



ECOTOURISM ITINERARIES GUIDE



Spaces of light and silence



TIERRAS DE GRANADILLA

Cáceres • Extremadura



Ecotourism Itineraries Guide

Tierras de Granadilla

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Ecotourism Itineraries Guide

Trasierra-Tierras de Granadilla Region

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The Region of Tierras de Granadilla

The region of Trasierra-Tierras de Granadilla is located to the North of the province of Cáceres (Extremadura, Spain), and covers an approximate area of 700 square kilometres. It consists of fifteen villages, totalling 9,500 inhabitants. It is crossed from North to South by the A 66, old N 630, old Vía de la Plata from the Romans and older even the path of transhumance from the Neolithic period.

Offers three fully differentiated areas: the mountainous North is embedded in Las Hurdes. The peaks of Trasierra, to the East, serve as buttress to the neighbouring Valle del Jerte. The centre of the region, flat, wavy, is shared by olive trees, meadow, irrigation and an immense artificial lake: The Gabriel y Galán reservoir.

For a long time, unknown by the tourism and ecotourism, holds, nevertheless, great treasures: Cáparra, Roman city located at the Vía de la Plata, and that disappeared in the fourth century. Granadilla, village whose lands surrounded the reservoir in 1965 and which has been preserved intact, as if its inhabitants had abandoned it yesterday. The Casa Museo Gabriel y Galán as a tribute to this illustrious poet.

To this important heritage we must now add El Anillo: International Centre for Sports Innovation in the Natural Environment, which has obtained for its design and peculiar structure, several awards and international recognition. One of the most prestigious awards was in July 2009, in the X Bienal Nacional de Arquitectura. Other architecture meetings where its value

to the national and international levels has been recognized are: The Muestra Itinerante Internacional de Arquitectura Española, the VII Bienal Iberoamericana de Arquitectura y Urbanismo. Gets the ENOR Award for Young Architecture, the Architectural Review Awards for Emerging Architecture 2009 and the New York Architectural Record-Design Vanguard.

A vast, overwhelming, nature for those who like to enjoy the silence. So that the region has been chosen by National Parks to host the new breeding centre of the Iberian Lynx, located in the vicinity of Zarza de Granadilla.

And kind people - is not just a cliché - over and over again to the traveller. In a territory where human activities adapt respectful to the environment, we have raised these routes as an approach to this complex universe. That is why I ask that for a few days, you abandon the car and the rush, take the bike, boots or the horse, and immerse yourself in the stillness and the magic of the Tierras de Granadilla. Sure that you will not be disappointed.

Areas without forest cover

In this field you can see larks, calanders, stone-curlew, Montagu's harriers (in crops of cereal). Even groups of vultures (Griffon, black and Egyptian) which come from the neighbouring Hurdes and that bosom the countryside in search of any carcass.



Gabriel y Galán reservoir environment

Apart from the aforementioned storks and cranes, which have their roost near Granadilla, a multitude of waterfowl can be seen occasionally: mallard, frieze, duck spoon garganey...

In the forests of coniferous of the North of the reservoir live goshawks, sparrow-

hawks, great spotted woodpeckers, chaffinches, jays, hawfinches. And as for mammals, have here their habitat the wild boar, the badger, the marten, the fox, the mongoose and the extremely endangered Iberian lynx, which holds in the area a small reproductive population.

The natural environment

The meadow is undoubtedly the biggest heritage of the region from the ecological point of view, and the best example of sustainable development that can be quoted, since it allows to combine an environmental value raised with the human use, which here is fundamentally cattle: in many places we will be able to observe cows (also sheep and pigs) grazing between the holm-oaks and the cork oaks of the farms, many of them delimited by stones fences.

Wildlife

Not only there are domestic animals in the holm-oak woods: also

we will be able to find foxes, rabbits and genets, although the above mentioned are very difficult to see.

Nevertheless, it is the community of birds the one that takes the biscuit in this ecosystem: here live birds of prey of medium size as the red kite, the black kite, the Eurasian buzzard, the booted eagle; nocturnal birds of prey as the tawny owl, the little owl or the scops owl; ravens as the azur-winged magpie; white storks, very abundant, and black storks, not so much. Also a multitude of minor birds as the common chaffinch, the robin, the warbler, the great tit, the common stonechat, the redstart...

Practical information

▶▶ Leave everything as it was. Close doors, gates, etc. Respect private property, and follow the marked trails. Respect the trails.

▶▶ Don't do any type of fire, it is the main enemy of our nature.

▶▶ Do not abandon or bury your waste, take it to a collection service.

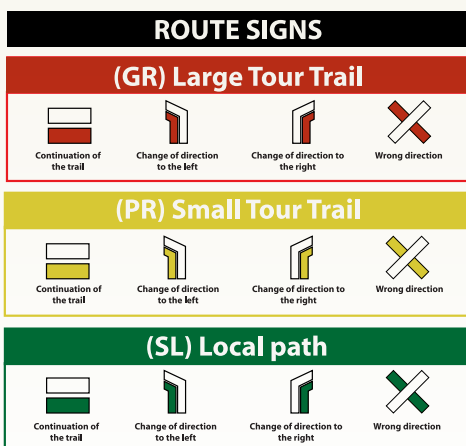
▶▶ Respect and take care of the water sources and creeks.

▶▶ Try to make the route without disturbing animals that are in your path, respect the flora of the area, don't take branches or flowers.

▶▶ Try to make the trails respecting, as much as possible, the silence of the fields.

Route signs

Signposting of trails. These are some of the signs you will find when you take the routes we describe below.





HIM (Hiking Information Method)



Environment

Harshness of the natural surroundings

1. The natural surroundings are not risk free.
2. There is more than one risk factor
3. There are several risk factors
4. There are quite a lot of risk factors
5. There are many risk factors



Itinerary

Difficulty getting your bearings in the itinerary

1. Well defined roads and crossroads
2. Paths or signage that indicate continuation
3. Requires accurate identification of geographical accidents and cardinal points
4. Requires orientation and navigation techniques off the path
5. Navigation is interrupted by obstacles that must be skirted around



Displacement

Difficulty in displacement

1. Walking along a smooth surface
2. Walking along bridle paths
3. Walking along paths with steps or irregular land
4. It is essential to use your hands keep your balance
5. Requires some climbing to advance



Effort

Amount of effort required

1. Up to one hour of effective walking
2. One to three hours' effective walking
3. Three to six hours' effective walking
4. Six to 10 hours' effective walking
5. Over 10 hours' effective walking

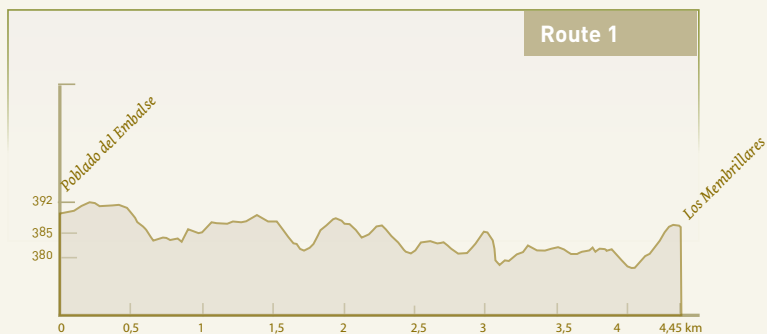
*Calculated according to HIM criteria for an average hiker carrying a light backpack.

ROUTE 1



Ruta 1. **Membrillares**

Route 1: Membrillares



HIM



Departure: Poblado del Embalse
Course: Linear (round trip)
Length: 13 km (round trip)
Estimated time: 3 horas
Difficulty: baja
Difference in levels \wedge : 45,7 m
Difference in levels ∇ : 49,6 m
Maximum altitude: 392 m
Minimum altitude: 377 m

1

Route Membrillares

Embalse de Gabriel y Galán

Completed in 1961, it was in its time the largest in Extremadura. The data speak for themselves: almost 50 square kilometres and 27 kilometres long. Was built to provide water to the irrigation systems of the basin of the Alagón and, secondarily, for electricity production. The system is completed with two reservoirs, downstream of the dam: Guijo and Valdeobispo. In this life, everything has a price: here was the flooding of a fertile valley and the depopulation of the village of Granadilla, which was virtually surrounded by its waters.

The Village

Its history goes back to the reservoir, as it served to accommodate workers who worked on the construction of the dam. Today is partly uninhabited, but it also hosts a series of services, such as the facilities of the Commonwealth, the hostel Poeta Gabriel y Galán, the Cáparra Association of Rural Development, the Regional Interpretation Centre, the tourist office and the Regional Training Centre.

Route description

As we have said, this route has its home in the Village of Embalse de Gabriel y Galán and ends in Los Membrillares, popular bathing area of the district in the warmer months.

The starting point is located in the EX 205 road, where the sign of the Cáparra Association is. From here starts a path that descends into the reservoir. 860 meters further we stumble upon another path, this time paved, and we go through it to the right. Another 60 meters and we get out of the path on the left, next to an inverted U shaped cork oak. Here, a narrow trail opens that leads to the shore of the reservoir, which we will continue to the right, until we find a new path that borders it. Once in it, we continue to the left. At the beginning it is in good condition, but later almost disappears. If we find the shore too stony, we only have to climb a few meters and exit to the road that leads to 'El Anillo'.



Before us, on the other side of the large sheet of water, stands an antenna crowned hill. It is the Sierra de Santa Bárbara (route 49). We can also see the wall of the reservoir, a kilometre long.

We continue along the water, following the whims of the coast. We have walked a little over 2 km. from



the beginning, when we arrive at the small peninsula on which is located the spectacular 'El Anillo', Centre of Sports Activities in the Natural Environment. We pass in front of the door and cross the narrow isthmus and find a path, which we follow to the right. At a fork that is 300 m later, we choose the option on the left, next to the banks of the reservoir.



From here the route is simple, because we will simply border the water. To the East you can see the high mountains of the Trasierra and before us it is possible to see the abandoned village of Granadilla (route 8).

Thus we reach the area of Los Membrillares, formed by a large bend in which the field is immersed in the reservoir with a mild slope. If we

are at the end of Spring or Summer surely we find ourselves with people bathing or families spending the day.

Our route ends near a house in ruins, clearly visible at a high. Next to it there is a Palm tree, in whose shadow we can rest if it is hot. We will make the way back through the same place which we came.



Village of the Reservoir

Built next to the dam to house workers of the same, it currently hosts the headquarters of the GAL Ceder Cáparra, the headquarters of the Trasierra Tierras de Granadilla Commonwealth, the Regional Interpretation Centre and a Youth Hostel.

Interpretation Centre and Tourist Office

Contents interpret resources on which the economy of the area and traditional uses are based (olives, oil, slaughter and cork), as well as information on the villages of the region, history, gastronomy, etc.

Here we find, the Regional Tourist Office.

Phone: 927 024 390 / 927 43 94 76



Centre for Sports Innovation 'El Anillo'

Embalse de Gabriel y Galán Swamp. Prior appointment: 927 442 901 / 608 560 626

Where to eat?

Bar Restaurant Gabriel y Galán

Phone: 927 43 95 77 / 645 831 134

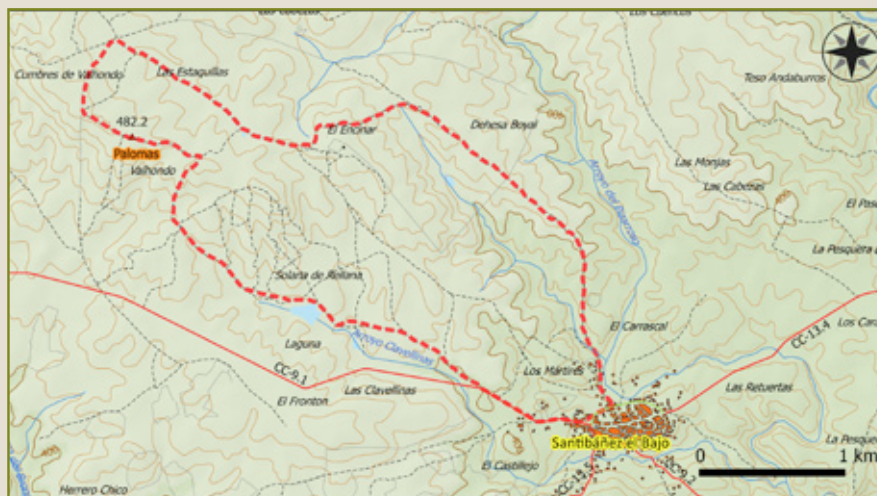
Bar La Presa. Phone: 655 981 227

ROUTE 2



Ruta 2. **Dehesa de Santibáñez**

Route 2: Santibáñez Meadow



Route 2

HIM



Departure: Santibáñez el Bajo
Course: round trip
Length: 10,8 km
Estimated time: 3 horas
Difficulty: baja
Difference in levels \wedge : 149 m
Difference in levels ∇ : 149m
Maximum altitude: 478 m
Minimum altitude: 371 m

2

Santibáñez Meadow

A Boyal Meadow

It is the term commonly used to refer to those areas that are of municipal property, and this is the case of the Santibáñez Meadow. With an area of 900 hectares, the exploitation by neighbours is made in a communal way, by rent. The City Council sets a few lots going out into public auction. The main uses of the meadow are raising cows and pigs, coal from oak to braziers (picón), and the extraction or production of cork from cork trees that takes place once every nine years.

Despite being the Meadow one of the main hallmarks of Extremadura, we can count the occasions in which we can walk freely, since most are zealously gated and private properties. This is our opportunity to know where the legendary pata negra ham grows: taking advantage of it.

Cows? Yes, thank you

When entering or leaving the meadow, we find cattle grids. If we do not know this expression: it's a pit that exists in farms accesses covered with metal crossbars. This ingenious system allows the passage of vehicles and people, but prevents the animals from escaping without the need for a door.



Anywhere you see one of these devices, we will have almost complete certainty that we are going to find cows. Non-dairy, but intended for the production of meat. But rest assure, because they are not at all dangerous, in any case we give you two tips: a) We will not summon or provoke them. b) We will never get between them and its offspring, as the love of a mother is virtually the only thing that can pluck them out of its quiet. Sometimes it happens that the curious ones are the calves, and try to approach, but with us away from them it is enough.

Route description

We place the starting point of this route next to the municipal slaughterhouse of Santibáñez el Bajo, almost opposite to the Post Office. The path is broad at the beginning and in concrete. We pass next to the pools, we have two very followed crossings and in both we choose the option on the right.

After 400 m. we arrive at a third crossing, where we also take the right. We are on the resting place

of cattle; here there is a shelter for shepherds and pens for the animals. 300 m further on, we take the path on the left, through the cattle grid. The land rises gently and we are surrounded by trees: virtually all are oaks and cork oaks. We will also see patches of scrub, mainly rockrose and lavender.

If there is something striking in this meadow, it is that it is located in a sort of plateau which, despite

being little more than 400 m. above sea level, has a wide panoramic view of the surroundings. Are now perfectly visible between the trees, the mountains of the North, and as we go by, we will see also the ones to the East and South. We will find also some oak, species that tends to be typical of higher altitudes.

We pass through several forks and two cattle grids more. With over 5 km travelled and already off the main path we face 400 m. absolutely impassable for bikes and surely flooded in Winter: the numerous holes that make it impossible to pedal are visible in the hooves of cows sinking into the soft mud. In this section, in addition, the path is not far from clear, although there are a few light treads. Then, the land rises a little and the route is again visible and walkable.

Another kilometre and we arrive at the triangulation station, mounted on a turret of concrete. It is the Cerro Palomas, 482 metres above sea level, the highest point of the route.

We continue. Two more crosses and a cattle grid. Then we see a considerable water reservoir: Laguna Nueva. It is possible that this is the site where we find more cows. Three more crosses and the last cattle grid: we leave the road and turn left. Santibáñez is less than 1 km away. Such a road is infrequently travelled and its left bank has a dirt path. Once inside the village we find a crossroad, where we will continue left towards Ahigal. Soon we will see the post office and the slaughterhouse, and we have finished our tour of the meadow.





SANTIBÁÑEZ EL BAJO

In Santibáñez el Bajo we find very representative buildings such as the parish church of Santiago Apóstol of the 15th century, in which we highlight its sturdy Bell Tower and the chapel of Santísimo Cristo de la Paz, of the 18th century, which keeps a wooden carving of Christ which gives name to the Church and a Virgin of Alabaster, whose replica is located in Italy. The Town Hall, built in 1928, is another of the points of interest that the visitor should not miss. Nature lovers can enjoy beautiful walking routes in the area, such as the 'Path of San Albín', which runs on trails marked by orchards of olive trees and vines to reach the Lake of the mountain or the 'Route de los Lagares', that runs through these abandoned buildings along the course of the creek of the Clavelinas. Another good place to enjoy nature is the Boyal Meadow, where you can enjoy views so beautiful as the ones shown in the pictures.

Santibáñez el Bajo

Web: www.santibañezelbajo.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Church of Santiago Apostle, 15th century.
- » Chapel of Cristo de la Paz
- » Route 'Path of San Albín' and 'Route de los Lagares'.

FESTIVITIES

- » First weekend of August
- » Emigrant Fair
- » June 1st Fair
- » September 23: Fair of Christ

ACCOMMODATION

- » Casa Rural Ruidioro
Tlf.: 927 670 071 / 648 273 098 / 608 921 912
Avda. Las Vegas, 55
casaruralruidioro@hotmail.com
www.ruidiorohotelrural.com

BATHING AREA

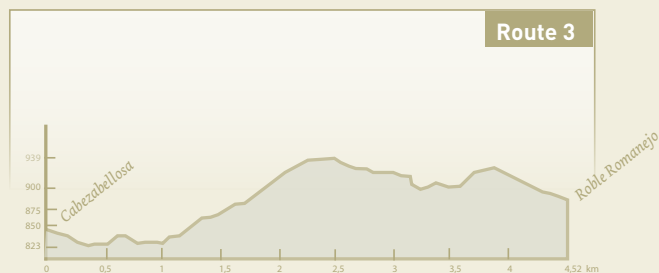
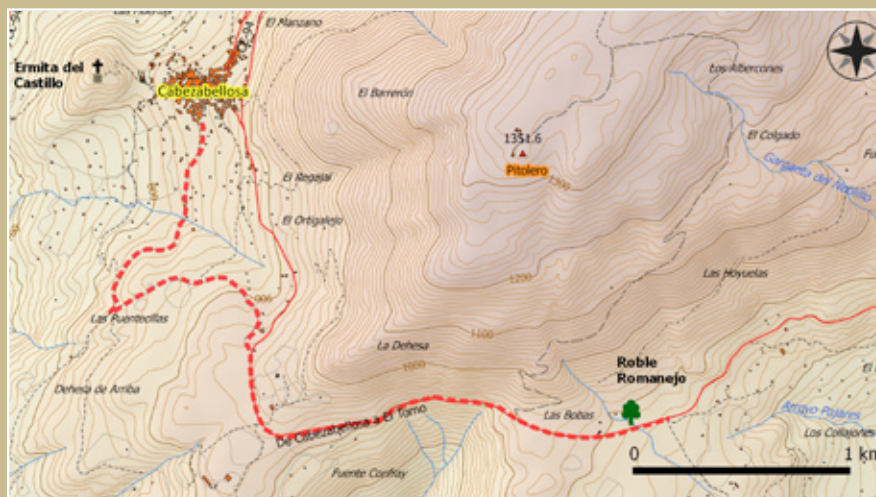
Municipal pools of Santibañez el Bajo.



ROUTE 3

Ruta 3. Roble Acarreadero

Route 3: Acarreadero Oak



HIM



Departure:

Cabezabellosa

Course: Linear (round trip)

Length: 9,04 km

Estimated time: 3,30 h.

Difficulty: Media

Difference in levels \uparrow : 167 m

Difference in levels \downarrow : 127 m

Maximum altitude: 939 m

Minimum altitude: 823 m

3

Acarreadero Oak

Unique tree of Extremadura

The Junta de Extremadura created several years ago this figure of protection for the most iconic trees of the region. The Acarreadero was one of the first eight obtaining such statement. And it is, as we shall see, the largest oak in Extremadura that has with ease all the requirements: Its treetop surface is over 800 square meters; the height exceeds 26 meters; the trunk has a perimeter at the base of almost 10 meters; as for the age, are calculated some 600 years. And to any neighbour of Cabezabellosa who we ask will talk about his tree with pride. Unique tree statement involves the conservation of the specimens in harmony with its applications, rights and traditional uses, as well as the development of educational, scientific, cultural, social and economic activities compatible with its protection.

Route description

We start our journey in the mountain town of Cabezabellosa next to the bus stop. An advice before we begin, if we have drove here let's park in this zone and let's not penetrate in the old town, since there are passages so narrow that easily can take us back to the time in which we were getting our driver's license. Are streets that are well worth visiting, but walking.

We were at the bus stop. From there we will see the pharmacy. We go down that street, called Fuente, and the next, which is Church Street which, as the name suggests, leads up to said building. We are located opposite the temple and take its left or what is the same, continue through Church Street. Only after 100 m. we find an alley on the right, which we take. A few meters down we find a traditional laundry where it is possible to fetch water for drinking. Where one can protect both from the rain and the rigors of the sun. We go ahead, which for the moment has cement floor. 500 m. after the crossroad we arrived at a cattle grid; we are now on an oak forest, and we are tucked in by the shadow of the leafy trees. More 600 m. and we find a double crossing: first, we turn left and again to the left. We begin to ascend and leave the oak forest. Another cross, this time cross-shaped, and we continue straight.

Now we are going through bare ground and we can see Cabezabellosa to our left; much more down the Gabriel y Galán reservoir, and much of the towns that make up the Tierras de Granadilla. The ascent



rises until we reach a metal door that we go through to the Cabezabellosa - El Torno road. We turn right.

Such a road is not busy but even so we will not be in it for long, at least if we are walking or on horseback; we leave it at the 400 m. by the second gate we see to our right, while bicycles will continue in the asphalt for 1.5 km. until they see a cattle grid to the left. Past the door we continue toward our left next to the fence. 100 m further on the ancient road linking Cabezabellosa to the village of El Torno is already visible, which preserves even part

of its pavement. This path goes on parallel to the road constantly and sometimes between stone walls, so it is impossible to get lost. The problem is that it is in very poor condition: If the bushes have not closed it is because of the continuous movement of livestock, leaving only a narrow path. Hikers must carry a good stick in case they need to remove bushes that close the path.

At this Stage we will have noticed already that we have transposed the mountain and therefore watershed. The Landscape that now opens before our eyes is the well-known Valle del Jerte.

Castillo Chapel. Cabezabellosa

Do we want to give a stroll because there is no time or desire for more? Beside Cabezabellosa we have the Castillo Chapel, visible from the village. To reach it we must follow identical instructions as for the route of the oak, only when arriving opposite to the Church instead of going to the left we will go to the right. We

pass next to the school and we are still going down. When we get next to the wall of the Cemetery we will continue straight; the path is so obvious that it does not need to be marked. If at the end we are left without seeing the Romanejo oak we have here, on the right and next to the wall, a fine specimen of chestnut.

Arriving at the door of the enclosure which surrounds the chapel, it is possible that we find it closed. It does not matter, because the best views are up: to the right of the wall starts a narrow path that leads to a small plateau located between huge boulders of granite. From there we can enjoy a wonderful panoramic of the plain, Cabezabellosa and the mountains.

Total distance round trip: 2.5 km.

Estimated time: 35 minutes





And Jerte is the river whose waters are confined below, forming the reservoir of Plasencia.

We have been walking 600 metres along the rugged path when we find a source of drinking water (who writes this certifies it, since I've tasted it without consequences). We walk among very dense vegetation and a little over 1 km. after the water source, we climb a small hill until we reach a metal door that opens to the road. We pass by it and just opposite, we will see the cattle grid that we pointed out to the cycling option. We walk by it and see a dirt track that ascends: is the ascent to Cerro Pitolero of 1,352 m., where there is a take-off point of gliders. But we do not climb that high, at 300 m. from the cattle grid, just where the track makes its first turn, we take a detour to the

right and continue along a path more plain-looking and less travelled. We go deep again in an oak forest; whose huge specimens already presage the tree that we are about to see. We cross a creek and, a little later, we find a Y shaped fork. We take the right option. When we get to a new creek we will see a path going to the right and back. Descending describes a broad turn and there, in the middle of a clearing, we find the majestic Romanejo oak, perhaps the largest we've ever seen. There is a sign of the Junta de Extremadura, which gives a series of information relating to the tree.

After contemplating it and relax, we will return to Cabezabellosa retracing our steps.



CABEZABELLOSA

It is the highest village in the region, is located at an altitude of 840 meters and its natural location turns it on the balcony of the Valleys of Ambroz and Jerte, by the extraordinary views of the two valleys. Its highest known point is the 'pitolero' with an altitude of 1351 meters, from which we can see the Extremadura meadows and several provinces. This peak is very suitable for the practice of paragliding and hang gliding. The location and its forests of chestnut and oak, gives option to stroll by the trails that go into nature, on these trails we can see the Romanejo oak, listed as Unique Tree of Extremadura.

At the heritage level, we highlight the Church of San Lorenzo of the 17th century, with its tombs of stone on the floor. Completes its religious heritage, the chapel of Nuestra Señora del Castillo of the 18th century, with a beautiful altarpiece from the 18th century, and from which privileged enclave we can admire a magnificent view of Cabezabellosa and all the region. There are other anthropomorphic tombs and a Roman site. The practice of paragliding in the summer season completes the tourist offer.

Cabezabellosa

www.cabezabellosa.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

- ▶▶ Church of San Lorenzo, 17th century.
- ▶▶ Chapel Virgin del Castillo, 18th century.
- ▶▶ Archaeological deposit in the castle.
- ▶▶ Unique tree: 'Romanejo or Acarreadero' Oak

FESTIVITIES

- ▶▶ September 8: 'Festivity of the Virgin del Castillo'.
- ▶▶ September 9: Pilgrimage in the chapel of the Virgin.
- ▶▶ August 10: San Lorenzo.

ACCOMMODATIONS

▶▶ Casa rural Villa Lucía

Tlf.: 670 627 662 / 659 388 008
www.restaurantelostresgabrieles.com
restaurantelostresgabrieles@hotmail.com

▶▶ C. R. Carvajal Birdwatching Centre

Tlf.: 669 795 310 / 656 978 234
casacarvajal@yahoo.es
www.casacarvajal.com

▶▶ A.R. and Hostel La Bellosina

Tlf.: 927 489 056 / 639 903 173
info@hostallabellosina.es
www.hostallabellosina.es

WHERE TO EAT

▶▶ Los Tres Gabrieles Restaurant

Telf: 659 38 80 08
www.restaurantelostresgabrieles.com

BATHING AREA. Municipal pool.

PARAGLIDING AREA. El Pitolero. +Info. Asociación Parapente-Plasencia.
www.vuelolibrevaldeamor.es

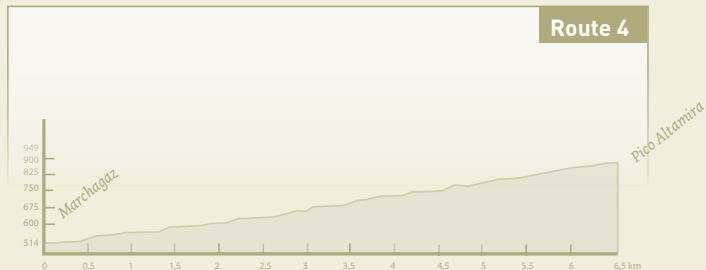
An aerial photograph of a small village with white walls and red-tiled roofs, situated in a valley. The surrounding landscape is hilly and green, with a winding road visible. In the background, there are layers of mountains under a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The top of the image has a decorative wavy blue border.

ROUTE 4

A decorative wavy yellow border separating the image from the text below.

Ruta 4. **Pico Altamira**

Route 4: Pico Altamira



HIM				
	2	2	2	3

Departure:

Marchagaz

Course: Linear (round trip)

Length: 6,54 km (one-way)

Estimated time: 2 h.

Difficulty: Media

Difference in levels \uparrow : 494 m

Difference in levels \downarrow : 61,8 m

Maximum altitude: 949 m

Minimum altitude: 514 m



4

Pico Altamira

'Manzanilla cacereña' olive

It is possible that upon reaching the area we will be surprised by the abundance of olives. If we had the idea that this tree is unique to Andalusian or to the South of Badajoz heritage, this visit will end with our prejudice: The Western half of the region is devoted largely to the cultivation of the olive and the figures are compelling: 35 million kilos per year and dozens of cooperatives here are the way of life for many families

There are basically two types of collection: the intended for the manufacture of oil, which is collected in winter; and the table, also known as verdeo, whose collection begins in the month of September.

When we reach the top of the mountain we will check as sheltered by its slopes are aligned olive groves as far as the eye can see, as if in a Jaén landscape.

Route description

This trail has its home in the village of Marchagaz and climbs to the top of the Sierra de Santa Bárbara, popularly known locally as Sierra de Altamira. Our route begins in the Plaza de España, next to schools. We go up the Egido Street, which is where the pharmacy is and we arrive to the Plaza Majadilla, wide and with a fountain in the middle. We cross it and go down the street coming up and to the left, next to a house that has huge dice ornaments. Then we find a Y shaped crossing; we choose the branch to the right, which is steep and of concrete. On the other side of a wall and to the right we will have the chance to contemplate a few beautiful specimens of cork oak. The difference in height is the hardest of the entire route. We will gain height among olive groves. At a + shaped crossroad. We continue straight. There is another higher up, where we take the path to the left.

While the excursions to the Romanejo Oak or Piedras Labradas (route 7) cross a granite setting, the ascent of the Sierra de Santa Bárbara is marked by slate. The whole mountain is set on this type of rock, as well as the neighbouring Hurdes. We will gradually raise on the plain and Marchagaz is at our feet.

We are 2 km from the departure and, at a fork, we turn to the right. We are leaving the monoculture of the olive grove and begins to appear a type of vegetation more varied. Two other crossings and to our right we can already see the ruins of the convent of San Marcos, covered by vegetation. We soon reach a wide dirt track, where there is a fountain and a picnic area. We continue along the track upwards. From here the vegetation is lush: chestnut, turkey oaks, pine trees, nut trees, heather, rockrose, broom... As for the route, it is impossible to get lost: winds along the slope of the mountain, passes to its North face and after 2 kilometres reaches the highest point, 980 m above sea level. Proof of the privileged spot is the large number of antennas of all kinds that crown the mountain. To the North we see the villages of Las Hurdes and the Los Ángeles River. To the East, Mohedas (route 11) and the Gabriel y Galán reservoir; further, the foothills of Gredos, depending on the season we can see them covered in snow. If we look towards the South we will understand the strategic and sheltered situation of Marchagaz, located in the centre of a kind of mountainous circus which protects it from almost all winds.



MARCHAGAZ

The municipality has an architectural ensemble of religious character of great wealth. Buildings of interest are the ruins of the Convent of San Marcos, located on the slopes of the Sierra de Santa Bárbara (known as sierra de Altamira), who once served as a refuge for the Franciscan monks, and the parish church of Santiago Apóstol, construction of rectangular ground plan of four sections, which houses the image of Santiago Matamoros who is venerated by the people. The visitors can enjoy the 'Path of the Convent'. This route starts in the municipality and goes up to the Hill, where a new trail continues up to the ruins of the convent of San Marcos. From this location we can admire the vast landscape that covers the regions of las Hurdes, Valle de Alagón and Tierras de Granadilla.

Marchagaz

www.marchagaz.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Parish Church of Santiago Apóstol
- » Ruins of the convent of San Marcos

FESTIVITIES

- » July 25: Santiago Apóstol
- » First Monday after Easter: Pilgrimage

ACCOMMODATIONS

- » Casa Tenerías

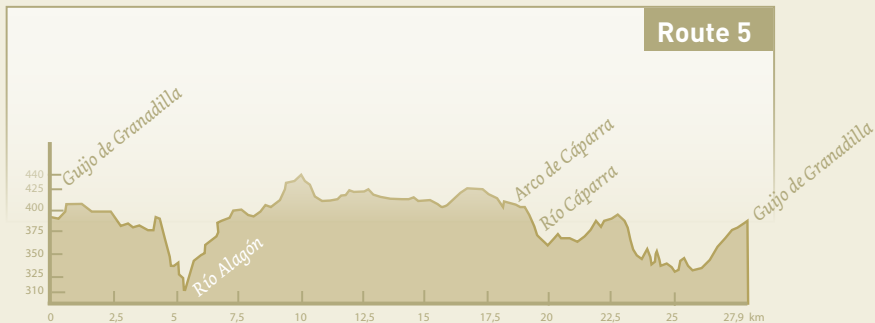
Tlf.: 696 548 295 / 679 410 929 / 927 239 968
www.setinrural.com
casatenerias@setinrural.com

ROUTE 5



Ruta 5. De Guijo a Cáparra

Route 5: From Guijo de Granadilla to Cáparra



HIM



2 **2** **1** **4**

Departure:

Guijo de Granadilla

Course: Circular

Length: 27,9 km.

Estimated time: 7 h.

Difficulty: Media

Difference in levels \uparrow : 422 m.

Difference in levels \downarrow : 418 m.

Maximum altitude: 440 m.

Minimum altitude: 310 m.

5

From Guijo to Cáparra

Verses for the land

Who was this Gabriel y Galán so that his name was given to a reservoir? A Minister? A businessman? No, a poet. Although Salamancan by birth (Frades de la Sierra, 1870), knew how to capture the soul and language of the simple people like no one else: in his famous Extremeñas collects the linguistic variant called castúo. Along with Luis Chamizo, is regarded as the leading exponent of popular poetry in Extremadura. Already in his time enjoyed some literary standing, won some Floral Games, and had friendship with Unamuno. In 1903 the City Council of Guijo named him adoptive son. In 1905, only thirty-five years old, he died of 'pneumonia'. Gabriel y Galán, died on January 6 in Guijo de Granadilla and was buried at the Municipal Cemetery in this town. Today it is possible to visit his house converted into a Museum, where we can see objects, manuscripts and books donated by his descendants.

Route description

This is a circular route that has its origin in Guijo de Granadilla, reaches the Roman city of Cáparra following a section of the Vía de la Plata, and returns to the starting point by another way.

From Reverencia Street, that crosses the road that bypasses the village, begins the Plasencia Path which is paved with concrete in its first 800 m. There are olive trees on both sides and the terrain is plain. Soon we reach a crossroad and we're going to the left. In the next section we ignore the many paths that, at an angle of 90 degrees, leave the main path and go into the olive groves. We've travelled 3.5 km. when we reach a Y shaped fork and chose the section on the right.

Until here the route has been clear enough but now the forks follow one another: at 700 m. crossing to the right. 200 m. more and new crossing, abandon the well-marked down path, and we go to the left, on other quite worse and uphill. 2,250 m. more and another crossing, this time on the right. We descend a path in a pretty bad shape for 150 m. and next to a house we turn right along a path that passes almost unnoticed. Now come about 200 m. utterly impassable for bicycles: If we are doing the path in this mode, we will have to take it by hand during this stretch. The

path goes down and reaches the Santibáñez-Oliva de Plasencia road, of relative traffic. We bend to the left.

Here we cross the bridge over the Alagón river, overgrown, since its waters are retained by the reservoir of Valdeobispo. Once on the other side, where already fully dominates the holm-oak, we climb the road about 700 m. until we find a path that climbs to the right.

Here we should choose accordingly: hikers and riders will be on the road; the bikers have no choice than to make about 3 km. of road, until the hamlet of Ventaquemada, where they will turn left by the wide drovers' road. If we don't like the asphalt, we can go by the roadside of gravel of almost a meter that goes along the road (strongly advise against to riders the option of the path: I tried to go when I was mapping the route and took me more time pushing the bike than mounted on it).

I now explain the riding-hiking option. We were emerging from the road by a path on the right and upward. We are going between stone walls. At 600 m. and at a crossroad we turn 90 degrees to the left. 500 m. more and a new turn to the left. We find ourselves in a well paved path that we follow for another 700 m. up to now turn right.

The ground gets progressively worse, and we went through areas that are probably flooded in the rainy season. We are, moreover, in the most labyrinthine part of the route. We have three turns to the right: the first at 750 m., the second at 250 m. more, and the third at another 300 m. After a really bad stretch, the path starts to improve. After a slight decline we reach a wide drovers' road: is the Western Cañada Soriana. Here we turn left.

By the drovers' road runs a paved country path but there is space out of it if we want to go by land. After almost 2 Km we are back on the Santibáñez-Oliva de Plasencia road near Ventaquemada. We cross it. From here, riders, bikers and hikers will continue together.

In contrast to the narrow roads where we have circulated so far, here the drovers' road opens in all its fullness, 70-80 meters in some places. If we add to this fact that it has been dotted with leafy oaks and that the Western Soriana joins in this sections the Vía de la Plata, we will understand that we are before the most attractive six kilometres of the route.

In this section we will see, with some frequency, yellow arrows painted in trees and soil. It is the signalling of the Camino de Santiago of the South that leaves from the distant Seville and goes to Santiago



de Compostela, either by Astorga or by Orense. Immense journey that we, at this time, will taste only a very small part. Until recently it was a path almost testimonial, but in recent years it is acquiring a considerable boom, so it will not surprise us if we find some of the two thousand pilgrims that annually pass through these lands. To us the yellow arrows will be useful until we arrive at Cáparra.

Although in principle we can move freely by the drovers' road, I recommend the path on the right, which is next to the stone wall: in the left side moisture accumulates, as indicated by the high grasses, and if we go there will not be rare that we find ourselves stuck.

We've travelled 5.5 km. from Ventaquemada when we face a fork: The Vía de la Plata and the Western Soriana separate. The yellow arrow sends us to the right. If we have been walking or on horseback recall the path on the left: is where will have to go if we want to avoid 1 km. of road.

Attention, 250 m. later, we leave the well charted and paved road and we take another left, in quite a few worse conditions but indicated by the yellow arrow. From here, among the vegetation, we can see the Arch of Cáparra.

I do not know what draws more attention here, if the survival through the centuries of the arch or the complete disappearance of the Roman enclave: now the excavations are bringing to light buildings, walls, but only ten years ago one came and looked astonished this four-foot arch - unique in the Iberian Peninsula-, just in the middle of the field, and wondered where was the rest of the city.

The Vía de la Plata passed - and passes - under the arch and matches the decumanus of the city in this section. If we want to, we can take a tour of the excavations, they have recently placed a few panels with images and information that allow us to get a more accurate idea of the buildings and its role.

If we want to visit the interpretation centre (see schedule on the tab of Villar de Plasencia, route 6), we will go to the right, by the gravel path that comes out under the arch - is the old cardo - and which crosses the excavations. There are benches, a large porch and, if the Centre is open, also beverage vending machines and toilets.

Then we will resume the route returning to the arch. Here hikers and riders can retrace 800 m of path then turn at the Western Soriana. Otherwise, along with bikers will go down to the right, looking for the road, where they will turn to the left. In any case both paths meet next to the Roman bridge that crosses the Ambroz river - known in this stretch as Cáparra river -. This bridge is very restored, since by it passed much of the heavy machinery that came to build the Gabriel y Galán reservoir. After crossing the river, we take a path that goes to the left. At the beginning comes a slight rise. Then flattens. We've travelled 2 km. in it when we find a cattle grid that can be opened. Then we cross another, but this with cattle grid. Some stretches of the road are made of concrete - attention bikers, because they are not continuous-, we ignore paths that appear to the right and left until we begin a steep decline into the Alagón river. The first thing we will see is a small hydroelectric station: is the Guijo reservoir. Now the road flattens, going up river to reach the

Guijo-Zarza de Granadilla road. We are going to the left, crossing the bridge. From here we can see a strange structure that protrudes from the water: is a bridge that was saved from the reservoir and placed on a concrete base. Pity that in doing so they confused a small detail: the spans of the bridge point to the banks, as if the river, rather than flowing from North to South, now flows from East to West.



Once on the other side of the real bridge, the itineraries split again: bicycles will continue along the road, which ascends for 1 km. Then comes a slight descent and immediately we enter in Guijo. With regard to hikers and horseback riders, they will take the road that goes to the right of the road, which is plain for quite a while and borders the reservoir. Then it narrows, it begins to ascend and we understand why we cannot come here by bicycle. There is a somewhat difficult stretch, but I think that the horses without the riders can climb it without a problem. After this section, at a fork we will go to the left, and the same when reaching a main path. Soon we will see the Tower of the village Church, which serves as a reference in the final steps of our route.





GUIJO DE GRANADILLA

www.guijodegranadilla.com

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Parish Church of San Andrés
- » Chapel of Cristu Benditu
- » Chapel of Santa Ana
- » House Museum of Gabriel y Galán
- » Outstanding folklore

FESTIVITIES

- » January 6: commemoration of the death of Gabriel y Galán.
- » Last Saturday of April: pilgrimage of San Marcos.
- » Second Sunday of May: Gabriel y Galán Poetry Award
- » July 26: Santa Ana.
- » September 14: El Cristu Benditu.

MUSEUMS

Casa Museo Gabriel y Galán.

Monday to Friday from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm. Weekend prior appointment. Guided and free tours.
Tel. Ayto.: 927 43 90 82
www.guijodegranadilla.com

Roman City of Cáparra Interpretation Centre

Opening hours: Winter from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Summer from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Tlf.: 927 199 485

GUIJO DE GRANADILLA

The Church of San Andrés is one of the most remarkable religious buildings of the Granadilla area. This building is notable for the high quality of the stonework with which is made. Visitors must not leave without seeing the chapels of Cristu Benditu de La Misericordia and of Santa Ana, both from the 15th century.

Undoubtedly the pampered jewel of the municipality is the House Museum of the poet Gabriel y Galán, which preserves many objects and belongings of the artist. Nature lovers can go on the 'Plasencia Olive Path' which starts in Guijo de Granadilla and that continues up to the famous arch in Cáparra passing through the Guijo reservoir. Also to be highlighted in this town the important Reservoir of Gabriel y Galán which will allow the visitor to enjoy the landscape, engage in water sports and leisure.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Casa Rural El Olivo:

Tlf.: 669 732 677 / 646 123 917
www.casaruralelolvivo.es
crolivo2@gmail.com

Casa Rural El Labriego:

Tlf.: 610 392 656
el_labriego@yahoo.es

A.R. El Jardín del Poeta

Tlf.: 609 236 254
www.eljardindelpoeta.com
eljardindelpoeta@gmail.com

WHERE TO EAT?

La Jara Restaurant.

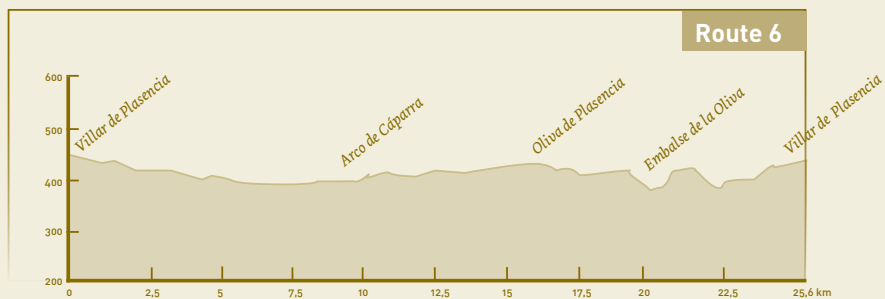
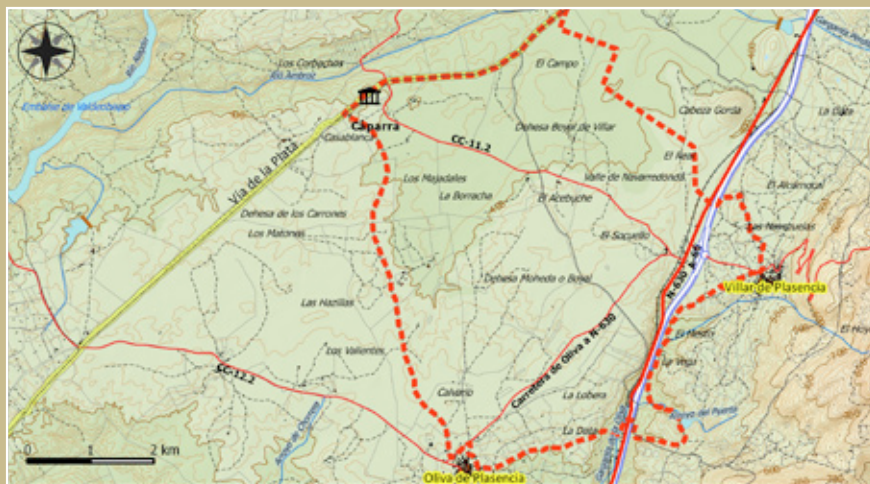
Tel.: 927 439 256 / 656 393 583

A hiker with a red backpack is seen from behind, standing in a large, weathered stone archway. The archway is made of large, rectangular stone blocks with a textured surface. The hiker is wearing a purple long-sleeved shirt and green pants. The background shows a bright, sunny day with a clear blue sky and a green landscape with trees and a fence. The image is framed by a teal border at the top and bottom, with white wavy lines at the top and bottom edges.

ROUTE 6

Ruta 6. Villar, Oliva y Cáparra

Route 6: Villar, Oliva and Cáparra



HIM

2	2	2	4

Departure:
 Villar de Plasencia
Course: Linear (round trip)
Length: 25,6 km
Estimated time: 7 h.
Difficulty: Media
Difference in levels ▲: 312 m.
Difference in levels ▼: 313 m.
Maximum altitude: 450 m.
Minimum altitude: 361 m.

6

Villar, Oliva de Plasencia and Cáparra

Cáparra, the lost city

The existence of Cáparra goes back to a time before the formation of the Roman Lusitania: in its place there was, for certain, a Vetton settlement.

Possibly it was the route of the Roman road between Merida and Astorga, which Cáparra was a mansio or stop, what motivated, in the time of Emperor Augustus, the beginning of the urban process. By the end of the 1st century was awarded by Vespasian the Roman citizenship, and reached its heyday in the 2nd century.

With the fall of the Roman Empire began its decline, accentuated during the Muslim era. The foundation of Plasencia by Alfonso VIII in 1186 moved the flow of travellers and goods further East, and sentenced definitively the city, that was almost completely depopulated. In the 18th century, there was a failed attempt at repopulation. Then Cáparra, is literally buried and was only visible its famous four-sided arch.



The excavations

Where until recently there was an olive grove, have appeared, as if by magic, the southeast door of the city walls, the Forum, the amphitheatre, public baths and a set of rooms with space for storage and household. And there is still much to dig.

There is, moreover, a scattered Cáparra: there are materials of the city, both constructive and epigraphic, distributed by all the neighbouring villages, including relatively distant locations, such as Abadía or Plasencia.

Route description

A new approach to the Roman site of Cáparra, this time from the East. At the entrance of Villar de Plasencia, just where the road forks and there is a sign which reads Cabezabellosa 7.5 km. we start our journey.

We leave effectively towards Cabezabellosa, but a few meters ahead on the left, right where there

is a concrete bench, descends a road also of concrete. We take it. Here - somewhat hidden - is an informational panel installed by the Vocational School describing the road called Camino del Río and basically will be the one we will follow to Cáparra. A few meters ahead there is a large metal door.



We open it, go through it, and leave aside the municipal weighing scale. We are on the route of cattle; before us, the refuge of the shepherds (distinguishable because it is white and with a wooden porch). We go to it, that is, to the right.

We have travelled about 800 m. from the start, when we find ourselves in a new widening; the option that we must select now is the left, leaving to the right several pig farms whose salubrious aroma accompanies us for a while. About 200 m. further down a new fork to the right. In this area it is quite possible to find cows. We are going between oaks and descending. Another intersection, again to the right. We get to a door which reaches, nothing less than to the N-630. On the other side of the road we will find another door, this time open. We go through it, come across a service road and continue

straight ahead. We are in one of the spacious and paved runways built for irrigation. We follow calmly, as it barely has moving vehicles. We cross the railroad track (abandoned) and will continue without anything new for 2.5 km., out of which we find a T-shaped crossroad. We go to the right for about 600 m., then we turn left. The asphalt ends and we find a path of packed dirt that we follow straight for 1.3 km., going through two huge doors which we need to open. Turn right and after 300 m. we stumble upon another door but this time rustic, made of wire and sticks. Once crossed, we turn left, we are now on the *Vía de la Plata*, with which we already made contact on route 5. We will now go through a stretch of 3.5 km. but in the opposite direction.

We have just entered in the pilgrimage route, we go down a short slope and find a door as rustic as



the previous. For about 1 km. we will move close to a stone wall and we only separate from it to cross a creek that usually does not carry water. The path comes to another metal door, which we pass on. For about 2 km. we will advance between walls of stone. The path is invaded by vegetation and, I think, that is kept minimally open by the continuous passage of pilgrims.

We have come to a path that we cross and continue straight. 300 m. further is the Arch of Cáparra. We can visit the excavations and it is also possible to access the interpretation centre of the site going to the left, from the same base of the Arch and overcoming a small hill on a gravel road. In the centre, apart from explanatory panels and various archaeological finds, we can see a 3D simulation of the origins and development of the city. Then, if the outdoor enclosure is open, we will exit by the entrance for vehicles and

turn right on a path and about 100 m. later to the left. Otherwise we will return to the arch and continue to the left; 600 m. Then, we turn left again onto a clearly defined road and then to the right.

Regardless from we have arrived, we are now in the Camino de la Oliva, as is popularly referred to, and which crossing will take us to the village of the same name. The first section is quite abandoned and full of vegetation. It is necessary to warn here that we must have special care in the two first kilometres, since the cows that are behind the fences, are wild cattle. On both sides there are cattle grids preventing the bulls from coming out, and us, watching ourselves, will not abandon the path under any circumstances.

The ground improves especially when we pass the main entrance of the farmhouse of the cows' owner. After 7 km. from Cáparra we end up



in a road, now on the outskirts of Oliva. We turn left and follow it for about 300 m. If we are tired and are in favour of a withdrawal on time, here we are offered this possibility, following this road, after 6 plain km. we reach Villar de Plasencia, showing its charms, just where the streetlamps and the sidewalks end we turn right. We will go around the village by narrow streets paved until we reach the area of the Retamar. Here starts a rural road paved with numerous curves and a vertiginous drop - bikers, caution! - that in 2.5 km. takes us back to the N-630. We cross the road and the cattle grid and follow straight ahead by the same asphalted road, which climbs with a somewhat hard ramp for about 1 km. At the top the asphalt ends. There is a crossroad, we take the left, which descends to the small reservoir of the Garganta de la Oliva. This water is intended to cater the people

of drinking water, so the fences surrounding it entirely prevent the cattle from drinking. From the wall of the dam, the path is damaged and almost disappears, but we will not lose it if we follow the course of the creek to where the reservoir flows, leaving it through the right. Then, below, we cross that creek and the path appears again. We are in the meadow area and during a stretch we move parallel to the national road. From here to Villar de Plasencia we find three intersections. The first is to the left, the second again to the left and the third to the right. We thus reach a wall that we follow to find an alley between walls of stone. We will find a metal door - the last of the day - and 500 m. further we will go to the asphalt next to a shrine. The Km. 0 of our route is 100 m. on the right.



Villar de Plasencia

www.villardeplasencia.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Church of the Asunción
- » Chapel of San Bartolomé

FESTIVITIES

- » 20 and 21 of January: San Sebastián and San Fabián.
- June 13: San Antonio.
- August 24: San Bartolomé.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Casa Rural Tía Emilia / A.R. Tía Antonia

Tlf.: 927 489 028 / 695 581 126
www.casatiaemilia.com
info@casatiaemilia.com

Casa Rural El Rincón del Villar

Tlf.: 927 489 247/696 456 188/696 452 842
www.elrincondelvillar.com
info@elrincondelvillar.com

WHERE TO EAT

Hostel-Restaurant El Avión

Tlf.: 927 489 199
It is in the N 630, 1 km. from the village

VILLAR DE PLASENCIA

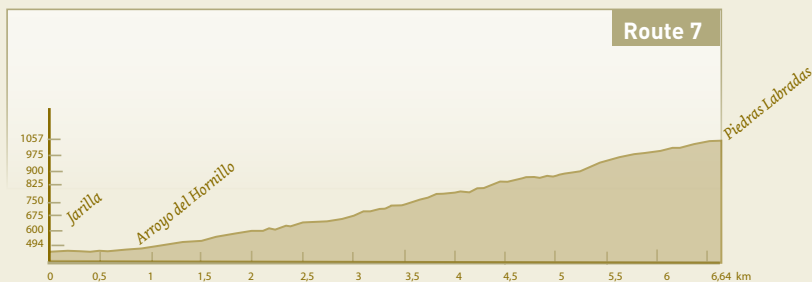
In this town we can admire the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, a Renaissance building which is home to numerous Gothic influences. It is a square building of masonry and ashlar, with a tower of three bodies and a beautiful doorway adorned with a flattened arc. Villar de Plasencia also retains two Baroque chapels where are venerated San Bartolomé and San Antonio de Padua. Also, in this town begins the Camino Real to Plasencia. Visitors can tour the 'Camino del Rio', which crosses a meadow surrounded by oaks, where graze large numbers of cows, very abundant in these lands.



ROUTE 7

Ruta 7. **Piedras labradas**

Route 7: Piedras labradas



HIM

2	2	3	2

Departure: Jarilla

Course: Linear (round trip)

Length: 6.63 km (one-way)

Estimated time: 2 h.

Difficulty: Average

Difference in levels \uparrow : 589 m.

Difference in levels \downarrow : 26 m.

Maximum altitude: 1057 m.

Minimum altitude: 494 m.

7

Piedras Labradas

A Roman sanctuary

The hill of Piedras Labradas is 1,070 meters above sea level; This name referred to a plateau which has been levelled or extended by humans. More or less in the centre we find the remains of the building. The stone blocks are carved with a perfect cut, hence the name of the place.

About its origins are shuffled several hypotheses, since in principle it is unusual that the Romans build in such height. There are who thinks that it had to be a Vetton settlement, or at least one sacred place on which the temple was built. Other theories are inclined that in the plateau existed a communications post that sent, by fire overnight and sparkle by day, signals a far. It is also possible that site fulfilled tasks of protection and monitoring on a secondary route that would unite the Vía de la Plata with the Valle del Jerte. We must not forget also that very close from here there was a water catchment that supplied Cáparra.

The first thing that surprises in the site is, in contrast to the Roman city, here it was just necessary to dig out, possibly because that in this place there is accumulation of dust and dirt washed away by erosion. The second thing is the good condition of the stones: it seems as if they had been carved yesterday.

Oblivious to the hypothesis, solitary and atop the temple of Piedras Labradas remains with its mysteries.



Route description

This route, apart from taking us up to the ruins of the temple, runs through mountain landscapes of great beauty.

We start in the town of Jarilla, descending along the road by which we have arrived. We pass next to a sports court and a children's playground. A little further down, when we have travelled 800 m. from the village centre, we see to our right an orange metal door, next to a large pond. We open it and we have a descending path that leads to the bridge spanning the creek of the Hornillo. Then we find a fork. Right.

From here we will continue always in the main and obvious path that winds between oaks and large granite rocks and begins to rise. We slowly rise over the plain. We have walked

an hour when we arrive at a metal gate. We go to the other side and continue along the path, which now carries a stone wall in our left. 500 m. further there is a fork: we are going to the right. The path is covered with grass, but if we pay attention to the clearing that makes the slope we will not get lost. At this point the holm-oaks are replaced by oaks.

Then we arrive at a water source that is a few meters from a herd of goats. Then another fork, and this time we go to the left. We are now in the less marked area of the trail, so we have to pay our full attention. A little further up there is a barely perceptible separation of roads and we go to the right. From here is impossible to get lost, as the route skirts the mountain heading South very slowly gaining height. The forest thickens.



Ferns appear and the oaks are enormous. We find dead trees; we do not know whether by fire or lightning. In cleared sections we can see how high we are.

The route now begins to outline the hill bordering the Collado del Cerezo, and instead of going South goes North, as the poem says. From here we will see, hundred meters lower, a waterfall. We are still gaining height gently. Now the path ends, but we will continue straight while preserving the direction that we brought next to a creek and a stone wall. On the other side of both there is a luxuriant forest of pines and chestnut trees, ideal for relax in the shade.

We are a thousand meters high. The trees disappear gradually. To move forward we take as a reference

a group of holm-oaks, the only ones of the entire area. We then cross a grouping of granite boulders, also known as berrocal. We continue heading North and climbing all the time.

The Hill of Piedras Labradas, easily recognizable, is a smooth, flat surface, without rocks or trees. In the centre are the remains of the temple, an area of about 20 square meters; from the ground rises a row of perfectly cut stone blocks. Spread over the edges of the plateau - apparently were reused to build a sheepfold - we can see several more rows.

Once examined the site and enjoyed the tours, we will undertake the return by the road that brought us up here.



Jarilla

www.jarilla.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Church San Gregorio Magno, 16th-17th century, with its free-standing bell-tower.
- » Popular architecture.

FESTIVITIES

- » January 26: San Policarpo
- » May 9: San Gregorio Magno.
- » September 14: Cristo de la Salud.
- » Mid-August: Festival of the emigrant.

ACCOMMODATIONS

» Hotel Jarilla

N-630, a 2 Km. del pueblo.
Tlf.: 927 477 040 / 676 484 064
hotel@hoteljarilla.com
www.hoteljarilla.com

» Hostel Asturias

Tlf.: 927 477 057 / 663 968 927
hostalasturias@hotmail.com
www.hostalasturias.com

» CR Piedras Labradas

Tlf.: 617 990 363/ 678 828 832
www.piedraslabradas.com
canibi@hotmail.com

» CR La Calamorcha

Tlf.: 927 477 062 / 619 343 709
www.calamorcha.com
reservas@calamorcha.com

» Casa Rural Solaz de Ambroz

Tlf.: 615 027 795
www.solazdelambroz.es
solazambroz@telefonica.net

WHERE TO EAT

- » Hotel Jarilla and Hostel Asturias.

JARILLA

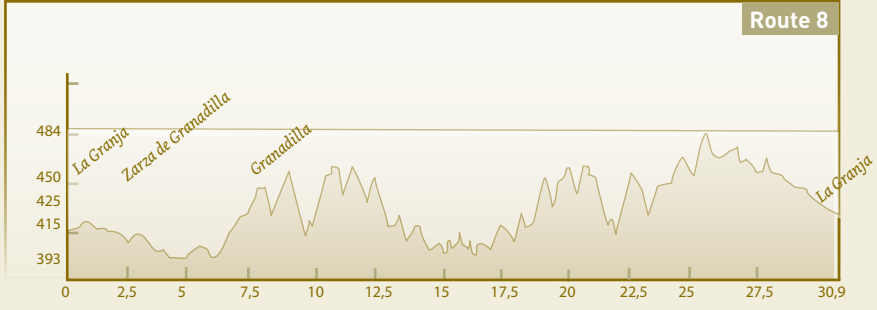
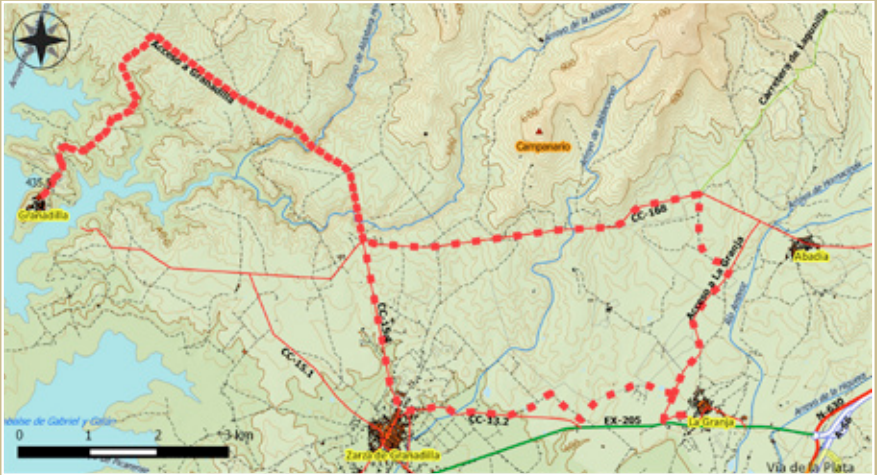
It is in the West foothills of the mountains of Trasierra in the Western end of Gredos. The main monument is the parish church of San Gregorio Magno which was built in the 16th century and the works continued until the 17th century.

Furthermore, in Jarilla are the remains of a small Roman temple on the Hill of 'Piedra Labrada'. From this site of rectangular floor plan and granite is only preserved the cella, nothing remains of the naos and the pronaos. Visitors can tour the 'Camino de Piedras'. By this route, walkers can admire the beautiful mountain landscape, crossing river gorges that roam the mountainous terrain.



Ruta 8. **Granadilla**

Route 8: Granadilla, medieval town



HIM

2	2	1	4

Departure: La Granja
 Course: Linear
 Length: 30,9 km
 Estimated time: 7 h.
 Difficulty: Media
 Difference in levels \uparrow : 554 m
 Difference in levels \downarrow : 542 m
 Maximum altitude: 484 m
 Minimum altitude: 393 m

La Granja, Zarza de Granadilla and Granadilla

The unsinkable village

There are several paradoxes in Granadilla. The first, that the Gabriel y Galán reservoir annihilated the village in 1965 and the water has never touched its walls. And it was because the reservoir stole its lands, the best plains of the region. Isolated in the strict sense of the word - the water flooded the road - it stood there, its intact walled fence and its magnificent Castle, the houses fallen by age and neglect. The municipal term, expropriated, was repopulated with pine and eucalyptus. In 1980 received the Declaration of historic-artistic site, and in 1985 it was included in the Program of Abandoned Villages. Was then undertaken the restoration of part of the housing, and each year students of institutes of all Spain spend there a few days learning trades of the rural life and crafts. Those things that, unfortunately, are not taught in school. Today, the whole area belongs to National Parks.



The exile

A living part of this history that does not appear in the books is the owner of the bar that is next to the wall of the reservoir. He was born in Granadilla, and now has the privilege - or the discredit - of living on the artificial lake which flooded the fertile lands of his village. He and his brother were the last to leave as they worked as boatmen transporting people, animals and vehicles from one bank to the other. 'For four or five years I had daily burials.' Refers to the residents who were marching, making of him their particular Charon.

From Granada to Granadilla

We are in the village that gave name to the Region: La Granja, Zarza, Guijo, Mohedas... all have the addenda of Granadilla. This is proof of its important role as head of the territory. Of Muslim origin, it was re-founded in 1170 by Fernando de León with the name of Villa de Granada, and retained that name for more than three hundred years. With the conquest of the Andalusian Granada by the Catholic Kings, the first loses its name, since to distinguish them, it was renamed as Granadilla.

Route description

This route has its origin in the town of La Granja, passes through Zarza, goes to the abandoned village of Granadilla and returns to La Granja.

Before we begin, a clarification: Granadilla is a medieval town. But medieval in all senses: is surrounded by a wall that, outside the limited opening hours to the public, is closed under lock and key and then we just can see it from the outside (or from within, if we stay locked up). This peculiar circumstance must be taken into account when planning our route, so we do not find ourselves with the door shut in our face.

As we said, we start the tour in the vicinity of La Granja, just at the junction of the EX 205 with the road that leads to Abadía. We will initially go into this village, and at 400 m. we turn left by a concrete road. At the beginning there are meadows on both sides and then meadows to the left and holm-oaks to the right. After 700 meters from having embarked on the road we cross a bridge. Then comes a second creek, now without bridge. The path worsens, and is filled with high grass and deep tracks that indicate that this part becomes a mudflat in the rainy season. 800 m. after the bridge we reach a good track, and we're going to the right. Another 600 m. and we turn 90 degrees in a turn to the left. We head toward Zarza. 200





m. more and crossing, Left. Another 500 metres and we are on the old La Granja-Zarza de Granadilla road, (right) of little movement, as EX 205 absorbs now most of the traffic. We walk 1.5 km. by asphalt and we are already in the village, that we will just touch by its northern part. We found a cross-shaped crossing and take the right. 100 m. further there is another crossing. We will go straight ahead and then right.

We are already on the road going to Granadilla, wide and with low-traffic, because through here you cannot go to another site rather than to the abandoned village. It

has slight slopes and climbs, but we climb more than we go down. At 2.5 km. from the village we find the intersection of Abadía. We continue straight. A little earlier we have left the old road to Granadilla to the left, which I imagine will end under the waters of the reservoir. From now on we will go on the one that was built after the flood, although it seems anything but a new road: it is narrow, has considerable water slides, and above all potholes: between km. 3.5 and 4.5 after the Abadía crossing the road is so damaged that it is preferable to circulate through the vast shoulder to the left (cars do it too). The ledges are brief, but of



considerable inclination. The pine trees give a certain uniformity to the landscape.

4.5 km. after the Abadía junction, the road takes a turn of 90 degrees and begins to descend towards the village and the reservoir. Fortunately seems that here the asphalt is better, 2 km. further we see a large building on the left: is the cemetery, which looks to be new. One of the most moving ceremonies that the granadillanos still retain is to meet here on the day of the Dead to honour their dead.

The first thing that we see, as we get closer to the village, is its

monumental Keep. It is true that they have placed above it a metal roofing which makes it look like the Japanese feudal castles, but that does not detract its charm, quite the contrary. Outside the walls, next to the Keep, there is a huge elm. When we move on next to him and cross the door of the village, we can truly say that we have travelled in time.

I have watched people who visit Granadilla, and usually the first thing they do when they arrive is to climb to the top of the Keep, and then visit the village. I propose the opposite route: visit the streets first, then climb to the wall and, finally, the Castle. Thus

Granadilla will reveal its secrets little by little.

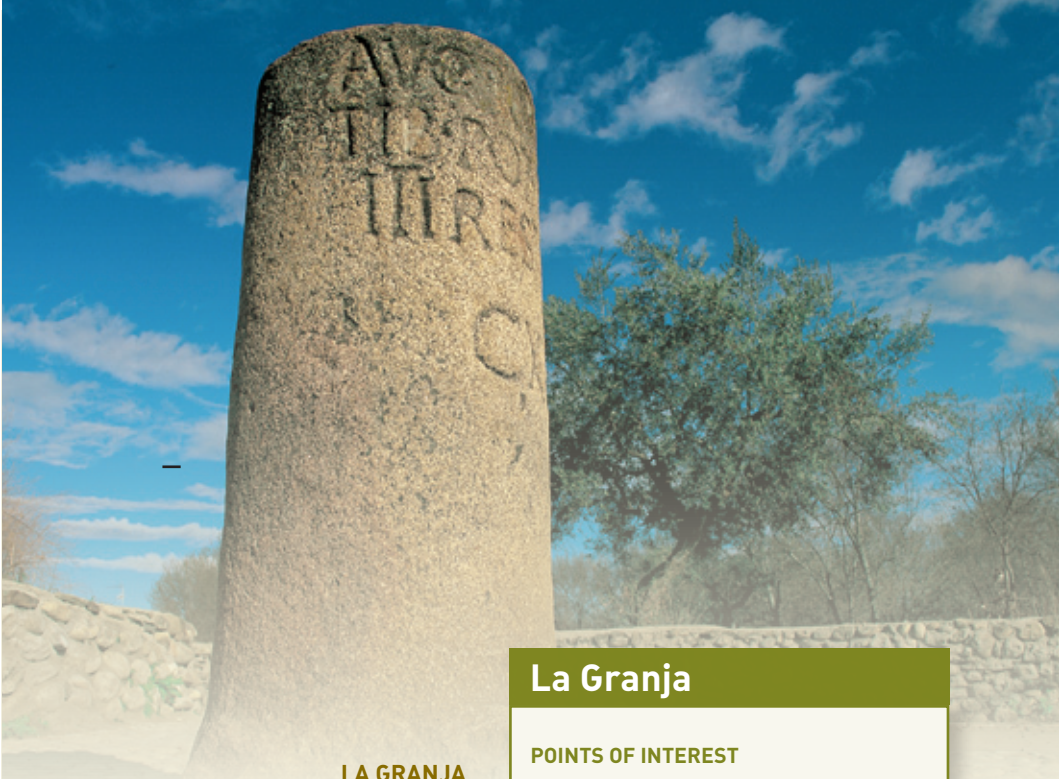
The main street, which starts right from the gate, is without a doubt the most restored of all. By it we will arrive at the square, and then we can stroll and visit both the reconstructed area as the rebuild (before the latter was not opened to visitation, now it seems that it is). The new part will seem happy and full of life, especially if in those dates there are a group of schoolchildren in the village. But under that cheerful and carefree layer Granadilla hides a bitter ground: the pain of uprooting and the forced walk. That is what we will find as we walk among the houses without doors and roofs, with its impressive sense of bombed city.

At some point in our journey we will find an access to the walls. We can walk almost on the entire wall, although I notice to those who suffer from vertigo and the distracted: the paseo de ronda (sentry walk) has no inward banister and the height is, at times, considerable. In several places, we can see a series of gardens attached to the walls, called *langueras*.

We finally go to the Castle. Consists of successive rooms which are accessed by a spiral staircase. Then

we go outside, to an area of terraces, and we can still climb a little more. Getting here we can understand why we should book this visit to the end: the view is impressive: not only we can see all of the village, but also the Gabriel y Galán reservoir, which surrounds it and maintains a sort of peninsula. The expanse of water is such that it confers a unique maritime air to Granadilla.

Engaged in the visit and transported to a different world, it is quite possible that we have forgotten that we still have to return to the point of origin. Mounted on our bikes we go back 8 km. to the Abadía junction and there we turn left. The ground is bad during 4 km. with ups and downs. Restocking pines have been replaced on both sides of the road by abundant rockroses. After 5 km. of the previous crossroad and overcoming an asphalted road to the left, we take a dirt road to our right. We are going by plain area and grassland. We find two crossings, which are both to the left. 1.4 km. after the road we reach another. Right. 1.4 km. on it and we will find a detour to the left. 700 m. more and we'll be in the Centre of La Granja, where we put an end to this route.



LA GRANJA

It is located in the plain area between the Trasierra mountains and the riverbed of the Alagón River.

The most representative building of the town is the Church of María Magdalena, a work done in masonry between the 16th and 18th centuries. The Roman Milestone and a horse branding building of stone dating from 1544 are also very notable. The village also has a superb natural swimming pool, in the riverbed of the Ambroz river located 500 meters from the N-630 and the A-66.

Festivities in La Granja

- ▶ *Los Mártires (January 20).*
- ▶ *Carnival Festival. Pilgrimage (last Saturday of April).*
- ▶ *San Antonio de Padua (June 13).*
- ▶ *Santa María Magdalena (July 22).*
- ▶ *El Cristo de la Paz (August 31).*

La Granja

POINTS OF INTEREST

- ▶ Parish Church of María Magdalena, 16th century
- ▶ Roman Milestone of the Vía de la Plata
- ▶ Horse Branding Building from 1544

ACCOMMODATIONS

Casa Rural El Miliario

Tlf.: 927 486 161 (de 9:00 a 14:00 h.)
ayuntamiento@lagranja.es

GRANADILLA

- ▶ Opening hours from April to October (Summer):
Morning: 10:00 am - 1:30 pm
Afternoon: 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm
- ▶ Opening hours from November to March:
Morning: 10:00 am - 1:30 pm
Afternoon: 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Closed on Monday except holidays.



Zarza de Granadilla

www.lazarza.org

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Church of the Asunción, 16th century
- » Chapel of the Cristo de la Misericordia

FESTIVITIES

- » First Sunday of May: pilgrimage
- » August 31: San Ramón Nonato

ACCOMMODATIONS

» Hostel Junco Fresco

Phone: 927 486 275 / 647 512 899
hostaljuncofresco@hotmail.com
www.hostaljuncofresco.com

» Apartamentos Rurales Tierra de Granadilla

Phone: 696 135 668 / 649 377 694
www.tierrasdegranadilla.com
reservas@tierrasdegranadilla.com

» CR-Aptos Granadilla del Duque

Phone: 605 931 060 / 605 931 058
consultas@granadilladelduque.es
www.granadilladelduque.com

» Aptos. Posadas de Granadilla

Phone: 927 486 257 / 654 346 813 / 654 346 812
apartamentos@posadasdegranadilla.com
www.posadasdegranadilla.com

WHERE TO EAT

» Hostel Junco Fresco

Phone: 927 486 275

» Orozco Restaurant

Phone: 927 486 269 / 927 486 213

» El Cordel Bar restaurant

Tlf.: 927 486 137 / 665 978 334

EXHIBITIONS HALL-MUSEUM

“Proyecto M”

Phone: 927 486 215
City Hall Zarza

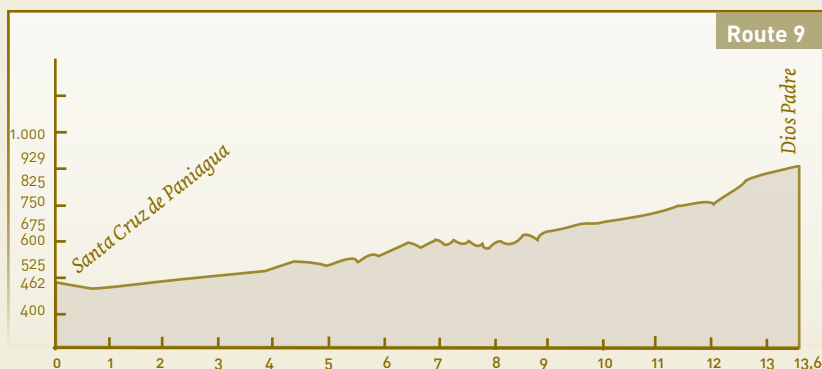
ZARZA DE GRANADILLA

Much of its territory is flooded by the waters of the Swamp Gabriel y Galán. Zarza de Granadilla possesses an important Visigoth necropolis, remains currently exposed in the Museum of Cáceres. It is also worth visiting the parish church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, building of masonry with reinforcements of ashlar in the angles, the buttresses and the tower built in the 16th century and where we highlight its beautiful lintelled covers of the Epistle and the Gospel, that are opened in the walls. Visitors can tour the ‘Camino de Granadilla’, a beautiful route that traverses a large pine forest until it reaches the walled village of Granadilla, declared Historic-Artistic Site in 1980.

ROUTE 9

Ruta 9. **Sierra de Dios Padre**

Route 9: Dios Padre Mountain



HIM

1	2	1	3

Departure: Santa Cruz de Paniagua
Course: Linear (round trip)
Length: 13,6 km
Estimated time: 4 h.
Difficulty: Media
Difference in levels \uparrow : 652 m
Difference in levels \downarrow : 200 m
Maximum altitude: 929 m
Minimum altitude: 462 m

9

Dios Padre Mountain

Privileged watchtower

This mountain, like a volcano and with a name of biblical resonance, is one of the oldest in Extremadura. It is located on the western boundary of the district, bordering on the Sierra de Gata, and its age dates back 500 million years. More than five hundred are also the meters that rise above the peneplain. This fact, together with its solitary location, is what makes it possible to contemplate many villages: more than twenty in any given day, and nearly seventy in a clear day, including a city of neighbouring Salamanca. Also, we can see the mountains of France, Candelario, Trasierra, Hurdes, Gata, Puerto de los Castaños, Villuercas and Mosca, in the vicinity of capital Cáceres. In time of fire risk, there are guards who can provide us with all these points.

At the summit, apart from the surveillance tower and the triangulation station, there is a small chapel, with Visigoth main arch, in honour of Dios Padre, where every year the residents of Villanueva de la Sierra come to celebrate the pilgrimage. Also come some from Santa Cruz de Paniagua, who apparently were those who began the tradition.

Caution! Hives



In these tracks that we are traveling it is possible to find rows of them deposited there by the beekeepers. This practice, as well as illegal, must be a hundred meters at least from any public road - is extremely dangerous because it is well known that a massive attack of bees can have fatal consequences. If we find ourselves in this situation I recommend two things: first, make a detour, even

off-road, to go as far as possible of the industrious critters. The second is to call 112, asking to get in touch with the Guardia Civil, or directly to the 062, which is the number of the SEPRONA, and denounce such unscrupulous.

Route description

At the entrance of Santa Cruz de Paniagua leaves an alley to the wide right, in concrete and with a water source. We're going in it for 500 m., soon we found ourselves in a crossroad, where we turn left and then, immediately, to the right, 200 m. more and new fork: right. We will go among olive trees, and cross a creek by its corresponding bridge.

The road continues in concrete, but only at intervals. 350 m. after the last crossing, a Y intersection where we take the right. The climb is for the time being soft. In the next section we overcome three more forks, where we will choose the right direction with the help of the map.

From the third intersection comes a climb in a straight line of more than 1 km., where the slope is accentuated. To our right we have an impenetrable pine forest. To the left, fruit trees and olive trees. Later the vegetation closes the route on both sides until we reach a cultivated quadrilateral area. Here the road disappears, but we will use two sides of the square following the edge until we reach a wide track, where we're going to the right. 100 m. later we bend to the left and embark on a very strong climb of 250 m., after which we will find another fork, again choosing the ramp to the left.

We are now surrounding a large water reservoir whose height we will overcome little by little. We reach another perpendicular wide track cutting our way. We follow to the left.



We have travelled almost 6 km. from the village when the track where we are reaches a large firewall. Right. We are before the highlight of the route: just 1 km. away. We will go up 210 meters - that equals to a difference in levels in the order of 20 per cent -. Therefore, we must be patient as the old saying: to reach the top as a young start up as an old. In addition, once up there, we will see that the view is well worth. Apart from landscapes, in this area are usually seen black and Griffon Vultures, kites, crows and, in the cliffs, blue rock-thrush.





SANTA CRUZ DE PANIAGUA

Santa Cruz de Paniagua has numerous remains of religious art, perhaps the most representative is the parish church of the Salvador, built in the 16th century and renovated in the 17th century. It is also worthwhile to visit the Church of Santa María Magdalena, rural type construction in masonry slate and square ground plan and the chapels of the Cristo and of Dios Padre. Visitors can enjoy a healthy bath in the beautiful landscape that bathes the natural swimming pool of the municipality in the place known as La Lisea. In 1554, San Pedro de Alcántara takes eremitical life in Santa Cruz.

Santa Cruz de Paniagua

www.santacruzdepaniagua.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Church of the Salvador, 16th-17th centuries, with its free-standing bell-tower.
- » Chapel of Dios Padre
- » Chapel of Cristo

FESTIVITIES

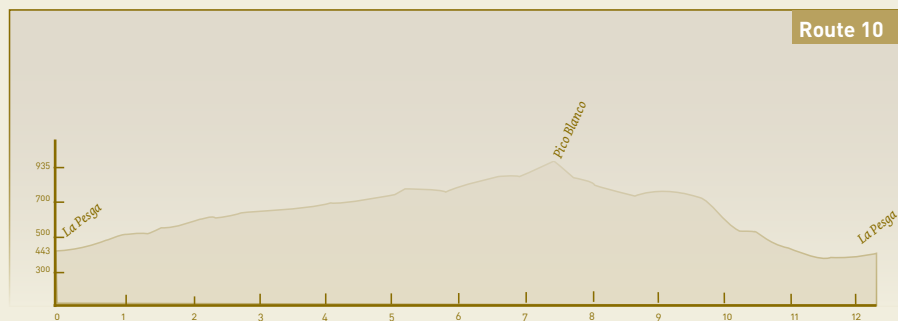
- » San Blas. February 3.
- » Santa María Magdalena. July 22.
- » San Roque. August 16.
- » San Pedro de Alcántara. October 19.



ROUTE 10

Ruta 10. Pico Blanco

Route 10: Blanco Peak



HIM



Departure: La Pesga
Course: Linear (round trip)
Length: 12,3 km
Estimated time: 3h 30m
Difficulty: Media
Difference in levels \wedge : 665 m.
Difference in levels \vee : 664 m.
Maximum altitude: 935 m.
Minimum altitude: 411 m.

10

Blanco Peak

Natural viewpoint

From La Pesga we can say that it is the entrance of Las Hurdes. Located amid puerto de Perancho and the Los Ángeles River, it has about 1,200 inhabitants. According to what we compare it, they may seem few, but is the fourth centre of the region in population - far ahead of others that are in the plain, in areas with better communication -. It currently has the highest density of inhabitant per Km2 and suffered to a lesser extent the migratory bleeding from the 1960s. What is its secret? A rugged and humble tree: the olive tree.

For many months of the year part of the population works out, in catering or construction. In the Summer, while other towns in the surroundings are bustling with activity with the return of emigrants, La Pesga, sleeps. But October comes and the collection of the olives begins; then return the exiled from Madrid or Mallorca, and the village fills. The town seems to be in construction permanently. Many of those who work outside are building a house little by little because they know that, sooner or later, their fate is in the La Pesga.



Route description

We start our tour in the Plaza del Collado, which is where local hikers gather for their departures. If we walk by the Avenida de la Constitución, passing by no. 49 and the fence of the school we will see to the left and up the El Guindal Street. We follow it. Soon we reach a fork and choose the path on the left. We pass next to the water reservoir and water treatment plant. Here the concrete ground that reappears intermittently ends. We continue along the main path, ignoring the many entries that to right and to left go between the olive groves.

These first sections have quite steep slopes, which will force a biker to get off the bike, thus caught in cold. When we travelled about 2 km., we reach the line of a hill - or what is the same, we go on horseback between

two sides -. Now come 2 km. of placid plain that gives us, to the right, an interesting view of the Los Ángeles river, reduced on this stretch by the reservoir. All the mountain side where we move is dotted with olive trees. On the opposite slopes, it is interesting to see how the humanization of the terrain contrasts, translated in the geometric arrangement of the olive groves, with the green spots of wild ground located above.

We arrive at a fork where a huge white arrow is painted. The path makes a 180 degree turn and begins to climb again.

We gradually gain height on the opposite hills. We are 850 m. above sea level, behind a bend the Gabriel y Galán Reservoir looks daunting.

The last meters have pretty hard ramps. We will know that we are on top when we see the viewpoint, a kind of stone terrace which is accessed via

Notice for bikers

The best thing you can do is turn around and descend by where we came, since now and for 1 km. we will go through the above trail, that it is very steep and impassable to vehicles, no matter what wheels they have. Unless, obviously, you want to carry the bike.

a staircase and in whose centre is the triangulation station. In the village we were told that it is the best view over the reservoir of the entire region, but you have to see it to believe it and admire its maze of Islands, Straits and peninsulas.

In the surroundings of the viewpoint there are groves of Strawberry trees, which are currently not grown enough to provide shadow. Nor do we find water here.

After taking pleasure and enjoying the silence and the views, we begin the descent through the trail opened in the vegetation that is surrounding the viewpoint, just at the opposite end of the stairs.



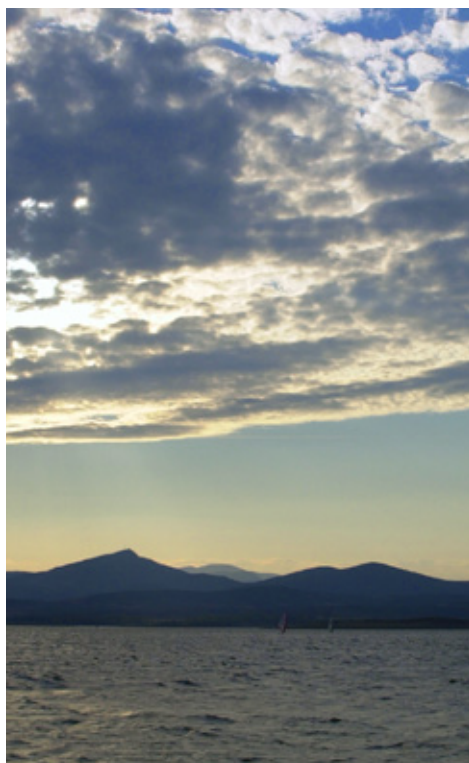


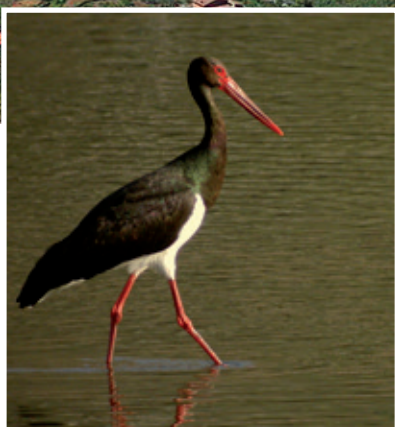
We start from the stairs that helped us gain access to the viewpoint where the triangulation station is, at the end of the same we turn left to begin the descent between strawberry trees with a steep slope.

At the end of the descent lies a very large firewall, again we take the path that follows on our left.

We walk to the end of the firewall to connect with a broad path that departs from a country house surrounded by cherry trees, which we leave again to our right.

As 50 meters back we take a path between rockroses to our left that delves into a pine forest, at the end of the same and again taking a path to the left we will start our most aggressive descent, much caution since it is a steep slope.





At the end of the path we can already see the first olive trees, we always take the paths coming to our right to end in the road that took us to La Pesga.

We cross the road and go for a walk to the Plaza del Collado where we began the route. On one side, on the sidewalk, there is a water source where we can quench our thirst.

LA PESGA

It lies between two small hills of the Sierra Vaqueriza and in its environment runs the Los Ángeles River and the Plata creek. The visitor is not exaggerating when he says that the beauty of the Landscape of La Pesga is eclipsing. It is not the architecture of the municipality, or its Church of the Inmaculada Concepción of the 18th century, that gives uniqueness to this place are its views, its rushing river surrounding the villages, its rounded hills flooded of olive trees, its peaceful riverside walk. The river has great influence in the customs and practices of the place, boat rides, canoeing, fishing along the bank and there are places of leisure and accommodation overlooking its waters. La Pesga has hiking paths: the path of the mowers, who followed this path from Extremadura to Castilla, with 41 km, crosses the natural Protected enclave of Las Batuecas, is as hard as it is beautiful. The Blanco Peak route, through about 14 km of spectacular views, from where you can enjoy the landscape contrast between Las Hurdes and the meadows of Tierras de Granadilla, and the unbeatable views of the Gabriel y Galán reservoir. The route of the Trilla; still without signals, which makes it less popular and therefore more attractive. It was the old road used to go to the sowing and threshing places. In this route we highlight the site known as Canchal Bocaoveja, for its singularity. This route does not last more than four hours in total.

La Pesga

www.lapesga.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

- ▶ Church of the Inmaculada Concepción

FESTIVITIES

- ▶ June 13: Pilgrimage of San Antonio
- ▶ Last weekend of August: Olive festival.
- ▶ Trade Fair (end of August)
- ▶ September 14: El Cristo
- ▶ December 3: San Francisco Javier

ACCOMMODATIONS

Casa Rural y A.R. La Comarca

Phone: 927 674 537 / 629 967 464
www.lacomarca.com.es

A.R. La Almazara

Phone: 927 674 715 / 629 423 367
www.apartamentosalmazara.com
info@apartamentosalmazara.com

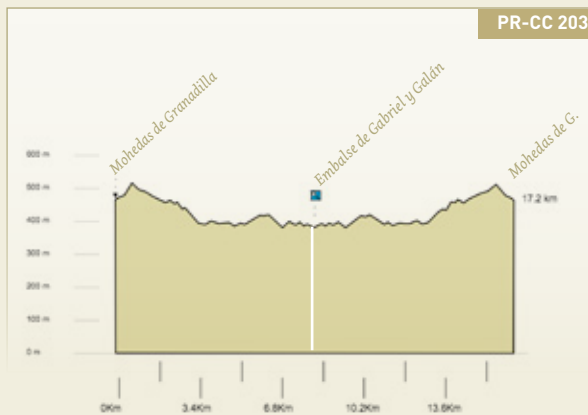


ROUTE 11

Ruta 11. **Camino de Talaván**

Route 11: Talaván Path (PR-CC 203)

Mohedas de Granadilla. - Reservoir - Mohedas de Granadilla.



Course: Linear (round trip)
Length: 12,3 km

HIM



Departure:

Mohedas de Granadilla

Course: round trip

Length: 17,2 km

Estimated time: 3 horas

Difference in levels \uparrow : 240 m

Difference in levels \downarrow : 240 m

Maximum altitude: 510 m

Minimum altitude: 378 m

11

Camino de Talaván: PR - CC 203

Trip to nowhere

There are many places in the surroundings of Gabriel y Galán, where you can enjoy the spectacle of the meadows around the water. But it is less frequent to see the holm-oaks converted in this or almost. That is the proposal of this route: visit a peninsula or, rather, two; We will arrive almost to the centre of the reservoir by mainland and will have, in addition, an unusual vision of Granadilla.

Notice for bikers

Despite the fact that the whole route does have many ups and downs, we warn you now that this is not the ideal route for beginners: the ground is abrupt, the ledges and downspouts are short but strong, there are a lot of loose stones and sometimes the cycling lane narrows so much that you will be touching the rockroses and thorny plants. And even with experience there will still be a climb or muddy place where we have to put the foot on the ground.



Route description

From the entrance roundabout to the village of Mohedas de Granadilla (452 m), where it converges with the GR 10, we should take the road towards La Pesga - so we will admire the oil mill that was installed in the centre -. At 800 m. there is a pond with a kind of park and opposite begins the trail where the PR-CC 203 starts. The road, plain at its beginning and with gentle ups and downs in the rest, leaves among stone walls and fields with olive trees. The ground is dirt and allows the passage of some vehicles, very comfortable for walking. Different tracks will come out on both sides, so you have to look at the directions. After the first kilometre we can already see the Gabriel y Galán reservoir and the Islands to where the route is headed. The stone walls disappear but not the

olive groves, monoculture plantation of the area, accompanying us to the first banks of the reservoir. There is only a shadow at the end of the tour, but not water. Rosemary, lavender and especially rockroses occupy the free spaces, although entering the zone of the swamp, we can already find extensive meadows with holm-oaks and some cork oak. On the way path, the mountains of Béjar and Candelario in front can be seen and on your right the Tras la Sierra hill. Between the tops of the trees, you can have a glimpse of the abandoned village of Granadilla. In a section with steep slope, to the right is an abandoned sheepfold, with two walls for cover, a pigsty and pens, remains



of a vast property covering much of the area that we go through and whose main house (now covered by water) was in La Colonia, place which can be reached after passing a port. First we have to cross the Vallecanto creek without difficulty. After the port, the tour takes the track to the left. Here there are no olive trees, only meadows with cattle grazing. By going towards the centre of the reservoir, we have water both to the right and to the left. After a short S trip we will arrive in a deserted road (7.3 km, 1 h 40 min).

This road was planned to communicate with Granadilla, but the construction of the dam thwarted the project. The ground is gravel and its route is first flanked by more

pastures and then by eucalyptus. To the right we can see the dam of the Gabriel y Galán reservoir and the homonymous village. At times the vegetation becomes more closed and varied, amazing the solitude and silence that almost from the start of this signalled footpath hosts the walker. The final point is before the aforementioned Granadilla, from which it is separated by 300 m. of the water which flooded the old passage of Santa Catalina. Coinciding with a pine forest we reach the shore of the Gabriel y Galán reservoir (384 m, 8.6 km, 2 h). The return is done by the same path.



MOHEDAS DE GRANADILLA

It occupies the southern flank of the Sierra de La Pesga which include heights such as Pinajarro, Navazos and the Corral de Los Caños. It has an interesting Romanesque church, San Ildelfonso, construction of a single ground plant with buttresses on the sides and in which we highlight its beautiful bell tower which is attached to the foot of this construction. Its natural environment is remarkable, since it has extensive woodland and recreational areas. Nearby are las Hurdes and Sierra de Gata, must-sees for nature lovers. Visitors can also tour the "Talaván Path" which crosses the route of the same name to the called 'tail of the swamp' with spectacular views and landscapes.

Mohedas de Granadilla

www.mohedasdegranadilla.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Church of San Ildelfonso

FESTIVITIES

- » January 23: Sal Ildelfonso
- » June 13: San Antonio
- » July 16: Virgen del Carmen
- » August 31: San Ramón Nonato

WHERE TO EAT

- » Ruta de Las Hurdes Restaurant

Phone: 927 673 646

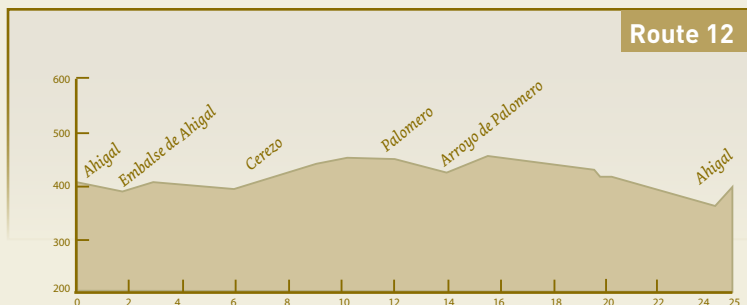
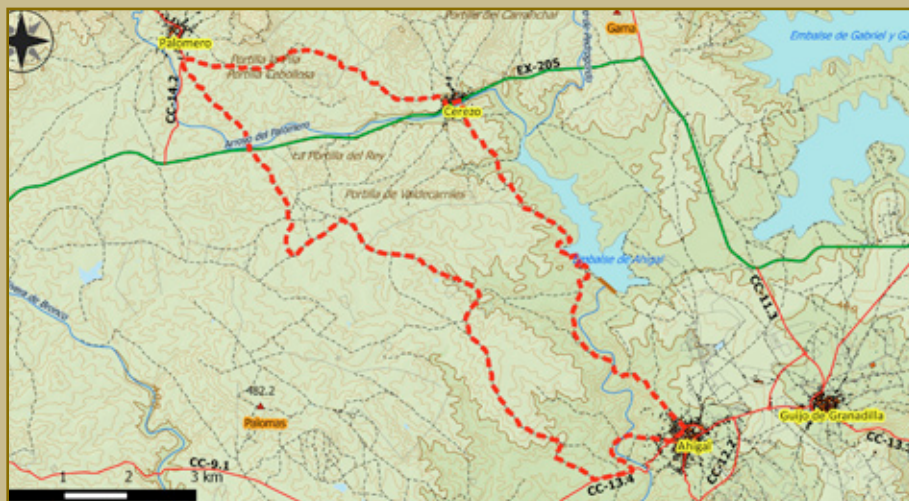
It is at the junction of the EX 205, 3 km. from the village.



ROUTE 12

Ruta 12. Ahigal, Cerezo y Palomero

Route 12: Ahigal, Cerezo and Palomero



HIM



Departure: Ahigal
Course: Circular
Length: 27 km
Estimated time: 5 h.
Difficulty: Baja
Difference in levels \uparrow : 389 m
Difference in levels \downarrow : 389 m
Maximum altitude: 465 m
Minimum altitude: 352 m

12

Ahigal, Cerezo and Palomero

A route as in the past

The paths are lost. Highway boom, coupled with the motorization and the decline of traditional ways of transport, have been decisive in determining the fall into disuse of the communications network that until not long ago covered the territory. The vegetation, which closed the paths, and some unscrupulous owners who put padlocks to public roads, did the rest.

Is the purpose of this twelfth route to retrieve a tiny part of this heritage that belongs to all, and travel between Ahigal, Cerezo and Palomero as in the old days: through the field, by dirt paths.

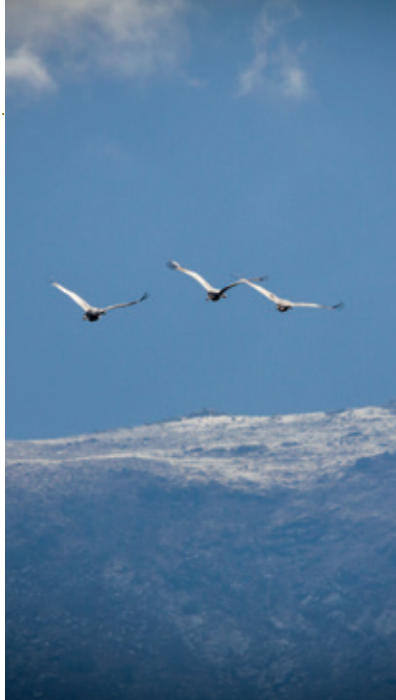
Route description

Very close to the main square of Ahigal begins the Santa Marina Street. We are going on it and after 200 m. we are at the chapel carrying the same name, recognizable by the arch of ivy surrounding the door. We leave the village down a narrow road of asphalt with enough potholes. At 3 km. we arrive at the wall of the Ahigal reservoir: left. We cross it and arriving at the other end we find a road bordering the reservoir: it is impossible to get lost if we do not leave the shore. We move towards the end and about 3 km. after the wall of the reservoir we will find a 'T' shaped crossing.

First, we will go to the left, and a few hundred meters further down to the right. Little over 1 km and we arrive at Cerezo. We enter the village and walk along the road, to the left, heading to El Bronco. Just before leaving the town we will see the Cuestas Street, to the right. We take it and, at the end, this time on the left, we will see the old path to Palomero wedged between walls of stone. The tour is in general plain, and we will practically all the time among olive trees. Almost after 4 km we find a Y shaped fork. We will choose the right option, and 500 m. further we will already be in Palomero.

There is a single road that crosses the village: towards the North reaches Marchagaz, and towards the South, the EX 205. We will choose the second option. We leave the town, and passing by the cemetery, we will see a path on the left which we'll take. This downward path, in general, has 1.5 km. and, after crossing the creek of the Palomero, easily fordable, reaches the EX 205. We cross the road, open the door on the other side and continue straight ahead, ignoring a couple of roads that begin perpendicular. We climb a bit between oaks. Somewhat over 1 km and we reach a crossroad. We bend to the left; to do this we must open a metal gate and pass to the other side. 200 meters later comes another twist, this time to the right. Woodland disappears for 1 km.

We now have the worst-preserved stretch of the route: numerous rockroses and other herbs almost obstruct our journey. At 500 m. we pass next to a lagoon and leave it to our right, 200 m. more, T-shaped crossroad: we turn right to immediately turn left. Here rather than vegetation there is ground in poor condition. And in Winter, mud.



Suddenly we end up on a farm and cannot find the path: again, the owners have ploughed. We can go straight about 100 m. or skirt the fence: in any case we will face a fence where a rustic door of sticks and wires opens: by opening it we check that this operation is not performed too frequently.

On the other side of the fence the oaks appear again: we are in the Dehesa de Ahigal. We follow the tracks, sometimes more marked than others, we go through about 300 m. flooded in Winter and impassable for bikes at any time because of the cows, like on route 2. We leave the difficult area and beyond we will find a fence (I do not know if it has doors or cattle grids, because when I took the route it was not finished), in which we

must enter and get out later. At 400 m. we will find a Y shaped crossing, and we will go to the right, and the same 100 m. further down. We go up a small slope, we'll soon be in plain and find another door, which again marks the limit of the meadow. We cross it and continue straight ahead.

We are once again among olive trees, that will accompany us for about 3 km. To our right we will see Ahigal, and to the left Santibáñez el Bajo. We reach the road that connects both villages, and turn left. We go down to Palomero Creek, cross the bridge, and after a small climb and two turns we are back in Ahigal, where we will put an end to our country route.

AHIGAL

Its environment is marked by holm-oaks, cork trees, vineyards and olive groves. The Gothic Renaissance Church of the Asunción, built in the 16th century is the most prominent building. There are other chapels, the Santísimo Cristo de los Remedios el Humilladero, linked to the Brotherhood of the Vera Cruz, Santa Marina and the oldest of the Santos Mártires, these last two were built on ancient Roman buildings. Other highlights are the Pozo Cinojal and the Renaissance Cross. Traditions are, without a doubt, the most important cultural manifestations of Ahigal, among them one can quote the Chiquitía, consisting of baking cakes and opening pitarra wines during the eve of Todos los Santos (Halloween) and the Lonja, gift that is delivered on the wedding day to ensure the decency. Nature lovers can make tours through the Pantano de las Cumbres, one of the most interesting places of the region.

Ahigal

Web: www.ahigal.com

POINTS OF INTEREST

- » Church of the Asunción
- » Chapel of the Santo Cristo de los Remedios
- » Chapel of Santa Marina
- » Chapel of the Santos Mártires
- » Renaissance cross.

FESTIVITIES

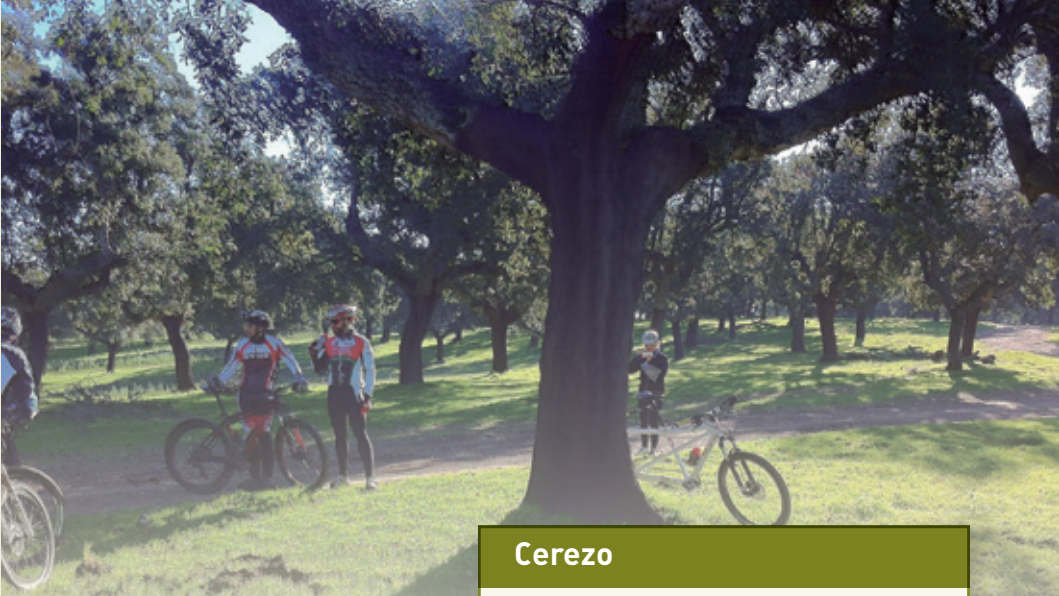
- » Pilgrimage of Easter Monday
- » May 15: San Isidro
- » Sunday market, in particular Domingo Mayor, which takes place on the second Sunday of August.
- » August 10: San Lorenzo.
- » September 25: Fairs
- » October 4: Cristo de Los Remedios

ACCOMMODATIONS

- » **Villa Cardadorum**
Phone: 616 361 287 / 622 435 606
(Booking - Trivago)

WHERE TO EAT

- » **Salones Mahillo Bar restaurant**
Phone: 927 439 030



CEREZO

Its environment is surrounded in endless rockroses, holm-oaks, cork oaks, turkey oaks and oaks that are a true natural treasure for visitors. The Church of San Juan Bautista, 18th century building is located in this town. Nature lovers can take the route of La Barzagosá, where they will visit the Pozo Gabriel and will enjoy the characteristic vegetation of the Extremadura meadow.

PALOMERO

The municipality features a rugged relief, of purely highland characteristics, where we highlight the elevations of Mount Gorreo and the hill of Barreras. The most important building in the town is the parish church of San Miguel, built in the 18th century. In its interior we highlight the altarpieces, the largest with a crucifix and a carving of wooden gabled, that has been replaced recently. We must note that during the 15th century Palomero was an important village and head of an extensive area. Nature lovers can visit the so-called 'Pinofranqueado path' that passes through beautiful landscapes, like Puerto Judío, until it reaches Pedro Muñoz.

Cerezo

www.cerezo.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

» Church of San Juan Bautista, with its free-standing tower.

FESTIVITIES

- » June 24: San Juan Bautista
- » August 16: San Roque
- » September 8: Virgen del Rosario

ACCOMMODATIONS

» A. R. Posada del Teso.
Phone: 699 257 969 / 609 327 359
www.posadadelteso.es

BARs

» Café bar Los Escudos. Phone: 609 916 010

Palomero

www.palomero.es

POINTS OF INTEREST

» Church of San Miguel.

FESTIVITIES

- » May 9: San Gregorio.
- » September 30: San Miguel.

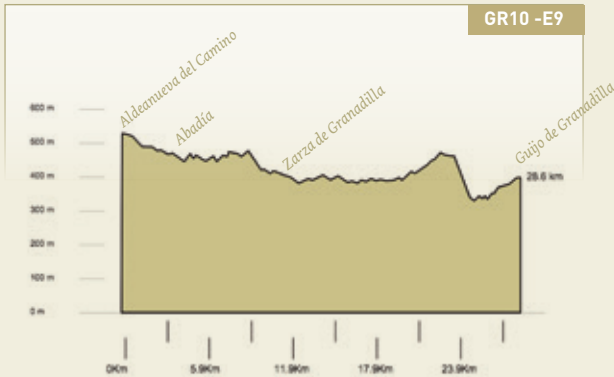
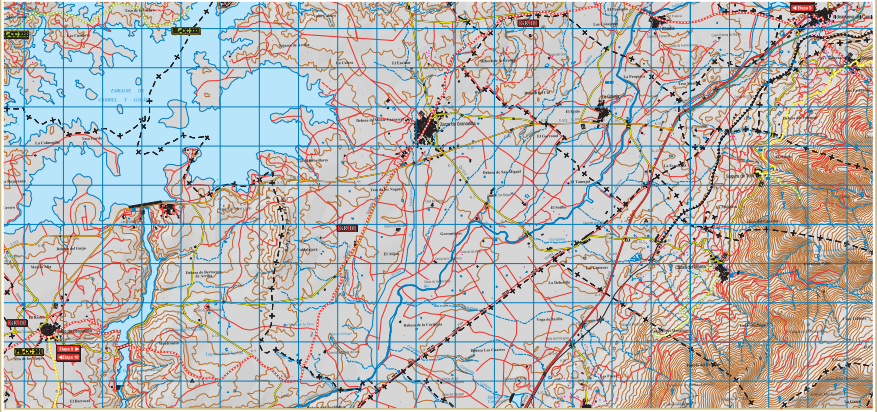
**NETWORK
OF TRAILS
OF THE
CENTRAL
SYSTEM**



GR10. Etapa 9

Aldeanueva del Camino-Guijo de Granadilla

GR 10: Stage 9



HIM



Departure:

Aldeanueva del Camino

Course: 7h 15m

Length: 28,6 km

Estimated time: 3 horas

Difference in levels \uparrow : 407 m

Difference in levels \downarrow : 542 m

Maximum altitude: 524 m

Minimum altitude: 327 m

Aldeanueva del Camino - Abadía - Zarza de Granadilla

Guijo de Granadilla

Route description

In Aldeanueva del Camino (528 m) begin some stages characterized by a radical physical change in the environment. A plainer relief, a much warmer climate and a vegetation of Mediterranean crops take us to other lands. The GR 10 leaves the village to the right - heading SW - by a street parallel to the N- 630. This ends in the cattle cord that links the actual cattle tracks of la Plata and Western Soriana, partly invaded today by a local road.

The tour moves forward completely in the plain, between olive trees, oaks and fields and enters the village of Abadía (3.8 km; 45 min). This place has the Palace of Sotofermoso and the Franciscan convent of Bien Parada, which served to this order

as a Faculty of Theology and Music. It was built in the 17th century and is currently in ruins.

The route crosses the Ambroz River at the exit of the village by a local road, from which it is necessary to immediately turn left to continue about two kilometres by the cattle cord up to the Western Soriana royal Cattle track, in which we will walk the next 14 kilometres.

The terrain becomes hillier and a sea of rockroses envelops the road, which prevents to appreciate the path. The reference will be at all times a stone wall that goes on the left. The waterlogged ground is crossed going up the road that follows on the right. Some agricultural sheds and



a via crucis of stone announce the entrance in Zarza de Granadilla (12.2 km; 3 h 5 min).

The cattle track leaves the village coinciding with the road heading SW bordering the park which is located opposite the Town Hall and moves towards the plaza de toros. The route crosses the EX-205 and goes between meadows of centuries-old oaks to the heart of the region of Tierras de Granadilla, where a secular grazing of sheep and cattle takes place. At 4 km the cattle track leaves the road, turns left and reaches shortly after the CC-11 road (20 km, 4 h 45 min).

The GR 10 continues down this road and after 1 km turns left through a cattle grid. The terrain gains altitude and - after leaving the track towards the right -, during a short distance along a beautiful berrocal, from where

takes again another path to the right. Emerge from the background the peaks of the region of Las Hurdes and at this point the towering rockroses occupy the meadows, so you have to pay attention to the road, since the different tracks can be confused. The descent into the Valley of the Alagón River follows an old paved road. The river course, dammed in this place, is crossed by the bridge of the EX-205 road. To the right - along a stretch of this reservoir of Guijo de Granadilla -, we ascend through abandoned orchards flanked by old stone walls until the village of Guijo de Granadilla (393 m; 28.6 km; 7 h 15 min).

A photograph of two cranes, likely Common Cranes, standing in a lush green field with small white flowers. The crane in the foreground is facing left, while the one behind it is facing right. The background is a soft-focus green field. The image is framed by white wavy lines at the top and bottom.

**NETWORK
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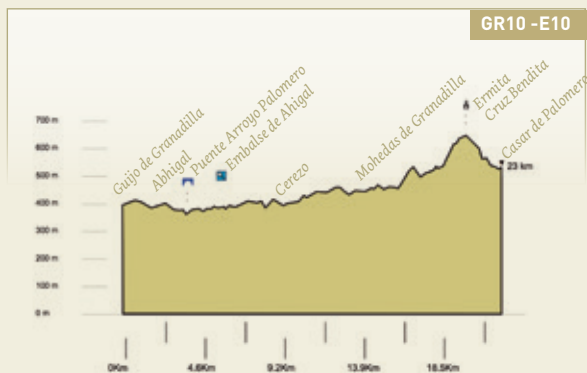
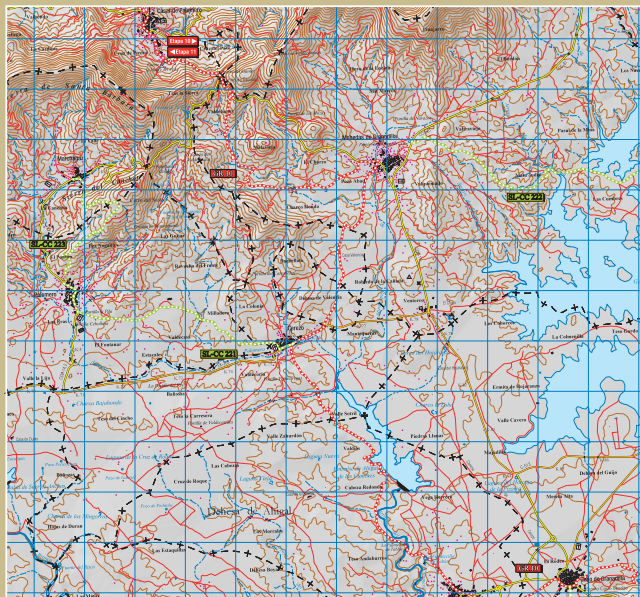
GR10. Etapa 10

Guijo de Granadilla-Casar de Palomero

GR 10

Stage 10

- Guijo de Granadilla
- Ahigal
- Cerezo
- Mohedas de Granadilla
- Casar de Palomero



HIM



Departure:

Guijo de Granadilla

Course: Linear

Length: 23 km

Estimated time: 5h 50m

Difference in levels ▲ : 604 m

Difference in levels ▼ : 466 m

Maximum altitude: 645 m

Minimum altitude: 363 m



From Guijo de Granadilla to Casar de Palomero

Route description

This stage of the GR 10 begins in the town of Guijo de Granadilla (393 m) along the Ahigal road and 100 m. further, takes a track accompanied to the left by dense olive groves. Heading SW - without taking detours, then turning to the W and following the painting marks of the GR 10 -, the route crosses the road that leads to Oliva de Plasencia. Among small farms it enters Ahigal (1.9 km, 25 min).

A street with a traffic light leads to Santa Marina, which leaves to the right, and passing by a chapel and a transept we leave the town by an asphalted road. Opposite we can see the peak of Santa Barbara, by whose right hillside we reach las Hurdes. To the left leaves a dirt trail

that descends first between olive trees and then between rockroses, to cross two creeks and delve into the meadows of holm-oaks and cork oaks. Thus, the road arrives on the shores of the Ahigal reservoir, along a stretch to the left to a cattle grid. New hills with olive groves take us to the town of Cerezo (9.7 km, 2 h 20 min).

The route leaves this village along the road running through it, to the right, heading NE. Soon after, at the first corner at 1 km, the GR 10 continues along a track that starts to the left. The journey continues by dirt tracks between meadow farms with old oaks and stone walls, paying attention at all times to the signage in the crossroads. After crossing the Valdefuente Creek and passing



through abandoned orchards, we enter in Mohedas de Granadilla (14.3 km, 3 h 20 min).

Bordering the park on the left, the tour reaches the road that we now climb, again, to the left heading to Casar de Palomero. Beyond of the pool - also to the left -, begins a track of concrete in gentle descent which after 1 km turns into dirt, connecting with others. After crossing the Valdefuente creek several times begins the climb among olive trees. The road skirts a pine forest, strange in these places, heading N to the col. After some strong ascent ramp we reach the road, which we take to the left. After going through two areas

with tables and water sources, the GR 10 arrives in 500 meters to the puerto del Gamo (650 m) and the chapel of the Cruz Bendita, gateway to las Hurdes and where you get splendid views. The descent is done by the left shoulder, separated from traffic by a fence, up to the vehicles entry indication to the village of Casar de Palomero (531 m, 23 km; 5 h 50 min).

**NETWORK
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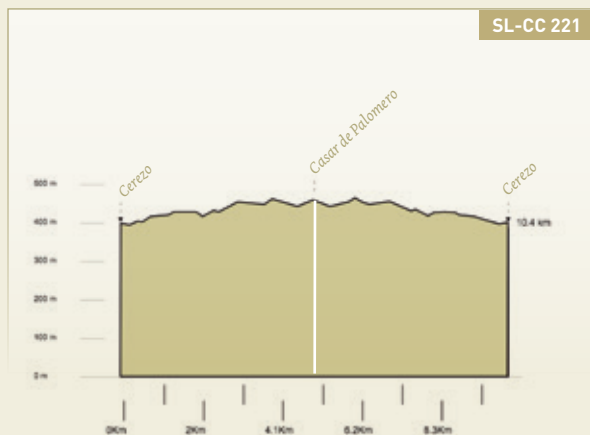
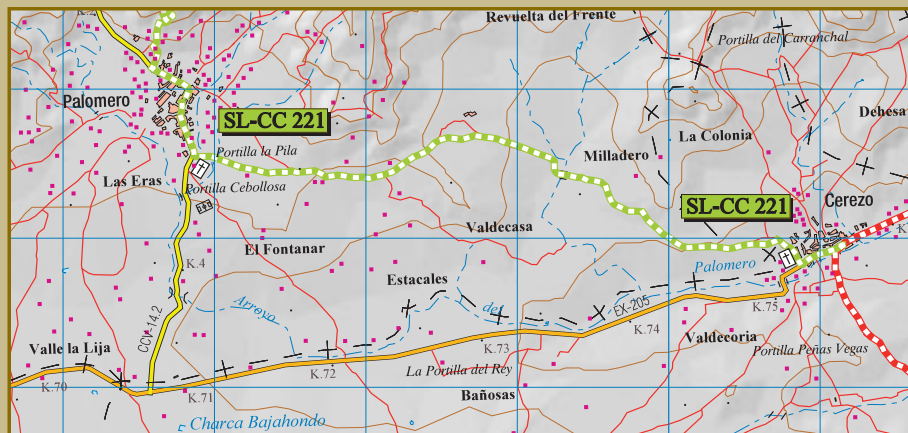


SL-CC 221

Cerezo-Palomero

SL-CC 221

- Cerezo- Palomero



HIM



Departure: Cerezo

Course: Linear (round trip)

Length: 10,4 km

Estimated time: 3 horas

Difference in levels \uparrow : 105 m

Difference in levels \downarrow : 105 m

Maximum altitude: 461 m

Minimum altitude: 394 m



From Cerezo to Palomero

Route description

The SL-CC 221 begins in a small park on the street or road of Cerezo (409 m) and point of confluence with the GR 10. The excursion follows the Hernán Cortés Street heading SW, crossing - within the village - a creek by a bridge and turning right to go by the Cuestas Street, leaving this town along a wide track, first of concrete and then of dirt. All the path is done on this same ground, following the traditional route that linked these two villages.

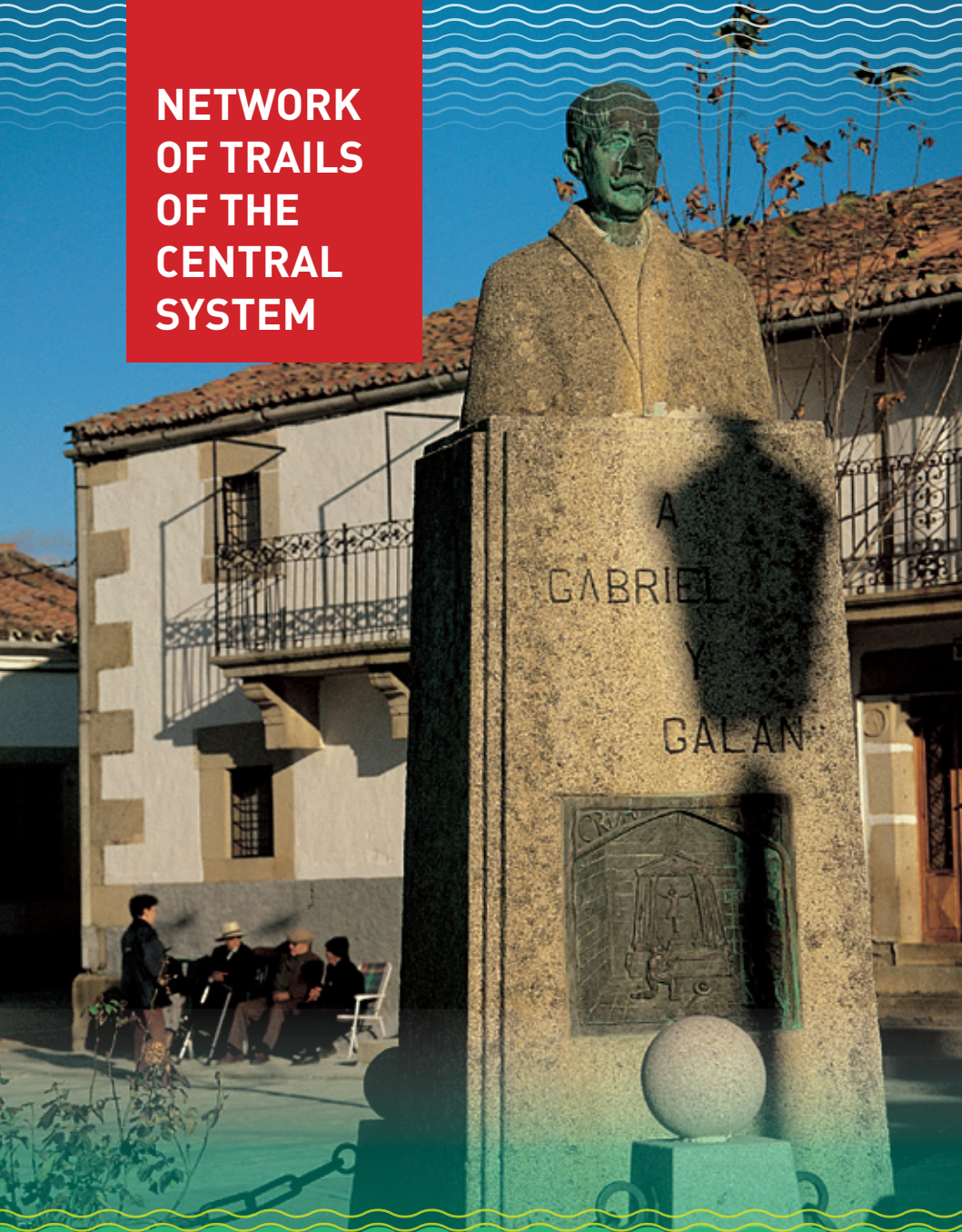
Leaving the village, we find first stone walls, on whose sides are fields with olive trees. On the right

we can see almost all the way to the summit of Santa Bárbara, which acts as a separation from the region of Las Hurdes. The olive trees give way to meadows of holm-oaks, cork oaks and the stone walls disappear. Some stretches are only occupied by wasteland. The road is gently hilly, always heading W. At 2 km, in the middle of a meadow of rockroses and holm-oaks and after passing a cattle grid, a ford allows to cross the creek of los Frailes. We move towards the end of the tour and we find olive groves again.



Shortly after the fourth km there is a fork in the track. Any of the two branches lead to the village, but the route takes the one on the left. Between holm-oaks and olive trees we will soon see the first rooftops. Reached the access road to the village, we turn right to enter on Avenida de la Constitución to reach the plaza Mayor of Palomero (456 m; 5.2 km, 1 h 15 min). The return is done along the same path from where we came. You can also choose to continue to the town of Marchagaz following SL-CC 223.

**NETWORK
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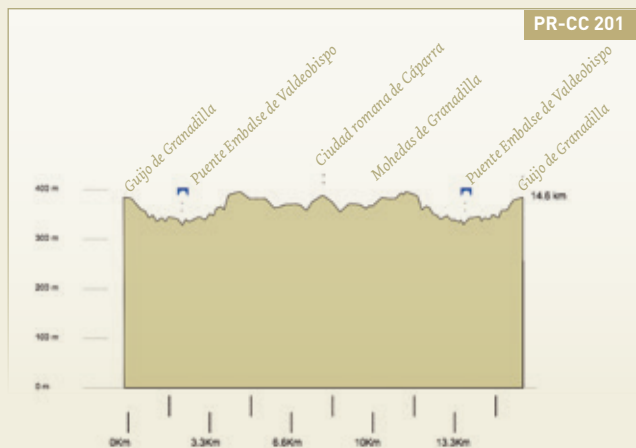
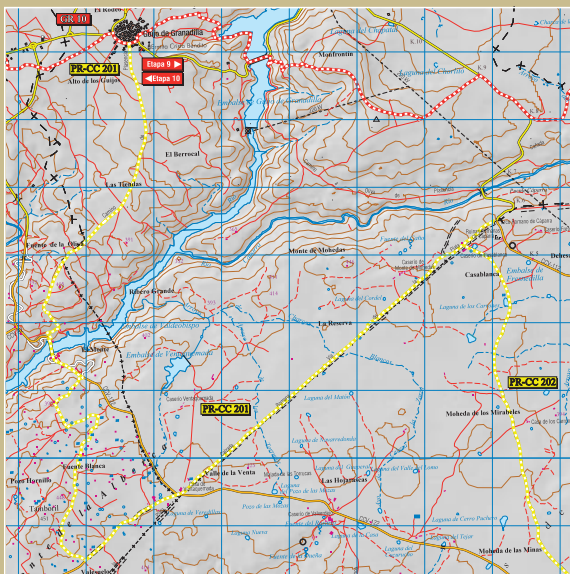


PR-CC 201

Camino del Poeta (Guijo-Cáparra)

PR 201

- Guijo de Granadilla
- Ciudad romana de Cáparra
- Guijo de Granadilla



HIM

2	2	1	2

Departure:
Guijo de Granadilla
Course: Linear
Length: 14,6 km
Estimated time: 3h 40 m
Difference in levels \uparrow : 253 m
Difference in levels \downarrow : 266 m
Maximum altitude: 391 m
Minimum altitude: 327 m



Poet path

Route description

This path begins at the intersection of the Reverencia Street of Guijo de Granadilla (393 m), with the road that bypasses the village, place where the path of Plasencia begins.

The tour leaves from the portico on the Pontón road and descends by the Regato Street. Then turns to the right and follows the path crossing the creek of Tres Cruces and las Monjitas. Then continues to las Peñas where in the past women washed clothes, and passes through the rear of the Lagar de Abajo, ancient building which is preserved in good condition. After about 200 m. heading to Saetilla, the

route follows the track and arrives at Pontón, Roman bridge that when the reservoir was built remained as a silent witness of a past of glory in the midst of the river. It is impossible to get lost in this stretch from Saetilla, since you cannot leave path.

Once you cross the bridge, the PR-CC 201 turns right, away from the GR 10 and continuing along the path of la Estación, where in the past the locals would take the train to Villar de Plasencia, we will find a fork in which we take the ramp on the right. In this section we find many holm-oaks and then we go through a cattle



grid and continue along the path to the left (the one in concrete). The route crosses the Angarilla de los Corvachos gate to the intersection of the road from Villar de Plasencia, where we turn right across the bridge to Cáparra and enter the ruins of this Roman city, where its impressive four feet or tetra pylon arch welcomes the walker (410 m; 7.3 km, 1 h 50 min). From this point the return is done by the same route.

The Vía de la Plata passed - and passes - under the quadrilateral Arch of the Roman city of Cáparra and matches the decumanus of the city in this section. You can visit the

excavations and its magnificent interpretation centre, offering a more accurate idea of how the buildings were and its function. To access this centre you should go to the left on the gravel road that goes under the arch - old cardo - and that crosses the excavations. There you will find benches, a large porch, beverage vending machines and toilets.



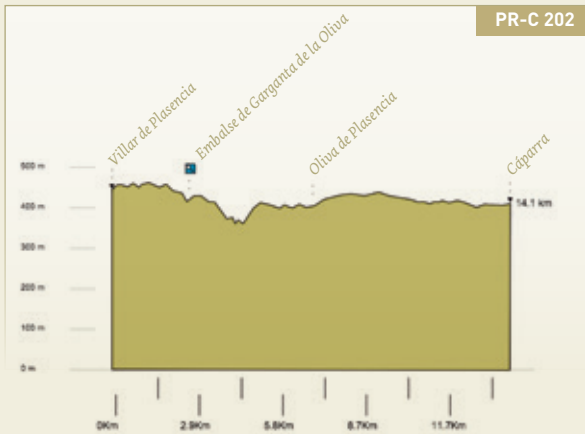
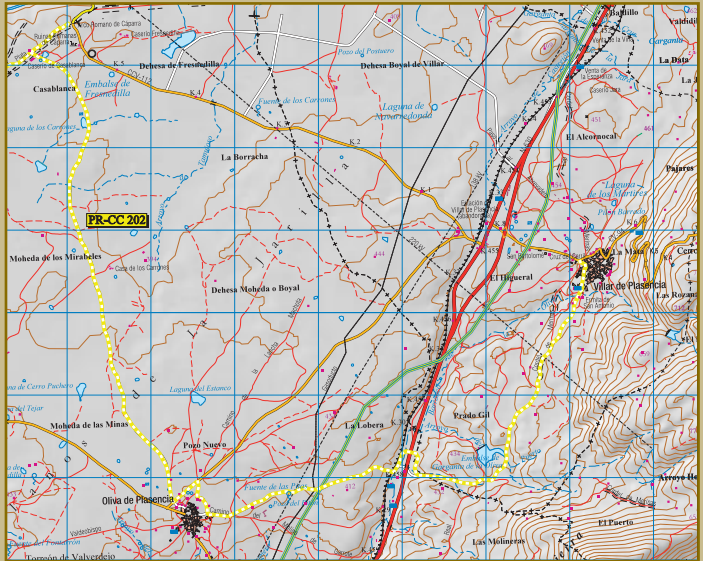
**NETWORK
OF TRAILS
OF THE
CENTRAL
SYSTEM**

PR-CC 202

Camino de Vespasiano (Villar-Oliva-Cáparra)

PR 202

- Villar de Plasencia
- Ciudad romana de Cáparra



HIM



2



2



1



3

Departure:

Villar de Plasencia

Course: linear

Length: 14,1 km

Estimated time: 3 h 30 m

Difference in levels \uparrow : 162 m

Difference in levels \downarrow : 219 m

Maximum altitude: 457 m

Minimum altitude 358 m



Vespasian path. Villar de Plasencia-Cáparra

Route description

This route begins at the entrance of the village of Villar de Plasencia (467 m), begins climbing toward the centre 100 m. and taking the Real Street to the right. We leave the village by the San Antonio Street and an old paved road leads to the old bridge of the 18th century - according to the carved inscription -, which crosses the ravine of la Oliva. The path, of granite sand, crosses between abandoned orchards or olive trees, then giving way to old holm-oaks that grow between rocks covered with moss. A port signals the crossing with the royal cattle track of Vizana, barely identifiable on the ground, where we can see the abundance of white broom. Gentle ups and downs occur

through a beautiful landscape, until 2.5 km we leave the path to follow straight ahead, without turning to the right and down along a creek that we cross at a pylon for cattle. On the right appears the Garganta de la Oliva reservoir. Crossing the creek that feeds it, and climbing a diagonal steep slope to the left, we will reach a track that we take to the right. Once skirted the reservoir, the route reaches an asphalted road that will continue with this ground until the end of this section. After a sharp decline, first we cross the highway A-66 by a bridge and then the abandoned railroad track Sevilla-Gijón. An easy climb through meadows with brooms and meadows



with cattle close to the town of Oliva de Plasencia (7.1 km, 1 h 40 min).

PR-CC 202 does not enter the town; it skirts it by the N. To do this in the first houses we turn to the right by a cemented path. At the end of a street we take the right again, leading to a road, which we will have to follow for a while to the left, again heading towards the village. Shortly before entering it, the route turns right, taking a track first of concrete and then of dirt, which passes in front of the great farm of Los Baldíos. This will be the path to follow to the end. We go through extensive meadows with holm-oaks, cork oaks or deforested, with abundance of cattle, and at times wild cattle. Once passed the cattle area, the meadows close in, but its

monotonous beauty will continue all the time. This wide track leads to a paved stretch that continues straight for about 200 m, point where the PR-CC 202 converges with the Vía de la Plata, future GR 100. If we continue to the left, we enter the archaeological site of Cáparra (410 m, 14.1 km; 3 h 10 min). We have decided to finish the route in the same Vía de la Plata, under the arch, coming together with the PR-CC 201.



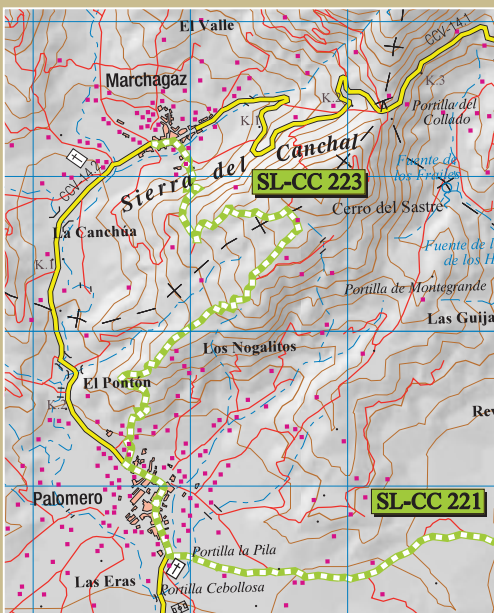
**NETWORK
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SL-CC 223
Camino del verdeo

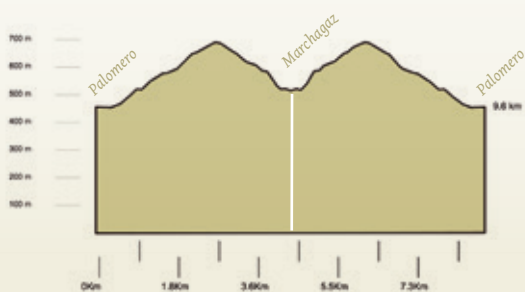
SL-CC 223

Camino del verdeo

Palomero
Marchagaz
Palomero



SL-CC 223



HIM



1

2

2

2

Departure: Palomero

Course: Linear (round trip)

Length: 9,6 km

Estimated time: 3h 20m

Difference in levels \uparrow : 240 m

Difference in levels \downarrow : 240 m

Maximum altitude: 688 m

Minimum altitude: 451 m



Verdeo path

Route description

This local trail starts from the plaza Mayor of Palomero (456 m), to exit down Iglesia Street to Avenida de Julio Hernández, which actually is the road that heads to Marchagaz. Palomero is a village living from olive and also cork oak and cattle. Large number of olive trees surround the town. The route leaves the road to take on the right the Cerrados Street and begins to climb through a cemented street, between olive trees, until it reaches a cottage. As we ascend, the views of Tierras de Granadilla expand, contemplating the Gabriel y Galán reservoir and another smaller that supplies water to Guijo de Granadilla. To your right

lies the town of Ahigal, firstly Cerezo and, in front, a few antennas rise on the Hill of Santa Bárbara. To the left is El Gorrero and the hill of the Orden, marking the border with the region of Las Hurdes. Along the way we see some 'muros', name applied to the small stone huts of cylindrical shape, which housed the shepherds in the event of bad weather or when they stopped to eat. In another time, the common cabreal was used in Palomero, a goatherd hired by the village who came to the plaza honking a large conch shell. The inhabitants gave him their goats and he took them to the hills. By sunset, the goatherd returned and the goats



were given to their legitimate owners. The mastic, the spurge flax, the white heather and the strawberry trees follow the route on both sides of the path. Also some chestnuts that are being replaced by pines, rockroses and lavender. On the border with the municipality of Marchagaz, SL-CC 223 leaves the main track, crosses an olive grove and reaches a new track that descends to the boiler - between the Dios Padre mountain and Altamira -, where is Marchagaz. With

a pronounced descent we enter this town and before arriving at the Town Hall we turn left. Down the Iglesia Street we reach its plaza Mayor (514 m, 4.8 km, 1 h 40 min). The return is done by the same route.



CEDER CÁPARRA

Plaza del Poblado, s/n

Poblado del Pantano de Gabriel y Galán (Cáceres)

Tlf: 927 02 43 90 Fax: 927 43 96 66

turismo@cedercaparra.es / ceder@cedercaparra.es.

www.cedercaparra.es

TOURIST OFFICE

Community of Trasierra-Tierras de Granadilla

Poblado del Pantano de Gabriel y Galán (Cáceres)

Tlf: 927 43 94 76 Fax: 927 43 96 66

TOURIST INFORMATION POINT

Zarza de Granadilla

Tlf: 927 48 60 04 Fax: 927 48 64 46

ATURTIGRA VIRTUAL OFFICE

Tierras de Granadilla Tourism Association

www.turismotierrasdegranadilla.com

EDIT

FINANCE