

Basque Country

SPAIN | FRANCE



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Traveling Aggies

A PROGRAM OF
The Association of Former Students



June 16-24, 2018



Inspiring Moments

A World Apart

The story of travel involves more than a ticket and a passport. It should weave together discovery, education and humanity, the best elements of any compelling tale. Your personal travel story begins with our commitment to delivering authentic experiences with local people.

The incomparable value of your journey lies in the personalized care you receive from your Travel Director and the knowledge you gain from expert guides and lecturers, who call this area home.

By eliminating logistical worries, your multilingual Travel Director allows you to immerse yourself comfortably in your surroundings. This high-caliber professional makes you feel safe and important by creating a convivial, welcoming atmosphere.

The other important characters in this story are the guides and lecturers, whose regional expertise shines in their insider perspective and commentary.

Discover this unique part of Spain and France, meet local people and get an in-depth look into the fascinating Basque region.

- ▶ Immerse yourself in the unique Basque culture of beautiful **San Sebastián**.
- ▶ See design meet tradition in Espelette, where strands of the eponymous **red peppers** hang from the houses to dry.
- ▶ Taste Basque culinary heritage at a **traditional cider house**.
- ▶ Step back in time at a **16th-century Basque country home** to learn about local traditions.
- ▶ Learn about **life in Basque Country** during dinner with local people.
- ▶ Visit the **Guggenheim Museum Bilbao**, the building itself a work of art designed by Frank Gehry.
- ▶ Venture into **La Rioja wine country** to taste the famous local wine.

Howdy, Ags!

Join us on an exciting journey through Basque Country in Spain and France. This fascinating region has its own language and culture, and the Basque people have a zest for life that is second to none!

We'll stay in San Sebastián, the city that gave the world pintxos, the Basque version of tapas. Bordered to the north by the Bay of Biscay and by rolling hills to the south, San Sebastián makes a beautiful home for our stay. Each day, we'll explore different Basque towns in both Spain and France, taking in the shared culture of these two regions.

This trip combines the security, ease and value of group travel with opportunities for independent exploration. Enjoy the camaraderie of traveling with a group and, during your free time, feel the thrill of making your own discoveries! Space on this exclusive journey is limited, and the trip is sure to sell out quickly, so make your reservations today!

Gig 'em!

Jennifer Bohac

Jennifer Bohac '87, Ph.D.
Director, Travel Programs
The Association of Former Students

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800-633-7514

AggieNetwork.com/Travel





Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

Day One

In Transit

Depart your gateway city for Bilbao, Spain. †

Day Two

D

Bilbao, Spain | San Sebastián

Upon arrival, transfer † to San Sebastián and the Hotel de Londres y de Inglaterra.

This evening, enjoy a Welcome Reception and Dinner with your fellow travelers.

Day Three

B | D

San Sebastián

Discovery: San Sebastián. This seaside town is one of the most charming towns in Spain. See its Old Town, including Buen Pastor Cathedral. Stroll along Paseo de la Concha, a promenade that hugs the curve of the shoreline, for a beautiful view of the bay.

Free Time: Enjoy a free afternoon.

Enrichment: Spain's Basque Country.

Discover the culture of Basque Country.

Enrichment: Meet the People. Meet San Sebastián residents for dinner and conversation about life in Basque Country.

Day Four

B | L

Hondarribia | Bayonne, France | Biarritz

Discovery: Bayonne. Stop in Hondarribia for a view of France's Basque region across the Bidasoa River. Continue to Bayonne, France's Basque capital. Visit Sainte-Marie Cathedral and its cloisters and explore the Old Town.

Discovery: Enjoy lunch at a traditional cider house, where diners sit at long wooden tables. Enjoy the ambience of the exposed beam ceilings, stone walls and huge cider casks.

Discovery: Biarritz. A former whaling town, Biarritz today is a chic seaside resort with the best surfing waves on the Bay of Biscay. Walk along the waterfront from the Casino Barriere to the Rocher de la Vierge, an outcrop connected to the shore by a bridge built by Gustave Eiffel. From the southern side, you can see San Sebastián on a clear day. Visit the medieval Atalaye watch tower, where fishermen kept an eye out for whales.

Free Time: Return to San Sebastián, where the evening is yours to try one of the city's many excellent restaurants, which range from pintxos bars to restaurants that wow guests with molecular gastronomy creations. Enjoying pintxos, however, is a much more casual affair. Many people enjoy a drink and a couple pintxos at one place, then head to the next place for the next round of drinks and dishes, and repeat!

Day Five

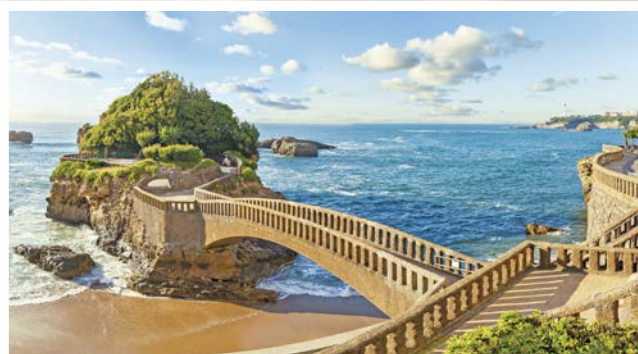
B | L

Laguardia, Spain

Discovery: La Rioja Wine. Explore the walled city of Laguardia in the famous La Rioja wine country just south of Basque Country. See the church of Santa Maria de los Reyes, Plaza Mayor and wine cellars that were built in centuries-old tunnels. Continue to a noted bodega for a tour and a wine tasting.



San Sebastián



Enrichment: *The Way of St. James.* Learn about the world-famous pilgrimage, which has several stops in Basque Country.

Day Six

B | L

Espelette, France | St-Jean-de-Luz

Discovery: *Basque Traditions.* Go back in time at Maison Ortillopitz, a 16th-century Basque country home in the French Basque region. Learn about Basque life and traditions. Continue to Espelette, a picture-perfect town where strands of the eponymous red peppers adorn whitewashed homes, the traditional method of drying the peppers.

Savor a delicious lunch in Espelette.

Enrichment: *Rural Games.* In Basque Spain and France, rural games known as “herri kirolak” honor the hard work of farmers. The games are based on farming tasks, such as wood chopping, scything and more.

Discovery: *St-Jean-de-Luz.* This pretty town has a swashbuckling past! In the 17th and 18th centuries, fishermen traded their nets for swords and cannons to become feared corsairs. France’s King Louis XIV and Maria Teresa of Spain exchanged wedding

Above:
Biarritz

Right:
Traditional
Basque dress



vows here. See the St-Jean-Baptiste Church and stroll through Place Louis XIV.

Day Seven

B | L

Bilbao, Spain

Discovery: *Bilbao.* Visit the Guggenheim Bilbao, which itself is a beautiful piece of art designed by renowned architect Frank Gehry. Explore the exciting and thought-provoking works of modern art with an expert guide. Enjoy lunch in Bilbao.

Enrichment: *Hemingway’s Spain.* Ernest Hemingway lived for many years in Spain, which influenced much of his work. Discover his passion for this wonderful country.

Day Eight

B | D

San Sebastián

Free Time: Enjoy a full day at leisure. Take a final stroll through the Old Town. Stop for an alfresco lunch along the Plaza de la Constitución. Shop for souvenirs, maybe

INCLUDED FEATURES

ACCOMMODATIONS

(With baggage handling.)

- Seven nights in San Sebastián, Spain, at the first-class Hotel de Londres y de Inglaterra.

EXTENSIVE MEAL PROGRAM

- Seven breakfasts, four lunches and three dinners, including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine with dinner.

YOUR ONE-OF-A-KIND JOURNEY

- Expert-led **Enrichment programs** enhance your insight into the region
- **Discovery excursions** highlight the local culture, heritage and history:
 - Explore the seaside Basque town of San Sebastián, birthplace of the pintxo and a cultural center of Basque society.
 - Discover the charm of Bayonne, capital of France's Basque region.
 - Taste delicious Basque cider and cuisine at a traditional cider house.
 - Stroll along the waterfront promenade in the fashionable resort town of Biarritz.
 - Sip wine at a La Rioja winery and explore Laguardia, a fortified medieval town.
 - Experience Basque life at Maison Ortillopit, a 16th-century home.
 - Admire the pretty homes in Espelette, where famous Espelette peppers are grown.
 - Learn the exciting history of pretty St-Jean-de-Luz.
 - Explore the world of modern art at the Guggenheim Bilbao.
- Free time to pursue your own interests.
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions to mingle with fellow travelers.
- Clearly hear your English-speaking guide with your own VOX headset.
- Tipping of guides and drivers
- Complimentary travel mementos



Sainte-Marie Cathedral, Bayonne



UNESCO World Heritage

This program features **Sainte-Marie Cathedral** in Bayonne, France, on the **Route of Santiago de Compostela**.

a pair of espadrilles, the Basque shoes that have become popular around the world, or txapela, a traditional beret. An Elective Activity also is being offered today.

ELECTIVE | Pamplona. Visit the city known for the annual Running of the Bulls and its ties to Ernest Hemingway. See the bullfighting ring, the chapel of San Fermín and the Gothic cathedral. Lunch is included. Gather for a Farewell Reception and Dinner.

Day Nine

B

In Transit

Following breakfast, transfer to the airport for the return flight to your gateway city. ⬆

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions. Walking is required on many excursions, and surfaces may be uneven or unpaved.

✈ Transfers and flights included for AHI FlexAir participants
B/L/D denotes included breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

E Elective experiences available at an additional cost



St-Jean-de-Luz

AHI TRAVEL EXPERTISE

From your reservation to your return home, we are here to ensure you have the adventure of a lifetime.

Before you go:

- ▶ **Travel Consultants** | These experts stand ready to answer your questions about activities, meals, accommodations and more as they guide you through the reservation process.
- ▶ **Passenger Service Representative** | Once you have reserved your spot, enjoy personalized assistance from this specialist, your one point of contact who will help you with everything from arranging flights to booking elective activities to fulfilling special requests.
- ▶ **Travel Information** | Receive extensive destination information and travel tips compiled by our travel-savvy team to prepare you fully for your journey.

Once you arrive:

On the ground, three layers of top-quality professionals offer their insiders' perspective. From suggesting the best café or pub to sharing a laugh over the stories of the day, our dedicated team takes your adventure to the next level.

- ▶ **Travel Director** | Throughout your journey, you will be in the care of a seasoned AHI travel professional who will manage all the logistics, allowing you to relax and simply soak up the ambience. Resourceful, knowledgeable and attentive, your Travel Director helps to ensure you enjoy an unforgettable travel experience.
- ▶ **Expert Guides** | Who better to show you around than the people who live there? We've specially selected informed and enthusiastic local professional guides who understand the needs of our educated and curious travelers. Warm and genuine, they're ready to share their passion for their country with you.
- ▶ **Lecturers** | Coming from all walks of life, our entertaining local lecturers open your eyes to history and current events. The breadth of their knowledge deepens your appreciation for the region and its heritage.



HOTEL DE LONDRES Y DE INGLATERRA | SAN SEBASTIÁN



Our travel experts have carefully selected this first-class property for its prime location. It is ideally located for exploring the region's renowned landmarks, while providing opportunities to immerse yourself in local life. Of utmost importance is the quality of the services, amenities and accommodations, allowing you to enjoy your stay fully.

Reserve your Basque Country trip today!

Trip #: 9-23757W

Send to The Association of Former Students
Attn: Traveling Aggies
505 George Bush Drive
College Station, TX 77840-2918
Phone: 979-845-7514 Fax: 979-845-9263
Toll Free: 800-633-7514



Full Legal Name (exactly as it appears on your passport)

Guest 1 _____
Title First Middle Last Date of Birth

Email: _____

Guest 2 _____
Title First Middle Last Date of Birth

Email: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Home: (_____) _____ Cell: (_____) _____

Sharing room with _____ (Form sent separately)

Name(s) you would like on your name badge(s):

(1) _____ Class Year

(2) _____ Class Year

Three-Night Pre-Trip Extension in Madrid, Spain.

Please make _____ reservations for me (us) on the Elective Pre-Trip Extension in Madrid.

I/we authorize you to make my/our reservations as follows:

Land Program and AHI FlexAir

I/we reserve the Land Program and request the round-trip AHI FlexAir to Bilbao, Spain, to depart from:

Departure City

- Please contact me regarding air options.
- Please send me information on upgrading my flights.
- I/we will make my/our own air arrangements and transfers.

Single Accommodations

- I prefer single accommodations at an additional \$995 (limited availability).
- I request assistance in securing a roommate but will accept a single, if one is available at this time, and pay the single supplement. Should a roommate be found, I understand the supplement will no longer apply.

Reservations are subject to availability and are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations are to be paid in full by **April 2, 2018** (75 days prior to departure). Reservations received after this date must be accompanied by payment in full. Final payment may be made by personal check, MasterCard, Visa, Discover or Amex. Make checks payable to AHI Travel.

AHI Travel has assumed all costs for the printing and distribution of this promotion. This program is exclusively arranged by AHI Travel, 8550 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60631. No funds donated to The Association of Former Students or to Texas A&M University have been used in the production or mailing of this travel brochure; all such costs are covered by the tour supplier.

Enclosed is a deposit of _____ (\$600/person required) to reserve _____ place(s).

- Accept my check made payable to **AHI Travel**.
- Charge my: MasterCard Visa Discover Amex

Card # _____

Expires _____ / _____

(Signature as it appears on credit card)

Please note: Any payment to AHI Travel constitutes your acceptance of the terms and conditions set out herein, including but not limited to the cancellation terms.

PROGRAM DATES

Air Program dates: June 16-24, 2018

Land Program dates: June 17-24, 2018

LAND PROGRAM

Full Price	Special Savings	Special Price*
\$3,345	\$250	\$3,095

*Special Price valid if booked by the date found on the address panel.

VAT is an additional \$295 per person.

All prices quoted are per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated).

Single accommodations are an additional \$995 (limited availability).

Let us arrange your flights!

✦ **AHI FlexAir** | Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:

- ▶ **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- ▶ arrival and departure **transfers** on most flights
- ▶ **flexibility** to change or cancel your reservations without penalty up to 60 days before departure on most flights
- ▶ **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays
- ▶ flight insurance worth up to \$250,000, subject to policy terms

Travel stress-free with AHI FlexAir.



Retiro Park



ELECTIVE | PRE-TRIP EXTENSION IN MADRID

Get to know Madrid, Spain's vibrant capital!

Includes three nights at the Hotel Wellington; Spanish art lecture; guided city tour; three breakfasts; one lunch; train to San Sebastián; train station/San Sebastián transfers; guide, driver and meal gratuities; an AHI Hospitality Desk; and all taxes and service charges.

Price: \$1,195 per person, double occupancy; \$1,495 single occupancy

NOT INCLUDED-Fees for passports and, if applicable, visas, entry/departure fees; personal gratuities; laundry and dry cleaning; excursions, wines, liquors, mineral waters and meals not mentioned in this brochure under included features; travel insurance; all items of a strictly personal nature.

MOBILITY AND FITNESS TO TRAVEL-The right is retained to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of this trip who, in the opinion of AHI Travel is unfit for travel or whose physical or mental condition may constitute a danger to themselves or to others on the trip, subject only to the requirement that the portion of the total amount paid which corresponds to the unused services and accommodations be refunded. Passengers requiring special assistance, including without limitation those who permanently or periodically use a wheelchair, must be accompanied by someone who is fit and able to assist them, and who will be totally responsible for providing all required assistance.

AIR TRANSPORTATION-The price of air transportation offered by AHI Travel is based on Advance Purchase Excursion fares. After tickets are issued, penalties up to 100% of the ticket price may be levied. If connecting flights are requested, special promotional fares may be used, in which case penalties of as much as 100% may be assessed by the airlines if reservations are changed or canceled after ticketing. After departure, if the reservations are changed, you will be charged the higher, all year Economy class fare.

VARIATIONS TO THE GROUP ITINERARY MUST BE REQUESTED NO LATER THAN 60 DAYS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE. Passengers who choose to make their own airline reservations independently will be wholly responsible for arrival and departure transfers, and any airline fees or penalties incurred as a result of program cancellation and/or change in travel dates, or airline schedule(s).

BAGGAGE-Baggage restrictions vary according to the airline policy and the class of service flown. Details will be provided with your pre-departure information. Baggage allowances are subject to change by the carrier without notice. Excess baggage charges for additional or oversized/overweight pieces are expensive and not included in your trip price; plan your wardrobe accordingly. Transport of baggage and personal effects is at the owner's risk throughout the travel program.

AUTHORITY TO USE IMAGES AND AUDIO RECORDINGS-On occasion, AHI Travel obtains, from its staff, or from trip participants, photographic or video images of passengers and trip activities. By participating in this travel program, you authorize AHI Travel, without providing compensation to you, or obtaining additional approvals from you, to include photographic and video recordings of you, as well as voice recordings included with any videos, in AHI Travel's sales, marketing, advertising, publicity and/or training activities.

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CANCELLATION-All cancellations for any reason will be subject to a \$250 per person administrative fee. You may choose, at the time of cancellation, to apply the withheld administrative fee to a future AHI Travel program that will operate in the current calendar year or year following. Cancellation from 120 days to 76 days prior to departure will result in forfeiture of 10% of the entire cost of the trip per person; 75-30 days, 50% of the trip cost per person; cancellation from 29 days up to the time of departure will result in 100% forfeiture of the entire cost of the trip. **TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE IS AVAILABLE. AN APPLICATION WILL BE SENT AFTER YOU RESERVE.** All cancellations must be submitted in writing to AHI Travel. **CANCELLATION OF TRIP OPTIONS**-Purchases of optional excursions, trip extensions and additional hotel nights become fully non-refundable 45 days prior to departure. Air transportation and private transfer purchases are subject only to penalties assessed by the airlines and transfer suppliers.

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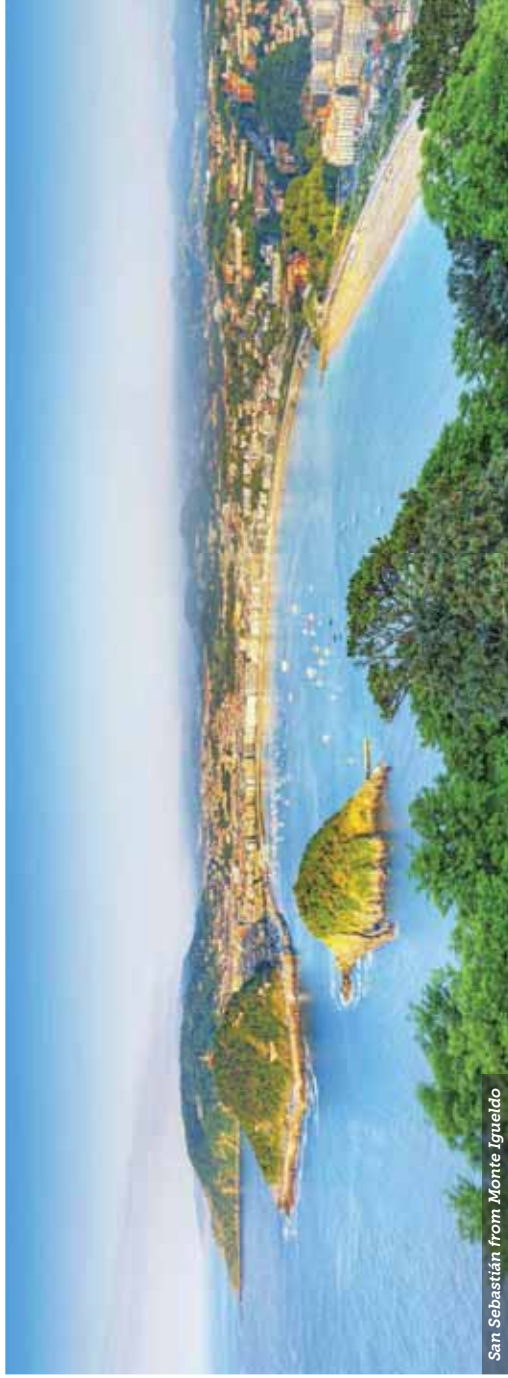
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San Sebastián from Monte Igueldo

Discover the culture, food and wine of beautiful Basque Country!

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With AHI you can rely on:

- Experienced Travel Directors who attend to every detail of your journey.
- An exceptional travel value.
- Unique access to local sites.
- Flexibility and customization.
- Safety and security.



Please call or refer to our website for the most current program information, discounts and pricing.

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