

An outstanding Nature Site with a rich history

The geological history of the area has considerably influenced the current shape of the nature reserve, not only because of the variety of type of rock, but also the closeness of the Málaga coast and the low altitude of the local sierras, with the peak of the Huma being the highest at 1.191 metres. These factors have made local forests, both past and present, retain a pronounced Mediterranean nature. Aleppo pine forests are predominant in the vegetation landscape, as a result of reforestation efforts to stop erosion, which took place in the middle of the last century. However, nowadays, there are enough examples of holm oaks, cork oaks and rich understory mixed in with the pine, and that, in some areas, creates a quite promising type of woods.

The pine forest located on the North East slope of Sierra Llana is especially remarkable. Here, the regeneration of the primeval forest is evident, both because of its density and the variety of species. The most frequented forest is, of course, the one in the Valle del Hoyo, with its ancient examples of carob trees and its spread of fine shrubbery, which is reflected on the opposite slope, on the other side of the river and beneath the peak of Huma: large lentiscs and Mediterranean palms



Gaitanes Gorge is one of the main breeding areas of the griffon vulture in Málaga province, also a reserve for the Spanish Ibex, and a true birding paradise, as suggested by the fact that the area has been declared of Special Protection Area for Birds mainly birds of prey and small rock dwelling birds but also aquatic species. The inhabitants of this protected area, including the least visible ones such as reptiles, amphibians and bats, combined with others, led to this spot being declared as Special Area of Conservation and, above all, Paraje Natural, a protected wilderness reserve.



ALLOWED WHERE INDICATED



DIFFICULTY PARAMETERS OF THE PATHS (M.I.D.E.)



coexist with Phoenician junipers. These create closed monospecific formations in certain spots, covering even the rockiest and most inhospitable areas with a dark canopy. The most spectacular extension of Phoenician juniper is the one in Tajo de los Estudiantes. Nevertheless there are several smaller juniper groves, even a centuries-old solitary example located just before the glass balcony on Caminito del Rey, a reminder of the times when the sea reached the gorge itself. There is a host of small flowering plants, jewels hidden away in the steep limestone walls and the hard sandstone ground.

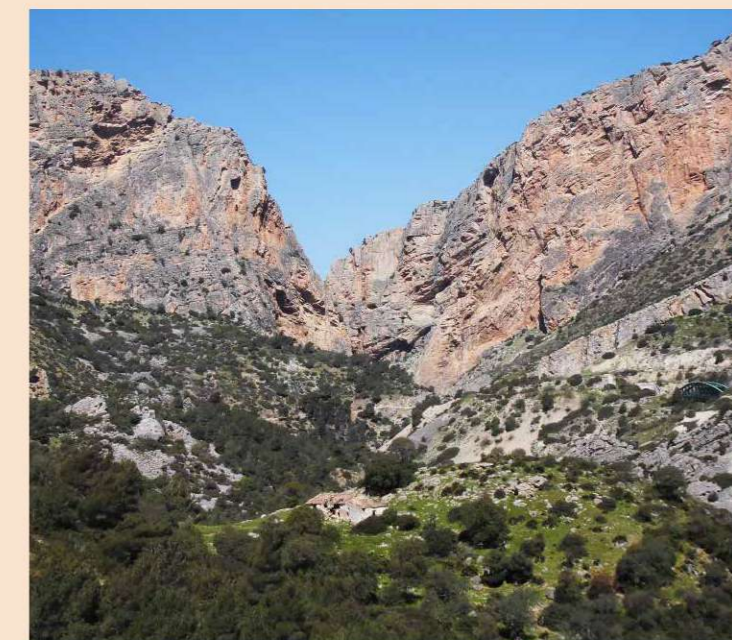
The Guadalhorce River and Gaitanes Gorge

Béticas Mountain Range form a major limestone belt which separates the plateau northeast of Málaga province from the coast. In the area of Gaitanejo three rivers come together: Río Turón, which comes from the Sierra de las Nieves, the Guadalteba river and the main course of the two tributaries, the Guadalhorce, which originates in Puerto de los Alazores. The resulting river course has managed to open a canal which flows directly into the Mediterranean sea in the southeast direction.

Three gorges have been formed taking advantage of the great natural fracture in the rocks dating back to the Jurassic era, these are the three most well-known landscapes of the reserve: Las Gambutas or Gaitanejo, El Tajo de las Palomas and the most impressive one, El Gaitán. The first two gorges are the narrowest, at 10 metres apart as minimum, and rock strata incline of 45 degrees. The deepest gorge is the last one mentioned, with over 300 metre inclines and spectacular landscapes caused by vertical layers of rock of varied textures, widths and colours. You can also find here a variety of water springs, sinkholes, caves and sheer rock faces, the latter almost always facing south and the most spectacular ones being the Placas Frontales of Cerro del Castellón. Flanking the western areas of the Paraje are the Miocene calcarenite rocks, virtually horizontal and formed by marine and sandstone conglomerates, showing fine grain and light pipeclay colour.

The mountain landscapes created by these more recent rocks also contain escarpments shaped by rivers, tafoni and honeycomb formations, cavities of different dimensions carved out by erosion. It is in these dramatic moun-

tain landscapes where the industrial history of Málaga has been written, from the first railway line to connect the steel mills of Málaga with the coal supplies of Cordoba, to the high speed train connection between Costa del Sol and the rest of the country. However, what undoubtedly has



shaped the present of the area were the seven reservoirs and, above all, the construction of a walkway between the Chorro dam and the hydroelectric power station, which has been known, since 1921, as Caminito del Rey.

Public Use Facilities

Public Paths (Senderos de Uso Público) and Viewpoints (Miradores). The Official Trails approved by the Andalusian Mountain Federation are the Long Distance GR (Gran Recorrido) and Short Distance PR paths (Pequeño Recorrido).

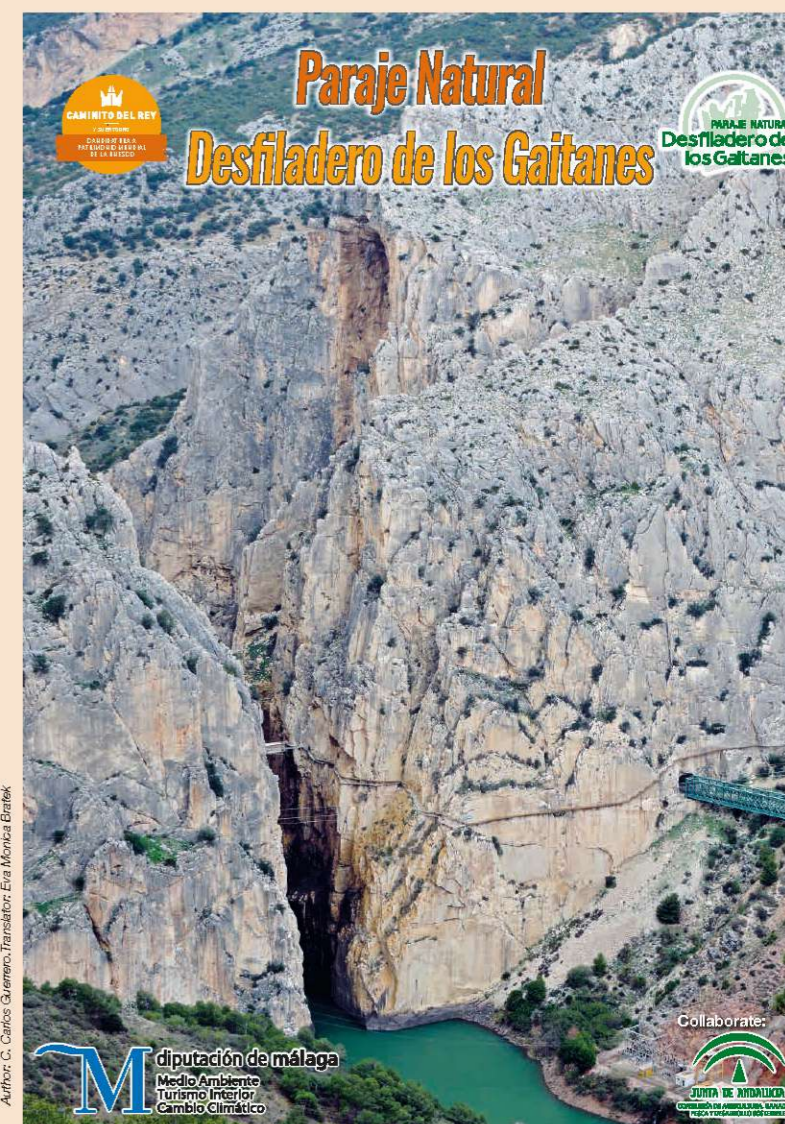
Visitors Center of Caminito del Rey

Los Embalses Viewpoint Los Estratos Viewpoint

	SUP Haza del Río	Km	3.9	Time	1h 15'	Descent	0 m	Ascent	380 m	MIDE	2.2.2.2
	SUP Gaitanejo	Km	4.2	Time	2h	Descent	140 m	Ascent	140 m	MIDE	2.2.2.2
	SUP Los Embalses	Km	1.8	Time	40'	Descent	40 m	Ascent	0 m	MIDE	1.1.1.1
	Caminito del Rey	Km	7.7	Time	3h 30'	Descent	25 m	Ascent	75 m	MIDE	2.1.2.2
	GR 249 Stage 20	Km	22.0	Time	6h 30'	Descent	800 m	Ascent	680 m	MIDE	2.2.2.4
	PR-A 390 Huma Access	Km	12.0	Time	4h 30'	Descent	680 m	Ascent	690 m	MIDE	4.2.2.3

Other Paths	GR 219 Stages 19 y 21	GR7 E4 Stages 6, 7 y 8	GR 248 Stage 1	PR-A 85 Nacimiento	PR-A 87 Torcal Charcón
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Collaborate:



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Legend:

- Nature Site Border
- Visitors Center
- Camping
- Train Station
- Archeological Sites
- Viewpoints
- Geological Sites
- Reservoir Uses:
 - Reservoir / hydroelectric / irrigation
 - Fishing
 - Sailing
 - Swimming
- Official Trails
 - Public Use Path
 - Caminito del Rey
 - Long Distance Path
 - Short Distance Path

PARAJE NATURAL
Desfiladero de los Gaitanes

Conde del Guadalorce Reservoir

Sierra de Almorchón

Sierra de Huma

Sierra del Valle de Abdalajís

Sierra Liana

Guadalorce Reservoir

Guadaltoba Reservoir

La Encantada Lower Reservoir

La Encantada Upper Reservoir

Arroyo del Granado

Haza del Río

Los Embalses Path

Gaitanejo Path

Haza del Río Path

PR-A 87

PR-A 85

PR-A 390

GR 249 Et 19

GR 249 Et 20

GR 249 Et 21

GR 7

GR 248

To Campillos

To Ctra. A-343 Antequera

To Valle de Abdalajís

To Álora

To Ardales

oma de las Aguillitas

Loma Muñosa

Los Miradores

Los Camoriles

Los Hilillos

Cerro Cebrián

Las Peñuelas

Sierra Blanquilla

Cortijo de la Romera

Cortijo del Arpa

Cornicabra

El Hornillo

Cortijo del Manco

Cortijo del Madroño

Tajo de Ballesteros

Cañada del Lobo

Valle del Hoyo

Sabucón

Desfiladero del Gaitán

Los Estratos Viewpoint

Tajo del Buitre

Tajo de la Encantada

Los Palmares

La Puerta del Sol

T.m. Ardales

T.m. Álora

Puerto Pizarro

Cortijo del Manco

Cortijo del Madroño

Tajo del Estudiante

T.m. Antequera

T.m. Álora

La Pedrera

Los Castellones

Los Castellones

La Almona

Rodahuevos

To Álora

Cjo. Campano

Puerto de Rosalejo

Puerto Pizarro

Cortijo del Manco

Tajo del Estudiante

T.m. Antequera

T.m. Álora

La Pedrera

Los Castellones

Los Castellones

La Almona

Rodahuevos

To Álora

Salto de la Zorra

Cjo. Campano

Puerto de Rosalejo

Cortijo del Manco

Cortijo del Madroño

Tajo del Estudiante

T.m. Antequera

T.m. Álora

La Pedrera

Los Castellones

Los Castellones

La Almona

Rodahuevos

To Álora

Cjo. Campano

Puerto de Rosalejo

Cortijo del Manco

Cortijo del Madroño

Tajo del Estudiante

T.m. Antequera

T.m. Álora

La Pedrera

Los Castellones

Los Castellones

La Almona

Rodahuevos

To Álora

Fuente de la Viuda

Cortijo del Manco

Cortijo del Madroño

Tajo del Estudiante

T.m. Antequera

T.m. Álora

La Pedrera

Los Castellones

Los Castellones

La Almona

Rodahuevos

To Álora

Fuente de la Viuda

Cortijo del Manco

Cortijo del Madroño

Tajo del Estudiante

T.m. Antequera

T.m. Álora

La Pedrera

Los Castellones

Los Castellones

La Almona

Rodahuevos

To Álora

La Capilla 1186 m

Cjo. Campano

Puerto de Rosalejo

Cortijo del Manco

Cortijo del Madroño

Tajo del Estudiante

T.m. Antequera

T.m. Álora

La Pedrera

Los Castellones

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La Almona

Rodahuevos

To Álora

La Capilla 1186 m

Cjo. Campano

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T.m. Álora

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Los Castellones

La Almona

Rodahuevos

To Álora

AVE Málaga-Córdoba