

GOOD PRACTICE



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked paths



Please respect private property



Please avoid making noise



Open camping is not permitted



The capture of animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Access with motor vehicles is not allowed



Plant collecting is not allowed



Releasing dogs off leash is prohibited

Emergency phone: 112



CÁDIZ

La Breña y Marismas del Barbate

MORE INFORMATION

Natural Park Information Point. Puerto Deportivo de Barbate s/n. Barbate. Cádiz. Tel. 956 45 97 80

ventanadelvisitante.



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

PARQUE NATURAL

La Breña y Marismas del Barbate

Trail
Arroyo Mondragón

OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



ROUTE

Linear

LENGTH (OUTWARD)

3,6 km

ESTIMATED TIME (OUTWARD)

1 hour and 30 minutes

DIFFICULTY

Low

TYPE OF TRAIL

Path or track with sandy surface

LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Stone pine forest on sandy soil, accompanied by typical Mediterranean scrubland species. Riparian vegetation, ferns.

SHADE

On some sections

SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Cádiz / Barbate

SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

1073

START / END COORDINATES

36° 12' 18" N - 5° 58' 34" W

36° 12' 30" N - 5° 56' 34" W



HOW TO GET THERE

From Barbate, take the A-2233, taking the exit at kp 17.4 towards San Ambrosio. After approximately 1.8 kilometres, passing the El Jarillo recreation area, and leaving the settlement of San Ambrosio behind us to the left we find a small carpark at the start of the trail (beside the turn-off for Palomera de La Breña).



PARKING

There is a parking area at the beginning of the trail.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

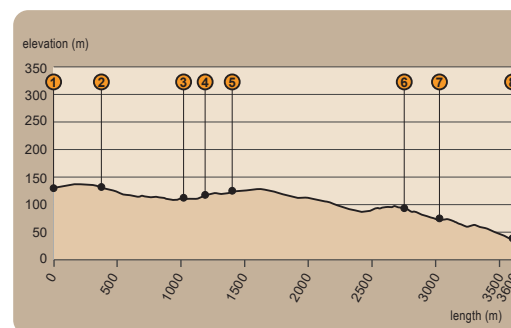
It is not possible to access the trail by public transport. The principal company running regular bus routes in the area is Transportes Comes (tel. 902 19 92 08; www.tgcomes.es). You can also obtain information at the Comes office in Barbate (tel. 956 43 05 94).



OTHER TRAILS

La Breña y Marismas del Barbate Natural Park has several trails to discover the park. They include the Sendero del Acanilado and the Sendero Las Quebradas. The Sendero Torre de Meca and the Sendero Torre del Tajo are the closest.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



MAXIMUM GRADIENT

102 m

MAXIMUM ALTITUDE

138 m

MINIMUM ALTITUDE

36 m

REFORESTATION OF PINE FORESTS: LA DOMA DEL VIENTO

For millennia, the ocean winds stirred the shifting dunes of La Breña at will. Spurred by the orographic influence of the Strait of Gibraltar and the meeting of the Mediterranean and Atlantic waters, there was no way of keeping the violent winds in check. Finally, in the late 19th century, A series of stone pine repopulation projects were undertaken, which managed to make the sands more secure and protect the soil from erosion.

Why the stone pine? The stone pine had everything: a robust temperament, fugal (no demand for soil or humidity), resistant to heat and drought, a rapid grower and capable of covering the soil quickly with long and abundant roots. The reforestation also led to a veritable explosion of life. A varied and rich cast of noble Mediterranean scrubland species: mastic, palmetto, strawberry tree, myrtle, Kermes oak, juniper, savine and aromatic plants and medicinal species grew under the shelter of the pine forests, changing the landscape of La Breña forever.



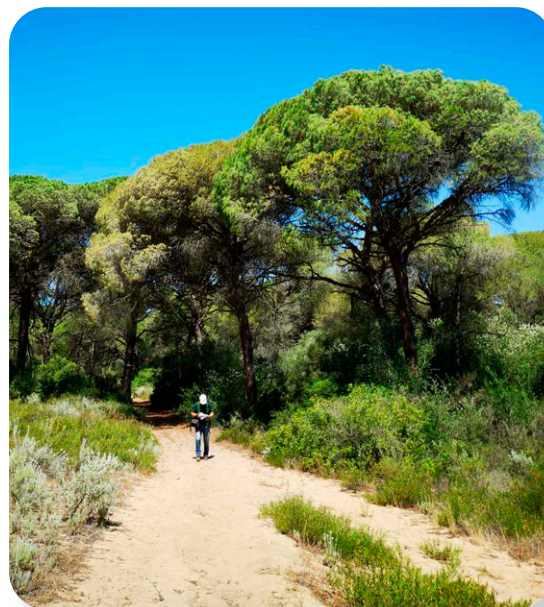


The Arroyo Mongragón stream begins at the head of the Barranco Hondo ravine and is one of the few water courses in the Natural Park. When not running dry, its waters feed the marshes of the Barbate. The trail runs along the right banks of the stream, hugging the northern boundary of the natural space. It crosses a front of dunes stabilised by the repopulated stone pine forest, running alongside the old road from Barbate to El Palomar de la Breña. It ends on the track known as Camino de los Veteranos.

In the shadow of the pines

The start of the trail [1] is close to the village of San Ambrosio, at the start of the track that leads to the spectacular 18th century ethnographic site that is El Palomar de la Breña. Built on the La Porquera Farmstead, today it is converted into tourist accommodation. With adobe walls eleven metres tall and seven thousand, seven hundred terracotta nests, it was, for a long time, the largest pigeon loft in the world (even registered in the Guinness Books of Records).

A sandy track takes us into the pine forests. The stone pine forests play a crucial role in fixing the dunes and protecting the soil. These pines are from the repopulation projects undertaken in the 19th century. Although the majority are extraordinary in scale, some are of great beauty, as you can see for yourself.



The fragrances of La Breña

The influence of the valleys of Mondragón and San Ambrosio confer the first half of the route with a microclimate different from the rest of the park. Here you'll find riparian species somewhat rare for a pine forest like poplars, brambles and creepers as well as others more typical of oak forests like strawberry trees, ferns and cork oaks [2]. The vegetation, meanwhile, accompanying the stone pine for most of the route is typically Mediterranean [3]: mastic, retamas, palmettos, olive trees, rockrose, savines, junipers and aromatic plants like rosemary, lavender, melosa and holy rope. The scent can impregnate your skin and clothes with the aromas of La Breña.

We continue following the signs and markers along soil somewhat more compacted by the pine needles. Small birds like the great tit, blue tit, nightjar, the short-toed treecreeper and raptors like the short-toed eagle, booted eagle, scops owl, tawny owl, take refuge in the pine forest giving the forest its voice. Some clearings in the vegetation allow us to see the crop fields on the hill of La Porquera and, further on, some twelve hundred metres from the start, the dell of the Mondragón [4]. On the other side of the stream, we can see a wind farm on the hill, with the stylised white of the windmills upwind.

Giants above the sand

In about two hundred metres, the trail reaches a crossing overlooked by a number of gigantic stone pines [5].



As gigantic as they are solemnly beautiful, they flood the ground below with shade and pine needles. From here, the path opens up on the dunes. For three hundred metres, the steep rising gradient of the trails slows the advance of the sand over the soil. It then descends, with a few interruptions, practically to the end of the trail.



In the final section, the clearings in the vegetation allow us to enjoy some interesting panoramas [6] of the Sierra del Retín and the extensive plain of the marshland and the river Barbate zig-zagging across it. You can also pick out the Aleppo pine forests that rise up the sides of the Peña Cortada and Las Quebradas mountains and the areas of Vejer de la Frontera, Medina Sidonia and Benalup.

After crossing the last firebreak, the dune spills out forming a diaphanous surface of varied width. Here, on the lefts, the sand has consolidated with the cancerous remains of marine creatures forming a fossilised dune [7]. On the sand, magnificent specimens of savine and maritime juniper will escort you to the shade of the pines. These same pines lead us to the Camino de los Veteranos [8], where the trail ends.





Trail

Arroyo Mondragón

- Arroyo Mondragón Trail
- Other trails of the natural park
- Road
- Path
- Drovers' road
- Firebreak
- Natural Space

- Landmark (see text)
- Trail
- Panoramic views
- Recreation area

Parque Natural La Breña y Marismas del Barbate