

## Gaucin Walks V: Las Palas

Difficulty: Medium

Time: 2 hrs 30 minutes

Terrain: tracks and paths

*This walk covers part of the ancient route between Gaucin to Cortes de la Frontera, the village you can see on the other side of the Guadiaro valley.*

*Please leave all gates as you find them: keep dogs on a lead whenever livestock is loose and when passing near or through private property. Wear suitable footwear and carry sufficient water, especially in the summer months.*

*We welcome any feedback/comments to: [gaucindaywalks@gmail.com](mailto:gaucindaywalks@gmail.com)*

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**THE WALK:** Start at the bandstand and children's park "Parque Antonio Godino" which is just outside Gaucin on the main Algeciras to Ronda road.

With the bandstand, play park and a small aviary on your left, walk up the main road towards Ronda. Take the first track going down to the left by a large signboard: "Muebles Las Palas" and a sign: "Ruta V – Garganta Las Palas". The concrete track goes downhill and passes a furniture shop called 'Las Palas'. Ignore the numerous entrances and tracks off this track and continue downwards. Eventually the track goes to the right and upwards, marked by green posts and a fence; in front of you is a very smart dark green metal gate to a private property.

DO NOT keep following the track here but instead turn left onto a smaller path - marked with a Roman numeral 'V' - which continues straight on, following the fence which has been on your left for some time. This path soon passes through a gate by a fence coming down the hillside on your right. When the fence on your left turns to the left and goes straight down the hill, continue straight on, into the woods where the path is well defined and passes through trees between two low banks.

Continue on this lovely path for about 10 minutes, descending gently through cork oaks. Start to look out for a track lower down on the left through the trees. When you come to a junction in the path, follow the main path around to the left. There is a lone pine tree amongst the oaks straight ahead of you (marked with a faint green and white cross), and a faint smaller path continuing straight on. Within 5 minutes you will have joined the much larger track below. There is a sign in the trees that says 'Camino Gaucín a Cortes'.

Turn left onto the large track, marked by Roman numerals II and V. Follow the track as it makes a huge loop to the opposite side of the valley.

After about 30 minutes and as the track is climbing gradually you notice another track above you on the left. When you arrive at this track turn left onto it and pass by a chain and two metal posts.

After about 10 - 15 minutes take the left fork where the track splits – look carefully to spot the Roman numeral II (V is straight ahead on the main track) and follow this track downhill to a gully where the track deteriorates. As the track climbs again you zig-zag up the hillside through oak woods and pines, eventually reaching a gate marked with black and white triangles, and a sign saying ‘Coto Privado de Caza’. *This is about an hour and a half from the start of the walk.*

Go through the gate with the triangle sign, turn right and then walk for 5 minutes uphill on the main track (ignoring the smaller track off to the right just past the gate). When the track loops sharply to the right, by a builders yard with barking dogs, pass through the large metal gate ahead. If it is locked (rarely) you can pass through a smaller wire gate to the right.

Follow this track uphill as it winds past numerous smallholdings until you arrive back at the petrol station.