

## GOOD PRACTICE



- Please leave rubbish in the bins provided
- Walk on the marked paths
- Please respect private property
- Please avoid making noise



- The capture of animals is not permitted
- Starting fires is strictly forbidden
- Open camping is not permitted
- Plant collecting is not allowed

Emergency phone: 112

MÁLAGA  
GRANADA

PARQUE NATURAL  
Sierras de Tejeda,  
Almijara y Athama

## MORE INFORMATION

Sedella Visitors' Centre. C/ Villa del Castillo nº 17, Sedella. Tel. 951 28 95 70.  
Regional Sustainable Development Office in Malaga. Avda. de la Aurora, 47.  
Edificio Servicios Múltiples, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> floors. Málaga.  
Tel. 951 77 70 08 / 670 94 88 94.  
ventanadelvisitante.



UNIÓN EUROPEA  
Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural



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

MÁLAGA-GRANADA

PARQUE NATURAL  
Sierras de Tejeda,  
Almijara y Alhama

Trail

El Pinarillo-Fuente del  
Esparto-Río Chíllar



## OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



### ROUTE

Linear

### LENGTH (OUTWARD)

4,5 km

### ESTIMATED TIME (OUTWARD)

1 hour and 30 minutes

### DIFFICULTY

Moderate

### TYPE OF TRAIL

Forest trail and path

### LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Mountain relief marked by gullies, ridges, ravines and gorges, and a vegetation of Aleppo pine, Mediterranean scrub and, in the vicinity of the river, riparian vegetation.

### SHADE

Frequent

### SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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

### PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Málaga / Nerja

### SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

1054/1055

### START / END COORDINATES

36° 47' 48.26"N - 3° 51' 0.49"W  
36° 48' 29.55"N - 3° 51' 54.12"W



## HOW TO GET THERE

From Malaga, take the A-7 motorway in the direction of Motril, take the 295 turnoff to Cueva de Nerja. Just before entering the car park of the Cave, we take the forest track that starts on our left and follow it for 3 kilometres, until a junction with the path that ascends to the Pico del Cielo. We continue for 2 kilometres along the left-hand lane as far as the recreational area El Pinarillo, where we find the trailhead.



## PARKING

You can leave the vehicle in the car parks of the recreational area El Pinarillo, provided the access lane is open.



## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

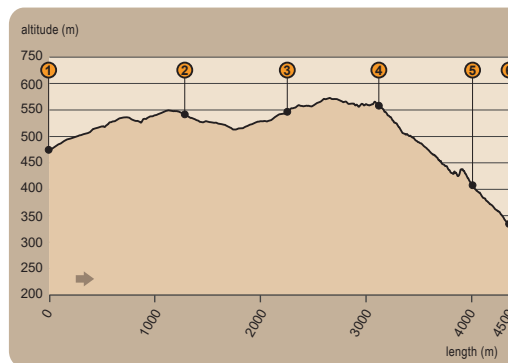
You can get to Cueva de Nerja by bus (the main company running regular bus routes in the area is ALSA, tel. 902 42 22 42 www.alsa.es).



## OTHER TRAILS

There are numerous trails to choose from that pass through the Natural Park. The nearest is the lane that ascends to the Pico del Cielo.

## PROFILE OF ROUTE



### MAXIMUM GRADIENT

238 m

### MAXIMUM ALTITUDE

573 m

### MINIMUM ALTITUDE

335 m



## LOTHE GORGES OF THE RIVER CHÍLLAR

Matching the beats between the sea and the mountains, the Chíllar River flows into the Mediterranean from the Almijareñas ridges of Navachica, the Peñón del Cuervo and Piedra Sillada, at an altitude of more than 1200 metres. Like the living artery that it is, its 17 kilometres overcome the sheer drop by sculpting in the dolomitic marbles of the Almijara deep and narrow gorges or "cahorros", as they are known locally; creating leaps, waterfalls and crystal-clear pools, and form a V-shaped valley surrounded by abrupt gullies more than 1000 metres high that plummet into the abyss.

The dissolved carbonates that the water has been taking from the mountain range precipitate on the pebbles of the bed, giving it the appearance of polished cement. They also precipitate on vegetation, forming travertine.

Numerous birds take advantage of the cracks in the walls to nest. In the most open sections, there are rushes, reeds, oleanders, and brambles, along with other sturdier Mediterranean species such as the carob tree, Aleppo pine and fig tree, since the narrow, shady water course does not allow a riverside gallery forest to develop. Mammals are more difficult to see but, on the river banks, it is possible to make out the tracks and footprints of foxes, genets, wild boars, squirrels, badgers, etc., which approach in search of water or food.



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





## Trail

### El Pinarillo-Fuente del Esparto-Río Chíllar

Straddling the provinces of Granada and Malaga, the mountain massif of the Tejada, Almirajara and Alhama mountain ranges constitutes the imposing and rugged seam between the high mountains and the coast. An extraordinary territory, where water has contributed to shape a unique relief in the dolomitic marbles of the mountains, producing very varied and biodiverse environments such as the cave of Nerja, the gorge of the River Chíllar and the ravine of Los Cazadores. People on both sides of the mountains were able to take advantage of the few natural corridors to establish routes and connect places and cultures, exchanging goods, news, errands, rumours, etc.

This path allows us to discover part of a landscape that plummets from its high skylines to the bowels of the earth, and whose foothills advance until they disappear under the waters of the sea, as well as the history of those who have lived and travelled through it.

#### The Spring of the Esparto

In the midst of an Aleppo pine forest, we start from the recreational area El Pinarillo [1] which has tables, benches and barbecues. By the main lane, we head north-east up the ravine of La Coladilla on its left bank. Almost a kilometre away, we cross the bed of the ravine and turn left, heading west. After another 400 metres, we reach the Spring of the Esparto [2]. This spring collects the waters that have travelled through of the core of the Tajo del Almendrón, passing through layers of marble and limestone that are millions of years old. The water has been dissolving and penetrating these calcareous materials through a labyrinthine network of fissures and cracks, until it reaches the area of contact with impermeable materials, where it springs enriched with dissolved carbonates along its subterranean journey. This occurs throughout the Natural Park, so the waters that flow through the massif, when precipitating the dissolved carbonates on the vegetation, produce numerous deposits of calcareous tuffs or travertines.

But the history of the Spring of Esparto is intimately linked to human activity. The name itself gives an idea of the importance that esparto craftsmanship had in the local economy. Moreover, its location at the mouth of the ravine of Los Cazadores made it a strategic place to wash the minerals carried by beasts of burden. Here, among sheer precipices that exceed 100 metres in height, several



deposits of lead, zinc and other metals were concentrated. In the immediate vicinity are the miners' houses, some of which have been refurbished as a mountain tourist hostel.

#### A flow of muleteer treasures

The path enters a pine forest on dolomite sands, where Kermes oaks, junipers, mastic, gorse, boxwood, rosemary and, of course, esparto grass grow. Although it is an area with great potential for natural vegetation, the areas that flank the forest track are cleared of scrub to protect the forest and its inhabitants from fire.

Going down about 500 metres from the spring of the Esparto to climb back up a steep slope, we reach the dividing line between the ravine of La Coladilla and the basin of the river Chíllar: the collado (depression) of the Apretaderos [3]. The place is so named because here they "squeezed" and adjusted the valuable loads carried by the pack animals, which had been loosened with the ascent and descent through the rugged terrain. Sheep wool from Granada for the brides of Malaga, dried figs from Malaga to sweeten Christmas, sweet potatoes from Maro, fresh fish and many other choice goods generated a transfer of delicacies and other popular treasures transported from one region to another by hard-working muleteers who would stop here.



#### A place among the mountains

The depression is not the highest point of the trail, but it serves as a resting place on the slope; it also offers a wonderful panoramic view over the impressive peaks of the Sierra Almirajara. In them nest large birds of prey, such as Bonelli's eagle and the booted eagle, and other birds of the rocks, such as the black wheatear or the blue rock thrush.

Following the track to the right, we now head north. As we go deeper into the mountains, the terrain requires more effort. On the massif, which appears bare in the sheerest rocks, there are caves and hollows that sheltered outlaws in different eras. These mountains are full of legends and stories of smugglers, poachers, guerrillas and pilgrims who heard the call of the mountains.

#### The river Chíllar

With the whimsical shapes of the cuts shaping the horizon with their ridges, and almost without unevenness, we continue about 900 metres from Los Apretaderos to a point where the track crosses a path that descends on the left. The trail suddenly plunges down a challenging hillside; known as la Cuesta de los Galgos (the slope of the hounds) [4]. At some point, as we go up the hillside with the breeze of the valley, we are met by the murmur of the river. We soon arrive at the Chíllar canal [5], an extensive artificial scar that runs through the ravine transferring water from the channel to one of the historic light industry factories of the mountains. From here, a vertiginous 400-hundred metre drop takes us to the riverbed [6], where we can regain strength for the return trip and enjoy the smells, sounds and colour palette of the riverside vegetation and the freshness of the Chíllar.

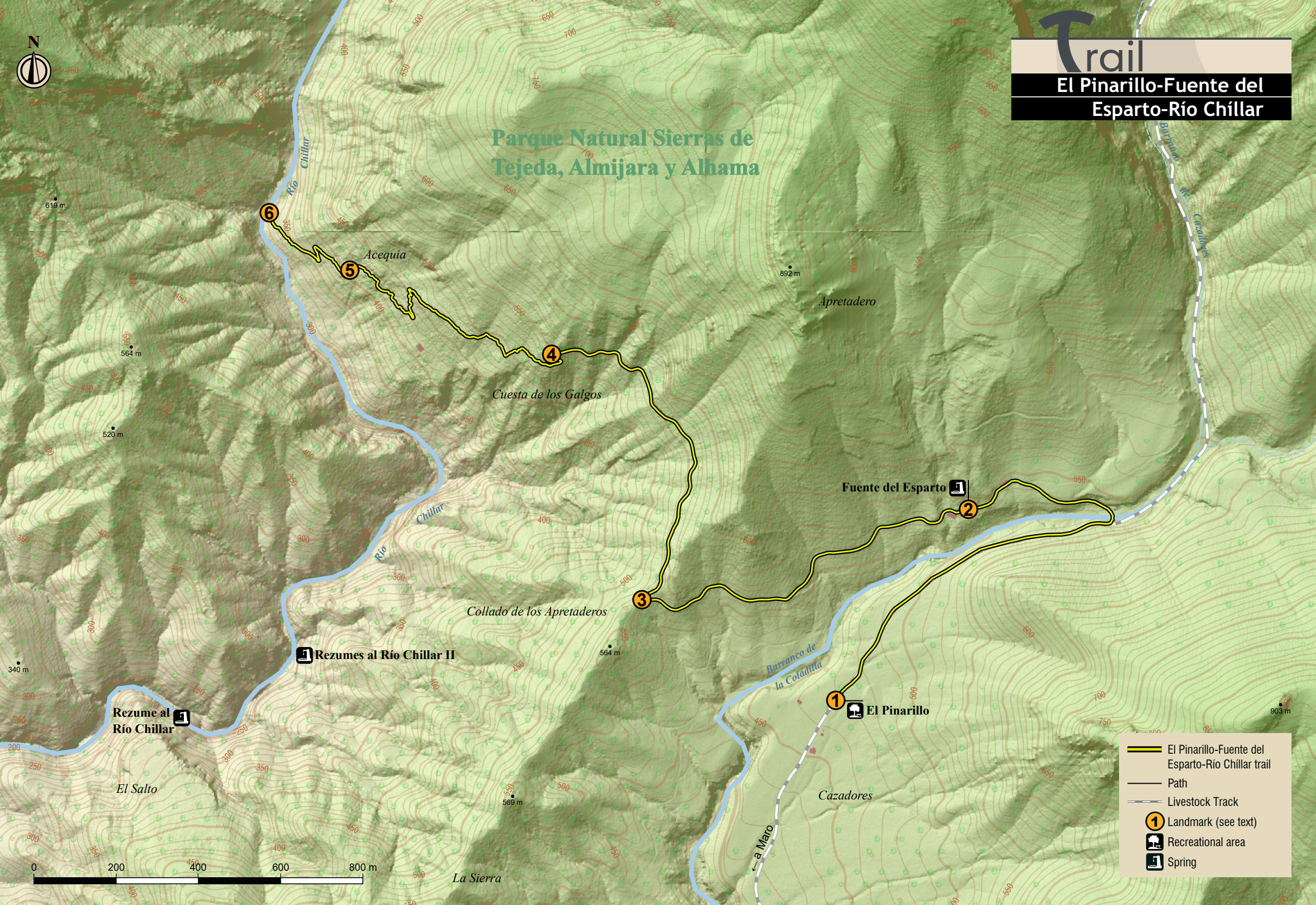






**Trail**  
**El Pinarillo-Fuente del Esparto-Río Chillar**

**Parque Natural Sierras de Tejeda, Almirajara y Alhama**



- El Pinarillo-Fuente del Esparto-Río Chillar trail
- Path
- Livestock Track
- Landmark (see text)
- Recreational area
- Spring