

ALTERNATIVE START B

es Capdellà to Estellencs

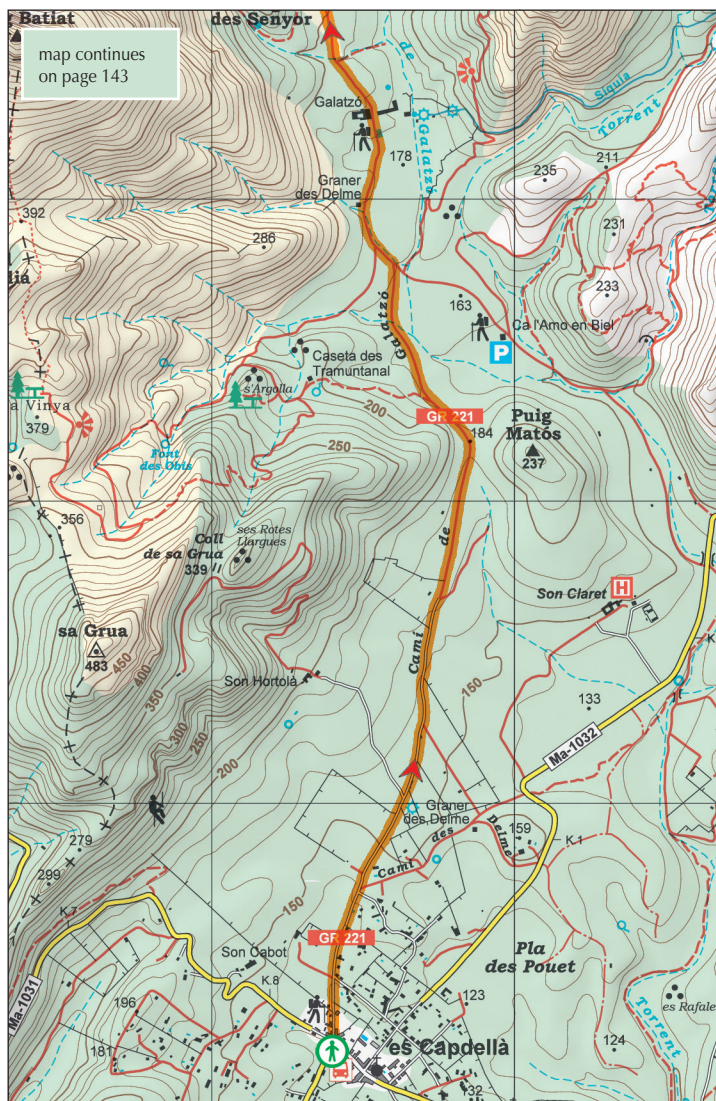
Start	es Capdellà – 544812
Finish	Església de Sant Joan Baptista, Estellencs – 555896
Distance	16km (10 miles)
Total ascent	580m (1900ft)
Total descent	560m (1840ft)
Time	5hr
Map	Alpina Serra de Tramuntana – Sud I
Refreshments	Bars restaurants at es Capdellà. Drinks machine at Galatzó. Bar restaurants at Estellencs.

There was a plan at one point to run this variant route coast-to-coast from Peguera to Estellencs. A walking route was constructed at great expense parallel to the road from Peguera to es Capdellà, and this is well worth the extra effort, but the first signposts for the GR221 are at es Capdellà. The route runs through the Finca Galatzó estate, which was brought into public ownership in 2006, and boasts a number of interesting paths. A gap in the mountains is crossed, where another private property was brought into public ownership in 2002. The route makes a convoluted descent to Estellencs. Using this variant route effectively replaces the first two-and-a-half days of the main route.

ES CAPDELLÀ

The name of this remote village is derived from *es cap d'alla*, meaning 'the very end'. Towards the close of the 17th century a number of houses were documented, which belonged to agricultural labourers on the surrounding estates, and these houses gave rise to the village of es Capdellà. Facilities include a bank with an ATM, a post office, a couple of shops and a bar restaurant. There is also an office for the Finca Pública Galatzó. Bus 111 links es Capdellà with Palma.

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*Almond groves in the
Comellar de ses Sínies
beyond Galatzó*

Start at a crossroads at Plaça de Bernado Calvet in **es Capdellà**, around 130m (425ft). Follow Carrer de Galatzó, which is signposted for the Finca Pública Galatzó. A mapboard and signpost are passed at a junction with Camí del Graner del Delme. The road later becomes a track passing almond groves, olive groves and small farms, reaching a gateway on a gentle, wooded gap beside **Puig Matós**.

A track leads gently down into a marvellous valley, full of fertile red earth, flanked by the towering peaks of Mola de s'Esclop and Puig de Galatzó. Stay on the main track to reach the **Finca Galatzó**, where a huge old building features a courtyard, chapel, oil press and several outbuildings.

Dating from the 13th century, **Finca Pública Galatzó**, an extensive estate that was once private property, was purchased in 2006 and opened to the public. At first, only native Mallorcans and school parties seemed aware of the place, but tourists now arrive in increasing numbers. The estate is well-placed for excursions onto the mountains of Mola

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de s'Esclop and Puig de Galatzó, and formerly overgrown paths have been cleared. Take note of signposts on the way through, so that plans can be made to explore more thoroughly in future. All who visit this secret valley will want to return. For information, tel 600 451277, galatzo.es.

Keep to the right of the main building to pass beneath an arcade and follow a walled track, which continues through almond groves. Keep to the main track at all times, which means turning right at a junction, as signposted for ses Síntes. The track drops gently into a sparsely forested valley, passing fan palms. Go through a stone gateway and pass two limekilns – one

The path heading right leads towards Pas des Cossis and Puig de Galatzó. It can be used to reach Estellencs.

small and one large – both to the left. Wander gently up through the valley, winding alongside the **Torrent de Galatzó**.

Watch out for a sitja, carboner hut and limekiln on the right. A picnic site is located in the shade of pine trees later, with a reconstructed sitja and carboner huts. Keep following the track to approach **Pou de ses Sínies**. There is a junction of tracks just before the *pou*, or well; turn right, then decide whether to make a short detour to the archaeological site of **Naveta de ses Sínies**. Later, avoid a turning to the right, then watch for a marker post and follow a path cut through càrritx, winding up a rugged slope and passing above an old trough. Also watch out for a well at **Font des Poll**, hidden on the other side of the path.

A steep and rugged climb includes views of Puig de Galatzó for a while, and some parts of the path feature old cobbling and stone buttressing. There is a view back to the sea at a higher level, and the path climbs past a sitja and passes the occasional pine tree. Climb past another sitja at a higher level, noting how the course of the old path has been cleared in preference to any other trodden line. Always keep sight of the path, noting another sitja to the right, climbing to a signposted junction. Turn left to follow the GR221. ◀

The mountains loom large as the path zigzags further uphill, buttressed with boulders and passing a few stout pines. A signpost is reached near a gap at 652m (2139ft), and the main route (Stage 3) is joined. Cross a stile over a wall and turn left as marked to follow a clear track down through a fire-damaged forested valley below **Serra des Pinotells**.

When a junction is reached, keep left to continue down a lower track. The refugi of **sa Coma d'en Vidal** is passed, around 550m (1805ft). (This should have been providing accommodation when it was first acquired, back in 2002, but when it finally opened in 2016, it was only available to large groups.)

The track leading away from the building is flanked by an avenue of trees, then it passes through a gate, where there is a glimpse of the coast. The track is very



TREKKING IN MALLORCA

*Cliffs rise above
forested slopes on
the descent from
Coma d'en Vidal*



Before reaching the road, a track on the right could be used to short-cut a very convoluted stretch of the route.

steep and convoluted as it descends, passing through a formidable wall and fence that once barred access to the property. There are splendid views of the high cliffs of **es Morralàs**, forested slopes and the coast. Pines give way to holm oaks as the track winds further downhill, reaching a signposted junction near a water tank. Turn left to continue downhill and the track joins the **Ma-10 road** at the Km97 marker. ◀

Turn left to follow the bendy road, watching for a signpost on the right. A winding path runs down a forested slope to land on an old highway, which is now a

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forest track. Follow it gently downhill round a series of tight bends. When it passes above a little house in the forest, join another track and turn right to continue. When this bendy track later approaches the main road, fork left at a junction beforehand. The track becomes a path running parallel to the road, passing the Km96 marker. Join the road to walk round a descending bend at **Coll des Pi**.

Turn left as signposted at a junction to walk down an old, narrow road in a series of tight zigzags. Turn right at a junction far below, passing a house and a towering stone wall. Overlook orange groves while passing other road junctions, continuing straight towards the village of **Estellencs**. Turn left along the main road when the Hotel Maristel is reached, quickly reaching the church of Sant Joan Baptista, around 150m (490ft). Stage 4 of the main route starts here.

The first mountain village on the GR221, **Estellencs** is surrounded by steep terraces, forested slopes and rocky mountainsides. Accommodation is available at two hotels – the Maristel and the Nord. There are a few bars and restaurants, a shop, a post office and an ATM. Bus 200 links Estellencs, Banyalbufar, Esporles and Palma.