

Basque Country Tourism *Code of Ethics*



etikoa
Turismo Euskadi

What is a *Code of Ethics* for Tourism, and why?

A destination isn't just a pin on a map or a post on social networks. It's a territory, a culture, an ecosystem and more. It's a living thing that feels the changes in the tourist model that we're making as a society. Our decisions as tourists and as residents matter. The way we go about generating tourism today is what will allow us to go on doing it tomorrow. And the day after tomorrow. A legacy of sustainability and ethics for those who come after us.

Aware of tourist development worldwide and of the need to achieve sustainable tourism, the Department of Tourism, Trade and Consumer Affairs of the Basque Government, through Basquetour, signed up to the Global Code of Ethics in 2014, reaffirming its commitment to Basque society by fostering sustainable, responsible tourism.

This Basque Country Tourism Code of Ethics is adapted from the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. It was drawn up in partnership with the different tourism operators, who brought their point of view and experience of the industry to the project, and taking into account the distinctive features of our culture and identity. A series of general principles aimed at guiding tourists, tourism operators and residents to achieve a form of tourism that is responsible towards the environment, people and their fundamental rights.

If you are a tourist organisation and would like to sign up to the Basque Code of Ethics for tourism, go to:

www.euskadietikoa.eus

*A destination isn't
just a pin on a map*



SAN JUAN DE GAZTELUGATXE, BIZKAIA

01/01

*or a post on
social networks*



Our model: Code for Basque Tourism

Are we a destination or are we a place to live? Tourists or travellers? Fun for those visiting us or peace and quiet for residents? Prosperity or belonging? #Euskadi or Euskadi? In the end it all comes down to one question: What tourist model do we want to be?

We've been answering this question since 2014, when we joined UN Tourism, making us one of the most highly-rated destinations for both visitors and residents. In 2019 we went a step further, creating the Basque Country Tourism Code of Ethics.

A pact between tourists, residents and tourism operators. A kind of quid pro quo of rights and obligations. A handshake to seal an agreement. Basque-style. It could not be any other way. Is there any finer way?

*Are we a
destination
or are we a
place to live?*

Tourists or travellers?

01/01

OLD TOWN, BILBAO



#Euskadi or Euskadi?



1. *I will respect* tourists and residents.
Their habits and traditions. Their
fun and their peace and quiet.

2. *I will stand* for equality in
diversity. Whoever you are,
whatever you're like.

3. *I will protect* our environment,
landscapes and natural resources.

4. *I will support*, use and enjoy local
produce and culture.

5. *I will safeguard* the tourist assets
recognised by UNESCO as World
Cultural Heritage.

6. *I will take care* of the tourist trade
and the people who work in it.

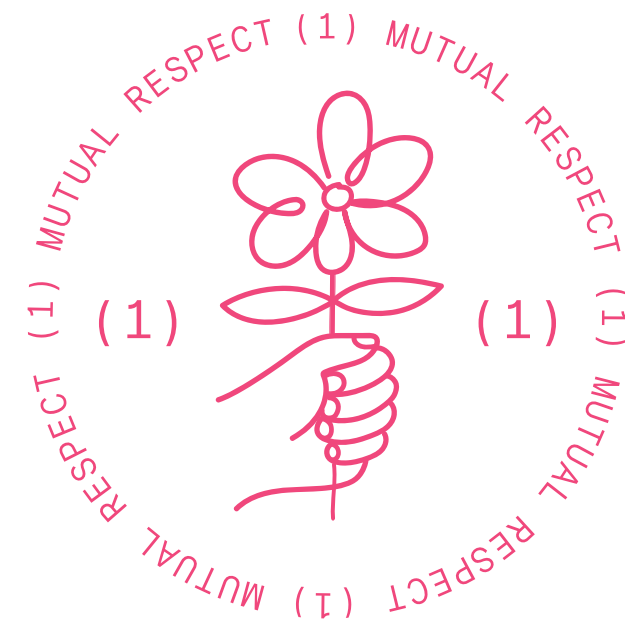


1. Mutual respect

There are so many traditions, ways of life, social practices, laws and cultural customs as there are places in the world. Getting to know and respecting ours and those of the people who visit us is the easiest way to make Euskadi, the Basque Country, much more than just a destination.

Respect for tourists. Even if our cultures live thousands of kilometres apart. Even if our beliefs speak different languages, there's no language more universal than empathy. As local tourism operators, we undertake not only to respect those visiting us, but also to find out about their tastes and needs in order to understand and exceed their expectations.

And respect for those who live here. In our everyday life and at night. In our work and in our rest time. For our laws, customs and traditions. So that the way people visit us need not change the way we live.



01/04

AMURRIO, ARABA

There are so many traditions, as there are places in the world



02/04

OLD TOWN, DONOSTIA



03/04

SAN ANTON BRIDGE, BILBAO



04/04

HONDARRIBIA, GIPUZKOA



2. Equality in *diversity*

The blue of our sea does not care about the colour of anyone's skin. In the infinite past of our people, age does not matter. The diversity of our landscapes is indifferent to gender identity. In our cuisine, made up of kitchens we have made into temples to fine eating, religion does not matter. Our land does not mind how special your abilities are, who you are or who you believe in, who you love or how you listen, see, feel or get about. Nor do we. If travel broadens the mind, the Basque Country is a giant door open to doing away with prejudices. We await you with open arms and open minds.

*Although our beliefs
speak different
languages, the blue
of our sea does not
care about the colour
of our skin*



01/04

BILBAO



02/04

OION, ARABA



03/04

DONOSTIA-SAN SEBASTIÁN



04/04

VITORIA-GASTEIZ



3. Environmental *responsibility*

However rough our sea might seem. However green our land. However deep our roots. However high our mountains. However endless our coasts. However ancient our people, villages and traditions. However Basque we are, we need to go on feeling it. Our land is precious and vulnerable. We need to safeguard our environment for future generations.

As tourism operator, we are committed to saving natural resources, cutting the footprint of our activities to a minimum and distributing movements of tourists and visitors over time.

As a guest in our land, take away memories that don't leave a mark. This is the best way for others to rediscover the way back to what will always be their home.

*However Basque we are,
we need to go on feeling it*



ARAMAIO

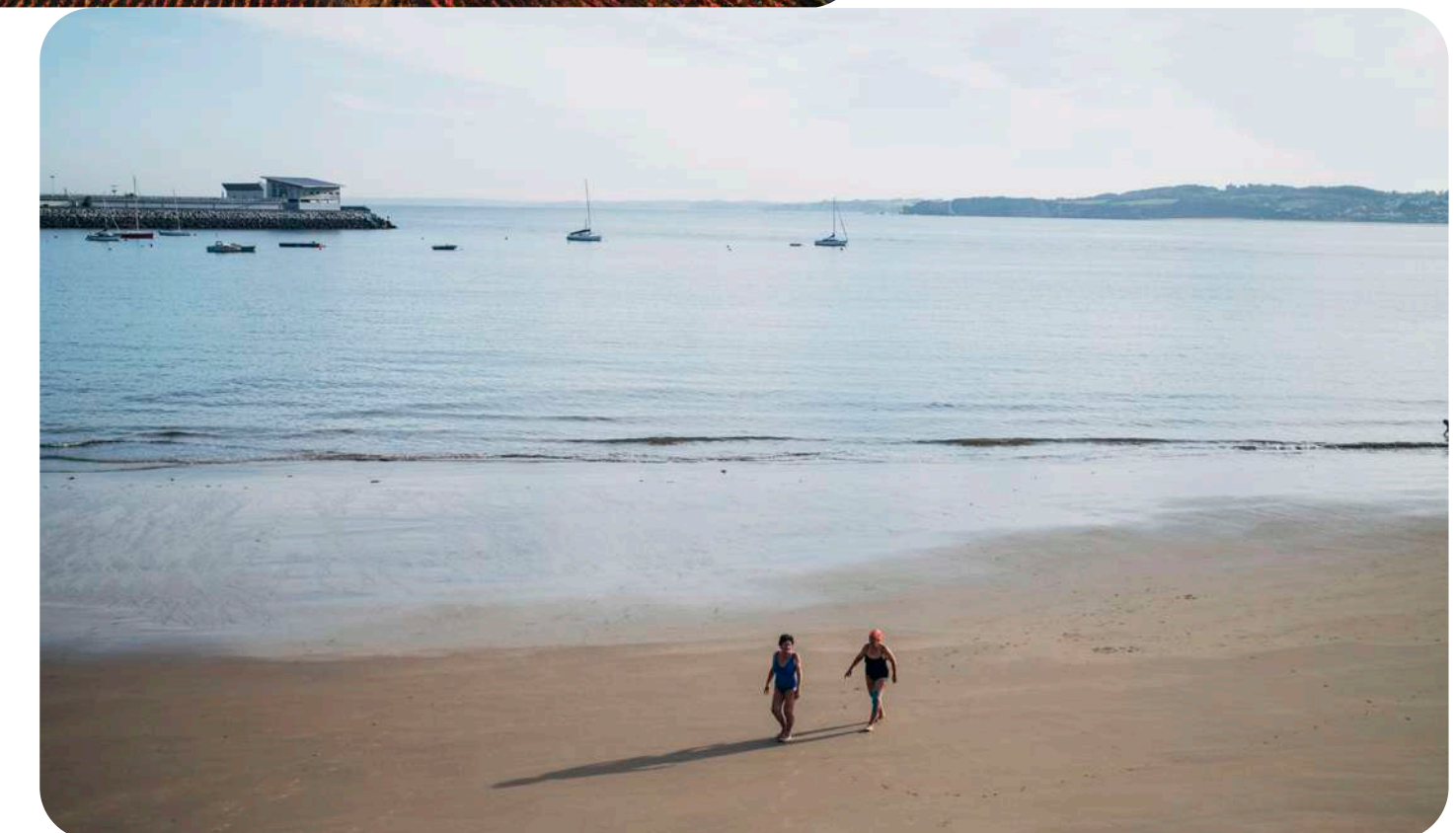
03/03

*our land is
precious and
vulnerable*



RIOJA ALAVESA

02/03



HONDARRIBIA

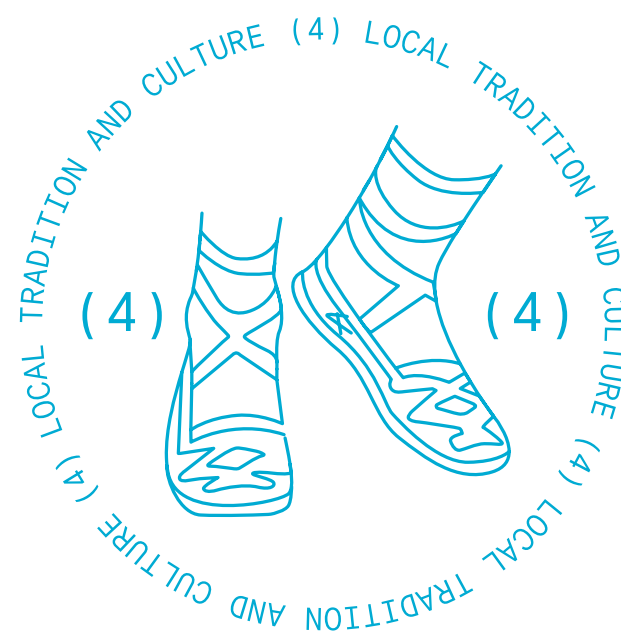
01/03



4. *Local tradition and culture*

Here food comes in the form of pintxos and stars. Sport sounds like stone, wood and txapa. Art still strives to master iron and titanium. Modernity continues to speak an ancient language. Fashion, culture, festivities and customs... Local tradition remains our universal symbol. Keeping it means conserving what we are so that we can carry on being like this.

Now that we can eat the same anywhere, buy the same things anywhere, see the same shop windows and listen to the same music anywhere, it's time to remember that we aren't just anywhere. Consume local produce from local shops. There's no better souvenir than an ancient culture and craft. Eskerrik asko!



*The local remains our
universal hallmark*

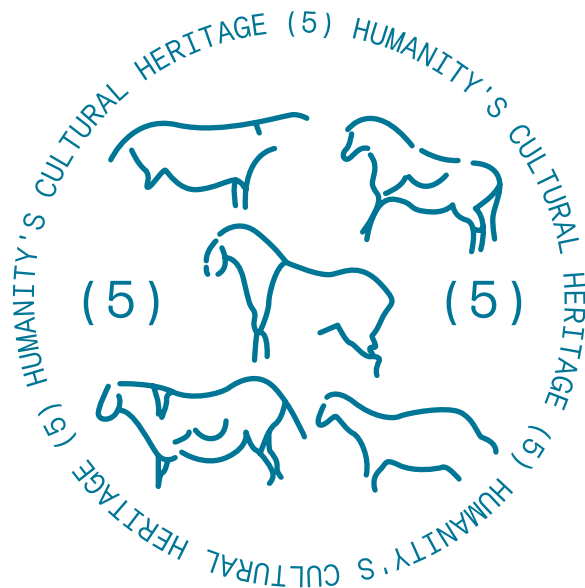


5.
Humanity's *cultural heritage*

Iron giants, ancient caves, archaeological sites, prehistoric sanctuaries, enchanted forests, magical paths, coastal geoparks, biosphere reserves, impossible sculptures, unique buildings and more. The Basque Country boasts UNESCO-recognised tourist assets.

Maintaining and protecting them isn't just an obligation; it's the pride of being able to go on enjoying the beautiful postcards in which we live.

Preserve our
heritage so that
in the future
we can continue
to enjoy
the postcards
we live in



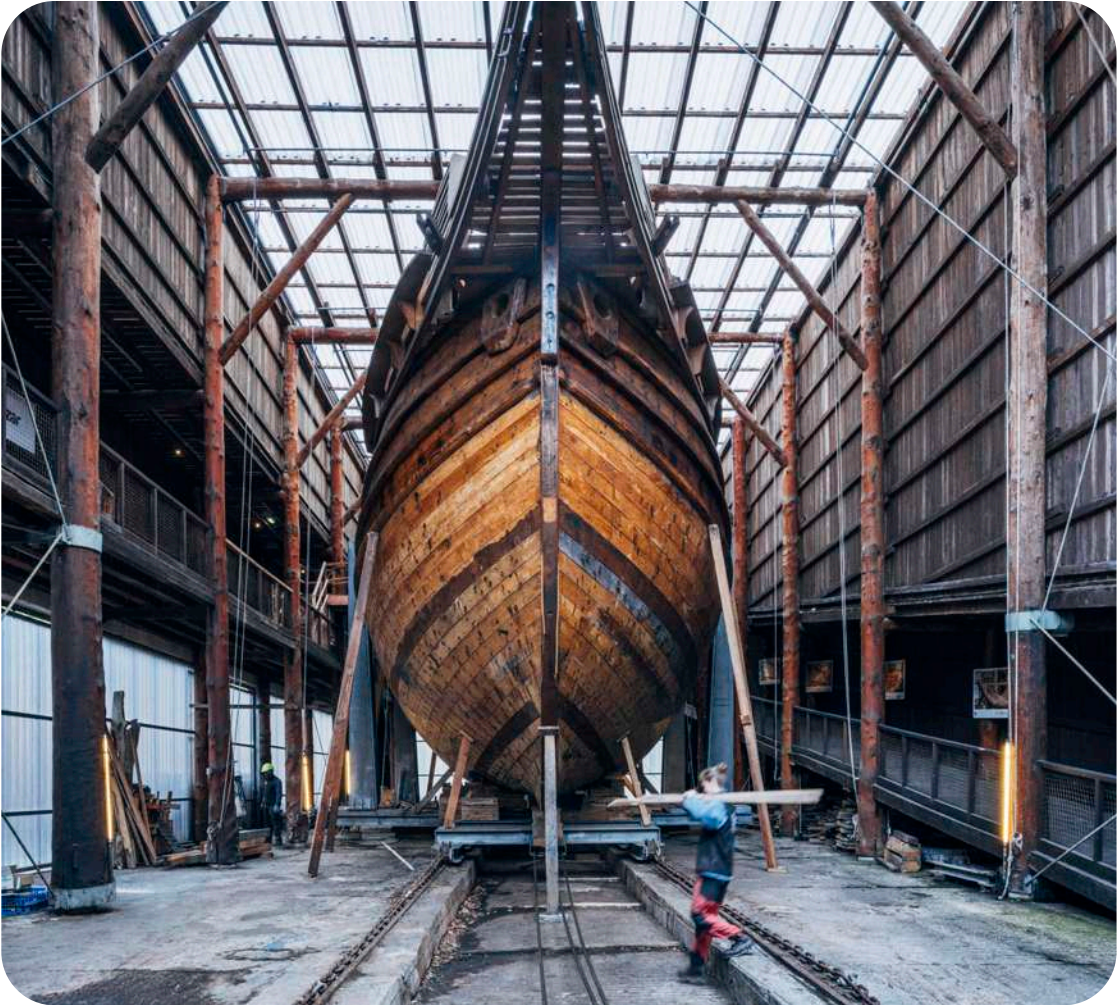
01/04

BIZKAIA BRIDGE



02/04

URDAIBAI RESERVE



03/04

ALBAOLA ITSAS KULTUR FAKTORIA



04/04

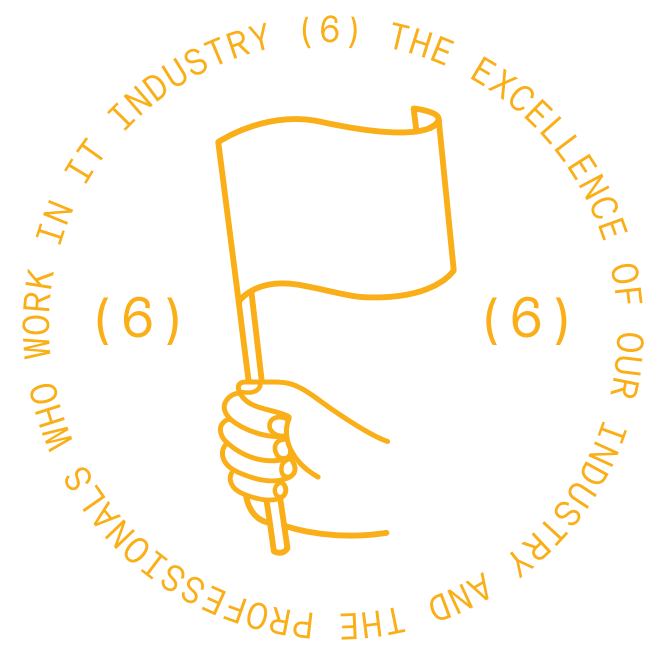
EKAIN CAVES



6. The *excellence* of our industry and the professionals who work in it

Someone once said that people will remember you for how you make them feel. And if the Basque Country leaves such pleasant memories in our visitors' emotional baggage, it's because of the people they have to do with. Tourism professionals who, more than guides, hoteliers, information providers or shop assistants, are the best hosts to welcome them to this great little country.

They are our greatest tourist asset. It is therefore our obligation to uphold their rights, foster their skills with tools and programmes for continuing training, assure the best conditions and facilities for businesses, opt for the right human capital, ensure the financial sustainability of the industry and respect their way of life by paying a fair price for their products and services. These are things that do not come out in the photo, but make up each of the stories behind it.



*Our professionals are the face of
the thousand faces of Euskadi*



A methodology to justify the Basque Country Tourism Code of Ethics

Our ethical principles for sustainable tourism are not just aspirations or fine words. Tourism is a key issue for regions, their economic prosperity and their residents' well-being.

We need to choose what tourist model we want to have. Our Code of Ethics is the way.

To do this we have a whole methodology and processes for training, advice and support, as well as an Basque Country Tourism Ethics Committee.



01/01

*Our code of ethics is
the way forward*

URDAIBAI, BIZKAIA





Tourism Ethics Committee

This committee represents a place for participation, dialogue and conflict resolution. It is responsible for publishing and applying this Code, as well as for monitoring and verifying compliance with it.

The Basque Country Tourism Ethics Committee is made up of eminent, independent and impartial personalities of high moral standing and personal integrity, as well as recognised expertise at national or international level in a range of areas, without necessarily being directly linked to tourism.

Their main role is in advice and the promotion of responsible, sustainable tourism based on key principles such as the handling of suggestions, complaints and/or claims regarding possible breaches of the Code.

Commitment by the tourist industry

Every tourist operator or organisation wishing to form part of the Basque Country Tourism Code of Ethics must complete, through Basquetour, a training process to accredit that they meet the requirements of the Department of Tourism, Trade and Consumer Affairs of the Basque Government.

Only after completing the relevant process do they receive the certificate and badge accrediting them as a responsible tourism operator.

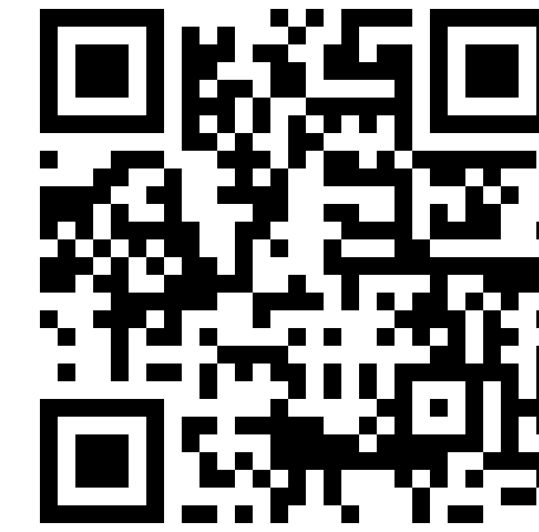
They also have access to continuing training, advice and support to keep up their active commitment.

Basque Country Ethics Register

All tourism operators adhering to the Basque Country Tourism Code of Ethics go into the Basque Country Ethics Register after successfully completing the pertinent process validated by the Tourism Ethics Committee.

Keeping and annually updating this register is the responsibility of the Basque Country Tourism Ethics Committee.





You can find out more at:
www.euskadietikoa.eus

Remember, our decisions as tourists and as residents matter. The way we do and create tourism today is what will allow us to go on enjoying the beautiful place in which we live tomorrow.

Acknowledgements:
The Basque Country Tourism Code of Ethics was drawn up thanks to the collaboration of the different tourism operators, who took part in the project by contributing their point of view and experience in the industry, as well as the Spanish Secretary of State for Tourism's office (SETUR), UN Tourism, universities, tourist cooperation bodies, tourist management structures, business associations and other public institutions.

Eskerrik asko



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**BASQUE
TOUR** turismoaren
euskal agentzia
agencia vasca
de turismo

EUSKADI
BASQUE COUNTRY

