



*Pocket*  
**BILBAO &  
SAN SEBASTIÁN**  
TOP SIGHTS • LOCAL LIFE • MADE EASY

A thick, curved rainbow arc that starts from the right side of the text and extends towards the bottom right corner of the page.

**Stuart Butler, Duncan Garwood**

# In This Book

## QuickStart Guide

Your keys to understanding the cities – we help you decide what to do and how to do it



**Need to Know**  
Tips for a smooth trip



**Neighbourhoods**  
What's where

## Explore Bilbao & San Sebastián

The best things to see and do, neighbourhood by neighbourhood



**Top Sights**  
Make the most of your visit



**Local Life**  
The insider's city

## The Best of Bilbao & San Sebastián

The cities' highlights in handy lists to help you plan



**Best Walks**  
See the city on foot



**Bilbao & San Sebastián's Best...**  
The best experiences

## Survival Guide

Tips and tricks for a seamless, hassle-free city experience



**Getting Around**  
Travel like a local



**Essential Information**  
Including where to stay

Our selection of the cities' best places to eat, drink and experience:

 **Sights**

















 **Eating**

 **Drinking**

 **Entertainment**

 **Shopping**

These symbols give you the vital information for each listing:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Telephone Numbers     |  Family-Friendly |
|  Opening Hours         |  Pet-Friendly    |
|  Parking               |  Bus             |
|  Nonsmoking            |  Ferry           |
|  Internet Access       |  Metro           |
|  Wi-Fi Access          |  Subway          |
|  Vegetarian Selection  |  Tram            |
|  English-Language Menu |  Train           |

Find each listing quickly on maps for each neighbourhood:



### Bar Hemingway

16  Map p233, B2

Legend has it that Hemingway, wielding a machine gun, created this timber-paneled bar during his stay in Bilbao. The showpiece is a painting by Papa Hemingway in town. Dress code: smart casual. [www.barhemingway.com](#); Hôtel Ritz; 6.30pm-2a

## Lonely Planet's Bilbao & San Sebastián

Lonely Planet Pocket Guides are designed to get you straight to the heart of the city.

Inside you'll find all the must-see sights, plus tips to make your visit to Bilbao and San Sebastián really memorable. We've split the cities into easy-to-navigate neighbourhoods and provided clear maps so you'll find your way around with ease. Our expert authors have searched out the best of each city: walks, food, nightlife and shopping, to name a few. Because you want to explore, our 'Local Life' pages will take you to some of the most exciting areas to experience the real Bilbao and San Sebastián.

And of course you'll find all the practical tips you need for a smooth trip: itineraries for short visits, how to get around, and how much to tip the guy who serves you a drink at the end of a long day's exploration.

It's your guarantee of a really great experience.

## Our Promise

You can trust our travel information because Lonely Planet authors visit the places we write about, each and every edition. We never accept freebies for positive coverage, so you can rely on us to tell it like it is.

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## Welcome to Bilbao & San Sebastián

Alike but not alike, Bilbao and San Sebastián are both cities with a Basque soul and a love of the culinary arts. But where Bilbao is industrious and arty, San Sebastián is flirty and sunny. And in between the two? A string of bijou coastal villages with a sea-salt heart.

San Sebastián

PEETER VIISIMAA/GETTY IMAGES ©





# Bilbao & San Sebastián

## Top Sights

### Museo Guggenheim (p36)

A byword for contemporary architecture, Bilbao's spectacular Museo Guggenheim has lifted the city into the 21st century and changed the face of regional tourism.





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### Museo de Bellas Artes (p40)

From Gothic sculptures to pop art, the Museo de Bellas Artes is the region's most compelling collection of fine art. Temporary exhibitions draw huge crowds. Above: *Garden*, by Francisco Iturrino

## 10 Top Sights

### San Sebastián Aquarium (p74)

More than just pulsating jellyfish, gardens of coral and an awful lot of fish, San Sebastián's aquarium also features a captivating Basque whaling exhibit.



P. FOCHE/GETTY IMAGES ©

### Playa de la Concha (p88)

Fulfilling almost every expectation of what a perfect city beach should be like, San Sebastián's Playa de la Concha is among the best in Europe.



NITO/SHUTTERSTOCK ©

### San Telmo Museoa (p72)

San Sebastián's showpiece cultural attraction is this impressive museum of Basque culture and society. Exhibits can be challenging, but they are always interesting.



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## Monte Igueldo (p90)

Take a clunky old-world funicular railway to the summit of Monte Igueldo for eagle-eye views of San Sebastián; finish with a few turns on the carousel.



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## Central Basque Coast (p66)

Where the storm-tossed Atlantic Ocean is fighting a duel with the green hills and plunging valleys. The result is a contorted and spectacular coastline, dotted with lovely fishing villages.



IMAGE BROKER/ALAMY ©

## Guernica (p64)

It doesn't always make for pleasant viewing, but Guernica's peace museum will get you thinking about war, hate, discrimination and love.