

# CARROS DE FUEGO



## The High Level Route of the Pyrenees



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## 1 Introduction

The concept of high routes (or haute routes) was born in the Alps in the late nineteenth century by the Alpine Club (UK) who proposed a summer itinerary between Chamonix (France) and Zermatt (Switzerland) which they called "**The High Level Route**".

It was not until 1911, when the trip was completed on skis for the first time, that both the concept and the High Route (Haute Route) name became popular. Since then, all mountain routes lasting several days from hut to hut are known as high routes.

If there is an area in the Pyrenees that is associated with high routes, then it is the **Parc National d' Aigüestortes and Sant Maurici**, and if there is a route that can be categorized as high route, it is the "**Carros de foc**".

The National Park incorporates all the elements that characterise the high Pyrenees, featuring a dazzling and diverse landscape of snow, rivers, waterfalls and lakes. With a breath-taking geography interested with a chain of mountain huts, this is the ideal setting for a high route trail.

The story of "Carros de foc" began a little over twenty years ago with courtesy visits between mountain huts guards in the park, but since then has become a Pyrenees classic.

## 2 The destination

**The National Park of Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici** is one of the fourteen national parks of Spain. Located in the Catalan Pyrenees is, together with the **National Park of Ordesa and Monteperdido** (in the Aragonese Pyrenees) and the **Parc National des Pyrénées** (in the French departments of Pyrénées-Atlantiques and Hautes-Pyrénées), an excellent representation of the main ecosystems Of the Pyrenees.

Its main hallmark is water, which runs through rivers, canyons and waterfalls and stagnates in lakes and peat lands. All this is located between mountains of more than three thousand meters altitude and leafy forests of black pine, spruce, scot pine, birch and beech.

In the park there is an extensive network of sheltered mountain huts that allow mountain lovers to discover all corners with all comfort and at any time of the year. In winter, when the park is covered in white and its more than 200 lakes freeze, it becomes a perfect and beautiful stage for crossings with mountain skis or snowshoes.

Following the trail left in the Middle Ages by **Romanesque** art in the **Boí Valley** is another way of approaching this place. The church of **Sant Climent de Taüll** with its slender square-shaped bell tower is the most well-known image of the eight churches built in the valley under the influence of the Lombard Romanesque and they are declared a **World Heritage Site** by **UNESCO**.



## 3 Basic information

Destination: Aigüestortes and Sant Maurici National Park. Pyrenees. Spain

Activity: Trekking.

Difficulty: \*\*/\*\*.\*.

Length: 6 days.

Season: From June to October.

Minimum-maximum group: 3-10 people.



### 3.1 Required physical condition and type of terrain

Physical level	Total elevation	Kms	Physical Condition
*	Up to 600 m	Up to 16 km	Normal: occasional sport practice
**	Up to 1200 m	Up to 23 km	Good: regular sport practice
***	Up to 1400 m	Over. 23 km	Very good: strict sport practice

Physical level category does not have to correspond exactly with given ascent and kilometers at the same time.

#### Type of terrain

- \* Good conditioned forest tracks and trails
- \*\* Good conditioned trails. Presence of stones and roots on the way requiring attentive hike.
- \*\*\* Bumpy, stone loose tracks, including off trails

## 4 Programme

### 4.1 Programme outline

\*Optional. We can manage the accommodation in the valley for the night prior to the start of the trek.

**Day 1. Estany de Cavallers (1.800 m)-Refugio Ventosa y Calvell (2.200 m)-Refugio Colomers (2.135 m).**

Distance 12 km ascent +750 m -550 m Time 6-8 hours

**Day 2. Refugio Colomers (2.135 m)-Refugio Saboredo-Refugio d'Amitges (2.378 m).**

Distance 12,3 km Ascent +820 m -400 m Time 6-7 hours

**Day 3. Refugio d'Amitges (2.378 m)- Refugio J.M.Blanc (2.326 m).**

Distance 14,5 km Ascent +950 m -920 m Time 6-7 hours

Optional climb to Pico Monedero (+-150 m)

**Day 4. Refugio J.M.Blanc (2.326 m).Refugio Colomina (2420 m.)**

Distance 7km Ascent +350 m -300 m Time 3.5 hours

**Day 5. Refugio Colomina (2420 m.)-Refugio Estany Llong (1.985 m).**

Distance 11 km Ascent +600 m -900 m Time 4 hours

**Day 6. Refugio Estany Llong (1.985 m)- Estany de Cavallers (1.800 m)-**

Option A .Distance 14,5 km Ascentl +900 m -1.200 m Time 7-8 hours

Option B. Distance 4,5 km Ascent +30 m – 250 m Time 2 hours.

\* The activity will finish before 5pm to allow time for the return home.

## **4.2 Detailed programme**

\*Optional. WE can manage the accommodation in the valley for the night prior to the start of the trek.

### **Day 1. Estany de Cavallers (1.800 m)-Refugio Ventosa y Calvell (2.200 m)-Refugio Colomers (2.135 m).**

We begin the journey by accessing the National Park from Cavallers Valley. Skirting the Estany de Cavallers to gain height we'll reach the hut. We will cross a landscape dotted with mountain lakes (lakes of glacial origin) and reach the Port de Caldes. We will descent to the glacier cirque of Colomers where we will reach the mountain hut where we will spend the first night.

Distance 12 km ascent +750 m -550 m Time 6-8 hours

### **Day 2. Refugio Colomers (2.135 m)-Refugio Saboredo-Refugio d'Amitges (2.378 m).**

We will leave the hut to the Southeast to reach Port de Ratera and if we have the strength we can crown the Ratera Tuc (2862 m) and then descend to the Amitges mountain hut located in a beautiful spot.

We have the option of going through the Saboredo Hut, making a more complete itinerary and visiting another beautiful "U shaped" valley created by the typical glacial erosion of these mountains.

Distance 12,3 km Ascent +820 m -400 m Time 6-7 hours

### **Day 3. Refugio d'Amitges (2.378 m)- Refugio J.M.Blanc (2.326 m).**

Descent to the famous Estany de Sant Maurici with impressive visits of Els Encantats. Ascent to the Monestero Col (2,877 m). We only have to go down to Estany Negre and reach the mountain hut.

Distance 14,5 km Ascent +950 m -920 m Time 6-7 hours

Optional climb to Pico Monedero (+-150 m)

### **Day 4. Refugio J.M.Blanc (2.326 m).Refugio Colomina (2420 m.)**

From the Col of Saburó we will walk towards the Colomina hut crossing a section of "carrilet" an old construction that takes advantage of the relatively flat orography of this stretch with many lakes.

Distance 7km Ascent +350 m -300 m Time 3.5 hours

### **Day 5. Refugio Colomina (2420 m.)-Refugio Estany Llong (1.985 m).**

We will face the hill of Dellui to finish in the Estany Llong hut.

Distance 11 km Ascent +600 m -900 m Time 4 hours

### **Day 6. Refugio Estany Llong (1.985 m)- Estany de Cavallers (1.800 m)-**

Option A. Last day of trekking. Ascent to the last hill of the trip, the Contraix Col (2.743 m). Descent through the Colieto Valley to the Ventosa and Calvell hut, to continue in clear ascent to the starting point of the first day. End of our journey.

Distance 14,5 km Ascent +900 m -1.200 m Time 7-8 hours

Option B. If the weather is not good or a group participant is tired or does Not see clearly complete this last day you can comfortably descend a well- marked path to reach a place where you can get off by bus ending the trekking.

Distance 4,5 km Ascent +30 m – 250 m Time 2 hours.

\* The activity will finish before 5pm to allow time for the return home.

## 5 More information

Price: 490€ per person.

### 5.1 Included

- Professional Mountain guide services for the whole trip.
- 5 nights of half-board accommodation in the mountain huts (breakfast and dinner)
- Accident insurance cover.
- Trip management.

### 5.2 Not included

- Flights (Muntania offers this service for an additional cost of 20€)
- Transport to the starting point.
- Lunches.
- Any drinks not included in the menus (dinner and breakfast).
- Any changes that may occur during the trip due to any incidents (meteorology, etc.) and that involve a higher expenditure than the budget of the client and the guide.
- Any additional nights before/after the trek.

### 5.3 Packing list

It is important to carry a light backpack (6-8 Kg), so it is recommended to carry just the required clothes and equipment. If you do not have all the equipment you can rent it, please consult us.

- Backpack (between 30-40 liters).
- Trekking boots or sneakers.
- Telescopic poles.
- Technical clothes:
  - Socks.
  - Long and light trekking pants.
  - Thermal t-shirt (base layer). A spare one.
  - Fleece jacket or similar (second layer).
  - Gore-Tex or similar jacket and pants (third layer).
  - Primaloft jacket or similar.
  - Light and thick gloves.
  - Woollen cap and sun cap.

- Sunglasses.
- Head lamp (extra batteries)
- Sheet-sleeping bad
- Canteen or camelback (minimum 1 litre).
- First aid kit and essential toiletries
- Sunscreen and SPF lip balm
- Camera

## 5.4 Observations

### **Date Flexibility**

Aside from the regular travel trip dates, we are flexible to reconsider new dates if those are more convenient to the client's leisure plans. Do not hesitate to contact us should you have any different dates in mind.

### **Time and meeting point**

One week prior to the trip departure date, an email will be sent to each participant to give away the meeting point and time along with the guide contact information. At this point any information considered essential to the trip organization will be shared.

### **Plane tickets (if applicable)**

If case you wish us to handle you plane ticket, please contact us with airport arrival and departure details and number of needed luggage. Before issuing any ticket, Price and details Will be send to the client for its approval.

Muntania fee for plane ticket management is 20€ per person.

If, otherwise, you handle your plane tickets, please coordinate with us before hand to check on arrival and departure information.

Please take into consideration getting with you on your carry-on luggage some set of clothing in case of checked luggage lose.

### **Trekking Backpack**

Very important to carry out just indispensable material and clothing to walk at ease. You would not need to take food supplies and clothing can be hand-wash daily. We recommend backpack weight between 6 to 10 kg.

## 5.5 Insurance policy

All activities in Spain have an accident insurance included in the price. Yet, if you practise mountain sports regularly and also travel frequently, **we suggest you get a travel insurance**, that as well as covering any accident and rescue it also protect you against many other situations.

If you do not have a travel insurance you can acquire one with our travel agency. Exploring Spain processes all insurances with **Intermundial**. The cost of these insurances is lower if you buy it through Exploring Spain than if you do it directly with Intermundial.

## EU RESIDENTS

### Ski/Aventure Plus

It is a **travel insurance** and also **covers the practise of many sports and activities**. You can get one for the duration of the trip or for the whole year, being able to choose the starting date. If you get the insurance for a year, it will not only be valid for the trip with Exploring Spain but also it will be valid for any other trips or activities you may do during that year.

### Ski/Aventure Plus with Cancelation

It has the same coverage that the previous insurance but also you will be cover in case of cancelation of the trip and tickets in case of force majeure (sickness, injury...) for yourself and/or a relative.

The travel insurance with cancelation that we offer, allows a refund of the costs already paid for up to 1.000 €. If the cost of the trip and flights is higher, you can extend the amount covered (under request).

### Multi-assistance Plus with or without Cancelation

Both Multi-assistance Plus with or without Cancelation are **travel insurances with better coverage** than the Ski/Adventure Plus with or without cancelation but they **do not cover the practise of sports**.

This insurance can be of your interest if you already have an accident and rescue insurance that covers the activity that you will be doing in the trip, but you do not have a travel insurance. It can also be useful if you are interested in a trip without practising any sports.

## NON EU RESIDENTS

### Incoming Cancelation Plus

This insurance covers the costs of the trip and the tickets if you have to cancel the trip before the departure because of different reasons like for example a sickness (see conditions of the insurance).

This insurance can be useful if you already have a travel insurance but it does not cover the cancelation of the trip or if you already have an insurance covering sports and activities.

### Incoming Ski/Aventure Plus with Cancelation

It is a **travel insurance** and also **covers the practise of many sports and activities**. You will also be cover in case of cancelation of the trip and tickets in case of force majeure (sickness, injury...) for yourself and/or a relative. You can get one for the duration of the trip or for the whole year, being able to choose the starting date. If you get the insurance for a year, it will not only be valid for the trip with Exploring Spain but also it will be valid for any other trips or activities you may do during that year.

The travel insurance with cancelation that we offer, allows a refund of the costs already paid for up to 2.000 €. If the cost of the trip and flights is higher, you can extend the amount covered (under request).



\*Consult prices and conditions for Intermundial insurances with Exploring Spain following this link:  
<https://www.exploring-spain.com/insurances>

#### Included accident and rescue insurance

\*\* Included accident and rescue insurance. Nº POLIZA 4020006195 Muntania Outdoors. Assistance phone number 24h 902 09 15 57 (it is the contact number for the insurance company Prebal, Previsión Balear M.P.S).

\*\*\* It is the customer's responsibility to inform the insurance company about the accident as soon as possible. Prior the departure for the trip, we will send you an email with the insurance policy number and the assistance number so you can have it during the trip.

\*\*\*\* Depending on where the accident happens, the customer will have to pay in advance if the insurance company indicates it, being the payment refunded by the insurance company within the policy's limits. In any case Exploring Spain – Muntania Outdoors S.L. is responsible for any advance payment required for the rescue or assistance.

#### 5.6 Links of interest

- [www.amitges.com](http://www.amitges.com)
- <https://www.refugicolomers.com>
- <http://www.jmblanc.com/es/>
- <http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguestortes>

#### 5.7 Highlights

- Perhaps the most classic and famous trekking in the Pyrenees.
- Alpine landscape with spectacular views.
- Wide network of mountain huts.

## **6 Contact**

**Exploring Spain - Muntania Outdoors, S.L. CICMA: 2608**

+34 629 379 894 [info@exploring-spain.com](mailto:info@exploring-spain.com) [www.exploring-spain.com](http://www.exploring-spain.com)

c/ Las Cruces Nº 1, portal 2, 2º C, 28491 Navacerrada (España).