

COSTA BLANCA MOUNTAIN WALKERS - WALK DESCRIPTION

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Walk description originally prepared by:-	Viv & Phil Freakley	
Last Updated	4 th April 2017	
Title of Walk	Cova Llumiosa and Els Martells Circuit	
Location of Start (include name of nearest village/town at start of description)	Rasquera, Park at the historic Balneari de Cardó.	
Key Statistics for walk - Distance in km	6	
Key Statistics for walk - Ascent in m	480	
Key Statistics for walk - Walking time and total completion time including any stops	3.5hr 4.5hr	
Key Statistics for walk - Grade (using CBMW system)	MS/B	
Grid reference of start point (if known)	Lat:40.951572N, Long: 0.57745E	
Directions to Start	From Rasquera follow the narrow and scenic road to the Balneari de Cardó, reached after nine kilometres at the end of the road.	
Short walk description	A delightful walk through woodland and along open ridges via several romantically decaying Ermitas, established by the Carmelite nuns in the 17 th century.	
Full Walk Description	Elapsed Walking Time/Distance so far	
Walk back along the road to reach an information board on the L and turn R up a track for only a few metres before turning sharp L onto a steeply rising stony footpath.	200m, 3min	
Follow this footpath past the Ermita of the Santissima Trinitat noting the stables on the right, used up to the last century to stable horses for excursionists. Continue contouring and climbing to pass through the Ermita of Sant Angel.	700m, 15min	
After some easy zig-zagging through woodland a col is reached, with a signpost indicating the Font del Teix down the far side and Cova Llumiosa steeply uphill to the R.	1.25km, 35min	
Turn R to climb steeply up on the obvious path, veering L along a short section of exposed rock ridge before moving R onto the flank of the mountain and walking directly below some steep crags. Soon care is needed to notice a junction where a trace of a path appears to continue straight on but our route doubles back sharply to the left.	1.68km, 55min	

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<p>Now the path climbs steeply, aided by a chain for a short section to arrive, after some zig-zags at Cova Luminosa – a natural arch through the rock with stone walls and steps rising up through it.</p>	1.7km, 1hr
<p>Climb the staircase to arrive on another ridge at a T junction and turn R to walk a short distance up to a viewing platform. Return to the junction to descend steeply at first, then contour across steep ground. Follow the obvious path, with a few steep rocky sections, down to a T junction at the bottom of deep valley. The junction is marked by a tiny (30cm high) finger-post, indicating our left turn on the main path for the Cassola del Diable.</p>	2.35km, 1hr 30min
<p>Follow this path for 8mins to a small meadow. The main path will now veer to the left and climb up past an old tar pit to reach a large cairn just below the main ridge. But for a more interesting route to the same point look carefully for a small path climbing fairly steeply up to the right from the meadow. There is no signing to mark the junction or the path but a series of cairns shows the way up a shallow wooded valley towards a subsidiary ridge.</p>	2.5km, 1hr 38min
<p>Turn right onto the small path, which is new and so is not always obvious. However it is mostly well-cairned and follows a line slightly to the right of the base of the shallow valley until the dramatic rock formations of els Martells (the Hammers) come into sight on top of the subsidiary ridge. Climb up to them for some remarkable views.</p>	2.8km, 1hr 55min
<p>Leave the Martells by a well-used and clear path along the ridge. Continue rising for a few minutes until the path drops slightly to re-join the main path at the aforementioned large cairn below the crest of the main ridge. Look for another small finger-post and metal plate attached to a rock, both indicating our direction for La Xaquera.</p>	3km, 2hr 5min
<p>Zig-zag up to the high point on the main ridge – ignoring a further metal plate with pointer doubling back to the L - with a reward of fantastic views across the open plain and across the Ebro delta and the sea.</p>	3.1km, 2hr 10min
<p>Descend R along the ridge across rough ground down to a small col. The path now drops below the ridge and enters woodland. Ignore an arrow indicating a footpath going up on the L and bear right at a second junction with a metal sign plate, ignoring the left path for La Xaquera. Yellow waymark dots now appear, leading past a craggy corner, with the now dry Font de Teixets.</p>	4km, 2hr 25min
<p>Still following yellow dots, drop steeply down an earthy path to cross the barranc and pass an animal shelter, known as the Cova dels Porcs. Just after there is a junction with yet another marker plate screwed onto a rock, where we make a left turn.</p>	4.4km, 2hr 40min
<p>The path climbs through woodland with steep crags on the left before descending some earthy broken down terraces to reach a junction, where we turn right.</p>	4.8km, 2hr 50min
<p>Climbing once more, the path emerges out of the woods onto an open rocky ridge which culminates in the ruins of the Ermita of Sant Onofre, sited on a promontory overlooking the Balneari.</p>	5km, 3hrs
<p>To continue, double back along the path for a few metres to a junction and turn L to descend to the valley once more and join a track at a crossroads with a signpost.</p>	5.5km, 3hrs 10min

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Cross the track and continue up a steep path signposted for Ermita de la Columna and make your way up to the Ermita. Returning to the signpost, turn R onto the track and follow it down, to cross a chain and join a broader track where a R turn brings you back to the car park.

6km,
3hrs 30min

Walk Recommendations or restrictions

None

See map below.....

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Route followed is outlined in Red



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