10 reasons for visiting PAGOETA NATURE RESERVE

www.costavasca.org
Get up close to the Basque Country’s authentic Cantabrian landscape

Come along and discover our artistic/cultural heritage

Take a look at the pre-industrial heritage

Come and discover our natural heritage

Make your way into the reserve on foot

Come to the coast of Gipuzkoa

Come along whenever you want

Come and taste the local cuisine

Come and stay in the accommodation of your choice

You don’t have to come closer, you’re already near

Pagoeta Nature Reserve

Perfect balance between nature and the human being

Pagoeta Nature Reserve lies near the coast of Gipuzkoa, barely 20 kilometres from Donostia-San Sebastian. Although most of the park lies within the municipality of Aia, it also overlaps into various other towns and villages, including Zarautz, Orio, Getaria, Zumaia, Aizarnazabal, Errezil and Asteasu.

The current Nature Reserve, qualified as such on September 29, 1998, takes its origins from the estates owned in the area by the County Council of Gipuzkoa, specifically comprising those of Laurgain and Altzola, in addition to the enclaves of Iturraran, Agorregi and Bekola. A total protected surface area of 1,335 acres.

The best idea on making a first visit to the Reserve is to head for the Iturraran Visitors’ Centre with its public information and attention service. From here, visitors can make their own personal choice, opting to discover the variety of museums, natural areas, constructions or nature walks.

But the Pagoeta Nature Reserve is more than just an area which has been fenced in and protected: it is another piece of the territory to which it belongs and into which it is deeply interwoven. It is impossible to separate the park from the territory surrounding it, which may well be one of its greatest assets: the intimate relationship between the human and natural environments to be found in the region.

Enjoy your visit and have a good trip.
Over the years, humans have created a peculiar landscape on the rolling coastal hills giving the region its outline. The result is the typical Atlantic agricultural landscape speckled with local peculiarities: small, sparsely scattered villages, a whole patchwork of small fields with hedgerow separations.

The key to this landscape lies in the farmhouse, or caserio. In this kind of establishment, house, family and rented land are so closely linked to one another that the farm itself is impossible to understand without one of the three ingredients. That’s why it has been defined as a family agricultural concern.

On observing the landscape, the first thing we notice is the distance between the farmhouses dotted over the hills. Spreading out around each one is the land used for typical everyday farm work: vegetable gardens, fields for crops and grazing. The plots are marked off with hedgerows: bushes and small trees moreover providing shelter for a variety of little mammals and birds. It is not uncommon to see ancient paved roads making their way alongside these separations.

In the areas lying above and furthest away from the farmhouse are the woods and pastureland. The former used to provide wood for burning and construction purposes, while the animals were put out to graze on the pastureland, particularly in the summer months.

Having maintained these traditional activities until only a few years ago, plus the fact that pine trees are not replanted as densely in this area as they are in the other parts of the Cantabrian coast, are two of the reasons behind the survival of a large part of the landscape.

Get up close to the Basque Country’s authentic Cantabrian landscape

Take in the landscape, the result of perfect balance between traditional activities and nature: a delight to the eyes.
Come along
and discover our
artistic/cultural heritage

From the most ancient of megalithic remains to the modern Aia pelota court, praised by the sculptor Jorge Oteiza, and the region’s enormous profusion of religious and non-religious architecture. An enormously wealthy heritage.

The oldest remains correspond to the megaliths (burial mounds and dolmens) to be found in the area. These are funerary elements corresponding to a shepherding culture dating from around 5,000 years ago.

On the hilltops of Pagoeta are the Olarteta dolmen, the two Murugil burial mounds, and, a little lower down, the four corresponding to Urruztume. Not far from here, at the top of a small rocky outcrop known as Sarobeberrho haiitza, is another burial mound, not forgetting that of Arreta near the centre of Aia.

Many of the farmhouses scattered over the area offer interesting architectural characteristics. A number of these buildings stand in the Nature Reserve itself: Iturraran, Agorregi, Almizuriberti (Amezket-Lardi), Bekola, Sagastizabal and, above all, Palazio. This is a Gothic palace built as from the 14th century, which stands next to the road in the neighbourhood of Laurgain.

Not only does the religious architecture demonstrate the tremendous wealth of the parish churches: a variety of humble, secluded chapels punctuate the ancient paths.
Take a look
at the pre-industrial heritage

You can watch how they used to work with iron, how the winter’s snow was stored, charcoal was obtained, mills were worked, lime was produced, etc.

Trades and activities long gone years ago, but which have left their mark on the area: a rich pre-industrial heritage spread out over the Reserve. Some of these elements have been restored to function as they did in the past.

The Agorregi foundry is at the bottom of a deep valley. It used hydraulic energy from rivers to move the large bellows and the air hammer, just like other mills surrounding it did to rotate its milling turbines.

Downstream, there are more mills, whose operation can also be interpreted.

Throughout the rest of the Reserve are other elements from our snippet of pre-industrial history. Outstanding among these are the iceboxes, in which winter snow was kept for sale during the warmer months. One of these stands not far from the Sagastizabal farmhouse, today a Nature Centre for the groups of schoolchildren who come to visit Pagoeta; and another around Lizartxoeta hill: Nebera tikia (small icebox) and Nebera haundia (big icebox), the latter of which is well worth a look because of its size.
La actual ferrería de Agorregi fue construida en 1754 sobre las ruinas de una ferrería anterior por el señor del Palacio de Laurgain siendo el responsable del proyecto el arquitecto Francisco Ibero.

Su magnífica situación rodeada de un bosque de hayas y robles hacía que estos árboles fueran la materia prima para producir carbón vegetal con el que fundir el hierro.

Un sistema hidráulico muy ingenioso aprovechaba al máximo los escasos recursos hidráulicos de la cuenca y hacía llegar las aguas del río a la ferrería a través de un sistema de canales de 2 kilómetros de longitud, a los que se añadió un doble depósito de agua. El agua, una vez en la ferrería, repartida en diferentes depósitos, hacía funcionar los diferentes engranajes de los que constaba el complejo hidráulico: los fuelles y el mazo de la ferrería y las ruedas de molienda de los molinos superior e inferior.

La dura competencia de los Altos Hornos que utilizaban carbón mineral, hizo que esta y otras ferrerías de Gipuzkoa tuvieran que desaparecer.

La ferrería ha sido rehabilitada y en la actualidad se puede visitar y ver cómo se trabajaba el hierro en la época anterior a los altos hornos siderúrgicos. Se aprecian también los depósitos de agua (anteparas), las presas y canales y toda la infraestructura necesaria para que funcionara este establecimiento hidráulico.

The Agorregi foundry and mills are near Iturraran Parketxea. The complex may be accessed by foot on the paths, or from the Iturraran car park (coordinates: X 568369, Y 4789093) or from the surroundings of the Manterola manor (coordinates: X 569108, Y 4789747).

Contact: 943 83 53 89
iturraran@gipuzkoamendizmendi.net
Located in the town of Aia, smack dab in the centre of Gipuzkoa, and very near the coastal town of Zarautz, the Pagoeta Natural Park holds rich natural and cultural heritage.

Pagoeta is home to different animal species. Its environmental variety provides for great wealth of fauna living in freedom, including some of the endangered species in the Basque Country. The Egyptian vulture, the fat dormouse, the peregrine falcon, the European bumblebee, the Betizu cow and the Pottokak horse are just some of them, and you can see them while walking through the park.

Many other members of the lively animal community on the Atlantic hillsides find refuge in Pagoeta: roe deer, boars, hares and even a curious pair of Egyptian vultures that flies from African lands every year to make their springtime nest here.

With a maximum height around 700 metres, large swathes of native tree vegetation have been preserved: oak, beech, birch, holm oak, alder, holly, chestnut, maple, etc., and plantations with foreign species such as Japanese larch, Douglas fir and Lawson cypress. Some of them are extraordinarily interesting, such as the Beorbarruti and Arkumelarre yew trees or the Elutsaundi beech woods.

The flora is typical of the eastern Cantabrian region.

The Botanical Garden surrounding Iturraran Parkebea is of note. More than 5,500 species classified into 8 different zones.
**ITURRARAN MANOR**

Iturraran is the Natural Park information centre. All year round, different environmental-education workshops and activities are organised here, for schools, organised groups or the general public. Different issues are worked on with these activities: Pagoeta’s ecosystems, flora, fauna, geology, professions from yesteryear, etc. Thanks to these activities, the visitor can discover the balance between nature and human activity.

Parketxe Iturraran still has the original 18th-century wooden structure. Here you can see interesting things, such as the Roman numerals engraved on the wooden structure, that showed how to assemble and in which order they were to be constructed, secret money slots incrusted on the pillars, remains from the cider press... There is also a permanent exhibition on Pagoeta’s physical and ethnographic environment, and several interactive supporting elements along with an educational workshop.

**THE BOTANICAL GARDEN**

Thanks to the mild climate enjoyed by this manor, it is surrounded by a botanical garden where trees and bushes from all over the world are cultivated, both from warm and cold regions: Mediterranean, conifer, oakwood undergrowth, meadows and native trees that can be identified with their labels, showing their name and the regions that they come from.

There is also a space for endangered plants in the Basque Country, with the mission of preserving them.

The Garden began to be planted in the winter of 1986, adding new species to the collection each year. The Regional Government of Gipuzkoa is the owner, and the Department of Agriculture and the Environment is in charge of maintenance.

Simple pathways lead one around the entire botanical garden, one of the richest on the Iberian Peninsula.

To make it easier to understand, the Garden is divided into 8 large zones with their own features:
- Collections of Oak
- of Maple
- of Mimosa
- of Mediterranean Plants
- of Elm and Walnut
- of Myrtle
- of Palm Trees
- of Heather
- of Conifer Trees

**SCHEDULE**

**LOW SEASONS** from October to June (inclusive)
- Tuesday through Friday: 10:00 – 14:00 h.
- Saturdays, Sundays, holidays and long weekends: 10:00 – 14:00 h.

**HIGH SEASON** July, August and September
- Tuesday through Friday: 10:00 – 14:00 h and 16:30 – 18:30 h.
- Saturdays, Sundays, holidays and long weekends: 10:00 – 14:00 h.

**ENTRANCE:**
- Adults: 1 €
- Children (5-12 years): 0,50 €

*NOTE: information is free. The entrance fee is only paid to see the exhibition.*

**CONTACT:**
- Coordinates: X-568369, Y-4789093
- Tel: +34 943 83 53 89
- iturarran@gipuzkoamendizmendi.net
- www.parketxesarea.org
- www.aiapagoeta.com
- www.gipuzkoamendizmendi.net

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**Collector Plant Fair:**

Since 2003, the last weekend of April, the collector plant fair has been organised at the Iturraran Botanical Garden. The objective of the fair is to show plants that are unusual in our environment, but that are highly valued by collectors. This is a special occasion to find out more about the botanical world, as well as to get the plants we see in the gardens but that are difficult to obtain.

**THE ITURRARAN APATRI**

Near Iturraran Parketxea and for educational purposes, an apiary has been built. With guided tours, it shows the structure of beehives and how they are organised, observing bee activity live.

The black bee is the most important polliniser in our ecosystems, which is why its preservation and multiplication is essential.

**Guided tours to the apiary**

Tours open to all audiences:
- Easter week and summer weekends at 13.00h

Tours for groups and schools with prior appointment.
Some of these trails make their way round the Reserve or lead into it from the surrounding villages. Others come from much further away and cross right through it to continue their wanderings in other regions.

But they all offer safe walks with little discoveries, new landscapes and the chance to enjoy nature.

**TRAILS**

**Located in the Reserve * **

- **SL Gi 4001**: Agorregi: iron and water
- **SL Gi 4002**: Fauna tour
- **PR Gi 4001**: Stroll in Pagoeta
- **PR Gi 4002**: Pagoeta Cross
- **Neberako Lizarra - Sarrola Connection**

**Located in the area round the Reserve * **

- **GR - 121**: Talaia Tour: Hondarribia - Mutriku
- **PR - Gi-84**: Aia - Iturriaz - Zelatun
- **PR - Gi-158**: Itxaspe (Orio)
- **PR - Gi-40**: Aizarna - Santa Engrazia (Zestoa)
- **GR - 35**: Transhumance paths

* Trails approved by the Mountain Federation
The five paths recommended to discover the Park

**• SL Gi 4001 - Agorregi: iron and water**

- **DURATION**: 1:30 – 2 h.
- **DIFFICULTY**: Average - low
- **LENGTH**: 3.5 km
- **HIGHEST POINT**: 200 m/a.s.l.
- **LOWEST POINT**: 50 m/a.s.l.
- **LOCATION**: PAGOETA NATURAL PARK Land
- **EXIT**: Iturraran car park

This is a great itinerary for families and hikers who do not have much time but still want to see the relevant areas in the Park.

Going through the Botanical Garden - zone 7 - we go down to the Agorregi foundry; from there, going through the bottom of the valley, we reach Manterola, going by several interesting mills.

The path goes up again, returning to the starting point, going through a different area in the Botanical Garden - zone 2 - next to the Iturraran Manor.

During the route, of note is the riverbank vegetation, surging up on both sides of the river going down through the valley, pathway to the sea. Predominating species here are those that have adapted to moist soil: alder, ash, common elm and bushes such as elder and grey willow.

**• SL Gi 4002 - Fauna tour**

- **DURATION**: 2 – 2:30 h.
- **DIFFICULTY**: Average - low
- **LENGTH**: 6.5 km
- **HIGHEST POINT**: 200 m/a.s.l.
- **LOWEST POINT**: 50 m/a.s.l.
- **LOCATION**: PAGOETA NATURAL PARK Land
- **EXIT**: Lukun car park

This itinerary is excellent for families and hikers who want to discover Pagoeta’s fauna and manors.

Gently ascending up to the Laurgain quarter, we find a well-known transept, a site of prayer for the Lardizabal gentlemen. As we continue going up, we reach the Sarrola manor, where we can observe pottoñas, betizus and learn a bit more about the Park’s fauna in the surroundings.

Further on, we cross the Sarrola erreka stream and go up to the Orbea manor, very close to the car park where we began the itinerary.

Carefully observe the flora and fauna on this path, you will find one-of-a-kind species.

**• PR Gi 4001 - Stroll in Pagoeta**

- **DURATION**: 6 h.
- **DIFFICULTY**: Average
- **LENGTH**: 17 km
- **HIGHEST POINT**: 700 m/a.s.l.
- **LOWEST POINT**: 300 m/a.s.l.
- **LOCATION**: PAGOETA NATURAL PARK Land
- **EXIT**: AIA car park

This route goes in a circle around Mount Pagoeta. It has great landscape and cultural interest.

Shortly after beginning our route, we will find the Burnígurutze iron cross. Further on, we see the Aizkortkoaitza fault, the Sagastizabal snowfield, the old Beorbarruti yew and the magnificent Elutsaundi beech wood, until reaching the Lizarbakarra intersection.

Walking through the Altzola quarter, we see another two snowfields. Once there, we skirt Mount Pagoeta on a track that offers lovely panoramic views of the Park.

The last section goes over the old transhumance path until reaching Aia. We return to the starting point on a path that runs parallel to the road.

**• PR Gi 4002 - Pagoeta Cross**

- **DURATION**: 1:35 h.
- **DIFFICULTY**: Average-low
- **LENGTH**: 5.9 km
- **HIGHEST POINT**: 674 m/a.s.l.
- **LOWEST POINT**: 312 m/a.s.l.
- **LOCATION**: PAGOETA NATURAL PARK
- **EXIT**: Urdaneta Quarter

This path joins the Urdaneta quarter with the Aia hub, showing different perspectives of it. The visitor can enjoy the landscape during the tour.

**• Neberako Lizarra – Sarrola connection**

- **DURATION**: 40 minutes
- **DIFFICULTY**: Average-low
- **LENGTH**: 1.6 km
- **HIGHEST POINT**: 240 m/a.s.l.
- **LOWEST POINT**: 515 m/a.s.l.

This connection joins the PR-Gi 4001 and SL-Gi 4002 routes.
At Alto de Zudugarai (also called Alto de Orio), get off the N-634 joining Zarautz and Orio and take Gi-2631 toward Aia-Villabona. Go 4 km down Gi-2631 until seeing the “Iturran Parketxea” sign. There are two car parks: for buses at the entrance, and for cars, 300 metres further, following the paved road. “Iturran Parketxea” is about 150 metres from the car park. Follow the “i” information sign.

HOW TO GET THERE

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

www.lurraldebus.eus
www.euskotren.eus
Come to the coast of Gipuzkoa
And enjoy the wide range of leisure and cultural activities. Unforgettable walks beside the sea, sports and cultural activities, or taking a rest on the beaches with their fine sand.

These and many others are the options available to you in the area around the Pagoeta Nature Reserve.

Golf, trekking, scuba diving, underwater fishing, rock-climbing, horse-riding, yacht excursions, tuna fishing, horse-riding, tennis, paragliding, hand-pelota games as both an observer and as a participant, and surfing, are some of the leisure activities offered in this region.

Spacious beaches, impressive cliffs, interesting old quarters and representative buildings together with Pagoeta Nature Reserve, form a region, that of Urola Kosta, which, on the shores of the Cantabrian Sea, gives onlookers a delightful feeling of beauty.

A little town of seafaring tradition with an astonishing old quarter housing the fine Church of Saint Saviour.

The town is surrounded by acres of vineyards from which Txakoli white wine is obtained. The ancient Azkizu road, well worth the visit, makes its way through the vines.

Declared a villa in 1379 by King John II of Castile, of note is the 13th -century Church of San Nicolás, which was reformed in the 16th century, and the boat races the last Sunday of July, which fall under the Sea Bream Festival. Section of the Coastal Path.

Standing along the seafront, Zarautz offers the visitor a whole variety of options and a great deal of history thanks to its most representative buildings: Luzea Tower, Narros Palace, etc.

Set in the countryside among farmhouses and woods with a magnificent 16th century church, Aizpea chapel and a roadside cross. Pagoeta Nature Reserve stands within its limits.

Sits on the estuary of the Urola River with beaches, spectacular cliffs and a marina.

The town also has an old quarter with a medieval layout and extremely interesting museums such as that of the artist Ignacio Zuloaga.
Come along

whenever you want

There are a thousand reasons for visiting Pagoeta Nature Reserve at any time of the year; the unique countryside of the Cantabrian coast, its inhabitants, its mild climate all year round, and its ideal location.

The Cantabrian coast enjoys a pleasant climate. The fact that the sea is so near keeps the temperature mild all year round. In winter, temperatures of below 0º are almost exceptional, while in summer it doesn’t get too hot, meaning that you can enjoy the sun and the sea in comfort.

There is also a great deal of cultural activity, particularly during the summer months: theatres, cinemas, exhibitions, international sculpture and ceramics exhibitions, patron saint’s festivities, golf competitions, etc.
Basque cuisine is well known for its excellence the world over. Doubtless the reason for this success is the quality of the generally seasonal ingredients used to make it, the variety of dishes and the long years of tradition dating back to ancient stoves in the home and popular gastronomic societies.

A deeply-rooted seafaring tradition means that fish is prepared in a whole range of different ways, such as hake in green sauce, cuttlefish cooked in their ink or with onions, barbecued sardines, grilled bream or mackerel, cod “pil-pil”, crab, etc.

Also to be found are a selection of top-quality meats.

In this region we can also enjoy what is known as "miniature cuisine". Local bar-tops are literally packed with all sorts of “pintxos" sure to set the mouth watering, particularly if accompanied by “Txakoli”. This wine, which has its own guarantee of origin and quality and is produced on the slopes of our mountains, has achieved recognized standards and is a great popular as a fruity, slightly sparkling white wine, served at between 10 and 11º.

This territory is very closely linked to shepherding culture, producing many different kinds of cheese, including sheep, cow and goat, many taken from ancient recipes.

Come and taste the local cuisine

And enjoy the real taste of our land.
Succumb to the charm of widely varying flavours.
Come and stay
in the accommodation of your choice

We all like to travel in different ways. You can therefore choose accommodation from a wide selection according to your tastes, number of people, budget, etc.

Hotels by the beaches offering all of the comforts of city life, tourist apartments, holiday homes for rent, camp sites in which to enjoy nature, hostels, town or country house accommodation are all offered by this region in order to accommodate visitors and tourists.
You don't have to come closer, you're already near

Because you're sure to be able to reach Pagoeta Nature Reserve in a short time no matter where you are.

Excellent road, plane or train connections bring you rapidly into the region. Are you surprised? Look at some examples from the centre of your city of origin to Pagoeta Nature Reserve:

From Donostia-San Sebastián:
- 20 minutes – 25 km.

From Bilbao:
- 60 minutes – 90 km.

From Vitoria:
- 60 minutes – 90 km.

From Biarritz:
- 45 minutes – 70 km.

From Pamplona:
- 60 minutes – 90 km.

For information
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943 83 53 89
www.aiapagoeta.com
www.parketxesarea.org
www.gipuzkoamendizmendi.net

Tourist offices
- Getaria: 943 14 09 57
- Orio: 943 83 55 65
- Zarautz: 943 83 09 90
- Aia: 943 13 11 44
- Zumaia: 943 14 33 96

Internet addresses
- www.getariaturismo.eus
- www.turismo.orio.eus
- www.turismozarautz.eus
- www.aiapagoeta.com
- www.zumaia.eus

www.costavasca.org

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