

Biscayan chef Eneko Atxa has 5 Michelin stars thanks to his restaurants Azurmendi*** and ENEKO.



With a constant commitment to health, solidarity and sustainability, his restaurant Azurmendi***, with three Michelin stars and a green star, had received twice the award for the *Most Sustainable Restaurant* from The World's 50 Best Restaurants. It has also been named the *Best Restaurant in Europe* according to

OAD (Opinionated About Dining), *Best Restaurant in the World* according to the luxury magazine Elite Traveler and had won the Sustainability Award from Madrid Fusión. Eneko Atxa was awarded with the *National Gastronomy Award 2015*, National Prize for Healthy Gastronomy to the Most Outstanding Personality 2018, Chef of the Year in Europe 2019 according to Madrid Fusion, 'Sustainable Sun' by the Repsol Guide 2021, MadBlue 'Cinco Océanos 2022 Award' for its work in sustainability and Gentleman 2022 Sustainability Award. It has also been part of the European's Young Leaders.

At the same time, the chef continues his international expansion, after opening his ENEKO restaurants in Larrabetzu, Tokyo, and Lisbon; BASQUE in Lisbon, Seville and Brussels; as well as NKO in Bilbao.

The origins:

The chef from Bilbao began his path into gastronomy at the age of 15 at the Culinary School of Leioa in Biscay, combining his study time with work at restaurant where he learned traditional Basque cuisine. Later he took a step forward and he worked for several prestigious restaurants where he developed his very own style. In 2005, after being head-

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chef in several kitchens, he decided to open his own restaurant: Azurmendi***, in Larrabetzu nearby Bilbao.

Azurmendi***, Eneko Atxa's home in his own words, won three Michelin stars one by one in straight years from 2007 to 2012 and As the Michelin guide granted the third star, Azurmendi*** became the first and only restaurant in Biscay obtaining this distinction, and Eneko Atxa, 35 years old, was one of the youngest chefs in Spain obtaining such recognition.

Eneko Atxa's cuisine:

Eneko Atxa has developed and shared his great creativity at Azurmendi***, ENEKO and NKO restaurants around the world. His passion and sensitivity, cultural roots, connection with the surrounding territory and its produces define his gastronomy. The traditional culinary Basque book have been and remain the foundations of this creations. All this efforts to create pleasure improve and generate added value, share wealth and knowledge; in short, grow in a sustainable and sustained manner.

His cuisine - the perfect trilogy of flavour, texture and aesthetics - is rooted to the Basque traditional cuisine. You can guess the flavours of homemade food and the stews made by his grandmother in every preparation. He departs from this solid base to build textures and techniques to create outstanding dishes. A cuisine that shares a story and gives the diner a gentle touch – it is a silent revolution with harmony and sustainability in mind.

As a result, the cuisine of Eneko Atxa is pure flavour. An intense, tasty and unique cuisine where tradition and avant-garde, interact in a balanced way in order to create a gastronomic experience that pays homage to the senses.

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Azurmendi*:**

Azurmendi opened its doors in September 2005 and by that time it held a winery, a restaurant and a huge space for events. Thanks to the evolution of the business and the achievement of two Michelin stars in 2010, it was decided to establish a new gastronomic space in the beginning of 2012. This was the first sustainable restaurant in the Iberian Peninsula that was able to incorporate less invasive working methods with the environment, local and recycled materials and the most advanced technologies in terms of renewable energy available at that time. Eneko Atxa also has been the first chef who has created an experience around gastronomy, a tour through his facilities and seasonal products, recreating history and the origins of his culinary tradition. A restaurant full of emotion, where every place, detail and service, reflects the personality and philosophy of Eneko Atxa, influenced by a territory and a way of understanding and transmitting values.

ENEKO, a growing concept:

In 2016, Eneko Atxa created the culinary concept ENEKO, a growing net of restaurants set in Larrabetzu (2017), Tokyo (2017) and Lisbon (2019) to let the world experience Basque cuisine in an authentic and real way. A return to the origin with unique creations offering the diner the basis of Eneko Atxa's cuisine: flavour and technique.

Later in 2017, ENEKO Restaurant at Larrabetzu, located beside Azurmendi*** Restaurant, earned its first Michelin star, the same year of the opening. In 2020 the ENEKO Lisboa restaurant, located in the well-known Alcântara café of Lisbon, receives its first Michelin star. The same year, the ENEKO restaurant wins a green star for its commitment to sustainability.

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BASQUE, the grill, the key element:

BASQUE is the latest gastronomic proposal from the Biscayan chef, based on traditional Basque gastronomy and cooked with high quality products. Although it was first set up in Lisbon in 2019, its expansion continues until it reaches Seville and Brussels.

BASQUE's culinary offering is informal and modern, based on traditional Basque recipes with local touches, such as its charcoal grills or its typical dishes and 'txakoli' basque white wines. Its menu features options to nibble and share, casseroles and grilled dishes.

NKO, where Basque and Japanese cuisine embrace:

NKO is a project that brings together two important gastronomic cultures, the Basque, which is Eneko's original, and the Japanese, a cuisine that Eneko Atxa has loved for more than 15 years when he first traveled to Japan and discovered the gastronomic cultural wealth of the country.

Both cultures have a predilection for great products from their own environment and for the disciplines that seek to highlight them.

Eneko Atxa has created this concept where the spirit of the Basque and Japanese culinary tradition converge. A place where people will find the perfect mix between both cuisines.

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