

Basque Country Guided Walking Holiday

Tour Style: European Multi-Centre

Destinations: Spain & Basque Country

Trip code: PBLCL

Trip Walking Grade: 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Discover the rich and unique culture of the Basque Country and the varied landscapes on both sides of the border with our Guided Walking multi-centre holiday. In France, explore the local area on foot, spot the local Pottok horses and walk to the summit of Mount Esnaur. A train ride to the summit of La Rhune is bound to be a highlight of the trip. In Spain, walk along the coast to San Sebastian and further explore coastal paths and inland trails that pass through vineyards.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- A full programme of guided walks and sightseeing, including a free day to explore at your own leisure
- All transport to and from walks
- The services of a knowledgeable local leader
- 'With flight' holidays include return flights from the UK and hotel transfers
- 7 nights' half-board accommodation in en-suite rooms

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience the diverse Basque Country culture in both France and Spain
- Explore the coast along old pilgrim trails and through Spanish vineyards
- Take a train to the summit of La Rhune for spectacular views out to the ocean

TRIP SUITABILITY

This is a level 3 activity. Walks are up to 8 miles with up to 1,550 feet of ascent and up to 2,800 feet of descent. Many walks are on trails that are rocky and uneven underfoot.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

We arrive at Bilbao airport, where we meet our local guide and transfer across the border to Sare, where we spend our first three nights. Depending when we arrive and once you've checked in, there may be a little time to explore the town before meeting with your guide for dinner.

Day 2: Sare

Today we'll enjoy a gentle walk in the local area following the oratories trail. Walking initially along the GR10 we continue to walk on the Galtzada a medieval road leading to the nearest Spanish village, Zugarramurdi. There are 14 oratories in this area and all were built in the 17th Century by fishermen who wanted protection from Saints.

Day 3: La Rhune Summit

This morning we'll take a bus to the col de Saint Ignace. From here, we'll take the tourist train to the summit of La Rhune where, with good weather, we'll enjoy some spectacular views out towards the Atlantic coast. Our walk from the summit will cross the French and Spanish border before descending back to the col, enjoying

the views as we go.

Day 4: To San Sebastián And On To Getaria

A bus journey takes us along the coast to Pasaia; we'll stop by Victor Hugo's house then take a small local boat across the river to start our walk. We ascend stone steps – part of the pilgrim way – before our trail enters and undulates through a pine forest and along the coastline. Our coastal walk takes us to San Sebastián; as we near it, we should be treated to some stunning views. Later, we'll transfer to Getaria for the next four nights. Hotel: Hotel Saiaz, Getaria

Day 5: Free Day

Today is a free day for you to explore the local area independently at your own pace. Your local guide can help with suggestions, but here are some ideas you might enjoy:

Getaria: take in the spectacular views over the Bay of Biscay; visit the church and explore the old city walls and fishing port; relax on one of nearby beaches or enjoy a dip in the sea; or visit the Cristóbal Balenciaga museum of fashion.

Zarautz: a short bus ride away, there are plenty of shops and the longest beach in the Basque Country.

San Sebastián: a stunning city with beautiful beaches and impressive architecture. It can be easily reached by train.

Bilbao: also accessible by train, there's much in this city to enjoy including the famous Guggenheim museum.

Day 6: Zumaia

We transfer by public transport to the coastal town of Zumaia, from where we'll enjoy a fantastic coastal walk following the Compostela trail and GR-121. This walk offers some of the finest Spanish Basque coast; the area is now protected to help preserve its unique beauty and the ecosystem.

Day 7: Zarautz To Getaria

On our final day we take a short transfer by public transport from the beach at Zarautz to Getaria. This is a fabulous walk along the coast, which also takes in a loop trail around Getaria amidst the txakoli vineyards.

Day 8: Departure Day

After breakfast and a leisurely morning, we'll transfer to Bilbao airport for our return flight home.

ACCOMMODATION

Arraya Hotel De Charme, Sare - Basque Country

This delightful 4* hotel is located on the village square in Sare offering rooms within 3 traditional 16th-century houses. Each room is individually decorated and features a TV with satellite channels, a private bathroom and free Wi-Fi. Some rooms open onto the garden and some have views of the village square.

Hotel Saiaz, Getaria - Basque Country

Housed in a Gothic building in the old town, this wonderful 3* hotel offers intriguing historic details with all the modern comforts. Many of the 17 ensuite rooms offer sea views and the breakfast room has panoramic views across the Bay of Biscay. All rooms have WiFi, a minibar, safe and television.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Essential Information

Passport Requirements

You may need to renew your British passport if you're travelling from 1 January 2021.

On the day you travel, you'll need your passport to both:

- have at least 6 months left
- be less than 10 years old (even if it has 6 months or more left)

Use the [government website](#) to see if your passport is valid for this holiday

EHIC Cards

The UK government has officially launched the Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC), which will replace the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). UK residents can now apply for one of the GHIC cards, which will gradually replace the EHIC cards as they reach their expiry dates. Every family member travelling requires a GHIC. You can make an application for yourself and on behalf of your partner and any dependent children under the age of 16. Both cards will offer equivalent protection for emergency and medically necessary healthcare needs when in the EU on a temporary stay, which includes holiday, study and business travel. Necessary healthcare includes things like

- emergency treatment and visits to A&E
- treatment for long-term or pre-existing medical conditions
- routine medical care for pre-existing conditions that need monitoring
- oxygen and kidney dialysis

The public only need to apply for their free GHIC cards when their current EHIC expires. The process is likely to take two weeks. For more information visit <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>.

The GHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance. We advise all holidaymakers to also invest in travel insurance that covers healthcare, so they are covered for other issues that may arise, as well as cancellations and lost luggage.

Essential Equipment

To enjoy walking/hiking comfortably and safely, footwear, clothing and equipment needs to be suitable for the conditions. Safety and comfort are our priorities, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities.

- Footwear with a good grip on the sole (e.g. Vibram sole) is the key to avoiding accidents.
- Walking/hiking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended (ideally worn in), and specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed, are better than a single layer (include spares).
- Fabrics (lightweight and fast drying) designed for the outdoors are recommended.
- Waterproof jacket and waterproof over trousers.
- Warm hat and gloves.
- Denim jeans and capes are not suitable on any walks.
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner.
- Thermos flask for hot drink.
- Water bottle (at least 2 litre).
- Spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar.
- Small torch.

- First aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed).
- Sun hat and sunglasses
- Sun cream.

Optional Equipment

- Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents.
- Insect repellent.
- Camera.
- Gaiters.

Useful Information

Language:

Euskara is the Basque language, but Spanish and French are also spoken

Currency:

Euro

Money:

Access to emergency money, preferably via a credit card, is very important as you never know when an emergency may arise.

Electricity:

220 - 230 Volt AC with round two round pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

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Local Currency

The currency of Basque Country is the Euro.

Electricity

220 - 230 Volt AC with round two round pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

ATM Availability

Access to emergency money, preferably via a credit card, is very important as you never know when an emergency may arise.

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday: 9am – 1pm Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £20 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you

have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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