

Hiking routes in Alt Camp

8



*Miramar,
a balcony on Camp*



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NB: Any established written accounts are limited in terms of concrete time and space. The natural evolution of the landscape and human activity can mean that some accounts may become less reliable over time.

8. *Miramar, a balcony on Camp*

This excursion allows us to discover the Serra de Miramar. It would be difficult to imagine any another name which so accurately reflects the geographical location of Miramar (sea view), an old village set at the foot of la Cogulla, from a range of the same name, with a splendid long balcony open to al Camp and the Mediterranean.

We set off on this walk from Valls, one of the towns on the plain, actually the capital of Alt Camp and a modern industrial town, surrounded by “valls” (valleys) created by watercourses. Leaving aside the huge industrial estate, we pass cultivated fields and peaceful landscapes, very pleasant walking. Before we know it, we come to Masmolets, a village where time has literally stood still. A few steps more and we have already come to Fontscaldes, a privileged location where the Iberians once settled, leaving behind a legacy of the Iberian furnace. Later on the hike, we will have to tackle the rather daunting mountain ascent, even though the footpaths are actually very pleasant. After winding our way up for a good way, we will find ourselves on the approach to the village. Once in the village, all it takes is a stroll through the streets to breathe in and absorb the this village’s special character, a mixture of countryside, woodlands and seascapes, the ideal place to restore both mind and body.

We can begin this hike from Valls, Masmolets, Fontscaldes or la Fassina (from the Masos road, approaching from Tomb de la Paella by the N-240); depending that is on our desire and the time we have available. Restaurant facilities and parking are available in the town and villages whilst at the *masia* de la Fassina, there is only a small area to park a car.





Camí de la Verneda

8. Miramar, a balcony on Camp

Time

Distance

0:00
Partial



0:00
Total

0,000
Partial



0,000
Total

Valls. This town is famous for being the birthplace of the “castells” or human towers and the “calçotada” (a type of spring onion, grilled). The capital of Alt Camp, the town’s patrimony includes the Arciprestal churches of Sant Joan, Mare de Deu del Lledó, Carme, Sant Francesc and Sant Antoni. The town has various attractions of interest to the visitor, such as the Capella del Roser (a chapel with 17th century glazed tiles depicting scenes from the battle of Lepanto) or the Museu de Valls (a museum with one of the best collections of Catalanian art from the last hundred and twenty years).

The town’s attractions also revolve around some of the celebration held throughout the year including: Tres Tombs, Gran Festa de la Calçotada, the Candela, Sant Joan and the Firagost, otherwise known as the Santa Úrsula. During these fiestas you will be able to appreciate some of the town’s deep-rooted traditions (horse and carriage ensembles, bestiary and, naturally,

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the “castells” or human towers exhibitions). The town has all the necessary facilities: accommodation, bars and restaurants, shopping, etc.

Crossroads with Carretera de Montblanc and Carrer de la Creu de Cames (228m) (post). This hike begins on the Montblanc road, opposite the Creu Roja or Red Cross, and the Parc de Bombers or fire station. We take the street by the name of Carrer de Sor Filomena Ferrer, which goes up in line with the main road, which in turn drops down in to cross the train line. This particular hike is signposted, in white and yellow, as the PR-C 5. We pass in front of the Monestir de la Immaculada, the convent belonging to the Monges Mínimes nuns. We continue to make our way north-northeast. Once passed the building, the street becomes a track, at the end of which we take the bridge across the train line from Roda de Berà to Picamoixons. We start to make our way down Camí de la Verneda, finally leaving Valls behind us. Since there are a fair amount of *masies* and houses along here this asphalted track is well used. Down to the left is the Xamora brook, the opposite side of which are the buildings of the Santa Úrsula urbanisation.

0:08  0:08

0,700  0,700

Fork (post). Here, where the track forks, we continue straight on heading north, leaving Camí de Masmolets on our left.

0:06  0:14

0,500  1,200

Fork. Here we take the right fork to join a track accompanied by a wall in stone and fields of carob, almond and olive trees, typical of these dry un-irrigated plains.

0:03  0:17

0,300  1,500

Bridge. Here we take the bridge over the N-240 bye-pass. From this elevated spot we are able to make out, at the foot of the mountains, the Masmolets belltower, the village of Fontscaldes and, perched on the mountain, the little hamlet of Miramar and finally, the antennae right on the summit of Cogulla. We continue to make our way, passing some houses and what was a surfaced track has now become a dirt track.

0:03  0:20

0,300  1,800

Access road. We pass an access road to a private finca on our left, with a no entry sign.

8. Miramar, a balcony on Camp

0:03  0:23

0,300  2,100

Junction (post). Here where the track splits into three, we take the middle path, heading northwest. The Muntanyes de Prades are straight ahead of us. We can clearly see the monolith at Castell Dalmau, halfway up the Puig d'en Marc, left of the Brugent valley. The path surface here is stony with pebbles and slightly sunken. Very soon we are heading once again towards la Cogulla.

0:06  0:29

0,500  2,600

Junction (post). Here we take the path to the left which climbs up over a small flat rock ledge. The branch to the right disappears into the cultivations. We make our way back up by the Riera de Masmolets, the river on our left and an embankment on our right. After a hundred metres or so, we pass a path leading to the footbridge across the gully, completely overgrown by thick vegetation.

0:06  0:35

0,500  3,100

Fork (post). In front of the metal fence which surrounds a piece of land, we come across a “historic” post, installed by the ramblers from the Valls AAEET rambling association. We take a left turn (towards the northwest) with Coll Vell straight ahead.

0:02  0:37

0,200  3,300

Intersection (post). Here we will make our way through the streets of a rather uninspiring urbanisation. We turn left.

0:02  0:39

0,200  3,500

Right turn (post). We leave the street leading straight ahead to take the one to the right, at the bottom of which we see the Masmolets church. Right in the centre of the street there is an electricity supply pole and one of the signposts for the PR-C 5.

0:05  0:44

0,400  3,900

Masmolets (305m). *This village is typical of those in the area, surrounded by the vineyards of the municipality of Valls. Located between the capital of Alt Camp and Fontscaldes, the village dates back to the 12th century. The church, dedicated to Sant Roc, is built on the top of an outcrop of volcanic rock. The construction date of the church, 1808, is engraved on the key to the arched vault door. It has a good restaurant.*



Església de Masmolets



Old signpost

We enter Masmolets by the church square or Plaça de l'Església. We pass through the village by making our way along Carrer Principal, or the main street, practically the only street in fact, with four houses.

0:01  0:45

0,100  4,000

Fork. We are in front of Ca l'Orpinell. We turn right down Camí de la Font, which is a surfaced road. Soon we will be making our way across the Rasa de Masmolets. The road to the left connects the village to the N-240 road.

0:03  0:48

0,300  4,300

Intersection (post) with the old Camí de Fontscaldes. Here we continue straight ahead on the asphalted road. This intersection is quite difficult to spot since only the branch to the right is actually passable, the one to the left now looks more like a ditch. As we make our way, we will pass by some fenced off plots.

0:08  0:56

0,600  4,900

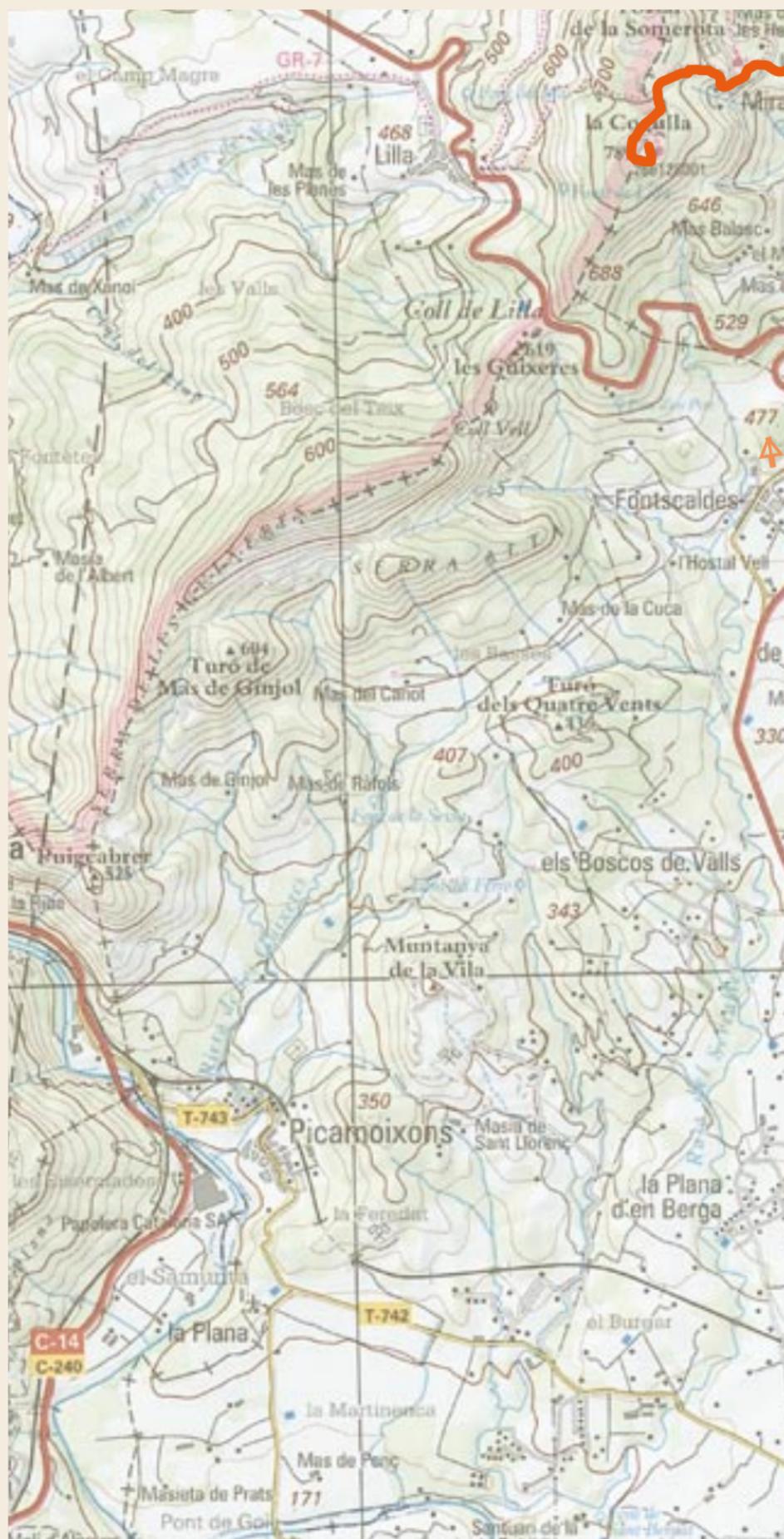
Fork (post). Here we turn right, heading east. We leave the asphalted road, which now makes a 90° turn to the north. The sight of a billboard lets us know we are now on the Palau de Reig development 25.

0:03  0:59

0,300  5,200

Rasa de Fontscaldes and road. We come to the road from Vilafranca to Montblanc; we take the road left (north), close to the river. Once again, we are making our way between the building plots at Palau de Reig.

8. Miramar, a balcony on Camp



Time



2 h 24'

Difficulty



11,600 km



Distance



8. Miramar, a balcony on Camp

0:06  1:05

0,500  5,700

Intersection (post). We cut across Rasa de Fontscaldes and a track leading to the cultivations and on to the Bosc del Simon, the woods. Just a few steps west and, once again, we have la Cogulla directly before us. To the right, what now looks like a ditch was once the old road to Vilafranca.

0:10  1:15

0,800  6,500

Left turn. We make our way down an embankment. We leave the old road, in a very poor condition, which, if it were passable, would continue straight on to Fontscaldes.

0:03  1:18

0,300  6,800

Service road to the N-240. We join this road on the left, ten metres on from having passed the old road or Camí Vell de Masmolets on our right, now impassable.

0:06  1:24

0,500  7,300

Access to Fontscaldes (395m). We continue straight ahead. On the right we have the access, beneath the N-240 to the village of Fontscaldes, on the opposite side of the road.

Fontscaldes (401m). *In the lap of the Serra de Miramar, although it comes under the town of Valls, this village has a personality of its own. One of the most important attractions in this small village is the Iberian archaeological site, where the Forn Ibèric or Iberian furnace was uncovered, along with a collection of ceramics, now on display in the Museu Arqueològic de Barcelona. The parish church is dedicated to Sant Simó and for a long time was part of the Monestir de Santes Creus. It has two restaurants.*

0:02  1:26

0,200  7,500

Fork. We continue until we meet up with the road. On the right is the road to Torre de la Mixarda and Figuerola. Also on the right, we can see what remains the Iberian ceramics furnace, protected by a rather inappropriate shelter.

0:01  1:27

0,100  7,600

N-240 road and track. We come to the main road which we follow for a few metres after which we take the track to the right.



Protective shelter for the Forn Ibèric or Iberian furnace

0:05  1:32

0,400  8,000

Fork. Here we take the fork to the right. We make our way surrounded by a hillside covered in young pine trees known as the Bosc del Vives. The track to the left goes to Tomb de la Paella.

0:05  1:37

0,400  8,400

Intersection. Here we take the track to the left heading north. The track to the right returns to Fontscaldes by the sunny slopes. The one ahead leads to Torre de la Mixarda and Figuerola. We pass between vineyards and finally enter the woods. Later, the track makes its way along the bed of the stream.

0:06  1:43

0,500  8,900

Granges del Roca. Here we stay left, the footpath heading north between stone embankments. We climb uphill a little, leaving the stream behind us.

0:03  1:46

0,300  9,200

Fork. The path is intersected on the right by another path, having come up from the bottom of the gully. We continue to climb.

0:01  1:47

0,100  9,300

La Fassina (460m). We come to the great *masia* de la Fassina, where we also link up with the road or Carretera dels Masos. We follow the road right towards Figuerola del Camp. On the left we will come to the N-240, just in Tomb de la Paella.

8. Miramar, a balcony on Camp

0:02  1:49

0,100  9,400

Fork in the track (post). Leaving the Masos road we take a left turn onto a wide track facing the mountain. Down to the right, beneath the power lines, we can see Mas de Mandil. A little higher and by the side of the track, we come across the remains of a *masia*, completely overgrown with vegetation. The track continues to make its way uphill. We pass between the walls of a collapsed barn and the foot of a pylon. From here, we have a beautiful view of Miramar, set on the crag.

0:07  1:56

0,500  9,900

Intersection. We follow the track right, the one to the left levelling out towards the Font Fresca gully. A hundred metres on and we pass another track on the left (towards an electricity pylon). On the other side an isolated track leads to Mas de Mandil.

0:06  2:02

0,300  10,200

Fork. Here our track is joined on the left, by the track from Font Freda.

0:02  2:04

0,100  10,300

Hill (576m). We come to a hill where we find a strip of land without any trees, creating a fire-breaker and a track providing access to the same. We take the other track on the left going up. On the same side we have an embankment and at ground level, a water tap and trough where it might be advisable to fill the water bottle. Continuing to make our way up, we have a splendid view of the crest of the Serra Carbonària, Coll de Prenafeta and Tossal Gros, at the foot of which are the woodlands of Sant Pare and, in the background, we can just make out the village of Figuerola del Camp.

0:02  2:06

0,100  10,400

Gate and fork. We come across an iron gate, usually left open. We turn left and continue to wind our way up the steep hill until the path finally levels out a little towards the north and next to an embankment.

In front of the gate is the entrance to the Mas del Barbat water culvert. On the right, a track goes into the woods, albeit closed with a padlock.



Fontscaldes path

0:03  2:09

0,200  10,600

Fork. We continue ahead on an improved track, leaving the woodland track on our right. Three hundred metres further on and we pass by the yard and buildings by the name of les Cotxeres.

0:06  2:15

0,350  10,950

Gate and asphalted road (post). We come to a second gate, also open, which we pass through and continue on to the left, along the asphalted road from the N-240 to Miramar.

0:01  2:16

0,050  11,000

Detour to Miramar (signposted). We take this route to the right where a pylon prevents any vehicles passing. We are now at the entrance to Miramar. We make our way between the remains of the barns and an embankment, at the end of which we find the entrance to Mas de les Heures, on the right hand side, guarded by some very tall cypress trees. The ground underfoot is paved and scored to prevent slipping on the steep slope.

8. Miramar, a balcony on Camp

0:08 🕒 2:24

0,600 🏃 11,600

Miramar (680m). *A small nucleus within the municipality of Figuerola del Camp set on a crag beneath la Cogulla, visible from the entire Camp de Tarragona region. The little Romanesque church in Miramar pays homage to Sant Mateu, one of the apostles and the altar is dedicated to Sant Bernat de Menthon, patron saint of trekkers. To the west, set in a depression between the village and la Cogulla, the village's water source, with an abundance of fresh natural spring water, is in the middle of an attractive grove. To the north of the hamlet is the cemetery in which lies the remains of Masgoret, the Carlist general.*

This small village or hamlet was abandoned for some years, but is now gradually being reconstructed, thanks to the efforts of the Valls ramblers association, responsible for the Montserrat Gili mountain refuge.

There are no bars or grocery shops.

We enter by the main street or Carrer Mayor. At the third set of large gates we come to the Xalet-Refugi Montserrat Gili, the refuge, owned by the Secció de Muntanya de l'AAEET de Valls. To make use of the refuge, the keys must be requested beforehand from the association's headquarters in Valls. The street consists of the house façades and the crag leading up to the Plaça Mayor or the main square. From here, we can make our way up to the church and take great delight in the impressive panoramic views from the "balconada de Miramar" in front of the church.



The Miramar balcony

Hiking routes in Alt Camp

THE ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF LA COGULLA

For those who wish to do so, it is possible to make the ascent to the top of la Cogulla where there is the Creu or cross and television transmitters. At 786m, in spite of not being the highest summit on the Serra de Miramar (with Tossal Gros or Morrot de Sant Jordi at 867m), this is perhaps the most emblematic and characteristic of these regions and what's more offers some fantastic views literally to all four winds.

0:00  0:00

0,000  0,000

The little church square. We make our way around the apse and take the steps down towards the pine walkway where there is parking for vehicles. We continue along the upward rising track in a northwesterly direction, leaving the road on our right and the track to the water source, on the left. A hundred metres up and we are joined, on the right, by the track to the village's water tank. We continue to follow the signs for the GR 7 route.

0:06  0:06

0,400  0,400

Intersection. Here where the track splits three-ways, we take the track furthest left, which winds its way first across the trough, and then continues to ascend. The surfaced track, straight ahead, goes as far as the phone antennas on Tossal de la Somerota. The track down, which runs parallel to this, is padlocked, this being the Camí de Lilla and the continuation of the signs for the GR 7 route.

0:08  0:14

0,500  0,900

Footpath. A footpath appears on the left, which is actually a short-cut. This path climbs straight up, but literally reaches the summit in a matter of a hundred metres or so. If we have the inclination, we can take this, saving ourselves from the long way round on the path.

0:07  0:21

0,400  1,300

Cim de la Cogulla (786m). This summit is topped by an early twentieth century iron cross which, since the advent of TV, has been somewhat eclipsed by the buildings and powerful signal transmitter antennae. The view from here is almost never-ending although, it has to be said, a clear day is needed for it to be fully appreciated.



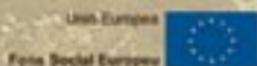
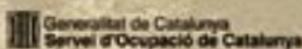
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Activitat de Turisme
de la Diputació de Tarragona



Pacte de Santes Creus



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