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San Sebastian, European Capital of Culture in 2016

1. The Concha Bay

The Concha Bay is the image par excellence of San Sebastian. The Concha Beach stands right in the centre of the city and stretches from the City Hall to “El Pico del Loro” (Parrot’s Beak). Its 1,500 meters of white sand are elegant and cosmopolitan. It is no surprise that The Concha is considered to be one of the best city beaches in Europe.

The Concha promenade is punctuated with several elements famous in their own right and well known beyond the city: the Concha railing (one of the most universal icons of the city, unmistakable for its design), the lamp posts (replicated in The Film Festival awards), “los relojes” (“the clocks”, in the main access to the beach), the area around La Perla (with its variety of spa options, bars & restaurants, sports clubs, etc.). All of these elements make a stroll round the Concha, whether through the beach or the promenade, an essential activity for locals and tourists alike.



Source: Ortzibia and Donostia Tourism

The Concha Bay

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2. Old Town of San Sebastian



The Old Town was surrounded by a city wall until 1863, when it was demolished to make way for the new town. The Plaza de la Constitución lies at the heart of the Old Town. The balconies on the colorful buildings that line the square display numbers dating back to the time when it was used as a bullring. Today, however, the Plaza de la Constitución is the scene of busy comings and goings and the setting for major local festivities. The Old Town is also home to the city's two oldest churches: San Vicente Church and Basilica of Santa María.

At the opposite end of the Old Town is the Museo San Telmo; an ancient 16th century Dominican convent, once used as military barracks and home today of the new Museum of Basque Society and Citizenship. The building has a cloister and an ancient church well worth the visit. The far eastern side of the Old Town looks on to the harbor, well protected from the Bay of Biscay.

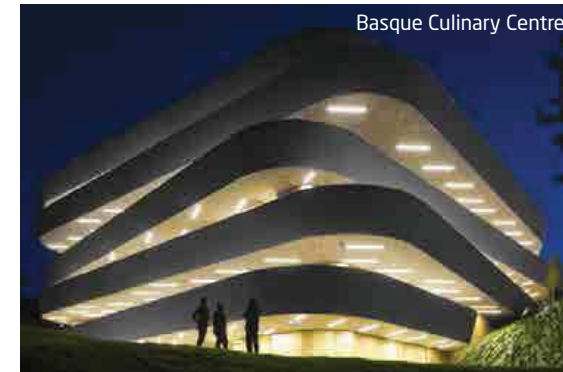
3. Romantic Area



Once the walls were demolished in the late 19th century, successive work carried out on the new part of San Sebastian gradually gave the city its layout as we know it today.

The new town was very carefully planned, with an extremely elegant 19th century design and eclectic style. The most remarkable aspect of the new town is the feeling of unity barely interrupted by a handful of modern buildings. Outstanding among these are: The San Sebastian City Hall, The Buen Pastor Cathedral, The Plaza de Bilbao, María Cristina Bridge, Paseo de Francia, Victoria Eugenia Theatre, The, Maria Cristina Hotel, The new spa La Perla and The Monte Igeldo Funicular railway.

4. Architecture



A 16th century church in Gothic style, an 18th century Baroque basilica, Belle Époque buildings, palaces, Rationalist buildings, contemporary works...San Sebastian's architecture has everything; San Sebastian is tradition and avant-garde, among the most important buildings are:

- Contemporary works: Kursaal and Basque Culinary Center, Gastronomic Sciences University
- Religious Buildings: Buen Pastor Cathedral
- Belle Époque buildings
- Mansions and Castles
- Squares and Promenades

Source: Ortzibia and Donostia Tourism

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5. Along the coast - 6 km of coastline with 3 beaches and 3 icons



Coming down from The Monte Igueldo, you find the Peine del Viento (Wind Comb), designed by the internationally famous “donostiarra” artist Eduardo Chillida, a profound dialogue between art and the landscape. After strolling through the gardens and Ondarreta Beach, you arrive at the Miramar Palace, the former summer residence of the royal family which is surrounded by gardens. From La Concha Beach, you reach the Aquarium that is nearly a century old and has recently been refurbished. It is one of the most modern oceanographic museums in Europe and tells the fascinating story of the Basque whalers of years gone by. Continuing along the coast you will come to Construcción Vacía (Empty Construction), a sculpture by Oteiza, which beckons us towards the Paseo Nuevo, which leads to the popular Gros district, with its charming terrace cafés, shops and bars. The walk ends at the third beach, Zurriola, and with the third sculpture: Paloma de la Paz (Dove of Peace) by Nestor Basterretxea.

6. Surfing and Golf



Surf plays a major role in San Sebastian. Thousands of surfers from all over the world make their way to San Sebastian's Zurriola Beach with the sole pretext of surfing its waves. That's why San Sebastian is the setting for dozens of local, national and international championships mainly held from spring to autumn. During these months, it becomes easy to confuse the Zurriola Beach and its surrounding areas with any surf city in Australia or California.

The local passion for surf is so great that recent years have seen it become a way of life, and it's common to come across some kind of surfing event on the Zurriola Beach. The areas of Sagüés, on the Paseo de la Zurriola, and the district of Gros are packed with bars, pubs, restaurants and shops for surfers.

The main reason for visiting the “Zurri”, as the local youths like to call it, is to move your

body. This lively aspect is precisely its greatest attraction. Surf championships and daily surf classes, volleyball, football and beach-tennis... The hub of beach activity is to be found here, on the 800 metres of sand occupied by the Zurriola.

Surrounding San Sebastian, the visitor may find 4 Golf courses:

- 2 of 18 holes: Fuenterrabia (home town of the two times Augusta Masters winner, José Maria Olazabal) and San Sebastian
- 2 of 9 holes: Zarauz (just at the border of the beach) and Andoain



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7. Running in San Sebastian



San Sebastian is a city made for running. Added to its endless seaside promenades are the countless pedestrian areas, away from the noise of traffic, which make this a perfect city for the sport. It is an ideal setting for outdoor running enthusiasts. A sustainable city where you can combine sport and exercise with the

beauty of places like La Concha, the Peine del Viento and the riverside pedestrian walkways.

In San Sebastian running is hugely popular and the numerous locals and visitors who do the sport can enjoy the many races organized in the city throughout the year. The level of participation in these races is usually very high, and in the better known events many people come from places other than the Basque Country to enjoy the enormously healthy activity.

Some of the races:

- The Clasica
- Behobia San Sebastian
- Marathon of San Sebastián
- San Silvestre donostiarra
- Lilaton
- Berdebidea
- XI spring race Donostiarak-UPV/EHU
- Kross berdea
- Half Marathon de San Sebastián
- Urumea 5 miles
- Night race La Caixa
- Cross Amstel 3 Beaches
- San Sebastian International Cross Race

8. Parks and Gardens



San Sebastian has many beautiful and easily accessed urban green areas. By this we refer to its parks and gardens, the city's green lungs and a reflection of its sustainability:

- Alderdi Eder gardens
- Gipuzkoa Square Gardens
- Miramar gardens and palace
- Aiete Park
- Cristina Enea Park
- Miramon Park
- Memory Park

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9. Gastronomy - 3 stars, foodie tours, cookery workshops....and much more!



Gastronomy is one of San Sebastian's best known attractions. A long-standing tradition, the culture of eating is present and future in this city where you will find three of Spain's seven 3-stars Michelin: Arzak, Martin Berasategui and Akelarre. In fact, San Sebastian, with its 16 stars Michelin in total, is the second city in the world to hold the highest number of Michelin stars per square meter.

In San Sebastian you'll find endless possibilities for throwing yourself to all sorts of foodie activities:

- Going for pintxos: you simply can't leave San Sebastian without trying its famous pintxos
- Cider Houses: enjoy the very best example of our traditional gastronomic rite... 'Txotxi!'
- Traditional markets
- Restaurants guide
- Gastronomic workshops

10. Culture



The European Capital of Culture 2016 represents an enormous opportunity to turn the focus on culture and dialogue as the roads towards improved coexistence. It will also promote stronger ties with the rest of Europe and foster innovation in the cultural sector.

San Sebastian 2016, European Capital of Culture, seeks to place value on the role of culture as a tool for constructing a better coexistence. For this purpose, more than 400 cultural activities for all kinds of audiences will take place between January and December.

HEINEKEN JAZZ FESTIVAL

In the second fortnight in July, San Sebastian taps its feet to the rhythm of the finest jazz. Great musicians have all taken to the city's beaches, theatres, squares and auditoriums at one time or another to delight audiences at this world-famous event, one of the oldest European Jazz festivals.

ZINEMALDIA / INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

The entire national and international film panoply flocks to San Sebastian every September to attend the most cosmopolitan event of the year: Zinemaldia, or the International Film Festival, one of the biggest of its kind in Europe alongside the Festival de Cannes and the Venice Mostra.

THE MUSICAL FORTNIGHT

One of Europe's oldest and most prestigious music festivals awaits you. Each year, the Musical Fortnight in San Sebastian offers the best concerts and performances of classical music. A select program that combines the excellence of the great talents on the international scene with the magic of an unforgettable setting: San Sebastian.



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Don't miss in San Sebastian

JULY

Donosti Cup
www.donosticup.com

51 Heineken Jazzaldia: Jazz Festival
www.heinekenjazzaldia.com

San Sebastian Classic Cycling
www.gtxe.org

AUGUST

77 San Sebastian Musical Fortnight
www.quincenamusical.com

Great Week-International Firework Competition
www.donostiakultura.com

Itsasfest - Maritime culture
www.dss2016.eu

SEPTEMBER

Kutxa Kultur Festibala
www.kutxakulturfestibala.com

Euskal Jaiak - Basque Festivities
www.donsotiakultura.com

Zinemaldia - 64 International Cinema Festival
www.sansebastianfestival.com

The Regattas
www.donostiakultura.com

"Kalebegiak" - The cinema
www.dss2016.eu

OCTOBER

San Sebastian Gastronomika Congress
www.sansebastiangastronomia.com

Performing arts
www.dss2016.eu

Donostikluba
www.donostikluba.com

XXVII Horror and Fantasy Film Festival
www.donostiakultura.com/terror

NOVEMBER

Behobia -San Sebastian
www.behobia-sansebastian.com

Marathon
www.maratondonostia.com

Submarine film series
www.ciclo.subacuaticasrealsociedad.com

DECEMBER

Basque language and culture
www.dss2016.eu

Festival of Santo Tomas
www.donostiakultura.com

Olentzero
www.donostiakultura.com

San Silvestre Road Race
www.sansilvestredonostiarra.com

DURING THE SUMMER

Horse racing
www.hipodromoa.com

Musika parkean
www.musikaparkean.com

ALL YEAR ROUND

Gastropote
www.gastropote.com

Pintxopote

Behemendi Itinerant Trading Market
www.Mercadoitinerante.blogspot.com.es



Source: Ortzibia and Donostia Tourism