



cu|RÛTAS

Cultural routes
around Gijón/Xixón

Gijón



Infogijón

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Photo of The "Retablo del Mar" Photographic
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These routes allow you to explore and get to know Gijón/Xixón from twelve perspectives that are all totally different, but that all have one thing in common: the historical and cultural heritage of the town of Jovellanos. These itineraries are aimed at a broad spectrum of people, with interests as diverse as film, literature, art, history, and feminism. And all thanks to cultural routes that give you the opportunity to discover the secrets of Gijón/Xixón in a fun way, and in just a few hours. This is an experience that will appeal to locals and visitors alike, and something you can enjoy either alone or together with family or friends.

These itineraries cover the seven wonders of Gijón/Xixón to enjoy on a day out with the family. They show how the city has evolved focusing on the life and work of women; they allow you to discover Gijón/Xixón's extensive modernist heritage and follow in the footsteps of its most famous historical local: Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos. They highlight the progress made by the city during the last two centuries of history, and

explain the industrial heritage which has been so important for the town's economic and social development; they reveal interesting ROUTES around the outskirts of Gijón/Xixón; they reveal the secrets of the popular neighbourhood of Cimavilla, home to fishermen, craftsmen and *cigarreres*; they suggest a fascinating ROUTE taking in the sculptures and urban art in the city; they explain what the Civil War years were like, from the time of the military coup to the capture of Gijón/Xixón by Franco's troops; they show some of the locations where emblematic films have been shot, and reveal where the cinemas used to be years ago; and they also take in the places featured in various literary works set in the city.

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GIJÓN / XIXÓN

TWO

CENTURIES

OF HISTORY



ROUTE

- San Lorenzo Beach, Escalera 4
- Calle Capua
- Plaza del Instituto
- Calle Corrida
- Plaza del Carmen
- Calle Álvarez Garaya
- Plaza L' Humedal
- Marina
- Plaza Mayor

The recent history of Gijón/ Xixón begins with industrial development, with an emerging bourgeoisie forming part of the most privileged sectors of the city, and a significant working class contributing to the dynamism of a city that, through the most typical streets, squares and buildings in the city centre reveals its history over the last two centuries.

1st STOP

San Lorenzo Beach, Escalera 4

The tour begins on the beach of San Lorenzo, in front of the well-known *La Escalera*. The monumental flight of steps leading to the beach is an example of rationalist architecture and was built in 1933 by the architect José Avelino Díaz y Fernández Omaña. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, a great deal of seaside activity took place on the broad sands of San Lorenzo beach, turning El Muro into a first-class urban location, and leading to ongoing work to improve the environment.

2nd STOP

Calle Capua

We continue on towards Calle Capua, where on the corner you can see the Martillo de Capua (1899) on the corner. This building is part of the only old block that is still standing on the beach. The refurbishment of this villa, undertaken by Mariano Marín Magallón, symbolises the transition from the 19th to the 20th century in Gijón's architecture. It is an eclectic construction with a French flavour and classical decorative features, but elements leaning more closely towards French and Catalan Modernism can already be seen.

Continuing along the route, we come to the Ciudadela de Celestino Solar Municipal Museum. The *ciudadela* of Capua, or Celestino Solar, was deliberately hidden in the inner courtyard of the block. The *ciudadelas* were substandard housing complexes built for the urban proletariat from the end of the 19th century on. In Gijón/ Xixón there were about 200, and this one, closed in 1987, consisted of twenty-three homes.

The walk now takes us to La Plazuela, located at one of the corners of the old wall, built in 1837. The walls ran parallel to what are today's Covadonga and Capua streets.

▲ (Detail)

La Escalera on Begoña day, San Lorenzo beach. 1934, C. Suárez*

◀ Plaza Mayor





Walking tour
Distance 2,5 km



In the last quarter of the 19th century, the State ceded the land that would allow the city to expand beyond the walled enclosure. Thus began one of the most important of the city's expansion plans, known as 'the expansion of the San Lorenzo sands', which resulted in the establishment of the L´Arena district.

3rd STOP

Plaza del Instituto

We take Calle Menéndez Valdés to get to the Plaza del Instituto, a favourite meeting point for the people of Gijón/ Xixón. Nearby you can see several buildings of great value, such as the old Instituto Jovellanos, the Casa Berenguer, the Basilica del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús or the Jovellanos Public Library.

4th STOP

Calle Corrida

We now head towards Calle Corrida, originally called 'Calle Ancha de la Cruz de Huelga', first passing by the old Escuela Superior de Comercio, the first building with an entirely metallic structure built in Gijón/ Xixón.

Calle Corrida was, and still is, the quintessential place for a stroll for the people of Gijón/ Xixón, and with its many cafés it looks like a single long café terrace.

5th STOP

Plaza del Carmen

Our route now leads to the Plaza del Carmen. The Carmen district was a service area for the port, where products were exchanged between the port and the railway. It owes its name to a chapel dating from 1671, which was demolished at the end of the 19th century. In 1920, García de la Cruz remodelled the square, filling it with prestigious buildings: the National Telephone Company, the Bank of Bilbao and the Caja de Ahorros de Asturias.

6th STOP

Calle Álvarez Garaya

We take Calle Álvarez Garaya as far as the Plaza L´Humedal, passing in front of the church of San José (1946-1954), a historical building inspired by the Baroque.

7th STOP

Plaza L´Humedal

The name of this square refers to the area in which it is located: a marshy area that blocked the development of the city towards the east. Presiding over the square is the well-known Gota de Leche, a childcare institute created in 1922-24 by García de la Cruz, as a Clinic for Children. The market was set up in the surrounding area, which meant that the Gota de Leche was protected by a fence that subsequently disappeared after recent remodelling. The name, which translated into English means 'Drop of Milk', stems from the fact that free bottles of pasteurised milk were once distributed from here.

8th STOP

Marina

We head for the marina, taking Calle Pedro Duro which leads to Calle Marqués de San Esteban, a street that was intended to serve as a link between the northern railway station and the port.

Coal trucks were taken along Marqués de San Esteban to the jetty, where the coal was loaded onto ships. In 1885, the Sociedad de Fomento built the docks, reclaiming from the sea the strip of land between Marqués de San Esteban and Rodríguez San Pedro streets, and reducing the capacity of the old dock by creating the Jardines de la Reina, which were named in honour of Queen María Cristina.

The marina is the symbol of the great change in Gijón/ Xixón. The port of El Musel went from being used for industrial purposes in the 19th century to being one of the city's main leisure areas.

9th STOP

Plaza Mayor

We head for the Plaza Mayor, where the tour ends. In the middle of the 19th century, the municipal corporation decided to build a new Town Hall. Andrés Coello was in charge of the project, which included plans for a square designed to be a commercial and social centre.



GIJÓN / XIXÓN CIMAVILLA



ROUTE

- Iglesia San Pedro
- Plaza de Jovellanos
- Torre del Reloj and Casa de Nava
- Plaza del Periodista Arturo Arias
- Plaza de la Corrada
- Capilla de la Soledad
- The sculpture 'Nordeste'
- Tránsito de las Ballenas
- Marina
- Casa Paquet
- Plaza del Marqués

Cimavilla has borne witness to, and played a role in, the most significant historical events in Gijón/ Xixón: the Roman era, the conflicts of medieval times, the creation of the port, the birth and work of Jovellanos and the beginnings of the industrial era. Monuments and the stories of fishermen, craftsmen, 'cigarreros', and 'playos' (the name the men and women, who were born in this old fishing quarter are known by) keep the past alive in this area of the city.

1st STOP

Iglesia San Pedro (Church of San Pedro)

The tour begins at the church of San Pedro. Of Gothic origin, it was rebuilt in the 1940s in the Romanesque Revival style. It is located at the foot of the green area known as Campo Valdés, and was for many years the only church in the town. Below the Campo Valdés stands the Roman Baths Museum, where an explanatory video and a series of interactive screens offer a comprehensive overview of the complex and the Roman past of Gijón/ Xixón.

Standing in the centre of Campo Valdés, you can imagine the vestiges of the Roman wall under the ground; it circled the lower part of the neighbourhood, stretching for 850 m. In the next square you can see a partial reconstruction, and the Valdés Palace, built in 1570 on the foundations of the wall. This was the residence of the Valdés family, then a Tobacco Factory, and later, a customs building. Today, it is a private school.

2nd STOP

Plaza de Jovellanos

In the square there is a brick model of what was the original Roman wall. The Birthplace of Jovellanos (Museum) dominates the square. Its rooms house objects and memorabilia connected with his life, important examples of Asturian painting from the 19th and 20th centuries, and contemporary sculpture. The 'Retablo del Mar', a work in wood by Sebastián Miranda, stands out. It is a celebration of the fishing and seafaring traditions of Cimavilla. It depicts 156 people in what was an everyday scene: the fish auction at the rula or fish market.

Opposite the museum, stands the Casa del Horno, the first headquarters of the Royal Nautical and Mineralogical Institute,

◀ View of Cimavilla. 1932, C. Suárez*

founded by Jovellanos in 1794. Next to the Birthplace of Jovellanos, on the left-hand side, is the Chapel of Los Remedios, which houses Jovellanos' tomb. Both the museum and the chapel are attached to a former Pilgrims' Hospital.

3rd STOP

Torre del Reloj and Casa de Nava

Opposite the Pilgrims' Hospital, stands the Casa de Nava, a square, sober, sparsely decorated house, built at the beginning of the 18th century as the residence of the Vizconde del Campo Grande. This is another of the noble palaces of Cimavilla, currently under municipal ownership.

On the left, we can see the Clock Tower. Built on the base of an old Roman tower, this was the prison for the judicial district of Gijón/ Xixón until the beginning of the 20th century. It was also the town hall. The tower we see today was rebuilt

in 1995, and it flanks what was once the ancient Roman entrance to the city. The remains of the old wall can be seen right in front of some information panels that explain what it was like.

4th STOP

Plaza del Periodista Arturo Arias

We go up Calle Vizconde de Campo Grande to the Plaza del Periodista Arturo Arias, dominated by a bust of the famous journalist. The locals know it as the *Plaza de Tabacalera* or the *Campu les Monxes*, as the large building that presides over it was, until its dissolution in the 19th century, the convent of the Augustinian Recollect nuns, and, later, the Tobacco Factory. The City Council of Gijón/ Xixón now plans to convert the building into a cultural centre.

We pass by *la casa de piedra*, an excellent example of the typical fishermen's houses in the neighbourhood, and taking Calle Vicaria, turn second right onto Calle del Rosario.



Iglesia San Pedro ▲



Walking tour
Distance 1,30 km



▲ Cimavilla

5th STOP

Plaza de La Corrada

Walking down to the left, we come to the Plaza de La Corrada, a very large neighbourhood patio that once served as the setting for theatrical performances. The stone building in the lower right-hand corner is striking. This is the Casa de los Alvargónzalez, the headquarters of the cultural foundation that bears the same name.

6th STOP

Capilla de La Soledad

We take Calle Óscar Olavarría on our way to the La Soledad chapel, originally built in the 17th century and subsequently rebuilt in 1938, which is always open and houses the image of the Virgin de la Soledad and the Cristo de Medinaceli. It was once the headquarters of the Seamen's Guild - which financed and organised whaling - and has a sober façade crowned by a tiny belfry.

Names such as *Transito de las Ballenas* or *Casa de las Ballenas*, in the heart of the local port, still survive, as a testimony to the importance of whaling in the past (the word 'ballena' means whale).

7th STOP

The sculpture 'Nordeste'

We head for the end of the street, where you will see the sculpture 'Nordeste', in corten steel by sculptor Joaquín Vaquero Turcios which was erected in 1994.

Very close to 'Nordeste' is the Cerro de Santa Catalina, a hill that provides a natural viewpoint, and a place that was of clear strategic importance to the city due to its geographical position. This hill, also called *L'Atalaya*, is where the origins of the city of Gijón/ Xixón lie. Here stands one of the most recognisable sculptures in Gijón/ Xixón 'Elogio del horizonte'. When seen from the sea, it looks a great deal lighter than it really is, giving it an impression of weightlessness.

To the right on the eastern slope is the La Fontica fountain, a small natural spring, and the oldest public fountain in the city.

8th STOP

Tránsito de las Ballenas

We take Calle Tránsito de las Ballenas, passing by the *Cuesta' l Cholo*, a name brought back by emigrants returning from the Americas.

9th STOP

Marina

The Marina lies in front of us, and in the foreground you can see the wooden building that was once the old Rula or fish market. The Rula was the centre of economic activity in the neighbourhood, and the place where fishermen, *sardineros*, merchants and interested members of the public attended the fish auctions. When the seaport became the marina, these activities were moved to El Musel. Today the building is a multi-purpose centre with an exhibition hall.

10th Stop

Casa Paquet

We continue along Calle Claudio Alvargonzález until we arrive at Casa Paquet, now the tourist office. Casa Paquet, built in Cimavilla in 1918, was a family home inspired by traditional 16th-century models. It was designed by the architect Miguel García de la Cruz y Laviada (1887-1935) and is the best example of an urban Renaissance-inspired palace in Asturias.

11th STOP

Plaza del Marqués

We head for the Plaza del Marqués or *Plaza de la Barquera*, where a chapel of the same name stood until the end of the 19th century. Now, the place is dominated by the monument to Don Pelayo, erected in 1891 as a tribute to the first King of Asturias and central figure of the city's coat of arms.

On one side of the square, the Revillagigedo Palace stands out, a Baroque addition that took advantage of a 15th century tower. It has the Collegiate Church of St. John the Baptist attached to it.

From the Plaza del Marqués, the rest of Gijón/ Xixón seems to stretch to the base of Cimavilla, inviting us to continue walking through its streets, discovering the city's magnificent hidden corners.



▼ Ascent to Cimavilla from the Plaza del Marqués

The Marina ▲





JOVELLANOS´ GIJÓN / XIXÓN



ROUTE

- The Birthplace of Jovellanos (Museum)
- Plaza Mayor
- Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo
- Plaza del Instituto
- Calle de La Merced
- Paseo de Begoña
- Calle Covadonga
- Plaza de Europa
- Plaza Seis de Agosto
- Calle de Los Moros
- Calle Corrida
- Plaza de Italia
- Jardines de la Reina

It's said that Gijón/ Xixón is indebted to God for the sea, and for the rest to Jovellanos. Jovellanos was a decisive figure in the economic, cultural and urban development of the city where he was born, where he lived, and to which he contributed so much in terms of urban and economic expansion. Gijón/ Xixón grew in the 18th and 19th centuries, on the basis of the ideas put forward by the Enlightenment.

1st STOP

The Birthplace of Jovellanos (Museum)

The walk begins at the birthplace of Jovellanos, that most important inhabitant of Gijón/ Xixón, at the house where he was born in Cimavilla. In 1971 the 15th century palace was converted into a museum full of memorabilia of the man who was born there on 5 January 1744: Baltasar Melchor Gaspar María de Jovellanos.

This enlightened defender of the arts, who was concerned about the lack of artistic activity in Asturias, would have been pleased to see that the rooms of his family home now house works by the most brilliant names in Asturian painting and sculpture. On the left you will find the chapel of Los Remedios, where the tomb of Jovellanos is located.

In the Plaza de Jovellanos, where the museum is located, look to the hotel establishment on your right. This house was the first headquarters of the Royal Nautical and Mineralogical Institute, founded by Jovellanos.

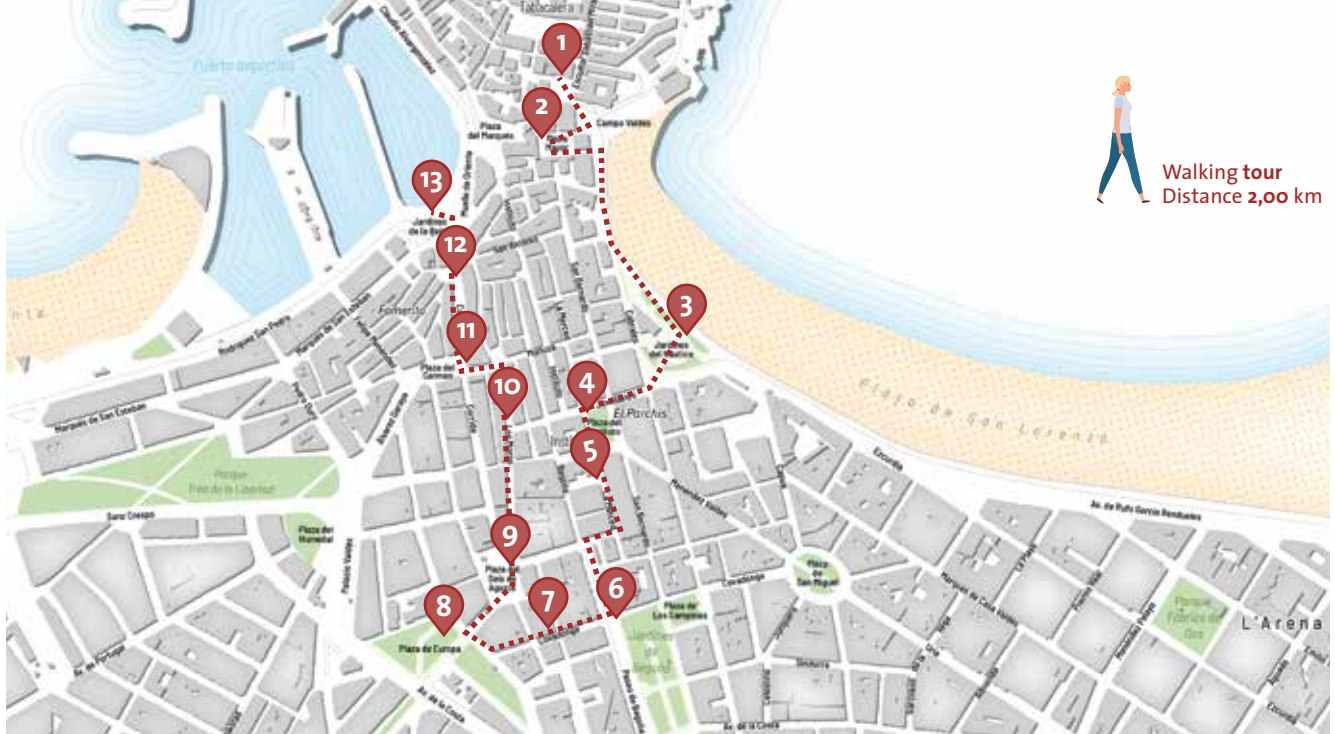
2nd STOP

Playa Mayor

After strolling through the Plaza Mayor, where the Town Hall, built by Andrés Coello in the mid-19th century stands, we continue on our way along the Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo.

◀ (Detail)

Jovellanos' Birthplace Museum. 1966-1973, Gonzalo del Campo y del Castillo's archive of negatives*



3rd STOP

Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo

Without losing sight of the sea, you can see the impressive flight of steps leading down to the beach: *La Escalera*. This containing wall was not completed until 1907, although the visionary Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos had already been concerned about the destructive power of sea and sand that prevented the city from growing towards the south-east.

4th STOP

Plaza del Instituto

Crossing the Jardines del Náutico, we take the street named after Jovellanos. The Plaza del Instituto opens out on the left, and on one side of it you will see the Instituto de Jovellanos. That first building in the upper town had become too small, and Jovellanos entrusted the design for the definitive Institute to Juan de Villanueva, the Chief Court Architect. To the right of the Institute and opposite the Basílica del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, popularly known as *La Iglesia*, is the Jovellanos Public Library, formerly the headquarters of the Bank of Spain.

5th STOP

Calle de la Merced

We go up Calle de La Merced, leaving the Escuela Universitaria de Estudios Empresariales Jovellanos designed by Manuel del Busto in 1911 on the right. Behind it stands the Primary School which also bears Jovellanos' name.



Façade of the Old Jovellanos Institute ▶



Church of San Lorenzo, in the Campinos de Begoña ▼

6th STOP
Paseo de Begoña

This is a natural promontory, a large rock that in the 18th century became a park. Over the years, it has gradually been transformed into a place for leisure activities, a playground for children and a place for people to relax. On the left you can see the Teatro Jovellanos, heir to the old Dindurra Theatre, which offers a wide and varied cultural programme under municipal management.

7th STOP
Calle Covadonga

Next, we take a walk up Calle Covadonga as far as the Plaza de Europa.

8th STOP
Plaza de Europa

This pro-European space and its surroundings were urbanised when the city wall was demolished in 1877. It is a link between 19th century Gijón/ Xixón and the subsequent growth of the city.

9th STOP
Plaza Seis de Agosto

Arriving at the Plaza del Seis de Agosto you'll find yourself in another 'Jovellonian' space, where there's a statue dedicated to the great man, and also the Mercado del Sur, opened in 1899.

On 6 August 1811, Jovellanos returned to his home town, after an unjust ten-year exile in Mallorca; the town turned out in force for its illustrious son, organising a warm welcome for him. At the end of the 19th century the decision was taken to dedicate this space to the memory of Jovellanos, and a statue was commissioned from the sculptor Manuel Fuxá, which was completed in 1891.

◀ Statue in tribute to Jovellanos

10th STOP

Calle de Los Moros

We now take the Calle Los Moros shopping street, where there are many buildings from the early 20th century. The streets of Los Moros, Corrida and Instituto, which run from north to south, form part of the Improvement Plan proposed by Jovellanos in 1782, together with other transversal streets. This was a pioneering project in terms of urban reform, and its ideas served as the basis for the growth of the city in the following century.

11th STOP

Calle Corrida

If there is a well-known emblematic street in every city, in Gijón/ Xixón it is, without a doubt, this one. It is a popular street for shopping and leisure, and the most traditional place for taking a walk.

12th STOP

Plaza de Italia

Calle Corrida begins in the Jardines de la Reina next to a small

square called the Plaza de Italia. From here you can see the impressive building designed by the architect Mariano Marín Magallán. The façade of the house features some beautiful caryatids (columns in the shape of female figures).

13th STOP

Jardines de la Reina

From the Jardines de la Reina, there is a magnificent view of the port of Gijón/ Xixón. Coal from the Asturian mines used to arrive at the old dock. In fact, it was mining that led to the growth of the local port to the point when it became too small, and it was necessary to create another outer port at the beginning of the 20th century: El Musel. Jovellanos had proposed the expansion of the port in order to be able to trade with the Indies, and he also fought to make Gijón/ Xixón the Harbour Master's Office for Asturias.

Although many of the proposals Jovellanos made regarding the city could not become a reality during his lifetime, many of his ideas were taken up in later centuries.

Antiguo Banco de Gijón (Old Bank of Gijón) ▼





GIJÓN / XIXÓN MODERNIST



ROUTE

- Calle Jovellanos
- Calle Instituto
- Calle Cabrales
- La Plazuela
- 43, Calle Cabrales
- Plaza de Europa
- 1, 8 and 35 Calle Corrida

In the Gijón/ Xixón of 1900, immersed in a dynamic of development, the bourgeoisie sought to leave its mark and the stamp of its aspirations through, among other things, architecture and urban redevelopment. Although it is difficult to speak of Modernist architecture as such in the city, in the years corresponding to the turn of the century, decorative elements, materials and designs were introduced that had extensive connections with Art Nouveau, so we can speak of a Modernist influences in Gijón/ Xixón.

The buildings in Gijón with these characteristics are mainly concentrated in Corrida, Jovellanos, Munuza, Cabrales, Instituto, Los Moros, Trinidad and San Bernardo streets.

1st STOP

Calle Jovellanos

We start off in Calle Jovellanos, which has links to Catalan Modernism, as can be seen inside the Basilica del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús or in the house located in Calle Jovellanos, on the corner with Calle Merced. This building, designed by Barcelona architect José Graner Prat in 1901, uses an approach very typical at the time: façades facing on to two streets. Here you can see the relationship with Catalan Modernism, more specifically a hint of the style of Gaudí, in the finishing touches such as the pinnacles, the undulating shape of the façade, and the incorporation of whimsical organic forms on the balconies.

2nd STOP

Calle Instituto

Nearby, at number 16, Calle Instituto, you can see an interesting building whose façade incorporates an *Art Nouveau* decorative approach. It is a design by Miguel García de la Cruz, who may well be considered the most Modernist of the architects to have worked in the town of Jovellanos. He was an assistant architect for the Gijón/ Xixón Town Council from 1903, and a year later he became the municipal architect. Several examples of the modernist influence on his work are the kiosks he designed and the Casino pavilion located on Paseo de Begoña.

Next, we will head towards San Lorenzo beach via San Antonio, San Bernardo, and Julio Somoza streets.

The Café San Miguel, known as *Cafetón* ►

◀ The Emblematic Café San Miguel building. 1980,
Joaquín Aranda Iriarte*



Walking tour
Distance 2,50 km



3rd STOP

Calle Cabrales

At 18, Calle Cabrales, in front of San Lorenzo beach, you can see a house designed in 1903 by Manuel del Busto. Although its original appearance has been altered, some of the Modernist style decorative details on the façade have been retained. The richness of its colours, today slightly faded, stands out in the combination of materials such as ceramics, brick, stone and limestone ashlar in the lower part.

Manuel del Busto is probably best known for his works outside Gijón/ Xixón, although in the town of Jovellanos there are some Modernist touches that reveal his influence.

We will continue along the Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo towards Calle Capua and La Plazuela.

4th STOP

La Plazuela

Manuel del Busto designed the building of the old Café San Miguel, the popular *Cafetón*, located in the square of the same name, which also has certain Modernist touches. In the case of this building, the Neo-Baroque feel has much greater weight than the typical *Art Nouveau* styles, especially in the design of the mouldings.

We continue along Calle Covadonga until reaching the crossroads with Calle Cabrales, by Campinos de Begoña.

5th STOP

43, Calle Cabrales

At number 43 Calle Cabrales, you will find a magnificent two-storey building designed by Mariano Marín, one of the most prolific and outstanding architects of the time, in 1901. This building is notable for its large glazed areas, with three lines of wide symmetrically arranged openings. One of the most striking elements is the grille, made from curved stems with a typically Modernist feel.

Next. You will cross the Paseo de Begoña, taking Calle Covadonga to get to Plaza de Europa.

6th STOP

Plaza de Europa

We have Manuel del Busto to thank for other works such as



the Chalet Ladislao Menéndez in the Plaza de Europa just before the Paseo del Velódromo. It was designed in 1907. With its carefully designed mouldings, the *Art Nouveau* influence is revealed in the light, flat, ornamental details, which are also considerably simplified and more refined compared with previous work. The most remarkable feature is an angular tower-kiosk, that dominates the entire complex.

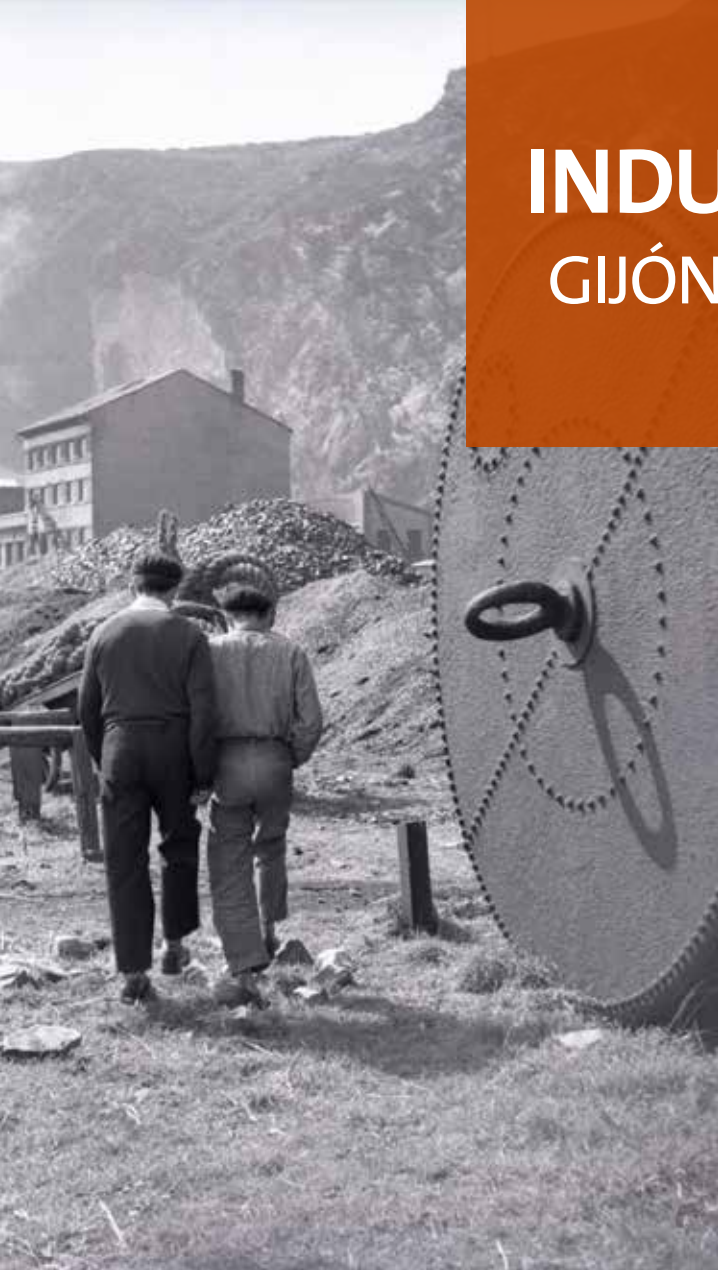
We will skirt the Mercado del Sur to reach the Plaza Seis de Agosto and the beginning of Calle Corrida.

7th STOP

1, 8 and 35 Calle Corrida

Calle Corrida is an incomparable setting to observe buildings with modernist touches. Designed by Mariano Marín in 1903, the house located at number 35 stands out. Here you can appreciate the undulating lines and the curves of the wide glass openings and the richness of the ironwork.

At numbers 1 and 8 you will find two magnificent designs by Miguel García de la Cruz. The most outstanding feature of the façade, which combines ceramic, stone, and iron, are the crenellations crowning the complex, especially in the area of the rotunda where the style of the pinnacles is reminiscent of Gaudí's work. The complexity of the façade of number 8 is noteworthy, especially in terms of the use of multiple materials and surfaces of different qualities and appearance.



INDUSTRIAL GIJÓN / XIXÓN



ROUTE

- La Campa Torres
- Playa de Poniente and the Railway Museum
- Marina
- Plaza del Periodista Arturo Arias
- Litografía Viña (Calle Honesto Batalón)
- Plaza Mayor
- Ciudadela de Celestino Solar
- Feria Internacional de Muestras de Asturias
- Mina La Camocha

1st STOP

La Campa Torres

The Aboño Thermal Power Station. Work began in 1969.

As in the case of other Asturian power stations belonging to the Hidrocantábrico company, architect and artist Joaquín Vaquero Palacios was involved in the design. The building combines feats of engineering, architecture, and art, making it a unique example of industrial heritage.

Not far from here, in Veriña, is one of the emporiums that marks the industrial importance of the city: ArcelorMittal, formerly Ensidesa, is one of the most important steel companies in Europe. The Ensidesa factory was established in Avilés in 1950 by the National Institute of Industry, and began operations in 1956. A year later, an integrated steel plant was built in Veriña, and started producing steel in 1971. This led to the transformation of the districts and parishes of Tremañes, Poago/Puao, and Veriña, as well of course as the creation of new neighbourhoods and urban enclaves in Rocés, Nuevo Gijón/ Xixón, Santa Bárbara/ El Poblao de Santa Bárbara, La Calzada and El Natahoyo.

Port of El Musel. We continue the tour here, via one of the key features of industrial Gijón/ Xixón. Its infrastructure and installations date from between 1893 and 1907, when the first dam, the North Dam, came into partial service. Subsequently, the port was expanded several times, most recently in 2012, when the Torres dam was constructed.

2nd STOP

Playa de Poniente and the Railway Museum

We arrive at the Poniente beach, less than 20 minutes away by road via the AS-19, where the Chimenea de la Compañía de Maderas de Demetrio Fernández Castrillón is located. It has been in existence since at least 1876.

The Railway Museum, which houses an important collection of steam locomotives and railway memorabilia, is located in the old North Station (1873).

3rd STOP

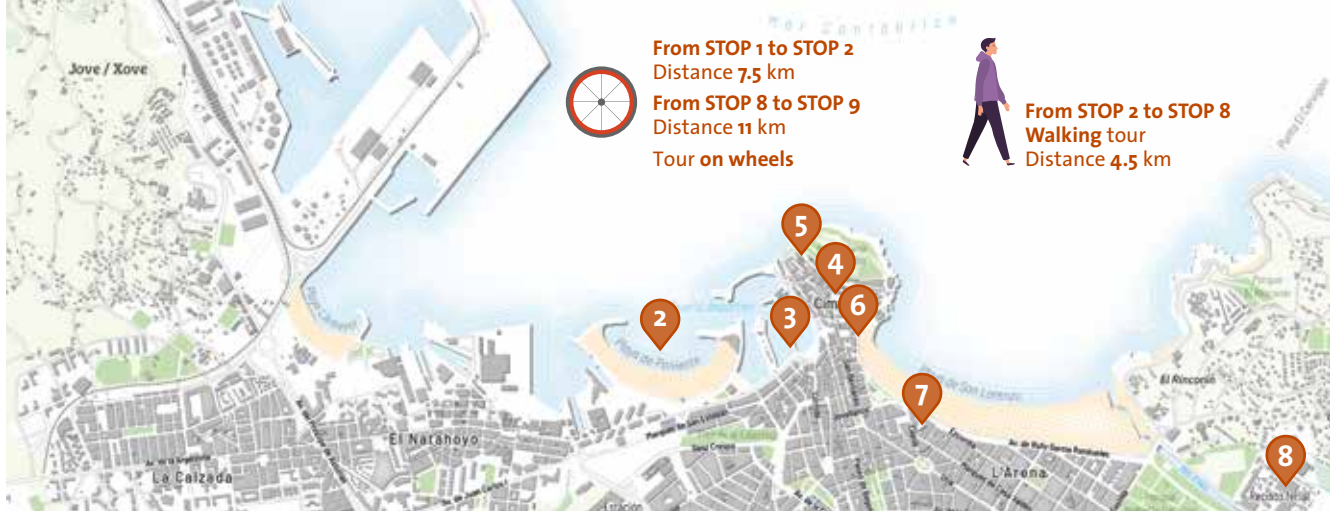
Marina

We continue in the direction of the Marina until we reach the Banco Urquijo building, formerly the Sociedad de Fomento de Gijón/ Xixón. This impressive example of Gijón's civil architecture allows us to recreate the importance of the architectural heritage linked to industrial and commercial activity.

▲ (Detail)

Harbour facilities, El Musel. 1955, Manuel Espin*

Gijón/ Xixón would not be what it is today if over the last century and a half the process of industrialisation had not brought with it chimneys, workshops, factories, 'ciudadelas', machinery and a mass of different people who have been able to create a melting pot of lifestyles, customs, and ways of living and working. This industrial heritage is still present and can be seen in the city of Gijón/ Xixón. Following in its wake, we can appreciate the background and continuity of the transformation of the city, which in 1900 had approximately 50,000 inhabitants, and a population that in the heat of the industrial boom multiplied by more than five during the 20th century.



4th STOP Plaza del Periodista Arturo Arias

On this site stands the Tobacco Factory, which has occupied what used to be a convent of the Augustinian Recollect order since 1843. The building, austere and imposing, was completed in 1679. The chapel was used as the factory's warehouse until its closure in 2002.

5th STOP Litografía Viña (Calle Honesto Batalón)

We continue along Vicaría and Eladio Verde streets until we reach Calle Honesto Batalón, where we find the Viña Litografía building, founded in 1920 by the brothers Juan and Robustiano Viña Mori. It's perhaps one of the most striking examples of the city's booming graphic arts industry in the 20th century. In the post-war period, it was relaunched and oriented towards the labelling of preserves and cider bottles, and to printing advertising posters, an activity to which the painter Mariano Moré made a contribution. Since 2001, this location has been home to an Artistic Printing Centre.

6th STOP Plaza Mayor

Here you will see the renovated Town Hall building, designed by architect Andrés Coello in 1865, a time of turbulent economic activity in the city.

7th STOP Ciudadela de Celestino Solar

Inside the block that is known as the 'Martillo de Capua' (Capua's Hammer in English) we find an example of working class ways of life in Gijón/ Xixón at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. It dates from 1877, and has an entrance corridor that is two and a half metres long. One house prevented the group of 24 houses and two communal toilets from being visible from the street. It was inhabited until 1987, and is now a museum.

8th STOP Feria Internacional de Muestras de Asturias

We continue our tour through the pavilions and facilities of the Asturias International Trade Fair building, heir to those late nineteenth century exhibitions that reflected the economic and industrial life of the region. Right next door is the Muséu

del Pueblu d'Asturies, with its Ethnographic Museum, whose photo library and archive house extraordinary collections that reflect the daily, social and cultural life of the industrial town of Gijón/ Xixón.

9th STOP Mina de La Camocha

Our last visit brings us to the La Camocha coal mine, situated between the parishes of Vega and Samartín de Güercas, 6 km from the town centre.

On the way, together with traditional farmhouses, we find *llagares*, Asturian cider bars that showcase the industry of transformation of the apple. Once in Vega, we continue to the right along Calle de Ernesto Winter until the shaft of the La Camocha mine - which was active until the end of 2007 - comes into view.

Coal mining was considered a highly desirable enterprise from 1900 onwards, but it is only from 1930 that we can speak of the La Camocha mine as a going concern. For Gijón/ Xixón, the Camocha shaft represented a boost to its economic, and even demographic, development, and attracted hundreds of people to work in the mine.

A greenway, which follows the route of the old mining railway that once transported the ore to the port, linked the La Camocha mine with the Poblado de Santa Bárbara/El Poblao de Santa Bárbara and El Musel.

This brings us to the end of a tour that recreates that industrial Gijón/ Xixón where coal, iron and steel, ships and fishing, countryside and sea, industry and landscape combine to create an industrial, cultural, and natural heritage.

Port of El Musel. ▼



GIJÓN / XIXÓN HISTORICAL MEMORY



ROUTE

- El Musel Tunnel
- Cerro de Santa Catalina
- Las Milicias and El Cuartel (Casa Paquet and Palacio Revillagigedo)
- Cimavilla Tunnel
- Ayuntamiento (Town Hall)
- Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo
- Civil Defence Committee
- Parque de Artillería
- Iglesia de San José prison
- War or Defence Committee
- Health services
- Mobilisation Delegation
- Research and Surveillance
- La Igliesiona prison
- Cuartel de la Guardia de Asalto
- Junta de Defensa Pasiva
- Consejo de Asturias y León
- Begoña Tunnel
- Gijón/ Xixón Orphanages
- The role of the Guardia Civil
- Cuartel de Simancas
- Cuartel de Zapadores de El Coto
- Wartime prisons

This urban tour is based on Gijón/ Xixón in 1936-37 during the Spanish Civil War, from the military coup to the capture of the city by Franco's troops, which meant the definitive fall of the Northern Republican Front.

These historical events began on 22 July 1936 and ended on 20 October 1937. The Condor Legion of the German air force took part in them. Franco allowed them to use Gijón/ Xixón for a rehearsal for the Second World War, which was already brewing. This consisted of 15 months of indiscriminate bombing, not on a daily basis but nonetheless all too frequent, which brought terror to a defenceless civilian population and resulted in high numbers of dead and injured.

THE GIJÓN/ XIXÓN OF THE TIME

There were many factors that made the city a target during the Civil War: it was the political and administrative capital of Republican Asturias, it had important industrial resources and, above all it had El Musel, a major target because it was a major point for the entry and exit of goods.

In 1936, the municipality had a population of 85,000 inhabitants - mostly working class - of which some 60,000 lived in the capital, a city with a marked industrial character.

The end of July 1936 saw the first attempt to take Gijón/ Xixón by land, sea, and air, and a state of war was declared. Over the next 15 months, daily life became dominated by the sound of sirens, escaping to the air raid shelters, waiting for the danger to end, and then starting all over again. The result of this strategy was evident in the appearance of the city on 21 October 1937: a scene of desolation, this was a city that had already been abandoned by the civil and military authorities, and the balconies, façades and windows were draped with white cloth as a symbol of surrender.

◀ (Detail)

Aiding the wounded after a bombing. 1937, C. Suárez*

Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, La Igliesiona. ▶

Dated c. 1935, Anonymous*



PREVENTIVE MEASURES IN THE SHELTERS

At the beginning of the bombing, the council embarked on the task of preparing suitable spaces to serve as shelters, an operation that began with the inspection of the cellars in the town centre. At the same time, it was necessary to instruct the population on preventive measures to be taken, and to strengthen the auxiliary services responsible for alleviating the effects of the bombings.

Effective information was provided with regard to these preventive measures, primarily via the press. Newspapers gave instructions on what to do when planes were spotted, and reported on the location of shelters, as well as how the code of acoustic signals warning of air raids would work. This was done by taking advantage of the sirens in the factories that marked the beginning and end of shifts. Additionally, at least two others were installed: one in the headquarters of the Junta de Obras del Puerto, at the local docks, and another in the bell tower of the Basílica del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, known locally as *La Iglesia*.

SHELTERS

Shelters, the only guarantee of at least a measure of physical protection against the raids, had to be located underground to minimise the impact of the bombs. Here the basements of the buildings were of fundamental importance, although in the case of Gijón/Xixón there were few buildings that had them. To this was added a lack of infrastructure in terms of underground and railway tunnels. For this reason, the narrow central streets of Del Horno and Del Agua were covered using sacks of earth, and it was essential for the gates to be open day and night to provide shelter for passers-by.

After an initial selection of 67 basements, the Mayor's Office called for these buildings to be evacuated and made available to the public, and also constructed other shelters at street level - in the end close on 200 were built. To these official shelters, others that were solely for the use of particular groups were added.

Furthermore, miners were hired to construct 33 larger shelters, although only four were to be completed. After the occupation of Gijón/Xixón in October 1937, all these places were closed up to avoid them being used as hiding places.





▲ Cerro de Santa Catalina

There are works such as 'The Refuge', by the painter Nicanor Piñole, which represent the period very clearly. It portrays children, women and old people in a precarious shelter in Gijón, looking up at the sky in horror, a scene of passive resistance to the bombing. Death is close by. The great contribution of photographer Constantino Suárez also stands out, as he left a powerful testimony of the bombings, the suffering of the civilian population, the months of vigilance and terror, the traces of the conflict in ruined buildings devastated by fire or shrapnel.

1st STOP

El Musel Tunnel

Advantage was taken of the existing Lieres railway tunnel, which could provide shelter for 5,400 people. The only work that seems to have been carried out during the conflict was the opening up of a side entrance to facilitate access to a central area.

2nd STOP

Cerro de Santa Catalina

This was one of the three coastal defences, together with La Campa Torres and La Providencia. At the beginning of the Civil War, there was a detachment of the Simancas Regiment at the top of the hill, which surrendered to the militia on the first day of the conflict. On 24 July, a Schneider and a Krupp cannon from the Trubia Arms Factory were stationed on the southern slope.

3rd STOP

Las Milicias and El Cuartel (Casa Paquet and Palacio Revillagigedo)

The self-defence militias were set up by the left-wing parties and trade unions under the aegis of the Communist Party, whose headquarters were located on the upper floors of the Casa Paquet building, opposite the quay.

The Revillagigedo Palace, used as a militia barracks, was partially destroyed during a bombardment in the first days of September 1937.

The first bombs fell on Gijón/ Xixón on 22 July 1936. The first major air raid took place on 14 August of the same year, causing more than a hundred casualties on that day alone.

From the summer of 1937, with the arrival of the Condor Legion on the Northern Front, attacks began to take place almost daily.

4th STOP

Cimavilla Tunnel

This gallery, covering a space of 300 m² in the shape of an inverted 'Y', could hold 1,200 people.

Eleven miners, a foreman, a stonemason, a blacksmith, and large numbers of labourers worked on its construction.

The upper section is located in Plaza Arturo Arias, with the lower ones in Claudio Alvargonzález and Recoletas streets. It has four entrances: a flight of steps (probably the one located next to the Collegiate Church) and three ramps. The only entrance that is still open today is the one on Calle Claudio Alvargonzález, near Casa Paquet.

5th STOP

Ayuntamiento (Town Hall)

After the military uprising, the city of Gijón/ Xixón remained loyal to the Republic. In the early days, a War Committee was set up, which organised the control of the city.

The Town Hall would continue to function, with Jaime Valdés, of Izquierda Republicana, a left-wing party, as leader of the council. But on 15 October 1936, the Municipal Management Committee was set up, and anarchist Avelino González Mallada was chosen as mayor.

The Gestora Municipal de Xixón promoted revolutionary urban planning via the Plan for Urban Reform, demolishing several buildings as an essential part of bringing about these improvements.

The parish churches of San Pedro, San Lorenzo and San José were also demolished, but not as part of the plans for urban reform.

6th STOP

Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo

The situation in the city changed with the arrival of the cruiser Almirante Cervera, with the militia also facing attack from the sea. For this reason, the order was given for the artillery on Santa Catalina Hill to be aimed towards the sea, and on the Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo, machine guns and mortars were placed to defend the city from a possible landing.

7th STOP

Civil Defence Committee

At numbers 41 and 43 of the street that used to be called Blasco Ibáñez (now Calle San Bernardo) were located the offices of the Civil Defence Committee, which was the body responsible for the defence of the population by establishing an initial network of shelters in an organised manner.

8th STOP

Parque de Artillería

Located in Calle Marqués de San Esteban, the artillery park operated as such from 1928 to 1944. There were various military establishments in the city, such as the El Coto barracks or the Trefilería de Tremañes camp.

9th STOP

Iglesia de San José prison

In the first weeks of the war, the church was used as a temporary prison, until it was destroyed by bombing on 14 August 1936 in one of the bloodiest episodes of the war. The first bombings by Franco's forces, which targeted the civilian population, resulted in 54 dead and 78 injured. The population reacted by storming the church of San José, to where the Francoist prisoners had been transferred from *La Iglejona*. After this incident, 63 people were captured and taken to the cemetery of Jove/ Xove where they were shot. As a result of these events, the Tribunales Populares (People's Courts) were established, with the aim of putting an end to these uncontrolled actions.

Other detention centres included the prison of El Coto, and a cargo ship in the port of El Musel that held 500 prisoners.

10th STOP

War or Defence Committee

Formed by the political and trade union organisations, this committee was set up on the night of 17-18 July 1936 at the Casa del Pueblo in Calle Sanz Crespo. Its first premises were in the Llano de Arriba school, but later it moved to the former Banco de Xixón building in Calle Begoña.



Cimavilla ▲

11th STOP

Health services

The health services were installed at the Childcare Institute, better known as La Gota Leche. Part of it was converted into a field hospital. Additionally, Gijón/ Xixón also had the Patronato San José (on Avenida Hermanos Felgueroso, near the Simancas Barracks) and the Hospital de Caridad (on Calle Cabrales).

12th STOP

Mobilisation Delegation

These committees, which had their headquarters in the old Malet Hotel on the corner of Corrida and Munuza streets, were formed by workers' parties and trade unions. They were born out of the need for defence against the military uprising. Their mission was to organise the defence of Gijón/ Xixón, establish contact with the leaders of armed groups, and coordinate the attacks on the barracks in the hands of the military.

13th STOP

Research and Surveillance

The Provincial Committee of the Popular Front was created to unify the different committees and organisations in Asturias. Its first headquarters were in Sama (Langreo/ Llangréu) and it moved to Gijón/ Xixón on 6 September 1936.

Parallel to this, the Research and Surveillance Committee, also known as the Public Health Committee, was set up, which was a form of rearguard repression. Its headquarters were located on the upper floors of the Banco Español de Crédito on Calle Corrida, better known as the Casa de los Figaredo.

14th STOP

La Iglesiona Prison

La Basílica del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, known locally as *La Iglesiona*, functioned as a prison during the October Revolution of 1934, and later during the Civil War as well. Hundreds of prisoners faithful to the Republic passed through it, 341 of whom were executed. In addition to the unbearable conditions in which the prisoners were held, they also had to face summary trials - lacking any guarantee of due process - and so-called 'paseos' (literally 'walks'), when many of them were shot.

15th STOP

Cuartel de la Guardia de Asalto

The Old Jovellanos Institute was the headquarters of the Assault Guard, which had a detachment of 140 men at the beginning of the war. Gijón/ Xixón, took the side of the Republic, as did most cities. Most of the victims of the terrible bombing on 14 August, were in the vicinity of these barracks and at the Langreo railway station.

16th STOP

Junta de Defensa Pasiva

In 1942, the Passive Defence Board carried out a study within the city to establish the most suitable shelters in the event of an attack, and selected the tunnels of Cimavilla, the Cuesta de Begoña, the Bank of Spain and El Musel.

One year later, a Francoist Royal Decree made it obligatory to build shelters in towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants, and one of these was the one in the basement of the current Jovellanos Library, formerly the Bank of Spain.

17th STOP

Consejo de Asturias y León

This was constituted on 25 December 1936, with Belardino Tomás as president. The so-called 'White House', located in El Parchís, was the seat of the Repárnment.

On 24 August 1937, after the fall of Santander, Asturias was isolated and the Concejo declared itself a sovereign power, assuming all political and military authority until the definitive fall of the Northern Front on 21 October 1937.

18th STOP

Begoña Tunnel

Built in the summer of 1937, this was the second most important shelter in the city, after Cimavilla. It occupied the Cuesta de Begoña, and the main section had two entrances: a ramp on Calle Fernández Vallín and a flight of steps on Calle de Menén Pérez. Access to the other section is located in the Paseo de Begoña.



Gota de Leche ▲

Cuartel de Zapadores de El Coto ►



▲ Nicanor Piñole. *El refugio* (1937). Museum of Fine Arts of Asturias

19th STOP

Gijón/ Xixón Orphanages

With the number of orphans and refugees increasing, orphanages appeared in the city which functioned like boarding schools. In October 1936, the first orphanage was opened in the old San Vicente de Paúl School, at the junction of Caridad and Ezcurdia streets.

20th STOP

The role of the Guardia Civil

When the military uprising took place, the Civil Guard in Gijón/ Xixón took the side of the rebels. 123 men left their former barracks at the Campos Elíseos, located at the intersection of the Avenida de la Costa and Calle Ramón y Cajal, and took refuge in the church of San Lorenzo, in Calle Begoña, in the face of resistance from the militia. On the night of 20 July 1936, they handed over their headquarters to the civil authorities.

21st STOP

Cuartel de Simancas

Under the command of Colonel Pinilla, the Simancas Barracks consisted of 550 men. At first, his troops did not manage to make the uprising a success in Gijón/ Xixón.

After seeing action in various different places, the troops retreated to their barracks. This was the beginning of a tough siege, with continuous attacks by the militia. On 21 August, the barracks were taken over by militias loyal to the Republic.

22nd STOP

Cuartel de Zapadores de El Coto

Located close to Simancas, this barracks was manned by 180 men. The two barracks, both on the Francoist side, came under heavy siege until their situation was alleviated to some degree by the arrival of the rebel cruiser Almirante Cervera. When it left, the attacks intensified. The besieged, aware that it was not possible to resist for any longer, fled to the nearby Simancas barracks, not without first disabling as many of the weapons they had to leave behind them as they could. Thus, on 16 August 1936, the Cuartel de Zapadores de El Coto fell.

23rd STOP

Wartime prisons

In the early days of the struggle, the El Bibio bullring was the place where the militia troops gathered in order to lay siege to the rebel barracks. Once the war was over, and in the weeks following the occupation, it became a temporary concentration camp, where several thousand prisoners were held.

It was not the only one. The prisons of La Calzada, La Harinera, La Algodonera or El Cerillero also became concentration camps. Although there are no exact figures, it is estimated that between November 1937 and January 1951, more than 1,934 people were shot in Gijón/ Xixón.

Source (Only in Spanish):





GIJÓN / XIXÓN MORE THAN JUST A CITY



ROUTE

- Barrio Zarracina
- Monteana/ Montiana Village
- Cenero/L' Abadía de Cenero
- Roman Villa of Veranes
- Carbayera de Grandá

Gijón/ Xixón is not just an urban centre, the rural surroundings also have much to offer the visitor. On this tour we would like to take you to some of the parts of Gijón/ Xixón that are most worthy of note terms of economic and historical development, as well as to the numerous green areas nearby.

1st STOP

Barrio Zarracina

We start out on the A-8, taking the Tremañes exit to the AS-19. After passing the Veriña petrol station and roundabout, we turn left towards Poago/ Puaio-Monteana/ Montiana.

From this high area, you can see the ArcelorMittal factory, which produces steel from iron and coal. On the far left, you can see the deposits and the dark buildings that house the sintering plant. Behind them, the two blast furnaces - the last still in operation in Spain - can also be seen, together with the steelworks, and on the right, the rolling mills and warehouses located in buildings lower down.

The steel industry in Asturias was first established in 1961 with the creation of the Unión Siderúrgica Asturiana (Uninsa), formed by the association of the Fábrica de Mieres, Duro Felguera and the Sociedad Industrial de Moreda y Gijón/ Xixón for the construction of a rolling mill.

2nd STOP

Monteana/ Montiana Village

Uninsa - which later became a part of Ensidesa, then Aceralia, and now ArcelorMittal - built these housing blocks. The village has a church, a school, a community centre, a train station, a library, and other services that have gradually turned it into a small town.

We continue on towards Serín on the AS-326, and from there head towards San Andrés de los Tacones. We will pass under the A-8, which links Gijón/ Xixón with Oviedo/ Uviéu and Avilés. Right at this point there is a fork in the road that gives it the shape of a 'Y'.

We then skirt the San Andrés reservoir, which covers some 60 hectares, has a capacity of 4 cubic hectometres, and a dam height of 22 metres. It was built in 1964 to supply water to the Aceralia factory, which was formerly known as Ensidesa.

Next we go up to the Trubia neighbourhood, in the parish of Cenero/ L'Abadía Cenero.

▲ Peasants building a wall.. 1918, *Modesto Montoto**

◀ Torre de los Valdés in Cenero/L' Abadía Cenero



3rd STOP

Cenero/ L'Abadía Cenero

Here we find the Torreón de los Álvarez de las Asturias and the chapel of the Virgen de la O. The tower was built in the 13th century by Rodrigo Álvarez de las Asturias, Count of Noreña, and is still inhabited today.

Legend has it that a lady was banished to the tower: she fell into disgrace, thus destroying the family's honour. A chapel was built just in front of the tower, that of the Virgen de la O. It is said that mass was held with the doors open so that the young lady could hear it. The chapel originally housed a Romanesque image of the Virgin Mary, who was represented seated and with child. The image and the chapel were destroyed during the Civil War, and both were subsequently rebuilt.

Later, we will come to another tower that probably dates back to the 14th century: the Torre de los Valdés (*Turruxón de Cenero*). Asturias was not a land of great fortifications in the late Middle Ages. The splendid buildings that were emerging in southern areas were not within the reach of most of the local nobles, who were richer in pretensions than they were in resources, and who were often supported by the church. This tower could be called a 'fortress house', because it is an example of a building that is clearly habitable but at the same time extremely robust, somewhere between a military building and a residential palace.

We continue by car through the parish of Cenero/ L'Abadía Cenero towards the Roman Villa of Veranes.

4th STOP

Roman Villa of Veranes

This museum, which opened to the public in March 2007, is one of the group of Archaeological Museums of Gijón/ Xixón, together with the Campo Valdés Roman Baths and the Campa Torres Natural Archaeological Park.

The archaeological remains that can currently be visited in Veranes belong to the *pars urbana* (residential area) of a large estate. This was built in the Late Roman Empire (4th century A.D.) on the primitive ruins of an important Early Empire rural settlement. This large manor house has undergone three

phases of architectural renovation and extension, which took place over the course of the 4th century AD. The mansion was in use until the 5th century AD.

The visit to the museum includes a tour of the reception building and of the site, taking in different observation points from which to contemplate the archaeological remains that have been preserved. Of these, the polychrome mosaic in the principal hall (*oecus*) stands out. It is protected by a cover that is a reminder of how large this room was originally.

The tour includes a video guide for individual use, available at reception.

On leaving the Roman villa, we take the AS-226 to the Peñaferuz turnoff. We then continue towards La Pedrera, and join the AS-246. From there, we head towards Gijón/ Xixón until reaching the Mareo petrol station. We continue along the main Carbonera road, built in the first half of the 19th century to facilitate the transport of minerals from Langreo/ Llangréu, in the mining area in the Nalón River basin, to the port of El Musel in Gijón/ Xixón.

We will pass in front of the Real Sporting de Gijón Football School, from which some of the leading figures in the sport have emerged on a national level. If there are no Sporting matches or rallies access to the pitch area is usually allowed.

Following the road, we arrive at Granda.

5th STOP

Carbayera de Granda

This is the last remnant of an old oak forest in Asturias, called *carbayos*.

Next to the *carbayera*, stands the church of Santo Tomás de Granda and, on the other side of the AS-248, you will see the Palacio de los García-Sol. This Italian style building welcomed Alfonso XIII as a guest, and the place was famous in the area for the festivals that were held there. On the other side of the *carbayera* lies the cemetery, protected by a stone wall.

There is also a small rest area. Nearby there are bars, restaurants, and the typical picnic areas, where you can stop to eat or have a *botellina* of cider.



ROUTE on wheels
Distance 25,00 km



GIJÓN / XIXÓN SCULPTURES AND URBAN ART



ROUTE

Western Area
Central Area
Marina
Cimavilla

- Niños de la guerra
- Mural del Colegio Público Santa Olaya
- Torre de la Memoria
- Las letronas (Jardines de la Reina)
- Árbol de la sidra (marina)
- Monument to Don Pelayo (Plaza del Marqués)
- 'Stairway to Heaven' (Claudio Alvargonzález and Oscar Olavarría streets)
- 'Nordeste' (Tránsito de las Ballenas)
- 'Elogio del Horizonte' (Cerro de Santa Catalina)
- Escaleras del Cerro (Access to the Cerro de Santa Catalina Auditorium)

Like other cities, towns and villages in Asturias, many streets, squares, and promenades have been renovated in recent decades, developing spaces for the benefit of the public.

The Paseo del Muro y Playa de San Lorenzo, and its continuation, the Senda de Cervigón, which runs as far as Cabo de San Lorenzo, in La Providencia, is a good example of this transformation of the urban landscape.

In the city of Gijón/ Xixón, the sculptures are in themselves a kind of open-air museum. Some are so significant that they have become a symbol of the city's identity. 'Praise of the Horizon' is perhaps the city's greatest sculpture, one of those that have the power to transform space. When it was first erected, there was a certain amount of controversy, but today it is a part of the collective imagination.

WESTERN AREA CENTRAL AREA MARINA CIMAVILLA

1st STOP

'Niños de la guerra'

This bronze and stone sculpture by Vicente Moreira, located on L'Arbeyal beach, was erected in memory of the 1,100 children (the 'niños de la guerra' or 'war children') who were evacuated to the USSR via the port of El Musel during the Civil War, on 23 September 1937. The city of Gijón/ Xixón seeks to preserve their memory and ensure that one of the great tragedies of recent Spanish history, that of exile, is not forgotten.

2nd STOP

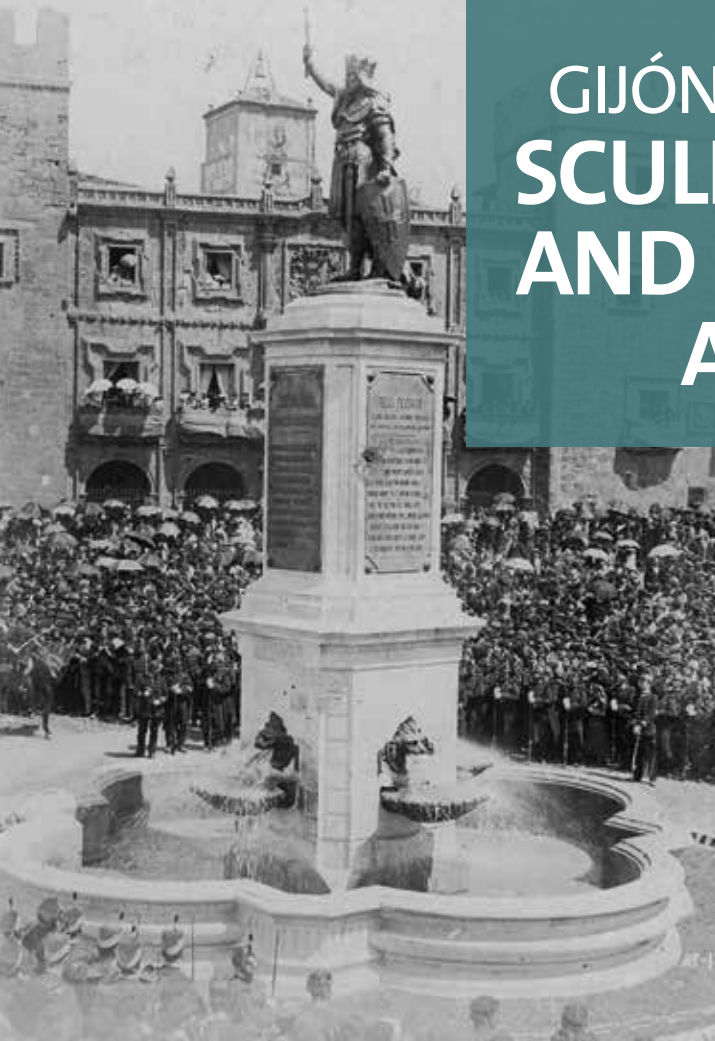
Mural del Colegio Público Santa Olaya

When walking along Avenida de Galicia, by the Santa Olaya State School, you cannot fail to notice the graffiti that decorates its wall and that represents the class struggle of the shipyard workers.

3rd STOP

'Torre de la Memoria'

This great 'Tower of Memory' is a symbol of the industrialisation of Gijón/ Xixón and a reminder of the old



▲ Unveiling of the Don Pelayo Monument, plaza del Marqués. 1891, A. Truan Vaamonde*

Plaza del Marqués ▼





factory that was for so long located on the site where it now stands: Moreda Park. The work of Francisco Fresno, it was erected in the year 2000, is 16 metres high and casts an elongated shadow, which is an integral part of the work. The relief on its surface unintentionally forms signs and faces, maps of unexplored worlds, messages that the gods of memory try to prevent us from forgetting.

4th STOP

Las letronas (Jardines de la Reina)

The sculpture consists of the name 'Gijón' in solid steel, in the city's characteristic red colour. It is the reproduction, on a grand scale, of the tourist board logo introduced in 2009. The idea was to place it in a central location or somewhere locals and visitors like to take walks, and the site itself was chosen by public consultation. The sculpture measures between 3 and 3.5 metres, and each of the four modules framing the letters weighs two tonnes.

5th STOP

Árbol de la sidra (Marina)

This 'Cider Tree', formed by 3,200 empty cider bottles (the equivalent of the annual glass consumption of 100 families) has a twofold function, as it is both aesthetically pleasing and

▼ *Las letronas (Jardines de la Reina)*



at the same time helps to raise awareness of the importance of recycling. The work, which weighs almost eight tons, is lit up at night. The positioning of each bottle corresponds to the characteristic position when pouring cider in the traditional way. It was designed by the Pidmunt group of companies and Labaula Architects, and was erected in 2013 on the occasion of the popular Cider Festival, the Fiesta de la Sidra Natural.

6th STOP

Monument to Don Pelayo (Plaza del Marqués)

Erected on 5 August 1891, it is a tribute to the first King of Asturias and the central figure on the coat of arms of Gijón/ Xixón. The sculpture shows the Cross of Victory, the symbol of Asturias, and a drawn sword. It was designed by José María López.

▼ *Árbol de la sidra*





“Stairway to Heaven” ▲

7th STOP

‘Stairway to Heaven’

(Claudio Alvargonzález and Oscar Olavarría streets)

The stone steps of Gijón/ Xixón are one of those unusual spots that are sometimes to be found in cities. Street artist Mossel painted the titles of Rolling Stone magazine’s 50 best albums in the history of rock on the 41 steps on the Noche Blanca in 2012.

8th STOP

‘Nordeste’

(Tránsito de las Ballenas)

The sculpture ‘Nordeste’ (1994), created by Joaquín Vaquero Turcios, represents the link between Gijón/ Xixón and industry. The work is made of corten steel, a material that turns a beautiful reddish colour with the passage of time.

The Nordés is a cold, dry, wind that when blowing hard sweeps the sky clean of clouds, leaving spectacular shapes behind. The work stands in a location that is whipped by this very wind, and links the fishermen, the neighbourhood, and the sculpture itself.

“Nordeste” ▼



9th STOP

Elogio del Horizonte

(Cerro de Santa Catalina)

The characteristic semi-circle represents the unfinished, and in 1990 Eduardo Chillida’s idea was to unite the horizon, the cosmos, and human beings, in such a way that we could step into it and feel its embrace. This 10-metre-high sculpture stands in front of a former military bunker, creating a resonance chamber with a shell-like effect.

10th STOP

Escaleras del Cerro

(Access to the Cerro de Santa Catalina Auditorium)

“Neither blows that hurt, nor words that wound”, “His love does not hurt, but your hatred does” and “Moedá ensin violencia” (youth without violence) are some of the phrases that decorate the steps leading to the Cerro de Santa Catalina Auditorium. These 30 steps, painted in 2017 by graffiti artist El Niño, form the colours of the rainbow and on them you can read messages aimed at raising awareness and putting an end to gender-based violence. violencia de género.

“Elogio del horizonte” ▼





“Sombras de luz” ▶

ROUTE

El Rinconín area

Cervigón

Parque del Cabo San Lorenzo

- ‘Sombras de luz’ (Mayán de Tierra)
- ‘La madre del emigrante’ (Paseo del Cervigón and Parque de El Rinconín)
- ‘Sin título’ (Parque de El Rinconín)
- ‘Solidaridad’ (Parque de El Rinconín)
- ‘Cantu los días fuxíos’ (Paseo de El Cervigón)
- ‘Nunca más’ [‘Never again’] (Senda de El Cervigón)
- ‘Castillo de Salas’ (Parque Joaquín Rubio Camín, Senda de El Cervigón)
- ‘Homage to Álvarez Margaride’ (Parque del Cabo San Lorenzo)
- ‘Homenaje a Galileo Galilei XV’ (Parque del Cabo San Lorenzo)
- ‘Paisaje germinador’ (Parque del Cabo San Lorenzo)



EL RINCONÍN AREA

CERVIGÓN

PARQUE DEL CABO SAN LORENZO

11th STOP

‘Sombras de luz’ (Mayán de Tierra)

This work by Fernando Alba (1998), consists of four monumental rectangular metal plates perforated with circles of different sizes through which light penetrates, creating a play of shadows. When the sun sinks into the Cantabrian Sea, the light projected through the holes is clear and sharp.

12th STOP

‘La madre del emigrante’

(Paseo del Cervigón and Parque de El Rinconín)

This was the first modern sculpture to be erected in a public space in the city (1970). The people of Gijón/ Xixón affectionately call it *La Lloca'l Rinconín*. The sculptor, Ramón

Muriedas, captured in bronze the feeling of sadness of those women who, in the first decades of the 20th century, saw their children leave El Musel in search of a better future.

13th STOP

‘Sin título’

(Parque de El Rinconín)

Through this large geometrical work erected in 2001, sculptor Herminio Álvarez, expresses his concern for the weightless balance that appears to be impossible.

14th STOP

‘Solidaridad’

(Parque de El Rinconín)

Four interlocking cylindrical shapes form this sculpture by Pepe Noja (1999). A chain that represents union, and also freedom, because the links are open: they do not lose their independence, their formal autonomy.



El Rinconín Area

El Cervigón

Parque del Cabo San Lorenzo

Walking tour

Distance 3,50 km





◀ “La madre del emigrante”

15th STOP

‘Cantu los días fuxíos’
(Paseo de El Cervigón)

The title of the work, by Adolfo Manzano (2001), refers to the geographical location, and is more powerful thanks to the use of the Asturian language. *Días fuxíos* are days of flight, and the reference is to the appearance of instability, those traces that remain in our memory, without us being able to do anything about it.

16th STOP

‘Nunca más’ [‘Never again’]
(Senda de El Cervigón)

This is a tribute to the Asturians interned in the Nazi concentration camps. It was inaugurated in the year 2000, as a symbol freedom and humanity, open to the sky.

17th STOP

‘Castillo de Salas’
(Parque Joaquín Rubio Camín, Senda de El Cervigón)

This sculpture by Joaquín Rubio Camín commemorates the shipwreck of the Castillo de Salas, which sank off the Bay of San Lorenzo in 1986 with a large cargo of coal. The ship remained in the sea for 17 years, until in 2003 part of the wreck was removed, and eleven of the fragments were used to create this work in that same year.

18th STOP

‘Homage to Álvarez Margaride’
(Parque del Cabo San Lorenzo)

In 2011, a year after the death of businessman José Luis Álvarez Margaride, President of the Thyssen Group in Spain, this monument was erected in his honour, designed by his daughter Xana Kahle.



“Nunca más” ▲

19th STOP

‘Homenaje a Galileo Galilei XV’
(Parque del Cabo San Lorenzo)

The sculpture is made up of two semi-circular geometric structures, placed at an oblique angle. Each one of them is composed of plates that curve, arch and draw concentric paths on this map that represents a thousand planets in the cosmos of dreams. Amadeo Gabino is the author of this ‘Homage to Galileo Galilei XV’, erected in 1997.

20th STOP

‘Paisaje germinador’
(Parque del Cabo San Lorenzo)

At close range, the landscape reveals unexpected details, and the arms give it the appearance of a weather vane and compass. This work of art by Miguel Ángel Lombardía (1997), almost three metres high, is open to any interpretation: a being of magma, a space satellite about to lift off, a wounded dinosaur, a Cyclops looking at the sea through its one eye.



“Paisaje germinador” ▲



“Homage to Álvarez Margaride” ▲



GIJÓN / XIXÓN WITH THE FAMILY



ROUTE

- Aquarium
- Cimavilla
- The beaches
- Parque Isabel la Católica
- Municipal Football Stadium
- El Molinón-Enrique Castro Quini
- Jardín Botánico Atlántico
- Laboral Ciudad de la Cultura

Gijón/ Xixón has its own 7 wonders, and you can visit and enjoy all of them with the family.

1st STOP

Aquarium

In the Gijón/ Xixón Aquarium you will find 60 fresh and salt water tanks. You can wonder at life in rivers, on the Cantabrian coast, in the Caribbean Sea, in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, in the Red Sea, in the South Atlantic and the Subtropical Atlantic Ocean. In total, the Aquarium brings together 12 different ecosystems under one roof and 4,000 creatures of 400 different species, such as salmon, eels, sturgeon, moray eels, manta rays, bull sharks, and loggerhead turtles.

2nd STOP

Cimavilla

This is the old fishing quarter. Here you will find references to numerous historical events that occurred in the city. This area can be covered on foot. Don't miss the Cerro de Santa Catalina, the Campo Valdés Roman Baths, and especially the *skatepark*, which has a *bowl* with several heights and a *street plaza* area with several levels. The popular Cerro de Santa Catalina has a large green area and, in the upper section, stands the emblematic sculpture 'Praise of the Horizon', by Eduardo Chillida. From here you have unbeatable views of the bay and of the Cantabrian Sea.

3rd STOP

The beaches

Gijón/ Xixón has seven beaches: four on the east coast plus three urban beaches.

L Arbeyal, which stretches for about three hundred metres, is the most westerly and is located between the neighbourhoods of La Calzada and Natahoyo.

These sands are sometimes the scene for certain sports tournaments.

The Poniente beach is 500 metres long, and is located in the western part of Gijón/ Xixón, between the Marina and the Natahoyo neighbourhood.

Finally, the largest and most emblematic of all is the beach of San Lorenzo, which has sands that stretch for over a mile, and

◀ (Detail)

Boys and girls playing on the beach. 1926, C. Suárez*



From STOP 1 to STOP 5
Walking tour
Distance 5,5 km



From STOP 5 to STOP 7
Tour on wheels
Distance 3,5 km

is backed by the seafront promenade known as El Muro. San Lorenzo beach is the ideal place for an introduction to the world of surfing. Here the waves usually reach heights of more than a metre, but are never massive. Surfers usually place themselves between steps 8 and 10. When the waves get higher, more experienced surfers also come to Los Mayanes beach.

4th STOP

Parque Isabel la Católica

This is the largest park in Gijón/ Xixón, and is home to a great variety of species of trees and animals, such as peacocks, swans, and ducks. It also has a large children's play area. Just a few minutes away, on Paseo Dr. Fleming, stands the Museo del Pueblu d'Asturies, an essential visit in Gijón/ Xixón. It was created in 1968 with the aim of preserving, studying, and disseminating the memory of the Asturian people.

5th STOP

Municipal Football Stadium El Molinón-Enrique Castro Quini

This is the oldest football stadium in Spain. Although it is not clear exactly when it was built, a first reference is to be found in the press from 20 May 1908. It is the home ground of the

Real Sporting de Gijón, and can hold 30,000 people. The name of the stadium in part comes from a great hydraulic mill that once stood on the site, and is at the same time a tribute to the best player in Sporting's history, Enrique Castro Quini. The stadium also offers guided tours of the facilities.

6th STOP

Jardín Botánico Atlántico

In these Botanical Gardens, that cover approximately 25 hectares and are more than 150 years old, besides enjoying the more than 2,500 plant species and exploring the maze, you can participate in a variety of activities, workshops and celebrations marking the changes of season during the year. The Jardín Botánico Atlántico also has a slide area located in what is known as the Bosque de los Niños (Children's Forest), and there is a cafeteria. Its collections are organised into four different thematic areas, with the Atlantic Ocean providing the common thread: the Cantabrian environment, the plant nursery, the La Isla gardens and the Atlantic route.

7th STOP

Laboral Ciudad de la Cultura

Covering 270,000 square metres, this is the largest civil building in Spain, and its square has the same dimensions as the Piazza San Marco in Venice. Its tower, 130 metres high, is the highest in Asturias. The Laboral Ciudad de la Cultura is the result of a project undertaken to bring new life to the old Universidad Laboral de Gijón/Xixón building, which was constructed between 1946 and 1956. This place welcomes school groups from different educational centres, and the theatre offers an extensive annual programme that includes all kinds of shows and leisure activities.

◀ Jardín Botánico Atlántico



WOMEN IN GIJÓN / XIXÓN



ROUTE

- Campo Valdés
- Plaza Jovellanos
- The Birthplace of Jovellanos (Museum)
- Calle Les Maestrines
- Campu Les Monxes
- Capilla de Nuestra Señora de la Soledad
- Cuesta'l Cholo
- Antigua Rula (Old Auction House)
- Plaza del Marqués
- Antigua Pescadería Municipal (Old Municipal Fishmarket)

Women have played a fundamental role in the transformation of the city. The weight of women and what they represent has been gaining strength over the years, and this is something that will be very much to the fore throughout this tour.

1st STOP

Campo Valdés

Campo Valdés, next to the statue of Octavio Augusto. To understand something of Roman Gijón/ Xixon and the role of women in the society of the time, we will visit the Roman Baths Museum. The use of thermal baths was a daily activity that completed the morning toilette. In the Roman world, women could access and enjoy public thermal complexes, although in the great baths of Rome itself, such as those of Caracalla, there were spaces differentiated by sex. However, we can assume that, in the small town of Gijón/ Xixon, allowing access at different times would have been the way of keeping the sexes apart, but these measures might not always have been effective. Women, having more free time, would have gone to the baths earlier in the day. The Roman matron's toilette consisted of tidying her hair with the help of the *ornatrices*, who were also responsible for her depilation and make-up.

2nd STOP

Plaza Jovellanos

Xosefa Xovellanos, the younger sister of the illustrious Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, was the first female writer in the Asturian language, and she was born in Gijón/ Xixon on 4 June 1745. After marrying Domingo González de Argandona, attorney general at the court of the Principality of Asturias, she moved to Madrid, where she often visited other Enlightenment figures such as Campomanes. Xosefa Xovellanos had three children: two (Vicenta and Isabel) died when they were small, and a boy who was born and died just a few days after his father's death, when she was only twenty-eight years old. These misfortunes distanced her from social life, and gave her a vision of the world where neither pomp nor courtly splendour had any place. Thus, she returned to Gijón/ Xixon to look after the family properties. She later moved to the house of her sister, the Countess of Peñalba, in Oviedo/ Uviéu. There, she led a pious life, dedicating herself to teaching the disadvantaged and carrying out charitable works. With her own money she founded an educational foundation for orphans, which was

◀ Woman on a vespa, San Lorenzo beach. 1957, C. Suárez*

century, cigarette companies sought to give preference to their daughters or nieces when recruiting new employees. The pride of the guild grew along with the wages, which were higher than those of other workers at the beginning of the century.

Fiesta de Comadres

The origin of the annual banquet with which the tobacco companies celebrated the Fiesta de Comadres is unclear. The aim seems to have been to strengthen female bonds beyond those between blood relations. Until the mid-twenties, 'Comadres Thursday' continued to be a holiday in the factory, where they ate, drank, and performed plays, preventing any work from being done. This celebration was an institutional representation of the collective identity of les *cigarres* (the [female] cigar makers). From 1929 onwards, the fiesta was no longer held inside the factory, and lost importance in favour of other trade union activities, and it became known as the 'Festejo de La Constancia'. By the end of the 19th century, the tradition had almost disappeared and, apart from the cigar factories, only a few textile workers carried the Fiesta de Comadres into the 20th century. However, the celebration has survived the passage of time, and it continues to bring women together on the Thursday before *Antroxu* (as carnival is known in Asturias).

Fishermen's houses

In *Campu les Monxes* you can soak up the atmosphere of old seafaring Gijón/ Xixón thanks to the two typical fishermen's houses that remain. Women played a fundamental role in the city's households, although they occupied a social space that was limited to the sphere of the home, and were dependent - even if they had a job - on 'the man of the family', whether he was the husband, father, or brother.

Cimavilla Laundry Tradition

Mondays were days of revelry at the *Campu les Monxes* laundry area, as the sinks were clean and the water flowed freely. The laundry area, popularly known as the *criticaderu* of Cimavilla, was built thanks to a donation of 5,000 pesetas from Casimiro Domínguez Gil, former mayor of the town. It was covered to protect the washerwomen from the rain, and had two toilets. Certain rules were established for the area. A municipal guard was in charge of controlling the 'shifts' to avoid problems and, in the event of any dispute, he would determine who should occupy the post. Furthermore, any washerwomen who caused a disturbance were expelled and fined. These places were used by both private individuals and professional washerwomen.

6th STOP

Capilla de Nuestra Señora de la Soledad

Calle de la Soledad where it intersects with Calle Artillería. From this location, you can see the western neighbourhoods of Gijón/ Xixón. There were factories that employed women, such as La Algodonera - dedicated to textile production and which had almost 500 workers - the hat factory and the Gijón Fabril glass factory.

7th STOP

Cuesta'l Cholo

This is the scene depicted in the 'Retablo del Mar', by Sebastián Miranda, which is in the Jovellanos Museum, located in the house where he was born. As we have already explained, this

work offers a visual representation of the role of women in seafaring Gijón/ Xixón. You can see a fisherwoman carrying the fish she has acquired at the fish market, or from the *sardinera* Octavia *La Monroya*. The *sardineras* sold fish in the streets and squares to supplement the family economy and sailors' pay. These women came out of the fish market with the fish, and went from one place to another calling out to advertise their wares, transported in wooden carts. At that time, the cry of "¡Hai sardines!" was commonly heard in Gijón/ Xixón. It was aimed at attracting buyers, who sometimes closed the deal from their window. It was not only women from the town itself who were involved in buying and selling fish. In fact, those who came from the interior of Asturias to buy it had their own nickname: les *balbones*.

At the end of the *Cuesta'l Cholo*, is the Tránsito de las Ballenas, a name that is a reminder of the time when whaling was

Old Municipal Fishmarket ▼





Antigua Rula (Old Auction House) ▲

practiced in Gijón/ Xixón. At that time, part of the profits were shared among the wives of the sailors who died in the dangerous task of catching these cetaceans.

8th STOP

Antigua Rula (Old Auction)

Around the Antigua Rula (Old Auction), *les xeleres* worked shifts in the ice factory surrounded by water and ammonia. It was said in Cimavilla that going to sea was a thousand times better than this hard work in the factory. There were always women and children around, collecting the pieces of ice that had broken off to sell them or to take them home.

On 2 May 1898, the Antigua Rula (Old Auction) was the scene of a demonstration led and instigated by the women of the city in protest against excise duties. The conflict started when customs officers confiscated two fish from a fisherwoman for non-payment of the new duty levied on fish. The employees of the Tobacco Factory - which at the time had about 1,800 workers - were soon to join the protest. The revolt, initially peaceful, turned violent in the face of the lack of response from the authorities. Tomás Zarracina's flour and chocolate factories and indeed his home, were targeted by the demonstrators, who also burned documentation at of the consumption administration office that collected the taxes on food that were so burdensome for family economies. When soldiers were mobilised, the women decided to return to their homes. As a result of the uproar, the mayor ended up resigning, and these taxes were abolished.

9th STOP

Plaza del Marqués

The Palacio de Revillagigedo was the summer residence of Queen Isabel II in 1856. Gijón/ Xixón played a leading role in

royal summers until the port areas were transformed with the creation of the docks supporting the development of the mining industry and the shipping of coal.

10th STOP

Antigua Pescadería Municipal (Old Municipal Fishmarket)

After construction work on the Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo began in 1907, in the 1920s the Campo Valdés area was improved by the demolition of the Plaza del Adobo and the old fish shop, an example of iron architecture. The new Pescadería Municipal (1928-1930) was subsequently built on the site by Miguel García de la Cruz. The fisherwomen who worked inside the building had individual stalls with a water supply, which facilitated the handling and sale of the fish under hygienic conditions.

Between the San Lorenzo chapel and the Town Hall square there were also simple stalls covered with cloth awnings where women sold produce from the local vegetable gardens, as well as other items, such as the local newspapers *El Comercio* and *Nordeste*.

To the east of the beach, on the point of El Cervigón, you can see the house of Rosario Acuña Villanueva (Madrid 1851 - Gijón/ Xixón 1923), a fascinating writer who publicly declared herself to be a freethinker, a Freemason and a feminist. A great intellectual and poet, she lived the convulsive historical period of her time with intensity. She was the first woman to occupy speak at the Ateneo de Madrid, and wrote several plays and essays. Her first drama, 'Rienzi, el Tribuno' (Madrid, 1876), was the work that brought her prestige and notoriety.

LITERARY GIJÓN / XIXÓN



ROUTE

- Poniente
- Cimavilla
- Plaza del Instituto
- Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo
- Plaza de Toros el Bibio
- Municipal Football Stadium
- El Molinón-Enrique Castro Quini
- Contrueces

The places that appear in works of literature are an indispensable part of the stories they tell. Gijón/ Xixón is the setting for an infinite number of literary publications, which would not be the same if the characters portrayed had not lived or spent time in the home town of Jovellanos.

1st STOP

Poniente

Starting out from the Poniente beach, we head for the Marina, an ideal setting with a certain air of romance about it. Or, at least, that is what the hero of 'Helena o el mar del verano' (Helena or the Sea in Summer) the novel by Julio Ayesta about a boy from a good family who discovers his first love, must think. The hero of this book, considered by some readers to be one of the most impressive in Spanish post-war narrative literature, goes to the nearby old Estación del Norte - today the Railway Museum - on a cart to meet his cousins, who arrive in Gijón/ Xixón from Madrid to spend the summer. Later on, they all go down to the quay together in Uncle Arturo's old car on their way to his house.

◀ (Detail)

Gran Café Dindurra Terrace. 1918, *Joaquín García Cuesta**

Paradiso bookshop ▼





Walking tour
Distance 5,50 km



FROM STOP 6 TO STOP 7
ROUTE on wheels
Distance 5,00 km

2nd STOP Cimavilla

Arriving in the Cimavilla neighbourhood, it is impossible not to mention Alberto Alonso Blanco 'Rambal' (1928-1976), a Gijón-based proto-image artist who never hid his homosexuality despite living under the Franco regime. Rambal was well loved by all his neighbours in Cimavilla, and his murder, which has never been solved, shocked the whole city. His life does not just provide the material for a single novel, but for a whole series of them. For this reason, Vicente García Oliva from Gijón/Xixón wrote *L'aire les Castañes* and Pablo Antón Marín Estrada, also from Asturias, was inspired by this tragedy to write *La Ciudad Encarnada*, which was awarded the Xosefa Xovellanos prize. Pilar Sánchez Vicente also mentions Rambal in *Mujeres Errantes*, a book in which the Cimavilla neighbourhood takes on particular prominence, and in which the history of Gijón/Xixón is explained via the main character, Greta Meier, a famous Swiss writer based in London, who returns to her homeland in a final attempt to stop the aimless drift of her days.

These works are not the only ones set in Cimavilla. In *El Calvario de Piedra*, by Joaquín Alonso Bonet, the author manages to recreate how the Easter processions used to take place in the neighbourhood for his readers. This work was published in instalments in the newspaper *La Prensa de Gijón*, under the pseudonym 'Antolín, el de los Cantares', and tells the story of a young man from a good family who returns to Gijón/Xixón, his home town, in the 1920s.

Part of the action in this novel also takes place in *Cuesta'l Cholo* and in the Cerro de Santa Catalina, a natural viewpoint in the upper part of the neighbourhood. Here you can see one of

the most representative monuments of Gijón/Xixón: 'Praise of the Horizon', by Eduardo Chillida. This is one of the clearly recognisable reference points in Rosa Valle's *Sonarás bajo las Aguas*, a crime novel that revolves around a murder. The book tells a story of murder, revenge, phobias, and secret hatred, but is also about love, and music as the ultimate expression of beauty and as a counterbalance to sound as a weapon of global destruction.

It mentions 'Praise of the Horizon', saying: "Fully digesting that conversation would have required another Indian-style sit-down leaning back against Eduardo Chillida's massive concrete sculpture, but the escape had left no space. Max was waiting to go back to the police station with her".

About five minutes after leaving 'Praise of the Horizon' behind us, we come to a place without which Gijón/Xixón would not be what it is today: the Tobacco Factory - the former convent of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters. In his book *El Calvario de Piedra* Joaquín Alonso Bonet is well aware of this, and part of his book - which covers every aspect of social life in Gijón/Xixón at the time - relates to this factory. The novel also takes us to the church of San Pedro, which stands over Campo Valdés, as well as to the Plaza Mayor in Gijón/Xixón, and particularly to the nearby Municipal Fish Market building and the Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo. "The waters rose, crashing into the wall, smashing against the Fish Market and rising above the roof of this market in Gijón", says the author.

3rd STOP

Plaza del Instituto

Next, we come to the popular Plaza del Instituto, known by the people of Gijón/ Xixón as Plaza El Parchís, which also features in Joaquín Alonso Bonet's book. Nearby, the main character in the book describes "an agglomeration of educational buildings: the Industrial School, the School of Commerce and the Institute itself. All crowded together. And they once called this the Athens of Gijón!" The School of Commerce, now owned by the municipality, first opened in 1911 and has recently been converted into a local cultural centre.

We continue on to Calle La Merced to visit the iconic Paradiso bookshop, with more than four decades of history behind it. This is one of the settings chosen by David Barreiro for *El Túnel*.

This novel talks about the sense of belonging understood as the love for a place that no longer has anything to offer, or has already offered everything it can. Like the traditional street, the book is steeped in local life with countless references to characters and situations that are easily recognisable to anyone familiar with the Gijón/ Xixón of the 90s.

Speaking of the Paradiso bookshop, the disenchanted protagonist says that it is "the only place in Gijón that I'd save from a fire".

From here we head towards the Plaza de Europa, where the Nicanor Piñole Museum is located, a location that features in *La Noche que no Paró de Llover*. Some of the action in this book also takes place in nearby Calle Covadonga and Paseo

de Begoña. On one side of this promenade stands the Teatro Jovellanos, opened in 1899 as the Teatro Dindurra, and its café, located next door, is still open. In fact, the traditional Café Dindurra features in the novel. The church of San Lorenzo also appears in this work. It was built in the Neo-Gothic style in 1896, and can be seen in the background.



▼ Paseo de Begoña and Calle Covadonga

Paseo del Muro San Lorenzo ▲



4th STOP

Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo

We head back to the Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo via Calle Ruiz Gómez. It was precisely in this area that two of the characters from *La Noche que no Paró de Llover* by Laura Castañón lived. Her book is about how deceptive memory can be, and the reconstruction of the past. The main character, Valeria Santaclara, goes to psychologist Laia Vallverdú's clinic - located between Uría and Ruiz Gómez streets - looking for help to open a closed envelope that has been in her possession for years. Throughout the novel, Valeria reflects on her life, from her comfortable childhood in the Gijón/ Xixón of the late 1920s, her relationship with her sister, the historical circumstances of what was a turbulent time, to her feelings of guilt.

On the corner of Ezcurdia and La Playa streets, stands Café Gregorio, a little place with more than three decades of history behind it. Since it opened in 1985, the place has played an important role in Gijón's social life. This is why the author wanted to feature it in his work, turning it into a café frequented by several characters in his book.

We continue along Calle La Playa back to the sands of San Lorenzo beach, one of the most emblematic in Asturias, which stretches for about 1,550 metres. A part of *La Noche que no Paró de Llover* takes place at stairway 10.

Additionally, several characters from *Sonarás bajo las Aguas* come to these popular sands to eat. *"The tide was low, the sea was in a good mood and they were able to go down to the beach to eat their sandwiches, sitting on the rocks. They liked the stairway that was well away from the main sweep of sand and the El Tostaderu area, stairway 16, where the San Lorenzo beach officially comes to an end"*, writes Rosa Valle.

▼ Paseo del Muro San Lorenzo

5th STOP

Plaza de toros El Biblio

Julián Ayesta used the Gijón/ Xixón bullring at the beginning of *Helena o el mar de verano* (Helena or the Sea in Summer). The action in the novel begins in the summer season, during the festival of Gijón/ Xixón - 15 August, the day of Nuestra Señora de Begoña - at a bullfight, and he describes the festive atmosphere.

The El Bibio bullring opened in 1888. In 1941 it had to be rebuilt. This two-storey building in the mudejar style forms a regular 16-sided polygon.

6th STOP

Municipal Football Stadium El Molinón-Enrique Castro Quini

The stadium of the Real Sporting de Gijón football club is the next stop on this tour. The El Molinón-Enrique Castro Quini stadium was mentioned in the local press for the first time on 20 May 1908, making this the oldest professional football pitch in Spain. It has been one of the most emblematic places in the town of Jovellanos ever since. Perhaps this is why Joaquín Alonso Bonet included it in *El Calvario de Piedra*, where readers witness the intense rivalry between the Sporting and Vetusta teams.

7th STOP

Contrueces

This is where the tour comes to an end, with a nod to another fundamental work in literary Gijón/ Xixón. *Quinquis* by Agustín García Meana, is set in this neighbourhood located in the southern district and tells the story of a young man's life between 1977 and 1994, a period when there were a great many delinquents known as 'quinquis' (petty thieves) as in the title of the book. Throughout the book there are references to many places in Gijón/ Xixón that are easily recognisable, such as the Contrueces Public Library, the Santuario Nuestra Señora de Contrueces, the Camino de los Caleros and the Palacio San Andrés de Cornellana.





GIJÓN / XIXÓN ON FILM



ROUTE

- Calle Jovellanos
- Paseo de Begoña
- Calle Corrida
- Plaza del Carmen
- Railway Museum
- Marina
- Plaza Mayor
- Cerro de Santa Catalina
- San Lorenzo Beach
- Municipal Football Stadium
El Molinón-Enrique Castro Quini
- Laboral Ciudad de la Cultura
- Monte Deva

Gijón/ Xixón on film invites you to learn about the history of film in the city. Through an itinerary that will take you through the old cinemas and the main filming locations, you will get to know the most emblematic places in the city.

1st STOP

Calle Jovellanos

We start out in front of the Jovellanos Public Library - the former Teatro Jovellanos - where the first cinema screening in Gijón/ Xixón took place, on 12 August 1896. The first films shot in the city were also shown here: 'View of a breakwater', taken from the hill of Santa Catalina, and 'View of the Campo Valdés', taken at the exit of the church of San Pedro. With film-making becoming something of a tradition, in August 1900 cinematographs were set up in shacks in Gijón/ Xixón.

2nd STOP

Paseo de Begoña

We head towards the Begoña Gardens until reaching the Teatro Jovellanos, home to the official section of the Gijón/ Xixón International Film Festival (FICX), dedicated to alternative and auteur works, which dates back to 1963. Over the last few years, some of the most prestigious independent film professionals in the world have attended FICX, such as Terry Gilliam, Brillante Mendoza, Lucrecia Martel, Marisa Paredes, Maribel Verdú and Daniel Guzmán, among many others.

We continue along the Paseo de Begoña, one of the many locations in the city featuring in the film *If I were a Rich Man* (2019), by Álvaro Fernández Armero, and, further on, you will see the Hotel Begoña, where the first building constructed to house a cinema, the Versailles, opened in 1910. In 1981 it was closed, and six years later it was demolished.

Our route takes us to the Casino de Asturias, which houses the Asturias Film Interpretation Centre. This is the location of the Hernán Cortés cinema, which opened on 6 April 1958 with the premiere of Walt Disney's film *Fantasia*. On 4 December 1964, there was a screening of *Jandro*, a film by Julio Coll shot in Asturias. It closed its doors for the last time on 31 March 1994.

In the background, you can see the Plaza Seis de Agosto, where the Mercado del Sur is located, also featured in the films shot in the city, such as *Pudor* (2007) by David and Tristán Ulloa.

◀ (Detail)

Filming, 1962, *Manuel Espín**



FROM STOP 1 TO STOP 10
Walking tour
Distance 7,00 km



FROM STOP 10 TO STOP 12
ROUTE on wheels
Distance 10,00 km

3rd STOP

Calle Corrida

Our path now leads us through Calle Corrida. On the corner Calle Asturias, you will see the façade of the old Robledo cinema (1916-1992), which sought to be architecturally similar to the theatres at the time it was built.

At number 30, you can see the façade of the old Maria Cristina cinema, with a capacity for 646 spectators. Although the building was finished in 1938, it was not to open until 1943, because of the Civil War.

4th STOP

Plaza del Carmen

We arrive at the Plaza del Carmen, one of the filming locations for *El Diablo También Lloró*, directed by José Antonio Nieves Conde in 1955. Few scenes in this film were shot in the city, although there are enough to recognise the train station, today converted into the Railway Museum.

5th STOP

Railway Museum

The jewel in the crown of the films recorded in Gijón/ Xixón is the Oscar-winning *Starting Over*, directed by José Luis Garci in 1982. For the nostalgic, *Starting Over* is a picture postcard of the city and, for those who do not know it, an opportunity to discover how much things have changed. The locations used for the film were, among others, El Musel, the Railway Station, Calle Corrida, the Robledo Cinema, San Lorenzo beach, the Mercado del Sur, the Plaza Mayor and the Lavadero de Deva.



Façade of the former Robledo cinema ▲



▲ Laboral Ciudad de la Cultura

6th STOP

Marina

We continue along Calle Rodríguez San Pedro until reaching the Marina, one of the favourite places for filming. This location is one of the settings for the film *The Frost*, directed by Ferrán Audí in 2008.

7th STOP

Plaza Mayor

Our film itinerary takes us to the Plaza Mayor, one of the shooting locations for *Poker Face* (2012), by scriptwriter Carlos Theron. Through black humour, *Poker Face* tells a story of robbers and losers.

In the Plaza Mayor stands the Hotel Asturias, the hotel where Antonio Ferrandis, the star of *Starting Over*, stayed.

8th STOP

Cerro de Santa Catalina

We will then take a stroll through the streets of Cimavilla on the way to the Cerro de Santa Catalina, which was not yet home to the emblematic monument 'Praise of the Horizon' when it hosted the shooting of *The Red Fish* by José Antonio Nieves Conde (1955), which was the first feature film to use Gijón/ Xixón as a setting.

9th STOP

San Lorenzo Beach

We come down the Santa Catalina Hill and pass by the Club de Regatas, arriving at the San Lorenzo beach, one of the best backdrops any film could have. In *Double Feature* (1984), by José Luis Garci, José (Adolfo Marsillach) and Mala's (María Casanova) walk along the sands is already a classic in cinema history.

San Lorenzo beach also plays a leading role in *Course Completed* (1987), also directed by José Luis Garci. This film offers a splendid view of the sea from the window of the Capua building.

Near the sculpture 'Sombras de Luz', the beauty of the Paseo del Muro de San Lorenzo seafront promenade was also used as a location by Jorge Sánchez-Cabezudo and Alberto Sánchez-Cabezudo in their series for television called *La Zona* (2017).

10th STOP

Municipal Football Stadium El Molinón-Enrique Castro Quini Gijón/ Xixón does not only have a stunning hotel; it also has a football team and an 'Oscar winning stadium', as El Molinón-Enrique Castro Quini (the home ground of the Real Sporting de Gijón football team) is to some extent the protagonist of the film *Starting Over*.

11th STOP

Laboral Ciudad de la Cultura

We now move on to the Universidad Laboral, an emblematic building that Javier Fesser chose in 2002 as the villain's palace in *Mortadelo & Filemon: The Big Adventure*.

During Brain Drain (2009), directed by Fernando González Molina, La Laboral became, thanks to the magic of cinema, the University of Oxford.

12th STOP

Monte Deva

Bringing this tour of some of the most emblematic and recognisable locations in Gijón/ Xixón for film lovers to an end, we arrive at Mount Deva, the location for the filming of Rafael Parbús's *Campamento Flipy* (2010). As well as offering fantastic views, Monte Deva is home to the Monte Deva Municipal Astronomical Observatory - (Gijón/ Xixón) - where 215 comets have already been recorded, as well as a Nature Interpretation Centre.



JOVELLANOS

La Escalerona. San Lorenzo Beach





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