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■ PETIT FUTÉ PAYS BASQUE ANGLAIS ■

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Couverture: Boogie boarder surfant dans un tube, Biarritz

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followed by @petitfute.com

Write to the editor: info@petitfute.com

EDITORIAL

Each year we are proud to present, in its new edition, our new recommended addresses for accommodation, gastronomy, cultural and sporting activities that abound both on the coast and in the Basque Country. This is a great reward for us who travel all year round on the roads, from Bayonne to Hendaye, from Mauléon to Espelette, etc., each time with the desire to discover and make known the talents of our craftsmen, this human gift which is not only limited to simple tourist "spots" or postcard clichés. The Basque Country has 158 communes, more than 300,000 inhabitants, and is one of the best culinary destinations in the world, with a plethora of sporting activities: golf, surfing, pelota, rafting, tennis, cycling, hiking, horse riding, etc. A historical-cultural identity and a language, enriched by thousand-year-old traditions and translated into its architecture, its clothing traditions and a unique gastronomy with an infinite variety of land and sea products and local recipes. Thanks to the development of numerous weekly connections, rail (4 hours from Paris), air (an average of 1.5 hours from European capitals), road with the A63 (1.5 hours from Bordeaux) with its 3 lanes, not forgetting BlaBlaCar, BlaBlaBus, FlixBus, etc., with shuttles several times a day from major French cities, but also from Barcelona, the Basque Country has become a "top 3" destination in Europe! Everyone will find something to discover and enjoy in this new 2021 guide, which is now published in an English version.

The Basque Country editorial team



 PRINTED IN FRANCE

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Sare.

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The city of Biarritz / Biarritz.

© saiko3p - stock.adobe.com



DISCOVER THE BASQUE COUNTRY



THE MUST-SEES

Basque Museum of the History of Bayonne

■ MUSÉE BASQUE ET DE L'HISTOIRE DE BAYONNE

Maison Dagourette
37, quai des Corsaires
BAYONNE BAIONA

☎ 05 59 59 08 98

www.musee-basque.com

contact@musee-basque.fr



Tourism and handicap quality labels. Museum of France. Historical monument. Open all year round, Tuesday to Sunday: 10am to 6pm (visit musee-basque.com, pre-booking recommended). Closed on Mondays and public holidays, except on 14 July and 15 August. Free up to 26 years old. Adult: 8 € (reduced 5 €). Group (15 people): 5 €. Free every 1st Sunday of every month. Duration of the visit: 1h30. Guide dogs allowed. Guided tour (French, English, Basque, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian by appointment only). Shop: Bookstore and exclusive creations inspired by the museum's collections and made by local craftsmen: many gift ideas. New: mobile tour application to download from Apple Store or Google Play (free, in 4 languages, and audio guide function). "Hemen sartzen dena, bere etxean da!"

Welcome to this *Museum of France*, which houses the richest collection dedicated to life in the North Basque Country (*Iparralde*). The Dagourette House, a rare and beautiful 17th century port house, classified as a historical monument, has been home to the Basque Museum since it opened in 1924. Following a major renovation in 2001, vast and luminous contemporary spaces have been added to the old building, offering comfort and

fluidity to the visit. Around a large skylight (*Argialde*), twenty or so themed rooms on three levels reveal the many aspects of Basque culture: origins and language, funeral rites, rural life and architecture, domestic life and crafts, maritime and river activities, festivals and games, and regional history. The section devoted to the history of Bayonne evokes Basque and Gascon societies at the confluence of the Nive and Adour rivers and the opening onto the Atlantic Ocean. Each year, a temporary exhibition highlights a theme, an artist, an aspect of art and society in the Basque Country. Just a stone's throw from the Museum, on the heights of the Place Paul Bert, the north wing of the Château-Neuf (a listed 15th century fortress) houses the Museum's Library-Documents Centre, one of the richest structures in the Basque Country, with its 30,000 old and contemporary documents, manuscripts, books, newspapers, magazines, etc.

Reception of the public: limited capacity, in compliance with the sanitary rules* linked to Covid-19. Masks must be worn. Online reservation is mandatory. Practical information is available at: www.musee-basque.com.

Visits: self-guided and guided tours: online reservation. Free audio-guided tour application: *Basque Museum* guide available in French, Basque, Spanish and English on App Store and Google Play to be downloaded before visiting the museum.

Activities: consult the agenda on musee-basque.com (family and young audience routes; Thursday evenings at 6pm: lectures, musical and dance lectures, film screenings, etc.; adult and young audience activities; school activities: contact the mediation service at ☎ 06 25 24 34 24; library-documents centre: by appointment from 9:30am to 12pm and 2pm to 5pm. ☎ 05 59 59 57 50 - 05 59 59 57 54.

Shop: bookshop and exclusive creations.

Biarritz Océan

■ CITÉ DE L'Océan

Avenue de la Plage – La Milady
BIARRITZ/MIARRITZE

☎ 05 59 22 75 40

www.citedelocean.com

contact@biarritzoccean.com



April, May, June, September, October and winter and Christmas holidays, open from 10 am to 7 pm. February, March, November, December from 14h to 19h. Nocturnal until 8 pm in summer. Closed from 4th to 29th January. Information on www.citedelocean.com. Facebook and instagram: @citedelocean. Individual entries: adult: 13 €, reduced rate (student, teenager, job seeker): 11 €, child (6 to 12 years old): 9 €, free – 6 years old, Combined ticket Aquarium + Cité de l'Océan: adult: 24 €, reduced rate (student, teenager, job seeker): 20 €, child (6 to 12 years

Identity Card

- **Population:** about 300 000 inhabitants.
- **Density:** 100 inhabitants/km².
- **Surface area:** 3,000 km².
- **Important cities:** Bayonne, Anglet, Biarritz.
- **Number of communes:** 158.
- **Region:** New Aquitaine. Aquitaine merged on 1 January 2016 with the Poitou-Charentes and Limousin regions.
- **Highest point:** Orhy peak (2,017 meters).
- **Main rivers:** the Adour, the Nive.

Euskal Pass: The best of the Basque Country!

"Euskal Pass, the best of the Basque Country!" offers a 48-hour or 5-day pass to enjoy free entry and visits to some thirty sites and guided tours in the French Basque Country.

► When you buy your Pass at the tourist offices of the Basque Country Tourist Office, addresses which can be found on the website www.euskalpass.com, you will systematically receive a booklet. All the sites included in the Pass are listed with a description and practical information.

► **The Euskal Pass app:** available for download on iOS and Android, it allows you to consult timetables, conditions, locate the sites and monuments included in the Pass, obtain more detailed information on the history of the sites visited, and have a dematerialised Pass in the form of an "embedded" QR code. The application is free and accessible offline.

► **Instructions for use:** the Euskal Pass, developed by the Basque Country Tourist Office, is activated on the first use at one of the sites included, as follows:

- Access to a choice of 3 of the 6 sites listed below: Cité de l'Océan in Biarritz, Villa Arnaga in Cambo-les-Bains, Grottes de Sare, Grotte de La Verna, Bateau Nivelle V in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, Wow Park in Urrugne.
- For all other sites, free access (Castles of Bidache, Mauléon and Urtubie, Bishops' Prison, Basque Museum, Ecomuseum of Pelota, guided tours, etc.)

► **Prices:** Pass 48h (consecutive): adult: 25 €, child (6 to 13 years old): 17 €; Pass 5 days (consecutive): adult: 45 €, child (6 to 13 years old): 30 €

old): 16 €. Guided tours on reservation. Catering on site. Shop. Air conditioning. Free parking nearby.

The Cité de l'Océan lets you discover the ocean in a fun and sensational way, using modern technologies to provide you with new and interactive experiences. Thanks to Virtual Surf, surf the perfect tube and try to take the lead! Embark on an eventful journey aboard the Bathyscaphe, a dynamic 4D cinema. Standing on a dynamic surfboard and equipped with a virtual reality mask, you will find yourself in the shoes of a surfer thanks to Surf Sensation 5D. Virtual Trip 360°: an amazing dive with a virtual reality mask! Go on a 360° immersive dive in the heart of a pack of 700 sharks in French Polynesia, with the animation "700 sharks in the night", a virtual reality documentary that follows the expedition led by Laurent Ballesta, which helps to understand the hunting techniques of one of the largest marine predators. You will also marvel at the beauty of the 40-minute 3D film. Will you dare to push your limits and defy the laws of gravity by riding Seaborg? Equipped with a virtual reality mask, set off on an immersive and eventful journey along the beauty of our Aquitaine coast. *Virtual reality animations age min. 6 years. Animation "Seaborg", min. size 142 cm. New and surprising experiences!*
New: swap your mask and snorkel for a virtual reality mask and dive deep into the deep blue sea. A 12-minute 360° film that immerses you in fascinating species!

■ **AQUARIUM DE BIARRITZ** ★★★★★
Espplanade du Rocher de la Vierge
BIARRITZ/MIARRITZE
☎ 05 59 22 75 40
www.aquariumbiarritz.com
contact@biarritzcocean.com



Open all year round from 9.30am to 7pm. Nocturnal until 10 pm in summer. More information on www.aquariumbiarritz.com.

aquariumbiarritz.com. Facebook and Instagram @aquariumbiarritz. Individual admissions: adult: 15 €, reduced rate (student, teenager, job seeker): 13 €, child (4 to 12 years old): 11 €, free – from 4 years old. Guided tour (by appointment): 65 € extra. Ticketing on line. Combined ticket Aquarium + Cité de l'Océan: adult: 24 €, reduced rate (student, teenager, job seeker): 20 €, child (6 to 12 years old): 16 €. Animations during school holidays included in the entrance ticket. Guided tours on reservation. Tourism Quality Label. Air conditioning. Catering on site. Shop. Opposite the Rocher de la Vierge, the Biarritz Aquarium, in the Art Deco building from the 1930s, invites you to discover around fifty aquariums. It was one of the first oceanographic institutes in France; it was the visionary Marquis Léopold de Folin who came up with the idea at the end of the 19th century. Opened to the public in 1933, then having undergone numerous waves of renovation with a grandiose extension from 3,500 to 7,000 m² in 2011, it offers you an original visit of the seabed. Every year, more than 300,000 visitors marvel at the beauty of the oceans and its inhabitants. The visit begins in front of the Bay of Biscay basins: jellyfish, octopus, seahorses... to discover the species that populate the Atlantic coast. After a dive in the cetacean gallery and the history of fishing in the Basque Country, you enter the turtle cave for a surprising face-to-face with several specimens including Alice the loggerhead turtle. Stop in front of the seal basin, the darlings of the Aquarium! The seals' meal is a highlight of the visit where young and old alike enjoy watching them play and gobble up kilos of mackerel, every day at 10: 30 am and 5 pm. Afterwards, you will find the mangrove swamp and an 11-metre long coral reef. Fish with original colours and improbable shapes twirl before your eyes. Finally, admire the residents of the giant aquarium of 1.5 million litres of water where 7 species of sharks, barracudas, rays and the Napoleon fish live. A breathtaking show!

The eusko: the local currency of the Basque Country

Two currencies circulate in the Basque Country: the Euro of course and the Eusko, a currency that relocates the economy by circulating only in the Basque territory to boost the local economy, the Ecological Transition, peasant agriculture, local shops and the Basque language.

► 1 eusko = 1 euro

► Change your euros into eusko!

More information at the end of this Guide in the “Organise your stay” section.

Villa Arnaga

■ LA VILLA ARNAGA

Musée Edmond Rostand

Route Docteur-Camino, Route de Bayonne

CAMBO-LES-BAINS/KANBO

☎ 05 59 29 83 92 – www.arnaga.com

Labelled Historic Monuments, Remarkable Garden and House of Illustrious People. 19 rooms in the Villa. 13 hectares of gardens. Open every day from 1 April to 31 October. In 2021, open the last 2 WE of March 9.30am-12.30pm/2pm-5.30pm. Adult: 8,50 €. Children (from 7 to 11 years old): 2,50 €. Group (15 people): 7 € (school groups: 2,30 €). Show: 13 € – The gardens are not free access. Animals not allowed. Shop. Animations. Count at least 1h30 of visit for the whole site.

Cambo-les-Bains had the advantage of being discovered, not by financiers and promoters, but by the writer-poet Edmond Rostand. Immerse yourself in his universe in the heart of this privileged corner of the Basque Country where he has always felt at home: he settled, wrote and built without disfiguring, quite the contrary. Arnaga Park is the perfect expression of the swing of the heart and soul of its creator, divided between his inclination for solitude and meditation as materialized in the English garden, on the one hand, and his inclination for honours and luxury



as shown in his French garden, on the other. The famous author of *Cyrano de Bergerac* gave Cambo an image as poetic as his verses. His superb Villa Arnaga, built by the famous Parisian architect Joseph-Albert Tournaire, was constructed in 1903. Thanks to his enlightened personality, Edmond Rostand was able to give a particular elegance to the imposing Basque style residence. Nestled in the heart of 15 hectares of French and English gardens, the result is a refined masterpiece: both the walls and the furniture were commissioned from renowned artists. Transformed into a museum since 1960, the Villa opens the doors of intimacy where documents and paintings evoking the life of the writer are exhibited. One discovers the astonishing universe in which Edmond Rostand found inspiration. Note that it was in Cambo that Edmond Rostand wrote *Chantecler* in 1910! To complete the visit of the villa, room cards in 4 languages are available.

The Maurice Ravel Academy

■ ACADÉMIE INTERNATIONALE DE MUSIQUE MAURICE RAVEL

8, Place Maurice Ravel

SAINT-JEAN-DE-LUZ/DONIBANELOHIZUNE

☎ 05 59 47 13 00 – www.academie-ravel.com
contact@academie-ravel.com



French garden of Villa Arnaga.



© Villa Arnaig, musée Edmond Rostand, Cambo-les-Bains.

The villa Arnaig, where Edmond Rostand lived.

All programs, dates, schedules and rates throughout the year online.

Lovers of classical music will be able to enjoy these musical journeys which are based on romanticism. Between popular tunes and harmonic audacity, the aim of the Ravéliades is to perpetuate the memory of Maurice Ravel and to constitute a true living conservatory of French music. Singing, piano, violin, viola, cello and chamber music classes. Let your senses go and discover these wonderful groups of composers!

Basque Museum of Pastoralism and Cheese

■ **MUSÉE BASQUE DU PASTORALISME ET DU FROMAGE**

Agour Fromages du Pays basque

Agour Gasnategia Hélette

HELETTE/HELETA

☎ **05 59 37 63 86**

www.agour.com

agour@agour.com

Free of charge. Certified AB, Organic Agriculture. Audio-guided visits: July/August, visits at 9am, 10am, 11am, 2pm, 3pm, 4pm and 5pm and from September to June, 2 visits per day at 10.30am and 3.30pm. Groups on reservation. Shop open all year round from Monday to Saturday midday from 8.30am to 12pm and from 2pm to 6pm (closed Saturday afternoons,

Sundays and public holidays). Shop. Sale of cheeses and various regional products (Bayonne ham, ice cream from ewe's milk, Basque biscuits and desserts, jams, wines...).

In this temple of ewe's milk cheese, we discover all the finesse of Basque white gold, this speciality of the Agour cheese dairy, voted twice best cheese in the world... A ten-minute video that briefly presents the particularities of the Basque Country, the vitality of the economy... the shepherd's cayolar, its architectural principle, the role of the family, the importance of the etxe – the Basque farmhouse, the place of life, the sheepfold with the know-how over the centuries. Further on two other rooms including the one presenting the farmhouse of the 21st century. Imagine going through the door of a home, and discovering it from the child to the grandmother, then the sheepfold with the old objects and even the sheep in the straw... then you enter the 21st century, in a room which gives on each side on the cellar with its astonishing alignment of cheeses, bordering a room all in length. You must visit the shop, which offers a tasting of these ossau iraty PDO cheeses, matured in the cellar for four to seventeen months, with a natural rind, some just rubbed with Espelette chilli pepper, and which offers Arnabar, Bippia, Massonde, Irouléguy wines, Brana liqueurs, not forgetting local ciders and beers. You will also find home-made ice creams made from 100% natural ewe's milk, without preservatives or colouring agents, made by the Maison Agour, and, recently, the new ranges of home-made biscuits and pastries and salted meats.



The Basque flag in 1894

The red background represents the people, the green cross of Saint Andrew in the same colour as the oak tree of Biscay symbolises the law which is above the people. A white cross on the green cross and on a red background symbolises the morality of Christ who must reign over the law and the people. Thus the different terms of the motto are all represented in the flag. Jaingoikoa (God) is represented by the white cross. Lege Zaharra (the old law) is represented by the green cross, Eta (and) is represented by the union of the two crosses in the centre of the flag.

Observatory Castle Abbadia

■ ABBADIA - LE CHÂTEAU-OBSERVATOIRE

Route de la Corniche
HENDAYE/HENDAIA

☎ 05 59 20 04 51

www.chateau-abbadia.fr

chateau-abbadia@hendaye.com



Quality Tourism. Closed 3 weeks in January. "Prestige Visit" 2 hours with access to the kitchens once a month. Guided tour: adult 9,90€ (Monday morning and Saturday morning, 9h45 visit: 8,50€ in July/August). Child 4/13 years old: 4,90€, teenager 14/18 years old: 7,50€. Family" package: 27€ (2 adults and 2 or 3 children). Discovery of the scenographic spaces (park and pavilion): 2€, free – 16 years old. July/August, 7 days a week: guided tours every 30 min. from 10am to 3.30pm. Unguided visits from 4pm to 7pm, last entrance at 6pm. Treasure hunt for 7/13 year olds: 3€. Pass Abbadia/Arnaga: 15€ from 1/04 to 5/11 for self-guided visits. New: guided tour of the restored park: 4€, 6/13 years old: 2€. On Wednesdays and Fridays at 10am, guided tour "Les Abords d'Abbadia" (outside and inside the castle). 1st hour visit on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays at 9.45 am. On sale only on internet. Tourism & Handicap Label. Rental of the castle for various events, weddings, concerts...Boutique. Bar. Very popular site, booking is strongly recommended during school holidays.

Property of the Conservatoire du Littoral, this natural site of 66 hectares allows, within the varied landscapes, to go back in time to 80 million years ago, when the sea still occupied the current location of the Pyrenees chain. The site is characterized by steep cliffs, creeks and 2 famous rocks "the Twins" witness of the retreat of the coast.

Classified by the Monuments Historiques in 1984, the castle is the property of the Academy of Sciences by donation since 1901. In fact, Antoine d'Abbadie, himself a member of the Academy, bequeathed his castle in return for a special clause; the Academy of Sciences had to undertake to continue the astronomical work he had begun. Until 1975, the observatories continued to survey the night sky of the cornice, then the instruments were abandoned in a cellar until 2000, when the Academy asked to make an inventory of the astronomical heritage. 80 objects were found. This old and exceptional instrumentation makes Abbadia the ^{first} and only decimal observatory in France. The visit is eloquent, from the vestibule with its monumental staircase, its astonishing stained glass window, to the room of honour with its heavy baldachin, passing through the reception rooms, or the chapel with its exceptional framework. Everywhere a quotation calls out: Antoine d'Abbadie's motto "More being than appearing", "Don't throw a stone into the well from which you drink the water", etc. The Château Abbadia lifts the veil on Antoine d'Abbadie's genius with the Pavillon Accueil.

The restoration of the park: in 2020, the redevelopment of the park was completed, the interpretation of Eugene Bülher (landscape architect who designed the park), from the historical elements. The redevelopment was carried out with a view to preserving and enhancing the park in order to encourage contemplation and understanding of the various landscape scenes. It has been restored to its former splendour. The landscape composition and exotic plantings evoke Antoine d'Abbadie's many travels. An English-style landscape park that integrates natural elements (mountains, ocean, trees, etc.). An invitation to discover the interpretation points, the history of the site, the scientific experiments of the owner, the species planted and the Arragorry house where Virginie played the piano...

A true biological reserve, bicycles, dogs, picnics and sampling are prohibited.



The Tower Room at Abbadia castle.

HENDAYE

Observatory Castle
ABBADIA

WWW.CHATEAU-ABBADIA.FR



Roland's Footprint



LE PAS DE ROLAND
Laxia

ITXASSOU/ITSASU

Open all year round. Free of charge.

A legendary image is lent to this narrow passage carved into the rock in the Laxia Gully. Roland is the nephew of Charlemagne. In August 778, he was part of the rearguard of his army at war against the Saracens (actually the Basques) and rode on horseback towards the pass that would enable him to drive them back into Spain. At Itxassou, he rode along the Gave with great enthusiasm and came up against an impassable rock. It is then that he grabs his sword, which never leaves him, brandishes it and cuts a passage for the soldiers. Durandal has saved them, they can go on. Roland leaves his footprints on the rock. Unfortunately, braving danger with courage and without an escort, he found death at the so-called Roncesvalles pass on August 12, 778, (the legendary hero is found in the *chanson de geste*, *La chanson de Roland*). In any case, the superb scenery is worth exploring this steep climb, a narrow pass during which sometimes only a car can pass... So why not decide to do it on foot from Itxassou or by bicycle, preferably with electric assistance! An unmissable walk of almost 3 km. A little further on, in about twenty minutes by car, you reach the Col des Veaux (a venta) on the border with Spain. At the same time bucolic, instructive and ideal to regenerate oneself in this so generous and authentic nature, it is a small corner of paradise accessible to all, close to the villages of Itxassou, Bidarray, Cambo-les-Bains so typical.



is 900 m to 1,500 m high in the shape of a large circus. In autumn, the views are magnificent. At the Chalet de Cize, one exhibition follows another.

The church of Saint-Etienne-de-Baigorri

■ **L'ÉGLISE DE SAINT-ÉTIENNE DE BAÏGORRI**

SAINT-ÉTIENNE-DE-BAÏGORRI/BAIGORRI

Accessible and visited all year round following religious services.

This Romanesque style church preserves a very beautiful altarpiece classified as Baroque from the end of the 17th century, three floors of galleries as well as a German-made Remy Mahler organ. By the will of the association Orgue en Baigorri with the donations of more than 450 parishioners, was created this exceptional organ with two manuals of 56 notes, a pedalboard of 30 notes and 28 registers, inspired by the 18th century in the south of Germany.



The Citadel of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port

■ **LA CITADELLE DE SAINT-JEAN-PIED-DE-PORT**

**Chemin de la Citadelle
SAINT-JEAN-FOOT-DE-PORT**

© 05 59 37 00 92

Guided and commented tours in July/August (duration: 1 hour) on Monday and Wednesday at 2.30 pm. Adults and over 11 years old: 3 €, free for children under 10 years old. Registration at the Tourist Office. Languages spoken: French, Spanish. Listed as a Historic Monument since 1963. Built on the site of the former fortified castle of the kings of Navarre, it dominates the walled city with its superb view. Built in the 17th century during the Wars of Religion and the Franco-Spanish conflicts, it was then redesigned by Vauban, who improved the defensive system and the fortification of the entire city. Today, we find the paved ramp, the monumental arch, the drawbridge... A grandiose panorama and a fitness trail complete the journey.



Iraty Forest



LA FÔRET D'IRATY ET LE COL LARRAU/LARRAINE

Individual visits of 45 minutes. Please contact the tourist office for more information.

From Larrau, an impressive road climbs up to the Iraty site: an almost deserted nature and no population because it was inaccessible for a long time. 20 km of winding road leads you to the top, to the Iraty pass. On both sides of the border, on 17 194 ha, the Iraty forest is said to be the largest beech forest in Western Europe. The beech forest

The bishops' prison of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port

■ LA PRISON DES ÉVÊQUES

41, rue de la Citadelle

SAINT-JEAN-FOOT-DE-POR

☎ 05 59 37 00 92

Open from April to November 1st. April to the end of June and September until 1 November: open every day except Tuesday 11am/12.30pm and 2.30pm/6.30pm; July/August: open every day 10.30am/7pm. Free until 14 years old. Adult: 3 €. Historical monument since 1941.

Confused with the House of Bishops. Between 1383 and 1417, the city was the episcopal residence three times (great schism of the West). This building was well used as a municipal prison at the end of the 18th century and for the soldiers of the citadel garrison in the 19th century (names engraved in the doors). In the years of the S.T.O., after 1940, the Nazis locked up the fugitives there. Today, visit the disciplinary cells and the impressive underground vaulted room, with its warheads (14 m long by 9 m wide) revealing moving traces of the conditions of detention.

The caves of Isturitz and OxocelHaya

■ LES GROTTES D'ISTURITZ

ET D'OXOCELHAYA

Saint-Martin-d'Arbèroue

SAINT-MARTIN-D'ARBÈROUE /

DONAMARTIRI

☎ 05 59 29 64 72

www.grottes-isturitz.com

contact@grottes-isturitz.com



Tourism quality. Classified Historic Monuments. European Cultural Routes: CARP. Sites & Museums network in the Basque Country. Open from 15 March to 15 November 7 days a week. March, April, May, October, November: from 2pm to 5pm. School holidays and public holidays: additional visit at 11am. June and September: visits at 10:30 am and 11:30 am and from 2 to 5 pm*. July and August: 10am to 6pm* – (*last visit). Adults: 11.50 € (students and job seekers: 9 €. Teenagers (12/17 years old): 8 €. Children (4/11 years old): 4,80 €). Group: 9 € (children: 4 €, teenagers (from 12 years old): 6,50 €). Family ticket: 34 € (parents + 3 children up to 17 years). Special prehistory-geology-photo tour (2h): 15 €. Duration of visit for the general public: 1 hour. Holiday vouchers. Places limited to 25 people. Catering (July/August: local snack). Nature and Prehistory shop. Museum space: history of the Hill of Gaztelu. Hiking in the vicinity. Online ticket sales. Classified as a historical monument, active member of several national and international networks: ISCA, CARP European Cultural Routes, ANECAT, Sites and Museums in the Basque Country.*

The caves – history and geology: the Gaztelu Hill, a single visit for these 2 superimposed caves, 2 great periods of humanity – Middle and Upper Paleolithic. A protected mineral palace in the heart of the earth...

The 20th century had just begun, when, during the exploitation of the guano in place, the workers realized that there were bones that did not correspond to the fauna of the surroundings. They warned André Darricau, the owner of the site, who called in a well-known prehistorian, E. Passemard, who testified that the bones did not match the fauna of the area. Passemard, who confirmed that the bones were those of a mammoth, a wolf, a bear...

This is the time when other caves in France are discovered. A. Darricau had the exploitation stopped and launched the research. This was the start of a dizzying adventure for the archaeologists who took a very close interest. It was soon realised that this was a prehistoric site of great importance in southern Europe. 80,000 years of human presence were attested to. Excavations and research with the participation of the most eminent archaeologists: Passemard, Saint-Perrier, Laplace, Barandiaran have provided 45,000 pieces: lithic material, objects of movable art (the collections of Isturitz are preserved, exhibited, studied by doctoral students at the Museum of National Antiquities in Saint-Germain-en-Laye: MAN).

The caves today: after a century of excavations, research continues thanks to an extraordinary heritage in place... Topics: the Neanderthal-Homo Sapiens transition, cave art, occupation of the cave by large animals, conservation of artistic and natural heritage. Today's archaeologists lead multidisciplinary teams: C. Normand, D. Garate, N. Vanara, JM Pétillon, A. Villaluenga. Every year, major events and activities take place.

2021 will be no exception to the rule. A main theme: "Ornaments in prehistoric times". For some years now, the origin of the adornment has been recognized as one of the fundamental events in the evolution of humanity. Because of its richness, originality and secure context, the Aurignacian jewelry from the Isturitz cave is beginning to take a prominent place in the debates concerning the origin of modern Man and the transition from the Middle Paleolithic to the Upper Paleolithic. On a more modest scale, but no less important, the Isturitz finery is beginning to give us valuable details about the variability, chronological, geographical and even spatial, within the Aurignacian in Aquitaine. These men had a strong sense of aesthetics. They adorned their clothing with beads, shells, they wore pendants, had a great knowledge of semi-precious materials: lignite, soapstone, talc, ivory, amber. Numerous pendants, shells, ivory or bone beads, pierced teeth of horses, foxes, hyenas, wolves... enrich the collections of Isturitz which have become an international reference... Randall White.

Explore the caves of Isturitz and Oxocelhaya! Special theme tours:

Resonance" sound tour" An artistic creation by Pierre Estève: a sound evocation of prehistory and geology, a

sensory installation that will allow you to create your own mental images. Every Sunday last visit. For groups on reservation.

Cro-Mignons" tour For young people (4-8 years), July/August at 10:30 am. Reservation strongly advised.

Themed tours 2 hrs approx. on reservation, information ☎ 05 59 29 64 72

Prehistory and Cave Art lecture tour with a prehistorian. Sunday at 10:30 am, see website for dates, groups 15 pers. maximum (from 15 years old).

Special visit Geological discovery: what the caves teach us with a geological engineer. Geology, Karstology, climate change (Limited places).

Special visit to Paleontology, with a prehistorian paleontologist. Animals that disappeared in prehistoric times (Limited places).

Discover the inaccessible ornate galleries of Oxocelhaya with a prehistoric guide and virtual reality commentary. Tailor-made service for groups.

Special photo tours: March to November on the ^{first} Saturday of each month at 9:30-11:30 a.m., July-August on Wednesdays at 9-11 a.m.

Auditive visit for the blind by appointment.

2022: resumption in the cave of the concert for prehistoric flutes, a creation by François Rossé Aspalidian.

And, the program of the Cultural Space "Arts and Sciences": Association Isturitz and Oxocelhaya, heritage, culture and prehistory.

A geological masterpiece, a cathedral of rock, a journey to the heart of the earth; how can we find the words to describe such beauty? A descent into the bowels of the Earth, an unbelievable spectacle, a fairyland of concretions, wonders of nature.

A private site, the family saga managed today by the Darricau family has a bright future ahead of it.

Due to the health crisis, online booking is strongly recommended and consult the website for any special visits, as schedules may be adjusted, cancelled or postponed: <http://www.grottes-isturitz.com/>, page always updated.

The caves of Sare

■ GROTTES DE SARE
SARE/SARAKOHERRIA

☎ 05 59 54 21 88

www.grottesdesare.fr
lezea@grottesdesare.fr



From 8 February to 31 March and from 3 November to 2 January 2022, open Monday to Friday from 2 to 5 pm*, Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 pm*. April, May, June, July, August, September: daily from Monday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm*. From October 1st to November 2nd included: Monday to Sunday from 10am to 5pm*, continuous daytime. Closed on December 25th and January 1st. *Departure time of the last visit. Can be modified according to the course of the day. Adult: 9 €. Children (from 5 to 13 years old): 5 €. Teenagers (14 to 17 years old included) and students (on compulsory presentation of the card): 7.50 €. Handicapped person: 5,50 € (part of the visit can be done, please

ask beforehand by phone). Groups of 15 people or more (reservation required): see prices and conditions on: https://www.grottesdesare.fr/horaire_tarif.php. The site is designed to be accessible to the greatest number of people. Information on: <https://www.grottesdesare.fr/accessibilite.html>. Inside the cave, are not accepted: animals, pushchairs, photo/video shooting. CB. Cheques. Local currency Eusko. On site: bar, restaurant in summer, shop, 3 car parks, picnic area, departures of hiking trails. The conditions of visit and access to the site may be modified according to the evolution of the COVID-19 epidemic.

The third most visited site in the Basque Country, the Sare caves offer a guided tour with sound and light, with several themes: a fascinating and atypical geology, the temporary occupation of the cave by man without forgetting a part of our history through mythology, but also an approach to the origins of the Basque people, its traditions and its landscapes. This visit was designed according to the works and writings of J.-M. de Barandiaran, one of the greatest anthropologists of his time.

45 min to 1 hour guided tour. The guide will provide you with additional information along a fully equipped and safe route. To the rhythm of the "txalaparta", you will admire the extraordinary work of the water for millions of years.

You will observe one of the largest porches in the Basque Country and wander through the galleries to discover meanders, tubes, gours and other concretions, not forgetting the prehistoric habitat site where man lived temporarily over 20,000 years ago. A visit adapted for young and old!

A protected area: in collaboration with the CEN Nouvelle-Aquitaine (Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels) and the GCA (Groupe Chiroptères Aquitaine), the commune of Sare and the caves of Sare have signed a partnership with these institutions in order to better understand and conserve the natural heritage of the caves of Sare and its surroundings.

The Caves of Sare are now part of Natura 2000, a protected area for its fauna and flora, some of which are endemic species.

Inside the cave, the bat, the only flying mammal, is watching us! Several species are regularly monitored (counts), as some are highly endangered. The caves of Sare are considered as a place of international interest for their protection.

Megalithic Park and Site Museum: before or after the visit to the caves, 2 free visits are offered, that of the Megalithic Park built by Dr. Blot, a true reconstruction of the various monuments erected by man during the protohistoric period (2,800 years BC) and the museum which presents the occupation of the cave by man from prehistoric times to the present day. Children will also find an area devoted to bats.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/grottesdesare

Instagram: www.instagram.com/sarakolezeak

New: reservations are strongly recommended (school holidays and public holidays) on the internet (Caves website) or at tourist offices in the Basque Country. Each visit is limited by a number of people.



© Albert Loys - Shutterstock.com

The gorges of Kakuetta

■ **LES GORGES DE KAKUETTA** ★★
SAINTE-ENGRAVE/URDATX-SANTA-GRAZI
www.sainte-engrace.com

For 2021, the date of reopening is still unknown because the Commune is undertaking development work at the level of the reception, paths, car parks, etc... More information on the site: <http://www.sainte-engrace.com/>.

While waiting for its reopening, here is its history.

In the bowels of the inner Basque country, in the small Souletin village of Sainte-Engrâce, the Kakuetta gorges are a real treasure given by nature; one of the most prestigious sites in Europe. Explored for the first time in 1906 by Edouard-Alfred Martel, a specialist in scientific expeditions, they are now protected. In the past, farmers would take the wheat down from the high cliffs to the water mill at the entrance to the gorge, and then take the heavy sacks of flour up the same way.

During the Second World War, this mountainous passage between France and Spain became synonymous with freedom for many people wishing to flee the occupied zone. The Basque shepherds, who knew the rocky escarpments perfectly well, turned into smugglers, braving the German patrols at the risk of their lives.

A wild and spectacular place: "we are here in the Amazon of temperate latitudes, yet in the heart of the Basque mountains", we hear professionals say. A luxuriant nature, of a fierce beauty which keeps the sportsmen could try to climb. A length of 2,000 m, a depth between 30 and 350 m and a particularly narrow passage called "Grand Etroit".

The village of Sainte-Engrâce is also famous for its Romanesque church from the XIth century, the Grotte de La Verna for an underground exploration, its numerous hiking trails.

La Verna Cave



GROTTE DE LA VERNA ★★
Arrakotchepia reception area

D113

Calla district

SAINTE-ENGRAVE/URDATX-SANTA-GRAZI

☎ **+33 6 37 88 29 05**

www.laverna.fr

contact@laverna.fr

via the shuttle bus from the Calla district.



Quality Tourism. Open all year round. By reservation only. Rates vary according to the time of visit, including access to the site with shuttle bus. Discovery tour 1h: adults: 17 €, children (from 5 years old): 11 €, river exploration 1h30: adults: 22 €, children (from 7 years old): 16 €. Sports exploration 2h: adults: 27 €, children (min age 10 years old): 21 €, la Verna Aventure – departure assured from 5 persons: 3h: 46 € (min age 12 years old), 5h: 64 € (min age 14 years old), 8h: 86 € (min age 16 years old). Tourism & Handicap Label. First prize in the 2013 Accessibility Trophies in the Tourism and Disability category. Reduced rates except public holidays, school holidays and we on visits 1h, 1h30, 2h.

It is the largest underground hall in Europe, ranked among the top 10 in the world and the first to be converted for the general public. Extraordinary dimensions: 250 m in diameter and 190 m high over an area of 5 ha and a volume of 3.6 million^m³. For the record, students from the Polytechnique flew a hot-air balloon there...! In this abyss, 3 different types of land are opposed to each other, schist and limestone from the primary era (350 million years ago) and limestone from the secondary era (80 million years ago). In the middle of this mineral universe, a remarkable fauna has settled, small invertebrates, all blind and depigmented, the *Aphaenops loubensi* and the *Aphaenops cabidochei*, which need to live in an atmosphere saturated with humidity. "Discoverers, explorers or adventurers... to each his own visit!" You start at the Visitor Centre with a choice of 2 accesses: on foot along an 8 km marked path to the GR10 and the Arpidia ravine (2h round trip-1h30 return) or by shuttle bus for 30 minutes. According to your wishes and your physical capacities are proposed: 1h of discovery for beginners, 1h30 for river exploration which allows you to access the waterfall spillway in the room, 2h for a sports exploration with a caving guide. Rather adventurous? It's "la Verna Aventure"; a sporting visit with an introduction to speleology from 3 hours to a whole day. Temperature of 6°C, even in summer, please bring warm clothing, trousers and walking shoes. An exceptional and unmissable site.

NATURE

Between ocean and mountains, the Basque Country offers an incomparable richness, both in the landscapes and in the vegetation enhanced by a very favourable climate,

with the sun battling for a few shots of firedamp, in an environment with pleasant temperatures and rich in safe bets.

GEOGRAPHY

The Basque land, Euskal Herria, displays a beautiful eclecticism without looking like it. A coast, of course, that cannot be denied, a hinterland of plains, but also of mountains, with the Iraty forest in particular and its cross-country skiing tracks. A fragmented relief, complex with the Adour to the north, the Anie peak to the east, the Ebro to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, thus participating in the whole Pyrenean chain which extends towards the Iberian Peninsula.

Climate

The Basque Country benefits from temperate climate and mild temperatures.

- ▶ **Average temperatures:** 15 °C to 30 °C in summer.
- ▶ **Sunshine:** sunny summer and autumn.
- ▶ **Precipitation:** fairly heavy in spring.

Littoral

The French part of the Basque coastline lies between the Adour and Bidasoa rivers. Over a distance of about 30 km,

it is remarkable for the diversity of the environments that make it up as well as for the biological and landscape riches that characterise it. It represents a land of contrasts, reinforcing the identity of the Basque territory as a whole.

▶ **Physical environment.** The Basque coastline is a transitional environment between the Pyrenees and the Bay of Biscay. More commonly known as the Basque Coast, it is made up of two distinct entities: the dune belt and the cliffs. A tongue of sand extends on either side of the mouths of the Adour and Bidasoa rivers. Elsewhere, it corresponds to a succession of cliffs from Biarritz to Hendaye and is also characterised by the amplitude of the swell.

▶ **Occupation of space and urbanization.** Progressively urbanised, the coast now forms a vast conurbation that extends far beyond administrative boundaries and stretches from Tarnos (in the Landes) to San Sebastian (in Spain). The fishing industry is now outstripped by tourism, which has been steadily developing in the 8 coastal communities (Anglet, Biarritz, Bidart, Guéthary, Saint-Jean-de-Luz, Ciboure, Urrugne and Hendaye) for the past 40 years. The population can triple during the summer months.

FAUNA AND FLORA

Fauna

▶ **Mammals.** Stags, deer, roe deer, marcasins... for the most imposing, invade plains and forests just like the fox, the hare or even the squirrel. The pottok (pronounced potioc) has been invading the slopes of the Pyrenean mountains since the Paleolithic period.

▶ **Birds.** The temperate climate and the average relief attract many birds, a richness that can be discovered during autumn migrations. Moreover, at the Organbidexka pass, specialists will be able to inform you and interest you on the numerous birds of prey, including the famous and easily recognizable griffon vulture or the Egyptian vulture which breeds in our region before returning to Africa, eagles, kites, storks... better known and above all more mediatised, the pigeon, this bird prized by Basque hunters who capture it with nets in passes or shoot it in doves. The woodcock is also the prey of hunters in November.



A pottok, a wild pony emblematic of the Basque Country.



The Irouleguy vineyard.

► **Fish.** In the many rivers, fishermen will be fascinated by the rainbow or fario trout which has made the reputation of the streams that criss-cross the valley from Urepel to Baigorry via the Aldudes or even rarer for the Desman, this rodent of the Pyrenees which looks like a mole with a long tail and a small trunk

Chipirons, one of the jewels of Basque cuisine, come closer to the Atlantic coast when they reproduce. The pibales, as they are called, are the eel fry that swim up rivers to grow as they leave the Sargasso Sea, off the coast of Florida. At sea, the tuna has been a household name throughout history, caught with pole and line, live bait or bait and tackle. It is particularly celebrated in Saint-Jean-de-Luz. Not to be forgotten, even if it is rare, the operne, the emblem of the Basque Coast, which is fished on the rocks discovered at low tide, in September, with mask and snorkel, in apnea, in the caves under the rocks or in a boat, taking them off with a scraper. To be compared to the chipiron, with a very fine taste.

Flora

► **Vegetation.** Each soil has its own vegetation, each region has its varieties! Thus, the Basque coast was the kingdom of the tamarisk, there are still some left in Biarritz. Just like the rhododendrons at the foot of damp cliffs or the heather on the coast or in the mountain ranges where they bloom from summer to early autumn. But there are also important peat bogs populated by the drosera and it is in the Basque Country that the largest beech forest in Europe develops (including 1,700 hectares in the forest of Haira, near the Aldudes valley), accompanied by gorse on the rocky sectors, at high altitude, while further down the hills, one discovers moorland and woods of oak (pedunculate oak and tauzin oak) and chestnut trees.

Parks and nature reserves

► **Abbadia – Basque cornice Hendaye**

A protected natural site, the Abbadia estate extends over 65 hectares of beaches, cliffs, sea moors, meadows and

forests. Property of the Conservatoire du Littoral in the commune of Hendaye, it is an exceptional biological and geological reserve; a wide variety of nesting birds, orchids, etc. can be observed here. The route is on foot, and without a dog.

► **Bay of Cenitz – Saint-Jean-de-Luz / Guéthary**

The Cenitz hill, site of the 2 hectare Conservatory, allows you to scan the ocean, rich in fauna and flora, and will delight lovers of walking, swimming and surfing.

► **Lake Mouriscot – Biarritz / Bidart**

Protected natural area with a total surface area of 110 hectares, partially classified Natura 2000, developed and partly open to the public for walking and fishing.

► **Lake Marion – Biarritz**

The natural lake is in the middle of the public garden and a stone's throw from the town centre. Stroll around the lake and enjoy the nature that makes the birds happy.

Animal parks

The Etxola Animal Park was established in 1999. It is located at the foot of the Lizarieta Pass and 3 km from the Sare Caves, and has many domestic animals from all over the world.

Many of these breeds are nowadays forgotten or disappear. A magnificent walk in the heart of the mountain is proposed here.

Gardens

Some of these gardens are well known such as the Arnaga garden in Cambo-les-Bains or the Florénia park in Urrugne which unfortunately closed its doors to the public in 2005.

Other sites are certainly worth the trip, even if the general public does not yet know them very well, such as the park of Abbadia Castle in Hendaye, the botanical garden of Bayonne, etc..

HISTORY

Pieces of history have been written over the centuries in the Basque Country: from the Celtic invasion to the new Kingdom of Navarre in the 16th century, events have taken place: the Battle of Roncesvalles, the creation of the Kingdom of Navarre, the break-up of Basque

unity from the 12th to the 15th century, the Hundred Years' War, the arrival of the new Basque Kingdom in the 16th century, not forgetting the burning and bloodshed of the kingdom, a victim of Franco-Spanish rivalry...

PREHISTORY

The origin of the Basques? Probably Prehistory, some 80,000 years ago, because it seems that it was during this period that the first attempts at cave paintings were

made, such as in the Isturits caves. Numerous vestiges, dolmens, mounds, caves, reveal the Palaeolithic life in the region.

ANTIQUITY

From the Roman occupation which lasted six centuries, we will find villas, baths and roadways, the great Roman

road from Bayonne to Astorga which crosses the Basque Country and the copper mines of Banca for example

MIDDLE AGES

Christianity gradually penetrated the Basque Country, and it was undoubtedly at this time that the great patron saint fiestas were born. In the Middle Ages, waves of invasions by Visigoths, Franks and Muslims affected the Basque Country: the people took refuge in the mountains and in 778, with

a powerful army, defeated Charlemagne in Roncesvalles. Then came the era of the Vascons and, in 1152, the Labourd became an English possession, following the marriage of Eleanor of Aquitaine with Henri Plantagenet, the occupier imposing a specific administration on the town.

FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO THE REVOLUTION

It was then that the Vascons organised themselves and founded the kingdom of Navarre, which lasted until the 16th century, with many upheavals due in particular to repeated plague epidemics. And it was only after the arrival of Henry IV, King of France and Navarre, that the

border between France and Spain was created, with the Treaty of the Pyrenees, on the famous Island of the Pheasants in Hendaye. A process of pacification was initiated, reinforced by the marriage of Louis XIV to the infant Maria Teresa.



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FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE 21ST CENTURY

And it was not until the Revolution that the department of the Basses-Pyrénées, our current Pyrénées-Atlantiques,

was born, integrating the Basques and Béarnais under the same banner.

NOWADAYS

With the rise of Basque nationalism, Sabino Arana invented a new word at the end of the 19th century: *Euzkadi*, the “Basque homeland”. Designating the same territory as the Basque Country, it does more than describe the delimitation of a cultural region and underpins a political project for this territory. The validity of the concept of the transnational Basque Country, within which the French Basque Country is integrated, is hardly questionable on the northern side of the border. The inclusion in the territory of the Basque Country of areas where the popular language was Occitan may have been a controversial issue until after the middle of the 20th century. It will be remembered that in 1922 the choice of the name to be given to the Basque Museum and the Bayonese tradition was the subject of heated discussion before a compromise was reached. But over time, collective representations evolve and, as Giséle Carrière-Prignitz notes, even the right bank of the Adour, in Boucau and Saint-Esprit, is today “integrated” into the Basque Country, with voices regretting this state of affairs seeming to be hardly audible at the beginning of the 21st century. Today, this heritage remains an infinite source of inspiration without hindering an ultra-contemporary daily life that makes it an irresistible destination. The Basque Country is part of the New Aquitaine region which, since January 2016, brings together Aquitaine, Limousin and Poitou-Charentes. In what is now the largest of the French collectivities with 84,000 km², the Basque Country is without doubt one of its most attractive

territories. For a very long time confined to its image as a quiet seaside resort ideal for resting, it is clear that a real dynamism has overturned this purring which no longer has a monopoly! The art of living is so well represented here that the Basque Coast has been compared to that of California, so much so that the department moves, lives, advances while remaining very attached to its culture: it is in any case what makes its charm. With Biarritz as the kingdom of surfing, a discipline that is far from being anecdotal since it represents 5,000 direct jobs and could in 2019 create a campus and a research laboratory in Ciboure, an intoxicating language that is proudly passed on, a rich gastronomy and a flourishing economy, many new Basques are settling on the coast. Poles of excellence with companies specialising in different or complementary sectors, start-ups and incubators are signalling a good financial health which is attracting more and more investors. Agriculture is an important part of the economy with sectors of character such as Espelette chilli pepper or sheep's cheese. Tourism is obviously at the heart of the concerns and the offer of accommodation completes the activities which often exceed by their diversity the great classics of the coast. A border department par excellence, the Basque Country is a radiant land and, since January 2017, it even corresponds for the very first time to an official territorial administrative structure with the creation of a real constitutional framework: the Basque Country Agglomeration Community.

© Marc ALGÈRE - borowice



The famous “Rocher de la Vierge”.

HERITAGE AND TRADITIONS

The Basque Country is a country where tradition is omnipresent. It can be found everywhere, in the language, in the

music, in the singing, in the dances, in the sports (Basque pelota, the famous Basque strength), in the architecture..

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Literature

In 1545, a key date in the history of Basque literature, the first book printed entirely in the Basque language was published, a collection of religious and secular poetry by Bernat Dechepare, parish priest of Saint Michael's parish (Lower Navarre). Almost a century later (1643), Pedro de Aguerre, known as Axular, parish priest of Sare, published *Gero* ("Later"), considered a masterpiece of Basque classical letters.

The 18th century will be that of the apologists and grammarians with the Guipuzcoan Jesuit Manuel de Larramendi (1690-1766), famous in particular for his important linguistic works. Basque literature became secularised from the second half of the 19th century onwards. From the 1950s onwards, with Jon Mirande (1925-1972) and Gabriel Aresti (1933-1975), there was a significant development in Basque literary production. Among today's most prolific and talented writers, we can mention Bernardo Atxaga, a native of Asteasu (Guipuzcoa),

whose novel *Obabakoak* (National Literature Prize in Spain, 1989) has been translated into 19 languages, or Itxaro Borda, who in 2001 won the Euskadi Prize for his novel *100 % Basque*. At present, almost 1,500 books written in Basque are published every year.

Painting

► **Basque Painting**, by Mr. de Jaureguiberry. This reference book by Michel de Jaureguiberry unveils the history of Basque painting with all its masters, whether from Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Navarre or the Northern Basque Country. The book includes 11 living painters, such as Apezetxea or Zumeta...

And if we were to name just one, from the North Basque Country, it would be Aski, the painter whose works are exhibited everywhere, colourful and evocative of the Basque Country: seascapes, bullfights, still lifes, portraits...

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Towns and villages

► **The Basque house.** To walk around Bayonne and look up... is to discover what makes up the face of the town: the houses of the city. And taking an interest in the evolution of this exceptional heritage. In the 16th century, two styles of house already appeared, those with wood sides and those in stone, the first presents a gabled facade on the street, one or two storeys corbelled, with crossed windows, leaning on a spinning, protruding and moulded band, the second, Renaissance style, belonging to the wealthiest, has street-side gable façades with crossed windows, supported by a running but flat band, the characteristic feature of these buildings remaining the use of Mousserolles yellow stone, used for door and window frames.

Over the centuries, developments appear, Bidache stone is used as the balconnets and balustrades with leaves and palmettes. In the 18th century, the half-timbered house makes its appearance with eaves with fretworked rafters, French windows, the stone facade is fitted with very moulded cornices. In the 19th century,

the wooden framework of the houses is covered with a coating imitating stone and the windows are surrounded by a moulded wooden frame with wrought iron railings. The same applies to the stones, which are also covered.

In the Basque Country, the same evolution as in Bayonne, the so-called carpenter's houses were marked in the 16th century by the mason who introduced stone: the Labourdine house, which is a model with its whitewashed facade highlighting the wooden sections painted in dark red, the Souletine house, with a slate roof is closer to the neighbouring Béarnaise houses, as for the Bas-Navarraise house, it is more massive and more noble by highlighting the stone of the country.

► **The Basque village.** There can be bastides-rués, spectacular as in Aïnhua which dates from the 13th century, composed, lined up next to each other, of houses which have gardens at the back.

But the classic Basque village is quite typical, around its church surrounded by the cemetery, its pediment and the square, some of which are spectacularly intertwined, as in Biriathou or Guéthary.



Basque building.

Religious architecture

The layout of Basque churches is simple, with a single nave without a transept or aisles, with a square chevet to the east, semi-circular or cut-sided. These churches can also be recognised by their gable walls, which are pierced by two arcades housing the bells. The bell towers

are original with an octagon surmounting the 1st square floor as in Ainhoa, Saint-Jean-de-Luz or Ciboure, with a gable wall just as atypical as in Bidarray. A peculiarity in churches, especially in the diocese of Bayonne: the famous three-storey wooden galleries, on the bottom and both sides, facing the altar, reserved for men while women occupied the Jarlekuou, the family tomb.

TRADITIONS AND LIFESTYLES

Language

► **The Basque or Euskara language.** The rural character of the Basque Country and the church have contributed to the maintenance of the Basque language. This phenomenon is combined with the fact that historically, the Basque Country has been little romanized. Rome dominated politically, but did not impose its culture. Perhaps it didn't have the time to do so since the Roman Empire was destroyed by barbarian invasions. These Barbarians probably "saved" the Basques! So, a language that has survived but whose exact origin is unknown. Research has not provided any satisfactory answer, especially since all the languages related to Basque have disappeared. What is certain is that it is a very old language: the first lexicon dates from the 12th century, the first dictionary from the 16th century and the first grammar from the 17th century. And, in Roman times, the protobasque had two hundred to three hundred words with a lot of nicknames. In addition, texts from the 15th century have been found as well as copies of texts from the 12th to 14th centuries. It is an "agglutinating" language (the letters and suffixes are glued to the words)

from Western Europe. Basque works backwards (from right to left) and has no prepositions and a relatively small vocabulary (for six words in French, only one will suffice in Basque). At present, the Ikastolas, those schools where Basque is taught from childhood, are flourishing. Universities in Basque (authorized only since 1980) are able to provide teaching. This is curiously less true in the legal field, when the law concerns people's daily lives. Globally, in the French Basque Country, 80,000 people know how to express themselves in Basque, a fact that has become evident through cultural activities in Basque: theatre, Basque carnival, song (Basque rock, dances where people sing in Basque). A language that is also present abroad: Bordeaux, Paris, Latin America (especially Argentina), North America, spoken by more than 2 million people.

► **Pastoral care, masquerades and bertularism.** The Basque language is very present in many cultural activities in full expansion, pastoral activities (very codified sung rural theatre), masquerades or bertularism (sung and improvised oratorical jousts), the whole often evoking slices of life of the past, with humour, weddings, agricultural work..

Arts and Crafts

► **Basque linen.** Metis, cotton, linen and hemp are the noble materials used in the making of Basque linen. Fabrics decorated with stripes whose width indicated the wealth of the house. On a white or bis background, often damasked, seven different colours recall the historical provinces that make up the region

► **The Basque beret.** The Basque beret comes from Béarn! Appearing in the 15th century, it was made by shepherds: knitted then moulded around the knee, washed and hammered in water to felt it. This Pyrenean hairstyle is only worn at work when it is black, and at parties when it is red.

► **The costumes.** Who hasn't crossed at a party, a basquaise dressed with the famous red skirt, a waistcoat and the scarf cleverly crossed on his chest or a dressed basque, on a white shirt of a dark waistcoat on which a wide belt is rolled up marking the top of a pair of short trousers over stockings. Less widespread today, perhaps, the famous corniform headdress that was worn, lowered in widows and erected in married women! The famous beret, on the other hand, is still in use today.

► **The espadrille, 2,000 years of history?** The first text found on a shoe corresponding to the espadrille dates back to the Latin writer Pliny the Younger in the year 100, noting the fact that Hannibal's troops (247-183 B.C.) wore very old shoes, attributed to the inhabitants of southern Gaul and shepherds of the Iberian mountains. The soles were made of small rushes or brooms braided and rolled up. For several centuries, the espadrille was the only footwear worn by Basque farmers. Later, in each village, a sandal craftsman settled down. The materials used at the time were those found on site. Linen to weave the upper, hemp, esparto and esparto esparto braided for the sole, hence the name "Espartina": the Basque espadrille. And in the 1900s, the espadrille took off and the Basques called on a Spanish workforce, the Swallows. Today the espadrille of that era still exists, but it has also been modernised over the centuries with increasingly innovative models

Music – Dances

► **Dancing.** Recreational and social, the dance can also take on specific paces, it is then taught and reserved for men and remains in the repertoire like the Basque jump, the kaskarot in Labourd and in Basse Navarre that we find during the carnival, danced processions like the fête-Dieu, perhaps better known, the godalet dantza, the famous glass dance. For the record, the dances are original: they turn counter-clockwise, a direction long considered harmful

► **Songs and music.** You can't imagine the Basque Country without music and singing. Everywhere, absolutely everywhere, you can hear them. In churches, during a pelota match, during a party, in a bar, simply in the shade of a square... everywhere you will find the famous bertsolaris, the improvising singers, born a few centuries ago and still very present. Epic poems or long

laments are always present, in parties and when they are accompanied, the singers are accompanied with the txistu and the soinau, the first one being a flute with three holes and the second one a tambourine.

Traditional sports and games

► **The mus... the poker of the Basques.** It is of course in the Basque Country that the world championships of mus. But what is it? "One Basque, a singer, two Basques, a game of pelota, three Basques, a choir and four Basques, a game of cards..." A proverb! But beware not just any card game! A game of mus, (pronounce mouch), this game where one can lie with pleasure, and where bad faith, signs made in secret and false indications are the obligatory passages of success. The official record of this Spanish card game, in 1745, can be found in the trilingual dictionary of the Jesuit Manuel de Larramendi, a game that is still part of the daily life of the Basques today. Announcements, counter-attacks, ambushes, you have to confuse your opponent by using all the folds of the field, in three shifts... The Basque diaspora has spread its game all over the world and it can be played in Canada as well as in Australia, which was twice crowned world champion in 1991 and 1993.

► **Basque strength.** Originally, these competitions, which would have originated in Saint-Palais, were held in farm yards with strict rules that still govern these tug-of-war

In the same spirit, the trunk cutting, event imported from an Austro-Canadian practice, is still very much alive. Currently the Aizkolari world champion in trunk cutting is none other than José Vicondoa, a Spanish Basque from Navarra. What does it consist of? You have to climb up a tree trunk as quickly as possible, using wooden planks as a step. Once at the top, you chop the trunk into thin slices. With variations, invented by our champion, such as cutting the trunk blindfolded or upside down.

► **Basque pelota.** Three disciplines for this sport king of the Basque Country, bare hand, paleta or chistera, these are the three symbolic disciplines for which the Basques have been enthusiastic for centuries and which have left vestiges in every village. With the famous pediments in all the village squares, the trinquets (covered pediments) and the jai-lai (covered pediment with a wall on the left), the French championships of which take place during the great Basque sports week in July.

► **The pelota, this little ball...** There are only two manufacturers of these little balls in the Basque Country, the Pumpa Company in Saint-Pée-sur-Nivelle and Jean Lucugaray in Bayonne.

A pelota consists of a rubber or latex core, surrounded by wool, then cotton thread and finally two goat leather skins, sewn one on top of the other. The balls differ according to whether they are the bare hand, the pala, the paleta, the joko garbi or the grand chistera.

► **Rugby,** the king sport of the Basque Country, after Basque pelota, is illustrated by two conquering teams, Bayonne and Biarritz and many others all over the towns and villages.

THE GOURMET BASQUE COUNTRY

LOCAL SPECIALTIES

Many are the specialties of Basque cuisine. To name just a few, here are the must-haves:

- ▶ **Ttoro** [tioro] is a dish halfway between stew and fish soup, with a cod base, to which various shellfish and langoustines are added.
- ▶ **Marmitako** is a preparation based on tuna, tomato and potato, chilli pepper, garlic and onion.
- ▶ **Fish**. There are many different recipes; among the best known are koskera hake and bakalao (cod) al pil-pil.
- ▶ **The axoa** [achoa] is a kind of ratatouille made from minced veal and sweet chilli pepper.

▶ **Piperade** is a sauce made with chilli, onion and tomato. It accompanies many dishes including the famous Basque chicken.

▶ **The taloa** is a cake made half of corn flour and half of wheat flour. The tradition is to cook taloa standing in front of the fire. They are then wrapped around a slice of cooked ham or fresh sheep's cheese.

▶ **The chipiron** with its notable recipe: the chipiron à la luzienne.

▶ **The txangurro** is a crab stuffed with onions, leeks and carrots

LOCAL PRODUCTS

Meat, poultry and game

▶ **Basque pork**. In 1929, after having counted more than 138,000 black magpie pigs in the cradle of the Pyrenees, the number in 1981 was around twenty sows and two boars. The breed was then declared endangered by the Ministry of Agriculture. A conservation programme for the breed was then set up with the Institut Technique du Porc (ITP) and INRA. In 1988, Pierre Oteiza discovered this pig on the ITP stand at the agriculture show. Two examples of this pig were given to the Aldudes, and a huge amount of work was undertaken to find and group together the purebred animals. In 1990, the Association Basque Pig in the Aldudes Valley was created, which, apart from its action to safeguard the breed, obtained its entry in the herd book (LIGERAL) in 1997, which guarantees the recognition of the species.

▶ **Lamb**. Very consumed in the Basque Country, and cooked in axoa (stew) or accompanied by piperade.

▶ **Goshawks**. During the hunting season, many restaurants in the region promote the famous pigeon. A long tradition of a few centuries taken up by a few dynamic restaurateurs, each one today putting a little bit of his personality into it, some continue to make it in the fireplace and flaming it in front of the customer, others in the kitchen, adding their own little grain... of salt! From 20 October to the end of November, anthology evenings follow one another in a festive atmosphere, where local gastronomy rhymes with conviviality, most often in a festive atmosphere where Basque singing blossoms again with happiness! For regulars and novices alike, who will learn how to flambé a capuchin pigeon! Surprise!

Delicatessen

▶ **Bayonne ham**. Where does the Bayonne ham come from? No one really knows, but a beautiful legend makes one think. It says that in the 14th century, Gaston Phoebus, Count of Foix, hunting wild boar in the lands of Béarn, he would have wounded a boar without being able to find its trace. Several months later, the animal would have been found, perfectly preserved, covered with salt, in the dry riverbed... The meat would have been tasted and appreciated by all, which would have incited the population to preserve pork and wild boar meat in salt. On the portal of the cathedral of Sainte-Marie d'Oloron you can also see 12th century sculptures of pig sacrifices and large hams. In any case, one thing is certain, ham was not born in Bayonne and it takes its name from the fact that the Basque town shipped the ham from its port and promoted it. In fact, Bayonne ham is the product of a region, the Adour river basin, which has a climate with high humidity levels, favourable to its slow maturing, giving it the softness that we know it is known for. This ham has become a reference in gastronomy, from Rabelais who opened the doors of literature to the kings of France, and today it is a European recognition which establishes its fame with the famous IGP (Protected Geographical Indication). It is thanks to the Interprofession Aquitaine (INPAQ) and the Bayonne Ham consortium, which brings together all the links in the industry, that this PGI with its precise specifications was obtained.

▶ **Bayonne Ham for export**. The future looks promising for Bayonne ham as it develops across the Atlantic. No. 1 on the French market, it is now aiming for international development. Japan, South Korea, Canada and the United

States – the world's leading market for cured ham – are among the regions that the teams of Bernard Dupont, the president of Inpaq, are trying to open doors to. Above all, a PDO application (Appellation d'origine contrôlée) for Bayonne ham has been filed with the Institut national des appellations d'origine (INAO). A sesame that could be a major asset on the American market.

► **Kintoa ham.** The ham from “Porc Basque” is now crowned and is called Jambon du Kintoa, in homage to this territory where pig herds used to graze. The traditional cradle of Basque pig farming, the Aldudes were once part of the Pays de Quint or Kintoa. The “Quinta” the fifth was a tax levied by the kings of Navarre on the pigs that grazed on the king's mountains, one pig in five. It was the feudal right of the Quint. The pigs were thus brought to the “acorn patch”, in these ideally exposed pastures, offering an abundance of acorns, beechnuts and chestnuts that fell in autumn. The great forerunner in this area was Pierre Oteiza, who explains that “this ham, cured and matured in the open air in mountain areas for 16 to 18 months, is characterised by a dark red, marbled colour with a powerful, deep nose, undergrowth essences and a firm texture with a powerful taste too, fruity and matured with spicy notes and a nutty aroma.” The Appellation of Controlled Origin (AOC) Kintoa and the AOC Kintoa ham were validated in November 2015 by the Inao. The institute unanimously approved the geographical area of Kintoa (232 municipalities, 60 of which are in Béarn) and the means used to produce quality pork. This is a real asset that strengthens consumer confidence while protecting the Kintoa name.

► **Whole Manex ham on the bone.** Three farmer friends, the three Jean (Manex in Basque), met in their uncompromising quest for quality. Settled in the valley, they chose Laurent Petricorena to prepare the hams. The pigs are selected for the quality of their meat, raised on the farm, fed only good cereals and able to develop two months more than the others. After salting them and rubbing them for a long time with sweet pepper, their host dries them for almost a year in a collective dryer. As with Bayonne hams on the bone, they are then cured for three months in the open air before being ready to eat. They deserve these fourteen to sixteen months of patience, because at the end of the curing process, their darker flesh develops an extraordinary scent and taste, all the more so because preserved in a ham bag, it can remain for many months without losing its aromas.

Fish, seafood and shellfish

The Basque Country is a country of fishermen, and fishing obviously means fish. Today, the main port is mainly Saint-Jean-de-Luz/Ciboure. Apart from whales, which for a long time made the ports rich, today sardines, anchovies, hake, sea bream and tuna are the main fish caught. But there are also freshwater fish that were already appreciated in the Middle Ages. Today, the main wealth is trout, which is fished by casting, casting or fly-fishing. Salmon is becoming rarer. On the other hand, the most popular fish is eel, which is fished with a trap. And one of the last jewels is the eel fry, which is experiencing a real triumph (prices are soaring!). Also called pibale, elver or angula, the eel fry is fished at



Ossau-iraty.

nightfall when it is brought up into fresh water with the help of a sieve. Its fishing is increasingly controlled.

Cheese, dairy products

► **The sheep's milk cheese.** The Basque Country is one of the leading regions in France for sheep farming and second for the production of ewe's milk. This cheese with a registered designation of origin is of course made by craftsmen. In the Basque Country, cheese is often accompanied by black cherry jam.

Fruits and vegetables

► **The Basque apple.** Autumn is apple season, in the Basque Country as elsewhere. And in the Basque Country, the first references of this fruit date back to the 11th century. It was supplanted by the vine in the 20th century and has been enjoying a revival over the last ten years or so, and artisanal production in Sagarno is booming. The Eztigar Cider Factory in particular is responsible for the rebirth of this fruit, especially the cider apple. In 1995, 15,000 apple trees were planted on a 30 hectare plot of land. Leading to the creation of the said cooperative. And today it is Segida, a group of 7 producers that manages the processing and the commercial part. With eloquent figures: harvest of 200,000 tons per year for 115,000 litres of net product. And of course, from apples to cider, there is only one step from apple to cider that cider lovers will find in the cider houses of the Basque Country.

► **Itxassou cherries.** Xapata, Pelloa, Beltza... so many varieties of cherries from the Basque region, celebrated with great pomp, as it should be, every June in Itxassou. The festival, certainly, to honour this small fruit! But also to recall the large-scale work undertaken by a group of a dozen producers, gathered within the Zapata Association and the GIE, Cerises d'Itxassou, to rehabilitate this production and thus relaunch it, notably by replanting 4,000 plants of local varieties.

The orchards are remarkable for the arrangement of their trees, in rows, of a modest height of 3 to 4 metres, allowing them to be picked from the ground. Itxassou is therefore the stronghold of the cherry, which you will soon realize, from May to June, by finding this small red fruit everywhere for sale in the village and also by discovering the famous black cherry jam that is eaten everywhere in the Basque Country with the local cheese.

Oils, spices, condiments

► **Espelette chilli pepper.** It is a plant, more precisely a fruit, a local variety which presents a certain genetic heterogeneity giving it its hardness. The fresh Espelette chilli pepper measures from 7 cm to 14 cm, is conical in shape with a slightly rounded tip and its smooth skin turns dark red while it displays a fruity fragrance that is found when it dries, associated with spiciness, classified No. 4 on the Scoville scale, a grid that allows to measure and compare the pungency of chilli peppers.

Who hasn't come across this chilli pepper in the Basque Country that gave its name to the famous village of Espelette, which lives intensely at the time of the traditional chilli pepper festival, at least once a year, on the last weekend of October, an institution, a must at the time. An aura that has boosted the young producers, who are now over fifty (thirty in 1997), and the strength of their union have come together to apply for recognition as an appellation d'origine contrôlée, which was set up in 1997. During the harvest, the chilli pepper is marketed either in powder form or in rope, these ropes which nicely flood the shops of the Basque Country, put in rope as a powder manufacturing process requiring a precise know-how. You can't miss them... and if, however, you don't see them, you can admire them, embroidered on towels and tea towels... Because Espelette chilli pepper can be used in all weathers.

► The sweet pepper of Anglet

Less well known than its neighbour from Espelette, the Anglet sweet pepper is also a local product to be discovered. With a green colour and a less spicy flavour, the vegetable can be eaten in a salad with tomatoes, onions or even as an omelette. Although there are many producers in Anglet, green chilli peppers are grown all over the Basque Country. For the Confrérie de la garbure Angloye et du piment doux d'Anglet et du Pays basque (Brotherhood of the Angloye Garbure and Sweet Pepper of Anglet and the Basque Country), there is no question of having exclusivity, the aim is just to "highlight this product of the local gastronomy".

Sweets

Chocolate

In Bayonne, the origin of chocolate manufacture and consumption dates back to the beginning of the 17th century, when the Jews chased by the Inquisition settled in the village of Saint-Esprit. However, it was in 1670 that the word chocolate first appeared in the town archives. An alderman received money for bringing 25 pounds of

chocolate from Spain. A statement of expenses, dated 1680, states that the city offered 16 pounds of chocolate to Monsieur de Vauban, the king's engineer. From the 18th century onwards, chocolate played an important role in the Bayonnais economy, and commercial rivalries began to emerge. In 1725, the publication of the ordinance of the Aldermen of Bayonne forbade the Jews living in Saint-Esprit to manufacture and retail chocolate in the town of Bayonne. That same year, Abraham d'Andrade was convicted of renting an apartment on rue Orbe to make chocolate. In order to establish their monopoly and to prevent Jews from exercising this profession, the master chocolate makers of Bayonne created a corporation in 1761, which was suppressed by the Parliament of Bordeaux in 1767, following complaints from various merchants.

► **The beginning of fame.** At the end of the 18th century, Bayonne chocolate was sold in Paris and in several towns in the kingdom. Its reputation was firmly established. In the 19th century, Bayonne asserted itself as the city of chocolate both in terms of the quality of the product and the number of chocolate makers. In 1854, there were thirty-one chocolate manufacturers in Bayonne. At that time, chocolate manufacturing also spread to many towns in the Basque Country: Biarritz, Cambo, Charritte-de-Bas, Espelette, Hasparren, La Bastide-Clairence, Saint-Etienne-de-Baigorry, Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Saint-Palais and Ustaritz. And as early as 1825, Bayonne chocolate was rewarded by various patents and medals that consecrated its unanimously recognised quality. During the great Franco-Spanish exhibition organised in Bayonne in 1864, Bayonne chocolate was honoured with a tasting competition. In the 20th century, even if it no longer occupies as important a place as it did in the last century, chocolate making remains an important activity carried by historic houses, Cazenave (1854) Daranatz (1890), Paries (1895), and more recent ones such as the Atelier du Chocolat, Chocolat Pascal, Monsieur Txokola, Mendivé (St Palais)...

Today, Bayonne continues to keep alive a tradition and know-how that dates back nearly four centuries. And it is currently the Chocolate Academy (created in 1993), bringing together craftsmen and enlightened amateurs, which is committed to defending a product that now belongs to the city's historical and gastronomic heritage.

The Basque cake

Cambo is the origin of the famous Basque cake made from corn flour and fat and was often presented in the shape of a little pig. It was in the 17th century. Later, in the 18th century, it was called *biskotxak*. And it was probably only in the 19th century that this cake was decorated with cream and then jam. Today, no bakery-pastry shop worthy of the name in the Basque Country would dare to forget in its range, the Basque cake which displays its differences according to the personality of the pastry chef, but the basis remains! You can find out all about the Basque cake at the Basque Cake Museum in Sare.

► **The Basque cake in Cambo, a long history.** It is here that you will find the oldest trace of the *biskotxak*, first family-made and then home-made. It is to Marianne Irigoyen that we owe the recipe for the Basque cake she

got from her mother. Thus, every Thursday she took the stagecoach to go and sell her cakes in Bayonne, which at the time was called "Gâteaux de Cambo". The descendants will continue the work undertaken, the little girls first, the Dibar sisters nicknamed the Biskotx sisters... And it is only long afterwards that their recipe will be passed on to a pastry cook in Cambo, just before the eldest one disappears! "In Cambo, well-being is also a matter of greed..." This undoubtedly explains the craze for the Basque Cake Festival, which has become an unmissable event, promoted in particular by Eguzkia.

► **Eguzkia.** Soleil en basque, an image reminiscent of the shape and golden appearance of the cake, was created in 1994, followed by 25 companies, all determined to enhance the value of the real Basque cake, consolidate and develop the activities of craftsmen through the promotion of a traditional product made from natural raw materials – according to strict specifications – and of course contribute to the economic development of the Basque Country.

► **The Basque cake brotherhood.** Another major asset was the creation of the Basque Cake Brotherhood some time ago, giving Cambo another ambassador who not only highlights the Basque cake, but also the town of Cambo, notably by getting involved in the various festivals of the 180 or so brotherhoods of the South-West, by organising cake-making courses, not forgetting the competition for the best Basque cake, after very specialised tastings! Icing on the cake, their respective roles in promoting the town and its cake have become a priority, thus contributing to



Gâteau basque.

the brand's legibility. With numerous exchanges as well, such as their presence, for example, at the bread festival in Paris, the Maubourguet terroir festival, the Bordeaux fair, the San Sebastian festival in the Spanish Basque Country, meetings with other partners, but also efforts in certain areas such as obtaining the Label Rouge by the INAO, which they support.

ALCOHOL AND SPIRITS

Wines

Wine tourism today has the wind in its sails... And no one, enlightened amateur or simple novice, hesitates to push the door of a wine estate in the New-Aquitaine region, particularly in the department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques, rich in known and recognized vineyards, nestled in landscapes of anthology, superb authenticity and populated by men attached to their land and determined to make it known... Irouleguy, Madiran, Jurançon, Saint-Mont, as many riches as these lands of character where exceptional wines are born. In the Basque Country, wine is cultivated on the slopes, on terraces and this is how the "courbu" blossoms. In these vineyards, the doors are open all year round, even if summer remains the high point of wine tourism.

► **Irouleguy.** With a completely renovated work tool, 12 new double vats, 3 new cellars for white and red barrels and two new presses, the site of the Cave d'Irouleguy is being modernized and the harvest promises to be beautiful! To present this world to the curious, the Cave has also created a scenic area that will plunge you into the Irouleguy vineyard, one of the smallest in France. Along this self-guided tour, you will taste their latest vintages and find a variety of offers in bottles, gift ideas, objects around wine, but also local products from partners such

as sheep cheese, local cider and apple juice, Espelette chilli pepper... Companies are also part of this dynamic, as the Winery now offers meeting spaces for thoughtful events around Basque culture and identity.

► **From the ocean came wine: Egiategia, underwater winemaking:** The terrace of the cellar overlooks the bay of Saint-Jean-de-Luz and it is perhaps from admiring it that the idea was born in the mind of Emmanuel Poirmeur, an agricultural engineer and oenologist... One thing is certain, it is here, 15 metres from the depths of the sea, that some of its wines are vinified! This method is patented and unique in the world. It reveals aromas that cannot develop elsewhere and the white wines of the Dena Dela cuvée surf on lime and freshness, while the rosés reveal wild strawberries and the reds an exotic density. The vintages are exceptional and the chardonnay is grown on the cliffs, on the edge of a ledge. Erlaitza will seduce you with its complex notes of citrus fruit, bergamot and beech wood. Mysterious and bewitching, it sums up well the spirit of this estate, which is fascinating to visit. By reservation only, from Tuesday to Friday, the cellars are open from April to October for tastings. Visit (first immersion) of the winery and explanation of underwater winemaking. Tasting of 3 wines (white, red and rosé). Duration: 45 min.

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