

COSTA BLANCA MOUNTAIN WALKERS - WALK DESCRIPTION

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Walk description originally prepared by:-	Ralph Phipps
Last Updated	8 th October 2019
Title of Walk	Penalara from Los Cotos
Location of Start (include name of nearest village/town at start of description)	Los Cotos Railway station or large parking area just above.
Key Statistics for walk - Distance in km	14
Key Statistics for walk - Ascent in m	680
Key Statistics for walk - Walking time and total completion time including any stops	4.5hr 6.5hr
Key Statistics for walk - Grade (using CBMW system)	S/C/Scr
Grid reference of start point (if known)	Lat: 40.822665, Long: -3.963996
Directions to Start	Cercedilla is reached to the NW of Madrid from the AP6 motorway at junction 47. The M614 and M622 lead to the village with the railway station on the outskirts. Take the railway from here or drive up through Puerto de Navacerrada and on to Los Cotos.
Short walk description	The highest summit in the Gudarrama region followed by a demanding ridge traverse with delightful return route through a lake dotted plateau.
Full Walk Description	Elapsed Walking Time/Distance so far
Start either from the railway station or the car park at the col.	
From the railway walk up the entrance road to reach the main road and turn L for a few metres to find the cobbled entrance road to the national park and the visitor centre.	150m, 2.5min
Pass this and continue up the track passing a security post and then walk up the track as it changes to stony ground to reach a bend at the Mirador del Gitana.	800m, 14.5min
Turn L here and pass a small building continuing ahead.	
As the track levels you pass through a fence and reach a less distinct junction where you turn L uphill.	
There are several junction now where there are finger posts indicating the route to Penalara and these continue up through zig-zags on a broad track. Pass a fantastic	

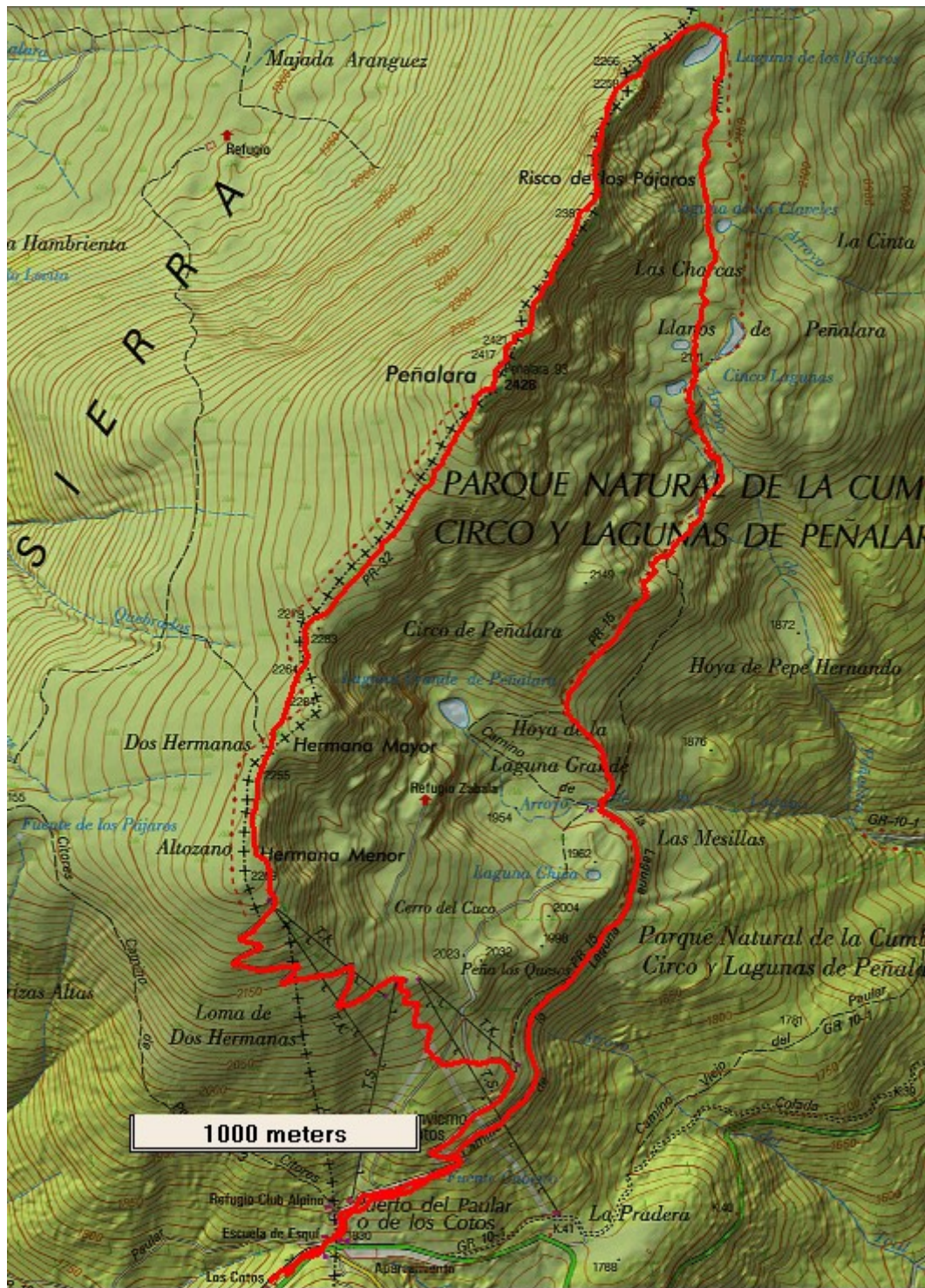
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viewpoint where you can now look across to the complete Penalara ridge with a small refugio nestling in the valley below.	2.1km, 46min
When you reach a small junction with a Y/W marker visible just off to the R take this now smaller path as it passes above the low lying peak above you and heads out to the intermediate peak on the ridge of Penalara before starting the final climb to the summit proper.	3.5km, 1hr 18min
To continue along the ridge you will need a good head for heights and good balance to thread your way through some precariously balanced large boulders as you make your way along the ridge. In general it is better to be slightly off to the LHS of the main ridge line. Persevere for some time before the rocky ground relents and you can descend on slightly easier terrain generally aiming for a lake that you can see below you on the RHS.	5.6km, 2hr 3min
When you reach this.....	7.4km, 2hr 43min
continue to the LH end to easily cross the outflow stream and then double back to the R on easy ground to soon pick up a clearer path aiming across the plateau.	
Concentration is needed to follow this with occasional cairns and pole markers as it rises and falls across several ribs and drops down to small marshy areas where there are myriad small pools and lakes.	
Eventually you come to a spur where you can look across the to the Refugio you saw earlier and here the path turn sharply down the hill to the L,.....	10.3km, 3hr 39min
aiming for a bridge and broader path that you can see below.	10.7km, 3hr 50min
Cross the bridge, climb a small set of steps and turn L on a much improved track to the L.	
Follow this for some time to finally arrive down some steps to the building you passed at about 850m earlier in the day.	
Turn L down the main track to reach you start point and the visitor centre.	
<small>Spanish maps included within these descriptions are provided courtesy of the Spanish IGN and remain © Instituto Geográfico Nacional</small>	
Walk Recommendations or restrictions	At 2400m the summit can easily leave you breathless and the ridge from the summit is a demanding rocky traverse. If you cannot complete this it may be better simply to return the way you came from the summit plateau.

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Route followed is outlined in Red



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