



# Gaztelugatxeko San Juan

*Saint John of Gaztelugatx*





Gaztelugatxeko San Juan edo Doniene Euskal Herriko itsas santutegirik garrantzitsuena da. Mendeetan zehar Bizkaiko biztanleen peregrinazio tokia izan da, gehien bat inguruko herriko arrantzaleena.

Idazle erromantikoek, XIX. mendean, soberania nazionalaren sinbolotzat hartu zuten, irlaren tontorretik egin zen borrokagaitik Bizkaiko independentziaren alde.

Basatia eta edertasunez betea dugu Matxitxakoko lurmuturreko mendebaldea, gure kostako nabarmenena, Akatz eta Gaztelugatxeko irlak bereiztuz bereziki. Azken hau, begi biko harrizko zubi baten bidez dago lurrera loturik. Penintsula gainean San Juan bateatzaileari, bere martirioan edo lepo mozketan, eskeinitako ermita bat dago. Ermitara heltzeko 231 harri maila igo behar dira, tradizioak dioenez antzina 365 izan ziren: *“urtiek egunek dekosen beste eskillarak egon ziren”*.

*Saint John of Gaztelugatx is the Basque Country's most renowned maritime sanctuary. Over the centuries, it has been one of the most important pilgrimage destinations on the coast of Bizkaia, particularly for sailors.*

*In the 19th century, Romantic writers, recalling the heroic defence of Bizkaia's independence from the top of the crag, claimed it as a symbol of national sovereignty.*

*West of Cape Matxitxako, the most protruding point on our coastline, is rugged and beautiful and the islets of Akatz and Gaztelugatx stand out. The latter is linked to the mainland by a dual-span stone bridge making it a peninsula on which the chapel dedicated to the martyrdom or beheading of St. John the Baptist stands. To get there, it is necessary to climb 231 steps, although tradition maintains that in the past there were as many steps as there are days in a year, or in other words 365.*





## San Juan Lepamoztuari kultoa

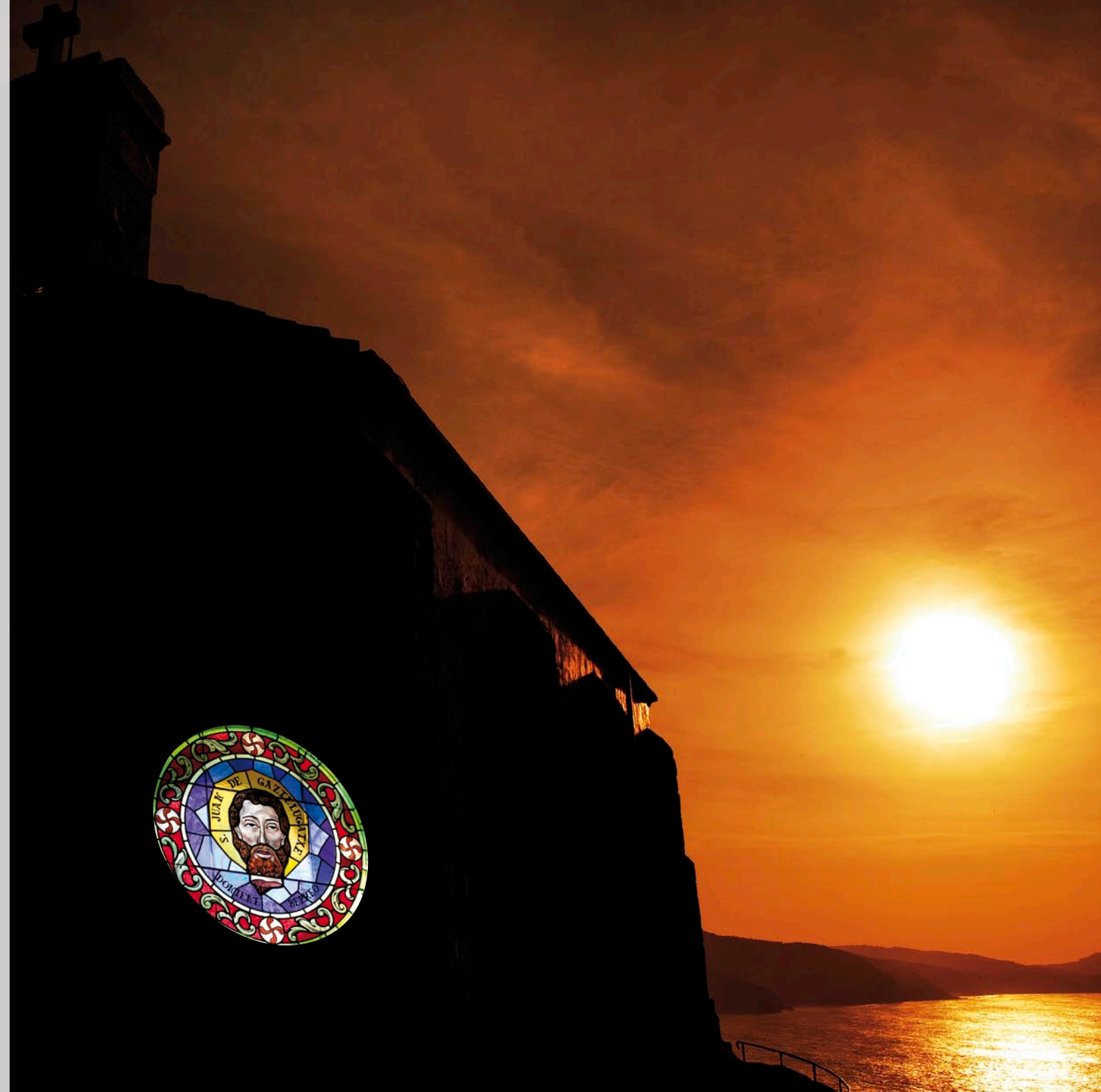
Eleiza katolikoak San Juanen jaiotza ekainaren 24ean ospatzen du eta bere martirioa abuztuaren 29an. Juan Bateatzailea Herodesen aginduz dekapitatu zuten, eta bere burua, bandeja batetan jarri ondoren, Herodiadesen alabari eman zioten. Kontakizun santu batek dioenez, Herodesek Bateatzailearen berpiztuerari bildur zion, burua eta gorpua batera lurperatuak baldin baziren, horregatik lurperatu zuen gorpua Makeronte-ko gotorlekuan eta burua Jerusalem-eko errege jauregiaren harresien azpian.

Erdi Aroko kronika miraritsuen arabera, burua, gorabehera askoren ondoren Akitaniaraino heldu zen. Bateatzailearen buruaren aurkezpena 1010. urtean egin zen Saint Jean d'Angély-n herrian, La Rochelle-tik kilometro batzuetara. Urte horretatik aurrera Bateatzailearen buruari kultua zabaltzen joan zen. Nafarroako erreinuan Santxo Handia erregeak, 1025. urtean, San Juan de la Peña monastegia sortu zuen Pirinioetan, Jaka inguruko ermitainu gune zahar baten gainean.

## Worship of St. John beheading

*The Catholic Church commemorates the birth of St. John the Baptist on 24 June, coinciding with the summer solstice, and his martyrdom on 29 August. Herod ordered the beheading of St. John and his head was handed to the daughter of Herodias on a platter. According to pious legend, fearing the resurrection of the Baptist if his head and body were buried together, Herod ordered the body to be buried in the fortress of Machaerus and the head in Jerusalem, under the walls of the royal palace.*

*Medieval chronicles, believing in miracles, assume that the severed head ended up in Aquitaine, following numerous vicissitudes. The head of the Baptist was presented in 1010 in the town of Saint-Jean-d'Angély, a few kilometres from La Rochelle (France). From this year, the worship of the head of the Baptist spread. In Navarre, King Sancho the Great created the Monastery of San Juan de la Peña in 1025 on a primitive hermitage church.*







## Fundazioa

Hogeitazortzi urte beranduago, 1053. urtean, Bizkaiko jaunak Pirinotako monastegi famatuari tenplu hau eskeini zion. Tenplua jatorrizko dokumentuan *Sancti Iohannis de Castiello* izendapenarekin agertzen da, “*in territorio de Bakio eta alia parte de Bermeio*” kokatuta. Ondorengo dokumentuetan, premonstratense ordenari eskeintzen zaionean, *Sanctus Iohannes de Penna* deitzen zaio. Mendeetan zehar *San Juan de la Peña*, izenarekin jarraitu du edo antzekoekin: *Archivo Segreto Vaticano*-an, *Sancti Iohannis Baptiste de la Pennya* izenarekin aurkitu dugu XV. mendean. *San Juan de Gaztelugach* eta *San Juan de Gaztelugache* izenak dokumentuetan ez dira agertzen XVIII. mende arte. *Doniene* beste izendapen herrikoia da, ziurrenez *Done Iohannes* (“San Juan”) arkaiko baten kontrakzioa izango da.

Tenpluaren imajina agurgarriena San Juanen burua da, bandeja baten gainean jarrita. Irudi hau beti egon da ohorezko lekuan, erretaula nagusiaren erdian, eta orain absidearen jarritako itsasontzi baten brankaganean.



San Juan de la Peña (Huesca)

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## The Foundation

*Twenty-eight years later, in 1053, the Lords of Bizkaia donated this temple to the famous Monastery in the Pyrenees. In the original document, it appears by the name of Sancti Iohannis de Castiello located “in territorio de Bakio et alia parte de Bermeio”. In later documents, when it was donated to the Premonstratensian Order, it was called Sanctus Iohannes de Penna. Over the centuries, it has kept the name of San Juan de la Peña or similar names such as Sancti Iohannis Baptiste de la Pennya, which has been found in documentation of the Archivo Segreto Vaticano dating back to the 15th century. The names of San Juan de Gaztelugach and San Juan de Gaztelugache do not appear in documentation until the 18th century. Another popular name for the sanctuary is Doniene, which is possibly the abbreviation of an archaic Done Iohannes which means “St. John”.*

*The most revered image in the temple is the head of St. John placed on a platter. This image has always held a place of honour, presiding over the main altarpiece and it is now placed by way of the figurehead of a fishing vessel that has been situated in the apse, above the altar.*







## Historia

“Monastegi” edo Erdi Aroko eleiza izatetik komentu premonstratense bat izatera pasatu zen XII. mendean. Fraileek 1330. urtean komentua utzi eta dokumentazio guztia, santutegiaren erlikiak eta bitxiak Salamancara eraman zituzten eta galdu egin ziren.

Inioz ez da izan tenplarioren eleiza edo gomendioa. Baina, nire ustez, Tenplaren Ordenarekin zerikusi euki ahal du, bere kideen sarraskien ostean (1307-1314) tenplarioen altxorra eta La Rochelle-ko flota desagertu eta gero.

1334.ean Alfonso XI.a errege gaztelarrak Bizkaiko Jaureria Juan Nuñez de Lara jaunari kentzen saiatu zen. Jaunak Gaztelugatxeko haitzan egin zuen defentsa indarra, bertan inguratuta egonik ekaina eta uztailean zehar. Azkenik, errege gaztelarrak, aurkakoak garaitu ezin zituela konturatuz, armistizio bat sinatu eta bere tropak erretiratu zituen.

1596.ean, Bermeo eta Izaro atakatu zuen flotatxo franko-ingeleseko soldadu batzuk San Juanera igo ziren. Hauek bitxiak lapurtu, bateatzailearen imajina bota eta ermitainua haitzetatik behera jaurtiki zuten, itsasoraino zatika eroriz. Ondorengo atake piratak ere, 1782.ekoa adibidez, botin urria eskuratu zuten.

XIX. mendean egoera tamalgarria zen, 1808an botatzen saiatu zirelarik. Dena den, azkenik ez zuten 1886. urteraino behera bota, antzinako eraikina apurtuz eta gaur egungo eleiza eraikiz, balore artistiko eta historiko gutxikoa.

## History

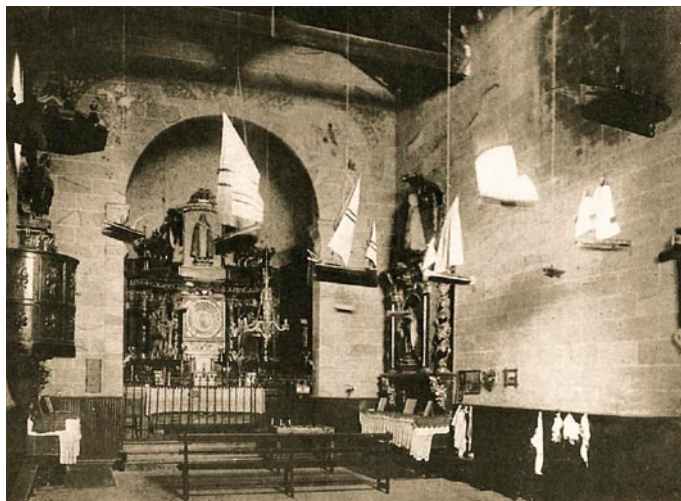
From “monastery” or medieval church, it became a Premonstratensian convent in the 12th century. The monks abandoned it in around 1330, taking all of the sanctuary’s documentation, relics and jewels to Salamanca, of which nothing remains.

It has never been a temple or possession of the Templar Order, although I believe that it may have been indirectly related to the Order of the Temple following the fierce extermination of its members (1307-1314) and the disappearance of the Templar treasure and fleet based in La Rochelle.

In 1334, the Castilian King Alfonso XI attempted to usurp the position of Lord of Bizkaia from D. Juan Nuñez de Lara, who rebelled and entrenched himself on the rock of Gaztelugatx. The King of Castile besieged it in June and July. Unable to defeat the rebels, he signed an armistice with them and finally withdrew his troops.

In 1596, some soldiers from the Franco-English fleet that attacked Bermeo town and Izaro island went up to San Juan, stole the treasures, demolished the image of the Baptist and threw the hermit off the cliff, smashing him to pieces against the rocks. Later pirate attacks, such as that of 1782, took away a small amount of loot.

It was in such a poor condition in the 19th century that an attempt was made to demolish it in 1808, although this did not happen until 1886, destroying the former construction and building the present chapel, which is of little historic or artistic value.



1917





## Erromeriak

Udaro, milaka pertsona hurbiltzen dira San Juanera eskualde guztietako herrietatik, giro lasaitu eta alai batean behar diren errituak betetzeko. Ermitara heldu eta gero, ohitura da kanpaia jotzea. Ondorioz, kanpai sokaren azpian egun guztian zehar etengabe jotzen diharduten peregrino multzo izugarriak bilduz. Erromesak meza entzun eta gero, herrira itzuli baino lehen, Do-niene eskapularioak eta betiko erroskilak erosten dituzte.

Ekainak 24an egiten den erromeri famatuenera joaten diren gehienak bermeotarrak izaten dira, barrukaldeko herrietatik ere hainbat etorri arren. Goiz goizetik hasi eta milaka pertsona pasatzen dira ordurik ordura ematen diren mezetatik, lehena goizaldeko sei t'erdietan dutela. Ohitura izan da Olbizarretan (Urizarretan) eguerdikoa jan eta Bakiora jeitea. Arratsalde erdian Bermeora itzultzen da, Arenen geldiune bat eginez. Amaiera Bermeoko herrian ospatzen da jaigiroan, berandu arte.

Uztailaren 31an ere beste erromeria bat egoten da. Oraingo honetan Arrietatik ateratzen da goizaldean Ama Birjinaren irudi bat prozesioan eramanez. Oinez Sollubeko bizkarretik ibili ondoren, Mañuko Karmengo Birginaren eleizan eta San Pelaioko eleizan geldialdia egiten dute, eta hemendik San Juanera jeitsi.

Abuztuaren 29an bakiotarrek Eneperiko jaiak ospatzen dute, talde handitan joanez santutegira. Egun honetan ere Bermeoko Udaletxeak tenpluari bisita egin eta azken urtean jasotako berrien Akta egiten du, irlaren jabetza baieztatuz.



2007.08.29

## Pilgrimages

*Every summer, pilgrimages or processions are made to the chapel from villages around the region, attracting thousands of people who perform the established rituals in a relaxed and festive atmosphere. Upon arrival at the chapel, the custom is to ring the bell, forming queues of pilgrims under the belfry, ringing it throughout the festive day. The pilgrims attend mass and many of them purchase scapulars of St. John as well as the traditional doughnut before leaving.*

*The most multitudinous procession, on 24 June, attracts pilgrims mainly from Bermeo, although pilgrims also arrive from other inland villages. From dawn, thousands of people pass over the rock, where masses are celebrated every hour from half past six in the morning. It has been traditional to have lunch in Urizarreta (also known as Olbizarrak), go down to Bakio, and return to Bermeo in the middle of the afternoon, stopping in Arene and continuing the festivities in the village well into the early hours.*

*On 31 July, another pilgrimages heads for Gaztelugatx. This time it leaves Arrieta town at dawn, carrying an image of the Virgin and climbs Mount Sollube on foot, stopping at the Church of the Karmel Virgin of Mañu and at the Church of St. Pelayo, from where it heads down to St. John.*

*On 29 August, the Eneperi Festival is celebrated by the people of Bakio who travel en masse to the chapel. It is also the date fixed by Bermeo Town Hall to make its annual visit to the temple and take the minutes of new events over the past year, hence reiterating the sovereignty over the rock.*

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2005.06.24



## Kanpai hotsak

Antzina kanpaiak beheko partean egon ziren, harrizko arku batetik dindilizka. XIX. mendean egin ziren obreekin, kanpaia orain dagoen lekuan jarri zen, ate nagusiaren gainean. Tradizioak eskatzen du kanpaia jotzea santutegira heltzen danean. Gizon-emakume zahar batzuk dinoie *Pater Nosterra* erreza-tzen dan artean jo behar dela kanpaia. Beste batzuk hamahiru bider jotzen dute, baina, gehienak, hiru biderrez bakarrik jotzen dute.

Meza ematen denean kanpaia ez da jo behar.

## Bell Ringing

*In the past, the bells were located at floor level, hanging from a stone arch. Following the works carried out in the late 19th century, it was placed on the belfry on the temple's façade. Tradition says that the bell must be rung upon arrival at the sanctuary. Some informants tell me that the Lord's Prayer was recited whilst the bell rang and it did not cease to sound until the prayer was finished. Others ring the bell thirteen times and most ring it three times, particularly when there are a lot of people.*

*The bell must not be touched when mass is being celebrated.*





## San Juan Portale eta San Juanen oñotzak

Doniene eta Bermeoko herria lotzen duen zilbor heztea, antzinako kaltzada, harresi zaharraren portalean hasten da, *San Juan Portale*-an. Horren azpian, oraindik, oin itxurako zulo bat duen harri bat daukagu, San Juanek berak utzi zuen oinotza egindakoa herriko jendearen ustez. Santuak, Bermeoko portuan lurreratu ondoren, hiru pausu emanaz iritsi omen zen Gaztelugatxera, lau oin aztarna utziz: “*San Juanek leelau leelau imin zauen kaderie Morondon, arkupien. Gero imin zauen kaderie Arenen, itxurri zelan dauen Salomeneko beko partien, an leelengo kaderie. Bigarrena Martin Koixoneko mendijjen, an Landatxuen, Landako beko partien, da irugarrena San Juanen. Zelako oñek okin sauen San Juanek!*”.

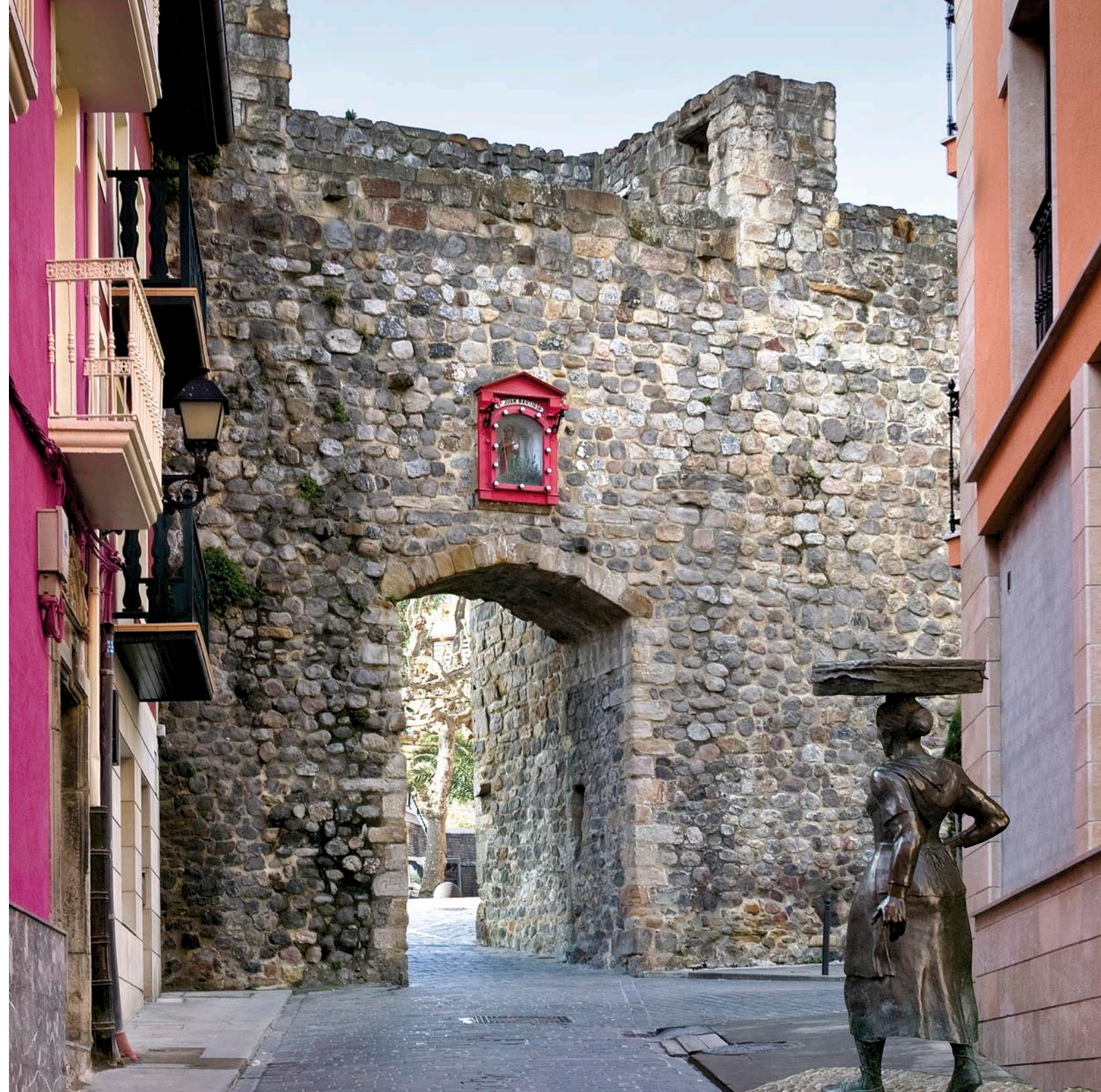
1980garren hamarkadan, Burgoko kaltzada galdu ondoren, oin aztarna bat jarri genuen egungo bidearen ondoan, gutxi gora behera Matxitxako lurmuturra pasata, santutegia lehenengoz ikusten den tokian. San Juan Portalekoa berria jarri zan eta Burgokoa, santutegian bertan ipini zan eta holan, San Juanen hiru pauso eta lau oinotzak mantendu egin dira.



### *The Gateway and the Footsteps of St. John*

*The umbilical cord that links the sanctuary to Bermeo town, the old road, begins at the gateway of the walls, popularly known as San Juan Portale. Under the Gate of St. John, there is still a stone with a hole in the shape of a foot, which, according to local legend, represents the footprint left by St. John (San Juanen oñotza). Upon arrival in the port of Bermeo, the Saint reached the top of the rock in three big steps or strides: the first from the gate in the walls to the neighbourhood of Arene, the second to close to Mount Burgó and the third to the rock of Gaztelugatx.*

*In the 1980s, having lost the layout of the road to Burgo, we placed a footmark alongside the present road, just after going round Cape Matxitxako, exactly in the place where the chapel comes into view for the first time. The stone of the first step and the stone of Burgo, which has the name of Saint John etched on it, were renewed and placed in the chapel as the last step of the staircase. In this way, the line of the three steps and four footprints of the saint have been maintained.*







### **Arrantzaren aldeko erritualak**

Uda hasieran edo udazkenean, atunaren kosteraren hasiera eta amaierarekin batera, itsasontzietako neskatilak eta arrantzaleen senideen taldeak San Juanera joaten dira arrantza on baten eskatzeko.

Bermeoko itsasontzi berrien bedeinkazio edo “*bautisue*” ere Gaztelugatx aurrean egiten da. Fraile edo abadeak untzia bedeinkatzeko bazter guztiak zeharkatzen ditu, ur bedeinkatua isuriz eta beragaz gurutzeak eginez toki guztietan. Ospakizun erlijiosoa bukatzean, itsasontziak hiru zirkulo ematen ditu itsasoan eta ondoren, gaur egun nahiko isilean, errito magikoa hau egiten da: sartagin baten gainean San Juan besperan batutako “*San Juan kargillie*” ipintzen da, sua ematen zaio, eta sartagina, belar sorta eta guzti, kareletik itsasora botatzen da. Batzuk, jarraian, txanpoiak itsasora bota egiten dituzte itsasontziak sorte ona euki dezan.

### ***Propitiatory Rituals for Fishing***

*At the beginning of the summer or in autumn, coinciding with the beginning and end of the tuna-fishing season, it is common for groups of wives or relatives of fishermen to go to San Juan to ask for a good catch.*

*The blessing or “baptism” of new vessels from Bermeo is also carried out in front of the rock. The officiating monk or priest blesses the vessel by visiting its quarters, sprinkling them with holy water and making the sign of the cross. Upon conclusion of the religious ceremony, the vessel makes three circles in the sea and discretely proceeds to the next magical ceremony: the “San Juan posy” (San Juan kargillie) which has been picked on the night of Saint John is placed on a frying pan, set alight and the burning frying pan and posy of plants is thrown overboard into the sea. Then some of those present throw coins into the sea to ask for good fishing for the vessel.*



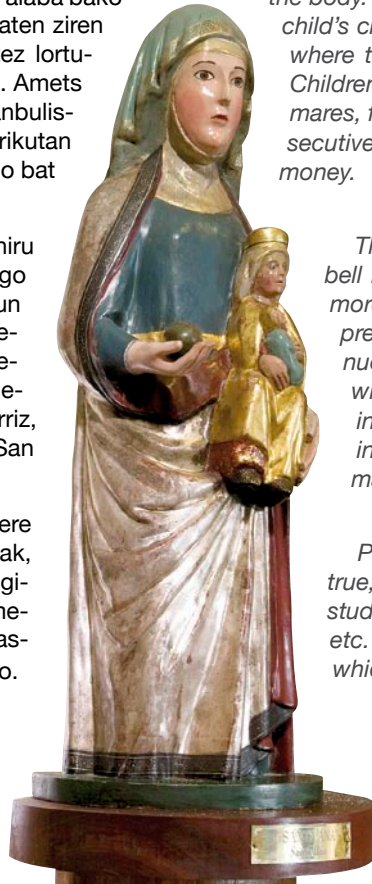


## Herritar medikuntza

Santutegira arima garbitzeko joateaz aparte, gorputzaren gaitzak sendatzeko ere joaten zen jendea. Seme alaba bako emakumeak santutegiko Santa Ana-rengana joaten ziren umeen erropa edo gauza bategaz. Bere bitartez lortu-tako umeak “benturara” bataiatzen ziren bertan. Amets geixotasunak sufritzen zituzten umeek (sonanbulismoa, amets gaiztoak, gau beldurrak) hiru barikutan jarraian eramaten zituzten San Juanera, errosario bat errezatu eta limosna bat eskeiniz.

Buruko min ugariak dituztenak, kanpaia hiru sortan jotzen zuten, azpian kokaturik, eskurago zegoenean. Buruko mina ez eukiteko, gaur egun arte heldu den ohitura, kanpai jotzea izen da, kredo bat errezatzen den artean. Tartar egiten zutenek San Juani, ukubilan gorde zezaketen mone-dak eskeintzen zioten. Kailuak zituztenek, berri-z, euren oinak ermitarako bidean zehar dauden San Juanen “oinen” aztarnetan sartzen zituzten.

Era guztietako promesak eta eskakizunak ere egiten dira, pertsonalak, familiarrak, ikasketenak, itsasontzietarako, enpresentzako, negozioak, gi-zartearen aldekoak, eta abar. Aipamen berezia me-rezi dute “arimieri” buruzko sineskerak, hemen as-ku ahal dira eta hemetik zerura igotzen direlako.



## Folk-Medicine

*The sanctuary has been visited to purify the soul and heal the body. Women who could not bear children took a piece of child's clothing or another object to the image of Santa Ana, where they worshipped, later baptising them “as chance”. Children suffering from sleep disorders (sleepwalking, night-mares, fear of the dark) were taken to St. John on three consecutive Fridays, where they said the rosary and left some money.*

*Those who suffered from frequent headaches rang the bell in three series, standing underneath it, when it was more accessible. A custom that has continued to the present day, to prevent headaches, consists of continuously ringing the bell whilst reciting a Creed. People with a stammer offered the coins that they could hold in a fist to St. John. Those who suffered from corns inserted their feet into the “footprints” of the Saint that mark the way to the chapel.*

*Promises are made to visit the chapel if wishes come true, and all kinds of requests are made: personal, family, studies, help, for vessels, companies, businesses, social, etc. It has also been related to troubled souls (arimiek), which may be freed and rise to heaven from here.*



## Gaztelugatxeko Babespeko Biotopoa

Kostaldearen eremu honek paisaia-multzo bikaina osotzen du. Azpimarratzeko dira itsasoaren hondoak, alga handiarekin (*Laminaria* spp.), *Gelidium sesquipedale*, labarretako landareri bereziak (*Armeria euskariensis* eta *Olea europaea* var. *sylvestris*), lanpernak, arrain mota asko eta itsasoko hegaztiak (kormorana, hanka horidun kaioa, ohiko painoa eta abar). Gaztelugatx aldeko itsasoak, lurrak, landareria eta fauna konserbatzeko, Babestutako Biotopo deklaratu zen (EHAA, 229/1998 Dekretoa). Bizkaiko Foru Aldundiari dagokio Biotopoen kudeaketa eramatea.

## Protected Biotope of Gaztelugatx

*This stretch of the coast forms an excellent landscape. The seabed stands out, with algin (*Laminaria* spp.), *Gelidium sesquipedale*, interesting cliff vegetation (*Armeria euskariensis* and *Olea europaea* var. *sylvestris*), goose barnacles, many species of fish and seabirds (cormorant, yellow-legged gull, storm petrel, etc). To conserve and protect the landscape, flora and fauna of the area of Gaztelugatx, it has been declared a Protected Biotope (BOPV – Official Journal of the Basque Country, Decree 229/1998). Management of the Biotope corresponds to the Regional Government of Bizkaia.*



## Santutegiaren ondamena 1978.ean

Gaztelugatxeko eleizak izan duen azken gertakizun penagarriena 1978.eko urriaren 10ean eginiko erretea izan da. Sakrilegioaren egileek santuaren burua haitzetatik behera bota zuten, egun batzuk geroago bertan aurkituaz. Jarraian talde handi batek, gehienak bermeotarrak, "Doniene Berreraikiaren Aldeko Komisia = Comisión Pro Reconstrucción de San Juan" taldea sortu zuten. Bi urte baino gutxiagoko epean, santutegia berregitea lortu zuten, 1980. urteko ekainaren 24an inauguratuz.

Bere misioa bete ondoren, komisioko hiru kideek eta "Doniene Santutegiko Zaintzaile Taldea = Comisión de Mantenimiento del Santuario de San Juan de Gaztelugatxe" taldea sortu zen. Ordutik, eleiza eta bere kultureko mantentze lanak egiteaz gain, inguruko berritze eta hobetzekoak ere egin dituzte. Komisioko bultzatzaileetako bat D. Ramón Mendizabal abadea izan zen, 1993.eko abenduaren 30an hil zena. Urtero eta egun horretan, Gaztelugatxeko San Juaneko lagunak eta kolaboratzaile hildako guztien aldeko meza bat ospatzen da.



1990



2006

## Destruction of the Sanctuary in 1978

The latest incident suffered by the church of Gaztelugatx was a fire started deliberately on 10 October 1978. Those responsible for the sacrilege hurled the revered head of the Saint onto the rocks, where it was found some days later. A large group of people, mainly from Bermeo, immediately set up the "Saint John Pro-Reconstruction Committee" which, in less than two years, rebuilt the sanctuary, opening it on 24 June 1980.

Once its mission was fulfilled, this Committee was dissolved, and the "Committee for the Upkeep of the Sanctuary of Saint John of Gaztelugatx = Doniene Santutegiko Zaintzaile Taldea" was set up, which has dedicated these years to the maintenance of the chapel and its worship, as well as making improvements and cleaning up the area. One of the founders of this Committee was the priest, Father Ramón Mendizabal, who died on 30 December 1993, the date on which a commemorative mass is held for all the friends and collaborators of St. John of Gaztelugatx who have passed away.



1980.06.24



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Bermeo, 2008

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## **ELIZKIZUNAK / *WORSHIP AND MASS TIMES***

### **Ekainak 24 June (San Juan)**

06:30, 07:30, 08:30, 09:30, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 13:30 and 18:00.

### **Uztailak 31 July (San Ignacio)**

11:00 and 12:00.

### **Abuztuak 29 August (Eneperi)**

11:00, 12:00 and 13:00.

### **Abenduak 30 de December**

17:00.

