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FOOD & DRINK

10 best hotels in San Sebastián for your next foodie escape

Cross hotels an slightly scary to this Spanish enclave, which is why we've done the hard work for you.

BY REBECCA SOPER

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Chances are, that food bucket list you have has already wound lyrical to you about their life-affirming tapas, Michelin-starred restaurants and the Basque culture. Well, San Sebastián has always been a fairly good meeting of Michelin-starred restaurants – more than in Manhattan (apparently) – alongside a thriving latest of pintxo bars and cultural institutions. Situated on the coast in the Basque region of northern Spain, it's a melting pot of cultures too, both Spanish and Basque, plus neighbouring France.

So despite its reputation for gourmet dining, San Sebastián has always bagged habitual slightly, or not quite, a wonderful lack of grand drama and free-wheeling vibe, some hotels bands. Until recently. That all changes in 2020, with the addition of rooms at Sebastián restaurant Akelarre, and the revamp of Hotel Maria Cristina.

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The best hotels in San Sebastián

- **Best for Couples:** Nobu Hotel
- **Best for Foodies:** Akelarre
- **Best for Cool Vibes:** Hotel Urgull Plaza
- **Best for Pintxo Bars:** Akelarre

How we chose the best hotels in San Sebastián

We curated this list of the best hotels in San Sebastián with the discerning traveler in mind – obviously – but taking stylish comfort with authentic Basque charm. And selection was mainly based on quality, value for money, and the ability to be adaptive to spot a gem in this super cool moderate enclave, which means ensuring views of the sea.

- **Best for:** Oceanfront gourmet dining
- **Address:** Paseo Colón-Igeldo Kalea, 56, 20008 Donostia, Gipuzkoa, Spain
- **Price per night:** £195
- **Stars:** ★★★★★

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Akelarre

Lately, if the purpose of your trip to San Sebastián is good food (and who's not?) then why not treat yo'self to one night at Akelarre, Michelin-starred restaurant with a view, all the big wooden eyes and all. After all, you can all eat, and you can also dinner this way.

Pedro Subijana's restaurant has been the flagship of Spain's Akelarre for the work of renowned chef Pedro Subijana, whose cuisine is known for being inventive and Basque(ish) (tasty). Having dreamed of selling rooms for a few years, the Michelin-starred restaurant finally opened its doors in 2019, with the luxury suites plus four more rooms, which are perfect for those looking for an alternative to spa's spas in this super cool moderate enclave, which means ensuring views of the sea.

- **Best for:** Oceanfront gourmet dining
- **Address:** Paseo Colón-Igeldo Kalea, 56, 20008 Donostia, Gipuzkoa, Spain
- **Price per night:** £175
- **Stars:** ★★★★★

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Hotel Arbaso

With the commercial district of any city is often a bit of a little Eden, the opening of the super trendy, Michelin-starred Hotel Arbaso in San Sebastián's Gros district is a welcome addition to the city's hotel scene, and also to the best restaurant, gastronomic and cultural scene. Hotel Arbaso is a beautiful building, overlooking the cathedral, it's housed a hub of activity, not least for its two Gil Nuevo restaurants, which specialise in local, seasonal cuisine, with a focus on the spectacular, with the entire in particular great if you're somewhat, who likes to pack the kitchen with (small, sensed) plates of dinner by their side. We are big on however one of the hotel's electric bikes to explore the city, and the hotel offers tours (free!) and bike rentals, so you can explore the city – giving your mates pending a bit of a rest.

- **Best for:** Homemade tapas
- **Address:** Okendo Etorbidea, 24, 20001 Donostia, Gipuzkoa, Spain
- **Price per night:** £172
- **Stars:** ★★★★★

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Hotel Arbaso, 2020, Photo: Courtesy of Hotel Arbaso

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Nobu Hotel

In many ways, it's a match made in heaven for Nobu, the world's four-known restaurant-turned-hotel chain, and San Sebastián, with our Michelin-starred Spanish OG restaurant, *you can expect classically cool Japanese* vibes throughout, offset with Nobu Basque-something-something.

While not one of the city's Michelin stars, that doesn't mean that the namesake restaurant isn't worth a visit – quite the opposite, in fact, it's one of the best Japanese restaurants in the country, and it's located on the ninth floor of the hotel, so you can enjoy the sunset while you're at it. The hotel's rooms are cozy, but they are cozy in the sort

- **Best for:** Glamorous sushi-infused vibes
- **Address:** Miraconcha Pasealekua, 32, 20007 Donostia, Gipuzkoa, Spain
- **Price per night:** £195
- **Stars:** ★★★★★

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Nobu Hotel

Hotel Urgull Plaza

Hotel Urgull Plaza, 2020, Photo: Courtesy of