

SPAIN

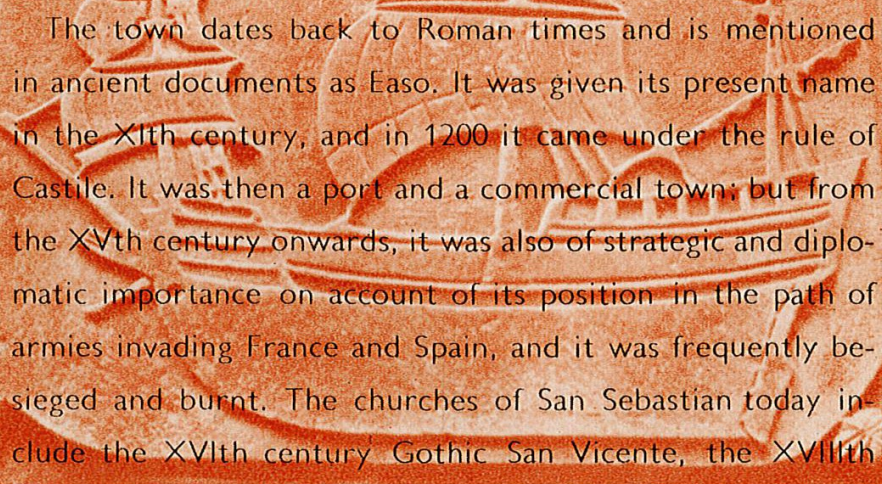


SAN SEBASTIAN

The capital of Guipuzcoa is regarded as one of the smartest summer seaside resorts in Europe. It is beautifully situated in charming surroundings, and has a mild climate, excellent shops and many places of amusement.

Since the Queen-Regent Maria Christina of Hapsburg built the Miramar Palace on the Concha Bay as a summer residence, San Sebastian has been the seat of the Court, and the virtual capital of the nation during the summer months, when the Head of the State, the greater part of the Government and nearly all the Diplomatic Corps accredited to Spain move to the city.

San Sebastian is one of the most up-to-date, provincial capitals in Europe. There are particularly fine sands, with safe bathing from two beaches, both sheltered from the open sea by the island of Santa Clara, in the middle of the bay. The Concha is one of the best bathing beaches in Spain, and curves back in the semicircle which has the two hills known as Monte Igueldo and Urgull at each end. There are splendid views from both these hills. One can get to the top of Monte Igueldo by funicular or car from the very smart Ondarreta beach. There is an observatory on its summit, and an amusement park. One should also go up a third hill, El Uliá, to get a panoramic view of the whole town, the sea and the surrounding countryside.



The town dates back to Roman times and is mentioned in ancient documents as Easo. It was given its present name in the XIth century, and in 1200 it came under the rule of Castile. It was then a port and a commercial town; but from the XVth century onwards, it was also of strategic and diplomatic importance on account of its position in the path of armies invading France and Spain, and it was frequently besieged and burnt. The churches of San Sebastian today include the XVIth century Gothic San Vicente, the XVIIIth century Baroque Santa María with a fine front; and the old Abbey of San Telmo, now the museum of Ethnography, History and Art. The interior of this church has been decorated throughout by Sert.



Summer Festival, Ballet.

TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE IN SAN SEBASTIAN: Idlázquez, 8
Tel. 11774
Office hours: 9,30 - 1,30 and 3,30 - 7

Although San Sebastian is essentially modern, it has some very picturesque corners, such as the famous fishermen's quarter, at the foot of Monte Urgull.

On the quay stands the Naval Museum of Oceanography, with an interesting aquarium on the groundfloor containing specimens of most of the fish caught off its shores. The Plaza Mayor or Main Square of the town, although built at the beginning of the 19th century, is one of the most original and picturesque squares in Spain. Its houses, all alike, rest on spacious arcades. The old Town Hall in this square contains paintings and records of historical interest.

FESTIVITIES

The chief ones are in August, beginning on Assumption Day, and continuing during the so-called «Great Week», with pigeon-shooting, regattas, horse-races, golf, polo, bullfights, concerts, parties, exhibitions, etc.

The International Film Festival has become very popular. This takes place in mid-July. Another interesting feature of the season are the summer courses for foreign students.

EXCURSIONS

There are villages and farms round San Sebastian full of Basque local colour, with folk-dancing and music on feast-days, when pilgrimages to shrines and hermitages take place.

Trips should be made to the picturesque fishing-village of **Pasajes**; to the **Sanctuary of San Ignacio de Loyola**, the birthplace of the founder of the Jesuits; to **Hernani**, a very picturesque little town; to **Rentería**, an industrial centre, with the Artabitarte Caves nearby; to **Zarauz**, with its very fine beach and golf-course, to **Fuenterrabia**, an old walled town with castles and lovely sands, with the newly-made airport for San Sebastian close by; to the Sanctuary of **Aranzazu**, an example of the ultra-modern church architecture; to **Oñate**, a historic town, Court of the Pretender in the Carlist Wars; to **Orio**, **Motrico**, **Guetaria**, **Deva**, **Oyarzun**, **Vergara**, **Lezo**, **Irún**, etc.



ABOVE. Promenade.
BELOW. View from Monte Igueldo.



ABOVE. Lasarte Race-course.
BELOW. Ondarreta Beach.