

COSTA BLANCA MOUNTAIN WALKS

FINESTRAT AREA. Monte Castellet circuit - short

Ref: 47

RAFEL—PORTELL de LOPEZ---COLLADO de SACAREST---CASA PINTAT---RAFEL.

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LEGAL NOTICE: Although we strive to make descriptions as correct as possible, use at your own risk

WALK SPECS.: DISTANCE 9.3km- **WALKING TIME** 3¼ hrs - **ASCENT** 585mtrs – **GRADE** M
(Walking Time only add time for breaks and lunch)

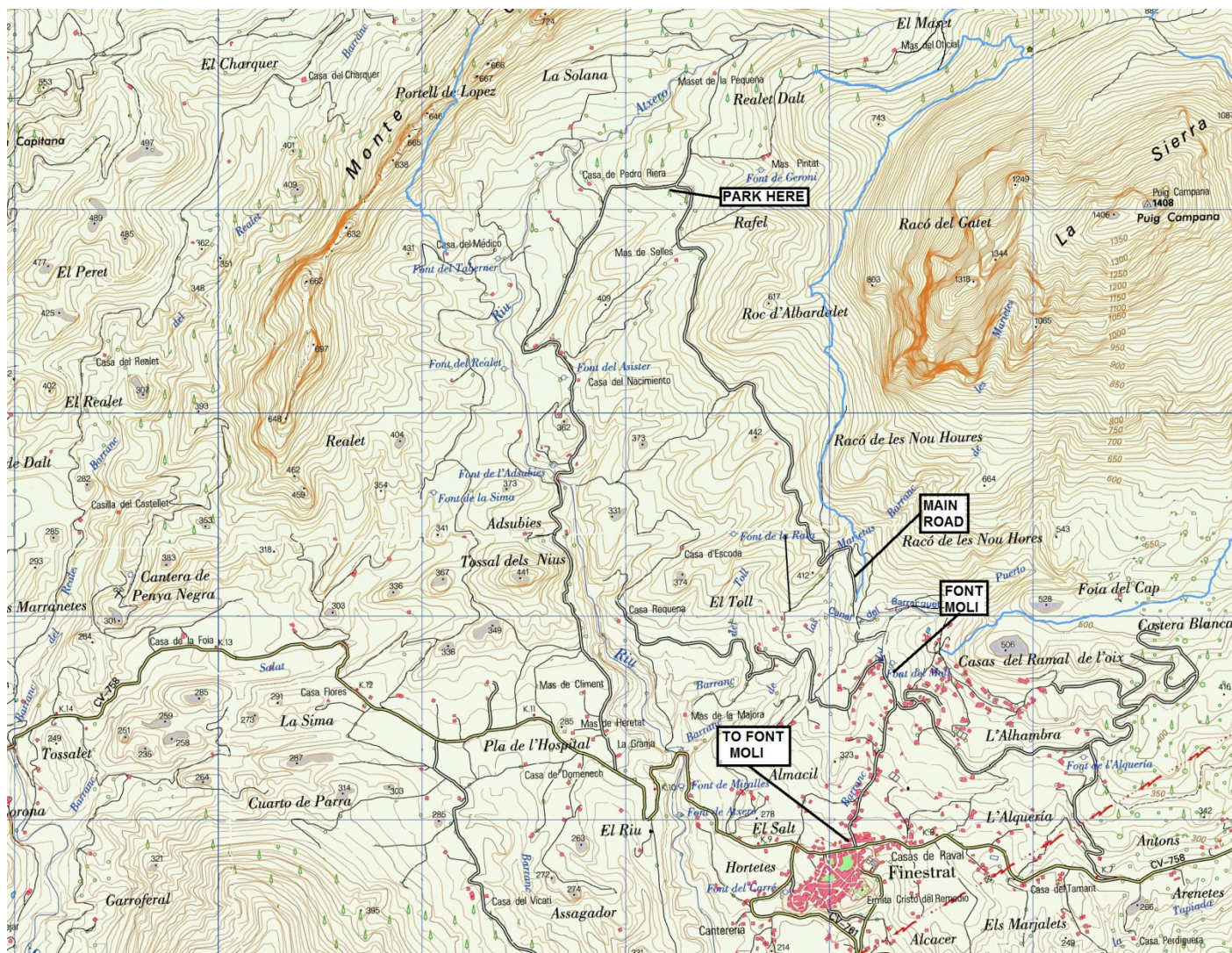
DESCRIPTION

This is a varied circular walk up to Portell de Lopez, the pass over the long jagged spine of rock forming Monte Castellet, and then down into pine woods clothing its northern slopes. Not very high but as it is in the center of a range of mountains curving from Puig Campana to Aitana there are excellent varied views. The total ascent is conveniently divided into several climbs. The start is an easy one along roads followed by a 285-meter main ascent to the pass and then several lesser climbs through the woods to end with an amble back to the start. After the pass lots of shade helps on hot sunny days.

Roads 20%. Tracks 35% all good. Paths 45% medium. Some tracks muddy after heavy rain.

TO THE START FROM FINESTRAT

From the center crossroads drive **N** to Font Moli. From here continue along the “main” surfaced road 3.4 km to a junction with a surfaced road going up **R**. This is the start and has parking for at least 4 cars.



COSTA BLANCA MOUNTAIN WALKS

MONTE CASTELLET CIRCUIT

THE START.

*Note that times quoted are walking time only. - no breaks.
Underlined letters are map references.*

Total distance and
%of walk completed
based on total time

Walk **W** down the main surfaced road which soon turns **SW**, and ignore minor tracks off, to reach a **junction** with another surfaced road **A**. (15 min. 1.2km) 1.2km 8%

Take the surfaced road going sharp **R** following a chained link fence, direction Finca Cajubana. Ignore all minor roads off until you arrive at a junction at **Realet #73 B** (there is a tiled sign on a wall). (10mins .4km)

1.6km 13%

Turn **L** and continue pass Realet #72 and #38 on the **RHS** to arrive at a **T junction C**. (8mins .6km)

2.2km 17%

Turn **R**, pass casa #41 on **LHS** follow its fence up to the end and about 50 Mtrs. past end look for a path on **RHS** which is marked by several cairns **D**. (3min .2km)

2.4km 19%

Take this path, zigzagging up to the top. (2min .1km)

2.5km 20%

Before continuing look N and spot a tiny casita beside a fence. This is our next objective. Keep this in mind as the directions to here are difficult to describe.

Continue **N** along a crest which follows above a wooden house off on your **RHS**. Walk along topmast bancale to its very end. Find a path (old track?) which curves **R**. Take path off **L** which leads to a cement pagoda type structure **E**. (6min .2km)

2.7km 23%

Go around this structure and find path going up behind it and following a small cemented water channel. (2min .1km)

2.8km 24%

This old mule path, often zigzagging, winds up steeply to cross the ridge at the Portell de Lopez. (Good stop with shade and views) (see map) (30min. .6km) 3.4km 40%

From the ridge looking **NW** see a path a couple of meters down going **R** fairly level. Ignore this path and a few paces further down find another path, feint at first, descending down **R** over bare rock. Follow this path, which goes down and soon improves, to join a **track F** with a boulder in its center. (**NE**) (10min .3km) 3.7km 45%

Turn **R** along this rather overgrown track until it joins another track at a sharp **fork G**. (**NE**) (12min .9km) 4.6km 51%

(2018 note: From here an option (a little rough) is to continue on to **Y junction**, go up **R** and continue on steep path to **H** on map)

You go up sharp **R** and curve **L**, (ignoring track off **L**), and ascend to pass a ruin across a small valley some 75 meters on your **L**. Continue on to reach a **LH** bend with a cairn on **RHS**. marking the steep path up to the Rock Knoll. However the old mule path to Rock Knoll starts some 200 meters further along the track on **RHS**, it is marked by a cairn and yellow marks painted on the rocks. It is easier, so we choose this one **H**. (15min .6km)

5.2km 59%

Go up easier path to meet a cross path where you turn **R** up to "Rock Knoll", a small shaded area with a collection of rocks that make it good place to rest. **(8min .3km)**

5.5km 63%

From here continue along the path, (ignoring path off **R** which is marked by a cairn).

Our path curves **L** and then up **R** to where the old mule path is semi blocked by vegetation and stones and is little used. **(5min .1km)** **5.6km 66%**

From here our path goes up **R** for a few meters to reach a small flat rocky place, (Old Ruin?) . Do not go straight on but turn 90 degrees **R** for 4/5 meters and then 90 degrees **L** to reach a clearing near the end of a track. **(2min .1km)**

5.7km 67%

Turn **L** and ascend this track to meet **main track** at Collado del Sacarest **K**. **(16min 1km)**

6.7km 75%

MONTE CASTELLET CIRCUIT Cont'd.

Now turn **R** along main track, which soon becomes surfaced, and find a large boulder on the **RHS** of the road, then find a cairn on your **LHS**, which marks the rather inferior start to the path down. So it is preferable to go a few more paces to the next cairn on **LHS** and follow this better start to your mule path down.

Follow the mule path, which zigzags down to near the bed of the Barranco Atxero where the path follows the **N** bank for a short distance and curves **R** around the head of the barranco to reach an almond bancale. Walk along the bancale to a track where you turn up **L M**. **(19min .6km)**

7.3km 85%

At first **LH** bend find a path going off **R** . **(5min .2km)**

7.5km 88%

Continue along path, ignoring track off **R** by boar wallow, and go on down path to meet the main track at a cairn and near a large **boulder**, with black spot, on the **RHS** of track **P**.

Turn **L** down the track which becomes paved after a few meters and bear **R** down to a **T** junction where the road surface changes colour **S**.

Turn **L** down the road to your start and car(s). **(23min 1.8km)**

9.3km 100%

