On this second trip based on the wildly popular Harvard Course: Science and Cooking: From Haute Cuisine to the Science of Soft Matter, Michael Brenner takes you to the Basque Coast. In addition to a compelling and in-depth exploration of San Sebastian’s and Bilbao’s cultural and historical gems, you will meet legendary Basque chefs, artisan producers, and food movement leaders. Enjoy insider access from Michelin-starred test kitchens to a home-hosted meal, and engage the senses via art, music, and science—as well as superb food and wine.

**SCHEDULE BY DAY**

*B=Breakfast, *L=Lunch, *D=Dinner

**FRIDAY, MAY 24**

**DEPART U.S. FOR SPAIN**

**SATURDAY, MAY 25**

**WELCOME TO BILBAO & RIVER OF TIME**

Be met upon arrival to Sondika airport, whose airy main terminal was designed by acclaimed Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava. Transfer to a design hotel directly across from the Guggenheim, deposit bags, freshen up and relax until our program begins this afternoon.

Everyone has heard the term “Bilbao effect” applied to cities that strive to break free from an aging industrial past into a brighter future fueled by the arts, architecture, and gastronomy. While often attempted, few cities have matched Bilbao’s remarkable transformation. A boat trip as the sun dips low along the Nervion River allows us a bit of time travel, experiencing remnants of Bilbao’s industrial past as well as highlights of its artistic, architectural, culinary rebirth—all of which have made it one of the most talked about cities in the world.

Gather for an intimate welcome dinner prepared especially for us by one of the local leaders of the Slow Food movement in Bilbao

Overnight: *Gran Hotel Domine* (D)

**SUNDAY, MAY 26**

**MUINA, ART & ACTIVE IN BILBAO**

After breakfast, Professor Brenner shares some of the inspiration and ideas behind Science & Cooking during a morning lecture, including how the Basque food visionaries we will meet this week fit into the overarching trip narrative.

The shimmery scaled exterior of the Guggenheim is a potent symbol of one of the more remarkable urban transformations of recent decades. Enjoy a curator led tour of
this inimitable museum and its most important collections.

Lunch is onsite at the modern, minimalist Nerua, the Michelin star restaurant helmed by Chef Josean Alija and currently ranked #56 in the world by Restaurant Magazine. Chef Alija’s philosophy is best defined by the Basque word ‘muina’ meaning (roughly) the nucleus, essence, or soul. Chef Alija will lead us on an insider’s tour of the kitchen and present us to his team prior to lunch.

Afternoon adventure—walking or biking Bilbao. Both options are guided and designed to discover Bilbao like a local. Both groups stop to admire structural icons from a few of the world’s most acclaimed star architects along the Abandoibarra neighborhood as well as delve into Bilbao’s medieval Casco Viejo.

Overnight: Gran Hotel Domine (B, L)

TUESDAY, MAY 28
SCIENCE & INSPIRATION THROUGH THE GENERATIONS

Transfer to the Basque Culinary Center (BCC) this morning for an ‘in situ’ Science & Cooking class with Professor Brenner and Elena Arzak, joint head chef with her father of the eponymous Michelin 3-star restaurant. Chef Arzak was named Best Female Chef in the World in 2012 by Restaurant Magazine. Basque Culinary’s master’s degree students are invited to join us for this one-of-a-kind lecture.

Enjoy a late morning visit to the nearby Museo Chillida Leku, the museum and park grounds exhibiting sculptural work of the renowned Basque artist Eduardo Chillida. Our guide for this visit is Luis Chillida Belzunce, the son of the late sculptor and director of the Eduardo Chillida-Pilar Belzunce Foundation.

Return to the BCC (a 5 minute drive) for lunch prepared by the culinary students especially for us. There will be free time in San Sebastian this afternoon, as we’ve arranged for an evening activity.

Gather again this evening for a Michelin 3-star dinner to remember at Arzak.

Overnight: Maria Cristina Hotel (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29
MID MILLENNIAL MARKET + PRIZED PIGS

The weekly market in the picturesque town of Ordizia is one of the hidden gems of Basque Country. Held each Wednesday since 1512, it is the oldest weekly market in Gipuzkoa (one of the three semi-autonomous Basque
provinces). There, *alubias* (beans) hold a place of honor in the pantheon of fresh produce which overflows the market stalls. Smoky, nutty Idiazabal cheese is also on fragrant display as are fresh flowers, baked breads, live snails, and dozens of other regional & seasonal specialties.

Later meet Slow Food Presidium producer Pello Urdapilleta at his 18th C. family farmhouse set high in the forested hills above Tolosa. Pello, a Basque engineer by training, re-dedicated his life to raising and developing a market for the region’s last remaining heritage breed, *Euskal Txerria*, after learning that his own family’s pig-farming roots date back to at least 1575.

Visit the chestnut and acorn laden hillsides where Pello’s pigs, with their signature long floppy ears, happily roam. Weather permitting, enjoy canapés in the welcoming garden before sitting down to a memorable home-hosted meal that includes some of the sublime cured ham produced on the farm. Enjoy wine & conversation in equal measure around Pello’s cozy hearth.

For those who wish to explore this beautiful landscape on foot, there will be an optional 2-kilometer walk after lunch down bucolic country lanes before returning to San Sebastian.

Overnight: Maria Cristina Hotel (B, L)

**THURSDAY, MAY 30**

**MIND OF MUGARITZ + CIDER HOUSE**

**RULES**

This morning meet with Andoni Louis Aduriz, chef and owner of Michelin 2-star Mugaritz. Chef Aduriz will share his vision, one that connects food with science, art, memory, sustainability and more.

Ranked amongst the world’s top ten tables for the last decade. Mugaritz is universally admired. This is thanks in large part to Chef Aduriz’ role as a creative thought leader. Thanks to his boundary-pushing curiosity and cross-disciplinary collaborations, Mugaritz has become synonymous with R+D, even closing each year for four months to focus on creativity. In fact, the word “restaurant” is hardly an adequate description for Mugaritz.

Participate in a lively exchange between Professor Brenner, Chef Aduriz and Mugaritz, Director of Research, then experience the magic of Mugaritz’ boundary-pushing kitchen with an exclusive tasting menu. Return to San Sebastian in the late afternoon.

Celebrate your Basque Country adventure in relaxed, local style at an authentic cider house. Here, patrons enthusiastically line-up with their glasses when the chef yells, “txotx” indicating that a stream of effervescent cider is to be released from the barrel. Basque cider houses are local, ultra-casual, social and great fun.

Overnight: Maria Cristina Hotel (B, L, D)

**FRIDAY, MAY 31**

**HOMEWARD BOUND**

Transfer to the Bilbao airport in time for your return flights home. (B.)