

Santiago de Compostela

Galicia · Spain

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Santiago de Compostela is the end point of the Camino de Santiago, the pilgrim routes to the tomb attributed to Saint James. Pilgrims have walked here for about 1,000 years. Nearly 500,000 arrived in 2024. The old town is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is built around the cathedral.

The city suits a short, slow trip on foot. The poet *Rosalía de Castro*, a key figure of Galician literature, was born here. Outside summer, expect rain and bring a jacket.

When to visit

June to September is the driest and warmest period and the best time for walking. Autumn and winter are wet and grey, and the days are short. Spring is mild but often rainy.

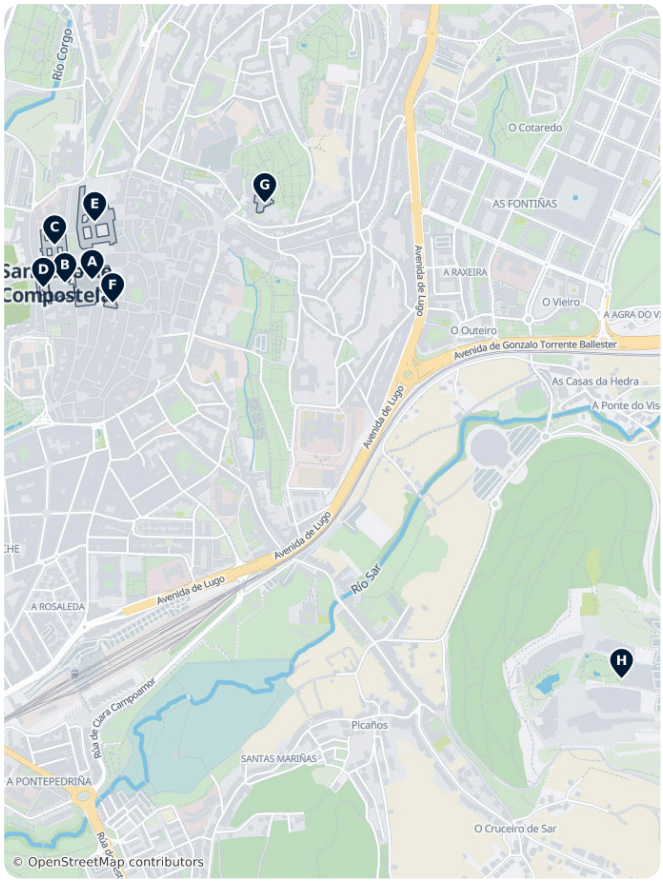
A major event is the festival of the Apostle in the second half of July. The fireworks on the night of 24 July are the highlight. 25 July is Galicia Day. The next Holy Year is 2027. The city gets many more pilgrims then.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Fair Fair for hiking	11° / 15°	6° / 1°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Good Good for hiking	12° / 17°	6° / 1°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
March	Good Good for hiking	14° / 20°	7° / 2°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for hiking	16° / 23°	8° / 4°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 25°	10° / 6°	Dry air · Calm winds
June	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 28°	12° / 9°	Dry air · Calm winds
July	Great Great for sightseeing	24° / 31°	14° / 11°	Calm winds
August	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 32°	14° / 12°	Calm winds
September	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 30°	13° / 10°	Calm winds
October	Good Good for sightseeing	19° / 26°	11° / 7°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for hiking	14° / 19°	8° / 4°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Fair Fair for hiking	12° / 15°	7° / 1°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: June, July, August, September

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela is the reason for the city. Building began in 1075 and the church was consecrated in 1211. The Baroque Obradoiro facade, finished in 1740, and the carved Portico of Glory by Master Mateo, finished in 1188, are the main things to see.
- B Praza do Obradoiro is the square in front of the cathedral. Pilgrims gather here at the end of their walk.
- C Parador Hostal dos Reis Católicos was built as a hospital for pilgrims after the Catholic Monarchs visited in 1486. Construction began in 1501. It has been a hotel since 1954.
- D Pazo de Raxoi is the town hall of Santiago, beside the Obradoiro square.
- E Mosteiro e Igrexa de San Martiño Piñario e Seminario Maior is a monastery and church close to the cathedral.
- F Museum of Pilgrimage and Santiago is a museum about the pilgrimage and the city.
- G Igrexa de San Domingos de Bonaval belongs to the former convent of San Domingos de Bonaval. The convent holds the Pantheon of Illustrious Galicians, where *Rosalía de Castro* is buried.
- H City of Culture Galicia sits on Monte Gaiás outside the centre. The architect was *Peter Eisenman*, chosen in a competition in 1999. It holds the library and archive and a museum with temporary exhibitions.

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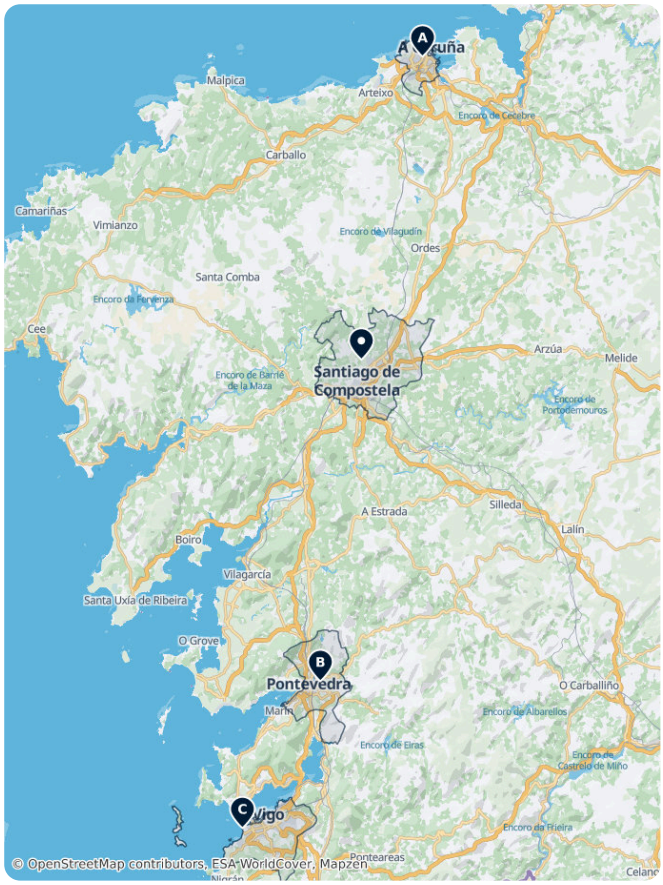
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What to experience

- **Watch pilgrims arrive**: Walkers finish on Praza do Obradoiro. Many stop, sit on the stones and look up at the cathedral. You do not have to walk the Camino to share the moment.
- **See the Botafumeiro**: The giant incense burner weighs 80 kg and swings through the cathedral at certain religious holidays and at every Pilgrims' Mass in Holy Years. It is not used at every Mass, so check the cathedral schedule.
- **Walk the last 100 km**: The pilgrim certificate, the Compostela, requires 100 km on foot or on horseback, or 200 km by bicycle. Carry a stamped pilgrim passport to collect it.
- **Fireworks night on 24 July**: A fireworks show on Obradoiro Square is the central event of the Apostle festival. Arrive early for a good spot.

Day trips

Galicia is small and trains are quick, so several towns work as a half-day or full-day trip. Journey times vary with the service.



- **Padrón** (a short trip by train or bus): Padrón is a famous stop on the Portuguese Way. A stone in the parish church is said to be where the boat of Saint James was moored. The town is known for its small fried green peppers and has a museum about *Rosalía de Castro*.
- A A Coruña (by train): A larger city on the Atlantic coast and the capital of its province.
- B Pontevedra (by train): The old town is mostly closed to cars. The Baroque church of the Pilgrim Virgin has a scallop-shaped floor plan.
- C Vigo (by train): A larger city on the coast to the south.
- **Cape Finisterre and the Costa da Morte**: Pilgrims often continue to Fisterra, 98 km away. The lighthouse stands at the tip of the cape. Muxía has a sanctuary by the sea, the Virxe da Barca. Public transport is slow and infrequent, so a car or a tour is easier.

Where to explore

Other places in Galicia worth adding to a longer trip:

- Cities on the coast: A Coruña and Vigo.
- The Costa da Morte: Fisterra and Muxía.
- Further away: Sanxenxo, Cangas, Ribadeo and Mondoñedo.

Getting there

- **By air**: Santiago-Rosalía de Castro airport (SCQ) is about 12 km east of the centre. It has domestic and international flights. Bus line 6A runs between the airport and the centre. You pay the driver. A taxi is the quicker option.
- **By train**: Santiago de Compostela-Daniel Castelao station is run by Renfe. Madrid takes about 3 hours. Regional trains also run to A Coruña, Pontevedra and Vigo. Porto takes under 5 hours with a change in Vigo. Book on Renfe.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old town and most sights are within a short walk of the cathedral.
- **By bike**: Cycling is not practical in the old town.
- **City bus**: Pay the driver on board. Airport line 6A is run by Tussa.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town and main sights are close together and mostly reachable on foot.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Cycling is not practical in the old town.

Food & drink

The local sweet is the Tarta de Santiago, an almond cake dusted with sugar in the shape of the cross of Saint James. It has EU protected status and is baked in Galicia.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Churros · Churros con Chocolate
Fried dough sticks served with a thick, dark hot chocolate for dipping — a classic Spanish breakfast or late-night snack.

LUNCH

Paella Valenciana
A saffron-scented rice dish cooked in a wide, shallow pan. The traditional Valencian version uses chicken, rabbit, and green beans — best eaten at midday.

Gazpacho
A cold, blended soup of raw tomatoes, cucumber, pepper, garlic, olive oil, and vinegar, originally from Andalusia. Served as a drink or a starter, especially in summer.

DINNER

Pulpo a la Gallega
Boiled octopus sliced onto a wooden board and dressed with olive oil, coarse salt, and smoked paprika — a signature dish of Galicia.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Jamón Ibérico
Dry-cured ham from acorn-fed Iberian pigs, sliced paper-thin and eaten on its own or with bread. The finest grade, jamón ibérico de bellota, is one of Spain's most prized products.

Tortilla Española
A thick potato and egg omelette, served warm or at room temperature, found in virtually every bar in Spain. Often eaten as a tapa or a quick meal.

Patatas Bravas
Fried potato chunks served with a spicy tomato sauce or aioli — one of the most common tapas across the country.

Pintxos
Small snacks anchored to slices of bread with a toothpick, the Basque Country's answer to tapas. Found in bar counters across San Sebastián and Bilbao, often with elaborate toppings.

Croquetas
Crispy breaded cylinders with a creamy béchamel filling, typically made with jamón, bacalà (salt cod), or mushrooms.

DRINKS

Rioja Wine · Vino de Rioja

Spain's best-known wine region produces full-bodied reds from Tempranillo grapes, aged in oak. The crianza, reserva, and gran reserva labels indicate increasing age and complexity.

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Safety & health

Petty theft is the main risk for visitors. Thieves use distraction and often work in teams, especially in crowded places. Keep valuables in more than one pocket. The emergency number is 112.

History

Between 818 and 842, Bishop Theodemar of Iria said he had found the remains of Saint James. A shrine grew, and then a town and a pilgrim route. In 997 the ruler *Almanzor* attacked and partly destroyed Compostela.

Work on today's cathedral began in 1075. In the 12th century the city became an archbishopric under *Diego Gelmírez*. The Obradoiro facade of Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela is a Baroque addition from 1740.

The Catholic Monarchs founded the pilgrim hospital that is now Parador Hostal dos Reis Católicos. The old town was inscribed on the UNESCO list in 1985.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Spain at a glance:

CURRENCY

EUR €

EMERGENCY

112

ELECTRICITY



Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES

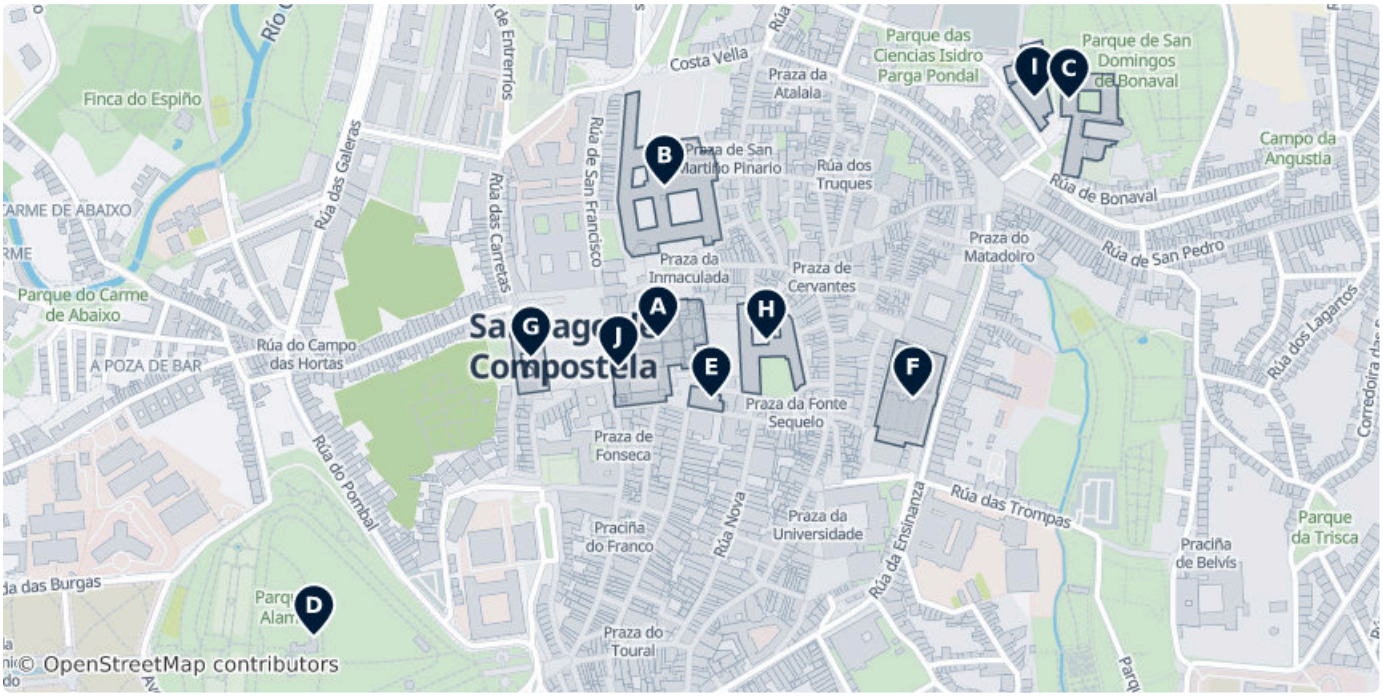
Spanish

TAP WATER

Safe to drink

Santiago de Compostela: The Absolute Essentials

Santiago de Compostela's historic center revolves around its majestic Romanesque cathedral, the final destination of the Camino de Santiago. This list highlights the city's architectural heritage, from the massive Baroque Monastery of San Martiño Pinario to the neoclassical Pazo de Raxoi. Visitors can explore Galician traditions at the Museum of the Galician People, browse local produce at the granite Mercado de Abastos, or view contemporary exhibits at the CGAC. The Alameda Park offers panoramic views of the skyline, while the city's many cloisters and museums preserve centuries of religious and artistic history.





A Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela

A UNESCO World Heritage site, believed to be a place where the apostle St. James was buried.

Praza do Obradoiro, Santiago de Compostela (42.88052, -8.54459)

catedraldesantiago.es/en, +34 98 158 35 48



B Monastery of San Martiño Pinario

The monastery of San Martiño Pinario was a Benedictine monastery in the city of Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain.

10 Rúa do Val de Deus, Santiago de Compostela 15782, Spain (42.88200, -8.54450)



C Museum of the Galician People

Visit the former convent of Santo Domingo de Bonaval and learn more about Galician culture, history and living conditions.

Rúa de Bonaval, 15703 Santiago de Compostela, Spain (42.88285, -8.53908)

Mo	Closed
Tu–Sa	11:00–18:00
Su	11:00–14:00

museodopobo.gal, +34 981 58 36 20



D Parque de Alameda

A 19th-century park featuring the Paseo da Ferradura, which offers panoramic views of the cathedral. It contains diverse botanical species, historic monuments, and the iconic statue of the 'Two Marías'.

Santiago de Compostela 15705, Spain (42.87759, -8.54920)



E Museum of Pilgrimage and Santiago

Takes up the western part of the cloister and houses a precious collection of devotional art and rare manuscripts.

Praza das Praterías 2, Santiago de Compostela (42.87993, -8.54388)

Tu–Fr	09:30–20:30
Sa	11:00–19:30
Su	10:15–14:45

museoperegrinacions.xunta.gal, +34 881 867 401



F Mercado de Abastos de Santiago

A traditional market housed in 1940s granite buildings. It is a central hub for Galician gastronomy, specializing in fresh seafood, local cheeses, and regional produce.

4 Rúa das Ameas, Santiago de Compostela 15704, Spain (42.87993, -8.54117)

Mo–Sa	08:00–15:00

mercadodeabastosdesantiago.com

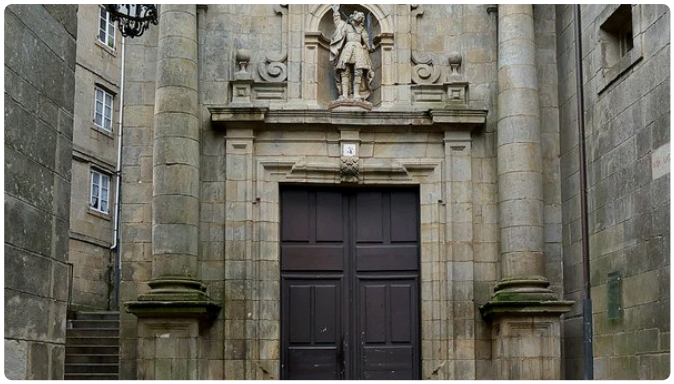


G Pazo de Raxoi

Pazo de Raxoi is a neoclassical palace in Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain.

11 Rúa da Trindade, Santiago de Compostela 15705, Spain (42.88032, -8.54629)

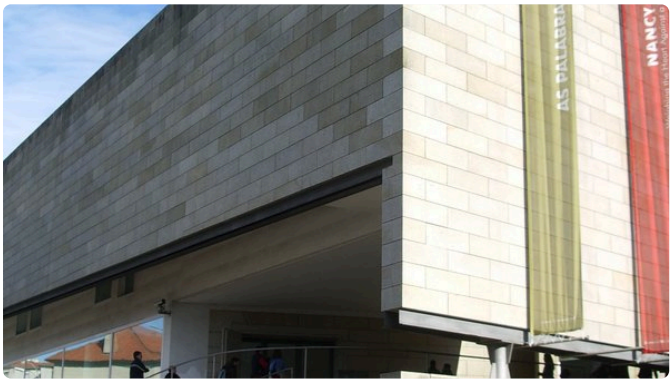
santiagodecompostela.gal



H Monastery of Saint Pelagius of Antealtares

The Monastery of Saint Pelagius of Antealtares is a monastery in Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain.

11 Rúa de San Paio de Antealtares, Santiago de Compostela 15782, Spain (42.88049, -8.54314)



I Galician Contemporary Art Centre

The Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, CGAC is an arts centre based in Santiago de Compostela that aims to promote culture in Galicia...

Rúa Valle Inclán 2, 15703 (42.88287, -8.53954)

Mo	Closed
Tu–Su	11:00–20:00

cgac.xunta.gal/gl, +34 981 54 66 19

J Santiago Cathedral Museum

Showcases the cathedral's artistic and archaeological heritage, including the reconstructed 12th-century stone choir by Master Mateo, the treasury, and an extensive collection of Flemish tapestries.

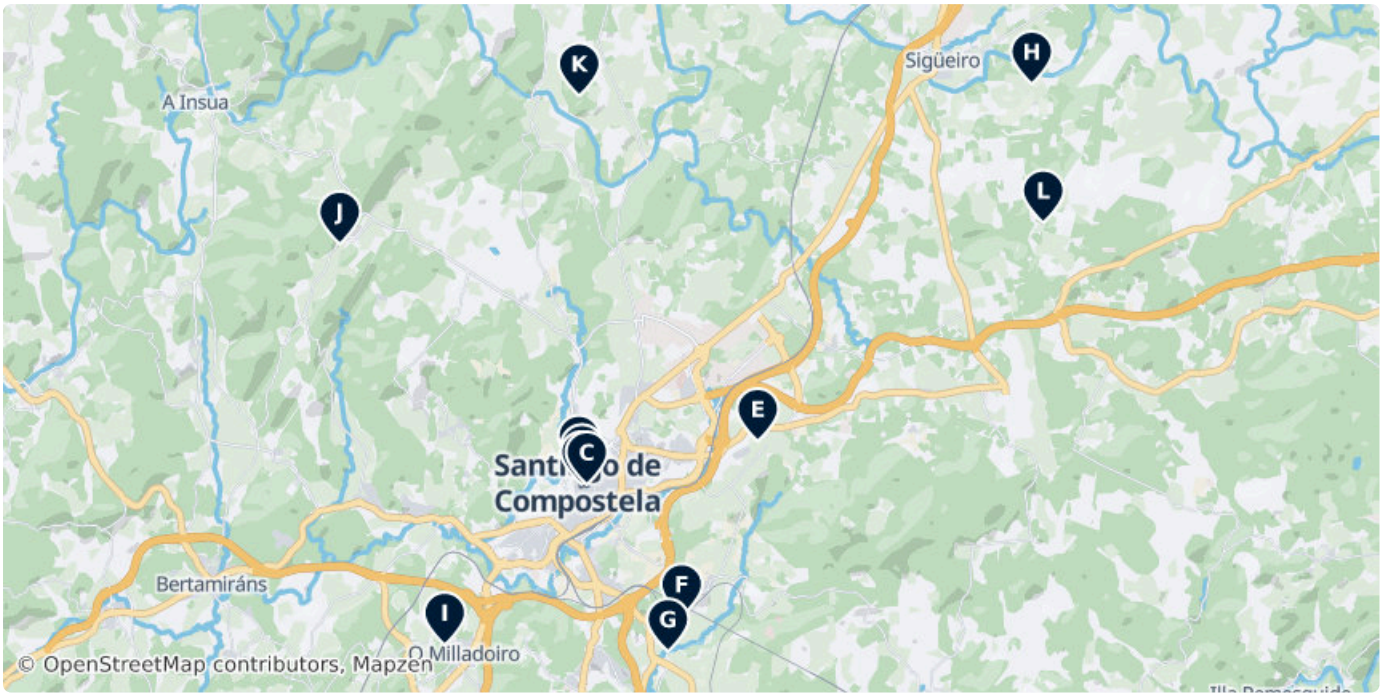
(42.88023, -8.54512)

Mo–Su	10:00–20:00

visitas.catedraldesantiago.es/en/

Sacred Sites of Pilgrimage

Santiago de Compostela serves as the historic terminus of the Camino de Santiago, centered on the Cathedral where the apostle St. James is believed to be buried. This collection highlights the city's ecclesiastical architecture, from the massive Baroque facade of San Martiño Pinario to the quiet cloisters of San Paio de Antealtares. Beyond the historic center, the list includes rural chapels and parish churches like the Ermida de San Marcos on Monte do Gozo, marking the final approach for pilgrims.





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11 Rúa de San Paio de Antealtares, Santiago de Compostela 15782, Spain (42.88049, -8.54314)

D Convento de San Francisco do Val de Deus

Founded by St. Francis of Assisi in 1214, the current Baroque structure includes a monumental church and a museum dedicated to the Holy Land.

Rúa do Campiño de San Francisco 3 (42.88392, -8.54537)

E Ermida de San Marcos

Situated on Monte do Gozo, this chapel marks the site where pilgrims traditionally see the Cathedral of Santiago for the first time.

5 Rúa de San Marcos, San Marcos 15820, Spain (42.88951, -8.49438)

F Igrexa de San Cristovo do Eixo

An 18th-century Baroque parish church located in the rural district of O Eixo.

(Unnamed Road), 15893, Spain (42.85290, -8.51606)

G Capela de Santa Lucía

A small chapel dedicated to Saint Lucy, situated in the southern outskirts of the city.

(Unnamed Road), 15893, Spain (42.84561, -8.52001)

H Igrexa de Santa María de Cesar

A parish church in the rural northern district of Cesar, representing traditional Galician ecclesiastical style.

(Unnamed Road), 15820, Spain (42.96407, -8.41626)

I Igrexa de San Xosé do Milladoiro

A contemporary parish church in O Milladoiro, a significant milestone for pilgrims walking the Portuguese Way.

(42.84696, -8.58363)

J Igrexa de Santa María de Ameixenda

Parish church serving the community of Ameixenda, located west of the city center.

(Unnamed Road), 15864, Spain (42.93069, -8.61356)

K Ermida de Augas Santas

A small devotional chapel located in the northern rural parish of Augas Santas.

(42.96155, -8.54527)

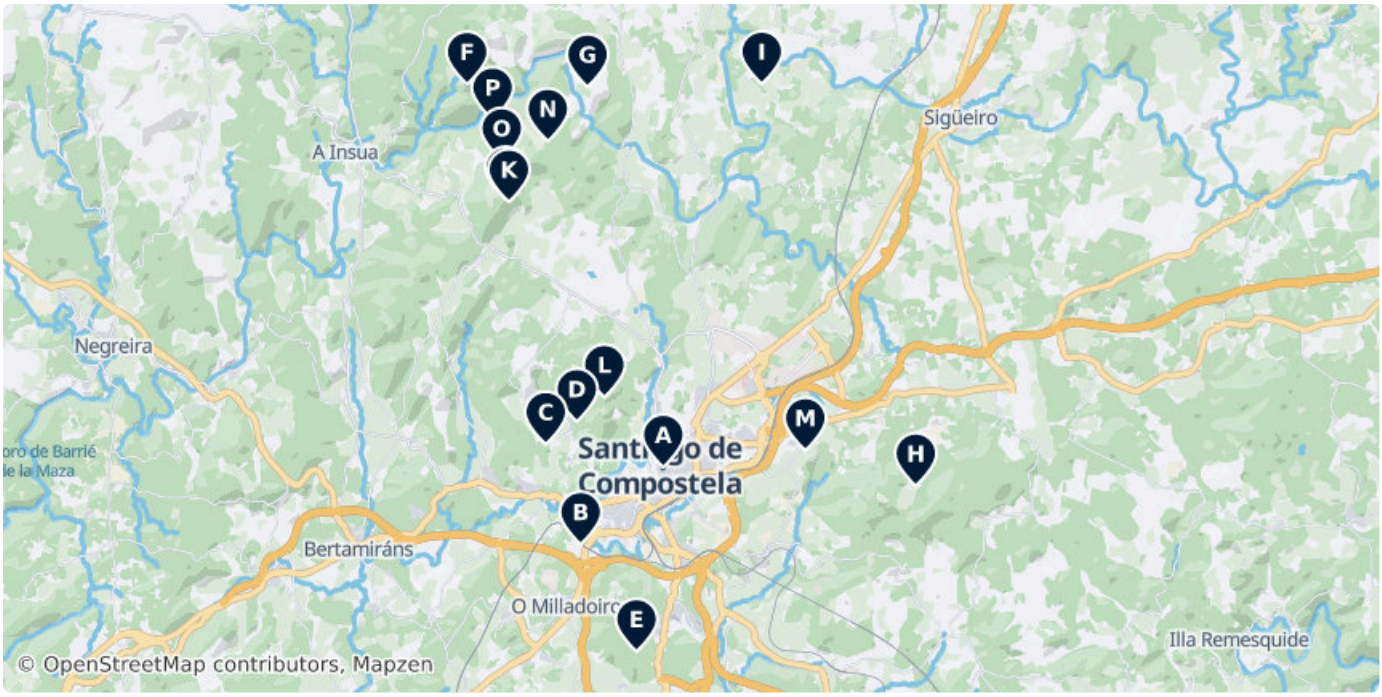
L Ermida da Madalena

A rural chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene, situated in the parish of Bando.

(42.93509, -8.41300)

Historical and Archaeological Treasures

This collection spans millennia of history around Santiago de Compostela, from Neolithic megaliths like the Dolmen de Zarramacedo to Bronze Age petroglyphs and Iron Age hillforts known as 'castros.' It features the iconic Romanesque and Baroque architecture of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela alongside the medieval ruins of Castle da Rocha Forte. The list also includes industrial remnants, such as an early 20th-century electricity generator, and religious monuments like the Vía Crucis stone crosses, detailing the region's long cultural evolution.





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B Castle da Rocha Forte

Castle da Rocha Forte is a ruined fort near Santiago de Compostela, in Galicia, Spain.

15706, Spain (42.86092, -8.57319)

rochaforte.info

C Castro de Marmancou ou de Figueiras

Remains of an Iron Age hillfort settlement, typical of the pre-Roman castro culture in Galicia.

Estrada de Folgoso a Codesedas, 15897 Santiago de Compostela, Spain (42.88629, -8.58527)

D Petróglifos de Correxíns

Prehistoric rock carvings featuring geometric motifs and circular engravings dating back to the Bronze Age.

Camiño do Toutón, 15897 Santiago de Compostela, Spain (42.89209, -8.57454)

E Petroglifo de Montouto

Ancient rock art site featuring cup marks and prehistoric engravings carved into the natural granite landscape.

(42.83374, -8.55386)

F Castelo de Portomeiro

Archaeological remains of a fortified Iron Age settlement, also known as Castro de Portomeiro.

15873, Spain (42.97746, -8.61251)

G Castro de Merelle

Remains of a pre-Roman fortified village situated on a strategic elevation overlooking the surrounding valley.

(42.97683, -8.57085)

H Dolmen de Zarramacedo

A Neolithic megalithic burial chamber constructed from large upright stone slabs.

(42.87578, -8.45722)

I Castro das Cruelas

Archaeological site containing the foundations and defensive perimeter of a pre-Roman hillfort.

(42.97755, -8.51051)

J Petróglifos da Fonte da Matanza 1

Prehistoric rock engravings located near the Fonte da Matanza, featuring traditional Galician rock art motifs.

(42.94834, -8.59910)

K Petróglifos da Fonte da Matanza 2

Part of a complex of prehistoric petroglyphs featuring circular designs and cup marks.

(42.94769, -8.59804)

L Cruceiro XIV do Vía Crucis do Pedroso

A traditional Galician stone cross representing the 14th station of the Way of the Cross on Mount Pedroso.

(42.89822, -8.56502)

M Os Peregrinos

A bronze sculpture on Monte do Gozo depicting two pilgrims looking toward the spires of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

(42.88475, -8.49545)

N A Pedra que Fala

Archaeological site featuring a stone traditionally associated with local legends and ancient carvings.

(42.96307, -8.58458)

O Antiga canteira

Abandoned remains of a historical stone quarry once used for local construction.

(42.95818, -8.60054)

P Antigo xerador de elecctricidade

Industrial ruins of an early 20th-century building used for power generation.

15873, Spain (42.96847, -8.60371)

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