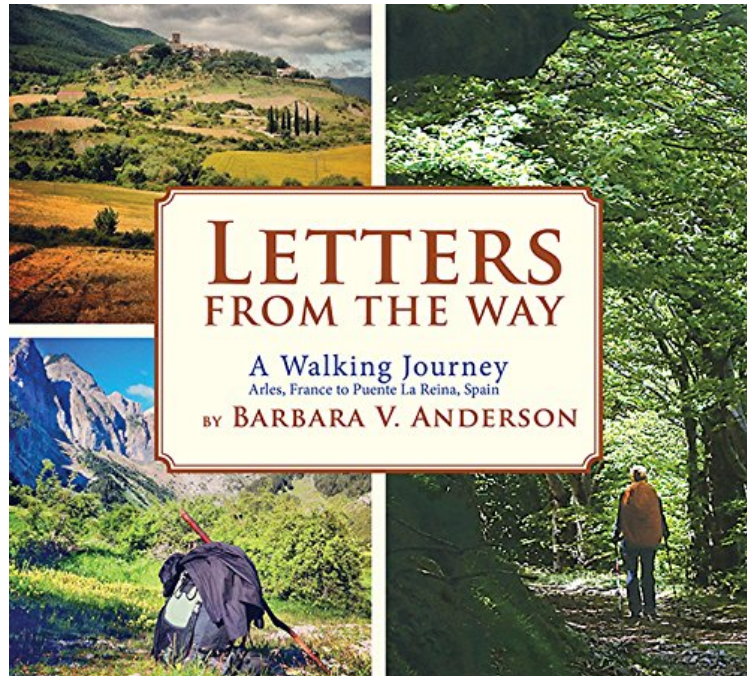


## Letters from the Way

Barbara V. Anderson

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**Barbara V. Anderson : Letters from the Way** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Letters from the Way:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Walk Well-Spent Well-Told!By C.M. McBrideLiterary Critic Robert Fagan captures Barbara V. Anderson's "Letters From The Way" as I would with two big "thumbs-up!"As a literary critic, it is always a treat to discover a writer with talent and an engaging message. Such was the occasion with Barbara V. Anderson's "Letters From The Way - A Walking Journey," a collection of actual letters sent from the author to friends while hiking or walking if you will on one of the lesser traveled pilgrim paths in France and Spain measuring some 600 miles? What would a "retired California woman" with no particular French or Spanish language skills traveling solo find? One hint? Expect the unexpected!You'd be totally mistaken if you presume this to be a hiking piece or even a travel log, though there are many pictures written and photographs provided to give you a taste of the landscape and happenings. Rather I found this walking journey to be an intimate view of one's search for meaning, of God, and of self. As I followed the author's trek through her letters, in a real sense it became mine as well. Barbara Anderson's questions mirror many that we all have, and her discoveries and remaining mysteries may illuminate your own search for meaning as well.I have often heard it said that walking is akin to meditation in motion. Ms. Anderson's letters from her "walking journey" take you with her in a way that is not only insightful and interesting, but also funny and intimate as well - definitely a "good read." In each letter (not chapter), Anderson had me laughing or chuckling to myself while also managing to vicariously enjoy her travels and travails in search of more than just another bucket list experience - this search for meaning. Interestingly, her conclusions insightfully pull together her journey that makes this entire work entertaining and thought-provoking for us all.With no pomp or sense of self-importance, Barbara Anderson lovingly drew me along with her, the issues she pondered, the things she saw

and experienced, along with the people she met. Yes, in a kind of magical, mystical way, she allowed me to join her and address the same questions of life while exploring new territory. "Letters From The Way - A Walking Journey" is an exquisitely written, thoroughly engaging tale that I heartily recommend, and I look forward to enjoying Ms. Anderson's future work!" - Published by Robert Fagan in The A Position at [www.robertfagan.com](http://www.robertfagan.com) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Reading this is almost like walking The Walk. By nbarnton Barbara Anderson shares her thoughts and experiences on a loooong walk through France, over the Pyrenees Mountains and into Spain. Well written and thought provoking. I couldn't put it down. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I love the format of the compilation of her letters to ... By Old Time Trader This is my kind of "travel", "spiritual quest" book. Short, witty, challenging, inspiring and thought provoking. I love the format of the compilation of her letters to friends and families through the walk. It draws you in to the thoughts, challenges and questions she had throughout the walk. It may even get you to thinking about making your own quest by long distance walking, as it did me.

Barbara V. Anderson's new book, *Letters from the Way* takes readers on her solo walk that covered 600 miles on the GR 653, from Arles, France to Puente la Reina, Spain. This was not Barbara's first long distance walk and like she did before, she wrote weekly letters to her family. As these letters were shared, she found herself writing to more than fifty friends who then shared the letters with their friends. Photographs by Barbara and others she met along the trail provide a visual accompaniment to her quirky observations. The letters are her musings about fellow pilgrims, vultures and butterflies, the endless rain, lessons to learn, and spiritual questions to answer. Her often humorous and always honest reflections make a good resource for anyone wondering what it would be like to set out on their own very long journey. When asked his impression of the letters, San Francisco's renowned artistic director David Ford commented, "Barbara Anderson makes it easy to contemplate the hardest thing."

It's been a while since I've come across a book that perfectly filled a spot in my soul that I didn't even know I needed filled until I read it. The full review is on: [booksjadore.com](http://booksjadore.com) "If you want to spend some time with someone thinking about God, don't you want her to have a sense of humor? And be open to other points of view? And smart, of course, and thoughtful. And feel it all deeply. And remember it's all a personal journey? Barbara Anderson makes it easy to contemplate the hardest things." --San Francisco's renowned artistic director David Ford From the Author In April 2012, I decided to take a walk, a very long walk. I walked 500 miles on the French GR65, from Le Puy-en-Velay to St-Jean-Pied-au-Port. In Spring 2013, I took another walk. I walked 600 miles on the GR653, from Arles, France to Puente la Reina, Spain. I didn't know much about long distance walking before I began my first trek. Raised Catholic, I had heard of the Camino de Santiago in Spain and I probably would have walked the Camino but my timing was off. Just when I began making plans, Emilio Estevez released the movie, "The Way", starring his father, Martin Sheen. It seemed everyone who saw the movie decided to walk the Camino from St-Jean-Pied-au-Port to Santiago de Compestela. I learned about other trails throughout Europe that led to the Camino. Traditionally pilgrims began their journey from their homes - whether those homes were Germany, England or Norway. I discovered Europe had many long distance hiking trails (religious and secular) and is in the process of creating even more as baby boomers reach retirement age. France has hundreds of trails called Grandes Randonnees. Four of these GRs are considered chemins or pilgrim trails, trails leading to the Camino. The GR65 and the GR653 are two of these routes. True believers cross Spain walking under the Milky Way on the Camino but I am not a true believer. Or a true Atheist. I'm not any kind of believer. I was attempting to discover what I did believe so it made sense to me to walk the path that lead to The Path. This journey was also a quest. Since taking those hikes, I have continued to walk in Europe. In 2014, I walked Hadrian's Wall and the West Highland Way in Britain. In 2015, I will take another 600-mile walk in Britain. These are secular walks rather walks connected with the Camino though I plan to take more Camino walks too. Walking gives me time to be present on this trail on this day in this moment. I do not use electronics when I walk. My only music is the sound of birds, wind and cascading water. I am not looking down at a screen but up at butterflies and billowing clouds. I approach a village watching it grow slowly from a vague silhouette on the distant horizon, to a distinct skyline, to individual buildings and finally the rarely visited village museum, the lace curtains rustling in an open window or the quirky little caf in back of the church. We are so used to darting about a landscape in a car and arriving to five or six destinations in a day, hopping out of the car, checking off the things we are supposed to see, jumping back into the car, the next town, the next check list. Long-distance walking is a way to magically stretch time, to slow down every moment. So often we overfill time into a whirlwind of activity. Time flies we say, but why do we want it to fly by? I prefer to savor time. A long distance walker takes a week to see what others visit in a day, but what a long distance walker sees, they see, feel, hear and smell. When I return home after months of walking, my friends who were in the same part of France for only one week ask, "Did you see this, did you see that, did you go here, did you go there?" And I must answer, "No, that was twenty miles off the trail so no, I didn't go there". But then, I don't ask them if they saw the pink roses growing out of the sidewalk near the patisserie, since I know they didn't have time. From the Inside Flap These letters are my reflections along the way. They are my musings about the weather and my fellow pilgrims, about vultures and butterflies, about lessons to learn and spiritual questions to answer. They are not a

travelogue, a daily blog of events, or recommendations for the best places to stay. They are, however, a good resource if you are wondering what it would be like to set out on your own and take a long, a very long, walk.