

# Castellvell and Mare de la Font Park

*“From the riverside shade to sunny spots”*

This is Solsona’s star route. It takes us from dense riverside woods to the panoramic views from the watchtowers in Castellvell, a landscape of contrasts between sunny spots and shady places. During the course of the walk, we will also discover the rich heritage of the area, such as the flora on the botanical route to the La Mina Fountain or the hundred-year-old oak grove on the way to Castellvell. Have fun in the Mare de la Font Park; enjoy the history in Castellvell and the nearby ancient Iberian settlement. This route takes 90 minutes to complete and is suitable for all ages.

## Route

Solsona is the starting point of this route (where the Black river and the Pallarès ravine meet). We have to follow the water stream to the **Mare de la Font Park**. This part is particularly suitable for all types of people and all times of the year, and can be done by bicycle. The path is wide and cars are not allowed: tall trees (poplars and ashes) flank the river. There is a section (1) which is especially interesting in the spring, when we get to listen to birds such as the nightingale, the golden oriole, the blackcap or the common blackbird singing away. In the afternoon, leaves form a spectacular mosaic of colours. Halfway through, we find the **Fulla Fountain**, and further along we cross two small stone aqueducts to get to a stairway, there we cross a paved path to reach an information point of the protected areas of El Solsonès (2). In order to get to La Mina Fountain we need to go through the metal tunnel. It is advisable, however, to visit the nearby Mare de la Font Park, where you can replenish your water

supplies and then go back to La Mina Fountain to continue the route.

Just after the metal tunnel, on both sides of the torrent that goes to the Font de la Mina there is an interesting **botanical route**, where through signposts with texts and drawings we can learn about the flora that inhabits the area. Once across the **Manel Fountain** (3) we reach **La Mina Fountain**. There, in a shady corner, we see a cave with a waterfall which welcomes us in the springtime. Then we can climb some steps to reach the La Mina Park, where there is a sports circuit.

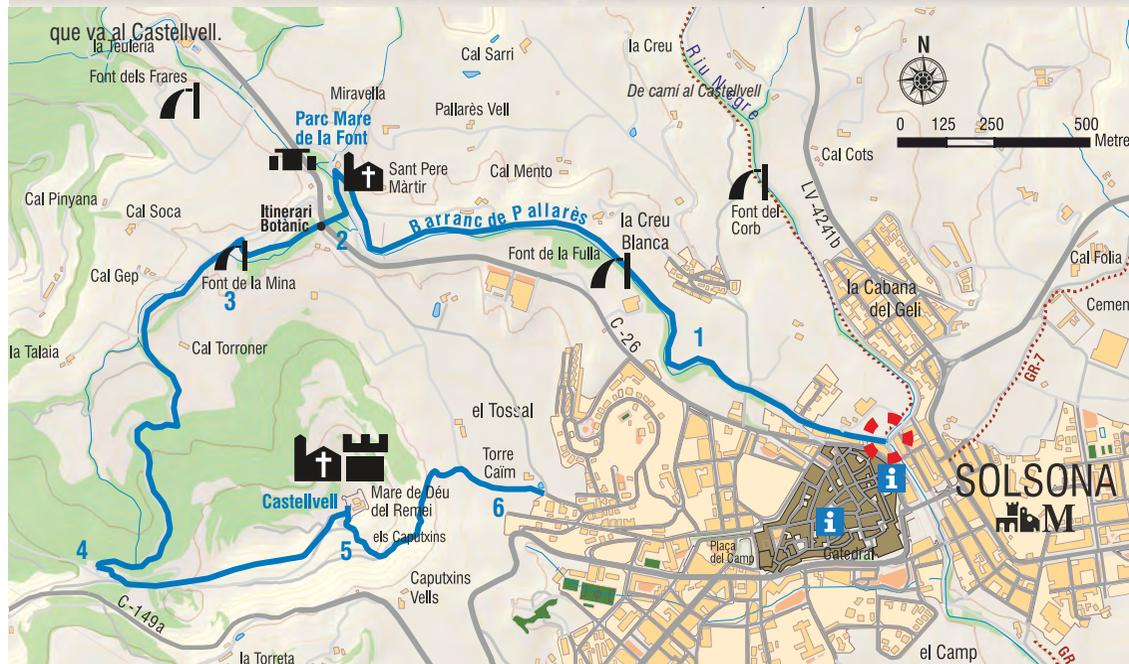
We cross the park and take a path on its western end that goes through an impressive oak grove with some very sturdy and mature exemplars. In this part of the route, the path goes up the Castellvell shady side of the hill, with pine groves and undergrowth in the form of box, until we reach the Castellvell road (4). Then, we will only have to walk a few hundred metres to reach the building that gives name to this route.

At the top of the hill, 848 metres above sea level and 130 metres above the city, we find the remains of the **ancient castle of Solsona**, currently located in the municipality of Olius. The Castellvell is a great place to visit and an excellent spot to contemplate Solsona and the geography of the area. Dating from the 10th century, it has been transformed over the centuries. We can also see the remains of an ancient Romanesque church, a Gothic chapel and the most recent fortifications dating from the 19th century Carlist wars.

West of Castellvell, there is an **Iberian settlement** on a small plateau. It dates from the 6th and 5th century BC, during the Iron Age; and it lasted until medieval times, with the 3rd century being its period of



Views of Solsona from Castellvell

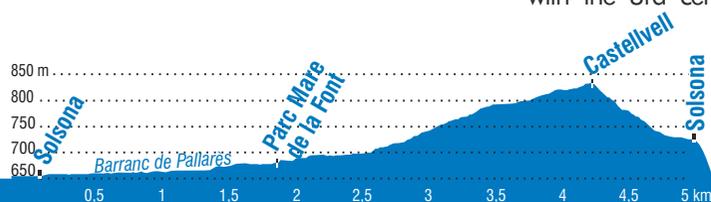


splendour.

Once we have explored the place we take a trail that will transform into a stony stairway (5) which comes down from the Castellvell in zig-zag. Now we are getting closer to the city and we start to see the Cathedral’s bell tower and the Clock tower. Then we reach the old road (6), which leads us back to Solsona.

## Technical data sheet

1 h 30 min	Easy
5 km	Easy
182 m	360 kcal
Circular	310 kcal



Path to Mare de la Font



Castellvell