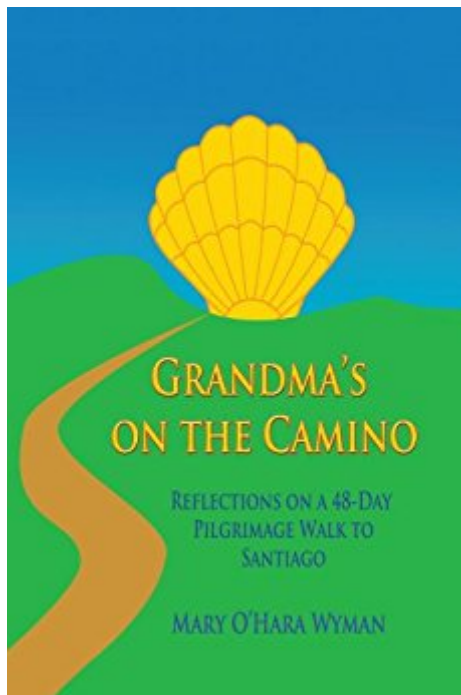


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# Grandma's On The Camino : Reflections On A 48-Day Walking Pilgrimage To Santiago



## 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

The author paints a vivid word picture of the joys, challenges and rewards in attempting and completing this 500 mile pilgrimage. Get ready to experience the Camino without leaving the comfort of your couch. At various points, I shook my head in wonder, laughed, and marveled at the author's commitment as the story unfolded. I was moved by the grit and perseverance she demonstrated to walk the 500 miles despite little preparation or experience as a hiker, and the profound obstacles she faced. She vividly describes the beauty of nature, the kindness of strangers, the synchronicity of events, and the satisfaction of spiritual growth. The book is a testimony to never giving up and the rewards of following your dream. I highly recommend this book!

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.

At first I was leery of the title, which seemed too cute. But then I read her justification - daily postcards to her granddaughter while she was walking the Camino - which, along with her daily journal and subsequent reflections, made real sense as an organizing device for the book. She is an engaging writer, but, more than that, inspiring. Mary Wyman, at 70, is no cream puff, but one of the toughest cookies on the Camino. She fell 5 times, incurring injuries that would have sent many of us home. But she just kept on. She writes with eminent practicality, undergirded by her grounding in centering prayer. I would also say that she writes as one who is very connected in the world, taking compassionate notice of fellow travellers as well as having a keen eye for the natural world she encounters on the journey. This is an excellent read for those planning to walk the Camino de Santiago, perhaps especially inspiring for those of us eligible for senior discounts.

Such an inspiring story in every way. Made me want to hit the road, myself. The way the author

writes to her grandchild and then reflects about the spiritual meaning of the experience makes it a book you want to read and reread. My mobile device lost the book and I reordered it even though didn't seem to know I already had paid for it - that's how much I loved this book.

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.

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 pelegrios. 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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