

Autumn in the Basque Country
september - october



By: BASQVIUM food, culture & luxury experiences

Autumn in the Basque Country

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Euskal Herria, The Land of the Basques in the local language, is a fascinating destination which comprises a relatively small piece of land and 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 also fuelled the debate on whether the Basques can boast the oldest European culture.

Anytime is a good time to visit The Land of the Basques, especially in Autumn, when temperatures are still mild and our forest exhibits an 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 Holidays 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..



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After Summer holidays, when days begin to shorten, cities and even rural areas boost activity remarkably. Culture and gastronomy are protagonists of many events along the country.

Autumn begins with one of the most relevant and international events of the year – [San Sebastian International Film Festival](#). Together with Cannes, Venice and Berlin, form the club of most important Film Festivals in Europe. This is the perfect occasion to meet famous Hollywood and European film stars and to watch more than 200 films along the city.

This year for the 70th edition of the Zinemaldia International Film Festival will award the Premio Donostia prize to the actress Juliette Binoche. And going on with the cultural scene, the iconic Guggenheim Museum of Bilbao celebrates every 18th October its anniversary. And to commemorate 25 years since the inauguration of the museum, like every year, the Guggenheim of Bilbao will open its doors for free. In addition, as it is the 25th anniversary, there will be special activities throughout the month.



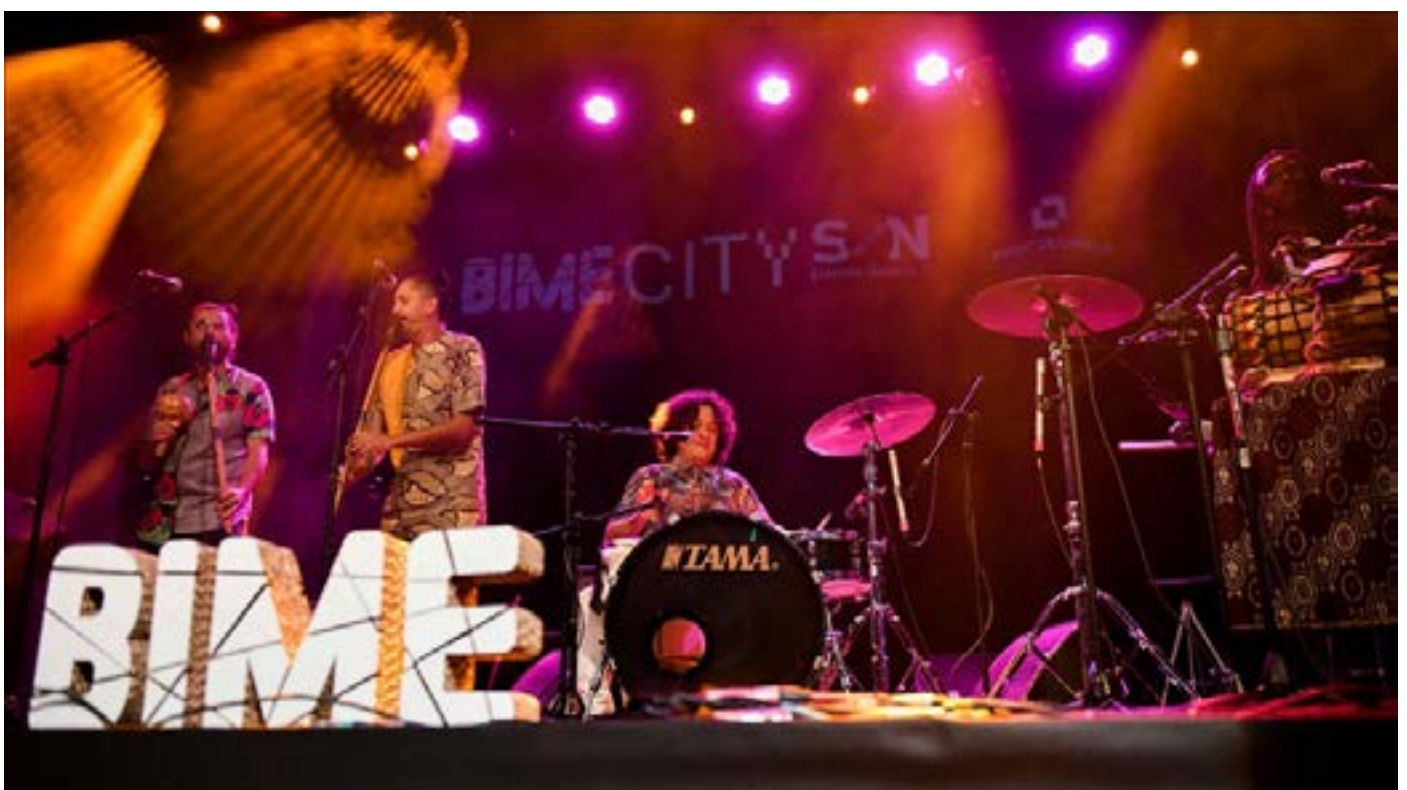
In fact, although during the whole year you can find a special program of exhibitions and numerous cultural activities, main celebrations occur during the month of October, like the official anniversary gala and diverse events of light, colour and music indoors and outdoors.

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Related to Haute Cuisine, from October 2 to 5, the “Gastronomika” Congress will turn the city of San Sebastian into the Gourmet Capital hosting the best of Basque, Spanish and world cuisine. One of the most important gastronomic events in the world.



Music is very present with the return of the Opera season, Symphonic Orchestra's concerts or some international music events such as the [BIME Rock Festival \(26 - 29 oct\)](#) or the [Sopela Kosta Fest \(23-25 sept\)](#).



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On the other hand, after the main festive summer season, in Autumn, we can still find some important festivities, like 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.

And it's worth mentioning "Maritxu Kajoi" day in the village of Arrasate, where every first Friday of October its inhabitants dress in black smart suits and dresses to honour the miracle of Maritxu Virgin, when in a crowded town square, from the source from which water always flowed, litres

and litres of wine began to sprout!

With these last festivities of October, the main season that started in April turns to the end.

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

At the same time, Autumn is the main season for **Street Food Markets**, full of all the seasonal vegetables and fruits, highlighting the one called Urriko Azken Astelehena celebrating in the historical village of Gernika on the last Monday of October.

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

But if there is a top product that nature gives us these days, these are mushrooms, fungi and truffles, found in multiple varieties all along our mountains.

The right time to taste these delicatessens is now.

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Fruits such as grapes, apples, pomegranate and some others like blackberries, blueberries and redcurrants come in Autumn, last ones used mainly to make jams. Also, the best moment of the year to enjoy tasting all kinds of nuts such as walnuts or chestnuts.

And undoubtedly among fruits, the main protagonist is the grape. Between September and October, the most important time of the year reaches the Vineyard areas of Rioja and Txakoli, with the **Wine Harvest**.



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It is a process that can last between 30 and 40 days, which means that the collection can arrive well in 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 characteristics of each of them.

Around this season many Festivals are held 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 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.

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It is also the time for harvesting apples which are very appreciated, preserved to produce the local Cider – Euskal Sagardoa, that could be tasted with the beginning of the new year.

It is worth mentioning the protection of this product in the Gipuzkoa jurisdiction, which already in the 11th century, prohibited the introduction of foreign cider, until the local one was consumed. The laws have defended the apple tree, the apple orchard and the cider trade for centuries. Considering apple orchards as a collective wealth in all Basque municipalities.

Last year 3,2 million litres were produced in the Basque Country and this year it seems that production will be excellent, as the apple trees have a lot of fruit!

Today there are 100 cider makers in the Basque Country that offer the chance to eat at the cider house and a chance to try the “txotx” experience, which consists of tasting cider from different barrels with a traditional cider menu. In the cider houses, the season starts in January and ends in mid-May, but some cider houses nowadays open all year round.

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

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In the case of Athletic de Bilbao football team's stadium from Bilbao, San Mamés, usually called The Cathedral, it was recognised as the best sports building in the world at the World Architecture Festival in 2015, its modern architecture and integration into the city of Bilbao makes it a special place to enjoy a unique experience.

Related to the traditional Basque Sports, this is the time for the Jai Alai World Tour Final Series. Considered as the fastest ball game in the world, it is a real spectacle to see a game alive! And in October the 4,5 Hand Ball Championship starts with the classification round.

During the first part and almost the whole season, the weather is still good enough to enjoy our mountain range and forest dyed in the beautiful colours of Autumn. That's why still some mountain trekking and mountain bike competitions are held at this time of the year.

As you can see, Autumn is full of traditions and a 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!

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We wait for you!



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TRADITIONS AND FESTIVITIES CALENDAR

25.09.2022

Sagar Uzta – cider and apple party
Astigarraga

29.09.2022

San Miguel festivity. Cultural, gastronomic and leisure activities
Iurreta, Arrasate, Bergara, Eibar, Lazkao

During October

Activities related to the grape harvest or the winemaking process
Different wineries in the Rioja and Txakoli areas.

07.10.2022

Maritxu Kajoi festivity
Arrasate

01.10.2022

BIONEKARABA. Organic products fair
Vitoria - Gasteiz

01 - 02.10.2022

Kantauri Fest
Zierbena port

02.10.2022

Kilometroak – Leisure festival in favor of the Basque language in Gipuzkoa. Walking circuit, music and gastronomy
Ibarra

03.10.2022

First Monday of October Market. The biggest livestock market of the year. Food, gastronomy and agricultural machinery
Gernika

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04.10.2022

Livestock Fair and Equestrian Contest. Cheese contest. Exhibition of cattle, machinery, handicrafts, gastronomy and Basque products.
Agurain - Salvatierra

06-20.10.2022

San Fausto festivities. Cultural, gastronomic and entertainment activities
Basauri, Durango

07.10.2022

Festivity of Virgen del Rosario and pilgrimage of the Virgen de Begoña. Torchlight procession in Bilbao
Gainza, Itsasondo, Oñati

12.10.2022

Virgen del Pilar festivities
Azkoitia, Zuia

14.10.2022

Araba Beans and Vegetables Day
Pobes

16.10.2022

Nafarroa Oinez – Leisure festival in favor of the Basque language in Gipuzkoa. Walking circuit, music and gastronomy
Tafalla

19.10.2022

Apple Day. Exhibition and sale
Arrasate - Mondragón

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13-28.10.2022

San Severino festivities. Cultural, gastronomic and leisure activities, highlighting the 23rd "alubiada" contest.

Balmaseda

16.10.2022

Alava Potato Fair

Valdegovia

29.10.2022

Tolosa Goxua. Sale of cakes and other sweets

Tolosa

30.10.2022

Ardiki Eguna - Mondeju and Aralar Shepherd Cheese Contest.

Exhibition and sale

Zaldibia

31.10.2022

Last Monday of October Market. One of the largest open food and gastronomy markets of the year. Exhibition of agricultural machinery

Gernika

Casi todos los fines de semana

Livestock and local products fair

Diferentes lugares

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[Short video of the gastronomic market of the last Monday of October in Gernika.](#)

CULTURAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM

16 - 24.09.2022

Zinemaldia 2022 - [Festival de San Sebastián](#). One of the most important Film Festivals in the world
San Sebastian

19.09 - 26.10.2022

Hitzak Lege. Textos jurídicos en euskera a lo largo de la historia - Exhibition
Parlamento Vasco, Vitoria

Hasta 25.09.2022

"Guernica" Agustín Ibarrola - Exhibition
Fine Arts Museum, Bilbao

22.09.2022

James Taylor - Concert
Euskalduna, Bilbao

22.09.2022

"Las bingueras de Eurípedes" - Theater
Arriaga Theater, Bilbao

23.09.2022

Banda Municipal de Música de Vitoria - Concert
Jardín Secreto del Agua, Vitoria

23.09.2022

Distrito Urbano 2022 - Festival
Bizkaia Arena, Bilbao

23.09.2022

Banda Municipal de Música de Bilbao - Concert
Azkuna Zentroa, Bilbao

23.09.2022

Xperimental Fest - Concert
Jimmy Jazz, Vitoria

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23-24.09.2022

Sopela Kosta Fest - Festival of music, culture and sports competitions
Sopela

24.09.2022

“La hora de Pablo Ibarburu” - Comedy
Campos Elíseos Theater, Bilbao

24.09.2022

Festival de Anime de Bilbao - Anime festival
Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

25.09.2022

25th anniversary concert
Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

26.09.-02.10.2022

Latin American Film and Culture Festival - Festival Biarritz
Amérique Latine
Biarritz

30.09.2022

Irun Zuzenean Festibala - Music Festival
Irun

Hasta 02.10.2022

Oteiza and Chillida - Exhibition
Museo San Telmo, San Sebastian

02-05.10.2022

San Sebastian Gastronomika
Kursaal, San Sebastian

06 - 22.10.2022

SANTURZINE - International Short Film Festival
Santurtzi

08.10.2022

Joan Manuel Serrat - Concert
Kursaal, San Sebastian

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15.10.2022

Robe - Concert
Bilbao Arena

17.10.2022

The Missing Element - Performance
Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

27.10.2022

Franz Ferdinand - Concert
Bilbao Arena

Hasta 30.10.2022

3x4= Orain - Exhibition
Museo San Telmo, San Sebastian

Hasta 30.10.2022

Tutankhamon, 100 años de fascinación - Exhibition
Museo de arqueología y de Naipes (Bibat), Vitoria

SPORT ACTIVITY CALENDAR

30.09.2022

Athletic Club vs. Ud. Almería
San Mames, Bilbao

30.09.2022

Baskonia vs. Unicaja
Buesa Arena, Vitoria

02.10.2022

Zumaia Flysch Trail 43k
Zumaia

02.10.2022

Bilbao Basket vs. Real Betis
Bilbao Arena

02.10.2022

Alavés vs. Ponferradina
Mendizorroza, Vitoria

03.10.2022

Eskupilota 4,5 - basque handball match
Different locations

09.10.2022

Real Sociedad vs. Villarreal CF
Reale Arena, San Sebastian

09.10.2022

Baskonia vs. Lenovo Tenerife
Buesa Arena, Vitoria

09.10.2022

Bilbao Basket vs. Valencia Basket
Bilbao Arena

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09.10.2022

Swimming competition. 10 km race along the three beaches of San Sebastian.
San Sebastian

12.10.2022

Alavés vs. Albacete
Mendizorroza, Vitoria

13.10.2022

Real Sociedad vs. Sheriff Tiraspol
Reale Arena, San Sebastian

16.10.2022

Athletic Club vs. Atlético de Madrid
San Mamés, Bilbao

19.10.2022

Real Sociedad vs. RCD Mallorca
Reale Arena, San Sebastian

22.10.2022

Bilbao Night Marathon – 42, 21 y 7 kms
Bilbao

23.10.2022

Baskonia vs. Real Madrid
Buesa Arena, Vitoria

23.10.2022

Alavés vs. Sporting
Mendizorroza, Vitoria

30.10.2022

Real Sociedad vs. Real Betis
Reale Arena, San Sebastian

30.10.2022

Alavés vs. Oviedo
Mendizorroza, Vitoria

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30.10.2022

Bilbao Basket vs. Baskonia
Bilbao Arena

30.10.2022

Athletic Club vs. Villarreal CF
San Mames, Bilbao

Nearly every weekend

Basque rural sports exhibitions
Different locations



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