

galicia strolling through vineyards



XUNTA DE GALICIA

IMPORTANT NOTICE_

With the aim of promoting its tourism products, Turismo de Galicia carried out an open tender procedure (arm's length principle) aimed especially at travel agencies.

The itineraries included in this brochure are the outcome of the package holiday proposals created by the winning agency.

Galicia, a wine tourism experience

In Galicia, wine is culture and art, fruit of a tradition that is thousands of years old. Rías Baixas, O Ribeiro, Ribeira Sacra, Valdeorras and Monterrei are the five denominations of origin that are currently protecting some of the world's finest wines.

Discover the secrets of Galician wines walking among the vines on steep hillsides or at the edge of the sea and touring wineries – the most cutting-edge, the most stately and those with the greatest family tradition. Find out about how the first settlers in these parts lived in fortified pre-Roman Iron Age villages, the mysteries of the mediaeval fortresses and the mystery contained behind the walls of the monasteries. Enjoy hidden mountains spots, visit historical cities and stroll through seafaring villas.

Pazos, boutique hotels, country houses, spas and thalassotherapy centres pamper their guests and tie their offerings to those of the restaurants, which will lavish you with all the flavour that Galicia has to offer. *Albariño, Mencía, Godello, Treixadura...* more than twenty varieties of native grapes are the perfect accompaniment to the most exquisite of delicacies. Land of fish, seafood, meat, bread, cheese, traditional desserts and a wide variety of spirits. We invite to you to partake of one-of-a-kind wine and gastronomic experiences.

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1 Cambados, the cradle of Albariño wine

The seafaring town of Cambados – sanctuary of seafood and Albariño wine – offers a tour of its wineries, its museums dedicated to wine and its historical pazos.

p. 8



2 The roots of Albariño wine

In the heart of O Salnés, we'll enjoy outdoor activities, find peace in its monasteries and tour its most important vineyards and wineries.

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3 Sea and wine in O Rosal

In this experience, we'll confirm the benefits of thalassotherapy, eat next to the sea and get to know a Roman-Galician Iron Age settlement.

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4 Priory of O Ribeiro

We'll kick back and relax in the spas' mineral waters, travel by catamaran on the River Minho, discover wineries and monasteries and visit the Jewish quarter of Ribadavia.

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5 Lajas and O Ribeiro wines

A tour of Galicia's largest acropolis, a balneotherapy session, a visit to a winery and the monastery where the Cistercian monks brought the first wine grape vines.

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7 In the lands of the Valdeorras DO

From the stunning, monumental scenery of O Barco de Valdeorras, we move on to the locality of A Rúa, where most of the wineries for this designation are located.

p. 44



6 In the lands of the Ribeira Sacra DO

In the Ribeira Sacra, the cradle of Galician monastic life, we'll be astonished at the vineyards arranged across nearly vertical terraces and the steep canyons, a sign of identity of these beautiful localities.

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8 In the lands of the Monterrei DO

Monterrei – dominated by its fortified city – and Verín – land of ancient carnivals – will show us the secrets of the wine of any designation of origin of Galician origin.

p. 50



9 Food and wine experience in Santiago de Compostela

We will enjoy the monuments in Santiago's Old Town and, in its main market, we'll cook with the help of a chef.

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10 Tour of the designations of origin of Galician wines

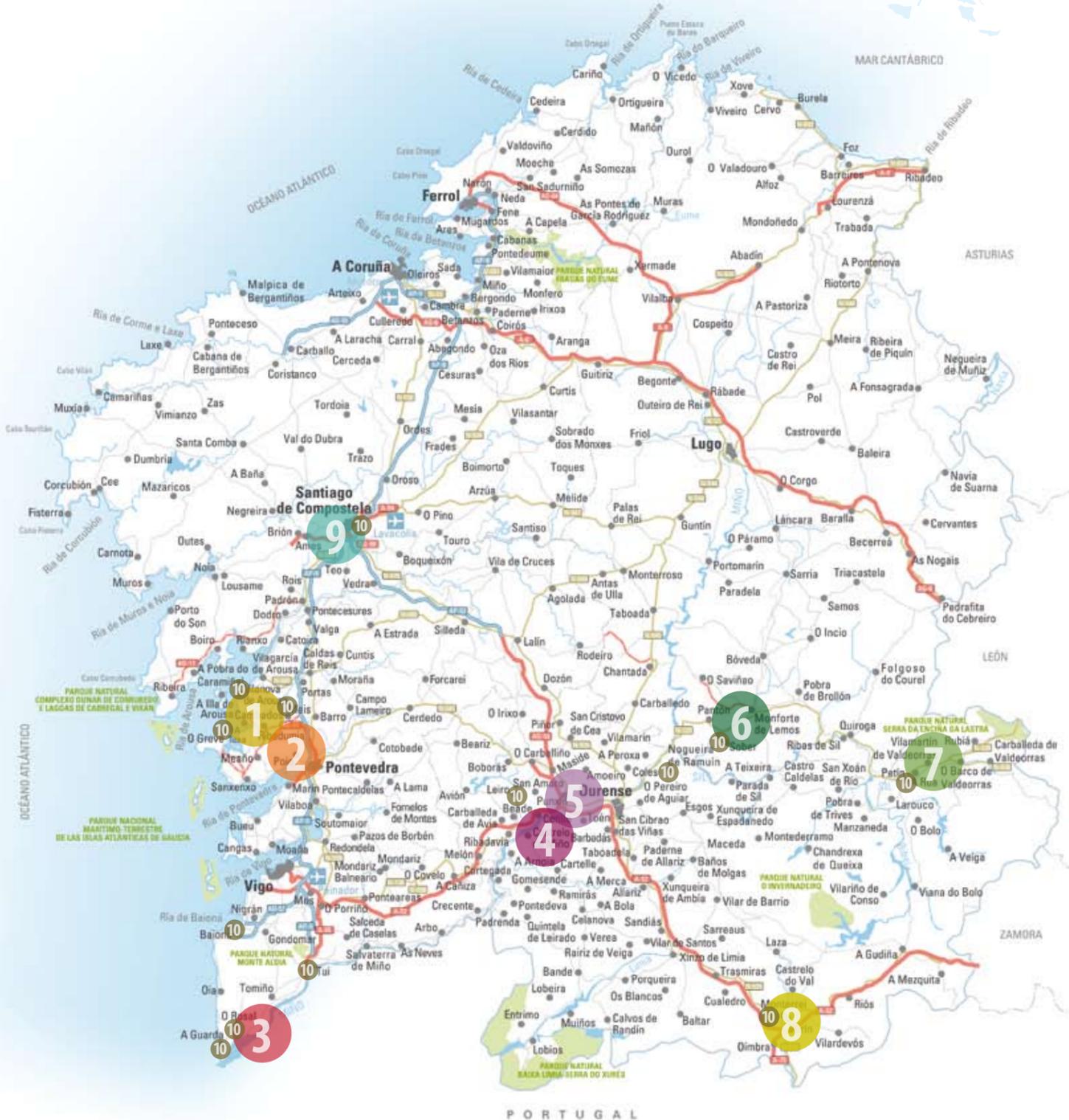
A one-week tour of the most important areas of the five Galician designations of origin. We'll visit stately pazos, architectural jewels, wineries, beautiful mountain spots and seafaring villages from the Rías Baixas to Santiago de Compostela and passing through inland Galicia.

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Strolling through vineyards

experiences



- TOLL MOTORWAY
- MOTORWAY
- HIGH-CAPACITY NETWORK
- NATIONAL ROAD NETWORK
- BASIC AND COMPLEMENTARY REGIONAL NETWORK
- REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK
- BROAD-GAUGE TRACK
- NARROW-GAUGE TRACK
- NATIONAL/NATURE PARKS

1 EXPERIENCE Cambados, the cradle of Albariño

- day 1 | Cambados
- day 2 | Cambados - Vilanova de Arousa - Cambados
- day 3 | Cambados

2 EXPERIENCE The roots of Albariño wine

- day 1 | Meaño
- day 2 | Meis - Cambados - Vilanova de Arousa
- day 3 | Meis - Meaño

3 EXPERIENCE Sea and wine in O Rosal

- day 1 | Oia
- day 2 | O Rosal - A Guarda
- day 3 | Oia

4 EXPERIENCE Priory of O Ribeiro

- day 1 | A Arnoia - Cortegada - A Arnoia
- day 2 | Ourense - Leiro - Ribadavia
- day 3 | A Arnoia

5 EXPERIENCE Laias and O Ribeiro wines

- day 1 | Cenlle - Punxín and San Amaro - Cenlle
- day 2 | Leiro - Ourense - Cenlle
- day 3 | Ourense

6 EXPERIENCE In the lands of the Ribeira Sacra DO

- day 1 | Monforte de Lemos
- day 2 | Sober - Esgos - Parada de Sil - Nogueira de Ramuín - Sober
- day 3 | Monforte de Lemos

7 EXPERIENCE In the lands of the Valdeorras DO

- day 1 | O Barco de Valdeorras
- day 2 | A Rúa
- day 3 | O Barco de Valdeorras

8 EXPERIENCE In the lands of the Monterrei DO

- day 1 | Monterrei - Verín
- day 2 | Monterrei - Verín - Vilariño de Conso
- day 3 | Verín

9 EXPERIENCE Food and wine experience in Santiago de Compostela

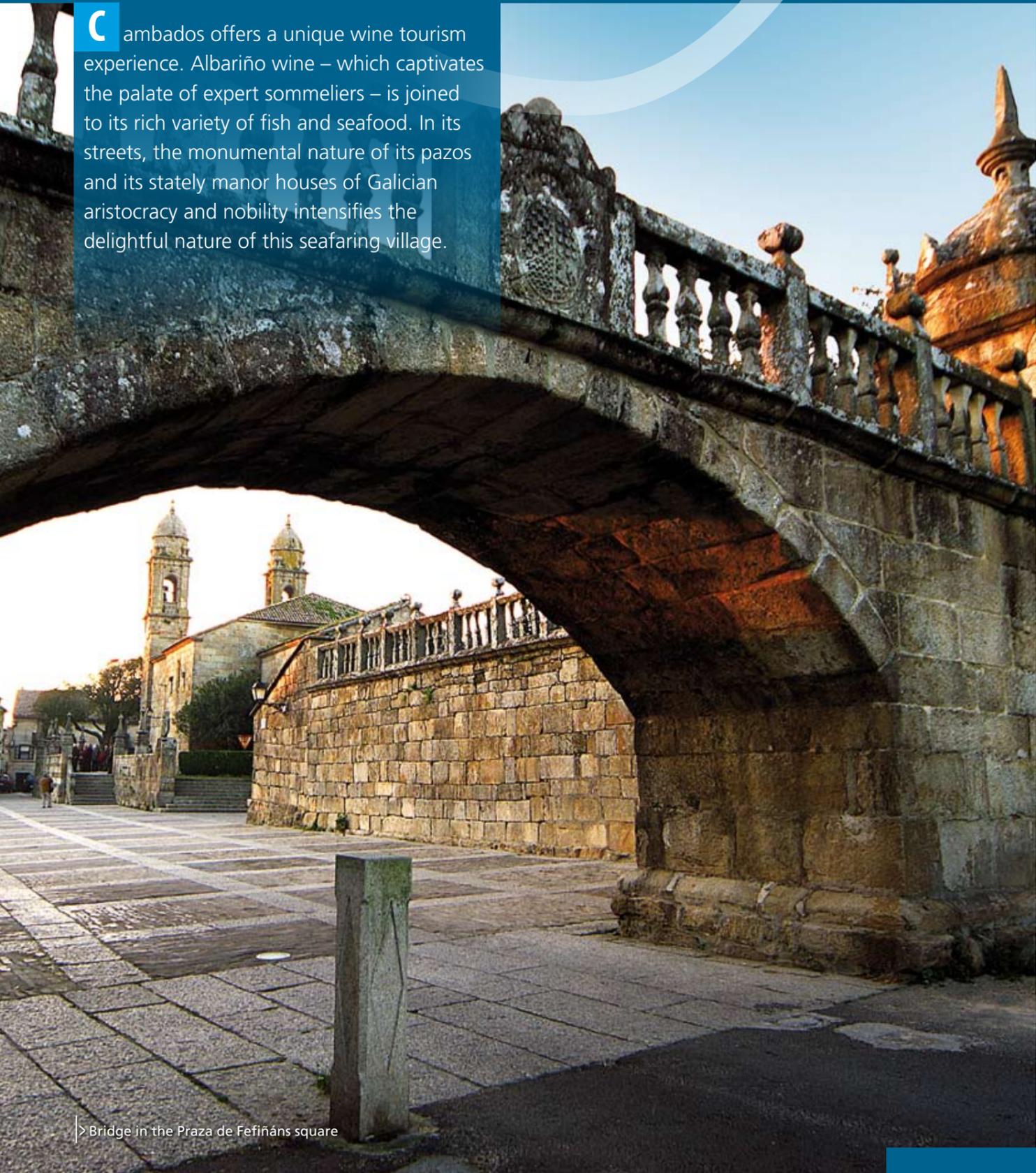
- days 1-2-3 | Santiago de Compostela

10 EXPERIENCE Tour of the designations of origin of Galician wines

- day 1 | Cambados
- day 2 | Vilanova de Arousa - O Grove - Baiona
- day 3 | Baiona - O Rosal - A Guarda - Tui
- day 4 | Tui - Leiro - Nogueira de Ramuín
- day 5 | Sober
- day 6 | A Rúa - Monterrei
- day 7 | Monterrei - Verín - Santiago de Compostela
- day 8 | Santiago de Compostela

Cambados, the cradle of Albariño wine

Cambados offers a unique wine tourism experience. Albariño wine – which captivates the palate of expert sommeliers – is joined to its rich variety of fish and seafood. In its streets, the monumental nature of its pazos and its stately manor houses of Galician aristocracy and nobility intensifies the delightful nature of this seafaring village.



> Bridge in the Praza de Fefiñáns square



1

EXPERIENCE

day 1 |

Cambados

- 1_ Cambados state-owned hotel
- 2_ Paseo da Calzada
- 3_ Boardwalk

day 2 |

Cambados

- 4_ Praza de Fefiñáns - square
- 5_ Fefiñáns winery
- 6_ Pazo de Fefiñáns

Vilanova de Arousa

- 7_ Parish of Tremeoedo

Cambados

- 8_ Museo Etnográfico e do Viño (Ethnographic and Wine Museum)
- 9_ Ruins of the Church of Santa Mariña Dozo
- 10_ Monte da Pastora

day 3 |

Cambados

- 11_ Ruins of San Sadurniño Tower

START_ Cambados

END_ Cambados

DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_

→ Cambados state-owned hotel. Tel_ **986 542 250**

→ Museo Etnográfico e do Viño. Tel_ **986 526 119**

→ Pazo de Fefiñáns winery_ www.fefinanes.com



| day 1 |

Cambados, a seafaring village of monuments

We'll arrive at Cambados at dusk. If we decide to stay in a building of historical importance that is also a monument, the old **Pazo de Bazán**, a state-owned hotel located right in the centre, is eminently suitable. The ancestors of the writer Emilia Pardo Bazán had it built in the seventeenth century. At one time, General De Gaulle stayed within its walls.

The wine festival

The state-owned hotel is accessible via Rúa Príncipe, crossing the Paseo da Calzada, a lovely tree-lined avenue of poplars and black poplars that becomes a scintillating throng thanks to the *Festa do Viño Albariño*, an official Tourist Event. During that week, there's an invasion of dozens of stands set up by the area's best wineries, which offer their Albariño wines at affordable prices.

> Vineyards in Cambados



The sea and its delicacies

We cross the tree-lined avenue and reach the **Boardwalk**. Following a line of palms and green spaces, we can skirt a section of the coast or enter the marina. In both cases, we'll have the islands of A Toxa and Arousa and the peninsula of O Grove right in front of us. In the sea, hundreds of shellfish rafts – floating platforms for cultivating mussels, oysters and scallops.

We have before us one of the planet's largest deposits of phytoplankton. With good reason, it is said of the estuaries – and in particular the one in Cambados – that they are the sanctuary of shellfish, in addition to that of the Albariño wine. All the hotels, restaurants and tapas bars in the village offer a selection of excellent quality products on their menus. We'll see how true this is when we sit down to dinner.



> Seafaring village of Cambados

| day 2 |

Touring wineries and pazos

Today, we'll explore in detail the winemaking wealth of Cambados through its wineries and themed museums.

We enter the aristocratic **district of Fefiñáns**, continuing until we reach the square of the same name. It is the most imposing square in Cambados and one of most beautiful in Galicia. It will take us just a few minutes from Rúa Real, after we cross Asorey square. We'll find the artistic complex built round it in the sixteenth century and declared a Heritage Element of Cultural Interest to be fascinating. It comprises the Church of San Benito, a watchtower-viewpoint known as the "Keep", a beautiful baroque-style arch bridge and the impressive Pazo de Fefiñáns, whose circular balconies at both ends of the building are quite eye-catching.



> Ethnographic and Wine Museum



> Praza de Fefiñáns square and pazo

*"A ti, mi Cambados,
pobre e hidalgo y soñador,
que al cantarín son de los pinares
y al amparo de tus pazos legendarios,
duermes acostado al sol, a la orilla del mar".*

You, my Cambados,
poor, noble and filled with dreams,
that, to the singsong of the pine trees
and under the protection of your legendary pazos,
sleeps lying in the sun, on the shore of the sea.

Ramón Cabanillas



> Winery

The Fefiñáns winery

Since 1904, Fefiñáns has housed the oldest winery in the locality. Touring it will take about an hour, or maybe a bit more if we extend it with guided tastings of the three types of Albariño wine that it produces along with its pomace brandies. Its typical vine arbours – located a metre and a half from the ground to avoid the damp – will pique our curiosity. We'll be seeing them throughout a hectare of land from the interior of the pazo. It has a magnificent forest of native species and centuries-old boxwoods, which are tended to with great tenderness.

The tour through its fermentation, ageing and bottling rooms will help us understand the production process. Modern technologies coexist in harmony with the ageing of these wines in oak barrels kept in wine cellars dominated by stone and wood.

The exquisiteness of the Pazo de Fefiñáns

A tour of the interior of the pazo is also a possibility. As we wander its rooms, corridors and halls, we appreciate the refined tastes of the Galician nobility living in villages and cities. Their work mediating among farmers, clergy and nobility on collecting fees was the origin of their wealth, evidence of which is the beautiful wallpaper decorating one of its main rooms, inspired by scenes from the Orient and brought back by José Benito Pardo de Figueroa, first Marquess of Figueroa, during his time as ambassador in Russia at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The inner ward is dominated by the coats of arms of the viscountship of Fefiñáns and of the marquessate of Figueroa.



Land of fish and seafood

After delighting our palates with the “golden prince of wines”, as Álvaro Cunqueiro defined Albariño wine, it will be time for lunch. Any of the many restaurants and tapas spots in the village will be a fine choice. Fish and seafood prepared in a thousand and one ways – even with Albariño wine as their base – are king on their menus. And let us not forget the typical raw oysters with lemon from the estuary.

*Albariño, gold from the earth,
sun that ignites love,
lights up paths
and makes pain be forgotten.
Sweet, clear Albariño
my bewitching friend
I will drink you singing
I will sing to you drinking.*

Wine culture through wineries and museums

Afternoon offers us new possibilities of wine tourism discoveries with tastings in wineries, inside or outside Cambados. On the road to **Tremoedo**, in the neighbouring municipality of Vilanova de Arousa, we find examples of regal wineries crowning extensions of vineyards, both great and small. It's a not-overly-long trip over local roads (PO-9005 and Deiro Road), perfect for delighting one's sight with the smoothly wavy lines of the harbour-filled landscape.

If we remain in Cambados, the **Museo Etnográfico e do Viño** (Ethnographic and Wine Museum) is ideal for investigating the wine of O Salnés and, in general, of the Rías Baixas. It was one of the first wine-centred museums in Spain and today is one of those with the best documentation. It is housed in an old sixteenth-century rectory's house called “**Casa Ricoy**”.

*“Albariño, ouro da terra
sol que encendes os amores
alumeas corredoiras
e fas esquecer dores.
Albariño doce e craro
meu amigo feiticeiro
heiche de beber cantando
heiche de cantar bebendo”.*

Ramón Cabanillas

Ruins steeped in history

The tour of the museum is doubly attractive because of its proximity to the ruins of the **Church of Santa Marina Dozo**, a national monument with a cemetery on its grounds. These remains may cause us to feel overcome with emotion as they are the “most melancholy burial grounds”, according to Cunqueiro. The church is an example of “maritime” Gothic. Several hypotheses explain its partial destruction in the nineteenth century. One blames a fire, either accidental or deliberately set. The other mentions the large amount of unrest that took place at the time. Today, we see its arches – richly decorated with balls – reaching unprotected to the sky. If we happen to be present when the sun moves lower across the Atlantic from the Monte da Pastora, we'll witness a beautiful spectacle of light playing between the arches.

When the days are long, we can extend our walk another ten minutes as we climb up towards the **Monte da Pastora**. We'll have a panoramic view of the estuary of Arousa. On very clear days, the town of Santa Uxía de Ribeira can just be seen. With this image, we'll return to our hotel to dine and relax.

| day 3 |

A stroll through the ruins of the San Sadurniño Tower

In the morning, if we rise early and the weather is fine, we can take a walk to discover the ruins of the San Sadurniño Tower, built in the early Middle Ages. The ruins are located on an islet called “da Figueira” and are accessible by a lovely arch bridge when the tide is not very high. In order to reach the ruins, we'll cross the streets in the **San Tomé District**, which has the most seafaring atmosphere in Cambados.



> Shellfish gathers in front of the San Sadurniño Tower



> San Tomé



> Santa Mariña Dozo

The roots of Albariño wine

We propose a wine tourism getaway to the heart of O Salnés, home to the roots of Albariño wine, to stroll among grapevines at the feet of stately wineries, both cutting-edge and of rustic beauty. There are many possibilities offered to us by this subzone of the Rías Baixas Designation of Origin, with numerous companies dedicated to winemaking hidden away in old towns like Cambados or among the gentle hillsides that slowly descend to the Atlantic. We'll take advantage of the sea-tinged atmosphere of the estuary and the leaf-filled nature of the valley to arrange some activities outdoors.



START_ Meaño
END_ Meaño
DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_

- Mar de Frades winery_ www.mardefrades.es
- Agro de Bazán winery_ www.agrodebazan.com
- Pazo de Zárate winery_ www.bodegas-zarate.com



EXPERIENCE

day 1 |

Meaño

- 1_ Locality of Meaño
- 2_ Bridge over the River Chanca
- 3_ Mills on the River Chanca

day 2 |

Meis

- 4_ Convent of Santa María de Armenteira
- 5_ Mar de Frades winery

Cambados

- 6_ Town of Cambados
- 7_ Praza de Fefiñáns - square
- 8_ Boardwalk

Vilanova de Arousa

- 9_ Agro de Bazán winery

day 3 |

Meis

- 10_ Monte da Escusa

Meaño

- 11_ Bodega Pazo de Zárate winery

| day 1 |

Hiking trail and dinner in an old mill

We choose the municipality of Meaño as the departure point for our wine tourism experience because of its beautiful scenery and central position on the peninsula of O Salnés, where the Albariño grape extends its domain. Among the accommodation offered is a boutique country hotel with excellent service, which we'll reach in the afternoon. We'll have time to arrange a first exploratory activity of these lands which concentrate the greatest surface area of vineyards with the Rías Baixas Designation of Origin.

We propose travelling a section of the nearby **River Chanca Mills hiking trail**, in particular the one that runs between the parishes of Lores and Simes. You'll enjoy a leaf-filled nature, stop to listen to the sound of the small waterfalls and eddies among the rounded stones and watch how the current gently rocks the water's plant life





> Cloister of the Armenteira Convent



> Convent of Santa María de Armenteira

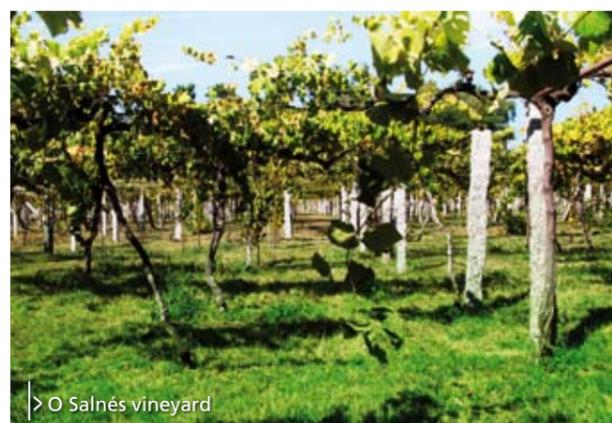
Restored mills, more than 200 years old

We'll start off at the **bridge over the River Chanca** near Lores' parish church. Ahead lie six kilometres of nearly flat land. The route is well-signed, provided with explanatory panels, wooden bridges and walkways and has lighting. We'll find many restored mills, such those of *A Ponte, Igrexa, Daniel O Ferreiro, Entremuíños, Quintáns, Marcial de Barbeito* and *Couso*. Some are over 200 years old.

Approaching Simes, on the second section and passing the road, we see that the forest gives way to open fields and Albariño grapes being cultivated. We suggest that – if time permits – you ask staff at the country hotel to prepare you a picnic with **local products and Albariño wine** so that you can take advantage of the wonderful recreational areas along this route. Another very recommendable alternative is, once the hike is over, to dine in one of the **old mills** along the route, restored and converted into a boutique restaurant. Its cuisine is known for its **grilled meats**.



> Mill



> O Salnés vineyard

| day 2 |

Peace and tranquillity in the Convent of Santa María de Armenteira

After breakfast, we'll use our morning getting to know the wine and cultural heritage of O Salnés. We suggest you start with a visit to the Convent of Santa María de Armenteira, well signposted since we took the AG-41. Considered the Cathedral of Salnés, it is located in a wooded setting, protected by Mount Castrove. It was founded in the twelfth century by the Cistercian Order, although only the church remains of the original building. We'll see its interior illuminated by a magnificent openwork rose window composed of geometric elements.

The nuns, who have been living in it since 1989, have brought it back to life and opened it up to the community. If we're thinking about getting away from it all and seeking out some peace and quiet, they'll open the doors of their inn to us. This provides them with some income, which they supplement with making hand-crafted **medicinal soaps** from the oil of the camellias they grow in their garden and which is distilled in the O Areiro Plant Pathologies Station.

A tour of the Mar de Frades vineyard and wine cellar

And just three miles away we'll be in Meis at the Mar de Frades winery, a reference in innovation in these parts. There, we'll be able to observe their wine-making process. We begin in the vineyard, spread out in terraces with impressive views of the estuary. We continue on with the winery, whose cutting-edge design – which is evocative of a huge sailing ship – is integrated into the forest that crowns Mount Valiñas.

Its interior is dominated by a marked technological aesthetic that is most noticeable in the fermentation room, whose enormous steel tanks can be seen over the metal catwalks surrounding them. Winery staff are at our side the entire time. The tour ends with a tasting of their wines, although we can take our first steps in professional wine tasting with an expert sommelier.

Fish, seafood and Albariño wine in Cambados

With lunch in mind, we suggest returning to the O Salnés motorway towards Cambados, the standard bearer for Albariño wine. Close to the monumental **Praza de Fefiñáns square**, you will find many restaurants that pair the products of the town's estuary with the fruity wines of the Rías Baixas Designation of Origin, both of well-deserved prestige. After lunch, we can wander through its stately streets or breathe in the sea breeze on the boardwalk as we contemplate the outline of Galicia's largest estuary.

Visit to the Agro de Bazán winery, in Vilanova de Arousa

In the afternoon, we'll do a guided tour with a wine tasting at the stately Agro de Bazán winery, following the road to Deiro (PO-9005), which we will reach in less than ten minutes. It is located in the locality of Tremoedo, in the town of Vilanova de Arousa. Its neoclassical building was constructed in the style of French *chateaux*. It is partially buried on a hillside lined with extensive trellises arranged with calculated regularity.

The scenery, with its vineyards, forests and the sea, is as intoxicating as the visit inside. Here, the traditional stills in the distillation room where the *augardenteiros* prepare delicate pomace brandies and liqueurs from grape skins will draw your attention. The barrel room is an allegory to the tools used for tasting the wine; its granite columns reproduce the form of a wine-tasting glass and their capitals are shaped like a tastevin. At the end of the tour, we suggest we return to Meaño for dinner at our hotel.



> Vilanova de Arousa

| day 3 |

An all-terrain bike tour or a visit to a traditional wine cellar

After breakfast, we can bid farewell to O Salnés with a bit of exercise. In nearby Meis, we find the first mountain bike centre in Galicia where bike tours can be arranged. We can choose the trip to **Mount da Escusa**, which offers little difficulty and breathtaking views of the estuaries of Pontevedra and Arousa. Since some of its sections pass through pine forests, we are likely to find semi-wild horses grazing among the trees.

If we prefer to take things easy, we can use our last stroll about Meaño to visit the **Pazo de Zárate**, rebuilt in the eighteenth century, which also houses a winery with a great family tradition. After passing through its massive granite wall via the wooden gate, we'll come upon the mill and the old winery surrounded by antique tools for harvesting grapes and tilling. Their rustic beauty makes the perfect contrast to the stateliness and the cutting-edge quality of the wineries we visited the day before.



> Bike path through O Salnés

Sea and wine in O Rosal

We suggest exploring the art of winemaking in O Rosal Valley. The vineyards are set into places of great beauty, in a nature pampered by the mildness of the climate and the influence of sea and river. It is also here where the Atlantic receives the River Miño and where this links us to neighbouring Portugal. Its frontier character gives it a mysterious air with landscapes that hide prehistoric villages such as Mount Santa Tegra. This proposal invites you to get to know some of O Rosal's most iconic wineries, but don't forget to take into consideration some of the many possibilities offered by this subzone and visit the facilities of some of the other Rías Baixas Designation of Origin brands of wine.



> Mouth of the River Miño



START_ Oia
END_ Oia
DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_

- Terras Gauda Wineries_ www.terrasgauda.com
- Quinta Couselo winery_ www.quintacouselo.com
- Talaso Atlántico_ www.talasoatlantico.com



EXPERIENCE

- day 1 |
Oia
- 1_ Town of Oia
 - 2_ Talaso Atlántico
 - 3_ Monastery of Santa María de Oia
 - 4_ A Riña viewpoint
 - 5_ A Pedreira petroglyphs
- day 2 |
O Rosal
- 6_ Terras Gauda Wineries
 - 7_ Quinta Couselo winery
- A Guarda
- 8_ Port of A Guarda
 - 9_ Mount Santa Tegra
 - 10_ Santa Tegra fortified pre-Roman Iron Age village
 - 11_ Castro de Santa Tegra Archaeological Museum
- day 3 |
Oia
- 2_ Talaso Atlántico

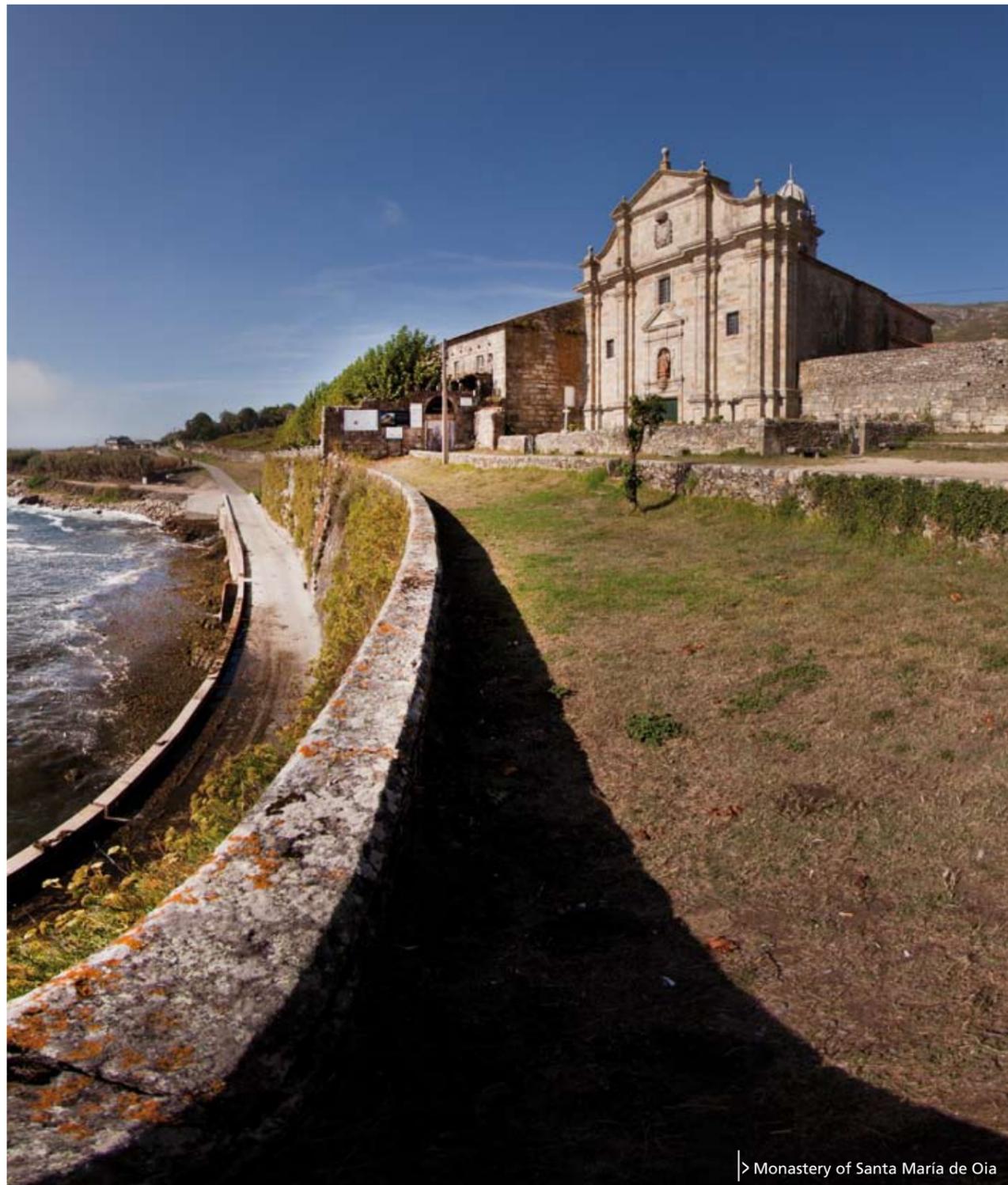
> Monastery of Santa María de Oia



| day 1 | In Oia, from the thalassotherapy hotel to the monastery

Our destination is Oia, a municipality in the region of the Baixo Miño, where the O Rosal Valley is located. We'll reach it via the PO-552 on the coast. Its hotel offerings includes a **thalassotherapy hotel**, where we can stay if we're in the mood to pair wine and sea, a formula already tested successfully in these parts.

We recommend arriving at the hotel in the early hours of the afternoon in order to take advantage of the micromineral properties of the seawater in the thalassotherapy hotel's thermal springs leisure areas. You can also arrange an excursion, a laid-back tour of the surroundings or do a fun activity. One good option is to take the short trip to the **Monastery of Santa María de Oia**, just a few minutes by car from the hotel. While we are admiring its monumental nature and its location at the edge of the sea, we'll find the place where the story of O Rosal wine all began. The Cistercian monks who have been living here since the twelfth century are credited with the fine art of cultivating the vine on these lands.



> Monastery of Santa María de Oia

The route of the A Pedreira petroglyphs

After your visit, we suggest an outing following the route of the A Pedreira petroglyphs at the **A Riña viewpoint**. From here we're able to observe excellent panoramic view over the cove and the monastery in Oia. The trail is signposted so that you can follow and identify this ensemble of enigmatic prehistoric petroglyphs drawn using easily discernable lines and bowl shapes.

For dinner, the fruits of the sea, mushrooms or lamb

Back in Oia, we can enjoy dinner in the hotel or opt for the food on offer at local bars and restaurants. Their menus feature barnacle, octopus, crab and sea urchin. They also include recipes made with mountain-grown mushrooms – in season – and different kinds of algae. In addition, the cheeses and sausages from Torroña and the lamb from Santa Comba enjoy well-deserved fame in the area.

| day 2 |

We visit several wineries, eat beside the sea and take a walk on Mount Santa Tegra

We suggest you spend the morning touring delightful spots in O Rosal Valley and discover the art of winemaking with the help of two locally important wineries located where the River Miño meets the Atlantic. We'll take the same PO-552 coastal road to the town of A Guarda and then continue on in the direction of Tui.

Terras Gauda wineries

In a half hour, we'll reach O Rosal, where the Terras Gauda wineries are located. We see that the terrain is gentle, lying some 50 to 150 metres above the sea level and formed by small, softly rolling hills. The winery is found in this setting, flanked by pine and eucalyptus forests and its wide expanse of vineyards, which are the same ones we'll visit during our tour.

The winery sits very close to the mouth of the River Miño in the A Guarda area. Due to its location in the valley, it enjoys a unique microclimate characterised by mild temperatures, very few freezes and abundant rainfall. The pampering by the climate and terrain and the labours of its professionals result in wines that have graced the tables of the world's finest hotels. They'll explain to us their commitment to marrying the nobility of Albariño to other local varieties such as the Loureiro and the delicate Caíño Branco. The visit concludes with a tasting in their shop.



> Mouth of the River Miño



> Lamprey



> Terras Gauda wineries

Quinta Couselo winery

After bidding goodbye, we'll continue along the PO-552 and then turn on to a provincial road network in order to reach the Quinta Couselo winery, which takes its name from its location. Our tour runs along an old estate which was in the hands of the Cistercian Order in the twelfth century. Here the vine trellises were installed on a small plot of land. The winery is located in a rustic pazo more than 200 years old that is characteristic of Galician rural architecture. A granary, wagon wheel and tilling implement share space in the garden.

One of the rooms in the winery is dedicated to distilling the *Albariño*, *Loureiro* and *Caíño* bagasses. These new Galician **pomace brandies** are part of the ancient art of the *augardenteiros*, transmitted from parents to children. Its production is inspired by the artisan tradition of *os poteiros* of O Rosal. We see how the winery harmonises this cultural tradition with the fertility of the land, distilling pomace brandies and macerating exquisite products like **Mirabelle plums** in them.



> Quinta Couselo winery

We eat in the Port of A Guarda

After the tour, we think about where to have lunch. Fish and seafood or white meat go perfectly with the local wines. Sampling them in the restaurants and tapas bars opposite the Port of A Guarda could be an attractive idea. A typical delicacy here in season is the **lamprey**, caught in the estuary of the River Miño as they pass through the area when travelling up the river to spawn. If seafood is your weakness, you should know that the town is known as the “**capital of the rock lobster**” – which has its own festival in July – and is also the reigning queen of an exquisite dessert, the “*rosca de yema*” (an eggy-custard-filled pastry ring).

To speed digestion, we'll take a stroll round the A Guarda port area, where the characteristic seaman's houses – narrow, multi-story and very colourful – will amaze us. On the southern dike – known as the **dique dos mariñeiros** (“sailors' dike”) – it is easy to spend some time observing the fishermen at work and their boats and fishing gear. We must not forget that this activity is deeply rooted in A Guarda. Its fleet is among the largest in Spain working in the capture of **swordfish**.



> Pre-Roman Iron Age village of Santa Tegra



> A Guarda from Mount Santa Tegra

Visit to Mount Santa Tegra

Mount Santa Tegra is one of the most significant and best-preserved examples of pre-Roman fortified city culture in Galicia. This Galician-Roman settlement dates back to the Iron Age, although it lived its heyday in the first centuries before and after Christ with the arrival of the Romans. On the climb to the mountain, we'll enjoy breathtaking panoramic views of the town of A Guarda, the estuary of the River Miño and its mouth on the Atlantic, the O Rosal Valley, the A Groba mountain range and neighbouring Portugal.

For true sportsmen, **approved hiking trail PRG-122** leads to the top of the mountain. At every step, we discover a different view of the region, until we reach the first walls of the ancient settlement. We'll walk on its cobbled streets, among the remains of dwellings, ancient storerooms and workshops and take the opportunity to take a photo of ourselves in front of one of the reconstructed houses which give us an idea of how its inhabitants lived.

Another option is to go by car up the access road to the mountain until reaching the settlement, take a relaxed tour and then continue on to the top. To our right we'll see a **via crucis** and extraordinary views over the ocean.

A visit to the **archaeological museum** will allow us to discover the splendid collection of swastikas found in the excavations, and the finishing of the torcs, the central motif of the exhibition. Of Roman origin, we find anthropomorphic funerary stelae and a significant exhibit of coins. The museum has a shop where you can buy typical hand-crafted pottery, and there are also several restaurants and cafés where you can enjoy a snack. At the end of our tour, we set off towards the hotel in search of dinner and relaxation.

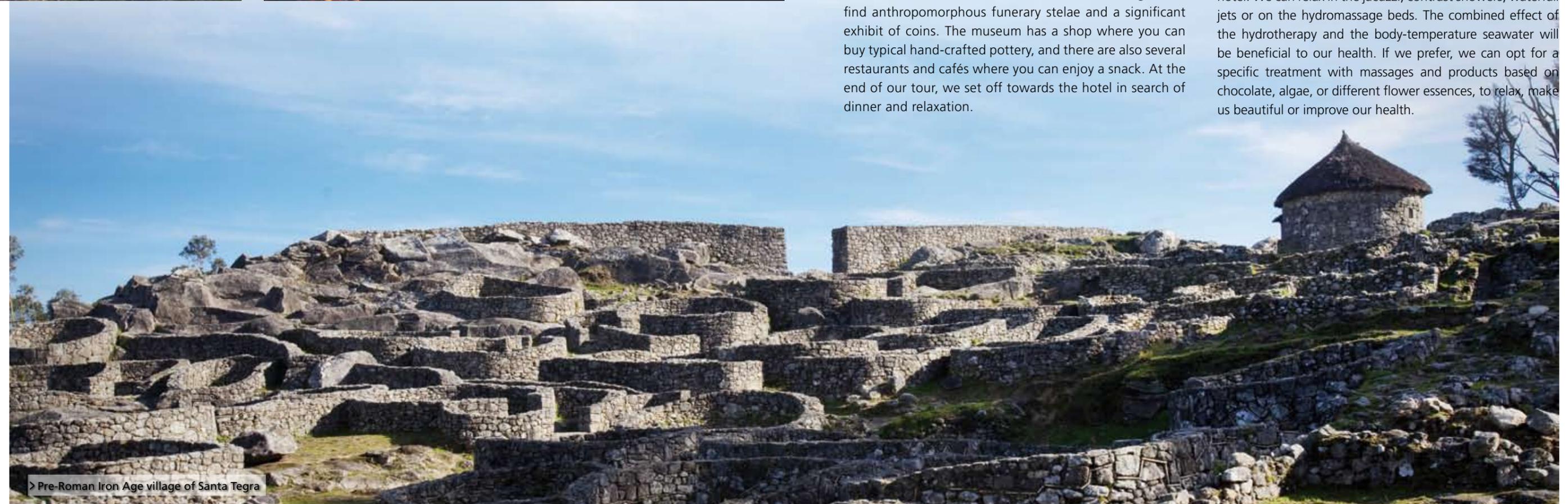


> Talaso Atlántico

| day 3 |

Beauty, relaxation and health treatments with seawater in the thalassotherapy hotel

Between breakfast and check-out, we'll still have time to enjoy a seawater circuit in the facilities of the thalassotherapy hotel. We can relax in the jacuzzi, contrast showers, waterfall jets or on the hydromassage beds. The combined effect of the hydrotherapy and the body-temperature seawater will be beneficial to our health. If we prefer, we can opt for a specific treatment with massages and products based on chocolate, algae, or different flower essences, to relax, make us beautiful or improve our health.



> Pre-Roman Iron Age village of Santa Tegra

Priory of O Ribeiro

O Ribeiro is Galicia's oldest wine-producing region. The Rivers Miño, Arnoia, Avia and Barbantiño converge in it, leaving behind lush riverbank vegetation interspersed with vineyards and orchards. On its slopes are scattered churches, monasteries, pazos, fortified pre-Roman Iron Age villages and Jewish settlements as well as hot springs, which are coming to the fore once again in a new golden age for their spas. The wineries proposed on this route are an example of the many that you can find across the length and breadth of the territory included in the designation of origin, from the large and modern wineries – such as the Cooperativa do Ribeiro – to the smaller, artisanal wineries, more open and approachable.



> River Avia



START_ A Arnoia
END_ A Arnoia
DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_

→ Pazo Casanova winery_ www.pazocasanova.com
→ Viña Meín winery_ www.vinamein.com
→ A Arnoia spa. Tel_ 988 492 400

→ Cortegada spa. Tel_ 988 483 276



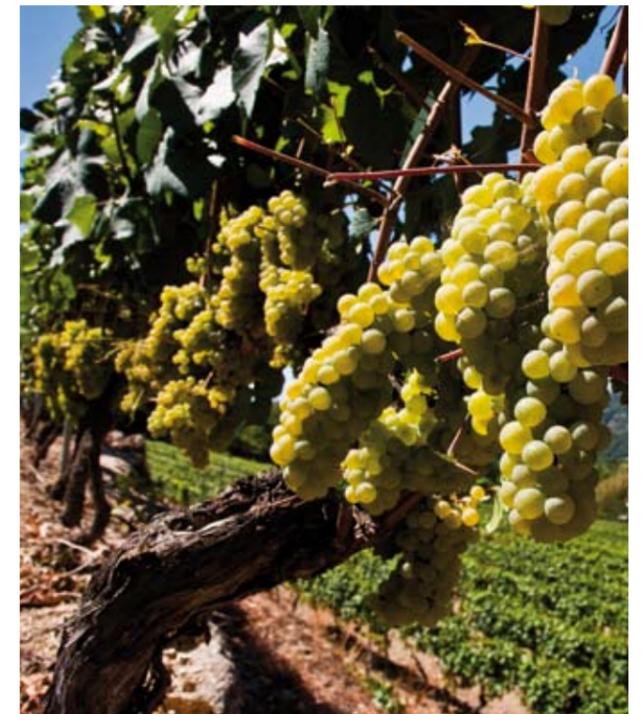
4 EXPERIENCE

- day 1 |
A Arnoia
1_ Town of A Arnoia
2_ A Arnoia spa
3_ River Miño
Cortegada
4_ Cortegada spaa
A Arnoia
5_ Town of A Arnoia
- day 2 |
Ourense
6_ Pazo Casanova winery
Leiro
7_ Viña Meín winery
8_ San Clodio monastery
9_ San Clodio mediaeval bridge
Ribadavia
10_ Jewish quarter
11_ Inquisition building
12_ Ruins of the castle of the Counts of Ribadavia
13_ Viewpoint in the Praza de Buján square
- day 3 |
A Arnoia
2_ A Arnoia spa

| day 1 |

A Arnoia opens the doors to the oldest wine-producing region in Galicia

A Arnoia will be the site chosen as a starting point for a closer look at the oldest wine-producing region in Galicia, O Ribeiro. This village, on the banks of the Frieira reservoir, is the paradigm of harmony between wine, water and spas that we will find elsewhere in the region.



The A Arnoia spa

The town's offer of accommodation includes a refurbished boutique hotel in a former Cistercian Priory. There is also a modern hotel which houses a spa with hypothermal waters; at 22 degrees and possessing a sulphurous and fluorinated composition, they are suitable for fighting rheumatic, dermatological or respiratory ailments.

We recommend that you arrive early in the afternoon if you want to take unhurried advantage of the time in this spa, which is terraced onto a hillside slope, just as they do here with the vineyards. From its exceptional enclave, it faces the water in the reservoir and the forests on the banks of the River Miño. It's the same landscape that we see from its indoor and outdoor pools.



> Cortegada spa



> A Arnoia spa

Travel by catamaran on the River Miño

If the weather is suitable, in the afternoon we can complete our spa therapy with a catamaran tour on the River Miño. The wooden pier is practically at the foot of the spa. Depending on the time of year, they'll be green or have turned brown, red or yellow.

We'll reach another spa town **Cortegada** – whose spa we'll see standing majestically on the shore, nestled in the woods behind it. If it's not spring or summer, we suggest arranging the trip with the organising company in advance. At the spa, they can help you contact the company or arrange it directly.

Characteristic A Arnoia peppers are presented in very different ways, even in ice cream

At dinner time, we can order traditional products to enjoy along with our Ribeiro wine and, if it's season, enjoy one of the region's star dishes: the well-known A Arnoia peppers. They are delicious fried, stuffed or in an omelette. There's even pepper ice cream. The product's own festival – an official Tourist Event – is held in August.

| day 2 |

On the winery route, admiring the grandeur of the territory and the Jewish Quarter in Ribadavia

Pazo Casanova winery

In the morning, after the breakfast, we head to the town of Santa Cruz de Arrabaldo, near the city of Ourense. We'll tour the Pazo Casanova winery, a half hour away via the A-52, N-120 and OU-0522 provincial road. After passing through the stone walls of the rural eighteenth-century pazo belonging to the winery, on the estate's slopes we'll see Treixadura, Albariño, Godello and Loureiro vines covering an area of ten westward-orientated hectares.

During the tour, they'll explain the traditional wine-making process the winery follows. We'll also find out about the research projects they are engaged in aimed at contributing to the development and evolution of local wines, in collaboration with the Galicia's Viticulture and Oenology Station. At the end of the tour, we'll sample their wines and pomace brandies.



> Bodega Pazo Casanova

The Viña Meín winery

The Viña Meín winery is located in the parish of San Clodio do Ribeiro, and we can tour it and sample their wines.

Surrounded by a plantation of Treixadura, the grand old manor is now a charming rural accommodation, a pioneer in wine tourism in Galicia; from it, we can see how the grapevines extend up the mountainside. The newly built winery is located at the foot of the building for guests, and has used the original stones of the old winery.



> Bodega Viña Meín



> Vineyards of Pazo Casanova

The Cistercian Monastery of San Clodio

Just a kilometre away is the Monastery of San Clodio – since 1931, a Historic/Artistic Monument – considered the cradle of O Ribeiro wines. Cistercian monks took up residence in it in the twelfth century and their work boosted the cultivation of wine grapes in area. The soil, the gentle slopes and its western mid-day orientation did the rest of the work. Today it houses a monument/hotel. Access is free and we can stroll through the gardens or visit the cloisters. In the church, the altar stands out as well as the curious *Mudéjar*-style coffered ceiling under the choir.

Meat, wine and coffee liqueur

Back in the hotel restaurant, we'll have the opportunity to sample some *carne ao barro* or suckling lamb, or choose other spots in the parish offering menus based on traditional cuisine washed down with local wines. After dessert, it is customary to order a glass of coffee liqueur which is popular in the province of Ourense.

When we finish, we can take a walk to the **mediaeval San Clodio Bridge**, which – together with the monastery – complete the historical/artistic complex. Take a look at the cross that crowns its central arch. On the outer wall is a figure of a saint who could be San Clodio.

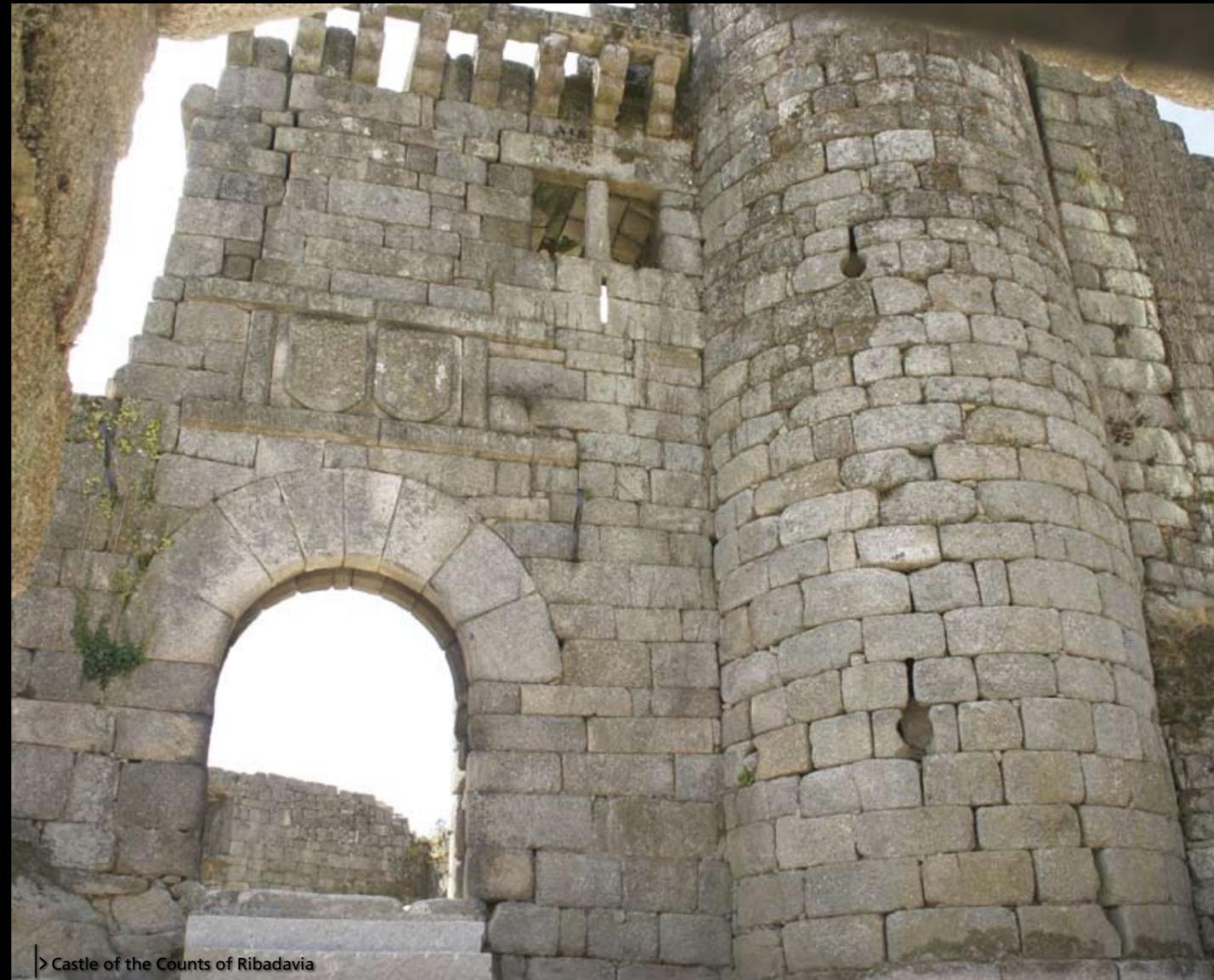


> Inquisition building Ribadavia

The Jewish Quarter of Ribadavia

We'll devote the rest of our afternoon to wandering Ribadavia, the capital of O Ribeiro, where the **Viño do Ribeiro Wine Festival** – the oldest in Galicia and an official Tourist Event – is held in late April or early May. The wine also attracted a large Jewish community to this town, and ended up becoming half of its population.

We can enter the Jewish Quarter between the Praza Maior square and the wall. Among its shops is one that prepares exquisite Jewish sweets following ancient recipes. **The House of the Inquisition** is a beautiful sixteenth-century building that you'll be able to recognise because there are five coats-of-arms of families linked to the Holy Office who went to the village to watch for and execute Jews who were false converts.



> Castle of the Counts of Ribadavia

A visit to the ruins of the castle of the Counts of Ribadavia

The ruins of the castle of the Counts of Ribadavia – at the top of the village – are its iconic symbol. Abandoned since the seventeenth century, its grandiosity as one of Galicia's largest mediaeval fortresses can still be seen. We invite you to pass through its three remaining gates in the wall: the Porta de Cerca Oeste, facing the Alameda; the Porta de Celanova, to the south, connected to the river, and the Porta Falsa, to the southeast in direction of the mill. You can take a break from your walk at the **viewpoint in Praza Buján square**, where you can watch the River Avia as it flows by, finally ending up in the River Miño.

Ribadavia offers many bars with a very wide selection of wines in addition to those of the O Ribeiro Designation of Origin. They are an excellent choice for tapas and dinner. Some of these establishments provide evening entertainment with live music from local groups.

| day 3 |

Treatment at the A Arnoia spa or a boat ride

After breakfast, we encourage you to continue taking advantage of the mineral-based medicinal properties of the A Arnoia spa, where you can enjoy a massage or a beauty, health or relaxation treatment. If you prefer, you can go down to the pier, rent a small rowboat and navigate the calm water. Another alternative is to stroll along the shore and admire the scenery, or enjoy a drink in the small, rustic bar surrounded by gardens and wooden tables.



> Festival of Ribeiro wine



> Ribadavia



> San Clodio Monastery

Laias and O Ribeiro wines

The culture of wine and hot springs are closely linked in the lands of the O Ribeiro region in inland Galicia. Its rugged terrain, a mix of rivers and mountains, create beautiful landscapes but also hold fabulous fortified Iron Age villages, shrines, churches and monasteries, considered the cradle of the excellent wines they produce. Today, these wines are protected by the O Ribeiro Designation of Origin, and we encourage you to discover their wineries and rich heritage.



> Fortified pre-Roman Iron Age village of San Cibrao



START_ Cenlle
END_ Ourense
DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_

- Pazo Casanova winery_ www.pazocasanova.com
- Viña Meín winery_ www.vinamein.com
- Laias spa. Tel_ 988 280 409



5
EXPERIENCE

day 1 |
Cenlle

- 1_ Town of Cenlle
- Municipalities of Punxín and San Amaro
- 2_ San Cibrao de Las fortified pre-Roman Iron Age village
- Cenlle
- 3_ Laias spa

day 2 |
Leiro

- 4_ Viña Meín winery
- 5_ San Clodio Monastery
- 6_ San Clodio mediaeval bridge
- Ourense
- 7_ Pazo Casanova winery
- Cenlle
- 3_ Laias spa

day 3 |
Ourense

- 8_ As Burgas Fountain
- 9_ Ourense Cathedral
- 10_ Praza Maior - square
- 11_ Church of Santa Eufemia

| day 1 |

From Cenlle to Galicia's biggest acropolis, the fortified pre-Roman Iron Age village of San Cibrao de Las

We propose starting off from Cenlle, a town on the shores of the River Miño where its waters accumulate due to the Castrelo de Miño reservoir. Its hot springs – which gush forth at more than 50 degrees – allow us to benefit from this resource in modern facilities.

We recommend that you get there early in the afternoon; that way, you'll be able to use the time to schedule a visit to one of the interesting local heritage sites such as the spectacular **fortified pre-Roman Iron Age village of San Cibrao de Las** – also known as “A Cidade” – very close to Cenlle, which straddles the municipalities of San

Amaro and Punxín. It is considered to be Galicia's largest. The surface area inside its walls covers nearly 100,000 m², 9,000 of which are part of the acropolis.

Among the many items of the village that will grab your attention is one of its most unique: the water tank/fountain next to the west gate of the outer wall. The fort is known to have been inhabited between 200 BC and AD 200 by which time this culture was already in decline, hence the obvious signs of Romanisation seen in the acropolis. The entire village, located on the top of a gentle hill, is surrounded by a beautiful landscape of rolling hills and native vegetation.

A balneotherapy session in Laias

After our tour, we suggest you put the final touch on the afternoon with a spa therapy session in the Laias hot springs facilities. It is documented that the King of León Bermudo II did so as well; in 999 he visited this region accompanied by Prince Alfonso to recover from the gout he was suffering, as he knew of the hyperthermal water's healing properties. Today, we know that the water is predominantly bicarbonated and alkaline. Enjoying a swim in the heated outdoor pool brings health benefits but also excellent views as well, as it is like a balcony from which you can contemplate the calm waters of the River Miño in the Castrelo de Miño reservoir. If we're in the mood, we can also enjoy a health, relaxation or beauty treatment.

As long as there's water in the Miño, there'll be wine in O Ribeiro.

We wash down the best local delicacies with a glass of Ribeiro

For dinner, there is a wide variety of quality local products for delighting our palates. Next to a glass of DO Ribeiro wine, we might choose **Cea-style bread** and a plate of **á feira-style octopus**, prepared as they do in the nearby town of O Carballiño which is famous for its *pulpeiras*, accompanied by **cachelos** (potatoes) and some **A Arnoia** peppers, if in season. If we prefer meat, we can opt for a **cachucha** (pig's head) or **lacón con grelos**.

"Mentras auga teña o Miño, no Ribeiro non falta viño".

Popular saying

| day 2 |

We explore the places where the monks brought the first grape vines at the beginning of the last millennium

After breakfast, we suggest that you begin to delve into the local wine culture with a tour of one of the wineries covered by the Ribeiro Designation of Origin. The Cistercian Monastery of San Clodio in the nearby municipality of Leiro is considered the seed of the birth of the local wines, to where the religious order's monks brought the first grape vines early in the last millennium.

There are also local examples of the Designation of Origin's wineries, such as the one at **Viña Mein**, in the parish of San Clodio, which can introduce you to the history, production and characteristics of the wines grown here. If you visit, you'll be able to walk among the vineyards of a plantation of Treixadura vines, one of the white grape varieties preferably

used by the Designation of Origin, and tour the winery's facilities. Next to the vineyard is a restored traditional construction and refurbished as rural accommodation; you can see the vineyards ascending the slopes from its gallery. We'll finish off our visit by tasting the wines produced by the winery, accompanied by some snacks or tapas, which are so popular in Galicia.

A visit to the Monastery of San Clodio

We recommend that afterwards you get to know the Monastery of San Clodio, which has been converted into a four-star monument/hotel that is open to visitors. You may stroll through its gardens and among the arcades of its cloisters, or enter its Romanesque church, inside of which is an interesting altarpiece and a curious coffered ceiling under the choir.

In addition, the monastery is nestled in a valley surrounded by vineyards, where walking is a delight. We encourage you approach the **mediaeval San Clodio Bridge** – dating from the fifteenth century – which features an interesting *cruceiro* in the middle. Along with the monastery, it is part of a complex granted National Historical/Artistic Monument status.



Meat, Ribeiro and coffee liqueur

At lunchtime, the area offers several restaurants, both in the San Clodio monument/hotel as well as in different country houses. In addition to the excellent DO Ribeiro wines, it is possible to enjoy some good steaks. To accompany dessert, don't forget to order a glass of coffee liqueur as the one from the neighbouring parish of Berán is justly famous.

An eighteenth-century pazo converted into a winery

When afternoon rolls around and your lunch has settled, you can head towards the town of Santa Cruz de Arrabaldo near Ourense, where we'll find an important example of the Ribeiro DO, the **Pazo Casanova winery**. Its Treixadura, Albariño, Godello and Loureira vineyards lie next to an eighteenth-century pazo belonging to the winery, and is where we'll go once we've passed its stone walls. The winery works with the Galicia's Viticulture and Oenology Station on projects aimed at the development and evolution of local wines, which we'll be able to sample along with the distilled beverages its produce.

After the tour, you can finish off the afternoon enjoying the **Laias spa** facilities before dinner.



> Praza Maior in Ourense

| day 3 |

Ourense, Galicia's spa capital

After breakfast, we suggest you visit the city of Ourense – the spa capital of Galicia – which boasts great heritage site and business appeal. The Old Town is the location of one of its symbols – the neoclassical fountain of **As Burgas** – where the water gushing from it steams from its high temperature. There are two legends: one that says that the origin of the spring is in a dormant volcano under the city, and the other locates the volcano under the **Chapel of Santo Cristo**, in **Ourense Cathedral**, a must-see.

In the historical district, you'll also find the **Praza Maior** square, a curious plaza surrounded by buildings with beautiful white galleries, and the **Church of Santa Eufemia**, on the way to the city's modern part and connected via Rúa do Paseo. This is Ourense's great pedestrian artery, full of dynamism and eye-catching commercial establishments, especially shops with fashionable footwear and textiles.



> As Burgas



> Ponte Vella (Old Bridge) in Ourense

In the land of Ribeira Sacra Designation of Origin

The Ribeira Sacra, in Galicia's interior, is like a heart pumping life through the Rivers Miño and Sil. They both created a landscape of steep canyons mixed with native forests and Mediterranean species as a result of their special microclimate. The grapevine – grown here on slopes that seemingly defy gravity – is particularly grateful for it. Tasting these wines, losing your sight in an abyss of water or taking shelter in genuine Romanesque gems – the cradle of Galician monasticism – are part of this destination designed to flood the senses.

> Vineyards in the River Sil canyon



EXPERIENCE

- day 1 |
Monforte de Lemos
1_ Town of Monforte de Lemos
2_ Monuments of San Vicente
3_ Centro de Interpretación do Viño da Ribeira Sacra (Interpretation Centre)
- day 2 |
Sober
4_ Parish of Doade
5_ Water sport centre
6_ Canyons of the River Sil
Esgos
7_ Monastery of San Pedro de Rocas
Parada de Sil
8_ Monastery of Santa Cristina
Nogueira de Ramuín
9_ Monastery of Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil
Sober
10_ Sober wineries
11_ Amandi viewpoint
Monforte de Lemos
1_ Town of Monforte de Lemos
- day 3 |
Monforte de Lemos
12_ School of the Piarists
13_ Convent of the Poor Clares Mothers
14_ River Cabe riverwalk

START_ Monforte de Lemos
END_ Monforte de Lemos
DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_
→ Centro de Interpretación do Viño da Ribeira Sacra. Tel_ 982 105 303 / www.centrovino-ribeirasacra.com
→ Doade Yacht Club. Tel_ 982 260 196



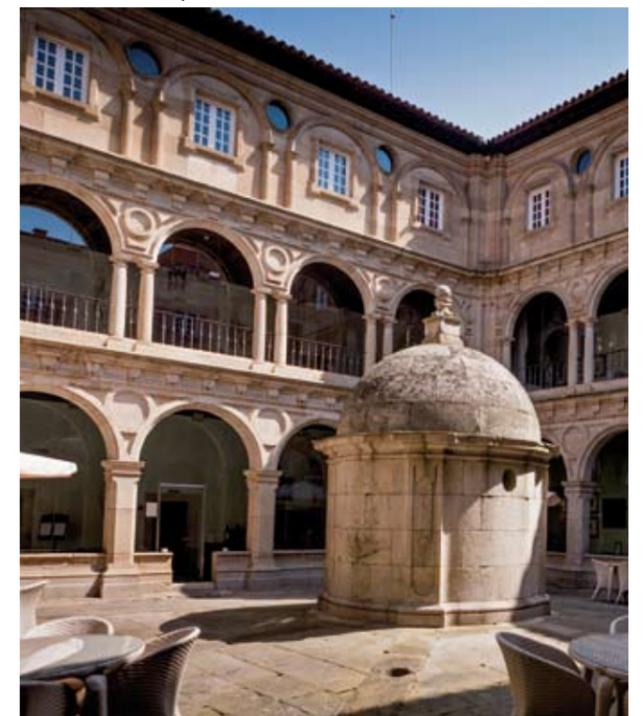
| day 1 |

On the origins of the city of Monforte

We'll reach Monforte de Lemos – capital and geographic centre of the Ribeira Sacra – at dusk. It offers varied and excellent quality accommodation. It has a **state-owned hotel** on the very site where the city first appeared – Mount Saint Vincent – which occupies the premises of the **neoclassical monastery of San Vicente** and the **Palace of the Counts of Lemos**. Along with the **Keep** – which you can visit – they form an imposing monumental complex that maintains its layout as a fortified city surrounded by a wall, large sections of which still remain.

This lookout point offers a spectacular view over the city. Very close and without leaving the area inside the wall, you can tour its mediaeval borough. A large Jewish community settled here, and traces of it are evident on Zapaterías, Falagueira and Pescaderías Streets and – outside the walled area – in the Praza de España square.

> Cloister of the state-owned hotel in Monforte

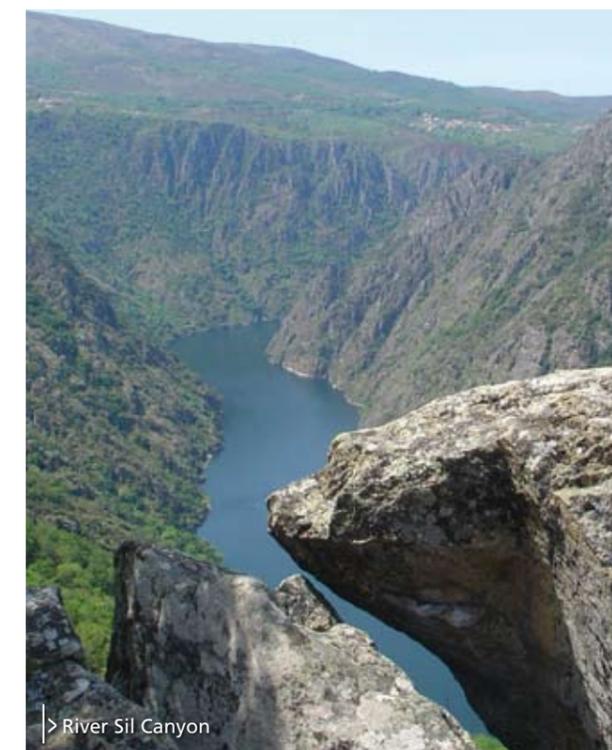




> Monastery of Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil



> Catamaran wharf in the River Sil



> River Sil Canyon

A visit to the “do Viño da Ribeira Sacra” Interpretation Centre

We recommend you visit the “do Viño da Ribeira Sacra” Interpretation Centre. In this historic building, the secrets of winemaking and of the local varieties – of which there are more than 90 – will be revealed to us. And its shops offer them all, along with a selection of other Galician and Spanish wines. Its modern exhibition space, equipped with audiovisual resources, photographs, sculptures and paintings, shows the extraordinary uniqueness and natural, artistic, climatological and scenic wealth of the Ribeira Sacra. This is an overview that will prepare us for absorbing the intense feelings these places will arouse in us the next day.

We’ll bid farewell to the complex in its **tapas bar**. Here, we can delight our palate with some Mencía and allow ourselves to be tempted by the touch of signature plates featuring Galician products of the highest quality and presented as creative tapas. We’ll then return to our road to the hotel, where we’ll enjoy dinner.

> Centro de Interpretación do Viño da Ribeira Sacra (Interpretation Centre)



| day 2 |

An adventure through the canyons of the Sil, by catamaran or tourist train

A hearty breakfast at the hotel will be required to start our adventure in the River Sil’s canyons, steep granite breaks, symbol of the Ribeira Sacra landscape. There are two options for exploration: one in the depths of the canyon, on the waters of the Sil, and the other a bird’s eye view. Equally captivating and exciting, we don’t have to miss either, if we get properly organised. We can do both from **Doade**, in the municipality of Sober, about 13 kilometres from Monforte de Lemos via the LU-903 road.

One of the **catamarans** navigating the River Sil for two hours will depart by mid-morning. The landscape that rises above our eyes will leave us agape. *Soutos* (chestnut groves), *carballeiras* (oak groves) as well as Mediterranean

species like the olive tree seem to be scaling the sides of the gorges, staining them with an incredible range of red, yellow and green during the autumn.

The cradle of Galician monasticism

We’ll also see how Romanesque churches and chapels dot this terrain. We are in the cradle of Galician monasticism, with outstanding examples such as the **Romanesque Monastery of San Pedro de Rocas** and the **Monasteries of Santa Cristina** and **Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil**, this latter converted into a state-owned hotel. The cultivation of grapevines, extending along these near-cliffs, on terraces – also called *socalcos* – will powerfully attract our attention.

We eat in a typical winery

After the river trip, it's a sure bet you've got an appetite and a desire to sample some of the Ribeira Sacra DO wines made from these grapes, almost all of which are of the Mencia variety. A lunchtime, it's inevitably that the wine be put on an equal footing with the cuisine. One recommended alternative is to visit **Sober wineries**, which offer an excellent restaurant service, with the added incentive of enjoying the buildings of traditional rural architecture in the area. Not surprisingly, the Ribeira Sacra was the setting chosen by the first country house accommodation opened in Galicia.



> The Keep from Monforte

The meaning of "heroic viticulture"

After our post-lunch chat, we'll be ready for new experiences, like a ride on the **tourist train** departing Doade. We'll spend a couple of hours winding through the surroundings over asphalt tracks that will carry us soaring through the canyons. Stopping at strategic viewpoints such as the one in **Amandi** – famous for its wine fair, recognised as an Official Tourist Event in Galicia – is obligatory. From here, we will be amazed as we see the grapevines growing on almost-vertical earthen banks, and then comprehend the meaning of the expression "heroic viticulture".

To settle our emotions, the tour includes a stop at a large winery where we can sample their wines as we learn more about the production of the Ribeira Sacra Designation of Origin. Back to Doade, it's time to retrace our steps to Monforte de Lemos to have a rest in the hotel. Before, however, we can enjoy some **tapas** in the city, a deeply rooted local custom.

| day 3 |

Strolling through Monforte

After breakfast at the hotel, and if we have time before starting our drive home, we recommend a short walk through the Old Town of Monforte de Lemos. Concentrated in a few square metres are many valuable surprises: from two works by El Greco in the important gallery in the **College of the Piarists** – known as the "Galician Escorial" – to one of the most important collections of religious art existing in Spain, in the **Convent of the Poor Clares Mothers**.

Stretching our legs on the central boardwalk along the **River Cabe** is another option to fill us with energy before our return trip. We are likely to find small boats for rowing its calm waters; canoeists and fishermen will add colour to the scenery.



> Palace of the Counts of Lemos



> School of the Piarists Monforte



> Walk along the shores of the River Cabe

In the land of the Valdeorras Designation of Origin

The Valdeorras region is an area of great geographical contrast. It combines proximity to Pena Trevinca – known as “the roof of Galicia” – with its deep river basins through which flow the River Sil and its tributaries. Grape vines are at home in its red clay soil. Slate not only adorns the roofs of traditional buildings, but also makes a soil suitable for maturing grapes. These grapes – converted into wine – go to sleep underground, in the same caves that the Romans dug centuries ago in their search for gold.



> Bridge in Petín. Valdeorras



START_ O Barco de Valdeorras
END_ O Barco de Valdeorras
DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_

→ Pazo do Castro_ www.pazodocastro.com
→ Alán del Val winery_ www.alandeval.com
→ Joaquín Rebolledo winery_ www.joaquinrebolledo.com

→ A Coroa winery_ www.acoroa.com
→ Godeval winery_ www.godeval.com



7
EXPERIENCE

- day 1 |
O Barco de Valdeorras
1_ Town of O Barco de Valdeorras
2_ Pazo de Os Flórez
- day 2 |
A Rúa
3_ Town of A Rúa
4_ San Martiño Reservoir
5_ Alán del Val winery
6_ “La Mina” wine cellar/cave (Joaquín Rebolledo winery)
7_ A Coroa winery
8_ O Aguillón recreational area
- day 3 |
O Barco de Valdeorras
9_ Monastery of Xagoaza
10_ Church of San Miguel
11_ Godeval winery

| day 1 |

Pieces of mediaeval history

We suggest a route through the region and valley of Valdeorras, shaped by the passage of the River Sil between mountains. The town of O Barco de Valdeorras is a strategic point from which to explore the area. We recommend that you arrive at your chosen accommodation in the early afternoon. The hotel offer is varied, both in the town itself as well as in its parishes.





The *botelo*, chestnuts and mushrooms dominate on local menus

For dinner, the options are extensive. When looking at the menu, remember the saying common here: “From the sea, grouper fish; from O Barco, the *botelo* (a pig-slaughter dish)”. *Botelo* is a product of a pig slaughter, a real delight for the palate. Other well-known local products include chestnuts – which have a place of honour in current Valdeorras cuisine – along with the great variety of mushrooms from its mountains. The glass will be a perfect fit for either a red Mencia or a white Godello of the Valdeorras Designation of Origin.



> Pazo do Castro

> Androlla festival

From the tradition of the pazos to wine therapy treatments

Hotels, houses and pazos retain pieces of the mediaeval history of this city, and hence are worth a visit. This is the case of the **Pazo dos Flórez** or Pazo do Castro, converted into a hotel. It is located in a place called “Vila do Castro”, five minutes from the centre, in the upper part of O Barco de Valdeorras. This spot offers a wide view of the plain on which this large town sits. In 1630, Don Pedro Quiroga Losada had it built to found his estate, which could subsequently, by law, be inherited exclusively by the first son of each successive generation.

Its original appearance – different to the rest of the Galician pazos – is eye-catching. We are received by its façade comprising six arches made of local red stone over a large covered porch and its slate roofs, a hallmark of the region, whose economy revolves around its mining. Declared an historical/artistic building together with its chapel, it has been refitted as a four-star monument/hotel. The interior retains its original furniture, decor and artwork. Poke around a bit and you’ll find a *palleira* (haystack) attached to a small museum of carriages and riding equipment.

If you’ve arrived early, you can take good advantage of your time and add a little afternoon relaxation in the pazo’s spa. Wraps or massages with oils extracted from grapes are some of the wine-therapy treatments that are included in the offer of the wide world of wine and its culture.



> Alán del Val winery



> Joaquín Rebolledo winery



> Vineyards in Valdeorras

| day 2 |

Visiting wineries in A Rúa

We’ll devote our morning to getting to know the wines of the Valdeorras Designation of Origin, guided by its winemakers in the vineyards themselves. We’ll drive over to the nearby town of A Rúa, where the largest number of wineries with that designation are located. We’ll take the N-120 and then the turnoff to the town indicated. During the approximately quarter-hour drive, its beauty will unfold before us. The embedded course of the River Sil we had been following widens here and forms the **San Martiño reservoir**, a highly valuable natural area due to its flora and fauna; inside, it contains several islands.

The winemakers show us the secrets of their wines

There are many wineries that deserve our attention due to their great uniqueness, and so we will use much of the day visiting them and talking with the winemakers about varieties, tilling the vineyard, pruning, harvesting, processing, climate, soil or any other aspect we’d like to know about this land’s ties to wine.

In the morning we can accompany the **Alán de Val** winemakers to the **A Costiña** estate, to see the Brancellao varieties facing south on steeply sloped land. Under the slate-rich ground – which facilitates permeability and the absorption of the sun’s heat – the grapes will mature in an ideal fashion. That’s how this winery produces a wine which is exclusive to its plots, with numbered bottles that end up on the tables of the best restaurants.

Later, we’ll descend to the wine cellar/cave called “**La Mina**”, built in the eighteenth century and restored with all its structural elements intact. This is where the **Joaquín Rebolledo winery** ages wines naturally, away from noise and at a perfectly constant temperature and humidity. The barrels remain in these underground stone rooms until the winemakers consider it to be the perfect moment for the wines to be released to the market.

The restaurants of A Rúa don’t neglect local products such as *botelo* or *androlla*, rib pie, river eels, roast kid or game meats.

A winery established over an old fortified Roman Iron Age village

After lunch, we climb to **Mount A Coroa**, where an ancient Roman fort used to sit and where a winery of the same name now does. The owners rebuilt it over a building that was more than 300 years old, using only local materials such as slate, stone, wood and clay.

Our eyes will immediately escape to a small circular building of jagged stone topped by a chimney. This is the air vent used in the cave, hidden under its feet. Here is where the fermentation process of the liquid gold that is Godello takes place. The place's magic and mystery will increase when you find out that 300 metres north of here the Romans dug into the mountain for gold, and 200 metres to the south, the *Via Nova* – Roman road number XVIII in the *Antonine Itinerary* – used to cross; it connected Astorga with the Portuguese city of Braga.



> Vineyards in Valdeorras



> Spa in the Pazo do Castro

A nature walk

If by the end of the tour with the winemakers it is not yet too late, we suggest you take a walk in the **O Aguillón** green space, which surrounds the San Martiño reservoir on the entire right side of the River Sil where it passes through A Rúa. It is the perfect place to watch the birds that come to nest here. More than a dozen different duck families have been recorded among them.

When it's dinner time, if you decide to eat in A Rúa, the **pork knuckle** is a specialty for which the municipality is well-known, honouring this dish in an annual food fair.



> San Martiño reservoir, from O Aguillón. A Rúa



> Monastery of Xagoaza

| day 3 |

From Romanesque churches to modern wine-making technologies

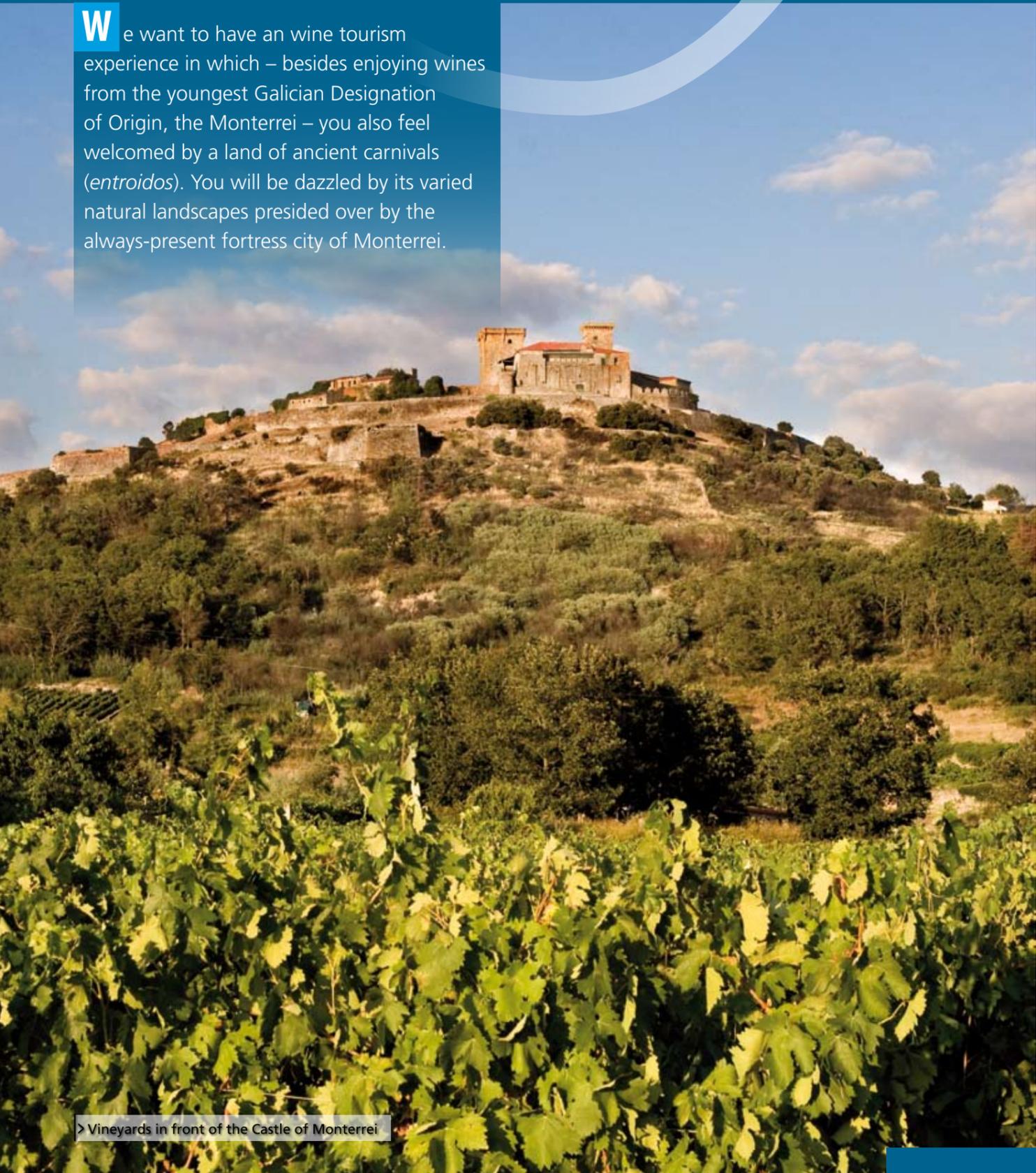
Before starting your return, you can take one last walk to the **Monastery of Xagoaza** – which originally was a priory of the Knights Templar – and the **Church of San Miguel**, where a Maltese cross carved in stone can be seen at the top. It takes just over half an hour from the centre of O Barco de Valdeorras to reach this beautiful mediaeval complex dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that, after being restored, houses the modern facilities of the **Godeval winery**, which we can visit. The Romanesque architecture of these buildings and an almost pristine natural environment will transport us to a time past. By contrast, the interior of the winery incorporates the latest technology for producing a varietal Godello wine with the protected designation of origin.



> Vineyards

In the land of the Monterrei Designation of Origin

We want to have an wine tourism experience in which – besides enjoying wines from the youngest Galician Designation of Origin, the Monterrei – you also feel welcomed by a land of ancient carnivals (*entroidos*). You will be dazzled by its varied natural landscapes presided over by the always-present fortress city of Monterrei.



> Vineyards in front of the Castle of Monterrei



EXPERIENCE

- day 1 |
Monterrei
 1_ Parish of Vilaza
 2_ Pazo de Espada
 3_ Pazo de Limia
 4_ Church of San Salvador
 5_ Monterrei fortress
Verín
 6_ Town of Verín
- day 2 |
Monterrei
 7_ Vía Arxétea winery
Verín
 8_ Tapias Mariñán winery
Vilariño de Conso
 9_ O Invernadeiro Nature Park
- day 3 |
Verín
 10_ Stroll along the River Tamega
 11_ Casa do Asistente
 12_ Cabreiroá spa

START_ Monterrei
 END_ Verín
 DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_
 → Vía Arxétea winery_ **687 409 618**
 → Tapias Mariñán winery_ www.tapiasmarinhan.com
 → "O retiro do Conde" country house_ www.oretirodoconde.com

→ Cabreiroá spa_ **988 590 015**
www.cabreiroa.es



> View of the valley from the Castle of Monterrei

| day 1 |

The beauty and grandeur of Monterrei Valley

We suggest you arrive in Monterrei Valley – on the shores of the River Tamega – early in the afternoon. We are in the southeastern part of the province of Ourense, near Portugal. After leaving our bags at the hotel, we'll begin this wine tourism adventure exploring the beautiful towns in the valley. The parish of Vilaza, in the municipality of Monterrei, is an excellent starting point due to its proximity to the road connecting to the Rías Baixas Motorway (A-52), which gives the town excellent accessibility without disturbing its tranquil lifestyle.





> Monterrei fortress



> Pazo dos Condes

Pazos converted into country home accommodation

The town retains the architecture of its traditional pazos. Some are used for rural tourism, such as the **Pazo de Espada** (formerly known as Pazo Blanco-Raxoi), which is accessible only to guests, who can enjoy a well-stocked wine cellar filled with Monterrei Designation of Origin wines. Opposite is the so-called **Pazo de Limia**; its entrance gate is crowned by a sundial and its main façade features a glassed-in gallery and a characteristic coat-of-arms carved in stone surrounded by baroque decoration.

One of Vilaza's main peculiarities is its **baroque Church of San Salvador**. Attached to it is a large tower of older construction called the "Tower of the Templars".



> San Salvador de Vilaza

Visit the mediaeval fortress of Monterrei

Vilaza is constantly under the impetuous gaze of the mediaeval fortress of Monterrei – the icon of the region, the municipality, the valley and the label of its designation of origin. Its majestic presence exerts a pervasive influence on this land bordering Portugal, whose frontier it has been watching over for 800 years. We'll use the afternoon to visit this acropolis, the largest in Galicia for many authors.

Arriving from Vilaza to the N-525, we'll turn left towards Ourense until reaching a turnoff to the right that indicates the Parador de Verín state-owned hotel. From the hotel's grounds at the foot of the castle, we'll walk up the hill. This is the best way to take a look at the triple wall and its buildings, built between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries. Firstly, we find the **Pilgrims' Hospital**, founded in the fifteenth century. Let's not forget that this region is the gateway to Galicia from the Plateau and Portugal and an essential reference along the Vía da Prata (the Southeast Way) to Santiago de Compostela.

Next, we'll walk the streets of the town until we reach the last gate, which we cross through in order to reach the inner ward. From here, we access the **Keep**, an impressive mass of stone 22 metres high. From it, you can oversee much of the River Támega's basin, a valley dotted with vineyards, orchards, small villages and a large town, like Verín. You will also find the **Ladies' Tower**, smaller and perfectly nestled in the **Pazo dos Condes**, a Renaissance building with an ornate arch supported by columns. The **Church of Santa María** completes the complex; on one of its façades is a Christ surrounded by anthropomorphic and mythological figures which will amaze you.

In these surroundings which transport us to another time, it's



> River Támega. Vilaza

not hard for us to imagine the legends surrounding the place that tell of the unfaithful countess who – fearing the wrath of her husband – falls from the tower to the inner ward, known the "green pit", 14 metres deep.

Although the area outside of the fort is open, if we are interested in accessing the interior of the keep, the Pazo dos Condes and the church, visiting hours are daily from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm.

And, to eat, octopus á feira-style, cod or traditional stew

After the visit, we can dine in **Verín**, accompanying the Monterrei DO wines with *á feira*-style octopus or codfish. The traditional Galician stew (*cocido*) and all of the products related to the pig slaughter – such as *androlla* or *cachucha* – are also a good option. These delicacies are linked to the *Entroido* (Carnival), here declared an official National Tourist Event, since they are enjoyed with increased delight this time of year.

> "Entroido" in Verín



Approaching the art of wine

After a hearty breakfast, in the morning the Monterrei winemakers await us. Since the territory that makes up the designation of origin is relatively small, we'll have a majority of the wineries of this DO scattered around the Tâmega Valley at hand.

If we have chosen our accommodation in Vilaza, we can visit the **Via Arxétea winery**, a family-owned business. Its owner will guide us among the vines and show us the differences between a Treixadura and a Godello, the white varieties most commonly grown in the area. We'll touch the vines and their leaves and grapes in order to check their texture and hardness. We can be present when the grapes are thinned, pruned or harvested, depending on the time of year. The production process is explained in the winery; we'll discover how all the aromas of the grapes are captured so that they can be transmitted to the wines before they go through the press. And finally, we'll sample the wines produced here.

From Vilaza, we'll go to the town of Pazos in the municipality of Verín, headed to the **Tapias Mariñán** winery. The winery follows the design of a typical local country house, as is built from granite. The vineyard sits on flat land next

to it, with a large mountainous backdrop halfway distant. Walking through the vineyards and tasting the Godello and Treixadura white wines or the red Mencías will take us to mid-day. Nearby, we'll find a traditional restaurant that prepares traditional cuisine and whose specialty is **grilled meats**.

The beauty of the O Invernadeiro Nature Park

After the post-lunch table conversation, we'll top off our day discovering the O Invernadeiro Nature Park in Ourense's central massif, which leaves part of its mark north of Monterrei. This visit has to be authorised in advance, since the land is the property of the Xunta de Galicia.

From Verín, we'll take county road 114 OU to Laza and, once there, we'll take the turnoff to Campobeceros. This is the best place to be completely seduced by the natural beauty of this land, in a spot that has always been uninhabited. We'll find an abundance of holly, rowan and yew in the park. Eagles and hawks soar overhead and we may even spot a vulture. The ground is the dominion of the wolf, wild boar, marten and ermine.

There are five possible guided routes on which we can track roe deer and deer. We suggest you choose the one that leads to the glacial cirque and the lovely **Os Arcos waterfall**. Inundated with sensations, we head back to the hotel seeking dinner and rest.

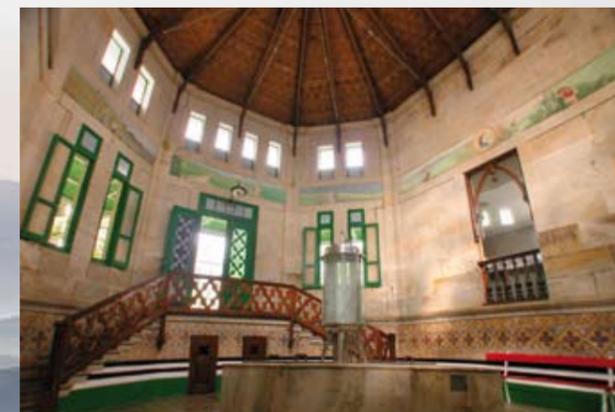
Walk through Verín

Before leaving, we recommend you take a more relaxed morning walk through the village of Verín, following the course of the River Tâmega via the riverwalk to Alameda. If you wish to do your final shopping for the trip, you can step into the shopping area.

Fans of heraldry should not skip what is known as the "**Casa do Asistente**" next to the bridge that crosses the River Tâmega. The beautiful coat-of-arms on its façade is impressive. This building was built for the Count of Monterrei's assistant, hence its name. Today it is the headquarters of the Tourism Office and a pilgrim hostel. It also has two large exhibition halls.



> Casa do Asistente



> Cabreiroá spa

A territory rich in medicinal mineral waters

This region is famous for its medicinal mineral waters. Cabreirorá, Sousa and Fontenova are some of its springs, and are currently also prestigious firms that sell their water. If we want to visit them, the most unique is the **Cabreiroá spa**, one kilometre from the village. It is surrounded by a large area of forest and gardens where you can go for a stroll and where we will see the gazebo for those using the waters. Inside there is a large transparent tank where the water arrives directly from the spring, which occasionally bubbles. This is because the waters exit with some degree of natural carbonation, which is what makes them so special. We can try as much as we want from a tap connected to the tank and check its medicinal mineral properties declared for public use in 1906.



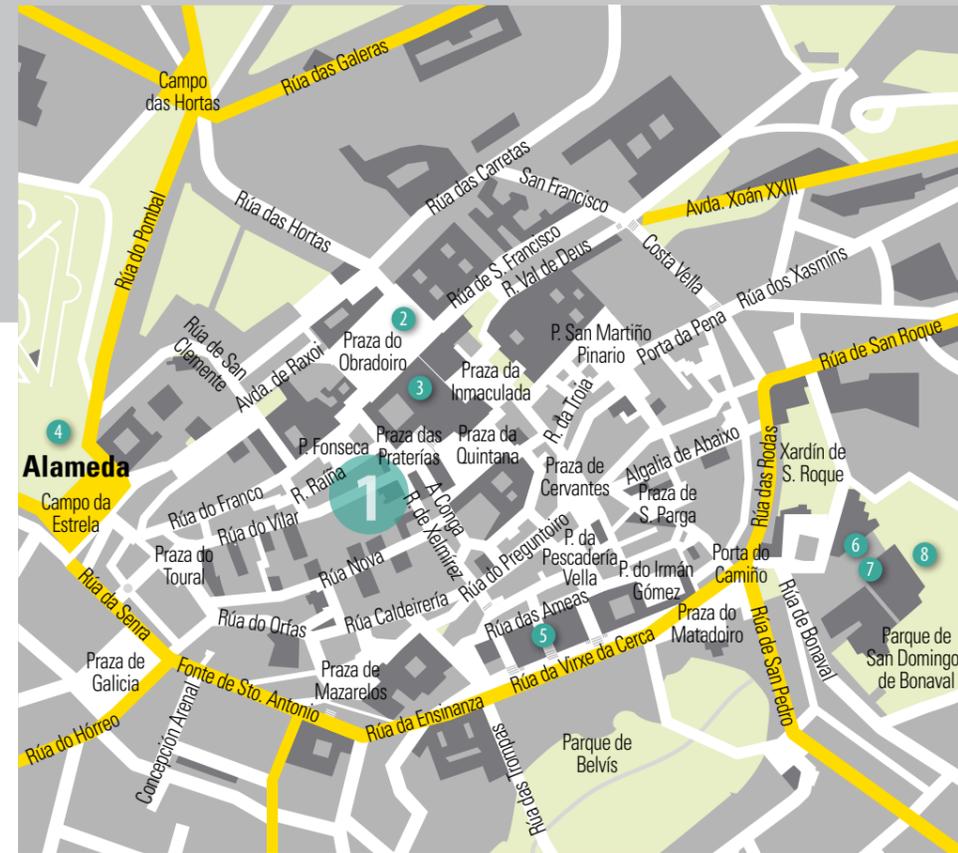
> O Invernadeiro Nature Park

Food and wine experience in Santiago de Compostela

We suggest a getaway to Santiago de Compostela, a World Heritage Site and Galicia's capital. We'll enjoy the worldly pleasure of its exquisite cuisine and its famous wines, and our emotions will be awakened when we contemplate the beauty of its cathedral, where we'll take advantage of our opportunity to embrace the Apostle.



> Fresh Produce market



9 EXPERIENCE

- day 1 | Santiago de Compostela
- 1_ Old Town
 - 2_ Praza do Obradoiro - square
 - 3_ Cathedral of Santiago
- day 2 | Santiago de Compostela
- 4_ Alameda
 - 5_ Fresh Produce Market
 - 6_ Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea (Galician Centre for Contemporary Art)
 - 7_ Museo do Pobo Galego (Museum of the Galician People)
 - 8_ Bonaval Park
- day 3 | Santiago de Compostela
- 1_ Old Town

START_ Santiago de Compostela
END_ Santiago de Compostela
DAYS_ 3

MORE INFORMATION_
→ Catedral_ www.catedraldesantiago.es
→ Mercado de Abastos_ www.mercadodeabastosdesantiago.com

→ Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea_ www.cgac.org
→ Museo do Pobo Galego_ www.museodopobo.es



| day 1 |

Praza do Obradoiro square and the cathedral, the jewels of the city

We recommend that you arrive in Santiago early in the afternoon. In the old town you will find pensions and boutique hotels in buildings wrapped in tradition and history, along with unique combinations with innovative building rehabilitations.

After you get settled, let yourselves get lost on the cobblestone carpet of its streets. The cathedral and the **Praza do Obradoiro** square are "must-see". If we stand in the centre of this square and turn around, we'll get a visual summary of all that is Santiago: spirituality in the **cathedral**; knowledge in the **Pazo de San Xerome** (home of the rector of the University of Santiago); authority in the **Pazo de Raxoi** (City Council), and welcome, in the **Hostal dos Reis Católicos** (an old pilgrims' hospital that is today a state-owned hotel). Different styles united by the granite of their buildings.



> Façade of the Cathedral of Santiago

We suggest you take a leisurely tour of the cathedral. The **Pórtico da Gloria**, a masterpiece of Romanesque art, is overwhelming. Don't miss embracing the Saint and visiting his relics. Our itinerary begins with climbing to the Apostle's niche, on top of the main altar, where his effigy may be embraced. Then, we go down to the crypt, which houses relics stored in an urn made of worked silver. The cathedral's other façades, along with their squares, are also worth of a leisurely tour.

Wine and tapas in the old town, before or after a walk along the Alameda

When you have finished, take the **Rúa do Franco**, named this way for being the place where French pilgrims used to stay. The refrigerated displays with fresh meat and aquariums with live fish and seafood at the doors of the restaurants will catch your eye. Here the best of Galicia's gastronomy is on display, so we can start with some ideas for dinner.

At the end of the street, we'll cross **Porta Faxeira** – where one of the seven doors in the mediaeval walls once stood – a natural passage connecting the Old Town with the Alameda, the large park in the centre of Santiago. It contains beautiful surprises such as a centuries-old eucalyptus, lovely camellia gardens and a small forest of old oaks. From Paseo da Ferradura you will have a front view of the cathedral, which stands out among the other historic buildings. It is a fascinating picture at any time of day, but as afternoon sets in, the light lends it a magical atmosphere.

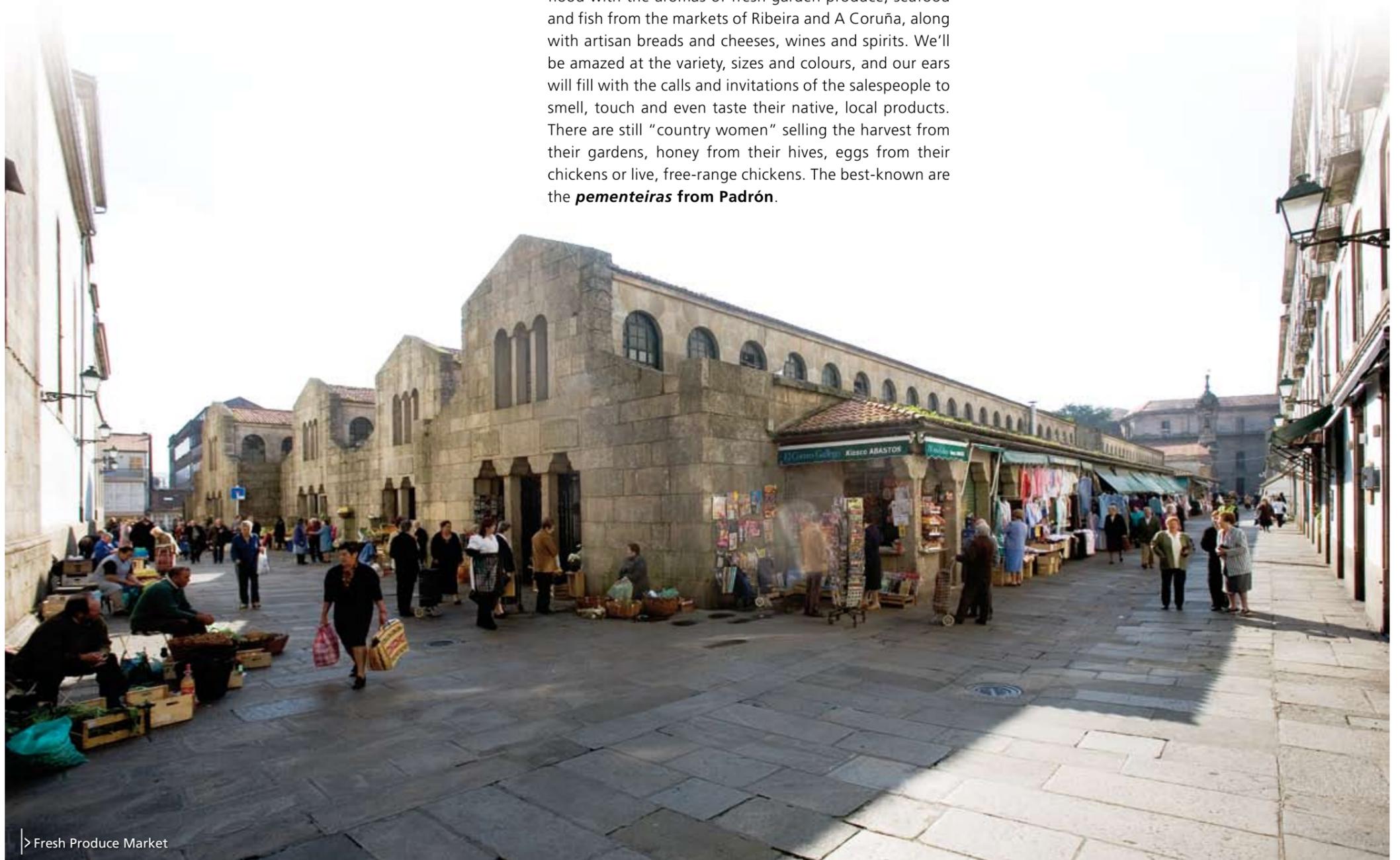
At dinner time, it is a deeply rooted custom to go to a number of establishments one after another for wine and tapas in the Old Town, although the exquisite variety of restaurants in Santiago also invites you to enjoy a full-course meal. When night falls, these streets offer more possibilities. One is a quiet drink meeting the locals and enjoying the evening strolls through the nostalgic, yellow-lit streets that transmit romance.



> Rúa do Franco



> Interior of the Fresh Produce Market



> Fresh Produce Market

| day 2 |

The fresh produce market, the second-most-visited place after the cathedral

After breakfast, we suggest a short walk to the fresh produce market, the second-most-visited place after the Cathedral of Santiago. To get the most from your visit, you can sign up for a **culinary workshop**, which includes the experience of purchasing the ingredients here and then cooking them.

In the corridors of the square, our sense of smell will be flooded with the aromas of fresh garden produce, seafood and fish from the markets of Ribeira and A Coruña, along with artisan breads and cheeses, wines and spirits. We'll be amazed at the variety, sizes and colours, and our ears will fill with the calls and invitations of the salespeople to smell, touch and even taste their native, local products. There are still "country women" selling the harvest from their gardens, honey from their hives, eggs from their chickens or live, free-range chickens. The best-known are the **pementeiras from Padrón**.

We can cook the products purchased in the market ourselves, with the help of a chef

Later, in the kitchen, the chef will guide us, but we will cook. Depending on the ingredients purchased we can make a village chicken stew, the traditional octopus *á feira*-style, meat *ao caldeiro*-style, a scallop turnover seafood cocktail or a seafood-based rice with lobster. According to our taste or style, we can choose or combine traditional and cutting edge preparations. For dessert, we'll learn to make the famous **Santiago cake**, a delicacy made of crushed almonds. While cooking, we'll savour a glass of the well-known local wines of Galician designation of origin, while exchanging culinary tips and tricks with the professionals.

Bonaval Park leads to an old cemetery, a site of many outdoor shows

After our post-lunch chat, we recommend you visit Bonaval Park, the former estate and cemetery of a Dominican convent. We enter via the promenade between the **Museum of the Galician People** and the **Galician Centre for Contemporary Art**. The promenade runs up a slope formed by paths, earthen banks and walls of shale. We'll be accompanied by the whisper of water fountains, canals and tanks and harmonious vegetation comprising magnolias, fruit trees and oaks. Along the way, you'll find a frame-shaped **sculpture by Chillida**. Try standing behind it and facing the landscape to discover a different view of the Old Town, full of roofs and chimneys. It will not be difficult to reach a **cemetery** on foot. Now deconsecrated, its magical and special acoustic environment is sometimes used for holding musical shows.

We attend a wine tasting

Afterwards, we recommend returning to the culinary workshop to round off our experience with a wine tasting led by a winemaker. You will be surprised to find that you are able to perceive the subtleties and differences between them thanks to this professional guidance. With visual, olfactory and tasting games, we can look at the green hue of a young white and the golden hue of one from the barrel; in one, a fresh apple note and, in another, more reminiscent of bread; or the varying density in the mouth. And although an expert requires hours and hours of study, our senses have enjoyed the colours, smells and flavours of the wines of Galician designations of origin.



> Museo do Pobo Galego (Museum of the Galician People) and Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea (Galician Centre for Contemporary Art)



> Façade of the cathedral's: Acibechería

| day 3 |

Shopping in the Old Town

After breakfast, a morning walk will imbue us with the liveliness and dynamism that pilgrims, locals, tourists and college students stamp on the streets of Santiago. As we walk, we can explore the active trade that exists in the Old Town, arranged an open-air shopping centre. From the **leather goods** on display in the stalls on the Rúa Nova to the **silver and jet artisans** located in the vicinity of the cathedral, we can find almost anything.

Tour of the designations of origin of Galician wines

This is an experience aimed at discovering the best wines with Galician designations of origin: Rías Baixas, O Ribeiro, Ribeira Sacra, Valdeorras and Monterrei. Walk through vineyards at the shores of sea and river, on hillsides and in valleys, on mountains and in canyons; come and visit pazos, monasteries, churches, fortified Iron Age villages and fortresses. Savour Albariño, Treixadura, Mencía, Godello, Loureira, Caíño Branco, Brancellao... up to more than 20 varieties of native grapes, combined in just the right proportions in stately, rustic or cutting-edge wineries. Rest and allow yourself to be spoiled in buildings of great historical and artistic value, in the countryside or in the city.



> O Grove and the island of A Toxa



START_ Cambados
END_ Santiago de Compostela
DAYS_ 8

MORE INFORMATION_

- Rías Baixas Designation of Origin: www.doriasbaixas.com
- O Ribeiro Designation of Origin: www.ribeiro.es
- Ribeira Sacra Designation of Origin: www.ribeirasacra.org
- Valdeorras Designation of Origin: www.dovaldeorras.tv
- Monterrei Designation of Origin: www.domonterrei.com



10

EXPERIENCE

- day 1| **Cambados**
 - 1_ Cambados state-owned hotel
 - 2_ Pazo de Fefiñáns winery
 - 3_ Fefiñáns district
 - 4_ Seafaring neighbourhood of San Tome
 - 5_ Ruins of San Sadurniño Tower
 - 6_ Museo Etnográfico e do Viño (Ethnographic and Wine Museum)
 - 7_ Ruins of the Church of Santa Mariña Dozo
 - 8_ A Pastora viewpoint
- day 2| **Vilanova de Arousa**
 - 9_ Town of Tremoedo**O Grove**
 - 10_ Port of O Grove**Baiona**
 - 11_ "La Pinta" caravel
 - 12_ Baiona state-owned hotel
- day 3| **Baiona**
 - 13_ Walk on Monte Boi**O Rosal**
 - 14_ Quinta Couselo winery**A Guarda**
 - 15_ Port of A Guarda
 - 16_ Pre-Roman Iron Age village of Santa Tegra**Tui**
 - 17_ Tui state-owned hotel
- day 4| **Tui**
 - 18_ Convent of the Poor Clares
 - 19_ Cathedral of Tui**Leiro**
 - 20_ Viña Meín winery
 - 21_ San Clodio Monastery**Nogueira de Ramuín**
 - 22_ Monastery of Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil
- day 5| **Sober**
 - 23_ Doade pier
 - 24_ Canyons of the River Sil
- day 6| **A Rúa**
 - 25_ San Martiño reservoir
 - 26_ A Coroa winery
 - 27_ O Aguillón complex**Monterrei**
 - 28_ Town of Monterrei
- day 7| **Monterrei**
 - 29_ Monterrei fortress**Verín**
 - 30_ Tapias Mariñán winery**Santiago de Compostela**
 - 31_ Hostal dos Reis Católicos
- day 8| **Santiago de Compostela**
 - 32_ Cathedral of Santiago
 - 33_ Old Town

Cambados, a stately seafaring village

The O Salnés Valley, in the heart of the Rías Baixas and protected by the Designation of Origin of the same name, will be our starting point. Its proximity to Galicia's main roadway, the Atlantic Toll Motorway (AP-9), and its connection to the O Salnés Motorway (AG-41) provide it with excellent accessibility. Within the valley, and known as the "capital of Albariño", is the town of Cambados. We recommend arriving early in the morning at this stately seafaring village, the former stronghold of a powerful Galician nobility.

Cambados offers accommodation in pazos, stately homes and country or hotel-based properties. But its flagship is the **Parador do Pazo de Bazán**, a stately eighteenth-century mansion, where De Gaulle himself once stayed. Its location right in the centre makes it easy for us to reach in just a few minutes the imposing **Praza de Fefiñáns** square, declared a Heritage Element of Cultural Interest, along with the sixteenth-century artistic complex located around it.

A visit to the Pazo de Fefiñáns winery

The impressive Pazo de Fefiñáns, whose winery we're getting ready to visit, stands out noticeably. Our tour will not only be a meeting where technology embraces tradition in making these Albariños, but also a lesson in history, heraldry and art as we walk the rooms, corridors and halls

of the pazo. We'll be seduced by the lush nature enclosed within its walls, walking through its arbour-filled vineyards and its magnificent garden of native species and ancient boxwoods. We'll conclude the tour with a tasting of some of their fine wines.

The area around Fefiñáns features restaurants where the famous seafood of the Arousa estuary can be accompanied with the "golden prince of wines", as Cunqueiro called Albariño.

History and sea

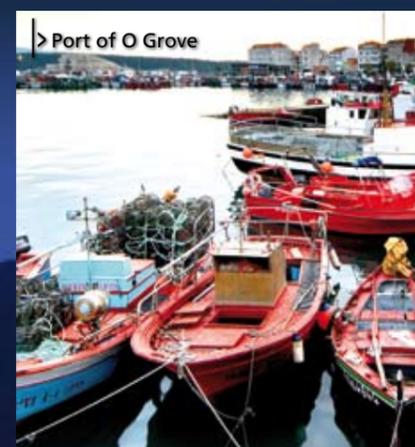
In the afternoon we suggest you continue to enjoy Cambados' beautiful palatial architecture in the aristocratic **district of Fefiñáns**. Passing through the streets of its Old Town, we'll reach the **San Tomé neighbourhood**, which has the most seafaring atmosphere in the village. We find the remains of the **San Sadurniño Tower** which, at high tide, seems to rise from the estuary.

To complete the visit, we suggest you go up to the town's highest point and discover the **Museo Etnográfico e do Viño** (Ethnographic and Wine Museum), at the foot of the **ruins of the Church of Santa Mariña Dozo**, and watch the sunset from the nearby A Pastora viewpoint, which will give you a nice view of the O Salnés Valley and the Ría de Arousa.

From the wineries of Vilanova de Arousa to the shellfish of O Grove and Baiona

After breakfast and a short walk along Cambados' boardwalk, we head for Tremoedo, in the adjoining town of **Vilanova de Arousa**. Beginning in Cambados, we find a landscape of rolling hillsides filled with trellises and wineries. When we sample their wines in tasting rooms – which are an architectural allegory of the world of wine – we understand the importance given to wine culture here. At their tables, we may be offered some shellfish delicacy such a pie of mussels, grilled scallops or seafood *minifilloas* – somewhat similar to a crêpe or pancake – to accompany the Albariño wines.

Another possibility is to head over to the town of **O Grove**, known as the "seafood capital". A good choice for lunch is the restaurants specialising in seafood positioned across from the harbour and along the boardwalk. After lunch, a tour of the **port** will put us in front of one of the world's largest shellfish beds, where mussels, oysters and scallops are grown on shellfish rafts – platforms floating in the estuary – that can be picked out with the naked eye.



> Port of O Grove



> View of Cambados



> Maritime promenade in Baiona

The Boardwalk in Baiona, a good place to relax and eat

In the afternoon, we'll move south. We may travel leisurely up part of the coast of the Rías Baixas, passing through Sanxenxo, Pontevedra, Arcade, Redondela and Vigo until we reach Baiona. Or, perhaps, we'll reach the town quickly via Atlantic Highway and then the AG-57. Once there, we'll tour the boardwalk – ideal for watching the bay and looking at the white glassed-in galleries of the waterfront – and entertain ourselves until dinner.

On the pier, there is an exact replica of the **caravel "La Pinta"**, which brought the first news that Europe knew of the discovery of America to this town more than 500 years ago. As for accommodation, the offer is varied but the flagship property – which we can see from the port – is the **state-owned hotel**, halfway between a forth and a stately pazo. It's located within the fourteenth-century walls crossing the peninsula of Monterreal and retains the three towers which the fortress used to be guarded. For dinner, we might be tempted by a **seafood plate** or **bass in turnip top sauce** from its kitchen or the menus of the restaurants along the promenade.



| day 3 |

From Baiona to Tui

When we finish breakfast, we can bid goodbye to Baiona walking a stretch of the **Paseo Monte Boi**, a path that surrounds the fort. From here, we can catch a glimpse of the Stelae and Cíes Islands, between the sea and a mountain covered with pines, willows, ash and oak.

We continue south, leaving behind the most exclusive domain of Albariño wines, towards lands where the nobility of this grape enriches the nuances provided by the Loureiro and the oh-so-delicate Caiño Branco. This formula is used in the **O Rosal valley**, the southernmost part of Galicia and on the border with Portugal.

We'll reach **Couselo** via a number of provincial roads. Here, we can visit a **winery** located in a stately 200-year-old restored pazo. We'll walk through its vineyard; quite old, it was inherited from the Cistercian monks, who are attributed with early grape-growing efforts in these lands dating back to the twelfth century. In addition to wines, some wineries have distillation rooms, heirs to the tradition of the *os poteiros* of O Rosal. We'll taste their wine, spirits and liqueurs, which are distilled and then have delicious products like **Mirabelle plums** macerated in them.

A Guarda, the lobster capital

Due to its proximity, we suggest you eat in the town of A Guarda, the "lobster capital." You'll enjoy the lively activity of its port. In the area, you'll be able to enjoy delicious seafood; for dessert, the typical "rosco de yema" and eggy-custard-filled pastry ring.

After lunch, we suggest, firstly, a little walk along the **dique dos mariñeiros** (sailors' dike) and then a climb up Mount Santa Tegra to discover one of the best-preserved Roman Iron Age fortified villages in Galicia. You can leave the car in the visitor reception area and then walk a route that lasts less than an hour through all the excavated archaeological sites. Look inside the museum for the splendid collection of swastikas found in these excavations. From the top, you'll enjoy spectacular views of A Guarda, the outlet of the River Miño to the Atlantic and the gentle rolling hills of the vineyards, houses and orchards of the O Rosal Valley and neighbouring Portugal. And, if you fancy a snack before you leave, there is café and service available.

In Tui, lamprey and eel dishes are the stars

Later, we suggest you go follow the Miño by road to reach Tui, which was one of Galicia's capitals. To sleep, you'll find hotels, guesthouses and country houses. But its flagship is the **state-owned hotel**, one kilometre from the centre, facing the **International Bridge** designed by Eiffel that connects us with Portugal. At dinner time, the "**Tui-style lamprey**", its signature dish, will certainly be tempting. In season, we'll find it – along with eels – in area restaurants because they are caught in the estuary of the River Miño.



From Tui to the Ribeira Sacra

We recommend you start the morning off with a good breakfast so you can climb up the promontory where the village of Tui sits. We feel like we've travelled back in time to the mediaeval age while we climb up the streets of A Canicoba, Entrefornos, Rúa do Corpo Santo and the Encerradas tunnel, a vaulted passageway under the **convent of the Poor Clares**, which connects the upper part with the area between the walls. The nuns make the famous "little fish", delicious almond sweets typical of this town.

We reach the huge fortified **cathedral** – the only one in the province of Pontevedra – done in Romanesque and

Gothic styles. Its western door deserves its reputation of being one of the most beautiful of the Spanish Gothic doors. On its storied capitals, we can see very lifelike birds and felines, as well as the Virgin lying on a bed, representing the Nativity. You will soon match the images up with well-known Biblical chapters.

The Miño basin dominates these surroundings. It is displayed in all its lushness, with its riparian forests and fertile valleys filled with orchards and large vineyards. We will change this landscape once we take the A-55 and then the Rías Baixas Motorway (A-52) towards the domains of the O Ribeiro Designation of Origin in Ourense. The path becomes more rugged as we move through the Montes da Paradanta, which are covered with scrub dotted with rock formations.



> "Little fishes"



> Cloister of the Cathedral of Tui



> Tui

In San Clodio, we'll visit a winery and the monastery

About noon, we'll have reached San Clodio, one of the parishes in Leiro, halfway between O Carballiño and Ribadavia. The valley of the River Avia is characterised by the gentleness of its landscape, which has historically resulted in the significant planting of vines on its slopes. We'll be able to visit a plantation of native Treixadura grapes adjacent to a large rural manor converted into boutique accommodation. Its gallery offers an exceptional position from which to see how the vineyard climbs up a south-facing hillside. Later, we'll walk on its sandy soil. In the **Viña Meín winery** – built at the foot of the manor and attached to a large granite bolus – we will review the production process of these wines. If we fancy, we can conclude the visit in the tasting room sampling pie and cheese to accompany this Treixadura white, to which Godello, Albariño, Torrontes or Albilla are also added in varying proportions depending on the year.

Just a kilometre away is the **Monastery of San Clodio**, today a monument/hotel, but open to visitors. We can take advantage of our after-lunch time to visit this place where Cistercian monks began planting the first vineyards in the twelfth century.

The scenic beauty of the Ribeira Sacra, bathed by the River Sil

In the afternoon, we'll head to one of the most fascinating landscapes in inland Galicia, shared by the provinces of Lugo and Ourense: the Ribeira Sacra. Its name extends to the designation of origin that covers the wines produced here. We'll see vineyards clinging to steep canyons on the slopes that receive more sunlight, while the occupier of those in the shade is the native forest. The high temperatures that allow this spectacular terrain favour the appearance of species native to Mediterranean forests, such as cork and the so-called "strawberry tree".

The mighty River Sil makes its way through this harsh environment, and it seems to kneel before the churches and monasteries that bless it from above. A place of refuge for hermits since the fourth century, the Ribeira Sacra became the birthplace of Galician monasticism. Today, there are outstanding examples, such as the **Monastery of Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil**, a Historic and Artistic Monument since 1923 and currently a state-owned hotel where we can even relax in its spa. We'll arrive via the A-52, which passes through Ourense, and then the N-120 in the direction of Monforte de Lemos. At kilometre 550 (Penalba), we'll take the turnoff to Luíntra and continue until Santo Estevo de Ribas de Sil.



> Ribeira Sacra

| day 5 |

A catamaran adventure on the River Sil and a visit to a winery

The beauty of the Ribeira Sacra, with its sloping vineyards, should be viewed from all perspectives. In the morning we'll go to the banks of the River Sil in Lugo and observe it from the depths of the canyon during a catamaran trip that starts at and returns to the pier in Doade, in the municipality of Sober. For an hour and a half, we'll be engrossed watching the vineyards arranged on terraces or "socialcos" that seem to climb right up the cliffs. When we return to Doade, we'll be able to enjoy a traditional meal with local and seasonal products such as **mushrooms** and **chestnuts** – which are an excellent side dish for local meats – accompanied by Mencías wines with the Ribeira Sacra Designation of Origin.

In the afternoon, we'll explore the canyon from a bird's eye view. Before, though, we must climb the mountains over some winding tracks. We will finish the trip off in one of the cellars with that designation of origin. We'll discover the wine production process; mainly orientated to the Mencía variety, Brancellao, Merenzao, Sousón and Caíño Tinto are also used. For whites, the Godello, Albariño and Treixadura varieties are used. Winery professionals will tell us what "heroic viticulture" – a concept that we already felt on our road here as we observed how the terraced vineyards seem to nearly fall down vertigo-inducing slopes – consists of. After the visit, we'll return to the hotel for dinner and rest.



> River Sil Canyon



> Androlla

| day 6 |

From A Rúa to Monterrei

After breakfast, we'll start off our visit to the neighbouring region of Valdeorras, in the northeastern part of the province of Ourense, following the N-120. Our destination is the town of A Rúa, where most of the wineries under the Valdeorras Designation of Origin are located. We won't lose sight of the River Sil which – at the location of A Rúa – reaches two kilometres wide in the **San Martiño reservoir**, an exceptional place for the flora and birds, where more than a dozen families of different kinds of ducks have been recorded.

From here, we head to **Mount A Coroa** to visit a winery located in what was once an ancient Roman settlement. The building was built with local materials only such as stone, wood, clay and slate, products on which the region's economy turns. As in the other local wineries, this one ages its wines underground, in wine cellar/caves, a few metres from what was once a gold mine worked by the Romans.

Products made from pig slaughtering such as *botelo* or *androlla* are typical of the area

After the visit, we suggest that you look for a place where you can accompany a *botelo* or an *androlla* – products resulting from the slaughter of pigs – with Godellos or Mencías, the varieties used by wineries of that designation. For the best digestion of these dishes, we encourage you to spend the afternoon strolling the **O Aguillón** complex, a green walking area in the vicinity of the San Martiño dam. Out of the more urban part, there are strolling areas that enter in among the trees and extend as far as small coves. These are exceptional viewpoints for watching the birds that frequent this natural area.

We'll continue on to the slopes and valleys of the Monterrei Designation of Origin, in the southeastern part of Ourense, near Portugal. The icon of the region is the **fortress city of Monterrei**. At its feet is a state-owned hotel, with an air of a pazo, a perfect choice to spend the night under the fortress's protection. Verín and its environs complete the offer of hotel and rural accommodation.

| day 7 |

From Monterrei to Santiago de Compostela

In the morning, we'll pay a must-see visit to the citadel of Monterrei, considered by many authors as the largest acropolis in Galicia. If we've stayed at the state-owned hotel, it will be just a small trip heading upwards. Going up, we notice the triple-wall structure and watch the buildings that appear as we pass. When we reach the top, we'll enter the inner ward, around which we'll find the **Keep**, the **Ladies' Tower**, the **Palace of the Counts** and the **Church of Santa María**. We'll be impressed by the scenic valley bathed by the River Támega, and its vineyards. We can go down to eat at Verín, the regional capital. The **octopus á feira-style** of its taverns is well-known by all.

Early in the afternoon, we can visit the **wineries** of the designation of origin in the neighbouring parish of Pazos. We'll stroll through the large vineyard located on flat land next to the winery and enjoy the explanations given by its professionals. We'll conclude the visit with a tasting of their wines: Treixaduras and Godellos in the whites and Mencia with Tempranillo in the reds.

We'll end our day in **Santiago de Compostela**, which we'll easily reach via motorway. We'll try to not delay departure too much so that we'll have much time to settle in our chosen hotel and dine in the capital of Galicia. The restaurant and hotel offerings in the city are extensive. The **Hostal dos Reis Católicos** combines history, art, tradition and luxury. It will be exciting to rest next to the Obradoiro façade of the Cathedral of Santiago.



| day 8 |

In Santiago de Compostela, from the roof of the cathedral to its cobblestone streets

We are in Santiago de Compostela. A visit to the cathedral is inescapable. But many will be surprised to find that you can start with the roof. And that's how we're going to do it this morning, guided by professionals who lead us over the churches roofs. We'll discover the harmonious beauty of its different architectural styles, the impressive squares surrounding it and its extraordinary setting. From up high, we'll contemplate a good part of this World Heritage city with a bird's eye view.

Until we bid farewell, Santiago will be full of surprises that will captivate us. The emblematic **Rúa do Franco** and the surrounding historic streets of Compostela bring together the rich variety of Galician cuisine. In the vicinity of the cathedral, the delicate craftsmanship of jet and silver reigns. It lives in harmony with the most diverse shops and commercial establishments, from traditional to cutting-edge. And it is all dominated by stone and by green spaces of unique charm.







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