

ITINERARY

BAYONNE



NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE



VILLES
& PAYS
D'ART &
D'HISTOIRE
DIRE

CONTENTS

5 THE SHAPE OF A CITY

10 THE CITY OVER THE CENTURIES

17 FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER

24 PRACTICES AND IDENTITIES

30 MAP OF THE CITY



1. Bayonne at the confluence of the Adour and the Nive rivers

Map of the course of the River Adour between Dax and Bayonne, [16th century], Bayonne media library



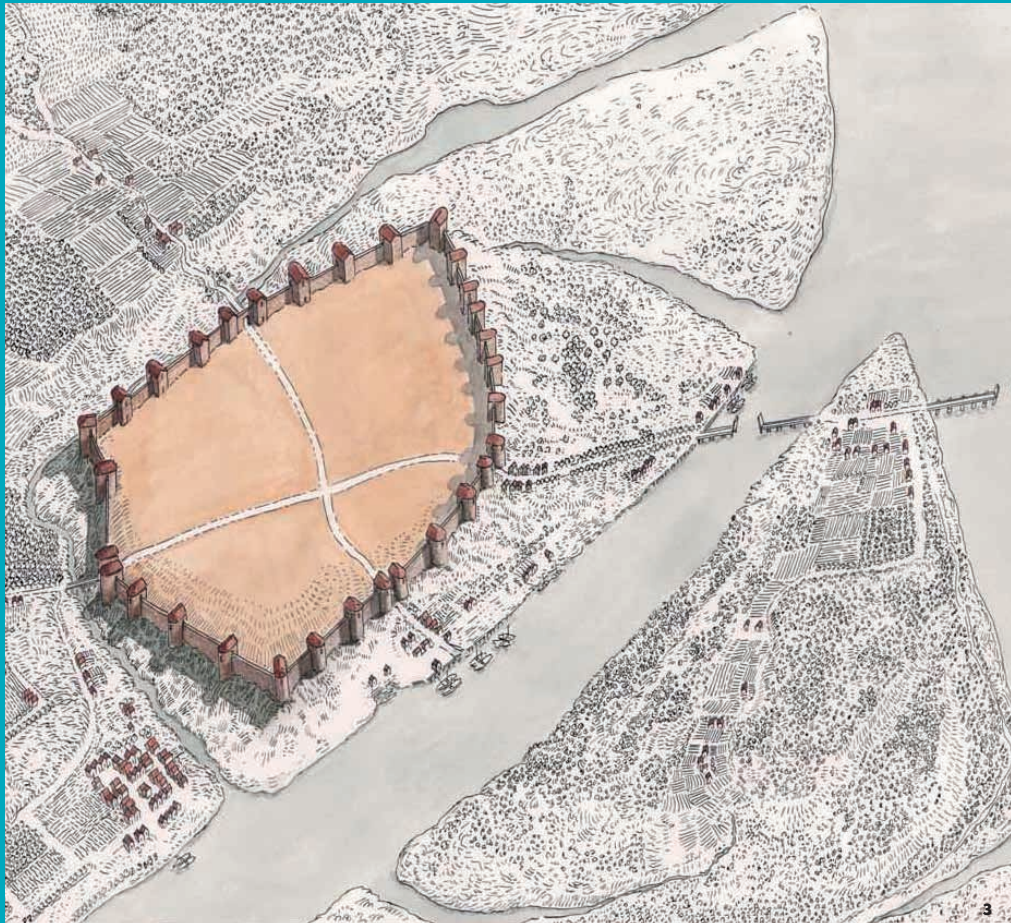
2. Roman tower

On the boulevard of the Lachepaillet rampart



3. Reconstruction of Bayonne in the 4th century

Drawing by Dominique Duplantier



THE SHAPE OF A CITY

THE NATURAL SITE

In the hollow of the Bay of Biscay, Bayonne is located between the plain of Les Landes and the Pyrenees mountain chain. It enjoys a geographical position that places it at the heart of the main communication routes. The city is built at the confluence of the Adour river and its tributary the Nive, at the place where the main valley narrows and makes for an easy crossing of the river; this confluence is surrounded by a group of hills that dominate the lowlands and flood plains. The two water-courses are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide every day. The Adour, a beautiful river that reaches a width of more than 500 metres upstream of the city, arrives in Bayonne after a journey of 320 kilometres from the Bigorre. The Nive meets the Adour in the heart of the city, after having travelled 78 kilometres from the region of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. The confluence of the Adour and the Nive rivers contributed to the development of Bayonne, making it a maritime and river trading port. The footprint of the two water courses is plain to see in the layout of the urban landscape.

THE GENESIS OF A TERRITORY

Archaeological digs carried out since 2010 reveal that humans have occupied the heights of Bayonne for more than 200,000 years. This is the oldest human presence attested to date in all of the French Basque Country. From these heights, the progressive domination of the alluvial plains formed at the confluence of the two rivers, requiring control of the waters, the drainage and infilling of the lands were decisive factors in the birth of the future settlement.

Lapurdum, the ancient kernel that lies at the origin of Bayonne, was first established on the left bank of the confluence of the Adour and the Nive, on a 10-metre-high mound, in the middle of the marshes. In the 4th century AD it was enclosed by a wall, which determined the future direction of the site, as a protected space with all the conditions to later become a citadel.

The 4th-9th centuries, marked by political instability and numerous successive incursions of barbarians from the territories of Aquitaine, constituted a long phase of urban disruption. The complete reordering Bayonne underwent in the 12th and 13th centuries also hampers our understanding of this period. Nevertheless, occupation of the site appears to have been continuous up to the 9th century.



UPPER TOWN, LOWER TOWN AND SUBURB

From the 11th century and throughout the Middle Ages, Bayonne was structured around the religious, military and political authorities, represented in the surrounds of the cathedral by the bishopric, the castle, the town hall and the pillory.

The needs of a growing population and the development of the port – the economic engine of the city – led to the development of new neighbourhoods on the lower, marshy ground on both banks of the Nive: this was the origin of the Bourg Neuf and the Pannecau quarter on the right bank, and of the Port-de-Castet and Port-de-Suzeye streets on the left bank. This process of urban expansion by subdivisions, the domination of the river banks, and the remediation of lands to be built on, comprises the key elements in the evolution of the forms of the medieval city. Around the confluence, two historic neighbourhoods of the city were emerging: Grand-Bayonne – on the higher ground, around the cathedral – and Petit Bayonne – below, on the right bank of the Nive. On the right bank of the River Adour, at the northern gateway to Bayonne, the birth of the Saint-Esprit district, located on the main artery of traffic to Santiago de Compostela,

constitutes the second decisive element in the evolution of the form of the city.

A FORTRESS CITY

Since ancient times, Bayonne played a key role as a military city due to its strategic position. Beginning with the Roman *castrum*, the outline of which long determined the limits of the city, works occurred over the course of the centuries: the ancient walls were modernized and adapted to new techniques of warfare, marking, as in many other ancient citadels that became strongholds, the shift from vertical to horizontal fortifications. Two unprecedented moments in the history of fortification are illustrated in Bayonne: the medieval English wall and the Renaissance boulevards. The early 16th-century walls, which remain intact, make Bayonne a unique case in France for studying the emergence of the bastion system in Western Europe. In the 17th century, the rearrangement of the fortified ensemble was accompanied by the demolition of the suburb in order to clear and secure the area outside the ramparts, a measure that resulted in a withdrawal of the population within its walls. At the highest point of the city's three founding districts, a fortress recalls a decisive moment in its history: the Château-Vieux,



in the upper city, was built in the 12th century when Aquitaine was held by the Kingdom of England; the Château-Neuf, in the Bourg Neuf, attests to the recovery of Bayonne by the King of France in the mid-15th century; and the Citadel, in the Saint-Esprit district, was built by the great military engineer Vauban, in the context of the general reorganization of the borders in the 17th century. The city today owes the stabilisation of its urban layout to the exceptional preservation of the military fortification. This fortified ensemble, a protected historic monument, is unique in Europe, both for its extent – 3.5 km – and for its architectural diversity.

OPENING UP AND MODERNIZATION

At the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries, Bayonne still had all the characteristics of a medieval town with narrow, poorly paved, gloomy streets, over which jettied, half-timbered houses leaned in higgledy-piggledy fashion. From the 1730s, while other cities were transformed according to the urban, hygienic principles of the Enlightenment, Bayonne experienced more limited modifications, due to the constraints arising from the military easements, with the notable exception of the creation of the Marines and Paulmy



avenues. These tree-lined promenades expressed a desire to beautify citizens' living conditions and to improve the circulation of traffic in the city. The maritime vocation of the settlement, its shipyards and its long-distance trade led it to become a dynamic port city. The buildings facing the river and the quarters connected to the port were subject to the most significant changes: the construction of quays and the customs house in the 18th century, and the building of the city hall and theatre in the 19th century. The developments during the Second Empire modernised the city. The new amenities, both planned and completed, represented a definitive break with the infrastructure of the Ancien Régime: railway station, modern markets and slaughterhouses, hospital, the Saint-André church, the commencement of the lycée project, and the mains water supply. The construction of stone bridges and the opening up of new avenues were key advances in shaping the city. The incorporation of Saint-Esprit, a commune that had belonged to Les Landes since the Revolution, also opened up broad prospects for urban development.



THE CITY OUTSIDE THE WALLS

After being built and rebuilt on top of itself over many centuries, Bayonne, a city constrained by its fortifications, escaped from its walls at the beginning of the 20th century. This urban expansion commenced in 1907, the date of the decommissioning of the military stronghold: the lands located to the west and to the south of the city were released from all military constraints and entered communal ownership. The process continued in 1921, when the walled enclosure and the settlements of Mousserolles and Marracq were transferred to the city, in a dramatic expansion of its territory. From this point on, the city developed on all sides of its historical centre: the Lachepaillet (today Arènes), Marracq and Polo-Beyris quarters emerged with their innovative architectural styles – regionalism and Art Deco – breaking with the building types of the city’s ancient heart. These new districts embodied the demographic, architectural and urban renewal of the 20th-century city. This model of the expansion of a city around its historic core was interrupted in the 1960s with the advent of large blocks of flats, often built on former market garden and agricultural land – Balichon, Sainte-Croix, Habas-la-Plaine, Codry, Sainstantan – and the extensive deve-

lopment of low-density housing. The growth of the city, which extended further and further from its centre, began to impinge on the neighbouring communes. Bayonne came to see itself and to act as part of a triple-headed agglomeration, together with Anglet and Biarritz, but also as the heart of a community encompassing more broadly the south of Les Landes and the Basque Coast.



4. Plan of Bayonne in the 18th century:

Upper city, lower city (Bourgneuf) and suburb of Saint-Esprit, Bayonne media library

5. Bayonne, a city in its ramparts:

Glacis, 16th century bastion and Roman tower

6. Entrance to the city by the Mousserolles gate,
17th-18th century

7. Buildings on the banks of the Nive in the 19th century

Print, Bayonne media library

8. Marines Avenue

in the 18th century
Print, Bayonne media library

9. Saint-Croix quarter

Façade of a Breuer residence

10. Paulmy Avenue

Façade in the neo-Basque style

11. Arènes district

Detail of a chalet

THE CITY OVER THE CENTURIES

1. Detail of the Sainte-Marie cathedral

© G. Auzeméry-Clouteau

2. Municipal regulations of Bayonne

in the Middle Ages, Archives of Bayonne and the Basque Country

1ST CENTURY: HUMAN OCCUPATION

On these lands traversed by two water courses, inundated with marshy areas, between the Pyrenees mountain range and the Atlantic Ocean, the people of the 1st century AD left few traces of their occupation of the site: signs of metal-working activities, coins, some pieces of pottery. We can only make hypotheses: can we qualify this as a settlement? Could it be a hub for the redistribution of metals? Or was it simply a zone of protection for the mining areas within the Basque Country?

4th CENTURY: A CASTRUM

Ancient Bayonne, known as *Lapurdum*, first appears in the written sources of the Roman Empire at the end of the 4th century. This military camp was surrounded by a rampart crowning the natural promontory overlooking the Nive and the Adour rivers. The size of the area enclosed and protected (8.5 hectares) suggests that it was also occupied by a civilian population. The only certainty is that this human presence, attested since the 1st century, predated the wall built in the 4th century.

587: A CITY?

The city of *Laburdo*, mentioned in 587 in the settling of a territorial dispute (Treaty of

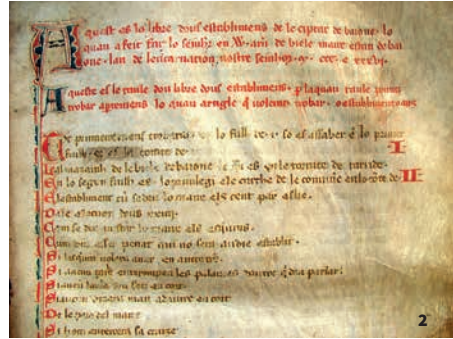
Andelot), lay at the heart of Frankish rivalries. The term “city” suggests that *Laburdo* held the status of an episcopal see. The creation of a bishopric is however difficult to formally attest: it remained vacant and in a precarious situation over several centuries, subject to incessant attacks by Goths and Normans.

THE YEAR 1000: LABOURD, DUALITY OF POWERS

Around the year 1000, the city of Labourd, governed by a territorial viscount, held an important position within the Duchy of Gascony, as a fortified city accessible from the sea. The viscount and the bishop were the two strong men of this territory, and shared power and property rights equally. Between the castle and the cathedral, Labourd presented the appearance of a large enclosed garden, with only a few houses, surrounded by broad ditches among the marshes and rural hamlets.

1120-1125: RELIGIOUS AND URBAN FLOURISHING

Under the short episcopate of Raymond de Martres, there began a decisive period of prosperity that was marked by active cooperation between the two powers, secular and ecclesiastical. Together, viscount and bishop



undertook to strengthen the link between the city and the suburb already developing on the right bank of the River Adour, by building a solid wooden bridge. Work on a cathedral began. At the request of the bishop, a charter of franchises designed to promote the settlement of the city was granted by the Viscount and confirmed by the Duke of Aquitaine. Under this dual authority, the city henceforth known as *Baïona* experienced its first urban and religious flourishing.

1152: AQUITANIAN TERRITORIES OF THE KINGDOM OF ENGLAND

In 1152, the marriage of Eleanor, daughter of the Duke of Aquitaine, and Henry Plantagenet, Duke of Normandy and heir to the English throne, sealed the fate of Bayonne for the following three centuries. From then on, the city formed part of the Aquitanian territories held by the Crown of England. The title of viscount was gradually stripped of its functions, until the Labourd underwent administrative partition: Bayonne, separated from its hinterland, was placed under the authority of a Provost Marshal, the representative of the King of England, who governed on the basis of councillors and *prud'hommes* recruited from among the notable citizens.

1207: TRADE, THE WEALTH OF THE CITY

Trade is what made the city rich. The establishment in 1207 of the *Societas navium baionensium*, an association of seafarers, is indicative of the scale of the maritime trade and transport, the foundations of Bayonne's economy. The growth of Bayonne was largely due to its shipping company, which established it as a site of choice for the transport of wine and goods from the Garonne basin to England and Flanders. Vessels and galleys built at the shipyards on the Nive made the reputation of the Bayonne fleet.

1215: A CITY WITH A MAYOR

The municipal charter granted in 1215 by the English King, John Lackland, introduced a new statute which was to govern the city throughout the period of English rule. Bayonne, like Bordeaux in the same epoch, became a city led by a governing body (*corps de ville*) and a mayor. Representing royal authority, the mayor was the leader of the municipal body: he administered justice, managed the finances, controlled the city's militia and had custody of the keys to the city. The proper functioning of the municipi-



pal institutions was based on respect for the municipal pact intended to ensure the mutual protection of inhabitants or neighbours.

1337: A BASTION OF ENGLISH DOMINATION ON THE CONTINENT

At the beginning of the Hundred Years War, Bayonne remained more than ever one of the bastions of English domination on the continent. Deeply linked by its economy to the British Isles, it was, together with Bordeaux and Dax, one of the pivotal cities of the Duchy of Aquitaine. The city, at the height of its naval power, participated in all the English victories and secured the control of the Bay of Biscay. English architecture made itself felt in the city, with the Mocoron gate, on Petit-Bayonne hill, making direct reference to the English Castles erected against the Welsh at the end of the 13th century.

1451: A FRENCH CITY

At the end of the Hundred Years War, Bayonne swore an oath to the King of France, in exchange for being allowed to retain its property. Charles VII adopted a policy of reconciliation and imposed tax measures beneficial for Bayonne's townspeople, whom he wanted to win over to his cause. The municipal ins-

titutions were reorganized in favour of the burghers. The King appointed a mayor from outside the city, a deputy mayor from among the burghers and a cleric as head of the administration. He asserted his authority by embarking on the construction of the Château-Neuf: The two large protruding towers, overlooking the city, represent the vigilance of the new royal power.

1578: MIGRATION AND DIVERSION OF THE ADOUR

The natural migration of the mouth of the River Adour along the Atlantic coast placed the economic life of Bayonne at risk. The royal power took fiscal and economic measures to allow the townspeople of Bayonne to revive their trading activities. In vain... The solution had to be a different, and radical one: the decision was taken to open a channel through the sand dunes for the river to discharge directly into the ocean. The engineer Louis de Foix was recalled from Madrid – where he was involved in the construction of El Escorial – to take charge of the project. As a result of this colossal undertaking – and with the assistance of a great inundation – the Adour river finally flowed directly into the ocean on 28th October, 1578.



1584: SAINT-ESPRIT, A STRATEGIC SUBURB

Although closely linked to the city for its security and its economic activity, the suburb of Saint-Espirit depended neither on the jurisdiction nor the Diocese of Bayonne, a rather uncomfortable situation for the municipal officials. The right to justice there was exercised by the Collegiate Church of Saint-Espirit, endowed by Louis XI with a very significant income. Meanwhile, the Baron of Seignanx, *seigneur* of Albret, sought to assert his property rights up to the right bank of the Adour and claimed these lands. The fate of Saint-Espirit, a strategic territory at the heart of these conflicting interests, was sealed in 1584 when Bayonne purchased the rights to the territory, thus ensuring its domination over the right bank of the River Adour.

1672 : “A RENOWNED AND BUSY SEA PORT”¹

The new mouth of the River Adour promoted the revival of trade in Bayonne: Bayonne regained its role as a commercial hub between the south and the north of Europe. On the banks of the Adour, the shipbuilding industry was booming. Vessels of all sizes emerged from Bayonne’s shipyards: frigates, pinnaces,

brigantines and all the fresh water boats sailing up the River Adour. Whaling and cod fishing was booming in the Grand Banks and Greenland. The interests of Bayonne coped very well with the near-permanent state of war, sometimes with Spain, at others with Holland: it was the golden age of privateering. Along with Dunkirk and Saint-Malo, Bayonne figured among the most dynamic ports in this domain.

¹ Albert Jouvin de Rochefort, Barbin, *Le Voyageur d’Europe, où sont les voyages de France, d’Italie et de Malthe*, 1672

1680: VAUBAN ARRIVES

Upon his arrival in Bayonne in 1680, Vauban, King Louis XIV’s engineer of fortifications, sealed the city’s role as a military stronghold, by consolidating the ramparts and building an imposing citadel on the heights of Saint-Espirit. The military works were redesigned and strengthened and the glacis (defensive slopes) were cleared of buildings, encircling the enclosed city with ditches, water and greenery. The stronghold was thus thoroughly and decisively transformed. As of now, Bayonne was a city-garrison, able to withstand a long siege. Its strategic position on the border made it the sentinel of the Pyrenees.



1753: THE “JEWISH PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH NATION”

The Jewish community, settled in the suburb of Saint-Esprit since the 16th century, established the administrative and religious framework of their organization in 1753, with the “Regulations of the Jewish Portuguese and Spanish Nation.” An economically powerful group since the 17th century, despite the discriminatory measures imposed by the city authorities, the Jewish community in Bayonne was demographically the largest in Europe one century later. A model of organization, and intellectual metropolis for the Jewish-Portuguese diaspora, at the forefront of the fight for emancipation, this community retains its particular identity symbolized by a monumental synagogue, an asylum, and a cemetery.

1843: CULTURE AND THE ARTS IN THE CITY

The inauguration of the new city theatre, in 1843, marked the beginnings of an intense cultural and artistic life that developed throughout the century. The creation of a municipal library, the transformation of the school of drawing into the school of painting, the opening of the music school and the



construction of the lycée are all significant events indicative of an unprecedented artistic and cultural effervescence. The creation of musical, historical and literary societies, newspapers and museums expressed the same creative momentum. This accompanied the birth of the regionalist movement which combined the Basque identity with the Gascon tradition of Bayonne, forging the image of a dual original culture.

1854: THE FIRST TRAIN ARRIVES AT SAINT-ESPRIT STATION

For the second time in its history, Saint-Esprit, a commune that had belonged to Les Landes since the French Revolution, became a key territory for its neighbour Bayonne. The arrival of the railway, a synonym of modernity and a major economic factor, brought with it the creation of the railway station – the terminus of the Bordeaux- Bayonne line – on the right bank of the Adour, at the foot of the Citadel. The significance of this situation could hardly escape Bayonne, all the more so as the railway lines gradually underwent considerable expansion, reaching Toulouse and Spain. The two communes were formally merged in 1857. The railway brought new prospects of urban development to Bayonne, together



3. English architecture
of the Mocoron tower

**4. Towers of the
Château-Neuf**
overlooking the city

**5. Plan of the course
of the River Adour by
Nicolas Flamberghe,
1610**, Bayonne media
library
The number and diversity of
boats reflect the activities
of a flourishing port

**6. Regulations of the
Jewish Portuguese and
Spanish Nation, 1753**,
Archives of Bayonne and
the Basque Country

**7. Lithograph by Blanche
Hennebute (1850)**,
Bayonne media library
The city hall and theatre in
the 19th century

**8. Detail of the railway
station**
© G. Auzeméry-Clouteau

with the strategic control of modern means of communication.

1882-1884: THE INDUSTRIAL PORT

The opening of the steel forges of the Adour in Boucau, first historic example of a water-based steel industry, defined the new vocation of the Port of Bayonne, which henceforth became an industrial port. The site was chosen because it could receive English coal and iron ore from Biscay more cheaply, the ships returning with pit props cut from the forests of Les Landes. The activity of the forges supplied local, national and international trade and dictated the intensity of the port traffic, which increased steadily until 1914. The shift in activities was also geographical: the port left the heart of the city and moved its activities further toward the mouth of the river.

1924, 1926: THE AFFIRMATION OF IDENTITIES

In the 20th century, a strong sense of regional identity emerged and permeated the arts world, taking original forms enjoyed by the people of Bayonne: Franco-Gascon theatre, poetry, and revues were a success at the city's theatres. The consciousness of a vigo-

rous Basque identity found a unique site for expression in 1924, with the creation of the Museum of Basque Culture and of the History of Bayonne. The Gascon Academy was created two years later, reflecting concern about the disappearance of the Gascon language. Numerous festive events – parades, fairs, cavalcades, balls, and so on – maintained social cohesion, particularly in the bull rings and in the stadium, focused on the Aviron Bayonnais rugby team, a true ambassador of the city with their playing style and colours.

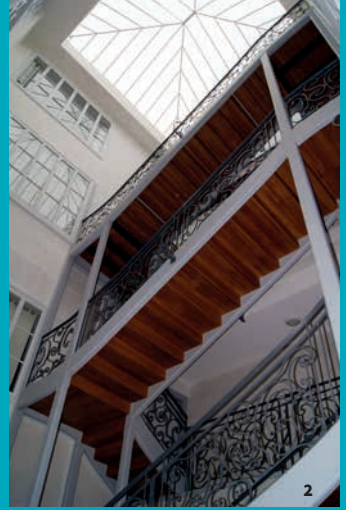
1972: THE CITY AS REGIONAL HUB

Over the course of the 20th century, Bayonne interacted more and more closely with its neighbouring cities, Anglet and Biarritz. This new way of thinking about the city found institutional expression with the creation in 1972 of the BAB District. Within this new institution, Bayonne took on the role of the hub city and laid claim to the title of “capital of the Basque Country.” A sub-prefecture and second commune in the Pyrénées-Atlantiques department, Bayonne occupies a strategic position on this popular stretch of the Atlantic coast which has seen remarkable economic growth. With 48,873 inhabitants (2013) in an area of 2,580 hectares, it is now the heart of a dynamic and attractive urban area.

1. Fanlight grilles,
decorative element of the
façade

2. Stairwell
and glass canopy

3. The rooftops,
indicative of the high den-
sity of the urban fabric



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FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER

UN MONUMENT URBAIN UNIQUE : L'HABITAT DU CENTRE ANCIEN

**Quai amiral Dubourdiou, quai amiral
Jaureguiberry, quai des Corsaires,
rue Bernède**

The old centre of Bayonne presents the image of a city reworked and rebuilt over the course of the centuries. Its current appearance was defined in the 18th century. Demographic and economic prosperity, the presence of the fortifications constricting urbanization to within the walls, and the disappearance of the suburbs all led to an extreme densification of the urban fabric as well as reconstruction of the buildings. The long and narrow buildings created a style of housing unique in France: the “two-key apartment” where the different rooms were separated by common stairwells. This defined a Bayonne model that endured until the mid-20th century. The façades of the houses in the historic heart mainly date from the 18th and 19th centuries. They alternate the grey stone of Bidache and painted wooden frames. Wrought iron, a decorative element used in façades, appears with the introduction of glazed doors. Railings, door knockers and fanlight grilles are true works of art created by master blacksmiths. The houses of Bayonne also reveal another hidden wealth: the stair-

cases. The oldest, in wood and surmounted by a canopy, date back to the 17th century. The 850 staircases in the old centre are now identified as an important element of the city's heritage. The first major urban planning and beautification operations of the 19th century were the prestigious developments on the banks of the River Adour: construction of the city hall and theatre and of the buildings facing it with a view to architectural unity; the creation of Boufflers avenue with its large bourgeois buildings, and the construction of stone bridges. The creation of a protected sector in 1975 defined the old centre and its unique model of habitat as an urban monument. This opened the way for a robust policy of safeguarding and restoring this heritage.

CELLARS AND ARCHES

**Rue du Pilon, rue des Prébendés,
rue Port-Neuf, rue des Tonneliers**

The architecture of the houses in the old centre is based on two main typologies that reflect their precise geographical location in the city: the houses of the upper town have a cellar, while the houses of the lower town, built on wooden piles and surrounded by canals until the 17th century, are supported by arches on the ground floor.



Cellars and arches alike have direct access to the street or to the canal and provide similar functions – as warehouses or stores – which reflect the economic prosperity of Bayonne in the Middle Ages. These typically medieval structures make it possible to reconstruct the plan of the city with perfect rigour. The arches are predominantly found in the neighbourhood of the Petit-Bayonne and the Grand-Bayonne, in the emblematic Port- Neuf street. The Argenterie and Pilori streets, which both lead to Place Pasteur, the old market square and the heart of the city in the Middle Ages, contain a particularly high number of cellars. The same goes for Salie and Espagne streets, major routes of communication in the medieval period. A last and very important group is located on Prébendés street. The cellars, Gothic in style, range from simple vaults with transverse arches to more complex ribbed vaults. The most common dimensions (5 x 15 m, 5.5 x 22 m, 5 x 25 m) reflect a well-organized subdivision of houses as well as standard building models. A few of these cellars are double, consisting of two spans communicated by a passage. The presence of some 130 Gothic cellars – an invisible heritage – together with the houses built over arches that are more easily identifiable in the contemporary urban fabric,

constitute two aspects of the city’s architectural wealth.

BRIDGES AND WHARVES

Quai des Corsaires, quai Galuperie, quai Chaho, quai Dubourdieu, quai Roquebert, quai Jaureguiberry, quai de Lesseps, quai Bergeret

The bridges have a powerful impact on the structure of the city because they perform the essential role of linking the three oldest districts: Grand-Bayonne, Petit-Bayonne and Saint-Esprit. Long built in wood and subjects to the ravages of floods, the bridges fulfilled a strategic role in this trading city, both in terms of communication between the shores and in providing access to different landing places on the banks for the unloading of goods. They had to be regularly maintained, and sometimes completely rebuilt, until they were constructed in stone in the middle of the 19th century. The banks of the Nive, long treated as an extension of the houses that line them and used for activities connected to the port, were gradually consolidated and transformed into wharves on the initiative of their owners. Along the left bank of the Adour, the development of the wharves that began in the 18th century was accompanied by the



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creation of beautiful tree-lined promenades, the Marines and Boufflers avenues. On the right bank, in Saint-Esprit, the backfilling of numerous millponds along the River Adour allowed the urbanization of the banks and the building of wharves beginning in the mid-19th century. Today, the banks of the Nive have become outstanding leisure areas, around the pavement cafés and restaurants. A walk at low tide offers the opportunity to spot the activities and the landscape of the old port in the heart of city: moorings rings and old stepped slipways emerge from the depths of the river. In Saint-Esprit, the footpaths along the river Adour offer beautiful perspectives of the Grand and the Petit-Bayonne, as well as an open view towards the river mouth.

**THE 20th CENTURY DISTRICTS:
VILLA AND CHALET ARCHITECTURE**
Avenue Paulmy, avenue du sous-lieutenant Iribarne, avenue Marie-Anne de Neubourg, rue Cassaigne

After the key date when Bayonne was decommissioned as a military stronghold (1907), a new Bayonne gradually emerged beyond the fortifications, from the esplanade of the Place des Basques, along Paulmy avenue, and as far as the ancient “suburbs”, exten-

sive tracts of sparsely inhabited countryside: Lachepaillet, Marracq, Mousserolles. The urban explosion of the inter-war period permanently changed the face of Bayonne with the creation of these new neighbourhoods; at the same time, it brought about a highly visible architectural renewal since the houses built on these lands are radically different to the traditional buildings of the old centre. The houses lining Paulmy avenue are revealing of this evolution of urban space: the villas commissioned by wealthy property owners, deliberately ostentatious, form a laboratory of the architectural styles that washed over the Basque coast in the 1920s and 1930s and constitute some of the most beautiful achievements of the neo-Basque trend, which finds its roots in the model of the farms of Labourd. Art Deco also made itself felt in this new Bayonne, with remarkable examples of the style. The bourgeois villa in Bidache stone, with its corner towers, covered front steps, loggias, and ornate window frames, is another common architectural style in these residential neighbourhoods. Another type of home also became popular: the chalet. This more modest architecture, characterized by simple and sober volumes yet brightened by the presence of carved consoles and wooden



or wrought iron balconies, is found in many of the city's neighbourhoods.

THE HAUTS DE BAYONNE: THE ARCHITECTURE OF LARGE HOUSING ESTATES

Avenue de Jouandin

The architecture of large housing estates is represented in Bayonne by the large-scale programme carried out starting in 1963 on the heights of the Saint-Étienne neighbourhood, on the right bank of the River Adour.

The project included the construction of 3,500 housing units to accommodate a population of 8,000 people. A great name in architecture and the author of numerous emblematic works including the Unesco Building in Paris in 1952, Marcel Breuer was behind the ensemble. For the Bayonne housing estate, Breuer was inspired by the Brutalist architecture that first emerged in England in the 1950s. Seven large twelve-story buildings form an S-shape on a rise to the north of the city, while the lower part of the site is reserved for smaller buildings and individual houses. This Functionalist architecture of the 1960s, in total contrast to the local architectural styles, has been poorly accepted, despite the quality of the duplex housing, the presence of green

spaces and the variety of cultural, sports and administrative facilities included in the new quarter. The refurbishment undertaken in 1986 aimed to soften the austerity of the original design. A new major operation to enhance the whole complex was undertaken between 2005 and 2013. The architecture of the Hauts de Sainte-Croix, criticized, sometimes rejected, is nevertheless a strong presence in the local landscape, and a full part of the built heritage of Bayonne. It has been designated a 20th-century heritage site.

NATURE IN THE CITY

Allée de Tarrides, allée Catherine de Bourbon, avenue Léon Bonnat, towpath of the Nive

Bayonne, a fortified city with a remarkable ensemble of monuments, has throughout its history preserved its natural heritage, ensuring the city enjoys breathing spaces. The opening up of numerous tree-lined avenues bears witness to this desire to embellish and oxygenate the city. Elm trees were planted in 1638 to form the Allées Boufflers; the Allées Marines were laid out as a promenade planted with trees in 1727 and become the playground of the townspeople of Bayonne. The Allées Paulmy with their field elms (1753)



4. 19th century spiral staircase

5. Urban landscape on the banks of the Nive

© G. Auzeméry-Clouteau

6. Typical Bayonne building:

narrow façades on an elongated plot

7. View of arches in Petit-Bayonne

was described a century later as one of the most beautiful promenades in France. The city's inventiveness with green spaces is also illustrated in the development of the military sites and fortifications which at the beginning of the 20th century entered public ownership: the glacis were transformed into public walks; public gardens in French and English styles replaced the old casemates (bunkers) of the Place d'Armes; botanical gardens were created on top of the ramparts; the La Poterne gardens; sports facilities at the foot of the Saint-Léon ramparts; the health circuit below the fortifications of Mousserolles... Further away from the city centre, other remarkable landscapes participate in the rich natural heritage of Bayonne. The Barthes of Ilbarritz, in the Beyris quarter, and those of the plain of Ansot constitute oases of greenery in the urban fabric and outstanding places for observing the local flora and fauna in natural wetland areas. The towpath along the Nive also forms a green space for the city, combining promenade and natural landscape.

**AROUND THE CATHEDRAL:
THE HEART OF THE MEDIEVAL CITY**

Place Louis Pasteur, square Dubarat, rue des Faures, rue Douer, rue Sabaterie, rue des Gouverneurs

The immediate surroundings of the Sainte-Marie cathedral are imbued with the medieval history of Bayonne. The heart of the city brought together within a limited perimeter all of the religious, civil, military and economic authorities. At its centre stood the cathedral flanked by its cloister, the episcopal palace and the canons' house. Work on the cathedral began in 1258 after an earlier Romanesque edifice burnt down, and it contains clear references to other French buildings from the first half of the 13th century, such as Soissons and Reims. The cloister was used both as a cemetery and a place of public life: the townspeople of Bayonne gathered together under its great elm to approve the municipal ordinances or swear an oath; the governing body assembled here. On Place Notre-Dame, the town hall, the market and the pillory punctuated an intense public life. Not far from here stood the castle, the residence of the military authorities. Today, little of this medieval town can still be seen in the urban landscape. It can be made out in the shadow of the

8. Goats in the city:

sustainable maintenance of the green areas

9. View of the cathedral spires from the cloister

10. The banks of the Adour at Saint-Esprit:

The Quai de Lesseps

© G. Auzeméry-Clouteau

11. Modernity of the Petit-Bayonne quarter:

the university library



Gothic cathedral, near the pillory fountain; it is suggested in the garden of Dubarat square, where the bishopric building now houses the media library; it becomes more real with the massive presence of the Château-Vieux, still dominating the upper town. Other, fainter, traces reveal the medieval past of Bayonne: the maze of streets leading to the cathedral, ordered according to the trades which gravitated to the heart of the city, reflects an urban layout typical of the Middle Ages, as do the Gascon names of these streets, evocative of the medieval guilds. A hidden and private heritage, the cellars or *sostarrainhs* present beneath a hundred houses of the upper town form a remarkable and original heritage that helps to understand the medieval city.

THE SAINT-ESPRIT QUARTER

Place de la République, rue Maubec, quai amiral Bergeret, quai de Lesseps

At the beginning of the 12th century, a wooden bridge was built over the Adour to connect Bayonne to the suburb on the right bank of the river, a route taken by the pilgrims on the road to Santiago de Compostela. Two hospices welcomed them on these lands: one at 4 Rue Maubec – now vanished – belonging to the Knights of Jerusalem, and the Priory of

the Church of Saint-Esprit, on the site of the present-day church. This suburb, a place of asylum, of passage, and of welcome, received the Jewish families driven out of Spain and Portugal by the Inquisition in the 16th century. This well-organized and economically powerful community left its footprint on the quarter with its cemetery, asylum, ritual baths and synagogue. The suburb was fortified at the end of the 17th century by the Marshal of Vauban who had a bastioned citadel built there. Up until the 19th century, Saint-Esprit, with its warehouses and its shipyards, was wholly dedicated to the activities of the Port of Bayonne. Its current appearance is due to the profound upheavals which resulted from the period after it was merged with the commune of Bayonne in 1857: the arrival of the railway and the construction of the railway station, drainage and progressive subdivision of the lowlands along the river, development of the quays, and construction of the Saint-Esprit bridge in stone. Art Deco made its appearance in the district at the beginning of the 20th century, with major buildings such as the Shipping Registry – now the DIDAM, a space for temporary exhibitions – as well as villas with high architectural quality along the banks of the River Adour. Whether seen as a



quarter of Bayonne or a city within the city, Saint-Espirit, faithful to its tradition as a land of hospitality, celebrates the multicultural character of its population, reflected in the vitality of its many civic associations.

PETIT-BAYONNE

Place du Réduit, quai Galuperie, quai des Corsaires, place Paul-Bert

Between Adour and Nive, Petit-Bayonne extends from Place du Réduit, at the confluence of the rivers, to the foot of the fortifications that surround the district and define the urban boundary. Framed by the two watercourses that almost make it an island, this triangular tongue of land, carved out little by little from the marshes, comprised the first urban expansion of Bayonne in the 12th century. The dominant presence of water in the quarter has defined its urban layout and historical activities. On the Nive side, a landscape of quays and arches recall the port-centred history of the area, which is also echoed in the street names. On the Adour side, the urban façade of the bourgeois buildings erected in the middle of the 19th century offers a vantage point over the river. In the 20th century, the neighbourhood developed a strong cultural vocation, with the

establishment of the Bonnat-Helleu Museum (1901) and the Museum of Basque Culture and of the History of Bayonne (1924). The creation of the university campus within the fortifications (2008) brought vitality and youth to the district and presented a real urban challenge, defined by the bold conversion of the military architecture. Barracks and warehouses from the 19th century and defensive bastions from the 17th century were transformed into lecture theatres and classrooms. The contemporary aesthetic of the new university library underlines the modern character of these developments. Between student life and cultural openness, Petit-Bayonne has revived its image thanks to this high-quality urban renewal project as well as many other actions taken to restore the ancient urban fabric.

PRACTICES AND IDENTITIES

LANGUAGES

The linguistic duality of the city can be explained by the double cultural and historical melting pot that has shaped Bayonne, a city that is both Gascon and Basque. Gascon was the official administrative language of medieval Bayonne: the oldest archives, dating from the 12th century, are evidence of this. This language also infuses the place names. The long-disappeared agricultural areas, farms and mills comprise an inexhaustible reservoir of ancient place names, revealing the Gascon roots of the city. At the very beginning of the 20th century, the daily life of the Saint-Esprit quarter still resounded with this language, which was also used in successful revues, theatre plays and musical performances. The Basque language, one of the oldest in Europe, found greater dissemination and recognition with the birth of its literature, first printed in the 16th century: the translation into Basque of the New Testament in 1571 is the founding act of this Basque print heritage. The practice and defence of the Euskara tongue in Bayonne was first organised at the beginning of the 20th century with the rise of a powerful sense of regionalism, expressed as a demand for recognition. This organisation around the development of the Basque language conti-

nued to grow throughout the 20th century with the creation of an Academy, a Study Centre, and a Public Office for the Basque language, and the development of bilingual education in schools. Today, the Basque language, and the many art forms in which it is expressed – music, theatre, song, dance – are part of an identity that belongs to everyday life in the city. As well as the two languages that lie at the root of the identity of Bayonne, other cultures have come to enrich the city, as a reflection of its multilingual character. Between Portuguese, Spanish, Arabic and Creole, no less than thirty different languages are today identified in the neighbourhoods of the city.

SOCIAL LIFE

Since it first emerged, in the mid-19th century, the world of civil associations in Bayonne showed great vitality. The cultural and recreational life which first developed during the Second Empire led to the emergence of many different societies, with very varied concerns. Musical societies were very much in vogue, followed by circles of a sporting and social character. Among the oldest, some have become veritable institutions, with over a century in existence: the Society

KALENDER A.
BAZCO NOIZ DATEN,
ILHARGVI BERRIAREN
eta letra Dominicalaren eça-
gutzeco manera-
requin.

*Nesta ditzogen direnario-ere bazzu egarri izan
dira, ez / gauden herce egun santificazteco-
rie delacoz, baina feriataco, hieru-amanetas,
eta asto herce guezataco, egun iaquinac eta be-
reclac diruzente- arbirzu dutenzer.*

ROCHELLAN.
Pierre Hautin, Imprimiciale.
1571.

1



2



3



4



5

of Arts and Letters (1873), the Nautical Society (1875), and the Harmonie Bayonnaise theatre society (1879). The enduring nature of these associations shows the important place that sport and culture have occupied for over a century in Bayonne society. They demonstrate the full force of this social connection that traverses the ages and now finds other modes of expression. Social life in Bayonne now revolves around festivities, embodied by some 80 *peñas*, associations whose philosophy is based on a culture of all forms of festivity, combining friendship and conviviality. Some of these festive associations offer the chance to host revellers in unusual venues, such as the casemates, part of the city's hidden underground heritage. This uniquely Bayonne way of life reaches its peak during the last week of July, dedicated to the Fêtes de Bayonne. These feasts, created in 1932, are built around strong aspects of regional identity, yet are accessible to all, as part of a tradition of openness and hospitality.

SPORTS

Sports in Bayonne, beyond their practice or the passions that they generate, include a strong heritage dimension, enshrined in historic sites, as well as in forms of sociability

connected to the identity of the city itself. The game of Basque pelota appears early on in the city's history, as early as the 16th century, with a recreational site believed to have been dedicated to the *jeu de paume*, known as the "tripot Maubec". The continuity of this practice over the course of the centuries means that the Saint-André *trinquet* (pelota court) still exists today. With the Trinquet Moderne, built in 1913 and completely renovated in 1997 to become the only *trinquet* in the world to boast three glass walls, together with many other *fronton* courts present throughout the city, Bayonne is testimony to the living practice of Basque pelota. Water sports are also renowned in this river city, with the creation of two associations that have today become distinguished sports clubs: the Nautical Society, the oldest of the associations to remain active, created in 1875, and the Bayonne rowing club, Aviron Bayonnais, which was set up in 1904 and was soon to win glory not on the river but on the rugby field. The glorious year of 1913, when Aviron Bayonnais won the title of rugby Champion of France, marks the beginning of a great passion among the people of Bayonne for their club. Aviron became an ambassador of the city with its "Bayonne style of play". The Jean Dauger stadium, as soon as it was built



in 1935, became the venue for all the fervour associated with a sport that has become an integral part of the intangible heritage of Bayonne.

GASTRONOMY

The culinary arts enjoy a special place in Bayonne, strongly rooted in the social and economic history of the city and its region. Beyond simple consumption, the local produce which made the name of the city in the 17th and 18th centuries – ham, chocolate, goose and duck thighs – were gifts presented to distinguished visitors passing through Bayonne. These food gifts played a strategic political and commercial role, which has been decisive to their continuity. Bayonne ham has been produced here since the Middle Ages. It is manufactured across the River Adour basin and owes its reputation to the quality of the salt used in its preservation and which gives it all its flavour. Its sale and shipment from the Port of Bayonne identify it as an emblem of the city. Indeed, Bayonne ham has been celebrated every year since the mid-19th century at the traditional Spring Fair. Since the 1960s the Fraternity of the Ham has been involved in the protection of the appellation and in promoting Bayonne ham as part of the city's

heritage. Chocolate is also a product with a significant history: Bayonne was once considered the capital of this product. It was first known as a beverage which appeared at the 17th century. Its history is intimately linked to that of the Jewish community, the holder of the keys to the trade in cocoa beans and to the manufacturing secrets arriving from Spain. Initially reserved for a social elite, chocolate was gradually adopted by the general population in Bayonne and the Labour province. Commercial brands, founded by the dynasties of chocolatiers, developed in the 19th century: chocolate was transformed into a bonbon, patisserie or ice-cream. The city's chocolate tradition, supported by an Academy of Chocolate, led to the formation of a unique identity linking know-how and history.

BULL RUNNING AND BULL FIGHTING

The traditions involving bulls, including releasing steers and and cows into the city streets, have their roots in the Middle Ages. This practice, between sport and spectacle, has existed since the 13th century, forging a particular identity of the city which claims to be “the oldest bullfighting city in France.” Over the course of the centuries, the bull running took on an official and festive character as



a spectacle presented to distinguished visitors to the city. The key sites of this practice inscribe its importance in the urban fabric: the long-disappeared wooden bull rings of the Saint-Esprit district; the *plaza de toros* of Lachepaillet, of Hispanic and Moorish inspiration, which still brings together the aficionados during the annual *temporada*. Bayonne's bull rings have attracted leading enthusiasts: King Philip V of Spain, Napoleon III and Eugénie de Montijo, the writers Prosper Mérimée, Théophile Gauthier and Ernest Hemingway, the painter Picasso... Each year, the great names in modern bullfighting can be found in Bayonne, where the public can watch *corridos* on foot or on horseback, as well as *novilladas*. This tradition is widely supported by bullfighting organisations, which promote and renew this intangible heritage.

1. Translation of the New Testament into Basque
1571, Bayonne media library

2. Trilingualism
in the city

3. The red scarf,
inescapable during the festivities

4. Enjoyable times in a casemate

5. The banks of the Nive
during a festival

6. Fervour in the Jean Daurer Stadium
during a match with the Aviron Bayonnais

7. The Nive enlivened by a regatta

8. Pelota match
in the Trinquet Moderne

9. Programme for Bayonne's plaza en 1894,
affiche, Médiathèque de Bayonne

10. Cocoa beans

11. Bayonne ham fair

12. The bullrings of Bayonne



10



11



12



GRAND BAYONNE

NIVE

PETIT BAYONNE

ADOUR



i TOURISM OFFICE

THE GRAND-BAYONNE QUARTER

- 1** City Hall and Theatre
- 2** Post office
- 3** Château-Vieux
- 4** Media library (former bishopric)
- 5** Sainte-Marie cathedral and cloister
- 6** Augustine Tower and plachotte
- 7** Saint-Simon Tower
- 8** Sault Tower
- 9** Spanish Gate

THE PETIT-BAYONNE QUARTER

- 10** Bartizan
- 11** Bonnat-Helleu Museum
- 12** Saint-André Church
- 13** Museum of Basque Culture and of the History of Bayonne
- 14** Château-Neuf
- 15** Mousserolles Gate
- 16** University/Nive Campus
- 17** Royal Bastion

THE SAINT-ESPRIT QUARTER

- 18** Saint-Esprit Church
- 19** DIDAM (Shipping Registry)
- 20** Rail Station
- 21** Synagogue

SAINT-ESPRIT

« BAYONNE OF TALL
BUILDINGS, COOL STREETS,
RIVERS THAT MINGLE
WITHOUT TUMULT.
I COULD TELL MYSELF IN
TELLING YOU,
AND RECOGNIZE MY OLDEST
ROOTS. »

Jean Cayrol, Preface to *Living in the Basses-Pyrénées 1900-1930*, 1980

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Tourism Office

25 place des Basques

64100 Bayonne / 05 59 46 09 00

bayonne-tourisme.com

infos@bayonne-tourisme.com

Learn about Bayonne... in the company of a professional guide approved by the Ministry of Culture and Communication. The guide welcomes you. He or she knows about all aspects of the territory of Bayonne and offers you the keys to understanding the development of the city through its quarters. The guide is ready to listen to you. Please do not hesitate to ask questions. If you are part of a group, City of Art and History visits are offered throughout the year, upon reservation.

In close cooperation with the Tourism Office, the City of Art and History service offers year-round activities for residents, students and visitors.

Bayonne belongs to the national network of 184 Towns and Lands of Art and History. The Ministry of Culture and Communication, Directorate of Architecture and Heritage, assigns the designation Towns and Lands of Art and history to local communities which promote their heritage.



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