

In the privileged environment of **Oyambre Natural Park**, we find the municipality of San Vicente de la Barquera. Let's start with the towns that make up this municipality: Abaño, La Acebosa, El Barcenal, Gandarilla, El Hortigal, Los Llaos, La Revilla, Santillán-Boria and San Vicente de la Barquera.

As a brief introduction, it's important to note that due to its strategic position next to the Cantabrian Sea, the capital, San Vicente de la Barquera, has played a very important role in the history of our region. Maritime trade has been a fundamental part in the town's development. During the Roman Empire it was known as the port of **Vereasueca**, although its greatest growth came in **1210** when **King Alfonso VIII** created a **municipal charter**. This involved a series of benefits and tax exemptions for its economic development. At the same time, the **salt trade** was regulated, which increased its fishing activity since **salting** was one of the most popular ways of preserving fish. Nowadays, it's still a model fishing port.

Countless travelers transited through this area, one of the most predominant of which being **Emperor Carlos V** when he was still a prince and heading towards Castilian lands to be crowned as Carlos I. That is how San Vicente became part of the European Routes of Emperor Carlos V. The routes of the pilgrimage have become one of many of the historical paths that cross the municipality of San Vicente. The Northern **Camino de Santiago (the Way of St. James)** and the **Camino Lebaniego** bring thousands of pilgrims from all over the world.

Next we'll reveal more of its **ESSENTIALS** and **EXPLORING**:



ESSENTIALS

① OLD TOWN SAN VICENTE DE LA BARQUERA

Much like a natural moat, the Pombo and Rubín Marshes surround the peninsula where the old town is located. Like any place with a defensive purpose, it's located on high ground, so that means you're going to have to climb uphill! But the views are well worth the effort. On Calle Alta, formerly known as Rúa Mayor, we can see these main monuments:


- **King's Castle** This building is from the 13th century, when San Vicente became part of the municipal charter in 1210. Can you imagine what the castle guards must have seen in the Middle Ages? Come visit the inside of the castle and besides learning about the town's history, you'll be blown away by the views!
- **The Castle Walls** Like any medieval town, not only did it have to have a castle, but a fortified wall complex, as well. Various parts of the walls have been preserved and are still standing, including: the northern section, part of the south wall, the Asturian door—also known as the Pilgrims' door, and the


reconstruction of the Mar and La Barrera doors. It's here where we can find the **Preboste Tower**. This tower is where taxes used to be collected, so watch your wallet when you pass by here!

- **Church of Santa María de los Ángeles.** The Santa María de los Ángeles Church can be found on the highest place in town, as if it were a fortress. Its Gothic construction began in the 13th century and was finished in the 19th century with the completion of the bell tower. The interior houses several treasures, like altarpieces or the **tomb of Inquisitor Corro**, one of the best pieces from the Spanish Renaissance. An interesting thing you'll see beside the statue on the sepulcher: a dog, the symbol of loyalty. In front of the church tower, you can see the remains of La Concepción Hospital, a place whose mission was to help the pilgrims doing the Camino de Santiago.
- **The Corro Family Palace.** This is located in front of the Preboste Tower and nowadays it's known as the San Vicente de la Barquera Town Hall.

2 OYAMBRE NATURAL PARK RESEARCH CENTER

The Punta de la Silla Lighthouse has been the guiding light for sailors since 1871; it's also home to the Oyambre Natural Park Research Center. The natural parks are spaces created to protect the flora and fauna. In Oyambre's case, its size is around **6000ha** (about 6000 football fields) and it's divided into different areas: the **coast**, with its cliffs, beaches and estuaries; the **meadows**; and the **forest**, like **Monte Corona**. In the rooms of the lighthouse, there are materials on display which allow you to gain a better understanding of the park. But best of all, you can take in all this information live just by looking out the windows.

 Within the center's outdoor enclosure, you'll find a small **interpretive tour** of the flora, an **insect hotel** and even an **amphibian pond**! In addition to the views, you may see a yellow-legged gull or a cormorant fly overhead.

 The park team carries out **guided tours** which help you take in all the surroundings. They're highly recommended!

Information at: [Naturea PN de Oyambre](#)

3 THE BEACHES

If there's anything that represents the municipality, **it's the beaches**. There's something for everyone: **big ones**, **small ones**, **coves**, those that give way to the open sea, or those that are sheltered in an estuary. Depending on who you ask, they will give you a different name because the beaches are also known by some of their special features. Here we'll explain:

- **Fuentes Beach**, also known as the “nuclear beach”. In the 1970s there was a plan to build a nuclear power plant here which never came to fruition, but it did leave its nickname and a trench next to the beach.
- **La Maza Beach**, this is known as “the lazy people’s beach” because those that didn’t want to walk to the “waves” beach would just stop here. This beach is **dog friendly**.
- **El Tostadero Beach**, this is a beach sheltered from the winds and is literally “like a toaster” because of the heat.
- **El Rosal Beach**, this is the start of “waves” beach.
- **Merón Beach**, this is where the Merón Stream flows into.
- **Bederna Beach**, this is mouth of the Bederna Stream.
- **El Cabo Beach**, this is the last of the beaches on the coast. It’s commonly known as Piedras Negras (Black Rocks), Gerra and Gerruca.
- **Oyambre Beach**, this beach is located on the other side of the cape and it's shared with the neighboring municipality of Valdáliga.


They’re the ideal places to enjoy yourself by swimming, sunbathing, going for a walk or practicing water sports like **surfing, paddleboarding, rowing, fishing or sailing**.


 On Oyambre Beach you’ll find the **Yellow Bird monument**, dedicated to one of the first transatlantic flights and which landed here in 1929. It was a French plane that took off from The United States and whose final destination was Paris. Why did it land here? You’ll have to come and find out...

④ A SUNSET: IN SEARCH OF THE GREEN RAY

Along the whole coast, from **Los Llaos** to **Boria-Santillán**, you can enjoy one of the most beautiful sunsets. We recommend two locations:

- **Gerra**, from the town, going down to El Cabo Beach or along the coast you’ll find some unbelievable views.
- **Boria- Santillán**, from the road that goes from the lighthouse to Fuentes Beach, there are several spots to watch the sunset.

 It’s beautiful **any time of year**: in summer the sun sets beyond the sea, while in winter behind los Picos de Europa (the Peaks of Europe). Each day is a **unique, once-in-a-lifetime landscape** that’s a gift for all your senses.

 The **green ray** is an optical effect that lasts one or two seconds during the rising or setting of the sun. Atmospheric conditions need to be precise and perfect in order to catch sight of this green flash. Are you up for catching the green ray?

5 THE RISE AND FALL OF THE TIDES

Every time the tide rises and falls, we see a different landscape. That's the magic of nature! Each day there are **two high tides** and **two low tides**. Between two high tides, there are approximately **12 hours and 25 minutes**. And between a high and low tide, there are approximately 6 hours, 12 minutes and 30 seconds. Therefore, each day it occurs at a different time. What causes this fluctuation in the water? The **Sun and the Moon** are responsible. There are two types of tides produced: **spring tides and neap tides**. They're known for their intensity and they depend on the lunar phase, as well as the sun and moon's position with respect to Earth.



Between San Vicente and Tostadero Beach is the estuary area of the Rubín Marshes. When the tide ebbs, an accumulation of sand called a "**tidal delta**" forms in the center. This is what we call "The Big Beach".

6 PRODUCTS FROM THE SEA

Gastronomy is a fundamental part of getting to know a place since it's linked to the economy. Because there's a mix of sea ports and farming in San Vicente, **surf and turf platters** are a great option. The **fresh fish** that arrives at the market and **shellfish** are essential culinary staples. And, of course, we can't forget about our delicacies: **squid** and a good pot of **sorropotún**—a quintessential seafood dish. It's similar to what in other regions is known as 'marmitako'. **Sorropotún** is a stew made up of tuna, potatoes, onions, green peppers, tomatoes, stale bread, water, salt, olive oil, and a pinch of love and patience.


When it comes to sweets, we've got **Pejinas**. Besides getting its name from what the women of San Vicente are called, it's a sweet puff pastry filled with "cabello de ángel" (or "angel hair"—a candied filling made from squash). Come try them!



The **Mozucu** festival is celebrated on **September 9th**, when sorropotún is given out to the attendees on the beach. You only have to bring a plate, spoon and your appetite! If you can't make it to the festival, you can try it in the restaurants in town.

7 FISHERMEN AND 'REDERAS'

Another experience we recommend is to walk through the port or watch its activity from La Barquera Bridge. Every time the boats arrive, there's a **bustle on the dock** to **unload the fish** and other tasks, including the **repair of fishing nets**. This job is done by '**rederas**,' women in charge of sewing the nets that have broken throughout the day on the fishing boats. Watching the skill and speed with which they sew is worth the walk. But of course, this isn't something we can always see on the dock.

 There is a program called **RED ERA**, in which fishing nets are recycled and repurposed into handbags, decorative items, etc.



EXPLORING

① Come see some of the **incredible views** in San Vicente. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Behind Santa María de los Ángeles Church.** After exiting the walls through one of the gates, you'll find a terrace where you can see Pombo Marsh. On clear days you can see the Picos de Europa in the background, including the silhouette of the Picu Urriellu, otherwise known as Naranjo de Bulnes.
- **The castle** is another good vantage point to see the landscape from a bird's eye view.
- Others: The panoramic views from **Punta de la Silla Lighthouse** and **Gerra** are SPECTACULAR!

② Hit some of the **hiking trails** like:

- THE CLIFFS OF SAN VICENTE

Walk along the cliffs that go from the lighthouse to Fuentes Beach. The trail is about 9km and has little inclined. Halfway through the hike you should look for the cave where the **Cúlebre** (a mythological winged serpent-dragon) lives.



Download more information [HERE](#)

- PÁJARO AMARILLO (YELLOW BIRD)

Setting off from San Vicente, go along the coast to reach Oyambre Beach. The cliffs, beaches and the story of the Yellow Bird are some of the highlights of this 13-kilometer trail. And of course, you'll have to pay attention to the tides!



Download more information [HERE](#)