

BEST PRACTICES



- Please leave rubbish in the bins provided
- Walk on the marked trails
- Please respect private property
- Please refrain from making noise



- Capturing animals is not permitted
- Starting fires is strictly forbidden
- Release of exotic species prohibited
- Plant collecting is prohibited

Emergency phone: 112

CÓRDOBA

ZONA ESPECIAL DE CONSERVACIÓN
Suroeste de la Sierra de Cardena y Montoro

MÁS INFORMACIÓN

Venta Nueva Visitor Centre. Link with road N-420 with the CO-510, km 79. Cardena. Córdoba. Tel: 677 982 786.

Territorial Delegation in Córdoba for Sustainability, Environment and Blue Economy. C/ Tomás de Aquino, s/n. Edificio Servicios Múltiples, 7ª planta. Córdoba-14004. Tel: 957 734 106.

ventanadelvisitante.

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ZONA ESPECIAL DE CONSERVACIÓN
Suroeste de la Sierra de Cardena y Montoro

CÓRDOBA

Trail

El Madroñal



OTHER CONSERVATION SCHEMES



• ROUTE

Linear walk

• LENGTH (ONE-WAY)

7.4 km

• ESTIMATED TIME (ONE-WAY)

2 hour and 30 minutes

• DIFFICULTY

Medium-Low

• TYPE OF TRAIL

Trail of compacted soil footpath

• LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

From the start, you will ascend towards an area of olive groves, through which you will walk between stone walls, until you reach the end of the path.

The route mostly runs across mountain olive groves dotted by olive mills, as well as areas of Mediterranean scrubland and riverside vegetation associated with the streams along the route. From various points you can make out the southern part of the Sierra de Cardena y Montoro Natural Park, steep areas dominated by pine forest formations, repopulated in the 1950s and 1960s with black pine and stone pine.

• SHADE

Frequent

• SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

• RECOMMENDATIONS

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

• PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Córdoba / Montoro

• SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

903 - Montoro

• START / END COORDINATES

38° 4'57.81"N 4° 21'54.34"O

38° 4'41.59"N 4° 22'8.73"O



HOW TO GET THERE

To reach the start of the trail, take the exit at kilometre point 58 on the N-420, which connects the towns of Montoro and Cardena. Next to the service road, you can see the start sign describing the route.



PARKING

There is car park at the start of the trail and there are also places nearby to leave your vehicle.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

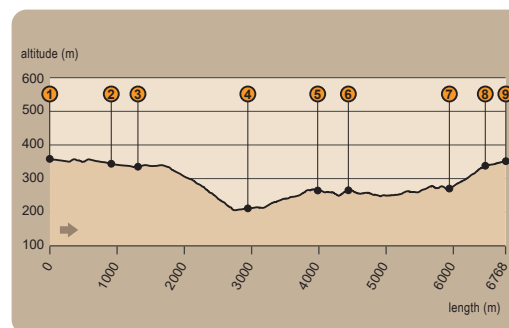
There is no public transport to the start of the trail. The company running regular bus routes in the area is Autocares Carrera (tel. 957 42 21 77; www.autocaresramirez.es) or Auto Transportes Ureña S.A. (tel. 957 40 44 79).



OTHER TRAILS

The natural park has many trails to get to know it, among the closest to it are the Pizarranga trail or the La Cebadilla trail.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



• MAXIMUM GRADIENT

152 m

• MAXIMUM ALTITUDE

357 m

• MINIMUM ALTITUDE

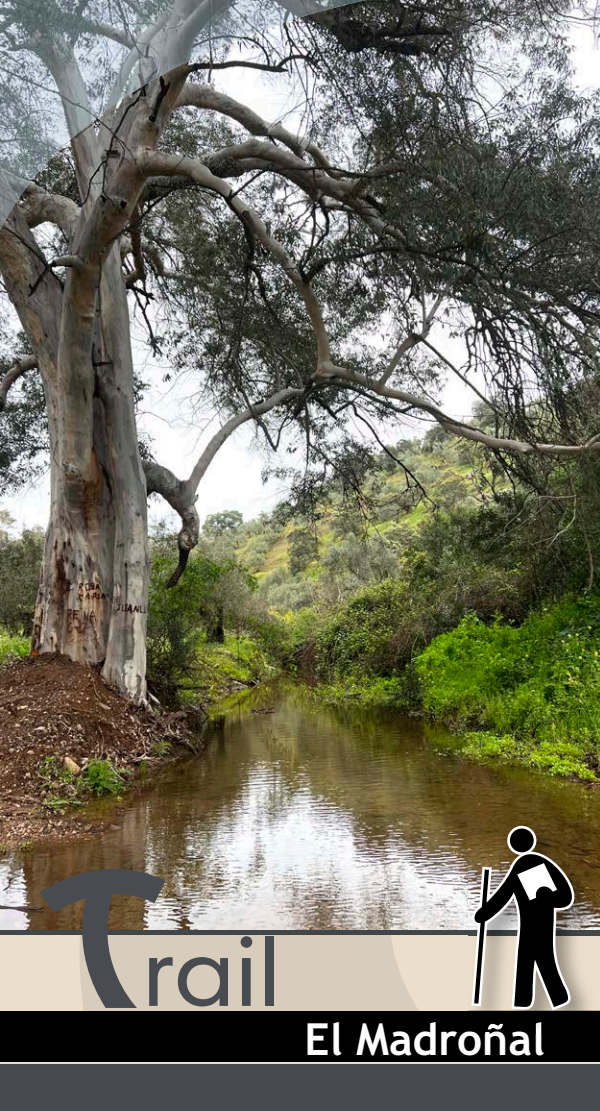
205 m



THE MOLINAZA STONE OF MONTORO

If there is one striking thing about the town of Montoro, apart from its location on the river Guadalquivir, it is the reddish colour of many of its old stone buildings, a strikingly rare colour which has become one of the hallmarks of this noble town. This red sandstone rock is popularly known as *molinaza*. Montoro is practically built on a quarry of this rare rock. Many of its buildings were built in the same stone that was excavated when the foundations were dug out; but if there is one that stands out most of all, it is the Puente Mayor bridge that links this town with the neighbourhood of Retamar, built in the 16th century.

Today there are still a few active quarries in the surrounding villages, each with its own unique colours. The most intense hues are the most popular. Apparently, it was given its name because it was used in the construction of oil mills ("molinos" in Spanish) unique and large buildings that required suitable materials, given the type of industrial activity that was carried out inside them; but it was later used to build monumental buildings in the region, such as churches, estate houses, etc. The fact that it was easy to carve probably had an influence on this, while in the village or farmhouses, peasants used it mainly to fit the frames of doors and windows or to outline the corners of the walls.



El Madroñal

El Molino and Mojapiés Creek

The path starts from the service road of the national road 420 Córdoba-Tarragona [1], which can be accessed via exits 58 or 54, depending on which direction you walk. The first part of the path, approximately one kilometre long, is a permanent descent, at times very steep, between olive groves and holm oak woods until you reach the Molino de Mojapiés [2], a building recently restored as a recreational dwelling, which receives its name from the stream of the same name, which accompanies us at times during the first part of the path, until it joins the Martín Gonzalo creek.



A little further on, the creek crosses the track and reveals the interior of the gallery forest [3] that surrounds it, turning the trail into a shady, cool tunnel in which a multitude of small birds seek refuge and food, some with songs as recognisable as the nightingale, a bird as discreet in its shape and colour as it is identifiable by its trills, always associated with the thicket and coolness.

The farmhouse

Once past the stream, which remains without water for a good part of the year, you will begin an ascent of just over a kilometre and a half until you reach a small pass where you will find the Mojapiés farmhouse [4], a ruined building that used *molinaza* stone for its door and window lintels due to its capacity to



be carved into regular shapes, and which housed a small oil mill inside, like so many other rural buildings in the region. On the other side of the lane is a sculpture dedicated to a post-war maquis unit who operated in these parts.

From this point, the track descends quickly to the bottom of the valley, providing magnificent views of the olive groves on the nearby hills. There it joins a forest path to the right which, after a hundred metres, takes another crossroads to begin the climb that will take you to the end of the route.

It is advisable to go to the ford by the Martín Gonzalo creek [5] just around the junction of the Arroyo de Mojapiés creek, although always with a certain amount of caution as, in certain special situations, the riverbed can be flooded if there are releases from the upstream reservoir. The vegetation is very interesting but, with a bit of luck, it is also possible to observe the amphibians and reptiles (tortoises and water snakes) that live in these clean waters.



The olive grove

After taking a break and chilling by the water and with your strength restored, you will begin the return ascent through a characteristic Montoro traditional olive grove [6]. Olive growing is this town's main hallmark, as evidenced by its Olive Oil Museum and the biennial International Olive Oil



Fair that it organises. This locality belongs to the Protected Designation of Origin Montoro-Adamuz, which brings together a group of 8 municipalities that cultivate, under strict indications, olives of the Picual and Nevadillo Negro varieties as the main fruits for their extra virgin olive oils.

A little further on, you cannot but notice a majestic building. This is the Lagar (or mill) de Milla [7]. It has an "H"-shaped floor plan structured around by two interior courtyards and the olive-oil mill in the central dividing nave. Of the two wings, one is the two-storey dwelling and the other the *cocherón*, a building used as a stable, hayloft, storehouse or workers' quarters. This mill was built in 1869, most probably on top of an older building. The Spanish term "*lagar*" is used to refer to those mills where liquids are extracted from vegetable fruits, so it can be applied to grapes, apples and olives.

Leaving the mill behind, you will face the last sections of the path that will take you back to the N-420 service road after a little over 2 km. Before the end, the path is once again flanked by the characteristic stone walls so typical of this natural park, which have a particular characteristic regarding to the plants that cling to the walls. Observing them from a short distance, it is possible to admire the beautiful micro-worlds of lichens, mosses, navelwort and small evergreens that cover every inch of stone [8]. On some of the more colonised or deteriorated walls there are even Montpellier cistus, lavender and even small kermes oak bushes.

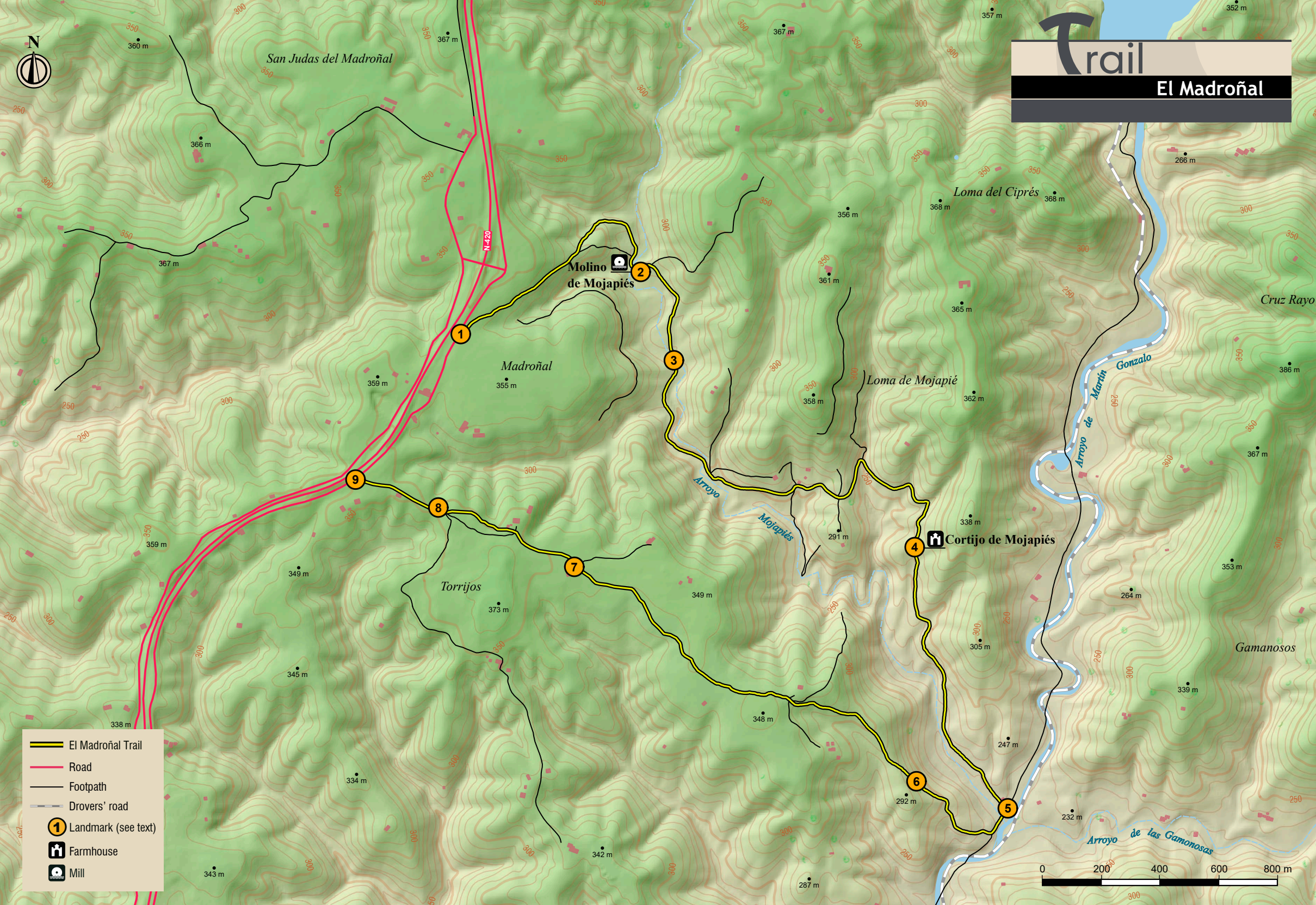
Once you are back on the service road, you will have finished your trail [9]. If you left your vehicles at the start, you only have to turn off north-east to the right and continue with caution for about 600 metres along the service road until you find your vehicle.

El Madroñal is a path that runs along forest tracks following a "U" shape, starting and finishing at the aforementioned road (with a distance of about half a kilometre between the starting and finishing point). A large part of the route passes through mountain olive groves, where remnants of Mediterranean scrubland are preserved in the form of holm oak groves and gallery forests around watercourses.



Trail

El Madroñal



- El Madroñal Trail
- Road
- Footpath
- Drivers' road
- Landmark (see text)
- Farmhouse
- Mill

