

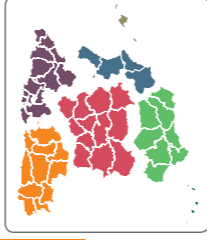
# NATURAL TRAIL RIVER ESLA



Guide to the  
**Nature Trails**  
of Spain

## SECTOR NORTHWESTERN PENINSULAR NATURE TRAIL ESLA

1. To reach the trailhead of this nature trail, you need to take road LE-512 at Valencia de Don Juan up to Mansilla de las Mulas and turn off at the first track to your right, past the Valjunco urban development. The first section of the trail runs along a concrete path to the east of the houses, among Poplar groves and agricultural fields, heading toward Valencia de Don Juan and crossing several roads, further to which it goes straight on toward the South.
2. At the arrival to the boundaries of the municipality, at an intersection with the road near the sports centre, the path is no longer paved but covered with gravel. From this point onward, it runs among thorn trees (*Acacia* sp.), elm trees (*Ulmus* sp.), walnut trees (*Juglans regia*), airborne plane-trees (*Platanus hispanica*) and cropped lands where corn and sunflowers are grown.
3. The trail continues straight on, closer to the road to Castrofuente, crossing two bridges over small brooks and several agricultural trails.  
Approximately at kilometre point 6 the trail reaches the recreational area of Las Bracas, surrounded by poplar groves and cornfields.
4. The trail goes on surrounded by agricultural fields up to kilometre point 9, from which it is paved again. From this point, surrounded by new cropped lands, you can get a glimpse at the town of Castrofuente.



## SECTOR NORTHWESTERN PENINSULAR



Since 1993 the Ministry for Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and the Environment's Nature Trails Program aims to restore former transport infrastructures such as railway tracks, cattle trails and traditional routes, for public use and enjoyment.

These routes take us to the countryside to discover the biodiversity and beauty of our precious natural heritage, and discover the villages, sights, traditions and people that are part of the unique cultural landscape of our country.

We invite you to visit them and offer you the keys to enjoy the trip. In this brochure you will find a brief description of River Esla Nature Trail and the map for the journey, along with recommendations to make the most of this experience. We only ask one thing of you: do not forget to leave everything as you found it. The conservation of these pathways is also your responsibility.

**TELÉFONOS DE INTERÉS:**  
• City Council of Valencia de Don Juan: 0034 987 75 00 01

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## CORNFIELDS AND SUNFLOWERS ON A LAND POPULATED SINCE THE NEW STONE AGE

The town of Valencia de Don Juan, on the southern part of the province of León, is the starting point of this trail. The town's origins date back to a Vaccaei settlement established where the castle ruins are today. This municipality, also known as Coyanza, was given its current name after the First Duke of the Villa, Prince John, son of King Alfonso X.



5. The trail goes on surrounded by agricultural fields up to kilometre point 9, from which it is paved again. From this point, surrounded by new cropped lands, you can get a glimpse at the town of Castrofuente.
6. Several agricultural paths run through our trail, which continues straight on until it reaches Castrofuente. A road runs through this town and there is a small fountain nearby. A few metres away from there you can find the train station, now in ruins, where the trail ends.

## CASTLE OF COYANZA (VALENCIA DE DON JUAN)

The Castle of Coyanza, given National Monument status by virtue of Decree of 3 June 1931, was erected in the 15th century on top of a former construction built on a ruined Iron Age hillfort settlement.

It comprises a moat, a second wall and a great crenellated wall with three-cube towers. To the south stands the Keep, alongside some sections of the primitive wall that used to circle the town in the past.

The premises, open to the public, are partly preserved and restored.

The premises belong to the Board of the Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan and is open for tourist purposes.

## OBSERVATION POINT OVER THE ESLA AND DUCK GARDEN

In the Middle Ages, Valencia de Don Juan was called Coyanza, and its castle still popularly goes by that name.

Next to the castle, in the higher part of the town, there is a viewpoint over the Esla where tourists can enjoy a wonderful view over the Esla valley. Thanks to its natural beauty, this place has become a place of obligatory visit for all visitors.

Also in this area of Coyanza, tourist can enjoy the Duck Garden, the local park. The sight of the little ones throwing breadcrumbs to the ducks that live in the pond and having a great time is an usual one. The park has also a kiosk where walkers can rest, and a bandstand used by the music band to play on summer nights. Besides, a series of memorial plaques about the history of the town are scattered around the park.

Sunseed crop near the town of Castrofuente



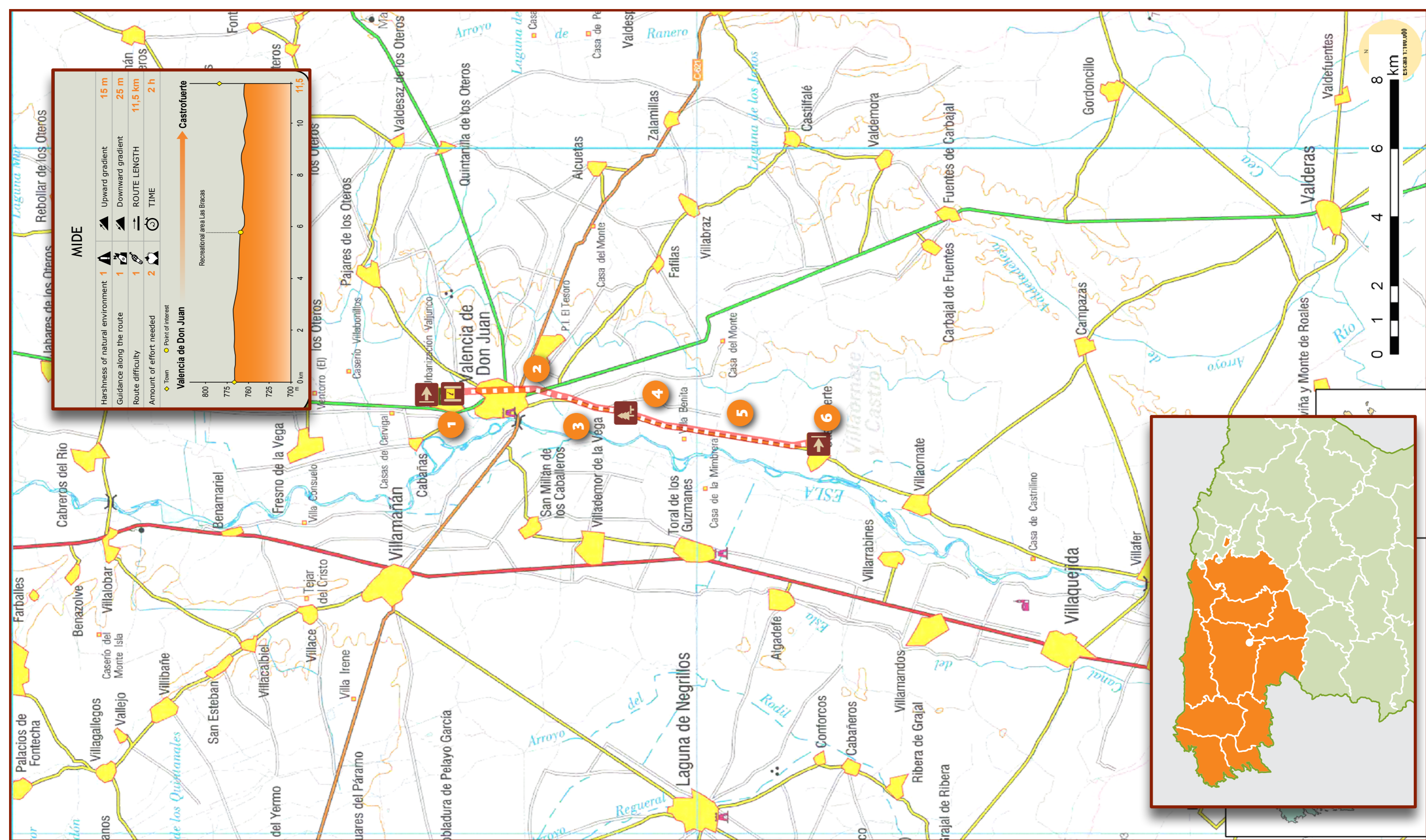
Church of San Pedro Apóstol in Valencia de Don Juan



Castle of Coyanza in Valencia de Don Juan







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NATURE TRAIL  
**ESIA**

- Starting point
- End of trail
- Information panel
- Rest area