

BILBAO HAS A CULINARY PASSPORT: 9 RESTAURANTS



Bilbao has a culinary passport

bilbaoDendak proposes a gastronomic route to help you enjoy all the cuisines and flavours of the world

Until not all that long ago, one of the things we most enjoyed when we travelled abroad was discovering new tastes and flavours... And one of the things we least enjoyed was thinking that it would be a long time before we could taste them again. Thankfully those days are no more! Nowadays Bilbao has such a range of international gastronomic proposals that we can find restaurants that will allow us to 'travel' without having to leave our seat at the table. So, just to prove it to you, this week [bilbaoDendak](#) would like to propose a highly original gastronomic route through Bilbao.



Restaurante Ondori Botxo.

Let's start with a rather curious mixture of Basque and Asian cuisine. To savour this *mélange*, perhaps we should start with a visit to **Ondori Botxo**. Actually, making a recommendation here is by no means an easy task because not only is everything absolutely delicious, but you're never sure quite what to expect. Blessed with a boundless imagination, Chef Jurgi Arejita changes the menu regularly which may mean that when you sit down for your meal, maybe the tuna cannelloni stuffed with a brandade of leeks and shiitake mushrooms won't be on the menu, or the cod waffle with Vizcayan kimchee but hey, that's not a problem. The alternative is sure to be equally as enticing. Bilbao has a culinary passport



Pintxo del Ondori Botxo, Premio a la creatividad



César 'Kunta' Escudero at **Dando la Brasa** takes this peculiar fusion a step further. Straddling both sides of the Pacific, Kunta is into Nikkei cuisine, a type of fusion cuisine that combines the best of traditional Japanese and Peruvian cooking. But he also takes care to source his produce locally: vegetables from Arrieta, bread from Mungia, ice cream from Maruri... Oh and the food is grilled, it goes without saying. You can choose from house specialities such as grilled scallops with an aubergine puree, codium seaweed and lime, jerky and corn croquettes, or crab baos.

If we prefer Peruvian food on its own, we should definitely try **Waman** where

Chef Gabriel Huaman makes the most of Basque produce and all he learnt under Eneko Atxa to give a new twist to the culinary heritage he received from his parents - they run another restaurant in Bilbao, the Rocoto in Deusto. Here we can begin with a classic 'starter' such as pisco sour or perhaps a more original suggestion - anyone for foie and eggfruit nougat? Next, a *tiradito* of lemon fish or a terrine of suckling pig with a purée of *carapulcra anticuchero*. Bilbao has a culinary passport



Restaurante Waman, Madariaga Etorbidea, 5.

If we head up the Pacific coast of the American continent (but just up the road from Colón de Larreátegui) we will end up in Mexico. Or at least in one of the most admired exponents of its gastronomy here in Bilbao: **Chilango**. Its menu is a veritable cavalcade of classic burritos, enchiladas, tacos and guacamole served in appetising 'small dishes' with a touch of Basque cuisine courtesy of Marcelino Barrenechea. The latest additions to his offer include, for example, totopos bathed in a spicy green tomato sauce with mango and habanero chili, chipotle chicken, au gratin cheese, crème fraîche and pickled red onion. Can I take your order?



Restaurante Chilango, Colón de Larreátegui K., 34.



El Laterío, Arechaga Kalea, 3.

Let's head back to Bilbao La Vieja which is coming down with delicious gastronomic proposals that have their roots in the cuisines of other countries. A good example is **El Laterío** where they invite us into a typical Lisbon fisherman's tavern to enjoy their selection of gourmet tinned fish from Portugal and the Cantabrian. Their menu features as many as 25 types of tinned fish (cod, mussels, sardines, mackerel, swordfish, eel, cockles, sea urchin caviar...), all sourced from small family canning factories. It also boasts delicious Portuguese cheese, Iberian cold cuts, *gildas* (a typical local *pintxo* featuring anchovies, green olives and chili pepper). This particular delicacy always makes for a perfect snack. As you can imagine, it's a great spot to try some of our neighbours' best beverages, *vinho verde* for example, or Super Bock, one of Portugal's favourite beers, the typical cherry liqueur called *ginja*, and of course, their famous Port. Bilbao has a culinary passport.



Italian cuisine and its star product, pizza, are a must on any gastronomic route. On this occasion we'd like to suggest **Demaio** whose gourmet pizzas are considered by many to be the best in Bilbao. The fact is that this restaurant has ascended to the Olympus of pizzas: it's the fifth best pizzeria in Spain, one of Europe's Top 50, and it also boasts a Repsol Guide 'Sun'. Its menu features Neapolitan and Roman pizzas, made with doughs fermented

using the most avant-garde techniques in an ongoing search for perfection. But the De Maio brothers have also managed to combine the most exquisite Italian ingredients with the most select ingredients of Basque cuisine, such as longfin tuna (*Bonito del Norte*) from Bermeo, anchovies from the Bay of Biscay, Idiazabal cheese and boletus mushrooms.



Demaio, San Frantzisko Kalea, 10.

We wrap up our culinary tour in the Maghreb where we can't help but be seduced by the exquisite delicacies of Arab cuisine. To enter the **Berebar** is to venture into the heart of Maghreb culture, safe in the knowledge that you will soon be enjoying the most typical dishes of the region's gastronomy such as hummus (r'himaz), tagines, lamb couscous, falafel, moussaka... Its menu offers a wide range of mouth-watering dishes, so if you can't make up your mind, never fear! The tasting menu is always a great idea as you'll be able to sample this Berber restaurant's very best dishes. And of course, what better way to round off the experience than with some Arab tea and pastries! Bilbao has a culinary passport.



Restaurante Berebar, San Frantzisko Kalea, 65.