

BILBAO, YOUR CRUISE PORT

Bilbao to face new challenges due to increasing interest in Basque Country's attractions and new maritime station

Last season, the Port of Bilbao received 61 cruise vessels carrying almost 84,000 passengers, a record figure that was reached thanks to the tourist attractions offered by the Basque Country and the new passenger terminal -OLATUA- inaugurated in March 2017.

The new maritime station is at the forefront of those in Europe because of its design, which was carried out after an exhaustive study of the functional demands of this type of building,

the attention paid to the data and opinions provided by the major cruise operating companies, and the high standards of quality and maritime safety. This station has especially brought about improvements in the service and embarking and disembarking operations, a key feature for ports like Bilbao wanting to grow as base ports.

The building has been conceived as a great rectangular glass container, 15 metres high and with 3,200m² of useable surfaces consisting of two main floors with a mezzanine in between.

The station opens towards vessels, thus facilitating embarking and disembarking, manoeuvres and guaranteeing passenger comfort. Passengers access the vessel directly and safely along the building's exterior footbridge, without having to walk along the pier, thanks to a gangway. Luggage and ship supplies movements take place at ground level, next to the berthing area through a zone completely free of passenger movements.





Cruise vessels of all types

This season cruise vessels of all sizes (between 90 and 339 metres long), of all types (family and exclusive) and for all ages. In addition, at least a dozen vessels will call at the Port of Bilbao for the first time. All of them are new, curious and different. The most outstanding include:



Over twenty shipowners committed to Bilbao

This year more than twenty shipowners will continue their commitment to this destination - Azamara, Celebrity Cruises, Cunard Line, Crystal, Fred Olsen, Hapag Lloyd, Hurtigruten, Majestic International, Marella Cr., MSC, Noble Caledonia, Norwegian, Oceania, Ponant, Pullmantur, Princess Cruises, P&O, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd (RCCL), Saga Cruises, Seabourn, Sea Cloud, SilverSea Cruises, TUI Cruises and Wind Star.



Le Soléal (Ponant)

A luxury French vessel, 142 metres long, launched in 2013.

Le Lapérouse (Ponant)

An elegant vessel that preserves the Ponant spirit: refinement, intimacy and comfort. It will commence cruises this very year 2018.



Asuka II

Which will bring on board older Japanese passengers in the month of May desiring to sample our gastronomy.



This season, we will again receive a visit from the elegant cruise vessel **Britannia (P&O, Carnival Group)**, which has already visited us on other occasions. The **Britannia** began with cruises on 14 March 2015, and on 27 May the same year, it called at the Port of Bilbao for the first time.

Pullmantur embarks again

8 - 15 september
(8 days, 7 nights)

Again, mention must be made of **Pullmantur** (RCCL) which offers the opportunity to embark on its cruise vessel **Zenith** from the Port of Bilbao facility at Getxo.

- **Rostock** (Germany)
- Malmö (Sweden)
- Ijmuiden (Netherlands)
- Dover (United Kingdom)
- Cherbourg (France)
- **Bilbao** (Spain)





Bilbao's twin appeal for Luxury and mega-ships

Bilbao's Getxo is not only the ideal choice as a turnaround port for Luxury cruise ships but it also makes a great port of call for the largest ships. It has always been the ideal gateway into the elegant French Basque coast and Euskadi region but now it has the infrastructure – with three berths and two terminals – to handle the demands of homeporting ships and visiting mega-ships.

Its new cruise terminal offers free Wi-fi, a VIP lounge and tourist information centre while the port provides a full range of services from ship repairs, bunkering; garbage disposal; water supply, and provisioning. It is also designed to comply fully with ISPS with scanners, arches, surveillance, port police and restricted access areas.

For homeporting passengers, Bilbao International Airport is just eight miles from the centre of Bilbao

(which is 13 miles from the port) and offers over 600 weekly flights to all the major Spanish cities and 30 European cities across Europe. The city of Bilbao has been reinvented so that the past and the future, tradition and innovation co-exist in its parks and gardens, promenades, streets and buildings.

The Seven Streets of the Old Quarter now bustle with life and trade while the 19th Century 'Ensanche' boasts neo-Classic and Baroque landscape and the rehabilitated area of Abandoibarra now has exciting contemporary architecture.

At the core of this reinvention is the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, which opened 20 years ago. But there are also many other museums in the city: The Fine Arts Museum is considered one of the best in Europe with more than 10,000 pieces of art while the city is also home

to the Basque Museum, Maritime Museum, Archaeological Museum, Museum of Reproductions, the Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art, the Bilbao Athletic FC Museum and the Museum for the Holy Week Procession floats.

Shopping choice in Bilbao is also plentiful. From small traditional shops and antique stores to souvenir shops, they are all there in the Casco Viejo while global brand stores are found in the Ensanche district.

Michelin-star restaurants, exquisite traditional restaurants, typical grill houses, cider or tapas bars can be found across the city. Just an hour and a half from Bilbao by car, the Rioja region is renowned for its internationally famous and exquisite wines and its innovating tourist offers.