

Set off on your trip to El Cid's final frontier: Orihuela. Ideally in autumn, winter or spring, take your bike and pedal through a diverse and surprising land: the provinces of Valencia and Alicante seen from inland. If you haven't been, you don't know what you've missed.

In blood and fire

This route follows two narratives: one literary and the other historical. The former is related to **Valencia**. According to the poem El Cantar, it was there that he married his daughters to the princes of Carrión, and the surroundings of the city were the setting for several battles against Muslim armies who aspired to recover it. In one of those battles, fighting against King Búcar, El Cid acquired the sword Tizona.

The second route it follows is historical. In November 1088, before he had conquered Valencia, El Cid travelled from **Xàtiva to Ontinyent** to wait for King Alfonso VI there, as he was coming to the aid of the fortress at Aledo. The armies never met and Alfonso banished Rodrigo for a second time. El Cid spent Christmas in **Elche**; surrounded by enemies, he determined never to serve any lord again and to act on his own account and risk, and he imposed his law as far as **Orihuela**.

What will you find?

Enormous **contrasts**: from urban sections, with tarmacked farm lanes and green ways, to lonely paths in more mountainous areas. Large extensions of fruit and vegetable gardens, clearly Mediterranean hills, arid landscapes, palm groves

and fertile valleys. Two environmental and social icons of Valencia: the **Albufera** and the **Valencian gardens**. Eight harmonious towns with rich heritage listed as historic and/or artistic sites: **Valencia, Alzira, Xàtiva, Ontinyent, Bocairent, Villena, Elche** and **Orihuela**. Spectacular castles in Xàtiva, Banyeres de Mariola, Biar, Villena, Sax, Petrer and Cox. Four World Heritage sites dating back to the Middle Ages: **Valencia Silk Exchange, the Water Tribunal, the Mystery Play of Elche** and **Elche Palm Grove**. Depending on the time of year, traditional **Moors and Christians festivals** in Bocairent, Ontinyent, Banyeres de Mariola and Villena, which are of national or international tourist interest



Download from our website all the updated information: maps, topoguides, tracks, accommodation, stamping points, etc.



Download the Way of El Cid travel app. It is free and is ready to work in places with no wifi signal.



▲ Dusk in Biar Castle

The Way of El Cid Consortium is promoted and funded by the following provincial deputations:



FILE



Distance 253 km



Estimated time 3/4 days



Accumulated climb 2.500 m



Accumulated descent 2.500 m



Physical difficulty Medium



Technical difficulty Low

Route and signposting

We have designed a route that is perfectly adapted to gravel bikes, along rural tracks with a firm surface, comfortable lanes, tarmacked tracks and lonely roads. It is not signposted precisely for gravel bikes, but the route coincides largely with the MTB and hiking ways, so you should pay attention to the signposting in those sections.

	Continuity mark	Wrong direction
GR 160 section (hiking and MTB routes)		
Non-GR section (hiking and MTB routes)		
MTB section (MTB route)		

Road sections

Part of the route follows secondary roads with little or sometimes no traffic. In any case, do not forget to ride carefully and make yourself visible to vehicles.

	E	F	M	A	M	J _N	J _L	A	S	O	N	D
Mean temperature Max/Min	13° / 0°	14° / 1°	17° / 3°	19° / 5°	23° / 8°	27° / 12°	31° / 14°	31° / 15°	28° / 12°	22° / 8°	17° / 4°	13° / 1°
no. of hours of light per day	09:45	10:45	11:56	13:14	14:17	14:52	14:36	13:40	12:27	11:12	10:04	09:29
Mean rainfall	31	21	35	40	46	36	6	16	47	55	38	35

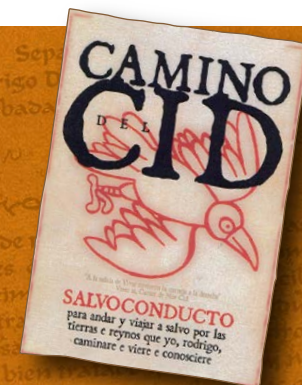
Monthly mean data for Villena, which can act as a point of reference for the inland section of Defending the South.

The Letter of Safe Conduct

The Letter of Safe Conduct is the record card on which travellers collect the stamps of the towns they go through. It is free and can be obtained in Tourism Offices or in our head office:



Consorcio Camino del Cid
C/ Madrid 24, 09002 Burgos
info@caminodelcid.org
Tel.: 947 256 240





Services

- Passport stamping offices
- Acomodation (hotel, hostel,...)
- Wellcome point
- City information centre
- Chemist's
- Train station
- Repair shops

Stages (253 km)

1. Valencia - Xàtiva (71,2 km)
2. Xàtiva - Biar (70,7 km)
3. Biar - Orihuela (111 km)

Advice and recommendations

- ▶ Do not set out without **tracks** and the **topoguides**.
- ▶ Avoid surprises; **book your accommodation in advance**.
- ▶ You will be going through lonely scenery with small villages: think ahead and prepare food and spares.
- ▶ Use a helmet and reflective clothing. **Make sure you can be seen**.
- ▶ This is not a race. Judge your **strength** and **technique** and do not lengthen the stages unnecessarily.
- ▶ Keep the **topoguide** at hand and check it if you have any problems.
- ▶ Wear the **helmet**.
- ▶ **Respect the signs**; they're for everybody.
- ▶ Remember that **rain** and **tall vegetation** can make cycling hard in some sections.

▲ In red, the towns that are mentioned in the poem *Cantar de mi Cid*



Edit:
Consorcio Camino del Cid
C/ Madrid 24, 09002 Burgos

We would be very grateful if you could send us any comments, errors or experiences to info@caminodelcid.org

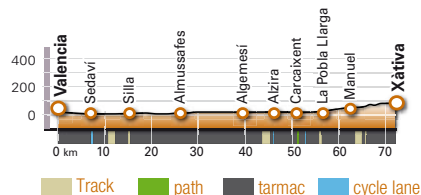
Defending the South

Gravel travel guide

Valencia - Xàtiva

May 2025

UTM Desarrolos



FILE	Distance 71,2 km	Accumulated climb 300 m	Earth / Tarmac / Cycle Lane 8 / 90 / 2 %
	Physical difficulty Low	Accumulated descent 220 m	Signposting in hiking and MTB sections
	Technical difficulty Low	Estimated time 4 h 35 m	IBP Difficulty index 27

VALENCIA

(807.693 hab.)

Sedavi

(10.637 hab.)

Silla

(19.683 hab.)

El Romani

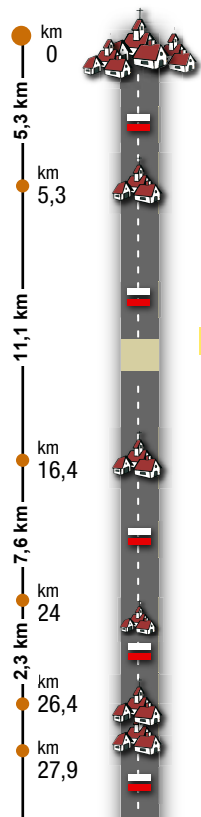
(272 hab.)

Almusafes

(8.996 hab.)

Benifaio

(11.984 hab.)



A level stage that crosses the fertile gardens in the south of Valencia along small roads and tarmacked tracks that allow us to pedal far from the main roads. The tracks near La Albufera enter a protected natural space and will reveal countless birds wandering through the rice fields. As we approach the Júcar valley the scenery changes slightly, as we continue cycling on a wide plain where we can enjoy the endless orange orchards that immerse us in their aroma.

Set off from *Plaza España*, next to the *statue of El Cid*, and go along *San Vicente Mártir Avenue*, away from the city centre towards the bridge over the *Turia*, and then take the *Real de Madrid Avenue* in **La Torre district**. Turn left on to *Hellín and García Lorca Streets* where, after going under the railway line, we continue to the right on *Europa Avenue* until we reach **Sedavi**.

We go through **Sedavi**, along *País Valencià Avenue* and continue across the bridge over the *V-31 motorway*, where we connect with the **EuroVelo8** route. We go on along the *Saler road (CV-401)*, which we leave at a roundabout for the *Castellar track* and re-join the **Vía Augusta**. When we reach the level crossing to **Massanassa**, we turn left on a track that leaves the tarmac behind. We cross the sadly famous *Poyo ravine* by a ford.

⚠ Do not cross in the case of high water levels (the level is usually low) After 1.3km on the canal track, we leave it to join a tarmacked track. We leave *Puerto de Catarroja* behind and continue along several country lanes between the rice fields of *La Albufera* until we come to **Silla** (after 300m).

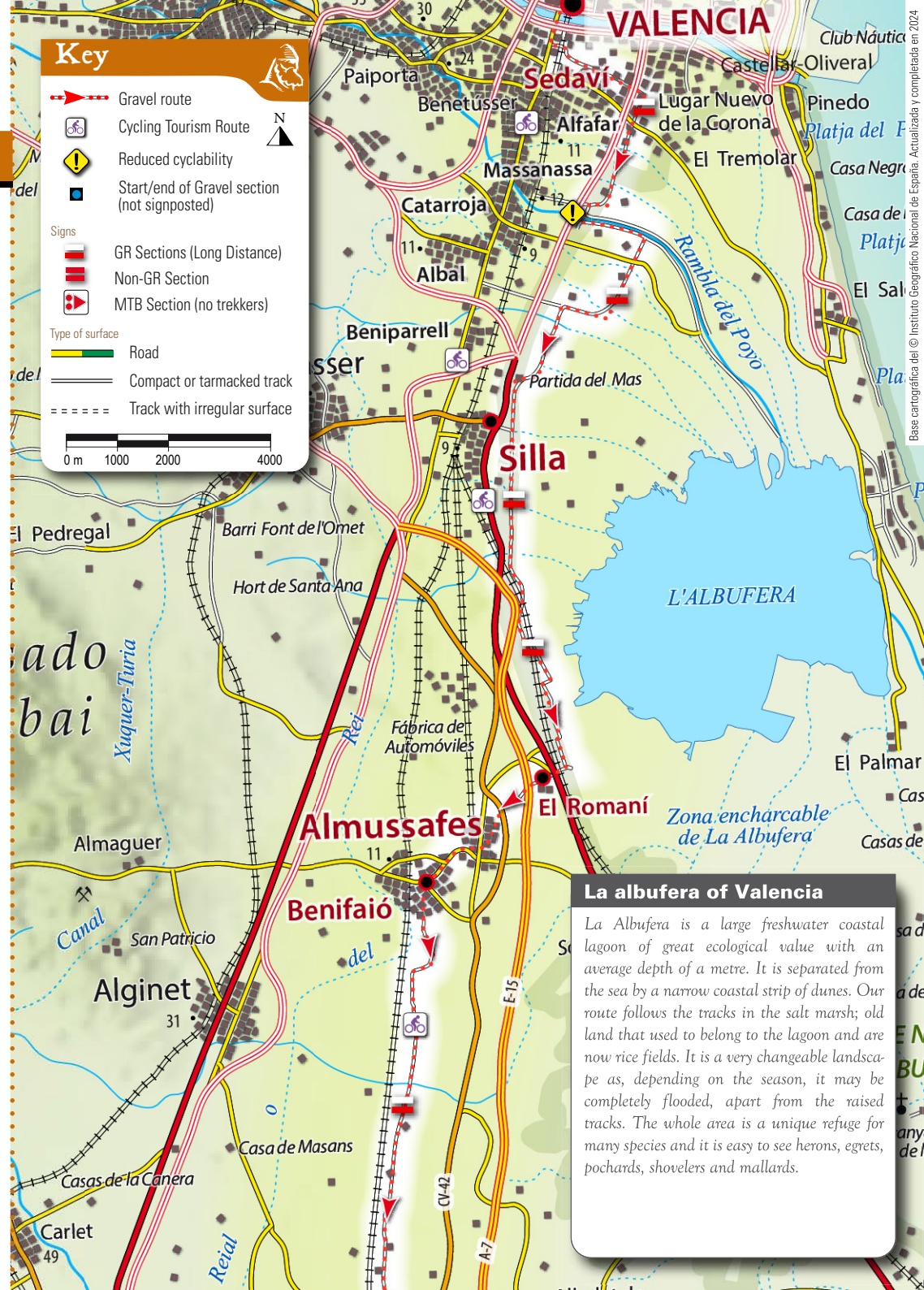
We re-join the route on the **GR-239 (Levant Way of St James)** along the *Vell de Russafa track* on a long straight section towards the south. The track reaches the *C-3320 road* and then the *railway line*, and in both cases we continue on a tarmacked surface. The track turns off slightly from the railway to enter the *Albufera rice fields* briefly, before returning next to the railway again and reaching the bridge at the access to **El Romani**.

We leave the town from *Molino Romani Street* along a road that crosses the *AP-7*, and we soon come to **Almusafes**.

The towns of **Almusafes** and **Benifaio** form a continuous urban area only separated by *Tramusser ravine*. We leave **Almusafes** from *Mayor Square* next to *Racel Tower*, and take *Salvador Botella Street* to the roundabout over the ravine at the entrance to **Benifaio**.

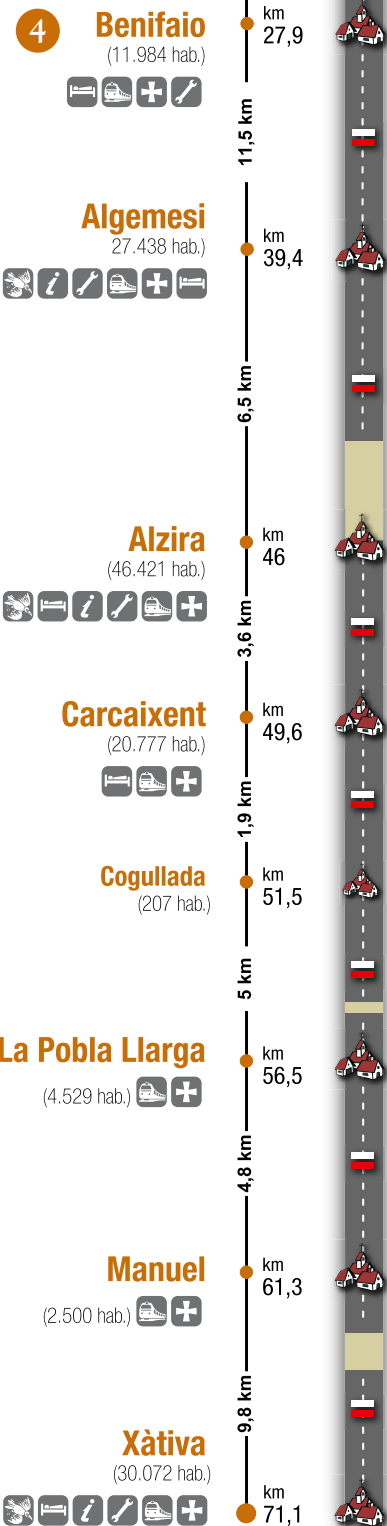
Key

- Gravel route
- Cycling Tourism Route
- Reduced cyclability
- Start/end of Gravel section (not signposted)
- Signs
- GR Sections (Long Distance)
- Non-GR Section
- MTB Section (no trekkers)
- Type of surface
- Road
- Compact or tarmacked track
- Track with irregular surface



La albufera de Valencia

La Albufera is a large freshwater coastal lagoon of great ecological value with an average depth of a metre. It is separated from the sea by a narrow coastal strip of dunes. Our route follows the tracks in the salt marsh; old land that used to belong to the lagoon and are now rice fields. It is a very changeable landscape as, depending on the season, it may be completely flooded, apart from the raised tracks. The whole area is a unique refuge for many species and it is easy to see herons, egrets, pochards, shovelers and mallards.



From *Blasco Ibáñez Square* in **Benifaio**, we take *Pintor Segrelles Street* which becomes a tarmacked track (*Camí de la Mocarra*). We leave the *Royal Júcar irrigation channel* behind and go straight ahead along the tarmacked track next to the signs for the Way of St James. Ignore several turnings until you reach a junction, before a level crossing, where we turn left off the main track (*Camí de l'Hort de l'Alemany*). Make good speed on the tarmacked track, along an endless straight with hardly any interruptions between citric fruit orchards, and always with the railway line to our right. Ignore several roads that cross our track and reach **Algemesi** with no problems.

Go along *Parque de Salvador Castell Street* to its end, next to the *river Magro*, which we cross over a *pedestrian footbridge*. Take *Camí de la Minyoneta* and leave *Virgen de la Salud* school behind, without turning off, until you reach an industrial estate. We continue to the entry to the estate at a roundabout on the *CV-42 road*, which we cross with care to some land next to a scrap yard, where we take a tarmacked track. It soon becomes a track with a compact earth surface and, after crossing a bridge over the *river Verde*, we turn right on to another track that avoids the road. With a good surface, it runs parallel to the *CV-42 road* until it ends at a roundabout next to a lovely Modernist building (*La Cotonera*). Then we take a **cycle lane** on the left on the banks of the *river Júcar* that leads to an iron bridge that we cross to reach the centre of **Alzira**.

We leave from *Reino Square* next to the tourism office on *Colón Street* and come to a tunnel under the *CV-50 road*. After going through the tunnel, go straight ahead. Just after crossing *La Casella ravine*, take the first turning on the right (*Ben Jafacha Street*) and enter an industrial area, which we leave along a tarmacked track (*Camí de la Materna*) among citric fruit orchards. Go straight ahead without turning off, and go past some large agricultural warehouses before coming to a roundabout, from where we enter **Carcaixent**.

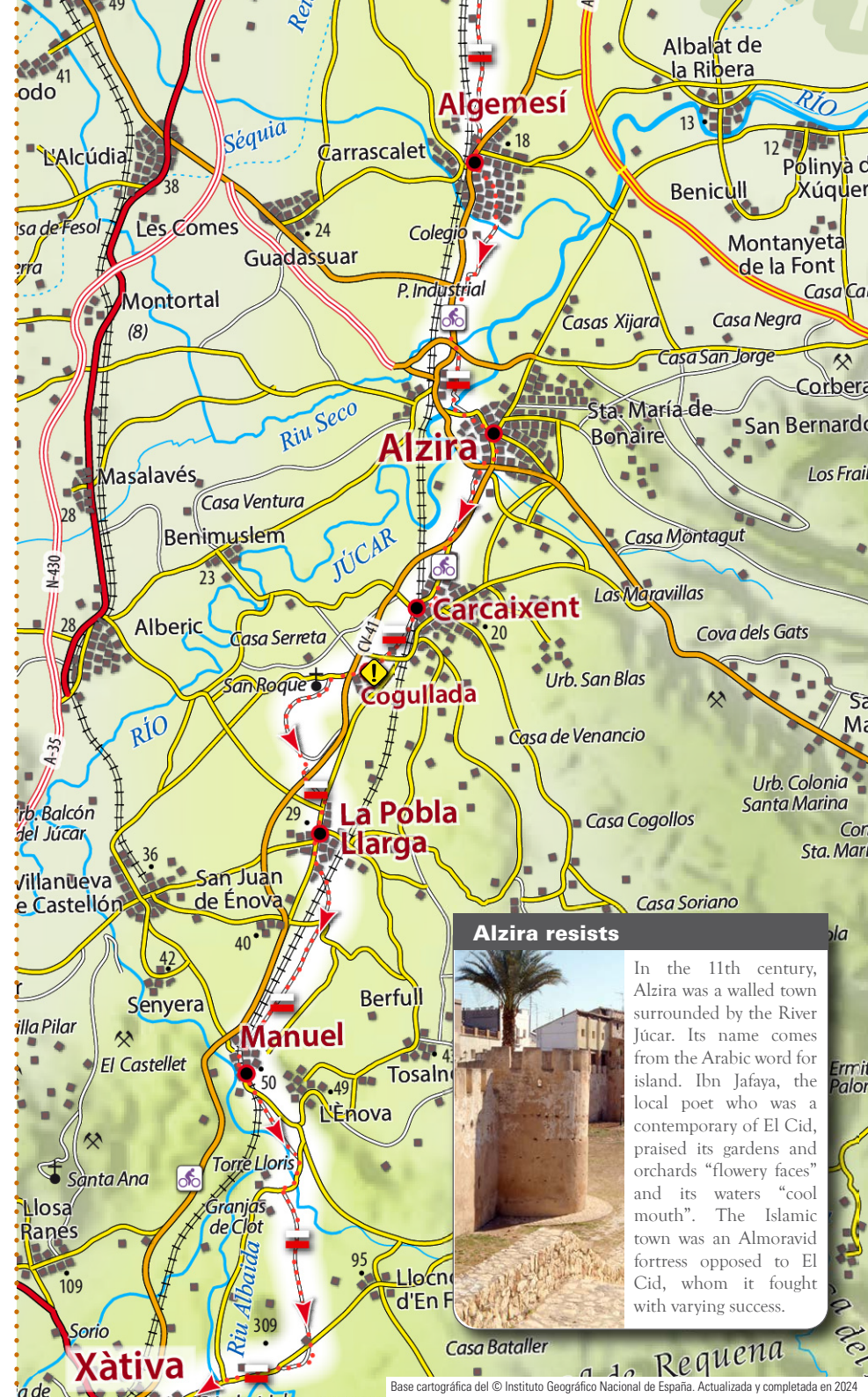
From *Mayor Square*, take *Comandante Hernández Street* and then turn right on to *Prim Street*. Pay attention because, just after going through a *tunnel under the railway line*, we have to turn left along a clearly marked path next to the river and the railway. It soon becomes a tarmacked track that goes through an industrial area and ends at a roundabout. Take the tarmacked track opposite.

⚠ You have to push the bike for 200m (wrong direction in a one way street) to Cogullada.

Leave the town on *Ravalet Street* and cross the pedestrian footbridge over the *CV-41 road*, where we take the *CV-543 road (Camí de San Roque)* on the right. Shortly before reaching *San Roque Hermitage*, we leave the road on a tarmacked track on the left. It goes through countless orange orchards with several turnings where we have to pay attention to the signposts, until it comes to the *CV-41 road*. We go under that through a small underpass that leads to **La Pobla Llarga industrial estate**, which is the way into the town.

We go out of the town on *Santa Cecilia Avenue* and *Pintor Estruch Street*, which connects with a tarmacked track (*Camí de Monflorit*). It goes under the railway line next to *Barcheta ravine* and leaves behind a turning on the left to *Pont de l'Ase* before coming to the roundabout in the *CV-561 road*. We go straight ahead along another tarmacked track opposite. When we come to a crossroads next to an underpass under the railway line, we turn off and continue between orange orchards along a long straight section to a tunnel under the road, on the outskirts of **Manuel**, which we enter on *Abad Street*.

Continue on *Abad Street* and take a cycle lane along the old railway line that goes through the town, then leave it next to the old station. The cycle lane ends at a junction with the road, where we take a tarmacked track on the right that soon becomes a track with a firm earth surface. We again come to the road, which we take briefly on the right, but soon leave for an earth track on the left. This crosses a couple of fields (be careful with the surface for 20m) and after 250m we take a tarmacked track where we can pick up speed again on the main route without any difficulties. It crosses a bridge over the railway and soon goes on to the *CV-600 road*, which we avoid momentarily along a tarmacked track opposite. After a crossroads, the track ends again at the road, which we take with care, to reach **Xàtiva** through a large industrial area.



Alzira resists



In the 11th century, Alzira was a walled town surrounded by the River Júcar. Its name comes from the Arabic word for island. Ibn Jafaya, the local poet who was a contemporary of El Cid, praised its gardens and orchards "flowery faces" and its waters "cool mouth". The Islamic town was an Almoravid fortress opposed to El Cid, whom it fought with varying success.

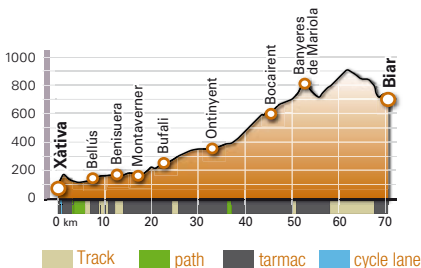
Defending the South

Gravel travel guide

Xàtiva - Biar

May 2025

UTM Desarrolos



Distance	70,7 km	Accumulated climb	1.600 m	Earth / Tarmac / Cycle Lane	29 / 71 / 0 %
Physical difficulty	Medium	Accumulated descent	1.020 m	Signposting	in hiking and MTB sections
Technical difficulty	Medium	Estimated time	5 h 45 m	IBP	Difficulty index 116

An intermediate stage that goes up the valleys of the rivers *Albaida* and *Clariano* to reach the foothills of the Baetic range. Along the way, we will discover interesting landscapes, such as the *Cova Negra* path, *Val de Albaida* with *Bellús* reservoir, the natural swimming-pools of *Pou Clar*, and *Sierra de Mariola*. The route does not involve any complications or difficulties, apart from a climb up a road in Ontinyent and the lovely forest track in the hills between Banyeres and Biar.

The ring of the dove



Xàtiva Castle is an emblem of this town of monuments. After El Cid conquered Valencia, Xàtiva became an Almoravid fortress. An important paper industry developed there during the taifa kingdoms. It was the home of Ibn Hazm (11th century), the author of *The Ring of the Dove*, one of the most important love poems in our literature, and of Ibn Yubair (12th century), the author of a famous book of travels in the Arab world.

Key

- Gravel route
 - Cycling Tourism Route
 - Reduced cyclability
 - Start/end of Gravel section (not signposted)
 - GR Sections (Long Distance)
 - Non-GR Section
 - MTB Section (no trekkers)
- Signs
- Type of surface
- Road
 - Compact or tarmacked track
 - Track with irregular surface

0 m 1000 2000 4000

Ontinyent

Cova Negra

The route from Xàtiva to Bellús follows a nice easy path through the gorge of the River Albaida. Half way along this section, we come to Cova Negra, a blackish rock-shelter where archaeologists have found important remains of Neanderthals.

Xàtiva

(30.072 hab.)

Bellús

(306 hab.)

Guadasséquies

(480 hab.)

Benisuera

(185 hab.)

Alfarrasí

(1.183 hab.)

Montaverner

(1.617 hab.)

Bufali

(156 hab.)

We set off on *San Pascual Street* along a pedestrian lane that goes up to the *CV-620 road*. Ignore the signs for the **hiking route** and continue carefully along the road (**intense traffic**) until you re-join the route after 200m. Go down through a housing estate to an *aqueduct*, and then follow a track and path that can be done on a bike (**attention, steps**) which reaches an area of level ground. It's the start of an enjoyable path where you can ride through the *river Albaida Gorge*, next to a *medieval water channel*, and pass through *Cova Negra* and a climbing area. From the car park, we continue along an easy track to **Bellús**.

We leave **Bellús** on an earth track that goes through a tunnel under the dam road and approach the reservoir. Continue to **Guanasséquies**.

Next to the roundabout, we take a track with a good surface that avoids the section of road to **Sempere**. There we take a short section of road to **Benisuera**.

We leave from the lower part, near a park. The track turns right on to an earth farm lane that goes round the head of *Bellús reservoir* to **Alfarrasí**.

(**if you prefer tarmac you can take the previous track on the way out of Benisuera**).

Follow *Valencia Avenue* on the *N-340 road* towards **Montaverner**. We leave an industrial estate behind and, after crossing a bridge over the *CV-60*, we come to a roundabout where we go straight ahead on the old road, over a lovely iron bridge. We soon cross the *river Albaida* and come to **Montaverner**.

We exit the town from *Ontinyent Street*, on a tarmacked track that goes down the *river Albaida* and we cross it over a footbridge. We follow a section next to the river as far as *Barranquets ravine*, where we distance ourselves from the stream. We reach a junction, where we go down to the *river Albaida bridge*, and after a short but intense climb we come to **Bufali**.

Bufali

(156 hab.)

**Ontinyent**

(36.194 hab.)

**Bocairent**

(4.115 hab.)

**Banyeres de Mariola**

(7.255 hab.)

**Biar**

(3.607 hab.)



We follow a road around **Bufali** to a junction where we take a tarmacked track next to a stream and go on without turning to a crossroads next to a fenced field, where we turn right. We cycle past a sewerage works and reach the **CV-641** road, which we take on the right, turning 180°. We soon leave the road on a track on the left with a short section of a compact earth surface. Keep on the main track without turning off until you reach a tunnel under the motorway. It leads to a long industrial estate that we go through to reach **Ontinyent**.

Leave the town by the municipal sports centre next to the roundabout on the ring road. Take the *Camí del Llombo*, which goes through several housing estates until it comes to a turning on to the Alba path. It's a path that can be cycled and will take us to **Pou Clar** (natural pools for bathing) where **we go up some steps with the bike on our shoulder** to the car park. Carry on along the CV-81 road with **great care because of the traffic and the steep climb**. Ignore the turning in *Tarongers Ravine*, where the **hiking route** turns off the **MTB section**.

▶ Start of MTB section (5,7 km)

Taking no notice of the turning in *Tarongers Ravine*, we continue on the **CV-81** road that climbs up a narrow valley with **great care owing to the heavy traffic, narrow hard shoulder and steep ascent**. After 1.5km, the road adds another lane for slow traffic which makes the climb more comfortable. Once you're out of the ravine, and come to a level section with a roundabout, leave the road by turning right (forbidden for cars) and re-join the **hiking route** on the *Pont Darrere la Vila* that enters **Bocairent**.

We go out of the town from the lower part, next to *San Blai Bridge*, towards the football pitch. We leave several detached houses behind and soon come to *Bocairent industrial estate*. The route goes through the large industrial area and leaves behind a junction with the *GR-7 path*, and ends at a tarmacked track (*Camí Vell de Banyeres*). After a long straight section, we come to *San Antonio Hermitage* where we turn on to a track with a compact earth surface which gradually starts the climb to the range of hills. When we enter the **province of Alicante**, the **signs change (GR to No GR)** and the track surface improves and becomes tarmacked. Go up the gentle climb without turning off until you reach the *Banyeres road*, which we take on the left, leaving the **hiking route**. We quickly come to **Banyeres de Mariola** (**no entry along the track opposite**).

Leave the town on *Alcoi Street*, which joins the **CV-795 road**, and turn off the **hiking and MTB route** temporarily.

○ Section without signs: the route abandons the signposted hiking and MTB route

We go quickly down the road to reach the bridge over the *river Vinalopó* after 1.4 km. We then turn off the road on to a tarmacked track in the right. After 25 m, continue on the track on the right which, after 1 km, re-joins the **hiking and MTB route**.

We follow the tarmacked track for 2km and come to a fenced field, where it becomes a forest track with a compact surface where you can cycle into the hills up a long but comfortable climb. After a level section, when you come to *Cova Negra forest recreation park*, start a rapid descent down a winding track that is fun for cyclists. It ends at the *sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de Gracia*, where we take a road that quickly leads to **Biar**.

Pou Clar: a refreshing bathe

On the way out of Ontinyent, the Alba path leads to Pou Clair, an impressive landscape formed by a series of natural pools carved in the limestone. It's hard to avoid bathing in their crystalline waters and relaxing before starting the tough sections to Bocairent, one of the loveliest towns in the whole Way of El Cid.

**Scenic road**

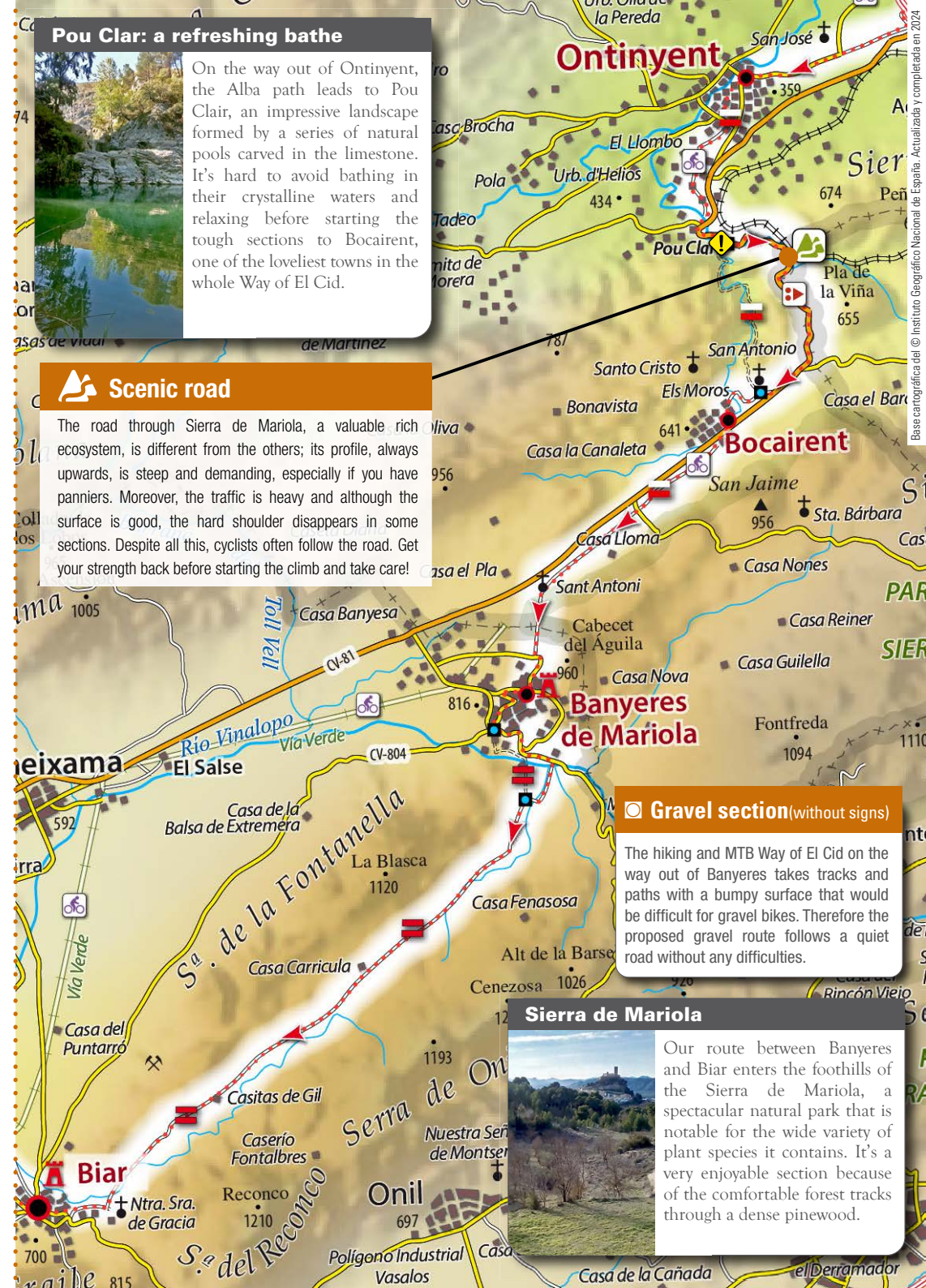
The road through Sierra de Mariola, a valuable rich ecosystem, is different from the others; its profile, always upwards, is steep and demanding, especially if you have panniers. Moreover, the traffic is heavy and although the surface is good, the hard shoulder disappears in some sections. Despite all this, cyclists often follow the road. Get your strength back before starting the climb and take care!

○ Gravel section (without signs)

The hiking and MTB Way of El Cid on the way out of Banyeres takes tracks and paths with a bumpy surface that would be difficult for gravel bikes. Therefore the proposed gravel route follows a quiet road without any difficulties.

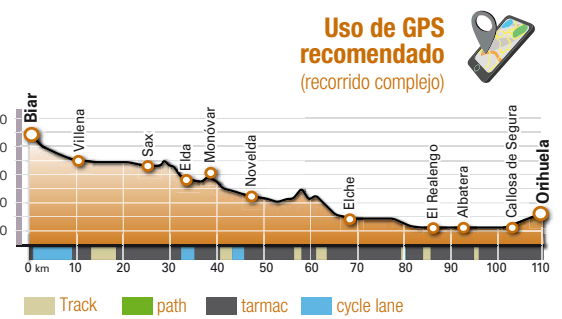
Sierra de Mariola

Our route between Banyeres and Biar enters the foothills of the Sierra de Mariola, a spectacular natural park that is notable for the wide variety of plant species it contains. It's a very enjoyable section because of the comfortable forest tracks through a dense pinewood.

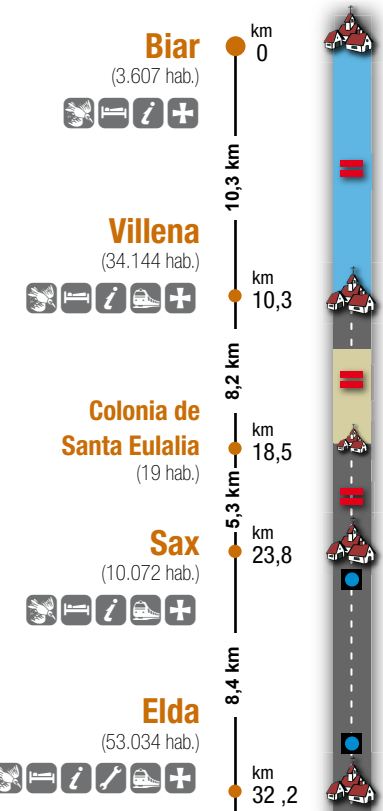


May 2025

UTM Desarrrollos



Distance	111,1 km	Accumulated climb	480 m	Earth / Tarmac / Cycle Lane	14 / 74 / 12%
Physical difficulty	High	Accumulated descent	1.050 m	Signposting	in hiking and MTB sections
Technical difficulty	Low	Estimated time	6 h 40 min	IBP	Difficulty index 53



This is the longest stage in the Way of El Cid, but with its downhill profile and good surfaces, we'll make good progress. It starts by following the River Vinalopó from its rising to Elche, discovering impressive medieval fortresses as we go. The last section is across a vast plain where the aridity of the landscape contrasts with the fertile fields and the common presence of palm groves.

We set off from the roundabout on *Maisonnavé Street*, where we take the *CV-807 road* (to *La Canyada*) downhill, with the option of a cycle lane for a time. At the end of the industrial estate, take a tarmacked track on the left that coincides with *La Chicharra Green Way*. The flat comfortable track, with restrictions for cars in some sections, allows us to make good speed. Much of the route goes through cuttings made for the old railway, in the shadow of pine trees. After crossing the old railway bridge over the *river Vinalopó*, the track turns left and heads towards *Villena* on a long straight section to the entrance to the town, next to the sports centre.

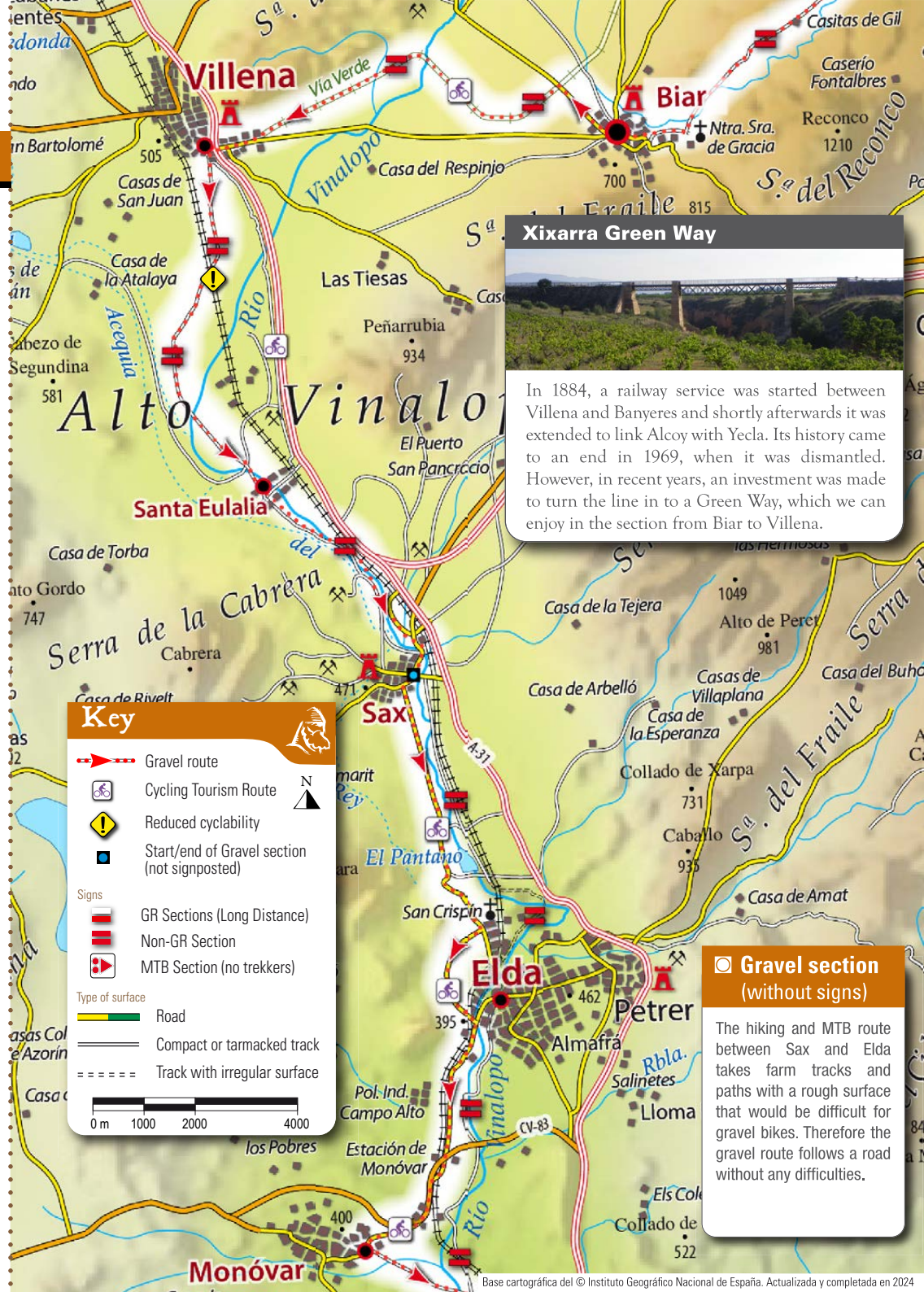
We go to the small *monolith of El Cid* on *Rosalía de Castro Street*, at the start of the route with the Way of St James and the *PR-CV 371*. At first we take a tarmacked track, as far as a junction shortly after crossing the railway (⚠️ **Take care: level crossing without barriers**) and continue on earth tracks with a good surface. Continue through the Vinalopó valley between large fields and barren land to the Colonia de Santa Eulalia.

We leave on *Santa Rita Street* on a tarmacked track with no difficulties, with the *river Vinalopó* on our left and the silhouette of *Sax Castle* on the skyline.


At the roundabout on *Cuatro Rosas Avenue*, we turn off the **hiking and MTB route**, and continue on *Reyes Católicos Street*.

Section without signs: the route abandons the signposted hiking and MTB route

We go to the roundabout at the start of *Americas Avenue* and continue on the *CV-833 road* towards *Elda*. The road is busy, but has a wide hard shoulder that allows us to cycle comfortably. After a long level section, the road starts a steep climb to a col. From there we go rapidly down to *Elda Hospital*, and continue on a long ring road (*Condes de Elda Avenue*) to the lower part of *Elda*.



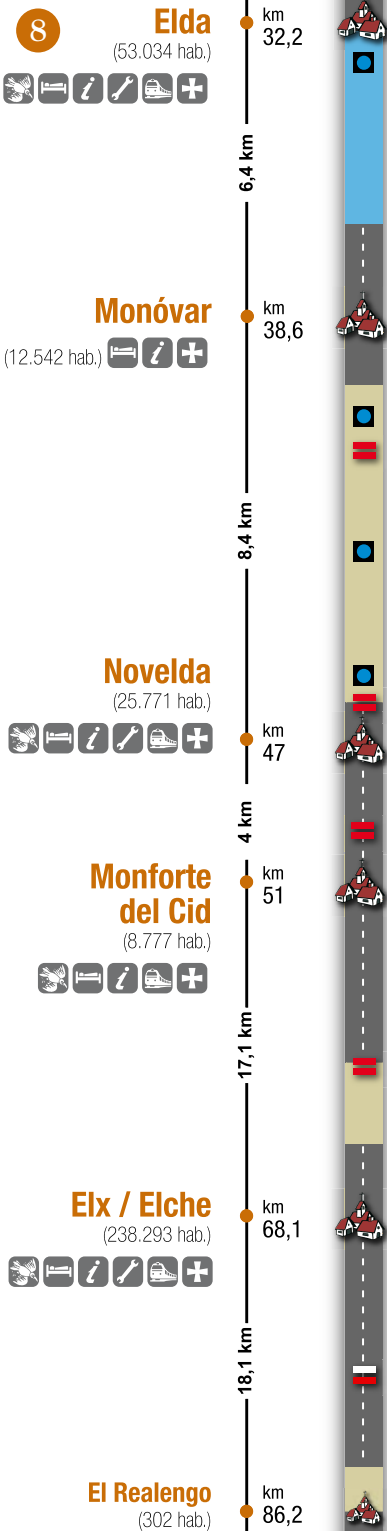
Xixarra Green Way



In 1884, a railway service was started between Villena and Banyeres and shortly afterwards it was extended to link Alcoy with Yecla. Its history came to an end in 1969, when it was dismantled. However, in recent years, an investment was made to turn the line in to a Green Way, which we can enjoy in the section from Biar to Villena.

Gravel section (without signs)

The hiking and MTB route between Sax and Elda takes farm tracks and paths with a rough surface that would be difficult for gravel bikes. Therefore the gravel route follows a road without any difficulties.



We leave the town from the roundabout next to *Vinalopó Park* and ignore the **hiking and MTB route**, which goes a different way.

☐ **Section without signs:** the route abandons the signposted hiking and MTB route

Take the cycle lane parallel to the *CV-835 road*, which rapidly heads away from the town, through a continuous urban area of industrial buildings and detached houses. After 3km, the **cycle lane** ends at a roundabout next to a petrol station and we have to follow the road, which is now much less busy. We soon come to the old Monóvar station, where we take the *CV-83 road* to **Monóvar**.

At the urban roundabout next to *Alameda Park*, we take the *Way of the Mills*. The tarmacked track leaves the *petanca club* behind and quickly descends to the enormous high-speed railway viaduct over the *river Vinalopó*. There we re-join the **hiking and MTB route**, which follows a level compact earth track for 2.5km. We go by the *Clot de la Sal* (ponds) and, before we come to an aqueduct (opposite the *castle*), we turn off the **hiking and MTB route** on a track on the right.

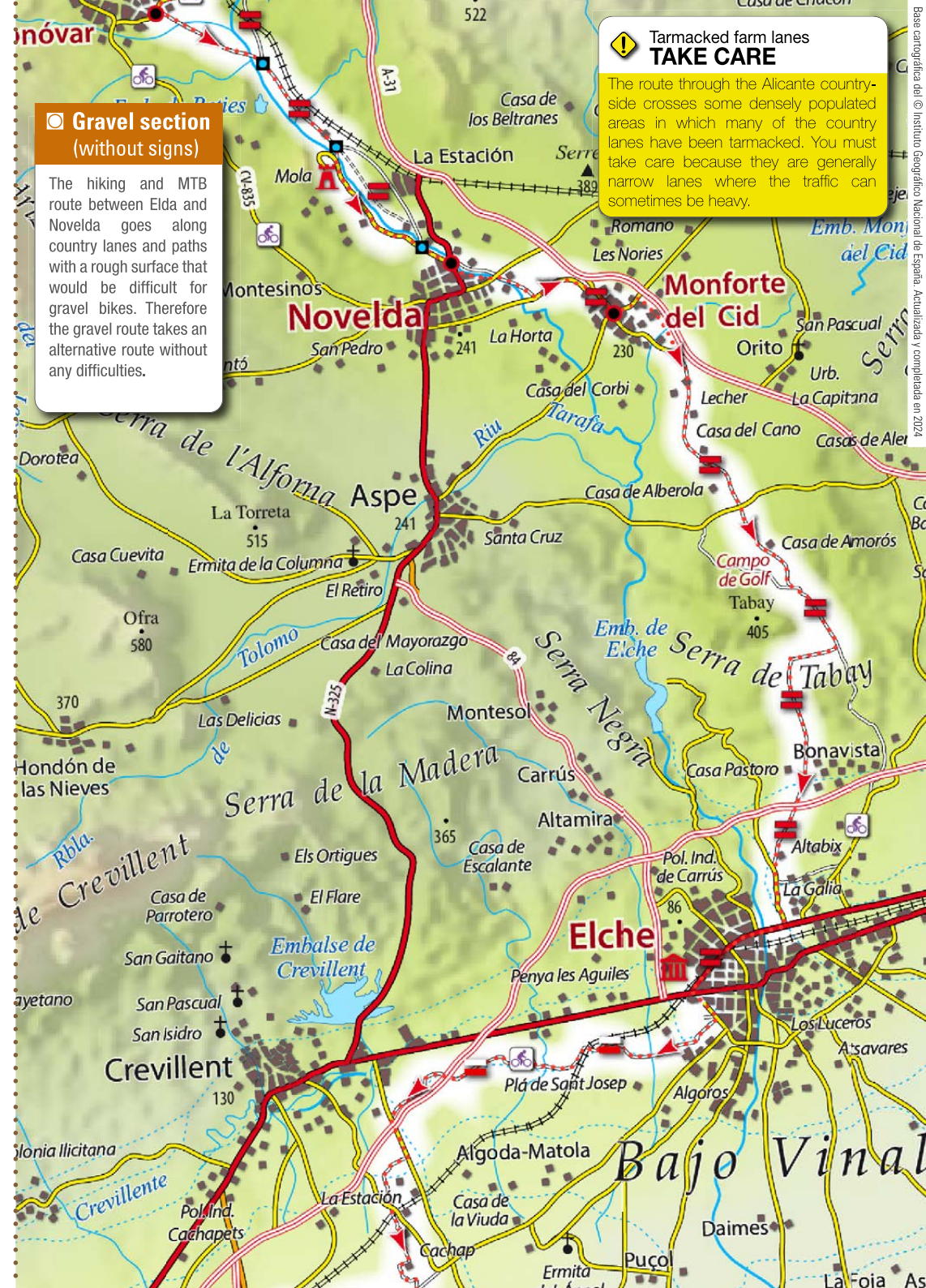
☐ **Section without signs:** the route abandons the signposted hiking and MTB route

The track crosses a bridge over the *river Vinalopó* and meets the *CV-832 road* at the foot of *Mola Castle*. We go on for 200m along the road to a crossroads, where we take a **cycle lane** that leads us to the proximities of **Novelda**, where it disappears. The last section of the access to **Novelda** is on the road, together with the **hiking and MTB route**.

We leave on *Vinalopó Avenue* and cross the river at the roundabout next to the *football pitch*. Follow *Antic Camí de Monfort Street*, which goes through an industrial estate to a **cycle lane** next to the road, which we will soon take. We join it at a roundabout and follow the road to **Monforte**. We soon come to another roundabout at the entrance to **Monforte**.

Set off on *Los Pinos Avenue* and *Camino de Azagador Street*, and leave the industrial estate behind. You come to a road, which you cross and continue opposite on a tarmacked track (Llano track) between vineyards to the *CV-847 road*. Follow a compact earth track that goes up a small hill to a *golf course*. We continue on a road that goes down between dispersed houses and take a tarmacked track on the right. On a bend we turn off the tarmacked track and take a way with a good earth surface that goes down the bottom of a ravine following the *signposted cycling route*. When we come to some housing estates, the track is tarmacked again and goes through a tunnel under the *A-7 motorway* and ends at a roundabout. From there we go to the town centre on *Camino del Pantano Avenue*.

We go from the centre of **Elche** to the end of *Tonico Sansano Street*, next to the car park for *Vinalopó Hospital*, where we take the *Riegos service road*. The **signs change (No GR to GR)** as our route to **Orihuela** largely coincides with the **Poet's Path GR-125**. The exit is along a tarmacked track nearly 8km long parallel to the covered canal that crosses endless housing estates. Shortly after going under the *A-7 motorway*, we reach a pond where the canal ends. We briefly take the **Crevillent** road, which crosses the *A-7* and the railway, and then turn off on to a tarmacked track on the right. We reach a raised crossing in **Barrio La Estación**, and continue through several housing estates to a road. We follow it to a crossroads, where we take the earth track opposite that leads to **El Realengo**.



Elche palm grove


Elche palm grove is formed by a series of orchards with date palms. They were grown by the Arabs with an irrigation system of channels. A World Heritage site, it is an example of how humans can change the landscape for the better.

Leave the town as far as the bus stop and take the *CV-904 road*, which crosses the railway line and comes to a roundabout. We continue on a road that goes under the *AP-7 toll motorway* and then goes across the *A-7 motorway* over a bridge. Here we temporarily leave the *GR-125* as we go straight ahead on the road at a good speed as far as **Albatera**.

We'll leave the town on *Cruz Street* and take a small road where we return to the *GR-125*. Carry on along country roads to a bridge over the *A-7 motorway*, where we leave the tarmac on a motorway service track. After 600m take a tarmacked track that goes through an industrial estate and, when you come to a road next to the roundabout at the access to **Rocamora Farm** (after 400m), you have to leave the hiking and MTB route as we continue on a **cycle lane**.

 **Section without signs:** the route abandons the signposted hiking and MTB route

The **cycle lane** runs parallel to the *CV-900 road* and soon takes us to the roundabout at the access to **Cox** (after 150m). We continue on the **cycle lane** next to the *CV-900*, which, after going under the high-speed railway line, goes round **Callosa de Segura** via four roundabouts, until we reach the town in the south, at a fifth roundabout where we re-join the **hiking and MTB route**.

We go from the roundabout at the access to the town along the *CV-900 road* towards **Redován** in an urban area with a speed limit of 40km per hour, but we must **take care**  because it's a section with heavy traffic. After leaving the cemetery and the *Barrio del Rincón* behind, we follow the road without turning off as far as **Redován**.

We leave **Redován** from *Orihuela Avenue* on *Calvo Sotelo Street* (*CV-919 road*), but we soon take a turning on the right (*Masquefa track*) which finishes in the **Media Legua district** and its hermitage. From there we go on to **Orihuela** on the *Old Callosa track*, which lets us cycle comfortably to a small roundabout and **Orihuela town centre**; the end of our adventure.

Orihuela



In 1088, El Cid rode through much of the province of Alicante with his armed retinue. It was a hostile territory in which he did not leave a "stone standing or any sign of inhabitants" according to the Muslim chronicler Ben Alcama. In 1091, El Cid's protectorate extended from Tortosa to Orihuela, which was the southernmost place in which he was able to impose his influence. The monuments in the modern town come from its importance in the 15th and 16th centuries.

