

Route 4. The Kadagua route

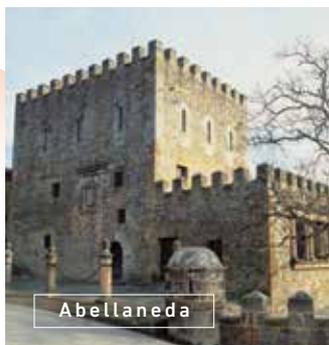
Echoes of the medieval

The clear waters of Kadagua once flowed down stained red. Factional wars blighted the region, the tower houses burned and the people took refuge in the villas. Echoes of the medieval now turned into stone, just as vanity turned into the colonial palace, affluent immigrants, returned, nostalgic. Today life flows peacefully amongst the aroma of bubbling putxeras. The walls and battlements instil sounds of a heroic past into our days and, maybe, spirits of nobles engaged in meetings, still discussing which colour the river will flow.



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To begin this route which is full of historical monuments alongside the Cadagua river we leave Bilbao on the BI-636 and join the BI-3651 towards **Güeñes**. We are met by Villa Urrutia, a home which is now a Casa Consistorial (Town Hall) and a silent witness of those who one day went to the Indies and came back rich. An outstanding example of religious architecture, the Santa de María Church (16th century), a notable example of Isabelline Gothic and the Renaissance.



Abellaneda

To enjoy an authentic coexistence of nature and art, we can visit **ARENATZarte**, in the Arenatza park (Güeñes). It is a botanical garden which, in its paths, homes exceptional trees and cutting-edge sculptures.

If you have come with your family, visit the Biscay Abentura Park, a park containing circuits with obstacles, inflatables and a climbing wall. All of

this inside an enormous industrial park on the Arangoiti Estate. Capacity for 700 people.

We leave Güeñes on the same road that we came in on, but then we take the BI-3602 to **Zalla**. This town links its history to the border disputes and old foundries. It preserves a valuable historical legacy such as the Murga Palace which dates to the 17th century, the current town hall, or the Tower of Terreros, a good example of defensive construction in the era of factional wars.



ARENATZarte

Balmaseda



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The San Pedro de Zarikete chapel is a highlight, next to which a sapling of the Tree of Gernika was planted. To enjoy the fresh air, there's the leisure area of **Bolumburu**, and a stroll along the old Robla railway lines.

Abellaneda is a town which you must visit when doing this route. Following the BI-3602, we leave Zalla and a little further on take the BI-2701. The Abellaneda Meeting House was a meeting place where representatives of the regional councils discussed general matters from the 14th to the 19th century. Today, this symbol of the set of privileges and the liberty enjoyed by these localities when they annexed to the Fiefdom of Biscay, is home to

the Museum of Encartaciones. Pay it a visit and find out about this part of our history.

We end this journey back to the echoes of our past in **Balmaseda**. After returning on the BI-2701, take the BI-630 in order to arrive, in less than 15 minutes, at this town, the biggest population centre of the area with an extremely beautiful historic quarter presided by the Puente Viejo, the oldest testimony of its wall. Easter in Balmaseda, during which a Living Passion is recreated full of realism which draws in more than 50,000 people. The Beret Museum La Encartada, an old factory specialising in the production of the traditional "txapela", takes us back to the end of the industrial revolution.

We can visit the buildings and see original machines of great value. If you like gastronomical peculiarities you will be keen to get to know both the past and the present of the Putxeras which are prepared on the day of San Severino, the 23rd of October. It is a traditional bean stew with all of the sacraments (pork ribs, bacon, chorizo, blood sausage...) which the railway workers of the Bilbao-La Robla line cooked on the heat from the coal of the machines in a putxera or a railwayman's casserole dish. It is ideal to accompany them with the town's txakoli.

From Balmaseda to Bilbao, it takes a little less than 30 minutes to return along the BI-636.