

## COSTA BLANCA MOUNTAINWALKERS - WALK DESCRIPTION

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<b>Walk description originally prepared by:-</b>	Ralph Phipps	
<b>Last Updated</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	
<b>Title of Walk</b>	Castell d'Aixa circuit from Lliber	
<b>Location of Start (include name of nearest village/town at start of description)</b>	Lliber car park beside medical centre at bottom of Calle Colon.	
<b>Key Statistics for walk - Distance in km</b>	12	
<b>Key Statistics for walk - Ascent in m</b>	825	
<b>Key Statistics for walk - Walking time and total completion time including any stops</b>	4 6	
<b>Key Statistics for walk - Grade (using CBMW system)</b>	VS/C	
<b>Grid reference of start point (if known)</b>	Lat:- 38.742268, Long:- 0.004882	
<b>Directions to Start</b>	A small connecting road runs between Jalon (in the Jalon valley!) and Gata de Gorgos and this passes through the small village of Lliber. The car parking in the village is on the south (low) side and can be reached awkwardly from the main road running through the village between the 2 sets of traffic lights. It is signposted.	
<b>Short walk description</b>	A walk to two of the Montes de Beniquasi summits – one rarely visited – and a crossing of the D'Aixa valley. A demanding walk with some "rough" stuff early in the walk and a significant climb after lunch.	
<b>Full Walk Description</b>		<b>Elapsed Walking Time/Distance so far</b>
Turn between the 2 rows of houses and walk along to a steep bank which goes up R to a cobbled road which we follow to the L. After a few metres go around a bend R and then turn L uphill on a second street before leaving this onto a footpath on the L.		240m, 3min
This remains paved for a few metres and then as it turns slightly to the R and starts going uphill it disintegrates into just steps and rough ground. Ignore the concrete continuation of this uphill to the R (which leads to the cemetery) and step straight ahead onto the footpath going straight ahead.		
Follow this mozarabic and at a slight "Y" junction take the L fork which which drops downhill. At the vehicle track turn R.		720m, 11min

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<p>Follow this track and turn L round the end of the sewage works and then in about 50 metres turn R, make your way down and go across the river and then find a rudimentary path which skirts round almost horizontally.</p>	1km, 16min
<p>As it comes out of the trees you can see a ruined finca high above you. Don't head for that but keep going almost level and pass quite close to another more ruined one. Pass that ruined finca (it will be on your R) and follow very thin paths as they wander very slightly uphill but then round the end of the spur and drop into a barranco.</p>	1.5km, 23min
<p>As you approach this you can see a mozarabic going off on the opposite side of this and cross directly and find the start of this mozarabic.</p>	
<p>Follow this uphill and turn back at the first bend. At the next bend turn L continuing uphill with the barranco on the L. At the next bend as you are heading up the barranco ignore the turning that doubles back and instead go straight ahead on a much thinner path which is still clear enough to follow.</p>	1.8km, 27min
<p>Although broken down initially in parts it becomes a very clear mozarabic trail. Follow this up with the barranco on the left. Take care not to pick up a line rising steeply and instead push through the bushes to stay on the best route. As you round a small spur the path becomes much clearer ahead with a wall on the LHS.</p>	
<p>Drop into and walk up the barranco for 2/3 metres before exiting L.</p>	2.1km, 36min
<p>and continue ahead on the engineered path which is less clear now with some scree making it difficult to determine the correct path. There are cairns to show the way and with care you can continue to follow up towards a ruin above.</p>	2.4km, 41min
<p>The ruin is situated on a small spur directly below some imposing crags and you continue leftwards below these but still rising. Shortly you pass 2 impressive caves in the crag and then drop slightly into a craggy corner where you can see the path rising up a small weakness in the corner.</p>	
<p>Once up the step take any line you can find upwards towards the next line of crags. Aim slightly leftwards here and head towards a corner in the crags where a stream obviously flows at times.</p>	2.6km, 46min
<p>When you reach the corner continue leftwards and uphill initially directly below the crags but a little way up it is best to move slightly L to avoid vegetation. A little way ahead you will see a rocky gully on the RHS which you can take exiting at the L after 15-20m.</p>	
<p>Now continue on a slabby platform L with crags above you on your RHS and drop a little until you find a weakness which you can easily step up and reach surprisingly easy ground above.</p>	
<p>Now you head fairly directly uphill aiming slightly leftwards to join a path which has come up from below and to the L of you from a col. It is difficult to see from below but is easily seen when you join it.</p>	2.8km, 53min
<p>Turn R on this and follow it uphill to the R and around a small bluff. There are one or two cairns marking this route.</p>	
<p><b>NB – gps track differs from this route until point marked - *</b></p>	
<p>As you round this bluff you can see ahead of you a path going directly up the mountain and the ridge line slightly to your L. There are now numerous ways of getting to the summit, but possibly the easiest is as follows.</p>	

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As you round the bluff a little way in front of you is a clear rising slab up to the L. Follow this for 50m or so and watch for another path going off R and more steeply uphill. Take this and try to stay on the RHS of a clear line of terrace walls. At times you will be able to make out what was the original engineered path, but it is difficult to stick to it. If you are on the best line you will come to a casita in moderate condition on the RHS and here you can take another slabby route up to the L to find whatever route is available to continue towards the ridge line.

When you have had enough of this aim L and uphill to crest the ridge line that links to the summit and from this you will have clear views down to Jalon and Alcalali.

3.3km, 1hr 5min

**GPS track re-joins this described route here.**

Once on the ridge proper aim uphill on the L side of the ridge to avoid the worst of the vegetation and soon this reaches a small plateau.

From here the summit is obvious. The best line now is to proceed up the ridge following at times a distinct path initially in the middle and later towards the LHS of the ridge line. When this reaches a clear cairn on a spur you can take a more direct line uphill on a rocky ramp to reach the summit.

3.7km, 1hr 17min

From the summit you can look across to Castell d'Aixa almost at the same height and between yourself and this is a col which you reach by turning L and following down towards an intermediate col guarded on its far side by a crag. Before you reach this you should track down considerably lower to the L and join a path coming from the L which you follow to the R.

This continues down pushing through some bushes and around the crags at the intermediate col and rounds this at a safer spot before continuing down to the col directly below Castell d'Aixa.

4.3km, 1hr 28min

From here follow the Y/W path up to the summit of Castell d'Aixa.

4.8km, 1hr 49min

From the summit continue to follow the Y/W which leads initially N and then NE along the side of the ridge. After 350m take care to find an abrupt L turn (with cairn) which lead back the way you came but under the crags. After a while this turns again and descends steeply in places to reach a well and from here leads downhill towards a small col.

5.4km, 1hr 50min

Here (with ruined fingerpost) there are 2 paths. The one going directly ahead leads eventually to Pedreguer. This we ignore and instead turn half R and soon downhill. At times the fact that this was an engineered path is very clear, but at times it is a steep descent with some imposing crags directly in front of you.

6.2km, 2hr 7min

Soon you descend across scree to the valley bottom (which would descend to Font D'Aixa) and as soon as you are on level ground the path crosses the valley to the RHS.

6.8km, 2hr 16min

From here this is generally easy going but there is one steep descent before the path arrives at an eroded section where you cross to the LH bank.

7km, 2hr 20min

Keep going past a ruined finca and shortly after this the path appears to disappear as it drops into the barranco and crosses immediately to the other side. It is important to find the beginning of the path here as it is a little hidden.

7.9km, 2hr 42min

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Follow this path now uphill to a junction where continuing ahead steers you further towards Font d'Aixa but our path goes steeply uphill away from this up a ramp and then on a clear line ascending steadily towards a line of crags above.

Eventually you arrive at the crags to find the path doubling back along a ramp with a little exposure and then under a wedged boulder

before emerging at a col.

8.8km, 3hr

Cross directly over this and pick up the line of the path going slightly L and downhill to reach a clear ridge line on the L.

By following the ridge down you reach a set of terraces with a ruined finca on the RHS.

Pass under the finca and walk along the level terrace immediately below it.

A little further on this drops down one terrace and then continues ahead on a very clear line.

The old mozarabic trail has been cleared in 2014 and it is now easy to follow, so stick to the clear old line and avoid shortcuts that reduce the surrounding area to rubble!!

9.6km, 3hr 14min

Only one point requiring care is encountered and this is just before the descending path meets a level area of ridge where the correct path runs across to the RHS of the ridge line before doubling back to the L.

As you cross the ridge line there is an alternative footpath running L which you should ignore if you want to find the correct line.

Follow this down now as it intersects your outgoing route lower down on the flank of the hill and then re-cross the river to follow your outbound route back to the sewage farm.

When you reach this cross the river and turn to the R of the sewage works following a clear footpath which trends L to run into a track.

Follow this and at a fork take either variant to arrive back at the parallel group of houses and your car.

### **Walk Recommendations or restrictions**

Navigational ability for the first part of the day is key as is an absence of fear of scratchy bushes – most of which can be avoided!

See map below

Route followed is outlined in Red

