

# Bolunburu Hillfort

## ZALLA

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the route



You are about to travel back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, to a **hillfort** from the second **Iron Age** that has remained almost unchanged to this day. The hillfort is situated on a small elevation (320 metres; 1,050 ft) overlooking the **Salcedo Valley**, which is crossed by the Kadagua River.

The settlement occupies a **total area of 4,000 m<sup>2</sup>** (13,100 sq. ft) enclosed by a wall and an outer moat that runs along the entire southern front of the hill. The Bolunburu Crag provides a natural defence barrier on the north.

The wall is made of **masonry**, with an average width of 3 metres (10 ft) and a height that may have originally exceeded 5 metres (16.5 ft). The wall had a **single gate**, located at the southeast end. The houses consisted of **simple rectangular huts**, built with perishable materials. The few remains of their structure that are still standing belong to the foundations. In addition, other enclosures that served as sheds, **workshops and warehouses** have been identified.

The Bolunburu complex allows us to understand what the day-to-day life in the hillfort was like. Today we know that its inhabitants practiced a **diversified economy** based on **livestock farming, subsistence agriculture** (mainly cereal

and legume crops), the harvesting of wild products, and **iron metallurgy**. Many charred acorns have been found inside the houses. But perhaps the greatest peculiarity of the place is the discovery of abundant **hand mills** made of local sandstone.

Furthermore, the toponymy surrounding the hillfort is noteworthy, as it mentions **witches and wizards**—a colloquial demonym for the people of the municipality of Zalla. These witchcraft legends are perhaps linked to the inhabitants of the hillfort and find their greatest expression in the so-called **Campa Las Brujas (The Witches' Field)**, where it is said that they used to meet and dance by the river.



### Where to eat

**Aretxaga**  
Tel.: 626 163 542

**El Porron**  
Tel.: 946 390 754  
[www.restauranteelporron.com](http://www.restauranteelporron.com)

**Cervecerazalla**  
Tel.: 946 39 06 21  
[www.cervecerazalla.com](http://www.cervecerazalla.com)

### Where to stay

**Hotel Ibarra**  
Tel.: 618 789 720  
[www.hotelibarrazalla.com](http://www.hotelibarrazalla.com)

**Pensión Txikote Ostataua**  
Tel.: 946 390 178

### Visit a txakoli winery

**Virgen de Lorea**  
Tel.: 629 455 620  
[www.bodegasvirgendelorea.com](http://www.bodegasvirgendelorea.com)

**Txakoli Txabarri**  
Tel.: 658 728 865  
[www.txakolitxabarri.com](http://www.txakolitxabarri.com)

### Buy the award-winning Zalla purple onion

**Ana Mari Llaguno**  
Tel.: 619 471 700

**Mertxe Vivanco**  
Tel.: 946 390 820

### Guided tours to the hillfort

**Alboan**  
Tel.: 605 757 420  
[www.alboanenkarterri.com](http://www.alboanenkarterri.com)

**Leykatur**  
Tel.: 616 498 621  
[www.leykatur.com](http://www.leykatur.com)

### How to get



**Bizkaibus (bus service)**  
A0651 Bilbao-Balmaseda  
Station: **El Longar**



**Feve (train service)**  
Bilbao - Balmaseda  
Station: **Ibarra**

