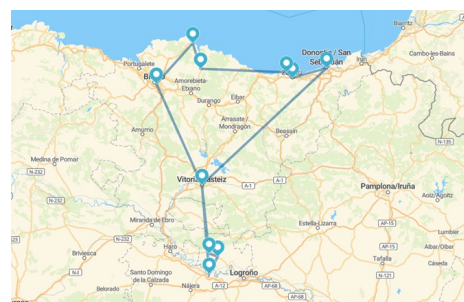




Spain, 6 Days · Tailor-made by car

## Basque Country and La Rioja Route – Wine, Cuisine and Landscapes

Drive along quiet roads dotted with ancient vineyards in the beautiful wine region of La Rioja; discover unique landscapes featuring steep cliffs, stone-built villages lost in the verdant mountains, bracing coastlines, pristine beaches and picture-postcard villages such as Getaria and Bermeo; and explore the Natural Parks of Gorbeia and Urkiola, the caves of Mairuelegorreta and Baltzola, the reservoirs of Ullibarri-Gamboa, Urrunaga and Albina, and the Gujuli waterfall. The authentic green heart of the Basque Country is one of the most treasured eco-destinations in northern Spain. And in Gernika-Lumo we'll connect with the soul of Euskadi, after visiting the Casa de Juntas and the Museo de la Paz and Euskal Herria museums. This tour has everything: countryside, culture, coast, cuisine and wine. You'll be able to dine at some of the most famous eateries in the world or traditional restaurants in remote fishing villages and discover the avant-garde Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the Belle Époque heritage in San Sebastián, the emerald-green charm of Vitoria or the mystical beauty of the spectacular San Juan de Gaztelugatxe chapel. Take a trip to the Basque Country (Euskadi) and marvel at some of the most photogenic places in Europe. And along the way, discover ancient traditions, beautiful architectural treasure and the mouth-watering "pintxos" culture that you can share with the welcoming Basque people. Enjoy this fascinating route by car and soak up the Basque essence.



NATURE

**Departure date:** Departures from July 2026 till July 2027

**From:** London

### Travel details

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## DAY 1 · CITY OF ORIGIN - BILBAO

Flight departure from the city of origin to Bilbao and rental car pick-up. Your adventure begins here. Industrial, artistic, edgy, culinary, urban, redeveloped... Bilbao welcomes us with open arms. Its joie de vivre, its fabulous culinary universe, its excellent museums and its amazing ability to combine its past life of furnaces with Art Nouveau treasures, baroque and contemporary monuments and buildings designed by the world's most famous architects make this city a truly unique place. Must-visits include its iconic Guggenheim Museum, designed by Frank Gehry; the lively Paseo de Abandoibarra, a boulevard shared by tourists, locals, runners and families alike; the imposing Isozaki twin towers, and the bustling Azkuna Zentroa, a former wine warehouse converted by Philippe Starck into the place to see and be seen... In this first leg of the tour, we'll discover a welcoming Bilbao that invites you to stroll along its Ría and cross the Vizcaya Bridge, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site; wander through its lively old town and "Seven Streets"; sit at a never-ending bar covered with delicious pintxos while enjoying a few txikitos (small glasses of wine); or engage in some retail therapy at its traditional shops... When night falls, discover the authentic Bilbao from the vantage point on Mount Artxanda or experience some of its amazing nightlife. Overnight stay in Bilbao.

## DAY 2 · BILBAO - GORBEIA NATURAL PARK - VITORIA

We'll bid farewell to the vibrant city life of Bilbao to head towards the beautiful Gorbeia Natural Park, a land of boundless nature that seduces anyone who decides to explore it. Located in the green heart of the Basque Country, this haven of 20,000 hectares is one of the most treasured eco-tourism destinations in northern Spain. Driving around it is a real treat. Here you'll find nature, traditions, cuisine and relaxation in their purest forms. During the tour, you can visit spectacular places like the Natural Parks of Gorbeia and Urkiola, the caves of Mairuelegorreta and Baltzola, the reservoirs of Ullibarri-Gamboa, Urrunaga and Albina, the Gujuli waterfall and the Saldropo wetlands... We recommend touring a cheese factory, becoming a shepherd or a beekeeper for a day, or visiting the honey or pottery museums in Ollerias (Elosu)... Take advantage of the visit to try Idiazábal cheese and craft beer from Gorbeia! You can explore the park on your own or by following one of the clearly signposted trails (Ruta Urkiola, Ruta Gorbei Oeste and Ruta 240). Choose the one you like the most!

After completing the visit, we'll set off for Vitoria, a green, modern and welcoming city that surprises the traveller with its beautiful old town, its lively atmosphere and delicious cuisine. Go on a tapas crawl along Calle Cuchillerías for some exquisite specialities!

Overnight stay in Vitoria.

## DAY 3 · VITORIA - RIOJA ALAVESA (ELCIEGO / MARQUES DE RISCAL - LAGUARDIA) - LEZA - VITORIA

Today's leg will introduce us to the historical and photogenic wine region of La Rioja. Its unique wine tourism culture, colourful landscapes dotted with vineyards and stone-built villages, provocative skies and radiant light will accompany us all the way. This is a land of fine wine and excellent bodegas, some more modern and others more traditional, but all encourage the traveller to learn about the history and process of making Rioja wine and, of course, the odd tasting session or two! In between visits we'll come across castles, manor houses and medieval villages; we'll visit fascinating wine museums and architectural gems; we'll enjoy relaxed conversations with the friendly locals; and we'll savour delicious cuisine paired with one of the best wines in the world.

We'll start this Wine Route in the charming medieval town of Laguardia, a fortified settlement with a well-kept old town and the must-see churches of San Juan Bautista and Santa María de los Reyes.

You'll be amazed at its underground 'village' and its maze of galleries and passages where the wine ferments in silence. Above ground, its narrow streets only allow pedestrians and bicycles. Motor traffic is prohibited here. Visit its wine stores, bars, taverns and gourmet restaurants.

On with our journey. A delightful 15-minute drive through vineyards leads to Elciego, our next stop. Here we'll visit the state-of-the-art Marqués de Riscal bodega, an amazing building designed by Frank Gehry.

On the way back to Vitoria, we'll pass by the Balcón de La Rioja (Leza). Located on the road above Herrera, the vantage point offers a stunning panoramic view of La Rioja.

Overnight stay in Vitoria.

#### DAY 4 · VITORIA - SAN SEBASTIÁN

After enjoying the city of Vitoria, admiring its two cathedrals, its Renaissance palaces with manicured gardens and soaking up its lively atmosphere, we'll head off to San Sebastián. During the one-hour drive, we recommend trying the local cuisine by stopping off at the Ondarre cheese factory in Segura; the Idiazábal cheese tasting centre; the food and gastronomy interpretation centre in Ordizia; and the cider museum in Astigarraga. Rest of day at your leisure to enjoy the charms of San Sebastián, a romantic and majestic city that will captivate us with its chic atmosphere, one of the most beautiful bays in Spain, the Instagram-ready Concha beach and its vibrant cultural agenda structured around the Kursaal and the recently-opened Centro Tabakalera, which earned it the title of European Capital of Culture 2016... Buildings such as the Hotel Maria Cristina, the Teatro Victoria Eugenia, the City Hall or the La Perla Spa remind travellers of the splendour of the belle époque when this city was the summer destination of choice for the upper echelons of European royalty and aristocracy. San Sebastián is a city for walking, fine dining, relaxing and enjoying life. Known as the world capital of the pintxo, its Parte Vieja is peppered with traditional restaurants and taverns where you'll enjoy a truly gastro experience. Overnight stay in San Sebastián.

#### DAY 5 · SAN SEBASTIÁN - ZARAUTZ - GETARIA - GERNIKA - BERMEO - BILBAO

This is one of the most Instagram-ready stretches of the Euskadi coastline.

We'll be able to admire a rugged salt-scented coastline dotted with wild beaches surrounded by steep cliffs, stone-built villages seemingly lost in the emerald green mountains, and picturesque fishing villages...

And, between stops, we'll be able to sample the excellent local cuisine.

Once in Zarautz, we'll find a 3.5 km beach, a lively old town and some very interesting Gothic and Renaissance buildings.

After a short drive along a beautiful seafront road - considered one of the best roads in the world according to a list made by a leading car rental company - we'll reach Getaria, an former whaling village that is the birthplace of Juan Sebastián Elcano and which now endears itself to travellers with its historic harbour, renowned fish restaurants and the Cristóbal Balenciaga Museum. Then we'll head inland to Gernika-Lumo, symbol of freedom and peace for the Basque people, where we'll visit the Casa de Juntas, the Museo de la Paz, the Museo Euskal Herria and the Jai-Alai frontón (pelota court). Then back to the coast to end this intense day in the picturesque seaside town of Bermeo. Here we'll visit the spectacular chapel of San Juan de Gaztelugatxe, Cape Matxitxako, the Aita Guria whaling ship and the Museo del Pescador, located in the Torre Ercilla.

Overnight stay in Bilbao.

#### DAY 6 · BILBAO - CITY OF ORIGIN

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin.

Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

## Your trip includes

### Your trip includes

- ✓ Return flight.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Bilbao.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Bilbao.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Vitoria.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Vitoria.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in San Sebastián.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in San Sebastián.
- ✓ Rent-a-car.
- ✓ Insolvency protection.

### Your trip doesn't include

✕ Possible toll charges.

## Destinations Visited

Bilbao



Vitoria



Eltziego



Laguardia



Leza



San Sebastián



Zarautz



Guetaria



Guernika-Lumo



Bermeo



## Important remarks

- Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far the possible.
- Check-in time at the hotel on the day of arrival depends on each establishment, but in no case will it be before 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.
- The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs.
- A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels.

- Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult.
- To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle.
- Consult the necessary documentation to enter the destinations visited and for transit in the countries where air stopovers are made.