



## Natural landscape

This is a trail of contrasts, with a mosaic of vegetation that changes before your eyes along the different stretches of the route. The rocky landscape, colonised by scrub and meadows at the easternmost extreme of the mountain range, transforms into denser woodland on the shady side of the slopes. On the topmost parts, the scarce vegetation shows the harsh nature of the climatic conditions. **Pla del Grau Gran [11.3]**: An area with no covering from trees, from which the Barranc dels Pèlcs, the most important gully in Montsant, begins. These flat areas would have been sown with cereal crops until well into the 20th Century. This is the spot reputed to have been the site of the miraculous discovery of the image of the Mare de Déu de Montsant (Mother of God). **Roca Corbatera [11.4]**: (1,163 m) is the highest point of the Serra Major.

## Cultural heritage

**Albarca**: (815 m). A small village adjoining Cornudella. Historically this village forms part of the county of Prades and was an independent municipality until the middle of the 19th Century. After the Civil War, the village underwent rapid depopulation. It now consists mainly of holiday homes. It has some points of interest that are worth a look and also provides superb panoramic views. In Arabic, Albarca means "blessed mountain", probably as a result of the shrines that the Moors found in the mountain range, and the Christians translated this as Montsant. **Pla dels Hostalets [11.1]**: Albarca was a passing point for the high road from Lleida to Fraga, an important route for the transport of goods. At this point where the routes crossed, there was a blacksmith and hostels for the travelling merchants, the ruins of which can still be seen. **Chapel of Mare de Déu de Montsant [11.2]**: This shrine has its origins in hermitic orders founded in the 12th Century, in an attempt to form a Cistercian convent on the mountain, which in the end was moved up to Bonrepòs. The current building was constructed in 1450, when this part of the mountain became the property of the Cartoixa d'Scala Dei (Carthusian monastery of Scala Dei).



Chapel of Mare de Déu de Montsant. Salvador Palomar.



## TRAIL 11 ALBARCA

Grau de la Mare de Déu  
Ermita de la Mare de Déu de Montsant  
Pla del Grau Gran  
Roca Corbatera  
Grau Gran

Initiative: Parc Natural de Montsant. Contents: Grau d'Oïacs Senders de Montsant i Cornuda. Writing, coordination and control: Pedrenca Pedagogia Ambiental



Parc Natural  
de la Serra  
de Montsant



Generalitat de Catalunya  
Departament de Medi Ambient  
i Habitatge



A trail on the easternmost side of the Serra de Montsant, which enables the walker to get to know the different characteristics of the two sides of the mountain range easily in a single trip. This trail is recommended for those who enjoy contemplating the landscape and taking spectacular photographs. The ascent takes the walker directly to the chapel of Mare de Déu de Montsant, climbing up the very steep cliff of the north slope. The second part follows a walk along the upper part of the mountain range, easily reaching the highest point, the Roca Corbatera (1,163 m). An extensive view of the landscape unfolds before our eyes. Finally, the excursion returns to Albarca, following part of the old path, which has always provided the easiest access to the upper levels of the mountain range, the Grau Gran. This walk can be done in a morning and is suitable for all types of walkers, although the first part may be more difficult for those who are not used to walking in the mountains. This is a walk that can be done at any time of year. If you want to do it in summer, it is best to avoid the sunniest hours of the day. In summer, the walk can be started early in the morning or from mid-afternoon onwards. This walk should not be done in fog.

Technical description

TOTAL DISTANCE:  
**4.7 km**  
TOTAL TIME:  
**2 h** (rest stops not included)  
LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:  
**MEDIUM/HIGH**  
TOTAL ASCENT:  
**450 m**



Maple (*Acer opulus* ssp. *granatense*), Roger Pascual.

Trail description

We leave from the terrace in front of the shelter and approach the foot of the mountain. From the **Pla dels Hostalets [11.1]**, which is identifiable by the ruins surrounding it, take the track that goes off to the right. Pay attention to the various signs, ignoring the one at this point that indicates «Mare de Déu». The path descends gently; passing a path that goes off to the right. A few metres after that, you will see a faded fork in the path. Continue on the path to the right, which is marked on the ground with white paint. This is the path to Ulldemolins, descending over colourful rocks. This path appears again later with a widening of the track. On the right you will pass the head of the Barranc del Teix (El Teix gully). Continue on to the signpost placed by Turisme de Catalunya, the Tourist Board of Catalonia, where you should leave the track and take the path of La Mare de Déu (Mother of God), which climbs up to the left. This is a narrow path leading into the thick woodland. The ascent is hard and steep. After various twists in the path, you will arrive at the **chapel of Mare de Déu de Montsant [11.2]**. Leave the chapel by the track which leads to the **Pla del Grau Gran [11.3]** plain. After a short while you will find a much more heavily trodden track. Continue in the same direction and shortly afterwards take the path to the right that crosses the flat area and then begins to climb until it reaches the ridge. Turn to the right and you can climb without difficulty to the peak of the **Roca Corbatera [11.4]**. To begin the descent, walk back to the crag and follow the path that leads in front of the rock and that goes down to the upper part of the Pla del Grau. From here, follow the red and white marks of the GR (long hike trail) as far as the hill of Collet de Miragüelos. Leave the track and follow the old drove road, which is paved on some stretches, and leads to the Pla dels Hostalets. Shortly after that you will reach the village.



Albarca.

