

San Sebastian alive with festivals, culture, food and wine

BY
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The View from Here



San Sebastian is a sophisticated coastal city in northern Spain that I have wanted to visit for a long time. I was able to go off-season this year in February when it was relatively cool but still very enjoyable. In season, it is now just “over-the-top” busy.

As with most Spanish cities there is an elegant centre. The most beautiful architecture lies on either side of the fairly wide Urumea River. There are many neoclassical and art nouveau buildings and numerous attractive bridges that cross the river. It helps to have centuries of history. If only we could design our cities to have half the charm of European ones. I always marvel at the beautiful landscaping, public squares, statues, fountains and great light fixtures. The old

city fronts two stunning beaches, along which there is a beautiful promenade. The most exposed of these beaches attracts surfers from all over.

San Sebastian is in the Basque country, and is definitely very unlike other areas of Spain. There was a strong and often violent Basque independence movement, now rather dormant. The Basque language is not known to relate to any other language in the world. It was suppressed in Franco’s Spain, and it is now being spoken more than it was a few decades ago. Although most people speak only Spanish, quite a few speak Basque.

San Sebastian is famous for its excellent food and has the second most Michelin starred restaurants per capita in the world. It is truly one of the world’s gastronomical destinations. Its tapas, here known as “pinxtos” are particularly good, many of them seafood-based as the Bay of Biscay is right here. For a very relaxed and rewarding experience you can have some



San Sebastian from a lookout at the western end of the more sheltered bay. The city core is in the distance.

locally produced wine, a few of the tapas served in one of a myriad of atmospheric bars, and then dinner in one of the many good restaurants.

San Sebastian has a very famous film festival, an International Jazz Festival, and a classical music festival. These festivals fill every hotel in the city with visitors from all over the world. At almost any time of the year there are outstanding cultural events to enjoy.

Christmas is just around the corner

November is always a busy month for Saugeen Shores with pre-holiday shopping events being held throughout the month. Saugeen Shores also holds its Shoppers Night and tree lighting ceremony this month, as well. It seems that every weekend has an event that is of interest to all.

St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Southampton will be hosting their annual turkey dinner on Saturday, November 3rd. There will be two sittings available at 5pm and 6:30pm. Adults are \$16 and children 10 and under are \$7. For more information call 519-797-3672.

Remembrance Day is Saturday, November 11th and ceremonies will be held at the Southampton and Port Elgin cenotaphs. Everyone is welcome to come out and join.

The 10th Annual Christmas Tour of Homes in Saugeen Shores is featuring six homes this year. The tours will be Friday, November 16th from 6pm to 9:30pm and again Saturday, November 17th from 11am to 4pm.

Proceeds from the Christmas tours will go to the Saugeen Memorial Hospital

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Saugeen Shores



Foundation and other community projects. Tickets for the tour are \$20 each and can be purchased at the door of any participating house or at St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Southampton the day of the tour.

The charity Caitlyn Cobean’s Community Crusaders (an organization that helps families of critically and terminally ill children) will be hosting a special raffle at their home with tickets being \$5 each or three for \$10. For more information and home information visit www.chantryislandchambettes.com

With Christmas just around the corner the Saugeen Memorial Hospital Auxiliary is preparing for their annual Christmas

Bazaar. On Saturday, November 17th they will be holding the annual bazaar from 10am to 2pm at The Plex in Port Elgin. With free admission, visitors can enjoy the opportunity to be able to purchase tax free handmade crafts, antiques, baked goods, 50/50 draw, used books and more. All proceeds raised at this event will be in support of the Saugeen Memorial Hospital’s patient care.

Santa Claus will be waving to one and all at the Port Elgin Santa Claus Parade. The parade will be held on Saturday, November 24th. Bring your family and friends to this year’s parade which will begin at 7pm. Non-perishable food items will be collected along the route for the local food bank. If you would like to participate in the Parade or to volunteer please contact the Chamber of Commerce at 519-832-2332.

If you would like an event mentioned for December’s article please contact me by November 30th. If you have something for next year, send the information to me in December! You can reach me at 519-386-1400 or tamriashon@bmts.com.