

The municipality of **Ruente** is located next to the **Saja River** and the **Sierra del Escudo de Cabuérniga**. There are four key words that describe the area: **nature, gastronomy, architecture and mythology**. And soon you'll understand why.

First, we'll mention the towns that it consists of: **Barcenillas, Lamiña, Ruente and Ucieda**. Each one has a street and a place that will pique your interest because they're living history.

As a **brief introduction**, it's important to note that the municipality's oldest remains are preserved in the **San Fructuoso Hermitage**. Here you can find a sarcophagus, some columns and other **pre-romanesque** remains.

Furthermore, Ruente was an important stop **on the way to Castile**. In the **9th century**, it was transited by the **Foramontanos**, people who were going to repopulate the meseta. And in the **16th century**, it was part of a commercial route called the **Camino Real**. If you like driving, we recommend following the road to the **Palombera mountain pass**: it's one of the most beautiful **scenic routes** in the area!

During the **17th and 18th centuries** there was a wave of **emigration to America**. These people who made their fortune abroad, **Indianos**, built **large houses and baroque mansions** when they returned; and you can still see them throughout the municipality.

Moreover, its **natural environment** is very important. Most of its territory contains some means of conservation: the **Saja Besaya Natural Park**, the **ZEC** (Special Conservation Area) **waterway of the Saja River** and several **Unique Trees** which are significant due to their size, age or peculiarity, like the Mellizo (Twin), the Belén or the Bujilices Beech.

Next we'll reveal more of its **ESSENTIAL** and **EXPLORING** sections, as well as clues and fun facts to make your visit this municipality more fun.




ESSENTIALS

① BARCENILLAS

The name **Barcenillas** comes from the word "**bárcena**," which refers to the fertile land near rivers. A walk through the village is like looking at a catalog of traditional **montañesa houses** from the **17th and 18th centuries**, when the **Indianos** arrived to build their homes. Furthermore, Barcenillas was a village of **stonemasons**. You can see the intricate stonework in all of the houses, especially on the **windows**, which are adorned with flowers, crosses and filigrees.




Someone who was closely linked to Barcenillas was **Francisco Pérez González**, more commonly known as **Pancho**. He was Honorary Adviser of the PRISA group and co-founder of the Santillana publishing house along with Jesús Polanco.

 Do you want to learn more? Click on this link from the **Esencia de Cantabria** website. [Self-Guided Tour of Barcenillas](#)

2 LAMIÑA WATERFALLS

Are you ready to **walk**? The Lamiña Waterfalls, also known as the **Úrsula Waterfalls**, is the perfect hike to do with the **family**. It's **not too difficult**, although you have to be a walker because the route is approximately 8 kilometers. You can set off from **Barcenillas** or **Lamiña**, as both paths meet at the same point. Once you're at this point, you go up a hill that will lead you to a **cattle grate**, which is a metal grill on the ground which serves to prevent livestock from escaping because they are scared of stepping on it and breaking their leg. The descent is indicated to the right of the gate. **Warning!** Once you reach the river, there's no bridge, so **you'll have to cross** it very carefully. Then, you go along the **left** of the river, and **voila!** You've arrived at the magical place where the **waterfalls** are.

 As a **warning**, the roads that lead to the waterfalls **cannot be accessed by car**, despite signage in some areas stating the opposite. **Only residents' and agricultural vehicles are authorized**. You will see the signs just outside of both towns. In Barcenillas, there's a large **parking lot** next to the **church** where you can leave your car, that way you can enjoy the landscapes much more.



Technical information and recommendations:

- ▶ **Starts and ends:** Barcenillas o Lamiña
- ▶ **Length:** 8 km
- ▶ **Duration:** 2 h
- ▶ **Level:** easy
- ▶ **Type of track:** linear
- ▶ **Incline:** +100 m./ -100 m.
- ▶ **Type of path:** forest trail and walking path
- ▶ **Signpost:** Green/white markers, although they're not complete
- ▶ **Drinking water:** fountains in Barcenillas y Lamiña



Notes:

1. We recommend downloading the track of the route on your phone.
2. Wear good hiking shoes and take a walking stick.
3. Only leave your footprints on the ground: throw any trash you accumulate into the correct bin when you return.
4. The trail can be done on bicycle, but only up until the cattle grate. Here, you can lock the bike to a post; then, we recommend continuing on the main path and going up to Braña de Joces. The views here are fantastic.
5. Live in harmony with the environment: observe animals from a distance and respect the plants. If you walk quietly you may find some pleasant surprises.



[Download more information and track HERE](#)

3 RUENTE

Ruente has one mandatory stop: **La Fuentona (The Big Fountain)**. The name could be somewhat confusing, because it's not actually a fountain, but **a river!** This spring **flows intermittently**. The dry spells (which can last hours or minutes) are called "**secas,**" and they're closely tied to Cantabrian mythology. In this case it's referring to the legend of the 'anjana,' a Cantabrian fairy. It's a magical place that immediately transmits a sense of calmness.



Ruente has prominent houses like **La Nogalera** and Mier mansion, and a medieval **bridge** which, along with La Fuentona, is the ultimate backdrop to the perfect photo in town.



At this link, you can take an **easy 3-kilometer journey** which includes the village of Ruente and the trail along the Saja River: [Self-guided tour of Ruente](#)

4 UCIEDA

Within its three neighborhoods—**Ucieda de Arriba (the top of Ucieda)**, **de Abajo (the bottom)** and **Meca**, you'll be able to see interesting buildings like a **shrine** (a small building with religious symbols pointing out the main road), **La Canal House**, or **Escagedo Mansion**, among others. Did you know there are several **famous figures** linked to Ucieda? We'll highlight some of them: two artists, **María Blanchard** (Cubism) and **Antonio Quirós** (Figurative Expressionism); and **Consuelo Berges** (translator, journalist and writer)



Ucieda is one of the access points to the **Saja Besaya Natural Park**. Several hiking and bicycle trails have their starting points at the **La Campa or Casa del Monte** recreational area, which we'll tell you more about soon. But there's more...mark your calendar for **the first Sunday of September**, when the **Cocido Montañés Festival** is celebrated. This stew is one of the star dishes in the area and we recommend you try it.



To **take a step-by-step tour and to get to know Ucieda** better, we recommend visiting the following link: [Self-guided tour of Ucieda](#)

5 BAYONES RIVER TRAIL FOR THE BLIND

This trail for the blind is a **simple 2-kilometer route**. It's located in the La Campa de Ucieda (also known as **Casa del Monte**) recreational area. The start of the trail is about

700 meters ahead. Although you can arrive by car, we recommend going on foot, that way your 2-kilometer route becomes 4. It's **highly recommended for families** because it can be turned into an **educational experience**: take a **blindfold**, and whether you're a child or adult, try **reading** the signs throughout the first kilometer of the route **with your hands**. Each sign represents **animals or embossed plants** and their descriptions are in **braille**.



Technical information and recommendations:

- ▶ **Starts and ends:** Parking lot 2 km away from Casa del Monte recreational area
- ▶ **Length:** 2 km (4 km if starting from recreational area)
- ▶ **Duration:** 1 h
- ▶ **Level:** easy
- ▶ **Type of track:** circular
- ▶ **Incline:** +50 m./ -50 m.
- ▶ **Type of path:** forest trail and walking path
- ▶ **Signpost:** Signs at the start of the trail and throughout the first kilometer
- ▶ **Drinking water:** a fountain in Uceda



Notes:

1. We recommend downloading the track of the route on your phone.
2. Wear good hiking shoes and take a walking stick.
3. Only leave your footprints on the ground: throw any trash you accumulate into the correct bin when you return.
4. Live in harmony with the environment: observe animals from a distance and respect the plants. If you walk quietly you may find some pleasant surprises.



[Download more information and track HERE](#)

6 CANTOS REDONDOS VIEWPOINT

The **Cantos Redondos viewpoint** is located on the **summit** of the Sierra del Escudo de Cabuérniga. You have to go on foot via the Piralba- Cantos Redondos Route to get here. The path begins in Santibáñez. You have to be in shape to do it, though, because the climb up has an incline of 535 meters. However, **the effort is worth it**. The **360° panoramic views** are amazing! On a clear day, you can see parts of the Asturias and Cantabria coasts, Picos de Europa (Peaks of Europe), Peña Sagra, the Cantabrian Mountains, and the valleys all around.



The Sierra del Escudo de Cabuérniga is what is geologically known as an overthrust fault; meaning that due to the earth's movement, a fracture in the crust occurred. The route is located here on this fracture.



There's more information about the trail at the following link: [Piralba - Cantos Redondos Route](#)

7 MONTE AA ROUTE

The route of Monte Aa or of the **Singular Trees** is one of the most frequented in the valley. This itinerary takes you into one of the mature oak groves of the region where **cagigas** -as Quercus robur oaks are known here- abound along with beech, holly and riverside forest. The **most striking specimens** are **century-old oaks** cataloged and protected as Singular Trees. One of the **best known was El Cubilón**, whose remains you will see protected as a monument by a fence. On the promenade you will see **the Mellizo, the Belén and the Arriaga**. It will seem incredible to you, but **these trees were born around the year 1400, when Columbus had not yet arrived in America!** It is a real luxury to be able to enjoy them and that is why we ask you to respect and care for them.

The **start** is the town of Riente where you have parking to leave the vehicle. There are two options to get to the Singular Trees:

- **Linear route** that follows the main forest track: go up about 4 kilometers to a curve where you find signs to see the unique trees.
- **Circular route** signposted as Ruta del Cubilón.



The forest track can be traveled by mountain bike but to enter the interior path, it is not allowed for bicycles.

Always follow the trodden and marked path because what is outside the path **is growing the new generations of oaks**.



Technical data and recommendations:

- ▶ **Start and end:** Riente
- ▶ **Length:** +- 10 km depending on the option
- ▶ **Duration:** 3 hours.
- ▶ **Level:** low (there is a slight slope)
- ▶ **Type of track:** linear / circular
- ▶ **Incline:** +280 m. / -280 m.
- ▶ **Type of path:** track and trail
- ▶ **Signpost:** Cubilón route
- ▶ **Drinking water:** source in Riente



Notes:

1. It is recommended to download the track of the trail.
2. Wear good shoes and walking sticks.
3. Leave only the mark of your footsteps: the garbage that you generate, deposit it in the appropriate container when you return.
4. Live in harmony with the environment: observe the fauna from a distance

and respect the flora. If you walk in silence you can discover pleasant surprises.
5. The download and info that we attach is from the linear route



[More info and track of the route HERE](#)



EXPLORING

SAJA BESAYA NATURAL PARK

Do you want to disconnect from your day-to-day routine and be at one with nature?
Well, you've come to the perfect place!

We'll answer a few basic questions for you:

1. **How can I get in the park?** One of the main entrances to **Saja Besaya Natural Park** is in Uceda.
2. **How do I get there?** Continue down the road that goes through the town to get to this paradise.
3. **Where do I park?** About 4 kilometers away you'll find the recreational area of **Casa del Monte (also known as Campa de Uceda)**, where you can **park** and start hikes and adventures.
4. **What time of year should I go?** This question's easy, it's amazing throughout all seasons!
5. **How big is it?** About 24,500 football fields! (24,500 hectares)
6. **Warning:** there's very little to no phone reception in many areas. It's advisable to download an app like My112 which you can be located with in case you run into problems. We'll leave you with the links for [My112](#) or [AlertCops](#)

Next we'll suggest a few trails:

① LOS PUENTES HIKING TRAIL

This is one of the most well-known routes in the area. The track goes through **Monte Río Los Vados or Mount Uceda**, an **oak grove** that also has other species like beeches and tree heathers. You'll have the chance to see specimens like the *Roble Tumbado (Lying Oak)* or the *Haya de Bujilices (Bujilices Beech tree)* which are part of the **Unique Trees** of Cantabria inventory. The **starting point** is Casa del Monte. Follow the **track**, and at about 700 meters you'll come across a bridge and a sign that takes you on a detour to the right towards Braña del Moral. The hike up is 4 kilometers. Once you pass **Casa del Andinoso**, you'll turn to the left. This is the start of the **hiking trail** that will take you

through the mountains where you can see the Unique Trees in the forest, as well as the ruins of **Rozas**, a village abandoned in the 17th century. You can also see remains of **coal cellars**, where charcoal was used as fuel in homes and in the ironworks industry. At the end of the trail, you'll reach the **Vuelta de la Coterá**, where the track merges with the Hayacorva route and takes you back to Casa del Monte.



Technical information and recommendations:

- ▶ **Starts and ends:** Parking Casa del Monte recreational area
- ▶ **Length:** 15,80 km
- ▶ **Duration:** 5 h
- ▶ **Level:** moderate
- ▶ **Type of track:** circular
- ▶ **Incline:** +690 m./ -690 m.
- ▶ **Type of path:** forest trail and walking path
- ▶ **Signpost:** CA-ENP35 signs in light and dark green
- ▶ **Drinking water:** a fountain in Ucieda



Notes:

1. We recommend downloading the track of the route on your phone.
2. Wear good hiking shoes and take a walking stick.
3. Only leave your footprints on the ground: throw any trash you accumulate into the correct bin when you return.
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[Download more information and track HERE](#)

2 HAYACORVA TRAIL

This route runs through the **northeastern part** of the Natural Park. It's entirely on a **path**, so it's perfect to do **either on foot or mountain bike**. The landscape is a mix between **meadows, oak trees and beech trees** in the shadier areas. **Set off** from Casa del Monte and follow the same path as in the previous trail. After about **700 meters** you'll reach a **fork in the road**. Continue toward the area called **Casa de Tío Mero** until you reach the junction. Since it's a **circular route**, if you take the **path to the left**, you will do the trail **clockwise**; if you continue straight, you'll do it counter-clockwise. The path goes uphill until you reach a place called **Las Palancas**; from this point on, the path is downhill. If you pay close attention, you may see **deer, foxes**, or strange invertebrates like the **Alpine longhorn beetle** (*Rosalia alpina*) or the **stag beetle** (*Lucanus cervus*).



Technical information and recommendations:

- ▶ **Starts and ends:** Parking Casa del Monte recreational area
- ▶ **Length:** 13 km
- ▶ **Duration:** 4 h
- ▶ **Level:** easy
- ▶ **Type of track:** circular
- ▶ **Incline:** +417 m./ -417 m.
- ▶ **Type of path:** forest trail
- ▶ **Signpost:** parcial
- ▶ **Drinking water:** a fountain in Ucieda



Notes:

1. We recommend downloading the track of the route on your phone.
2. Wear good hiking shoes and take a walking stick.
3. Only leave your footprints on the ground: throw any trash you accumulate into the correct bin when you return.
4. Live in harmony with the environment: observe animals from a distance and respect the plants. If you walk quietly you may find some pleasant surprises.



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