

Camariñas circular tour... routes on the Costa da Morte



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All the force of the Atlantic batters the mythical Costa da Morte, giving it a range of characteristic shapes and colours. Strong winds, the scent of the sea and green hills are the features of a route that distils the essence of one of the most dangerous coasts in the world. The circular route, which starts and ends in Camariñas, takes in coastal villages and landscapes, dunes, capes and sandbanks, echoing tales of sailors, storms and lighthouse keepers.



coin. Located close to each other, they have such close links to the sea that they cannot be understood without it. The bright colours of the houses recall times when the paint left over after painting boats protected the beach-facing façades from the winter weather. A dirt track takes us towards Ensenada de O Trece, an inlet open to the sea and exposed to the might of the ocean. The wind blows the fine sand of the beach upward, creating a sand dune like a wall on the side of the O Veo hill that stretches to the top and beyond. On the flat land at the other end lies the English Cemetery, reminding us of the harsh conditions on this part of the coast. The route to Vilán, with views of the horizon, winds slowly beside cliffs and crags, among which an old wolf trap can be seen.

Camariñas is the sea, and the sea is stories of hard work, shipwrecks and tough people who live in a setting that is both beautiful and dangerous. Its presence is at the heart of this route, but the sea and water also have stories to tell on land. A seafaring village, Camariñas nestles in a small *ría*, sheltered from the area's constant winds. The modern harbour contrasts with older maritime constructions which retain the traditional character of the

village. Visitors should be sure to admire the lace made in Camariñas by the *palilleiras*, craftswomen who keep this wonderful cultural legacy alive. The route to Ponte do Porto winds round the A Basa inlet and along the Río Grande estuary. After Ponte do Porto it turns off towards Camelle and Arou, Arou and Camelle... are two sides of the same

The dangerous nature of the coast led to the construction of a new lighthouse at Cape Vilán, the first electrified lighthouse in Spain (1896).

It towers above the crag and, at 130 metres high, is one of most representative images of the Galician coast, in an incomparable

*Entre Cabo Vilano e Tosto,
entre Arou e Camariñas.
Hai chuvias das sete cores
e mirei ao lume do mar cravar-se nos ollos do raposo.*

▼ Cabo Vilán.



◀ Museo Man de Camelle



The **legacy of Man, the German of Camelle**, is one of the town's most distinctive features. Manfred Gnädinger settled in the town's port in the 1960s, communing with nature and creating art based on the concept of a garden-museum, interacting with rocks, shapes and colours.

In his search for harmony with the sea, Man's life and work became part of the landscape of the Costa da Morte. Visitors began to come to see his work and it became an open-air museum in the land-art style, playing with rocks and making changes to the area, including the harbour wall.

The *Museo Man de Camelle*, *Casa do Alemán* was created nearby and part of his legacy can be seen there, complementing the works which are still outdoors

setting for visitors to enjoy the spectacular sunsets. Cape Vilán lighthouse also houses the *Centro de Interpretación dos Naufraxios, Faros e Sinais Marítimas* (the Shipwreck, Lighthouse and Marine

Signal Interpretation Centre). The return route to Camariñas passes close to Nosa Señora do Monte hermitage, which, from a hilltop with sweeping views, oversees the passage of boats and seamen.



Don't miss...



The name of the municipality is taken from the “**camariña**” (*Corema album*), a species of shrub native to the Atlantic coast. This plant, typical of the Costa da Morte, is a fine example of the wealth of flora found in this impressive yet fragile landscape, part of the Natura 2000 Network.

O cemiterio dos Ingleses

The Royal Navy's HMS *Serpent* sank off this coast in 1890. Of its crew of 175 only three survived. The others have all been laid to rest beside the sea that took their lives.

The ship sank in a heavy storm on the night of 10 November 1890, when she was sailing from Plymouth to Sierra Leone. The ship ran aground on the rocks at Punta do Boi with tragic consequences, at a point known today as *Baixos do Serpent*.

The 172 bodies were buried near the place where the ship sank, in the same spot as 28 members of the crew of the *Iris Hull*, another ship that sank at Punta do Boi in 1883.

The English Cemetery is a simple stone construction divided into two areas, an inner section reserved for officers and a larger section for other crew members. Because of its distinctive character and historical importance the cemetery was included in the European Cemeteries Route.

As an expression of gratitude for the help given by local people, the British Navy sent gifts, including the “*Serpent Barometer*” which can still be seen on the façade of a house in Camariñas harbour.

