

# BASQUE COUNTRY

A scenic view of a coastal town in Basque Country. In the foreground, the back of a person's head wearing a blue beret and a blue and white plaid shirt is visible. The middle ground shows a stone bridge with several arches crossing a narrow channel of water. A winding path leads up a rocky, grassy hill to a small building on the peak. The background features a large, rocky coastline with waves crashing against the shore under a cloudy sky.

**EUSKADI**  
BASQUE COUNTRY



# EUSKADI

## BASQUE COUNTRY



The 10 TOP experiences mentioned in this catalogue are among the 50 that you can choose from. They are subject to change and may be updated. Therefore, before you choose an experience and to find out about prices, schedules and places available, we advise you check the website:

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)

or by phoning **946 941 212**

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# BASQUE COUNTRY

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# EUSKADI

BASQUE COUNTRY





There are many reasons why Basque Country is an essential destination. That's why we want to show you a small selection of things you can't miss. Apart from these, there are myriad attractions that will enchant you. Time will tell.

The

10

essentials

*things you can't miss  
from the  
Basque Country*



1

Bilbao



6

San Juan de  
Gaztelugatxe



2

San Sebastian



7

Urdaibai



3

Vitoria-  
Gasteiz



8

Balenciaga  
Museum



4

Assembly  
House  
of Gernika



9

Sanctuary  
of Loiola



5

Bizkaia  
Bridge



10

Laguardia

# THE BASQUE COUNTRY

ideal to enjoy  
in short stages

**t**here's no room for more. Because it's hard to find so many stunning places so close to one another. The Basque Country is the ideal place to enjoy numerous attractions in a short space of time: varied landscapes, pleasant climate, ancient culture, word-famous **cuisine**...

Two colours will accompany you on your journey through the Basque Country: the green of the incomparable setting of its **mountains and valleys**, and the blue of the sea.

You will see that the Basque people have strong links with these natural environments: land and sea. Both have been determining factors in a lifestyle revealed by their idiosyncrasies:

deeply rooted customs, a rich culture, traditional sports...

To better understand the nature of these people it is important that you immerse yourself in its traditions, exploring the fishing ports and the life of the countryside...

On the **coast** you will see how the Cantabrian Sea has marked the personality of the neighbouring villages. You will also notice the difference between their inhabitants and the inland people.

If you explore the history of the outstanding figures who have marked the personality of these communities you will discover how their maritime,

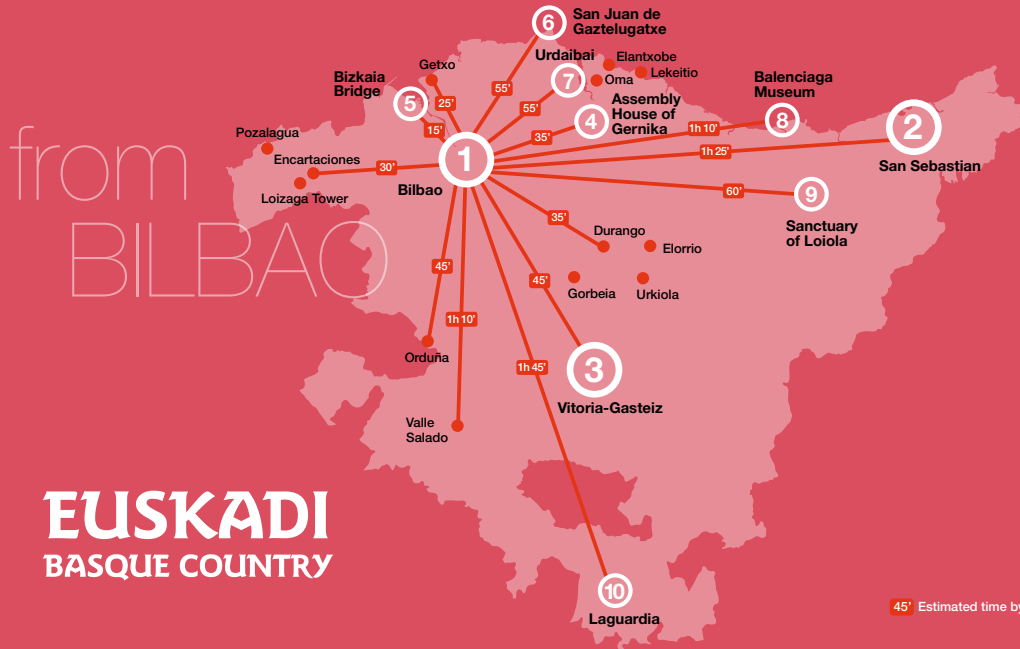
industrial and agricultural character, always diverse and enterprising, has been bred.

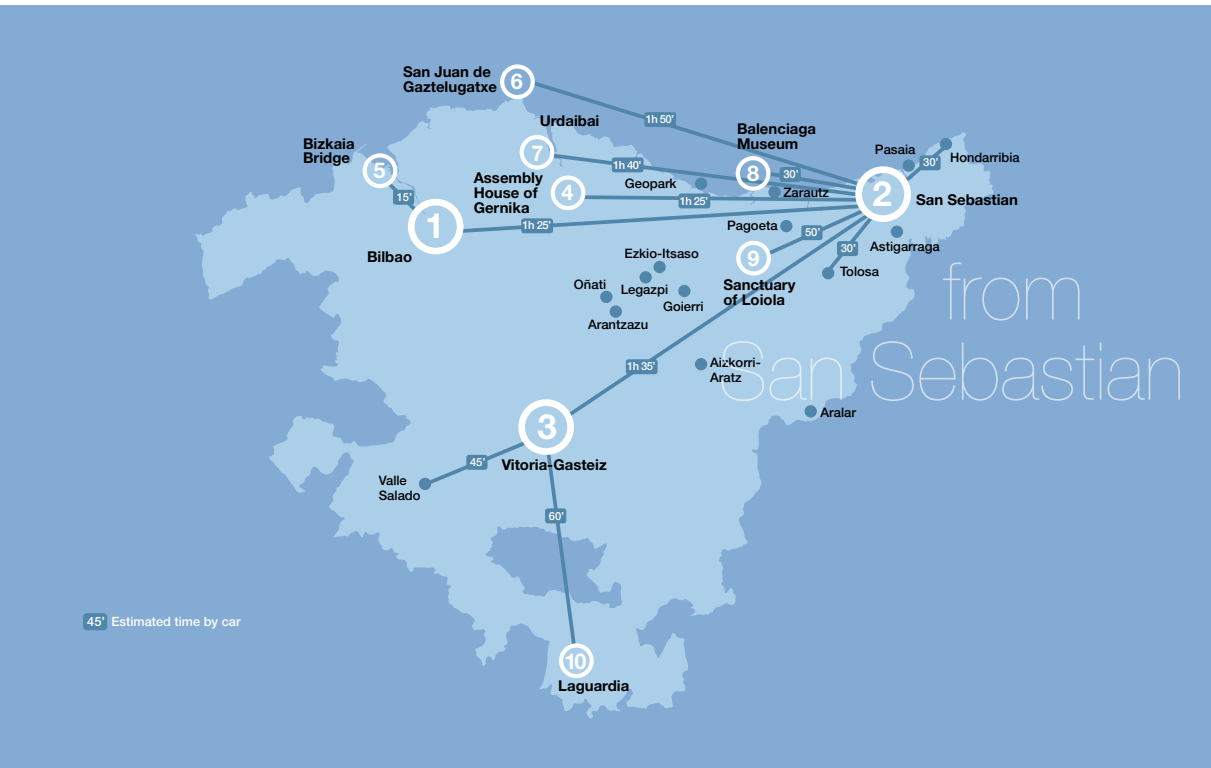
And if you find the coastal and inland villages interesting, you will be no less fascinated by the three capitals. **Bilbao** will surprise you with its transformation from an industrial city to an avant garde metropolis bringing together the great contemporary international architects. **San Sebastian**, exquisite and unique, will seduce you with its beautiful and stately setting. **Vitoria-Gasteiz** will show you its rich heritage and why it sets a worldwide benchmark in urban planning.

Eating and drinking well is an affordable luxury in the Basque Country: local seasonal products in 'pintxo' form with a good wine from the **Rioja Alavesa**, txakoli or cider. You will be in gourmet paradise!

Enjoy! Experiment, observe, then give way to the passion of taste.

[www.basquecountrytourism.eus](http://www.basquecountrytourism.eus)





45' Estimated time by car



45' Estimated time by car

“The leading lights of the new Bilbao are the world-famous architects who have left their mark on its spectacular buildings”

# Bilbao

*a city of design centred on the*

# GUGGENHEIM

GUGGENHEIM BILBAO MUSEUM



*i*f any city is a benchmark for tourists it is unquestionably **Bilbao**. You will be surprised by its conversion from an industrial centre into a model city designed for living. Everything began with the **Guggenheim Bilbao**. Neither Frank Gehry's stunning architecture nor the varied art gallery with its incomparable display of contemporary art will leave you indifferent.



"Fosteritos" is the name affectionately given to the unique street-level subway entrances. Take a trip on it. Philippe Starck will also take you by surprise with **La Alhóndiga** (the Cornhouse), once a wine warehouse and now a multicultural centre.



The international projection of Bilbao provoked by the "Guggenheim effect" is unquestionable. You will find its mascot, **Puppy**, the floral dog by Jeff Koons, guarding the building. A snapshot with the faithful watchdog is a must.

But the change goes much deeper than an iconic building: the result is a city that has reinvented itself... Starting with the metro, where Sir Norman Foster combines architecture and engineering to masterly effect.

### [Bilbao has opted for design as the basis of its renovation as a city](#)

The **Torre Iberdrola** by César Pelli, the highest in the Basque Country, and the **Torres Isozaki** also figure among these signature works. Don't miss the chance to cross the Santiago Calatrava bridge opposite, the **Zubizuri**. Another of his masterpieces is the airport terminal, known as **La Paloma** (the Dove), due to its resemblance to a bird about to take flight.



You can take a break in a lovely green space surrounded by design... the **Avenida de Abandoibarra**, a lively venue where tourists mix with the local people to share a pleasant moment. Take the chance to visit the **Bellas Artes Museum** (Art Gallery) with its collection of El Greco, Sorolla, Gauguin and Zurbarán among many others.

On **El Ensanche** avant garde buildings coexist with the elegance of those erected by the new bourgeoisie: the modernist **La Concordia Station**, the **Palacio de la Diputación** (provincial Council building) in the Gran Vía, the superb **Café Iruña** next to the **Jardines de Albia**, and the **Teatro Campos Elíseos**, among others.

On **Abando**, Gran Vía, **Indautxu** and the **Old Quarter** you can immerse yourself in the modern Bilbao shopping experience known for its elegance, quality and international fashion houses.

[www.bilbaoturismo.net](http://www.bilbaoturismo.net)



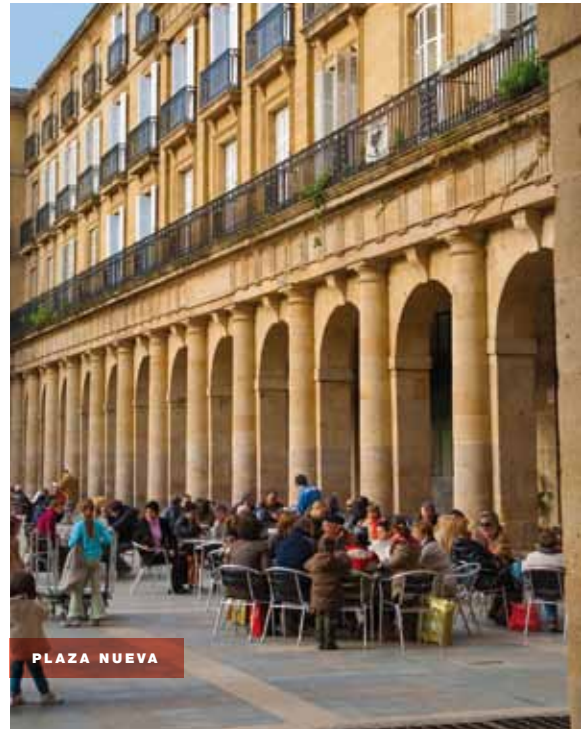
SANTIAGO CATHEDRAL

*a young heart  
beats*  
in the  
CASCO  
VIEJO

“

*If the Guggenheim Bilbao surprised you, get ready for the special charm of the Casco Viejo. You will see how much it is loved by the local people. This is the Bilbao that was born around the Ría (estuary) in 1300. Today, the ancient heart of Bilbao is still full of life*

”



PLAZA NUEVA

The **Casco Viejo** originated in its famous **7 streets**: Somera, Artecalle, Tendería, Belosticalle, Carnicería Vieja, Barrencalle and Barrencalle Barrena. "Txikitear" (having a few wines) in these streets is a must. You will encounter a universe imbued with a special atmosphere: that of the "pintxos".



Day or night, in the Plaza Nueva, Calle Jardines or in Santa Maria you will find a multitude of places to try them. If you decide to eat at one of the restaurants in the area you may find a group of diners singing over dessert. This is still a very common custom in these parts.

### The Casco Viejo exudes life and any time of day

The commercial tradition of the Casco Viejo of Bilbao is legendary. Especially since the floods in 1983 the shops have undergone a spectacular transformation. Variety and quality awaits you in more than 400 shops of all kinds and around 200 catering establishments... and the **La Ribera municipal market**, "the real one" as the local people call it, so closely linked to



the customs of the townspeople... Did you know that it is Europe's largest covered market?

### Bilbao is affectionately known as "el botxo"

The people's devotion to the **Virgen de Begoña** (Our Lady of Begonia) is reflected in the numerous popular celebrations in her name. You can visit her by ascending the 311 steps of the **Calzadas de Mallona** starting from the Plaza de Unamuno, or by taking the lift that leaves you nearby. By the way, the **la Salve bridge** (Hail Mary bridge) is so called because it marks the point where sailors setting out to sea offered a "hail Mary" as the Begonia basilica disappeared from sight.

An interesting point to note: as it is located in a valley, the city is affectionately known as *el botxo* (the hole). If you take the **Artxanda funicular railway**, you will get an extraordinary view of the *botxo*, where "greenery meets the skyscrapers."

You will find the genuine, bustling Bilbao the in the Casco Viejo, a National Heritage Site. The Gothic **Santiago Cathedral**, so named because it stands right on the Santiago pilgrimage coastal route, the **Plaza Nueva**, the biggest and oldest in

Bilbao, the **church of San Antón**, with the ancient ruins forming its foundations, the Neo-baroque **Teatro Arriaga**, the **Arenal gardens** or the **Archaeological Museum**, that will take you back more than 100,000 years, are only a few of them. For a relaxing moment take a rest in any of the historical cafés.

If you are here in the second week of August you will be able to take part in the **Aste Nagusia** (the great week), in which **Marijaia**(the Lady of the Fiestas) deploys all her gaiety.





ZUBI ZURI

# THE RÍA

A living artery with a key role in the city

From the town's foundation until the present day, the Ría (Estuary) has played a key role in the development of Bilbao and has been one of Basque Country's economic driving forces.

The fact that it is navigable as far as Portugaete enabled the establishment of important shipyards on its banks until the mid 1980s. Today the Ría still plays a leading role, but now as a source of enjoyment for the people of Bilbao and for visitors.

The history of the Ría is the history of its bridges: the San Antón bridge forms part of the city's coat of arms. The Ribera Bridge belongs to the old Bilbao that began to be modernised alongside the La Merced bridge as far as the Arenal bridge which gives onto El Ensanche. Industrial activity obliged some of them to "open up" for passage of heavy shipping.

## Bridges and footbridges unite the new and the old Bilbao

The Zubizuri and La Salve bridges, integrated into the Guggenheim, the Pedro Arrupe, and the Euskalduna bridge... speak to us of the new Bilbao open to tourism.. The latter is located over the old site of the famous Euskalduna shipyards, where today the Palacio de Congresos y de la Música, declared one of the world's best conference centres in 2003.. Alongside you will find the Ría de Bilbao Maritime Museum and opposite, one of the cranes of the old shipyard: La Carola.

Metropolitan Bilbao enables you connect with the enterprising spirit that has always characterized the Basque people. A visit to the surrounding area will bring you closer to its maritime aspect.



PALACIO EUSKALDUNA

“ It is said that the Ría does not belong to Bilbao but that Bilbao belongs to the Ría, because the history of the city is so closely linked to it. We recommend a walk along its shores as far as the mouth. This is the best way to get close to what has always been and still remains the life force of the city.

”



THE LOOKOUT (CHILLIDA)



## Paseo de la Memoria

The theme of this new park, part of the urban renovation of Bilbao, is remembrance of what we were to understand who we are today. It is surrounded by works of leading contemporary artists: Dalí, Koons, Chillida, Bourgeois, Garraza...

If you take a trip on the Ría it will give you a totally different perspective on the city. The design of the buildings, the changing pace of the city... you will see everything from a unique viewpoint: the left bank, scene of the traditional Basque industry, and on the right, over the **Bizkaia Bridge**, with Getxo's **Las Arenas** and **Neguri** districts.

[www.bilboats.com](http://www.bilboats.com)  
[www.aupatours.com](http://www.aupatours.com)  
[www.portugalete.com](http://www.portugalete.com)

The surroundings of the Ría in contemporary Bilbao also provide a home to projects like **ZAWP** (Zorrotzaurre Art Work in Progress), a movement arising from the need to tackle the district's urban planning from the cultural and creative viewpoint.

[www.zawpbilbao.com](http://www.zawpbilbao.com)

“ This is the magnificent aspect of an iron construction inspired by the Eiffel Tower, the gateway of the Ria to the open sea ”



...and from Bilbao

# Bizkaia

# BRIDGE



# UP and DOWN

It was declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO in 2006. Portugalete is on the left, with Las Arenas (Getxo) on the right. Don't miss the experience of crossing by the upper platform: it provides marvellous views of the mouth.



## A few feet from the beach



Since the metro was inaugurated, Bilbao can proudly say it has beaches. The majority are on the right bank. There is a good choice from calm waters for the whole family to beaches where surfers gather to enjoy the special waves: Ereaga, Arrigunaga, Arrietara, Barinatxe... all the way to Plentzia, a beautiful seafarers' village from where it is a short walk to the mouth. The sight of the little fishing boats that the local people use to catch "txipiron" (squid) drawn up on the banks is absolutely charming.

[www.metrobilbao.eus](http://www.metrobilbao.eus)

*i*t is an authentic icon with its four 61 metre-high iron towers joined by the 160 metres of the walkway. People and cars are carried across the river in the gondola suspended from the rails of the upper platform.

Opened in 1893, the **Bizkaia Bridge** was the first shuttle bridge in the world to be designed and built as a metal structure. It was designed by Alberto Palacio y Elissague, who also had a part in another well-known work of the times, the Crystal Palace in Madrid's Retiro Park.



SOPELANA

“

*This is city that seduces. One look at the bay and its three beaches will make you want to discover all its secrets*

”

# San Sebastian

*more than an incomparable setting adorned by the sea*



LA CONCHA BAY



The famous **La Concha** beach gives you a warm welcome as soon as you arrive in San Sebastian, and invites you to sunbathe, swim or just a stroll along the shore, even in winter. Take the walk from the **Alderdi Eder** gardens to the **Peine del Viento** by Chillida and Peña Ganchegui, leaving the **Ondarreta beach** to one side.

This first crush will show you the paradise that surrounds the bay: the peaks of **Igueldo**, **Urgull** and **Ulía**, and **Santa Clara** island.

The **Urumea** river and its bridges and **Zurriola** beach with its powerful waves are found on the other side of the city.

This urban beach is only a few metres from downtown San Sebastian, which makes it very popular for all kinds of water sports, especially surfing and body-board.



ZURRIOLA

A city that offers a never-ending variety of other attractions in other areas is yours for the taking. You will discover that San Sebastian is the city of wellness. Massage, thalassotherapy, romantic strolls through the city centre... all these and more are lying in wait to capture your heart.

### Scene of a multitude of suggestions

If you like running you can do the stunning circuit from El Peine del Viento to **Sagües** by the **Paseo Nuevo** or along the banks of the Urumea. San Sebastian is also perfect to enjoy by bike. "Bidegorris" (bike lanes), will take you to any part of the city.

If you choose the Urumea it will lead you to points like **Zurriola**, the closest to the mouth of the Ria dominated by the **Palacio de Congresos Kursaal** and which connects **Gros** with the city centre. The original congress centre, **Santa Catalina**, was a wooden building for years. The **María Cristina** bridge stands out due to its monumental appearance and the **Mundaiz** bridge is remarkable for being the first span the Ria without intermediate supports. The **Lehendakari Agirre** is the last one. You can also opt for an excursion to **Monte Igueldo** which you can ascend on a funicular railway. And to get one of the most spectacular views of the city and coast: Chillida's Peine del Viento. **Monte Urgull**, with its castle, is another interesting option.

[www.sansebastianturismo.com](http://www.sansebastianturismo.com)



PEINE DEL VIENTO

World capital of the

# PINTXO

Learn the secrets and keys to success of San Sebastian's cuisine with a tour of the bars of the **Parte Vieja**, the **Centre**, the **Antiguo** or **Gros**, trying suggestive pintxos or small snacks with txakoli, cider or wine from the Rioja Alavesa. This is the kind of small-scale cooking that captivates more and more people every day.



Make sure you try an authentic Basque tradition: the 'Gilda' (a made with a chilli pepper, olives and anchovy) accompanied by a glass of wine or txacoli at midday. Start with that, then look around and it will be unheard of if you don't find a bar with an innovative offering of pintxos with a great atmosphere that will encourage you to eat standing up during an entertaining stroll. The Parte Vieja in the first place, then any part of the city will offer you its inimitable nano-cuisine...

PINTXOS IN THE PARTE VIEJA



## Here in San Sebastian our table is adorned with a 16-star tablecloth

San Sebastian and its surroundings are strewn with the stars that, year after year, the influential Michelin Guide awards to the best cooks on the planet. Martín Berasategi, Juan Mari Arzak, Pedro Subijana and Andoni Aduriz, along with their colleagues from other local towns, make up part of the stellar constellation which has made San Sebastian's cuisine one of the Basque's County's main tourist attractions.

But these culinary stars also belong, in a certain way, to every pintxo bar, restaurant, cider bar and carvery that enriches the capital and its surroundings. The gastronomic quality is total. Just think of what you would like. Ask for advice and you will have various suggestions in a flash, each according to the speciality of the giver.

The *asadores* (carveries) will offer you impressive T-bone steaks or charcoal-grilled fish. Even though it's easier said than done: Try everything! (But not all at once). The doors of an impeccably attended restaurant are open to you in any corner of San Sebastian.

One of the keys to the culinary success of San Sebastian is the excellent seafood and *casericó* (farmhouse) products. Allow time in your plans to fit in a visit the **La Bretxa** market in the Parte Vieja or that of **San Martín** in the centre. You will be delighted to see professional chefs and aficionados commenting on some carrots or the origin of a bass with the stall-holders. It is not unusual to see three-star chefs like Arzak or Subijana in these markets... along with housewives and other lovers of top quality products!



## Eat in a star-spangled firmament

You'll discover that taste is divine. You only need to treat yourself to the pleasure of choosing between the 16 stars scattered across this exclusive sky to understand why it is so widely recognised. They are masters of the culinary art and their fame knows no borders. Just the chance you need to take advantage of the fact that you are in the city with the most Michelin stars per capita in the world.



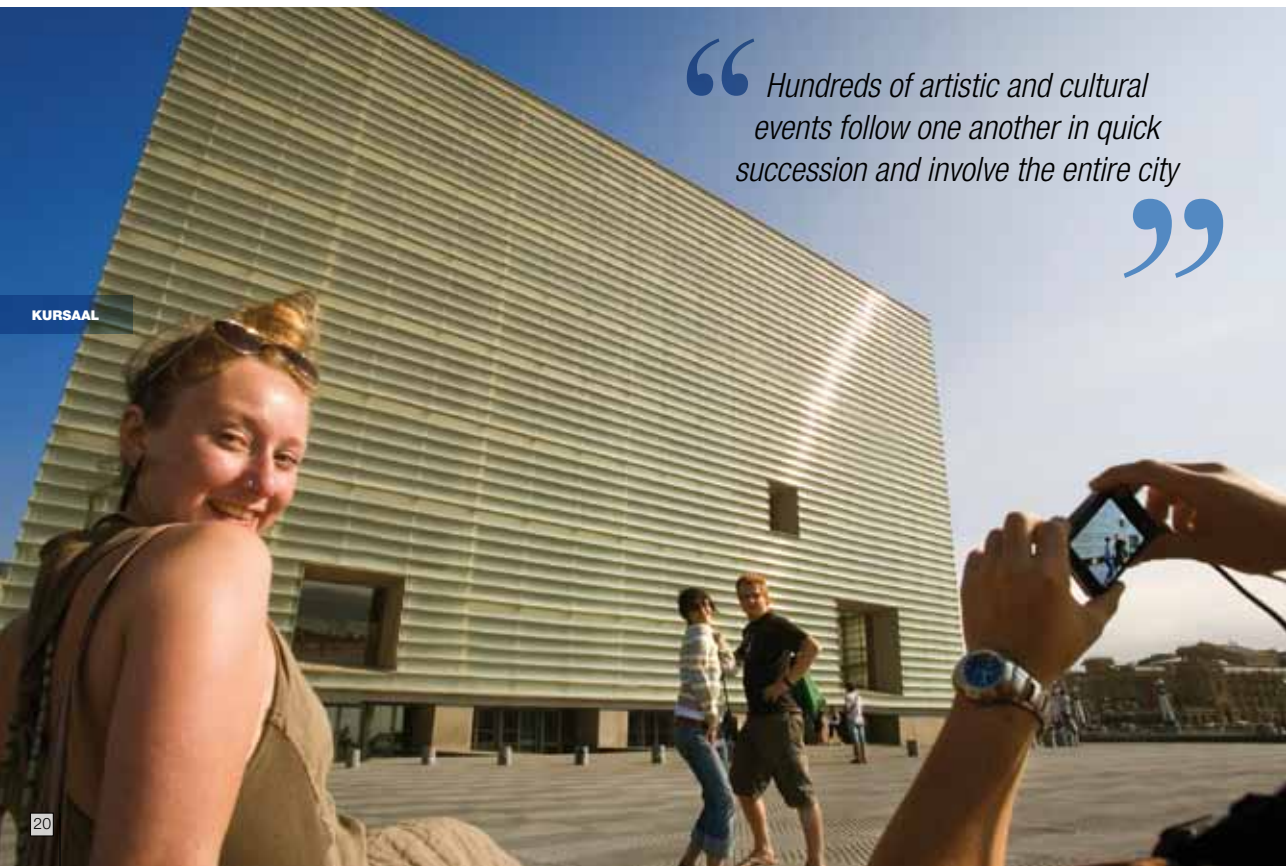


# SAN SEBASTIAN

The city of film  
and of  
*culture*

It has all the values and arguments... There's a reason why San Sebastian has been designated "European Capital of Cultural 2016"...! Cultural life is intense here... From its most popular and multitudinous expression –the Tamborrada on 20 January – to the prestigious International Film and Jazz Festivals. This is what is called "waves of civic energy".

“ *Hundreds of artistic and cultural events follow one another in quick succession and involve the entire city* ”



KURSAAL



**C**atherine Deneuve, Glenn Close, Woody Allen... and many more have experienced it in person. Beyond the cinematographic festival as such, San Sebastian itself is a huge film set.

Directors, actresses and actors, scholars and critics over the last sixty years have fostered an incredible love of the cinema that permeates the whole life and activity of the city. The Tourist Office also organizes a guided tour to learn about San Sebastian through the magic of the silver screen. It is worthwhile allowing yourself to be guided through the **Boulevard**, the beach of **La Concha** and the **Área Romántica**... You will see that the urban air is awash with the seventh art: discover the **Hotel María Cristina**, the **Teatro Victoria Eugenia** and the **Palacio Kursaal**. It's all just one big film set!

[www.sansebastianfestival.com](http://www.sansebastianfestival.com)

In the European Capital of Culture 2016 the cultural encounters and events follow one another in quick succession. The **International Jazz Festival** is a classic and another outstanding occasion is the **Quincena Musical (Musical Fortnight)**. The cinema has other expressions in the **Mountain** and **Diving** film contests and

the **Fantasy Film Festival**. The **Surf Film Festival**, evolving into a multidisciplinary event, is also an outstanding experience. **Arteleku** is a centre open to creativity in all its artistic forms. And if you are a science and space enthusiast, **Eureka! Zientzia Museoa** (the Science Museum) invites you to take part in novel experiences, with new technological proposals every week.



**SAN SEBASTIAN  
DONOSTIA 2016**

San Sebastian, European Capital of Culture 2016, has the necessary tools for a new concept of cultural policy. Its neighbourhoods have schools, workshops and cultural centres that foster the creative exchange of ideas and social transformation.

A succession of celebrations, conventions, events and festivals exclusively related to the European Capital of Culture 2016 will take place during the coming years.

[www.sansebastian2016.eu](http://www.sansebastian2016.eu)

**TOP  
EXPE-  
RIEN-  
CE**

## Cider and the sea



Relive the adventure of whaling, discover its connection with cider and savour the cuisine associated with the ritual of the **"txots"** (first pouring of the new season's cider), visiting the **Sagardoetxea Museo de la Sidra Vasca** (cider museum), taking a guided boat trip across the bay of **La Concha** en San Sebastian and visiting the **Aquarium** with its spectacular ocean tunnel. A feast for the senses.

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)



“His technical brilliance and perfectionism made him the fashion designer's couturier. Balenciaga is not only famous. He was the probably the most influential fashion designer of the 20th century”

...and from San Sebastian

# BALENCIAGA MUSEUM

Discover the life and times of Cristobál Balenciaga, his heritage and his impact on the history of fashion and design at the museum. The Museum provides the keys to understanding the work of Balenciaga, and in addition to its exhibits offers courses, conferences and educational workshops for a variety of audiences.



**t**he **Cristóbal Balenciaga Museum** is located in **Getaria**, his home town. It has more than 9,000 square meters devoted to one of the great fashion designers whose creations have been exhibited in museums around the world, from the Metropolitan Museum in New York to the Tokyo Fashion Foundation or the Lyon Textile Museum.

**Zumaia** is home to the **Ignacio Zuloaga Museum**. In addition to the painter's works its holdings include works by El Greco and Goya.

In **Pasai Donibane** visit the **Victor Hugo House Museum** where the great man lived and wrote about the local people. Exhibits include manuscripts and drawings of the era.



## People on the move because they love it

San Sebastian is an active city in which love of outdoor sport runs deep. You will encounter runners, cyclists, rollers, surfers... on any of your walks.

It's no wonder then that the city hosts numerous first-class events throughout the year. Some examples are the Marathon, the Behobia-San Sebastian half marathon, the Cycling Classic, the Donosti Cup (football), horse racing in Lasarte and the *trainera* (rowing boats originally used for fishing) regattas in the popular Bandera de la Concha. These events always draw huge crowds and you can take part in the festive atmosphere.



BEHOBIA-SAN SEBASTIAN



SALBURUA

“  
Vitoria-Gasteiz combines technological and industrial activity with wide open spaces and pedestrian and sports areas. European Green Capital 2012 this is city to be enjoyed



ZABALGANA

”  
Those who live here say that it is a convenient and agreeable city. On foot or by bicycle, touring Vitoria-Gasteiz is possible for all. There are urban pathways, the bike lane (bidegorri) tracks through leafy forests... They travel throughout the city, linking together the Anillo Verde (green ring). More than a hundred kilometres of waymarked lanes.

The Anillo Verde is the natural perimeter of the capital of Araba/Álava. There are 47 kilometres of tracks and trails through the parks surrounding the urban area, from Alegría, Armentia Olarizu, Salburua Zabalgana, the banks of the Zadorra, Berrostegieta, Errekaleor to Lasarte. A green landscape of forests, rivers and all sorts of fauna and flora.

Vitoria-Gasteiz has grown while respecting its surroundings and its rich natural heritage. The Salburua wetlands, huge lagoons a few kilometres from the centre, are host to herds of deer and thousands of waterfowl. The Ataria Interpretation Centre will give you a close-up look at them.

There is no need for vehicles to get to these nature reserves. Vitoria-Gasteiz is designed for pedestrians and is one of the European cities with the most square metres per capita of green zones. This is demonstrated by walks such as El



# Vitoria-Gasteiz

*the harmony of a city  
designed for living*



Batán, La Senda-Fray Francisco-Cervantes to the Basílica de San Prudencio de Armentia heights, parks like La Florida, San Martín, Arriaga, Judimendi, the Anillo Verde itself... Routes that provide endless beautiful natural impressions at any time of year.

Are you into trekking? Leaving the city to the south you will find the **Vitoria-Gasteiz Hills**. You can reach the Zaldiaran, Errogana and Arrieta summits by going through Berrosteigieta and Mendizorroza.

To the north, you can trek the Badaia, Arrato and Elgea ranges.

The beach and water are land-locked here, and very well kept. In the **Ullibarri-Ganboa** and **Santa Engracia** reservoirs you can enjoy the country around Landa, Erpidea, Garaio, Marieta and Legutiano for sunbathing, windsurfing, swimming or kite flying.



## A bird's eye view

If Vitoria-Gasteiz is considered a green city it is, among other reasons, because of its devotion to natural resources. We recommend a visit to **Ataria**, an installation in the **Salburua** reserve where you can observe a wide variety of bird life in a silence that only a privileged environment can offer. Another interesting option, although only practicable at certain times of year, is to take a bird's eye view of the city from altitude, by balloon.



ULLIBARRI-GANBOA



ATARIA



SANTA MARÍA CATHEDRAL

*You will live  
history as  
never before*



## The effects of a Cathedral

The Almendra Medieval (Medieval Almond) so called because of its oval shape, is in urban green belt. It is the oldest part of the capital, located on a hill called Gasteiz, and dates from around the year 1,000. The first suggestion any *gasteiztarra* would make is to visit the **de Santa María Cathedral** while it is still “open for works”. Writers such as Toti Martínez de Lezea and Ken Follett have found inspiration here for their historical novels. The long restoration works of this Gothic cathedral are still an original activity in high demand by tourists and history lovers who discover how the building was built and how it is being restored. Over a million visitors have wandered around its nave, atrium, walls and clerestory.

[www.catedralvitoria.com](http://www.catedralvitoria.com)



PLAZA DE ESPAÑA

“Vitoria-Gasteiz has one of the most iconic old quarters in Basque country. You will be surprised to discover 12th-century streets full of medieval flavour

”

When you continue your tour of the **Casco Antiguo** (old quarter) you will visit the **Walls**, the **Bibat** (Cards and Archeological Museum) and the **Escoriaza-Esquivel** and **Montehermoso** mansions without the slightest effort. Convenient escalators take you to the highest points. There you will be welcomed by a seething, innovative social and cultural life.

The vicinity of the Casco Antiguo is home to a restless cultural avant-garde.

One of its latest ideas is the **mural itinerary** that fills façades and old walls with gigantic, full-colour murals that have created a school in avant garde European art.

Notice the street names: Cuchillería (cutlers), Herrería (blacksmiths), Pintorería (painters), Correría (harness makers)..., recall the names of the trades to which they were devoted. On the first Saturday of each month, by the way, a market is held in which traders from the area display their wares along the street.

These are the surroundings of mansions such as **Bendaña**, the **Casa del Cordón**, post-houses like the **Portalón** and the busy plazas **Brullería**, **Campillo** and **Matxete**.

This rich heritage includes a museum of undeniable interest, the **Natural Science Museum**, a benchmark in its field for the quality of its of geology, zoology and botany collections.

[www.vitoria-gasteiz.org/turismo](http://www.vitoria-gasteiz.org/turismo)



MIEVEAL WALLS



# A *Ensanche* that unites centuries

PLAZA DE LA VIRGEN BLANCA

Contemporary art  
coexisting with  
archaeology and  
playing cards

*t*he **Ensanche** is also home to another indispensable museum in Vitoria-Gasteiz: **Artium, the Basque Centre-Museum of Contemporary Art**. It collects, produces, disseminates and researches the art of our times. Its holdings include works by great painters like Miquel Barceló, Chillida, Gordillo, Miró, Picasso, Tapies, Dalí, Saura, Urzay... among others.



ARTIUM



## Shopping, sweets, pintxos and rambles

The dynamic of the city means you have time for everything, including a shopping expedition downtown. There is so much to choose from: speciality stores that have made their business into an exquisite activity, shops with charm, exclusive fashion boutiques and accessory stores that combine design and originality... and delicatessens where you can acquire the flavours of your trip to take back home. Don't grudge yourself that special article and choose from the veritable cornucopia on offer.



One thing you just can't miss is going out for pintxos in some of the city's numerous bars and taverns. "Txikiteo" is an inseparable part of the Basque way of life and for you it is the most seductive way to join in one of the deepest rooted local customs. In some areas there are established "Pintxo Routes" that offer a great way to discover the appeal of these delicious examples of mini-cuisine. Each barrio offers a 'pintxo-pote' on a certain day of the week, when all the bars in the district agree to charge a special low price for a drink, a pintxo and a great atmosphere. Whatever your choice, you will love joining the *cuadrillas* (groups of revellers) who create a festive atmosphere in the taverns. The bars packed with pintxos are simply irresistible.

And there is another sweet temptation you shouldn't try to resist. Bakery is another speciality of the capital of Araba/Álava with decades of tradition. Allow yourself to be captivated by the endless delights in the shop windows. Try the "**goxua**" (layered cream cake), the "**tarta Gasteiz**" (pastry cake) the "**txuxitos**" (puff cakes), the **chocolate truffles**, the **vasquitos and nesquitas** (chocolates)... and if you buy some to take away be sure to get plenty, because everyone who tries them will come back for more.



## and when the fiesta starts...

...the city transforms itself. You will have the chance to see for yourself, especially if your visit coincides with the "**fiestas de la Blanca**" (Feast of the White Virgin) on 5 August. The local hero, Celedón, will have kicked off the festivities the previous day. The atmosphere is electrifying.



CELEDÓN ARRIVES

...and from  
Vitoria-Gasteiz

# The Salt

# VALLEY

“ Such is its uniqueness that  
it was proposed as a Unesco  
World Heritage Site in 2013.  
A natural route that will leave  
you speechless

”

The "The Añana Salt Valley" is the ideal one-day excursion. This traditional industry extracted salt from saline spring water and is formed by more than 5,000 threshing pits arranged in hand-crafted terraces made of stone, clay and wood. You can walk along the paths between hundreds of wooden channels that distribute water to more than 120,000 m<sup>2</sup> of evaporation basins.

[www.vallesalado.com](http://www.vallesalado.com)



**TOP**  
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The **Valle Salado de Añana** looks back on 3,000 years of history. A guided visit will give you insight into its curious construction and the secrets of the Añana Salt that Basque cooks use in their recipes. You can taste the brine that runs through the channels, dip your feet into the Salt Spa and try various gourmet salts.

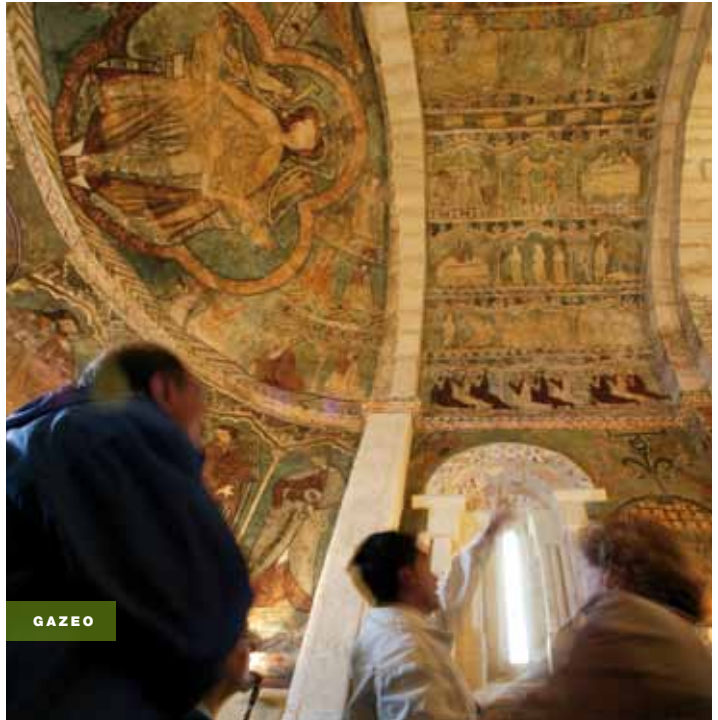
[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)



## Go back to the beginning of history

Araba/Álava's heritage is rich in prehistoric sites. You can find **megalithic remains** such as the Aizkomendi dolmens in Eguilaz, Sorginetxe in Arrizala and La Chabola de la Hechicera in Elvillar that provide a tantalising insight into the lives of the first inhabitants.

The magnificent **polychrome decoration of the churches in Alaitza and Gazeo**, the Casco Viejo of Salvatierra and the Mendoza and Varona towers are also outstanding. And Quejana, with its medieval construction containing a monastery and the Ayala Palace, or the walled towns of Labraza, Salinillas and Laguardia are not to be missed...



GAZEO

# RIOJA

A L A V E S A

*Landscape of wine and vineyards*

SIERRA DE CANTABRIA

What you are seeing is an aperitif of the singularity of the **Rioja Alavesa**... a sea of vineyards occupying the zone between the **Ebro** and the **Sierra de Cantabria** and shows its spectacular apparel depending on

the season. No wonder that Unesco has included the Cultural Landscape of Wines and Vineyards in its list of World Heritage Site candidates. This cultural and historical complex is encrusted in a homogeneous landscape that integrates lovely towns with archaeological sites such as dolmens and walled villages

centuries of history... creating a recognisable cultural landscape. You will be impressed with the way the region combines tradition with modernity. You only have to observe the wineries that dot the landscape surrounded by the sea of vineyards. For all these reasons the Rioja Alavesa is well worth a visit. Even if the wines - and now the olive oil - with protected designations of origin are not your thing, you will discover a regions of the Basque Country with their own personality and warm, friendly people you will be delighted to get to know.

[www.rutadelvinoderiojaalavesa.com](http://www.rutadelvinoderiojaalavesa.com)

LAGUARDIA LAGOONS





**TOP**  
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## Aromas and landscapes of the Rioja Alavesa

There is nothing easier than hopping on the **Enobus** and letting your guides lead you comfortably around the **Rioja Alavesa Wine Route**. You will visit medieval villages in the company of a guide, see spectacular vineyard scenery, learn the secrets of preparing and enjoy the flavours and aromas of fine wines with **certified designation of origin** in wineries and other catering establishments where you can also do some wine tasting.

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)



THE WINERIES  
OF THE RIOJA ALAVESA

## *Innovation in form and content*

*t*he transformation that the wineries have undergone runs parallel to the passion with which the people of the **Rioja Alavesa** approach everything to do with wine. First came the "calados" (underground cellars) that shape the subsoil of a good part of the towns and villages of the region and date back to the Middle Ages. Today, they are modern facilities that vie for attention by bold projects full of beauty and daring, designed by great contemporary international architects. Some stand out for their avant garde construction, like the **Marques de Riscal** winery by Frank Gehry, **Ysios** by Santiago Calatrava, **CUNE** by Philippe Mazières, **Baigorri** by Samaniego and **Antión**, the work of Marino Pascual. Others are more classical and base their appeal on the elegance and quality of their materials. The wine culture means that the profusion of great wineries impregnates the daily life of the Rioja Alavesa in a very special way.

You will find that many are open to visitors and are happy to show you their processes, the selection of grapes to make the wine, the huge fermentation barrels and oak ageing barrels, always enveloped in an almost monastery-like stillness and silence.

LAGUARDIA



## The health and beauty of wine

Wine-related pleasures go beyond taste: the Villa de Laguardia hotel provides natural treatment with "designation of origin" for care of the skin and the spirit. Their spa offers delicious *al la carte* suggestions like the wine-based treatment that harnesses the product's cosmetic properties.



## For the whole family

The Rioja Alavesa has activities for old and young alike. When planning your trip think of the fun you could have participating as a family in numerous new experiences related to the word of wine.



“ Each facet of this province of Álava combines traditional and modern... age old wisdom and cutting edge technology. Its the know-how of a culture that has made wine its passion ”

RIOJA ALAVESA

*Laguardia,  
History with open walls*

CHURCH OF SANTA MARÍA DE LOS REYES (LAGUARDIA)

**Laguardia** is the main town of the central part of the region. Fortified in the 13th century, its walls and towers shelter a hive of activity in which tourism holds a privileged status.

If you have time, take a guided tour that includes the portal of the church of **Santa María de los Reyes** and **Torre Abacial**. It is not only well-preserved, but remarkable for other reasons. Make sure not to miss it.



LAGUARDIA

The town hall in the Plaza Mayor features an interesting chiming clock with figures that dance to the rhythm of festive street music.

You may not know that Samaniego, the fable writer, was born here in a mansion in the Plazuela de San Juan dating from the seventeenth century.

South of the town you will notice the beautiful Church of San Juan, described as a church-fortress.

The oldest building in the village (late fourteenth century) is the Casa de la Primicia, located on Calle Páganos, which owes its name to its original use as the storehouse for the "first fruits" tax.

And if you want an unbeatable view of the lands and people of the Rioja Alavesa, take a trip to the Paseo del Collado, which offers a magnificent view of the region against the backdrop of the Sierra de Cantabria.



ELVILLAR

The Basque people discovered the virtues of the Rioja Alavesa thousands of years ago. Each of its towns boasts a rich historical heritage that can't fail to attract your attention. Some worth noting are the **dolmens of Layaza**, the Herrera pass, **Sotillo**, **San Martín**, **La Huesera** in Laguardia, **La Chabola de la Hechicera** in Elvillar, **El Encinal** and **Los Llanos** in Kripan. The numerous **cave wine presses** still preserved in many places are also fascinating.

You can visit the Iron Age forts of **Castros de Buradón**, near Labastida. Close to Laguardia, the proto-historic village of **La Hoya** contains a museum that traces the way of life neatly three thousand years ago. You will be surprised by the violent history that explains how the inhabitants met their end, in a torment of arrows, fire and spears!

You will also soak up the history here. The medieval origins of the Rioja Alavesa, between Navarre and Castile, explain the presence of numerous **walled towns**. Labraza is one of them. It has won the International Award for Walled Towns due to its excellent state of conservation. The hundred inhabitants live like feudal lords in one of Araba/Álava's most attractive villages.

On the far west border of the Rioja Alavesa the town of Salinillas de Buradón proudly maintains its defensive walls, towers and the mansion of the Condes de Oñate. There is a saltwater spring that attracts hundreds of tourists every year.

You are sure to enjoy yourself!



LABRAZA



# The Basque COAST

*Forged culture*

BY THE FORCE OF THE

*Sea*

**t**he link between the sea and the Basque Country is nothing new. The **Cantabrian Sea** has always played an essential role in the landscape, economy and life of the people close to it, giving rise to customs still rooted in the maritime tradition. When you visit places with economies closely linked to the sea you will be better placed to understand something of the nature of this people, and to assimilate experiences that carry the unique signature of an ancient culture.

This maritime spirit has its origins in the whaling. Thus fishing offered a stable and worthy way of life: the men going down to the sea to fish, and the women mending the nets or selling the catch. Even today in many ports you can see how they keep to the same roles. The need to protect their interests led the sailors to unite in guilds or **cofradías**, a tradition that is still very much alive today.

### [This devotion is reflected in a host of maritime celebrations](#)

The need for protection from the ferocity of the Cantabrian Sea had much to do with the religious leanings of the sailors.

This devotion is reflected in the numerous patron saint festivals, such as the “cármenes”, “madalenas” or “san pedros” (festivals consecrated to Our Lady of Carmen, Mary Magdalene and St Pedro respectively) taking place in many coastal towns. The churches they built also bear witness to this devotion: the Sanctuary of the **Virgen de Guadalupe** in Hondarribia, **Santa Catalina** in Mundaka and **San Telmo** in Zumaia. The most remarkable of all is the sanctuary of **San Juan de Gaztelugatxe**.due to its unique setting... We recommend climbing to the top: you're sure to get a pleasant surprise.



# Basque Coast Geopark



LOW TIDE

*You will feel the passing **60**  
of 60 million years*

**a** must for your trip is a route along the coast taking in the flysch, a stratified stone complex showing 60 million years of the history of our planet and which makes up the **Basque Coast Geopark**. Observing the flysch, will give you an insight into the evolution of the planet through the rock formations of this part of the coast. The rock layers that you will see have been uncovered by constant wave action.

This complex is a true passion for geologists worldwide who defend the theory that we can "read" in these rocks the extinction of the dinosaurs as a result of the impact of an asteroid.

You can access the enclave from the towns

of **Zumaia, Deba and Mutriku**. For a better look there are various alternatives: boat trips, flysch trekking, horseback routes and a visit to **Algorri**, the Natural Resources Interpretation Centre in Zumaia, that will enable you to explore this geological structure of the Basque Coast in an easy and entertaining way.

Other areas of geological interest are the petrified dunes of **Astondo**, in Gorliz, and the stretch of cliffs beginning at **Punta Galea**, in Getxo, that extends through **Sopelana, Barrika, Plentzia**, and **Gorliz** to end at **Armintza**.

[www.algorri.eu](http://www.algorri.eu)  
[www.geoparkea.com](http://www.geoparkea.com)

“

*The Basque Coast Geopark has been a member of the European Network of Geoparks recognized by UNESCO since 2010*

”





## Basque Country birding

Bird-watching can be extremely interesting in the Basque Country. The **Txingudi** wetland in Irún, the **Cabo Híguer** in Hondarribia or the inaccessible **Isla de Aketxe** in Bermeo are excellent natural observatories. The **Urdaibai Bird Centre** in Gautegiz-Arteaga is a bird banding and study centre. In fact, the Basque Country has a tourist product giving full information on bird watching:

[www.birdingeuskadi.net](http://www.birdingeuskadi.net)



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CE

## The flysch route

From Mutriku and Deba to Zumaia... these stunning cliffs are even more impressive when observed from the sea. This marvellous insight into the evolution of the planet is composed of **flysch**, a geological formation that shows the secret history of the Earth like an open book.

A fascinating boat trip allows you to approach this awesome coast, declared a **World Natural Heritage Geopark Reserve** by Unesco.

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)



FLYSCH

# BASQUE BEACHES

“ Chosen by queens, painters and poets for their beauty, fine climate and waters rich in iodine and salt. Now you can enjoy their charm. ”

The multitude of beaches that dot the Basque Coast are versatile as well as beautiful. You can just take it easy or combine relaxation with numerous activities such as surfing, canoeing, diving, paddle-type beach sports or beach volley. All the beaches guarantee the quality of their waters and services with certifications renewed year after year.

There are all kinds of urban beach ideal for families including **La Concha** in San Sebastian, **Astondo** in Gorliz or **Isuntza** in Leketio, all in Bizkaia.

The best for a young, fun-loving atmosphere are **Zurriola** in San Sebastian and **Gorliz** and **Plentzia**, in Bizkaia. The surfboard and sea kayak are most at

home at **Zarautz**, **Bakio** and **Laidatxu**, the last in Mundaka... or **Gorrondatxe** (Getxo), **Arrietara** (Sopelana), **Antilla** in Orio and **Barinatxe**, known as **La Salvaje** (the Savage), between Getxo and Sopelana. Other beaches popular with visitors for their wide, uncrowded stretches and good facilities include **Hondarribia**, **Karraspio** in Mendexa, **Arrigunaga** and **Ereaga** in Getxo, **La Arena** in Muskiz and Zierbena, **Ea**, **Santiago** in Zumaia, **Malkorbe** in Getaria, **Deba**, and **Arrigorri** in Ondarroa. One very special beach is **Laida** in Ibarrangelu. Its unique charm comes from the beauty of its setting in the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve.

**Itzurun** in Zumaia is another jaw-dropping beach and it can also tell you the geological history of the Basque Coast.



LAGA BEACH



ZARAUTZ

If you need an easily accessible beach, Bizkaia has **Ereaga and Arrigunaga** both in Getxo, **Laga, Karraspio** and **Toña** (Sukarrieta), and Gipuzkoa offers you **La Concha, Zarautz** and **Ondarbeltz**.

And finally, if you are into naturism, the Basque Country has a wide variety of small coves and several beaches where you can feel free. A sample of bays: **Barrika, Lapatxa** in Ea, **Ulía** and **Igueldo** in San Sebastian and **Zurriola**, which also has a nice beach. Others include **Zarautz** and **Saturraran** in Mutriku. Bizkaia offers **Meñakoz** in Barrika-Sopelana, **Aizkorri** in Getxo and **Barinatxe** in Sopelana-Getxo.

Surfing arrived to the **Côte Basque**, as the French Basque Coast is known, especially in Biarritz, in the 1950's. Slowly but surely the sport attracted followers, and today this is a benchmark surfing area. If you are interested you can choose from numerous active tourism companies that offer courses and classes to get started or for those who are already experts. From **San Sebastian** to **Getxo**, through **Zarautz, Sopelana, Bakio** and **Mundaka**, which has the best waves in Europe, love of surfing is reflected in the endless number of surfers from around the world who make the pilgrimage to these beaches. The towering waves provided by the Cantabrian Sea (some ranked World Class) makes it possible to hold major championships such as those of San Sebastian, Zarautz and Sopelana, the latter two included in the European and World circuits, and the Punta Galea Big Challenge in Getxo (World Big Wave Tour).

[www.surfingeuskadi.net](http://www.surfingeuskadi.net)



MUNDAKA

SAN JUAN DE GAZTELUGATXE

*“Dive to the depths of the sea, it is full of treasures”*



**San Juan de Gaztelugatxe** near Bermeo is a mythical enclave on the Basque Coast. Its spectacular sea mouth and thrilling views make it unique.

Be sure to climb its 231 steps and ring the bell 13 times to guard against evil spirits.



MATXITXAKO LIGHTHOUSE

to help to organise the high-to-low fish auctions.

In Bermeo, Bizkaia we have the **Fishermen's Museum** and the "Aita Guria" Whaling Interpretation Centre that tells the story of the Basque maritime legacy from whaling to the life and customs of the fishing communities. **Torre Madariaga**, the Basque Country biodiversity centre, is located in Busturia, in the heart of the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve. The **Plasentia Butrón Museum**, in Plentzia, tells the town's maritime history through navigational instruments, models, etc. The **Marítimo Ría de Bilbao Museum** maritime museum, located in the old shipyards, has exhibits showing vessels related to the port. **Rialia**, the **Museum of Industry** in Portugalete preserves the history of mining and ironworks in Bizkaia.



SANTA CATALINA LIGHTHOUSE

The **Centro de Interpretación del Mar**, in Santurtzi, documents port life at the beginning of last century. And in Mendexa, Lekeitio, you can see the **Marierrota** tidal mill.

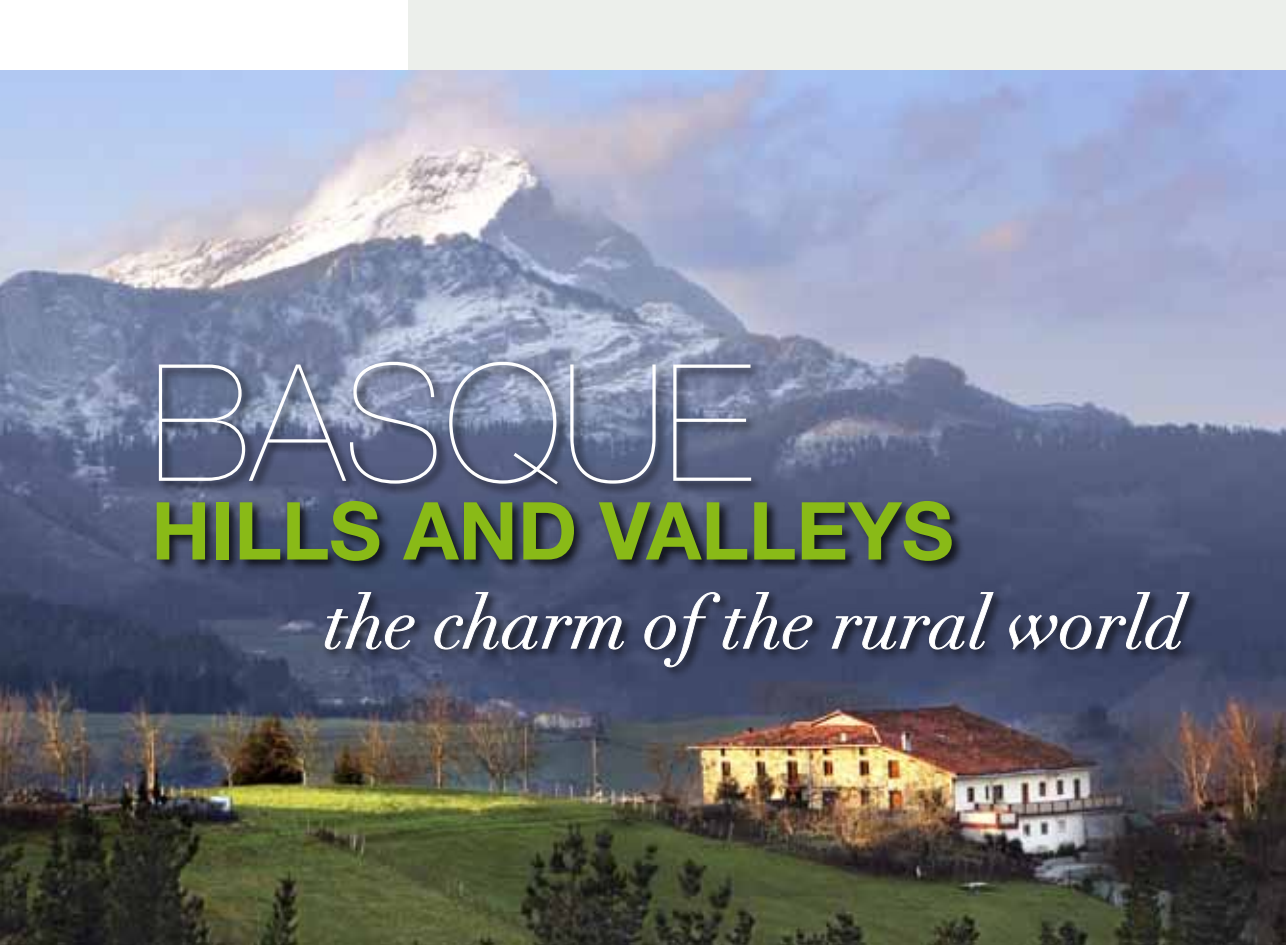
## Lighthouses and forts: eternal sentinels

If you are interested in the lighthouses of this singular enclave be sure to visit the one at **Cabo de Matxitxako**, near **Bermeo**, which is more than a hundred years old. The **La Plata lighthouse in Pasaia** with its oval towers resembles a medieval castle. The one at **Gorliz on Cabo Billano** is the highest of the entire coast and the **Getaria lighthouse** is on top of Monte de San Antón. However, the **Santa Catalina lighthouse in Lekeitio**, home to the **navigation technology interpretation centre**, is the only one that can actually be visited. Those at **Isla de Santa Clara** and **Igueldo**, in San Sebastian, are also well known.

If fortifications are more in your line you can visit the **Fuerte de Guadalupe**, the **Castillo de San Telmo** and the **Castillo Palacio de Carlos V** in Hondarribia. You also have **Fuerte de San Marcos** in Rentería and **Torre Luzea** in Zarautz.

**t**o comprehend the legacy of this maritime culture and explore its heritage to help you to understand the relationship of the Basque people with the sea, nothing better than to visit the many museums scattered along the coast. You could begin with the San Sebastian **Aquarium**, a pioneering marine studies institution. You will love the Oceanarium, with its transparent tunnel giving 360° views of the marine world. The capital also boasts the **Naval Museum** with thematic exhibits chosen for their cultural and historical importance. The **Romano Oiasso Museum**, (Roman Museum) in Irún takes its name from the city built here by the Romans, and displays daily life in ancient times.

If you would like to see a working shipbuilder's shop, a coastal carpentry from the old days, the **Marítima Ondartxo Cultural Centre** restores sea craft by hand and exhibits a wide range of historical vessels. The **Museo Bentalekua**, in Mutriku, conserves a wooden apparatus that used



# BASQUE HILLS AND VALLEYS

*the charm of the rural world*

“  
*In the Basque  
Country more  
than anywhere  
else you perceive  
the differences  
between the  
urban and rural  
environments*

”

**W**hen you go into the country you will see that the character and traditions of the Basque people remain unchanged. This capacity to maintain all the nuances of its identity is what makes the rural world so attractive. You will love getting to know what life is really like in these areas. There are numerous **hotels and cottages** in the Basque Country where you will find its essence. Authenticity is the keynote of the Basque countryside.

But if you are interested in the activities of day-to-day life in the country you will be fascinated by a stay in a *caserío*, sharing a few days with a Basque family. This idea has the appeal of a direct contact with a nature that will stimulate your senses as you participate in everyday activities: cheese production, cider making, preparing meat, honey, jam, milking cows... in short, all kinds activities that will immerse you in the reality of Basque rural life.

You will become familiar with their customs, enjoy the local cuisine especially related to the area you choose, learn words in the **Euskera** (Basque language)... to put it in a nutshell you will be just another member of the family. And if you are lucky your stay may coincide with one of the festivals, markets and popular celebrations that occur throughout the year in the surrounding area. Immerse yourself in them.



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CE-

## Shepherd for a day

You can share the daily life of dairy herdsman Patxi Solana at the Atxarte dairy in **Abadiño**, helping him to milk and shear the sheep, make cheese and soap and a host of other farmyard chores. And you will learn the secrets of the taste and aroma of **Idiazabal designated origin** cheese while having the pleasure of eating some.

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)



ASSEMBLY HOUSE OF  
**GERNIKA**  
*History welcomes you  
with open arms*

ASSEMBLY HOUSE OF GERNIKA



Before beginning to explore the interior, knowing a few facts about the origins of the people will help you to perceive their culture, heritage and identity in the light of the historic background. The Basque people has an ancestral language, Euskera, of unknown origin and the region has been inhabited by peoples such as the Vascons. They are known to have fought against Romans, Moors and Visigoths. In the Middle Ages the Basque Country belonged to the Kingdom of Navarre, conquered by Castile in the 16th century. Today, this traditional governmental arrangement is reflected in the existence of an Autonomous Community of the Basque Country that shares a good part of its culture with the neighbouring Chartered Community of Navarre.



The symbol of the Basque people is the place where its traditional freedoms were passed into law: Gernika-Lumo, with its **Assembly House**, and the mythical tree under which the Charter was signed. This oak tree was the meeting place of the Councils of the Fiefdom of Bizkaia (Biscay) in the middle ages and today continues to host key events such as the investment of the Lehendakari (President of the Government of the Basque Country). The building, in which the **Assembly Hall** is the outstanding feature, is the traditional seat of the parliament of the province of Bizkaia (Biscay).



QUEJANA

If you are interested in the prehistoric roots of civilisation, then you can't afford to miss the chance to explore the **palaeolithic Ekain and Santimamiñe caves**, study the **flysch in the Basque Coast Geopark** or observe the **dolmens and cromlechs in Aiako Harria, Monte Adarra, Aralar, the Rioja Alavesa or Valdegovia**.

In **Araba/Álava** you will encounter the walled towns of Antoñana, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Peñacerrada, Laguardia and Labraza, which defended the interests of the Kingdom of Navarre. The fortified mansions and towers of Quejana, in the Ayala Valley, Mendoza and Villanañe will take you back to medieval times, as will the old quarters of Salvatierra-Agurain and Artziniega. In the field of ecclesiastical art, the Cathedral of Santa María in the capital of Araba/Álava is still being restored and invites you to don a hard hat to visit the works. You will find the superb polychrome figures that grace the Portal of Santa María del los Reyes in Laguardia deeply interesting.

The cultural and historical heritage of **Bizkaia** is rich and varied. The Archaeological Museum of Bilbao is the ideal place to get a general overview. From there you could start with the island city of Orduña,

the Haizko megalithic itinerary, the Gernika-Lumo Meeting House and the one in Avellaneda. The docks and metalwork museums on the left bank of the Nervion provide insight into the industrial aspect of the heritage. Then you could continue on to the Zenarrutza monastery in Ziortza-Bolibar and the sanctuary of San Miguel de Arretxinaga in Markina-Xemein. Then visit the old quarters of Balmaseda, Durango and Elorrio.

In **Gipuzkoa** you can follow Roman footsteps in the mines of Arditurri or the old port of Irun. If you are an art lover – or devout – the basilicas of St. Ignatius of Loyola and Santa Maria del Coro will attract your attention, as will the modernist Arantzazu Sanctuary in Oñati, where the University is another must.



UNIVERSITY OF OÑATI



MONASTERY OF ZENARRUTZA

## BASQUE COUNTRY, GREEN AND NATURAL

“ Mountains that rise from the sea and fall to form picturesque valleys and plains spread with vineyards... The Basque Country is revealed in all its glory in a landscape full of contrasts, bewitching and full of colour.

”

URDAIBAI  
*a little paradise  
to be enjoyed*

**P**rotected sites, nature reserves, parks and rich ecosystems comprise the diverse scope in which Nature shows herself in this small country.

This is true of **Urdaibai**, declared a biosphere reserve by the UNESCO due to its unique natural and cultural features. Urdaibai is located in a district that includes the **Mundaka ría**, renowned in surfing circles for its left-hand break wave.

The **Torre Madariaga**, headquarters of the Basque Country Biodiversity Centre offers a series of interesting activities for visitors.

The **Urdaibai Bird Center** in Gautegiz-Arteaga, an open window onto the Biosphere Reserve, is also well worth a visit.

The centre is also an observatory, and tracks the more than 200 migratory species that visit or transit the area each year.



TORRE MADARIAGA



**TOP  
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CE**

## Sailing on the Urdaibai Ría

Explore the **Ría de Urdaibai**, one of the most beautiful spots in the Basque Country, accompanied by a guide/story-teller who will draw you into a world of legend. When you go ashore you will enjoy delicious local products accompanied by live traditional Basque music.

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)



OMA FOREST

Follow lunch with a lovely walk along the **Laida beach** the longest in the district with almost a kilometre of fine golden sand. An ideal place to take the children due to its calm, shallow waters. The **Laga beach**, next to **Cape Ogoño**, one of the most beautiful sandy beaches of the Basque Coast, is close by. Its waves attract many surfers and other lovers of water sports such as sailing and sea kayaking. You will also enjoy the sea views from the sanctuary of **San Juan de Gaztelugatxe**. You can also immerse yourself in trails to arrive at the **Oma forest** that painter and sculptor Agustin Ibarrola used as his canvas to create his magical land-art work.



# NATURE Reserves

*beauty in its  
natural state*

2



CRUZ (GORBEIA)

1

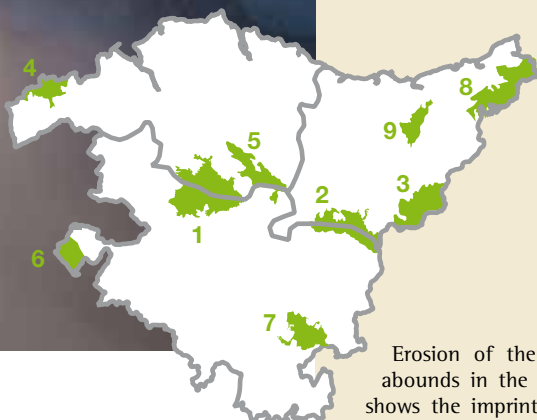
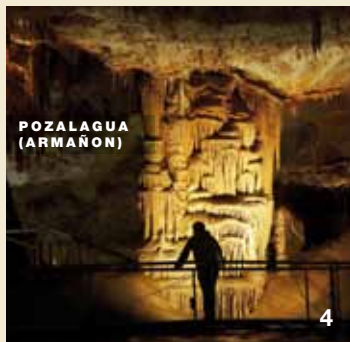
Here, culture, heritage and nature come together to provide a **network of Nature Reserves** spread across the entire territory.

The **Gorbeia Nature Reserve**, near Vitoria-Gasteiz, is the traditional benchmark of Basque mountaineering. On both its Araba/Álava and Bizkaia faces you can enjoy wonders such as the Goiuri waterfall or historical landmarks like the Gorbea Cross that marks the summit. You may prefer to visit the Arantzazu sanctuary or walk the San Adrián mountain pass tunnel in the **Aizkorri-Aratz Nature Reserve** in the heart of Gipuzkoa where you can also visit the Arrikruz caves, the most extensive in Gipuzkoa with 14 km of interconnected galleries.



ARALAR

3



You will find megalithic monuments in the **Aralar Nature Reserve** and in the **Armañon Nature Reserve** caves such as Pozalagua, unique for its eccentric stalactites, await you. Between Bizkaia and Araba/Álava you can visit the **Urkiola Nature Reserve** that contains the sanctuary of San Antonio Abad and San Antonio de Padua, a magical enclave with a popular legend about the stone at its entrance: anyone who turns it around three times will find their love.

Erosion of the limestone that abounds in the Basque Country shows the imprint of time in the **Valderejo Nature Reserve**. A natural route that will leave you speechless. Although if what you want is to immerse yourself in silence, you will make the **Izki nature reserve** your destination. And before leaving the area visit Peñacerrada. It's walled village is a sight to see.

And the **Aiako Harria Nature Reserve** is nestled in the foothills of the Pyrenees only 10 kilometres from the Basque coast. Its three main peaks, of great

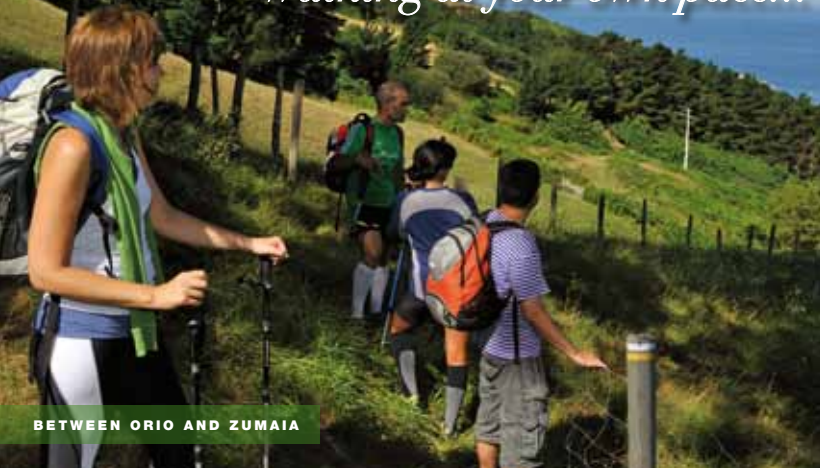


scenic beauty, are known as the "Tres Coronas" (Three Crowns). The **Pagoeta Nature Reserve**, also in Guipuzkoa, is endowed with rich flora concentrated in the Iturraran Botanic Gardens.



# ACTIVE NATURE

*walking at your own pace...*



BETWEEN ORIO AND ZUMAIA

**t**rekking and mountain enthusiasts have a perfect opportunity to enjoy walking in the Basque Country. Seeing the **Cultural Landscape Legacy** of the Basque Country allows you, in a route of just 40 kilometres, to experience a wide variety of different landscapes from ordered vineyards to unspoiled mountains, from the coast to the inland plains.

[www.senderismoeuskadi.net](http://www.senderismoeuskadi.net)

## GR-283

### Idiazabal Cheese Route

It is so named because it immerses you in the world of this delicious cheese, discovering its production sequence by visiting a variety of places. It begins from the **Aralar and Aizkorri-Aratz nature reserves**, where the Latxa breed of sheep (dairy sheep native to the Basque Country) grazes. You will see the dairies



OVEJÁ LATXA



Love of cycling has led to the creation of four **BTT centres** (mountain bike centres) in Basque territory. Busturialdea-Urdaibai in Bizkaia; Izki-Montaña Alavesa and Valderejo-Añana in Araba/Álava and Debabarrena and Tolosaldea in Gipuzkoa. There is a wide choice of activities wherever you happen to be. Just get on your bike and explore the natural beauty you will encounter along the way.

[www.btteuskadi.net](http://www.btteuskadi.net)

where the cheese is made and the markets such as Ordizia where it is sold, finishing in Idiazabal. On the way you will discover all the secrets of Goirri with a magnificent view of Txindoki, the "Basque Matterhorn". A wide range of accommodation will complete your experience at the end of each stage.

[www.rutadelquesoidiazabal.com](http://www.rutadelquesoidiazabal.com)



IZKI

*or if you prefer,  
by bike*

# the Basque Routes to Santiago

## Greenways, growing by leaps and bounds

The Basque Country has many **Greenways**, old railway lines converted into bicycle paths crossing landscapes reserved, until now, for the few.



Choose one or do them all: The Vasco-Navarro, Bidasoa, Montes de Hierro, Atxuri, Urola, Plazaola-Leitzarain, Arrazola, Arditurri, Itsasur and Mutiloa-Ormaiztegi greenways are waiting for you with open arms.

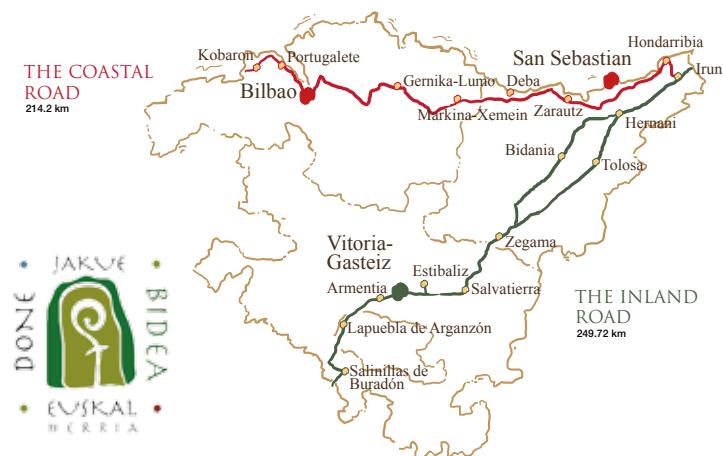
It would be hard to think of anything more attractive for the nature-lover.

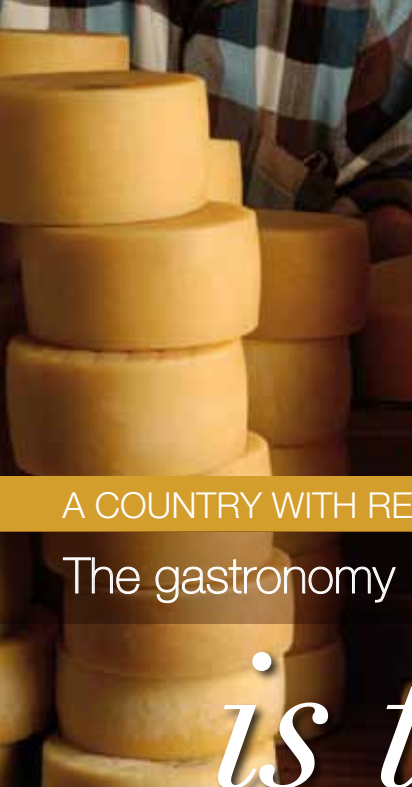
[www.viasverdes.com](http://www.viasverdes.com)

The **Coastal Route**, also known as the **Northern Route**, is one of the oldest routes and was used by pilgrims from the Nordic countries. From Hondarribia to Zarautz you will keep to the highroads overlooking the Cantabrian Sea on a delightful trail, experiencing the lively atmosphere of sea and fishing communities, not forgetting the ever-present world of the farmhouses and their green pastures.

From Markina-Xemein the route becomes easier through the hinterland of Lea-Artibai and Busturialdea to reach the tranquillity of Las Encartaciones and the border with Cantabria.

The **Inland Route** joins the **French Route** and enables the traveller to explore territory with a variety of colours, forms and spaces... from the borders of Gipuzkoa and Araba/Álava. For the Romans this route was the European freeway.

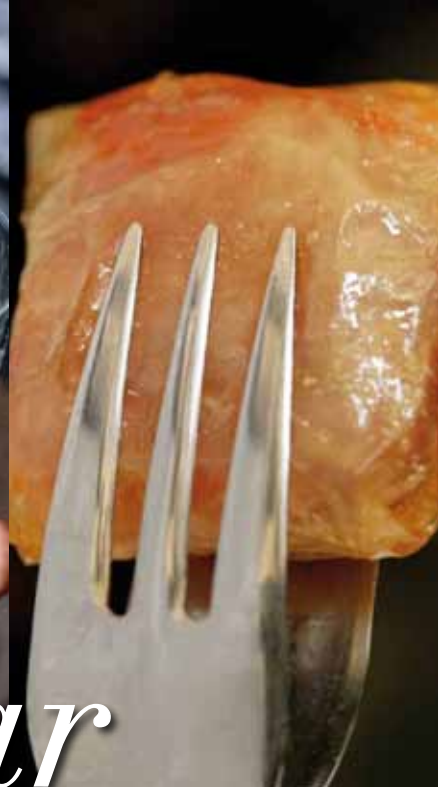




A COUNTRY WITH RESOURCES

The gastronomy

*is the star*



“

*The land and the sea have been generous to the Basques. A thousand years of wisdom and tradition of the men and women who work their wonders in restaurants, gastronomy clubs and kitchens, raises the cuisine and wine of the Basque Country to a divine status...*

”







**b**ack where memory is lost in the mists of time, Basque cuisine already depended on what the land provided...

Basque Country is a land where every fish, meat or garden product has a special character. Cold, wild waters, green, plentiful pasture, strong north winds... they all blend together with the collective know-how to produce something truly unique.

### It all comes from these parts

One of the secrets of this internationally recognised cuisine is undoubtedly the quality and diversity of raw materials that enable the creation of an endless world of wine and food experiences. And there is a strong cast of actors committed to satisfying the most refined palates.



*Experience the identity of a people*

## Euskadi Gastronomika

Euskadi Gastronomika, a Gastronomic Tourism Product Club, is a network of networks based on criteria of demand for and commitment to quality assumed by all actors involved in the process. Therefore it is an unbeatable guarantee for the consumer.

It unites the potential of producers, products and services from every corner of the Basque Country to provide complete, planned and comprehensive gourmet tourism that will meet your every expectation.



# A star-spangled gastronomic firmament



ARZAK



BERASATEGUI



SUBIJANA



ADURIZ



ATXA

**t**hose anonymous men and women who become masters and mistresses of the kitchen, with recipes that contain their own little secrets, is the norm for the Basque Country. When you meet the great figures of Basque cuisine, you will find that they have earned their reputation the hard way. Many stand out on their own and receive the acclaim of gourmet critics. The proof is in their **29 Michelin stars**. Basque cooking is constantly collecting awards. Along with Paris, San Sebastian is the only European city that has 3 restaurants with 3 Michelin stars.

“*In the Basque Country every dish is an artistic creation*”

You will find that every small restaurant offers an attractive culinary panorama. The **erretegiak** (carveries), many of them located in and around the fishing ports, will offer you impressive charcoal-grilled fish or meats. Some of them, like the Elkano restaurant in Getaria or the Asador Etxebarri in Atxondo, shine with the light of a star.

The **sagardotegiak** (cider breweries) are other establishments that offer the same grills with the added delight of their picturesque setting among *kupelas* (barrels). The **bodegas** (wineries) of the Rioja Alavesa offer another fine and differentiated manner of dining. Any of these options will leave you with a delicious after-taste.



Museums, interpretation centres and the university

## Cooking with cap and gown...

There are museums where you can investigate the various domestic and professional culinary fields, such as the **Caserío Igartubeiti** museum in Ezkio-Itsaso, the main activity of which comes in October with the Cider Week. But no matter when you come, the visit will provide a fascinating insight into the Basque caserío (farmstead), its architecture, inhabitants and way of life.

The **Gorrotxategi Museum of Cakes and Pastries** in Tolosa shows the pastry-maker's trade from the 14th to the 19th century.

The **D'elikatuz Food and Gastronomy Interpretation Centre** is located in Ordizia and in Idiazabal you will find the **Idiazabal Cheese Interpretation Centre** which explains the secrets of the D.O. product and offers tasting.

And of course this knowledge flows into the **cooking schools** scattered around the Basque Country. This wide and varied training opportunity is taken every year by hundreds of students. The widely recognised university-level **Basque Culinary Center**, where the country's leading chefs teach, is the outstanding example.

[www.bculinary.com](http://www.bculinary.com)

[www.idiazabalgaztarenmuseoa.com](http://www.idiazabalgaztarenmuseoa.com)

[www.dellikatuz.com](http://www.dellikatuz.com)

[www.gorrotxategi.com](http://www.gorrotxategi.com)

[www.igartubeitibaserrria.eus](http://www.igartubeitibaserrria.eus)



BASQUE CULINARY CENTER

## Wine science

Txakoli and cider also have their school and museums. The **Centro Temático del Vino Villa Lucía** (wine centre) in Laguardia will introduce you to wine-making and includes virtual tasting and games. To find out more about txakoli you might be interested in visiting the **Txakolingunea**, (Txakoli Museum) in Bakio, or the **Mendibile Jauregia** in Leioa, home of the **Bizkaia Txakoli Museum**. Astigarraga is home to **Sagardoetxea**, the **Apple and Cider Interpretation Centre**, an attractive museum area that provides the latest technologies with computer panels, interactive material, photos and games.

[www.sagardoetxea.com](http://www.sagardoetxea.com)

[www.villa-lucia.com](http://www.villa-lucia.com)

[www.bizkaikotxakolina.org](http://www.bizkaikotxakolina.org)

[www.bizkaikoa.bizkaia.net](http://www.bizkaikoa.bizkaia.net)



“  
*Cuisine is present in every expression of Basque life in the shape of well attended celebrations, gastronomic contests or culinary exhibitions*

”



VINTAGE FIESTA

There is a host of gastronomic festivals taking place in every corner of the Basque Country. And they are of every type, from popular contests that everyone can enter to prestigious professional events with long traditions of excellence. This is the case of **San Sebastian Gastronomika** which brings together leading chefs from all over the world. The **Euskalherria Pintxo Championship** rewards the most innovative culinary proposals. The **Debagoiena Gastronomic Workshops** are your chance to get to know the culture, products and gourmets of the district. The **Pintxo de Álava Week** emphasises sophisticated mouthfuls with innovative taste combinations. And the list goes on, an interminable array of contests and events.

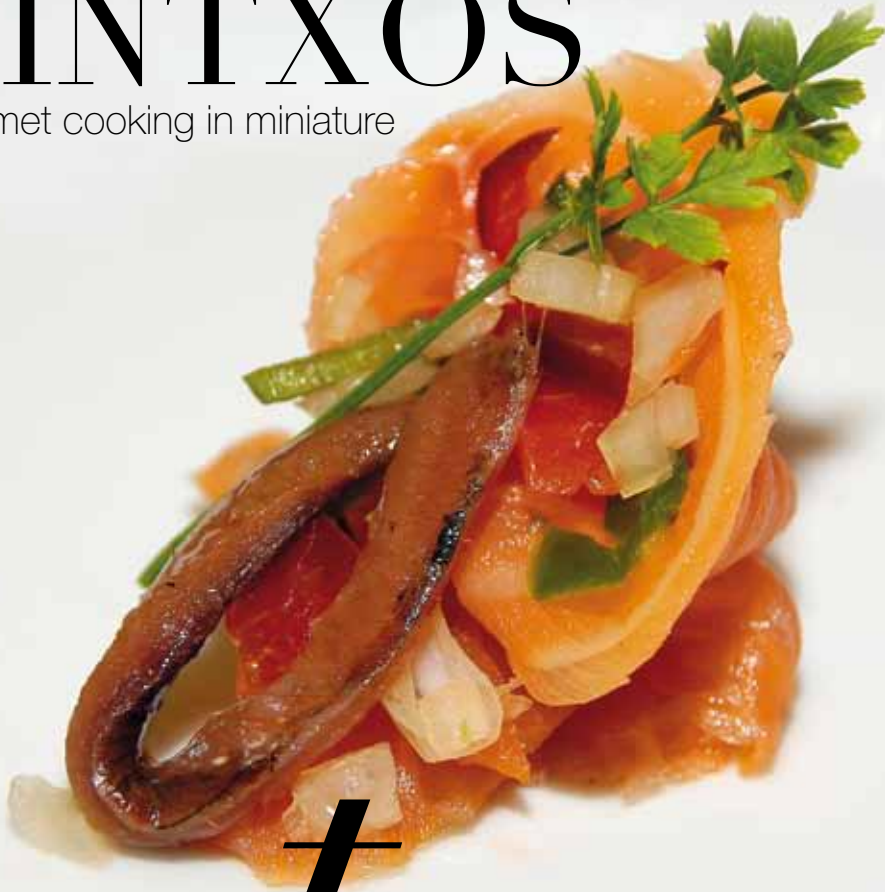
Make sure to ask which ones coincide with your visit because they are sure to delight you.

[www.academiavascadegastronomia.com](http://www.academiavascadegastronomia.com)

NANO-GASTRONOMY

# PINTXOS

gourmet cooking in miniature



*t*

he idea of going from bar to bar trying the delicious mouthfuls that crowd the counters of the establishments originated here, and it is such an attractive scene, that you will find it impossible to resist. They began as unassuming Gildas made with peppers and anchovy and as Péles, or boiled eggs. The idea was to eat something between glasses of wine, but they had actually created a new way of eating: "pintxos" From that simple beginning, today the tiny snacks tempting the palate in bars

and elaborated with great care by their creators are universally admired. This is the sophisticated science of nano-gastronomy.

Wherever you may go, when you see them you will not be able to resist trying some in the bars of the Parte Vieja of San Sebastian, in Bilbao's Casco Viejo, in the Ensanche in Vitoria-Gasteiz, or wherever you are, you can be sure you will get the chance to taste hundreds of combinations... the delicious world of the "pintxo" deserves no less.



[www.vitoria-gasteiz.org](http://www.vitoria-gasteiz.org)  
[www.sansebastianturismo.com](http://www.sansebastianturismo.com)  
[www.bilbaoturismo.net](http://www.bilbaoturismo.net)



**TOP**  
EXPE-  
RIEN-  
CE

## Cookery course in a gastronomic society of San Sebastian

You will have the privilege of visiting a friendly, good-humoured ambience centred on cuisine in a place reserved exclusively for members where you will be made to feel at home. You will learn to make traditional pintxos from the bars and taverns of the city and enjoy a traditional Basque lunch.

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)





# the markets

*...your table is prepared here*

ORDIZIA MARKET

**t**he markets and fairs foster direct contact between producers and clients. In **San Sebastian** La Bretxa, El Antiguo and San Martín are outstanding. In **Ordizia** –on Wednesdays– the benchmark prices for the rest of the territory are set and, in **Tolosa**, Saturday is the ideal day to do the week's shopping.

La Ribera, in **Bilbao**, is the biggest municipal provisions market and the most extensive covered market in Europa. **Gernika-Lumo** welcomes you on the first day of the week throughout the year and, much more crowded, on the first and last Monday of October. The **Orozko market**, held every Saturday of the year, is also outstanding.

In **Vitoria-Gasteiz** the Plaza de Abastos (produce market) is a colourful scene of visiting producers and farmers of the region who exhibit a selection of vegetables, fruits and cheeses outside.

## Seasonal fairs

On various occasions throughout the year, they organize special markets such as those of **Santo Tomás** in the three Basque capitals, the **Salvatierra-Agurain** livestock fair, the potato fair in **Valdegovia-Gaubea**, the **Santiago** market in Vitoria-Gasteiz, the **Pimiento de Gernika** day, the Mercado Agrícola (farmers' market) in **Balmaseda** and the vintage in the **Rioja Alavesa**.

[www.academiavascadegastronomia.com](http://www.academiavascadegastronomia.com)



GERNIKA-LUMO MARKET

# SPRING

**Spring** in the Basque Country the time of the "mamiak" (curds), of the first peas and broad beans, of anchovies and mackerel. The new cider is also at the ideal stage for drinking. Beef and mutton -especially the lamb- offer a tempting reason for a fiesta or banquet. Don't miss it.



A dish for every



# SEASON

# SUMMER

**Summer** brings skipjack and bluefin tuna, sardines from Bizkaia, txipirones (small squid) from San Sebastian and Mutriku, red mullet, "txitxarros" and "txangurros" (crab), sea bass, monkfish...You will enjoy the establishments in ports and coastal towns! The same goes for meats: dine in a carvery to check it out yourself.

Basque market gardeners also join the summer party: red and green peppers, meaty tomatoes, spicy Tolosa peppers, green beans and superb lettuce...



**Autumn** is time for "babarrunak" (kidney beans), truffles and potatoes from Araba/Álava.

The hunting season adds pigeons, partridges, woodcock and wild boar to the table. And be sure not to miss out on the delicious mushrooms and fungi that reach the kitchen - "zizahoris" (*Cantharellus cibarius*), "onttobeltzas" (*Boletus aereus*) and "onttozuris" (*Amanita caesarea*) - and the same goes for the chestnuts, hazelnuts and apples from the caserío. It's vintage time.



# AUTUMN



# WINTER

Perhaps the best time to show off Basque cuisine is **winter**. Edible thistles, beans, cauliflowers and leeks come from the gardens... Meat, bacon and black pudding from the fields and barns. The sea provides exquisite bream, elvers... The table is ready.



## A gourmet goes shopping...

You are going to have a hard time choosing because you will want it all: a voluptuous duck **foie gras**, **flake salt** from Añana, cod from the northern oceans and **extra virgin** oil from the Rioja Alavesa.

The range on offer in Basque delicatessens is endless: spicy **txistorras** (chorizo sausage) local vegetables, tasty preserves, the delicious **Gernika peppers**, **perretxikos** (wild mushrooms) from Araba/Álava, skipjack tuna from Lekeitio, **crianzas** and **reserves** from the **Rioja Alavesa**, **canned fish** from Bermeo and "txakoli".

Sweets like the **cocotes** (iced biscuit) from Markina, **cigarrillos** (almond waffles) and **tejas** (almond biscuits) from Tolosa, **neskitas and vasquitos** (chocolates) from Vitoria-Gasteiz, **ignacios** (almond topped cupcakes) from Azpeitia, **rellenos** and **tostones** (biscuits) from Bergara... One of the most typical is the **basque tart**.





WINE TOURISM

# THE RIOJA ALAVESA

*A voyage through  
the world of wine*

“Devotion to good wine has given rise to an appealing wine tourism offer in the Basque Country, and new resources and proposals are added every day.

*If you are looking for a fun-filled getaway to mix your love of cooking with landscapes and a variety of activities, This is your trip!*

”

*i*n its confined area the **Rioja Alavesa** combines a range of attractions that will enable you to learn all about grapes, vineyards and wineries.

The fame of these wines goes back a long way. The Rioja D.O. is your guarantee of high quality wine, whether you find it in small vineyards or futuristic major wineries. The Tourist Offices in Laguardia, Labastida and Elciego can suggest an entertaining programme of visits suited to the time at your disposal. One option is to visit villages, vineyards and wineries, simply enjoying wine culture. There are also wine-related spas, restaurants renowned throughout the area and beyond... Things are done very well around here.





## Visit a traditional winery

Exploring the magical world of wine is almost a sacred duty when you visit the Rioja Alavesa. You will find out the secrets of a centuries-old wisdom that will help you understand why these wines are so famous.

You will learn to appreciate both the small family winery with its underground cellars ("calados") hidden under a street and the spectacular design of the great wineries. Wine-related architecture is impressive.

In their depths you will learn the traditional production methods, grape-treading, carbonic maceration, the required temperature and humidity conditions...

You can taste and buy wine in the majority of them and some have restaurants that serve typical dishes of the area.



[www.rutadelvinoderiojaalavesa.com](http://www.rutadelvinoderiojaalavesa.com)

# TXAKOLI

a wine that  
ignores borders

Distribution assured. With three separate 'designations of origin' –Getaria, Bizkaia and Araba– "txakoli" is sought-after throughout the sophisticated and innovative international wine markets. Its flavour is distinct from any other. With its appealing acidic character, many say that it complements fish well... try it for yourself.



The warm, humid air from the Bay of Bizkaia drives the cultivation of attractive varieties for production of "txakoli" around the ancient caserios on the coasts of Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia or in the Aiara-Ayala valley in Araba/Álava. Twenty years ago it was included in the designated origin, a distinction that led to a positive growth and evolution of this wine.

## With the breeze from the Cantabrian Sea

The **Getaria, Zarautz, Bakio** (coastal) **Amurrio, Orduña Goierri** (inland) districts offer entertaining tours that combine local culture with gastronomy and wine tasting.

**TOP**  
EXPE-  
RIEN-  
CE

A txakoli  
with  
3 stars



Txakoli, the white wine par excellence of the Basque Country, is an outstanding aspect of the Azurmendi food and wine complex. Located in the beautiful enclave of Larrabetzu, it combines the best Basque cuisine with the oenology and culture of txakoli, all under the watchful eye of **Eneko Atxa**, a chef with 3 Michelin stars.

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)

## CIDER BREWERIES

# In the key of TXOTX!

For centuries, all Basque caserios have had superb apples growing nearby. Ten days after the apples have been picked and stored, the juice "zizarra" is extracted with the help of a cider press and fermented to produce cider "sagardoa".

When you hear someone shout "txotx!" take your glass over to the barrel (kupela) indicated by the person who opens the bung to let the cider spring forth.

The custom of "txotx!" originated from the tasting sessions in which a client would try various barrels before making a purchase. The custom has been adapted for modern times and now the cider breweries of Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia and Araba/Álava open their doors to whoever fancies lunch or dinner there and they now feature firmly on the restaurant circuit.



“

*A trip to a cider brewery should figure on any itinerary to the Basque Country.*

*Traditionally, people eat standing up, helping themselves from the barrel taps and singing*

”

! A GREAT IDEA !

## Dining in a cider house

### *A robust menu*

Cider from the "kupela" (barrel), cod omelette or with peppers, a magnificent T-bone ox steak, cheese, nuts and quince jelly... that's what any Basque cider house will place before you!

The cider season starts on Saint Sebastian day in January and ends in May, but virtually all establishments keep their doors open throughout the year. In many of them, they may well spontaneously burst into an "otxote", a chorus of song that will really liven up the proceedings. Sometimes they also organize entertaining "bertsolaris" contests, spontaneously improvising poetic verses.

[www.sagardoarenlurraldea.com](http://www.sagardoarenlurraldea.com)

## SANCTUARY OF LOIOLA

# The Ignatius Loiola Route

*Following in  
the footprints  
of Saint Ignatius*



LOIOLA SANCTUARY

“

*You will follow the spiritual process of the saint from the house where he was born in Azpeitia (Gipuzkoa) to the Cave of San Ignacio in Manresa (Barcelona) in 1522 while he was still a gentleman*

”

**t**he route runs between massive mountain ranges, green forests and steep slopes, giving you the opportunity to enjoy the diversity and beauty of both the nature reserves and the countryside in general.

Six stages pass through the Basque Country, going through Azpeitia where the majestic **Loiola Sanctuary** is located. This is a monumental complex constructed around the house of the Loiola family where Saint Ignatius was born. From Gipuzkoa enters Araba/Álava, crossing La Llanada, Montaña and the Rioja Alavesa from where it enters Navarre.

The steps in the pilgrimage of this Basque priest are the basis of a tourism development project that opens the gateway to a Basque Country guardian of treasures in the form of monuments such as the sanctuaries of **Loiola**, **La Antigua** and **Arantzazu**.





ARANTZAZU SANCTUARY

Following the paths that lead you into the interior of Gipuzkoa you will arrive at Zumarraga, where the **La Antigua Sanctuary** will be your second stop. And finally, entering the Aizkorri-Aratz nature reserve, don't miss the opportunity to take in Oñati and the Arrikruz caves.

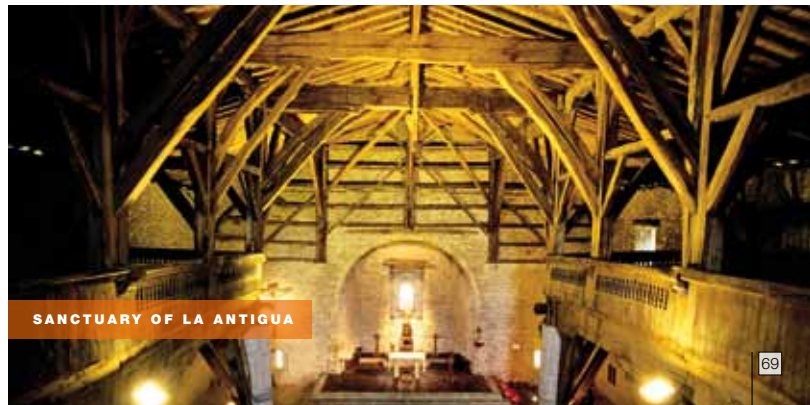
## The Arantzazu Sanctuary, Basque art with capital letters

The **Arantzazu Sanctuary**, Refurbished in the fifties of last century (after suffering three fires), holds some of the best work of our most celebrated artists. The façade by Oteiza, Chillida's doors and Basterretxea's paintings represent the most sincere homage of the people of Gipuzkoa to their patron saint.

Arantzazu is also known as the birthplace of "Euskera" (the Basque language), a unique setting in which the dissemination and teaching of the Basque language will enable you to discover more about the culture of the country.



[www.caminoignaciano.org](http://www.caminoignaciano.org)  
[www.santuariodeloiola.org](http://www.santuariodeloiola.org)  
[www.arantzazu.org](http://www.arantzazu.org)



SANCTUARY OF LA ANTIGUA

FINE ARTS (BILBAO)

We're off to see

# MUSEUMS

# The Basque Country in the **world**

**b**egin by deciding what you prefer and get ready, because the choice of museums in the Basque Country is long and of the highest quality.

In **Bilbao** a superb collection of contemporary art is displayed in the Guggenheim Bilbao, while the holdings of the Bellas Artes Museum includes works from the 13th century to the present. You can also opt for the Archaeological Museum or the Euskal Museoa ethnological museum among others.

The Peace Museum in **Gernika-Lumo** is indispensable, as is the la Ferrería de El Pobal (a smithy) in **Muskiz**, and the Minería Museum (mining museum) in **Gallarta**.



FINE ARTS (VITORIA-GASTEIZ)

The San Telmo Museum in **San Sebastian** shows the development of Basque society through its exhibits. The Aquarium is nothing less than spectacular.

The Photomuseum, in **Zarautz** is a temple for photographers. And if you are a devotee of high fashion the Cristóbal Balenciaga in **Getaria** shows the work of this brilliant designer.

**Vitoria-Gasteiz** boasts the Bellas Artes Museum (fine arts), the "Artium" (the Basque Centre-Museum of Contemporary Art), the natural History Museum and Bibat, home of the Naipes (playing cards) Museum and Archaeology.

The same province is home to the Alfarería Vasca Museum (Basque pottery) in **Ollerias** and the Ethnographic Museum in **Artziniega**.



Key Basque cultural events in the world of music, dance or theatre such as the Vitoria-Gasteiz and San Sebastian International Jazz Festivals know no borders.

In Getxo there are folk, blues and jazz festivals. The Basque Symphony Orchestra's Euskalduna opera season and the BBK Live macro-festival take place in Bilbao.

In San Sebastian you have Zinemaldi, the Film Festival, the Musical Fortnight, the Fantasy and Horror Film Week, the bertsolaris (song improvisers) festivals...

In Araba/Álava the Early Music Week, the Dantzan Maiatza festival (dance), the International Games Festival Magialdia, the Television and Radio Contest and the Azkena Rock Festival stand out...



SAN TELMO MUSEUM (SAN SEBASTIAN)

TOP  
EXPE-  
RIEN-  
CE

## Basque rural sport

In the 17th-century **Mallabia** caserío you can discover the roots of this sport from the lips of a stone-lifting champion and, if you are up for it, try your hand with stones suitable for your capability. You will gain insight into life in the caserío, its relationship with rural sport, and attend a benchmark competition. An aperitif with pintxos and local cider and a friendly chat with the family will enable you to approach the most authentic aspects of Basque culture.

[www.viajesporeuskadi.es](http://www.viajesporeuskadi.es)



HARRIJASOTZAILE



ALBOKA

# Traditions

## WELL conserved

*i*f you have never visited the Basque Country before, you will probably be curious about a lively dance that opens many celebrations: the "auresku", a welcoming dance of full of energy in which the "dantzari" (*dancers*), show astounding flexibility. This is only one of the manifestations of a rich heritage which, in addition to folklore, also includes legends, mythology, language, customs, traditions, rural sports, history, and all forms of art.

The has an idiosyncratic nature achieved by the use of traditional instruments such as the "alboka" "made of bulls' horns", "txistu", a type of flute, "trikitixa", a kind of accordion or the "dultzaina" (*oboe*).

### Full of myths and legends

Learn about the fantasy of Basque mythology at first hand, and thrill to the characters that fill the **literature** of a legendary country; you would have the most interesting stroll of your visit if someone could describe the personages: **Mari**, a woman of fire who combs her hair in her cave before crossing the heavens; **Lamiak**, beautiful women with webbed feet who haunt the river banks; **Basajaun**, the lord of the forests with his brutal looks; **Jentilak**, the courteous spirits with their supernatural strength and the **Sorginak**, witches with supernatural powers...



BASQUE DANCING





TRAINERAS



AIZKOLARAK

### Herri Kirolak (rural sports) are a reflection of work in the countryside

Sport is also part of Basque traditions. It is only necessary to see how the people fill the **pelota mano**, **pala** and **cesta punta** courts (played respectively with the hand, a paddle and a basket sling). Bets are placed and the atmosphere at the courts is thrilling.

The "traineras" (regattas) or the championships of "aizkolaris" (axeman), "tronzalaris" (cross-cut saw), "harrijasotzailes" (stone lifters), "sokatira" (tug-o-war), "segalaris" (mowers) or "idi-demak" (draft oxen) take place in many Basque towns and villages.



SOKATIRA

## Basque pelota and the sea

In Bermeo you can experience the world of Basque pelota at an ancient court. A professional pelotari (player) will introduce you to the varieties of the game and you will be invited to practice with two of them. The culinary side will be taken care of by an aperitif of local canned products and a glass of txacoli. And the maritime side by a boat trip from **Gatzelugatxe** to **Bermeo**.

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**TOP**  
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[www.euskaditurismo.eus](http://www.euskaditurismo.eus)

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[www.alavaturismo.com](http://www.alavaturismo.com)

## BIZKAIA TOURIST OFFICE

[www.mybilbaobizkaia.net](http://www.mybilbaobizkaia.net)

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[www.gipuzkoaturismo.net](http://www.gipuzkoaturismo.net)

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944 034 930 · [www.alaratur.org](http://www.alaratur.org)

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946 177 201 · www.mundakaturismo.com

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**MUXIKA**  
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**ONDARROA**  
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**ATAUN**  
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**CAMINO DE SANTIAGO**  
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www.oriodejakeue.net

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www.btteuskadi.net

**GREENWAYS**  
www.viasverdes.com

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www.aena.es

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Autobuses Urbanos de Vitoria-Gasteiz TUVISA  
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www.euskotren.es

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Aburi Station (EUSKOTREN)  
Calle Aburi 8 · 902 543 210/ 944 019 900  
www.euskotren.es

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www.bilbao.net/bilbobus

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**METRO BILBAO**  
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## Gipuzkoa

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Lurralde Bus (inter-city)  
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www.lurraldebus.net

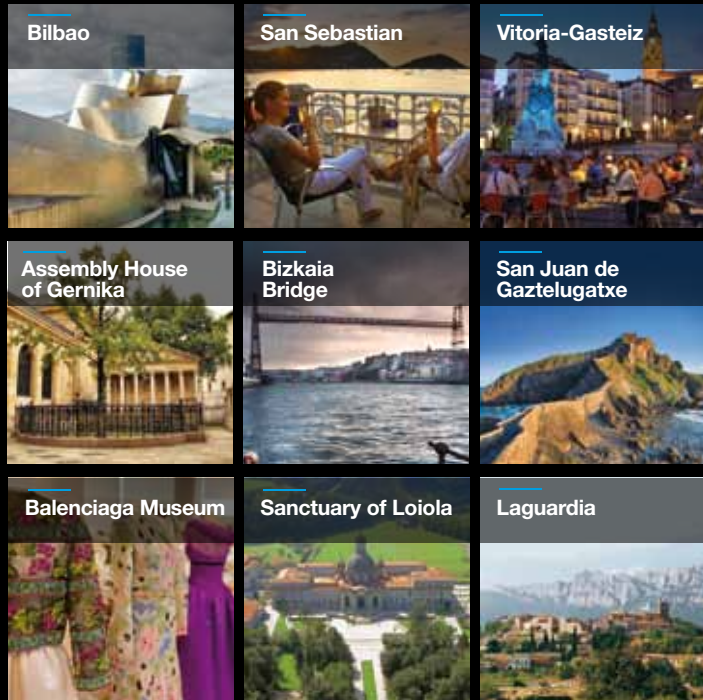
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The  
**10**  
essentials

There are many reasons why Basque Country is an essential destination. You are going to find this out when you get to know its people, its history, the heritage that its cities breathe, and even better when you talk about it over a great meal.

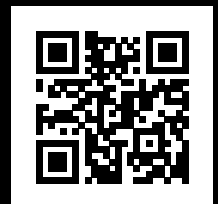


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