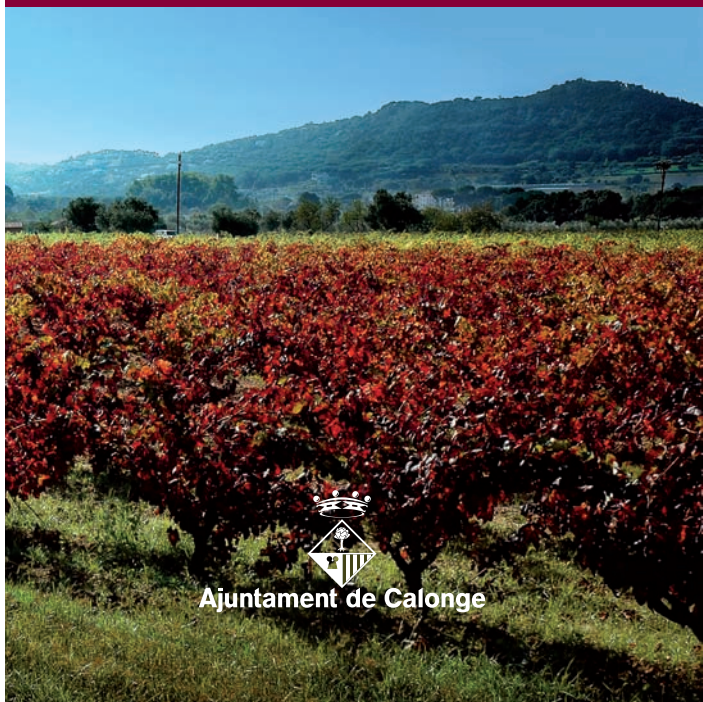




5th edition

Discover Calonge and Sant Antoni...

The Tinar basin: "A walk in the vineyards"



Ajuntament de Calonge



Introduction

Whether on bicycle or on foot, this route has a particular charm: treading a land transformed and maintained by man, with small-scale agriculture, a land that survived a phylloxera plague that attacked the vines at the end of the 19th century, and where one can find small woods, irrigation canals and streams.

In its core is the Tinar stream and its drainage basin which together form a landscape of unusual characteristics. The mild temperatures, moderate rainfall and a rather acidic type of earth have favoured the development and growth of the vineyards along the banks of the stream.

The Tinar stream, also known as "Rierot" (little river) becomes a tributary of the Calonge stream at the point where the local slaughterhouse stands. According to Pere Caner (a remarkable local writer and politician), a "tinar" used to be a utensil used by the cork cutters; it had the shape of a barrel cut in half with notches to lodge the accessories. It could also be related to the word "tinard", which in the Empordà area is a large barrel used to collect the must from the wine casks.



The stream starts in the Jonc mountain range which has the highest hills in the area: Jonc Cross, Puig Cargol (359 m) and Cendrosa hill, and flows towards the Fonts district where several *masies* (country houses) can be found, most of which are traditionally devoted to vine cultivation.

As opposed to other wine growing areas in our country, in Calonge wine making, fruit tree growing and work in orchards and vegetable gardens have, since ancient times to the present day, been the way of subsistence of many *masies* and farms.

For this reason, the municipality has requested this wine-growing area be declared Cultural Heritage of National Interest. If granted, this would be a great precedent in Catalonia.

Included in this area are *masies* from Calonge and Vall-llobrega which have maintained the traditional way of life and production methods.





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Masia



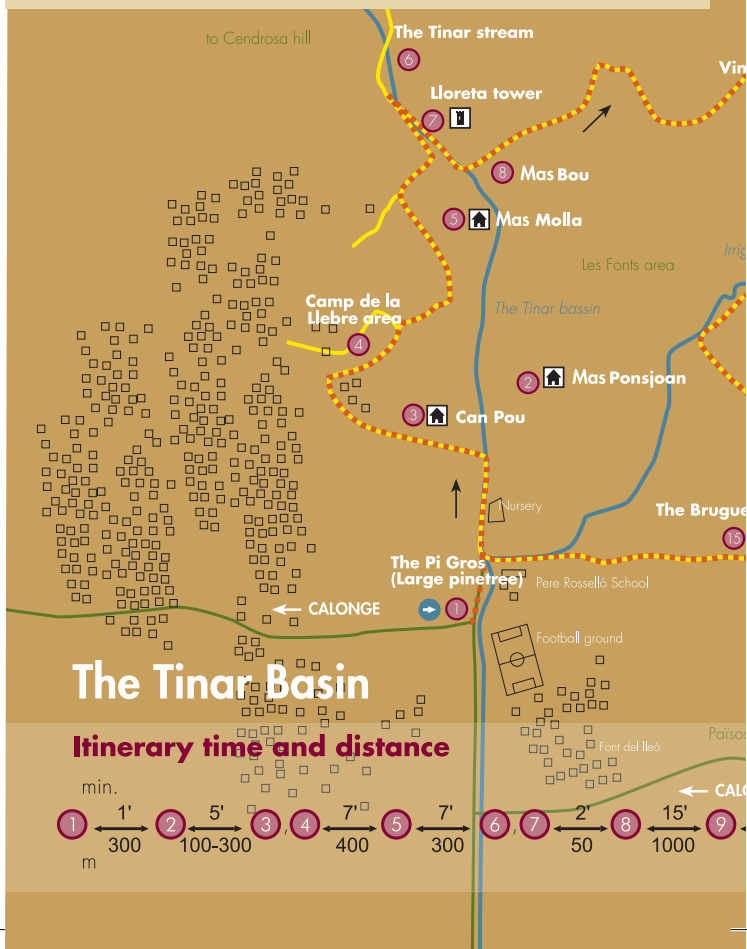
Cemetery



Manor



Way out



out

Mas Gil

Vineyard shed

Mas Ribot

The brick factory

Mas Monells

Cami Ral
(former Crown road)

Irrigation

Mas Domènech

Mas Muní

Madral
Canal

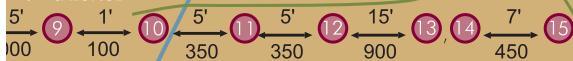
the Brugueres plain

→ PALAMÓS

Països Catalans avenue



← CALONGE



Technical information

- **Approximate total itinerary time:** 1h 45 min
- **Real walking time:** 1h 10 min
- **Distance:** 5,2 Km
- **Exertion and difficulty:** low
- **Slope:** Slight ascent from Mas Bou to Mas Gil
- **Starting and arrival point:** the large pinetree (Pere Rosselló school in Calonge)
- **Signposting:** Local path (white and green marks) on one part of the path
- **Remarks:** The *masies* in the wine-growing area can be visited prior appointment. Please contact the Tourism Office in Sant Antoni (phone +34 972 66 17 14 or visit www.calonge-santantoni.com) for more information.

For further information about the path network in Baix Empordà and the Calonge district, visit www.visitemporda.com

Description of the route:

The itinerary starts at a remarkable place in the Calonge district: the Pi Gros (Large pinetree) ❶ located on the road to the schools, near the Tinar stream. There is a panel with information about the town.

We walk upriver until we reach the point where the street crosses Joan Maragall street. We get there by crossing a bridge over the little river. If we had continued along an unpaved private path, we would have reached Mas Ponsjoan ❷, located in Les Fonts area which we can perceive from the path. This *masia*, surrounded by cultivated fields, grows different varieties of fruits and vegetables. They also produce wine using an artisanal press. By the stream, there used to be a Romantic-style garden where children used to go to have their afternoon meal and to play. It is now closed to the public. Just in front there is an ancient manor owned by the Pou Serradell family ❸ and which was the home of a well-known solicitor.

We then reach the Camp de la Llebre area ❹. This is an old-fashioned place with old houses, some of them with well-known names such as Can Ton Nanet, in the street with the same name. We turn right at this street. The road paving ceases after the houses.

At the first crossroad we turn left. A few yards away is Mas Molla ❺. From this point onwards we find a typical Mediterranean landscape with fields that have been cultivated by man for many years. Mas Molla stands on the right side of the path. The Molla family, owners of the *masia*, have been working the land for over seven centuries. They have an oil mill, make wine, sell fruit... We are welcomed by a bunch of bananas and a barrel of wine advertising the sale of their products. We can only see the rear part of the *masia*.

Not to miss an interesting place, we turn a few yards to the left at the next cross-path towards Lloreta tower ⑥. At the crossing there is a signal indicating that we are on a local path (white and green marks). This building dates back to medieval times and served as a watchtower even though it was not built for this purpose. Later on it was converted into a fortified *masia*. If we follow this path it would take us to the Puig de la Cendrosa hill, with a beautiful view over the plain and the Puig Cargol hill.

Our proposal, however, is to return to the bank of the Tinar ⑦ and walk until we reach cross-path to the left. In front of us is Mas Bou ⑧. This *masia* dates back to the same period as Mas Molla.

We walk up the path following a tributary of the Tinars. Gradually a landscape of vineyards appears on both sides of the stream. Mas Gil ⑨ is located at the end of the path. Today it is a wine cellar with state-of-the-art technology, and belongs to a Swiss company. It is surrounded by well-aligned and "trained" vines to make the harvesting process easier.

We cross a bridge and a few yards ahead to the right we perceive a small building amidst the vines. It is a Modernist style tool shed ⑩. These sheds were used to store the tools used in the cultivation process.

At this point we take a path to our left, pass in front of a power transformer and follow the Local Path through a pine wood.

We will walk past the front side of Mas Ribot ⑪ as we follow the path to the left. The *masia* is surrounded by a line of fig trees, a plain with olive trees, and patches of corn fields and fruit trees. A bit further ahead, this path will take

us to an old brick factory 12, just before crossing the Mas Monells bridge. The land around the brick factory is reddish due to the clay in the soil. If we followed the Local Path it would take us to the Puig Cargol hill.

We go back to Mas Ribot, towards the sea. To the left, on top of the hill we can make out the Mas Domènech.

Long before reaching Mas Muní 14 we turn right and take the old crown Road 13 that leads between an olive grove and the high edge of a pinewood.

The path goes on through the vineyards, along the left bank of a ditch bordered by sturdy and rather luxuriant cork-oak trees.

As soon as we reach the first modern houses, at the first crossroad we take the path towards Calonge, through the Mas Ponsjoan fields.

Towards the end of our itinerary we go pass the nursery school, the primary education school and the sports stadium a bit further away. Soon after the stadium we will find ourselves once again at the starting point.

Points of interest

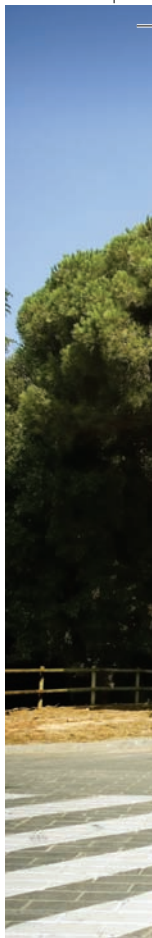
The Pi Gros (Large pinetree)

The Pi Gros (Large pinetree) is the starting point of our itinerary. This is a pine-nut tree that stands nearly 11 metres tall. It's crown spans almost 20 metres, and has a circumference of 3.10 metres. The abundance of water thanks to the Tinar stream and the sunny characteristics of the place have made this tree become luxuriant through the years.

Pine-nut trees are characterized by their seeds. The pine-nuts are edible once the shell has been removed. The ovoid shape and the size of their cones, which can measure between 20 and 25 cm, as well as the compactness of their crowns, or their reddish and cleaved bark differentiate them from other conifers, such as the white pine or the maritime pine that grow by the seaside, both of them also present in our country.

It's imposing appearance has spared it from being cut down when the area around the Pere Rosselló schools was developed. Due to its location in a visible and easy-to-access place, it has appeared in several publications as a landmark in the area.

By the tree there is an information panel showing the local paths and a map to help us find our way around.





Cone from a pine-nut tree

Mas Ponsjoan

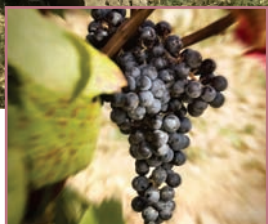
We find the Mas Ponsjoan at the end of the unpaved path which takes us over the bridge that crosses the Tinar stream. This is one of the best rebuilt *masies* in Calonge and dates back to the 17th century. The current owners of the house worked in it since the 19th century as caretakers, and bought it towards the end of the 20th century. The house marks the main access to the wine-growing/producing area. Here we feel the close relationship that has existed for centuries between vineyards, wine and man.

It is said that in the 19th century, the cellar in Mas Ponsjoan had a tavern which at times were patronised by the bandits operating in the area.

Mas Ponsjoan is also a place with wonderful legends... "It was said that the well had no bottom, and that fairies or good witches lived in it..."

For many years, the legend of the Mas Ponsjoan fairy was related to the children in front of the fire place, as explained by Leonila Carles. One of the purposes of legends, whether they were true or not, was to teach moral values to the children in an interesting way. This legend about the fairy teaches the need to keep a promise one has made.





Bunch of red grapes



Detail of the Fairy's Well

Can Pou and Camp de la Llebre area

Can Pou is the *masia* we find just after crossing the bridge over the Tinar, to the right. It bears the name of its well-known proprietors, and has over 300 years of history. It is also locally known as Mas Rotllan de les Roques. There are other houses with the name of Mas Rotllan in the municipality, such as Mas Rotllan dels Vinyers and Mas Rotllan de Baix.

The Camp de la Llebre area—a site protected by the Calonge General Development Project—was added at the end of the 18th century/beginning of the 19th. It is composed of two parallel streets named Creu d'en Blanc and Camp de la Llebre. Among its farms is Can Blanch whose heir was Pere Rosselló, who became the Assistant Director of the International Bureau of Education headquartered in Geneva, where he passed away in 1970. This is the reason why the Primary School in Calonge is named after him.

The street named Carrer de la Creu takes its name from a cross marking the village boundary. It was put up in this place at the end of the 18th century.

Camp de la Llebre had been a Crown road, as all the main paths were in the past. One end of this path leads to the Bellloch hermitage, and the other end goes past the Collet monastery and leads to the Palamós harbour.





Tomatoes to rub on bread



Detail of a lintel

Mas Molla

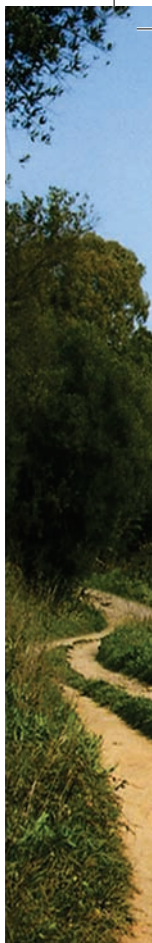
To the right and surrounded by shade and fruit trees is Mas Molla, a renowned ancestral *masia*. According to documentation, since 1338 to the present day it has been owned by the same family. However, the current farm, including its cellar, was built in the 18th century and refurbished at the end of the 19th century.

The house treasures the *Llibre Mestre* (the teacher's book) by Martí Molla (1812), a mix of his own notes and old texts he had copied himself. His grandson, Joan Molla Presas, studied agricultural engineering and has left us a collection of photographs dating back to 1900.

He fought a plague of *phylloxera*, a 1 mm-long yellow insect (only visible with the aid of a magnifying glass) that attacks the roots of the plants to suck the sap, weakening them and killing the vines after a few years.

The solution was to plant new American vinestock as they are resistant to *phylloxera*, and then graft them with local grape varieties.

The owners of Mas Molla still cultivate plots of land by the village, even though today most of their vines lie between the Tinar stream and the Gavarres mountain range. Currently they are important local wine producers together with other *masies* in Calonge and Vall-llobrega. They are all members of the Cultural Heritage of National Interest area which includes both villages, as they still produce wine using ancestral methods. According to Pere Caner, together with Can Pere Pau in Camp de la Llebre, they had owned oil mills or olive presses, as they were called in the past.





Waiting to be filled up



Wine-making illustrations

The Tinar stream and “Lloreta tower”

The Tinar flows parallel to the path that leads to Torre Lloreta. In this area one can still find a few tree bases characteristic of river bank vegetation, such as narrow-leaf ash trees or cork oaks, growing in a damp atmosphere. Due to the proximity of a much frequented path, some rather opportunistic species have also grown, such as locust trees or reeds. These species, much to our dislike, are a sign of degradation of the riparian flora.

Torre Lloreta is a building believed to date back to the 11-13th centuries. Together with the Calonge castle, Valentina tower and the Castellbarri ruins, it has been classified as Cultural Heritage of National Interest.

The building was formed by a rectangular tower to the north and a wall with arrow loops surrounding the site.

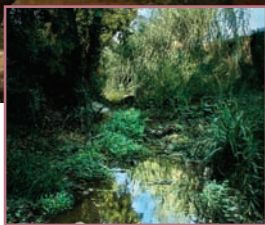
It is believed to have been an old castle because in that area there had been other towers. Later on it was turned into a fortified *masia* known as Can Sixt de la Torre.

It is currently being refurbished and will probably be turned into an inhabitable *masia*.





Detail of the Torre Lloreta well



The Tinar stream

Mas Bou

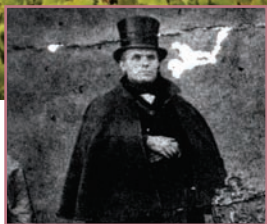
Mas Bou is renowned for one of its ancestors who became a celebrity in the middle of the 19th century: Doctor Xarino. He was well-known for performing rather unorthodox medical practices such as getting rid of ill people whose families were not interested in keeping them alive.

Mas Bou was built during the same period as Mas Molla. As we can see during our excursion, the landscape throughout the entire itinerary is dotted with *masies*. It has been so since the 13th century, when most of the *masies* were built in Calonge.

Its current morphology has been influenced by refurbishings and/or extensions carried out in the 18th and 19th centuries, and mainly by the modifications it went through in the middle of the 20th century ordered by the current owners from Mas Palà, in Castelladral (Bages), who turned it into a manor. This house has become a distinct element in the landscape.

The documents of this *masia* are kept in Besalú, and the most ancient one dates back to 1293. It used to belong to the Vidal family, also known as Bou, a name that was taken by the family from the 16th century onwards. After the marriage between the heir and the heiress of both families, Mas Mont and its glass oven added up to their ownership of Mas Bou.





Doctor Xarino

Mas Gil and the shed in its vineyards

The Mas Gil, with its Modernist appearance, can be perceived from the middle of the hill. This name, however, is quite recent. Its documents, dating back to the 18th century, state that it used to be known as Mas Sabater.

It is known that in the Sabater family there were four notary publics, one of which got to be Mayor of Calonge. They owned other *masies* in Calonge amongst which was Mas Deumenjó. The property was later named Mas Gil after a tenant farmer.

As a result of a refurbishing well into the 21st century, this *masia* has undergone many transformations and has become a state-of-the-art cellar featuring the latest technology in the sector. They market their wine under their well known brand Clos d'Agon and most of their production is sold abroad.

On the way to Mas Ribot we come across a typical vineyard shed dating back to the 19th century, property of Mas Gil.

These sheds were very useful for the farmers to shelter from bad weather and to store their tools so that they did not have to carry them home every day.





Vineyard shed

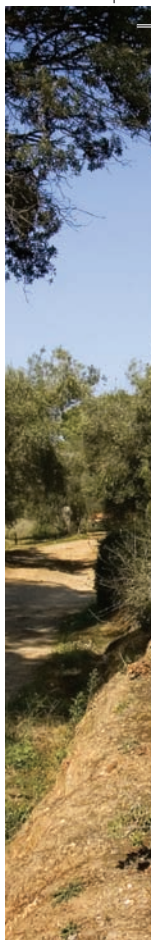
Mas Ribot

Following the proposed itinerary we get to Mas Ribot de Fonts, a well known *masia* that was inhabited by farmers for several generations until Josep Clara i Ribot moved to Palamós, where he passed away in 1858.

In 1927 his descendents sold the property to the Trias family, hotel owners in Palamós, who, in 1964 sold it to the Rousseau family who had the house refurbished. Mr. Teodor Rousseau used to be the director of the Metropolitan Museum of New York and every year contributed to the Calonge Museum.

The current landscape at Mas Ribot is an example of the agriculture that is typical of Calonge, composed of small multicultivated plots of land. In 1999 Calonge used to grow 145 ha. of cereal for grain, and 40 ha. of fodder. With 113 ha. of vineyards it was the first village in wine production in Baix Empordà. With 19 ha. of olive groves and a further 19 ha. of vegetables, it was the third regional district in the production of these cultivations. It was also the first village in Baix Empordà in the cultivation of fruit trees, with a surface area of 17 ha. of groves.

All the *masies* in Calonge are protected by the General Urban Layout Scheme. Mas Ribot de Fonts is an unreplaceable element in the landscape, as it is placed on high ground and surrounded by gardens. It is located at a crossing of two public paths and can be admired by all passers-by.





Example of multicultivation in Calonge

The brick factory

The brick factory is located on the left side of the path. It is believed to have been owned by Mr. Lluís Salvadó i Pepitó. Witnesses say that it was still operative in the middle of the 20th century. Two or three people worked there making bricks in a completely artisanal method.

Clay was the raw material used. It was extracted from the surrounding land –the earth is still red in the vicinity–, spread out on the ground, and water was added. It was then mixed using the feet. The bricks were made one by one with the help of moulds. Then they were introduced in the oven which was lit using dried heather, broom or genista, the fuel of those times.

In those times there were other brick factories in the village, such as Torretes, Can Garí (currently Càmping Internacional), Can Medi (where the Treumal petrol station now stands), or at Mas Vilà. The Can Ribot brick factory is the only one which has been well preserved since those times; the others have been destroyed as a result of the town planning in the area.





Detail of the brick factory



Bridge over the Madral canal (or main canal)

Camí Ral and Mas Muni

Well kept between a high border and an olive grove, a part of the old crown road from Calonge to the Bellloch hermitage and Palamós still exists. Camí Ral means "main road" or "crown road". All the other paths were not considered "royal" and therefore were of less importance.

Even though this path does not pass in front of Can Muni, this *masia* can be found at the far end of the path we took before turning into the Crown road.

At the end of the 18th century, Can Muni was home to the village tax collector. He not only collected money but also other products, such as poultry, potatoes, etc., for the allodial lord. Each allodial lord had his own tax collector and in this case the lord was the Duke of Sessa. Documents exist stating that in those times there were 17 allodial lords in the village.





Detail of Camí Ral (crown road)

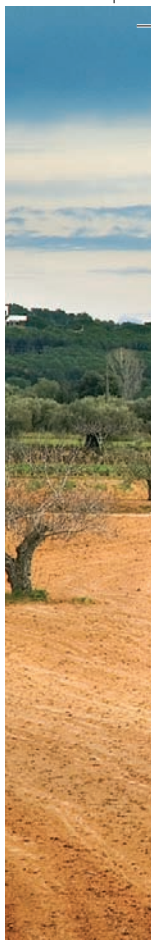
The Brugueres plain

Once on the plain in the direction towards the schools and the large pine tree, we cross the Brugueres plain. At the end of it is the Mas Ponsjoan orchard, with a great variety of fruit trees and vegetables.

Heather grows as undergrowth to oaks or cork oaks in our part of the country. They grow as much as 2 metres high, and constitute a thick underbrush which can be practically impervious in the Mediterranean woods. These species (heather, broom or heath) are quite common on the plain.

In the 18th century, the Duke of Sessa divided the plain into plots and rented them out. These plots were turned into vineyards, olive groves and fields.

In this landscape of cultivated fields it is easy to find open-land birds such as stonechats, grey redstarts, chaffinches, linnets, etc. feeding on the sides and edges of the paths.





Grey redstart



Broom heather



Notebook:



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Ajuntament de Calonge

