

BEST PRACTICES



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Capturing animals is not permitted



Walk on the marked trails



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Please respect private property



Release of exotic species prohibited



Please refrain from making noise



Plant collecting is prohibited

Emergency phone: 112



CÓRDOBA

PARQUE NATURAL
Sierra de Cardena
y Montoro

MORE INFORMATION

Venta Nueva Visitor Centre.

Link with road N-420 with the CO-510, km 79. Cardena, Córdoba.

Tel. 677 904 308 / 957 015 923.

ventanadelvisitante.



UNIÓN EUROPEA
Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural



Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul

PARQUE NATURAL
Sierra de Cardena
y Montoro

trail

Camino de la
Piedra Gorda



Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul

OTHER CONSERVATION SCHEMES



• ROUTE

Linear walk

• LENGTH (ONE-WAY)

5.1 km

• ESTIMATED TIME (ONE-WAY)

1 hour and 45 minutes

• DIFFICULTY

Low

• TYPE OF TRAIL

Trail of compacted soil footpath

• LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

A *dehesa* landscape, in which you can find many granite formations.

• SHADE

Scarce / Frequent

• SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

• RECOMMENDATIONS

Carry drinking water and sun protection in summer and wear suitable clothing and footwear.

• PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Córdoba / Cardena

• SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

882 - Cardena

• START / END COORDINATES

38° 16' 44.67"N 4° 19' 14.17"O

38° 18' 34.34"N 4° 16' 59.58"O



HOW TO GET THERE

To get to the trailhead, take the Cardena exit on the N-420 towards Aldea del Cerezo. At this junction, take the service road to the north and, after about 1,200 m, you will reach the signposted starting point.



PARKING

There is no car park at the start of the trail, although there are places nearby where you can leave your vehicle. We recommend you access the trail from the town of Cardena, where you can park your vehicle.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

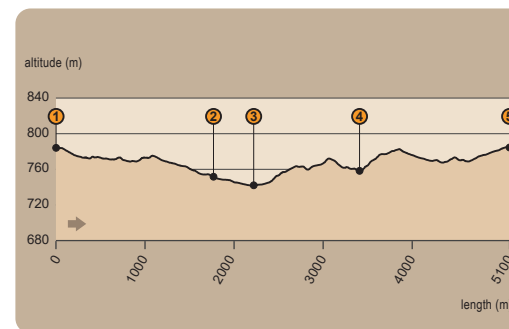
The company running regular bus routes in the area is Autocares Carrera (tel. 957 42 21 77; www.autocaresramirez.es) or Auto Transportes Ureña S.A. (tel. 957 40 44 79).



OTHER TRAILS

The natural park has many trails to get to know it, among the closest to it are the Cardena - Azuel trail, the Camino de los Madereros trail or the Cardena - Aldea del Cerezo trail.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



• MAXIMUM GRADIENT

46 m

• MAXIMUM ALTITUDE

786 m

• MINIMUM ALTITUDE

740 m



GRANITE BOULDERS

Granite is a very common rock - it makes up 15% of the emerged continents - originating from solidified lava from the Earth's core, which emerged to the surface due to orogenic folding or the erosion of surface materials. In its best-known variety, it is composed of visible grains of quartz and mica, agglutinated in a matrix of whitish feldspar that acts as a cement to bind the whole.

The most common erosion of granite in these latitudes is in the form of layers. Moisture and water dissolve the more superficial feldspar layers and, little by little, the grains of the materials are loosened, giving the rock the characteristic rounded shape that you most frequently see in the countryside and in sandy-textured soils.

The inhabitants of the Sierra de Cardena y Montoro Natural Park have used granite to build houses, feeding and drinking troughs and, above all, the walls that can be seen along the entire route, built with such skill that they have withstood the test of time. The name of the district of Los Pedroches, which includes Cardena, is related to the abundance of granite, which creates its characteristic rocky landscapes, which seems to be the etymological meaning of the district's toponym.

Today, granite has many uses thanks to its hardness, impermeability, density and even its aesthetic appearance. Dikes, breakwaters, harbours, foundations, reservoirs, pavements... are common uses for granite rock, but it is also commonly used in statues or kitchen countertops, replacing marble, which is much more delicate and alterable.



Camino de la Piedra Gorda

This trail is a pleasant and comfortable walk along a traditional path that runs through areas of local pasture landscapes known as *dehesa*, the most representative landscape of this Natural Park. It takes its name from a very characteristic granite outcrop, known locally as “*Piedra Gorda*” (“Fat Rock”), located in the first half of the route, which breaks with the harmony of the sea of holm oaks that you will cross during the five kilometres of this linear path.

The *Piedra Gorda* Trail belongs to a small network of paths that start from the village of Cardeña, all of which can also be travelled by mountain bike or even on horseback. These are the Cardeña-Azuel, Camino de los Madereros, Cardeña-Aldea del Cerezo and Aldea del Cerezo-Azuel trails. Practically all of them are interconnected, which allows, once you have finished the Camino de la Piedra Gorda Trail and if you don't want to return to Cardeña by the same route, or by any of them, extending the walk depending on your preferences, physical shape or your means of transportation.

You will start the trail on a path bordered by cattle fences [1], whose piles, which in other areas are normally made of wood or metal, have been made with granite beams on which several species of lichen profusely grow, the colonising life form par excellence, which you will also find on the oldest branches of the holm oaks along the route. Further on, it is the unique stone walls of the region that trace the route.



The *dehesas* around us are relatively recent, as the holm oak trees that can be seen are quite young and in good health. Although it is not uncommon to see large birds of prey such as the griffon vulture or an of the pairs of Iberian imperial eagles present in the natural park, flying high up over the canopy of trees, the most abundant birds and the queen of the forest is the magpie, although its distant cousin, the Iberian azure-winged magpie, shares its habitat on numerous occasions. Eurasian hoopoes, blue tits, wrens, common wood pigeons and small forest birds of prey such as northern goshawks and northern sparrowhawks can be seen or heard with a little skill and if you know to tell apart their singing.

La Piedra Gorda

A little over a kilometre from the start of the trail, the path descends gently, the ground becomes deeper and the trees larger, until you can see a large granite boulder to your right: the *Piedra Gorda* [2].



Next to it, there is a small depression in the ground that temporarily accumulates a certain amount of water that the pigs use to cool themselves and take mud baths to fight parasites. For this reason, the holm oaks around the pond have mud stains at the level of the pig's back, made by pigs when they scratch the dried mud off themselves.

In some of the estates that you are passing through, their managers have decided to plant more trees and refresh the *dehesa* with younger holm oaks. However, the presence of livestock (sheep, cattle and pigs) and their taste for acorns or young shoots of acorns, together with the absence of protective scrub, makes it necessary to safeguard the saplings in various ways. Thus, on the path it is possible to observe tree guards to prevent predation by rabbits, and small mesh plots where not only trees but also accompanying bush species reproduce.



The creeks of the *dehesa*

If you continue walking along the track, shortly after you will cross first the Risquillo creek [3], then the Fariñas creek [4] and, near the end of the trail, the Navalaborrica creek, three seasonal streams that can carry a large volume of water during the rainy season, as can be seen by the hanging gates that open automatically in favour of the current in situations of floods or floods. The walls also have small openings near the ground, like spillways designed to reduce the pressure of the water on the stone walls and prevent them from being knocked down by the force of the water.

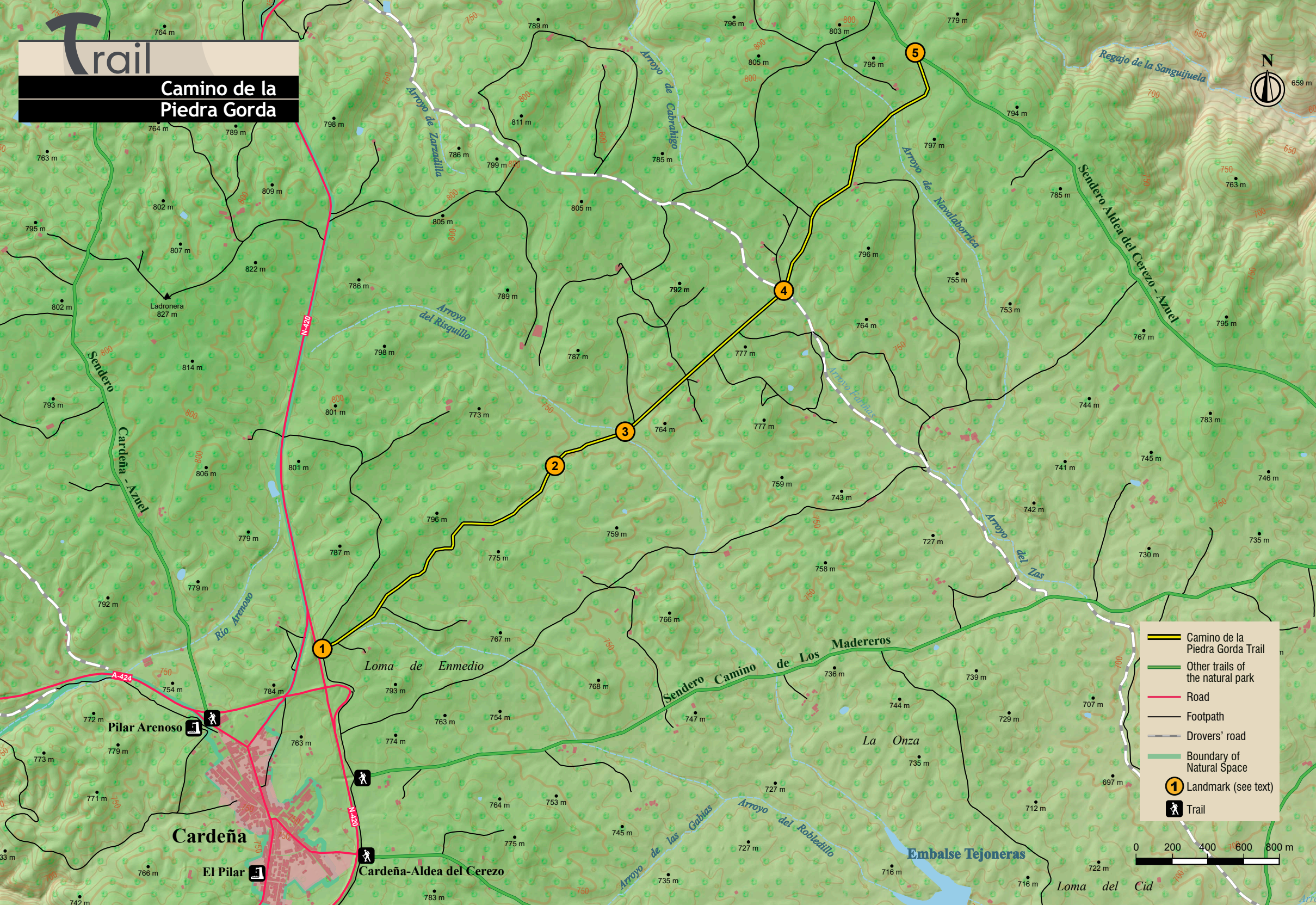










After the last stream, some five hundred metres further on, the forest track will join another traditional path that has been converted into a public footpath: Aldea del Cerezo-Azuel, which marks the end of your linear route [5] and the beginning of the way back to the starting point. However, if you prefer to make it a circular route, you can take this path to the south-east via the aforementioned Aldea del Cerezo-Azuel until it joins the Camino de los Madereros Trail, a route will leave you some 750 metres south of your starting point on the service road.



Trail

Camino de la Piedra Gorda



-  Camino de la Piedra Gorda Trail
-  Other trails of the natural park
-  Road
-  Footpath
-  Drivers' road
-  Boundary of Natural Space
-  1 Landmark (see text)
-  Trail



Cardena

El Pilar

Cardena-Aldea del Cerezo

Loma de Enmedio

Madereros

La Onza

Loma del Cid

Embalse Tejoneras

Sendero Aldea del Cerezo - Azuel

Arroyo de Navalarborca

Arroyo de las Gabias

Sendero Camino de Los

Arroyo del Risquillo

Arroyo de Cabranigo

Arroyo de Zanzadilla

Regajo de la Sanguijuela

Ladronera 827 m

Pilar Arenoso

Cardena-Aldea del Cerezo