

### Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain

The cruise port in Bilbao is nestled behind a residential neighborhood. The area has many attractions, but they're spread over the mountainous countryside, so you'll need an excursion to visit them.

#### History

Founded in the late 13th century, Bilbao is one of the commercial hubs of the Basque Country. This is due to its thriving port; exporting of wool and iron. It's the second-most industrialised region of Spain, behind Barcelona.

#### Local Flavors

- Pintxos - "pinches" or little dishes.
- Bacalao al Pil-Pil - Salted cod with pil pil sauce; made from garlic, dried guindilla chilli and olive oil.
- Piperrada - Onion, green peppers, tomatoes and Espelette peppers, sauteed. Sometimes meats are added.
- Kokotxas - Fish stew, in a green sauce made from olive oil, flour, garlic and parsley.
- Txuleton - rib steak cooked over charcoal and served with chips and salad.
- Txangurro a la Donostiarra - baked tomato-based crab dish served in its top shell.
- Porrusalda - stew with leeks, potatoes, and sometimes carrots or pumpkin.

#### Unique Animals

- Betisoak (or Betizu) - wild cow, lives in the Basque mountains.
- Griffon Vulture
- Porcini Pie Noir du Pays Basque - aka "Basque pig", short-legged Iberian pig with an elongated body and floppy ears. Basque pork is famous for Bayonne Ham.
- Pyrenean Desman - semi-aquatic of the Talpidae family (like moles) aka "trumpet rat", due to its long snout.



#### Unique Plants

- Armeria euscandiensis - herb found on the Basque coast.
- Eguzkiloire - flower of the silver thistle, known for its beauty and mythological importance.



#### Language

Euskara. Spanish and English are also spoken.

#### Currency

Eusko. Euros are accepted in some locations. Credit cards widely accepted.

#### Driving

Your US driver's license is valid. Right hand side of the road. Mountainous country expect narrow winding roads.

## Sites to See

San Juan de Gaztelugatxe (right)

Butron Castle

Bermeo - ancient fishing village

Historical Gernika - home to one of the oldest Parliament.

Bizkaia Bridge - first suspension ferry bridge in the world.



## Guided Tours

Mikel with Tours by Basque

(Private guide for group of four, will customize tour as you go, very full day with lunch stop.)

\$170pp (€680/group)

[San Juan de Gaztelugatxe, the Coast, an amazing Castle and Gernika](#)

*\*We have toured with Mikel and recommended him.*

Gaztelugatxe, Mundaka and Gernika Tour from Bilbao

From \$110.94

<https://www.viator.com/tours/Bilbao/Gaztelugatxe-Gernika-and-Bermeo-small-group-tour-lunch-included/d4485-40961P51?pid=P00002881&uid=U00204439&mcid=58086&currency=USD>