

# GREEN CAPITAL



**VITORIA  
GASTEIZ**   
turismo   
& convention bureau



# *Vitoria-Gasteiz,* *a city embraced by nature*

**DISCOVER THE GLOBAL GREEN CITY**

A Green Belt, 150 kilometres of bicycle  
lanes and a sustainable philosophy: be green!

# DISCOVER THE NATURAL CHARM OF VITORIA-GASTEIZ



And, if you feel like visiting other urban parks, you might choose, among others, **Judimendi** (located in the city's old Jewish cemetery), the **Prado Park** (very popular with runners) or **Arriaga** (the biggest of the urban parks). [v-g.eus/urbanparks](https://v-g.eus/urbanparks)

## THE GREEN BELT



A romantic garden created in 1820, **wetlands of international importance** and 42 square metres of green areas per inhabitant. These are just a few of the natural claims of Vitoria-Gasteiz, icon of sustainability.

If you're looking for a compact city where you can **go for a walk, ride your bike, go hiking or jogging**, the capital of the Basque Country will fit your plans like a glove. Proof of this are its 150 kilometres of bicycle lanes, making it the second best city in Spain for getting around by bike.

Another of its main local attractions is the Green Belt, a group of large parks around the city. With its **observatories, forests and resting areas**, they constitute an ecological belt where time seems to stand still. And all thanks to decades of recuperation and renovation work, involving dedicated citizens who are fully committed to living life the green way.

These efforts have been rewarded with the titles of **European Green Capital** (2012) and **Green Global City** (2019), as well as the **Biosphere certification** (2016) as Responsible Tourism Destination.



This belt of parks, 33 kilometres in length, came about as a project in 1993. Today, it's one of the city's biggest sources of pride, a large network of spaces that have been recovered for leisure and environmental education.

The **Salburua Park** stands out in particular. Located just three kilometres from the centre, it includes one of the most valued inland wetlands in the Basque Country. Here, you can visit the **Ataria Interpretation Centre** which proposes a variety of environmental activities.

The park covers 200 hectares and gives you the opportunity to visit several lagoons, a small oak forest and two bird observatories. The area is home to almost 200 species of animals, among them the European mink (an endangered species) and a herd of deer.

## IN THE HEART OF THE CITY



**La Florida** is one of the most photographed parks in the city. A true lung for the central area, it's also a time tunnel thanks to its 200 years of history.

It was created in 1820 in the style of the romantic French gardens. One year later, the four **statues of the Gothic Kings** were brought from the Royal palace in Madrid.

The biggest extension of the park took place in 1855, following the English model of large garden spaces. That same year, at the Universal Exhibition in Paris, the authorities in Vitoria acquired many of the **exotic**



Equally, the **Armentia Forest** awaits you with over one hundred hectares dotted with trails, cycle paths and equestrian tracks. The Basilica of San Prudencio (patron saint of Álava together with the Virgin of Estíbaliz), one of the most emblematic Romanesque temples in the Basque Country, can also be found in the area.

But the Green Belt is so much more! Discover the other parks: <https://v-g.eus/greenbelt>

Exhibition in arts, the authorities in Vitoria acquired many of the **exotic trees** that are found in the park. The **bandstand** was built in 1890 and has traditionally been the venue for concerts and dances in the summer.

If you want to get to know some of the park's jewels, there's an **itinerary of 42 species** with their names written on the base. We suggest, for example, taking a break at the fern leaf beech tree or the Virginia Tulip Plant which is over 40 metres high. Also worthy of note are the Himalayan Cedar and an American Black Walnut Tree, one of the oldest trees in the city. In the area you will find the **Secret Garden of the Water**, a curious Japanese garden.

## REFERENCES

- **Bicycle rental and alternatives for people with reduced mobility:** <https://v-g.eus/rent>
- **Birding, hiking, horse riding, Nordic walking, running...:** see what's on the 'Nature' menu on our website and enjoy a green experience in Vitoria-Gasteiz: <https://v-g.eus/tourism>
- **Map of green routes in Salburua, Olarizu and Armentia:** <v-g.eus/rutasverdes>
- **Decalogue of Responsible Tourism:** <v-g.eus/responsibletourist>

Latest information at [www.vitoria-gasteiz.org/tourism](http://www.vitoria-gasteiz.org/tourism)

## MUST-DOS

**Bookings and information about these and other themed tours**  
Tourist Office. Tel: 945 161 598 / 99



### EUROPA CONGRESS PALACE

The first of the conference centres in the Basque Country, this Passivhaus building has a vertical garden that measures almost 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> on its façade. The rooftop terrace includes a fragrant garden and offers views over the green corridor of Avenida Gasteiz.

[palacioeuropa.org/](http://palacioeuropa.org/)



### ZADORRA RESERVOIRS

The marshes of Ullibarri-Gamboa and Urrunaga are of unique ecological richness. Several aquatic birds find refuge in the area, such as the grey heron or the osprey. You can reach them and circle them by bicycle and go for a swim in the summer period: the beaches of Garaio Sur, Garaio Norte and Landa have blue flags.



Photo: Alava Medieval

### GREEN WAY OF THE BASQUE-NAVARESE TRACK

On the 31st of December, 1967, the Basque-Navarrese railway made its last journey; today, its trail is a green way measuring a total of 123.5 km. One option is to follow the trail from the surroundings of the Olarizu Park and continue to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Estibaliz (patron saint of Álava). Another alternative is to head north from Vitoria-Gasteiz along the trail and connect with the Tour of the Ullibarri-Gamboa Reservoir.



Photo: Eloy Corres

### NATURAL PARKS

Álava has five: Valderejo, with the largest colony of griffon vultures in the Basque Country; Gorbeia, with a 100-metre waterfall (the Gujuli waterfall) and an outstanding oak grove; Izki, where a canyon juts out with artificial caves dug into the rocks; Urkiola, a natural habitat for vultures, Egyptian vultures and peregrine falcons, and Aizkorri-Aratz, a reference point for Basque mountaineering where you can find the San Adrián Tunnel, part of the interior St. James' Way. [alavaturismo.eus/parques-naturales/](http://alavaturismo.eus/parques-naturales/)

### LAGOON COMPLEX OF LAGUARDIA

Protected Biotope with five types of habitats of community interest and a dozen species of birds. The surrounding vineyards form, especially in autumn, one of the most remarkable landscapes in the region.

[arabakoerrioxa.eus/es/](http://arabakoerrioxa.eus/es/)



### SANTA CATALINA BOTANIC GARDEN

Medieval history and nature go hand in hand among the ruins of the old Monastery of Santa Catalina, from the 13th century. The garden is home to plants from the five continents together with local species and it was the first place in Spain to be certified a Starlight Stellar Park, meeting the right conditions for activities to do with observing the sky.

[bit.ly/jardinsantacatalina](http://bit.ly/jardinsantacatalina)



Photo: Eloy Corres

### VITORIA MOUNTAINS (MONTES DE VITORIA)

Mountain range located to the south of the city. With an average altitude of 1,000 metres, its highest peak is that of the Kapildui mountain, at 1,177 metres. It has extensive gall-oak groves and a beech forest, and the Batán and Zapardiel rivers run through it.

# VITORIA-GASTEIZ

## Enjoy the Green Capital!



Virgen Blanca Square

**V**itoria-Gasteiz is surprising by nature. It is one of the European cities with the largest surface area of green spaces to walk, run or cycle in, to birdwatch or go horse riding. The 'European Green Capital 2012' award, its status as a certified Sustainable Tourist Destination (2016) and the 'Global Green City 2019' award acknowledge it as one of the most environmentally-committed cities at international level. Discover it!



Green belt



Wall art

**Its historical heritage.** The Historic Quarter of Vitoria-Gasteiz, declared Monumental Complex in 1997, preserves its medieval layout intact and contains parts that take visitors back to bygone

**Its festivals and cultural manifestations.** The calendar offers top-class events. International Festivals such as the Jazz Festival, the Azkena Rock Festival, Magialdia, Kaldearte (street art), the Theatre Festival and FesTVAl (television). Sports competitions such as the Martín Fiz Marathon and the Vitoria-Gasteiz Ironman. And of course, chances to enjoy our culture: rural sports, folklore, without forgetting traditional celebrations such as San Prudencio and Our Lady of Estibaliz, patron saints of Álava, Santiago and the La Blanca Festivities.



eras. This is the case of **Santa María Cathedral** or the **Old Cathedral** (13th century) and the **Medieval Wall** (11th century), both essential visits. Not to forget its churches and Renaissance palaces such as Villa Suso, Montehermoso and Escoriaza-Esquivel.



Santa María Cathedral

The **Arquillos (Arcades)** of Olaguibel (18th century) bridge the difference in height between the medieval 'Almond' and the neoclassical Expansion. The squares **Plaza de la Virgen Blanca** and **Plaza de España** give way to pedestrian streets with a great shopping atmosphere.

**Its nature.** 150,000 trees on its streets and many parks, in addition to those in the Green Belt surrounding the city. In the city centre, the main park in La Florida, from the early 19th century. In the Green Belt, with an extensive network of pedestrian and cycling paths, the Salburua wetlands stand out. There we can see birds, deer and discover the European mink, a species in serious risk of extinction. There we can find the nature interpretation centre, **Ataria**.



Ataria



Virgen Blanca Festivities

**Its gastronomy and wine.** The National Capital of Gastronomy in 2014, in Vitoria-Gasteiz it is possible to try the most traditional dishes and the most innovative creations of Basque cuisine in restaurants and pintxo bars, with an extensive offering for all budgets. All washed down with wines from Rioja Alavesa and Txakoli from Alava. And for dessert the variety of sweet creations that are the result of the city's tradition of confectionery. The **Ardoaraba** eno-gastronomic fair, the **Big Pintxo Week** and the **Pintxo-pote (pintxo + drink offer in bars)** make it possible to enjoy the best flavours on the street.

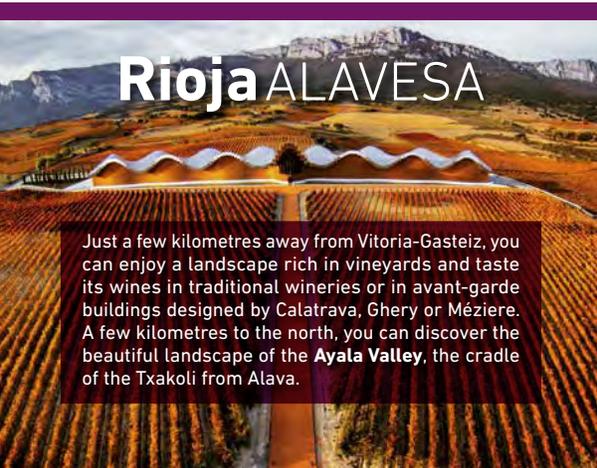


Pintxos

**Its museums.** With an important collection of contemporary art, the **Artium Museum** offers interesting temporary exhibitions. The **Fine Arts Museum** and the **BIBAT Museum**, which houses the **Archaeology Museum** and the **Fournier Cards Museum**, with the best collection of cards in the world. The **María Inmaculada Cathedral** or the **New Cathedral** is home to the **Museum of Sacred Art**. Without forgetting curious museums such as the **Arms Museum** or the **Lantern Museum**, unique in its genre.

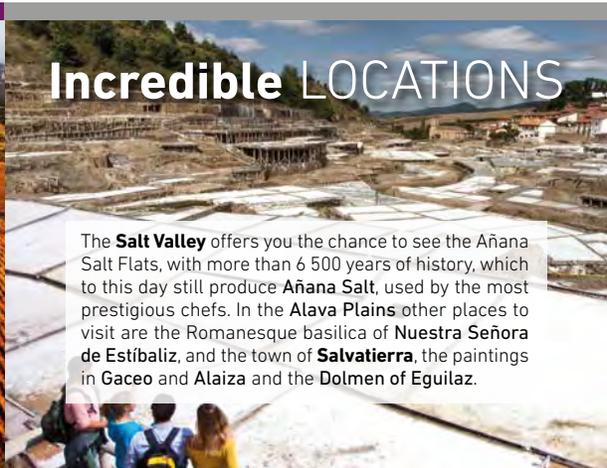


Artium



## Rioja ALAVESA

Just a few kilometres away from Vitoria-Gasteiz, you can enjoy a landscape rich in vineyards and taste its wines in traditional wineries or in avant-garde buildings designed by Calatrava, Ghery or Méziere. A few kilometres to the north, you can discover the beautiful landscape of the **Ayala Valley**, the cradle of the Txakoli from Alava.



## Incredible LOCATIONS

The **Salt Valley** offers you the chance to see the **Añana Salt Flats**, with more than 6 500 years of history, which to this day still produce **Añana Salt**, used by the most prestigious chefs. In the **Alava Plains** other places to visit are the Romanesque basilica of **Nuestra Señora de Estíbaliz**, and the town of **Salvatierra**, the paintings in **Gaceo** and **Alaiza** and the **Dolmen of Eguilaz**.

## ROUTES AND GUIDED TOURS

There is a large offering of routes and guided tours that show you the city from all perspectives.

Visits to discover the Medieval Quarter, to learn about the city following the trail of love stories, the settings for literary works, legendary characters, or singular places such as the Santa Isabel Cemetery of the Mural Route. There are also other proposals to see the city while running or cycling.

## ENO-GASTRONOMY

In addition to visiting the Plaza de Abastos Market, we cannot forget the gastronomic routes and the guided tastings to enjoy the best products and the best atmosphere in Vitoria-Gasteiz.

If you want to know where to eat, have a rest with a coffee, buy a nice souvenir or enjoy the nightlife, ask for the GUÍA ESTRELLA (Star Guide) at the Tourist Office, an initiative by the Gasteiz On Retailers Association.

## MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL CENTRES

Artium Museum of Contemporary Art / Bibat Archaeology Museum and Fournier Card Museum / Fine Arts Museum / Natural Science Museum / Arms Museum / Museum of Sacred Art / Lantern Museum / Montehermoso Cultural Centre / ATARIA Interpretation Centre of the Salburua Wetlands

## RESOURCES GUIDE

Emergencies, Ertzaintza (police). 112

Paediatric emergencies: 945 00 70 00

Radiotaxi. 945 27 35 00

Radio-taxi Celedón 945 27 20 00

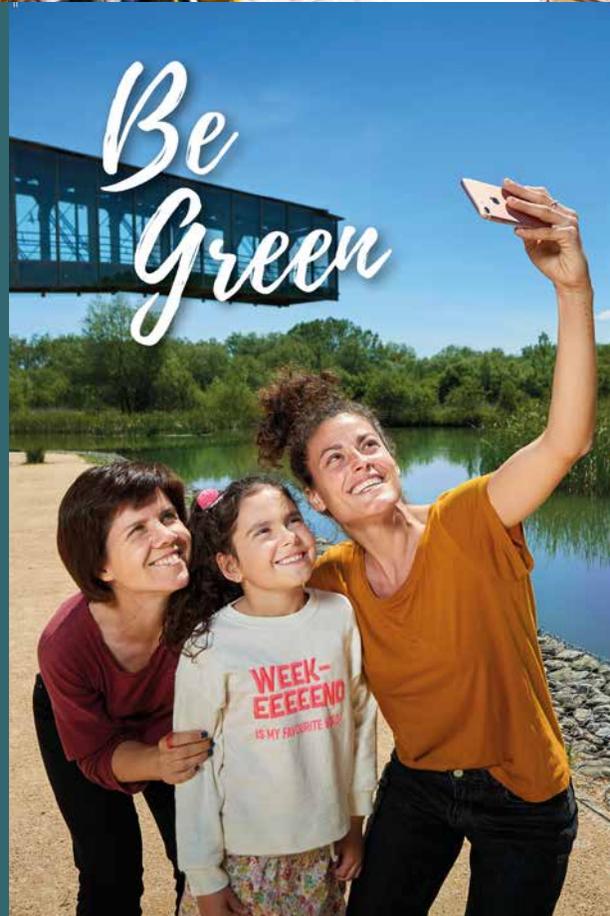
Municipal vehicle pound. Aguirrelanda, 8.

945 161 100 / 945 158 000

Renfe. 912 320 320

Airport. 945 163 500 / 902 404 704

Bus station. 945 161 66



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**EUSKADI**  
BASQUE COUNTRY



**BIOSPHERE**  
certified destination

Awarded the **European Green Capital in 2012**, since 2016 **Vitoria-Gasteiz** has held the **Biosphere Responsible Tourism certificate** that accredits its status as a sustainable tourist destination.

**ALL THE INFORMATION AT:**  
**Tourist Office**, Plaza de España 1

945 16 15 98 / 945 161 599

turismo@vitoria-gasteiz.org

Opening hours: Mon-Sat 10 am to 7 pm.

Sundays and public holidays: 11 am to 2 pm

[www.vitoria-gasteiz.org/tourisme](http://www.vitoria-gasteiz.org/tourisme)



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