

GOOD PRACTICE



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked paths



Please respect private property



The capture of animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Fishing is prohibited



Open camping is not permitted

Emergency phone: 112



ALMERÍA



MORE INFORMATION

Las Amoladeras Visitors' Centre.
Ctra. AL-3115 Almería-Cabo de Gata. km 7. Almería. Tel. 950 16 04 35

ventanadelvisitante.



UNIÓN EUROPEA
Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural



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

PARQUE NATURAL
Cabo de
Gata-Níjar

ALMERÍA



Vela Blanca



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

OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



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



Red
Española de
Reservas de
la Biosfera



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Cabo de Gata-Níjar
UNESCO
Global Geoparks

• ROUTE

Linear

• LENGTH (OUTWARD)

3,4 km

• ESTIMATED TIME (OUTWARD)

1 hour and 30 minutes

• DIFFICULTY

Low

• TYPE OF TRAIL

Path or track

• LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Coastal edge of volcanic mountain range with moderate slopes and heights dominated by cliffs and ravines. Series of coves of varying size and degree of accessibility, with and without beaches. Scan vegetation in arid environment, with colourful bush dotting the lands boasting diverse autochthonous species (palm shrub, *Periploca angustifolia*, acacias, etc.). Sparse historic military constructions and maritime navigational aid installation.

• SHADE

Little or none

• SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

• RECOMMENDATIONS

Carry drinking water and wear suitable clothing and footwear.

• PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Almería / Níjar

• SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

1060 - El Pozo de los Frailes

• START / END COORDINATES

36° 43' 59,23"N – 2° 8' 51,56"W

36° 43' 33,75"N – 2° 10' 11,89"W



HOW TO GET THERE

From the Ronda de San José, take the path to Playa de Los Genoveses beach, which we pass until we reach the Casa del Mónsul, some 4.5 km from the start of the path.



PARKING

There is a carpark with some 50 places at the start of the trail.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

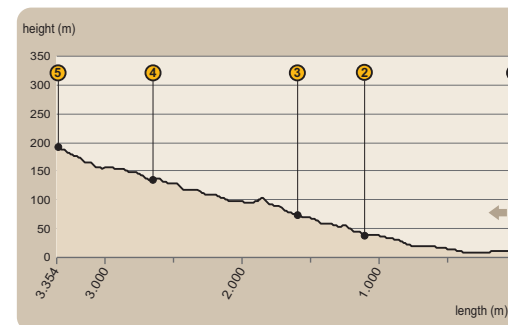
The principal companies running regular bus routes in the area are ALSA - Alsina Graells (tel. 902 42 22 42; www.alsa.es), Autocares Bernardo (tel. 950 25 04 22; www.autocaresbernardo.com) and Frahemar (tel. 950 26 64 11; www.frahemar.com).



OTHER TRAILS

The natural park has an extensive offering of signposted trails. Some of the closest are Los Genoveses and Loma Pelada.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



• MAXIMUM GRADIENT

185 m

• MAXIMUM HEIGHT

192 m

• MINIMUM HEIGHT

7 m



VELA BLANCA

If we approach the area from the sea, through the beautiful Las Sirenas reef, as we pass the Dedo reef we see the volcanic dome of Vela Blanca emerge on the horizon; a great white mass at the base of the cape.

This mass was formed by volcanic materials (disturbed white tuff) that contrast with the other materials and darker colours (andesite and dacite). The white area resembles a great sail, hence the area's name of Vela Blanca, literally meaning "white sail".





The areas his trail takes us through are home to wonderful surprises for those who make their way through them, whether it's the first time or you're familiar with the area.

The landscapes and environments of the Cabo de Gata have been myths and legends among sailors and people on lands for generations, and that's no surprise when you encounter them in person. The natural features, especially geological, botanical and zoological characteristics, won't disappoint even the

Mónsul

From the Ronda de San José take the path to the south-east towards Los Genoveses Beach and more. Continue along the path for some four and a half kilometres to reach the Casa del Mónsul, where there is a carpark and the trails starts (see [1] on the map). Mónsul beach is one of the most attractive of the Cabo de Gata thanks to its unspoilt setting and characteristic profile of the dunes and volcanic rocks like the La Peineta rock. The sparse constructions around the beach include a restored traditional well alongside the house.



Continue eastward along the same path. After some two hundred and fifty metres we pass the turn-off that takes us to the Media Luna cover and beach. In another eight hundred metres we take a curve crossing the Mónsul ravine, where the road to Carbón cove [2] starts, a spectacular beach sheltered to the south by Punta Redonda, the rocky outcrop with its origins in rapidly cooled lava flows upon entering into contact with the water. The characteristic column formations of andesite rock are among the most interesting of all those in the natural park.

La Parra Ravine

We pass the barrier restricting vehicle access above the Carbón cove, a spot offering excellent views of the cove below. In the immediate surroundings, at the right time of year we observe perennials with their characteristic pinkish tones. At an altitude of some four hundred metres, we reach a curve [3] offering spectacular views of the section of the coast we have covered with Barronal beach in the background.



We continue our ascent as we make out the peak of Vela Blanca to the west, with the sea below and the tower on the peak above. The steep andesite wall is dotted with small to medium-sized cavities, produced frequent erosion of the volcanic rock.

At the height of Punta Colorada, we change our course to head away from the coast in search of the right point to cross the Parra ravine, which is located at the head [4]. Along the sides we see a splendid palm grove and find some of the parks botanical gems including Chinese lantern, clique and pink flabellina and even caralluma if we look closely between the esparto grass.

Las Sirenas

With a final push we reach the traffic barrier in the hills of the Vela Blanca [5], and the La Sirenas viewpoint and the end of the trail. From here we can enjoy some of the most iconic views of the natural park, with the dark volcanic rocks emerging in a multitude of whimsical shapes, inspiring a repertoire of legends. It is said that the sirenas or mermaids, were really monk seals that roamed the coast in the middle of the last century.



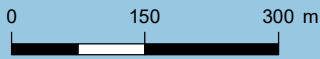
There is an in an interpretive panel with information on the landscape and the Vela Blanca tower, built in the 15th century which serves as watchtower for possible Barbary pirate attacks from North Africa, communicating with other towers by smoke signals.





Trail

Vela Blanca



- Landmark (see text)
- Parking
- Panoramic views
- Tower
- Interpretive panel
- Beach

- Vela Blanca Trail
- Path

MAR MEDITERRÀNEO