

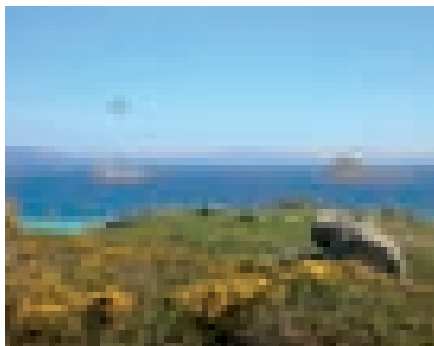
# Sálvora

*Tradition has it that “Sagres Man” (a legendary being who originated on the islets near Sálvora) and “El Falcoeiro” (idem) wished to woo “La Forcadiña” (idem). The two giants fought each other and the larger and stronger Sagres Man dealt a blow that sent jawbones flying near where they were fighting. During the harsh combat Sagres split his tongue in seven pieces, and some of the unfortunate “Falcoeiro”'s teeth ended up in El Carreiro, while the last teeth landed even further away than Los Prexeiros. After the fight, Sagres Man turned around and rested.*

*This legend, still recounted by elderly sailors in Aguiño, is reflected in the names of the many rocks and islets in the area: Home de Sagres, Falcoeiro, Forcadiá, Sete Linguas (seven tongues), As Moas (the teeth), Os Prexeiros e As Quixadas (the jawbones)..*

## HISTORY

Although **early peoples and influential ancient cultures** (Celts, Romans, Sueves, etc.) spread throughout Galicia, no data or studies exist on their settlements or the uses of the island at that time. Some archaeological remains found on the sands of Sálvora attest to the passage of these sailors but do not confirm their visit to the island. Historical references to Sálvora date from the end of the Early **Middle Ages**, when it belonged to the crown of Galicia and Asturias, and was donated by Alfonso II the Chaste to the Church of Santiago. There is said to have been a church on the island, but no remains or other evidence indicate that one ever existed.





*The current stately home, Pazo de Goyanes, was built on the site of the former salting factory. It still has the shore access ramps*

In the Late Middle Ages, the island was used as a base for attacks by invading Vikings, Saracens, etc., making stable settlement impossible. When the fighting ended and calm reigned along the estuary, people living along the coast moved to Sálvora to settle and use the land. At that time, in the mid-sixteenth century, the Church handed the islands over as an estate to Marcos Fandiño Mariño. Until the beginning of the seventeenth century his rule and that of his heirs was based on a **feudal regime** according to which settlers had to hand over part of their harvests and livestock bred on the island to the “lord”.

Neither is there any evidence on the island of pirate attacks in the 17th-18th centuries; however, the rise of commerce and fishing at that time did find an echo there in the form of a factory known as “O Almacén” (some authors claim it was the first in Galicia and date it from 1770 to 1779, while others believe that it was those on other islands, which date from the early-19th century). A tuna fishing business was created in 1789, whose exclusive rights to the island and a radius of four leagues from the shore led to harsh confrontations with local sailors.



Such developments led to people living along the coast coming to settle the island. Families were grouped in the “Village” in houses where several generations lived together. There was no church or school, but the lighthouse keepers were good teachers. They grew corn, rye, potatoes, and each family had 7 or 8 cows as well as sheep, hens and rabbits. Everything produced was for domestic consumption. What they caught from their *dornas* (boats) did not have to be shared with the lord and provided a source of income. The only bar, next to

*Fish salting factory.  
Courtesy of Ficción producciones.*

the salting factory, was a place to meet and hear news from the coast.

In 1820, as a result of the marriage of Isabel de Mariño, who had inherited the island, to Ruperto Antonio de Otero, the Otero dynasty became the new owners of Sálvora.

The State expropriated the island from the Oteros in 1904 for reasons of national defence, and kept a small military detachment there until 1958. While they were on the island the settlers became colonists of the State without restrictions, which enabled them to enhance their living conditions by improving the houses, building new stables and better fishing vessels, etc.

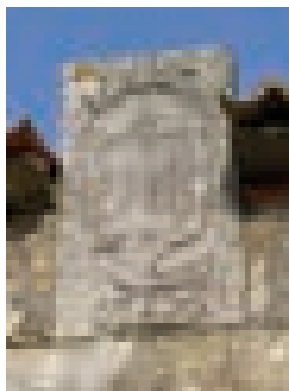
In 1921, fifty nine (59) people lived on the island, but only 25 experienced the tragic shipwreck of the steamboat Santa Isabel to the south of the island. It happened on 2 January, when many settlers had gone to the coast for local celebrations. The brave people who remained, mainly women, set out in *dornas* to aid the victims. In December the same year a new lighthouse came into operation.

When the army withdrew, the Oteros recovered the island and resettlement got underway. The last inhabitants left the island at the end of the nineteen seventies.

The Otero family moved to "O Almacén", the former factory, which they converted into a pazo (stately home), turning the nearby tavern into their chapel. They used the island as a hunting reserve until the authorities banned hunting.



*The horses in Sálvora remember us the previous hunting activity at the island, now forbidden.*



*Coat of arms at the entrance gate of the pazo, the lineage of Otero.*



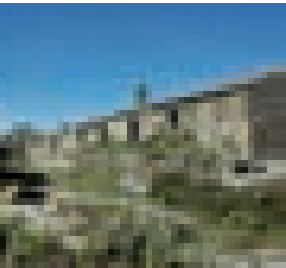
*Plaque commemorating the shipwreck of the "Santa Isabel":*

*"For young Carlos Verdier y Escobar, who disappeared in the shipwreck of the steamboat Santa Isabel, and in memory of the other unfortunate victims of the accident in these waters in the early morning of 2 January 1921. CARLITOS' grieving parents. Cadiz, 27 July 1921."*

## ACHITECTURAL HERITAGE



### The Village



*View of the village from the central patio-like open area*

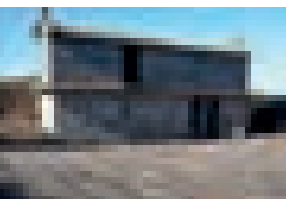
This ruined village is located in the northeast, above Punta de Pernaprada. The one-storey houses have shared walls and many conserve a small veranda at the entrance. They all look onto a central patio-like open area, which is for communal use. They also shared the use of raised barns, eight of which are still standing, and two mills –one near the lighthouse and another behind the beach of the *pazo*– which were occasionally used when bad weather made it impossible to carry the grain in vats to Castiñeiras for grinding.

Inside, the largest room is the kitchen-dining room where there was a hearth and an oven. Fairly modern stables and tool sheds were located in shared areas of the village.

A classic example of community living.

*The raised barns of Sálvora relate to the hard farm work and the good crops in the past.*

### Raised Barns



There are two stores at the entrance to the village. They are of the *celeiro* type, with a closed base and made of stone. Their two-sided sloping roofs are decorated with crosses and pinnacles.

### Santa Catalina Spring

Along a path 100 m. before reaching the village there is a spring/water fountain bearing a stone with an inscription that reads: "Virtuous Water Yields Health and Strength". It was built with material from the old lighthouse and is tied to legends of a tunnel under the sea that connects with the nearby coast.



*Santa Catalina Spring is along the path leading the village*

### Lighthouse

The first lighthouse was built in 1852 at Besugueiros Point. It was a class-four lighthouse emitting white and red light that could be seen ten miles away. There were quarters for the lighthouse keepers and a store. The tower was hexagonal with a small balcony. Initially, it ran on lamp oil and then on fuel oil. The second, (class-three) lighthouse, at the same site, was built following the shipwreck of the "Santa Isabel" in 1921. It was overhauled in 1954 to include generators, batteries and a store. Nowadays it operates using solar panels.



*Sálvora lighthouse*

The wharf was made to serve the lighthouse and the lighthouse men on El Almacén Beach. It is sheltered and fairly deep.



*The salting factory converted into a stately home and the sailors' tavern converted into a chapel*

### Pazo de Goyanes (stately home)

Built on the site of the former salting factory warehouse, it consists of two mansion-style towers and bears several heraldic shields. Opposite the main entrance is the chapel, formerly the island's tavern, and a little further north there is a lovely crucero or stone cross, with carved images.

### Sálvora Mermaid

On El Almacén Beach there is a stone sculpture known as the "Mariño Mermaid", about who it is said:

*"The Sálvora Mermaid dallied with a Roman gentleman who was shipwrecked on the island. A child was born, who was named Mariño. A descendent, Joaquín Otero Goyanes, Marchis os Revilla, decided to perpetuate the memory by erecting this statue. It is the work of prestigious Burgos sculptor Ismael Ortega Martín, and dates from 1968."*

