

GeoParc

Catalunya Central

Experience, explore,
savour 40 million
years of history!



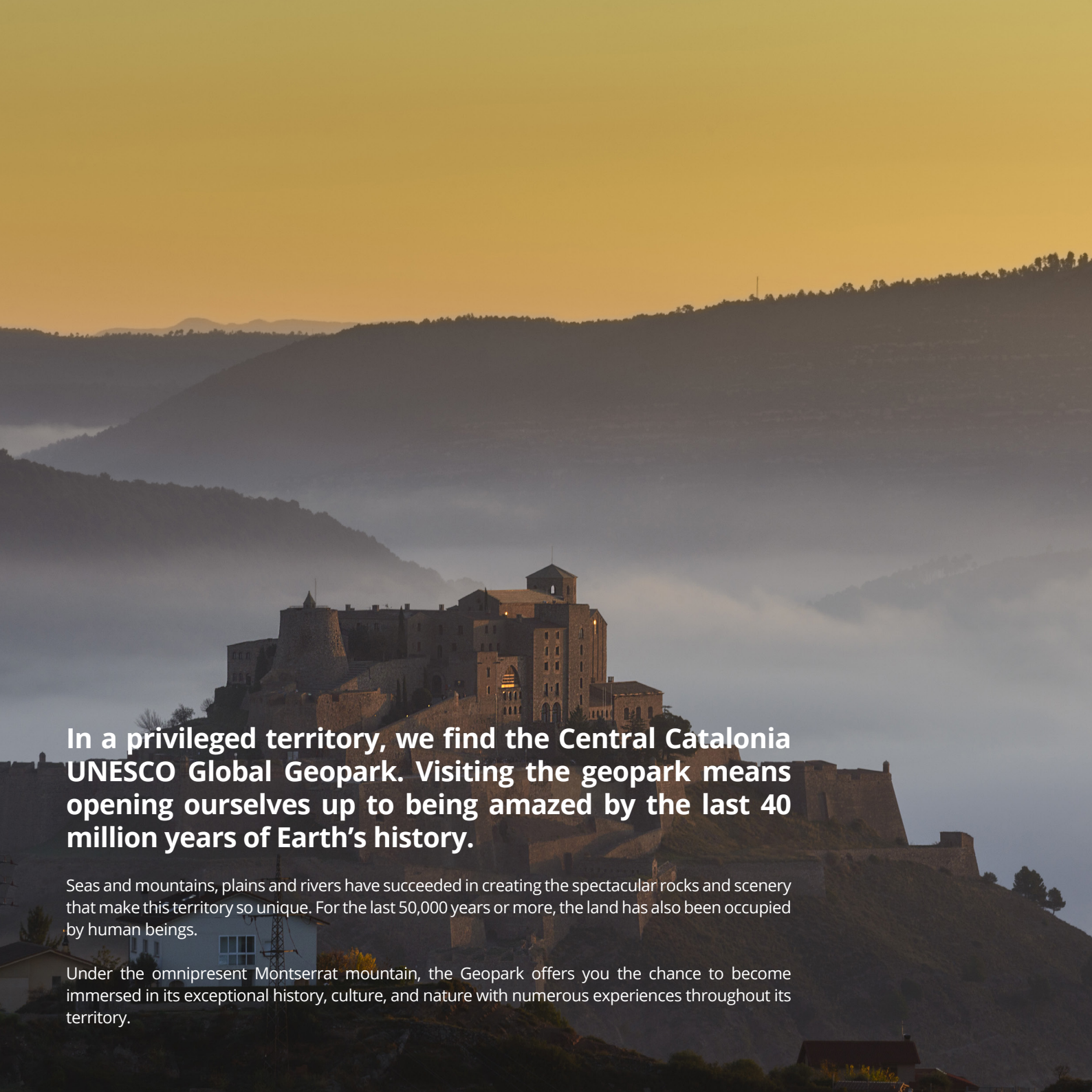
GeoParc
Catalunya Central



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In a privileged territory, we find the Central Catalonia UNESCO Global Geopark. Visiting the geopark means opening ourselves up to being amazed by the last 40 million years of Earth's history.

Seas and mountains, plains and rivers have succeeded in creating the spectacular rocks and scenery that make this territory so unique. For the last 50,000 years or more, the land has also been occupied by human beings.

Under the omnipresent Montserrat mountain, the Geopark offers you the chance to become immersed in its exceptional history, culture, and nature with numerous experiences throughout its territory.



By car:

C-55 road to Barcelona
 Barcelona, Berga C-16 Road/Motorway
 Terrassa C-58 Motorway
 C-25 Road (Eix Transversal -
 Girona, Vic, Lleida)
 Igualada C-37 Road



By train:

RENFE: Spanish National
 Railway Network
www.renfe.es (Línies R4 i R12)
 FGC (Ferrocarrils de la
 Generalitat de Catalunya)
www.fgc.cat (Línies R5 i R50)



Only...

50 mins from Barcelona
 1 h 15 mins from Lleida
 1 h 15 mins from Tarragona
 1 h 20 mins from Girona

UNESCO Global Geoparks

What are UNESCO Global Geoparks?



unesco

Geoparc Mundial

UNESCO awards the label of Global Geopark to special geological territories that have world-renowned unique geology and exceptional cultural and natural values.

Geoparks are well defined areas which work to reinforce partnerships between geological heritage and other aspects linked to the territory's natural and cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. Furthermore, they emphasise the importance of geodiversity as the basis which establishes all the ecosystems, and which reflects human interaction with the landscape. They aim to help their inhabitants make progress through sustainable development linked to geotourism and geological heritage, whilst also valuing the territory as a whole. They are projects which rely on a boost from their host society to thereby consolidate a feeling of belonging.

In 2015, UNESCO created the International Geoscience and Geoparks programme. In conjunction with two other UNESCO labels, Biosphere Reserves, World Heritage and Geoparks illustrate the complete panorama of World Heritage and its relation to human beings.

Geoparks are not only made up of rocks. Nevertheless, said rocks are the beginning of our story.

The European Network, the Global Network and UNESCO

In 2000 the **European Geoparks Network** was established by 4 European Geoparks in 4 different countries that shared a common interest in conserving and promoting areas of special geological relevance. The EGN is a voluntary association of Geoparks that share the same work methods to accept and implement the principles that make up "The EGN Charter".

In 2004, with UNESCO's support, 17 European and 8 Chinese Geoparks joined forces to create the **Global Geoparks Network** (GGN). Since 2015, the network serves as the official collaborative organisation for UNESCO, aiding in the management and functioning of the UNESCO Global Geoparks, and it is the home of all the Geoparks. It works as a network to promote conservation, preservation, and abiotic and biotic natural diversity. It offers support, creating quality control standards and best practice models.



The Central Catalonia UNESCO Global Geopark

Immerse yourself in the history of an inland sea!

The Central Catalonia Geopark was officially recognised in 2012. It is situated in a privileged location in the heart of Catalonia. It has a surface area of around 1,300 km² and is made up of 36 municipalities in 3 regions. It is a land of contrasts, where the geology has created a unique landscape with magnificent natural monuments and hidden treasures to explore.

The Geopark territory has been inhabited by the human species as far back as the Middle Palaeolithic Period, some 50,000 years ago. The area was occupied to make the most of the natural resources that the land offered, including its geological resources. This continued presence in the territory has provided the area with a magnificent mining, historical, cultural, and traditional heritage, which completes the territory's rich and strong personality.

That said, the history of the majority of the rocks that form the landscape and were seen by those first human beings, goes back to the dawn of time. At the time, approximately 41-37 million years ago (during the Eocene Epoch), most of what we now call Central Catalonia was an inlet which was connected to the Atlantic Ocean.

36 million years ago, this inlet was cut off from the ocean due to the rising of the surrounding mountain ranges, such as the Pyrenees in the

North, and it was gradually restricted, forming a large saltwater lake, until it had all but evaporated. It left behind a large number of sediments deposited in different marine environments, such as seabeds, deltas, and coastal areas. As the culmination of its final stages, during the evaporation process, the sea left behind gypsum and significant salt deposits (halite, silvite and carnallite). Once it had disappeared, rivers and lakes occupied the territory where the ancient sea had once been. At the time, the majority of the reddish rocks we can see in the landscape were formed.

The current fluvial network has been forming over the last 10 million years. The erosion of all these rocks by rivers such as the Llobregat and the Cardener, a continuous process which is still happening today, has shaped the terrain that defines the Geopark's characteristic landscape and has conditioned the history of its inhabitants for millennia.

This is a welcoming territory which surprises its visitors with its natural and tranquil environment and rich cultural heritage. It also offers inquisitive visitors the chance to travel through 40 million years, experiencing the Earth's history, exploring the inland sea, and savouring the Geopark.

Global Geoparks Network globalgeoparksnetwork.org

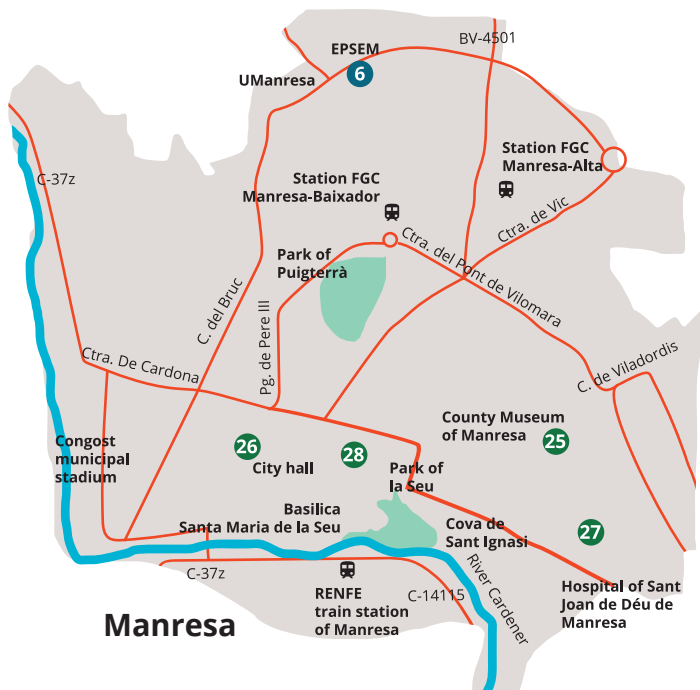
Promotional GGN website www.visitgeoparks.org

European Geoparks Network www.europeangeoparks.org

Catalonia Central Geopark www.geoparc.cat/en/

Geoparks en.unesco.org/global-geoparks

IGGP en.unesco.org/international-geoscience-and-geoparks-programme



The Geopark's Tourist Information Points

This is a list of companies, facilities and entities located throughout the territory that can offer visitors information and guidance about tourist attractions during their visit.

<https://www.geoparc.cat/empreses-i-collaboradors>











Punt d'Informació
Turística



Diputació
Barcelona



-  Rivers and streams
-  Main roads
-  Train and bus stations
-  Limits of the municipality
-  Capital of the municipality
-  Places of geological interest
-  Geotourism sites
-  Other centers



Geotourist sites

- 1 The Toll Caves - *Moià*
- 2 The Moià Museum - *Moià*
- 3 The Mura Cave - *Mura*
- 4 The Montserrat Caves - *Collbató*
- 5 Sant Joan viewpoint - *Montserrat*
- 6 The Valentí Masachs Museum of Geology - *Manresa*
- 7 The Geopark's visitors' centre - *Sallent*
- 8 The memory of water centre - *Sallent*
- 9 Geological itineraries. Migmón - *Súria*
- 10 Pla de Bages Wine Tourism Centre. A space for experiences - *Navàs*
- 11 Salt Mountain Cultural Park - *Cardona*
- 12 Castellet Castle and its badlands - *Sant Vicenç de Castellet*
- 13 Manxons Wine Vats - *Callús*
- 14 Wine vats route - *El Pont de Vilomara i Rocafort*
- 15 Lunar Interpretation Center of *Castelladral*
- 16 Pont Vell - *Avinyó*
- 17 Visitor center - *L'Estany*
- 18 Meander of Calders - *Calders*
- 19 Museum of history - *Artés*
- 20 Aiguamolls de la Bòbila - *Santpedor*
- 21 Ichnites of Can Prat Barrina
- 22 Anticlinal de Castelltallat
- 23 Àrea del Coll de Can Maçana
- 24 Bray d'Oló

Other centres

- 25 Documentation and Research centre of the Geopark - *Biblioteca del Campus Universitari de Manresa, UPC*
- 26 Seat of the Geopark, Manresa - *Consell Comarcal del Bages*
- 27 Learning Camp of Bages - *Manresa*
- 28 Tourism Office - *Manresa*

Experience

**Experience the
Earth's history**

Visiting the Geopark means being surrounded by an environment that originated over 40 million years ago in the geographical heart of Catalonia.

We can touch the passing of time with our hands, discover the towns that have been defined by their landscapes, enjoy experiences with their inhabitants and feel the history of a land rich in natural resources and highly valuable both historically and culturally.

Experiencing the Geopark means being a part of this spectacular landscape, being aware that you are in a world-renowned unique geographical area. We are surrounded by a geological heritage that has played a part in our development, culture, gastronomy, and way of being.

History

Geoparc means heritage in all its expression and extension. There is evidence that the first settlers moved into this territory over 50,000 years ago, during the Middle Palaeolithic Period. Within its contrasting landscapes of a thousand textures, there are outstanding architectural jewels which have accumulated over the space of more than one thousand years, from tiny Romanesque hermitages to dry stone barracks.

The legacy of the industrial revolution is centred around its rivers; on its hills, castles and towers which remind us that this was a land of wars and combats. Its natural resources, salts, have driven development for centuries. On its plains and in its terraces, testimonies of history, there are vineyards and olive groves, that continue to provide excellent and uniquely flavoured wines and olive oil.



Meandre de Calders



Manxons Wine Vats / Callús



Mountain of salt - Cardona



La Bòbila wetlands - Santpedor



Castellet - Sant Vicenç de Castellet



Mura



Rajadell



Avinyó



L'Estany



Artes



Balma de Comaposada - Castelladral (Navas)



Dry stone

“The art of dry Stone: knowledge and techniques” was included in UNESCO’s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage “in 2018. It is a building technique that consists of putting together stones of different sizes that have been more or less shaped so that they fit together, without any adhesive material.

Throughout the Geopark there are a huge number of barracks, walls, vats, and other constructions which were built using this technique. These buildings can be found all over the territory and, in some municipalities, they constitute an authentic experience which allows us to witness the close links that exist between geology and working the land; two realities that have coexisted in the Geopark for centuries.



Sant Esteve i Sant Sebastià. Sallent



Monestir de Sant Benet



Vallhonestà. Sant Vicenç de Castellet

Romanesque architecture

The different architectural and artistic trends that have occurred over the course of history are duly represented in the Geopark by means of different emblematic and highly important works. Romanesque architecture is an age-old art with examples from the first periods, which date back to the 10th and 11th centuries. There are jewels that must be included on the itineraries of those who want to explore this relatively austere art and admirable harmony.

Romanesque routes - bagesturisme.cat/romanic | **The Montserrat Romanesque Route** - bagesturisme.cat/rutes/ruta-ii-2-vorejant-montserrat-copy

Explore the inland sea

Exploring the Geopark means venturing deep into the first traces, the territory of the inland sea that existed over 36 million years ago and disappeared with the rising of the Pyrenees.

Montserrat, an ancient delta, is the gateway to a territory of 1,300 km² which comprises 36 municipalities in Central Catalonia; an environment brimming with geological and mining attractions: the Toll Caves and the Montserrat Caves, the ancient deltas of Sant Llorenç del Munt and Montserrat, the

Catalan Potassic Basin, the Cardona Salt Mountain, the Vall del Flequer Vats, etc. The territory is sewn together with infinite routes that allow us to immerse ourselves completely in the Geopark.

Trepitja Trepitja





Montserrat Mountain Natural Park

Precinct of the Monastery of Montserrat

Plaça Abat Oliba, s/n 08199

Mountain of Montserrat

Tel. 93 835 06 44 / 93 828 40 07

muntanyamontserrat.gencat.cat

The incomparable Montserrat Mountain is unique in the world due to its unusual silhouette and geological formation. It is home to the Virgin of Montserrat (Mare de Déu) Sanctuary and the Benedictine Monastery founded by Abbot Oliba in the 11th Century. For over one thousand years it has welcomed pilgrims who come from far and wide to venerate the image of the “Moreneta” and it has become a spiritual and cultural shelter, an indisputable symbol of the Catalanian people.

In 1987 it was named a Natural Park and the mountain is omnipresent in the Geopark. It is one of the main centres of scenic attraction and has an exuberant natural heritage. This ancient delta stands out as an impressive and impregnable massif, yet at the same time it is full of cavities and chasms. There are signposted climbing routes and paths that allow us to explore this fantastic natural environment. Some of these paths have panels providing information about its geology.

Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac Natural Park

The Natural Park's rocky and wild landscape is the product of persistent geological processes shaping the rocks over millions of years. This erosive action has created both the rounded and rugged scenery, with typical characteristic elements such as cliffs, channels, ground-level rocks, and monoliths. On a subterranean level, the water has formed an impressive ensemble of cavities, which, when they reach the surface in the exterior, give rise to well-known chasms, caves, dens and emergences.

This enclave boasts a thrilling geological history, starting out as a delta and rising up as the massif that it is now, thus enabling an accumulation of significant geodiversity. Its natural richness and important architectural heritage can be observed throughout the park. From the impressive Sant Llorenç del Munt Romanesque monastery to the humblest barracks of dry stone, we can get an idea of the significant human footprint which is present in this area: which includes outstanding castles, chapels, farms, and vats on the vineyards.

Since 2011, the Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac Natural Park and the 12 municipalities that contribute to this natural space have been working to promote sustainable tourism, compatible with conserving the territory and boosting the local social economy. It is a sustainable tourism strategy drawn up with the consensus of the territory's agents.

Ctra. de Terrassa a Navarcles, km 14,8

08230 Matadepera

Tel. 938 317 300

p.santllorenc@diba.cat

parcs.diba.cat/web/santllorenc

*parcs.diba.cat/web/turisme-sostenible-als-espais-naturals/
compromis-del-parc/santllorenc*





Manresa, the heart of Catalonia

Manresa is the Geopark's main city. It is an excellent starting point to discover the great ages of Catalonia's splendour, and it is an international reference point thanks to Saint Ignacio of Loyola's retreat in 1552, when he experienced a profound spiritual transformation.

Nowadays, we can see that Manresa has been clearly marked by the different historical ages that it has been through over the course of more than one thousand years. It boasts a patrimonial and cultural legacy which can be witnessed in various corners of the city impregnated with history, where we can find mysterious medieval streets, impressive baroque ancestral homes, and sumptuous modernist buildings.

Culture, sports, geology, nature, wine tourism and spirituality are fused together in the same heartbeat, that of the city inspired by the heart of Catalonia.

Manresa Turisme

Plaça Major 10, Manresa, 08241

938784090

turisme@manresaturisme.cat

www.manresaturisme.cat/ang

Cardona and the Salt Mountain

Visiting Cardona means reliving history in style, enjoying exceptional heritage, and being amazed by a mountain made of pure salt, which is the town's *raison d'être*. The saline diapir, an extremely valuable mountain, has been closely guarded by the impressive castle and the powerful lineage of the Count-Dukes of Cardona, known as the rich salt gentlemen or the "kings without a crown". The discovery of potassium in the potassic basin in 2012 led to the rapid industrialization of Cardona.

The Salt Mountain still continues to rise, it is the only outcrop of the saline rocks formed over 36 million years ago, when the ancient sea dried up, and it has been worked since the Neolithic Age. It is a protected natural area, and we can visit its interior, which offers galleries of fantastic textures and colours covered in salt stalactites and stalagmites.

Tourist Office *Avinguda del Rastrillo, s/n, 08261, Cardona Tel. 93 869 27 98 | oficinaturisme@cardona.cat cardonaturisme.cat/en/*



The Prehistoric Park of El Toll Caves of Moià

Toll's karstic complex is made up of limestone from an ancient coral reef dating back 38 million years. Nowadays, the action of the subterranean river continues to broaden these extremely beautiful cavities, which are a magnificent example of the power water has to dissolve rocks. The caves are also known as the Palace of Quaternary Fauna and represent a world-renowned palaeontological site where we can find out about our first settlers and their relationship with the fauna of the time. The experience is complemented by a visit to the Moià Archaeological Museum.

Moià Museum and Birthplace of Rafael Casanova

C/ Rafael Casanova, 8, Moià, 08180

Caves del Toll

Carretera N141c, quilòmetre 32, Moià

938 209 134 | info@covesdeltoll.com

covesdeltoll.com



The Montserrat Caves at Collbató

Inside the Montserrat Mountain lies a hidden and impressive subterranean world full of history. In the interior of the conglomeratic massif, the action of the rainwater, which filters through the cracks, has been dissolving the rocks for million of years and has left a legacy of a wide range of chasms and caves. Also known as the Salpetre Caves due to the supposed presence of this mineral in its interior, these caves have been inhabited or visited since prehistoric times. It is a completely karstic landscape decorated with spectacular speleothems (stalactites, stalagmites, etc.) which have inspired great artists and given this space special renown.

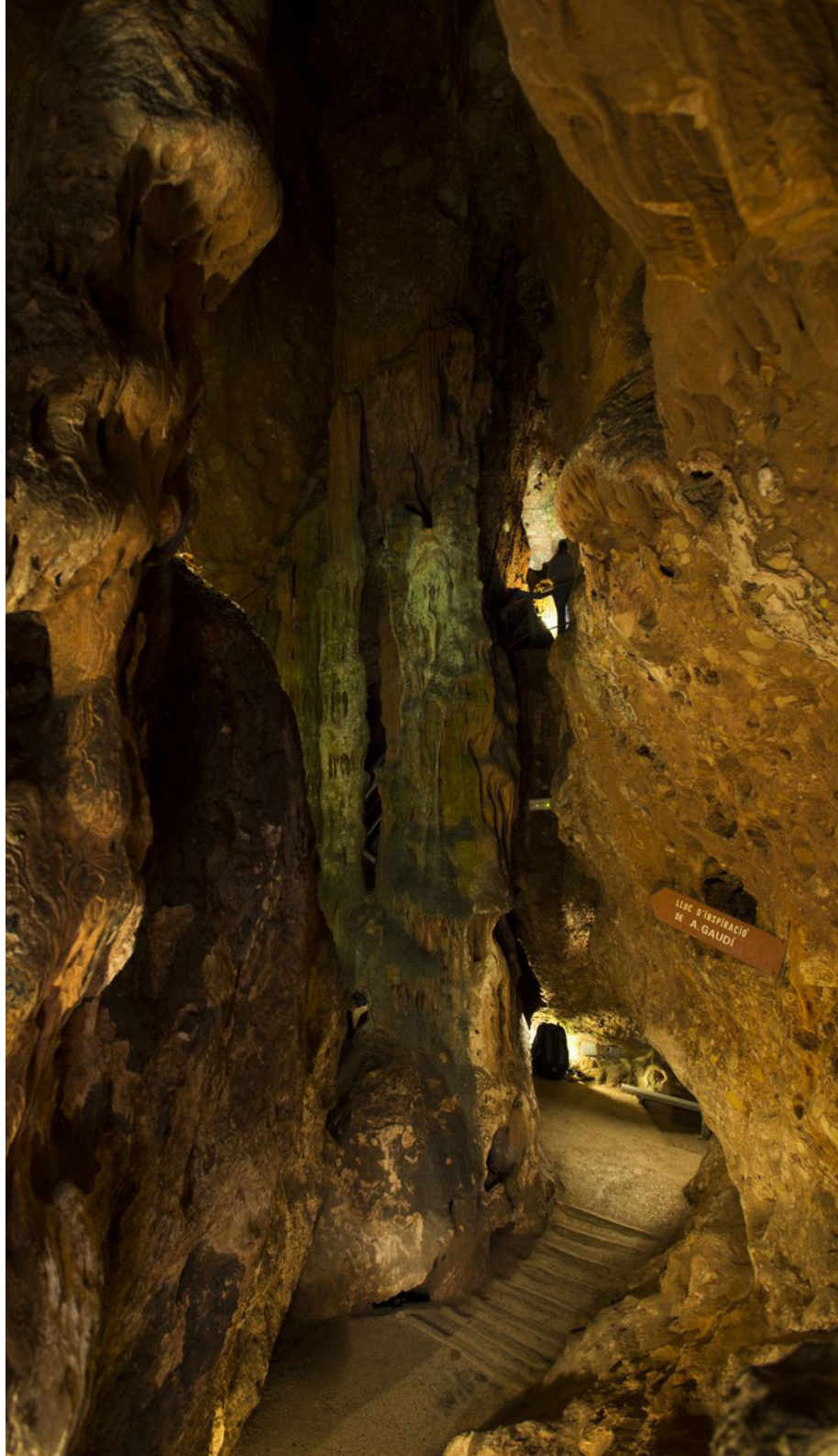
Information point and ticket sales

Carretera B-112, Km. 1.5. Collbató, 08293

647 964 076

covesdelsalnitre@gmail.com.-

cardonaturisme.cat/en/





Sallent, the memory of water

Torres Amat House

The Centre of the Memory of Water

*C/ del Pont Batlle Pere Otger (Pont Vell), 1,
Sallent, 08650*

93 877 22 31 | info@sallentturisme.cat

www.sallentturisme.cat

Water, the source of life and wealth, has been intrinsically linked to Sallent's life and development, which boasts an extraordinary cultural heritage that dates back over 2000 years. Following the course of the Llobregat river, on the outskirts of Sallent, the mountain ranges that characterise the Northern half of the Geopark disappear giving rise to the Pla de Bages region. The Iberians saw that the Cogulló Hill could be used as a strategic enclave due to its control of the river and the plain.

The municipality was a pioneer in Catalonia's industrialization. The textile sector was a great driving force for over one hundred years, with factories that strategically took advantage of the river's salient waterfalls. A visit to the Torres Amat Museum House is a must, as well as its exhibition about the memory of water. Following the boom of the textile sector, mining took over to exploit the potassium.

Sallent hosts the Geopark's visitors' centre, located in the Botjosa neighbourhood, near to important sites of geological interest and mining heritage.

The geology of Súria's history

Súria Tourist Office

Sant Climent, 21 (Poble Vell). Súria, 08260

93.131.34.45 | turisme@suria.cat | www.suria.cat

Geology, mining, history, and mythology are found in force in this enclave, forming a complex and inseparable relationship. Súria, considered to be the origin and the end of the Earth in the legend of Migmón, is the municipality where, in 1830, the father of modern geology, the Scotsman Charles Lyell, carried out various studies that drew attention to its geological past. In the subsoil of this section of the Eocene basin we find rocks

dating back some 36 million years, which give testimony to the sea's retreat of and the great evaporation that gave rise to the enormous accumulation of salts. In 1912, the presence of potassium was discovered, turning the fortified mediaeval town of Suria into an important mining centre. Around the iconic anticline fold of Migmón, in Suria, history is geology.



Savour savour

Savour the Geopark

Have you ever imagined what the Geopark tastes and smells like?

The rocks, the result of 40 million years of geological past, have provided the soil of the Central Catalonia UNESCO Global Geopark and its produce with a unique personality. The aroma

of wine, freshly baked homemade bread, and cheese. The taste of oil, leafy vegetables, garden produce, eggs, fresh meat, cottage cheese and honey. Dishes made with products from an exceptional land.

Local produce

The producers of the Geopark territory work hard on a daily basis to boost the richness of our food and agricultural produce. They are producers who cultivate and make high quality local and traditional produce.

Rebost del Bages - www.rebostbages.cat

Produce of the land - Tasta'm . Moianès -

www.consorcidelmoianes.cat/ca/turisme/productes-de-la-terra-tasta-m

Oil tourism

Just like wine, the Geopark territory boasts a wide range of extra Virgen oil products of undeniable quality. Furthermore, producers have endeavoured to recuperate previously forgotten native varieties such as “la corbella”, “la verdal of Manresa” and “la vera”. The majority of these oil producers open their doors to tourists with pleasure, offering guided tours, to showcase the elaboration process of this alimentary product that boasts a multitude of therapeutic properties.

The Collbató oil windmill-

covesdemontserrat.org/wp/activitats/el-moli-de-loli

Oil from Bages -

bagesturisme.cat/gastronomia/productes-autoctons/oli-varietats-locales-corbella-verdal-manresa-vera



Tines de la Vall del Flequer

The wine route of the Pla de Bages

Human beings have been making wine for millennia. Over the course of so many years, a close relationship between wine and geology has been established. The grape-producing identity of the Pla de Bages region stands out thanks to local producers working hard to recuperate native varieties, such as “el picapoll”, which produces excellent cold and fruity white wines and “el mandó”. It is worth highlighting that the Geopark’s territory and its exceptional geological history have conferred the land of central Catalonia, rich in clay and limestone, very distinct properties which have given the Bages wines a unique personality with notes of lavender and aromatic herbs.

Among the forests of the Geopark’s southern region, we find the “Vats on the vineyards”, a solution unique to this part of the world, which has enabled wine to be made in locations at some distance from farms and farmers’ houses, and which constitutes an exceptional heritage.

Website for the route - www.rutadelvidobages.cat/en/



Montserrat as seen from Montcau

The Geopark: a sustainable tourism destination

One of the mainstays of UNESCO Global Geoparks is to promote sustainable development of the territory through sustainable geotourism.

The Geopark is dedicated to a responsible tourism model, which is committed to environmental, social and economic sustainability, in line with the Sustainable Development goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

The Commitment to Biosphere Sustainable Tourism is a program led by companies, services, and public entities of the regions of the Barcelona province that want to improve their management of sustainable tourism and the regions' position as a tourist destination.

The project recognises best work practice that takes into account the fight against climate change, the environment, social benefits, economic practice, and the cultural environment where they are located.



The Geopark companies are certified with a stamp that makes them official collaborators and they are the only entities who can create products with the Geopark's own stamp.

The Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac Natural Park works using the methodology of the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism, whose main aim is to promote tourism in a sustainable manner within Europe's natural and protected areas. The companies and services that participate have a distinguishing stamp that is on the same level as the Biosphere certification, also making them official Geopark collaborators.

www.geoparc.cat/empreses-i-collaboradors

www.geoparc.cat/socol/geoturisme

parcs.diba.cat/web/turisme-sostenible-als-espais-naturals/restaurants2

The Geopark is so much more!

Geoparks strive to promote the wellbeing and progress of their inhabitants by means of a project that values the territory as a whole. Beyond geotourism, geoparks work on the basis of strategic lines that also end up giving a return to society, and make these territories a benchmark for improving well-being and the way we relate to our environment.

The Geoparks' fundamental mainstays:

Sustainable and lasting development, where geotourism takes centre stage to unite the territory's agents, with a highly prestigious stamp to develop a responsible strategy for the territory.

Research, collaborating continuously with scientific entities to promote the transfer of knowledge to society.

Geoconservation, as geological heritage plays a key role in the Earth's history and these testimonies of the planet's evolution will determine sustainable development not only at present, but above all, in the future.

Education on all levels, a key element to raise the new generations' awareness of some of the main problems that we have to face in the context of the dynamic planet on which we live.

Permanent educational activities in the Geopark

www.geoparc.cat/en/socoll/education-and-research/#didacticactivities



Sant Vicenç de Castellet: Muntanyes Russes and Castellet hill



The Valentí Masachs Museum of Geology of the "UPC"

Much more than a classic museum of geology, because, in addition to exhibitions of representative collections of minerals, rocks and fossils, it teaches people about the main uses of these geological materials and encourages them to reflect on important social themes linked to natural resources.

"Valentí Masachs" Museum of Geology

Edifici de l'Escola Politècnica Superior d'Enginyeria de Manresa. (EPSEM)

Av. de les Bases de Manresa, 61-73

08242 Manresa (Bages) – Catalunya

Tel. 93 877 72 41 / 93 877 72 00

geomuseu@upc.edu | geomuseu.upc.edu



Aragonite. Mura Cave

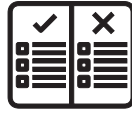


Ichmites of Can Prat Barrina

Live the Geopark experience!



Respect nature, geological outcrops, and mining heritage.



Respect the rules of the Natural Protected areas, such as the Natural Parks.



Do not litter, take your rubbish with you.



Do not collect fossils.



Respect the environment and its inhabitants.



Respect the information panels.



For safety and conservation reasons, starting fires is forbidden.



Remain silent, do not go out into the countryside, stay on the signposted paths and tracks and respect private property.

Website of interest

www.geoparc.cat

www.visitgeoparks.org

www.europeangeoparks.org

en.unesco.org/global-geoparks

bagesturisme.cat/en/

collbato.cat/el-municipi/serveis-turistic.html

Photographs from the archives of the Bages Regional Council and the Geopark | Authors of the photographs: **Carles Fortuny, Gerard Franquesa, Òscar Rodbag, Ferran Climent**



Interior of the Cardona mines

follow us



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English