

Coll Roig Crag: A balcony overlooking l'Enciola

Cabrera archipelago maritime-terrestrial National Park



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The route leading to Coll Roig Crag runs along part of the track that links the harbour with l'Enciola Lighthouse. It starts in the harbour, where the Park information office is located. The uphill section of the route is well worth the effort due to the splendid views it affords – not only of the l'Enciola Lighthouse and the peninsula, but also of Cabrera's harbour bay, with the castle rising majestically above it.

Self-guided itinerary

Approximate duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Total distance: 3 km round trip

Difficulty: 2/4

Recommendations: The section of the path that runs between Coll Roig Crag and l'Enciola Lighthouse is off bounds in order to restore that vegetation that has been damaged by walkers repeatedly taking shortcuts. For this reason, this section may only be completed when accompanied by Park staff.



Eleonora's falcon (*Falco eleonora*)
(Photo: Sebastià Torrens)

1. The harbour, where human traffic is highest

Cabrera harbour is the area of the Park where human traffic is highest. This is not surprising due to the fact that this is a disembarking and boarding area for visitors that practically everyone has to pass through. It is also the site of many of the Park's amenities (information office, first aid station, public toilets, fishermen's shelter and the canteen), as well as the mooring berths for the service vessels and authorised fishermen, as well as the Park management facilities.

The information office will provide details of activities, times, itineraries and the location of sites of interest, as well as the Park's wealth of environmental resources and other aspects. From here, you should follow the main track along the coastline, passing close to the "Sunyer Family Cross", erected in memory of Damià Sunyer, a tenant of Cabrera, and his two sons, Joan and Gaspar, who were all executed by a firing squad during the Spanish Civil War, a historic event that Cabrera did not forget.

You will soon come to the first beach on the itinerary, Les Agulles Cove, a small beach nestling on the right-hand side. Next to it is a field of solar panels and the generator that supplies power to an island that aims to become energy self-sufficient in this aspect.

Your route will take you past "Sa Vicaria", a small chapel dedicated to Saint Petronilla, where the inhabitants of the island of Cabrera could attend mass (fishermen, lighthouse keepers, army personnel and the residents of Villa Cristina).



Harbor bay
(Photo: Catalina Sebastià)

2. The Camp, a space for all

The archipelago has been the property of Spain's Ministry of Defence since 1916, when the Feliu family, the last civilian owners of Cabrera, were expropriated following the sighting of a German submarine in the waters around the island during World War I, throughout which Spain remained neutral. In order to avoid raising suspicions of collaboration with either side and to guarantee neutrality, Cabrera was expropriated on the grounds of national security. The camp is the site of the military buildings that housed the troops and today provide accommodation for Park staff, researchers, a small army detachment and are also used as a public shelter.



**Camp pavilion set up as shelter
(Photo: National Park's guides Team)**

3. Fishing, an ancient resource on Cabrera.

Following on from “sa Platgeta”, the ancient salting factory is a reminder of the importance fishing has had on Cabrera for many centuries. It consists of a series of basins hollowed out from the rock where fish was salted for conservation. It was also here that garum was prepared, a fermented sauce made from fish guts and considered a delicacy in ancient times. Although the exact date of construction is unknown, it was used between the 5th and 7th centuries, and in all likelihood is related to the community of monks that lived on the island.

In the 19th century, during the captivity of the Napoleonic troops on Cabrera (1809-1814), the prisoners used the site as accommodation, opening doors in the basin walls and building their hearths there. Later, in the late 19th or early 20th centuries, sandstone, known locally as marès, was extracted from this area for use in construction work, with the corresponding impact on the archaeological remains.



Salting factory
(Photo: Sebastià Torrens)

4. The way to s’Espalmador

Continuing the route around the bay, a delightful stretch along flat, easy terrain brings you to s’Espalmador Beach. Like sa Platgeta, it is one of the beaches authorised for public use.



As you walk next to the shore, you will be able to see the typical coastal vegetation with its low, rounded forms, perfectly adapted to the sea spray and breezes. The species include Balearic Milkvetch (*Astragalus balearicus*) and Sea Lavender (*Limonium sp.*). Bird watchers will also be able to spot the occasional European Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*), swimming in search of food or perched on a rock, spreading out its wings to dry after diving into the sea.

The name “s’Espalmador” refers to the place where vessel bottoms were cleaned and then covered with a layer of grease or pitch (espalmar in Catalan), enabling them to glide faster and more smoothly through the water. Leaving the beach behind you, on the right-hand side you will see an area that is bare of vegetation. This is a reminder of Cabrera’s agricultural and cattle farming tradition: arable land enclosed by drystone walls to prevent the livestock from entering. In hot weather, the Lilford’s Wall Lizards (*Podarcis lilfordi*), endemic to the Balearic Islands, are a common sight as they dart in front of visitors.



5. The climb up to Coll Roig Crag

From this point, the track gradually begins to make its way uphill along a stretch under the Canal Llarg Channel. This gentle slope will take us past an area of maquis vegetation that includes shrubs such as the Mastic (*Pistacia lentiscus*), Mediterranean Heather (*Erica multiflora*), Cade Juniper (*Juniperus oxycedrus*), Montpellier Cistus (*Cistus monspeliensis*), Mock Privet (*Phillyrea angustifolia*) or the endemic *Rhamnus ludovici-salvatoris*. The scientific name of this shrub was chosen in honour of Archduke Ludvig Salvator of Austria, who mentions Cabrera in his 1880 work entitled *Die Balearen*:



Balearic buckthorn
(*Rhamnus ludovici-salvatoris*)
(Photo: Toni Suau)

“In general, the soil is calcareous, loamy and very stony [...]. The little land that is farmed produces cereals, legumes and fruit [...]. On Cabrera there are 400 goats, 95 sheep, 40 pigs and two pairs of male mules, 3 female mules and a mare. The castrated billy goats are taken to Conejera Island; on Na Redonda are the lambs ready for selling, some 20 in all; on L’Imperial, 12 lambs; and old goats and 4 sheep graze on S’Estell [...]. On the first of January 1880 there were 31 inhabitants [...]. There are five areas of arable land: Cala Ganduf, La Miranda, Es Comellar des Mal Nom, Es Comellar de ses Figueres and s’Espalmador [...].”

Archduke Ludvig Salvator of HABSBURG-LORRAINE. Die Balearen (1880).

On the left-hand side you will notice some rocks covered with lichens (organisms formed by the partnership of a fungus and an alga), which gives them their whitish appearance. One of the elevations of Cabrera – Penyal Blanc or “White Crag” - is named after this effect. Orchilla (*Roccella phycopsis*), formerly used to obtain a purple dye, is another species of lichen that can be observed nearby, also on the rocks. Likewise, it is easy to spot on the northeast façade of the building housing the “Es Celler” museum.

6. When Cabrera was under the sea

After completing the gentle but steady uphill climb, you will come to a small pine forest (with *Pinus halepensis*), indicating the end of the slope and your arrival at the top of the crag. Before reaching the end of the itinerary, on the right-hand side you will see an outcrop of ochre-coloured sandy limestone rock. If you look closely, you will see fossilised organisms dating back some 50 million years, when Cabrera was under the sea. They are nummulites, from the Latin nummus (meaning small coin). Now extinct, they were single-cell lenticular organisms that could grow up to 6 cm in diameter. From a central chamber, they grew in a coil shape, forming other small chambers, which is why you will be able to see the arrangement of the septa that separated the various chambers.



Pine forest at Coll Roig
(Photo: Neus Alberti)

7. The balcony overlooking l'Enciola

On reaching the end of the itinerary, you will observe a change in the appearance of the vegetation, which has been combed and transformed by the prevailing winds, its channelling and the effect of the sea spray.

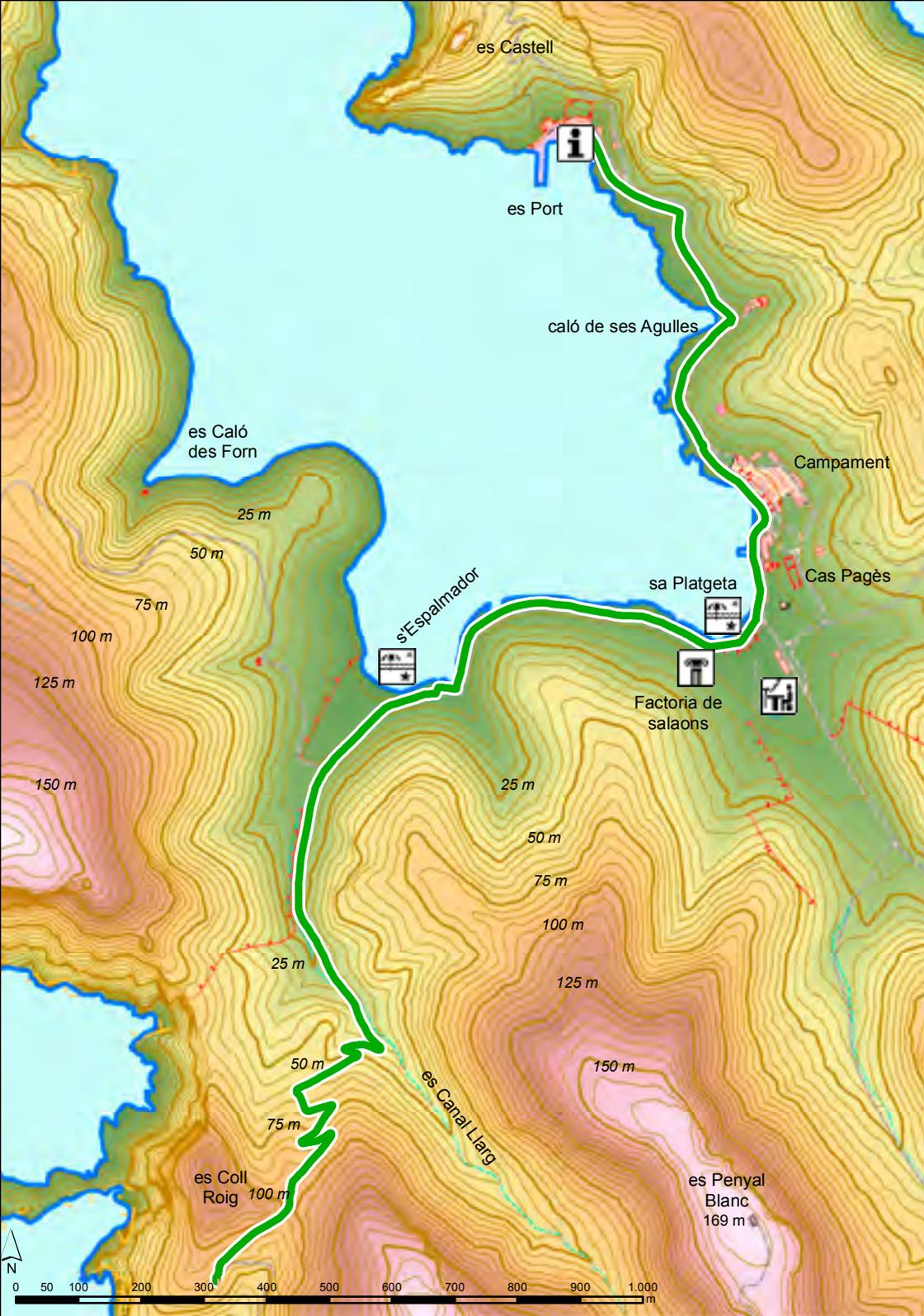
This spot affords magnificent views of the peninsula and l'Enciola Lighthouse, which has guided sailors since 1870, painted with its jauntily striking red and white diamond pattern.

Shortcuts taken off the path have damaged the vegetation in this area. In order to aid its restoration, access to l'Enciola Lighthouse has been restricted, and is only possible when accompanied by the Park guides.

The walk back to the harbour is along the same path, although this time downhill, and you will be able to delight in the marvellous views of Cabrera harbour and the bay, with the late 14th century castle perched above it.



Harbor bay
(Photo: Neus Albertí)



es Castell

es Port

caló de ses Agulles

es Caló
des Forn

25 m

50 m

75 m

100 m

125 m

150 m

s'Espalmador

sa Platgeta

Campament

Cas Pagès

Factoria de
salaons

es Coll
Roig

75 m

50 m

25 m

es Canal Llarg

25 m

50 m

75 m

100 m

125 m

150 m

es Penyal
Blanc
169 m

