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TOUR ITINERARY

RIDING LEVEL 2

Europe / Spain / Basque Country + Rioja

Rioja + Basque Country Bike Tour

Bilbao to the Camino de Santiago: Northern Spain's Wine Region

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TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Pedal traffic-free roads through vineyards with majestic views of the Sierra del Cantabrico mountains
- Immerse yourself in the world of *Tempranillo*, *Garnacha tinta*, and *Mazuelo* varietals during tastings with local producers and visits to our favorite *bodegas*
- Savor classic Riojana dishes and wood-fired lamb our friend Jaime's 19th-century *asador* restaurant in Haro
- Pamper yourself at a series of luxurious historic properties that celebrate the architectural heritage of La Rioja
- Ride a section of the Camino de Santiago to the Monastery of Yuso, a UNESCO World Heritage Site recognized as the birthplace of the Spanish language









ARRIVAL + DEPARTURE

Arrival Details

- **Airport City**: Bilbao, Spain
- **Pick-Up Location**: The Artist Grand Hotel
- **Pick-Up Time**: 9:00 am

Departure Details

- **Airport City**: Bilbao, Spain
- **Drop-Off Location**: The Artist Grand Hotel
- **Drop-Off Time**: 11:00 am

NOTE: DuVine provides group transfers to and from the tour from the pick-up and drop-off locations stated on the itinerary. In the event your train, flight, or other travel falls outside the arrival or departure times or locations, you may be responsible for extra costs incurred in arranging a separate transfer.

Emergency Assistance

For urgent assistance on your way to tour or while on tour, please always contact your guides first. You may also contact the Boston office during business hours at +1 617 776 4441 or **emergency@duvine.com**.



Tour By Day

DAY 1 To the Source

Your DuVine guides will greet you at one of our recommended hotels in downtown Bilbao, then we're off to our boutique Relais & Châteaux hotel. After a safety review and bike fitting, we'll head out on our first ride following the Rio Oja, the river that gives this famous wine region its name. Stop at our friend Victor's organic honey farm, where we'll learn all about these fascinating pollinators, then continue cycling to the village of Ezcaray for a *tapas*-style lunch in the charming main square. Afterward, stroll the town's picturesque streets, stopping to visit the medieval church of Santa María la Mayor, then spin back to the hotel to relax and refresh. This evening, we'll gather to toast the adventure ahead before a dinner of classic *Riojana* dishes at the hotel's inviting casual restaurant.

Meals: Lunch / Dinner
Destinations: Bilbao, Ezcaray
Accomplished: 13 miles / 20 km, elevation gain: 787 feet / 239 meters
Longer Option: 16 miles / 25 km, elevation gain: 1,180 feet / 360 meters
Accommodations: **Hotel Echaurren**

DAY 2 The Dynasties of Rioja

Today we move on from Ezcaray and ride to the village of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, stopping at a popular pilgrims' café where your guides relate the story of Saint Dominic and the miracle of the rooster. Our own pilgrimage continues along vineyard roads and past medieval villages. Along the way, stop for photos at a 2,000-year-old Roman bridge before arriving in the town of Haro—the spiritual capital of the Rioja wine region. We'll break for lunch in the barrel room of a historic winery located in the heart of the railway station quarter. Inaugurated in 1863, Spain's first electric railway was built to transport Rioja wines to Bilbao and beyond, bringing them to export markets around the world—many of the region's best-known wine houses established their home base here. After lunch, continue riding or transfer by van for a transfer to the charming town of Briones and our next hotel. Settle in and enjoy an après velo drink at the bar or take a stroll around town. Later, we'll regather for a short transfer to see our friend Don Raphael, who guides us though an exclusive tasting before a spectacular meal at the hotel restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Destinations: Santo Domingo de la Calzada, Briones
Accomplished: 27 miles / 42 km, elevation gain: 406 feet / 124 meters
Longer Option: 36 miles / 59 km, elevation gain: 1,358 feet 414 meters
Accommodations: **Hotel Santa Maria Briones**

DAY 3 Origins of the Spanish Language

Today we cruise south to the 11th-century UNESCO World Heritage Monastery of Yuso, considered the birthplace of the Spanish language. We'll pass pilgrims from around the globe and stop to chat as they hike this section of the 500-mile Camino de Santiago. Today's lunch is a beautiful array of local cuisine served in the renovated part of the monastery, bridging the gap of time through food. Choose to bike back to the hotel or transfer by van for some downtime (and perhaps a Spanish *siesta*). Tonight we'll take a short transfer to downtown Haro. There, our friend Jaime opens the doors to his family-run restaurant, which has been serving its famous wood-oven roasted lamb since 1870.

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Destinations: San Millan de la Cogolla
Accomplished: 21 miles / 34 km, elevation gain: 1,692 feet / 516 meters
Longer Option: 40 miles / 64 km, elevation gain: 2,667 feet / 813 meters
Accommodations: **Hotel Santa Maria Briones**

DAY 4 Into the Vines

Begin the day with a bang on a spectacular climb towards the Sierra De Cantabria mountains. As we gain elevation, the valley seems to expand endlessly, with vineyards as far as the eye can see. Our reward is a gorgeous descent into the 10th-century village of San Vincente de La Sonsierra, where we'll pause for a well-deserved coffee break. Afterwards, our friend Irene hosts us at her family-run winery for a casual lunch of tuna and local meats grilled over wood cuttings from her vines, paired with a selection of her estate's wines. It's a short ride to our iconic hotel designed by Frank O. Gehry: the glittering, ribbon-like roof appears right from the middle of the vineyards as we approach. Spend the afternoon by the pool or head to the hotel's Caudalie vinotherapy spa for one of their wine-infused treatments. Tonight, transfer to Laguardia for dinner on your own—your guides can suggest their favorite tapas bars or assist with restaurant reservations. *On egin*!

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch
Destinations: San Millan de la Cogolla, Briones
Accomplished: 21 miles / 33 km, elevation gain: 1,692 feet / 516 meters
Longer Option: 40 miles / 63 km, elevation gain: 2,841 feet / 866 meters
Accommodations: **Marqués de Riscal**

DAY 5 The City of Cellars

Today, take your pick between an easygoing or a more challenging route toward the Ebro River, starting on serene roads high above the vineyards. Stop for coffee at a local market, then continue riding to the medieval town of Laguardia, which sits upon a warren of 300 cellars carved from rock during the Middle Ages. These ancient cellars (called *calados*) aren't just subterranean wineries—they were once hideaways to protect villagers in times of turmoil. They're also a striking contrast to the ultra-modern wineries that have cropped up since Spain joined the European Union in the mid-1980s—but at lunchtime, we'll head to a tasting room in town to try wines that the same family has been producing for five centuries. After, opt to tack on some extra miles or hop in the van for a lift back to the hotel. Tonight, we'll toast to the week's adventures with a celebratory *aperitivo* at the hotel, followed by an unforgettable *Riojana* meal at Marqués de Riscal.

Meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Destinations: Lapuebla de Labarca, Laguardia, Elciego
Accomplished: 23 miles / 37 km, elevation gain: 2,066 feet / 630 meters
Longer Option: 30 miles / 47 km, elevation gain: 2,600 feet / 788 meters
Accommodations: **Marqués de Riscal**

DAY 6 Adiós Rioja

Bid *adiós* to La Rioja, its wines, medieval architecture, sumptuous gastronomy, and stunning landscapes. After breakfast, we transfer back to Bilbao where your guides will take you to our recommended post-trip hotel.

Meal: Breakfast
