

Summer in the Basque Country

august - september



By: BASQVIUM food, culture & luxury experiences

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Euskal Herria, which literally refers to the land of the Basques in the local language, is a captivating destination that encompasses in a relatively small area a wide variety of landscapes from the sea to the mountain range to modern cities to the more rural.

Located in a mountainous enclave of Atlantic Europe, the land of the Basques is still shrouded in a history of mystery and legend. The origin of this people is uncertain, whose language, Basque, is said to be the oldest language in Europe still spoken to this day and unrelated to any other language spoken in Europe, or even in the world.

The mysterious origins of Basque have fueled debate as to whether the Basques can also boast the oldest culture in Europe. Any time of year is a good time to visit the land of the Basques, but certainly the warm, sunny weather, longer days and shorter nights, along with the plethora of festivals and outdoor activities, make summer the perfect time to explore and enjoy the destination.



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Preserving the summer spirit that began with the traditional celebration of San Juan, known for its bonfires on the night of June 23, followed by other important events such as the Fiestas de San Fermin in Pamplona or the Fêtes de Bayonne, all during June and July, the month of August continues strong with festivities in the three capitals of the Basque Country, beginning with the Fiestas de la Virgen Blanca in Vitoria-Gasteiz in honor of its virgin.

Every August 4, the descent of Celedón (popular symbol of the festivities) to the Plaza de la Virgen Blanca marks the beginning of this great celebration. The city fills with color and music, while its inhabitants sing the song “Celedón has bought a new house”. The extensive program of festivities will take you to enjoy various musical performances in parks and squares to the streets of the Old Town, where you can enjoy the txikiteo (wine route), while marveling at the walls, palaces and, of course, the Cathedral of Santa Maria. A party that kicks off one of the three most eagerly awaited popular festivals.



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Almost immediately, San Sebastian take over from August 9 with the txupinazo (chupinazo) from the City Hall. This beautiful city dresses up with the best staging during its Semana Grande (blue and white handkerchief included). Every day around 10 p.m., from Mount Igeldo to Urgull, fireworks illuminate the bay of La Concha while children and adults enjoy these magical summer nights. During the day, you can take the opportunity to stroll and taste the best gastronomy in the world –haute cuisine from the best chefs, traditional recipes or the many treasures hidden in the pintxo bars of the Old Town and the neighborhood of Gros.



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And finally, the party comes to Bilbao to culminate with its spectacular Big Week, on Saturday, August 16. An exceptional occasion to discover the street atmosphere of the txosnas (tents) located on the banks of the estuary of Bilbao and get lost in the bustle of the Siete Calles (Old Town), where one thing is a must, the txikiteo of ochotes (gangs) while singing songs. Do not miss it and join them to enjoy the taste of the authentic! Culture is also very present during this week, with many live performances (theater, dance, music...).

From this moment on and continuing with the summer season, you can find popular festivals in every corner, every week, all over the Basque Country.



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For music lovers it is the time to enjoy wonderful music festivals. Leaving behind the Bilbao BBK Live or the Donostia Jazzaldia in July, August brings a particularly remarkable international festival, the Esférica Festival in the Rioja Alavesa (August 22-2), where it will be held in places like Elciego, Laguardia, Labastida and Lapuebla de Labarca.

During these days, music, art, land and gastronomy will be mixed to offer the spectator a magical experience to enjoy in the heart of Alava.

Summer is also harvest time for many of the products that were sown during the spring, such as the famous green peppers from Gernika, different types of red peppers, chilli peppers from Ibarra and tomatoes, all of them distinguished with the Basque Quality Seal - Eusko Label.

But it is also the time for pumpkin, cucumber, lettuce, eggplant, parsley and fruits such as melon and cherry that make up the great vegetable panorama of the Basque rural countryside.

And the king of seasonal fish is undoubtedly the prized tuna, one of the most traditional fish in Basque gastronomy.

The tuna are caught one by one with long rods, using the traditional and sustainable technique.

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Once the boat is over the school of fish, water sprays are turned on to hide the rods, a real spectacle to see live! This tuna is then sold fresh in the markets to prepare traditional dishes such as Marmitako (tuna, potato, tomato and bell pepper stew).

And it is still time for other species of fish such as sardines, anchovies or mackerel, which last from the spring season. Perfect time to enjoy the grills in many of our ports!



This is also a perfect time to enjoy the highly appreciated and delicious D.O. Idiazabal cheese, made from raw milk from native Latxa breed sheep. At the end of summer, after having finished producing the cheese in an artisanal way, they are left to mature until they are ready to be sold. So these months are the best to taste one of these delicatessen.



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On the other hand, for sports fans, it is still the time for outdoor sports activities. In addition, during the festivities in the villages, we can also enjoy traditional Basque sports, which are usually held during the morning-midday.

The good weather invites more outdoor activities, especially water sports, horseback riding and mountain trekking. And in August the soccer season returns, with the start of La Liga in the stadiums of Mendizorroza, Reale Arena and San Mamés. It is also the season. And to round off the Basque rowing season, the Bandera de la Concha in San Sebastian attracts thousands of fans

As you can see, summer is full of traditions and is a perfect time to enjoy the land of the Basques, although it is the high tourist season, especially in cities like San Sebastian and coastal areas.

And to celebrate that summer has given way to longer and warmer days, here you can see a beautiful [video](#) of the coast of the Basque Country filmed from a drone, made by The Sam Productions.

We are waiting for you!



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TRADITIONS AND FESTIVITIES CALENDAR

From 04.08. to 09.08.2025

Virgen Blanca festivities
Vitoria-Gasteiz

09-12.08.2025

Old Port Festivals. Culture, Gastronomy & Leisure activities.
Getxo

09 - 16.09.2025

Semana Grande (Big Week festivities)
San Sebastián

10.08.2025

San Lorenzo festivities. . Culture, Gastronomy & Leisure activities.
Bedia, Fruiz, Lemoa, Maruri, Zaratamo, Iruña de Oca

From 11.08.2025 to 18.08.2025

San Roque and Nuestra Señora de Asunción festivities
Portugalete, Gernika, Andoain, Llodio

15.08.2025

Artzain Eguna (Sheper day)
Araia

15.08.2025

Feasts in honor to Our Lady of the Assumption. Pilgrimage to the
Basilica of Bilbao.
Bilbao and many other villages around the territory.

16 - 24.09.2025

Semana Grande (Big Week festivities)
Bilbao

17.08.2025

Sailor Day
Ondarroa

23 - 25.09.2025

Festival Esférica
Rioja Alavesa

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31.08.2025

August 31 Commemoration
San Sebastián

01-08.09.2025

San Antolín festivities
Lekeitio, Plentzia

01-09.09.2025

Basque festivities
Zarautz

05.09.2025

Goose day
Lekeitio

05-10.09.2025

Hondarribia festivities
Hondarribia

07-15.09.2025

Basque festivities
Ordizia

x.09.2025

Juan Sebastián Elcano disembarkation
Getaria

08.09.2025

Hondarribia display
Hondarribia

08.09.2025

Virgin Mary Day
Bermeo, Elorrio Oñati, Aretxabaleta, Elciego, Lanciego

11-14.09.2025

Folklorez blai festival
Ermua

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13-22.09.2025

Festival of Our Lady of Aiala. Culture, Gastronomy & Leisure activities.
Alegria-Dulantzi

14-21.09.2025

Tomato week
Aretxabaleta

14-21.09.2025

Festival of Santa Cruz. Culture, Gastronomy & Leisure activities.
Portugalete, Galdakao, Artzentales, Lezo

14.09.2025

Olagarro eguna (octopus day)
Zumaia

14.09.2025

Grape Harvest Festival
Rioja Alavesa

18-21.09.2025

Beer fair
Tolosa

Every wednesday

Wednesday's market
Bergara

CULTURAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM

01.08.2025

Requiem(s) Ballet
Conference Center San Sebastián

11-14.08.2025

Tabakalera Dantzan 2025
San Sebastián

From 14.08. hasta 21.09.2025

MAMMA MIA! - Musical
Arriaga Bilbao Theatre

16.08.2025

GBH + Deaf Devils Concert
Bilbao

16-30.08.2025

Route of the mourals
Vitoria - Gasteiz

20.08.2025

West Side Story
Conference Center San Sebastián

22.08.2025

Orquesta Nacional de España
Conference Center San Sebastián

22-31.08.2025

Flamenco On Fire 2025 Festival
Pamplona-Iruña

27.08.2025

Orchestre De L'Opéra National de Paris
Conference Center San Sebastián

28.08.2025

Héritier Wata Concert
Campos Elíseos Bilbao Theatre

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29.08.2025

Candlelight: Coldplay vs. Imagine Dragons
Bilbao

29-30.08.2025

Dantz Festival 2025
San Sebastián

30.08.2025

Candlelight: Tributo Hans Zimmer
Bilbao

04.09.2025

Quevedo Concert
Bilbao

05.09.2025

Maitaldia 2025 Festival
Biarritz

06.09.2025

Andy y Lucas Concert
Conference Center San Sebastián

10-14.09.2025

Getxo Folk - Festival
Getxo

12.09.2025

Candlelight: Queen vs. ABBA
Bilbao

12-14.09.2025

Boga Boga Festival
Hernani and San Sebastián

12-21.09.2025

Alava Early Music Week
Vitoria Gasteiz

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14.09.2025

Sebastian Yatra Concert
Bilbao Arena

16.09.2025

Pimpinela Concert
Palacio Euskalduna

18-21.09.2025

DALECANDELA Festival
Getxo

26.09.2025

Nancys Rubias Concert
Bilbao Arena

27.09.2025

Moto - Membra Jesu Nostri
Arriaga Theatre

30.09.2025

Euskadiko orkestra - Berloiz / Ravel
Conference Center San Sebastián

SPORT ACTIVITY CALENDAR

June - September

Horse racing

06-10.08.2025

Golf-La Galea Cup
Getxo

09.08.2025

Cycling – 47º Premio San Román
Muxika

17.08.2025

Athletic - Sevilla FC
San Mamés - Bilbao

24.08.2025

Real Sociedad - R.C.D. Espanyol
Reale Arena - San Sebastián

25.08.2025

Athletic - Rayo Vallecano
San Mamés - Bilbao

07-14.09.2025

Bandera de la Concha - rowing competition
San Sebastián

14.09.2025

Real Sociedad - Real Madrid
Reale Arena - San Sebastián

14.09.2025

Athletic - Deportivo Alavés
San Mamés - Bilbao

Every monday

Galarreta Jai-Alai
Hernani



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