

# Hiking routes in Alt Camp



*Around  
Montagut and  
Puig Formigosa*



**Text and Photography:** Enric Fonts i Ferrer  
**Cartography:** Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya  
**Translation:** Babyl Traducciones  
**Co-ordination:** Servei Comarcal de Turisme  
del Consell Comarcal de l'Alt Camp

**NB:** Any established written accounts are limited in terms of concrete time and space. The natural evolution of the landscape and human activity can mean that some accounts may become less reliable over time.

# 1. Around Montagut and Puig Formigosa

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This walk begins at the church of Sant Jaume de Montagut, the ancient parish church which, at one time, brought together as many as five hundred parishioners from the different *masies* (traditional Catalan farmhouses) scattered throughout the mountains which formed the boundary of Montagut. Until recent times it was left almost abandoned, but a short time ago made a recovery from the state of oblivion it has been in since the time it was evacuated, in the middle of the twentieth century, due to the restoration work and the demolition of the adjoining rectory. The fact that the road here has now been repaired is also a contributory factor. So, setting off from the church, we will take the track which threads its way along the sunny slope of the Serra d'Ancosa, just a little below the summit ridge. Our route takes us by the reservoir and the remains of the houses at Formigosa, in the centre of Collet del Vent, overlooking the Bonany and Esblada valley. On arriving at Coll de Pinar de la Costa, we turn towards Plana de la Rovira Seca but the dense vegetation unfortunately doesn't allow us to take in the panoramic view. Soon we are heading in the direction of Montagut, this time taking the shaded slope with some beautiful Holly trees, Scots pines and Holm oaks. Before we know it we will have reached the summit of Puig Formigosa, at an altitude of 1,002 metres, from where we will not tire of gazing at this colourful landscape. From here a footpath rapidly takes us near to the Collet del Vent, the point at which we will retake the way we came.

This hiking excursion is both quick is easy and enables us to fully appreciate nature through all our senses: the open landscapes are a delight to the vision, the olfactory sense is filled with damp woodland smells, the sense of hearing is calmed by the sound of silence, the taste buds can be stimulated by one of the best waters in the area and the sense of touch likewise by textures as diverse as the spongy moss and the sharp prickly holly leaves. Its well worth taking time to enjoy this route and you're sure to be pleasantly surprised.



Formigosa reservoir

# 1. Around Montagut and Puig Formigosa

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From Querol we can reach the church at Sant Jaume de Montagut either by taking the rural asphalted road or, from Santes Creus, by taking the TV-2441 to Coll de la Creueta and then on by the same rural asphalted road which also takes us to Coll de Montagut. Here we can turn onto a tarmac track and park the car in front of the church.

*Time*

*Distance*

0:00  
*Partial*



0:00  
*Total*

0,000  
*Partial*



0,000  
*Total*

**Església de Sant Jaume de Montagut (800m).** This recently restored church is located on the mountain's north facing slope. The building includes a polygonal apse surrounding a ribbed vault which supports the portico with its three semicircular arches. The

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rectory house, which previously blocked the view of the entrance, has been demolished. In the mid 19th century, Montagut formed a municipality with Querol; bringing together six farmsteads which were scattered throughout the region and which produced wine and vegetables and also had their own flour mills.

We make our departure from the flat piece of land in front of the church, by the asphalt road which brought us here.

0:02 🕒 0:02

0,100 🚶 0,100

**Montagut church hill.** Leaving the asphalt road we turn right, onto a footpath, heading in a north westerly direction. Our route is accompanied by the red and white signs indicating we are on the great GR 172 footpath, one way heading in the direction of Mediona and in the opposite direction towards Santes Creus. We will also find the white and yellow marks indicating us to be on the short PR-C 2 route which, by the tarmac track, leads to Querol (in barely an hour and a half) and afterwards down to the Gaià river bed and then climbs back up to Pontils where it meets up with the GR 7. To complete the walk we will need a good three hours and 45 minutes but at the moment there are sections, namely between Santa Perpètua and the Seguer mill which are completely overgrown with vegetation.

0:04 🕒 0:06

0,300 🚶 0,400

**Esplanade.** Various tracks leave from this point, basically intended for fire prevention purposes. We take the one which is by far the widest and most frequently used, following the wide mountain ridge through the not very dense forest.



*Sant Jaume de Montagut church façade*

# 1. Around Montagut and Formigosa



Time



1 h 37'

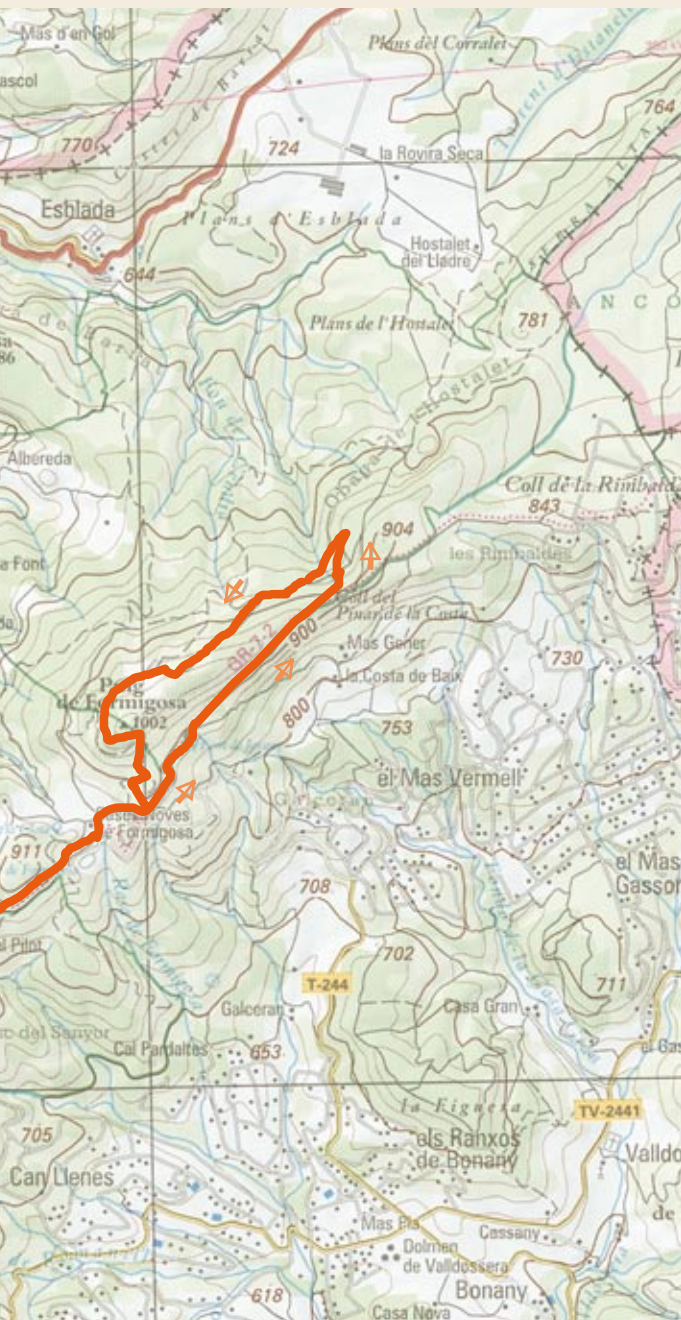
Difficulty



6,400 km



Distance



# 1. Montagut and Formigosa

Cases Noves de Formigosa



0:15  0:21

1,100  1,400

**Road to the right marked no entry.** Obviously we will ignore this as we will another track a little further on, on the same side, which looks as if it leads to Estany de Formigosa, and which we would then just about be able to make out beneath us.

0:05  0:26

0,300  1,700

**Where the road forks.** Here we take the left fork, the one to the right, which very quickly branches off again, takes us near to the Estany de Formigosa. This is a large reservoir where the area's water is collected to supply the urbanisations at the foot of the mountain. Taking the left branch we would come to the T-244 road at the start of the Mas Vermell urbanisation.

0:01  0:27

0,100  1,800

**Casas Noves de Formigosa.** Passing between what little there remains of the pens we come to Collet del Vent (864m). We continue in a north easterly direction. The track is filled with tyre marks due to the fact that when it rains great puddles of water are created which remain for days.

Behind the debris on the left, which retains mostly home effects, and next to a magnificent solitary oak, a road appears which goes down to Esblada village.



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0:02 🕒 0:29

0,100 🚶 1,900

**Path to the left.** We continue to follow the track. We leave the footpath which sets out from between the hillside woodland and farmland and climbs the sunny slope up to the summit of Formigosa. We will use this to make our way back down, once we have encircled the large Puig Formigosa crest, but for now we will take the gentler north facing slope.

0:03 🕒 0:32

0,200 🚶 2,100

**Turn and fork.** Here the track makes a sharp turn which cars avoid by having invented a short cut. We immediately come to a fork and turn left. The woodland now is much fresher and more varied with pine trees, Holm oaks, oak trees, junipers, etc.

0:09 🕒 0:41

0,600 🚶 2,700

**Font del Jovany.** This excellent fresh water font is to be found in a small clearing to the left of the track, an ideal place to take a break and enjoy this beauty spot's enveloping silence. We continue along the track which after around fifty metres will fork again and we will take the left branch.

0:18 🕒 0:59

1,200 🚶 3,900

**Coll del Pinar de la Costa (900m).** A hundred metres before we will have left a little used path on our left hand side. In the middle of the hill we now come to where two paths intersect and we take the one to the left, which, towards the north, begins



Font del Jovany

# 1. Montagut and Formigosa

to descend. Here we leave behind us the GR 172 signs which, with four hours walking, would take us to Mediona, via the Serra d'Ancosa. From this point on we will be accompanied by the white and yellow signs which indicate the short PR-C 3 route.

0:05  1:04

0,300  4,200

**Intersection.** From here we take the level track to the left heading south west. We leave behind us the footpath signs which continue straight on in a northerly direction and on to Sant Magí de la Brufaganya, being a two and a half hour walk from this point. A couple of hundred metres on we come to another similar junction and proceed in the same way. We are on the shady side of the sierra and here we can appreciate the fresh forest around us with some perfect examples of English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), a perennial which often grows to eight metres. It flowers in June and bears red berries in October, typical of Christmas, and which last the entire winter. Being a fairly rare tree and the fact that it provides both food and shelter to many animals, means this has now been made a protected species.

0:10  1:14

0,700  4,900

**Intersection.** We take the ascending path to the left. The other path descends down towards Esblada, where the C-37 road from Valls to Igualada passes through. We begin a fairly steep upward climb, which within four hundred metres will bring us to the top of this small hill. As we continue our upward climb, the forest's humid appearance starts to change, once more becoming dry and rugged with Holm and Evergreen oaks. Similarly the terrain is also becoming rockier, leaving behind us the earth and at times mud footpaths which are easy and comfortable underfoot.

0:15  1:29

1,000  5,900

**The summit of Puig Formigosa (1.002m).** Having advanced some three hundred metres along the mountain ridge footpath, surrounded by dense vegetation which almost completely hides the view, we finally come to the highest point of Puig Formigosa, at an altitude of 1,002 metres. Just before reaching the summit we turn to admire the beautiful outline of the Montserrat Mountains silhouetted against the horizon. If it weren't for a metal bar above which is propped a nativity scene it would be very difficult to know exactly where the highest point is, there not being any trig points indicating as such. In fact, Puig de Formigosa, in spite



*The summit of Puig Formigosa*

if being a little higher than its neighbouring Montagut (964m), doesn't enjoy any less of the views to be had from this other point.

We continue along the highest part of the sierra for another hundred metres or so, heading east, before finally coming to the end of the path. At this point an excellent panoramic view spreads before us: towards the south, the source of the Riera de Marmellar river, with urbanisations in the foreground; beyond these, the castle of Selma and the Serra del Montmell with the Mediterranean sea in the background. Towards the west, the unmistakable peak of Montagut and behind, the Muntanyes de Prades; in between, the great plains of Camp de Tarragona.

0:02  1:31

0,100  6,000

**Footpath.** The path finally comes to an end in a small open area; next we have to scramble a few metres over the rocky summit to then head south, via a path which at the outset is fairly steep. This well-trodden path makes its way through this hillside, densely populated with evergreen oaks, has been recently marked out with the white and green indicating signs on both rocks and trees. Occasionally we come across a milestone from the times when this was the only form of signposting the mountain trails. From here the trail progressively loses height and the steep incline begins to level out. Some of the stone walls we are about to leave behind us indicate we are passing through what were formerly terraces for cultivation, now taken over by the increasingly dense forest. Having now come to the flattest part, we will take the path between the forest and Collet del Vent.

0:06  1:37

0,400  6,400

**Track (866m).** Leaving out the track we took previously, and turning to the right we continue on to Cases Noves de Formigosa. Retaking the path we came by, a half an hour's walk and we will be back at the Sant Jaume de Montagut church.



**Consell Comarcal de l'Alt Camp**  
Passeig de l'Estació, 42, baixos • 43800 Valls  
Tel. 977 60 62 87 • Fax 977 61 30 71  
[www.altcamp.cat](http://www.altcamp.cat)  
[consell@altcamp.cat](mailto:consell@altcamp.cat)



Partenariat de Turisme  
de la Diputació de Tarragona



Pacte de Santes Creus



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