

A circular graphic with a white background, surrounded by a dark green border. Inside the circle, the word "Gijón" is written in a red, cursive script. The circle is framed by a white silhouette of a city skyline, including various buildings, a bridge, and a tower. The word "Gijón" is centered within the circle.

Gijón

ENGLISH

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Identity, Language and Culture



A esgaya:

lots, plenty, in great quantity.



Those Curious Characters

Learning *un pelín* (a bit) of asturianu, catching the infectious festive spirit, joining in with the celebrations, dancing to the rhythm of Folk music or enjoying the city's cultural events will allow us to discover the most human side of Gijón/Xixón – and to decipher, at least in part, that very personal science of theirs: the art of living well.



Constantino Suárez Group posing on San Lorenzo beach, c. 1935 Col. *Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies*

Gijón/Xixón is a city with character. A very particular character: that of its people. Those who were born here, and those who, even without that fortune, chose it as their home. Women and men of Gijón/Xixón, with their solidarity and outspoken spirit, possess a unique quality that defines who they are. That's why, if you are with someone from the city, you will find it hard to out-eat them, out-boast them about their city, or beat them to paying for a round. Because people from Gijón/Xixón are like that: *grandona* – larger than life. El Molinón, La Escalerona, Las Letronas... (*-ona* means large). They have a true mastery of the augmentative.

But there is no need to be intimidated: to balance things out, the city also has places like Los Campinos, the kilometrín, or El Rinconín. (*-ino/a* means little). In all of them, they share – with locals and visitors alike – their passion for food, cider, the sea, nature, friendship, fun... for life itself! Curious characters indeed, worthy of study.

CHISCAR, PRESTAR,
ESTRAPAYAR, MANCAR,
EMBURRIAR, CALEYA, CHIGRE,
ESFAMIAU ...



To get closer to them and to that curious way of understanding life, you first need to grasp what they say (and how they say it) – which isn't always easy. Strolling through the city, it is not unusual to hear, with some surprise, curious expressions or words. Locals speak in a fresh, authentic way, with a certain cheek, often slipping into the Asturian language, asturianu, sprinkling it naturally through their Spanish conversations. But they also use a vocabulary all their own, born in the Cimavilla neighbourhood: *el playu*. So, if someone from here sends you off "to see the whale," they're not exactly suggesting a trip to the Aquarium... If you ask about



Say cheeeese!

someone you haven't seen for a long time and they say *fue pal sueste*, fear the worst: in Cimavilla, *sueste* means the cemetery. But if someone calls you *bobín* or *bobina*, don't get upset – far from being an insult, it is actually a term of endearment. And of course, if you are invited to an *espicha*, don't hesitate to go – it's an informal party held in a cider house (*llagar*), where cider poured straight from the barrel takes centre stage.

It is also worth checking whether your trip to Gijón/Xixón coincides with one of its many *fiestas de prau* – open-air celebrations with live music where groups of friends spend the whole day (and night) eating, drinking, dancing and singing. The *fiestas de prau*, held in neighbourhoods, villages and parishes across the township throughout the year – especially in summer – are a hallmark of the city and a reflection of Asturian culture and values.

So, given this festive spirit, it is no surprise that there are apps to help you go *de folixa en folixa* – from party to party. At these parties, cider and *bolos preñaos* (chorizo-filled bread rolls) are never missing, though at the traditional *amagüestu*, held in autumn, people eat roasted chestnuts and drink *sidra del duernu* (sweet cider). *Pote asturiano*, *picadillo* and *frixuelos* are must-try dishes during *antroxu* (Carnival), a festival of major regional tourist interest in Gijón/Xixón, held one week after *xueves de Comadres* – an all-female celebration where women gather, go out for dinner and take over the Gijón nightlife.



Pablo and his son Juan are ready. 'Come down, we're off to catch some waves.'



Another very popular celebration is *La Noche de San Xuan* (24 June), centred around the bonfire lit on Poniente beach. Here, the people of Gijón/Xixón burn the old, make wishes before the flames, and celebrate the shortest night of the year with folk and traditional music performances. They also decorate with flowers the fountain of King Pelayo's statue in Plaza del Marqués, the heart of the celebrations, as legend has it that on this night the *cuélebres* (mythical serpents) keep the *xanes* (Asturian fairies) captive, until the next day when the fairies search for the *flor del agua* (Midsummer Water Blossom) in rivers and springs.

The festivities of San Xuan continue with the patron saint celebrations of San Pedro (29 June). Meanwhile, the Día d'Asturies in Xixón is celebrated on the first Sunday in August. The traditional parade of folk groups and bagpipe bands makes its way from Plaza Mayor to the Cerro de Santa Catalina. Once there, a *jira* (outdoor gathering) takes place and people dance the *danza prima*, Asturias's popular dance, in which participants link little fingers and form concentric circles. In the afternoon, also outdoors, there are demonstrations of traditional Asturian games, sports and dances. But beyond tradition, Gijón/Xixón also boasts a spectacular calendar of cultural and artistic



events, long established, that place the city at the forefront of the international avant-garde. Among them are the FICX (Gijón/Xixón International Film Festival), *Semana Negra*, FETEN (European Performing Arts Fair for Children), the *Metrópoli* and *Tsunami* festivals, and the *CometCon* youth convention of alternative culture and leisure.

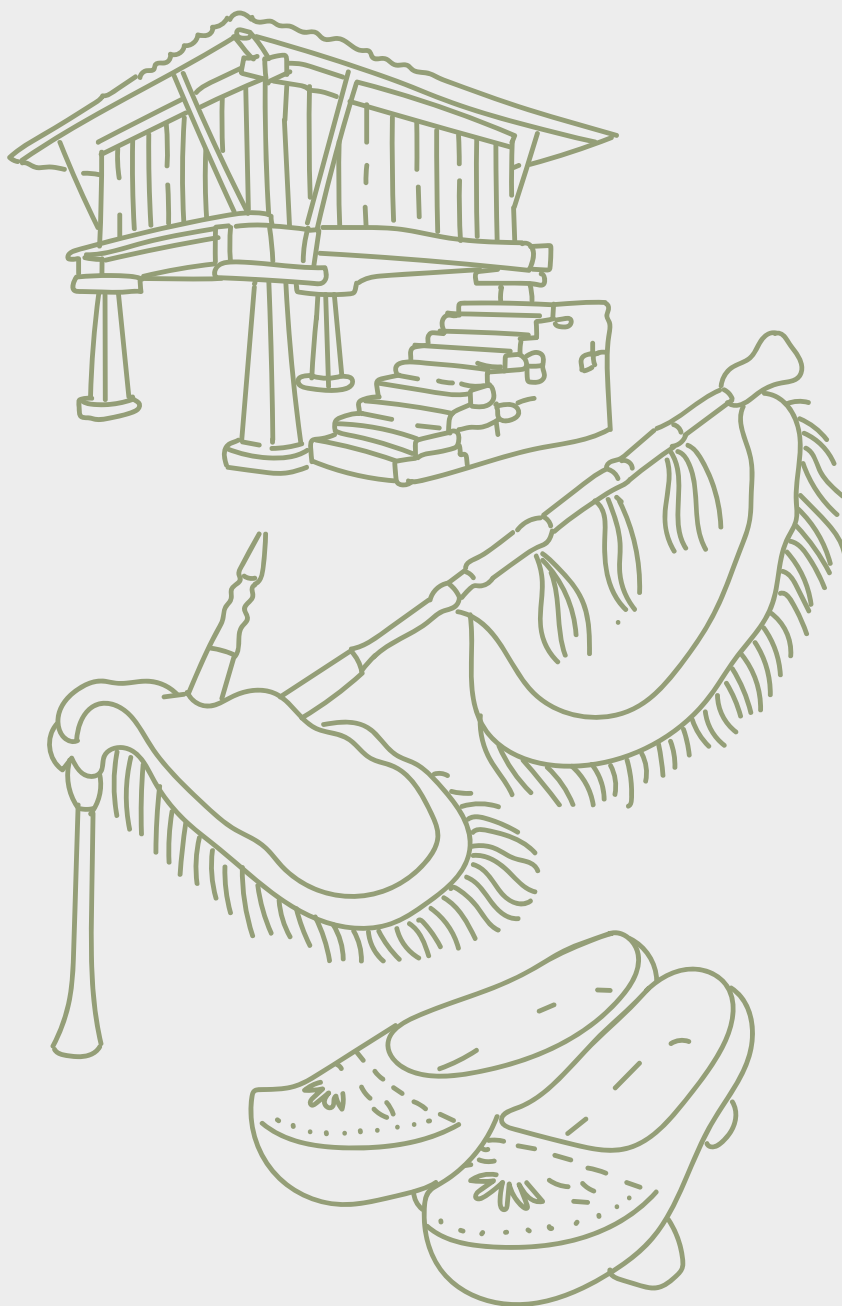
Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies

To get a real insight into traditional Asturian culture, there is nothing better than visiting the Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies – an open-air ethnographic museum, created in 1968, within a wooded area of 35,000 m², which includes a brackish-water pond, a reminder of the marshland that once dominated the mouth of the River Piles.

On its grounds we can find *hórreos* and *paneras* (raised granaries) from the 17th to 19th centuries, noble houses, a peasant dwelling, a cider press (*llagar*), a shepherd's shelter, farming implements, tools...

The museum's collection includes both tangible and intangible testimonies of many kinds: museographic, musical, photographic, documentary, and linked to oral memory.

Inside the Muséu del Pueblu is the Muséu de la Gaita, which houses a collection of traditional bagpipes (*gaitas*) from Asturias as well as from different European countries, North Africa and the Near East, along with other Asturian instruments such as tambourines, horns, and flutes.



Origins and Evolution of the City



Escomplor:

to clear up, when the clouds
disappear from the sky (it
does happen, sometimes).



Funerary
mounds on
Monte Deva

This Goes Back a Long Way

To understand the city's present-day idiosyncrasy, it is essential to delve into its history and its stories: the Neolithic origins of the city, the traces of the Roman Empire, the medieval period, the process of industrialisation... A walk through the city and its surroundings allows us to travel through time via the heritage preserved from each of these historical periods.

Monte Deva, a patient guardian of the bay of Gijón/Xixón, has hidden beneath its soil, for centuries, the city's origins. A secret revealed at the end of the 20th century, when excavations began that have since uncovered a necropolis of nine funerary mounds spread along the ridge line, and a quarry from which Neolithic people extracted huge stone blocks to build some of the tombs. This goes back at least 5,000 years.

To better appreciate the importance of this site, it is worth first visiting the Archaeological-Natural Park of Campa Torres, located on Cape Torres, about seven kilometres from the centre. This site, one of the main fortified settlements in northern Spain (before 490 BC), founded by the Astur tribe of the

Cilurnigi, provides insights into Asturian protohistory and the transition from the pre-Roman to the Roman period. It also has a bird observatory and a viewpoint overlooking Gijón/Xixón and El Musel, the city's imposing port – one of the most important in northern Spain.

After the enigmatic visit to the Neolithic mounds, this historical journey is best continued with the Roman Villa of Veranes, twelve kilometres from the city centre, an example of a noble dwelling from the Late Roman Empire, as well as the Roman Baths of Campo Valdés, located in Cimavilla, the upper quarter of Gijón/Xixón, where in the early 2nd century AD the Roman city was founded, engaging in trade both by sea and by land via the Silver Route.

The legacy of the Roman Empire has left its mark on the city. But not only in the inherited material heritage. But also, in the curiosity and admiration this fascinating period inspires among the people of Gijón/Xixón.

As we advance on our walk, and through the city's history, the Middle Ages reveal themselves in all their splendour in the dozen Romanesque churches that are preserved in the municipality, bearing witness to the importance this area once had on the Jacobean route which, in the 10th century, made its way to Santiago along the Cantabrian coast — the so-called Northern Way (*Camino del Norte*). Among them, outstanding examples include the Church of San Miguel de



Dueñas, next to the Castiello de Bernueces washhouse; L'Abadía Cenero, regarded by many as the cathedral of Gijón's Romanesque style, tall and green like the *texu* (yew tree) that has grown beside it since 1718; and San Salvador de Deva, one of the oldest Romanesque churches on the Iberian Peninsula. At this time, the city was still confined to the Cimavilla district, and it was not until the mid-16th century that it began to expand southwards.

The streets of Cimavilla preserve monuments of great historical and architectural value, such as the Palacio of Valdés, built in 1570 on the foundations of the old wall; the 18th-century Casa de Nava; the Clock Tower, now home to the Municipal Archive; the Revillagigedo Palace; and the Casa de los Alvargonzález.

You should also look out for corners that recall seafaring Gijón/Xixón, such as the Chapel of La Soledad, built in the 17th century and once the headquarters of the Seafarers' Guild, or the Plaza del Periodista Arturo Arias, also known as Campus Monxes and popularly called el Llavaderu, where two typical fishermen's houses still stand alongside the newly renovated Tabacalera building, a former convent of the Augustinian Recollects that was turned into a Tobacco Factory during the disentailment, providing work for 2,000 women: the *cigarreras* (female cigar makers). This professional collective, with strong class consciousness and a spirit of solidarity, led the first major women's strike in Asturias in 1903, and in the years that followed became an example of the

workers' movement – not only female – so characteristic of Gijón's identity.

Cimavilla is also home to the house and tomb of one of its most famous citizens: the Enlightenment thinker Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, who laid out the blueprint for the city's development during the 18th and 19th centuries.

At the Jovellanos Birthplace Museum you can learn more about this key figure of the Spanish Enlightenment and visit his tomb in the Capilla de los Remedios.

On its top floor, the museum houses the impressive work *El Retablo del Mar*, a large polychrome wooden carving by Sebastián Miranda, closely tied to popular Gijón/Xixón, in which the Oviedo-born sculptor vividly recreates a fish auction at the old *rula* (fish market) in Cimavilla.

The process of industrialisation that began in the mid-19th century made the city the hub of Asturias's productive sector: El Musel Port, numerous factory facilities, the shipyards...Gijón/Xixón would not be what it is today without its industrial heritage: chimneys, workshops, factories, workers' quarters, machines... but also the people who forged a melting pot of ways of life, customs, and ways of living and working, passed down to their descendants.

A good example, tucked away inside the block known as the Martillo de Capua, is the Ciudadela de Celestino Solar, built in 1877 and now converted into a museum – a showcase of the lifestyles of Gijón's working class in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

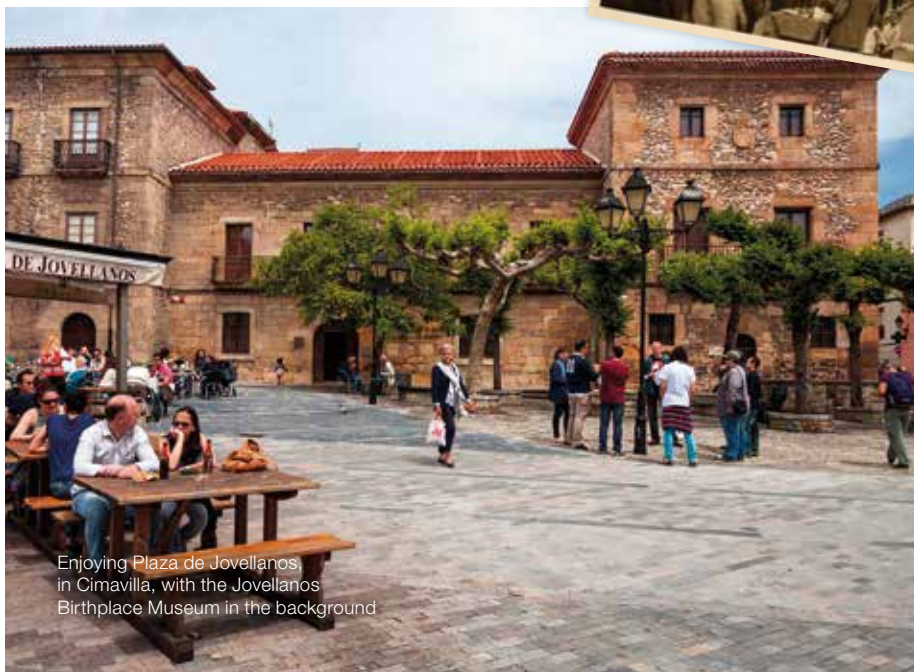
But let's continue our way.

Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, portrait by Francisco de Goya





Jovellanos Street, at the beginning of the 20th century



Enjoying Plaza de Jovellanos, in Cimavilla, with the Jovellanos Birthplace Museum in the background



Plaza del Instituto, popularly known as "El Parchís"

With industrialisation came new architectural movements, such as Modernism, one of whose most distinctive features is the feminine character of its ornamentation. The area around Corrida, Jovellanos, Munuza, Cabrales, Instituto, Morros, Trinidad and San Bernardo streets contains some of its most representative buildings, such as the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Chalet of Ladislao Menéndez in Plaza de Europa, and the former Café San Miguel, the popular Cafetón, in the square of the same name.

To gain a complete vision of the city's historical evolution, it is well worth ending this fascinating journey through time with a visit to the Nicanor Piñole Museum and the Evaristo Valle Museum Foundation – both collections showcasing a broad selection of works by these two Gijón-born artists of the early 20th century.



Evaristo Valle Museum Foundation, in Somoio

Laboral, City of Culture

Originally conceived as a miners' orphanage, this spectacular architectural complex, built between 1946 and 1956, soon became Spain's first Universidad Laboral, before later being turned into a secondary school.

In 2007 it was restored and transformed into a major cultural venue.

Dominated by its imposing tower, facing a main courtyard inspired by St. Mark's Square in Venice, the building was constructed with its back turned to the city of Gijón/Xixón.

The Madrid architect Luis Moya designed it this way, in the image of the Parthenon in Athens – both to shield it from the north-west wind and so that visitors would have to walk around it to enter, thereby appreciating its full grandeur.

Today it houses various institutions, including its monumental Theatre, LABoral Centre for Art and Industrial Creation, Radiotelevisión del Principado de Asturias (RTPA), the School of Performing Arts (ESAD), the Professional Conservatory of Music and Dance, the Integrated Vocational Training Centre, and the Faculty of Commerce, Tourism and Social Sciences "Jovellanos"...

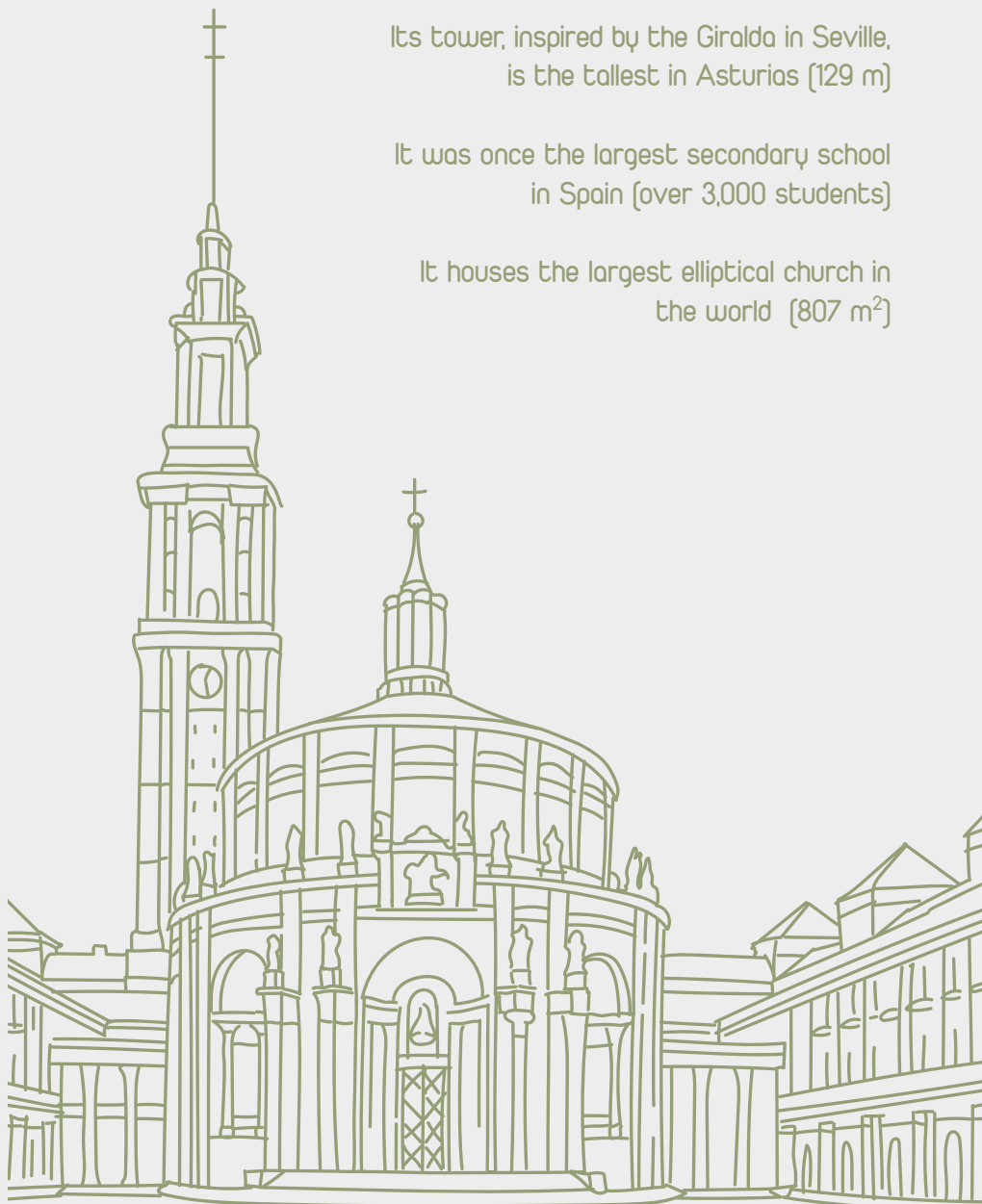
Throughout the year, its many spaces also host a wide variety of shows, activities, and all kinds of professional and socio-cultural events.

It is the largest building in Spain, three times bigger than El Escorial (270.000 m²)

Its tower, inspired by the Giralda in Seville, is the tallest in Asturias (129 m)

It was once the largest secondary school in Spain (over 3,000 students)

It houses the largest elliptical church in the world (807 m²)



CuLRutas: cultural routes through Gijón/Xixón

Two
centuries
of history

Cimavilla

Jovellanos's
Gijón/Xixón

Modernist
Gijón/Xixón

Industrial
Gijón/Xixón

Gijón/Xixón
and historical
memory

Gijón/Xixón
– more than
just a city

Gijón/Xixón
– sculpture
and art

Gijón/Xixón
with the
family

Gijón/Xixón in
the feminine

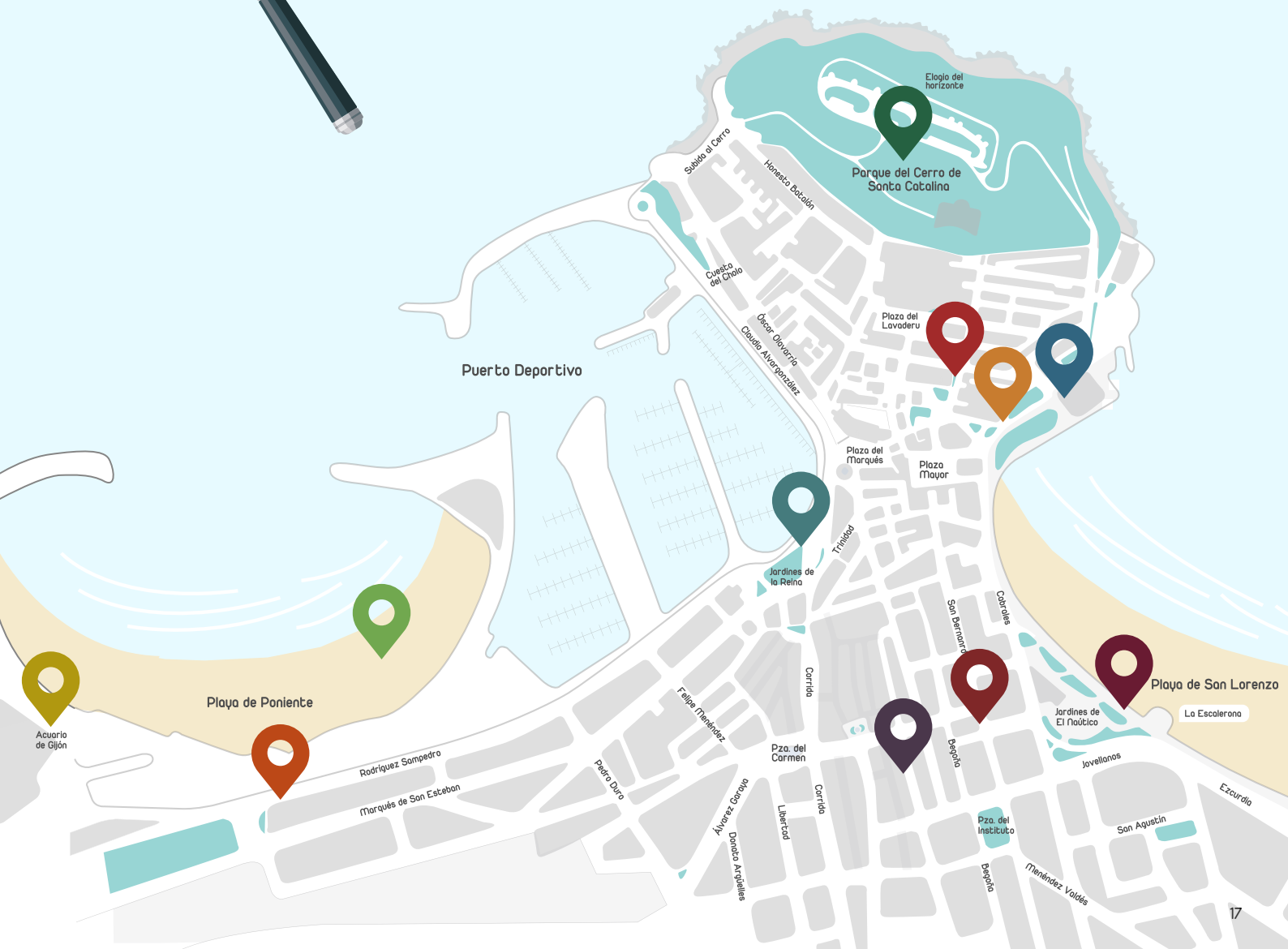
Literary
Gijón/Xixón

Gijón/Xixón
on screen

A series of routes invite us to explore and discover Gijón/Xixón's historical and cultural heritage from a wide range of perspectives: history, art, cinema, literature, feminism... Twelve different lenses through which to discover one and the same city.



Download the
routes here



The Old Quarter of the City



Playu/a:

nickname given to the people of Gijón/
Xixón; their own dialect, especially in
the Cimavilla neighbourhood.



Cimavilla: the Essence of Xixón

Cimavilla, the origin and essence of Gijón/Xixón, perfectly embodies the spirit of its people. The upper quarter, or Fishermen's district, lives under the influence of the surrounding sea, which imprints its unique character on its residents: proud, sharp-tongued, wry, supportive and outspoken people. A stroll through its streets reveals, among historic buildings and lively terraces, the beating heart of this city, pulsing to the rhythm of the Cantabrian Sea.

Once a neighbourhood of pirates, fishermen, *cigarreras* (female cigar makers) and artisans, Cimavilla represents not only the essence but also the origin of Gijón/Xixón. On this small peninsula, surrounded by water on all sides except for the narrow isthmus that now links

Plaza del Marqués and the Town Hall with the city centre, is where it all began. Here, in the 1st century AD, after conquering the *castros* (hillforts) of the Astures, the Roman Empire founded a small settlement that took root and gradually spread inland.



La cuesta'l Cholo

Over the years, the city grew in a fan shape, but always with its eyes and heart on the neighbourhood where it was born – Cimavilla – where whaling became the economic and social engine until 1722, when the last whale was hunted with harpoons and blooders. Today, its memory lingers only in the city's imagination and in the names of certain houses and streets near the port. Such is the case with Tránsito de las Ballenas (Whale Crossing), the place where

whales caught off the Gijón coast were cut up. Next to it, la cuesta'l Cholo is nowadays one of the city's busiest spots. Every day of the year, both locals and visitors flock there to bask in the intermittent evening sun while enjoying bottles of cider and some tapas. In fact, the city's upper quarter is full of charming restaurants that keep alive the seafaring spirit that has always defined it.



Don Pelayo, the Revillagigedo Palace, and the Clock Tower

And it is in these streets and squares that the *playos* and *playas* live their lives – the nickname for people from the neighbourhood and, by extension, all inhabitants of Gijón/Xixón. The *playa* idiosyncrasy is undoubtedly a subject worthy of study. Their strong character, their unique way of seeing and living life, and even their manner of speaking – or rather, *expla-yarse* (expressing themselves freely) – is unmatched. In fact, after the Civil War they even invented their own language, “resve” (al-



so called “vesre”), which consisted of speaking backwards – reversing the order of vowels and consonants in a word or phrase – to communicate and confuse the dictatorship’s security forces.

From the Cimavilla Skate Park, young Jairo – a full-time resident and occasional skater – recalls how, as a child, if he annoyed his grandfather and his domino-playing friends, they would scold him in “resve”.

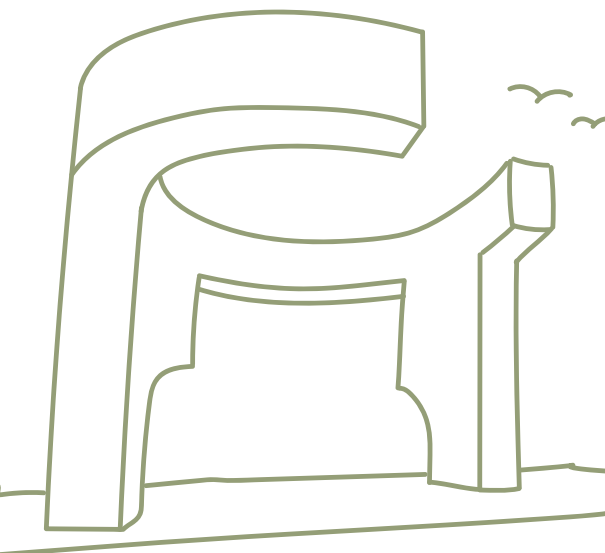
“We’re something else! Today we’ve got piercings, tattoos and other things on our minds... But watch out! We’re just as playos as ever. Or are you going to tell me we’re not?”

“We’re something else! Today we’ve got piercings, tattoos and other things on our minds... But watch out! We’re just as *playos* as ever. Or are you going to tell me we’re not?”

The bohemian, alternative spirit that has taken hold in Cimavilla in recent years is perfectly reflected in the Escaleras del Rock (Rock Stairs), linking the marina with the upper part of the neighbourhood; each step, painted a different colour, bears the title of one of the 50 greatest albums in rock history. Quite something.

And if we continue climbing from the Skate Park, we reach the Cerro de Santa Catalina, a natural promontory that in the

17th century housed a military outpost to protect the city from pirate attacks. Besides offering the best views of the city (in the words of Jovellanos, “the spectacle is magnificent; at the sight of it one feels an inexplicable pleasure”), the Cerro de Santa Catalina also boasts its most famous sculpture, *Elogio del Horizonte* – a concrete structure weighing almost 500 tonnes and standing 10 metres tall. Standing inside it, you can hear the amplified sound of the waves crashing against the cliff rocks, as if inside a giant seashell.



The City of Sculptures

Beyond *Elogio del Horizonte*, some thirty sculptures by local and national artists of diverse styles form a unique route through the city. Not far from Chillida's sculpture, in the same Cimavilla neighbourhood, you can see *Nordeste* by Joaquín Vaquero Turcios, symbolising the union between Gijón/Xixón, the Cantabrian Sea and industry. Near the marina, the popular monument to Pelayo, often part of celebrations like Carnival, faces a huge sculpture made of cider bottles that demands attention: *Árbol de la Sidra*, a work composed of more than 3,200 bottles. Originally installed temporarily to raise awareness about glass recycling, due to the interest it sparked among visitors it has become a permanent attraction. On the paseo de Rosario Acuña promenade, next to El Rinconín beach, stands another of the city's most famous sculptures: *La madre del emigrante* by Ramón Muriedas, affectionately nicknamed "La Lloca" or "La Muyerona", which depicts the anguish of those mothers who watched their children leave for the Americas in search of a better life. Other works scattered across the city include Monumento a la República by Manzano and Quesada; *El Cubo* by Alejandro Mieres; and *Génesis* by Joaquín Rubio Camín. And, by the sea, notable works include *Sombras de luz* by Fernando Alba and *Solidaridad* by Pepe Noja.



La madre del emigrante, by Ramón Muriedas.

EL
RINCONÍN

To the Rhythm of the Cantabrian Sea



Pingar:

to drip, to get soaked, to drip from being soaked; hence "poner pingando" (to slag someone off, laying into their faults).



The Sea in their Very Being

Gijón/Xixón lives facing the Cantabrian Sea. And the Cantabrian Sea watches those who stroll along its shores or gaze at it from El Muro, La Providencia, or the Cerro de Santa Catalina. The people of Gijón/Xixón carry the sea in their very being. They enjoy nine beaches and coves suitable for every kind of bather: athletes, surfers, people with reduced mobility, children, lovers of hidden spots, naturists... Find your favourite spot!

Gijón/Xixón embraces the sea with the Bay of San Lorenzo. From San Pedro to “El Rinconín”, the seafront promenade known as El Muro is walked every day of the year by thousands of locals and visitors. But besides San Lorenzo beach, the city’s best-known, the municipality also has eight other sandy beaches – some urban and others set in nature – as well as a modern marina.

This explains why the bond between the people of Gijón/Xixón and the sea is so intense: they carry it in their very being. Hardly surprising, since on these beaches people don’t just take a dip or sunbathe: they walk barefoot along the shore, walk their dogs in winter, surf, play football, volleyball or paddle ball... or go crabbing on the *pedrera* (rocky shore).



San Lorenzo Beach

San Lorenzo Beach

San Lorenzo Beach Located right in the city centre and flanked by El Muro, a 3-kilometre seafront promenade, San Lorenzo beach is one of the most famous urban beaches on the Cantabrian coast. Crescent-shaped and a kilometre and a half long, it is one of the city's most iconic sights, a classic destination for swimming, strolling, playing and watersports. In recent years it has become very popular with surfers, as its conditions are ideal both for surfing and for learning. And every weekend on its wide sands there are beach-football matches where Gijón

folk of all ages gather at whatever time the tide allows, because you must play at low tide.

Access to San Lorenzo beach is via a series of numbered stairways, running from Stairway 0 ("La Cantábrica"), behind San Pedro Church, to Stairway 16, located in the area popularly known as "El Tostaderu", at the mouth of the River Piles.

A usual meeting point for many locals, Stairway 4 – the one with the clock, the one with the giant thermometer – is the

biggest and most famous. As you would expect, it is known as La Escalerona ("the big stairway").

Poniente (or Pando) Beach

Poniente Beach Located in the Fomento area, very close to the marina, this beach is ideal when the *Nordés* blows – the north-easterly wind – as it is sheltered from it.

Poniente beach was already a bathing spot by the mid-19th century, as shown by the fact that in 1858 Queen Isabel II took advantage of her official trip to Asturias to enjoy its healthy wave baths.

L'Arbeyal Beach

It is the major beach on the city's west side. Located between the popular neighbourhoods of El Natahoyo and La Calzada, it is a stable golden sandy beach about 500 metres long, with calm waters and a good range of services.

Other Urban Beaches

El **Rinconín** (or **El Cervigón**) beach lies at the eastern end of the seafront promenade. At 400 metres long with a sand-and-rock base, it is attractive for spear-fishing and snorkelling, but swimming with caution is advised due to the rocky bottom. The region's first dog-friendly beach, access with dogs is allowed all year round. **Los Mayanes** beach lies beyond San Lorenzo's sands on its right-hand side, along the Rosario Acuña promenade. It consists of rocks, pebbles and a stretch of sand that varies with the tides. It has good access and services



Poniente Beach

Rural Beaches

Peñarrubia is the first of the rural beaches on Gijón/Xixón's eastern side. About 500 metres long, it is a narrow strip of shingle and sand, ringed by high cliffs rich in fossils. It is often frequented by naturists. Beyond La Providencia lies **Estañu** beach, a golden-sand cove with an attractive tombolo shape. Split in two by an islet visible to the west, another draw

is a small rock-hewn natural pool known as el Pozo del Cura.

Serín is a slender, beautiful unspoilt beach, about 350 metres long, flanked by cliffs and open to the Cantabrian Sea. Access is not easy, which makes it very appealing to nudists and naturists, as well as lovers of quiet surroundings. Lastly, the cove of **La Cagonera**, once

a refuge for boats and fishermen, is very difficult to reach, so it is best accessed by boat. Ideal for spearfishing or diving.



Serín Beach



Ediciones Prida M.N. Workers on the quay, c. 1920. Col. *Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies*



Gijón Marina

Gijón/Xixón's marina is arranged in four basins with over 780 moorings. It has flown the Blue Flag since 1996, awarded by the Foundation for Environmental Education, and has become a reference point for some major international regattas. Right in the city centre, next to Cimavilla, it is the ideal place to enjoy the sea and watersports: jet skis, paddleboarding, kayaking, boat hire, boat trips, dinghy sailing...

Green Escapes



Afoyoizu/a:

cosy, pleasant, agreeable; a person, place or thing that makes you feel at ease.



Nature is Gijón/Xixón

Gijón/Xixón is surrounded by nature. Its inhabitants know it and enjoy it in many ways. One way is by following the green trails that lead to the sea, the river, the woods or the nearby hills... Cervigón Trail, Peñafrancia Trail, la Camocha Greenway, Río Ñora and Piles Riverside Path. The ideal way is to take them without any hurry.

As we can see, there are many reasons to pack your boots when travelling to the town of Jovellanos: the five green trails around it are one example, as are the three cultural routes that set off from the city to other destinations. Because Gijón/Xixón is not only a destination but also a

starting point. Thus, from the city you can walk step by step the Way to Covadonga/Cuadonga, make a pilgrimage to Santiago along the Northern Way, or head south following the Silver Route.

Green Xixón

Trails and routes around the municipality of Gijón/Xixón

Cervigón Trail

Peñafrancia Trail

La Camocha
Greenway

Silver Route

Río Ñora Path

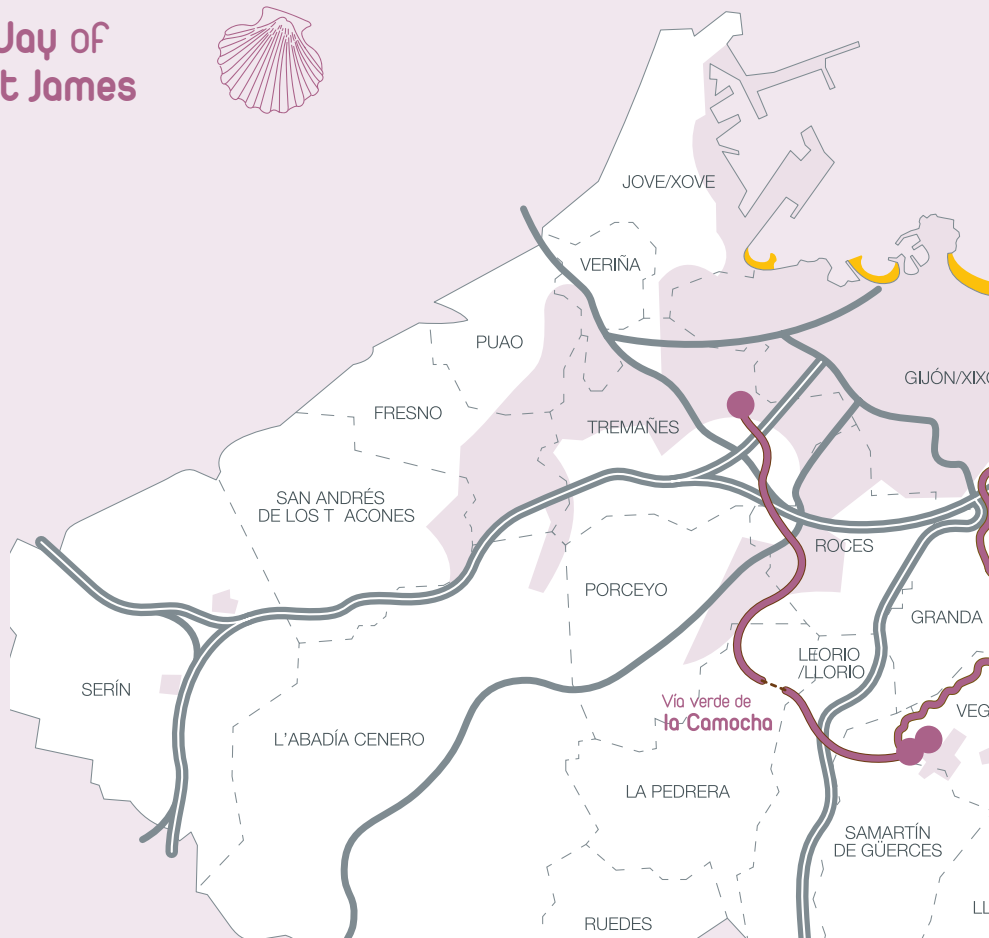
Piles Riverside Path

Way to Covadonga

Way of
St James

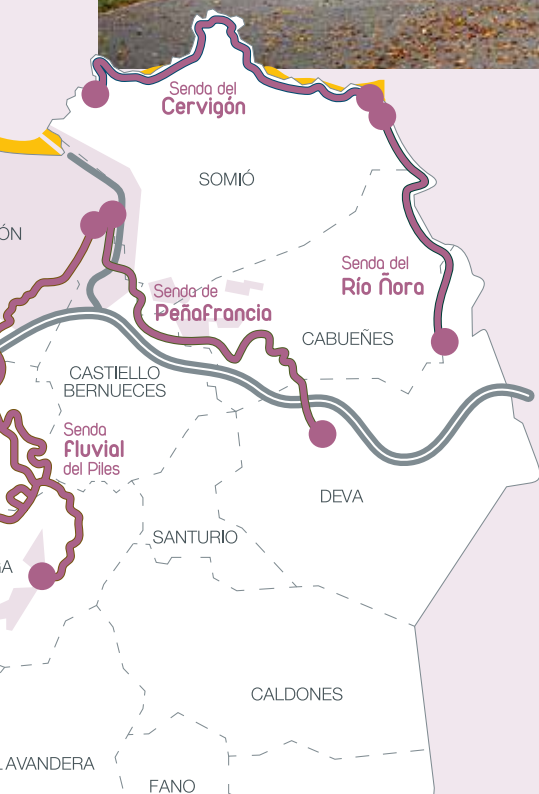


Download the
trails and rou-
tes here





La Camocha
Greenway



On foot or by bike, there are many routes that take us through Gijón/Xixón's natural surroundings and let us enjoy countless corners of the municipality of scenic, ethnographic and cultural interest.

The **Cervigón Trail** is one of the most representative. It runs along the cliffs, rocky shores and beaches of the eastern coast, an area untouched by the city's industrial and urban growth.

The **La Camocha Greenway**, which follows part of the old mining railway, leads us to the settlement founded in the mid-20th century to house La Camocha

mine workers and their families. Rural surroundings and native woodland combine with the recent industrial past, still present in the characteristic headframes of the mine shafts.

And as with the others, each route has its own personality and charm: the **Peñafrancia Trail**, running along the banks of the river of the same name, and also the **Río Ñora Path**, the **Piles Riverside Path**, the **Ways to Santiago** and to **Covadonga**, and the **Silver Route**...

Family Fun



Guoje/a:

boy/girl, youngster. From mining vocabulary, used for the kids who worked washing coal ("washers").



Constantino Suárez. Three girls on San Lorenzo beach, c. 1930. Col. Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies

Kids' Stuff

Nine beaches perfect for relaxing, swimming and sport, pleasant routes and walks in a green setting, and an ideal infrastructure for a varied, fun range of children's activities make Gijón/Xixón a great city for family plans.

Gijón's youngest residents enjoy a varied programme of children's activities all year round. And their parents do too, of course. Family leisure is one of the city's strong points. So those travelling with little ones are in luck. To start with, in

Gijón/Xixón families can find accommodation to suit them: hotels, apartments, country houses and bungalows, with facilities designed especially for them, while local eateries offer special menus and outdoor play areas for after

the meal. Beyond logistics, the city offers numerous activities and visits to delight children, starting with San Lorenzo beach – an emblematic Gijón/Xixón spot that becomes an ideal play space for the whole family in both summer and winter. On the municipality's beaches, children, with the tides' permission (and their parents'), can build sandcastles, jump waves at the shoreline, surf, hunt for crabs... And dogs are in luck too: at El Rinconín beach dogs are allowed year-round, while outside the summer season they're permitted on San Lorenzo between stairways 2 and 8.

Other active options for families include watersports, children's workshops, camps, storytelling, hot-air balloon rides and horse riding... An almost countless offer that also includes year-round highlights such as football matches at El Molinón (*¡Puxa Sporting!*), the European Performing Arts Fair for Children and Youth, and the leisure activities of Semana Negra in summer.

Likewise, at the Roman Villa of Veranes you can discover the past accompanied by a Faun, and at the Roman Baths through dramatised or puppet-led visits.

They can also play-and-learn about traditional Asturian sports at the Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies and discover the cider-making process, even taking part in the *mayanza* – apple-harvest time – thanks to visits and activities run by the municipality's *llagares* (cider presses).

Children and teenagers who are into skating will want to pack their boards when they learn they can enjoy it in Gijón/Xixón at the Cimavilla Skate Track, known as the Skate Park, which has a bowl and a street area with ramps, hubbas, rails... Located beside the Old Fort and the coastal batteries of Santa Catalina, it of-



María and
Carlota are
having a blast



Shopping at the Artisan and Organic
Market in Plaza Mayor

fers spectacular views of the sea and the city – a draw to bear in mind for parents accompanying their children there. There is a second skate park without a bowl in Los Pericones Park, and an indoor one at GuajeSkates Indoor Skatepark & School.

Sticking with active plans, don't forget the green trails that start right in the centre of Gijón/Xixón or the 70 kilometres of bike lanes the city offers for getting around safely.

There are also many parks and gardens with children's play areas, such as Cabo San Lorenzo and Isabel La Católica Park, which has play equipment and various species of animals roaming free.



Strolling along one of the green routes

7 Must-dos for the Whole Family



Amazed at the Aquarium

PICNIC AREAS

A few kilometres from the city, in the municipality's rural areas, you will find plenty of open-air *merenderos* (picnic spots) with play spaces for the kids and fresh, restorative cider for the parents.

BIOPARC ACUARIO DE GIJÓN/XIXÓN

Eels, sturgeon, moray eels, rays, sand-tiger sharks, loggerhead turtles and 400 other marine species live in 60 fresh- and salt-water tanks that showcase in detail the flora and fauna of the world's seas and oceans.

FISHERIES EXPERIMENTATION CENTRE MUSEUM (CEP)

Another, lesser-known, sea-life museum is the CEP (Centro de Experimentación Pesquera) on Avenida Príncipe de Asturias, by El Arbeyal beach, which maintains and renovates the models and collections on display and the live specimens at the Museum-Aquarium.

ATLANTIC BOTANICAL GARDEN

Not to be missed: this 25-hectare natural museum, the first botanical garden in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula, home to over 30,000 plants from 2,500 species. Alongside its natural woods and gardens, it features the Children's Forest, a lovely kids' area, and a fun laurel maze.

PONIENTE BEACH

There is nothing better than spreading your towels on this 500-metre urban beach: its waters are perfect both for the little ones to swim and to start out in watersports, and it has a children's play park right on the sand, usable at any time of year.

ASTURIAS RAILWAY MUSEUM

The Railway Museum holds the largest collection of preserved historic railway stock in Spain. During the Jornadas del Vapor (Steam Days), historic steam and diesel engines are put into operation. Visitors can ride the trains on short trips through the museum in old wooden carriages, as well as join special guided tours.

MARCO TOPO FAMILY TREASURE HUNT

For families, a playful, fun way to discover the city's history, heritage and culture is the Marco Topo adventure in Gijón/Xixón – an interactive treasure hunt offering a self-guided tour of its most emblematic places: the Marina, Cimavilla, San Lorenzo beach, the Aquarium, El Molinón, the Botanical Garden...

Gijón/Xixón in One Click

Digital tools to get to know Gijón/Xixón from the other side of the screen.

Gijón/Xixón is within reach via different digital tools that show us the city from the other side of the screen. With Story Map Gijón/Xixón you can dive into the city's history using your mobile and maps. Las edades de Gijón/Xixón is a podcast series, produced by Radio Viajera, that proposes a journey through time to the city.

Virtual tours let you delve into different emblematic locations of the town of Jovellanos without leaving your armchair.



Enjoy all that and much more by scanning this code with your phone.



Self-guided routes with augmented-reality content



Jovellanos Birthplace Museum (Casa Natal de Jovellanos)

On this visit, augmented reality invites us to discover details that escape the naked eye: scenes, characters and landscapes that reveal the deep bond between Gijón/Xixón and the Cantabrian Sea. Through a carefully curated selection of works by leading early-20th-century Asturian artists such as Juan Martínez Abades, Ventura Álvarez-Sala and Nicanor Piñole, we will tour the museum with fresh eyes, connecting art, history and seafaring memory.



Secrets of the Botanical Garden

Visit Gijón/Xixón's Atlantic Botanical Garden following the guidance of some unusual tour hosts: the *Cuélebre*, the *Espumeru*, the *Xana*... and other mythological beings, designed by Gijón artist Ruma Barbero.

These characters already appear in the comic "Las siete maravillas de Gijón/Xixón", available at Infogijón.

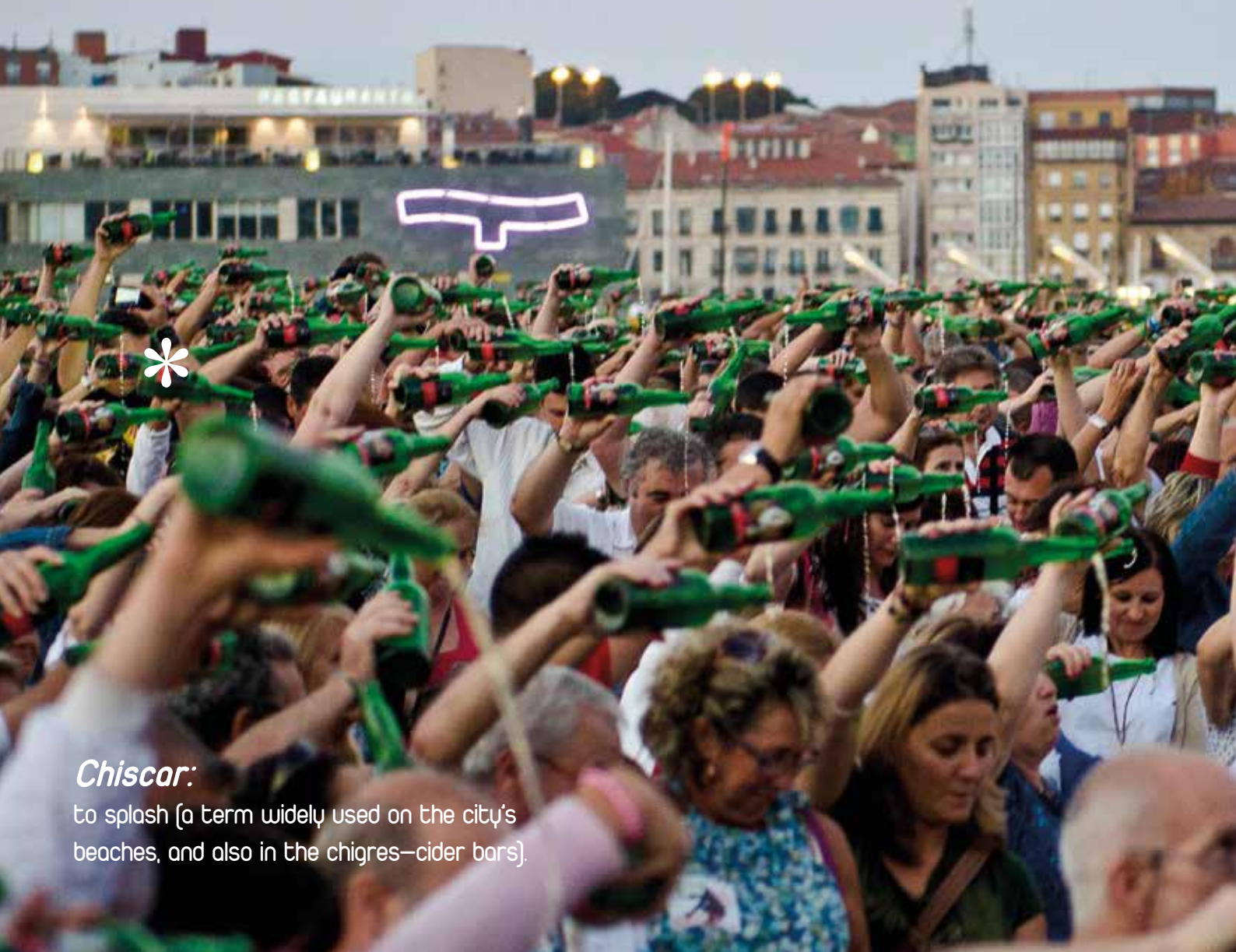


Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies

The mythological characters from "Las 7 maravillas de Gijón/Xixón" will also be our hosts at the Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies, giving us the chance to discover this space that brings us closer to the ways and customs of the Asturian people.



Cider Culture



Chiscar:

to splash (a term widely used on the city's beaches, and also in the chigres—cider bars).



Foto Rocés. Drinking cider at a picnic area, c. 1965.
Col. Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies

Guardians of Heritage

Cider is not just a drink: it is a way of being and existing in the world (their world), a tradition, a rite, a celebration of life, Friendship and Fellowship. Everything begins with it.

Some love affairs never end. Like, for example, the one the people of Gijón/Xixón have with their beloved cider. A drink already appreciated by the Astures in its early forms, to which the Romans—who called it *zythos*—surrendered without reservation, giving rise to terms like *pomar* or *pumares* (a traditional apple orchard). Since then, cider has been part of the Asturian sentimental landscape. Low in alcohol, it is refreshing and healthy (“antipy-

retic, diuretic and laxative,” as those who want a leaflet for everything would say).

Beyond any healing qualities, cider—like the sea—is part of daily life in Gijón/Xixón, becoming a way to socialise and bond that social networks could only dream of. After all, there is no habit more Gijón than sharing a bottle in good company (no need to specify; when you drink cider, good company comes as standard).



Inside a cider
press house



Fancy a *culín* (a small pour of
Asturian cider)?

To grasp, in all its complexity, the importance of this native drink in Gijón life, there is nothing better than visiting local *llagares* (cider presses), where you can even take part in an *espicha* (an informal, stand-up meal by the cider cask), or stopping at *sidrerías* or *chigres* as you stroll the city. There, visitors can taste ciders from different *llagares* and pair their *culinos* (small pours) with typical Gijón seafood bites such as *chicharrinos*, *bocartinos*, *parrochines* and *panchinos*—all small fish usually enjoyed fried in *sidrerías*. Beyond these venues, there are other occasions to fully enjoy the cider art of the town of Jovellanos. At Easter, for example, the Primer Sidre l'Añu event invites attendees to taste the first cider

of the season straight from the presses. And at any time of year, locals make their own secular procession from *chigre* to *chigre*, from *llagar* to *llagar*, with plenty of *pinchos*, traditional food... and a bit of self-flagellation if you head home too early.

Summer, beyond its traditional festivals where cider reigns supreme, brings a particularly cider-focused date: the crowds at the Natural Cider Festival held at the end of August, joined not only by Gijón folk but also by Asturians and visitors from other regions.

And then in October, the cider calendar brings Gijón/Xixón de Sidra (gijondesidra.wordpress.com), a notable 11-day food event where most of the city's *sidrerías* twin with leading Asturian *llagares*, offering top ciders alongside tasty little *cas-seroles*.

The Municipality and its Cider Presses

Besides stopping at the city's many *sidrerías* to sample local cuisine, the best way to dive into the particularities of Asturias's quintessential drink is to visit one of the municipality's *llagares* to learn the process behind this age-old beverage—while tasting it straight from the cask.

Natural Cider Festival

Declared of Regional Tourist Interest, this major event is held in the last week of August. Its wide programme includes, among other activities and events, the Cider and Apple Market, tastings at the city's *llagares*, Cider Bus routes, and even the World Record attempt for Simultaneous Cider Pouring, held each year on Poniente beach.

Cider Culture

Did you know the modern cider bottle was born here? Cider once travelled from cask to jugs, and *escanciado* (cider pouring) imitates that *espichado* from earlier times (the tapping of a cider barrel for communal drinking).

The “Xixón bottle” began to be manufactured in 1844 at La Industria. With dark glass and a “lady’s leg” neck for pouring, its shape has remained almost unchanged since 1880. Thus, each sip is a piece of history.

Four Essential Rules for Enjoying Cider

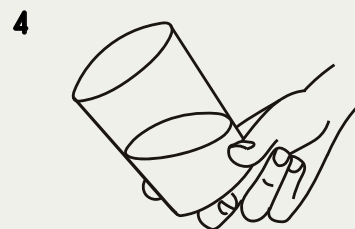
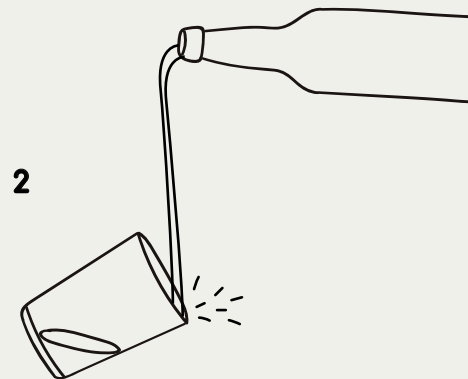
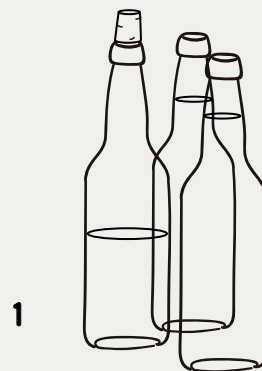
1. Cider isn't ordered by the glass but by the bottle, which is usually shared.

Traditionally the glass is shared, though it is increasingly common for each lucky drinker to have their own.

2. To bring out its flavour, cider is *escanciada* (poured from height). If you don't dare, ask the bartender to do it, or ask your neighbours at the bar—someone will surely lend a hand.

3. Cider is served in *culinos* (small pours), to be drunk in one go, leaving a little dreg which—if sharing a glass—is tossed on the floor where you drank from, to rinse it.

4. If someone pours and offers you a *culín*, don't keep them waiting. Drink it quickly in a single swig. If you don't, everyone will know you are a *foriatu/a* (outsider).



Food and Culture



Fortón/a:

a big eater, glutton; someone who needs a lot to feel full—sometimes a pro at it.



Some calamari, a little bottle of cider and a few laughs in the L'Arena district

A film-worthy gastronomy

People in Gijón/Xixón love to eat: to linger over fresh local produce and long after-dinner chats in good company. That's why, whenever they can, they give in to the subtle or robust flavours of their cuisine. From the most traditional dishes to the most avant-garde, the city showcases an honest recipe book that doesn't mask but enhances natural flavours.

Fabada, *pote asturiano* and *cachopos* are three emblematic Asturian dishes that leapt from the local realm to conquer other territories. Nothing new when it comes to *fabada* or *pote*—true stars of the Asturian table since time immemorial—whose generous portions never cease to amaze diners.

Cachopo, for its part newer but just as characteristic, grabs visitors' attention with its size and heft.

A dish, then, to share between two or more, unless you want to be called a *far-tón* (see Glossary).



But in Gijón/Xixón there's a whole world of flavours beyond these traditional dishes. A quick look at restaurant menus and Gijón recipes shows the maritime character that has always marked the city's personality, and the generosity of the Cantabrian Sea, which daily fills the *rulas* (fish markets) with tasty rockfish and some of the planet's finest shellfish.

Proof of this are the portions of *chicharinos* (small horse mackerel), *bocartinos* (anchovies), *parrochines* (small sardines) and *panchinos* (little sea bream) commonly enjoyed in the city's many *sidrerías*, with a bottle of cider. In this way, local seafood shines—like a leading actor—in

baked dishes that use hardly any seasoning, to highlight the flavour and texture of fish such as sea bream, *pixin* (monkfish) or white seabream. Stuffed megrim with shellfish, conger eel with *arbeyinos* (peas), *pixin with bugre* (monkfish with lobster) and *chopa a la sidra* (black seabream in cider) are other traditional recipes that delight even the most demanding palates.

Tiñosu and *golondru* (the local names for scorpionfish and wolffish respectively) are two rockfish highly prized in Gijón/Xixón. They are usually stewed with potatoes, garlic, onion, olive oil, white wine, parsley and paprika. Red mullet are also rockfish,



caught near the coast. They're commonly eaten fried or grilled, the latter being ideal to maximise their flavour. But it's not all fish at Gijón's markets. Cephalopods and shellfish refuse to play second fiddle. Thus, *calamar de potera* and *pulpo de pedreru* (line-caught squid and rock-caught octopus) also have pride of place among local specialities.

And finally, the shellfish take the stage. In Gijón/Xixón's markets, restaurants and *sidrerías* you will find no shortage of lobsters, spiny lobsters, goose barnacles, clams, shrimp, winkles, *andariques* (velvet crabs), Norway lobsters, spider crabs or *ñocles*—the local name for the delicious

brown crabs. But without doubt the two shellfish most closely identified with Gijón people are *llámpares* (limpets) and especially *oricios* (don't even think of calling them "erizos de mar" in Spanish). Besides trying them in restaurants as locals do, travellers can also enjoy them back home thanks to the tinned products sold in the city's food shops—the first place where they began to be preserved using this method. A delicious culinary memento that lets visitors prolong Gijón/Xixón's taste of the sea, like rewatching a favourite film from the comfort of the sofa.

Beyond the sea and its salty flavour, Gijón/Xixón also stands out for its sweet tooth. The city boasts one of the highest ratios of patisseries per capita in Spain, which says a lot about its sweet tradition. Proof of this lies in the many pastries in the Gijón recipe book, notably the famous Asturian rice pudding—so rich and creamy. Also *charlota*, *frixuelos* and *casadielles*—delicious sweet pastries filled with walnut and/or almond and anise. Not forgetting the city's youngest confectionery speciality: the *tarta gijonesa*. Popularised in the 1970s, it's a sponge cake covered in nougat cream, found in nearly all the city's patisseries and restaurant menus. Alongside these, counters also offer other traditional sweets such as *tejas*, *florentinas* and *pelayos*, made with apple and marzipan. Delicious excuses



to weave Gijón/Xixón's patisseries into your city strolls and discover the locals' *llambión* (sweet-toothed) character and the sweetest side of this seafaring place where, without doubt, you eat like in the movies.

What's more, Asturian cheeses—bringing herding traditions straight to the palate—deserve a starring credit at the end of these film-worthy meals.

No wonder Asturias produces 42 varieties of artisanal cheese, making it a veritable cheese paradise. Among them, the most popular are Cabrales, Afuega'l Pitu, Gamonéu and Casín—each with Protected Designation of Origin—as well as Los Beyos, with Protected Geographical Indication.

What should I order in...?

Each season has its own produce—healthiest and tastiest at that time of year. Here is a small guide to when to order some of these delicacies in the city's restaurants and *sidrerías*, or in its markets and food shops:



Spring

Menestra (Vegetable medley)

In spring, vegetables are at their best, making *menestra* ideal to enjoy in all its glory.

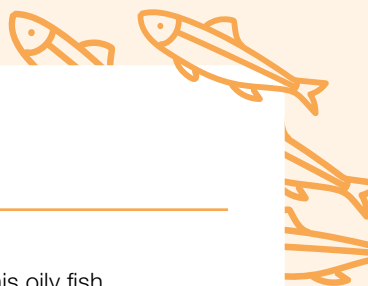
Bocartes (Anchovies)

Boquerones or anchovies, together with *parroches* (small sardines), arrive a season before sardines—their bigger sisters, though only in size.

Llámpares (Limpets)

These single-shell molluscs, typical of Asturian rocky shores, avoid the sun and seek salt water. They're often cooked with *fabes* (beans), stewed with paprika and, above all, in cider with a touch of heat that makes them absolutely delicious.

And also: don't forget *les fabes de mayo* (tender May broad beans)...



Summer

Sardines

In the warmest months this oily fish accumulates more fat, intensifying flavour and aroma.

Bonito (Albacore tuna)

If there is a quintessential summer product in Gijón/Xixón, it is bonito, prepared in many ways: grilled, with tomato, in cider, stewed, pickled... and of course as tuna loaf (*rollo de bonito*), one of Asturias's most popular signature recipes.

Pulpu de pedreru (rock-caught octopus)

At this time a very Gijón dish is slow-cooked: *pulpín con patatines* (octopus with little potatoes). A delight. Other variants include *pulpu con berces* (greens) and *pulpu amarisco* (with shellfish).

And also: *calamar de potera* (line-caught squid), *Somío* tomatoes, red berries...



Autumn

Costañas (Chestnuts)

With autumn's arrival, chestnuts begin to fall and finish ripening on the ground.

In November comes the *amagüestu*, a deeply rooted Asturian tradition: pairing roasted chestnuts with freshly pressed sweet cider to enjoy as a family.

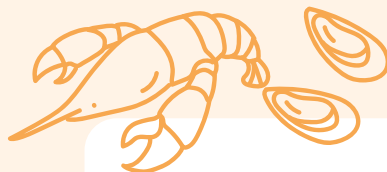
Callos (tripe stew)

Autumn's chill invites hearty stews and soups; among them *callos* stands out, a classic of traditional Asturian cooking. They are usually served piping hot in an earthenware dish, with a little heat.

Verdines (tender green fava beans)

The *fabes verdines* stand out for their small size, hue and delicate flavour. They pair perfectly with shellfish and fish, though they are also often cooked with mushrooms or game.

And also: wild mushrooms, nuts...



Winter

Mariscos (Shellfish)

Tradition says local shellfish are best in the months with an "r", though in reality availability and quality vary by species and closed seasons. In any case, the coldest months coincide with the peak for some shellfish such as spider crabs, *ñocles* (brown crabs), *andariques* (velvet crabs) or goose barnacles.

Oricios (Sea urchins)

In the coldest months you can enjoy sea urchins, or *oricios*, usually eaten raw or with a brief cooking, though they can also be prepared in stews, with rice or in a pie — a local recipe that shows the devotion Gijón/Xixón has for this delicacy.

Fabada (bean stew) and pote asturiano (hotpot)

Both dishes, so characteristic of our region, can be enjoyed year-round, but have traditionally been used to ward off the cold, so they are more commonly eaten in winter.

And also: sea bream, cod...

Shopping in Gijón/Xixón



Andarica:
velvet crab.



Ana will always welcome you with a smile and top-quality produce at her fishmonger's in the Mercado del Sur.



Juan Carlos Tuero.
Municipal fish market. 1987
Col. *Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies*

A Local Touch

Gijón/Xixón would not be the same without local shops and that personalised relationship of trust and warmth that develops day by day between shopkeepers and customers. It is an eco-friendly, sustainable way of consuming that boosts the local economy, in keeping with the community-minded spirit of its people. Visitors, meanwhile, will find numerous specialist shops for food, culture and crafts... making it easy to take a piece of Gijón/Xixón home.

Neighbourhood retail makes Gijón/Xixón a committed city whose economy is rooted in sustainability, belonging and local ties. Coexistence, human warmth, and mutual relationships and knowledge create an organic city model, clearly reflected in the shops that have opened in recent

years. In the town of Jovellanos there is no shortage of shopping opportunities, whether you are strolling through the centre or spending a day at the beach.



Luisa, a German exchange student, has gone out shopping. Veni doesn't speak German — but there is no need!

Gijón/Xixón's markets and shops make it easy for visitors to enjoy all kinds of products and services during their stay, while also giving them the chance to take home a wide variety of keepsakes and souvenirs. Nine areas make up Gijón/Xixón's shopping map. Two of them — El Centro and La Calzada & Natahoyo — are organised as Open-Air Shopping Centres. The rest are: Constitución, Llano, Pumarín, Pablo Iglesias, L'Arena and El Coto/Viesques.

There is also a wide range of cultural products.

A simple walk through the city centre reveals record shops, charming bookshops, and art galleries with works to suit every pocket...

As for design and crafts, the distinctive shopping districts — where long-standing stores live in harmony with the most innovative — let visitors discover fashion, fine jewellery and home décor, while the Artisan and Organic Market offers original works by local makers and artists.

All this without forgetting the many markets that open throughout the year around Gijón/Xixón, notably LABShop — a major showcase for fashion and art that brings together a large group of independent creators, designers and publishers — the Xixón Christmas Market, MENAX, and ArteGijón, a well-established craft fair where you can find the most creative handmade pieces.



Craft solutions in case you want to declare your love to your mozu/a (sweetheart).

MERCADO DEL SUR

Opened in 1899, this provisions market — a pentagonal metal-framed building occupying an entire block between Plaza del 6 de Agosto and Plaza de Europa — still preserves the essence of its beginnings, offering the area's best produce with the closeness and trust built up over years. As Pedro, a fishmonger from Cimavilla whose life has always been tied to fishing, explains:

"What people like is this. One-to-one service, something personal. Here you've got fruit, fish, bread, meat — all top quality."

That is the Mercado del Sur: everyday luxury.

EL RASTRO

Every Sunday, locals and visitors can enjoy El Rastro, the largest and busiest street market in Asturias. Located behind the Sports Palace, next to El Molinón, its stalls delight bargain hunters and vintage collectors, offering everything from antiques to a wide range of foodstuffs — and second-hand clothing too...

A truly charming meeting point.

MERCADO ARTESANO Y ECOLÓGICO

On the second weekend of each month, the Artisan and Organic Market is held in Plaza Mayor — a regional benchmark for crafts, gastronomy and tourism, and a must for enjoying local, organic, native and fair-trade products, as well as activities linked to traditional Asturian culture.

Artisan and Organic Market



Anatomy in Motion





Paragliding from Colina del Cuervo, flying over Serín Beach



Constantino Suárez.
Group of women rowing on San Lorenzo beach. 1934.
Col. Muséu del Pueblu d'Asturies

Shared Energy

Few things nourish the souls of Gijón folk more than laughing with friends on la cuesta'l Cholo, group swims, beach kickabouts, shared cider or cachopo... visitors to the city can also join this way of celebrating life or enjoy, together, the wide range of experiences on offer.

Strolling along El Muro, playing a spontaneous kickabout on the beach, swimming in open water, surfing, sailing, running, paddling... People from Gijón/Xixón love active, shared leisure that goes far beyond classic walking paths or cycle routes.

Watersports, rounds of golf, kayakpescaing — even taking part in the apple harvest — are just some of the options in this city with no ceiling but the sky. A sky that, thanks to the mild climate and stable atmosphere, can be conquered by hot-air balloon or by paragliding — the

latter practised year-round, either solo or tandem with a professional. Another option is paramotoring, suitable for people with reduced mobility. And, as noted, those who want to go higher still can do so by hot-air balloon, an original mode of transport available early in the morning or late in the afternoon — the best times of day to fly.



Cantabrian Waters

The Cantabrian Sea not only gives Gijón/Xixón rich seafaring cuisine and a dozen beaches for relaxing and strolling, but also a vast stage for sport. Fishing — whether sport or spearfishing — is practised along a wide stretch of the municipal coastline. And dinghy sailing, one of the star watersports, can be done all year round. Windsurfing and sea kayaking are also very popular among enthusiasts of all ages, in every season. Driving jet skis or opting for newer activities such as wakeboarding or flyboarding are ideal for those who prefer an adrenaline rush. And if you want to see Gijón/Xixón from a different perspective — that of the Cantabrian — you can hire boats to fish or simply to sail.

Another very popular activity at San Lorenzo is surfing, given its ideal conditions for learning to catch waves. There are various surf, bodyboard and stand-up paddle schools. Surfing is an individual sport, true — but those who practise it find a stimulating shared experience in their passion.



San Pedro church looks on as surfers take to the waves at San Lorenzo.



Inland

The areas around the city are also much frequented by locals, who devote much of their free time to exploring them on foot or by bike. **Five green trails** let you enjoy riverside woods, farmsteads, meadows, cliffs and beaches.

A wide range of routes caters for people with reduced mobility, families with little ones and older visitors.

Besides hiking and cycling, other activities include **paintball** and the traditional **mayanza** — the stage in cider-making when apples are chopped and pressed. Options are rounded out with a wide variety of guided excursions: mountain

routes, ethnographic walks, birdwatching, or trips to spot bears and other wildlife.

Golf lovers have four courses just a few kilometres from the city centre: two municipal — La Llorea and Tragamón — and two private — the Real Club de Golf de Castiello and Deva Golf Pitch & Putt.



Paragliding from Pico San Martín, or Picu'l Sol

Beyond the Coast

Pico San Martín, or Picu'l Sol, is the usual launch point for paragliding flights offering a beautiful panorama of Gijón/Xixón that, weather permitting, reaches Oviedo/ Uviéu, the L'Aramo range, Mount Naranco and Avilés.

Here... There's Everything!

Some swim in the pool every day, some play five-a-side with friends, others take part in padel tournaments. And there are also very many athletes of all ages competing in different categories, including disciplines that are not so traditional here but have really taken hold among locals, such as rugby, baseball or American football.

Much More than Sport

People from Gijón/Xixón love sport and have a wealth of facilities for it, both public and private. Special mention goes to the city's long-standing social sports clubs, where a large share of the population — especially families — exercise and spend their free time. Flagship clubs include the Real Grupo de Cultura Covadonga (one of the largest in Spain!), Swimming Club Santa Olaya, the Tennis Club and the Club Astur de Regatas, among others.



The women of Gijón Rugby Club



Eva and Ana enjoy their training on the kilometrín, by the River Piles.

THE "KILOMETRÍN"

The "kilometrín" is a track that, for many years, measured only 975 m (hence the name which translates as the little kilometre). Located near El Molinón football ground, it welcomes many of the city's runners every day to give it their all (or at least something).

Leisure Time

Gijón/Xixón Never Stops

Cinema, music, dance, literature, performing arts, alternative leisure, gastronomy, sport... All year round, the city's calendar is packed with celebrations, festivals and cultural events for every taste, budget and audience. Enjoying them is also a way of living Gijón/Xixón. Make the most of it!





Tsunami Xixón Festival. Stage at Laboral,
City of Culture

FESTIVALS

In Gijón/Xixón, as throughout Asturias, countless festivities, events and celebrations take place all year long. Especially representative are the so-called *fiestas de prau*. These are traditional open-air festivals held between May and September by parishes and neighbourhoods, with cider and live music, where crowds of local residents and visitors gather.



EVENTS festejos.gijon.es

ANTROXU

Carnival, Festival of Regional Tourist Interest.
February/March.

NOCHE DE SAN XUAN [St. John's Eve]

Bonfire, music and traditional dances.
24 June.

LA FIESTA DEL CIELO

Air show and aviation-related activities.
July.

SEMANA GRANDE

Patron saint festivities of Our Lady of Begoña.
August.

DÍA D'ASTURIES EN XIXÓN

Festival of National Tourist Interest.
First Sunday in August.

FIESTA DE LA SIDRA NATURAL

Festival of Regional Tourist Interest.
August.

CINEMA

A film-loving city could not be without a top-tier festival devoted to the seventh art, one that Gijón/Xixón has enjoyed every autumn for six decades now.

If you love cinema, there is no better excuse for a getaway to Gijón/Xixón. For over a week, FICX turns the Jovellanos Theatre into the city's cinephile hub.

The festival programme includes screenings of the latest independent films at various venues around the city, as well as courses, round tables, meet-the-director sessions and live music.

An unmissable benchmark that year after year draws the boldest, most innovative professionals on the international film scene and an enthusiastic audience that is ever larger and more discerning.

Alongside FICX, noteworthy highlights include the annual programme of Laboral Cinemateca, the film series organised under the science-outreach programme Gijón con Ciencia, and the versatility of other festivals dedicated to documentary (Docuxixón), short films (Cortogijón), social cinema (MUSOC) and "B-movie" films (Peor... ¡imposible!).

¡ACCIÓN!

**Festival Internacional
de Cine de Gijón**



EVENTS

MUSOC

Asturias Social and Human Rights Film Showcase. January.

musocasturies.org

CORTOGIJÓN

Gijón/Xixón Short Film Festival. May.

cortogijon.com

DOCUXIXÓN

Documentary screening series. June.

gijon.es/es/eventos/docuxixon

PEOR... ¡IMPOSIBLE!

B-movie and low-budget film series. August–September.

<https://www.gijon.es/es/turismo/peor-imposible>

FICX

Gijón/Xixón International Film Festival. November.

gijonfilmfestival.com



MUSIC

The people of Gijón/Xixón love music and, fortunately, that love is reciprocated. The city is famous for the countless festivals, across all musical styles, that it hosts throughout the year. Standouts include the eclectic Gijón Sound Festival, held at different venues around the city, and the L.E.V. Festival, showcasing top electronic music and the most experimental visual arts. All the summer fiestas and festivals put music centre stage: Metrópoli and Semana Negra combine their cultural programmes with daily concerts; Tsunami Xixón has earned its place as Asturias's major rock festival; Euroyeyé has spent over 20 years drawing mods from across the world; and Semana Grande includes free daily gigs. And from autumn onwards, jazz and gospel take over in festivals featuring major international names.

The Danza Xixón showcase of workshops and performances, and the Festival de Música Antigua round off a varied musical offering without gaps or hang-ups.

EVENTS

GIJÓN SOUND FESTIVAL

Urban, eclectic music gathering.

gijonsoundfestival.com

L.E.V. FESTIVAL

Electronic music and visual arts.

April/May.

levfestival.com

FESTIVAL DE MÚSICA ANTIGUA

Classical music festival.

gijon.es/es/eventos/festival-musica-antigua-gijon

GIJÓN LIFE

Concert series.

gijonlife.com/

TSUNAMI XIXÓN

Rock festival.

August.

tsunamixixon.com

EUROYEYÉ

Mod and 60s culture festival.

August.

euroyeye.es

JAZZ XIXÓN

Jazz festival.

November.

teatrojovellanos.com

FESTIVAL DE GÓSPEL

Spiritual music gathering.

December.

teatrojovellanos.com





DANCE

With Danza Xixón, the most contemporary languages of the movement arts, in the broadest sense, are brought to various performance spaces in the city, including the street (could there be a more “theatrical” venue).

LITERATURE

For decades, Gijón/Xixón has had a steady relationship with literature that has only grown: book clubs, launches, readings, and some of the most charming bookshops in the country make the city breathe literature from every corner. The young poetry festival POEX, here to stay, showcases different poetic languages across various artistic expressions, with leading national poets in attendance. But without doubt the city’s must-attend literary event is Semana Negra, a pioneering multidisciplinary festival that in 2021 received the Gold Medal of Merit in the Fine Arts. With over 30 years behind it, this crime-fiction-centred festival is Spain’s longest-running literary, cultural and activist gathering. Its activities include cultural events and various entertainments such as concerts, bar terraces, markets, fair-ground rides, and more. A true classic now — an absolutely essential date in Gijón’s summer.



EVENTS

DANZA XIXÓN

Contemporary dance and movement-arts showcase, a reference point in northern Spain. October.

gijon.es/es/eventos/danza-xixon

EVENTS

POEX

Poetry gathering. March/April.

facebook.com/poexixon

FERIA DEL LIBRO DE XIXÓN (BOOK FAIR)

Book launches and various activities. June.

gijon.es/es/eventos/feria-del-libro-de-gijonxixon

SEMANA NEGRA

Literary, cultural and festive event. July.

semananegra.org



PERFORMING ARTS

Gijón/Xixón is an ideal stage for the performing arts, as shown by its carefully curated annual programming at the Jovellanos Theatre and Laboral, City of Culture, and by the fact that the city hosts the Principality of Asturias's Higher School of Performing Arts (ESAD). Among theatre activities, FETEN stands out for its originality — Gijón/Xixón's European Performing Arts Fair for Children, established as Spain's leading meeting point for professionals in this field. It brings together nearly a hundred theatre companies that turn the urban space into a live laboratory for experimenting with the latest creative trends.



Photo by David Álvarez López
<https://flickr.com/photos/94814431@N02/10634971754>

EVENTS

FETEN

European Performing Arts Fair for Children.

February.

feten.gijon.es

TEATRO JOVELLANOS (JOVELLANOS THEATRE)

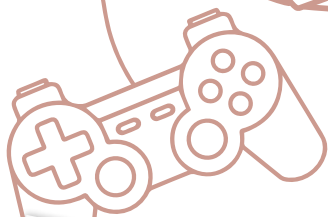
gijon.es/es/directorio/teatro-jovellanos

TEATRO DE LA LABORAL (LABORAL THEATRE)

laboralcidaddelacultura.com

ALTERNATIVE LEISURE

Gijón/Xixón has always backed alternative culture. A clear example is the work of the youth association Abierto Hasta el Amanecer, which since 1996 has run a socio-educational leisure programme on weekend afternoons and evenings. As for cultural fixtures, the Metròpoli media festival of culture and entertainment combines gastronomy and trends, music of every style, science-fiction cinema... covering every branch of entertainment: comics, video games, concerts, exhibitions, film, television, kids' activities, board games, extreme sports, Star Wars, cosplay. In other words, geek paradise. In recent years the city's programme has also added CometCon, the region's longest-running youth convention for alternative culture and leisure — a true invasion of video games, comics, film, cosplay, K-pop, maker culture and everything related to the virtual world.



EVENTS

CONCURSO DE PINCHOS DE GIJÓN/XIXÓN

Gastronomy festival. May.

gijondepinchos.wordpress.com

METRÒPOLI GIJÓN

Media Festival of Culture and Entertainment. June/July.

metropoligijon.com

COMETCON

Youth convention for alternative culture and leisure. September.

cometcon.org

OTHER DATES OF INTEREST

FIDMA

Asturias International Trade Fair. August.

feriasturias.es

CSIO 5 ESTRELLAS

International Show Jumping Competition. August/September.

hipico.gijon.es

GIJÓN/XIXÓN DE SIDRA

Gastronomy festival in cider houses. October.

gijondesidra.wordpress.com

MERCAPLANA

Children's and Youth Fair. December/January.

camaragijon.es

Proximity Tourism



Discovering Paradise from Gijón/Xixón

Besides feeling deeply *Gijonés*, the people of the town of Jovellanos proudly display their Asturianness whenever they can.

That is why they suggest discovering the region's charms from the privileged base the city provides.

An ideal starting point from which to enjoy paradise in all its splendour.

Four routes to discover Asturias

- WESTERN COAST
- CENTRAL MOUNTAINS
- EASTERN COAST / PICOS DE EUROPA
- MINING AREA





DID YOU KNOW...

that the Western Coast Protected Landscape is a narrow coastal strip open to the sea with vast stretches of meadows and grassland, with areas of coastline that are hard to access and of great value?

WESTERN COAST

CABO PEÑAS-AVILÉS-CUIDEIRU

The Western Coast Protected Landscape (Paisaje Protegido de la Costa Occidental), in the municipalities of Valdés and Cudillero/Cuideiru, marks the destination of this almost 90-kilometre one-way route, which will reveal the beauty of Asturias's coast and some emblematic towns of the Principality. Starting from Gijón/Xixón, head towards Cabo Peñas via the fishing towns of Candás and Luanco/Lluanco, where a lovely beach and the Maritime Museum await.

Cabo Peñas is the northernmost point of Asturias, a beautiful landscape of cliffs

about 100 metres high with spectacular views. From there, after stopping to see the long sands of Xagó, the route leads to Avilés, where you'll surely be surprised by its old town — considered one of the best preserved in northern Spain — its estuary (don't miss the rula or fish market), and the Niemeyer Centre, the only building in Spain by this Brazilian architect. After the Avilés stroll, the route continues through other places of interest: Salinas beach — one of Asturias's most touristic — which also has a unique open-air museum dedicated to anchors; San Esteban de Pravia, highlight-

ing the mouth of the Nalón; Somao, with its stately *indiano* houses; and Aguilar beach. And at the end of the route, after the rugged northern coastline, the fishing village of Cudillero/Cuideiru appears as the perfect finale — one of the most photographed coastal towns in the country.



DID YOU KNOW...

this route lets you discover and savour traditional products and dishes such as *Afuega'l Pitu* cheese, chestnut hotpot, spit-roasted lamb, or the famous Asturian carbayones pastries?

CENTRAL MOUNTAINS

UVIÉU-SENDA DEL OSO-BUSTIELLO

This foray into Asturias's Central Mountains reveals both art and nature on a beautiful, rolling itinerary where the peaks stand out. The first section of this 145-kilometre circular route links Gijón/Xixón with Oviedo/Uviéu, where you should focus on the pre-Romanesque churches of San Julián de los Prados, Santa María del Naranco and San Miguel de Lillo.

Another pre-Romanesque gem is the church of San Pedro de Nora, which appears a bit further on in Las Regueras, a few kilometres from the Meanders of the Nora viewpoint, reached from Priañes.

The next stop is the Senda del Oso Trail, a greenway of 33 kilometres of which only a short six-kilometre stretch is accessible up to the Bear Enclosure. After the walk, the drive continues up the valley to the Valdemurio reservoir, accessed from Bárzana — a particularly attractive spot in autumn. Until you reach L'Altu la Cobertoria, the climb offers splendid views of the Quirós valley and the Ubiñas Massif. Weather permitting, it is the ideal area for a restorative picnic.

Back on the road, descend the pass towards La Pola (L.lena) and Bustiello (Mieres), where you will find the fascinat-

ing Mining Village Interpretation Centre, whose visit shows what an Asturian mining settlement was like in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



DID YOU KNOW...

at La Griega beach in Colunga there is a path of just over half a kilometre that takes you to dinosaur footprints — the largest discovered in the world so far?

EASTERN COAST / PICOS DE EUROPA

**TAZONES-LLASTRES-EL FITU-CANGUES
D'ONÍS CUADONGA/ COVADONGA**

Over its 114 kilometres, this route eastwards across Asturias reveals both sea and mountains, with the Picos de Europa appearing along the way. The first stop is the charming fishing village of Tazones, historically notable as the place where Charles I landed on arriving in Spain. Next, the Partial Nature Reserve of the Villaviciosa Estuary showcases one of the best-preserved and most environmentally valuable estuaries on the Cantabrian coast.

Villaviciosa calls for a leisurely stroll through its historic centre and a stop at the nearby church of San Salvador de Valdediós (“El Conventín”), a pre-Romanesque jewel 9 kilometres from town. The route returns to the sea to visit Lastres — considered one of Spain’s most beautiful villages — and the nearby Jurassic Museum of Asturias (MUJA), a trip back to the world of dinosaurs. On the way to Arriondas/Les Arriendes you reach the Mirador del Fitu, with spectacular views

of Asturias’s eastern coast and the Picos de Europa. The final stretch reveals the bridge over the River Sella, Cangas de Onís/Cangues d’Onís and Covadonga/ Cuadonga, where the cave, the basilica and the beautiful lakes await.



Tanes Reservoir

DID YOU KNOW...

you can visit a pit that is still active and walk through its mine galleries? If you are not fazed by going underground, sign up for the guided tour of the iconic Pozo Sotón Coal Mine in the municipality of San Martín del Rey Aurelio.

MINING AREA

MUSEUM OF IRON AND STEEL-MINING MUSEUM-SAMUÑO ECOMUSEUM-POZO SOTÓN-REDES PARK

Inland Asturias is mining country, but also a region of beautiful nature and high ecological value, home to treasures such as Redes Natural Park, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. This 95-kilometre route leaves Gijón/Xixón for La Felguera, home to the MUSI Iron and Steel Museum, one of the best examples of the Nalón Valley's industrial past. The next stop, the Samuño Ecomuseum at the former San Luis Mine, includes a two-kilometre ride on a mining train.

Mining remains centre stage in El Entrego, site of the MUMI Mining Museum, which features a reproduction of a coal pit mouth and the “cage” that carries miners inside.

From there the route leads to Entrialgo (Laviana/Llaviana), where the Birthplace of writer Armando Palacio Valdés awaits — a 17th-century rural mansion.

After this stop, nature takes the lead in Rioseco/Rusecu (Sobrescobio), set be-

tween the Tanes and Rusecu reservoirs and the gateway to Redes Natural Park. In this area it is more than advisable to visit the Water Interpretation Centre and the Redes Interpretation Centre, walk the Ruta del Alba Trail, and discover at the Tarna Pass the Nalona Spring — the source of the River Nalón.

Glossary

Essential vocabulary for diving into Gijón/Xixón

Acutar: to reserve, to save a spot (a sign saying “*Acutáu*” on a restaurant table makes it clear it’s booked. Time to find another!).

A ESGAYA:
lots, abundant, in great quantity.

Afayadizu/a: cosy, pleasant, agreeable; a person, place or thing that makes you feel at ease.

Amagüestu: the roasting of chestnuts; a traditional festivity centred on roast chestnuts and sweet cider.

Andarica: velvet crab.

Antroxu: carnival; también hace referencia a la parte del *gochu* que se regala en esas fechas a los vecinos que no hicieron matanza o a los que se quiere obsequiar.

Arcu la vieya: rainbow.

Babayu: someone who talks nonsense; a fool, idiot, conceited person who boasts without reason (a much-used insult in Asturias).

Ballena (*ver la ballena*): to tell someone to get lost. The expression dates back to 1895, when a dead whale, found by the steamer Sultán, was brought to a cove at El Rinconín amid great public excitement.

Banduyu: belly, abdomen; a person with a prominent paunch.

Cachopu: a typical Asturian dish, of astronomical size, made from two meat fillets stuffed with cheese, ham or other fillings; it even has its own principle in Gijonomy (and quite right too!).

Caleya: a narrow, short street or alley; a mountain path, rural lane.

Carbayón/a: nickname for people from Oviedo; also an almond-based pastry.

Cascayu: local name for the game of hopscotch.

Chigre: cider house; bar.

Chiscar: to splash (a term widely used on the city’s beaches; and also in cider houses).

ESPICHA: the act of opening a cider cask. By extension, it refers to any party around cider barrels, where people eat, drink and enjoy themselves together.

Coger en cuellu: to pick up in your arms, to cradle.

Collaciu/a: friend, mate, pal.

Cuélebre: a legendary creature in Asturian mythology, a winged serpent with less-than-kind intentions.

Curiosu/a: well-turned out, good-looking, well-proportioned; neat, tidy.

Cutu: cold; if you ask about the weather in Asturias and someone replies with the typical line from the local forecast “Fai un cutu qu’escarabaya’l pelleyu”, be sure to pack a fleece.

Duernu: vessel that collects apple juice when pressing; *sidra del duernu* is the fresh juice produced by pressing the apples.

Emburriar: to push (very useful to know which way a door opens).

Escamplar: to clear up (of the weather), for the clouds to vanish (it does happen sometimes).

Esfamíáu/ada: ravenously hungry; scrawny, peaky.

Espoxigar: to grow, to develop, to recover one’s health.

Fabada: the quintessential Asturian dish that needs no introduction; with cider, there’s no better fuel: “Con fabes y sidrina nun fae falta gasolina” (With beans and cider you don’t need petrol).

Faltosu/a: lacking sense; disrespectful, a nuisance (a favourite insult among Asturians).

Fame: hunger; as the saying goes, there is only one antidote to fame, apart from eating, of course: “Cuerpu tumbáu fame resiste” (A body lying down resists hunger).

Fartón/a: a big eater, glutton, someone who needs a lot to feel full; fond of overindulging — sometimes professionally so.

Fartucar/se: to eat a lot, to fill up; folk wisdom is clear: “A fartucamos vamos, a trabayar ya dirán” (We’ll go for a good feed; as for work — we’ll see).

Fíu/a: son/daughter.

Foguera: bonfire.

Folgar: to have a good time, to rest, to be at leisure.

Folixa: party, revelry, fun.

FORIATU/A:

outsider, from outside the Principality of Asturias; the main beneficiary of this present Treaty of Gijonomy.

Forrar: to eat while drinking or beforehand to cushion the effects of alcohol or to stave off hunger for a while.

Frixuelu: a fried batter treat made with flour, milk, eggs and sugar, typical of Antroxu (carnival crêpe).

Furacu: hole.

Gabitu (*echar un*): to help out, give a hand.

Gochu: pig; by extension, a dirty, rude, foul-mouthed, indecent person...

Guafe/a: boy/girl, youngster (from mining vocabulary, used for the kids who worked as helpers in coal operations).

Ho: clipped form of "home" used mainly to emphasise the end of a sentence (¡Qué, ho! or ¡Cal-la, hooooooooo! are especially handy).

Home: man; husband, el mi home (my husband).

iHome, no!: of course yes (ironical emphatic "you bet").

Llagor: cider press; the term refers both to the press and the place where cider is made.

Llambión/a: sweet-toothed, fond of desserts; i.e., someone who devours casadielles, frixuelos, pelayos, chaponas, bartolos, princesitas and other local treats.

Mancar: to hurt, injure, harm (oneself).

Marchar: to leave, to go away (an Asturian doesn't just "go", they march).

Mozu/a: boyfriend/girlfriend.

Muyer: woman; wife, la mi muy-er (my wife).

Muyerina: elderly woman.

Naguar: to have one's mouth water at the sight or smell of some delicacy.

Ñocla: brown crab.

Orbayu: fine, persistent drizzle typical of Asturias.

Oriciu: sea urchin, whose strong, addictive flavour is like putting all the Cantabrian's wildness in your mouth.

Pelín: local unit roughly meaning "a bit".

Picar: to knock on the door with your knuckles; by extension, to ring the bell.

Pigazu (*echar un*): a short nap, a quick doze, a brief light sleep that *presta pola vida* (does you a world of good).

Pingar: to drip, to get soaked, to drip from being soaked; hence *poner pingando* (to slag someone off, laying into their faults).

Playu/a: nickname for people from Gijón; also their distinctive speech, especially in the Cimavilla district.

Prau: meadow.

Preñáu: stuffed; with chorizo, black pudding, cheese or any other delight inside (as in *bolli preñáu*).

Prestar: to please, to delight; it also means to lend something to someone without knowing if you will get it back — which is rather less pleasing.

Puxa: up with..., long live... (¡Puxa Xixón! ¡Puxa Asturias!).

Refalfiu: weariness brought on by excess; when you've done, eaten or enjoyed something to excess, *tas refalfiáu*.

Repunante: unpleasant, fussy, always complaining, everything gets on their nerves.

Tajalápiz: pencil sharpener (curious, isn't it?).

Tendal: clothesline/airer (some are covered — it does rain now and then in Asturias...).

Uviéu: Oviedo.

¡XARÉU! :
commotion, bustle,
boisterous fun, a knees-up.

Xixón: Gijón.

Xano: figure from Asturian mythology, a nymph (or fairy) of springs and mountains.

**¡HOME, NO!
CHISCAR
¡GUAJE!
EMBURRIAR**

gijón