

WALKING IN CADIZ

THE GUIDEBOOK

5. RÍO GUADALMESÍ



ANNE MIDDELKAMP

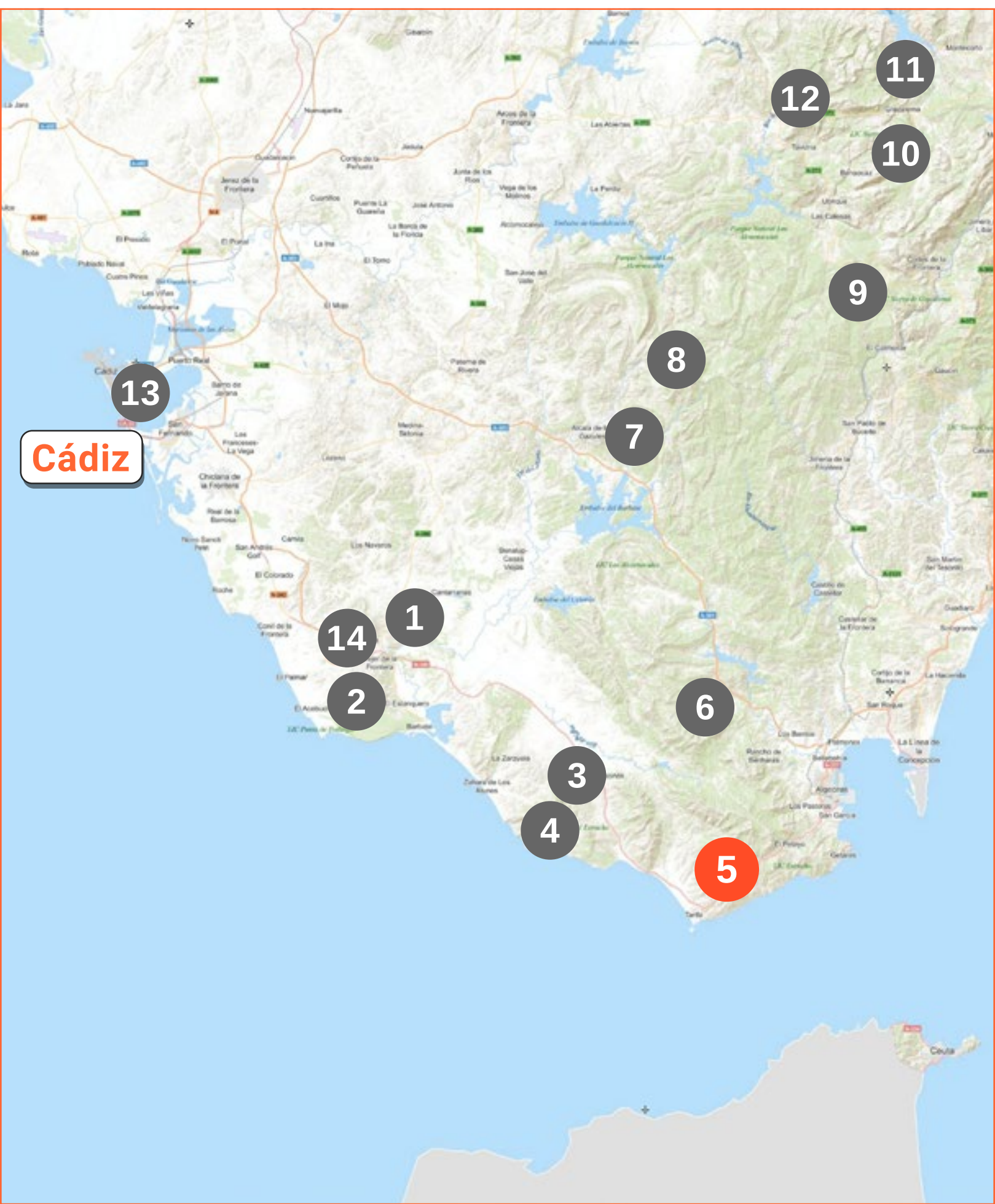
Walking in Cádiz

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Overview walks

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5. Río Guadalmesí

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The route

- Name: Río Guadalmesí
- Where: Sierra de Estrecho, near Tarifa
- Type of walk: Circular
- Length: 6.6 km
- Duration: 2.5 hours (without stops)
- Difficulty: Easy
- Shade: Only the second half
- Highest point: 417 m
- Lowest point: 303 m
- Path type: Partially marked, paved dirt road & forest path

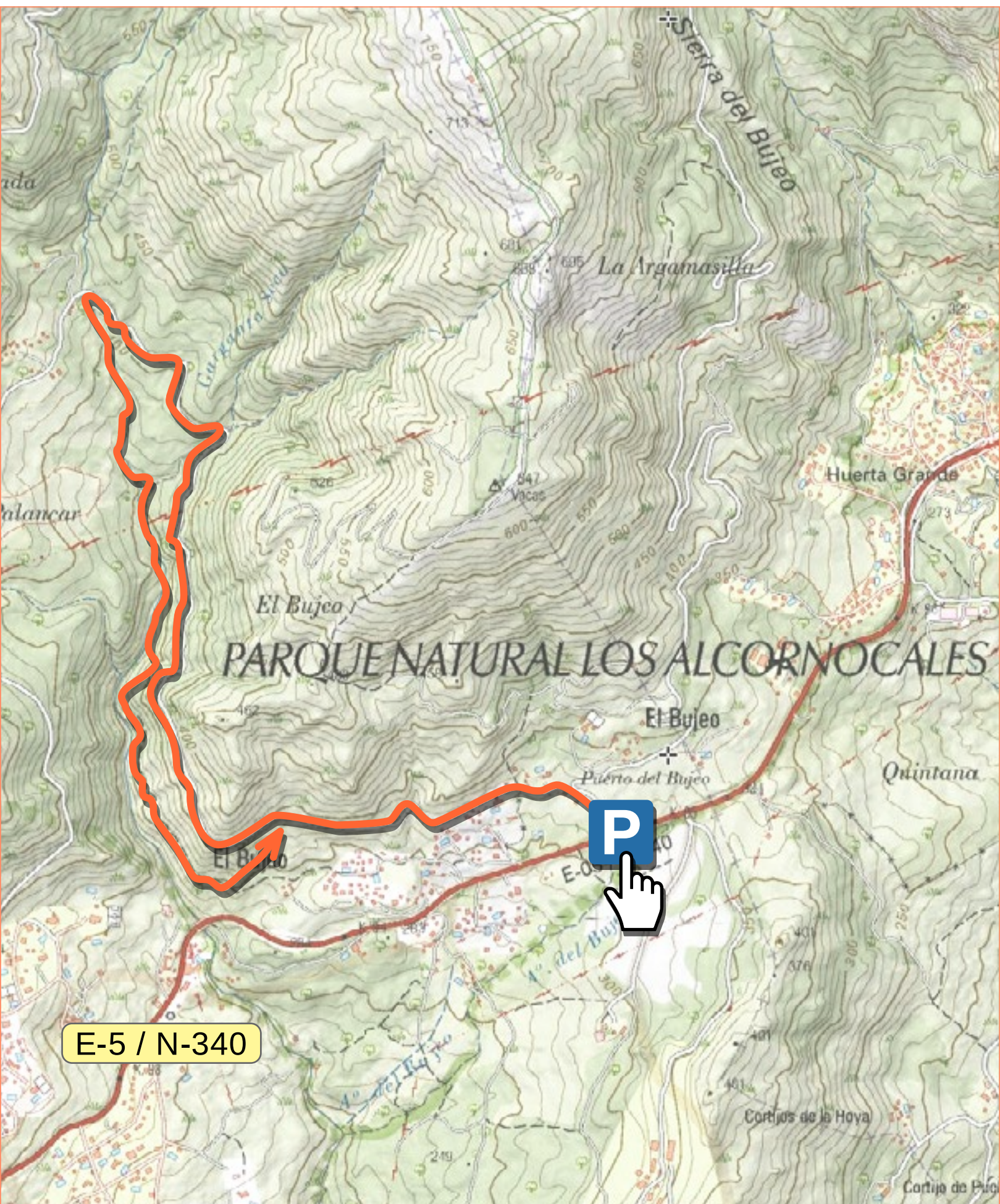
The starting point of this hike is at km 95 on the N340 between Tarifa and Algeciras. The walk



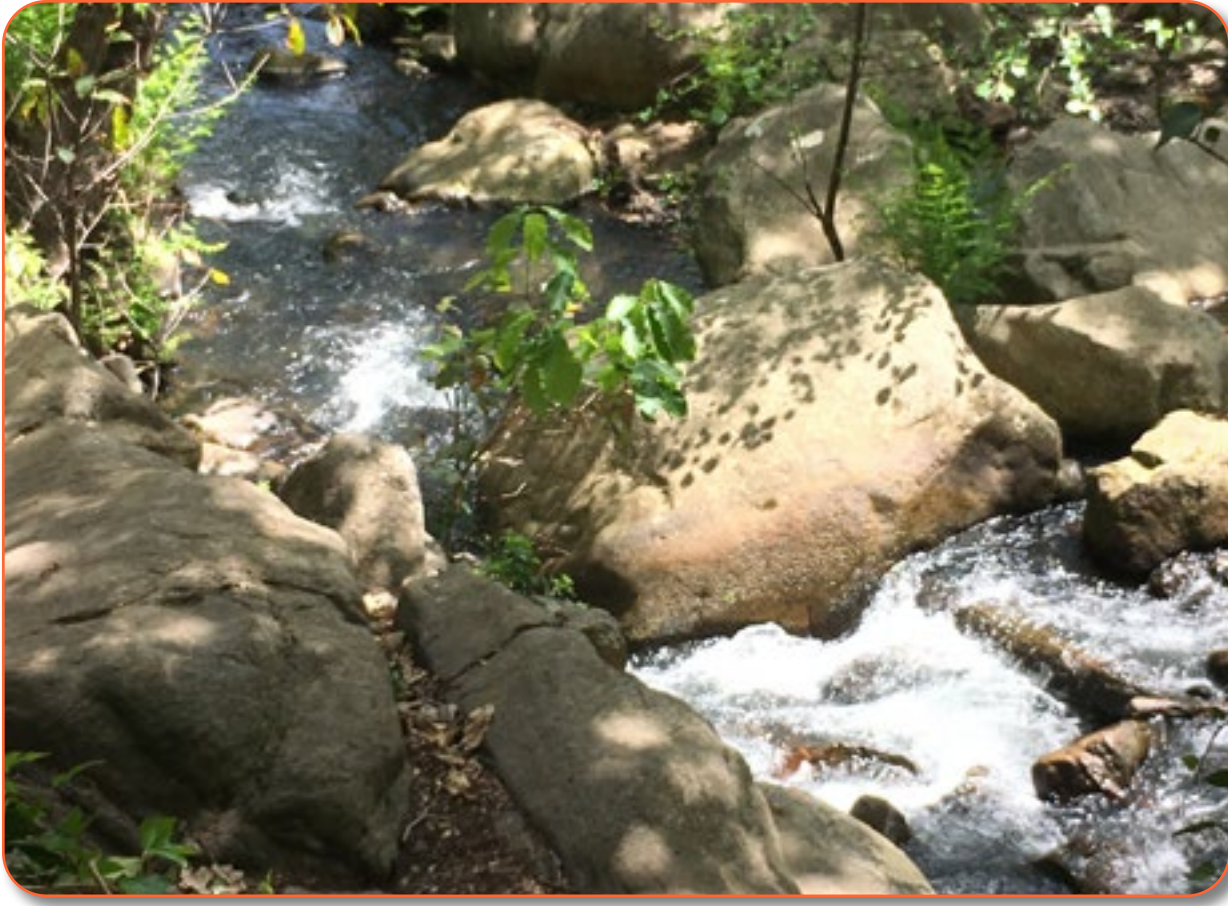
starts at the Área recreativa El Bujeo, a large picnic area where there is plenty of space to park your car. Note: When you're driving from the west, from Tarifa, you have to drive past the exit to El Bujeo and turn back at some point because you are not allowed to turn left on this busy road. The trail starts from this picnic area, passing a few houses and after a bit, gradually going upwards to your right. The first five minutes you can still hear traffic, but after a few turns, there's nothing but silence and birdsong.



The map



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In short

Río Guadalmesí is a wonderful and easy hike. It starts from the busy road between Tarifa and Algeciras, but soon you're in an amazing and peaceful valley.

The first half of the trail is along a wide dirt track, going gradually up and after that you descend through a delightful stretch of



forest along the Guadalmesí River. Immerse yourself in the sounds of babbling water and chirping birds. Pure bliss.

The River of Women

Río Guadalmesí, in Arabic, meaning The River of Women, is a stream that rises high up in the mountains of the Sierra Luna and flows 600 metres down to the Mediterranean sea over a length of seven kilometres. Legend has it that women hid along this river from the pirates who raided these coasts and kidnapped many of them to trade as slaves in Africa.



The walk



The first half of the walk is on a wide, winding dirt road up to the tiny hamlet of Palancar. The path is flanked by alcornoques, cork oaks, and you have a beautiful view of the valley on your left.

After about 45 - 50 minutes you arrive at the top, where there is a bridge over the river Guadalmesí. At the bridge it is easy to find the trail down along the river. You can also choose to walk on a bit further towards the neglected and overgrown farms of Palancar and then return to the bridge where the trail leads down. The descent alongside the creek is a real treat, with a few rocky bits here and there,



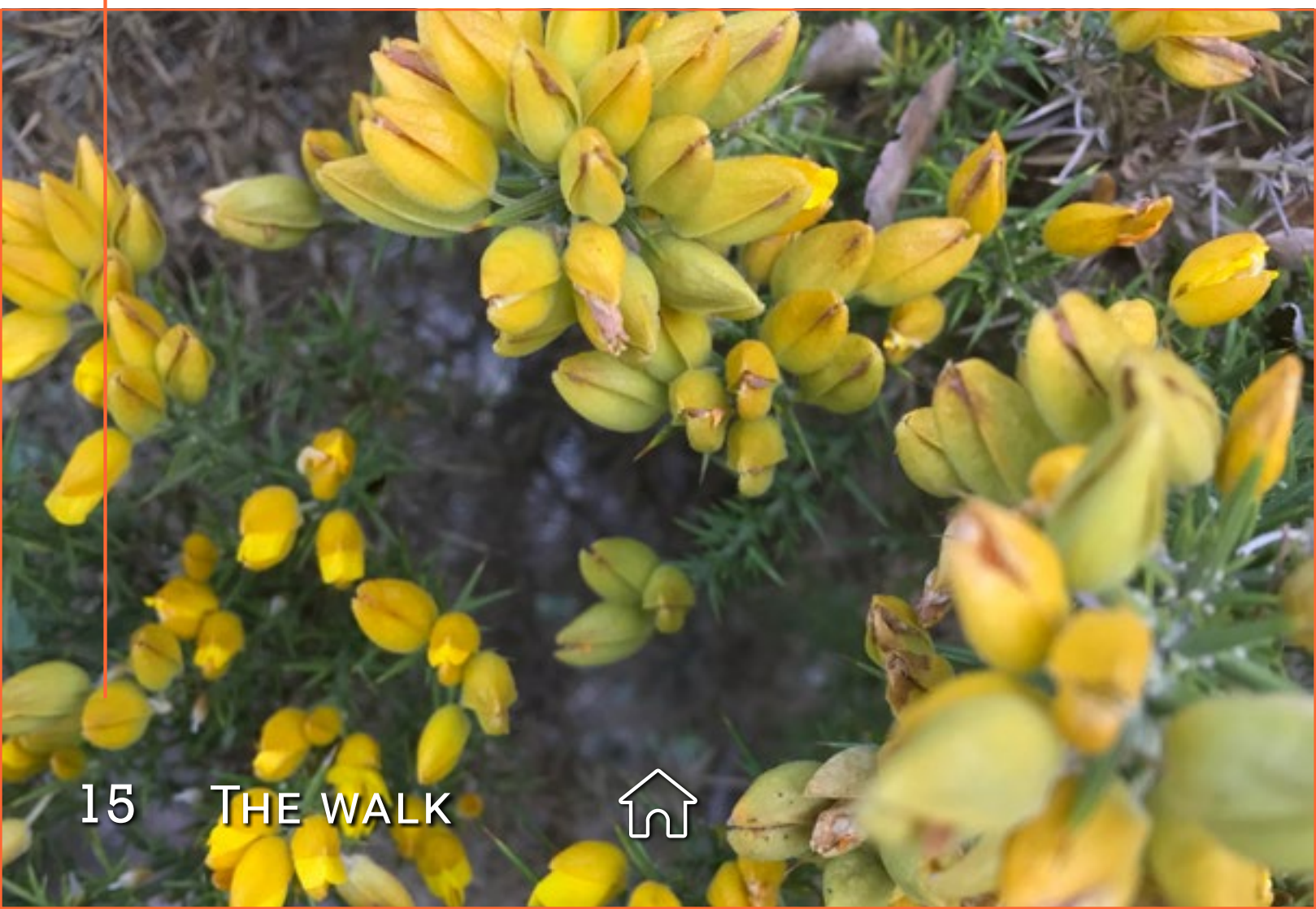


but it's all quite uncomplicated. I hardly ever needed my Nordic walking sticks! Halfway down we found a perfect spot in the sun to eat our picnic. Paradise. Just leave me here. This is all I need: Birdsong and gurgling water, gnarled trees and green ferns, wild flowers and an occasional vulture circling lazily overhead.

Laurisilva, Europe's last jungle

The combination of the sea fog that lingers in the mountains, the cold winds of the Poniente and the hot, dry winds of the Levante have created unique vegetation in this part of Spain. This type of forest is known as laurisilva, a remnant of a formerly widespread subtropical forest with evergreen trees and scrub. The mist from sea and high humidity allow plant species to grow here that are remains of the last European jungle. In addition to the characteristic cork oak of the Alcornocales,

you will find strawberry trees, mastic trees, alder and heather. In the spring, the ground is dotted with daisies. I also discovered a flower I had never seen before, the Aspalathos, (Calicotome villosa), a thorny shrub with yellow flowers. The flower resembles broom but is larger. I learned that in ancient times these flowers were used to make perfume.



At the southernmost point of the walk you have a magnificent view of the 842 metre high Jebel Musa in Morocco. On a clear day this mountain looks so close, it's a sight that never fails to impress me. Continue along the path, it leads you to the left and after a rocky section you arrive back at the road where you started.



Tarifa

Tarifa is the southernmost town in Europe, just 14 km as the crow flies from Africa. A popular destination for kite and windsurfers, thanks to its consistently strong winds. Tarifa is raw, colourful and lively and has a lovely old town centre. This city takes its name from the Berber warlord Tarif ibn Malik who conquered the city in 710, after which the Moors ruled Tarifa for 6 centuries. This Arab past is still very visible as you wander through the maze



of narrow streets. You can also visit the beautiful old Iglesia de San Mateo and climb the city walls at the Castillo Guzmán el Bueno for beautiful views.

From Tarifa you can spot dolphins, killer whales and whales in the Strait of Gibraltar. An unforgettable experience! We recommend the tours by Turmares.

[Turmares](#)

Ferries to Tangier in Morocco leave from here daily, a return ticket costs about € 70.00.

[Ferries to Morocco](#)





Tips

Bar Rico and the market

Bar Rico is one of the oldest tapas bars in Tarifa and the perfect place for a tasty and cheap tapas at the bar. Calle Coronel Moscardó, 7. Also try the Mercado de Abastos, the central market on Calle Colón, for coffee, a Spanish breakfast and people watching. Only open mornings and not on Sunday.



Where to eat

Restaurant El Lola

Restaurant El Lola in the centre of town is very quirky and cool with flamenco dot decoration, a great atmosphere, a traditional menu and always a band or guitarist on the terrace playing tunes. The staff are characters and you really feel like you are in traditional authentic Spain here.

Restaurant El Lola



Restaurant La Favela

Restaurant La Favela is situated in a beautiful old, monumental building in the centre. Cool decoration and beautifully presented dishes including a good selection of vegetarian meals. Reservations for dinner recommended.

Restaurant La Favela

Cafe Azul

A fantastic place for brunch, smoothies and crepes is Café Azul. Your kids will love the food and the large portions at this very friendly eaterie.

Cafe Azul



Beachbar El Chiringuito

El Chiringuito Lounge is a bright bistro perfectly set on the last curve of the beach looking out to the island. The food is excellent and they have a lounge inside and a terrace outside. It is funky with fusion food and great for sunset cocktails in their sandy chill out area with cool music in the background.

Beachbar El Chiringuito



Where to stay

Guesthouse Dar Cilla



At the old city wall of Tarifa you'll find the monumental and beautiful guesthouse Dar Cilla, with smart studios and elegant apartments. From their huge roof terrace you have phenomenal views of the Strait of Gibraltar towards Africa across the water.

[Guesthouse Dar Cilla](#)



€ 10,- Cashback



When you indicate with your reservation (directly at the accommodation, not through agencies) that this is 'Anne's Walking in Cádiz tip' and show this ebook upon arrival you'll receive € 10 Cashback or a € 10 discount!



Social media



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Walking
in Cádiz



**We hope you enjoy
your walks in Cádiz!**

If you have any comments or additions to the routes or a nice tip in terms of food or activities, then I would love to hear that! Please send an email to:

info@walkingcadiz.com



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