

## GOOD PRACTICE



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked paths



Please respect private property



The capture of animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Fishing is prohibited



Plant collecting is not allowed

Emergency phone: 112



CÁDIZ MÁLAGA

PARQUE NATURAL Los Alcornocales

## MORE INFORMATION

Natural Park Office Los Alcornocales

Pza. San Jorge n.º 1. Alcalá de los Gazules. Cádiz. Tel: 956 41 86 01

El Aljibe Visitors' Centre

Ctra. CA-2112 Alcalá de los Gazules - Benalup Casas Viejas km 1  
Alcalá de los Gazules. Cádiz. Tel. 956 42 05 29

ventanadelvisitante

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## OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



### • ROUTE

Linear

### • LENGTH (OUTWARD)

3,3 km

### • ESTIMATED TIME (OUTWARD)

1 hour and 40 minutes

### • DIFFICULTY

Average

### • TYPE OF TRAIL

Path. Loose materials on the surface. Areas of flagstones and stones.

### • LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Mountain area with steep slopes and dense and diverse vegetation. Wide panoramic views of the Barbate basin and the Strait of Gibraltar.

### • SHADE

Plentiful

### • SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Necessary (nature park office)

### • RECOMMENDATIONS

Carry drinking water and wear suitable clothing and footwear. Check that the water from fountains is safe to drink.

### • PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Cádiz / Alcalá de los Gazules y  
Jerez de la Frontera

### • SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

1063 - Algar

### • START / END COORDINATES

36° 31' 18,90"N – 5° 39' 00,69"W  
36° 31' 34,06"N – 5° 38' 07,97"W



## HOW TO GET THERE

At km 13-14 on the A-2304 road (Alcalá de los Gazules-Ubrique), you will find the El Picacho recreation area, where the trail begins.



## PARKING

There is a car park with some 15 places at the start of the trail.



## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

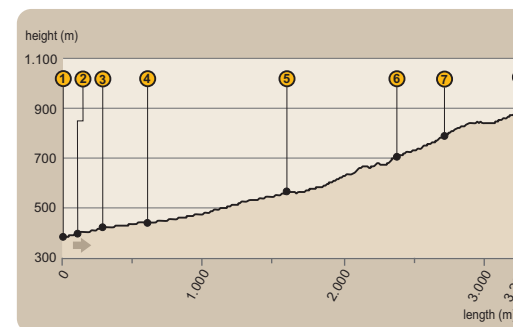
The principal company running regular bus routes in the area is Transportes Comes (tel. 902 19 92 08; www.tgcomes.es).



## OTHER TRAILS

Other marked trails in the natural park connect with it: Travesía del Aljibe, Ascent to the Aljibe and Ascent to the Picacho.

## PROFILE OF ROUTE



### • MAXIMUM GRADIENT

495 m

### • MAXIMUM HEIGHT

878 m

### • MINIMUM HEIGHT

383 m



## THE WELL-DESERVED REWARD

From its height of almost nine hundred metres, the Picacho offers a panoramic view over the natural park. The landscape is dominated by the cork oak forest, which is lost in the distance, dotted with masses of vegetation of different colours and textures that wind through the rugged gorges, such as the one we have seen at the *canuto* of Puerto Oscuro.



Between clearings in the forest, there are the *bujeos*, which are lands used for agriculture and livestock farming, with rich soils and tasty pastures where the wild olive trees provide shade for the livestock. Beyond the cork oak grove, the countryside and crops of La Janda can be found. On clear days, the view reaches the Strait of Gibraltar and the Bay of Cadiz.

The summit, subjected to intense erosion, shows the bare sandstone outcrops, with cuts and slabs of capricious shapes, where rock vegetation of great interest grows, in many cases exclusive to these mountain ranges.

In the most inaccessible spots, the birds of prey build their nests, from which they flight above our heads, giving us the spectacle of their easy and elegant gliding. The mountain goats graze on the slopes.

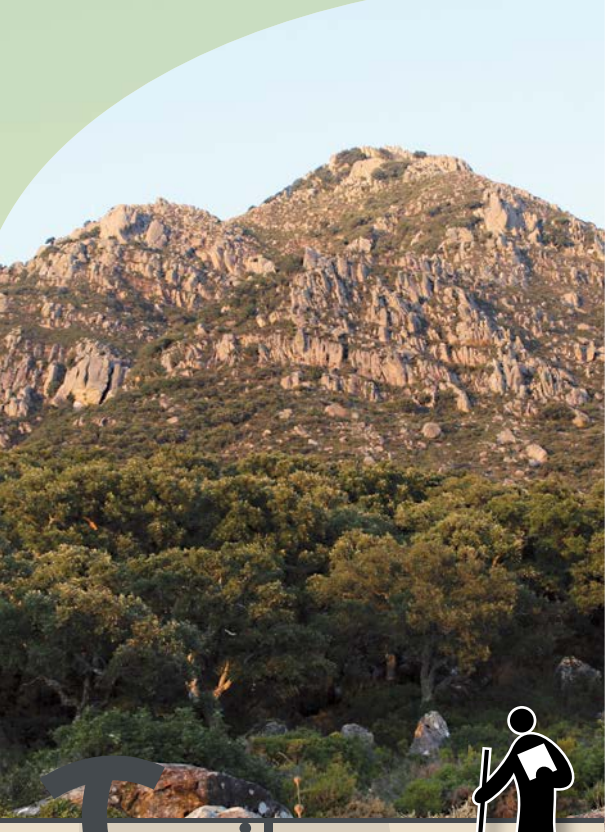
CÁDIZ-MÁLAGA



Subida al Picacho



Junta de Andalucía  
Consejería de Agricultura, Ganadería,  
Pesca y Desarrollo Sostenible



## Subida al Picacho

### The lagoon at the foot of the Picacho

We start our trail in front of the El Picacho recreational area [1]. Carob, mastic and wild olive trees accompanied by imposing specimens of holm oaks, cork oaks and gall oaks shade the path.



After a short ascent, we reach the Picacho lake [2], and find the peak that we will continue to climb. The lagoon, which is seasonal, collects the waters of autumn and winter, and barely retains them in summer. It is a source of food and water for the animals in these forests. Its greenish waters are home to amphibians, reptiles, insects and aquatic plants.



*There were many mills in these sierras that provided the flour for the bread needed every day, which was baked in ovens like this one, in two or three-kilo loaves that the workers ate over several days.*

Near the lagoon we will pass by an old bread oven [3], and then listen to the sound of the water that announces our arrival at the Garganta de Puerto Oscuro, the source of the River Barbate. Here we find a beautiful riverside forest made up mainly of alders, together with the occasional gall oak and hackberry.

We cross the stream over a wooden bridge [4], which allows us to enjoy the luxuriant alder trees, with their showy leaves and their fruits, which look like small pine cones that ripen at the end of summer, but which remain on the tree, empty, for quite a long time. Afterwards, we cross the track that leads to the refuge and to the summit of Aljibe.

### El Picacho, increasingly difficult, but getting closer

After climbing up Puerto Oscuro, the view of the majestic Picacho directs the final route we have to face.



A cork oak forest [5] offers us the possibility to regain strength before facing the last effort.

*Cork oaks and gall oaks have been accompanying us. The former are unmistakable because of their bark, the cork, extracted between June and August, which involves stripping the trunks to reveal their golden skin that will burnish over the years.*



*The gall oaks, which belong to the same family as the cork oak and the holm oak, were used for building and charcoal making because of their hard, calorific wood. Its fruit, which should not be confused with the galls caused by the bite of an insect, is the acorn, which was also used to feed livestock in the mountains.*

The slope of the Picacho is meandered by some streams that have allowed us to see, once again, vegetation similar to that of the gorge of Puerto Oscuro and even some beautiful specimens of rhododendron, recognisable by its intense green leaves in the shape of an ellipse.

### Mountain vegetation at the top

The climb gets harder and harder. The cork oak grove gradually gives way to the pine forest [6], with colossal centenary specimens, amidst a thicket of heather, strawberry tree, mastic tree, etc.



The landscape is transformed into the Puerto de las Calabazas [7]. The strong winds and the stony soil prevent the growth of larger plants, except for some kermes oaks and small bushes, the so-called *herrizas*, with endemic species and singular species such as the flycatcher, a carnivorous plant that compensates for the lack of nutrients in this soil.

After overcoming a steep escarpment, we finally reach our goal: the Picacho [8], with views over a large part of the province that will reward our efforts.



# Trail

## Subida al Picacho



- 1** Landmark (see text)
- P** Parking
- Site of ethnological interest
- Recreational area
- Interpretive panel
- Viewpoint
- Nature room
- Spring
- Bridge
- Shelter

- Subida al Picacho Trail
- Other trails of the natural park
- Road
- Path