

# 39 ERTS: EL JOU-ROC DE LA CAUBA PATH



## DON'T MISS...

the opportunity, if you get the chance, to pass by a dry stone wall and examine the colour of the lichens, as it can give you great information. If the lichens on the rock are green or yellow, this means that the wall has not suffered any damage or movement of land, and if they are orange it means that the air circulating through the area is very pure.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Walls made of stone have great historical value and are a real point of reference in the identity of Andorra and many places of the Pyrenees. Besides forming terraces and delimiting plots of land, they constitute rich ecosystems for many animal species (insects and invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals and even some birds, which nest there) and plant species (ferns, lichens and mosses).

## TOPONYMY

**Erts:** From the Basque *ertz*, meaning “nearby”. This village lies very close to the Arinsal river, on top of the bank in such a way that the plinth upon which it rises forms a sidewalk, or pavement.  
**Jou:** From the Latin *lugu*, meaning “which has a round profile”.



Jou forest



Pink  
(*Dianthus hyssopifolius*)



Matted globularia  
(*Globularia cordifolia*)



Arinsal valley

This itinerary, which makes for a splendid botanical outing, leads up to Roc de la Cauba, in the village of Erts (parish of la Massana). It's an easy route, although caution is advised once you reach the top, as the drop is high.

The first stretch of the path is surrounded by hazels (*Corylus avellana*) and common box (*Buxus sempervirens*). These shrubs are commonly found in calcareous areas, and although there are no calcareous strata in this area, their presence is the result of the rocks found higher up, whose carbonates are loosened and transported downhill by the rain.

Further up, in the shaded and thus cooler area, the vegetation is typical of humid alpine grasslands. The most common species are the tower cress (*Arabis turrita*), the water aven (*Geum rivale*), the liverleaf (*Hepatica nobilis*) and the wild strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), among many other types of grass that thrive in shaded areas.

Before ascending up the mountain pass, you'll pass through a forest of scots pines (*Pinus sylvestris*), which you'll see plenty of all the way to the top.

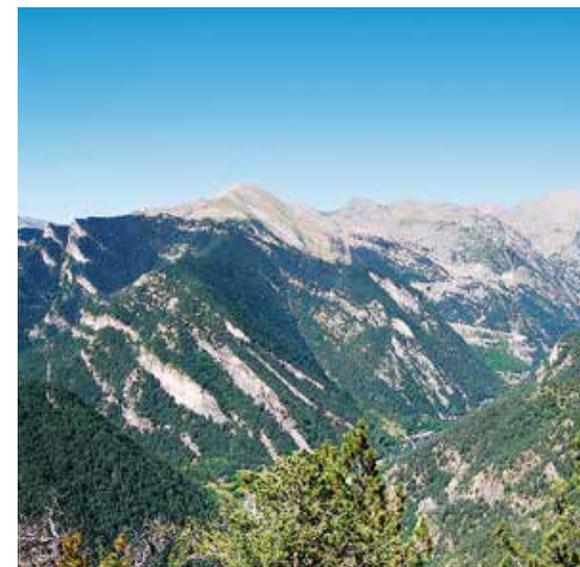
As you continue to climb you'll begin to find scattered specimens of mountain pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Although the vegetation is generally consistent with that found in pine woods, there are also a few plants typically found in rocky environments, such as white stonecrops (*Sedum album*), several species of Globularia, such as the Cordifolia, listed on Andorra's catalogue of vulnerable species, and the *Astragalus monspessulanus*—a small shrub with compound leaves and pink flowers.

The Chapel of Sant Romà (19th century) presides over the village that this route passes through. In its interior there's a Baroque altarpiece. For adventure lovers, there's a via ferrata in Erts, at Roc de la Coma. To get there, take the path next to the Casa del Quart, on the left side of the river, in the direction of Arinsal.

This via ferrata has several vertical and horizontal obstacles measuring from 250 to 270 m. In total there are between twelve and fifteen climbing routes ranging from low to medium difficulty (Class 4, 5 and 6), as well as a passage for rappelling.

# LA MASSANA

## 39. ERTS: JOU-LA CAUBA ROCK ROUTE



### DATA SHEET

- ● ● ●
- 1H 40 MIN
- 1H
- +489 M
- 2.070 M
- NO\*
- APPROXIMATE WALKING TIMES

### ROUTE SIGNPOSTING

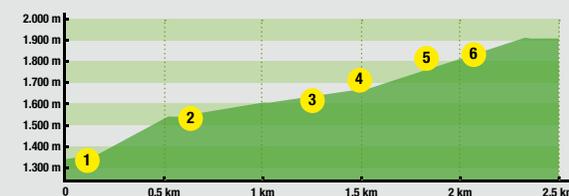
- ● ●
- WRONG WAY

LOCATION	HEIGHT	DISTANCE DROP	TIME	COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION
<b>1</b>	<b>WOODEN SIGN</b> 1.322 m	-- (--)	--	N42 33.703 E1 30.028	You'll have to follow road CG-4, heading toward Arinsal. About 300 metres before arriving at the village of Erts, beside the road on the right, you'll see a wooden sign indicating the beginning of the route.
<b>2</b>	<b>VIEWPOINT</b> 1.526 m	718 m (+204 m)	40'	N42 33.699 E1 30.350	The path zig-zags through the forest until you reach a viewpoint that will treat you to a beautiful panoramic view of la Massana and the surrounding villages.
<b>3</b>	<b>DRY STONE WALL</b> 1.627 m	1.220 m (+101 m)	1H	N42 33.802 E1 30.672	From this point, the path goes level for a while and then enters Jou forest, a marvellous wood of Scots pines that will tempt you to stop and rest quietly for a moment. On the right, you'll pass by the rubble of a hut until you come to a dry stone wall.
<b>4</b>	<b>JOU PASS</b> 1.706 m	1.470 m (+79 m)	1h 15'	N42 33.856 E1 30.817	You should continue ahead without making noise, as it is not unusual to encounter a roe deer ( <i>Capreolus capreolus</i> ) or fallow deer ( <i>Dama dama</i> ). The path climbs fairly straight through the forest until you arrive at Jou pass.

LOCATION	HEIGHT	DISTANCE DROP	TIME	COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION
<b>5</b>	<b>INTERSECTION</b> 1.807 m	1.810 m (+101 m)	1h 30'	N42 33.673 E1 30.913	Take the path that goes toward the right and leave the other path on the left that leads to Coll de les Cases. From this point, the path ascends over the mountain pass until you come to another intersection.
<b>6</b>	<b>LA CAUBA ROCK</b> 1.811 m	2.070 m (+4 m)	1h 40'	N42 33.602 E1 30.803	Take the path on the right. The path stays level over the pass until you reach La Cauba rock. From this point, you'll be able to enjoy impressive views of the village of La Massana and the mountains of Arinsal. You should proceed with caution, as this final stretch of the route is high up in the air.

\*You can return by following the same route.

### ROUTE PROFILE



La Massana