

**Discussion Guide: What the Psychic Told the Pilgrim: A Midlife Misadventure on Spain's
Camino de Santiago de Compostela
Jane Christmas**

Introduction

In celebration of her 50th birthday, Jane Christmas finds herself leading fourteen women along the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, a centuries-old pilgrimage route stretching 800 kilometers (500 miles) from southwestern France across the Pyrenees almost to the northwestern shore of Spain. Before she leaves, Christmas consults with a psychic, who warns of catfights, lost jewelry, encounters with celebrities, a visit from Death, and a fair-haired man. After less than a week of travel with a group of squabbling middle-aged women, Christmas sets out on her own. That is when her real adventure begins, as she battles loneliness, hunger, and exhaustion. She also encounters charming villages, thickly forested vales, and more compatible pilgrims. And she meets and falls in love with the fair-haired man. By journey's end, all of the psychic's predictions have come true, and Christmas has discovered that it is the detours of life that lead us to our heart's desires. Copyright © 2008 D&M Publishers Inc.

Discussion Questions

1. This book describes a candid and comical account of a personal experience; however it includes snippets of historical facts. Did you enjoy Jane's sense of humor? Did you enjoy the history lessons?
2. Was there a specific experience that Jane described that you either enjoyed or disliked? Share the passage and your thoughts.
3. The psychic's predictions in Jane's case came true. Discuss your experiences with psychic predictions or your beliefs about psychic predictions.
4. Did this book inspire you to embark on your own adventure? If so, what would it be? Or, explain to the group what you do in your daily life to experience a sense of adventure.
5. Discuss the need to constantly seek out "greener pastures" rather than be content with life as is.
6. Jane is forced to make a series of choices during her pilgrimage. Discuss whether you agree or disagree with the choices that she made.
7. Discuss Jane's experience with her group of women. How did the dynamics play out?
8. Discuss whether you feel that taking part in a pilgrimage is a more of a religious journey or a journey of self discovery.
9. Was there a particular character in this book that you related to? If so, who was it and what was the connection?
10. Discuss the following statement from the book summary and whether you believe it to be true: "It is the detours of life that lead us to our heart's desires".