

## **COSTA BLANCA MOUNTAINWALKERS - WALK DESCRIPTION**

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<b>Walk description originally prepared by:-</b>	Ralph Phipps, 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2012
<b>Last Updated</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2024
<b>Title of Walk</b>	Montana de Santa Barbara
<b>Location of Start (include name of nearest village/town at start of description)</b>	Horta de San Juan The T330 runs across the northern side of the mountain range. Horta lies a few km to the north of this road.
<b>Key Statistics for walk - Distance in km</b>	6
<b>Key Statistics for walk - Ascent in m</b>	300
<b>Key Statistics for walk - Walking time and total completion time including any stops</b>	1.5 2.5
<b>Key Statistics for walk - Grade (using CBMW system)</b>	M/B

**Grid reference of start point (if known)** Lat./Long:- 40.955627, 0.315428

**Directions to Start** Start in the middle of the village. Follow the T334 south (Avenguada Ports d'Horta de San Joan) to reach Carrer F on the LHS. Take this and at a long sweeping bend to the L take the road that goes E into the fields.

**Short walk description** EI Tossal d'Orta, also known as Santa Barbara, is a magnificent pyramid shaped mountain that dominates the village of Horta de Sant Joan. Its privileged location makes this top a great viewpoint for the bulk of the Port and the Terra Alta and Matarrana. At its base is the convent of Santa Maria dels Angels, that dates from the time of the Knights Templar, with a door and stairs of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Here, during the XVI century San Salvador, patron and highly venerated saint of the town of Horta lived for 12 years.

### **Full Walk Description**

**Elapsed Walking Time/Distance so far**

From the town there is a clear road that runs E towards the Convent of Santa Maria dels Angels of San Salvador. c.20mins

Above this we can see the top of Santa Barbara, haughty and challenging.

Take the signed path that leaves to the left of the building. When we arrive at a level terrace situated behind the convent we take a footpath to the left (roughly East) under the crags, ignoring the way on the right that ascends more directly in the direction of a hermitage.

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The path that we follow is surrounded by cypresses and we are going to contour great walls of conglomerate, below the mountain.	c.33mins
After a bit of contouring, the path crosses some impressive barrancos and then begins to ascend.	c.35mins
We make a noticeable turn and see a cave on the right, located at the foot of the walls. This is the Cave of San Salvador, where there is a statue of the saint protected by a grate and a fountain. We return to the same path and continue to ascend.	c.38mins
We take the footpath that continues ahead steeply and to the right in zig-zags.	44mins
After a steep ascent we arrive at a first rocky col, flanked by cypresses and with a terrific panorama. We continue ascending, moving below the walls and on the other side of the mountain which brings us to a.....	50mins
Second col, also surrounded by cypresses. This is also an impressive viewpoint, with a beautiful panorama over the valley of the Canaleta, presided over by the majestic walls of the Tossal d'en Grillo and Montsagre d'Horta. There are ruins of the Hermitage of Sant Antoni. From now on, the footpath follows a platform between 2 sets of crags	51mins
To the right, there is a cistern and remains of a fortification of the Civil War. When you reach a line of large cypresses on the left and the path starts to descend, take a sharp right 160 degree turn up a path to the summit ridge.	54mins
We arrive at a level stretch covered by cypresses, located below the rocks that form the highest crest of the Tossal d'Orta. We leave the footpath that continues straight ahead (that we will then follow for the descent) and turn to the right, by a footpath that climbs through the rocks to the other flank of the hill.	56mins
Summit ridge. We turn left in the direction of the ruins of a hermitage surrounded by cypresses.	59mins
Now we reach the ruins of the Hermitage of Santa Barbara, located to little distance from the top. From here it is possible to enjoy a magnificent panorama and we can now easily complete the ascent.	
If you do not have vertigo, you descend a few meters through the rocks in the direction of a col, and then up to the summit.	1hr 2mins
Top of the Tossal d'Orta or Santa Barbara. There is sometimes a Catalan flag and cross with the inscription of Santa Mission, dated 1953. There is a great panorama towards Horta de Sant Joan, the surrounding towns and the bulk of Els Ports, seen in detail from this viewpoint. We have to return to the hermitage to complete our route.	1hr 5mins
From the Hermitage of Santa Barbara we descend by the same path for a short way.	
When we reach the terrace covered with cypresses. we take the path we had been following earlier and turn towards the right.	1hr 13mins
At the end of the terrace the path descends in the direction of a needle shaped rock – Cigronet- located immediately on the continuation of the main ridge. The footpath runs through some scree so it is best to make zig-zags and pass below the needle on our right. The paths is in poor repair but obviously man-made	1hr 15mins
We arrive at the high part of a small rocky canal. We are going to descend, making	

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continuous turns by a very awkward and stony footpath, but without any real problems.  
Soon we see the convent below us.

1hr 26mins

We pass close to a Hermitage.

At a crossing the path on the right takes you towards a hermitage constructed at the foot of the wall. Ignore this and continue straight ahead.

1hr 30mins

When you reach the Convent of Santa Maria dels Angels, you can re-trace your steps back to the village. There is an opportunity to follow a track on the E side of the town walls and make your way N and back into the town where you wish.

**Walk Recommendations or restrictions**

None