

Gaucin Walks XIII: Venta Socorro to La Claridad

Difficulty: Easy

Time: 1 hour

Terrain: rough paths and tracks

A circular short walk which passes through pine and cork oak forests.

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

THE WALK: Start at the parking area on the main Gaucin to Ronda road, opposite Venta Socorro which is near the bridge and car park/recycling bins. You can reach it via an alley just to the left beyond the Unicaja bank and by Bar Otolao.

Opposite the *venta* to the right of the bus stop there is a track below the road with views to Cortes de la Frontera and the Sierra de Libar. Take a moment to turn round and admire the Roman bridge. You pass a few gates to farm properties but keep on the main track. After approx. 600m the path becomes thinner with a conifer plantation to your left and views of Sierra del Hacho. The path soon crosses a small stream bed. Bear right and, after a few metres, cross the stream again. Continue uphill on a narrow rocky path for approx. 200m until it meets a wide track. Turn right onto the track and head downhill past an old bath in the field. (Ignore the first track to the right, which goes to a private property).

If you turn left onto the track here you would shortly come out by the Gaucin petrol station).

After a total of approx. 1.4km you will come to a gate across the track. Do not pass through the gate; instead bear left here, heading up a narrow path with a pine wood on your right. After the path bears round to the right you will see a gate ahead and a wire fence on your left. Stay on the narrow path, which goes downhill next to the fence. Soon after this, the path becomes a little indistinct but take the upper option of paths (marked with a faint blue arrow on a stone). After only 5 minutes the narrow path meets a wider track. Turn left onto the wider track.

When you meet a large metal gate, ignore the faint blue arrow on the right by a wire and post gate. Instead, **pass through the large metal gate and keep walking on the main track.** *This metal gate is usually unlocked but should be pushed shut after passing through.*

After approx. 200m the track bears to the left with a wire gate on the right and a small track straight ahead. Continue uphill on the main track; after a few minutes of steep uphill climbing you will reach a large metal gate ahead and a lot of barking dogs by a woodyard below on the left. Pass through the gate, which should be unlocked. If it is locked you can pass through a smaller gate to the right.

The track becomes a tarmac road, which wends its way back to the village passing several smallholdings before emerging at the petrol station.

The road opposite leads to the centre of the village.

If you wish to return to your starting point, take the concrete track off to the left about 200m before the petrol station and follow this down until you see the small path heading off to the right that you came up on the way out. From here you can retrace your steps back to Venta Socorro. Alternatively you can turn left at the petrol station and walk along the main road back to Venta Socorro.