

Stage 26 JIMERA DE LÍBAR BENALAURÍA

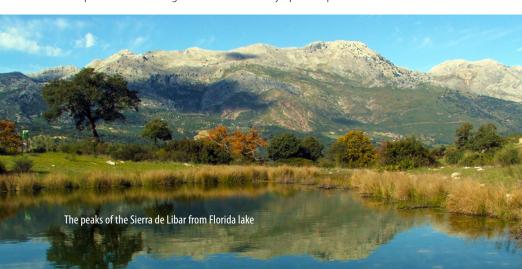
THE STAGE IN SUMMARY

The Stage runs south, halfway up the left-hand side of the River Guadiaro valley. The valley sides are covered in woodland of Cork and Holm oak and farmland until it reaches the group of farmhouses at Siete Pilas. It then enters the Serranía de Ronda's other important valley, the Genal, where the route heads east.

Up to the Honda or Florida Lake, it shares its way with the GR-141, with gentle uphill and downhill sections, while crossing numerous streams. These are all tributaries of the Guadiaro, only some of which are permanent. The valley opens out considerably here, with the villages of Jimera de Líbar and Cortes de la Frontera perched halfway between the mountains and the farmland, on opposite slopes. Once you enter the Montes Públicos (Public Uplands) of Benadalid and Benalauría, a long climb takes you up to the Benalauría pass, situated between the limestone peaks of the Rock of Benadalid and La Sierra Ridge.

The cluster of properties, country estates and farmhouses in this central section is due to the large number of springs and the expanse of land suitable for farming. The path runs along the network of paths and tracks until it reaches the top of the mountain pass, the highest point of the stage. Dropping down from here, it connects with the GR-141 and after a stretch of road and a charming footpath through Chestnut trees, you reach Benalauría. The stage mostly makes use of a variety of tracks and recovered traditional footpaths.

The territory of Jimera de Líbar stretches up to the ruins of Venta Alfacara (km 4.7), where you begin to see Walnut trees. You carry on into land belonging to Benadalid and after passing the small lake, a wire fence leads the way into Benalauría's municipal area, at about kilometre 8. A climb then takes you up to Siete Pilas. It remains within this municipal area until the end, except for a stretch along the border on the way up to the pass.



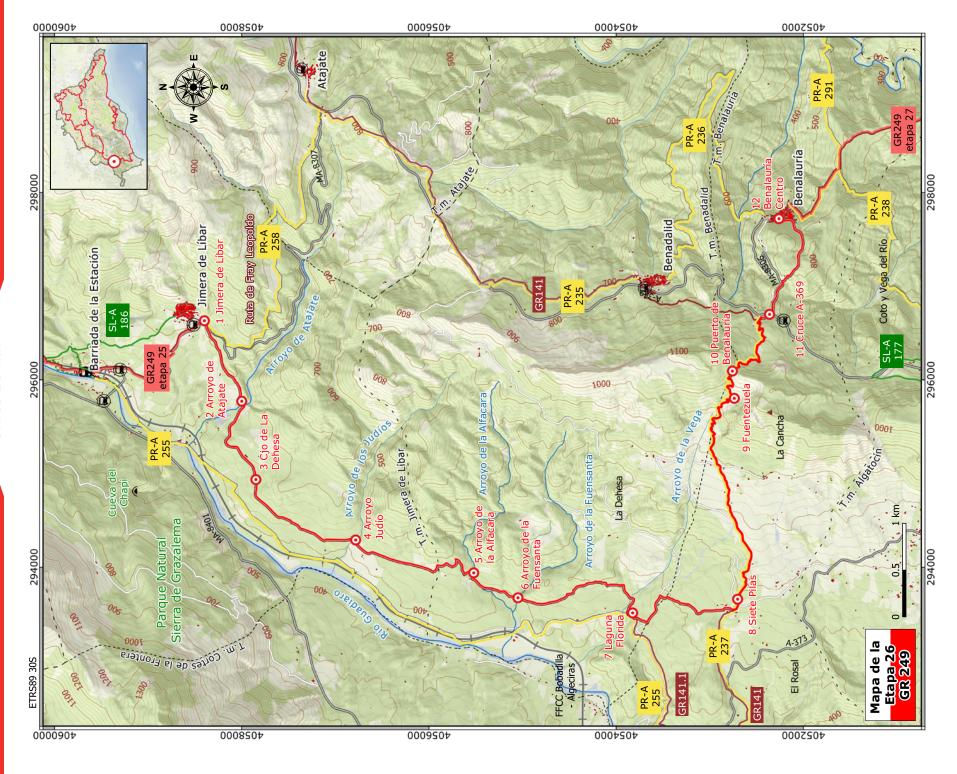
26. Jimera de Líbar • Benalauría



• Road traffic circulating at the start and end of the Stage

GR-141 Great Path of the Serranía de Ronda, overlap at the start and end of the Stage
PR-A 258 Atajate — Jimera de Líbar y Ruta de Fray Leopoldo, link up at the start
PR A-255 Jimera de Líbar — Cortes de la Frontera, link up at the start and km 7.4
PR A-237 Cañada de Real Tesoro — Tesoro, overlap from km 9

P O I N T	Χ		Υ		HEIGHT ABOVE SI	DISTANCE
1.Jimera de Líbar	296630	/	4058400	/	510 m	Km 0,0
2.Atajate stream	295770	/	4058000	/	430 m	Km 1,0
3.La Dehesa estate	294935	/	4057850	/	450 m	Km 2,1
4.Judío stream	294290	/	4056785	/	415 m	Km 3,5
5. La Alfacara stream	293940	/	4055520	/	425 m	Km 5,1
6. La Fuensanta stream	293675	/	4055050	/	390 m	Km 5,8
7.Florida lake	293510	/	4053825	/	440 m	Km 7,4
8. Siete Pilas	293660	/	4052700	/	575 m	Km 9,0
9.Fuentezuela	295805	/	4052740	/	935 m	Km 11,8
10.Benalauría pass	296095	/	4052760	/	1005 m	Km 12,2
11. Crossing the A-369	296700	/	4052360	/	820 m	Km 13,5
12.Benalauría centre	297720	/	4052260	/	680 m	Km 14,7





ROUTE DESCRIPTION



You leave Jimera along the main road towards Atajate, and turn off immediately to the right onto a tarmac track, named Carril de la Dehesa. You then turn off this further down, in order to pick up the stony ancient pathway, lined by Holm oaks. After 1km from the start, it joins the track again close to the Atajate stream. Through a gate, you access the Public Uplands of La Dehesa, the traditional cleared forest system of Cork oaks with Holm and Gall oaks. This land belongs to the Town Council of Jimera de Líbar. Behind the gate is the closed off rubbish dump (a resting area actually) and some small sheds that appear on your left after a sharp bend. The best views of Jimera de Líbar to the north-east and the Sierra del Palo hills to the west are found here. A little further on, you reach the farm of La Dehesa, the fenced small lake and its adjoining recreational area.

A section through Cork oaks brings you to the ruins of the country estate of El Pastor on the right and you go



down to the Judío stream (km 3.5). Cross this to reach the country house of the same name, while changing from a south-westerly to southerly heading.

🚗 Among 'Bujeo' soils and **Mediterranean Uplands** → Up to km 7.4

You then come to a much more open area with clayey terrain, which the path climbs up on numerous narrow and criss-crossing paths. To the right is the Bernardito country estate with its Eucalyptus trees, while up ahead is the wide-open landscape of Sierra Blanquilla and Cortes de la Frontera. The rise with the Walnut grove was the location of the old inn of La Alfacara, which is now reduced to rubble. The trail through the upper part of the estate leads to the irrigation pool, then descends and joins another footpath. The vegetation changes to Mediterranean scrubland with a wire fence on the right separating this land from some of the houses. You pass a threshing circle just before the bends that lead to the Alfacara stream and a water storage facility (km 5.1), surrounded by entwined scrub vegetation.

The landscape then opens up, at times with areas of Olive groves or Wild Olive trees and others simply with crops or thicket. Continue along the multiple criss-crossing livestock trails, that cover this farmed land. When you pass by some beehives, you have reached the Cortijo de los Capitanes estate. A slight descent takes you down to the deep gouge of the Paliche stream (or de la Vega), covered with undergrowth.



The Honda (or Florida) lake (km 7.4) is a small body of water next to the main track, which tends to dry up in summer. From here, the PR A-255 and GR-141 split off, heading towards the train station at Cortes.

Climbing once again, you pass through the traditional Dehesa land of Benadalid and Benalauría, made up of several hundred hectares of Holm oak and Gall oak woodland. Still heading south, you cross the Peñoncillo (or Bovedilla) stream and turn right, off the main track that climbs up into the hills.

Arriving in the village of Siete Pilas, you are presented with a wide-open area (km 9) with the Hermitage School of Bishop Herrera Oria, still in use today. The path makes a sharp turn, parting ways with the GR-141 and changes direction to head east, first passing the Siete Pilas fountain. Then it takes one of the traditional paths used to join up the scattered houses.

The Sierras of Almargen & El Espino → To the end of the stage

The Benalauría Way goes uphill from Siete Pilas, parallel to a drainage channel that is a pipeline further up, carrying water from Fuensanta. At times, it joins other tracks,





but generally progresses through scrubland. You cross another track at the Maja country estate and then take the last long climb along a secondary track that leads up to the quarry and some water wells.

The mountain pass is between the Pine forest of the Rock of Benadalid and the Holm oak forest of La Cancha on the right, already part of Benalauría. From the Benalauría pass (km 12.2), there are views of the Guadiaro valley to the west and the Genal valley to the east. There is a turn-off to the via ferratas and the Tajo de los Aviones (The Cliff of the Crag Martins) climbing routes on the left, but you take the concrete track that winds down through Holm oaks to join up with the GR 141.

Together, they cross the road going to Algeciras, then go down the MA-8306 for a short distance and climb up along a track

> lined with houses and Chestnut trees. When you reach the pass, you continue straight on down the hill. The track becomes a forest path and after a somewhat vertical stretch, where the landscape opens out, you arrive at the pretty village of Benalauría, where the Stage ends.