



2 Jimera de Líbar El Colmenar

GR 141 GRAN SENDA DE LA SERRANÍA DE RONDA
SECTION 2: JIMERA DE LÍBAR - EL COLMENAR

LENGHT: 24,9 km DURATION: 7 h

INCLINESS
Total ascent: 749 m Total descent: 1.001 m

CARTOGRAPHY E/1:25.000
1064-II (Cortes de la Frontera) | 1064-IV (Gaucín) | 1064-III (El Colmenar)



PROFILE OF THIS SECTION



LINKS TO OTHER APPROVED TRACKS



GR 249 Gran Senda de Málaga	PR-A 258 Atajate - Jímera	SL-A 34 Cañón Buitreras
	PR-A 237 C Tesoro - Benalauría	SL-A 138 Río Guadiaro
	PR-A 245 El Colmenar - Gaucín	SL-A 186 Camino de la Estación

This guide does not offer information regarding the state of conservation of the tracks since it can vary at any time.

ITINERARY OF THE TRACK

2



SUMMARY OF THE SECTION

We will follow the course of the river Guadiaro along this section of the track, which will take us from Jímera de Líbar to El Colmenar (also known as **Estación de Gaucín**). The latter belongs to the town of Cortes de la Frontera. Most of our journey runs along the left river bank, through meadows, woodland and farmlands that stretch over the inter-stream ridge that separates us from the Valle del Genal (Valle of the Genal). A succession of medium-height mountain ranges dominate the fields, such as the sierras del **Conio**, **Benadalid**, **Benalauría**, del **Fraile** and del **Hacho**. On the other side we will always see the grey limestone of the macizo de Líbar (massif of Líbar), which is the most eastern area of the Sierra de Grazalema Natural Park and runs parallel to the river Guadiaro. Only at the end of this section of the track, when we get to the narrow cañón de

las **Buitreras** (canyon of las Buitreras), a protected area and Natural Monument in Andalusia, will we cross to the opposite river bank to finish our journey. We can also choose to take the detour of the Gran Senda de la Serranía de Ronda (Great Track of the Serranía de Ronda), that will take us from the Laguna Honda, near the town of Cañada del Real Tesoro and back to the main route through the Pasada del **Bujeo del Álamo**.



Ardivieja flower

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KEEP IN MIND

We will pass through a total of 10 wooden gates (locally known as **angarillas**) that we must remember to close to prevent the cattle from crossing from one ranch to another. We should also have in mind, specially in the rainy seasons, that the track can be a bit uncomfortable to walk through due to the sticky mud in the Dehesa de Jímera and the rest of clayey trails of this section. Also be careful when crossing the different fords, as the river levels can be high because of the rain. Please do not disturb the livestock that graze in the field, specially the cattle. Although cows are gentle animals, they are easily enraged when bothered and may charge at you; should we find any in the middle of the track, we should best make

MAIN SPOTS OF THIS SECTION			
1	Jímera de Líbar	30S x: 296633 – y: 4058399	520 m
2	Dehesa de Jímera	30S x: 294870 – y: 4057842	453 m
3	Vado de Arroyo Judío	30S x: 294291 – y: 4056784	413 m
4	Arroyo Alfacara	30S x: 293937 – y: 4055523	424 m
5	Laguna Honda	30S x: 293483 – y: 4053823	445 m
6	Siete Pilas	30S x: 293522 – y: 4052742	565 m
7	Venta del Tío Casas	30S x: 291488 – y: 4051148	365 m
8	Puerto de la Fresneda	30S x: 290811 – y: 4049858	474 m
9	Puente de los Alemanes	30S x: 287866 – y: 4048541	330 m
10	Charco del Moro	30S x: 288135 – y: 4047296	220 m
11	Central Hidroeléctrica Buitreras	30S x: 287139 – y: 4046390	227 m
12	El Colmenar	30S x: 286334 – y: 4046512	239 m



◀ THIS SECTION ONLINE

a detour and resume the trail further on. The puente de los Alemanes (Bridge of the Germans), which is 60 metres high, does not currently have any security fences, so we should take precautions, specially if we want to look over the bridge to see the bottomless abyss below. The descent towards the charco del Moro is very steep and slippery, so it is recommendable to use alpenstocks. Up to the scattered houses of Siete Pilas (Benalauría), our track coincides with the itinerary of the GR-249, Gran Senda de Málaga (Great Track of Málaga). As with the first section of the track, Jímera de Líbar, Cañada del Real Tesoro (Estación de Cortes) and El Colmenar (Estación de Gaucín) are all connected by the Algeciras-Ronda railway, which allows us to combine both sections. ADIF-RENFE Information number: 902320320.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ITINERARY



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▲ Sierra Blanquilla to the left and sierra del Palo to the right

1 JIMERA DE LÍBAR – km 0

We start by the MA-8307, at the exit of Jímera and in direction to Atajate. Near the fountain we will see a public washing place, now fallen into disuse but well preserved, and behind it, a trough for the cattle. Hear you will also see several markers that belong to the PR-A258 Jímera de Líbar-Atajate (although the sign wrongly reads PR-A 257) and to the great tracks GR-249 and GR-141. The last two overlap up until the **Laguna Honda** (Deep Lake in English).



We start our walk down the road to **Atajate** and later we turn to the asphalt lane to the right. This path will take us though several smallholdings of olive trees, almond trees and farmlands. At that same crossroad you will see a sign of the GR-249. It is worthwhile to stop here for a moment to look at the spectacular view of the **Blanquilla**, del **Palo** and **Benaoján** mountain ranges, all part of the **Grazalema Natural Park**. On these steep mountainsides and under the highest escarpments, natural habitat of the mountain goat, there are small patches of holm oaks that are home to several species, like the ginet.



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JIMERA DE LÍBAR: 540 m above sea level. The town is formed by two different settlements: the town itself and the neighbourhood of la Estación near the river Guadiaro we have just crossed. We can visit the *iglesia de Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, the ermita de la *Virgen de la Salud* and the *fountain-washing place*. As we have said, in the neighbourhood of la Estación there are several rural lodgings and tourist attractions related to the *Sierra de Grazalema Natural Park*. We should mention the local fair and feasts to honour the Virgen de la Salud (mid-August) and the *romería* (religious pilgrimage) at the end of June.
+ Info: www.jimeradelibar.es



We will walk under the shade of the holm oaks and surrounded by retamas (a type of broom bush), thorny brooms, fan palms and mastics. We follow the trail towards the **arroyo de Atajate** (stream of Atajate, also known as del **Molinillo**). Further down the river, some black poplars indicate the location of the abandoned **mill of Cecilio**. The following ford will grant us access to the public mount **Dehesa**. We follow the road not paying attention to the diversions to the right, as they would take us to the Cañada Real del Campo de Gibraltar and to the river bank of the Guadiaro.

2 MONTE MUNICIPAL DEHESA (public mount Dehesa)– km 2,1

The Dehesa is a property of the town of Jímera de Líbar and it has a surface area of 257 hectares. It is an important cork oak forest, where holm oaks and gall-oaks also grow. The underbrush is formed by retamas, rockroses and matagallos (a type of nettle). Forest resources like cork are exploited, but also the montanera pig rearing is practised (pigs are left to roam freely and graze on acorns and wild grass). Other livestock is also bred here, such as goats and sheep. There is also a warehouse that is used as seedbed by different companies.

After a couple of hundred metres we will have to have to cross a wooden gate as we enter a different property. From

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- ▲ Rock bunting
- Debarking of the cork oaks during summer

- ▼ The massif of Líbar reflected in the waters of the Guadiaro



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here we can see to the South-west some houses of Cortes de la Frontera scattered under the **sierra de los Pinos**, one of the locations with the highest rainfall rate of the Iberian Peninsula. Its proximity to the river allows us to hear the murmur of the **Guadiaro**, protected by a dense river bank vegetation. As we wander down the path, we can enjoy the view of several old cork oaks and gall-oaks. Charcoal used to be made out of these, when wood was the main energy resource. Soon, we will arrive at the **ford of the Arroyo Judío**.



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▲ Deer roam the meadows of the Valle del Guadiaro

► Trail in between the cork oaks



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3 VADO DE ARROYO JUDÍO (ford of the Arroyo Judío)– km 3,5

Under normal circumstances, we should be able to cross the stream easily, but be careful if it has rained heavily. To the right we can see a facility for retinta cows, the most important type of cow of the area. However we have also seen other Andalusian species that are being recovered, such as the pajuna, the berrenda or the cárdena. A bit further on, to the right, we find the **cortijo de Arroyo Judío** (country house of Arroyo Judío) and a road going down that connects with the **Cañada Real** del Campo de Gibraltar, which runs almost parallel to the GR-141.



We continue straight through the Vereda de Gaucín until we reach a hight that allows us to see a great panoramic view of the Guadiaro valley. We will soon pass by the cortijo de **Bernardito**, easily recognisable for its beautiful eucalyptus. As many other cortijos of the area, this country house is in ruins, and only the best preserved part is still used as a stable. Here we will see two different paths: ours continues straight forward and the ascends to meet again with the first path.

▼ Panoramic view of Cortes de la Frontera from the Vereda de Gaucín to Jimera de Libar

We leave the municipality of Jimera de Libar and we enter that of Benadalid. The vegetation also changes, as this piece of land is a pure plantation of walnut trees. **This may be the most difficult part of the journey:** there are many forks on the road to prevent the overcrowding of the path.



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► Cattle will be seen along this entire section of the GR 141

▼ We will cross several wooden gates on our way



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This may cause us to miss the ruins of **the old inn of the Alfacara**. However, we will know we are following the correct path if we come across a battered threshing floor surrounded by a stone wall. After crossing a gate we arrive at the Alfacara stream.

4 ARROYO ALFACARA (Alfacara stream)– km 5,2

Both the fig trees and the rosebays, tied by climbing plants, almost cover the Alfacara stream. Usually, we will be able to cross it easily, but a rise in the level of the river may cause the pontoons to disappear, which can cause some difficulties. After we cross the stream we will walk by a water tank and the old path. Here, the track turns into a paved lane that ends at a larger road. We follow the Vereda de Gaucín, bordered by boundary mounds during a great part of the way. The next landmark of our journey is the vado del arroyo de la Fuensanta (ford of the Fuensanta stream). Next to it we can see the majestic **Cortijo Nuevo**. From here we will discover wide farmlands and grazing lands.

We ascend in between scattered hawthorns as we gain sight of the Benalauría mountain range. To the South-east we can see the motley historical centre of Cortes de la Frontera on

the eastern mountainside. The next gate gives us access to the estate of the **cortijo de los Capitanes**, where the ground is quite muddy. We should pay attention, because at some points the path can be hardly seen. However, the following gate is seen from afar. From a small hill we will be able to see the location of **Siete Pilas**, easily recognisable for some tall black poplars that tower over the mountainside. We descend parallel to the **arroyo de la Vega**, which practically covered with mastics, until we cross its ford and the following gate. Shortly after, we will find the Laguna Honda.

5 LAGUNA HONDA – km 7,5

The Laguna Honda (Deep Lake in English), also known as **Laguna Florida** or **Laguna del Quemado**, is in truth a small endorheic pool that is totally dry during summer. A few meters onwards, the trail overlaps a part of the track from Cordel del Guadiaro to puerto del Espino. This is also part of the PR-255 Jimera de Libar-Cortes de la Frontera, which covers both that livestock trail and the Cañada Real del Campo de Gibraltar. We continue to the left until we find a fork on the road that has some signs belonging to the GR-141 and the GR-249. One points to the 7.5km we have already walked from Jimera; another to the 17.4km left to finish our journey at El Colmenar. Here we find the diversion to the GR-141-1 that will allow us



▲ Signs at the diversion to the Cañada del Real Tesoro

▼ Laguna Honda



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to reach the Cañada Real del Tesoro, also known as Estación de Cortes (Cortes Station). We can continue our itinerary after we have passed that town and once we have supplied ourselves with food at the Pasada del Bujeo del Álamo.

To resume our journey down the GR-141, we take the detour to the left until we reach the municipality of Almargen, that meets the trail from Ronda to Gaucín at the old inn of San Isidoro. We are on the public mount Dehesa. After the Reconquista ("reconquest", historical period from 722 to 1492 during which the Christian kingdoms of the Peninsula sought to conquer the land controlled by Muslims), these and other surrounding lands were given to the towns of Benadalid and Benalauría. These in turn, belonged to the feudal estate of Benadalid, controlled by the Duke of Ferias. After the Moorish were driven out, some pieces of land were given to settlers so they could farm them, while the trees themselves remained as property of the towns. The mount was run collectively between the two towns until 1931. Nowadays, although the Dehesa is still property of the town, its is run by the Regional Government of Andalusia

We resume our journey walking down the road that goes from **Cordel del Guadiaro** to **puerto del Espino**. Further onwards, near the hidden fountain of los Garbanzos, we enter the municipality of Benalauría. After one last steep slope, we arrive at the scattered houses of Siete Pilas.

▼ Sierra de Libar



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▲ Troughs of Siete Pilas.
Cortes de la Frontera in the background

► Pasada del Bujeo del Bujeo del Álamo. Diversion GR 141.1



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6 SIETE PILAS – km 8,9

On the higher part of the trail, where the road from Benalauría to Cortes begins, we find the troughs that give name to this location: Siete Pilas (Seven Troughs in English). This settlement has one of the best panoramic views of the mountains of the Sierra de Grazalema Natural Park. These manglers figure on official documents as **Abrevadero-Descansadero de las Pilas de Calabrina** (Trough-Stopping place of Pilas de Calabrina), and they belong to the road from Cordel del Guadiaro to puerto del Espino (pass of el Espino). If we take into account the disputes over these rich lands, we can understand the strange arrangement of the towns of Benadalid, Benalauría, Algotocín and Gaucín which, although belonging to the Valle del Genal, they expand their borders to the river banks of the Guadiaro.

The road from Benalauría to Cortes runs by the troughs. This road is also part of both the GR-249 (Gran Senda de Málaga) and the PR-A 237 (Cañada del Real Tesoro-Benalauría). We find the western exit next to a multisport court and a few houses. A dense holm oak forest surrounds the road, which on some parts still conserves its stone pavement and gutters. After less than a kilometre down this path, we have to cross the A-373 road and continue following well-trodden trail. Soon, we will leave the PR-A 237 through another gate. This part of the itinerary is



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▲ Remains of the old stone pavement of the road from Benalauría to Cortes de la Frontera



- ▲ Gall-oak forest in Siete Pilas
- Abandoned vegetable gardens on the riverbanks of the Guadiaro

wonderful to walk thanks to its flat course. It will lead us to the municipality of Cañada del Real Tesoro. From here, we will get to a small trail near the **Fuente de la Pasá house**.

We turn to the left and, after a small ascent, we will pass near the cortijo of Siete Puertas. We will walk near a wide meadow that encloses the river Guadiaro, next to the end of the mountain, and surrounded by a magnificent forest of holm oaks, cork oaks and gall-oaks. The next landmark of our journey is the crossroads between the **Cañada Real del Campo de Gibraltar** (which we are walking) and the **Cañada Real del Llano de las Cruces**.

7 VENTA DEL TÍO CASAS (Tío Casas Inn)– km 11,2

We are on the location of the Venta del Tío Casas (Tío Casas Inn). Also near the crossroads, we see the house of el Cerrillo. The Cañada Real del Llano de las Cruces, through which the PR-A 244 Gaucín-Cañada del Real Tesoro runs, then turns right and crosses the Guadiaro over a beautiful bridge at the **Pasada del Bujeo del Álamo**. We continue straight ahead through a meadow roamed by retinta cows and Iberian pigs until we reach the bridge that crosses the Salitre stream. This bridge is both pedestrian and for vehicles. From here, to the left, and belonging to the municipality of Algotocín, we find the Cañada Real del Campo de Gibraltar which goes to the pass of las Eras. This part of the track also belongs to the PR-A 244 to Gaucín.

- ▼ Many Iberian pigs are bred in the area



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- Old threshing floor near cortijo del Conde



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The road to the Puertos (mountain passes), our road, turns to the right and ascends up to a small resting place by two decrepit elms. After another ascent, we arrive at the Puerto de la Fresneda (Ash Forest Pass).

- ▼ Towards la Fresneda

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- ▲ Ruins of the cortijo del Conde

8 PUERTO DE LA FRESNEDA (Ash Forest Pass)– km 14,6

This last slope is quite steep, so you might want to stop for a while before continuing our journey. From here onwards, the view of the landscape changes completely thanks to the altitude. Unfortunately, these lands have been consumed by the fire and there are numerous dead gall-oaks and holm oaks. However, the underbrush gives a note of hope. Soon, we will cross the de la Abejera stream, dry during most of the year. Further on, when we find a fork on the road, we take the path to the right, which ascends to the **cortijo del Conde**. Near this country house we find a sign



that points towards the **cañón de las Buitreras** (canyon of the Buitreras). From this lookout we can see how the railroad enters one of the many tunnels that go through the mountain. Particularly remarkable is the proliferation of the turbinata subspecies of Phoenician juniper, which normally grows near the coast, showing that this area was once near the sea. Nearly at the end of the track, we find the ruins of the cortijo del Conde. This ranch, now abandoned, is also known as the cortijo de las Buitreras and it stands as proof of the crisis that the traditional agricultural model suffers

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- ▲ Puerto de la Fresneda
- The road from Puerto de la Fresneda



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since some decades ago. The trail descends, surrounded by fig trees, towards a visible threshing floor. We will then walk through the retamas and down some steps and walkways carved into the stone. We are now on the Puente de los Alemanes (Bridge of the Germans).

9 PUENTE DE LOS ALEMANES (Bridge of the Germans) – km 20,1

Built in 1918, the puente de los Alemanes is part of a 6 km

- ▼ Puente de los Alemanes and its stairway

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- ▲ The river course of the Guadiaro through the Cañón de las Buitreras



conduit that supplies water to the Buitreras hydro-electric power plant. This place is simply spectacular: it is both majestic and intimidating. At the bottom of the canyon, the waters of the Guadiaro run as if they crossed an open cave. On the other side, there is a small tunnel we must go through to get to the foot of a steep mountainside. A hard ascent awaits us, but it is highly worthwhile. When we get to the top a natural balcony will offer us a great panoramic view. After that, we will have to descend to return to the **riverbanks of the Guadiaro**. We must be very careful, the gradient is steep and the terrain is quite slippery. From this sheer mountainside we can see the amazing railroad track. We will then arrive at the Charco del Moro.

► Charco del Moro



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▲ People practising canyoning in the Cañón de las Buitreras

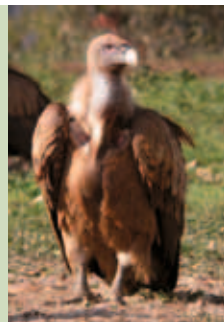
10 CHARCO DEL MORO (Pool of the Moor)– km 21,3



The charco del Moro is a long pool of cold water embedded in between two walls. If we look closely, in the middle of the pool and near the left edge, we will see small waves on the surface of the water; this is where the emergence point of the subterranean waters is located.



The cañón de las Buitreras was the first ravine in Andalusia dedicated to canyoning. Nowadays, these activities are regulated and you need permission from the Consejería de Medio Ambiente (Regional Department of the Environment) to practice them. You can get it at the local office in Ronda, located in the Alameda del Tajo. To pass in between these walls, that in some points are a hundred metres high, as you climb, jump and swim in the long pools is a remarkable experience for those brave enough to try it. To those new to this type of sport, we highly recommend hiring the services of one of the companies dealing in active tourism of the area; this way, with the help of an experienced guide and the necessary equipment, we will have an unforgettable experience.

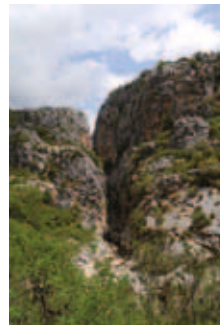


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▲ Griffon vulture

◄ The river Guadiaro and the railway track run side by side through the Buitreras area

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▲ Cañón de las Buitreras
► Admiring Sierra del Hacho



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From here on, we will walk along the Guadiaro, either over its river bank or on the western mountainside. We would like to highlight the suspension bridge that crosses adit 9, an outlet of the hydro-electric complex that can be quite impressive when it carries a lot of water, creating a wonderful waterfall. Equally impressive are the wild mountains of the **sierra del Hacho**, almost completely covered by a beautiful forest and packed with all the types of flower that are typical of the Mediterranean mountain vegetation.

11 CENTRAL HIDROELÉCTRICA BUITRERAS (Buitreras hydro-electric power plant)– km 24

We finally arrive at the great pipe of the Buitreras hydro-electric power plant. The main building has the same taste as other buildings from the beginning of the 20th century, and has a great architectural value. Since 1918, the Hydro-electric company of the Guadiaro has worked at full operating level with two other groups, that were joined by a third seven years later. In between all of them, they generated 7200 kW of power. In 1949, the station management changed hands, and has been run since then by Sevillana de Electricidad, nowadays known as Endesa. We continue down the path and among the **abandoned houses of former workers** of the station. We then exit the complex through a great gate. The next stretch of the road is an asphalt lane that runs among tall eucalyptuses and will take us to the town of El Colmenar.



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▲ Mules are still used in the cork extraction

12 EL COLMENAR – km 24,9

This town was settled during 1892, when the **Algeciras-Bobadilla railway** was built by the English company The railway Algeciras-Gibraltar. The British influence in the architecture is easily noticeable in the station and other surrounding buildings. Since the 1st October 1913 the Compañía de los Ferrocarriles Andaluces ran the railway, but in 1941 the service was nationalised and RENFE took over the management.

A point of botanic interest is the **eucalyptus**

arboretum of El Colmenar, located in the outskirts of the town, near the forest trail of Cortes de la Frontera. The history of this place goes back to the beginning of the 20th century. Its original purpose was to experiment with the species of trees that better adapted to the local terrain. With this aim, the work team of engineer Eladio Caro introduces more than 60 different species in a this previously delimited piece of land. The abundance of game in the **Los Alcornocales**

Natural Park, which can be hunted in the Reserva Andaluza de Caza de Cortes de la Frontera (Andalusian Game Reserve of Cortes de la Frontera), has influenced the traditional culinary recipes of the town, as many include venison. In the same manner, the local fondness for fungi picking has caused the presence of many tapas and dishes with ceps and chanterelles in the restaurants and bars of El Colmenar. The Estación de Gaucín (as the town is also known), is one of the Andalusian towns that still conserves a wide mule driving tradition, specially used in the **cork extraction**.