

BETWEEN TWO BAYS

A walk linking coastal ports and museums



San Sebastián
Donostia

9,6 km



Pasaia

BETWEEN TWO BAYS



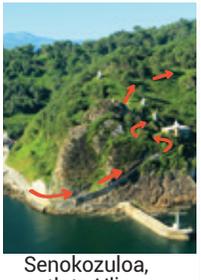
Corazón de María Church, start of the path leading up to Mount Ulia

Ulia, a mysterious, beautiful, wild and uninhabited place. For many people its curious rocks and spectacular cliffs populated only by gulls, its changing reliefs, the scent of its ferns, its meadows and heaths next to the sea and its harmonious tranquillity evoke nature in its purest state. Here, as the sea embraces a rugged, rocky mountain, far from the madding crowd, we are no longer in either San Sebastián or Pasaia, but instead in our little Atlantic Arcadia, in contact with the true spirit of nature.

At the summit of Mount Ulia, formerly also known as Mount Mirall, there used to be a watchtower, which, in addition to being a good place for whale watching, allowed for the monitoring of maritime traffic on the coast and nearby ports, as well as serving activities such as fishing, defence, rescue or towing boats into port. Ulia also has numerous ruins of military fortifications and batteries, aqueducts and tunnels for supplying water to the city, abandoned country houses, the remains of forgotten quarries and tracks, of a strange and curious cable car, a dismantled tram line and an old funfair. Ulia seems to be full of memories – wars, whale sightings – and of fresh water essential for a growing city, as well as of travellers who, like Victor Hugo, set out from San Sebastián and crossed these mountains, and ended up by chance in Pasaia becoming fascinated by both the location and its inhabitants. Their journeys are the inspiration behind this route between two bays.

Many wonder how a section of the coast this long has survived virtually intact so close to the cities of San Sebastián and Pasaia, which have almost 200,000 inhabitants between them. This is a great mystery because, without doubt, there have been many attempts to build roads, bridges and even whole neighbourhoods on this land. One thing that probably had a bearing is the fact that in the mid 19th century water began to be drawn from this area to supply the growing population. The new and more abundant water supplies like that of Artikutza in Navarra, built at the start of the 20th century, did not diminish the value of these mountains as a source of water, which reveals the wisdom of our ancestors for whom water signified life. Today, Ulia is a protected natural area, shared by the municipalities of Donostia-San Sebastián and Pasaia, and included in the European Natura 2000 Network.

The end of the Paseo Nuevo at the far side of La Concha Bay, very close to the place where the most powerful waves break, marks the beginning of the port of San Sebastián. From this point, via the most important cultural and natural landmarks of this coast, we link up with the inland part of Pasaia Bay. The route, which forms part of the Talaia path or GR-121, can be completed in either direction. Here however, we shall describe the west-east route, from San Sebastián to Pasaia, section by section. The walk takes around 4-5 hours, and the route can also be completed quickly and comfortably in either direction by public transport, allowing you to walk one way and return by bus, for example. There are many other routes and tracks in and around Ulia. However, because of their difficulty, due to a lack of signposting or the possible risk they present to inexperienced walkers, they are not described in this publication. The route proposed here runs along a rugged coastline with rocky cliffs, which too can pose a risk – albeit minimal – for walkers. It is therefore essential to take great care when walking in such areas.



Senokozuloa, path to Ulia

1



The Aquarium and the Basque Maritime Museum are located at the western end of the port of San Sebastián and mark the start of the route. Passing through Portaletas, an old gate in the city walls, we reach the Old Town (Parte Vieja), and walk along Mari Street towards Virgen del Coro Street and 31 de Agosto Street. Here we find the city's main religious buildings, such as the churches of Santa María and San Vicente, as well as the San Telmo Museum, a former Dominican convent, all situated in the part of the city that survived the tragic attack and fire of 1813. At the end of the Old Town, the Kursaal Conference Centre and Bridge mark the beginning of the Gros District with its extensive Zurriola Beach.

2



Before we reach the end of Zurriola Beach, the Corazón de María Church marks the start of the climb up Mount Ulia. The ascent is steep and quite uneven at first, but you soon reach the path that follows the former tram line to Ulia, built in 1902 to allow visitors to travel to what was the city's first funfair. The station of arrival later became the starting point for the cable car, the first of its type in the world, which took visitors up the summit of Mount Ulia. Soon we come to a bend, which, vegetation permitting, affords excellent views of the city. In 1813, allied troops under the command of Wellington built a battery just above this point from where they could bombard the city before storming it. Here we leave the former tram line, which leads up to the youth hostel, restaurant and interpretation centre located on the upper part of Mount Ulia. Winding its way through a dense forest of tall pine trees, the trail leads us to a section where the rock, exposed through years of use as a path, curiously resembles a natural staircase.

3

We then come to a high, open area known as Kutralla gaina, where the scenery changes completely. Suddenly we are looking out over the Ulia cliffs, home to a large gull population. From this point, another path climbs up towards the summit of Mount Ulia and the old watchtower. However, our route continues along flatter ground before rising gently in order to cross the steep cliffs that drop sharply into the sea. Here we can catch a glimpse of Monpás Point, with its fort built at the end of the 19th century during the war between Spain and the United States over Cuba. The path continues a little unevenly and soon begins a gentle descent towards the Kutralla Spring. The garden-like appearance of this damp wild spot surrounded by tall pines may surprise us thanks to the hydrangeas, ferns and liverworts that grow here.



4

After the Kutralla Spring, we continue downwards along the path. The track gradually turns into a stone road that used to lead down towards an old quarry, and from the nearby vantage point we can again enjoy views over Monpás Point. This road is unofficially named *Jose txo's Avenue* in honour of the tireless Jose txo Mayor, who has done a magnificent job, working tirelessly for decades opening and restoring paths in this area. The forest soon opens out, offering a view of Animeta Point and the rocks at Atalaundi. From here, on a clear day, we can see not only Biarritz but also the coast of Les Landes in France. Heather, ferns and gorse are the plants most commonly found here, along with the occasional pine and Pyrenean oak. In ancient times, the latter tree covered most of the mountain. Ulia is also the home to a universe of rocks sculpted into incredible shapes by the wind, rain, sun and sea. Victor Hugo described this very eloquently: *"The sandstone is the most amusing and the most strangely compounded rock that there is. It is among rocks what the elm is among trees. No appearance that it does not assume, no caprice that it does not show, no dream that it does not realise. It takes all shapes, it makes all kinds of grimaces."*



5



After reaching the Atalaundi area, up on Animeta Point we find another crossroads. From here, one path runs up towards the summit of Mount Ulia and another towards the Atalaundi rocks, continuing towards the coastal trail that runs closer to the sea. Our route runs along the middle of the slope, covering increasingly wooded land. Over the last few years, the forests on Mount Ulia have become denser and expanded to a remarkable degree. The path continues towards the area where the Barraka country house was located. One hundred and fifty years ago, there were only two country houses on the sea-facing slope of Mount Ulia, one being Barraka, famous for its vegetable garden, from which the first vegetables of the season used to be taken to the La Brecha market. The track runs around the Illurgita or Murgita Cove, a beautiful, wild, hidden away spot, used in times gone by for smuggling, and later climbs up towards the Mendiola zone.

6



In the Mendiola zone the trail surprises us once again by revealing a new facet of Ulia: the water paths. As we walk, we notice several aqueducts and tunnels built in the 19th century to channel water collected from Ulia's streams and springs to the city. These are the most visible examples of a formidable, extensive network. The popular Ingelesiturri Spring (of untreated water) flows out of one of the last streams, alongside the path and the second aqueduct. Slowly walking along through the ferns, we approach the majestic and indisputably romantic Faro de la Plata (Silver Lighthouse) situated on an impressive cliff that is almost perpendicular, 163 m above sea level, until we reach the esplanade below it. The lighthouse takes its name from the silver colour the large rocks beneath it turn when they are pummelled by the waves.

7

From here, the lighthouse access road takes us to Pasaia along the mouth of its harbour, a spectacular narrow strait, which is abruptly cut off. Thousands of years ago, Ulia used to form part of the same mountain as Jaizkibel, Urgull and Santa Clara Island, and stretched as far as Zumaia, and the Pasaia Bay is one of the inlets that the water has created in this coastal chain. Protected by these magnificent mountains, it constitutes an excellent natural harbour. Continuing along the route, on the first bend near to a vantage point, we take the path leading down towards Senokozuloa and its small lighthouse. The rest of the route continues at sea level and we soon come to the Albaola Basque Maritime Factory housed in the former Ondartxo shipyard, where a reproduction of the 16th-century San Juan whaling ship is being built.



8

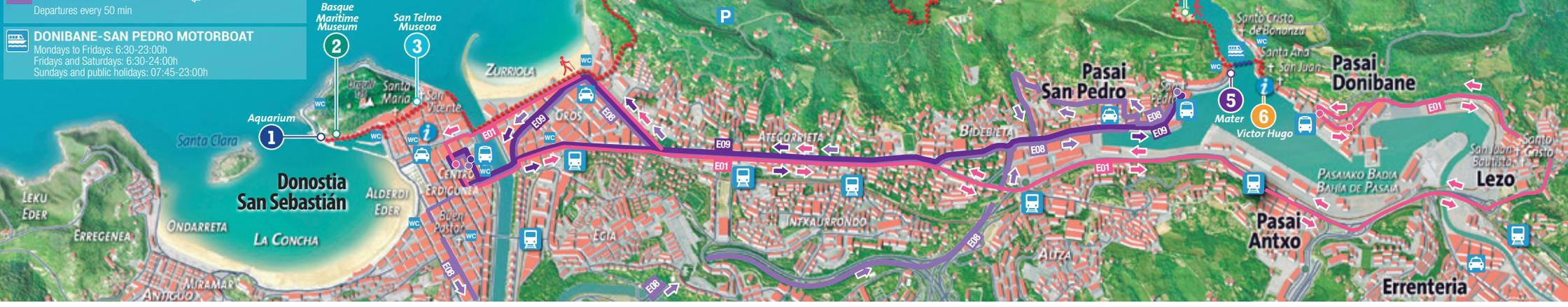
Upon reaching San Pedro, Victor Hugo's words spring to mind, still perfectly relevant today for describing this special place: *"A curtain of tall green mountains, their summits standing out against a brilliant sky; at the foot of the mountains a row of houses placed closely together; all the houses painted white, saffron and green, with two or three tiers of large balconies shaded by the prolongation of their great, red, hollow-tiled roofs; on all the balconies a thousand fluttering things, linen drying, nets, rags – red, yellow and blue; beneath the houses, the sea; [...] Every grace has been bestowed upon this bay. When I look at the horizon which incloses it, it is a lake; when I look at the rising tide, it is the sea."* From here, Donibane can be reached quickly by motorboat. Victor Hugo arrived at this far-flung location by chance and decided to remain for a few days. The building in which he stayed now houses the Victor Hugo House Museum, the point at which this route finishes. The end of a lovely walk through the past and present of this marvellous corner of the Basque coast.



ACCESS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- BUS:** www.mugi.eus - www.ekialdebus.eus
- E01** DONOSTIA / SAN SEBASTIÁN (Gipuzkoa plaza) ↔ PASAI DONIBANE
Departures every 20 min except at times with little traffic (every 30 min)
- E09** DONOSTIA / SAN SEBASTIÁN (Okendo) ↔ PASAI SAN PEDRO
Departures every 15 min except at times with little traffic (every 20-30 min)
- E08** DONOSTIA / SAN SEBASTIÁN (Okendo) ↔ PASAI SAN PEDRO
Departures every 50 min
- DONIBANE-SAN PEDRO MOTORBOAT**
Mondays to Fridays: 6:30-23:00h
Fridays and Saturdays: 6:30-24:00h
Sundays and public holidays: 07:45-23:00h

- TAXI**
DONOSTIA/SAN SEBASTIÁN:
Radio Taxi Donosti: 943 464646 / Taxi Vallina: 943 404040
PASAI: Gipuzkoa Taxi: 943 400500
Radio Jaizkibel: 943 391414
ERRENTERIA: Radio Taxi Viteri: 943 340342
- TRAIN**
RENFE: www.renfe.com/viajeros/cercanias/sansebastian
EUSKOTREN: www.euskotren.eus



San Sebastián Donostia ↔ Pasaia

MUSEUMS WITH A FLAVOUR OF THE SEA

San Sebastián and Pasaia have a deep, interwoven maritime history, that of two neighbouring ports, which have co-existed for centuries and shared their seafaring activities. Two different bays that, with the arrival of tourism and industrialisation, became even more different and increasingly specialised: one, La Concha, which since the 19th century has been a place for enjoying summer leisure activities. The other, Pasaia, which has been an important base for the whaling industry since the Middle Ages, later specialised in the cocoa trade, shipbuilding and cod fishing.

The geography of San Sebastián and Pasaia has played a decisive role in determining their history, certainly to a larger extent than in other places. The beautiful landscape that we can admire along this part of the Basque coast has also been responsible for providing protection and defence to both the city of San Sebastián and the port of Pasaia. Thus, the two cities were destined to develop a definite focus on maritime activities, and have made the most of these natural conditions in order to grow around their bays or ports. Moreover, in the Basque Country the coastal mountains have always provided exceptional vantage points over the coast, and thanks to them in-depth knowledge was gained on everything that happened at sea, which together with know-how and organisation contributed towards ensuring a thriving maritime economy. For this reason, the watchtower on Mount Ulia was extremely important, and even today continues to attract people like a magnet. Mount Ulia, the geographical feature that both unites and separates the two populations, also symbolises the union between the two ports.

The San Sebastián-Pasaia coastal trail offers us a spectacular itinerary during which it is possible to find connecting strands between the past and present of this maritime and natural area. Thus, all the attractions, sights and museums that can be found on this itinerary cover numerous aspects of the history, culture and nature of the place, offering a unique and fascinating route that we invite you to discover.



1



SAN SEBASTIÁN AQUARIUM

With around 300,000 visitors each year, the San Sebastián Aquarium is one of the most popular attractions in the Basque Country. It is an obligatory stop for all visitors to the city. The Aquarium is located in one of the most picturesque parts of San Sebastián –the harbour– right next to the Old Town, with its wide range of bars and restaurants. It occupies an emblematic building dating from 1928, with two floors dedicated to the maritime and marine heritage of Gipuzkoa. Of particular interest is the skeleton of a North Atlantic right whale, as well as the numerous tanks containing over 200 species native to the Cantabrian Sea and a wide variety of tropical species. There is also a 360° vision underwater tunnel in which you are surrounded by other spectacular marine species.



DOMOSTIA SAN SEBASTIÁN
AQVARIUM

(+ 34) 943 44 00 99
info@aquariumss.com
www.aquariumss.com

OPENING HOURS

July and August, open every day, Monday to Sunday:
from 10:00 to 21:00

From Easter to June 30 and September:

Weekdays: from 10:00 to 20:00 / Weekends, holidays and long weekends: from 10:00 to 21:00

From 1 October to Easter: Weekdays: from 10:00 to 19:00 / Weekends, holidays and long weekends: from 10:00 to 20:00

2



BASQUE MARITIME MUSEUM

Who hasn't heard about the exploits and legends of Basque seafarers? The history of the Basques cannot be explained without the sea and its heritage. The Euskal Itsas Museoa, located in the heart of the port of San Sebastián, seeks to point out the value of Basque maritime history and heritage through temporary exhibitions on fishing, shipping and illustrious personages, etc. The building itself is part of the city's maritime history. Port activities in the 18th century were controlled from this very same place where exhibitions are now held – the museum was formerly the San Sebastián Consulate tower house. Until the mid-19th century, it was the only building located outside the old city walls, in the harbour area, and is one of the few civilian buildings that survived the city's destruction in 1813.



Elias Salaverría, La offrenda de Elcano (detail)



EUSKAL ITSAS MUSEOA MUSEO MARITIMO VASCO

(+ 34) 943 430 051
info@itsasmuseoa.eus
www.itsasmuseoa.eus

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday to Saturday: 10:00-14:00 / 16:00 - 19:00
Sundays and public holidays: 11:00 - 14:00
In summer also from 16:00 to 19:00
Closed on Mondays

3



SAN TELMO MUSEUM

The museum reopened in 2011 after a state-of-the-art architectural extension to enhance the building it is housed in, a former 16th-century Dominican convent and its cloister, an architectural treasure located in the very heart of San Sebastián, at the foot of Mount Urgull. San Telmo, the oldest museum in the Basque Country, was opened in 1902. It provides a varied, contemporary overview of Basque society from its origins up to the present day, examining the history, culture and way of life of the Basque people. The museum contains a wide variety of comprehensive collections that allow visitors to learn about Basque society and how it has changed over the years. Of particular interest are 11 extraordinary canvases by the painter Josep M. Sert, as well as works by other famous artists such as Zuloaga, Chillida, Oteiza, Esther Ferrer, etc.



STM

San Telmo Museoa

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www.santelmomuseoa.eus

OPENING HOURS

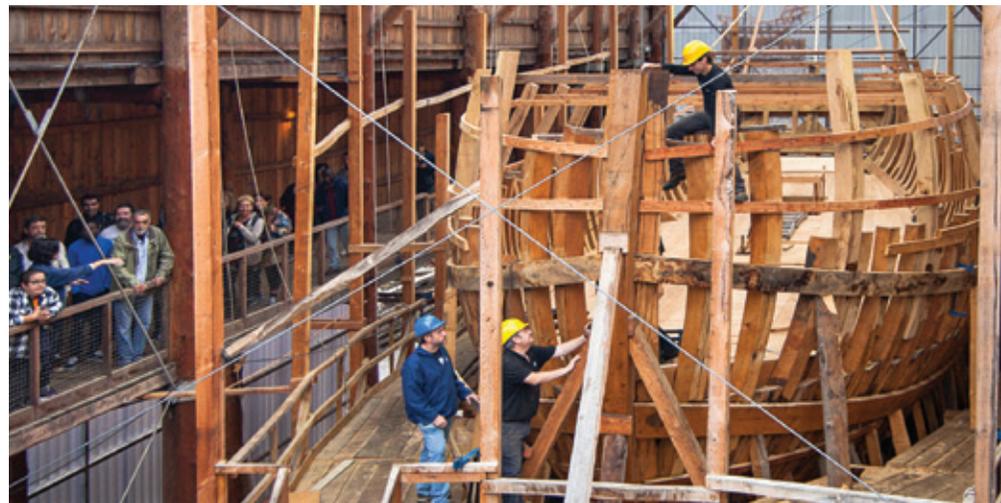
From Tuesday to Sunday: from 10:00 to 20:00
Closed on Mondays, Open on Bank holidays

4



ALBAOLA – THE BASQUE MARITIME FACTORY

Located at the mouth of the bay of Pasaia, at the eastern end of Mount Ulia, this is a museum where history comes to life. Visitors can watch a replica of a 16th-century whaling ship, the San Juan, being constructed. Built in this very port, it was chartered in 1565 for whale hunting in Canada. After sinking off the coast of Newfoundland, this ship went down in history as a witness of that maritime saga in North America, and inspired the revival of boat building in Pasaia, rekindling the tradition and creating a legacy for future generations. Thus, before the public's watchful gaze, a team of carpenters and naval craftsmen are faithfully building the replica of the San Juan whaling ship, using the same techniques as those employed in the 16th century. The construction process is under UNESCO patronage.



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OPENING HOURS

Tuesday to Sunday:
10:00-14:00 / 15:00-18:00
*Easter and summertime: 19:00
Closed Mondays (except public holidays and on Mondays before a public holiday)



5 MATER Ecoactive Boat Museum

MATER is the last great bonito fishing vessel made of wood. It has now been converted into a singular Ecoactive Boat Museum where visitors can learn about the sustainability of traditional Basque fishing practices and their awareness raised about caring for the environment. From San Pedro-Pasaia, its base port, MATER boasts an extensive programme of activities to help the visitor learn about, love and preserve the maritime, cultural and natural milieu of Pasaia-Jaizkibel-Ulía: guided boat tours, interpretative sea trips, guided walking tours, onboard didactic workshops, awareness-raising eco-activities and citizens' science.

Check our schedule of activities at www.mater.eus or follow us on social networks.



Tel.: (+ 34) 619 814 225
info@mater.eus
www.mater.eus

OPENING HOURS Prior booking essential

03/01-06/30 to 09/01-12/30:
 Thursday to Friday: 16:00-19:00
 Saturday: 11:00-14:00 / 16:00-19:00
 Sunday and public holidays: 11:00-14:00

07/01-08/31:
 Tuesday to Saturday: 11:00-14:00 / 16:00-19:00
 Sunday and public holidays: 11:00-14:00



6 VICTOR HUGO HOUSE MUSEUM

A typical Pasaia house dating back to the 17th century, with direct access to the bay, a common feature of numerous buildings in both of Pasaia's old town centres. Victor Hugo stayed here during his visit to Pasaia in the summer of 1843, fascinated by the beauty of the location, its natural surroundings and by the warmth of its inhabitants. The author of *Les Misérables* described his stay thus: "The house in which I am living is one of the most dismal overlooking the street, and at the same time one of the brightest overlooking the bay. Above the roof, among the rocks, I see stairways clambering through patches of verdure up to the old white church". The current exhibition, entitled "Victor Hugo, a trip down memory lane", pays tribute to the valuable legacy of drawings and documents the famous author bequeathed.



Victor Hugo

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OPENING HOURS

Easter, July and August, from Monday to Sunday:
 09:00-14:00 / 16:00-19:00
Winter Timetable, from Tuesday to Saturday:
 10:00-14:00 / 16:00-18:00 - Sunday: 10:00-14:00

IMPORTANT ADVICE

- You are responsible for your own safety on this walk; when passing close to cliffs, utmost care should be taken to avoid falls and accidents, in particular if walking with children or in a group, bearing in mind that cliff edges can be unstable and give way.
- Please respect the natural vegetation and fauna, especially nesting birds. Do not write, paint or make engravings on trees, rocks or stones.
- Do not make any unnecessary noise and enjoy the sounds of nature.
- Leave nothing behind: take any litter, wrappers, cans, bottles, cigarette ends, etc. home with you.
- **Please help us to conserve Ulia for future generations.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ULIA YOUTH HOSTEL: (00 34) 943 483 480 ☎

ULIA INTERPRETATION CENTRE
www.cristinaenea.eu

MOUNTAINEERING AND HIKING:

Club Vasco de Camping Elkartea: www.vascodecamping.com

WEATHER: www.euskalmet.euskadi.eu

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER: 112 ☎



PASAIA TOURIST OFFICE

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