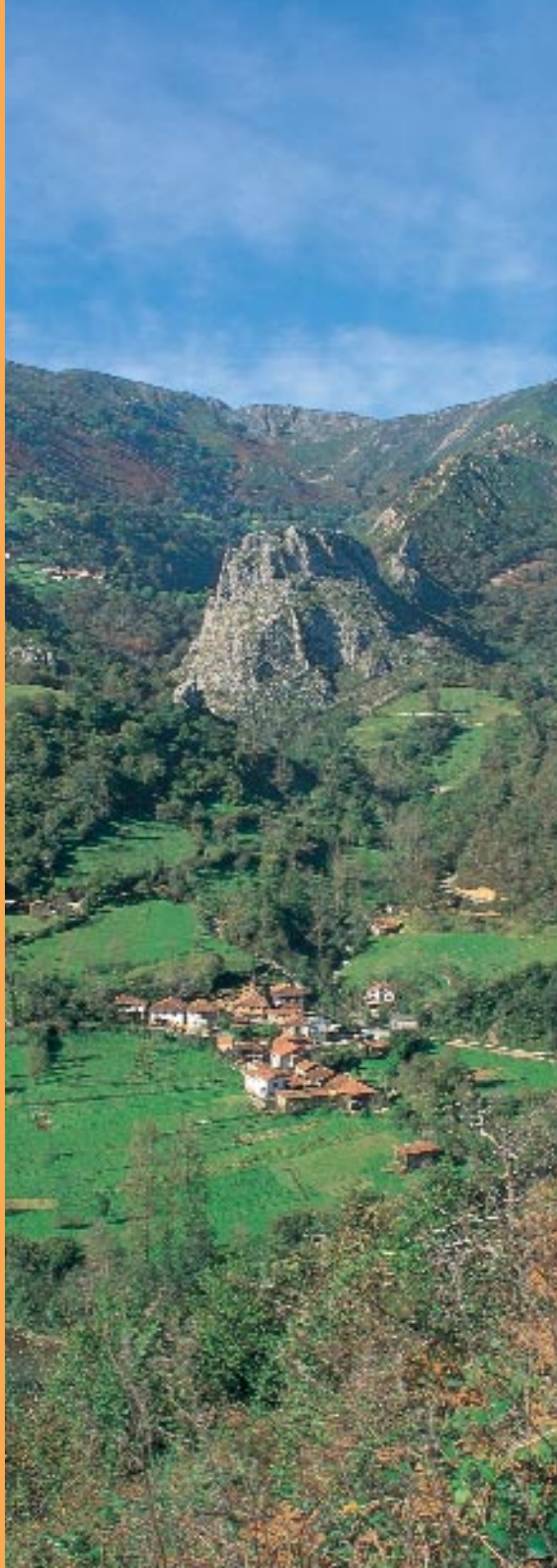


Spain

Asturias

Oviedo



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M A R C A N T Á B R I C O

A CORUÑA 135 km

LUGO 70 km

A CORUÑA 140 km

SANTANDER 67 km



GALICIA

LUGO

C A S T I L L A

C O R D I L L E R A C A N T Á B R I C A

P I C O S D E E U R O P A C A N T A B R I A

CANTABRIA

PALENCIA

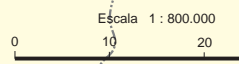
LEÓN

LEÓN 36 km

LUGO 236 km

BURGOS 201 km

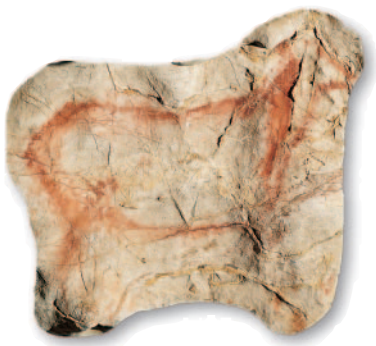
- Highway
- Freeway
- National road
- «A» Road
- «B» Road
- Local Road
- Railway
- Parador (State-run hotel)
- Shrine-Monastery
- Castle
- Monument
- Historic ruins
- Caves
- National Park
- Nature Reserve
- Camp site
- Ski resort
- Golf course
- Spa
- Marina
- Lighthouse
- Airport



Cartographic information: CARTOGRAFÍA: GCAR, S.L. Cardenal Silíceo, 35. Tel. 91 416 73 41 - 28002 MADRID - AÑO 2000

INTRODUCTION

*The Principality of Asturias is a verdant, unending feast of scenery. In this region of northern Spain, sea and mountainside meet in a world of abrupt contours, exuberant nature, rolling forests, and scores of small towns and villages dotted about a terrain that is a joy to the senses. Seventy-eight municipalities make up a region that covers over 10,500 square kilometres (some 4,000 sq. miles), with a 375-kilometre strip of coastline. To the south lies the Province of León, to the West that of Lugo, and to the East, Cantabria. The Picos de Europa massif has acted as an nigh impassable barrier. To the north, the Atlantic swell of the Bay of Biscay pummels the coastal cliffs, forming hundreds of beaches...secluded, capriciously carved beaches, small coves of white sand and weathered rock. Two very different faces of Asturias, and, there between the two, lies metropolitan Asturias: **Oviedo**, the capital (population 200,000), **Gijón**, the largest city (population 270,000), and **Avilés**, an industrial and fishing centre (population 90,000). In addition, there are the two mining capitals: **Langreo** and **Mieres**.*



Pindal Cave, rock painting

History: Heirs of the Palaeolithic

To trace Asturias' historical origins one has to travel far back in time. To the Palaeolithic, the age of the great cave painters. The caves of Candamo, El Buxu, El Pindal or Tito Bustillo, among others, stand in mute testimony to this culture. When, many centuries later, the Roman Empire sought to colonise these lands, its envoys came up against warrior tribes with a lifestyle not far removed from that of their Palaeolithic forebears. They fished and hunted much like their ancestors, they moved about in clans, clothed themselves in furs and skins, paid homage to the deities of Nature and rebelled



against the very notion of foreign rule or authority. These were the Asturs.

The Asturs were exponents of the so-called *castro* culture. These *castros* (fortified encampments) were both places of abode and defence: circular stone dwellings, with straw roofs, surrounded by stout walls. This *castro* culture has left abundant examples in



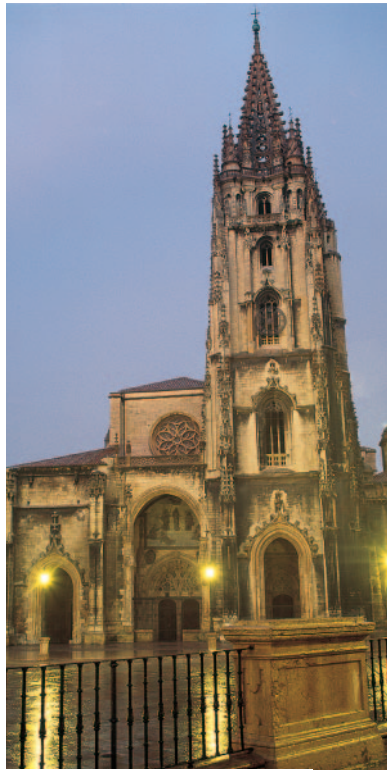
Cave of Tito Bustillo, rock painting. Ribadesella

Asturias, the best being the Coaña *castro*, in the West of the region. When, after three hard-fought wars, the Romans were finally able to set about their cultural and economic colonisation of the Asturs, they looked to this people's land for its precious metals, and to its menfolk for skilled warriors to man the Imperial legions.

Ultimately, Asturias was Romanised, though never entirely. The Moorish invasion left few scars on the Principality. Once again, the Astur tribes halted the advance of an invading army with the aid of a broken and difficult terrain. The legend is told of how, in the 8th century, a local chieftain of noble blood, Pelayo by name, defeated the Moorish forces at the Battle of Covadonga, on the site of which there now stands a shrine that has become a regional symbol. Indeed, it was this battle that heralded the beginning of the Reconquest and the birth of the Asturian monarchy.

Many years have since elapsed, but the echoes of those bygone days haunt the land: the famine of medieval times, the uprising of the Asturian people during the Peninsula War, the massive exodus of the emigration years, the industrialisation that took place toward the close of the last century... A past that is kept alive through traditions, folklore and customs: ancestral dances, such as the *Corri-corri* of the Cabrales district or *El Pericote* from Llanes; dishes that hail from another age, such as the local casseroles (*potes*), the famed *fabada* (stew of haricot beans, pork and sausage), or the blue-veined Cabrales cheese, left to mature in natural mountainside caves; a past that is to be seen in the local architecture, in the

mansions built by the “indianos” (expatriate Asturians who, having left to seek fame and fortune in America, returned with their newfound wealth), and in the *hórreos* (narrow, stone, house-like gran-aries supported on squat piles) standing alongside many a country homestead, which together constitute Asturias’ most important architectural heritage. A past that has also bequeathed a local tongue, known as *bable*. This however is neither standardised nor in generalised use, and is heard mostly in country districts. Asturias has a population of 1,100,000, a mild climate and plentiful rainfall. Temperatures average around 12°C in winter (except in mountain areas) and 16°C-18°C in summer.



Oviedo Cathedral

*Faculty of Philosophy and letters,
statue of Father Feijoo. Oviedo*



OVIEDO In the shadow of its Cathedral

Oviedo is a city that is ideal for exploring on foot. A good part of its historic Old Quarter is a pedestrian precinct. The starting point for the tour is the **Cathedral Square (Plaza) (1)**, laid out beneath the imposing steeple of its Gothic church. Oviedo Cathedral, built in the 16th century, stands guard over one of Christianity's treasures, the **Cámara Santa**, designed as a shrine for a coffer of holy relics -the **Arca Santa**- along with the **Angel Cross (Cruz de los Angeles)** and Pelayo's reputed **Cross of Victory (Cruz de la Victoria)**, an insignia which forms part of the Asturian coat of arms.

The interior of Oviedo Cathedral -Flamboyant Gothic in style- is truly impressive. The altarpiece is considered one of the most exquisite in Spain. The 11th-century polychrome stone statue of the Saviour, cloister, Chapter House and pilgrims' garden graveyard are other points to see in this church with its single, soaring steeple and spire.

Opening times: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 4 - 7 p.m. (summer, 4 - 8 p.m.). Closed Sundays and Public Holidays. The Cathedral Museum may also be visited. Opening times: Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 4 - 7 p.m. Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 4 - 6:30 p.m. (summer, 4 - 8 p.m.). ☎ 98 520 31 17.

The streets surrounding the Cathedral have a very traditional flavour. The



Oviedo City Hall

Calle San Vicente (*calle*, street) is home to the **Asturian Archaeological Museum (2)**.

Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and 4 - 6 p.m.

Sundays and Public Holidays, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. ☎ 98 521 54 05. Rooms are divided into Roman, pre-Romanesque and Gothic.

Feijoo Square, the **Monastery of San Pelayo (3)** and the **Church of St.**

Mary the Royal (Santa María la Real) (4) are hedged round by narrow,

bustling streets and alleyways. On one

of these streets, **La Rúa**, stands the

Provincial Fine Arts Gallery (Bellas Artes) (5), housing a fine collection of

16th-century European and Spanish paintings and 19th- and 20th-century

Asturian art. Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and

5 - 8 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays, 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

☎ 98 521 30 61.

In the Old Quarter, one finds many of the city's most traditional shops, wine bars (*tascas*) and dealers in antiques and religious items. A stone's throw

from the Calle de Cimadevilla is the Plaza de la Constitución, with the **City Hall** (*Ayuntamiento*) **(6)**, which in its first incarnation, dates from the 17th century, and **St. Isidore's Church** (*San Isidoro*) **(7)** (16th- and 17th-century). Nearby is **Fontán Market** **(8)**, currently undergoing restoration, and the Plaza del Fontán, the heart of Oviedo's Old Quarter, a small yet stunning square, enclosed by arcades that lend it a genuine medieval air (note: the square is scheduled for restoration in 1997). A street market is held on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday mornings.

San Francisco Park (*Campo de San Francisco*), which traces its origins as far back as the 13th century, acts as the city's "lungs". In the area around the Plaza de La Escandalaria, a number of singular buildings are to be found, such as the Caja de Asturias, the **Regional Palace** **(9)**, seat of the Principality's Regional Council, Asturias' most important political body, and, in the neighbouring Calle de Fruela, the former Banco Herrero building, with its notable façade. Adjoining La Escandalaria Square rise the silhouettes of the **Campoamor**

Theatre **(10)**, which houses the Centre of Modern Art in its basement, and what was formerly **Santa Clara Convent** **(11)**, today home to the Inland Revenue Department. Facing the nearby Calle de San Francisco is the historic edifice that is **Oviedo University** **(12)**, founded in the 16th century by the Inquisitor, Fernando de Valdés Salas. Visitors are welcome. Around the corner in the Plaza de Porlier, the façades of the **Toreno** **(13)** and **Camposagrado Palaces** **(14)** are well worth seeing.

The **Calle de Uría**, the shopping centre of modern Oviedo, runs as far as the railway station. Just off the Calle de Uría are other streets of commercial interest, such as the Calle de Conde de Toreno, Santa Cruz, Doctor Casal, Palacio Valdés, Milicias Nacionales and Gil de Jaz. On this last street stands another of the city's landmark buildings, the old **Provincial Hospital** (*Hospicio Provincial*) **(15)**, dating from the 18th century and now converted into a luxury hotel. Its Baroque façade is emblazoned with an impressive Spanish coat of arms. Visitors are welcome to go inside and savour the

Plaza de la Escandalaria. Oviedo



courtyards and atmosphere.

Oviedo can boast the world's leading examples of pre-Romanesque art, three of which are a "must". The **Church of St. Julian in the Fields** (*San Julián de los Prados*) **(16)** is to be found at the entrance to the city, beside the highway linking Oviedo with Gijón and Avilés. Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon. Sundays and Public Holidays, 4 - 6 p.m. closed Mondays. It dates from the 9th century and, in its interior, houses some magnificent frescoes. On the slopes of Mount Naranco, just three kilometres outside Oviedo, stands **Santa María del Naranco** **(17)**, a small summer palace built by King Ramiro I in the 9th century. Santa María is another of the Principality's landmarks. A short distance off is **San Miguel de Lillo** **(18)**, a royal chapel dating from the same time. Opening times for Santa María del Naranco and San Miguel de Lillo:

Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Closed Sundays afternoons. There is no entrance fee on Mondays, but no guided tours are provided. San Miguel de Lillo, Santa María del Naranco, Santa Cristina de Lena, the Cámara Santa, San Julián de los Prados and the Foncolada Fountain have all been officially granted World Heritage Site status by UNESCO. There are yet more examples of pre-Romanesque in the area: in the very centre of the city is the **Foncala da Fountain** **(19)**; in Las Regueras, some 13 kilometres from Oviedo, the **Church of San Pedro de Nora** **(20)**; and, on the old road to Langreo, about 5 kilometres from the city, the **Church of Santa María de Bendones** **(21)**.

Chapel of San Miguel de Lillo. Oviedo



GIJÓN

Facing out to sea

Gijón is a seafaring and industrial city. Its historic old part is centred on the Fishermen's Quarter of Cimadevilla. Cimadevilla separates the city's two sweeping beaches, San Lorenzo and Poniente. Facing out to sea from a point adjoining the Cimadevilla district is Eduardo Chillida's impressive

the former Pescadería (fish market), today an administrative centre, and the **Gijón Jovellanos Birthplace Museum** (*Museo Casa Natal de Jovellanos*) (3), housing collections of Asturian paintings and a recreation of the house of Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, the 18th-century politician and writer who was the leading figure in Spain's Age of Enlightenment (*Ilustración*) and



Partial view of Gijón harbour

sculpture, entitled **Elogio del Horizonte** (In praise of the Horizon) (1). The "Elogio" is Gijón's tourist landmark and is situated on the **Santa Catalina headland**, site of an erstwhile military fortress and now converted into a park. On the other side of the hill, is the local quay-side and marina. Fronting onto the cobbled and semi-arcaded *Plaza Mayor* (main square) is the 19th-century **City Hall** (*Ayuntamiento*) (2). Adjacent to it are the buildings of

remains as a constant reference point in the street names and history of Gijón.

Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 8 p.m. Sundays and Public Holidays, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Closed Mondays.

☎ 98 534 63 13. **St. Peter's Church** (*San Pedro*) (4) stands at one end of the bay. From here, the way now leads into the adjoining **Roman Baths Museum** (5). An explanatory tour makes it possible for one to



Revillagigedo Palace and monument to Don Pelayo. Gijón

imagine what daily life at the baths was like during the first centuries of the present era. Restored sections of the Roman wall can be seen. Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 8 p.m. Sundays and Public Holidays, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Closed Mondays. ☎ 98 534 51 47. Going for a stroll along the **Muro de San Lorenzo** esplanade (6) is very much a local tradition -as is strolling along the Calle Corrida, the city's main business and shopping avenue. Corrida Street begins at the quayside, crosses the Plaza del Carmen and continues down to the Plaza del Seis de Agosto. A short walk from the beginning of Corrida Street brings one to **Revillagigedo Palace** and the **Collegiate Church of St. John the Baptist** (*San Juan Bautista*) (7), where exhibitions of modern art are held. In the Calle de La Trinidad, one

can visit the **Barjola Museum** (8), with its display of contemporary painting and sculpture. Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and 5 - 8 p.m. Sundays and Public Holidays, 12 - 2 p.m. Closed Mondays. ☎ 98 535 79 39. A few yards further on is the **Clock Tower** (*Torre del Reloj*) (9), which houses the local historic archives and is open to visitors. The Paseo de Begoña is one of Gijón's meeting points. On Begoña, just by the **Jovellanos Theatre** (10), is the Café Dindurra, the best example of its kind in a city well supplied with old-style cafés. Gijón is *the* café city. Just off Begoña, lies the **Church of San Lorenzo** (11), dating from the early part of this century. Also nearby is the **Church of the Sacred Heart** (*Sagrado Corazón*) (12), on Calle Jovellanos. The **Nicanor Piñole Art**

Gallery (13) is in the Plaza de Europa and is open to the public at the following times: Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 8 p.m. Sundays and Public Holidays, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Closed Mondays. ☎ 98 535 95 94.

A good way from the centre, though only a short distance from Gijón itself, there remain two tourist sights that are a "must". **Somió**, a wealthy upper middle-class suburb, is the site of the **Evaristo Valle Art Gallery (14)** and its fine gardens, complete with tropical trees. Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 4 - 6 p.m. Sundays and Public Holidays, 12 - 2 p.m. ☎ 98 533 40 00. Continuing through Somiό and taking the old road to Santander, one comes across the **Universidad Laboral (15)**, a polytechnic and agricultural college, and one of Spain's most imposing buildings. Granite and marble go to form the structure's essential components. A good part of the campus is open to the public. Other points of interest: the Campa Torres archaeological park overlooking Gijón's industrial harbour, El Musel. The Campa marks the site of the first primitive settlement of Gijón's earliest

inhabitants. Located in the centre of the city is the **Railway Museum (16)**, a retrospective look at the history of Asturian industrialisation.

Visits can be arranged by appointment, ☎ 98 530 85 75. At the Asturias Trade Fair Showgrounds a visit can be paid to the

Ethnographic Museum of the Asturian People (17), with its outdoor recreation of rural architecture in the Principality. In the Asturias Pavilion is the **Bagpipe (Gaita) Museum (18)**, the bagpipe being the region's traditional musical instrument. Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 8 p.m. Sundays, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. ☎ 98 533 22 44.

Elogio del Horizonte (In praise of the Horizon) sculpture by Chillida. Gijón



ITINERARIES

■ The Eastern route

The point of departure for this route is **Lastres**, a town in the Colunga district which retains the imprint of its seafaring past: in its day, it was a whaling port. **Ribadesella** is a summer resort town. A bridge divides the fishing harbour from the beach. The first Saturday in August, this bridge acts as the finishing post for what is perhaps Asturias' most

strongly advised to call ahead of the intended date,

☎ 98 586 11 20.

Taking the N-634, the route heads for **Llanes**. Asturias' best beaches are now within reach, including, among others, those of San Antolín, Torimbía, Barro, Celorio, Poo, Sablón and Toró. Llanes was founded in the early years of the 13th century. There is a town wall and medieval tower, a picturesque port and a beach. A series



representative festive event, the Descent of the River Sella by Canoe (*Descenso en Piragua del Sella*). Ribadesella offer the chance of seeing the nearby Cave of Tito Bustillo, one of Europe's gems in terms of cave painting. Opening times: summer, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 3:30 - 5:15 p.m. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays. There is a daily maximum quota of 400 visitors and the caves are only open to the public from 1st April to 30th September. Visitors are therefore

of charming towns and villages are dotted about the district. Continuing along the N-634 towards Santander one arrives in **Colombres**, home to the *Indianos Archives*. This museum tells the story of Asturian emigration, a fascinating journey that transports one through time and space to the Americas. Opening times: Monday to Friday, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. and 4 - 7 p.m. ☎ 98 541 20 05. One now heads for Panes and thence to **Cangas de Onís**, following the course of the prodigious

River Cares along district road AS-114. Before reaching Cangas de Onís, the **Cabrales** district awaits discovery. From its main town, **Carreña de Cabrales**, the visitor -weather permitting- can get one of the best views of the upward-jutting rockface of the massy Naranjo de Bulnes. The Cares Gorge (*Garganta del Cares*) is also nearby. This is the mountain outing best known to all Asturians, a score or more kilometres of narrow road that tortuously winds along the defile between Poncebos and Posada de Valdeón (Province of León). Cangas has a hump-backed medieval bridge-known as the Roman Bridge (*Puente Romano*)- and the Sante Cruz dolmen, an ancient tomb beneath a chapel of the same name. In the environs of Cangas is the *Buxu Cave*, with its rock paintings : There is a daily maximum quota of 25 visitors. ☎ 98 594 00 54 or 608 17 54 67. Taking the AS-262, one starts up the 7-kilometre ascent to the Covadonga Shrine (*Santuario*), cradle of the Reconquest. In Covadonga, one can

visit the Cave of Our Lady (*Santa Cueva*), with its image of the *Santina* - the Virgin of the Battlefield and patron saint of Asturias- the Basílica and Museum. From Covadonga, a further 12-kilometre climb along a superbly scenic road, brings one out at the *Lakes Enol and Ercina* (alt. 4,000 ft.) Once here, those interested are welcome to take a look around the Picos de Europa National Park nature study and visitor reception centre ☎ 98 584 86 14. Returning to Cangas de Onís, one takes the N-534 to **Arriondas** and **Infiesto**, with the Sierra del Suevo Range for company. The Suevo mountain country provides the last refuge for herds of Asturcón horses, the native breed which goes back a thousand years or so. Near Arriondas, on the Colunga road, is the look-out point known as the *Mirador del Fito*. Distances in kilometres from Oviedo: Colombres (136); Llanes (102); Ribadesella (84); Panes (126); Cangas de Onís (72); Arriondas (65); Infiesto (45); Lastres (63).

Covadonga Lakes. Picos de Europa National Park



■ The coastal route

Cape Peña which juts out to sea, marks a sudden, even surprising, change in the coastline. To get to Peñas the best thing is to visit two seaside towns en route, **Candás** and **Luanco**. In Luanco one finds the Asturias Maritime Museum. Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 7 p.m. Sundays and Public Holidays, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. ☎ 98 588 01 01. Lying on the far side of the Cape is **Avilés**, Asturias' third biggest city and site of the country's most important iron and steel industry. The town centre has its share of attractions: the pedestrian precincts marked out by Calle Galiana and Calle Rivero, the Plaza de España with the City Hall building, the venerable 13th-century

Church of Sabugo, and the modern Church of St. Thomas of Canterbury. As regards civic architecture, Avilés can offer the Valdecarzana and Camposagrado palaces and Palacio Valdés Theatre.

After passing through **Salinas**, a residential seaside resort built along one of the longest beaches on this stretch of coast (where a visit can be paid to the open-air Anchor Museum), the N-632 leads on to **Cudillero**, a fishing town perched on a narrow inlet, with its houses picturesquely huddled along the harbourside. Situated in El Pito, just a kilometre or two from Cudillero, is the *Palacio de los Selgas*, currently undergoing work prior to being opened to the public. The road runs on to **Luarca**, a town of white houses: in themselves, the local

Cudillero



lighthouse, *Atalaya* (watchtower) chapel and cliffside graveyard, alone justify a visit. **Puerto Vega, Navia** and **Tapia de Casariego** take the traveller to the point where Asturias ends and Galicia begins. The Navia municipal area borders on the **Coaña** district. In the village of Villacondide, one finds the *Coaña* *castro*, a pre-Roman settlement site, excavated for the greater part and in very good state of preservation. This is definitely a "must". Summer visiting hours: Tuesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., and 4 - 7:30 p.m. Closed Mondays. Wednesdays, no entrance charge. Visiting hours from 1st October to 31st March: Tuesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. and 4 - 5:30 p.m. There is a small museum on-site. Separated by the River Eo estuary, Asturias and Galicia are linked by the impressive Santos Bridge. On the banks of the estuary, two charming towns lie open to the sea, Figueras and Castropol. Distances in



Palace of the Marquess de Ferrera. Avilés

kilometres from Oviedo: Candás (37), Luanco (42), Avilés (28), Cudillero (55), Luarca (100), Tapia de Casariego (141), Navia (121), Castropol (152).



■ The Western route

From Oviedo, take the N-634 bound for **Grado**, a town with an interesting Old Quarter and a rather special country market on Sunday mornings. En route to Cornellana, the road crosses one of Spain's best salmon streams, the River Narcea. The salmon-fishing season lasts from March to the beginning of summer. One soon arrives in **Salas**, site of the *Collegiate Church of St. Mary Major (Santa María la Mayor)*, medieval tower and house of Valdés Salas. Branching off down local road AS-225, a drive of some 20 kilometres brings one to Pravia, ancient capital of the Court of the Asturian Kings, with its Collegiate church and Moutas Palace. Situated in Santianes, on the banks of the River Nalón, is another of the

River Trubia. Somiedo Nature Reserve



monuments that go to make up Asturias' treasure trove of pre-Romanesque art, St. John's Basilica (*San Juan*), built by King Silo in the years 774-785.

Going from Pravia via the AS-235 one gets to **San Román de Candamo** and one of the highlights of the Principality's cultural and artistic heritage, the *La Peña de Candamo Cave*. Those wishing to arrange a visit should kindly call the the Town Hall on ☎ 985 82 80 56. This grotto is a veritable shrine to the Upper Palaeolithic, with a profusion of cave paintings, some classed as among the world's finest examples of rock art. Visits are very much restricted in order to preserve the "health" of the murals, which were painted over a lengthy period of time dating from 18,000 - 3,000 B.C. A return to Salas is in order before setting out on a different road in the direction of **Tineo**, gateway to the westernmost reaches of the region. Hidden worlds lead to Pola

de Allande, the **Los Oscos** district with its unique architecture, Taramundi and San Tirso de Abres. Further south, lies **Cangas de Narcea** and the Corias Monastery. Mantling the Cangas de Narcea and Ibias areas is the *Muniellos Nature Reserve*, a vast

CANTABRIAN SEA



indigenous forest stretching over an area of more than 50 square kilometres and constituting the largest oak forest (*Quercus petraea* and *Quercus robur*) in mainland Spain and one of best conserved in Europe. Visits are restricted to twenty or so persons per day. Those interested in visiting the park should kindly call the Regional Natural Resources Authority (*Dirección General de Recursos Naturales*) at ☎ 98 510 55 45.

Muniellos is not the sole instance of virgin territory. Bordering Cangas de Narcea, the **Somiedo** district boasts the *Somiedo Nature Reserve*, an extensive swathe of woodland and lakes. The Park Reception Centre (☎ 98 576 37 58) is in Pola de Somiedo. For those who wish to be in closer contact with Nature, in the neighbouring districts of Teverga, Santo Adriano and Proaza an abandoned railway track has been converted into a cycling route dubbed the "Bear Trail". Distances in kilometres from

Oviedo: Grado (26); Salas (47); Tineo (70); Pola de Allande (104); San Martín de Oscos (192); Cangas de Narcea (99); Pola de Somiedo (85); Taramundi (183); Pravia (42); Grullas- Candamo (28); Teverga (42); Proaza (26).

Corias Monastery. Cangas de Narcea



■ OTHER ROUTES

The Pilgrims' Way to Santiago

Oviedo Cathedral was the historic focal point for the Asturian Pilgrims' Way to Santiago (*Camino de Santiago*), which entered via Llanes and its *Monastery Church of San Antolín de Bedón* and wound on, past Ribadesella, Villaviciosa, Nava, Valdediós and Oviedo, among other places. From the Asturian capital, the Way then headed towards Grado, Cornellana (with its monastery founded by the Order of Cluny), Salas, Tineo, Allande and Grandas de Salime. A variant of the Way kept parallel to the coast, going from Cudillero to the Galician border on the estuary of the River Eo. The whole of Asturias is profoundly coloured by the *Camino de Santiago*, with small wayside churches and chapels and venerable pilgrims' hospices sounding a constant reminder.



The cider route

Villaviciosa is one of the region's chief apple production centres. The El Gaitero plant (visits by appointment. ☎ 98 589 01 00) has been a traditional exporter of sparkling cider to America. Its cellars and gigantic casks are worth taking time out to see. Head along district road 113 in the direction of **Valdediós**, site of the 9th-century *Church of the Saviour (San Salvador)*, one of Asturias' pre-Romanesque jewels and an important reference point on the *Pilgrims' Way*, the route travelled by medieval pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela. District road 250 and an 11-kilometre drive through woods and small villages brings one to **Nava**, the cider capital. The *Cider Museum*, opened in 1996, ☎ 98 571 74 22. Distances in kilometres from Oviedo: Villaviciosa (42); Nava (31).

Cider

The mining route

Asturias holds out the promise of one last itinerary of interest. This is the route through the mines, which have played such a vital role in the Principality's history. Taking the AS-251, some 30 kilometres separates Nava from **Pola de Laviana**, leading into mining Asturias and onwards to the industrial landscapes of the

Leaving Langreo and its industrial belt behind, the AS-111 speeds, on to **Mieres** (12 kilometres). The town's focal centre is the Plaza de Requejo, with its array of cider taverns. Close by, in the town of Insierto, is the 18th-century *Shrine of the Martyrs of Valdecuna*. The highway links Mieres with **Pola de Lena**, on the outskirts of which stands *Santa Cristina*, a stunning



Church of Santa Cristina de Lena. Pola de Lena

Caudal and **Nalón** river valleys. One soon comes to **El Entrego**, site of the *Mining Museum*, where one can enter a mock-up re-created for the visitor, and experience the smells and noises of a real working pit. Opening times: Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and 4 - 7 p.m. Sundays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. ☎ 98 566 31 33.

pre-Romanesque church built by King Ordoño I. Summer opening times: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 4:30 - 6 p.m. Closed Mondays. November to April, 12 - 1 p.m. and 4 - 5 p.m. Distances in kilometres from Oviedo: Langreo (22); Mieres (20); Pola de Laviana (33); Pola de Lena (33).

HOW TO GET THERE, WHERE TO EAT AND STAY

Asturias' airport lies 47 kilometres from the region's capital, Oviedo. Regular daily flights link the city with Madrid and Barcelona, other main cities around Spain, Paris and London. There is a coach service from Oviedo, Gijón and Avilés that connects with flights, and coach, car rental and taxis are all available at the airport.

Rail: RENFE (Spanish Rail) runs a daily train service to Madrid and Barcelona (among other destinations), with scheduled daytime and night-time departures. There are central railway stations in Oviedo, Gijón and Avilés. Trains connecting points in the interior of the province and the Cantabrian cornice are operated by FEVE. In summer this company puts on a tourist train, the *Trascantábrico*, a narrow gauge train which runs along an exceptionally scenic route and brings back memories of the old turn of the century railways. The

trip on the *Trascantábrico* lasts a week and passengers sleep aboard. As for road transport, a variety of regular bus and coach services cover the region. The leading passenger transport company in the area is ALSA, whose routes connect up points all around the Principality and a good part of Spain. Likewise, it links Asturias with different European capitals, such as Paris and Brussels.

Asturias is served by a wide range of hotels and restaurants. There are over 60 five-, four- and three-star hotels, plus many others of a more modest nature; in addition there is good choice of small holiday flats, situated mainly in country areas, and some 60 camping sites situated by the sea and in the mountains. Asturias is also able to offer a somewhat different form of accommodation, namely, the so-called *Casas de Aldea* (Country Cottages), rustic buildings

Gijón Parador



refurbished as tourist lodgings. Rentals can sometimes be arranged on a room-by-room basis while in other cases, the cottage as a whole is rented out. A further possibility is afforded by the *Casonas Asturianas* (mansion-houses), a quality club formed by 24 hotels of different categories, ranging from 2- to 4-star, located in rural settings and linked by the common denominator of de-luxe guest facilities and service. For bookings and tourist information kindly call the Central Booking Office at ☎ 98 527 48 58 or 902 300 202.

The Principality of Asturias is rightly famed as one of Spain's good food areas, from the most luxurious restaurants of Oviedo and Gijón to modest eating houses in the smallest towns. In every case, the visitor is sure to have the chance of savouring the delicacies of Asturian cuisine. Most establishments have a fixed menu two courses, dessert and drink at prices ranging from 900 to 1,800 pesetas. All such establishments are required by law to display, prominently and visibly, a list showing the prices charged (with or without VAT). Tipping is allowed unless otherwise indicated. Asturias has two Tourist Paradors, the San Pedro de Villanueva just outside Cangas de Onís and the Molino Viejo (Old Mill) in Gijón, the latter being situated in the Isabel la Católica Park, five minutes from San Lorenzo beach.



Fabada asturiana (bean and pork stew)

Exchanging currency poses no problems. There are banks almost everywhere: morning banking hours are 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Some branches also open in the afternoon. The bigger towns are supplied with numerous card-operated cash points (ATMs).

In general, all main credit cards are accepted in shops, restaurants and hotels, though not to the same degree in the more rural areas of the province.

Parking in Oviedo and Gijón city centres is regulated by a pay by the hour system (known by the Spanish acronym, ORA). In the streets in such zones, there are coin-operated vending machines from which the necessary parking cards can be purchased. Parking in a so-called blue zone (*zona azul*) without an ORA card, can lead to the car in question being towed away by the Local Police.

LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

Asturias' natural surroundings make it ideal for lovers of mountaineering, *mountain biking* and *hiking*. The Asturian Mountaineering Federation (*Federación Asturiana de Montaña*) can be contacted on ☎ 98 525 23 62. There is a good network of mountain refuge huts. Those keen on caving will find that Asturias is one of Spain's leading centres for this sport. Throughout the region, though especially in the east, numerous firms are engaged in organising horse and pony trekking. The Indigenous Fauna Exhibition Centre (*Centro de Exhibición de Fauna Autóctona*) is situated in Soto de Cangas, in the Cangas de Onís district. For further information kindly call, ☎ 98 594 00 17.

Golf: There are a number of municipal and public golf courses in Asturias: in Gijón, Llanes, Noreña, Ribadesella, Oviedo and Tapia de Casarigo, For further information kindly call the Principality of Asturias Golf Federation, on ☎ 98 533 91 41.

Skiing: The Valgrande-Pajares ski resort is equipped with 4 chairlifts and 9 ski-lifts. For further information kindly call ☎ 98 595 71 23. In addition, there is the San Isidro resort area, on the border with the Province of León.

Sailing: Gijón has a yacht basin (☎ 98 534 45 43), provided with the full range of services. The city is home to a number of sailing schools and frequently acts as the starting

and finishing point for regattas. Sailing Federation (*Federación de Vela*), ☎ 98 534 54 76.

Canoeing/kayaking: Asturian rivers are ideal for canoeing.

The first Saturday in August marks the holding of the Descent of the River Sella, from Arriondas down to Ribadesella, a festive event of international tourist interest. The *Fiesta de las Piraguas* is probably Asturias' most cherished festivity. Sport and sheer enjoyment merge in an explosion of joy, which begins on the Friday and does not end until the Sunday. The event involves a 17-kilometre race down a river of striking contrasts and myriad shades of green. The strains of "*Asturias, patria querida*" (Asturias, beloved land), the Principality's official anthem, open a race in which thousands of contestants from the five continents take part. No money prizes are on offer: there is only the honour of winning.

Hunting: Wild boar, fallow, chamois and red deer are just some of the pieces that can be bagged in the mountains of Asturias. The Regional Environmental Authority (*Dirección Regional de Montes and Medio Natural*), ☎ 98 510 55 47, will furnish information as to conditions and open seasons. The Hunting Federation (*Federación de Caza*) can be contacted on ☎ 98 527 63 50.

Fishing: Trout and salmon streams abound. The angling season is spring and summer. For further



Canoe fiesta. Descent of the River Sella

information kindly call the Regional Environmental Authority ☎ 98 510 55 48; and the Asturian Angling Federation (*Federación Asturiana de Pesca*), ☎ 98 560 10 67.

The two most important football stadiums are the Carlos Tartiere Stadium in Oviedo, and the El Molinón Stadium in Gijón. In Oviedo, indoor sports are held in the Palacio de los Deportes, and in Gijón, in the Pabellón de La Guía. During August, Gijón is the venue for the International Show Jumping Competition.

Culture, fiestas local cuisine and shopping

Oviedo, Gijón and **Avilés** are the main cultural centres. Each has a public theatre (Campoamor, Jovellanos and Palacio Valdés respectively) with all-year-round

activity. In September, the Campoamor Theatre is the venue for the prestigious *Oviedo Opera Cycle*. Autumn in Gijón brings the *International Film Festival*, while July signals *Semana Negra* (Black Week), a literary-cultural event which looks to the genre of crime fiction for inspiration. In April and May, all three cities host the *International Music and Dance Festival of Asturias*. In late October or early November, Oviedo acts as the backdrop for the annual *Príncipe de Asturias Awards* ceremony. In August, Gijón is the site of the *Asturias International Samples Trade Fair*.

August signals the fiestas of St. Augustine (*San Agustín*) in Avilés, and St. Begoña in Gijón. Oviedo celebrates its St. Matthew's Feast (*San Mateo*) in September. In summer, the festive calendar is filled with *romerías* (pilgrimage outings, and *espichas* (fiestas where cider reigns supreme, held in a *llagar*, the cellar-like hall

used for preparing and storing cider). Other traditional festivities include: the Fiesta del Pastor in Cangas de Onís (25th July); Asturias Day in Gijón, (first Sunday in August); America Day in Asturias, celebrated in Oviedo in September; the Avilés and Gijón Carnivals; *La Descarga* in Cangas de Narcea, on 16th July, marked by the launching of thousands of rockets; the Fiesta de los Huevos Pintos, in Pola de Siero, on Easter Tuesday (with a market selling traditionally painted eggs); the Fiesta del Asturcón, in Majada de Espineros, in August, marked by the branding of the Asturian steed par excellence -the Asturcón- within the context of an open-air *romería*.

Shopping: Each locality of a certain size holds a weekly market selling local produce, such as the *Fabes de la Granja*, haricot beans used in the traditional *fabada*. Numerous boutiques line the streets of Oviedo and Gijón. Wooden handicrafts -clogs, (*madreñas*) are the traditional footwear in country districts- and further west, hand looms and cutlery. There is a profusion of jewellery shops, many engaged in the cutting, polishing and setting of locally found jet (*azabache*).

Fine Arts Gallery. Oviedo

Regional dishes include: *sopa de marisco* (bouillabaisse-like soup), *pote asturiano* (a rich potage of beans, ham, sausage meat and potatoes), *fabada* (stew of haricot beans, pork and sausage), *fabes con almejas* (beans with clams), *pescados a la sidra* (fish -usually hake- in cider), roasts, *ventresca de bonito* (grilled bonito), *angulas* (baby eels), *cebollas rellenas* (stuffed onions), vegetables of all kinds, trout, stuffed potatoes, seafood, *oricios* (sea urchin). Typically Asturian too, are: *Boroña*, a type of cornflour bread; *frixuelos*, a fritter-like dessert similar to crêpes; *bollo preñado*, breadroll stuffed and baked with spicy Spanish sausage (*chorizo*); *callos* (tripe); *compango* is a meat-based side-serving to accompany other dishes, and is composed of *chorizo*, black pudding (*morcilla*), shoulder of pork (*lacón*) and bacon. Desserts: Candamo



*Asturias Day.
Typical Dress*



strawberries, rice pudding, *marañuelas* biscuits shaped like a leaf, rose or crown), and *casadiellas* (small folded cakes with a filling of ground walnut, sugar and anisette). The *Carbayones*, filled with ground almond and egg yolk, are the typical pastries of Oviedo, while the *Princesitas* are the speciality of Gijón. The local honey is excellent. As for

USEFUL ADDRESSES

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TURESPAÑA TOURIST INFORMATION
☎ 901 300 600
www.tourspain.es

Regional Tourist Services Department:
Plaza de España, 1 bajo, edificio de Servicios Múltiples, Oviedo
☎ 98 510 64 33, Fax 98 510 64 21

TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES:
Oviedo: Plaza de Alfonso II El Casto.
☎ 98 521 33 85
Calle Marqués de Santa Cruz
☎ 98 522 75 86
Avilés: Calle Ruiz Gómez, 21 ☎ 98 554 43 25
Gijón: Calle Marqués de San Esteban, 1
☎ 98 534 60 46
Llanes: Calle La Torre ☎ 98 540 01 64
Madrid: Centro Asturiano. Calle Farmacia, 2
☎ 91 522 27 36
Mieres: Manuel Llana, 8 ☎ 985 45 05 33
Pola de Lena: Esquina de Marqués de San Feliz, 2 ☎ 98 549 32 68
Regional Tourist Board: ☎ 98 527 78 70

TRANSPORT
Serviberia ☎ 902 40 05 45
Renfe (Spanish Rail) information and Bookings
☎ 902 24 02 02
Feve (narrow-gauge railway) Oviedo
☎ 98 528 40 96; Avilés ☎ 98 554 13 48;
Gijón ☎ 98 534 24 15

fruit, the apple is king. There is wide choice of cheeses: Cabrales, Gamonedo, Beyos, Queso Casín, Afuega'l Pitu.

To drink there is *cider* (fellow-drinkers sharing a tumbler) sparkling cider and, to the west of the region, wine. Mineral water is available from local springs.

Buses:
Alsa ☎ 98 596 96 96
Intercar ☎ 98 596 96 96
Taxis Oviedo ☎ 98 525 25 00 and 98 525 00 00;
Avilés ☎ 98 556 00 00;
Gijón ☎ 98 514 11 11 and 98 516 44 44
Road traffic Road & Highway information
☎ 900 12 35 05
Guardia Civil (Traffic Dept.)
☎ 98 528 17 97 - 98 528 12 66
Tele-ruta ☎ 98 577 17 27

POST & TELEGRAPHS
General Post Office: Alonso Quintanilla, 1, Oviedo ☎ 98 521 41 86; Telephone Exchange (public booths): Foncalada, 7

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National Police: 091 **Municipal Police:** ☎ 092
Civil Protection Corps ☎ 98 577 17 77;
Public Information Service: ☎ 010
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☎ 98 537 05 11, Fax 98 537 02 33
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MAIN BUILDINGS AND TOURIST SIGHTS

- 1.-Elogio del Horizonte (In praise of the Horizon)
- 2.-City Hall
- 3.-Gijón Museum-Jovellanos' Birthplace
- 4.-Church of San Pedro (St. Peter's)
- 5.-Roman Baths Museum
- 6.-Muro de San Lorenzo esplanade
- 7.-Revillogido Palace-Collegiate Church of San Juan Bautista (St. John the Baptist)
- 8.-Barjola Museum
- 9.-Clock Tower
- 10.-Jovellanos Theatre
- 11.-Church of San Lorenzo
- 12.- Church of the Sagrado Corazón (Sacred Heart)
- 13.-Nicanor Piñole Art Gallery
- 14.-Evaristo Valle Art Gallery
- 15.-Universidad Laboral
- 16.-Railway Museum
- 17.-Ethnographic Museum of the Asturian People
- 18.-Bagpipe Museum

Tourist Information Office



Post Office



Hospital



Red Cross



Police



Railway Station



Bus and Coach Station



Parador

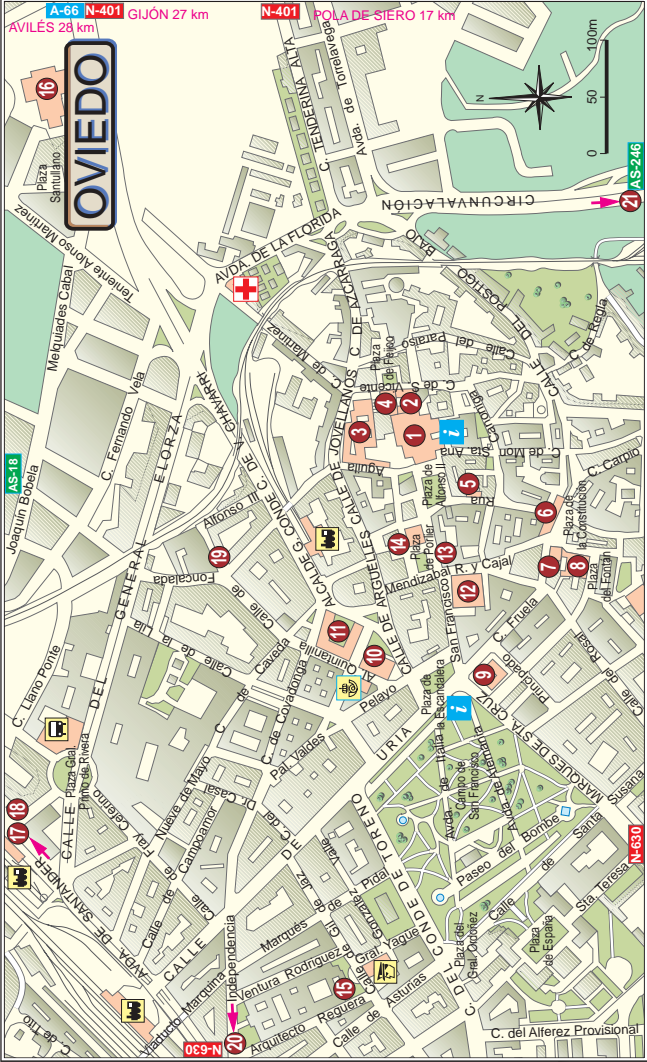


MAIN BUILDINGS AND TOURIST SIGHTS

- 1.- Cathedral
- 2.- Archaeological Museum
- 3.- San Rayayo Monastery
- 4.- Church of Santa Maria la Real (St. Mary Royal)
- 5.- Fine Arts Gallery
- 6.- City Hall
- 7.- Church of San Isidoro (St. Isidore's)
- 8.- Fontán Market
- 9.- Regional Palace (seat of Regional Authority)
- 10.- Campoamor Theatre
- 11.- Former Convent of Santa Clara
- 12.- University
- 13.- Toreno Palace
- 14.- Camposagrado Palace
- 15.- Old Provincial Hospital
- 16.- Church of San Julián de los Prados (St. Julian in the Fields)
- 17.- Church of Santa Maria del Naranco
- 18.- Chapel of San Miguel de Lillo
- 19.- Foncalada Fountain
- 20.- Church of San Pedro de Nora
- 21.- Church of Santa Maria de Bendones



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AVILÉS 28 km

OVIEDO

AS-246

LANGREO 16 km

GRADO 24 km

MIERES 28 km



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