

CIMAVILLA NEIGHBOURHOOD



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TO READ



**Gijón
Xixón**

Infogijón

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**Gijón
Xixón**



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The Cimavilla neighbourhood

The Cimavilla neighbourhood is the upper quarter of Gijón/Xixón, and is also the oldest in the city. Its streets still preserve part of the history of those who lived in the neighbourhood.

Men who were born in this neighbourhood are known as 'playos', and women are known as 'playas'.

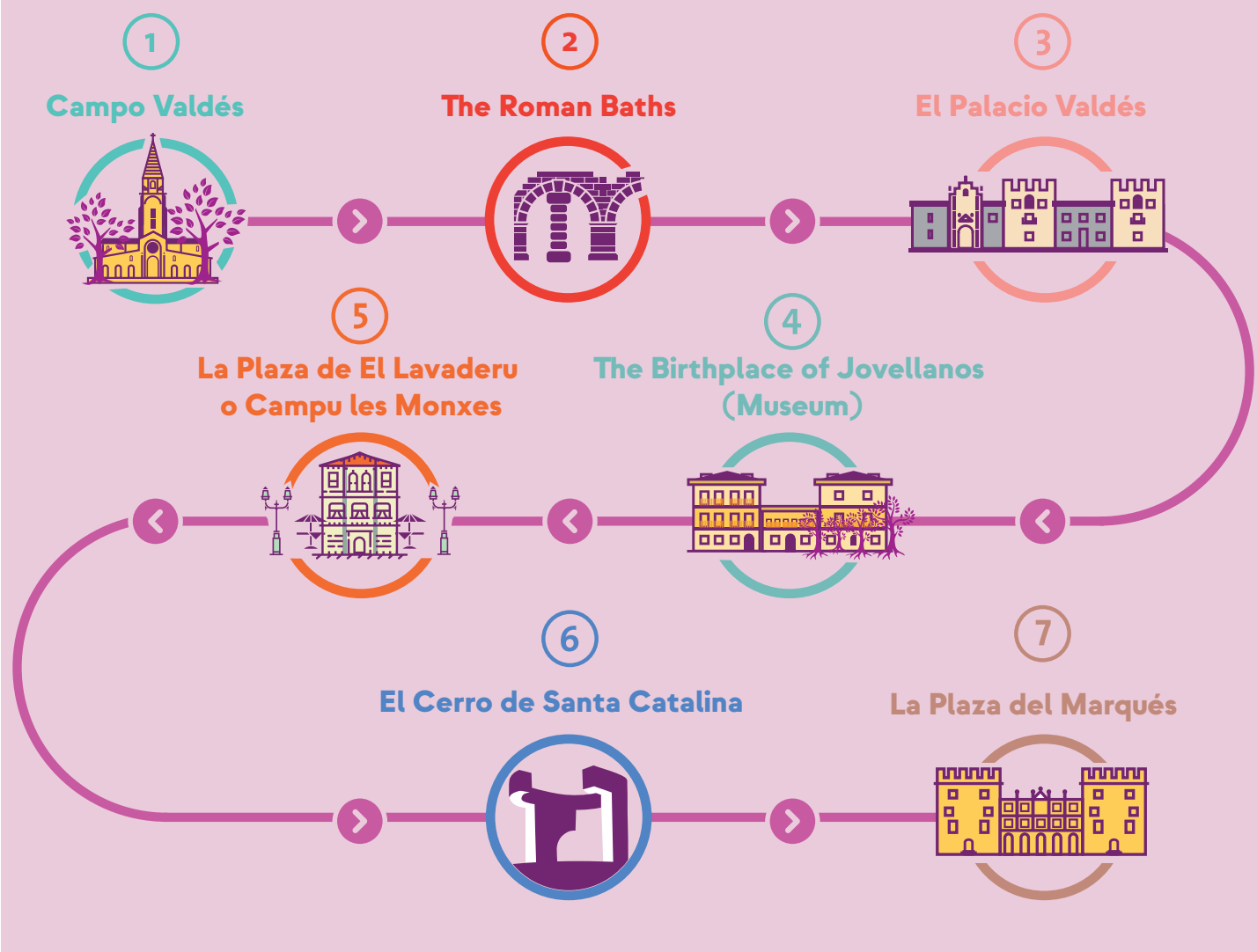
In this guide you are going to take a tour of this neighbourhood, which is one of the most interesting places in Gijón/Xixón.





The Cimavilla neighbourhood

The tour will be as follows:



North



El Cerro de Santa Catalina

6

La Plaza de
El Lavaderu o
Campu les Monxes

5

The Birthplace
of Jovellanos
(Museum)

4

El Palacio Valdés

3

El Campo Valdés

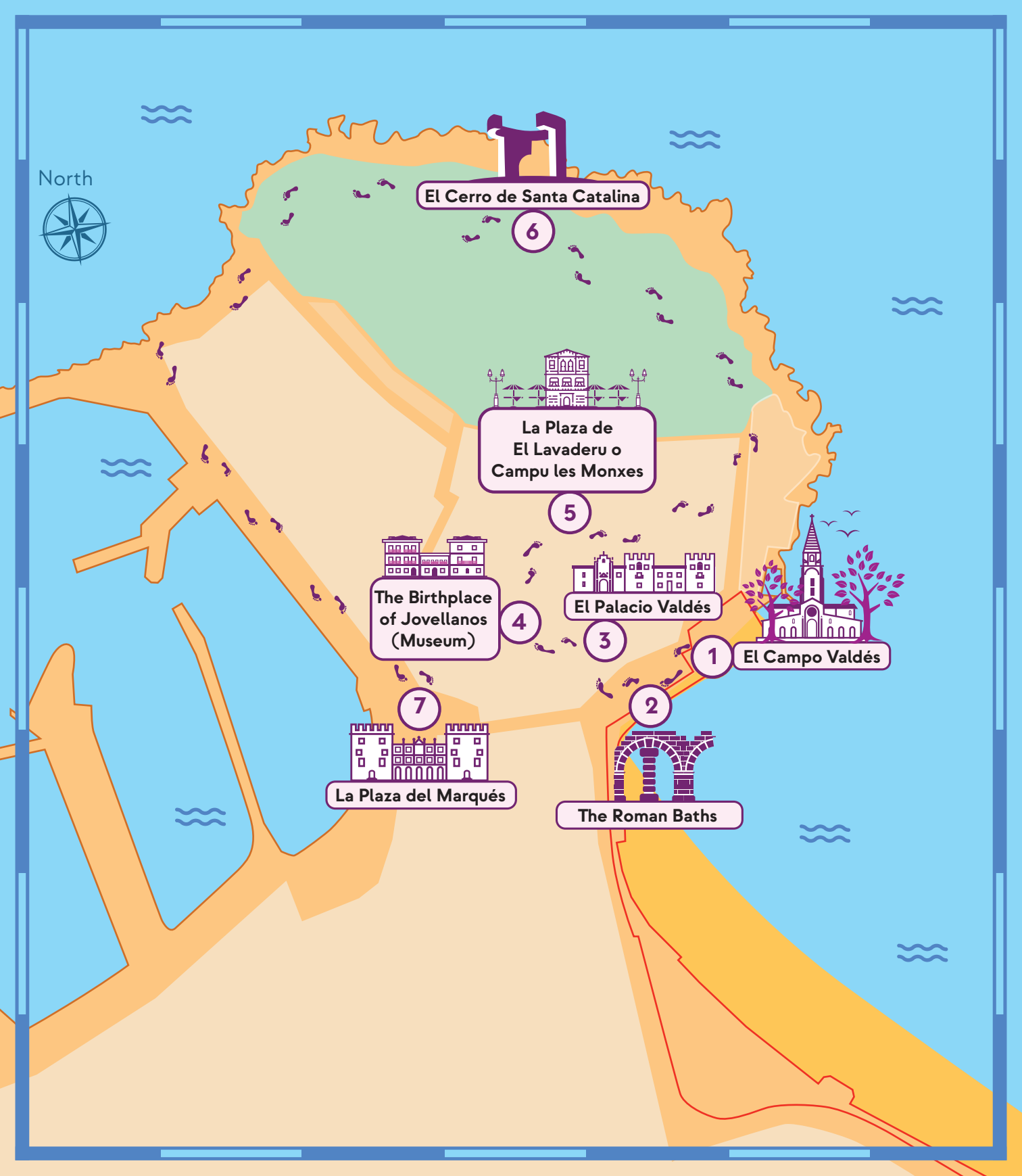
1

La Plaza del Marqués

7

The Roman Baths

2



1 El Campo Valdés square

Leaving the beach of San Lorenzo behind you, you will arrive at one of the most popular places in the city: Campo Valdés square.

Campo Valdés square was the meeting point for the people of Gijón/Xixón, and especially for the people of Cimavilla. At the back of the Campo Valdés plaza stands the **Iglesia Mayor de San Pedro**, on the site of a **15th century** temple. Below the church and the gardens are **the Roman Baths**.



15th Century (siglo XV)

Roman numerals are letters that are used today in specific areas in Spanish. For example with the names of kings and queens.



2 The Roman Baths

Part of the history of Gijón/Xixón is also linked to the Roman period. The Roman baths date from this period and were the public baths that existed in the city at that time. Today, the building is a museum where you'll find the archaeological remains of the old Roman baths and where you can visit the old rooms where the steam baths used to be, as well as other decorated rooms.

The Roman baths of Gijón/Xixón were built in the style of the baths of the ancient Roman city of Pompeii. The baths were public buildings to which all citizens had access, especially in the afternoon. At the hot springs, In addition to the baths, people took part in other leisure and hygiene-related activities.

In the audiovisual room, you can watch a video that explains about the baths and the Roman past of Gijón/Xixón. In this same room, you can also see the remains of the city's **Roman wall**, built in the 3rd century and 850 metres long. This wall surrounded the lower part of the Cimavilla neighbourhood.



3 El Palacio Valdés

To the right of Campo Valdés you'll find the palace that gives its name to the area, the Palacio Valdés.

It is an example of a **baroque** Asturian palace. It was built in 1570 on the Roman wall, and was where the Gijón **nobility**, such as the Valdés family, lived.

At the end of the 19th century the building was used as a tobacco factory and customs house, and today it is an educational centre.

Near the palace you will find the **Plaza de Jovellanos**. Around the square you can see parts of the Roman wall that until now had been underground.



Baroque

17th century art style. Baroque works are extremely ornate

Nobility

The social class that includes people who receive a title from the king, or inherit one from their ancestors.



4 The Birthplace of Jovellanos (Museum)

Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, popularly known as Jovellanos, was one of the most important figures in the history of Gijón/Xixón. He held some very important public positions, such as his work at the courts of Kings **Charles III and Charles IV**.



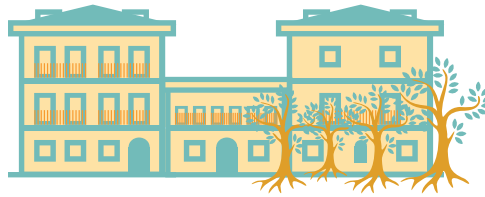
Charles III and Charles IV

Charles III and Charles IV can be read as Charles the Third and Charles the Fourth.

Remember that Roman numerals are letters that are used today in specific circumstances. For example, with the name of kings and queens.



4 The Birthplace of Jovellanos



The museum is divided into 2 parts

1

History and life of Jovellanos.



2

The Asturian painting and sculpture room. In this room you can see [Retablo del Mar](#), a piece created by the Asturian sculptor Sebastián Miranda, which portrays scenes of life in the Cimavilla neighbourhood. It is a tribute to the fishing and seafaring traditions of the neighbourhood.

To the left of Jovellanos' Birthplace stands the [Chapel of Los Remedios](#), built at the end of the 16th century. Jovellanos' remains lie in the chapel of Los Remedios.

Next to the museum and the chapel is the old Pilgrim's Hospital, where pilgrims who followed the coastal route to Santiago de Compostela stayed to recover from the long journey. The hospital was open until 1836.

Today, it is a restaurant. This area is full of cider bars and restaurants, perfect for stopping off to enjoy the local cuisine of Gijón/Xixón.

5 La Plaza de El Lavaderu o Campu les Monxes

On the way to the highest part of the Cimavilla neighbourhood, you will come to the popular Plaza de El Lavaderu, also known as Campu les Monxes, because the old Tobacco Factory building located in the square was previously a convent.

In the past, it was the place where fishermen, **net makers, cigarette makers,** and above all the women who came to wash clothes in the laundry area in the square, used to meet.

This square is cheerful and colourful. Today you can still see some of the typical fishermen's houses which are small, with two floors and an outside staircase. In addition, it is a popular meeting point in Gijón/Xixón for enjoying the terraces and a glass of cider.

Although its generally known as the Plaza de El Lavaderu, the real name of the square is Plaza Periodista Arturo Arias. It was named after a popular journalist who worked at the newspaper El Comercio.

As a historical curiosity, it is important to point out that the Tobacco Factory or Tabacalera provided work for many people in the Cimavilla neighbourhood, especially women, who were known as "**Cimavilla cigarette makers**". These women, who were from fishing families, saw the factory as an opportunity to work at a different place than their husbands.



Net makers

Women who sewed fishing nets.

Cigarette makers

Women who made cigarettes in a tobacco factory.



6 El Cerro de Santa Catalina

To climb the **Cerro** de Santa Catalina is to climb up to one of the most emblematic places in the city. El Cerro has a large park with impressive views of the coast of Gijón/Xixón. The highlight of the Cerro is undoubtedly the **Elogio del Horizonte**, created by Basque artist Eduardo Chillida.

This huge concrete sculpture appears to embrace sea and air, and to welcome sailors. You can also enjoy the sculpture from the inside since the way it's constructed creates a shell effect, so you can hear the sound of the sea.

Going down the hill, you will find another popular sculpture, **Nordeste**, by Joaquín Vaquero Turcios. In summer, the north-east wind is what everyone is waiting for, as it sweeps the clouds from the sky and ensures a sunny day. However, in the winter, it is a damp, cold, biting wind.

Leaving the Cerro and heading towards the marina, you will find the well-known **Cuesta'l Cholo**, a regular meeting place for the people of Gijón/Xixón and for those visiting the city.

Finally you will see the **city's marina** in front of you. It was formerly the old seaport, and was the centre of economic activity in the neighbourhood. The wooden building that occupied the old rula or fish market is now an exhibition and activity hall.



Cerro

Cerro is the Spanish word for an elevation of land that is smaller than a mountain - rather like 'hill' in English.



7 La Plaza del Marqués

The tour comes to an end in the Plaza del Marqués, which is presided over by the 1891 **monument** to **Infante Don Pelayo**, erected in honour of the first king of Asturias. In his right hand he holds the Victory Cross, the symbol of Asturias.

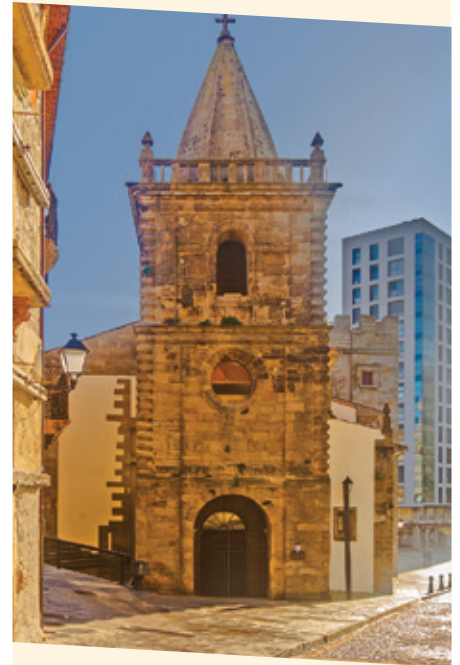
In the Plaza del Marqués you will find the **Palacio de Revillagigedo**, which looks medieval because of its towers, but is actually baroque. The Palace has the **Colegiata De San Juan Bautista** attached to it. Temporary exhibitions are held at both sites.

You've come to the end of the tour. However, you should take some time to walk around the Cimavilla neighbourhood, get lost in it, and talk to its people. They are sure to tell you some incredible stories.



Colegiata

A Catholic temple similar to a church.



A BRAVE HORIZON

