

## 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



Plant collecting is not allowed

Emergency phone: 112

CÁDIZ MÁLAGA



PARQUE NATURAL Los Alcornocales

## MORE INFORMATION

Natural Park Office Los Alcornocales

Pza. San Jorge n.º 1. Alcalá de los Gazules. Cádiz. Tel: 956 41 86 01

El Aljibe Visitors' Centre

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

Alcalá de los Gazules. Cádiz. Tel. 956 42 05 29

ventanadelvisitante



UNIÓN EUROPEA  
Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural



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

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## OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



NATURA 2000



Red Española de Reservas de la Biosfera

### • ROUTE

Linear

### • LENGTH (OUTWARD)

6,9 km

### • ESTIMATED TIME (OUTWARD)

3 hour and 30 minutes

### • DIFFICULTY

Medium-High

### • TYPE OF TRAIL

Compacted track or path. Loose materials on the surface

### • LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Different plant formations, all of them valuable, changing according to altitude and orientation. Wide panoramic views of the Strait of Gibraltar, the African coast, the Barbate basin, the Bay of Cadiz, etc.

### • SHADE

Frequent

### • SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Necessary (nature park office)

### • RECOMMENDATIONS

Carry drinking water and wear suitable clothing and footwear. Check that the water from fountains is safe to drink. Fog can be an added difficulty. The trail is closed during selective hunts and controlled hunting. Cattle grazing can usually be found.

### • PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Cádiz / Alcalá de los Gazules

### • SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

1063 - Algar

### • START / END COORDINATES

36° 31' 18,90"N – 5° 39' 00,69"O

36° 30' 37,14"N – 5° 36' 28,64"O



## HOW TO GET THERE

At km 13-14 on the A-2304 road (Alcalá de los Gazules-Ubrique), you will find the El Picacho recreation area, where the trail begins.



## PARKING

There is a car park with some 15 places at the start of the trail.



## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

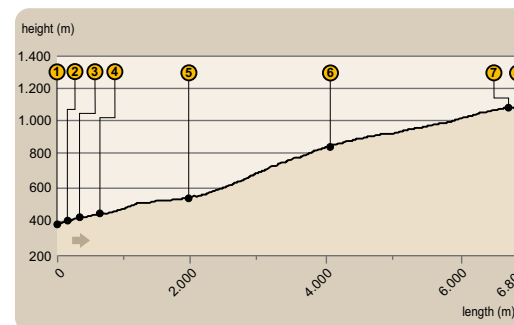
The principal company running regular bus routes in the area is Transportes Comes (tel. 902 19 92 08; www.tgcomes.es).



## OTHER TRAILS

Other trails in the natural park linked to this one are the La Saucedá, the Garganta de Puerto Oscuro and the Ascent to the Picacho.

## PROFILE OF ROUTE



### • MAXIMUM GRADIENT

704 m

### • MAXIMUM HEIGHT

1.087 m

### • MINIMUM HEIGHT

383 m



## FROM THE TOP

This trail gives us a view of the balcony of Los Alcornocales: the Aljibe, the highest point of these mountains. From its altitude of almost 1,100 metres, we can contemplate a large part of the natural park; of its mountain ranges dotted with different forest textures; of its rivers, rugged gorges and wetlands; of its cultivated lands and bujeos; of its towers and castles; of its farmhouses and villages... and also of other trails that, like this one, go through it, discovering it closer to us.



But the views reach even further: to the south, the Strait of Gibraltar and the African coast, and turning our gaze clockwise, the great Barbate basin, the Bay of Cadiz, the Sierra de las Cabras, in the background the great plains of Seville, Ubrique, the Sierra del Pinar and, to close the circle, the Serranía de Ronda and Sierra Bermeja.

We will share the sight of the numerous birds that fly these hunting grounds: booted, short-toed and buzzard eagles, together with goshawks, sparrowhawks and tawny owls. And many others, such as the common vulture, Egyptian vulture, eagle, Eurasian eagle-owl, peregrine falcon or kestrel build their nests in the bare and inaccessible slabs and cliffs of these mountain ranges.

CÁDIZ-MÁLAGA

PARQUE NATURAL Los Alcornocales



Subida al Aljibe



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



## Trail Subida al Aljibe

### First, the lagoon and the Picacho refuge

The start of our trail is in the El Picacho recreational area (check [1] on the map). After a few steps, we come to a lagoon [2], one of the most beautiful and charming places, surrounded by cork oaks, gall oaks, wild olive trees, mastic trees and, in the background, the imposing Picacho.

We will go around the lagoon and shortly afterwards we will find the remains of an old bread oven [3], very relevant remains of human activity in this natural space.



*During a large part of the route, we can find a shrub on the shady slopes, forming part of the undergrowth of the cork oak grove: the strawberry tree, recognisable by its pink or white bunches of flowers, as well as by its fleshy red berry.*

We cross a wooden bridge over the Puerto Oscuro stream [4], a tributary of the River Barbate, where we can observe the riverside vegetation, with alders and oleanders as the most representative species.

The path is well marked and leads to the forest track. Here the path divides in two, the ascending path leads to the Picacho, but we continue along the tarmac track until we reach the refuge [5], which is a good place to take a short break and then continue along the path that borders it to the summit of the Aljibe.

### Always gaining height

From the refuge to the summit we are separated by a drop of five hundred and fifty metres, along a direct path, shared, in season, with herds of mules that transport the cork, just as they used to transport the coal for furnaces. Step by step we are gaining altitude. Behind us we can find the Picacho, while the texture of the vegetation and the orography of Puerto Oscuro can be perfectly distinguished.



*The need for access and transport led to the development of the still-living mule driving works. It is essential during the corking; which from June to August the cork oak trunks are debarked, taking about nine years to produce cork suitable for cork stoppers again, exhibiting in the meantime an orangey hue, darker as time goes by.*



If we pay attention, we can find a fountain [6] on the left and, in the vicinity, some holly trees. Shortly after, the track forks with the crests of the sierra already within reach. We will continue to the left, always going upwards and trusting in the reward of enjoying, from the highest point, the views that are leaning out during the ascent.

### Mountain vegetation before reaching the top

The shrubby vegetation is now replaced by a variety of mountain scrub, well adapted to the terrain and the prevailing winds in this area.



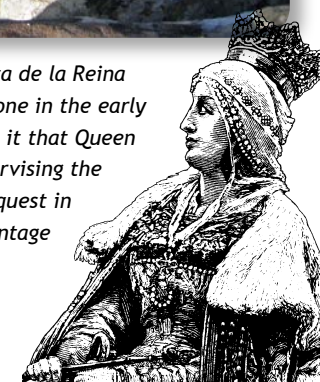
Above 800 metres, the Pyrenean oak stands out, distinguishable as its wavy, dry leaves remain on the stem without falling off.

We have reached the summit of the Aljibe [7], from where we will have, if the mists do not prevent it, the promised views, similar to those that the birds of prey whose flights animate these skies must have.

Just to the left there is another promontory, the base of which we have already passed, known as the Pilita de la Reina [8].



*It is assumed that the Pilita de la Reina was dug out of the sandstone in the early Middle Ages. Tradition has it that Queen Isabella the Catholic, supervising the development of the reconquest in these latitudes, took advantage of a stop along the way to bathe in this basin.*

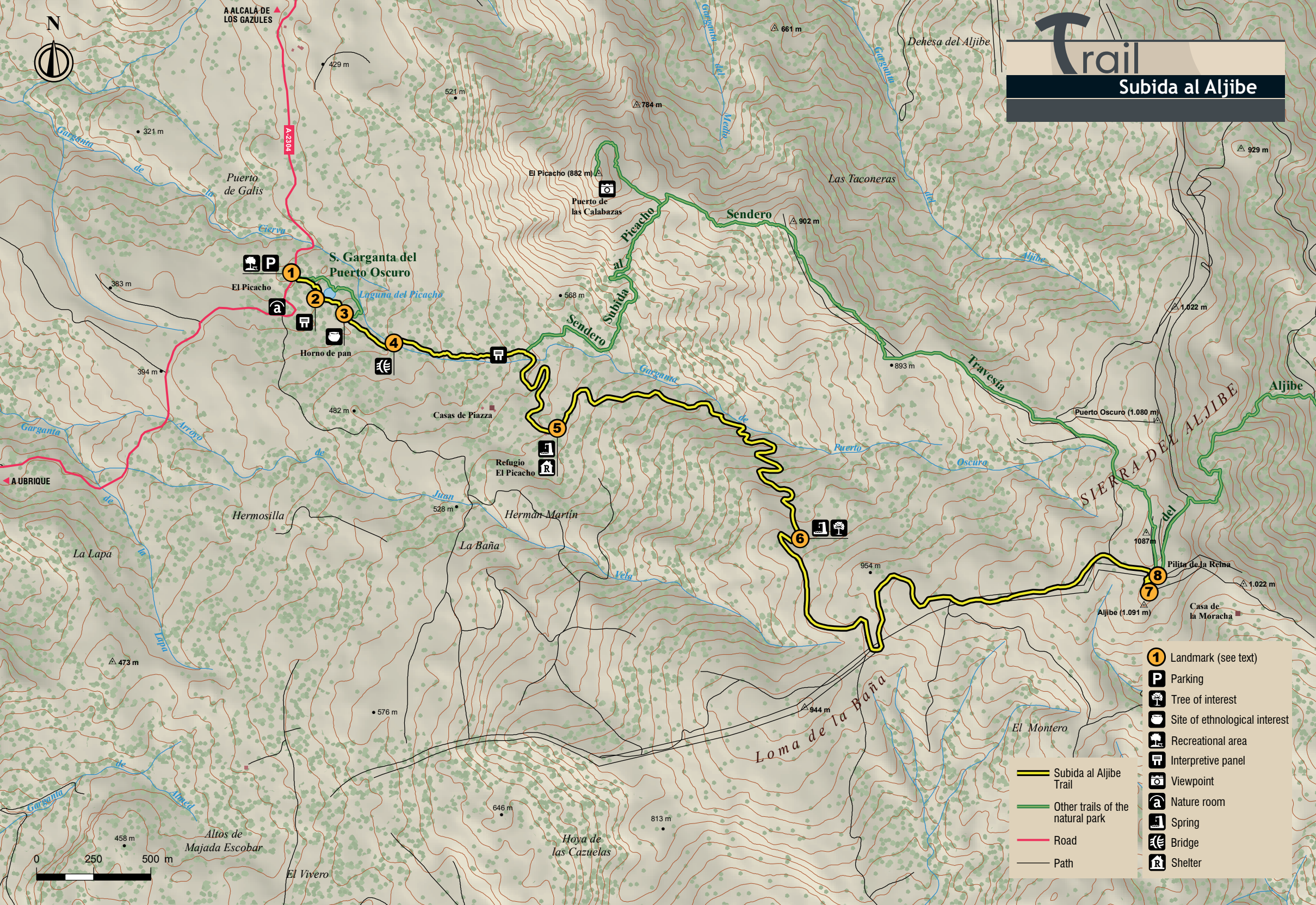


Although of some difficulty due to its length and unevenness, this trail, which requires authorisation to be followed, ascends to the highest point of the natural park, amply rewarding our effort.

A route of former charcoal makers and current access for cork makers, the path is still used by muleteers who penetrate the cork oak grove or cross this mountain range, with their loads of cork on their backs. From a bird's eye view, we will get to know a large part of these lands and the people who inhabit them.

# Trail

## Subida al Aljibe



- 1** Landmark (see text)
- P** Parking
- Tree of interest
- Site of ethnological interest
- Recreational area
- Interpretive panel
- Viewpoint
- a** Nature room
- Spring
- Bridge
- R** Shelter

- Subida al Aljibe Trail
- Other trails of the natural park
- Road
- Path