



Liérganes

A village with a tale

Map Key

1. Tourist information office
2. FEVE train station
3. Car park
4. Motor home area
5. Man-Fish Tale Museum
6. Fluviarium Museum
7. Town Hall
8. Rest and recreation area

Sightseeing Tours

- 01  Liérganes Monument Tour (1 hour)
- 02  El Mercadillo Short Tour (25 minutes)



Mayor Riaño's House
16th century

One of the oldest houses in Liérganes. Its main features are the semicircular arch with large vousoirs, and the decorative cornices.



Saint Peter Ad Vincula Church
17th century

Construction was started by Bartolome Hermosa and finished by Juan de Cavadas in 1627. It is divided in three naves of the same height, divided by Tuscan columns and covered by a ribbed vault.



Portilla and Rañada Houses
17th century

Rañada's house has a coat of arms where you can read the legend, 'Rañada, Alavado sea el santo sacramento,' meaning, 'praised be the Blessed Sacrament.' Portilla's House has semicircular arches.



House of the Cannons
18th century

The architecture resembles Madrid's Baroque style. It is built with carved stone masonry work, its main feature being the bolstered door frame.



Cuesta-Mercadillo or de La Rañada Palace, 18th century

This is one of the most distinctive stately homes in Liérganes. In 1994, it was granted the legal status of BIC or Cultural Interest Asset. The building's U-shaped floor plan is reminiscent of the old medieval palatium design.



Langre House
18th century

This is a Classical style mansion. The main features are the carved stone masonry work, the ground floor with its double segmental arches and impost design, and the main floor door-windows-balcony combination.



Setien House
16th century

This is one of the oldest buildings in Liérganes. The lower floor main feature is the entrance's semicircular arches. On the first floor there is a Plateresco style window framed by attached columns supported by brackets.



Saint Pantaleon Church
14th century

Gothic style building attributed to Abbot Juan Gutierrez Mercadillo. The church interior is composed of three naves with pillars formed by linked semicircular columns supporting pointed arches and a ribbed vault.



Elisedo Palace
18th century

Located in Pamanes, it is one of the most beautiful Baroque palaces of Cantabria's architecture and the only building in the municipality which allows visitors.



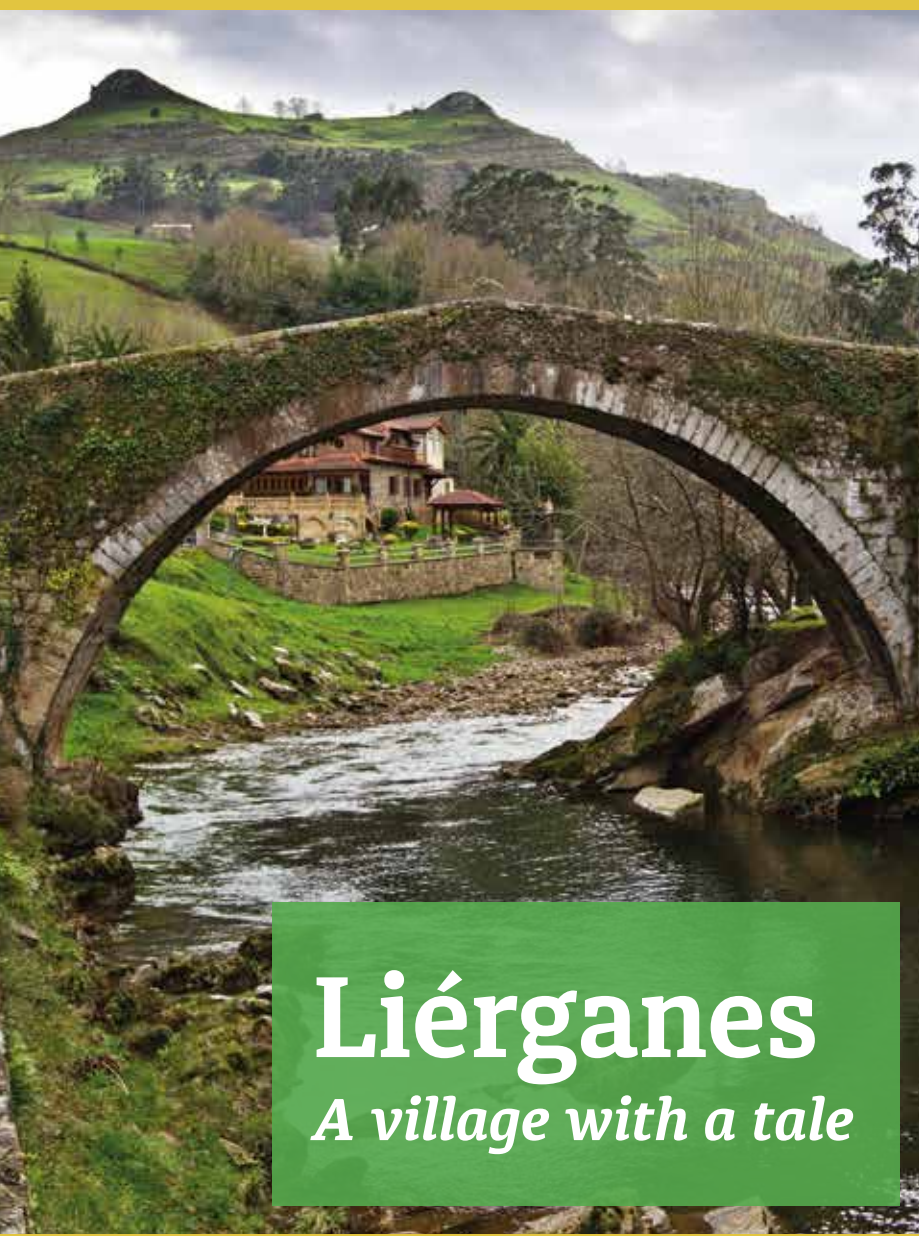
Miera-Rubalcaba House
18th century

Located in Rubalcaba, the house has two stories. The lower one features arches and the upper one a large coat of arms next to a corner balcony.



The Rubalcaba Cross
18th century

Located in Rubalcaba, it is a thick column with an impressive coat of arms. It is situated on the North-East corner of the wall surrounding the Miera-Rubalcaba state.



Liérganes

A village with a tale

The tale of the man-fish

IN THE VILLAGE CALLED LIÉRGANES, near the town of Santander, around the middle of the 17th century, there once lived a family composed of the father Francisco De la Vega, the mother María de Casar, and their four children. When the woman became a widow, she sent Francisco, the second son, to Bilbao, to learn the trade of carpenter. He was living there when he went swimming with his friends in Bilbao’s estuary on the Eve of Saint John’s Day in 1674. The youngster took off his clothes, went into the water, and swam downstream until his friends lost sight of him. He was known to be an excellent swimmer so his mates did not get concerned until a few hours later. At this point, when he did not return, they thought he had surely drowned.

Five years later, in 1679, some men were fishing in Cadiz’s Bay, when they encountered a strange marine creature with a humanoid aspect. When they tried to approach it to investigate, it just went away. The incredible sightings went on for several days until they were finally able to catch it by luring it with pieces of bread as bait and surrounding it with their nets. When they pulled it up on board, they were amazed to see that the creature was actually a strong young man with pale skin and sparse reddish hair. His only unusual features were two rows of scales from neck to waist on the front and back of his torso, and worn out nails that seemed corroded by the sea salt. The fishermen took the strange looking man to San Francis Convent where he was exorcized as a precaution against possible evil spirits, and questioned in several languages without being able to get a response. After a few days, the friars’ efforts paid off as he finally uttered one lone word “Liérganes”.

The incident travelled by word of mouth but no one knew what the meaning to this word could be. Finally, Don Domingo de la Cantolla, secretary of the Inquisition Court, told Cadiz’s Bishop that Liérganes, his birthplace, was located near Santander and belonged to Burgos’ Archdiocese. At the same time, Mr. De La Cantolla, informed his relatives in Lierganes about the finding in Cadiz, and asked them for any local events which could be linked to the strange individual staying at their convent. The answer from Liérganes was that nothing unusual had happened except for the disappearance of Francisco De la Vega, son of the widow María de Casar, when he was swimming in Bilbao’s estuary, but this had happened 5 years earlier.

This information sparked the curiosity of Juan Rosendo, a friar at the convent, who wanting to find out if the young man rescued from the sea and Franciasco de la Vega were the same person, set off with him for Lierganes. When they arrived at the mountain known as de la Dehesa, about two miles away from the village, the clergyman ordered the youngster to find his way. His mute companion did so confidently without making any mistakes on his way there.

Young Francisco stayed at his mother’s house where he lived peacefully, but showed no interest on anything or anybody. He was always barefooted, and would not dress unless given clothes, being indifferent to nakedness. He did not speak but occasionally said the words, tobacco, wine or bread, even though he did not express desire or need to smoke, eat or drink. When asked if he wanted these things, he did not answer. He never asked for food, but if it was offered, saw others eating, and was allowed, he would eat and drink a lot in one sitting and then would fast for three or four days.

Because of the above, everyone thought him mad. Nine years later, on a day as any other, he just disappeared again into the sea. The last account of his whereabouts was reported by a fisherman from San Vicente de la Barquera who swore to have seen him swimming into the high seas along a pod of dolphins.

El Mercadillo Quarter

IT GREW AROUND THE SQUARE BY THE SAME NAME, and was later renamed Marques de Valdecilla. The buildings, dating from 1650 to the middle of the 18th century, include some impressive Baroque style stone homes whose facades display the magnificent coats of arms from the most important families of the society of the time. The significance of these carved family emblems is that they were associated with the house’s construction site -solar in Spanish- giving origin to the term *Casa Solariega*, or house located on a specific plot of land to serve as the family’s representative in the social system of the time. This construction style, including semicircular arched open porches with a marked impost line and rows of windows decorated with fretwork, became the norm of the time. The sculpture quality of the coats of arms stands out against the carved stone walls of the facades. The main feature of this quarter is the construction in the early 17th of the artillery factory in the site which is now the place of the *Casa de los Cañones* -house of the cannons- which was fueled by hydraulic energy provided by the Miera River. The factory manufactured cannons with iron from the mines of Pámanes and Cabárceno and other local mining sites.



Elsedo Palace

ITS CONSTRUCTION WAS ORDERED BY Don Francisco Antonio de Hermosa y Revilla, born in Pámanes in 1657. He had many aristocratic titles including the first Earl of Torrehermosa and Knight of the Order of Calatrava among many others. Don Francisco was also a Knight at Felipe V’s court, acting as army supervisor and tax administrator. From 1702 on, he was rewarded with life-long positions which increased his fortune.

The palace was already under construction in 1704. The work was supervised by Francisco Agüero, master mason resident in Pámanes. The chapel was finished in 1716. The founder died before its completion and the family rented out the building which started its deterioration process until it was purchased and restored by the artist Luis Krassing in 1958. It was later sold to its current owners, the Santos-Diez family, who has turned it into a magnificent contemporary art museum. In 1978, it was declared an asset of cultural interest.

San Pantaleón Church



LOCATED ON THE HILLS between two streams (Batan and La Rañada), this Gothic style building originally had two naves in the 14th century. The third nave was later added in the 16th century. It is believed to have been a military church used by the Knights Templar.

The church interior has thick pillars composed of linked semicircular columns which support pointed arches and a ribbed vault. The capitals are decorated with various elements including crosses and human heads. There are two Baroque altar pieces. The center point of the main altar is the statue of Saint Sebastian located next to Saint Pantaleon and Saint James Apostle. The second altar piece includes a statue of the Virgin Mary with Baby Jesus on her right knee dated from the 16th century. The tower was built in the same century to house the bells. The mechanical clock was added in 1747. The church was thoroughly restored in the 20th century. Nowadays, Saint Pantaleón is the village’s patron saint. His festivity is celebrated annually on July 27th with prayers on the eve of the celebration, and a High Mass, procession and traditional dances on the day itself.



Thermal Spa Resort

WRITTEN RECORDS OF THE USE OF THE SPA DATE AS FAR AS 1670 and report that the spot was the Holy Fountain for the ill in the areas surrounding Liérganes. The water contains a moderate amount of minerals and sulphur. In the 19th century, it was recommended for the treatment of diseases affecting lungs, skin, and stomach, as well as rheumatoid conditions. The first sulphuric waters bathhouse was built in 1844. The Thermal Spa opened in 1862 and the old inn and hotel were built a few years later, all of which have undergone constant renovations. The years of greater splendor at the beginning of the 20th century were consequence of the use of the facilities by Spain’s royal family while on holiday at the Magdalena Palace in Santander. As a result, the life and the urban design of Lierganes revolved around the health and leisure resort. Additional hotels, the theatre, the new bridge, the train station and the tree shaded promenades were built, and the tradition of visiting Lierganes to snack on *chocolate con churros* became popular. The inn La Posada del Sauce was built to be used as a posting station in the 19th century. Then, from 1912 to 1935, it became a hotel called Hotel Santanderina and was used as shelter by the Spanish civil war refugees. It was later used as a novitiate by the Marists priests until the present time hotel Posada del Sauce opened in 1988.



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Liérganes Geocapa



Web Viewer