



*As Mariñas and the Gulf of Ártabro**



A CORUÑA BY NIGHT, SEEN FROM MERA BEACH

We have come up with a number of attractive tours around the **As Mariñas Coruñesas** area, bathed by the waters of the **Gulf of Ártabro**.

You may opt to take our route along the eastern coast of the Ría de A Coruña, in Oleiros, enjoying the spectacular views of the city, its port and the Tower of Hercules.

Alternatively, discover the delights of **Betanzos** and **Pontedeume**, medieval towns once ruled over by the knight Fernán Pérez de Andrade, known as O Boo ('the Good'). Also not to be missed are the fascinating monuments and delightful spots in towns such as Sada, Bergondo, Abegondo, Cambre, Carral or Culleredo.

You should also take the time to marvel at the rough seas that crash onto the shores of beaches that line the coast of Arteixo as far as the fishing town of Caión, the gateway to the dreaded **Costa da Morte** or 'Coast of Death'.



DIANA THE HUNTRESS FOUNTAIN - BETANZOS



MARIÑAN MANOR HOUSE - THE GARDENS



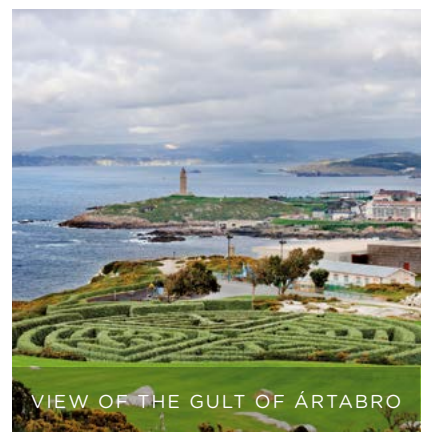
MERA LIGHTHOUSE



ARTEIXO - SURFERS

**Artabrorum*

The Gulf of Ártabro is the large mouth where the sea flows into the land, formed by the convergence of the rías or tidal inlets of A Coruña, Betanzos, Ares and Ferrol: the 'chunk' that appears to have been bitten out of the Iberian Peninsula when seen on a map. The Greco-Roman geographers named it **Portus Magnus Artabrorum** (the great Ártabro natural harbour).



VIEW OF THE GULF OF ÁRTABRO

Biosphere Reserve:

The **Mariñas Coruñesas and Terras do Mandeo Biosphere Reserve** comprises land, coastal and marine ecosystems in the basins of the rivers Mero and Mandeo, including areas that form part of the Natura 2000 network. It covers no fewer than seventeen boroughs, including A Coruña. Biosphere Reserves are designated by **UNESCO**, as part of its **Man and Biosphere** programme. The aim is to conserve cultural and environmental heritage, promote the socio-economic development of the areas' residents and provide opportunities for research and education in sustainable development.

...profiles:

Fernán Perez de Andrade, a medieval knight and lord of the lands you will be visiting on these tours. You can learn more about him and his life in Betanzos and Pontedeume.

The García Naveira Brothers, *indianos* - emigrants who made their fortune in America, specifically in Argentina, before returning to their hometown of Betanzos in the early 20th century, where they became major philanthropists.

Luis Seoane, (Buenos Aires, 1910 - A Coruña, 1979). "The Galicians will eventually learn about their history, even though it is limited to bric-a-brac and other knick-knacks..." A painter, writer and intellectual who revolutionised art and the history of Galicia with his designs for El Castro and Sargadelos ceramics factories back in the 1970s.

The ghost of **Fiz de Cotovelo** who haunts the footpaths of Cecebre in **El Bosque Animado** ('The Enchanted Wood'), the novel by **Wenceslao Fernández Florez**, often pays a visit to San Amaro Cemetery in A Coruña to liven up the guided tour of this Galician pantheon, included on the Significant Cemeteries in Europe Route.

MORE INFO AT:

www.turismocoruna.com

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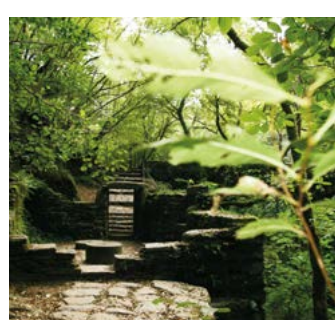


As Mariñas Coruñesas

GULF OF ÁRTABRO



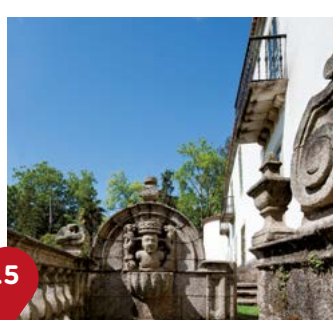
1 Betanzos
24 km/23' (AP-9 Motorway, exit 2F-A)
Standing on a river peninsula surrounded by the rivers Mandeo and Mendo, the historic quarter of this medieval city has been declared a Historic and Artistic Site. Three gates of the ancient walls are still standing: Arco da Ponte Nova, Arco do Cristo and Arco da Ponte Vella. Inside the walls are three early Gothic churches built by Fernán Pérez de Andrade: the 14th century San Francisco, declared a national monument, housing the tombs of Fernán Pérez de Andrade and other nobles that have made this temple Galicia's most important pantheon for members of the nobility; the 15th century Santa María do Azogue, also declared a national monument and whose most outstanding features are the Flemish school polychrome wooden reredos and the capital with Galicia's only medieval farming calendar; and the 15th century Church of Santiago, featuring a figure of the Apostle Saint James over the doorway. A municipal tower was built adjacent to this temple in the 16th century.



Sites situated just outside the town and that are well worth a visit include Bremao Chapel, Andrade Castle and the monasteries of Monfero and Caaveiro, nestling in the heart of the **Fragas do Eume Nature Park**, Europe's best-conserved autochthonous coastal forest.



3 Eastern coast of the Ría de A Coruña (Oleiros)
(Accessed via Avenida Alfonso Molina AC-11 and Puente Pasaje AC-12)
The bridge's central lane will bring us to Santa Cristina (7 km/12'), a peninsula-shaped beach in the borough of Oleiros. From here we head towards Bastiagueiro (2 km/5'), a beach that is a firm favourite with the young people of A Coruña.



5 Bergondo
23 km/20' (AP-9 Motorway, exit 2F-B)
Bergondo is an area boasting a wealth of stately homes and manor houses, including the magnificent Baroque Pazo de Mariñán, owned by A Coruña Provincial Council. Standing on the banks of the Ría de Betanzos tidal inlet, it is open to visitors who can tour the house and magnificent grounds dotted with several bird-watching points. Pedrido Bridge, a feat of engineering designed by Torroja Miret and Villalba Granda, takes us to Miño, site of one of the most spectacular beaches on this stretch of coastline.



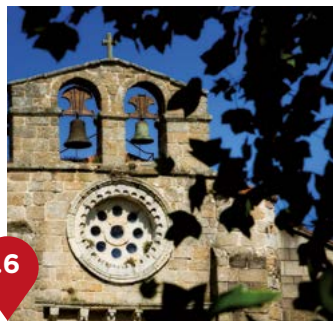
9 Abegondo
30 km/26' (AP-9 and A-6 motorways)
The manor houses of Quiroga and Figueroa are clear indications of this borough's noble past. Abegondo is the site of a stone cross that was so deeply-admired by the people of A Coruña that they decided to erect a replica here in the city, in front of the Church of San Jorge. The Beche and Abegondo-Cecebre reservoirs, built in 1976 to supply the city of A Coruña and included in the Natura 2000 network, are ideal spots from which to observe the flocks of birds that migrate here for the winter. The training ground of football team Deportivo de A Coruña is also located in Abegondo.



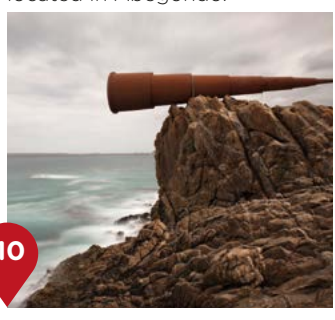
Not to be missed is a visit to the Pasatiempo Encyclopaedia Park. Work on this recreational facility was completed in 1914 by the García Naveira Brothers, *indianos* who emigrated to Argentina where they made their fortunes. The early 20th century also brought a new style of architecture to Betanzos: Modernism. Architect Rafael González Villar, who designed the Kiosco Alfonso in A Coruña, is one of the key figures behind the transformation of medieval Betanzos into a 'modern city'.



The next stop on the route is Santa Cruz (1 km/3'), site of the castle built to defend the tidal inlet which today affords breathtaking views of our city. Continuing on to Mera (5 km/8'), a summer holiday town, we make our way up to the lighthouse, consisting of two towers which, together with the Tower of Hercules, guide large vessels entering the port of A Coruña. The Costa de Dexo nature monument extends between the lighthouse and Lorbé harbour, famous for its floating mussel farming platforms. From the top of the cliffs we can admire stunning views of the rías or tidal inlets that form the Gulf of Artabro: A Coruña, Betanzos, Ares and Ferrol.



6 Cambre
16 km/20' (AP-9 Motorway, exit 7)
This town is home to one of the finest examples of Galician Romanesque architecture: the Church of Santa María de Cambre. Opposite the main façade of the church is the Archaeological Site Museum, housing remains of the Roman town. You can also enjoy a relaxing stroll along the promenade that lines the Ría do Burgo tidal inlet or spot the numerous Modernist style houses. Cambre's attractions include the wood that inspired the novel by Wenceslao Fernández Flores, *El Bosque Animado* ('The Enchanted Wood'), which was also made into a film.



10 Arteixo
23 km/20' (AG-55)
Arteixo is home to the headquarters of fashion retail giant INDITEX and also the site of A Coruña's Outer Port. Top of our list of recommendations is a nature walk along the *sendero azul* or 'blue footpath' (low difficulty, 6.5 km) in the Costa da Morte Special Area of Conservation (SAC). You will walk along the path joining seven spectacular unspoilt beaches that defy the onslaught of the wild North Atlantic. Waters that attract surfers, seabirds, dolphins and sometimes even whales.



2 Pontevedra
38 km/30' (AP-9 Motorway, exit 21F)
Pontevedra and Betanzos, domains of the Knight Fernán Pérez de Andrade, were important strongholds during the Middle Ages. The location of this town, at the mouth of the River Eume, made it a strategic defence point.



4 Sada
18 km/24' (AC-11, N-VI, AC-174)
In the early 20th century this town was a popular summer holiday resort for numerous families from A Coruña and it is also one of the region's principal fishing harbours and marinas. Traces of its Modernist past can be admired in the magnificent La Terraza building, which originally stood in Méndez Núñez Gardens in A Coruña, before it was moved on the tram which connected the city with Sada. Also not to be missed is a tour of the O Castro (Sargadelos) ceramics workshop, founded by Isaac Díaz Pardo and local artist Luis Seoane.



7 O Burgo, Culleredo
12 km/12' (AP-9 Motorway, exit 7)
A stopping point on the English Way of Saint James from A Coruña to Santiago de Compostela. Sights worth looking out for include O Burgo Bridge, where the city once stood before King Alphonse IX of León ordered 'Cruñia' to be moved to the site known today as the Old City, marking the start of sea trade from the city. In Peiro, Celas Tower, declared an Asset of Cultural Interest, provides a fascinating insight into the rule of the Andrade family over these lands. The Xalo Hills offer lovers of adventure tourism and hiking a range of great leisure options.



11 Caíón and Costa da Morte
25 km/30' (AG-55, DP-0514)
Caíón, site of a former whale fishing harbour, is a small village of less than 1,000 inhabitants that provides a fascinating insight into the lives of the people that inhabit this coastal region. It is the gateway to A Coruña's dreaded **Costa da Morte** or 'Coast of Death', which earned its name and reputation due to the shipwrecks that were once common occurrences in this region. It extends from here as far as Finisterre, and includes the towns of Malpica, Muxía, Corme, Laxe, Camariñas, Corcubión and Cee.

Traces of its glorious past can be seen at every turn in the historic quarter. Driving into town from the motorway, you cross the bridge that replaced the earlier Gothic version, of which only the bear and boar, symbols of the Andrade family, remain. From here you can also catch a glimpse of the 14th century Andrade Tower, which today houses the Tourist Information Office and the Andrade Visitor Centre. A stroll around the streets will reveal the ruins of the town walls, the Town Hall, the main street known as Calle Real, the churches of Santiago and Las Virtudes, the Palace of Archbishop Rajoy, the Convent of San Agustín, the Latin School and many other secrets of the town's rich medieval history.



8 Carral
21 km/21' (N-550)
If you have already discovered the city's range of delicious tapas, then you will have also tasted the traditional bread from Carral. This country borough, standing on the English Way to Santiago from A Coruña, boasts more than 20 artisanal bakeries renowned for their delicious Galician wood-oven baked bread. The wealth of flour produced in these lands is accompanied by numerous mills. Explore the Costa da Égoa Mill Route, a fascinating hidden footpath that winds its way among streams, leafy woods and ancient watermills. Definitely worth exploring.



What did you think of our ideas?

...perhaps by bus

If you don't fancy driving, scheduled bus services run regularly to several of these destinations from the centrally-located Calle Entrexardins (Méndez Núñez Gardens) and to all of them from the Bus Station. The information panels at the Entrexardins bus stop provide details of the bus times. Alternatively you can call the Bus Station on +34 981 184 335 or check directly with the bus companies: ACP (autoscalpita.com T +34 981 235 759) and ARRIVA (arriva.gal - T +34 981 330 046)