

Galicia Festivals, Fairs and "Romerías"



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In the furthest corner of the galaxy

The common denominator that underlies all Galicia's festivals continues to be a real sense of solidarity, reinforcing the ideal of the home, the group, and inextricably linked to the idea of tradition and identity. The "*morriña*" experienced by Galician emigrants everywhere is felt even more poignantly when they look back on those special days. Holidays and festivals undoubtedly bring out the best in a society, united by a sense of harmony and empathy that flows between the people and the land, the sacred and the profane, reinforced by the renewal of ancestral myths and rituals.

THE INFLUENCE OF AGRICULTURE IN TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS AND FAIRS

The roots of these festivals are to be found in farming traditions, and are associated with the "four life-giving elements": **fire**, namely the sun, light and heat; **rainwater** that fills the springs, rivers and seas; the **land**, which includes stone, ground, the home, altar and tomb; and the **air** we breathe, the wind that whispers to us and creates the swirls of smoke rising up from the "*lareiras*". Four elements that are closely linked to the four seasons of the year, marked by equinoxes and solstices that have been commemorated since the New Stone Age, when Man discovered his ability to domesticate everything around him: the landscape, vegetation, animals, as well as his fellow men, through the introduction of rules and laws. Yet the passing of time has left its mark: over the years many of these traditions have taken on the appearance of Christian rituals. Festivals originally rooted in farming traditions include the Christmas period with the Night of San **Silvestre**, the Feast of the Virgen de la **Candelaria**, the **Entroido** or Carnival, the **Maïos**, **San Xoán**, **Corpus**, and the **Magostos** during the Feast of San Martín. Festivals with characteristics that are peculiar to each parish, yet which also share a series of common denominators: the bonfires which form a focal point around which the group gathers and which have developed into spectacular firework displays. Other central elements include the water that nurtures the orchards, the purifying wind that carries the spirits of their ancestors, the unchanging setting that is the land...celebrations that bring together the communities of the living and the dead.

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In this sense, the Night of San Juan is a fine example of these ideas: tradition has it that ancestral voices and the tolling of ancient parish bells can be heard from beneath the lakes. During other festivals such as those held in Santa Marta of Ribarteme, As Neves (Pontevedra) or el Cristo of A Pobra do Caramiñal (A Coruña), men and women wrapped in shrouds are carried in coffins by their relatives to give thanks for having been saved - albeit temporarily - from "*o pasamento*". In traditional Galician folklore, life and death go hand in hand.

ANCESTRAL FAIRS, FESTIVALS AND "ROMERÍAS"

The chosen venue for these celebrations was traditionally a crossroads, a meeting point which would later become the setting for fairs and "romerías" alike. A setting that would inevitably include a "*cruceiro*" (stone cross), a traditional religious symbol, or a stone altar with a collection plate for alms, the "*peto de ánimas*", in memory of their forefathers. The sites chosen for the "romerías" to a religious shrine included woods, *carballeiras* (oak woods) facing the sea, the banks of a river or before one of those huge stones or springs believed to hold "*miraculous*" properties and that have been the object of cult since time immemorial. These areas are presided over by the temple, the shrine where the faithful flock to worship an ancient image and leave their offerings. Lands that stretch out into the distance, such as those of **O Faro**, close to Chantada, **A Guarda** or **Tegra**, in the province of Pontevedra, **O Pico Sacro**, just outside Santiago de Compostela; or **O Viso** in Lobios, province of Ourense. Settings where we also find the springs which the local inhabitants claim have special healing powers, such as those of Fonte do Rial close to the Shrine of **Santo Ourente of Entíns** in

Serra de Outes in the province of A Coruña; or **San Andrés de Teixido** in Cedeira, where " *ó que vai de morto o que non foi de vivo*" ("those who failed to go in life will go in death") and so it goes on, in keeping with a spiritual exercise bound by tradition: **Pastoriza** in Arteixo; in Pontevedra and in the borough of A Cañiza, the Shrine of **A Franqueira** in the borough of A Cañiza, in Pontevedra; **Los Milagros de Amil** in Moraña, in the province of Pontevedra; **Nosa Señora da Lanzada** in Sanxenxo; **O Corpiño** in Lalín; Outeiro de Rei, in the province of Lugo, the field of **Santa Isabel** on the banks of the River Miño; in Ourense, the Shrine of **Os Milagros of Maceda**... Open spaces shrouded in legends, apparitions and healings in which the sense of pantheism can truly be felt; the animism whereby a force animates the inanimate and which characterises both Galicia and the Galician people. It is here that the pipes or the *pandeirada* (tambourine) sound their sweetest. Traditionally "*mordomos*", representative figures from the group, would go from house to house during the festival period to collect a gift, which they



Galicia Festivals, Fairs and "Romerías"



would then hang from a branch, normally taken from a laurel bush, and later auction off. Today the system has changed; a committee is responsible for ensuring that the interests of all are attended to, thereby guaranteeing the success of the celebrations. Music is an essential element, and these festivals provide local bands, choirs and folk groups with the perfect audience for their performances. Flags and street lighting are also omnipresent. And as night falls, no celebration is complete without the ubiquitous "*folión*" or firework display. The "*folión*" held on the eve of the Day of the Apostle, in Santiago de Compostela, is a larger version of the same interest in celebration that drives many of Galicia's towns and villages.

An element of trade is also present in Galicia's festivals and religious celebrations. They represent a time of coming together and provide the perfect opportunity to sell Galicia's finest produce and crafts, as well as other goods of more distant origin. The atmosphere is one of harmony and fraternity. With the arrival of





autumn, the festivals and fairs of **San Froilán** in Lugo or **San Lucas** in Mondoñedo represent the drawing to a close of the summer, and the preparation for shorter and darker winter days.

ENTROIDO. The Carnival celebrations, which may fall either in February or March, bring out the full bloom of the mimosa and camellia, the spring colours of the landscape. Each area of Galicia has its own particular rituals and costumes that combine to form a spectacular calendar of festivities presided over by Meco, Urco or Momo... the popular "*choqueiro*" god and absolute ruler of these celebrations: *Domingo Fareleiro, Xoves de Compadres, Domingo de Corredoiro, and Xoves de Comadres*. The most important celebrations are held on the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, although *Ash Wednesday* is popular for its "*Enterro da Sardiña*" and a final celebration is held during Lent itself, known as "*Domingo de piñata*".

EASTER. This is celebrated during March or April, and in Galicia takes on a sense of religiosity characterised by





animism and pantheism and true religious devotion.

"A RAPA DAS BESTAS". Early in July several mountain villages in Galicia hold their traditional "*Rapa das Bestas*", an ancient festival during which the horse breeders round up the "*greas*", or groups of wild horses - "*as bestas bravas*", sturdy beasts described by Roman travellers two thousand years ago -, in the paddock or "*curro*". The foals accompany the mares and they are branded with a hot iron, during the course of a fierce duel fought out between beast and man. The air is filled with horses' neighs, human cries, kicking and horses' manes, whilst the animals are tamed and their manes cut to be sold later. Additional activities such as dressage displays, show jumping competitions, eating and dancing complete the day's events.

THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE, BETWEEN ALTAR AND TABLE...

The traditional "*romería*" has its own particular ritual: it includes following the processional route; taking your own food or buying the typical products for sale at the various stalls; taking part in the religious celebrations, including the mass, the letting off of rockets and the procession carrying the image

of the saint, accompanied by a group of *gaiteiros* or local band; and a meal shared with relatives or friends, a kind of meeting for the ancient tribe or clan in which the whole parish takes part. Picturesque traditions that have been skilfully portrayed by many of great names of the Galician art revival of the 20th century such as Colmeiro, Maside, Torres or Faílde. No celebration is complete without the "*pulpeiras*" who cook the octopus in their ancient copper pots, serving it up on wooden plates carved with their initials; or the stalls selling the traditional Galician pie with a range of fillings: "*raxo*" (marinated pork), "*xoubas*" (baby sardines), tuna, cockles, eels.. plus a range of meat dishes including casseroled, braised or stewed veal. Proof of the importance played by "*xantar*" – eating – in popular festivals throughout Galicia is the fact that in recent times many have been reconverted into authentic gastronomic celebrations, aimed at extolling the virtues of the typical products of each region: wine, octopus, ham, Galician stew, shellfish, lamprey, eel, pies, peppers, trout, elver, etc. These festivals and "*romerías*" are spread throughout the year and extend along the length and breadth of Galicia, forming a vital part of its economy and culture.







Festivals in Galicia of
National Tourist Interest

Carnival

Xinzo de Limia (Ourense)



This borough is located on the road from Ourense to Zamora, on the site of the former Antela Lagoon, the source of the legendary River Limia, known since ancient times as the "*Río del Olvido*" (River of Oblivion). Together with its neighbouring boroughs it forms a unique itinerary to be followed during the Entroido or carnival time: the "*Peliqueiros*" in Laza; the "*Cigarróns*" in Verín; the "*Boteiros*" in the area around Viana do Bolo or Manzaneda and in Xinzo itself the "*Pantallas*" who take control of the streets. They can all be clearly distinguished by their costumes and masks, which have been added to throughout the ages but whose origins have long been forgotten, although they are known to be closely linked to the farming celebrations that herald the coming of spring.



“Romaría do Santo Cristo”

Fisterra (A Coruña)



This takes place at the westernmost tip of the Iberian Peninsula, journey's end for the pilgrims following their visit to the Apostle's tomb. Tradition has it that this is the site of the temple to the setting sun, the “Ara Solis”, and of the Chapel of San Guillermo where fertility rites still take place. **Easter** has a special importance in Fisterra due to its relation to the sun cult: after the darkness, after the Passion, comes the Pascua Florida (Easter Sunday), when the Resurrection is re-enacted outside the Romanic church of Santa da Area, home to an unusual image known as the “*Santo Cristo da Barba Dourada*”, worshipped as if the very sun itself had been brought back from the dead.

Easter Viveiro (Lugo)



A borough that looks out onto the Cantabrian Sea, typical of those to be found in Lugo's Mariña Central area, surrounded by countryside that also witnesses the traditional "*Rapa das Bestas*". Naseiro Valley, the River Landro are also the sites for some of Galicia's most traditional "*romerías*". The landscape is characterised by thickly wooded areas and large beaches. This town, founded in the 13th century, was the site chosen by the Franciscan monks for their monasteries and a series of events depicting the life and passion of Christ, as well as for the traditional "*cruceiros*" (stone crosses) and the "*Viacrucis*" (the Way of the Cross). Articulated images portray the various "*seasons*", such as the station where Jesus meets his Mother, accompanied by the "*sermon*". Silence weighs heavily



in the atmosphere, broken only by the beating of a drum, as the "*cofrades*" make their way through the narrow streets by candlelight...accompanied by the slow march of the penitents. Reason enough to walk along the cobbled streets of this town, some of which still preserve the town wall gates, and whose seaport was of considerable importance throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

Easter

Ferrol (A Coruña)



This city stands on a narrow and sheltered inlet of major strategic value, particularly during the 18th century, when the enlightened spirit of the seafarers decided to draw the city's structure along the lines of neoclassical rationalism. Its military spirit, combined with the most timeless of traditions, have led to a series of unique Easter celebrations, in which the strict and disciplined naval traditions add a touch of brilliance to this sober, modest, rational yet imaginative setting that characterises both the people and the city, birthplace of men and women who have distinguished themselves in all walks of life.

O Ribeiro

Wine Fair - Exhibition
Ribadavia (Ourense)



The date of this fair varies, although it is normally held in early May, on a site boasting the stately homes of the nobility and churches with charming towers as well as the more humble dwellings of the winemakers. Ribadavia is imbued with the very essence of the local "*ribeiros*", and particularly those that lived on the banks of the Avia, the river that flows between the terraced vineyards or "*socalcos*" where the grapes of the Pazos de Arenteiro, Leiro and Beade ripen, on its way to join the Miño in Ribadavia. The city grew up around the Sarmiento family castle, and boasts a Jewish quarter complete with ancient wine cellars, a cool freshness and something of a pagan sanctuary and authentic local associations.

This wine festival is a display and exaltation of the very finest wines produced by the famous vineyards along the



riverside such as Barbantes, Razamonde, Ventosela, Esposende, Castrelo, A Arnoia, San Cristovo, Beade, Leiro, Beiro, San Clodio, Riobó, Gomariz, Pazos de Arenteiro, Varón, etc.

“Corpus Christi” Ponteareas (Pontevedra)



A fertile valley running along the banks of the River Tea, lying between the Paradanta and Galleiro Hills, in the region of O Condado, and rich in archaeological remains from various periods. This is a land that is home to fine musicians and curious traditions such as that of the Bridge of los Remedios, related to easy childbirth, or the animist cults inspired by the huge crags of A Picaraña. The area's best-known festival, Corpus Christi, is held during the **weekend following “Corpus Christi”**, and is famous for its elaborate floral carpets. This is a delicate and sadly ephemeral art form, whose intricate multicoloured and geometrical shapes are the result of a whole night's work in which the whole town is involved, in readiness for the solemn procession at noon the following day.

Bonfires of San Juan

A Coruña

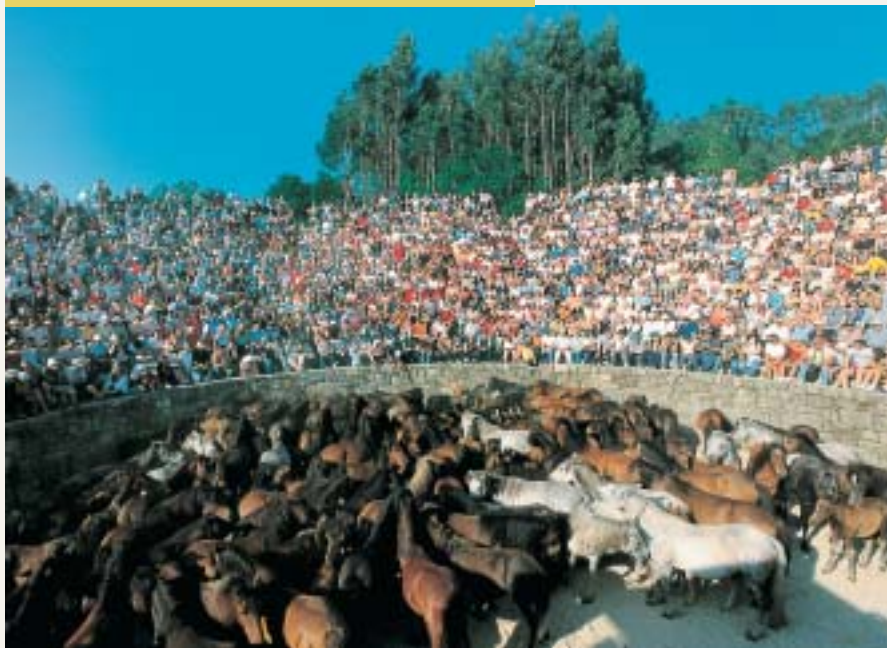


The night of the 23rd to the 24th of June marks the highpoint of the ancestral essences of the so-called "magical Galicia", when the animist sentiments of its people join forces with nature more strongly than at any other time of year. Thousands of bonfires are lit on Riazor beach, or in the various districts that make up the city that is home to the Roman Hercules Lighthouse. Families and groups of friends dance around the fires and share a feast of roast sardines and boiled potatoes known as "*cachelos*".



“A Rapa das Bestas”

San Lourenzo de Sabucedo.
A Estrada (Pontevedra)



The first weekend in July. It takes place in Terra de Montes, rich in archaeological remains, particularly petroglyphs - prehistoric stone carvings depicting spirals, astral symbols, animals and hunting and taming scenes, such as those on display in the neighbouring borough of Campo Lameiro. Herds of wild horses and cows move freely around these open lands, which are also ideal for hunting and fishing. Everything is connected to the ancient fiesta of the "Rapa das Bestas", where the paddock or "curro" becomes the focal point in the struggle to tame the wild horses, the essence of speed, sun and life that are said to have been "*fathered by the wind*".

"A Rapa das Bestas"

of Candaoso

Santo André de Boimente. Viveiro (Lugo)



From the top of these hills visitors can catch a glimpse of the Landro bay or inlet and beyond it Coelleira Island and Estaca de Bares. Here, **during the early hours of the first Sunday in July**, and after a traditional breakfast consisting of garlic soup, the horsemen begin to round up the wild horses to tame them in the paddock where they are then branded, their manes cut and domesticated in an impressive struggle. The festivities continue until night falls over the hills.



“San Benitiño de Lérez”

Pontevedra



This popular “romería”, in honour of the saint referred to in local poems as the “*santo más milagreiro*” (the most prolific of miracle workers), is held every **11th July** in the more modest quarters of Pontevedra. San Benito has enjoyed tremendous popularity amongst the Galician people since the Later Middle Ages, which spread thanks to the major Cistercian monasteries built in Galicia.

Worshippers pray to this saint in the hope that he will rid them of their ailments, particularly warts. Lérez is the site of a former Benedictine monastery, and a shrine built on the banks of the River Lérez that houses the small image of the saint. Devotees pass under the altar and dip their fingers in the oil lamp which is claimed to have “miraculous” powers.

International Festival of the
Celtic World
 Ortigueira (A Coruña)



The venue for this festival lies between the surprising Ortegal Cape and Estaca de Bares, on the slopes of the Capelada, Coriscada and Faladoira Hills that lead to the sanctuary of San Andrés de Teixido. This is an area of great geological value where the sea flows gently into the land, forming a maze-like inlet. It is here, among the magnificent beaches, archaeological remains and strong Celtic traditions, that this festival of Celtic solidarity is held during the **third weekend in July**. Particular emphasis is given to traditional and contemporary music, and the finest groups in the Western Atlantic region regularly come to perform at Ortigueira.



“Santiago Apóstol”

Santiago de Compostela (A Coruña)



The greatest Galician festival of all is held on **25th July**, turning the city of Santiago de Compostela and its cathedral into the principal summer reference. It is a meeting point for ancient trails and European traditions. All Galician festivals and “romerías” represent an ancient call to gather around sacred and profane elements that contain a heavy sense of symbolism. At midnight on the eve of the *Day of the Apostle*, a spectacular fireworks display is held in Obradoiro Square, including the traditional “*burning of the Cathedral façade*”, further proof of the ancient cult to the colourful igneous phenomena, staged by firework experts.

The fantasy of lights, colour and creativity brings out the full force of the Baroque stonework that characterises the city’s architectural heritage. On the morning of the 25th a solemn offering is made to the Apostle in the cathedral, followed by a parade around the streets featuring giant headed figures accompanied by traditional music and concerts in the city’s squares. “Romerías” and festivities take place in the *carballeiras*, under a canopy of centuries-old oak trees. The Festival of the Apostle is the synthesis and essence of Galician sentiment, a call and convergence for solidarity in a historic setting.

Festival of International Tourist Interest

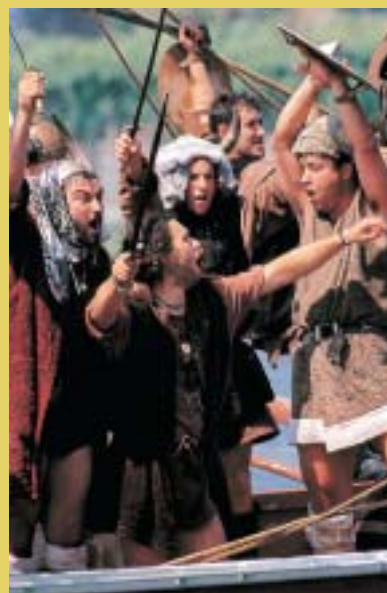
Festivals in Galicia of **National** Tourist Interest

Viking “Romería” Catoira (Pontevedra)



This event is celebrated in the shade of the Eastern Towers, the site of a former Roman settlement where the medieval towers once stood in defence of the route along the River Ulla to Jacobsland - the name given to Santiago de Compostela by the Norsemen.

It is here, on this site steeped in history, that an re-enactment of the Viking invasions is carried out on the **first Sunday in August**: the Viking "*drakkars*" put into port... *aturuxos*, the lusty cries of the strong red-headed Norsemen with their horned helmets ring out as they brandish their swords...the "Christians", powerless before these fighting men and forced to surrender following a skirmish intermingled with smoke and fire, yet the conclusion is a fraternal gathering of actors and spectators around the table, to the accompaniment of the *gaiteiros* (pipers), whilst the sound of celebratory rockets echoes around the Arousa inlet.



Festival of International Tourist Interest

Festival of
“la Santa Cruz”
Ribadeo (Lugo)



Villa stands on a hilltop overlooking the Eo, on the border between Galicia and Asturias. It was the birthplace of the erudite the Marquis of Sargadelos and its principal landmark is the "*Casa de los Moreno*", built in the Modernist style that characterises the whole town. **On the first Sunday in August** practically the whole town joins the "romería" to Monte de Santa Cruz that looks out over the inlet and woods. An exceptional setting in which to enjoy this local festival that includes all the local dishes and the traditional pipes, tambourines and drums played in the shade of the stone monument to the *gaiteiro* (the piper), the work of Ourense-born sculptor Failde.

Albariño Wine Festival Cambados (Pontevedra)



"Fidalgo e soñador". A town of noble ideals, Cambados faces the Arousa inlet, formed by the River Ulla and the mouth of the Umia which borders the region known as Salnés. This is an inlet of spectacular sunsets, and lands that served as an inspiration for the poetry of Ramón Cabanillas. The landscape is scattered by those tall and noble vines where the grapes of the celebrated Albariño or Espadeiro wines ripen. The sun terraces of vast stone manor houses originally built as defence towers look out over paradisiacal landscapes. Cambados celebrates its wine festival on **the first Sunday in August**, and its meticulously organised wine-tasting session attracts true gourmets and connoisseurs. This is a time for extolling the delights offered by both sea and land in the very heart of the *"Rías Baixas"*.

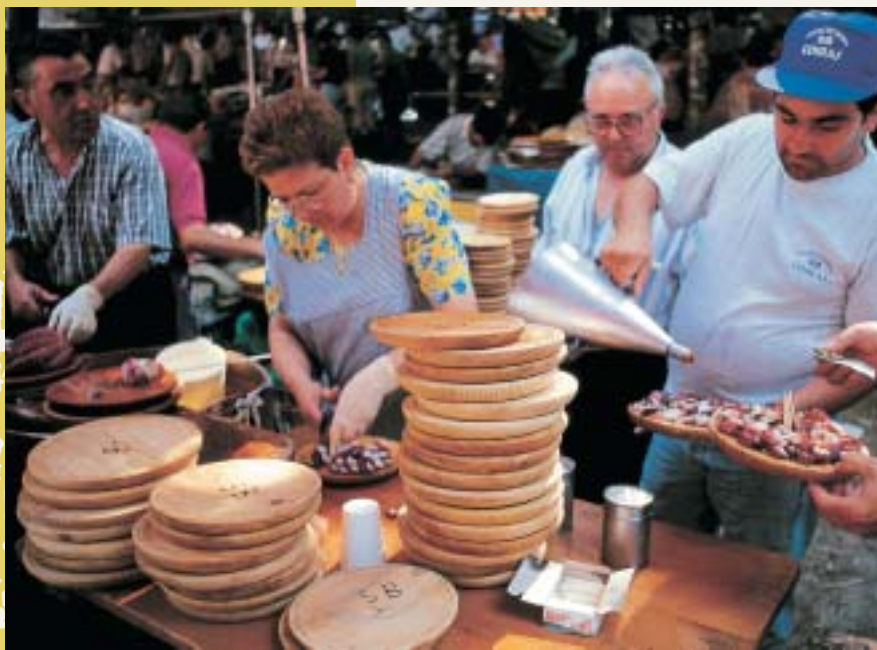


Feast of the Patron
San Lourenzo
Foz (Lugo)



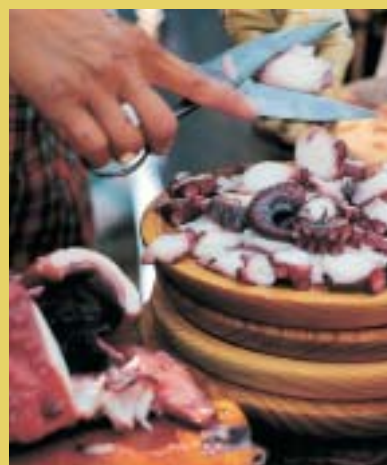
A busy seafaring town in the region known as the Mariña Lucense. Its history is closely linked to San Martiño of Mondoñedo, the former bishop's seat of the diocese, the "*Holy Bishop*" and Marshal Pardo de Cela, historical figures who have become shrouded in legends and myths. The area is famed for its many popular "*romerías*", although the principal festivities take place on **10 August** when the town commemorates its Patron Saint San Lourenzo. The days are filled with numerous attractions and folk groups and top bands perform their music in the streets. In keeping with the traditions associated with fire in Galicia, a water fireworks display is the major attraction when night falls.

Octopus Festival O Carballiño (Ourense)



This town is located on the edge of the ancient roads that ran from the Monastery of Oseira as far as the lands of the Ribeiro.

It is home to the spectacular Vera-Cruz church, the work of Modernist architect Antonio Palacios and which contains the essence of Galician architecture, as well as the vast Municipal Park that runs along the banks of the Arenteiro, and which forms the setting every **second Sunday in August** for the Octopus Festival. This delicacy is popular with travellers, and can be found at fairs, festivals and "romería" alike, although it is the speciality of the *pulpeiras* from the parish of Arcos. It used to be prepared using the dried octopus brought from the ports by the mule drivers, which they would exchange for the products of the land, and which served as the perfect accompaniment for the "Cea Bread". A "*Xantar enxebre*" - a meal



shared with friends and family - under the shade of the trees or in tents, accompanied by traditional music and dancing.

Festival of the Patron

San Roque (Os Caneiros)

Betanzos (A Coruña)



A medieval city founded on the hill rising above the Rivers Mero and Mandeo on the stretch of coastline of the province of A Coruña known as the *Mariñas Coruñesas*. The city's landmarks include the churches of Santiago or Santa María do Azougue, or the Franciscan church, which houses the magnificent tomb of Fernán Pérez de Andrade "O Bo", as well as its ancient taverns under the arches. The focal point of the Festivals that are held **from 14 to 25 August** is the Plaza do Campo, from which a giant handmade paper balloon is launched.

Other events include the river trip to the beautiful shady "Os Caneiros", where families and friends share a meal together on the slopes of A Espenuca, a hill that has been considered to be a sacred place since ancient times.

Festival of the Patron
San Roque
 Sada (A Coruña)



This town has one of the various ports scattered along the so-called "*Arco Ártabro*" (the Artabrian Axis) that stretches from the city of A Coruña as far as Ferrol, including the bay formed by the Betanzos inlet and which flows into the Atlantic at a point known as the Rock of A Marola. **Every 16 August** the area around the beach – presided over by the exceptional glazed modernist building known as "*A Terraza*" – becomes a temporary fairground offering a full range of amusements and attractions that draws the crowds from many miles around. Particularly popular is the huge *sardiñada* (sardine feast), celebrated in true Galician festive tradition.



“Romaría do Naseiro”

San Pedro. Viveiro (Lugo)



Held on the fourth Sunday in August.

Viveiro – site of many other major celebrations including Easter, “*As Maúlas Fair*” in Galdo, “*A Rapa das Bestas of Candaoso*”, the “*romería*” of the Monte de San Roque- throws itself wholeheartedly into this exceptional outdoor festival held on the banks of the River Naseiro. This magnificent green and lush setting, dominated by the giant eucalyptus tress of Chavín, attracts families who share a meal in the open air consisting of the finest local fare, to the accompaniment of folk groups. This festival has rightly earned itself the name of “*A Romaría do Bo Xantar*” (*the Good Food “romería”*).

“Festa da Istoria”

Ribadavia (Ourense)



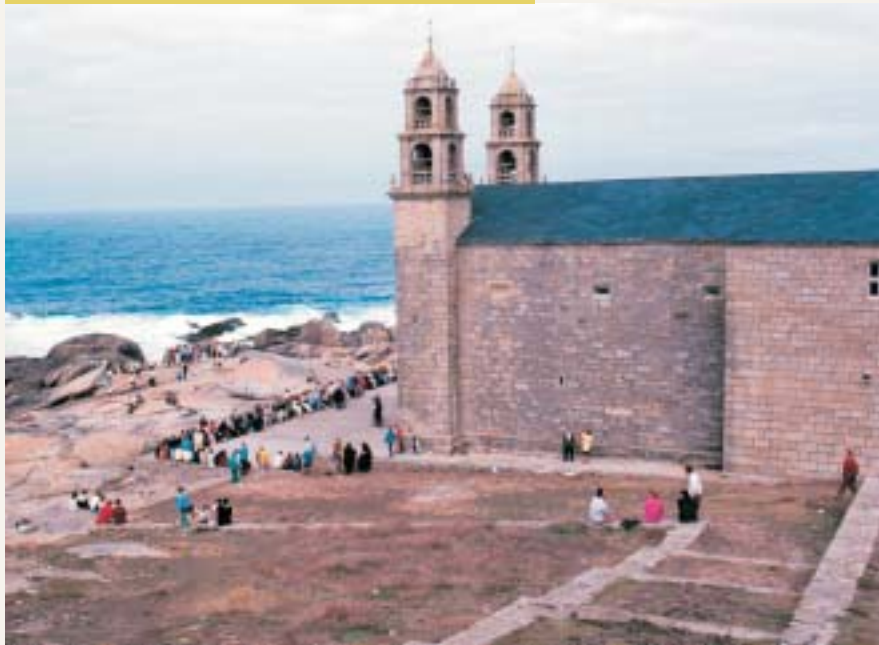
Ribadavia's historic centre - above which stand the ruins of the castle of the Sarmiento family -, famed for its Jewish quarter with its sturdy houses and arches, is the setting **on the last Saturday in August** for an exceptional festival that recreates the traditional Jewish atmosphere.

This town, which also organises a Drama Festival, knows how to get the best out of its costumes and play-acting, recreating an authentic medieval environment. The maravedí is the only legal tender accepted in the streets where craftsmen display their wares and where we can all too easily come across noblemen, guilds, winemakers, puppeteers, the “*irmandiños*” (*bands of peasants*), and even executioners... The local taverns exude a special atmosphere



that brings the capital of the Ribeiro region to life.

"Romaría da
Nosa Señora da Barca"
Muxía (A Coruña)



A traditional fishing village embedded on the "*Costa da Morte*". This breathtakingly beautiful landscape features huge granite rocks onto which the waves crash down relentlessly. The popular Sanctuary of the Virxe da Barca – the subject of songs and poems – stands on the slopes of Monte Corpiño. On the **Sunday following 8 September** a "romería" is held to this shrine, and whose ancient pantheist traditions are still preserved: devotees crawl under the stone known as the "*Pedra dos Cadrís*" or make the moving "*Pedra de Abalar*" sway. These traditions are naturally followed by the typical "*xantar*", or lunch, which include the fish casseroles for which the area is known.

Shellfish Festival

O Grove (Pontevedra)

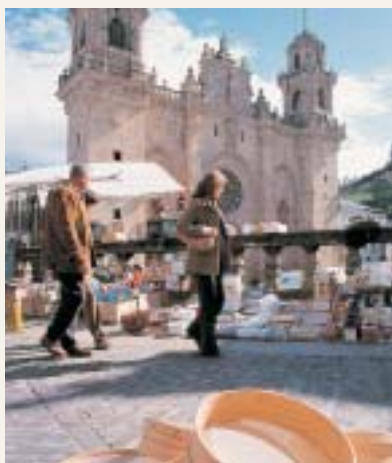


Held on the second Sunday in October, coinciding with the Pilar holiday period. This town stands between the inlets of Arousa and Pontevedra, just beyond the vast beach and sanctuary of A Lanzada, in the borough of Sanxenxo, a place of pilgrimage for sterile women who bathe in the "*nove ondas*" (*nine waves of the sea*). Here the Peninsula of San Vicente looks out onto the Island of Sálvora, as recorded in the traditional song: "*¡Ai Salvora, Ai San Vicente...as nenas bonitas hainas en...!*" Not to be missed is a visit to the spa-island of A Toxa, an essential reference in the history of tourism in Galicia. Nor must visitors to this festival leave without sampling the wide range of shellfish on offer, proof that this is



a region of exceptional delicacies, washed down with the wines of the "*Rías Baixas*".

Fair of
“As San Lucas”
 Mondoñedo (Lugo)



Located between A Terra Chá and the area known as the Mariña Lucense, on the road to Ribadeo and Asturias. It was

once one of the seven capitals of the Ancient Kingdom of Galicia, and a bishop's seat with Romanic cathedral included, and today a living museum of the past. The town has close connections with a famous 15th century figure, Marshal Pardo de Cela, and the famous Conciliar Seminar of Santa Catalina, which became a focal point for this city that was to be the birthplace of musicians such as Pascual Veiga and writers such as Álvaro Cunqueiro. Yet this town is equally famous for its delicious almond tarts. The fairs and festivals are celebrated **on the days leading up to and around 19 October**, the highlight of which is the famous horse market that attracts the inhabitants of the A Mariña and the surrounding hillsides. It provides a perfect backdrop to show off the finest arts and crafts on offer in the province of Lugo and the whole of Galicia.





Galician Festivals of Tourist Interest

“Cocido” Fair

Lalín (Pontevedra)



The region known as “País do Deza” forms a crossroads in the heart of Galicia, characterised by immense and shadowy oak woods. Its inhabitants are the proud custodians of their local traditions, centred around fairgrounds, sanctuaries such as the shrine to O Corpiño, and the stately manor homes of the nobility. They have all acted as sources of inspiration for illustrious figures that were born in this area. This festival, which pays tribute to the pig, called the “*rei do pote*” due to the fact that every part of the animal is used in local dishes, is held on the Sunday prior to the Entroido or Carnival celebrations, known as “**Domingo de Corredoiro**”. The central event of this festival is the hearty Galician *cocido*, the authentic local stew, served up with traditional music and entertainment.

Carnival

Cobres. Vilaboa (Pontevedra)



This borough leads on to the O Morrazo peninsula. It is crowned by Xaxán Hill and Castiñeiras Lake, with roads leading to neighbouring Moaña. Its parishes look out onto the bay and San Simón Island and the Rande Straits, and preserve many customs related to the medieval seafaring tradition. The Carnival celebrations include rituals, elaborate costumes, dancing, singing and music, as well as the traditional “*galáns e galanas*” - traditional figures from the Entroido celebrations in Cobres. Initiation rites and games to test the skills of the younger inhabitants all combine to herald the blossoming of spring.

Festival of “la Androlla” and Carnival Viana do Bolo (Ourense)

These mountainous lands, bordering on the province of Zamora, preserve the essence of their age-old traditions. Proof of this is the parade of “*foilonas*”, held on Carnival Sunday, when groups of masked figures from each parish walk through the streets to the accompaniment of deafeningly loud percussion instruments. One of the typical masks is the “*boteiros*”, an exotic looking mask crowned by a large wreath of flowers that has its roots in ancestral rites, further adorned with elements brought back by emigrants from far-off countries. The culinary aspect of this festival centres on the “*androlla*” - pig's stomach stuffed with cured pork meat, an essential part of the local stew, served with “*cachelos*” (boiled potatoes) and turnip top greens.



Carnival Laza (Ourense)

The borough of Laza, a vertex stretching along the banks of the Támega and the slopes of the Hills of San Mamede and O Invernadeiro, is the proud custodian of traditional Galician festivities such as “Os Maios” and in particular the *Entroido*, or Galician Carnival. A time heralding the start of Lent and the arrival of spring, which for the farming world brings with it the colourful blossoming of nature and a period of sowing and planting. Groups of “*Peliqueiros*” liven up the town's streets and squares, dressed in their elaborate costumes that combine elements and rituals from the ancient, medieval and baroque periods. With their faces covered by a mask carved in wood, crowned by a semi-circle and decorated with totemic symbols, they follow the ancient rituals that have been passed down throughout the centuries.



Running, jumping and shouting, they ring their bells in unison, lashing out with their whips at anyone who dares to cross their path. The festivities reach the heights of frenzy on the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. After mass the locals engage in a fierce flour and ant throwing battle, take part in parades, taste a special sponge cake called “*bica*”, and people dressed up as a bull named “Morena” run loose along the streets. The end of the festivities is marked by the “*Entierro de la Sardina*” (Burial of the Sardine).

Carnival

Verín (Ourense)



This town in the province of Ourense is the epitome of the Galician carnival. Famed for its waters and wines, it stands on the banks of the River Támega. This festival reveals the town's respect for tradition but also its love of liberty

and the imaginative creativity of the modern age, irony and the peculiar sense of humour known as "*retranca*" that characterise Verín's carnival costumes. The call for all the residents to join in, the famous "*Fai Antroido*", is symptomatic of these festivals, one of the major dates on the festive calendar.

The "*Cigarróns*", the masked figures typical of the Valley of Monterrei, seen by ethnographer Taboada Chivite as a mockery of the tax collectors sent out by the Counts who lived in the castle and ruled over the area. Gastronomy is an essential element during this period. Local delicacies include "*cachucha*" (pork head), "*androllas*" (cured pork meat), Galician stew and desserts such as "*orellas*" and "*filloas*", all washed down with the local wines that are at their best at this time of year.

Festival celebrating the arrival of the Caravel Pinta

Baiona (Pontevedra)



This town, characterised by vestiges of its medieval and Renaissance past, stands in a sheltered bay at the entrance to the Vigo inlet. A port worthy of royal favours in the past, its walls enclose the legendary Tower of the Príncipe de Monterreal, today converted into a Parador. Facing the Cíes Islands, Baiona is home to a monument commemorating the arrival of the Caravel "Pinta", depicting the discovery, natives, treasures and first news from the New World. This event, which took place in 1493, is commemorated on **the first weekend in March** every year with a recreation of the Renaissance atmosphere in its cobbled streets: stalls and taverns offer their wares and crafts, together with exhibitions of ancient Galician seafaring traditions.

Cheese Festival

Arzúa (A Coruña)

An essential place to stop and rest for those travelling along the French Trail, and just a short distance from the end of the pilgrim's journey to Santiago de Compostela, where the various trails merge into one. The town lies between the Rivers Tambre and Ulla, in a lush green valley that is ideal for cattle raising and covered in dense oak woods, dotted with the manor houses and estates that were a source of inspiration to Valle Inclán. This land is famed for its excellent fairs selling a range of products including its local honey and its celebrated cheese festival, held on **the first Sunday in March**. Festivities and trade converge in this gastronomic springtime celebration that pays tribute to the wide range of rich and creamy cheeses produced in this area.



Amandi Wine

Festival

Sober (Lugo)

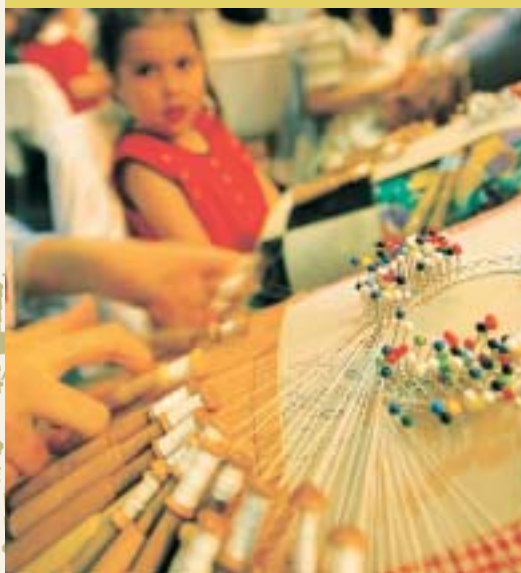
Since ancient times the River Sil has formed part of the route leading to the Castilian plateau. Romans and medieval monks alike used the course of the river as a guide to help them on their way, leaving their mark along its banks; monasteries whose motto "*Ora et labora*" produced wine, olives and chestnuts. A land rich in time-old traditions such as those of the potters of Gundivós, Amandi is one of those tiny villages renowned for its wine lying along the "*Ribeira Sacra do Sil*" (the sacred banks of the River Sil) that looks out on to the river as it flows through a breathtakingly beautiful gorge. At the start of the Easter period – **on Palm Saturday and Sunday** - the town of Sober offers free wine tasting and displays of its products in a celebration of its finest traditions. Legend has it



that as its name implies, this is a wine made for love. This is the perfect time of year to rediscover the history, art and beauty of the banks of the River Sil.

Bobbin Lace

Exhibition and Fair
Camariñas (A Coruña)



This is the true heart of the "*Costa da Morte*", where the sea also weaves its foamy lace amongst the rocks and cliffs of the coastline. The lighthouse at Cape Vilán shines out like a symbol from against the rocks that have witnessed the full cruelty of the sea. The "*palilleiras*" form an essential part of the lace-making tradition whose origins have long been lost in the mists of time yet which are shared by much of Atlantic Europe. **The Camariñas Easter Lace Fair** attracts lace-makers from all over the world, but particularly from this western region of the province of A Coruña. Events include displays, sales and competitions, where visitors can admire the skill and quality of this craft that combines tradition and modernity.

Easter

Cangas (Pontevedra)



A town rising up from the ocean, where the sea flows into the inlet it share with its neighbour Vigo, which stands facing it. A sheltered and strategic site that has placed it at the centre of history and adventures, plundered by the Normans, Muslims, Turks and pirates of all nationalities. Like many seafaring towns, Cangas feels a special devotion for the Passion of Christ. The Renaissance Collegiate Church of Santiago, lying at the historical heart of the town, serves as

the setting for the medieval style re-enactment of the Calvary and the Holy Burial during Easter Week. The events start on the Friday of Sorrows, and continue on Palm Sunday, Easter Thursday and Good Friday, concluding with the joyful celebrations of Easter Sunday and the Resurrection. A special devotion is felt for the image of the Santo Cristo del Consuelo, attributed to Gregorio Fernández, as well as another crucified image, known as "*Oficio de Difuntos*", the tireless confidant for the joys and sorrows of the men and women of Cangas. Statues and processional images that bring to life the Easter mysteries of this truly seafaring town, and whose most poignant moment is undoubtedly the silence of the "*caladiños*" as they walk in procession around the town on Good Friday.

On the first weekend after Easter Sunday, Tui, one of the seven cities of the Ancient Kingdom of Galicia – built to defend the River Miño and the border with Portugal, pays tribute to its Patron Saint San Telmo. This saint, who died in Tui whilst making the pilgrimage to Santiago, is the patron saint of seamen and the object of fervent devotion in Galicia. The whole town, including its old quarter, which faces the river, and the modernist district, which stretches beyond the ancient city walls, forms the ideal setting for a festival that is the quintessence of Galician feeling and sentiment. One of the most poignant moments is the procession that carries the image of the saint around the town, and which attracts devotees from neighbouring Portugal in an expression of true

Festival of the Patron **San Telmo** Tui (Pontevedra)



fraternity. The first days of spring bring out the full bloom of nature, and are the perfect time to celebrate the “*Baixo Miño Agricultural Fair*”, a fine display of the wealth of the land. This is the time of the year when the finest local restaurants serve up dishes prepared with time-old recipes rich with the flavour of lamprey and eel, washed down with the excellent wines of this privileged region.

Oyster Festival Arcade. Soutomaioir (Pontevedra)



Arcade lies at the mouth of the River Oitavén where it flows into the Verdugo at the point known as *Salto do Inferno*. The river continues under the historic Sampaio Bridge, where the heroic soldiers fought out their battles for independence from the French with their “wooden cannons”. The waters eventually flow into the renowned Bay of San Simón, complete with its island that was the source of 14th century songs of friendship. The sea around Vigo and the Rande Straits played witness to the galleons and their treasures in the 18th century, a source of fascination to Captain Nemo, fruit of the imagination of Brittany-born writer Jules Verne. It is here that the delicious pearly oysters are bred, whose virtues are extolled by the town of Arcade de Soutomaioir on the **first weekend in April**. The perfect time of year to enjoy the unique taste of this delicacy produced by

a sea rich in history and poetry, with the sole accompaniment of the tangy juice of a lemon. Visitors come back year after year to enjoy the wealth of history and flavours to be found in Arcade and its ancient roads, guarded over by the Chapel of Peneda and the castle that once belonged to that fearsome 15th century landlord, Pedro Madruga de Soutomaioir.

Trout Festival

A Pontenova (Lugo)



Wooded lands in which the wizard Merlin himself would feel at home, areas devoted to livestock and the forestry industry lying just after Meira on the road from Lugo to Vegadeo and on the border with Asturias. The land has been marked by the limonite kilns, the old railway line and the former industrial areas that have long been silenced and today serve to remind us of what once was. This is the site of important fairs and the convergence of springs and streams that flow down to the Eo, and an ideal spot for fishing. The Trout Festival takes place on the **first of May**, where visitors can enjoy this gastronomic delight whilst admiring the finest arts and crafts the region has to offer.

“Os Maios”

Ourense



This is the “*Terra da Chispa*”, or “*Land where sparks fly*” due to its celebrated travelling knife grinders. The capital is Ourense, the city of the Santo Cristo, the bridges over the Miño and the Burgas Fountain, which pours forth its boiling water. The city has a long-standing tradition in the celebration of farming festivals such as the *Magostos*, with its typical bonfires and chestnuts held on 11 November - and which coincides with the celebrations for its patron saint San Martín - , as well as Corpus Christi, or the “*Maios*”,

held on **early May**. This ancient and simple festival is popular throughout the province of Ourense as well as on the historical streets and squares of its capital. It represents a celebration of the blossoming of the trees and the bloom of childhood and youth, symbols of life and fertility. It was christianised by the “Tree of Redemption” represented by the cross, and turned into the “*Day of the Holy Cross*”. A keen rural instinct induces the younger inhabitants to parade their “*Maios*” – images made from brightly coloured fruits and flowers and fashioned into a range of forms and covered in leaves - around the streets either on their shoulders or on home-made floats. The procession is accompanied by children beating sticks and singing satiric and witty songs with clear allusions to current affairs.

Trout Festival

Ponte Caldelas (Pontevedra)

This “*lojal*” town “is inextricably linked to water with its hot springs and spa resort standing on the banks of the Oitavén and Verdugo Rivers with their picturesque beaches. This town was already well established in the 12th century as a stopping place for mule drivers on their way from the coast of Vigo to Montes and Suido. Many of its inhabitants emigrated to Latin America, particularly Brazil, whose influence can be seen in the beautiful Indiano style houses. In season, this town also offers some of the finest game, fish and traditional dishes available. The crystal clear waters of its Rivers reflect the greeny beds, from which the Verdugo takes its name. This is an anglers’ paradise, a practice that has always been popular throughout Galicia. **The last weekend**



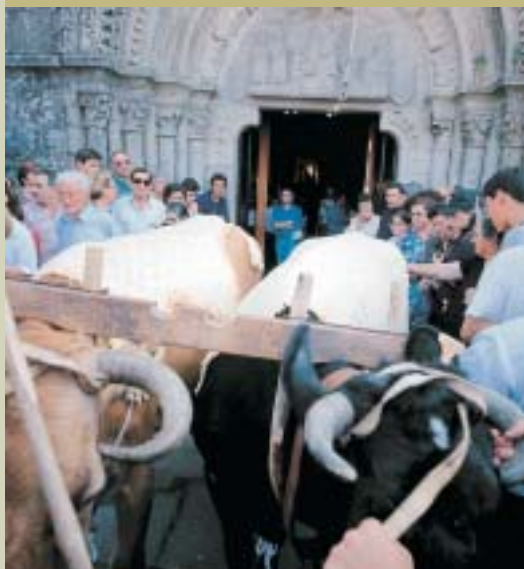
in May sees the “*International Angling Competition*”, attracting many of the finest anglers, and the “*Trout Festival*” offering the full range of recipes, ranging from the simplest forms of preparation to the more elaborate and sophisticated “*nouvelle cuisine*”.

“Romaría da

Virxe da Franqueira”

A Cañiza (Pontevedra)

Held twice a year, on Whit Monday and 8th September. This town lies in the Paradanta Hills, close to the road running between Vigo and Ourense, and the site of various sanctuaries and their corresponding “romerías”. The Sanctuary of A Franqueira is the most famous of all those held in Galicia, recorded as the site of a Benedictine monastery as long ago as the 11th century. The most moving part of this celebration is when the Virgin is taken around the streets on an elaborately decorated carriage, flanked by the flags and banners of the various parishes. Other events include the “*stick dances*” and other rituals such as “*A Festa dos Puxos*”, where the offerings made in the sanctuary are auctioned off.



“Corpus Christi” Redondela (Pontevedra)



A Eucharistic festival that was particularly popular in seafaring towns and villages and during the Renaissance period, combining the rituals of the medieval guilds with even more ancient elements in the traditional dances. This is the day when the young locals parade around the streets with “Coca”, a mythical dragon out to capture the prettiest girls in the town. They form the head of the Corpus

procession, and behind them come the giants and giant-headed characters, and other fictional figures from the tales told by travellers on their way eastwards, re-creating the essence of a paratheatrical formula in the town. On leaving the church and coming to the crossroads, they stage a *Sword Dance* in the presence of the Holy Sacrament, accompanied by *gaiteiros*, (pipers), followed by the Dance of the “*Penlas*”- adult women dressed in white who dance round in a ring with young girls balancing on their shoulders. The Holy Sacrament makes its way in procession around the town, followed by the fourteen parish crosses, walking on the floral carpets painstakingly created by the local inhabitants the night before and which decorate the cobbled streets. The air is heavy with incense and the music of the region’s famous bands and pipers, and as night falls there is a spectacular fireworks display.

Offering of the Kingdom of Galicia to the Blessed Sacrament Lugo



Lugo’s ancient Cathedral, standing among the city’s Roman walls, is privileged to have the Blessed Sacrament on permanent display. On the **Sunday following Corpus Christi**, the seven cities of the Ancient Kingdom of Galicia -Tui, Mondoñedo, Betanzos, A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense and Santiago de Compostela- take it in turns every year to make the solemn offering in the Cathedral. During the service we are treated to a rendering of the march of the Ancient Kingdom of Galicia performed by pipers.

Karts

Grand Prix

Esteiro. Muros (A Coruña)

This spot, which offers some of Galicia's finest seascapes, and where the sea converges with the rocky hills and fine sandy beaches, is the setting for the unusual and entertaining kart meet that is held here during **the third weekend in July**. This meet is a real test of imagination and ingenuity and is the perfect opportunity to enjoy the Galician sense of fun and irony. Participants bring their own "engine-less vehicles" to take part in this popular parade. This festival also includes the other traditional elements of Galician celebrations, and today is firmly consolidated as a popular festivity and expression of good humour. Large crowds flock to this event every year, which attracts all those in search of fun-filled entertainment that is rich in creativity and imagination.

**"Romaría da Fraga"**

As Pontes de García Rodríguez (A Coruña)

A wooded area criss-crossed by the roads that run up and down the Faladoira Mountains, famous for their megalithic burial mounds and the spectacular geological formations, creating a magnificent setting around the River Eume and its tributaries. This "romería" has been held in this breathtaking setting **on 24th and 25th July** every year since 1904. The Fraga, which is the Galician word used to refer to a wood with various species of trees, takes place in open area close to the river banks where a traditional hut building competition is held, followed by a meal consisting of Galician festive fare such as octopus and meat and fish filled pies. In the background, the sound of the Galician pipes, as it is only in the open air that the full richness of its notes can be truly appreciated.



In the afternoon, traditional games such as tug-of-war are played. On the eve of the "romería" a folk festival is held, with performances from some of the finest traditional bands and groups of the moment.

“Carneiro ao Espeto”

Festival
Moraña (Pontevedra)



Traditional songs refer to Moraña as a land of stonemasons and mule drivers that travelled between the hills and the sea. And it is here that wild horses still run free, only to be subjected to the traditional “*rapa das bestas*”. Judging by the remains discovered here, this magnificent landscape has been a wealthy source of agriculture and livestock for man since

prehistoric times. History has given rise to this festival held on **the last Sunday in July**, a magnificent culinary, farming and rural celebration, that has only been improved upon by the contributions made following the comings and goings between Latin America, which delights in its barbecued and grilled meats. The “*Festa do Carneiro ó espeto*” is one of those time-honoured traditions that simply get better and better as the years go by. Salnés wine is an essential ingredient in this feast, which includes succulent roast lamb served on the banks of the River Umia, accompanied by poetry and songs and pleasant conversation.

Tuna Festival

Burela (Lugo)



The discovery of the magnificent gold torque of Burela serves as a reminder that this fishing town, famed for its tuna fleet, was built on the site of an ancient fortified Iron Age settlement. Every year, on **the first Saturday in August**, Burela celebrates its “Tuna Festival”, a perfect way of showing off the real treasures of the sea has to offer, the many ways this fish can be prepared and the hospitality that is the hallmark of this area of the Mariña Lucense that looks out onto the open Cantabrian Sea.

Herbón Pepper

Festival

Padrón (A Coruña)

The River Ulla winds its way from Padrón towards the Arousa inlet, a source of inspiration for the prayers and labours of the Franciscan friars who built their monastery here before setting off to travel the world. On their return they brought back with them the seeds of these small yet delicious peppers that are bursting with the ironic flavour of Padrón-born Nobel prize winner Camilo José Cela, a staunch defender and proclaimer of their delights. Man has left his mark on this landscape; for here we can find the “*pesqueiras*” used to trap the lampreys, eels and trout; or creeping vines and kitchen gardens which produce those tiny peppers, carefully pampered to ensure that they receive exactly the right amount of water and heat. The festival, held on **the first Saturday in**



August, has all the ingredients that are essential for any Galician festivity. It takes place in the ancient and shadowy oak wood overlooking the river and the old Franciscan monastery, where, as the song goes, we will find “*San Antoniño vertendo auga polo peito...*”. Here we will find the true flavour of a people that have been described in the songs and tales of writers and poets throughout history.

Pepper Festival

A Arnoia (Ourense)

The banks of the River Arnoia at the point where it joins the Miño is a paradise of wine, fruit trees, peppers and hot springs that have given rise to a spa that looks down upon a calm and navigable stretch of the River Miño. The summer heat is more keenly felt in this middle section of the Miño, in a region watched over by the mythical mountain of Coto de Novelle. Not to be missed is a visit to one of the typical taverns, with their tables set out under the vines, to sample the eels and trout accompanied by those fried peppers that fill the air with a mouth-watering aroma. The fine wines of the region, which have earned the skilful harvesters their well-deserved reputation, are the perfect accompaniment. The Pepper Festival



is held during **the first weekend in August**, in recognition and tribute to the natural wealth of the land, and includes the finest traditions Galicia has to offer in an incomparable setting.

“Festa da Maruxaina ”

San Cibrao. Cervo (Lugo)

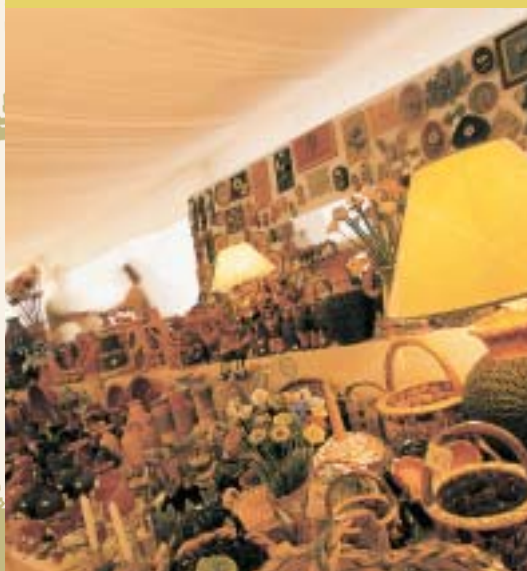


The Cantabrian Sea stretches out on the horizon of Mariña Lucense, a land of emigrants, seafarers and fishermen, who all have their place in the poetic Maritime Museum of San Cibrao. This is a town deeply rooted in industry yet inextricably

linked to the pounding and relentless sea. The *Maruxaina* Festival, held on **the second Saturday in August**, is a public act of recognition and gratitude for the blessings of the sea. Its origins lie in the legend that tells of a mermaid who had a profound effect on the life of the town: some say that she is there to offer aid to sailors, yet others claim that she cruelly seduces and deceives them. Born by the seamen in a procession lit by candles and lanterns, she is taken for trial on Torno Beach. Found guilty of the claims made against her, the disgraced mermaid is eventually pardoned by the local people. The festivities conclude with music and singing, and the preparation of the typical *queimada* drink in the town square. The festival represents the coming together of ancient myths, traditions and modernity.

Buño Pottery Festival

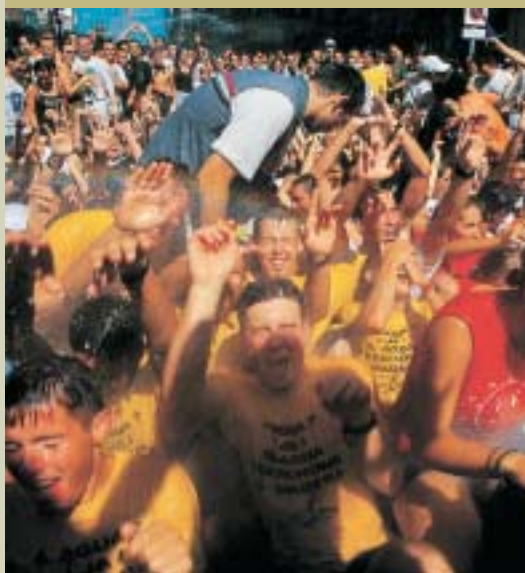
Malpica de Bergantiños (A Coruña)



In the heart of the lush green lands of Bergantiños, whose virtues were sung by Pondal and put on canvas by Sotomayor, lies the parish of Buño, famed for its “*oleiros*” or potteries. A major exhibition of this craft is held from **12th to 20th August** which highlights the importance played by ancient legacies in this craft. The “Traditional Firing” which takes place in the ethnographical complex known as “*Forno do Forte*”, and which includes “*A Carroa*”, a fish-based meal, constitutes the central event of this fair-turned-festival dedicated to one of Galicia’s oldest and most representative pottery centres.

This town lies in a privileged location in a land scattered with the magnificent manor houses of the Salnés region. The lookout points of Monte Lobeira offer breathtaking panoramic views. Vilagarcía is a land of festivals and fairs, examples of which include the Camellia Festival and the festivities dedicated to San Roque, a count and wise healer from Montpellier who made the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, held **around 16th August**. The image of the saint is taken around the town in a procession to the accompaniment of an unusual rhythm. The festivities provide the young people of the town with the perfect excuse to hold their water fights. Other events include a flower and a naval battle.

Festival of the Patron **San Roque** Vilagarcía de Arousa (Pontevedra)



“Queimada popular” Cervo (Lugo)

The sense of magic of these lands is lost sometime prior to the Enlightenment, before the apotheosis and sorrow experienced by Raimundo Ibáñez, Marquis of Sargadelos and founder of smelting and ceramics industries, the Royal Factories that made the name of Galicia synonymous with quality and prestige. Following its hard learnt lesson, since the seventies the new “Sargadelos” has worked hard to combine tradition with creativity, art and industry. These practical spirits from past and present seem to have found a point of convergence on the banks of the River Xunco, where every year, on **the Saturday following 16 August** a “*queimada*” is prepared for locals and visitors alike, complete with the dramatic “*esconxuro*” or spell, a “*vade retro*” designed to drive from the flames the



evil spirits that attack life, solidarity and the spoken word. After sharing and drinking this fiery beverage, a potion or elixir worthy of witches and goblins, you experience a renewed sense of youth, solidarity and of belonging to a hard-working and creative community with a strong sense of solidarity.

“Folión de Carros”

Chantada (Lugo)



Chantada, with its mythical Mount Faro, standing in an area of great archaeological and medieval wealth, jealously guards its centuries-old Galician traditions and customs. It is not in vain that it lies at the geographical centre of Galicia, on the way to the Deza region and the *Ribeira Sacra*, the sacred riverbanks of the River Miño, where Romans and monks alike transformed the landscape with their terraced vines; the Chaos de Amoeiro plateau in the province of

Ourense or the plains of Lugo. Chantada plays tribute to its agricultural past during the festivities celebrated in honour of its patron saint the *Virgen del Carmen* on the **Saturday prior to the first Sunday after 21st August**. Families and groups of friends gather to take part in the “*Folión de Carros*”, a parade featuring various types of traditional carts and carriages decorated with flowers and traditional symbols. These traditional means of transport, pulled by quietly resigned cattle, probably date back as far as prehistoric times and are still preserved today thanks to a living sense of ethno archaeology. It provides the perfect opportunity to delve deep into Galicia’s musical and culinary traditions, sampling the pies and octopus, and washing them down with the traditional wines of the region.

“Empanada” (pie) Festival

Bandeira. Silleda (Pontevedra)



The Deza region is criss-crossed with ancient trails that remind us of the pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela and where the ancient Cistercian monastery of Carboeiro stands as proof of the splendour of the medieval period. Lands whose inhabitants retain all the culinary skills and know how of the inn keepers and friars of the past who offered their hospitality to pilgrims and mule drivers alike, and where the traditional pies were considered a delicacy by those following the Camino de Santiago. Proof of this is the pie festival held on the **third Saturday in August**, where visitors can sample the varieties of pastries, fillings and shapes on offer and that make up the typical Galician pies, first brought here by the Romans.

A picturesque, seafaring town that was portrayed to perfection by Castelao, its most illustrious resident. The town's close connections with Mexico and passion of the seamen have turned the Virgin de Guadalupe into an object of true devotion. This dearly beloved image is carried out on a maritime procession by the sailors who show it off to the rest of the town. At midnight, the bands and local people sing a popular song in the candlelight that says "*descalciña pola area parece unha rianxeira*". This festival is held **around 8th September**.

Festival of the
"A Virxe de Guadalupe"
Rianxo (A Coruña)



Held on the third Sunday in September. This seafaring town lies at the foot of Mount A Curota, a viewpoint that looks out over the Rías Baixas. The origins of this festival go back to the 15th century, and are connected with an offering made by the town alderman, who recovered from a serious illness on the eve of the procession. Since then offerings are made by people who have almost lost their lives and wish to give thanks for the intervention of Jesus of Nazareth. Carrying candles and dressed as penitents, they are accompanied by relatives and friends pulling a coffin.

Festival of Jesus of Nazareth
Procession of Shrouds
A Pobra do Caramiñal (A Coruña)



“Romaría de A Saínza”

Rairiz de Veiga (Ourense)



Deep within the province of Ourense, in A Limia, which is said to be crossed by the “*River of Oblivion*” the traditions and essence of rural Galicia live on. Mountainous landscapes, watched over by the defence towers of the Counts of

Monterrei and Moctezuma that fought for control of the monasteries. Legend has it that this is the birthplace of the beautiful and loving yet ill-fated wife of Pedro el Cruel, Inés de Castro, who would only become queen after her death. This is the setting where, on the morning of **24th September**, grandfathers, fathers and sons gather under the shade of an ancient oak tree that serves as a fortress to relive a story in honour of the Virgen de la Merced that must never be repeated: the medieval battles between the Christians and the invading “*Moors*”, claiming a tithe of “*One Hundred Maidens*”. The only fitting end for the ensuing battle, interspersed with sermons and chants, is the freeing of the prisoners and a fraternal meal and dance, complete with toasts, music and fireworks.

“Festa da Faba”

Vilanova de Lourenzá (Lugo)



History and myth converge in these lands to tell us of the Lord of Tierra de Campos and Galicia and founder of the Monastery of San Salvador (that houses relics kept in a Paleochristian sarcophagus), known locally as the “*Holy Count*”, or of a wizard in the style of writer Alvaro

Cunqueiro, Pardo de Cela, Lord of Frouxeira, a popular marshal betrayed, or of Fernando de Casas Novoa himself, the architect whose dress rehearsal for the Obradoiro façade of Santiago Cathedral is to be found in the parish church of Santa María de Valdeflores. This valley, lying amongst the foothills of the mountain range, is a crossroads at which we can choose to move on to the coast, the central plains of Lugo or the mountains. And it is here where, on the **first Sunday in October**, a festival and fair are held to pay tribute to this product that is highly valued and appreciated throughout Galicia, an essential ingredient for its stews, casseroles and compango (cured meat and sausages), thought by some to be the way to true friendship.

Festival of San Froilán

Lugo

During the first fortnight in October the city of Lugo attracts visitors from all over the region as well as from many other parts of Galicia. It marks the beginning or the end of a cycle that seems to fit neatly into this period, epitomised by the Sunday known as "Domingo das Mozas". Originally the festivities represented a period of preparation for the coming of winter. Culinary delights, stalls selling traditional Galician products and a wide range of amusements combine in this exceptional meeting point between the urban and rural worlds. A vestige of the Roman forum that could well have characterised this tightly walled city.



Religious calendar

Easter Sundays

2004	11 April
2005	27 March
2006	16 April
2007	08 April
2008	23 March
2009	12 April
2010	08 April

This chart listing the Easter Sundays for the coming years allows for the other moveable dates to be calculated by subtracting or adding the days given below to the Easter Sunday date:

Ash Wednesday	Subtract 46 days
Whit Sunday	Add 49 days
Corpus Christi	Add 60 days

Nota

The festivals and celebrations featured in this brochure have been classified into two categories: festivals declared to be of tourist interest by either the State or Autonomous tourist boards. They are arranged in chronological order, according to the date the declaration was made public.

All those celebrations declared to be of tourist interest by the State are considered to be of national interest; special mention is also made of those that have been declared Festivals of International Tourist Interest.

The dates of some of the events included in this publication may be subject to alteration, and it is therefore recommendable to check the exact date with the corresponding local authority.

List of Festivals of Tourist Interest

PAGE	NAME	CATEG.	LOCATION	DATE
36	"Cocido" Fair	GF	Lalin (Pontevedra)	Sunday before Carnival
10	Carnival	NF	Xinzo de Limia (Ourense)	Carnival Week
36	Carnival	GF	Cobres. Vilaboa (Pontevedra)	Carnival Week
37	Festival of "La Androlla" and Carnival	GF	Viana do Bolo (Ourense)	Carnival Week
37	Carnival	GF	Laza (Ourense)	Carnival Week
38	Carnival	GF	Verin (Ourense)	Carnival Week
38	Festival celebrating the arrival of the Caravel Pinta	GF	Baiona (Pontevedra)	The first weekend in March
39	Cheese Festival	GF	Arzúa (A Coruña)	First Sunday in March
39	Amandi Wine Festival	GF	Sober (Lugo)	Palm Saturday and Sunday
11	"Romaría do Santo Cristo"	NF	Fisterra (A Coruña)	Easter
12	Easter	NF	Viveiro (Lugo)	Easter
13	Easter	NF	Ferrol (A Coruña)	Easter
40	Bobbin Lace Exhibition and Fair	GF	Camarínas (A Coruña)	Easter
40	Easter	GF	Cangas (Pontevedra)	Easter
41	Festival of the Patron San Telmo	GF	Tui (Pontevedra)	First weekend after Easter Sunday
41	Oyster Festival	GF	Arcade de Soutomaior (Pontevedra)	The first weekend in April
42	Trout Festival	GF	A Pontenova (Lugo)	1st May
42	"Os Maios"	GF	Ourense	The first Sunday in May
14	O Ribeiro Wine Festival and Exhibition	NF	Ribadavia (Ourense)	Early May
43	Trout Festival	GF	Ponte Caldelas (Pontevedra)	Last weekend in May
43	"Romaría da Virxe da Franqueira"	GF	A Caniza (Pontevedra)	Whit Monday
15	"Corpus Christi"	NF	Ponteareas (Pontevedra)	The weekend following "Corpus Christi"
44	"Corpus Christi"	GF	Redondela (Pontevedra)	"Corpus Christi" Day
44	Offering of the Kingdom of Galicia to the Blessed Sacrament	GF	Lugo	Sunday after "Corpus Christi"
16	Bonfires of San Juan	NF	A Coruña	23rd June
17	"A Rapa das Bestas"	NF	San Lourenzo de Sabucedo. A Estrada (Pontevedra)	First weekend in July
18	"A Rapa das Bestas" of Candaoso	NF	Santo André de Boimente. Viveiro (Lugo)	First weekend in July
19	"San Benitiño de Lérez"	NF	Pontevedra	11th July
20	International Festival of the Celtic World	NF	Ortigueira (A Coruña)	Third weekend in July
45	Karts Grand Prix	GF	Esteiro. Muros (A Coruña)	Third weekend in July
45	"Romaría da Fraga"	GF	As Pontes de García Rodríguez (A Coruña)	24th – 25th July
21	"Santiago Apóstol"	IF	Santiago de Compostela (A Coruña)	25th July
46	"Carneiro ao Espeto" (roast lamb) Festival	GF	Moraña (Pontevedra)	Last Sunday in July

PAGE	NAME	CATEG.	LOCATION	DATE
46	Tuna Festival	GF	Burela (Lugo)	First Saturday in August
47	Herbón Pepper Festival	GF	Padrón (A Coruña)	First Saturday in August
47	Pepper Festival	GF	A Arnoia (Ourense)	First weekend in August
22	Viking "Romería"	IF	Catoira (Pontevedra)	First Sunday in August
23	Festival of "la Santa Cruz"	NF	Ribadeo (Lugo)	First Sunday in August
24	Albariño Wine Festival	NF	Cambados (Pontevedra)	First Sunday in August
25	Festival of the Patron San Lourenzo	NF	Foz (Lugo)	10th August
48	"Festa da Maruxaina"	GF	San Cibrao. Cervo (Lugo)	Second Saturday in August
26	Octopus Festival	NF	O Carballiño (Ourense)	Second Sunday in August
48	Buño Pottery Festival	GF	Malpica de Bergantiños (A Coruña)	12th –20th August
27	Festival of the Patron San Roque (Os Caneiros)	NF	Betanzos (A Coruña)	14th – 25th August
28	Festival of the Patron San Roque	NF	Sada (A Coruña)	16th August
49	Festival of the Patron San Roque	GF	Vilagarcía de Arousa (Pontevedra)	16th August
49	"Queimada popular"	GF	Cervo (Lugo)	Saturday after 16th August
50	"Folión de Carros"	GF	Chantada (Lugo)	Saturday before the first Sunday after 21th August
50	"Empanada" (pie) Festival	GF	Bandeira. Silleda (Pontevedra)	Third Saturday in August
29	"Romaría do Naseiro"	NF	San Pedro.Viveiro (Lugo)	Fourth Sunday in August
30	"Festa da Isteria"	NF	Ribadavia (Ourense)	Last Saturday in August
43	"Romaría da Virxe da Franqueira"	GF	A Cañiza (Pontevedra)	8th September
51	Festival of the "A Virxe de Guadalupe"	GF	Rianxo (A Coruña)	8th September
31	"Romaría da Nosa Señora da Barca"	NF	Muxia (A Coruña)	Sunday after 8th September
51	Festival of Jesus of Nazareth / Procession of Shrouds	GF	A Pobra do Caramiñal (A Coruña)	Third Sunday in September
52	"Romaría de A Saíza"	GF	Rairiz de Veiga (Ourense)	24th September
52	"Festa da Faba "	GF	Vilanova de Lourenzá (Lugo)	First Sunday in October
53	Festival of San Froilán	GF	Lugo	First fortnight in October
32	Shellfish Festival	NF	O Grove (Pontevedra)	Second Sunday in October - Pilar National Holiday (12th October)
33	"As San Lucas" Fair	NF	Mondoñedo (Lugo)	Around 19th October

GF – Galician festival of tourist interest

NF – Festival of national tourist interest in Galicia

IF – Festival of international tourist interest in Galicia

Location of Festivals held in Galicia

A Coruña

No. PAGE FESTIVAL

01	39	Cheese Festival
02	11	"Romaría do Santo Cristo"
03	13	Ferrol Easter
04	40	Bobbin Lace Exhibition and Fair
05	16	San Juan Bonfires
06	20	International Festival of the Celtic World
07	45	Karts Grand Prix
08	45	"Romaría da Fraga"
09	21	"Santiago Apóstol"
10	47	Herbón Pepper Festival
11	48	Buño Pottery Festival
12	27	Festival of the Patron San Roque (Os Caneiros)
13	28	Festival of the Patron San Roque
14	51	Festival of the "A Virxe de Guadalupe"
15	31	"Romaría da Nosa Señora da Barca"
16	51	Festival of Jesus of Nazareth / Procession of Shrouds

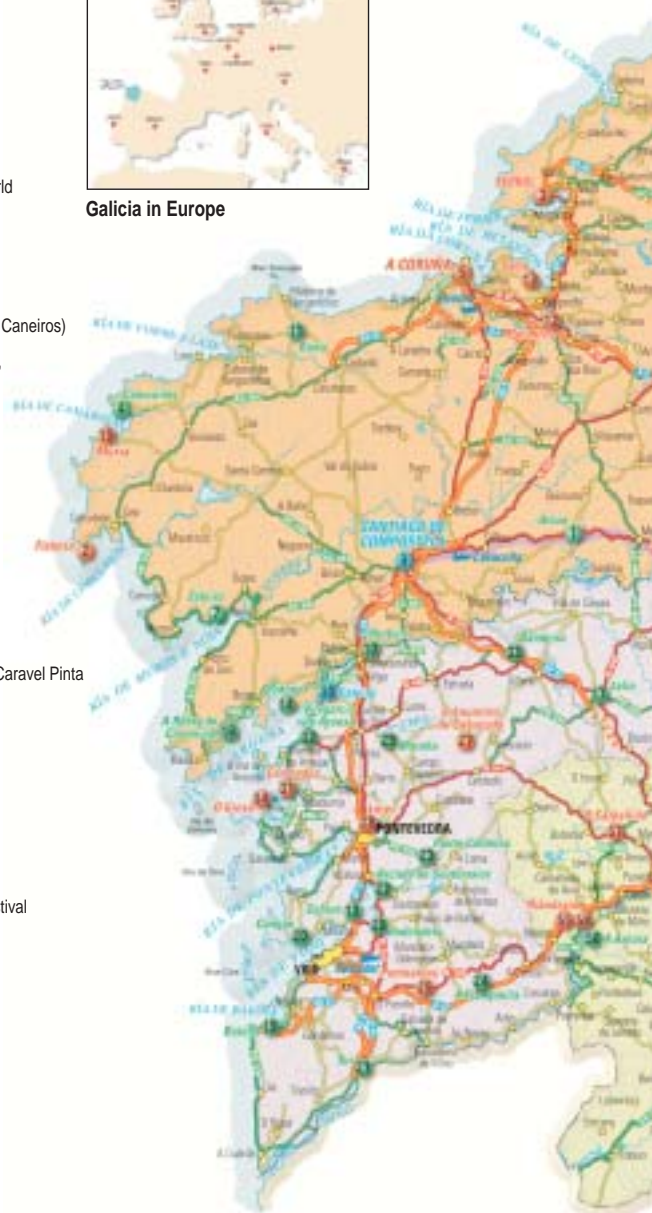


Galicia in Europe

Pontevedra

No. PAGE FESTIVAL

17	36	"Cocido" Fair
18	36	Cobres Carnival
19	38	Festival celebrating the Arrival of the Caravel Pinta
20	40	Cangas Easter
21	41	Festival of the Patron San Telmo
22	41	Oyster Festival
23	43	Trout Festival
24	43	"Romaría da Virxe da Franqueira"
25	15	"Corpus Christi"
26	44	"Corpus Christi"
27	17	"A Rapa das Bestas"
28	19	"San Benitoño de Lérez"
29	46	"Carneiro ao Espeto" (roast lamb) Festival
30	22	Viking "Romería"
31	24	Albariño Wine Festival
32	49	Festival of the Patron San Roque
33	50	"Empanada" (pie) Festival
34	32	Shellfish Festival





Lugo

No. PAGE FESTIVAL

35	39	Amandi Wine Festival
36	12	Viveiro Easter
37	42	Trout Festival
38	44	Offering of the Kingdom of Galicia to the Blessed Sacrament
39	18	"A Rapa das Bestas" of Candaoso
40	46	Tuna Festival
41	23	Festival of "la Santa Cruz"
42	25	Festival of the Patron San Lourenzo
43	48	"Festa da Maruxaina"
44	49	"Queimada popular"
45	50	"Folión de Carros"
46	29	"Romaría do Naseiro"
47	52	"Festa da Faba"
48	53	Festival of San Froilán
49	33	"As San Lucas" Fair

Ourense

No. PAGE FESTIVAL

50	10	Carnival of Xinzo
51	37	Festival of "la Androlla" and Carnival
52	37	Carnival of Laza
53	38	Carnival of Verín
54	42	"Os Maios"
55	14	O Ribeiro Wine Festival and Exhibition
56	47	Pepper Festival
57	26	Octopus Festival
58	30	"Festa da Istoria"
59	52	"Romaría de A Sainza"

Motorways, highways

Regional expressways

State network

Basic regional network

Additional regional network

Standard gauge railway track

Narrow gauge railway track

Camino de Santiago (Pilgrims' Trail to Santiago)

Festivals of International Tourist Interest

Festivals of National Tourist Interest

Festivals of Regional Tourist Interest

"You say: Galicia is very small. And I say: there is a World of Galicia. Every piece of a land is in itself as the entire World. You may journey from North to South, from East to West, in little time; you may do so over and over again, and yet you shall not travel it whole. And every time you go, you shall come across new things (...) The surface may be small; in depth, entity, Galicia is as great as you wish ... " VICENTE RISCO



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