

ALAVESE PLAINS

DISCOVER YOUR
WILD SIDE



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EUSKADI
BASQUE COUNTRY



ARABAKO LAUTADAKO
KUADRILLA
DE LA
LLANADA ALAVESA



lautur
lautadako turismoa

PAINTED CHURCHES OF THE ALAVESE PLAINS

GAZEO / ALAITZA / AÑUA / ARBULU

HISTORICAL
TERRITORY



ALAVESE
PLAINS

GAZEO

behind it.

The geographic location of the Alavesse Plains made it a favoured area of transit for merchants and pilgrims. Surrounded by high mountains, but with excellent accessibility, at the height of the middle ages it became a rich and prosperous area, which has left an interesting heritage full of history

ALAITZA



This small Romanesque church dedicated to San Martín de Tours has a secret hidden inside; the largest collection of Gothic mural painting in the entire Basque Coun-

On the outside of this church, there are two unusual Romanesque doors, which also have remains of polychrome. And inside, tens of enigmatic red figures on a white background wrap around the apse making a visit here a unique experience.

AÑUA



The outside of this church displays one of the most elaborate apses in the entire Alavesse plains. On the inside, there are paintings from medieval times accompanied by beautiful works from the renaissance on the vaults built in different phases.

ARBULU



One of the best examples for understanding how churches in Alava were decorated, with medieval, renaissance and baroque polychrome, can be found in this church.

suggestions.

The Estibailiz sanctuary - a Basque Romanesque jewel - can be found 10 km from Vitoria-Gasteiz. The compound is made up of the Romanesque church, the "Romanesque in Alava" interpretation centre, the monastery and the old Vasco-Navarro railway stop.

Distance: 26km

To **GAZEO** from Vitoria-Gasteiz: take the A-1 road up to 374 exit (Salvatierra-Agu-

rain/Gazeo).

Distance: 4 km.

To **ALAITZA** from Gazeo: continue through A-411 road for 3km and then take de

A-3110 for 400m.

Distance: 15 km.

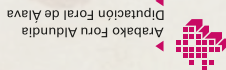
To **AÑUA** from Vitoria-Gasteiz: take the N-104 road. Once you pass Ilarretza, take the A-3110. Before arriving at Alegria, turn to the right and continue through the A-4121 in the direction of

Gazeta..

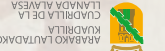
Distance: 14km

To **ARBULU** from Vitoria-Gasteiz: take the A1 road and pass Lubiano. Then, before you reach Ventas del Pato, take the 364 exit from E5/A1 and continue through N-104 up to Arbulu..

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Arabako Foru Aldundia
Diputación Foral de Alava



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GAZEO

CHURCH OF SAN MARTÍN
DE TOURS IN GAZEO



From the exterior, the semi-circular apse gives away its Romanesque origins. The paintings displayed inside, however, are from the Gothic period. This spectacular group was discovered in 1967, hidden behind the retable. After successive stages of restoration, these images appeared that show the journey of the soul into the afterlife according to 14th century beliefs.



In the centre of the composition you can see the Throne of Mercy, made up of the Father, the crucified Son and the Holy Ghost trinity figures in the shape of a dove. It is surrounded by an array of angelical choirs, virgins and saints in perpetual adoration. The image of the crucifixion and the weighing of souls by Archangel Michael are represented in the lower strip.



The mouth of hell with sinners going in appears on one of the sides. In summary, we are confronted with a very high quality group of paintings that is also a thorough lesson in medieval religiosity.

ALAITZA

CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION
OF OUR LADY OF ALTAIZA



The church of Alaitza is one of the greatest mysteries that has come down to us from the middle ages. Inside the church there are strange and simple red figures painted around the 12th century showing a complete repertoire of scenes of the daily lives of the medieval nobility with hardly any religious references.



In the central part of the composition we find the siege of a castle involving soldiers on foot and horseback. And occupying the entire vault around it there are processions of ladies, a funeral and other hard to interpret scenes taking place.



The rest of the church also has some peculiarities. There are numerous archaeological remains of palaces and tombs inside that shed light on the private uses the church had and the transformations it underwent during the 15th century.

AÑUA

CHURCH OF THE BIRTH
OF OUR LADY OF AÑUA



This church is noteworthy for its monumental 13th century apse. Midway between Romanesque and Gothic, it's full of arches, oculi, windows and one of the most expressive collections of corbels in Álava. The quality and originality of the workshops involved in its construction have made the sculptural group the most striking one in all the Alaveses plains.



On the inside the windows, packed with medieval decoration, also display original polychrome, while in the vaulting you can see examples of ashlar masonry and red geometric elements. On one of the walls of the apse, a small battle scene has survived that has schematically rendered characters which you may be able to relate to the paintings in Alaitza.

The expansion of the church in the 16th century left some interesting examples of painting of that period. Typical renaissance brushwork can be seen on the vaulting and, on the wall, you can find an interesting mural representing a walled city.

ARBULU

CHURCH OF SAN MARTÍN
OF ARBULU



Nothing from the outside would suggest the painterly treasure the church of Arbulo holds inside. The successive rehabilitations and expansions of the church have made it so that nowadays there is an unbroken line through the history of mural painting from the middle ages to the baroque, going through the renaissance.



A surprising group of mural paintings on the primitive apse of the Romanesque church appeared after the recent removal of the retable in which you can see geometric shapes, animals and two consecration crosses.



On top of the quality of the groups of paintings one could add the masterfulness of the vault keystones of the presbytery. Done in a Gothic style with exceptional sculptural quality, the keystones conserve all their original gilding and polychrome from the 15th century.

HOURS FOR GUIDED TOURS OF THE CHURCHES:

SATURDAY (AND TUESDAY IN JULY AND AUGUST)

- 11:00h
- Church of San Martín de Tours in Gazeo.
- Church of Our Lady of the Assumption in Alaitza.

Continuation, 13:00h

- Church of the Birth of Our Lady of Añua.
- Church of San Martín in Arbulo.

SUNDAY (AND THURSDAY IN JULY AND AUGUST)

- 11:00h
- Church of San Martín de Tours in Gazeo.
- Church of Our Lady of the Assumption in Alaitza.

Continuation, 13:00h

- Guided tour of the walled village of Agurain/Salvatierra.



For more information, group visits and reservations:
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