



Bilbao, urban experiences



METROPOLITAN AREA OF BILBAO

There is a term that was coined to describe the towns that surround Bilbao that, together with the city, constitute an unparalleled economic force and area of tourism interest. It is called **"El Gran Bilbao"**.

It comprises **the two banks of the estuary**. The right bank and its buildings represent the stately and bourgeois character of the area, with towns such as **Areeta (Las Arenas)**, **Neguri** and **Algorta in Getxo**. On the left bank are largely industrial towns such as **Barakaldo** and **Sestao**, or those with a seafaring tradition like **Portugalete** and **Santurtzi**.

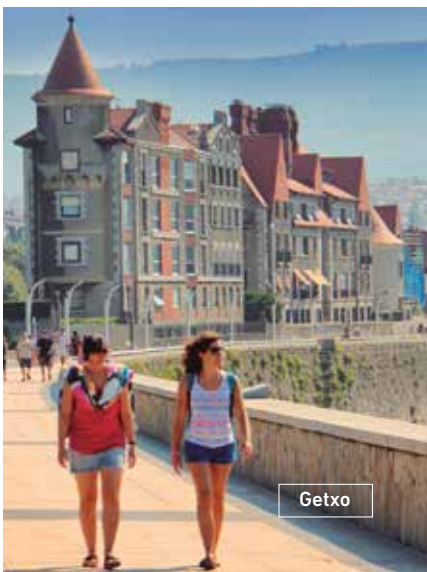
These two banks are joined by the magnificent **Bizkaia Bridge**, known as the Hanging Bridge, which you can cross on the lower gondola, or by walking across the high-flying footbridge with spectacular views.

On the right bank, visit the picturesque **Old Port of Algorta**, with its naval houses and traditional taverns, or climb up to the **Usategi viewpoint**. You can also see the

mansions on the **Churruca Quay**, stop to have a refreshment, buy sailor garments in the **Marina**, or take a swim at the elegant **Ereaga beach**. Continuing down the road you'll arrive in **La Galea**, with its cliffs and beaches with beautiful sunsets.

On the left bank, don't miss the town of **Portugalete**, which is lively and colourful with its **Rialia Museum of Industry**. Be sure to see famous **Santurtzi** with its seaside restaurants.

If you'd like to relive the region's powerful, industrial past, visit **Ses-tao**, with its iron industry and old shipyards, or **Barakaldo**, the second most populous city in Bizkaia after Bilbao.



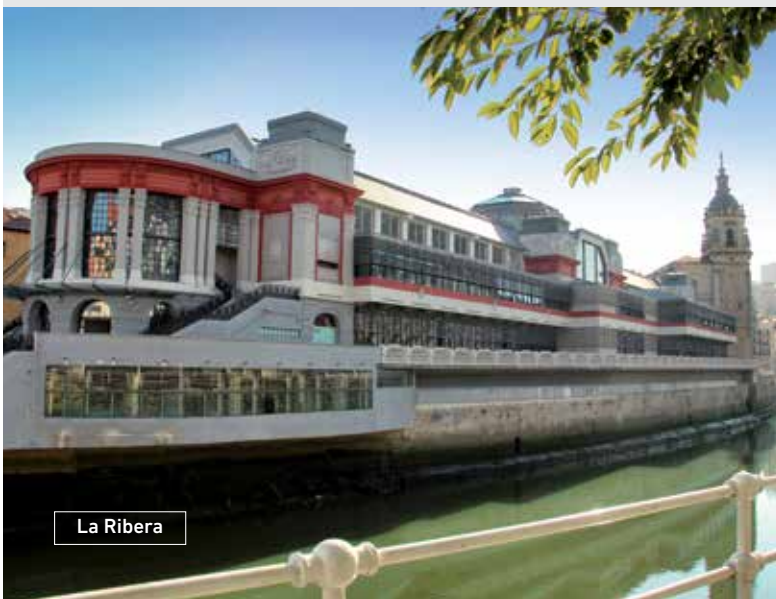
OLD QUARTER

The Old Quarter of Bilbao is like the heart of the city. It's famous for its religious buildings, such as **Santiago Cathedral**, **San Nicolás Church** on the Arenal or the emblematic **San Antón Church and Bridge**, which you will see on the city's shield. As for civil buildings, very close to the Old Quarter is **City Hall**, which is open to visitors, with its spectacular Arab Hall, and, of course, the emblematic **Plaza Nueva**, a popular place to get together with friends, full of fantastic bars and restaurants. With an unbeatable ambience of businesses and txikitio and pintxos (small glasses of wine and small plates), the **7 calles** invite you to explore. You can find fashion, décor, authentic shops with artisan or gourmet products and souvenirs to remember your visit by.

In terms of culture, the **Teatro Arriaga** is a symbol that offers high-level programming on a consistent basis. Opposite the theatre is the famous **Arenal Park**, which boasts pleasant urban gardens that offer space for multiple activities and encounters. If gastronomy is your thing, you can't pass up a visit to **La Ribera Market**, the largest covered market in Europe. It has thousands of products that make up the city's culinary identity and form the basis for the dishes you can enjoy at any of the plethora of restaurants in this area.

The city's culture is also reflected in museums such as the **Diocesan Sacred Art Museum** or the **Reproductions Museum**. And don't forget the **Basque Museum** or the **Easter Procession Museum**.

Near the **Mallona Steps** is the **Archaeology Museum**. These stairs, which start in **Plaza de Unamuno**, pass by a cemetery whose original gate still stands.



La Ribera

If you feel like walking, follow the stairs until you reach the **Basilica of Begoña**, patron saint of Bizkaia.



San Diego Cathedral



AZKUNA ZENTROA

You are in an area of Bilbao with lots of activity, where there's a mix of businesses, culture, bars, and restaurants and classical buildings live alongside more contemporary ones.

The centre of this area is the **Azkuna Zentroa**, the former Alhóndiga which stored and traded wine since the beginning of last century, a work by the architect Ricardo Bastida. It is now a local, national, and international Society and **Contemporary Culture Centre**. Visitors can enjoy the recent architectural update with the spectacular columns designed by Philippe Starck. From the inside of the building, you can see the glass-bottom swimming pool located on the ceiling. In the same building you also have bars, a world-class restaurant, a terrace for having a drink with stunning views, and a store full of **Basque Design**, where you can find some designs and handicrafts by local artists. Check their programming, as you're sure to find an activity or event that interests you.



Plaza Bizkaia



Azkuna Zentroa

In the immediately surrounding area, you'll see contemporary buildings hinting at this city's transformation over time, including the glazing on the **Plaza Bizkaia**, headquarters for government agencies, and the irregular cube shape of the **Osakidetza Building** (the Basque Government's ministry of health).

Starting in **Plaza Zaballburu**, you can walk down a series of commercial streets. Get lost in one of the most famous pastry or chocolate shops, and try a "carolina", a traditional sweet from Bilbao. They are named after the daughter of the pastry chef who created them. On your way to Gran Vía, you can entertain yourself for a bit at the **Bilbao Casino**, a remodelled building which, in addition to gambling, features gastronomy and leisure activities.

A little further on to the right, is the **Campos Elíseos Theatre**, popularly known as El Campos or La Bombonera de Bertendona after its spectacular modernist façade.

A bit further away is the **Vista Alegre Bull Ring**, where you will find also the **Bullfighting Museum**, full of prints and stories about this practice.



Campos Elíseos



GRAN VÍA

Bilbao's **Gran Vía** is its main thoroughfare that crosses the centre of the city. Many commercial streets with elegant buildings branch off from Gran Vía.

These buildings include the **Bizkaia Provincial Council Hall**, an example of Basque eclecticism in construction at the end of the 19th century. It can be visited for free, but you must make a reservation ahead of time. Other buildings that you will see as you walk along this artery are the **Casas de Sota**, the **Hotel Carlton**, the **Stock Exchange building**, which is close to Gran Vía, and the **Casa Lezama Leguizamón**, just on the opposite end. In Plaza Moyúa, you'll see **Chávarri Palace**, with all of its different windows.

But the architecture in this area offers something for everyone. Near the estuary are the **Isozaki Towers**, glazed twin cube-shaped towers that lead to the **ZubiZuri footbridge**, designed by the architect Calatrava. The **Provincial Library**, located just behind the Provincial Council Hall, has a very interesting glazed façade that is full of literary inscriptions in multiple languages.

If, by chance, you're planning on taking the metro, the entrance to some stations may catch your eye: they resemble a glass seashell. They are the work of architect Norman Foster, and are known by locals as **"Fosteritos"**.

Now you can relax in the elegant **Albia Gardens**. Along one side, you have a row of restaurants, one of which is the emblematic **Café Iruña**. From here, you can browse any of the Spanish or international fashion, décor, pastry, gourmet, or Basque design shops.



Doña Casilda Park

There are two stations with train themed architecture that you'll want to be sure to visit to take in their unique features. There is **Concordia Station**, a building with a magnificent modernist façade; and behind it is **Abando Station**, with a giant stained glass window that tells the naval and industrial history of Bizkaia.

If you're up for it, taking a boat ride along **the estuary** can be a great way to have fun as a family.



Plaza Moyúa

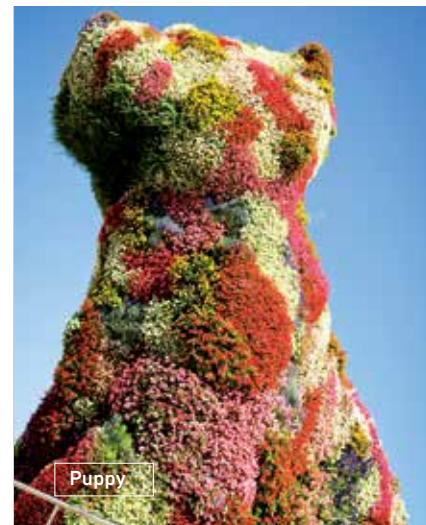


GUGGENHEIM

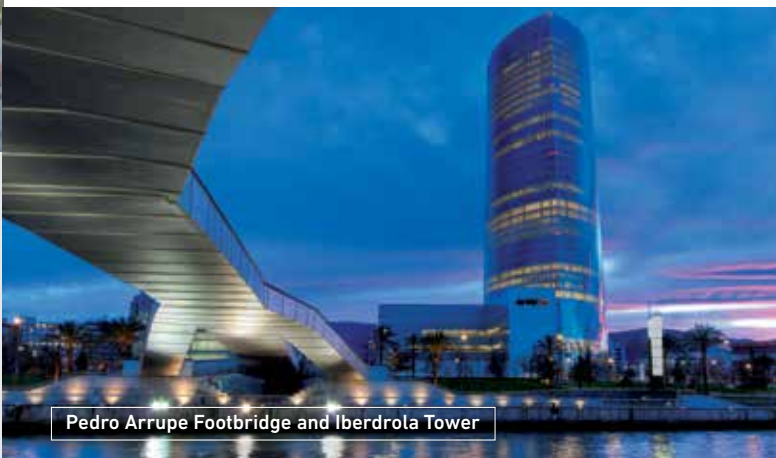
The "Guggenheim effect" refers to the transformation Bilbao has undergone in terms of its scenery, society, and international influence.

The museum that sparked this phenomenon, the **Guggenheim Bilbao Museum**, is an icon in the city and its culture. It's a must-see for all visitors to Bilbao. The building was designed by the architect Frank Gehry and is sure to leave no one indifferent with its curved lines and shiny titanium finish. It shares its collections with the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Peggy Guggenheim Museum in Venice, and has contemporary art from the first avant-garde artists to modern day.

In front of the museum is the figure known as **Puppy**, the dog made of flowers, and the sculptures outside of the museum, such as the spider "Maman" by Louise Bourgeois, the Tulips by the creator of Puppy, Jeff Koons, The Red Arches on the bridge by Daniel Buren, and Tall Tree & The Eye, by Anish Kapoor, close out a large-scale museum space.



Puppy



Pedro Arrupe Footbridge and Iberdrola Tower

Close by is the **Fine Arts Museum**, another gem with collections of Basque art and pieces by classical painters. With 100 years of history, it is one of the most important collections in Spain.

This environment gave rise to what is known as the **"Art District"**, a circuit of art galleries and museums. You can take a walk down the **"Paseo de la Memoria"** with sculptures by artists such as Dalí, Chillida, Koons, Burgeois, Kapoor, Novatt, Choliet, Valdés, and Garraza.

The relaxing and expansive **Doña Casilda Park** is surrounded by other contemporary buildings such as the **Iberdrola Tower**, the **University of the Basque Country auditorium**, and the **CRAI Library at the University of Deusto**, whose auditorium and central building are located on the other

side of the estuary.

At the museum shops and other shops in the area, you can find souvenirs and unique design objects.

There are also clothing and gourmet stores, as well as wine shops.



SAN MAMÉS

Perhaps you've arrived in Bilbao via the new **"Bilbao Intermodal" bus station**; you'll notice right away that you're in one of the modern areas of recreation in the city, but without a doubt what will catch your attention is the new **San Mamés stadium**. **"The cathedral" of the Athletic Club**, it is a spectacular work by the architect César Azkárate. There you can visit **the lion Club's museum** and purchase some souvenirs in red and white.



La Carola

You'll also see that very close by are the banks of **the estuary**, a lovely spot for a stroll to see the work being done on what is now an island, **Zorrozaurre**, which is full of cultural activities and markets on the weekends. On your walk you'll also notice **La Carola**, a crane that recalls this area's port and industrial past. In that same spot is the **Itsasmuseum**, a very interesting museum dedicated to seafaring culture.

Not far off, you'll see the **Euskalduna Palace** building. Its name comes from the old shipyards, but today it is a conference centre, exhibit hall, and cultural events centre with lots of activity (the operas organized by ABAO are held here). Of special interest is its rusted structure that recalls a ship and its exterior lampposts that form a promenade of metallic trees.

To round out your visit to the area, you should know that you're close to some of the legendary "poteo" streets, that is, streets where people go from bar to bar, enjoying a good wine like **Txakoli from Bizkaia**, accompanied by any number of excellent **pintxos**.

If you're interested in the Basque language, you can cross the estuary to the San Ignacio neighbourhood and visit the **Basque Language Information Centre**, a leader in the study of this language at the heart of the identity of the people of the Basque Country.



Itsasmuseum Bilbao



TOURISM BILBAO

Plaza Circular, 1 Edificio Terminus
944 795 760
bilbaoturismo.net
visitbilcay.eu

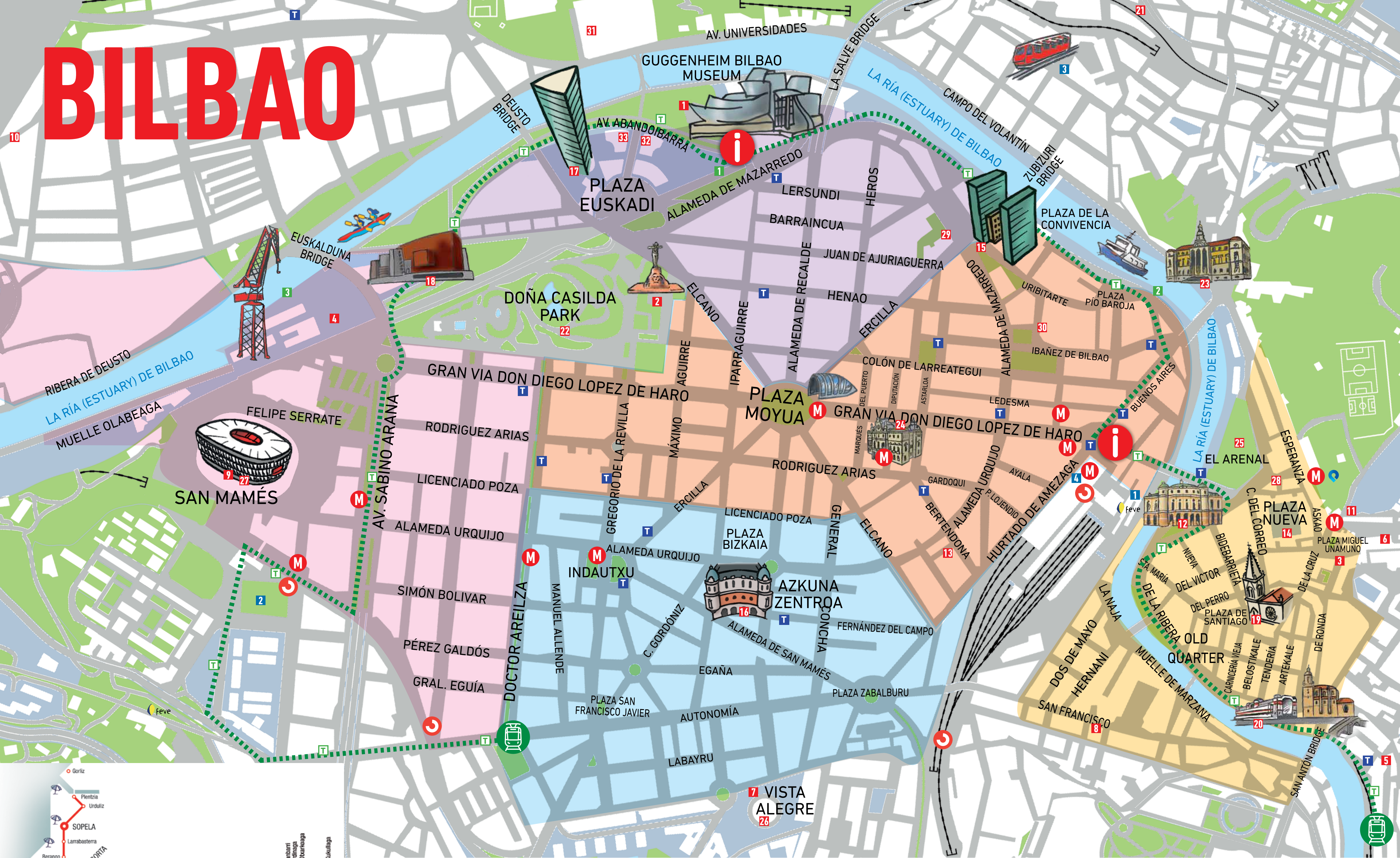


BILBAO
BIZKAIA
be basque

EUSKADI
BASQUE COUNTRY
#Basqueexperience



BILBAO



AREAS

- GUGGENHEIM**
- OLD QUARTER**
- AZKUNA ZENTROA**
- GRAN VÍA**
- SAN MAMÉS**

PLACES OF INTEREST

- 1 Guggenheim Bilbao Museum
- 2 Fine Arts Museum
- 3 Basque Country Museum
- 4 Itsasmuseum Bilbao
- 5 Diocesan Sacred Art Museum
- 6 Easter Procession Museum
- 7 Bilbao Bullfighting Museum
- 8 Reproductions Museum
- 9 Athletic Club Museum
- 10 Basque Language Information Centre
- 11 Archaeology Museum
- 12 Teatro Arriaga
- 13 Campos Elíseos Theatre
- 14 Plaza Nueva
- 15 Isozaki Towers
- 16 Azkuna Zentroa
- 17 Iberdrola Tower
- 18 Euskalduna Palace
- 19 Santiago Cathedral
- 20 La Ribera Market
- 21 Artxanda
- 22 Doña Casilda Park
- 23 City Hall
- 24 Provincial Council Hall
- 25 El Arenal
- 26 Bilbao Vista Alegre Bull Ring
- 27 San Mamés

TRANSPORT

- 1 Concordia Station (train)
- 2 Bilbao Intermodal (bus)
- 3 Plaza del Funicular
- 4 Abando Station (train)
- 5 Metro Station
- 6 Taxi
- 7 Tram

TRANSPORT TOURISM

- 1 Tourism Bus
- 2 Boat ride on the estuary
- 3 Kayaks
- 4 Tourist office

PRACTICAL INFO

TOURISM BILBAO
www.bilbaoturismo.net
BIZKAIA (BISCAY) TOURISM
www.visitbiscay.eu
BASQUE COUNTRY TOURISM
www.turismo.euskadi.eus/en
NEKATUR/AGROTURISM
943 327 090 · www.nekatur.net