



# EL GOIBAR

English



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# Presentation

The town of Elgoibar lies in the west of the province of Guipuzcoa, surrounded by green mountains. The River Deba crosses through the town and streams from the Azkarate, Muneta, Petomendi and Kalamua mountains flow into it.

Elgoibar has always been, and continues to be, a highly industrial town whose main activity is the manufacture of machine tools. Years ago, there were many gun manufacturers and ironworks in the area, but, these days, metallurgical products predominate.





## History

Formerly, Elgoibar was in a region called Marquina de Yuso. In 1346, Alfonso XI signed the Town Charter which founded Elgoibar under the name of Villamayor de Marquina and in 1472, the Guipuzcoa Councils and the Catholic Monarchs gave permission for the name to be changed to Elgoibar, as the land surrounding the then parish of San Bartolomé, where the walled town was built, was called Elgoibar.

Elgoibar has had several fires over the years; however, the people of the town were quite capable of overcoming adversity and making the town flourish. In 1883, the fountain with drinking water in the main square was built, and in 1893, electrical street lighting was installed. The town gradually spread outwards towards the mountains until it became the Elgoibar we know today.





## Old Town

In 1459, Martín Sancho built the church at the San Bartolomé de OIaso Monastery. The monastery and the church have disappeared, but the entrance to the church is still standing on the site, and leads into OIaso cemetery, which is very beautiful and of great historical and artistic importance.

The Magdalena shrine, built around 1346, lay outside the town walls at a crossroads and was always visited by travellers going to Castile.

The Casa Torre de los Alzola is in Nafarroa Square. The first documents relating to this building date back to the year 1484, although its origins are much older. In times of emergency, the building was used as the meeting place for the town councils. One such occasion was in 1560, when part of the town was destroyed by fire and meetings between the townsfolk and the Town Council were held in the Casa

Torre to discuss re-building. The former Padre Aguirre school is in Aita Agirre Square, also known as Txikixa Square.

The hub of life in Elgoibar is Foruen Square, better known as Handixa Square. This a perfect, elegant Baroque square containing the Town Hall, built by the Ibero brothers in 1737. The town's coat-of-arms, granted by the Catholic Monarchs in 1498, dominates the building. The church of San Bartolomé (the patron saint of Elgoibar), built by Longa, Larraza and the Ibero brothers, also stands In Foruen Square It was inaugurated in 1716, after twenty-five years of work. The church is built in the Escorial style and has a Baroque tower and a strongly classical style altar. The whole of this fine complex is completed by ancient porticoed houses and the oldest pelota court in the Basque Country, built in 1751.





## Natural surroundings

Small valleys in all shades of green are the main feature of the natural surroundings of Elgoibar. Hidden corners let you discover a different kind of tourism and enjoy being in harmony with nature at any time of the year.

The Karakate-Irukurtzeta range is one of the best viewpoints in Euskal Herria. It rises above the towns of Bergara, Elgoibar and Soraluze, and the highest peak, Irukurtzeta, is less than nine hundred metres, so it is an easy walk, ideal for a family excursion. The area is important for the large number of dolmens and tumuli found there, and the Basque ethnologist and anthropologist,

Jose Miguel Barandiarán, felt it deserved the name of “Route of the Dolmens”. The districts of Azkue (San Roke) and Sallobente-Ermuaran are two of the favourite routes for experienced mountain walkers to go deeper into the range from Elgoibar.

Kalamua is another mountain much loved by the people of Elgoibar. The peak is 771 metres high and is the boundary between Markina and Etxebarria, in Vizcaya, and Elgoibar. The very pretty and charming districts of Aiastia (San Migel) and Idotorbe (San Pedro) are on the southern slopes. Walking through these valleys,

with the wind brushing through the meadows, the sun shining off the white walls of the farmhouses, and the ancient trees towering proudly, is to invite the clock to stop and just enjoy the surroundings with all five senses.

Caves and hidden monuments, the knife-cut of the coastal edge, historic farmhouses and ancient cattle barns scattered throughout the coast and hills of the region, far from the beaten tourist trails, make Elgoibar and Debarrena into a welcoming place, with a great wealth of ethnographical and natural features, open to all those who care to find it.



# The districts



## ALTZOLA

The spa established in 1846 meant that Altzola was a very popular place for many years. The architectural heritage consists of the former spa, the Olaetxea tower, the Altzola tower, Albizkoa house, Aurretxe palace and the former Zelaia hotel. Festival of San Juan: 24 June.

## ARRIAGA

Better known as San Antolín because of a shrine that used to be there, this district holds the Zabale Torre farm house, one of the most beautiful in the town, and Apraiz mill. Festival of San Antolín: September 2.

## SALLOBENTE-ERMUARAN

Sallobente-Ermuaran is the district of Elgoibar that has the largest number of farmhouses, sixty-three in all. Around the shrine of San Lorenzo there is a pelota court, open space around it, a stream and a bolatoki, also the oldest and most important Renaissance paintings in Guipuzcoa. The Arostegi palace, with its small square and fountain, completes the landscape in this valley, one of the most beautiful in the region. Festival of San Lorenzo: 10 August.

## IDOTORBE (San Pedro)

Idotorbe (San Pedro) is one of the busiest districts in the town. A landmark in the shrine of San Pedro, which is very large and almost square. Festival of San Pedro: 29 June.

## AIASTIA (San Migel)

The end of this district marks the boundary between Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya. Here, you can find the shrine of San Migel, built in 1845. Festival of San Migel: 29 September.

## AZKUE (San Roke)

The path going up to mount Karakate leads from this district. The shrine of San Roke commemorates the saint the people of Elgoibar turned to when the plague struck. You can see the figures of two boxers above the bell, put there in honour of José Manuel Ibar "Urtain". Festival of San Roke: 16 August.

## URRUZUNO

Although this district is quite sparsely populated, its natural beauty leads more and more people here and the surrounding area for relaxation.

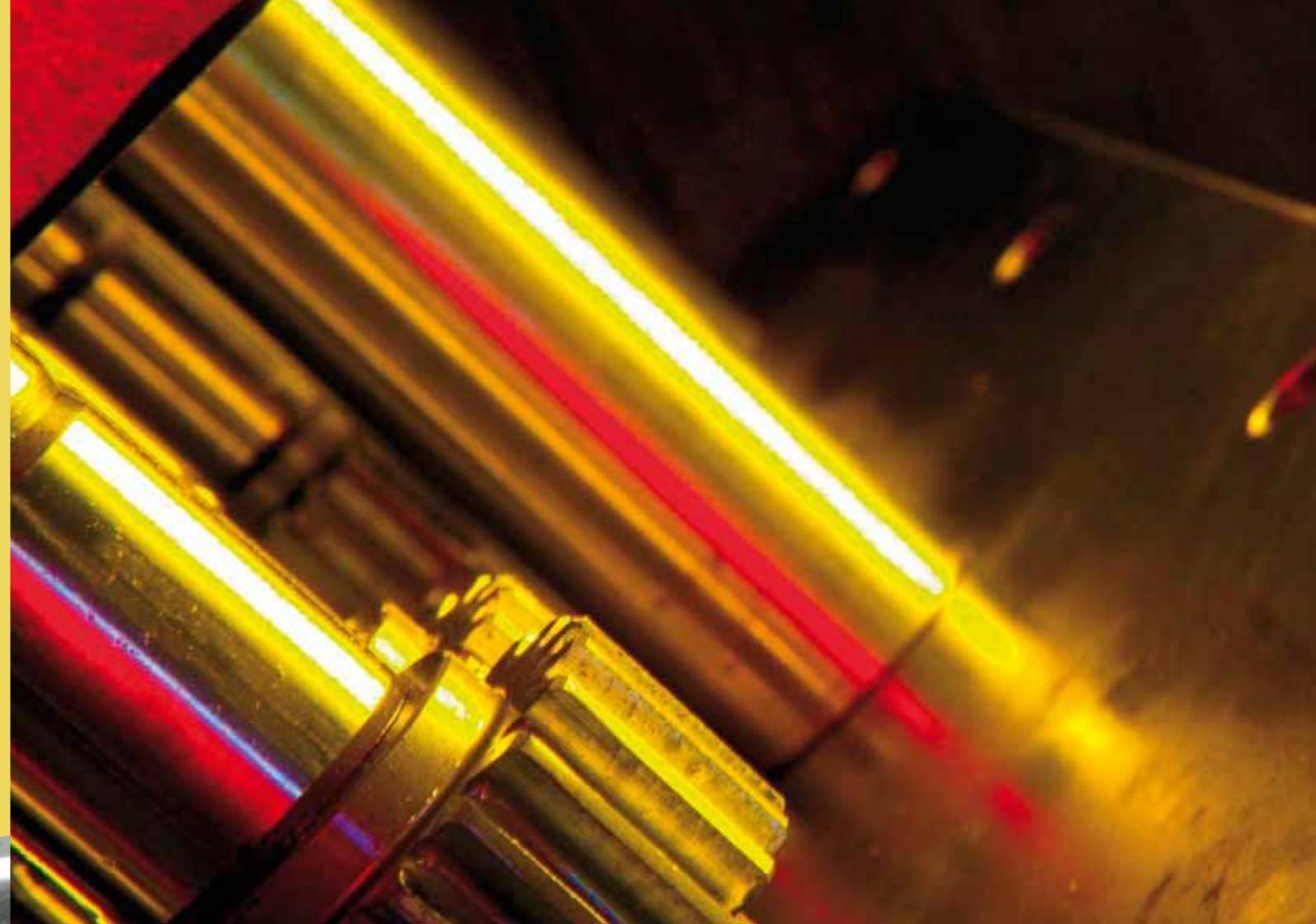


# Industry

Called the “The machine-tool capital” since the start of the 20th century, Elgoibar is well-known in international markets thanks to the initiative of its companies. The numerous ironworks that were there in the past gave way to the machine tool industry. According to records, there are at present one hundred and seventy in Elgoibar, employing a total of three thousand one hundred and seventy-seven workers.

The companies are divided into various fields: machine tool manufacture, bearing manufacture; general mechanical engineering; metal casting and stamping; manufacture of bolts, screws, chains and springs; manufacture of electrical distribution and control apparatus; metal treatment and coating; manufacture of mechanical tools; manufacture of mechanical transmission systems, etc. Nowadays, many of the products made in Elgoibar compete with the top international brand names.

There are six important industrial zones in the town: Olaso, Lerun, Ibaizarte, San Antolin, Arriaga and Albitxuri; however, there are many other companies spread throughout the town.





## Machine Tool Museum

The Machine Tool Museum pays tribute to all those workers, entrepreneurs and others who have made this small town a benchmark in the design and manufacture of machine tools. The museum was created to make later generations aware of what was one of the bases of socio-economic development in the region and to show the historical and present situation of the zone from the point of view of industry, and contains a large part of the history of this booming industry.

The museum also aims to attract visitors from outside the industry, forming part of the region's tourist attractions, and now dubbed 'iron tourism'.

The Museum is located in a new building whose design evokes the shape and content of Basque industrial workshops at the turn of the century. As part of its educational strategy, the museum charts the origin and evolution of the different technologies used in mechanical manufacturing processes.

The museum covers a useful surface area of 420 square metres. It has a central section and two spacious side sections where more than 60 machines can be seen (universal milling machines, parallel lathes, sanders, drills, etc.), all made by pioneers of machine tools in Elgoibar.

The museum is open to the public, and can also be visited by schools and on business trips by prior appointment at the IMH, telephone 943 74 84 56, or through the Internet at [museo@imh.es](mailto:museo@imh.es)



## Fossil and Mineral Museum

At present, the museum has two very different rooms. The first contains invertebrate fossils and fossils from the Basque Country.

There are eleven large wall display cabinets. One of these shows plants, and the rest hold all types of invertebrates, for example: fossils of trilobites, insects and crustaceans belonging to the arthropods. there are also corals, stromatolites and graptolites. In the central section, you can see sixteen small display windows containing over a thousand fossils from the Basque Country.

There is also a fluorescent chamber in the first room with long-wave black light displaying the chromatic effects of certain minerals.

The second room shows vertebrate fossils and minerals and has nine large wall display cabinets, and three tables with large vertebrates and a small vertical display with a bear cub of the *Ursus Spelaeus* variety. There are all kinds of fossils here, from small dinosaurs, dinosaur eggs, sharks' teeth and fish from various deposits ranging from the United States to the Lebanon, not forgetting China, Brazil, Germany and more.

There is also a large collection of minerals from the mines and hills in the Basque Country.

Call 608 41 66 83 to arrange a visit to the museum.



# Festivals, fairs and events

## FESTIVALS

**17 January, San Antón:**  
(second patron saint of Elgoibar).  
Cultural events.

**Trinidad** (end of May or beginning of June, depending on the calendar of saints' days).

Cultural events, agricultural and livestock show and handcraft fair.

**24 August, San Bartolomé:**  
Festival for the town's patron saint. Sokamuturra, Mauxitxa txaranga, concerts, livestock show, cider competition, cheese competition.

## FAIRS

**On the last Saturday of each month** an agricultural and livestock fair is held.

**Trinidad Fair** is an agricultural and livestock fair, but with animals and products from the Elgoibar farms only. Country sports and the procession to the shrine are other activities that brighten the day.

**The Trinidad handcrafts fair** displays the work and techniques of the craftsmen and women.

**The Baserritarra Day Fair** is part of the San Bartolomé festival.

The most important events are: the cider competition, cheese competition and auction of Limousin cattle, country sports...



**The Gabon Zahar Fair:** this is held on the last Saturday of the year and is one of the most important fairs in Euskal Herria. There are competitions for cheese, fruit and vegetables. The end-of-month livestock and agricultural fair still takes place and there are over one hundred stalls selling local products.

## EVENTS

**Mugerza International Cross** in January.

**International Folk Festival** in July.

**International Chess Tournament** in December.



# Mintxeta

The BTT DEBABARRENA mountain biking centre offers sixteen signposted routes through extremely beautiful natural surroundings open to all. The DEBABARRENA network of routes provides 400 km of cycle tracks.

The centre has demanding routes where, once you have made the effort to gain height, there is the reward of spectacular views from the tracks running along the tops.

Families and those wanting easier routes can find these along the coastal area, in other inland towns and, of course, in the surroundings of the Reception Point at Mintxeta.

The Reception Point at Mintxeta has tourist information on Elgoibar and the rest of the region, in addition to detailed information on the best routes for groups and individuals, according to their interests.

There is also a service offering the hire of bikes, helmets, etc., toilets and showers, first aid, an area for cleaning and repairing bikes, bike parking, etc.

The setting for sports at Mintxeta (fields, swimming-pools,...) and the leisure and walking areas in the surroundings in the Sallobente-Ermuaran valley, make the centre in general, and the Reception Point in particular, a very attractive alternative for mountain biking enthusiasts and nature lovers.

The mountain biking facilities in the Debabarrena region enable you to discover highly interesting and beautiful scenery where the blue of the sea and the bright green of the hills inland both contrast with, and blend into, each other, and never fails to surprise visitors.



# Places of interest

## **Town Hall**

Built in the Baroque style by Ignacio and Francisco Ibero in 1737.

## **Altzola old spa**

Founded in 1846, the hot, saline waters are still in use today.

## **Altzola Water Mill**

This electricity power plant has a 250kw horizontal Kaplan turbine.

## **Apraiz Water Mill**

Where an ironworks once stood, and whose remains have been preserved, the mill has been completely renewed.

## **Zabale Torre**

The Zabale Torre farmhouse conserves original features from the 15th century, such as the pointed arched gateways, pairs of large windows, arrow slots and modillions.

## **Museum of Paleontology**

The museum has a large exhibition of vertebrate and invertebrate fossils and minerals. Visit by appointment.

## **Machine Tool Museum**

The museum is in a building that recreates how the industrial workshops worked and looked at the beginning of the 20th century.

## **Culture Centre**

This is in the Casa Torre de los Altzola and dates from the end of the 15th century.

## **Frontón**

This is the oldest ground for playing pelota in the Basque Country, built in 1751.

## **San Bartolomé Church**

The church of San Bartolomé (1716) was built by Longa, Larraza and the Ibero brothers. The main altarpiece is a neo-classical work by Justiniani and Ugartemendia.

## **Olaso Portico**

In 1459, Martín Sancho built the church at the monastery of San Bartolomé de Olaso, and since the end of the 18th century, the portico has been preserved as the gateway to the cemetery.

## **Barrena Berri power station**

The Barrena Berri power station, on the banks of the Deba River, was the first to be built in the region. It has a 500kw Kaplan horizontal turbine.





## Gastronomy

The agricultural and livestock fair held on the last Saturday of every month is just one example of the taste Elgoibar displays for the best produce. Visitors will have the opportunity to share the pleasures of good food with the people from the town, as there is a wide range of restaurants and grills, as well as bars serving delicious snacks.

Elgoibar still preserves the true style of Basque cuisine, the sauces and casseroles that have delighted everyone who has come to try the regional specialities since time immemorial.

The local restaurants make good use of their proximity to the sea to vary their dishes with the finest fish and shellfish. Some of the most famous dishes are based on products from the Cantabrian Sea, such as mackerel, which is scarce but tasty; chefs in Elgoibar know a thousand different ways to prepare it. There is also hake with kokotxas and clams, a seafood dish that, paradoxically, was invented in the inland of Guipuzcoa.



## The surrounding region

**In addition to Elgoibar**, the region of Debabarrena contains the towns of Deba, Eibar, Ermua, Mallabia, Mendaro, Mutriku and Soraluze.

**Deba** is traditionally a summer resort, with very fine beaches and a spectacular coastline. The old town is noted for the church of St. Mary (National Monument). It has interesting rural districts, such as Lastur, Elorriaga and Itziar, where the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Itziar can be seen.

**Eibar**, the regional capital, is a commercial and industrial town with a long tradition of handcrafts. Its damascene work and guns are famed throughout the world. Of the religious buildings, the parish church of San Andrés and the sanctuary of Ntra. Sra. de Arrate are worth a visit.

**Ermua** is also an industrial town. the buildings of greatest artistic interest are the church of Santiago Apostól, the Baroque palace of the marquis of Valdespina (now the town hall) and the Loviano palace, a fine Renaissance building.

**Mallabia**, at the foot of mount Oiz, has several rural districts where most of items of art and ethnographic interest can be found: beautiful farmhouses, ancient shrines... It is traditionally well-known for its country sports competitions: trials with oxen, lifting stones, etc.

**Mendaro**, is a small town at the start of the Aranerreka valley, considered to be a paradise for pot-holers, because of its wealth of caves, pot-holes and underground rivers. You can also visit “Chocolates de Mendaro-Saint Gerons”, a company that has spent about one hundred and fifty years making chocolates by hand.

**Mutriku** is an old, typical coastal town 4 kms. from Deba. The old town contains a large number of interesting buildings and has been declared a site of Historical Interest. There is also nature and scenery, as Mutriku has lovely rural districts, such as Olatz and Astigarribia, both full of history and legends. The coast is another of it's attractions, with fine beaches and coves, such as Saturran and Sieteplayas.

**Soraluze** shares with Elgoibar the mountains of the Karakate-Atxolin-Irukurutzeta range, with several remains from the Neolithic and Bronze Ages (dolmens and tumuli). The old town boasts the church of Santa María la Real.



# Guide to services

## Town Hall

www.elgoibar.org

Arreta bulegoa

943 74 10 50

arreta-bulegoa@elgoibar.net

Culture Centre

943 74 21 58

kultura@elgoibar.org

Municipal Police

943 74 13 94

udaltzaingoa@elgoibar.net

## RESTAURANTS

Amistad

P. Muguruza, 31

943 74 10 01

Aterpe

San Roke, 5

943 74 25 95

Belaustegi

San Migel Gaina

943 74 31 02

El Gautxo

Errosario, 71

943 53 17 71

Gabi

Nafarroa plaza, z/g

943 74 12 30

Gorbea

Santa Ana, 10

943 74 05 80

Harzubi

Olasope, 2

943 74 12 44

Herri Gain erretegia

Idotorbe auzoa

943 74 30 40

Ibai Ondo Erretegia

Giza eskubideen plaza

943 74 26 27

Jaika

P. Muguruza, 27

943 74 10 29

La Bodega Erretegia

P. Muguruza, 22

943 74 25 00

Lanbroa

P. Muguruza, 5

943 74 08 06

Lerun Jatetxea

Lerun, 6

943 74 31 96

Madigan's

Bernardo Ezenarro, 2

943 53 15 57

Olaso

Olaso, 15

943 74 31 85

San Pedro

San Pedro auzoa

943 74 00 10

Sigma

Xixilion kalea, 1

943 74 85 31

Txarriduna

Ermuaranbide, 1

943 74 04 90

Aubixa

Idotorbe auzoa

943 74 19 09

## HOTELS

Txarriduna hotela \*\*

Ermuaranbide, 3

943 74 87 78

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Medical Centre

B. Ezenarro z/g

943 74 11 55

Cruz Roja

A. Agirre Plaza z/g

943 74 38 64

## S.O.S DEIAK 112

Taxi

943 74 08 98

PESA buses

902 10 12 10

EUSKOTREN

943 74 04 42

Machine Tool Museum

943 74 84 56

museo@imh.es

Fossil and Mineral

Museum 608 416 683





[www.elgoibar.org](http://www.elgoibar.org)

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