

Whether you are heading south to Spain or heading for the Pyrenees, Bayonne is a good option to change trains or switch to a coach, especially if you have a thing for chocolate and/or piment-cured pork.



## Strolls

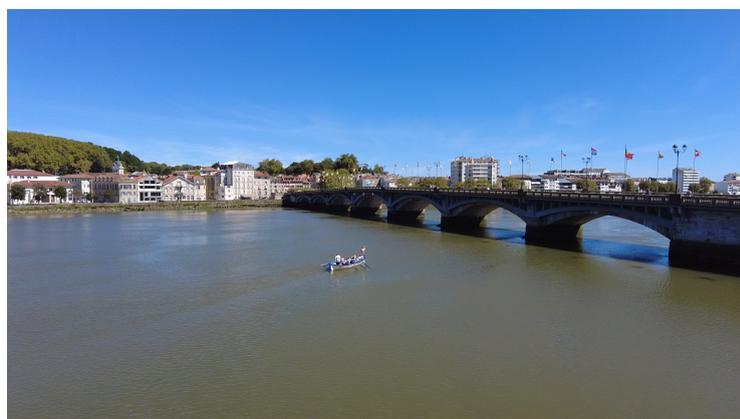
- [A wander around Bayonne \(3.5km blue\)](#)
- [Japanese Garden and Ramparts \(1km red\)](#)

## Interactive Map

Here is a [link to a map](#) that can help you find your bearings.



some freshly griddled squid or mussels and a cold beer - while marvelling at the clever bod who thought to build the station with a clock tower tall enough to see the time from the other side of the river.



*River Adour*

The place also has a statue of Charles Lavigerie who as the garb suggests was a priest, but it's odd that he is holding a cross rather than a glass of wine. He was best known in his day for the '[Toast of Algiers](#)' in 1890. At that time, the country was in deep turmoil with the Church wanting to get rid of the godless/secular State - meanwhile the State seemed quite keen to see the back of the church. At a reception in Algiers, he persuaded the two warring sides to come together to work on something they all agreed on, which was colonising Africa.



*Charles Lavigerie*



*l'Echauguette*

And while that might not be something we would want to toast today, his vehement opposition to slavery and human trafficking, did at least provide something approaching a moral compass.

Incidentally, the big fortress back on the other side of the river is the [Citadelle](#), designed by [Vauban](#), and still in military use as the base for the 1st Parachute Regiment.

Carry on down Rue Victor Hugo to the tall narrow lanes of the old town, which stay comfortably cool in the height of summer. The houses are also protected from the elements by their vibrant maroon shutters, which are something of a Basque feature across both sides of the border.



*Townhouses*



*Cathedral*

Continue to the right up Rue Argenterie and to the Cathedral (3), which is well worth a nosey inside for its 16th Century stained-glass windows and several lovingly restored frescoes.

Then, continue up Rue Notre Dame and then turn right on to Rue des Gouverneurs. The first street on your left (Pl. du Château Vieux) takes you up to the top of the ramparts, but you could instead follow the next left down to the Japanese Garden (see red route below).

Walk to the end of Place du Château Vieux and turn left. You are now on top of the ramparts with views over the parkland to your right and, after all the orderliness of the town, a pleasingly higgledy-piggledy row of houses to your left. See if you can work out the numbering system for the houses - it might make sense in a parallel dimension.



*Place du Château Vieux*

Turn left down Rue des Prébendes and then right on to Rue des Faures (5). This is where the town's iron foundries were located, making daggers that could be attached to muskets - also known as ... bayonets. These days, it's a high-end home to pre-loved books and clothes shops. At the end, take a sharp right and then cross Place Montaut onto Rue Montaut where we come to the Cloister.

If you are wondering how hip this part of town is, just around the corner there's a cafe where you can listen to records on your own record player while you drink macchiatos (6).

Follow the walls of the cloister on to Rue du Luc and then wiggle left onto Rue Poissonnerie (7).

The compact [Musée du Jambon Aubard](#) in the left is a whistle-stop trotter-to-sausage lowdown of what makes Bayonne ham special (spoiler alert - they lace it with [piment d'Espelette](#)) (8)



*Musée du Jambon Aubard*

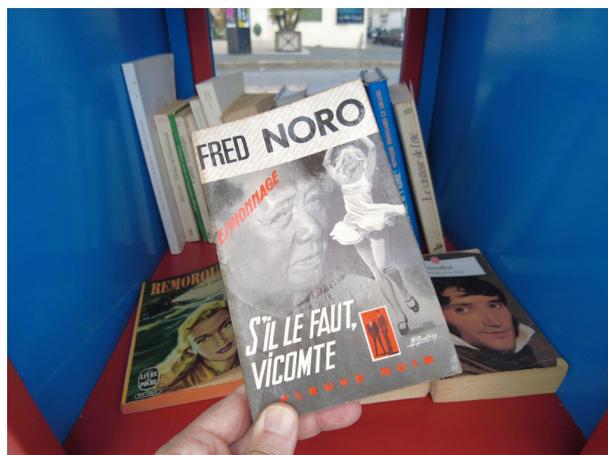
At the bottom of the street is the Halles de Bayonne on the left where you can fill your senses with all the other produce that this gourmand town has to offer (9). Either walk through or around it.

We need to cross the river to see one more (vegetarian-friendly) speciality of Bayonne. Feel free to take either bridge (the second bridge is marked on the map), but once crossed turn right on to Rue Marengo, passing the Basque Museum (10). Then take the first left onto Rue Jacques Lafitte.

Down this road on our right is [Monsieur Txokola](#) (11) where you can learn all about chocolate making and why they also like to put piment d'Espelette in that as well.

Then continue to the end of the road which takes you back to the watchtower where you can grab some more calamaries before heading back to the train station.

If you are catching the bus, you will need to walk along the riverside which takes you past the art-deco DIDAM arts centre which has a little book exchange outside (12). Why not pick something up for the next stage of your trip (or drop something off in English...)?



*Book exchange*

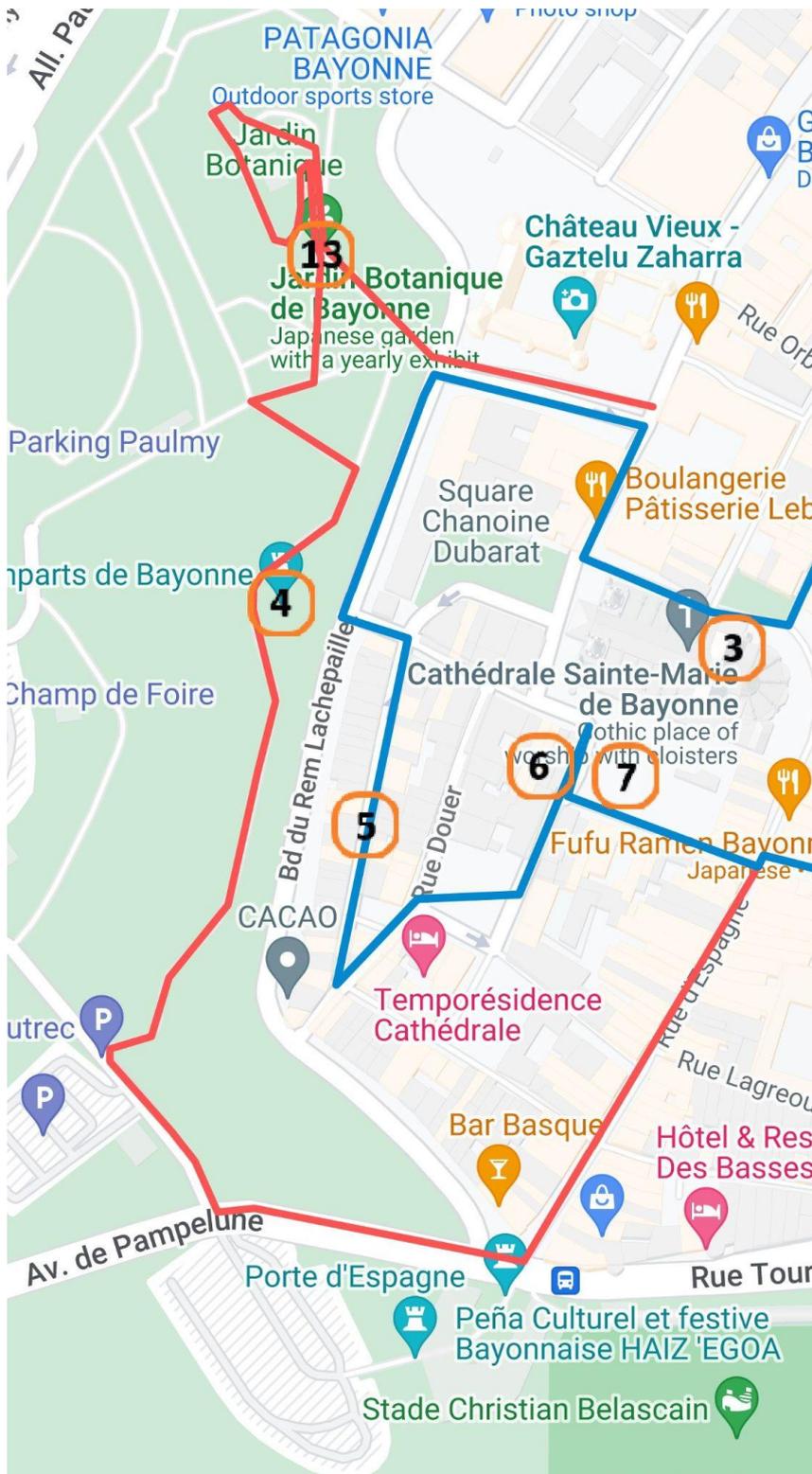
If you have any time left before moving on, you might also want to check out a couple of other things. Just up the hill is the [Rail Bayonnais](#) - the court where they have been playing the various forms of the Basque sport [pelota](#). There is also the newly opened [Jewish Museum](#) where you can learn more about the people who made sure Bayonne and Chocolate went hand in hand. (15)



*Rail Bayonnais*

## Japanese Garden and Ramparts (1k red)

This extension gives us a chance to take in some greenery and heroically stupid history.



From the Rue des Gouverneurs take the second left which leads down to La Poterne and through to the wrong side of the walls from an attackers point of view. It's just a short walk up to the Jardin Botanique, also known as the Japanese garden (13), owing to the collection of exotic

plants including the katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*), known as the caramel tree for its spicy caramel odour.

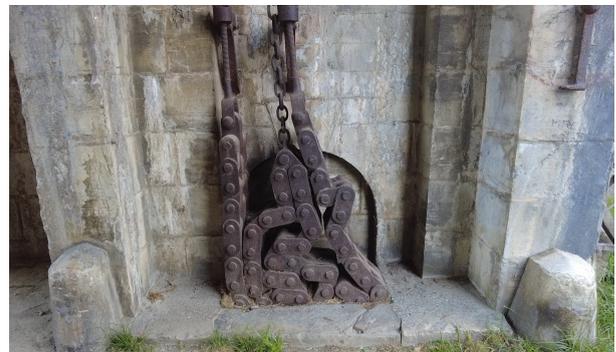


*Japanese garden - by MarionS40, Laurentb64*

From there, you can wander through the parkland created from the *Remparts* that run around the city. The fortifications were designed by Vauban, who's handy work we see all around the edges of France and played a large part in making France the shape it is today. The cleverly designed walls gave courage to defenders and none more so than General Pierre Thouvenot.



*Fortifications*



*portcullis chain*

In 1814, after Napoleon had already abdicated, the brave General seems to have decided that the war should finish in a glorious death, so he ordered his troops to attack the besieging British and other allied forces. Just short of 2,000 troops died, but alas, Pierre survived. Oops.

Continue round to the Avenue de Pampelune. Pampelune, or as we know it Pamplona, is twinned with Bayonne and each July there's a similar [festival](#) to the one made world famous by Ernest Hemingway. If you are not sure if that sort of thing is for you, the council put up pictures of previous year's activities so you can look at them and make your own mind up.



*Bull running at the Bayonne festival*

Follow the Rue d'Espagne back towards the Cathedral and then right on to Rue Poissonnerie to rejoin the wander around Bayonne.