



From left to right: architect Sir David Chipperfield; Pedro Casares, Spanish Government Delegate in Cantabria; Jordi Hereu, Spain's Minister of Industry and Tourism; María José Sáenz de Buruaga, President of Cantabria; H.M. the King; Ana Botín, Executive Chair of Banco Santander; María José González Revuelta, President of the Parliament of Cantabria; Gema Igual, Mayor of Santander; and Daniel Vega Pérez de Arlucea, Director of Faro Santander. Photo: David S. Bustamante

His Majesty The King officially opens Faro Santander with Ana Botín, Chair of Banco Santander, at the Bank's former headquarters in the Cantabrian capital

- Ana Botín, Chair of Banco Santander, said the transformation of the bank's historic headquarters into a new arts space on the Paseo de Pereda reflects a commitment to "honouring history and the traditions on which Foundation Banco Santander was built while reinventing them for today's world."
- Faro Santander was created as "a home for this community", one that celebrates its roots in Santander with a global perspective.
- Designed by David Chipperfield, the project was conceived around a central idea: to preserve the building's identity whilst breathing new life into it and strengthening its connection with the city.

His Majesty the King today inaugurated Faro Santander, the museum launched by the Banco Santander Foundation at the bank's historic headquarters on Paseo de Pereda, in the Cantabrian capital. The ceremony was attended by the Chair of Banco Santander, Ana Botín, as well as representatives from local institutions and the wider community.

Accompanied by Jordi Hereu, Spain's Minister for Industry and Tourism, His Majesty the King was welcomed by Ana Botín, Chair of Banco Santander; María José Sáenz de Buruaga, President of Cantabria; María José González Revuelta, President of the Parliament of Cantabria; Pedro Casares, Government Delegate in Cantabria; Gema Igual, Mayor of Santander; Daniel Vega Pérez de Arlucea, director of Faro Santander; David Chipperfield, the architect responsible for the building's transformation; who toured the centre's facilities before welcoming the first visitors.

With the opening of the art centre, a new chapter begins for one of the city's most iconic buildings. Home to Banco Santander's headquarters for decades, the building now opens its doors to the public, creating a space for people to come together, discover art and technology, exchange ideas and engage with culture.

Ana Botín, Chair of Banco Santander, expressed her gratitude for the presence of His Majesty the King and highlighted the significance of this moment for both the city and for Banco Santander. She also recalled the close ties between her family, the building and the bank itself where she had worked: *"For this building is a landmark – it has witnessed the history of both the city and the bank."*



Ana Botín during the opening of Faro Santander. Photo: David S. Bustamante

She explained its transformation began with a defining question: what to preserve, and what to change without losing the building's essence. The project designed by David Chipperfield preserves the building's identity and historical value whilst adapting it to today's world. *"Great buildings are those we admire from the outside. And they are also part of our everyday lives. They respect history without being trapped by it. They preserve what matters, while also reinventing themselves. That is Faro Santander."*

The Chairwoman of Santander expressed particular gratitude for the support of the Mayor of Santander, Gema Igual, throughout the project.



S.M. el Rey visita Faro Santander junto Daniel Vega Pérez de Arlucea, director de Faro Santander, y otras autoridades.

Foto: David S. Bustamante

A building that honours its history and embraces the future

The current renovation of the Paseo de Pereda headquarters is part of a long history of transformations. The original building dates back to 1795 and before becoming a bank in 1923, housed a hotel and a sailing club, amongst other uses.

In the 1950s, Emilio Botín-Sanz de Sautuola y López spearheaded a major transformation to provide the bank with a headquarters befitting its ambition to become a leading institution in Spain with an international outlook. The architect Javier González de Riancho redesigned the interior and linked the two twin buildings with the distinctive large arch, crowned by four female sculptures representing navigation, trade, culture and the arts.

Decades later, the challenge has once again been to adapt the building to a new era. The project, led by David Chipperfield, has sought to preserve the essential elements of this heritage whilst creating a contemporary, accessible and open space. Ana Botín explained, *"Our aim has been to create a modern museum that can stand alongside the best in the world. A place where people of all ages can discover, exchange ideas and learn. A place open to visitors from around the world, but first and foremost, a home for this community. For the people of Santander."*



Faro Santander. Photo: Belén de Benito

beacon for Santander

During her speech, Ana Botín drew a parallel between the transformation of Pereda into Faro Santander and the evolution the bank has undergone in recent years. *"In many ways, the transformation of this building mirrors Banco Santander's ambition today: to build the best open, global financial services platform"*, she stated.

From its base in Santander, the bank has grown to now serve 182 million customers, including four million businesses, becoming a bridge between Europe and the Americas and, increasingly, between North and South America. Ana Botín noted this growth has been underpinned by the bank's ability to evolve whilst maintaining the principles of responsibility and prudence that have guided it throughout its history.



Inmersive experience *Before Faro Santander* at Cubo. Photo: Belén de Benito

"Next year, Banco Santander will celebrate its 170th anniversary. 170 years during which we never ceased to change but always remained true to our purpose", said the bank's chairwoman. "We are here to support our customers as they navigate their way through life. And that is why the new name for this building — Faro — is so appropriate. A lighthouse helps people find their way. It connects sea and land. It welcomes those arriving from elsewhere. And it is there for everyone."

Faro Santander opens its doors to the public tomorrow, 8 September, as an open and accessible space that will bring together art, culture, knowledge and public engagement. Its programme will offer visitors the chance to explore Banco Santander's artistic heritage and exhibitions of international significance, whilst providing a programme designed to engage diverse audiences and encourage participation and engagement.

Among its opening exhibitions are *Masterpieces from the Banco Santander Collection*, *Modern Mexico in the Gelman Santander Collection* and *The Symptomatic Surreal: Leonora Carrington*, alongside a programme of public events designed to make Faro Santander a meeting place for art, culture and society.

Full details, including ticket information, are available at www.farosantander.com. Tickets can also be purchased at the centre's box office.



Exhibition view of *Masterpieces of Banco Santander Collection*. Photo: Belén de Benito

About Faro Santander

Faro Santander is a cultural project run by the Banco Santander Foundation. It is the city of Santander's new arts centre, where art, culture and technology come together in an open setting accessible to all. Faro Santander is housed in the Pereda Building, the former headquarters of Banco Santander and one of the city's most iconic buildings. This historic building is now being given a new lease of life with the aim of becoming an ambitious, innovative and inclusive cultural space, connected to society and the cultural fabric of Cantabria. The centre's architectural design has been entrusted to the English architect David Chipperfield, winner of the Pritzker Prize in 2023. The opening of Faro Santander will mark a new milestone for the city, offering a dynamic, stimulating and fun venue where everyone is welcome.

About the Banco Santander Foundation

The Banco Santander Foundation works to help build a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable society. To this end, it carries out initiatives grouped into three areas of action: promoting culture as a tool for understanding the world around us; social action to support the progress of vulnerable groups; and education and entrepreneurship as drivers of society.

FARO SANTANDER PROGRAMME

Masterpieces from the Banco Santander Collection

Dates: 8 September 2026 – February 2027

Modern Mexico in the Gelman Santander Collection

Dates: 8 September 2026 – 10 January 2027

The Symptomatic Surreal: Leonora Carrington

Dates: 8 September 2026 – 31 January 2027

Cubo: Before Faro Santander

8 September 2026 – April 2027

Marisma: Faro Santander Creation Grants

8 September 2026 – May 2027

Faro Dialogues

8 September: David Chipperfield and Ana Botín

9 September: Lola Jiménez and María Beguiristain

10 September: Sara San Gregorio and Juan Bordes

11 September: José Antonio Gutiérrez Sebares and Miguel Ángel Bringas

15 September: Javier Mariátegui and Juan Luis Libano

16 September: Vanessa Boni and Carolina Erdocia

17 September: Marisol Argüelles and Estrella de Diego

Llamita: Parafernalia. Family workshops

9, 10 and 11 September from 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm

Faro Lights Up

12 September from 5.00 pm to 11.00 pm

Pereda Gardens and Promenade, 9–12

5.00 pm Games festival

8.30 pm Concert by the Reina Sofía Higher School of Music Ensemble

9.00 pm Casapalma concert

10.00 pm Region concert

11.00 pm End of the festival – Symphony of Light

Faro Santander

Paseo de Pereda 9–12, 39004 Santander (Cantabria), Spain

Opening: 8 September 2026

Tickets available at www.farosantander.com and at the box office

Standard ticket: 14 euros

Concession: 7 euros

+Faro: 30 euros

+Faro (concession): 15 euros

Further information: www.farosantander.com

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