



galicia

XUNTA DE GALICIA

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# galicia

They used to say that our coastline was the end of the world, but before getting lost in the **Atlantic Ocean** that was believed to be infinite, we invite you to discover a universe that will awaken your five senses.

Throughout history, there have been many peoples who tried to conquer us, though when they surrendered to the **mysteries** we so value, they decided to stay for centuries.

From the era of **petroglyphs** and **dolmens** to the walls erected by the Romans and the dozens of hill-forts all over, the stones bear witness to the past. Little by little, imposing **monasteries** and **cathedrals** rose up, culminating with the masterpiece constructed in **Santiago de Compostela**.

This is the abode we offer **pilgrims** who come from all over the world to purify themselves in the *botafumeiro* after an exhausting journey along the **Camino de Santiago**, amidst forests of infinite shades of green, enshrouded in fog, and fields dotted with cows and farmers. These vistas, along with the local fishermen and shellfish gatherers, best signify hard work and effort.

Thanks to them, our visitors can feast on the most **exquisite delicacies**. The turbulent ocean is where the best goose barnacles grow, and the calm rías are home to the **tastiest clams, oysters and mussels**.

Those from farther inland claim they prepare the most delicious **octopus** of all, but they also offer





the finest cheeses, rapini, potatoes and bread.

We specialise in cornmeal Galician pies (**empanadas**) filled with cockles, variegated scallops and pretty much anything that runs, flies or swims; in **stews**; in Spanish omelettes; in seafood platters; in European pilchard paired with **Padron peppers** (D.O.P. Pementos de Herbón); in roasted **chestnuts**; in stuffed **spider crab**; and in applying innovative techniques to natural products that become gold in the hands of today's chefs.

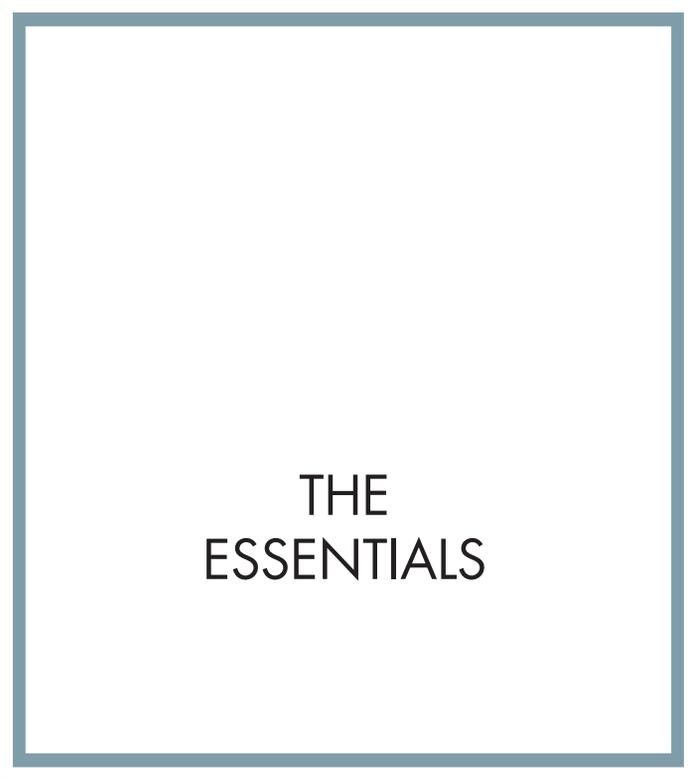
Our **tasty** and unique **wines**, with designations of origin such as O Ribeiro, Ribeira Sacra, Rías Baixas, Valdeorras and Monterrei, enliven get-togethers and no meal is complete without **coffee liqueur**, herb liquor, or the **magical queimada**

**punch**, accompanied by spells. We jump over waves in search of fertility, on **the night of San Juan** our beaches are ablaze with bonfires, we have rocks with curative powers, herbs hanging off the side of cliffs that inspire love, and fountains in which miraculous waters flow.

If you come to visit us, you will discover **scenery** where rivers wend their way through vineyards, fine, white sand beaches bathed by a **tumultuous sea**, medieval towns and fishing villages with an unforgettable scent of the sea, **World Heritage monuments** and islands inhabited by unique species.

**Living in Galicia** offers you a singular experience, the chance to escape routine, travel through nature in its purest form, get lost in the mystery and find inner peace.





THE  
ESSENTIALS



As Catedrais beach



## The essentials

A visit to Galicia is a comprehensive and singular experience that you will enjoy for both its natural as well as its cultural heritage. **The Way** leading to **Santiago de Compostela**, the historic centre of which is a **World Heritage Site**, is composed of pilgrimage routes. You can reach **Cape Fisterra**, which in ancient times was believed to be the end of the earth.

In a territory defined by its **1,650 kilometre** coastline, located in the North-western region of the **Iberian Peninsula**, lighthouses abound; the **Tower of Hercules** is the only one that has remained active since the Roman era.

The same is true of its sandy areas, many of which are untamed. Places such as **Praia das Catedrais [Cathedral beach]** have become expression of art in the natural world.

To the south we have the **Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park**, a unique flora and fauna reserve, which opens out on to the **Rías Baixas**, as well as the **Rías Altas**, which are rich in fish and seafood.

Traveling inland, one can sail along **the Sil River**, which runs through the centuries-old vineyards and monasteries of the **Ribeira Sacra** or make

out the city of **Lugo** from atop its **Roman walls**.

Vestiges of a bygone era include the petroglyphs, dolmens, and hill-forts scattered across the land, as well as the **cruceiros [calvaries]**, **hórreos [granaries]**, and **pazos [country houses]**, all of which are representative of **popular architecture**.

Renowned for its excellent cuisine, Galicia is best recognised for its use of high-quality, natural products. Don't miss out on the opportunity to enjoy a wide variety of delicacies at the region's many restaurants and taverns.



Praza de Praterías, Santiago



THE WAY OF SAINT JAMES



The oldest pilgrimage route in Europe has also become a **Primary European Cultural Route**, since it has served as a crossroad for trade and exchanges between the Iberian Peninsula and the rest of the continent since the Middle Ages.

To travel it is a unique journey, due to the landscapes you traverse, which vary from mountainous to coastal regions, the inland villages you pass through, the cuisine you sample, and the spiritual values you share with others. There are eight paths to **Santiago de Compostela**,

though the **French Way** is the most popular.

If you still have any energy left, you could continue on to **Cape Fisterra**, or the end of the world, as people from ancient times knew it.

CATHEDRAL AND HISTORIC CENTRE OF SANTIAGO



Nearly one thousand years old, **the cathedral** houses the tomb of St. James the Apostle and is also the destination of countless pilgrims who for centuries have travelled many kilometres from all over Europe for the Jubilee, recognized with the

**"La Compostela"** certificate issued by the Church as proof of having completed at least the last 100 km. of the route.

After embracing the bust of the apostle located on the High Altar, you can visit his crypt and become entranced by the show put on by the **botafumeiro** and then go up to the cathedral's roof. Constructed with large blocks of ashlar, from there you can look out over the better part of the historic centre which is made up of narrow streets and plazas. Down below, visitors from all four corners of the Earth sample traditional wines and tapas.



### LUGO'S ROMAN WALL



A **World Heritage Site**, it is the only completely intact Roman wall in the entire world. It measures two kilometres, and its interior can be accessed through ten different doors.

Although legend claims that it was built to protect a sacred forest, you can now visit its battlements, which offer views of most of the city, including the cathedral and the cobblestone streets of the historic centre. During the celebration of **Arde Lucus**, homage is paid to Lugo's Roman past, which left behind its public bathhouses as testament to another era.

If you happen to be there during the celebration of **San Froilan**, be sure to try the local boiled octopus dish known as "pulpo á feira" at one of the stands set up for the patron saint festivities. A walk along the banks of Galicia's main river, **the Miño**, will aid in digestion.

### TOWER OF HERCULES



The **oldest working lighthouse** was built to help sailors navigate between the Mediterranean and Northwestern Europe, a strategic point on commercial routes since ancient times. Steeped in legend, the best known tale claims that **Hercules** defeated

the **Giant Geryon** to free the lands he had taken over. After cutting off his head, he buried it on the shore and built a lighthouse on top. Nearby, a town called **Crunia** sprang up, named after the first woman who lived there.

You can climb to the top of the Tower and catch a glimpse of A Coruña and the Atlantic Ocean: its tide constantly batters the entire coastline while the winds bluster along with it.

Nearby the tower is a large green area that has been turned into a sculpture garden for people to meander through.



### CAPE FISTERRA

The **Romans** called this place *finisterrae*, or the **end of the Earth**, as they believed it to be the world's Western-most point. After observing a number of sunsets, Decimus Junius Brutus, the general that led the conquest of this corner of the **Iberian Peninsula**, determined that the sun dies each day in these waters.

Located in the middle of the **Costa da Morte**, it is surrounded by wild beaches and takes a daily beating from the relentless **Atlantic Ocean**, and from atop the cape's cliffs, you can enjoy the vistas of endless sea

that many pilgrims see upon completing their journey.

Right near the cape is the Romanesque Church of Santa María das Areas, which houses the image of **Christ of the Golden Beard**. Legend has it that his beard and fingernails grow.

### ATLANTIC ISLANDS OF GALICIA NATIONAL PARK

A European **natural heritage gem** with a vast diversity of unique flora and fauna, this park is composed of the Cíes, Ons, Sálvora and Cortegada archipelagos, which boast incompa-

rable scenery. Due to its **limited access**, in order to visit you should take a boat from ports such as Vigo, Cangas, Baiona or Sanxenxo.

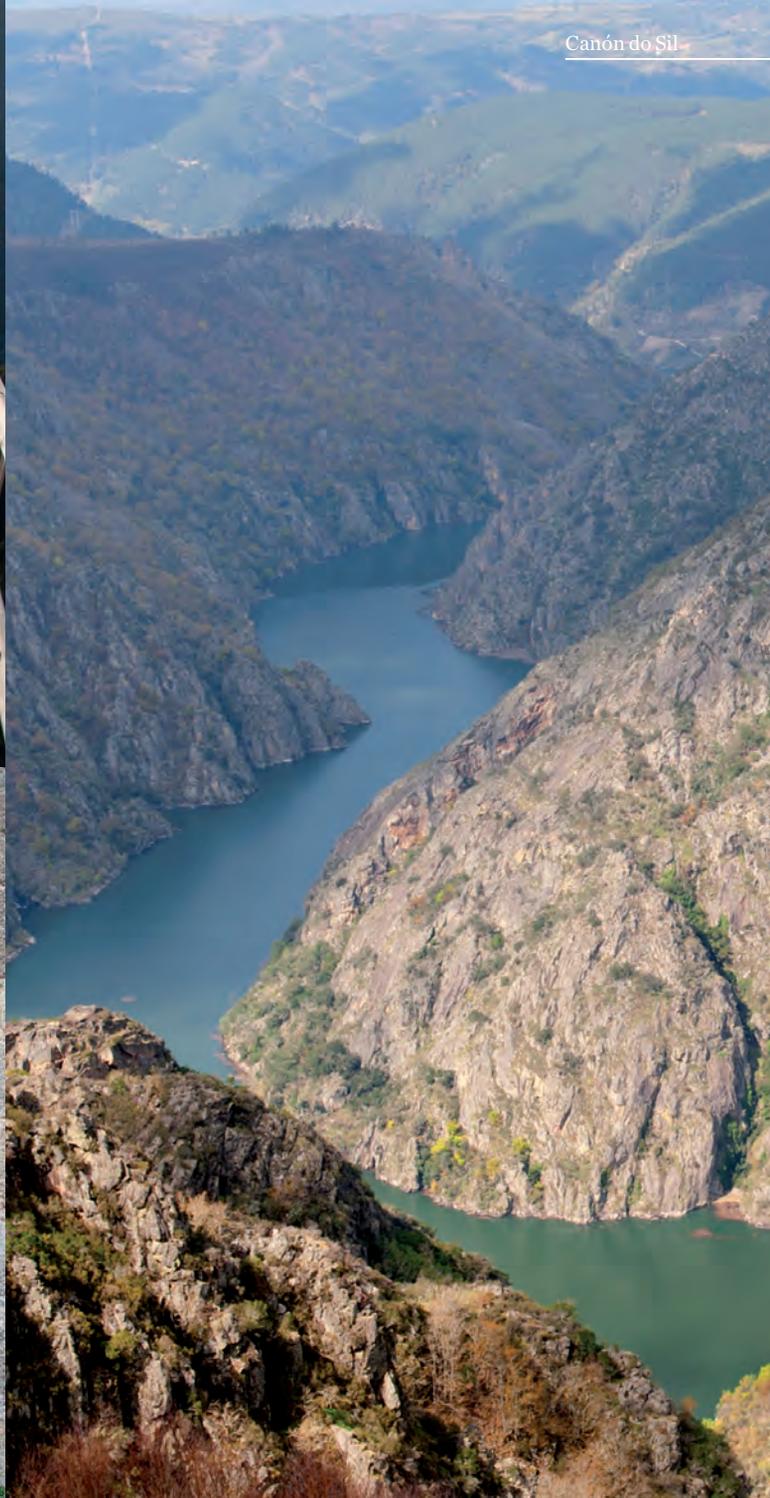
Regardless of the island you choose to visit, we recommend you take a walk along one of the available **hiking trails**, to check out the lighthouses from up close, and to enjoy the **completely natural beaches**, from which you can observe a wide array of birds and marine animals. These islands are part of the **Rías Baixas**. On your way over you will have the chance to see the fishing boats that operate daily in the area to catch the best fish and seafood.



Lookout, Canón do Sil



San Miguel de Eiré, Pantón



### RIBEIRA SACRA AND CANÓN DO SIL

Over centuries, the **Sil and Miño** rivers have carved out the landscape of **Ribeira Sacra**, a unique steep hillside covered in vineyards and monasteries. This is where the greatest concentration of Europe's **Romanesque religious architecture** is, with singular examples such as Santa Cristina de Ribas de Sil, San Miguel de Eiré, and Santo Estevo de Ribas de Miño.

Not to be missed are the spectacular views from a catamaran journey through the Sil's canyons or from the

footbridges that run parallel to the Mao River. The perfect companion to complete your experience is the wines cultivated on these lands from Lugo to Ourense, which have their own designations of origin.

### PRAIA DAS CATEDRAIS

The ferocity with which the Cantabrian Sea batters the shores of **Lugo's Mariña** region has, over centuries, carved out this natural monument that can be seen in all its splendour at low tide. It allows you to walk through **stone arches measuring more than 30 meters** tall, as well as underground passages and caves.

This is what caused this beach, the real name of which is Augas Santas, to be re-baptised. Do not forget to check **the visiting hours and permits**, since access is restricted to preserve this place's **extraordinary beauty**.

**Tales of mermaids and sailors** will follow you as you travel through the surrounding villages, such as Ribadeo, with its interesting examples of Indian houses, and Viveiro, with its historic centre and noteworthy medieval churches. When you need to recover your strength, don't forget that at ports like Rinlo they prepare a very tasty **seafood rice dish**.





5



6



7

## GASTRONOMY

*Empanadas* (1), turnip tops, cheeses (5), fish, beef, octopus (4), broths, lampreys and bread (6), all washed down with the finest wines, are just some of the products that can be sampled in any Galician city or village.

There are many **local delicacies** known for their quality, with certifications guaranteeing their origin. These products include **Galician Veal**, which is famous for its juiciness and tenderness, and **Padrón peppers** (D.O.P. Pementos de Herbón) (7), which are known by the common Galician saying, “uns pican e outros non” [some are spicy and others are not].

Renowned for its **cheeses**, Galicia offers varieties such as Queixo Tetilla, Arzúa-Ulloa, Cebreiro and San Simón da Costa. We recommend that you try them all because it would be very hard to pick just one. In keeping with the theme of tastings, **Galician wines** boast five designations of origin: Rías Baixas, O Ribeiro, Ribeira Sacra, Valdeorras and Monterrei, which all come in red and white varieties.

The excellent raw materials available means that the best chefs often seek them out, and Galician fish, seafood and beef (2 and 3) are all coveted items on the menu at Spain’s premier restaurants. The taste and colour of local mussels, as well as of

Norway lobsters and scallops, cannot be beat; the latter are the number one choice among international restaurateurs. The same is true of our exquisite **hake**, which is brought in on boats that depart from the O Cebleiro port, and the goose **barnacles** extracted from the dangerous rocks of O Roncudo.

Homage is paid to Galicia’s **rich gastronomy** through mass festivals throughout the region, and we highly recommend that you take part in at least one of them. There, you will have the chance to sample products at reasonable prices while listening to musical accompaniment.



### THE RÍAS

Galicia's profile is easily recognisable on account of its **rías, little fingers of ocean that cut into the land**, creating the perfect equilibrium. Their unique waters are the ideal place to cultivate the best fish and seafood.

With **1,650 kilometres of coastline**, the 16 rías are home to more than **700 fine sand beaches** on which to rest, bathe, play sports or sail.

Cape Fisterra divides them into the **Rías Altas** [Upper Rías] and **Rías Baixas** [Lower Rías], which correspond to Northern and Southern Galicia. The **former** are known

for their stunning landscapes, replete with **steep cliffs**, while the more **temperate climate of the south** turns the latter into a **highly popular vacation destination each summer**.

The **Ribadeo ría** is the most Eastern and connects Galicia with Asturias. The richness of its wetlands makes it possible for a wide variety of fauna to call it home. The Rías of Foz and Viveiro also run through **Lugo's Mariña** region.

It is the A Coruña province with the greatest number of rías, eleven to be precise. Some are presided over by **imposing capes** like the Estaca

de Bares and Ortegal, on the opposite ends of the O Barqueiro and Ortigueira rías.

The Ferrol, Ares, Betanzos and A Coruña rías, with fine sand beaches and tranquil waters ideal for family vacations and water sports like sailing and surfing, are part of the **Golfo Ártabro**.

Along the Costa da Morte are the Corme e Laxe, Camariñas, and Corcubión rías. Their striking maritime landscape looks as if they were sculpted by the force of the Atlantic Ocean, which batters the cliffs incessantly during the winter storms.



Cape Ortegal



Ría de Vigo



San Felipe castle. Ferrol

The **Rías Baixas** are known for their mild climate and for being a coveted tourist destination during the summer for anyone looking to enjoy the good life. You will be astounded by the beaches along the **Muros e Noia ría**.

And in the Arousa ría, you will find numerous fishing grounds, where you will primarily see women working. Meanwhile, the **Vigo ría** is characterised by the hundreds of punts that float across its waters. It also provides access to the Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park and the opportunity to hear legends on sunken galleons filled with gold that lie on its floor.





Parque Arqueolóxico da Arte Rupestre de Campo Lameiro



Cruceiro at Combarro, Poio



Dolmen of Axeitos, Ribeira

### PETROGLYPHS, DOLMENS AND HILL-FORTS

From the **pre-Roman era** we have **stony vestiges** that tell of long-ago times, stone carvings that hold the key to the **mystery** of their meaning, striking megalithic constructions and walled villages high up in the hills or at the water's edge, but always in a strategic place for defence.

At the **Parque Arqueolóxico da Arte Rupestre de Campo Lameiro** [Campo Lameiro Stone Art Archaeological Park], visitors can wend their way along a path that runs amid **80 petroglyphs**, the highest concentra-

tion thereof in all of Europe. Though there are magnificent examples of this stone sculpture art throughout Galicia, the meaning of the figures represented there (spirals, circles, labyrinths, geometric symbols) remains unknown.

Did you know that the **legends** claim that under the **dolmens** built out of large slabs of stone there are buried treasures?

Although no one has been able to confirm this, these Neolithic constructions are associated with burials and funeral rites. You will surely notice the **Dolmen of Dombate**, of the most spec-

tacular and which is part of the museum space, due to its imposing size.

When Rome colonised the Iberian Peninsula, they found that in the land known today as Galicia the people lived in hill-forts, testimony of our Celtic past. Always fortified, they tended to build in higher altitude areas for protection and lookout purposes, though it was also believed that being nestled in places higher up would put the people in closer contact with the gods. Some of the ones that have been best preserved include **Santa Trega, San Cibrao de Las, Viladonga and Baroña**.



Hórreo at Combarro, Poio



Castro de Baroña, Porto do Son



Pazo de Oca, A Estrada

### HÓRREOS, PAZOS AND CRUCEIROS

Granite carvings have helped configure out ethnography, both as something that peasants as well as sailors would do. **Canteiros**, or stoneworkers, have been working for centuries with the stone that they have used to build the thousands of **cruceiros** that keep watch over the roadways, the ashlar of the heavy-duty walls of the most noble **pazos** and the **hórreos** where the most prized crops were stored.

No two **hórreos** are alike: if you look at the one in **Carnota**, those in **Com-**

**barro**, or those from **Piornedo**, you will see how they vary. These constructions, aimed at protecting crops, were raised on pillars that support airy chambers made of wood or stone.

Common in rural areas, **pazos**, these stately homes of noble families were built from stone between the 17th and 19th centuries. They are always surrounded by **breath-taking gardens** where flora —such as camellia, for example— from all of the world’s continents can be found.

The **pazos** located in **Mariñán**, **Oca**, **Santa Cruz de Ribadulla** and **Fefiñáns**

are just some of the majestic examples of what can be found throughout the region.

It is impossible to travel through Galicia without encountering dozens of **cruceiros**: we have some 12,000! **Cruceiros**, an expression of popular religious worship, are stone crosses constructed on roadways or near churches or cemeteries to protect travellers.

Be sure to visit the one in **Melide**, which dates back to the 14th century, or the one in **O Hío**, a stunning cross from the 19th century that depicts various biblical scenes.



TEN  
STORIES TO  
EXPERIENCE GALICIA





## *Ten stories to experience Galicia*

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**Galicia awakens your senses.** To breathe in the scent of its forest, to listen to the rough sea, to taste its cuisine, to touch the roughness of stones thousands of years old and to see the region's wide variety of fauna are just some of the things that this **land so rich in nature and heritage** has to offer.

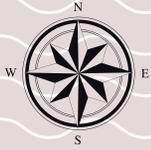
**Galicia is meant to be experienced,** for visitors to come and enjoy it little by little, according to their preferences. This is why we are proposing 70 different opportunities for you to experience it over the course of just several days. As you travel through Galicia, you will notice a vast array

of shades of green, all of which can be seen in its **forests**. You will be stunned by the one in **Os Ancares**, **As Fragas do Eume** or islands such as **Cortegada**.

The countless **rivers, streams and hot springs** are responsible for this greenness, and this is why Galicia is known as **the land of a thousand rivers**. We invite you to enjoy them, but do not forget that we also have salt-water sources, too. Surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, many of the **beaches** are practically **untouched**, with fine, golden sand just made for taking a rest or practising water sports.

When it comes time to replenish your strength, there is nothing better than a visit to a **fishing village** along the **Costa da Morte** or the **Rías Baixas**, where the hard work of the men and women who live off the sea is evident and you can sample the freshest, tastiest fish and seafood.

You already know that this land is enchanted, so you mustn't miss its shrines, where Pagan and Christian traditions are intertwined, or the stone art sites, the hill-forts, and the gardens brimming with camellias that surround the rural noble residences known as **pazos**.



### THE WAY OF SAINT JAMES (1)

A pilgrimage and cultural exchange route between the Iberian Peninsula and Europe, the Way of Saint James is a World Heritage Site that is also the pilgrimage route with the most international tradition.

### SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA (2)

Galicia's capital is the destination of the thousands of pilgrims who complete the Way of Saint James each year. Its cathedral and historical complex have been declared World Heritage Sites.

### SANTA TREGA (3)

From the highest point in the hillfort, a pre-Roman settlement, you can get the best views of the border between Galicia and Portugal, where the Miño River lets out into the vast Atlantic Ocean.

### TOWER OF HERCULES (4)

Legend has it that Hercules defeated

the giant Geryon and buried his head in the place where the lighthouse was later built; it is the only such example from Roman times that is still in operation today.

### CAPE FISTERRA (5)

Known in ancient times as the end of the world and a place of worship of the sun, after visiting Santiago de Compostela, pilgrims journey to this incomparable place at the edge of the wild Atlantic Ocean.

### CÍES ISLANDS (6)

Rodas beach, labeled the most beautiful in the world by *The Guardian*, is located on the paradise-like Cíes Islands, which are part of the Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park.

### FERROL OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT ERA (7)

Beginning in the 16th century, Ferrol, which started off as a fishing village, began to grow until it became the largest naval base in Europe in the

18th century and a port for use by the Royal Navy.

### SERRA DA CAPELADA (8)

The highest cliffs in continental Europe rise more than 600 meters above sea level. They are inhabited by wild horses and are home to the popular shrine built to Santo André de Teixido.

### RIBEIRA SACRA (9)

The mountainsides, covered in vineyards and stunning Romanesque architecture, descend down in steep slopes to the Sil and Miño rivers, thereby creating a landscape of incomparable beauty.

### WALL OF LUGO (10)

While walking along the best-preserved Roman wall, you can look down over Lugo's historic centre, over which the cathedral looms. Legend has it that it was constructed to protect a sacred forest.



1



2



3



4



5



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8



9



10



## WOODLANDS OF GALICIA

The infinite varieties of green so characteristic of Galician forests, along with the morning fog and rush of the rivers that cut through the land create an atmosphere that is at once calm and mysterious in which to immerse yourself.

### *Os Ancares*

**Os Ancares**, along with **O Courel**, is one of Galicia's largest flora and fauna reserves. There are a number of different **hiking trails** that cut across these mountains in which foxes, wild boars, wolves, roe deer, wood grouse and even bears live. We recommend that you visit the nature classrooms for more precise information before beginning your journey.

The **pallozas**, which are typical mountain homes with roofs made of straw, which helps the snow to slide off of them more easily as opposed to collapsing under its weight, can be found in villages like **Piornedo**. They are pre-Roman constructions

that were inhabited until recently. The **flora** you will find in these places includes oak groves and holly trees, which have bright red berries that really stand out amid winter snows.

A journey along the **Fraga da Marronda**, located in Lugo's municipality of Baleira, varies depending on the season, due to the changing colours of the scenery.

Along the path, which is indicated quite well, you will find bridges, mills and **hórreos**; the latter were constructed according to the area's typical architecture. You will also see the headwaters of the Eo River,

which flow into the Cantabrian Sea after winding its way through this **centuries-old forest**.

In this **leafy fraga**, a forest composed on species indigenous to Galicia, you will find oak, birch, chestnut, holly oak, hazelnut and the characteristic holly trees.

In this mountainous area you will also find the **Cruzul oak forest**, which is unique in Galicia, as this species normally grows in drier climates. Legend has it that it is inhabited by witches. **Are brave enough to enter the woods to discover some of its mysteries?**



Village of Piornedo, Cervantes

Located in the town on Becerreá, this wooded area is characterised by its thicket, where mosses and lichens inch their way up tree trunks, evidence of the area's **lack of pollution.**

For hundreds of years, local people have believed in the curative powers of the centuries-old chestnut trees you will find in **Souto de Agüeira**, located in As Nogais, since they would use them to prepare homemade remedies and a high culinary value is placed on their **chestnuts.**

The ideal time to visit is in autumn, when the ground is covered in open husks that reveal tasty, meaty nuts inside.



## *Devesa da Roqueira*

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Located in **Folgoso do Courel**, Devesa da Roqueira offers such diverse vegetation that a walk through this area is always an **interesting experience** for anyone who loves botany and hiking.

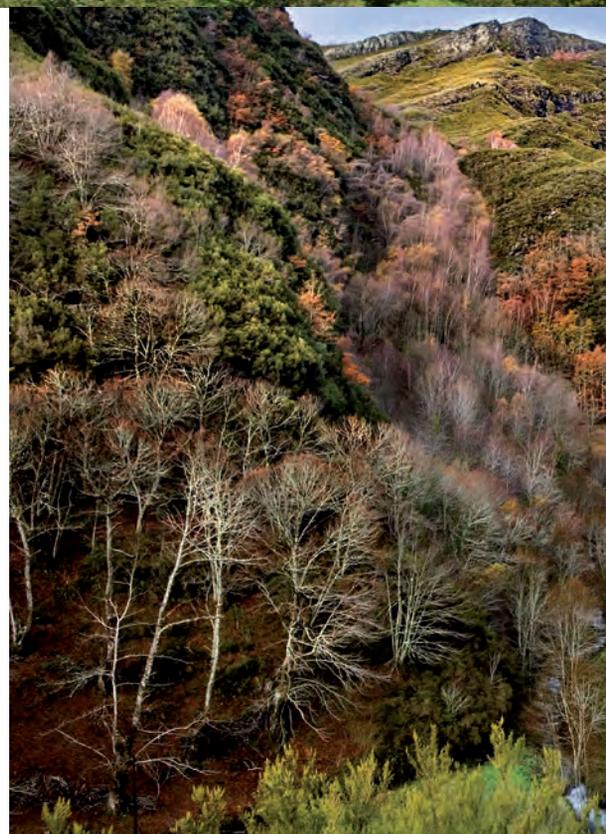
This is where you will find the **widest variety of plant species in all of Galicia**, which is why many consider it to be the region's **most beautiful forest**.

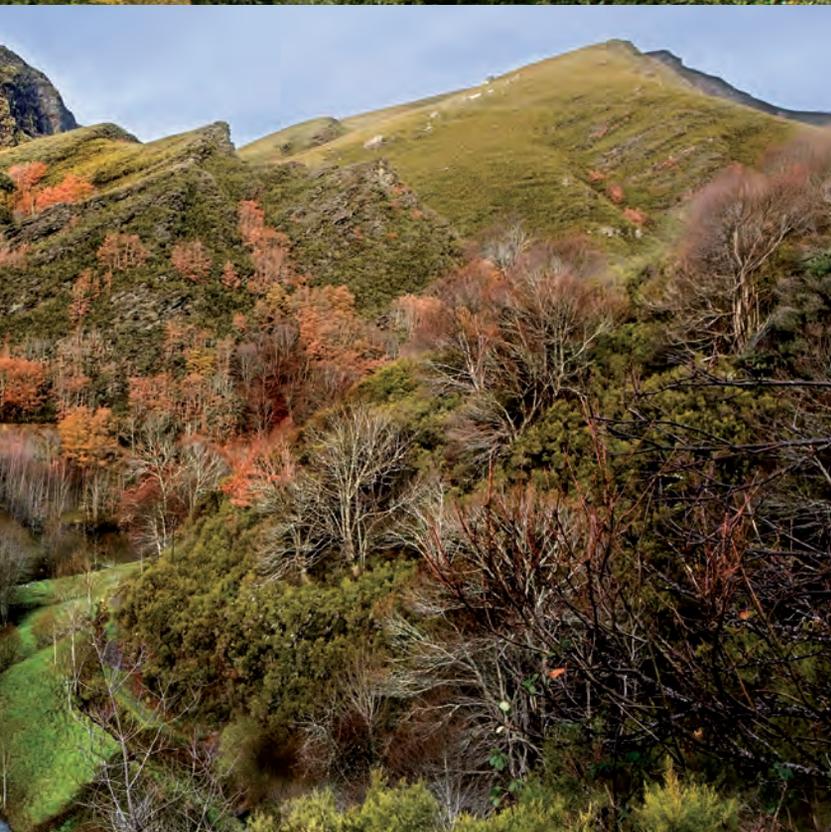
Infinite shades of green stretch across these mountains and valleys, where beech, mountain-ash, maple, chestnut, oak and yew

blend together to create a **feast for the senses**.

The official hiking trail is almost nine kilometers long and is rated at an average difficulty level. Before setting out, you can get some information on the trail at the Moreda Nature Classroom in Seoane do Courel.

One of the greatest rewards for completing this adventure is to reach Formigueiros Peak after first passing by a glacial lake, where you will find some of the best views you will ever see.







## As Fragas do Eume

Classified as a quintessential Atlantic forest, **Fragas do Eume** is protected as a natural park. Traveling along its paths, you can discover dozens of native plant species, including ferns and lichens that have been growing in this area since the **Cenozoic era**.

At over **9,000 hectares**, these woods are pristine—barely anyone lives here.

The Betanzos and Ares upper rías are the ones that run near these invaluable woods and provide it with a year-round **temperate climate**. The **Eume River** and some of its tributaries bathe this valley, where waterfalls and cascades abound. Their

incessant flow breaks up the silence of the forest, and you will have the opportunity to check them out on some of the marked trails.

If you study the ground, you will be able to make out wolf tracks, though their flighty behaviour in human presence will make it hard for you to actually come into contact with them.

At one of the most spectacular places is the **Caaveiro Monastery**, which was built in the 12th century to give shelter to the **hermits** living in the area. There, you will gain a better understanding of the spiritual retreat and absolute tranquillity that these

first inhabitants enjoyed. The **panoramic** views over the river and oak forests are unbeatable.

Nearby, although outside the oak forest, is another architectural gem: **the Santa María de Monfero Monastery**, which is situated in a small valley through which the Lambre River runs.

Its **façade, designed like a chessboard** made of granite and slate, will take your breath away, as will the well-preserved **sarcophaguses** inside the building that were delicately constructed for the **Andrade family**, which ruled the region for several



Medieval bridge over the Sesín river



centuries, eventually becoming one of the most powerful.

Nearby, in the municipality of Aranga, is another one of the area's natural treasures, the **Fraga das Barbudas**, which is filled with cascades, some of which rise as high as 20 meters, and an impressive array of vegetation.

Foxes, wild boar, goats and roe deer all call this place, through which the Cambás and Mandeo rivers run on their way to the nearby sea, home.

Some of the things you will encounter along your journey include the Barreiros mini electrical plant and the town of O Couce, which is surrounded by meadows and farmland, the classic image of rural Galicia.



## *Cortegada Island*

Located in the **Ría de Arousa**, Cortegada Island —along with Ons, Cíes and Sálvora— is part of the **Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park**. Because it is classified as a **protected area**, in order to access it you should seek information on the schedule for the ferry that will transport you to its coasts

A popular destination for botanists from around the world, the **laurel forest**, which covers the entire island, is astounding and makes it a true natural treasure. Seafood is often cooked with a handful of the plant's leaves, known as bay leaves, to enhance its flavour. Once you're off the ferry, check out the visitor

information booth, which will show you the two marked routes, both of which are easy to complete.

The first of the two circuits runs along the island's perimeter, while the second does so during the first half of the path to then cut clear across the island, through the laurel trees. Both paths begin at the ruins of the **Virgin of Miracles Hermitage**, which pilgrims began to visit in the 17th century due to its alleged curative properties.

The island's coastline offers numerous calm, solitary beaches where visitors can rest, take a walk, or cool off in the pristine waters.







## MAGICAL SHRINES

A land of beliefs and legends, in Galicia you will find unique enclaves and spectacular views from temples that have been melding Pagan traditions and Christian religious rites for centuries.

### *The "three wishes" trip*

The journey begins in the town of **Ferrol** and will take you all the way to the town of **Viveiro**, in Lugo. It offers you the opportunity to discover the more northern edge of Galicia's coast, where steep cliffs are continually pummelled by the fearsome **Atlantic Ocean**.

**Beliefs and legends** are a big part of this region's traditions. The alleged curative powers of many natural elements tied to spiritual beliefs combine **Pagan** and **Christian traditions**. Many devotees come here each year to visit these **three shrines** in order to fulfil promises, pray to the saints or contemplate the area in which they are located.

In **Ferrol**, you should take a walk through the **A Madalena neighbourhood**, where you can explore the industrial and fishing past of a city whose golden days were back during the Enlightenment, when its military complex was built.

The first shrine you should visit is the **Chamorro Hermitage**. Its name comes from the sculpture of the Virgin Mary that sailors used to worship and which was housed inside, since whenever they were in danger of being shipwrecked, they would shout "Xa morro!" (I'm dying!) in the hopes of receiving divine intervention. You may ask for your first wish from the patron saint.

Continuing along the coastline, you will find **beaches** such as the ones in **Covas**, **Valdoviño**, **Pantín** and **Vilarrube**, all ideal for any season, and they have become the beaches of choice for **surfing lovers**.

According to **legend**, those who have not gone to **Santo André de Teixido** once during their lifetime will do so thrice after their death. To reach the shrine, pilgrims walk up to fifty kilometres, along **wild beaches** and **cliffs** so high they can take your breath away. There are many **rituals** associated with worship of this saint. When you visit the 18th century church, do not fail to offer up your **prayers**.



On the way to Cedeira, in the **Capelada mountains** you can look out over the **Atlantic Ocean from atop Europe's highest cliffs**. To catch the sunset from here is an unforgettable experience. In the surrounding villages you can fill up on generous portions of razor clams or goose barnacles.

Do you know where you can get one of the most spectacular **views** in the whole world? From a **bench** perched atop the Loiba cliffs. Have a seat, breath in, feel the breeze on your face and simply enjoy looking out over the immenseness of the ría and Cape Ortegal and Cape Estaca de Bares on either end.

You can ask for your **third wish** in the cave of the Virgin Lourdes of the Conceptionists Convent in **Viveiro**.

Serra da Capelada



## Sanctuaries and vineyards

The proposed route begins in **Esgos**, in Ourense, and ends in **O Bolo**, which is also located in the same province.

These **wild mountains** were the perfect place for the anchorites and hermits that lived there in long ago times. The land appears to be sprinkled with architectural vestiges that are a testament to region's history, where life is peaceful.

The first place you must visit is **San Pedro de Rocas**. Located in the heart of **Ribeira Sacra**, a land of ancestral vineyards, it was at this monastery where Christianity began to take hold in Galicia. The structure houses

the remains of the only known world map, also called the **Beatus Map**, from the Roman era in all of Europe.

The **monastery**, which dates back to the **6th century**, its three **chapels**, **dig out from the rocks**, and its **anthropomorphic tombs** will send you back to the days of yore, and you will feel the solitude of those who once lived in this remote area. Nearby, you will find a **fountain** from which water claimed to heal warts and smooth wrinkled flows.

At the **Ribeira Sacra Visitor's Centre**, which is right next to the monastery, you can learn more about the re-

gion's ancient traditions and trades, as well as about the wines produced in the area.

Not far from there is the **Monastery of Santa María of Montederramo**. According to the legends, it was established in the 12th century by a monk and two roe deer. The stone statue of this religious man guards the entrance to the temple. The **Processional Cloister** and the **Lodging Cloister** are the complex's true gems.

If you continue on, you will reach **Castro Caldelas**, where you will find the **Os Remedios shrine**, which contains a strange religious art museum.





San Pedro de Rocas, Esgos

An imposing castle, built more than 600 years ago, rises up from the upper end of the town. Inside, there is an ethnographic centre that recreates what life was like in that era.

A **Roman Bridge** that stretches across the **Bibei River**, which was built during the reign of Trajan as Emperor of Rome and runs 23 meters across a slope, is one of the things you will encounter on your way to **A Pobra de Trives**.

Once you have reached **O Bolo**, you will find the **Ermidas shrine**. Legend has it that the image of Our Lady was discovered in a cave by some shepherd children. **The spectacular building**, the façade of which dates back to the 18th century, was carved into the stone. Du-

ring Holy Week, they celebrate a very popular **Way of the Cross**.

The **landscape**, filled with **grapevines** that stretch across terraces, dominates the area surrounding **Valdeorras**, on the way to O Barco. It is near where you will find a place called **Xagoaza**, where **Saint Michael's church** and **monastery** are.

The former is from the Roman era and houses 16th-century murals, while the latter is more recent, dating back to the 18th century.

On the lower level there is a **wine cellar**, where you can partake in a tasting, and on the upper level you can look out over the building's magnificent **closed cloister** from wooden balconies.



## HIDDEN HERITAGE

There are many corners of Galicia that we invite you to discover. A predominantly rural land, you need only to visit its towns and villages to see churches, monasteries, petroglyphs, *hórreos*, *pazos*, and mills, all of which are true hidden treasures.

### *Ourense: enchanted stones*

You will begin your journey in **A Merca** where you can see the country's largest concentration of *hórreos*. Used to store agricultural harvests, these 34 granaries are all built the same: with a stone foundation, wooden body, and tiled roof. All built facing the same direction, they create a **sort of unique ethnographic set**.

On your way to Celanova, you should stop off at **Vilanova dos Infantes**, a small **medieval town** with cobblestone streets and traditional, stately homes. On the upper end of the city looms the tower of a **castle**, as well as a well-preserved Romanesque church.

The imposing impressive façades of the church and the **Monastery of San Salvador** lead into Celanova's main plaza. Practically next door is the one-of-a-kind **Mozarab Chapel of Saint Michael**; its small size will certainly draw your attention.

Continuing South, you will hit **Bande**, which is known for its 7th century **Visigoth temple of Santa Comba**. Next to it is the **Pociño dos Namorados**, a fountain with waters that legends claim create love.

In **Lobios** you will find the **Baroque church of San Salvador de Manín**, which was moved twice, stone by stone, once in the 18th century and

again in the 20th century. Nearby, in the municipality of Muíños, is **As Maus de Salas**, which has various **megalithic burials or dolmens**.

A trip to **Allariz** will take you back to medieval times. Its quaint **historic centre** is dominated by buildings made from stone and wood. While you're there, make sure to catch a bite to eat in one of the restaurants that overlooks the Arnoia River.

In the municipality of **Maceda** is one of Galicia's most impressive castles. It bears witness to the various invasions that took place during the Middle Ages.





Vilanova bridge. Allariz



Set of granaries. A Merca



## *celtic settlements (castros), mills and "sambenitos"*

This journey begins in **Tui** and ends in **Mondariz-Balneario**; both municipalities are located in the province of Pontevedra.

**Tui**, known for its defensive-looking **cathedral** and typical medieval streets, shows vestiges of what was once a prominent **Jewish quarter**. A walk through its historic centre will take you back to another time, as you replenish your strength at bars and taverns that serve up only the most typical fare, including **elvers** caught in the **Miño River**.

At the **Diocese Museum** you will find the only collection of **sambenitos**

that remains in Spain today. **Sambenitos** are large scapulars used to humiliate people accused by the Court of the **Holy Inquisition**, which would force them to walk barefoot while wearing these garments and holding a lit altar candle. The purpose of this type of **public ridicule** was to make an example out of them in front of the rest of society.

On the way to **Tomíño** is the **Goián Fort**. It is located on the banks of the Miño River, which at this point is close to its mouth. What you will see is a set of defensive constructions on both sides of the river that date back to the 17th century.

En route to A Guarda is a cluster of **mills of O Folón and O Picón**, which date back to the 17th and 18th centuries, respectively. Laid out in a staircase fashion to take advantage of the power of the descending water, today you can walk among the 67 that remain.

The **Santa Trega hill-fort**, located in A Guarda, is one of the best preserved in all of Galicia. Climb up to the hilltop for some **unforgettable views of the mouth of the Miño River**. In addition to the excavated remains, which reveal how inhabitants of the past once lived, you can check out the different types of houses and various **petroglyphs**.



Mills of Folón and O Picón, O Rosal

In the towns of A Guarda and O Rosal you will find the **Miño's estuary**, a vast wetland of great ecological value that can be seen perfectly from atop the hill-fort. The restaurants in these towns offer a variety of typical products, most notably **lobster**.

If you continue on your way, you will pass by the **Oia Monastery**, the main façade of which faces the sea. Once in **Baiona**, take a walk through the historic centre and check out the replica of **Pinta caravel**.

The original arrived at this port in 1493 to report the discovery of America. Lastly, indulge yourself with a much-needed rest at the **Mondariz spa**: it will be a true treat for you.





## LIGHTHOUSES AND WILD BEACHES

With more than 1,600 kilometres of coastline, Galicia is all about beaches and ocean. The Atlantic Ocean batters the coastline relentlessly and with such ferocity that it creates stretches of golden sands and cliffs located in places of incomparable beauty.

### *Lighthouses and beaches at the end of the earth*

We suggest that you visit the arc of the Galician coast where the **Atlantic Ocean** slams against the shore the hardest. This journey begins in **Malpica de Bergantiños** and finishes in **Fisterra**.

This stretch of land is located in the province of A Coruña and is called **Costa da Morte [Coast of Death]**. Its name comes from the catastrophes and shipwrecks that have taken place along its cliffs. During the winter, wind and sea **storms** are common, making it difficult to navigate through these waters.

In the area of Malpica de Bergantiños you will see just how important **lighthouses** are for guiding sailors

in extreme weather conditions. The **Punta Nariga Lighthouse**, which is built in the shape of a boat, is one of the foremost examples. They say that the goose **barnacles** extracted from **Cape Roncudo** are the most delicious in the world, which is why they are in such high demand at markets and restaurants. From the ground, you can catch a glimpse of the **Sisargas Islands** in the distance. They have been declared a protected area for birds.

On the way to **Camariñas** you must stop off at the **Soesto and Traba beaches**, located in the municipality of Laxe. A walk along their fine sands will rejuvenate you, while the strong wind and powerful waves will make you feel the full force of the Atlantic.

Camariñas is a fishing village near Cape Vilán.

Its lighthouse looms one hundred meters above sea level and was the first on the Spanish to operate with electricity. At the **Museo dos Naufraxios [Shipwreck Museum]**, you can learn more about this beautiful place, as well as the extreme dangers it poses for navigating, since this section of the coast has experienced no less than 150 shipwrecks.

A testament to how rough the ocean is to this area is the **English Cemetery**, where the 172 crew members of the HMS *Serpent* military ship, which sank in the 19th century, are buried. The beaches in this region are



Cape Vilán lighthouse



wild, and along the sandy stretches, as well as on the Cíes islands, grows **corema album**, the native bush after which the town is named.

The Western-most point of peninsular Spain is **Cape Touriñán** and the stunning Nemiña beach. Nearby, from the **Facho hilltop**, you can make out the town of Muxía.

When you reach **Fisterra**, you will have arrived at the place Romans considered to be **the end of the earth**. This is where many pilgrims end their journey on the **Way of Saint James**. Enjoy a walk along the solitary beaches of **Rostro** or **Mar de Fóra**. And do not miss the opportunity to catch a sunset from one of the neighbouring cliffs.



Rinlo, Ribadeo



## *The cathedrals of the sea*

Heading out from **Ribadeo** you will get to know the far eastern coast of Lugo, eventually arriving in **Viveiro**.

Ribadeo is located in **Lugo's Mariña**, and its coast is closely tied to legends of mermaids and sailors. The town's historic centre boasts a large number of constructions built in the **Indian architectural style**. After visiting the town, you can take a walk to **Pancha Island**, which has two odd lighthouses painted in blue and white, the shorter of the two dating back to the 19th century and the second to 1987.

One mandatory stop that is quite close to Ribadeo is the fishing village called **Rinlo**. It is famous for its small

port and the **seafood rice** prepared in local restaurants from recent catches. With renewed strength, you can walk to the **Os Castros beach**, up to the shoreline, which is accessed through a natural tunnel.

Nearby is the **As Catedrais beach**. It would be wise to inquire about any permits you may need for your visit during the summer months and Holy Week, as well as about the tide. During low tide, you can meander your way through the **stone arches** that the rise and fall of the sea has created over centuries, turning these stony formations into vaults soaring more than **thirty meters** high and **grottos to explore**.

If you prefer to take in this natural wonder from a vantage point higher up, you need only to head out to the cliffs. If you continue on your journey, you will reach the Peizás beach and Fazouro hill-fort.

Galicia's most famous **ceramic** ware comes from **Sargadelos**. Its factory, which goes by the same name, began operations in the 19th century. Check out how they craft their unmistakable polychrome pieces with their characteristic blue hues. Take home a figurine or dish as a souvenir.

Nearby, in the town of **Cervo**, is **Cape San Cibrao**, where you will find the



Os Farallóns islets. They say that **A Maruxaina**, a mermaid who during storms calls out to the sailors passing by, lives there, although it is unclear whether it is to shipwreck them or help them on their journey.

Before tucking into a tasty dish of **line-caught hake** at one of the restaurants in the port of Celeiro, we recommend that you visit **Esteiro beach**, in Xove. It offers green areas ideal for picnics.

The views from the **Faro hilltop** are spectacular, so don't hesitate to visit there before checking out Viveiro, which has an historic centre that gives you a feel for medieval urban life. Its **Holy Week** is declared an **attraction of International Tourist Interest**.



ATLANTIC OCEAN

CANTABRIAN SEA



## THE WAY OF SAINT JAMES

As the oldest and busiest pilgrimage route in Europe, you can reach Santiago de Compostela through a number of different ways that originate in different places and cross the continent and the Iberian Peninsula. The life of anyone who sets out on the Way and shares it with other adventurers will remain forever changed. This experience is a mix of spiritual, religious, and athletic aspects that offer travellers a full experience that delights all five senses.





## The French Way

This pilgrimage route begins in a village of Lugo called **O Cebreiro** and ends before the urn containing the Apostle's remains at the **cathedral in Santiago de Compostela**.

O Cebreiro is located between **Os Ancares** and **O Courel**, and it is where you can check out the **pallozas**, or typical Galician houses build with straw roofs to help the snow slide off them in winter. One of them is home to the Ethnographic Museum, where you can learn about what life was like in this area for centuries, up until not that long ago. This is also where the **church of Santa María A Real** and its Santo Milagro chapel—which houses

a paten and goblet, true Roman treasures—are located.

On the way to Samos, you will pass through Liñares, by Hospital da Condesa and Alto do Poio, three spots with spectacular scenery. In **Triacastela**, which is the end of a stage in the **Codex Calixtinus**, you will find inns and lodging for pilgrims.

In Samos, where trout caught in the Oribio and Sarria rivers is a common treat, you can visit the **Mozarab chapel of Ciprés** and the **Monastery of San Xulián**. A walk through its cloisters and enormous church is a true journey through time.

Continuing to Portomarín, you will reach **Sarria**, on the Way's most notable places. Once they depart from here and reach Santiago, pilgrims earn a "**Compostela**", that is, a document verifying that they completed a minimum of 100 kilometres of the route. In the village of **Barbadelo** you can visit Santiago's Romanesque church, which has been declared a national monument.

Nearby is **Portomarín**, which offers views over the Belesar reservoir. Its waters flooded the town in the past, so several buildings were transferred elsewhere, stone by stone, including the **church of San Nicolao**. When the





San Salvador de Vilar de Donas. Palas de Rei

water level is low, you can observe the ruins of the old village. Do not hesitate to try the eel **empanada**, a regional delicacy, along with the almond cake and herb liqueur.

What is most significant in the town of **Palas de Rei** is the **Monastery of Vilar de Donas**: the interior of its church is adorned with **14th century frescoes**. Just several kilometres away is the **Pambre castle**, considered the best example of Galician military architecture. It is surrounded by a breath-taking scenery full of local vegetation.

You must stop off in the town of **Melide**, famous for its **pulpo á feira**, which is enjoyed with **rye bread**. It is also known for its sweet cakes called **melindres**. In keeping with

the theme of traditional gastronomic products, the creamy **Arzúa cheese** is a reason all on its own to visit this place.

**Santiago de Compostela** is not far from here. Pilgrims who arrive at the much-desired end point are rewarded with a 12 o'clock noon mass at the cathedral in their honour, after which they may **embrace the Apostle's bust on the High Altar**.

Take advantage of your time here to explore the **cloister**, the **museum**, the **crypt** where the remains of the Saint's body lie, and the **Holy Door**, which is only opened in Holy Years, when the 25th of July, the day of the Apostle, falls on a Sunday.



## The Silver Route

If you travel from **Verín** to **Santiago de Compostela** you will get a full experience of the route known as the **Silver Way** or the South-eastern Way.

In Verín, you will be welcomed by the **Monterrei fortress**. Its most notable aspect is its keep, which looms over the town and the Támeiga River valley. Located atop an acropolis, for 800 years it has guarded the lands that stretch into Portugal.

Its triple wall protects, among other things, the **Green Well**, which has been tied to stories of infidelity and suicide, such as that of the wife

of **Peter the Cruel**. It is typical to indulge in **boiled octopus**, **cod** and **androlla**, a type of pork sausage, all washed down with local wine.

If you continue on your journey, you will reach **Augas Santas**, which is very close to **Allariz**. This town has one of Galicia's most impressive historic centres. If you take a stroll through the village, you can sample sweet cakes or royal almond cake, in addition to **Queixo do Rexo**, a cheese made from sheep's milk.

Known as the **thermal capital of Galicia**, **Ourense** boasts a major historic centre, the most important

element of which is its **cathedral** and its famous **chapel of Santo Cristo**. The **fountain of As Burgas**, from which **water flows at 67 degrees centigrade**, is tied to a legend that there is a dormant volcano under the city.

In addition to its **Ribeiro wine**, **Ribadavia** is home to valuable art/history heritage, most notably the **Castelo dos Condes**, one of Galicia's most typical fortresses.

Be sure to visit the wine bars, where you can sample local wines. You must also try the sweets sold in the old Jewish quarter.





Allariz

Near Ribadavia is the **Laias spa**, where you can rest after touring the vineyards in the vicinity of **San Clodio**, in the municipality of Leiro.

Cea is known for baking a type of **bread** (I.G.P. Pan de Cea) that is famous throughout Galicia. You can pair your tasting with Eucaliptine liqueur, which the nearby monks of the **Oseira Mo-nastery** prepare from eucalyptus leaves.

What is notable about the structure is its massive size, and it's worth wandering through its **immense cloisters**, the **grand staircase**, and the **impressive church** and the ambulatory with chapels that closes the apses. On one side you will find the chapter hall, which is

covered by ribbed vaulting held up by braided columns.

You will arrive in the capital of Galicia, **Santiago de Compostela**, via a street named Ponte do Sar, where you will be able to view a collegiate church by the same name. Its inclining walls are held up by the massive buttresses that make it so recognisable.

The **historic centre**, dominated by the cathedral, is just steps away. If you wend your way through its narrow streets it will let you out at the majestic **Praza do Obradoiro**. Take advantage of your stay to discover the **Abastos Market**, where you can purchase artisan products or have a bite to eat at one of the tapas bars.



## SPRINGS

As the nation's top hot springs destination, Galicia boasts more than 300 springs, many of which have therapeutic waters, thanks to rich mineral deposits.

### *Hot springs and O Ribeiro Wines*

If you travel to the Ourense towns of **Cenlle** and **San Amaro** you will clearly see how **rich in hot springs** and **wine** this area is. **O Carballiño** and **O Ribeiro** are two regions that have been assigned the **O Ribeiro designation of origin**, under which one of Galicia's most delicious wines is produced. Along with the thermal baths, wine production is the area's other primary economic activity.

The town of **Laias** is the ideal place to take a break and sample the region's typical products and wash them down with a fine wine. You can stay in one of the rural lodges or a spa hotel, where

in the Roman times they extracted gold from the river.

One good option would be to take a walk along the **banks of the Miño**, Galicia's longest river, where you can take in the nature from Laias to Barbantes-Estación. One way to complete your journey would be to relax with a massage or enjoy the waters at the Laias spa, which looks out over the Castrelo de Miño reservoir.

Local **bread** in **Cea** (I.G.P. Pan de Cea), **boiled octopus** in O Carballiño, foamy beers and **coffee liqueur** are just some of the delicacies you can feast on in this area.

In the latter of the two places you will encounter an architectural curiosity, the **Veracruz Temple**, designed by Antonio Palacios. Its historicist style mixes decorative elements from various artistic periods, which makes it, along with other examples by this architect, a unique construction.

**O Carballiño** also has a **large spa**, where people have come for years in search of relief from various ailments or to simply relax for a few hours.

The **San Cibrao de Las Hill-for**, one of Galicia's largest, is also known as **A Cidade**. It is located between the towns of Punxín and San Amaro.



It was inhabited from the 2nd century to the end of the **Castro culture**. The most notable aspects of the complex include its concentric walls and the fountain or cistern used to supply water to the acropolis.

To truly get into the spirit of the region, we recommend that you participate in a **tasting** at one of the **wine cellars** located amid the area's vineyards.

The **first strains** were planted by the **Cistercians monks of San Clodio**. This monastery, which dates back to the 6th century, quickly became a prosperous agricultural hub. Today it is a charming hotel with a beautiful cloister.



## Water and adventure at O Xurés Park

This route runs between **Bande** and **Lobios**; the latter has a thermal bath spa renowned for its mineral medicinal waters.

Once you have begun your tour, you will see the **remains of Roman settlements and roadways**, all surrounded by lush forests and green valleys filled with **cascades and wild fauna**, such as roe deers, horses and wolves.

The **Church of Santa Comba de Bande** is the only part of the old monastery that still stands today. Dating back to the **17th century** and though somewhat smaller, on the outside,

its floor —lain out in a Greek cross and preceded by a portico— reveals a dramatic combination of volumes. Inside, you can check out the frescoes that depict the four Evangelists, as well as the Annunciation and God the Father atop a globe.

Not too far away is the 1st century **Roman military camp of Aquis Querquennis**, which provided the impetus for the construction of a major roadway that joined Astorga and Braga.

Located on the banks of the **Limia River**, when the waters rise it can become completely submerged. In ad-

dition to the archaeological remains, you can also check out the visitor's centre, where you can learn about all the peculiarities regarding its organization and functionality during the Roman Empire.

At the **Lobios spa** you can take a dip in its bicarbonate water that bubbles and fizzes at temperatures of greater than 70 degrees. Its pools overlook the Serra do Xurés mountains, and you can walk along the river trail to reach the public thermal baths.

You can also explore the mills, pools and waterfalls that cascade



down in varying shades of blue. In the area, **game and beef** are typical, so you should keep these products in mind when ordering your meals.

The latter tends to come from **Cachena cattle**, a local bovine species characterised by its large antlers that roams the meadows freely.

Along the **Corga da Fecha Route**, which begins at the spa, you will pass by the place where the **archaeological remains of the Aquis Originis house** lie, where you can still make out a kitchen, thermal bath area, and localised underground heating system, which was also used in imperial thermal baths.



## STROLLING THROUGH VINEYARDS

With five designations of origin and the product of centuries-old traditions, Galician wines are valued throughout the world. A visit to the place where they are produced is sure to be an enjoyable experience for you.

### *Cambados, the cradle of Albariño wine*

Cambados is the starting point for this trip, where you will travel through the land where the famous Albariño grape is grown.

A stately town, Cambados combines courtly architecture and seafaring tradition. The wines stored in its cellars, which bear the Rías Baixas designation of origin, are the perfect accompaniment to the region's fish and seafood dishes

The Paseo de la Calzada, Príncipe Street, and the Parador are all mandatory stops during your visit here. They are normally teeming with tourists in the summer months, thanks

to the mild climate and unbeatable cuisine.

The Albariño Wine Festival, which has been declared a site of National Tourist Interest and one of the oldest in Spain, is an event you can't miss in the summer in Galicia. You can go to visit the stands set up by local wineries and sample their products.

From the town's promenade, you can see the A Toxa and Arousa islands in the distance. Between them and the coast is a vast assortment of punts that collect mussels and oysters. Local restaurants and bars serve up these true delicacies. Remember that the unique

natural conditions of the Galician rías mean that the seafood is of an unbeatable, internationally-renowned quality.

The Fefiñáns Pazo is one of the best examples of stately civil architecture in all of Galicia. Located next to the San Bieito church, this semi-urban pazo forms an interesting artistic grouping, the construction of which began in the 16th century.

Its courtyard is dominated by the coats of arms of the Viscounty of Fefiñáns and the Marquisate of Figueroa. The floor, which is laid out in an "L" shape, opens out to a plaza bearing its name. The most notable feature is the cre-



related tower. It also has the region's oldest **wine cellar**, which dates back to 1904. You can visit part of the **vineyards** or stroll through the **gardens**, which are filled with local tree species, such as the centuries-old boxwoods.

At the **Museo Etnográfico e do Viño [Ethnography and Wine Museum]** you can learn about the history and methods of winemaking in the Salnés region, which is where Cambados is located. Nearby are the ruins of the **Santa Mariña Dozo church** and its romantic cemetery.

If you cross through the **San Tomé fishing neighbourhood** you will reach a bridge that leads to the Figueira islet, where you can explore the ruins of the **San Sadurnño tower**, which dates back to the Middle Ages.



## Priory of O Ribeiro

A **Arnoia** is the best way to get to know this area of Ourense. Classified under the **Ribeiro designation of origin**, A Arnoia is one of the areas of Galicia with the greatest **winemaking tradition**.

This town, located on the **banks of the Fieira** reservoir, combines winemaking with hot springs, since it has a **spa** with waters laden with sulphur and fluoride that run at 22 degrees Celsius. From its terraces, you can look out at the forests lining the **banks of the Miño River**.

If you take a catamaran out, you can sail to the old spa located in Cortega-

da. Its modernist architecture will transport you back to the 1930s.

A **Arnoia** is famous for its **peppers**, which are prepared in many different ways: stuffed, in omelettes, fried, roasted or grilled. Every August, this staple is honoured with a special festival.

Near Ourense, at the **Pazo of Casanova**, you can visit the wine cellar inside this 18th century construction. Here they grow **godello, loureira, albariño and treixadura grapes**.

They will also explain the research projects that are currently under-

way to help develop and change the region's wines. You mustn't leave without tasting the wines and *aguardiente* (pomace brandies).

In the municipality of Leiro, on the way to Ribadavia, you will find the **Viña Meín wine cellar**, surrounded by grapevines. The old house, which was once used to produce wine, is now used for rural tourism.

Nearby is the **Monastery of San Claudio**, which is considered to be the birthplace of Ribeiro wine, since its Cistercians monks were the first to plant grapevines on these hillsides. Today, it serves as a **hotel**, but visitors



Ribadavia



have free access to explore the cloisters and gardens. The most notable features of the church are its altar-piece and coffered ceiling.

The town of Ribadavia, with its **Festa da Istoria [History Festival]**, where people dress up in old-fashioned clothing, with its Jewish Quarter, castle and Inquisition House will take you back to the days of yore. Be sure to try one of the typical Jewish sweets and to check out a play at the **Mostra Internacional de Teatro**.

While still in Ribadavia, you should visit the **San Xes de Francelos church**. It is considered to be a unique, **9th century** Pre-Romanesque construction. You will be impressed by its latticework.



## MARINE TOURISM

If you want to learn how the fishermen and shellfish gatherers work, what fishing techniques and utensils they use, or how a market works, be sure to visit a fishing village to explore this fascinating world.

### *Seaside villages: Muros, Fisterra and Muxía*

The **Costa da Morte** will offer you the chance to get to know the day-to-day routine of typical villages devoted to fishing. In **fishing villages** such as Muros, Fisterra and Muxía, legends of shipwrecks and lighthouses dotting the rugged coasts run rampant.

Take a boat tour of **Cape Fisterra**, which in ancient times they believed that the world ended. Today there are many pilgrims who finish the **Way of Saint James** before the ocean.

At its ports, you can watch as **redeiras** women repair fishing gear. It takes a person five years to master this detail-oriented task. You mustn't leave without trying some of the recently-caught delicacies at the taverns located in the ports of **Muros** or **Muxía**.

A land of many stories and tragic sinkings, you will find crosses placed at different locations along the coast in memory of those who perished in the Atlantic. **Winter storms** in this area are unforgiving, and the ocean's

ferocity makes navigation difficult if not impossible. This also puts the lives of **percebeiros**, who collect goose barnacles, at risk.

At the Cabo Vilán lighthouse, one of the Galician coast's most important and which is situated in a beautiful place where you can enjoy a memorable sunset, you have the **Centro de Interpretación dos Naufraxios, Faros e Sinais Marítimos** [Shipwrecks, Lighthouses and Maritime Signals Visitor's Centre].





Port de Muros



Shrine of Nosa Señora da Barca. Muxía





Golf course. Illa da Toxa, O Grove



Mariscadoras

## Discovering the Rías Baixas

The Rías Baixas are a top **summer destination** for many Galicians. Blessed with a temperated climate, **fishing villages** like Boiro, Ribeira, Marín, Combarro, and Cangas all boast **beaches with sun-kissed sands**. Across the water from them is the Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park, which can be reached by boat. You can go visit some of the islands and their tranquil beaches and protected flora and fauna.

There are several groups of **shell-fish gatherers** that you could accompany on their route through the shell-fishing grounds in the **Arousa, Pontevedra or Vigo rías**. There, they extract clams and cockles to sell at the markets.

Located in **valley of O Salnés**, Cambados is one of this region of Galicia's most elegant manors.

Surrounded by grapevines that produce wines with the **Rías Baixas designation of origin**, take a walk through the town's historic centre to admire the stately homes and majestic Pazo of Fefiñáns.

A visit to the **Salazones de Moreiras** in O Grove, where they salt fish, will teach you a great deal about fishing and shell-fishing. The trays where they cultivate mussels and other molluscs are part of the landscape in the Rías Baixas. If you sail around them, you can see how people work out on these platforms.

Continuing along the coast, you will reach **Combarro**. The traditional **hórreos**, which were used to store agricultural harvests, are located on the side facing the sea; behind them you will find the fishermen's houses. The **granite and wood** used to build both constructions combines to create an attractive little town.

Just a few kilometres away is **Pontevedra**, which is home to one of Galicia's most beautiful historic centres. Take a leisurely walk through its streets and plazas, making sure to stop off at the **Museo Provincial [Provincial Museum]** to admire its collection, which includes a sizable sampling of Galician artwork.





## THE ROUTE OF THE CAMELLIA

Camellias are the true stars of the show in the stately gardens of local pazos. Try to visit when they are in bloom to witness how the experience becomes a feast for the senses.

### *Pazos and gardens*

This route will take you through various settlements in the provinces of A Coruña and Pontevedra, as detailed below. Along the journey, you can wander through traditional Galician gardens while taking in their unusual scents and sights.

All year long, there are expos and contests celebrated in different regions of Galicia, since the quality and variety of the specimens is something highly sought after by local amateurs and international expert collectors alike.

Your trip begins at the Mariñán Pazo, which is located in the municipality of Bergondo. The build-

ing is situated on a large farm next to the Mandeo River. The French garden, with its geometric flowerbed, is composed of paths lined with boxwood and banana trees, as well as azaleas, ivy, rose bushes, centuries-old varieties of Clethra, and, of course, a wide variety of camellias.

The most notable botanical aspect of Santiago de Compostela is the Alameda, or boulevard, which is located in the city centre. It is in this peaceful place, along with the Carballreira de Santa Susana Park and the shade of the palm and banana trees where the stunning camellias called "jacobean" grow.

The types of camellias that grow in the garden at the Santa Cruz de Ribadulla Pazo are known for their beauty and large size. For the experts out there, this ornamental botanical garden is the most fascinating in all of Galicia. It was enriched in the 19th century by Iván Armada, who significantly expanded the plant collection.

This magnificent example of the Galician garden is divided into wild areas and others that are more geometrically shaped. It also has an old glass greenhouse. This idyllic enclave was where intellectual and politician Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos sought refuge during the





Napoleonic occupation of the early 19th century.

Known as the “Galician Versailles”, the **Pazo of Oca** has walled gardens and a large, river-like pond that passes between them, where you will find a stone rowboat bursting with vegetation and the red of camellias in bloom. If you take a walk, you will end up on the stunning **Paseo de los Tilos** promenade. Perpendicular to the main façade is a Baroque church and a beautiful arched corridor that connects to the building reserved for private use; it is adorned with furniture and artwork spanning several centuries.

The **Casa da Matanza** or **Casa Museo**, where the great writer **Rosalía de Castro** died in 1885, remains practically untouched insofar as

the original structure is concerned. Inside, there are photos of family members and fellow intellectuals, as well as personal memorabilia, documents, and various objects from daily life in 19th century Galicia. There are various camellias in the house’s gardens.

In **Vilagarcía de Arousa** you can visit the medieval **Rubiáns Pazo** and its extensive landscaped forest, the austerity of which is broken up by the colourful camellias, some from the famous **Eugenia de Montijo variety**. The uniqueness of this space has made it worthy of mention by the **International Gardens of Excellence**.

Be sure to visit its winery, which produces wines with the **Rías Baixas designation of origin**, to par-



Pazo de Oca. A Estrada

take in a tasting. During the guided visit they will show you inside the pazo and its chapel.

The gardens at the **Pazo of Quinheiro da Cruz**, located in **Ribadumia**, are surrounded by vineyards with the **Rías Baixas designation of origin**, its own winery, and a **native forest**. The true star of the **landscaped area**, where a plethora of exotic and tropical species flourish, is the camellia: some **5,000 specimens** of more than a thousand varieties. Another pazo with a winery is **Fefiñáns**, in **Cambados**.

Built in the 18th century, the **Pazo of A Saleta**, in **Meis**, has a chapel and pigeon house, as was typical in stately buildings from this era, as well as magnificent gardens. The one that surrounds the rural house itself is planted with more than two

**hundred varieties of camellias** and was the fruit of labours of a British couple named the Gimsons, who, after acquiring the building in the 1960s, created an **English-style botanical garden** with species from all of the world's continents. It has subsequently become one of the foremost in all of Spain.

The origins of the **Pazo of Lourizán** date back to the 15th century, although the building itself —constructed in modernist style— was only erected in the 19th century. Its **54 hectares of land** served a variety of purposes over the course of its existence, from **farmland to a forest research centre**. The abundance of a wide array of camellias makes this landscaped area **burst with colour**.

**Camellias and roses** are intermixed in the **Castelo de Soutomaio** gar-





Pazo de Santa Cruz de Ribadulla. Vedra

den, where their presence has increased over the years. The delicate flowers are surrounded by centuries-old chestnut trees and plant species from every continent in the world.

Just like the Rubiáns gardens, the ones at **Soutomaior** have also received the distinction of **International Garden of Excellence**.

You can get the best views of the **Vigo ría** from the **Parque de O Castro [O Castro Park]**, and you can explore the city's Roman past, all while enjoying the camellias that flourish among the orange and cypress trees.

The garden surrounding the **Quiñones de León Pazo/Museum**, a municipal museum that displays archaeological, painting and decorative art collections, offers you

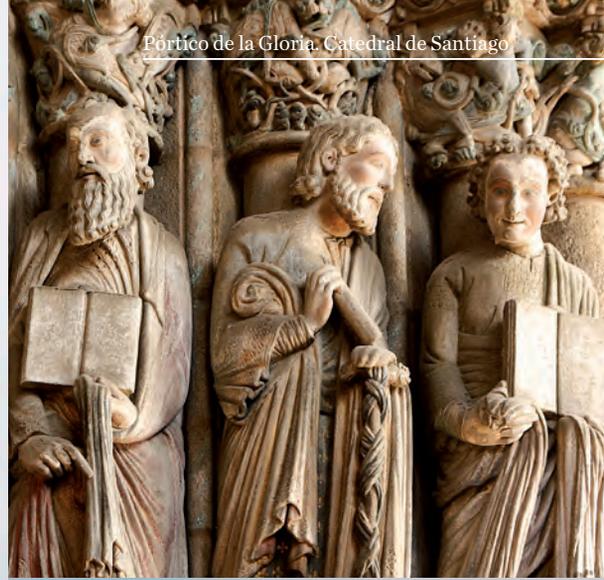
the opportunity to meander among an infinite number of plant species right in the heart of **Vigo**. Come at the end of February to catch the camellias in full bloom.

**Galician gardens** hold many surprises. Do not hesitate to check out the **Pazo of San Lourenzo de Trassouto**, in Santiago de Compostela, where you will find magnificent camellia specimens and a garden full of boxwood hedges trimmed into allegorical **Christian symbols**.

Similarly, the **Pazo of Faramello**, built at the beginning of the 18th century between Santiago and Padrón, is surrounded by a 126,000 m<sup>2</sup> farm with **bucolic landscaped areas**. Some of its flowerbeds are built on the remains of an old paper mill at the edge of the river that cuts across the land.



MORE  
GALICIA



Museo do Mar, Vigo



## Street art

Since the days of our forefathers, everywhere you look in Galicia you will find art. Its **petroglyphs**, **dolmens** and **hill-forts** all tell of a long-ago time filled with secrets. Come to discover its mysteries while exploring stately **pazos**, **hórreos** and **cruceiros**.

**Stone** is the common denominator in all of these pieces. For centuries, those who work with stone, known as **canteiros**, have built **houses**, **village streets** and **monasteries**. They have crafted the **façades of Romanesque temples**, scattered across the land.

Works of notes include the **Santiago cathedral's masterpiece Portico of**

**Glory**, as well as the coats of arms and tombs of noble families on **pazo** façades and inside churches. Slide your hands along the **granite** to feel its roughness and solidity.

If **museums** are your thing, you're in luck. Galicia offers centres that focus on a wide variety of topics, both out in the **countryside** as well as in **city**. There are countless ways to learn and to enjoy yourself. All **Galician cities** have renowned museums.

If you are a nautical history buff, go to **Ferrol** to see the **Naval Museum**, where they have reproductions of ships and navigational and cartographical instruments on display.

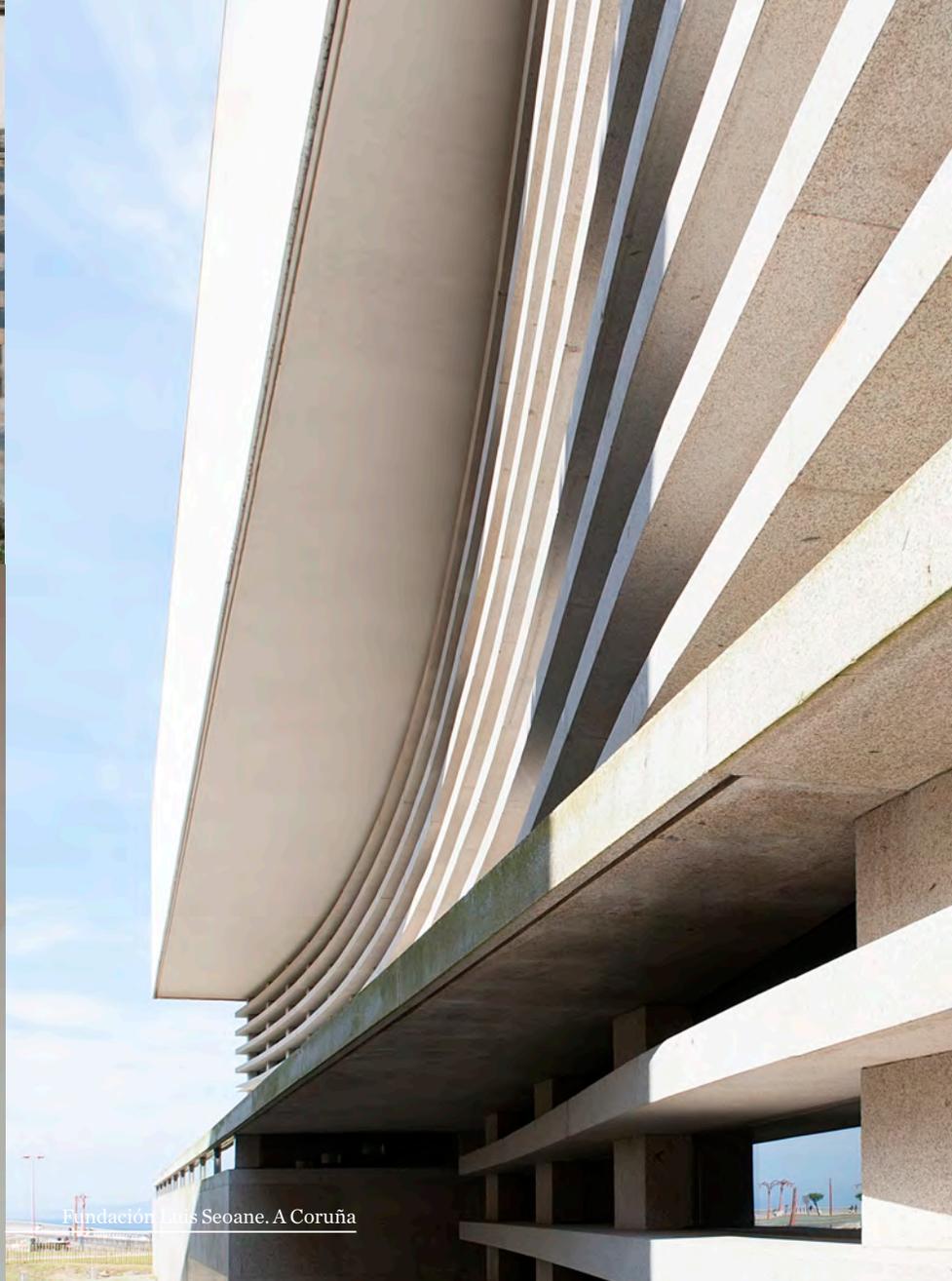
If painting is your thing, go into the **Museo de Belas Artes da Coruña [Coruña Fine Arts Museum]** to see the most notable works of **20th century Galician artists**. In **Santiago de Compostela** you can learn about Galician **traditions and customs** through the **ethnographic collection** at the **Museo do Pobo Galego [Galician People's Museum]**.

While in **Pontevedra**, you may visit the **Museo Provincial [Provincial Museum]**, which has several locations throughout the historic centre. Galicia's primary port, **Vigo**, is home to the **Museo do Mar [Museum of the Sea]**, where you can explore Galicia's connection to the sea.



Monastery of Monfero

CGAC. Santiago de Compostela



Fundación Luis Seoane. A Coruña

To experience how they lived in **pre-historic times**, as well as in the days before the **Roman era**, you should visit the **Campo Lameiro** and **San Cibrao de Las** archaeological parks. At the former, you will discover perfect examples of **pre-historic art** in the form of **petroglyphs**. At the latter, you can explore what the **hill-forts** of Castro culture were like.

The monuments and works of art in **Monforte de Lemos** are a great example of what you might find if you visit a **Galician village**. On display at the **Museo de Nosa Señora da Antiga** [**Our Lady of Antigua Museum**] is a select **picture gallery**, with pieces by El Greco and Andrea del Sarto, while the **Museo de Arte Sacra das Clarisas** [**Museum of Sacred Art of the Clarisses**] has a large collection of Italian pieces acquired by the Count of Lemos in the 17th century.

However, if you are more a fan of **modern art**, you must visit the **Fundación Luis Seoane** in A Coruña; the **Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea** [**Galician Contemporary Art Centre**] in **Santiago de Compostela**, and the **Museo de Arte Contemporánea** [**Contemporary Art Museum**], in **Vigo**. Their temporary exhibits include pieces from the latest creative trends.

At **Cidade da Cultura** [**Culture City**], architecture takes centre stage. Designed by Peter Eisenman, this complex, which is composed of several buildings, is considered an international highlight. You can visit the **Museo de Galicia** [**Museum of Galicia**], which offers a wide variety of exhibits, the **Library** and the **Archives**.



## Language and literature

In Galicia, in addition to Spanish, we speak Galician. **Both languages are official**, so you won't have any problem communicating with people throughout the region, as the majority of the population is bilingual.

**Galician is a Romance language** similar to Portuguese that was very important during the Middle Ages, since it was used in troubadour poetry. King Alfonso X, **The Wise**, wrote his much-celebrated *Cantigas de Santa María* in this language.

During your visit, **you will learn words** that are difficult to translate to other languages, such as *riquiño*,

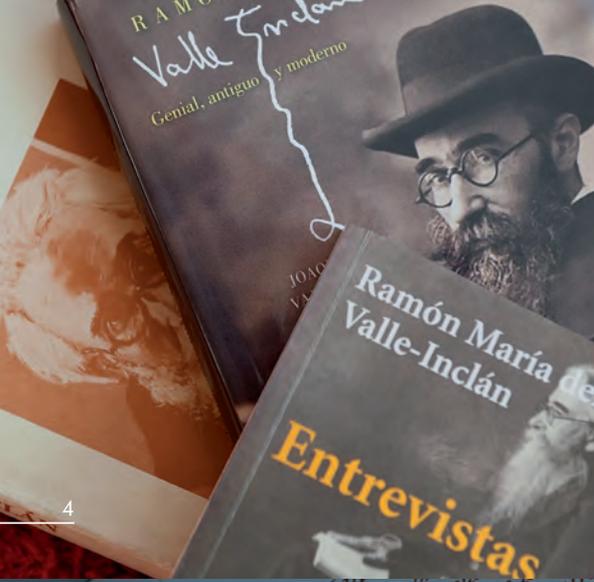
*enxebre*, *ruliña*, *alumiñar* and *toxo*. When you hear them, you will note Galician's **peculiar cadence and soft sound**.

Throughout Galicia's **extensive literary tradition**, women have played an important role. You can revel in the verses penned by **Rosalía de Castro** or the lucid prose of **Emilia Pardo Bazán**, who wrote stories about 19th century society. Both women are a point of reference for Spanish literature.

There are a number of award-winning writers born in Galicia, such as **Camilo José Cela**, who won a **Nobel Prize** and wrote beloved books such as *The Hive*

and *The Family of Pascual Duarte*. Other names of note include **Valle-Inclán** (4), **Eduardo Blanco Amor**, **Álvaro Cunqueiro**, **Alfonso Daniel Rodríguez Castelao**, **Gonzalo Torrente Ballester** and **Manuel Rivas**.

If you want to learn more about the lives of these intellectuals, visit the homes where they lived, or explore their exhibits, be sure to visit the **Fundación Camilo José Cela** (2), the **Casa Museo Emilia Pardo Bazán** (3), the **Fundación Rosalía de Castro** (5 and 6) or the **Fundación Gonzalo Torrente Ballester** (1), where their libraries and the first edition of their books are kept.



4



5



# Castelas



## Nature in its purest form

Galicia's natural wonders mean that the vast majority of its territory is protected, due to interest in its different habitats. Take a stroll through its forests, where wolves live, or sail out to its islands to check out their wild beaches.

**Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park.** A boat will take you to the **most beautiful beach in the world**, according to *The Guardian*: Rodas, on the Cíes Islands. Composed of the archipelagos of Sálvora, Cortegada, Ons and Cíes, this park is a unique flora and fauna reserve.

**As Fragas do Eume.** In the Iberian Peninsula's best preserved Atlan-

tic forest you can walk among native trees and climb up to the **Monastery of Caaveiro**, which offers spectacular views of the Eume River.

**Baixa Limia-Serra do Xurés Park.** The legends surrounding this land, filled with waterfalls, megalithic monuments, thermal waters and the major **Roman road Via Nova**, combine fantasy and reality.

**Correubedo Dunes.** These famous **giant dunes** are the most notable feature of this idyllic seaside location. If you travel along the marked paths, you can explore the **lagoons** surrounding them, Carregal and Vixán.

**Mount Aloia.** On your way through Tui, check out the natural lookout point over the Miño River valley, Galicia's largest. Your climb to the top of the hillside will be rewarded with **spectacular panoramic views**.

**O Invernadeiro.** Practically uninhabited, in order to visit this mountain you must request permission in advance. Its **isolation** makes it a privileged place for having its rivers and native forest all to yourself.

**Serra da Enciña da Lastra.** The presence here of **oak trees** and other Mediterranean species is an exception in Galicia. This place is also a true paradise for speleologists.



Doniños beach



## *Galicia, a natural wonderland*

In addition to national and natural parks, Galicia also has **nature preserves**, such as its **Protected Landscapes**, **Natural Monuments**, **Natural Resource Special Protection Areas**, which are tied to **Local Places of Importance**, and **Biosphere Reserves**.

To the north of Lugo, in **Viveiro**, you will see **Avó de Chavín (Chavín's grandfather)**. One of Spain's tallest trees, this **62-meter eucalyptus**, is located in **Souto da Retorta**. On the **Ártabra Coast** of A Coruña is the **Serra da Capelada**, Spain's tallest cliffs. Amid the fog you will see wild horses, stone walls reaching into the ferocious sea, and shrines visited,

according to **legend**, by reincarnated souls.

The waters that lap the shores of the **paradise-like beaches** located in Pontevedra's municipality of **Cangas**, however, are quite a bit calmer. Located between the Pontevedra and Vigo rías, **Costa da Vela's** find white sand will be certain to impress you.

Next, you'll swap the coast for the **mountains**. In **Pena Trevinca**, which is 2,127 meters high and located in Ourense's region of **Valdeorras**, during the melting season the rivers gush down the slopes, through Europe's only yew tree forest.

Six areas of Galicia have been declared a **biosphere preserve**. Concentrated in Ourense and Lugo, the main features of these preserves are rivers and mountains. The River **Arnoia** runs through the **Área de Allariz** preserve, in Ourense. In this same province you will also find **Xurés**, which is known for its varied forest.

In Lugo, **pallozas**, or traditional houses used for centuries, dot the **Os Ancares Sierra**. To the north is the preserve composed of the **Eo River**, **Oscos** and **Terras de Burón**. The waters of the Eo irrigate the entire area. Around Galicia's longest river you will find the **Terras do Miño**, through which the Way of Saint James passes.



Praza da Leña. Pontevedra



Rúa Policarpo Sanz. Teatro A Fundación. Vigo



Modernism. Ferrol





Praza das Praterías, Santiago de Compostela



Galleries, A Coruña



As Burgas spring, Ourense



View of Lugo from its cathedral

## Seven cities

Galicia has **seven cities** spread out over its four provinces. Located in Pontevedra, the **most populous** is **Vigo**, with nearly 300,000 inhabitants.

**Ferrol:** In the 16th century, this city became a port for the **Royal Navy**. Its importance as a military base and **naval industry** headquarters would come to grow over time.

The waters of the Atlantic Ocean bathe the shores of **A Coruña**. Climb up to the **Tower of Hercules**, a World Heritage Site and the **only Roman lighthouse still in operation** today, and enjoy the city's beaches. Be sure to take a picture of the balconies overlooking the **Marina**.

**Santiago de Compostela:** The target of thousands of pilgrims who travel on the **Way of Saint James**, its historic centre is a **World Heritage Site**. Meander through its streets and marvel at the **botafumeiro**, which is still in operation today.

**Pontevedra:** If you take a stroll through its historic centre, you will learn more about the **canteiros**, who cut the **granite** used to build it. Its plazas will welcome you to the city and its high quality of life.

**Vigo** opens out onto a ría, and along its surface you will see **punts out fishing** for molluscs, but did you know that its beneath its waters there

are a plethora of **galleons** that used to transport gold extracted in the Americas? At the **Mercado da Pedra** you can sample oysters, and if you head to the port you can catch a boat to the **Cíes Islands**.

**Ourense** rises above the banks of the **Miño River**. Of all of its bridges, the most notable is the **Roman Bridge**, the city's symbol. Take a dip in one of the many **hot springs** you will find.

**Lugo:** The city's centre rises up from within the world's best-preserved **Roman wall**, which is considered to be a **World Heritage Site**. Its Roman past is also evident in the thermal baths and the celebration of **Arde Lucus**.



## Historic complexes

**Galicia is a predominantly rural** region, and its landscape is dotted with **small towns and villages**. Its **historic hamlets** continue to serve as a commercial and administrative point of reference for the population living throughout the area.

**Betanzos** was the capital of the kingdom of Galicia during the middle Ages. Its nickname, "**City of Gentlemen**" makes reference to its importance as a home for noble families.

**Muros**. One of the things that will surprise you most about this town, which sits right on a ría by the same name, are the **stone arcades** under which sailors would store their fishing gear.

**Baiona**. It was at this port that the

**Pinta** docked in **1493**, bringing news of the **discovery of America**. Due to the sieges it suffered, a fortress was built; today it operates as a touristic parador.

**Tui**. The defensive style in which its **cathedral** was built is certain to draw your attention, as are the magnificent tympanum reliefs on the main door. This village was a strategic administrative and religious settlement.

**Allariz**. The Arnoia River, with its idyllic riverside walk, cuts through this town, whose glory days were back in the Middle Ages, when it was a cultural centre and capital of the kingdom of Galicia.

**Ribadavia's** rich medieval past helped it to become the capital of the

Ribeiro designation of origin region. Surrounded by **vineyards** and the Avia River, the **Castelo dos Condes [Castle of the Counts]** presides over the population.

**Mondoñedo**. The episcopal headquarters, the main focus of this town's centre is its magnificent cathedral. If you're in the mood for something sweet, try a slice of the typical cake filled with candied pumpkin strands, known as "**cabello de ángel**".

**Viveiro**. The strategic importance of this town's port was the motivation behind the wall that was built around it. Are you up for searching for the **three access gates**? **Once inside the walls, you will get an idea of the splendour of this town's past.**



## *Galicia is one big party*

A lover of festivals and parties, Galicia seamlessly blends Pagan and Christian traditions. It's rare to find a single weekend during the summer months when there is not some sort of celebration in one of the region's villages, towns or cities. Some of these festivals have even received recognition as events of Galician, national or international touristic interest.

Many of the celebrations have religious roots and are held in honour of a saint or patron saint. It's worth your while to visit a village and watch the processions around the small churches and the open-air dances where you can dance the night away until well into the dawn hours.

Pilgrimages are another type of common festivity. Many of them offer you the chance to explore peculiar rites related to the supposed curative powers of some images, fountains or stones found in shrines such as those of Santo André de Teixido or Nosa Señora da Barca. At these celebrations, you will get to taste typical donuts, empanadas or cheeses during a country meal, while being serenaded by bagpipe and tambourine music.

Food is an essential part of any Galician celebration. Nearly all towns produce something that can be prepared in various different manners to create dishes served up to the masses at popular prices. Some examples include the Festa da Lam-

prea [Lamprey Festival] in Arbo, the Festa da Langosta [Lobster Festival] in A Guarda, the Festa do Marisco [Seafood Festival] in O Grove, the Festa da Empanada [Empanada Festival] in Noia and the Festa do Capón de Vilalba [Capon of Vilalba Festival].

Historic reenactments are also quite common in the historic centre of Galicia's towns and cities, where participants travel back in time, such as at the Festa da Istoria [History Festival] of Ribadavia, the Feira Franca in Pontevedra and the Festa da Arribada [Arrival Festival] in Baiona. Make sure to dress in period costume, so as to truly become the character you are pretending to be.



## Rapa das bestas

That flocks of wild horses continue to live in the mountains today reflects Galicia's ancestral past. Every summer these creatures' **manes and tails are cut** and they are **dewormed**. Although they roam free through the hillside, they actually have owners. During this festival, any **foals** that were born are **marked**.

This job, which has become an **atavistic tradition** in various Galician towns, is a body-to-body struggle between man and horse where no sort of instrument is used to overcome them.

The animals are then led down from the mountains by several people to the **curros**, or complexes in

neighbouring towns where they are treated.

Places like **Viveiro, Oia, Cedeira and Mondoñedo** celebrate this tradition, though **Sabucedo**, in Pontevedra, is perhaps the town that best preserves this **unique Spanish ritual**. The **aloitadores**, that is, those responsible for restraining the horses, are the true heroes in this practice into which several youths are inducted each year.

One of the more peculiar aspects of this tradition is that some of the horses pertain to San Lorenzo, the saint to which local people pray during mass prior to setting out to round up the animals.

The **anthropological and media interest** that this festival arouses each year draws a large number of spectators, who come to the **curros** to watch this true **ethnographic performance**. Afterwards, the horses are returned to the mountain to **total freedom**.

The final portion of the festival is when the **aloitadores** and their assistants get to feast on **Galician delicacies**, such as empanadas, boiled octopus, and wine, all while being serenaded to **traditional music** played on the bagpipes and tambourines. **Would you dare to pass up such an authentic opportunity as this one?**



## Entroido

**Entroido**, or **Carnival**, is one of Galicia's most **traditional festivals**. Celebrated for centuries, it has always maintained its bawdy, participatory, **Pagan roots**, despite being prohibited during the dictatorship.

In order to enjoy this collective diversion, where people take to the streets of the region's cities and towns, you need only to out on a **costume** and move to the rhythm of the **charangas** music. When you need to replenish your energy stores, there is nothing better than **cocido**, a typical winter stew, or desserts such as **filloas** [crepes] and **orellas** [fried dough].

**Ourense** is the province with the greatest carnival tradition. This is

where you will find the well-known **Triángulo do Entroido** [Triangle of Entroido] where in **Xinzo de Limia**, **Verín** and **Laza**, the **pantallas**, **cigarróns** and **peliqueiros**, all dressed in **traditional garb** and adornments cause a ruckus in the streets and interact with the public. You should also check out some of Ourense's other towns like **Manzaneda**, **Viana do Bolo** or **Vilariño de Conso**, where your carnival experience will be a bit different.

In the town of **Cobres**, in the Province of Pontevedra, they celebrate an entroido of which written record dates back to the 18th century. The main focus is on **popular dances** and

games in which **madams** and **gallants** participate in their finest **suits**, which recreates a courtly atmosphere. The military uniforms with quirky adornments worn at the **Xenerais da Ulla** are also quite fetching. The individuals in costume participate in **atranques**, which are dialectical showdowns where they poke fun at local, political or social matters.

Galicia's **cities** are no stranger to this festive tradition. **A Coruña**, **Ourense** and **Pontevedra** all celebrate carnival for several days, when the streets fill up with local people and visitors alike wearing clever costumes while the **charangas** music livens up the atmosphere from the morning until late at night.



## Shopping, fashion and crafts

In addition to your photos and memories of your trip, you will certainly enjoy returning home with something made in Galicia that represents **traditional crafts** or **modern innovation** (1).

The high quality of Galician crafts means that they are in high demand. **Lace from Camariñas** (3), **ceramic ware from Sargadelos** (2), **jewels made from jet or silver pieces** that are still made today using techniques passed down from generation to generation to create unique pieces. Many of the streets and plazas in the historic cities and towns bear the names of these artisans.

If you check out the brand name **Artesanía de Galicia** [Galician Crafts] you will find a professional, **sustainable** sector that strives to preserve **unique trades** that create incomparable pieces such as **earrings made from jet**; **clogs made from wood** (4) and **leather**; **torcs**, which are necklaces of Celtic origin, created from **silver**; **bagpipes** made from **boxwood** and **velvet**, and **sancosmeiro hats** braided from straw.

But if **food** is more your scene, you won't have any difficulty finding **liqueurs** in delicate bottles. The most well known in Galicia is **aguardiente**, which is used to make **queimada**. The traditional **coffee liqueur** is also a

staple at the table after meals. Galician **cheeses** are protected by five designations of origin; you can pair them with various cookies.

As the birthplace of **fashion brands** like **Kina Fernández**, **Adolfo Domínguez** and **Roberto Verino**, Galicia is a world power in the textile industry. The **multinational** headquarters of **Inditex**, at its network of stores you will find the latest in fashion trends. Additionally, the region's city centres are brimming with boutiques, which offer original alternatives. If you prefer shopping centres, you will be pleased to hear that **Marineda City**, Europe's third largest mall, is located in A Coruña.



## Festivals and nightlife

The most highly populated **urban centres** offer an endless list of possibilities for enjoying a night out on the town. You can start by heading to one of the typical streets in the **wine bar areas** where you will discover a plethora of bars that attract a large crowd of people each night. Amid this spirited atmosphere, which extends beyond the doors of the bars themselves, you can sample traditional **tapas**, accompanied by **Galician beer or wine**.

You also have the option to visit a **restaurant**, where you can enjoy high-quality products coveted around the world that are used in both the most **traditional** and **cutting edge**.

**Nightclubs, pubs and discothèques** are open well into the early morning hours, so enjoy the party as long as your body will cooperate!

A Coruña's **beaches, which are ablaze with bonfires on the night of San Juan**, at the end of June kick off the summer. **Coastal towns** like Baiona, Sanxenxo, Vilagarcía de Arousa, Ribeira, Mugar dos, Viveiro and Ribadeo swell with tourists who come to enjoy a few days at the beach and the area's **warm climate**, open-air concerts, and fine dining.

It's worth visiting **Santiago de Compostela on the night of July 24th** to watch the **fireworks** set off to honour

the apostle, who's annual celebration is held the following day.

Additionally, in Galicia we hold **festivals** like the heavy metal and hard-core **Resurrection Fest; PortAmérica Rías Baixas**, where you can listen to indie and rock groups; **SinSal Son Estrella Galicia**, which is held in Illa de San Simón and has a secret line-up, and **Festival de Ortigueira**, which focuses on folk music.

It's important to note that in each village you can dance to the typical **open-air summer dances**, which coincide with the **patron saint festivities**.



## Family tourism

Galicia is the perfect destination for enjoying some quality time with the family. People of all ages will find options at any time of the year, thanks to the pleasant climate, which remains temperate. Additionally, it is a safe destination that is not overcrowded, so it shouldn't be hard for you to decide where to go on holiday.

There are a variety of companies that offer open-air activities for the little ones. Have some fun canoeing, kayaking, rock climbing, surfing or with archery. There are also some sailing schools that offer summer camps at various coastal locations. The calm wa-

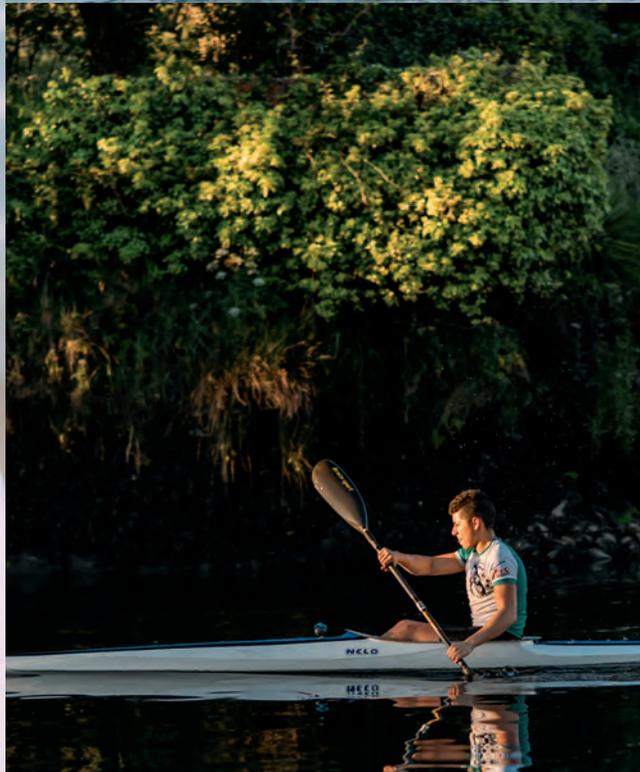
ters of the rías enable you to sail safely. There are various museums that would satisfy the entire family.

At A Coruña's four science museums, all of which are completely interactive, you will see how to feed seals, identify a planet's stars, explore a plane cabin or learn how DNA works.

At other museums, such as Allariz's toy museum you can see how children of the past used to have fun, and at the railroad museum in Monforte de Lemos you can learn about the history of the train. For anyone who is passionate about

animals, at the Marcelle Natureza and Avifauna parks you can see bison, zebras, emus, llamas, reindeer, wolves, flamingos, vultures, turtledoves, pheasants and grouse. Another way to get in touch with the natural and agricultural world is to visit a farm school.

Fervenzaventura de Silleda, Casa Grande de Xanceda and Casa Alvarella all allow visitors to explore the rooms where the cows are milked and the stables where the sheep and goats sleep, brush ponies, collect vegetables and legumes from the garden, bottle-feed calves or bake your own bread.



## *Galicia: the great outdoors*

If you are a nature freak, you have come to the right place, because Galicia's landscape, which is a mix of countryside, mountains and sea allows you to participate in a variety of activities, thanks to its year-round good climate.

With **1,650 kilometres of coastline**, Galicia is a true paradise for anyone who loves **nautical sports**. If sailing is your thing, you will find more than twenty ports and fifty or so facilities to dock, all of which are well connected by land route.

The **tranquillity** and **shelter** of the rías makes it easy to navigate through

them all year long. Come learn about Galicia's rich marine history or explore the Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park. It's all part of the experience.

There are many fans of **surfing** and its variations who come to brave the **formidable waves of the Atlantic**. There are special **beaches** for people who are surfing greenhorns, but there are also sandy areas where you can enjoy yourself if you already have experience.

**Galicia** is known as the **land of a thousand rivers**, so its waters and reservoirs you can participate in various adventure activities, all organised by companies that specialise in this

field and which can guarantee your safety. The **ever-changing** and **surprising landscape** that you will find on your journey offers a **vast network of well-marked trails** that make it easy for you to **hike** peacefully and safely.

However, if you prefer to explore nature on a set of wheels, you need only to visit one of the region's all-terrain bike shops. Cycling through the region will allow you to enjoy whatever nature sends your way. Without a doubt, thanks to its climate and landscape, Galicia is the ideal destination for anyone who loves the great outdoors.



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Proyección U.T.M. Fuso 29



	Highway
	High-capacity regional network
	National highway network
	Basic regional network
	Other regional networks
	Provincial highway
	High-speed rail
	Broad-gauge rail
	Narrow-gauge rail
	National borders
	Autonomous community borders
	Provincial borders
	LUGO Provincial capital
	Vigo Autonomous community capital
	Baleira Other municipalities
	O Cádavo Municipality capital
	Airport
	National Park
	Natural Park



Discover Galicia in the most natural way possible:  
an updated look at tourist attractions

### GEODESTINATIONS

14 places with natural demarcation stemming from  
their history and peculiarities.



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