

*International Education: Passing Down Tradition:  
Basque food and Culture: Character Education: Hope*

The Idaho State Department of Education is dedicated to increasing the technical capability, social readiness, and global perspective of high school graduates in order that they will complete school with the character, skills, and knowledge to become responsible and productive citizens in their community, state, nation and world. The following lesson on the Basque Country integrates one of Clifton Taulbert's *Eight Habits of the Heart* "to incite your memory and passion so that you can employ your imagination in the building of good communities for the twenty-first century."

Taulbert, Clifton. (1997). *Eight Habits of the Heart*. New York, New York: PenguinBooks.

This is a one week unit
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**I. Content:**

I want my students to be able to:

- A. Research food traditions in the Basque culture. (i.e. family occasions such as weddings, funerals, births, holidays, as well as every day life)
- B. Understand the importance of tradition of maintaining a culture
- C. Demonstrate an understanding of the correlation between food and hope
- D. Share their own personal family food traditions and how these traditions inspired family hope
- E. Write a personal narrative paper that shares their family food tradition

**II. Prerequisites:**

Students need to have an understanding of the following:

- A. How to conduct research on the internet by using search engines and providing citations for internet sources
- B. The components of the personal
- C. How to create a PowerPoint presentation

**III. Instructional Objectives(s):**

The student will:

- A. Research and present information in a power point
- B. Understand the concepts of hope and the passing of family tradition
- C. Write a personal narrative
- D. Write for purpose and audience
- E. Write in order to generate, record, and reflect upon ideas
- F. Apply the six traits of effective writing: ideas, voice, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions

**IV. Materials and Equipment:**

*Teacher:* Personal Narratives  
Basque Recipes – **Student Handout #6** and **Student Handout #7**

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Computers for researching  
PowerPoint program  
Smart Board, projector or large monitor (optional)

*Students:*     The Sainly Orphan Girl - Student Handout #1  
                  The Singing Tree, The Bird Which Tells the Truth, and the water that  
                  makes young – Student Handout #2  
                  PowerPoint Rubric - **Student Handout #3**  
                  Peer Evaluation – **Student Handout #4**  
                  Personal Narrative Rubric – **Student Handout #5**  
                  Flan – **Student Handout #6**  
                  Basque Rice – **Student Handout #7**  
                  Gastronomy – **Student Handout #8**

**V. Instructional Procedure**

The student will:

- A. Be exposed to the concepts of hope and the passing of tradition through family and community
- B. Hear examples of personal narratives of Basque individuals who experienced and relay the importance of food through family and community
- C. Discuss the elements of a personal narrative and writing for purpose and audience
- D. Apply the elements of a personal narrative using the personal narrative rubric.  
**(Student Handout #5)**

The teacher will:

- A. Provide some **background** of the Basque culture, a typical Basque family unit, and some typical Basque communities (of the past and present) through:
  1. A Smart Board projection of excerpts from Basque Oral History on the Basque Museum Website: [www.basquemuseum.com/oralhistory](http://www.basquemuseum.com/oralhistory)
  2. An up-close look at various past and present gastronomical societies, first defining what a gastronomical society is and how it has evolved over the years. **(Student Handout #8)**
- B. Provide example of Basque culture through stories and food.
  1. Share Basque **stories** shared and recorded in the oral tradition, which continues and reinforces the Basque desire for the preservation of their culture for future generations. (include three story titles and **Student Handout # 1** and **Student Handout #2**)
  2. Share teacher’s own recipes from the Basque country that were passed on and continue to be shared at the family table – **Student Handout #6** and **Student Handout #7**

**VI. Assessment and Evaluation:**

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- A. Assign students to create their own personal narrative using the rubric, **Student Handout #5**. Students must draw from their own family traditions which include food and oral tradition or through the interview process; use the experiences of a third party
- B. Students must write a personal narrative
- C. Students must incorporate at least two recipes from the culture(s) represented
- D. Both of the above must be represented through a PowerPoint and presented to the class
- E. Every student is responsible to peer evaluate using **Student Handout #4**
- F. Take the Basque trivia quiz online, a fun way to introduce the Basque culture and ethnicity to those who are unfamiliar with it. The website is:  
<http://www.funtrivia.com/trivia-quiz/World/The-Basques-85392.html>
- G. Take The Meaning of Food quiz, a brief and fun test of your knowledge of how food plays a significant role in many cultures and how it is first introduced to babies. The website is:  
[http://www.pbs.org/opb/meaningoffood/food\\_and\\_family/bring\\_in\\_the\\_new/](http://www.pbs.org/opb/meaningoffood/food_and_family/bring_in_the_new/)

**VIII. Idaho Achievement Standards:**

- Standard 2: Comprehension/Interpretation  
Goal 2.1: Acquire Strategies and Skill for Comprehending Text  
10.LA.2.1.1 Synthesize the content from several sources on a single issue; compare and contrast ideas to demonstrate comprehension.
- Standard 3: Writing Process  
Goal 3.1: Acquire Prewriting Skills  
10.LA.3.1.4 Match format to purpose and audience.  
10.LA.3.1.5 Produce a piece of writing within a set period of time.  
Goal 3.2: Acquire Skills for Writing a Draft  
10.LA.3.2.1 Use the ideas generated and organized through prewriting to write a draft.  
10.LA.3.2.2 Sequence ideas in a cohesive, meaningful order.  
Goal 3.3: Acquire Skills for Revising a Draft  
10.LA.3.3.6 Conference with others to improve writing.  
Goal 3.5: Acquire Skills to Publish Writing  
10.LA.3.5.1 Publish improved draft  
10.LA.3.5.2 Share writing with intended audience.  
10.LA.3.5.3 Use appropriate technology to produce a final draft.
- Standard 4: Writing Applications  
Goal 4.1: Acquire Expressive (Narrative/Creative) Writing Skills  
10.LA.4.1.1 Write narratives or short stories that describe the specific actions, movements, gestures, and feelings of the characters.

**VIII. Follow up Activities**

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- A. Present the personal narratives orally
- B. Either bind the narratives individually, or as a collection
- C. Have students develop a computer presentation on their own culture, reflecting the strongest values found in that culture
- D. Cook a Basque recipe or two and share it with the class. You could include some research into Basque cuisine <http://www.buber.net/Basque/Food/Recipes>

## Student Handout 1

### Use of Materials

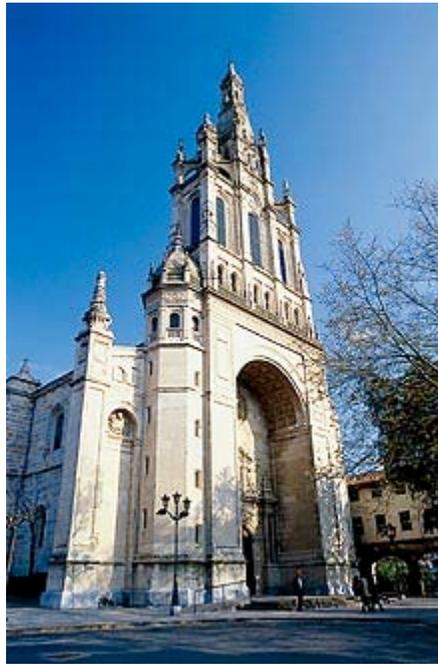
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## The Saintly Orphan Girl

by: Elena Bagwell



Basilica of Begona  
Bilbao, Spain

When I landed in Bilbao there was much for me to see. I heard from some locals to visit the Basilica of Begona, where the Virgin of Begona is worshipped. When I came upon the Basilica its presence startled me. It is set atop a hill that I reached by walking from the Medieval Quarter. The Basilica dominates the landscape of Bilbao and commands everyone's attention forcefully. Being in its presence was very spiritual.

## Student Handout 1

I passed through the large park surrounding the Basilica and entered through the enormous wooden doors that worshippers had passed through since the 16th century. The interior of the Basilica was very eerie. It was large, cold, and smelled like it had not been exposed to sunlight in ages. However, there was plenty of sunlight seeping in through the beautiful stained glass windows. I made my way through the corridors, passed the altar and by a series of statues of saints. I came upon a tiny stained glass window that could have been easily overlooked had the colors not been so vivid. Floating in the middle of a bright red background was the image of a dove. Staring at the stained glass overwhelmed me with a feeling of peace, and I closed my eyes as I let the warmth of the sun enter my body. Suddenly a live dove appeared and whispered a story into my ear as he perched on one of the pews.

### The Saintly Orphan Girl...

"I once had a friend who God entrusted me to take care of every day. My duty was to bring her food and keep her alive for God told me that she was very special, and that he had a plan for her. She was a young orphan girl, who lived in solitude so I was her only companion and she grew very fond of me.

One day the orphan girl happened to spot two policemen dragging a girl much like her to a nearby prison. The girl was either to be executed or imprisoned. Seeing the poor fate of this young girl, my friend could not help but to be grateful for her own piety and holiness. She thought to herself had the troubled girl lived a life similar to hers, she would not be punished for her bad actions.

Instantly, God punished my young friend for the pride she thought of. Her punishment was that I no longer bring her food and keep her company. Some time passed and the orphan girl became very lonely without me. She went to visit a priest so that she could confess her sins

## Student Handout 1

and be forgiven. As soon as she did so, the priest explained to her that she must attend the birth of three children as her punishment. At the three births the orphan girl was to take note of the gifts given to the children.

The girl did as she was told and first approached the Queen, who was giving birth to a baby Prince. The Queen allowed her company and the young girl watched as the boy was born with a white string circled around his neck. Immediately, the orphan girl knew the boy would either be hung or guillotined when he turned 18.

The next child was a little girl who was born with a red string attached to her wrist. The orphan girl understood this to mean that the baby girl would turn out a ruined young adult.

The third child was a boy born with a blue ribbon tied to his finger, which meant that he would grow up to be kind and to serve God.

Unable to forget the fate of the young Prince, she returned to the royal family and helped to care for the boy. Each time she held him she could not help but to say "Poor child!" Eventually, the Queen overheard her and asked her why she considered her child not to be fortunate. The orphan girl kept her silence until the date of the Prince's 18th birthday drew near. She could not silence herself any longer, and told the royal family of the fate of their child. The King and Queen, in turn, told their son who decided that he needed to leave the house urgently.

The Prince traveled for quite some time before he came to another town. He came across a house connected to a large shop. Since the Prince was very well educated, the shopkeeper hired him to work in his shop. Overtime, word spread of this young man and the town grew to love him dearly. However, the Prince had some secrets of his own and eventually the townspeople caught on. Each night the Prince would leave the house, but no one ever knew where he would disappear to. One night his master cut a hole above the shop and spied on the Prince leaving once dark arrived. The Prince walked a distance before falling

## Student Handout 1

down upon his knees, on which he walked until he reached a church. For a week the master watched the Prince do the same thing every night.

One night was different, however. On the eighth night of spying the master witnessed an angel come down from heaven. The angel came down to the Prince, placed a white string around his neck, and lifted him into the air. Several seconds later the angel placed the Prince gently on the ground and disappeared.

The master was so shocked that he did not hesitate to confront the boy. The Prince explained to his master that his penance was fulfilled and that he was allowed to return home.

The master, seeing the holiness and obedience of this boy, did not want the Prince to leave without him marrying his daughter. The Prince agreed to it, but on the condition that he received his parent's approval. The royal family was overly joyous upon the safe return of their son. The Prince told his story of penance and that he had been forgiven by God. Then the Prince told the story about his master's daughter and his parents agreed to the marriage. And everyone lived and died happily ever after," finished the dove.

"I never saw the young orphan girl again, but I still think of the girl and the good that she created out of her own sins," said the dove.

Once he had finished telling his story the dove spread his wings and flew out of the Basilica of Begona, and disappeared over the tops of the trees...

### Author's Note:

The reason I chose to retell "The Saintly Orphan Girl" was because I needed a

## Student Handout 1

story whose plot could fit into my frametale and make sense. I wanted to place my main character in a church in Bilbao, so I found a religious story to fit that atmosphere. I liked the inclusion of the dove in the original story, especially since doves are a common religious symbol. Also, I didn't want to choose a story that was negative because I wanted to start my frametale off with a positive feeling. This story seemed to do that and I also thought it would serve as a good inspiration for my main character, Stella.

I thought the most interesting part of the story was the inclusion of the dove. He was hardly spoken of, but he still played an important role in the story. That's why I chose to play up his character by giving him the part of the storyteller. It also surprised me to find out that the entire story wasn't about the orphan girl. Based on the title, I expected for the main character to be the girl so it came as a surprise to see the plot veer off course to focus on the Prince. I think that is an important element for my readers to recognize. I also would like my readers to realize the indirect connection between the orphan girl in the story and my main character, Stella. It's my attempt to provide a little inspiration to the main character.

There wasn't a lot that I altered and the length of the story remained the same. I did add some to the beginning and some to the end so that the story would fit appropriately into my frametale. The only thing I did change was the location of the string on each of the babies that were born. I de-emphasized the roles of the Queen and King in my retelling because I didn't think they were very important to the plot. I emphasized the role of the dove because he was important to the plot.

### Bibliography:

Story Title: The Saintly Orphan Girl

Story Websource: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/basque/bl/bl68.htm>

Book Title: Basque Legends

Author: Wentworth Webster

Year: 1879

## Student Handout 2

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## The Singing Tree, The Bird Which Tells the Truth, and the water that makes young

by: Elena Bagwell



"Little Box of Jewels"  
by: Andrew Waddington

*My final adventure brought me to San Sebastian,  
which is one of the most visited cities of the Basque  
region. It is a cosmopolitan city, but with an old*

## Student Handout 2

world flare that feeds any interest. My interest took me to a quaint little library that was said to house an ample collection of regional folklore. I didn't think there could be a better way to wrap up my trip than to indulge in the local literature. I grabbed a book, nestled into a cozy chair in a secluded part of the library, and ended my experience with the Basque culture the best way I could.

And so began the story of "The Singing Tree, the Bird Which Tells The Truth, and the Water That Makes Young."

A little bird told me of a time when there lived three

## Student Handout 2

sisters. The eldest sister dreamed to marry the king's servant, the middle sister wished to marry the king's son-in-law, and the youngest dreamed to marry the king himself. Only the wish of the youngest sister was granted when she married the king.

Over time the two sisters grew very jealous of their younger sister. Eventually, when the younger sister became pregnant they wrote a letter to the king, who was away on business, explaining that his wife had given birth to a cat. The king wrote back with wishes that the cat be taken care of as if it were a human child.

The younger sister became pregnant again and her sisters sent word to the king that his wife had given birth to a

## Student Handout 2

dog. However, the king still insisted that the dog be taken care of just as the cat had been.

By the younger sister's third pregnancy the two sisters told the king that his wife had given birth to a bear, and that they were certain that she dabbled with animals.

At this point the king became so angry that he ordered his wife to be put away in a dungeon underground and be given just enough food each day to survive. The king also ordered that the animal children be killed, but the sisters claimed they had already done so.

The truth of the matter was that the younger sister had given birth to three beautiful human babies, two boys and a girl that the older sisters had attempted to kill

## Student Handout 2

by putting each in a basket and depositing them in the river. Luckily, a gardener had found each of the baskets and raised the children with his wife. The family lived very happily and loved each other very much until the father and mother both died.

The three siblings continued to live together very happily until an old beggar stopped by their house and told them that they could never be truly happy until they had obtained three things. Those three things were a tree which sings, a bird which tells the truth, and water which makes things young again.

The sister was so upset at this comment that the eldest brother decided to set out to find these things. He gave her an apple and told her that if the apple began

## Student Handout 2

*to ripen it was a sign that he was in trouble, and that if the apple turned rotten then he was dead.*

*As he traveled the older brother came across a monk who warned him to retrace his steps because there were great dangers ahead. The brother ignored the monk and pursued until he came across another monk, who told him that if he proceeded he would never return. This monk told him that he would hear terrible cries all around him, and that if he turned his head to look he would be punished. The brother continued on and when he heard those cries he turned his head to look and was turned to stone.*

*The apple he gave his sister turned bad and rotted, at which moment the younger brother decided to set off to*

## Student Handout 2

find him. However, the same fate awaited the younger brother and when the apple he gave his sister rotted she was overcome with sorrow.

Not knowing what else to do she dressed herself up as a man to find her brothers. When she approached the second monk she realized that he was actually a great saint. He saw such a great amount of determination within her that he provided her a jug of water that makes things young again. The saint instructed her to sprinkle a drop on each stone that had once been her brothers, and that they would come back to life.

The girl passed through the cries unharmed and, constantly running, got to the top of the mountain that all the siblings were supposed to reach. At the top she

## Student Handout 2

heard an angelic song coming from a tree, and a bird landed on her shoulder that told her so many truths. Afterwards, she came across the stones that were her brothers and poured a drop of water on each one so that they came back to life. The three siblings returned home happily with the tree, the bird, and the water. Eventually, the king heard their story and the bird advised the siblings to invite the king over for dinner. The bird told the sister to lay out a fine table cloth and fill three dishes, one with lentils, one with parched peas, and the last with haricot beans. When the king arrived he was very surprised to hear the singing tree and the talking bird, but more surprised with how the family had received him (with lentils, parched peas,

**Student Handout 2**

*and haricot beans ), which he said was very strange.*

*At that moment, the bird spoke to the king:*

*"Is it not stranger to see this young woman pass for a cat. Is she a cat?"*

*The bird then pointed to the older brother and said:*

*"Is this a dog, this young man? Is that not more astonishing?"*

*Finally, the bird pointed to the younger son and spoke to the already confounded king:*

**Student Handout 2**

*"Is this a bear, this one? Is that not an astonishing thing?"*

*The king sat there in silence until the bird once again spoke.*

*"Is it not a shame to leave one's wife to live eighteen years in a dungeon underground?"*

*Once the king realized that the children were his they all went to free their mother. The sister brought with her the secret water and poured it over her mother, which made her eighteen years younger. The king condemned his wife's sisters to be burned alive in the*

## Student Handout 2

*market-place as their punishment. The king, the queen, and their children all lived joyfully.*

### *Author's Note:*

*I came across this story and fell in love with it instantly. I immediately knew that I had to include it. I wanted to place it at the end of my Storybook because I thought it had a really positive message. I like the idea of a younger sister saving her two older brothers by her determination, bravery, and love. I think this story sends a good message of family devotion. I also thought this story was very unique. The plotline is about a quest, which is always*

## Student Handout 2

entertaining and dramatic. The quest ends with a family reunited. There is also magic and animals, which gives the story a lot of flavor and diversity. I liked this story so much that I didn't want to change it drastically. I shortened it by leaving out a lot of the details that weren't necessary.

### Bibliography:

Story Title: *The Singing Tree, the Bird Which Tells the Truth, and the Water That Makes Young*

Story Webservice: [Story](#)

Book Title: *Basque Legends*

Author: *Wentworth Webster*

**Student Handout 2**

*Year: 1879*

### Student Handout 3

Area	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 Unacceptable
	Contains all slides and required graphics	Contains all slides and required graphics	Contains most of the slides and some required elements	Contains some slides and few required elements	No attempt made to complete the project
Slides	Slides are navigable, contain sound, all appropriate graphics, transitions and backgrounds	Slides are fairly navigable, contain sound, many appropriate graphics, transitions and backgrounds	Slides are sometimes navigable, contain little sound, few appropriate graphics, transitions, and backgrounds	Slides are not navigable, contain little or no sound, appropriate graphics, transitions, and backgrounds	
	Design and presentation are appealing	Design and presentation are somewhat appealing	Design and presentation are not very appealing	Design and presentation are not appealing	
Mechanics	Little or no grammatical and/or spelling errors, text entirely in author's own words	Few grammatical and/or spelling errors, most of text in author's own words	Several grammatical and/or spelling errors, text not in author's own words	Many grammatical and/or spelling errors, text not in author's own words.	
Content	Contains detailed, organized, and clear information about all aspects of the country researched	Contains organized and clear information about some aspects of the country researched with some detail	Contains information about the country researched with little detail, may not be clear and organized	Contains very little information about the country researched with no detail organization	



## Student Handout 5

# Personal Narrative Rubric

### Holistic Scoring Guide

#### Distinguished (A+)

- Establishes and maintains a clear focus
- Strong evidence of character and setting description
- Provides a message of life lesson
- Careful organization/order of events
- Uses colorful, vivid words
- Control of surface features

#### Proficient (A)

- Focused on a purpose
- Good evidence of character and setting description
- Provides insight
- Logical order of events
- Uses some vivid words
- Few spelling/grammar mistakes

#### Apprentice (B)

- An attempt to establish purpose
- Communicate with audience
- Some evidence of description
- No evidence of message
- Good organization of ideas
- Uses ordinary language
- Some spelling/grammar mistakes

#### Novice (C)

- Limited awareness of purpose
- No description
- No message
- Random/weak organization
- Ineffective wording
- Several spelling/grammar mistakes

## **Student Handout 6**

### **FLAN**

#### **Ingredients**

1. 3 cups whole milk
2. 7 eggs- 4 whole eggs, 3 egg yolks only
3. 1 and ½ cups sugar ( 1 cup for syrup- ½ cup for egg mixture)
4. 1 teaspoon pure vanilla
5. ¼ cup water

#### **Utensils**

1. 8x10 cake pan
2. blender
3. flan pan ( at least 6 cup capacity)

#### **Process**

1. Fill 8x10 cake pan ½ full of hot water and place in 300 degree oven.
2. Create syrup by boiling 1 cup sugar with ¼ cup water until caramelized to a medium brown in flan pan. Remove immediately from heat and roll caramel around flan pan to coat all sides. Set aside in shallow pan of cool water.
3. Scald 3 cups whole milk and set aside.
4. In blender mix 4 whole eggs, 3 egg yolks, ½ cup sugar and 1 teaspoon pure vanilla. Pour sugar in slowly and blend until all mixture is smooth and light in color. Then add scalded milk SLOWLY, and continue to blend until everything is mixed.
5. Pour entire mixture into caramelized flan pan and place in water bath in 8x10 cake pan in oven. Bake 2-2 and ½ hours, until knife inserted in center of mixture comes out clean.

#### **Serving**

1. Can be eaten warm or cold. Insert knife around outer edge of flan pan and invert in dish that has at least 1 and ½ inch high edges (i.e. pie dish).
2. Enjoy.

## Student Handout 7

### Basque Rice (serves 12-14)

#### Ingredients

- 2 cups long grain white rice
- 8 cups very hot chicken broth
- 1 cup cubed ham
- 1 ½ - 2 Basque chorizos; sliced in ¼ inch slices
- 1 large chicken breast cubed
- 1 cup medium-sized shrimp with or without shell
- 1 ½ cup small clams with shell (cleaned and rinsed night before)
- ¾ cup diced carrots
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 large clove garlic minced
- ½ cup frozen peas
- ½ cup diced green peppers
- ½ cup diced red peppers
- ⅓ cup olive oil
- 7-8 asparagus spears or 7-8 artichoke hearts

#### Utensils

- Very large frying pan, Dutch oven, or preferably a large “paellera”
- Wooden spoon

#### Process

- Place ⅓ cup olive oil in pan and heat over medium heat. Add and sauté 1 cup diced onion, ¾ cups carrots, ½ cup diced green peppers, ½ cup diced red peppers and garlic. Stir with wooden spoon while sautéing, about 5 minutes. Then add diced chicken breasts and continue sautéing for 4 minutes. Next, add chorizo, ham, 1 cup shrimp and the clams and continue sautéing another 5 minutes, while occasionally stirring. Then, add 2 cups rice and ½ cup frozen peas. Continue sautéing for 3-4 minutes more, while stirring slowly. Finally, add 8 cups very hot chicken broth and stir to mix all ingredients well. Bring to a boil and either reduce heat to low and continue cooking slowly until done, or place in 400° oven and bake for 25 minutes. Approximately 5 minutes before done, garnish with the other ½ cup shrimp and 7-8 asparagus spears or artichoke hearts. Allow to finish baking or simmering.
- Let stand for 10 minutes and then serve immediately.

## Student Handout 8

<http://www.cd.sc.edu.es/DOCS/book.SS-G/v2/Gastronomy.html>

### GASTRONOMY

An important part of Basque cuisine's good reputation is due to its ability to take advantage of its widely known culinary tradition. On this basis, it has been able to develop towards a varied high-quality new cuisine.

The many good restaurants and gastronomical societies founded in the Basque Country are a testimony to the enjoyment Basque people get from good food, and their fondness for cultivating the traditions of good cooking.



Atmosphere in a typical gastronomical society (La Unión Artesana)

For some people **gastronomical societies** are the best example of good eating habits; they are traditional meeting places, whose members compete to make delicious dishes for the others. Their members have also collaborated in preserving and recovering old recipes, as well as giving a new approach to cooking, by giving a new status to dishes of humble origin, but of high culinary merit. Until recent times admission to gastronomical societies was not open to women, except on the eve of St. Sebastián's Day, the city's patron saint. This anachronistic custom, still upheld in the most traditional societies, has been abolished in many of them. Nevertheless, the traveller who wishes to visit a gastronomical society would have to be invited by a member, because that is the only way to gain admission.



Members of the New Basque Cuisine.

On the other hand, Gipuzkoa has a great variety of different types and categories of restaurants, most of them offering high-quality food. Owing perhaps to the gastronomical societies, restaurants in San Sebastián show the influence of the traditional Basque cuisine in their simple and tasty home-made dishes. The combination of those two types of cooking have resulted in what is known as the New Basque Cuisine. Following the path of other modern cuisine, the New Basque Cuisine is based on seasonal fresh food, that is market oriented. The introduction of puff pastry, cream-based sauces, and exquisite dish presentation, clearly defines a style that lovers of good food always find in San Sebastián.

No traveller visiting Gipuzkoa should miss tasting some of the most characteristic dishes from its cuisine. To help him make a selection, we shall mention some of these dishes.

## Student Handout 8

Delicious fresh fish dishes, cooked in such a way as to enhance their own flavour, can be savoured in the restaurants along the coastal strip in Gipuzkoa. Although sea bream and hake are the two most popular dishes, there is a great variety of other fish to please every palate. We shall start with **hake** (*Merlanus Merlanus*: european hake/european whiting). Connoisseurs prefer hake fished with a fishing line, because it bleeds to death, leaving the flesh in the very best condition, while a trawler-caught hake dies by drowning, and so macerates inside the net. Hake with a green sauce is the most usual way of cooking it. The sauce is thickened by emulsifying the oil with the juice from the fish, once it has been warmed; flour is not added. Many prefer the side closer to the head known as the nape. There is nothing tastier than hake's nape with clams and barbels.

On the other hand, grilled **sea bream** topped with lightly fried garlic is one of the favourites dishes in the seaside restaurants. **Anchovies** (the best come in spring) and **sardines** are grilled too. Many people, who visited San Sebastián a long time ago, come back with the memory of sardines and anchovies grilled that way in the typical little restaurants close to the port.

Basque people like **cod** very much. It seems that in the Middle Ages they discovered cod banks in Newfoundland, and developed a method of drying and salting the fish, which has survived up to the present times. It has been said that, until some years ago, cod was a poor man's food. Today it is a favourite dish, whether it is made "pil-pil" (with garlic sauce), or with "vizcaina" sauce (red peppers and tomato sauce).

**Small squids** (chipirones) in their own ink have the reputation of being the only black dish in the world. That is why it revolts people who see it for the first time. In summer, the little boats with white sails that catch them can be seen from the Paseo Nuevo in San Sebastián.

Summer is also the **tuna** season. "*Marmitako*", a stew with pieces of tuna potatoes, peppers and tomatoes, was a dish of humble origins, made in the small trawlers' kitchens. It is very nourishing, and it takes its name from the pot ("*marmita*") in which it is cooked.

**Baby eels** (angulas) is one of the most expensive and best liked dishes of all; strangely enough, other Europeans do not seem to like them at all. They are the elvers or young of the fish that swim back up the rivers from the Sargasso Sea. Cooked pil-pil style, they are best liked by the people from San Sebastián to celebrate dinner on the eve of St. Sebastián's Day (January 19th), and on other festivities. But owing to their growing shortage, the price of elvers is getting far too high for the majority of people's pockets. It has been stated that future generations will not get to know this delicious dish.

We do not have enough space to speak about the large number of dishes that can be savored in the restaurants along the coast, but we shall mention at least the typical fish soap, as well as the **backed crab** (*txangurro*), among the long list of sea food.

## Student Handout 8



Beans and corn, the traditional ingredients of Basque cuisine.

Apart from fish, there is a great variety of delicious vegetables, pulses, meat, mushroom dishes, ect. Among the pulses we have to mention the **black beans from Tolosa**. You can cook them slowly on the stove for many hours in an earthenware cooking pot, to which salami and pork rib have been added. They can be savoured in any restaurant, but the best ones are found in farmhouses and in restaurants located in rural areas.

Concerning meat-dishes, it is worth mentionin roast lamb. Ox steaks are very typical of the cider bars as we will see later on.

It is time for dessert, and one cannot leave San Sebastián without tasting the **frangipane tart** (franchipan) with cream and almonds that can be eaten warm. And we cannot forget the traditional curd made with ewe's milk that can be taken either with sugar or with honey.



Traditional cheese production Ixidro Legorburu from Idiazabal.

For those who love cheese, **Idiazabal cheese** made entirely with ewe's milk, and slightly smoked. will be an interesting discovery. According to your own taste, you can choose either new or milder, or dry, which is more mature and stronger in flavour.

Food is served with two delicious local beverages; a slightly sharp **cider**, mainly from the Astigarraga and Usurbil area, and **txakoli**, a dry sharp-tasting with wine, produced mainly in Getaria and Zarautz. But a rosé from Navarre, or a wine from Rioja, both very much liked by the Basque people, can also be drunk with any of the dishes.

If you visit Gipuzkoa from the end of January to the beginning of April you can enjoy a new experience by going to a cider bar. Cider has always been brewed on the Basque farms for home use since ancient times, and it is also brewed in the cider bars for sale. It seems that clients traditionally used to go to the cider bars to taste the cider stored in the big barrels, before they chose the one they wanted to be bottled for them. They used to eat cod omelette, and a grilled ox or steak to help them not to get too merry. Today the same menu can be savoured in the many cider bars located in Gipuzkoa, together with as much cider as anyone wants to taste out of the open barrels; for dessert Idiazabal cheese and nuts. In view of their success in recent years, there are some cider bars that have menus similar to those offered by any other restaurant. In general, neither a polished service nor too much tidiness should be expected (one should remember that cider bars are cider factories too); a lively din and a good atmosphere, on the other hand, can be relied upon.

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