

Autumn in the Basque Country

september - october



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 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.

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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 marks the 73st edition, a year that will be special because of the actors' and screenwriters' strike in Hollywood.

And going on with the cultural scene, the iconic Guggenheim Museum of Bilbao celebrates every 18th October its anniversary. And to commemorate 28 years since the inauguration of the museum, like every year, the Guggenheim of Bilbao will open its doors for free.



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 6 to 8, 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 \(28 - 31 oct\)](#) or the [Sopela Kosta Fest \(19 - 21 sept\)](#).



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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

25-28.09.2025

Sagar Uzta – cider and apple party
Astigarraga

29.09-5.10.2025

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.

02-06.10.2025

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

03.10.2025

Maritxu Kajoi festivity
Arrasate

04.10.2025

BIONEKARABA. Organic products fair
Vitoria - Gasteiz

04-05.10.2025

Kantauri Fest
Zierbena port

05.10.2025

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

06.10.2025

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

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07.10.2025

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

Agurain - Salvatierra

10-19.10.2025

San Fausto festivities. Cultural, gastronomic and entertainment activities

Basauri, Durango

18.10.2025

Apple Day. Exhibition and sale

Arrasate - Mondragón

19.10.2025

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

Tafalla

19.10.2025

Mycology Fair

Zarautz

19.10.2025

Alava Potato Fair

Valdegovia

23.10.2025

San Severino festivities. Cultural, gastronomic and leisure activities, highlighting the 25rd “alubiada” contest.

Balmaseda

25.10.2025

XXX Tolosa Goxua - Sale of cakes and other sweets

Tolosa

26.10.2025

Belauntza Fair

Belauntza

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26.10.2025

IV Women Artisans' Fair
Irura

26.10.2025

Ardiki Eguna - Mondeju and Aralar Shepherd Cheese Contest.
Exhibition and sale
Zaldibia

27.10.2025

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

Every Weekend

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

19 - 27.09.2025

Zinemaldia 2025 - [Festival de San Sebastián.](#) One of the most important Film Festivals in the world
San Sebastian

19 - 21.09.2025

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

19.09.2025 - 05.01.2025

Chiaru. Exhibition by the Japanese artist.
Azkuna Zentroa, Bilbao

19, 20, 26.09.2025

Irun Zuzenean Festibala - Music Festival
Irun

20.09.2025

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

20-26.09.2025

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

26.09.2025

Xavier Rudd - Concert
Sala Santana 27, Bilbao

26.09.2025

Nancys Rubias - Concert
Bilbao Arena, Bilbao

27.09.2025

Manuel Carrasco - Concert
Bilbao Arena, Bilbao

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27.09.2025

Paloma San Basilio - Concert
Euskalduna Palace, Bilbao

Until 28.09.2025

Vistiendo un jardin - Exhibition
San Telmo Museum, San Sebastian

03.10.2025 - 19.01.2025

Goya and the Costumbrismo.
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, Bilbao

04.10.2025

Luis Miguel - Concert
BEC Arena, Barakaldo

06-08.10.2025

San Sebastian Gastronomika
Kursaal, San Sebastian

17.10.2025

Trend Festival XXL 2025
Bizkaia Arena, Barakaldo

21.10.2025

Izarrak Alde - Exhibition
San Telmo Museum, San Sebastian

23.10 - 01.11.2025

SANTURZINE - International Short Film Festival
Santurtzi

08-12.10.2025

The Rocky Horror Show
Palacio Arriaga - Bilbao

16-19.10.2025

The true story of Richard III - Theatre
Palacio Arriaga - Bilbao

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25.10.2025

"La forza del destino" Verdi - ABAO Bilbao Opera Concert
Palacio Esukalduna - Bilbao

Until 31.10.2025

Yacimiento de Antxerikueta - Exhibition
Museo de arqueologia y de Naipes (Bibat), Vitoria

SPORT ACTIVITY CALENDAR

04.10.2025

Athletic Club vs. RCD Mallorca - LaLiga
San Mames, Bilbao

04.10.2025

Half Marathon San Sebastian Rural Kutxa
San Sebastian

05.10.2025

Zumaia Flysch Trail 43k
Zumaia

05.10.2025

Alavés vs. Elche CF - LaLiga
Mendizorroza, Vitoria

05.10.2025

Real Sociedad vs. Rayo Vallecano - LaLiga
Reale Arena, San Sebastian

11.10.2025

Eskupilota 4,5 - basque handball match
Different locations

12.10.2025

Baskonia vs. Real Madrid
Buesa Arena, Vitoria

12.10.2025

Cycling Vilabira
Hondarribia

12.10.2025

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

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14.10.2025

Bilbao Basket vs. Peristeri
Bilbao Arena

18.10.2025

Bilbao Night Marathon – 42, 21 y 7 kms
Bilbao

22.10.2025

Athletic Club vs. Qarabağ FK - Champions League
San Mamés, Bilbao

26.10.2025

Real Sociedad vs. Sevilla FC
Reale Arena, San Sebastian

26.10.2025

Bilbao Basket vs. Andorra
Bilbao Arena

26.10.2025

Athletic Club vs. Getafe CF - La Liga
San Mames, Bilbao

Nearly every weekend

Basque rural sports exhibitions
Different locations



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