

Visit the main archaeological, historical and architectonic sites in Cantabria.

Information and reservations

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Tower of the Infantado

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Subject to availability.

On the day, you can only buy tickets at the ticket office, subject to availability of places and in order of arrival.

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Prehistoric caves



Cultural centres

Availability on the day/Sales in the ticket office



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IMPPE 81508 - Depósito legal SA-76-2022



HORNOS DE LA PEÑA CAVE

Tarriba, San Felices de Buelna



El Gobierno de Cantabria



Centros Culturales de Cantabria

The cave is 100 metres long, but its interior chambers and passages are small and quite difficult to move through in some places. The walls were decorated almost exclusively with incised and finger engravings. Most of them were drawn about 15,500-13,000 years ago but others are at least 22,000 years old. The entrance hall contains some very old Palaeolithic engravings, particularly the figure of a horse, associated with the dwelling area. Inside the cave, the most abundant figures are horses and bison, followed by aurochs, ibex and stags. In the furthest and most remote part of the cave is one of the few human representations in northern Spain, very similar to some engraved anthropomorphs on the ceiling in **Altamira Cave**.



To visit the cave it is necessary to wear a helmet, which will be provided by the guide at the start of the visit.



CULLALVERA CAVE

Ramales de la Victoria



Two kilometres from **Covalanas Cave**, near the centre of Ramales, this cave has a surprisingly large entrance, 14 metres wide and 28 metres high. The cave stays this size in the first 1,500 metres of its passages. The total length of the cave is now 13,400 metres and at one time it was among the longest caves in the world and the fourth longest in Spain. When it rains, the cave system becomes active and the River Calera appears inside the passage. The visit takes place along a 400-metre walkway that allows access for people with limited mobility. A yellowish figure of a horse was painted near the entrance. Some claviform signs and series of dots are located in a side-passage 782 metres from the entrance, beyond the tourist part of the cave, while 1,179 metres from the entrance three horses were drawn with charcoal about 12,500 years ago. These are contemporary with the figures in **Las Monedas Cave** and are some of the paintings furthest inside a cave in the Iberian Peninsula.



Visit the main archaeological, historical,

PREHISTORIC CAVES AND CULTURAL CENTRES

CANTABRIA

ES EN FR



3 EL PENDO CAVE

Escobedo de Camargo



The first part of the cave is an impressive 45m in width and 22m in height. Its first occupants were Neanderthals, at least 84,000 years ago. After their demise, Homo sapiens lived in the cave between 40,000 and 12,000 years ago. Over 250 portable art objects have been found belonging to that period of time. They help to understand the way the cave was used as a meeting place for human groups. Inside the cave and visible from the dwelling site, a frieze of rock 25m long contains 19 of the 24 red paintings in the cave. They include a herd of hinds, an ibex, a horse, two indeterminate figures and some signs. The wall would have been lit by daylight in prehistoric times, before the roof of the cave collapsed at the entrance. From the point of view of the choice of animals, technique and style, these paintings belong to the same artistic cycle as those in **Covalanas Cave**, dated to about 20,000-25,000 years ago.



4 HORNOS DE LA PEÑA CAVE

Tarriba, San Felices de Buelna



The cave is 100 metres long, but its interior chambers and passages are small and quite difficult to move through in some places. The walls were decorated almost exclusively with incised and finger engravings. Most of them were drawn about 15,500-13,000 years ago but others are at least 22,000 years old. The entrance hall contains some very old Palaeolithic engravings, particularly the figure of a horse, associated with the dwelling area. Inside the cave, the most abundant figures are horses and bison, followed by aurochs, ibex and stags. In the furthest and most remote part of the cave is one of the few human representations in northern Spain, very similar to some engraved anthropomorphs on the ceiling in **Altamira Cave**.

5 COVALANAS CAVE

Ramales de la Victoria



The virtual absence of occupation levels in Covalanas Cave shows that it was used almost exclusively as a shrine, restricted to a small number of people owing to its small size. The cave consists of a narrow and high passage 110 metres long, in which practically all the red paintings are situated about 65 metres from the entrance. The technical and stylistic homogeneity of the figures, nearly all of which were painted as dotted lines, and the relatively small number of depictions, suggest that they were all painted at the same time, about 20,000 or 25,000 years ago. In total the figures consist of 18 hinds, two horses (one doubtful), a stag, an aurochs, an indeterminate animal and some signs.



6 CULLALVERA CAVE

Ramales de la Victoria



Two kilometres from **Covalanas Cave**, near the centre of Ramales, this cave has a surprisingly large entrance, 14 metres wide and 28 metres high. The cave stays this size in the first 110 metres of its passages. The total length of the cave is now 130 metres and at one time it was among the longest caves in the world and the fourth longest in Spain. When it rains, the cave system becomes active and the River Calera appears inside the passage. The visit takes place along a 400-metre walkway that allows access for people with limited mobility. A yellowish figure of a horse was painted near the entrance. Some claviform signs and series of dots are located in a side-passage 782 metres from the entrance beyond the tourist part of the cave, while the

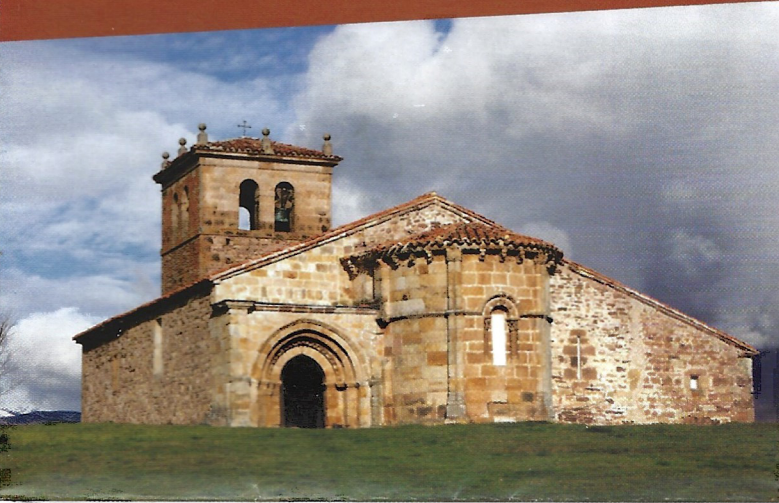
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ROMANESQUE INTERPRETATION CENTRE

Villacantid, Campoo de Suso



This centre is located in the church of Santa María la Mayor. This building is the result of different constructive phases over time, and the apse and the door of the Romanesque church built in the late twelfth century are still preserved. It displays representations of fantastic animals, such as griffons, and scenes like the jousts of knights and Samson fighting the lion. Several audio-visual resources explain the different phases in the construction of the church, the work of stone masons and the techniques used in Romanesque architecture. The origin and development of the Romanesque in the region is explained with examples from the southern valleys, such as Santa María de Retortillo, built on top of the forum in the Roman town of **JULIOBRIGA**, and the collegiate of San Martín de Elines and San Pedro de Cervatos.



12

TOWER OF THE INFANTADO

Potes



TORRE DEL INFANTADO
---POTES---

Bastion of Potes and Liébana, the 15th century Tower of the Infantado stands between the Rivers Deva and Quiviesa. Opened to the public in 2011 after its restoration, the museum is devoted to the work of Beatus of Liébana, abbot and first Cantabrian author, in its 1,800 m², distributed over 6 floors, around a central courtyard. It is accessed by a long staircase and a door with a pointed arch. Having belonged to the Dukes of Infantado, it has been a prison and Town Hall of Potes. Today it permanently hosts the most complete exhibition of beatus facsimiles in the world: "Beatus of Liébana and his beatuses". Temporary exhibitions are held in the basement. From the battlements you can view Potes, with the Picos de Europa in the background.



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PERO NIÑO TOWER

Sovilla, San Felices de Buelna



The Tower-Fortress of La Aguilera, also known as Pero Niño Tower, was built in the fourteenth century. It has an Interpretation Centre displaying information about the life of Admiral Pero Niño, 1st Count of Buelna, based on the book *El Victorial*, written in the fifteenth century by his lieutenant Gutierre Diaz de Games. The exhibition titled "Pero Niño: life and adventures of a medieval knight" begins by explaining the rich archaeological heritage in Buelna, especially the cave of **Hornos de la Peña**. Audio-visuals, optical games, holograms and touchscreen audio interactive games describe the chivalrous and courtly life of this eminent man during the reign of King Enrique III, within the historical context of the Kingdom of Castile in the late fourteenth century.



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SOBRELLANO PALACE AND MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Comillas



These buildings were designed by Joan Martorell, commissioned by the 1st Marquis of Comillas, the businessman Don Antonio López López. The palace was conceived as a veritable architectural jewel in a neo-Gothic style integrating that modernist character found in all the architect's works. It was created as a summer residence for the marquis and the Royal Family. The design and the noble materials used in its construction are quite astonishing, such as the fireplaces designed by Cristobal Cascante, the stained-glass windows made in Eudald Amigó's craft workshop, and the mural paintings by Eduard Llorens i Masdeu. The Memorial Chapel was conceived as a cathedral on a small scale, incorporating an ambulatory where the family mausoleum is located. Inside the chapel, the organ, the stained-glass windows and the sculptures by Josep Llimona and the Vallmitjana Barbany brothers are outstanding. The seats of honour, the pews and the confessional were designed by Antonio Gaudí.





1 CAVES

Visits are guided in all the caves and last about 45 minutes, except at Chufin Cave, where the duration is about 1 hour 45 minutes.

Covaleñas, Hornos de la Peña and Chufin lack electric lighting. The guide will provide torches at the start of the visit. You are recommended to wear non-slip comfortable shoes and warm clothing.

2 CENTRES

Visits to the Domus at Jvliobriga and the archaeological site of Camesa/Rebolledo are guided and last about 45 minutes. If both Roman sites are visited in the same day, you can enjoy a reduction in the price of the visit to the second site.

In the high season, guided visits are organised to the Roman town of Jvliobriga.

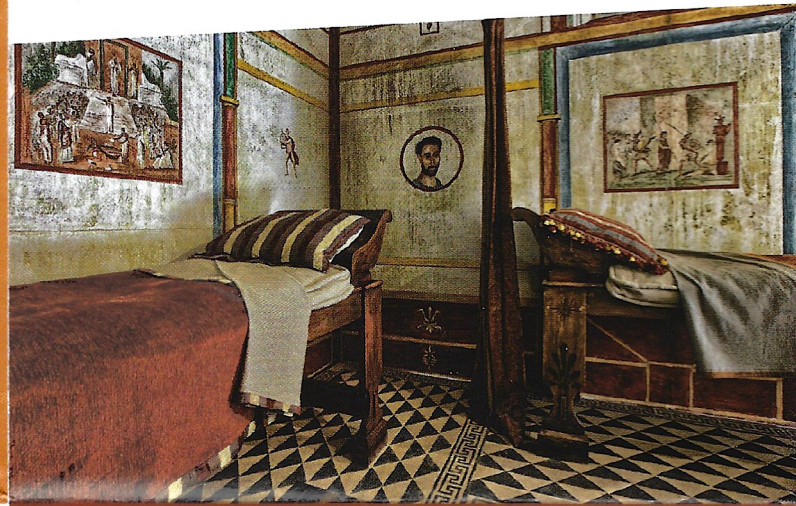
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JVLIOBRIGA DOMUS ROMAN TOWN

Retortillo, Campoo de Enmedio



The JVLIOBRIGA DOMVS is situated in the Roman town of the same name. It recreates in its design, size and distribution the so-called House of the Firedogs, with its Hellenistic ground plan and located only 200m away. This house was built in the late first century AD, the time of the town's greatest splendour. The DOMVS reproduces the main room, the triclinium, which was used for meetings, banquets and as an office. The interior courtyard with its columns is the location of the lararium, for offerings to the gods. Succulent meals were cooked in the culina; the cubiculum was a place to rest and where the family could be together; and the tavern was the financial support of the household. On the second floor, the permanent exhibition displays the main archaeological finds in the town, connected with the daily life of its inhabitants. The history and urban layout of the town are explained during the visit.



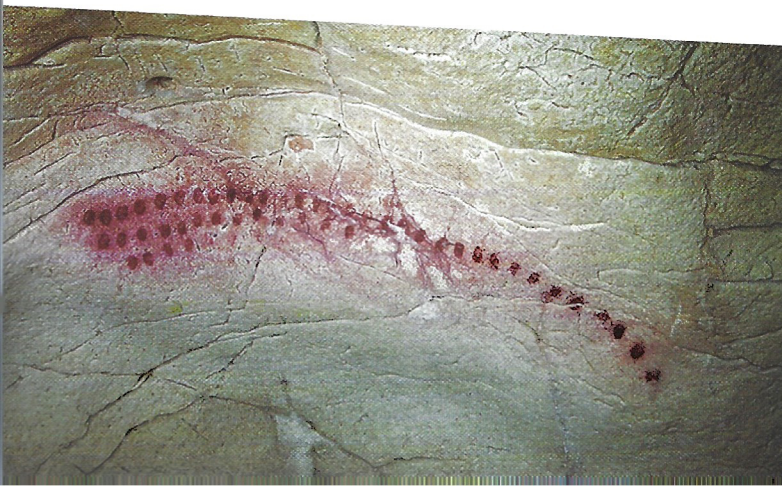
7 CHUFÍN CAVE

Riclones, Rionansa



The name of the cave comes from the Moor Chufin who, according to local tales, hid treasure inside the cave. But the real treasure is the group of Palaeolithic drawings and paintings in the cave, particularly the engravings in the entrance, within daylight, next to a prehistoric dwelling. Nearly all the figures in this area represent hinds, many of them depicted with three deep lines. It is a clear example of an exterior group, dated to between 25,000 and 18,000 years ago. It is surprising to find a lake inside the cave, but this is a consequence of the Palombera reservoir flooding the valley. Several red paintings are seen around the lake. Most of these are signs, mainly rows of dots, rather than animal figures, although an aurochs, two horses and a stag can be seen, as well as a possible female figure. These are all at least 20,000-25,000 years old.

i You have to crawl to reach the interior of the cave. The guide will provide helmets and knee-pads.



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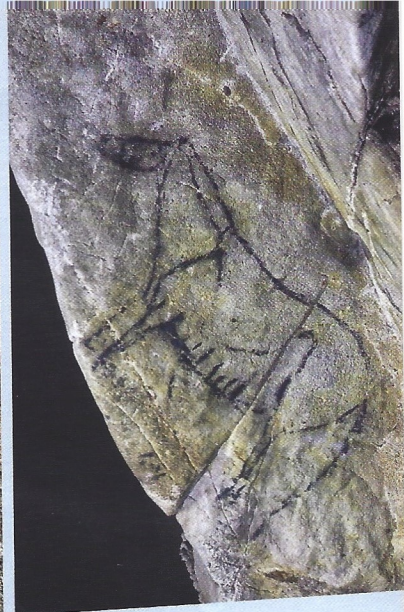
ROMAN-MEDIEVAL SITE OF CAMESA/REBOLLEDO

Mataporquera, Valdeolea



This luxurious Roman villa, with its baths, was built in the first century AD in the proximity of a town. Its large storage area gives an indication of the rural activity carried out there. The villa was abandoned in the middle of the third century AD and the land was used for a cemetery in the early Middle Ages. This is shown by the numerous graves in pits or lined with stones, and a smaller number of sarcophagi, located around the foundations of a church of the same age. This consisted of a single nave and a rectangular apse. The history and distribution of the Roman villa are explained during the visit, highlighting the purpose and use of the different parts of the baths and the building techniques employed in Roman times.





CAVES OF MONTE CASTILLO

Puente Viesgo

Four decorated caves in Monte Castillo were listed as World Heritage by UNESCO in 2008. These are El Castillo, Las Chimeneas, Las Monedas and La Pasiega. The ones that are open to the public are:

1 EL CASTILLO CAVE



El Castillo has been inhabited for at least 150,000 years as the cave contains one of the oldest occupation levels in northern Spain. The levels related to the disappearance of the Neanderthals and the arrival of Homo sapiens, dated to between 41,000 and 38,000 years ago, are of particular interest. A painting dated to at least 41,000 years ago currently represents the first phase in the decoration of the cave. About 300 metres long, the cave is decorated on practically all its walls, which display over 2,900 motifs, produced between 41,000 and 3,500 years ago and therefore representing 37,500 years of the symbolic ideas of humankind. Among the diverse kinds of depictions, signs are more abundant than animal figures. Of these the most frequent are bison, some of them contemporary with the bison in **Altamira Cave**. The 78 hand stencils, at least 37,000 years old, are a point of reference of the cave.

2 LAS MONEDAS CAVE



The cave was given its name after 20 coins from the time of the Catholic Monarchs were found there, connecting the cave with legends of treasures. It is 350 metres long, and the first 250 metres are visited. In addition to the prehistoric art, the cave is famous for the beauty of its geology, with large chambers in the first 200 metres containing colourful flowstone, columns, stalactites and stalagmites. The pictures were drawn with charcoal in a small passage near the entrance. The animals represented are characteristic of a cold climate, such as reindeer, which are very unusual figures in Palaeolithic art in northern Spain, horses, ibex and a bison. They have been dated to 12,300 - 11,500 years ago. No occupation levels contemporary with the paintings have been found, and the nearest levels of that age are in **El Castillo Cave**, 650 metres away.

i In summer and at Easter, activities connected with Prehistory are held for people of all ages. Tickets for both caves can be obtained at the entrance of El Castillo Cave.