

The cemetery of Adina

It is known that the lands surrounding the Iria Flavia church have been used as a place of burial since ancient times whereas the archaeological remains of the Roman and Swabian times clearly support this fact- the anthropomorphic sarcophagi that today occupy the atrium are from the 6th century.

The current cemetery has between its walls two crosses and four centenary olive trees that are part of the List of Singular Trees of Galicia (Catálogo de Árbores Senlleiras de Galicia). Under one of these olive trees, is located the tomb of Camilo José Cela (Iria Flavia 1916 – Madrid 2002).



Another famous Galician writer, Rosalía de Castro (Conxo 1837 – Padrón 1885) expressed her desire to be buried in this holy land where her remains were kept from the year of her death until 1891, when they were transferred to the mausoleum, in the Panteón de Galegos Ilustres in Santiago de Compostela. Nonetheless, the cemetery has a gravestone in her honor.

*[...] O simiterio da Adina  
n'hai duda que é encantador,  
cos seus olivos escuros  
de vella recordazón [...]*

*[...] Moito te quixen un tempo,  
simiterio encantador,  
cos teus olivos escuros,  
máis vellos que os meus abós [...]*

Rosalía de Castro

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Church Santa María  
la Mayor of Iria Flavia





## One of the first Marian Temples of the world



The history of Santa María de Iria dates back to Roman times, although it is not known with certainty the actual moment when the primitive basilica was built. The existence of up to two pre-Romanesque temples is defended by some authors, which place them parallel to the development of Christianity in Galicia. Even at that time, one of them was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, as its tradition links the appearance of the Virgin Mary to the apostle Saint James there to encourage him to preach his faith throughout the Iberian Peninsula.

## A Cathedral before Santiago de Compostela

The first documentary evidence that recognizes Iria Flavia as an episcopal headquarters dates back to the 6th century. The bishopric of Iria Flavia played a fundamental role in the discovery of the apostolic sepulcher, being Bishop Teodomiro the one who gave the account of the discovery around 820, that will forever link the Jacobean tradition to this church. The importance of these lands is confirmed with the fact that the basilica was commissioned in different moments, despite of the strong influence exerted by Compostela and the consecutive attacks into the lands of the Normans and Almanzor.

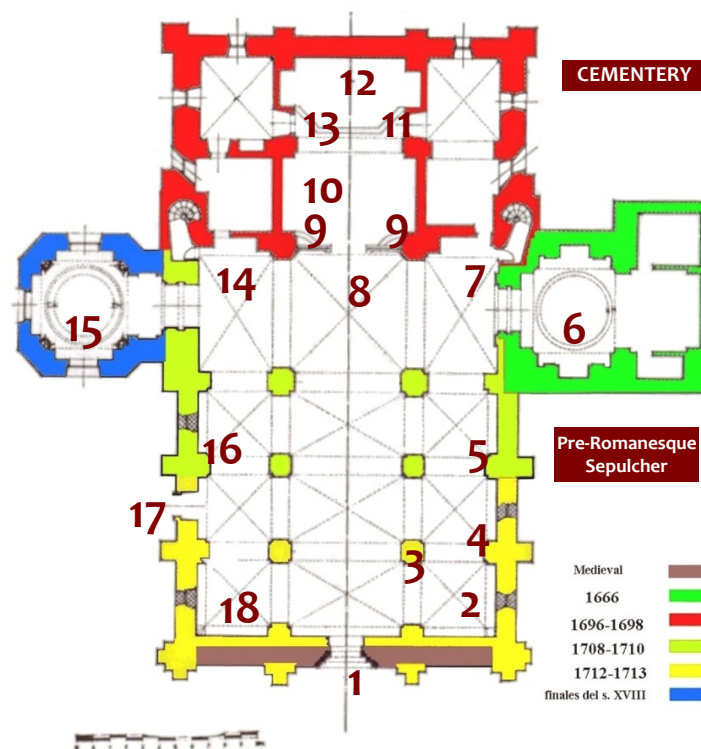
## The passage from Cathedral to Collegiate church



With the definitive transfer of the Mitra to Compostela, the designation of a collegiate church was granted in the 12th century by Bishop Xelmírez, which would last until 1851. From that moment on, it was to be

considered a parish, a rank which it still holds today. What remains of the period's medieval splendor is the main entrance of the church with its 13th century Gothic traces. The pointed archivolt which frame a sculpted tympanum with a prominent portrayal of the Adoration of the three Wise Men.

## CHURCH'S GROUND



1. Gothic Main Entrance
2. Baptistry
3. Place of burial of the 28 holy bishops of Iria (10th-11th century)
4. S. Roque Altarpiece (Beginning of 19th century)
5. S. Pedro Mezonzo Altarpiece (Xosé Ferreiro - early 19th century)
6. Chapel of San Ildefonso or of the Bishop of Quito (17th century)
7. San Martín Altarpiece (18th century)
8. Gate (Clemente Lorenzo - 18th century)
9. Low choir (Miguel de Romay - 18th century)
10. Organ (Manuel Sanz and Gregorio González - 18th century)
11. Main Altar's Altarpiece (Miguel de Romay - 18th century)
12. Sepulcher by Rodrigo de Luna (15th century)
13. Holy Bishop Sepulcher (discovered in the 17th century)
14. Holy Spirit Altarpiece (Ferreiro - beginning of the 19th century)
15. Chapel of the Tabernacle or of the Virgin of Bethlehem (late 18th century)
16. San Rosendo Altarpiece (Xosé Ferreiro - early 19th century)
17. Side entrance
18. Virgen de los Dolores Altarpiece

## The necessary Baroque remodeling

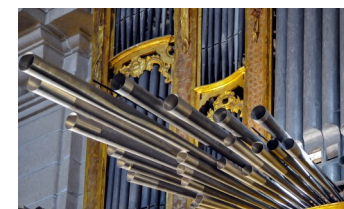


In the second half of the 17th century the architect Melchor de Velasco reformed the chapel known as the Bishop's Chapel of Quito. It will also be at the end of this century when the evident deterioration of the church is verified. As a solution, a contest is held where master projects are presented such as those by Diego de Romay or Gabriel de Casas, but it will be in fact a collaborator of the latter, Pedro García, who will be in charge of the Baroque construction at the beginning of the 18th century. This reconstruction, which had a tight budget, was financially supported, in part, by the donations of the Bishop of Quito, his tomb is in the chapel that bears the same name although his mortal remains were never transferred to Iria.

## Sober lines host ornamented altarpieces

Outwardly, the stepped towers noticeably display a clear Compostelana influence and in the interior nine altarpieces can be counted of varied imagery. The principal focus is the main altar, where we can find a stony Gothic Virgin Mary to which in the 17th century the image of a kneeling Apostle was added. It is the work of Miguel de Romay, in a churrigueresque style. Nearby is the low choir that was probably made by the sculptor himself and the organ with a box in Rococo style. All this is preceded by a 16th century grid that houses the image of Saint James the pilgrim, also carved by Romay.

## Other interesting facts



the old gothic altarpiece of the collegiate church.

The main religious festivities that are celebrated in this church are those of Our Lady and San Rocco on August 15th and the Virgin of Bethlehem on August 24th.