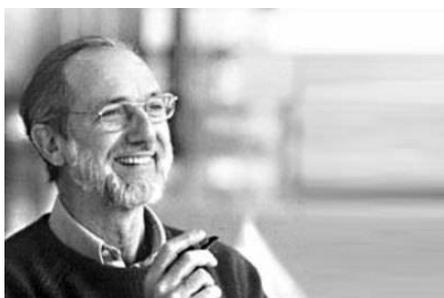


## Is this man going to create yet another cultural hub?

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The Spanish city of Santander is little known to international visitors. It now aims to become northern Spain most prominent cultural hub, in the wake of Guggenheim's success in Bilbao. With outstanding Renzo Piano's hand in it....



Published on Monday, September 19th, 2011. Íñigo de la Serna dealt with the erection of the Guggenheim Center, that was responsible, through its launch in 1997, for the transformation of the Basque city of Bilbao into one of Europe's foremost tourism and culture "must" location.

Following this huge event, Mr. de la Serna now became mayor of Santander, after having gained a second election during last May. His forthright aspiration is to replicate for his native city the renaissance that he experienced directly in Bilbao, with the Botín Center, a €62 million project planned by renowned Italian architect Renzo Piano, which is programmed to inaugurate in early 2014.

The Guggenheim activated the total makeover of Bilbao and this incredible Botín assignment has the potential to offer as influential an apparatus of growth in Santander, a city that is currently experienced by visitors more like a transitional place.

In fact, the cultural hub will be constructed on a sea front boulevard that acted in the past as the ferry's parking space in Santander. Its plan is programmed to be disclosed by the end of this current month. The project is headed by Italian architectural sensation Renzo Piano, who came out as a key architect in the 1970s, at a time when, along with British architect Richard Rogers, he planned a new milestone museum, the Parisian Pompidou

Centre.



Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao

Santander's idea to base a growth concept on Bilbao goes along with the thought that a flagship structure can produce economic emancipation nearly instantaneously. That scheme, on the other hand, doesn't show accomplishments at all times. In fact a portion of Spain's debt catastrophe stalks from excessively grand road and rail network development missions that have burdened the country with fragmentary constructions, counting libraries, stadiums and museums.

That state of affairs might give explanation concerning an undeniable protectiveness when those concerned express the ideas connected with new projects. Only in March 2011, Avilés, yet a Spanish city, opened the €44 million Niemeyer Center, a blatantly ahead of its time arts compound on the river of the Avilés. Natalio Grueso, the appointed director, began to catalogue the advantages of the plan by calling attention to the fact that the great dissimilarity among this building and others is its price.

Whereas in Santander, regional administrators don't have feel concerned on the subject of mitigating the price of the arts centre to those persons who pay taxes. As an alternative, the Botín Center will be sponsored by the family organization of Emilio Botín, Spain's largely powerful banker and the President of Banco Santander.



banker Emilio Botín

Santander people are appreciative for this individual preference and gamble on Santander, at a time when the establishment could without problems have chosen in its place Madrid or many other cities which are populated by over one million people.

However, director of the Botín Foundation Íñigo Saez de Miera, was firm on the fact that Mr Piano's construction has a necessity to be incorporated into a bigger cultural tourism plan — preferably a modern arts route of northern Spain — to steer clear of a number of of the errors of other projects caused by the "going-solo" factor.

Hence cultural tourists could have begun their voyage in the Basque area by paying a visit to the Chillida sculpture museum next to San Sebastián and the Guggenheim in Bilbao, previous to taking a trip by the side of the coast to Santander and Avilés and finishing their journey at Santiago's Cultural Hub.

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