

BEST PRACTICES



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked trails



Please respect private property



Please refrain from making noise



Capturing animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Release of exotic species prohibited



Plant collecting is prohibited

Emergency phone: 112



CÓRDOBA

PARQUE NATURAL
Sierra de Cardena
y Montoro

MORE INFORMATION

Venta Nueva Visitor Centre.

Link with road N-420 with the CO-510, km 79. Cardena, Córdoba.

Tel. 677 904 308 / 957 015 923.

ventanadelvisitante.



UNIÓN EUROPEA
Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural



Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul

PARQUE NATURAL
Sierra de Cardena
y Montoro



Camino del Carrizo
y del Reloj



OTHER CONSERVATION SCHEMES



• ROUTE

Linear walk

• LENGTH (ONE-WAY)

6.1 km

• ESTIMATED TIME (ONE-WAY)

2 hours

• DIFFICULTY

Low

• TYPE OF TRAIL

Trail of compacted soil footpath

• LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

A *dehesa*-type landscape, where you can find holm oaks, cork oaks and Portuguese oaks, as well as very dense grassland of small-sized annual and perennial species size, with a great capacity for regrowth created by the action of livestock. From this path you can contemplate the landscape formed by the Quintana and Madrona mountain ranges, in the Natural Parks of Sierra de Andújar and the Natural Park Valle de Alcudia y Sierra Madrona, in the provinces of Jaén and Ciudad Real respectively.

• SHADE

Scant

• SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

• RECOMMENDATIONS

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

• PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Córdoba / Cardena

• SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

882 - Cardena

• START / END COORDINATES

38°19'38.37"N 4°19'27.81"O

38°18'44.02"N 4°17'9.06"O



HOW TO GET THERE

The path starts on the outskirts of Azuel, specifically near the local graveyard. This point can be reached from the N-420 road in the direction of Ciudad Real via an exit towards Azuel and Conquista, located at kilometre point 88. If you are coming from the opposite direction, it is best to take the exit at kilometre point 89 in the direction of Azuel and just before entering the town, turn left and go under the national road to the graveyard.



PARKING

There is no car park at the beginning of the path, although you can park in the cemetery of Azuel, which is next to the beginning of the path.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

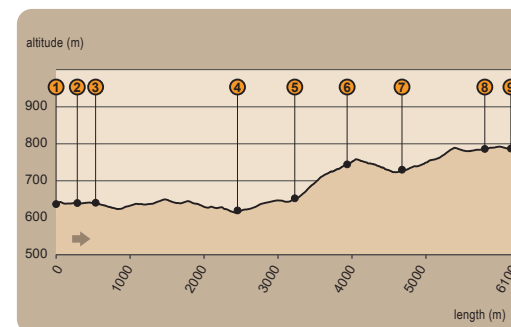
The company running regular bus routes in the area is Autocares Carrera (tel. 957 42 21 77; www.autocaresramirez.es) or Auto Transportes Ureña S.A. (tel. 957 40 44 79).



OTHER TRAILS

The natural park has many trails to discover it, among the closest are the Cardena - Azuel trail, the Camino de los Madereros trail, the Piedra Gorda trail and the Cardena - Aldea del Cerezo trail.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



• MAXIMUM GRADIENT

178 m

• MAXIMUM ALTITUDE

793 m

• MINIMUM ALTITUDE

615 m



THE FIVE QUERCUS OF THE SIERRA DE CARDEÑA Y MONTORO NATURAL PARK

The Carrizo-Reloj Trail has the notable particularity of having the presence of four species of acorn-bearing trees of the *Quercus* genus. There is a reason why, during the Arab domination, this county was called "Fash Al-Ballut" or "the plain of the acorns". These *Quercus* species are holm oak, Portuguese oak, cork oak and kermes oak, the latter being smaller in size, although it can have a tree-like appearance. Considering that close to the nearby Venta del Charco there are specimens of Pyrenenan oak, there are a total of five members of the *Quercus* genus in this protected space.

Despite the differences in shape, size and sugar content, depending on the species, all acorns are highly appreciated by a large number of animals and, of course, by Iberian pigs, and acorns give pork meat, especially ham, healthy characteristics and an exceptional flavour. The combination of different species of oak trees on a single farm ensures a longer *montanera*, the last feeding period of the pigs in the pasture, which coincides with the acorn ripening period, approximately from October to March.



The El Camino y el Reloj Trail is a linear path just over six kilometres long, without considering the way back, which has two distinct parts. The first of these trails runs east along the Colada de Azuel al Cerezo, an 8-metre wide drovers' road, where a forest track in a good state of conservation crosses a *dehesa* of holm oak groves lined by granite stone walls of very different shapes, where you can see pig and cattle farms. The second part leaves the well-trodden pack to take a steep path heading south that will take us to a height of almost 800 metres through areas of cork oak and Portuguese oak groves of great beauty.

The *dehesa*

The Carrizo path starts next to the graveyard [1] of Azuel, (signposted). After a few kilometres between stone walls, the path continues along the Camino del Reloj path, which starts after crossing a gate on the right of the reed path (signposted). The other end of this trail, and therefore another option to get to the trailhead, is from the Aldea del Cerezo-Azuel path. From the esplanade next to the graveyard is where the path starts between open meadows [2] with rich pastures, full of colour in spring and dotted with granite boulders. By the road, up to the walls that enclose the adjoining private property, it is possible to see remnants of the natural vegetation that coexisted with holm oaks until it was hollowed out by the *materos* (cork workers) to increase production without touching the tree layer. This is a natural regeneration facilitated by the absence of herbivores, which is much more prevalent in livestock farms and even in the adjoining hunting grounds.

A little more than 500 metres from the start, be careful not to stray from the main path, and pay attention to the markers indicating the route to follow [3]. You will pass by an Iberian pig farm and then descend to the Ahorcaperros Creek [4], the lowest point in the entire route, in whose gullies you can see several nests of European bee-eaters dug into the slopes.



Mediterranean scrubland

The path now becomes narrower and is limited by well-preserved stone walls, sometimes consolidated with earth or some kind of mortar. You will reach the signposted turning to the right that takes us off the forest path and the drovers' road, located a little more than halfway along the total distance of the trail. Please ensure to follow the recommendations of the signs and keep gates closed to prevent possible escapes of livestock [5].

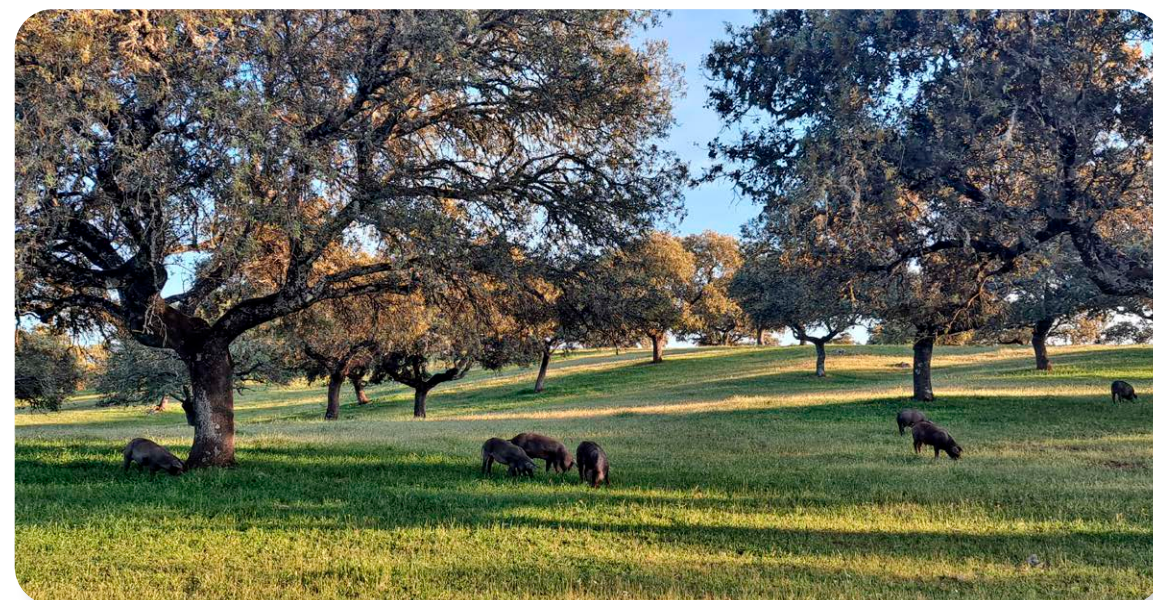
From here, alongside the holm oaks, it is possible to see different types of native scrubland, lavender, Montpellier cistus, glum rockrose, *Asphodelus*, mastic, rosemary, lupin, wild asparagus, gorse, broom, etc. thrive in this forest with young holm oak specimens [6].

Cork oak and Portuguese oak

Soon, after a short descent through a pretty landscape, and after passing by the Cortijo del Reloj farmhouse [7], your trail will become a forest path once again to

start a mild climb to the end of the trail. However, a pleasant surprise awaits you on this last stretch: the forest of holm oaks becomes now a mixed forest of holm oaks, cork oaks and Portuguese oaks [8]. If you also consider that there are some small kermes oaks by the side of the road, you'll appreciate that this stretch has four different species of the *Quercus* genus, which is the genus of acorn-producing trees and shrubs, in a reduced area of land.

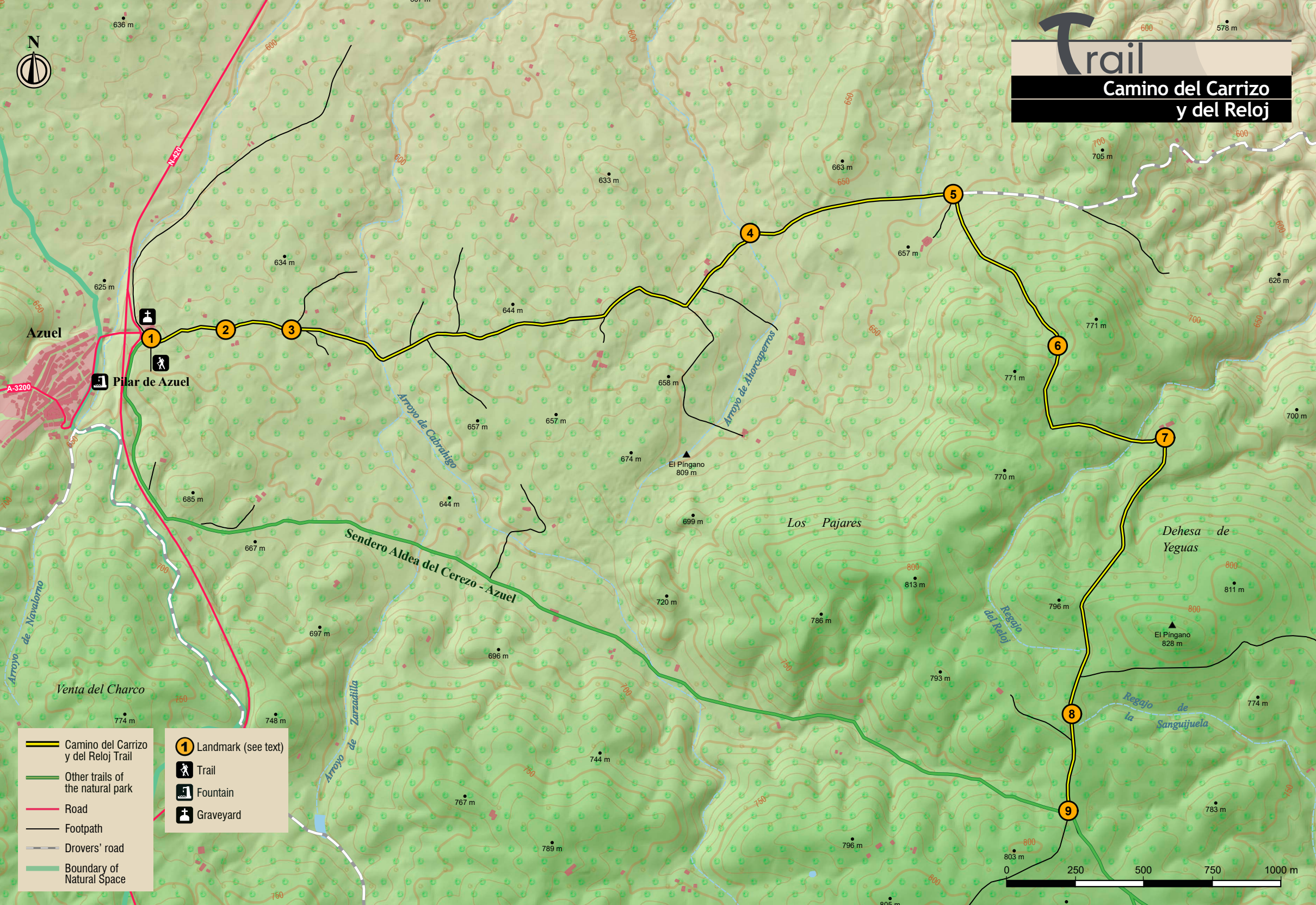
Your linear route ends definitively at a crossroads [9], which connects with one of the paths that leads to Cardena (the Piedra Gorda Trail), which can take you directly to that town, if that is your choice. This point also cuts the path from Aldea del Cerezo to Azuel, so you can return to the start of your route by a different path to the one you took on the way out; alternatively, you can retrace your steps, as it is, as stated before, a linear path.





Trail

Camino del Carrizo y del Reloj y del Reloj



- Camino del Carrizo y del Reloj Trail
- Other trails of the natural park
- Road
- Footpath
- Drovers' road
- Boundary of Natural Space

- 1 Landmark (see text)
- Trail
- Fountain
- Graveyard

