Technical sheet | Guided hike | Level 2/5 | 5 Days of walking

Charm and Comfort of the Basque Country

Your Tour briefly

- Easy hiking in the Basque Country
- Star-based itinerary
- Comfortable *** hotel accommodation with swimming pool
- Exploration of the rich and diverse Basque cuisine

Highlights of the Hike

- Easy access via Bayonne train station
- Coastal hiking, GR 10 trails, classified villages, mystical forests, and legends of witchcraft…
- Shepherd's meal, one lunch in a traditional restaurant
- Exploration of the Basque Coast and the inland Basque Country









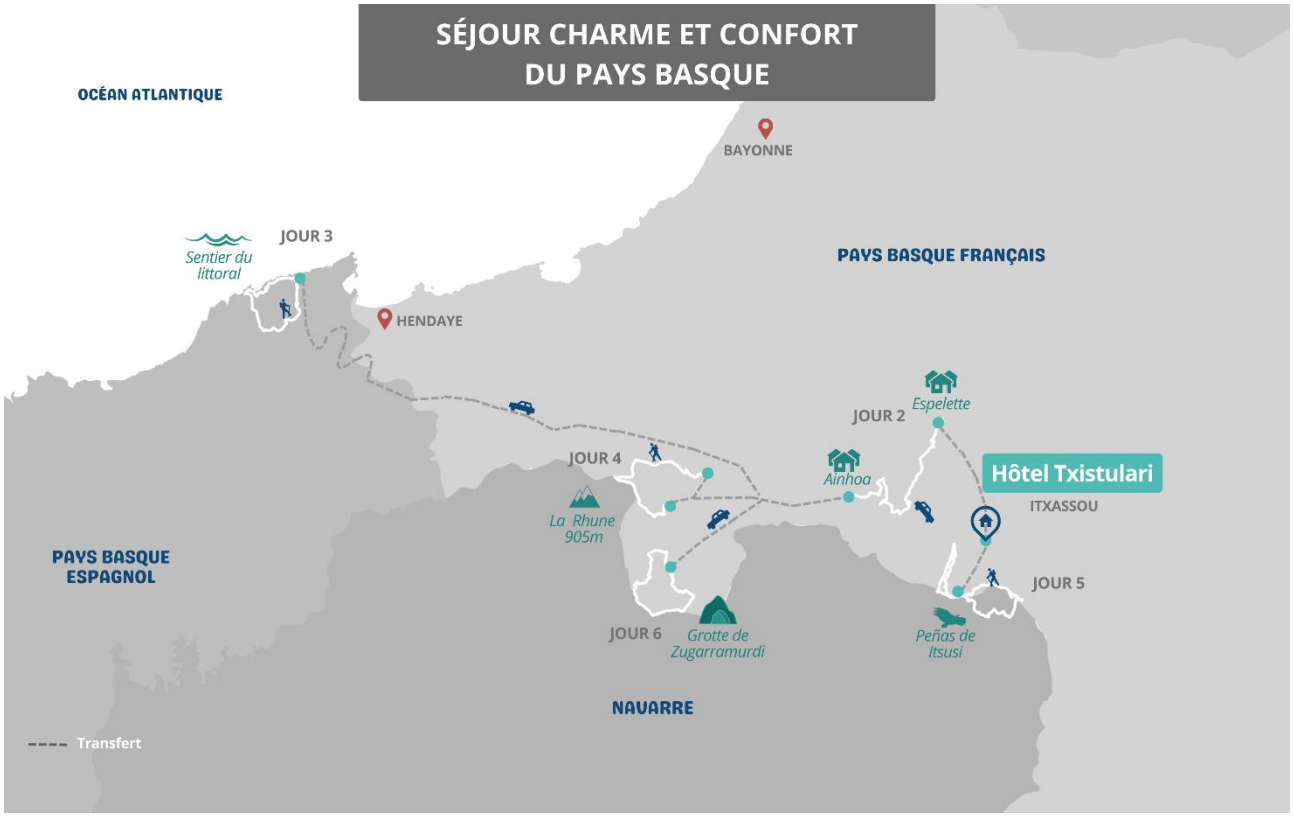
www.respyrenees.com
www.maison-iputxainia.com
Tél : (33) 5.34.14.51.50 ou (33) 6.10.97.16.54
info@respyrenees.com

This accessible hiking circuit takes you to the first foothills of the Pyrenees, offering a discovery of the Basque Country! Explore the many unusual villages nestled in lush valley bottoms, as well as the iconic La Rhune.
This itinerary is a chance to experience an exceptional cultural identity while walking along coastal cliffs between Hendaye and Spain, as well as from village to village, across ridges and through forests…

Your guide, a Basque Country specialist, will help you discover this rich culture through encounters in the numerous villages you will pass through.

You will also traverse the legendary GR10, the Trans-Pyrenean trail that stretches from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, and follow the footsteps of witchcraft in the Basque Country… Mystery awaits!

Your guide will also give you a taste of Basque culture and traditions. And, of course, gastronomy will not be left behind: black cherries from Itxassou, Espelette pepper, Bayonne ham, sheep's cheese… A true delight for the taste buds !



•PROGRAM

Day 1 : Start of your stay in Bayonne

Meeting at 6 :00 PM in Itxassou (or 5 :25 PM at Bayonne train station). Check-in at your accommodation, a *** hotel with swimming pool, for the entire week. Welcome drink and briefing on the itinerary.

Day 2 : Typical villages of the Basque Country



Through the villages of Ainhoa (classified as one of "The Most Beautiful Villages of France") and Espelette, world-famous for its peppers adorning the village houses: you couldn't ask for a more beautiful introduction to the « Basque World », its culture, gastronomy, and lush landscapes.

• **Distance: 12km, duration: 5h, elevation gain: +490m, elevation loss: -530m, transfer: 20min**

Day 3 : Crossing into Spain via the stunning coastal trail



Today, we head towards Spain. Facing the Bay of Txingudi, which separates Hendaye from the Spanish port of Hondarribia, we reach Cabo Higuer, the westernmost point of the Pyrenees! From there, the route, sometimes overlooking cliffs, sometimes through a lush valley, offers a perfect snapshot of the Basque Country : a blend of ocean and mountains! Stop at the beach in Hondarribia at the end of the hike !!

• **Distance: 12km, duration: 5h, elevation gain: +390m, elevation loss: -580m, transfer: 1h**

Day 4: Ascent of "Larrun," iconic peak of the Basque Country



La Rhune (or Larrun in Basque), standing at 900 m, overlooks the Basque coast and the mountains of both the French and Spanish Basque Country. The exceptional panorama is well worth the effort. It is also a mountain that the Basques have preserved and maintained, notably through livestock farming. Cherry on top : a route away from the crowds allows us to fully enjoy the beauty of this massif.

Note : It is possible to skip the hike and take the small train for those who do not wish to climb. Reservations should be made at the very beginning of the stay !

• **Distance: 11km, duration: 5h30, elevation gain: +680m, elevation loss: -820m, transfer: 30min**

Day 5: The GR10 and the Peñas de Itsusi



The Basque Country is inseparable from the GR10, which begins on Hendaye Beach. Around Itxassou, the trail follows the so-called "border ridge," marking the boundary between France and Spain. It then approaches the Peñas de Itsusi, a favored refuge for vultures, which we will have plenty of time to observe.

Finally, we will not miss the opportunity to have lunch at the farm with Marie-Pierre, a typical Basque shepherd's meal that will warm our hearts!

• Distance: 16km, duration: 5h30, elevation gain: +580m, elevation loss: -580m, transfer: 20 min

Day 6 : In Xareta, following the footsteps of smugglers… and witches!



Not far from Sare and the border with Navarre, we enter the magnificent border beech forest. People have long "worked by night" here!

This territory also witnessed a tragic chapter in history: a witch hunt ordered by King Henry IV, with the Zugarramurdi cave, which you will visit today, being a highly symbolic site.

• Distance: 11,5km, duration: 5h, elevation gain: +535m, elevation loss: -535m, transfer: 30 min

Historical note

At the beginning of the 17th century, the Basque Country was the scene of an intense witch hunt, notably marked by the intervention of Pierre de Lancre, a judge sent by the king. Between 1609 and 1610, he carried out a brutal repression against alleged witches, accused of holding sabbaths, making pacts with the devil, and practicing pagan rituals. Dozens of people, mostly women, were arrested, tortured, and executed. This dark period reflects the fear and religious intolerance of the time, exacerbated by the Inquisition.



Illustration : *"Akelarre – The Witches' Sabbath"*, GOYA

Note: When the group has fewer than 9 people, the hikes are done as a loop. For larger groups, the hikes may be point-to-point.

Day 7 : End of your stay

The stay concludes after breakfast. For those who arrived by train: transfer to Bayonne train station, arriving on site at 9 :30 AM.

The programs have been prepared based on the latest information available at the time of writing; unforeseen events may occur, and situations beyond our control may alter the schedule. On site, our guides are the best judges and may modify the itinerary according to the weather or if the safety of the group requires it.

•MEETING POINT AND END OF STAY

Meeting point:
On Day 1 at 6 :00 PM at your accommodation in Itxassou (64 – Pyrénées-Atlantiques): Hôtel*** Txistulari.

If you arrive early in Bayonne:

1/ Luggage storage: Hôtel Côte Basque, located opposite Bayonne train station, offers luggage storage (€10 per bag, 2024 rate subject to change).
Address : Hôtel Côte Basque, 2 rue Maubec, 64100 Bayonne. Phone : +33 5 59 55 10 21.

2/ Visit Bayonne:
The Bayonne Tourist Office publishes a guide to discovering Bayonne. You can download it below or pick it up directly at the Tourist Office, Place des Basques, 64108 Bayonne:

https://www.calameo.com/read/004039137bf2929b7092e?trackersource=library

End of stay:
On Day 7 around 9 :30 AM, after breakfast.
Transfer to Bayonne train station (arrival on site at 9 :30 AM) for those arriving by train.

•DATES AND PRICES

Number of participants
Groups of 4 to 15 people.

Departures / Guaranteed departures / Price per person and per dates: See our website.

Price includes:
- Accommodation with full board from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 7
- Transfers during the stay
- Guidance by a BE AMM certified guide specializing in the Basque Country
- Visit to the Zugarramurdi Cave

Price does not include:
- Insurance
- Meals not indicated in “Price includes”
- Transfers not included in the program
- Visits
- Drinks
- Booking fees: €15

•TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Terrain type
Relatively easy hikes on good trails; the terrain is varied but often rocky.

Level 2
These trips are designed for those seeking an active holiday. A reasonable level of physical fitness is required. Expect 4 to 5 hours of walking per day. Ascent rate*: +300 m per hour.
**Note: Walking times are average and only account for actual hiking time, excluding breaks.*

Supervision
Hikes are led by a BE-certified Mountain Guide specializing in the Basque Country.

Carrying
Only personal items for the day and your picnic need to be carried.

•ACCOMMODATION / MEALS

Accommodation
6 nights in a *** hotel with swimming pool, in a double room.
www.txistulari.fr
The Hôtel Restaurant TXISTULARI has been our preferred partner for several years. This family-run hotel, where Jean-Jacques and his son Michel prepare delicious Basque specialties along with some creative dishes using fresh, local ingredients, ensures a memorable stay. Anne-Marie's welcoming spirit will also delight you.
Single rooms are available upon request, subject to availability and an additional supplement. Private parking is available for guests arriving with their own car.



OTHER ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS
On certain dates, due to group size and room allocation, we may work with the Gure Gostuan guesthouse—a very charming and comfortable property located 200 meters from the Txistulari. If this applies, you will be informed before confirming your booking, so the choice is yours.

For those staying at Gure Gostuan: breakfasts are served on-site, while dinners are shared with the group at Hôtel Txistulari. You will have access to the Txistulari hotel pool, as Gure Gostuan does not have one. Here is the Gure Gostuan website if you'd like to take a look before deciding:
www.gites64.com/Chambre-d-hotes-Itxassou-Ithurry-borgeais-Coeur-Pays-Basque-64G441006.html

Meals
- Continental breakfast (tea, coffee, milk, bread, butter, jam)
- Evening meals often featuring Basque specialties, including starter, main course, and dessert
- Picnic lunches included
- Drinks not included

•PRACTICAL INFORMATION

DID YOU KNOW? Travelling by train produces on average 90% less CO_2 than travelling by plane or car (source: ADEME).
Don't hesitate to contact us if you need any information about train options. You can also use the following very practical websites:

- www.sncf-connect.com
- www.tictactrip.eu
- www.rome2rio.com

Here is all the information you'll need to reach us by train at Bayonne station:

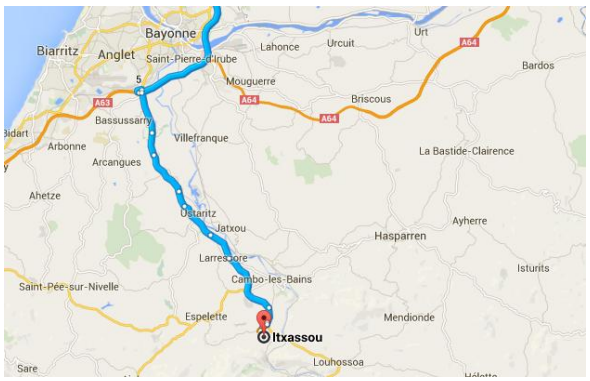
- TGV from Paris (Strasbourg, Lille, Rouen… connected to Paris by Intercités)
- TGV + Intercités from Lyon and Marseille, via Toulouse
- Intercités from Toulouse

Intercités + TER from Nantes via Bordeaux

How to reach Bayonne by other means:

- By plane: Biarritz Parme Airport (25 km) — daily flights to Paris, London, Lyon, and the Clermont-Ferrand hub.
- By road: From Bordeaux, take the A63 motorway (207 km). From Toulouse to Bayonne, take the A64 motorway (293 km), then from Bayonne take the A63, exit 5 toward Cambo-les-Bains.

If you are travelling by car, we recommend parking your vehicle in Itxassou, at your accommodation: Hôtel Txistulari.



Accommodations before or after the stay:

Hôtel Côte Basque in Bayonne:
A bright*** Comfortable, located near Bayonne train station.
2 rue Maubec
64100 BAYONNE
Tel : 05.59.55.10.21
Hotelcotebasque@orange.fr
www.hotel-cotebasque.fr

Hôtel Ibis Style in Bayonne:
A bright *** hotel located near Bayonne train station.
1 place de la République
64100 BAYONNE
Tel : 05.59.55.08.08
h8716@accor.com
https://urlr.me/z7ShZJ

•TO BRING IN YOUR LUGGAGE

Luggage

• A hiking backpack of around 35 liters, useful for carrying your personal items during the day.

Clothing

• 1 sun hat or cap
• T-shirts (1 for every 2–3 days of hiking). Avoid cotton as it takes a long time to dry; prefer short-sleeved breathable fabrics such as Capilene (Patagonia), Dryflo (Lowe Alpine), Light Effect (Odlo), etc.
• 1 thermal base layer (same fabric recommendations as above) or long-sleeved shirt
• 1 fleece jacket
• 1 trekking pants
• 1 comfortable pants for the evening
• 1 lightweight Gore-Tex style jacket
• 1 swimsuit and a towel for the pool
• Warm underwear
• Hiking socks (1 pair for 2–3 days of hiking). Avoid cotton "tennis" socks—they take too long to dry and increase the risk of blisters; prefer socks made of Coolmax or similar
• 1 pair of waterproof hiking boots with good ankle support (Vibram-type sole)
• 1 pair of comfortable shoes for the evening

Clothing should be adapted according to the chosen season.

Small equipment

• 1 pair of high-quality sunglasses
• 1 water bottle (minimum 1 liter)
• 1 pocket knife (to be packed in checked luggage)
• Toiletries
• Toilet paper, sunscreen, and lip balm
• For picnics: cutlery

Personal medical kit

- Your usual medications
- Vitamin C or multivitamins
- Pain relief medication: preferably paracetamol
- Elastic adhesive bandage (e.g., Elastoplast, 6 cm wide)
- Adhesive bandages + disinfectant compresses
- Blister treatment (Spenco SOS Blisters, available in sports stores, pharmacies, or parapharmacies)

Group first aid kit

- First aid kit under the responsibility of your guide