

# EZCARAY

THE FIRST TOURIST TOWN IN LA RIOJA



Fuero de Valle



Iglesia de Santa María La Mayor



La Real Fábrica de Santa Bárbara



Estación Ferrocarriil



Estación de Esquí "Valdezcaray"



www.ezcaray.org

AYUNTAMIENTO DE EZCARAY



## EZCARAY TOWN HISTORY

**Origins.** The first information relating to the settlement of the valley was discovered in prehistoric neolithic remains found in the area.

The pre-Romanesque Autrigones tribe occupied the highlands of the Oja Valley, giving rise to the Basque place names found here.

Later find tell us of tombs and objects of Roman origin discovered in the area, such as coins from the Emperor Trajan period found in the area of Balanegra (possible Roman military and civil emplacement, belonging to the old Ojacaastro).

Visigoths and Moors populated the area, although the valley suffered a steep decline in population after the expulsion of the latter.

**Founding of the town.** It was around 923-924 after the conquest of Nájera when the King of Navarre, Sancho Garcés I, took responsibility for repopulating the area, securing his domain to take advantage of the land's resources and grant Ezcaray its current name.

The first historical mention of Ezcaray dates back to 974, a year in which King Sancho of Navarre donated the Santa María de Lueña church to San Andrés de Cirueña, granting him an area of meadows along with Ezcaray and Ojacaastro.

**11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> century.** In 1074, Ezcaray and the valley became a definitive part of the Kingdom of Castile when Alfonso VI annexed La Rioja in its entirety. Once the valley ceased to be a border between Navarre and Castile, its inhabitants moved to the current location of Ezcaray on the left of the River Oja.

The Council of Ezcaray acquired great importance in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, as shown by evidence documenting them having to pay more taxes to the Diocese of Burgos (35 maravedí).

**14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> century.** On 24<sup>th</sup> April 1312, King Fernando IV the Summoned, granted **Local Jurisdiction to the Ezcaray Valley, Ojacaastro, Zorraquín and Valgañón** "...in order for their populations to grow and remain...". The inhabitants of the valley were therefore **exempt from paying transport tax for their livestock, merchandise**, etc., with the exception of the cities of Toledo, Murcia and Seville. It left the inhabitants of the valley **free of all taxes, rates or loans**, except "five new maravedí coins and nothing more". Furthermore, with the aim of repopulating the valley, the Local Jurisdiction granted **self-righteousness to the town**, meaning that criminals who resided therein must be defended and not expelled from the valley by law. Nobody from beyond could come to try them.

The Local Jurisdiction was confirmed by King Alfonso XI and his wife Queen Constanza on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1326, and later by the Catholic Kings on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1484, although they abolished that pertaining to the fostering of criminals and debtors. It was last confirmed by King Fernando VII on 13<sup>th</sup> December 1814 and remained in force until the revocation of local jurisdictions in 1876 after the Third Carlist War.

As a symbol of the town's past, an iron ring named "La Argolla del Fuero" still hangs in the Plaza de la Verdura.

At the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century it is known that the Estate of Ezcaray belonged to Pedro Manrique de Lara. In his will he granted his legitimate son, Pedro Gómez Manrique, the responsibility of governing Ezcaray and its valley with the specific mandate of establishing a direct heir with the stately name of Ezcaray.

On 13<sup>th</sup> April 1477, the Catholic Kings authorised the creation of the **Ezcaray Estate** via Royal Mandate, being founded on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1478. Today, the crests of the Lords of Ezcaray emblazon the main gallery of the "Santa María la Mayor" parish church.



Other sites can also be seen, such as the **San Lázaro Transept**, (16<sup>th</sup> cent.), the **Santa Bárbara Chapel** or the **Chapel of the Virgin of Allende**. This last chapel houses the Gothic image of the patron of the town, the Virgin of Allende (14<sup>th</sup> cent.), and other works of art from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century; the collection of 10 canvases with images of angels is particularly noteworthy, in which six of them are carrying an arquetibus instead of the traditional sword.

**16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> century.** From the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards and under the guardianship of the Local Jurisdiction, the valley began to grow rapidly in economic and social terms. Mainly based on the richness of its pastures that welcomed a large number of migrating sheep herds, the textile industry also reached a significant peak, leading to its golden age in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the building of the "La Real Fábrica de Santa Bárbara" (The Royal Factory of Santa Barbara).

In 1752, the Marquess of Ensenada supported the creation of the "**La Real Fábrica de Santa Bárbara**" through royal franchises, in honour of Queen Bárbara of Braganza, wife of Fernando VI, whose support the factory also enjoyed. Two large buildings were constructed that were dedicated to the manufacture of cloth and looms, which became one of the most important textile factories in Spain.

A short while after, in 1773, the privileged status of General Company was requested from King Carlos III. It became known as **Compañía Real de San Carlos y Santa Bárbara en Ezcaray**. In 1785 it passed into the hands of the Royal Treasury, which led to a new resurgence in textile manufacture in the town. The unique "El Fuerte" or "Tinte" building, as it was known, dates back to this period, which contained twelve boilers and was fireproof.

Its decline began in the year 1808. The consequences of the War of Independence led vast numbers of local people to emigrate due to lack of employment. The Real Fábrica ceased textile production in 1845. Nonetheless, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century there were 29 textile factories that employed 1,000 people.

Today, after different renovation plans, the Real Fábrica buildings house **municipal sub-offices; Ezcaray Hostel**, the Town Hall and the **Royal Ezcaray Theatre**, opened by Her Majesty Queen Sofía in 2012.



**The town of Ezcaray possesses the most interesting collection of popular architecture in La Rioja.** The old town still preserves beautiful hidden gems with extremely well-maintained architecture. Ezcaray retains a maze of old streets from its past, with **palaces and manor houses** whose facades display coats of arms from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, like the **Palace of Archbishop Barroeta** and the **Angel Palace**. These palaces provide proof of the economic importance this town had for centuries.

**20<sup>th</sup> century and the present day.** On 9<sup>th</sup> July 1916 **the Haro – Ezcaray narrow gauge railway was opened**. It was used for transporting commuters and freight to and from all the towns and villages along the route, and linked up with national (RENFE) rail lines. Competition from road transport and the fact that it was narrow gauge led to its disappearance.

On 16<sup>th</sup> January 1964, the Haro – Ezcaray railway closed to the public after forty-seven and a half years in service. Vestiges **of the train station** remain as a reminder, which today has been converted into a bar/restaurant. Also, the old railway route enables walkers to enjoy the wonderful landscape thanks to the "**Vía Verde del Oja**", a remodelled stretch of track that constitutes yet another attraction for the numerous visitors to the town.

Midway through the last century the first woodworker cooperatives were created, thus causing the progressive abandonment of farming. Today, some products made in Ezcaray display the **local tradition of manufacturing furniture** together with more specialised companies (manufacturers of cinema/theatre seats, etc.), who today are leaders at national level and are also seen as a benchmark in international markets.

The importance to the local area of **fabric manufacturing like blankets** from 100 % hand-made pure wool is worthy of mention, reminding us of the importance the town had in the golden age of the Mesta (medieval association of sheep ranchers in Castile).

Nowadays and at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the service sector (especially **tourism**) has become extremely important and seen growth due to the presence of the **Valdezcaray ski station**, and also due to the **extraordinarily wide range of restaurants and hotels** on offer in the town.



**The Valdezcaray ski station** is located **14 km from Ezcaray**. Having been recently modernised, the station has capacity to welcome 300,000 visitors a year. It has **22 km of marked ski runs** (4 green, 6 blue, 10 red, 2 black and 2 yellow), **three service hubs** (at altitudes of 1550 m, 1620 m and 1850 m), **six chairlifts** capable of transporting nearly 15,000 skiers/hour, **artificial snow cannons, a snow park**,...

**Ezcaray offers numerous gastronomic options** based on outstanding basic ingredients and traditional safeguarded recipes. "Bite-size gastronomy" served up **by the numerous and equally charming tapas bars** is available alongside traditional Riojan and other signature restaurants.



<b>Ezcaray Council</b>	E-mail: ayuntamiento@ezcaray.org
<b>Medical Centre</b>	C/ Virgen de Allende, 1.
<b>Begonia Tapia Pharmacy</b>	C/ Arzobispo Barroeta, 15.
<b>Masip Pharmacy</b>	C/ San Felipe, 4
<b>Valdezcaray ski station</b>	Phone: 941 354 221
<b>Posts and Telegraphs</b>	Phone: 941 354 221
<b>Plaza de la Verdura</b>	Phone: 941 354 172
<b>Guardia Civil (Local Police)</b>	C/ Calvario, 2
<b>Municipal Sports Centre</b>	Phone: 941 354 002
<b>Biblioteca</b>	C/ Eliseo Cadarso
<b>Biblioteca</b>	Phone: 669 755 646
<b>Santa María la Mayor Church</b>	C/ Sagasta, 1
<b>Petal Station</b>	Phone: 941 427 360
<b>Taxi</b>	941 427 054 / 639 831 516

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

# EZCARAY

## TOURISTIC MAP



AYUNTAMIENTO DE EZCARAY

# EZCARAY

AN ALL-YEAR ROUND DESTINATION

**The town of Ezcaray offers appealing tourist attractions throughout the year.**

Ezcaray Council, town associations and specialist companies in the area program a wide range of interesting activities for locals and visitors alike,

which complement attractions found in the town's natural environment, its food and wine, its artistic and historical heritage, its local festivals and traditions, or its role as the skiing HQ of La Rioja.

On 28<sup>th</sup> May 1998, the town of Ezcaray became the first in the Autonomous Community of La Rioja to be declared a **Tourist Attraction Town**. This is due to the fact that the burgeoning resources and attractions of the town delight its visitors, whatever the time of year.

# EZCARAY

A MOUNTAIN PARADISE

The Alto Oja forms a natural region of large environmental and scenic attractions. Nestled in the most north-eastern part of the Iberico System, it belongs to an old Palaeozoic mountain range known as the Sierra de la Demanda. Easy to access, this mountain paradise is dominated by chain of mountains higher than 2,000 m. Indeed, nine peaks stand taller than said altitude, all of them being crowned by San Lorenzo at 2,269 m.

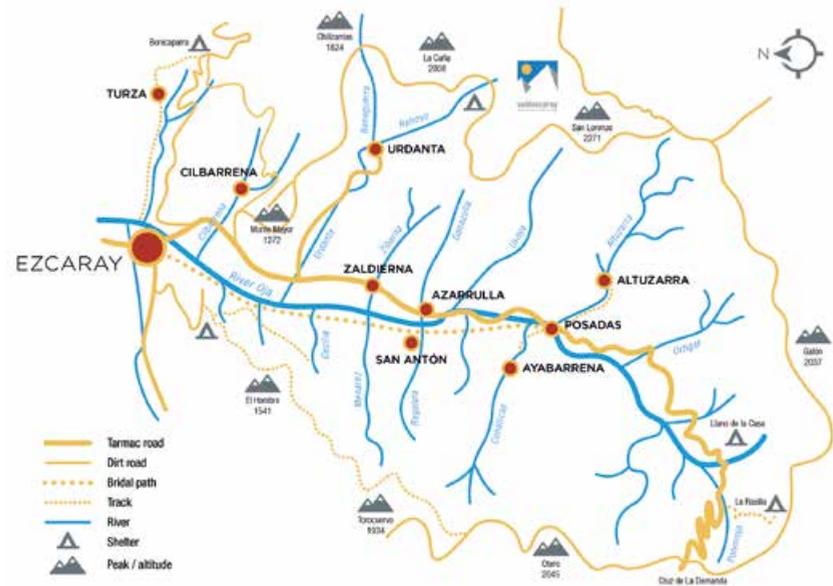


**Ezcaray offers a privileged natural environment for hiking and outdoor sports.** Magnificent landscapes and trails flanked by diverse flora (fruit trees, poplar groves, alder trees, beech and pine forests)



invite you to discover the surrounding walks and routes. Hundreds of kilometres of mountains and valley are suitable for all levels of mountain-bike enthusiast.

The Hamlets of Ezcaray are found on both sides of the River Oja and in the gullies that nourish it; full of natural heritage and popular architecture, including three-storey stone masonry houses. The hamlets of **Azárrulla, Zaldierna, Urdanta** and **Turza** are found on the right of the River Oja (and the ruins of Altuzarra and Cibarrena); the following hamlets are found on the left of the River Oja: **Posadas, Ayabarrena** and **San Antón**.



## AYUNTAMIENTO DE EZCARAY TOURISTIC MAP

### SIGHTS

- 1 El Maduro. Recuerdo de la Fábrica Real. S. XVIII
- 2 El Fuerte. Sala de calderas. S. XVIII
- 3 Real Fábrica de Tejidos. 1752, ampliada en 1773
- 4 Casa de los Gandásegui.
- 5 Puerta de los antiguos Talleres y Tintes reales. S. XVIII
- 6 Puente de Landía o Alandía. S. XVI
- 7 Puente de la Estación. 1925
- 8 Antigua Estación de Ferrocarril. 1916
- 9 Ermita de Nuestra Señora de Allende. S. XVIII
- 10 Plaza de la Verdura.
  - Argolla del Fuero
  - Fuente de 1924
- 11 Antigua Casa de teléfonos. S. XVII
- 12 Plaza Conde de Torremuzquiz.
  - Quiosco de 1958
- 13 Puente Canto. S. XVI
- 14 Crucero de San Lázaro. S. XVI
- 15 Palacio del Arzobispo Barroeta. 1776
- 16 Casa de los Cuezva. S. XVIII
- 17 Casa de Don Ramón Martínez. Finales XVIII
- 18 Casa de los Masip. S. XVIII
- 19 Palacio Ángel. 1753
- 20 Iglesia de Santa María La Mayor. S. XII al XVI
- 21 Casa de Doña Blanca de Azcárate. 1922
- 22 Casa de los Gil de la Cuesta. S. XVIII
- 23 Casa parroquial. 1772
- 24 Fuente de la Paz. 1841
- 25 Residencia de ancianos Jesús Nazareno. S. XIX
- 26 Fuente del Sauco. 1920
- 27 Ermita de Santa Bárbara. S. XVIII

### SERVICES

- TOURIST OFFICE
- EZCARAY COUNCIL
- THE ROYAL EZCARAY THEATRE
- THE ROYAL FACTORY HOSTEL
- LIBRARY
- MEDICAL CENTRE
- PHARMACIES
- CINEMAS
- MUNICIPAL SPORTS CENTRE
- SWIMMING POOLS AND SPORTS FIELDS
- SCHOOL
- GUARDIA CIVIL (Local Police)
- PETROL STATION

26 Acceso desde la Ctra. a Valgañón

27 Acceso desde la Ctra. a Valgañón