a wonderful way to share her camino. Mary, using humor, practical and spiritual language, wove for me an undertaking, an adventure of epic and

deeply personal proportions. My reasons for wanting to walk the Camino are personal and spiritual. Mary was unafraid to share her inner-most feelings about her journey. From a badly bruised toe that threatened the entire trip, to meeting and sharing with people from around the world (most whose language she did not speak), to making a flower doll with a young child, to the voice of her sister and more and more, Mary's story touched my heart and deeply. Thank you, Mary, for sharing your camino with me.

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