

75 - Cascade of the Purgatorio

This hike takes us to the crowded Cascade of the Purgatorio, not via the popular route from El Paular but from the Refugio de la Morcuera near the Puerto de la Morcuera. On the way out we descend to this waterfall through a wide path that gives a wide view on the Cuerda Larga and the Valley of Lozoya. After the cascade we climb through the spectacular rocky surroundings of the Purgatorio and return via a couple of firebreaks to the Refugio de la Morcuera.

- The hike starts directly behind the youth hostel on a wide path that lies behind a green barrier (1). This path is signposted with signs of the RV-6 that we follow for quite some time. Thus we ignore after about 10 minutes the firebreak straight on and instead follow the posts of the RV-6 to the left (2).
- After in total about 45 minutes we reach a small building with a junction (3). Here we also follow the signposts of the RV-6, to the right.
- After in total about one hour and 20 minutes (at about 1,450 metres of altitude) the trail takes a sharp bend to the left (4). We go straight on here onto a firebreak that further on goes downhill steeply. Thus we temporarily ignore here the signposts of the RV-6.
- At the end of this firebreak we reach the trail of the RV-6 again (5) and turn right. We keep following this trail for a while, go through a green gate and next at a post of the RV-6 we turn right onto a narrow trail (6). Here we leave the trail with the signposts of the RV-6.
- We follow this trail a while until we get close to a stream (Arroyo del Aguilón) (7). Keep left here towards the stream, cross the bridge and then turn right onto the trail.
- We now follow this nice trail along the Arroyo del Aguilón all the time, the last stretch over the rocks, until the observation platform for the lower Cascade of the Purgatorio (8).
- From the Cascade we walk back a bit via the rocks and a bit further on – next to a sign “Cascada del Purgatorio” – turn to the right uphill onto the rocky slope onto a narrow trail (9). This trail further on is marked with milestones. Initially keep left in order to walk via the left flank of the mountain; further on the trail turns to the right to go over the mountain.
- This trail is not always very well visible but relatively well marked with milestones. Further on this trail turns into a wide firebreak (10) that takes us uphill to the Cerro Merino (11). On the Cerro Merino this firebreak ends in another firebreak where we turn right, further uphill.
- Through this firebreak we eventually reach the asphalt road M-611 (12). We go through the green gate, turn right and walk a stretch parallel to the road via a wide strip. We follow the bend to the left and next turn right onto a trail, which lies behind a fencing through which we go (13).
- Further on we follow the bend to the right (14). Through this trail we eventually reach another trail on which we already walked on the way out where we turn left (15). Through this trail we walk the last stretch back to the youth hostel Refugio de la Morcuera.

Fact Sheet

Duration: 4:00 hrs.
 Distance: 14.0 km.
 Route type: Circular route
 Path type: Dirt road, trail, firebreak
 Marking: Signposts RV-6 / milestones (partially)
 Total difference in altitude: 560 m.
 Highest point: 1,729 m.
 Difficulty: Medium (5/15)



How to get there?

Take from Madrid the M-607 to Tres Cantos/Colmenar Viejo. Near Colmenar, take the M-609 to Soto/Miraflores and follow the M-609/M-611 to Miraflores de la Sierra. In Miraflores keep following the M-611 to Rascafría. Between km 17 and 18 we reach the Puerto de Morcuera. Continue on this pass further in the direction Rascafría. We first get past a small parking lot near a well (Fuente Cossío) and then a bit further on at the youth hostel Refugio de la Morcuera. Here we park the car and start the hike.



GPS Coordinates:
 Latitude: N 40 50.191
 Longitude: W 3 50.109

