

ZURRIOLA BEACH: Kursaal Auditorium, Igor Mitoraj sculptures

The Urumea River divides San Sebastián in two parts, leaving in the right place the third beach of the city: Zurriola. It is the favourite of young people and one of the best places in Europe to practice surf.



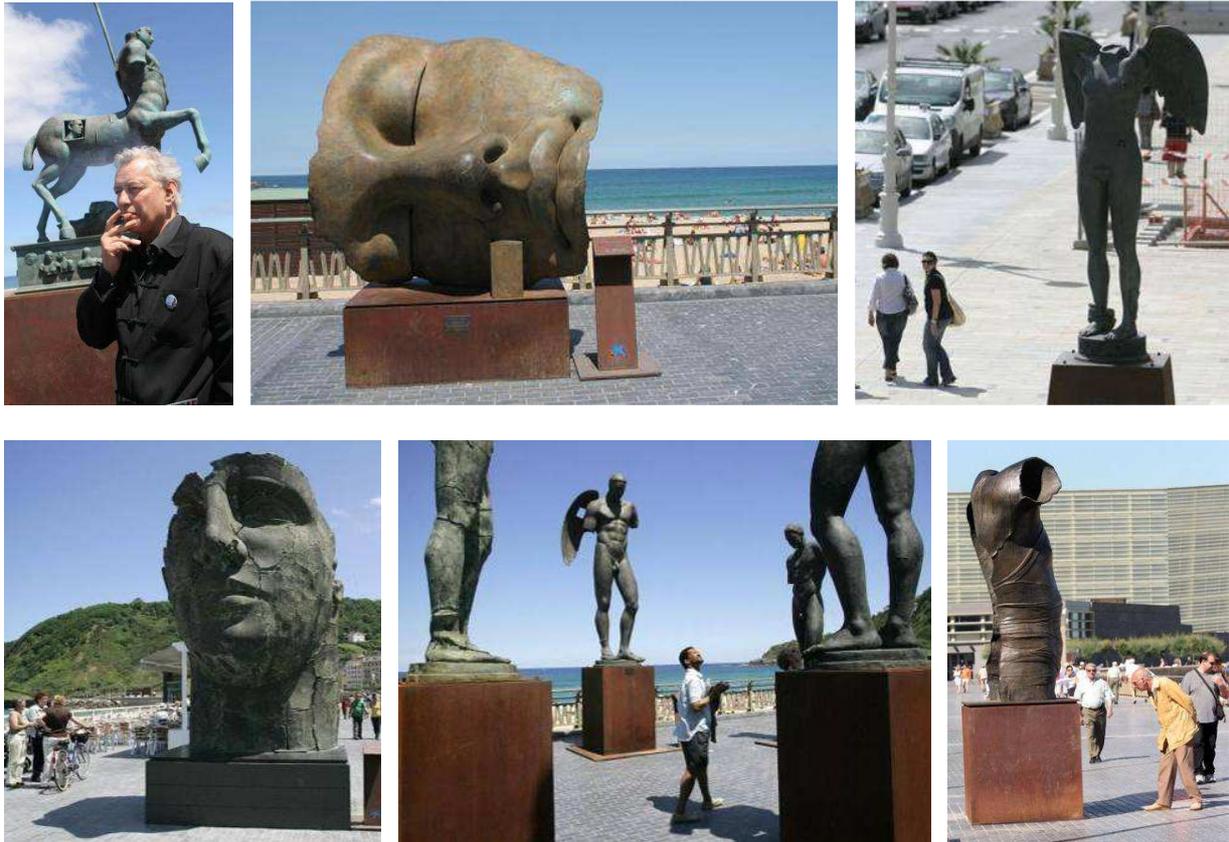
There are many remarkable buildings in the mouth of Urumea River like Victoria Eugenia Theatre or Maria Cristina Hotel. But the last architectural treasure of the city is the Kursaal Auditorium by Architect Rafael Moneo. Moneo has received the Pritzker Prize (The Nobel of Architecture) and the Mies van der Rohe Award for the best European building in 2001 amongst other prizes.



The Kursaal lies on a corner of Zurriola Beach, Moneo found his inspiration for the design of the complex in the large, two-cubic-meter stone blocks that were used as jetties and breakwaters at the mouth of the river. As opposed to the jetty blocks, his two building volumes are not especially rectangular, but lean three degrees in relation to the horizontal plane, and five degrees to the vertical. Visually, the two dynamic main forms

seem to be repelling each other, but the glass cubes harmonize nicely with the general building height of about twenty meters, just as the greenish translucent glass facades match in colour the nearby river water perfectly.

After the Kursaal visit, the Zurriola beach shows 23 sculptures of the Polish sculptor Igor Mitoraj (in the picture above, with black shirt). Mitoraj work deals with the myths and the perfection of the human body. He recovers classic sculpture with a contemporary vision, acting like a bridge between the antique and the modern, in the marvellous environment of the beach avenue.



Behind Zurriola Beach stands the quarter called Gros. It is not a beautiful place, but very popular because of the best pintxos (tapas) of the city. If you want to check the high quality of the miniature cuisine of San Sebastián, search for the best tapas bar in Spain: Aloña Berri in Street Berminghan 24 and ask for the pintxo called “Chipirón en Equilibrio”.

If you want to discover pintxos in San Sebastián remember to take with you a Spanish-English dictionary, otherwise it will be very difficult to know what pintxos are made of.

