

Galicia and the Pilgrim's Way

7 Night Parador Tour - Half Board

Your itinerary

The following pages contain general information about your car or motorcycle tour and the locations where you will stay. The order in which they appear may not be the order your hotels have been confirmed for you - for your individual itinerary please refer to your holiday documentation.



León

10/2024

Car and motorcycle tours in Spain


Brittany Ferries



Advance planning

To decide on places to see and plan your route it's useful to refer to tourist office and travel websites such as Google maps, viamichelin.com (which will also show motorway tolls if applicable) or theaa.co.uk.

Hotel directions

With your travel documents is an information sheet for each hotel which has been booked for you giving directions together with some further details.

Arrival

Unless stated, you will be expected to arrive at each of the hotels pre-booked for you by 6pm each day. This should allow time for a fairly leisurely drive between overnight stops but if you find you will be arriving later than this please ring the hotel so your room is held for you.

This tour is on a half board basis, with breakfast and set menu dinner included.

The itinerary takes you through some of northern Spain's very varied scenery, allowing you to see the spectacular Picos de Europa mountains, the green countryside of Asturias and some of the charming fishing villages and unspoilt beaches along the coast.

There is also a great deal of history in this region with some magnificent old buildings and monuments, particularly in the cities of León and Santiago de Compostela, which have attracted pilgrims since the Middle Ages. With its long coastline Galicia is also a seafaring land, with Vigo being home to Spain's largest fishing fleet. There are many charming coastal villages with fine beaches, rocky coves and restaurants serving excellent fresh seafood. The land is also relied on for producing wine and there is some beautiful vine covered countryside.



The Roman bridge at Cangas

Cangas de Onís

From Santander or Bilbao you may like to stop at the pretty medieval village of **Santillana del Mar** or the fishing village of **San Vicente de la Barquera**. It's also worth taking a small detour into the lovely coastal resort of Ribadesella.

Arriondas [5k from Cangas] is the starting point for many white water sports on the Rio Sella. The annual kayak festival is held here at the beginning of August with participants from all over the world. **Covadonga** [14k from Cangas], the birthplace of the reconquest of Spain from the Moors has an impressive monastery and the shrine of La Santina - the patron saint of Asturias, is in a nearby cave. **Cangas** is a lively town with an ancient bridge and a good choice of shops, bars and restaurants.



Ribadeo

Ribadeo

A short detour from the N632/N634 takes you to the attractive traditional fishing villages of **Cudillero** and **Luarca**. Ribadeo itself is a beautiful Galician fishing and farming village with a number of bars and restaurants, and you can buy some of the popular local ceramics. There are boat trips along the river Eo and many lovely beaches nearby.



Santiago cathedral

Santiago de Compostela

You may like to stop at **Vilalba** to see the town and its castle, part of which is now a Parador. **Santiago de Compostela** is Europe's greatest pilgrimage centre. There is a huge amount to see in this city, founded in 813 after the supposed discovery of the tomb of St James. The impressive cathedral is a major attraction and the city itself is beautiful with squares and narrow streets filled with appealing shops, taverns and bars.



Parador Baiona

Baiona

A worthwhile stop is **Pontevedra**, now inland but once a port, where Columbus's flagship was built, with some charming streets and medieval squares - or take a detour into **Vigo**, a vibrant city and fishing port. There are also some lovely beaches locally, known as the Rias Baixas. **Baiona** has excellent beaches and has long been a popular holiday resort. It was here in 1493 that Columbus brought news of the discovery of the New World. A replica of La Pinta, one of his 3 ships, can be seen in the harbour.



Luintra

Near **Ourense** are the beautiful river **Sil Canyons** which can be viewed from the river in a catamaran. There is a part called the Riveira Sacra which has many interesting religious buildings and monuments and a pretty landscape where some fine white wines are produced. As well as the historic Parador at Nogueira de Ramuín, the area around **Luintra** is charming with some wonderful walks and scenery, particularly near the river Sil.



León

Originally a Roman settlement, **León** is a lively university city with wide boulevards, pedestrian squares and stunning architectural treasures such as the twin towered cathedral with its sculptures and very beautiful stained glass windows - it is equally impressive at night when it's illuminated. The Renaissance San Marcos monastery and the Basilica de San Isidoro which has valuable Romanesque frescoes in the crypt are an interesting visit too.



Lerma

Lerma, high above the Arlanza river, is a little historic town that can be seen from some distance away as you approach it. The Parador is within the Ducal Palace which was built at the beginning of the 16th century for King Filipe III on the site of a ruined castle and stands in the main square on the upper part of the town. Don't miss the collegiate church of San Pedro which has one of the oldest working organs in Spain, dating from 1616, and for wonderful views of the river and surrounding scenery, take the steps up to the ramparts surrounding the charming old quarter. About 20 minutes' drive from **Lerma** is **Covarrubias**, another old village with lovely medieval streets and the renowned 15th century churches of San Cosme and San Damián.



Santander & Bilbao

Standing along the north shore of a great bay of stunning natural beauty **Santander** is one of the most traditional holiday resorts of northern Spain where many of the Spanish themselves choose to holiday, escaping the more arid inland areas. There is a superb sandy beach, modern leisure amenities and an attractive promenade laid out with flower borders and trees, popular with the locals who stroll along it in the early evening and at weekends. The city has wonderful restaurants and shops plus a variety of nightlife and entertainment.



Over recent years **Bilbao** has been transformed into a vibrant modern city with plenty to entice tourists. The top visitor attraction is the **Guggenheim museum** with its striking modern architecture which is spectacular both inside and out. There are permanent art displays and regular temporary exhibitions held here which are well worth a visit. There is much more to see (and best explored on foot) - the atmospheric Casco Viejo old quarter with its maze of cobbled streets filled with shops, cafés and restaurants; remarkable buildings, bridges, squares, lovely parks, museums and art galleries. Shopping is also excellent and there is a large colourful Sunday market.

