

ITINERÀNNIA, NETWORK OF TRAILS

Itinerànnia is a network of trails, with over 2500 kilometres between the neighbouring regions of Ripollès, Garrotxa and Alt Empordà.

A network of hiking trails is like a road map, but with footpaths, allowing the hiker to get from any one point to another.

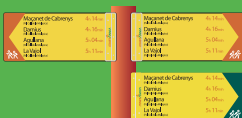
It retrieves the old historic roads between the villages to reach many small places.

The network offers many different hikes depending on the time or difficulty and your interest over nature, on the time or difficulty and your interest over nature, architecture or culture.

Each route that we propose is just a little taste of an extensive network of trails that you can walk to discover the Ripollès, Garrotxa and Alt Empordà counties.

THE SIGNS

All the trails of the network are marked regularly over the paths with horizontal painted yellow signs.



PATH'S MARKS
(3 x 10 cm)

TURN LEFT / RIGHT

WRONG PATH

The marks are placed approximately every 300 metres painted on tree trunks, stones or using and other mediums already deployed in the area.

The vertical signs is located at crossroads. The basic network signalling (banners with red tip) indicate the 4 nearest population in each direction and time needed. The banners of the itineraries of the municipalities, as the one you have in your hands, have a green tip shows the name and direction of the route.

You will find information boards with a map of the county's trails in every village or city integrating the network.



+INFO:
www.itinerannia.net

www.mollo.cat
www.ripollesturisme.com



Download **ITINERÀNNIA APP**



memorial democràtic Camí de l'Exili

ROUTE OF CAMÍ DE L'EXILI



High



4h

ITINERÀNNIA
XARXA DE SENDERS
Ripollès - Garrotxa - Alt Empordà

ITINERÀNNIA
XARXA DE SENDERS
Ripollès - Garrotxa - Alt Empordà



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With the fall of Barcelona, on January 26, 1939, began what we currently call The Retreat. Hundreds of thousands of people fled Francoist troops in the direction of the French border.

From the end of January to the beginning of February of 1939 around 100,000 people, approximately, crossed through the valley of Camprodon.

The Molló municipality has three main escape routes across the border: The Ares pass Road (which was already operational in 1939 but had not quite reached the border point), the old road that ran from Camprodon to the Ares pass through the Casilla del Carrabiners and **the road from Espinavell to the Pregon pass which is what we follow with this route.**

Most roads hidden between mountains were widely used also by entrepreneurs, deserters, wealthy people and people related to the national movement, both from the region and from outside, many of whom, once in France, went to the Irún border, where they entered the Spain controlled by the Francoists.

After the Civil War, these paths continued to be used for different reasons. During World War II, they were used assiduously by Jews fleeing Nazi Germany. They used them to reach Prats de Molló or La Presta and, from there, they embarked on the last kilometres to the Spanish border, where some of the Crossers in the area that guided them were already waiting for them. Thus, they avoided the border surveillance of both the Germans and the Francoist regime.

After the Civil War and World War II, these paths were still used for a long time. In a Francoist Spain immersed in the middle of the post-war period and with a scarcity of materials and food, the turn of smugglers came. The inhabitants of the valley, taking advantage of their knowledge of the territory, crossed to France to make purchases and resell them, later, within the region. Some did so out of necessity, but others were enriched by this practice known as *straperlo*.

After the end of World War II, *maquis* (armed groups that opposed the establishment of the Francoist regime) also used these border mountain passes.

Miguel Quintana Peñalver, along with other colleagues, established the first base of operations of the anti-Francoist guerrillas in Mas La Sorrenque-

ra, between Prats de Molló and La Presta. From this house they could cross the border by several points, mainly by Prats passes or the Pregon pass. Later, both this house and Grevodella (La Presta) were used by Francesc Sabater Llopart, Quico Sabaté.

We leave Molló from the Itinerànnia **R85** sign in **plaça Major** and head towards Espinavell, to Espinavell the road, in addition to being marked with the yellow Itinerànnia markings, also has the **GR151** markings.

After a few meters we find the junction **R84 Molló dipòsit vell** and continue in the direction of Espinavell. Along the way we find the neighborhoods of **la Bola**, crossroads **M1** and **els Grells** crossroad **M2**, which will lead us to **Espinavell** where we will find the crossroads **R88**.

The houses of this nucleus were the last ones that Republicans saw before crossing the border, in the winter of 1939. Their inhabitants watched, perplexed, as this large number of people took the path to the border, and tried to help them, within their possibilities, giving them food and a roof, if appropriate.

Not all the exiles, however, arrived on foot. Some had been able to take vehicles and drive them up to Espinavell. In front of the village school (current Els Estudis refuge) vehicles could go no further and were dumped down the bank, so they were unusable for the enemy.

We follow the yellow signs direction **Coll Pregon**, that also coincide with the white and red of the **GR11.6** and the **GRT79** (cross-border).

The route from Espinavell La Farga (on the River Tec, reaching the Presta) was full of abandoned military and civilian objects. Faced with the impossibility of carrying them, discouragement, the steepness of the route, the snow, the cold or tiredness, many people ended up abandoning their belongings, which they had grabbed when leaving their homes, on the path.

After the Civil War ended, the inhabitants of Espinavell climbed to the Pregon pass to see if they could find anything value among all the abandoned objects, from Camprodon to Prats de Molló, also war objects could be found at any point along the routes that led to Northern Catalonia.

After Camprodon's defensive combat, weapons no longer had virtually any meaning, and therefore divider walls, bridges, rivers, and shores became the main places to abandon this material. However, if

they got near the border line and had not yet abandoned their weapons, the fighters stacked ammunition boxes, explosives, weapons and bolts to blow them up and thus prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy.





Where we are right now was the last place where the material carried by the soldiers was blown up before crossing the Pregon pass. The blast of the accumulated boxes left the fields full of remains and, for years, the farmers of Espinavell found large quantities of ammunition, grenades, weapons bags and military objects. Even now it is not strange to find them, walking along the path.

We arrive at the **R90** junction, the border point of **Coll Pregon**, and we will continue towards **la Presta**, where we will finish the route.

During the last days of the Civil War in Catalonia, a large number of wounded people from the front arrived in the Camprodon valley. From the improvised hospitals of Camprodon, once stabilized, the wounded were loaded in trucks in the direction of the border. There were those who took the road from the Ares pass and others that reached Espinavell. The latter had to be transported from Espinavell to the Presta on stretchers. The stretchers, normally, were carried by two soldiers, but there were also some loaded onto the mules. The hardness of the path, the cold, the frozen snow in the dark side of the ridge... made the transfer very difficult, meaning not all of them reached the Presta. Along the path that descends to the houses of La Farga (on the banks of the Tec River), many stretchers were abandoned that had carried casualty that had not managed to survive the transfer. The dead were buried and the stretchers, abandoned.



Espinavell with the Costabona mountain in the background

-  ITINERÀNNIA NETWORK
-  ROUTE
-  ROAD TRAIL
-  RIVER
-  TOURIST SERVICES
(See website)
-  VERTICAL SIGNPOSTS
OF THE NETWORK
-  NATURAL POOL

ROUTE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Time: 4h

Distance: 9,70 km

Max. height: 1.540 m

Min. height: 1.069 m

Accumulative slope ascent
and descent : 649 m

Accumulated difference in
level of descent: 729 m

Difficulty: High



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