



6th edition

Discover Calonge and Sant Antoni...

The coastal path: "A walk by the seaside"




Ajuntament de Calonge

Introduction

Where the pine trees observe the sea, where it seems that the tree tops wish to ask the waves to come closer, we find a unique ecosystem of great beauty: the very essence of the Costa Brava, specifically on the stretch between Sant Antoni de Calonge and Platja d'Aro, along the seaside walk. The proposed itinerary covers the entire stretch. A number of tiny and medium-size creeks break from time to time into the seaside walk and change the green and brown colours into dim yellow and the blue from the crystal clear sea. These refreshing waters are no doubt a great ally for the hikers in summer... Let's not forget that enjoying nature is not at all incompatible with a pleasant holiday, very much the contrary.

This itinerary, a balcony made of granodioritic rock over the Costa Brava, provides us with an excellent opportunity



for a first contact, simple and worthwhile, with the diversity of animals and plants, both on the coast and in the woods, surely being its main attraction.

These steps were man-made over five centuries ago, when danger came from sea brought by the dreaded pirates and corsairs. Guardians walked among the cliffs to watch and warn about the arrival of newcomers. It was in those times when the watch and defence towers were built.

Our boots will start their stroll at the southern end of the Sant Antoni beach, just under Torre Valentina, an itinerary that is also recommended for kayaking. After checking our provision of water, we are on our way. This itinerary starts with splendid views over the sea, the coast and several creeks.



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Proposed route

GR (Footpath of great route)

PR (Footpath of small route)

Stream

Sens of the march



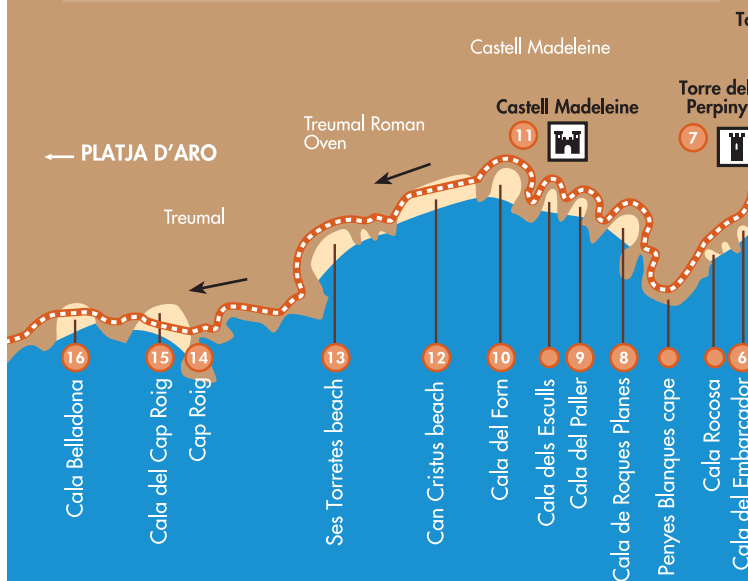
Castle



Tower of vigilance



Departure - arrival

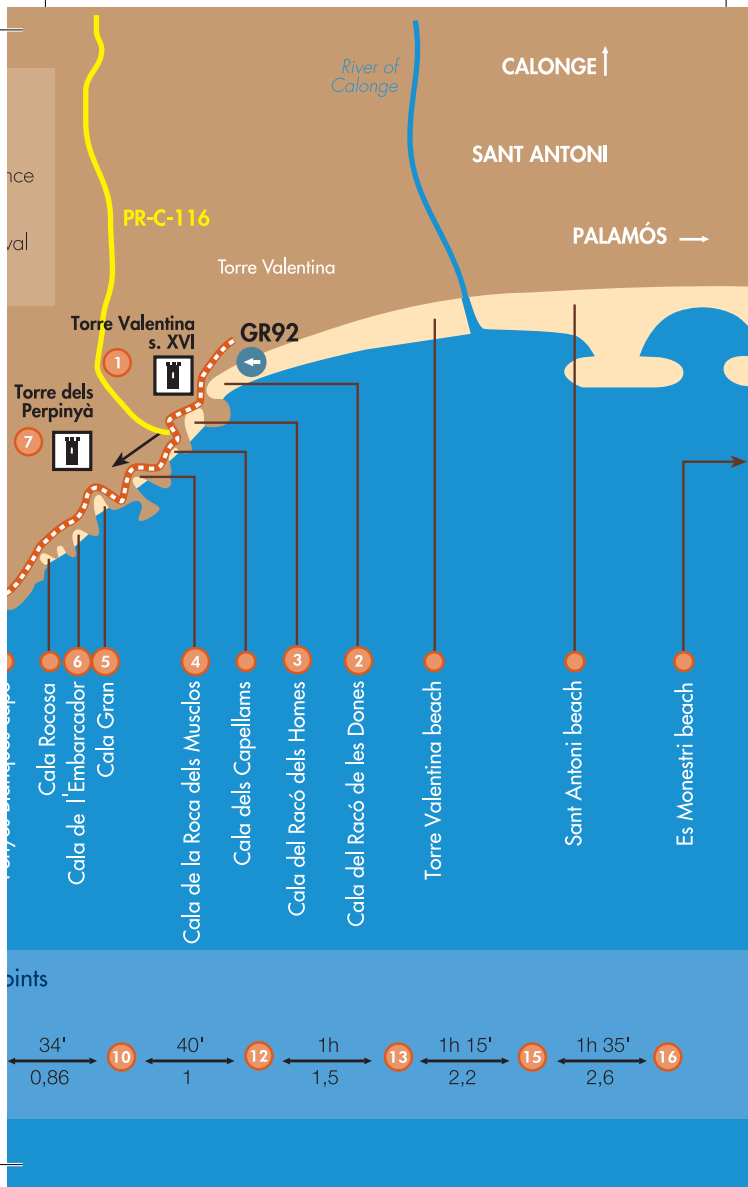


Coastal path GR92

Time and accumulated distances of the route of the main points

min.





Technical data sheet

- Approximate time:** 3h round trip.
- Effective walking time:** 2h 30 min. approx.
- Length of the route:** approx. 5.2 km round trip.
- Effort and difficulty:** low.
- Unevenness:** small slopes on the way to the creeks.
- Departure and arrival:** Torre Valentina.
- Signalling:** GR-92 path, white and red signals.
- Remarks:** The cliffs on the sea front are subject to strong erosion. Therefore, we will have to be careful with some areas prone to small landslides, avoiding the edges and stepping always on safe land when accessing the creeks. The days with east storms can be adequate to go to the creeks, but care should be taken when approaching more difficult places, close to the sea.

Description of the itinerary

The itinerary starts at Torre Valentina and can be accessed following the avenue with the same name, or also from the Sant Antoni seaside promenade. The stretch along the coastal path we propose cannot be missed: it is straight and there is no need to take any turn or deviation from the path which is easy to follow if the weather is sunny but not too hot. Immediately to the right and before the steps is Torre Valentina ①. We must pay attention not to miss it as it is surrounded by new buildings. The Racó de les Dones ② beach is the crescent-shaped space at the end of the Sant Antoni bay. If we look up, on the rocks, we will see the old bunkers from the Spanish civil war, well hidden among the vegetation.

Once up the steps, we can go down to the little beach known as Racó dels Homes ③, just underneath. This is a high point and provides a full view of the bay. The gravel path along the cliffs takes us through Cala dels Capellans, and 150 m further on, Cala de la Roca dels Musclos ④.

Five minutes later, we reach Cala Gran ⑤, barely 35m long but remarkably beautiful. Further on are Cala de l'Embarcador ⑥ and Cala Rocosa.

After Cala de l'Embarcador comes torre dels Perpinyà 7; many visitors think this is Torre Valentina, but this tower is a recent construction. Then, we go on towards Roques Planes cape, along a path on the right that takes us to a small street with a few steps belonging to the Castell Madeleine residential estate.

We pass under a level crossing, sometimes humid, to reach the beautiful Cala de Roques Planes 8. We go down the four steps until we reach the beach which sometimes disappears in winter.

The path reappears on the other side taking us to Cala de la Roca del Paller 9, Cala dels Esculls and Cala del Forn 10, spaces too restricted for bathing, but full of charm.

The late Madeleine Carroll used to have a property around here 11.

Then we get to the Can Cristus beach 12 and follow it until we reach the Ses Torretes beach 13, next to it. Those sandy beaches are a lot larger than the creeks we came across so far, and can be accessed from the main camping sites in the area.

We go on up some white rocks until we perceive Cap Roig 📍, starting at one end of the beach with the same name and forming two small creeks 📍.

Next to Cap Roig, the last beach of the Calonge municipality, is Cala de la Belladona 📍, where our route ends.

If we want to, we could continue for another half an hour along the coastal path until we reach Platja d'Aro. This walk is also highly recommended.

Highlights

Torre Valentina

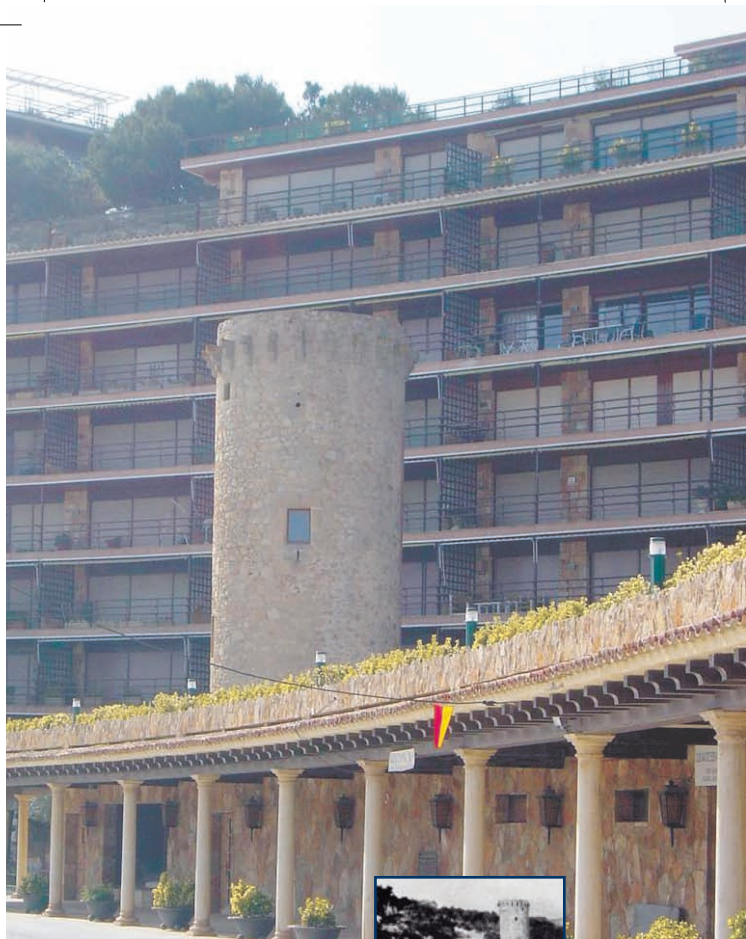
Here is Torre Valentina, discretely standing up in the midst of modern buildings.

This watchtower dates back to the 16th century and had a clearly defensive function. It was built at a time when aggressions and attacks from pirates were very common on the Mediterranean. The system used in those days was to send a warning by means of smoke signals from the coastal towers towards those living inland. Fires were lit on the highest part to warn the castle and its surrounding areas of the imminent danger. All over the village there were strategically situated towers, such as the Baró, Mal Ús, Aixades, etc., which announced the events following a chain.

According to the author Pere Caner in his book "La Vall de Calonge", this tower was named after Reverend Father Valentí, from Palamós, who was its owner. Until the mid 20th century the tower was attached to a country house.

The last owner of this building was the Viscountess of Cabanyes, a lady who had many other properties. In any case, due to the significance of this tower the whole area deserved to be called its name.





Torre Valentina years 20

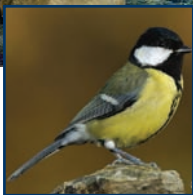
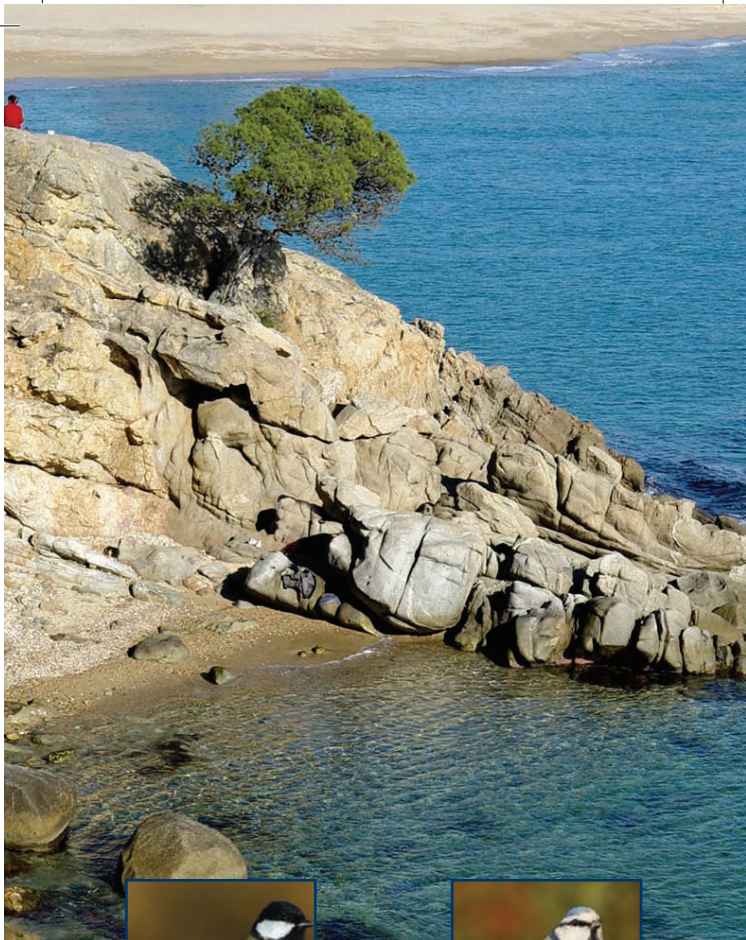
Racó de les Dones and Racó dels Homes beaches

The part of beach in front of the tower is known as Racó de les Dones. It is separated from the Racó dels Homes by the Torre Valentina point. Their names mean Women's Corner and Men's Corner because for a very long time the mayor had forbidden that people of both sexes bathe together. This geographical separation made it easier to bathe apart. Further along the path is the creek known as Cala dels Capellans (Priest's creek); it was used by the clergy from the Sant Martí parish as a bathing place.

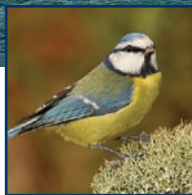
On this little hill, the old bunker from the Spanish civil war overlooking the bay on this side goes almost unnoticed. This bunker is the witness of a not too distant war that has left many scars in our country.

As we reach the small viewing-point on the top of the steps, the coastal landscape gets wilder; the cliffs that continue with us along the route are more or less covered with white pine. If we pay attention, we will be able to hear the songs of the tits and the greenfinches, or the noise of the serins on the branches.





Great tit



Blue tit

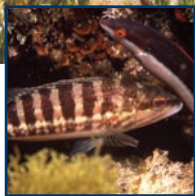
Cala de la Roca dels Musclos and Cala Gran

The Cala de la Roca dels Musclos gets its name from the large amount of mussels stuck to the rock just in front of this creek, making it look black; this was some time ago, not so much now. When the tide drops, mussels can be seen and, if we observe carefully, we can also see several species of incrusting organisms such as limpets and a variety of seaweed.

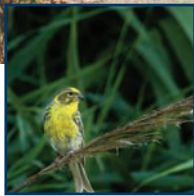
These ins and outs of the coast have been used for many years to set fishing lines or cast nets or other fishing tackle from the sea or from land. Local fishermen used the fish caught in the Mediterranean with these fishing systems to complement their diet which consisted mainly of freshly picked vegetables. Some local fish such as the sargus, saddled bream, yellow gurnard or comber, among others, were a very valued resource in periods of scantiness.

On the way to Cala Gran we find ourselves increasingly surrounded by pine trees, but we can also find holm oaks, a very rare tree on the Costa Brava, with abundant undergrowth. The presence of these forest areas provide excellent homes for the wild birds, and the rocks for reptile species, such as different types of lizards.





Comber



Garrafó

Cala de l'Embarcador and Torre dels Perpinyà

The coastal path takes us to the Cala de l'Embarcador; but what really charms us is the slender tower on top of the property. It is known as Torre dels Perpinyà, and sometimes mistakenly called Torre Valentina. This tower is not of medieval origin, but was built to look like one of the old watchtowers.

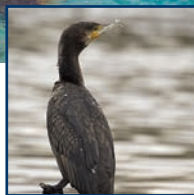
A pier was built in this creek which was baptised as Cala dels Corbs because it is said that years ago sea crows used to nest here. The pier is a private property but can be accessed by means of the staircase.

The Cala dels Corbs and the rest of creeks we find on our way form continuous ins and outs which have been given different names according to their shapes or the anecdotes associated to them throughout time. Some of these names are, for instance, Cala Rocosa or Cala d'en Rondos also known as Cala de la Roca Vermella.





Perpinyà Tower



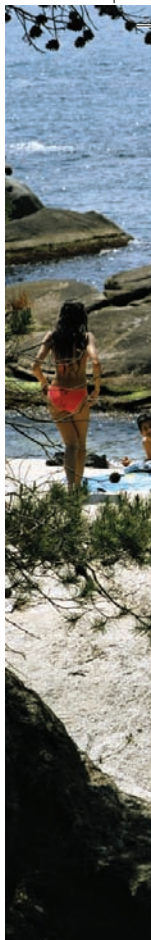
Black crowe

Roques Planes cape and creek

Once in Roques Planes our sight is caught by the beautiful landscape formed by the rocks surrounding the beach. These rocks have acquired their peculiar shape due to the passage of time and the waves breaking against them. They are all smooth and flat. This type of rock formation is very unusual on our coast. Among all the rocks there is a very peculiar one known as Foradada.

If we get closer to the cape, we will be able to see very interesting marine birds, such as the marine black crows or the puffins that fly away like a bolt of lightning, brushing the waves, or the abundant silvery gulls fighting for a space on the rocks or for a fish from the sea. In the small holes filled with seawater we see small crabs, as well as sea tomatoes stuck on the partially sunken walls and seaweed being dragged by a sea urchin.

On our way to Cala de la Roca del Paller we find the Mal Pas point, which was a very difficult place to reach before the access was clearly defined.





Roca Foradada



"Whale back"

Cala de la Roca del Paller and Cala del Forn

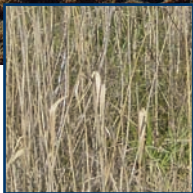
The Cala del Paller gets its name from the shape of the rocks by the water, that remind us of a haystack. In the old country houses the hay used for feeding the animals and for their bedding was stacked around a pole.

Before getting to Cala del Forn we pass by the Cala dels Esculls. The walk takes around five or ten minutes. This creek can be rather dangerous for boats because of the large number of rocks just below the surface of the water.

It is said that at Cala del Forn there might have been an old Roman oven but there are no remains to prove it. This would be the reason for its current name.

The creek to the right of the path has an unusual reed formation. It reproduces the configuration of the old marshes that used to build up at the mouth of the Calonge torrent, currently dried up to be converted into buildable land. This type of habitat is extremely interesting because it reminds us how the beaches and the coastal ecosystems were formed. Observing a small reed formation in this creek, formed by the rain water dropping down the cliffs, is a unique occasion to see four different atmospheres at once: the sea, the coastal cliffs, the reeds, and the woods.





Reedbed

Castell Madeleine

At the beginning of the 20th century, the actress Madeleine Carroll set up residence on the top of the Treumal cliffs, in those days an inhospitable place as was the rest of the Costa Brava which was rather unknown. She was one of the many foreign well-off and famous persons who bought large properties by the seaside and who were the ones who promoted the Empordà coast internationally.

In fact, the coastal path crossed her property but she had it moved outside the limits of the property to avoid people from passing through her estate. The Lady of Treumal, as she was known, was born in West Bromwich (Birmingham, Great Britain) in 1906. Madeleine Carroll starred in many well-known films, such as *The 39 Steps*, *Lloyd's of London*, *Virginia...*, among others. She died in 1987 in San Pedro de Alcántara (Málaga) where she was buried. However, ten years later the Calonge Town Council obtained authorisation from her heirs to exhume her mortal remains and move them to Calonge.

Lord Philip Astley, husband of Madeleine Carroll, had a mansion built for her just by the seaside, in a part of the Treumal old residential estate. Later on this estate was named after her.





Madeleine Carroll

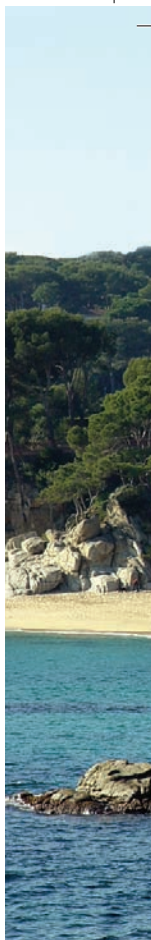
Can Cristus and Ses Torretes beaches

The path goes on and takes us through a tunnel which gives on to the beautiful, large and well kept Can Cristus beach with a length of 180 metres.

This creek is, in itself, an example of coastal ecology, no doubt more fun than any academic class. At the centre of the creek the Massoni torrent flows into the sea, showing how necessary it is the union between the sea and a river for large beaches to be formed.

At the end of the torrent, which only flows into the sea after heavy rains, are small marshes of great ecological value. A small path along the northern bank serves as an observation point. At certain moments, interesting river birds such as the sedge-warbler, the great reed warbler, the wild nightingale or the warbler can be seen. At migration time and in winter, it is not unusual to see different types of broad-billed sandpipers stopping to feed in the wet sand of this deserted creek.

Strolling along the sand –in summer it is grateful to feel the waves on our feet- we get to the Ses Torretes beach, also of fluvial origin.





Beach with environmental certification

Cap Roig and its creek

We continue along Penyes Blanques cape and go on up to Cap Roig, looking bright from the path. It is a rocky formation mainly composed of feldspar crystals give it this reddish colour.

Some call it the Comte (Count) beach because, together with the following one, Cala de la Belladona, it is located in a sector within the Treumal area known as Comtat de Sant Jordi. Here, a noble from Madrid built a chapel dedicated to the patron of Catalonia.

On this beach we can often find remains of what seems to be seaweed; it actually is a superior plant that has been able to adapt itself to its marine surroundings. It is an oceanic posidonia whose thin and long stems are a symptom of clean waters and a mature and diversified ecosystem. The posidonia also helps to stabilize the sandy sea bed, avoiding its erosion by the waves.





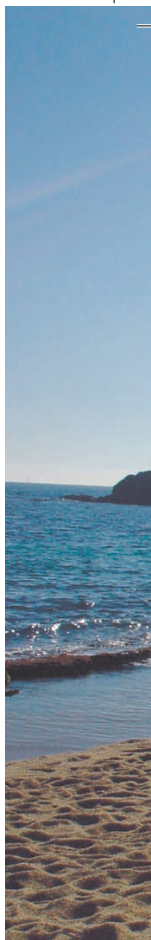
Posidonia

Cala Belladona

It is the last of the creeks in our municipal area. It can be accessed along the coastal path, past the Sant Jordi creek, and also using the stairs from the road and passing by the side of a hotel. In fact, one part of the creek is crossed by the boundary dividing the municipality of Calonge from Platja d'Aro; but, of course, nature does not know about municipal divisions!

The small island to the south of the creek suggests the face of a woman, and this is what gives it this name: beautiful woman.

No doubt, the path that took us to this place has helped us to discover one of the wildest and photogenic areas in our municipality. On our way back to Sant Antoni or going further on towards Platja d'Aro, we may take pictures and take home with us a small part of this coast whose beauty surely cannot leave us indifferent.







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