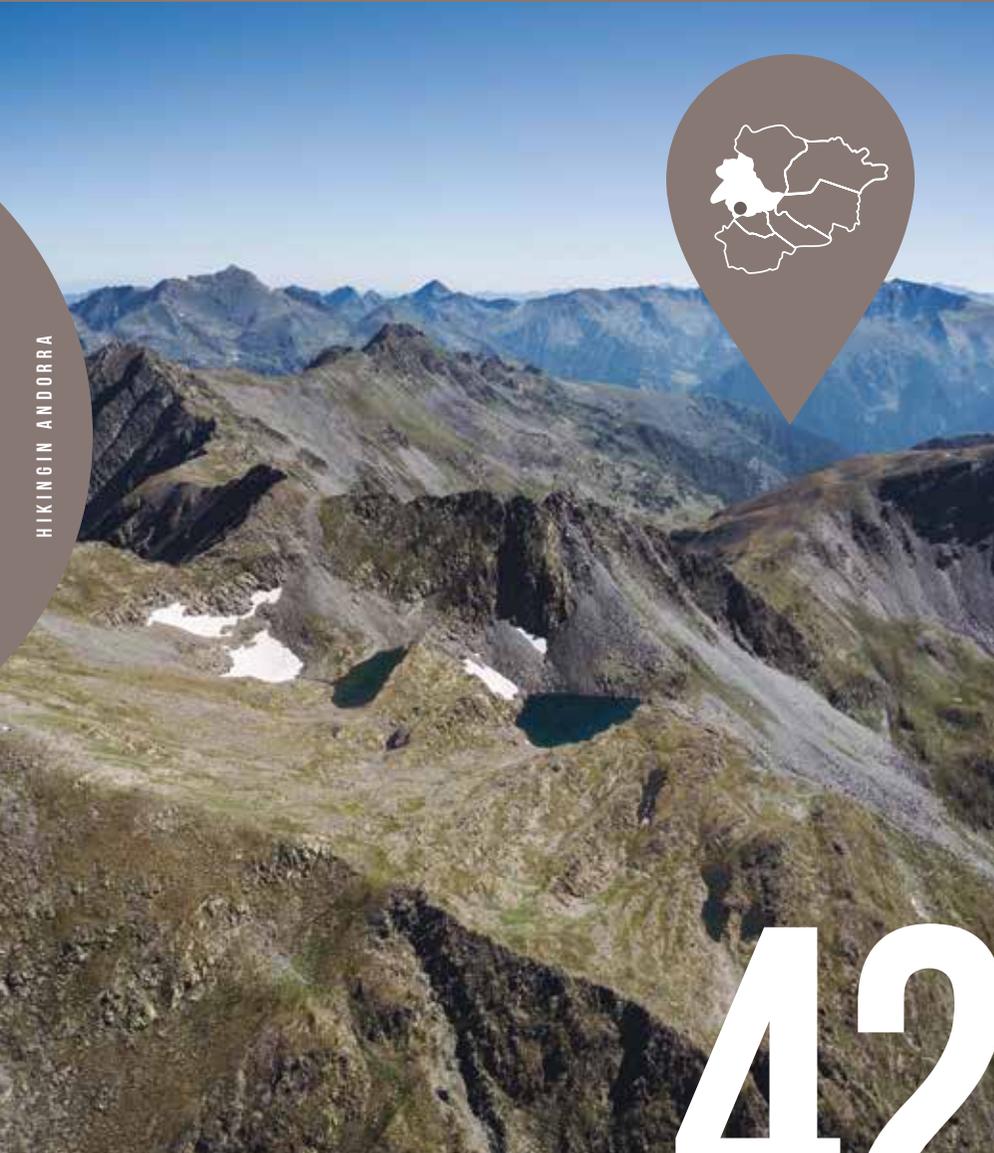


# 42 MONTMANTELL PONDS AND PLA DE L'ESTANY PEAK (COMAPEDROSA NATURE PARK)

HIKING IN ANDORRA



# 42

## DON'T MISS...

the Comapedrosa Interpretation Centre (CIC) educates, raises awareness and provides all sorts of information on the nature park.

## DID YOU KNOW?

in 1996, Arinsal suffered one of the biggest avalanches to occur in a populated area in the whole of Europe. Estimates suggest that approximately 2 billion cubic metres of snow fell at 200 km/h from a height of 2,500 metres.

## TOPONYMY

**Montmantell:** compound name made up of *Mont+mantell* (Meaning "Mountain" + "blanket"). This in turn comes from the Latin *mons/tis*. This county has several grassy mountain faces, whose shape brings to mind a blanket. *Mantell* (blanket) comes from the Latin word *mantellum*.



Hunters' cabin



Northern wheatear



Ridge



Negre lake and Comapedrosa Peak

This itinerary is located in the Valls de Comapedrosa Nature Park, a natural area created in 2003 and extended in 2006. It's one of the Principality's most alpine areas. It is home to a number of glacial lakes, including Estany Negre, Estany Forcats and the Montmantell lakes, the latter being a main point of interest along this route.

It's a tough route: although it's not technically complicated, the last stretch involves overcoming a small ridge. It passes through a variety of different kinds of landscapes, allowing hikers to admire the magnificent Pla de l'Estany or the timeless Montmantell ponds. It ends with a spectacular panoramic view of the Pla de l'Estany Peak, located on the northern border.

The flora that you'll be surrounded by along the route is mostly made up of deciduous trees which, as you gain altitude, will give way to fo-

rests of Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). There are also plenty of hazels (*Corylus avellana*), whose leaves are rugged, pointy and serrated, wild cherry trees (*Prunus avium*) and wayfarers (*Viburnum lantana*).

The fauna is also plentiful, including white wag-tails (*Motacilla alba*), Eurasian wrens (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*), common blackbirds (*Turdus merula*), long-tailed tits (*Aegithalos caudatus*), Eurasian blue tits (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) and European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*).

It isn't difficult to see small mammals either, particularly red squirrels (*Sciurus vulgaris*). Wood mice (*Apodemus sylvaticus*), bank voles (*Clethrionomys glareolus*) and garden dormice (*Eliomys quercinus*), on the other hand, are more difficult to spot.

# LA MASSANA

## 42. MONTMANTELL PONDS AND PLA DE L'ESTANY PEAK



\* You can return by following the same route.

### DATA SHEET

- 4H 15 MIN
- 3H 30 MIN
- +1299 M
- 1299 M
- 7.160 M
- NO\*

APPROXIMATE WALKING TIMES

### ROUTE SIGNPOSTING

- GR11
- WRONG WAY



LOCATION HEIGHT	DISTANCE DROP	TIME	COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION	
<b>1</b> INFORMATION HUT 1.560 m	-- (--)	--	N42 34.683 E1 28.736	When you get to la Massana, turn towards Arinsal, go past the town and continue until you reach Arinsal's car park, where you'll find the Valls de Comapedrosa Nature Park's information hut.	
<b>2</b> PLA DE L'ESTANY PATH 1.610 m	760 m (+50 m)	15'	N42 34.838 E1 28.736	Cross the first tunnel and turn right. Pass in front of the Prat Sobirans buildings and continue along the tarmac road until reaching a barred walkway. This is the starting point of the Pla de l'Estany path.	
<b>3</b> BORDES DE LA CORUVILLA 1.880 m	2.160 m (+270 m)	1h 05'	N42 35.179 E1 28.096	Leave the tarmac road and head upwards along the Pla de l'Estany path. The trail climbs while running through the forest. Follow the signs for Pla de l'Estany and you will reach the Coruvilla farm buildings.	
<b>4</b> REC D'ARENY 1.984 m	2.620 m (+104 m)	1h 25'	N42 35.268 E1 27.852	At this point, continue climbing along the track heading towards Pla de l'Estany. Continue meandering between the path and the track until reaching the Rec d'Areny path.	

LOCATION HEIGHT	DISTANCE DROP	TIME	COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION	
<b>5</b> JOAN CANUT REFUGE 2.050 m	3.540 m (+66 m)	1h 45'	N42 35.645 E1 27.632	Take the Rec d'Areny, which climbs parallel to the track, and soon you'll reach the magnificent Pla de l'Estany. Follow the signs for GR11.1 northbound until reaching the Joan Canut free mountain refuge.	
<b>6</b> MONTMANTELL PATH 2.180 m	4.080 m (+130 m)	2h 10'	N42 35.831 E1 27.819	Follow the signs for GR11.1 which runs to the right of the shelter. The trail gains altitude along an alpine pasture until reaching the beginning of the Montmantell path.	
<b>7</b> CABIN 2.500 m	5.600 m (+320 m)	3h 10'	N42 36.069 E1 28.182	Leave the GR11.1 and turn right towards the Montmantell ponds. The path follows the course of the river, leading you to the surprising Pleta de Montmantell grazing area. Continue climbing up a steady slope until reaching a small hunting lodge. The views from this point are truly breathtaking.	
<b>8</b> MONTMANTELL LAKES 2.675 m	6.460 m (+175 m)	3h 40'	N42 36.287 E1 28.012	From here on you must pay attention to the signs, given that the trail is not clearly signposted. Continue to follow the yellow dots and markings of an old GR until reaching the first Montmantell pond. Walk around the left side of the pond and continue climbing until you reach the second Montmantell pond.	
<b>9</b> ARINSAL MOUNTAIN PASS 2.734 m	6.830 m (+59 m)	3h 55'	N42 36.384 E1 28.043	From the western edge of the second Montmantell pond, carry on walking along the path which heads west. Slightly further on the path turns 180° and the slope eases off until reaching the Arinsal mountain pass.	
<b>10</b> PLA DE L'ESTANY PEAK 2.859 m	7.160 m (+125 m)	4h 15'	N42 36.406 E1 27.841	Upon reaching the Arinsal mountain pass, turn left (west) and head towards the summit up above. Despite this being an easy summit, this is the most technical part of the route. Upon reaching the summit, the panoramic views are spectacular.	

