

BASQUE MYTHOLOGICAL HERITAGE



All the countries and culture have their own myths and legends and the Basque country has its own mythological creatures who are part of its identity.

From prehistoric times and later with the influence of the Christian religion or the Roman invasion, Basque mythology has undergone a series of influences which have made it richer in characters and legends.

As another cultures of the world, the Basque mythology is based on the four elements which can be found in nature: fire, earth, air and water. But Earth is the center of all of them. That is why the principal mythological character is Mari, the female goddess who is able to take different forms and lives in caves. In our area Bizkaia we have our Mari "Amboto", because she lives in the caves of this mountain.

Another characteristic aspect of the Basque mythology is the feminine character of the Basque gods. As we have already mentioned, we have Mari or Ama Lurra, as goddess of the earth. But not only do we have the goddess of the earth, we also have the goddess of the moon "Ilargi Amandrea" or the goddess of the sun "Eguzki Amandrea "

There are also some curious mythological creatures who have enriched our mythology.

Eguzki or Eguzki Amandre

The Sun, has special relevance among the Basque deities. She is who gives us light and warmth, and the good and bad harvests are in her hands. She also has a great influence on the geniuses and evil spirits, since the presence of the sun makes them move to their home, inside the earth.

Ieltxu

An inhabitant of Biscay that according to some legends, he is placed in the mountains of Busturian an area that is usually permanently covered with mists. But who is it? Nobody has seen it, nobody knows it, and nobody can say what he is like. He has been described as a bird that appeared at night when no one was waiting for it or calling.

Galtzagorri

He is a character from Basque mythology. They are tiny beings that help humans in their cumbersome jobs. They wear red pants and hide in the pin cushions. They cry out to their human owner, turning around asking for more tasks to be done: "Now what? What now?"

Mari

She is the queen of the goddesses. She is usually represented with the body and face of a woman, elegantly dressed (usually in red). She also appears as a tree, eagle, cow or woman of fire. Sugaar is her partner. She lives in Amboto Mount caves.

Zezengorri

He is a being that lives in caves. He takes the form of a cow or bull and protects Mari's abodes. There are people who believe that he is Mari herself. It should be highlighted that the bull has been very important in all the culture of southern countries

Akerbeltz o Aker

Its shape is that of a goat, as its name is said in Basque. According to the legend, Akerbeltz has two faces. A good one that is in charge of protecting the animals that belong to him and the bad one which is the one which is connected with meetings with witches and sorcerers doing akelarres.

Basajaun

He is the wild man of the forest and is represented by a huge body covered in hair. He is the protector of the flocks and shepherds and so, for example, when the storms are approaching, he warns the shepherds with great cries. He lives in the deep forest and is also credited with inventions such as the sierra, the mill