



ASCAIN

The summit trail

Distance 10,2 km	Height 480 m	Duration 3h00	Typology Circuit	Signposting PR (yellow)
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From Saint-Jean de Luz (exit n°3 on A63), follow the D918 towards Ascain and Saint-Pée sur Nivelle. Go to the center of the village of Ascain and park on the car park which is behind the church or on another of the nearest car parks.

Start GPS : UTM : 611 911 - 4800 008 Lat/Long : 43.34458/-1.61926

One of the most emblematic patrimonial and panoramic routes on the Basque coast. From the heights of Ascain, the route runs along the hills of the Saint-Ignace pass with a view of the mountains and the ocean, from the Rhune to Saint-Jean-de-Luz bay.



SECTION 1 > From Ascain to Bizkarzun

UTM : 611911 - 4800008

At the bottom of the church car park (P1), turn left to the "rue du cimetière" street; then take the first street on the right (between the pelota court and Sainte-Marie school towards P2 car park). Walk up until the end of Arraioa Street. At the top (Arraioa farm), take the signposted path «sentier des sommets» which joins a Y-shaped intersection near a small canal : go down to the left to cross a stream (footbridge) and go up on the other bank on a wide and stony path. After an uphill crossing, leave the track in the second bend to climb the path opposite. It cuts a new path and keeps going straight along a low wall. Walk between the brooms to the top..

SECTION 2 > From Bizkarzun to Suhalmendi Pass

UTM : 612770 - 4800438

From the top of Bizkarzun, go back to the intersection at the foot of the low wall: turn left and walk past the Martinhaurren barn near a beautiful oak tree. Go 50 m ahead on the wide path, then choose the right-hand path at the Y-intersection. It climbs steadily up the south side of the hill. On a flat spot with a cross and an engraved stone (view of the Rhune), keep walking on the stony track opposite, then very quickly to the right, to keep walking on the wide ridge. Pass by an information point about the local Kintoa Basque pig race.



SECTION 3 > From Suhalmendi Pass to Nausien Pass

UTM : 614518 - 4798931

At the Suhalmendi Pass intersection, go down the path to the right (Basque pig pens). In the first valley, leave a path on the left and keep walking to the right on the path under the pines. It goes down to a T-junction (between plots 40 and 41): turn left. The flat and sandy path joins the bottom of a second wooded valley (stream); keep to the right on the path. It goes up a little towards an intersection of 4 paths: go up into the wood by the one on the left. Just before a plantation, keep walking on the path on the right. Go down to the right on the ridge path.

SECTION 4 > Esnaur summit and way back to Ascain

UTM : 613307 - 4798528

On a straight slope, reach a pass near the D4 road (car park): go up the road to Nausienborda farm. When you reach the farm, follow the path down to the left of the shed. It goes alongside a fence and then goes up right between the broom trees. On the slope, it turns sharply to the left and climbs straight up to Esnaur hill (it is a difficult passage). At the top from where you face the ocean, take the path that goes down on your right. At a flat area (a small dome on the right), turn left to continue on the path that goes towards Ascain. At the bottom of the path, go straight ahead to a wood and after the gate, go down to the right on the asphalt road. You will reach Arraioa farmhouse and the road on the left back to Ascain.

POINTS OF INTEREST

❖ The Bizkarzun redoubt (2,2 km)

On the panoramic summit of a redoubt can be seen among thick broom bushes. It was an ancient defence post on the Franco-Spanish border against the British army built at the beginning of the 19th century. UTM : 612770 - 4800438

❖ Kintoa basque pigs (4,3 km)

Near Suhalmendi pass, you reach a Kintoa Basque pigs farm. This local breed is raised in the open air and can enjoy a view of the ocean! (you can find there games and information boards about local ham which is famous for its hazelnut and spice scent).9 - 4799153

❖ View on the Rhune train (6,8 km)

From these ridges overlooking the Sainte-Ignace road pass, you can see the Rhune train line. This is a 4.2 km electrically-powered rack-and-pinion railway which was inaugurated in 1924. Because of the slope, the engine pushes the cars up and holds them back on the way down. UTM : 613493 - 4798274

❖ The Esnaur redoubt (8,2 km)

More than twenty redoubts were spread over the Rhune massif to protect the border and contain the assaults of the attackers. The first use dates back to 1793 against the Spanish, the second to 1813 when Marshal Soult tried to resist Wellington's English troops. UTM : 612662 - 4799350

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- All shops and services (Ascain)
- UTM : 611 755 - 4800 085
- Drinkable water point, toilets (Ascain, near the Chourio pelota court).
- UTM : 611 882 - 4800 135

Hiking and biking trails

Useful things to know

LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY

The degree of difficulty is detailed in the guide leaflet for each trail and is categorised according to the classification used by the French Hiking Federation (Fédération Française de Randonnée Pédestre).

Very Easy. Less than 2 hours along well-marked paths. Ideal for families with young children.

Easy. Less than 3 hours, can be walked with children; slight difficulties may be encountered on some sections of the path.

Medium. Less than 4 hours. Suitable for walkers used to hiking; some sections of the trail may require a higher degree of effort, with some elevation gain.

Medium. Over 4 hours. For experienced and seasoned hikers. The trail is long and/

or difficult (elevation gain, challenging sections).

MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS

Veru easy. Wide, smooth rolling trail, less than 300 m elevation gain.

Easy. Fairly smooth trail, less than 300 m elevation gain.

Medium. Technically challenging trail, less than 800 m elevation gain.

Difficult. Very difficult terrain, 300-800 m elevation gain.

HEIGHT

The cumulative uphill climb.

DURATION

The amount of time required is given as an indication only. It takes into account the length of the trail, elevation gains and any potential difficulties. The duration is calculated without taking any rest breaks into account.

PR® CERTIFIED HIKING TRAILS®

These trails have been given the French Hiking Federation (Fédération Française de Randonnée Pédestre) seal of approval based on various quality criteria that take into account environmental, touristic, technical and other accreditation aspects. (Further information available at www.ffrandonnee.fr)

GPS COORDINATES

The coordinates of the departure point are given in latitude/longitude so that you can log the GPS position into your device. All other data (stages along the trail) are provided in UTM coordinates. The reference format is as follows: WGS 84 - UTM 30T TRAIL MARKERS

MARKING

The trails presented here are PR® certified and are marked in yellow. Some stretches of the path may also be part of a long-distance GR footpath, in which case red and white markers will show the direction to take. This will be fully explained in the guide leaflet.

	LOCAL FOOTPATHS AND PR®	REGIONAL FOOTPATHS GRP PAYS	LONG DISTANCE FOOTPATHS GR®	MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS
RIGHT direction				
Turn LEFT				
Turn RIGHT				
WRONG direction				

The Dos and Don'ts when hiking and biking

Enjoying Basque Country footpaths and trails means behaving in an appropriate and respectful way, not only towards nature but also towards the men and women who work in this countryside. It is very important to ensure some rules are followed.

Be prepared before you set off:

- Don't leave without all the necessary equipment (map, water, suitable clothing and footwear, etc.)
 - Avoid going alone. Remember to inform a relative or friend, or even the town hall of your itinerary. The lack of telephone network in some areas may prevent you from contacting someone or being contacted.
 - Don't drink water from the streams and rivers, and don't swim in them.
 - Check on the forecast just before setting off; the weather can change very quickly.
- Find out about any scheduled events taking place along your itinerary: stubble burning, hunting, forestry activities, etc.

Preserve and protect nature

- Put a recyclable bag in your backpack so that you can take your rubbish home.
 - Don't approach animals; observe them in silence from a distance.
 - Don't pick wild flowers, berries or mushrooms without permission to do so.
- Pay careful attention to signposting and stay on the marked paths.

Show respect and consideration for agricultural and pastoral activities

- Slow down when driving near herds or flocks. Only park in especially provided places so you don't impede traffic.
 - Avoid hiking with your dog. If you do take your dog, it must be kept on a lead at all times.
 - If you open a gate, make sure you close it behind you.
 - Show respect and consideration for private properties situated along your itinerary.
 - Keep your distance from free-roaming animals. Don't feed them.
 - Don't light any fires or barbecues.
- Only camp in authorised areas.

Managing your waste when hiking and biking

Keep your rubbish in your backpack when out enjoying the Basque countryside. Then, you can sort through your waste for recycling when you get home!

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Météo France (weather forecast): 08 99 71 02 64 or 32 50 or www.meteofrance.fr

- Assistance / Emergency services : Europe-wide emergency number 112, Fire Brigade: 18, Police / Gendarmerie: 17, Emergency SMS number for the deaf and hard of hearing : 114



YOUR FEEDBACK

The greatest care and attention has been given to the itineraries that we have recommended to you. So we would be delighted to have your impressions and observations with regard to the condition of the trails and footpaths. Your feedback will also enable us to ensure they are maintained in good condition. Please inform us of any problem you encountered or if you have any useful comments to make, go to sentinelles.sportsdenature.fr

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Basque Country Tourist Information Office

- ESPELETTE, rue principale +33(0)5 59 93 95 02
- SAINT-PÉE-SUR-NIVELLE, rue du fronton +33(0)5 59 54 11 69
- AINHOA, rue principale +33(0)5 59 29 93 99
- SARE, mairie +33(0)5 59 54 20 14
- ASCAIN, rue Oletako bidea +33(0)5 59 54 00 84
- URRUGNE, place René Soubelet +33(0)5 59 54 60 80
- CAMBO, Herriko Etxeko etorbide +33(0)5 59 29 70 25

CONTACT THE PROFESSIONALS

Numerous professional guides and qualified activity coordinators are available to accompany you off the beaten track. To find out more, just contact the front desk at the Basque Country Tourist Information Offices.