

Hotel Los Castaños to Parauta

5.2km / 1hr 20min

Leave the Hotel and turn right down the slope. After 15m turn left down a series of nine steps. At the bottom turn left in front of a postbox to pass a *tabac* shop on the right. Descend to a fork by house No 1 on the left and bear right downhill. At house No 30 bear right downhill to meet a larger street at a T-junction. There is a fountain to the left outside house No 2. Bear left in the 11 o'clock direction and walk down the street for 150m. At the end, at a junction below a ruined old fort, take the concrete track heading down left signed 'Parauta 1hr 15mins'.

You leave the village and go down the right-hand side of a valley. After 100m the concrete surface becomes a track and there are views left to Parauta, a splash of white in the distance. The limestone mountain to your left with the giant cliff face is El Toril (1405m on map) and is a handy reference point for this walk.

Continue downhill for a kilometre - you pass several gated and chained tracks. Just past a concrete-surfaced track which joins from the left (do not turn down it!), your track widens and you have lovely views towards Parauta. The track curves down right and you continue for a kilometre as it hairpins left and winds in and out down the valley side. There is a fenced area on the right as you reach the valley floor. Your return route is alongside the fence.

The river crossing frequently changes depending on how much rain fell during the Winter, John will give you specific instructions for this!

After crossing the river you will walk past a building on the left as the track narrows. You are now on the valley floor climbing towards a domed hill ahead, Corro de la Higuera (on map). After 200m the track goes to the right of the hill before a hairpin left turn takes you around the front of it.

After 10 min of walking, you will reach a clear fork. Take the sharp right, avoiding the left-hand path on which a tree is marked with a red X (just in case you are tempted). Follow the right-hand path as it progresses to the top of the hill, looking back with superb views of Cartajima and *El Toril*. Just past a fence you will reach a T-junction; turn left, past a small house on the right-hand side of the road and continue on this level track until it reaches Parauta entering it past a sign pointing back to Cartajima.

Just in case our telephone number is (00 34) 952 180 778