

COASTAL PATH

THE COSTA BRAVA WAY

Text Sergi Lara | Photography Jordi Puig



© **Triangle Postals SL**
Sant Lluís, Menorca
Tel. +34 971 15 04 51
triangle@triangle.cat
www.triangle.cat

Idea and direction
Jordi Puig

Text
© Sergi Lara

Photography
© Jordi Puig

Technical support
Patronat de Turisme Costa Brava
Consells Comarcals de Alt Empordà,
Baix Empordà and La Selva

Graphic design
Joan Colomer | Joan Barjau

Layout
Vador Minobis

Maps
Triangle Postals | GradualMap

Translation
Steve Cedar

Printed in Barcelona, 5 -2021

DLB-8792-2010
ISBN: 978-84-8478-419-7

No part of this book may be reproduced
or used in any form or by any means
—including reprography or information
storage and retrieval systems— without
written permission of the copyright owners.

The authors and publishers of this
guide restrict themselves to presenting
a route on foot along the Costa
Brava, with optional variants of a
diverse nature. They are not liable
for any event, incident, accident or
circumstance that may arise from the
use of the information included here.
Hikers must follow the marked paths,
behave prudently and be respectful
towards the natural and cultural
environment.



▲ Cala el Crit, Mont-ras

Introduction	Page 11
STAGE 1	Page 19
BLANES TOSSA DE MAR	
STAGE 2	Page 39
TOSSA DE MAR SANT FELIU DE GUÍXOLS	
STAGE 3	Page 51
SANT FELIU DE GUÍXOLS PALAMÓS	
STAGE 4	Page 65
PALAMÓS BEGUR	
STAGE 5	Page 87
BEGUR L'ESTARTIT	
STAGE 6	Page 107
L'ESTARTIT EMPÚRIES (L'ESCALA)	
STAGE 7	Page 121
EMPÚRIES (L'ESCALA) ROSES	
STAGE 8	Page 139
ROSES CADAQUÉS	
STAGE 9	Page 153
CADAQUÉS EL PORT DE LA SELVA	
STAGE 10	Page 171
EL PORT DE LA SELVA PORTBOU	
STAGE 11	Page 191
PORTBOU BANYULS-SUR-MER (DE LA MARENDA)	
STAGE 12	Page 203
BANYULS-SUR-MER COLLIOURE (COTLLIURE)	
Practical guide	Page 215
Place name index	Page 220



THE COSTA BRAVA WAY

LINKING NATURAL SPACES

The Costa Brava is one of the most important tourist destinations in the world, but paradoxically, it is also a region that concentrates a first-class human and scenic heritage, from the Bronze Age megalithic monuments to the works of great 20th-century painters such as Picasso, Dalí, Dérain and Matisse. In this guide we propose to cover the entire coast along the old coastal paths, used for centuries by fishermen or police surveillance patrols on the lookout for smugglers. After the development of residential urban planning in the last third of the 20th century, many sections of path have disappeared or have become impractical to use. For this reason, although the guide has the coastal paths as its main route, quite a few of the sections correspond to mountain paths or other coastal paths that can be taken to cross natural spaces of great value. In this sense, the succession of very diverse landscapes confirms that the Costa Brava emerged as a result of its geological position between the Iberian Peninsula, the range of the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean, with the final result of a series of unique landscapes and great personality. In short, a region of Europe without comparison, along which runs the longest coastal route of the western Mediterranean.

All along the coast we can clearly identify the countryside where this intense trek of 220 kilometres is undertaken, full of memorable corners.

If we divide the region into two halves, we see that the southern half—from the town of Blanes to that of Pals—is the

THE ROUTE: THE GR-92 AS A ROUTE OF REFERENCE

In order to present a unified and marked route, the description of the recommended itinerary follows, in the majority of sections, the route of an already existing Grand Randonnée, the GR-92, which covers the whole Catalan coast from the Spanish-French border to the Delta de l'Ebre. Sometimes, faced with the difficulties of the orography or due to the presence of roads or property developments that have modified some coastal paths, the GR-92 continues along inland routes, but generally always close to the coast. In any case, the description of the stages in sections always includes alternative variants. In some cases they are unmarked paths or marked with another type of signposting, paths which, in fact may be more interesting than the route of the GR-92, but by going along craggier areas or along long sections of beach, require greater physical effort or greater hiking experience.

Therefore, although this guide proposes crossing the Costa Brava following the course of an internationally certified route like the Grand Randonnée (red and white signs), the inclusion of all the coastal paths suitable for hiking enables us to establish the most suitable or interesting crossing for each



▲ *Quercus suber*

Main route

Main route - GR

Main route - PR

Variant

GR (Gran randonnée)

PR (Small route)

Section

person. In this sense, the different levels of hiker, based on knowledge of the area, experience and fitness, will also vary according to the weather conditions and the type of terrain and relief. Finally, we should point out that in some sectors the main route does not form part of the GR-92, as in the case of the north coast of Cap de Creus between Cadaqués and El Port de la Selva, as well as the Côte Vermeille between Portbou and Collioure. As a whole, the crossing has a level of difficulty between easy and moderate, making use of the marked paths and passing continually through towns where one can find accommodation and supplies. It is also important to realise that all the passing towns are connected by different means of public transport with the main capitals; Barcelona, Girona, Figueres and Perpignan.



▲ Coastal path, in Calella de Palafrugell



▲ Coastal path, in Cala Ametller

STAGE
4

SECTION 2

Page 66 ◀ Map

2 h 20 min

FROM PLATJA DE CASTELL
TO CALELLA DE PALAFRUGELL



▲ Iberian settlement of Castell

We can pass some relaxing time in the **spot of Castell**, a unique setting, which after its protection as a natural space has been able to re-value an area, overcoming the pressure of the surrounding tourist resorts. From the beach itself, the GR-92 sets a course inland, firstly following the course of the **Aubi stream** as far as a bridge, and after crossing a beautiful field, we climb to the top of a mount-viewpoint that has the name of **Roques d'Ase** (132 m). There is no doubt that this option is attractive, and is also easier to follow thanks to the red and white signs, but the description of this section of the stage could not be without the coastal path that leads to a string of wonderful coves, perhaps the most outstanding series of unspoilt coves along the whole Costa Brava, although this is always a subjective appreciation. We should point out that the whole area that extends from Platja de Castell to the entrance into the municipal district of Palafrugell, boasts the classification of **Castell-Cap Roig Space of Natural Interest**, since it is an extension of the **Les Gavarres massif** collapsing into the sea, which due to its irregular orography has conserved its natural landscape almost intact. It is a landscape dominated by extensive woods of holm-oaks, cork and pine trees up to the very coastline. Added to that, the moment of starting the walk from Platja de Castell, we climb to the promontory of **Agulla de Castell**, where there are the remains of a **settlement of the ancient Iberian culture** from the 6th century BC, an enclave raised over the corner where the cave of **La Foradada** is hidden, the natural rock tunnel that enables the passing of small boats inland. From here, the route requires some hiking experience, since although there are some signs and markers, the terrain is rocky and the forest cover very thick, with many



▲ Cala Canyers

crossroads of tracks and paths. Initially, one should maintain the walk as high up as possible, eventually dropping towards a forest track that leads to some estates.

After going around the first estate we come to, we link up again with the unforgettable coastal path that leads to **Cala Corbs** and **Cala Canyers** (viewpoint), and from these to the paradisiacal **Cala Estreta** (steps and fishermen's hut). From this last cove, we must walk directly over the sand and link up with the other coves in the area, passing through the wild **Cap (cape) de Planes** (nudist area and pier), a point from which one can just make out one kilometre away the tiny archipelago of the **Formigues islands**. These islands are permanently inhabited by gulls and cormorants, and form part of the historical chronicles for being the setting of an important naval battle in the late-13th century, in which the Catalan Armada commanded



▲ La Foradada

THE CAP ROIG BOTANICAL GARDENS

Coming from the marked track from Platja de Castell, when we come to a fork (sign), there is an entrance to the garden through a metal gate on the right. If we go past this point, the track will lead us to the lower part where the asphalted road entrance for vehicles passes, a road we must climb for half a kilometre. The old estate of Cap Roig, already documented from the 14th century as property of the Massoni family dynasty, was bought in 1927 by the couple made up of the exiled Russian Nicolai Woevodsky and the English aristocrat Dorothy Webster, both lovers of design, decoration and gardening. In the following years their team of workers mapped out a route with botanical species from around the world, which included the construction of a Scottish-style **castle**. If, however, something really stands out in this garden, it is for occupying one of the most spectacular spots on the Costa Brava, with total domain over the space that goes from the **Cap de Sant Sebastià** as far as the **Formigues isles**. During the summer this setting plays host to an important **music festival**. The visit should add at least another hour and a half to the stage.



PRACTICAL GUIDE

Botanical Gardens of Cap Roig

Cami del Rus, s/n
Tel. +34 972 614 582

Opening times

From April to September

10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

From October to March

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

January and February

Saturdays and Sundays

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Cap Roig Festival

July and August

www.caproigfestival.com



▲ Cap Roig Festival



STAGE
5B

SECTION 2

Page 90-91 • Map

3 h 30 min

FROM PALS
TO TORROELLA DE MONTGRÍ

▲ Sant Julià de Boada

We return to the GR-92 heading north from Pals, initially along an asphalted track that we leave immediately to continue along the right by a series of farm tracks. The accompanying scenery could not be better, since the route crosses an area very typical of what are the **Pals rice fields**. After passing the section along the **Riera Grossa** and the **Can Bac** estate (beware of the dogs), we cross the quiet GI-651 road and go round a beautiful field. This last section of farm track comes out at the entrance of the tiny village of **Fontclara**, a series of closely built old country houses. We must immediately go along the local road that links Fontclara and Palau-sator, leaving on the left the track



▲ Fontclara



▲ Palau-sator

to **Sant Julià de Boada**, where there is a small church with pre-Romanesque origins (10th century). Once in **Palau-sator** we discover another complex of historical buildings with a typically medieval structure, with special emphasis on its large **Torre del Rellogge** (Clock tower). From here, we continue heading north, now with our sights set on the massif of Montgrí that we see ahead, but still some way off. This last section may seem monotonous, since it goes along a long track that joins Palau-sator with the villages of Fontanilles and Gualta. To break this monotony, on passing alongside the village **Fontanilles** (farms), the route of the GR-92 climbs towards **Puig de Font Pasquala** (90 m). The entrance to **Gualta** is attractive, since we cross its main street, the Carrer Mayor, as far as its historic **old bridge** over the **River Daró**. Keeping an eye out for the signs, we must follow the left bank of the river (channelling), and on crossing the GI-643 go onto the right bank. The Daró ends flowing into the **River Ter** with the town of **Torroella de Montgrí** on the other side, where a



▲ View from Puig de Font Pasquala