The BASQUE COAST

Seafaring people

En route

Activities on land and sea

Basque style sun and beach

BASQUE COUNTRY

EUSKADI
BASQUE COUNTRY

A GREAT PLAN!

There are countless plans that the Basque Country can offer you, your group or your family. They will all provide you with unforgettable experiences that you'll want to tell everyone about on your return. Just look for the ones that are to your taste and enjoy them.

Find them all on our website
tourism.euskadi.eus/en
or scan this QR code

etikoa
Turismo Euskadi

Responsible Tourism

The Code of Ethics of Tourism in the Basque Country aims to establish 8 basic principles, so that all Travel Agencies integrate responsibility and sustainability into their day-to-day practice. The Responsible Tourism Guide contains 10 tips to make the tourist's trip an enriching and sustainable experience. These tips are highlighted throughout this brochure.

Publication: 5th November 2023 • **Print run**: 5.010 copies • **©** Government of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country. Department of Tourism, Commerce and Consumption• **Published by:** Eusko Jaurlaritzaren Argitalpen Zerbitzu Nagusia / Servicio Central de Publicaciones del Gobierno Vasco • **Translation:** On Global • **Author:** Bell Communication • **Texts:** Libe Fdez. Torróntegui and Basquetour-Costa Vasca • **Photos:** Basquetour, Vicente Paredes, Ignacio Zuloaga chart - Gipuzkoa Provincial Council, Javier Carballo, Albaola, Mendi Urruzuno, Roke Photography, Ritxi Goya - Zarautz Turismo, Gorka Zabaleta, Eduardo Vidarte, Bidasoa Activa, Arrauning, Luis Gorricho - Buceo Hondarribia, Txoff buceo, Troka, Oribay Tours, Redymar, Sopela Turismo, Santurtzi Turismo, Debabarrena Turismo, Basque Coast Geopark, Erredehierro, Orio Turismo. • **Printers:** Gráficas Irudi, S.L. • **D.L.:** LG G 736-2023

Partial and/or full copying of the texts, maps and images contained in this publication is prohibited without the prior written consent of the publisher and authors.

The BASQUE COAST

Cover photo:
Basque Coast UNESCO Geopark
(Mutriku, Deba, Zumaia)

6 **Seafaring people**
- The women of the Basque Coast
- Sailors
- The first whalers
- *Arrantzales* (fishermen)

16 **Coastal gastronomy: an ancient heritage**

18 **Basque style sun and beach**

22 **The coast from the sea: nautical activities**
- By boat
- Rowing, diving and others
- Surfing Euskadi

32 **Activities with sea views: exceptional landscapes**
- Cliffs unique in the world
- Trekking and more

38 **Routes on the Basque Coast**
- From Bilbao to San Juan de Gaztelugatxe
- To Lekeitio and Ondarroa by Urdaibai
- From the geopark to Getaria and Zarautz
- From San Sebastián to the 'Côte Basque'

56 **Shopping**

57 **Movie scenes**

58 **Events**

60 **Practical info**

61 **Basque Coast museum network**

62 **Basque Coast musts**

> *People with a seafaring soul who tell stories of brave and daring men and women.*

few cultures have had a relationship as special, lasting and committed to the sea as the Basques. Towns with a seafaring soul that tell stories of brave and daring women and men. People with a special way of understanding life who transmit the unmistakable rhythm of living with the sea to everyone who visits the Basque coast.

That's why we suggest ideas and reveal the secret passwords of each place in the following pages so you can enjoy *genuine* experiences.

The best of your Basque Coast visit begins here, after these words.

Ongi etorri!

LEKEITIO

TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

Seafaring People

The WOMEN of the Basque Coast

TEAMWORK: both on land and aboard the boat: while the men *(arrantzales)* put were at sea, women did... everything else. Some mended the nets: others unloaded, transported and sold the fish. And some were even pirates, explorers or shipowners.

SILENT: men figure in history (mainly written by them) as the only actors on maritime voyages. But little is known, for example, that **Catalina de Erauso** of San Sebastián escaped - disguised as a man - from the convent at the age of fifteen, enlisted as a soldier to fight in Chile, reached the rank of ensign and went down in history as the Ensign Nun.

HEROIC: to sell fresh fish in the hinterland they travelled on foot - often barefoot - up to 20 or 30 kilometres (from Santurce to Bilbao...). In the ports of **Ondarroa**, **Bermeo**, **Lekeitio** and **Getaria** you can still see women mending nets and selling fish as of old.

MAGICAL: sirens that dragged the sailors to the bottom of the sea, witches, storms... The fishermen's women sewed religious images to the nets to bring good luck as the Virgin Mary is the patron saint and protector of seafarers. In 1607 María Zozaya and several other women from Rentería were accused by a court of the Inquisition of unleashing a storm that caused the death of 800 men.

INDOMITABLE: the women (known as sirgueras) dragged different types of boats from the shore by means of ropes fastened to the body with a strap to the neck. This practice was maintained in the port of Bilbao until the beginning of the 20th century despite having been denounced since the middle of the previous century.

HOSPITABLE: some of the daughters of those generations of women, who raised families while their husbands worked on the high seas, today welcome tourists to their lodgings or restaurants, teach them the arts of their trades or manage tourist offices to show that we are what we are because we ventured forth.

ENTREPRENEURS: tourist guides who share their history and that of their villages with passion, sailors who embark to show the corners of the coast that saw them grow, women who run a hotel and serve with the same affection they lavish on their own families.

CURIOSITY

Bateleras were owners of small boats or dinghies that provided transport or passage services. In the bay known precisely by that name, **Pasaia (Pasajes)**, these boatwomen established a monopoly over the transport of passengers (preachers, naval officers, sailors, members of the royal family, visitors, etc.) and goods between either side of the fjord and the ships anchored in it.

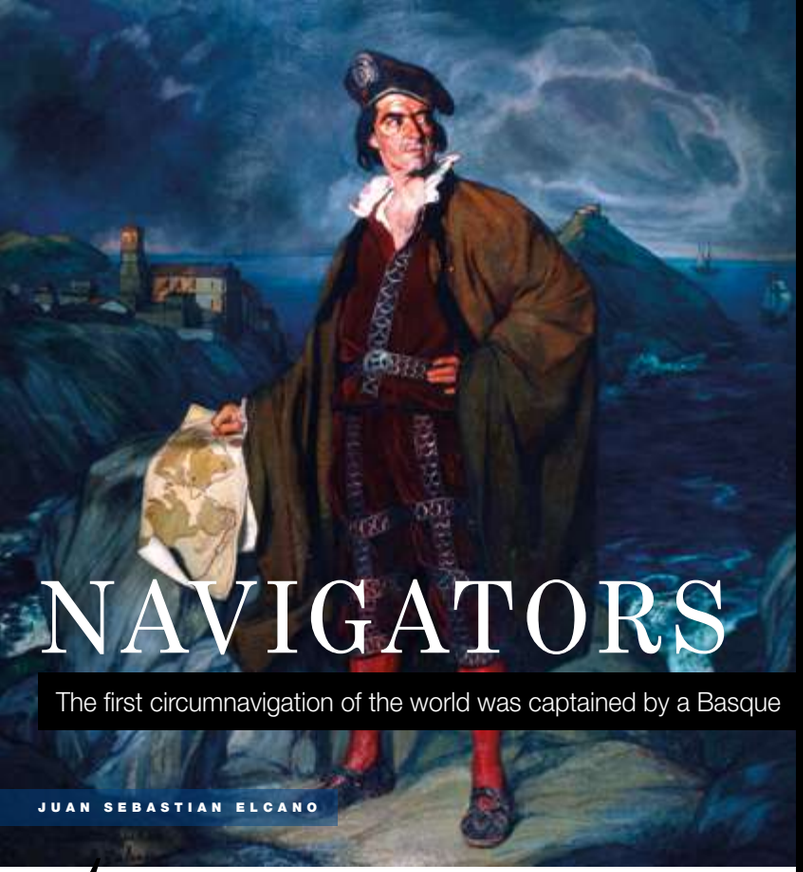
They say that "those women who seemed immune to fear" inspired some parts of the work of the French writer Víctor Hugo.

Today they play a leading role in the festivities of San Juan and the rowers of the **Pasai Donibane** trainera (traditional rowed fishing boat) are called "las bateleras".

A GREAT PLAN!

Maritime experiences

In **Bermeo** and **Getaria** you can visit fish canning factories to learn about, and even take part in, this artisanal activity traditionally monopolised by women. The work was carried out during the fishing season when the men were at sea and above all, in spite of industrialisation of the processes, because the preparation of preserves such as anchovies requires a skilled, delicate touch.



NAVIGATORS

The first circumnavigation of the world was captained by a Basque

JUAN SEBASTIAN ELCANO

There is a certain heroic image concerning Basques and their imprint on distant lands. They embody the persevering and adventurous character forged on the basis of the nautical miles that **Juan Sebastián Elcano**, our most illustrious navigator, travelled to complete the first circumnavigation of the globe and become the precursor of a breed of Basque sailors who have left an indelible imprint on world history: Miguel López de Legazpi and Andrés Urdaneta, who sailed so far that they could have gone around the world three times and conquered the Philippines; Domingo de Bonachea, who captained scientific expeditions to Tahiti and Cosme Damian de Churruca, who mapped the coasts of the Caribbean.

In 1522, after three years of an infernal voyage, Elcano managed to conclude the expedition - originally led by Magellan - to the Spice Islands. In command of the remaining carrack (nao), he became the first man to sail around the world. The voyage demonstrated the marine continuity of the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. Only 18 of the 234 sailors who left Spain returned, and 4 of them were Basques. Of the initial 5 ships only one survived, the nao Vitoria, which was also of Basque origin: built for a shipowner from Ondarroa, it was commandeered by Charles V for the risky expedition.

Getaria, his hometown, enacts the arrival of Elcano every four years. The 500th anniversary of this world-changing event was commemorated in 2022.

Monuments to illustrious sailors in their native towns

MUTRIKU

There is a statue of Cosme Damián Churruca, sailor, cartographer and hero of the battle of Trafalgar, in the square of the same name and his dwelling, the Arrietakua manor house, still exists today. There is a large coat of arms, split into two parts, on the façade adorned with various kinds navigation gear.

GETARIA

A sculpture-lookout rises on a bulwark of the old wall, which acts as a plinth. The monument is crowned by a winged victory in the manner of a ship's figurehead. In the lower part a bas-relief represents Juan Sebastián Elcano. Inside the building an inscription recalls the names of the rest of the crew members who, along with Elcano, survived the voyage. The town boasts two other statues of Elcano.

MUTRIKU

GETARIA

A GREAT PLAN!

Fish grills on the street

Nowadays it is difficult to conceive a visit to Getaria or Orio without trying **the best grilled fish in the world**, cooked on grills that originate in those used by ships' crews to prepare their meals on board ship or in the street itself. They were so valuable that even Elcano left two of them as legacies in his last will and testament.

The first whalers

9 CLUES TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THEM

One of the most fascinating stories about Basques and the sea concerns their adventurous nature and whale hunting. They were the pioneers of an occupation that would last for centuries and leave a powerful cultural legacy. Hoist the sails! We are off to the 15th century... on an expedition:

1 PIONEERS. Before Moby Dick. The Basque maritime industry was at its peak and its meat and oil were already a major source of wealth at a time when English or Danish whalers were venturing on their first whaling voyages.

2 NEW MARKETS. Whales are stranded on our shores from time to time and we learn to value their contributions to our diet. Moreover, our land is wet and unsuitable for growing cereals... but our forests are luxuriant and good shipbuilding wood abounds... This would more or less be the way the Basques developed their commitment to the whaling trade.

3 EVERYTHING BUT THE SPOUT OF THE WHALE. The meat was exported to France (the tongue was considered a true delicacy); the oil was used for lighting, cosmetics and medicines; the bones were used in furniture and for construction. The baleen were used in corsetry and even the spermaceti had its uses! It was coveted for making ointments.

4 LOOKOUTS. The whalers put to sea grasping their harpoons at the cry from the watch on a high lookout. Speed was of the essence because the boat that arrived alongside the whale first would have certain privileges.

The lookouts in San Antón in **Getaria**, Mount Ulía in **San Sebastián, Bermeo, Mundaka and Elantxobe** are easily accessible from the town centres. Cabo Ogoño above **Elantxobe**, Santa Cruz in **Zarautz**, the Mendata lookout in **Deba**, Cabo Higer in **Hondarribia**, Otoio in **Ispaster** and the **Gorliz** lookout require a longer walk but are really worth the trouble.

5 THIRTEEN OARSMEN AND A HELM. Trainera regattas, one of the most demanding, visually beautiful and vibrant Basque sports, originated in that race to the whale or back to port.

An amazing spectacle of colours and festivity when there is a race and the oarsmen and women compete to win "the flag". The prize is always an embroidered flag. The most coveted is La Concha in **San Sebastián**, a regatta held on the first two Sundays of September since 1879.

At the **Arraunetxe** centre in **Orio** you can even row on a competition boat. Groups can also opt for rowing a trainera in **San Sebastián, Pasaia** and **Lekeitio**.

6 CIDER AND THE SEA. The voyages were long and hard but thanks to their cider - that keeps well in barrels compared to water - the Basque whalers got plenty of vitamin C and no storm could stop them.

Visit **Sagardoetxea**, the Basque cider museum. And if it's the cider season (approximately from January to Easter) you can enjoy the atmosphere of the 'txotx' (the moment when diners leave the tables and approach the newly-opened barrels or kupelas) and the typical fare (t-bone steak) of the cider houses.

7 BEYOND THE SEAS. In Newfoundland (Canada) there are place-names in Basque such as Irutxulo (Three Holes), Baye-Ederra (Beautiful Bay) or Placentia (named after Plentzia, in Bizkaia), reminders of the Basques who fished in those waters.

8 COAT OF ARMS GYMKANA. Notice the number of whales in the coats of arms of Basque coastal towns. Many of them were founded when whaling was at its height. **Zarautz, Hondarribia, Mutriku, Bermeo, Lekeitio...** keep looking!

9 NAO SAN JUAN. Back to the 21st century, the **Factoría Marítima Albaola** shipyard is building a replica of the nao (carrack) San Juan, an emblematic project for UNESCO. The remains of the ocean-going vessel, lost in 1565 (two years after its construction in Pasaia), were found in Red Bay (Canada) 400 years later and have been studied and documented. Albaola is a shipyard/museum that you can visit to learn about how they work with the same materials and methods used by their ancestors while respecting the historical construction process.

This is the Guggenheim of the sea, an indispensable visit.

ARRANTZALES

(fishermen)

Those who grew up away from home battling the ocean waves know that their best reward is waiting after all the hard work. We have always longed to get back home, so being good hosts is in our hearts.

When you visit a seaport you will see fish markets, fishing boats, the hustle and bustle, carts and trucks when the fish is unloaded... activity that marked the rhythm of most coastal towns until very recently. This rhythm is still transmitted to those who visit working ports on the Basque Coast such as **Getaria**, which has the most modern fish market in the country, **Ondarroa**, the main high-seas port of the Bay of Biscay, **Bermeo** with its tuna fleet, **Hondarribia** or **Santurtzi**.

SANTA CATALINA LIGHTHOUSE, LEKEITIO

BERMEO

A GOOD PLAN

- **Seafaring days in Lekeitio, Santurtzi, Pasaia or San Sebastián**, visiting areas linked to fishing activities - boat owners' associations, ships, etc.-, doing "saltwater" activities and rounding out the day with a txakoli and pintxo tasting in the port.
- **Santa Catalina lighthouse** in **Lekeitio**. The only lighthouse that can be visited on the Cantabrian coast, Here Antolin, a seasoned fisherman, will tell you about the operation and importance of these infrastructures and even invite you to take a (virtual) sea voyage. It is also worth taking a trip to other lighthouses on the Basque Coast such as the La Plata lighthouse in **Pasaia,** Cabo Higuer in **Hondarribia**, Matxitxako in **Bermeo** with its bird observatory (the **Gorliz** observatory) or the Galea lighthouse in **Getxo**.
- **MATER museoa**, in Pasaia, is a museum in a traditional fishing boat. People passionate about artisanal and sustainable fishing share their knowledge and stress how important it is for fishing to respect the environment. You can even taste a seafood appetiser on the deck with views of the frenetic activity of the port.
- **The Museo del Pescador** (Fishing Museum) in **Bermeo** is located in the historic **Torre Ercilla**, a national heritage building. Since 1948 it has housed this museum devoted to the world of Basque fishing: the life and work of the fishermen, their customs, trade associations, the vessels and the methods they have employed over the years for fishing and marketing their catch.

- In **Santurtzi** you can visit the tuna boat Agurtza, one of the last traditional wooden fishing boats remaining on our coast, to learn how the fishermen lived on board. The visit will make certain things clear about the character of the Basque people.

COASTAL GASTRONOMY: *an ancient heritage*

GETARIA

- The best **grilled fish** in the world is found on the Basque Coast.

- The Monday visit to the **traditional market of Gernika-Lumo** is a must, as are the market squares: The Bretxa in **San Sebastián**, the Ribera in **Bilbao, Zarautz, Bermeo**...

- 5 delicacies you are sure to find on the menu of the best restaurants: marmitako (tuna stew), txipirones (baby squid) in their own ink and cod al pil-pil (in garlic and pepper sauce) and a la Bizkaina (Biscay style). 'Deconstructed' or not, you have to try them.

- The tables always have a tablecloth. Except in cider houses.

- Culinary societies, or 'txokos', are private meetings where the members gather to cook, eat and spend time with their friends. Enjoying a meal as a guest in a txoko is a true immersion in Basque gastronomic culture.

- The perfect pairing with the fish of the Basque Coast is undoubtedly **txakoli**, the Basque Country's characteristic white wine. The Sosoaga winery in **Lekeitio** conserves a working 18th century winepress, the oldest in the Basque Country. You can visit wineries in **Bakio**, the location of the txakoli interpretation centre. There are also great wineries in **Getaria, Aia, Zarautz, Hondarribia, Muxika**...

- Many coastal towns have a special relationship with certain fish and products and this is reflected in their gastronomic festivals and indispensable dishes: octopus and **Zumaia**, mackerel and **Mutriku**, anchovy and **Ondarroa**, canned products and **Bermeo**, sardines and **Santurtzi**, sea bream and **Orio**, **Pasaia** and cod, tuna and **Hondarribia.**

- **Getaria** and **Pasaia** hold entertaining workshops where you can clean and prepare our own canned anchovies in oil.

CURIOSITY

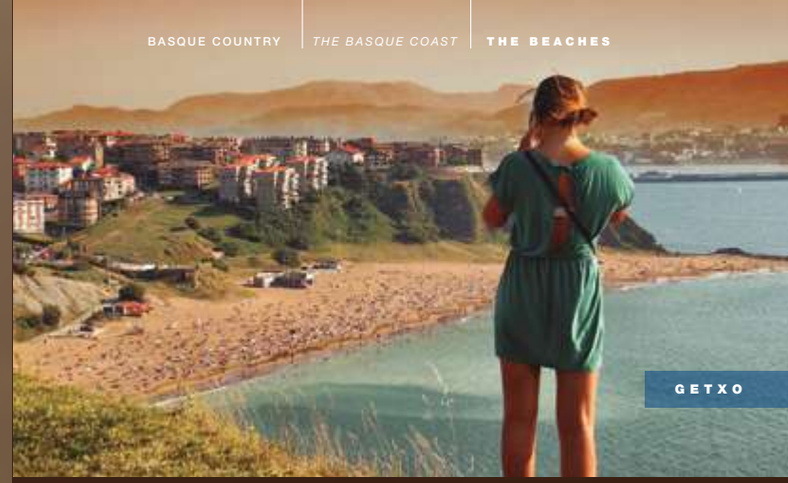
- In the 19th century a Bilbao merchant placed an order for "20 or 22" cod but received 20022 fish by mistake. Shortly after **Bilbao** was besieged by the Carlist troops and the only available food was the merchant's codfish. That's why we have so many recipes for this fish, among which bacalao al pil-pil takes pride of place.

- And the txipirones "a lo Pelayo"? Around the year 1900 there was a restaurant in **Getaria** run by a certain Pelayo Manterola. Given the abundance of baby squid and quite fed up with them, Pelayo and his partner Teresa innovated by sautéeing them on a bed of onion and green peppers.

- The **grills** were installed on the streets of **Getaria** and **Orio** because they were the sailors' way of cooking their fish aboard the boats. As maître d' Aitor Arregui puts it, this is a culinary landscape. It was in **Getaria** that he grilled the first hake nape cut and the first whole flat fish with skin and all. This technique enables the turbot to retain its gelatin moisture and cook to perfection. Quality raw material, Royal Oak charcoal, the exact distance between the embers and the fish and seasoning with pan-fried oil, salt, slight acidity and a magical touch that differentiates the top restaurants from the rest are the secrets of good grilled fish.

Basque style
SUN AND BEACH

ZARAUTZ



GETXO

It was European royalty, aristocracy and bourgeoisie who turned the coast from **Getxo** to **Biarritz** into a tourist destination in the nineteenth century. They chose places like **San Sebastián, Zarautz** or **Lekeitio** for their holdays because of the beauty of the coast and the therapeutic qualities attributed to them: the moderate climate, mild summers and waters rich in iodine and salt and warmer than on the rest of the Cantabrian coast.

The medicine of the times recommended that the baths should be taken "in the morning, on an empty stomach, in odd-numbered series: 3, 5, 7... 3, 5, 7... and with a duration of no more than 3 waves per session."

In 1887 Queen María Cristina had wooden royal sheds built to preserve her privacy on the beach of her favourite city, **San Sebastián**. In 1911 they were replaced by the Casa de Baños (bath house) that still stands to this day on the promenade.

LA CONCHA BAY

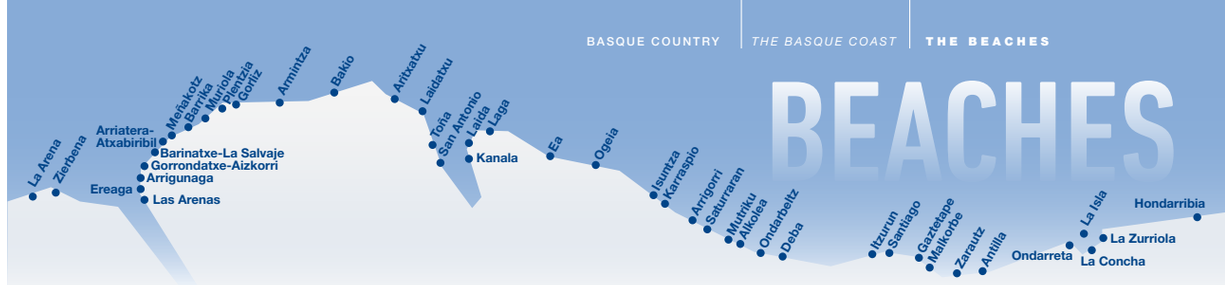
WHAT TO SEE OR DO

- At La Perla, a renovated thalassotherapy centre in **San Sebastián** first opened in 1912, in addition to enjoying its own spa circuit you can go directly to La Concha beach for a swim in the sea before heading back to the jacuzzi. The Hotel Talasoterapia Zelai in **Zumaia** is located right on Itzurun beach, one of the most beautiful on the Basque Coast.

- Sheltered by the port's docks, the seawater pools in **Elantxobe** and **Mutriku** are ideal for a family swim or to do swimming laps at your own pace and are definitely worth a visit.

- **Urban beaches** protected from the roughness of the sea such as La Concha in **San Sebastián** or those at **Gorliz** and **Plentzia** or Isuntza in **Lekeitio**, are ideal for all the family. The beaches of **Hondarribia**, Karraspio in **Mendexa**, Arrigunaga and Ereaga in **Getxo**, La Arena in **Muskiz and Zierbena**, **Ea** beach of Santiago in **Zumaia**, Malkorbe in **Getaria**, **Deba** beach and Arrigorri in **Ondarroa** also fall into this category.

BEACHES



- **Naturist**: the bays of Lapatxa in **Ea**, **Barrika**, Ulía and Igeldo in **San Sebastián**. Or the Zurriola beach in**San Sebastián**, **Zarautz**, Saturraran in **Mutriku**, Muriola **(Barrika)**, Meñakoz **(Barrika-Sopela)**, Aizkorri **(Getxo)** and Barinatxe in **Sopela** and **Getxo**.

Bakio P WC ISO 14001 ISO 9001
BAKIO

Barrika P
BARRIKA

Meñakotz P WC
BARRIKA/SOPELA

Muriola P
BARRIKA

Aritxatxu WC
BERMEO

Deba P WC ISO 14001
DEBA

La Concha P WC EMAS
DONOSTIA/SAN SEBASTIÁN

La Isla WC EMAS
DONOSTIA/SAN SEBASTIÁN

Ondarreta P WC EMAS
DONOSTIA/ SAN SEBASTIÁN

Zurriola P WC EMAS
DONOSTIA/ SAN SEBASTIÁN

Ea P WC
EA

Kanala P WC
GAUTEGIZ - ARTEAGA

Gaztetape P
GETARIA

Malkorbe P WC
GETARIA

Arrigunaga P WC
GETXO

Ereaga P WC
GETXO

Gorrondatxe - Aizkorri P WC
GETXO

Las Arenas P WC
GETXO

Barinatxe - La Salvaje P WC
GETXO – SOPELA

Gorliz P WC
GORLIZ

Hondarribia P WC
HONDARRIBIA

Laga P WC ISO 14001 ISO 9001
IBARRANGELUA

Laida P WC ISO 14001 ISO 9001
IBARRANGELUA

Ogeia P WC ISO 14001 ISO 9001
ISPASTER

Isuntza P WC ISO 14001 ISO 9001
LEKEITIO

Armintza P
LEMOIZ

Karraspio P WC ISO 14001 ISO 9001
MENDEXA

Laidatxu P WC
MUNDAKA P WC ISO 14001 ISO 9001

La Arena
MUSKIZ-ZIERBENA

Alkolea P
MUTRIKU

Ondarbeltz P WC
MUTRIKU

Mutriku P WC
MUTRIKU

Saturraran P WC
MUTRIKU

Arrigorri P WC ISO 14001 ISO 9001
ONDARROA

Antilla P WC
ORIO

Plentzia P WC
PLENTZIA

Arriatera-Atxabiribil P WC
SOPELA

San Antonio P WC
SUKARRIETA

Toña P WC
SUKARRIETA

Zarautz P WC ISO 14001
ZARAUTZ

Zierbena P ISO 14001 ISO 9001
ZIERBENA

Itzurun WC
ZUMAIA

Santiago P WC
ZUMAIA

THE COAST FROM THE SEA: *nautical activities*

The first nautical clubs in the ports of Bilbao, San Sebastián and Hondarribia date from the end of the 19th century. The first surfers appeared on their beaches in the 1950s and were the pioneers in Europe.

Along its 246 km of coastline 40 beaches, 50 surfing waves, 20 marinas and more than 100 maritime tourism companies provide the best nautical plans to round off the perfect visit to the Basque Country.

PLENTZIA BAY AND GORLIZ

BOAT HIRE

You can rent a sailing or motor yacht or even a traditional tuna boat at most marinas along the Basque Coast

If you have a yachtmaster certificate you may rent a bare boat (without a skipper), but there is nothing like sailing with someone with local knowledge, who knows the coast, all its hidden bays and the most interesting ports.

The charter companies also provide full and half-day trips and even shorter excursions. There are outings to learn the basics of manning a sailing boat, to see the coast from the sea and docking in charming towns or round off your day on the Basque coast by watching a sunset from the high seas.

BOAT TRIPS

Between **Getxo**, **Santurtzi** and **Bilbao:** the landscape and architecture of the estuary or ria from a different viewpoint.

In **Plentzia**, take a boat trip and taste wine from... an underwater winery!

Sail from **Bermeo** around Izaro island and see San Juan de Gaztelugatxe from the sea.

Explore the Urdaibai reserve in **Mundaka**, hear the legends of the district and try the local products.

See the **Basque Coast Geopark** from the sea to learn more about the history of the earth as revealed in its amazing rock formations.

Sailing in the bays of **San Sebastián** and **Hondarribia**.

A GREAT PLAN!

WHALE SPOTTING

The Bay of Biscay is considered an exceptional place to see dolphins, pilot whales, beaked whales and even large whales. An unforgettable experience. Scheduled full or half-day excursions with expert guides are available from Bermeo, Getxo, Santurtzi and Pasaia.

REGULAR MARITIME TRANSPORT LINES

Using the normal maritime transport services in rias and bays is an easy fun option ideal for families to access towns and beaches and see the surroundings from a different viewpoint. It can also avoid long detours during trekking or biking routes including the coastal variant of the Camino de Santiago. In the bays of **San Sebastián, Pasaia** and **Hondarribia** and the **Bilbao, Mundaka** and **Zumaia** rias.

ROWING

A GREAT PLAN!

In a canoe, on a *stand-up paddle board*, racing trainera or traditional boat. The range of rowing techniques enables all kinds of people to get some healthy exercise and enjoy the surroundings individually or as a group. Coast, rías and bays to enjoy stroke by stroke.

• Kayaking under the Guggenheim or on the Urdaibai estuary

A basic idea of how to paddle is sufficient to kayak **under the Guggenheim Museum,** in **Gorliz, Urdaibai, Zumaia** or **La Concha Bay** with or without a guide. For competent paddlers there are routes along the coast or advanced training in sea and surf kayaking in **Plentzia, Ibarrangelu** and **Lekeitio**.

• SUP, the in sport

A board, an oar and a modicum of balance. These are the ingredients to enjoy Stand Up Paddle. At **Plentzia, Bakio, Urdaibai, Lekeitio, the Deba estuary** or **Hondarribia**, for example.

• Traditional rowing

You can take part in group rowing in a racing trainera or replicas of historic craft. In addition to the paddling technique, the characteristics of the boat and its history are part of the experience. Where? In three places with strong sports rowing links: **Orio, San Sebastián** and **Pasaia**.

DIVING

The Basque Coast is an exceptional destination for scuba diving. Its more than 200 km of coastline encompasses many different ecosystems - rocky seabeds, sandbanks, cliffs...- that host a wide variety of marine fauna and flora that surprises even experienced divers.

The professional diving centres of the Basque Country will ensure that you enjoy really special dives, provided the sea - often a rough master in these parts - gives its consent. Their passion for the sport and knowledge of the most spectacular reefs with the greatest ecological diversity are your best guarantee.

A GREAT PLAN!

• Baptism

Baptism enables you to discover the underwater world and scuba diving in a quick, safe controlled manner. In **Getxo, Pasaia,** the seawater pools in **Mutriku** or the sandy seabeds of **Hondarribia**, for example. Prerequisites? Being able to swim and wanting to have fun.

• Dives off the coast of Gaztelugatxe or under the Jaizkibel cliffs.

Punta Lucero, Cape Billano, Matxitxako, Izaro, Azpiroz, Gaztelu, Punta Ratón, Los Frailes beach...
These are only a few of the places to which organised diving trips are available.

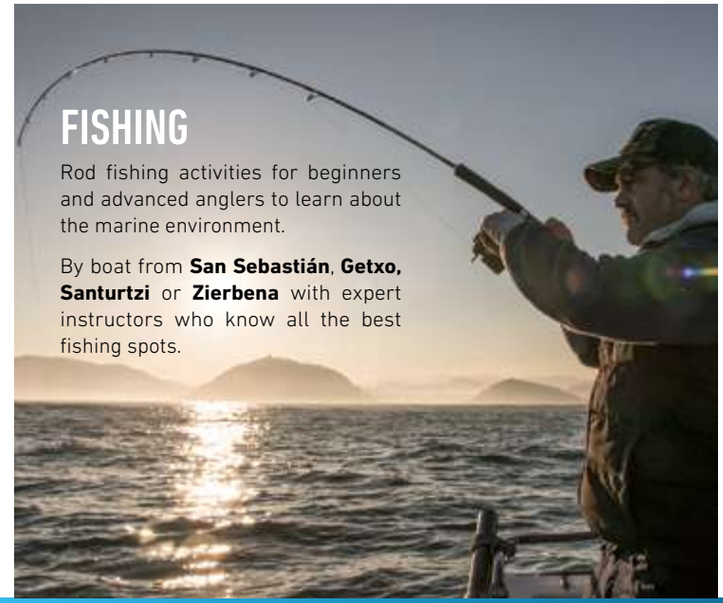
Other plans

COASTEERING

The in thing. A new form of trekking takes place along the shoreline and combines trekking, water jumping, swimming and diving, climbing, rappelling... In **Gorliz**, **Lekeitio** or **Urdaibai** adventure and fun are assured on practically unknown stretches of coast.

FLYBOARD

You will feel like a flying fish when you get a flyboard up and running for the first time. After a few minutes practice the device enables you to defy gravity as you zoom around several metres above the surface. Fun and games guaranteed. In **Gorliz, Hondarribia** and **Zumaia.**



FISHING

Rod fishing activities for beginners and advanced anglers to learn about the marine environment.

By boat from **San Sebastián**, **Getxo, Santurtzi** or **Zierbena** with expert instructors who know all the best fishing spots.

JET SKI EXCURSIONS

Thrills in spectacular natural settings. From **Zumaia**: excursions to admire the *flysch* and the **Geopark** coast and to **Pasaia**. And from **Hondarribia**: to **San Sebastián** by navigating around Mount Jaizkibel or towards **Saint-Jean-de-Luz** and **Biarritz**.

For further information on these activities, consult the tourist information offices in the towns mentioned (Page 62)

SURFING
Basque Country

MUNDAKA

ZARAUTZ

The Basque Country was the first surfing mecca in Spain. Its more than fifty surfing brakewaters and its experienced provision of surfing services ensure that the Basque Coast remains a benchmark among surfing destinations in Europe.

Mundaka is a dream left-hand barrel that ranks among the ten best waves in the world, but it is only one of a varied mix. **Punta Galea**, **Orrua** and **Meñakoz** have waves suitable for all levels, as have **Zarautz**, **Sopela**, **Bakio** and **San Sebastián**. Then there are quieter places with special charm such as **Deba**, **Getaria**, **Laga** or **Zumaia**.

There are also events of interest to everyone all year round that attract large crowds, generate significant economic activity along the entire coast and make the destination an international benchmark.

SAN SEBASTIÁN

Surfing Basque Country is made up of over 100 companies and institutions involved in the sustainable and organised development of surf tourism in the Basque Country. Its offer, based on its unbeatable surfing conditions in combination with other tourist attractions, is supported by the professional expertise of the member companies, the number and variety of the waves and the surfing atmosphere that characterises the entire Basque coast.

All its members from schools with specialised professional teachers to surf-friendly accommodation, hotels, hostels and campsites with services adapted to the surf tourist are committed to surfing and meet the quality and legality standards required to display the Surfing Euskadi seal.

ARRIATERA

A GREAT PLAN!

• Surfing baptisms

After adjusting the wet suit it takes just a couple of hours to get started in the sport, learn the basic movements and try to catch at least one wave. Fun is guaranteed, as is a burning desire to do it again.

• Courses

From La Arena in **Muskiz** at the western limit of the Basque Coast to Zurriola in **San Sebastián,** there is a wide range of activities to learn how to surf at the Basque Country's surfing beaches: getting started, weekend, advanced, intensive courses... The variety of waves and the wide choice of schools ensure that you will find the course with the contents and duration that suits your level... Even for the whole family!

• Watch surfers, beaches, waves and competitions

There's no need to grab a board and take to the water to enjoy surfing. Watching people surf has a certain hypnotic touch. Any day at the beach from one of the impressive lookouts along the coast. Or even on a mythical day of giant waves like those shown on television news and internet videos.

www.surfingeuskadi.eus

ACTIVITIES WITH SEA VIEWS: *exceptional landscapes*

SAKONETA (DEBA)

1 UNESCO Biosphere Reserve: **Urdaibai**.

1 UNESCO Geopark, part of the **Global Geopark Network**.

2 nature reserves: **Aiako Harria and Pagoeta**.

3 biotopes: **Gaztelugatxe, Iñurritza and the Deba-Zumaia coastline**.

13 special reserve areas (ZEC) in the Natura 2000 network.

3 areas of geological interest recognised with the "golden nail" (there are only 61 in the world): the *flysch* in **Zumaia** (2 nails) and the Gorrondatxe cliffs and beach at **Getxo**.

2 special bird protection reserves (ZEPA) and designated wetlands of international importance (RAMSAR): **Urdaibai and Txingudi Bay.**

4 points of interest for ornithological tourism (**Txingudi, Urdaibai, Cape Matxitxako and the port of Bilbao**) and a specialised centre: **Urdaibai Bird Centre**.

PLENTZIA

CLIFFS

UNIQUE IN THE WORLD

ITZURUN BEACH (ZUMAIA)

This is corroborated by the three gold nails, a distinction that marks exceptionally important geological areas (there are only 60 others in the world) and by the declaration of a 13-km stretch of coastline between **Mutriku**, **Deba** and **Zumaia** as a UNESCO Geopark.

They say that the geological formation called ***flysch*** is a book in stone in which the history of the Earth can be read. The geopark provides guided tours by sea to view the cliffs from a boat or walking on trails with spectacular views, all with guides who explain when and why dinosaurs disappeared and help you to discover the enormous variety of species that live there today.

But there are more examples on the Basque Coast: between **Pasaia** and **Hondarribia,** the sea has sculpted sinuous forms, caves and hollows in the multi-coloured walls of the cliffs below Mount **Jaizkibel**. Here, unusual rock formations, some considered the best-preserved in the world, can be found that will certainly reward a visit. The cliffs between **Getxo** and **Barrika** have also been awarded a golden nail. Only a stone's throw from Bilbao you will find an area with walks on the heights, beaches and outdoor bars where you can take in the stunning landscapes and sunsets while sipping a cold drink.

FLYSCH IN SAKONETA (DEBA)

www.geoparkea.eus

www.flyschbizkaia.eus

THE GEOPARQUE COAST

MUSKIZ AND ZIERBENA

TREKKING

• 5 stages of the **Northern Camino de Santiago** from **Hondarribia** to **Muskiz**.

• Excursions to the **Peña de Aia nature reserves** and **Pagoeta**.

• The **Talaia trail** between **Hondarribia** and **Mutriku**.

• The **Marine boulevard** between **Zarautz** and **Getaria**.

• **Geo-routes** in **Sopela, Gorliz, Mutriku, Deba** and **Zumaia.**

• Network of **trails** in the **Urdaibai biosphere reserve**.

• **Trails** among the **Bakio vineyards** or to the **Gorliz lighthouse**.

• **Cliffs** from **Getxo** to **Gorliz**.

• The Itxaslur **greenway** in **Muskiz**.

• The **Lea** river **route**.

BIRD WATCHING

• A specialised centre, the **Urdaibai Bird Centre** in **Gautegiz-Arteaga** in the heart of the biosphere reserve.

• Two observatories in exceptional environments: **Ekoetxe Plaiaundi** in **Irun** and the **Cape Matxitxako** lighthouse in the **San Juan de Gaztelugatxe biotope**.

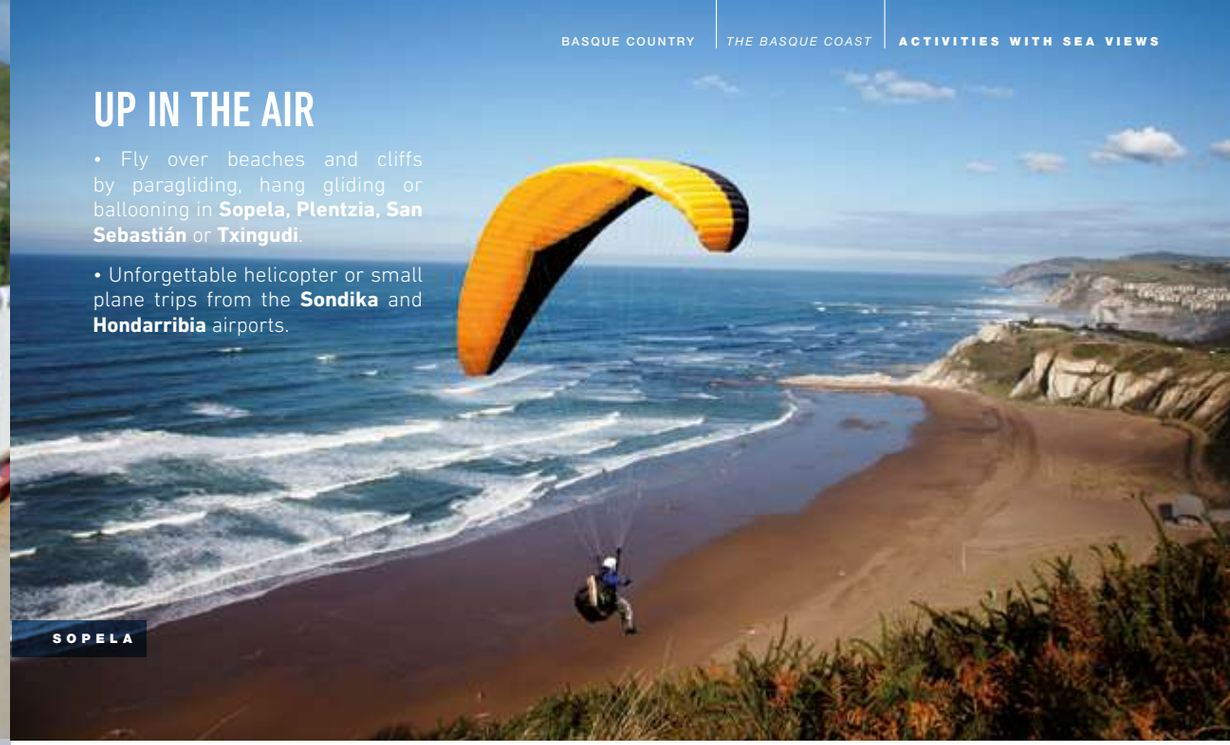
• Other points of ornithological interest: the **Iñurritza** biotope in **Zarautz** and **Mount Serantes** above the port of **Bilbao**.

CAPE MATXITXAKO

UP IN THE AIR

• Fly over beaches and cliffs by paragliding, hang gliding or ballooning in **Sopela, Plentzia, San Sebastián** or **Txingudi**.

• Unforgettable helicopter or small plane trips from the **Sondika** and **Hondarribia** airports.


SOPELA

BY BIKE, HORSE OR 4X4 ...

• Bike routes along the coastal route of the **Camino de Santiago** along paths over the sea and coastal roads. You can also book customised itineraries and forget everything you need - transfers, accommodation, etc - in the hands of specialised companies.

• Horseback riding lessons and excursions in equestrian centres: **Lemoiz, Mutriku, or Irun.**

• Outings on quads and 4x4 vehicles from Bakio to visit **San Juan de Gaztelugatxe** and Urdaibai.

ONDARROA

For further information on these activities, consult the tourist information offices in the towns mentioned (Page 60)

ROUTES
on the Basque Coast

ELANTXOBE

From BILBAO *to* SAN JUAN DE GAZTELUGATXE

MUSKIZ AND ZIERBENA

From the **La Arena** beach you can take the **Itsaslur greenway** (2 to 5 km), a spectacular track on the old mining railway runs along the coastline suitable for walking or biking. Don't miss the seafood in **Zierbena**.

SANTURTZI

Trekking and mountain bike fans will love the routes to **Mount Serantes** with its spectacular views of the **ría mouth and the port of Bilbao**. The best part comes after the descent: the famous sardines of **Santurtzi**.

Distance between Bilbao and San Juan de Gaztelugatxe by the coast road: 73 km.

PORTUGALETE

Walk along the banks of the ria with views of the **Bizkaia Bridge** and the **Torre Salazar** in the old quarter where Lope de Salazar was poisoned along with his daughter... after being held prisoner by his own son for many years!

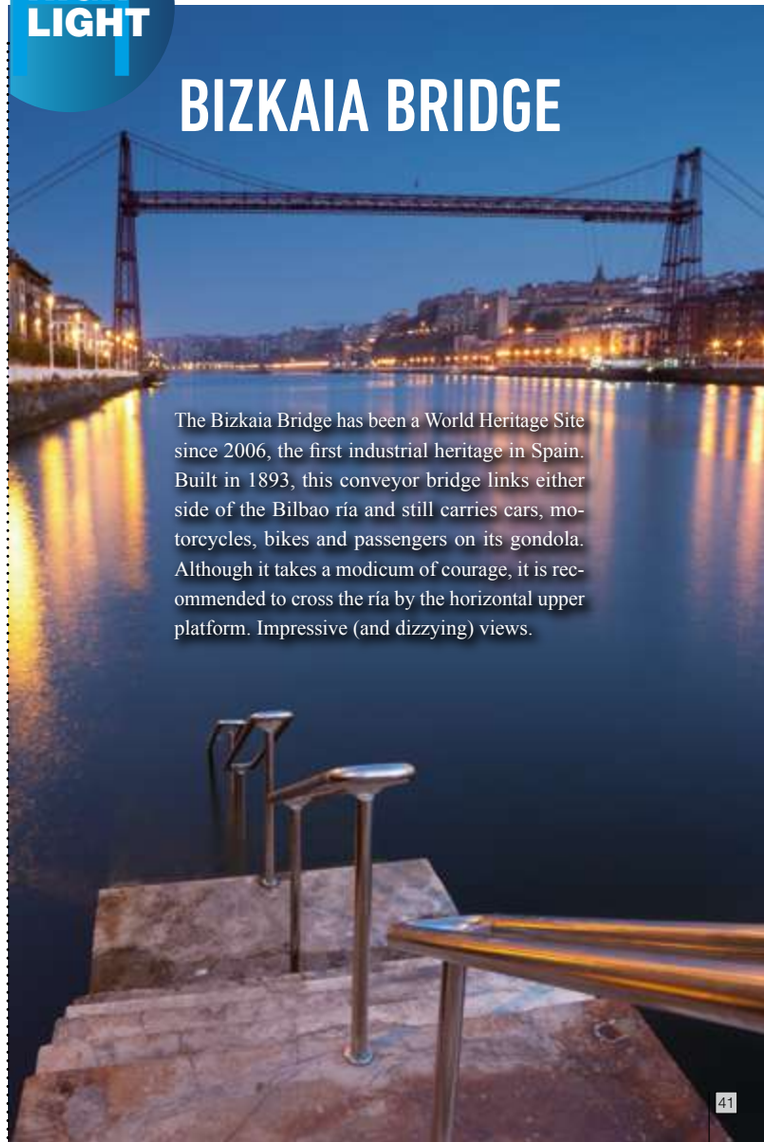
GETXO

After crossing the ría by the **Bizkaia Bridge**, take a stroll along the sea front flanked by neo-Basque and colonial style mansions and villas as far as the **marina** with its wide range of nautical activities, restaurants and even an aquarium.

A visit to the **Old Port of Algorta** is a must, to stroll among whitewashed fishermen's houses and have an aperitif in its square or on the stairs.

HIGH LIGHT

BIZKAIA BRIDGE



The Bizkaia Bridge has been a World Heritage Site since 2006, the first industrial heritage in Spain. Built in 1893, this conveyor bridge links either side of the Bilbao ría and still carries cars, motorcycles, bikes and passengers on its gondola. Although it takes a modicum of courage, it is recommended to cross the ría by the horizontal upper platform. Impressive (and dizzying) views.

From

BILBAO *to*

SAN JUAN DE GAZTELUGATXE

SOPELA AND BARRIKA

Lively and surfing beaches, outdoor cafes and walks on the cliffs that reach **Getxo** and **Plentzia**.

PLENTZIA BAY AND GORLIZ

Ría, protected bay and wide sandy beaches, a perfect environment for water sports from kayaking to the hilarious *coasteering*. There are also trekking trails - the one to the **Gorliz** lighthouse is especially recommended - the old quarter of **Plentzia** and even an underwater winery.
A few kilometres away you can visit the fishing district of **Armintza**: a small hidden gem.

BAKIO

Wineries and the Txakoli museum and one of the longest beaches on the coast, ideal for surfing even for beginners.

To end this tour, now in the **Bermeo** district, take the most essential visit on the Basque Coast and one of the most emblematic of the entire peninsula: **San Juan de Gaztelugatxe** -with its small island, 241 stairs, 3 bell peals and 1 wish. The best time is at sunset. Or by boat from Bermeo.

THE *whole family*

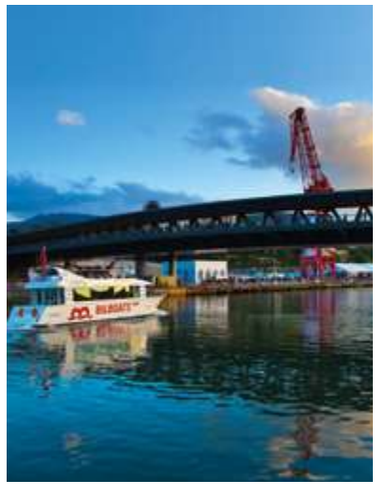
• **El Pobal ironworks** in **Muskiz**. An exhibition of the most important components of the manufacturing process of an ironworks, it also includes a visit to the ironworks building, flour mill and manor house. Live demonstrations every weekend and on holidays.

• The **Getxo Aquarium** on the marina faithfully reproduces marine environments in which a wide variety of fish, corals, anemones, marine algae, invertebrates and crustaceans coexist.

IN CASE *it rains*

• **Maritime Museum** (former Fishermen's Association) and the **Agurtza**, a boat in open to the public in **Santurtzi**, or **Rialia**, **Portugalete**'s industrial museum, are good options for exploring the close links of the Basque Coast with the sea and iron.

BILBAO *from the Ría*



A boat trip on the river from **Santurce to Bilbao** or vice versa to discover the new architecture that occupies land once devoted to shipyards and docks. Or take a marine transport service to visit **Santurtzi, Portugalete** or **Getxo** at your own pace.

Remember: the **Euskalduna Concert Hall and Conference Centre** is next to the **Ría de Bilbao Maritime Museum** where you can explore the maritime history of the city and the secrets of its successful urban transformation.

HIGH LIGHT

SAN JUAN DE GAZTELUGATXE

San Juan de Gaztelugatxe is faith, nature and magic. A genuine haven of peace in the midst of the rough sea. It forms part of the history of Bermeo, of the fishermen... and of any traveller: once visited, never forgotten. The bell that today is said to bring good luck once sounded a warning if anyone crossed the threshold or of there was a storm at sea. It has witnessed or consoled countless tragedies, but has also seen the relationship of a people with the sea from the most beautiful viewpoint imaginable.

It is also a protected nature reserve due to its marine and terrestrial biodiversity and landscape value.

To LEKEITIO AND ONDARROA *by* URDAIBAI

BERMEO

One of the most emblematic fishing villages on the Basque Coast. Above its lively old port the **Ercilla tower** houses the **Fisherman's Museum**, one of the few museums in the world exclusively devoted to the life and work of fishermen. Buying some preserves is essential.

MUNDAKA

A small, charming fishing village that is a benchmark in the surfing world for its left-hand barrel, one of the top ten waves worldwide. **Izaro Island**, the scene of stories of queens, friars and corsairs, is just off the coast. From **Mundaka** and **Bermeo** there are boat trips to the island and to the inside of the estuary.

Distance by the coast road: 67 km.

IBARRANGELU

On the other side of the ría **Laida beach** provides extraordinary views. Located in a nature reserve, it can be accessed by the river transport service. Another must-see is the **rock of Ogoño** and **Laga beach**, practically unspoilt and boasting perhaps the most crystalline waters in the Basque Country.

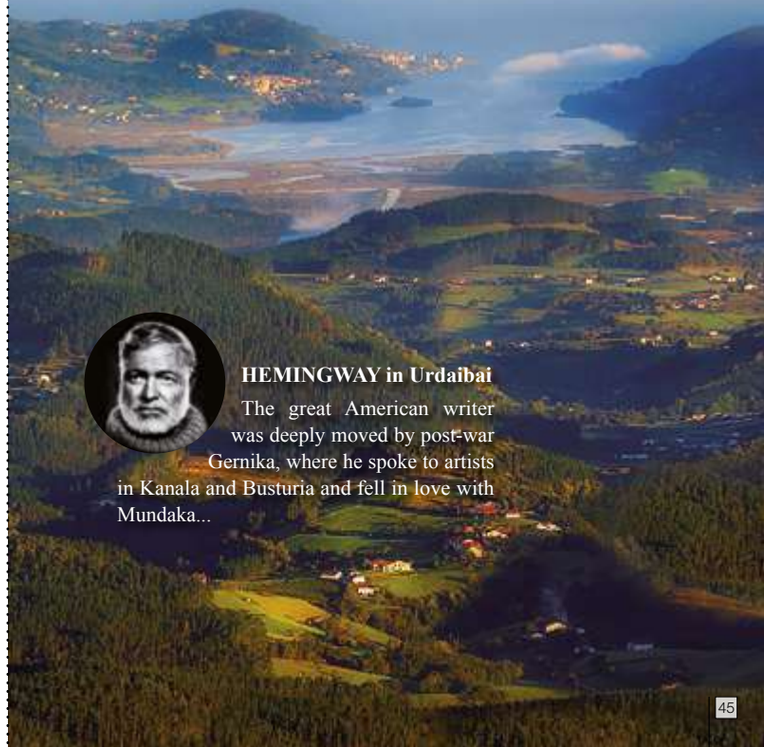
ELANTXOBE

A singular fishing village that grew any way it could at the foot of Ogoño. Space is at such a premium that it has a rotating platform in the main square for the bus to turn around. 'Beautiful villages must have great remedies'.

HIGH LIGHT

URDAIBAI

Urdaibai has the greatest scenic and ecological diversity of the Basque Coast. It was declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1984. The Oka River, which becomes a ría after crossing Gernika and creating spectacular wetlands before emptying into the sea. There are many and varied plans for visitors to enjoy the natural environment: trekking, bird-watching, excursions by boat or SUP, mountain bike routes...



HEMINGWAY in Urdaibai

The great American writer was deeply moved by post-war Gernika, where he spoke to artists in Kanala and Busturia and fell in love with Mundaka...

To LEKEITIO AND ONDARROA *by* URDAIBAI

EA

A small, narrow town that hugs its estuary until it opens to the sea. The wild **Ogeia** beach is only a few kilometres away in **Ispaster**.

LEKEITIO

Maritime heritage and a storied past in a superb natural environment, island included. The panorama provided by the façades of the houses surrounding the port and the nearby **Gothic basilica** that hosts extensive artistic treasures are of exceptional interest. Family beach and nautical activities. And the only lighthouse on the Cantabrian coast that can be visited.

MENDEXA

Karraspio beach is on the right bank of the river Lea where you will also find the singular sixteenth-century **Marierrota tidal mill** and a pleasant walk known as "**the Lea route**".

ONDARROA

A fully active port with the biggest fleet of fishing boats on the Cantabrian coast. Further along you will find the old quarter that contained the original port.

The best ending to the trip is hake 'a la Ondarresa'.

THE *whole family*

• **Ekoetxea Urdaibai**, in **Busturia**, displays the richness of the natural and cultural heritage of the biosphere reserve while fostering knowledge and the appreciation of biodiversity. It will exceed the expectations of the whole family with a broad activity schedule.

IN CASE *it rains*

• **The Basilica de la Asunción de Santa María in Lekeitio has a formidable Spanish-Flemish altarpiece in gilded and polychromed wood, the third largest sculpted gothic altarpiece in Spain. It is open to the public in summer and guided tours are provided with prior booking.**

GERNIKA *and the painted forest of* OMA

GERNIKA-LUMO

Known for the bombing on 26 April 1937, the spirit of Gernika was immortalised in Picasso's masterpiece, but it is also a living monument that evokes the 'traditional freedoms of the Basque people'. Since the fifteenth century a succession of oaths to uphold the law were sworn under the tree next to the **Assembly House**. The **Peace Museum** is very close by.

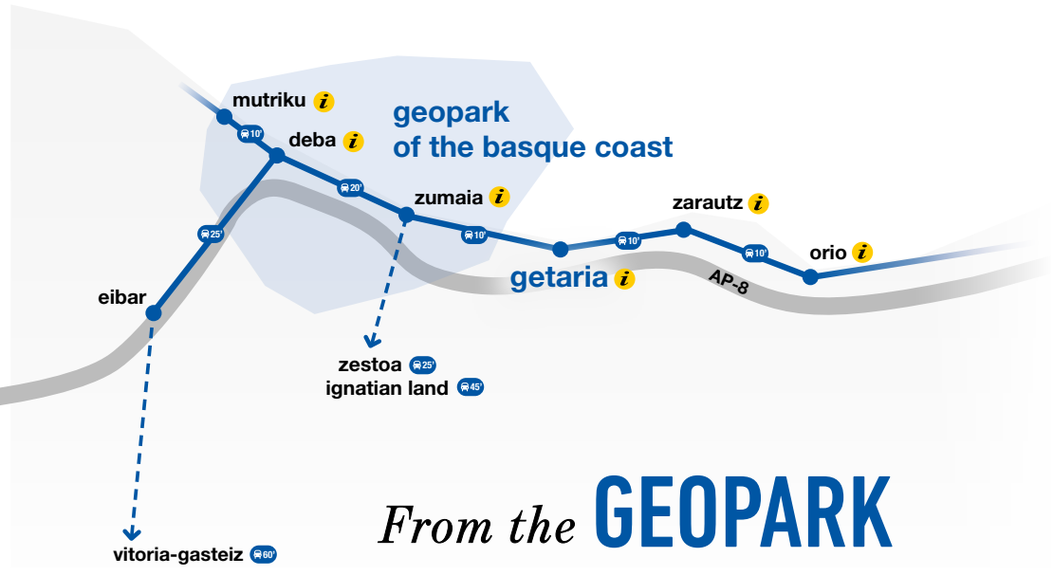
OMA FOREST AND THE SANTIMAMIÑE CAVES

The painter Agustín Ibarrola devised an oasis of joy, nature and colour in a forest in **Kortezubi** near the Santimamiñe cave. This explains the numerous eyes painted on the tree trunks to symbolise the gaze of the first 'artists' who left their works in charcoal on the walls of the cave. The Santimamiñe caves are open to the public, and it is possible to enter the atrium and view a 3D projection of the mural paintings.

HIGH LIGHT

SANTA CATALINA LIGHTHOUSE

The Santa Catalina lighthouse in Lekeitio houses the navigation technology interpretation centre. Here you can learn about maritime technology and methods thanks to the explanations of Antolin, a seasoned local fisherman, accompany him on a virtual sea voyage and get some fantastic views of the coast.



From the GEOPARK *to* GETARIA *and* ZARAUTZ

MUTRIKU

From the top of the town down to the port: a neoclassical church, a historical complex with stately houses (17th-18th century) and a tower house that was the scene of a passionate love story. And a unique collection of fossils at the **Nautilus Geological Interpretation Centre**.

DEBA

The portico with its original medieval polychrome and the cloister of the **Gothic church of Santa María** can be found in the old quarter. The idyllic **Lastur valley** and the white cliffs of **Sakoneta**, one of the most spectacular areas of the coast, are not far from the town.

Distance between Mutriku and Orio by the coast road: 38 km.

ZUMAIA

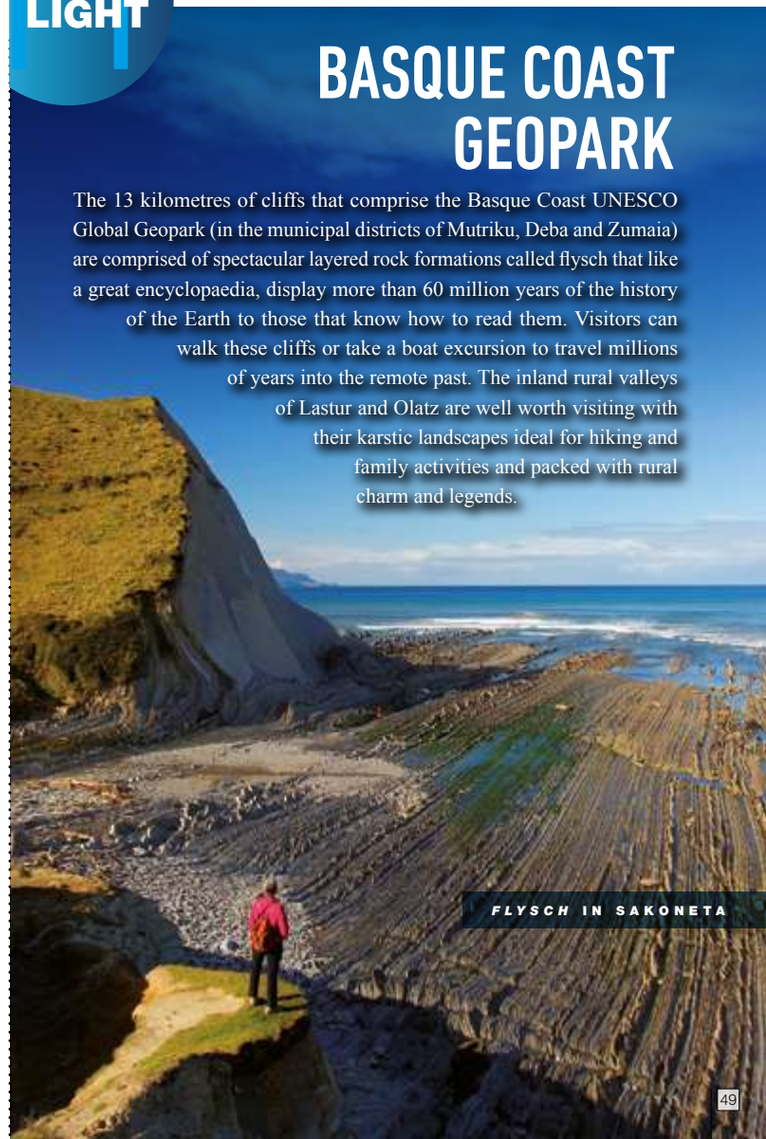
Visit the **Algorri interpretation centre** to learn about the peculiarities of *flysch*, and take a short boat trip to view it from the sea. On land, the **church of San Pedro**, the **Ignacio Zuloaga cultural centre**, the painter's home-studio and the **San Telmo hermitage**. From there, the cliffs and Itzurun beach beckon. Landscapes of a calibre that remains in the mind's eye forever.

The stretch of road between **Zumaia** and **Zarautz** has wonderful views of the sea and txakoli vineyards and makes a great outing by car, motorcycle or caravan (especially for the passengers).

HIGH LIGHT

BASQUE COAST GEOPARK

The 13 kilometres of cliffs that comprise the Basque Coast UNESCO Global Geopark (in the municipal districts of Mutriku, Deba and Zumaia) are comprised of spectacular layered rock formations called flysch that like a great encyclopaedia, display more than 60 million years of the history of the Earth to those that know how to read them. Visitors can walk these cliffs or take a boat excursion to travel millions of years into the remote past. The inland rural valleys of Lastur and Olatz are well worth visiting with their karstic landscapes ideal for hiking and family activities and packed with rural charm and legends.



FLYSCH IN SAKONETA

From the GEOPARK *to* GETARIA *and* ZARAUTZ

GETARIA

Hometown not only of Juan Sebastián Elcano, the famous navigator, but also of international fashion guru Balenciaga. Once in the old quarter and before reaching the port with its charcoal grills you will pass Getaria's main cultural heritage site, the **church of San Salvador** opposite the famous "Getaría mouse" (Monte San Antón) and its heart: the port. Getaria is an authentic culinary landscape.

ZARAUTZ

The longest beach in the Basque Country, with perfect waves for learning to surf. Following the coast you come to the **Iñurritza** dunes and the **old Mollarri loading dock**. In the town centre you will find the **church of Santa María la Real**, stately homes and defensive buildings such as **Luzea tower**. And the **Photomuseum** for cinema and photography lovers.

ORIO

Once a whaling and fishing village now devoted to rowing. The old quarter climbs a steep slope topped by the **church of San Nicolás**, built with a defensive role in mind as if it were just another section of the walls. Enjoy rowing in **Arraunetxea**: Basque rowing, canoeing, SUP, etc.

ZARAUTZ

THE *whole family*

• Surfing in Zarautz
A beginners' surfing course with all the equipment included, specially designed for the whole family to learn how to catch waves together. A weekend to enjoy surfing and the cultural and culinary delights that Zarautz and its surroundings have to offer.

• Traditional games
Discover the old mill in the Lastur Valley (Deba), take part in an entertaining talos (cornflour flatbread) workshop with tasting included and play traditional Basque games with the family: txingas races, sokatira, gathering corncobs, sack races...

IN CASE *it rains*

Gastronomic activities
Zumaia, Getaria, Zarautz and Orio are the ideal places to make plans to discover and enjoy gastronomic products and their production facilities. Anchovy preserve workshops, visits to txakoli wineries, the secrets of a good grilled sea bream or the mixed farming methods that produce gourmet products.

ORIO

Dig out that raincoat from the bottom of the suitcase and take a walk along the cliffs that line the coast. We are all for going for a walk, or a run or whatever, no matter what the weather. And the angrier the sea gets, the more photogenic it becomes.

EKAINBERRI

Visit the **Ekainberri cave** (a replica of the original Ekain cave) In Zestoa, a few kilometres from Zumaia. A magnificent chance for the whole family to learn the keys to interpreting cave paintings. It was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2008 along with 16 other rock art sanctuaries on the Cantabrian coast including **Santimamiñe** and **Altxerri**.

HIGH LIGHT

CRISTÓBAL BALENCIAGA MUSEUM

Located in a spot with magnificent views next to the 19th-century Aldamar Palace (former residence of the Marquesses of Casa Torre, Queen Fabiola of Belgium's grandparents) where the young Balenciaga started out in the fashion world.

This is a marvellous opportunity not only to visit the rooms and temporary exhibitions but also to learn the secrets of the dressmaking workshop and even to make your own garment under the expert eye of a professional designer.

From SAN SEBASTIÁN *to* "LA CÔTE BASQUE"

SAN SEBASTIÁN

Take a stroll through one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Walking, running or cycling on a route that ends at Chillida's **Wind Comb**. Or bordering **Mount Urgull** along **Paseo Nuevo**, stopping off at landmarks such as 'Lo Viejo' and its pintxo bars and churches, the **port**, the **Aquarium** (not to be missed if children are with you) or the **San Telmo Museum**, formerly a 16th-century Dominican convent.

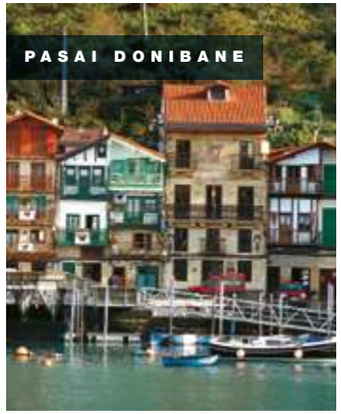
Or take a boat to **Santa Clara Island** or even better, a canoe or SUP board from **La Concha beach**. **Zurriola beach**, on the other hand, is a great place to learn or practice surfing.

Taking the funicular up **Mount Igeldo** is an indispensable plan to get panoramic views over the bay and visit an amusement park that is also a 1980s period piece.

Distance between Donostia / San Sebastián and Hondarribia by the coast road: 24 km.

PASAIA

The **Mater**, a fishing boat converted into a museum for dissemination of artisanal fishing methods and the **Albaola** Sea Factory where a 16th-century whaling carrack is being rebuilt are two must-sees in **Pasai San Pedro**, a few kilometres from San Sebastián.

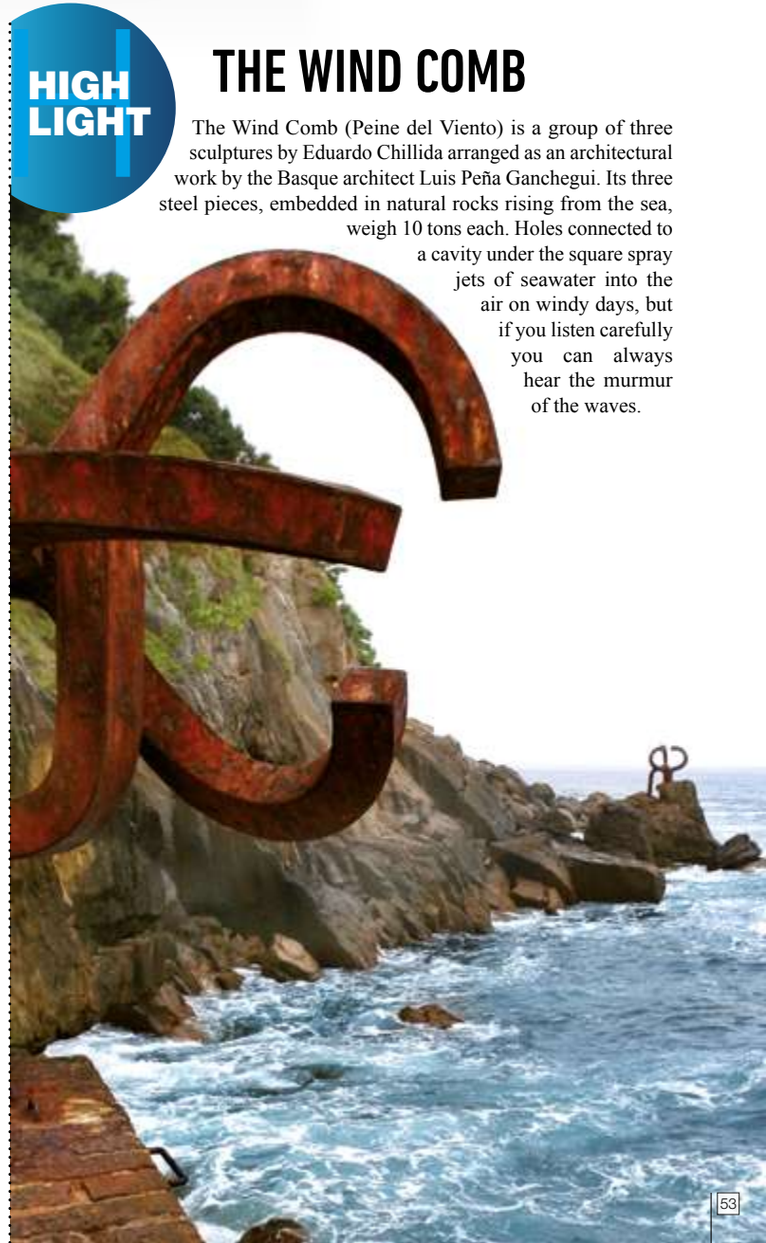


A superb way to get to **Pasai Donibane** is to take the motorboat that departs from **Pasai San Pedro** and is used by the local people and pilgrims to avoid a twelve-kilometre detour around the bay. Pasai Donibane has only one street, a cobbled thoroughfare closed to traffic that runs through several tunnels. Here you can visit the **Víctor Hugo house-museum** that also houses the tourist information office. The novelist spent some time here enthralled by the beauty of the village.

HIGH LIGHT

THE WIND COMB

The Wind Comb (Peine del Viento) is a group of three sculptures by Eduardo Chillida arranged as an architectural work by the Basque architect Luis Peña Ganchegui. Its three steel pieces, embedded in natural rocks rising from the sea, weigh 10 tons each. Holes connected to a cavity under the square spray jets of seawater into the air on windy days, but if you listen carefully you can always hear the murmur of the waves.

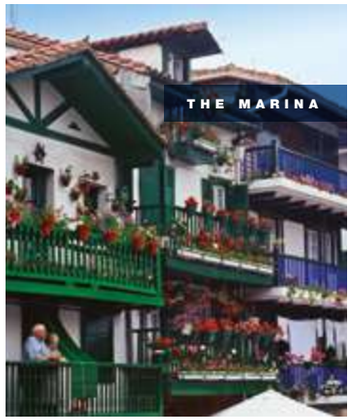


From SAN SEBASTIÁN *to* "LA CÔTE BASQUE"

LEZO

A singular work of art in the church of **Santo Cristo**: a Byzantine image of a beardless Christ famous for working miracles. And lookouts along the coast: the **Jaizkibel Towers**.

The road overlooking the sea across the summit of Mount Jaizkibel is a good optional route to Hondarribia and enables you to visit the **Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe**.



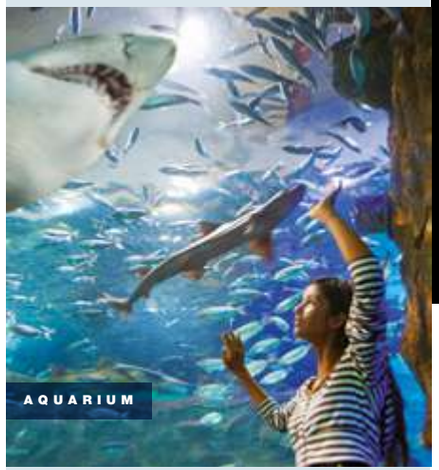
HONDARRIBIA

Two differentiated parts. The medieval town, where the most outstanding features are the **Plaza de Armas** with **Charles V's castle** and the **Gothic church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción**. The other is the **La Marina district**, a bustling area of bars and outdoor cafes with a genuine fishing village atmosphere. And looking towards the bay, a wide beach, the marina and the fishing ports.

THE *whole family*

• **San Sebastián Aquarium**

Its main attraction is the oceanarium, a transparent 360° tunnel, in addition to its 37 aquariums. Although the two bull sharks are the main attraction, more than 5,000 fish live here in addition to the real eleven metre-long skeleton of the second-last whale captured on the Basque Coast.



• **Hunting whales in Albaola**

A special plan: Come to the museum by boat. Children will receive a treasure map that they fill it in as they go through the museum, helped with hints from the cartoon character Txo. A visit made by and for children. You can round it off with a "whaler menu" at the restaurants in the area.

• **Watersports**

In both San Sebastián and Hondarribia you can rent canoes for several people, stand up paddle boards and surfing courses. A couple of quick tips on the basic movements... and fun for the whole family in calm conditions. You can also book guided outings.

IN CASE *it rains*

• **Storms** -beware, caution- storms on the Basque Coast are fantastic to watch, but can be scary.

• **Basque Maritime Museum**

This small centre located in an old building in the port of San Sebastián programmes interesting exhibitions on various aspects of the relationship of the Basque people with the sea.

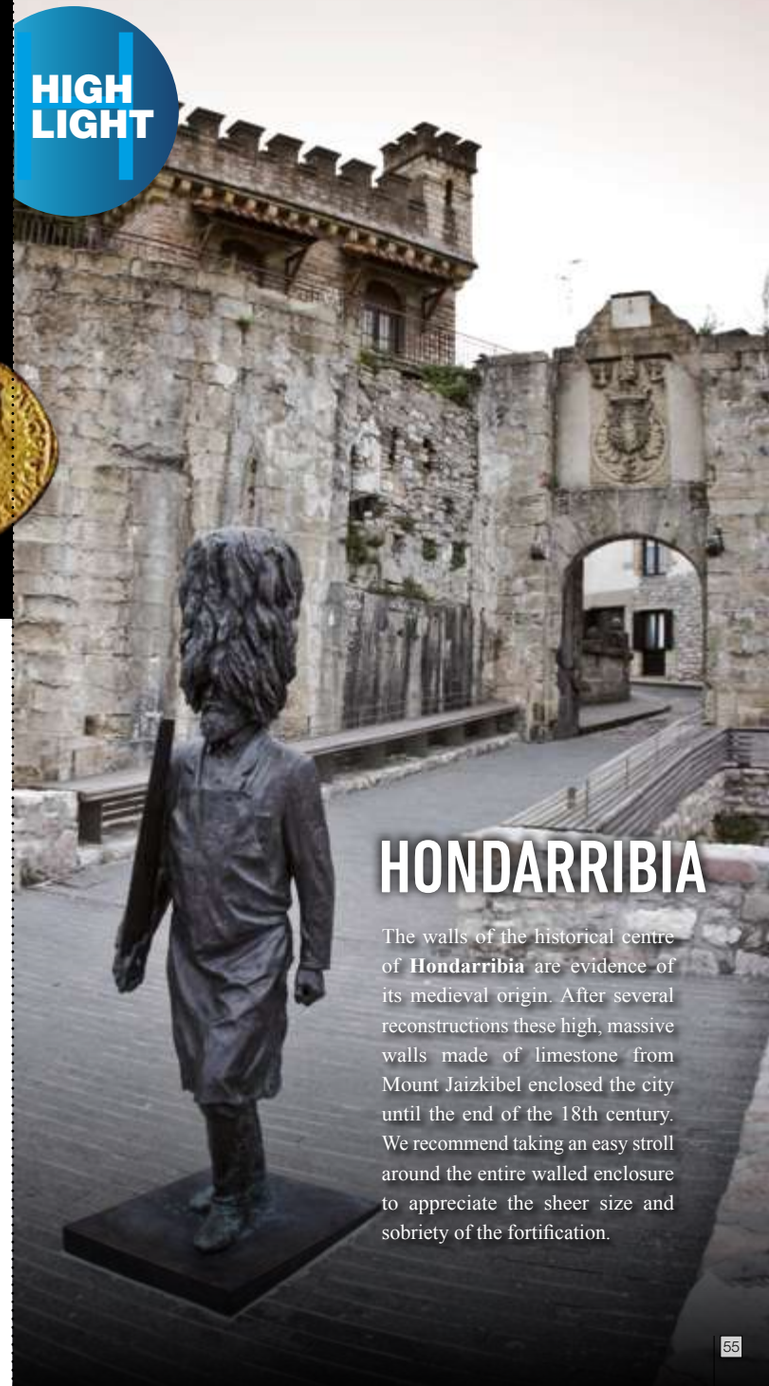
• **In the footsteps of the Romans**

The Oiasso Roman Museum in Irun is devoted to the archaeological remains of the old port of the same name and tells the story of Roman conquest of the Basque Coast.

LA CÔTE BASQUE

La Côte Basque is a series of towns and sandy beaches that were lent a veneer of glamour and French 'charme' by 20th-century royalty and bourgeoisie. Peaceful Guethary, charming **St. Jean de Luz**, ultra-famous **Biarritz** and lively **Bayonne**.

HIGH LIGHT



HONDARRIBIA

The walls of the historical centre of **Hondarribia** are evidence of its medieval origin. After several reconstructions these high, massive walls made of limestone from Mount Jaizkibel enclosed the city until the end of the 18th century. We recommend taking an easy stroll around the entire walled enclosure to appreciate the sheer size and sobriety of the fortification.

SHOPPING

GOURMET PRESERVES

Sustainable fishing, excellent raw material and a long tradition of craftsmanship. Northern albacore (bonito del norte) - the belly is the best part - tuna, fresh and preserved anchovies, sardines... In gourmet shops, especially in Hondarribia, San Sebastián, Getaria, Mutriku, Zumaia, Bermeo and Getxo and also at the canneries themselves such as Maisor in Getaria and Zallo in Bermeo.

TXAKOLI AND CIDER

Txakoli is another absolute must. This white wine that combines especially well with seafood, fish or preserves is not found anywhere else in the world. The denomination of origin Getariako Txakolina is usually ever so slightly sparkling, unlike the other two denominations: Bizkaia and Araba.

Cider was already a widespread drink at the time of the first whaling expeditions since it kept better than water on long sea voyages. Look for the DO Euskal Sagardoa and Eusko Label marks that certify local raw materials and superior quality.

SURF AND MARINE FASHION

There are innumerable specialised stores and several globally famous Basque brands. Surfboards, clothes and all kinds of accessories that can be found in the more surf-oriented towns and cities: Sopela, Bakio, San Sebastián and of course Mundaka and Zarautz.

Fashion brands and new creators have also launched maritime-style product lines.

FOR THE HOME

Ceramics with nautical motifs, linen tablecloths, paintings, photos of spectacular waves, scale models of boats or sun loungers and poufs made with reused boat sails.

FILM SCENES

Game of Thrones

San Juan de Gaztelugatxe is transformed into Dragonstone, the Targaryen castle, in the series. Game of Thrones has used the Basque country throughout its production, setting scenes on Muriola Beach in **Barrika** and Itzurun Beach in **Zumaia** as the Westeros coast.

Approach the Game of Thrones locations from the sea: boat trips from **Bermeo** to San Juan and from **Zumaia** and even by jet ski to Itzurun and in by sea kayak or SUP to Muriola. Arteaga and Butrón castles, the fortress of Charles V and the walls of **Hondarribia** or the defensive tower of Muñatones in **Muskiz** are some of the other fortifications that deserve a film - or at least a visit.

Spanish Affair

The wedding scene in the film takes place in the hermitage of San Telmo, in **Zumaia**, on the flysch cliffs. From there you can walk along the GR GI121 coastal trail and enjoy the unforgettable scenery. Other scenes were filmed in the town's old quarter and in the port of **Getaria**.

events

Traditional Basque devotion to the sea is on display at local holidays like 'los cármenes', 'las madalenas' and 'los san pedros', held in various coastal towns.

The folklore is just as special, including the Kaxarranka dance, held in Lekeitio and la Kutxa, and the Arc Festival in Hondarribia, commemorating the swearing in of the Fishers Guild leadership.

Cuisine also plays a major role at events like the txakoli festival, the anchovy day festival in Ondarroa and Getaria. During local holidays traditional dishes are served up: bream in Orio, mackerel in Mutriku and sardines in Santurtzi.

Cooking, cultural and sports competitions including trainera boat racing, swimming, surfing, and rowing round out the calendar of events each year.

Sailors' Anecdotes

Isla de Cine: In the 70s and 80s it was an important film distributor and producer that brought fame to Izaro Island, an image of which appeared on the films' presentation curtain.

The mouse of Getaria: This is the nickname for the former Island of San Antón due to its shape, the result of erosion by the sea. Located opposite the town of Getaria, it is now connected to land by means of a man-made breakwater.

"Three holes": San Sebastián was formerly known as Hirutxulo because certain very pronounced cavities are visible between Igueldo and Santa Clara; between Santa Clara and Mount Urgull, and between Mount Urgull and Mount Ulia when viewed from the sea.

Rotating platforms: A turntable was installed to enable the bus to turn around so that the public transport could reach the centre of Elantxobe.

Water bicycle: Ramón Barea of San Sebastián created an invention that caused an international sensation in 1893: It was presented in La Concha and shown to the world at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900.

Ice-cold pleasures: The Basque beaches do not empty completely in the coldest months. It is common to see bathers having a dip even when the shore is covered in snow. Bravery and willpower for a healthy practice available to anyone.

Practical INFO

Tourist Information Offices

BAKIO
946 193 395 · www.bakio.org
BERMEO
946 179 154 · www.bizibermeo.eus
BILBAO AIRPORT (LOIU)
944 031 444 · www.bilbaoturismo.net
BILBAO TURISMO
944 795 760 · www.bilbaoturismo.net
DEBA
943 192 452 · www.deba.eus
GERNIKA - LUMO
946 255 892 · www.gernika-lumo.net
GETARIA
943 140 957 · www.getariaturismo.eus
GETXO
944 910 800 · www.getxo.eus/turismo
GORLIZ
946 774 348 · www.gorliz.net
HONDARRIBIA
943 645 458 · www.bidasoaturismo.com
IRUN
943 020 732 · www.bidasoaturismo.com
LEKEITIO
946 844 017 · www.lekeitio.org
MUNDAKA
946 177 201 · www.mundakaturismo.com
MUSKIZ
946 802 976 · www.enkarterri.org
MUTRIKU
943 603 378 · www.mutriku.eus
ONDARROA
946 831 951 · www.ondarroa.eu
ORIO
943 835 565 · www.turismo.orio.eus
PASAIA
943 341 556 · www.oarsoaldeaturismoa.eus
PLENTZIA
946 774 199 · www.plentzia.org
PORTUGALETE
944 729 314 · www.portugalete.com
SAN SEBASTIÁN TURISMO
943 481 166 · www.sansebastianturismoa.com
SANTURTZI
944 839 494 · www.turismo.santurtzi.net
SOPELA
944 065 519 · www.sopelaudala.org
ZARAUTZ
943 830 990 · www.turismozarautz.eus
ZIERBENA
946 801 356 · www.visitenkarterri.com
ZUMAIA
943 143 396 · www.zumaia.eus

Ports with transit services

BERMEO
94 688 023 2 · www.ekpsa.eus
GETARIA
943 89 61 29
GETXO EL ABRA-GETXO MARINA
944 91 23 67 · www.getxokaia.com
GETXO REAL CLUB MARÍTIMO DEL ABRA MARINA
944 63 76 00 · www.rcmarsc.es
HONDARRIBIA
943 64 17 11 · www.ekpsa.eus
MUTRIKU
943 60 33 26 · www.ekpsa.eus
ORIO
943 249 400 · www.ekpsa.eus
PASAIA
650 257 482 · www.pasaiaport.eus
SAN SEBASTIÁN PORT
943 00 04 64 · www.ekpsa.eus
SAN SEBASTIÁN LA CONCHA BAY REAL CLUB NÁUTICO DE SAN SEBASTIÁN (MARINA)
943 42 35 75 · www.rcnss.com
SANTURTZI
94 483 94 94 · turismo.santurtzi.net
ZUMAIA
Telephone: 943 86 09 38
Web: www.marinaurola.com

Basque Coast museum network

www.losmuseosdelacostavasca.eus

ASTIGARRAGA
Sagardoetxea, Cider Museum
BAKIO
Txakolingunea, Txakoli Museum
BERANGO
Steel Belt Memorial Museum
BERMEO
Fisherman's Museum
BILBAO
Itsasmuseum Bilbao
Bizkaia Archaeological Museum
BUSTURIA
Ekoetxea Urdaibai
DONOSTIA / SAN SEBASTIÁN
Maritime Museum
Aquarium
San Telmo Museum
FORUA
Forua Roman settlement
GAUTEGIZ ARTEAGA
Urdaibai Bird Centre
GERNIKA LUMO
Euskal Herria Museum
Gernika Peace Museum
Assembly House
GETARIA
Cristóbal Balenciaga Museum
GETXO
Getxo Aquarium
Bizkaia Bridge
HONDARRIBIA
Arma Plaza cultural and tourist information centre
IRUN
Oiasso Roman Museum
Ekoetxea Txingudi
KORTEZUBI
Santimamiñe Caves
Oma Forest
LEKEITIO
Santa Catalina Lighthouse
MUSKIZ
Muñatones castle
El Pobal ironworks
MUTRIKU
Nautilus, Mutriku
Geological Interpretation Centre
PASAIA
Albaola, The Sea Factory of the Basques
Mater museum ship
Victor Hugo house-museum
PLENTZIA
Plasentia Butrón museum
PORTUGALETE
Rialia, industrial museum
Bizkaia Bridge
SANTURTZI
Santurtzi Itsasoa interpretation centre
Tuna boat Agurtza
ZARAUTZ
Photomuseum
Archaeological heritage exhibition
ZESTOA
Ekainberri
ZUMAIA
Algorri, ZUMAIA natural resources interpretation centre

Free!

THE BASQUE COAST MUSEUM CARD

Get one and enjoy discounts and advantages in 40 heritage centres and sites of the Basque Coast's museum network.

Request and activate it at any of the network's centres.

The 10 musts *of the Basque Coast*

1 Bizkaia Bridge

Also known as the "Hanging Bridge", this World Heritage Site is an architectural jewel that still operates commercially after 125 years of history. It has an impressive panoramic walkway.

2 Plentzia Bay and Gorliz

Places to rest, a medieval village and a great active tourism offer for all ages: trekking paths on cliffs, beaches and even an underwater winery! Also accessible by underground train from Bilbao.

3 San Juan de Gaztelugatxe Chapel

The most emblematic place on the Basque Coast. Number 1 on the list of natural wonders of Spain.
The sailors climbed to the chapel to ask for protection before setting sail, a tradition that is still maintained today. The bell also has its own history...

4 Urdaibai Nature Reserve

Biosphere Reserve since 1984. The area with the greatest landscape and ecological diversity of the Basque Coast and which brings together some of the most visited places in the Basque Country.

5 Santa Catalina Lighthouse

It is one of the coastal "sentinels" with the best views.
It houses an interpretation centre where you can make an exciting (virtual) boat voyage and learn the secrets of navigation.

6 Basque Coast Geopark

From the impressive *flysch* cliffs that can be visited on foot or by boat to the green karst valleys, Mutriku, Deba and Zumaia offer a series of impressive landscapes.

7 Getaria: Elcano and Balenciaga

The beautiful birthplace of Elcano, the first seaman to sail around the world and Balenciaga, the great couturier, is also known for its grilled fish, txakoli and a "mouse"...

8 San Sebastián

A dynamic, cultural, seaside city, in an unparalleled setting, with the most Michelin stars per capita in the world.

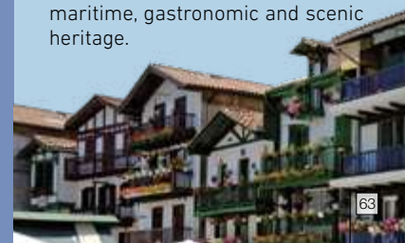
On the other side of the Basque Coast, it shares a great maritime history with Bilbao.

9 Pasaia and Albaola Sea Factory

Albaola, a shipyard converted into a living museum, is building a 16th-century whaling ship in a unique bay where you can also visit a tuna boat-museum and enjoy some of the world's best seafood.

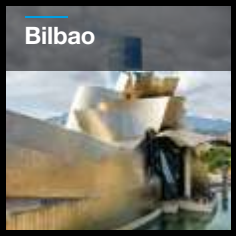
10 Txingudi Bay and Hondarribia

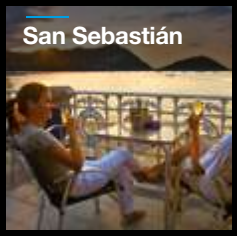
An ornithological paradise and an ideal environment for water sports and activities between Hendaye and Hondarribia, a medieval city that pamperingly preserves its maritime, gastronomic and scenic heritage.

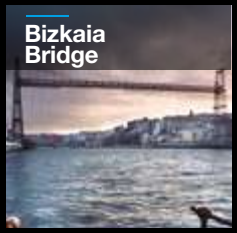


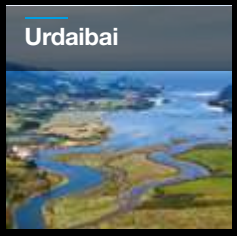
The 10 essentials

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.









tourism.euskadi.eus/en/

EUSKADI
BASQUE COUNTRY

EUSKO JAURLARITZA
GOBIERNO VASCO

BASQUE GOVERNMENT
Ministry of Tourism,
Trade and Consumer Affairs

Eusko Jaurlaritzaren Argitalpen Zerbitzu Nagusia
Servicio Central de Publicaciones del Gobierno Vasco

Printed on paper with FSC certification