

Loyola Valley

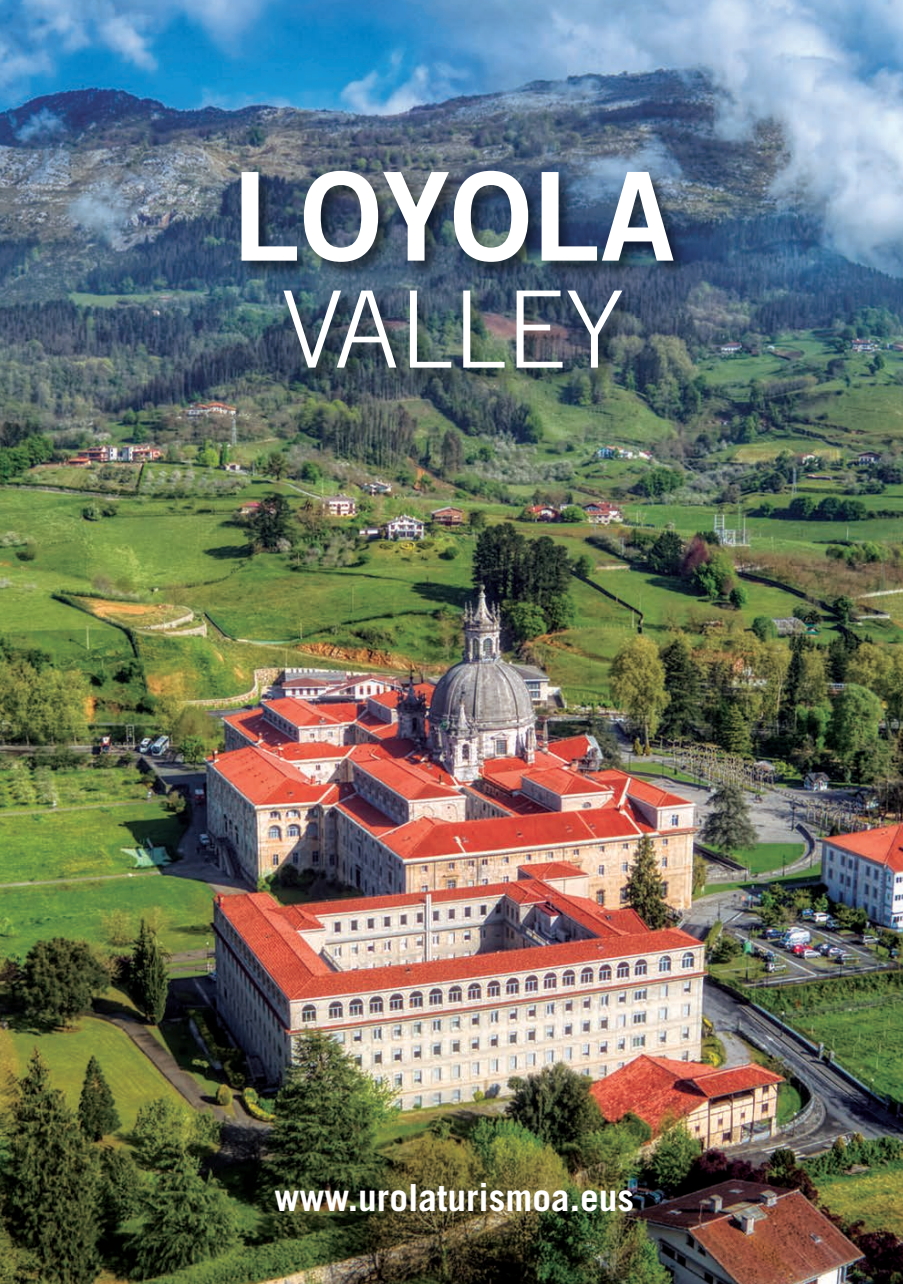
Loyola influences the entire valley through the figure of Saint Ignatius, which is why we have called this beautiful enclave Valle de Loyola (Loyola Valley). It is sheltered by the Izarraitz massif and crossed by the Urola river, connecting the municipalities of Azkoitia and Azpeitia.

We invite you to see, feel and live the places that the founder of the Society of Jesus knew as his native land.

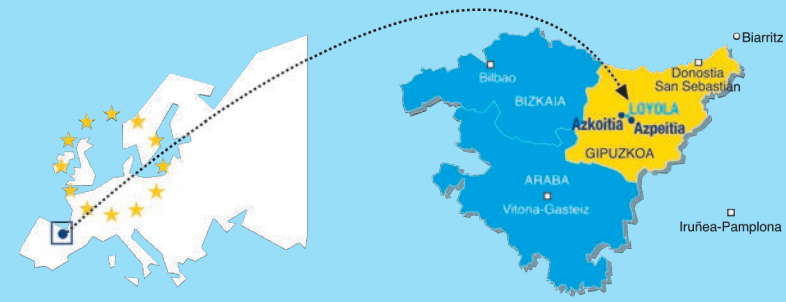


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LOYOLA VALLEY



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BASILICA AND SCHOOL

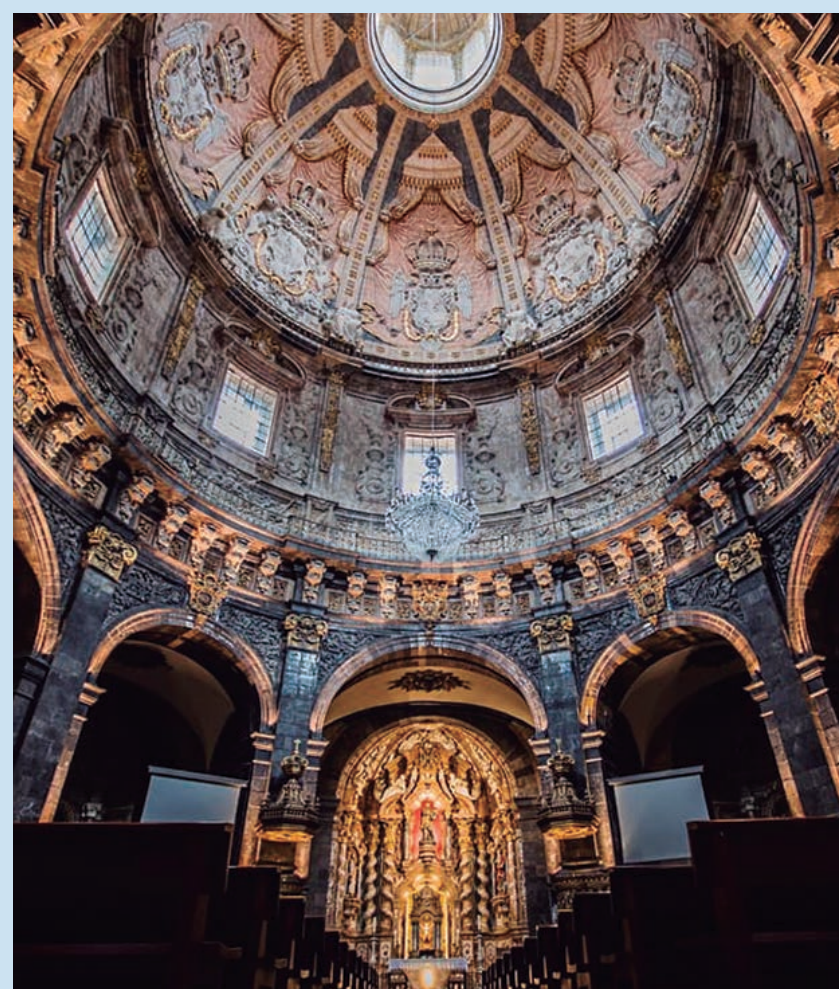
TOP 1

In 1681, Mariana of Austria, the Spanish Queen Mother, expressed her desire to establish a school and basilica of the Society of Jesus next to the house where the founder was born. She suggested this to the owners, the Counts of Oropesa, who gave the property to the Queen who in turn gave it to the Jesuits. The centrepiece of the school was to be the spectacular basilica, crowned by the Roman-style dome. It was also decided that one of the courtyards would be used to house, as a shrine, what is known as the birth house.

Once they had taken possession of the Loyola family's property, the search began for a suitable architect to produce the new work. The person chosen to design the magnificent work was the Carlo Fontana (1638-1714), from Rome, a loyal disciple of Bernini. Father Oliva, general of the Jesuits, had been confessor to Bernini (who died 1680) and did not hesitate to choose his disciple.

Several Italian churches provided inspiration for the architect, including those built by Carlo Rainaldi in the mid-17th century and that designed by Fontana himself in the Flavian Amphitheatre (Colosseum) but that was never constructed.

A group of Jesuits settled in the birth house in 1682 and in 1688 the subgrade and foundation work began, led by the master stonemason Martín de Zaldua. The Italian influence stands out above all in the spectacular dome, made with stone from the Izarraitz quarries and completed in 1735 under the direction of Ignacio de Ibero.



The portico is inspired by the style of the Churriguera brothers, responsible, among other works, for the Plaza Mayor in Salamanca. With its oval shape, it breaks the straightness of both façades. It is crowned by the coat of arms of Felipe V, carved out of Carrara marble. Following its completion, the Basilica was consecrated in 1738.

The final grand element of the church is its magnificent main altarpiece, a masterpiece by Ignacio de Ibero. It was built in the 1750s and a particular highlight is its Solomonic columns and the decoration of marble edges and agates using inlay techniques. This technique, never before seen in Loyola, was possible thanks to the training undergone by Ibero and his disciples in Zaragoza.

It was a titanic work, which employed local workers along with workers from Navarre and Valencia. The altarpiece depicts the two stages of Saint Ignatius' life: his youth in the military and his later religious years. That is why it contains arms, flags and battlements, elements of a defensive type more than religious symbols.

The statue of the saint was placed on the altarpiece in 1758. Made from silver and decorated with agates, it was donated by the Royal Guipuzcoan Company of Caracas and was valued at 4,000 pesos. Following the completion of the altarpiece, Ibero designed the minor altarpieces and pulpits of gold. He passed away in Loyola in 1766.

Shortly afterwards, the Jesuits were expelled and after various twists and turns, the basilica and school were completed in 1889.

CHAPEL AND HOSPITAL OF LA MAGDALENA



TOP 3

Outside the walls of the town of Azpeitia, on the road leading to the coast through Zestoa, are the chapel and the hospital of Santa María Magdalena. Master Ignatius of Loyola arrived here from Paris, where he was studying at Sorbonne University in 1535. His stay lasted three months. History tells us that he came to improve his health, as the doctors had advised him to take in the air back in his homeland, but his spiritual and human activity were far from ordinary. Here he made his great motto in life, "In all things, to love and to serve", a reality. It would be his last stay in his Basque land, and he left an indelible mark on it.

The medieval hospital was a poor building on just one floor. The ground floor took in the most contagious patients suffering from diseases such as leprosy. Their only contact with the outside world was through a window where they begged for handouts and follo-



wed the prayers in the chapel opposite. Its first floor was reserved for other patients, pilgrims and passers-by, and this was where Ignatius stayed. Despite his family's insistence that he stay in their house or at least accept a decent bed, he preferred to use the same beds as the poorest people.

During his stay at the hospital, he ended up preaching outside the adjoining chapel of Magdalena due to the fame of his spiritual message and the number of devotees he attracted. He also attended the catechisms and rogation days held at the different chapels around the town. This was the way in which Ignatius of Loyola demonstrated his conversion to his countrymen. He was close to those most in need, he valued peace among neighbours and, above all, he laid the foundations for what would be the life and work of the future Society of Jesus: "For the Greater Glory of God" (Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam).

BIRTH HOUSE

TOP 2

This is the house where Iñigo López de Loyola, better known as Saint Ignatius, was born. He was born here in 1491 and was the youngest of a large family formed by Beltrán de Oñaz Loyola and Marina de Licona Balda. Reliable documents tell us that the Loyola family goes back to at least the year 1347. The lineage belonged to the group of Elders or provincial nobles, and its financial power is visible in the will left by Saint Ignatius' great-great-grandfather in 1405. In it, he speaks of the "strong house of Loyola", which had been built or at least restored by him, the patronage of the monastery or parish church of San Sebastián de Soreasu, a winery, a mill and all the land that came with the ancestral homes of Oñaz and Loyola.

His childhood was spent between these strong walls, until he moved to Arévalo, home to the leading treasurer of Castile, Juan Velázquez de Cuellar. After his stay in Arévalo, the young Iñigo entered the service of the Viceroy of Navarre. In the struggle between Castile and France for control of the Kingdom of Navarre, Loyola was wounded in Pamplona in 1521 when a cannonball damaged both his legs.

Doctors ordered the patient to be transferred to his birth house to recover. During his long convalescence, he reflected on his past life and, influenced by religious readings, he decided to imitate the lives of the saints as much as possible and place himself at the service of God. The place where these reflections and decisions took place is today the world-famous Chapel of the Conversion, located on the third floor of the tower house. Thus, the house brings together two of the main milestones in this universal saint's life: his birth and his conversion.



The current house is the one that Iñigo knew. It has two very different parts: the ground floor of stone and the upper ones of brick. There are reasons for this that date back to the time of Juan Pérez de Loyola, Iñigo's grandfather.

As lord of Loyola, he actively participated in the so-called Wars of the Bands, being punished with exile to Andalusia by Enrique IV in 1456. The tower house was demolished by order of the King, who expressly prohibited its reconstruction in stone.

So, upon Juan Pérez's return from exile, he restored his house in brick, giving it the Mudejar appearance we see today. The same thing happened with the Balda house, the Legazpi Jauregi tower in Zumarraga and the Jauregi house in Zerain (former ancestral home of the Zerain).

We can see it in all its splendour, next to the baroque basilica and surrounded by the old Jesuit school, as the stone relic that saw the birth of the founder of the Society of Jesus.



SAN SEBASTIÁN DE SOREASU

TOP 4

The church in Azpeitia is closely linked to the Loyola lineage. Saint Ignatius was baptised in its baptismal font in 1491 and his ancestors had been patrons of the parish church since 1387. Its origin undoubtedly dates back to before the founding of the town in 1310.

Work to build the current church started at the beginning of the 16th century. It has three naves and is a hall church. The altarpiece that presides over its presbytery was built at the end of the 17th century. Inside, the chapels of La Soledad and San Martín stand out. The first was commissioned in the mid-16th century by Nicolás Sáez de Elola, a native of Azpeitia and conqueror of Peru.

It is Renaissance in its three artistic elements: architecture, painting and sculpture, making it unique in the Basque Country. The recumbent statue of Elola, on the north wall of the chapel, represents the battle of Cajamarca between the Incas and Spanish. The south wall contains a representation of the vision of the prophet Ezequiel and a variation of the drawing "The Dream of Human Life" by Michelangelo.

It is also worth highlighting the chapel of San Martín, founded at the beginning of the 16th century by Martín Zurbano, Bishop of Tuy.

One of the main features of the current church is undoubtedly its portico. It was designed in the 18th century by Ventura Rodríguez and built between 1768 and 1771 by Francisco de Ibero. Its neoclassical inspiration is clear and it is crowned by the statue of Saint Sebastian, patron of the parish.



THE TOWER HOUSE OF BALDA

TOP 5

This represents the most genuine of the medieval towers of the Elders. The family motto, "Antes Balda que Azcoitia" (Balda before Azcoitia) shows its partisan nature very well. The power of the lords is more important than the power of the towns.

The current building is a Gothic tower, whose elements take us back to at least the 15th century. It was knocked down by order of Enrique IV in 1456, and its owner, Ladrón de Balda, was exiled to Andalusia for his involvement in the so-called war of the bands and the threat to the towns.

In 1460, the property was bought from the Balda family by Martín de Licona and his wife, who rebuilt it in brick following the royal order. These new lords of Balda, of Biscayan origin, would go on to be the parents of Marina, mother of the future Saint Ignatius of Loyola.

Ownership of the house was followed by the acquisition of other rights such as the patronage of the Monastery of Santa María de Balda. Its Romanesque remains are preserved at the entrance to the cemetery where this temple once stood before the opening of the current parish church in 1510.

The house of Balda, which can be accessed by its original stone stairs, which have become broken over time, is built on higher ground, presiding over a large, monumental square where other interesting buildings and a sculpture by the fantastic artist Jorge Oteiza, a native of Azkoitia, can be found. The coat of arms, mulioned windows, Gothic entrance arch and other elements have been preserved on the façade of the house.



On the ground floor is a chapel dedicated to Saint Ignatius of Loyola, built one hundred years ago to mark the celebrations of the 4th Centenary of his Conversion, and growing in front of it is the venerated Tree of Gernika.

TOP 6

STA. M^a LA REAL AND THE TOWER HOUSE OF IDIAQUEZ



The tower house of Idiaquez is the palace of the Dukes of Granada de Ega, owners of the Loyola estate since 1741. This family is descended from Martín de Loyola, Saint Ignatius' older brother.

The tower house, with its characteristic façade crowned with neo-Gothic battlements, contains the arms of Idiaquez and Loyola. Its presence is imposing because it is a black house located right next to the gate of the wall where Saint Ignatius' grandfather

famously challenged the towns in 1456.

Today, in his memory, stands a small stone landmark that recalls the date that marked the end of the power of the lords and the start of the Modern Age.

Next to this you can also see the symbolic Neoclassical "las barricadas" fountain from 1831, and in the area, you can see the chapel of San Martín de Iraurgi, where Azkoitia was founded in 1324.

Opposite is the magnificent temple of Santa María la Real, a jewel

among Basque Gothic buildings, built on the site of the old San Sebastián hospital from the year 1510. It is a hall church, formed by three naves of the same height, with plasterwork vaults from the early 17th century, supported by eight Doric columns. It has two artistic façades, one Baroque with a colonnade and the other Gothic. Important architects participated in building this parish church, including some from the Court such as Juan Gómez de Mora and Jerónimo de Soto.



Its interior houses the chapels of three families linked to the ancestral home of Loyola: that of Floreaga, the secretary and treasury of Carlos V Pedro de Zuazola, that of the treasurer of the Casa de Contratación (House of Trade) in Seville, Juan López de Recalde, with a magnificent 16th-century polyptych, and that of the Idiaquez family with the saints of the Society of Jesus. The presbytery is presided over by a baroque altarpiece designed by the Jesuit Francisco Bautista, a designer from the Imperial College of Madrid. Its Romantic organ, built by the French organ builder Cavallé-Coll, is internationally famous.

OTHER VISITS



- STA. M^a DE OLATZ: This is a beautiful chapel close to Loyola's house that dates back to the beginning of the 14th century. Inside, the Gothic sculpture of the Virgin of Olatz, patron of Azpeitia, to whom Saint Ignatius was very devoted, is worshipped.



- EGIBAR: This is a farmhouse close to Loyola, where Iñigo de Loyola's wet nurse, María de Garín, lived.



- STA. LUCÍA DE ELOSIAGA: Chapel formerly dedicated to Santa M^a, where Saint Ignatius preached in 1535. According to the chronicles, he climbed a plum tree to preach. Master Iñigo de Loyola, recently returned from Paris, achieved great fame among his neighbours.



- TOWER HOUSE OF ENPARAN: This dates back to the beginning of the 14th century. Related to and allied with the Loyola family, like other partisan houses, it was demolished by royal mandate in 1456. It was rebuilt around 1535 in a more palatial style.



- PALACE OF FLOREAGA: This unique Mudejar-style building was built from 1515 by the Secretary and General Treasurer of Carlos V.

Pedro de Malpaso was the architect involved in its construction and he also participated in building the defences of Pamplona, where Iñigo de Loyola was wounded in 1521. His descendants were lords of Loyola and Floreaga in the 17th century.



- PALACE OF INSAUSTI: This beautiful baroque palace, in a rationalist style to the French taste, is the birth house of Xabier Muniñe Idiaquez, Count of Peñafloreda (1729-1785).

It is linked by family to the Loyola, whose memory is preserved in its adjoining chapel. The Royal Basque Society of Friends of the Country was founded in this house which is still its headquarters today.

The so-called "Caballeritos de Azkoitia" made the firm decision to innovate in science, the arts and the union between the Basque people, safeguarding their land and their language, Euskera.