

## GOOD PRACTICE



Please avoid making noise



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked paths



Please respect private property



Collecting rocks and minerals is not permitted



The capture of animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Open camping is not permitted



Plant collecting is not permitted

Emergency phone: 112

CÁDIZ  
MÁLAGA

PARQUE NATURAL  
Sierra de  
Grazalema

## MORE INFORMATION

El Bosque Visitors' Centre. Federico García Lorca nº 1.  
El Bosque. Cádiz. Tel. 956 70 97 33.

ventanadelvisitante.



UNIÓN EUROPEA  
Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural



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

PARQUE NATURAL  
Sierra de  
Grazalema



La Garganta Verde



## OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



NATURA 2000



Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura



Red Española de Reservas de la Biosfera

### • ROUTE

Linear

### • LENGTH

2,4 km

### • ESTIMATED TIME

1 hour and 40 minutes

### • DIFFICULTY

Very high

### • TYPE OF TRAIL

Mountain path, sculpted rock, loose stones.

### • LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Canyon of carbonated materials, with walls hundreds of metres high. Steep drops. Spectacular views of the Sierra del Pinar and laurel vegetation.

### • SHADE

Scant

### • SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Yes. Prior authorisation is required before visiting the trail. Individuals: cvelbosque@reservatuvisita.es, 956 70 97 33. Tourism activity companies, associations, clubs, federations and legally constituted groups must contact the Natural Park office, telephones: 600 16 19 16 / 600 16 19 06

### • RECOMMENDATIONS

Take into account the elevation of the return section of the trail. The gradient is steep and its slower than the outward journey. Carry drinking water and sunscreen and wear suitable clothing and footwear. Watch out for falling stones. Protected with guardrails along difficult sections, even still stones may be slippery. From 1 June to 15 October, the trail can only be accessed for canyoning activities.

### • PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Cádiz / Zahara de la Sierra

### • SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

1050

### • START / END COORDINATES

36° 48' 30" N - 5° 23' 32" W

36° 48' 49" N - 5° 24' 12" W



### HOW TO GET THERE

From Grazalema, take the A-372 to Benamahoma. After about 1.5 kilometres, turn right and take the CA-9104 towards Puerto de la Palomas. After about 10 km, the trail begins on our left from this road. It is also possible to arrive from Zahara de la Sierra.



### PARKING

There is a carpark with some 20 places at the start of the trail.



### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

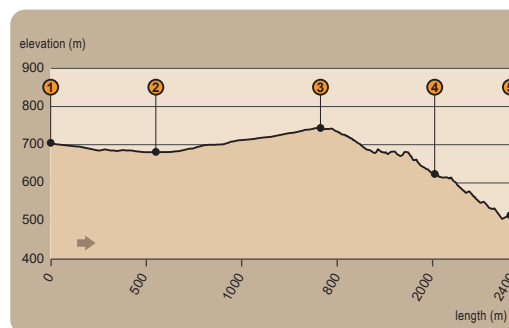
It is not possible to access this trail by public transport. The main companies running regular bus routes in the area are Los Amarillos (tel. 902 21 03 17) and Transportes Generales Comes S.A. (tel. 902 19 92 08). The nearest train stations are in Cortes de la Frontera, Jimera de Líbar, Benaolán and Ronda (check services and timetables at [www.renfe.es](http://www.renfe.es) or by telephone on 902 24 02 02)



### OTHER TRAILS

Other nearby trails in the natural park include: The Llanos de Rabel, La Bodega, El Pinsapar and Camino de los Charcones trails.

### PROFILE OF ROUTE



### • MAXIMUM GRADIENT

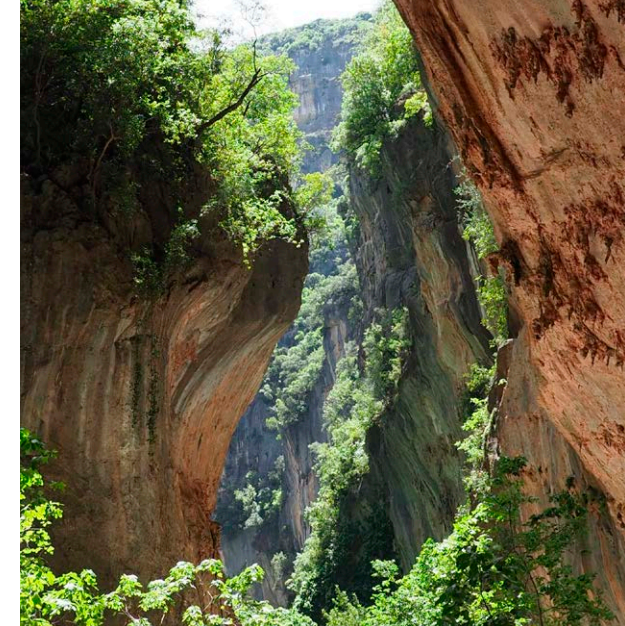
238 m

### • MAXIMUM ALTITUDE

744 m

### • MINIMUM ALTITUDE

506 m



## THE GARGANTA VERDE IS THE FRUIT OF AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WATER AND STONE

As is frequent in so many situations, the most powerful element in an interaction is not always the hardest and the Garganta Verde gorge is a clear example. For millions of years, the waters of the Bocaleones excavated the solid limestone rock of the sierra to form a canyon with walls that reach 400 metres in depth.

At the same time, under the channel of the river, an underground current dissolves the limestone, leading to a geological phenomenon called karstic moulding. This is how the cave known as "La Ermita" was formed, with its pointed stalactites exuding drops of carbonated water from the ceiling and the imposing, rounded stalagmites protruding from the floor with an extraordinary stone beauty.

The erosion caused by the river Bocaleones brought the channel of the riverbed increasingly closer, ultimately causing it to collapse. The upper part of the gallery was destroyed, and the two currents of water were unified. The depth and width of the canyon, together with the water that seeps through walls, generated a cool and humid environment that allows for the proliferation of tapestry of vegetation that gives the gorge its name.



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





# Trail

## La Garganta Verde



The Garganta Verde is a canyon carved into the limestone rock of the mountain by the power of the river Bocaleones. The Mediterranean vegetation that covers the vertiginous carbonated walls of the cliff gives its name to the gorge and adds to its mystic beauty. Fragile and hard like a diamond, this emblematic landscape of the Sierra de Cádiz is included in the Park Reserve Zone. An authorisation is required to access the route. And the trail not only leads us into the depths of the canyon, but also intimately close to one of the largest griffon vulture colonies in Europe, who found their home in the area above the landscape.

### A bird's eye view

The trail begins at the Puerto de los Acebuches, on the road connecting Grazalema and Zahara de la Sierra, behind a gate where a sign indicated the starting point [1].



On this first section, the trail crosses a very enclosed area of Mediterranean scrubland, with gorse, wild olive, palmettos and mastic, frequented by numerous small birds who'll engulf you in their chirping you. As we continue to advance, the first outcrops of the gorge come into view. If you look south, behind you, you can enjoy a panoramic view of the Sierra del Pinar. In about four hundred metres, there is a diversion that leads a little over one hundred metre to the viewpoint overlooking the gorge [2]. From this viewpoint, you can view the canyon in all its glory: its impressive cuts of several hundred metres, the exuberance of the vegetation that covers it, the solemnity of birds adapted to life on the rocky outcrops.

### Down, down, down

The trail runs along the Colada de la Loma del Calvario on a fairly level path until it reaches the mountain pass of Puerto de los Portillos [3]. From here to the finish, the route is a steep descent whose zig-zag route barely mitigates the steep gradient. Strategically located at certain points of the trail you will find a series of guard rails and carved steps in the rock that will assist greatly. As you advance further, you'll be accompanied by the squawk of the chough, the twit of the rock doves, the song of the alpine swift and the screech of the eagles. You'll be accompanied by the wind, which whistles between the walls, pulling at the vocal



cords of the throat of the gorge. Although if there is one sound capable of awakening the most ancestral memories of the skin it's the buzz of the vultures batting the air with their plumage just metres above. You should be so lucky to experience it.

### A calculating scavenger

The griffon vulture is an enormous raptors, specially equipped to detect and devour its carrion. It easily reaches a metre a height and two metres wing-to-wing span. This powerful scale allows it to rise with little effort, and circle, taking advantage of thermal currents and maintain that majestic, linear, exploratory trajectory to locate dead animals. Its ecological role is vital, as it cleans the territory of cadavers which could become a source of infection.



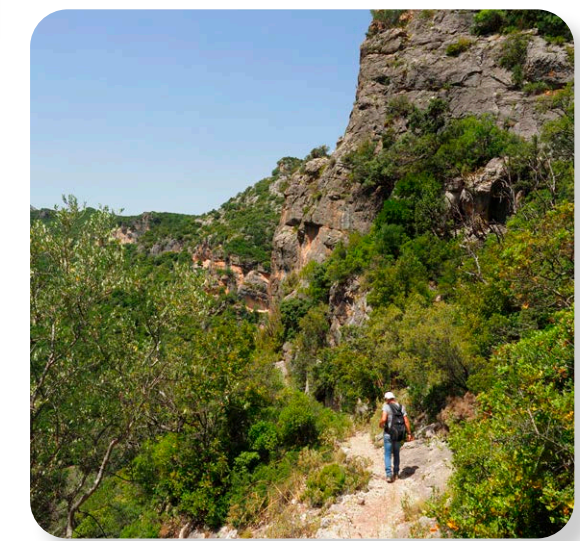
At dawn, the vultures rest, like gargoyles on a gigantic cathedral, on the limestone ledges of the gorge. Patient, they wait for the sun to warm up the environment and for the thermoclines that take them to the skies to form. If you look at the wall opposite [4], you can pick out numerous whitish deposits that reveal their perching sites and nests. With around 300 breeding pairs, the Sierra de Grazalema Natural Park is one of the most important sites on the Peninsula for the distribution of the griffon vulture.

With our clothes impregnated with the fragrances of the sierra, and most likely awestruck by the immensity of the surroundings, we continue our descent. Arriving at a staircase carved into the rock, the gradient becomes more pronounced, and the humidity penetrates further, oozing from the walls. Dogwood, oleander and laurel announce the proximity of the bed of the Bocaleones. Shortly before reaching the river, a sign indicates the end of the trail [5].



It is possible to continue through the canyon, but in order to continue our descent, some canyoning experience and the appropriate equipment is recommended: copes, harness, wetsuits, etc. Local active tour operators offer visits.

The return to is by the same trail. Don't underestimate the return, especially in the summer season. You will need twice the time the descent took. Show respect for the environment, drink water and stay within your capabilities. Enjoy it!





# Trail

## La Garganta Verde



Ermita de la Garganta

Garganta Verde

Puerto de los Portillos

Garganta Verde en Zahara de la Sierra

Mirador Garganta Verde

Pilar de Las Cambroneras

### Parque Natural Sierra de Grazalema

- 1 Landmark (See Text)
- P Parking
- Interpretive panel
- Viewpoint
- Caves
- Fountain
- La Garganta Verde Trail
- Road
- Drovers' road

