



SECTION

IRURTZUN-SARASA

NATURE TRAIL PLAZAOLA.



Guide to the
Nature Trails
of Spain



SECTOR
NORTHEASTERN PENINSULAR



FROM THE PEÑAS DE DOS HERMANAS ROCKS, TO THE ELTXUMENDI AND EZKIDI PEAKS, FROM IRURTZUN TO SARASA

A short, approximately nine kilometre section that brings the traveller nearer to the capital of Navarra. Pine and cork oak forests, agricultural land and grazing pastures make up a mosaic of a remarkably beautiful landscape.



SECTOR NORTHEASTERN PENINSULAR NATURE TRAIL PLAZAOLA. TRAMO IRURTZUN - SARASA SECTION

1. This section starts at the Iruztzun Rest Area, located next to the old railway route as it passes through this town. Leaving the last houses in this urban centre behind, not long after starting out, the trail advances almost parallel to road N-240-A, and the walker will find an old cairn with the following inscription: A PAMPLONA TRES LEGUAS, meaning 'Pamplona three leagues away' showing the distance to the Navarran capital.
2. The trail continues zigzagging left and right to go around housing, crossing road NA-4171, which provides access to Aizkorbe, with utmost care. The route is surrounded by pastures that are grazed on by sheep cattle (latxas breed) and horses.
3. To the left, the Trinidad de Ergo shrine dominates the landscape for various kilometres, whilst always being surrounded by enigmatic beech forests. After crossing road NA-4120, taking the due precautions, a building with unique architecture stands out among the others, this is the Karmapa Mikyö Dorje Buddhist Centre.
4. After the El Plazaola Natural Trail, the traveller is rewarded with panoramic views of the town of Guina and they later pass over a viaduct with the same name that is made up of 17 stone arches. The route passes through a pine growth with a mix of cork oaks, to then be surrounded not long afterwards by agricultural land until arriving at the town of Sarasate, taking care when crossing the road that leads to this town (NA-4121).
5. After overcoming a small uphill slope, the trail now continues parallel to motorway AP-15, descending until a tunnel with a semicircle cross-section that passes below said motorway. On the other side of this, the descent continues for a zoom section of solid cement, separated from road N-240-A by a concrete road safety barrier.
6. A new tunnel with identical characteristics to the previous one is crossed once again below motorway AP-15 and takes the traveller to a short, steep incline of just over 300 metres with different curves; this could put hikers' and cyclists' expertise and state of fitness to the test.
7. Once this orthographic difficulty is overcome, the panoramic views of the town of Erice de Iza and its San Andrés church provide comfort to the traveller, who descends to get back onto the railway line, leaving the ruins of the San Bartolomé shrine on the left.
8. Much like at the beginning to the journey, the route continues in parallel to road N-240-A to enter the town of Sarasa. This section of the El Plazaola Natural Trail comes to an end shortly after, on road NA-4104 which provides access to said town.

LATXAS BREED SHEEP

A breed of sheep that is native to and characteristic of Navarra and the Basque Country. The name *latxa* comes from a Basque word meaning *coarse*, which refers to the main characteristic of its wool. There are two varieties of these sheep: white-faced *latxa* and black-faced *laxta*. They are mainly raised for their milk, which is used to produce *Idiazabal* cheese and *Ronzal* cheese, both of which have Protected Designation of Origin (PDO). The *cordero de Navarra* (Navarran lamb) also has protected geographical indication (PGI). This breed also has an important environmental and socio-cultural role as the practice of transhumance is common between the valley and the mountain, which as a result, cleans the hills and the roots of the rural populations.



Peñas de Dos Hermanas



Trinidad del Ergo shrine



Panoramic view of Sarasa and Ezkidi peak



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PLAZAOLA
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SECTION

- Starting point
- End of section
- Rest area
- Bridge



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