

# le Mag

BIARRITZ  
PAYS BASQUE



*Discovery*

A bold and creative region

*Favourites*

Live your passion for golf

*Secrets*

Awe-inspiring inland villages

© D. Dohmen

# BIARRITZ PAYS BASQUE

— by Instinct —

## THE CALL OF A SINGULAR PLACE

Nestled between ocean and mountains, the Basque Country is the kind of unspoilt destination you want to keep for yourself, a secret to be savoured among initiates.

The Basque Country is also a language with mysterious origins, Euskara, that has shaped the region's identity for thousands of years.

The Basque Country is also a land. A land of simple, unpretentious beauty. Like its inhabitants, it is straightforward, attracting travellers in search of authenticity. During their stay, it reveals itself to those who understand how to take it all in.

The Basque Country is an ocean, alive with movement. Miles of coastline carved into the rocks, revealing unparalleled beaches and waves that seem to challenge the ever-present, majestic mountains, where villages of character are tucked away. These well-preserved villages are the guardians of culture and traditional skills.

The Basque Country is a land of passionate men and women. Passionate about their language, heritage and culture, they draw continual inspiration from their roots as they explore, innovate and break new ground, once again reminding us that the Basque Country is a bold and daring place, full of life and open to the world, ready to share its secrets.

The Basque Country is pure pleasure. Surfing in the morning, a stroll through the market, roaming village streets, admiring the sunset over the valleys, sitting down to a delightful meal... Food is an essential part of life here. Cuisine inspired by the contrast between sea and mountains and just waiting to awaken your senses.

The Basque Country is you. Travellers in search of experiences, who are struck by this powerful land revealed in just one day or over an entire lifetime. Those who come here find simple, down-to-earth pleasures.

For you, the Basque Country is an obvious choice. Just keep your eyes and your heart wide open and follow your instinct.

**Come and follow your instincts!**

## Between THE OCEAN AND THE MOUNTAINS



## LIES A PLACE LIKE NOWHERE ELSE...

Just a stone's throw from the Spanish border lies a picture-postcard region that offers a true change of scenery: the French Basque Country. The area has earned international acclaim, yet it is small enough to visit in just one day! Few destinations offer the possibility of hiking in the morning and enjoying the beach in the afternoon. From prestigious Biarritz to the untamed and secluded province of Soule, the Basque Country embodies perfect natural balance.

With protected natural areas, the land's charm and its strong character make it a little corner of paradise. People come to enjoy its beaches and waves as well as its vibrant cultural life, which combines ancient heritage and modern creativity. In this land of contrasts, full of understated, natural elegance, each visitor can adopt their own way of life and enjoy their own kind of holiday: lounging on the

sandy beaches, discovering culture, exploring wide open spaces, meeting new people and sampling culinary delights.

The possibilities are endless, and have one thing in common: living life to the fullest, every day of the year. Those who come here have made the choice of elegant, simple happiness, without pretention. Travellers will meet a cosmopolitan population who haven't lost their enthusiasm for their enviable daily life. A hiker greets a shepherd on a mountain ridge trail, a famous chef chooses today's special at the fish market in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, a surfer crosses paths with conference delegates in the streets of Biarritz, a famous actress shops peacefully at the market in Guéthary...

This diverse population reflects the region's variety of culture, architecture, culinary arts, and more. This is a place like nowhere else...



# The Ocean's MANY FACES

**ON THE BASQUE COAST, THE OCEAN GENEROUSLY WELCOMES ALL WHO COME NEAR. FISHERMEN, SURFERS AND BATHERS MAKE IT THEIR OWN IN EVERY SEASON.**

Different beaches, different atmospheres. The beach in Anglet spans 4.5 kilometres, Biarritz has an imperial feel, while Saint-Jean-de-Luz is family friendly.

The coastal pathway takes strollers along the cliffs and beaches from Bidart to Hendaye. Each location has maintained its natural, urban or secretive nature. In Saint-Jean-de-Luz, bordered by the peaks of the La Rhune and the Trois Couronnes mountains, generations come and go while timeless traditions continue. Those who not long ago were taking their first dip in the ocean, now introduce their own families to the ocean's delights during a summer break.

Surfing has become a way of life here on the Basque Coast since the autumn of 1956. That's when

scriptwriter Peter Viertel arrived in Biarritz with his wife Deborah Kerr to adapt «The Sun Also Rises» by Ernest Hemingway. Olivier Mony tells us how, with his long balsa surfboard, «Peter tried, failed, started over, and soon the rumour spread throughout the city that there was 'a Yankee walking on water near Villa Belza'» (1).

At one time, fishing on the Basque Coast meant an abundance of whales, sardines and anchovies. Today, smaller-scale fishing has taken over. The fishermen have revived the practice of «table sales»: a lively atmosphere on the port with fresh fish sold at market stalls.

### Colette Larraburu

(1) Jacques Pavlovsky and Olivier Mony, *Objets et saveurs du Pays basque*. Editions Confluences, 2008.



© lamax - Fotolia

### SAINT-JEAN-DE-LUZ

The port is home to around twenty fishing boats, and the fish caught here is sold at the fish market.



© J.-M. Decompte/CG64

### BIARRITZ

View of the upper beach of the legendary Côte des Basques, the Villa Beltza beside the Rock of the Virgin.



© P. Tohier / Communauté de Commune du Sud Pays basque



### CHANGIN WITH THE SEASONS

Sailing, boating, rowing traditional trainera boats, diving, dugout canoes, standup paddleboarding, surfcasting... There are so many activities to do year-round, as the members of the White Bears club confirm: no matter the season, they never miss a day of bathing in the sea at the Port-Vieux beach in Biarritz.



© Shutterstock

# Secret PATHWAYS

TRAVEL THE BACK ROADS TO DISCOVER THE BASQUE VILLAGES THE THREE PROVINCES OF LABOURD, BASSE NAVARRE AND SOULE. THESE ROADS INVITE YOU TO EXPLORE THE PASTURELAND AND FORESTS.

## *Txomin Laxalt*

Between Itxassou and Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, the road follows the curves of the Nive as its rippling waters play with the echoes of the basque mountains. At the foot of Mount Artzamendi (926m), the inhabitants of Itxassou tend the cherry trees that have made the village famous. Further on, it's time for a delicious break on a delightful hillside, where the village of Irouleguy tells the tale of France's smallest vineyard, a heritage passed down from the monks of Roncevaux.



© P. Carton.

## CROSSING BASQUE COUNTRY BY MOUNTAIN BIKE

220 km of trails and singletrack through the basque mountains. This is the perfect adventure for riders looking for wide open spaces and thrilling sensations.



© Zklo.



© AGE / Photononstop.

From Saint-Jean-le-Vieux and Mendive, visitors can ride on the heights of the pastoral Ahusqui route. Its fountain possesses healing properties, or at least this is what is recounted in the old songs that are still sung in the inns of Aussurucq and Alçay on country evenings.



© Ph. Laplace

### THE SHEPHERDS' SHELTER

The Harpea natural cave, found deep in the valley of Esterençuby, has been sheltering herds of sheep since prehistoric times.



© BeghmadetPalais

### CHAPEL OF SOIARTZ

Along the edge of the Ostabat forest is a pleasant hiking trail that is ideal for children. Hikers are sure to meet with pilgrims from around the world who are making their way to Santiago de Compostela.



© lamax - Fotolia.

### THE MOST BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES IN FRANCE

In the Basque Country, 4 colourful villages proudly hold this title: Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Sare, Ainhoa and the village pictured above, La Bastide-Clairence.



During the Fêtes de Bayonne, King Léon (from his balcony) welcomes over one million festayres dressed in white and red.



## The Festive SPIRIT

Visitors should know that in the Basque Country, any reason is a good reason to celebrate! A rugby match, ham, cheese and cherry fairs, a carnival, a festival.

This undoubtedly explains the Basque Country's joyous identity. The most iconic festivals are of course the Fêtes de Bayonne, held each year at the end of July, which bring together thousands of festayres (the name for these feria partygoers) dressed in white with a red scarf.

However, if you don't attend a

festival in one of the small villages like Arcangues, Sare and Itxassou, you will never fully understand the true spirit of these celebrations and the Basque people's deep love for their culture.

These celebrations create unity, gather people together, refresh minds, and unite hearts. Celebrations are also spontaneous events, evening drinks enjoyed by the beach, sparked by an unexpected conversation, friendships blossom and laughter is unrestrained; these celebrations have no set rules, they are improvised!



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*Bold, visually appealing and powerful: these words best describe the work and the talent of choreographer Thierry Malandain. Because art knows no borders, each year the dancers of the Biarritz Ballet tour the world. Everywhere they go they are hailed for their talent as they bring the name Biarritz to the stage.*

## HIGHLIGHTS

### JANUARY

- FIPADOC, the **Biarritz** International Documentary Festival

### FEBRUARY

- Carnivals in Tardets Haute Soule and **Bayonne**

### MARCH

- FILMAR, International Festival of Films about the Sea, **Hendaye**
- BI HARRIZ LAU XORI FESTIVAL (music, dance, theatre and poetry), **Biarritz**.

### APRIL

- 35<sup>ème</sup> Biarritz Quiksilver Maïder Arosteguy (surf), **Biarritz**
- The Bayonne Ham Fair
- Nafarroaren Eguna, Navarre Day, **Saint-Etienne-de-Baïgorry**.
- "Les beaux jours" Festival (classical, jazz and world music), **Biarritz**.

### MAY

- Andalou Festival, **Saint-Jean-de-Luz**
- Festival des arts de la rue (theatre), **Biarritz and Anglet**.

### JUNE

- Les Jours Heureux Festival, **Anglet**
- Saint Jean Festivities, **Saint-Jean-de-Luz**.

### JULY

- International Surf Film festival, **Anglet**
- **Biarritz** Golf Cup du Phare
- Anglet Beach Rugby Festival, **Anglet**
- Fêtes de **Bayonne**
- **Biarritz** en été (pop music)

### AUGUST

- International Classical Piano Festival, **Biarritz**
- Cesta Punta Championships, **Biarritz** and **Saint-Jean-de-Luz**
- Espadrille Festival, **Mauléon**
- Festival Force Basque, **Saint-Palais**
- Festival Paseo, **Bayonne**
- Musical Festival of Basse Navarre, **Saint-Etienne-de-Baïgorry**.

### SEPTEMBER

- **Anglet** Jazz Festival
- Festival le Temps d'aimer la danse (Dance Festival), **Biarritz**
- The Basque Country Pottery Market, **La Bastide-Clairence**
- Festival Ravel (classical music), **Saint-Jean-de-Luz**, **Ciboure**, **Ascaïn**, **Urrugne** and **Anglet**
- Dantza Hirian Festival (contemporary Basque dance), **Hendaye**
- Biarritz South american Festival (cinema and culture), **Biarritz**.

### OCTOBER

- Gâteau Basque Festival (traditional Basque cake), **Cambo-les-Bains**
- International Film Festival, **Saint-Jean-de-Luz**
- Points de vue, street art festival, **Bayonne**
- Pepper Festival, **Espelette**.

### NOVEMBER

- **Bayonne** Chocolate Festival.

### DECEMBER

- **Biarritz** Festival of Lights



# A wave of WELLBEING

**DO YOU NEED A BREAK JUST TO RELAX? HEAD TO THE BASQUE COUNTRY, THE ULTIMATE STRESS-FREE DESTINATION! LONG WALKS ON THE BEACH, SEA AIR, RELAXING MESSAGES – SLOW DOWN AND GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF WELLBEING.**



© G. Arrieta



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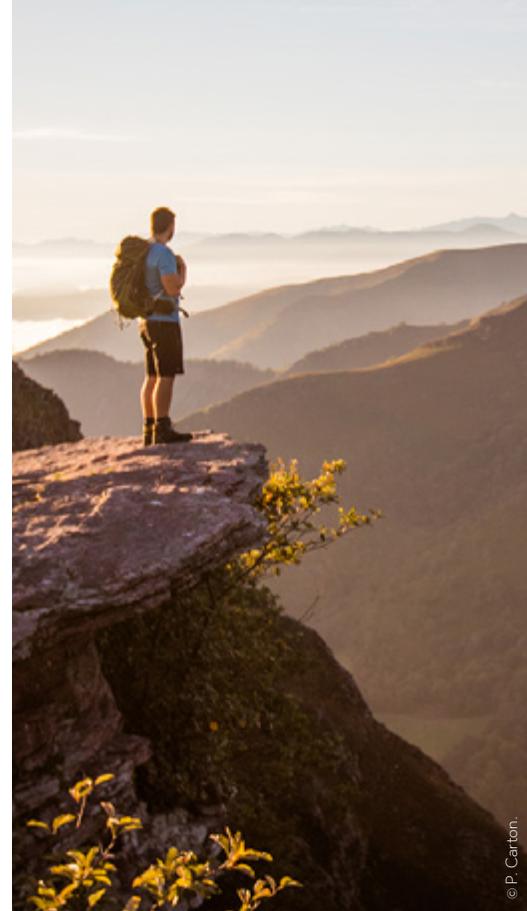
On the Basque Coast, five thalassotherapy centres offer a wide range of treatments, with something for everyone. Atlantalh in Anglet, Sofitel-Thalassa and Thalmar in Biarritz, Hélianthal Thalazur in Saint-Jean-de-Luz and the Serge Blanco Complex in Hendaye have all designed programmes to meet everyone's expectations.

Their traditional hammams or saunas, massages and beauty massages, aromatherapy, slimming treatments, fitness rooms and marine spa with seawater at a

temperature of 33° will provide you with relaxation and wellbeing.

Luxury spas – such as Spa Guerlain at Hôtel du Palais in Biarritz and Spa Loréamar at Le Grand Hôtel in Saint Jean de Luz- and peaceful salons further enhance the Basque country wellbeing offerings.

20 km from Biarritz, the spring water in the spa resort of Cambo les Bains is brimming over with benefits, and visitors can also take time out in the spa to enjoy beauty and relaxation treatments in an Art Deco setting.



© P. Carton

## PEACEFUL WANDERINGS

Leaving the ocean behind, turn towards the Pyrenees and set out to the east on foot along the GR10 trail, or by bike on the mountain pass routes, and you'll be sure to experience a true adventure. Your mind is alert; your body is set in motion... Get back to the basics and set out to discover a whole other universe. Walking and biking open new doors and lead to unforgettable encounters.



## BIARRITZ A GOLF DESTINATION

16 courses within a 100km radius  
[en.biarritz-destination-golf.com](http://en.biarritz-destination-golf.com)



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# Destination FRESH AIR

**WHETHER YOU'RE A SEASONED ATHLETE, YOUNG ADVENTURER, OUTDOOR ENTHUSIAST OR JUST CURIOUS... ANY OUTDOOR SPORT IS POSSIBLE HERE!**

For more than a century, the Basque Country has been known as "the birthplace of French golf." Today, seven golf courses provide an incredible variety of styles, levels of difficulty and panoramic views.

For hikers too, the trails offer many unique views. Quiet walks on the coastal footpath or in the magnificent beech forest of Iraty; a mountain bike loop around the Saint-Ignace pass; a horse trail in the heart of the basque mountains on the Sentier des Contrebandiers...

Do you long to climb up high? Try a paragliding flight from atop Mount Baigura. Is it water and seafoam you're after? Get a thrill riding a surfboard or follow the currents of the Nive. In Itxassou and Bidarray, the river Nive lends its strength to water sports like rafting and hydrospeed, making for exciting trips downstream. And for those who prefer fishing rods to paddles, there is no denying the sense of fulfilment you'll get fishing for wild trout in the small mountain streams.



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## The strength of FLAVOURS

Chocolate and Bayonne ham, chipirons (small squid), sheep's cheese, gâteau basque, wine from Irouléguay and Izarra liqueur... The mere sound of these words makes your mouth water and eyes sparkle. In Basque Country, producers and chefs are so proud of their land that they carefully craft each product, whether at a simple inn or an award-winning restaurant listed in the travel guide. At markets, restaurants run by master chefs, at parties or at the family dinner table, Basque cuisine boasts many treasures and flavours.

### ESPELETTE PEPPER

Ezpeletako biperra, its basque name, a Protected Designation of Origin since 2000, is essential to Basque cooking. It is only harvested in 10 towns that benefit from the ideal hot and humid climate. 188 united growers have made the Espelette pepper a product with a strong identity. It is available in a wide variety of forms, from seeds to powder, and it goes well with many different dishes, from first courses to dessert, and even with chocolate!



### CHOCOLATE TEMPTATION

At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Jews arriving from Spain and Portugal brought the first cocoa beans to Bayonne. Since then, chocolate has become a tradition and Bayonne has built a solid reputation for its quality. Chocolate is drunk, savoured and celebrated at the event in October, and visitors can also discover it at two museums in Bayonne and Cambo-les-Bains.



### CHEESE LOVINGLY NURTURED BY SHEPHERDS

Ardi gasna: Sheep's cheese in Basque. You can go straight to producers for a taste, or find it on any dinner table. Bread, red wine from Irouléguay, and maybe even a little jar of black cherry jam from Itxassou... Just enjoy.



### BAYONNE HAM

What would Bayonne be without its ham and its fair? And what would the basque Valley of Aldudes be without the farms of semi-free-range basque pigs with their distinctive long, black, floppy ears? The whole fresh ham is rubbed with salt from Salies-de-Béarn, and is lovingly cared for throughout the entire drying and maturing period. Producers and pig farmers are united in the Bayonne Ham Consortium, and the quality of their standards has earned it Protected Geographical Indication status.



### CAKE WITH A BIG PERSONALITY

Shh! It's a family secret! In the Basque Country, there are as many recipes for the traditional gâteau basque as there are bakers. From its origins, the etxekobiskotxa ("biscuit of the house"), filled with almond-flavoured pastry cream, managed to keep its original identity while adapting to delight its fans with new varieties. A crispy crust surrounds the soft filling, which is sometimes replaced by cherry jam and even chocolate. For breakfast, dessert or an afternoon snack, it's always delicious! The gâteau basque is such an iconic part of Basque culture that it is celebrated each year in early October in Cambo-les-Bains.

### FOLLOW THE BASQUE ROUTE OF FLAVOURS

Visit the Basque Country by following La Route gourmande des basques culinary delicacies as you travel along the coast and through the mountains! Chocolate, gâteau basque, honey, cheese, basque pork, trout from Banca and fattened ducks, cider and beer, wine from Irouléguay-eleven producers welcome you and offer a visit and tasting.

# Humanity, Harmony, HERITAGE

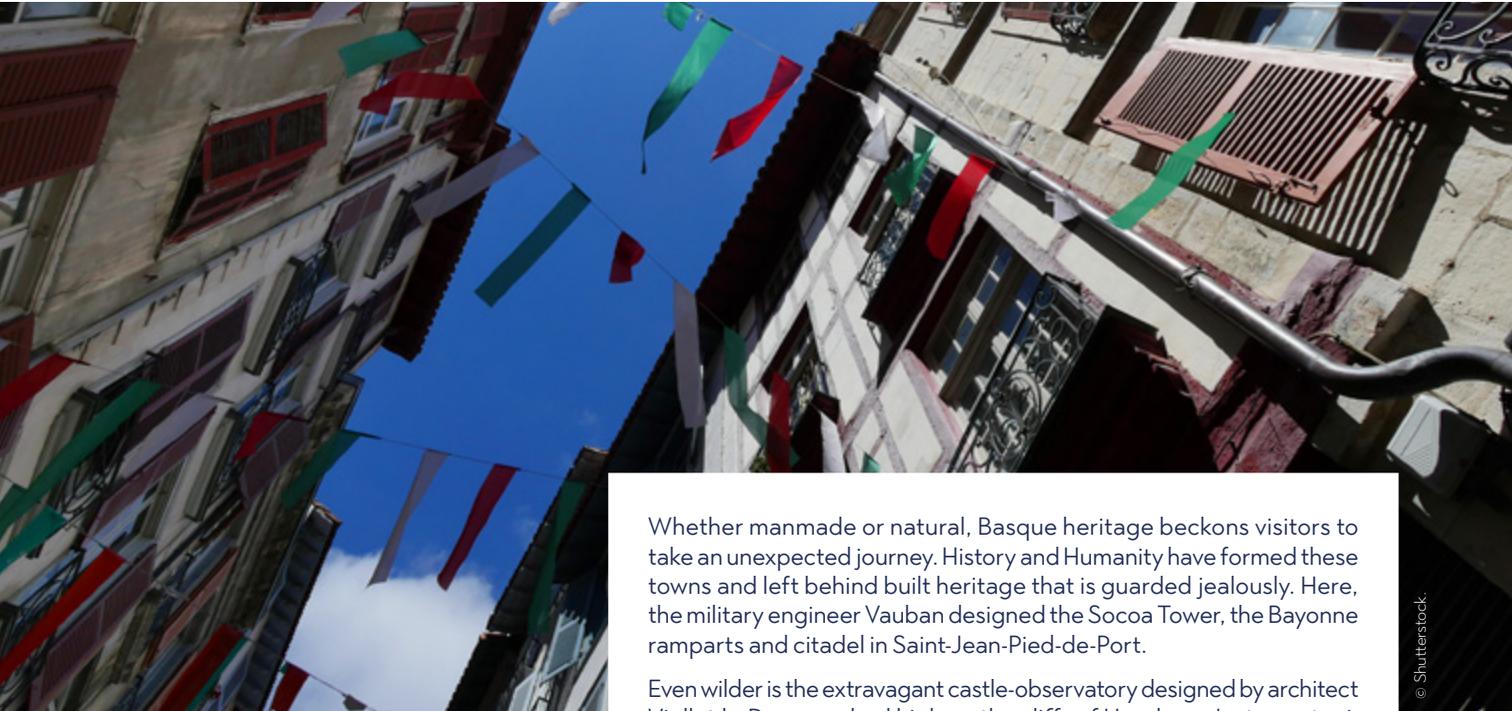
A CITY OF ART AND HISTORY, CORSAIR TOWNS, CASTLES, MOUNTAIN VILLAGES, FORTIFIED TOWNS, ANCIENT CAVES AND SPECTACULAR GORGES DWELL TOGETHER IN HARMONY IN THE BASQUE LANDSCAPE.



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© P. Gaillard.



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Whether manmade or natural, Basque heritage beckons visitors to take an unexpected journey. History and Humanity have formed these towns and left behind built heritage that is guarded jealously. Here, the military engineer Vauban designed the Socoa Tower, the Bayonne ramparts and citadel in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port.

Even wilder is the extravagant castle-observatory designed by architect Viollet-le-Duc, perched high on the cliffs of Hendaye. Just as astonishing is Villa Arnaga in Cambo-les-bains, a sort of palace reflecting the traditional farmhouse architecture of Labourd, designed by poet Edmond Rostand.

Yet, alongside the ingenuity and inventive ideas of a few individuals, nature itself has created treasures that the Basque people protect and enhance. Underground, the caves of Isturitz and Oxocelhaya in the valley of Arberoue tell visitors the secrets of our ancestors from over 80,000 years ago.

From there it is just a short distance to the top of La Rhune mountain, 905 metres to be exact, and the Basque people love to climb on foot or by train to admire the wonderful 360° panorama.

Even more dizzying is the Kakuetta Gorge path, a walk along a canyon resembling Amazonia, one of the wildest in Europe. Finally, clinging to the Pyrenees, stretching over the border between France and Spain, the Iraty forest is the largest beech forest in Europe.

The forest was long inaccessible and little used, allowing it to preserve its remarkable wildlife.



© CDT 64.

## Memories in the making BASQUE COUNTRY

Here, children can play, dance, climb, jump, swim, surf, run, pedal and visit... And of course, the 40 kilometres of coastline are like a gigantic sandbox where the most beautiful sandcastles are crafted!

Hendaye, on the Spanish border, is a children's playground, with its large, gently sloping sandy beach and activities for young audiences (festivals, shows, children's weeks).

For young city lovers, Biarritz and Saint-Jean-de-Luz can be visited aboard a little train or by participating in a treasure hunt. When skies are grey, kids can paint with chocolate at the Bayonne Chocolate Museum or watch the seals being fed at the Biarritz Aquarium.

For kids with plenty of energy to burn, there are treetop obstacle courses and big outdoor adventure parks in Anglet, Urrugne, Souraïde and Bidart.

Still looking for more? Courageous explorers can descend Mount Baïgura on an off-road scooter, or jump sky-high strapped to a bungee trampoline...

Nature too is adapted for children. Here there are gentle hikes along the Nive, across the Holzarte footbridge, or through the mountains with a donkey. Even La Rhune can be peacefully discovered to the rhythm of the little train on a rack railway. It's enough to make you wish you were a kid again...



© J. Roy.

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f i t y #BPByInstinct

# On your marks, Get set,... SHOP!

Want to bring back a piece of Basque Country? Want to find the perfect gift? No problem! The streets here are lined with shops that are sure to tempt you! From basque jewellery to outsized pottery, it's hard to

resist the temptation! Here, local craftsmanship is vibrant and colourful. Drawing on ancient heritage, tradition is often elegantly and sometimes boldly restyled by young local artists.



## Basque linens

The solid linen covering for oxen that was once used in the fields has become a lovely addition to any home, with vibrant colours that appeal to every generation.

## The Espadrille

At home in the fields and on fashion show catwalks, this sandal with its sole made of rope has been manufactured in Mauléon for 150 years.



## Outsized pot by Goicoechea



## The Basque cross

A treasure and symbol that can be found everywhere and can be worn as a necklace, ring or brooch.

## Leather wallets by Laffargue



## Tableware

by Assiettes et Compagnie



## The Makila

It is a sign of honour to receive the gift of the basque Makila, an elegant walking stick, also used for self-defence, made from the wood of the medlar tree.



# Plan your basque country HOLIDAYS

LONGING FOR HOLIDAY SPENT HIKING, SURFING, LOUNGING ON THE BEACH, IN THE COUNTRY, IN THE MOUNTAINS... THE EXPERIENCE OF A WEEKEND OF WELLBEING, BEAUTY OR CULINARY DELIGHTS? A BIG FAMILY HOUSE IN THE HEART OF BASQUE COUNTRY TO BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY TOGETHER?

Rentals, hotels, bed and breakfasts, tourist residences, and themed holidays. Book online or contact the Basque Country Tourist Information Centres directly.

[biarritz-pays-basque.com](http://biarritz-pays-basque.com)



© F. Rambert

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otpaysbasque.com
- » **ANGLET**  
1 av. de la Chambre d'Amour  
t: 00 33 (5) 59 03 77 01  
anglet-tourisme.com
- » **ANGLET**  
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bayonne-tourisme.com
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Rue Erretegia  
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bidarttourisme.com
- » **CAMBO-LES-BAINS**  
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cambolesbains.com
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2 place Saint-Jean  
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67 bis, boulevard de la Mer  
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hendaye-tourisme.fr
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Direct flights from Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, etc.
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Direct flights from Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, etc.
- » **BILBAO AIRPORT, IN SPAIN**  
(1 hr. 30 min. from Bayonne)  
t: 00 34 913 21 10 00  
aena.es/es/aeropuerto-bilbao  
Direct flights from Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, etc.

## YEAR-ROUND

### DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

- » Paris Orly / Biarritz :  
Hop and Air France
- » Paris Roissy Charles de Gaulle / Biarritz : Air France and Easy Jet

### INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

- » Brussels/Charleroi, Ryanair
- » London Stansted, Ryanair

### SEASONAL FLIGHTS

- » London Gatwick and London Luton, EasyJet
- » Southampton and Birmingham, Flybe
- » Luxembourg, Luxair
- » Dublin, Ryanair
- » Berlin, EasyJet
- » Copenhagen, SAS
- » Munich, Lufthansa
- » Stockholm, SAS
- » Geneva, Hop, Swiss
- » Basel Mulhouse, EasyJet

## BY ROAD

### NORTH-SOUTH DIRECTIONS:

- » Paris / Bordeaux / Bayonne: A10 A63 (7 hrs.)
- » Bordeaux / Bayonne: A63 (1 hr. 40 min.)

### EAST-WEST DIRECTIONS:

- » Toulouse/Bayonne via Pau: A 64 (3 hrs.)

### WEST-EAST DIRECTIONS:

- » Bilbao/Bayonne: E70 A63 (1 hr. 30 min.)

## BY TRAIN

### TGV ATLANTIQUE : PARIS

- » Montparnasse / Bordeaux / Bayonne (4 hrs.) / Biarritz /
- » St-Jean-de-Luz / Hendaye

### BORDEAUX / BAYONNE VIA TGV direct (1 hr. 40 min.)

**SNCF TRAFIC**  
<https://www.oui.sncf/>

## NO CAR TO EXPLORE THE BASQUE COUNTRY?

The [transfermuga.eu](http://transfermuga.eu) website helps you calculate your route on foot, by bus, coach, train or bike.

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