



 XUNTA
DE GALICIA

 Xacobeo 21:22

Muros



a walk of
history and life

Muros



THE MOST NOBLE, MOST LOYAL, AND MOST CHARITABLE TOWN OF MUROS IS LOCATED AT THE NORTHERN END OF THE MUROS AND NOIA ESTUARY. THE FIRST DOCUMENTS RECORDING ITS FOUNDING DATE FROM THE 13TH CENTURY AND IT IS ESPECIALLY WELL-KNOWN FOR ITS SEAFRONT AND ITS MEDIEVAL LAYOUT FULL OF COLONNADES, SMALL SQUARES, AND ORIGINALLY NAMED ALLEYS. THESE ARE THE REASONS MUROS WAS DECLARED A HISTORICAL ARTISTIC SITE IN 1970.

Essentials

A Iglesia de San Pedro de Muros



B Capilla de San Xosé



C Capilla de las Angustias



D Rúa do Hospital and Casa de Beneficencia



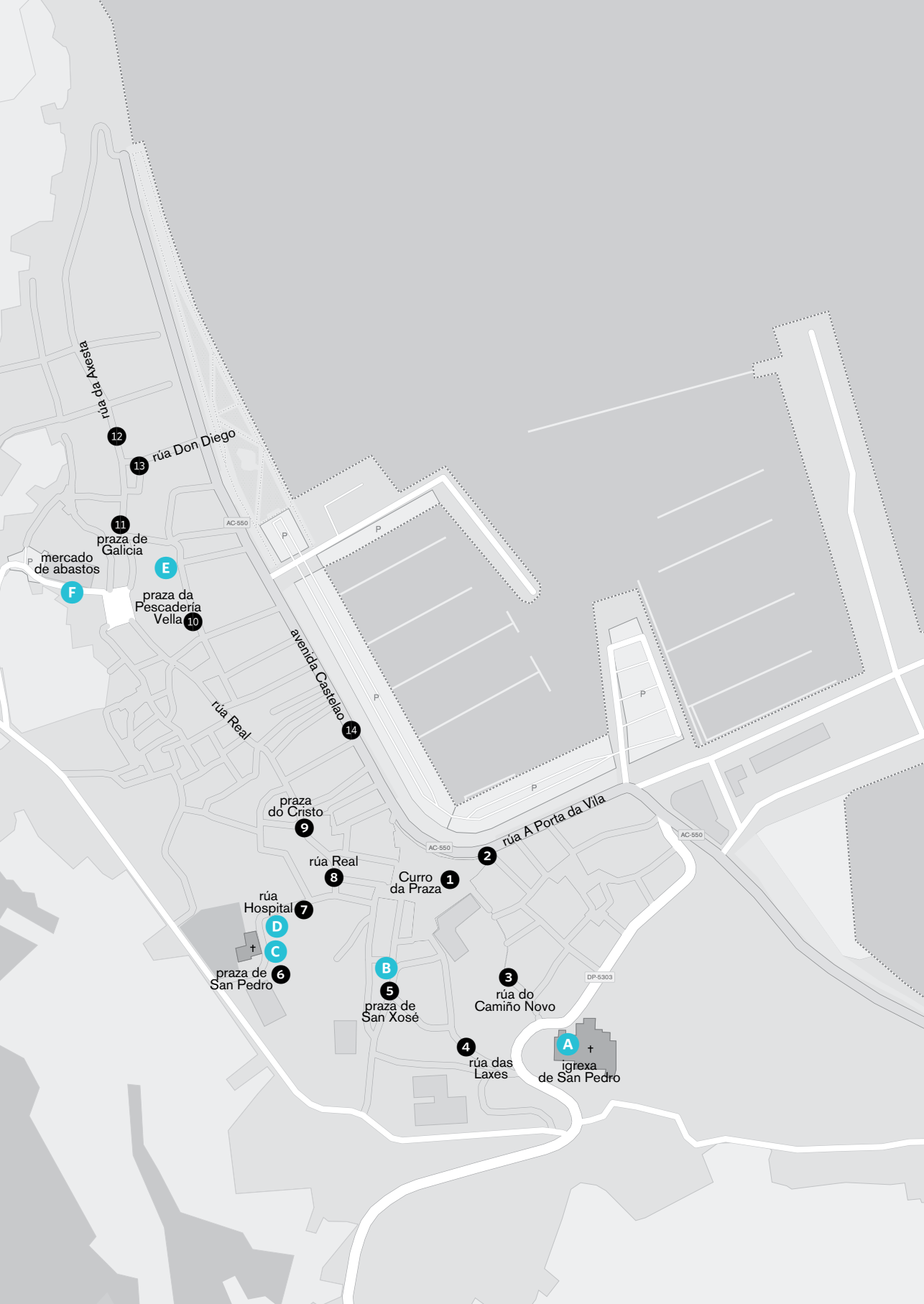
E Praza da Pescadería Vella and Fonte do Lagarto



F Mercado



The route



- 1 Curro da Praza
- 2 Rúa A Porta da Vila
- 3 Rúa do Camiño Novo
- 4 Rúa das Laxes
- 5 Praza de San Xosé
- 6 Praza de San Pedro
- 7 Rúa Hospital
- 8 Rúa Real
- 9 Praza do Cristo
- 10 Praza da Pescadería Vella
- 11 Praza de Galicia
- 12 Rúa da Axesta
- 13 Rúa Don Diego
- 14 Avenida Castelao



Muros

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Our tour of the old town starts out in the main square known as **Curro da Praza 1** (Corral of the Square), an easily accessible location, with nearby parking and bus stops. Its name originates in the bull runs that used to be held frequently at this site.

The most emblematic building in the square is the CASA CONSISTORIAL (Town Hall), which was built in the 20th century and on whose neo-Gothic façade pointed arches figure prominently, which can also be seen on other buildings in the town, as well as a tower which displays the town's coat of arms and a clockface. The current Muros coat of arms retains the emblems of Castile and Leon,

as it was once part of those kingdoms, and includes two scallop shells in reference to its place in the Archdiocese of Compostela, and a caravel, which commemorates the role of ships from Muros in the conquest of Malaga in 1487.

The square is lined by traditional buildings, which house bars and restaurants on their ground floors, where you can sample the typical local cuisine, which is chiefly fish and shellfish from the estuary. One of the most emblematic buildings is unquestionably the old modernist TEATRO MERCEDES (Mercedes Theatre), which opened as a dancehall and



FACING Muros
RIGHT Teatro Mercedes





theatre in 1925 and is now the [Mesón-Cervecería Teatro](#) bar. [Casa Sampedro](#) and [Cervecería O Curro](#) are the two other options for food and drink in this area.

We can find unique restaurants and bars nearby such as [Bar Muelle](#), which is well-known for its Spanish omelette and fried eggs; [Restaurante Don Bodegón](#), which has a small exhibition inside on the seafaring history of Muros; and the adjacent [Bar El Ancla](#), which is frequented by sailors on



a daily basis who come for the generous tapas dishes and famous “á feira” octopus. The name refers to the anchor located just in front that belonged to the frigate Ariete, which sunk very close to Muros in 1966. [Cervecería A Cova](#), which was previously a nautical supplies shop and [Bar O Cabalo de Pedra](#), which puts on temporary exhibitions, also serve coffee, ice creams, and drinks on their lively terraces in summer.

The square is bordered by **rúa A Porta da Vila 2** (Town Gate street), one of the old entrances into the area protected by the old Medieval walls, the presence of which can still be felt in this place name and some porticoed buildings that were built over the walls such as [CASA FABEIRO](#) (Fabeiro House), [CASA MALVÁREZ](#) (Malvárez House), and the old [BARRACKS](#). From here we move onto **rúa**

ABOVE Holy water font
BELOW Sailor

do Camiño Novo 3, which takes us to the higher area of the town, where the current [IGLESIA PARROQUIAL DE SAN PEDRO DE MUROS](#) (Parish Church of Saint Peter of Muros) and the [ANTIGUA COLEGIATA DE SANTA MARÍA DO CAMPO](#) (Old Collegiate Church of Saint Mary of the Field) stand.

The church is a clear example of the maritime Gothic style and its wooden roof resembles the upturned keel of a boat. Lope de Mendoza supported the construction of it in the 19th century on top of an earlier 12th century building. The church has been extended several times. The main entrance, the rose window, some corbels, and numerous guild symbols carved into the blocks still remain from the early building. From a later period, there is the Baroque bell tower, which you can climb up inside the church for panoramic views of Muros, the estuary, and the port. We can also visit the three religious art exhibition rooms, which display pieces of goldsmithery, liturgical items, and especially,



the image of [SANTA ANA TRIPLE](#) (Saint Anne Trinity) a depiction of Saint Anne with the Virgin Mary and Baby Jesus, from the 14th and 15th centuries. A visit to the chapel of the [SANTO CRISTO DE LA AGONÍA](#) (Holy Christ of Agony) is also worthwhile. It contains a carving of Jesus on the cross from the 18th century, which is highly dramatic and has the unique feature of having hinged shoulders to make it easier to take down during the sermon of the seven words and the descent from the cross which takes place when it is taken off the cross during Easter Week.

Before leaving the church, we should stop at the [BASIN OF HOLY WATER](#), a truly unique and one-of-a-kind piece, as it has a depiction of a snake curled up in a spiral, representing sin, submerged in the holy water that purifies

ABOVE San Pedro de Muros
BELOW Santo Cristo de la Agonia



everything. This snake has become a symbol of the church, so you can also purchase souvenirs such as pendants and soap in the shape of it.

In front of the church, **rúa das Laxes** 4 takes us to the nearby **Praza de San Xosé** 5 (Saint Joseph's Square), one of the most picturesque spots in the town, with brightly coloured houses and thriving plants. The simple CAPILLA DE SAN XOSÉ (chapel of Saint Joseph), dating from 1727, and its calvary round off the square. Another place worth visiting in

the surrounding area is the CHALÓN PUBLIC WASHHOUSE.

From here we head to the nearby **Praza de San Pedro** 6 (Saint Peter's Square), where the CAPILLA DE LAS ANGUSTIAS (chapel of sorrows) is located. It was built in 1665 over the old 10th century Iglesia de San Pedro (church of Saint Peter) and on its walls the marks of some of the stonemasons who worked on it are still visible. Part of the building was refurbished to house the Visitor Reception and Heritage Interpretation Centre.

We go down **rúa Hospital** 7, which takes its name from the "HOSPITALILLO" (lit. little

hospital), the old poor hospital founded in the 14th century by Diego Rodríguez de Muros, town judge and ancestor of the famous dynasty of bishops who made history in the 15th century. It is currently used as a community centre, it has vending machines for coffee, soft drinks, and snacks and is the perfect place for a quick stop, as it offers views of the cloister and its well-kept garden. Continuing downhill, we come to the FORTE VELLA (old fountain), next to which we can see a small bridge that crosses over the street.

Continuing along rúa Real, we head into Muros' Medieval maze of streets where we can start to see the odd names of the streets: Paciencia (Patience), Angustia (Sorrow), Soledad (Solitude), Sufrimiento (Suffering), Esperanza (Hope)..., linked to shipwrecks along this coast which have unquestionably shaped and continue to shape the town's history. To our right at no. 6 rúa Ancha is the Panadería-Pastelería Corona de Galicia,



which sells bread, baked goods, tea biscuits, and empanada pasties, which are all made by hand in their own bakery. An eye-catching modernist building from the early 20th century with lavish stone decoration stands in front and houses Deportes Casais on the ground floor. At no. 9 is the Asador Ría de Muros grill house offering us the full range of local cuisine in a carefully renovated building, where combines wood and stone to create a pleasant environment.

Making our way back to **rúa Real** 8 we find several home decoration shops, such as Ksiña, Bazar Alai and Rucacha, which are in typical sturdy buildings featuring good masonry and decorated balconies and windows with intricate grilles. On the perpendicular, narrow rúa O Rosal, in another renovated

BELOW Capilla de San Xosé



ABOVE Praza do Cristo
BELOW Rúa do Sufrimento



We now continue on towards the **Praza da Pescadería Vella** ¹⁰ (Old Fish Market Square), which with its numerous lively wine bars and pubs has become the premier wine and tapas area in Muros. It is a pleasant spot with various terraces that are a great place to stop in at and soak up the architecture and the atmosphere. The **FUENTE DEL LAGARTO** (lizard fountain) is in the middle of the square featuring an odd reptile which used to have wings. It was sculpted in 1929 by Francisco Iglesias, the finest stonemason in the town.

building, we find **Rosa Neúf**, a fashion and accessories boutique where women are given a starring role.

From here we follow on to the **Praza do Cristo** ⁹ (Square of Christ), formerly known as the Praza da Leña (Firewood Square) because the wood that was essential in heating up the lareiras (stove-chimneys) was sold here. It is overlooked by a Baroque calvary from 1789, which stands out for its slender column.

Before we carry on our attention is drawn to the modernist building of the Iglesias family, where the first pharmacy in Muros was opened and is today a photography shop. Very close at hand is the gourmet **Jesús da Meca** delicatessen, which specialises in sea products, such as processed seaweed, artisanal conserves and crab pates, as well as a wide selection of products which all come from the different Galician designations of origin.



We can pay a visit to the precious metal workshop **La Mar Océana**, where a group of artisans who boast over 30 years' experience design and make unique pieces; it includes a workshop and gallery that is open to display by other artists.

There are also small family shops such as the **Mercería Gerpe** haberdashery, which has been open for over 70 years and, interestin-

gly, has always been passed down from aunt to niece over these four generations. Their speciality is buttons, although we can also find all types of sewing items, underwear, and children's clothing.

On the nearby **Praza de Galicia** ¹¹ (Galicia Square) we come to the grand work of masonry that is the Mercado de Abastos (food market) building. The size of the building gives us an idea of how important this town was as a trading hub. The original double stairway, which some think is inspired by the Obradoiro (Workshop) stairway of the cathedral of Santiago, was built in the 19th century with Eclectic touches.

Following along **rúa da Axesta** ¹² we find some family shops, such as a jeweller, a fabric shop, a haberdashery... A short detour from here to **rúa Don Diego** ¹³ is worthwhile to see the curious Gothic arch which partially covers the street and supports the frame of a small house.

Back on our tour, we can take a stop at a unique fountain known as **FONTE DA AXESTA** (Axesta fountain), where locals can often be

FACING, ABOVE Fuente del Lagarto
FACING, BELOW Praza da Pescadería Vella
ABOVE Mercería Gerpe
BELOW Panadería París





seen queueing to collect their daily water, as the water here is held to be the best in the town. At the end of the street, we come to the small and privately owned CAPILLA DE SANTA ISABEL (chapel of Saint Elizabeth), which only opens its doors on the Festa de los Remedios (Festivity of the Remedies). From here we have a fantastic view of the inlet and the port of Muros, which offers up the tempting proposition of a walk along its Paseo Marítimo (seafront promenade).

On **Avenida Castelao** ¹⁴ (Castelao Avenida),



which is the main seafront in Muros, we come across the typical maritime buildings, homes comprising a porticoed ground floor with pointed or round arches, which is sometimes below street level. In the past, it was common in the lower part of the houses to see men repairing the fishing rigging whilst women salted and washed fish in basins. The living area was in the higher part of the house and, in the late 19th century, following the dominant trend at the time, another piece of traditional Galician architecture was added: the glass-enclosed *galería* balcony.

At the start of the street, we come to the

ESCULTURA AL MARINERO DESAPARECIDO (Sculpture of the Missing Sailor), by Ramón Conde, which was unveiled in 1989 and depicts a woman who, with a heavy heart, looks out at the sea which has claimed so many lives.

Along the promenade there is a wide and varied selection of cafeterias, restaurants, and pubs which entice us to try local dishes, including the *Tortilla Romana*, a typical dessert from Muros which consists of a sponge cake filled with cream and dipped in caramel. Some people say that the recipe was brought by a Portuguese sailor who landed at the port, although others believe it was invented by a local family.



We also come across the old CINE PARÍS building, which was built in an Eclectic style in the 20th century and is at present waiting on a future refurbishment. A little further on, at no. 43, is the CASA DO CAPITÁN (House of the Captain) an early 20th century modernist building which has striking intricate decoration on its curving façade and doorway. The wide variety of shops on this avenue, including pharmacies, sports equipment, food shops, tobacconists, bakeries, souvenir shops, ironmongers, nautical and fishing equipment shops, and clothes shops, is topped off by the flea market that is held here every Tuesday and Friday all year round. It is a simply wonderful setting to indulge in a few glasses of wine and some tapas.

FACING, ABOVE Capilla de Santa Isabel

FACING, BELOW Fonte da Axesta

ABOVE Avenida Castelao

BELOW Sculpture to the missing sailor



Fábrica de Sel

The arrival of Catalan and Cantabrian industry in the 19th century saw the town of Muros and the district start to fill up with salting factories, mainly for sardines and herrings. There was even more than thirty at one point, which was a big boost to the town's economy.

A stone's throw from Muros Old Town is the Fábrica de Sel, an old salting business that would later become a preserves factory until 1976. Nowadays the building hosts permanent exhibitions on boatbuilding, the preserves industry, and sunken ships in the area.

Santuario da Virxe do Camiño

The SANTUARIO VIRXE DO CAMIÑO (Virgin of the Way Sanctuary) was built in the maritime Gothic style on the road out of Muros, on the AC-550 travelling from the north. It stands next to the old 15th century HOSPITAL DE LAZARADOS (Leppers Hospital) which was built with donations from many of the town's residents.

Inside the church there is a striking collection of ex-votos, some of which are boat-shaped, which sailors offered to the image of the Virgin to show their gratitude for having been saved from the dangers of the sea. The Cristo Toscano (Tuscan Christ) carving housed in the sanctuary is a masterpiece of

Gothic religious imagery, which serves to highlight the maritime connections between Muros and Italy. We shouldn't forget that some pilgrims reached this port by sea and would stay at this hospital before continuing on to Compostela.

Muíño de Mareas do Pozo do Cachón

Following the AC-550, one kilometre from Curro da Praza we reach the MUÍÑO DE MAREAS DO POZO DO CACHÓN (Pozo do Cachón Tidal Mill) at Agro das Mareas (lit. Tides Land) close to the A PONTE DOS MUÍÑOS (Mills Bridge) site, two place names that allude to the mill itself, which was built in the early 19th century by Ignacio Pérez Bazarra, who was born in Muros and then emigrated to Argentina before finally returning.

Although there were several mills in the area at that time, a decision was taken to build a

FACING Fábrica de Sel

BELOW Pozo do Cachón tidal mill



tidal mill to search for alternative ways to mill grain, principally corn, when the flow of the rivers was lower. This type of mill collected water from the rising tide, which in Galicia is quite pronounced, and as the tide fell it was directed towards turning the wheels which worked the millstone. These types of building are quite common in places such as Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, but there are not many of them in Galicia and this is undoubtedly one of the most important and biggest in Europe.

In addition to its time as a mill, the building was converted into a bathhouse. The Santa Rita (Saint Rita) baths specialised in curing rheumatic illnesses using cool treatments made from sea water and seaweed.

After several owners and different uses, the mill was restored by Muros Town Council and it now hosts the [CENTRO DE INTERPRETACIÓN DA RUTA DOS MUÍÑOS DA COSTA DA MORTE](#) (Costa da Morte Mills Route Interpretation Centre), which has displays on buildings that are part of the history of the region. The interpretation centre is split into two differing parts: the mill area and headquarters of the institution and the warehouse-bathhouse, which is used as an exhibition room nowadays.

In the surrounding area we can find Casa Anido (Anido House), an old salting factory

that dates back more than two centuries, which is now a restaurant that serves up traditional seafood and has a terrace with wonderful views of Muros and its estuary.

Puerto de Muros and fish market

The historical importance of Muros is closely linked to its wide, sheltered port which has been held to be one of the finest in Galicia since the 15th century and was declared a Port of Refuge in 1880.

The mainstay of the local economy is undoubtedly fishing. In the afternoon, you can watch the boats coming into port and the subsequent landing and selling of the fish at auction in the Edificio de la Lonja (Fish Market Building). The market is managed by the Cofradía de Pescadores (Association of Fishermen) and visitors can enter, although they must register. Straight after the action, we can visit the stalls selling fish and shellfish, on the same esplanade, to buy the fresh produce recently sold at auction.

In the port, which has a good depth of water, there are two docks: a pier where yachts are moored, and an inner dock, where smaller boats are kept, creating a colourful and harmonious sight.





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