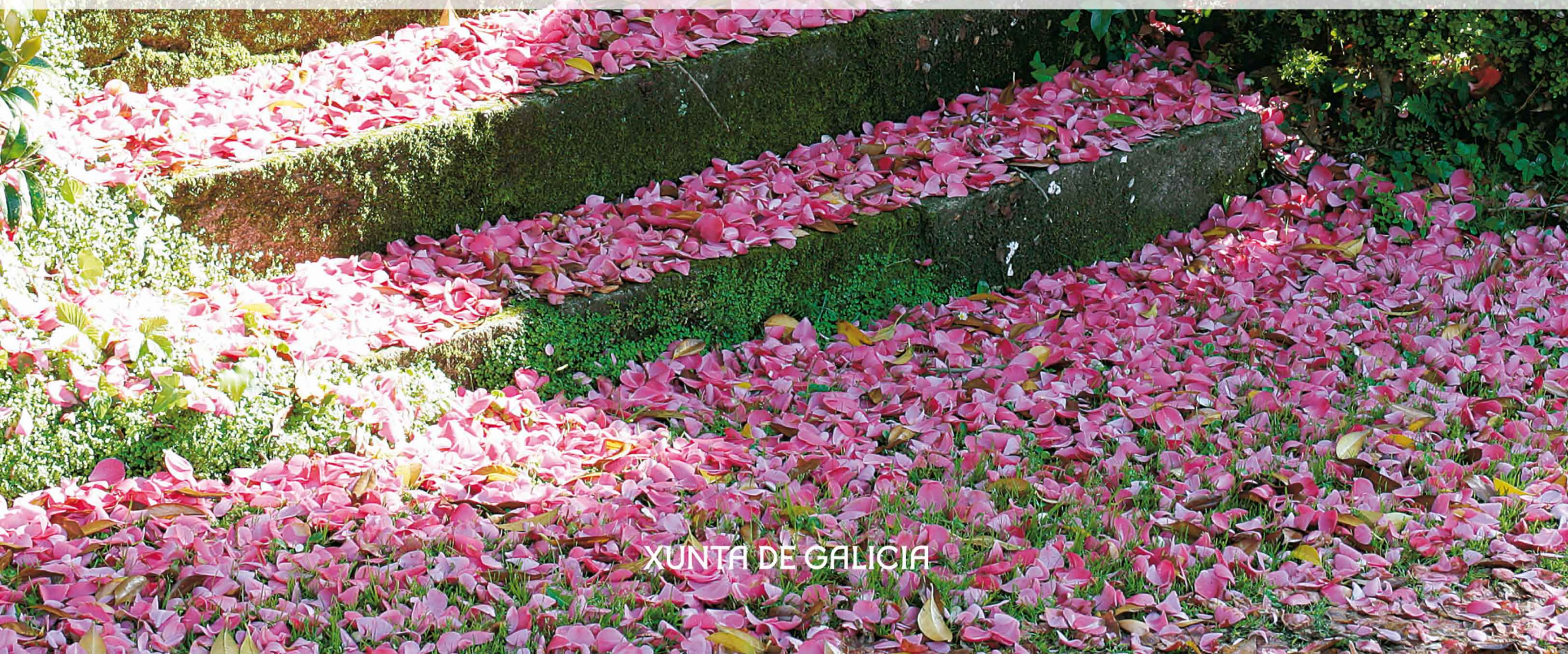




# GALICIAN PAZOS and its gardens





GALICIAN *PAZOS*  
and its gardens

# GALICIAN PAZOS and its gardens

*Introduction*

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# Foreword

**T**he landscape is one of the most characteristic signs of identity of a territory and Galicia has features so much its own they make it inimitable. Because of our geographical distribution, our idiosyncrasy perhaps manifests itself most strongly in the rural environment and both inland and on the coast Galicia contains unique spaces.

Over time, climate and orography shaped our physical space and this has largely determined our way of life, our relationships with the environment and ourselves.

We Gallegos are people who love our land, we feel attachment to it, and we've even given a name to that feeling of nostalgia produced by distance: *morriña* (homesickness).

The strength of the landscape and of the elements that compose it is very great in Galicia, which allows us to treasure our own, original typologies. This is the case of the pazos: noble and fundamentally rural constructions in which architecture and its surroundings make the difference.

The pazos, their gardens and their fields form part of a clearly Galician landscape that identifies us both inside and outside our territory and are the sites where a good part of our history has occurred. These landscapes have been the protagonist of some of the best literary works of our writers and also of some of our cultural and scientific milestones.

The pazos constitute a fundamental part of our artistic heritage and some, at present, offer accommodation as hotels or rural tourism establishments, providing in this way some of the finest and most exclusive lodging.

Their gardens, where many of the plant species that today grow throughout Galicia were first cultivated, still maintain all the splendor with which they were conceived.

One can find such species as the camellia, originally from the Orient and nowadays the flower of Galicia where it blooms in infinite varieties carefully cared for in many of our pazos. Indeed, camellias here have many and very diverse uses and have even been incorporated into our gastronomy.

This publication contains a part of this rich cultural heritage of Galicia, so original and so authentic that we are proud to share it.

Alberto Núñez Feijóo  
Presidente da Xunta de Galicia





## Galician gardens: another version of paradise

Gardens, those leafy microcosms, with their mutable fragility and their unceasing vitality, fill us with nostalgia for our lost Eden. Gardens represent both nature and culture, and this is why the Florence Charter (1982) defined the historical garden as a “living monument”; a monument not only to the natural features of a garden – the plants that bloom, sprout and in their annual cycle, the passing of time and the gradations of light that change a garden’s appearance from one moment to the next – but also to the enormous creativity that humans have invested in them. In a way, a garden is like a dream that has become physically manifested in the form of water, sky, plants, colour, sound, fragrance, flavour, soil, rock and memory. However, at the same time, a garden expresses a specific personality – that of the space on which it has been built, and the culture from which it has sprung. This book deals with the gardens of Galicia, green spaces that are often linked with *pazos*: their history, their architecture, their social and economic structure and their identity, which is simultaneously ambiguous and definite. And they are, of course, set in what is considered a mythical landscape.

The green countryside and the silvery sea are what define Galicia, a land revived by the constant presence of water, by a sky that changes from a canopy of mist and feathery rainfall to the deepest blue. From the mountainous inland area, furrowed by a thousand rivers, to the gentle coastline of the Rías Baixas and As Mariñas, or the abrupt cliffs of the Costa da Morte, Galicia is a land that is green, temperate and rainy, a land marked by the power of nature. Galician geography is defined by lowlands with valleys and coasts, gentle river estuaries, leading up to undulating mountains and mighty sierras. Over the centuries, the granite relief has been moulded by the sea, the rivers and rainfall, while the Atlantic landscape has been marked, in turn, by intense human activity.

Galicia’s geography – which is rough but the same time gentle, with numerous microclimates – and the temperate, rainy climate have helped to create a land filled with small, scattered villages that coexist alongside each other, as well

as a world that has its own specific language – one which has produced great tales and legends – and a culture with deep magical and religious roots.

To a great extent, these values have persisted in spite of the dizzying process of social change (a process that is inevitable and even necessary, though at the same time contradictory) which has meant that a balance has had to be struck between the self-absorbed Galicia and the Galicia that is open to the world outside. The autochthonous architecture and the very landscape are two particularly sensitive elements that express the “to be or not to be” of Galician identity. Popular architecture, which has developed as a result of the geo-climatic and socio-cultural conditions, has survived in the form of dwellings and other typically Galician constructions, such as *pallozas*, *hórreos*, *muíños*, *fornos*, *pesqueiras*, *pombais*, *telleiras*, *alvarizas*, *palleiras* and *alpendres*. The marvellous structural variety reveals the intuitive talent of this “architecture without architects”; a building style that combines maximum functionality with complete integration into the landscape. On another level – and based on the same values of functionality and suitability to the physical environment – the *pazos* represent one of the most important settings for Galicia’s cultural heritage, and not only because of their architectural typology, which combines the actual house and its auxiliary buildings (such as *adegas*, *hórreos*, *fallados*, *tullas*, *alpendres*, *cabazos*, *invernadorios* and *muíños*), but also because of their gardens, parks and agricultural land, which is home to the country’s botanical wealth, whether in the form of indigenous or imported species.

The culture of the *pazos*, which reached its zenith in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, has its origin in the old manor estates and is an extension of the “big house”, or the “house-fortress”. Ana Pereira Molares gives the following definition for a *pazo*: “A Galician nobleman’s house, built in the countryside, possessing heraldic emblems, luxurious in proportions and features, very much superior to the normal dwelling in the area in which it stands; not always but very frequently, *pazos* have a main gate decorated with the family coat of arms, a chapel,





dovecote and gardens, as well as other features. Chronologically it belongs to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, though some *pazos* are older, but have received structural additions in later periods.”

The word *pazo*, which derives from the Latin word *palatium*, suggests the stately, residential nature of the structure, though in many cases the owners were also farmers, which explains the architectural combination of residence and auxiliary structures, all of which revolved around a self-sufficient economy. As for the actual land, the area closest to the mansion or “big house” was often gardens, while the rest of the land was agricultural, divided into vineyards, orchards, pastureland and woodland. In spite of its etymology, the *pazo* shunned all forms of architectural pretension, and the few decorations the buildings have – such as arcades and terraces – were introduced more for the purpose of maximising the amount of light and sunshine the house could receive rather than as a form of ostentation. These stately homes often have a number of specific features in common, such as thick walls, large exterior stairways, generously-sized chimneys (sometimes with sundials on) and, particularly, the heraldic shield of the family. These could be seen in the middle of the façade, over the main gate, in the chapel, on the fountains, on the walls that mark the limits of the estates, and were sometimes even carved on

the trees. The end result is that the architecture and landscape form an indivisible whole, an idea that is expressed in the popular saying, “dovecote, chapel and cypress – it is a *pazo*”. The building’s origin can be traced back to Roman villas, defensive towers and mediaeval palaces, while later influences came from rural and monastic architecture, Italian Renaissance villas and Baroque palaces. Ángel del Campo summarises the typology of the *pazos* into four basic categories: 1) a large house built between towers of medieval origin with rear wings that contain a general purpose courtyard (for example, Vista Alegre, in Vilagarcía, Pontevedra); 2) a U-shaped construction made up of three buildings, often with the family’s coat of arms over the main gateway (for example, Vilar de Ferreiros, in Santiago, A Coruña); 3) a building made up of two wings joined at right angles and framing a garden. The most outstanding example of this is the Pazo de Oca, near A Estrada, in Pontevedra. It was completed in 1746, though the original building dated back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century; and 4) a large house built in one solid block (such as Bóveda, in Lugo, which also has a façade with arcade galleries dating from 1772).

Many of these houses shared a number of architectural features, including a rectangular ground plan, thick granite walls, two floors, a space between two supporting walls, chestnut plank flooring, colonnades on the ground floor and

galleries or balconies on the upper floor and hipped roofs without much in the way of projection. Last but not least, the typical *pazo* is surrounded by thick vegetation.

The vicissitudes of politics and social upheaval led to changes in the way these unique spaces were used, and even came to threaten their very survival. The *pazo* culture, with its light and shade, virtually died out in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when *pazos* became purely residential structures. However, part of the *pazo* heritage has survived – especially in terms of architecture and the landscape – and these should be preserved as an important legacy of Galicia’s collective memory.

The gardens are one of the most evocative and fascinating features of Galician *pazos*, not just because of their originality and variety, but also because of the way they interrelate with the rural environment and its changing beauty; a relationship that is based on the passing of the seasons and the size, colours and shapes of the plants. These gardens are also characterised by the omnipresence of water, ornamental stonework features (such as ponds, fountains, waterfalls, statues, balustrades, staircases, *miradoiros* and *ceadores*) and, of course, the indigenous fauna. An abundance of birds fill these gardens with their joyous song, including sparrows, pied wagtails, blackbirds, magpies, crows, doves, pigeons, chaffinches, nightingales, European serins, coal tits, blue tits, Lapland buntings, swifts, swallows, woodpeckers and treecreepers. Butterflies zigzag their way through the

flowerbeds like nervous fairies, while frogs croak and plop into dark, hidden pools. All creatures – both great and small – coexist happily in these gardens.

In their book *Monumental Trees in Galicia’s Cultural Heritage*, Carlos Rodríguez Dacal and Jesús Izco praise the wonders of Galician woodland, including the “Avó de Chavín” (a eucalyptus almost 70 metres high) at Souto da Retorta (Viveiro) and the horse chestnuts at Costa and Pombairiños, in the Ourense region, the trunks of which measure almost 12 metres in circumference. Some trees are over 500 years old, such as the oak tree at the Pazo de Cartelos (Lugo), the horse chestnuts in the Bosque de Pombairiños (Ourense), and the *sobreira* at Balboa, in A Estrada (Pontevedra). Other curiosities include the hermaphrodite orange tree at the Pazo de Brandariz (Ortigueira, A Coruña). Meanwhile, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the priest Martín Sarmiento – a specialist in Galician flora – discovered many fascinating things about the trees of the region, such as the fact that when laurels were planted alongside lemon trees, the latter stayed green, leafy and productive for many more years.

Looking from the *pazos* in the Beiramar area (Vigo), you can just make out, through the foliage, the dancing light of the sea, with all its magical metamorphoses, halfway between the eternal and the ephemeral. The gardens of the *pazos* – which represent a refined evolution of the original



orchards and vegetable gardens – are also reminiscent of the first interior gardens and the extensive vegetable gardens of the great Galician monasteries (Samos, Oseira, Sobrado dos Monxes and San Martiño Pinario). *Pazo* gardens are varied in their design, in accordance with aspects such as location, climate, relief, space and use. Their inspiration includes influences from French gardens (more geometric in style) or English landscaping (freer and more natural), but they all have their own personality. In the opinion of José A. Martín Curty, *pazo* gardens are defined by four features: isolation, compartmentalisation, terracing and eclecticism. The green coastal landscape enhances the personality and beauty of these gardens which, frequently, surpass the actual dwelling in terms of elegance, with their majestic trees, such as Atlas cedars (*Cedrus Atlantica*), the local variety (*Cedrus Atlantica "glauca"*), Lebanon cedars (*Cedrus Libani*), Caucasian firs (*Abies nordmanniana*), Greek firs (*Abies cephalonica*), yew trees (*Taxus baccata*), Japanese wisteria (*Criptomeria japonica*), Canary palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), Chile pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*), silver limes (*Tilia tomentosa*) and London plane trees (*Platanus acerifolia*). Other unusual species include the common mauve rhododendron (*Rhododendrum ponticum*), the European privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), the striking common oak (*Quercus robar*), the Sessile oak (*Quercus petrae*), the horse chestnut (*Castanea sativa* or *Castanea vulgaris*), the laurel (*Laurus nobilis*), the common cherrylaurel (*Purnas laurocerasus*), the tree strawberry (*Arbutus unedo*), the holly tree (*Ilex aquifolium*), the magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), the European spindle tree (*Evonymus*), the mock orange (*Philadelphus coronarius*), the orange tree (*Citrus aurantium*), the lemon tree (*Citrus limon*), the weeping willow (*Salix babylonica*), the Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*), the hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), the box (*Buxus sempervivens*, a species that is used to give structure to many gardens), and the camellia (*Camellia japonica*), the exotic queen of Galicia's gardens, and which has been baptised the "flower of the Rías Baixas", despite the fact that it thrives in many other areas along Galicia's Atlantic coast.

The sensation of "endless spring" that pervades Galicia, even during winter, can be explained by its dense foliage, as a result of the damp atmosphere and the many water-courses. But this is also due to the introduction of species that stay green all year round, or others which, as a result of deft interbreeding, bloom beautifully throughout the year. The deciduous trees and the abundant ivy also give a romantic touch to the autumn days. Located in the Pontevedra region of Ulla, the Pazo de Oca is known as "the Galician Versailles", and particularly because of its beautiful interior garden, which is invigorated (as is the entire *pazo*) by the tiny stream of Badoucos. Everything is a delight here, particularly from the box hedge borders, which gaze at their reflection

in the ornamental pools or encircle the granite fountain, arranged in a highly original lobed shape. The *pazo* is also singular for its large channelled ria which splits into two beneath the bridge, the brilliance of its hydrangeas, the long avenue of lime trees, the house's white gallery, the old washing place, and the camellias, which scatter their petals in drifts across the pathways in winter. One of these camellias is over 100 years old and stands 15 metres tall. The Pazo de Mariñán (A Coruña), which looks over the Ria de Betanzos and the banks of the Mandeo, is another unique spot, with its entranceway lined with London plane trees (some of them up to 50 metres high), white chestnuts and eucalyptus trees, as well as its avenue of ancient camellias and spruces; meanwhile, in the heart of its Baroque garden, the box hedges are a masterpiece of ornamental topiary. Other singular plant species that flourish in the garden's salt sea air include tree strawberries, London plane trees, Portugal cypresses, black poplars and ash trees, while the secluded intimacy of the tiny garden by the jetty or "balcony" on the ria recalls the legend of the clandestine loves of Doña Constanza, daughter of the powerful Gómez Pérez das Mariñas.

Apart from the romantic touch that resulted from the late-19<sup>th</sup> century reconstruction of a 15<sup>th</sup> century building, the Pazo de Lourizán (also in the Pontevedra region) offers a pleasant surprise in the form of a huge forested area that harks back to the *pazo*'s original structure as a farm; it has clearly-differentiated spaces (garden, agricultural estate and nature park) that bring together forestry research, the art of garden design and its original natural state. This structure is repeated in other similar spaces, such as the Pazo de Ortigueira in A Coruña (better known as Pazo de Santa Cruz de Ribadulla) and Castrelos in Vigo, which includes the Baroque *pazo* (now the Quiñones de León museum), the historical gardens (including a rose garden, a French garden and an English garden), a woodland area, a grove of trees and part of the Paseo de Lagares. In addition to its plant nursery, dovecote and auditorium, Castrelos is blessed with a number of other outstanding features, such as the wisteria at the entrance of the French garden and the Pradera del Té, the Paseo de Odriozola, with its double row of camellias and, once again, the energy-giving current of a small stream – the Lagares.

There are many other unique spots that deserve to be better known and more widely enjoyed, such as the public gardens of Posío, in Ourense, the historical-artistic garden of Padrón in the province of A Coruña and the Méndez Núñez gardens in the capital itself. Others include A Ferradura, in Santiago de Compostela, and O Pasatempo in Betanzos, which is rich in flora from the Americas. It was designed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in accordance with Italian Renaissance models (especially Bomarzo gardens), and with a dual intention: leisure and education.

The flowers of the camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas and acacias brighten up the relatively monochrome tones of winter, and they last until early spring, a time when there are few ornamental flower species in bloom. If I had to choose one flower as a symbol of the *pazo* gardens, it would have to be the camellia, for its beauty, its fragility and its romantic nature. Jesús Izco, who considers the flower "a gift from God", writes, "As for the competition between box and camellia, the latter wins hands down. This is easily comprehensible, given the great inequality between the two species in terms of foliage and flowers, and the camellia has the advantage in both cases. During autumn and winter, its large leaves shine lustroously with rainwater, as their crowns fill with flowers of all colours: red, pink, wine-red, violet or immaculate white, as well as different variegated varieties. The blooms multiply in many different shapes: full blooms, semi-double, double, peony and anemone. They stand out against the dark green crowns of the trees like little coloured lights, as a poet once wrote..."

The camellia was a relatively late arrival, as it was introduced into Galicia in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, after having been brought in from Portugal (where it had arrived from the East Indies). The camellia has not made much of an impact in Galician literature, though it is mentioned by Emilio Pardo Bazán, Curros, Pondal, Rosalía de Castro, Wenceslao Fernández Flórez, Ruibal and Álvaro Cunqueiro, who wrote *Laude da camelia*. Meanwhile, the delicate madrigal that Federico García Lorca wrote for Santiago de Compostela begins thus:

*Chove en Santiago  
meu doce amor.  
Camellia branca do ar  
brila entebrecida ao sol.*

In Japanese poetry – especially in *haikus* – camellias are one of the most celebrated flowers. In one of his best-known poems, the poet Kyoshi (1874-1959) expresses beauty's fragility, or perhaps the dangers of fleeting perfection:

The camellia  
in full bloom  
has become rather ugly...

(Perhaps this is why it is customary to use a half-open camellia as a decoration for the tea ceremony)

The Pazo de Santa Cruz de Ribadulla professes to own the oldest examples of *Camellia japonica* in Galicia, an honour that has often been mistakenly granted to the "Oranda-Ko" in Castrelos, owing to its spectacular size. The crowning glory of the Pazo de Oca, meanwhile, is the *Camellia reticulata* "Captain Rawes", not only because of its spectacular

blooms, but also because it is one of the oldest examples of its species in Europe. At the entrance of the Pazo de Torres-Agrelo (Redondela) there is a *Camellia sansaqua* that is 9 metres tall and with a circumference of 1.40 metres, while at Terraza de la Fuente there are two multi-trunk examples which are even taller (11.5 and 12 metres, respectively). The latter *pazo* is home to the "Barón de Soutelinho" variety, which is notable for its perfumed pink blooms. The gardens at the Castillo de Soutomaior, which were remodelled in 1982, also have a fabulous collection, though the Pazo Torre de Lama possesses the largest expanse of camellias in Europe, with around 400 varieties.

The value of these gardens, vegetable gardens, woods and pasturelands is enormous, in both material and spiritual terms. We should take good care of them and preserve them, not only for the spaces themselves, but for what they signify. Consider, for example, that in Galicia there are currently 404 threatened flora and fauna species, and that 59 of these are in danger of extinction. These include several varieties of dragonflies, the European freshwater turtle, the mountain hen and the bear; endangered plants, meanwhile, include the Armenia maritima, the mountain lily and the chrysanthemum).

The gardens of Galicia partly sprang out of the Baroque gardening trend that began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, heavily influenced by the symmetry of Versailles, though the Galician versions also possess an unmistakable personality of their own, being capable of integrating (as in the case of Ortigueira) geometric styles and landscaping, artificial and natural features, and native and exotic flora. And the creativity of gardeners (who have often remained anonymous) has undeniably been stimulated by typically Galician phenomena such as the presence of water (whether visible or unseen), the autochthonous granite (aged by time and embellished by the organic greenness of lichens and moss) and, of course, the plants themselves. Because a garden is not only a matter of design; what is most important is the soul of the place, the air that brings it to life and makes it, in some way, unique.

JOSÉ MARÍA BERMEJO





# Quinteiro da Cruz

Felipe Braga

PAZ DO QUINTEIRO DA CRUZ



## A confusion of camellias

Every year, at the height of winter, Quinteiro da Cruz bursts into colour as large splashes of yellow, white and red illuminate the details of the foliage. This is a garden that cannot be fully appreciated at first sight, with its intricate maze of footpaths, stone stairways and little hidden places.

A veritable confusion of camellias hangs down from hedges that are as cold and delicate as the very light of winter. And the garden changes with the blooms, as they vary in colour and origin – at least 1,400 varieties, all slowly telling their stories and legends.

They have come from Vietnam, China and Japan; they become acclimatised and they settle here. A veritable feast of beauty and botany that is distributed through the estate by tall green walls which give way to the interior garden, decorated with niches adorned with flowers as if they were the walls of a lounge; it is a truly overwhelming space, and stands around six metres tall.

From that point on, the garden gradually descends, as the camellia hedges sketch out the shapes of little corners and paths. Though the overall layout is an old one, it has produced a completely new garden – proof if any were needed of the extraordinary exuberance of the soil. Quinteiro da Cruz is a true decorative nursery that every day unquestioningly accepts new plants. The estate is a shop window of camellias, rhododendrons and azaleas, all the way up to the edge of the forest, an autochthonous woodland area with pines and oak trees. No-one would guess that these luxuriant, fertile gardens are less than 30 years old. The entire estate has a carefully renovated appearance, with its fountains, benches and stone tables. Over there, the tropical touch of a monkey puzzle tree which is crowned by an airy crest of branches. In the undergrowth, a chapel that was rebuilt, stone by stone, from the remains of one from the 16<sup>th</sup> century gazes out across a panorama of vineyards. There is a picnic area covered by jasmines. The autumn blush of the hydrangeas. Two *hórreos* [traditional Galician granaries] and a *cruceiro* [stone cross] provide a Galician counterpoint to the estate which is, above all, a garden that is waiting.

Waiting for the camellias.



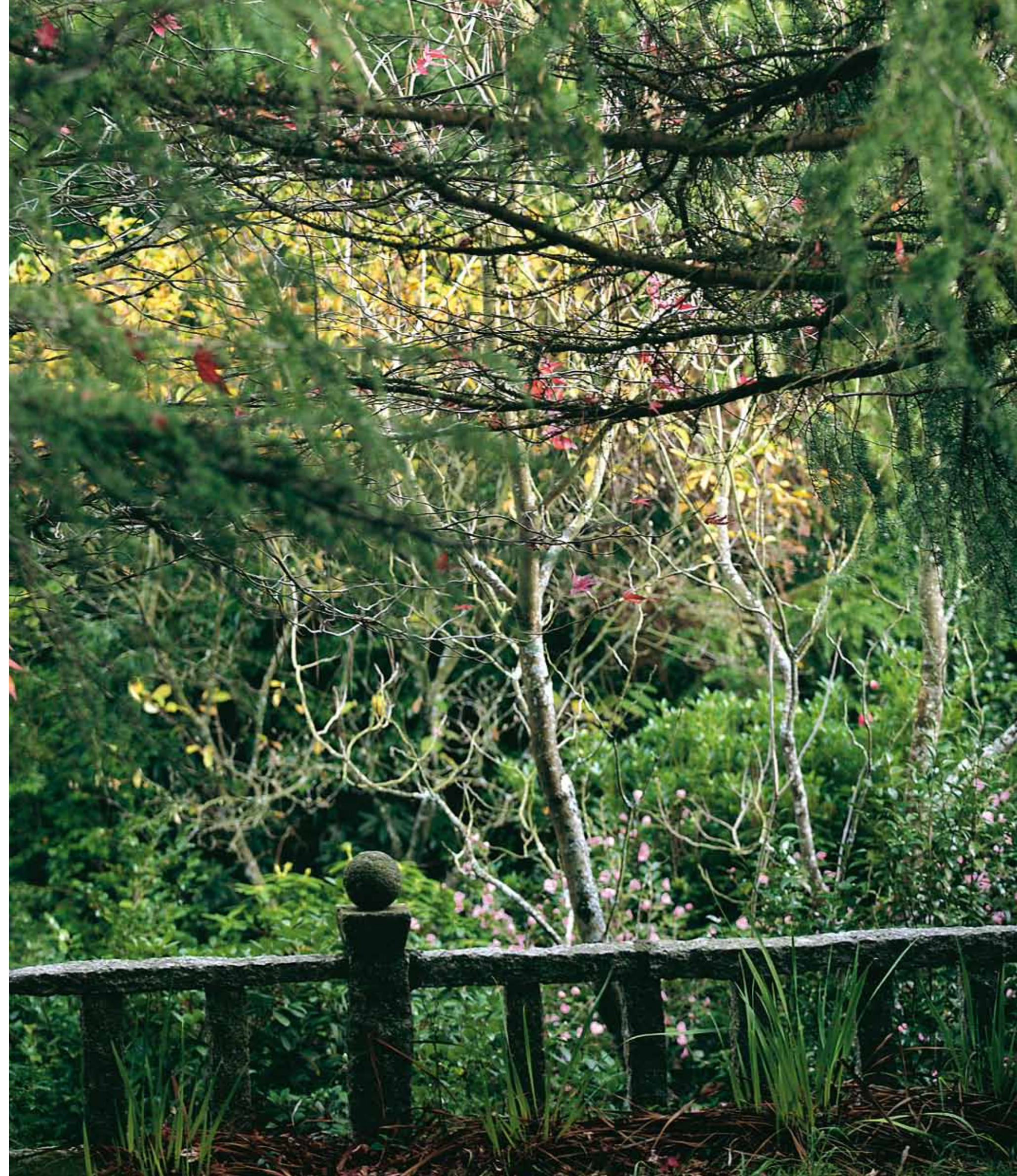




























# Oca



# Too beautiful to be described

Too beautiful to be described, the gardens at Pazo de Oca should always be seen from a carriage with liveried grooms drawn by six horses. Try it first in a golden carriage and then in a lacquered Landau, as this is the only way (wearing a wig and short britches to celebrate its early days, or a top hat for later years) you could prevent your appearance from jarring with the landscape.

The reality, however, is all about poetry; you have no choice but to surrender to it. The garden's three centuries of existence has covered the baroque, neoclassical and romantic periods, all of which coexist peaceably in the murmur of its fountains, in the blue-tinged air and in the brightness of its flowers.

There's no two ways about it – poetry insists on imposing itself here. It sits itself down and butts in wherever it wants. Poetry persists in sailing along the irrigation channels and harmonising with the cadence of the water; it's sentimental and slightly excessive, just like the water; it accompanies the box hedge snake that winds its way toward the dark heart of the maze. Poetry filters between the lime trees and crouches down behind the hedges. And in the end, it becomes majestic and formal in the ponds in which a visiting duck is paddling, completely overwhelmed by lyricism.

The bird has only just arrived, and you can tell – it moves slowly, contemplating everything around it in amazement: the island, the enormous hydrangea blooms, the Puente de las Truchas [Trout Bridge], and the cannons; it must be thinking about settling here.

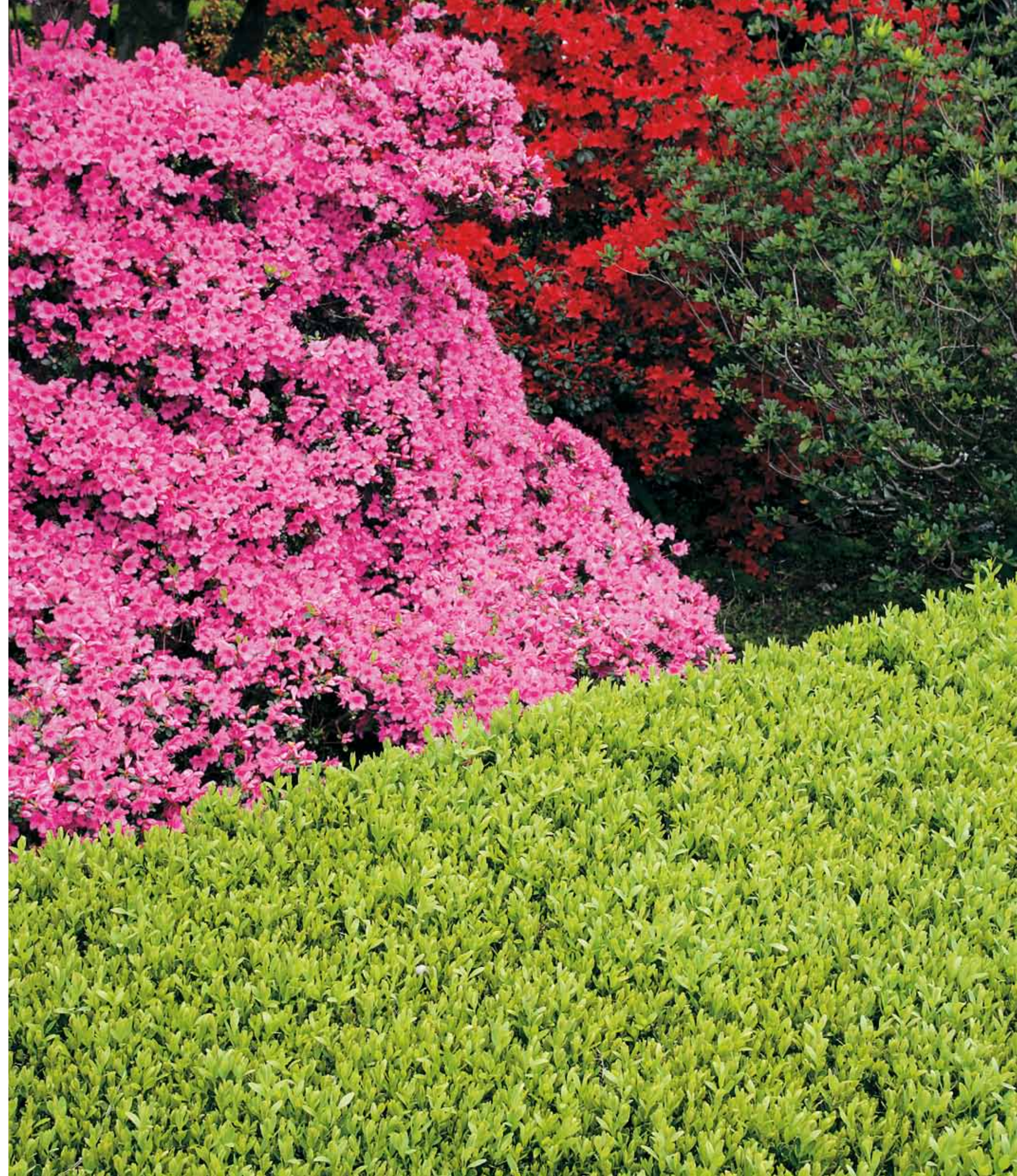
The surroundings could not be any more elegant: a sky that is pure Tintoretto, balustrades made of an almost silvery granite, with stairways and statues. And there's the water flowing past, gently and placidly.

Now the garden takes on a Versailles-like tone – like a decorative orchard. It is a nursery in which box hedges and roses coexist peacefully alongside celery, cabbages and peppers, not to mention kiwi trees that date back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and hundred year old vineyards. Meanwhile, a gaggle of geese greedily gobbling down apples gives the whole scene an intrinsically classical touch.

A bewildered frog is looking for the water. La Fuente del Teatro (The Fountain of Theatre) helps to give the setting even more atmosphere.

The Pazo de Oca also possesses an alarming topiary: an alligator, a dragon: the heraldry of the house. They are watched over by the tallest *Camellia Japonica* in Europe, a plant that keeps blooming until springtime; that is the time of year when azaleas, fruit trees and camellias all come into bloom at the same time as the hydrangeas. Spring is also the time when the garden becomes clearer – the sun shines and burns off the wreaths of mist that enshroud it in winter – that uncertain gleam that evokes magic and legends.

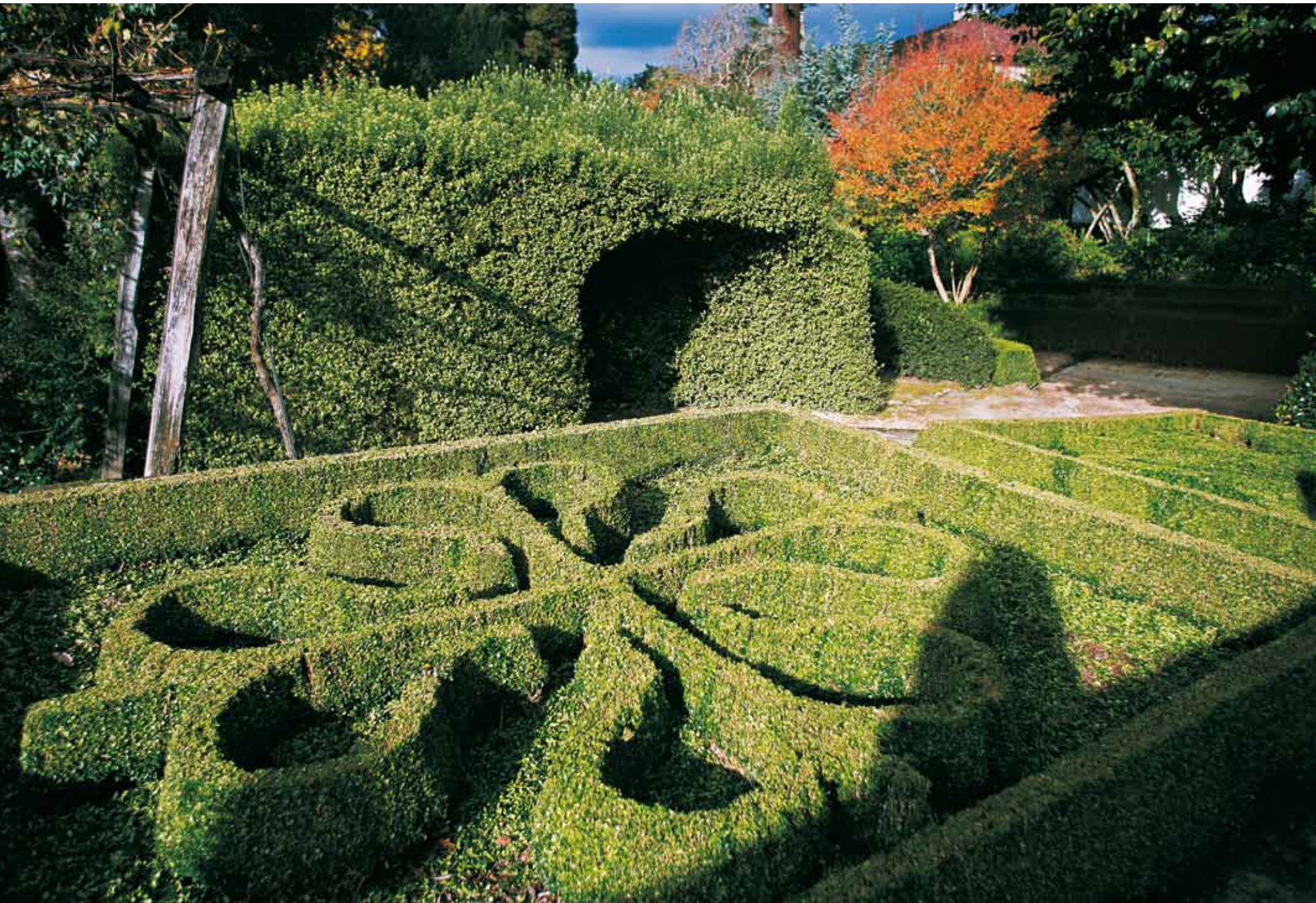
Too beautiful to be described: a stone garden enwrapped in a watery membrane.



































# Pazo da Ribeira

PAZO DE A RIBEIRA DE QUINARA  
1880



## Dangerous for a bad painter

Located in the valley of Barcia, the gardens at Pazo da Ribeira are without any doubt a danger for a bad painter.

Only a true artist would be capable of capturing on canvas the still beauty of the box trees, while the dark, glassy surface of the river Barcés would be an even greater challenge; this feature alone deserves to be the subject of a limpid watercolour.

The gardens were designed by Thieve, a Frenchman who arrived here in 1810 as a soldier and stayed on to work as a gardener. Despite their almost monastic structure, the gardens possess the undeniable air of 19<sup>th</sup>-century salon society, complete with a maze of box hedges and Empire-style stone benches (perhaps designed for short-stay visitors) that exist in perfect accord with the fountain. Madame Recamier would be in her element here, beneath the pale light of the camellias.

Monsieur Thieve also designed two other fountains that punctuate the length of the pathways.

The hedges and the paths lead to the pergola, which is dotted with fuchsia-coloured rhododendrons, white azaleas and variegated dahlias. In September, this space is swathed with a blue-and-white expanse of hydrangeas that contrasts with the red of the bamboo. There are also the aralias – black balls that ripen slowly until they resemble rosary beads lining a long avenue which goes off in search of the horizon. But Monsieur Thieve was unable to control the squirrels and the otters which, once they have wriggled through the gate, vanish quickly amidst the black bamboo, the oaks, the hazels, horse chestnuts, ash trees and the silvery poplars. When viewed from the bridge, this is a scene of perfect open riverside woodland.

When seen from Pazo da Ribeira.























# San Lorenzo de Trasouto



# A garden of peace

The garden of San Lourenzo de Trasouto transcends botany – the least important aspects of the garden are the plants, and the box design in the cloister in the form of Santiago’s shell and cross. Not even the garden’s design matters, or the fountains. As befits the garden of an ancient monastery, it is a place for prayer and silence. It’s a place that encourages whispering – you just can’t raise your voice here. At least, you shouldn’t. Even so, the water is disobedient.

The water, which sings out in three voices, spurts out into the fountain in fine streams with the clarity of a trumpet. You hear the exuberant splash of water into basins, as well as the babble of the fast-flowing irrigation channel. Because let us not forget that this is a vegetable garden, the part of the gardens that keeps their monastical soul intact. A soul that is a dwelling, but not a refuge; a soul that recharges itself with energy through silence, and regains the measure of things simply by strolling among the hedges. A profound, nostalgia-free tranquillity flows through this grid pattern that used to be a prosaic vegetable garden (let’s face it, there’s not much poetry in a pepper), though the sky does a lot to help, too.

And the garden transmits all of this, to the extent that by the time you leave, you’ll feel ready to face anything.

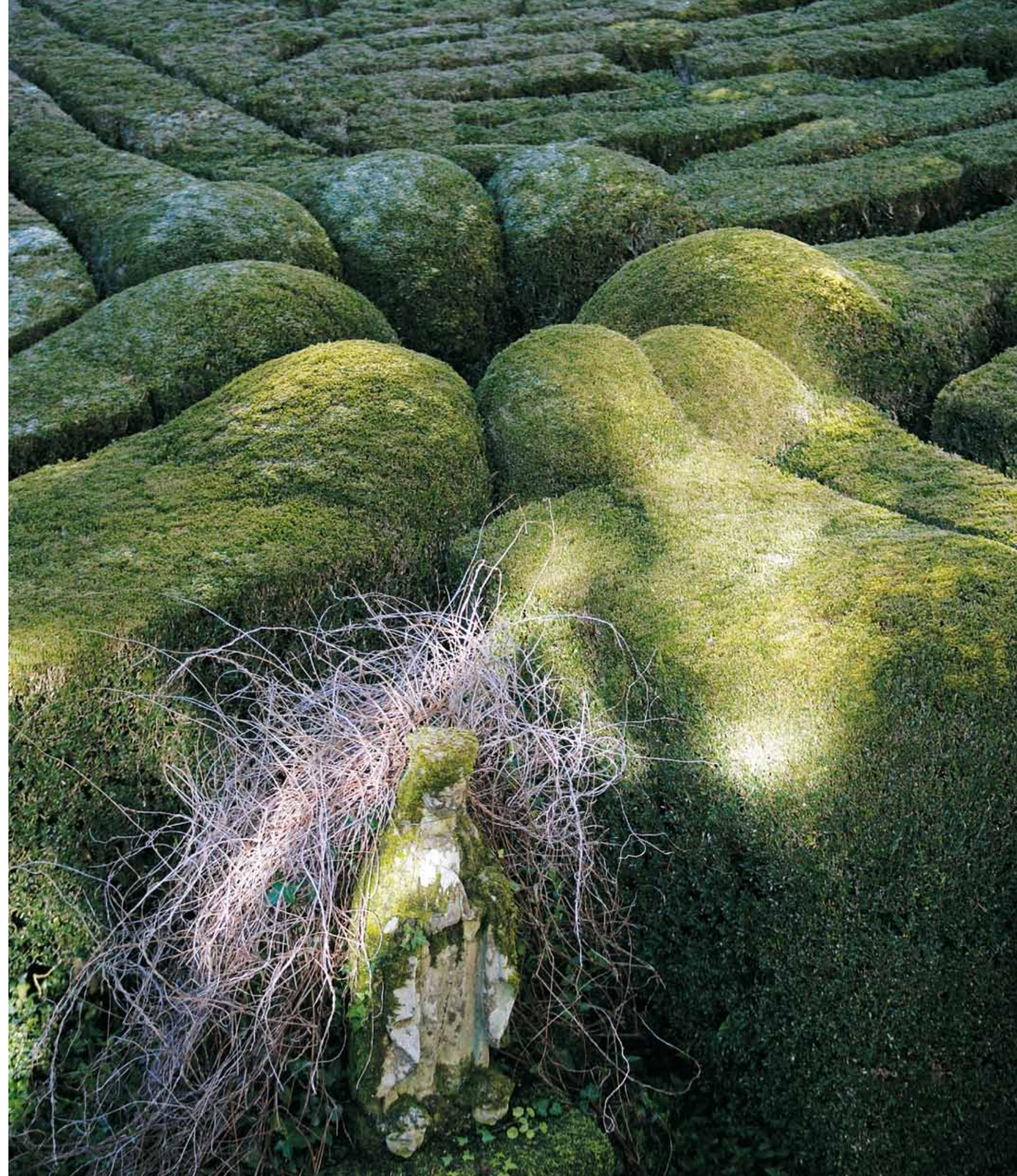
Inside the garden you breathe a kind of greyness. The afternoon sun filters the light just enough to tinge the flowerbeds slightly blue. The silhouette of the beeches and fir trees against the sky resembles the foreshortened tower of a castle with ruined battlements and stairways. A shrine struggles to be seen among the huge date palms.

Unlikely little roses grow as delicately as puffs of air. It seems as if one glance would make them crumble to bits. There are dahlias, gardenias and a wild rose bush that has sprung forth from the landscape. Little by little, the trees are creating a lofty vaulting of branches that ends in intricate fringes. There is a smell of laurel leaves and lemon vervain. It was around this spot that they found a stone image of the Virgin Mary – from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, they say – which now presides over the cloister as a constant reminder of the eternal. The statue does not represent any of the virgins in particular – though she could be dubbed the Virgin of the Waters, as the statue inhabits an altar that is next to a fountain. She is accompanied by a few angels – plump and chubby, just like angels should be – who hide together with her, among the box hedges. Meanwhile, the water imperturbably plays out its concerto.

From the cloister to the chapel, Trasouto becomes a monument once again, and reaffirms its identity as a monastery. The light buries itself in the baroque altarpiece, while the trees wait patiently; they know that what is solemnised in the church is always celebrated in the garden.

The city of Santiago de Compostela stands before the gates of San Lourenzo de Trasouto.

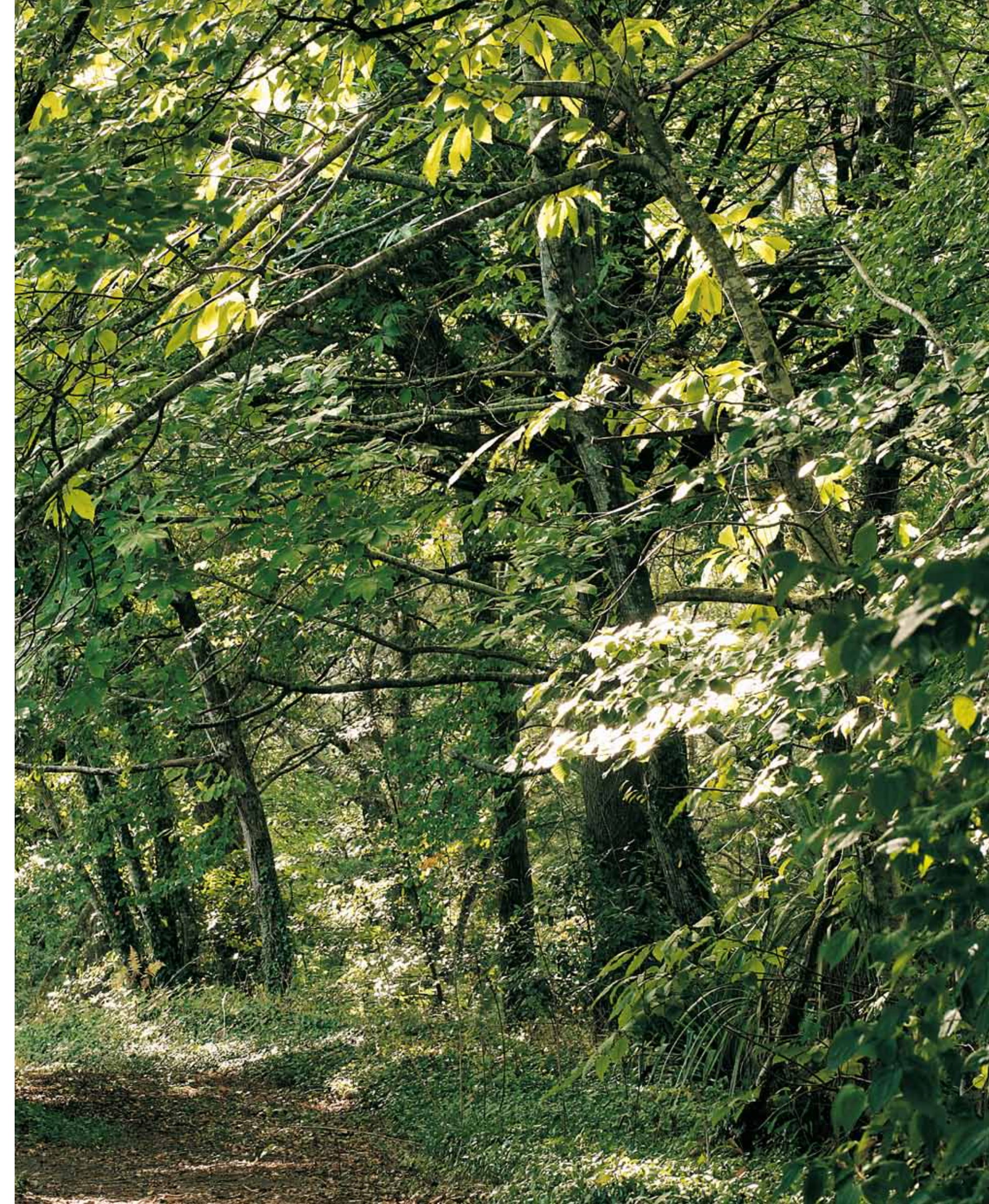
Which is only to be expected.



























# Fefiñáns



# The magic forest

Behind the imposing walls of the Pazo de Fefiñáns there is a magic garden hiding. Dense with foliage, you leap in without a second thought, through the big gate that will only open half-way.

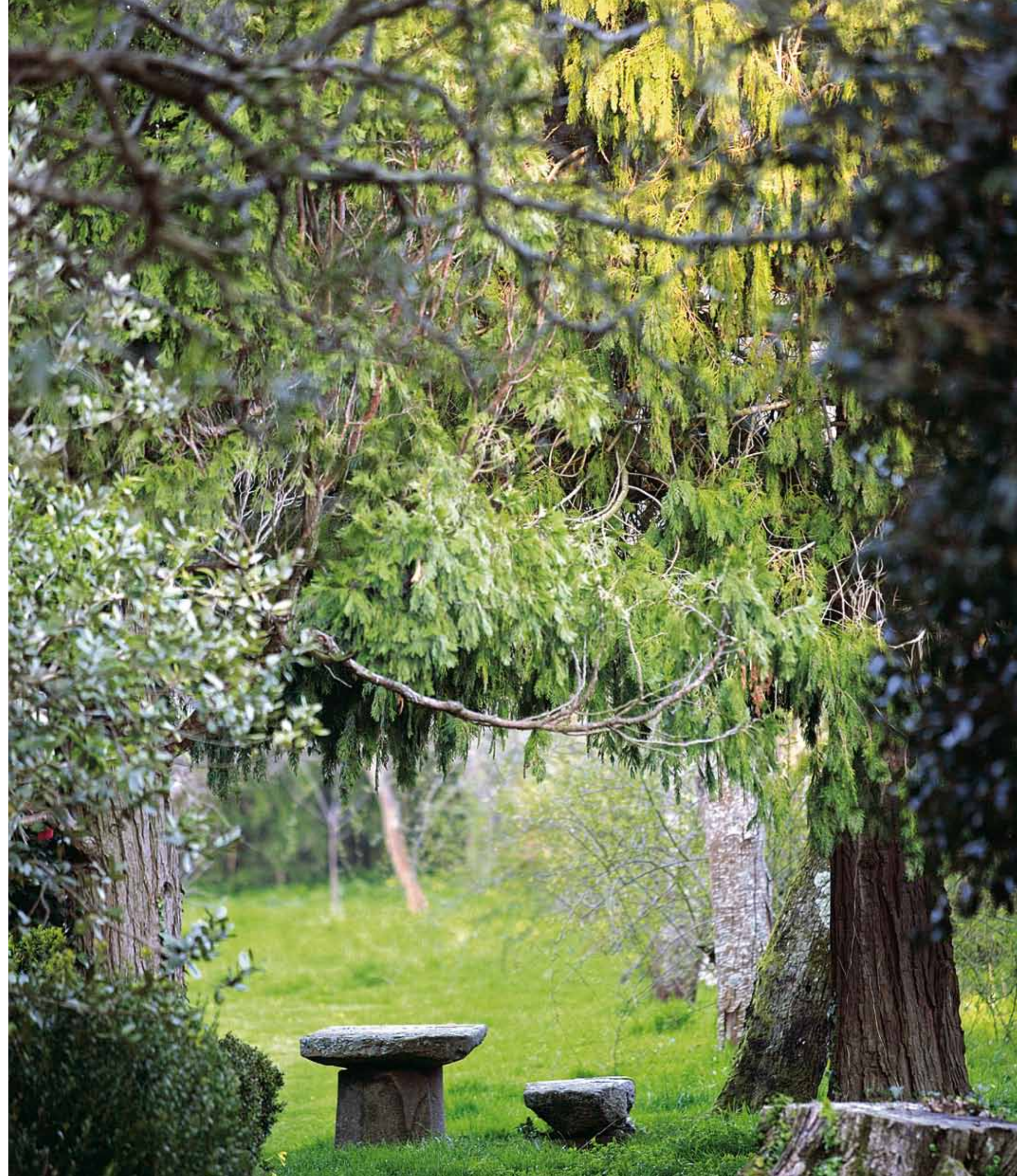
The thick perfume of honeysuckle hangs over the ancient ferns. The light buries itself in the branches of the trees. Long shadows drag themselves across the ground, restless and unsettled. The setting, which is filled with clicks, whispers and silences, brings the dawning realisation that in this space, time does not matter. It's gone. Or at least, it walks on tiptoes. There are palms, box hedges and oaks. A boulder of pinkish local granite lies in a corner, like a massive sleepy elephant covered with moss. Stone benches, light and shade; all that's missing is Alice and the White Rabbit.

It's hard to leave, to go back and open the gate once more, and bid farewell to the "magic forest", after having traversed the estate, with its vines and its dark water fountains, which are perhaps baroque in style, perhaps not (though magic plays no part in this – it's all down to time). Centuries of tireless streams of water have flowed down from beneath the stone cross, to become tempting dark mirrors. But if you manage to resist the allure of these twinkling watercourses, you can move on until you see the silhouette of the *pazo* behind the bridge. This bridge across the Camino Real, which makes the square unique, together with the church of San Benito and the 16<sup>th</sup>-century *pazo*, comprise one of the most beautiful monumental arrangements in Spain.

Fefiñáns should be visited just after the grape harvest, when the earth acquires the smell and colour of skin – a burnished ochrous aroma that is warm and intense like autumn light.

"All of this I will give you," said the Devil, when he tempted Christ, "except for Fefiñáns, Cambados and Santo Tomé".

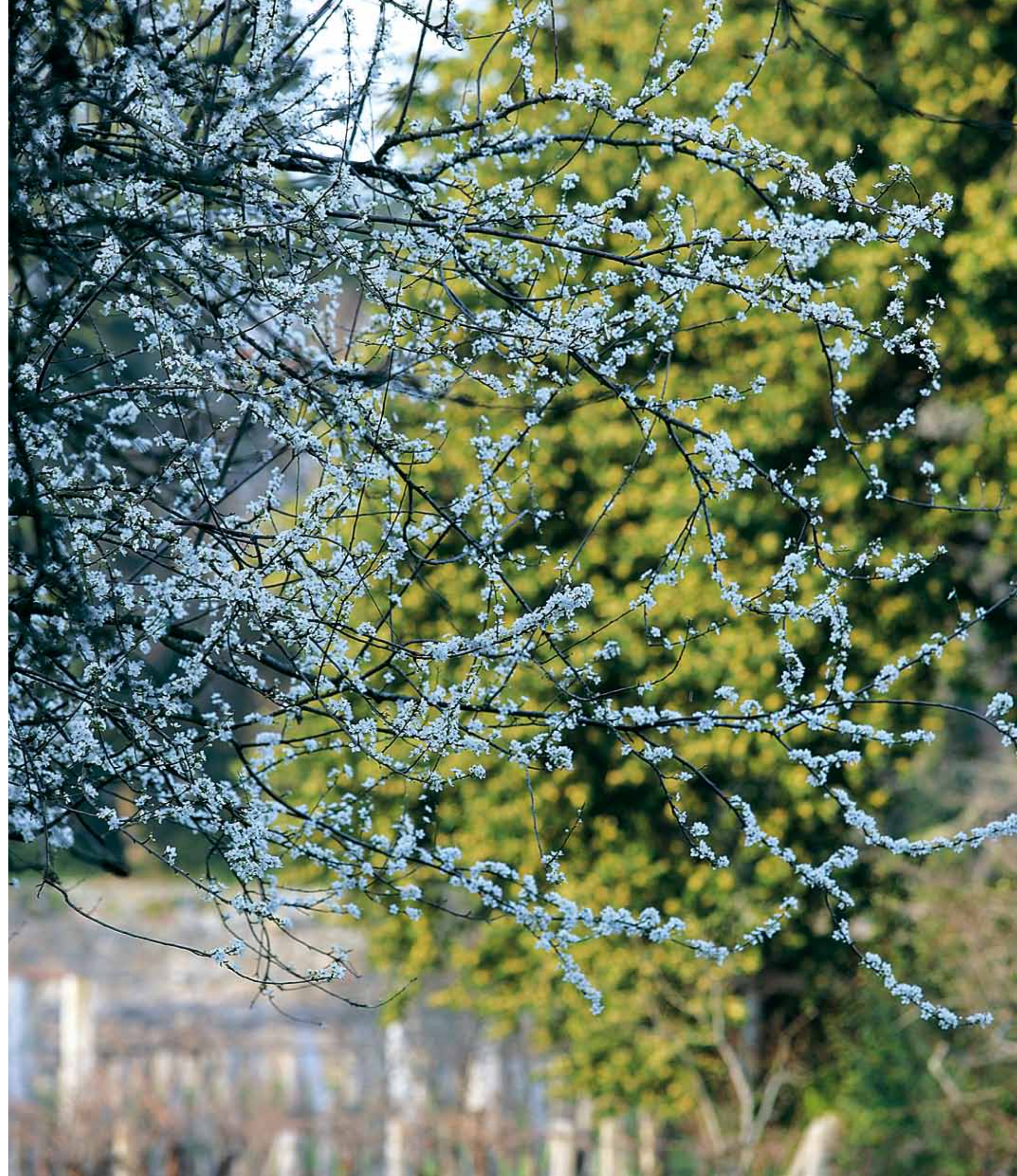
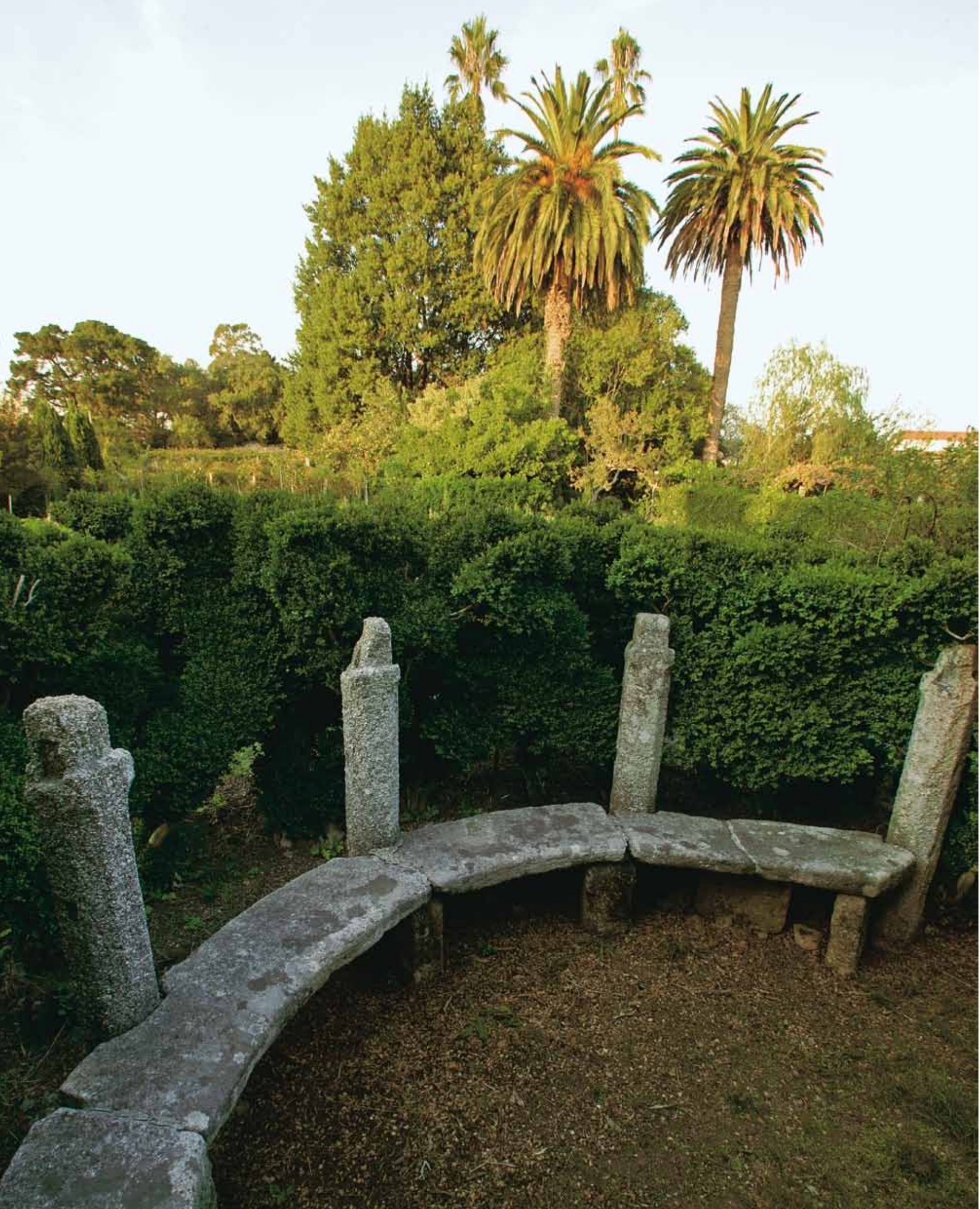
The Devil's reluctance is quite understandable.



































# El jardín de Esperante

PAZO DE ESPERANTE

*Benigno*

CABALLERO



## “Just another member of the family”

Every time the gate is opened or closed, little blue bellflowers and thorn apple blooms (also bell-shaped) both call out the same message: “This garden is just another member of the family”.

Some gardens are romantic, others are nostalgic, classical, strict, or simply perfect. The garden at Pazo de Esperante in Quembre is, above all, a cheerful garden; a setting that transmits a warmth that goes beyond happiness. A narrow stone stairway – like an intruder penetrating the courtyard of a castle – runs between the walls of a thick black-and-green box hedge. These tall hedges protect the privacy of the rest of the garden, the house and the estate, as if they were like an entrance hall. A few yellow marigolds smile a cheeky “Hello” from the middle of a flowerbed that acts as a passageway which breaks through the wall towards the blue of the horizon. The scent of a false jasmine waits on the stairway, ready to welcome guests.

The land that stretches out before the visitor’s eyes surrenders itself unreservedly – though that doesn’t mean it is without secrets. The garden runs down to the river in the form of colourful terraces. There are flowers of all tones and shades – pink, blue, white and yellow, as well as the purplish hint of a Japanese magnolia, still too small and weak to produce a few leaves to accompany the flower, though it is joined by a camellia from the same country. There are sweet peas, lilies, dahlias and many other plants, some with names, others anonymous, which grow in flowerpots and on low walls that snake off into the woodland.

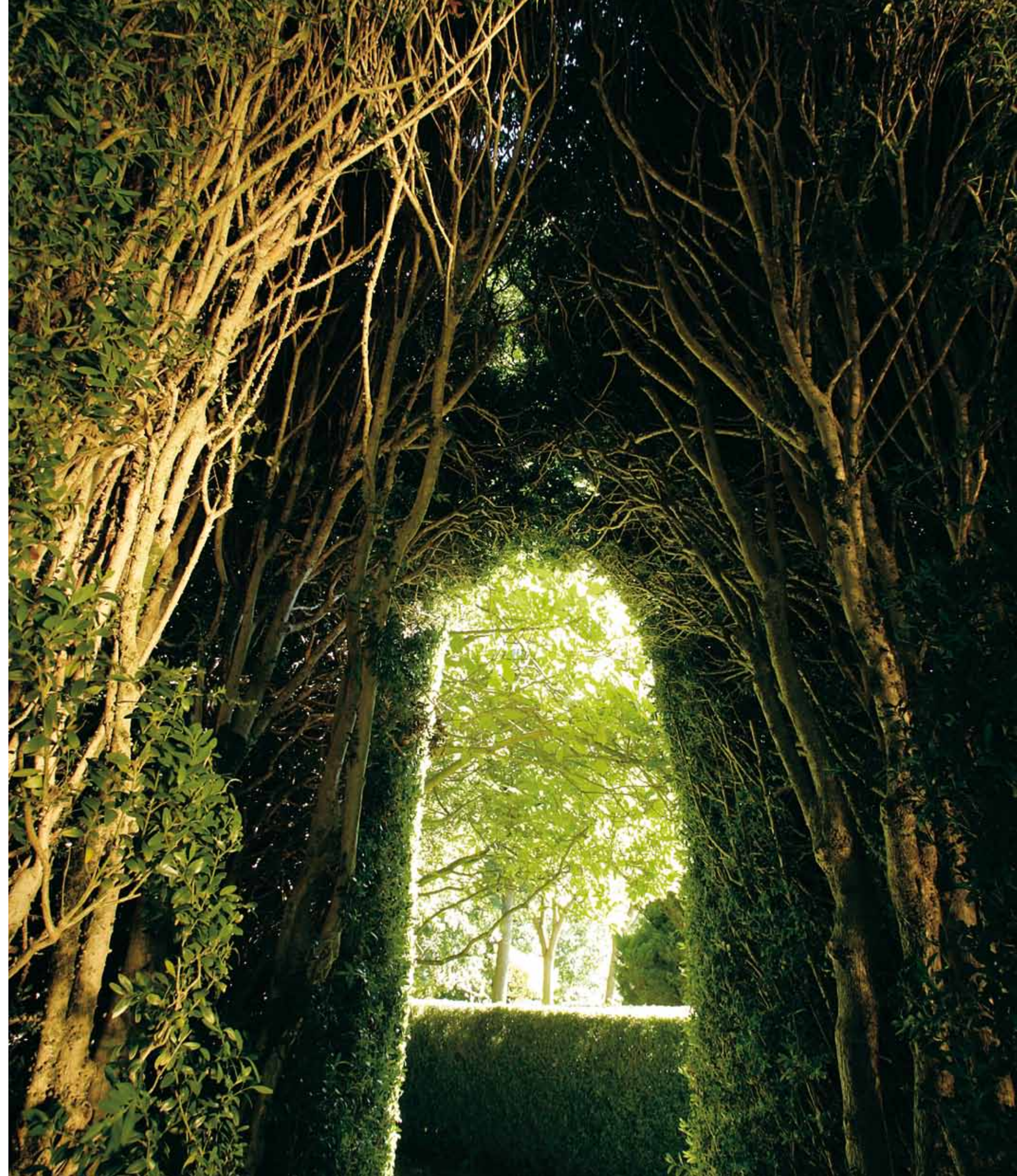
Once you penetrate the forest, with its oaks, beeches, willows and horse chestnuts, the whole scene is illuminated by a greenish backlight. There are gold greens, dark greens and apple greens. The sun lights up the grass, plucking forth cheerful emeralds from it. The *hórreo* that has been converted into a playroom provides a Galician counterpoint to the two palm trees – one skinny, the other a chubbier specimen. The entire space boasts the carefully-created carelessness of an English garden. There are no strict lines, and roses and lavender grow wherever they can in an apparent British disorder. Meanwhile, a bougainvillea patiently ascends the wall of the *pazo*, a house that became a noble dwelling in 1512























Sigrás

CASA DE JAZ

Artista: [Signature]



## A 200-year-old box hedge

On the levelled area in front of Pazo de Sigrás, there is a 200-year-old box hedge that flows impeccably and precisely along the flower beds. Not one single leaf is out of place, nor would it ever dare to grow beyond its limits. It is peaceful and orderly, within this Italian-style classical garden that climbs the hill towards the house. All the plants know their place perfectly – or at least, the ones that grow beneath the watchful coat of arms etched on the façade of the house. Andrades, Montenegros; don't even think about rebellion. As for the others – the camellias, the magnolias, the large grey fir tree and the chandelier-shaped pine that can all be found further down the hill towards the estate – they detest being subjected to so much symmetry. The Lebanon cedar, especially, is incapable of it. As is the Maritime pine, which the Galician government has declared a unique example of its kind, owing to its age and size.

In contrast, the laurel trees release their juicy aroma into the wind while lined up in strict formation, forming a kind of ceremonious avenue at the entrance of the estate.

Sigrás is a loyal exponent of the typical flora of the *pazos*. Researchers from the University of Santiago have even paid a visit here to catalogue the species. Rebellious, wild and refined, the garden maintains its spaces in a well-defined manner, though each has its own particular idiosyncrasy.

Behind the house, on an archaic, complicated path that goes up the mountain, a 15<sup>th</sup>-century arch contains a gate that is hidden by hydrangeas in August, and a stone stairway that is painted pink by camellias in winter. But all that remains of the tower that, in former times, must have ennobled the valley of Cela, is a chalice carved in stone, which was the emblem of the quarry. Apart from that, a dense forest of oaks and maples stand guard over a cork oak that is fatter every day.

Behind the well there are several agapanthuses in bloom – false lilies that don't fool anyone. Meanwhile, the horse chestnuts seem to shoot directly out of the ground as if they didn't have trunks. In all, this is a wild, almost savage place, which watches over and dominates the region laid out beneath it, leading off to the horizon



































# Rubiães



# 10 trees and a lily pond

One could call Rubiáns many things: historical, poetic or simply beautiful, and they would all be true. But the image that remains in the memory is that of a cluster of water lilies floating on the dark surface of a pond. Red, white and yellow, they offer themselves to the moon when they feel like it, or they just close up in the evenings. Nobody knows the why or the wherefore of it; it is simply a botanical enigma.

The *pazo* juts out between the trees with the arrogant simplicity of the house-fortress that it used to be in days gone by. A secular tradition transformed into foliage which is best expressed in the form of a dozen massive trees that stand as witnesses to the vicissitudes of the *pazo* and its lineage. The two magnolias that have grown up together with the house are permanently going about their perfumed business. Meanwhile, the 18<sup>th</sup>-century eucalyptus, a pioneer of its species in Galicia, stands guard at the beginning of the avenue: twelve metres in height, it grows in search of the sky. Finally, a ragged curtain of seven Japanese cedars hangs between us and the horizon.

You can call trees any name you like, because in the end, they can't argue or complain about it. But each tree unsuspectingly shows its particular personality. In fact, Rubiáns is a living, breathing plant museum with an abundance of camphor laurels, Chile pines, myrtles and all manner of venerable camellias.

The park echoes the robust idiosyncrasy of the house: it's occasionally wild, sometimes refined, but always stately. The park has a rather anarchic layout that exudes permanence in time and spaciousness in its paths. Solid box hedges cast little specks of sunshine on the ground, cheering up the restrained aroma of earth and dark moss that impregnates the pathways. Around the frog pond, the park becomes a garden, and very French – the landscape gardener Dorgambide was responsible for the colourful fish, the geraniums, gardenias and azaleas. Meanwhile, an avenue of vines extends the garden as far as the orchard, where apple and lemon trees give the estate a workaday agricultural touch.

Caught halfway between the rural and the stately, Rubiáns exudes consistency.



































Xaz



## The ambushed *pazo*

Ambushed behind its bougainvillea-and-ivy-covered façade, Pazo de Xaz looks out over a garden that penetrates the house, in the same way that the house is perfectly integrated with the garden. The myrtle hedges boast an infinite synchrony of colours: purples, browns, fiery red gladioli – they all make their way into the house, through the balcony, along the corridors, even through the gaps in the doors. The kitchen and the office, meanwhile, are decorated with a series of plant illustrations that are so real that they look as if they belong outside. Looking from anywhere in the house, the garden is invading through the windows which, in turn, light up the ivy, the bougainvillea and the shadowy yew trees.

There are large rocks arranged on the flower beds, which descend along an organised maze of pathways that run between magnolias, horse chestnuts, cedars and lemon trees. The benches and stone stairways are lined with moss; when seen from the house, it's a French garden design that couldn't be any more English, being simultaneously simple and austere. The regularity of the clumps of plants and trees contrasts with a confused mass of reeds, ferns and the occasional bluish note of an agapanthus. An African bamboo gives the arrangement an exotic counterpoint, while a tiny half-hidden statue of Neptune peers out from a niche in a box hedge. Far from the solemn severity of classical designs, at Xaz the overall sensation is one of happiness, a feeling that the *pazo* and the garden bestow upon each other, mutually.































# Santa Cruz de Ribadulla



## “The Lord’s farm”

The distinguished camellias of Santa Cruz de Ribadulla inhabit a garden that is verging on jungle, and which becomes increasingly exuberant and Jurassic as it descends towards the river. The garden is populated with Ceylon ferns, the type that dinosaurs used to shelter beneath, and which now sprout rolled up, in the shape of the pilgrim’s staff (perhaps in deference to Santiago). Gigantic sequoias and waterfalls help to evoke the prehistoric atmosphere. The oval leaves of the rubber plants watch over the entrance to a dark, magical vine alcove: it’s like a dragon’s cave, though its only tenant at the moment is a fountain. Inside, a tangle of climbing plants makes a common or garden vine post look as beautiful as a Bernini column, in what is undoubtedly a form of natural baroque. Thick layers of moss camouflage the taps on the gargoyles, as well as taking control of the rest of the garden, from the ponds to the wooden handrails on the bridges.

On a stone table lie the remains of the summer: flowers of all types, branches and a few loose leaves. Camellia buds and heads snapped off but still intact. Because the fact is, the camellia, being a noble flower, doesn’t fracture into pieces when it dies: when it falls, it is all in one piece. As if they had decapitated it – an occupational hazard for the aristocracy. The thousands of varieties that inhabit Ribadulla, which are as famous as the ancestry of the house, have brought fame to the *pazo*, as well as wise men such as Jovellanos, who was both distinguished by birth and educated. It was at this table, which was perhaps surrounded by the same improvised floral still life, in the same damp, gloomy setting, that he wrote a long memorandum, though he had in fact only come to get over a cold. And all that happened 200 years ago.

Tiny primroses and violets venture out to explore the spring. The green tones become emerald in colour, and the jungle turns into a more open forest area. The laurels, which smell of the bitter almonds they use to make cyanide, are no longer a reason for concern. Aged magnolias and fruit trees give way to the agricultural land which – for the family of the *pazo*, was just called “Ortigueira farm”. On the other side of the house – and of the chapel which, according to the finest noble traditions, is always open – the famous “Carrera de los Olivos” flaunts its rough, twisted roots like a challenge to time.































# Faramello

Pilar Bugallo 1888

EL FARAMELLO



## Simply beautiful

Faramello, unlike many other country houses of Galicia, lays no claim to being a stately mansion or palace (*pazo* in the Galician language). What really sets Faramello apart from the others is that its original use was as a paper factory.

The background for this unusual setting is a small stream which joyously and tirelessly works its way through the gardens, spreading its echos and rumours throughout the estate, a symphony during the rainy season, or softly murmuring when the river's level falls.

Or when it forms swirls and eddies.

Or pools, which shimmer cheerfully at the bottom of a steep riverbank, accompanying a trail ("*corredoira*") which was formerly part of the Way of Saint James the Apostle (Camino de Santiago in Spanish).

This famous Way, as mentioned in the Codex Calixtinus, is the path used to bring the remains of Saint James himself to Santiago during the "Translatio" under a luminous canopy of oak, birch and chestnut, now carpeted with primrose in early Spring, wild red strawberries in May, and camellias in the Winter.

Pilgrims and travellers have been using this path since time immemorial. And although the factory ceased operations when paper was no longer manufactured using old rags, even including the clothes worn by the pilgrims at the end of their voyage and deposited next to the Cathedral in a place called the Cross of Rags (Cruz dos Farrapos). Here the old clothes could be burned, or left to ferment for several weeks before they were turned into paper... just imagine how they must have reeked!

And even though Hurricane Hortensia altered the route of Saint James' Way, and even though the story of the "Translatio" and of the bulls who tamely kneeled before the mortal remains of the Apostle Saint James, and despite the machinations of the wicked Queen Lupa, all this today may be no more than a touch of legend, yet Faramello has lost none of its Jacobean and artisan flavour.

Thus, on Summer afternoons, when an orange sun creeps through the ash trees, nodding cordially at a large magnolia with rose-coloured leaves; a holly tree, the same one which appears on the coat-of-arms of the local town of Rois (a recent event, its true!), all these things encourage the visitor to explore around the terraces, and pay homage to the image of the Apostle which presides over a gazebo, accompanied no less by a gurgling fountain and an intensely blue-violet azalea.





Others who certainly clambered over these terraces were a pair of Genoese gentlemen, Bartolomé Piombino and Giacomo Gambino, fleeing (perhaps from the law; who knows) from their village of Voltri, bearing information regarding the manufacture of paper, which at this date in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century was a closely guarded secret, as much so as any other historical enigma.

Whether or not this is a case of 18<sup>th</sup> century industrial espionage, it is recorded that Bartolomé soon received – in 1714 – a royal warrant granting him an exclusive monopoly for the manufacture of paper in the Kingdom of Galicia. Eventually he ended up owning the whole factory, and the initial P for Piombino may be seen everywhere throughout the *pazo*. Nevertheless, it was the sculptor José Gambino, born in Faramello and the son of his business partner, whose name would come to be recognised as one of the greatest artists and creators of the baroque school of Compostela.

And that is how art came to Faramello. By the hand of none other than José Gambino. The chapel's altarpiece, the raised staircase, envied by present day architects and which Galician masons were already making in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the two stone crosses or *cruceiros*, the *hórreo*... And the large esplanade adorned with pinecones which have been a symbol of warmth and welcoming since ancient times. A symbol of that pleasant atmosphere that Faramello exudes.

'Peace for those who enter here'  
'Health for those who dwell herein'  
'Bliss for those who are absent'

So reads a plaque next to the entrance to the house. And a little further along, on the other side of a small gate, a snippet of 'pure Virgin blue' sky lights up the place where, from high up on a fountain, facing the wall, also with the bluish colour of hydrangeas, a statue of the Virgin Mary watches over while the devil tempts.

Today, even though neither apples nor serpents are to be found, a few black grapes sluggishly ripen on their vines.





PAZO

DO

FARAMELLO





















IN MEMORIAM  
LADY  
MARGARET  
WIFE OF  
EDWARD









Villasuso



## A slightly untidy garden

The Pazo of Villasuso, with its somewhat untidy but not unkempt gardens, is a place full of secret corners and hideaways, with its labyrinth of box hedges and fountains which discretely accompany the flow of one's thoughts.

The hedge is a thing-in-itself, solid, old, thick and tall like the walls of a castle – three metres at least – turning the paths into dark passageways: a sentry walk which zigzags down the terraced garden slopes, from one fountain to the next, towards where the woods nearly overwhelm the garden.

Sheltered by leafy oak, maple and chestnut trees whose branches nearly hide the serene blue sky. A constant blend of fragrances, a patchwork of greenery and shadows, creating perfumed landscapes. Leaving behind the fresh aroma of camphor, bay trees and mint, one now is met by the somewhat sticky sweetness of English dogwood or celinda, small white flowers which are used to adorn the altars of the Virgin Mary in the month of May, traditionally accompanied by a song of praise, “con flores a María.”

In the somewhat wild lower reaches of the garden, we run across a hiding place: a secret arbour now used to escape from the world, and perhaps from oneself! It's not a particularly attractive spot, really more of a bolthole, but in other times it was the “home” of a statue of the Virgin of Perpetual Mercy, always ready to lend Her help under any circumstance.

A bit further down, water gushes out of the mouth of a fountain of an oddly twisted fish; nearby a “Vieira” or shell symbolising pilgrimage evokes some memories of other centuries. Amongst the hedges, white and yellow calla lilies, open like flutes of champagne contrast with a stone balustrade covered with dark green moss.

Heading back towards the entrance gate, apple and pear trees as well as mature hazelnut trees, all of which seem to sprout from the same trunk, line the path to the “jardín novo” or new garden, with its fountain, myrtles, and an enormous and thick rose-coloured camellia which provides a backdrop to the pool area.

From there the stairs lead up to the viewpoint, the *pazo* itself and in particular the labyrinth, which like every labyrinth which ever was, encloses a treasure as well as a challenge. Its creator was a French soldier named Matias Thieve who in about 1810 came to conquer and in turn was “conquered” by the serene beauty of the Valley of Barcia, and more especially by one particular Galician lady! In return he created an enigma: the design of the labyrinth, which can only be appreciated from the air or from one of the walls of the *pazo*, whose





chimney is cosseted by a lilac-coloured Wisteria or glycinia. Bougainvilleas, or “trinitarias” as they are called in America, are the other “creepers” clambering for wall space here.

Another who returned from the Americas was don Gómez García Salgado. He had departed as a captain, but eventually became Governor of Tucumán by 1590.

Overwhelmed by homesickness, or “morriña” as they say in Galicia, he returned to Villasuso quite a wealthy man. The passage of time had wrought so many changes in his body and soul, that at first his family members were unable to recognise him. Finally an old family retainer, seeing don Gómez with his pack of mules, his riches and his “morriña,” blurted out, “couldn’t this be your uncle from America?” ...and the family welcomed him with open arms. This was such a miracle that a grateful don Gómez erected a chapel upon the very spot where the family reunion had taken place, and dedicated it to San Antonio (Saint Anthony of Padua, who is the patron saint of lost things, in case you didn’t know. The legend says that if you make a promise to San Antonio, you’d better keep it... He takes those things very seriously!)

The proof is an inscription with a date –162\_ – nearly illegible because of its age, and an exhortation “VIVA JESUS” for all to see in the entrance to the chapel.

A fountain, this one topped by a pineapple, awaits to greet visitors when they come or go, in this case it’s a golden oriole perched on a branch, flirting with her own image in a nearby car mirror.

Close to the house, a breeze ruffles through the leaves of a palm tree.



















CAPILLA DE SAN ANTONIO









# La Saleta

MAIO DE LA SALETA

1900



# Snapshot of a Galician garden

In the garden of the pazo of La Saleta, there is a tree that reddens when it rains.

No-one quite knows the cause of this embarrassing phenomenon. The rain brings out a thousand shades, a thousand reflections, and before you know it, a brilliant red patch springs forth, no ordinary yellowish shrub, but a red which stands out amongst the greens of this highly unusual botanical garden.

The hybrid *arbutus* or *madroño* is one of those enormous and colourful shrubberies which set the tone of the pazo of La Saleta: an unexpected and singular image characteristic of this delightful spot, variegated and occasionally undisciplined or even wild and exuberant. In every nook and cranny, plants appear to have chosen their own flowerbeds, blissfully ignorant of the rules of landscaping... or so it seems!

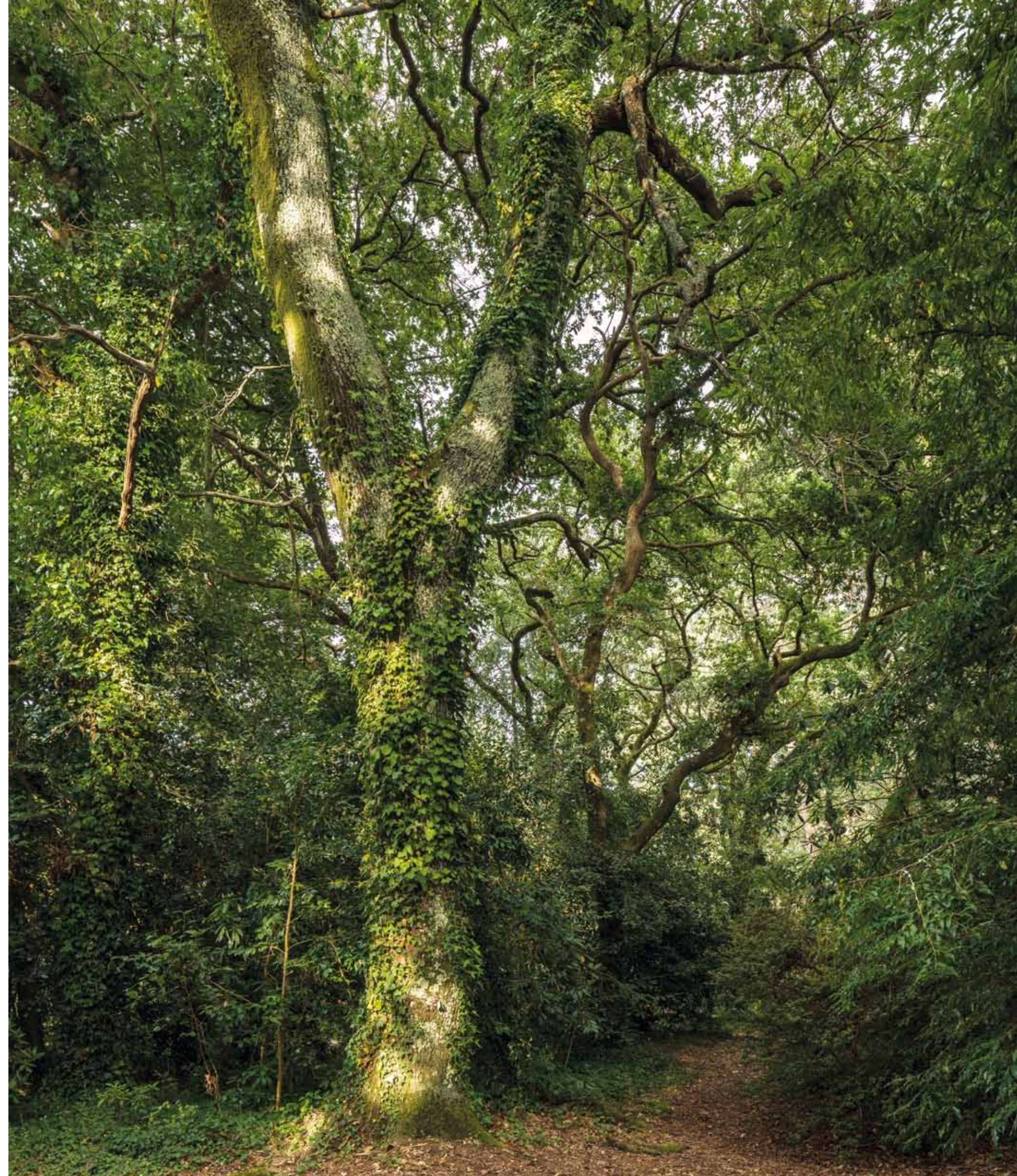
That's why a stroll through the La Saleta garden transports you from one image to another, each one unique, fleeting snapshots which have to be captured at the right moment lest they be lost forever.

One good example is the South African iris' flowers, which open at sunrise, and by the evening they dry up and die. Or a Mexican poppy which looks just like a fried egg, and which also closes its petals at dusk.

Thus the garden is in a state of constant flux.

This rapidly changing landscape is an essential feature of the pazo of La Saleta, the essence of a garden that a green-fingered Englishman started in 1968, and which time and a lot of effort have turned into a budding hotchpotch of greeneries, chiaroscuros and nooks and crannies, with giant shrubberies and flourishing trees that compete with each other for a little bit of sky amongst the foliage. A new garden that looks old because the plants that arrived from a thousand places quickly took root cheek-to-jowl with the indigenous inhabitants. And so it is that in the heart of rural Galicia, surrounded by vineyards, a bushy *leptospermum* from Tasmania embraces a pink-coloured camellia, a native of China which has now become a truly Galician flower.

Here, the camellias share their winter with a rare rhododendron – yellow, to be precise – an aloe with fan-shaped leaves and the fragrance of a jasmine, yellow as well. Yellow too is a huge polished camellia with the look and feel of wax, hard to the touch, in contrast with some dwarf camellias with their tiny flowers, half-hidden in a corner that smells like a forest.





A native forest full of chestnut, oak and laurel trees that also is home to all kinds of trees with a travelling spirit: sequoias, metrosideros from New Zealand, eucalyptus... Each with a story, an adventure, locked inside a wooden soul.

There are also some *perverse* trees and bushes, such as the one that behind a silky touch and a harmless appearance produces innocent little cyanide almonds!

Or one which could cause hives to whoever touches its delicate pink coloured blooms.

And finally an octagonally-shaped dovecote or pigeon loft, a large *hórreo* or traditional granary, a chapel dedicated to a Virgin who appeared to some country lads. And in the courtyard, the picture of a miracle: a Himalayan honeysuckle which decided on its own to die, when planted in a spot it deemed inappropriate, only to come springing back to life, but this time closer to the door! All of it is well taken care of, or more like pampered, by two ladies, mother and daughter, who have discovered how to give just the right touch of elegance, cosiness and relaxation to a garden which is in fact nothing less than a botanical tour-de-force through the landscapes of our Planet Earth.

A voyage that might begin or end (it depends) in La Saleta: “next to a wicker basket filled with knitting material and a tree fit for legend”.



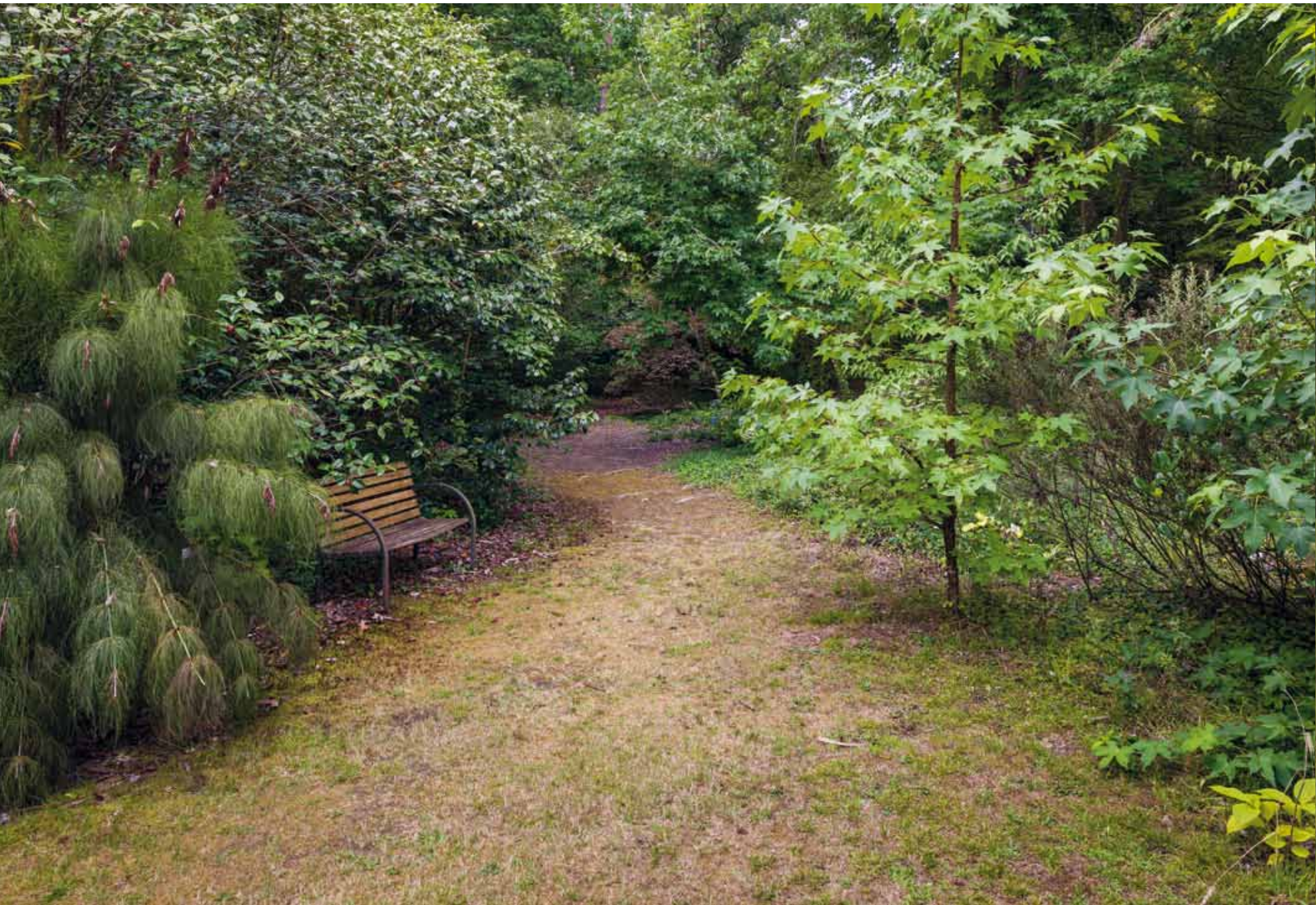






















# Recipes

The camellia, flower of Galicia, which reigns with splendor in its *pazos* and gardens, where architecture and nature intermingle in the most beautiful way, inspires the recipes of the chef Pepe Solla



# Raw and Cooked Romain Hearts

## The Pickle:

3.5 fl oz of apple cider vinegar  
1 tbsp of honey  
Ground pepper  
1 cinnamon stick  
1 thyme twig  
10 nasturium flowers  
20 camellia flowers  
30 dwarf turnips

Put the ingredients together in a jar and set aside for at least 15 days.

## Romain Hearts:

4 very fresh hearts  
Camellia oil

Cut 2 hearts in half and put in a baking dish, season with salt, dress with camellia oil and soak in water, heat oven to 130°C, cover and cook for 90 minutes.

Peel the outer leaves of the other two hearts, blend these and set aside.

## Also:

Kimchi powder

## Finishing and presentation:

Cut the fresh hearts in half, dress with the juice of blended hearts, the pickle juice and a little camellia oil, put each half on a plate, sprinkle with the kimchi powder.

Set the cooked heart on the griddle with the dripping from the baked dish and the pickle liquid, cover the cooked hearts, put the raw ones beside and serve.

Taste the contrasting raw and cooked hearts together.





# White asparagus and camellia oil

## The mixture:

4 fresh white asparagus

Peel the asparagus, remove the tips, you will use them later, blend the rest of the asparagus, strain and set aside.

## Yolk:

4 eggs  
Soya sauce

Break and separate the yolk from the egg white, add the soya sauce to the yolks and leave for 6 hours, afterwards clean and dry, break, strain and set aside.

## Hake:

3,5 oz of hake loin  
Coarse salt

Cut the hake into strips, cure in the salt for 6 minutes, wash to remove excess salt, dry and set aside.

## Asparagus flakes:

4 white asparagus

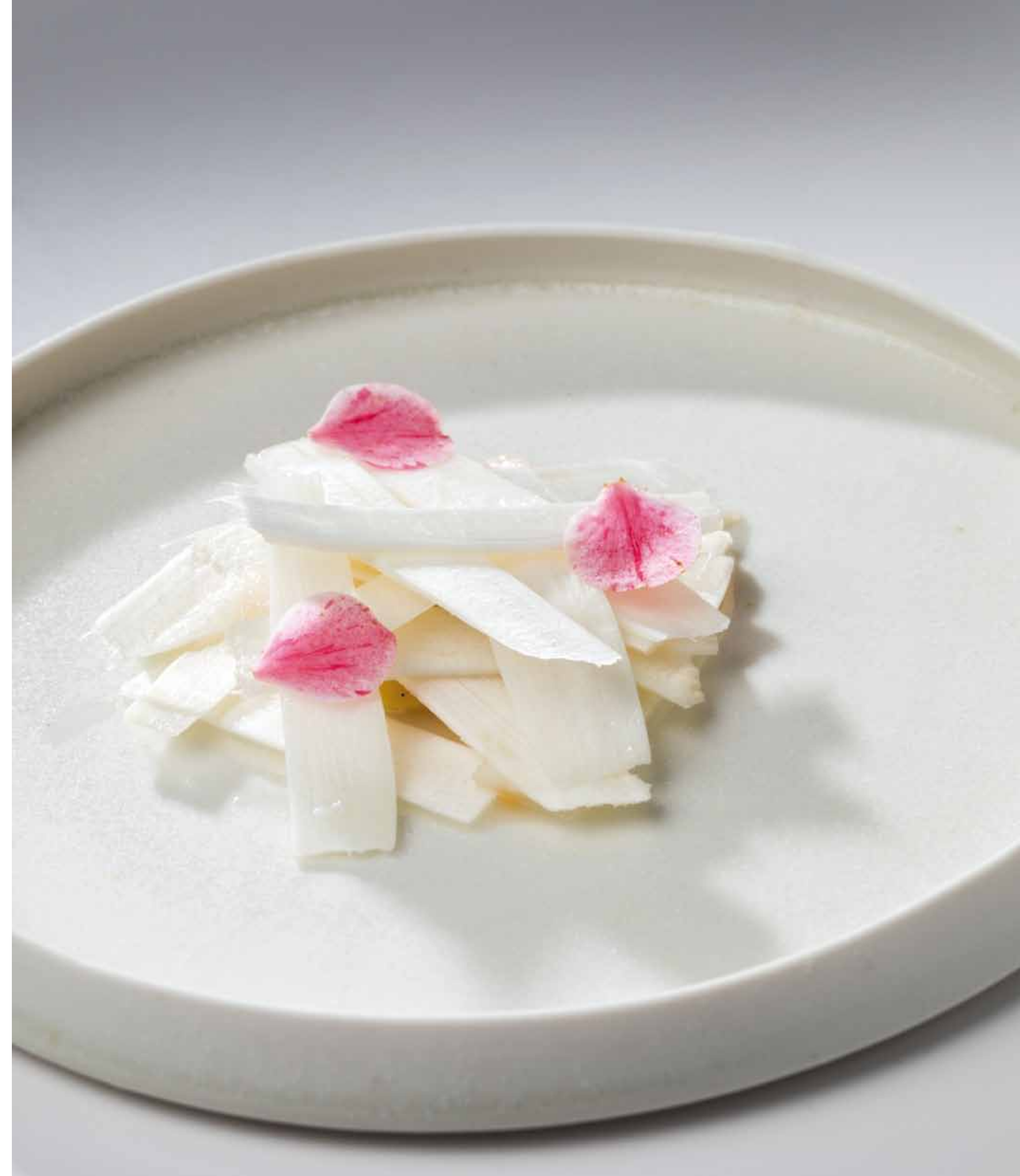
Peel the asparagus, cut off the tips and set aside, with the help of a peeler, make strips with the stems, set aside.

## Later:

Elderflower  
Camellia oil

## Finishing and presentation:

Place in the liquid in the center of the dish, the yolk sauce on top, then hake strips, and cover with the asparagus, finish with the camellia oil and the elderberry flowers.





# Spring

## The coconut:

7 tbsp of coconut milk

Filter coconut milk with cheesecloth, set aside the thick filtered part.

## Peas:

1 cup of peas

Heat water, blanch the peas for 20 seconds, drain and mash with 10% of the cooking water, strain and set aside.

## Avocado:

1 avocado

1 lime

Salt

Chop the avocado, blend with the lime juice, add salt and set aside in a cool place.

## Later:

Camellia flowers

Various flowers

## Finishing and presentation:

Place a bit of coconut puree on the plate, envelope with the pea puree, put the avocado in the centre and finish off with the flowers on top.





# Beef entrecôte, celeriac, peanuts, flowers and leaves

## The entrecôte:

16 oz steak without fat  
½ cup coarse salt  
¼ cup brown sugar

Mix the sugar and salt, make a bed, put the steak on it, cover with the rest of the mixture and leave to sit for 20 minutes, wash and dry, cut strips and set aside.

## Purée:

7 oz of celeriac  
2/3 cup of peanuts  
1 ½ tbsp of butter

Boil the celeriac and drain, toast the peanuts, hand blend the celery, peanuts and butter, add salt, strain and set aside.

## Dressing:

1 lime  
1 mandarin  
1 lemon  
½ grapefruit  
7 fl oz of camellia oil

Juice the citrus fruit, mix with the oil and set aside.

## The leaves and flowers

12 cabbage leaves  
12 chard leaves  
12 spinach leaves  
12 rocket leaves  
12 camellia leaves  
Dried and chopped cranberries

Macadamia nuts

Wash the leaves, dry and set aside.

## Finishing and presentation:

Dress the leaves with the citrus mixture, fill the slices of entrecote with the puree and some leaves, close and cover with the rest of the leaves, sprinkle the cranberry and finally grate some macadamia nuts to finish off the dish.





# Tea with citrus and honey

## The tea:

½ cup of water  
1 tbsp of camellia tea  
2 tbsp of sugar  
1.5 gelatin leaves  
1 1/2 tsp of Kappa

Heat the water, introduce the tea and sugar, infuse for 8 min covered, strain and mix in the gelatin leaves with the kappa, roll out into a thin sheet, cut into 8 cm circles. Set aside.

## Passion Fruit Flan:

1 cup passion fruit purée  
6 eggs  
Scant 2/3 cup sugar

Cook in thermomix for 8 minutes at 85° at setting 5, after this whip at maximum power for 2 minutes, strain and cool.

## Fruit:

1 blood orange  
1 grapefruit  
1 orange

Peel and separate each slice. Set aside.

## Lemon sorbet

4 cups of lemon purée  
1 ¾ cups of water  
1 ¼ cups sugar  
2 cups glucose  
1/3 cup glycerin  
2 gelatin leaves

Cook in thermomix the lemon and the water and sugar at 85° for 7 minutes at setting 5, add the rest of the ingredients and mix at maximum speed, strain and freeze. Whip in Pacojet.

## Orange jelly:

1 orange

Make a fresh orange juice and gelatinize at a rate of 1 leaf per cup. Cut into cubes.

## Lemon meringue:

80 g egg whites  
50 g of sugar  
1 lime peel

Whip the egg white, add the sugar and also the grated lime peel, roll out and dry in a dehydrator, set aside.

## The grapefruit:

250 g of grapefruit  
½ cup of sugar  
2 tbsp of foam

Mix everything together, strain and let stand, fill the siphon and set aside.

## Later:

Flowers  
Tangerine buds

## Finishing and presentation:

Arrange the tea gelatin in the center of the dish, add the rest of the ingredients, finish off with ice cream on top.





# Cherries, kefir, beets and flowers

## Kefir:

Generous ¾ cup of kefir  
1 vanilla pod

The kefir can be bought or easily made at home, in any case, strain to gain texture, mix with the vanilla pod and set aside.

## Cherries:

20 large cherries

Remove pips, chop, set aside.

## Beets:

1 fresh beet  
10 Camellia flowers

Finely slice 20 pieces of beet, blend the rest with the flowers and strain, marinate the slices in the juice and set aside.

## The powder:

Cold pressed juice

Dry the pressed juice and make it into powder, set aside.

## Flowers:

Small camellia flowers

## Finishing and presentation:

Sprinkle the liquid part on the plate, put the kefir beside it, put the cherries on top and insert the beets and flowers in between.





# galicia

