

Purely PYRENEES

walking and cycling holidays

Culture and "Camino" : Guernica, Guggenheim & much more



Coastal walking holiday in Green Spain, partly following the historic Camino de Santiago. You will see dinosaur fossils, cave paintings, a medieval island hermitage, Guernica, the Balenciaga fashion museum, and the Guggenheim in Bilbao.

4 nights, 3 walking days

■ Minimum required 2

■ From point to point

■ With luggage transportation

■ Self-guided

Code :
FP2PUBI



The plus points

- **Transfers from and to Bilbao (other transfers available)**
- **Luggage transfers every day so you only carry a daysack**
- **High quality, original hotels with dinner usually included**
- **24/7 customer service**



Before departure, please check that you have an updated fact sheet.

https://www.purelypyrenees.com/cultural_camino_break_guernica_guggenheim_much_more.html

We have packed a lot into this itinerary, though there is still plenty of time for gentle walking and relaxing. There will be typical Spanish hotels, parts of the Camino de Santiago, superb tapas and seafood, as you are never more than a few miles from the coast. Each day there are highlights: Getaria and the Balenciaga museum on your arrival day; dinosaur fossils and 14,000 year-old cave paintings the next day; the Guernica museum and UNESCO wetlands the next; and finally a magical island hermitage and the Guggenheim - plus an evening of tapas in Bilbao !

■ PROGRAMME

DAY 1

Arrival at Getaria

Standard option: You make your own way to Getaria.

With extra airport pick-up: We pick you up from Bilbao airport (or port or railway station) and take you to Getaria.

Getaria is a marvellous place. It is a thriving fishing port with 2 lovely beaches, an island (now linked to the mainland), and a traditional quarter on a cliff above a beach. It is famous for the local wine, Txakoli, as well as being the birth town of the famous fashion designer Balenciaga (your museum ticket has been included). If time allows, you can walk through vineyards and along the coast to the next village, Zarautz, which is renowned for its historic streets surrounding Queen Isabelle II's palace (founded when Zarautz became a prestige resort in the 19th century). It is now more well-known for its long beach, a favourite with surfers.

This itinerary includes daily transfers, adding considerably to the quality, enjoyment and price, so this break cannot be directly compared to apparently similar ones.

You stay at the two star boutique hotel called Pension Katrapona with smart stylish rooms, all with balconies and sea views, and a perfect location overlooking the fishing port. It's always a pleasure to stay here. You can choose from the portside fish oriented restaurants, not forgetting to try Txakoli, of course.

Walking time : 2h or 3h. Distance : 4km. Transfer time : 1 hour.

DAY 2

Getaria - Zumaia - Lekeitio

After a leisurely breakfast, you start by walking through the Txakoli vineyards, and then descend to the attractive seaside village of Zumaia where you can walk through 50 million years of history as the remarkable and dramatic Flysch cliffs here are famous for their dinosaur and other fossil remains. Your walk combines both this surprising coast, and the joys of Green Spain as you walk inland among wildflower meadows and woods. Your walking destination is the tiny hamlet of Elorriaga, and from here you can choose to be transferred directly to the hotel, or visit the Ekainberri museum, which includes an actual size, walk through replica of the cave famous for the prehistoric (14,000 year old) paintings of horses, which have made this a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

You stay in the fishing village of Lekeitio, in the charming and historic three star Hôtel Zubieta close the old town, beach and port. Each room is individually styled, and has a balcony. The bar and outdoor terrace are spacious and delightful. A truly relaxing place to stay. You can dine at a portside restaurant of your choice just a short stroll away.

Walking time : 5h30. Distance : 14,5km. Elevation : + 550m / - 550m. Transfer time : 1 hour.

DAY 3

Lekeitio - Elantxobe - Ogoño - Urdabai

You start your day with a transfer for a magnificent cliff top walk to the summit of Ogono with a 1,000 foot plunge straight down to the ocean. From here, you enjoy a wonderful view above the tiny and characterful port of Elantxobe (walk down to it if you wish), and from there you walk through oak forests to the 15th century hermitage of San Pedro of Atxarre. The final section is a panoramic decent down to the Urdabai estuary and bird sanctuary before a short transfer to the hotel.

You stay at the superb, four star Castillo de Arteaga - a truly luxurious hotel set in its own historic and spacious grounds with superb gastronomic meals that will stay in your memory as long as the place itself.

Walking time : 4h Distance : 9km. Elevation : + 450m / - 450m. Transfer time : 10 minutes.

DAY 4

Urdabai - Guernica - Gaztelugatxe - Bilbao

This morning you have a magnificent walk down the middle of the estuary on a man-made raised trail with estuary flora and fauna all around you until you arrive in Guernica itself. You then have a private guided visit (90 minutes, and included in the holiday price) around the fascinating Museum of Peace in Guernica. We then take you to begin a decent stroll to the amazing island hermitage of Gaztelugatxe - ideal for your picnic. In the early afternoon we transfer you to Bilbao, so you have plenty of time to visit the Guggenheim (entry price included), and explore the historic quarter.

For your last night, you stay in the modern Bilbao Plaza Hotel, superbly located right next to the town hall and the river. Sculptures, paintings and photographs as well as all the usual commodoties will make your stay very comfortable. Just a 10 minute walk from all the major sites in the city centre: the Guggenheim Museum, the cathedral, the theatre and the fantastic tapas bars and restaurants around the Plaza Nueva and the historic centre. A great place for a last night.

Walking time : 2h 30 minutes. Distance : 6km. Elevation : + 200m / - 200m. Transfer time : 1h30.

DAY 5

End of stay

Standard option: After breakfast, you have a transfer back to Getaria to collect your car.

With extra airport transfer: After breakfast, you have a transfer back to Bilbao airport (or port or railway station).

Transfer time : 15 minutes. Or 1 hour if heading back to Getaria.

Elements beyond our control (the weather, level of the group, logistical risks, other miscellaneous reasons...) may lead our team to modify the programme. We aim to please, but your safety will systematically be our priority.

■ **USEFUL INFORMATION**

PROGRAMME OF DEPARTURES

1 May to 31 October

MEETING POINT

Standard option: You make your own way to Getaria.

With extra airport pick-up: We pick you up from Bilbao airport (or port or railway station) and take you to Getaria.

END OF STAY

Standard option: After breakfast, you have a transfer back to Getaria to collect your car.

With extra airport transfer: After breakfast, you have a transfer back to Bilbao airport (or port or railway station).

TO GET TO THE MEETING POINT

There are flights to Bilbao from London, Paris and numerous other European cities. Some of these flights only fly (or only fly frequently) in the height of summer. There are ferries to Bilbao, and trains from France and Spain. There is also secure public parking in Bilbao.

CAR SHARING

To reduce your travel costs as well as carbon emissions, think about car sharing, whether you are a driver or passenger. Connect to [Blablacar](#) it's simple and practical.

We recommend that you compare the cost of various different means of accessing your circuit start point by using the website [Comparabus](#). Contrary to what the name suggests, this site proposes several different means of completing a journey, including, flights, trains, buses or car sharing.

PARKING

There is public parking in Bilbao and Getaria.

IF YOU WANT TO ARRIVE THE NIGHT BEFORE OR STAY AFTER THE TRIP

You can book extra nights before, during or after the holiday. Just contact us.

GUARANTEED DEPARTURE FROM (PERS)

2

LEVEL

This holiday features comfortable rather than challenging walking, and is suitable for anybody who is reasonably fit and enjoys "a good walk". It can get hot in July and August, as well as more crowded, but the temperatures are moderated by the mountains and sea breezes. We would recommend May, June and September as the best months.

LUGGAGE TRANSPORTATION

We will transfer your luggage between each hotel, so all you need to carry when walking is a daysack with whatever you regard as essentials.

SUPERVISION

This is an independent, self-guided holiday with transfers as described.

ACCOMODATION

You stay in double or twin rooms for one night in a very good 2 star pension, one night in a three star hotel, one night in a four star hotel, and one in the "maison d'hôtes de charme" in Bilbao.

MEALS

Breakfast is included every morning, but picnics, lunches and dinners are not leaving you free to make choices that suit you. The only exception is dinner at the Castillo de Arteaga which is included. There are shops and cafes/restaurants en route - and you can always ask the hotel the night before to make a picnic, which you can pay for locally.

TRANSFERS

Usually transfers are in people carriers, mini-buses, cars or taxis. Often they will be exclusively for you.

THE PRICE INCLUDES

4 nights bed and breakfast; the evening meal on day 3 (Castillo de Arteaga); people transfers as described; luggage transfers; detailed walking instructions; private guided tour of Museum of Peace, Guernica; entry to the Guggenheim, Bilbao; bespoke walking maps and guides; 24/7 customer phone service.

THE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

The journey to the start point, and from the finish point, except as specified; lunches or dinners (except for the dinner on day 3 in the Castillo de Arteaga) ; entry fees except as specified; personal and travel insurance.

FORMALITIES

You need to keep your passport with you at all times, and ideally insurance information. You need to make your own arrangements to claim local healthcare. There are requirements in France and Spain for all vehicles to carry safety equipment.

CONTENTS OF YOUR TRAVEL FOLDER

When we have received your balance of payment for your holiday, and in the month before departure, we send you all the documentation you need: detailed itinerary showing dates, times, contact details etc; a detailed guide to your walking route (with options) and lots of cultural, historical and nature background information; formal documents (invoices, contracts etc); luggage labels etc. If you book at the last minute, we can send this information to your first night hotel.

■ EQUIPMENT

Do pack everything into one suitcase (preferably soft form) and bring a weatherproof daysack (small rucksack) each. We transport your luggage, and large rucksacks are difficult for flights and cars.

Do invest in "tech" clothing - light, waterproof, breathable, quick drying etc - and good walking boots with ankle protection (trainers will not be good enough).

Do simplify your "tech" equipment if you can: for example, can you get communications, internet access, entertainment, music and books all on your smartphone ? There's plenty of space in your luggage for a Kindle, so do you need to take books as well ?

Do choose comfortable clothing for evenings too - usually people dress casual, or at most smart casual, but remember you are usually staying and dining in quality hotels.

Do remember that while you are enjoying some of the most unspoilt and magnificent scenery and landscapes in the world, and walking for hours without seeing another soul, you will be staying in villages and towns with shops that have most of the things you might need as replacements, or if you've forgotten stuff. After all, you are in France and Spain, not the middle of nowhere !

LUGGAGE

- A soft travel bag, avoid suitcases, which are more cumbersome and limit the weight of your belongings to 10 kg if possible.
- A small backpack of 30 litres minimum for your daytime requirements.

CLOTHES

- Waterproof and breathable anorak (Gore-Tex type)
- Fleece or a sweater (depending on the location and season)
- Waterproof over-trousers
- Pair of gloves (depending on the location and season)
- Sun hat (with all round brim)
- Shorts
- Swimming costume + packaway towel
- Several pairs of proper walking socks
- Underwear
- Pair of trainers or light evening shoes
- Comfortable clothing for the evening

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Walking boots (with ankle protection)
- Sunglasses, sunscreen and lip protection
- Water bottle or backpack container (allow 2 litres per person per day)
- Tupperware type container for the picnic + cutlery
- Compass
- Waterproof cover for walking instructions and map
- Head torch
- Survival blanket
- Mobile phone (signal strength is often surprisingly good, but cannot be relied on)
- Your identity documents (including driving licence - you never know when...)

FIRST AID KIT

- Small shared kit (gauze, plasters, analgesic, blister plasters, earplugs, pain killers, indigestion tablets)

■ MORE INFORMATION

THE AREA

The fault line that formed the Pyrenees does not stop as soon as the Spanish-French border hits the Atlantic Ocean in the Basque Country. Although technically no longer a part of the Pyrenees, the mountains continue to weave their way along in parallel with Spain's Cantabrian Coast.

Here, you can experience the seaside resort town of San Sebastian with its huge, long beaches and hoards of tapas restaurants; or you can visit the more industrial Bilbao with the world famous Guggenheim Museum of Modern Art.

The coastline between the two cities is lined with long-distance walking paths making their way in and out of the terraced vineyards of txakoli, used to produce the region's famous white wine. One of the long-distance routes coincides with one of the northern variants of the Way of St James.

Between Zumaia and Deba you can find some of Europe's finest cliffs of flysch, a geological feature created from layers of marls and sandstones that have been violently folded to form a kind of fossilized mille-feuilles tumbling down into the Atlantic. Geologists from all over the world come to study it due to the fact that there is one dark layer of marl containing a disproportionate amount of iridium and where hardly any fossils are present. Scientists have used this as evidence to back up their theory of a huge meteorite crashing to Earth and wiping out the dinosaurs.

This part of Spain has a unique culture and many would still like to see the Basque region become independent one day. Around 35% of people (figures from 2016) speak Basque (or "Euskera" as it is known here). This is a 10% increase over the last 10 years, evidence of a positive and constructive linguistic policy in Basque schools. Basque is the oldest living language in Europe, dating back to the nomadic populations that came to Europe before the ice age! Genetic studies have shown that the Basques have a significantly higher percentage of a certain type of Y-chromosome than other European populations.

The Basques are traditionally a nation of fishermen, farmers and raisers of livestock. However, the industrial revolution hit towns like Bilbao in a big way. Already a significant European port, it developed enormously. In recent years, it has cleaned up its image and become a thriving, modern and fashionable city, home to the internationally renowned Guggenheim Museum of Modern Art, designed by Frank Gehry.

The gastronomy is among the best in the world, with some of Spain's finest chefs coming from the region. There are more Michelin stars in the Basque Country than in any other region of Spain. Specialities include dishes based on hake, cod and tuna from the Atlantic Ocean, local sheep's cheese and red peppers. Typical drinks include cider, patxarán (an aperitif based on wild prunes) or Txakoli (a slightly sparkling white wine).

■ INSURANCE

According to the regulation of our profession, Purely Pyrenees is covered by a Civil Professional Liability. However, each client must hold an individual civil liability as well as an individual multi risk guarantee in order to protect themselves from incidents or accidents that may occur before or during their hiking trip.

We remind you that a credit card covers, in general, only assistance in repatriation and not the cancellation of your trip, and this only provided you use the card to pay for the total of the trip.

We offer a choice of three insurance options which you can purchase at the time of booking.

Package 1: simple cancellation insurance at 2.5%

This insurance provides reimbursement of the amount incurred (excluding fees and the cost of insurance) in case of cancellation due to one of the following causes: serious accident, illness or death of insured, spouse or person accompanying them, and certain family members.

Package 2: simple cancellation insurance and assistance / repatriation at 3.7%

This insurance allows, in addition to the benefits described in the plan No. 1; - To benefit from assistance in case of illness or injury during the trip and covers your return home if necessary. - A reimbursement paid on a pro rata basis (excluding transportation costs and with a waiting period) in the case of an interruption of your trip following an accident, the death of a loved one or other specified accidents.

Package 3: Package "super multi-risk": 4.8%

This insurance offers, in addition to the benefits described in the packages No. 1 and No. 2, - A wider cancellation insurance with the repayment of amounts incurred (net of deductible) in case of cancellation for any justifiable reason including an exceptional and unexpected event. - The management of some of the costs incurred at the time in case of return not linked to an exceptional and unexpected event. - Compensation (capped) for loss, theft or destruction of baggage. - Payment of compensation for delayed baggage delivery of more than 48 hours.

The rapatriation is not valid for all countries, please check with us before subscribing the insurance.

You will receive with the confirmation of your booking an extract of the general conditions of contract chosen (in french). Take this document with you on your journey. The validity of all guarantees corresponds with the travel dates indicated on the invoice and applies only to services sold. For departures and returns postponed, please contact us. Warning: If you buy only the contract No. 1 (simple cancellation insurance), this means that you need to have your own insurance, repatriation assistance (related notably to certain credit cards). We advise you to check your contract and cover guaranteed. In this case, we ask you to tell us when you book the name of your insurance company and your policy number. You will assume, therefore, the responsibility of certain risks, especially in the advance payments of certain costs.

Important: If you must use the assistance during the trip, you must obtain the prior consent of Europe Assistance before taking any action or incur any expenditure by telephoning: 33 1 41 85 85 85 and quoting the number of contract: 58662860

■ ACTING FOR RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Purely Pyrenees is a founding member of Action for Responsible Tourism.

The label "Action for Responsible Tourism" was awarded Purely Pyrenees in 2009. It is controlled, every year, by ECOCERT.

Based on common values of respect, solidarity and quality, ATR aims to harmonize professional practices of its members.

To win the confidence of customers, it focuses on four key commitments, which arise from many activities in the field and at home.

- Clear information and awareness of responsible tourism given to the traveller.
- Selection of providers in the spirit of responsible tourism.
- Setting up of a transfer of competencies to the providers.
- Commitment in relation to the tour operator's own structure.

More information on the label ATR on /www.tourisme-responsable.org

■ CONTACT US

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■ NOTES

