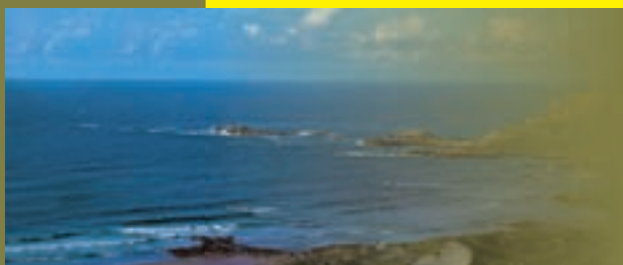




COSTA DA MORTE



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A COSTA DA MORTE

This is the name given to the long stretch of coast lying in the north-west of the Province of A Coruña and which runs between the Boroughs of A Laracha and Muros. It is divided into four areas: **Bergantiños, Soneira, Fisterra** and **Muros-Carnota** – and is made up of 17 municipal boroughs: **A Laracha, Carballo, Coristanco, Malpica, Ponte-ceso, Cabana, Laxe, Zas, Vimianzo, Camariñas, Muxía, Cee, Corcubiión, Fisterra, Dumbria, Carnota** and **Muros**.

Some authors attribute the name *Costa da Morte* to the fact that this is the *Finis Terrae* – the Land's End where the sun sank into the dark and sinister sea; where sailors would on occasions simply be swallowed up and where nobody knew what lay on the other side. Others, however, claim that the name comes from the large number of shipwrecks that this breathtakingly wild coastline has witnessed over the centuries.

Whatever the case, this is unquestionably a coastline of matchless beauty, where time appears to have stood still and the air is drenched in legend and mystery. Here, the sights and smells of the sea, the steep cliffs, the wind whistling as it draws and shapes the rocks all combine to immerse us into this unforgettable landscape. This is a place where magic and reality blend into one, and time and even space stand still. The wind whistles as it traces the forms of the rocks and boulders. The rain paints multiple shades of green onto a blue background, and ochre

onto grey. The gales and storms create unique scenes and the stones wait patiently to tell their tale...

On the *A Costa da Morte* nature has a soul; this is a land of enchanted landscapes. It comes as no surprise to learn of the pantheism of the peoples that worshiped the sun, the rocks and nature long before the coming of Christianity. Indeed, traces of these rites and rituals are still to be found today in the popular pilgrimages and traditions of the inhabitants of this land.

Delve into the sights and sounds of the *Costa da Morte* and you will enter a parallel world of light and shadow, where the sea breezes gently caress or mercilessly lash you, a world of whispering voices and of tempest and calm. A world which will awaken all your senses, even those that are in the deepest of slumbers. This is the place where everything commences, as the starting point is also the place where everything comes to an end.

In physical terms this is a land of contrasts, lying on a solid granite mass that



combines low inland flatlands with a sharp rugged coastline. Long stretches of sandy beaches abound, famed for their size and fine golden sands; here we can also find wetlands and sand dune ecosystems of immense ecological value that are rich in biodiversity, such as the nature spaces of **Razo-Baldaio** (Carballo), **Ensenada de A Ínsua** (Cabana), **Traba** (Laxe), **Louro** (Muros). The beaches, many of which stretch out for many kilometres, give way to steep headlands that jut out into the sea and which are home to the westernmost limits of Galicia and Europe such as the capes of **San Adrián** and **Punta Nariga** (Malpica), **Roncudo** (Corme-Ponteceso), **Cape Vilán** (Camariñas), **Punta de A Buítra** and **Touriñán** (Muxía) and the mythical and legendary **Cape Fisterra**, the end of the western trail or the Camino de Santiago. Another noteworthy feature of this land are its inlets or rías. Indeed it forms part of the area known as the Rías Altas, and is home to the inlets of **Corme and Laxe**, **Muxía** and **Camariñas**, **Lires**, **Corcubián** and **Muros**. Nor must we forget the spectacular river estuaries of **A Ínsua** (Cabana), **Camelle** and **Arou** (Camariñas), **Cuño** (Muxía), **Sardiñeiro** (Fisterra), **Ézaro** (Dumbría) or **Esteiro** (Muros).

The landscape changes as we make our way inland, and the rugged rock scenery gives way to a predominance of plains, broken only by the **peaks of Facho**, **Neme**, **Castelo**, **Pena Forcada**, **Penedos**

de Traba, or the mythical **Pindo**, an impressive granite mass which rises up more than 640 metres from the shoreline. Four large rivers – the **Anllóns**, **Grande**, **Xallas** and **Castro** – flow through these lands, which are also crisscrossed by a multitude of smaller rivers and streams which form large and fertile valleys. Particularly worthy of note is the case of the River Xallas. The source of this river is to be found on Mount Castelo (Coristanco). From here it flows through the plateau of the same name before crashing down into the sea via the waterfall at **O Ézaro Cove**, at the foot of the majestic Mount Pindo. Indeed, this is the only river in Europe that flows into the sea via a waterfall.

The climate on *A Costa da Morte* is oceanic, and similar to that of the rest of the Galician coastline, with mild temperatures throughout the year that range from between 6° and 10° in winter in the coldest months, and between 18° and 24° in summer. The seafaring villages and





coastal towns benefit from numerous microclimates, in which frosts are a very rare occurrence and the sea breezes smooth away the bitter winter temperatures and provide a welcome respite from the heat of summer.

HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Despite the fact that very few archaeological studies have been made into the *Costa da Morte*, it is known that the region had a considerably large population during prehistoric times thanks to the large number of megalithic monuments scattered throughout the area, including the **Dolmen of Dombate** (Cabana), known as the 'Cathedral of Megalithism'. Indeed, all 17 boroughs that make up this area boast examples of megaliths, a fact which led the region's Autonomous Government to set up the **National Megalithic Park** in this area.

The large number of fortified settlements known as castros also indicates that rather than decreasing, the population actually increased during the Iron Age. However, to date, only the settlement in **Borneiro** (Cabana), known as **A Cibdá**, situated just a short distance from the Dolmen of Dombate, has been restored. Little is known about the area during the Roman occupation. However, the so-called Roman bridges of **Lubiáns** (Carballo) and **Brandomil** (Zas), roads such as **Vilaño** (A Laracha), **Camíño Real** (Fisterra) or **Corme** (Ponteceso), the 3 stone altars that certain researchers insist on situating in Fisterra, including **Ara**

Solis, the mythological Roman city of **Duio**, the existence of a **Villa** and **Roman baths in Carballo**, as well as the reference to the Roman road of **A Per Loca Marítima** that linked Braccara (Braga) with Asturica (Astorga) and which passed through these lands, all indicate that the Romans did indeed settle here.

Findings made during archaeological digs in **Moraime** (Muxía), **Tines** (Vimianzo) or **A Medoña** and **Soandres** (Laracha) also point to the existence of Swebian and Visigoth settlers in these lands.

During the troubled Middle Ages, this area witnessed the fierce struggles for power between the local nobles and the prelate in Santiago de Compostela, proof of which are the medieval fortresses and defence towers that still stand in several of these boroughs. **Vimianzo Castle** (Vimianzo), **A Penela Tower** (Cabana), the **Mens Tower** (Malpica), **Nogueira Tower** (Coristanco), or fortresses turned into stately homes such as **Torres de O Allo** (Zas) or **Vilardefrancos** (Carballo), were all witnesses to the battles between the nobility and the clergy for the control of these lush and strategic valleys.

During this period, the coastal towns and villages were subjected to frequent raids, which led to the later construction of defence fortresses such as **O Soberano** (Camariñas), **O Cardeal** (Corcubión), **O Príncipe** (Cee), **San Carlos** (Fisterra) or the defence walls and castles of the **town of Muros**.

The area also conserves many fine examples of medieval religious architecture;



the Convents of **San Xiao de Moraimo** and **San Martiño de Ozón** (Muxía) **Soandres** (A Laracha) are proof of the importance of monastic life in the area, and we can also find many magnificent Romanic churches scattered throughout all 17 boroughs. The later Baroque and Gothic styles would also make their mark on the area, as there are also many splendid examples of Plateresque and Renaissance architecture.

In time, the fortresses of the Middle Ages were gradually replaced by splendid pazos - palaces and stately homes, magnificent examples of which can be found throughout the region.

From the 13th and 14th centuries onwards, the coastal towns begin to prosper far more quickly than those inland. Several of the most beautiful towns of the *Costa da Morte* were founded during this period, with historic streets and squares that are well worth a visit. Highlights include the town of **Muros**, which boasts an important civil and religious built heritage, with its houses and squares surrounded by arches; **Corcubión** with its modernist houses and palaces and churches; **Fisterra** and its Ara Solis Square and its amphitheatre structure grouped around the harbour; the narrow streets of **Laxe**; **Ponte do Porto** (Camariñas) with its houses lining the banks of the River Grande; and **Muxía**, presided over by Mount Corpiño and the Sanctuary of A Barca.

The rich and fertile lands and the introduction of crops from America earned A

Costa da Morte the nickname of the 'Granary of Galicia'. Indeed, the area preserves an important agricultural heritage, with its hórreos or raised granaries, major examples of which include those in **Carnota** (declared a national monument), **Lira** and **San Martiño de Ozón**.

Fishing, and the wide variety of fish and shellfish to be found in the area, was the principal economic driving force of the coastal towns. The area was also home to several large whaling factories, such as those in **Caión** (Laracha) and **Malpica**. Cottage industries also began to appear, such as lace making and pottery, as well as other crafts including *basket weaving and clog making*, etc. Today, A *Costa da Morte* continues to boast thriving pottery and lace making industries that are internationally renowned for the quality of their products as well as their capacity to conserve traditional skills. Camariñas and Buño, in Malpica, are the two most important craft centres for lace making and pottery respectively.

The 18th and 19th centuries also saw the development of industries related to the sea, such as fish salting and drying factories, clear examples of which can still be seen today, such as the **conger eel drying factory** in Muxía. These activities were brought to the area by entrepreneurs from Catalonia.

In the 19th century, A *Costa da Morte* also suffered the impact of the Napoleonic invasion and the resistance put up by the inhabitants of these lands resulted in considerable bloodshed. Yet it was also dur-



ing this century that the *Costa da Morte* would witness the birth of two of the most important figures in the history of Galicia:

Alfredo Brañas (Carballo) and **Eduardo Pondal** (Ponteceso). Two mythical figures who played a key role in the thinking, culture, literature and creation of a sense of nation in Galicia.

The early 20th century saw the start of a phenomenon that was to continue for much of the century and would represent a drain on much of the region's life blood: emigration. During the first half of the century the Galicians left mainly for America, especially Argentina, Uruguay, Cuba and Venezuela, later preferring European countries such as Switzerland, France and Germany.

The military coup by General Franco and his subsequent dictatorship worsened the situation. Reprisals, murders and a general sense of insecurity forced many people with republican and democratic ideas into exile. This was another dark age for the *Costa da Morte*, which would remain in oblivion throughout the *long dark days* of military dictatorship.

Today, the *Costa da Morte* is gradually emerging from this persistent isolation.

A PROTECTED NATURE SPACE

A *Costa da Morte* has been declared an **EU Site of Community Interest** due to the importance of its maritime ecosystems and the biodiversity of the flora and fauna to be found in this area. Indeed, it is a true paradise for lovers of ecology and ecosystems. The entire coastline between

Caión (A Laracha) and Muros and the various habitats it houses now benefit from this protected status.

This stretch of coastline boasts more than 20 catalogued ecosystems, including estuaries, coastal lagoons, cliffs with vegetation, fixed and moving sand dunes, peat bogs and rocky crags, etc.

The most important sites include the **Razo-Baldaio** Nature Space (Carballo), **The Sisargas Islands** (Malpica), **A Insua Cove** (Cabana-Ponteceso), **Traba Lagoon** (Laxe), **Cape Vilán** (Camariñas), **Cape Fisterra** (Fisterra), the sand dune and wetland habitats around **Mount Pindo** (Carnota-Dumbría) and **Mount Louro and Lagoon** (Muros-Carnota). The **wetlands of Baldaio**, **A Insua Cove** and **Traba Lagoon** are home to large colonies of seabirds that spend the winter there; in turn, the cliffs of **Cape Vilán** and the **Sisargas Islands** are home to practically the Iberian Peninsula's entire population of black-legged kittiwakes and auks. Specifically, the Sisargas Islands boast the largest colony of black-backed gulls in Spain.





All these nature spaces are home to a wealth of flora and fauna, including several rare species, some of which can only be found in this area. *A Costa da Morte* is therefore a natural paradise which will delight and surprise the senses and which can be enjoyed at any time of year. The capes such as **O Roncudo**, **Villano**, **Touriñán**, **Nariga** and **Lariño** also offer visitors breathtaking panoramic views.

Another spectacle not to be missed are the stony landscapes of the *Costa da Morte*, where the wind has shaped and formed the granite rocks. Particularly worth a visit are **Penedos de Traba y Pasarela**, **Pedra do Cadro** and of course **Mount Pindo**, known as the Celtic Olympus. Truly magical settings in which the rocks have taken the form of animals and objects.

The endless beaches of fine white sand are another major attraction, and a far cry from the crowded sands of some coasts. **Carnota** boasts the longest beach in Galicia, which stretches out for an amazing 7 kilometres. Yet with the exception of Coristanco and Zas, all seventeen of the boroughs of the *Costa da Morte* boast magnificent beaches.

The rivers stand out against stunning natural backdrops that are to be enjoyed with all five senses: riverside vegetation, mills, waterfalls, spectacular rock formations highlights include the **Entrecruces Waterfall** (Carballo), **A Saímia** (Ponteceso), **Caldeiras de O Castro** (Muxía), **Batáns de Mosquetín** (Vimianzo), **Verdes** (Coristanco) and **Gabenlle** (A

Laracha) to name just a few. A truly spectacular sight rises up before us with the granite mass of Mount Pindo, as it tumbles down to the sea at the mouth of the River Xallas in O Ézaro (Dumbria). This is the only river in Europe that flows into the sea via a waterfall that stands over 100 metres above sea level.

LEGENDS AND MAGICAL LANDSCAPES

On the *Costa da Morte* the difference between legend and reality often becomes blurred; here things are not always quite what they seem. This legendary, magical and mysterious atmosphere is in fact one of the area's most fascinating attractions, making it truly unique. In ancient times, the inhabitants of these lands worshipped the sun, the stones and nature and today, many aspects of these pagan traditions still exist. In **Corme** (Ponteceso) we can still see clear examples of how Christianity tried to eradicate these pagan traditions. A stone, carved in the shape of a serpent was Christianised by the addition of a stone cross. Yet the clearest examples are to be found in the **Sanctuary of Muxía** with the **Abalar and Cadrís stones**. These stones were almost certainly the object of worship prior to the arrival of Christianity, but they were later used to glorify the miraculous powers of **the Virgin of A Barca**, adding to the religious mythology surrounding the appearance of the Virgin before the Apostle St James on a boat the Abalar Stone, and whose rudder is the Cadrís stone. This belief has placed



Muxía firmly on the map of the final stage of the Camino de Santiago. The **Camado Santo or Saint's Bed**, close to the **Shrine of San Guillermo** (Fisterra) is a place of pilgrimage for those unable to have children, as the stone is claimed to have all types of powers related questions of fertility. The aptly-named and pointed **Pedra do Cú (bottom stone) in Carballo** is said to cure the haemorrhoids of all those who rest their behinds on it. The rocky landscapes of sites such as Mount Pindo, Cadro Moors and Traba and Pasarela, to name just a few of the best-known, form an enchanted, magical and mysterious backdrop to all types of tales and beliefs. Likewise, fire and water continue to represent the principal purifying elements in popular imagery. There are countless holy fountains which are said to hold all kinds of miraculous powers, and practically all the area's shrines boast their very own fountain which is said to be able to work miracles.

Fire is the common element to the most popular festival in Galicia as well as the *Costa da Morte*. On the **night of San Xoán**

– St John and the summer solstice – thousands of bonfires (known locally as *cachelas*) light up the skies. The purifying flames rid the air of the witches (*meigas*) and evil spirits. Locals and visitors alike jump over the flames to purify their souls of evil and to begin life anew. In this celebration those other elements of worship – water and plants – also play a key role; flowers are soaked in water and left outside overnight. When morning comes, the water is used to wash and purify the body. The Iron Age fortified settlements are an endless source of tales and legends. The entire *Costa da Morte* is scattered with the remains of these ancient settlements, each with its own magical spell, treasure and tale to tell. Almost all speak of the *moros and moras*, the fantastic beings that are said to have built these settlements and hoarded treasures of immense value underground. There are also references to submerged cities and towns, engulfed by the waters as a result of their wicked ways or an evil curse, and which today lie beneath the tranquil waters of a lake, lagoon or *braña* (reservoir). **Alcaíán** (Coristanco), **Vilaverde** (Laxe), Duio (Fisterra) or **Ricamonde** (Carnota) are just a few of these legendary towns and villages, tales of which can be heard all over the *Costa da Morte*.

Another major source of legends and tales that have been passed on orally from generation to generation are the many saints that are worshipped locally. Santo Adrián rid the area around the chapel named after him of a plague of





snakes; the Virgin of A Barca (Muxía) appeared before the Apostle St James whilst he was preaching in these lands; the Christ of Fisterra appeared on the beach inside a box after rescuing a fishing boat; the Virgin of los Remedios (Lira) caused a French warship that was about to raid the area to sink; and Duio (Fisterra) was doomed to disappear for failing to heed the teachings of the Apostle St James.

It's well worth scratching beneath the surface on the *Costa da Morte*. Keep your eyes peeled in order to see beyond the obvious. Discover what's fact and what's legend in each story, each tale told at the inn, each fable...For here things are never quite what they seem; here nature has a voice of its own, and is willing to speak to those that are observant and ready to listen.

GASTRONOMY

Today gastronomy is a major tourist attraction and *Costa da Morte* boasts a wide range of top quality produce.

Although we cannot talk of a cuisine that is specific to the *Costa da Morte* in the strictest sense of the term, as the range of dishes is similar to that of the rest of Galicia, we can say that the quality of the ingredients, especially the fish and seafood, provides an added value. The **Goose barnacles**, the king of seafood, which grow on this stretch of coastline are considered to be the finest in the world. Particularly famous are those from **O Roncudo** (Corme-Ponteceso) although

the goose barnacles collected in Muxía or Fisterra are equally exquisite.

Likewise, the razor clams from Fisterra - known locally as **longueirón** are also said to be the finest. The velvet and king crabs caught on the *Costa da Morte* are far superior to those to be found in other waters. The lobsters are also magnificent, and the inlets of **Cama-riñas, Laxe, Corcubiión** and **Muros**, as well as the Anllóns Estuary and the wetland of Baldaio (Carballo), are rich in cockles, clams and razor clams. Corme (Ponteceso) produces mouth-watering mussels.

Octopus is one of the area's most traditional and popular dishes. Indeed, the locally-caught octopus is of an exceptionally high quality. The most traditional way of preparing octopus is *á Feira*: it is boiled, chopped and served on a wooden plate with a dressing of olive oil, sea salt and paprika. Restaurants have also recently begun serving grilled octopus and it is also a delicious filling for the area's traditional pies or empanadas.

The **fish** caught in these waters is also particularly appreciated for both its quality and variety: Pollack, hake, monkfish, horse mackerel, sea bass, sardines, gilt-head bream and skate are just a few of the types of fish to be found. Traditional dishes include a range of mouth-watering fish and seafood casseroles normally made with Pollack, conger eel and skate. Make sure you don't leave the *Costa de Morte* until you have tasted this delicious local speciality.



Grilled fish, particularly sole, is another excellent choice, or alternatively opt for baked sea bass or gilthead bream.

Horse mackerel and especially sardines are worth a special mention. Sardines are a classic delicacy that are best enjoyed in the seafaring towns and villages on a summer's day. As the local saying goes 'en San Xoán a sardiña molla o pan' (On St John's Day sardines and bread), and it is around this time that the sardines are available all over the *Costa da Morte*. They are roasted and their delicious aroma is inextricably linked with the summer evenings on the *Costa da Morte*.

The quality of the squid and cuttlefish in varying sizes is also of an extraordinary quality. As for the **river fish**, Ponteceso is famed for its eels, whilst the trout caught in the rivers Anllóns, Grande and Xallas is another of the area's many culinary specialities.

Yet there is more to gastronomy on the *Costa da Morte* than fish and seafood. The meat produced here is of an exceptionally high standard and any restaurant, inn or eating house will offer a wide range of beef, pork, lamb, rabbit and chicken dishes. Livestock farming in this area still uses traditional feeding methods which are reflected in the excellent quality of its meats. Stews, the traditional lacón con grelos – shoulder of pork with turnip tops- and tripe with chickpeas are common throughout the area, and are ideal for those chilly winter months. **Entroido** – carnival time – is the perfect opportunity to taste these mouth-watering dishes

which at this time of year are rounded off by the perfect dessert: *filloas* – delicious pancakes which can be served in numerous ways.

The region is also famed for its **bread**. The town of Carballo has a long-standing bread making tradition, and its log-fuelled ovens continue to produce bread which is known for its quality all over Galicia.

The fields and orchards of the *Costa da Morte* are rich and fertile, producing a wide range of top quality fruits and vegetables. Traditional farming methods still predominate in this sector. Most of the beans grown in and around Bergantiños and Soneira are exported to the neighbouring autonomous region of Asturias, famed for its bean stew. Around here the saying goes that Asturias gives this dish its name and the *Costa da Morte* the beans. The potatoes grown here are considered to be the best in Europe, especially those from Coristanco, which celebrates its potato festival in September each year. Thanks to the microclimates of the coastal areas the production of cer-





tain vegetables such as garlic, lettuce, tomatoes and leeks is doubled and guarantees exceptional quality. Locally-grown greens and turnip tops are the essential ingredients for the local stock, one of the area's most traditional dishes and a staple part of the local diet.

In addition to the many restaurants, the traditional **fairs** are the ideal place in which to savour the *Costa da Morte's* traditional dishes. Gastronomy plays such an important part in these events that some are devoted entirely to a particular ingredient or dish. Carballo, for example holds tripe, beans and turnip top fairs, during which the restaurants, inns and eating houses prepare traditional dishes. Paiosaco (A Laracha) is famed for its **cherry fair**, which draws the crowds from all over the region, anxious to buy and taste this delicious fruit. Yet no fair is complete without an octopus or tripe stall, where visitors will be able to taste these excellent local specialities.

FESTIVALS

In summer practically not a day goes by without some borough on the *Costa da Morte* celebrating some kind of festivity. Gastronomy, religious, legends and fun all converge in an endless number of popular pilgrimages. Not to be missed are the pilgrimages of **A Barca** (Muxía), declared to be of tourist interest, **Os Miragres** (Caión-A Laracha), **San Fins** (Cabana), **O Faro** (Ponteceso), As Neves (Dumbria), **San Adrián** (Malpica), **Santa Rosa** (Laxe) and many more besides.

The patron saint of sailors, the **Virgen del Carmen**, is celebrated in the ports and harbours throughout the area with sea processions and major celebrations, although the actual date will vary from town to town.

Easter is another important time of year. Particularly worthy of mention are the Easter celebrations in **Fisterra**, which have been declared of tourist interest, with the main events and processions taking place on Easter Sunday. The programme of events for Good Friday in the town of Laxe is also of interest to locals and visitors alike.

The **Carnival** is another traditional event that is celebrated throughout the area. Highlights here include the Burial of Mikaela, the Cow Games and Madamitos and Ghuardineros, which stand out from the more traditional celebrations in other towns. Gastronomy festivals are always guaranteed to draw the crowds. Highlights include the **Goose Barnacle Festival in O Roncudo** (Corme-Ponteceso), the **Razor Clam Festival** (Fisterra), the **Cockle**





Festival (Baldaio-Carballo), the **'Roscón' Cake Festival** (Muros), the **Eel Festival** (Muxía), the **Potato Festival** (Coristanco), the **Trout Festival** (Baio-Zas), the **Tripe Festival** (Carnés-Vimianzo), and the **Mussel Festival** (Camaríñas).

The town of Zas hosts one of the most important folk festivals in Galicia. Known as **A Carballeira**, it attracts many of the top Celtic and traditional music groups from Galicia, Brittany, Scotland and Ireland, as well as thousands of fans. Other important folk festivals include **Traba Folk** (Laxe) and **A Anchoa** (Fisterra), although all the boroughs organise concerts featuring the top names in traditional music. Pop music is also present in the borough of Carballo, which organises **Xiria-Pop**, an important international festival.

The Middle Ages are also present in the programme of festivities organised on the *Costa da Morte*. Corcubión hosts a large **medieval market**. The streets throng with a range of colourful and historical characters including jugglers, troubadours, knights and their ladies and master falconers. In Vimianzo the **Raid on the Castle** re-enacts the Irmandiña rebellion, recreating the assault on the fortress. The programme of events is completed with musical performances and other forms of entertainment.

Also of interest are the **Bajadas de Carrilanas** held in Muros and Vimianzo. Participants hurtle down the steep streets of these towns in self-made vehicles without engines. A sight that is well-

worth seeing and which is guaranteed to raise a smile. The **Rapa das Bestas in Vimianzo** has also been declared a festival of tourist interest. Here visitors can admire the courageous **fighters or aloitadores** battling to tame the wild horses in order to submit them long enough to cut their manes. Horsemeat prepared in several delicious recipes is another attraction of this festival which is held on Mount Areosa.

San Xoán (St John) is probably the most important festival in Galicia, and by extension on the *Costa da Morte*. The bonfires – *cachelas* – light up the skies on this most magical of nights and locals and visitors alike jump over the flames to scare away the evil spirits. The best-known of these celebrations takes place in Carballo. Mention must also be made of two internationally craft festivals held on the *Costa da Morte*: the **Buño Pottery Festival in Malpica** and the **Camaríñas Lace Festival**.

MUSEUMS AND INTERPRETATION CENTRES

Although the area does not boast any large museums, it does offer visitors a wide range of fascinating exhibits, scattered around the region in small museums and exhibition centres. Examples of these include the **Fernando Blanco Museum** (Cee), with exhibitions on teaching and education; the **Seno de Corcubión Maritime Museum**, with more than a thousand exhibits on seafaring life; the **Castelo de San Carlos Fishing Museum**,



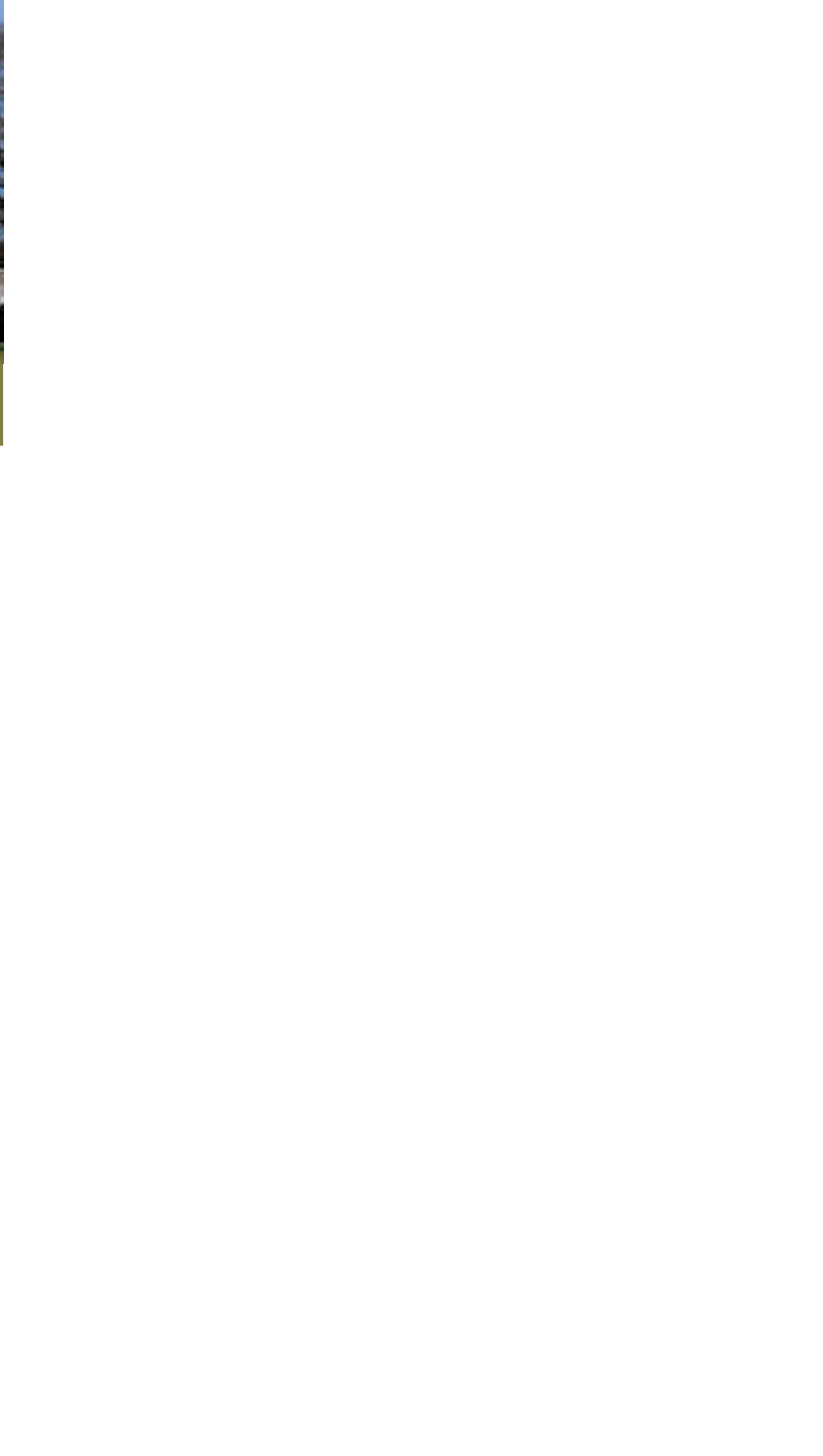
with a collection of items on fishing, including tackle and vessels from the *Costa da Morte*; the **Bergantiños Exhibition Hall and Museum** (Carballo), the former housing temporary exhibitions and the latter dedicated to ethnography and history; the **Asunción Antelo Museum** (Coristanco), with paintings and poems by this farm labourer and artist who shows visitors round herself; the **Forno do Foerte Eco-Museum**, **Casa do Oleiro** and **Expo-Bergantiños** (Buño- Malpica), all dedicated to traditional pottery and ceramics; the **Torre Pujales Foundation** (Corme-Ponteceso), home to an important collection of contemporary art; the Eduardo Pondal Foundation (Cospindo-Ponteceso) featuring exhibits reflecting the life and work of one of the greatest Galician writers and philosophers of all time; **the Sea Museum** (Laxe), with exhibits related to the sea and the life of sailors; **Vimianzo Castle** (Vimianzo), home to the Galician Costume Museum as well as the venue for live demonstrations and exhibitions on local arts and crafts; the **Linen Museum**

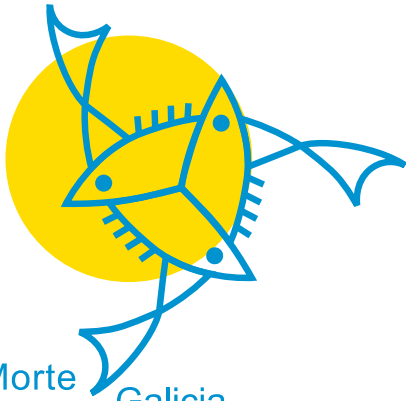


(Zas), which houses an excellent collection of clothes made of line and the tools and instruments used in their production; the **Lace Museum** (Camarifiñas), featuring a large range of designs and items made from lace from Camariñas and other parts of the world; the **Ponte do Porto Ethnographic Museum** (Ponte dol Porto-Camarifiñas), with a collection of applied arts and lace; **Man's Museum-Camarifiñas**, an open air museum situated in Camelle harbour showing the work of this 20th century myth of the *Costa da Morte*.

There is also an excellent network of heritage and landscape interpretation centres including As Torres do Allo (Zas), the Pazos Interpretation Centre and Tourist Information Office; **Pozo de Cachón** (Muros) and **Rectoral de Golmar** (A Laracha), the Interpretation Centres for the Mill Trail; **Casa da Pedra** (Ézaro-Dumbría) designed as the interpretation centre for the Mount Pindo and Xallas Waterfall trails; and **Batáns de Mosquetín** (Vimianzo), which, although not an interpretation centre in the strictest sense, provides a fascinating insight into the way the mills worked and the important role they once played.

Other resources on the *Costa da Morte* act as living museums. A fine example of this is the **Tourist Fish Market** in Fisterra and other fish markets in numerous fishing towns and villages. Nor must we forget the lighthouses that line the coastline at Touriñán, Villano, Nariga, Lariño and Cee; or the seafaring tourism resources of the **Lira** and **Laxe Seas**.





Costa da Morte Galicia

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