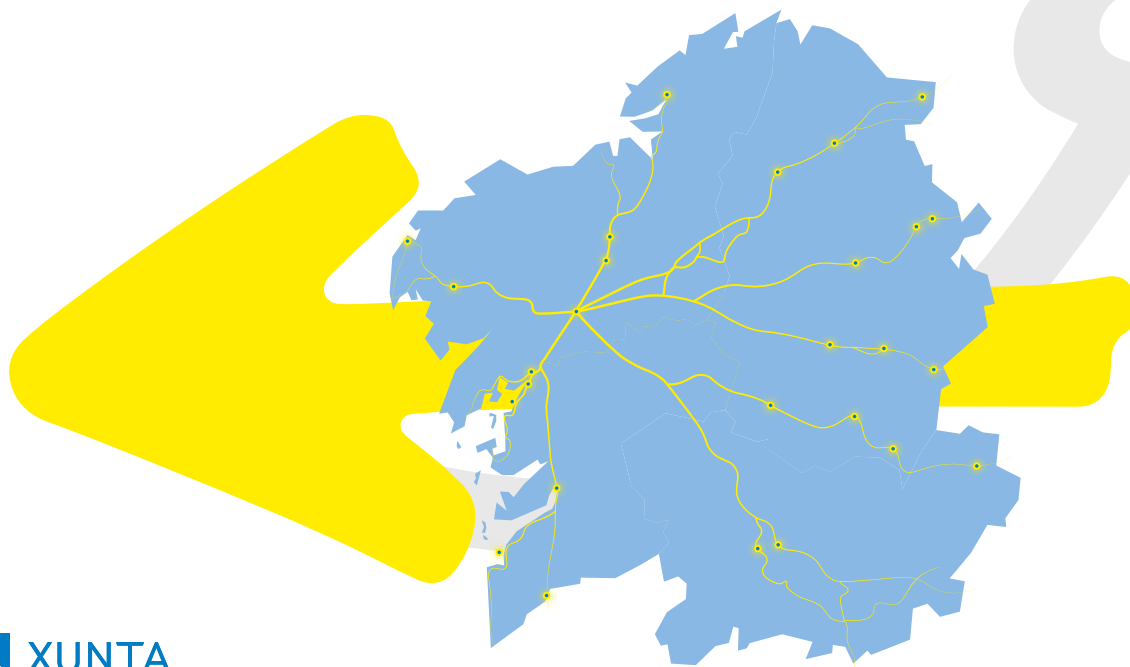


galicia

The 27 most charming places to visit in 2027 on the Caminos de Santiago



XUNTA
DE GALICIA

Published by: TURISMO DE GALICIA

Production: VERSAL COMUNICACIÓN S. L.

Texts: CRISTÓBAL RAMÍREZ

Photos: JOSÉ SALGADO

DL: C 4-2024

Print: @@@

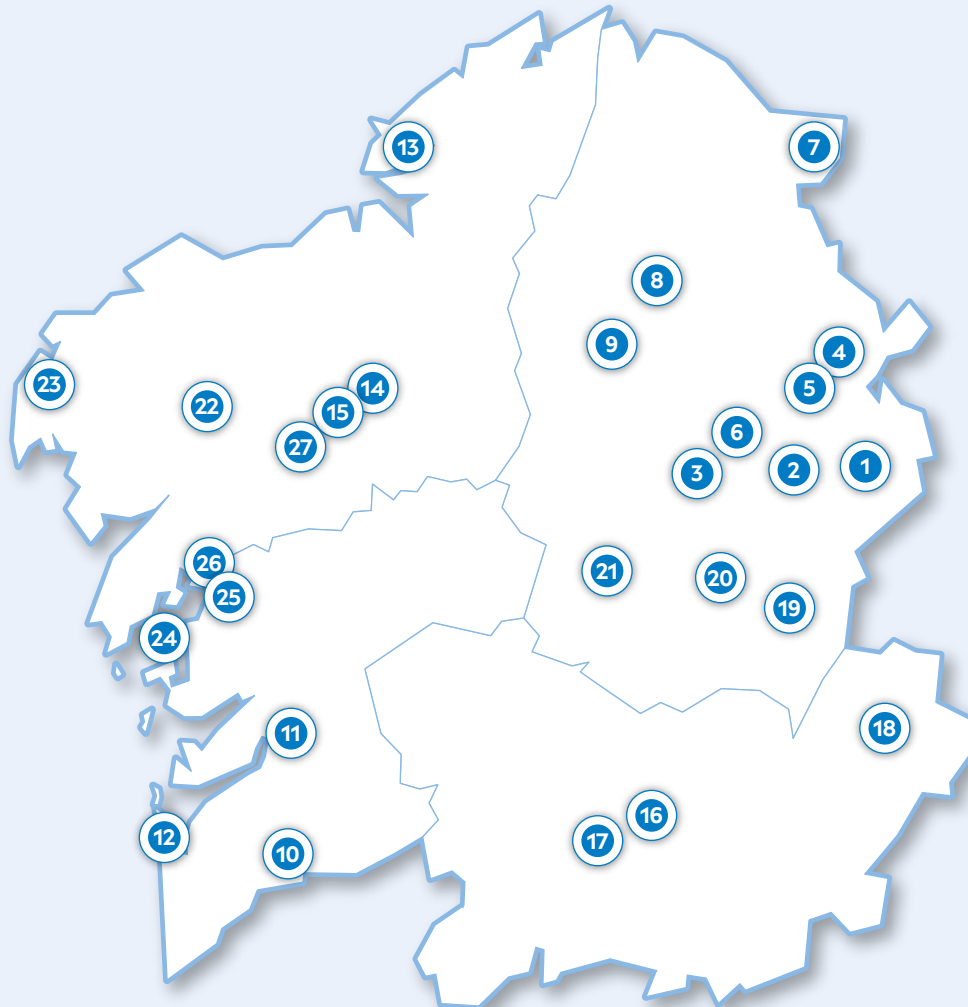
THE ROAD TO 2027

The next Holy Year will be in 2027, and Galicia is already preparing for it. It will start by investing €140 million across the different Camino de Santiago routes, which will be used to continually improve and maintain the surface of the paths and promote their appeal both in Spain and internationally, emphasising that the Jacobean routes boast unique values that set them apart from any other hiking route, in addition to their millenary history. Protecting these unique values is at the heart of the Xunta de Galicia's work in the region. The Camino – or rather the Caminos – is world famous, attracting visitors

from the remotest corners of the world to experience it for themselves.

The routes also showcase magnificent monuments, such as the cathedrals of Tui and Mondoñedo, not to mention the A Ponte Maceira bridge and the monastery of Samos. There are a number of hidden treasures to be found along the route, often overlooked by pilgrims in their hurry. On the following pages we present 27 of these little treasures - perfect spots for photography, relaxation or reflection. These are the 27 charming places for 2027, the next Holy Year, which will be here before we know it!

Xosé Manuel Merelles
DIRECTOR OF TURISMO DE GALICIA



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■ San Martiño de Xubia (Narón)

The **27** most charming places to visit in **2027** on the Caminos de Santiago

Church of San Xoán

Pedrafita do Cebreiro

In the high mountains of Lugo, a unique artistic style has emerged, rooted in the Christian traditions of Spain, but with its own distinctive characteristics. A remarkable example of these humble churches can be found in O Cebreiro, with few ashlar and abundant humble masonry. But this church is just one of many; another can be found in the neighbouring village of Santo Estevo, a little further on, in Liñares, and, after climbing the Alto de San Roque, another one can be found tucked among the houses of the village of Hospital da Condesa.

The latter seems to eagerly await pilgrims with a bench outside, undoubtedly the most popular spot along the French Way in Galicia from spring

Marvel of balance in Hospital da Condesa

The French Way 154,329 km

to autumn. Nestled in the shade of its tower, which is not very tall but is a marvel of balance, built with stones so small that arranging them and making them stand seems more like a miracle than a feat of engineering.

And by the way, if the pilgrim does not stop and walk around the building, they will not see that on the opposite side lies a hidden gem - an area of land with a rich history. Once a threshing floor, this space holds the tales of the local community. The town itself takes its name from a 9th-century pilgrim hospital, highlighting the enduring spirit of hospitality that defines the area. As a testament to this spirit, a public hostel stands ready to open its doors.





Ferrería da Ponte

Triacastela

From a bird's eye view, Triacastela appears to be nestled in a small, fertile valley with a rich history dating back to prehistoric times, as evidenced by archaeological finds. As you descend from the Alto do Poio, the houses start to cluster together. At the end of the descent in Ramil, pilgrims are greeted by the church's neoclassical spire and bell tower. The pilgrim walks along the medieval street, which has been used by walkers for more than a millennium. Two delightful surprises wait at the end of that street. There are two signs offering the choice to venture right towards San Xil or left to explore Samos and its monastery.

Whichever way you choose to go, don't miss the opportunity to admire the structure on

Resting point and accommodation
for pilgrims on horseback

The French Way 131,242 km



your right - a masterpiece of pure masonry that exudes an aura of both strength and impressive balance.

This building is the old forge and, from a few metres away, has a subtle fortress-like quality due to the round arch of the entrance doors.

Known in the village since the 16th century as the Casa da Ponte, it was historically used not only as accommodation for pilgrims but as a resting place for pilgrims on horseback, who took advantage of the opportunity to regain their strength and have a bite to eat.



Barbadelo

Sarria

A church hidden away in a scrubland

The French Way 109,953 km

Sarria is a municipality in Lugo that is now known not only throughout Spain, but also in many parts of the world. It is the preferred starting point for pilgrims on their journey to Santiago, although more and more pilgrims are choosing places further away from the Camino Francés, such as O Cebreiro.



Following on the Camino we reach the Church of Santiago de Barbadelo. Declared a historic-artistic monument in 1976 and a site of cultural interest in 1980, the church has deep roots dating back to at least 874, with ties to an early monastery. The church that now stands before pilgrims was built slightly later, in the 12th century. Tradition has it that the neighbouring noble house, known as O Mosteiro (The Monastery) was once a pilgrim hospital for devotees travelling to Santiago, although it is likely that it was built on top of an earlier one.

Fun fact: the famous *Codex Calixtinus* mentions Barbadelo twice, which gives an idea of its significance.





A Proba de Burón

A Fonsagrada

Erected and then destroyed at the end of the Middle Ages by a rebellion of indignant peasants known as Os Irmandiños, only to be rebuilt by them after being defeated on the battlefield, the fortress of A Proba de Burón stands out in the middle of a very fertile valley that has been inhabited since prehistoric times. One of the original four towers, each around fifteen metres high, is still standing.

This is undoubtedly the most striking feature of this small town in Lugo which was the centre of the so-called Terra de Burón, but the pilgrim will also pass three buildings that will undoubtedly catch their eye. The simplest, but no less elegant, is a raised granary with a clear Asturian influence, not only because of its size but also

Castle and churches showcase their ancient might

The Primitive Way 152,953 km

because of its square base. And the other two are temples.



One of these is the parish church, placed under the protection of Santa María Magdalena, which beckons pilgrims with its

distinctive features: the external entrance to the bell tower and the semicircular apse, adorned with corbels that reveal its Romanesque origin. Fun fact: on the façade, the remains of a heraldic stone yearn to make their presence known. And the second church, at the end of the Primitive Way, is the chapel of San José, which showcases the influence of the neoclassical style.





Hospital de Montouto

A Fonsagrada

Next to a thousand-year-old dolmen and a chapel

The Primitive Way 144,745 km

Montouto is one of the three Galician pilgrims' hospitals that were still fulfilling their mission at the beginning of the 20th century, when very few people made their way to Santiago and even fewer travelled what is now the Primitive Way.

Historical research has shown that this is where the two paths that start before the town of A Fonsagrada meet: one that winds through the town and gently crosses the Lugo highlands, and the other that descends to the valley of A Proba de Burón, only to rise again. Both paths lead to the Hospital de Montouto, a resting place for all pilgrims. Those who have come through A Proba de Burón will have a bird's eye view of it, with a dolmen several thousand years old and



without a roof, as if to mark the origin of this mythical and even sacred space. Then there are the ruins of the hospital itself, now

restored, and with water cascading down from the mountain, skilfully channelled - no mean feat considering it was once the water that destroyed what is undoubtedly an unparalleled monument.

In front of it, on this small piece of land, a tiny chapel, not much bigger than an oratory, was later built and is in excellent condition. Inside, behind a transparent door, a cross and Saint James the Great accompany the small altar.





Castroverde Castle

Castroverde

Behind them is one of the many undulating landscapes that characterise the Primitive Way. The next mountain pass is a long way off. Pilgrims enter Castroverde through an area that is either flat or has short climbs and descents with a subtle gradient. At the end of this route is Castroverde, a small and lively town that flourished in the shadow of its medieval fortress, whose keep still captivates visitors today.

Access to the castle is via the Rúa Fortaleza, an increasingly narrow street lined with noble buildings, the last of which, with a coat of arms on its façade, adjoins the walls of the polygonal precinct, with walls that reach up to three metres high.

The originality of its four sides

The Primitive Way 121,261 km



Inside, which is easy to access, the tall tower made of large granite ashlar stands out, and its four unequal sides show a different face. The pilgrim's initial gaze is drawn to a peculiar window, and as

they turn left, they discover a gate which, in the Norman tradition, is not at ground level but raised as a defensive measure. It has a characteristic feature: the lintel is decorated with a carving of a piper.

On the next side is a high latrine, and on the fourth, a double window points to a ladies' room in this 14th-century castle.





Sanctuary of Arante

Ribadeo

As pilgrims approach the sanctuary of Nosa Señora das Virtudes in A Ponte (Arante Ribadeo), it remains elusive from a bird's eye view, although it is almost in sight. This means a relatively steep descent, but short and not at all tiring. And sure enough, just across the bridge over the Lexoso River stands the church. Although it appears smaller and less towering up close, it has much more charm.

The pilgrim treads on historical ground, reminded of this by a plaque that states that in 1809, during the War of Independence, the inhabitants of several nearby parishes fought against the army of the French General Fournier. The event is commemorated every year in May.

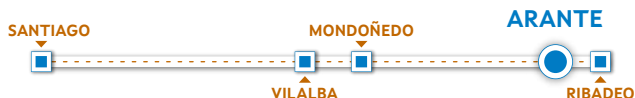
A magnificent collection of murals

Camino del Norte 178,037 km



The church dates from the 14th century and is in excellent condition.

The white walls, the buttresses on the front wall, the modest and elegant façade, the two doors and the bell tower are evidence of this. But the most interesting thing is what awaits inside: a collection of murals depicting various moments in the Virgin Mary's journey: her flight to Egypt, her coronation, her Assumption. What's more, these paintings, the origin of which is still unknown, are accessible even when the sanctuary is closed.



MO LOS

MAGOS O FRESNEL



Álvaro Cunqueiro

Mondoñedo

Gazing at the cathedral forever

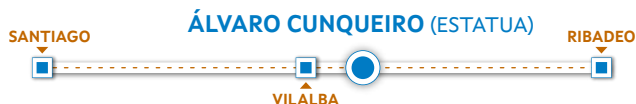
The Northern Way 157,900 km

Galician writer Álvaro Cunqueiro, born in Mondoñedo, was an emblem throughout his lifetime and continues to be even after his death. This sentiment was true then and is still true today in the city of Lugo, part of the Northern Way, a World Heritage Site.

The Jacobean route passed by the monastery of Lourenzá, a land famous for its excellent beans, and climbed gently before descending to Mondoñedo via a street with a seemingly ironic name: Casas Novas (New Houses in English). It is a traditional name, although there is not a single new house. Instead, pilgrims pass buildings on either side that exude an air of nobility.

And so pilgrims flock to the grandiose square surrounding the magnificent cathedral, flanked by more modest but historically rich houses that can be better appreciated in their entirety from the fortified entrance to the temple. It was in this square that Marshal Pardo de Cela, a medieval Galician nobleman who opposed the Catholic Monarchs, was executed. His rebellion cost him his head. A plaque commemorates the event.

The Northern Way passes by the seated statue of Álvaro Cunqueiro, erected in 1991 in the corner of a small but charming garden, facing the cathedral which, as the local says, watches over the pilgrims' path.





Ponte de Sa

Vilalba

The Northern Way winds gently through a flat area and approaches a riverside wood that runs parallel to the Labrada River. There comes a point when you have to cross this moderately wide, fast-flowing stream during the rainy months using a narrow but very long bridge. The size of the river shows that it's not limited to a meagre summer flow, but is remarkably expansive. Of course, the path is always safe.

The origins of this structure, which forms part of the old Camino Real, date back to the Middle Ages. Despite the passage of time, it has been fortunate enough to have undergone several restorations. Its design incorporates a single central arch, complemented by side arches

River Labrada's friend

The Northern Way 109,501 km



strategically placed to protect the structure from the typical swelling of the river in autumn

and winter. They are semicircular, except for the arch, which is slightly pointed, a sign of the taste for this Gothic art, which is as rare as it is valued in Galicia. One last detail: the floor of the bridge is cobbled.

In the distance are the hills of San Ramón, which form the administrative boundary with the municipality of Guitiriz.





Ponte das Febres

Tui

Named Ponte das Febres (Bridge of Fevers) due to being the place where Saint Telmo fell ill and died, this bridge is situated within the municipality of Tui and is the historic entrance to Galicia for pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago from Portugal. It is a small, charming structure with a single arch that spans the San Simón river, built in the middle of a wooded area. At the foot of a hill, pilgrims suddenly find themselves in a place that is intimately linked to local history and the Portuguese Way.

The story goes that just before Easter in 1246, Saint Telmo, now the patron saint of Tui, was preaching near this city. Despite a high fever, probably from malaria, he returned to the cathedral of Tudela, where he preached until

The place where San Telmo fell ill

The Portuguese Way 112,670 km



Easter Sunday. Later, when he reached the Ponte das Febres (built in the 12th century), he turned

back, knowing that his condition would prevent him from continuing. He eventually died in Tui.

After crossing the Ponte das Febres, marked by a plaque explaining its historical significance and a stone cross, and coming out of the forest, the church of Ribadelouro comes into view on the left. If travellers stay on the pilgrims' path, they will come across a group of crosses (commonly called Calvary, though they were originally part of a Way of the Cross, and some were grouped there) and the medieval Orbenlle or Magdalena bridge.





A Canicouva

Pontevedra

A climb with a one-hundred-year-old surface

The Portuguese Way **76,950 km**

The pilgrim has crossed what is undoubtedly the best bridge on the Portuguese Way - Ponte Sampaio, situated at the exit of Arcade (a town in Soutomaior) and leading to the municipality of Pontevedra, which has gone down in history as the site of a decisive two-day battle in 1809, when Napoleon's soldiers fought with troops and inhabitants from nearby areas. Incidentally, the battle put an end to several months of French occupation of Galician territory.

The Jacobean route weaves its way between houses, over hills and crosses another bridge, albeit a smaller one, to facilitate the crossing

of the River Ulló. This is the start of a long, beautiful climb called A Canicouva.

The effort required, which is manageable for everyone, is rewarded by the centuries-old route that walkers traverse. The polished granite blocks beneath your feet still bear the marks of the carts that, previously pulled by cows or oxen, used to climb these slopes slowly and with difficulty. On the right is the Cacheiro stream, bordered by a magnificent native forest.

Of course, as Pontevedra extends to sea level, a descent lies ahead, with a stop at the small and charming chapel of Santa Marta, with its characteristic stone cross, erected in 1617.





Estelas Islands

Nigrán

Historically, the Portuguese Way entered Galicia by crossing the River Miño at Tui, but more recently the allure of the Portuguese Way de la Costa has captivated those journeying on foot or by bicycle towards the Cathedral of Santiago, the final destination of all Jacobean routes.

The growing popularity of this route can be attributed to one simple reason: the breathtaking sea views. In fact, from the town of A Guarda, at the foot of the great hillfort of Santa Trega, the Portuguese Way of the Coast runs parallel to the ever spectacular Atlantic Ocean, with a coastline full of reefs and islets. It then passes through Oia, with its

Friends of the Cíes

The Portuguese Way of the Coast



monastery that once served as a monk-soldier monastery, and as the coast veers right towards a lighthouse, the historic Baiona sprawls below, accompanied in the background by the so-called Cíes, two lesser known but spectacular islands. They are the Estelas, de Dentro and de Fóra, the former being larger than the latter. They are surrounded by a group of reefs known as As Serralleiras. Both islands remain untouched by tourism and are renowned for their abundance of shellfish.





San Martiño de Xubia

Narón

A medieval sarcophagus in a
Romanesque temple

The English Way 103,093 km

San Martiño de Xubia was a double monastery built in the times of Romanesque art, meaning it accommodated monks and nuns. No religious community practises within these walls today, but they still stand with dignity. The entire complex - temple, monastery buildings and cemetery - exudes a certain mysticism that complements its artistic elements, among which the three magnificent Romanesque apses stand out.

Pilgrims don't see it straight away. The route winds through the municipality of Narón, hugging the banks of the Ferrol estuary, where the estuary gradually narrows until it joins the main river that gives it life, the Grande de Xubia. The pilgrim doesn't immediately see the wall

and the 18th-century church tower, but descend and first sense an extraordinary presence in the background, then they are overwhelmed by the impression that the buildings are rising, as if from the earth.

Later, the usual question that comes up when you stumble upon a building like this: should you enter the atrium or just keep going? It's definitely worth a look. You might not spot the entrance to the tunnel rumoured to have been used to transport prisoners to a nearby pillory – it's tucked away on the right, concealed by vegetation. But what will really catch your eye is a medieval anthropomorphic sarcophagus out in the open. That alone makes the visit worthwhile, and don't forget to check out the church's façade.





Os Carrás

Ordes

A medieval stretch

The English Way 24,119 km

The pilgrim crossed the centuries-old Pereira bridge, turned right, and along an increasingly narrow dirt road, entering a pine forest. The pine trees gradually give way to riverside species and oaks (known in Galician as carballos). The English Way is now a path that crosses a small stream and begins a



gentle incline that guides the visitor to Os Carrás, a place mentioned by Father Sarmiento on his journey north from Santiago. This is the start of a magnificent ascent of only 450

metres, but one that will remain etched in your memory.

The ascent to Os Carrás is not difficult, as the slope is very gentle and has been carefully channelled to manage the flow of water during rainy periods, showing great care and respect for the environment. This stretch is just about half a kilometre along a traditional Galician “corredoira”, which is nestled under the surrounding land, known as a “congostra”. As you traverse this medieval section, the oaks once again act as silent guardians and companions, and with each step, the pilgrim treads where others from northern Europe walked over six hundred years ago.





A Ulloa Bridge

Oroso

A bridge once crossed by Father Sarmiento

The English Way 16,884 km

The English Way ends just before Santiago, arriving at Sigüeiro. With the town centre in the background, it fades from view as you step into the forest. Although only a few meters long, these woods are remarkably beautiful, and are thought to be either medieval or possibly modern.

A road surface that has not been touched for centuries leads to a fully restored bridge - A Ulloa, mentioned in 18th-century texts, though the existing structure is of later origin.

A little further on, this section ends and the Camino, a well maintained dirt path, unveils

another surprise: the Paseo de los Peregrinos Ilustres. This is a series of plaques set into the ground within a specially designated area. Each plaque commemorates a pilgrim from the past. In this order, you'll come across the immortalised Margery Kempe (the first known British).

As already mentioned, Margery Kempe is commemorated by a statue at the beginning of the bridge over the Tambre. She crossed this bridge both on her journey to Santiago and on her return, as well as on her way back to embark in A Coruña.





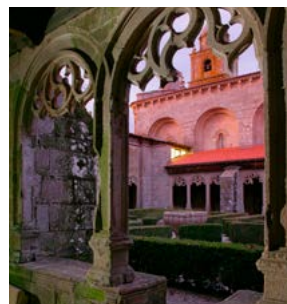
Santa María a Real

Xunqueira de Ambía

The Silver Way or Camino Mozárabe forks in A Gudiña, shortly after entering the province of Ourense. Those who follow the northernmost branch (historically known as A Vereá Vella) will descend to the bottom of the great plain of A Limia, entering the municipality of Xunqueira de Ambía. The journey begins with glimpses of noble buildings nestled among cattle grazing peacefully in the open air, hinting at the nobility and history that permeates their walls and galleries. After a gentle climb, the Camino widens out in the centre of the town, where the collegiate church of Santa María a Real commands attention, richly decorated on one side with blind arches that elegantly crown the buttresses. It is a building that cannot hide its medieval origins, when Romanesque art

A robust temple with a dovecote on top

The Silver Way or Camino Mozárabe 128,773 km



dominated in the 12th century, although the remarkable cross that stands in one corner is more recent. But if the side of the building doesn't excite you, the façade

invites you not only to take a photograph, but also to pause to appreciate its nuances, from the three openings to the lavishly decorated cornice, with its function as a gutter, and the main door with archivolts. The most impressive feature, of course, is the tower and the belfry, the latter dating from the 18th century. Fun fact: on the roof of the church, which was declared a national monument in 1931, there is a dovecote.





Vilanova Bridge

Allariz

Allariz is a town with a great deal of history. Pilgrims travelling along the southernmost part of the Silver Way or the Camino Mozárabe will pass through the town centre and come across the magnificent church dedicated to the Apostle Santiago. By following the scallop shells embedded in the ground, travellers will head downhill to cross the Arnoia River. This part of the town is called Vilanova, and the first thing you notice is a huge stone cross on three steps, with a very elaborate cross and figures. It was built in the 16th century as an offering to God to protect Allariz from the plague.

Here, not on asphalt but on large 18th-century granite slabs, you enter a green tunnel, leaving

Romanesque in a town brimming with art

The Silver Way or Camino Mozárabe 128,622 km



a sports facility on your left. On the opposite side is the church of Santa María, with a sober 18th-century façade that almost looks like a fortress (the side door is

particularly interesting), and a cemetery of great monumentality. This leads to the great bridge of Vilanova, which has Romanesque origins, although some say it dates back to the time when the Roman legions were in Galicia. It has two large arches.





Éntoma Bridge

O Barco de Valdeorras

After the ascent, which is not too steep, there is a detour down the Camino Real to the village of Éntoma, which has revitalised the whole area around the Winter Way. Many traditional houses and all the small streets have visible names.

This warm welcome is intensified when you get to the lower part. Even earlier, both in summer and, of course, much more clearly in autumn and winter, pilgrims will hear the sound of a river that flows abruptly, steeply and beautifully, dividing the village in two. This river is the Galir.

This was discovered centuries ago, and in the 17th century a bridge with a single semicircular

Along an old Camino Real

The Winter Way **218,235 km**



arch was built. Local materials were used: slate and large unhewn stones, as well as small reddish stones typical

of the area. In 2016, the bridge underwent a complete and meticulous restoration, leaving it as it is today.

Up the next small hill, on the right, is the local church, where two things stand out: the reddish tones and the beautiful wooden door. The building, devoid of ornamentation except for the bell tower, is rich in originality.





Torrenovaes Castle

Quiroga

A palace on high

The Winter Way 174,648 km

For many kilometres, the Winter Way is bordered by the river Sil, which can boast of its great width. Following the uphill stretch after Montefurado and the resulting descent, the route suddenly begins to climb. Certainly not many metres, but they are unforgettable because they lead to a village built at the foot of a castle. The pilgrim will find themselves in Torrenovaes, just before the village of Quiroga.

Completely traditional houses, with a lot of stone work, built, like the fortress, on a hill where a fortified settlement was built two thousand years ago. Of particular note is the small temple hidden among the houses. The

castle and the palace built on top of it are now majestic ruins, where a medieval legend about a mysterious hermit who inhabited the area lives on. It is possible to gain access to these walls.

Then the Winter Way heads for the Rego do Castelo, a fast-flowing river, to cover a section of this Jacobean route, considered by some to be the most beautiful of all, along a path that remains as it was hundreds of years ago, with the marks of the wagons on the rocks lining the ground. Acacias, holm oaks and cork oaks embellish the landscape, as do large piles of stones: the remains of a Roman gold mine in the area.





San Lourenzo Hillfort

A Pobra do Brollón

Untouched nature. This is the most accurate definition of the Winter Way, which crosses the municipality of A Pobra do Brollón in Lugo. The typical Galician *corredoiras* (old trails between towns) will make you believe that time has not passed. Some of them have strategically placed *pasais* or stones so that the rainwater does not obstruct the passage on its way down. This is how you get to the banks of a river that is never gentle, with rapids here and there and a respectable width. It is the Saa, winding from one meander to the next. The Camino continues straight on, bypassing the bridge, and is naturally flat as it follows the river for much of the way. Where it opens up into a wide space, it provides a path that, after a few minutes,

The traces of Roman mining

The Winter Way 146,211 km



leads to a small excavated elevation. This hill (*outeiro* in Galician) is a prehistoric village, the

hillfort of San Lourenzo, which year after year reveals its secrets to archaeologists. Visitors will see the buildings that have come to light, including those that form a medieval necropolis around the ancient chapel dedicated to the saint after whom the site is named. The double system of pits and counter-pits can be easily distinguished. In short, it is a site linked to the numerous mining operations carried out in the area by the Roman legions.





San Paio de Diomondi

O Saviñao

It was in a state of disrepair, and the intervention of the Xunta de Galicia recently led to the spectacular restoration of the former palace of the bishops of Lugo, next to the incomparable church of San Paio de Diomondi. The traveller has reached this point through an area that is 100% rural, and before descending to the River Miño through an unforgettable landscape, he or she will undoubtedly stop to admire this National Monument, declared such in 1931.

Although the enclave was first documented in the 8th century, the work that the pilgrim sees is purely Romanesque and was completed at the beginning of the 13th century. It is difficult to single out any one architectural element, but

A palace-turned-hostel

The Winter Way **112,798** km



the main door, with its large archivolts and four round arches, certainly catches the eye.

The columns

that support these arches are also remarkable, made of local marble. The capitals do not go unnoticed either, depicting centaurs, dogs and various animals, and even a human head on one side. The church has a single nave that ends in an apse divided into two bays.

The palace where the bishops of Lugo used to spend their summer holidays, attached to the church, is now a public hostel. The panoramic view is breathtaking.





Church of O Corzón

Mazaricos

Fisterra and Muxía are and have always been two points of attraction, at the end of known land, in the heyday of medieval pilgrimages, although this attraction has its roots much earlier. Many people from other places and countries wanted to see the Atlantic from these two fishing villages, and written documentation, tradition and archaeology all confirm this.

From Santiago the route climbs to a hilly area, crossed in the search for geographical landmarks. One of them is the church of San Cristovo do Corzón, in the municipality of Mazaricos. As the pilgrim makes his or her way down, step by step, he or she will notice that between the crosses of the cemetery there seems to be another cross of greater height.

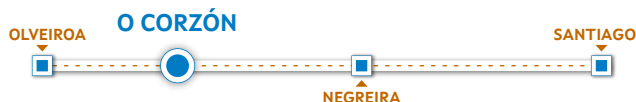
Boasting a free-standing bell tower

The Fisterra and Muxía Way **38,890 km**



In fact, there is a typical stone cross with a *pousadoiro* (a kind of table on which the coffin

is placed before the final farewell) that shares the space not only with the church but also with the bell tower, a remarkable work of art that stands alone, separate from the church. This one, on a lower level, faces west. That is to say, pilgrims see the back wall, and if they want to admire the simple façade they will have to go around the front. The origins of the building can be traced back to the 13th century, as evidenced by the capitals inside.





Church of Morquintián

Muxía

The religious sentiment that has been so present in the Galician soul throughout history explains why temples have been built in remote and seemingly inaccessible places since time immemorial. This can be seen by following the Fisterra and Muxía Way, which, after leaving Lires - where there is also a church - climbs up a mountain and crosses an almost flat area to find an elegant stone cross next to a fountain. This will take travellers to the village of Morquintián, where they will find another fountain and a traditional granite wash-house, of which there are very few left. A small jewel that by no means hides the large Romanesque church with a bell tower accessible from the outside. The building is a must-see, whether you understand

Under the gaze of a lion

The Fisterra and Muxía Way



art or not. Your eyes won't know where to rest. You may notice the lion's body with its half-open mouth and impressive teeth protruding from the roof, on which a cross has been

placed. Perhaps you will look at the buttresses, or perhaps you will look at the medieval façade, even as the corbels that support the roof overhang are medieval.

The façade has three interesting elements: a round arch in the doorway, a large oculus at the top and, above all, a reclining *Agnus Dei* with a cross above it.





EDICIA PAROQUIAE DE SANCTO MARTINO



Stone cross of Cortegada

Art in the Atlantic Islands of
Galicia National Park

The Route of the Sea of Arousa and River Ulla

The route up the Arousa estuary and the last stretch of the river Ulla is also the only fluvial Way of the Cross in the world. An idea from 1964, when pilgrimages to Santiago were something very marginal and forgotten by the whole world. But in the mid-sixties of the last century, a group of enthusiasts used their contacts in the administration to achieve what seemed impossible: a large group of typical Galician stone crosses on islands and riverbanks.

The first of these is half hidden by the undergrowth at the top of an islet called Malveira Grande. It is not possible to visit or even trim the vegetation, as Malveira Grande (like its younger sister, Malveira Chica) is part

of the Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park and it is strictly forbidden to enter: nature must grow without human intervention.

But at the second stone cross, things change. It is still inside the National Park, but it is possible to land on the island where it is located, Cortegada, with a permit. Passengers disembark at a jetty to the south-east, with the stone cross at the north end, stranded in the water when the tide comes in. In other words, travellers have to go on this splendid walk along the banks of the river, leaving behind the village that was abandoned many decades ago, until they reach the point from which they can see it, called the Corveiro point.





Torres de Oeste

Catoira

The part of the banks of the River Ulla where the Torres de Oeste (Oeste Towers) stand has been around since prehistoric times, when a fortified settlement was built and a bishop called Cresconio ordered a defensive fortress to be built on it. We know why: to prevent attacks by the dreaded Normans, who, going up the river, reached Iria Flavia, next to Padrón, without serious setbacks, and then had a free passage to Santiago.

And indeed, seven towers - the Castellum Honesti - and a chapel were built there. The current appearance of the complex is the result of the reconstruction carried out by an archbishop still renowned in Galicia, called Gelmírez (the chapel is his work), who lived in

The memory of the Vikings

The Route of the Sea of Arousa and River Ulla



the 11th and 12th centuries and whose palace opens its doors next to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

As a matter of fact, in 1946 the towers and the temple were joined together to prevent them from collapsing, and at the end of the 1960s it was planned that the great bridge that runs alongside them would pass over them, but of course this was never done. On the first Saturday in August, Torres de Oeste holds its traditional Viking pilgrimage, which has been declared a Festival of International Tourist Interest.





Brañas de Dodro

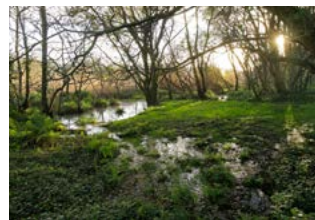
Dodro

According to tradition, a stone boat transported the lifeless body of the apostle Santiago from the Holy Land, sailing up the Arousa estuary and the last stretch of the river Ulla that feeds it, stopping at Padrón. In other words, it went around the Dodro marshes on the left, which were mentioned by Father Sarmiento in the 18th century and by the great Galician poet Rosalía de Castro in the following century.

Today, those who go up the estuary and the Ulla can still see this vast expanse crossed by small streams. In Galician, these marshes are called *brañas*, and this is the name by which they are known in a large region. It is also known that the aforementioned Rosalía de Castro lived

A site of great ecological value

The Route of the Sea of Arousa and River Ulla



in a nearby manor house - where she also gave birth to her twins - whose two towers served as watchtowers against

the Norman invasions, and where she wrote verses that were later published in *En las orillas del Sar* (On the banks of the Sar). The Sar is the main tributary of the Ulla, into which it flows at the entrance to Padrón, in a place symbolically called O Paraíso, and with Pontecesures in sight, on the banks of what is now Pontevedra.

Either way, it is a journey unlike any other on the planet.





Santiago de Compostela

Destination of all the Caminos

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The destination of all the Caminos de Santiago de Compostela always has been and will be the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Of course, pilgrims will leave behind beautiful, unforgettable and even exciting places, but the destination is the basilica that guards and venerates the human remains of one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ. The destination is also the Portico de la Gloria itself, a great work of Spanish Romanesque architecture, undoubtedly one of the best in the world, dating from the 12th century, now restored to its original polychrome and open to visitors. It is also that unique square, the Obradoiro, which has become the meeting point for hundreds of thousands of pilgrims every year, all of whom pose for photographs against the unique backdrop of its magnificent Baroque façade, which took almost a



hundred years to build. The chapel - whose origins date back to the 11th century - of A Corticela and the Romanesque almshouse on the left of the high altar, are the goal and the destination. And, of course, the finale is the symbolic embrace of the Apostle and the visit to the 19th-century silver urn that holds the bones of Santiago. And when it is a Holy Year, as it will be in 2027, everyone wants to go through the Holy Door, decorated since the 17th century with twelve figures from the medieval choir of the Sanctuary.



