

34 COMAPEDROSA HIGHLANDS ROUTE (COMAPEDROSA NATURE PARK)

DON'T MISS...

the chance to stop and sleep or eat at the Comapedrosa Shelter, which is in the middle of the nature park. Further information: +376 327 955

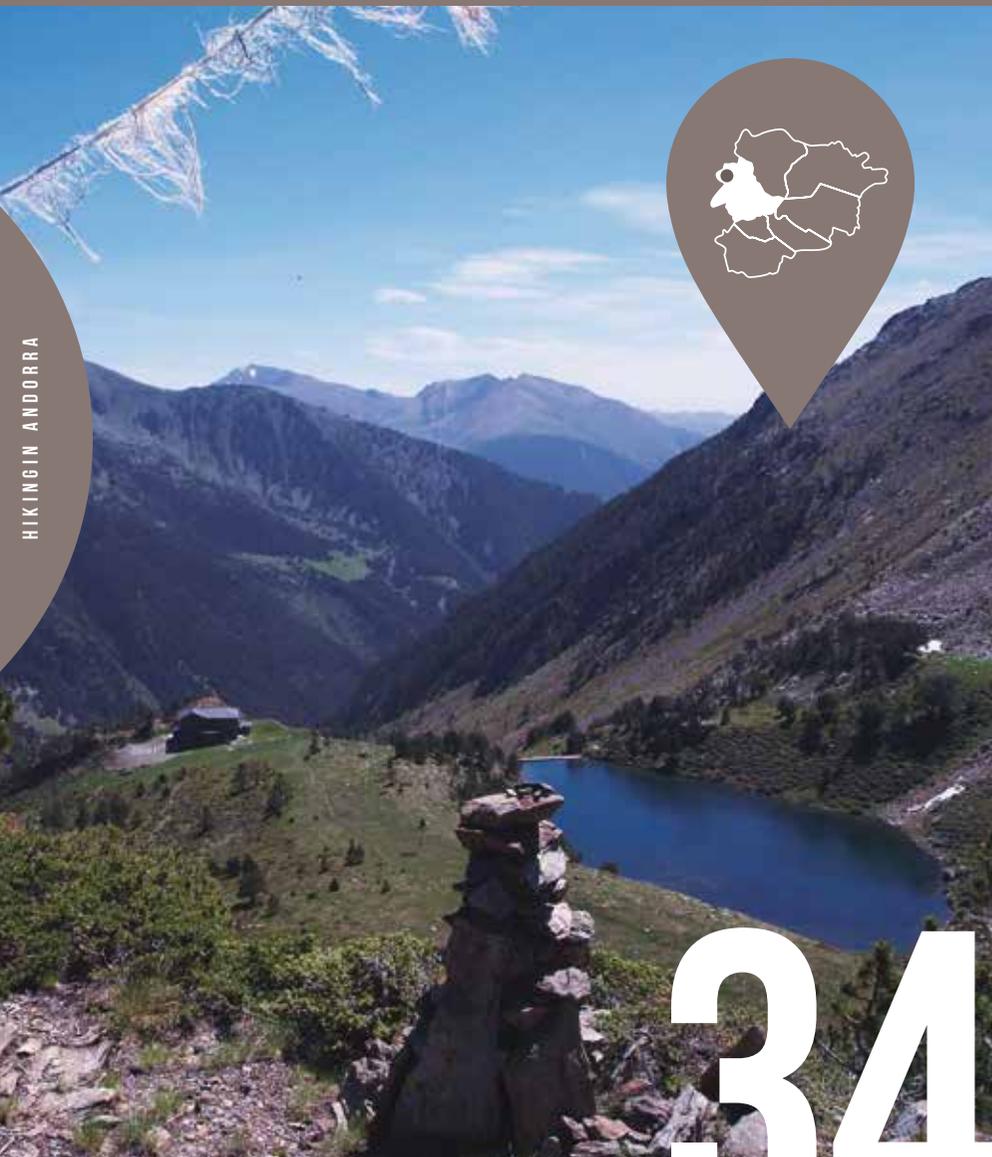
DID YOU KNOW?

The mountains of this valley were passages for fugitives during the Second World War. Andorra was a place of asylum for Republican, Spanish and French refugees, among others.

TOPONYMY

Comapedrosa: Coma, from the Latin cumba, meaning "valley", and pedrosa, from the Latin petra, meaning "stone"; thus "stone valley".

HIKING IN ANDORRA



Bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*)



Negre lake



One-flower fleabane (*Erigeron uniflorus*)



Black woodpecker (*Dryocopus martius*)

Pic de Comapedrosa is the highest peak in Andorra. It's located in the Valls del Comapedrosa Communal Nature Park, which covers 1,542.6 ha (15.42 km²). It belongs to the parish of La Massana, in Arinsal.

At 2,942 metres above sea level, it's an excellent place to contemplate the surrounding mountains and the whole of the Pyrenees. From the top you'll have a perfect view of Pica d'Estats, the highest peak in Catalonia. This nature park boasts six series of glacial lakes, making up a large percentage of the lake systems in western Andorra. They're also the highest lakes in the country.

The valley's cultural heritage is closely tied to traditional agriculture and livestock: stone huts, cabins, fountains, troughs, terraced plots, drystone walls, etc.

Very near the nature park there are a series of mountain shelters, including Borda de Percanela, Borda del Torner, Borda dels Prats Nous, Borda de les Agunes and Borda de la Coruvilla, all of which are connected with traditional farming and livestock activities, particularly harves-

ting and storing grass from neighbouring fields and raising livestock. Part of this tradition has survived until the present, as in summer, sheep, cows and mares graze in these meadows.

There are also two Romanesque chapels: the chapel of Erts, which dates from the 18th century, and the nearby chapel of Sant Andreu, which was built in the 17th century and was entirely renovated in 1964 by Catalan architect César Martinell. There are also two old flour mills: The Molí d'Abaix (lower mill) and the Molí d'Adalt (upper mill).

The best time of year to visit the park is from May to October, when there isn't much snow, making it much more accessible, and the park comes alive with the colours of spring (snow on the peaks and flowers in the valleys) and autumn (intensely green conifers and orange/brown deciduous trees). All the same, caution is advised with regard to springtime snow and summer snows. Visitors do come in winter as well to cross-country ski and go snowshoe hiking, but it's important to take into account the risk of avalanches, which considerably limits leisure options in winter.

34

LA MASSANA

34. COMAPEDROSA HIGHLANDS ROUTE



ROUTE PROFILE



DATA SHEET



8H
+1.361 M
-1.363 M
15.400 M

NO
 APPROXIMATE WALKING TIMES

ROUTE SIGNPOSTING



LOCATION	HEIGHT	DISTANCE DROP	TIME	COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION
1 ARINSAL CAR PARK	1.570 m	-- (--)	--	N42 34.409 E1 28.440	To reach the start of the route, follow the road to Arinsal (CG-5), pass the town and leave the car at the car park at the entrance of the park. Walk through the tunnel under the dike and follow the road to the Comapedrosa Interpretation Route.
2 CROSSROAD UNDER THE "AGUNES"	1.740 m	1.250 m (+170 m)	30'	N42 34.999 E1 28.187	The itinerary follows the Interpretation Route (you'll find information panels along the way). 500 m into the route, take a path that forks off to the right until you reach a forest track. Follow the forest track until you reach a bend to the right. Turn left at this point and follow the trail marked as GR11 (Camí de Comapedrosa). If you continue to the right, you'll reach Pla de l'Estany.
3 COLLET DE COMAPEDROSA	2.223 m	3.640 m (+483 m)	2h	N42 34.799 E1 26.927	Cross the Rivers Pla de l'Estany and Comapedrosa. Follow the path up a steady slope until you reach Collet de Comapedrosa hill. Go straight along the GR11 until you reach the picturesque and welcoming Comapedrosa manned mountain shelter. To reach the shelter, you have to deviate off the path slightly.
4 COMAPEDROSA PATH INTERSECTION	2.620 m	6.000 m (+397 m)	3h	N42 35.145 E1 26.182	From the pass, descend and walk level westward until the path resumes and makes you take a right turn going back up the slope. You'll pass by the pond near Negre lake and, after some scree, you'll reach the Comapedrosa path intersection.

LOCATION	HEIGHT	DISTANCE DROP	TIME	COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION
5 ALT DE COMAPEDROSA	2.942 m	7.400 m (+322 m)	4h 30'	N42 35.513 E1 26.619	Keep ascending, to the right, following the yellow dots. The path is steep and difficult all the way up to the mountain ridge. Follow the ridge until you reach the peak, which is the end of this route. The last stretch isn't difficult but caution is advised. At the peak you'll find the sculpture titled "La Gran Fita: Un llarg viatge" (The Great Landmark: A Long Journey), which is a solid iron structure enveloping three large rocks, which it protects from the harsh conditions of the peak. These rocks testify to the long journey that they embark on for thousands of years.
6 PLA DE L'ESTANY REFUGE	2.636 m	8.900 m (-306 m)	4h 50'	N42 35.513 E1 26.619	Begin the descent towards the river in Pla de l'Estany, following the yellow markers of the GRP. Not far into the route you'll come across an impressive view of the Pla de l'Estany cirque glacier. Cross the Pla de l'Estany sheepfold, heading north, until you reach the Pla de l'Estany refuge.
7 COMAPEDROSA PASS	2.223 m	11.530 m (-413 m)	5h 20'	N42 34.799 E1 26.927	Descend along the same route you took to ascend until the Comapedrosa pass, where the full-accommodation refuge can help you to break up the long trip down.
8 CROSSROAD UNDER THE "AGUNES"	1.740 m	14.300 m (-483 m)	6h 30'	N42 34.999 E1 28.187	Follow the same route upward until you reach the Interpretation Route. Return along the right side of the route, where you'll encounter a number of panels displaying information on the park.
9 ARINSAL CAR PARK	1.570 m	15.400 m (-170 m)	8h	N42 34.409 E1 28.440	The Route ends next to the tunnel under the dike. Go through the tunnel to the car park.



La Massana

