

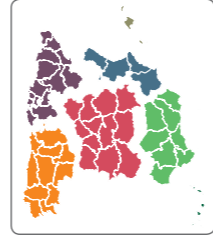
DL NPO

**TELEPHONES OF INTEREST:**  
• Matarraña Tourist Office: 0034 978 89 08 60

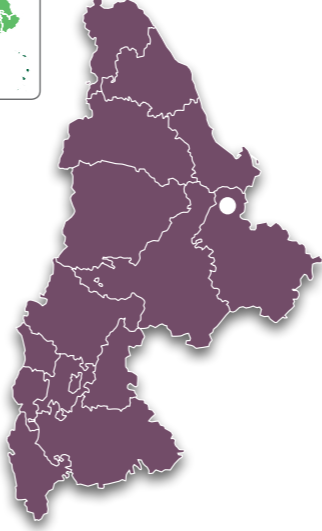
# NATURE TRAIL VAL DE ZAFÁN



Guide to the  
**Nature Trails**  
of Spain



SECTOR  
**NORTHEASTERN PENINSULAR**

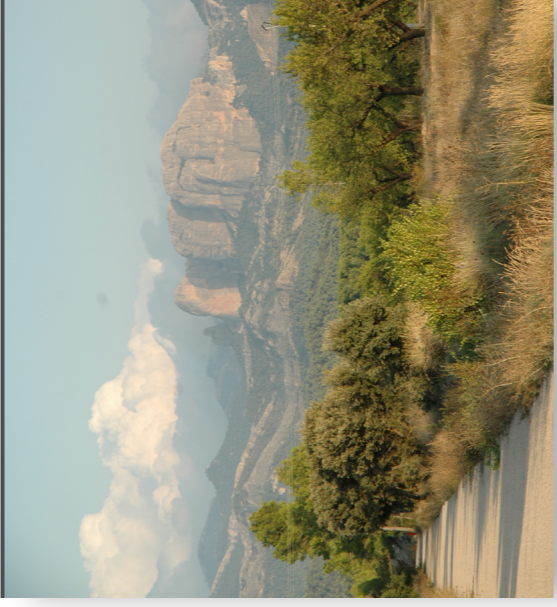


Since 1993 the Ministry for Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and the Environment's Nature Trails Program aims to restore former transport infrastructures such as railway tracks, cattle trails and traditional routes, for public use and enjoyment. These routes take us to the countryside to discover the biodiversity and beauty of our precious natural heritage, and discover the villages, sights, traditions and people that are part of the unique cultural landscape of our country.

We invite you to visit them and offer you the keys to enjoy the trip. In this brochure you will find a brief description of Val de Zafán Nature Trail and the map for the journey, along with recommendations to make the most of this experience. We only ask one thing of you: do not forget to leave everything as you found it. The conservation of these pathways is also your responsibility.

A journey through the landscapes that marked the early years of filmmaker Luis Buñuel; harsh farming land in the valleys that every Easter Week echo to the sound of the *tamborradás*, Spain's most famous drumming processions.

## THROUGH THE LAND OF DRUMS



## SECTOR NORTHEASTERN PENINSULAR NATURE TRAIL VAL DE ZAFÁN

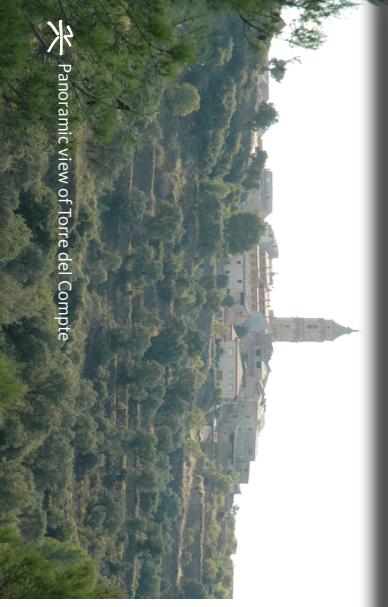
1. The trail begins at the abandoned railway station of Valdeagorfa. The old centre of this village still remains and is worthy of a visit. The station is quite large as in bygone days this was a prosperous and populous village, although today the railway buildings are used for drying almonds. At this point of the trail are the first information panels in a picnic area. It is recommended that travellers stock up with plenty of water at the local fountain as this is the last water source on the trail.
2. Alongside the station is the Equinoccio tunnel, so called because at dawn on every 21 March and 23 September, the sun illuminates its entire 2,200 metre length. Do not attempt to pass through the tunnel as it is dangerous (it lacks lighting and small sections may collapse). Instead, follow the path around the mountain, which is perfectly waymarked with signs, markings and information panels. This section makes its way through terraces and vales covered in olive and almond trees. One sign along this trail indicates the way to cave paintings at Val del Charco del Agua Amarga, some 12 kilometres away along agricultural roads. A kilometre the other side of the tunnel, the trail resumes the course of the old railway.
3. From here to the end of the trail, the route is exclusively for walkers and it passes through several old stations with their respective picnic areas. They are, in order, the stations of Valjunquera, Valdetormo, Torre del Compte (now a hotel), Valderrobres, Cretas and, finally,
4. Beyond this a signpost at a crossing indicates the proximity of two Iberian settlements: Torre Cremada and Tossal Montañés; both built on hills that overlook the valley of the Matarraña River.
5. After crossing the viaduct over the Matarraña River, the route momentarily abandons the old tracks to circle the Torre de Compte Station-Hotel. A little further on the route rises once again to the embankment of the old railway track where Valdeagorfa comes into sight.
6. From the Matarraña the trail rises through pine groves and past Valderrobres station as the nearby limestone massif of Puertos de Beceite gradually comes into view with its spectacular peaks and ridges.
6. Descending gently once again, this time to the valley of the Algars River, past the village of Cretas and the viaduct across the river to the border with Tarragon and close to Arnes-Lledó station, where the trail comes to an end.

## THE LOWER ARAGON RAILWAY

The railway from Puebla de Híjar (Teruel) to Tortosa (Tarragona) was lower Aragon's route to the sea. Designed in 1863, its function was not just civil but also strategically defensive; taking advantage of the natural barrier that was the River Ebro against any potential invasions from France. Thus, the operational section was used during the civil war to transport armaments. Its construction was slow, reaching Tortosa only in the 1940s. After a meagre 31 years of operation, the lines poor performance due to the depopulation of the province of Teruel and competition from the roads, combined with the sinking of a tunnel between Prat de Compte and Lledó, led to its closure in 1973. The full project had never even been completed, which, it had been envisioned, would have stretched all the way to the coast at San Carlos de la Rápita.



Tower keep of Castle of Calatrava



Panoramic view of Torre del Compte



Old station of Alcañiz



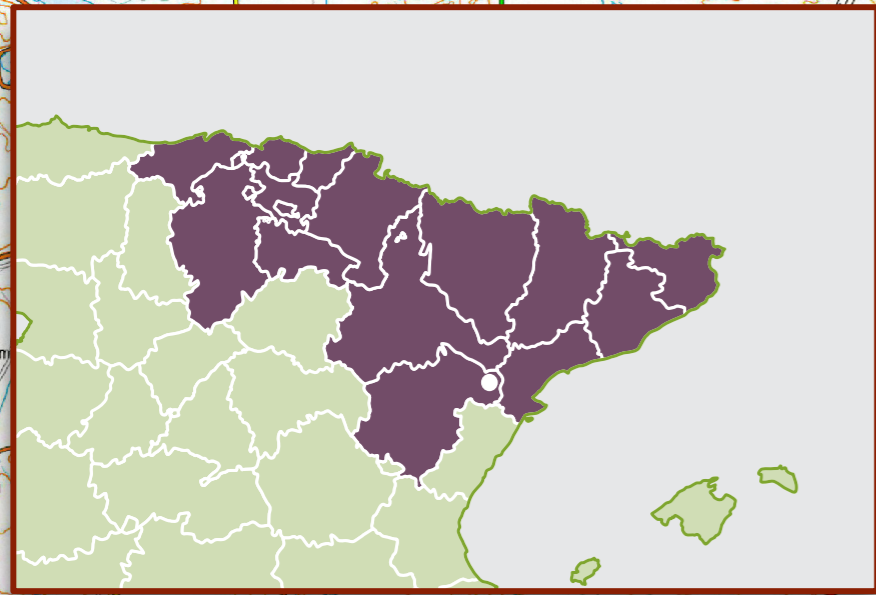
**MIDE**

Harshness of natural environment	1	▲ Upward gradient	335 m
Guidance along the route	2	▼ Downward gradient	370 m
Route difficulty	2	≡ ROUTE LENGHT	35,9 km
Amount of effort needed	4	🕒 TIME*	9 h 25 min

\* Two days

◆ town    ● point of interest

**Alcañiz halt** → **Arnés-Lledó station**



SECTOR  
**NORTHEASTERN PENINSULAR**



**NATURE TRAIL  
VAL DE ZAFÁN**

- Starting point
- End of trail
- Information panel
- Rest area
- Train station (abandoned)
- Detour
- Junction
- Underpass
- Walkway
- Bridge
- Tunnel

