

**VIDEO LIBRARIAN REVIEW** (3 1/2 stars out of 4):

Filmmaker Lydia Smith here follows people—who combine aspects of religious pilgrim, backpack-adventurer, and extreme hiker—on the famous Camino Frances, an ancient, 500-mile trail through holy sites. It begins in France (at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port) and continues through northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela, a route set down by medieval Catholic custom as the way to the tomb of St. James. In the distant past, convicted criminals, as well as the general run of sinners and seekers of miracle cures, could find redemption by completing this grueling, sacred walk (with an optional bonus to continue to the sea). While the pilgrimage persists in modern times—and Catholic clergy and the Mass make appearances along the way—the tone of *Walking the Camino* is more non-denominational spiritual-questing than orthodox. An international set of walkers profiled include a Canadian widower, grieving for his wife; a young French Catholic mother trying to share an experience with her fun-loving brother that doesn't result in arguments; a Danish girl, who is not very pious but is still shaken by her mother's recent illness; and a Brazilian woman fleeing a bad relationship, and possibly finding new love (although we're told that romance on the Camino is a rare distraction). A fine documentary that also ties in with the Martin Sheen-Emilio Estevez Camino-set drama *The Way* (Sheen is acknowledged in the end titles), this is highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (C. Cassady)