

## Town Hall



## Town:

Durango.

## Location:

At the junction of Artekale and Zeharkale streets.

## Access:

In the centre of the old quarter of Durango.

## Other places of interest nearby:

Church of Santa María de Uribarri.  
Durango.Cruz (Cross) de Kurutzia.  
Durango.Church of Santa Ana.  
Durango.Arch of Santa Ana.  
Durango.Palacio Etxezarreta.  
Durango.Convent of San Agustín.  
Durango.

Located in the heart of Durango's old quarter between Artekale and Zeharkalea, the Casa Consistorial, or town hall, is a two-storey rectangular building with an attic level. A range of materials was used in its construction, including ashlar for the porch and brick for most of the other walls.

All the features of interest are to be found in the main façade. The ground floor boasts a superb porch of seven round arches on pillars faced with Tuscan pilasters linked above by a frieze of metopes and triglyphs.

The main feature of the first floor is the balcony, onto which lead seven large window doors. The centre one is framed by pilasters supporting a triangular pediment broken at the centre to make room for the arms of the borough. The attic floor above is illuminated by seven simple trebeated windows.

One essential element contributing to the overall image of the town hall are the paintings adorning the two upper floors, depicting figurative designs, cupids, musicians, hunting scenes and other attractive motifs.

Durango's consistorio, or town hall, is an

example of a municipal style popular in Bizkaia that gave prominence to the porch on the ground floor and the council meeting hall with balcony included on the first floor. According to documents held in the municipal archive, this is one of the oldest town halls in Bizkaia,

dating from 1570, although subsequent work has of course substantially altered the original building. The most important of these reforms, after the 1936 civil war, involved the complete reconstruction of the building, except for the original porch, which was retained. The paintings were re-executed in the style of the originals done by Ignacio de Zumárraga in 1770. So the classic porch is really the only surviving remnant of a building that was, for its time, quite surprisingly advanced.

Martin de Iburgüen, a master mason who had worked on the Philip II's Escorial palace near Madrid, was responsible for the building's design. The stonework itself was executed by Bernabé de Solano, Martin de Urquiza and Martin de Zabala, with Juan de Anitua taking responsibility for the carpentry. Although the roof was put in place in 1587, the building was not completely finished until 1609, when the Durango-born artist Juan de Garay painted the arms of the royal family and of the borough on the façade.



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