



## - ASTURIAS -

An Area of Contrasts and full of Potential in the North of Spain



The Principado de Asturias sits on the Atlantic coast and occupies 10,000sq km or 3,900 square miles. It is part of what is referred to as the 'costa verde' with Cantabria and the Basque country (Santander, Bilbao) to the east and Galicia (Santiago de Compostela, Pontevedra ) to the west. Asturias covers a section of the Camino de Santiago or the pilgrims route.

Oviedo, the capital of Asturias since 812, and probably will become the European Capital-of Culture in 2016 and the Unesco signed up Asturias like a Natural Paradise in 2008. Oviedo is also the bishopric.



Asturias is one of the oldest kingdoms on the Iberian Peninsula with an age-old culture, traces of which can be found in every town and village. The region is very protective of its heritage and in spite of growing numbers of visitors to the region, the traditionally rural essence remains; and this can be seen in the maintenance of the nice traditional Asturian architecture, like for example in the mining regions.



Asturias is the place for those who value beautiful natural surroundings, clean air, sparkling rivers and a coastline to rival any others in the world.

### Asturias is a land of contrast

Starting with the contrasts in the climate throughout the seasons, resulting in the dramatic changes in landscape, to the huge contrasts in culture and lifestyle which may be found literally within a few miles of one another. The elegant and stylish cities sit next to the age old farms and lush green countryside. Then within a few miles we find stunning beaches and water sports framed by the spectacular mountains with unsurpassed scenery, climbing hiking and walking.



There can be few areas of the scale of Asturias which can offer so much contrast within such easy reach.



## Apart of its beauty, what is so special about Asturias?

The special thing about this place is how compact it is. Yes, there are wonderful coastlines, miles of sandy beaches, gorgeous green and tranquil countryside dotted with farms, hedgerows and tiny villages tucked into the valleys. There are magnificent mountains looming out of the mist. The big difference with Asturias is this is all so close together, within 20 miles you can experience the lot! Within another 20 you can throw in a trip to the city, this is what feels really unique about the region. You have to experience it to believe it.



## Asturian Beaches

The only problem with the beaches of Asturias is how to select which ones to spend time on. With over 200 to choose from, this can be a real challenge.



## How easy is it to get around to and in Asturias?

Apart of its airport, Spain's national RENFE rail network also serves Asturias well; trains regularly depart to and from the Spanish interior. FEVE Rail Company links also the centre of the region with Eastern and Western Asturias. There is also a bus service within and without the region, run by the ALSA Company. It links the bigger cities plus Madrid several times a day. There are also services to other Spanish Cities, like Barcelona, Bilbao, Seville, San Sebastian and Paris for example. As you can see, transport is not a problem in Asturias.

Other than that mentioned there are very good public transport network systems which connect the places by extraordinary roads.



## What about the food, drink and music?

The Asturian lush countryside provides some fantastic delicacies. Fresh fish and seafood, meat, fruits, vegetables, and really good cheese – all of the highest quality. This fresh produce is the basis for the region's wonderful cuisine. And of course, you must sample the local cider, just watching it being poured is worth the cost of a bottle!

The traditional Asturian Folk Music featuring Asturias Pipes or Gaita's is very different from Flamenco. Check out this site: <http://www.bandagaitesvillamieres.com/escuchaen.php>