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# Txotx! Drinking Cider (and Eating Cider-House Food) in the Basque Region

OCT  
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 [EMIGLIA \(HTTPS://WWW.TOMATOKUMATO.COM/AUTHOR/ADMIN/\)](https://www.tomatokumato.com/author/admin/)



San Sebastian is located not far from the Rioja wine region, but it's even closer to a hard apple cider region, home to delicious *sidra* and even more delicious (in my opinion) cider-house meals. Attending one of these meals is as much a cultural experience as it is a culinary one, so I knew this was something I should share with my friends on our recent trip to the region.



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There are a handful of cider houses within the city of San Sebastian, but they're not the most traditional of the lot. Seeing as we didn't have a car, we decided to go to the closest one we could get to by taxi – about 15 minutes' drive from the city center but still enough into the countryside to feel authentic. Petritegi did not disappoint.



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As in most Basque cider houses, there was a set menu on offer: the only choice to be made was in the fish course. Not knowing for sure whether we'd prefer the top or bottom half of a hake, we chose the most basic menu featuring cod and peppers, and then the *txotx* began.



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*Txotx* is the Basque version for cheers, but more than that, it's a term used to refer to a specific way of drinking cider: straight from the barrel. *Txotx* is said to be an onomatopoeia for the sound a barrel makes when punctured. In cider houses, the call of *txotx* is used to say "cheers!" but also to invite all participants to come up to the barrel to serve themselves.

At Petritegi, a staff member is on-hand at the beginning of the night to teach you how it's done, but by the end of the night, you become a pro at capturing the stream of cider in your glass.



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The cider is accompanied by a long list of dishes, all served to share. We started things off with pieces of a rich, savory sausage.



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Soon after, a cod omelette is served. Distinct from Spanish *tortillas* which you'll find in many *pintxo* bars, this omelette is a bit more solid and is cooked with thick pieces of salt cod and slightly-caramelized onions.



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Next comes the fish course – fried salt cod with fried peppers. It's a delicious if heavy dish that unfortunately defeated us.



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It was good we stopped when we did, however: rare *txuleta* steak was next. One of my friends commented that she was worried, at first, when they didn't ask us how it was cooked. Luckily, it's because they cook every one perfectly rare. Super tender and flavorful, this steak is the stuff of legends.



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Hard sheep's milk cheese is served next, accompanied by a block of sweet quince paste. I smeared the paste on the cheese, which I'm fairly sure is frowned upon, but I was several ciders in at this point, and no one seemed too bummed.



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The cheese was served with walnuts (another interactive portion of the meal).



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And we finished things off with almond *tuiles* and buttery Russian cigarettes.

Petritegi Bidea 6, Astigarraga

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*elizabeth* (<http://themanhattanfoodproject.wordpress.com>)

October 25, 2018

(<https://www.tomatokumato.com/txotx-drinking-cider-and-eating-cider-house-food-in-the-basque-region/#comment-518946>)

This is really cool—when we were in San Sebastian almost two months ago we didn’t do much exploring outside of the city because we were only there for a couple of days, but I’ll have to put this on my list of places to go for our next visit there. In the meantime, I’ll have to check out the dishes in *The Basque Book* that cover the cider house meal.

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## FOOD BLOGS

101 Cookbooks (<http://www.101cookbooks.com/>)

Amanda's Cookin' (<http://www.amandascookin.com/>)

An American in Ireland (<http://anamericaninireland.com/>)

An Edible Mosaic (<http://www.anediblemosaic.com/>)

Back to Her Roots (<http://backtoherroots.com/>)

Cannelle et Vanille (<http://www.cannellevanille.com>)

Ciao Chow Linda (<http://ciaochowlinda.blogspot.com/>)

Cinnamon, Spice and Everything Nice (<http://www.cinnamonspiceandeverythingnice.com/>)

Circle B Kitchen (<http://www.circle-b-kitchen.com>)

Closet Cooking (<http://closetcooking.blogspot.com/>)

Cream Puffs in Venice (<http://creampuffsinvenice.ca>)

Darby O'Shea (<http://darbyoshea.com/>)

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Dine and Dish (<http://dineanddish.net/>)

Fat Free Vegan (<http://blog.fatfreevegan.com/>)

Food Librarian (<http://foodlibrarian.blogspot.com/>)

Food on the Food (<http://www.foodonthefood.com>)

FX Cuisine (<http://fxcuisine.com/>)

Green Kitchen Stories (<http://www.greenkitchenstories.com/>)

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The Bitten Word (<http://thebittenword.typepad.com/thebittenword/>)  
The Comfort of Cooking (<http://www.thecomfortofcooking.com/>)  
The Life and Loves of Grumpy's Honeybunch (<http://shelbymaelawstories.blogspot.com/>)  
The Manhattan Food Project ([http://themanhattanfoodproject.wordpress.com](http://themanhattanfoodproject.wordpress.com/))  
The Noble Pig (<http://noblepig.com/>)  
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We Are Never Full ([http://www.weareneverfull.com](http://www.weareneverfull.com/))  
White on Rice Couple (<http://whiteonricecouple.com/>)

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