

## Valdespina Palace

### Town:

Ermua.

### Location:

C/ Marqués de Valdespina, 1.

### Visiting times:

From 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### Other places of interest nearby:

Church of Santiago Apóstol (the Apostle James).  
c/ Marqués de Valdespina.  
Old quarter. Ermua.

Palacio Lobiano.  
c/ Goienkale, 8-10. Ermua.

Casa Zarra.  
c/ Izelaieta. Ermua.

Church of San Andrés,  
(Saint Andrew).  
Eibar (Guipuzkoa).

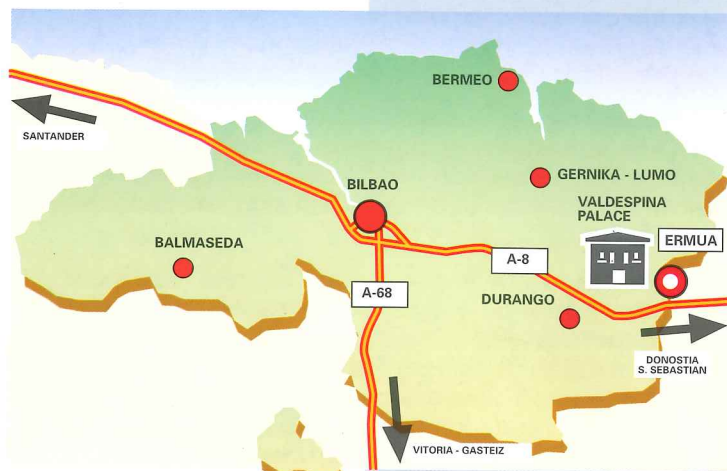
ENGLISH

CULTURAL  
HERITAGE  
OF BIZKAIA

No.

# Valdespina Palace

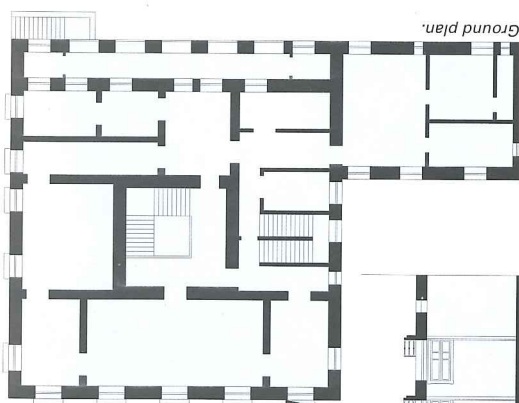
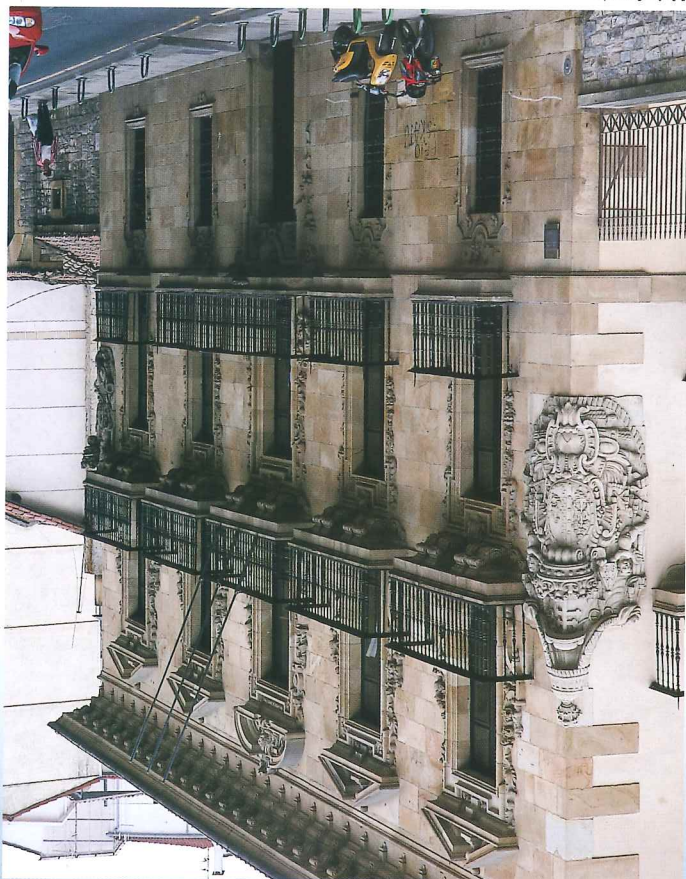
ERMUA



Bizkaiko Foru  
Aldundia  
Kultura Saila  
Ondare Historikoaren  
Zerbitzua

Diputación Foral  
de Bizkaia  
Departamento de Cultura  
Servicio de Patrimonio  
Histórico

Main façade.

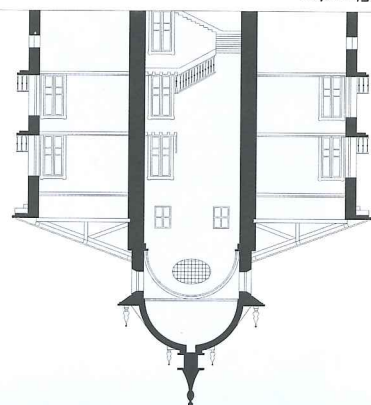


Ground plan.

Coat of arms on corner of façade.



Elevation.





**L**ocated in the centre of Ermua opposite the parish church, the Palacio Valdespina is, in terms of design and quality of the materials used, one of the finest examples of baroque residential building in the Basque Country. The building is a sophisticated, lavishly decorated variation on the type of baroque current in the early to mid-17th century.

A number of the original elements were either removed or altered when the building, designed as a private residence, was converted into the town hall. For instance, the stairway connecting the principal storey with the market garden has long since vanished, and the market garden itself is now an attractive garden.

This magnificent palace owes its existence in the first place to the enthusiastic patronage of Andrés de Orbe y Larreátegui, archbishop of Valencia and General Inquisitor. De Orbe commissioned Sebastián de Lecuona to build it in 1729, although it was actually finished by master mason Josep de Zuaznabar somewhere around 1759.

### The building

The Palacio Valdespina is a large building crowned by an attractive dome that strikes an interesting visual relationship with the belfry of the adjoining church of Santiago (St. James). Among the building's most noteworthy features are the central staircase and the splendid western façade that opens generously on to the garden.



Rear façade, showing dialogue between Palace and parish church.

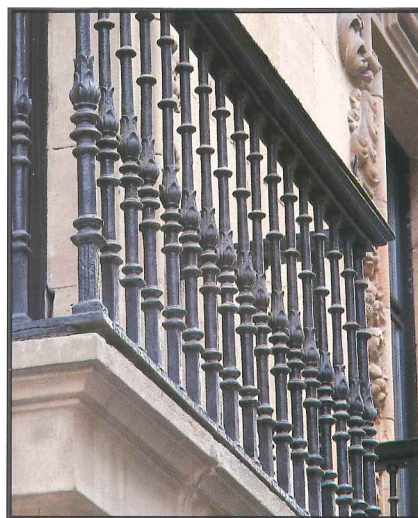
Inside, the building involves a series of rooms organised around a central space that acts as a focal point for the light let in through the oxeve windows below the dome, and partly as a staircase providing access to the first floor.

The main façade, which gives on the street and faces the church, is the most imposing of the four. The façade is a grid-like design consisting of four vertical axes, two each placed symmetrically on either side of a central one, where the main entrance to the building is located. Window mouldings, very austere on the ground floor, become increasingly complex as the building gains height, although the classically-inspired pediments over the third floor do help to mitigate the effect.

Framed by abundant foliage, the coats of arms of the Orbe and Larreátegui families are displayed on either angle of the façade. The iron railings on the balconies, although traditional in design, are beautifully executed.

The rear façade is also a great success, striking a particularly harmonious balance between its functional and aesthetic qualities. The façade is in fact three loggias, each of a different design. The lower level has three recesses, while above the central loggia boasts five round arches on dado capitals. The upper loggia combines round arches with narrower lintels.

One of the most outstanding features of the building is the dome, set on an octagonal drum with four inlaid windows in the oxeve style, above which runs the cornice. The dome itself is hemispherical, crowned with a lantern consisting of pinnacle, ball and weather vane. In form and style, the dome echoes and responds to the belfry of the nearby parish church.



Fine baroque ironwork.