

ROUTE ON WALKS

in the Sierra Almirajara, Tejeda & Alhama and
the cliffs of Maro Natural Parks



Ayuntamiento de Nerja
Concejalía de Turismo

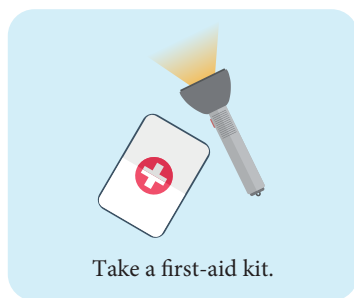
Advice



Tell someone where you are going.



Take water and something to eat.



Take a first-aid kit.



Don't leave litter; it's simple:
BRING BACK WITH YOU
WHAT YOU TOOK.



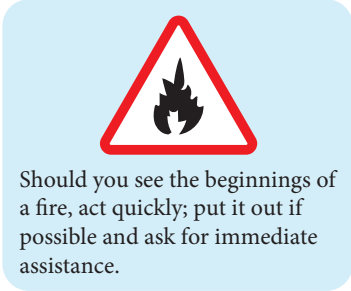
Remember that IT IS
PROHIBITED TO LIGHT A
FIRE in the mountains; neither
should you throw away cigarette



If you want something to show
upon your return, make it a
photograph.



Walk in silence; this is essential
so that you may hear the
birdsong or observe the wildlife.



Should you see the beginnings of
a fire, act quickly; put it out if
possible and ask for immediate
assistance.

GUARDIA CIVIL 952 52 00 91

LOCAL POLICE 952 521 545

EMERGENCIAS 112

CONSEJERÍA DE MEDIO AMBIENTE 951 04 00 58

Sketch Symbols

	National Road
	Road
	Dirt track
	Footpath
	Signpost
	Place to leave car
	Quarry
	Mine
	Beach Restaurant



Routes through the sierra of Nerja

- Route 1*
To the Esparto Fountain
- Route 2*
To Navachica via the Barranco de Cazadores (hunter's ravine)
- Route 3*
To the Almendron
- Route 4*
To the Castillejos Rock via the Valley of Río de la Miel

Sierra of Nerja

The Sierra of Nerja, as the most eastern part of the Sierra Almijara is known locally, ranging over 7.000 hectares, is to be found on the edge of the province of Málaga, bordering Granada to the North and East.

Almijara is the sister sierra of Tejada which it forms a mountain range. The general landscape is abrupt, very steep, with high mountains close to the sea furrowed with deep ravines which have developed perpendicular to the coastline.

The highest peak is that of Navachica, which in the space of just 12 kilometres stretches to 1.832 metres. Other peaks which lend personality to the sierra are: Cuesta del Cielo (Hill of the Sky) (1.505 m), Tajo del Almadrón (Almadrón Cliff) (1.514 m), Sol (Sun) (583 m), Cerro Romero (Romero Hill) (616 m), Peñón de los Castillejos (Castillejos Rock) and Cerro Mangüeno (Mangüeno Rock).

Two types of materials appear in great flourishes throughout the sierra: limestone, which gives it its characteristic whitish aspect, and schists, which appear extensively around the base of the sierra. When the mass of limestone rests upon the outer layer of the impermeable schists, the rain falling upon the sierra accumulates on these and creates numerous mountain springs. The Arab name of Nerja comes from this: Narixa, which means abundant spring. When the water dissolves the limestone spectacular formations are created such as those known as the Cave of Nerja and many other such caves which scatter the whole sierra.

The only two permanent rivers, to the West the Chillar and to the East the Río de la Miel (River of Honey), form the borders of the Nerja Sierra. In their final kilometres these develop into typical boulevards. The remainder of the waterways are occasional.

The proximity to the sea and the screening effect of the sierra on the northern winds make the climate of the area gentle, warm and dry. The average annual temperature is of almost 19° C, with the rainfall in the spring and autumn not exceeding 400 mm per year.

Human presence is patent since the high palaeolithic age as can be seen by the remains found at the Cave of Nerja. Roman and Arab civilizations also left their mark, proof of which are the vestiges or a road and two bridges from the Roman era located behind the San Joaquín Factory and at Río de la Miel, and of a fortress and various Arab farmhouses in the valley of this river.

Traditionally the sierra has been used for big and small game hunting, its forests for wood and resin and the lower areas, with their craggy floors, for dry land agriculture. Minerals were also extracted from the sierra, such as lead, fluorine, wolfram, iron and asbestos. Marble has been and is the subject of open exploitation.

Currently, the traditional dry land crops (almonds, olives, vines...) and irrigable crops (yam, sweet potato, sugar cane...) have been substituted in many places by subtropical crops (avocado, custard apple...) and the sierra only retains a nominal game value by virtue of being the National Game Preserve since 1973.

Vegetation and fauna

Brushwood covers the greater part of the sierra from which emerge pine trees, replanted or grown since the last forest fire. In the highest areas one can see the remains of the autochthonous oaks wood.

We will encounter different types of brushwood depending on the level of land gradation, low ground producing gorse or furze bushes. On even lower ground one can find thyme and esparto bushes. Pine trees and high thickets can be found upon the deepest ground. From 1.700 meters of altitude the vegetation consists of thorny padded shrubs known as "monks seats".

The fauna of the sierra is very rich. Within the invertebrate group we find numerous "endemismos" (species that may only be found in this area). Some amphibians such as the frog and toad take advantage of the springs and puddles to reproduce. This area is also the habitat for snakes, lizards and the striking ocelado lizard. Amphibians, reptiles and many of the abundant birds are very beneficial as they keep the insect population under control. It's quite usual to see eagles and kestrels flying above the mountains. Apart from the presence of mammals such as the fox and the weasel, the mountain goat stands out in its beauty. The mountainous characteristics of this sierra make an ideal habitat for this creature.

Routes through the sierra

Before starting upon the corresponding explanations it is necessary to comment on various aspects of the routes. The descriptions are concise. We have not attempted to lead you by the hand, but to give you the required directions so that, using your own intuition, you may discover the sierra. Along some of the routes alternatives are suggested which will open up even more possibilities to the visitor. Each route is accompanied by a diagram which tries to be as explanatory as possible but which should not be followed to the letter as they are not made to scale. In parts where the path is most difficult to find, such as in urban zones or the path entrances, these are enlarged. At some points coloured posts have been erected as per the centre page, but we advise you to guide yourselves by more permanent elements.



Autor: C. Jaime



Route 1

To the Esparto Fountain

The Fuente del Esparto (Esparto Fountain) is a useful enclave to use as a reference point in following various routes. The distance from the national road to it is that of 6 km.

From the N-340 we take the turn-off to the Cave of Nerja. At about 500 m and precisely at the entrance to the car park of the Cave we will follow the lane which commences to our left next to a small pine tree.

The path ascends between low hills and repopulated young pines on the right of the Barranco de la Coladilla de los Cazadores (Ravine of the Hunter's Defile), an area still recovering from the last forest fires.

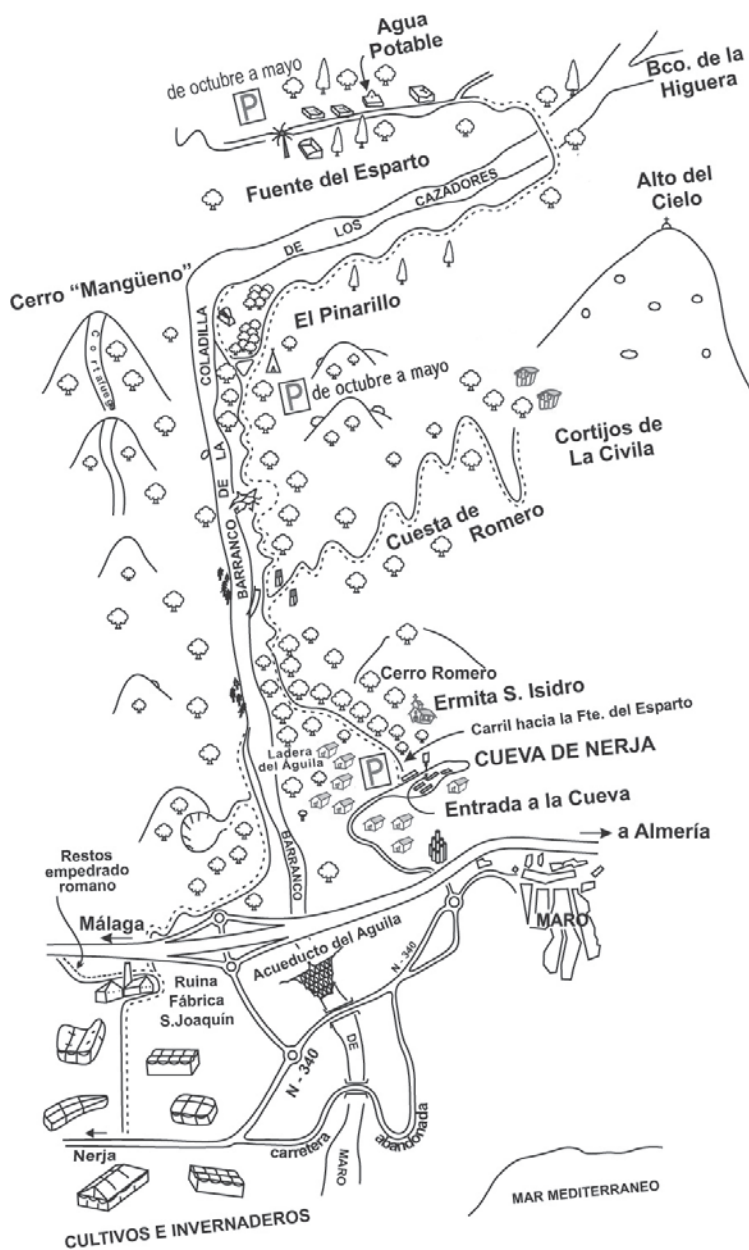
About two and a half kilometres further on we come to a fork where the path to the right ascends to the Cortijo de La Cívila (La Cívila Farmhouse) via the Cuesta de Romero (Romero Hill) and the path to the left will take us to the Esparto Fountain. At our feet the Barranco de la Coladilla continues, slotting into the bottom of the valley, dotted with small pine trees, box woods, palmettoes, rosemary and juniper bushes. The opposite side is that of the Cerro Mangüeno (Mangüeno Hill) where a firebreak runs along the crest.

Less than 2 kilometres past the La Cívila fork and after passing the old rubbish dump, we come to a recreational area known as El

Pinarillo (The Little Pine) which has drinkable water and barbecues. Leaving this to our left and continuing along the lane, we come to the Fuente del Esparto. This owes its name to the abundance of this vegetable in the area (esparto grass), which was picked for use in local craftsmanship as base material for the manufacture of ropes, basket, espadrilles, etc. The water found there, actually drinkable, made possible the construction of a mineral washing plant during the time of mineral exploitation in the sierra.

The distance from the N-340 is of 6 km.

* A good alternative route consists in walking along the base of the Barranco de la Coladilla. Access is gained by heading from the N-340, through greenhouses, towards the old Fábrica de San Joaquín (San Joaquín Factory) and following a lane which begins from behind this factory. Close by, we can see the Acueducto del Aguila (Eagle's Aqueduct) built to carry water to this old sugar factory. This lane passes by the ravine on the right and close to an old quarry, later used for clay pigeon shooting. A little further on we descend into the ravine and, continuing on, may enjoy walking along its tightly slotted bed.



Route 2

To Navachica via The Barranco de Cazadores (hunter's ravine)

This is one of the routes which begins at the Fuente del Esparto. Formerly it was used for the transport of minerals from the mines which are further up the ravine. The peak of the Navachica, with its 1,832m altitude, constitutes the rooftop of the Almijara Sierra.

The itinerary begins on the lane to the right, a few metres prior to the Fuente del Esparto. The path takes us to the heart of the ravine where we can deposit the car and proceed on foot along this high-walled ravine. Due to its limy nature there are many cracks and small caves. Some of them, those situated in the lower parts, have been used to herd goats, as refuges or even as houses.

The pass narrows further and turns into a path which continues past a water spout (popularly known as "chorrera"-trickle), weaving zig-zags and gaining height, it levels out about 1,000 m and continuing on along level ground we again reach the ravine bed, where the ravine appears to end in a wall which blocks its progress. To overcome this obstacle the path again ascends abruptly, climbing and winding its way around the side wall of the pass. Then, circling the wall which impeded our progress along the bed, it descends back to the ravine bed and arrives at the entrance to the first mines of our routes which are the Mina del Uno (Mine of One) and La Furia (The Fury). It is necessary not to stray from the established pathways as the gallery ventilation wells remain open and semi-camouflaged by the vegetation, with no warning signs.

From the mines we continue along the base of the ravine until we come to a fork. At this point we must follow the ravine to our left, thus leaving the Hunter's Ravine (which continues to the right) and which would take us towards the Loma de la Encina (Holm Oak Hilllock). Carrying on along this left ravine and about 300 m further up, a new fork appears which we must now follow to the right.

Along this ravine we come across a series of "steps" of about 2 to 3 metres height and which will not be difficult to climb. The slope becomes increasingly steep until reaching a point at which the ravine closes up and we can follow it no further.

From here we proceed up a very steep path which veers off to our right between holm oaks. We pass by some caves called Los Caños del Rey (The Jets of the King) where in water deposits are to be found throughout almost the entire year. At the top of this climb we come across a hill called Ranchillo del Viento (Little Ranch of the Wind) where it would be worthwhile resting in order to contemplate the landscape, as from here the panorama of the surroundings of the Barranco de Cazadores is extraordinary. Also we can make out the peak of the Navachica, the entire range of the Almendrón and to our right a vast forest of adult black pine mixed with holm oak, which looks like a great oasis completely surrounded by rocky mountain ranges. This is the Pinar de Lomas Llanas (Pine Grove of the plain Hilllocks).

Route 3

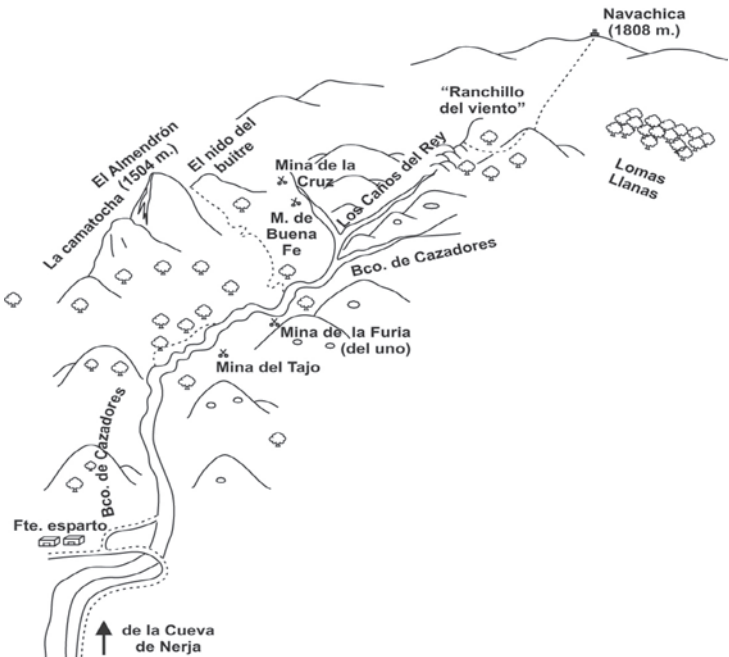
To the Almendrón

To reach the Navachica from here we simply continue up-hill in the direction of the peak. Almost no pathways are distinguishable but due to the absence of brushwood we will have no difficulty in finding our way. Along this path the slope becomes gentler again. By ascending to the peak we will have covered on foot about 18 km, and we still have the same again ahead of us to descend. For this reason it is necessary to set off very early in the morning and follow this route when the days are longer.

We recommend this route due to the spectacular nature of its landscape. Approximately 1 km from the mines of La Furia and El Uno and at the base of a large pine tree, the path begins to our left, perfectly visible. It zig-zags up a hillock and takes us towards a mountain pass on the North face of the Almendrón.

From here the entire valley of the Chillar River can be seen, with the Cortijo del Imán (Imán Farmhouse) at the bottom with impressive panoramic views. We are now at the foot of Tajo del Almendrón (Almendrón Cliff) which we will be able to ascend from this point, to later return along the same route.

If we set off in the early morning we will be back by the afternoon.





National Road



Road



Dirt track



Footpath



Signpost



Place to leave car



Quarry



Mine



Beach Restaurant





Route 4

To the Castillejos Rock via the Valley of Río de la Miel

This itinerary runs along the west side of the fertile valley of the most eastern part of our sierra, made use of since long ago for traditional crops (vines, olives, almonds) and more recently for subtropical crops.

Scarcely begun the ascent via the road off the N-340 at kilometre 298, the greenness and freshness of this valley surprises compared with other Alpujarra landscapes. Dozens of farmhouses scatter the valley with white reminding us of the traditional human presence which goes back to Roman times and has lasted renewed until our times. The higher parts of the mountains sustain a natural vegetation.

We carry on along the road until we reach and take a lane to our left close to the signpost indicating that the road we are on is coming to an end.

* If we are interested in riverside vegetation, it is possible to continue along the road until reaching a rotunda and then carry on along a lane which commences there and takes us close to the riverbed. We can only go up part of the river as getting to the actual mouth of the river is quite complicated. There are areas where small cascades have formed, others where the river narrows and harbours a more exuberant vegetation. This is the habitat of the rare freshwater tortoise.

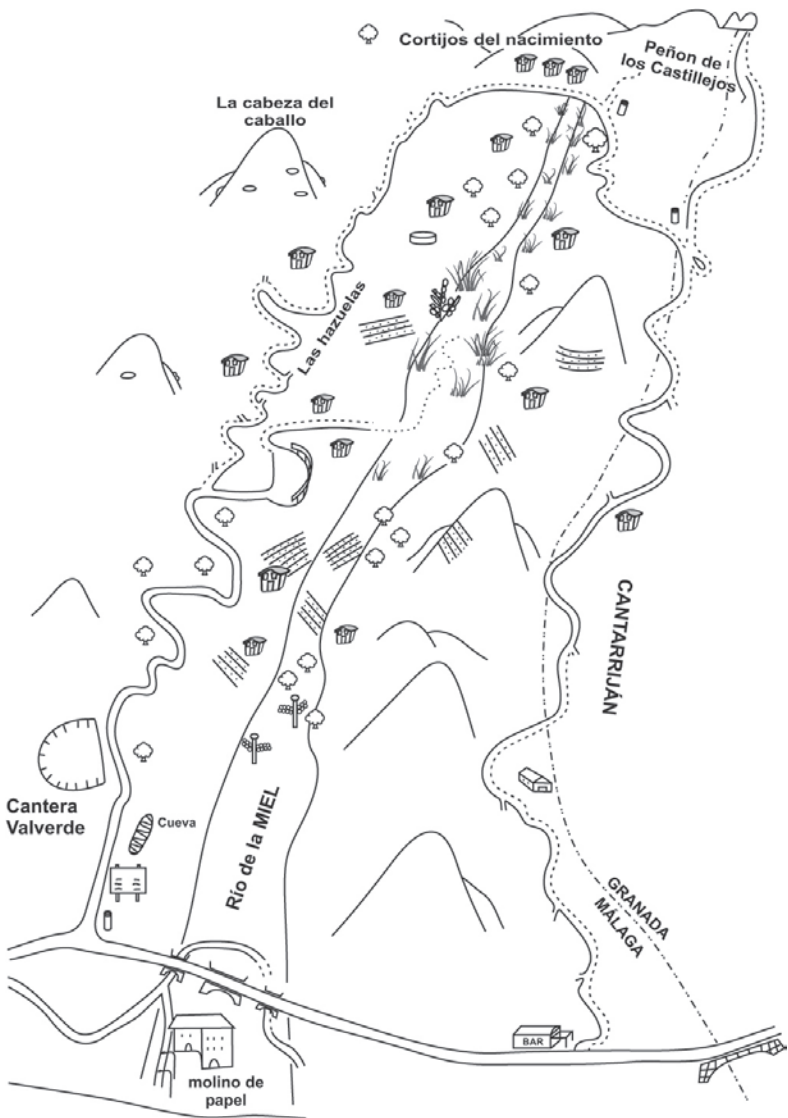
* We may choose to continue on foot for the rest of the route (9 kms), leaving the vehicle in the rotunda and going back to the lane previous-

ly indicated, which is not in very good condition but will also allow for the passage of cars. We will carry on along the lane, leaving to our left and right others which lead to private properties, until reaching Los Cortijos del Nacimiento (The Farmhouses of the Source), so-called as they are situated close to where the river originates.

After passing a small stream we come across two alternative routes for the ascent to the Peñón de los Castillejos (Castillejos Rock). With the first we take a path which begins in the form of a lane on our left, via which we will climb up to the rock itself in three quarters of an hour. Here we can observe how the vegetation recovers from a previous forest fire. The second alternative consists in continuing along the lane and, upon arriving at the side of the mountains, we veer to the left to gain access to the base of the rock, this time on its eastern face. From here we climb, guided by our intuition, to the top from which we can contemplate marvellous views of the valley of Río de la Miel and of Granada and the coast.

It is told amongst farm hand who live in these places, that a normal sized bell was found here which, rusted and worn by the passage of time, was exchanged for trinkets by a wandering salesman and that it turned out to be made of silver.

The return to the N-340 can be made following the earthen lane, of 9 km length, which takes us to the area of Cantarrián (see diagram).







Routes of the reserve

Route 1

Cala Barranto de Maro (Cove of the Maro Ravine)

Route 2

La Caleta beach

Route 3

Maro beach

Route 4

Torre de Maro (Tower of Maro)

Route 5

Playa Molino de Papel (Paper mill beach)

Route 6

Playa de las Alberquillas (Alberquillas beach)

Route 7

Calas del pino (pine coves)

Route 8

El Cañuelo

Nature Reserve

The cliffs of Maro - Cerro gordo

Where the Almirante Sierra dips its toes into the Mediterranean Sea the Acantilados de Maro-Cerro Gordo (Cliffs of Maro-Cerro Gordo) appear. They constitute an enclave of unusual beauty for which they have deserved the accolade of being declared Paraje Natural (Nature Spot) by the A. M. A since 1989, extending along 375 hectares including one kilometre seaward.

For your enjoyment we propose a series of itineraries. They are all short and can be covered on foot from the N-340 road.

Route 1

Cala Barranco de Maro (Cove of the Maro Ravine)

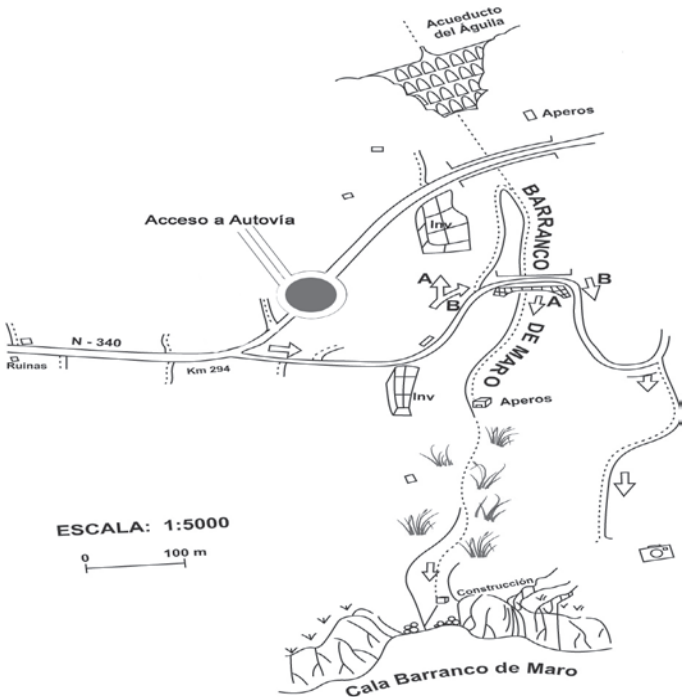
This is situated at the mouth of the Barranco de Maro (Maro Ravine), known farther up as the De la Coladilla-Cazadores.

Access is gained past kilometre 294 of the N-340 in direction Nerja-Almería entering the old national road immediately before the beginning of a bend. Carrying on some 300 metres, we veer to the left before passing the bridge, and go down to the Barranco de Maro via a lane in extremely bad condition (only 4x4 vehicles should attempt it). From here we can see, farther up, the Acueducto del Aguila (Eagle's Aqueduct), still in perfect condition, built in the last century to carry water to the mills of the old San Joaquín sugar factory in Maro.

Upon arriving at an "apero" (tools shed), the route turns into a

pathway, which it is only possible to descend on foot and wearing sports shoes, surrounded by sugar-cane and sub-tropical crops. We must continue along the left hand side until reaching a small building from which the path begins, which takes us down to this small yet pretty cove of rounded rocks. It interest lies more in its secluded nature than in bathing. The total length of the route is of little more than one kilometre.

* A further suggestion (option B on the diagram) would be to carry on over the bridge instead of veering to the left, taking the earthen path to the right, arriving at a fork to enjoy a wonderful panorama of shelved cliffs. To the right these form crevices which the more daring may venture to explore.



Route 2

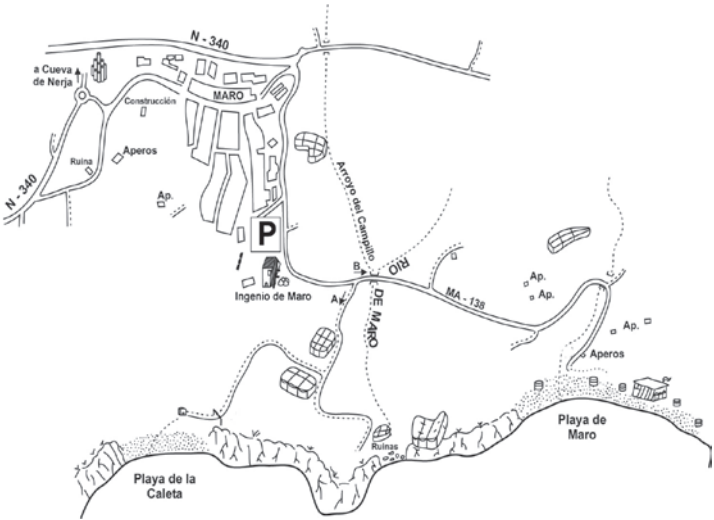
La Caleta beach

A sandy beach, of medium size and shielded beneath the Cliffs and the vega of Maro (fertile plains of Maro). Its natural beauty gives it a certain wild charm.

Access is gained via the crossroads from the Nerja Cave to Maro, crossing Maro and descending along a road on the other edge of Maro which weaves its way between crop fields and greenhouses. After

the first bend we must take a lane to the right (option A on the diagram). Once on the lane we veer off again to the right between two greenhouses, this entrance is not very visible. We carry on until we reach a widening of the lane. Passing by the chain we continue down to the beach.

The total distance covered is a little less than 2 kilometres.



Route 3

Maro beach

This is a sandy beach of considerable size, with easy access and very popular during summer season. To reach it we must take the same road as that leading to the La Caleta Beach, until reaching a small

square with little parking space. From here we can go down to the beach, where there is a beach restaurant.

From the road it is a distance of 2 kilometres.

Route 4

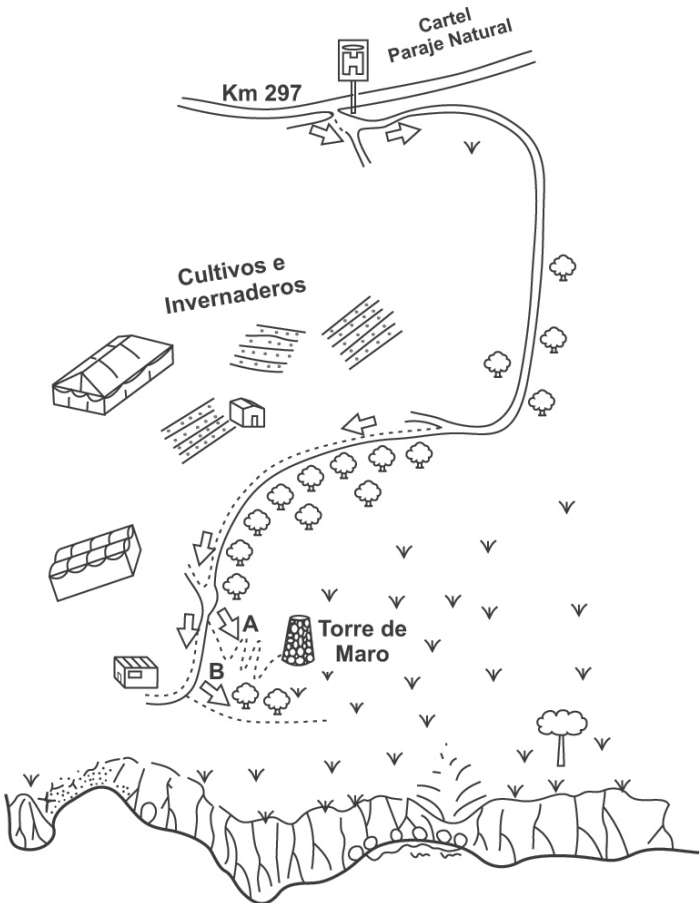
Torre de Maro (Tower of Maro)

This is one of the many watchtowers which scatter our coast. From here marvellous views can be appreciated, as well as the chance to take a pleasant stroll around the surroundings.

The access is conveniently signposted and is to be found exactly at the 297 kilometre of the N-340, where we move onto a earthen lane from which to the right we can

see typical crops to the area and to the left an old pine grove. Upon reaching a widening of the lane we continue on foot, via the path that goes up to the tower. We could lose ourselves amongst the smells of thyme, rosemary, and other such aromatic Mediterranean plants.

The length of the route is that of one kilometre.



Route 5

Playa Molino de Papel (Paper Mill beach)

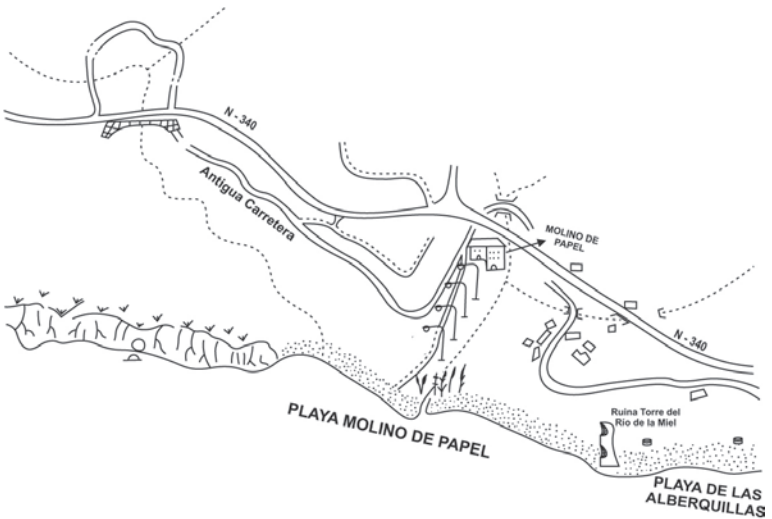
It owes its name to the ruins which in times gone by used to be a paper factory known locally as El Molino de Papel (The Paper Mill). It was founded by the Nerjeño governor of Las Guayanas, Manuel Centurión Torres, during the reign of Carlos III. It was in operation from the end to the 18th century through until the middle of the 19th century and is currently owned by Azucarera Laríos (Laríos Sugar).

The beach is large, sandy and the Río de la Miel and the Arroyo de los

Colmenarejos (Colmenarejos Stream) flow into it.

Access is gained by taking a right-hand turning about 300 metres past kilometre 298 on the N-340. This road descends a steep slope onto the old road which we must follow until reaching the Molino de Papel, where we veer to the right and go down to the beach.

From the N-340 the distance is less than 1 km.



Route 6

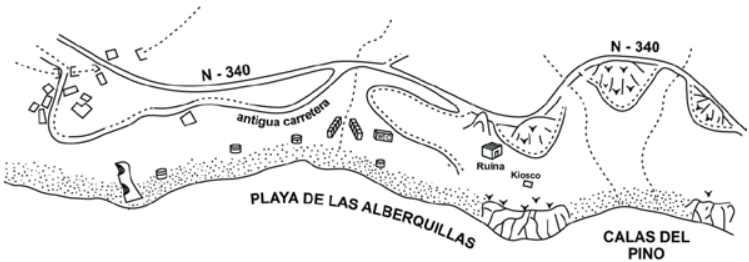
Playa de las Alberquillas (Alberquillas beach)

This beach is of vast dimensions and is joined to the Molino de Papel Beach by the ruins of the Torre del Río de la Miel (Honey River Tower).

Access is gained via a right turning which cannot be clearly seen from the N-340, about 200

metres past kilometre 299. It is a lane in good condition via which vehicles may reach the beach itself. It is a pleasant spot to pass a typical day on the beach.

The distance from the N-340 is of 1 km.



Route 7

Calas del Pino (Pines Cove)

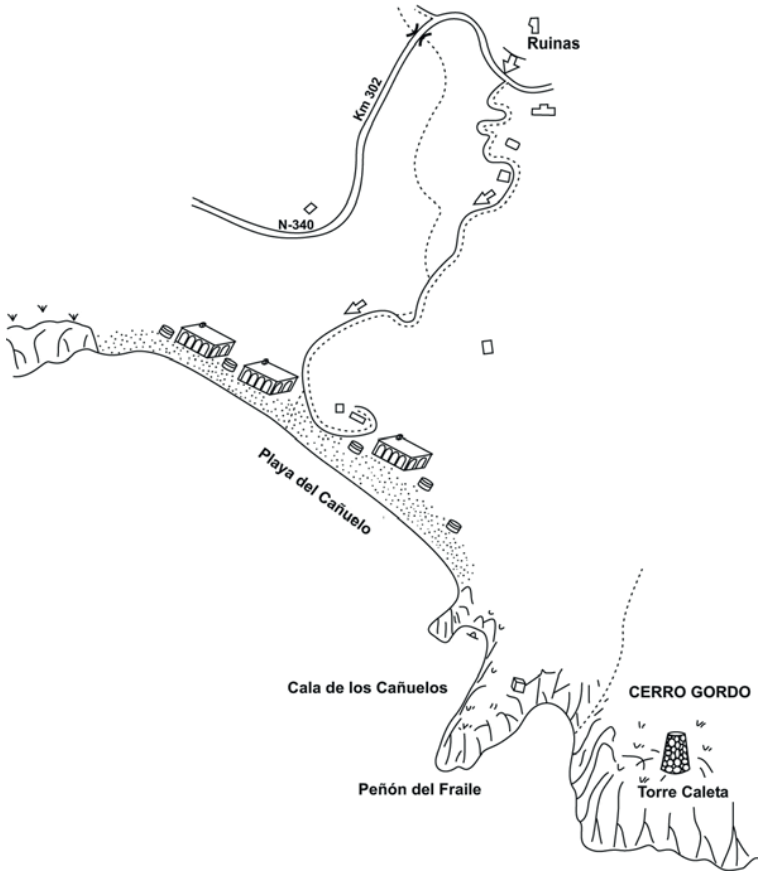
These are two sandy coves of medium size situated between the Playa de las Alberquillas (Alberquillas Beach) and the Torre del Pino (Pine Tower). Despite being separated by fallen rocks, one may walk quite easily from one to the other.

They can be reached by a path (see diagram) which starts on the third bend of the old N-340, on the right-hand side, past kilometre 299. The path slopes downwards to the beach between dry brushwood. From the N-340 to the beach the distance is of about 200 metres

Playa El Cañuelo

This is a large, frequented beach, on which there are two beach restaurants, that can be reached by walking through an earthen lane of less than one kilometre's length which begins 400 metres past

kilometre 302 to the right of the N-340. There is public transport from the N-340, from June to September.



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