

Post



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May 24, 2025 · 5 min read

Pintxos for lunch and dinner - May 25, 2025

Updated: May 28, 2025

SUMMARY

Al fresco breakfast on a pretty square. Walked along the marina then hiked up Mount Urgull to the enormous Sacred Heart statue for stunning views of the city. Pintxos (Basque equivalent of tapas) crawl for lunch then some downtime for rest and laundry. We quickly adopted the tradition of having pintxos around 7:00 although we made it dinner and called it a night rather than also eating a huge dinner at 10:00 pm! On the way home we met Anouk with whom we will share an adventure tomorrow. - Karen

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DETAIL

I awaken at 7:15. Karen had said she wanted to sleep in until 8:00 (following a late dinner, in the Spanish style). I pitter patter out for coffee in the breakfast room (just on the other side of two doors, very close). There are a lot of people having breakfast, all getting ready for their Rick Steves' tour. There's a hand written sign, on the RS letterhead, detailing the day's agenda. By 7:45 Karen's awake.

For the morning we plan to take a group walk, but first a tasty breakfast on a beautiful square. It's on one of the more major walking streets with important buildings all around and tall, handsome trees shading the wide walking paths. For our walk, we head towards the aquarium, not to go to the aquarium, but rather to go up the mountain. The old town goes right up to the mountain and stops, leaving the rest to beautiful nature. The available paths offer lots of choices and twists and turns. There are ramps and stairs and short tunnels through walls. Halfway up we encounter a bar that has all of the usual beer and wine and sangria. All are priced at three or 3.50 euros per glass. Such a good value! We have none of it, but rather just continue up and finally get to the top where the fort and the enormous statue of Jesus holding up two fingers is looking down over the city.

Back down on the ground, it's time to go for lunch. We have pintxos ("pinch-ohs") for lunch. We find a table for six and a couple at a time we go up to the counter and point and say "three of those and two of these, and a liter of sangria with six glasses", and another liter of sangria. They give them to us and we carry them to the table. Everything gets cut up and everyone gets to try everything. There's toasts with shrimp, egg, smoked salmon, roasted red pepper, anchovy, tuna, on and on and on. So many things to try. We don't know what we're doing so we make the rookie mistake of only getting the "on display" cold pintxos. The 'cooked to order' hot ones are frequently even better, we hear.

After lunch, we go back to the room and do laundry and work on the blog. When we were in Lourdes we made a number of rookie mistakes doing laundry. That's not gonna catch us up this time, we tell ourselves. . Karen and I do our washing and rinsing in the sink in our hotel room. Ron and Nancy intend to do the entire washing and drying at the laundromat.

All the washing machines are busy when we get there. Ron points out that somebody has not only clothes being washed (for another 23 minutes), but also their battery operated car fob. When the lady finally comes back, we ask if the clothes in the washing machine are hers. She says they are. We ask if the car key is also hers (and point to it). In dismay she admits that it is. She has to wait another 12 minutes before she can retrieve it.

I put our washed and rinsed clothes into a dryer. I dutifully select, 'medium cool' for the temperature, as Karen prefers. I realize I don't have enough change and go convert a five-euro note. I come back and put the coins in. The dryer starts. That's when I realize that it had reset itself to the super high temperature setting. And it can't be changed now. Whoops!

As we wait for the washing machines to free up, we read the instructions which say that soap is automatically dispensed into the washing machine for each load. When it's our turn, Ron dumps the entire bag of their laundry into the washer and starts it. It begins filling with water. That is when he realizes that their Zip-lock bag full of 38 soap sheets is still in there. It will be a good half hour before we're able to retrieve it. We just wonder at which point in the wash cycle the bag is going to burst open. So much for not screwing up the laundry. Clothes done and folded, we head back to our rooms and admit our mistakes.

At dinner time we once again go out for pintxos. We are not alone. There are a ton of people on the street. As we walk around, looking for a good Pintxos bar, we come across a enormous square with a huge stage and many musicians, dancers, and singers. There's a very large audience in chairs. We enjoy the energetic last two songs of this free concert.

At our chosen pintxos restaurant there are five or six seats available right at the bar. We were supposed to just get one drink and two food items here. We end up getting three drinks and many food items. Rookie mistake. The rest of the evening we correctly go from bar to bar getting just one glass of wine (three euros) and some food item. This is repeated quite a few times.

Around 11:30 PM it's time for dessert. We find a place for Basque cheesecake (and get glasses of wine to go with it). Liz orders three cheesecakes, to be split between the six of us. As they're preparing them, she realizes that each plate has two fairly good size slices on it. She quickly changes the order after they've prepared only two plates, whew! It's very good, very creamy.

On our way back to our hotel we stop to play on some playground equipment and (perhaps wine related) someone in our group takes a harmless tumble. A nice lady, Anouk, and her friend rush over to render aid. We talk and talk and wind up making a date for 1 pm tomorrow afternoon. She's a foodie and is going to get us into one of the many 'secret' societies. What intrigue!

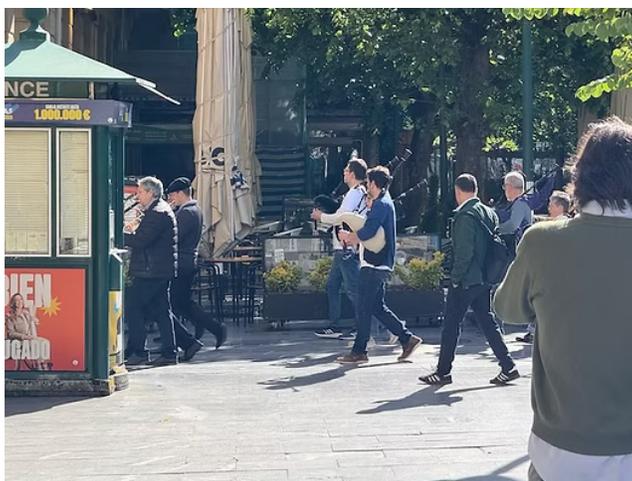
Photos



Near our hotel are these 50 ton marble blocks. We marvel at their symmetry. The waves crashing against them are just frenetic.



Delishous breakfast.



As we eat a band goes by playing music, including bag pipes. Such fun.



The view from where we're eating includes these marvelous buildings.



Off we go on our hike to get a little exercise.



The views from atop the adjacent 'mountain' are great.



Looking towards the water we see lots of activity. Sail boaters, swimmers, kayakers. Very active people.



Lot's of couples pictures taken up there.



The big JC guy on the top, looking down on the city.



Pintxos for lunch. Lots to choose from.



It's all good but math is sometimes required to divide up what we got evenly between six people.



In the afternoon walking seems to be the order of the day. Everyone loves to be out walking. Such a social people!



FARNSNIENTE



With the heat (probably 72 degrees) we sit down to cool off with some Aperol Spritzes.



Dinner time, more people out walking and walking. Going from pintxos bar to pintxos bar.



At the end of the evening we run into Anouk and her friend. We make a date to do some food explorations with Anouk tomorrow.

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