

# Route 2: Urdaibai

## Ancestral art and living forests

This route takes us back to a time far earlier than ours, some 14,000 years ago, when the first inhabitants used their hands daubed in paint to print on the walls of ancestral caves. Here we immerse ourselves in ART, from the cave paintings of Santimamiñe, to the painted trees of Oma forest, from the end of the 20th century. Both places radiate with magic, both are painted with geometric figures, animals and humans. Artists brought together in an idyllic setting thousands of years apart. You can also visit Gernika, birthplace of the masterpiece by artist, Pablo Picasso.

**Bilbao**  
(Termibus)



A3513 - Bizkaibus



**Gautegiz-Arteaga**  
● Santimamiñe  
● Oma

**FORTEST OF OMA (KORTEZUBI) IS CLOSED**

We apologize for any inconvenience.

For this route, take **Bizkaibus line A3513** from the Termibus station in Bilbao. This leaves every **two hours** and will take you to Gautegiz-Arteaga (Zelaieta stop, next to the Town Hall).

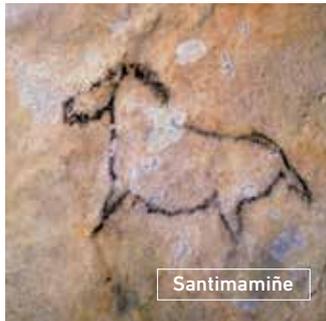
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From here, follow a paved track which will take you to Basondo in a walk of approximately 20 minutes. This is a refuge for threatened wildlife where the main species of the region live alongside other species which are already extinct in the wild. Here you can observe and take photos of the animals from close up, making it an entertaining activity for children.

Five minutes along the same track takes you from Basondo to **Santimamiñe**. This cave is the most important archaeological site in Bizkaia. Discovered in 1917, its wealth lies in its geology, in the quality of the archaeological sites and in the cave paintings from the Magdalenian period. Approximately fifty charcoal paintings and carvings depict buffalo, horses, cattle, boars, brown bears and deer. There are geometrical shapes and drawings of humans.

Both the paintings and the archaeological remains date back to more than 14,000 years ago. In 2008 the

cave was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is possible to visit the interpretation centre, the archaeological site and take a virtual trip as the cave is closed to the public to ensure its conservation.



Santimamiñe

From Santimamiñe, after a 45 minute walk, you will reach the **painted forest of Oma**. Artist, Agustín Ibarrola, sought a new relation between art and nature and transformed the pine forest into a canvas. Here, 47 human, animal and geometric figures seem to come to life depending on the angle from which you look at them. The forest is full of magic and you will feel watched and protected by this work of art.



Gernika

Once back in Gautegiz Arteaga, the **A3513** bus will take you back to Bilbao, although you could also stop in **Gernika**. This emblematic town was the scene of atrocities during the Spanish Civil War caused by an air attack from the German Condor Legion and the Italian Legionary Air Force. Picasso took inspiration from the event to create his masterpiece, «Guernica», which became one of the most important anti-war symbols of the 20th century. The town is also home to the Council House and the Gernika tree, a standard bearer for the essence and freedom of the Basque people. A visit to the Paz Foundation Museum is also interesting.



Oma Painted Forest

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