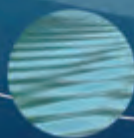
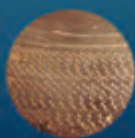




# TWO

COUNTRIES  
ONE DESTINATION







# TWO COUNTRIES ONE DESTINATION



EIXO ATLÁNTICO  
DO NOROESTE PENINSULAR



XUNTA  
DE GALICIA *galicia*



PROGRAMA  
COOPERACIÓN TRANSFRONTERIZA  
ESPAÑA - PORTUGAL  
COOPERAÇÃO TRANSFRONTEIRICA  
2007 - 2013

Unión Europea  
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Invertimos en su futuro



# TWO COUNTRIES ONE DESTINATION ONE DESTINATION COUNTRIES

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# CARLOS NEGREIRA



We cannot ignore the importance that Eixo Atlántico has had, during the last 22 years, to boost cooperation between the North of Portugal and Galicia. It has developed its work in many areas; some of them so strategic relevant as the Urban Agenda, which will be drafted and discussed during the two-years presidency that I have the honor to Chair.

Among all actions promoted, the most important in the short and medium term due to the great economic growth that it involves is the promotion of the tourism within the Euro-region. Our Euro-region has great assets in those values that tourist look for: the religious tourism, nature & leisure tourism, health tourism and heritage related tourism, are present in a territory so rich and charming that six of our cities have been recognized by UNESCO as World Heritage places.

This Guide shows clearly both elements: the rich tourist offer of the Euro-region and our capacity to value it through a common brand: "Two countries one destination"

I hope that you really enjoy of this Guide and we will have the opportunity to see you in our cities!

*Carlos Negreira*  
President of Eixo Atlántico and Mayor of A Coruña.



The pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela has been decisive to the roll of structuring Europe and its potentialities as a channel of communication and genesis of interculturality still have full force today.

The Camino de Santiago (Way of St. James) represents one of the sites with most historical-artistic value. The extraordinary wealth of monuments and landscapes of these routes attract each year thousands of pilgrims. They are the ones that preserve to history the Jacobean legacy.

The Jacobean routes take part of the most powerful links between Galicia and Portugal. This guide gives us a more profound knowledge of the different routes but also of the tourism resources of the territory where with this unique and authentic destination is settled in, characterized by the quality and the valorization of the endogenous resources.

The way of St. James is considered to be our icon of differentiator tourism that draws international tourists regardless the time of the year.

For all of these reasons, the way of St. James is placed in the center of the first strategic line of the Tourism Plan of Galicia in which the Jacobean Route is defined as a structuring axis of the new alternatives for tourism and an international demonstration model.

The preservation, the management of fluxes, the signalization and services, as well as the implementation of the Smart Way aim to consolidate the way as a sustainable and differentiator resource by means of the use of innovation and technology.

A fair share of the preservation and marketing of the associates values of the Jacobean Route is only possible thanks to the work of the Associations of Friend of the Way. There are more than 200 all over the world with almost 80 thousand associates.

Therefore there is an extensive network that revolves around the dissemination of the cultural and tourist values of the Jacobean Route. This is a live sample of the day to day of the Way as an element of cohesion. This year, on the occasion of the VIII Centenary of the Pilgrimage of San Francisco of Assisi to Santiago celebration, the capital of Galicia will host the first International Summit of Associations of Friends of the Way, at Santiago. A historic event that wants to symbolize the gratitude of Galicia to all those who live and feel the Way.

Galicia will have this year multiple artistic events, exhibitions and congresses to celebrate this ephemeris. This is a great year to make the Way and go across the routes enjoying the cultural offer of the centenary, a unique experience.

The Way is a living museum of some of the most important patrimonial and artistic resources of the world, a route that has traveled throughout history leaving us a treasure that we must preserve, share and disseminate.

*Alberto Núñez Feijóo, President of Xunta de Galicia.*

# St James' Way



*Thousand years of History  
for millions of stories*

# RELIGIOUS TOURISM

The universality of the religious feeling has pushed men and women since the antiquity to go all over thousands of kilometres with the hope of redemption. The appearance of the remains of Apostle Santiago and the successive bulls of the Popes made “El Camino de las Estrellas” (“The Way of the Stars”) the uncertain destination of pilgrims who fought against the inclement weather to arrive to Santiago de Compostela, where the religious catharsis took place.

Nowadays, the religious feeling still exists, although the sceneries of religious nature are also a magnet for other public, more interested in the ludic and cultural aspects.



The cities of the Eixo Atlántico, besides counting on numerous monuments of churches, basilicas and monasteries spread over its emblematic territory, enables to enjoy the pilgrimage to the jubilee city of Santiago de Compostela, as well as, for instance, to intensely live the Holy Week or other festivities of religious nature, spread all across the Euro-region's area.

## St James' Way

The cultural inquisitiveness and the religiosity  
The adventurous desire of the personal challenge  
Dominated by Romanic and Gothic styles  
Going all over paths of ancient Templars and Benedictines  
Among chestnuts and *carballos* (oaks).  
Among legends and miracles.

*Thousand years of History for millions of stories*

## The Way of St. James

### All the ways converge to reach the Obradoiro Square

For more than one thousand years, the Way of St. James has driven pilgrims till the sanctuary of an Apostle of Christianity: St. James the Great. His tomb, discovered in 813 in Libredón hill, would be the cornerstone of a prodigious Cathedral and of a city that would attract walkers from all Europe. The pilgrimage to Santiago was the most important religious and cultural occurrence of Christianity between the 11th and 13th centuries, fact recognised by the UNESCO, which declared it as World Heritage.

Many cities of the Eixo Atlántico are traversed by the different routes of the Way of St. James.

1. French Way. Sarria.
2. Silver Route. Bragança, Ourense, Verín, O Carballiño and Lalín.
3. Portuguese Way.
  - a. Medieval or Central Way: Porto, Vila do Conde and Barcelos.
  - b. Interior Way: Peso da Régua, Vila Real, Chaves and Verín.
  - c. Coast Way: Porto, Matosinhos, Vila do Conde, Vigo and Pontevedra.
4. English Way. Ferrol, Narón and A Coruña.
5. Winter Way. O Barco de Valdeorras and Monforte de Lemos.
6. Primitive Way. Lugo.
7. Towers' Way. Guimarães and Braga.
8. Pilgrimage Route of the Sea.

+info

[www.turgalicia.es](http://www.turgalicia.es)  
[www.xacobeo.es](http://www.xacobeo.es)



## SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

From the 10th century, Santiago built monasteries, churches, hospitals and refuges to look after the pilgrims. Everything in the city is an echo of the Way: the Cathedral itself or the ancient hospital for pilgrims –today the tourist hotel of The Catholic Monarchs- both in Obradoiro Square, in the middle of which is located the slab which indicates the starting point of the pilgrimage. The adjacent monasteries to the Cathedral, San Martín Pinario and San Paio de Antealtares, were also born to guard the tomb of the Apostle. Azabachería Square was a bustling market where moneychangers and charm sellers approached the pilgrims. In Quintana Square they found another market, and in Platerías, craftsmen and metal smiths. The *rúa do Franco* (Franco's Street) provided them lodging and meals.



The main route –the one from the French Way- gets inside the old city through the *Concheiros* quarter, that gathered the sellers of the historic shell –natural, made of lead, tin or silver- which distinguished the pilgrims. Through San Pedro Street it is possible to arrive at the *Porta do Camiño* (Way's Gate), which reminds one of the eight gates of the already dismantled wall. Only the nearby Arco de Mazarelos remains from it. The Casas Reais Street leads to Cervantes Square, with elegant buildings, and from there to the northern side of the Cathedral. The surroundings are spread with the ten Romanic churches mentioned by the Codex Calixtinus: San Fiz de Solovio, San Miguel, San Benito... today covered with Baroque and Neoclassic emblazonments.



In the outskirts of Santiago one can also visit the convents and monasteries which, from the 13th century on, were dedicated to heal and host pilgrims and dwellers: the Convent of San Francisco, the hospital of San Roque and the Dominican convent of Bonaval. The feminine enclosed ones can be visited after arranging in Santiago Tourism the guided visit 'Domus Dei: enclosed convents', which explains the austere and contemplative lifestyle of the Benedictines in San Paio de Antealtares, the Mercedarians, the Poor Clare Sisters, the Carmelites and the Dominicans of Santa María de Belvís. It is also available, on request, a visit to the monumental churches, many of which keep collections of sacred art that are possible to visit: in this sense, the visit to the Monastery of San Martiño Pinario, the Museum of Sacred Art of Antealtares and the Museum of the Colegiata del Sar are emphasized.

+info

[www.santiagoturismo.com](http://www.santiagoturismo.com)  
[www.santiagodecompostela.org](http://www.santiagodecompostela.org)

## French Way

### SARRIA

The French Way is the pilgrimage route with most historic and artistic tradition and the most internationally recognized one, as well as the most visited by hundreds of thousands of pilgrims. This way enters Galicia through O Cebreiro, in Lugo province.

Sarria, is an example in the Way for the pilgrimage on foot, given its privileged location, placed 111km from Santiago, since the minimum distance to obtain the *Compostela* is 100km. It is a city linked to the St. James tradition, full of culture and a crossing point for pilgrims since the Middle Ages.

The *Rúa Maior* (Main Street) of Sarria is the core of the old quarter, necessary step for the pilgrim. The fact of the Way passing through the town has favoured the existence of many religious constructions, such as the Church of *Santa Mariña*, the Church of San Salvador of the 13th Century or the Chapel of San Lázaro, temple of the 18th Century and former hospital of the 15th Century. It also stands out the Monastery of la Magdalena, from the 13th-18th Centuries.



In the rural surroundings, the Romanic style is found in different churches, among which it stands out the Church of Santiago de Barbadele of the 12th Century. As tokens of the civil and military architecture it is representative the Torre de la Fortaleza, rebuilt at the end of the 15th Century; the current building of the court, former hospital of San Antón, which was active until 1821 and the bridges of the *Ponte Ribeira* and of the *Áspera* of medieval origin that crosses the Way.

The pilgrim finds in Sarria the largest population of the French Way in Galicia after Santiago. Those who enjoy antiquities should go for a walk in the *Rúa do Porvir*, where most of the famous antiques dealers of Sarria are assembled. Sarria, in addition, is being consolidated as a Centre of Reference of Antiquities and Restoration (CRAR) of the Euro-region.

In the town two sanctuaries are centres of pilgrimage, which give rise to the *Romería dos Remedios* and the *Romería do Cristo de Goián*.

### Bragança, Verín, Ourense and Lalín

The South-eastern Way, most known as the *Vía de la Plata* (Silver Route) is the longest pilgrimage route; it connects the Peninsula from north to south with a large geographic and of historical-artistic heritage. This route enters in the north-west of Portugal through Bragança, crosses Galicia, passing through Verín, Ourense and Lalín until its arrival at Santiago de Compostela.

### BRAGANÇA

The Silver Route, known as a commercial and military itinerary of roman origin, starts in the municipality of Bragança through *Quintanilha*, the oldest pilgrimage gate in Portugal.



*Pelourinho. Bragança.*

The Portuguese way of the Silver Route passes through the municipality of Bragança and, in some of its sections, the route traverses the itinerary of the Via XVII (seventeen in Roman numerals) of Antonino, which joined *Brácará Augusta* and *Asturica Augusta*.

Bragança, shelters a wide and different built heritage, invites the pilgrims to travel through the memories of their ancestors. From the ensemble, it stands out the citadel, antique fortified village with countless promenades that breath history: the castle with the Militar Museum, the *Domus Municipalis*, the *Pelourinho*, the Church of Santa María and the Iberian Museum of the Mask and the Garment, that are established as emblematic places.

The historical centre shelters the church of the Sé, the modern Centre of Contemporary Art Graça Morais, planned by the architect Souto Moura, the Centre of Photography Georges Dussaud, the Museum of the Abade de Baçal and the Alive Science Centre.

The city also shelters a rich religious heritage. An example of it is the Benedictine Monastery of Castro de Avelãs, only model in the Portuguese Romanic outlook, crossing point for the pilgrims, the temple of Santo Cristo de Outeiro, dated from the 17th Century, classified as National Monument in 1927. Its construction is associated to the necessity of reaffirmation of the country as a nation independent from Spain. It stands out the Castle of Outeiro declared Building of Public Interest in 1955. Its construction dates back to the Middle Ages, rebuilt in the reign of D. Dinis, at the end of the 13th Century. The dominant position of this fortification conferred it, throughout the Middle Ages, the role of a lookout of the border of Trás-os-Montes with the kingdom of León.

The celebrations and *romerías* are another religious component that assume a particular importance in the rituals connected to the winter solstice, with the masquerades of pagan origin, between the 25th December and the 6th January and the carnival period.

The veneration of *Nossa Senhora das Graças*, the patron saint of the city, celebrated between the 15th and the 22th August, is another of the enhanced festivities of the city.

## VERÍN

Verín, communicative connection of ways, link between the Southeaster Way Silver Route coming from Zamora, and the Portuguese Interior Way coming from Chaves.



*Pilgrims inn. Verín.*

Verín welcomes pilgrims from Bragança, variation in which the walker passes through several settlements full of history until Segirei, border village that makes the pilgrim go into Galicia, only 30 km separate it from Verín, where he or she will find the pilgrims who have chosen the Portuguese Interior Way.

In Verín, the route takes us until the bridge of Támeiga river, natural link of the Eurocity Chaves-Verín. A pazo (country house) of the 18th Century is the stop; either to seal the credentials, or to overnight. The House of the Shield offers the well-deserved rest to the walker, in spacious and renovated facilities.

In this setting one can find the Chapel of San Lázaro, and the Royal Way that goes into the fortification of Monterrei, defensive ensemble which dominates the valley and place where it was installed the first printing house of Galicia. Only 180 km separate the pilgrim from Santiago de Compostela.

The walker has a paths network. Among them stands out the *Thermal and Water Route*, which passes through the miner-medicinal springs of the Cabreiroá spot and its balneary, Sousas and Fontenova, Requeixo, Fonte do Sapo and Cadelinas (see page 162).

## ■ OURENSE

Many travellers pass through the land of Ourense, although they can start the Way there, since from this point it is fulfilled the minimum distance to obtain the “Compostela”. The city offers one of the most singular lodgings of the Way in the San Francisco ensemble.

Ourense’s history can be felt in its old quarter, with proofs of medieval, baroque and modern art architecture in stately homes, rows of balconies, fountains and arcades.



Panoramic view of Ourense

The Cathedral is unmissable, stylistically it is considered Romanesque of transition and its floor corresponds to one of a pilgrimage church. A temple where it stands out the Portico of the Paradise, polychrome tympanum of the 13th century, inspired by the Portico of the Glory in Santiago de Compostela.



*Cloister of San Francisco. Ourense.*

Another jewel of the city is the cloister of San Francisco, which is in the upper part of the city, close to the Auditorium of Ourense. The original church was moved in 1929 stone by stone until its new location in the vicinity of San Lázaro Park. This spectacular Gothic cloister of San Francisco convent has a rectangular floor with 62 pointed arches and 76 double columns, except for the four first ones and the four last ones, which are single and with quadri-lobate shafts.

## LALÍN

The Way continues until Lalín, where it gets connected in A Laxe, place of junction between the Silver Route and another of the pilgrimage itineraries, the Winter Way (see page 32). It is here where one can find the pilgrims lodging.



Because of its geographical location, Lalín is considered the kilometre zero of the Community of Galicia. The pilgrim finds in this city green natural surroundings. Around the monastery, from which it only remains the church, it was organized the village, being this today the old quarter.



Church of Goiás. Lalín.

The city of Lalín has an interesting heritage including religious buildings such as the Sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de O Corpiño of the 17th century, example crowded by thousands of visitors and where *romerías* are celebrated every year (see page 41). It also stands out the monastic Romanesque church of the 12th century of Lalín de Arriba, besides other civil buildings, such as de Pazos of Liñares, Bendoiro and Donfreán.

In Colón Street it is found the sculpture of O Porco ("The Pig"), which symbolises one of the most famous gastronomic fiestas of Lalín and of all Galicia, the *Feira do Cocido*, declared of National Touristic Interest in 2010.

+info

[www.cm-braganca.pt](http://www.cm-braganca.pt)  
[www.verin.es](http://www.verin.es)  
[www.eurocidadechavesverin.eu](http://www.eurocidadechavesverin.eu)  
[www.ourense.travel](http://www.ourense.travel)  
[www.lalin.org](http://www.lalin.org)

## Portuguese Way

**Through the Medieval or Central:** Porto, Vila do Conde and Barcelos.  
**Through the Interior:** Peso da Régua, Vila Real and Chaves-Verín.  
**On the Coast:** Porto, Matosinhos, Vila do Conde, Viana do Castelo, Vigo and Pontevedra.

The Portuguese Way to Santiago de Compostela, used since the Middle Ages, has an important repercussion since the 12th century, offering a setting with a great natural value.

There are three alternatives in this Way that crosses the cities of the Eixo Atlántico: the Medieval or Central route which passes through Porto, Vila do Conde and Barcelos until going into Galicia through Tui; the Interior route

which crosses Peso da Régua, Vila Real and Chaves, and the route on the Coast, which meets in some parts the Medieval Way passing through Porto, Matosinhos, Vila do Conde, Viana do Castelo, and crosses the border going along the edge of the Ría of Vigo and arrives at Pontevedra.

### **Portuguese Medieval Way, also called Central**

The Medieval or Central Way in the North of Portugal starts in the Sé of Porto, after a couple of stretches from Lisbon. It continues towards Barcelos, land of the legend of the Cock. After, it passes through Pontevedra until arriving at Santiago. There are pilgrimage models of this itinerary such as the one of the Queen Santa Isabel in the 14th century or the one of the Jerusalem Bishop portrayed by the Priest Giovanni Batista Confalonieri, in 1594, among any other famous pilgrims.

## **BARCELOS**

The city of Barcelos is, in its own right, the epicentre of the Portuguese Way to Santiago de Compostela. It offers three lodgings and some support points for pilgrims. It is one of the richest territories regarding tradition and pilgrimage vocation in Portugal.



*Entrance of the Way in Barcelos.*

There are many buildings and spaces of patrimonial value that cover the most varied styles and periods, allowing the visitant to choose between a more urban route or a more rural one. There are three ways which pass through Barcelos: the Medieval or Central Way, the Way on the Coast, and the Way of the North or of the *Reina Santa* ("Saint Queen").

In the urban tour it is found the medieval core of the city, with the Chapel of la Señora del Puente, where one can still see the benches and footbaths for the pilgrims' rest, the medieval bridge, structure of the 14th century which reinforced the strategic role of Barcelos in the pilgrimage to Compostela in the Middle Ages, the Matriz Church, the building of the *Câmara Municipal*

("town hall"), former hospital to support the pilgrims, the *Temple of Senhor Bom Jesus*, the Church of *Nossa Senhora do Terço* or the *Church of the Misericórdia*, where it can be found the best baroque tiling. Also, the Cruise of the Gallo, which immortalises the legend of the Cock of Barcelos, which gives shape to the miracle of Santiago, where the Apostle saves a pilgrim from the gallows. From the legend it would arise the symbol of the city and later of Portugal.

The rural route allows the traveller to discover some of the most beautiful sanctuaries; churches, bridges, cruises and fountains, such as the one of *Nuestra Señora de la Franqueira*, the one of *Nuestra Señora de Aparecida*, the Romanesque Church of *Abade de Neiva*; the Romanesque Church of *S. Martinho de Balugães*, the bridge *das Tábuas*, the cruise of *Portela* of the Fountain of the *Ferreirinha*, among many other symbols which voice the pilgrimage vocation of this territory, a living museum of the Way of St. James, materialized in the Legend of the Cock and in an old quarter intrinsically connected to this pilgrimage.

+Info

[www.cm-barcelos.pt](http://www.cm-barcelos.pt)

## Portuguese Way through the Interior

This itinerary offers a mountainous landscape influenced by the proximity of the Range of the *Alvão*. It crosses the municipalities of *Peso da Régua*, *Vila Real* and *Chaves*. Its route is also used by other pilgrims who travel to the Sanctuary of *Fátima*.

### PESO DA RÉGUA

The Way continues through *Peso da Régua*, placed by the riverside of *Douro* river, which offers a diversified heritage. Of religious nature, it stands out the Main church of *peso da Régua*, temple built at the beginning of the 17th century. It was built where formerly it was erected the chapel of the Holy Spirit. It is enhanced a famous fresco of the 18th century, by the great Portuguese painter *Pedro Alexandrino*, which represents the Supper of Christ.

It is possible to visit the *Casa do Douro* ("Douro's House"), one of the most important institutions, whose history is connected to the production and commerce of the Wines of the Douro and Porto. In its interior one can admire a prominent triptych of stained glass windows attributed to the master *Lino António*, which depict, in its left panel, the typical activities of the wine production in the Region. In the right panel, the works related to commerce and wine exportation passing through *Vila Nova de Gaia*, and in the middle, the union of both activities, fundamental to the growth and the creation of the wealth in the *Douro*. It can be also contemplated the building of the *Chapel das Sete Esquinas* or the *Chapel of Nossa Senhora do Desterro*, built between the 17th and 18th centuries, in the artistic period of the Proto-Baroque. The recovery of the *Chapel das Sete Esquinas* was honoured with the Prize of Architecture of the *Douro*, with and Honourable Mention.



Peso da Régua is the entrance door to all the region of the *Vinho do Porto* ("Porto Wine"). It attracts the attention the vineyards placed along the river-side (see page 109) and the *Museum of the Douro* deserves a visit.

## VILA REAL

The Portuguese Way through the Interior arrives at Vila Real, city of great diversity which allows the pilgrims to live, in a few kilometres, a way marked with beautiful landscapes: from sheer valleys, where the culture of the vineyards in terrace predominates, to a landscape marked by the *Alto Douro Vinhateiro*, classified as World Heritage by the UNESCO (see page 76).



*Vila Real.*

The baroque style has a great presence in the city. It stands out: the New Chapel of Church of the Clergymen, where it attracts the attention the façade and the tiles that cover the walls inside of it, which represent scenes of the life of *São Pedro* and *São Paulo*; the church of *São Pedro*, the most remarkable building in San Pedro Square and the only church in Vila Real with two towers with both bell towers.

It must be visited the Cathedral of Vila Real, also known as the Church of *São Domingos*, project approved by the King in 1421 and whose construction started the 8th May 1424, during the reign of King D. João I. It became Cathedral in 1922, when it was created the diocese of Vila Real, by the Pope Pius XI. It was declared National Monumental in 1926. The tower was built in the 18th century.

Vila Real is rich in landscapes and natural surroundings. Travellers can go to the Solar of *Mateus*, one of the unmissable visits. National Monument of Portugal, it is a Baroque residence-palace of the 18th century that lets envisage the life of the Portuguese aristocracy. It is worth walking around the magnificent gardens and vineyards that surround the house. It is curious the spectacular closed avenue, with a tunnel of trees more than 50 metres long.

It is recommended to go all over the Natural Park of the *Alvão*, located in the homonymous range (see page 121).

## CHAVES

Chaves and Verín are connected by a 26 km stretch in the Way of St. James. The city of Chaves, with its cosy historic city centre, with typical balconies and an interesting monumental ensemble, among which it stands out the *Camões* square, the *República* square, the *pelourinho*, the *Matriz* church and the *Misericórdia* Church, the Town Hall and the Pazo of the Dukes of *Bragança*, see of the Museum of the Region, famous for its wide and rich epigraphic collection of the Roman period.



*Matriz Church. Chaves.*

Other points of interest are the roman bridge of *Trajano*, *Caldas*, whose waters flow at 73 grades centigrades, the Roman therapeutic spa, in the *Largo do Arrabalde*, the *Homenaje* Tower and, in the exit to *Galicia*, the Romanesque Church of *Nossa Senhora da Azinheira*, in *Outeiro Seco*.

The pilgrim crosses some parishes of the municipality, from Vila Poca de Aguiar, entering Oura, continuing to Vidago, passing through Selhariz, Vilas Boas, Vilela do Tâmega, São Pedro de Agostém, Samaiões, Madalena, Chaves (centre), Santa Cruz/Trinidade, Outeiro Seco, Vilarelho de la Raia, entering Galician lands through the locality of Rabal. Another version of the tour in the Eurocity has its entrance in Feces de Abaixo, continuing through Mandim.

Close to the old quarter one can find the Caldas de Chaves, one of the most important thermal centres of Portugal, with the hottest waters of Europe (see page 161).

+info

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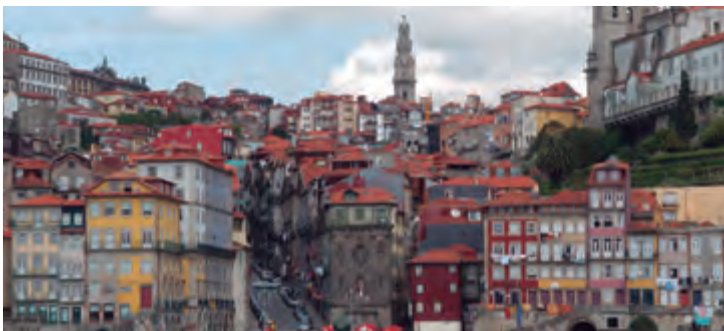
### Portuguese Way on the Coast

The Portuguese Way on the Coast owes its name to the fact that it runs close to the coast and through it walked on a pilgrimage the king Don Manuel, or Saint Thomas Becket. It is also called the Monastic Way.

The Way goes out of Porto and it hardly gets separated from the coast, going through Matosinhos, Vila do Conde and Viana do Castelo, entering Galicia through Tui, it crosses the Ría of Vigo and reaches Pontevedra, until Santiago de Compostela.

## PORTO

Millenary and cosmopolitan city, model of the North of Portugal it is a large city of contrasts where various styles and ages get mixed, reflected on its narrow medieval alleys, churches, squares, monuments and wide and modern avenues.



In Porto the pilgrimage starts in the *Terreiro da Sé*, building with a roman-Gothic structure of the 12th and 13th centuries, with restructurings from the Baroque period (17th-18th centuries) and from the 30s of the past century. The Cathedral of Porto is dedicated to *N. Sr<sup>a</sup> da Assunção*; inside it D. João I and D. Filipa of Lancaster got married in 1387 and the Infant D. Henrique got baptized. In this monument it stands out the icon of *N. Sr<sup>a</sup> da Vandoma*, patron saint of the city and the silver altar, carried out between 1632 and the 19th century, considered as a fundamental work of the Portuguese gold smithing.

After sealing the pilgrim's credentials in the *Sé*, or in the tourism office, installed in the former *Casa da Câmara* of the 15th century, one can enjoy a visit to one of the most emblematic symbols of Porto: the Church and the Tower of the Clergymen and the Church of *São Francisco*.

At the exit of the old hamlet, the way splits into two in the way of the coast: the one of the Interior, towards Braga, and the one of Lima or the Central one, towards Barcelos. They all cross the city through different places.

Porto represents, in the Network of Capitals with Large Vineyards, the wine regions of the *Vinhos do Porto*, *Douro* and *Vinho Verde* (see page 110).

## MATOSINHOS

Matosinhos is a city with a traditional connection to the Way of St. James constituting the *Monastery of Leça de Balio* a place of shelter and support for pilgrims who visit the tomb of the Apostle in Compostela, and declared National Monument. This medieval construction is one of the best architectural examples in Portugal of the transition from Romanesque to Gothic.



The Church *do Bom Jesus* of Matosinhos is a noteworthy and important religious building, with a Renaissance line of the 15th century, which had innumerable alterations until today. One can admire the bell towers, the broken pediment, the main gate, decorated with a medallion and the lateral niches that contain the statues of San Pedro and San Pablo.

The monastery of *Leça do Balio*, declared National Monument, is considered one of the best architectural examples in the transition from Romanesque to Gothic Portugal.

## VILA DO CONDE

The Way goes into Vila do Conde, a city which prints on its landscape its ancestral origins, from the prehistoric ages to the contemporaneous architecture. The Convent of Santa Clara, which dominates the urban area, is a conventual palace of the 18th century. It stands out the cloister, with arcades that rest on Tuscan columns, having in the middle a Baroque fountain.



*At the back, Monastery of Santa Clara. Vila do Conde.*

The church of Santa Clara, which is annexed to the convent, has a Gothic structure with Renaissance insets. In the north side one can find the Chapel of the Founders, of the 16th century, where the gravestones of the Infant Don Alfonso Sanches and his wife Doña Teresa Martins rest, National Monument.

It is worth visiting the Matriz Church of the Church of *São João Baptista*, a manueline temple built between the 15th and 16th centuries, with the main façade crowned by a bell tower of the 17th century. It stands out the baptismal font, from the 18th century, the tiles of the Chapel of Ntra. Sra. de los Mareantes of the 18th century, the icon of San Juan Bautista, made in calcareous stone typical of the area of the parish of Ançã and the golden sculpted altarpieces. It includes the Sacred Art Museum.

The city maintains other interesting constructions: the *Paços do Concelho* (former *pazo* of the town hall) of the 16th century; the chapel of Ntra. Sra. do Socorro, temple of the 17th century and the church of the *Misericórdia*, among others.

The sea has always influenced this city and it inspired the pillow lace that can be appreciated in the Museum of Lace or in the National Craftsmanship Fair, one of the most important ones of this kind in Portugal, celebrated annually.

## VIANA DO CASTELO

Since the consecration of the Church of *Castelo do Neiva* to Santiago by the bishop D. Nausti, in 862, the first one out of Spanish territory, history, culture and tradition connect Viana do Castelo to St. James' worship. In the municipality, there are several temples dedicated to the Apostle.



View of Santa Luzia. Viana do Castelo.

The pilgrims who go over the route of the coast experience the beauty of the forestry paths, the picturesque and bucolic rural routes and the history and monumental character of the country houses, the monasteries and the city itself.

Inside the medieval old quarter, among many interesting points, it stands out the Sé Cathedral and its portico, which alludes sculpturally to the Apostle. This was the place at which pilgrims arrived before heading towards the *Hospital Velho* ("Old hospital"), or to the Church *Misericórdia*, with the goal of resting and receiving the alms that guaranteed the arrival at their destination. Nowadays one can overnight in the city, in the lodging of *S. João da Cruz dos Caminhos*, in the convent of the *Carmo*, which still fulfils the function of sheltering the itinerants.

The tour around the city can be easily done thanks to the flat land on the seaside.

## VIGO

The Portuguese Way runs on the coast passing through Vigo with the spectacular views of its *ría* ("sea inlet") protected from the ocean by the Cíes Islands. The Cíes Islands were declared Natural Park, they are an encounter with the unspoilt nature, they contain idyllic beaches, limpid waters, cliffs and valued seafloors (see page 116).

The Way crosses the city, some pilgrims reach the convent of San Francisco entering through the gate of *O Berbés*, while others, formerly, acceded to the extinct fortified area through the Falperra gate. Behind it, and continuing through Santiago Street, the pilgrims arrived at the centre of the city.



Pilgrims continued through the *Areal* way, areas nowadays constructed, and which some experts identify with a former roman road, and which head towards the Road of *Sanxurxo Badía*, headed to Teis.

Of a religious nature, it is enhanced the beautiful Romanesque church of San Salvador de Coruxo, and also the church of Santa María in Castrelos and the pazo Quiñones de León.

## PONTEVEDRA

The Portuguese Way continues towards Pontevedra, where it enters the city through the Gorgullón Way, *Virxe do Camino* and Sagasta, passing through the Glorieta ("Roundabout") of Compostela until arriving at the old quarter. Here one can find the Sanctuary of the Pilgrim Virgin, declared Property of Cultural Interest, it was built in 1778 in order to shelter the patron saint of the province of Pontevedra and the Portuguese Way to Santiago, whose party in her honour is celebrated on the second Sunday of August. The floor of the church has a scallop shell shape and on her exterior façade one can find the sculptures of Santiago, San Roque and the Virgin. It is a point of reference for pilgrims and it is where they can seal the credentials.



*Peregrina Church. Pontevedra.*

The Way heads to Ferrería Square, where the beautiful Gardens of Casto Sampedro and the convent of San Francisco, from the 13th-14th centuries, of a Gothic mendicant style, are located. The latter has interesting medieval sepulchres and mural paintings. It was declared National Monument and, recently, Property of Cultural Interest.

In the old quarter there is a large amount of cruises, which attracts the visitor's attention. In the north-western area of the historic quarter there is the basilica of Santa María La Mayor, temple financed by the Pontevedra's navigators union in the 16th century. It has a beautiful architecture where the last Gothic is combined with the Renaissance tendencies. The façade, one of the most important ones in Galicia, is a genuine altarpiece of stone. It was declared National Monument and these days, Property of Cultural Interest.

It is also remarkable the Baroque Church of San Bartolomé, 17th century, which maintains an icon of the Virgin of the O, patron saint of the city; it also stands out the Sanctuary of the apparitions, former school of the Dorothy's where Sister Lucía, one of the minor protagonists of the Fátima apparitions, resided. It has also a special interest the visit to the provincial Museum of Pontevedra, which is nowadays one of the three best and biggest museums of Spain. It is formed by a six buildings ensemble where it is possible to look at pieces since the prehistory until the present day.

The pilgrimage itinerary to go out of the city passes through the entire old quarter. The stretch finished crossing the Lérez River, which flows into the Ría of Pontevedra a few meters forward, through *Ponte do Burgo*.

+info

[www.cm-matosinhos.pt](http://www.cm-matosinhos.pt)  
[www.visitporto.travel](http://www.visitporto.travel)  
[www.cm-viladoconde.pt](http://www.cm-viladoconde.pt)  
[www.cm-viana-castelo.pt](http://www.cm-viana-castelo.pt)  
[www.turismodevigo.org](http://www.turismodevigo.org)  
[www.visit-pontevedra.com](http://www.visit-pontevedra.com)

## English Way

### Ferrol, Narón and A Coruña

The English Way is one of the maritime pilgrimage routes that were used in the medieval Europe to reach Santiago de Compostela. It was called like that because most of the devotes who arrived by boat at the harbours of A Coruña and Ferrol came from the British Islands and the Scandinavian countries to start their pilgrimage from there.

Both harbours have become traditionally established as the starting points of the two alternatives of the English Way.

The Ferrol itinerary, the longest one, runs through the coast having the *ría* as a travelling companion. It starts from the *Curuxeiras* harbour, the Ferrol harbour where it also gets started the millenary Way to San Andrés de Teixido.



The city still maintains the former Hospital of the Charity, of the end of the 18th century, which was built for the attention of pilgrims and sick people, although it is currently a cultural centre. In the Ferrol fishing village one can find the military armoury and the church of the Socorro, the Bastion of *San Xoán*, the Curtain and the Weapons Room of the Armoury. Leaving the harbour behind, the route guides us to the military church of San Francisco, further on, on the left, it is found the *Raíña Sofía* Park, and on the right, one can find the Ferrol Tourist Hotel and the Capitania gardens. All of this, located between the old port quarter and the neoclassic quarter of La Magdalena. This quarter has a perfect rectangular design, with a chocolate bar shape and with six lengths and straight lines that meet with nine perpendiculars, where two wide symmetric spaces are opened; the *Amboaxe* square and the *Armas* square.

In this quarter of La Magdalena, it is found the Consistorial Palace. Further down, next to the market, there is the Church Street, where it stands out the neoclassic co-cathedral of San Julián. Right after there is the Galicia Square, where one can find the restored Jofre theatre and the Dique gate, which is one of the numerous accesses to the installations of the Ferrol armoury. Before the Callao Square, the Way continues through the Corner of Molíns until the Las Angustias church, also neoclassic and with a Latin cross floor.

The itinerary continues towards Narón town hall, adjoining the one of Ferrol, following its tour through the *ría*.

The English Way enters Narón through the seaside, following the Avenue of the Mar de Caranza. It is worth visiting some historical buildings such as the monastery of San Martiño de Xuvia, previous to the 12th century and declared National Artistic Monument. Located next to this one, it is settled the San Martiño church, of the 12th century, although its façade and the tower are from the 18th century. It represents a characteristic architectural style, within the Galician Romanesque.



*Monastery of Couto. Narón.*

The windmills are key places of Narón; they are fluvial and maritime from the 18th century, located at the banks of the two main river basins: the Great River Xuvia and the Freixeiro River. The big pazos and chalets are also characteristic, built in different periods and with different architectural styles. The Pazo do Vento, the Pazo de Libunca, the Pazo de Nelle and the Antón Chalet are remarkable.

The architectural heritage is especially significant in the rural surroundings with the church of San Lourenzo de Doso of the 16th century and the church of San Salvador.

Narón opens up to the sea through a wild coast with high cliffs and golden sand beaches (see page 138). It has hiking routes among which it stands out the one that leads to the magnolia tree of Xuvia (see page 128).

## A CORUÑA

The variation of the English Way, which departs from A Coruña, starts the route in the harbour of El Parrote headed to the Romanesque Church of Santiago, from the 12th and 13th centuries, where it is found the icon of the Apostle Santiago on horseback. It continues until the Puerta Real (“Royal Gate”) and through the Avenue of la Marina, which, with its emblematic balconies, made the city deserve the nickname of “the glass city”.



*Panoramic view of the Inner Harbour and Marina Avenue. A Coruña.*

Going all over the old quarter allows to reminisce stages of the medieval and Baroque history of the city. Among them one can find the collegiate church of Santa María del Campo, the convent and the church of Santo Domingo, the collegiate church of Santa María del Campo or the church Orden Tercera.

It is remarkable the Castle of San Antón, from the end of the 16th century. It was built on a small rocky island, as a strong square for the defence of the people of Coruña. It was also a prison, until mid-20th century, and, from 1968, it is the see of the Historical and Archaeological Museum.

It is a must the visit of the symbol of the city: the Tower of Hércules. It is erected between the cove of Orzán and the Ártabro Gulf. It is the oldest lighthouse in the world that is still operating, and it was declared as World Heritage (see page 47).

+info

[www.visitferrol.com](http://www.visitferrol.com)  
[www.naronconcello.org](http://www.naronconcello.org)  
[www.coruna.es](http://www.coruna.es)

## Primitive Way

### LUGO

The Primitive Way is the path of the first known Way. It connects Oviedo with Santiago de Compostela. One of the first devotes who followed this route was Alfonso II, The Chaste, in the 9th century, to visit the recently discovered tomb of the Apostle Santiago.

This itinerary presents a route in the high mountains, with great difficulties, which are compensated by the beauty of the landscape. The Way runs through the Acebo harbour, passes through the historical hospital of Montouto or through the castle of *Castroverde* until arriving at the oldest city of Galicia, *Lucus Augusti*, the current Lugo.



Lugo Wall. Photo: Xurxo Lobato.

With more than two thousand years of history, Lugo maintains the only complete roman wall of the whole Roman Empire, from the 3th-4th centuries, declared as World Heritage by the UNESCO. The Primitive Way enters through this impressive wall through the gate of San Pedro. It follows the design of the roman road which connected *Lucus Augusti* with Iria Flavia, passing through the Cathedral of Santa María.

The street of San Pedro gives way to the *Maior Square*, where it stands out the Town Hall, jewel of the Galician civil Baroque. The Way continues towards the cathedral, Romanesque, covered with Baroque and neoclassic, where pilgrims stopped to pray before the Holy Sacrament. Going out of the city through the *Miñá Gate*, the oldest one of the wall, the way heads to *Miño River* through the Way of the *Hortas* and the *Ponte Road*. Before crossing the primitive roman bridge, which crosses the river, one can visit the Roman baths, inside the *Balneario Hotel* (see page 157). Before crossing the bridge, we arrive at the *San Lázaro quarter*, where it is kept an old Lazareto ("Leper hospital").

Other significant monuments are: the convent of Santo Domingo, the Episcopal Palace or the conventual church of San Francisco.

### ○ Barco de Valdeorras and Monforte de Lemos

The Winter Way is an alternative route chosen by many pilgrims to enter the Galician territory, especially in the winter, to avoid the difficult walkway through the snowy summits of O Cebreiro and arrive at Santiago de Compostela.

The Winter Way, which gets started from the French Way in Ponferrada, is the only one that runs through the four Galician provinces. The route is designed following, in its greater part, the course of the Sil River, natural communication path between Galicia and the Castile-Leon plateau.

This itinerary crosses a great part of the *Ribeira Sacra*, with a Mesomediterranean microclimate that favoured the settlement of religious communities; in such a way that nowadays, the area has the largest density of Galician Romanesque churches, nestled, most of them, in the astonishing canyons of Sil River and the slopes of Miño River.

### ■ O BARCO DE VALDEORRAS

The Way of St. James enters O Barco de Valdeorras through its Royal Street. Among religious constructions, it is enhanced the Church of Viloiira. It stands out its main façade, as well as the Baroque bell-gable that it flaunts, made of the country stone. Other two remarkable temples are the church of Outarelo, dedicated to San Francisco Branco and the Church of the Proba, of Romanesque origin, with later modifications.



View of O Barco de Valdeorras.

In the natural surroundings it is found the Monastery of Xagoaza. This monumental ensemble consists of two main buildings: the monastery, which dates back to the 18th century, made of stone with simplicity in tandem with elegance and the church of San Miguel, of Romanesque origin from the 12th and 13th centuries, which maintains its original construction of semi-circular apse and rests of capitals. The façade is decorated with a cross of the Order of San Juan of Jerusalem.

The *castro* (Neolithic fortified settlement) of Valdeorras, of pre-Roman origin, is catalogued as National Monument. Close to its medieval fortress it is found a small church, typical of the Galician rural architecture, which dates back to the 18th century. Every Holy Week it is celebrated the *procesión de los caracoles* ("snails' procession"). It takes place on the Holy Friday at night and it owns its name to the centrepiece of snail shells that are placed, full of oil, along the procession walk.

O Barco de Valdeorras has patches for the grapevine culture, attached to the Certificate of Origin of Valdeorras, one of the oldest ones in Spain (see page 103).

## MONFORTE DE LEMOS

Leaving behind the riverside of Sil River, we enter Monforte de Lemos, head of the region of Tierra de Lemos, capital of the *Ribeira Sacra*, to the south of the province of Lugo. It is of special interest the San Vicente del Pino ensemble, located around a monastery, with a castle placed on a strategic hill, surrounded by a walled enclosure spread with defensive towers; one of them with the emblem of the templar TAU, represented in the city shield. From the ensemble, it stands out the castle or Tower of the Homage, the highest and best preserved one in Galicia, 30 metres high, with a width of 13 metres and with walls with 3 metres of thickness. The wall, as well as the tower, was built between the 13th and 14th centuries.

The Monastery of San Vicente del Pino, although its origins go back to the 9th century, its current edifice was initiated in the 16th century. The conventual building, inhabited in most of its history by the Benedictine order, presents a harmonious square with a neoclassic façade and cloister. The monastic Church, with a Renaissance façade and transition-Gothic inside. Currently, the monastery shelters the Parador of Tourism of Monforte de Lemos.

The VII Countess of Lemos founded the Convent of Sta. Clara, current Museum of the Nuns of the Order of St. Clare, one of the most important museums of sacred art in Spain, and without a doubt the most valuable one regarding Italian art of the 16th and 17th centuries. There, we can observe polychrome imagery like the Immaculate and the Recumbent Christ by the sculptor Gregorio Fernández.

The Convent of *Nosa Señora da Antiga*, known as School of the Company, and popularly as the Escorial of Galicia, it is a building of Herreran design, founded by the Cardinal Don Rodrigo de Castro in 1593. It counts on an

important art gallery, in which two works by El Greco are enhanced: the Apparition of the Virgin with the baby Jesus to San Lorenzo or San Francisco and Fray León meditating on death. It deserves to be mentioned the building of the former town hall of the city and that is currently the see of the Centre of the Wine.



*Monastery of San Vicente. Monforte de Lemos.*

Besides the previous monuments, one must enjoy the guided visits to the monasteries of the region; San Miguel de Eiré, San Fiz de Cangas, Monastery of Las Bernardas, Santo Estevo de Atán, etc. Without forgetting the Romanesque jewels of the *Ribeira Sacra*, many of them declared as World Heritage. It should be reminded San Paio de Diomondi Santo Estevo de Ribas de Miño or Santa María de Pesqueiras, among many others.

Without forgetting the canyons of the Sil River that can be traversed through routes by catamaran and its wine, which is the protagonist of these lands, with wineries with Certificate of Origin *Ribeira Sacra* (see page 101).

+info

[www.concellodobarco.org](http://www.concellodobarco.org)  
[www.monfortedelemos.es](http://www.monfortedelemos.es)  
[www.caminodeinvierno.com](http://www.caminodeinvierno.com)

## Torres Way

### Guimarães and Braga

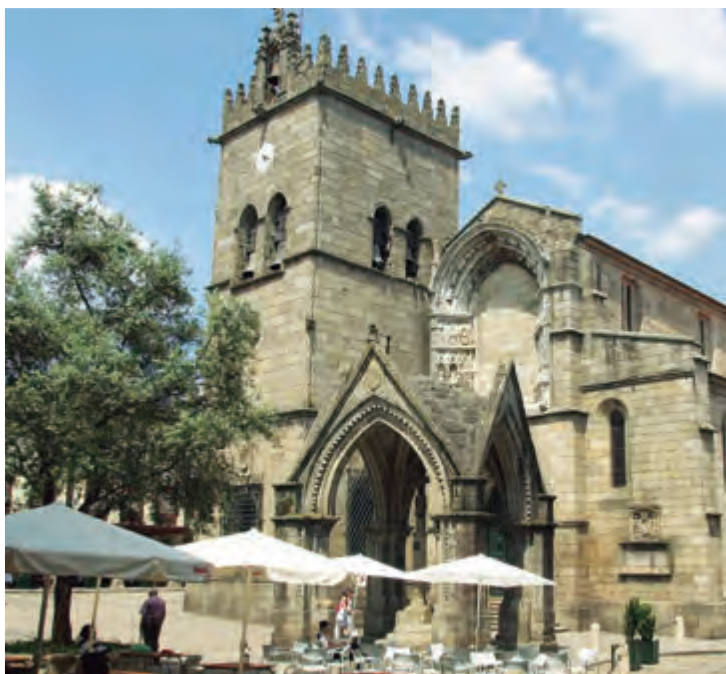
Diego de Torres, son of a humble book shopper from Salamanca ruined by the Succession War, was a man who rose up against his destiny of poverty and submission and who found in writing his instrument for rebellion. According to what Torres Villarroel himself narrated in his autobiography,

during his exile in Portugal between 1732 and 1734, he made de promise of going on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. What is curious is that he decided to go on this pilgrimage crossing Portugal, instead of doing it following the Silver Route. This is how the Torres Way commenced.

## ■ GUIMARÃES

Given its privileged location 215 km far from Santiago de Compostela, Guimarães is, for many people, a starting point of the Torres Way, since the minimum distance to obtain the Compostela is 100 km on foot or on horseback, and 200 km if the way is done by bike.

Guimarães was establishing throughout the centuries its presence in the Way of St. James, with the urban development of the hamlet of the city, declared World Heritage by the UNESCO (see page 58). It is a must-place for everyone who goes all over the road between Guimarães and Braga.



*Church of Nossa Senhora da Oliveira. Guimarães.*

The starting point of the itinerary can be at the Church *Nossa Senhora da Oliveira*. It was one of the sanctuaries visited by pilgrims from different places of Portugal who headed to or came back from Santiago de Compostela, just as the popular saying stated “Whoever went to Santiago and did not visit the *Senhora da Oliveira*, did not go on a true pilgrimage”

The importance of the worship to Santiago is present in the whole town and also in the area that surrounds the Church, where it is located the Square of S. Tiago. There was here, from the 12th to the 19th century, a small chapel dedicated to the Apostle, founded by the French who accompanied the Count Henrique of Bourgogne, father of D. Alfonso Henriques. Nowadays it can be observed the representation of a scallop shell in the pavement.

## BRAGA

The Torres Way, which comes from Salamanca and continues until Santiago de Compostela, has in Braga its central point, place where many pilgrims initiate the last stretch of the Way.

The design is documented since the 16th century, although there are more ancient testimonies, since this route crosses the Way through the road Antonina. In this way, it crosses the Salamanca pasture, the Beira Alta, the lands of the rivers Duero, Tâmega, Lima and Miño and finally the Galician rías.



*Detail of the Cathedral. Braga.*

Pilgrims can overnight in the city in the *Casa da Roda*, lodging located in S. João Street. In the tourism office one can get and seal the official credentials of the Way of St. James.

Braga is considered the biggest religious centre in Portugal, due to its antiquity as a Christian city, the fact of being a centre of the ecclesiastical power and finally, due to its architectural influences.

The itinerary reaches the Cathedral of Braga, the first one in Portugal, considered one of the most important temples of the Portuguese Romanesque, declared National Monument. It is made up of Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque elements on a Romanesque base that dates back to the year 1070. Inside, it stands out a very complete museum and three external chapels, especially the *Capela dos Reis*, built to shelter the tombs of Alfonso Enriques's parents.

Towards Boavista Street it is found the fountain erected by the Archbishop D- Diogo de Sousa, in 1531, where it is inserted a niche of Santiago, which proved that the Way passed through there since the 15th century.

In the vicinity of the city there are three seductive religious centres: the church of Visigoth style of *São Frutuoso de Montélios*; the Benedictine monastery of Tibães and the sanctuary Bom de Jesús. Its construction was made throughout the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. It consists of an astonishing Baroque building at the top of a hill with magnificent views.

In Braga the pilgrim can do a historical tour since the ages of the Roman occupation until today. In the north of Braga it is found the Natural Park of Pereda-Gêres, one of the most beautiful landscapes of the country (see page 119).

+Info

[www.guimaraesturismo.com](http://www.guimaraesturismo.com)  
[www.cm-braga.pt](http://www.cm-braga.pt)

## Pilgrimage Route of the Sea

The Pilgrimage Route of the Sea of Arousa and the Ulla River commemorates the move of the remains of the Apostle Santiago from Jaffa (Palestine) to Iria Flavia, founded as touristic tour in 1963. In 1996 it was recognised as the Way of St. James by Decree Law of the 10th May, about the protection of the Ways of St. James of the Autonomous Community of Galicia.

According to the testimonies and the tradition, this Route updates the pass of the apostolic vessel that brought the remains of Santiago from Jaffa, in Palestine, until Iria Flavia, the current town of Padrón. It is the first of the Pilgrimage Ways, since without the move there would have not appeared the phenomenon of the pilgrimages.

This tradition was followed with fervour in all the Christian world and it was even expressed through the millenary pilgrimage history in a varied and wealth iconography that represents the last day's run of the Apostle Santiago together with his disciples Atanasio and Teodoro. They were led by an angel and guided by a star –according to what is expressed by the municipal shield of the town of Padrón- arrived at the Galician coasts entering the sea of Arousa and going up the Ulla river, on its way to Compostela.

The day's run that enters Galicia through the Atlantic waters of the ría of Arousa, continues through the river-bead of the Ulla until reaching the lands of Iria. A stretch that provides the pilgrim with a landscape of singular beauty.

The edition of the brochures, signposting of the terrestrial way and the signalling of the river to make sure a safe navigation, together with the annual organization of the commemorative upriver activities, let the public know the singularity and attractive of this route, its rich historical past, its monumentality and the beauty of its edges, opening it to the tourism and recovering one of the most valued sources of pilgrimage tradition and Galician history.

The route by the Ulla would be later enriched with the location of seventeen rocky cruises inspired in the purest Galician iconography.

+info

[www.vilagarcia.es](http://www.vilagarcia.es)  
[www.riveira.es](http://www.riveira.es)  
[www.fundacionxacobeia.com](http://www.fundacionxacobeia.com)

## RELIGIOUS EVENTS

The effect of the mysticism has always awakened massive exodus of believers all throughout the centuries. Besides the great centres of pilgrimage such as Santiago de Compostela and Braga, Galicia and the North of Portugal share their fondness of traditions and religious celebrations.

### HOLY WEEK

The Holy Week offers different alternatives in the peninsular north-western quadrant, being this its maximum exponent from a religious point of view. Ferrol stands out for the relevance of its mass processions and its great atmosphere in these dates. Meanwhile, in the north of Portugal, even if it is a lay country, it has its Christian reference in the city of Braga, where these festivities are lived with special devotion.

### FERROL

The Ferrol Holy Week is declared Fiesta of National Touristic Interest since 1995 and recently watching for the declaration of International Touristic Interest. In these days, the tradition of many centuries of history is merged with a great popular involvement.

During the Holy Week, Ferrol covers its streets with art and imagery. Besides the processions, a large amount of activities are organized, such as the guided visits to the Route of the Naval Construction, the Horse Venue of

Ferrol, or different exhibitions. Processions start on Palm Sunday and finish on Easter day. During these days twenty-five processions go out onto the streets, organized by the different brotherhoods of the city. The Holy Thursday and the Holy Friday are the main references of a Holy Week in which thousands of people look at the parades of the processions of the “Santo Encuentro” and “Os Caladiños”



*Procession of the Holy Week. Ferrol.*

+info

[www.semanasantaferral.org](http://www.semanasantaferral.org)

## BRAGA

The Christian tradition in Portugal is particularly concentrated in the north, having its core in Braga, known as the “Portuguese Rome”. The solemnities of the Holy Week gathers thousands of visitors, some attracted by their religious beliefs, with others who mix the profane and festive with the ethnographic and cultural aspects.

The celebration of the Holy Week in Braga runs from the Ash Wednesday to the Easter solemnity, with a preparation all throughout the Cuaresma (“Lent”). The agenda of the Holy Week includes both religious and cultural acts.



Staircase to Bom Jesús. Braga.

Braga has an extraordinary diversity of architectural styles. An example of it is its Cathedral, with Romanesque, Gothic, Manueline and Baroque styles.

+info

[www.semanasantabraga.com](http://www.semanasantabraga.com)

## OTHER RELIGIOUS FESTIVITIES

### BARCELOS. CRUZES CELEBRATION

The Cruzes Celebration is celebrated every year on 3rd January, it is the day dedicated to the *Senhor Bom Jesus da Cruz* and municipal holiday. It is the main great *romería* of *Minho* and it is also the most genuine portrait of Barcelos in its singular religious and ethnographic traditions.

Its origin harks back to the beginning of the 16th century and it has its origin in the Cruzes miracle that took place in 1504. This fact caused the rise of the devotion to *Senhor Bom Jesus da Cruz* and afterwards, the construction of a Baroque temple in the centre of the city.



Procession "da Invenção da Santa Cruz". Barcelos.

Notadas, the Barcelos Cruzes Celebration gains a singular air thanks to its *romería*, the craftsmanship, the *romería* arches, the floral rugs, the procession, the floral battle, which reflect the beat of the local culture. It is a manifestation that spreads happiness and announces that Barcelos is partying.

+info

[www.cm-barcelos.pt](http://www.cm-barcelos.pt)

## LALÍN. NUESTRA SEÑORA DE O CORPIÑO

The Sanctuary of O *Corpiño* is among the oldest ones in Galicia, it welcomes thousands of visitors every, especially in the days when the *romería* is celebrated, on 23th and 24th June.



Sanctuary of O *Corpiño*. Lalín.

To the Sanctuary arrive devotees who believe that the Virgin will help them to heal their souls. Pilgrims place themselves around the Sanctuary to pass under the Icon, showing their veneration and asking for protection.

It has a place for the visitors to put their candles as an offering to the Virgin. According to the tradition, the apparition of the Holy Virgin took place these days and this is who the altarpiece of the Sanctuary is crowned with an icon of San Juan Bautista.

+info

[www.santuario-corpino.es](http://www.santuario-corpino.es)

## PESO DA RÉGUA. NOSSA SENHORA DO SOCORRO

The celebration in honour of *Nossa Senhora do Socorro* is an old cultural heritage. The roots of this devotion is linked to the *Douro* river when this was navigated by *rabelos* boats, which were baptised with religious names or sentences, looking for divine protection against the dangers they faced. When these ships were launched, they put paper flowers on the bow and an olive branch with olives on the stern to be in luck, whereas an alms dish, the “*Alminhas do Barco*”, was put under the command bridge.



Procession “*Nossa Senhora do Socorro*”. *Peso da Régua*.

+info

[www.cm-pesoregua.pt](http://www.cm-pesoregua.pt)

## ■ PONTEVEDRA. SAN BENITO DE LÉREZ

The popular *romería* of San Benito de Lérez, declared of National Touristic Interest, is celebrated on the 11th July. The celebration runs in the Monastery of San Salvador de Lérez, located in the surroundings of the city. It was founded in the 10th century by the Benedictine monks and reformed in the 16th-17th centuries, what resulted in the current neoclassic temple with Baroque façade of the 18th century. On the façade it is found an icon of San Benito.



+info

[www.visit-pontevedra.com](http://www.visit-pontevedra.com)

## ■ VIANA DO CASTELO. NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA AGONÍA

The festivity of the patron saint of the city is celebrated during the second fortnight of August, reaching its height on the 20th August. The field of the Agonía is the main scenery of its *romería*. It is considered one of the biggest and oldest ones in Portugal.



*Festivities of Nossa Senhora da Agonia. Viana do Castelo.*

The worship to the Señora de la Agonia, which started in the 18th century, is strongly linked to the fishing community of Viana do Castelo. The Procession del Mar and the *Ribeira* streets, generously decorated with floral rugs, are some testimonies of the profound religious devotion of the city.

What characterizes more this *romería*, is the traditional ethnographic courtship, because of the richness of their suits, luxuriously complemented with gold masterpieces. The celebration continues with music, dance and the throwing of astonishing fireworks that illuminate the night.



[www.vianafestas.com](http://www.vianafestas.com)

## VILA NOVA DE GAIA. ROMERÍA OF SAN GONÇALO

The origins of this *romería* of *San Gonçalo* harks back to the Middle Ages. It is celebrated the first Sunday after the 10th January; official day of the saint. A parade runs through the streets of the city, with the heads of *San Gonçalo* and *San Cristóvão*.



Since the morning the Mareantes of Douro river march through the streets, as well as the Comisiones Nova and Vella da Rasa, which go all over the streets of Gaia carrying their protective saints with the heads of *S. Gonçalo*, protector of the people from the sea and protector from the illnesses, and *S. Cristóvão*, protector of the river boatmen. Figures followed by thousands of pilgrims, singing and trumpeting at the sound of the sledgehammers, while they head to the Church of Mafamude, where prayers are made to the Saint's altar.

+info

[www.gaiaglobal.pt](http://www.gaiaglobal.pt)



*Heritage, 'Ethnographic-Cultural and Castros' Tourism*

## HERITAGE, ETHNOGRAPHIC-CULTURAL AND CASTROS' TOURISM

The traveller who crosses Galicia and the North of Portugal is amazed by the large amount and variety of their monumental and artistic jewels that can be found all throughout their geography. The Eixo Atlántico includes in the territory of its cities six spaces declared as World Heritage by the UNESCO and many historic centres in the Euroregion cities.

They reflect a real proof of the architectural memory that makes them an outstanding and diversified centre of attraction.

The Euroregion is rich in vestiges from Celtic people who inhabited the area during the Iron Age. The traveller has the chance to discover a millenary territory, where the first communities that inhabited the Hispanic-Luso area started to erect megalithic monuments such as dolmens and their enigmatic castros (small fortified villages set on hills), leaving a strong culture known as *castreña*.

Galicia and the North of Portugal form a territory that has historically developed, from an economic point of view, through industry. Because of that, some cities still maintain traces of a singular industrial patrimony linked to shipbuilding and fishing.

One should not forget the festivities and ethnographic events that let enjoy the origins and history of the Cities of the Eixo Atlántico in a ludic context.

### A CORUÑA

A Coruña shapes a peninsula located between two bays. This privileged maritime location conditioned the life and history of the city. Three areas can be distinguished: the Ciudad Alta ("High City"), the isthmus, also known as "Pescadería" ("Fish Market") and the expansion part that connects the peninsula with the continent.

The **megalithic culture** left its trace in the municipality through the funerary monuments, Mámoas of the *Zapateira*, which are still kept 5,000 years BC. A bit later, the castros' culture arrives at these lands favouring a new form of politic-social organization, of which some vestiges are witnesses, such as the castros of Elviña and Nostián, both in course of recovery.

Romans arrived at A Coruña attracted by the mineral wealth of the area. They made the harbour of this settlement one of the most important ones of *Gallaecia* and built a lighthouse for it: the Tower of Hércules. Placed between the inlet of Orzán and the Ártabro Gulf, the Tower of Hercules was erected. Declared as World Heritage in 2009, it is the oldest roman lighthouse in the world and the only one that is still working. It was built in the 1st century

and it has always been a reference point for sailors and visitors that arrive at A Coruña and a strategic point in the maritime route that connected the Mediterranean with the northwest of Europe. Its interior is open to the public: the access to the monument, from the maritime promenade, can be made through a pedestrian way, until the start of the imperial double stairs. Climbing its 234 steep steps one can enjoy the amazing panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean and A Coruña. Once downstairs, one can walk along the maritime promenade or rest in the beaches of Orzán and Riazor.



*La Casa del Hombre ("Man's house") (Domus). A Coruña.*

The wealth of the artistic and cultural heritage of the city joins the natural beauty of the environment. The maritime promenade allows to go over the city, skirting its perimeter and offering an image, on the one hand of the wild sea, and on the other hand, of the city.

There are places of interest such as: the *Casa del Hombre (Domus)*, interactive museum of the human being; singular building of the famous Japanese architect Arata Isozaki. The Finisterre Aquarium or the home of the Fish, an aquarium of marine fauna whose main feature is that it has an outdoors space bathed by the sea water, or the *Casa de las Ciencias*, which houses the Planetary, the first interactive museum of Spain. It is located in the small palace of the Santa Margarita Park. The National Museum of Science and Technology: it is the second see, together with Madrid, of this state museum. Its building was designed by the architects Victoria Acebo and Ángel Alonso, award-winner of the National Prize of Young Architecture. This new museum shelters spectacular pieces such as the cockpit of a Boeing 747.

The Galleries of the Navy, besides constituting one of the emblems of the city, represent one of the most valued proofs of the architectural patrimony

of A Coruña. The main façade can be seen from María Pita Square, built at the end of the 19th century after the walls' demolition. The almost perfect square formed on this square is presided by the Town Hall, erected at the beginning of the 20th century with a modernist style. Inside one can visit the Clocks Museum, which exhibits pieces of the 18th-20th centuries, belonging to different periods.

The Old quarter has squares and antiquary houses that mix the Romanesque and the Baroque of the churches of Santiago Apostle, Romanesque of the 12th century, and the oldest one in A Coruña, the Collegiate Church of Santa María del Campo, with a cruise of the end of the 15th century, and the Convent of Santo Domingo.

Regarding the festivities calendar, San Juan in A Coruña, declared of National Touristic Interest, is a must-appointment. On 23rd June the city awakes waiting for the night, one of the shortest ones and, without a doubt, the most intense one that the city experiences. The beaches of the city get full of people who prepare familiar barbecues, waiting to light to the thousands of bonfires that will burn from midnight till further than dawn.

+info

[www.coruna.es](http://www.coruna.es)

## ALTO DOURO OR ALTO DOURO VINHATEIRO

It is an area of the northeast of Portugal, with more than 26 thousand hectares, classified as **World Heritage** in 2001. It is divided into three sub-regions: Baixo Corgo, Cima Corgo and Douro Superior.

It is a natural and cultural landscape of exceptional beauty. Dominated by terraces covered with vineyards, from which it is obtained the *vinho do Porto* and *vinho Douro*, among others (see page 109) and embraced by the Douro.



*"Rabelo" in the Alto Douro.*

There are several places from which one can enjoy infinite settings and admire the fauna and flora. A meeting with the beauty and warmth of the Portuguese cities. It is worth going over this landscape by boat from Porto without forgetting cities like Penafiel, Peso da Régua and Vila Real.

+info

[www.whc.unesco.org](http://www.whc.unesco.org)

## BARCELOS

The municipality of Barcelos is full of buildings and outstanding memories, from churches to fortified towers, all of them in an unbeatable state of preservation. A promenade through its streets will let discover its history, as it is testified by the archaeological vestiges of the *Citania de la Franqueira*, the kiln *dos Mouros* ("Moors"), the *castreño* spa of Galegos Santa Maria, the **Romanesque buildings**, among which it stands out the church of *Abade de Neiva* and the church *Velha de Manhente*, the **Gothic and Manueline** vestiges of the *Matriz Church*, the *solar dos Pinheiros*, the pazo of the Counts of Barcelos, the town hall, the bridge and the medieval tower.



*Remains of castros. Barcelos.*

It is also remarkable the convent of Vilar de Frades, the sobriety of the **Renaissance forms** that mark some places in the old quarter, till the **Baroque decorative excellence** present in many buildings such as the temple of the *Bom Jesus de la Cruz*, the Church of the *Tercio*, the Church of the *Misericórdia*, among others.

Barcelos has a great number of vestiges from the **castros period**. There are pedestrian routes and circuits that facilitate its knowledge. Places of great landscape and architectural beauty that let reliving this period that shaped the **cultural identity** of the whole peninsular Northwest.

It stands out the ruins of the Castle of Faria and the Archaeological Station, the Kiln *dos Mouros*, the *castreño* spa of Galegos Santa Maria, the *castros* of Roriz/Oliveira, Picarreira and de Carmona, the picoto ("summit") of the moors in the Chã of Arefe, among others.

The cultural identifying element of the city is the production of the **ceramics *Olaria de Barcelos***, whose origins hark back to the castros period. The ceramics and kiln vestiges found in the castros signal their use and the control of the complex technical processes to bake the clay, already in **the Iron Age**.

Barcelos is the scenery of one of the oldest fairs, whose origin harks back to the 14th century and it is celebrated every week, on Thursdays. Characterised by its simplicity and authenticity, this fair attracts thousands of visitors, motivated by the possibility of seeing the excellent craftsmanship, the authenticity of the regional and farming products that the culture of this region has, such as the suit and the typical attire represented in the traditional folklore from Barcelos and O Minhoto.

The Cock of Barcelos, worldwide known, is another heritage testimony of the city that must be known in its entire dimension, from modelling to painting, in one of the traditional workshops spread though the territory.

+info

[www.cm-barcelos.pt](http://www.cm-barcelos.pt)

## BRAGA

The archaeological vestiges testify that the current city of Braga was inhabited from the period of the castros culture, during the Iron Age. From the mid-3rd century AD it was occupied by the romans, who gave it the name of *Bracara Augusta*. It has a rich heritage with more than two thousand years of history. Proof of it are the Roman Ruins and Baths, dozens of Sacred, cultural, archaeological, military and civil spaces.



*Libertade Avenue. Braga.*

Its **Old quarter** reflects the long history of the city as a **religious and commercial centre**. The República square is the vital centre of the area. The ***Torre da Homenaxe*** ("Tower of the Homage"), from the 15th century, is the only rest that remains from the fortifications that defended the city in the 20th century.

**Several religious edifications spread the old quarter**, among them the small *Capela dos Coimbras*, temple of the 16th century, or the Church of Santa Cruz, of a Baroque style from the 17th century. The majestic *Sé de Braga*, the first one in Portugal, started in the 11th century, with modifications all throughout its history, conferring it a mixture of different styles; Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque. It houses a Museum of Sacred Art that exhibits interesting liturgical pieces.

It also contains civil edifications such as the Old Archbishop's Pazo, from the 14th century, with later modifications of the 17th and 18th centuries. In the outside there is the beautiful garden of Santa Bárbara.

Located in the vicinity of Braga, one of the most astonishing sanctuaries of Portugal is erected, the *Santuário do Bom Jesus do Monte*, which attracts thousands of pilgrims. A colossal Baroque staircase, called the Escalinata de las Tres Virtudes, finishes on its last stretch with a representation of the theological virtues: faith, hope and charity.

One of the most multitudinous celebrations is the one of *Reviver Bracara Augusta*, the last weekend of May. It celebrates an historic recreation to commemorate the founding of Braga, with the historical reconstruction of the market and the Roman parties, taking advantage of the numerous signs and references that they discover in the archbishops' city.

+info

[www.cm-braga.pt](http://www.cm-braga.pt)

## BRAGANÇA

Bragança inherits the name of a large region of Trás-os-Montes, in the north-east of Portugal, see of the municipality and district. It is one of the biggest municipalities of the country and one of the oldest cities in Portugal.

Through the vestiges of the cave art, which is located in the current urban perimeter, Bragança had a stable population already in the Bronze Age. From the 9th century BC. on, the first fortifications were established. There lived the communities that integrated the Zoelae nation, community that was extended on a wide area in the northeast of Portugal and Spain, with political and administrative see in Castro de Avelãs.

The patent influence of the Romans, because of the mining exploitations and the important military road that passes through Bragança connected the Atlantic and the Iberian Meseta. Due to its strategic location, it was desired by the nations came from the North of Europe, such as the Swabians or the Visigoths.

With the Muslim invasion and during the Reconquest period, Bragança constituted its territory as a frontier area, known at the beginning of the 10th century AD as County of Bragança. At the end of this century, the territory was controlled by the family of the Braganças, the second most important ones after the Royal family.

Thanks to its strategic position, basic in the constitution of the Kingdom of Portugal, it gained importance, so in the 12th century (1187) D. Sancho I attributed it the status of city with a regional charter and, in 1464, D. Afonso V, at the request of D. Fernando, Second Duke of Bragança, conceded the Forum of the City.



*Iberian Museum of the Mask and the Garment. Bragança.*

For being on the defence front of the Kingdom in the wars against León and Castile, it was devastated in several occasions and it also participated in important agreements and treaties, from which it stands out the Treaty of Babe.

In this agreement, the Duke of Lencastre and D. Constançia, heir of Castile, recognised the rights over Portugal and Algarve to D. João I. In 1640, with the Restoration of the Independence, D. João IV, Eighth Duke of Bragança was proclaimed king, starting the Fourth Dynasty of Bragança, which governed until the establishment of the Republic.

From the ranges of Nogueira and Montesinho, sceneries of exceptional fauna, it is designed an incomparable landscape that surrounds the city with its exuberant flora with large oak woods and ancient chestnuts.

The celebrations and manifestations linked to traditions such as the so-called “festas dos rapazes” (“kids’ festivities”) or of Santo Estêvão are emblematic, and they mark the winter solstice. At the sound of the *gaita-de-Foles* (“bag-pipe”) and decorated with masks, they give free rein to the tradition. The *Fiesta de la Historia*, other festivities and *romerías*, thematic street markets such as the Norçaça and Norcastanha, the “Feira das Cantarinhas” (street market of ceramic), are as well of interest.

Carballo is located between the *Mariñas* and the *Costa da Morte* ("Coast of Death"). It benefits from a privileged geographical location, which allows it to enjoy the landscape diversity that its rivers configure. It was inhabited since ancient times, something proved by its artistic and *castros'* patrimony, found in the coastal sites of the natural space of Baldaio. In *Brañas do Carregal* there are several *castros'* rests from which it can be deduced a high occupancy of the territory during the *castros'* culture and the Middle Ages. The name of the region, *Bergantiños*, seems to have its origin in the Celtic tribe of the *brigantinos*. From the Roman age it stands out the *castro* of *Torre Pardiñas*, in which one can perceive its influence on the defensive system, and the Roman bridge of *Lubiáns*, which was part of the Roman road *Per Loca Marítima*. The rests that remain date back to the medieval ages. There is a *mámoa* (Neolithic gravestone) in the road to the beach of *Pedra do Sal*, a Celtic *castro* in *Constenla*, some stately homes in *Vilar de Peres* and the chapel of *San Juan* with its cruise in *Leira*.



During the 40s of the last century, the **exploitation of the wolfram** started a growth period that reached its peak between the 60s and the 80s, what favoured a large urban expansion in the municipality.

The city was known since the antiquity because of its **sulphurous waters** known as *Baños Vellos* (see page 164).

The production of the **Carballo bread** is remarkable, since the whole of the cereals used are produced in the municipality. This tradition is documented since the 16th century, when it was said that the residents of Carballo

“cultivated the bread”. The great quality and taste, as well as the water of the Anllóns River were the ones that helped to make the Carballo Bread famous, standing out the wheat, corn, mixed or rye muffin, although the pies, egg-bread rocks and the sponge cakes are also very known. The festivity is celebrated in May.

+info

[www.carballo.org](http://www.carballo.org)

## CHAVES

Uncountable vestiges and archaeological testimonies account of the strategic importance that Chaves valley always had throughout history. The **Old quarter** grows surrounding the Castle –from which it only remains the Torre de Menagem- and the Walls. No one is left cold with the **narrow streets, typically medieval**, whose characteristic balconies are placed as a brand image.

Chaves offers the visitor must-references such as the Forts of *São Francisco* and *São Neutel*, defensive bastions of the city and the nation.

A promenade through *Aquae Flaviae* will let admire the millenary Roman Bridge, churches with Romanesque and Baroque touches, palace constructions, thematic museums, gardens and green spaces.



*Roman Bridge. Chaves.*

The Old quarter of Chaves constitutes a unit of great heritage value, object of several interventions that guarantee its preservation and valuation.

Chaves aspires to be a “**Museum City**” so its inhabitants and visitors feel it as a dynamic museum with the implication of the alive economic and social forces of the city. The objective is the increase of the visitors to the old quarter,

attracted by the exhibition of museological pieces and the promotion and spreading of the historic and cultural heritage.

Close to the old quarter there is the Caldas of Chaves, one of the most important thermal centres of Portugal, with the hottest waters in Europe (see page 161).

+info

[www.chavesportugal.com](http://www.chavesportugal.com)  
[www.eurociadadechavesverin.eu](http://www.eurociadadechavesverin.eu)

## FERROL

Ferrol extends between the Atlantic Ocean and the *ría* of Ferrol, it is a municipality open to the ocean, with a natural landscape characterised by a great beauty. In the city there are some rests of the castros culture.

In 1761 Carlos III approves the rationalist plan of the **Quarter of the Magdalena**, adjacent to the old fishing heart of the city, appearing therefore on the of the most interesting urban proposals in Europe at this time.

The Quarter of the Magdalena is a Historic-Artistic Ensemble since 1984. The design, with a chocolate bar shape, has six long straight streets that meet nine perpendicular ones and in their sides, two large squares: Amboaxe and the Armas square.

More than twenty modernist buildings from the beginning of the 20th century are preserved. The ones made by the architect Rodolfo Ucha are enhanced, such as the Ferrol Casino, the Romero house, the Bruquetas house, the Jofre Theatre, the Torrente Ballester house and the fish market building. It has flashy galleries and bay windows with geometrical and naturalistic decorations full of colour.

A singularity of Ferrol is the artistic action "**Las Meninas de Canido**"; it was an idea of the local painter Eduardo Hermida, which was born as a vindication for the condition of abandonment of some housing in the traditional quarter of Canido. Consequently, local, national and foreign artists reinterpreted the Velazquez's Meninas. In 2013 the last Meninas were painted, visited by about 10.000 people.

There are currently about 200 Meninas, all of them different, and even the bollards, bike lots and other urban furniture pieces have been adapted to the Menina shape.

About 250 years ago, the Spanish monarchs of the Enlightenment times decided that the *ría* of Ferrol, natural shelter for vessels, would be made into the Royal Shipyard and Armoury. Nowadays, the heritage maintained from these times constitutes an actual alive museum about shipbuilding.

In 2012 the industrial heritage of Ferrol got valued with the creation of the **Route of the Naval Construction**, which includes visits to strategic points in the city, which have had a noticeable influence on its past. The settlements

included in the Route are: the Bastion of San Juan over the dock of Curuxeiras; the military Armoury, with enhanced elements like the Old Headquarter of Instruction and the Gate of the Dyke; Exponav, the biggest museum in Europe dedicated to shipbuilding; the Naval Museum; the shipyard of Navanti, worldwide referent regarding its design, construction and integration of military ships with great technological content; the Headquarter of Dolores, building declared Property of Cultural Interest and the oldest headquarter in Spain and the Castle of San Felipe, example of military architecture in a beautiful settlement.



*Shipbuilding Route. Ferrol.*

The festivity *de las pepitas* (“pips”), Regional Touristic Interest since 2013, is one of the identity symbols of Ferrol since more than 120 years ago. Since 1903, the eve of the holiday of San José, the Ferrolan bands of musicians meet to go over the streets honouring the “pips” and by extension all women of the city.

Furthermore, this night innkeepers and shopkeepers give their clients a singular heart-shaped sweet, the *Bico das Pepitas*.

+info

[www.visitferrol.com](http://www.visitferrol.com)  
[www.larutadelaconstruccionnaval.es](http://www.larutadelaconstruccionnaval.es)

## GUIMARÃES

The municipality is located in the region of Miño, one of the greenest ones in the country. The historic city of Guimarães is linked to the origin of the Portuguese national identity in the 10th century. The UNESCO classified its Old quarter as **World Heritage** in 2001.

The tradition and its relevance are shown in the careful rehabilitation and **preservation of the old medieval hamlet**. The rich typology of its buildings show the development of the Portuguese architecture between the 15th and 19th centuries, characterised by the use of traditional construction techniques and materials. The locality takes the traveller to a medieval setting, in which the nobility built their housing.



*Old quarter. World Heritage. Guimarães.*

Going through Santa María Street one enters the old quarter; it is the oldest and with most history street, because it links the lower part of the population, around the convent, with the Castle placed in the Sacred Hill.

It stands out the Santiago Square surrounded by beautiful buildings of the 17th and 18th centuries, with a great artistic and architectural value. Continuing the promenade one arrives at the *Largo de Oliveira*, where the Collegiate Church of Nuestra Sra de Oliveira, from the 14th century, is located, and which houses the Museum of Alberto Sampaio with a rich historic and artistic legacy.

All the streets encourage to the stroll and the squares to rest, while the historic buildings are contemplated. Besides its **intense cultural tradition**, Guimarães presents itself as a city open to the world. Among its recognitions there is the one of being **European City of the Culture** in 2012 and the one of **European City of the Sports** in 2013.

The Citania of Briteiros, located 15 kilometres from the urban core of Guimarães, is one of the **most important archaeological sites of Portugal**. The first digs were carried out by the archaeologist Francisco Martins Sarmento, between 1875 and 1884.

This *castro* settlement, located in the summit of the San Román hill, was inhabited and established since the 4th century BC. It is a fortified village that has four lines of walls and rests of moats. Until today, more than 150 family units were discovered, presenting different kinds of floor: circular, quadrangular and elliptic.

The archaeological remains of these ruins are exhibited in the **Archaeological Museum of the Martins Sarmento Society**, in Guimarães.

The **Afonsina festivity** is a historic recreation that captures the **founding of the Kingdom of Portugal** in September. It invites to revive memories about the conquests of the first king of Portugal. The scenery is built along the old quarter of the city, World Heritage, to reproduce the medieval “cradle city”. Guimarães has lately become a cultural model through its program GUIDance in February, the Gil Vicente Festival (June), the Music Platform (July) or Manta (September), Animação de Verano and Fundaosound and Guimarães Jazz in November.

+info

[www.guimaraesturismo.com](http://www.guimaraesturismo.com)

## LALÍN

Lalín is a town in the province of Pontevedra and the capital of the region of Deza. In Lalín there are about thirty *castros*, which show the local prehistory, and also a dozen of place names more that make clear that there have been similar settlements, but that they have already disappeared. About one hundred *mámoas* previous to the *castros* age are still preserved. There have also been pre-Roman discoveries, such as arrowheads, ceramic objects, machetes...



Ethnographic Museum “Casa do Patrón”. Lalín.

It has a wide architectural heritage, with about thirty pazos spread along the town, where most of them are private property. Among the ones that are preserved is stand out for its importance the *Pazo* of Liñares, declared by the Xunta of Galicia as Property of Cultural Interest.

This valued piece of the Galician architectural Heritage, Baroque of the 17th century, is the maximum representation of the noble past of the region of Deza, as well as one of the most representative examples of the stately homes and of the civil architecture of Galicia.

Among the best-preserved pazos of the region we can find the *Pazo* of Des, with a neoclassic style and the restored *Pazo* de Bendoiro, turned into a rural tourism house. Regarding the religious architecture, the Romanesque churches of San Miguel de Goiás of the 12th century and San Martiño de Lalín de Arriba of the 10th century are remarkable.

In Lalín there is also a contemporary avant-garde architecture, where it is found the maximum exponent of the new town house called *Technologic Castro*, made by the architects Mansilla and Tuñón.

+info

[www.lalin.org](http://www.lalin.org)

## LUGO

The city of Lugo, the former *Lucus Augusti*, is the oldest one of the Galician cities. It is surrounded by a **Roman wall** of more than two kilometres of perimeter, erected for defensive reasons at the end of the 3rd century and the beginning of the 4th. Declared as National Monument in 1921 and **World Heritage** by the UNESCO in 2000.

The walled enclosure is the best preserved in the Iberian Peninsula among the ones of the same period, and its current look is mostly the same as its original configuration. It is between 8 and 12 metres high and 4 and 7 wide.

It was formerly crowned by 85 big semi-circular towers that had between ten and thirteen metres of diameter. Today, 71 cubes are preserved at the level of the wall, but for a part of *A Mosqueira*, which is above the wall.

It has 10 access gates: five from the Roman period and five built between the 19th and 20th centuries. There are five staircases and a ramp that let gain access to the upper part of the wall at some points, what enables a nice promenade through its parapet walk, with more than 2000 metres of perimeter.

There is a **Centre of Interpretation of the Wall**, located in the Campo Square, in the centre of the city. The wall surrounds the heart of Lugo; the beautiful hamlet has emblematic constructions such as the Cathedral of Santa María. Very close to the riverside of Miño River, where it passes through the city, one can find the Roman baths (see page 157).

The old quarter of Lugo shows a wide heritage of mostly Roman origin, although it also has examples of medieval, Baroque and neoclassic architecture. The rooms of the former convent are nowadays the see of the **Provincial Museum**, which houses, apart from temporal exhibitions, restores mosaics and other vestiges from Roman villas discovered in the city's ground.



Arde Lucus. Lugo.

The conventual church of San Francisco is another significant monument of Lugo, as well as the convent of Santo Domingo from the 17th century, the church of San Froilán from the 18th century, the Episcopal Palace from the 18th century and the Town Council from the 18th century.

In the Dulcerías Street, in the heart of the old quarter, it is located a small archaeological museum in the basement of an inhabited house, showing the floor or another Roman edification.

The **patronal festivity**, of National and Galician Interest, honours **San Froilán**, bishop of León who was born in Lugo in 832, worshipped since the Middle Ages. This festivity is celebrated between the 4th and 12th October. It is a festivity of strong character, which maintains a traditional taste and evolves as well in a natural way, adapting to the new times. It stands out the attractive fair rides, the large amount of musical concerts, which count on the presence of big figures.

Another festivity in Lugo is the **Arde Lucus**. It is a historic-cultural festivity to commemorate the founding of the city. The walled old quarter gets transformed, in Lucus Augusti, offering a whole program of activities, in an incomparable frame, as it is the one of the Roman wall. It is celebrated on a weekend near the summer solstice and it is declared of Galician Touristic Interest.

Macedo de Cavaleiros, a slightly more than 150 years old town, has in its historic references the heroic act of the knight Martim Gonçalves de Macedo, who saved from death the Avis Master, future King of Portugal, D. João I, in the Battle of Aljubarrota, in 1385, and received in appreciation for it the Brasão de Armas (“Blazon”) of “Masaedo”, as it was denominated this town.



*Entroido's Masks. Macedo de Cavaleiros.*

With an extension of 699 km<sup>2</sup>, Macedo de Cavaleiros is right in the Transmontano Northeast, in the district of Bragança, between the Range of Bornas and the Range of the Nogueira, being crossed by the rivers Azibo and Sabor. It has a diversified landscape with a notorious natural heritage denominated **Protected Landscape of the Albufeira do Azibo** (see page 122), where one can find two Blue Flag award-winning beaches and a wide area of Network Natura 2000 with unique features of fauna and flora in Portugal. On foot, as well as by bike, one can discover an astonishing and inspiring territory that has about 200 km of signed tours.

It combines a high geological value and a natural patrimony, also present in the **Macizo de Morais**, known as the “Belly button of the World”, with a notorious cultural legacy manifested by the preservation of the traditions, the gastronomic richness and the wealth of regional products and the people’s memories.

The artistic manifestations linked to dance, theatre or music are varied, from groups of Caretos, till events. Enhancing the Group of Caretos of Podence and the Pauliteiros of Salselas, as well as events such as the Fairs of the Hunting and of the Tourism, the Fair of S. Pedro, the Carnival, the Recall of the Traditions with the Ceifa and Malha in Morais and the International Festival of Traditional Music are excellent letters of introduction.

This town has a great historic, archaeological and artistic patrimony along all its territory, patent in its public, private and religious buildings, sites, old bridges, *pelourinhos*, diving fountains, among others. It also has the museums route, with the Museum of Sacred Art of Macedo de cavaleiros, the Religious Museum of Balsamão, the House of the Caretos of Podence, the Museological Core of the Oil “Site of the Cortiços”, the Rural Museum of Salselas, the Royal Filatório of Chacim and the Museum of the Honey and Apiculture.

It is recommendable to enjoy a visit of the typical villages such as Cortiços, Bousende and Vale Pradinhos. Do not forget visiting the *pelourinhos* of Vale de Prados, Pinhovelo, Chacim and Nozelos, and the churches of Lamalonga, Vilarinho de Agrochão and Podence, buildings of high patrimonial value and classified as Monuments of Public Interest.

Macedo de Cavaleiros is a small territory that recalls the true essence of the “*transmontana soul*”.

+info

[www.cm-macedodecavaleiros.pt](http://www.cm-macedodecavaleiros.pt)

## MATOSINHOS

The first references to Matosinhos hark back to the 11th century, being then known as Matesinus. In 1514, the town received status from D. Manuel I but it was just recognised as a village, in the 19th century (1853). In 1984 it was raised to city.

Originally, it was a traditional fishing village where salt was extracted. Nowadays it is the main fishing port of the country, in which three of the main economic development factors of the region are enhanced: the commercial port of Leixões, the refinery of Petrogal and Exponor, where big international events are carried out.

The **Sanctuary of the Senhor Bom Jesus** is the main monument of the city and an important religious Renaissance building. It can be mentioned the patrimony of **Leça da Palmeira**. It is the oldest quarter of Matosinhos and it deserves a visit to its beaches and to its buildings of artistic value such as the works of the architect Siza Vieira (the Tea Room and the Pool of the Tides), the Lighthouse of the Boa-Nova, the *Quinta da Conceição* and the Fort of *Nuestra Senhora das Neves*.

**The Pool of the Tides** is a group of salt-water pools that can be unnoticed but that are the perfect framework of the two tanks in the landscape. It was a work of the architect Álvaro Siza and it was inaugurated in 1966, being classified as National Monument. The Municipal Market of Matosinhos, classified as Property of Public Interest, keeps its original function, and stays open since the first half of the 20th century.

Buried under the sand of the Angeiras beach, it can be found an important archaeological station, which dates back to the Roman period. It is an example

of Roman industrial architecture made up by six ensembles of tanks, with 32 units in total, with rectangular or trapezoidal shape, dug out in the outcrop and spread along the 600 metres in the sandy area of the Angeiras beach.



These tanks were destined to the fish room or to the production of other types of tinned food very appreciated in the Roman ages such as the *garum* dough, resulted from the maceration of different kinds of fish and molluscs with wine, oil and other products.

They are a restored example of the traditional *Casas de Mar* of Angeiras in the beaches of Perafita, it is a traditional structure of the region and testimony of the farming-maritime activities that marked the identity of *Lavra* until the beginning of the 20th century. These houses belonged to the great houses of *lavoura* ("farming") of the region, which practised the sea fishing as well, as a seasonal and complementary activity apart from farming. There, the *moços de mar* ("fishermen") kept the ship and the tools for the *faina* ("savory pastry") and to shelter the *sargaço* and the *caranguejo pilado*, traditionally used as an indispensable fertiliser for the fields.

## MIRANDELA

The city of Mirandela is located in the Transmontano North-East and is known for the kind hospitality of its people, its gardens, the gastronomy and, of course, its natural beauty. Bathed by the Tua river, the municipality and the city of Mirandela have a wide cultural heritage. In the city, it is remarkable: the Puente Viejo (declared National Monument), the Távoras Pazo, the Solar of the Condes de Vinhais and the Misericórdia church (classified as Properties of Public Interest), in the town of Torre Dona Chama stand out: the Puente de Peidra (National Monument), the Castro of São Brás and the *pelourinho* (declared Properties of Public Interest), the village of Abreiro integrates the network of villages of the North of Portugal, the *Pelourinho* (Property of Public Interest), with the same declaration, there are three more pelourinhos in the villages of Lamas de Orelhão and Frechas and three churches, in the villages of Abambres, Avantos and Guide.



*Ponte Velha ("Old Bridge"). Mirandela.*

Mirandela has a more than 30 years old Cultural Centre, a reference in all the Region, since it includes the Municipal Library, the Municipal Museum Armindo Teixeira Lopes, the Professional School of Art (Music) and two auditoriums.



[www.cm-mirandela.pt](http://www.cm-mirandela.pt)

Monforte de Lemos, **door to the Ribeira Sacra**, is the geographic and economic heart of the region of Tierra de Lemos. Its history harks back to the Palaeolithic; its first known dwellers were the *Oestrimnios*, in the *castros* age or *castros* culture, characteristic of the Celtic tribes. The first written references about the tribe that inhabited Monforte, the *Lemavos*, date back to the Roman historians Plinio and Estrabón, between the 600 and 900 BC. In 79 AD Monforte was the communication heart between the important *Lucus Augusti* and the *Vía Nova XVIII* that connected *Bracara Augusta* (Braga) with *Asturica Augusta* (Astorga).

The word “*lemos*”, which gives the region its name, known as *Terra de Lemos*, would be a Celtic-origin word that means “wet land, fertile land”. The *Lemavos* settlement was after the *Castro* of *Dactonio* (*Dactonium*), population heart that was the origin of the current Monforte.

The city was, in the medieval ages, a singular example of a feudal fortified city. Around a Monastery, with the *Condal* palace located on a strategic mound, the San Vicente Hill. The seigneurie of Lemos, one of the main Galician stately homes, had its peak with the marriage, in 1598, of the VII Count, Don Pedro Fernández de Castro y Andrade with Catalina de la Cerda y Sandoval, daughter of the Duke of Lerma, prime minister of Felipe III, who end up being the President of the Council of the Indies, Viceroy of Naples and President of the Supreme Council of Italy.

The King Alfonso XII declared it “city” in recognition of the efforts made by the citizens for the construction of the line Madrid-A Coruña, for whose reason the Railway Station was inaugurated. Nowadays it houses a Railway Museum, in the old garages of the Railway Deposit, where it can be seen the emblematic steam, diesel and electric locomotives of the museum.

Regarding the urban heritage, the most outstanding one is without a doubt the ensemble nestled in the San Vicente hill, which constitutes as well an excellent viewpoint with a superb panoramic of the surroundings. We can observe here the monumental ensemble made up by buildings of great artistic and historic value. The construction of the **Monastery of San Vicente de O Pino** started, as it is stated in a well-kept inscription, in 1539. The cloister, which constitutes the central axis of the ensemble, is dated from the end of the 18th century. Its church has a Latin cross floor with three stretches in the main nave and three others in the cruise one. It stands out the main altarpiece, from the 18th century and made by a local artist. The façade of the church has a Renaissance style.

The **Homenaje Tower** was part, together with the wall, of a fortress built between the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th. It was recently restored to be used, together with the Benedictine monastery, as National Tourist Hotel.

The School of Nuestra Señora la Antigua, or School of the *Compañía*, built between 1591 and 1622, is made up by the church and two wings at both

sides of it. It houses a small museum, created in 1945. It has an interesting art gallery, in which two Greco's works are enhanced (Sano Lorenzo and Sano Francisco) and five by Andrea del Sarto (San Pedro, San Xoán Bautista, Santa Margarita de Cortona, Santa Inés and Santa Catalina de Alejandría).



*Cabe River flowing through Monforte.*

The VII Countess of Lemos founded the Convent of Santa Clara, current Museum of the St Clare's Order Nuns, one of the most important museums of sacred art in Spain, and without a doubt the most valuable one regarding Italian art of the 16th and 17th centuries. We can contemplate there polychrome imagery such as the Immaculate and the Recumbent Christ by the sculptor Gregorio Fernández.

Other places of interest are the building of the former town hall, built in 1583 to be a hospital, which lately housed the Town Hall of the city and is nowadays the see of the Wine Centre. Do not forget visiting the old bridge, of Roman origin, which was re-built at the end of the 16th century; the medieval hamlet and the Jewish quarter; the Pazo Molinos de Antero and the Pazo of Tor, among others. Its long history is recreated in the Festivity of the Xudería, the first Saturday of September and the Medieval Fair, the Saturday of the Holy Week.

The town of Monforte de Lemos offers the opportunity to carry out different and interesting cultural routes in the environment of the Ribeira Sacra. It also offers the visitor the spa of Aguas Santas, of Roman origin, where one can rest.

The regions of Ferrol and Ortegal have an extraordinary archaeological and ethnographic heritage, where the Atlantic Celtic castros from the Iron Age stand out.

The route starts in the *castro* of Vilasuso, it is a typical Iron Age Celtic habitat on an average hillside with a double defensive system. Leaving the *castro* behind, the way leads to the Pena Molexa (Dolmen). This crag and its surroundings are between the richest places in legends in Galicia.



*Theme Park "Aldea Nova". Narón.*

The way that, passing through the Pena Molexa, goes from the *castro* of Vilasuso till the Pena Lopesa, is one the of the most beautiful and interesting stretches of the itinerary of San Andrés de Teixido. The magnificent Virgin dominates over the Atlantic Ocean and The Valley of Trasancos, a unique place, immutable through the passage of time.

Starting the descent one can see the impressive Pena Lopesa. Rests of a *castro* almost made into an island by the sea. The legend says that in the Pena Lopesa there is a Moor king's castle that guards a treasure.

On the other hand, the prehistoric necropolis of the Monte dos Nenos, with at least 14 funerary gravestones, is placed in Santo Estevo de Sedes. It forms the first monumental architecture of Galicia, being as well a cultural phe-

nomenon that links all the European Atlantic Strip. Nowadays, some of them can be visited; they have an easy access and count on signposts.

Open to the public in January 2008, in the Monte de los Niños (“Children’s Hill”) (parish of Sedes) it is found the first theme park about the rural world *Aldea Nova*. It is a 35 thousand metres<sup>2</sup> space in which the life in a typical Galician village is recreated.

It has facilities such as a lodging with capacity of fifty people and a village house, which houses an ethnographic museum. It counts on a cared autochthonous wood with 200 species, a greenhouse, vegetable gardens and fruit trees; all of them cared in an ecologically, as well as the autochthonous Galician cattle and a large field for sportive activities.

This large park of the autochthonous nature and culture of Galicia is a proof of the recuperation of the identity and maintenance of the values of the surroundings and the Galician environment. But it is also a great scenery from where one can observe a privileged panoramic view of a wide variety of Galician endogenous elements.

The privileged location of Narón, settlement of two great ancient pilgrimage routes, Way of Santo André and English Way of Santiago (see page 27), has many architectural jewels from the Romanesque till the French Renaissance of the beginning of the 20th century. Example of this are: San Martiño de Couto; the chapel of Santa Margarita Parish of the Valley- Chapel, built in the 15th century with a rectangular floor. Close to the chapel there is the fountain of Santa Margarita to which one can accede through a stone staircase, and which has two pipes: through one flows the water of the Saint, against magic and bad labours, and through the other flows the water of Santa Lucía, which heals the eyesight problems. The pediment of this fountain is decorated with the Malta Cross. The ensemble is finished with a cruise of archaic forms, made of olivine rock.

*Pazo*-convent of Baltar (Parish of the Val), from the 16th century, is a big *pazo*, with gravel rough-stonework walls and granite masonry in the corners, in the cornices and in the *xambas*. A chapel completes this ensemble, today made into a parish church, in which a modest precious altarpiece can be seen, as well as some interments among which it stands out the one of the marquises of San Sadurniño, the rests of what had been a beautiful *hórreo* (“raised granary”), disappeared a few years ago, and the fountain made up of *toelo* stone, of a Baroque style, which can be visited in the gardens part.

The *Pazo Libunca* (Parish of Castro), in the Way of Santo André de Teixido, of frenchified Renaissance style and great dimensions, with a fortified tower-view-point with excellent views of which it stands out the roof made with Talavera tiles in blue and white. Built by the Catalan architect Juan Roig, with the purest *Belle Epoque* style, it houses what could be the greatest ceramic collection of Talavera of Spain, signed by Sorolla’s disciple, Juan Ruiz de Luna.

## ○ BARCO DE VALDEORRAS

○ Barco de Valdeorras is a town located in the north-eastern side of the province of Ourense. Located at the bottom of the Sil valley, surrounded by mountains, it is the centre of the region of Valdeorras.

It counts on beautiful landscapes in the riversides of the Sil River, as well as in the ranges that surround it: the Natural Park of *Serra da Lastra*, the *Courel* Range and the *Eixe* one, with *Pena Trevinca*, which, with 2124 metres, is the highest summit in Galicia, and *O Teixadal de Casaio*, real natural monuments.

The monumental ensemble of *O Castro* is an astonishing viewpoint over the village of *O Barco* and the *Malecón*, the river promenade of Sil River, the favourite place of its people.



*Monumental Ensemble Village of O Castro. O Barco de Valdeorras.*

Remains of the Roman culture and several *pazos* are the most remarkable in the town of *O Barco*, as well as the festivities. It stands out the “*Camiño das Covas*” (“*Way of the Caves*”) which is celebrated in *Vila do Castro* (Council of *O Barco de Valdeorras*) in the last weekend of June, with the participation of a dozen private wineries that open their doors for the tasting of the wines that they themselves elaborate with the different kinds of grapes from the Certificate of Origin Valdeorras, served with *pinchos* made with products of the region.

*O Castro* is a village declared Property of Cultural Interest, and among its many attractions it counts on a medieval fortress, as well as some *pazos* of great interest.

It is located in the centre of the north-western quadrant in the province of Ourense. O Carballiño counts on an interesting old quarter, declared Historic-Artistic Ensemble, where it stands out the Barrio de Flores (“Flowers Quarter”) and the symbol of the city: the Temple of Veracruz. It is a contemporary ecclesiastical architectural jewel, masterpiece of the architect Antonio Palacios. It is the greatest and most identifying work of the city. Built in full with materials of the region, especially granite and slate, it contains a mixture of styles among which one can appreciate the influences of the Romanesque and Gothic of Oseira, and other monasteries of the region, feudal towers and pazo.

The *Iglesia Vella* (“Old Church”), which was the former parish church of San Cibrán, was built at the end of the last century over the former Hermitage of San Bieito by the diocesan architect José A. Queralt with a profoundly neo-Gothic design.



*Temple of Veracruz. O Carballiño.*

The “**Municipal Park**” was promoted in the 20s by the secretary of the Council Mr. Vicente Nóvoa Requejo. The first squares were made according to a plan made by the architect from Ourense Conde Fidalgo. In the 30s, it was made the move of the monument to the Hermanos Prieto, work made by the sculptor from Aragón Mr. Mateo Larrauri. Located in a place called Labandeira, in the Municipal Park, it is found the “fish harm”, being the exponent for strengthening the repopulation of the rivers in the region.

The “**Gran Balneario**” (“Great spa”) (see page 159) was inaugurated in 1900, although the use of its water harks back to the Middle Ages. According to some authors of this century, it was one of the most important spas in Spain due to the number of visitors and the healing effects of its waters.

Furthermore, the locality is known in Galicia as the birthplace of the “**pulpo á feira**”, celebrating the Festivity of the Pulpo (“Octopus”) of O Carballiño.

One of the most popular gastronomic *romerías* and with more audience, declared Festivity of Touristic Interest in 1972. Each second Sunday of August, in the municipal park, of 500 thousand m<sup>2</sup>, this *romería* is celebrated, gathering more than 70 thousand people and consuming about 30.000 kg of octopus. It has its origin in the payment of the usufruct rights that the inhabitants of Marín did to the monks of the monastery of Oseira for the use of its lands.

+info

[www.carballino.org](http://www.carballino.org)

## OURENSE

Ourense's history is felt in its historical city centre, spread with many places with **proofs of medieval, Baroque and modernist architecture in state-ly homes**, balconies, fountains and arcades that are hidden in a labyrinth of streets and paving squares of immense beauty. It houses many singular buildings, such as the Consistorial House, the Pazo of Oca-Valladares, the Municipal and Archaeological Museums or the churches of Santa María Nai or Santa Eufemia.

The **Plaza Mayor** ("Main Square") has been the scenery of festivities, processions, bullfights, important annual fairs such as the San Martín one, being the most important place of the city; it attracts the attention the floor inclination, which constitutes an exceptional incident among the Spanish Main Squares.

The **Cathedral** is a must. It is stylistically considered Romanesque of transition and its floor corresponds to one of a pilgrimage church. A temple where it stands out the Paradise Portico, polychrome tympanum from the 13th century inspired in the Portico of Glory of Santiago de Compostela.



Main Square. Ourense.

Another heritage jewel of the city is the San Francisco Cloister that is found in the upper part of the city, close to the Ourense Auditorium. The original church was moved in 1929 stone by stone until its new location in the vicinity of the San Lázaro Park. This spectacular Gothic cloister of the convent of San Francisco has a rectangular floor with 63 pointed arches and 76 double columns, except for the four first ones and the four last ones, which are single and with quadrilobate shafts.

Well known are also the bridges laid across the city, being the most emblematic one the Roman Bridge or *Ponte Vella*, which still maintains traces from its origins. In its most modern side, Ourense is a city with a wide commercial offer. Birthplace of big firms, the Paseo Street, pedestrian artery, is a must-visit for shopping lovers.

In the festivities calendar, it stands out “Os Maios”. This festivity is celebrated since the last nights of April throughout May, being its climax the 3rd, day that coincides with the Christian festivity of Santa Cruz.

In the Burgas capital there are two kinds of “mayos”: the traditional ones or “enxebres”, with pyramidal or conic shape; and the artistic or fantasy ones, which can represent from an artistic monument of the city (or from somewhere else) to a television puppet.

+info

[www.ourense.travel](http://www.ourense.travel)

## ■ PAREDES

Located in the North of the Country, in the region of the Sousa Valley, the town of Paredes is part of the Region of the Littoral Douro and was part of the Porto District. Archaeological remains show that more than 5000 years ago humans chose the territory of the current town of Paredes to live.

With the arrival of the Romans at the Iberian Peninsula during the 2nd century BC and the search for wealth, they were led to the gold-bearing sites of Castromil and the Banjas (Sobreira).

The current municipality of Paredes is settled in the former Court of Aguiar de Sousa.

In 1837, as a consequence of the administrative reorganisation it was created the municipality of Paredes. The increasing development of the town led D. Maria II to give it the category of Village in 1844 and it was finally recognised as a city in 1991.

The availability of capital, thanks to the return of the Brazilians at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, contributed direct and indirectly to the development of the furniture industry, due to the direct investment in some factories, through furniture orders made by these Brazilians, or through the furniture that they brought from Brazil and that inspired local craftsmen.



*Monastery of São Pedro de Cete. Paredes.*

Paredes includes, with some of its monuments, the Romanesque Route, which is a project of touristic/cultural character that exists since more than ten years ago and that was born from the necessity, recognised by all the towns in the Sousa Valley, of creating a sustainable product, which allowed appreciating and promoting the built patrimony of the region, as well as all its resources.

The project is made up by several monuments, from monasteries, churches, towers and bridges, in the Sousa Valley, spread all throughout two ways, north and south. Paredes includes the Southern tour, with the monuments: Monastery of São Pedro de Cete and the Hermitage of Nossa Senhora do Vale, both in Cete, the Tower of the Castle of Aguiar de Sousa, the Tower of the Alcoforados, in the parish of Lordelo and the Chapel of the Quintã, in Baltar.

Paredes has other monuments of great architectural and religious heritage value, among which it is enhanced: the Church of San Cristóvão de Luredo, the Church of S. Tomé, in Bitarãed and the Church and former Monastery of S. Estevão de Vilela. All of them are classified as Properties of Public Interest.

Paredes sheltered human settlements since the antiquity, what allows having singular references of the castros and Roman cultures. An example of the first one is the Castro of the Muro de Vandoma, whose location appears in medieval documents. This place, at 519 metres high, has natural defence conditions and a long-distance visual control. The archaeological remains point to a settlement since the proto-history until the Middle Ages. The place name Range of the Muro suggests the existence of a wall almost 4 metres wide and 3927 metres of perimeter, in a continuous but irregular circuit. It was built on blocks of stone. In the best-preserved stretches it is not more than one metre high, except for one stretch that keeps almost two metres.

There are remains of other castros constructions, from which there were collected ceramic fragments, and rocky structures were found, probably of a defensive character, such as the case of the Castro of S. Silvestre, the Castro of the Monte del Crasto or even previous ones, such as the case of the grave of the Quinta da Coca and the Dolmen do Padrão, of a pre-historic character.

The miner exploitation that Romans did in this area when looking for gold is preserved in the municipality of the Minas de Oro de Castromil, in the parish of Sobreira. As a result of this exploitation, it is found nowadays an interesting mining heritage. Nowadays the mines are part of a project of scientific-pedagogical dissemination promoted by the Municipality through the creation of the Centre of Interpretation of the golden Mined of Castromil and Banjas and the realisation of guided visits with the aim of make this patrimony public.

From the Roman period is has been also identified the necropolis of the Cruz, Parada de Todeia, Vandoma, Calvário and Tanque.

+Info

[www.cm-paredes.pt](http://www.cm-paredes.pt)

## PENAFIEL

It is a city full of hills, valleys and rivers, which can be enjoyed from several places. It is recommended to enjoy the waters that descend from the Tâmega lagoon or the wild hillsides of the *Douro*.

Here, the Anta of Santa Marta, the *Menhir of Luzim*, cave etchings and some necropolis can be visited. It also contains one of the **biggest castros of the Peninsular North-West**; the *Mozinho Hill*. It is a proto-Roman city, cradle of the beginning of the era. It is part of the Route of Castros and Verracos of the Hispanic-Lusitanian Border.



*Archaeological remains of Monte Mozinho. Penafiel.*

This village was inhabited in the Roman period, between the 1st and 5th centuries AD. The *castro* is crowned by the acropolis, protected by a tough stone wall, although the inside lacks of any urban structure. The entrance, in the upper part of the *castro*, was flanked by two fortified towers, where two statues of Galician warriors were found, currently found in the Provincial Museum. Inside the outside part there are two different kinds of construction.

The typically castreñas are circular spaces and the Roman ones have rooms of squared or rectangular floor. The objects found in the archaeological digs are located in the Penafiel Provincial Museum.

Penafiel has an extraordinary patrimony and rural architecture, existing in several places and villages of the town, being enhanced the Preserved Village of Quintadina (Lagares). It stands out the Benedictine Monastery of Bustelo and the aqueduct erected around it, as well as the Sanctuary of Nossa Senhora da Piedade (Sameiro) and the Historic Centre of the city.

At the end of the spring it takes place the Festivities of *Corpo de Deus* (Corpus Christi), unique in the country and in the world since, from around six hundred years, they maintain the sacred and profane mould of its procession. The *Cavallhada* (Cavalry), a *Serpre* (heraldic dragon) and the Trades Dances, together with the State of St. George and the *Boi Bento* (Blessed Ox) are part of the solemn procession.

Since the end of the 19th century, also in the eve, the entourage of *O Carneirinho* (Yearling sheep) goes over the city. It is a parade of decorated animals, one for each group of Primary School students, who jovially offer the animal to their teacher to celebrate the end of the school year, in memory of the payment that the parents used to do before education was public.

+Info

[www.concellodobarco.org](http://www.concellodobarco.org)

## PESO DA RÉGUA

Archaeological evidences confirm the dwelling of this town since the Roman period and the following invasions by the barbarians. They leave a testimony of the Roman age: the *Archaeological Station of Fonte do Milho*, classified as National Monument; the Paleochristian Cemetery that has seven tombs dug in slate, probably from the 7th-8th centuries; the Sanctuary of *Nuestra Señora de las Velas* and the *Cruz Santa de Poiães*, a cross covered with silver sheets, with several figures of the 13th century.

Peso da Régua arises surrounded by a monumental landscape and by the Douro River, which has always been a bridge to the development. What was before the excellent accessibility for the transport of the Porto Wine until Gaia, nowadays, the river turns into the nerve centre for the departures and arrivals of the cruises through the Douro. From the Régua pier there are touristic tours organized through the river, which let enjoy the landscape beauty of the area. This natural space was recognised in 2001 by the UNESCO as **World Heritage**.

Since the 18th century, with the creation of the **Company of the Agriculture of the Alto Douro Vineyards**, by the Pombal Marquis, the locality turned into the hub of the Porto Wine region (see page 109). The main patrimony of this town was constituted by the vineyards displayed in terraces along the river, which make up the raw material of this internationally valued wine. Impor-

tant organisms related to this production have their sees in Régua, such as the *Porto and Douro Wines Institute*, the *Interprofessional Commission of the Demarcated Region of the Douro* or the *Institute of Navigability of the Douro*.



General view. *Peso da Régua*.

The *Douro House* constitutes the main touristic attraction of the city. This building, which dates back to the second quarter of the 20th century, works as the see of the association of wine-producers. It stands out the stained glass windows, by the painter Lino António, in which it is described the history and the elaboration process of the *Porto Wine*.

In the old quarter of the city there are some enhanced religious buildings of the 18th century, such as the *Matriz Church*, the *Cruise Chapel* or the *Cruise of Señor de la Agonía*. The *Railway Station of Peso da Régua* was a witness of the arrival of the first train in July 1879.

5 kilometres far from the city it is found the thermal station of *Caldas de Moledo*, which is a great place for resting (see page 162).



[www.cm-pesoregua.pt](http://www.cm-pesoregua.pt)

## PONTEVEDRA

Pontevedra is located at the end of the river with the same name. The history of the city is reflected on its monumental patrimony. The outdoors museum of Pontevedra is a river island, located next to the Lérez River, to which the tides arrive. In the final stretch of this river, declared as protected natural space, one can accede from the centre of the city through a nice promenade.

The Sculptures Island houses a permanent exposition of contemporaneous architecture. It is made by twelve granite sculptures made by internationally known artists such as Robert Morris or Richard Long, which try to be in harmony with the nature that surrounds them. The vegetation of the riverside preserves ecosystems, like the wild rush, in which it stands out the presence of great crested grebes and swans.

The old quarter is one of the best-preserved ones in Galicia, declared Historic-Artistic Ensemble; it covers the area that was formerly within the walls, behind the seven gates of the medieval city. Inside one can find thirteen squares, whose names recall the intense commercial activity of this old city: the Vegetables square, the *Pedreira*, *Leña* or *Ferraría* squares are a good example of the trades and markets that appear in the centre of Pontevedra.



*Leña Square. Pontevedra.*

In the Five Streets Square, dominated by one of the most recognised cruises of *Terras de Pontevedra*, where there is the house in which Valle Inclán lived. Some stately homes, from the 17th and 18th centuries, delimit the *Teucro* Square, which receives its name from the Troya war hero and who, according to the legend, would have been the founder of Pontevedra. The *Ferraría* Square is called like that due to the forges that it used to shelter under its

arcades; the Leña Square was called like that for being the area where the firewood was sold for home fireplaces; in the Vegetables Square it was held in the 17th century a market where products from the fields were sold.

Besides the representation and excellent preservation of its civil architecture, it stands out in the old quarter of Pontevedra its important religious architecture. Thus, the ruins of the Convent of San Domingos are considered the best example of the Galician Gothic. Close to these ruins it is found the Basilica of Santa María la Mayor, declared National Monument, where it stands out its excellently sculpted plateresque façade, whose construction was ordered by the former Mareantes' Union in the 15th century. Inside there is represented the Cristo da Boa Viaxe, to whom the sailors commended themselves before their depart.

Some representative conventual churches are enhanced: San Francisco of the 14th century, the sanctuary of the Peregrina with a scallop-shell-shaped floor as a symbol of the Way of St. James (see page 26), Santa Clara of the middle 14th century and San Bartolomé, which constitutes an important example of the Galician Baroque.

The city offers a **wide museums network**. It stands out the Provincial Museum of Pontevedra, considered one of the three best and biggest provincial museums of Spain. It is a six-building ensemble with pieces from the prehistory till the present. On the other hand, the Archbishop's Towers Interpretation Centre (CITA) offers a new vision of Pontevedra's past, it lets discover what was one of the emblematic monuments of its history. They are rests of the medieval fortress; its origin harks back to the 12th century, although it had to be rebuilt later. It was used as a residence by the Santiago archbishops, and as administration of justice by the judges in a part of the Archbishops Towers. They project a 3D audio-visual presentation and there are some interactive screens.

8 kilometres far from Pontevedra it is found the *Mámoa do Rei*, with a polygonal room and an access corridor, with three perfectly distinguished stretches. It is part of a Neolithic eight-dolmens ensemble, located in the vicinity of the Castiñeiras Lake. It is one of the **most important funerary gravestones fields of Galicia** and it was declared Property of Cultural Interest.

The *Feria Franca* is based on the privileged gave by the king Enrique IV in 1467, by virtue of which it was authorised the celebration of a free-tax market with a duration of one month. The *feria france* was born in September 2000, the same month as its annual festivity, with the intention of recover the memory of one of the period with greatest strength and prosperity of the city.

The wide program includes medieval tournaments, falconry and archery exhibitions and a great recreation of the transportation of wine from the Ribeiro area, in Ourense, to its later exportation until the north of Spain, England or Flanders.

Porto has been inhabited since at least 2500 years, what left a great variety of remains turned into its constructions, which cover since the Iron Age until the present, including the Roman, medieval, Baroque and industrial periods. This presence is shown in the elements that make up the visible aspect of the city, such as the roads, the quarries, the carpentries, the forged or melted irons, the ceramic and the stuccos, as well as many statues spread throughout several places in the city.

Declared as World Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO in 1996, going through the old quarter of Porto is the best way of discovering its origins. An alive, dynamic, densely inhabited organism with a strong character, the old quarter of Porto reveals in each corner the history of its evolution and successive periods of its development.

In fact, the city is made up by a great buildings ensemble that gives evidence to decisive moments of its history. They are churches and convents, palaces and buildings, avenues and quarters, bridges and gardens, urban furniture and other constructions, a palette of various typologies spread throughout the urban space. More than memories or auteur architectures, its profile reflects the historic and architectural wealth of this territory. Example of this are the *Bolhão* Market, the Majestic Café, the station of *São Bento*, the Lello Bookshop, the Ferreira Borges Market and the Stock Market Palace.



*Avenue "dos Aliados". Porto.*

The museums of Porto reveal several evolutionary phases of the city, its history, its cultural and scientific development, its commercial activity, its architecture and decorative arts, its customs and habits, in interesting spaces, such as the National Museum Soares dos Reis and the Contemporary Art Museum of Serralves, beyond the Infant House, the Porto Wine Museum, the Romantic Museum of the Quinta da Macierinha and the House-Museum Guerra Junqueiro.

The same as its historic aspect, Porto also explores its identity, linked to the sophistication and contemporaneity reflected on the prominence of the Serralves Foundation and the Casa da Música ("Music House"), architecture

icons and distinctive projects of cultural offer together with the prestige of the Porto School and of the Architects Álvaro Siza and Eduardo Souto de Moura, for example.

Porto has a regular animation and cultural, sportive and festive events schedule. The great festivity of the city is *São João*. The streets get full of people; the air gets perfumed with basil and roasted sardines, while the music invites to dance

+info

[www.visitporto.travel](http://www.visitporto.travel)

## RIVEIRA

Santa Uxía of Ribeira, declared Town of Touristic Interest, is located in the southwest side of the province of A Coruña. It is a sailor village with a third of the fishing fleet of Galicia. The Fishing Port that is among the most important ones of the European Union regarding coastal fishing.

It counts on a wide and important cultural heritage, in which archaeological remains, *pazos* and museums are included, as well as **natural spaces of great beauty**, like the Natural and Dune Park of Corrubedo and the lagoons of Carregal and Vixán, the Sálvora Island, which is part of the Natural Park of the Atlantic Islands (see page 119) and the Peri-urban Park of San Roque.

The **remains of the castros culture** are spread all along the Riveira territory. The most popular site in the area is located in the so-called A Cidá Hill, declared Property of Cultural Interest.

The village is structured around a superior enclosure, with an oval-acropolis shape, taking advantage of the granite outcrops of the summit of the hill. A slope gives way to a second enclosure or *antecastro* delimited by a slope that defends the site. From the site, one can have an astonishing view of the natural landscape.



In the festivities and *romerías* calendar it should be mentioned the *Festa da Dorna*. Its origin dates back to 1948, it is celebrated the 24th July in Riveira and was declared Festivity of Touristic Interest in Galicia. Fun during seven days, dedicated to the most typical fishing vessel of the area.

+info

[www.riveira.es](http://www.riveira.es)

## SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Santiago de Compostela was declared in 1985 **World Cultural Heritage** by the UNESCO, considering that its urban beauty, its monumental integrity and its spiritual signification has turned it into “one of the few places so profoundly imbued with faith that it has become sacred for all the Humanity”. For the UNESCO, the city is “an extraordinary monumental ensemble”, “an ideal city that overflows History and timelessness”. Because of that, the 170 hectares of its old quarter have been included in the list or Wold Heritage. The Way of St. James also received this distinction in 1993 (see page 9).



*Monastery of San Martiño Pinario. Santiago de Compostela.*

The tour can start from its Cathedral, with apostolic sepulchre, its Baroque main altar and the masterpiece of the Romanesque sculpture: the Portico of Glory. The cloister, the museum and the ascent to its stone roofs, with magnificent views, are a must-visit.

One can also visit around the four Baroque squares of *Obradoiro*, *Azabachería*, *Quintana* and *Platerías*, whose beauty had a decisive influence in the development of the art and architecture in the north of the Iberian Peninsula.

It cannot be missed, next to the Cathedral, the Xelmírez Palace, with its Romanesque interior and access to the Cathedral roads. Or the Tourist Hotel of the *Reis Católicos* ("Catholic Monarchs"), former hospital of the city and pilgrims shelter, adjacent to the neoclassic Palace of Raxoi, see of the Santiago Town Council and the *Xunta* of Galicia, and in front of it there is the *Colexio* of San Xerome ("San Xerome School"), see of the rector's office of Santiago University: **the Obradoiro is a majestic compendium of artistic styles and poles of urban activity.**

Streets of medieval origin are opened from the Cathedral, reorganised in the Enlightenment period, with important civil and religious buildings. It would be enough to go through the Vilar street and the Nova street to the south, or the Azabachería and Cervantes squares to the north, just to see a dozen convents and monasteries appear - among which it stands out San Martiño Pinario, the second biggest monastery in Spain after El Escorial, and San Paio de Antealtares, both next to the Cathedral-, two dozen monumental churches, about twenty pazos and small palaces from the Renaissance, Baroque or Neoclassicism; a monumental market and several modernist buildings. And thus one can arrive to the Bonaval Park or the Alameda to see one of the most impressive monumental ensembles of the world.

The rich historic heritage of Santiago de Compostela has increased in the last two decades with an outstanding ensemble of pieces of **contemporary architecture**. The most centric auteur architecture is the Pilgrimage and Santiago Museum (2'12), by Manuel Gallego Jorreto, which faces the southern façade of the Cathedral. Going to the east one can reach the Contemporary Art Galician Centre (1992), by Álvaro Siza, next to the former Dominique convent of Bonaval, with which it shares a park (1990) with amazing terraces designed by Siza and Isabel Aguirre.

Going down the Costa Nova de Arriba one arrives to the Xoán XXIII Avenue (1991), a terrace with roof that faces the Library Ánxel Vasal (2001). In the Burgo das Nacións Avenue appears the Auditorium of Galicia (1986), by Julio Cano Lasso, with an important cultural activity, and near the Faculty of Information Sciences (1993), by Álvaro Siza. They are surrounded by the green Park of the Music in Compostela. From there it is easy to reach the romantic park of Vista Alegre, which, together with the original mansion gathers three impressive new works: the School of High Musical Studies (1999) and North-west Artery, see of the SGAE (2005), both by Antón García Abril; and the Museum of Natural History (2011), by César Portela. Finally, getting closer to the Sarela river through the park of Galeras, one can see in the upper part the residence of the president of the *Xunta*, by Manuel Gallego Jorreto.

But without a doubt, one must go by car to the most portentous of the Galician contemporary works: the Galicia City of Culture, which is been built in the upper part of the Gaiás Hill since 1999 and has already inaugurated four of its six buildings.

Sarria, located in equidistant points from the cities of Lugo and Monforte de Lemos, is irrigated by the Celoiro, Loio and Sarria (from which it receives its name) rivers. Vilanova de Sarria, founded by Alfonso IX in 1194, was the head of a medieval county and afterwards a marquisate related to the Casa de Lemos.



*Tower of the Batallón. Sarria.*

A fortress, four bridges, the Monastery of la Magdalena and up to nine hospitals were used to look after the pilgrims who were going to Compostela. In the present day Sarria, several hotel facilities, lodgings, camping, hotels and cottages take people from every country in the world in, in the rebirth of the pilgrimages. Many of them choose Sarria as the starting point of their trip, since it is 111 km far from Santiago.

In the old quarter of the town, *Rúa Maior*, apart from the emblazoned houses one finds the churches of *Santa Mariña* and San Salvador, the *Torre da Fortaleza*, and already in the exit the Monastery of la Magdalena, with Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque elements.

In the parishes the Romanesque one can visit the churches of Barbadelo, Property of Cultural Interest, Albán, Corvelle, Lousadela, Belante and Santo André de Paradela, and the *pazos* of Tumbiadoiro, San Sadurnño, the Quarter of Pizarrero, Perro ad Outeiro de Goián.

There are preserved archaeological sites in the dolmens' field of Santa Mariña, and the *castros* of San Cosme, Outeiro de Goián, Paredes and others, and several sculptures in Maside, Vilar and Barbadelo.

A singular beauty of natural landscapes of meadows and mountains is offered to the traveller, especially the *Foz das Aceas* and the natural viewpoint of the Monte de San Marco. In the *Rúa do Porvir* one can visit the famous Sarria antique shops.

The **Noite Meiga** (“Bewitched Night”) is the event par excellence, with which the town says goodbye to the summer; it is celebrated the last Saturday of August. Born in 1971, the legend tells the sad love story between a boy and a *meiga* (“witch”). According to it, as a punishment for falling in love with a magical being, the boy is sent to a seminary. The witch, shattered, leaves to the mountain, where she cries until her tears make up the river.

People gather during the afternoon in several festive activities and group dinners at night. After midnight, they do the “Danza de la Noite Meiga” (“Bewitched Night Dance”), a re-enactment where the witches and the “*tragos*” (“goblins”) dance around a bonfire in order to shoo the gloomy predictions away. Moreover, they carry out artistic exhibitions, concerts and literary acts.

Info

[www.sarriaturismo.com](http://www.sarriaturismo.com)

## VERÍN

Verín, located in the southeast of the province of Ourense, in the riverside of Támeqa River, in the heart of the Monterrei region, appeared at the foot of an important medieval fortress and is one of the main and most prosperous urban centres of the province.

A tour through its old quarter shows the most emphasized patrimonial resources. Starting from the sumptuous blazon that takes over the **Casa del Escudo** façade, the tour continues through the **bridge of the Támeqa River** until arriving at the Main street, where most of the buildings show on their façades, balconies and heraldic shields birds pecking at a Salgado’s salt-cellar, Figueroa’s fig leaves, Feijóo’s sword among roundels and Fonseca’s stars, among others. In the García Barbón Square and just in front of it, one of the most notable civil buildings of the town: the Casa de los Acevedo; it is noteworthy the magnificent shield between the two balconies of the first floor.



Cigarrón Square. Verín.

From the García Barbón Square one heads for **Cigarrón square**, through an alley of the old part. A big stone sculpture, honours the *cigarrón*, protagonist of the most important **festivity of national touristic interest** of Verín, the *cigarrones*, from the famous **Entroido de Verín** ("Verín Carnival"). With a great visual and aesthetic appeal, it is merged in an incomparable popular festivity atmosphere, in which the costumes' colouring gets mixed with the white flour that they throw to the people, and also with the black pyrotechnic smoke.

Leaving the Cigarrón square and continuing through the Pozo street, crossing the Merced square, the tour finished in the Municipal Library, the Culture House and the Information Office TCA. Already in the Portugal Avenue, there is the former **building of the Hermanos de la Salle School**, donated by García Barbón in 1893 for the education of children with scarce resources.

The diversity of ethnographic resources in the area makes that, apart from the famous carnival, the visitors have several options to let themselves be seduced by the history, landscape and the former way of life. It is really attractive for the visitor to do a route through the rock wineries, a generous itinerary in natural and geomorphologic resources.

In contrast to the conventional wineries, located in the *pazos'* wine cellars or in rectory houses, the rock ones were used by humble farmers. They are located between vineyards, spread over fields, or even in more mountainous areas. They are small cavities in the rocks, formerly used in the elaboration process of wine.

It should be emphasized that the Monterrei region has the largest amount of rock **wineries** of Galicia. Inside Verín one can find the rock winery of *Pozo do Demo* (Cabreiroá), the rock winery of Felgoso (Ábedes) and the closest one to Chaves, the rock winery of A Teixugueira (Mandin).

+info

[www.verin.es](http://www.verin.es)  
[www.eurociudadechavesverin.eu](http://www.eurociudadechavesverin.eu)

## VIANA DO CASTELO

Viana do Castelo is surrounded by mountains and it is bathed by the Atlantic Ocean and the Lima River. The presence of the castros culture in this town is supported by the remains found, belonging to several *castros*, among which it stands out the **Citanía de Santa Lucía**. This fortified village is one of the most important *castros* of the country. It was built during the beginning of the Iron Age and it got its maximum apogee during the Romanization period. Its dwellers moved afterwards until the Lima River estuary, creating here a humble fishermen community. From the 15th century on, its harbour became one of the most active and important ones of the country, due to the Portuguese maritime expansion process, encouraging the commercial and demographic development of the town.

The prosperity of this period is reflected in the **large number of Manueline and Renaissance pazos** that are spread over the old quarter. In 1848 the queen María II gave Viana do Castelo the category of “city”. It has experienced a number of changes in the last decades that have turned it into a modern city.

Viana do Castelo is one of the most enhanced monumental cities of Portugal. The tour through its old quarter lets discover the architectural evolution of the city, represented by **several buildings of many different styles**: Romanesque, Manueline, Renaissance, Baroque, neoclassic, modernist... Among the religious buildings it stands out the Matriz Church, or the Viana do Castelo Cathedral, temple of the 15th century guarded by two voluminous towers that give it the appearance of a fortress. The façade has some archivolts and sculptures that reproduce the figures of six of the apostles. Another enhanced church is the one of Nuestra Señora de la Agonía, from the 18th century, which shelters during August the *romería* dedicated to this virgin, during which her image is taken out of the temple and carried through the Ribeira streets in a procession till the sea.



*República Square. Viana do Castelo.*

In the República Square we find one of the most beautiful ensembles of the city, represented by the Former *Pazos* of the Town Council. The *cinquecento* Chafariz and the building of the Misericórdia. The pointed arch of the *Pazos* of the Town Council dominate the square. This construction, which was started during the Manuel I's reign and finished with João III, dates back to the 16th century and was formerly used as Town Hall. The building of the Misericórdia is one of the most interesting examples of Portuguese civil architecture of the 16th century. Of a Renaissance style, it has an arches gallery standing on splendid caryatides. The centre of the square is marked with a granite fountain of the 16th century, a work by João Lopes “O Velho”.

There are in the city other examples of civil architecture such as the Casa de los Arcos (“Arches House”), also known as ‘of João “O Velho”’, building of the 15th century that was the residence of this Portuguese explorer; the Hospital Velho that formerly welcomes pilgrims who were going to Compostela; the Palace of the Vizcondes de Carreira or of the Távoras of the 16th century, which still maintains remains of the Manueline style, despite of the remodeling carried out two centuries later.

The Municipal Museum is located in the small palace of Barbosa Maciel, built in the first half of the 18th century. The most interesting fund of this institution is an excellent representation of decorative arts, in which it stands out the collection of pottery and Indo-Portuguese furniture. The Museo del Traje (“Garment Museum”), in the República Square, is also of important cultural value. It exhibits the Viana garments and other ethnographic aspects of the region in permanent and temporal exhibitions. This museum is related with a group of museological hubs spread over the city, such as the Molinos de Agua de la Montaria (“Montaria’s Watermills”), in Carreço, the Molinos de Viento de Palas (“Palas’s Windmills”) and the Núcleo Museológico do Sargaço in Castelo do Neiva, the Núcleo de Arquitectura Popular de Darque (“Darque’s Popular Architecture Hub”), apart from the Museo del Pan (“Bread Museum”), in Outeiro. The latter aims to show, through the bread elaboration process, characteristic practices of the rural way of life, nowadays into disuse or even almost disappeared. The exhibition covers aspects such as the seeding or the cereal harvest, the separation process in the threshing floor, the transformation of the flour in the mill and the baking in the oven, to finally turn it into bread.

Beyond these hubs there is still a Archaeology Museological Hubs Network, specifically, the Church das Almas, the Church of Santa Maria de Geraz do Lima, the Castle of the Neiva and the Castle of the Neiva and the Nichos House, the latter located in a building of the 15th century, recently remodelled to house an exhibitions area where part of the archaeological remains of the town can be seen, with special focus on the Prehistory, Iron Age and Romanization periods.



[www.cm-viana-castelo.pt](http://www.cm-viana-castelo.pt)

## VIGO

Known as the *ciudad olívica* (“olive city”), Vigo and its region have been settled since the old days. There are several remains of *castros* sites, the most important and biggest one was placed in the Castro hill. The inhabitants of these communities used to live from farming, activities with hunting and fishing, and also doing iron and silver works.

Nowadays, this has a reflection on a powerful production network: fishing, shipbuilding, canning industry, car industry and the potentiality of the service

sector, which turned it into an attraction point due to the growth opportunities that it gives.

Vigo streets offer the visitor interesting places to go for a walk. The legendary *Mercado da Pedra*, former square where exotic products from overseas were sold in the past, and that nowadays offers tasty and varied seafood. The Berbés, fishermen quarter whose arcades were again and again portrayed by important Galician painters, is located in the shore area. The Bozas quarter still maintains the narrow streets, typical of fishermen quarters.



*García Barbón Cultural Centre. Vigo. Author: Carlo R. Prieto.*

Vigo is also characterised for being a lordly city, since it shelters inside its metropolitan area five *pazos*: Quiñones de León, La Pastora, San Roque, Riveira-Atienza and La Raposeira. One can visit Quiñones de León, surrounded by a park with centenary camellia trees and San Roque, which has a park where it is celebrated annually one of the most traditional and crowded *romerías* of the city.

At the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th **buildings of great architectural value** were planned, such as the building “El Moderno”, in the Puerta del Sol or the “Casas Bonín” in the *Areal*, both with a great French influence. Sculptures decorate the streets, such as El Sireno, located in the Puerta del Sol, a marine character that stands for the historic importance of the “mar de Vigo” (“Vigo sea”); the monument to Work, in the Gran Vía; in the Plaza de España, the Horses that represent those that even today trot freely in the mountains and the Puerta del Atlántico, in the Plaza de América, which pays homage to the Galician emigration.

In what refers to the religious architecture, the Romanesque churches of San Salvador de Coruxo and Santa María de Castrelos are remarkable,

as well as the Colegiata de Santa María de Vigo, where it is venerated the *Cristo de la Victoria*, which every first Sunday of August goes all over the city in a procession with tens of thousands of devoted. The primitive temple, from the 15th century, was burned by Drake's troops during its assault to the city in 1589. The current building has a neoclassic style. It also stands out the Convent of San Francisco, near the Berbés, the oldest one of these constructions.

The **Quiñones de León Museum**, which is housed in the Castrelos pazo, has the most important collection of Galician art, with the most representative artists of the last centuries and a greatly valuable archaeological collection. The *Museo del Mar de Galicia* aims to show the vital importance that the sea had in the economic and social history of Galicia as a source of resources. The **museum of contemporary art**, MARCO, has the objective of acquire and exhibit works of the latest artistic movements that include the most varied formats and different creative fields. Finally, the Liste Museum has an important ethnographic collection.

Vigo comes back to the 19th century in March, to remember its victory over the French troops in the festivity of **La Reconquista** ("The Reconquest"), declared as Touristic Interest of Galicia. The old quarter turns into a wide market with decorations of the period, with theatrical representations in the streets, which recreate the fight between the French and the *Vigueses*. The highpoint is the part in the Gamboa street, in which the demolition of the village gate is represented.

+Info

[www.turismodevigo.org](http://www.turismodevigo.org)

## VILA DO CONDE

Vila do Conde is one of the oldest cities in the north of Portugal. The ancient origins of this coastal city were developed in the *Castro* of S. João Baptista, a place where, in 1318, D. Afonso Sanches and D. Teresa Martins founded the Monastery of Santa Clara, monument which, restored and extended in the 18th century, is one of the *ex-libris* of Vila do Conde.

During the 16th century, Vila do Conde reached its commercial peak due to shipbuilding, greatly linked to the discoveries whose tradition was kept until the present, and which, with the harbour and the customs, made up one of the most important commercial points in the history of the 16th century.

It stands out the restoration of the surroundings of the Monastery of Santa Clara, the intervention in the area of *Cais da Alfândega*, with the construction of a port for leisure crafts, the construction and museum-like transformation of a replica of a Renaissance vessel, among others, as well as the maritime urban front in the sphere of the Polis Program, which aimed to re-organize this urban space with the objective of enjoying the natural conditions which the closeness of the sea offers.

Regarding architecture, Vila do Conde offers a wide variety of monuments to visit, such as the Monastery of Santa Clara, the *Capela do Socorro*, the *Matriz Church*, the Fort of S. João Baptista, the chapel de Nossa Senhora da Guia, construction that points to the 10th and 11th centuries, family seats, the aqueduct, just to mention some examples, whose concern to preserve and restore them has been constant.



*Fort of São João Baptista. Vila do Conde.*

There are prehistorical rests, such as the *castro* of S. Paio or the Citanã de Bagunte, examples of the Romanesque architecture such as the Church of the Rio Mau, the emblazoned rural houses and ancestral homes or the monastic tradition of Junqueira, the convent of Azuzara or S. Salvador de Vairão. Vila do Conde also counts on one of the most prestigious craftsmanship fairs.

Festivities of the Corpus Cristi have a particular meaning, since the streets are decorated with floral carpets full of colour and beauty.

+info

[www.cm-viladoconde.pt](http://www.cm-viladoconde.pt)

## VILA NOVA DE FAMALICÃO

Vila Nova de Famalicão is a Portuguese city created in 1835 from the dismemberment of the town of Barcelos.

With a rich and varied cultural tradition which harks back to the Prehistory, the community from Famalicão has been establishing its own and defined personality. The *castros* of the hills peaks, the bridges that embrace the riversides, the churches that reflect spirituality, the nobility of the stately homes, the customs and habits of the lands labouring, the wealth of its craftsmanship and the rich gastronomy are an alive witness of a community that builds the future in each moment.

Famalicão is also a land deeply linked with the tragic life of one of the most representative Portuguese literates: Camilo Caastelo Branco. In S. Miguel de Ceide he lived and wrote until he became blind and desperate, brilliantly describing the Portuguese society.



Camilos' Museum. Vila Nova de Famalicão.

The House Museum of Camilo, town's heritage, is an alive example of the life of the "greatest *romancista* of the Iberian Peninsula".

+Info

[www.cm-vnfamalicao.pt](http://www.cm-vnfamalicao.pt)

## VILA NOVA DE GAIA

Vila Nova de Gaia turned, around the second half of the 18th century, into a land of fishermen, craftsmen, traders and businessmen. And it was in this prosperity period when some foreigners started to settle and acquire properties, especially houses and storehouses, which were used to support the embarkation operations of the Douro wine.

The city has many attractions and it invites to a historical and cultural visit, being enhanced several monuments and other places of interest. In the **Serra do Pilar**, whose panoramic views cover the old quarter and the Douro river, is placed in the Monastery of Serra do Pilar, World Heritage, made up by a circular temple of the 16th century and a Renaissance cloister. Inside the town, in Grijó, there is the Monastery of San Salvador de Grijó, built on the site of a former Agustin convent from the end of the 16th century and beginnings of the 17th. It stands out the singular cloister, with two floors, and the sarcophagus of the Infant D. Rodrigo Sanches from the 13th century.

Of a Benedictine origin, the Monastery of Pedroso was founded in the first third of the 12th century and passed, from the 16th century on, to the Jesuit order, which started from this moment to administrate its properties.

Built in the 14th century next to the river, the Monastery of Corpus Christi had deep alterations due to the successive rises of the Douro. Of a Baroque style, the Church of Santa Marina harks back to the 14th century and was re-built in 1745, with a floor designed by the architect Nicolau Nasoni, with the exception of the tower, which dates back to the 1894.



*Chapel of Senhora da Pedra. Vila Nova de Gaia. Author: José Manuel Carvalho Melim.*

The museological offer includes the House-Museum Teixeira Lopes, built at the end of the 19th century, following a project of the architect José Teixeira Lopes. It was thought to work as a residence and sculpture workshop. It has valuable artworks and an important collection of bronze and marble sculptures, and plaster mock-ups by the Master Teixeira Lopes.

Medieval Lordly Residence, the *Solar de los Condes de Resende* was inhabited in 1886 by Eça de Queirós. In 1984 it was converted by the Town Council with the aim of becoming a divulgation point of the historic and archaeological heritage of the town. There is also installed the Historic Archive and the Archaeology and Anthropology Museum.

The Aqueduct of the Arcos del *Sardão*, built in 1720 under the order of the maternal grandfather of the poet Almeida Garrett, it was destined to the conduction of water to the little palace of the Quinta del *Sardão*, in Olivo del Duero. It is a strong structure made up by a vault with 23 big arches, supported by pillars.

The Casa Barbot, from the beginning of the 20th century and only example of the Modernism, is located in the Avenue of the República, one of the main arteries of the city. Its current function is the Culture House. In Avintes, the Piedra de la Audiencia is a granite monument made up by a table and three benches, having worked as box seat in many trials. This small monument of public civil architecture is unique in the country.

The Bridge D. Maria Pia, with a bi-articulated arch, and destined to the railway traffic, is a work by the engineer Gustavo Eiffel. The Bridge of D. Luis

l, used for the vehicular and pedestrian traffic, has two floors. It was built at the end of the 19th century with the project of the engineer Teóphile Seyrig, Eiffel's collaborator. In the future, it will be used for the union of the underground between the cities of Porto and Vila Nova de Gaia.

From the Douro River depart many cruises and there can be seen, anchored, the emblematic ships *rabelos*, which transported the Porto wine (see page 111) from the *quintas* ("country villas") where it was produced until the wine cellars to be stored.

**The wine cellars that store and mature the Porto wine** are other of the must-visits of the city. Spread over the riverside of Douro River, its visit lets knowing the in and outs of the maturing of this renowned wine. Following the river, near its mouth, we find São Pedro da Afurada. It is a town known for its typical ambient and its fishing traditions. It stands out the *romería* in honour of São Pedro, celebrated annually in the last week of June.

In the Aguda beach, known for its artisanal fishing, it is installed the Estación Litoral de la Aguda, which includes the Fishing Mueum with old and recent equipment, an Aquarium that exhibits the local marine fauna and flora and a department of education and investigation for marine ecology, aquaculture and fishing.

At the end of August and beginnings of September it is celebrated the festivity of *Broa de Avintes*, which keeps a rural touch, something that characterises this parish since ancient times; according to this, the agriculture was the predominant economic activity. It is one of the most appreciated delicacies of the Portuguese gastronomy.

+info

[www.cm-gaia.pt](http://www.cm-gaia.pt)

## VILA REAL

Vila Real is located in a transition area between the ranges of Marão and Alvão, and the territory of terraces and vineyards. Birthplace of brave sailors, fishermen and several writers, the city has some elements that show the evolution of the original population, defended by walls, founded in the 13th century by the regional law of D. Dinis, until the present. Testimonies such as the Houses of Diego Cão, Carvalho Araújo, Camilo Castelo Branco and the Marquises of Vila Real give the nickname to a circuit of discoveries of the old quarter.

Among the constructions of interest it stands out the **Santuario Rupestre de Panóias**. This ensemble, which is 6 kilometres far from the city, and which is about 1.800 years old, is made up by three big granite crags used as sanctuary of the prehistoric period. These rocks were used to carry out animal sacrifices. Later, the Romans used it as a worship place to venerate their own divinities, especially Serapis.

Regarding the religious constructions, it stands out the **Sé** ("Cathedral") of **Vila Real**. It is also known as Church of San Domingos, since this Gothic cathedral of the 15th century was originally the church of a Dominican convent. It was re-built after the fire in 1837. The Church of the Clérigos, also called Capela Nova or Capilla de San Pedro and San Paulo, has a Baroque façade attributed to Nicoulau Nasoni and magnificent tiles inside.



*Mateus House. Vila Real.*

The Church of the Misericórdia, built in mid-16th century under the order of Pedro de Castro, has Romanesque influences. Of the 15th century it is the Church of Nossa Senhora de Guadalupe, whose architecture is of a Romanesque style, even though the façade and the cruise arch are Gothic. It has two sculptures from the 16th and 17th centuries inside. The Church of San Dinís is the oldest one in the city, given that it dates back to the period of the foundation of the city. Next to this, we find the Capilla de San Blas, small Romanesque-Gothic temple of the 14th century. The construction of the Church of San Pedro was started in 1528, being restored in the 18th century. The church of *Vila Marim*, with its *Quattrocento* and *Cinquecento* frescoes, dates back to the 12th century.

Vila Real is a monumental city with many **civil constructions**, and besides the religious ones, of great historic and artistic interest, we find many nobility buildings. It stands out the House of the Marquesses de Vila Real, *pazo*

of the 16th century, and the House of Diogo Cão, famous seaman who sailed through the African coast between 1482 and 1486, and discovered the spring of the Congo River. It could not be indifferent to this ensemble the *barro preto de Bisalhães* and the *linhos de Agarez*, both jewels of the Vila Real craftsmanship.

The Casa de Mareus is a *pazo* of the 18th century, attributed to Nicolau nasoni, that represents one of the most beautiful examples of the Baroque civil architecture in Portugal. It has a museum whose heart includes documents of the familiar archive, and in which it stands out a 1817 edition of the Camões's *Lusíadas*. It also stands out the amazing gardens that surround the building.

It stands out in Vila Real the Natural Park of Alvão, which holds this cataloguing since 1983 (see page 121).

+info

[www.cm-vilareal.pt](http://www.cm-vilareal.pt)

## VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA

Vilagarcía de Arousa is located in the left side of the Ría de Arousa. The topography of this town is characterised for being very rough, and there the Xiabre hill reaches the highest altitude, from where one can obtain a great panoramic view. The petroglyphs ("rock carvings") in Ballotes and Meadelo, in the parish of Bamio, witness the dwelling of the area already in the 2nd millennium b.C. These figures cut into granite stones, are a representative example of the cave art, we can distinguish on them deer, circles and anthropomorphic figures. The *castros* culture left traces in the town through the remains of several *castros* (Agudín, Alobre, Carril and Lobeira). In these sites there appeared remains from the Roman period that confirmed the continuation of the settlement in this area during the historic period.

The Carril harbour turned into one of the most important ones in Galicia during the 17th and 18th centuries, since most of the goods traffic that was going into or out of Santiago de Compostela passed through it.

In 1873 it witnessed the arrival of the railway to Galicia, since the first railway line which crossed the Galician community was the one that connected Santiago de Compostela and Carril. Throughout the 19th century, Vilagarcía saw how the importance of the town and harbour was getting consolidated, thanks to the condition of the natural port of Compostela. Vilaxoán was a sailors' village whose history was linked to the one of the Catalan businessmen who settle the area in the 19th century and established, given the favourable conditions of the harbour and the wealth of the littoral, the first salt industries. This would be the precedent of the later prosperous canning industry. At the beginning of the 20th century, Vilagarcía, Vilaxoán and Carril merged to constitute a single municipality. The town was renamed, from this moment on, Vilagarcía de Arousa.

This city stands out for its architectural wealth with a large amount of pazos that are preserved there. The Pazo of Vista Alegre, from the 16th century and of a Renaissance style, was built under the order of the abbot of Teverga. It is connected to the adjacent building, an Augustine nuns' convent built a century later, through a big arch. The *Pazo de Rubiáns* was the place of residence of the founding family of the village, the García Caamaño. Built in the 18th century, it keeps an original tower of the 15th century and a chapel built at the end of the 16th century with a Baroque altarpiece and sculptures. The *Pazo del Rial*, erected at the end of the 17th century with stone coming from the Lobeira fortress, has a Baroque style. It was restored and turned into a hotel. The *Pazo de Sobrán*, built in the 15th century on the base of a monastery of the 11th century, keeps two towers of medieval origin.



The festivities in honour of the patron saint of Vilagarcía, declared as National Touristic Interest, are celebrated during 10 days around the 16th of August, it is the **San Roque festivity**. Two parties take place on this day simultaneously; the first one, of a religious character, starts with a solemn mass and the saint going on a procession from the Parish Church until the chapel which is named after him. During the afternoon, the way is made, more slowly, in the opposite direction. The second part starts around 12 in the morning, the 16th, right after being the image of the patron saint kept in the chapel of the San Roque quarter. In this moment, the *Fiesta del Agua* gets started.

+info

[www.vilagarcia.es](http://www.vilagarcia.es)

# Eno-Tourism



# ENO-TOURISM

The trip through the wine in the Euro-region Galicia-North of Portugal goes beyond its simple production; it is a synonym of culture, tradition, knowledge and, in itself, a lifestyle. Going through it is an excellent chance to combine the wine experience with the surrounding of villages and landscapes, monuments and traditions, people and customs. Some of the Eixo Atlántico cities are located in seven of the main certificates of origin: C.O. Monterrei; C.O. Rías Baixas, C.O. Ribeira Sacra, C.O. Valdeorras, C.O. Vinhos Verdes, C.O. Porto and C.O. Trás-os-Montes.

A meeting place, around the singular and varied way of producing their wines, exceptional without any doubt, and worldwide recognised. With these certificates of origin there is a wide variety of eno-touristic activities, from the visit to the wineries, strolls in the vineyards, wine cellars, tasting and wine museums, until the discovering of the historic and cultural patrimony associated with it. It is astonishing seeing this land full of contrasts in hills, valleys and sea, with plenty of different scenarios, where each land offers singular features that got transferred to the vineyards and these, to the wine that they produce.

Furthermore, there are several gastronomic events that take place during the year, such as fairs or festivities, which allow tasting the traditional cooking of each place and to acquire the diversity of their products.

Some of the best white and red wines of the world are produced in this euro-region and, many of them, have already acquired a deserved recognition beyond our borders.

*Immerse yourself among the most delicate and singular wines!*

## C.O. Monterroi Wines

### ■ VERÍN

The Certificate of Origin of Monterrei is found in the south-east of the province of Ourense. It is made up by the high basin of the Támega River and its tributaries, and makes up a valley, limited by ranges where it is found the vineyards cultivation. These are bordering lines with Portugal, with astonishing landscapes where the Támega flows over the territory, going into Lusitanian lands.

The visitor can enjoy the Route of the O.C. of Monterrei Wines with wineries at the foot of the valley and also in the mountain, with spectacular view-points. It has a wide historic patrimony and a great landscape wealth where one can visit the valley, besides some pazos, churches and fortresses.

The second weekend of August takes place the wine Fair OCM where the wineries assigned to the regulator Council praise the most selected and exclusive Monterrei wines.



C.O. Monterrei Wines Exhibition. Verín.

Verín is also known as the “Galicia’s gate”, for being the entrance to the region through the South-western Way Silver Route (see page 13). It is a city with great aquiferous sources, spas and springs such as Cabreiroá, Sousas or Fontenova (see page 162), for its patrimony, headed by the historic ensemble of the Monterrei Castle, and also known due to its ancestral Carnival, declared as National Touristic Interest.

+info

[www.domonterrei.com](http://www.domonterrei.com)  
[www.verin.es](http://www.verin.es)

## C.O Rías Baixas

### PONTEVEDRA AND VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA

The Certificate of Origin Rías Baixas starts its path in 1980 and from this moment on, the vineyard area, embraced in the quality brand, grew exponentially. It is extended through the littoral of one of the most dynamic Galician areas; since the border with Portugal til the north. This certification is the most productive one in Galicia, with more than 10 million litres.

This route C.O. *Rías Baixas* is located in an incomparable frame of a rich cultural and historic patrimony. The traveller has amazing vineyard areas, coast bathed by natural beaches, green landscapes, marshlands, rural settings and a great amount of churches and pazos.



C.O Rías Baixas.

## PONTEVEDRA

In one of the squares of the old quarter, the Mugartegui Square and the *pazo* with the same name has its see the Regulator Council of the C.O. Rías Baixas. The building has its origin in the 17th-18th centuries, and it is a beautiful example of the Baroque urban architecture.

Moreover, the city has several monuments erected in the old quarter, declared Historic-Artistic Ensemble, and a wide network of museums, among which it stands out the Museum of Pontevedra. On the other hand, it offers several possibilities to make contact with nature, through the *Illa das Esculturas*, the River Promenade of the Lérez River or getting closer to the Pazo and the Lourizán Gardens (see page 130).

## VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA

Vilagarcía, with a rooted sailor tradition, has the *Bodega Maior de Mendoza* ("Mendoza's Main Winery"), where one can discover how this Albariño gets produced, with the C.O. Rías Baixas. Its festivity is celebrated the second week of August.

Moreover, it stands out for being a land of rooted nobility, as shown by the large amount and quality of its *pazos*. It has the Pazos Route: Vista Alegre, Pazo of *Rubiáns*, Pazo of *Sobrán* and Pazo Rial are some of the examples. It is a city which made, from a Japanese plant, the camellia, an ensign about which it shows off in the international exhibition of the camellia. The Cortegada island, located at the end of the *ría* of Arousa, has a high ecological value, with a spectacular laurel wood. The island is part of the National Maritime Terrestrial Park of the Atlantic Islands of Galicia (see page 117).

+info

[www.rutadelvinoriasbaixas.com](http://www.rutadelvinoriasbaixas.com)  
[doriasbaixas.com](http://doriasbaixas.com)  
[www.visit-pontevedra.com](http://www.visit-pontevedra.com)  
[www.vilagarcia.es](http://www.vilagarcia.es)

## C.O Ribeira Sacra

### MONFORTE DE LEMOS, CAPITAL OF THE RIBEIRA SACRA

The Ribeira Sacra is one of the most beautiful and most spectacular regions of Galicia. It is located in the confluences of Ourense and Lugo, and its natural limit is marked by the riverbeds of Sil and Miño Rivers, with their corresponding tributaries.

The vineyards are arranged in a system of stone steps, known as *socalcos*, all throughout the riverside, and whose origin dates back to the Roman ages. This orography and the adaptation of the vineyards to the environment, with

more than 2000 years of tradition, are the reason why the wine activity of the Ribeira Sacra is known as “heroic agriculture”.

Apart from being an important wine-making and eno-touristic area, it is also enhanced its beautiful landscape and its natural and monumental heritage. The monasteries stand out for being one of the most important Romanesque collections of Europe.



*Centre of the Ribeira Sacra Wine. Monforte de Lemos.*

The Certificate of Origin Ribeira Sacra has its great day on the “Amandi Wine Fair”, which is celebrated on the Palm Sunday in Sober (Lugo). In the geographical centre of this area there is Monforte de Lemos, one of the most important cities in the inland of Galicia which, in medieval times, was a singular example of fortress-city. In its urban part there are several buildings and monuments preserved, which prove the importance that it reached in past centuries. Its old quarter is declared as Property of Cultural Interest.

Monforte brings its inhabitants closer to the wine culture through the Wine Centre of the Ribeira Sacra, building itself singular, where it is offered all the activity related with this certificate’s wine.

Furthermore, the city has important monuments, museums and places of interest; the tour could begin with the monumental ensemble of San Vicente do Pino, taking advantage of the panoramic view of the region which is offered there, at the same time that one visits the Benedictine monastery and its church; visiting the exceptional Museum of Sacred Art of the Clarisse Convent of the one of San Jacinto, where it is found the only painting by El Greco located in Galicia.

Another place of interest is the *Ponte Vella* over the Cabe River, attributed to the Romans, but whose current configuration is from the 16th century, although it maintains medieval details.

Among the several leisure activities than Monforte de Lemos offers, the hunting and fishing can be enhanced, as well as the canyons descent, the bike tourism, paragliding, climbing and above all, the route hiking, being the main one the Way of St. James through the Winter Way (see page 33).

+info

[www.ribeirasacra.org](http://www.ribeirasacra.org)  
[www.monfortedelemos.es](http://www.monfortedelemos.es)

## C.O. Vino Valdeorras

### O BARCO, CAPITAL OF THE TIERRA OF VALDEORRAS

The Certificate of Origin Valdeorras is one of the oldest ones in Spain, located in the South-Occidental part of the province of Ourense. It takes up part of the basin of Sil, Xares and Bibei Rivers, and it is adjacent to the Bierzo Leonés, which is the natural way of entry into Galicia.



The terraces for the vineyard farming are used since Roman times and its wines were a greatly valuable good as bargaining chip or taxes payment. Nowadays, they elaborate aromatic wines, with a great capacity of maturation in the barrels and a good evolution in the bottles, or the Godello, one of the most appreciated white wines in Europe.

The Route of the Valdeorras Wine offers, besides rural landscapes, a rich historic-cultural patrimony and a varied gastronomy.

O Barco is the capital of the Valdeorras region. It has a great ecological wealth where one can play several sports while enjoying the beauty land-

scapes that its rivers and mountains shape. Its old quarter surprises for the contrast between the big stately houses and the small, plain buildings.

In Vila do Castro gets celebrated the *Camiño das Covas* at the end of June and beginning of July. Hundreds of people gather to discover and visit the caves that are opened this day to offer a tasting of its artisanal wines with attractive *pinchos* ("bites") prepared in the same place.

Info

[www.rutadelvinoaldeorras.com](http://www.rutadelvinoaldeorras.com)  
[www.concellodobarco.org](http://www.concellodobarco.org)

## C.O Vinhos Verdes

### BARCELOS, BRAGA, GUIMARÃES AND VIANA DO CASTELO

The Certificate *Vinhos Verdes* occupies the North of Portugal, traditionally known as *Entre Douro-e-Minho*. Limited at north by the Miño River, which conforms a natural border with Galicia, and at south by the Douro River, which separates it from the rest of the country; in its vicinity it is found the National Park of Peneda-Gerês (see page 119).



Vineyard of the C.O Vinhos Verdes.

Dominated by the green of the vineyards, which extend over a 21 thousand hectare area, it is the widest wine-producer region of Portugal, and one of the biggest ones in Europe. It is not named after the colour of the wine, but after the fact that it is consumed while it is young, a few months after its elaboration.

The *Vinho Verde* is, in a natural way, light and fresh, with a unique fruity taste due to the characteristics of the soil and the climate of the region. A tour through the Route of the *Vinhos Verdes* will always be an encounter with nature, with history and with good Portuguese wines.

## BARCELOS

Barcelos is located in the heart of the biggest wine-producer region of Portugal. The Cávado River is its dominant element; it shapes the landscape and goes through it, dividing it into two and housing a singular territory, resultant from the climate and the soil fusion, together with the varieties of traditional grapes and millenary tastes.



*Wine cellars of Vilar de Frades. Barcelos.*

In Barcelos, the wineries are a must-visit for wine lovers. The visitors will be able to discover the secrets of the identity of each producer and immerse themselves into a tour through the ancient history of this region.

The city is also known by its architecture, since it was historically a Roman settlement, as well as by its ceramics. The recognised symbol of the city, as well as of the whole country, was born here, the Barcelos cock. The popular history of this symbol appeared linked to the Way of St. James (see page 17).

Moreover, in Barcelos it is settled one of the biggest markets of Europe, which takes place weekly, on Thursdays, in the Campo da República. In the north part of this square it is a must-stop the Church of *Nosa Senhora do Terço*, of the 18th century, as well as the Temple of *Senhor Bom Jesus*, of the 17th century, which is the epicentre of the famous festivities of the *Cruzes*. The Campo de la República is still an open door to discover and to enjoy the old quarter of the city, which is extended from this place until the Cávado River, in an architecturally and historically rich tour.

## BRAGA

Braga, one of the six sub-regions of the Region demarcated by the *Vinhos Verdes*, is crossed by the Este and Cávado rivers. There are eight different itineraries of the Route of the *Vinhos Verdes*. The itinerary of *Cávado Nascente* starts from Braga to discover all the patrimonial and gastronomic wonders of the region. Braga is one of the oldest cities of Portugal and it is known as the Portuguese Rome for being the ecclesiastic centre of the country. The Holy Week in this city attracts thousands of visitors and the religious belief gets mixed with the ethnographic and the cultural aspects (see page 39). It has a large amount of churches from all the periods, among them it stands out: the *Misericórdia*, of a Renaissance style; *Pópulo*, which dates back to the 17th and 18th centuries; *Nossa Senhora Branca* from the 18th century; *Santa Cruz* of a mannerist Baroque style; *São Vítor* with a monumental collection of tiles and *São Marcos* with the apostle relics.



The city was founded in the Roman ages under the name of *Bracara Augusta*, and it is also known as the *City of the Baroque*. Its best example is the *Santuário del Bom Jesús*. Among the most architecturally enhanced of the ensemble there is the great 200 years old staircase that leads to the Sanctuary. The sanctuary of Sameiro, second Marian and peregrination centre of the country, after Fátima, is located in the upper part of the hill, in the vicinity, from where one can enjoy an astonishing view. Braga is the entry to the National Park of Peneda de Gêres (see page 119).

## ■ GUIMARÃES

Guimarães, city classified as Cultural World Heritage (see page ??), is located in the centre of the region demarcated by the *Vinhos Verdes*. The *Vinho Verde* is unique in the world and exclusive of the region of the North of Portugal. It is a soft and fresh wine, whose ancestral connection with the land is manifested in the rural landscape of Guimarães. The conduction system, as well as the arrangement of the vineyards, coiled around trees, usually oaks, chestnuts, olive or cherry trees, which works as a support and where they grow freely.



S. Tiago Square. Guimarães.

Guimarães, birthplace, origin of the Portuguese identity and nationality, with a strong cultural and creative vocation, combines its rural traditions with a varied and excellent gastronomy, obtaining the title of Gastronomic Destination in 2012.

## ■ VIANA DO CASTELO

Viana do Castelo, together with Braga and Barcelos, makes up the *miñoto* triangle of the Route of the *Vinhos Verdes*, which includes a group of places inside the Region associated to the vineyard and the wine, organised in networks and correctly signed, among which it stands out the wines produced in *Tierras de Geraz de Lima y Chafé*, which, due to its singularity, is distinguished from the others.

*Solar de Merufe* was distinguished with the prize *Best of Wine Tourism*, since it had a varied offer that goes from the guided visits to the vineyards and wineries, to the tastings of their wines.

City oriented to the sea and to the sustainability. It has a beautiful promenade area, restored at the Limia riverside until its mouth. The Plaza de la República is the neuralgic centre of the Old Quarter, one of the most beautiful and preserved ones. The Manueline, Baroque, revival and *art deco* styles predominate here.

+info

[www.vinhoverde.pt](http://www.vinhoverde.pt)  
[www.cm-barcelos.pt](http://www.cm-barcelos.pt)  
[www.cm-braga.pt](http://www.cm-braga.pt)  
[www.guimaraesturismo.com](http://www.guimaraesturismo.com)  
[www.cm-viana-castelo.pt](http://www.cm-viana-castelo.pt)



*Barrels of Vinhos Verdes. Viana do Castelo.*

## C.O Vinho do Porto

### PESO DA RÉGUA, PORTO, VILA NOVA DE GAIA AND VILA REAL

The Certificate of Origin Vinho do Porto is the oldest one in the world, more than 300 years old. The Vinho do Porto is produced in the vineyards of the Wine-Producing Region of Alto Douro in Portugal, natural scenery that has been declared as World Heritage by the UNESCO (see page 76).

The vineyards are located in the hillsides of Douro river and its tributaries, making up a spectacular and colourful landscape that varies between different times of the year. In the last week of September and the first ones of August, the wine harvest and the typical works of the production in the wineries, represent the key moment in this region.

### PESO DA RÉGUA

Surrounded of green hills full of vineyards where it is cultivated the *Vinho do Porto*, peso da Régua is an important city of the *Douro*. The Marquis of Pombal transformed the city in the 17th century when he created the General Company of the Agriculture of the Vineyards of Alto Douro, in 1756 and, consequently, the Demarcated Region of the Duero.

The Route of the *Vinho do Porto* has a great amount of wineries in Régua and in its surroundings. The Museum of the Douro schedules a great annual exhibition to pay homage to big figures who had an outstanding role in moulding what is this region nowadays. Storehouses from several periods are preserved, as well as cooperatives and English firms, such as the building of the Casa del Duero and the Institute of the *Vinhos do Douro e Porto*.



Porto Wine Route. Peso da Régua.

Régua has a rich heritage in which it stands out the stately houses, the great country houses dedicated to the wine production and the small palaces. Many of these houses are open to the public and are worth a visit.

From the viewpoints of San Antonio or San Leonardo de Galafura one can obtain a beautiful panoramic view of the city of Régua, of the Douro River and of its vineyards. Another perspective of its beauty can be enjoyed sailing through the *Douro*.

## PORTO

Unique in the world, the Vinho do Porto is a wine produced in the Demarcated Region of the Douro, Cultural World Heritage, and matured in the wineries of Vila Nova de Gaia, where it was carried in the traditional vessels *Rabelos*, stars in the regatta that is carried out every year in the São João day. In 2011 it was declared Vintage year for the Vinho do Porto, the third vintage year of the 21st century.



“Essência do Vinho” Festival. Porto.

Its history can be discovered in a visit to the Insitute of the *Vinhos do Douro* and do Porto, to the Museum of the *Vinho do Porto*, the wineries, or going across the Urban Route of the Wine, touristic itinerary that runs through 15 monuments, among singular buildings, squares and streets, directly or indirectly related to the history of the *Vinho do Porto*. Annually, the Palace of the Stock Market houses the *Essência do Vinho*, where thousands of people take part in commented tastings, workshops and meetings with hundreds of producers.

Porto represents in the Network of Capitals of Large Vineyards the wine-producing regions of the *Vinhos do Porto* and *Douro* and of the *Vinho Verde*.

The see of the Commission of Viticulture of the Region of the Vinhos Verdes, created in 1929, is installed in the nineteenth-century small palace of Silva Monteiro and it is a member point of the Urban Route of the Wine.

Both winemaking regions cover a wide cultural, landscape and gastronomic patrimony providing singular and exclusive Eno-tourism programmes.

## VILA NOVA DE GAIA, WINERIES AREA

The commercial point in Vila Nova de Gaia, created since 1926, works as the prolongation of the producing area of the *Vinho do Porto*, which is stored and matured by law in the upper part of the riverside of the *Douro*. All the enterprises linked to the commerce of this wine are found in Gaia, where there are the wineries in which it is matured and bottled the wine, and which are a must-visit.

The wineries where it is stored the wine with Certificate of Origin of Porto are lined up along the riverside; they are open to the visitor and they offer guided visits. It can be done a combination with ship trips through the *Douro*, passing under the six bridges that connect Gaia with the nearby Porto. Another option is to walk by the riverside where there are docked the *rabelos*, one of the most typical images of the city. These are traditional wooden vessels that were originally built for the transport of wine barrels from the exploitations, until its storing.

The most outstanding construction of Gaia is the Monastery of the Serra do Pilar, founded in the 16th century. It is located in the upper part of a sheer hill that dominates a wide panoramic view of the Douro River. From its terrace one obtains, besides the excellent views to the Douro, the roofs of the Wineries of *Vinho do Porto* and the emblematic iron bridge of D. Luis I or the Eiffel bridge. The church and the cloister, with a circular floor, were declared National Monument.



*Rabelos on the riverside of the cellars of Gaia. Vila Nova de Gaia.*

## VILA REAL

Vila Real is located in the limit of the *Alto Douro Vinhateiro*. The southern part of the town is included in what is considered as one of the best wine-producing regions of the world.

Here, the hills are *penteadas* ("covered") with bards, where the production of the wine assumes a determining dimension in the life of its inhabitants, who all throughout the year work in the fields, terrace by terrace, until September or October, when it takes place the "festivity" of the wine harvest. The wine harvests represent the result of an entire productive process, and at this point the bustle of the vineyards workers is great, ending up, in the most traditional houses, with the *lagaradas* in the wineries. Here they have their origin the *Vinhos DOC, do Porto and de Mesa*, which can be white, red or rosé. It was in Vila Real where it had its origin one of the most famous ones, *Mateus Rosé*, whose name and label recalls the palace of the same name (see page 94).



Porto Wine. Vila Real.

Vila Real is rich in landscapes and natural environments. The travellers can go along the Natural Park do *Alvão* in the homonymous range (see page 121).

+info

[www.cm-pesoregua.pt](http://www.cm-pesoregua.pt)  
[www.visitporto.travel](http://www.visitporto.travel)  
[www.goiaglobal.pt](http://www.goiaglobal.pt)  
[www.cm-vilareal.pt](http://www.cm-vilareal.pt)

### CHAVES

The Certificate of Origin of Tras-os-Montes is produced in the demarcated mountainous region of Tras-os-Montes, which gives it its name, and located in the north-east of the country. The cultivation of the vine in the region harks back to the Roman period and it is known for its great quality.



The wine of Chaves is produced and commercialized through the Cooperative Wineries, one in Chaves and another one in *Oura*. From the historical past of the wine commercialization of Chaves it is preserved the *Adega do Faustino*, restored establishment with an attractive cover that works currently as a restaurant.

Chaves is a millenary city that had a great importance in the Iberian Peninsula during the Roman occupation. The evidence of its greatness can still be seen in some remains from its past, such as the military emplacements that recall the border past: the *Fort of São Francisco* and the *Fort of Neutel*.

In this city it is found one of the most important thermal centres in Portugal, *Las Caldas de Chaves*, being its waters considered as the hottest ones in Europe, for being raised at more than 70° C (see page 160).



# NATURE

The territory of the Euro-region Galicia and North of Portugal has natural spaces that are distinguish from others due to their authenticity and beauty. The Hispanic-Lusitanian beauty has a great diversity; mountains and profound valleys combine with the coast and, between them, an area of important examples of wood, flora and landscapes to go over, explore and take part in the collection of unforgettable images.

For the most adventurous ones, there is the possibility of carrying out sporting activities in direct touch with nature: paragliding, hiking, ascent, canoeing, *bungee jumping*, rafting, trips, kayak or mountain bike among others. Activities that offer a rest to the mind, physical exercise and an environment to be in contact with your companions.

*Explore and enjoy the nature and the adventure sport!*

## National Parks

This category of protection takes into account the exceptional richness of its flora and fauna, as well as the representation of its ecosystems, among other considerations.

There are two National Parks that are located in cities of the Eixo Atlántico.

*A paradise to discover!*

### **NATIONAL PARK OF THE ATLANTIC ISLANDS. VIGO, VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA Y RIVEIRA**

The National Maritime Terrestrial Park of the Atlantic Islands of Galicia, which covers from the *ría* of Arousa until the *ría* of Vigo, is made up by the archipelagos of Cíes, Cortegada, Sálvora and Ons and the maritime area that surrounds them. They were declared National park in 2002. But for Ons, the rest of the islands are located in cities of the Eixo Atlántico and declared as Places of Communitary Importance.



[www.iatlanticos.es](http://www.iatlanticos.es)

## CÍES ISLANDS. VIGO

The Natural Park of the Cíes Islands, currently included in the National Park of the Atlantic Islands, was created in 1980 and declared Area of Special protection of Fowl in 1989. It is one of the most beautiful places of the country, made up by three islands located in the mouth of the *ría* of Vigo: Norte or Monteagudo, Faro and San Martiño.



*Natural Park of the Cíes Islands. Vigo.*

The paradisiac islands are made of fine sand and their limpid waters have an incalculable value due to the biodiversity of their habitat. Among them it stands out the beach of Rosas, chosen by an English newspaper as the best beach in the world. The steep west coast of the islands has cliffs that can be over 100 metres high and plenty of caves originated by the marine erosion.

Its natural surrounding turns it into a perfect observatory of fauna and flora to hike, rest in the beach or anchor in the *ría* of Vigo and dive.

There are regular ship lines from Vigo and Baiona that work from the coast during the summer months and the Holy Week. In this natural landscape one can overnight in the camping and there is also the possibility of doing a guided touristic visit in Cíes from the interpretation centre that is found in the pier.

Thousands of visitors and campers visit these islands annually. The preservation of the park causes the establishment of access quotas to the island, so it is recommended to ask for a place in advance on its webpage.

+info

[www.campingislascies.com](http://www.campingislascies.com)  
[www.turismodevigo.org](http://www.turismodevigo.org)  
[www.iatlanticas.es](http://www.iatlanticas.es)

## CORTEGADA ISLAND. VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA

Located at the end of the *ría* of Arousa, and in touch with the mouth of Ulla River, the natural space of Cortegada has an area of almost 42 hectares, of which 39 correspond to the island and the rest to the islets of Malveiras, Briñas and Con.



It has a high ecological value for its amazing laurel wood, the largest one in the south of Europe, where there are recorded up to fourteen endemic species.

The Island was inhabited until the end of the 19th century. From this moment on, it turned into a summer *Pazo* of King Alfonso XIII and because of this it was considered as part of the Spanish Royal House. Nowadays Cortegada is part of the National Park of the Atlantic Islands. The most outstanding constructions there are the remains of the old pier and the old chapel of the 17th century.

By the sea one can arrive at the island following the shell-fishing Route of Bamio. The visits are restricted, either through the permission of the National Parks, or through the only enterprise authorized to carry out guided visits, [www.allcaravan.es](http://www.allcaravan.es).

Info

[www.vilagarcia.es](http://www.vilagarcia.es)

## SÁLVORA ISLAND. RIVEIRA

The Sálvora Island, located in the entrance to the *ría* of Arousa, is part of a small archipelago of islets that stands out for its extension; two kilometres of maximum width, direction north-south and an area of 190 Ha.

In 1770, the industrialist Jerónimo Hijosa, established the first salting industry of the *ría*. The island maintains a tiny abandoned village inside, in which lived around 60 people, being inhabited until 1972. Nowadays, it belongs to the parish of Aguiño (Riveira).

This small granite island presents two small hills, the Height de Milrey, 34 metres high, and As Gralleiras, 70 metres high. Its uneven orography contains caves, blocks and rocky cliffs, almost inaccessible, combined with areas of small sandy areas of thick sand such as the one of Area dos Bois and Del Castillo. The stretch that separates it from the land is a succession of islands and crags that make it very difficult for the navigation but extraordinary for the breeding of seafood and fish of commercial interest.



Its floral richness resides in the wide variety of seaweeds, some of interest for the pharmaceutical and cosmetics investigation. And above all, in the variety of species of culinary interest, which blanket the marine littoral ecosystem. The underwater fishing is forbidden in the surroundings of the island. However, for the lovers of other underwater activities, Sálvora is one of the best diving areas of the Galician coast. In the summer there are underwater photography championships organized by the Galician federation of Underwater Activities.

In the south of the island, located in its most protruding part, known as Punta Besugueiros, it is located the Lighthouse of Sálvora. This lighthouse, together with the remains of the former salting factory, the first one installed in Galicia, to which it was added, in 1960, two towers and battlements, today known as O Almcaén and the Monument to the Mermaid are the cultural referents of this natural space.

The island can be visited following the “Water Route”. On board an old sailing boat the islands are traversed.

## NATIONAL PARK OF PENEDA-GERÊS. BRAGA

The National Park of Peneda-Gerês was declared National Park in 1971. It is located in the north-west of the country and covers the provinces of *Minho* and *Trás-os-Montes*. Its sides seem to embrace the south-west of the province of *Ourense*, to the *Serra do Xurés*, with which it has more than 100 kilometres of common border, and actually it is configured as an only continuum, although with their peculiarities.

The mountain landscape surprises the travellers: each step is a place that invites to stop. There are several hiking routes that can be done and there are six camping areas.



Among the different archaeological sites it stands out the megalithic necropolis, in the *Serra do Castro Laboreiro, do Val da Coelheira e Chã de Cabanos*, in the *Serra Amarela*, as well as different remains from the Roman period. All of this is completed with important examples of medieval architecture.

+info

[www.cm-braga.pt](http://www.cm-braga.pt)

## Natural Parks

This figure of protection takes into account the beauty of its landscapes and the representation of its ecosystems. There are four Natural Parks in the cities of the Eixo Atlântico.

## NATURAL PARK OF CORRUBEDO. SANTA UXIA DE RIVEIRA

Declared Natural Park in 1992 and included in the Ramsar Agreement (Convention Related to the Wetlands of International Importance especially as Habitat of Aquatic Fowl) and unique in the Iberian Peninsula. It is made up

by almost 1000 hectares of a great dune landscape, paradisiacal beaches, fresh and salty lagoons, marshlands and a great diversity of vegetal species and fauna. The great population of fowl that inhabitates this place made that the park was included in the list of the Agreement about Wetlands of International Importance in 1993. Area of special protection for ZEPA-fowl. Place of communitarian importance- LIC "Wet Complex of Corrubedo", in the Natura Network 2000. Protected wetland in 2008 by which it is developed the legal system of protected wetlands and it is created the Inventory of wetlands of Galicia. Area of special protection of the natural values in 2004.



*Corrubedo dunes.*

There are five routes to discover the park: the Water Way, the Río do Mar Way, the Wind Way, the Beach Way and the A Gandarela Route, which allows discovering the traditional exploitation of the area, such as the windmills; popular constructions well preserved, the astonishing *Pedra da Ferreira* or de moving dune of the Ferreira, as well as the lagoons and marshlands of Carregal. Many of these routes run through pedestrian walkways to preserve the dunes and its particular and unique fauna and flora.

The moving dunes are the highest ones of the north of Spain, apart from being one of the best ones, and the only examples of coastal vegetation in Galicia. In its surroundings there are two lagoons, one of salty water (Carregal) and the other one of fresh water (*Vixán*) with wide flooded areas and wetlands of international importance in the crossing and nesting of fowl, something that confirms them as an Area of Special Protection of the Natural Values.

+info

[www.riveira.es](http://www.riveira.es)

## NATURAL PARK OF MONTESINHO. BRAGANÇA

Created in 1979, the Natural Park of Montesinho covers an area of more than 74000 hectares, making up an ensemble of ecosystems and humanized landscapes of National Interest.

The flora is very varied due to the geological and climatic diversity that characterizes this area, but it is on the ultra-basic rocks outcrops, due to the high toxicity degree, where it is found the greatest rarities, real *ex-libris* of the local

flora, of which are examples the *Anthylis sampaiana*, the *Festuca brigantina* and the *Avenula lusitanica*. In the whole area it is possible to observe bushes of *negral* oaks. Also holm oaks, chestnut woods, hollies and, in the fluvial areas, alder trees, ashes, black poplars, willows and hazelnuts.

Regarding fauna, one can observe a great diversity of nesting fowl, where it stands out the royal eagle or the black stork. Species such as the wolf, deer, roe deer, wild boar, otter or the water mole can also be seen.

The natural Park of Montesinho has a rich socio-cultural patrimony with quotidian practices from ancestral habits and customs. The festivities are an example of this, the ancient “Festas dos Rapazes” have a special value, carried out especially in the area of Lombada, at the end of December and beginnings of January, accompanied by the sound of the *fol* bagpipes and the bass drums.



Natural Park of Montesinho. Bragança.

The examples of popular architecture are outstanding, which learned how to adapt to the environment using the characteristic materials of the region. Architecturally, it stands out the complementary structures of the farming activities, especially, the dovecotes and the water mills.

The conjunction of natural and cultural values of this preserved area are made up by factors of interest to visit and enjoy.

+Info

[www.icnf.pt](http://www.icnf.pt)

## NATURAL PARK OF THE ALVÃO. VILA REAL

The Natural Park of the Alvão, created in 1983, is a preserved area located in the homonymous range, in the centre of the North Region. It makes up, together with the Gêres, marao and Cabreira ranges, a mountainous barrier that stands between the littoral and the *transmontanas* lands.

The park covers an area of around 7220 hectares and originates significant contrasts in the landscape: the upper part is characterised by wild mountains of granite rock in which there are created ravines and gorges, whereas the lower part is characterised by narrow and deep valleys. The Olo River crosses the park, making up a spectacular natural phenomenon: the *Fisgas de Erme-lo*, a waterfall with the greatest cascade of the Iberian Peninsula, with a slope of 200 metres. In Lamas d'Olo it is possible to observe the granite houses covered with thatch roofs, which recall an ancestral way of life of which there are still several remains.



Natural Park of Alvão. Vila Real.

For the most adventurous ones, the park has some routes of signalled hiking and about which one can find information in the Interpretation Centre in Vila Real.

+info

[www.icnf.pt/portal](http://www.icnf.pt/portal)  
[www.cm-vilareal.pt](http://www.cm-vilareal.pt)

## NATURAL LANDSCAPE OF ALBUFEIRA DO AZIBO. MACEDO DE CAVALEIROS

The Park of *Albufeira* ("Lagoon") *do Azibo* is a preserved area in Portugal in the heart of the *Trasmontano* North-East, delimited by the Bornas and Nugal ranges. The park landscape has a rich natural patrimony surrounded by calm meanders of the lagoon. The smooth slopes stand out, spread by oaks and cork oaks, and farming plots. The lagoon makes up the most important area of the whole *trasmontano* North-East at the aquatic fowl fauna level, standing out different species of fowl.

Among the large amount of activities that this natural space offers it stands out the fowl observation, the nature photography, the canoe tours or the pedestrian walks. There are also fluvial beaches, awarded with the Blue Flag.

In the Biodiversity station of St.ª Combinha there can be observed, apart from dragonflies, 43 species of daytime butterflies, of the 135 known in the Continental Portugal.



*Lagoon of Azibo. Macedo de Cavaleiros.*

+info

[www.cm-macedodecavaleiros.pt](http://www.cm-macedodecavaleiros.pt)  
[www.azibo.org](http://www.azibo.org)

## Hiking routes and equestrian tourism in the Eixo Atlântico cities

### BARCELOS

The singular landscape that the Minho traces has the epicentre of its beauty in Barcelos, provided by the union between the Cávado and the territory that its banks water.



*Neiva River. Barcelos.*

Fit among valleys and mountains, Barcelos has a great biodiversity of fauna and flora to discover through the most diverse sports and activities that allow to experience this land of sensations, colours and emotions, or simply to contemplate the beauty of the rural world and the nature in the fluvial beaches of the Neiva River, or in the banks of Cávado River.

It stands out the view that is offered from the hills of la *Franqueira*, Facho, Airó, S. Mamede and S. Gonçalo that allow to see all the Cávado valley, Neiva, Este, the *Minhotas* ranges, and leave at their foots the Coastal Shore and the Atlantic.

A world to discover through some of the many pedestrian routes that exist, which go all over the most recondite places in the territory, among them the program "Walk to discover Barcelos; in a mountain bike tour or in a Raid on a four-wheel, or simply to go over the pilgrimage route that cross the town towards Santiago de Compostela (see page 9).

It is also possible to practice the equestrian tourism, with two centres equipped with infrastructures for this. It is the equine centre *Irmão Pedro Coelho*, located in a wide green environment next to Cávado River, with playful, recreational, therapeutic and sporting activities. In the other side there is the equine centre of the *Quinta do Vau-Equivau*, equipped for the realisation of horse-riding and hurdle classes, as well as the hippo-therapy, the work of horses with mentally disables people. It is also equipped for the organisation of events and promenades related to the horse world.

Besides these infrastructures, there are others dedicated to the realisation of equestrian activities, such as the Equestrian and Recreational Association of Lijó or the *Quinta da Boavista*, in Moure or the *Quinta de Santa Comba*, in Varzea.

+info

[www.cm-barcelos.pt](http://www.cm-barcelos.pt)

## CHAVES-VERÍN EUROCITY

The Chaves-Verín Eurocity offers a wide variety of possibilities for nature tourism: mountain bike routes such as the well known Presunto Route, experience that combines sport and nature, absolutely consolidated in this territory.

There are hiking routes, such as the well known Pozo do Demo Route in Verín or the Borderline Route; without forgetting the ornithological tourism possibilities around the Támeiga, natural reference for many activities and link of the Eurocity. Catalogued as Place of Communitarian Interest and included in the Red Natura, it has important riverside woods in the area of Verín and aquatic vegetation formations, besides the alluvial plains and the seasonal lagoons on its banks; the preserved area covers all the course of the river in Galician territory until the Portuguese border.

In Chaves in the *Zona Ribeirinha*, the river is the dorsal spine of the city, which divides it into two quarters: the *Barrio do Castelo*, in the right bank, and the *Barrio da Magdalena*, in the opposite bank. On one side of the Jardim fo tabolado, in the right side, it is erected the spa building, next to it the *buvete* and the *Fonte do Pobo* a few metres away from the Roman bridge, with a trestle board, established on a pair of unequal arches. This place, with wooded and calm boulevards, protected from the city hubbub, is favourable to stroll.

A different way of discovering the Eurocity is through the small equestrian routes, with availability of horse-riding classes, hippo-therapy and other outdoors activity.



*Tâmega River. Eurocity Chaves-Verín.*

+info

[www.chaves.pt](http://www.chaves.pt)  
[www.verin.es](http://www.verin.es)  
[www.eurocidadechavesverin.eu](http://www.eurocidadechavesverin.eu)

## ■ GUIMARÃES. PEDESTRIAN TOURS

In Guimarães there are three pedestrian routes that explore, by different temas, the rural and mountain landscape. The route of *S.Torcato and his windmills* has a great historic-cultural patrimony where it can be felt the armony between the Earth, the Mankind and the River. The second route is the one of the *Citânia*, it is a territory that, besides the good natural conditions for the farming-herding activities, has excellent conditions of natural deffense

and for the development of the first ways of civilization. The third route, the *Penha* one, is a space where caves, crags, gorges, fountains and big trees are attractive for relieving trekking among vestiges of Christian devotion of the men who transform it.

+info

[www.guimaraesturismo.com](http://www.guimaraesturismo.com)



*Pedestrian Route. Guimarães.*

## LALÍN

Lalín has natural treasures such as the oakwoods of *Rodo* and of *Barcia*, being the latter the most singular one for counting on hundreds of oaks perfectly aligned in rows.



*Catasós Forest. Lalín.*

It also stands out for its beauty the *Fraga de Catasós*, declared Natural Monument, which has examples of oaks and chestnuts with the highest growing and bearing rate of Europe. Resources joined by natural spots such as the *Serra do Candán* or the Carrio Hill, from where one can see the natural boundaries of the Deza. There are also Places of Communitarian Importance (LIC in its Spanish initials) such as the mentioned *Serra do Candán* or the *Sobreirais do Arnego*.

The surrounding of the *Ponte dos Cabalos*, the one of *Pontevilariño*, the promenade of the riverside of Arnego river, in the location of *A Pena do Ladrón un Cadrón*, in the surroundings of the Pozo Negro, are also areas of environmental and landscape interest.

+info

[www.lalin.org](http://www.lalin.org)

## MIRANDELA

The Place of Communitarian Interest of Romeu, member of the Natura Network 2000, made up by an area of about 4768 hectares, of which near 76% are located in the east of Mirandela. In this territory it is possible to see a wide area of cork oaks (*Quercus suber*) and of woods of cork oaks and juniper (*Juniperus oxycedrus* var *lagunae*), in an excellent state of preservation. Regarding fauna, it is possible to find wolves (*Canis lúpus*), lontras (*Iutra Iutra*) and water-moles (*Galemys pyrenaicus*).



Range of Santa Comba. Mirandela.

The West sector of the Santa Comba Range is a residual relief of quartzite. In the summit of the Range, next to the cruise, there is the geodesic vertex called *Soalheiro*, 940 metres high, from where it can be contemplated an astonishing landscape.

The forest perimeter of the Range is made up by a group of Wild Pine (*Pinus pinaster*) that covers an area of at least 3110 hectares. One can also practice sport activities such as paragliding, hiking, mountain bike and climbing.

The Municipal Network of Pedestrian Routes offers three signalled and authorised routes, made up by the PR1 *Trilho do Tua*, the PR2 *Trilho de Vale de Lobo* and the PR3 *Trilho Entre Rios*.

Mirandela is, since more than a decade, the scenery of the National Championship, European Championship and World Cup of the *Jet Ski*. *Jet Ski* is a sport modality practised in the waters of Tua River.

+Info

[www.cm-mirandela.pt](http://www.cm-mirandela.pt)

## NARÓN. THE XUVIA MAGNOLIA

Narón opens to the sea through a wild coast, with high cliffs that end up in sandy areas of golden sand and of hard access. There is the possibility of doing up to nine hiking routes, among which there is the Xuvia River route, signalled by waterfalls (*fervenzas*) and old windmills.



*Magnolia of Xuvia. Narón.*

Located at the beginning of the esplanade where it gets started the Xuvia River route and also the English Way of St. James (see page 27), there is the Xuvia Magnolia, with more than six metres of trunk perimeter. Between 200 and 220 years old, it belonged to the Garden of the Royal Fabric of Flours of the 18th century and it is the biggest one of Galicia. It is included in the catalog of “*Árbores senlleiras de Galicia*” (“Unique trees of Galicia”).

+Info

[www.naronconcello.org](http://www.naronconcello.org)

## O BARCO DE VALDEORRAS. PINCHEIRA DE FERVENZA

The Pincheira de Fervenza is a natural settlement located a few kilometres far from O Barco de Valdeorras. The water falls hard in this cascade, known in Galician as *fervenza*, from almost thirty metres high, to a lake. Wooden handrails, tables and benches are attached in a wide space from where it can also be enjoyed an astonishing panoramic view of the Sil Valley. It is one

of the many natural cascades that exist in the area, but it may be one of the most amazing ones, and at the same time, easy to visit, due to the comfortable access and the proximity to O Barco.



There is also the possibility of doing six different tours in the city of O Barco de Valdeorras: the Monumental Route, the Sierro Route, the Camiño Real Route, the Penas Marías Route, the Serra de Eixe Route, the Panoramic Route and the Pincheira de Ferverza Route.

+info

[www.concellodobarco.org](http://www.concellodobarco.org)

## O CARBALLIÑO

In Carballiño the rest is combined with the tranquillity and the natural beauty. Going along the left riverside of Arenteiro River, its 32 hectares of woodland are extended along squares, avenues and ways from the Great Spa (see page 159) to the Fish Farm, and across from the river till the residential area.

Carballiño has a ways network that crosses the municipalities of O Carballiño, Ribadavia, Boborás and Leiro, members of the Touristic Community of *Terras do Avia*. It passes in its most part following the Arenteiro and Avia rivers, where singular landscapes are formed due to the canyons that both have excavated in the rocks as time went by. On its shores it is easy to find herons or even otters attracted by the abundance of trout.



*Mill of Lousas. O Carballiño.*

The abundant vegetation made up by oaks, chestnuts and pines hide, in many cases, what were former vineyards, many of them in recovery phase.

+info

[www.carballino.org](http://www.carballino.org)

## PONTEVEDRA

3 km far from Pontevedra there is the pazo and the Gardens of Lourizán. The pazo is full of history and counts on 54 hectares of garden, farm and wood. It has an important botanical garden, with exotic and autochthon species, where there are about 700 species from all the world. The Pazo de Lourizán, neuralgic centre of the period of the Restoration in Pontevedra can be visited by those who wish.



*Lérez River. Pontevedra.*

In the town there are some hiking routes, one of them in the parish of Pontesampaio. It is a 18km route that lets discover the ethnographic and cultural patrimony of Pontesampaio through a circular route that gets started in the historic bridge. Along this route there are up to 38 points of interest, among which it stands out the windmills and an aqueduct known as O Paredón.

From the city itself and without the need of moving, one can follow the fluvial route of the Lérez River, of 12 km there and back. The starting point is the Tirantes bridge. Another route that does not require a journey by car is the one that runs through the Alba marshlands, declared in 2012 Natural Space of Local Interest (ENIL).



[www.visit-pontevedra.com](http://www.visit-pontevedra.com)

## SARRIA. FOZ DAS ACEAS

Sarria has a wide network of rivers and brooks. The main river, which gives its name to the town, is Sarria River which, at its passage, gives place to picturesque landscapes with a lot of vegetation and singular beauty.

The Aceas Route is a recovered and prepared hiking circuit with about 6 km of circular tour, in both riversides of Sarria River. It allows the nature lovers to enjoy the beautiful landscapes of the riverside and also to discover a rich ethnographic and natural patrimony.



*Aceas Route. Sarria.*

There is in all the route a large number of autochtone species bot of flore and fauna. There are also important the watermills and a natural waterfall in the left side.



[www.sarriaturismo.com](http://www.sarriaturismo.com)

## VIANA DO CASTELO, PEDESTRIAL RESOURCES

In Viana do Castelo there is a Municipal Network of Pedestrian Resources, which explore the rural, mountain and coastal landscape. The tours on foot are the best way of discovering the territory and enjoying the environment, through shortcuts and tradiitional paths, places of great cultural and natural interest, being true products of active tourism. Doing these tours in the town

of Viana do Castelo, you will find, for sure, one of the most beautiful sceneries that nature produced and that men knew, fortunately, how to preserve. You will always find people, known by their friendliness and generosity, who will indicate you the correct way to arrive at a water mill, a waterfall or a chapel.



Mill in S. Lourenço Montaria.

+info

[www.cm-viana-castelo.pt](http://www.cm-viana-castelo.pt)

## VIGO

The city has suggestive tours around its surroundings. It stands out the panoramic path GR53, authorized by the Galician Federation of Mountaineering. It is an accessible tour and full of contrasts: green farming lands, eleven forest parks, the only zoological in Galicia, the university city with its vanguards architecture. One can visit the archaeological remains of castros or the traditional constructions (see page 88) that use the water force or the eremites, with its magic and spirituality and always with the captivating landscape of the *ría* of Vigo as background.



+info

[www.turismodevigo.org](http://www.turismodevigo.org)

## VILA NOVA DE GAIA

Apart from having around 14 km of coast with different routes that connect the city with the inside of the town, Gaia has a Parks Network in which it stands out he Biological Park.

The Biological Park is a centre of environmental education and natural reserve in the urban surroundings, with an area of 35 hectares, open to the public since 1983. In this great natural reserve coexist the flora, fauna, habitat, geology and the patrimony. Its discovering is a sensorial pleasure and an exciting learning.

The woods, rivers, lands with rural houses, raised granaries and the Febros River that crosses it and propels the mills, animals, plants and trees, are the images that remain forever in the retina of whoever goes along its almost three kilometres through the offered itinerary. The Biological Park has also a recuperation centre of animals that are found wounded or in captivity.



*Natural Reserve of the "Douro Estuary".*

To its many natural attractions this rich area adds many services, since it has accommodation, camping vehicles parking, auditorium, formation classrooms, library and other options of break, leisure and learning.



# WATER TOURISM

Evolutionarily, all the existing species had a common ancestor in the ocean. Many of the ecosystems that we know and others that we have never seen, are developed in the water, establishing complex and fragile relationships.

Humans, besides its biological necessity, have established a relationship with water that goes beyond its mere consumption. The water as a leisure source is present in humans and that is why we have developed ways to use it: sports or playful activities and other of medicinal character, as a well-being source.

Galicia and the North of Portugal have a strong offer related to the water. From its playful side of beaches in the sea, until the one related to health with a wide variety of spa offers.



*Azurara Beach. Vila do Conde.*

## Beach on the art of navigation

### BEACH

The Euroregion of Galicia and the North of Portugal offers a paradisiacal space, with a coast bathed either by the Atlantic Ocean or by the Cantabrian Sea. Along all its extension we can find beaches and coves of fine sand, rías, marshlands, lagoons, lighthouses and cliffs.

This territory offers the traveller from kilometres of beach totally equipped, until wild and lonely places that hide corners of great beauty. Spots that let the time to relax and enjoy the landscape and urban environments richness. The euronregion is lavish in beautiful rivers that cover from the mouth of Eo river until the *Douro*, World Heritage (see page 49).



*Riazor Beach. A Coruña. Author: Wifre Meléndrez.*

## BLUE FLAG

The Blue Flag is an award and a certification of quality system created and managed at European level by the FEE (Foundation for the Environmental Education) for the preservation of the sea, rivers, harbours and natural environments that is awarded since 1982. Among the 34 cities of the Eixo Atlántico fluttered 46 blue flags on their beaches in 2013.

But the enjoyment of the beaches should reach everyone so an increasing number of beaches in the euronregion is accessible for people with limited mobility and thus, they have accesses, ramps, adapted bathrooms and all the necessary for a correct enjoyment.

*Beaches with quality signature!*

BEACHES THAT HAVE BEEN AWARDED  
WITH THE BLUE FLAG 2013

GALICIA (21)

A CORUÑA

*Lapas · San Amaro · Orzan Matadero · Oza · Riazor*

CARBALLO

*Sainas · Pedra do Sal · Razo*

FERROL

*Doniños · San Xurxo*

RIVEIRA

*Coroso · Vilar*

VIGO

*A Punta · Canido · Figueiras · Fontaiña · Fortiñon  
O Tombo do Gato · O Vao · Rodas (Islas Cíes)*

VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA

*Campanario*

PORTUGAL (46)

MACEDO DE CAVALEIROS

*Fluvial beach*

ALBUFEIRA DO AZIBO

*Ribeira · Fraga da Pegada*

MATOSINHOS

*Agudela · Aterro · Cabo do Mundo · Funtão  
Fuzelhas · Leça da Palmeira · Marreco · Memória  
Pedras do Corgo · Quebrada · Senhora Boa Nova*

PORTO

*Foz · Gondarém · Homem do Leme*

VIANA DO CASTELO

*Afife · Amorosa · Arda · Cabedelo  
Carreço · Castelo de Neiva · Norte · Paçô*

VILA DO CONDE

*Frente Urbano Norte · Frente Urbana Sul  
Labruge · Mindelo · Vila Chã*

VILA NOVA DE GAIA

*Aguda · Canida Norte · Canide Sul · Dunas Mar  
Francelos · Francemar · Granja · Lavadores  
Madalena Norte · Madalena Sul · Mar e Sol  
Marbelo · Miramar · Salgueiros · Sãozinha  
Senhor da Pedra · Valadares Norte · Valadares Sul*

A trip to enjoy the Galician and North of Portugal coastal region with a wide variety of beaches spread through all its extension.

## FERROL

Ferrol's coast is part of the Artabra Coast, natural space preserved as Place of Communitarian Importance (L.I.C. in Spanish initials). There are plenty of long beaches of fine white sand, some with a half-moon shape and unspoilt vegetation. It stands out the beach of Doniños, Santa Comba, Es-melle and Ponzos. On windy days, its waters are perfect to practise aquatic sports such as surf, windsurf and body board.



*San Jorge Beach. Ferrol.*

The *Surfusión* championship, carried out in Doniños beach, deserves a special mention. It is an international competition of body board that situates the region in the world surfing elite.

The beaches of the *ría* are characterised for being smaller and calmer, located near the population hubs. It is the case of the beaches of Cariño, San Felipe, A Graña and Caranza.

From the viewpoint of Chamorro or the Monte Ventoso one can obtain a panoramic view of the city of Ferrol and its entire *ría*.

+Info

[www.visitferrol.com](http://www.visitferrol.com)

## NARÓN

Narón surround the valley made up by the mouth of *Xubia* River. It has three beautiful and wild beaches, separated by steep cliffs that make the descent difficult. The longest one is *Hortiña*, which reaches more than 600 metres. The others are Casal and Lopesa, the latter is found next to Pena Lopesa, with which it merges in a small island. These two beaches are located in a rural, unspoilt and isolated setting. Windy and with a great swell, they are a great nature work, perfect for the most adventurous ones.

It has a promenade next to the sea, in the right riverside of the *Xubia*, with a bridge that connects the riversides of *Narón* and *Neda*, perfect to stroll and get surrounded by the natural setting.



*View of the coast of Narón.*

+info

[www.turnaron.es](http://www.turnaron.es)

## A CORUÑA

The city has several beaches, two of them, *Riazor* and *Orza*, are located in the centre itself and are the largest and most crowded ones. On the other hand, the calmest ones are *Lapas*, *San Amaro* and the *Matadero* one; this one is called like that because there was one slaughterhouse (“*matadero*” in Spanish) in the vicinity.

A *Coruña* has a long promenade by the sea that allows going all over the city, going along its perimeter and offering a landscape, on the one side the wild sea and on the other, the city. All along the promenade there are places of great interest such as: the *Casa del Hombre (Domus)*, interactive museum of the human being; the *Casa de los Peces*, a marine fauna aquarium and the *Tower of Hércules*, the oldest lighthouse in the world and declared as World Heritage (see page 47).



*Lapas Beach. A Coruña. Author: Wifre Meléndrez.*

The old quarter allows reviving, through its streets, the history of the city. A Coruña also offers several museums and an active nightlife. In the summer it is celebrated the night of San Juan, on 23rd June, declared of National Touristic Interest.

+info

[www.turismocoruna.com](http://www.turismocoruna.com)

## CARBALLO

Located in the north of the *Costa da Morte*, the golden sandy areas of *Razo* or *Baldaio* made up one of the main touristic attractions of Carballo. Thousands of people come here to enjoy the landscape, the sea or simply to contemplate the sunset from an extraordinary environment. Those who prefer loneliness and silence have a wide dune system to discover.



*Horseback riding on the beach. Carballo.*

The Natural Space of *Razo-Baldaio* has different ecosystems: the beach, the dune, the bulrush, the lagoon and the marshland.

It also offers several options for leisure time, complemented with the celebration of sporting, cultural or musical activities.

+info

[www.turismocarballo.com](http://www.turismocarballo.com)

## RIVEIRA

Acting as the link of the *ría* of Muros-Noia and the Arousa one, there is Santa Uxía de Riveira, declared Municipality of Touristic Interest. Its beaches are open all along its 25 kilometres of coast, with important beaches such as Coroso, Touro, Castiñeiras, Vilar and Aguiño.

It has a natural space of great beauty and one of the most significant locations of the Galician natural heritage, the Natural Park of the dune complex of Corrubedo and the lagoons of Carregal and Vixán (see page 119).

The archaeological patrimony is abundant in this town. It deserves to be mentioned the *Festa da Dorna*, declared of Galician Touristic Interest, which is celebrated at the end of July.

+info

[www.riveira.es](http://www.riveira.es)

## VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA

Among its beaches it stands out the Concha and Compostela, which make up almost a single sandy area that is extended along great part of the Vilagarcía littoral and which connects the city with its *ría*. It is complemented with a promenade more than two kilometres long that goes all over the beaches in parallel, and is linked with the adjacent town of Carril.

It is a littoral full of public parks and gardens such as the Compostela, the Centenario or the O Castriño one. In the horizon there can be observed one of the most repeated images in the city, the silhouettes of the shellfish gatherers while fishing.

+info

[www.vilagarcia.es](http://www.vilagarcia.es)

## VIGO

Located in the southern riverside of the *ría* after which it is called, it is a cosmopolitan city linked to the sea. The *ría*, together with the Natural Park of the Cíes Islands (see page 115), is the most enhanced one of its treasures and the main symbol of the city.



Rodas Beach in the Cíes Islands. Vigo.

Its surrounding is full of beaches and coves, among which it stands out: Samil, one of the most known and crowded of the city; its promenade is extended along the littoral edge and it is absolutely equipped; O Vao, limited by the Toralla Island and also by several coves that precede the sandy area of Samil and contains dunes on a recovering process; and the Rodas beach, located in the National Park of the Atlantic Islands and described as the best beach in the world by a famous English newspaper.

Vigo is an exceptional place to go shopping. Its commercial streets par excellence are Gran Vía, Urzáiz and Príncipe, without forgetting the shopping centres located in different parts of the city. The most typical gastronomic and craftsmanship products are in the Mercado de la Piedra, in the old quarter. It also presents a great variety of options for night leisure.

+info

[www.turismodevigo.org](http://www.turismodevigo.org)

## VIANA DO CASTELO

Profiting from the excellent natural conditions that the mouth of Lima River and the Atlantic coast offer, Viana do Castelo counts on 24 kilometres of littoral coast and a recognised patrimonial, natural and landscape value of its beaches.



*Kite Surf in Viana do Castelo.*

These present excellent conditions for the practice of activities such as surf, windsurf, kite surf or body board. It is one of the permanent bases for professionals of these activities, both national and foreign. Because of this, the

city has a wide commercial offer linked to surf and its different varieties. On the other hand, the Lima river offers the practice of other sports such as aquatic ski, sailing, rowing, kayaking, fishing or simply the possibility of going all over it by boat, starting from the Marina.

+info

[www.cm-viana-castelo.pt](http://www.cm-viana-castelo.pt)

## VILA DO CONDE

Some of the most enhanced sandy areas of the north of Portugal are located in the town of Vila do Conde. These are beaches of fine white sand that extends all along the town for 18 kilometres and as a curiosity, in the centre of the city. It is worth visiting and enjoying the beaches of As Caxinas, Azul and Banhos.



*View of the beaches of Vila do Conde.*

+info

[www.cm-viladoconde.pt](http://www.cm-viladoconde.pt)

## MATOSINHOS

The coast is made up mainly by beaches, interrupted by the enlargement of rocky areas by the sea, the famous *Leixões* stood out as a rocky outcrop that made up a natural port, origin of the piers of the harbour with the same name.

The beautiful beaches that draw the coast of Matosinhos get full of people. Prepared with an area of modern urbanisations and terraces to enjoy a sunny day.



*View of the beaches of Matosinhos.*

There are preserved dunes, the Dune Park of *Praia da Memora*, accompanied by works by the architect Siza Vieira (via of *Leça da Palmeira*) and the architect Souto Moura (via of Matosinhos) inside the Polis Programme.

In winter above all, these beaches are chosen by surf, body board, sailing, windsurf and kitesurf lovers. It stands out the beaches *Leça da Palmeira* and *Aterro* by its ideal conditions for the practice of these sports.

+info

[www.cm-matosinhos.pt](http://www.cm-matosinhos.pt)

## PORTO

The Atlantic offers a coast with eight beaches of blue flag, rich in iodine. Attractive terraces invite to rest and wide promenades and gardens provide pleasant strolls.

+info

[www.cm-porto.pt](http://www.cm-porto.pt)



*"Esplanada" Beach. Porto.*

## VILA NOVA DE GAIA

It is the city that has more blue flags in Portugal. It has a promenade by the coast which runs along the 18 kilometers of beach, what allows discovering the cultural richness of its sandy areas and the Chapel of Senhor da Pedra, or the Aguda Dunes Park, located next to the Aguda beach, one of the most visited ones of Gaia.



*Miramar Beach. Vila Nova de Gaia. Author: Gaspar de Jesus.*

+info

[www.cm-gaia.pt](http://www.cm-gaia.pt)

## NÁUTICA

The Euro-region has a great variety of marinas and nautical clubs both in the coast, lakes and reservoirs, well equipped where one can moor his own vessel or rent one and enjoy the navigation pleasure. The traveller has, moreover, a large number of establishments specialised in the selling, renting, repairing or maintaining of vessels and complements for navigation.

The Iberian and littoral oceanography, together with the interior areas which the cities of the Eixo Atlântico enjoy present excellent conditions for the practice of sports, combined with an astonishing scenery of landscapes of amazing contrasts among which activities such as rowing, kayaking, canoeing, sailing, catamaran, sport fishing, windsurf and surf are enhanced, as well as underwater activities, such as diving.



Regatta in Viana do Castelo.

*You just have to get into adventure!*

**PORTS WITH NAVIGATION FACILITIES  
IN THE EIXO ATLÁNTICO CITIES**

**COASTAL**

**A CORUÑA**

Club Náutico de Oza	Dársena Deportiva de A Coruña
Marina Coruña (Blue Flag 2013)	Marina Davila Sport
Marina Punta Lagoa	Nauta Coruña
Real Club Náutico de A Coruña (Blue Flag 2013)	Porto de San Pedro de Visma
Porto do Testal	

**FERROL**

Club do Mar de Ferrol	Porto de Ferrol
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**PONTEVEDRA**

Club Naval de Pontevedra	Porto das Corbaceiras
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**PORTO**

Marina Porto Atlántico Leixões	Marina do Freixo
Marina da Póvoa	

**RIVEIRA**

Club Náutico Deportivo de Riveira	Porto de Aguiño
Porto de Palmeira	Porto de Santa Uxía de Riveira

**VIANA DO CASTELO**

Marina Viana do Castelo
-------------------------

VIGO	
Marina Davila Sport (Blue Flag 2013)	Real Club Náutico de Vigo
Liceo Marítimo de Bouzas	
VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA	
Marina Vilagarcía	Porto de Carril
VILA DO CONDE	
Porto de Recreo de Vila do Conde	
VILANOVA DE GAIA	
Douro Marina	
FLUVIAL	
MACEDO DE CAVALEIROS	
Albufeira do Azibo: Ribeira, Fraga da Pegada.	



### Plenty of activities and sports

All the maritime cities of the Eixo Atlantico and many from the inside have facilities and infrastructures for the practice of most of sports and navigation activities.

### Navigation routes

The eurorregion has excellent conditions to go into the “great blue sea”. The sea and its *rías*, from a vessel, gain the relevance they deserve, from where one can perceive the fraternal relation that exists between the sea and its littoral.

The landscape of its coasts contrasts with the calmness of its *rías*. Each *ría* has its peculiarity. A vision from here allows discovering the charming of its cities. It is for that, that the coastal Eixo Atlantico cities offer a nautical voyage taking as starting point the riverside of Douro river, until *Costa da Morte*.

Departing from the right riverside of Douro river, in its mouth with the Atlantic it is found Porto. It had since its origins a strong nautical vocation that has been kept until the present. Its Atlantic characteristics are favourable for the practice of nautical sports. The Douro river is as well the scenery of large national and international events, such as the Cutty Sark, the most competed stretch of the Extreme Sailing Series, already in its second edition, and the traditional regatta of *rabelos* vessels of the Festivities of São João, whose exponent are the fireworks over the river in the night of 23rd June.



*Marina of Freixo. Porto.*

From the piers of Estiva, Ribeira and Guindais and the Feixo Navy depart cruises, hotel-ships, vessel-ships, ecological ships, semi-rigid ones and yachts, to discover the singular landscape of the *Douro Vinhateiro*, Cultural World Heritage (see page 49), birthplace of the famous Porto wine.

The forts are part of the urban landscape of Porto, with special mention of the *S. Francisco Xavier* one and the one of *S. João da Foz*.

Porto is also known for its architectural constructions of different styles (see page 80) and periods, for what it is worth mooring the ship to go all over the city.

## VILA NOVA DE GAIA

Crossing Douro River through one of the bridges that connect the two riversides, the adjacent town is Vila Nova de Gaia. The link between both cities is very clear, fruit of the common patrimony of the Vinho do Porto, very present in the riverside area, full of wineries, accessible to the public.



*Marina of Douro. Vila Nova de Gaia.*

From Douro Marina one obtains an acclaimed view over Porto and from where one can enjoy different fowl species that cross the Natural Reserve of the Douro Estuary and which serves as ornithological refuge for them.

+info

[www.cm-gaia.pt](http://www.cm-gaia.pt)

## MATOSINHOS

Following the route by the sea, it is found the city of Matosinhos. Originally, it was an old fishing village from where salt was extracted, located in the mouth of Leça River.

An excellent destination with almost 11.5 kilometres of coast for those who look for leisure in beaches and parks. The monumentality of the city has its best example in the sanctuary of the *Senhor Bom Jesus*, although one should not forget visiting the patrimony of Leça da Palmeira.

+info

[es.cm-matosinhos.pt](http://es.cm-matosinhos.pt)

## VILA DO CONDE

Located in the mouth of Ave River, Vila do Conde is one of the oldest cities of the north of Portugal. It has a rich and varied landscape with a coast bathed by 18 km of beaches and a rural area of fields and pine woods, being visible remains such as the *Castro* of S.Paio or the Citania de Bagunte.

The ancestral origins of this coastal city are located in the *Castro* of S. João Baptista, the place where D. Afonso Sanches and D. Teresa Martins, in 1318, founded the Monastery and Church of Santa Clara, Portuguese National Monument, and from where one can enjoy the most spectacular views of the city.

It has a maritime promenade that frames the littoral roads and it is bordered by green and well-maintained gardens.



*Marina. Vila do Conde.*

At the architectural level, Vila do Conde has a wide offer of monuments to visit: the Capela do Socorro, the Matriz Church, the Fort of S. João Baptista, the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Guia, the family seats, the aqueduct or the already mentioned Monastery of Santa Clara.

In the summertime there are important events such as the International Festival of Short Films, the National Craftsmanship Fair, the Gastronomy fair, the Fair of Agricultural Activities and the Festivities in honour of San Juan, patron saint of Vila do Conde.

+info

[www.cm-viladoconde.pt](http://www.cm-viladoconde.pt)

## VIANA DO CASTELO

The most picturesque stretch covers the tour between Viana do Castelo and Valença do Minho, where one can see the amazing landscapes of the Miño Valley and the Atlantic littoral.

Viana do Castelo is a city bathed by the Atlantic ocean and surrounded by mountains that is located in the right riverside of the Lima river. Maritime village that was among the main national ports during the 15th and 17th centuries.

The *castro* of Santa Lucía, located in the summit of the hill with the same name, is worthy of admiration. It was erected during the beginnings of the Iron Age, obtaining its peak during the Romanization period. Its strategic location was essential for the control of the city and it is there where is located the majestic Basilica of Santa Lucía, one of the Portuguese symbols.

It is recommended to stroll along its old quarter where one observed the evolution of the different architectural styles through the large number of existing buildings.



*Marina of Viana do Castelo. Author: Joel Arezes.*

The *Agonia* field is the central scenery of the great *romería* of *Nossa Senhora da Agonia*, considered as one of the largest and oldest one of Portugal (see page 43).

+info

[cm-viana-castelo.pt](http://cm-viana-castelo.pt)

## RÍAS BAIXAS

The journey continues ploughing through Galician waters. The *Rías Baixas* ("Low *Rías*") are four and cover the southern part of the Galician coast. They combine stretches of cliffs with wide sandy areas. The less urbanized one is *Muros y Noia*; the *Arousa ría* is the largest one; the *Pontevedra* one has many beaches of fine sand, whereas the deepest and most southern one is the *Vigo* one.

## VIGO

The *ría* of Vigo surrounds, with its characteristic landscape, spread with *bateas* for mussels farming and isolated by the Cíes Islands, one of the main cities of the euronregion.

Vigo is the largest city of Galicia and its origin is linked to the sea. Its port is the most important one of the world in fish unload, what can be perceived in the old quarter, specially in the quarter of *O Berbés*, where there are plenty of establishments where one can taste dishes based on fish and seafood, being the oysters street the most popular one among the tourists.

From the ship it is easy to see the large number of sandy areas of Vigo and also the Cíes Islands. These protect the *ría* from the wind and are a small replica of paradise. They are part of the National Park of the Atlantic Islands, so to accede it is recommended to enter its webpage, since there is a daily limited capacity for visitors (see page 116). Another good option to sail is to use the regular line of ships that depart from the Estación Marítima de Ría to the fishing villages of Cangas and Moaña. From the viewpoints of *O Castro* and *A Guía* one obtains a privileged view of the *ría* and the city.

+info

[www.turismodevigo.org](http://www.turismodevigo.org)

## PONTEVEDRA

The *ría* of Pontevedra exceeds twenty kilometres. It starts in the mouth of Lerez River and arrives at the Atlantic, where the Ons Islands and Onceta stand. This coast has plenty of beaches.

In Pontevedra one can moor in its urban and fluvial port to discover the city. It had important shipyards in the Middle Age where vessels were constructed, such as the vessel *Santa María*, used by Columbus. In the town there are two fluvial beaches, one at the riverside or Lerez river, and the other one in the Verdugo river, specifically in the parish of Pontesampaio.

It is the second pilgrimage hub of Galicia after Santiago de Compostela. The amazing old quarter, declared Historic-Artistic Ensemble, has the splendour of the medieval period. The convent of San Francisco, the Basilica of Santa María la Mayor, the church of San Francisco, the ruins of Santo Domingo, the church of San Francisco, the sanctuary of the Apariciones or the Provincial Museum of Pontevedra are worth a visit.

+info

[www.visit-pontevedra.com](http://www.visit-pontevedra.com)

## VILAGARCÍA DE AROUSA

The *ría* of Arousa is the largest one of Galicia, located between the *ría* of Muros y Noia and the one of Pontevedra.

Entering by the south of the *ría* it is found Vilagarcía. Its port is of General Interest for the State since 1888 and nowadays, one of the basis of its economy. The *Ría* of Arousa offers excellent conditions for sailing. We can see in it the Cortegada island which has a high ecologic value, besides an amazing laurel wood and is part of the National Park of the Atlantic Islands of Galicia (see page 115).

In Vilagarcía one can take two routes, with which the traveller can discover for himself and at beach level, what the shellfishing consists of. The villages of Vilagarcía de Arousa and Carril are connected by a promenade, almost two kilometres long, very nice to go over.

The patron saint's festivities, declared of National Touristic Interest, are celebrated during 10 days around 16th August, festivity of San Roque.

+Info

[www.vilagarcia.es](http://www.vilagarcia.es)

## RIVEIRA

Continuing by the south of the *ría* of Arousa, there is Riveira. The port is the heart of the city. It is considered as the most important one of Spain in coastal fishing and one of the most important ones at European level.

It shelters a valuable natural patrimony. The Natural Park of the dunar complex of Corrubedo, one of the most visited ones of Galicia, has a large beach and two lagoons where valuable autochthonous species dwell. Near Corrubedo, there is one of the most important megalithic monuments of Galicia: the dolmen of Axeitos, dated back from around 4000 a.C and declared Property of Cultural Interest.

It should be mentioned the *Festa da Dorna*, declared of National Touristic Interest, which is celebrated at the end of July.

+Info

[www.riveira.es](http://www.riveira.es)

## CARBALLO

Leaving the *Rías Baixas* behind, there rises the *Costa da Morte*, whose name refers to the amount of sinking that happened there. It is, due to its geographical and historical importance, a must-visit for those who visit Galicia; a littoral of incomparable beauty and full of legends and mystery. The beaches and sandy areas are abundant and stand out for their long extension and their fine sand.

Carballo is the entrance door to the *Costa da Morte*. It stands out the natural space of *Razo-Baldaio*, which, together with the dunes, makes up a unique ecosystem, due to its ecologic and landscape importance.

In the city old quarter, there is an area destined to the Spa of Carballo, an option to recover strength and rest in an incomparable setting (see page 164).

+info

[www.carballo.org](http://www.carballo.org)

## A CORUÑA

The next destination in the sailing journey is the city of A Coruña. The fishing harbour offers a commercial entrance between America and Europe. It has a great importance in the fresh fish disembarkation and it has the most important crude traffic of the north of Spain.

One the ship is tied up, one can enjoy a city, always linked to the sea. The castle of San Antón, current archaeological museum, was created in the 15th century to protect the harbour. The Tower of Hércules, the symbol of the city, is the oldest lighthouse in the world that is still working (see page 47). The Marina galleries are arcades that the sailors formerly used for salting and fish selling.

In the tour through the old quarter one can enjoy plenty of monuments and museums. In the city centre it is found the María Pita Square, an extension of more than 10000 squared metres surrounded by arcaded buildings, among which it is found the modernist town hall.

+info

[www.coruna.es](http://www.coruna.es)

## FERROL

The last stretch of the itinerary arrives to the spectacular entrance to the *ría* of Ferrol. A port of easy access, where it can be perceived the military character and the importance of the shipyards in the city. From the cove there can be seen the castles that escort the city; in the north, the one of San Felipe and in the south, the one of Palma.

The Route of Naval Construction is a true alive museum about the history of shipbuilding up to our days, which includes visits to strategic points of the city (see page 56). The traveller can go to the Naval Museum, the largest museum of Europe dedicated to shipbuilding.

It is recommended to visit the old quarter of the city, with the Quarter of the Magdalena where there is also the Church of San Francisco of the 18th

century. The quarter of the Magdalena, Historical-Artistic Ensemble, is a perfect rectangle with the shape of a chocolate bar and on its sides there are two large squares: the Amboage square and the Armas square stand out for their streets with the shape of and their galleries houses.

+info

[www.visitferrol.com](http://www.visitferrol.com)  
[www.larutadelaconstruccionnavales](http://www.larutadelaconstruccionnavales)

## NARÓN

Adjacent to the Ferrol, Narón is part of the community of the *ría* and the Ferrol region. The territory invites to go over the Xubia Route, 9 kilometres long, going along the riverside. It keeps beautiful spots such as the Monastery of S. Martiño in O Couto and the *Muiño de Xuvia*.



*Atlantic Coast from the Viewpoint of the Lagoa in Narón.*

+info

[www.naronconcello.org](http://www.naronconcello.org)

## FURTHERMORE...

The Galician coast is a place of frequent maritime accidents, so it is full of lighthouses that help ships on their journeys. They deserve a mention, lighthouses such as: Estaca de Bares, the most northern point of Spain; the lighthouse of Cabo Ortegal. Very near there is the viewpoint of *Vixía Herbeira*, from where one can admire the highest cliffs of Europe; the lighthouse of Cabo priorriño and the lighthouse of Cabo Prior, among others.

# Spa Tourism

Carballo  
Old Baths

Lugo  
Augusto Baths

O Carballiño  
Great Spa

Ourense  
Thermal Capital

Verín  
Chaves  
Chaves-Verín  
Water Eurocity

Guimarães  
Caldas das Taipas

Penafiel  
Entre-os-Rios Spas

Peso da Régua  
Caldas de Moledo

# SPA TOURISM

This option does a tour by hydrotherapy and the Spanish-Portuguese mineral-medical waters. Galicia and the north of Portugal make up the richest European region in thermal resources, being a referent, both for the variety of its products and services all along its geography, and for their quality. Most of the spas and baths are part of unique landscape settings.

Apart from being a prestigious referent, in this territory one finds the most mineralized waters and the hottest ones of the Peninsula where one can choose between a leisure enjoyment or a therapeutic version of hydrotherapy.

## Miño River Route

The Miño River draws a landscape of leafy riversides where fluvial and thermal waters coexist in a natural privileged setting. The course of the river and its tributaries takes us to the cities of Lugo, Ourense and Carballiño.

### LUGO, THE AUGUSTO BATHS

In the left riverside of Miño river and near the bridge, which was formerly the main communication link of the city with the South of Galicia and through it passed the XIX via of the Antonio itinerary, are erected the antique Roman Baths, built at the beginning of the 1st century AD. Declared as Properties of Cultural Interest, they were also distinguished as Historical. Artistic Monument of National character in 1931.

The notable preserved remains are found in the ground floor of the current spa. A place for leisure, hygiene and clinic for different illnesses, thanks to the rich medicinal aquifer springs. The water, that reaches temperatures of 43.8°C, have sulphide-sodium bicarbonate attributes, which the current spa uses, recommended to heal rheumatic illnesses, gout and colds.

Nowadays, the preserved ruins can be divided into two centres. In the first area, and the most amazing part of the Roman facilities, the *Apodycterium* or locker rooms area, made up by two adjacent rooms with a common hall of slate rough ashlar. The second room, of small size, with a longitudinal barrel vault and mortar walls, could be the *Caldarium* of hot baths, which was turned lately into a Christian chapel.

However, what has just been described is just a small part of the ensemble that surpassed by far the current spa dimensions. The archaeological digging discovered new rooms which would correspond to spaces such as the gym (*palestra*) or a large pool (*opus caementicium*).

For the traveller who enjoys nature, a few metres far from the Roman Baths starts the hiking route Miño Abierto ("Open Miño"), downstream, that runs through the Reserve of the *Terras do Miño* Biosphere.

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[www.balneariodelugo.com](http://www.balneariodelugo.com)  
[www.lugoturismo.com](http://www.lugoturismo.com)

## ■ OURENSE THERMAL CAPITAL

Ourense has been since its origins famous for its hot waters, very valued by the Romans who settled in this valley almost two thousands years ago. Nowadays Ourense is a thermal referent in Europe, with a flow that surpasses the daily 4 million litres of miner-medicinal water and a millenary hydrotherapeutic tradition.

The oldest and best-known testimony is the monumental fountain of the Burgas with water springs at 67°C. Its neoclassic silhouette with three pipes is the symbol of the city that coexists now with a modern thermal station with an outdoors pool with more than 200 squared metres, sauna and terrace.



*Chavasqueira Thermal Station. Ourense.*

The Ourense thermal offer is completed with the natural complex of the margins of Miño River, where two thermal stations of private management are located: Chavasqueira and Outariz, both with affordable prices and noticeable Japanese inspiration with a wide catalogue of services including

massages, sauna or relax treatments. With free access: the Chuvásqueira baths, four outdoors thermal pools next to an old wooden windmill absolutely restored, and the Outariz baths and Burgas de Canedo, located in a large leisure garden area.

The thermal facilities are linked by a nice way prepared for the pedestrian and bikes use, surrounded by trees and with direct accesses to the bathing areas, a 20 kilometres long path, perfect for the footing and hiking practice.

One can also accede to the thermal area in the Baths Train, which does several daily trips between the Plaza Mayor of Ourense and Outariz, with stops in each of the facilities. The thermal use in Ourense, besides its mineral attributes has a leisure and relaxing character that attracts people of any age.

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[www.ourense.travel](http://www.ourense.travel)

## O CARBALLIÑO

O Carballiño has a large thermal tradition, due to its superficial and underground waters. At the riverside of Arenteiro River, tributary of the Avia river that flows into the Miño River, two balnearies are erected, one of the city itself and the one of Caldas de Partovia, the latter, the oldest one of Galicia.

It is worth stopping, both for the importance of the facilities and the tradition, and for its historical interest.



Great Spa. O Carballiño.

## GREAT SPA

The Great Spa of Carballiño was one of the most crowded ones in Spain since 1816 and nowadays, one of the most prestigious ones. It is located in the riverside of Arenteiro River, near the Municipal Park, in the centre of the city, surrounded by a leafy forestry mass.

Its water has healing properties, with temperatures that reach 26°C. They are used in treatments for the digestive system, hepatic illnesses, the respiratory system and rheumatic conditions.

## PARTOVIA SPA

In the vicinity of Carballiño, in the village of Partovia, one can enjoy medicinal water that dates back from the Roman period. This water is sulphide-sodium, they flow at a temperature of 31°C and it is recommended for the treatment of rheumatic conditions, respiratory and throat illnesses.

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[www.carballino.org](http://www.carballino.org)  
[www.balnearioidecarballino.com](http://www.balnearioidecarballino.com)

## Chaves-Verín, Water eurocity

This route is an invitation to discover the greatest mineral-medicinal and thermal richness of the Iberian Peninsula. The Chaves-Verín Eurocity is made up by the territory that both towns occupy in the Valley of the Alto Támega in the North of Portugal and South-east of Galicia, respectively. The Eurocity has become established as a space of thermal touristic excellence, with infrastructures and specialized services.

## VIDAGO BATHS, A BELLE EPOQUE LUXURY

Taking as a starting point the Vidago Baths, in Chaves, one finds the most alkaline waters in Portugal. Characterized for being hyper-saline, cold, sodium-bicarbonate, alkaline, slightly arsenical and ferruginous, gas-carbonic fluoride and not much radioactive. Its hyper-salinity is also outstanding, surpassing the Vichy ones (Catalonia, Spain), indicated for the treatment of hepatic-vesicular and gastro-duodenum illnesses, of diabetes, obesity and gout, allergic sicknesses and dysfunctional conditions.

Vidago was designed as a European concession of thermal spa stay, with a 40 hectares park, where there are 40 different species of trees; some of them are hundred years old. Its *buvettes* and former spa, following the architecture of the *Arte Nova* or the monumental Palace Hotel, make up a pleasant and relaxing park where one feels like letting time pass.



Vidago Palace. Eurocity Chaves Verín.

## CHAVES, THE HOTTEST WATER IN THE PENINSULA

Following the Thermal and the Water Route, signalled by the course of the Tâmega river, main tributary of the Douro, in Chaves, capital of the Alto Tâmega, there flow water with a unique composition in the Iberian Peninsula. They are hyper-thermal at a temperature of 73°C, bicarbonate, sodium, meso-mineralized and gas-carbonic.

According to history, in the period of the Roman control, the legions, after their war actions, enjoyed themselves in the boiling waters of the city of *Aquae Flaviae*, regaining strength and treating their illnesses.

The hot water of Chaves, which flows from the spring at 73°C, has a millenary tradition healing osteo-articular and muscle-skeletal conditions, of the digestive and respiratory systems, as well as the prevention and treatment of contemporary illnesses (stress, fatigue, anxiety, muscle-skeletal aches), being affordable for everyone.



Chaves Baths.

## VERÍN, A NEW WATER CULTURE

The route continues through the eurocity, getting into Galicia; Verín, thermal village par excellence. Data about the number of springs of this village are relevant.

The route in Verín, located in the north quarter of the eurocity, is characterized by its clear and pure waters, which have made it famous among its spas: Cabreiroá, Sousas and Fontenova, firms of recognised quality and prestige inside and outside Spain and the fourth spa, the Caldeliñas one, a bit farer from the city centre. Among its fountains, O Sapo is one of the most visited and recognised ones, but all of them evidence the important role that water had in the past and still has nowadays, keeping the prestige of its springs, its thermal water and its fluvial richness, making this area an space of thermal tourstic excellence.



*Cabreiroa Hotel. Verín.*

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[www.chaves.pt](http://www.chaves.pt)  
[www.verin.es](http://www.verin.es)  
[www.eurociudadechavesverin.eu](http://www.eurociudadechavesverin.eu)

## PESO DA RÉGUA: CALDAS DE MOLEDO

Four kilometres far from Peso da Régua, one finds Caldas de Moledo, located in a privileged setting. Its waters are recommended to treat rheumatic, skin and respiratory illnesses.

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[www.cm-pesoregua.pt](http://www.cm-pesoregua.pt)

## PENAFIEL: TERMAS DE ENTRE-OS-RIOS

Penafiel occupies a strategic position dominating, from a small hill, the riversides of Sousa and Tâmega Rivers, tributaries of the Douro.

The Thermal Station of Entre-os-Rios is located in the convergence of the Douro and Tâmega Rivers. It has a thermal park with a large area of trees, with a 50 hectares protection and it enjoys a wide historic and artistic heritage.

The water of this station flow at 18.5°C and are recommended to treat digestive system, rheumatic and muscle-skeletal illnesses, as well as dermatologic pathologies. It has specific programs of prevention and well-being.

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[www.cm-penafiel.pt](http://www.cm-penafiel.pt)

## Route between the Douro and the Miño

### GUIMARÃES: CALDAS DAS TAIPAS

In Guimarães is located the thermal station of *Caldas das Taipas*, used since the Roman period. The current facilities are located inside a leafy park in the riverside or Ave River. The medicinal waters, which flow at 32°C, have attributes linked to therapeutic indications for the treatment of respiratory illnesses of the upper vias, arthritis, muscle-skeletal and skin illnesses.



*Spa treatments in the baths. Guimarães.*

In this thermal stay the traditional classic aspect of hydrotherapy joins new interpretations of the meaning of comfort, standing out the programs of geothermal massages, aromatherapy and chocolate therapy.

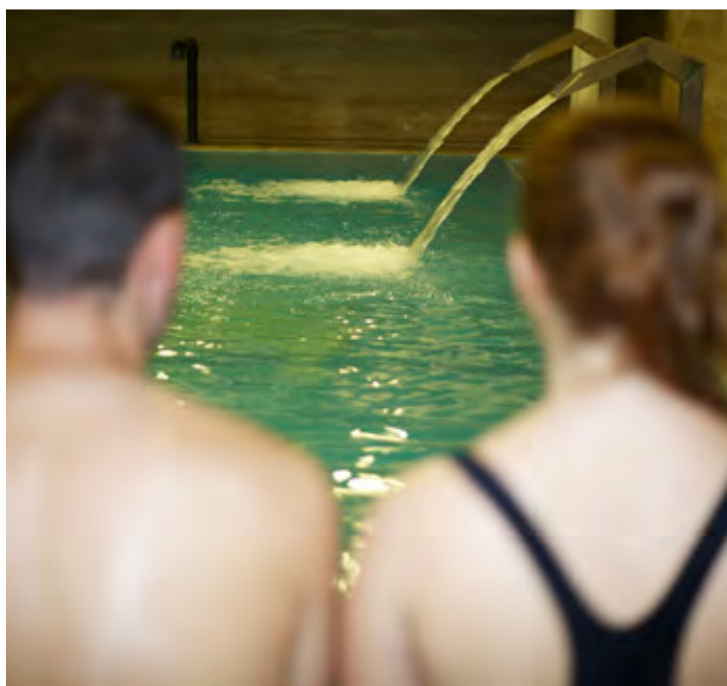
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[www.taipastermal.com](http://www.taipastermal.com)  
[www.guimaraesturismo.com](http://www.guimaraesturismo.com)

## Spas in Finisterre

### CARBALLO: OLD BATHS

The spa of Carballo is the only miner-medicinal spa of the whole Costa da Morte. It is located in the urban part, near a beautiful setting. It offers sulphured-sodium bi-carbonated waters of low mineralisation that flow at a temperature of 42°C: they are recommended to treat digestive system illnesses, metabolic upsets and hepatic and bile problems. They were recognised by the Waters Court of Paris as one of the best of Europe at the end of the 19th century and declared of public utility in 1928.



*Pool in the Carballo spa.*

Nowadays, these thermal waters count on the Q distinctive of quality and are a miraculous source, not only of health but also of beauty, well-being and relax. One can choose among a wide offer of services such as the thermal pools, baths, circular shower, massages or aesthetic treatments.

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[www.balnearioidecarballo.com](http://www.balnearioidecarballo.com)  
[www.carballo.org](http://www.carballo.org)

# KILOMETRIC DISTANCES

	A Coruña	Barcelos	Braga	Bragança	O Carballiño	Carballo	Chaves	Ferrol	Guimarães	Lalín	Lugo
A Coruña		264	260	360	166	42	265	52	274	122	98
Barcelos	264		23	240	170	237	140	284	40	208	325
Braga	260	23		225	163	231	125	277	25	201	318
Bragança	360	240	225		219	334	98	378	211	241	243
O Carballiño	166	170	163	219		130	124	118	180	36	96
Carballo	42	237	231	334	130		240	49	246	97	127
Chaves	265	140	125	98	124	240		283	104	146	188
Ferrol	52	284	277	378	118	49	283		295	143	119
Guimarães	274	40	25	211	180	246	104	295		248	335
Lalín	122	208	201	241	36	97	146	143	248		71
Lugo	98	325	318	243	96	127	188	119	335	71	
Macedo de Cavaleiros	339	207	192	47	198	314	77	360	171	220	265
Matosinhos	302	56	58	221	208	274	152	323	56	246	361
Mirandela	314	182	167	65	173	289	52	335	146	195	240
Monforte de Lemos	159	222	215	190	78	189	141	180	232	65	67
Narón	53	284	271	368	174	81	284	10	294	142	100
O Barco de Valdeorras	218	256	245	147	141	247	124	242	225	138	129
Ourense	174	177	171	191	20	149	96	195	187	55	94
Paredes	319	85	68	178	234	291	132	337	48	261	316
Penafiel	314	81	65	184	220	286	129	335	44	258	373
Peso da Régua	346	151	135	142	205	321	84	367	114	227	271
Pontevedra	134	136	130	304	68	105	209	155	146	109	192
Porto	300	63	56	219	206	272	150	321	54	244	359
Riveira	141	203	197	352	147	112	257	162	213	116	200
Santiago de Compostela	76	195	189	290	85	46	195	97	205	54	135
Sárria	128	254	247	211	90	157	173	149	264	78	36
Verín	240	166	150	119	99	215	29	261	130	121	166
Viana do Castelo	249	38	62	272	155	220	178	270	80	192	307
Vigo	159	112	106	280	88	131	185	180	122	135	218
Vila do Conde	290	35	49	251	196	261	144	311	48	233	348
Vila Nova de Famalicão	268	21	24	232	175	240	126	290	32	212	328
Vila Nova de Gaia	306	63	61	224	211	277	155	326	59	249	364
Vila Real	330	134	119	126	188	304	68	351	98	211	255
Vilagarcía de Arousa	125	166	159	336	131	96	239	146	176	100	183

	Macedo de Cavaleiros	Matosinhos	Mirandela	Monforte de Lemos	Narón	O Barco de Valdeorras	Ourense	Paredes	Penafiel	Peso da Régua	Pontevedra
A Coruña	339	302	314	159	53	218	174	319	314	346	134
Barcelos	207	56	182	222	284	256	177	85	81	151	136
Braga	192	58	167	215	271	245	171	68	65	135	130
Bragança	47	221	65	190	368	147	191	178	184	142	304
O Carballiño	198	208	173	78	174	141	20	234	220	205	68
Carballo	314	274	289	189	81	247	149	291	286	321	105
Chaves	77	152	52	141	284	124	96	132	129	84	209
Ferrol	360	323	335	180	10	242	195	337	335	367	155
Guimarães	171	56	146	232	294	225	187	48	44	114	146
Lalín	220	246	195	65	142	138	55	261	258	227	109
Lugo	265	361	240	67	100	129	94	316	373	271	192
Macedo de Cavaleiros		182	27	216	368	154	171	155	146	104	313
Matosinhos	182		157	260	324	268	215	37	41	100	174
Mirandela	27	157		190	334	173	145	121	121	79	288
Monforte de Lemos	216	260	190		161	67	47	269	266	222	162
Narón	368	324	334	161		221	194	339	334	365	154
O Barco de Valdeorras	154	268	173	67	221		111	249	244	199	226
Ourense	171	215	145	47	194	111		222	223	178	119
Paredes	155	37	121	269	339	249	222		4	64	190
Penafiel	146	41	121	266	334	244	223	4		63	195
Peso da Régua	104	100	79	222	365	199	178	64	63		257
Pontevedra	313	174	288	162	154	226	119	190	195	257	
Porto	180	9	155	257	320	265	214	34	38	98	170
Riveira	380	241	306	210	160	274	166	256	262	324	71
Santiago de Compostela	269	233	244	147	96	212	104	250	254	277	63
Sárria	247	292	222	33	130	87	79	308	299	255	222
Verín	103	178	78	116	260	94	73	156	154	110	185
Viana do Castelo	246	70	221	205	269	269	162	100	107	190	118
Vigo	289	150	264	138	179	202	95	170	171	233	29
Vila do Conde	212	29	187	246	310	259	203	58	66	156	159
Vila Nova de Famalicão	196	41	169	225	289	241	181	59	63	138	138
Vila Nova de Gaia	185	10	160	262	325	270	219	38	43	103	175
Vila Real	87	98	62	205	348	183	162	65	61	32	238
Vilagarcía de Arousa	343	204	318	194	145	258	150	220	224	289	34

	Porto	Riveira	Santiago de Compostela	Sárria	Verín	Viana do Castelo	Vigo	Vila do Conde	Vila Nova de Famalicão	Vila Nova de Gaia	Vila Real	Vilagarcía de Arousa
A Coruña	300	141	76	128	240	249	159	290	268	306	330	125
Barcelos	63	203	195	254	166	38	112	35	21	63	134	166
Braga	56	197	189	247	150	62	106	49	24	61	119	159
Bragança	219	352	290	211	119	272	280	251	232	224	126	336
O Carballiño	206	147	85	90	99	155	88	196	175	211	188	131
Carballo	272	112	46	157	215	220	131	261	240	277	304	96
Chaves	150	257	195	173	29	178	185	144	126	155	68	239
Ferrol	321	162	97	149	261	270	180	311	290	326	351	146
Guimarães	54	213	205	264	130	80	122	48	32	59	98	176
Lalín	244	116	54	78	121	192	135	233	212	249	211	100
Lugo	359	200	135	36	166	307	218	348	328	364	255	183
Macedo de Cavaleiros	180	380	269	247	103	246	289	212	196	185	87	343
Matosinhos	9	241	233	292	178	70	150	29	41	10	98	204
Mirandela	155	306	244	222	78	221	264	187	169	160	62	318
Monforte de Lemos	257	210	147	33	116	205	138	246	225	262	205	194
Narón	320	160	96	130	260	269	179	310	289	325	348	145
O Barco de Valdeorras	265	274	212	87	94	269	202	259	241	270	183	258
Ourense	214	166	104	79	73	162	95	203	181	219	162	150
Paredes	34	256	250	308	156	100	170	58	59	38	65	220
Penafiel	38	262	254	299	154	107	171	66	63	43	61	224
Peso da Régua	98	324	277	255	110	190	233	156	138	103	32	289
Pontevedra	170	71	63	222	185	118	29	159	138	175	238	34
Porto		238	230	288	175	77	147	36	39	7	95	200
Riveira	238		71	230	232	186	97	227	205	243	305	48
Santiago de Compostela	230	71		166	171	179	90	220	198	236	260	55
Sárria	288	230	166		148	238	170	278	257	294	238	215
Verín	175	232	171	148		203	163	169	153	180	93	219
Viana do Castelo	77	186	179	238	203		96	48	73	76	180	149
Vigo	147	97	90	170	163	96		141	119	157	219	60
Vila do Conde	36	227	220	278	169	48	141		32	34	138	190
Vila Nova de Famalicão	39	205	198	257	153	73	119	32		44	122	169
Vila Nova de Gaia	7	243	236	294	180	76	157	34	44		100	206
Vila Real	95	305	260	238	93	180	219	138	122	100		270
Vilagarcía de Arousa	200	48	55	215	219	149	60	190	169	206	270	



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