

Puig de Galatzó Itinerary via Son Fortuny

Serra de Tramuntana Nature Area



Photo: Esperança Perello



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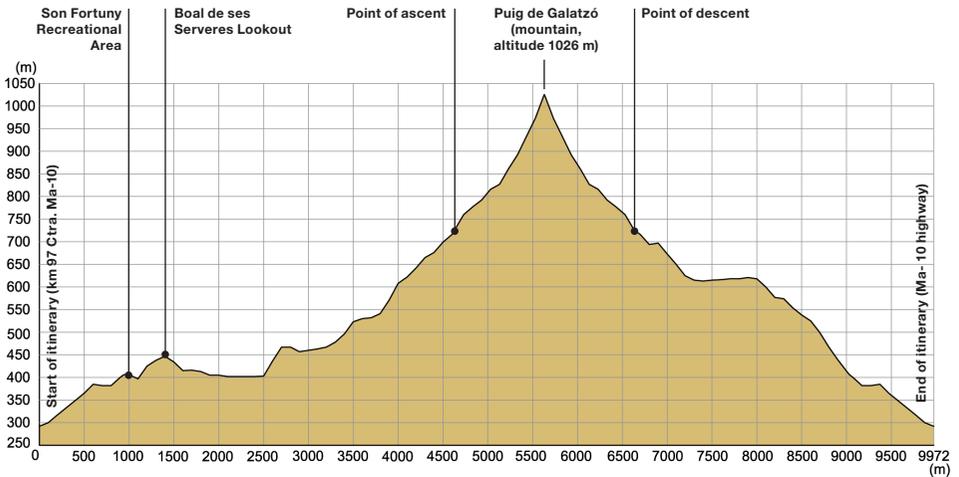
With an elevation of 1026 metres, the Puig de Galatzó can be seen from many different points on the island. This itinerary runs along one side of the mountain and then heads up the other side, to the peak. The landscapes that you will see along the way tell very different stories. Some are legends, as is the case of the Comte Mal (Count Evil), whilst others, such as that of the astronomer Francesc Aragó, are adventures that bear witness to a time in which the work of a scientist could easily be a perilous undertaking.

Difficulty: medium-hard

Distance: 9,9 kilometres (round-trip)

Duration: approximately 6 hours

The trail has a steep incline in certain places. This itinerary must be followed on foot. There is signposting all along the trail.



Estellencs from the trail to Pas de na Sabatera (Photo: Esperança Perelló)

1. Son Fortuny

The itinerary runs through the municipal area of Estellencs and begins at the entrance to the public estate of Son Fortuny (km 97 on highway Ma-10), which has been owned by the Island Council of Mallorca since 1981. The path starts off with a steep, winding uphill climb.

Son Fortuny used to be a large mountain estate that took in the entire northern face of the Puig de Galatzó. The houses are located in the private area of the old property. The public estate of Son Fortuny still includes 280 hectares of the historical estate, which in its time was the largest in the municipal area of Estellencs.

After an uphill climb of about 20 minutes, you will come to a plateau with a forest fire prevention water tank. On your right, you will see a trail that leads to the mountain refuge known as the Refugi de la Coma d'en Vidal. Instead, you will take the trail on the left, which will lead to the old stable, Boal de ses Serveres.



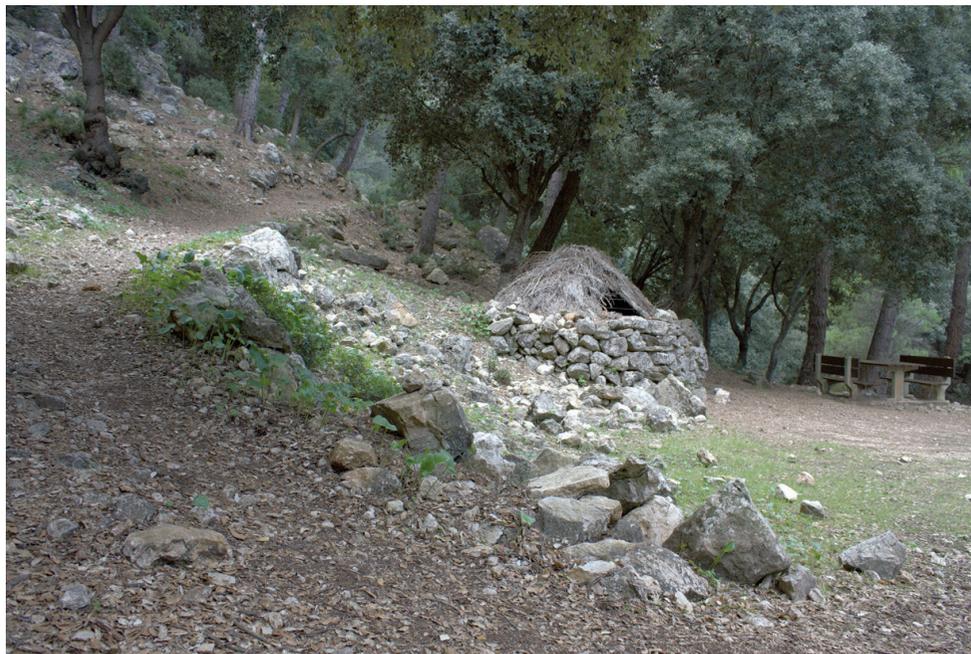
View from the trail leading to the Boal de ses Serveres (Photo: Esperança Perelló)

2. Boal de ses Serveres

You will immediately see that you are in the Son Fortuny Recreational Area. In the clearing are vestiges of the past use of the forest, with a charcoal production floor and a wood collier's shack.

On the left you will see the trail that will take you up to the Boal de ses Serveres Refuge. The name *boal*, meaning stable, appears to make reference to the structure attached to the refuge. Though in ruins today, this building was once used as a stable for herds of cattle.

After an easy climb, a few metres up on the left you will come to the Boal de ses Serveres vantage point. From here on out, the trail is somewhat overrun with Mauritanian grass (*Ampelodesmos mauritanica*), and just a few metres further ahead, it narrows to become a small path that runs along the mountain. Though it will not be difficult to follow the landmarks amid the Mauritanian grass, be careful not to trip over the leaves!



Start of the trail to Pas des Cossis (Photo: Esperança Perelló)



Boal de ses Serveres Refuge (Photo: Esperança Perelló)

Some 15 minutes later, you will come to a charcoal production floor that sits virtually at the edge of a sheer drop. This is a good place to stop and think about the lives of the men and women who worked in the forests of Tramuntana. You will also enjoy a panoramic view of the municipal area of Estellencs.



**Mauritanian grass
(Photo: Esperança Perelló)**

3. Pas de na Sabatera and climb to the top of Puig de Galatzó



**Before the climb to the top
(Photo: Esperança Perelló)**

After walking for an hour, and having left behind holm oak and pine groves, you will come to the pass known as Pas de na Sabatera. At this point, you are just a half hour from the top. You need only follow the landmarks. On clear days, this spot offers striking views. Looking to the north, you will see the town of Estellencs and the sea. To the northeast sits the plateau known as Mola de Planícia (920 m); to the east is the valley Vall de Superna, another plateau called the Mola del Ram (820 m) and the towns of Puigpunyent and Galilea; to the southeast, Palma; to the south, the municipal area of Calvià and the plateau Sa Mola del Port d'Andratx; and to the southwest the smaller rise of the Moleta de s'Esclop (926 m). Finally, looking out to the west are the mountains of the Serra des Pinotells and the Moleta Rasa.

You may wish to stop here for a moment to note the way the vegetation has changed along the trail. From the lush holm oak forest in the first sections of the hike, you have now come to the landscape typical of the Mallorcan mountains. Here, emerging through the cracks of the stones in the higher section of the trail, you are bound to see wild saffron (*Crocus cambessedesii*) in bloom between October and February.



Wild saffron (Photo: Esperança Perelló)

4. Caseta de n'Aragó (house) and the green meridian

Crowning the top of Puig de Galatzó are a metallic cross and a structure known as a geodesic vertex. These geodesic vertices were used as markers to measure distances and angles, and thus to depict the surface of the Earth. Francesc Aragó, an astronomer from Roussillon, lived at the neighbouring plateau, Moleta de s'Esclop for one year, undertaking these types of tasks. On 2 May 1802, the Paris-based *Bureau des Longitudes* entrusted two astronomers, one of them being Aragó, to measure the meridian of Paris. Aragó came to the Balearics in March 1807 and began to prepare the triangulation networks necessary to measure the precise distances between the Islands and the Iberian Peninsula and to obtain the latitude of the arch of the meridian.

As it happened, he coincided with a rather hectic period in Mallorca, given the Peninsular War with France (1808-1814). Suddenly, after the news of the uprising, the islanders became very suspicious of the Frenchman who occupied the top of S'Esclop, making smoke signals and strange instruments. As a result, Aragó was immediately accused of espionage.

Fortunately, he had a sailor friend who went up the mountain to warn him of the mob's intentions. The two came down the mountain, and Aragó, dressed as a farmer and speaking Mallorcan, was not recognised by the expedition that was on its way up the mountain to capture him.

Nevertheless, he was unable to escape from Mallorca. Caught on his arrival to Palma, he was imprisoned at the Bellver Castle.



The Morro de Ses Serveres from the pass Pas des Cossis (Photo: Esperança Perelló)

5. The legend of Comte Mal (Count Evil)

One of the lords of the Galatzó estate, the Count of Santa Maria de Formiguera, Ramon Burgués Zaforteza i Fuster, went down in history as Comte Mal, or “Count Evil”.

As the legend goes, the Count never thought twice when it came to killing or torturing his enemies. At both S’Argolla and the pass Coll d’en Debades there is a perforated stone, where it is said that he used to insert an iron bar to tie up his enemies and torture them to death. Apparently, the noblemen were customarily brought to S’Argolla, whereas the Count’s more humble victims were hung at the Coll d’en Debades, or “Pass of the Hopeless”. As one would imagine, this place owed its name to the hopeless pleas for mercy of the Count’s prisoners.

“We dug and found some graves with lime-covered human bones, scattered here and there. We found a row of 10 or 12 of them (...). It was the Galatzó cemetery, the burial site of the people who were killed by the Count, or whom he had others kill”.

“Caminos y paisajes”. Gaspar Valero i Martí



Barraca de carboner al Boal de ses Serveres (Photo: Esperança Perelló)

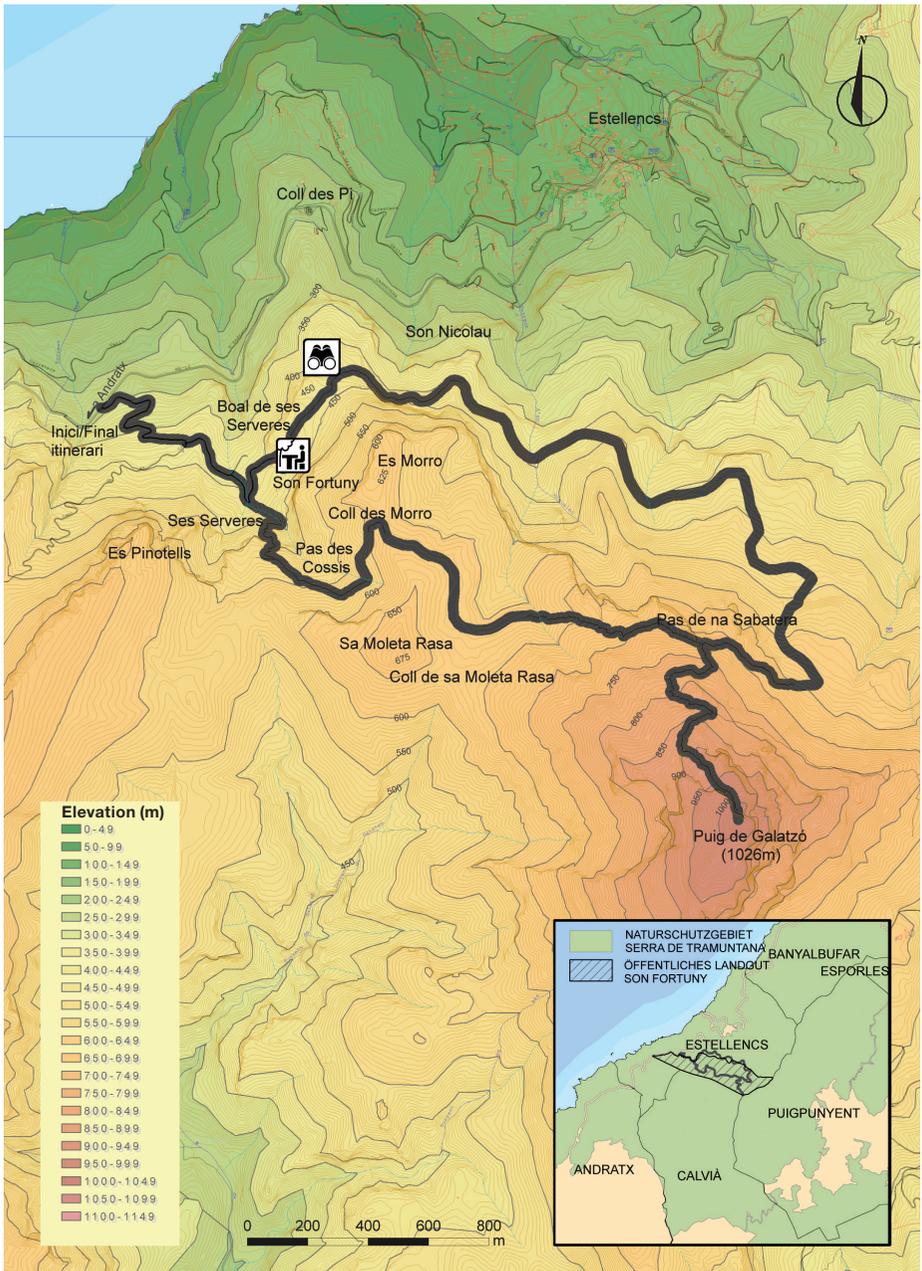
It was often difficult for the owners of Galatzó to recruit people to work at the estate, given the overall fear of the people. According to the legend, the soul of Comte Mal rides alone atop his green horse through the mountains of Galatzó. They say that the nights of November, when only the blowing wind and the sound of the animals can be heard from the mountains, are signs of his presence.

It appears that his father sought to impose the feudal jurisdiction and dominion on the villagers of Santa Margalida. As a result, the Count inherited a complicated situation, and given his arrogant nature and his regrettable actions, he was given the unfortunate nickname Comte Mal (Count Evil). In the end he was banished from the town of Santa Margalida. Ultimately, in an effort to recover the prestige of his name and lineage, the Count placed himself in the service of the King.

You will now turn around to go down the Puig de Galatzó and return along the same path until you reach the pass Pas de na Sabatera. From here, turn left, heading towards Pas des Cossis. From there, it will take you approximately 55 minutes to get back to the Son Fortuny Recreational Area.



Son Fortuny Recreational Area (Photo: Esperança Perelló)



Serra de Tramuntana Nature Area

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