

STAGE 7: RIBERA DE CARDÓS - ESCALÓ

RIBERA DE CARDÓS – TORMEDO AND ESCOLÀ FARM BUILDINGS – END OF THE TRACK ABOVE LA BANA – LA BANA PASS – AIDÍ – ESTARON – SANT PERE DEL BURGAL – ESCALÓ

Time needed: 5.45 h

Ascent/descent (approx): 600 m ascent, 575 m descent

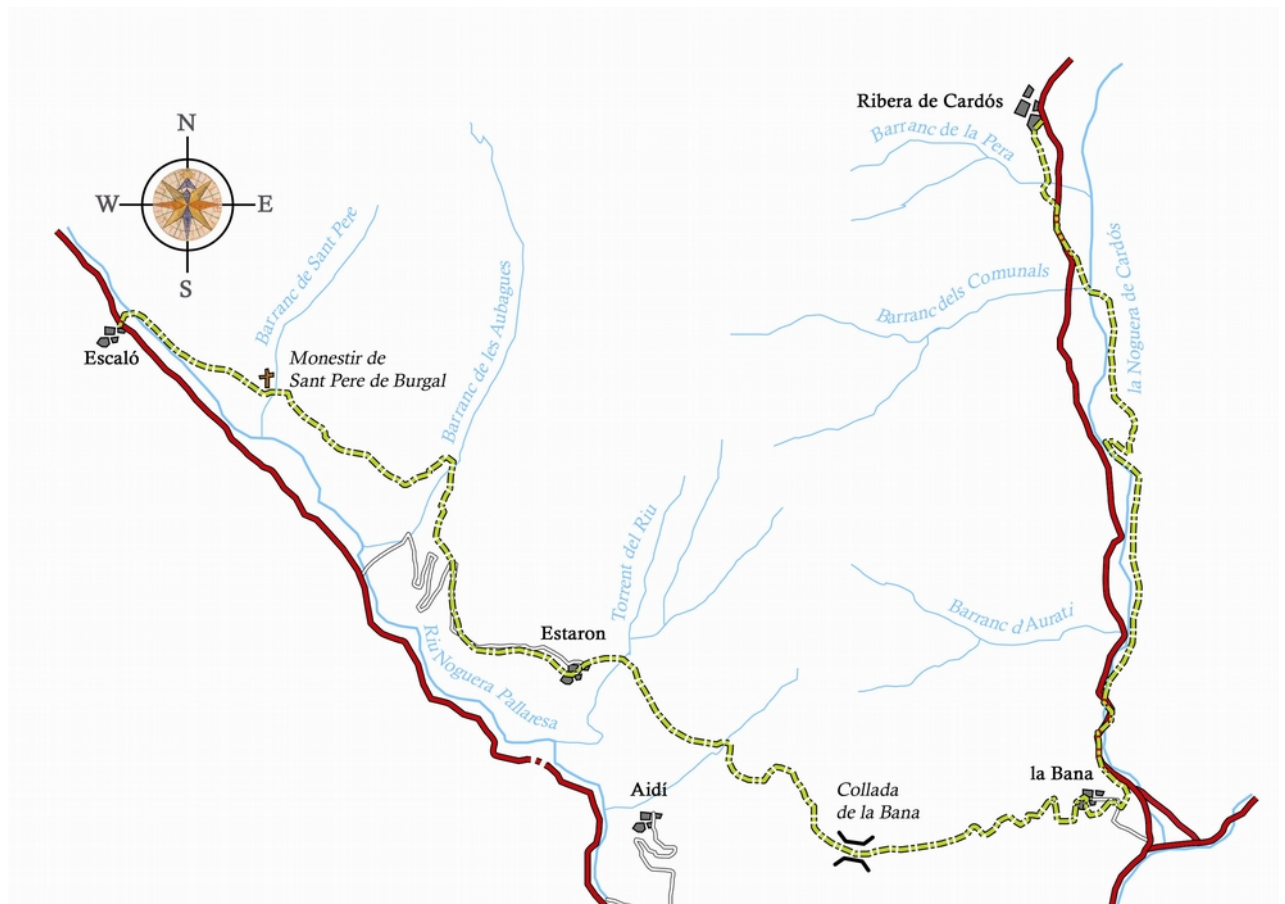
Distance (approx): 16.2 km

Highest point: 1,360 m

Lowest point: 864 m

Map recommended: *Parc Natural de l'Alt Pirineu*. Scale 1:50,000. Editorial Alpina.

Description last updated: July 2016



- 0 h **Ribera de Cardós**, 900 m. When this was written, the part from Ribera de Cardós to Estaron was not signposted and most of the path had still not been cleared of scrub. So when you follow it, you might find the odd little variation if it has been restored now. And if it hasn't, you can still do the walk, though it won't be as easy.
- We set off from the Cardós hotel and start by walking up the Surri, Anàs, Estaron and Bonestarre road but, just after the first bend, we take a street to the left where there is a lamp-post. As we go down we pass a tall new house on the left and the small white houses that belonged to the power station workers. Soon there is a sharp bend to the left that leads to the road but instead of following the bend we go straight ahead and take an old path with a dry-stone wall to the left. We cross an asphalted road and continue straight ahead on the old path, under the shade of the trees. One hundred metres before we come out on the road, we pass a small chapel on the left that is built into the rock and dedicated to St Anthony.
- 0.10 h **Main road of the Cardós valley**. We cross the road, turn right and carry on for about 100 metres. At the point where there is an overtaking sign there is a track which leads to the treatment plant. Instead of following that track we carry on straight ahead where the old path continues. It runs alongside the road, with dry-stone walls on the right. When it forks, just under a big electricity pylon, we take the left fork, which gradually goes down to the river.
- 0.15 h **Bocorona bridge**. On the other side of the Norguera de Cardós river we find the Ferreperet farm building. We pass it on the left and the path narrows.
- 0.25 h The **path then forks** into two narrow paths that stop at the same place: a small hollow in the Pixal de Norte ravine. We cross over and on the other side we find the Serni farm building, which we pass on the left, next to the path. We keep going for a couple of minutes. There are some fields on the right, below the path, and the high-tension power line too.
- 0.27 h **Tormedo farm buildings**. Group of five farm buildings which the path runs between. The Ansuiet, Escolà, Fèlix, Marrot and Trixó buildings, which we gradually pass. Then we lose the path and, from that point, have to carry on more or less straight ahead, where possible, until this stretch reappears with signs. Sometimes we cross meadows, other times go through the wood and occasionally walk through an old irrigation ditch but, either way, this is a rough route so it's worth wearing long trousers. After walking through this flat, uninhabited and uncultivated plain for about half an hour, we come across the traditional path again. It runs between some rocks on the left and the more sunken meadows to the right. A few metres further on it is covered again and means having to drop down into the meadows below.
- 1.15 h **Farm building**.
- 1.25 h **Flac meadow and bridge**, 855 m. Eventually we reach a meadow where the valley is closed. On the right there is a wooden bridge leading to the main road in the valley. People come to bathe here in the summer. When we reach the L-504 road, at km 5, we turn left and follow it for 500 metres. It's important to pay attention here because just at the start of a sharp bend, we will see the old path that goes up to the little village of La Bana on the right, There is a wooden hand rail on the left. We start to see some painted yellow markings, which sometimes help us to identify the path we need to follow.
- 1.35 h **Wooden hand rail** We carry on up the path until we reach one of the houses in La Bana. We pass it on the left and go round the side till we come out onto a narrow, asphalted road.

- 1.45 h **Road.** We turn right and head uphill for 200m, passing under a high-tension power line. There's a nice view of Tírvia to the left and, behind it, the Coma valley. After we have gone round a bend, which is quite sharp, we find the old path again.
- 1.50 h **Old path, 920 m.** We leave the road and take the old path. It is a narrow path marked with yellow stripes that runs between holm oaks and pines. Soon we see some riparian trees. There is a ravine there which descends from the La Bana pass. We pass it to the left of the path, which now bends right and starts to climb and zig-zag through the pine wood.
- 2.05 h **Circular construction, 1,000 m.** We reach a circular construction in ruins, on our right, and carry on going up through the pine wood until we get to the track.
- 2.15 h **The path crosses the track, 1,075 m.** We cross the track and follow the old path up through the wood. It's important to keep checking for the yellow markings. As it climbs the hillside, the path looks for the parts that are not so steep.
- 3 h **La Bana pass, 1,360 m.** The other side offers a panoramic view of the Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park. From left to right we can see Montsent de Pallars, Montorroio, Pic de Fonguera, Pui de Linya, Pic de Pinetó, Tesso and Pui de la Bonaigua. From this point we carry on along the old path, restored by the Alt Pirineu Natural Park in 2014, to the village of Estaron, following the yellow markings.
- 3.15 h **Gregori farm building, 1,228 m.** We reach a farm building, which is above the path, and carry on straight ahead. The path is quite flat but beware of the odd landslide. This area is covered with blackthorn and holm oaks. Soon we can see the village of Estaron and, to the left, Aidí Jussà. A few metres further up, on top of a small hill to the left, though we can't see it from the path, are the remains of the St Anthony hermitage (1,213 m). From here, submerged, we can see the ruins of the village of Aidí Sobirà. We'll pass it a few minutes later.
- 3.25 h **Aidí Sobirà, 1,200 m.** We pass what's left of the houses on our right and carry on downhill on the old path.
- 4 h **Aidí Jussà junction, 1,053 m.** Just as we get to Estaron we pass a manhole cover where the village water supply arrives and immediately come to the Aidí junction, which we pass on our left. Soon we pass the river ravine in a heavily shaded spot. From here on, we will come across painted yellow stripes that will lead us to Estaron, gaining height all the time.
- 4.10 h **Estaron, 1,060 m. (rural accommodation).** Not to be missed: a walk round the village, the church. We go through the village across the small square, where we can fill our flask at the fountain. On the other side of the village we come out on the road and follow it downhill until we come to a sharp bend on the left. Soon we'll see the houses in Escaló, where we are going to stop.
- 4.20 h **Sharp bend to the left.** A small path leads out of the field below that has no yellow markings. It's on the left, two or three metres down the field. It zig-zags amid the thick undergrowth, goes into a holm-oak wood, passes alongside the electricity pylons and then drops down until it comes out on the road. Once on it, we go right to the next sharp bend on the left.

- 4.30 h There might be cars parked on this bend. A **little path** gradually descends from here, then regains height in a holm-oak wood before going down to the ravine. This path was built in years gone by and sometimes had to be cut out of the rock. As we get near to the ravine it's easy to start wondering where the path continues on the other side because it is an escarpment and you can't see the path anywhere.
- 4.45 h **Pastera ravine**, 1,018 m. Birch and pine trees, an idyllic spot. We go up the ravine, passing it to our right. The path climbs between pines, holm oaks, heather, etc., and is indicated by yellow markings.
- 4.50 h **Junction**, 1,054 m. A stony path leads straight ahead but we turn left, as indicated by a yellow arrow, and go through some holm oaks. Soon there is another detour to the right but we carry straight on, gaining height and heading north.
- 5 h **Cap del Serrat**, 1,113 m. From here the path loses height in the middle of pine woodland. The sound of cars on the road at the bottom of the valley gradually gets closer. As we go down, we are surrounded more and more by holm oaks again. When we come out of this at some intersecting stone walls, we turn left and go down between two rock walls. They belong to the monastery where we are going to stop. We get there crossing a ravine by a small wooden bridge.
- 5.20 h **Sant Pere del Burgal Monastery**, 937 m. We leave the monastery to our left and head for Escaló, which we can see further on. From now on the path is in better condition and used more frequently. There are even some handrails.
- 5.35 h **Track**, 870 m. We are almost at the level of the river. We turn right on the track, with the river and a wooden hand rail on the left.
- 5.40 h **Junction, 870 m.** To the left we cross a bridge over the Noguera Pallaresa river. If we went straight ahead, it would take us to Esterrí d'Àneu. Once we are over the river, we are on the road and in the village of Escaló.
- 5.45 h **Escaló, 864 m.** (Hotel, restaurant). Not to be missed: a walk round the old medieval walled village, the watchtower).

IF YOU FIND ANY MISTAKES IN THE DESCRIPTIONS OR CHANGES TO PATHS, OR IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE, PLEASE WRITE TO info@ramatdecamins.cat.

Support the '[Apadrina un camí!](#)' project and sponsor a footpath.

Stage ascent/descent

