

Camino de Santiago: Weekly Weather Forecast & News Report

Date Prepared: Monday, 12 January 2026
Report Period: Week of 12–18 January 2026
Prepared for: Camino Pilgrimage Planning

Executive Summary

January is winter season on the Camino routes, bringing cold temperatures, frequent rainfall, and possible snow—particularly on northern routes. The Camino Portugués offers the mildest conditions. This week shows consistent cold weather across all three major routes with mixed precipitation patterns expected.

Weekly Weather Forecasts by Route

Camino Francés (The French Way)

Current Conditions: Very cold, wet winter conditions

Temperature Range: 0°C to 9°C (32°F to 48°F)

Rainfall Forecast: 8–15 rainy days expected in January; approximately 3–5 inches (7.5–12.5 cm) in northern sections

Notable Conditions: Possible snow at higher elevations; Santiago de Compostela region particularly wet with up to 10 inches monthly rainfall

Week of 12-18 January Outlook:

- Temperatures hovering around 5–10°C
- Expect frequent rain showers throughout the week
- Snow possible at elevations above 500m
- Layering and waterproof gear essential

Practical Note: The final stages through Galicia to Santiago (Triacastela to Santiago de Compostela) experience the heaviest rainfall, averaging 10 inches per month in winter.

Camino del Norte (The Northern Way)

Current Conditions: Cold, stormy, coastal weather

Temperature Range: 5°C to 12°C (41°F to 54°F)

Rainfall Forecast: Frequent Atlantic weather systems; rain common, with brief sunny intervals

Notable Conditions: Northern coast susceptible to stormy conditions; variable daily weather typical of coastal Basque Country and Asturias regions

Week of 12-18 January Outlook:

- Mixed conditions with frequent rain showers
- Temperatures slowly rising as you progress west from San Sebastián
- High humidity and wind typical of Atlantic coast
- Overcast skies predominate, with occasional sunny breaks
- Coastal sections (Bilbao to Gijón region) especially exposed to Atlantic weather systems

Practical Note: This route experiences the most severe winter weather of the three main routes due to Atlantic exposure. Rain is frequent and sometimes heavy.

Camino Portugués (The Portuguese Way)

Current Conditions: Mildest option; mixed sun and rain

Temperature Range: 6°C to 15°C (43°F to 59°F)

Rainfall Forecast: Moderate rain with intermittent sunny spells; less severe than northern routes

Notable Conditions: Porto to Santiago section remains reasonably accessible despite winter conditions; southern segments (Porto region) offer warmest daytime temperatures

Week of 12-18 January Outlook:

- Daytime highs reaching 12–15°C in Porto area
- Mix of cloudy and clearer days compared to northern routes
- Rain possible but less frequent than Francés or Del Norte
- Better conditions in opening stages from Porto
- Progressive cooling as route moves inland toward Galicia

Practical Note: Best option for winter walking if choosing between the three routes; southern Portuguese sections are genuinely walkable in January.

Comparative Weather Summary

Route	Temp Range	Winter Character	Challenge Level
Francés	0–9°C (32–48°F)	Very cold, very wet, possible snow	★★★★★ High
Del Norte	5–12°C (41–54°F)	Cold, stormy, Atlantic exposed	★★★★ Very High
Portugués	6–15°C (43–59°F)	Mild, mixed sun/rain, most accessible	★★★ Moderate

Camino News & Updates for 2026

Major Announcements

New International Flight Connections (Effective Summer 2026)

KLM has announced three new seasonal direct flights for Camino pilgrims:

- **Amsterdam to Santiago de Compostela** — Final destination flights (available mid-2026)
- **Amsterdam to Oviedo** — Gateway for Camino Primitivo and Camino del Norte (available mid-2026)
- **Cork to Santiago de Compostela** — New Irish route connecting Dublin/Cork area

Impact: Significantly improved accessibility from Northern Europe and Ireland; more convenient connections for North American pilgrims via Amsterdam hub.[source:1]

2026 Pilgrimage Trends

Early Statistics Show Portuguese Route Leadership:

Pilgrim office data (as of June 2025) indicates the Camino Portugués is currently the most popular route for 2026:

- **Camino Portugués** (Central + Coastal combined): 307 pilgrims
- **Camino Francés:** 227 pilgrims
- Total trend shows increased interest in alternative routes

Expected Pilgrimage Volume: 2026 marks "a return to normal" with projected increase in overall pilgrim numbers following post-pandemic recovery patterns.

Youth Pilgrimage Surge

Recent analysis shows a significant demographic shift:

- Pilgrims under 18 years old jumped **22%**, reaching nearly 50,000 participants
- Family pilgrimage groups increasing
- Younger demographic driving trend toward summer travel months

2026 Camino-Specific Events & News

Winter Pilgrimage Activity: As of 10 January 2026, daily live reports are being broadcast from the Camino Francés documenting winter pilgrimage experiences. Communities on Camino forums are actively discussing winter infrastructure, hostel availability, and real-time conditions.

Church Partnership Expansion: Insider's Camino (operating since 2017) is actively recruiting Episcopal and Anglican church partners for 2026–2027 pilgrimages, specifically focusing on the Portuguese Way with remaining spots:

- May 22–June 1 pilgrimage: 2 spots available
- October 6–16 pilgrimage: 4 spots available

Father/Son Initiatives: "Camino Fully Alive" father-son pilgrimage program continues in 2026, combining spiritual practices with family bonding, supported by Bishop Carl Kemme of Wichita Diocese.

Practical Recommendations for January Travel

Essential Gear Recommendations

For Francés & Del Norte:

- Waterproof, insulated jacket and rain pants
- Thermal layers (merino wool recommended)
- Waterproof hiking boots with good traction (snow/ice hazard)
- Warm hat, gloves, and neck buffer
- Emergency lightweight tent or emergency shelter
- High-calorie energy foods for cold weather hiking

For Portugués:

- Standard waterproof rain jacket and pants
- Layering system (fleece mid-layer)
- Water-resistant hiking boots
- Warm layers for early morning/evening
- Sun protection (winter sun can reflect off wet surfaces)

Timing Considerations

- **Best Route in January:** Camino Portugués (most accessible)
- **Challenging but Doable:** Camino Francés (shorter sections recommended; last 100km from Sarria more manageable)
- **Most Difficult:** Camino del Norte (Atlantic storm exposure)

Accommodation Notes

Winter accommodations present challenges:

- Many hostels operate reduced hours or seasonal closures in January
- Some albergues offer limited capacity
- Private accommodation (guesthouses, hotels) more reliably available
- Advance booking essential for winter travel

Resources for Current Conditions

Real-Time Weather Tracking:

- caminoweather.com — Detailed historical and forecast data by specific location
- foreca.com & yr.no — Accurate 7–14 day forecasts for specific towns
- **Santiago de Compostela specific:** AccuWeather, [Weather.com](https://weather.com) for final destination planning

Current Pilgrim Information:

- Camino de Santiago Facebook groups — Real-time pilgrim reports
 - Pilgrim office statistics — Official volume and route data
 - [WAW.travel](https://waw.travel) — Comprehensive Camino news and logistics
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Summary & Planning Notes

Current Status (12 January 2026):

- All three routes navigable but challenging in winter conditions
- Portugués offers best conditions for January travel
- New flight connections improving summer 2026 accessibility
- Youth participation and family pilgrimages showing strong growth trends

Recommendation: For current winter travel, prioritize the Camino Portugués. For planning 2026 summer travel, take advantage of new KLM Amsterdam connections launching mid-year.

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Next Update: Recommend weekly updates as weather patterns evolve through January