



**THE ARTS SOCIETY MARINA ALTA PROPOSED ITINERARY**  
**Day by Day Itinerary: Basque Cultural Tour 12 pax**  
**21-26 June 2022**

Date	Outline Itinerary	Accommodation
Tues 21 June	Arrive in Bilbao 11:45, check in to Hotel, Panoramic Tour of Bilbao including the Zaha Hadid regeneration of the 'island' the city's bridges and architecture by Cesar Pelli, Norman Foster and Isosaki. Welcome dinner in the hotel. (D)	4* Hotel Bilbao
Weds 22 June	Bilbao and the Guggenheim. Morning walking tour of the old town a private tour of the world famous Guggenheim Museum -(B) – Optional evening architecture walking tour*	4* Hotel Bilbao
Thurs 23 June	Wine-makers in La Rioja. A morning to discover the La Rioja Alavesa wine-producing region. Tastings at 2 very different establishments. Lunch to be taken at one of our winemakers' amazing private 'Finca' (B, L)	4* Hotel Bilbao
Fri 24 June	San Sebastian. Travel to San Sebastian with a visit to a remarkable outdoor gallery, before a short tour of the city. Free time for lunch to taste all those pintxos. Optional visit to the San Telmo Museum in the old town. (B)	4* Hotel Bilbao
Sat 25 June	Private guided visit to the Museo de Bellas Artes followed by a farewell lunch. (B, L)	4*Hotel Bilbao
Sun 26 June	Checkout from the hotel, Transfers to the airport from the hotel at approximately 10:30. (B)	

**Detailed Itinerary: Basque Cultural Tour**

**Introduction:**

A spectacular, private, 5–night tour offering the best of the Basque Country. Cultural highlights include a private docent tour of the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, visit the city's architectural icons and some of Spain's best galleries. Take in the local culture, gastronomy and spectacular scenery and stay in a super 4\* hotel. Visits to the cities of Bilbao and San Sebastian, we also get to see the green Basque Country and its rugged and famous coast as well as a private vintner's lunch in La Rioja.



Tour dates 21-26 June 2022.

Flights to be arranged by clients. June 21 Depart Alicante Airport on Vueling 10:20. Arrive in Bilbao at 11:45.  
June 26, Depart Bilbao Airport at 12:20. Arrive at Alicante Airport at 13:40.

## Day 1 –BILBAO

This formerly polluted, industrial and conflictive city has shed its rusty coating and transformed itself into a shiny, new, modern, dynamic metropolis. Busy, dense, and diverse, the city has really put itself on the world stage a result of this incredible urban transformation, aided by being home to the unmistakable Guggenheim Bilbao.

Transfers to the hotel are in our private coach (c 12:00h). After settling in and free time for your lunch (not included), we will undertake a Panoramic tour of Bilbao from our own private coach with guide. Taking in Monte Artxanda for views of the city we will learn how the river Nervion has been fundamental to the city's growth and provided inspiration to architects such as Cesar Pelli, Isosaki, Norman Foster, Frank Gehry and Santiago Calatrava.

A welcome dinner will be taken at the Ercilla's own in-house restaurant.

## Day 2 - BILBAO

Our first morning will take the form of a guided walking tour, in English. From our hotel on the river, we will stroll through the Old Town, the 'Zazpikaleak' or 'Casco Viejo' taking in the history, sights and smells, with stops in the 7 streets, the Cathedral and the superb Plaza Nueva and the Mercado de la Ribera, one of Europe's largest covered daily markets. A perfect platform to learn about and understand the evolution of the city as it is today. Following the course of the River Nervion, we will head over into the Ensantxe district where after having been on our feet for a couple of hours, we will stop to get a chance to sample some of the finest pintxos, our own Basque miniature bite-sized bar snacks, and take a short rest of course. You will have time to get lunch or just have a few more pintxos...

After lunch, our guide will take you from the Ensantxe District. Local anecdotes and historic gems of this now beautifully cleaned-up city will provide the contrast to the Guggenheim where a private guided showing of the Museum awaits. Our expert, English-speaking guide will introduce this marvellous piece of late 20<sup>th</sup> Century architecture, and the 90-minute private visit will to learn about the permanent and temporary exhibitions on show here as part of the Guggenheim Private Art Collection.

Free remainder of the afternoon and evening.

## Day 3 – RIOJA WINE COUNTRY

If you think Spanish wine, your first thought will most likely be Rioja. This area in northern Spain is the most well-known of all the Spanish wine producing regions, and your tour will not only reveal the spectacular scenery, towns and villages, but will give you an insight into the various different vineyards and the variety of wines created here.

Our tour will take place in the Basque 'Rioja Alavesa' district, where evidence of human settlement goes back thousands of years. Our first stop will see us in the stunning village of Elciego for a private tour of a small wine-maker and their collection of works of art from across Europe. Tastings will be included. Staying local we visit one of the oldest known winemaking facilities in the region to before heading to their private 'Finca' to sample some of their finest and take lunch outdoors where we will be surrounded by vineyards and majestic views.

Back early evening in Bilbao you will have free time to explore and dine.

## Day 4 –SAN SEBASTIÁN

'The Pearl of the North', as some would call it in Spain, Donostia/San Sebastián is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. 19th Century glamour in this belle-époque paradise, it rose to fame as a spa and seaside resort for old nobility, however the city these days caters for those seeking culinary excitement. A small city and very easy to explore, the amazing curved La Concha beach always provides a respite from the amazing selection of bars, restaurants and pintxos (Basque Tapas, you eat at the bar, on foot when there are no Covid restrictions however...).



Before we arrive in San Sebastian, we will take the opportunity to visit the recently restored [museum/gallery/exhibition/country house exhibiting works by Eduardo Chillida](#), an iconic Basque Sculptor. From here we make the very short drive to San Sebastián for a walking tour of the old town with our guide. Taking in the old town, the market, the fishing port and the Plaza Constitucional, we will learn about the city's violent history and transformation from port to spa to gastronomic heaven. After free time for lunch or pintxos, we will head back in the afternoon to Bilbao and a free evening.

## Day 5 – BELLAS ARTES

This morning sees our guide collect the group at the hotel for our guided tour of the Museo de Bellas Artes in Bilbao. Often overlooked by visitors, but one of the most eclectic collections of fine art in Spain. A farewell lunch in a Basque restaurant close to the Gallery will be arranged

## Day 6 – FLIGHTS

After breakfast and checkout, we will transfer the group to the airport from the Hotel at approximately 10:20.

## Accommodation

- 5 nights in the recently refurbished HOTEL ERCILLA 4\* Now part of the Marriott Group, this hotel is iconic in Bilbao and its location is second to none.
- The hotel boasts 2 restaurants and what is possibly the best rooftop terrace in Bilbao with 360° views of the city.
- We are holding 6 rooms for your group. They can be 'Stylish' rooms, or Stylish City View' rooms.
- Breakfast, portorage and welcome dinner on 21 June are included.
- Single travellers will have a double room and will be required to pay an excess.

## Notes:

- This tour is open to members of The Arts Society Marina Alta only.
- Tour based on a 12 pax.NO TOUR LEADER.
- All rooms are Double with Bed and Breakfast. Release 60 days.
- Guides are hand-picked and speak perfect English.
- (B, L, D) Breakfast - Lunch – Dinner included where noted.

## Includes:

- Room and Breakfast.
- Welcome dinner and wine on arrival day, and Farewell lunch on Day 5/6
- 2 pintxos and 2 drinks in Bilbao day 2
- Entrance and private official guide to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.
- Entrance to the Museo de Bellas Artes with audioguide.
- Entrance to Chillida Leku outdoor gallery.
- Public liability insurance with AON.
- All tastings and lunch on Day 3 La Rioja.
- Dedicated Private transport for all transfers including airports, in an air-conditioned, 'premium' coach.
- 1 dedicated Basque Experiences Guide on tour day 1 Panoramic Tour Bilbao (14:00-17:00h)
- 1 dedicated Basque Experiences Guide on tour day 2 Bilbao and Guggenheim (10:00h – 15:00h)
- 1 dedicated Basque Experiences Guide on tour day 3 La Rioja (08:45h – 18:00h)
- 1 dedicated Basque Experiences Guide on tour day 4 San Sebastian (09:00h – 17:00h)
- 1 dedicated Basque Experiences Guide on tour day 5 Bellas Artes and farewell lunch (10:30h- 15:30h)



- Porterage at Hotel.

### Does not include:

- Any purchases.
- Flights.
- Private Travel insurance, which we insist all travellers take out. COVID POLICIES for repatriation, hospital treatment and/or extra night's accommodation must be included in the clients own policy.
- Meals or drinks not included above.
- Visas or Vaccines.
- Tips or gratuities to drivers or guides.
- Optional tours

### Pricing:

Based on 2 persons sharing a double/twin room. IVA included at current rates.

#### HOTEL ERCILLA

Stylish Room: **€1160 per person**  
Single person supplement: **€310 per person**

Stylish City View Room: **€1190 per person**  
Single person supplement: **€340 per person**

**Prices BASED ON 12 GUESTS and will be subject to change with alterations.**

### Conditions:

Payment can be made via TRANSFERWISE Secure transfer which is our preference due to speed and low bank charges, or Credit Card/Bank Transfer. Any banking costs will be paid by the transferor.

We would require a **150€ deposit by 1 April 2022** to confirm the booking per person, with the remaining sum to be **made 45 days (6th<sup>th</sup> May 2022)** before the start of the trip on 21<sup>st</sup> June.

Should you cancel the tour you will receive a full refund up to 30 days (21<sup>st</sup> May 2022) before the start of the trip on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022. Then 50% refund between 22<sup>nd</sup> May and 7<sup>th</sup> June, and from then to the start a 25% refund.