

“A small group tour that gets you in on the Basque way of life in a big way. The point is not just to eat and drink some of the greatest food and wine in the world, but also to notice the unique sense of place here, to savor the culture and landscapes that inspire and sustain it all.”

Basque in It: Bilbao, San Sebastián, and the Basque Coast with the Rioja Wine Country

ITINERARY

Day One:

This trip goes straight to the heart of the Basque Country. Which means starting in Bilbao. For strolls in the elegant 19th Ensanche quarter and into the old city. Including a warm welcome with pintxos—the Basque’s special version of tapas—and wine on the city’s most sociable plaza. (4* city hotel, guided stroll. Dinner with wine—all our lunches and dinners include selected wine pairings.)



Day Two:

Start the day with an insider’s private tour at the Guggenheim Museum. The building is a Frank Gehry masterpiece, and a thrill to be in. After lunch at their little bistro (run by the chef who earned his Michelin star at Nerua), you’re off for the Basque coast. An afternoon to relax or join a good walk in this gorgeous green terrain. (Private transportation, sweet-rustic seaside inn, private museum tour, B, L, D)

Day Three:

A day to savor the traditions of the coast, beginning with a visit to a farm where local sheeps milk cheese is made and continuing with a vineyard tour and tasting of txakoli—the crisp white wine of the Basque Coast. The seafood from here is spectacular too, so it stars at lunch on the coast. (Private transportation, sweet-rustic seaside inn, tours at farm and vineyards, B, L, D.)



More Basque in It: Bilbao, San Sebastián, the Basque Coast, and the Rioja

Wine Country

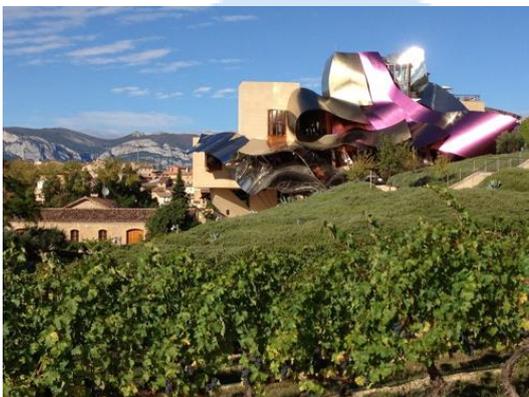
Days Four & Five:

San Sebastián is a gem of a city by the sea and one of the world's true culinary capitals. Join your guide for an energetic walk along the hills overlooking the Bay, or laze on the promenade. Roll up your sleeves for a cooking class. Delve into the culture and deliciousness of the pintxos tradition. (Private transportation, 4* hotel in the heart of the city, guided walk, cooking class, B, L + B, D.)



Day Six:

A drive inland takes you into the Rioja wine country, where you'll learn about and taste some amazing wines. Our approach is to get to know the terroir here with experiences both rustic and refined. Today is about small family-owned estates, a country picnic, and making time for relaxing on the terrace or going for a walk through village and countryside with your guide. (Private transportation, 4* country-chic hotel, winery tours and tastings, B, L.)



Days Seven & Eight:

Two more beautiful days in the wine country means tasting at prize-winning wineries representing both tradition and innovation. Which also means enjoying food experiences that range from a rustic wine-country grill to a jazzy Michelin-starred Marqués de Riscal. On the evening of October first, we'll whisk you back to Bilbao for one last evening (Private transportation, 4* country-chic and city hotels, winery tours, tastings, B, L + B, L.)

Day Nine,

Breakfast, check-outs, and farewells, with good wishes for your onward travels. (B.)