

## Pujerra circular walk (15 km, 5 hr)

### Introduction

Depending on the time of year and the amount of rain, crossing the river as you go from Pujerra to Júzcar may be more or less difficult. As of August 2013, the water was very shallow and there was a small wooden bridge on which to cross the river. If there has been a lot of rainfall since, it is likely that the bridge is gone, and you will have to wade through the water, which may be knee-deep. You should wear shoes and trousers that you won't mind getting wet. It may also be a good idea to take some large plastic bags with which to cross the river to avoid getting wet.

Also, as a general rule of thumb for this walk, if there are any tracks forking into or away from the track you're on which lead to gated parcels, ignore them unless this walk description explicitly advises you to continue your walk along them.

### Section 1: Hotel to Pujerra (3.5 km, appr. 1.5 hr)

Leave the hotel and walk down the street between the town hall and church. At the end of the street, go straight down *calle San José*. At the end of the street, curve steeply downhill right, then left; at a level road turn sharp right towards gateposts with eagles and bear left out of the village. After passing a goat farm on your right (ignoring a left turn shortly afterwards) you will pass some steps leading up to a *mirador* on the left. Beyond the *mirador*, cross straight over a track at *finca "El Quince"*. (Alternatively, you can walk up the steps to the *mirador* and re-join the route at the *finca*.)

Somewhat later, a minor path forks off to the left; continue on the main track downhill, bearing right. You will then pass a log cabin to the left. Upon reaching a five-fold crossroads with a manhole in the centre, keep on the main track bearing slightly left. When you reach a fork after a few minutes, bear left through a pair of oak trees. At the next fork, bear right and continue downhill. Pujerra should now be coming into view in front of you. Continue down the main track passing a small white building to the left, until – 1 hr after leaving the hotel – you reach a tarmac/cobbled road going from Júzcar to Pujerra. Turn left onto the road and cross the river on a concrete bridge. At a fork with power cables, bear left on a dirt track, and – almost immediately afterwards – bear right on a narrow uphill path.

It is now a steep climb into Pujerra. For 250 m you wind left and right under power cables through a fairly overgrown path. Along this path you will reach a fork, where you should turn right between two earth banks; then the path will widen and you should continue uphill to the right. Upon arriving at a T-junction with a well-worn track, turn right uphill and follow a fence along your left up to a tarmac road. Go straight over onto the track opposite and continue until you reach a fork. There, bear left, passing a metal pylon shortly after the turn. At a fork after another pylon, bear right. Some 20 min after leaving the narrow, overgrown path you should have reached a *mirador* at the outskirts of Pujerra, from where you have superb views of Cartajima and the valley. If you have brought a packed lunch with you, this is a beautiful place to rest and eat!

### Section 2: through Pujerra

To reach the village centre, if you're standing with the *mirador* to your right, walk the uphill street ahead of you past a large fig tree, leaving the *mirador* behind you. You will reach a village road paved with stones. Bear right along *calle Arriero*, then left through *plaza Vieja* past a statue on the left. Go through *plaza de la Iglesia* and turn right uphill. At the next T-junction, turn right passing the

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*ayuntamiento* on the right and bear left up two sets of steps. From the T-junction at the top of the steps, you can get to restaurants going both left and right (in *plaza de la Alameda*).

### **Section 3: Pujerra to Júcar (? km, ? hr)**

Back at the *plaza Vieja*, instead of going left, go right into *calle Esperón*. When the road turns into stone-patterned concrete, continue straight ahead, bearing slightly right. At the next fork, bear right, slowly descending down the side of the valley and past a white hut. Follow this track until you reach an unlocked gate, which should be closed. Pass through, closing it behind you. (You will go through a total of 4 such gates during this section of the walk – take care to close them behind you!) At the fork after the first gate, bear right and downhill. You will see a concrete water reservoir to the left and downhill before reaching the next fork. At the fork, bear right, ignoring the downhill turn to the left. As you continue along the track, you should be able to see several smallholdings to your left. At the next fork, bear left and downhill in a hairpin.

When the track splits at a hairpin, bear right and downhill to the 2<sup>nd</sup> gate, and past the smallholdings onto the 3<sup>rd</sup> gate on a right-hand bend. From here you will cross a valley with sweeping views of the riverbed below on either side. Descend along the path to a turning circle, where you bear sharply left and reach the 4<sup>th</sup> gate. You will cross a stream almost immediately and should then bear right and uphill. You should reach a locked, green fence. Here turn right along a path marked with red dots, which will take you to the river. This whole leg, from leaving the *plaza Vieja* in Pujerra, should take a little over an hour.

You will need to cross the river. If the wooden bridge is gone, you can use a rope fastened to trees on either side of the river (some 30 m further down) as an aid. On the other side, go counter-clockwise around a patch of bamboo (leaving it on your left) and follow the path up the hillside, which is marked with occasional red dots.

From here to Júcar, stay on this same snaking path. After a long while you will reach a fork, with a concrete track leading up and right. Bear left and downhill with the valley on your left, and passing a white house with a garden. At the next fork, bear right along a path with manholes. Continue until the path rises to meet some green iron railings. Turn right up into the village. After going up some steps, turn left and shortly fork right up to the road (or straight on to visit the village church). Once you reach the main road (MA-517), which runs through the village, bear right and continue walking along it. Shortly after, you should be able to reach *bar "Torricheli"* and a series of other bars for refreshment.

### **Section 4: Júcar to Cartajima (? km, 1 hr)**

Leaving *bar "Torricheli"*, walk right and then take the first right, making a steep ascent up a street and later a concrete road. When the track levels out and forks onto a main tarmac road, walk left for some 300 m, away from Júcar. Take a track off to the right, signed "Cartajima PR-A224". At a fork after a post marker go right and low. After some time, you will cross a dry stream and pass a purple-grey house to the right. The track ends in a T-junction: go right and up along the dirt track. At the next T-junction (with a fig tree), bear left. At the following T-junction, bear left to reach Cartajima. You should see it straight ahead of you, and should be able to make your way back to the hotel by retracing your steps from the morning.

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