GASTRONOMY & Wine tourism

**Wines with Protected Denomination of Origin**
Rioja Alavesa and Txakoli

**Michelin Starred Chefs**

**Top quality ingredients**
from land and sea

**Nanogastronomy**
Haute cuisine in miniature

**BASQUE COUNTRY**
There are 150 experiences to choose. They are subject to change and may be updated. Therefore, before you choose an experience and to find out about prices, schedules and places available, we advise you check the website: tourism.euskadi.eus/en/
The Basque Country is a land where all of the food, be it hake, tuna, beef or beans, has a special character. Cold, wild waters, green, plentiful pasture, strong north winds... they all blend together with the local wisdom to produce something truly unique.

Everything close at hand

One of the secrets of this internationally recognised cuisine is undoubtedly the quality and diversity of raw materials that enable the creation of an endless world of wine and food experiences. The natural resources have a short and busy journey to your table: extraordinary beef, lamb and pork raised in any one of the Basque villages and farms that dot the hills and valleys. And delicious beans, peppers, silver beet, leeks... grown in farmstead gardens in Gernika-Lumo, Arratia, Astigarraga, Ordizia or Tolosa... The hand-caught bonito, txipirón, hake and sea bream... Latxa sheep provide a unique milk for the prized Idiazabal cheese, grapes from Getaria, Bakio and Azas/Ayala give birth to innovative txakolis, the vineyards of Rioja Alavesa are the basis of unique wines and apples from Astigarraga and Hernani yield highly regarded ciders.

On your trip you will discover that the hills also provide succulent morsels: delicious dishes of woodcock, boar, partridge, pigeon and rabbit are on offer... or a wealth of wild mushrooms. The secret of Basque cuisine is its own superb ingredients and centuries of tradition. Savouring it is the pleasure of gods.

And there is a strong cast of actors committed to satisfy the most refined palates. You can put them to the test when you try the extraordinary dishes made by chefs that cultivate their vocation and display it in the plethora of traditional and avant garde recipes they offer you.

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

The gastronomy is the star

A COUNTRY WITH RESOURCES

The culinary tradition of this country is fruit of the passion for working with what the land and the sea provide. Today, authentically local dishes such as bacalao al pil pil (cod with hot pepper-garlic sauce) or Bizkaia-style, marmitako (tuna stew with potatoes), pourrusalda a la ondarresa (soup with potatoes, leeks, cod... from Ondarroa), among others, acquire in the hands of certain chefs a different way of expressing their essence. And this should not surprise us: such dedication must inevitably take recipes from the “olden days” on new paths of discovery, eager to face new challenges and constantly seeking to eclipse its own achievements. This has given rise to a generation of chefs that pours all its wisdom into providing new culinary experiences embodied in dishes fit for the most refined palates. Nothing escapes the urge to innovate: garden products, seafood, all kinds of meat... are transformed into sublime morsels in which the aesthetic appeal and the flavour compete for the attention of the senses of the most demanding diner. Innovation is the trend. Try it.
Experience the identity of a people

Euskadi Gastronomika

The gastronomy, from the most traditional to the most innovative, is one of the hallmarks of the Basque Country and is deeply rooted in the daily lives of the people, linked to our history, customs and leisure activities. It has crossed frontiers and is acknowledged and praised all over the world. The secret? The excellence and diversity of the raw materials that the sea and land of the Basque Country provide and the expertise of the great Basque cooks. We want to place this wide and diverse proposal at your fingertips, and for that reason we present Euskadi Gastronomika, a gastronomic tourism Product Club the aim of which is to delight you with the best experiences, the best cuisine and the best service quality. Euskadi Gastronomika is a network of networks based on criteria of demand for and commitment to quality assumed by all actors involved in the process. Therefore it is an unbeatable guarantee for the consumer.

Gastronomy is one of the hallmarks of identity of the Basque Country

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

On egin!

www.euskadigastronomika.eus
Line-caught hake, authentic bonito del norte, tuna, monkfish, “ankeoa” (anchovy), “txixarros” (mackerel), cod, “bautxas” (cuttlefish), “txipirones” (small squid), and numerous other species that the arrantzales (fishermen) of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa haul from the sea are unloaded every day from powerful modern fishing boats at the Basque wharves, conditioned by sustainable management of the Bay of Biscay.

Off the hook and… closely monitored!

The anchovies from the Bay of Biscay, or “bokarta” are renowned among connoisseurs. There were once fears about the alarming decline in anchovy stocks. However, an exemplary collaboration of biologists, institutions and the arrantzale has achieved a balance of catch and consumption. So you can once again try this tasty delicacy.

Science and technology have been applied to fishing practices, so that now about 138,000 tonnes of anchovy live in Basque waters. So the anchovy of the Cantabrian Sea remains a key ingredient on our tables, be it fried, battered, in oil or as a paste.

The Bay of Biscay holds another treasure that regularly features on Basque dinner tables: line-caught hake. Those in the know say that its great taste is enhanced when caught by a simple rod. Arrantzales from Hondarribia are masters of these arts. You will see this for yourself when they arrive at port.

From the fishmarket to the tin

Have a look at a can of tuna in your kitchen cupboard… Salted, preserved and tinned fish from Basque fisheries are world renowned. The Basque Country is responsible for 10% of the nation’s fish canning industry. A large part of the haul that comes into the docks of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa are taken to be processed and canned. Skipjack and bluefin tuna dominate over 60% of the trade. Here they process fillets, anchovies, eels and even the world’s largest production of squid ink!
The Basque Country’s agricultural and food industry has its own mark of distinction known as the ‘Eusko Label’. This seal of quality and provenance, overseen by the Basque Government, is granted to those products produced, processed and elaborated in the Basque Autonomous Community, whose quality is well above average. As such, Eusko Label is a guarantee of authenticity. To find it, look out for the clear ‘K’ symbol that distinguishes the products.

You can find a wide range of products with the distinctive Eusko Label: Euskal Okela beef, Basque suckling lamb, Bonito del Norte and Bluefin tuna, Caserío Vasco de chickens and eggs, honey, milk, Basque lettuce and tomato, potatoes from Álava, peppers from Gernika, hot green peppers from Ibarra, beans from Tolosa, pinto beans from Álava, virgin olive oil, farmyard pork and natural Basque Country cider, “Euskal Sagardoa”. Don’t miss your chance to taste the delicacies that carry the Eusko Label seal of quality... or take some home as a gift.

With respect to ‘denominaciones de origen’ (the Spanish ‘Designation of Origin’ food and wine qualification,) in the Basque Country, there are five: for txakolis from Araba/Álava, Getaria and Bizkaia, Idiazabal cheese and the wines from Rioja Alavesa.

www.hazi.eus

The choice is endless... the land dedicated to cultivation and farming demands great effort, despite the area allocated to agriculture in Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa being relatively modest. In Álava, the countryside is on a different scale. When you visit the region, compare the farming output. There are a lot of differences when you have less space!

The tomatoes and lettuces grown in the huertos (vegetable gardens) and caseríos (traditional Basque farmhouses) of Hernani, Tolosa, Leioa, Gernika and Aiara-Ayala provide one of the keys to success in Basque kitchens. Why you try them, you will appreciate the taste that only passion and toil can provide.

The potatoes from the Álava region, both those destined for the kitchen or replanting, enjoy a well-earned reputation. And the grapes of Rioja Alavesa is the origin of wines of great prestige at home and abroad.
The provenance of Basque food and farm produce ensures extraordinary quality. Even the bees that live in the Basque Country have become specialists. For each of the many honeys they produce they use lavender, clover, blackberry, rosemary, eucalyptus or chestnut flowers! And like them, the production of the caseríos and farms are also the result of a different way of doing things.

From the farm and the orchard... you are going to love it all

In the caseríos and farms of the Basque Country, everything takes its time. The local caserío chickens, with their reddish plumage and yellowish skin and feet, are the result of a careful selection process and spend their days on the open range. The heifers reared and raised on these pastures provide delicious fillets and steaks. The great aromas in the kitchens around here must come form somewhere!

When you travel along the Basque roads, look out for the images and pictures of the Latxa sheep breed, characteristic of the area. You can see them on the bumper stickers of many of the cars. Its a symbol of this unique breed of sheep that enjoys such wide renown.

In the Urkiola Nature Reserve, shepherd Patxi Solana invites us to share the daily chores in the farmhouse: Milking the sheep. Make cuajada (curd) and soaps. Traditional wool craft. Idiazabal cheese tasting. And in November, feeding a bottle to newborn lambs.
The signature dish in this country: gastronomy

The pleasure of sitting down table

It is not a cliché. Here, any problem is solved around the dinner table. From their passion for good cuisine, a science with a divine status has evolved. Sit down and enjoy the Basque Country is synonymous with the best cuisine. The devotion to food is present in all aspects of life here. In the domestic arena, lunchtime or dinnertime take on a special significance, above all when there is one of the many celebrations and get-togethers. Business deals also provide a good excuse for a meal. One of the reasons you have chosen the Basque Country as a destination may well be its cuisine... in which case, you have excellent taste!
The authors of the Red Michelin Guide have their work cut out for them in the Basque Country. Their visits to Basque restaurants are a regular event. The quality they find in its establishments is growing exponentially with the chefs constantly striving to surpass themselves. When you discover the cuisine of the Basque country’s Michelin starred chefs, you will taste for yourself that they have truly earned the accolade…

The Basque constellation shines with its very own light

The taste of glory*

Traditional cooking workshop

In an enjoyable atmosphere you will be initiated in the secrets of one of the finest cuisines in the world, and guided by outstanding local chefs you will discover the love that this requires. In the cooking workshop they will teach you how to prepare the most acclaimed Basque dishes. And afterwards you will have the pleasure of a delicious meal.

To visit these temples of cuisine is to get a little closer to heaven...

These stars of the culinary arts are held in the highest esteem in these lands and some of them have moved away from the Basque Country to run restaurants and spread the reputation of the area’s cuisine. And while they are there, the awards keep coming. It is easy to find an award-winning restaurant here. Wherever you are, there is sure to be one nearby. San Sebastian holds the world record for the highest number of Michelin Stars per inhabitant!
If you would like a menu of grilled fish or meat, head to an erretega (grill house). Some outstanding establishments are located in Getaria, Orio, Tolosa, Sukarrieta, Larrabetzu or Areatza. Aromas of bream, hake and steaks fill the air, cooked to perfection on a grill over sweet embers. Give in to temptation... A word of advice: good meat should be eaten rare, the fish medium rare.

Sagardotegiak (cider breweries) are other establishments that offer the same grills with the added delight of their picturesque setting between kupelas (barrels). The wineries of Rioja Alavesa offer another fine and differentiated manner of dining. You should make a reservation for the day and number of diners. The most common dishes are chorizo with potatoes or rack of lamb barbecued with vine leaves.
As would be expected in a society that values its cuisine so highly, food-related festivals are the order of the day all year round. From January through to December in town squares and gastronomy clubs, festivals and celebrations, hundreds of keen local cooks take part in various culinary contests that take place across the Basque Country. Their spontaneous creations of the amateurs hold their own against the professionals’ dishes. Beans, paellas, potatoes, snails, tortillas (omelettes), cod and marmitako (potatoes with skipjack tuna) feature in some of the most fiercely fought contests. Groups of friends often enter the contests as a team.

In San Sebastian, housewives, young amateurs and chefs from the local bars and taverns take part in a “tortilla de patatas” (Spanish omelette) competition on the beach at La Concha. If you walk through Bilbao’s Arenal park during the festivities in August, you could participate in the ‘Cazuela’ (stew) contest. In the fields of Aixerrota de Algorta, they compete to make the best paella. In Balmaseda, given its mining tradition, they produce gigantic ‘calderetas’ (lamb stews). In the Rioja Alavesa region, they produce gigantic ‘calderetas’ (lamb stews). In Lasudio-Llodio, stewed rabbit is the prize dish and amongst all of them, the marmitako may be the prize dish.

They say that the first gastronomy clubs were started in the mid 19th Century as an excuse for the men of the house to escape for a few hours for a little leisure time away from the family. Whether that is true or not, things are definitely changing and among the 1,548 gastronomic clubs in the Basque Country and Navarra, more and more of these traditionally male dominated groups are opening their doors to women.

A great idea!

Putxera in Balmaseda:
Cook your own putxera stew under the instruction of a local who knows the secret ingredients to add to the beans, bacon and chorizo. Enjoy tucking into a putxera, cooked over the coals with a low flame in a typical txoko tavern.

After this, be sure to visit the Balmaseda History Museum, the Passion Interpretation Centre and the San Severino Church, before you head back out for a few more ‘bolitos’ (small glasses of wine while bar-hopping).

Guided tour of the facilities in a unique, warm and friendly environment, learning in the course of pintxos (marmitako, a Basque tuna stew with potatoes; milhojas – or milefeuilles – of vegetables and mallard duck; peppers stuffed with morcilla – a type of blood sausage – and mushrooms; and “marriage of anchovies”) and savouring the traditional Basque lunch.

www.sociedadesgastronomicas.com
The ‘amamas’

have always known
of the SLOW FOOD

It was the ‘amamas’ (grandmas) who in the ‘caseríos’, inherited the secrets and recipes from their ancestors that have brought such fame to traditional Basque cuisine. This knowledge was shared with the men of the house. In each Basque home, you will find an extraordinary wealth of knowledge – both from him and from her – of advanced cooking principles. Their larders and suppliers provoke admiration and the healthiest of envy!

To begin with, you should know that the bread made in the ‘caseríos’ was once made of corn in the shape of a flat cake (talo), that later gave way to wheaten bread. Today the sourdough is mixed with a variety of organic whole grain flours the quality of which will surprise you.

A cold rainy day used to be the perfect excuse for preparing a good babarruna (bean stew) on a winter’s day. Nowadays, any day is a good day to enjoy this dish, garnished with its ‘sacred ingredients’: bacon, piparrak (chillies) and odolkiak (black pudding). Don’t miss out.

Some humble potatoes with chorizo cooked in Álavan territory will haunt your memory for a long time. You will also love the dishes based on garden products like pourrusalda (leek broth), a very healthy traditional recipe.

The local Cardos (edible thistles) and vainas (beans) hake in green sauce with potatoes, cod with pil-pil (garlic) sauce or Biscay style, red and white meats, perrebikas omelette (spring mushroom) and snails are other dishes deeply rooted in local custom. These are typical products still prepared on a daily basis in remote caseríos and offered to the public at fairs and markets.

The curd is one of the favourite desserts in the Basque Country. Produced seasonally from sheep’s milk, try it with sugar or honey. If you are lucky, the shepherd will have given it a special flavour by inserting a hot piece of iron into it.

The variety is endless, and each home has its jealously guarded recipes. Although they are all different, the end result is the same: superb!
COD to Biscay Style

INGREDIENTS (for 4 diners)
4 salted cod loins, 3 red onions,
2 cloves of garlic, 10 ‘chorizo’ peppers,
1 leek, flour or 3 slices of stale bread,
olive oil, salt

PREPARATION
The salted cod must be soaked in frequently-changed water for 24 hours before use.
To make the sauce: take a pan and add enough olive oil to cover the bottom.
Cook the finely chopped onion on low heat until it begins to brown. Add the chopped garlic and leeks. Dice and add the bread and one or two spoonfuls of flour, just enough to thicken the sauce.
Remove the seeds from the peppers and leave them soaking in cold water. Bring to the boil again. They are now ready to use. Remove the skin and add a few minutes until a homogeneous mixture is obtained.
Add the squid ink mixed with the white wine. Cook for half an hour. Meanwhile, take the opportunity to clean the squid.
You may like to stuff them with their own envelopes of squid ink. 1 ripe tomato, 2 large onions, 1 clove garlic, 1 glass of white wine, 1 piece of stale bread, olive oil, salt

SQUID in their own INK

INGREDIENTS (for 4 diners)
500 g of txipirones (baby squid), 2 envelopes of squid ink 1 ripe tomato, 2 large onions, 1 clove garlic, 1 glass of white wine, 1 piece of stale bread, olive oil, salt

PREPARATION
Stir-fry in a saucepan bathed in olive oil, chopped onion, sliced garlic and finely chopped tomatoes. Allow the onion to soften.
Then add the diced stale bread and leave for a few minutes until a homogenous mixture is obtained. Add the squid ink mixed with the white wine. Cook for half an hour. Meanwhile, take the opportunity to clean the squid.
You may like to stuff them with their own envelopes of squid ink. Add a teaspoon of paprika and stir in.
Add water as required and boil for 10 minutes.
Add the potatoes and boil for another 20 minutes at medium heat.
Add the chopped parsley and the hake. Toss to the saucepan gently. Taste to assess the seasoning (salt and pepper), adjust as necessary and... to the table.

POTATOES with CHORIZO

INGREDIENTS (for 4 diners)
1 kg potatoes, 500 g of cooking chorizo, 2 cloves garlic, 1 onion, 1/2 red pepper, 1 Italian green pepper, 500 ml of water, sweet or spicy paprika from the Vera region, olive oil, black pepper, salt

PREPARATION
Finely chop the onion, green and red pepper.
Place the onion and peppers in a saucepan and stir. Meanwhile, peel dice the potatoes, cut them into thick slices, add to the saucepan and stir.
Add a teaspoon of paprika and stir in.
Add water as required and boil for 10 minutes.
Add the potatoes and boil for another 20 minutes at medium heat.
Taste to assess the seasoning (salt and pepper), adjust as necessary and... to the table.

KIDNEY BEANS with their 'SACRED INGREDIENTS'

INGREDIENTS (for 4 diners)
300 g of Tolosa beans or Alava pinto beans, 200 g of pork ribs, 100 g bacon, 150 g chorizo 1 black puddling made with onions, 1 onion, 1 green pepper, 1 leek, 2 cloves garlic, Ibarra hot peppers, olive oil, salt

PREPARATION
Leave the beans to soak the day before.
Cook the ribs and bacon with water and a pinch of salt for 30 minutes in the pressure cooker. Drain and set aside.
Cook the black pudding and chorizo in a separate pot in water with a pinch of salt for 40 minutes at slow heat.
Chop the onion, green pepper and leek and lightly fry in the pressure cooker with a little olive oil.
Drain and add the beans. Cover with water, season and close, allowing 30 minutes cooking time.
The beans are then served with their sacred ingredients. The hot Ibarra peppers are the ideal accompaniment.

HAKE in GREEN SAUCE

INGREDIENTS (for 2 diners)
4 thick slices of hake, 250 grams of clams, 125 ml of fish broth, 2 tablespoons white wine, 4 cloves of garlic, chopped parsley, flour, olive oil and salt

PREPARATION
Soak the clams in salty water for an hour to allow them to eject any remaining sand.
Peel and finely chop the garlic. Place the oil in a saucepan and heat. Add the garlic and brown slightly. Stir in a spoonful of flour and leave for half a minute.
Add the wine and fish broth and heat up.
Add the chopped parsley and the hake. Cook for three minutes after each step, shaking the saucepan gently.
Add the clams and continue to shake the saucepan until the sauce thickens. Your dish will be ready in a few minutes. You won’t believe how good it is.
A very sweet country

A gastronomy so rich in “savouries” has to have its counterpart in “sweets”. So it is not surprising to find that each province has its own specialities, all different from one another, that you will find in the bakeries any town you visit.

If you have a sweet tooth, the chocolate truffles of Vitoria-Gasteiz and Bilbao are inimitable. The vasquitos and nesquitas and the San Prudencio tart from the capital of Alava are also exquisite. The bilbainitos, rice cakes, Carolinas (chocolate meringues) Pastel ruso, (baked meringues) Torta de San Blas (biscuits with icing)... in Bilbao

In Markina-Xemein the cocotes share the top billing with briscones and opillas (tarts) in Irún, sanblases (cookies) in Rioja Alavesa or the bizcochos (sponge) and chocolates from Mendaro.

You will be offered cigarillos and tejas in Tolosa and ori-baltzak, a white chocolate sponge cake in Gernika-Lumo. Bergara is famous for its fillings and tostones. The pastel vasco (gateau Basque) and apple pie are characteristic and highly appreciated throughout the Basque Country.

Txutxitos (puff cakes) from Vitoria-Gasteiz, Ignacios from Argetia, xaxus from Tolosa, pantxineta and franchipán from San Sebastian...

Everything you choose will take you back to forgotten taste sensations.

And for dessert...

Other sweets are also featured on the menus. One example is “Intxaur-Saltsa,” a traditional dessert based on walnuts, and mamia or sheep milk curds that you can enjoy on its own or with honey from Gorbea. Another local dessert is Idiazabal cheese, a product with Designation of Origin that combines brilliantly with quince jelly. And if you are in Álava, don’t miss the “Goxua” (layered cream cake).

Another typical dessert, this time of Vasco-French origin, is Basque tart, that you can try filled with baker’s cream or fruit like cherries or apricots. It is always juicy inside and crisp on the outside. Absolutely delicious!
PINTXOS

the greatness

of cuisine in miniature

It all started off with the humble *Gilbas* (chillies with olives and anchovy), *bandarrillas* (pickles speared on a toothpick) and the simple *Péles* or boiled eggs. The idea was a little something to eat between glasses of wine. Bars and taverns elaborated on the idea and those first straightforward pintxos gave rise to the sophisticated science of nanogastronomy.

From bar to bar or in the same tavern... experience the art of pintxos.

A few tips to ensure that you find the most popular and appealing areas: The Marina district in Hondarribia, the streets of 31 de Agosto, Mayor, Embeltrán and Reyes Católicos in San Sebastian, the districts of the Casco Viejo (Old Town), Diputación and Poza in Bilbao, and the streets of Cuchillería, Dato, Prado and Rioja in Vitoria-Gasteiz... and in the centre of each and every town throughout the Basque Country.

The list is endless!

"It is easy to lose yourself in the limitless world of the pintxo"
A different way to have lunch

The men and women who run the local bars and restaurants go to ever greater lengths to develop this form of culinary expression which, due to its great popularity, has spread to neighbouring regions and to some of the world’s most glamorous establishments. You can find them anywhere around the Basque Country. Food experts and gourmets fill the best local establishments. When the food is this good, word spreads. You will be astonished as you work your way through the list of sophisticated pintxos on offer, some of which give off clouds of liquid nitrogen while others look like a nest of vipers. Tradition has been blended with the latest technologies.

Cuisine in miniature is quite a spectacle

Should you wear a napkin or a white laboratory coat? Nanogastronomy assimilates some of the molecular cuisine of Adrià, Blumenthal, Gagnaire and This... But there’s no need to go so far: The Basque Country is home to the pioneers of the pintxo 3.0. Haute cuisine in miniature has turned into quite a spectacle! So much so that the Campeonato Euskal Herria de Pintxos (Basque pintxo championship) held in Hondarribia, is broadcast by Basque television as if it were the World Cup Final.

Contests with a mark of distinction

Check the schedules. It should not be too hard to find one of the many pintxo competitions that take place all over the Basque Country: The Championship of Gipuzkoa, of Sopelana, the inter-bar Pintxos championship of Bilbao-Bizkaia, of Deusto, of the Medieval Cities, the Vitoria-Gasteiz Championship of Pintxo Week and the Pintxo Championship of Zumarraga.

Pintxo workshop in San Sebastian

Passion for fine food, tradition, quality and international fame... you are in San Sebastian, which means a visit to a market, a gourmet shop... The Old Town is also a must. The workshop is led by an expert chef, and then afterwards, sampling of the pintxos that have been prepared.

www.vitoria-gasteiz.org
sansebastianturismo.com
www.bilbaoturismo.net

www.campeonatodepintxos.com
To say that wine is the economic motor of the Rioja Alavesa region may seem obvious, but you may not be aware how far its reputation has travelled. Although it was in 1991 when wines from Rioja earned the distinction of ‘calificada’ (qualified) added to the ‘Denominación de Origen’, the Real Junta de Cosecheros (Royal Board of Winemakers) had already been set up by 1787 to foster planting of vineyards and to enhance the quality of the wines.

If it is a world that interests you, you may like to know that the main varieties of grape authorized by the Regulatory Council are, for reds: tempranillo, grenache, graciano, carignan and maturana tinta. For the whites: viura, malvasía, grenache blanc, tempranillo blanco, maturana blanca, turruntés, chardonnay, sauvignon blanc and verdejo. Around 79% of the wine produced in the Rioja Alavesa region comes from the tempranillo grape.

It is always interesting to visit the wineries and soak up the wine culture, especially in a land that produces wines that are world renowned for their quality.

If you would like to discover another side to wine, uncork a bottle after seeing how it is made. Usually white – also red or rosé – with its own personality and growing presence on tables all over the world, txakoli is made from Hodarribia txuri and beltz and munemahatsa grapes. Each area has its own wine tourist route. Txakoli vineyards are different...

Some say it is their acidic character that is the key to their success.

Not all Basque wine is from the Rioja Alavesa region… The provinces of Getaria, the Biscay Coast, Gernika and Aiara in Álava produce the ‘other’ Basque wine that enjoys the distinction of the ‘denominación de origen’: txakoli.

The pleasure of travel through wine

The pleasure of travel through wine... all rolled into one

**Rioja Alavesa renowned quality**

**Txakoli: A seductive wine**

A STROLL THROUGH THE VINEYARDS OF RIOJA ALAVESA

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**A STROLL THROUGH THE VINEYARDS OF RIOJA ALAVESA**
The region of Rioja Alavesa has been an historic part on the route of hundreds of cultures making their way from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Biscay. These thousand years of culture has left a rich mark. Dolmens, vineyards, olive groves, architectural wonders, burial sites, chapels, bridges, paths, wineries and cellars tell tales of these lands through the ages.

Rioja Alavesa is located between the tranquil left bank of the Ebro River and the high slopes of the Cantabria mountain range that rises to a thousand. This spectacular geography has forced the locals to plant the vineyards on terraces and gentle slopes with clay and chalky earth that gives the vines and grapes a special character when producing crianzas (wines aged for two years in barrels) and reservas (wines ages at least three years in barrels).

The human touch is also evident in Rioja Alavesa. The works of architects such as Mazières, Calatrava, Aspiazu, Gehry and Marino, to name a few, can be seen in the outstanding buildings and wineries, but the wine cellars and family-owned wineries in Laguardia, Lapuebla de Labarca, Leza and Navaridas, will certainly impress you just as much, despite having less famous creators.

But pay attention. There’s a lot more to the place than vineyards!

You will never forget them. The Rioja Alavesa wines, along with those from Rioja Baja and Rioja Alta, all hold the distinction of the Denominación de Origen Calificada Rioja (The Rioja Designation of Origin). Almost three thousand hectares of vineyards are cultivated to produce some excellent crianzas, reservas and young wines. They regularly win the top prizes in the international wine contests in which the take part.

The ‘vendimia’ (grape harvest) takes place in September. A great excuse to visit the area!
When on the road from Laguardia or Lapuebla de Labarca, Elciego comes into view in the distance, it will shine with iridescent silver, gold and pink sparkles... the proud centrepiece of the new installations designed by Frank Gehry at the Bodegas Vinos de los Hermanos del Marqués de Riscal winery draws everyone’s attention. Within a few steps, you can pass from the 21st century wine cellars to the most avant-garde architecture of the wine world.

**Wine presses in titanium and glass**

In the tourist offices in Laguardia, Labastida and Elciego, you can find information about the constant tourism initiatives that are going on around the Rioja Alavesa region and about visits to the wineries and cellars. Wine-related architecture is impressive. Santiago Calatrava drew inspiration from a wine glass and rows of barrels to give form to the winery and he came up with Ysios which, next to Laguardia, stands out for its undulating roof line and backdrop of the Cantabria Sierra. In Samaniego, the wine-related architecture offers a spectacle of light and shadow, with great open spaces of glass and concrete perfectly integrated with its surroundings. Iñaki Aspiazu is the mastermind behind these installations at the Bodegas Baigorri winery. The French architect Philippe Mazières designed the CVNE winery in Laguardia. Both the wineries of Campillo in Laguardia and Faustino in Oion, offer other attractive destinations for your trip around the Rioja Alavesa region.

**Enjoy a cycle ride among vineyards**

Discover the vineyards and wineries of Rioja Alavesa on this beautiful route by ebike. You’ll set off from the village of Labastida in the company of a guide who’ll tell you about the culture, landscape and most important traditions of the area along the way. Back in Labastida you’ll visit a traditional winery, where you’ll be able to taste their wines together with a delicious snack.

**History with open walls**

The Basque people discovered the virtues of Rioja Alavesa thousands of years ago. Each of its towns boasts a rich historical heritage that can’t fail to attract your attention. Some worth noting are the dolmens of Layaza, the Herrera pass, Sotillo, San Martin, La Huevera in Laguardia, La Chabola de la Hechicera in Elvillar, El Encinal and Los Llanos in Kiapan. You will also soak up the history here. The medieval origins of Rioja Alavesa, between Navarre and Castile, explain the presence of numerous walled towns. Labraza is one of them. It has won the International Award for Walled Towns due to its excellent state of conservation. The hundred inhabitants live like feudal lords in one of Álava’s most attractive villages. Nearby Laguardia dominates the centre of the province. Its city walls and towers shelter a hive of activity in which tourism holds a privileged status. If you have the opportunity, take a guided tour which includes the portal of Santa María Church. It is not only well-preserved, but remarkable for other reasons.

On the far west border of Rioja Alavesa the town of Salinillas de Buradón proudly maintains its defensive walls, towers and the mansion of the Condes de Oñate. There is a saltwater spring that attracts hundreds of tourists every year. You are sure to enjoy yourself! Schedule in a fun day of wine tourism in Rioja Alavesa.

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

The warm, moist winds from the Bay of Biscay assist cultivation of great vineyards in the Basque Country devoted to “txakoli” together with the caserios of the coast of Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia or the Alava-Ayala valley in Alava. It is twenty years since its inclusion in the D.O., a distinction that led to a positive growth and evolution of this wine.

With the breeze from the Cantabrian Sea

The districts of Getaria, Zarautz, Amurrio, Bakio and Orduná offer entertaining tours that combine local culture with gastronomy and wine tasting.

With the taste of txakoli

You can visit working wineries and take part in tastings, sometimes at night, to learn the secrets of this very special wine. In passing you will also get to know coastal and inland towns full of local colour and traditions. You will see the vineyards that produce the grape that performs the magic of turning into “txakoli”. When they show you how to combine it with other local products like Idiazabal cheese, Bermeo anchovies or Gernika peppers you will feel like a qualified sommelier.

And remember that txakoli from the Basque Country boasts 3 ‘denominaciones de origen’:

• Getaria (Aia, Orio, Zarautz and Getaria) “Getariako txakolina” www.getariakotxakolina.com
• Bizkaia (Bakio and Gernika-Lumo) “Bizkaiko txakolina” www.bizkaiko txakolina.org

And if you prefer to enjoy the experience in a winery: tourism.euskadi.eus/en/

Three star txakoli: the wine and gastronomy experience of Azurmendi

Enter the world of txakoli on a guided tour of this wine and gastronomy complex led by Aixa Eneko, renowned chef of the Azurmendi restaurant, which has been awarded 3 Michelin stars. Three wine and gastronomy options from which to choose.

tourism.euskadi.eus/en/
If you are lucky, your visit to a cider brewery will coincide with a festive triki-trixa celebration with accordions and tambourines. The experience is well worth it. To get a full appreciation of the world of cider, you can visit Sagardoetxea (The Cider Museum) in Astigarraga, the capital of Basque cider. This is where the ‘agardun’ project was developed to keep the culture of the apple alive.

In Ezkio-Itsaso, the Igartubeiti Caserio Museum offers a diverse range of fun activities all involving apples and showing how a tolare, the cider press, works. The districts of San Sebastian, Tolosa, Legorreta, Aramaio and Gernika boast numerous sagardotegiak (cider breweries).

www.sagardoarenlurraldea.eus
www.sagardoa.eus

is the magic word

A trip to a cider brewery should figure on any itinerary around the Basque Country. Traditionally, people eat standing up, helping themselves from the barrel taps and singing.

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

Cider and the sea
Relive the adventure of whaling, discover its connection with cider and savour the cuisine associated with it, in a guided visit to the Sagardoetxea Basque Cider Museum: You will eat in a cider house, take a boat trip across the bay of La Concha and visit the aquarium, also with a guide.

www.sagardoarenlurraldea.eus
www.sagardoa.eus

Cider and txotx! (cider directly from the barrel) as a family
The world of the Basque cider houses opens up before you: you will visit the farm house and the apple orchards, and see how the apples are processed ... all in an entertaining and enjoyable way. The cider cellar awaits you along with a typical cider house menu, with cider in the “txotx” style (directly from the kupela, or barrel) and apple juice for the kids, who will also receive a small gift.
Both the markets of caserío produce and the fishermen’s latest haul offer easily available freshness, quality and contact with the producers themselves.

It couldn’t be any fresher.

From the caserío to the market...

...and to your table.

Whatever time of year you visit the area, the local produce markets are always open in any of the main Basque towns. If you visit one you will deal with “baserritarras” (countrymen) just as their regular customers do.
On various occasions throughout the year, they organize special markets such as those of Santo Tomás in the three Basque capitals, the Salvatierra-Aguain livestock fair, the potato fair in Valdegovía-Gaubea, the Santiago market in Vitoria-Gasteiz, the Pimiento de Gernika day, the Mercado Agrícola (farmers’ market in Balmaseda) or Tolosa Goxua: Sweets fair in Tolosa. Cider, cheese, the “txistorra” skipjack tuna, anchovies, mackerel and the local txakoli are some of the treats awaiting you in the colourful fairs and market days in Astigarraga, Ordizia, Orio, Hondarribia and Zarautz or Bermeo.

Markets and Fairs

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People appreciate the seasonal nature of food here: the spring’s first Idiazabal cheeses, the summer fruit and vegetables, the autumn “perretxiko”, wild mushrooms from autumn, beans in winter…

Visit to a market

The markets and fairs thrive on the personal contact between clients and the producers of the food. A few worth a special mention in San Sebastián: La Bretxa, El Antiguo and San Martín. Without leaving Gipuzkoa, in the town of Ordizia on Wednesdays you can see how they fix the market prices that all other parts of the territory use as a reference. In Tolosa on Saturdays you can get your hands on some superb beans and black pudding.

Bilbao never does things by halves! According to the Guinness Book of Records, La Ribera is the world’s biggest produce market, as well as taking the title of largest covered market in Europe.

It has to be a Monday. The market in Gernika opens its doors on the first day of the week throughout the year and, as a special and highly popular day, on the first and last Monday of October which always draws a crowd. On Saturdays, you may also find some tasty seasonal treats on offer! In Vitoria-Gasteiz, the market couldn’t be easier to get to, it’s right in the city centre in the Plaza de Abastos which still buzzes with its traditional, intense activity. Each Saturday they display a selection of fruit, vegetables and cheeses around the outside of the market
A gourmet out shopping...

Cheeses with a quality seal
In the Basque Country milk from the native Latxa sheep breed produces a delicious cheese of recognised prestige. This is the Idiazábal cheese with designation of origin, that you will love to savour in any of its varieties, white or smoked. Taking some home as a gift is a great idea.

Beans with a quality seal
They are classified as “excellent” by prestigious experts and do not bear the Eusko Label seal of quality in vain. The current varieties are the Tolosa kidney bean and the pinto bean from Alava.

Olive oil with the Eusko Label
Extra Virgin Olive Oil with the Eusko Label is a delicious, high quality product made entirely in the Basque Country. Subjected to strict controls, the result is a product considered very rich in nutrients.

Tzakoli: our white wine
There are three D.O., namely Arabako Txakolina, Getariako Txakolina and Bizkaiko Txakolina, and all are traded on innovative international wine markets. When you try them you will discover their talent for accompanying a variety of traditional products: Idiazábal cheese, Bermeo antxoa or anchovies, Gernika peppers...

Indulge yourself
Have them on their own or accompanied by kidney beans, as a “Gilda” (with olives and anchovies) or together with different pintxos. Ibarra hot peppers with the Eusko Label quality seal are an authentic indulgence.

A sweet tradition
Simply delicious: truffles, vasquitos and neskitas, bilbainitos, brioches (rolls), cigarrillos, tejas from Tolosa, ori-baltzak. The variety of Basque pastry-making is a challenge to your senses. Let yourself go.

From the fishmarket to the tin
The fame of the fish preserves of Basque origin is worldwide. The Basque Country is responsible for 10% of the nation’s fish canning industry: bonito, tuna, anchovies... You’ll taste the difference.

The wines of the Rioja Alavesa
Crianzas (two years in oak barrels), reservas (at least three years in oak) and young wines are included in the Rioja “Denominación de Origen Calificada” (Qualified Designation of Origin). Their quality ensures that they constantly occupy the top places in international wine contests. Your palate will agree.

Añana salt flower
Añana salt is considered “one of the best salts in the world”, and is backed by the testimony of prestigious chefs who use it in their restaurants. Four types of salt are produced... Choose one for your favourite recipes.

A pinch of salt in the salt valley
A guided tour will introduce you to the secrets of the salt of Añana, including its historical-cultural, natural, productive, therapeutic (saline spa) and culinary facets... It will surprise you in all senses.

tourism.euskadi.eus/en/
www.vallesalado.com
Once you have discovered the effort and passion that goes into the traditional stews, what are the best flours to use or why a particular wine makes a good crianza, the flavours and experience will be enhanced as you enjoy the food with all the five senses. It will taste better than ever.

The Basque Country is home to various gastronomy museums and interpretation centres.

In Ordizia in the Gipuzcoano highlands, you can find the D’elikatuz Food and Gastronomy Interpretation Centre. Esbio-Itsano is home to the Ipartu Beltz Caserio Museum, where the main accent is on cider, without neglecting other activities that illustrate life in the homestead.

There are numerous activities related to cheese that you will find fascinating. You will get to know the flocks of sheep, their shepherds and caseríos, even how to make cheese or curds which you will be able to taste on the spot. There are more than twenty working dairies open to visitors throughout the Basque Country.

The Idiazabal Cheese Interpretation Centre located here reveals the secrets of the designation of origin and offers tastings. If you are interested in the world of txakoli, visit Bakio: the Txakolingune (Txakoli Museum) programmes a host of activities centred on the wine.

As you can see there are endless options to learn all about the cuisine and its secrets.

A cuisine with so much personality and deeply rooted tradition was destined to overflow the boundaries of the kitchen and transmit its techniques and values through higher education. The goal is to train excellent chefs to take up the baton from the current stars in the gastronomic firmament.

Here in the Basque Country the love of cooking is instilled even before entry into one of the twelve Catering Schools that increase their student numbers year after year. These schools combine research with practical and theoretical training within the overall objective of providing their students with an approach to the reality of the profession. The broadly-based training combines innovation with tradition, in line with the benchmark set by a generation of chefs that has represented - and continues to represent - a gastronomic milestone.

The Basque Culinary Center in the Miramón Technology Park in San Sebastian is a university faculty that is now imparting the first courses with official university degree status of the University of Mondragón. The students at the centre come from all over the world with dreams of taking the arts of gastronomy, catering and the food industry to new levels. Their teachers include the crème de la crème of modern Basque cuisine: Juan Mari Arzak, Martín Berasategui, Pedro Subijana, Carlos Argüelles, Andoni Luis Aduriz, Hilario Arbelaitz and Eneko Atxa. You can imagine the privilege it is to attend their master classes.

In the lecture halls and classrooms there is constant talk of culinary production and preparation systems, business management, customer service, gastronomic culture, staff and client management... all the scientific fundamentals applied to cuisine. There are three special in-depth courses on offer too: The cutting edge of cuisine, innovation, business and entrepreneurship, and the food industry. A fitting level for the next generation of top chefs!

www.bculinary.com

Wine and cider matters
And speaking of wine, any winery in Rioja Alavesa is a museum or academy. If you would like to know more, the Wine Centre of Villa Lucía in Laguardia will take you through the production process of wine, with virtual wine tasting and games.

The town of Astigarraga is home to the Sagardoetxea Apple and Cider Interpretation Centre. The museum is set in an orchard and uses the most up to date resources and technology, interactive exhibits, photographs and games to bring the story of the humble apple to life.

www.idiazabalturismo.com
www.delikatuz.com
www.tolosaldea.eus
www.sagardoarenlurraldea.eus
www.vila-lucia.com
www.bizkaiko.bizkaia.eus
www.gastromuseums.com

Once you have discovered the effort and passion that goes into the traditional stews, what are the best flours to use or why a particular wine makes a good crianza, the flavours and experience will be enhanced as you enjoy the food with all the five senses. It will taste better than ever.

museums, interpretation centres, universities...

Great cuisine needs to be explained and... 

...understood
A trip to the Basque Country gives you the chance to taste any of its gastronomic delights and its superb wines. It is your opportunity to experience the essence of a country that has always been passionate about great food with top quality ingredients, lovingly prepared and shared once cooked with friends and neighbours.

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1. **A restaurant that has made its name**
   - Take your pick of the many world-renowned restaurants with Michelin Starred chefs on offer.

2. **A pintxos route**
   - To enjoy a meal in miniature while you share conversation and laughter.

3. **Txakoli served cold**
   - Accompanied by good seafood or fish in any port or caserio. Always served chilled.

4. **The secrets of great cuisine**
   - When you head home, you will take all the tips and tricks picked up in the various gastronomic contests you have seen with you. You will be the spiciest 'pil-pil' of all the sauces round the table!

5. **A menu from a cider house**
   - Cod and rare steak only by the cry of "txotx!", your signal to grab a glass and head to the kupela (barrel) to fill up with cider.

6. **Visit a market**
   - Chat to the local food producers that offer you the very best from their lands.

7. **A nice drop of Rioja Alavesa**
   - Set within city walls and friendly villages, any of the local wine cellars that take your fancy provides your chance to taste the best local vintages, of the best wines.

8. **The traditional sweets**
   - It is easy to find the perfect gift to take home in the Basque Country. You and your loved ones are sure to relish the traditional sweets and cakes. The perfect souvenir.

9. **A 'freskue' fish**
   - Freshly caught and straight from the docks, don't miss your chance to taste anchovies, skipjack tuna, bream... and the pleasure of licking your fingers after eating sardines straight off the grill.

10. **Eat like at home**
    - The love and knowledge that goes into the food at hundreds of family restaurants will give you that home cooked experience.

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...we invite you to try them.
TEN MOUNTAIN MONTHS ... hundreds of culinary dates

Are you a fan of tasting sessions, traditional cookery contests, culinary festivals and local produce fairs? Your schedule will be easy to arrange throughout the year, there are special gastronomic festivals and fairs in any of the localities.

Contests, exhibitions, tasting sessions and the sale of local produce and crafts are regular events at the festivals that reflect the popular culture and culinary traditions of the Basque people.

Think you know a lot about cooking? Like, really a lot? ... competitions such as the "Artzai Eguna" (Shepherd's Day) in Legazpi and "Antxoa Eguna" (Anchovy Day) in Ondarroa.

The same goes for the Euskal Herria Pintxo Championship in Hondarribia and the Pintxo and Caskerole Week in Vitoria-Gasteiz. Time to visit and coincide with them.

www.academiaivascadegastromania.com

Taste of the Vendimia (Grape Harvest) as well as the Pintxo Day in Amurrio... and the Fish exhibition in Vitoria-Gasteiz.

January
Taaxdi Day in Getaria
March
Chacinería Fair in Sopelana
Presentation of the Taaxdi vintage in Bakio
April
Artzai Eguna (Shepherd's Day) and Abando Vegetable Day in Mutriku
Pintxo and wine week in Rioja Alavesa, Vitoria-Gasteiz
Taaxdi Day in Aiako Harria
May
Antha Eguna (Arbor Day) in Ondarroa
The Festival of the Montaña Alta in Araba
Sagardo Eguna (Cider Day) in Uzturrea
Taaxdi Eguna in Amurrio
Fish Fair in Bermeo
June
Pintxo de Álava week in Vitoria-Gasteiz
Pintxo contest in Elgoibar
Gastronomic workshops in Debagiarena
July
Pepper Day in Gernika
Salt Fair in Andoain
Bream Festival in Orio
Sardine Day in Santurtzi
August
Artzai Eguna (Shepherd's Day) in Abando
Artzai Eguna (Shepherd's Day) in Amurrio
Artzai Eguna (Shepherd's Day) in Lapurtzitza
Gastronomic workshops in Debagiarena
July
Pepper Day in Gernika
Salt Fair in Andoain
Bream Festival in Orio
Sardine Day in Santurtzi

Cuisine

BAISKAE KULTURAKIN ZARZAMORAKA

BAISKAE KULTURAKIN ZARZAMORAKA
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/