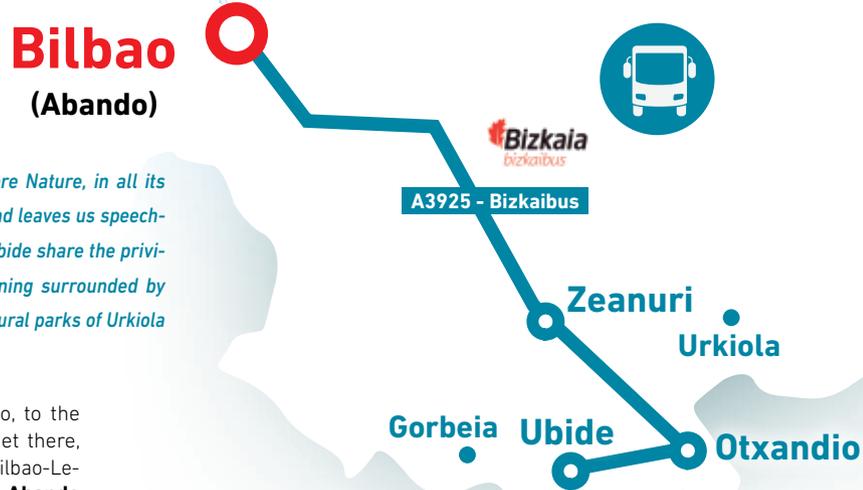


Route 8: Zeanuri/Otxandio/Ubide Between Urkiola and Gorbeia



Arratia valley is a place where Nature, in all its splendour, speaks for itself and leaves us speechless. Otxandio, Zeanuri and Ubide share the privilege of waking up each morning surrounded by indescribable scenery: the natural parks of Urkiola and Gorbeia.

Start this route in Otxandio, to the south-east of Bizkaia. To get there, take the Bizkaibus **A3925** (Bilbao-Lemoa-Otxandio-Ubide) from **Abando** station in Bilbao which leaves **every**

hour. Once in the Plaza Mayor, of great architectural relevance, take a look at the important monuments including the Town Hall, Santa Marina church (from the 16th century and partly built with funds from the Americas), the Volcano Fountain (in tribute to the importance of the forges), the Cultural Centre, the bowling lanes, the *fronon* court and the former hospital.



Otxandio

Otxandio is a town surrounded by impressive natural spaces as it lies mid-way between the natural parks of Urkiola and Gorbeia, where our visit can take place among the green prairies, rocky walls, forests and caves. In

addition we have Urrúnaga reservoir, highly suited to leisure activities, relaxing and sport, especially fishing. Walk around the reservoir and observe the huge number of birds and aquatic species.

The next stop on this route is **Zeanuri**, which we can get to on the **A3925** bus. Nestled in the foothills of Mount Gorbeia, this district is a group of very rural areas which still have a number of farmsteads, a fundamental example of the popular architecture of Bizkaia. A number of mountain routes depart from Zeanuri to the Gorbeia mountains, Lekanda, Urrekoatxa and Aldamin crags. It also offers places of exceptional beauty such as the Saldropo wetlands, accessed from Alto de Barazar, and which has an interpretation centre and recreational zone.

The last stop on this route on the Bizkaibus **A3925** line is **Ubide**, at the entrance to Gorbeia Natural Park. This is the highest district in Bizkaia, at an altitude of 581 metres, and it is located in a valley of gentle slopes with indigenous species of oak and beech and several recreational zones. A medieval street runs from the Town Hall to San Juan church, both buildings of great interest. Also of note are the bridge, La Magdalena chapel and Arechaga chalet, with a strong British influence evident in its construction.



La Magdalena shrine

The return to Bilbao is easy, the **A3925** leaves at Abando station where we started.

