

Spring in the Basque Country



By: BASQVIUM food, culture & luxury experiences

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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, but the bright colors of the spring make special this time of the year.

When the cold weather starts giving up and the sun starts shining longer hours, an explosion of colours emerge in our mountains and lands.

Oak and Beech Forest begin dying green with new leaves coming out and small daisies, or txiribitak in Basque, grow everywhere.



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It is still time for some rainfalls, combining with sunny days, what is reflected in a bright green colour all around.



The rough orography of the Basque Region historically kept the territory quite nestled, which gave rise to many ancestral pagan rites and the belief in mythological characters, that still remains in the imaginary of the people.

But when the Catholicism arrived in the Region from Spain and France, it expanded very quick. And although in rural and mountain areas precatholic rites were preserved, the Basques embraced the new religion surprisingly quick.

This marked the story of the Basques from that moment, what can be easily followed in the numerous churches and hermitages spread all around the territory and the religious festivities.

And it is at this last point, where Spring becomes important period of time to celebrate the Easter.

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Easter in the Basque Country comprises 5 days of festivity, from Holy Thursday till Easter Monday, in which you can find many religious processions and festivities to commemorate the death and resurrection of Christ.

Probably the most famous one is the “Living Passion” in the medieval village of Balmaseda (founded in 1199), where the historical events that led to the crucifixion of Jhesus are represented dramatically for two days.

But other famous functions are held all over the Basque Country, in villages like Arkotxa, Berango, Durango, Azkoitia or Segura.

And with the celebration of the Holly Week, in the religious old tradition, Lent with their days of fasting and penance are ended.

Spring is also a sowing season for many of the products that will be harvested in Summer and Fall in the Basque Farmhouses.

With the arrival of the good weather, the work of sowing increases considerably, highlighting products like the famous green peppers from Gernika, different types of red peppers, Ibarra chillies, beans and tomatoes, all of them distinguished by Basque Quality Label.

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But it is also time for pumpkin, cucumber, aubergine and parsley, which make up the great vegetable scene in the countryside.



At the same time, other type of food markets are celebrated like Shepherd Fair, held in Ordizia to present the new campaign of the Famous Idiazabal Cheese, the Bayonne Parma Ham Big Fair (French Basque Country) or the Day of Anchovy in Bermeo, Getaria and Ondarroa one of the seasonal fishes of the Spring, together with

Mackerel, Sole, Sea Bream and Mere Fish.

A calm sea allows fishermen to gain these delicatessens from Cantabric Sea and bring them to our ports.



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While the last remains of the Basque Carnivals finish in April, with “Maskaradak” hold in the French Basque Country during all the winter, several new season Festivals start celebrating in April too, like Saint George, Basque Fest in Bilbao or Saint Prudence in Vitoria – Gasteiz.

And the symbolic day of Navarre (Nafarroaren Eguna in Basque) in Saint Etienne de Baigorri (French Basque Country), with the reminiscence to the medieval Kingdom of Navarre, when no border separate the territory, today split between Spain and France.



But we could assert that month of May is the beginning of the “Summer Festival Season” in the Basque Country, that will last till October!

Villages like Orduña, the only place historically avowed with the category of City in the province of Biscay and where the Customs were established for goods and products coming from the Kingdom of Castille in their way to the Cantabric Sea, celebrates its popular festival of “Eight May”, giving the starting signal to the rest of festivals all around the region.

In the month of May also festivals in favor of the Basque Language take place, organized by the Basque Schools Association in the different provinces of the Basque Region. [Good chance to embrace the Basque Culture and its language Euskera.](#)

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And if you are keen on sports, it is the time for the Basque Hand Ball Double and Single Championship Finals, which are very popular.

[Here you can watch the video recap of the double final 2021.](#)



Good weather invites to do more outdoors activities, that is why Basque Rural Sports Exhibitions are more frequent, as Wood Chopping, Stone Lifting or Grass Reaping.

These Basque sports come from the work that people did on Basque farms, and that work became sport.



And of course, it is still a great time to find good waves for surfing and to enjoy the numerous hiking paths for the mountain lovers.

As you can see, Spring is full of traditions and perfect time to enjoy The Land of the Basques, far away from the crowds of peak tourist season time, despite the Easter Holiday period.

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And to celebrate that Spring has come with longer and warmer days, here you can watch a beautiful video by Jeffrey Alex Attoh. We wait for you!

[Short video of "Euskadi, Basque Country"](#)



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TRADITIONS AND FESTIVITIES CALENDAR

05.05.2021

Basque Cheese Fair
Ordizia

07.05.2021

Anchovie Day – Food Market
Getaria

21-23.05.2021

Bermeo Fish Fair
Bermeo

30.05.2021

Ibilaldia Festival 2021 (celebration of the Basque Language) – Music
and culture
Sopela

04.06.2021

Cattle Fair. Food Market
Mungia

Short video of the “White Night” of Bilbao to celebrate anniversary of the foundation of the city.



CULTURAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM

02.05.2021

Jerusalem Quartet & Hila Baggio Concert
Arriaga Theatre (Bibao)

06.05.2021 - 03.06.2021

Jazz Vital series of concerts
Vital Association (Vitoria-Gasteiz)

Until 05.09.2021

Exhibit "Muntadas, the Empty City"
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum

Until 05.09.2021

"Womanology" José Ramón Prieto
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum

Until 05.09.2021

Mendiburu, Matter and Memory
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum

16.05.2021

Jamming on Tour Improvisational show
Theater Champs Elysees (Bilbao)

19-23.05.2021

Laboral Kutxa Bilbao Surf Film Festival
Euskalduna Conference Centre and Concert Hall

20-21.05.2021

Bilbao Symphonic Orchestra George Frederic Händel Tribute
Concerts
Euskalduna Conference Centre and Concert Hall

20.05.2021

BBK Trends Forum
BBK Hall (Bilbao)

21.05.2021

Kitty, Daisy & Lewis in concert
BBK Hall (Bilbao)

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03-13.06.2021

Book Market outdoors
Bibao

06.06.2021

Ara Malikian Concert
Euskalduna Conference Centre and Concert Hall

11.06.2021

Maren in concert
BBK Hall (Bilbao)

15-17.06.2021

Food for Future
Bilbao Exhibition Centre

19.06.2021

Deforme Semanal late show
Bilbao Exhibition Centre



SPORT ACTIVITY CALENDAR

05-10.04.2021

Basque Country Cycling Tour 2021
All around Basque Country

06.05.2021 - 03.06.2021

Spanish Sailing Championship - Optimist Category
Hondarribia

01.05.2021

"Golden Axe" Wood Chopping Inauguration
Berastegi

08.05.2021

3rd race of Rowing Boat Championship
Hondarribia

09.05.2021

Basque Hand Ball Double Final Competition
Bilbao

16.05.2021

Santander League Championship Football Match
Athletic Club - Real Madrid
Bilbao

16.05.2021

Santander League Championship Football Match
Real Sociedad - Valladolid
San Sebastián

23.05.2021

Santander League Championship Football Match
Eibar - Barcelona FC
Eibar

03.06.2021

Beginning of the Summer Season of Horse Races
San Sebastián

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09.06.2021

Second Horse Race
San Sebastián

13.06.2021

"Golden Axe" Wood Chopping Final Competition
Azpeitia

16.06.2021

Third Horse Race
San Sebastián

Nearly every weekend

Basque Rural Sports Exhibitions
Different locations





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