
DISCOVERING THE CORKLANDS

www.visitcorkterritories.co.uk

PRESENTATION DOSSIER



Guided tour in Los Alcornocales Natural Park. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales

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A UNIQUE SYSTEM

Landscapes and the human settlements that have grown up in them in the greater part of the world are closely linked. Homo sapiens, have, as a species, molded the original landscapes and in so doing, they have evolved.

All this human activity has impacted on the landscapes in many and varied ways, and does and will continue to do so. Cork forests make up only a small part of our planet and are found in the Mediterranean and on the Atlantic coast of Morocco, Portugal and southwestern France; a fair sweep in itself but small on a global scale.

Happily, the cork forests are in as good a state today as ever, considering they have been exploited for thousands of years. This is thanks to the fact that it is the bark of the tree that provides us with this highly valued material, cork, itself a renewable part which can be removed periodically. Sustainability is assured.

The extraordinary jigsaw of languages and cultures that coexist around the Mediterranean areas are well known. The landscapes and climates are many and varied too, and many of them provide the soil and climatic conditions that suit the cork oak, and it is there that our tree can be found.

Cork is mainly used in stoppers, and this has forced cork producing communities to colonize the world, even farther afield than their main ally: wine. They have been forced to travel in pursuit of their trade and have developed, taking on a cosmopolitan character as the industrial revolution, which provided the demand for more and more production, took hold.

In essence it remains the same but the world of cork has certainly evolved, moving forward into modern times. Today, the cork towns and surrounding countryside are a unique mosaic of great natural wealth and anthropological interest.

This is a whole new world for you to discover: mountains and thickly wooded plains, vast meadows where the most magnificent cork trees are found, and clear views across endless horizons... All of this interspersed with villages, towns and cities that have become industrialized, that have specialized in forestry care, and that preserve their proud ancestral identity as cork producing districts.

Each place has its own peculiar architecture, cultural heritage and archeology and even boasts its own cuisine but what they have in common, although explained in many languages, is the cork oak, the history of cork, its uses and its beauty.

Take up the challenge and take a trip round the world of cork! It will be a long and varied journey, rich and rewarding, which will give you a unique insight into a diverse geographical phenomenon, what a magnificent way to spend your holidays and leisure time!

*Lluís Medir Huerta,
RETECORK cofounder and former Chairman of the Executive Committee*

SPECIAL FEATURES

The cork territories are exclusive to a particular part of the Western Mediterranean and are only found in seven countries in the world: **Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.**

These territories have **an exceptional surroundings, rich cultural heritage and the chance to do a wide variety of activities there.**



NATURAL HERITAGE

The cork landscapes are **remarkably rich in terms of flora and fauna as indicated by their biodiversity ratings, higher than many other ecosystems.** Endangered species can be found here, this and the rich bird life make them a big draw for naturalists.

The conservation of cork woods is of great importance as their existence has **beneficial implications on the surrounding environment and the planet by:**

- **Reducing the risk of fire**
- **Providing a bio-diverse natural reserve**
- **Slowing desertification**

- **Playing an important role in the water cycle**
- **Retaining CO₂ and contributing to slow climate change**



Sierra de San Pedro. Photo: Sierra de San Pedro Community

CULTURAL HERITAGE

These rural areas at the heart of the cork industry **offer unique experiences to tourists**, many of whom are looking for authentic experiences in natural surroundings.

Man and Nature have worked together here for centuries, and their relationship has been both intense and productive.

Visitors can be expected to find the following of interest:

- **Forest management as applied to cork production**, especially the stripping of the bark.
- **The meadows**, as a model of sustainable development and characteristic scenery.
- **Other forestry activities**: charcoal production, hunting, beekeeping and collecting and use of various products such as mushrooms and medicinal or aromatic herbs.
- **Rural architecture**: dry stone walls, mills, irrigation channels, wells, drinking troughs, cottages, huts, etc.

- ▶ **Other intangible elements:** from myths, historical routes, beliefs and legends to songs, dances, language, customs and ways of life.



Cork being extracted. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales Photo background

With regard to **urban heritage**, the development of the cork industry has had a profound impact on the nature of these municipalities since the seventeenth century, **evidenced in the architecture, literature, music, historical figures, or simply in the daily lives of its people**. Today it has become a **competitive industry** that prides itself on supplying products of the highest quality.

The cork boroughs **offer cultural facilities** which are available to the tourist thanks to:

- ▶ The working relationship between museums and visitor centres.
- ▶ Industrial heritage.
- ▶ Urban routes of architectural interest to see buildings unique to each place.
- ▶ Tours of factories and workshops where craftsmen work the cork.

GASTRONOMY

As defined In a Mediterranean, mostly rural context, these regions enjoy:

- Local agricultural produce
- Forest products: mushrooms, berries, herbs, etc.
- Mediterranean cuisine and its local specialties
- Locally produced wine

All of which guarantees a **distinctive, rich, varied cuisine**. Some of the most iconic elements of Mediterranean cuisine, **wine and oil**, are produced in many of the same areas alongside cork, **enabling you to learn about them by means of:**

- Visits to vineyards and wineries
- Wine tastings and pairings with other local products
- Farm and forest visits
- Pick your own farms
- Jam making workshops, learn how olives etc. are prepared.



Mediterranean Culture. Photo: Lluís Català

CORK AND ITS PRODUCTS

Cork is flexible, waterproof, lightweight and fire resistant. It can be compressed and used to insulate. **Imagine the number of ways it can applied**, apart from what has been, and remains, its principal role: **as a wine bottle stopper** or “cork” as it is known in English, taking the name of the material itself.

Although it is without a doubt the backbone of the industry in these parts, **you will be surprised to discover its many other applications.**



Photo: APCOR and Catalan Cork Institute (stoppers)

CORKLANDTOUR. CORK, LANDSCAPE & TOURISM. AN APPRECIATION OF THE CORKLANDS, AN ASSESSMENT OF THEIR POTENTIAL TO THE TOURIST INDUSTRY

Throughout this special report, you will discover the world of cork area by area, the open countryside where museums and visitor centers can be found. By means of this report we bring you the project: **CORKLANDTOUR. Cork, Landscape & Tourism. An Appreciation of the Corklands, an assessment of their potential to the tourist industry**, which receives the assistance of the Biodiversity Foundation and the Ministries of Agriculture, Food and Environment of Spain.

This project aims to promote tourist development of the cork territories by raising awareness of the importance and uniqueness of their natural and cultural heritage.



Cork boroughs and members of RETECORK



THE CORKLANDS



Los Alcornocales Nature Reserve. Castellar de la Frontera, Guadarranque Reservoir. Photo: Lluís Català



THE CORKLANDS

THE CORKLANDS

The Corklands are landscapes of *Quercus suber*, a species endemic in the Mediterranean basin.

The Iberian Peninsula is home to half of the world's corklands, located primarily in the southwest, North Africa has a sizeable area, and the rest is divided between the south of France, the west coast of Italy and islands of Corsica, Sardinia and Sicily.

The corklands encompass a diverse range of landscapes, hardly surprising when their

different climate features are taken into account.

In Spain we have singled out 23 areas of countryside where cork is found, some of them, like the Doñana Natural Reserve, are already well known. The information below will give you some idea of what you can expect to find, but do not hesitate to consult our website **to find out more about what is on offer.**



Estrecho Nature Reserve. Tarifa, El Bujeo. Photo: Lluís Català



THE CORKLANDS

LOS ALCORNOCALES NATURE RESERVE

This Nature Reserve is located at the western end of the Bética Range, a set of steep sided hills and rugged terrain, its highest point is known as Aljibe Peak (1092 metres).

It is the third biggest of the protected natural reserves in Andalucía and falls largely in the province of Cádiz, only the northeastern end is part of Málaga.

The protected area extends to about 167.767 hectares and the cork oaks found there have been ranked among the main EU residual forests, of great biological importance.



Los Alcornocales Nature Reserve. Alcalá de los Gazules, El Picacho. Photo: Lluís Català



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

The Reserve has an area of 119,000 hectares of cork oak, almost 50% of the total found in Andalusia. In the valleys and shady areas the cork oaks give way to forest, and on the slopes with poorer soils the ground is covered with heath, cistus and oakwood bushes and heather.

Vegetation unique to this area occupies the narrow headwaters of streams, forming river-bank forests termed “canutos” that extend along the wettest slopes and are called “misty forests”. Three plant species to note are: *Culcita*

macrocarpa, *Marsilea ba-tardae* and *Narcissus viridiflorus*.

The reserve is home to some interesting fauna, thanks to the richness of these largely unspoilt ecosystems.

More than 250 species of vertebrates have been identified, among them, more birds feature than any other group, followed by mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fish.

HERITAGE

The reserve has a **rural heritage of great importance, routed in the traditional activities and the natural resources of the area**, like water mills and remains associated with charcoal production. The **archaeological heritage** from the prehistoric period is particularly noteworthy, everything from dolmens to cave paintings, Roman remains, an abundance of castles and medieval monuments.

One of the most important activities is of course the stripping of the bark from the cork oaks and the processing of the cork.

The most important social and economic event in the annual calendar of the Reserve celebrates the many uses of this material, with craft workshops and much more.

For more information:

www.alcornocales.org/gestor//images/patrimonio/FOLLETO_PATRIMONIOALCORNOCALLES.pdf

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

In the province of Cádiz: Alcalá de los Gazules, Algar, Algeciras, Arcos de la Frontera, Los Barrios, Benalup-Casas Viejas, Benaocaz, El Bosque, Castellar de la Frontera, Jerez de la Frontera, Jimena de la Frontera, Medina-Sidonia, Prado del Rey, San José del Valle, Tarifa and Ubrique.

In the province of Málaga, we find the town of Cortes de la Frontera.



THE CORKLANDS



Muleteers at work. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales Photo background

TOURS AND FOOTPATHS

There are **different tours** that take you around sites of interest, **including one dedicated to prehistory, another to Roman times and another to medieval times.**

In contrast, **to simply enjoy the natural beauty of the region**, there are **footpaths** that take you to the best spots, such as the *Corredor Verde* Way, the walk between Tarifa and Los Barrios or the Ribera de Palmones.



THE CORKLANDS

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:

- Organized environmental studies activities
- Car parking and Picnic Areas
- Environmental Education Center
- Visitor Center
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Wildlife Observatory
- Guided tours

Los Alcornocales Natural Park Office

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www.alcornocales.org

In the town of Alcalá de los Gazules you can find **El Picacho, an educational facility and the Visitor Centre El Aljibe.**

There are also **information points** in Los Barrios, Jimena de la Frontera and Benalup-Casas Viejas.



Pontic rhododendron. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales Photo background

Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from www.alcornocales.org, www.juntadeandalucia.es, www.andalucia.org, www.gdralcornocales.org and Wikipedia.



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SIERRA DE HORNACHUELOS NATURE RESERVE

Situated in the western part of the province of Córdoba, it is part of Sierra Morena, a range of rolling hills with peaks that reach a maximum height of 725m above sea level.

The reserve, set up in 1989, is almost 60,000 hectares of the best preserved Mediterranean forest, consisting mainly of Holm oaks, cork oaks and riverbank woodland.

Together with the Sierra Norte de Sevilla and the Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche, **it forms part of the Biosphere Meadows Reserve of Sierra Morena.**



Seminary, Hornachuelos. Photo: Tourist Office Hornachuelos



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

The most abundant tree is the Holm oak, with cork oaks and gall oaks in wetter places, or wild olive trees in Vega del Guadalquivir. Where Man has been active the labdanum tree predominates, and other areas consist of scrub, myrtle, Kermes oak and arbutus (strawberry tree). In the southern half, carobs, fan palms and wild olives thrive on limestone.

Riverside woodlands line the copious rivers that cross the reserve and the willow is a species particularly abundant here and of **special botanical interest because of the high density of endemic species. The main threat to vegetation here is due to intensive pastoral grazing.**

There are some 425 animal species. Currently, **the Sierra Hornachuelos hosts the second largest colony of black vultures in Andalusia and three colonies of griffon vultures.** Several eagles' nests, both golden and Bonelli occur in large treetops, given the scarcity of rock faces to nest. **The endangered black stork, always interesting but seldom seen, is present here.**

Up to 30 species of mammals live in the countryside, highlighting the now almost extinct Iberian lynx, the mongoose and the otter. Deer and wild boar are abundant though, making the Sierra a game reserve of national importance.

HERITAGE

The rich architectural, historical and artistic heritage of the towns located in the Sierra de Hornachuelos includes prehistoric remains, ruins of pre-Roman and Roman villas, castles, towers and medieval walls, ancient monasteries, Renaissance churches and stately homes.

For example, in Almodóvar del Río you can enjoy **Castle de la Floresta, or the Roman remains and Arab towers** found in Posadas.

If that isn't enough, **in the heart of this reserve there are two renowned historical and artistic gems: San Calixto and the Seminary of Nuestra Señora de Los Ángeles.**

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

In the Sierra de Hornachuelos reserve we just can find 5 towns, all of them in the province of Córdoba: Almodóvar del Río, Córdoba, Hornachuelos, Posadas and Villaviciosa de Córdoba.



THE CORKLANDS



Castle de la Floresta, Almodóvar del Río. Photo: Natural Park Sierra de Hornachuelos

TOURS AND FOOTPATHS

There are **several marked trails and routes**, as well as the option of discovering the reserve through "**Nature for everyone**".

This is a 4 hour route, and leaves from the **Visitor Center at Laguna de Zóñar**.

For more information:

www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/servtc5/ventana/actividadesCategoriaFicha.do?idActividad=112&numero=1&nomCamp=FICHA%20ACTIVIDAD&e

On the other hand, **Moramiel Oro Ltd** offers visitors the chance to do a **beekeeping workshop where you can learn about the extraction of honey, or try your hand at candle-making**.

Products like candy made with honey, nuts or cosmetics and handicrafts made with cork are all on sale too.

For more information:

www.moramiel.com/en/taller-apicola



THE CORKLANDS

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:

- Organized environmental studies activities
- Car parking and Picnic Areas
- Environmental Education Center
- Visitor Center
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Wildlife Observatory
- Guided tours

Visitor Center Huerta del Rey
Tourist Office Hornachuelos

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Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from www.hornachuelosrural.com, www.juntadeandalucia.es, www.andalucia.org, www.moramiel.com and Wikipedia.



CABAÑEROS NATIONAL PARK

This park, located in the Montes de Toledo, is intrinsically linked to the history of Toledo, to which it belonged from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. In 1988, Cabañeros was declared a Natural Park, becoming a National Park in 1995, with an area of over 40,000 hectares.

The mountains here are heavily eroded and have a wavy appearance. Altitudes range from 620 metres to 1,500 metres on the Rocigalgo summits. The Park occupies part of the provinces of Ciudad Real and Toledo, **and is a Special Reserve for Birds (ZEPA) and Site of Special Importance (LIC).**



Torres de Estena. Photo: Cabañeros National Park



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

Cabañeros has catalogued 1,000 species of vascular plants. **Gall oaks, maples, Holm oaks and cork oaks along with aromatic Mediterranean shrub make up this most genuine of Iberian landscapes.**

Lakes and ponds are covered with buttercups, while yellow water lilies are common in sections of calm, deep waters of the river Bullaque.

The riverbanks in these areas are dense with overhanging vegetation, formed mainly of willow, alder and ash.

Among the species listed on the Endangered Species List in this region that can be found in the Park **include yew, el loro, *satiación de tres bulbos* and white rushes.**

About 200 species of birds live here, among them large birds of prey such as the black vulture, the Spanish Imperial eagle and the golden eagle. The *rañas* (undulating plains between the mountains) are home to birds like the great bustard, the little bustard and the lark. **Large mammals like deer, roe deer and wild boar can be seen in Cabañeros too.**



Deer. Photo: Cabañeros National Park



THE CORKLANDS

HERITAGE

Man has been present in the park for a very long time, there are remains of early settlers **dating back to the Lower Paleolithic.**

Small Bronze Age villages have also been found. **Indeed, the place takes its name from the shepherds' and charcoal workers' huts in the park itself.**

Malamoneda de Hontanar has an **archaeological site of the same name, as well as a castle and tower.** In Retuerta del Bullaque, **Zoorama is a showcase for the animal species that inhabit the park as well as its people and traditions.**

In some parts in the interior of Cabañeros **cork is still stripped from the oaks and beekeeping is practised.**

TOURS AND FOOTPATHS

To discover the Cabañeros National Park **there are plenty of trails and tracks to follow with or without a guide.** They can be done on foot, by bike or in a 4x4 vehicle or quad.

Activities are on offer too for organized groups and families, and include bird watching trails, horseback riding, kayaking down rivers or various workshops.

For more information:

www.visitacabaneros.es/actividades.php

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

In the National Park there are the towns of Alcoba de los Montes, Horcajo de los Montes, Navas de Estena and Retuerta del Bullaque of the province of Ciudad Real; and Hontanar and Los Navalucillos in the province of Toledo.

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:

- Organized environmental studies activities
- Car parking
- Picnic Areas
- Visitor Center
- Itineraries for the disabled
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Guided tours



THE CORKLANDS

Cabañeros National Park Office

Crta. Abenójar-Torrijos s/n
13194 Pueblonuevo del Bullaque, Ciudad Real
T. 926 783 297
cabaneros@mma.es

There is a **visitor centre in Alcoba de los Montes, Ethnographic Museum and Information** in Alcoba and Horcajo and **Information Points** in Navas de Estena and Los Navalucillos.



Cornisas del chorro. Photo: Cabañeros National Park

Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from www.alcobadelosmones.es, www.turismocastillalamancha.es, www.navasdeestena.org, www.reuertadelbullaque.com, www.los-navalucillos.com, www.visitacabaneros.es, www.diputoledo.es, www.magrama.gob.es and Wikipedia.



NATURE RESERVE OF NATIONAL INTEREST IN ALBERA

The Sierra de la Albera is the name given to the eastern section of the Pyrenees **that separates the plains of Empordà and Roussillon.**

In 1659 the Treaty of the Pyrenees **established the crest of these mountains as the Franco-Spanish border.**

It is a scenic region of outstanding natural beauty **where the transition between the species of the Pyrenees and those more typical of the Mediterranean can be observed.** This area was declared a Site of National Interest in 1986 and extends over an area of 4,207 hectares.

Subsequently, **two reservations were created within the Reserve:** one in the headwaters of the River Orlina of 384 hectares, **with the aim of preserving the flora,** especially the beech tree; and another in the Sant Quirze Valley of 585 hectares, **to protect the Mediterranean tortoise.**



La Albera, Banyuls. Photo: Lluís Català



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

There are important differences between eastern and western parts. The area Requesens-Baussitges is wetter and higher with extraordinary vegetation: cork oak, Holm oak, chestnut, etc. The Baussitges area is where the upper valley of the river Orlina and the most easterly beech woods in the Peninsula survive.

In contrast, Sant Quirze de Colera is totally Mediterranean but unfortunately has been hit by wildfires.

In the Reserve there are several endangered species of plant, most notably, the yew and the holly and some orchids.

The most important of the animal species in Albera is the Mediterranean tortoise. The eastern area is the only place in the Peninsula where this reptile survives, and it is in serious danger of extinction.

A remarkable diversity of bats inhabit the area, and birds of prey include the golden eagle, Bonelli's eagle and the eagle owl. As for carnivores, besides foxes, martens, weasels, genets and wild cats live here.

HERITAGE

The massif of Albera has the lowest hills and mountains in the Pyrenees so **has always been a crossing point.**

No wonder that in its southern slopes **one of the largest concentrations of megalithic monuments in Catalonia can be found.**

On the border with France **the ruins of the ancient monastery of Santa Maria de Panissars** (XI century) stand, **and recent archaeological excavations have uncovered the remains of a Roman road.**

Romanesque art is important here. Within the reserve, **the most notable monument is the former Benedictine monastery of Sant Quirze de Colera.** Nearby is the ancient church of Santa Maria of Cholera, also Romanesque, all within the parish of Rabós.

In La Jonquera are the remains of the **castle of Rocabertí** and not far away the sanctuary of Santa Maria de Requesens. **Beautiful examples of vernacular architecture** are the stately homes in Can Laporta, La Jonquera, or house of the Marquis de Camps in Espolla.



THE CORKLANDS



Castle Requesens. Photo: J.A. Fernández Castro

TRAILS, FOOTPATHS AND SO ON

There are a **wealth of tracks and paths for walking and cycling that take you to megalithic monuments and the areas around Sant Quirze de Colera and Requesens**. There is also the Albera Tortoise Breeding Centre.

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

Within the Nature Reserve there are the towns of Espolla, La Jonquera and Rabós d'Empordà, all in the province of Girona.

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:



THE CORKLANDS

- Organized environmental studies activities
- Car parking and Picnic Areas
- Visitor Center
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Guided tours

Administrative Office and Information Centre

Rectoria Vella
C. Amadeu Sudrià 3
17753 Espolla, Girona
T. 972 545 079

Information Centre and Permanent exhibition

Can Laporta
C. Major 2
17700 La Jonquera, Girona
T. 972 555 713



Wild boars and piglets. Photo: Jaume Justafre

Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from www.gencat.cat, www.empordaturisme.cat, www.tortugues.cat and Wikipedia.



THE CORKLANDS

LES GAVARRES NATURE RESERVE

The Gavarres make up the northern end of the **Catalan Coastal Range** and was recognized as an area of great importance and declared Area of Natural Interest in December 1992, **with an area of 28,672 hectares.**

It forms a real physical barrier between the **Baix Empordà and la Selva**, with its highest peak at Puig Gavarra, 532 m altitude, followed by Puig d'Arques, 527 meters.



Les Gavarres, Romanyà de la Selva. Photo: Lluís Català



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

Here the most important Catalanian cork oaks and maritime pine forests are located.

Vegetation here is that of wet, shady areas near mountain streams, forests are made up of alders, hazels and chestnuts, contrasting with the rest of the predominantly Mediterranean territory. **As for unique flora, isoetes, or quillworts, and**

orchids stand out, the most special of which is the *satirión de tres bulbos*.

There is also a great diversity of fauna, especially birds, including birds of prey such as owls, long-eared owl and hawk. There are 14 species of endangered bats, some of them quite rare.

HERITAGE

The cultural heritage of Gavarres is rich and diverse. Among the most important **archaeological remains** are more than 40 burial sites. Over the years, **both Iberians and Romans settled in the area, so we also find traces of those civilizations.**

From the tenth century, small farming communities settled in the heart of the massif and built around churches, generating something new: the parish.

Development here paralleled that of urban market centres like Girona and Barcelona, so that **Gavarres became a focus for economic activities linked to the exploitation of forest and natural resources such as firewood, charcoal, lime kilns and glass, ice wells, etc.**

The **architectural heritage** that can be found in the Reserve is well worth visiting.

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

In the Area of Natural Interest we found the following towns: Cruïlles, Monells i Sant Sadurní de l'Heura, Calonge, Cassà de la Selva, Castell-Platja d'Aro, Celrà, Forallac, Girona, Juià, La Bisbal d'Empordà, Llagostera, Llambilles, Madremanya, Mont-ras, Palafrugell, Palamós, Quart, Sant Martí Vell, Santa Cristina d'Aro, Torrent and Vall-Ilòbrega, all of them in the province of Girona.



THE CORKLANDS



Les Gavarres, Peratallada. Photo: José Jiménez and Montse López (ACER)

TRAILS, FOOTPATHS AND SO ON

The area is a perfect for hiking or cycling trips. The company Globus Empordà offers **balloon trips for both adults and children to enjoy the view from the air, trips on horseback or in a horsedrawn carriage.**

There is plenty to do here, environmental education

companies, like Pipistrellus SC, **teach the skills and crafts used here or guide you in collecting wild fruits to mention but a few options.**

You can also observe the sky from the best vantage point, the Angel Hermitage, at the Astronomical Observatory, Les Gavarres.

Towns within the Park, also **offer wine and gastronomic tours**, as is the case in Calonge.

For more information:
www.rutasdevinosemporda.es



THE CORKLANDS

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:

- Organized environmental studies activities
- Car parking
- Picnic Areas
- Environmental Education Center
- Visitor Center
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Guided tours

Les Gavarres Consortium

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www.gavarres.cat



Les Gavarres, Romanyà de la Selva. Photo: Lluís Català

Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from www.gavarres.cat, www.visitemporda.com, www.baixemporda-costabrava.org, <http://es.wikiloc.com>, www.globusemporda.com, www.hipicaunicorn.com, www.pipistrellus.com, www.espaiastronomic.com, www.rutesdelviemporda.com and Wikipedia.



THE CORKLANDS

MONTSENY NATURE RESERVE

Montseny is an interesting mosaic of Mediterranean and Central European landscapes, despite its proximity to the large metropolitan conurbation of Barcelona (only 50 km away).

Many of the habitats found here are of interest to the European Community, such as the Holm oaks, Mediterranean pines, cork oaks, beech, chestnut and heathland. In addition to its extraordinary biodiversity, Montseny is home to cultural and ethnological heritage of great value. **The protected area of the park is 31,064 hectares.**

In 1978, UNESCO included Montseny in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and in 2004 it was awarded the Q of Quality; which culminated in the accreditation of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in 2011.



Montseny Nature Reserve. Photo: Lluís Català



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

Going up from the lowlands to the peaks here, is, in terms of the scenery and flora, like travelling from southern to northern Europe.

Relict species and individual specimens of many rare plants

find refuge in these mountains; examples are the sundew, the royal fern, or yellow gentian, the *hierba peluda* and yew. Some native species are only found in this place, such as Sant Segimon's herb, the pansy or the Montseny violet.

As a meeting point of diverse environments in a relatively small area **it is also home to the most important range of fauna in the region**, with over 200 species of vertebrate and 9,000 invertebrate species.



Montseny Nature Reserve, panoramic. Photo: Lluís Català

HERITAGE

Montseny has cultural heritage too, undoubtedly one of its great attractions. The megaliths of the Sierra del Arca and the remains of the Iberian wall of Montgròs are the oldest. **There are also different castles** like Montsoriu Castell, Castell de Montclús or the Fluvia, at different stages of excavation or restoration.

The Middle Ages is widely represented here, **with more than a dozen Romanesque mountain churches.** The best example would be the Monastery of Sant Salvador de Breda, founded in 1038. Another beautiful monastery is Sant Marçal.

Montseny boasts a long list of monumental trees, like the Chestnut of Can Cuch, with a diameter of almost twelve metres.



THE CORKLANDS

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

In the protected area there are the towns of Arbúcies, Breda, Riells i Viabrea, Sant Feliu de Buixalleu and Viladrau, in the province of Girona; Aiguafreda, El Brull, Campins, Cànoves i Samalús, Figaró-Montmany, Fogars de Montclús, La Garriga, Gualba, Montseny, Sant Esteve de Palautordera, Sant Pere de Vilamajor, Seva and Tagamanent, in the province of Barcelona.

TOURS AND FOOTPATHS

There are several information points, different routes and guided tours can be done throughout the year.

Depending on the season, itineraries have a different focus, in the autumn, looking for mushrooms, or in spring, animal activity and the first blooms.

Itineraries that take in castles, monumental chestnut trees, workshops on plants and home remedies or river routes are some of the deals offered in this park.

For more information:

<http://parcs.diba.cat/documents/75109/15894267/p03d112.pdf>

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:

- Organized environmental studies activities
- Car parking and Picnic Areas
- Visitor Center
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Guided tours

Montseny Natural Park Office

Masia Mariona. Ctra. 5119 km 2,5 Mosqueroles
08479 Fogars de Montclús, Barcelona
T. 938 475 102

p.montseny@diba.cat



THE CORKLANDS

You can find **other centers and information points** in Santa Fe del Montseny (Can Casades), Fogars del Montclús, Rectoria del Brull, Montseny, Sant Esteve de Palautordera, Aiguafreda, Figaró-Montmany (Station) and Seva.

For more information:

www.turisme-montseny.com/en

The Park has museums and cultural facilities, documentation centres and facilities for environmental education.



Montseny Nature Reserve, Fogueres de Montsoriu. Photo: Lluís Català

Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from www.turisme-montseny.com, www.gencat.cat, <http://parcs.diba.cat> and Wikipedia.



MONTNEGRE AND EL CORREDOR NATURE RESERVE

Each is a well-defined massif that run parallel to the coast, forming part of the coastal mountain range.

The geographical location, topography and climatic variations between the inland slopes and those overlooking the sea provide the **diverse range of environments within the Reserve**. Its proximity to the sea has favoured the development of **luxuriant vegetation in addition to numerous Central European and even Atlantic species**.

The protected area is 15,010 hectares; of these, 2,241 are of pure cork oak and 5,876 cork oaks and pines.



Agricultural mosaic. Photo: Archive Montnegre and El Corredor



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

The Park is heavily forested and **includes a wide variety of plant communities of real significance**, hence the **mycological and biological interest** of the two massifs.

Most widespread are the Holm oak groves but at the top of the Montnegre African oaks and big-leaf oaks and some beeches are found.

In shadier areas, between hazels and oaks, chestnuts thrive in important numbers.

This unspoilt, dense forest allows forest-based species such as wild boar, civet cat, common dormouse, squirrel, goshawk, woodpecker, jay and the white snake to thrive too.

Central European species also live here, like the marten, the red-backed vole or the grey dormouse.

Recently too, various species of bat, rare in Catalonia, have been identified and **the herbivore, the roe deer, has been introduced.**

Open areas are pretty scarce but provide habitat for predators such as short-toed eagles, buzzards, foxes, and lizards.



Hoopoe. Photo: ACER

HERITAGE

Since ancient times, Man has come to settle in these lands, and proof of this are, for example, **the dolmens Piedra Arca and Piedra Gentil.**

Also of note are **Iberian remains at Turo del Vent and Puig de Castell and many medieval churches, chapels and hermitages.**



THE CORKLANDS

One such hermitage stands at the highest point of El Corredor, a hermitage in 1544, it was later rebuilt in late Gothic style. Facing the sea stands the Romanesque church of Sant Martí de Mata.

The Montnegre area has the most isolated parishes, **and in high places hermitages and the ruins of the Monastery of Roca-Rossa, a must for nature lovers and those who enjoy history.**

TOURS AND FOOTPATHS

The reserve offers **a lot of guided tours that will help you to understand the landscape, its fauna, flora and history.** You will also find **mountain bike routes.**

For more information:

<http://parcs.diba.cat/documents/75109/15894269/p05d064.pdf/7826ce5f-04dd-449e-8d46-9e8d369e2204>

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

In El Corredor and Montnegre we find the following boroughs, all in the province of Barcelona: Arenys de Munt, Dosrius, Fogars de Montclús, Llinars del Vallès, Mataró, Palafolls, Pineda de Mar, Sant Cebrià de Vallalta, Sant Celoni, Sant Iscle de Vallalta, Tordera, Vallgorguina and Vilalba Sasserra.

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:

- Car parking
- Picnic Areas
- Visitor Center
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Guided tours

Montnegre and El Corredor

Natural Park Office

Església, 13 - 2º

08471 Vallgorguina, Barcelona

T. 938 679 452

p.montnegre@diba.cat



THE CORKLANDS

You can find **other centers and information points** in: Hortsavinyà, Santurari del Corredor, Sant Cebrià de Vallalta, Arenys de Munt, Sant Iscle de Vallalta, Market Tordera, Fogars de la Selva and Sant Celoni.



Hermitage of El Corredor. Photo: Archive Montnegre and El Corredor

Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from <http://parcs.dibat.cat>, www.arenysdemunt.cat, www.dosrius.cat, www.fogarsdemontclus.cat, www.llinarsdelvalles.cat, www.mataro.cat, www.palafolls.cat, www.pinedademar.org, www.stcebria.net, www.santceloni.cat, www.santiscle.cat, www.tordera.cat, www.vallgorguina.cat, www.vilalbasasserra.cat and Wikipedia.



THE CORKLANDS

SIERRA DE ESPADÁN NATURE RESERVE

The reserve with its 32,000 acres, is the second largest of Valencia's open spaces. This mountain range, with its many natural springs, lush ravines and woodlands, is part of the Iberian range and separates the Palancia river basin in the south from that of the River Mijares in the north.

Unusually here, there are outcrops of sandstone, called *rodenos* which give rise to abrupt and rugged relief.

It forms a barrier that is channeled by the prevailing rain and winds. It was declared a Reserve in 1998.



Sierra de Espadán Natural Park. Photo: Archive, Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

The Mediterranean climate, geological conditions, rich flora and human intervention on the environment, have led to different vegetation: pine forests, riverside woods, rural areas, Holm oak and cork oak groves.

The latter is one of the most interesting in Valencia, intermingled with maritime pines, used in ancient times for the extraction of resins.

Native Valencian species such as knapweed, *clave de roca* or *hierba de las lunas* are found

here, as well as other species of great scientific interest like *pericó de sureda* and *ginesta de sureda*.

Birds of prey include the rare and endangered Bonelli's eagle, the short-toed eagle, the booted eagle and the goshawk.

Among the nocturnal species, the tawny owl, long-eared owl and the eagle owl. **The wild boar, fox, marten, badger and genet are some of the mammals.**



Native crab. Photo: Archive, Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve



THE CORKLANDS

HERITAGE

There are **numerous prehistoric remains, others belonging to the Valencian Bronze Age, as well as Iberian, Roman and medieval times.**

Especially prevalent are the **many remains of castles that were built by the Arabs.** No short-

age then, of cultural, historic and artistic interest here.

Livestock and agriculture took off here thanks to irrigation ditches and water storage systems, wells, dams and aqueducts.

Two aqueducts are evidence of this, the Rambla de Eslida or the Arquet in Alfondeguilla.

Items of ethnological and ethnographic interest like **ice stores, mines, trenches, etc. can be found in museums such as the Ethnological Museum in Pavia or Tales.**

The natural heritage offers visitors spectacular scenery where you will find many caves and natural springs. You can also participate in activities such as **the extraction of cork or beekeeping.**



Castro Ice cellar. Photo: Archive, Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve

TOURS AND FOOTPATHS

There are **different tracks and trails that allow the visitor to discover the most inhospitable places and wildlife** in the reserve as well as **its cultural heritage.**

For more information:

<http://parquesnaturales.gva.es/web/indice.aspx?nodo=4145&idioma=C>

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

The municipalities that are in the Reserve, all in the province of Castellón, are: Aín, Alcúdia de Veo, Algimia de Almonacid, Alfondeguilla, Almedíjar, Artana, Ayódar, Azuébar, Chóvar, Eslida, Fuentes de Ayódar, Higuera, Matet, Pavia, Suera, Tales, Torralba del Pinar, Vall de Almonacid and Villamalur.

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:



THE CORKLANDS

- Organized environmental studies activities
- Car parking
- Picnic Areas
- Environmental Education Center
- Visitor Center
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Guided tours

Nature Reserve Visitor Centre Sierra de Espadán Natural Park

Av. Francisco Mondragón, 2
12528 Eslida, Castellón
T. 964 629 112 – 679 196 294
parque_espadan@gva.es

You can find **colaborators information points** in Segorbe, Montanejos, Chilches, Onda, Castellón de la Plana, Navajas, Moncofa, Almenara and Almassora.



Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve. Photo: Lluís Català

Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from www.eslida.es, www.fuentesdeayodar.es, www.alcudiadeveo.es, www.pavias.es, www.tales.es, www.alfondeguilla.es, www.matet.es, www.higueras.es, www.valldealmonacid.es, <http://parquesnaturales.gva.es> and Wikipedia.



SIERRA DE SAN PEDRO, AREA OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE

On the border between the provinces of Cáceres and Badajoz is the Sierra de San Pedro, in the southern plateau of the Iberian Peninsula.

The protected area is some 115.032 hectares.

It is bounded in the northeast by the river Ayuela, while the rivers Tagus and Salor flow in the north. To the south the landscape gets progressively more undulating until it comes to an end abruptly at a fault line.



Sierra de San Pedro, San Vicente de Alcántara. Photo: Lluís Català



THE CORKLANDS

VEGETATION, UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA

Here the mountain range gives way to pasture. The most complex and mature ecosystems are oak and cork oak groves in the form of rangelands but there are areas of scrubland, grassland, olive groves and other crops. Along riverbanks alder and ash grow too.



Sierra de San Pedro, San Vicente de Alcántara. Photo: Lluís Català

The *Tamuja* or *tamujo* is native to the *Luso-extremadurensis* region and is present here thanks to its excellent adaptation to drought and lack of moisture, as well as floods and extreme cold.

In the thick of the Sierra de San Pedro you can see many of Europe's threatened species of fauna, including the most famous Iberian species: the wolf and lynx.

The birdlife here is also exceptionally important. Half of the regional population of Spanish imperial eagle, 21 pairs nest here, as do other species of interest such as the golden eagle, the black vulture, griffin vulture and the black stork, the eagle owl and the crane.



THE CORKLANDS

HERITAGE

Inhabited since prehistoric times, the first inhabitants of the boroughs of the Sierra de San Pedro Community date back to the Paleolithic period: **standing stones, dolmens and megalithic remains attest to this.**

This area boasts the largest and best preserved collection of dolmens in Western Europe, declared a Megalithic Complex of great cultural interest.

Roman rule made its mark on the whole area, **but most vestiges: castles, walled areas, sanctuaries, parish churches and hermitages are from the medieval period.**

From other times there are **several national historical monuments** (such as the Church of Rocamadour of Valencia de Alcántara), buildings and historic areas (such as the Gothic Quarter of Valencia de Alcántara) and a large number of churches and chapels of architectural interest.



Gothic Quarter of Valencia de Alcántara. Photo: Sierra de San Pedro Community

TOWNS IN THE RESERVE

In the Sierra de San Pedro we can find the following towns of the province of Badajoz: Alburquerque, San Vicente de Alcántara and Villar del Rey; and Aliseda, Cáceres, Carbajo, Herrerueta, Membrío, Salorino, Santiago de Alcántara and Valencia de Alcántara, of the province of Cáceres.

TOURS AND FOOTPATHS

There are a wealth of tours and trails to discover what the Sierra de San Pedro has to offer. The tour of the dolmens, ornithological trails, walks through the Gothic Quarter, etc.

Delightful viewpoints are dotted all over the area.

For more information:

www.mancomunidadsierrasanpedro.com/descargas/descargas_mat_divulgativo.html



THE CORKLANDS

SERVICES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The area has the following services:

- Organized environmental studies activities
- Car parking and Picnic Areas
- Children Areas
- Environmental Education Center
- Visitor Center
- Signposted itineraries
- Informative materials
- Guided tours

**Directorate General for the Environment.
Wildlife Protection Centre and Environmental
Education “Los Hornos”**

PO Box number 7
10181 Sierra de Fuentes, Cáceres
T. 927 200 170

Alburquerque Tourist Office

Plaza de España s/n
06510 Alburquerque, Badajoz
T. 924 401 201



Castle Piedrabuena, San Vicente de Alcántara. Photo: Sierra de San Pedro Community

Sources: Information provided by ACER. Associació per a la Conservació de l'Entorn i la Recerca; and extracted from www.mancomunidadsierrasanpedro.com and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS



La Concòrdia, Agullana. Photo: Lluís Català



CORK TOWNS

CORK TOWNS

Discover what corking communities are really about and the rich inheritance they enjoy; forestry work gives rise to related trades, traditional crafts live on, nature reserves are on the doorstep...

The relationship between man and the cork oak has been deeply engrained since ancient times.

This manifests in **unique landscapes and unique places** where the ancestral way of life is still lived in multiple ways.

The values embedded in this way of life are those of a sustainable society that respects its environment and functions in harmony with it.

Whether you look at it from a scenic, ecological, economic, social, historical, cultural, anthropological or scientific perspective, managing the world of cork well makes sense on every level.

You are invited to assess the potential of these resource-rich rural areas as the focus of sustainable development policies.



Old Can Mario cork factory water tank, Palafrugell. Photo: Àlex Cebollero



CORK TOWNS

HORNACHUELOS

Located in the western part of the province of Córdoba, part of it falls inside the Sierra de Hornachuelos Nature Reserve, set up in 1989.

Cork oaks are abundant in the area so cork extraction has a long tradition here.

The centre preserves the structure of an Arab town, with steep, narrow streets. Agriculture is basic to the economy here but the flow of visitors that the park generates and hunting activities have led to the emergence of tourism services, especially rural accommodation.



San Calixto Village. Photo: Hornachuelos Tourist Office



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

Visit the remains of Roman villas, castles, paintings on medieval walls, ancient monasteries, etc., **there is a wealth of architectural, historical and artistic heritage to explore. For walkers, a wide range of well signposted trails through the reserve will help you to get to know it.**

In the town, **don't miss the castle and city walls, the caves and hanging houses, the hermitage El**

Salvador, the Church of Santa Maria de las Flores, the Garden of Moratalla and the Monastery of Santa Maria de las Escalonias.

If you are interested in finding out about the reserve in detail, go to the **Huerta del Rey Visitor Centre** where permanent exhibitions **tell you all about the fauna, flora and things to do.**

CURIOSITIES...

As we enter the borough of Hornachuelos, **orange trees dominate the landscape.** The oranges are sure to have ripened on the trees so their flavour is really intense.

In addition, along with hunting, **this area is home to another ancestral activity: beekeeping.**

Hornachuelos celebrates its own unique festivals like the Cruces de Mayo, Corpus Christi or the

Pilgrimage of San Abundio; which usually involves decorating the streets and balconies of the town and traditional dances and songs of the area.

As for the cuisine, **do not miss the delicious venison sausage or the specially prepared leg of deer. If you have a sweet tooth local desserts include sweet crackers and biscuits, doughnuts or fritters.**

TOURIST OFFER

- **Where shall we eat?** www.hornachuelosrural.com/gastronomia-2/restaurantes-y-bares
- **Where shall we sleep?** www.hornachuelosrural.com/alojamientos-en-hornachuelos

Grazulema-Ocio organizes activities in the Nature Reserve of Sierra de Hornachuelos. For further information call: further information call: 686 526 893 or 697 783 693.



CORK TOWNS

FURTHER INFORMATION

Hornachuelos Tourist Office

C. Antonio Machado 6
14740 Hornachuelos, Córdoba
T. 957 640 786

turismo@hornachuelosrural.com
www.hornachuelosrural.com

Huerta del Rey Visitor Centre

Ctra. Hornachuelos - San Calixto (A-3151), km 1,5
14740 Hornachuelos, Córdoba
T. 957 579 656

huertadelrey@hotmail.es



Moratalla Palace and Gardens. Photo: Hornachuelos Tourist Office

Sources: Information extracted from www.hornachuelos.es, www.hornachuelosrural.com, www.juntadeandalucia.es, www.corchodelpais.com and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

LOS BARRIOS

Located in Campo de Gibraltar, in the province of Cádiz. The borough is one of the largest in Spain and is bathed in sunshine and breezes from where the Mediterranean meets the Atlantic, **perfect for those who love being active and eating well.**

Los Barrios is one of the largest surface brings to the Los Alcornocales Natural Park, declared as such by the Andalusian Parliament in 1989.



Los Barrios. Photo: Los Barrios Town Hall

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

The town is surrounded by Los Alcornocales Nature Reserve and that of the Marshes of the Palmones River. These open spaces are rich in animal and plant species themselves as well as providing a **stopover for many birds that migrate across the Straits of Gibraltar.**



CORK TOWNS

Los Alcornocales features archaeological sites and has more than fifty caves, the Tajo de las Figuras Cave, regarded as the Sistine Chapel of cave painting, is notable for its artistic value and its unique subject matter.

There are recreational and camping areas and hiking, biking and horseback trails. One of the most popular takes you up to El Picacho and El Aljibe. **You can also watch the cork being stripped from the trees.** Not to be missed are the church of San Isidro Labrador, the House of Urritia and the Betty Mollesworth Botanical Gardens and Botanical Park. Also worth visiting is the Granary (el Pósito), built in 1768 as a storehouse for wheat and currently the **Natural History Museum, which houses the best collection of fossils, minerals, etc. in Andalusia.**

CURIOSITIES...

Handicrafts made of cork, such as home furnishings or accessories like purses are on sale in the area.

Los Barrios hosts a lot of festivals, the Easter

dance and the freeing of bulls (*embolao*) are just two.

Strudels, meringues or almond sweets are just a sample of the traditional pastries on offer.

Try the local tomato sauce, *la moruna* and *los chicharrones*, slithers of golden pork fat, not to mention assorted fried fish and sardines on the spit.



Muleteers at work and the cork stripping. Photo: Los Barrios Town Hall



CORK TOWNS

TOURIST OFFER

► **Where shall we eat?**

www.turismocampodegibraltar.com/dondeComer.html

► **Where shall we sleep?**

www.turismocampodegibraltar.com/dondeDormir.html

Hiking, paddle surfing, kite surfing, mountain biking, kayak trips on the River Palmones, night walks, bird watching trips, visits to see rutting deer and mycological walks are some more examples of what is on offer here.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Tourism Villa de Los Barrios

Paseo de la Constitución 15
11370 Los Barrios, Cádiz
T. 956 582 504

delegaciondeturismo@ayto-losbarrios.es
informacionturistica@ayto-losbarrios.es
<http://turismo.ayto-losbarrios.es>

BTT Alcornocales Centre

Reception point Montera Plaza
Av. Carlos Cano s/n
11370 Los Barrios, Cádiz
T. 856 220 220

centro@centrobttalcornocales.com
www.centrobttalcornocales.com

Los Alcornocales Natural Park Office

Ctra. Alcalá-Benalup. Km 1, beside CEDEFO
11180 Alcalá de los Gazules, Cádiz
T. 956 418 901

pn.alcornocales.cma@juntadeandalucia.es
www.alcornocales.org

*Sources: Information extracted from www.losbarrios.es, www.turismocampodegibraltar.com, Wikipedia and *Al sur de Los Alcornocales and Alcornocalesños. Paisajes y Paisanajes* publications.*



CORK TOWNS

SESTRICA

When the Moors were expelled from Aragon in 1610 Sestrica was left almost empty so the land was leased to people who came from nearby towns.

Income from agriculture and livestock was supplemented by that brought by some of those who went to harvest crops in France two or three times a year.

Nowadays the climatic conditions are ideal for growing olives, cherries or almonds, first class products mostly cultivated without irrigation.

It also provides a great location for outdoor sports and leisure activities and is easily accessible from Zaragoza, the capital of this region.



Cork oak forest in Sestrica. Photo: Lluís Català



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

Sestrica is located on a hillside at the foot of the Sierra de la Virgen. While the landscape invites us to look upwards to Peña Guzman or Mount San Cristobal, there are some peculiar spots like the Huerta waterfall below.

The cork oaks found here are the only ones in the whole of Aragon, which makes them even more special. Don't miss the Cork Oak of the Prado or the Lone Tree of Viver.

In addition, for caving enthusiasts Trampas-peñas pothole is a must.

Some historic monuments of interest are the Tower of Urrea, the church of San Miguel, the Sestrica *peirones*, stone pillars, the Virgen del Prado hermitage, the aqueduct, etc. **Not to mention the large number of mills, fountains and ice stores that can be found in the borough.**

CURIOSITIES...

Pottery is an important craft in Sestrica and one workshop is unusual in that it doesn't use the potter's wheel. Instead, pieces are made by the warping method, joining several strips of clay on a base.

Lots of events and festivals are held in Sestrica. Easter is celebrated on the **Sunday of Quasimodo, the Sunday after Easter, when the inhabitants go in procession to the St. Bartholomew Hermitage, and after Eucharist, go on to the nearby hamlet of La Hiedra to have a traditional pie with a boiled egg inside.**

TOURIST OFFER

- **Good places to eat in Sestrica and the Aranda District?**
www.comarcadelaranda.com/comarca/guiaservicios/buscar.php?tsid=2
www.sestrica.es/directorio1.htm
- **Where shall we stay?**
www.comarcadelaranda.com/comarca/guiaservicios/buscar.php?tsid=1

Sestrica and the borough of Aranda with their wide variety of landscapes **are ideal for many outdoor activities. These include hiking, water sports, caving, paragliding, climbing and cycling.**



CORK TOWNS

FURTHER INFORMATION

Sestrica Town Hall

Plaza del Ayuntamiento 1
50248 Sestrica, Zaragoza
T. 976 825 285

sestrica@dpz.es
www.sestrica.es

Aranda District

Castillo Palacio del Papa Luna
Plaza del Castillo s/n
50250 Illueca, Zaragoza
T. 976 548 090 / 626 345 202

www.comarcadelaranda.com



Sierra de la Virgen, Sestrica. Photo: Lluís Català

Sources: Information extracted from www.sestrica.es, www.viverdelasierra.com, www.turismodezaragoza.es, www.comarcadelaranda.com and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

NAVAHERMOSA

In the southwest of the province of Toledo, in the foothills of the Sierra Galinda, which separates the mountains in the south and the plains in the north. Navahermosa is less than an hour from the capital, Toledo, a city that was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1986 and is regarded by many as a second Rome.

In the nineteenth century, almost half of the population was engaged in mining and olive oil production.

Montes de Toledo was recognised for its olive oil and mills were built in the twentieth century, when cork factories also became important.



Hoz de Carboneros. Photo: Navahermosa Municipal Archive



CORK TOWNS

CURIOSITIES...

Navahermosa falls within Cabaneros National Park, which extends into the province of Ciudad Real from Toledo, and is a Special Bird Reserve (ZEPA) and Site of European Importance (LIC).

Tracks and trails take you to its numerous beauty spots, like the Navahermosa olive groves, Mount Telegrajo or Mount Valcavero, Nacientes Spring, Hoz de Carboneros Waterfall, to mention a few.

If you are interested in history, head to the Town Hall, the Church of San Miguel the Archangel, the houses under the Arches and visit the hermitages and the remains of the Castle de Dos Hermanas.



Church of San Miguel the Archangel. Photo: Navahermosa Municipal Archive

CURIOSITIES...

Local products include cork, embroidery, d.o. label olive oil and manchego cheese.

Ancient traditions and typical festivities give visitors the chance to immerse themselves in the Spanish culture and include, for example, the Pilgrimage of Milagra, held the third Sunday of May.

TOURIST OFFER

Navahermosa has bars and restaurants as well as several types of accommodation: hotels, cottages and campsites. Notably, **in the province there is a wide range of cultural tourism, but gastronomy is also important with the popular Olive Oil Trail.**

Cabañeros National Park is only 12 km from Navahermosa and offers a wide range of **outdoor activities.**

For more information:

www.navahermosa.es/institucional_30_empresas-y-comercios-de-nuestra-localidad.html



CORK TOWNS

FURTHER INFORMATION

Navahermosa Town Hall

Plaza de la Constitución 1
45150 Navahermosa, Toledo
T. 925 410 111

info@navahermosa.es

www.navahermosa.es

Diputación de Toledo

Tourist Information Office

Subida de la Granja s/n
45002 Toledo

T. 925 248 232 Ext 551 - 552

infoturismo@diputoledo.es

www.diputoledo.es

Cabañeros National Park

Guided walks

T. 926 783 297

Guided 4x4 Tours

T. 926 775 385

Tourist deals and activities

T. 926 850 371

info@visitacabaneros.es

www.visitacabaneros.es



La Milagra Hermitage. Photo: Navahermosa Municipal Archive

Sources: Information extracted from www.navahermosa.es, www.diputoledo.es and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

MUELAS DEL PAN

Natural beauty abounds here, the hillsides are of cork oak, Holm oak, oak and cherry orchards; the steep rocky banks of the Esla River, which runs through the town and its farmland and grazing pastures, add to its charm too.

In the mountains there are significant numbers of foxes, roe deer, wild boar and even wolves. We also find eagles and black and white storks throughout the province, even if the latter are more difficult to spot.

Muelas de Pan is just 22 kilometers from the city of Zamora, with its 23 temples in the borough and 14 churches in the historic centre, it is the European city with the largest number of Romanesque churches in Europe, small wonder it is called Pearl of the Romanesque in the art world.



Muelas del Pan, Cerezal de Aliste. Photo: Lluís Català



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

As for open spaces, the Special Reserve for Birds in Canyons del Duero and the Sierra de la Culebra Regional Reserve are especially noteworthy.

Walkers can follow the clearly marked paths through this unique natural environment, one of the best is perhaps that which leads to *Sofreral*, the most northerly cork oak forest in the country.

Local and vernacular architecture are worth seeing too, the chapel of St. Stephen, the Ricobayo reservoir...

The town has **El Alcornocal Visitor Centre** and the **Pottery and Archaeology Museum**, with a wealth of artefacts from down the centuries.

CURIOSITIES...

Pottery was important here until the 1930s. Then about 4 years ago, the Pottery Museum ran some courses in which a student, grandson of the last potter in fact, stood out.

This young man is currently working shapes and textures in clay, reviving the age-old tradition that should never have been lost.

As for the cuisine, inevitably in these lands, meat is the centrepiece: exquisite cuts of beef, from animals raised in surrounding meadows with a **good wine from Toro**, or the Arribes area to go with it.



Pottery and Archaeology Museum: Photo: Muelas del Pan Town Hall

TOURIST OFFER

In Muelas de Pan itself there are **country houses, guest houses, bars, restaurants and an inn where you can sample the local cuisine.**



CORK TOWNS

► **Where shall we eat and sleep?** www.ayto-muelasdelpan.com/municipio.htm

However, remember that less than 30 kilometers away, is Zamora, where a much wider range of facilities are available.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Muelas del Pan Town Hall

Plaza Mayor 1
49167 Muelas del Pan, Zamora
T. 980 553 005
info@ayto-muelasdelpan.com
www.ayto-muelasdelpan.com

El Alcornocal Visitor Centre

C. San Roque
49167 Muelas del Pan, Zamora
T. 980 553 005
info@alcornocal.es
www.alcornocal.com

MAAM, Pottery and Archaeology Museum

C. Sillada 8
49167 Muelas del Pan, Zamora
citamuseos@ayto-muelasdelpan.com
www.ma-am.es



Ricobayo de Alba Beach. Photo: Muelas del Pan Town Hall

Sources: Information extracted from www.ayto-muelasdelpan.com, www.alcornocal.com, www.tierradelpan.com, www.zamora.es and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

AGULLANA

The borough is located in the region of Alt Empordà, in the province of Girona, close to the French border.

It encompasses the western part of the Sierra de la Albera, with its scenic natural heritage, **ideal for all manner of outdoor leisure activities.**

The cork industry began to develop in the mid-eighteenth century.

In its heyday, in the early twentieth century, the town had no fewer than 40 factories.

The number of **modernist buildings** such as *chalet Parellada*, *Estela*, *Can Vidal*, the Gomis asylum or *Concòrdia* café were built at the height of its development.



Agullana. Photo: Lluís Català



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

Agullana is close to the Salines-Bassegoda Nature Reserve too. **Visitors can walk or cycle to important megalithic monuments and magnificent examples of civil architecture while enjoying the landscape.**

In addition, there are a number of monumental trees of great age: chestnut, cork oaks and oaks, some of which have trunks over 7 metres thick.

Don't miss Santa Maria de Agullana church and the Santa Eugeni hermitage.

Well worth a visit too is the **Can Bech de Baix necròpolis permanent exhibition** of the Late Bronze Age site excavated in 1973.



Original door of Can Bech old cork factory, Agullana. Photo: Lluís Català

CURIOSITIES...

The virgin olive oil (d.o. Empordà reserve) and wine (d.o Empordà) produced here is of high quality.

Festivals held in the area are a roasted chestnut party on 31 October, the Easter Feast, and unique to the town, the *Xuia* Festival or Estrada Festival.

The cuisine in Agullana is typically Mediterranean, of homemade dishes such as those made with Catalan sausage.

At the Feast of the *Xuia* special omelettes are made and the neighbours tour the streets beforehand to collect the ingredients.

TOURIST OFFER

With two natural sites on its doorstep and hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking as well as lively cultural events, Agullana has a lot to offer.

For more information: <http://es.salines-bassegoda.org/que-hacer.html>



CORK TOWNS

- Where shall we eat? <http://ca.agullana.cat/turisme/restaurants/>
- Where shall we sleep? <http://ca.agullana.cat/turisme/allotjaments/>

FURTHER INFORMATION

Agullana Town Hall

C. Lluís Gomis 2
17707 Agullana, Girona
T. 972 535 206
ajuntament@agullana.cat
<http://ca.agullana.cat>

Salines Bassegoda Consortium

Plaça de la Vila 5
17744 Navata, Girona
T. 972 565 004
<http://es.salines-bassegoda.org/>



La Concòrdia, Agullana. Photo: Lluís Català

Sources: Information extracted from www.agullana.cat, www.salines-bassegoda.org and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

CALONGE

Right on the Costa Brava, in the province of Girona, Calonge is the cultural and historical centre next to Sant Antoni, its tourist resort on the coast.

It stretches from Les Gavarres hills to beaches and secluded coves, with farmland in between.

The town has one of the greatest forts in the region, Calonge Castle, and the watchtower Torre Valentina. The cork industry made the town prosperous in the nineteenth century and this lasted until the Civil War. After a difficult period, Calonge grew again with the expansion of tourism.



Sant Antoni Beach. Photo: Jaume Figueras

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

As for enjoying nature, there are marked trails around Calonge. The most popular take you round the Tinar Basin and Mill Valley, but **you can also explore the many small coves and stretches of beach along this coastline.**



CORK TOWNS

One of the highlights of Calonge is the town centre with its gardens and medieval walls, the Castle, Torre Valentina, the Monastery of Santa Maria del Mar or Collet, and the dolmen Puigsesforques.

CURIOSITIES...

Hidden away behind the beaches are the fields that have long produced grapes, it is well worth taking a trip around the vineyards and wineries.

The most traditional of the many festivals and fairs held here are **the Medieval Market or the Feast of New Wine**.

The cuisine blends that of sea and mountain but is renowned for its fish and prawn chowders and *cigalas*, a seafood.



Vineyards, Tinar basin in Calonge. Photo: Jordi Mas

TOURIST OFFER

As it is a tourist town it has a very wide range of accommodation and places to eat.

- **Where shall we eat and sleep?**
www.calonge-santantoni.com/index.php?chlan=gb

Besides all this cycling and horse riding are on offer here and all kinds of water sports like skate sailing and kayaking.

Every summer over 500 activities are organized through the programme **Estiu Actiu** (Active Summer), a big draw for families.



CORK TOWNS

FURTHER INFORMATION

Calonge Town Hall

Plaça de la Concòrdia 7
17251 Calonge, Girona
T. 972 660 375

ajuntament@calonge.cat
www.calonge.cat

Calonge-Sant Antoni Tourist Office

Av. Catalunya 26
17252 Sant Antoni de Calonge, Girona
T. 972 661 714

turisme@calonge.cat
www.calonge-santantoni.com



Calonge with Les Gavarres in the background. Photo: Jaume Figueras

Sources: Information extracted from www.calonge.cat, www.calonge-santantoni.com and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

CASSÀ DE LA SELVA

Only 12 km from Girona, the provincial capital, and nestling in the foothills of Les Gavarres, the old town boasts a sixteenth century Gothic Church, and many stately buildings from the early twentieth century.

It is so well connected that it has an important

service industry and also manufactures industrial textiles.

The adjacent hills, in the past an area of intense livestock and forestry work, **is now an area where residents and visitors go hunting, collecting mushrooms, mountain biking or hiking.**



Cassà de la Selva. Photo: Cassà de la Selva Town Hall, Jordi Frigola

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

Gavarres is rich in cultural heritage. There are more than 40 burial sites and Iberian settlements, castles, medieval windmills... apart from remains of pre-Romanesque churches, hermitages and monasteries.



CORK TOWNS

The borough of Cassà extends into flat, well-cultivated areas that **are lovely to explore taking tracks and trails through the meadows.**

The centre of the town itself is characterized by **neoclassical, modernist and eclectic styles built** in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Older than this are the parish church, Can Frigola and the Selvatana Tower.



Can Vilallonga Big Aqueduct (Les Gavarres Consortium). Photo: Oriol Alamany

CURIOSITIES...

Local produce is the key feature of the cuisine here. As part of their festivals giant figures with enormous heads are paraded around the town.

These figures usually represent the roots and history of the town. The Cassà de la Selva giants are over 50 years old and have travelled throughout Catalonia.



CORK TOWNS

TOURIST OFFER

This is a much visited corridor between mountain and sea with some idyllic spots; offering visitors a variety of dining options and accommodation.

➤ **Where shall we eat?**

www.cassa.cat/empreses/index.php/empreses/gastronomia/restaurants

➤ **Where shall we sleep?**

www.turismegirones.cat/es/donde-dormir/m6/todos/8eb2867e540c57d212adfa6c99ca0c83/al-ojamiento-hotelero.html

Here recreational options abound, **hiking, climbing, astronomical observation, quad biking, horseback riding, mountain biking, canoeing, golf and Pitch & Putt, balloon rides, etc.**

FURTHER INFORMATION

Cassà de la Selva Town Hall

Rambla Onze de Setembre 107
17244 Cassà de la Selva, Girona
T. 972 460 005
ajuntament@cassa.cat
www.cassa.cat

Gironès Regional Council

www.turismegirones.cat



Esclat meadow mowing. Photo: Cassà de la Selva Town Hall

Sources: Information extracted from www.cassa.cat, www.turismegirones.cat and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

LLAGOSTERA

At the southern end of Girona, surrounded by Les Gavarres and Cadiretes, l'Ardenya, both with a rich natural heritage, this territory has been occupied from the Palaeolithic and has a medieval castle dating from the twelfth century.

Thanks to the cork industry in the eighteenth century a golden age began and its stately homes are witness to the fact.

Llagostera's strategic location between Girona and the Costa Brava has meant that it has continued to grow.

It is on the Carrilet Route, one of the busiest and best-known cycle ways.



Llagostera. Photo: Llagostera Town Hall



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

A walk through the old part of town provides plenty of historical interest. The Wall walk includes the parish church of Sant Feliu, the castle and the viewpoint from the Castle Square, which looks out over Les Gavarres and on to the Pyrenees.

The way is dotted with modernist buildings that make up the popular Architectural walk.

The countryside is crisscrossed with a network of well signposted paths to enjoy on foot or by bike.



The wall of Llagostera. Photo: Marc Sureda

CURIOSITIES...

Llagostera has many of its own products produced in the area, like pinenut sausages, charcoal from Ardenya, Salenys springwater, Can Companyó oil or l'Eixerit curd cheese. As regards fairs and traditions, **the town has a wide range of cultural activities, the Roman Market, the *Trilla* Fair or the Mushroom Fair.**

Another attraction is the food, Llagostera organizes gourmet days when visitors can sample local and seasonal products in its restaurants.

TOURIST OFFER

➤ **Where shall we eat?**

www.visitallagostera.com/en/where-to-eat-drink/restaurants

➤ **Where shall we sleep?**

www.visitallagostera.com/en/where-to-sleep

Guided tours include:

- **The historic centre**
- **Llagostera's surrounding area**
- **Legends in the Old Town**



CORK TOWNS

These activities are offered throughout the year and are aimed at schools, groups, individuals, etc.

For more information:
T. 972 805 525 / www.actiescola.cat

Organised hiking, horseback riding, cycling also goes on in the area.

For more information:
www.visitallagostera.com/en/ecotourism



Old Carrilet Station. It is currently the Information Point. Photo: Marc Sureda

FURTHER INFORMATION

Llagostera Town Hall

Plaça del Castell 1
17240 Llagostera, Girona
T. 972 830 375 / 972 830 218
ajuntament@llagostera.cat
www.llagostera.cat

Llagostera Tourist Office

L'Estació, Passeig Romeu s/n
17240 Llagostera, Girona
T. 972 832 180 / T. 972 832 322
turisme@llagostera.cat
aodl@llagostera.cat
www.visitallagostera.com

Les Gavarres Consortium

Finca Camps i Armet s/n
Can Geronès
17121 Monells, Girona
T. 972 643 695
consorci@gavarres.cat
www.gavarres.cat

Sources: Information extracted from www.llagostera.cat, www.visitemporda.com and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

PALAFRUGELL

The borough is located on the Costa Brava. Palafrugell itself is the commercial and cultural centre, **but on the coast there are three tourist centres; Calella, Llafranc and Tamariu;** with Llofriu inland and more rural.

The population established themselves inland in the V and VI in centuries, safe from incursions on the coast.

The economy changed dramatically in the nineteenth century when it became an industrial city mainly producing cork.

At that time, **the water tower Can Mario,** now symbol of the town, was built. Subsequently, tourism became the driving force behind the economy.



Sant Sebastià Lighthouse. Photo: Joan Guitart



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

The coastline is best discovered by boat or kayak as it is rocky, clifty, and has hidden nooks and crannies of great charm as well as beautiful beaches. Llafranc and Tamariu and have been awarded the "Q" for quality and several more have the Blue Flag.

Enjoy the views from the network of paths that take you around all the best spots.

Don't miss the Sant Sebastià monuments, the Botanical Gardens and the Cap Roig Castle.

The town is home to the Josep Pla Foundation, the Sa Perola Visitor Centre, an old building where fishermen used to carry out the task of dying their nets, and a Contemporary Art Gallery.

CURIOSITIES...

One of the main sources of wealth of the town was the cork industry though, and it still enjoys great prestige. **Things made of this material are on sale in various shops and the Cork Museum.**

In Palafrugell many activities are held throughout the year, **the Habanera (sea shanty) Festival** which has taken place in Calella de Palafrugell since 1966, the Spring Festival or the **Festival Cap Roig Gardens** are just a few.

Two of the most prestigious gastronomic events are **The Garoinada and Es Niu**, celebrating the typically Mediterranean cuisine.

TOURIST OFFER

There are a wide variety of facilities available for the visitor.

➤ **Where shall we eat?**

<http://visitpalafrugell.cat/en/gastronomy/restaurants/>

➤ **Where shall we sleep?**

<http://visitpalafrugell.cat/en/accommodation/>



Calella de Palafrugell. Photo: Lluís Maimí



CORK TOWNS

FURTHER INFORMATION

Palafrugell Town Hall

C. Cervantes 16
17200 Palafrugell, Girona
T. 972 613 100
ajuntament@palafrugell.cat
www.palafrugell.cat

Palafrugell Tourist Office

Av. de la Generalitat 33
17200 Palafrugell, Girona
T. 972 300 228
turisme@palafrugell.cat
www.visitpalafrugell.cat



Llofriú. Photo: Joan Guitart

Sources: Information extracted from www.palafrugell.cat, www.visitpalafrugell.cat and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

SANT CELONI

Close to Barcelona in the Vallès Oriental, it is well connected with Europe and **is also gateway to the Montseny and Montnegre and El Corredor Nature Reserves.**

Besides its natural environment, it is important for wool and linen weaving, a textile industry that

arrived with the railway in the 1860s and developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Industry is still the main driver of the local economy.



Church of Sant Celoni. Photo: Sant Celoni Town Hall

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

The forests of Montseny and Montnegre and El Corredor have extensive interconnected trails for walking or biking and this is the way to discover megaliths, dolmens, Romanesque chapels, hermitages, etc., there are even military buildings and fortified farmhouses.



CORK TOWNS

Closer to the centre, **town tours search out the charms that Sant Celoni has to offer.**

Don't miss the arcades, the Main Street and the arcades of the Square, the neighborhood of the *Força*, the church of Sant Martí de Pertegàs, the Old Rectory and the Sant Pontius Chapel.

CURIOSITIES...

At Carnival the *Ball de Gitanes*, a local folkdance is performed. It comes from agricultural rites to promote soil fertility and the onset of spring; Sant Jordi and the dragon of Vilardell is when the village is filled with stalls selling books and roses.

The cuisine here is based on traditional cooking using game and haricot beans. Events are held to sample gastronomic delights in summer and autumn. Sweets are renowned here, nougat and *celonins*, made with cookie dough base, chocolate and almond. They represent the two mountains surrounding Sant Celoni: Montseny with white chocolate, and Montnegre with black chocolate.



Ball de gitanes. Photo: Sant Celoni Town Hall

TOURIST OFFER



The Town Hall. Photo: Sant Celoni Town Hall

Not surprisingly, **its proximity to the city of Barcelona has made the town a regular destination for nature lovers who also want to enjoy its rich cultural and architectural heritage.**

Therefore, **the town has a wide range of facilities and accommodation.**

► **Where shall we eat?**

[www.santceloni.cat/a.php?cercar=&taf=T&submit=Cercar&sec\[\]=53&are\[\]=tot&per_tema=53&menusex_328\[\]=Restaurant&fer=TCERCADORA](http://www.santceloni.cat/a.php?cercar=&taf=T&submit=Cercar&sec[]=53&are[]=tot&per_tema=53&menusex_328[]=Restaurant&fer=TCERCADORA)



CORK TOWNS

► Where shall we sleep?

Hotels - www.santceloni.cat/fitxes.php?categoria=117

Guest houses - www.santceloni.cat/fitxes.php?categoria=119

Rural accommodation - www.santceloni.cat/fitxes.php?categoria=118

FURTHER INFORMATION

Sant Celoni Town Hall

Plaça de la Vila 1

08470 Sant Celoni, Barcelona

T. 938 641 200

santceloni@santceloni.cat

www.santceloni.cat

Sant Celoni Tourist Office

C. Major 56

08470 Sant Celoni, Barcelona

T. 938 670 171

turisme@santceloni.cat

www.santceloni.cat/turisme

Sources: Information extracted from www.santceloni.cat and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

SANTA COLOMA DE FARNERS

Santa Coloma is the capital of the region of La Selva and is situated between the plain and the mountains of Les Guilleries.

The town has evolved over history, growing significantly in the second half of the nineteenth century, resulting in urban sprawl.

In the early twentieth century, Santa Coloma already had 4,600 inhabitants, and was soon

made a city in recognition of its economic, cultural and political relevance in the region.

The city is a destination for rest and relaxation though, with its thermal resorts and exceptional scenic surroundings, lush forests and unique granite rock formations that time has sculpted.



Sant Salvador Park, Santa Coloma de Farners. Photo: Josep Solà



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

La Selva, also known as the Water District, **boasts a large number of mineral water springs, rivers and thermal water.**

Tracks that were once used by bandits follow the rivers to the Mediterranean and **are now a network of marked paths suitable for hiking or cycling.**

The importance of water here has given rise to the ***Museu de l'Aigua* (Water Museum).**

One walk tours 10 hermitages, another takes in Romanesque heritage.

In the town itself, be sure to visit the parish church, the square, Sant Salvador park and the castle. Local museums might intrigue the visitor too.



Santa Coloma. Photo: Santa Coloma de Farners Town Hall

CURIOSITIES...

There are many festivals and fairs throughout the year in the town of Santa Coloma, when the streets fill with visitors.

Most of them centre on food like the **Ratafía Fair**, a liqueur made from the maceration of different fruits, herbs and spices in an alcohol base, usually brandy. Indeed, the cuisine of Santa Coloma is typically Catalan: **canned snails, grilled meat, *esqueixada*, sausages, spring onions, etc. with distinctive recipes that bear the name of the city.**

TOURIST OFFER

The hot springs make Santa Coloma de Farners popular with visitors and it has expanded the range of accommodation and catering facilities.



CORK TOWNS

- **Where shall we eat?** www.scf.cat/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=108&Itemid=124
- **Where shall we sleep?** www.scf.cat/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=101&Itemid=117

FURTHER INFORMATION

Santa Coloma de Farners Town Hall

Plaça de l'Ajuntament 1
17430 Santa Coloma de Farners, Girona
T. 972 840 808
ajuntament@scf.cat
www.scf.cat

Santa Coloma Tourist Office

Plaça de l'Ajuntament 1
17430 Santa Coloma de Farners, Girona
T. 972 840 977
promocio_economica@scf.cat



Farners. Photo: Santa Coloma de Farners Town Hall

Sources: Information extracted from www.scf.cat, www.triasbiscuits.com, www.casadelaparaula.cat, www.laselvaturisme.com and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

TORDERA

This borough is located in the province of Barcelona, in the Montnegre and El Corredor Nature Reserve. It is more than 84 km², part of its territory is mountainous, but there are also wetlands of great importance.

It was inhabited by Iberians and then by the Romans, **and part of an aqueduct remains.**

For centuries, agriculture was the main way of life in Tordera, until the arrival of the cork stopper industry when industrialisation started, thanks to the presence of the river.

Nowadays, the town continues to thrive being well connected by road to Barcelona and the coastline.



Iron bridge, Tordera. Photo: Tordera Town Hall



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

Visit the church of Sant Esteve, the hermitage of Sant Vicenç, the hermitage of Sant Andreu or canon of Santa Maria de Roca-Rossa, **all in lovely natural surroundings.**

Cultural heritage is plentiful in the reserve, the oldest remains are dolmens, the Gentil Stone and the Arca Stone, and Iberian remains Turó del Vent and Castell Puig.

Other interesting buildings are the church of Saint Christopher and the Hermitage del Corredor.

In the Montnegre area, where communications have always been more difficult, **there are isolated parishes and hilltop hermitages.**



Hortsavinyà, Tordera. Photo: Xavier Llop

CURIOSITIES...

Tordera is a town which keeps its traditions alive. Among them, let's highlight the main festival, which is celebrated in honor of Sant Bartomeu; the Saint Pontius fair, when locals get together in the countryside for all kinds of popular activities; **the Ram Market Fair when local produce is sold.**

Near the sea but mountainous, this duality is reflected in its cuisine, which uses local products.

Towards the end of the year, **the Fesol del Ganxet is held**, focusing on a creamy green bean with a distinctive flavor grown here.

TOURIST OFFER

Rural type guest houses are common here and various eating houses.

➤ **Where shall we eat and sleep?** www.tordera.cat/document.php?id=4281



CORK TOWNS

Four main trails in the area are:

- **Convento de Roca Rossa Walk**
- **Sant Pere de Riu Walk**
- **Vallmanya Walk**
- **Hortsavinyà, nature and history Walk:** made up of lush pine and cork oak forests, along with orchards, almond and olive trees.

For more information: www.tordera.cat/ARXIUS/PROMOVILA/rutes_natura.pdf

FURTHER INFORMATION

Tordera Town Hall

Plaça de l'Església 2
08490 Tordera, Barcelona
T. 937 643 717
tordera@tordera.cat
www.tordera.cat

Information and Tourist Office

C. Puigverd / Plaça Concòrdia
08490 Tordera, Barcelona
T. 937 642 816
promocioeconomica@tordera.cat



Views from Roca Rossa, Tordera. Photo: Xavier Llop

Sources: Information extracted from www.tordera.cat and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

ESLIDA

Located in the heart of the Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve, 30 minutes from Castellón de la Plana and less than an hour from Valencia, capital of the autonomous community.

The Sierra de Espadán offers a setting of lush forests of pine and cork oak, while the landscape also includes orchards, almond and olive trees.

At the time of the Arab occupation Eslida reached its peak, improvements were made in

agriculture, the town walls and the castle were extended, etc.

Thereafter, there have been good times and some less so, but from 1950 Eslida regained its prosperity through cork as well as becoming increasingly geared to tourism, with a significant number of second homes.



Eslida. Photo: José Vicente Salvador Daròs



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

The town is blessed with being right in the Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve, **and has 5 mineral springs, one of them is the only source of drinking water in Valencia.**

Also, **beautiful caves are dotted all over the area, interconnecting throughout the park.**

Of historical interest are the **Aqueduct of the Rambla, the Air Mill, Els Corral farmsteads and the Calvary Hermitage.**



Aqueduct of the Rambla, Eslida. Photo: José Vicente Salvador Daròs

CURIOSITIES...

Eslida is a leader in beekeeping and the production of local honey. Currently there are 8 beekeepers in the town and three of them sell locally.

There are traditional festivals all year, but more going on in summer, when the population multiplies.

As for the cuisine, try the tasty meats, stews and desserts.

Poble stew, cabbage or *Diju* stew, *los gazapos* are young rabbits.



CORK TOWNS

TOURIST OFFER

- **Where shall we eat?**
www.eslida.es/es/content/bares-restaurantes-tiendas
- **Where shall we sleep?**
www.eslida.es/es/content/donde-dormir-ocio

Besides all this, **an extensive network of paths for hiking, biking, horseriding provide for nature lovers.**

Contact the company **Ocio Esлада Aventura** for organised trips.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Eslida Town Hall

Plaza del Ayuntamiento 1
12528 Eslida, Castellón
T. 964 628 000
info@eslida.es
www.eslida.es

Sierra de Espadán Natural Park Visitor Centre

Av. Francisco Mondragón, 2
12528 Eslida, Castellón
T. 964 629 112 – 679 196 294
parque_espadan@gva.es

Ocio Esлада Aventura

Crta. Aín 32, bajo
12528 Eslida, Castellón
T. 696 738 890
info@eslidaventura.es
www.eslidaventura.es



Eslida View. Photo: José Vicente Salvador Daròs

Sources: Information extracted from www.eslida.es, <http://parquesnaturales.gva.es> and Wikipedia.



CORK TOWNS

SAN VICENTE DE ALCÁNTARA

San Vicente is located in the northwest of the province of Badajoz and its landscape is characterized by pastures and meadows, and by the Sierra de San Pedro rich in flora and fauna.

There are a great concentration of megalithic remains here, an abundance of dolmens, standing stones and burial sites.

In the twelfth century as part of a drive to repopulate the area by the order of Alcántara, **Piedrabuena Castle was built**. It is a stately fortress included in the **Route of the Castles of Extremadura**.

San Vicente really is the capital of Cork, with more processing plants than any other place, and traditions which revolve around it.



Piedrabuena Castle. Photo: Susana Expósito Amaro



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

San Vicente benefits from being in the heart of the Sierra de San Pedro. **In this natural paradise there are 31 pairs of the endangered species, the Spanish Imperial eagle, the highest number of this majestic bird anywhere; coexisting with black vultures, eagle owls, black storks...**

A big tourist attraction is at the end of the summer **when you can hear the roaring of the many rutting deer that live in this enclave. To get around on foot, by mountain bike, horse or even on four wheels, there are plenty of tracks and trails.**



The cork stripping, San Vicente. Photo: Susana Expósito Amaro

You can visit the megalithic sites and anthropomorphic tombs, the church of San Vicente Martir, the hermitage of Santa Ana or the Piedrabuena Castle. The borough has cultural facilities such as the **Cork Museum, the Alas Nature Centre and the Observatory of Aquatic Animals Celestino Ramajo.**

CURIOSITIES...

The main source of wealth here is the cork industry. **Many articles made from cork are on sale and the Cork Museum displays unique pieces.** One craftsman here works in leather and makes tailor-made footwear, hunting boots, etc.

A large number of festivals deeply rooted in traditions are celebrated, for example, **the feast**

of St. Vincent the Martyr or Corpus Christi, the latter declared of Regional Interest.

Among local recipes the best known are a blood sausage or tripe dish and *el buche*, a hearty sausage stew, along with preserved meats and a variety of sweets like Easter buns, almond biscuits and fritters.

TOURIST OFFER

The area offers different types of accommodation, **especially rural guest houses**, as well as local restaurants where you can taste the gastronomic specialties of the area.

➤ **Where shall we eat and sleep?** <http://turismociudaddelcorcho.es/empresas-turisticas/>



CORK TOWNS



Corpus Christi. Photo: San Vicente de Alcántara Town Hall

FURTHER INFORMATION

San Vicente de Alcántara Town Hall

Parque de España 1
06500 San Vicente de Alcántara, Badajoz
T. 924 410 050
ayuntamiento@sanvicedealcantara.es
www.sanvicedealcantara.es
<http://turismociudaddelcorcho.es>

Tourist Information Point

Plaza de Joaquín Salgado s/n
(Interpretation Centre)
06500 San Vicente de Alcántara, Badajoz
T. 924 410 945
centroalas@sanvicedealcantara.es

Sources: Information extracted from www.sanvicedealcantara.es and <http://turismociudaddelcorcho.es>.



CORK TOWNS

SIERRA DE SAN PEDRO COMMUNITY

It includes the following municipalities: Valencia de Alcántara, Membrío, Salorino, Santiago de Alcántara, Cedillo, Herreruela, Herrera de Alcántara, Carbajo and San Vicente de Alcántara.

It takes in the west of the central strip of Extremadura, between Portugal and the provinces of Cáceres and Badajoz.

Grassland is by far the most common habitat, a landscape transformed by man for millennia.

It is home to an extraordinary range of species in danger of extinction such as the Spanish Imperial eagle, the black vulture, the Iberian lynx, the bobcat, the Iberian wolf, the golden eagle, short-toed eagle and the kite.



Tourist Boat of the Tajo Internacional Nature Reserve. Photo: Sierra de San Pedro Community



CORK TOWNS

WHAT TO SEE AND DO?

The largest and best preserved group of dolmens in Western Europe, declared of cultural interest in the category Megalithic Complex is found here.

In addition, it also has several national landmarks like the Church of Rocamadour, and the

Gothic Quarter, both in Valencia de Alcántara, and a large number of churches and hermitages of peculiar architecture.

The highlight here is definitely the natural environment, especially the Tajo Internacional Nature Reserve and Sierra de San Pedro.



The dolmens, Valencia de Alcántara. Photo: Sierra de San Pedro Community

CURIOSITIES...

Each place that is part of the Community has its own festivals and traditions such as carnivals, pilgrimages, Holy Week processions, etc. **Prominent among them is Corpus Christi in San Vicente de Alcántara and the Pilgrimage of San Isidro in Valencia de Alcántara**, both declared of Regional Tourist Interest, the Medieval Festival Boda Regia also from Valencia or **the Mascarrá**, held in various towns.

Many are the products and dishes that can be found in the area, Olive oil, cheeses, honey, sausages, *el buche*, a hearty sausage stew, tripe dishes, pancakes, fritters, Easter buns and almond biscuits.



CORK TOWNS

TOURIST OFFER

In such a large area you can find many types of accommodation and eating options, just check their websites. **The Tajo Internacional Nature Reserve has many signposted paths for hiking, mountain biking, etc. and the boat Balcón del Tajo does trips on the River Tagus.**



Sierra de San Pedro, Salorino. Photo: Sierra de San Pedro Community

FURTHER INFORMATION

Sierra de San Pedro Community

C. Pizarro 16
10500 Valencia de Alcántara, Cáceres
T. 927 668 147
info@mancomunidadesierrasanpedro.com
www.mancomunidadesierrasanpedro.com

Barco del Tajo Office

C. Oaxaca 17, Local 1º 1º
10005 Cáceres
T. 927 231 897
www.barcodeltajo.com

Taejo Internacional

<http://taejo.eu/>

Sources: Information extracted from www.mancomunidadesierrasanpedro.com, <http://taejo.eu>, www.barcodeltajo.com and Wikipedia.



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES



Llofriú Stripping of the Bark Festival, Palafrugell. Photo: RETECORK



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

The concept of cork goes beyond what is strictly about forestry and industry. A whole heritage, architectural or otherwise has grown up in these territories.

Museums and visitor centres that dedicate themselves to bringing this cork reality to life for the outsider are outlined below.

Through these facilities **we can better understand this unique culture, how it impacts on the landscape, and what is entailed on an everyday level.**



Identity Cork Museum, San Vicente de Alcántara. Photo: Lluís Català



THE ANDALUSIAN SUBEROTECA

This team exhibits samples extracted from the mountains of Andalusia taken from 1995 to the current time.

They list cork from 1,002 different areas of Andalusia.

The aim is to make the cork samples available for consultation hence facilitating and promoting trade in a transparent market **and contributing to the socioeconomic development of the Andalusian countryside.**



The Suberoteca. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales

Suberoteca's office building, **which also houses the office of the Los Alcornocales Nature Reserve Information Centre**, has been designed with the aim of being **eco-efficient**.

SUBEROTECA FACILITIES

Suberoteca comprises a total of 632 m², which are distributed in different areas:

- Showroom displaying cork samples of Andalusia
- Preparation Room classifying the cork
- Wine cellar



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

- Boiler room for cooking cork
- Laboratory and investigation room

OTHER INFORMATION

- **Owned by:** Junta de Andalucía
- **Overseeing body:** Department of Environment and Territory
- **Functions:**
 - Analysis and classification of cork
 - Preparing cork samples obtained in the field, having analyzed their quality
 - Moisture analysis of cork
 - Analysis of the porosity of cork by imaging techniques
 - Advising industrial and cork producers
 - Vocational and academic resource
 - Informative talks given to groups linked to cork sector



Guided tour. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

OPENING TIMES

Open to the public **only by prior arrangement.**

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Andalusian Suberoteca

Ctra. CA-2112 Alcalá de los Gazules-Benalup Casas Viejas, km 1

11180 Alcalá de los Gazules, Cádiz

T. 670 940 039 / 956 418 618

alcornocal@agenciamedioambienteyagua.es



Exhibition of cork objects. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales

Source: Information provided by the Andalusian Suberoteca.



EL ALJIBE VISITOR CENTRE

The visitor centre *El Aljibe* enables the visitor to get the most out of their experience by explaining the natural heritage of the reserve.

The countryside is densely wooded and made up of wild olive, thick *Quercus canariensis* deciduous woods, the best preserved cork forests in the Iberian Peninsula and humid riverside woods with rare, lush vegetation that has thrived here since the Tertiary Age.

A nearby botanical garden *El*

Aljibe gives the visitor a chance to understand what this means.

The unique features of this area in Cadiz are explained.

Among other things, you can learn how the present state of the mountains and countryside not only depends on the environmental conditions, but also on human intervention throughout history.

Another exhibition focuses on the ecological and scenic riches of the countryside and forests,

featuring detailed information about the trees, associated fauna and the things these resources are used for.

There are two main rooms, the first is about man's relationship with the forest, paying special attention to cork harvesting; in the second major ecosystems are discussed, highlighting the cork oak as the core of the exhibition.



Visitor Centre Displays. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

For those who want to delve further, **the Centre can arrange for visits to the Andalusian Suberoteca, just 150 metres away, and the adjoining botanical garden.**



Botanical garden El Aljibe. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales

OTHER INFORMATION

- **Owned by:** Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment of the Junta de Andalucía.
- **Functions:** Environmental Education Programme focusing on cork.
- **NB:** A series of programmed talks and events will soon be established at the Visitor Centre, although this can be arranged by groups by appointment.



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

OPENING TIMES

The Visitor Centre is open:

- **From 16 September to 14 June:**
Tuesday to Friday from 10h to 14h and 15h to 17h.
Saturdays and Sundays from 10h to 17h.
Closed Mondays
- **From 15 June to 15 September:**
From Tuesday to Sunday, from 9h to 15h.
Closed Mondays

FURTHER INFORMATION

El Aljibe Visitor Centre

Ctra. A-2228 Alcalá de los Gazules-Benalup
Casas Viejas, km 1
11180 Alcalá de los Gazules, Cádiz
T. 956 418 614



The bark of the cork oak. Photo: GDR de Los Alcornocales

Source: Information provided by the El Aljibe Visitor Centre through GDR de Los Alcornocales.



EL ALCORNOCAL INTERPRETATION CENTRE

The Centre is in the town of Cerezal de Aliste in what is called “Casa del Cura”, which was done up through a job creation scheme to provide for the needs of the centre. Its aim is to help visitors to appreciate the importance of cork, its wealth and the need for its conservation.

The Cerezal de Aliste cork oak forest is located in the west of the province of Zamora, at an altitude of 800 m above sea level, in the borough of Muelas de Pan.

Its geographical and topographical situation determines the harsh climate, one of extremes, which determines the presence of certain groups of vegetation and hinders the development of certain species that thrive in milder weather conditions, such as the cork oak.

This tree has come to colonize the habitat, though, and is the forest is the largest of its kind at this latitude in Spain.

The need to raise awareness about the importance of this ecosystem led to the creation of the Alcornocal Visitor Centre in 2003.



Muelas del Pan, Cerezal de Aliste. Photo: Lluís Català



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

VISITOR CENTRE FACILITIES

It has a permanent exhibition of approximately 200 m² divided into different areas:

- **Murals and interactive area:** Display on the cork oak and cork, audiovisual presentations, touch screen computers, information panels and pamphlets.
- **Auditorium and meeting room**
- **Model of cork oak forest and general information**



Cork oak and cork display. Photo: Lluís Català

OTHER INFORMATION

- **Owned by:** Muelas del Pan Town Hall
- **Teaching activities:**
 - Children's craft workshop using cork
 - Visits to the cork oak forests



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

OPENING TIMES

The Centre is open:

- **Saturdays from 9:30h to 14h.**
- **On request**

FURTHER INFORMATION

El Alcornocal Interpretation Centre

Plaza La Iglesia 8

49164 Cerezal de Aliste, Zamora

T. 980 553 005 Ext. 10

F. 980 553 234

info@ayto-muelasdelpan.com

www.alcornocal.com



Informative materials. Photo: Lluís Català

Source: Information provided by the El Alcornocal Interpretation Centre.



CORK MUSEUM

The Museum works to raise awareness of Catalonia's cork heritage and its impact on the landscape, industry and ways of life. **The modernist building that houses the centre is itself a fine museum piece.**

It is a former factory founded in 1900 that became the headquarters of a company that was leader in Spanish exports in the 1920s.

The Museum looks at cork from a scientific, technical, industrial, artistic, cultural and environmental perspective.

It currently has a temporary exhibition on the extraction of the cork, industrial processing and the history of the company *Manufacturas de Corcho* plus interactive exhibits. It has an educational space, temporary exhibition hall and an auditorium for 100 people.



Cork Museum. Photo: J. García Batlle, AIMS



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

SECTIONS AND THE MUSEUM FACILITIES

In addition to the Cork Museum, it has associated centres:

► **Can Mario Modernist Water Tower Interpretation Centre**

This modernist style water tower has become a landmark identifying the town of Palafrugell. Visitors can discover the history of this iconic building and go up onto its terrace, 35 metres high, to enjoy a panoramic view of Palafrugell and Empordà.

► **Bassa-Rocas Visitor Centre in Llofriu**

Take a walk through the cork oaks of Llofriu to learn all about the ecology of Mediterranean forests and the work of those who strip the bark. Learn about the types of cork and tools used and hear stories that throw light on this way of life.

► **San Sebastian Site and watchtower**

This Iberian site from the sixth century BC is at top of a mountain with cliffs overlooking the sea and has one of the best views of the Costa Brava. There is also a fifteenth century watchtower, an eighteenth century hermitage and inn and a nineteenth century lighthouse.



Exhibition space. Photo: E. Pujol



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

OTHER INFORMATION

- **Owned by:** Palafrugell Town Hall
- **Teaching activities:**
 - Workshops aimed at school children and groups
 - Guided visits
- **Publications:**
 - Exhibitions Catalogues
 - Magazine *l'Estoig*
 - Collections *Estudis del Museu* and *Palafrugell restaura*

OPENING TIMES

- **From 15 June to 15 September**
 - Monday to Saturday from 10h to 14h and 17h to 21h.
 - Sunday 10h to 14h.
- **From 1 to 15 June and from 16 to 30 September**
 - Tuesday to Saturday from 10h to 14h and 17h to 20h.
 - Sunday 10h to 14h.
 - Closed Mondays
- **Rest of the year**
 - Tuesday to Saturday from 10h to 13h and 16h to 19h.
 - Saturday from 10h to 13h and 16h to 20h.
 - Sunday 10h to 14h.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Cork Museum

Placeta del Museu s/n.
17200 Palafrugell, Girona
T. 972 307 825
info@museudelsuro.cat
www.museudelsuro.cat

Source: Information provided by the Cork Museum of Palafrugell.



CAN CACIQUES INTERPRETATION CENTRE

The dynamic, active team here encourages visitors to discover the most significant features of past life in **Llagostera**. The house itself, Can Caciques, was built onto one of the towers of the fourteenth century medieval walls.



Can Caciques Interpretation Centre. Photo: Quim Paredes

SECTIONS AND THE INTERPRETATION CENTRE FACILITIES

The centre is divided into two spaces:

► **The walled town**

Exhibition showing the evolution of the **medieval centre of Llagostera**, from the twelfth to the



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

seventeenth centuries, using audiovisual material, panels with graphics and text and original features of the building itself: a tower, part of the wall and the moat.

► **The blessing of the forest**

This space looks at the close relationship between man and the surrounding forest. The exhibition contains a variety of pieces that illustrate some of the crafts and activities that take place in the forest and fall into three areas:

Cork (forest owners, eighteenth to the nineteenth century stopper workshops, industrialization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and corkboard).

Land (tilling, planting, mowing, beating and organizing the harvest).

Wood (charcoal, clogs, pipes and baskets).

There is also a small space to display a collection of **archaeological pieces** found on different sites in the 60s and 70s, in archaeological digs.

Thanks to the donation of this archaeological collection to the borough, **some of the prehistory and early history of Llagostera has been recreated.**

Periodically Can Caciques puts on special exhibitions to display some of the pieces of the ethnological collection that are not visible in the permanent exhibition, **showing specific aspects of domestic life, industry and crafts or folk customs in Llagostera.**

OTHER INFORMATION

► **Owned by:** Llagostera Town Hall

► **Teaching activities:**

Guided tours
Temporary exhibitions
Workshops
Demonstrations



Axes for stripping the cork. Photo: Quim Paredes



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

OPENING TIMES

The Centre is open:

- **Monday to Sunday, 10h to 14h.**

FURTHER INFORMATION

Can Caciques Interpretation Centre

C. Olivareta 38

17240 Llagostera

T. 972 830 005

cancaciques@llagostera.cat



Exhibition space with part of the fields Cork and Land. Photo: Quim Paredes

Source: Information provided by the Can Caciques Interpretation Centre.



SIERRA DE ESPADÁN NATURE RESERVE VISITOR CENTRE

The Centre is located in the town of Eslida, inside the reserve itself. It is the old school building which was restored and refurbished for use as a visitor centre.



Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve Visitor Centre. Photo: Lluís Català

VISITOR CENTRE FACILITIES

It has an exhibition of 76 m² and an audiovisual presentation.

Exhibition:



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

➤ **Through your senses**

The visitor can smell aromatic plants, look at a visual puzzle view of the park, feel what it is like to extract the cork from the bark and hear a set of cowbells.

➤ **Information displays**

Set out the distribution of cork oaks in the Iberian Peninsula, the technique of making cork stoppers, charcoal ovens and Espadán ice stores, the art of making walking sticks, olives, olive oil and festivals celebrated in the towns roundabout.

➤ **Showcases**

Contain corks and the tools used in their manufacture, canes, hackberry wedges and a basket of wild mushrooms, a beehive made with cork and a selection of honey pots.

➤ **Modular Structure**

Contains information on all 19 villages in the Nature Reserve.

➤ **Model of the Sierra de Espadán Reserve**

➤ **Wildlife**

Foam figures of the wildlife in the reserve are distributed throughout the center.

➤ **Information about the stripping of the bark**

Documentary on the Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve:

This documentary gives a brief description of the park showing its diversity and landscape and emphasizing the fact that this is an inhabited area.

OTHER INFORMATION

➤ **Owned by:** Department of Infrastructure, Territory and Environment of the Generalitat Valenciana.

➤ **Teaching activities:**

Information service: gives guidance about the features of the reserve and what to do there.

Environmental information: self guided visit to the exhibition, documentary.

Environmental Education Programme suitable for all.



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES



Exhibition. Photo: Lluís Català

OPENING TIMES

The Visitor Centre is open:

- **Tuesday to Sunday, from 9h to 14h.**

Check holiday opening hours by calling or emailing the centre.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve Visitor Centre

C. Francisco Mondragón, 2
12528 Eslida, Castellón
T. 964 729 112

parque_espadan@gva.es
<http://parquesnaturales.gva.es>

Source: Information provided by the Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve Visitor Centre.



IDENTITY CORK MUSEUM

Since the mid nineteenth century San Vicente and cork have been inseparable.

The Cork Museum, part of the Network of Museums of Extremadura, focuses on the identity of the town in the context of its links to this natural product.

The main space is divided into different spaces for permanent displays. First you find the cork dictionary, highlighting keywords. Then you discover cork in its natural environment, the cork oak, home to endangered species. The cornerstone piece is a large slice of the trunk of a cork oak called “rings of experience” which the tree has grown all through its life.



The Dictionary of Cork. Photo: Lluís Català

The visitor moves on to the first uses of cork, which date back about 3,000 years, **and the first settlements of the cork industry in Spain and Extremadura, and associated cultural and festive events.**



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

Later, you see how cork is also used in the home to make kitchen tools and equipment, seats, etc.

From here you can see **how cork is processed from the stripping of the bark to the factory**, to the making of the stopper, their different types and uses.



Cork at home. Photo: Lluís Català

OTHER INFORMATION

► **Owned by:** Department of Education and Culture of the Junta de Extremadura. Managed by agreement with the San Vicente de Alcántara Town Hall.

► **Teaching activities:**

- Guided visits
- School trips
- Wine Tasting and Craft Courses
- Workshops for children using cork
- Concerts



CORK MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTRES

Mycological days
Cinema
Trips to see the stripping of the bark
Tours of cork factories

OPENING TIMES

- **Tuesday to Friday from 10h to 14h and 16h to 20h.**
- **Saturday, Sunday and holidays from 10h to 14h.**

The Museum is closed on Mondays.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Identity Cork Museum

Av. Juan Carlos I, 33
06500 San Vicente de Alcántara, Badajoz
T. 924 410 945
laurabrixedo@hotmail.com



The cork oak and its surroundings. Photo: Lluís Català

Source: Information provided by the Identity Cork Museum.



HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THE CORKLANDS



Amics de la PAGESIA Association visit to a cork oak forest in Llofriu, Palafrugell. Photo: RETECORK



HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THE CORKLANDS

HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THE CORKLANDS

The corklands with their rich natural, historical and cultural heritage offer a wide range of activities suitable for all ages.

Nature-lovers, gourmets and lovers of history and traditions, families and children, older people and even the most adventurous... there really is something for everyone in **this unique ecosystem in the Western Mediterranean.**



Mountain bike trails and signposted itineraries. Photo: RETECORK

ACTIVE TOURISM

Each and every one of the corklands offers a wide **offer of active tourism and are ideal for all kinds of outdoor activity.**



HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THE CORKLANDS

Hiking, mountain biking or horseback riding all take on a leading role in these areas with their **network of tracks and marked trails** enabling the visitor to discover the characteristic landscape of each area and see their **historical, cultural and ethnological heritage**.



Green cycleway. Photo: Marc Sureda

Some might prefer to get around by quad or jeep or do adventure sports like rock climbing or paragliding.

Water sports such as skate sailing, kayaking, canoeing, paddle surfing, kite surfing, etc, can be enjoyed in the sea, for example in Calonge, Palafrugell and Los Barrios; or in rivers and reservoirs in inland areas. There are also **interesting river boat trips** onboard *Balcón del Tagus*, in the Tagus International Nature Reserve.

Apart from all this, **caving** enthusiasts should head for Sestrica, fans of **astronomical observation**, golf and Pitch&Putt are also catered for, as are those who would like to go up in a **hot air balloon**.

ECOTOURISM

The cork territories offer a unique experience of habitats and their natural resources. These activities bring us into close contact with nature and the real way of life of these rural populations.

Three of the highlights are:



HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THE CORKLANDS

► Birdwatching

The cork oak forests are areas of great biological wealth as large mammals and birds live exclusively in these areas. They are the habitat of the Spanish imperial eagle, the golden eagle, the black vulture, the griffon vulture, the black stork, the eagle owl and the crane for example. Spaces such as the Sierra de San Pedro, the Cabañeros National Nature Reserve or Los Alcornocales Nature Reserve have **orni-thological bird watching tours.**

► The roaring of the stag

It is commonly known that male deer emit a guttural sound during rutting (in the mating season). It is a **great tourist attraction** and, for example, in the borough of Los Barrios they organize trips to hear them. The period starts at the beginning of autumn, usually in late September.

► Stripping the cork

It is the quintessential activity of the corklands and is usually carried out in the summer. **This is the manual process of stripping the bark from the cork oak, a unique performance. In some places, where the topography does not allow mechanical means to enter the dense forest, mules are used to transport the cork.**

Areas such as the Sierra de San Pedro, the Cabañeros National Nature Reserve or boroughs like Eslida, San Vicente de Alcántara or Palafrugell, organise tours and have fairs to keep this rural heritage alive. Besides these activities, walks are organized to identify and collect wild mushrooms etc. **Talks are held and many companies provide for outdoor activities and ecotourism.**



Cork being extracted, guided tour in Llofriu. Photo: RETECORK



HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THE CORKLANDS

ETHNOLOGICAL TOURISM

The corklands are mostly rural communities where a wide range of traditions, customs and culture are found.

They offer new experiences to the visitor who can venture into an unknown world here.

To understand the relationship between man and his rural way of life follow the paths that take in terraces, ice stores, farms, kilns, traditional water mills, coolers, mines, etc. Consult the relevant visitor centres for more information.

CULTURAL TOURISM

The largely unspoilt countryside of the cork producing areas has within it treasures of great cultural interest.

Most boroughs have archaeological remains and burial sites, megaliths, etc., as well as Iberian villages, castles, walls, farmhouses, medieval mills, architectural remains of the Arab occupation, dams, aqueducts, etc. The religious heritage boasts remnants of pre-Romanesque

churches, hermitages and monasteries, **all in areas of outstanding natural beauty.**

Once the cork industry got under way in the eighteenth century and prosperity arrived, the towns were adorned with **stately homes and modernist buildings.**

Facilities are in place to help the visitor to appreciate all of this in each local context.

CULINARY TOURISM

Besides all of the above, **the cork territories can be proud of their wide ranging, high-quality cuisine true to the precepts of the Mediterranean diet using local produce.**

In almost every area you can sample culinary specialties and unique dishes. **The inland towns**

specialize in game, meat and sausages, with unique dishes like *el buche*, a hearty sausage stew in San Vicente de Alcántara, and specialties like hot tomato soup or goats' cheese. **On the coast, there are no shortage of fish and seafood dishes.**

Some aspects of Mediterranean cuisine that visitors can look into:

► Beekeeping

Beekeeping, ancestral activity in these territories, still provides a source of income for those who are involved in it. Visitors can learn the craft in Cabañeros National Park, in the Sierra de Hornachuelos and



HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THE CORKLANDS

the Sierra de Espadán Nature Reserve, where beekeeping is widespread and workshops that deal with all aspects of the practice are held.

► Olive Oil Trails

The olive tree and its fruits have long been present in history and have been significant in ancient Mediterranean civilizations. **Today, olive oil is a staple part of the Mediterranean diet.** So much so that tours can be done to learn about production and the cultural and natural heritage linked to this excellent, high-quality product. Some producers at the very top of their game have earned d.o. (designation of origin certification) status, such as Montes de Toledo; Empordà virgin olive oil, but other cork areas do tours too, as is the case in the northern part of the Sierra de Cádiz.

► Wine Tourism

What better way to discover the world of cork than hand in hand with its sister product, wine?

They are two sides of the same coin and their landscapes blend in with each other. Wine tourism is well established in the corklands through **wine tours, workshops, tastings and visits to wineries and vineyards.** Here cuisine, culture, and, more recently thanks to vinoterapia, health and beauty meet.



Visits to wine cellars. Photo: Lluís Català



La Garoinada. Photo: Lluís Maimí

► Gastronomic Days

Another great attraction are the gastronomic events organized by cork communities throughout the year. **These events provide visitors with an interactive experience of local produce in each area.**

The Catalan towns of Calonge, Llagostera, Palafrugell, Santa Coloma de Farners, Sant Celoni and Tordera offer different tasting menus eg Menu *Gamba* (prawns, langostines) Menu *Manaias* is Roman inspired, and include local recipes like *Garoinada* (sea urchin) *ratafia* (liqueur made from the maceration of different fruits, herbs and spices), *mongeta Ganxet* (green bean), etc.



HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THE CORKLANDS

TOURING

A popular way to uncover the charm of the corklands is by **combining driving with walking, cycling or horse riding to visit selected places of interest.**

Thematic routes that explore some aspect related to history, economic activity, local produce, natural heritage, etc. such as the **Route of the white villages** (Pueblos Blancos), in Andalusia, or the **Silver Route** (Ruta de la Plata), that goes from Andalusia to Asturias via Extremadura and Castilla y León are examples of routes that take in the corklands. Shorter, more local type routes such as the **Ruta del Toro** in the province of Cádiz, and those in Montseny Natural Park or the Baix Empordà in Catalonia also pass through cork territory.

DISCOVERING THE CORKLANDS

www.visitcorkterritories.co.uk

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