



## THE PIRINEXUS ROUTE

Pirinexus is a circular trans-border touring cyclist route which links the regions on both sides of the Pyrenees at the eastern end of the mountain range between Spain and France. The main section of the route is 353 km long, on top of which there are 175 km of additional itineraries which take you to the many sights of interest along the route. Almost half of the entire route runs along greenways and the rest uses rural tracks and roads with low traffic densities.

**Main route: 353 km**  
**Additional routes : 175 km**

## PARADISE OF DIVERSITY IN TERMS OF LANDSCAPE, CULTURE AND GASTRONOMY

The geography, latitude and strategic location of this small territory mean that the diversity of its landscapes, traditions, gastronomic aspects and cultural heritage would be difficult to match in any other area of this size across the world. The fact that in less than 70 km, as the crow flies, we go from an altitude of 2,500 m above



sea level to sea level itself shows that we have intermediate latitudes, and that the easiest way to cross the Pyrenean border is by following the Mediterranean coastline, means that the route combines snowy mountains with beaches where bathers can be found all year round. Furthermore, the area produces a great variety of natural vegetation and crops that are used in the gastronomy of a wide range of extremely varied and wholesome products. This is where the worldwide reputation and the Michelin stars for Catalan food come from. If we add to this the contributions made by the different cultures that have lived or passed through these lands, the Indigetes, the Greeks, the Romans –Hannibal with his elephants–, the Arabs, Jews, etc., this gives us a small idea of the reasons behind this cultural and heritage diversity that we

will not fully appreciate until following the route by bicycle and savouring the wealth of all its details.



## TWO STATES, ONE LANGUAGE: CATALAN

Until 1659, the inhabitants of the area covered by the route spoke just one language –Catalan– and the area was governed by one sole administrative body; the Catalan Courts. This fact will become evident again and again along the route in the place names, the symbols found on flags and coats of arms, in the close relation between elements of cultural heritage, and also in the gastronomy. This situation comes to an end in 1659 with the signing of the Treaty of the Pyrenees between Phillip IV of Castille and Lluís XIV of France. The two monarchs put an end to the war between them with this Treaty in exchange for, among other things, the transfer of particular territories; one of those being the county of Rosselló that includes the current part of the French state covered by our route. On the north side of the border, the Catalan identity has been maintained mainly through symbols. The language is currently undergoing a recovery process in some schools and 50% of the population understand it.

**THE PROMOTERS AND MANAGERS OF THE ROUTE**

The Pirinexus Route is the result of a collaboration between three institutions:

-  –**Consorti de les Vies Verdes de Girona**
-  –**Conseil Général des Pyrénées Orientales**
-  –**Pays Pyrénées-Méditerranée**

which, with the support of the European Union, designed and created this route between 2010 and 2013. These institutions, along with the municipalities involved, continue to work on maintaining the infrastructures that have been created; on publicizing the route, its attractions and user services; and on providing information for users and harnessing their comments in order to keep the route in the best possible condition and improve it where necessary.

This guide is one of the tangible results of this work, but you can also find more information and send your queries or comments to the following useful links.

**INTERESTING LINKS**

- > **www.pirinexus.cat**  
Official website of the route where we can find the tracks and information on the services and changes or specific incidents. Contact: **info@pirinexus.cat**
- > **www.payspyreneesmediterranee.org**  
Detailed information on the French section of the route and the progress of work on upgrading the cycle routes and greenways in this section. Contact: **velo@payspyreneesmediterranee.org**
- > **www.viesverdes.cat**  
Information from the Girona Greenways and of the route in the Spanish state. Contact: **info@viesverdes.cat**
- > **www.tourisme-pyreneesorientales.com**  
Information on the cyclable network within the Eastern Pyrenees.

**EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER: 112** (same number for the whole area).

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**Map of services on the route on the back cover flap.**

# Outline of the guide. Instructions for use

In the map index you will find the itinerary and its layout by sections and branches. The branches are additional routes from the main one. You will see that every section or branch is featured on a double-page spread: the descriptions are in the upper half and the map on the lower half.

**THE MAIN ROUTE, ADDITIONAL ROUTES AND ALTERNATIVES**

The routes can be clearly distinguished. Firstly, the pages that only describe the additional routes have a blue border on the top which indicates that they refer to a branch or additional route. Secondly, you can tell them apart by the colour and thickness of the lines on the map. The main route is thicker and appears in dark green, while the additional routes or branches are in light green. The additional routes take you to sights of interest close to the main route as an added extra to your tour, while the alternative routes can replace the main route if you want to avoid difficult sections of the main route or stretches that are inaccessible at certain times of the year (rising rivers, risk of forest fires, steep hills, etc.).

**SCALE OF THE MAPS**

Be aware that it is not always the same! In most cases it is 1:30.000 and for the Girona greenways it is 1:50.000. It can vary on the general links and maps.

**THE ROUTE**

The initial description corresponds to the section of the route on the map on the lower half of the page.

Description of the key sights to be seen on that section.

**THE MAP NUMBERS (SERVICES AND SITES OF INTEREST)**

On the map you will see various numbers within circles in different colours. The green ones correspond to sights of interest described in the text in the upper half of the page, while the others relate to services along the routes which are listed on the back of the services map on the inside flap of the back cover. It is worth noting the support points (in blue) which, apart from providing useful information for cyclists, offer a place to store your bike and equipment free of charge. To see the most updated list of support points and services on the route, please go to the official website.

**ROUTE LINES AND THEIR SYMBOLS**

You can clearly identify whether the route is separated from traffic (no inner line), when it shares the road with other vehicles (orange dashes within the green line) and when there are possible hazards such as heavy traffic or steep hills (red dashes within the green line).

**ALTIMETRY PROFILES, STRETCH NUMBER, KILOMETRES AND GEOGRAPHICAL NORTH**

Each map has an altimetry profile of the route, as well as showing the number of kilometres, the number of the stretch and the position of the geographical north.



## GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE ROUTE

The route is a circular one, designed for different paces, which can be started from different points. The route that unites the greenways aims to bring together stretches that share similar characteristics in the sense that they are isolated from motorised traffic and have mild inclines. It is important, however, to adapt to the geography of the land and the existing pathways available. Four stretches that are significantly different can be distinguished.

### 1. Le Boulou – Palafrugell

Agricultural roads, some of which have asphalt paving, and some small stretches of secondary roads. Sections with steep hills, between El Voló and Capmany.

### 2. Palafrugell – Olot

Greenways segregated from road traffic, except the Sant Antoni de Calonge - Sant Feliu de Guixols stretch where we can follow the Camins de Ronda (coastal paths) by foot or cycle on the road (section with no Pirinexus signage).

### 3. Olot – Arles-sur-Tech

Roads with low level traffic, except the Sant Joan de les Abadesses – Camprodon stretch



which follows mainly concrete agricultural roads. Crossing the highest Pyrenees. Long sections with steep hills.

### 4. Arles-sur-Tech – Le Boulou

Greenway, with some stretches that mainly follow farm tracks and the occasional road.

#### IMPORTANT

Pirinexus is not a greenway – it connects greenways. If you are travelling with children or trailers, you should find out in advance which sections are shared with other vehicles or which have steep or long hills

## STAGES OF THE ROUTE

The structure of the guide does not suggest stages but merely describes stretches. The idea is that individuals will be able to tailor-make their own stages depending on the time they have, their physical abilities and particular interests. We recommend not exceeding 60 km on average per day and, therefore, dedicating 6 days to complete the route. This pace would enable cyclists to interact with the main attractions along the route in addition to cycling. If a more thorough trip is planned, carrying out the activities proposed and covering the complementary routes suggested, at least 10 days would be needed.

## WHERE TO START AND HOW TO GET THERE

**1. Perpignan** > (International) train + bicycle lane to Cabestany and Saleilles; cyclable lane to Saint-Cyprien and Argelès. Pyrenees- Mediterranean Euroregion Greenway. (p. 10-11)

**2. Argelès** > Train + Pyrenean-Mediterranean Euroregion Greenway. (p. 12)

**3. Figueres** > (International) train + Vilabertran - Peralada road. (p. 26)

**4. Girona** > (International) train and Airport + Cassà road (9 km). (p. 57 and 60)

**5. Ripoll** > Train + Greenway of the Iron and coal route. (p. 75)

**Information at:** [www.sncf.fr](http://www.sncf.fr); [www.renfe.es](http://www.renfe.es)

## THE DIRECTION OF THE ROUTE

It is recommended that the route be followed in a clockwise direction, as described, for 3 reasons:

1. So as to be able to manage the highest point of the route, the Coll d'Ares, since the inclines are milder on the south side.
2. The most dangerous road which must be crossed is the one that goes from Prats de Molló to Arles-sur-Tech, both because of its traffic and the fact that it has no hard shoulder. It will be far less dangerous if we go downhill.

3. There is a north wind (the tramuntana) on the eastern part (Céret - Sant Feliu de Guixols) which often reaches very high speeds. And it is definitely worth having it on your side! If you are not doing the whole route in one go, the section between Coll d'Ares and Sant Feliu de Guixols is best to follow anticlockwise.

## CLIMATIC ASPECTS

In general, the climate is very mild, with an average temperature of 15° in the eastern sector, dropping to 10° in the Pyrenean towns. Apart from the north wind of the eastern sector, it is also important to consider that snow is possible in the mountain zones between Camprodon and Prats de Molló. There are also more days of rainfall in these areas, with around 100 days per year in Olot, which falls to 70 in the eastern area.

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EQUIPMENT

The type of bicycle that is best suited to the route as a whole is a hybrid bike with narrow and relatively large wheels (700C) with enough power to be able to pedal in comfort. We are talking about a lot of hours cycling. Having said that, on some sections, especially between Le Boulou and Peralada, a mountain bike with thicker wheels offers greater safety. Even in

summer it is important to carry warm clothing for drops in temperature, and at the very least some waterproofs. A fluorescent waistcoat is very useful for the road stretches. And don't forget lights, as unexpected things happen which can force us to change our timetable.

## DOWNLOAD TRACKS

Although the route can be followed without a GPS device, given that practically the whole length is signposted, there are some short sections without signage and it is always possible that a sign may have disappeared.

For this reason, riding with the track app always gives you that bit more confidence. You can find all the tracks at [www.pirinexus.cat](http://www.pirinexus.cat) in the download section. Remember that even if you don't have a special device, if you have a mobile phone with GPS you're bound to find a programme to



follow the tracks. The Girona Greenways have developed an application for Android, Blackberry and iPhone ([www.viesverdes.cat](http://www.viesverdes.cat)). In this app you will find information on sights of interest and the services along the route and its programme (Ulugh) also lets you download some other tracks. Also, as it works offline you will not have any roaming problems when you cross the border. Make sure you have enough battery life.

**THE MAIN ROUTE**

The main route has specific signs featuring the Pirinexus logo so you can follow it easily. Here are some examples of the signage. The only section without any signage is the stretch between Palamós and Sant Feliu de Guíxols. Here you will need to follow the regular road signage.



*Signposting in the French territory*

*Signposting in the Spanish territory*

The greenway sections have their own particular signage which occasionally includes the Pirinexus logo (see pictures).



← Olot - Sant Feliu de Guíxols →



**ADDITIONAL ROUTES**

These routes are not marked with the specific Pirinexus signs though in most cases they have their own signage. Check the description on the relevant page. The most popular ones are those in the Baix Empordà cycle touring network (access at Estartit – page 40; Peratallada and Pals – page 42; and Calella de Palafrugell – page 46) and the ‘Secrets of the Greenways’ routes (pages 55, 57, 67, 69, 70, 71 and 75).



*The ‘Secrets of the Greenways’ signposting*

*The Baix Empordà cycle touring network signposting*

**Things you shouldn't miss**

**10 OF THE MOST NOTEWORTHY ELEMENTS**

Some of these, as shown below, take you on a journey via complementary routes detailed on the map

- 1 La Côte Vermeille. The inspiration of artists. (p. 12-13)
- 2 Dalí and surrealism. The Theatre-Museum. (p. 26-27)
- 3 The ecological plain. Aiguamolls Natural Park of the Empordà. (p. 30-31 and 32-33)
- 4 The weight of history. Empúries and the archeological sites. (p. 34-35)
- 5 The wealth of the sea bed. The Mediterranean Museum and the Medes Islands. (p. 38-39 and 40-41)

- 6 The essence of the coastline. The coastal paths. (p. 46-47, 48-49 and 50-51)
- 7 The immortal city. The Cathedral and the historic centre. (p. 60-61 and 62-63)
- 8 The Volcanic region of La Garrotxa. The routes of the Fageda. (p. 68-69, 70-71 and 72)
- 9 The Cradle of Catalonia. The Ripoll Monastery. (p. 74-75)
- 10 The Mecca of cubism. Céret and the Museum of Modern Art. (p. 90-91)

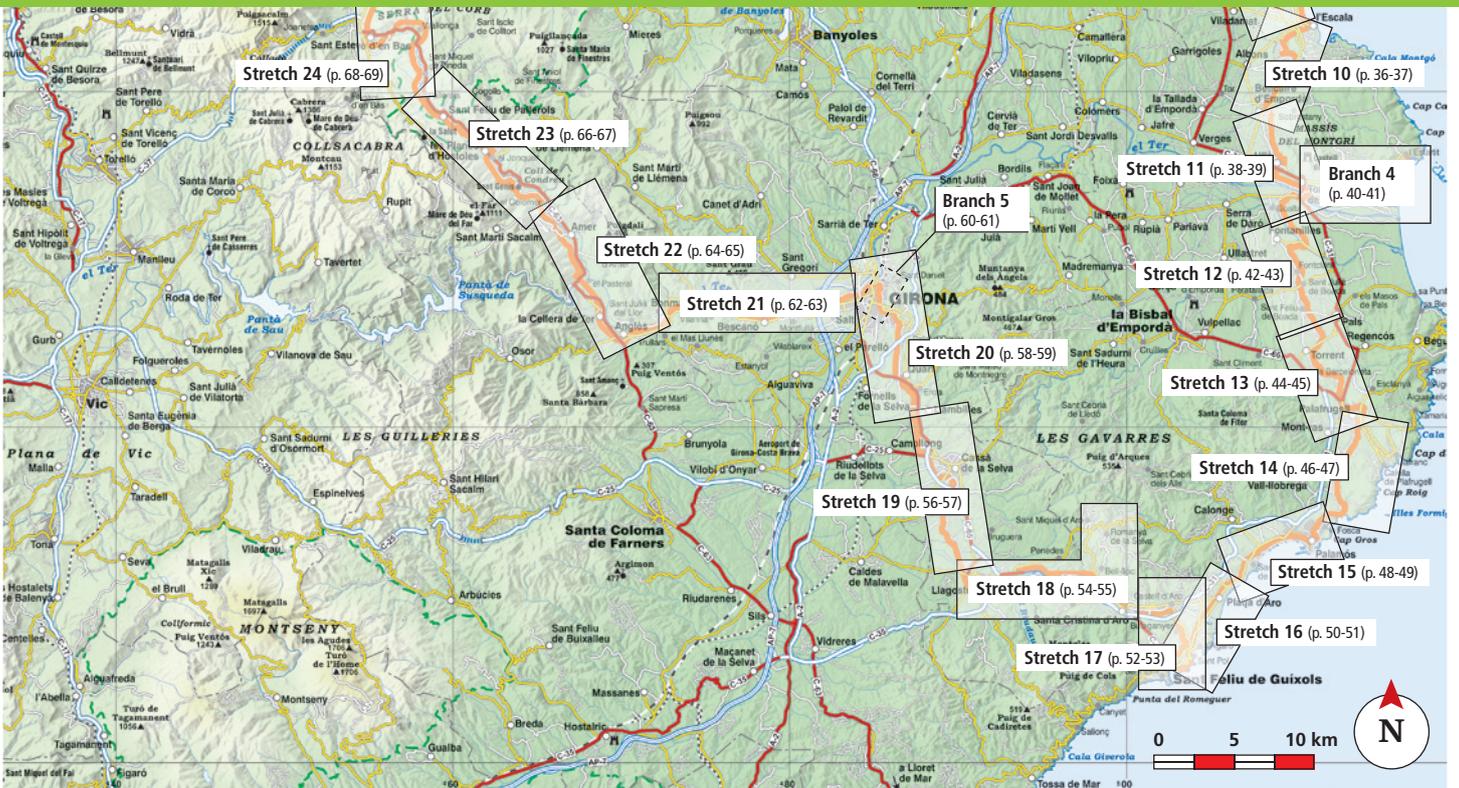


A dish from the Celler de Can Roca \*\*\* (Girona). "The Best Restaurant in the World 2013" (Restaurant magazine)

**GASTRONOMY AND THE 24 MICHELIN STARS**

A total of 19 restaurants that, all together, boast a total of 24 Michelin stars can be found in the area covered by the route and are included on the fold-out map. If we add to these the numerous cellars that produce cava and wine with denomination of origin, we can start to get an idea of the high gastronomic standards of the area. All the restaurants and wineries are also clearly highlighted on the map, with the contact details provided on the back.



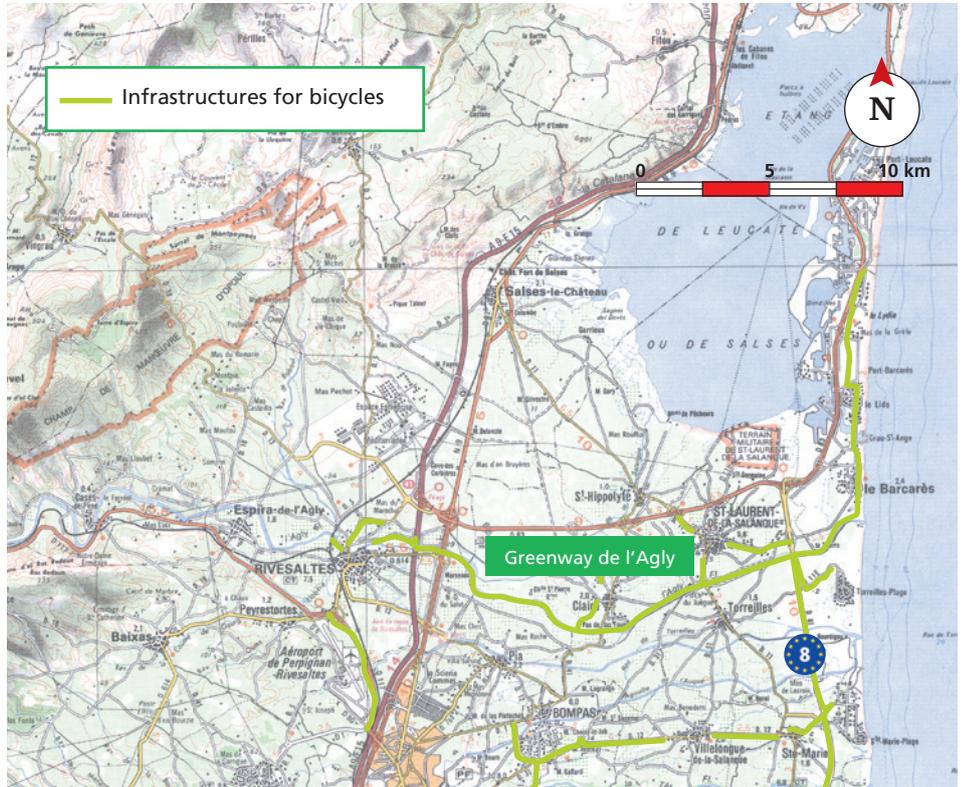


**INFRASTRUCTURES FOR BICYCLES IN LA PLANA DEL ROSSELLÓ**

The map on the right shows the current network of infrastructures for bicycles in La Plana del Rosselló, which link up with the Pirinexus route to Le Boulou. The Vélittorale, a greenway between El Barcarès and Argeles which continues northbound in the direction of Narbona, is of particular note

**EUROVELO**

The Network of Eurovelo Trans-European cycling routes which is being developed in Europe aims to link Athens with Cadiz via the Eurovelo 8 route (Mediterranean Route). The eastern part of the Pirinexus route coincides with this route, which also continues north with the recently created Pyrenean - Mediterranean Euroregion Greenway and with the Vélittorale. From Sant Feliu de Guíxols, the Eurovelo 8 leaves the Pirinexus route to continue south following the coastline.

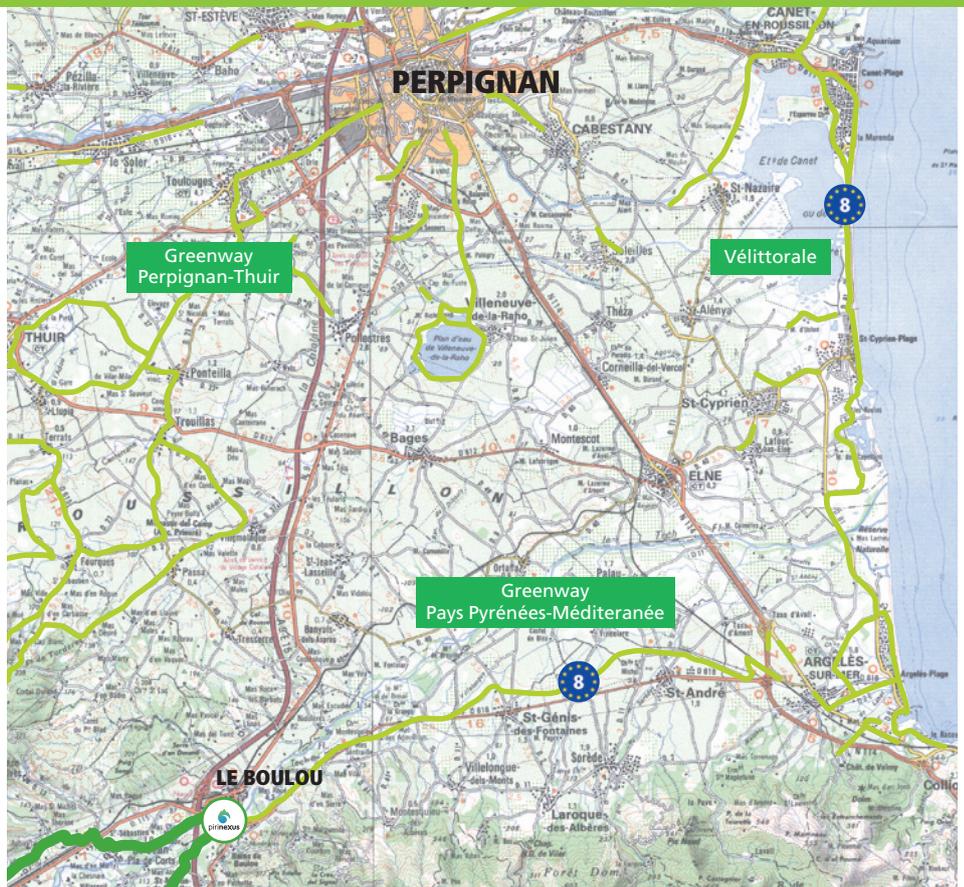


**PERPIGNAN**

The capital of the Department of the Eastern Pyrenees is also considered to be the capital of the historic county of Rosselló and Northern Catalonia. The key points of interest of the city are the Cathedral of Sant Joan Baptista; the Castle, the old prison which is now the Catalan Museum of Arts and Popular Traditions; the Palace of the Kings of Mallorca; la Llotja de Mar (the first maritime court in the world) and the Theatre of the Archipelago.



*The Palace of the Kings of Mallorca.*



# La Côte Vermeille. The inspiration of artists

On leaving the Argelès-sur-Mer station 1, go right along Av. de la Gare and Rue Marivaux until you reach the Route de Collioure (D-114) (200m). Turn left and follow the D-114 until you see signs for St. André and Le Boulou (800 m). Turn left on this road (D-618) and you will reach the roundabout which takes you out of d'Argelès (800 m). The Pays Pyrénées Méditerranée Greenway (asphalted and signposted) starts at this roundabout by the side of the railway track. By following this asphalt road we arrive at Le Boulou, the start of the Pirinexus route.



## COLLIOURE

One of the main attractions of this area is the Royal Castle of Collioure (673 DC) 3. The extremely picturesque town has been an inspiration for many world renowned artists.

Painters such as Matisse, Deiran, Gris, Braque, Picasso, Dufy and Dalí have painted its nooks and crannies, while poets such as Antonio Machado and novelists such as Patrick O'Brian are buried there.



View of the port and the castle of Collioure.

## ARGELÈS-SUR-MER

This eminently touristic town, European capital of camping, is located at the southern point of La Plana del Rosselló. Its 7 km of beaches collide with the eastern extreme of the Mediterranean Albera Massif, in a place known as the Racó 2 (little nook).

## SAINT-ANDRÉ

On our left, just 4 km from Argelès, we come across Sant Andreu de Sureda 4. Of particular note is the Roman church which began as a Benedictine Monastery founded in 800.

another Benedictine Monastery 5 of the same era (800 DC). Apart from the abbey, which has a lintel similar to the one found in Sant Andreu de Sureda, we can also visit the cloister of polychromatic marble, built in 1270 and rebuilt with the original pieces after countless efforts had been made to recuperate them.

## SAINT-GÉNIS-DES-FONTAINES

Located halfway between Argelès and Le Boulou, the abbey emerges at the side of



# In search of historic routes (we leave the route while taking in the beautiful Albera mountain range)

At the end of the Pyrenean-Mediterranean Euroregion Greenway we need to turn right to visit Le Boulou, making full use of the bicycle lane on the bridge of the river Tech. To leave Le Boulou we will take the same bicycle lane, although this time the bridge will be on our left. Just at the end of the greenway, and before crossing the bridge **1**, you need to cross the road and take a narrow concrete track between the roads and the river. From here, follow the concrete track between scrub and crop fields. Once we reach the edge of the motorway, which we will cross using the bridge, all the roads we take will be asphalted. From this point, the route unfolds among fruit-filled fields and vineyards, with the Pyrenean border also providing an impressive backdrop to this relaxing landscape.

**SAINT-MARTIN-DE-FENOLLAR.** (In the search of historic routes). Before starting the climb, we recommend



FRÉDÉRIC HÉBELIN

*The Church of Sant Martí de Fenollar and the excavations of the Via Domitia. Detail, fresco of the chapel of Saint-Martin-de-Fenollar.*

can still be seen on the walls and around the front of the church are of particular note and reveal great expressive force and a great wealth of colour and vividness which probably dates from the 12th century. It is, in fact, right here, by the side of this chapel, that excavations have been carried out within the Enllaç project to uncover the Via Domitia and gather valuable information on the outline of this important Roman road, the first one built in Gaul that linked the Alps with the Pyrenees.

**MAUREILLAS-LAS-ILLAS.** A prelude to the landscape that we will find along the next stretch, in Morellàs we can visit the Cork Museum **2**. Located in the Trade Union building, this museum exhibits the most characteristic elements of the corking industry that prevailed within this town during the 20th century.

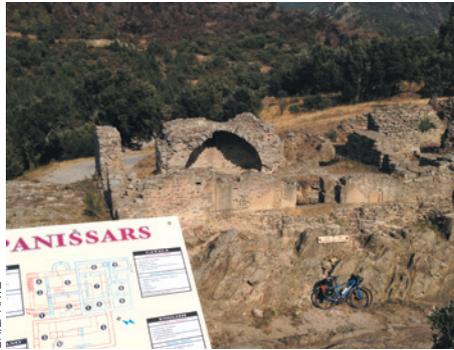
taking a minor detour to Saint-Martin-de-Fenollar to visit its Pre-Romanic church **1**. The painted murals which



# Climbing the Pyrenees towards its most historic crossing point

An uphill stretch that begins at the roundabout at the entrance to Maureillas and goes past Riunoguers. The stretch entails a 5.3 km climb with no resting point, although the most difficult point is between the crossroads of Las Illas and Riunoguers, 3.6 km with a gradient of 5.4%. The surface is asphalt to Riunoguers and then concrete on the climbs and then gravel or stone surfacing on the more level stretches. Remember that in the case of a high fire risk this access will be closed and you will need to cross the border on the alternative route signposted as **Bis** (D71b road).

Although we pass through the Pyrenean mountain range, the vegetation we find around us on this stretch is more Mediterranean than anything else (holm oak forests). It is important to take into account the water divide that we will find at 365 metres.



The crossing point of the Via Domitia and the Via Augusta.

**COL DE PANISSARS : DE LA VIA DOMITIA À LA VIA AUGUSTA.** At the Coll de Panissars we find the ruins of the medieval priory of Santa Maria de Panissars **1**, which was constructed on a large Roman building that was discovered recently and identified as the Mansion of the Summum Pyrenaenum.



The mansion can be found above the so-called Trophies of Pompey that were erected by Pompey the Great to commemorate his victory over the revolt in Hispania. Just at this point, the road name changes from Domitia (in Gaul) to Augusta (in Hispania).

**2 FORT DE BELLEGARDE (LE PERTHUS).** A fortification characteristic of the architect Vauban. Situated not many metres away from the Coll de Panissars, it is an impregnable place, protected by an immense moat excavated out of the rock. The first wall has five bastions. The entrance –the great gateway of France– is protected by a bascule bridge set at a considerable height above the moat. A visit to the site reveals the different spaces with their different uses and provides the visitor with in-depth knowledge of the specific vocabulary used to describe these kinds of modern military constructions.



# The memory of exile

This is the stretch which is the most complex to cycle of the entire route. As we are descending, we find 3 short climbs with the most intense gradients of the whole route which will force us to dismount **△**. There is a gravel surface which is not too solid in some parts making it difficult to control the front wheel of the bike **△**. There is, however, quite a long stretch which is concrete. Finally, the path that runs under the main road just before reaching the centre of La Jonquera, trails off into short stone paths (50 m) where we will have to dismount **△**. This is the small price we have to pay to be able to reach the town via a relaxed route which is far removed from the dangers and noises of motorised vehicles. To avoid this stretch you should go to le Perthus **1** from Coll de Panissars via an asphalt road and then take the N-II to La Jonquera (alternative route). The wooded area of holm oak trees that we pass through has been significantly affected by the fires of July 2012.



The Exile Memorial Museum at La Jonquera.

**LA JONQUERA.** Once within the valley, having negotiated the infrastructures, the human activity and urban landscape of La Jonquera offers striking contrasts. On entering, we find a considerable flow of heavy traffic and large commercial centres. As we go further into the town, we then find more traditional architecture. Of particular interest is the church and the square which is home to the Town Hall (Plaça de l'Ajuntament) off the

main road. But the border aspect, in this case in the form of a memorial, is presented to us through the Museum of Exile.

**2 EXILE MEMORIAL MUSEUM (MUME).** This is an interpretation centre dedicated to commemorating the exiles produced as a result of the Spanish Civil War. It is located on the same street in which most of those exiled escaped (C/Major).

**3 ALBERA INTERPRETATION CENTRE.** The heritage of the Albera mountain range is exceptional. A great variety of different environments can be found in a relatively small space, with such emblematic species as the Mediterranean turtle, the cows which are indigenous to the Albera Massif, in surroundings where human settlers have left their mark since Neolithic times. Summaries of all this information can be found at the information centre of the Albera natural park located in front of the MUME.



# The Albera and the megalithic monuments

Once we leave La Jonquera, we need to take a short but intense concrete climb of 1 km with a 7.3 gradient  $\Delta$  to leave the noise behind us. After crossing the first wooded stretch, where the route unfolds amidst traditional dry stone walls that delimit the forest and agricultural land, we find the Empordà plains stretching out before us, which we reach by proceeding along a gentle path without paving but in a pretty good state. 3 km before reaching Capmany we find an asphalt road, and then, before leaving the town, we find ourselves back on a gravel surface. As we cross this landscape and see the granite blocks as big as humans in the middle of the forests, it becomes apparent why some of these have been exploited by humans since ancient times to make megalithic monuments that were used as tombs.



We can find many examples of Dolmens 1 very close to our route, close to the small lakes of La Jonquera 2 that we will see along the way. We can find information on these on different platforms and at the Interpretation Centre of Albera. We

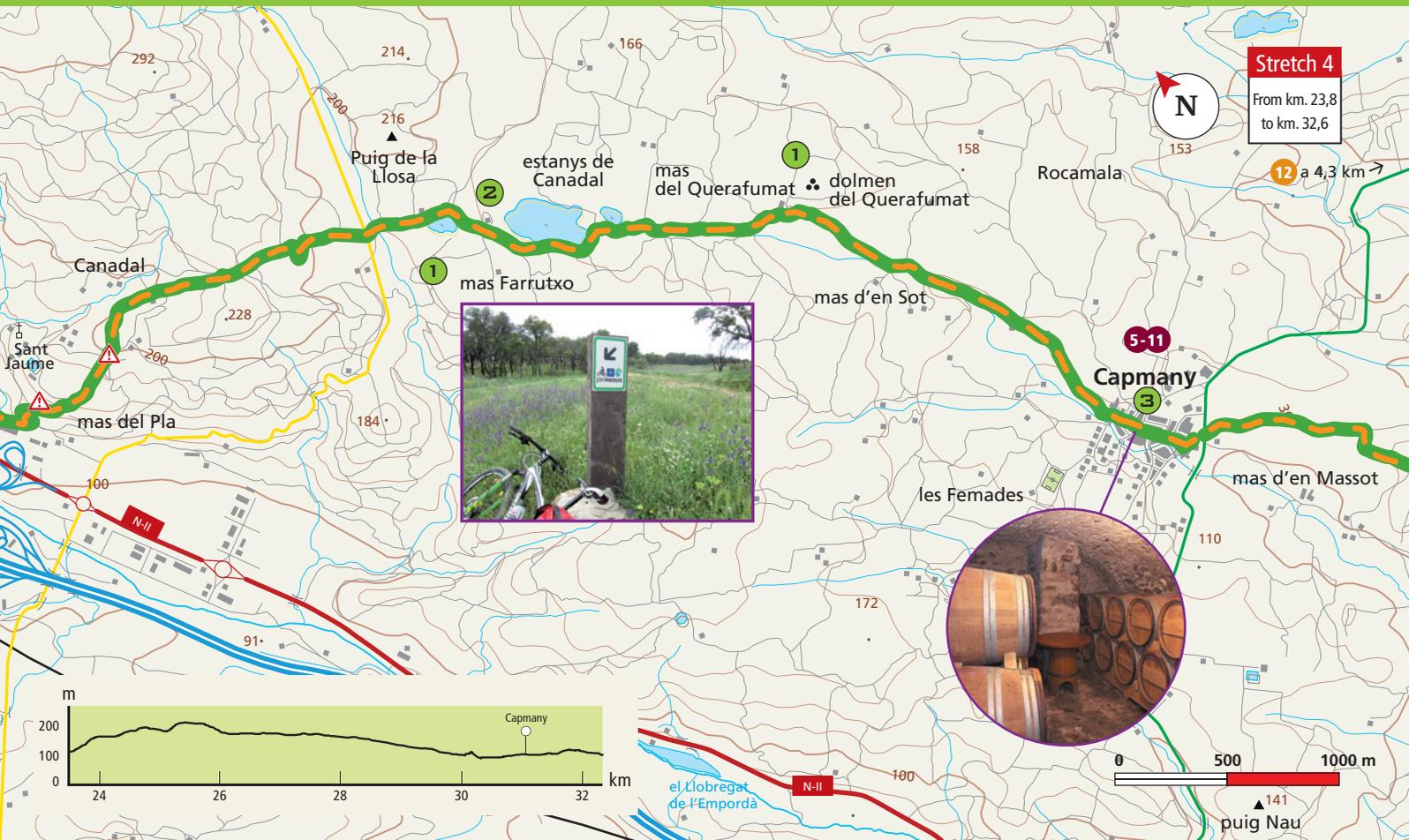
continue the descent and, when we see the first vineyards, we are on our way to Capmany.

3 **CAPMANY.** This small town has a large number of cellars dedicated to the production of wine. In fact, it has more wineries than any other town in the Empordà. A visit to one of them is well worth it. You can find authentic treasures of traditional architecture, some of them in ancient buildings stacked high with bottles and tote bags full of wine, patiently waiting for the prized liquid they hold to reach the exact level of maturation.



The grape harvest at a vineyard of a winery in Capmany.

We can also find a very interesting museum here in the town, the Museum of Wine Taps, and within the walled area of the fortification that gave birth to the town you will also find the Town Hall and the church of Santa Agata of the 12th century.



# We arrive at the Empordà plains. The Empordà and wine



Historical Centre of Vilarnadal.

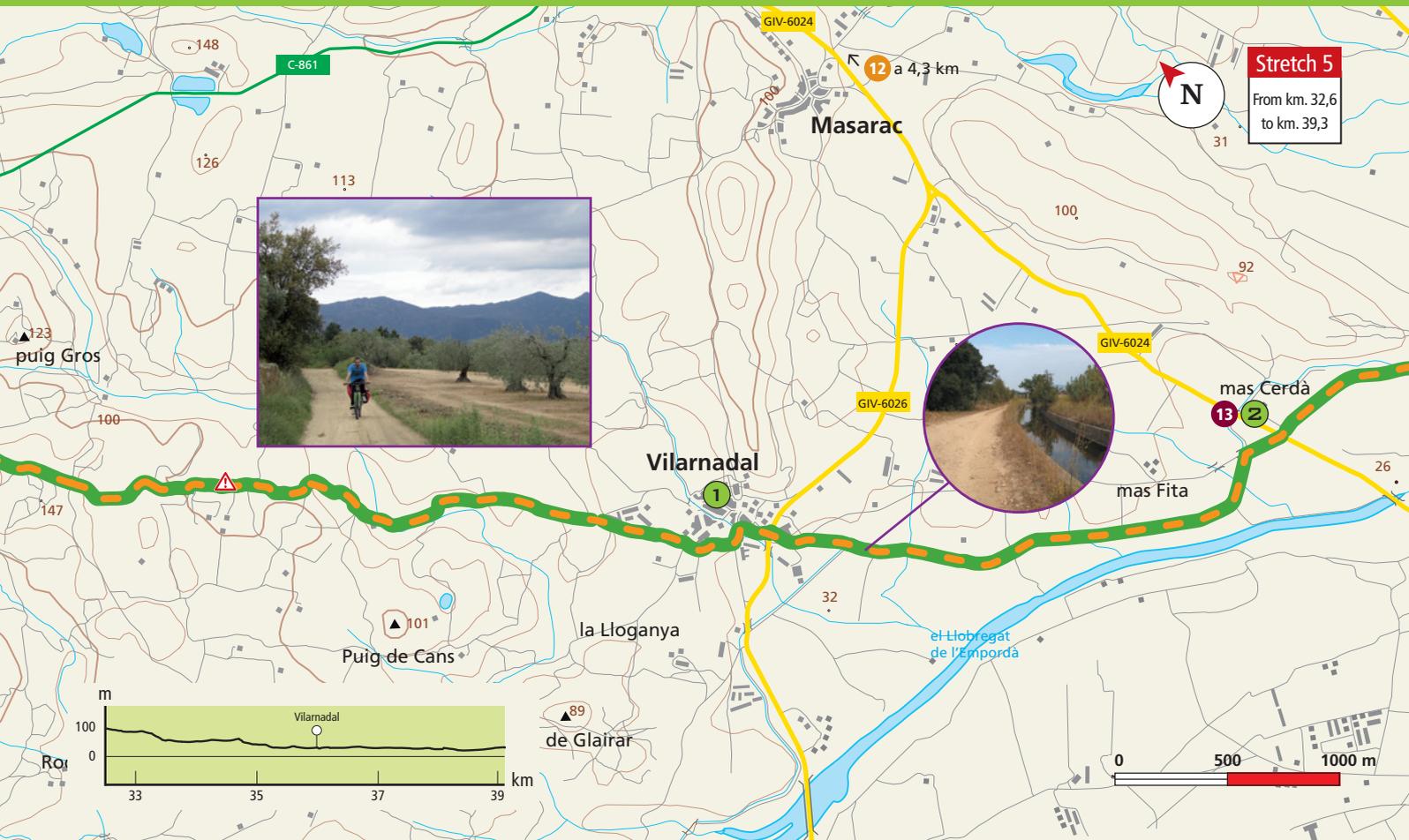
The first section of this stretch (3 km) is the last descent before arriving at the Empordà plains. Although it is a gentle descent (gradient of 4%), it is made up of non-paved paths where soil may have built up at some points as a result of rainfall, that could lead to difficulties managing the front wheel  $\triangle$ . Once on the plain, the paths improve (compact gravel) and are flat. The landscape that we pass through on this stretch is considerably varied. It varies from pine woodland, especially through the first

section, to extremely varied agricultural fields (wheat, corn, olive trees, wine, soya). From Vilarnadal ①, located beside a 14th century fortified manor, we will proceed along a route of small canals and irrigation channels. We have now reached the plains. The fruit of the vine and its later transformation into wines and cavas that have been produced in the area for centuries, is without doubt one of the factors that has been most notable in terms of the area's economy, alongside tourism. And just as we finish this particular stretch, we will be struck by the impressive view of a large castle. This is the Castle of Biart ②, a current reconstruction of a medieval castle which is home to one of the DO Empordà cellars.

**D.O. EMPORDÀ.** The Èmpordà Denomination of Origin (DO Empordà) is denomination of origin wine that mainly takes in the lands of the Alt and Baix Empordà counties which we will cross from north to

south in all their entirety. The range of Empordanese wines available is very wide, both in terms of red, white and rose varieties. The traditional sweet wine, the Garnatxa of the Empordà, stands out in particular, which is made following the straw wine technique: the grape is left to dry on bales of hay before being pressed. This is an excellent wine for accompanying desserts.

**CAVA.** Cava is a quality fizzy wine produced in a specific region (the cava region) which is characterised by the way in which it is fermented and aged in the same bottle that is later opened by the consumer. This allows the bubbles to be made naturally according to the traditional method. The cava region is extensive and within this region we can find the towns of Capmany and Peralada; the latter with notable levels of production which have led to it being renowned internationally. When you get there, don't forget to taste at least a glass of it!



# The wine, the cava and the viscounty of Peralada

This entire stretch is flat. We follow wooded paths with compact gravel paving in a good state. After Peralada we will have to cross the River Llobregat first, and then the Muga via a concrete crossing. After crossing this second fluvial range, we will then take the Muga Nature Walk **1**, a greenway that follows the river along to the river mouth. At times, when the water level is high, it can be difficult to cross the rivers **Δ**; if you cannot follow the marked route, go along the C-252 towards Figueres and enter the River Muga Nature Walk at the point that is signposted. There are two panels to explain this.

**PERALADA.** Strategically located on a hill, the town has always been an important crossroads and is steeped in history throughout. From the first area that was walled in by the Ibers, through medieval times up to today, it has become a town to lose yourself in time and to taste the wines and



cavas from the area. If you like, you can even have a massage at a “wine spa”. Let’s look at some of the spots that can be found there:

**2 CLOISTER MUSEUM OF SANT DOMÈNEC.**

This 12th century Roman monument is the only remaining vestige of an Augustine convent of the 11th century. The great attraction of the cloister is a series of capitals decorated with biblical and profane scenes. This forms part of the cultural centre of the same name and the museum of the town, which houses the Tourist Information Office among other services.

**3 CHURCH OF SANT MARTÍ.**

This is an 18th century construction with Roman remains and a Gothic bell



*The Castle of Peralada.*

tower. Inside we can find the jewel of the parish with a processional cross from the 14th century, a Renaissance chalice, and an exhibition of miniature nativity scenes from the 1940s.

**4 THE CONVENT OF CARME.**

A Gothic building which currently serves as the Castle Museum. Of particular note are the cloister and church with an exceptional polychrome wooden ceiling.

**5 CASTLE-MUSEUM OF PERALADA.**

Located within the old convent of Carme, the visit includes the library with over 80,000 editions, the church and cloister, the glass museum and the wine museum with the old cellar. A well-known music festival is held here every summer.



# Dalí and surrealism

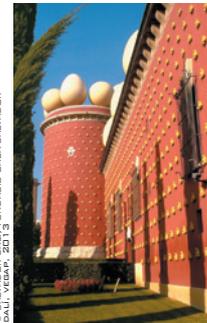
To go so near to Figueres and not visit the Dalí Theatre-museum would be unforgivable, unless you have already been there. To get there, we have to take a short diversion of no more than 6 km on the C-252 road that links Peralada with Figueres via Vilabertran. The road has little traffic but no hard shoulder, which means that we need to wear a fluorescent waistcoat. We do not need to go through Peralada on the return trip. At 1.4 km after Vilabertran, and just before the bridge over the River Muga, we need to turn of to the right until we reach the Muga Nature Walk ❶ that takes us along the right-hand side of the river.

**VILABERTRAN. The house of canons of Santa Maria de Vilabertran.** Santa Maria de Vilabertran is, without doubt, one of the best preserved examples of a Medieval house of canons. The centre of the abbey is organised around the cloister, the monastic rooms and the 12th century church with typically Roman

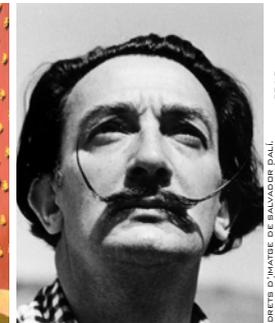
elements, where we can view the recently restored Cross of Vilabertran.

**FIGUERES. Dalí Theatre-Museum.** The Dalí Theatre-Museum ❷, the largest surrealist object in the world, was built on the remains of the old theatre in Figueres and contains the greatest variety of works from artist Salvador Dalí (1904-1989), from his first artistic experiments and surrealist creations to the work developed during the last years of his life. As Dalí himself explained: «It is obvious that other worlds exists, no doubt at all; but, as I have already said many times, these other worlds are within us, they can be found on earth and particularly at the core of the Dalí Museum dome where we find the unexpected and amazing world of surrealism».

**Toy Museum.** Located near the Dalí Theatre-Museum and the Rambla of Figueres ❸, the museum is home to an extensive and permanent exhibition of toys from across the years.



Tower Galatea



Portrait of Salvador Dalí.

**The Castle of Sant Ferran.** One of the greatest fortifications in the world, built to avoid the constant invasions of French troops during the second half of the 17th century. It is shaped in the form of a narrow irregular pentagon with a double wall surrounding it. The outer perimeter measures 3,125 metres and the inner part 2,100. The parade ground covers twelve thousand metres square. The garrison was comprised of 6,000 men, although the place could provide shelter for twice this number if necessary. Some visits take you on a tour of the fort's water tanks.



# Castelló d'Empúries, the medieval capital of the Empordà

Following the Muga Nature Walk, we reach Castelló d'Empúries. Here we cross the River Muga taking the old bridge and follow south via agricultural roads which are in a very good state (paved with compact gravel and some asphalt stretches).

## 1 CASTELLÓ D'EMPÚRIES

Capital of the county during the medieval period which extended from the Albera water divide in the Pyrenees to the River Ter, it was thus the medieval capital of the Empordà. The town still lives and breathes this medieval air, from the medieval markets organised to the products we can find in many of the shops in the historic centre of the town. If we take a look around the town, we should include a visit to the Curia Prison (1336), a Gothic style building which is now home to the Tourist Information



office and where we can also find the Medieval History Museum.

The **Silos of Plaça Jaume I** (14th century), old cereal deposits discovered in the subsoil.

The **Jewish Quarter** and the new and old synagogues of the Aljama; vestiges of the significant Jewish population during nearly 300 years from the 13th century onwards.

The **Little Mill Ecomuseum**, an industrial museum that conserves the old mill from the end of the 19th century.

The **public washroom**, an attractive construction from the 19th century where we can find the impressive Tuscan columns in the shuttered galleries that surround the wash area.

The **Gallarda Gateway**, a rectangular tower from the 18th century, provided the eastern access point to the walled premises and today it is the only one of its kind remaining along with a part of late medieval wall.



Castelló d'Empúries.

The **Gothic basilica of Santa Maria** (13th-15th centuries), a real treasure due to its authentic cathedral-like dimensions, is one of the most interesting examples of Gothic architecture in Catalonia.

The Gothic hall in the **Palace of the Counts**, currently home to the Town Hall, is particularly impressive. Now leaving the town heading south, we will pass the Toribi Duran residence, a huge eclectic building, and we will cross the River Muga for the last time going over the old bridge: a medieval bridge with 7 unequal keyholes dating back to the 13th century.



# A cocktail of nature, history, leisure and adventure

From Castelló, continue on the greenway along the left-hand side of the River Muga Nature Walk (with its own signage) ①. This stretch of the greenway was the first to be built, linking the historic centre of Castelló d'Empúries with Empuriabrava. Along this route we can get a close-up view of the waterways and the Muga riverbed, observing and enjoying the life of the river and the ecosystems associated with it: the little islands and river beds where the birds stop off, the woodlands of its shores and the fauna the water feeds through before flowing downstream.

② **NATURAL PARK OF THE AIGUAMOLLS.** Halfway along the route, a wooden bridge over the Muga enables us to access the Natural Park of the Aiguamolls which, today, is the second most important natural park in Catalonia. Here you will find various observatories for watching wildlife up close. If you follow this route, the trail



takes you to Cortalet ③, the Information Centre for the protected site, from which point there are some interesting routes to observe the landscape and the varied flora and fauna, such as the *Ruta dels Estanys* (Lake Route) ④ shown on the map. This site is extremely important internationally as a refuge for many migrating birds.

## EMPURIABRAVA AND ROSES.

From the wooden bridge over the River Muga we can either continue on the greenway to the river mouth, or turn left and go through Empuriabrava via one of the few roads that crosses the entire town and that benefits from a cycle lane. This unique town has 24 km of navigable canals that make it the largest residential marina in the world.

Once we leave the town, we follow the cyclist signs and, after crossing the Rubina Nature Reserve, we reach Roses, where the cycling route runs alongside the main road. The most noteworthy element of this town –formerly a fishing village and now



*Senillosa Observatory at the Aiguamolls of the Empordà.*

mainly a tourist attraction– is its fortress (4th century BC – 19th century), which contains vestiges of different occupations over the last twenty five centuries.

It is worth noting that we will pass very close by Skydive Empuriabrava, one of the 3 most important parachuting jumping centres in the world in terms of the number of jumps held. You can stop off to have a go and take your first tandem jump (two-seat parachute).



# The ecological plain, the Aiguamolls, and apple farming

We now continue on the flat route with some stretches exclusively for bicycles that, along with the bridge across the Sirvent, have been built for the Pirinexus route. Having passed the canal, we now find mainly asphalt agricultural roads until we reach Sant Pere Pescador. On leaving the town, we find a bicycle lane on the left-hand side of the bridge across the River Fluvià. Once across this, we turn to the left to go under the same bridge and continue the route upstream.



## THE ECOLOGICAL PLAIN.

The plain we are now crossing has played an important role ecologically speaking over the years. The build up of sediments from the Muga and Fluvià rivers as they reach the Mediterranean sea, have created extensions of water and resulted in a mosaic of lagoons, meanders and small lakes that over the years have gradually lost their salinity: the

aiguamolls. These aigamolls (marshlands) have served as waterlands that have been used as a refuge for large numbers and varieties of fauna and are recognised on an international level. Historically the aigamolls were drained to obtain agricultural fields, but the recent touristic pressure put the existence of the remaining lagoons under serious threat, especially with projects such as Empuriabrava which aimed to extend further south. Such projects were stopped thanks to social campaigning and the area became a designated Nature Reserve. To visit the aigamolls and the birds that can be found there up-close, you can access the site via the Park al Cortalet where there is a visitors' centre **1**.

## RICE AND APPLE FARMING.

One of the most common crops found in the marshlands is rice, although we can also find fields of cereals, sunflowers and, in

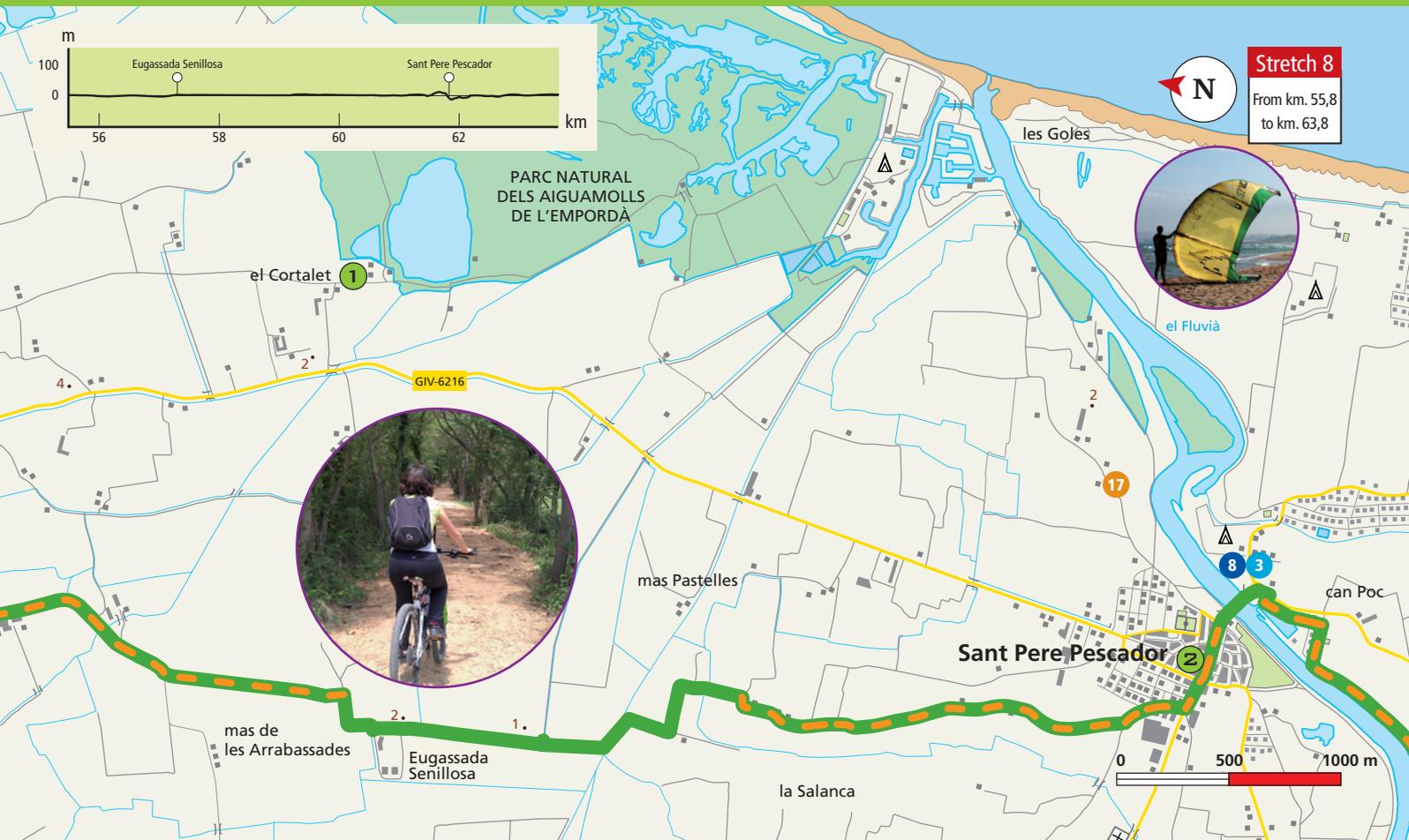


River mouth of the River Fluvià in Sant Pere Pescador.

particular, apples throughout this area. The latter fields dominate the landscape on the way to Sant Pere and also extend to the other side of the River Fluvià.

## 2 SANT PERE PESCADOR.

A town with a strong agricultural background, but also with an important touristic side. Many windsurfers come together every year on the beach –which is often buffeted by the north wind (Tramuntana) and south-west winds (Garbí)– and take part in the world championships.



# The sea and the vestiges of the Greeks

A trail which takes us along wide agricultural roads with compact gravel paving. From Sant Martí d'Empúries we find a walkway for pedestrians and cyclists which is separated from other traffic and paved with asphalt.

## L'ARMENTERA AND CINCLAUS

Once we distance ourselves from the River Muga, we then pass through the village of L'Armentera ①, which is dominated by a Neoclassic church and a very well preserved mill. Passing through apple orchards, we then go through the small hamlet of Cinclaus ② with a chapel dating back to the 10th century.

## ③ SANT MARTÍ D'EMPÚRIES

A small medieval settlement that was the first capital of the county and that preserves the original street outline and the shields and symbols of the nobles who still figure on the stone façades of many houses. In the village square, dominated by the parish church, we can

choose from the numerous restaurants that have gained a good reputation thanks to their high quality and the uniqueness of the place where they are located. Behind the church we find one of the best viewpoints of the Alt Empordà of the Costa Brava. From here we can catch a glimpse of the peaks of the Pyrenees, often covered in snow, of the entire Golf de Roses and, to the south, L'Escala and Montgrí.

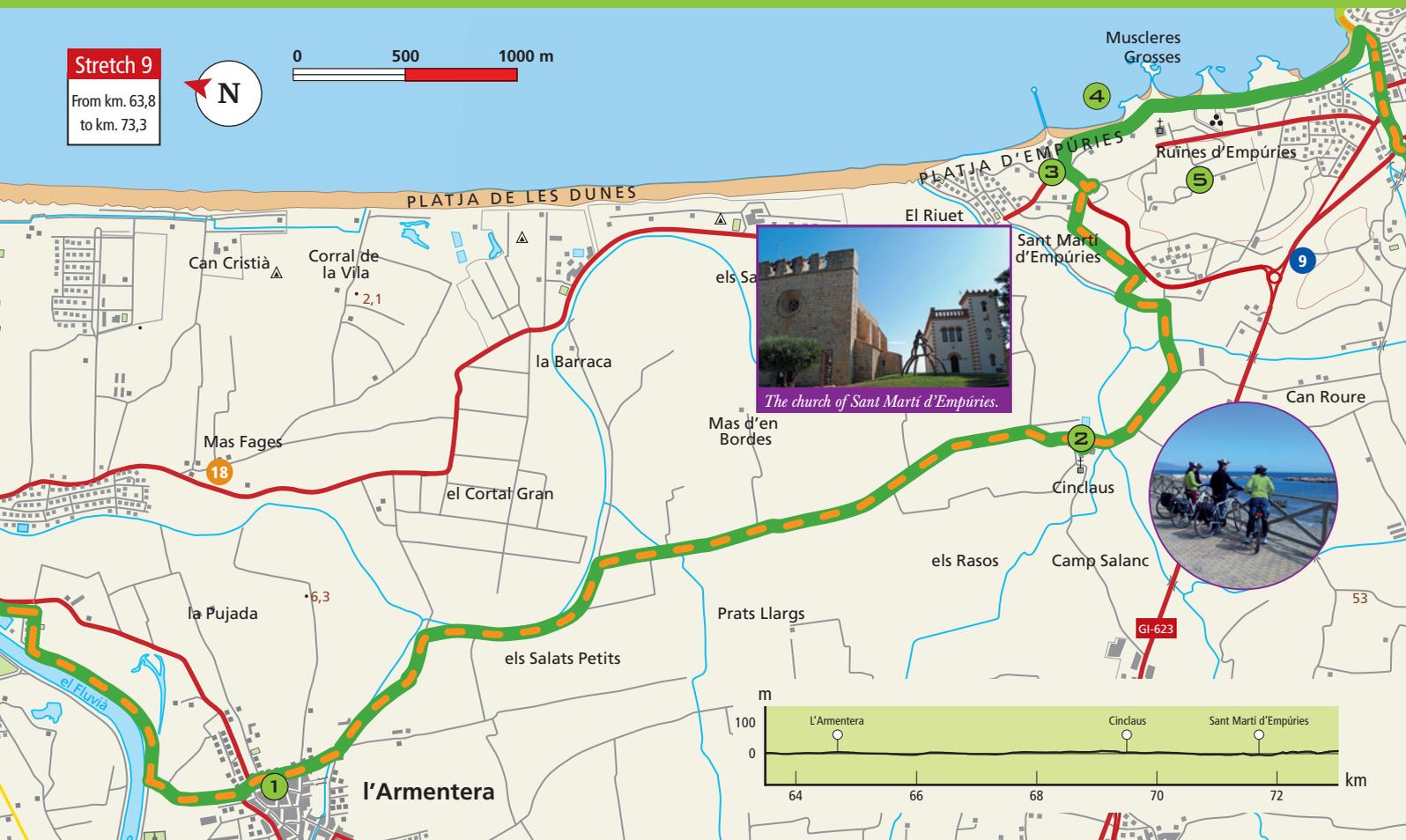
## THE GREEK PORT AND THE ARCHEOLOGICAL REMAINS OF EMPÚRIES.

It is at this precise spot where the Greeks decided to land their ships and take up settlement. The magnificent Greek port ④ that can be observed from this viewpoint, and that represents one of the most monumental works of engineering of ancient times on the Iberian peninsula, bears testimony to this. As a result of the site's history as the point of entry to the peninsula for the Greeks, Empúries was chosen as



Aerial view of the archeological remains in Empúries. In the background, L'Escala.

the ideal location to receive the Olympic flame during the Olympic Games held in Barcelona in 1992. If we continue our route southwards, after a few hundred meters we will find an outdoor array of magnificent archeological remains on our right ⑤. To access the ruins we need to find the entrance by following the perimeter towards the south east. This is the only place where we can find a Greek city and working site, alongside a settlement of the Indigetes and a Roman city. The entire area can be covered in around two hours to discover what the houses, temples, markets and shops of the different settlements were like.



# Home to the salting of the anchovies and the Montgrí Massif

This stretch starts from L'Escalà and continues 2 km along the main road which can be very busy with traffic in summertime. Special care should be taken when crossing the roundabout  to leave the town. On the next stretch the traffic is much lighter. Once we leave the main road, we will then pass through agricultural roads with compact gravel paving, in relatively good condition, which run by a small canal for most of the route. At the exit to Bellcaire we cross a very busy main road  and it is advisable to do this by using the pedestrian traffic lights.

**L'ESCALA.** With a strong fishing tradition, L'Escalà has conserved an industry throughout the centuries that has brought it worldwide fame: anchovy salting. We pass by the Anchovy and Salt Museum  which is also home to the Tourist Information Office. The museum shows us the history of fishing and the



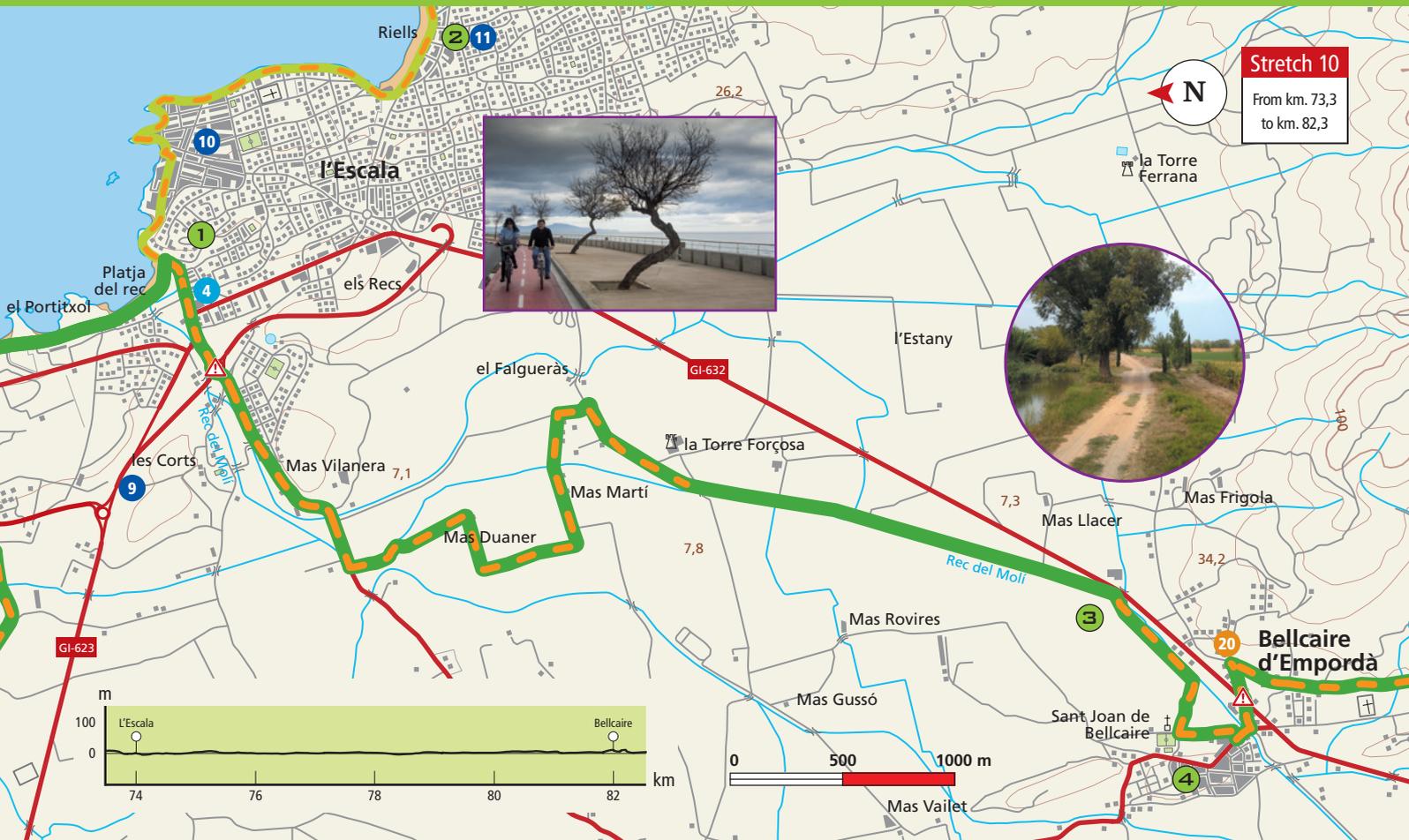
salting of blue fish from the 16th century up to today and we are immersed in a time, heritage and knowledge which are unique to the Catalan coast. The Tourist Office will provide us with information on the Anchovy tapas route which, at the same time, will help us to get to know the town. If we venture into the centre of town until reaching the port, with its notable fishing character, we will then find MARAM: The Fish Interpretation Centre . The centre is located near natural and historical assets which are also of geological, botanical and fishing importance. From here you can choose from different activities to visit and discover the different locations. On leaving L'Escalà, the route mainly follows an irrigation channel that waters the plains, known as the Rec de Moli, until the town of Bellcaire. Along this channel we will see traditional crop fields such as rice . In fact, the Information Office in L'Escalà can

provide information on a route that lets you discover the secrets of the cultivation of this particular crop.

**BELLCALRE.** In Bellcaire we can visit the Castle of the Counts of Empúries  which was built in the 13th century and is now located in the centre of the small town of Bellcaire d'Empordà. Documented in 1289, it was constructed as a form of defence in view of the battles and discordance between Count Ponç V of Empúries and King Jaume II, who had the neighbouring castles in Torroella and Albons built.



The Castle of Bellcaire.



# Following the Montgrí Massif until reaching the River Ter

Heading to Torroella, the route runs through wide agricultural roads with little traffic and compact gravel paving in a good state. We find an asphalt stretch on arriving in Ullà, where more care should be taken in view of the increase in motorised traffic. The crossing over the River Ter should be taken on the right-hand pavement; the pavement is very wide and has been designed for both pedestrians and cyclists. From here onwards we follow the roads along the bank of the River Ter and later the Daró. Care should be taken when climbing the riverbank up to the road as the traffic at this point passes at high speed. Once we have crossed the road, we will continue to follow the agricultural roads on the left-hand side which are paved with compact gravel.

**1 EL MONTGRÍ.** The calcareous Montgrí Massif that dominates this stretch is a unique geological structure. Located at the southern limit of the geological



Pyrenees, it can be found quite a way from the mountain range and in the middle of the plain. This is a highly strategic location. The Palaeolithic vestiges of some of the caves (el cau del Duc or «Duke's Cave») and the Castle of Montgrí provide some examples of this. The unfinished castle that sits on top of the central coppice of the Massif was built between 1294 and 1302 by Jaume II, as a vanguard in his dispute against the Count of Empúries. An impressive view of the Empordanese coastline can be observed from its towers.

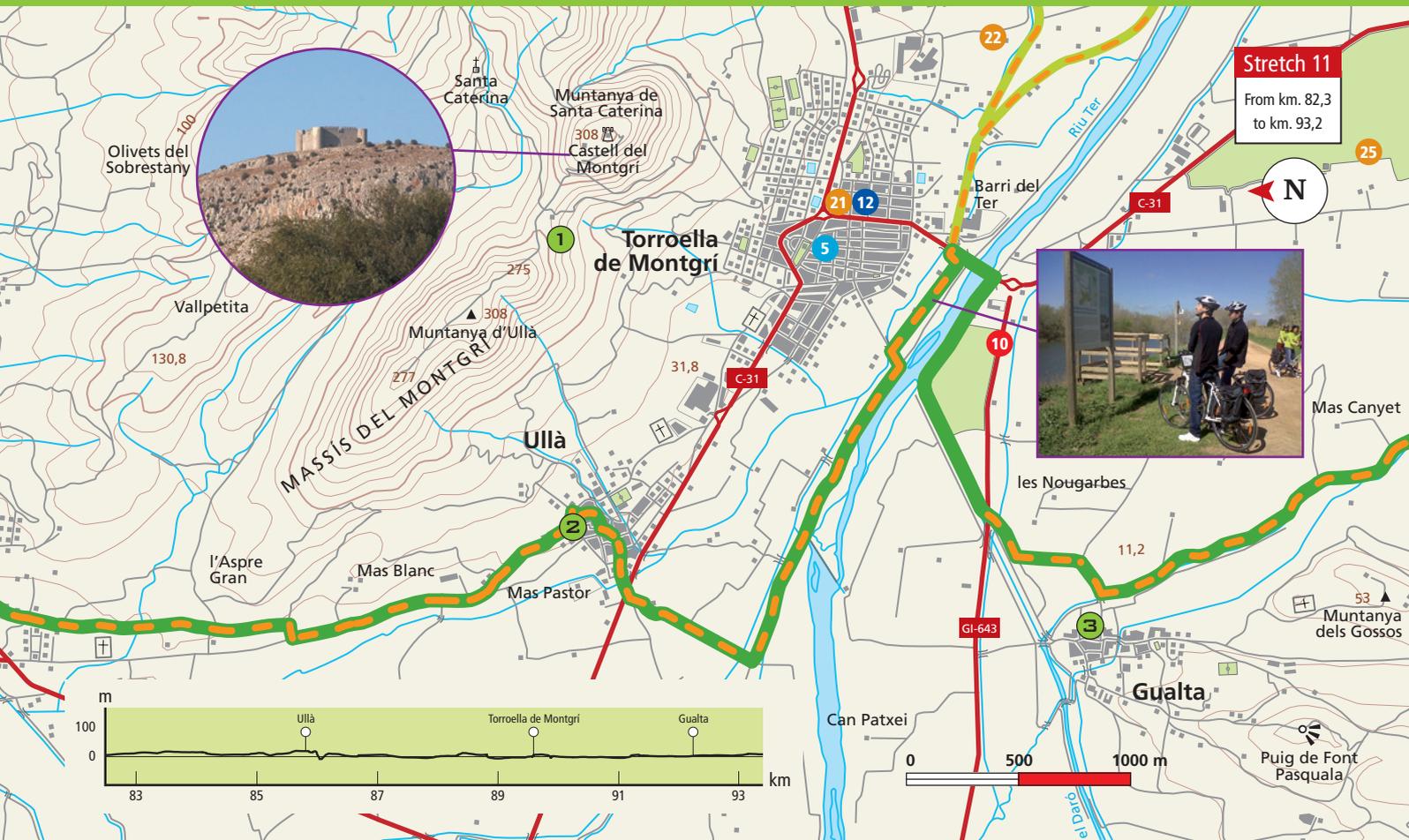
**2 ULLÀ AND TORROELLA DE MONTGRÍ.** The first town we find on the south side is Ullà, with the Church of Santa Maria being of particular interest. On leaving the town, after passing by apple orchards, we reach the River Ter that will take us to Torroella. At the entrance to the town, before crossing the bridge over the Ter and continuing our route, we have two more options: turn left and visit the lovely town of Torroella, or cross



Plaça de la Vila (Town Square) in Torroella de Montgrí.

the road and follow the purple signs of the Baix Empordà cycle tourism network that will take us to the Gola del Ter (the name given to the river mouth) and the town of L'Estartit. See the following page (38) for a detailed view of these routes.

**3 GUALTA.** Having passed the River Ter and re-taken up the Daró, we now find ourselves in Gualta with its old bridge with five arches (16th and 17th centuries), the Church of Gualta and, a little further on, the mill; a construction with the remains of a fortified structure.



# Les Medes. The wealth of the sea bed

## 1 TORROELLA DE MONTGRÍ

In Torroella we can follow a basic route along the old road to the Plaça de la Vila (old square), with the Town Hall building which is well worth a visit.

From here, if we make our way up to the church, we will pass the Palau Solterra (15th century) which is now home to the Museum of Contemporary Photography (National and International). It currently exhibits around 200 contemporary photographs from artists all over the world.

The Church of Sant Genís, one of the largest buildings of the town, is a temple of a sober and eclectic style which is unexpectedly large, both in terms of its height and the width of its nave. Different concerts have been held here for some years now, especially during the Torroella de Montgrí International Festival of Music.

Before leaving the town we really ought to take in Can Quintana (16th century), which now hosts the Mediterranean Museum, the Tourist Information

Office and the Interpretation Centre of the Montgrí Nature Park, the Medes Islands and Baix Ter. The Museum shows us the human aspect of the Mediterranean, focusing on the area covering the Montgrí Massif, the Baix Ter plain and the Medes Islands, by way of a participative experience for adults and children where you can smell the different aromas of the Mediterranean, listen to its sounds and music, touch its history and enjoy an audiovisual panorama that brings us closer to the Mediterranean reality of today. And after seeing this, we will no doubt be quite anxious to go and visit the sea. So let's go and do it.

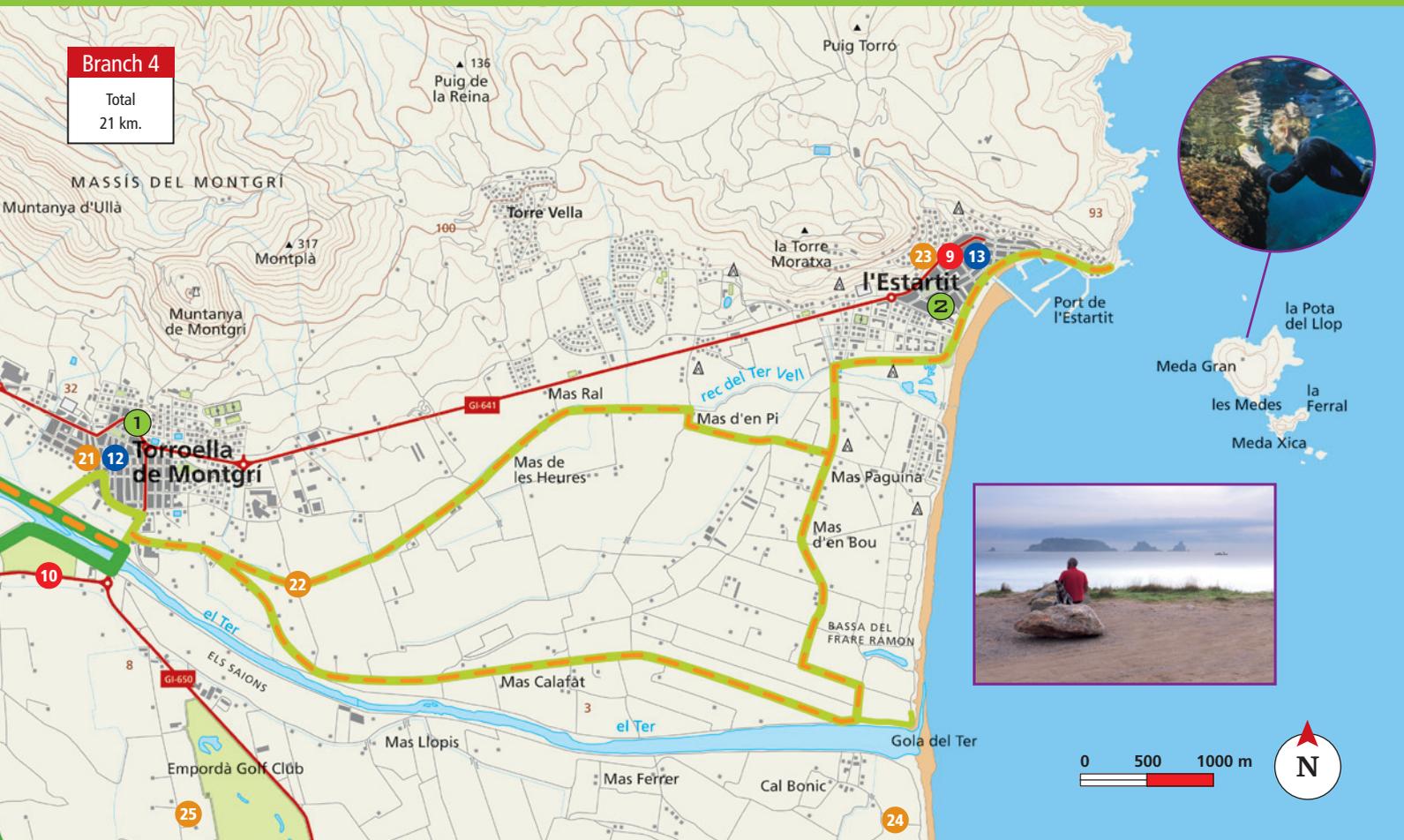
## 2 L'ESTARTIT - LES MEDES, VIA THE BAIX EMPORDÀ CYCLE TOURISM NETWORK.

The Baix Empordà cycle tourism network covers 250 km of cyclable roads with specific sign posts that help us to discover many hidden nooks of the county. From



Glass-bottom boat in L'Estartit.

this point, the network will take us to the mouth of the Ter (la Gola del Ter) following the course of the river. After, we will then continue to L'Estartit, where we will finally reach the Punta del Molinet at the end of the seafront promenade, under the cliffs of the Montgrí Massif and in front of the Medes Islands. The Information Centre of the Nature Park can be found at the port in L'Estartit, along with a variety of nautical activities (visits to the Medes Islands by glass-bottom boat that will enable us to see the wealth of the sea bed, scuba-diving, snorkelling, etc.).



# Pedalling along medieval hills

On leaving Gualta, we will continue by the Daró Vell along an agricultural road with compact gravel paving, until we reach the GIV-6501 road that we will follow on the right until Fontanilles and then in a southerly direction until reaching Sant Feliu de Boada. This road is mainly asphalted and has little motorised traffic **1**. After Sant Feliu de Boada, we leave the asphalt road and turn left to follow a very well maintained agricultural road until we reach Torrent.

**THE MEDIEVAL HILLS.** Across the plain that we are now crossing –known as Baix Ter– we start to make out different reliefs, some of which are home to small urban settlements with buildings dating back to medieval times. The first one we come across is Fontanilles, known for its 12th century church and its castle **2** dating back to the 11th century. Next we find Fontclara, with its Roman Church of Sant Pau de Fontclara **3**, and Sant Julià de Boada, with the Mozarabic church **4** as attested to by a document of 934.

**5 PALAU-SATOR.** 1.3 km west of Fontclara, following the cycle tourism network, we find Palau-Sator. The remains of the old wall and the tower marking the entrance to the settlement can be found in the medieval centre of the village, which is composed of a circular structure. We can also visit the Rural Museum here in the centre.

**6 PERATALLADA.** Following the cycle tourism network in the same direction, we arrive in Peratallada after cycling for 2 km. A designated historical-artistic site, it contains many examples of medieval architecture. The town has preserved its old feudal appearance, with narrow winding streets and the impressive fortified castle with its Homage Tower (Torre de l’Homenatge) and Palace, the walls and the Church of Sant Esteve. Also of note is the large moat that surrounds the town and was excavated straight out of the rock.



The Castle square in Peratallada.

**PALS.** More to the south, and located more on the Baix Empordanese plain, we can now make out Pals. Located barely 3 km east of our main route, Pals boasts a medieval centre **7** dominated by a Roman Tower built between the 11th and 13th centuries and known as the Tower of Time (Torre de les Hores). Within the old part of the town we can find pebbled streets, half-point arches, façades with ogive windows and stone balconies. The city wall has four square towers from the 4th century. The Josep Pla viewpoint, from where we can observe the fields of the Empordà and the Medes Islands, is particularly noteworthy. There is also an Archeology Museum.



# From L'Empordà to L'Empordanet taking in the Gavarres

On leaving Torrent, we need to cross the GI-652 road . The next section of 1.5 km runs along a shaded hidden away road without paving, but still in a good state for pedalling. After, we continue along agricultural roads with compact gravel paving until the road into Palafrugell. We need to cross the C-31 road  and then carry on along the pavement where we will quickly find a bicycle lane that we will take to an asphalt road with restricted access for motorised vehicles. If we want to head to the centre of the town, we need to turn left at the first turning and follow this road until we reach the Cork Museum that we will spot thanks to the modernist tower of Can Mario.

**LES GAVARRÉS.** On arriving at Torrent , with its distinctive church (14th century), we will notice how the plain starts to be closed in by hilly woodlands. This is the Gavarres Massif that we will go around in an

E, SE and SW direction and that will accompany us for around 50 km until we reach Girona. One of the main characteristics of this massif is the production of cork that is extracted from its holm oak forests. For many years, this material has been the main economic driving force of the towns bordering the Massif.

The first, and possibly one of the most well-known examples, can be found in Palafrugell.

**PALAFRUGELL.** The profile of this town is marked by two elements that stand out in particular: the unfinished bell-tower of the parish church of Sant Martí  and the modernist Tower of Can Mario . The latter will act as a reference point to help us reach the old factory of Can Mario, where we can visit the Museum



Calella de Palafrugell.

of Contemporary Sculpture of the Vila Casas Foundation, with 220 sculptures; the Cork Museum, where we can discover the secrets for obtaining and handling this material, as well as the variety of products it is turned into; and the Interpretation Centre of the Modernist Deposit of Can Mario, a modernist style deposit where you can access the terrace at a height of 35 m, and from where you can enjoy privileged views of Palafrugell and L'Empordanet.

**L'EMPORDANET.** This term, which defines the southern border of the Empordanese plain, was coined by Josep Pla (1897-1981), journalist, traveller and a highly prolific writer, who was born in Palafrugell, where we can visit the house where he was born, and which now houses the foundation that bears his name .



Tower of Can Mario.



# Along the little train greenway to the purest beach of the Costa Brava



Little Train Greenway.

Although the little train greenway calls to mind the old train of the same name that linked Palamos with Girona, this stretch actually runs along a new construction that mainly follows the River Aubí to its mouth at the Castell beach 1. It branches off in different directions, one of which leads us to Palamós. Once we find the start of the route, all we have to do is follow the signs and take the stretch that leads us to Castell. The surface is paved with compact gravel. Once at Castell, we then have to cross the bridge over the River Aubí and then take the left-hand lane 2. About 500 meters later a magnificent virgin beach

will appear amidst the trees. To continue on to La Fosca, we will have to take up the lane again and continue along the track we see in front of the bridge. If we opt for the greenway 3 that takes us in the direction of Palamós, this route links up directly with a bicycle lane that takes us to the port area of Palamós. If we like, we can also take a detour to Calella 4, a tourist town that has conserved its fishing heritage at some of its beaches. The coastal paths link all its secret coves up to the Golfet, as well as to the Botanic Gardens and the Castle of Cap Roig 5. This area, from this point to the beach of Castell, is a protected site of natural interest.

**MONT-RAS.** The town of Mont-ras is located at the start of the greenway on our right. The most significant element of it is the parish Church of Sant Esteve (1599) 6. Another characteristic feature of the area are the defence towers that often fortified country houses in a defence against attacks from

pirates who landed on the coast and raided nearby houses to stock up on provisions.

**7 PLATJA DE CASTELL.** This is the largest beach of the Costa Brava which has managed to resist developments linked to tourism. Public opinion managed to put a stop to the development processes that had transformed the area behind the beach. Actually the space of the coastline that stretches from this beach to Cap Roig is designated as a space of natural interest.

From here we can follow south toward the coastal path (camí de ronda) until we reach La Fosca, where we will find the series of fishermen's houses known as Cala s'Alguer 8. And if we go to the other side (the north), we can visit the Iberian settlement of Castell 9, a settlement of the Indigetes dating back to the 6th century BC that lasted to the Roman period and lived through its greatest years during the 4th and 3rd century BC.



# Among nets and the arts of fishing. The essence of prawns

From La Fosca, we will take the coastal route towards Palamós until linking up with a new bicycle lane. We continue left and, at the end of the cycling lane, we will have to follow the road closer to the sea and share it with other vehicles until we reach the beach of Palamós. At the southern extreme of the beach we will find ourselves in a car park between the beach and the sea walkway **1**. When we start our climb, we will climb this walkway via one of the ramps and continue to the end. At the end of the bay, at the point where the cycling lane **2** finishes and before an old lookout tower, we will follow the route that takes us to the C-31 road. Although this road has a high level of traffic in the summer period, it also has a clear border **▲** that will protect us from motorised traffic. Remember that you need to wear your fluorescent waistcoat to cycle on this road.

**PALAMÓS.** A traditional fishing village, its maritime front is full of evidence of this

fact: the “trenyines” (typical fishing boats), the nets on the south part of the beach, the shops full of fishing art, the Llotja de Mar (maritime court) at the wharf and the Fishing Museum next to it.



Fish Museum in Palamós.

**1 THE FISHING MUSEUM AND THE ESPAI DEL PEIX.** (Fish Workshop) in Palamós. We pass in front of these places of interest which are located in the port of Palamós just before reaching the beach of this bay. At the Fishing Museum we will learn all about fishing; about where and from where fishing is carried out, and about who is who in the world of fishing.

Beside the museum we will find the Espai del Peix where we will be immersed in the gastronomy and culinary aspects of fishing products. We can also take part in the series of activities organised there, such as going sailing in an old boat with a lateen sail.



**SANT ANTONI DE CALONGE AND CALONGE.** The southern half of the bay through which the route passes falls within the town of Calonge - Sant Antoni. The coastal town is Sant Antoni **3**, which is eminently touristic. In Calonge, we find the 8th century castle in the main square (Plaça Major) **4**. The gardens of the castle and the medieval walls are open and definitely worth a visit.

**5 THE COASTAL PATHS (CAMINS DE RONDA).** By walking along one of these paths you can savour the essence, beauty and energy of the Costa Brava. From Sant Antoni we can choose to walk to Sant Feliu (5 to 6 hours) and you can be sure to find some charming little nooks and crannies that you will never forget. Just follow the GR signs. For bicycles, contact the Tinglado of Sant Feliu de Guíxols where the route finishes. They have an area for storing bicycles and also provide other services.



# The Costa Brava at our feet

We need to follow the main road (C-253) until we get to the exit for Platja d'Aro. Once we see the hill at the end of the town, we need to take the roundabout **△** and then continue along the left-hand pavement. The hill will be more comfortable and safe to climb given that the road has no hard shoulder and is considerably steep. When we arrive at Rotonda dels vents, we will descend along the first street to the left directly to the beach. There, we will continue on the right-hand side of the road, along the sea front that links up with the road that takes us to the port of Sant Feliu de Guíxols, after having completed a slightly demanding climb. The whole route is of asphalt and is shared with other vehicles.

**PLATJA D'ARO.** Before reaching the centre of the town, we will first pass the Roman town **1** of Pla de Palol (1st century BC – 4th century AD). The Platja d'Aro stretch offers a wide range of shopping options and, just as we reach the sea again, we will see a good example of sand dunes on

our left **2**. From here we can follow a small section of the coastal path of S'Agaró, which has few steps along the first part, and, apart from the great wealth which is characteristic of coastal areas, we will also be able to see good examples of Noucentisme architecture **3** beside the sea.

## 4 THE COSTA BRAVA.

The stretch that takes us to Sant Feliu from S'Agaró – whether we go by foot or by bicycle, provides us with a bird's eye view of the magnificent panorama of the Costa Brava in its strictest sense; that of a rugged coastline with pink coloured granite cliffs with green pine trees that merge with the intense blue of the sea.

**SANT FELIU DE GUÍXOLS.** Born out of a small fishing village, beside a Benedictine monastery **5** famous for its horseshoe-shaped gateway from the 10th century, the town has grown thanks to



Porta Ferrada Monastery.

the development of the cork and tap industry. The Monastery of Porta Ferrada, initiated back in 968, houses the History Museum of the Town and the Carmen Thyssen Art Centre, where we can find temporary

exhibitions from her collection. The town has other exhibition spaces, such as the Museum of Cava Plaques **6** cava bottle tops), Museum of the Rescue **7** and the Tinglado del Port **8**.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the seaside promenade, which reflects the economic progress made by the cork industry, and which is presided over by the numerous modernistic stately homes and the hermitage of Sant Telm, located upon the southern cliffs which, according to legend, inspired Ferran Agulló to use the term Costa Brava for the first time.



# The Girona greenways

We start this stretch from Tinglado del Port, kilometre 0 of the Girona greenways. We will follow this infrastructure along 100 km from here to Olot. You can't miss it. All you need to do is follow the constant Greenways signs. Most of the surface is of compact gravel, although this is combined with some asphalt roads on the more urban parts of the route.

**1 EL TINGLADO DEL PORT.** This space houses an interpretation centre with artefacts related to the railways, a railway engine and two carriages. An explanation is given here of the transformation from railway line to greenway, the arrival at the port, and the beneficiaries of the greenways. We can also find information on the Secrets of the Greenways, a project which aims to interpret the area and will help us to get to know and interpret the historical and natural heritage of the greenways and their immediate surroundings. We can obtain published paper guides here and also find out more



The Castle of Benedormiens.

about applications for mobile phones (Girona e-routes) with geo-referenced audiovisual information.

We will also be provided with the range of nautical and sea activities available (kayaking, snorkelling, scuba diving, sailing, etc.) at the coast, and will be able to book or reserve these activities from here. It is important to note that the coastline that runs from Sant Feliu south is one of the richest sea areas in terms of biodiversity of the entire Costa Brava.

This fact is evident in the wide range of nautical and especially underwater activities available.

Kayaking is worth a special mention as it is considered to be the cycle tourism of the coast, according to those who practice it, since it allows you to cover long distances of the coastline without the aid of a motor and using the energy of your own body, thus impacting as little as possible on the environment.

**CASTELL D'ARO.** The old part of Castell d'Aro **2**, located on top of a hill to the right of our route, emerged alongside the Benedormiens Castle (11th century).

The entire village, with its medieval streets, was declared an historic-artistic site in 1971. The Castle is a military fortress built to protect the Vall d'Aro from military attacks. Near the castle we can find the Doll Museum with a permanent collection of more than 800 pieces from different countries and dating from the 19th century up to today.



# Taking in the Gavarres and appreciating cork

This stretch, which links the towns of Santa Cristina d'Aro and Llagostera, enables us to immerse ourselves completely in the landscape of the Gavarres. Here, along the route, we can see holm oak forests and observe how some of the trees have been peeled along the lower part of the trunk for their cork. Also, in the trenches dug out for the train, we can also see the basic geology of the massif, which is mainly made up of granite. It is precisely this material that produces the characteristic morphologies that are particularly visible before reaching Font Picant on the right-hand side of our route. This calls to mind the famous Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, but with much more modest dimensions. We will find descriptive signs provided by the Secrets of the Greenways that will offer us explanations of these aspects.

**SANTA CRISTINA D'ARO.** From in front of the station, where we find the Tourist Information Office, we can see the parish church **1** started in the 11th century and

finished in the 18th century. Some metres further on we can visit the Magic House **2**, a small museum of illusion and curiosity.

**3 ROMANYÀ.** From Font Picant station, turn right and head towards Romanyà, following one of the 'Secrets of the Greenways' routes along a 6 km stretch with a gradient of 200 m. Take care, as this is a road used by general traffic **▲**.

Located in the heart of the Gavarres, this is a medieval village with manor houses and well-preserved ancestral homes. The Church of Sant Martí **4** is a pre-Roman building with a Greek cross dating from the 10th century. But the real jewel of Romanyà is located just under 1 km from the centre in the direction of Calonge. This is the Dolmen of the Cova d'en Daina **5**, a megalithic monument built around 2700-2200 BC, comprising a rectangular funeral chamber covered with granite flagstones and protected by a stone circle of 11 metres in diameter.

**LLAGOSTERA.** Located on top of a hill, this spot has privileged views over the Selva depression. The hill is crowned by the parish church of Sant Feliu **6** (9th century). The village was built later around the feudal castle of the 12th century and within a walled area of which two towers and part of the wall itself can still be seen today at the side of the church. It is from this spot exactly, in the square in front of the church, from where we can observe the entire plain of the Selva and the surrounding landscape. As with the towns located at the foot of the Gavarres, the splendour of the cork industry from

the 18th century onwards left a legacy of modernist buildings that stand out in the town. The casino of the town square **7** (Plaça de la Vila) is a good example of this.

*The parish church of Sant Feliu.*



# A mosaic-like depression



Bridge over the Verneda.

The flat area we cross between Llagostera and Girona is the La Selva tectonic depression. A low-lying area that follows normal fault lines, responsible for the existence of hot springs in various parts of this region (Caldes de Malavella). This depression was filled with sediments from the surrounding hills which then formed a flat area in the centre of the basin. Before reaching Cassà de la Selva, we find an interpretation panel which will



Can Nadal (the Town Hall of Cassà de la Selva).

help us understand the relief of the landscape. This fertile plain constitutes a wonderful patchwork landscape, made up of holm oak and pinewoods, cereal and maize fields, and fruit trees, especially between Cassà and Llambilles. After leaving Llagostera, looking back we will see the silhouette of the Church of Sant Feliu. Similarly, when we reach Cassà, we will see the Church of Sant Martí, which dominates the town's skyline.

**CASSÀ DE LA SELVA.** This is one of the towns with the longest history of cork stopper production, a result of the abundance and quality of the cork produced by the oak trees of the Gavarres Massif. Entering the town, we can see outstanding modernist buildings associated with the age of splendour when the industry enjoyed its heyday. Good examples of this are Can Nadal, which now houses the Town Hall and is situated right on the route, and Can Trinxeria, on Plaça de la Coma in the town centre, which is used for exhibitions and concerts, especially in summer.

**1 PARC ART.** Parc Art is an exhibition of 150 sculptures by artists of national and international repute. The sculptures stand in the open air, dotted around a garden measuring over one hectare. The sculptors



were able to choose the location for the installation of their work, which marks something of an exception, thus allowing an evocative dialogue to be established between each piece and its environment. Conditions for visitors to [www.parcart.net](http://www.parcart.net).

**LLAMBILLES AND THE CHAPEL OF SANT CRISTÒFOL.** The Secrets of the Greenways route, which leads to the Chapel of Sant Cristòfol **2** and can be followed from Cassà or Llambilles, will

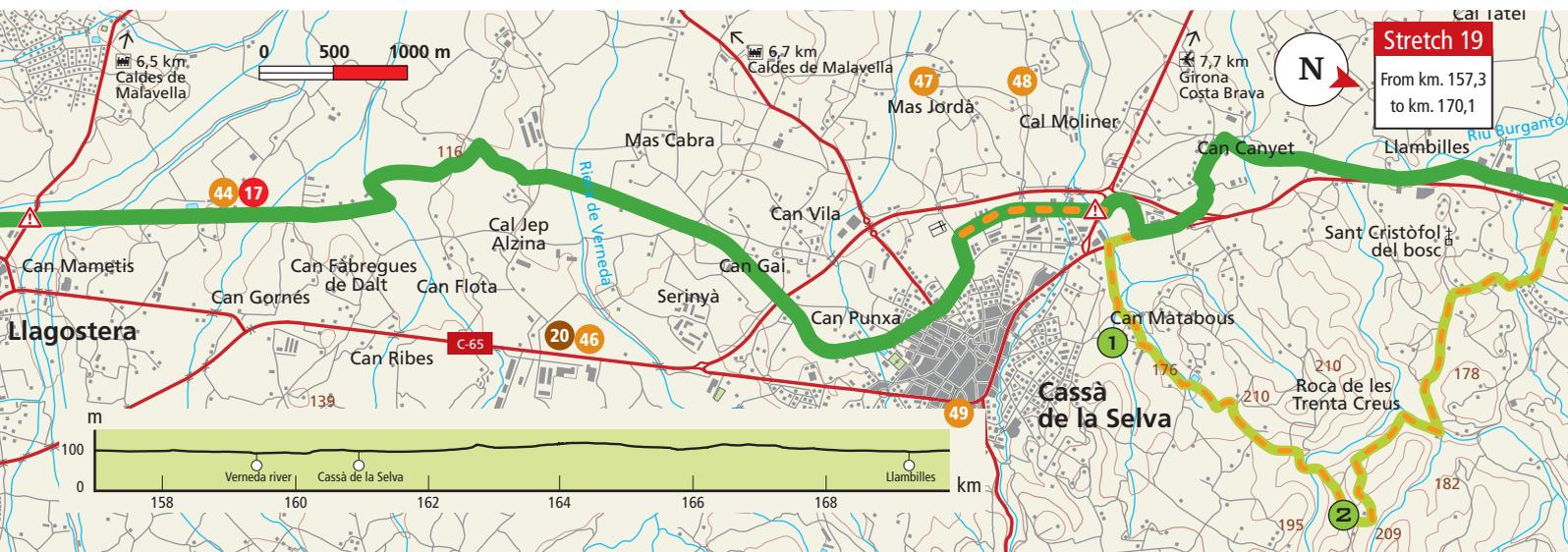
take you deep into the cork oak landscape of the Gavarres Massif.



The hermitage of Sant Cristòfol.



Old station of Llambilles.



# Potters and the immortal city



Museum of Quart Pottery.

The filling of the depression has given rise to numerous clay pits, which have been skilfully worked for over 700 years in order to create a wide variety of ceramic products. The town of Quart is the main centre of the pottery industry and, next to the greenway, we can find the Pottery Museum.



**1 THE POTTERY MUSEUM.** The museum is housed in the former Santa Margarida or Can Ginesta workshop, which was formerly the Quart brickworks. Visitors can learn about the brick-making process, ceramics, how they were made and the traditional items produced, especially those made from black clay.



Bridge over the Onyar (Narrow-Gauge Railway Greenway).

**GERUNDA, THE IMMORTAL CITY.** We reach the provincial capital, Girona, the largest city on the entire route, following the banks of one of the rivers that flow through the city, the Onyar. The city's skyline is dominated by the Cathedral and the Church of Sant Felu. The nickname, "immortal", was given to the city due to its resistance to Napoleon's troops during

the Peninsular War of 1809. However, the city's history is far more complex and can be discerned in its stones, monuments and gardens, in its urban development and also in its folklore, from the Roman Gerunda to the Girona of the 21st century. The old part of the city was the former centre. Here we can find one of the most important Jewish districts in Catalonia, the Cathedral, one of the most amazing Gothic buildings in Europe, and the medieval part, where



Houses along the Onyar with the Cathedral in the background.

the street names recall the old trades and professions that were carried out in the city. Moreover, the beautiful natural surroundings of the city are within easy reach of the built-up part of Girona. The Valley of Sant Daniel, La Devesa Park with its old plane trees, and the banks of the River Ter, are just a few of the locations that inhabitants of Girona or visitors can retreat to in order to escape the hustle and bustle of urban life and relax in peaceful natural surroundings.



# A tour around the provincial capital



The Sant Feliu Bridge. Church of Sant Feliu and Cathedral in the background.



Historic Centre of Girona (Barri Vell).

**1 THE CATHEDRAL.** Girona Cathedral was built on top of successive religious constructions between the 14th and 17th centuries. The main feature of this spectacular temple is the immensity of its single Gothic nave. Although the church was initially designed to be a

temple with three naves, in 1417 the risky decision was taken to continue with just one nave, despite opposition to what was a very radical design at that time. The result was a single nave, which is the widest Gothic nave in the world, measuring almost 23 metres.

**2 CHURCH OF SANT FELIU.** This Gothic building with Romanesque elements is the oldest church in Girona (4th century). Next to the high altar there are eight Roman sarcophagi embedded in the wall of the apse.

**3 ARCHEOLOGICAL WALK.** The old part of the city of Girona is surrounded by large walled sections which can be visited via the Archeological Walk. A walk around the ancient Carolingian (9th century) and Late Mediaeval (14th and 15th centuries) walls, which surround the historical centre on the east, gives us a splendid view of the city.

**4 ARAB BATHS.** This Romanesque-style building was constructed in 1194, imitating the structure of Arab Baths

which were in vogue at the time. The interior is divided into different bathing areas.

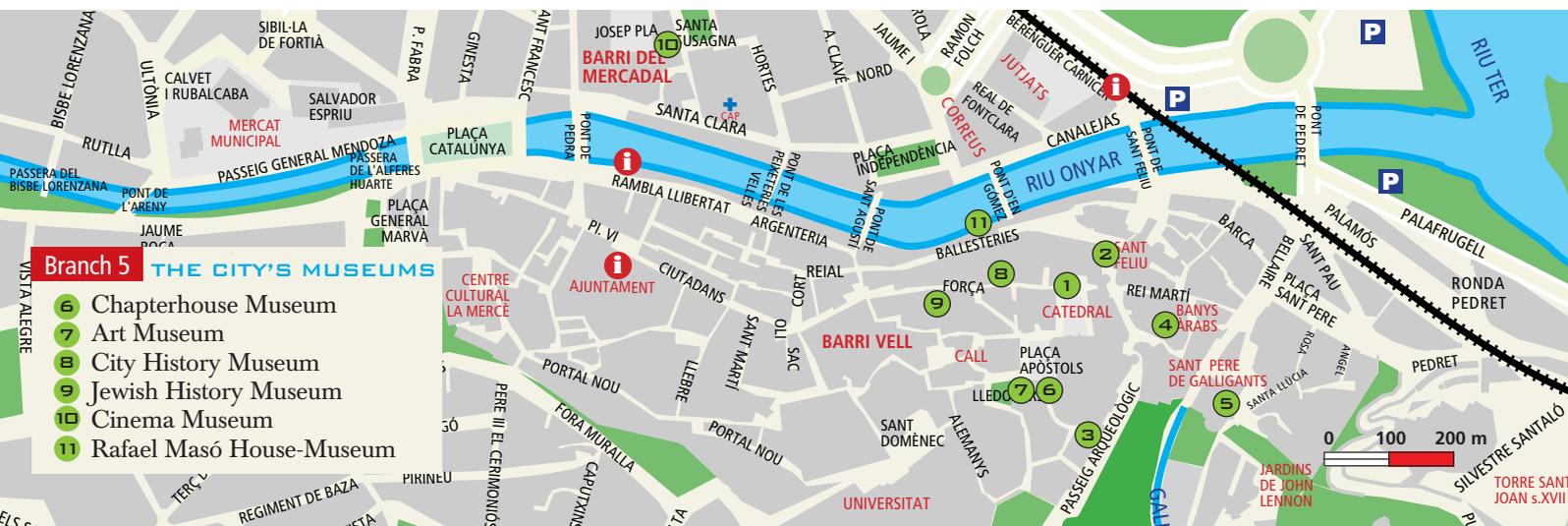
**5 MONASTERY OF SANT PERE DE GALLIGANTS.** Home to the Archeology Museum of Catalonia, the Benedictine Monastery of Sant Pere de Galligants (12th century) is one of the most notable examples of Catalan Romanesque art. Worthy of note are its bell tower, the rose window in the nave and the cloister.



La Devesa Park of Girona.



The Pujada de Sant Domènec in Barri Vell of Girona.



# The Ter: a life-giving river

For the next 20 km we cycle very close to the banks of the River Ter. Although we only catch glimpses of the river from time to time, we will constantly be aware of its presence. As soon as we leave Girona, we cross La Devesa, the largest city park in the Catalan Countries, containing over 2,500 plane trees of around 150 years old. The plane tree plantations further on in the town of Salt, which has an even larger surface area, are broken up by a very emblematic zone of market gardens which are linked to the cities of Girona and Salt.



**SALT.** A town with close links to the River Ter, due not only to the farmers who have worked and continue to cultivate its banks, but also due to the arrival of the textile industry in the middle of the 18th century and the use made of the force of the water from the Monar Irrigation Channel. These and other links to the river can be seen in the Water



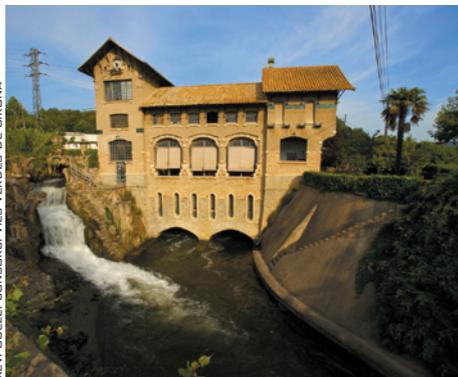
The Jetty of the Ter in Salt.

Museum of Salt **1**, housed in the former Coma-Cros textile factory, which has now been turned into a cultural centre (C. Sant Antoni, 1). Once we have crossed the market gardens at Salt, and cycled past the pastureland, we turn off towards a recreational area known as the Pla dels Socs **2**. This is an extensive clearing that used to be an island in the River Ter, and is now very well conserved. We shall find various pools, which are home to a large number of birds and emblematic mammals, such as the reintroduced otter.



La Devesa Park in Salt.

**BESCANÓ.** The section of the route in which this town is located is characterised by the magnificent modernist hydroelectric power stations associated with the generation of energy from the river and its lateral canals. One of the most notable power stations takes its name from the town of Bescanó and is found on the outskirts of the latter, to the left of the greenway **3**. This power station is outstanding due to the enormous outlet canal and its original machinery, which is still operational today. Further on, to the right of our route, we can see the Vilanna



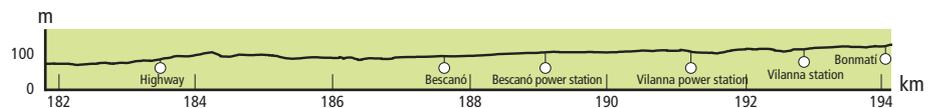
The power station in Bescanó.

power station **4**. Between the two, we can find an old ice well **5**, a cylindrical, stone construction, partially sunk into the ground, which was used to keep the ice that formed during the winter in a pond belonging to the building.



of this section. If you explore this area, you will come across an industrial village built at a time when the waters of the River Ter were used in the manufacture of textiles. Mas Bonmatí is particularly noteworthy. This house, built in a neo-Gothic style with an octagonal tower, belonged to the founder of this industrial village.

**BONMATÍ.** The town of Bonmatí lies on the other side of the river, at the end



# The elusive river and medieval towns

We continue along the greenway until we come to El Pasteral, where we cross the River Ter. Care should be taken at the road junction before you reach Anglès **△**. We have just entered the region of La Selva. Beyond the Ter, the disused railway line was used to create a road and the greenway runs along an alternative route with some very steep climbs **△**. Another well-signposted route runs alongside the road as far as the Amer cemetery before returning to the greenway.

**THE TER, THE ELUSIVE RIVER.** After Cellera de Ter, we see how the plain gradually peters out and becomes surrounded by mountains that prevent us from guessing where the River Ter continues. When we arrive at El Pasteral, we discover that the river comes out behind a steep mountain, running between rugged cliffs; this is the passage



of the upper reaches of the Ter or the “pas del Ter alt” **1**, after which the town we have just passed was named.

**THE MEDIEVAL TOWNS: ANGLÈS.** The part of the town located at the top of the hill conserves clear remains of the medieval city walls, surrounding the town square which was formerly the castle’s parade ground. Worthy of note in this old part of the town are the modernist houses designed by the architect Rafael Masó **2**, whose House-Museum we had the opportunity to visit in Girona.

**3 THE DRY BRIDGE OF SANT JULIÀ DE LLOR.** This Romanesque bridge, located on an old Roman road, now stands amongst cereal fields, most probably as a result of the river having changed its course. We can reach it



Villa Eulàlia. A modernist house in Anglès.

by taking a right turn when leaving Anglès and following the road to Sant Julià.

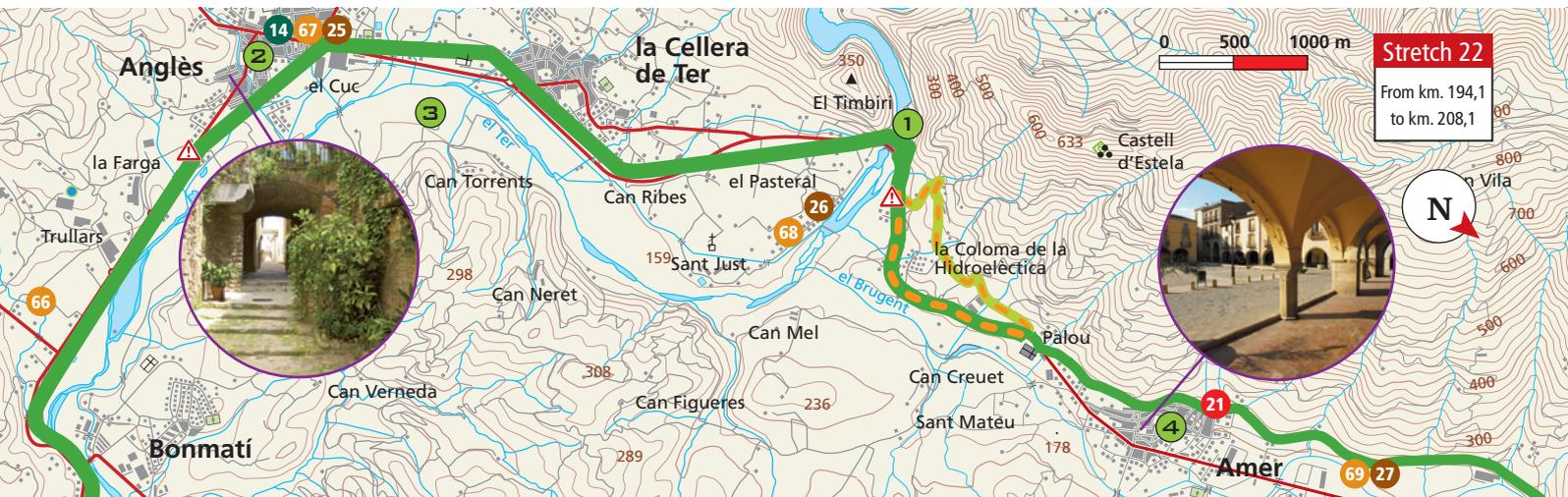
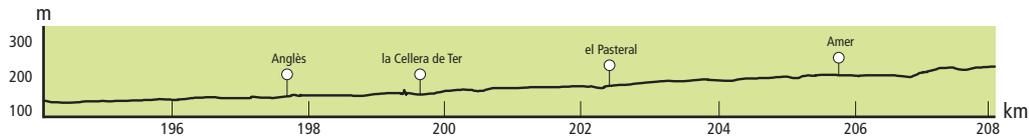
**AMER.** A village built in the 10th century around a Benedictine monastery (949) and



Old station of Amer. The Narrow-Gauge Railway Route.

the old main road from Girona to Olot. The only remains of the monastery are the church and the abbot’s chambers, which now house the ethnological museum, with over 2,500 items on display, highlighting the technological progress in agriculture and the tools the sector has employed. The other parts, in particular the cloister,

were destroyed by earthquakes in 1427. One of the most outstanding features of the town is the Arcaded Square **4**. This is one of the largest and most elegant arcaded squares in Catalonia. One of the square’s special characteristics is that it was built using cobblestones from different parts of Catalonia.



# A tunnel through the woods with hidden volcanoes



The Narrow-Gauge Railway Route. Amer-Les Planes.

You need to take it easy along this section. Despite taking us along a greenway, at Amer the route becomes a bit steeper as we climb up towards the Coll d'en Bas. As far as Les Planes d'Hostoles (10 km), there are long straight stretches, which, due to the gradient, seem to go on forever, making this one of the hardest sections of the greenways. We are now entering the region of La Garrotxa.

**A TUNNEL THROUGH THE WOODS.** The route follows the Vall del Brugent up to the Coll d'en Bas, mainly along its right hand side (our left hand side). We now go along the shady side of the mountain, through dense, extensive pedunculate oak, holm oak and Scots pine forests. It feels like we are passing through a tunnel within the woods, especially in those parts of the route where the railway cuttings reach a considerable height.

**THE AMER FAULT AND THE ORIGIN OF THE HIDDEN VOLCANOES.** Between Les Planes d'Hostoles and Sant Feliu de Pallerols we follow the left bank of the River Brugent, on the sunny side, from where we can observe its asymmetry. The right bank of the river, crowned by the El Far cliffs, which are clearly visible on leaving Les Planes d'Hostoles, is higher and steeper than the left bank, which is lower, more broken up and has a less defined relief. This effect is due to the Amer fault, which



Old Station of Sant Feliu de Pallerols. The Narrow-Gauge Railway Route.

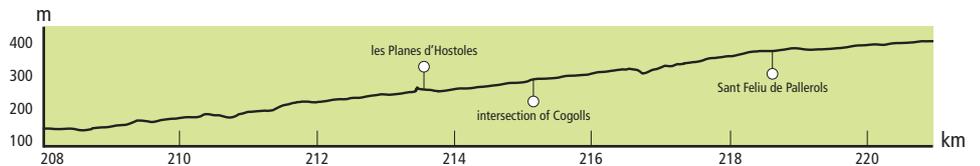
runs in the same direction as the valley, and which caused the right bank of the river (on the NE side) to sink over 1,000 metres in comparison with the left bank (situated on the SW). This fault is also responsible for the volcanoes in the area. In fact, if you look carefully, 1 km before arriving in Sant Feliu de Pallerols (1), you will see numerous fragments of very dark rock next to and in the middle of the path. These are volcanic rocks that came from the eruption of the Sant Marc volcano, which is located just on the opposite side



of the River Brugent. From Sant Feliu to Les Planes, this river runs over the stream of lava that was expelled by these and other volcanoes and then flowed towards the lowest parts of the valley, creating the riverbed. If you want to visit these volcanoes, or for more information about them, go to the visitors centre in La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park, which is located in the former Sant Feliu de Pallerols station (2).

**EL CASTELL D'HOSTOLES AND ELS GORGS DEL MOLÍ DELS MURRIS.** Leaving Les Planes d'Hostoles, one of the Secrets of the Greenways routes accompanies us to these two areas. The Castle (3), which we see after leaving Les Planes, was built in the 9th century and took on particular importance during the Rebellion of

the Remences (remença was a Catalan form of serfdom). Worthy of note at Els Gorgs are the tuff stone and travertine formations, rocks formed through the precipitation of dissolved calcium carbonate onto vegetation, resulting in the plants becoming petrified (4). This is an especially good place to visit in summer, since it is possible to bathe in the natural pool here.



# The fertile plain where the peasant revolts began

Once we reach the Coll d'en Bas, the highest point on the narrow-gauge railway route, the Vall d'en Bas stretches out below us. This is a wide, flat-bottomed valley, surrounded by very steep hills, dominated by Puigsacalm to the NW and the Falgars Cliffs to the SW. On the way to Olot, the largest towns we will pass through are Sant Esteve d'en Bas and Les Preses.

**THE BIRTH OF THE PLAIN. THE TUFF STONE PARK.** Various volcanic flows blocked the valley at its outlet, creating a dam in the River Fluvià. This is probably the origin of the name of Les Preses village ('The Dams' in Catalan). Thus, the valley was flooded and gradually filled up with sediments until, mixed with the volcanic rock, the land became very fertile. At first, however, it was very hard to farm, being a marshy area where, in some places, it was necessary to remove numerous fragments of large volcanic rocks. You



The Narrow-Gauge Railway Route in Sant Esteve d'en Bas.



can visit the Tuff Stone Park 1, next to the greenway, where it is still possible to see the artigues, small plots of farmland enclosed by dry-stone walls made from the volcanic rocks taken from the surrounding fields.

**ELS REMENCES (PEASANT REVOLTS).** In feudal Catalonia, the name remences or pagesos de remença (pagesos meaning 'peasants') was given

to serfs subjected to the servitude of the nobility and their abuses, one of these being a law known as the 'dret de remença'. This obliged the peasant to pay a substantial amount if he wanted to leave his farm.

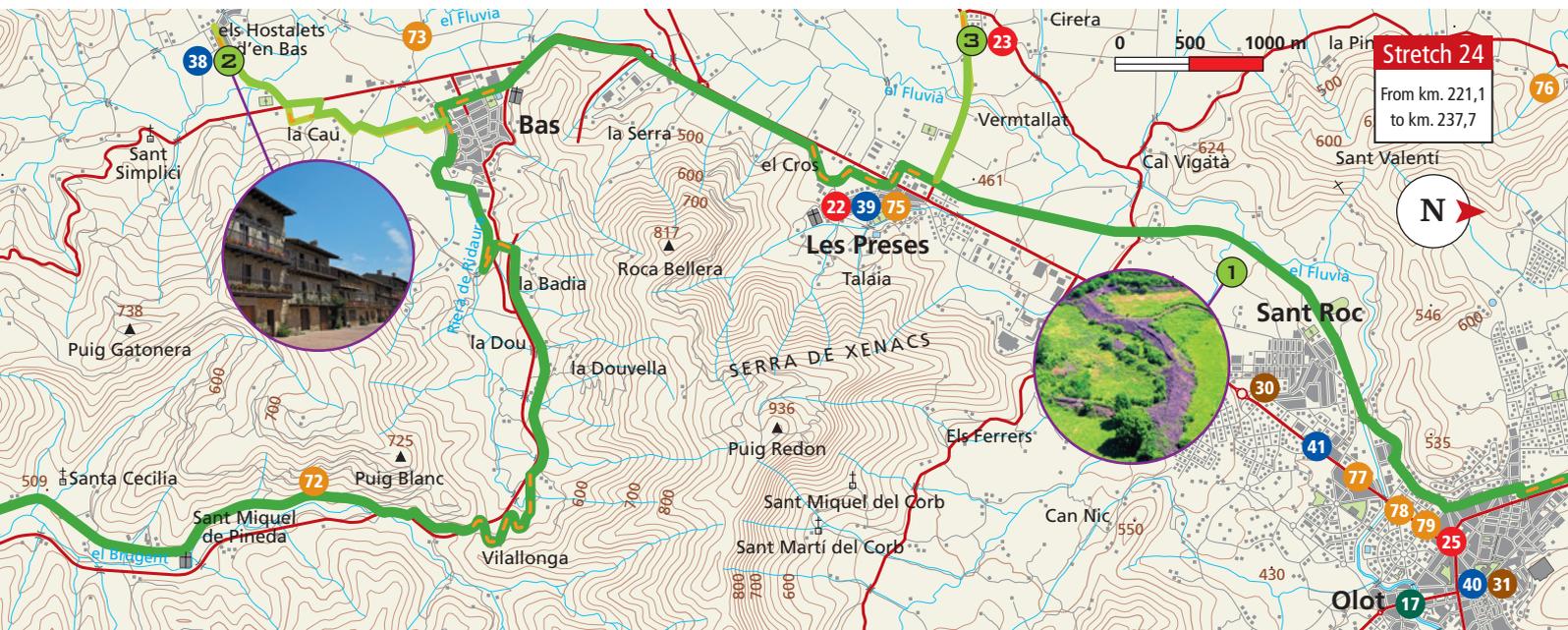
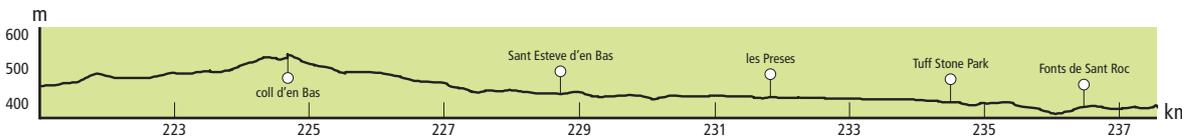
Normally, the peasant was unable to pay and this forced him to endure a pitiful existence and be a slave to the land. As a result of this situation, the first farmers' union in the whole of Europe was created in Vall d'en Bas. It was led by Francesc de Vermtallat and, in the 15th century, the peasants rebelled against the nobility, demanding fair treatment. This was achieved in 1486 with the Sentence of Guadalupe, which abolished servitude.

**THE TOWNS OF THE VALLEY: ELS HOSTALETS AND EL MALLOL.** Travelling along the Secrets

of the Greenways routes allows us to discover some of the towns in the valley. Here you will find remains of the 'remença' [peasant] history and

can admire the beauty of the natural surroundings. Els Hostalets 2 has been declared a historical-artistic site. The rustic houses on Teixeda Street,

with their wooden balconies covered in geraniums, are very picturesque. El Mallol 3, built on a strategic hill, was the former residence of the Viscounts of Bas, as well as being their administrative centre. It contains remains of the Castle and several other important buildings.



# Volcanic landscapes

**OLOT AND THE NATURAL VOLCANIC PARK.** The city is located in La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park, which boasts the most important volcanic landscapes in the entire Iberian Peninsula. The volcanic activity is linked to the Neogene- Quaternary fault system that affects the entire zone we pass through on our route. In geographical terms, it is a very recent mechanism, and one that shaped the area's current orography and landscape. For example, the depressions of the Empordà and La Selva regions, which we cross on our route, were created by this fault system. In addition to giving rise to most of the volcanoes in this region, the Amer fault, the most recent in the system, has caused seismic movements that have had an impact on the human population, for example the earthquakes of 1427 and 1428, which affected the historical heritage of towns such as Amer, Olot, Sant Joan de les Abadesses and those in the Vall del Tec. In fact, the latter valley,



The Volcano Centre.

which we also cross on the route, owes its current orientation and morphology to a fault belonging to this system.

**THE VOLCANO CENTRE.** This Modernist building standing in Parc Nou houses the information centre for the Natural Park and the Volcano Museum **1** which provides clear, educational information on the seismic and volcanic

features of La Garrotxa. Don't miss the earthquake simulator!

**SECRETS OF THE GREENWAYS ROUTES.** From Olot there are three 'Secrets of the Greenways' routes which take you to the most interesting features of the park:

**1. The Art of Landscapes 1**  
This route starts at Les Fonts de Sant Roc, just as you arrive in Olot. It goes in front of the Casal dels Volcans and takes you to some of the region's most emblematic scenery, a source of inspiration to artists.

**2. Beech Woods Amidst Volcanos 2**  
Connected to the previous route, this route takes you to the Jordà beech wood and the Croscat volcano. The Jordà beech wood **3** is highly unusual because it grows on flat ground on top of a former lava outflow from the Croscat Volcano. Thanks to the excavation made for cinder quarrying, you can now observe



Basaltic prisms. The three lava flows. Sant Joan les Fonts.

the internal structure of this volcano. We can find more detailed information at Can Passavent, the interpretation centre located here **4**.

### 3. El Montsacopa volcano and the three lava flows 5

On leaving Olot heading north, taking the turnoff to the greenway that goes to La Vall de Bianya, you can make a brief stop at Montsacopa **6**, an 'urban' volcano whose summit provides an excellent view of the whole town.

If you follow the greenway towards La Vall de Bianya you eventually come to the village of Llocalou that marks the start of the Three Lava Flows **7** route which takes you to some fascinating cliffs composed of basalt columns.



# The city of art and volcanoes

**OLOT.** Capital of La Garrotxa. Its history is closely linked to its natural environment, to seismic movements and the volcanic land that witnessed the peasant revolts during the 15th century and constituted a source of inspiration for the landscape artists who belonged to the Olot School.

The combination of volcanic formations and a moist, temperate climate has favoured the abundant, varied vegetation here, especially the polychromatic deciduous forests which have provided artistic inspiration for both painters from the Escola Paisatgística d'Olot (Olot Landscape School) and poets. Some excellent examples of the Olot Landscape School can be seen in the County Museum (c/Hospici, 8).

The modernist architecture and the tree-lined avenues are the most beautiful elements of this town. However, we can also find other architectural styles in buildings such as the Cloister of the Mare de Déu del Carme (17th century) and the



Aerial view of the volcano of Santa Margarida.

Church of Sant Esteve (18th century). The Can Trincheria House-Museum (c/Sant Esteve, 29) is an 18th century mansion house that houses a monumental nativity scene, one of the features that has helped make the house so well-known.

The artisan creation of religious imagery is one of the unique activities

associated with Olot and has consolidated its reputation as an area of artisan interest. A visit to the Museum of Saints (c/Joaquim Vayreda, 9), is a unique and fascinating experience which gives you a closer insight into the traditional techniques used to create religious imagery.

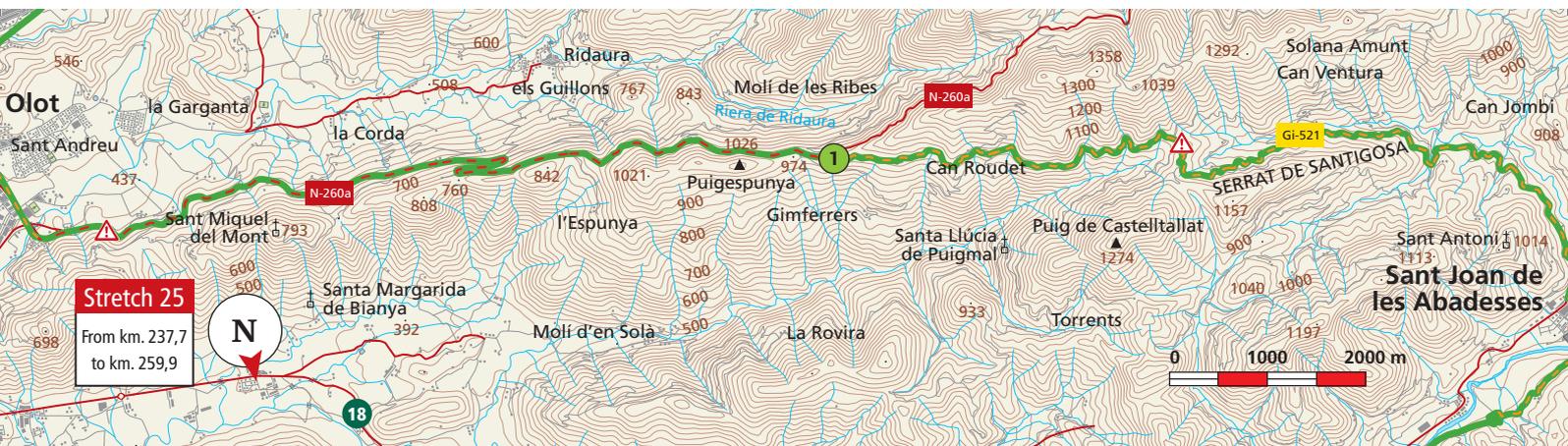
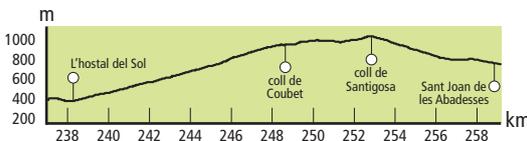
# Climbing the Pyrenees through beech woods and over volcanoes

As we depart Olot we leave the greenways behind. On this section, which is shared with other vehicles, there is very little traffic, especially midweek. This is where, geologically speaking, the Pyrenees begin. And you will certainly notice this because the steep climbs start here (over 600 metres in 10 km) **▲**. As we ascend, we get a bird's

eye view of the plain of the Vall d'en Bas and the city of Olot. When we reach the Coll de Coubet we get a close-up view of



the summits of the easternmost peaks of the Pyrenees on the other side of the mountain range we have just climbed. Once we have left the Coll de Coubet **1**, and are on the shady side of the mountain, the change in the vegetation will remind us that we are in a mountainous area and are now leaving the holm oak and pedunculate oak forests behind and are about to enter beech woods. Remember to wrap up warmly for the descent **▲**! You are in the Pyrenees and will be going down quickly. When you get to the bottom, you will be in the Ripollès Region.



# Ripoll, the cradle of Catalonia

The Iron and Coal Route, referring to the important ironworking tradition in the Baix Ripollès Region and the coal mining of Ogassa, follows the route that was once taken by the train between Ripoll and Toralles 1. From this point, there is a newly built section, which links the route to the upper section, along which the mining trucks used to travel using gravity alone, thanks to a cleverly designed coal mining system. After leaving Ripoll, we can go on to Campdevànol 2 where there is another 4-km section of greenway which follows an old highway and cattle track.

**RIPOLL.** The regional capital, Ripoll, is a historical, strategic, fortified city, surrounded by a wall built in the 14th century around the monastery and the town itself. One of the towers of the five gates to the city still remains today. In the Main Square, we can see arcades as well as the main buildings of historical and architectural interest.

**3 THE MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA DE RIPOLL.** Founded in 880 by Count Guifré el Pilós, this monastery acquired enormous political, social and cultural power, which made it a reference point in the formation of Catalonia. A fine example of Romanesque art, the monastery still conserves many original elements: the main door, the cloister, the main walls and several apsidioles, and many of the counts' tombs, including that of Guifré el Pilós.



The Ethnographical Museum is located next to the monastery. Opened in 2011, it also houses the tourist information centre.

**4 THE PALAU FORGE.** (Pg. de la Farga Catalana, 14-16). The metallurgic tradition both in Ripoll, hinted at by the name of this greenway, and by extension in the whole of Catalonia, is very well

represented by the Palau Forge. This forge is unique due to its mechanism which has manufactured pieces of iron and copper for four centuries.

**5 THE TOURIST RECEPTION CENTRE. THE LAND OF COUNTS AND ABBOTS.** At the Tourist Reception Centre (Centre d'Acollida Turística or CAT) in Ripoll, located at the start of the greenway, we can find a great deal of information on the history of Ripoll and the region under "Terra de comtes i Abats" (Land of Counts and Abbots), as well as details of the Greenways and Secrets project.

**6 OGASSA AND THE COAL MINES.** At the other end of the Greenway, in the town of Ogassa, we can find remains of the intense mining activity carried out here for 200 years. We can follow the route on foot along the "Coal Lives" (Secrets of the Greenways) to learn more about this.



# A Pyrenean valley with fertile plains and Romanesque art



Monastery in Sant Joan de les Abadesses.

In this section we shall travel along farm tracks, most of which are paved with concrete, with some very steep parts. Be particularly careful along the section 1 km after leaving Batllia, where you take a steep, narrow unpaved path which is difficult to cycle on  $\triangle$ . The hills that surround this valley contrast with the flat bottom. The fluvial terraces of the River Ter, set at different heights, as befitting of a river with a long history, have fertile plains that provide excellent grazing land for horses and cows. The last 2.3 km take us along the C-26 road with a hard

shoulder that protects us from the traffic, which can be quite busy here  $\triangle$ .

**SANT JOAN DE LES ABADESSES.** The town is characterised by the monastery and the medieval structure of the Main Square and the narrow streets that surround it. Encircling the town is a solid wall, remains of which can be still be found at its western end.

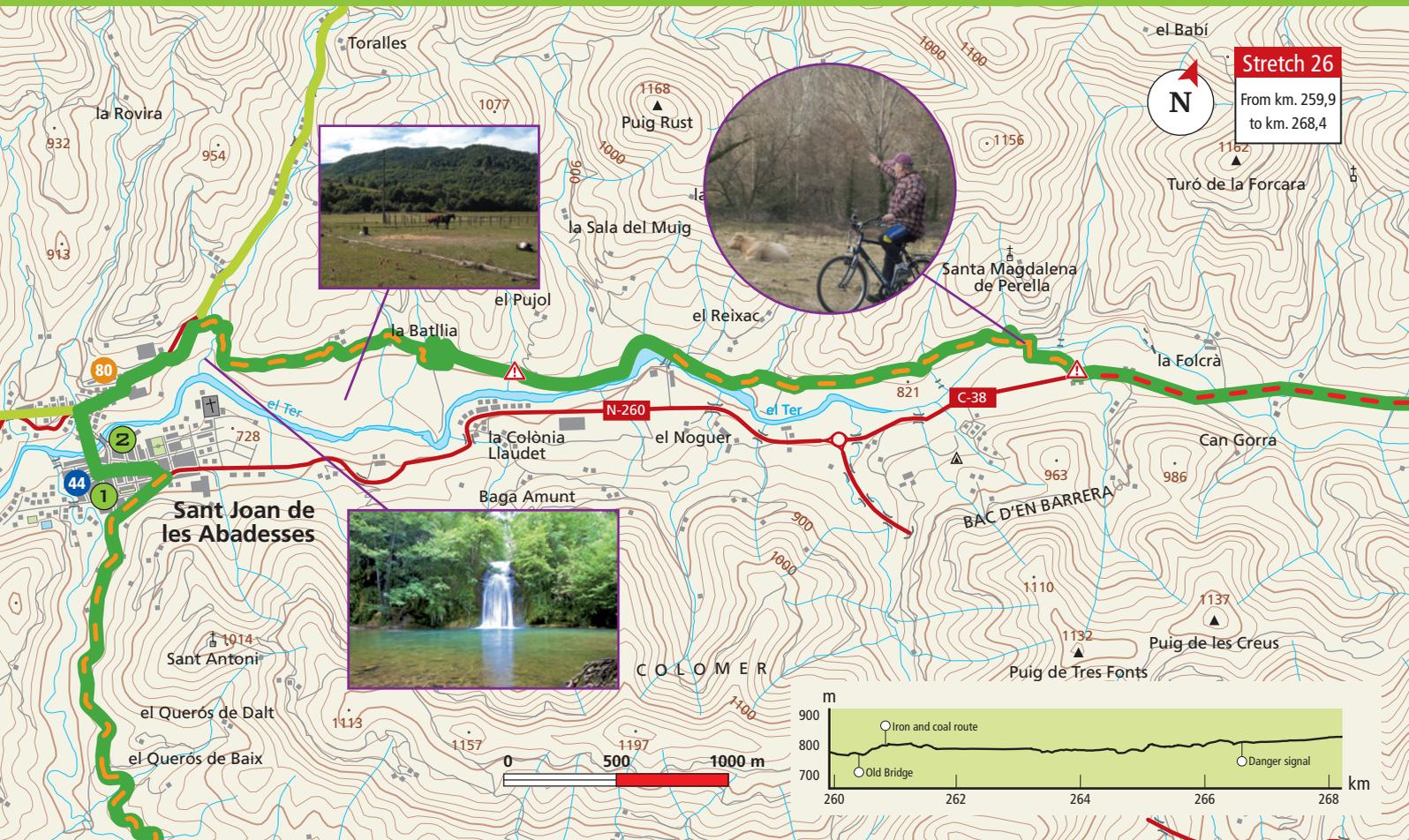
**1 THE MONASTERY.** This was founded in 887 by Guifré el Pilós for his daughter Emma and the religious community that gave the town its name. This monastery is of great importance, not only because of its architecture, but also due to the sculptures it contains. Some of the most important works here are the Descent from the Cross, seven polychrome wooden figures, almost life size, which date back to the 12th century. The monastery's museum is a faithful representation of the intense social and cultural life of this religious centre. We can visit the cloister,

the church and the Abbey Palace, which houses the tourist information centre.

**2 THE CHURCH OF SANT POL AND THE OLD BRIDGE.** We will cross over to the right bank of the river via the Old Bridge, built between 1128 and 1138, demolished by the earthquake in 1428, and again during the Spanish Civil War, but now restored. First, however, we shall pass the ruins of the peculiar Church of Sant Pol (1142), destroyed in 1690 in an attack by the Duke of Noailles, and conserved in this condition to the present day.



The old bridge in Sant Joan de les Abadesses.



# The Pyrenean valley of Camprodon

A part of the route that is very similar to the last one: farm tracks paved with concrete, and some short steep sections.

## SANT PAU DE SEGÚRIES.

Heading north from Sant Pau, the valley is known as the Vall de Camprodon and is a clearly differentiated unit, with links to Olot and historically linked to the Count of Besalú and the Bishop of Girona. An example of the latter are the very well conserved remains of the Capsacosta Roman Road 1, which linked Sant Pau with la Vall de Bianya, and which we can still follow today. This link is also reflected in Catalan literature by the legend of the Sailor of Sant Pau by Jacint Verdaguer. The most notable architectural feature of this village is the Romanesque Church of Sant Pau de Segúries 2, the first mention of which dates back to 920.



**CAMPRDON.** This town sprang up around the Monastery of Sant Pere, and has been popular with tourists since the start of the 19th century. This was when the first hikers and members of the Barcelona middle class arrived, the latter building their summer residences here, in modernist style, along the town's two main streets, the Font Nova and Passeig Maristany 3. The Prime Minister of the Second Spanish Republic, Juan Negrín, lived in one of these houses. The town's popularity with tourists also explains the intense commercial activity and the production of artisan products such as sausages and biscuits.

**4 THE MONASTERY OF SANT PERE.** Built in the middle of the 20th century, the embellishment of this monastery with cantilevers and cornices and the quadrangular distribution of the apse, mean it can be considered a

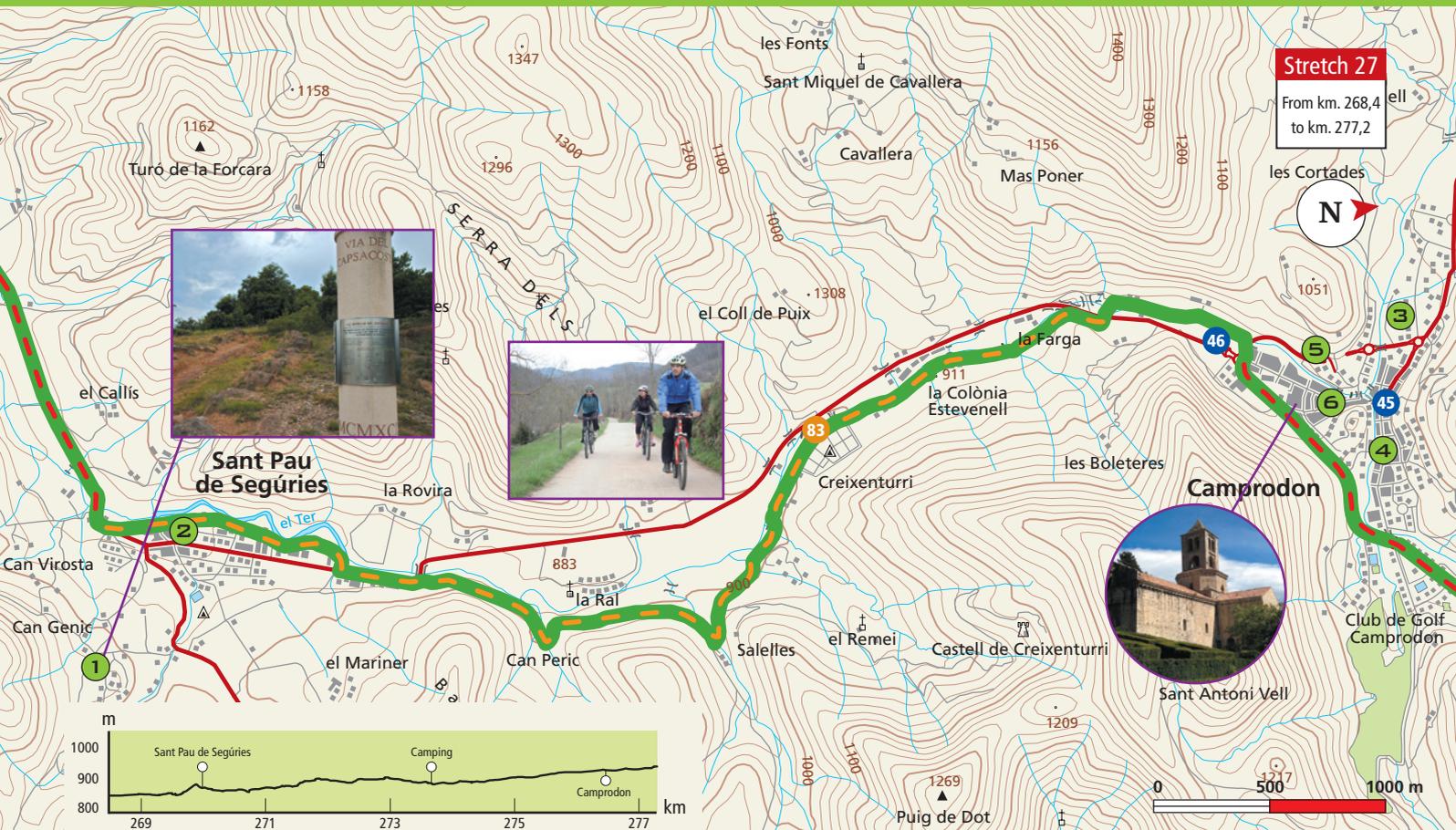


The new bridge in Camprodon.

construction more typical of the Cistercian Order than the Benedictine Order.

**5 THE NEW BRIDGE.** Built in the 12th century, this bridge spans the River Ter in the town centre, and must be crossed when going towards La Cerdanya Region.

**6 ISAAC ALBÉNIZ MUSEUM.** (C. Sant Roc, 22). Museum dedicated to the Catalan composer who was born in this town in 1860. Each year a music festival named after him is held in Camprodon.



# The high peaks of the Pyrenees. The watershed route



Molló with the Costabona in the background.

We leave the Valley of the River Ter and continue along the Valley of the River Ritort, one of its tributaries. Although this entire section is shared with motor vehicles  $\Delta$ , and goes along the C-38 road, there is very little traffic and it is one of the quietest sections of the route, enjoying the tranquillity typical of high mountain zones. There is a long, unbroken climb here. However, we can stop at Molló, and maybe another spot, to take photos and rest for a while. But take care not to let

your muscles get too cold before starting to climb again.

The Col d'Ares is the highest point along this route. We shall travel along the watershed of the Pyrenees, which, since the Treaty of the Pyrenees of 1659, has served as the political border between France and Spain. In geographical terms, we will be in the axial Pyrenees, the steepest part being made up of the most ancient materials in the

mountain range. Gradually, as we climb up, we will notice that this part of the river no long forms fluvial terraces like the ones in the valley bottom, due to the fact that, at this gradient, the river flows too quickly for it to be able to deposit sediments. The vegetation changes, increasingly giving rise to treeless areas dominated by pastureland. Slowly, we climb up towards the summit. Once there, the remains of the border function become clear with the signs of the "Camí de la Retirada" (The Refugees way); a thematic signposted route that goes to Prats-de-Mollo and which was taken by over 100,000 refugees who fled Franco's dictatorship in the winter of 1939.



**MOLLÓ.** This is a very compact settlement, already mentioned in 936, the year when the Church of Santa Cecília was consecrated. One traditional activity carried out here is the taking down of mules to Espinavell, a village in the municipal district. On 13 October each year,



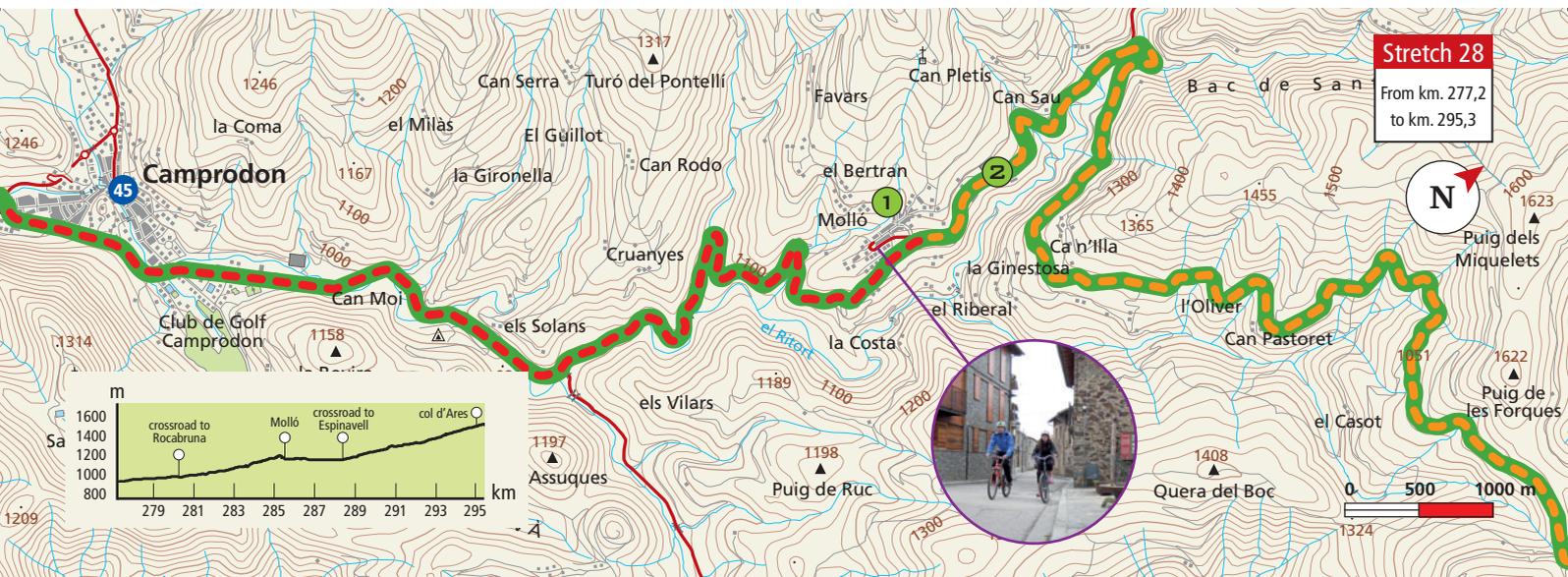
The church of Santa Cecília.

the livestock breeders gather together the over 300 foals that have been grazing on the Pyrenean pastures and take them down to the village in order to sell them.

of note are the imposing entrance, located at one side, with ornamental motifs concentrated on eight cantilevers, seven of which represent the deadly sins.

**1 CHURCH OF SANTA CECÍLIA (CATALAN ROMANESQUE STYLE).** Dating back to the 12th century, this church is characterised above all by its thin bell tower with a square base and four floors. As for the church itself, worthy

**2 MOLLÓ PARK. ANIMAL PARK.** Next to our route, this park offers visitors a tour that allows them to walk around among the red deer, fallow deer and roe deer, and see how they feed, rest, socialise, play and look after their young.



# In search of the fortified refuge

We enter the Vallespir region. The descent via the D-115 road is very long and steep . Wrap up well and make sure your brakes are working properly, especially if it is raining and if they are of the type that uses brake pads. Please remember that, although the road is quiet here, this part of the route is shared with vehicles. You are on the axis of the Pyrenean mountain range. This area boasts unique natural characteristics, both with regard to its geology and to the flora and fauna found here. This is the reason why most of the area is classified as a nature reserve. At the Nature Reserve offices in Prats-de-Mollo (Rue du Faubourg, 26) **1**, you can find information on hikes and bicycle trips which will help you explore the reserve and discover all its natural features. In this town there are other outdoor activities to be enjoyed such as canyoning and a forest adventure park. Or, if you prefer, you can relax and enjoy the healing properties of the thermal waters in La Preste, which have been used by bathers since the 14th century.



MICHEL CASTILLO

Fortified medieval city.



P. SALES

Prats-de-Mollo.

**PRATS-DE-MOLLO.** A mediaeval fortified town, mentioned for the first time in 878, Prats-de-Mollo conserves numerous historical elements which are shared between two neighbouring parts, the lower town and the upper town. Worthy of note in the lower town **2** are the French Gate, Plaça Josep de la Trinxeria, the Cross of the Reproaches, the Church and Chapel of the Saints Justa and Rufina, the walkway around the city walls and the Guillema Bridge. In the upper town **3**, the Rei and Vila squares and the Verger, Rector and Spanish gates are worth visiting. Outside

the fortified town, we can find the Firal Square, right opposite the French Gate, where the tourist information centre is located.

**4 LA GUÀRDIA FORTRESS.** As a result of the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659, which annexed this territory to France, Prats-de-Mollo became a fortified border town. This was when the building of the La Guàrdia Fortress began. Able to house around 100 soldiers, the fortress was designed to protect the new border and control entry to the Alt Vallespir. The fortress is well conserved and guided tours are organised.



# The Tech, the emblematic valley of Vallespir

This part of the route, as well as the next one, continues along the D-115 road. Here, however, it is much busier than on the descent from the Coll d'Ares ▲. The road is narrow, in most places without a hard shoulder, and cars travel along it at high speed. This stretch of the route and the next one are one of the main reasons we advise doing the Pirinexus route in a clockwise direction, as you will feel less anxious or apprehensive about dangers going downhill than when climbing uphill. Therefore, put on a fluorescent vest and enjoy the ride. The entire route between Prats-de-Mollo and Le Boulou passes alongside the River Tech, and its fauna and flora are protected by the Natura 2000 Network. The first thing that strikes the visitor is the orientation of this valley. It does not run perpendicular to the mountain range, as you might expect, but instead goes in an oblique direction, as if it was in a hurry to reach the sea, looking for the shortest route. This orientation is determined, as in the case of the Vall d'Hostoles (between Amer and Sant Feliu

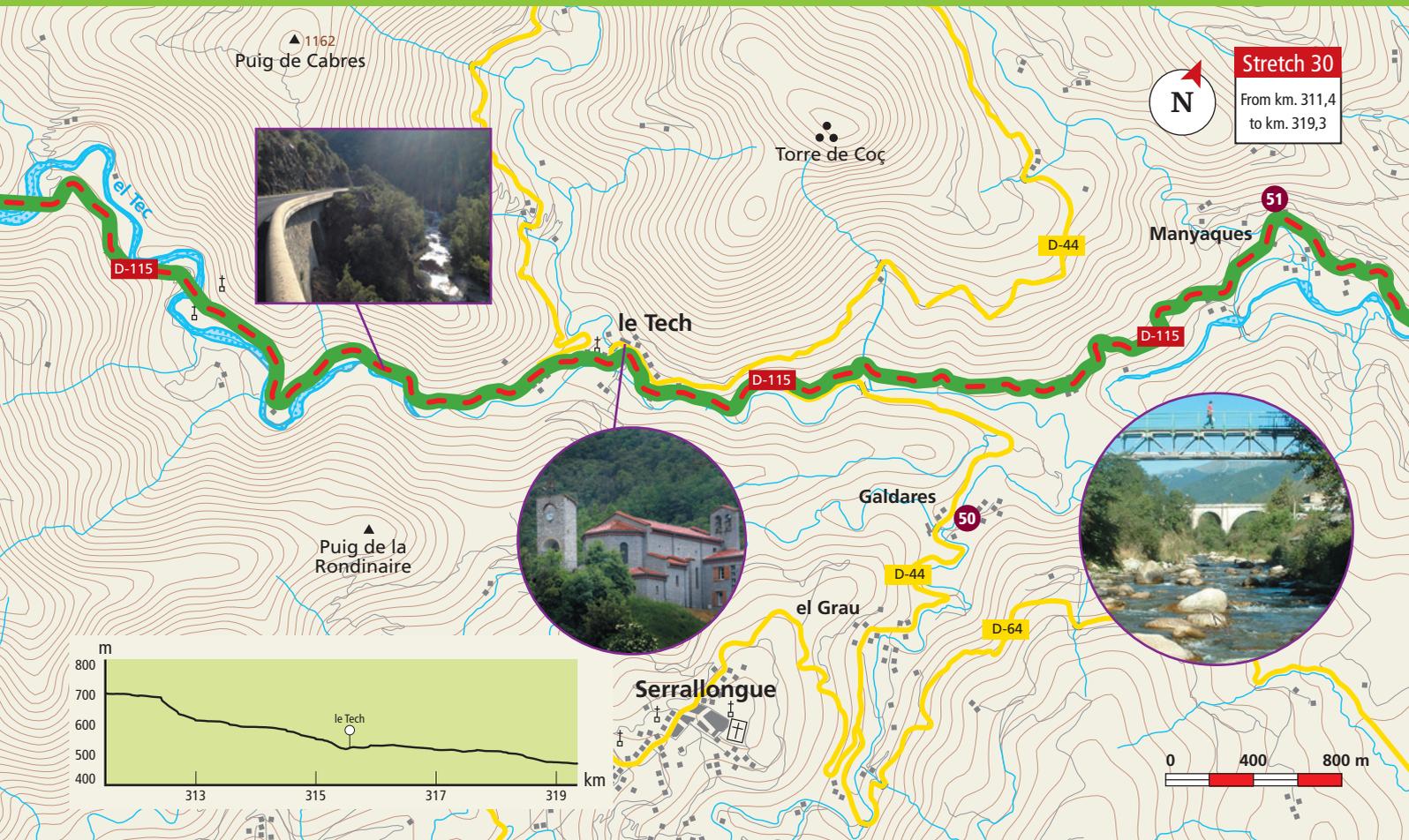


*Pirinexus Route between Prats-de-Mollo-la-Preste and Arles-sur-Tech.*

de Pallerols), by a fault, which in this case caused the NE block to sink. These faults form part of a larger complex and, as we mentioned earlier, they are responsible for the creation of the large depressions in the Empordà and Rosselló regions, the volcanic activity in La Garrotxa, and for the earthquakes of 1427 and 1428. Thus, the valley is very straight and the river flows downhill very rapidly, meaning that the resulting erosion at the bottom of its bed is

very marked and the sides of the valley are particularly steep. The river therefore flows through a narrow gorge. The road itself has many bends, and literally hangs on the side of the rocky bluffs that flank the valley. Relatively recently, in 1940, the force of the water in this river led to a disaster. After heavy rains and a landslide that caused part of the valley to collapse, there was a devastating flood which affected Arles-sur-Tech and Amélie-les-Bains. A total of 50 people were killed, and some of the bodies were never found. The train line between Prats-de-Mollo and Amélie-les-Bains was destroyed, and has not been restored since.

**THERMAL SPRINGS.** This is another phenomenon caused by major seismic faults, and is the reason why thermal springs are found in this valley, both in La Preste, near Prats-de-Mollo, and in Amélie-les-Bains, further east. The faults favour the flow of water underground, where it is warmed by the heat contained in the Earth's core.



# Via the narrow gorges, we reach the oldest Catalan abbey

**1 THE GORGES DE LA FOU.** Once we come to the end of this part of the route, around 2.5 km before reaching Arles-sur-Tech, we turn off to the left and head towards Les Gorges de la Fou, the narrowest gorge in the world. It is located only 500 m from our route. The gorge is 1,500 metres long and the walls 200 metres high, so close together that we can touch both sides at once if we stand between them.

**ARLES-SUR-TECH.** Arles is a town with a long and rich history. The town originally developed around the Abbey of Santa Maria. Later, industrial activity sprung up here with the Catalan textile factory, the weaving mill and the artisan confectionery. We can visit the tourist information centre located at the entrance to the Benedictine Abbey of Santa Maria, one of the oldest in Catalonia (778-780)

**2.** Worthy of note in the Abbey are the Cloister (which combines stone from Girona and marble from Céret) and the



*The Cloister of the Monastery of Santa Maria.*

Wheat Cross (a masterpiece produced using the Catalan Forge process), the Chapterhouse and the Church. Continuing our route on foot, we come across the Art and Crafts Mill, which houses the Catalan Textile Museum **3**. If you are a fan of traditional fare, before you leave you must go to a cake shop and buy a “Rousquilla”, a round biscuit typical of the Vallespir, and of Arles in particular.

Other places worthy of note include the building that is known as “Les Indis” because of its Art Nouveau architecture. It now houses the Town Hall.

**4 THE IRON MINES AND THE TRAIN.** Arles-sur-Tech has also been closely linked to the mining industry. The “Vetèra” iron mines are located near here, in Cortsaví. Because of this, it is no coincidence that in 1898 the train line already went as far as Arles. From here on, our journey will be linked to this line, since its disused track was used in the building of a greenway, along some parts of which we shall now travel.

**THE MOUNTAIN BIKE CIRCUITS IN THE ALT VALLESPIR.** If you are travelling by mountain bike across the section between Prats-de-Mollo and Arles-sur-Tech, you can leave your saddlebags at your accommodation and follow one of the many mountain bike circuits in the Alt Vallespir.



*Tourist office in Arles-sur-Tech*

# From the Pyrenees to the Mediterranean in the blink of an eye

After leaving Arles by the main road (D-115), take the path on the right. The route now follows tracks, some of which are asphalted, trailing alongside the River Tech, and uses the sections where there are still some remains of the railway track that used to run from Arles to Le Boulou. Take care here, at some points you have to pass barriers to stop motorized vehicles getting onto the track so you have to put the bike in a vertical position to get through them. It is much more peaceful cycling on roads free of traffic, even though we do have to share the route with vehicles on a small part of our journey. Leaving Amélie-les-Bains, the presence of railway infrastructures becomes quite evident. Indeed, in 1975 the train still came as far as this to collect iron ore. More specifically, the line went as far as the eastern entrance to the Amélie-les-Bains tunnel (1), which we can still see today. From here you go over an old railway bridge, shared with road traffic, and shortly afterwards you ride along the disused railway line, recently concreted, which is only suitable for cyclists and walkers. You will



MICHEL CASTILLO

Amélie-les-Bains.

need to cross some fairly steep slopes, also concreted, where the track is interrupted.

**AMÉLIE-LES-BAINS.** The valley begins to open up and loses the wild, gorge-like character associated with the mountain. As we approach Amélie-les-Bains, we notice the temperature becoming warmer and the scent of the sea in the air. Indeed, the first facilities we come across in the town are the heated municipal swimming pool and a sports centre known as the Espai Mediterrani (Mediterranean Zone), proof of the fact that this is an environment influenced by both mountain and sea. In Amélie-les-Bains,

everything centres on thermal springs. Since 633 there have been Roman baths in the town, which was called “Els Banys” (The Baths) until 1840, when it was given the French name of Amélie (Amélie-les-Bains) in honour of the queen with the same name. Since then, it has been a resort to which visitors have flocked to enjoy the properties of the thermal waters and the relaxation they offer. In fact, there are even one-day vouchers available to help you get fit! If we go 1.5 km further along the left bank of the River Tech, we will reach Palaldà, where, in addition to visiting the fortified mediaeval town, we can go to the Post Office Museum (2), where we can find the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Interpretation Centre, and the Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions, where we can discover the traditional tools used by shoemakers and find out how the typical Catalan rope-soled sandal, the “espadanya vigatana”, is made. After this, we should return to Amélie-les-Bains in order to ensure we continue along our route, which becomes truly spectacular from here on.



# Heading towards the capital of the Vallespir



The Devil's Bridge in Céret.

This is the part of the route that overlaps most with the old train line. The track is covered in gravel, at times quite loose, but which is not too hard to pedal on. Occasionally, the old disused railway track is blocked, and we therefore need to leave it, going down the embankment along a short, steep incline. We will pass remains of the former railway, spectacular tunnels and iron bridges,

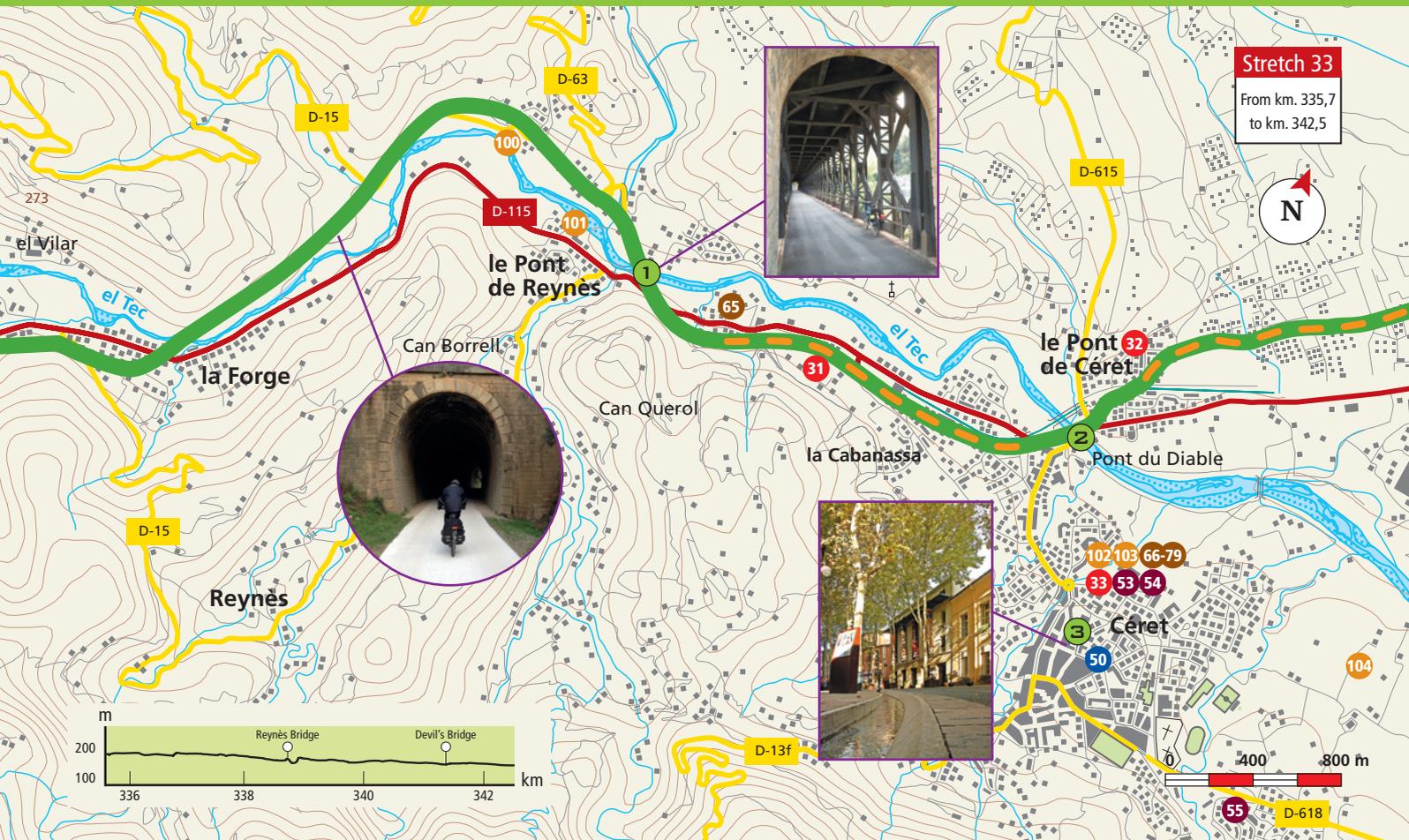
especially the one at Reynès ❶. After this bridge you come to a new recently-built walkway to cross the road safely. A little further on, you leave the old railway line and approach Ceret by the main road. On leaving the town, abandon the main roads and cross the River Tech by the Devil's Bridge ❷ (for pedestrians), and is the largest mediaeval (14th century) bridge ever built with a single arch. According to legend, the stone missing from this unfinished bridge was stolen by the devil. You then cross the road and, taking the Rue de l'Ermitage, head towards the railway line to cross it by a narrow concrete ramp and then continue to the right along the path, which is initially asphalted and later turns into fairly loose gravel, running between the cherry trees.



**CÉRET.** Capital of the Cherry and the Vallespir. The village, which is recognized

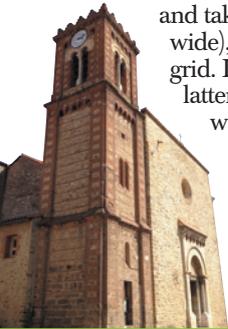
worldwide for the passage of plastic artists who have given its reputation as Mecca of Cubism, invites you to discover its historic center through two walks that intersect constantly. "Chemin Faisant", joining the 13 most important monuments and classified heritage sites of Céret, "Chemin Sublime", joins 20 panels with paintings, placed at the same location where they have been painted and which allow us to better understand the process of creating: Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Juan Gris, Manolo and many others. Of course we have to finish this tour of the visual arts with a visit to the Museum of Modern Art in Ceret ❸.

A new museum has opened its doors: "MuSIC" - the Museum of instruments of Céret, this exhibits ancient instruments from all over the world. Worthy of note is the House of Françoise Claustre Heritage situated in front of the new fountain on Place Pablo Picasso.



# Completing the circle

Continuing through the cherry trees and the occasional vine, you pass close by the picturesque Castle of Aubiry and the Santa Teresa farmhouse. After this the path gets slightly stonier until you reach the D115 from Ceret, where it becomes asphalted once again. Cross the road by the roundabout and then continue along the streets of Saint-Jean-Pla-de-Corts. This is an asphalted part of the route, shared with vehicles, but with very little traffic. Upon leaving Saint-Jean-Pla-de-Corts, and after crossing a watercourse, we need to leave the asphalted road and take a narrow path (0.5 m wide), going over a metal cattle grid. In order to get across the latter, and another cattle grid we will find further on, we need to lift our bicycle up and carry it over in a vertical position. Now all we need to do is follow



The Church of Le Boulou.

the narrow path, which later becomes wider and has a very compact gravel surface. After crossing three bridges over roads for motor vehicles, we will turn left and head towards Le Boulou. Here we come full circle and meet the route we started off on.

**1 THE LAKES OF SAINT-JEAN-PLA-DE-CORTS.** After passing through the streets of Saint-Jean-Pla-de-Corts, not far from the oldest part of the town centre and near the castle, the route is dominated by two artificial lakes which are located to the left of the River Tech. This is a tourist area which offers a large number of recreational activities. You can go on hikes around the lakes, and there are informative panels providing information on the local fauna and flora.

**LE BOULOU.** The historical circuit of Le Boulou runs through the old town, going around the church and heading toward the Quadrangular Tower, passing the vestiges of old fortifications, as well as the impressive 832 kg Assumption Bell and



Lakes in Saint-Jean-Pla-de-Corts.

the statue of the little drummer boy, built in honour of the first child of the troop to die in combat. The frieze of the church gate is a remarkable piece of work carried out by the Master of Cabestany, an anonymous sculptor active in the 12th century, who created many outstanding pieces still visible today in Girona, Navarra and Tuscany. In the Espace des Arts you will be able to see paintings, sculptures and photographic exhibitions. If you have enough time, you will be able to go either on foot or by bike to complete the historic tour of the Battle of Le Boulou (1793-1794), in which Napoleon's troops fought the troops from the Kingdom of Spain. You will even be able to enjoy a thermal treatment at the "Thermes".



# Cultural, folkloric and gastronomic events along the route

There are a wide range of activities that are organised throughout the year across the territory. Starting with the music festivals, which are held in summer in

particular, there are also gastronomic days which vary according to the season and the product, and the fairs and festivals of traditional products. These three pages

provide a list of the main events so that you can programme your visits depending on the time of year that you decide to do the route.

January	February	March	Event	Town/Village	Info
			Truffle Fair (Gastronomic Fair)	Arles-sur-Tech	www.tourisme-haut-vallespir.com
			Cooking with Sea Urchins (Typical dishes with sea urchins)	Palafrugell	www.garoinada.cat
			Gastronomic days for the Pig Slaughter and Lent	Camprodon and Molló	http://ca.costabrava.org/
			Bear Festival (Legendary festival)	Prats-de-Mollo, Arles-sur-Tech, St. Llorenç de Cerdans	www.fetes-ours-vallespir.com
			Corn on the Cob Fair (Gastronomy)	La Vall de Bianya	www.valldebianya.cat
			Black Music Festival	Salt and Girona	www.blackmusicfestival.com
			Pals and Cooking with Rice	Pals	www.pals.cat
			Mini Olot (Music Festival)	Olot	www.elmini.net
			Hunting Fair and Food Fair	Cassà de la Selva	www.cassa.cat
			Cooking with Pork (Gastronomic days)	La Cellera de Ter	www.lacelleradeter.cat
			Festival of Cooked Meats from Bescanó	Bescanó	www.festacatalunya.cat
April	May	June	Event	Town/Village	Info
			Medieval Market	Sant Antoni de Calonge	www.calonge.cat
			Gastronomic Days for Cooking with Spring Mushrooms	Olot, Vall d'en Bas, Les Preses, Vall de Bianya	www.cuinavolcanica.cat
			Mediterranean Fair: the Open Sea (Multi-sectoral fair)	Torroella de Montgrí	www.torroella-estartit.cat
			International Festival of Young Musicians	Le Boulou	www.tourisme-leboulou.fr
			Prawn Menu	Palamós	www.palamos.org
			Cooking with Blue Fish	Sant Feliu de Guíxols	www.guixols.cat
			Market Festival of Catalan Ceramics	Quart	www.quart.cat
			Greco-Roman Fair: Mediterranean Triumvirate	L'Escala	www.triumviratmediterrani.org

April	May	June	Event	Town/Village	Info
			The National Wool Festival and the Country Wedding	Ripoll	www.ripoll.cat/turisme
			Temps de Flors (Flower Festival), Girona	Girona	www.gironatempsdeflors.net
			Intergalactic Fair of Collectable Toys	Figueres	www.figueres.cat
			Cherry Festival	Céret	www.ot-Céret.fr
			"Sea food tasting sessions. La clova" (Gastronomy)	Torroella de Montgrí - l'Estartit	www.enestartit.com
			Water Festival	Le Boulou	www.tourisme-leboulou.fr
			Fira Arrels del Vi (D.O. Empordà wine tasting fair)	Sant Martí d'Empúries	www.arrelsdelvi.com
			Querències (Music and flamenco dancing)	Céret	www.ot-Céret.fr
			Arles Music Festival	Arles-sur-Tech	www.tourisme-haut-vallespir.com
			International Chamber Music Festival	Santa Cristina d'Aro	www.santacristina.net
July	August	September	Event	Town/Village	Info
			Cornamusam Festival (Traditional Music Festival)	Olot	www.cornamusam.org
			Sardana Festival (Traditional Catalan Dancing)	Céret	www.ot-Céret.fr
			Charivari Bands Festival	Prats-de-Mollo-la-Preste	www.pratsdemollopapreste.com
			International Music Festival, Castell de Peralada (Part of the Network of European Music Festivals)	Peralada	www.festivalperalada.com
			Sant Domènec Cloister Concerts	Peralada	www.peralada.cat
			International Festival of Classical Music	Sant Pere Pescador	www.santpere.org
			Torroella de Montgrí International Festival of Music (Part of the Network of European Music Festivals)	Torroella de Montgrí	www.festivaldetorroella.com
			Cap Roig Garden Festivals (Music Festival)	Calella de Palafrugell	www.caproigfestival.com
			Interludi (Classical, popular, flamenco, jazz and country music)	Calonge	www.festivalscalonge.com
			Nights of Jazz Festival of Platja d'Aro	Platja d'Aro	www.platjadaro.com
			International Music Festival of S'Agaró	S'Agaró	www.platjadaro.com
			Porta Ferrada International Festival (the oldest in Catalonia, 1958)	Sant Feliu de Guíxols	www.portaferrada.guixols.cat
			International Music Festival of Ripoll	Ripoll	www.ajripoll.org
			Cycle of Representations of the Myth of Count Arnau (Dance, music and theatre performances)	Sant Joan de les Abadesses	www.santjoandedesabadesses.cat
			Isaac Albéniz Musica Festival	Camprodon	www.camprodon.cat
			Fort Lagarde Show	Prats-de-Mollo-la-Preste	www.pratsdemollopapreste.com
			Portalblau (International Festival of Mediterranean Music and Art)	L'Escala	www.portalblau.cat
			International Folklore Festival	Amélie-les-Bains	www.amelie-les-bains.com
			Music Festival	Prats-de-Mollo-la-Preste	www.pratsdemollopapreste.com
			Schubertiada of Vilabertran	Vilabertran	http://ca.schubertiadavilabertran.cat
			Music Festival of the Vall de Camprodon	Molló	www.valldecamprodon.org

July	August	September	Event	Town/Village	Info
			Land of Troubadours Festival (Medieval Music)	Castelló d'Empúries	<a href="http://www.terradetrobadors.cat">www.terradetrobadors.cat</a>
			Girona Jazz Festival	Girona	<a href="http://www.festivaldejazzdegirona.com">www.festivaldejazzdegirona.com</a>
			Festibanyes (Bull festival)	Amèlie-les-Bains	<a href="http://www.festibanyes.free.fr">www.festibanyes.free.fr</a>
			Wine Fare of the Alt Empordà	Figueres	<a href="http://www.figueres.cat">www.figueres.cat</a>
			Salt Festival (Fairs and traditions of the salting of the anchovy)	L'Escala	<a href="http://www.anxova-sal.cat">www.anxova-sal.cat</a>
			European Heritage Days (Free guided tours)	Vallespir and Vall de Camprodon	<a href="http://www.payspyreneesmediteranee.org">www.payspyreneesmediteranee.org</a>
			Stick and Wood Fair (Artesanal)	Les Planes d'Hostoles	<a href="http://www.lesplanes.cat">www.lesplanes.cat</a>
October	November	December	Event	Town/Village	Info
			Anchovy Festival	L'Escala	<a href="http://www.visitlescala.cat">www.visitlescala.cat</a>
			International Basketware Fair	Salt	<a href="http://www.firadelcistell.cat">www.firadelcistell.cat</a>
			Gastronomic days of Fish Soup	L'Escala	<a href="http://www.lescala.cat">www.lescala.cat</a>
			Costa Brava Jazz Festival	Palafrugell	<a href="http://www.palafrugellcultura.cat">www.palafrugellcultura.cat</a>
			Beer Festival	Platja d'Aro	<a href="http://www.platjadaro.com">www.platjadaro.com</a>
			Mushroom Fair	Llagostera	<a href="http://www.festabolet.com">www.festabolet.com</a>
			Tria de Mulats d'Espinavell (Descent of young horses down the mountain)	Molló	<a href="http://www.mollo.cat">www.mollo.cat</a>
			Apple Festival	L'Armentera and Ullà	<a href="http://www.ddgi.cat">www.ddgi.cat</a>
			Gastronomic days of Cooked Apples	Torroella de Montgrí	<a href="http://www.enestartit.com">www.enestartit.com</a>
			Menu of Langoustine	Palamós	<a href="http://www.palamos.org">www.palamos.org</a>
			Festival of Santa Teresa and the Catalan Sheep Festival (Products related to the sheep of the Ripoll area)	Ripoll	<a href="http://www.ripoll.cat/turisme">www.ripoll.cat/turisme</a>
			Festival of Sant Lluç (Sheep festival dating back to 1314)	Olot	<a href="http://www.turismeolot.cat">www.turismeolot.cat</a>
			Girona Fair	Girona	<a href="http://www.girona.cat">www.girona.cat</a>
			Gastronomic Days of Sheep and Mushrooms from Ripoll	Ripoll, Sant Joan les Abadesses	<a href="http://www.elripolles.com">www.elripolles.com</a>
			Sant Martí Fair and the Competition of Chestnut Roasters of Amer (Artesanal Fair)	Amer	<a href="http://www.amer.cat">www.amer.cat</a>
			New Wine Festival	Calonge	<a href="http://www.calonge.cat">www.calonge.cat</a>
			Agricultural, Sheep and Trade Fair of Sant Andreu	Torroella de Montgrí	<a href="http://www.torroella-estartit.cat">www.torroella-estartit.cat</a>
			Firatast (Food Fair)	Girona	<a href="http://www.incatiscat">www.incatiscat</a>
			Nativity Scene Exhibition	Olot	<a href="http://www.turismeolot.cat">www.turismeolot.cat</a>