

Introduction

There are a number of possibilities throughout the town of Gorniz for hiking through unique spots, some of which are steeped in history, with charming landscapes that will delight hikers. The advantage of being a town overlooking the sea is that on some of the routes it is possible to enjoy not only walking through unique native vegetation, but also walking above sheer cliffs that drop almost vertically down to small coves bathed by the mighty Cantabrian Sea. The steep and winding coastline leading from the sandy beaches of Gorniz and Astondo adds a special attraction to coastal walks with spectacular scenery. If we add the charms of the neighbouring towns, we will find ourselves in this privileged area that forms part of what is known as the Uribe Kosta region of Bizkaia.

This manual contains 19 routes that start and finish in Gorniz. Some of them, of course, share parts of the route, but all of them have their own personality. Some of them are very simple and short and others are longer and require more preparation and effort, but none of them have major complications, just in some cases related to their length.

Something else that the reader will understand is that certain sections of some routes run within neighbouring municipalities: Plentzia, Barrika, Gatika, Lemoiz, Mungia and Urduliz feature, of course, as the walks are not just limited to the municipality of Gorniz. However, all of them are circular routes, i.e. we always start from Gorniz and return to Gorniz, and more specifically Plaza Ibarreta (Plaza Iberrebarri), the start and finish point of all the routes. Sometimes the routes share stretches of the GR 123 Trail (around Bizkaia) or the GR 280 Trail (Gran Recorrido de Uribe Kosta - The Uribe Costa Trail), which are the two main routes that pass through the area.

Something that I feel I should mention is that all the routes were explored and written down in a first draft during the summer of 2019, and then re-explored, timed, photographed, recorded on Wikiloc, etc., during the summer of 2020, and then written down in a more detailed and complete way. It may be (and in fact it has already happened to me) that certain details and situational references that identify key points on some routes may change over time, even in a very short period of time. Certain characteristic trees, a pine forest, a eucalyptus grove, a cairn, a signpost or a fountain, which seem to me to be key elements for identifying a point on a route, can disappear as if by magic in a very short time. A clear example of this can be found in forest thickets, where a major felling or clearing of a hillside causes the disappearance of a wooded area that changes visual references completely. Despite that, I believe that the references given to allow readers to follow all the routes are sufficiently detailed so that the hiker will not get lost or have too many problems in finding their way around.

I hope that you will be encouraged to do some of these routes which, as I say, in most cases are accessible to all hiking enthusiasts, generally not too difficult, and in some cases, these difficulties are only related to their length.

Pedro Pablo Uriarte Astarloa