



 XUNTA
DE GALICIA

 Xacobeo 21-22

Santiago de Compostela



Cathedral Route
a walk of
history and life

Santiago de Compostela



SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA WAS AND IS A MEETING PLACE FOR MANY CULTURES AND PEOPLES AND A PLACE FOR THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES. SANTIAGO IS A CITY MADE FOR WALKERS, ITS STREETS AND SQUARES FORM AN INCOMPARABLE, HARMONIOUS, AND HOMOGENOUS AREA, ACCENTUATED BY THE USE OF ONE SINGLE MATERIAL THROUGHOUT: GRANITE. STONES WHICH, SCULPTED BY DIFFERENT ARTISTIC TRENDS, HAVE CREATED AN UNPARALLELED CITY FULL OF MONUMENTS, WHICH WAS DECLARED A WORLD HERITAGE CITY BY UNESCO IN 1985.

A COSMOPOLITAN CITY SINCE THE MIDDLE AGES, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE INFLUX OF PILGRIMS FROM ALL OVER THE CHRISTIAN WORLD, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF ITS FAMOUS UNIVERSITY, WHICH IS OVER FIVE HUNDRED YEARS OLD. SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA IS ALSO THE CAPITAL OF GALICIA.

Praza do Obradoiro

A



Praza das Praterías

B



Praza da Quintana

C



Pazo de Fonseca

D



Monasterio de San Martiño Pinario

E



Iglesia de Santa María Salomé

F



The Route



- 1 Praza do Obradoiro
- 2 Praza das Praterias
- 3 Praza da Quintana
- 4 Praza da Acibechería
- 5 Rúa da Acibechería
- 6 Rúa do Franco
- 7 Rúa dos Bautizados
- 8 Praza do Toural
- 9 Rúa do Vilar
- 10 Rúa Xelmírez
- 11 Rúa Nova



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Cathedral Route

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The CATHEDRAL OF SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA has a Latin cross plan and at each corner of the cross we have a unique square full of monuments. There are, therefore, four main squares surrounding it.

Our route begins in the **Praza do Obradoiro** **1** (Workshop Square), a wonderful window into the history of architecture from the 11th

to the 19th century. The Cathedral, with its majestic Baroque facade, conveys the splendour of the Church in that period. The image of James the Great watches over the whole area. He is in the guise of a Medieval pilgrim, wearing a tunic, short cloak, and carrying a staff or pilgrim staff.

On the north side of the square, we can see the HOSTAL DOS REIS CATÓLICOS (Catholic Monarchs hostel). This was the first “modern” hospital in the Iberian Peninsula, which was commissioned by the Catholic Monarchs of Spain in the late 15th century. Today as a Parador hotel, it still maintains a tradition of secular hospitality; every day, the first ten



FACING Praza do Obradoiro
BELOW Hostal dos Reis Católicos



pilgrims to collect the “Compostela” (pilgrimage certificate) are given a free breakfast and lunch. On the main Plateresque-Isabelline façade, there is a striking curious white window where the Royal Chamber used to be. When the king opened the window and looked out onto the square, he would be flanked by the images of Christ and the Virgin Mary, which filled the ordinary people assembled there to applaud the king with wonder and admiration.

On the corners of the **Praza do Obradoiro** some small stalls sell the typical symbols of pilgrims: the pilgrim staff or walking stick, which was not only a walking stick but could also be used to fend off animals and bandits, scallop shells, the symbol of pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela, and a souvenir of the Way that many pilgrims take back home from *Finis Terrae*, and the dried and hollowed-out pumpkin which was used as a canteen. We can also find the Cross of Saint James, one of the city’s most representative symbols. This sword-shaped red cross evokes the military and religious nature of the Order of Santiago.



ABOVE The Cathedral seen from the Pazo de San Xerome

BELOW Pazo de Raxoi

FACING, ABOVE The three ages

FACING, BELOW Craft shops

The most harmonic and elegant building in the square is the **PAZO DE RAXOI** (Raxoi Manor House), on the eastern side, an 18th century palace which was used for both religious and civic purposes. It is a work in the most typical neoclassical French style, which archbishop Bartolomé Rajoy y Losada commissioned from the French architect Charles Lemaire, who left his Parisian mark on the area here. The image of Saint James Great watches over the whole area, depicted, this time, as a Medieval knight with his horse and sword.

On the southern side the square is enclosed by one of the smallest, yet most picturesque buildings: the **PAZO DE SAN XEROME** (Saint Jerome Manor House). This was an old school for poor students, which is why it was known as the Colegio del Pan y la Sardina (School of Bread and Sardines). It was built in the 17th century but boasts a beautiful late-Romanesque façade which is out of keeping with the rest of the building as it was transported



here from its original location. At the centre of the door and on the keystone of the top arch is a representation of the three ages of man: Old age, Adulthood, and Childhood, symbolised by Santa Ana, the Virgen Mary, and the Baby Jesus. This building is still linked to the University and is currently the seat of the Vice-Chancellor’s Office.

We now leave the Praza do Obradoiro behind and head towards the **Praza das Praterías** (Silversmiths Square), along rúa Fonseca, where we start to discover that silver working is one of the most important crafts in the city. Numerous souvenir and silver working shops line the way, some of which are in the Cathedral building itself, such as [A Buxería](#) o [Berenguela](#).

In the **Praza das Praterías** **2** the most striking aspect is the Romanesque façade of the Cathedral, the only remaining original one. It was refurbished as if it were a collage, using



sculptures and reliefs in stone from other façades under renovation which were placed here. Some of the pieces are masterworks, such as the fine carving of King David playing a Medieval instrument. On the western side of this square, the Renaissance-style Treasury façade encloses the cloister and is finished with an extraordinarily ornate granite balustrade.

Centuries ago, the best clients for the precious metal workshops in this square were the Cathedral and the countless churches, monasteries, and convents in the city, which came here to commission a wide range of items and ornaments for religious celebrations. Some of the old precious metal workshops survive to this day, such as those of the Otero family, a dynasty of silversmiths who have been working in silver and jet for generations at the [Taller de Bernardino Otero](#) and the [Augusto y Luis Otero](#) jewellers.


Elsewhere in the square, we still have the [PILGRIMAGES AND SANTIAGO MUSEUM](#) (Pilgrimages and Santiago Museum) to see, which is well worth a visit to fully explore the history of the city and the Camino de Santiago both in the past and present. A surprise is in store for us at [CASA DO CABILDO](#) (Canonry House), the finest example of the theatrical nature of

ABOVE Quintana

BELOW Praza das Praterías



Baroque architecture in Compostela. It was designed by the Cabildo Catedralicio (Cathedral Council) in the early 18th century as a beautiful adornment to close off and elevate the square. This is a false façade lacking the sufficient depth to accommodate any type of living space; it is essentially a piece of granite set design or ploy designed to give us the impression of a large palace. It is now a gallery for temporary exhibitions which allows us to take a look inside.

Climbing the stairs from the Praza das Praterías, a spot where many people choose to take a photo of themselves, we reach the [Praza da Quintana](#) , also known as [QUINTANA DE MORTOS](#) (Square of the Dead), which is a reminder that we are standing on top of an ancient necropolis. The stairs to the upper level lead us to the [QUINTANA DE VIVOS](#) (Square of the Living). In short, the dead below and the living above.

The [PORTA SANTA](#) (Holy Door) looks over the square and we can see the Baroque figure of James the Great, depicted as a Medieval pilgrim and accompanied by his two disciples Theodore and Athanasius. A few steps inside, a large bronze door, from 2004, blocks the way and is only opened in a Jacobean Year, for pilgrims and the faithful to obtain the



Jubilee. Completed by Domingo de Andrade in the late 17th century, the [TORRE DO RELOXO](#) (Clock Tower) is strikingly tall. Inside we can make out a replica of [LA BERENGUELA](#), a bell weighing over six tonnes. Completing the square on the south side is the [CASA DA CONGA](#) (House of the Canon) and to the north side the [CASA DA PARRA](#) (House of the Vine). Both Baroque buildings were former residences of the clergy and the nobility. They boast large chimneys, which were symbols of wealth and power at the time as a large chim-

ney meant that the house had a good kitchen and a large supply of food.

In **Praza da Quintana** there are also stalls selling typical souvenirs, whilst the [Puerta Real de la Catedral](#) (Cathedral Royal Door) leads to the [Cathedral Shop-Bookstore](#), which has a wide range of products linked to the cathedral and the Camino de Santiago and some very interesting books on topics such as food in the Jacobean tradition and Medieval music in Compostela.

To the north is the **Praza da Acibecheería** 4 (Jet Square) or Praza de la Inmaculada,



which is the entrance for the French Way and where pilgrims making their way down to the Praza do Obradoiro are a common sight. In this square the [FACHADA DA ACIBECHERÍA](#) (Jet Façade) of the Cathedral displays another image of James the Great, portrayed this time as an apostle and disciple of Jesus Christ with his staff and aura of holiness. Just in front, the Benedictines built one of the largest religious sites in Spain: the [MONASTERIO DE SAN MARTIÑO PINARIO](#) (Monastery of San Martiño Pinario). Nowadays it no longer houses Benedictine monks and is used as a residence and seat of a Major Seminary. It also contains the [Librería Egeria bookshop](#), which specialises in religious subjects and also sells items in precious metals and ornaments for religious celebrations, and [La Despensa](#), an interesting shop located in the old storerooms whose slogan translates as “...Everything under the sun...”. Entrance to the shop is via the residence and inside we can find a vast range of products and craft items from monasteries, not only in Santiago but also from elsewhere in Spain, such as pastries from convents, handmade soap and oils, candles, and medicinal plants grown by monks.

ABOVE Monasterio de San Martiño Pinario
FACING, ABOVE Acibecheería façade
FACING, BELOW Praza da Quintana



Documents found in the archives of the cathedral show that in the 16th century there were some one hundred craftsmen working in jet in dozens of workshops. But what is jet? It is a fossilised plant. Briefly, it is a type of coal considered a gemstone that is black and holds a special shine. It is difficult to work with as it is highly fragile. Medieval pilgrims believed that jet had healing and, above all, protective properties. That is what led them to buy a figa or fig sign in jet, in the shape of a closed fist with the thumb placed between the index and middle fingers.

Elsewhere in this square we can see some of the most traditional jet workshops in the city, such as [Azabachería Rod Mayer](#) (on Travesa da Quintana s/n), a prestigious family name in Compostela that has been working in this trade since 1891, and [Joyería Porto](#).

Heading up **rúa da Acibecheería** 5 (Silversmiths street), we come to another family

business, *Relojería y Joyería Regueira*, a jeweller and watch shop that has been here since 1970, which, interestingly, had a licence to manufacture and sell its own watches. Next door, the *Joyería Ricardo* jeweller has its own workshop and a shop window displaying the tools of the trade in a sort of small museum display. The pieces in nacre and jet are especially striking.

We continue on our tour and head back down to the Praza do Obradoiro under the ARCO DE PALACIO (Palace Arch), a clever piece

BELOW Pazo de Fonseca courtyard



of Medieval civil engineering that supports part of the refectory in the PAZO DE XELMÍREZ (Xelmírez Manor House). This site, which has wonderful acoustics, is frequently used by musicians and singers, modern troubadours, if you will, who put on delightful performances of their art for us.

On **rúa do Franco** 6 we come to the COLEGIO DE FONSECA (Fonseca College), which is now over five centuries old. The University of Santiago was founded here when archbishop Alonso III de Fonseca added Theology, Law, and Art studies to a small Grammar School. We cannot leave here without taking a look at the Renaissance cloister where the hor-

tensias and azaleas add a splash of colour to the surrounding granite. The exquisite Mudéjar ceiling in the Salon de Grados (Grades Hall) is particularly worth admiring.

After we finish our visit here, we head back onto **rúa do Franco**, which has been serving food and drink to locals, pilgrims, and visitors for centuries, as there is a large number of pubs, restaurants, and bars here, some of which appear in the famous *La Casa de la Troya* (House of Troy) novel by Pérez Lugín. Nowadays, we can still sample typical local dishes in almost century old establishments in the area, such as *El Gato Negro*, *Orense*, *Trafalgar* and *El Bombero*. This street full of places to enjoy wine and tapas was baptised the “Paris-Dakar” by students because those were the names of a cafe-bar and a restaurant at either end of the street. However, Franco street also has a selection of craft shops such as *Maeloc*, which has a wide range of gift items, including new jewellery designs in silver, jet, and enamel or ceramic



craft pieces. At the end of the street, almost level with the PORTA FAXEIRA (Faxeira gate), large queues outside the narrow door of the no. 3 Lottery shop are a common sight, as its location makes it one of the busiest in the city with locals, tourists, and pilgrims getting their lottery tickets there.

Opposite we find one of the most popular and beloved figures in the city: Manolo, who has been selling roast chestnuts to generations of locals and visitors at his stall at the Porta Faxeira gate for more than 50 years. He follows the tradition laid down by his father, who in the late 1940s brought the first locomotive train-shaped roast chestnut stall to Santiago, the Santa Fé. Nowadays it is his son who runs the train in winter, which in summer he swaps for a stall where he sells

ABOVE El Gato Negro
BELOW Trafalgar



his delicious hand-made ice cream. The rest of the shops in the street are artisan ice cream parlours using 100% Galician ingredients, such as [Bico de Xeado](#), and gourmet shops such as [A Cesta](#).

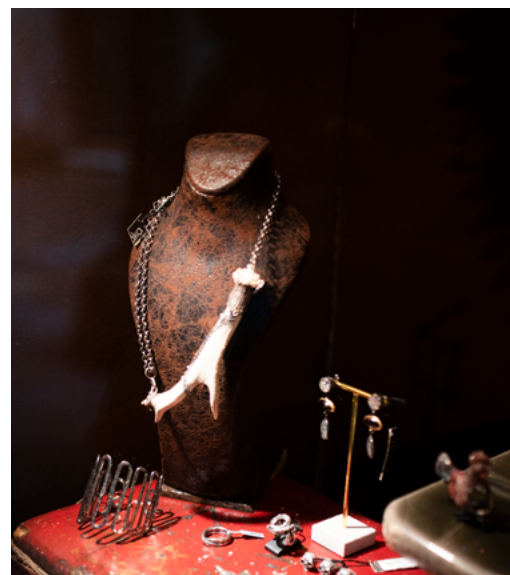
The nearby **rúa dos Bautizados** ⁷ is slowly becoming a shop window for the designs of the new generation of precious metal workers, both in the fine signature jewellery inspired by nature of [Katuxa Platero](#) and in the steel jewellery of [María Banús](#). The street also contains traditional shops such as [Farmacia Bescansa](#), which has been selling pharmacy products since it was founded by Dr. Antonio Casares in 1843. He had a famous range of products, including laxatives, digestive pills, and hair-restoring pills, made

ABOVE Ultramarinos Carro
BELOW Baraka Joyas jeweller
FACING Rúa do Vilar

using magistral formulas. Inside the shop our gaze is drawn to the magnificent wooden ceiling and the classic white porcelain apothecary jars.

The Galician preserves industry is also strongly represented on this street with shops such as [La Curiosa](#), which sells artisanal preserves from Ría de Arousa and whose every can is “a journey in time” as they are decorated with icons representing an important date, and [Frinsa La Conservera](#), where in addition to seafood or shellfish preserves they also sell chicken or turkey preserves seasoned with Himalayan salt as a new product.

We now come to the **Praza do Toural** ⁸ (Cow Market Square), dominated by the



[PAZO DE LOS MARQUESES DE BENDAÑA](#) (Marquises of Bendaña manor house). This 18th century Baroque building is now the head office of the [FUNDACIÓN EUGENIO GRANELL GRANELL](#) (Eugenio Granell Foundation), whose museum includes interesting collections of 20th century art. On the upper area of the façade, there is a striking, straining Atlas carrying the globe.

Under the arches, we can find the [Ultramarinos y Bodega Carro](#) which has been here since 1880 and has stayed true to its spirit despite renovation works. These shops were called ultramarinos or almacenes de coloniales (lit. overseas or colonial stores) because of the exotic products from other continents that they stocked on their shelves. Nowadays, Carro also sells Galician liqueurs or aguardiente spirits, premium preserves, and wine from the various Denominations of Origin in Galicia and the rest of Spain.

On the first floor of no. 9 is the [Galería de Arte Contemporáneo José Lorenzo](#) (José Lorenzo Gallery of Contemporary Art), which not only displays and sells artwork, especially from Galician artists, but also hires out and restores pieces.

For elegant, high-quality men’s fashion, look no further than [Confecções Riande](#) on the ground floor of the Pazo de Bendaña manor house. The original name of the house was El Buen Gusto (Good Taste) and was founded by Antonio Pérez, adoptive father of Alejandro Pérez Lugín, author of the novel *La Casa de la Troya*. It was the first shop in the city to introduce ready to wear fashion and has been run by the Riande family since 1922.

We now come onto **rúa do Vilar** ⁹, which is a wonderful street for evening strolls under the arcades that are so typical of the city, although some of them were removed in the 19th century to allow for the easy passage



of carriages. Aristocratic buildings, such as [CASA VAAMONDE](#) (Vaamonde House) and the [PAZO DE MONROI](#) (Monroi Manor House) are easily distinguishable by their coats of arms and blazons, which add a stately air to the street.

A short distance further along on **rúa do Vi-lar**, we come to the perfect symbiosis of the traditional and the modern in the [Mercería Cés](#) haberdashery (no. 84) and the [Baraka Joyas](#) jeweller (no. 78). The former takes us back to the past and in the latter Noemí Lamelas displays her signature multicultural-inspired pieces, in her favourite materials of silver, natural gemstones, and pearls. This first project was followed by [Barakita](#), a few doors further along at no. 76, which stems from the Lamelas sisters' passion for travelling. Here they sell vintage furniture, Asian fashion jewellery, unique items, and much more.

Nearby, at no. 60, [Carmen Pose](#) offers us the chance to make some wonderful gifts with original gems, fashion accessories, and decorations. Next door, [Espadela](#) (no. 58 and no. 68) offers two unique ethnic spaces, which encourage us to journey around the world in their craft items.

FACING Sombrerería de Celestino hat shop

ABOVE Pastelería Mercedes Mora cake shop



As is to be expected, this street offers us both traditional and more innovative precious metal pieces. Another shop worth investigating is [Crisol](#) (no. 28), which was an old umbrella factory, where we can find reproductions of important figures in the city, such as the Dos Marías by César Lombera.

Food historians inform us that, although the almond cake was already an exclusive product centuries ago, a large part of the fame of the Torta de Santiago cake is due to the Confitería Casa Mora confectioner, founded in 1924 by José Mora Soto, because it was the first to decorate the cake with the imprint of the Cross of Saint James. Today the shop is called [Pastelería Mercedes Mora](#).

For a coffee somewhere with lots of tradition, there is nowhere better than [Café Casino](#), which has been serving the bourgeoisie and intellectuals from Compostela and further afield since 1873. Valle-Inclán,



José Saramago, Castelao, and many others have all paid a visit to this establishment. Nowadays it is no longer a private club and its spacious dining hall and the reliefs and sculptures of master woodworker Máximo Magariños have been open to the public for years. It is a very interesting experience to discover portraits of Góngora, Quevedo, Cervantes, and Shakespeare or the striking wooden lamps among the reliefs. Artistic tradition is alive and well here, as it holds presentations of new literary works, debates, piano concerts, and art exhibitions.

As we leave the café, our attention is drawn to the *Sombrerería de Celestino* hat shop, founded in 1913 by Celestino Iglesias Regueiro. His descendants are still following in the footsteps of their grandfather and, with their characteristic red hat boxes that line the shelves, they take us back to a different age when wearing a hat was the custom.

This street also contains the *Mercería Algui* haberdashery (no. 24), opened in 1948, with its wooden counter and little drawers, bobbins of thread, and colourful buttons, and the new and innovative *Xirasol Store* (no. 44) selling handmade women's accessories made in cork, coconut, raffia, and straw.

On the corner of **rúa do Vilar** with **rúa Xelmírez** ¹⁰ stands CASA DEL DEÁN (House of Deán), a mid-18th century palace, which is a perfect example of the Baroque Compostela style, noted for its geometric shapes such as, for example, its odd cylinders. Bishops stayed here and maybe even a future Pope, as it was a residence for the most distinguished men in the Church. The ground floor is home to the Cathedral of Santiago Shop-Bookshop, which sells a wide range of souvenirs and also has a selection of books on not only the Cathedral but also pilgrimages and the city, its culture, history, food, and music.

Just a short distance from **rúa Xelmírez**, we find ourselves at what seems to be the rear gardens of the CASA DA BALCONADA (House of the Balcony) an 18th century mansion which houses the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for University Outreach. It is said that over six centuries ago Medio street started at this point. The street was purified with salt and closed off forever after the despicable murder of an archbishop and dean. The romances of the time tell of a story of secret love affairs, but the truth is more mundane as

power, status, and wealth were the motives for the crime.

On the corner, at no. 13, is *Trece Reinas*, a stylishly refurbished shop, which is frequented by some of the biggest fashion bloggers, as many alternative brands in women's clothing are sold here.

We start to climb the hill on **rúa Xelmírez** and soon come to two shops that are linked by the curious fact that some of the products they sell are made by cloistered nuns. At *Delicatessen As Monxas*, at no. 17, our palate is treated to the sweet and savoury products made by the Benedictine sisters from San Paio de Antealtares, the nuns from the convent of Carmen, or the Dominican nuns from Belvís. *Camelia*, at no. 19, specialises in organic cosmetics which have the healing and invigorating oil of camellia seeds as their main ingredient. These flowers are a beautiful, colourful sight when they flower in autumn, winter, and spring. One of the star products is the soap which the cloistered nuns from Armenteira monastery make from camellia oil.

Elsewhere on **rúa Xelmírez**, we can find numerous shops selling a wide range of items, such as *Mayer Azabache*, at no. 14; *Esperando Abril*, at no. 12, which has original clothing, accessories, and artistically styled dummies; *Malvasía*, at no. 22, where there is everything from clothes and accessories to



books and small decorations; and *De Cotío*, at no. 26, whose clothes, accessories, ceramics, and music are inspired by a modern take on Galician culture.

We retrace our steps and head back down towards **rúa Nova** ¹¹, one of the most "cultural" streets in Santiago, not only because of the arcades, which we also saw on Vilar street, but also because we can find good places to go for some tapas here alongside the most traditional Galician crafts and the TEATRO PRINCIPAL (Main Theatre) and the SALÓN TEATRO (Theatre Hall). These two venues are real powerhouses of culture in the city, putting on numerous festivals and dates every year, such as Cineuropa, Curtocircui-

FACING Café Casino
ABOVE Galería Sargadelos

to, and the International Festival of University Theatre.

At no. 2 rúa Nova is the [Taller de Orfebrería Alfonso Iglesias](#) precious metal workshop, which is not only a shop, it is also where they design, make, repair, and sell their own creations. Almost opposite, we have [A Atlántica](#) which has a wide range of Galician products. Tins of preserves, which are works of art in themselves due to the designs on them, stand alongside carefully crafted accessories.

[Merlín e Familia](#) (Merlin and Family), at no. 8 and 10, is one of those places that just draws you in, not only because of the intriguing name but also because of its creative window displays. We can find music, books, crafts, illustrations, and decorations here which are all made by Galician and Spanish designers.

[Zamo Tamay](#), at no. 14, immediately catches our eye with the absent-minded pilgrim, Seferino, who rotates with his mouth wide open and invites us to step into this shop selling art and gifts, where every handmade item is a unique and original piece. They include engravings, drawings, watercolours, and much more.

Two shops give us a good sample of the best in Galician artisanal textiles. [Dospel](#), at no. 26,

has been dressing both people and family homes in Compostela with bobbin laces, embroidery, clothes, and vinyl tablecloths; the perfect place to pick up household furnishings. The owner of [Bolillos S.C.](#), at no. 40, was born in Camariñas, famed for its lace goods, and shows us how to make beautiful bobbin lace at her shop. Legend has it that a Flemish boat sunk on the Costa da Morte a few centuries ago and that some of the crew and passengers survived thanks to sailors from Camariñas. The survivors included a wealthy Flemish woman who taught the sailors' wives the art of bobbin lace as a token of her gratitude.

[Ela Diz](#), at no. 24, and [La Tienda de Julia](#), at no. 30, offering women's clothing and accessories from Galician, Spanish, and international designers are two fine examples of how to stylishly and expertly repurpose spaces in the old town. They make use of numerous rooms where exposed stone is the main element and have even reclaimed the rear gardens.

The [IGLESIA DE SANTA MARÍA SALOMÉ](#) (Church of Santa María Salomé) is one of those rare jewels that we occasionally find, as there are very few churches in Spain dedicated to the mother of James the Great. It was founded in the 12th century by archbishop Xelmírez. We can view remains of polychromy on the beautiful façade as well as a scene in the Annunciation which shows the Virgin

Mary in a late stage of pregnancy. For a fun challenge we can head inside and try to find the beautiful angels wearing spectacles that appear on one of the Baroque reredos. In the 18th century, the great Baroque architect Simón Rodríguez attached an oversized bell tower, which was known as the Paperweight for a long time.

On the site of the old Irish College, the [PAZO DE RAMIRÁS](#) (Ramirás manor house) was built, which is another good example of a stately town house in the city. For a few years now, part of this building, at no. 44 Nova street, has been used by [Ámboa](#), a jewellery and



craft shop where old and new pieces can be found in the same space. As is to be expected, silver and jet are the main attractions in the store, but traditional Galician ceramics as well as ceramics by new designers also hold a prominent place in their shop windows.

At the end of the street, at no. 41, is [Casa Xeitosa](#), a clothes store that sells creative, responsible, and sustainable brands, Galician craft items, and recycled textiles.



FACING, ABOVE Joyería Ámboa jewellery
FACING, BELOW Iglesia de Santa María Salomé

Nearby

Parque de Belvís and its Convent

From the Santiago de Compostela's MERCADO DE ABASTOS (Abastos Market), we cross to **rúa da Ensinanza**, where we find the COLEGIO DE LA COMPAÑÍA DE MARÍA, a baroque convent from the 18th century founded by Archbishop Raxoi as a school for noble girls. Popularly known as La Ensinanza, the old school gives its name to the street. We then follow down the **rúa das Trompas**, so called because in the Middle Ages the heralds of the all-powerful Count of Altamira would announce his arrival to town by playing French horns (trompas). This route will bring us to the spacious and beautiful PARQUE DE BELVÍS.

Its urban vegetable gardens, its maze of camellias and its privileged viewpoints - whose wisteria-filled pergolas bloom in May - offer one of the most beautiful spectacles among the city's parks.

At the top of the hill stand the imposing towers of the SEMINARIO MENOR (Minor Seminary) and the la IGLESIA Y CONVENTO DE BELVÍS (Belvís church and convent), the latter still inhabited by a congregation of cloistered Dominican nuns, whose sweets and pastries are world-famous. Its foundation dates back to the 14th century, from which the image of the Virgen del Portal (Virgin of the Portal), to whom women in labour pray, is preserved.



Colegiata de Santa María La Mayor y Real de Sar and Cidade da Cultura

From the **Praza de Galicia** we continue along **Rúa da Fonte de Santo Antonio** and arrive at the fountain that gives its name to the street; here young women of marriageable age would come to drink in order to find a future husband. Just opposite, we will find Auga e Sal, a restaurant recently awarded with 1 star Michelin 2022. Here we will be able to sample its tasting menus paired with a wide range of wines.

Continuing along our route, past the Convento de las Madres Mercedarias (Convent of the Mercedarian Mothers), we descend along the **rúa do Patio de Madres** and **rúa de Castrón Douro** towards the Sar district. We are retracing the last stretch of an important pilgrimage route, the *Vía de la Plata* or Silver Way.

Once we reach **rúa do Sar**, we enter one of the most important historic quarters of the city. If we are lucky to be there between the 15th and 17th of August, during the festivities dedicated to the patron saint, we will be able to discover what a true traditional Galician festival is. On these days, the festivities of the Virgin Mary, San Roque and Santa Mariña are celebrated successively.

FACING Convento de Belvís

ABOVE Colegiata de Santa María La Mayor y Real de Sar



Hello Cooking welcomes us at number 96, **rúa de Sar**, a gastronomic experience to be enjoyed, discovered and experimented with. In its specialised bookshop, we can find all kinds of gastronomic literature and recipe books; we can also buy kitchen utensils and equipment and take part in its courses, talks and gastronomic days. Their vouchers and gastronomic experiences are the perfect gift for both pros and the culinary awkward.

We continue down **rúa de Sar** where A Grileira, a shop and workshop of Galician folk instruments, opens its doors at number 16. Xosé Lois Mouriño combines his work as a musician with that of a luthier.

This is how, without even realising it, we reach the heart of the Sar district and one of the most important Romanesque monuments in Santiago de Compostela, COLEGIATA DE SANTA MARÍA LA MAYOR Y REAL DE SAR (Colegiate church of Santa María La Mayor y Real de Sar). Strategically located next to the Silver Way and on the banks of the river Sar, the frequent floods caused the building's foundations to give way so that in the 18th century, the structure had to be shored up with enormous external flying buttresses. On entering the church, the exaggerated inclination of the pillars and the sobriety



and slenderness of the temple catch our attention. To the delight of Romanesque art enthusiasts, it conserves a part of the old cloister and its rooms house a small museum containing valuable pieces from the city's history.

If we wish to continue our walk, we can cross the river Sar and go to the Cidade da Cultura (City of Culture), an ambitious project which the American architect Peter Eisenman began in 1999. On Monte Gaiás (Mount Gaiás) stand its imposing buildings, their undulating stone roofs and glass walls house, among other institutions, the museum, the library and the archive of Galicia, the architecture of which will leave no one indifferent. The visit also offers the opportunity to stroll through the Forest of Galicia, which provides 5 kilometres of paths, several magnificent viewpoints and some of the best views of Compostela.

ABOVE Cidade da Cultura

FACING Santa María de Conxo

The Iglesia de Conxo and its monastery

To reach the Conxo neighbourhood, we start from **Praza de Galicia**, where the *Sargadelos Gallery* is located (on the corner of **rúa Doutor Teixeiro**). A visit here means stepping into a unique exhibition space. As well as a shop, it is a true centre of modern art. With a glance at its shelves, we will travel back in time to the 18th century, when Sargadelos was founded in Cerro (Lugo) as the first Galician iron and steel company. It is remarkable that decades later, it would devote itself to something as delicate as Galicia's porcelain par excellence, which has a characteristic cobalt blue colour, the brand's distinctive trademark. Today, in addition to kitchenware, offering modern designs inspired by the deep roots of Galician culture, the company has expanded its artistic creations to include figurines, jewellery, bags, scarves and fragrances.

We continue along Rúa de Montero Ríos, Praza Roxa, Rúa Frei Rosendo Salvado,



Avenida de Vilagarcía, rúa García Prieto and rúa Sanchez Freire. The **neighbourhood of Conxo** is located at the southern exit of the city, which is also the entrance point for pilgrims coming along the Portuguese Way. Conxo had its own Town Hall until 1925, when it was annexed to Santiago de Compostela. Its local festivities are held in September and attract thousands of locals and tourists, who show their popular devotion to Nuestra Señora de la Merced (Our Lady of Mercy) and San Serapio.

The oldest locals still recall how, in the past, when the procession of San Serapio left the Cathedral for Conxo, the faithful would leave it to enter a tavern and have a quick refreshing cup of Ribeiro wine; they would carry their pockets full of small coins so as to quickly pay for their drinks and not waste too much time before rejoining the procession again. One can easily imagine in what state the statue of the saint arrived

at the Iglesia de Santa María de Conxo (the church of Santa María de Conxo).

The IGLESIA AND CONVENTO DE SANTA MARÍA DE CONXO is a 12th-century complex linked to a lady called Rosuida, who had built, in memory of her lover who was murdered during her pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, a small hermitage that would later become a Benedictine church and monastery. At the end of the 15th century, the Orden de la Merced (Order of Mercy) settled here. This monastic complex offers us, as its most exquisite jewels, part of a Romanesque cloister and an exceptional carving of a Crucified Christ, the work of the great master of 17th-century Castilian Baroque imagery, Gregorio Hernández.

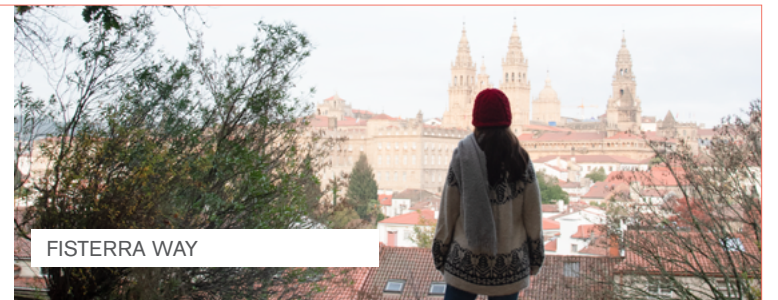
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