

Landlocked Countries: Andorra, Part 1

by Geir Sør-Reime

The Principality of Andorra is situated between France and Spain high up in the Pyrenees. The country has an area of 180.55 square miles and a population of around 77,500.

Andorra has two co-princes: the President of the French Republic and the Bishop of Urgell in Spain. This dual rule dates back to AD 1278, when a treaty was signed between the Bishop of Urgell and the Count of Foix (in 1607 transferred to the Head of the French state, currently the President of France).

Both Spain and France operate post-offices in Andorra, and from 1928, the Spanish post-office started using stamps inscribed Andorra (the first issues were Spanish stamps overprinted "Correos Andorra". The French post-office followed suit in 1931, when French stamps overprinted "Andorre" were issued, followed by stamps inscribed "Valles d'Andorre" in 1932. The inscription on the French stamps were changed to simply "Andorre" in 1944.

The official language of Andorra is Catalan, the only country to have it as its official language. Since 1978, the stamps of the French Post have been inscribed in Catalan "Principat d'Andorra" (between 1975 and 1977, they had a bilingual inscription Andorre-Andorra), whereas the stamps of the Spanish Post have been inscribed in Catalan since 1979.

In 1993, Andorra adopted a new and democratic Constitution, and the country joined the United Nations and the Council of Europe. In 2006 an agreement with the European Union led to Andorra's official adoption of the Euro currency and the minting of Andorran Euro coins.

In 2019, the 600th anniversary of the national assembly of Andorra was celebrated on stamps from both the Spanish and French Posts (photos, next column). They also made a joint issue in 2020 marking the candidate status of the parliament's meeting house, House of the Valley for the UNESCO World Heritage list.



Top, Fr. Andorra, 2020 World Heritage;
bottom Sp. Andorra, 2020 World Heritage

Tourism accounts for around 80% of the country's Gross Domestic Product. Skiing is the most popular tourist activity. Ski resorts were depicted on a 1993 set of five stamps issued by the French Post. They also depicted other tourist activities



Left, Fr. Andorra, 2019 national assembly;
right, Sp. Andorra, 2019 national assembly

on a 1994 set of four stamps. In 2018, the French Post issued a single stamp for the 10th World Congress of Snow and Mountain Tourism.



Above, Fr. Andorra, 2018 snow and mountain tourism a-b

Top right, Fr. Andorra, 1993 Ski resorts a-b (Sc. 423-24)

Left, Fr. Andorra, 1994 tourist activities (Sc. 439-42)

The first stamps associated with Andorra appeared in 1895, a set of 12 stamps featuring the arms of Andorra



Three of the twelve 1895 Republic of Andorra essays and inscribed "Republica de Andorra" were privately produced but were never used for postal purposes in Andorra.

Around the turn of the 19th century, essays for Andorran stamps were produced for the Bishop Co-Prince by Henri Douchet. At least two different designs were made. Both have been reproduced on the modern souvenir stamps issued by the office of the Bishop Co-Prince.



French and Spanish Andorra post office boxes, side by side

Internal mail has been carried free of charge, but the Andorran office of the co-prince the Bishop of Urgell has produced souvenir stamps that could be affixed to local letters but had no franking value.

The first Spanish post-offices in Andorra were opened in 1928 and until the introduction of the Spanish stamps overprinted "Correos Andorra", unoverprinted Spanish stamps were used. Ordinary Spanish stamps have also later been accepted for postage and between 1943 and 1948, no Andorran stamps were issued by the Spanish post-office and ordinary Spanish stamps were used.



Spanish Andorra 1928 Overprints (Sc. 1-12, Special Delivery E1-2)

The first pictorial definitive set was issued from November 1929. The first printing of these also had a blue control number on the back except for the 2 centimos stamp. From 1935 onwards, these stamps were re-issued without the control numbers and the color of some values were changed.



Sp. Andorra 1929 set, complete on 1934 Certified cover to Barcelona

The first post-WWII issue of the Spanish Post was a 1948 pictorial set. An express letter stamp and an air post stamp in similar designs were issued 1949 and 1951, respectively (photos, next column).

1948 Pictorial (Sc. 49)



A new pictorial set was issued 1963-64, and in 1966, a set showing Pyrenean flowers was issued.



Sp. Andorra, Airmail (Sc. C1)
Sp. Andorra, Express (Sc. E5)



Sp. Andorra, 1972 Europa (Sc. 62)



Sp. Andorra Olympics (Sc. 67-68)

The Spanish Post issued its first European stamp in 1972, and also in 1972, a set of four stamps featuring tourist views was issued. There were also two stamps for the



Sp. Andorra, 1972 tourism (Sc. 63-66)



Sp. Andorra, 1972 customs (Sc. 69-74)

Munich Olympics and a set of six stamps showing Andorran customs in 1972.



Sp. Andorra, Urgell Cathedral (Sc. 89)

Stamps issued after that include a 1975 stamp celebrating the 1100th anniversary of the consecration of Urgell Cathedral, the 1978 stamp for the 700th anniversary of the parity treaties creating the co-rule over Andorra, the 1978 set of four commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Spanish Post in Andorra (page 3) and the 1978 Europa stamps where one shows the



Sp. Andorra, 1978 Parity treaties (Sc. 105)



Sp. Andorra, 1978 Europa: top, House of the Valley; bottom, St. Juan de Caselles (Sc. 103-04)

1928

1978



Sp. Andorra, 1982 Arms parity treaty (Sc. 187)

50 ANIVERSARIO DEL CORREO ESPAÑOL

Sp. Andorra, 1978 50th anniversary Spanish Post (Sc. 102a-d)

Sp. Andorra, 1982 Arms definitive (Sc. 139)



House of the Valley, the old parliament house of Andorra, the 1988 stamp for the 700th anniversary of the second parity treaty, and the 1982 definitive showing the arms of Andorra.

In 1979, stamps portraying the bishops of Urgell as co-princes of Andorra were first issued. Further stamps were added 1981, 1983, 1985 (air post stamp), and 1986. In 2015 there was a memorial stamp for the late Joan Martí I Alanis, Bishop of Urgell and Co-Prince of Andorra.



Left to right, Sp. Andorra, 1979 bishop Pere d'Arg (Sc. 116); 1983 Co-prince visit (Sc. 157); 2015 co-prince memory (Sc. 414)



Sp. Andorra, 1990 Europa, modern Post Office (Sc. 206)

The 1990 Europa stamps showed the old French and Spanish post-offices in Andorra La Vella on one stamp (Sc. 205, p.1), and the modern Spanish post-office on the other.

Andorra's admission to the Council of Europe was marked with a 1995 stamp. The new Constitution, in reality making Andorra a sovereign nation, was celebrated on a 1994 stamp (next column). In 2004, the 10th anniversary was marked with a



Sp. Andorra, 1995 Council of Europe (Sc. 236)



Sp. Andorra, 2004 Council of Europe (10th anniversary of admission) (Sc. 306)

Sp. Andorra, 1994 New Constitution (Sc. 227)



Sp. Andorra 2019 Council of Europe (25th anniversary of admission)

single stamp. The 25th anniversary of Andorra's membership was commemorated on a 2019 stamp, which was a joint issue with the French Post.

The 10th anniversary of the Constitution was celebrated with a



Sp. Andorra, 2003 UN membership (10th anniversary) (Sc. 292)

2003 stamp showing the national flag. Also in 2003, the 10th anniversary of Andorra's membership in the United Nations was commemorated on a stamp. The 15th anniversary



Sp. Andorra, 2003 Constitution (10th anniversary) (Sc. 289)



Sp. Andorra, 2008 Constitution (15th anniversary) (Sc. 338)



Sp. Andorra, 2018 Constitution (25th anniversary)

sary of the Constitution was also celebrated with a 2018 souvenir sheet.



Sp. Andorra, 2004 Euro (Sc. 298)

With the introduction of Euro currency, a set of new definitive stamps showing the national arms was issued in 2002. A revised design with the national arms was introduced in 2014.

The Spanish Post issued A T M stamps 1996 -



Sp. Andorra, 2021 machine stamp

2006, and again from 2021. A mountainous landscape was the motif of the 1996-2006 stamps, whereas the 2021 issue featured two motifs, one showing an exhibit in the Andorran postal museum, the other a contemporary land-art work.

To Be Continued