

  
**BASQUE**  
 experiences



**Basque Experiences Itinerary – September 2015**

**Day by Day Itinerary: WineNot Boutique, Spain-September2015**

Date	Outline Itinerary	Accommodation
Sep 20	Arrive in Bilbao, private transport to Hotel, day in Bilbao with Basque lunch and private Guggenheim tour – L	Zenit Bilbao
Sep 21	Visit the Underwater Wine Cellar, private transport to Rioja Alavesa, Welcome dinner in the superb Hotel restaurant. B-L-D	Hotel Viura
Sep 22	Private guided Mediaeval village visits, two spectacular Rioja winery tastings. B	Hotel Viura
Sep 23	Visits to ‘Bodega Abadia de la Oliva’ and a fantastic winery with a typical lunch and wine tasting. Private transport to Priorat region and BBQ in the evening. B – L - D	Mas dels Frares
Sep 24	Visits to two pioneering Priorat Wineries, then free time at the hotel with the evening in nearby village B	Mas dels Frares
Sep 25	Private guided tour of Siurana and then private transport to the city of Barcelona. Walking tour of the Gothic Barrio with a private guide. B	Zenit Borrell
Sep 26	Visit the excellent food market with our chef and partake in Spanish cooking class with lunch and wine. Afternoon to visit sights of Barcelona, farewell dinner. B-L-D	Zenit Borrell
Sep 27	Private transport to Barcelona Airport and return. B	

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner



## Detailed Itinerary: WineNot Boutique, Spain-September 2015

### Sept 20 – Bilbao

Your tour of Northern Spain's bodegas and culture begins in the city of Bilbao, principal city of the Basque Region in the north of Spain. Arriving around noon, our private transport will take us to a four star hotel in the city, where after checking in and freshening up, we will go for our first experience of the Basque Country and a welcome lunch with wine in a typical Bilbao restaurant. Traditionally Basque in style, we will be close to the hotel should a siesta be required afterwards!

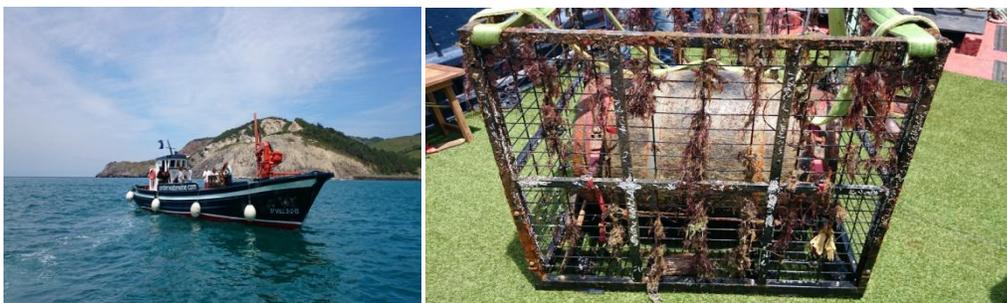
This formerly polluted, industrial and conflictive city has shed its rusty coating and transformed itself into a shiny, new, modern, dynamic metropolis. Busy, dense, and diverse, the city is now home to the world-famous Guggenheim Bilbao, whose collection we will visit in the late afternoon. A private guide will introduce the history and some of the permanent and temporary exhibits.



A free evening to explore the museum some more or to take a stroll around the city. Your accommodation is in a great modern hotel in Bilbao, the 4\* Zenit Bilbao. Central and within walking distance of everything in the city. [Zenit Bilbao](#) One night with breakfast.

### Sept 21 – Basque Coast and La Rioja

Breakfast on the private terrace of the Zenit Hotel. We check out and head to the sleepy fishing and beach village of Plentzia on the coast in our private transport. The village however hides a secret... That of the world's first underwater Wine Cellar. Inspired by bottles of wine salvaged from ship-wrecks, scientists and oenologists have combined to create a project to study both the regeneration of a quite beautiful bay, once decimated by overfishing, and that of the storage and maturing process of wine under the sea.



We will learn first-hand from these pioneers, the progress of this ongoing project before hopping aboard a restored fishing boat, for our private tour to sail out into the bay to sample their totally unique wines on board, before having a meal with wine in a fantastic Basque restaurant on the harbour-side in a converted old mansion. Dishes, made from locally sourced produce could include; freshly prepared salads, red beans, paella, locally-caught grilled fish, lamb chops, squid, or steak.

Once back on terra firma after lunch, we head back to our private transport and drive back inland and south-east for approximately two hours to the world famous 'La Rioja', one of the most emblematic wine producing regions in Europe. Here we will check in at the Hotel Viura in Villabuena de Alava, a mediaeval village surrounded by rolling countryside and vineyards. Some time to rest in this fantastic hotel before we visit the hotel's superb Rioja restaurant for our welcome dinner with Rioja wines.



The Viura Hotel, named after an autochthonous grape variety, provides modern four star luxury in a unique setting in Ezkuernaga/Villanueva de Alava. Two nights, with breakfast, in this remarkable modern hotel with use of the village swimming pool. [www.hotelviura.com](http://www.hotelviura.com)

## Sept 22 – La Rioja

Breakfast in the hotel before we explore the Rioja Alavesa wine producing region. La Rioja, known the world-over as the most famous Spanish wine producing region has been inhabited since prehistoric times, and remains from Roman, Visigoth, Arab and Mediaeval civilisations are very present. Accompanied by our own private, local guide we will visit the impressive village of San Vicente de la Sonsierra, with its imposing castle before we learn and hear about the history of Nuestra Señora de la Piscina.



This area, and the micro climate created as a consequence of the mountains to the south and north, produces excellent Rioja, and our visit to Remelluri will place the whole centuries-old, wine-making process into context at this most classic of ‘Rioja Alavesa’ producers. Set amongst beautiful rolling hills, this vineyard, one of the highest in La Rioja at c 2,400 feet produces some of the most widely acclaimed Rioja due in part to the altitude that allows a slower and later ripening of the grape. This family-run winery can trace its history back to the 14th century when monks founded a monastery-farm on the southern slopes of the Cantabrian Mountain range, and amongst the vines one can observe a 10th century necropolis, and a wine reservoir, hand-cut out of the rock. For lunch we will visit a typical Riojan family-run restaurant situated in a former bodega in the wide open Rioja Valley. Lunch and wines not included.

After lunch our private transport will take us the short distance to the capital of La Rioja Alta, the town of Haro, where we will undertake a tour and tasting at one of the oldest wineries in La Rioja, the family run ‘Lopez de Heredia’ where construction of the winery started in 1877. This is one of the cornerstone wineries of La Rioja, a real classic, and one of the most traditional, indeed they have only bottled 14 Gran Reservas since inception. The evening will see us visit the famous walled town of Laguardia where you will have a free evening to wander around the atmospheric streets.

## Sept 23 – Navarra, Aragon and Priorat

Breakfast and check-out of the hotel before we head further inland to Navarra and the historic Monasterio de la Oliva and its winery. The Abbey was founded by Cistercian monks who arrived from Burgundy in the year 1134 and who until this day are still producing wines, some of them award-winning such as the 'Abadia de la Oliva Cosecha Magno 2009' and the 'Abadia de la Oliva Tempranillo 2011' at the Catavinum World Wine and Spirits Competition 2013. The Gothic bodega still remains but production now takes place in more modern surroundings but it is the only monastery that still makes wines from grapes grown on its own vines, as well as producing some excellent Olive Oils.



Further south and we head to the Borja, wine producing region. Our tour here takes us to a curious bodega, built over time with a myriad of tunnels and caves used to store their wines. The eccentric owner will explain their philosophy and processes before sitting down with us for lunch, all, where we will get to taste several of the wines they produce alongside some fantastic home-cooked traditional food. The evening will see us drive to the Priorat region of Catalunya in north-eastern Spain where we will check in to our accommodation at the atmospheric Hotel Mas dels Frares, the converted former quarters of the Cistercian monks who founded the monastery in the 15th Century.



Dinner will be taken in form of a BBQ with wine at the hotel around the pool. Two nights in the historic and private [Hotel Mas dels Frares](#) Our rooms are the former monks' accommodation, a courtyard formation that now surrounds a swimming pool.

## Sept 24 – Priorat

Start the day surrounded by the hotels's vineyards and the fantastic views across the mountains and plains of Aragon. Today will see us visit two excellent Priorat Bodegas. Both bodegas have proceeded to carry on the tradition of wine making in this region, a difficult and intensive process due in no small part to the amazing topography. However new methods and technologies introduced in the last 20 years have enabled pioneering bodegas to recuperate and re-establish Priorat as a leading wine across the world. Lunch will be offered in the second bodega before they introduce us to their facilities and wines. Returning to our hotel for the late afternoon, you will have free time, with the swimming pool sure to be a popular option, but guests will also have the opportunity to stroll in the nearby hills. During the evening we will visit Falset, one of the principal villages in the Priorat D.O. region where you will be able to wander the streets, sample the atmosphere and local dishes. Private transport back to the hotel once we have finished.



## Sept 25 – Priorat and Barcelona

Breakfast in the hotel before checking out and driving east towards the capital of Mediterranean Spain, the city of Barcelona. On the way, mid morning we will stop at the tiny village of Siurana, a spectacular village located on the edge of a cliff, with breath-taking views over the Siurana reservoir and the Prades mountains. Conquered and inhabited by the Arabs in the early middle ages, the village was the scene of the legend of 'The Leap of the Arab Queen', where the village chief's daughter, Abdelazia, is said to have leapt, on horseback, over the edge of the ravine to escape the clutches of the Christian troops.

Popular today with rock climbers and photographers, our own private guide will explain to us the history and legends of this historically important region. After the visit we will have a local-style lunch in the village, not included, before making our way to the city of Barcelona. Arriving in the afternoon, and after checking in, we will be able to offer you a private, locally-guided 2 hour walking tour of the Gothic Barrio, and after you will have a free evening.

Two nights with breakfast in the centrally located [Zenit Borrell](#) This modern 4\* hotel is perfectly located for our visits to the market and the Barri Gotic.



## Sept 26 – Barcelona

Breakfast in the hotel, before we embark on our own, private 4 hour gastronomic experience. Meeting a fully-qualified, experienced, professional, bi-lingual chef at the hotel, we will visit Barcelona's world famous food market, La Boquería. Accompanying the chef in the market and listening to their explanations of the traditions, processes and culinary spectrum of this part of Spain is sure to awaken your senses. We will help to purchase the best of the local seasonal produce under the guidance of our chef. From here we will visit their kitchen for a fully hands-on, fun and social culinary experience.

Preparing the most classic of Spanish dishes, Paella, we will also learn to create three other courses- all dependant on the market produce of course. Wine will be included in our meal and during the preparation and will consist of local Spanish (Catalan) wines for us to sample. Afternoon free to visit Gaudi's (Barcelona's most famous architect) magnificent Sagrada Familia Cathedral, his Parc Guell, the Barcelona beach, the Picasso Museum, the Dali Museum, the Gothic Quarter. This evening will see us have our Farewell dinner with wine in a great Catalan restaurant with wines from Barcelona and Priorat.



## Sept 27 - Barcelona

Breakfast in the hotel before checking out and being driven to Barcelona airport for your flights back to the U.S. should you be flying back.

**Price for the trip: \$3,195 per person (double occupancy) for single occupancy, add \$495.**

**Price per person based on group of 12:  
2070€ (double occupancy), 2030€ (triple occupancy), for single occupancy add 395€**



**Includes:**

- Public liability insurance.
- Private, first class transport in a single vehicle with separate chauffer.
- Entry to Guggenheim and all wineries.
- 4 Lunches with wine in; Bilbao, Underwater Bodega, Campo de Borja, and during the Cooking Course in Barcelona.
- 3 Dinners with wine in; La Rioja, Priorat, and our farewell dinner in Barcelona.
- Guided visits to San Vicente de la Sonsierra and Nuestra Señora de la Piscina, Siurana, and the Barri Gotic in Barcelona.
- Cooking course.
- Accommodation at 4-star Hotel Zenit with breakfast included.
- Accommodation at 4-star Hotel Viura with breakfast included.
- Accommodation in the guest rooms of the former Cistercian Monks quarters at Mas dels Frares with breakfast included.
- Accommodation at 4-star Hotel Zenit Borrell with breakfast included.
- Bilingual guide at all times.

**Does not include:**

- Any purchases.
- Flights.
- Private Travel insurance (highly recommended)
- Lunches, dinners, meals or snacks not specifically mentioned above.

**Booking Terms and Conditions:**

- Bookings will be confirmed when we have received confirmation of payment of 10% of the services purchased.  
Last date to be 1 March 2015
- A further 40% to be received a minimum of 3 months before the starting date of the tour. (June 20 2015)
- The remaining 50% to be received a minimum of one calendar month before commencement of the tour. (August 20 2015)

**Cancellation Policy:**

- Cancellation 60 days before commencement of services purchased will result in a 100% refund of monies paid.
- Cancellation between 59 days and one calendar month before commencement of services purchased will result in a 50% refund of monies paid.
- Cancellation less than one calendar month before commencement of services purchased will result in a 0% refund.