

# AUTUM IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY

By **BASQVIUM** - Travel, Food and Culture



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Euskal Herria, The Land of the Basques in the local language, is a fascinating destination which comprises in a relatively small piece of land a great diversity of sceneries from the ocean, to the mountain range and from modern cities to countryside and vineyards.

Nestled in a mountainous corner of Atlantic Europe, the Land of the Basques is still wrapped in a mystery and legend story.

The origin of this people is uncertain, whose language – Euskera - is said to be the oldest living language in Europe and unrelated to any other spoken in Europe, or indeed the world. Euskera's mysterious origins have fuelled too the debate about, whether the Basques can boast the oldest European culture.

Anytime is a good time to visit The Land of the Basques and Autum when temperatures are still mild and our forest exhibit incredible palette of colours, together with multiple food markets and cultural activities along the Country, it is the right season to experience and enjoy the destination calmly.

After Summer Holydays and when days begin to shorten, cities and even rural areas boost activity remarkably.

Culture and Gastronomy are protagonist of many events along the country.

Autum begins with one of the most relevant and international event of the year – [San](#)



[Sebastian](#) [International](#) [Film Festival](#). Together with Cannes, Venice and Berlin, form the club of most important Film Festivals in Europe. The perfect occasion to meet Hollywood and European Film Stars and to watch more than 200 films along the city.

This year will celebrate the 65th edition of the Festival.

And going on with the cultural activity, this year the iconic **Guggenheim Museum of Bilbao** celebrates its 20th anniversary. And although during the whole year is taking place a special program of exhibitions and numerous cultural activities, during the month of October main celebrations will happen, like the official anniversary gala and diverse events of light, colour and music indoors and outdoors.



Music is present also with the return of the Opera season, Symphonic Orchestra's concerts or BIME Rock Festival in Bilbao, apart from the return of the regular music scene in the main cities.

And it is also the time for the Basque Bertsolari Conquest, a kind of Basque Poetry Slam performed alive, with ancestral roots in the Basque Culture.

On the other hand, after the main festive Summer season, in Autum we can still find some important festivities, like "Maritxu Kajoi" in Arrasate, Saint Fausto Festivals in the villages of



Basauri and Durango, Saint Severino in Balmaseda or Saint Michael and Saint Pilar's spread out in different villages.

With these last festivities of October the main season that started in April turns to the end. November starts with the All Hallows, which roots are ancestral in the Basque Country from a secular celebration to the Celtic festivities of the end of the Summer.



Related to Gastronomy, Autum is a very remarkable season from the Haute Cuisine, to traditional food markets, apart from being Wine Harvest time in Rioja and Txakoli white wine areas.

From 8th to 11th of October [“Gastronomika” Congress](#) converts the city of San Sebastian in the World Capital of Haute Cuisine, welcoming the best of Basque, Spanish and World Cuisine. One of the most relevant gastronomy event in the world that takes place in the city with more Michelin Stars per capita.

But at the same time, it is the main season for **Street Food Markets**, full of all the sesonal vegetables and fruits, highlighting the one celebrating in the historical village of Gernika the last Monday of October.

In the orchards different varieties of beans are collected, together with aubergines, pumpkies, leeks, carrots, lettuce, onions, squash and all kinds of cabbage (cauliflower, brussels sprouts, broccoli, ...).



But if there is a star product that nature gives us these days, these are the mushrooms, fungus and truffles, find in multiple varieties in our mountains.

The right time to taste these delicatessen.

Fruits such as grapes, apples, pomegranate and most of the fruits of the forest come in Autumn also (blackberries, blueberries and redcurrants), last ones used mainly to make jams. And nuts as well, like walnuts or chesnuts.

And undoubtely among fruits, the main protagonist is the grape.

Between September and October the most important time of the year reach to Vineyard Areas of Rioja and Txakoli, with the **Wine Harvest**.



It is a process that can last between 30 and 40 days, which means that the collection can arrive well into November.

The process is still done in the traditional way in many of the vineyards, in which the collected fruit are deposited in wicker baskets that usually have a capacity between 15 and 20 kilos.

Once collected the grape is taken directly to the wineries to begin the process of making red, white and rose wines, following the particular characteristics of each of them.

Around this season many Festivals are hold in all the villages to celebrate the beginning of the harvest, with the first symbolic stepping of the grapes. And many activities organized by the Wineries, in which visitors can take part in some tasks, such as the vintage or the winemaking process.

Harvest time is an exceptional moment to learn about the way of life that identifies the people of La Rioja.

A way of knowing their customs and history that have been maintained throughout the years, reaching to the present day being a reference product not only in the Basque Country and Spain, but worldwide.



Apples are very appreciated also, preserved to produce the local Cider – Euskal Sagardoa, that could be tasted with the beginning of the new year.



Last year 1.320.000 litres were produced and this year it seems production will be excellent, as the apple trees have a lot of fruit!

As far as fish are concerned, Mackerel, Mullet, Conger, Sardines, Gilthead and Octopus, among others, live their best season in Autumn.

And related to the meat, Hunting takes the lead above all, from wild boar to rabbit, scholarships or quail.

But during the week around Saint Martin Day (11th of November), that concurs most of the years with specially warm temperatures, known popularly as the Little Summer of Saint Martin, the protagonist is the Pig. These days were specially preserved for the traditional pig slaughter in the Basque Farms (Txarriboda in Basque Language), from where chorizo, black pudding (morcilla) or bacon will be produced.



Traditionally pigs together with cows were slaughtered this time of the year, to provide enough meat for the Winter.



On the other hand, if you are keen on sports, the Football League start the season with four Basque teams playing La Liga: Athletic of Bilbao, Real Sociedad, Eibar and Alavés. That means, every week we will find the chance to see high level matches in our cities.



Related to the traditional Basque Sports, this is the time for Jai Alai World Tour Final Series.

Consider as the fastest ball game in the world, it is a real spectacle to see a game alive!!

And between October and November the Basque 4,5 Hand Ball Championship is celebrated.

And the weather is still good enough to enjoy our mountain range and forest dyed in the beautiful colours of Autum. That's why still some mountain trekking and mountain bike competitions are hold at this time of the year.



As you can see, Autum is full of traditions and perfect time to enjoy The Land of the Basques, far from the tourist peak season and a perfect time also to enjoy our seasonal dishes!

And to welcome the new season, here you can watch a beautiful video with areal views of the



Basque Country in Autum shot from a drone.

We wait fot you!

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## TRADITIONS AND FESTIVITIES CALENDAR NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

<b>01/11/2017</b>	All Saints Day	All over the Country
<b>01/11/2017</b>	Cattle and Agricultural Fair. Food Market	Itziar
<b>01/11/2017</b>	Cheese Fair and Agricultural Market	Trutziroz
<b>03-05/11/2017</b>	Euskadi Stock Outlet Fair. Products up to 80% of discount	Bilbao Exhibition Center
<b>04/11/2017</b>	Gernika Bean Day. Bean Stew Tasting. Food & gastronomy market	Gernika
<b>04/11/2017</b>	Chocolate, sweets & Artisan products Fair	Zamudio
<b>04-05/11/2017</b>	Beerbao Fest – Artisan Beers Tasting Show	Euskalduna Congress Palace (Bilbao)
<b>05/11/2017</b>	Cattle and Agricultural Fair. Basque Limousin Cows Contest.	Zamudio
<b>05/11/2017</b>	Cattle and Agricultural Fair: Cows, horses, Donkeys of the Encartaciones and autochthonous sheep and goats.	La Arboleda - Trapagaran
<b>05/11/2017</b>	Mycological Week - Exhibition of mushrooms. "Pintxo" Tasting made with mushrooms	Plentzia
<b>11/11/2017</b>	Sale and exhibition of farm products	Berastegui St. (Bilbao)
<b>11-12/11/2017</b>	Saint Martin Festivity Markets (traditionally pig slaughter days)	Santa Cruz de Campezo, San Sebastian, Soraluze, Bergara, Zegama, Ermua, Bermeo.
<b>18-19/11/2017</b>	Tolosa Bean Fair and Contest. Basque Culture & Music Exhibitions	Tolosa
<b>24-26/11/2017</b>	Arts & Crafts Fair	Getxo

<b>30/11/2017</b>	Saint Andrew Festival. Agricultural Fair and Basque Culture & Music Exhibitions	Eibar & Azkoitia
<b>02/12/2017</b>	Snail Day. Tasting of snails. Agricultural fair.	Gernika
<b>02/12/2017 – 06/01/2018</b>	Nativity Scene, composed by more than 200 human figures, buildings and hundreds of animals and accessories	Florida Park – Vitoria - Gasteiz
<b>03/12/2017</b>	Black Pudding Festival	Ormaiztegui
<b>03/12/2017</b>	Cattle and Agricultural Fair. Frison Cows and Donkeys of the Encartaciones contest	Gordexola
<b>03/12/2017</b>	Saint Barbara Craft Fair. Exhibition of crafts linked to mining.	El Regato - Barakaldo
<b>03-11/12/2017</b>	<a href="#">Ardoaraba</a> Wine Fair. Route of bars, presentations of pintxos and wine tasting of Rioja Alavesa	Vitoria - Gasteiz
<b>05-08/12/2017</b>	Fair of the Beef Steak (Txuleton). Gastronomic Fair. Meals and dinners in grill restaurants.	Tolosa
<b>06-10/12/2017</b>	EUSKAL DENDA. XXII Trade fair of the Basque artisan sector.	Durango
<b>13/12/2017</b>	Saint Lucy Fair - Cattle and Agricultural Fair	Zumarraga
<b>16/12/2017</b>	Cattle and Agricultural Fair. Cheese & Bread contest. Terrazo Cows contest	Orozko
<b>14/12/2017 – 06/01/2018</b>	Christmas Crafts Fair	Vitoria - Gasteiz
<b>15/12/2017 – 06/01/2018</b>	GABONART - Christmas Crafts Fair	Bilbao
<b>17/12/2017</b>	Basque Country Snail Championship. Show Cooking, Tasting and Gastronomic Contest	Gernika



Short video of the Ardo Araba Wine Festival



## CULTURAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

<b>Until 09/11/2017</b>	Bill Viola: retrospective	Guggenheim Bilbao Museum
<b>Untill 14/01/2018</b>	Anni Albers: Touch the view exhibition	Guggenheim Bilbao Museum
<b>From 10/11 till 25/02/2018</b>	David Hockney. Pictures	Guggenheim Bilbao Museum
<b>Until 10/11/2018</b>	"World Press Photo" Exhibit	Vitoria - Gasteiz
<b>Until 26/11/2018</b>	42nd International Theater Festival.	Vitoria - Gasteiz
<b>Until 25/01/2018</b>	Rachel L. Mellon Collection	Cristobal Balenciaga Museum (Getaria)
<b>Until 31/01/2018</b>	Grey Flag 2016-2017. Transfórmate, Transfórmalo	Artium (Vitoria)
<b>28/10 – 03/11/2017</b>	Fantastic and Terror Film Week	San Sebastian
<b>01/11/2017</b>	Basque Bertsolari Championship	Irun
<b>01 - 05/11/2017</b>	International Choral Contest	Tolosa
<b>02/11/2017</b>	Joe Luis Walker – Blues Concert	Sala BBK Bilbao
<b>02-03-04-18- 21- 24/11/2017</b>	Basque Sinfonic Orchestra Concerts	Bilbao, San Sebastian, Vitoria – Gasteiz & Pamplona
<b>02-03-09-10- 16-17-20-23- 25- 30/11/2017</b>	Bilbao Sinfonic Orchestra Concert	Euskalduna Opera Hall (Bilbao)



<b>04/11/2017</b>	Basque Bertsolari Championship (Basque Poetry Slam)	Maule (French Basque Country)
<b>08-10/11/2017</b>	Music Festival against censorship	Sala BBK Bilbao
<b>10-17/11/2017</b>	<a href="#"><u>ZINEBI</u></a> : International Festival of Documentary and Short Film	Bilbao
<b>12/11/2017</b>	Basque Bertsolari Championship	Durango
<b>16-19/11/2017</b>	FIG Bilbao - International print and art works on paper art festival.	Euskalduna Opera Hall (Bilbao)
<b>17/11/2017</b>	Shakira: El Dorado World Tour	Bilbao Exhibition Center
<b>17-19/11/2017</b>	Retro Classical. Exhibition of classic, vintage and collection vehicles	Bilbao Exhibition Center
<b>18 -21-24-27/11/2017</b>	Don Pasquale Opera Performance	Euskalduna Opera Hall (Bilbao)
<b>19/11/2017</b>	Basque Bertsolari Championship	Amurrio
<b>26/11/2017</b>	Basque Bertsolari Championship	St. Jean de Luz
<b>01-02-04-07-14-16/12/2017</b>	Basque Sinfonic Orchestra Concerts	Bilbao, San Sebastian, Vitoria – Gasteiz & Pamplona
<b>01-03/12/2017</b>	Bilbao Sinfonic Orchestra Concerts for babies	Euskalduna Opera Hall (Bilbao)
<b>02/12/2017</b>	Basque Bertsolari Championship	Iruña - Pamplona
<b>From 05/12 till 08/04/2018</b>	Art and Space Exhibit	Guggenheim Bilbao Museum
<b>05/12/2017</b>	Tony Allen Music Concert	Sala BBK Bilbao
<b>06-10/12/2017</b>	Durango Azoka – The biggest Basque Literature & Music Market	Durango
<b>08-16/12/2017</b>	Mendi Mountain Film Festival	Bilbao
<b>14-15-18/12/2017</b>	Bilbao Sinfonic Orchestra Concerts	Euskalduna Opera Hall (Bilbao)
<b>17/12/2017</b>	Basque Bertsolari Championship Grand Final	Bilbao Exhibition Center
<b>From 15/12 till 07/01/2018</b>	Loizaga Tower private Rolls Royce and Vintage Car Collection Exhibit	Euskalduna Opera Hall (Bilbao)



## SPORT ACTIVITY CALENDAR NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

<b>02/11/2017</b>	Athletic Bilbao – Östersunds FK – (Europe League)	Bilbao
<b>02/11/2017</b>	Real Sociedad – Varta (Europe League)	San Sebastian
<b>04/11/2017</b>	First Semifinal 4,5 Basque Hand Ball Championship	Iruña - Pamplona
<b>05/11/2017</b>	Real Sociedad - Eibar	San Sebastian
<b>05/11/2017</b>	Bilbao Basket - Barcelona	Bilbao
<b>05/11/2017</b>	Second Semifinal 4,5 Basque Hand Ball Championship	Logroño
<b>08/11/2017</b>	Bilbao Basket – Alba Berlin	Bilbao Arena
<b>12/11/2017</b>	Popular Runnig Behobia - San Sebastian (20 kms)	San Sebastian
<b>12/11/2017</b>	Bilbao Basket – Valencia Basket	Bilbao Arena
<b>12/11/2017</b>	Gipuzkoa Basket - Unicaja	San Sebastian
<b>15/11/2017</b>	Bilbao Basket – Lietuovos Rytas Vilnius	Bilbao Arena
<b>18-19/11/2017</b>	International Rhythmic Gymnastics Exhibit EuskalGym	Vitoria - Gasteiz
<b>19/11/2017</b>	Athletic Bilbao - Villareal	Bilbao
<b>19/11/2017</b>	4,5 Basque Hand Ball Championship Final	Bilbao
<b>20/11/2017</b>	Eibar - Betis	Eibar
<b>22-26/11/2017</b>	Keler Bilbao Paddle Open	Frontón Bizkaia - Bilbao
<b>23/11/2017</b>	Athletic Bilbao – Hertha Belin – Europe League	Bilbao
<b>26/11/2017</b>	Real Sociedad – Las Palmas	San Sebastian
<b>26/11/2017</b>	San Sebastian Marathon	San Sebastian
<b>26/11/2017</b>	Alavés - Eibar	Vitoria - Gasteiz
<b>29/11/2017</b>	Athletic Bilbao – Formentera (Football Cup)	Bilbao
<b>29/11/2017</b>	Real Sociedad – Lleida (Football Cup)	San Sebastian

<b>03/12/2017</b>	Athletic Bilbao – Real Madrid	Bilbao
<b>03/12/2017</b>	Bilbao Basket – San Pablo Burgos	Bilbao Arena
<b>07/12/2017</b>	Real Sociedad – Zenit (Europe League)	San Sebastian
<b>09/12/2017</b>	Real Sociedad - Málaga	San Sebastian
<b>15/12/2017</b>	Athletic Bilbao - Real Sociedad	Bilbao
<b>15/12/2017</b>	Eibar - Valencia	Eibar
<b>17/12/2017</b>	Bilbao Basket - Estudiantes	Bilbao Arena
<b>17/12/2017</b>	Half Marathon Vitoria	Vitoria - Gasteiz
<b>20/12/2017</b>	Real Sociedad - Sevilla	San Sebastian
<b>20/12/2017</b>	Bilbao Basket – Lokomotiv Kuban Krasnodar	Bilbao Arena
<b>Best day from 15/10 till 28/02/2018</b>	Punta Galea Challenge – Big Waves Surf Competition	Getxo
<b>Nearly every weekend</b>	Basque Rural Sports Exhibitions	Different locations



