



27TH EAC ANNUAL MEETING



March 19-21, 2026

Museo Nacional y Centro de Investigación de
Altamira

Santillana del Mar, Cantabria, España

Contents

Venue.....	2
The National Museum and Research Centre of Altamira.....	3
About Santillana del Mar	5
How to get to Santillana del Mar	7
By air	7
By train.....	7
By bus	7
By ferry.....	7
Acommodation	8
Parador de Santillana del Mar	9
Hotel Altamira	9
Hotel Siglo XVIII	10
Complejo San Marcos.....	10
Hotel Cuevas de Santillana del Mar	11
Hotel Museo Los Infantes.....	11
La Casa del Organista	12
La Casona de Revolgo	12
Posada Araceli.....	13
Posada Camino de Altamira.....	13
Shuttle Bus	14
Extend your visit	15
Contact.....	18

VENUE

The 27th EAC Annual Meeting will take place in Santillana del Mar from 19–21 March 2026.

- The General Assembly and Heritage Symposium takes place 19–20 March 2026, at the Museum of Altamira.
- On 19–20 March, there will also be organized guided visits to Santillana del Mar, and a dinner for the participants.
- The board meeting and working group meetings take place on 18 March 2026.
- On March 21, an excursion tour will be held to an archaeological site in Cantabria.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTRE OF ALTAMIRA

The cave of Altamira is privileged to be the first place in the world where the existence of rock art from the Upper Palaeolithic was discovered. Altamira was also a unique discovery due to the quality, the magnificent conservation and the freshness of its pigments. Its recognition was delayed for quarter of a century, at a time when its comprehension was difficult for a society, that of the 19th century, immersed in rigid scientific postulates.

The cavity was discovered by a local man, Modesto Cubillas, around 1868. Accompanied by Cubillas, Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola visited the cave for the first time in 1875 and recognised some lines which at the time he did not consider to be the work of humans. Accompanied by his daughter María he returned to Altamira in 1879. The girl was the first to see the figures on the ceiling of the cave. Its value was not recognised until the discovery of Palaeolithic rock art in other caves in Europe.

The museum's first facility was a rustic house built in 1924 to exhibit and conserve the objects found at the excavations and as a dwelling for its first custodian. The growing number of visitors from the mid-20th century on made it necessary to build a new centre. The National Museum and Research Centre of Altamira was created by the Ministry of Culture in 1979. Its purpose was to construct a scientific and administrative instrument in order to better manage and conserve the cave of Altamira.



In 1985, the Altamira cave was included in the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites, at the request of the Spanish government. Altamira represents the unique artistic production of human ingenuity and is an exceptional testimonial to a lost civilisation. The Altamira cave's inclusion on the List of World Heritage Sites signifies that UNESCO considers it to possess Exceptional Universal Value.

The Museum's current home was opened in 2001, in a building planned by the architect Juan Navarro Baldeweg. The protection of the cave of Altamira was the principal deciding factor for its location, conception and construction. The permanent exhibition of the museum explores the "times of Altamira" and is divided into two main areas: the exhibition galleries devoted to the art and culture of hunter-gatherer groups in the Upper Palaeolithic, and the Neocave, where visitors can experience the Cave of Altamira as it was 15,000 years ago.

The Neocave shows Altamira as it was between 35,000 and 13,000 years ago, when it was inhabited by different groups of hunter-gatherers. The Neocave is an exact three-dimensional replica of the actual cavern, based on scientific knowledge and the study of methods and materials used in prehistoric times. Visiting the Neocave will let you experience the Cave of Altamira and discover the habitat of its occupants and the beauty of the rock art they created there.



ABOUT SANTILLANA DEL MAR

Since the Middle Ages, Santillana del Mar has been one of the most important towns in the región. It was the capital of the Merindad of Asturias de Santillana, one of the merindades that make up present-day Cantabria. However, human presence in the area left its mark thousand years before in the walls of the Cave of Altamira, just two kilometers from the town centre.

This medieval town with cobbled streets is classified as a historic-artistic site and has been, for decades, one of the most well-known cultural and tourist centres in Cantabria and in Spain. The town is structured around several landmarks with very specific functions: The Plaza of the Arenas, with the Collegiate church and cloister of St Juliana; the Plaza of Ramón Pelayo, which was originally the Market Square presided over by the Merino and Don Borja Towers, as well as the Town Hall, and the area of the Regina Coeli and San Ildefonso convents.

Santillana boasts an extraordinary architectural heritage. Among its religious architecture, the Collegiate church and cloister of St Juliana stands out, around which the town developed. The first monastery was founded around the 8th and 9th centuries to safeguard the relics of St Juliana, from which the name Santillana derives. During the 11th century, the monastery became a collegiate church, and for centuries, the town's various lineages contributed to its grandeur. Most of the building is fully Romanesque, although Renaissance and Baroque additions can be seen.



Regarding civil architecture, notable buildings include the Don Borja and the Merino Tower from the 15th century, and the Velarde Palace from the 16th century. Alongside, Santillana has other notable buildings such as the Peredo-Barreda Palace, the Villa and the Bustamante family houses, all from the 18th century. Some of the historic buildings are currently cultural institutions such as the Diocesan Museum, the House Museum of the sculptor Jesús Otero, the Santillana Foundation, the Caja Cantabria Museum, and the Houses of la Aguila and la Parra, where the ICRART exhibition "Images of a Universal Language. World Heritage Rock Art" is currently on display.

However, the appeal of Santillana lies not only in these grand buildings; it is also made up of more humble structures, albeit also of great historical value, which are displayed as an urban framework typical of the Medieval and Renaissance periods, transporting visitors to another time.



HOW TO GET TO SANTILLANA DEL MAR

BY AIR

The Seve Ballesteros-Santander airport is located about 27 km from Santillana del Mar. From the airport to Santillana the options include:

- Taxi: Its price can vary from 60 to 100 €.
- Bus: It is necessary to go first to Santander and then to Santillana. Approximately there is an Alsa Bus every 40 min from the airport to Santander that takes 15 min. From Santander, Autobuses La Cantábrica runs 5 buses from 10.30 to 19.00 h every day that takes 40 min to Santillana. The total price is around 10 €.
- Rent a car that takes long 30 min.

Websites:

- Alsa: <https://www.alsa.es/>
- Autobuses La Cantábrica: <https://lacantabrica.com/>

BY TRAIN

Usually Renfe runs 5 trains daily from Madrid to Torrelavega from 7.30 to 19.00 h that takes from 4 to 5 hours with a cost between 35 to 65 €. From Torrelavega a Taxi to Santillana takes 15 min and it has a price that varies from 15 to 30 €.

Websites:

- Renfe: <https://www.renfe.com/es/en>

BY BUS

Alsa offers 15 buses from Madrid to Torrelavega per day from 00.30 to 23.45 h, that takes between 5 to 6 hours depending on each bus. The price of the ticket can vary from 35 to 50 €. From Torrelavega a Taxi to Santillana takes 15 min and it has a price that varies from 15 to 30 €.

Websites:

- Alsa: <https://www.alsa.es/>

BY FERRY

Brittany Ferries offers three routes to Santander: From Rosslare, Ireland; and from Portsmouth and Plymouth in the UK. The price varies depending on the type of vehicle, number of passengers and if it is included a cabin.

Websites:

- Brittany Ferries: <https://www.brittany-ferries.es/>



MINISTERIO
DE CULTURA



ACCOMMODATION

Santillana del Mar offers a wide variety of charming accommodations. As most of them are situated in old palaces or traditional houses, they have limited number of rooms, so we recommend booking in advance.



PARADOR DE SANTILLANA DEL MAR

The Parador of Santillana del Mar is located in a magnificent 17th-century mansion. It is a perfect starting point for exploring the town's historic buildings and main monuments.

Datos de interés:

- Address: Plaza Ramón Pelayo S/N, 39330, Santillana del Mar, Cantabria.
- Phone: +34 942 02 80 28
- Website: https://paradores.es/es/parador-de-santillana-del-mar?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=18590350491&gbraid=0AAAAADqEyarBm3l9zXw6zgAOVbkrwxfam&gclid=EAlaIQobChMIkaPPvouyQMVtK39BR1GsQpBEAAYASAAEgIMIfD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds



HOTEL ALTAMIRA

Situated in the centre of Santillana, the Hotel Altamira offers rooms with wooden floors and rustic furniture. It has a seasonal restaurant, views of the Colegiata Church and free Wi-Fi. The building dates from the 17th century and the rooms have stone walls.

- Address: Cantón, 1, 39330, Santillana del Mar, Cantabria.
- Phone: +34 942 81 80 25
- Website: <https://www.hotelaltamira.com/es/index.html>



HOTEL SIGLO XVIII

Hotel Siglo XVIII in Santillana del Mar offers comfortable rooms with private bathrooms, free WiFi, and parquet floors. Each room includes a dining area, work desk, and TV, ensuring a pleasant stay.

- Address: Revolgo, 38, 39330, Santillana del Mar, Cantabria.
- Phone: +34 942 84 02 10
- Website: <https://hotelsigloxxiii.com/>



COMPLEJO SAN MARCOS

Complejo San Marcos is located near the historic center of the town and the Collegiate Church of Santillana del Mar. It has two accommodations: the Hotel and La Posada San Marcos.

- Address: Avda. del Alcalde Antonio Sandi, 27, 39330, Santillana del Mar, Cantabria
- Phone: +34 618 99 50 52
- Website: <https://hsanmarcos.com/>



HOTEL CUEVAS DE SANTILLANA DEL MAR

The hotel is housed in a rustic building with modern decor and features a seasonal outdoor pool with a furnished terrace.

- Address: Av. Del Alcalde Antonio Sandi, 4. 39330 Santillana Del Mar Cantabria.
- Phone: +34 659 41 35 51
- Website: <https://hotelcuevas.com/>



HOTEL MUSEO LOS INFANTES

A 17th-18th-century palace converted into a hotel in the centre of Santillana del Mar. Moved stone by stone and rebuilt in 1974.

- Address: Av. de Dorat, 1, 39330 Santillana del Mar, Cantabria
- Phone: + +34 662 58 40 85
- Website: <https://hotel-los-infantes.com/>



LA CASA DEL ORGANISTA

La Casa del Organista is a charming rustic-style hotel housed in a traditional 18th-century mountain building. The hotel's spacious rooms feature original décor with wooden floors and period furniture.

- Address: Calle Los Hornos 4, 39330, Santillana del Mar, Cantabria
- Phone: +942 84 03 52
- Website: <https://www.casadelorganista.com/>



LA CASONA DE REVOLGO

This charming, rustic-style hotel is located in a restored 17th-century house in the centre of Santillana del Mar and is surrounded by beautiful gardens.

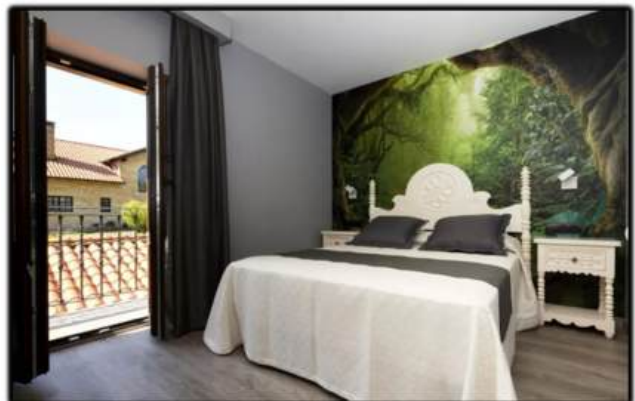
- Address: Parque de Revolgo, 3, 39330 Santillana del Mar, Cantabria
- Phone: + 942 81 82 77
- Website: <https://www.santillanadelmar.com/la-casona-de-revolgo>



POSADA ARACELI

Posada Araceli offers a peaceful and comfortable stay. Located in an old mountain house, it combines the warmth of home with modern amenities.

- Address: C. Revolgo, 20, 39330, Santillana del Mar, Cantabria
- Phone: +34 676 04 15 24
- Website: <https://posadaaraceli.com/>



POSADA CAMINO DE ALTAMIRA

Posada Camino de Altamira is located between the center of Santillana del Mar and the Altamira Museum. It is set around a garden and offers free parking.

- Address: Avda.Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola,10, Santillana del Mar, Cantabria
- Phone: +34 942 84 01 38
- Website: <http://www.caminodealtamira.com/>





MINISTERIO
DE CULTURA



SHUTTLE BUS

The Museum is located 2.5 km from Santillana del Mar, where the accommodations are located. A bus shuttle will be available for the participants to take them between Santillana and the Museum.

The meeting point in Santillana is located in the Plaza del Rey parking lot, next to the tourist office booth. This point is a 5-minute walk from all accommodations.



MEETING POINT
(Santillana del Mar)

The meeting point at the museum is located in the parking lot, which will serve as both the drop-off and pick-up point. Its location is marked with an arrow on the map below.



MEETING POINT
(Museum of Altamira)

EXTEND YOUR VISIT

If you are interested in extend your visit, Cantabria offers a wide variety of beautiful villages and archaeological sites.

SANTANDER

The city is arranged around a large natural harbor, used since before the Roman Empire. The landscape is privileged, with large green spaces and beaches, particularly the areas of Mataleñas, El Sardinero, and La Magdalena, where Alfonso XIII had his summer residence. Santander is known as one of the most elegant and beautiful cities on Spain's northern coast.

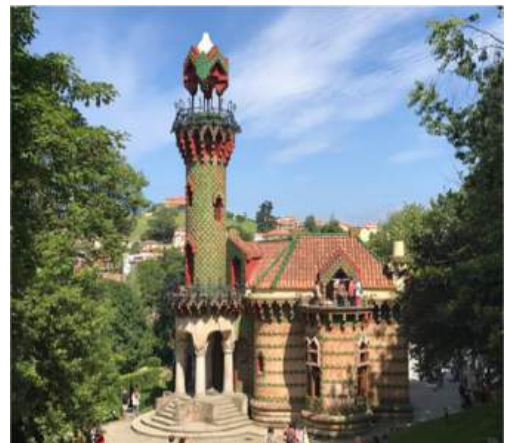
<https://turismo.santander.es/en>



COMILLAS

The town of Comillas is one of the most emblematic towns in Cantabria and one of the most interesting from an architectural perspective. It boasts some of the most important modernist buildings in Cantabria, such as the Sobrellano Palace and its Pantheon Chapel, the Pontifical University, and, of course, El Capricho by the brilliant Catalan architect Gaudí.

<https://www.comillas.es/>



JULIOBRIGA

It is the city most frequently cited by Latin authors and epigraphic sources in the Cantabrian territory, and is therefore considered the main Roman city that existed in ancient Cantabria. Numerous archaeological works have been carried out at this site, resulting in the recognition of a medium-sized urban area that is still identified today as the first Roman city in ancient Cantabria.

<https://turismodecantabria.com/lugar-interes/juliobriga-ciudad-romana-y-museo-domus/#>



MONTE CASTILLO CAVES

Monte del Castillo rises next to the Pas River as it passes through Puente Viesgo. This mountain contains four caves with prehistoric rock art, and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008. Of the four caves, El Castillo stands out, with its vestibule excavated at the beginning of the 20th century.

<https://turismodecantabria.com/lugar-interes/cueva-de-el-castillo/>



EL PENDO CAVE

Near the Bay of Santander, the El Pendo Cave is a cavern of monumental dimensions. Its history epitomizes more than 100 years of archaeology in Cantabria. It was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2008 due to the importance of its archaeological site and the cave paintings it contains.

<https://turismodecantabria.com/lugar-interes/cueva-de-el-pendo-2/>



CHUFÍN CAVE

The Chufín Moor Cave owes its name to this figure who, according to local people, hid a treasure inside. However, its true treasure are the red paintings that decorate its high ceiling and the exterior engravings located in the vestibule. Its importance was recognized in 2008 when this rock art complex was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

<https://turismodecantabria.com/lugar-interes/cueva-de-chufin/>



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