

## SANT MIQUEL DE CASTELLÓ AND FALGARS

### Fact sheet:

Difficulty: Average

Distance travelled: 10,900 m

Highest and lowest points: 950 and 490 m

Duration: 3 h 30 min

### Route:

- Leave the parking lots of the centre of Els Hostalets d'en Bas. Go past the church of Santa Maria and continue to the right on Vic street. Once out of the town, turn left onto an asphalted track that leads to the parish cemetery. Throughout the journey you will find the yellow markings of the Itinerànnia trail network.
- Before the cemetery, the road turns to the right and continues towards the Bigorra area. Leave the asphalted road and turn right onto a pathway bordering a ridge that goes into the forest.
- The path climbs up steeply, but in a pleasantly fresh area, with lush vegetation and the sound of birdsong, so making climb a charming experience. The variety of trees will be remarkable until you reach the beech grove before the small Portell pass.
- Once in Portell, we have the hermitage of Sant Miquel de Castelló just close by, where you can make short visit to. The views from this privileged viewpoint are spectacular. At your foot there is La Vall d'en Bas, with the Pyrenees in the background, the Puigsacalm cliffs on the left and broad views of the La Garrotxa region.
- You will come to the Itinerànnia G63 Sant Miquel de Falgars crossroads, and you take the path that indicates Els Hostalets d'en Bas via Falgars, with this section also coinciding with the GR2.
- After a few metres you will find another Itinerànnia G64 crossroads Rasos de Pibernat, where you will also head towards Els Hostalets d'en Bas via Falgars. Follow the path, now flatter, in the direction of Falgars d'en Bas. You can drink water at the Pibernat fountain and see the farmhouse with the same name. If you are lucky enough to do the route in spring, you can enjoy some wonderful flowering meadows and see a large number of orchids.
- At Falgars you will find the G66 Pla de Falgars crossroads, and you can visit the village following the Els Hostalets d'en Bas direction via Grau and enjoy the magnificent views over La Vall d'en Bas

and the rest of La Garrotxa . Go back towards **G66** and now take the path showing Els Hostalets d'en Bas 1 h. You start the descent on a concreted road, and then take a fairly straight but entertaining pathway (which can be avoided following the road if you come across a lot of mud on the way).

The path will take us to the plain and a few minutes from Els Hostalets, where we will enter the village to find the **G65** crossing and we will go down Teixeda street again to come back to the parking lot.

#### **Notes:**

- The whole route can be followed with the yellow Itinerànnia trail network marks.
- To follow this route you can download the mobile Itinerànnia application for free.
  
- The route is very attractive in either direction. You can also go first to Falgars and then on to Sant Miquel de Castelló.

#### **The attractions of the route**

Sant Miquel de Castelló, an ancient fortress that you can still see some remains of, is today a hermitage and a refuge managed by an excursionist group, and the buildings are closed to the public. Although it is relatively low in height and relatively easily accessed, it is one of the best viewpoints over La Vall d'en Bas.

From Els Hostalets, Sant Miquel can be seen to the west, at a higher point relative to the cliffs of its immediate surroundings. If you go up there, you will see even taller cliffs and the mosaic of crops on the flatter plots in the valley.

The current landscape was first started by the formation of faults and later by the barrage caused by the lava coming from the Croscat volcano near Olot, which cut off the old course of the Fluvià river and thus created a lake that eventually filled with sediments, forming the current valley. From Sant Miquel it is no stretch to imagine the continuity of the ridges below the crops and the 'connection' between the mountains on either side of the valley.

The Falgars plateau is located in a typical area of natural pastures in La Vall d'en Bas mountain area, within the Collsacabra subregion, and as a whole can still be considered a place to be discovered. The social changes of the last century made most of the people that were still living there leave.

Access by road traffic is from just a bit further from the La Devesa hostel, halfway between Olot and Vic along the Coll de Condreu, and now the road is paved to the centre, where the church is .