

11 PORT D'INCLES & ESTANYS DE FONTARGENT

This was once the classic legal (it did happen) trading route with France, commonly used up until the end of the 19th century by merchants, tradesman and travellers. All things told, it's not a bad little commuting route, and anyone obliged to fight their way into and out of some modern conurbation in order to do business may feel a little envious of men who's working day consisted of strolling across a mountain. Doubtless if you were hauling a couple of tons of pig-iron over the pass with a team of refractory mules, you wouldn't regard it with quite such starry-eyed romanticism, but even the most laborious haulage must have been meliorated by such a lovely landscape. The central section in particular is a delightful surprise since, from the road, there's no hint of the smoothly sculpted basin that cradles the small alpine pasture clumped about the banks of the **Riu del Manegor**.

All in all, it's the sort of landscape that is normally considerably further from any road, but here it's the merest stroll from your car and accessible to anybody able to walk up a steep English hill. As for the 'beach' at the end, that's simply the sort of place where you want to pitch tent and tell the world go hang. Maybe those old time muleteers didn't have such an easy time of it after all. They had to keep going. We have the luxury of whiling away the afternoon by the side of the lake. It's a memory that will sustain you through quite a few plane, train and car journeys during the rest of the year.



* at **Camping d'Incles**

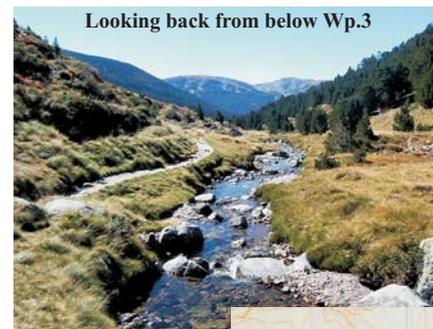
Access: by car

The walk starts just before **Pont de Baladosa** at the end of **Vall d'Incles** on a waymarked trail signposted (slightly obscurely) 'Port d'Incles, Estany d'Anrodad, Estany de l'Isla, Pic de Anrodad, Cap d'Espones'. (N.B. Not the 'Camí de Port d'Incles' which begins 500 metres earlier). There's room for several cars to park at the start, otherwise there's a large parking area just after the bridge. References to 'left' and 'right' banks of the stream are based on the direction of flow and are therefore contrary to the direction climbed.

Stroll
Riu del Manegor - plenty of fine picnic spots beside the stream below Wp.3.

Setting off from the road (Wp.1 0M), we follow the yellow-waymarked trail (NE), crossing the **Riu del Manegor** a little under 100 metres later, where we pass the first GRP waymarks (red-and-yellow stripes) and start climbing up the left bank of the torrent. Climbing steadily along a rocky but easy path, we emerge on a grassy slope above a small waterfall (Wp.2 10M), where the gradient eases and the granitic massif of Anrodad comes into view. The slope soon levels out altogether and we stroll along beside the stream to a signposted junction (Wp.3 25M).

The GRP bears left here, fording the stream to cross the **Camí de Port Incles** and climb to **Cabana Sorda** (Walk 21), passing en route the path to **Estany de l'Isla** and **Pic d'Anrodad**.

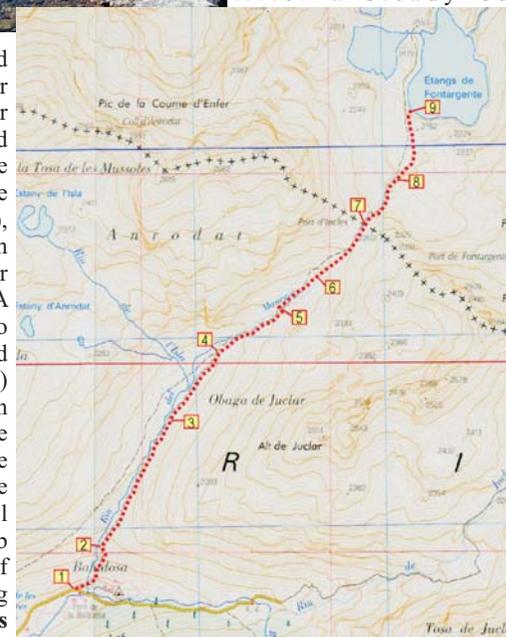


Looking back from below Wp.3

All these paths are waymarked and are possible variations on the present itinerary. For the moment though, we continue (NE) on the left bank of the stream to the head of the pasture, where we are joined by the **Camí de Port d'Incles** (Wp.4 35M).

After a steady but

straightforward climb, the clearer traces of path peter out temporarily and we cross onto the right bank of the torrent (Wp.5 45M), where we soon recover a clear trodden path. A gentler climb leads to a large waymarked rock (Wp.6 50M) beside a marshy patch of ground below the source of the **Manegor**, and the start of our final steady but brief climb to the gateway of large cairns marking the **Port d'Incles** (Wp.7 60M).



Descending into France on a clear path, we pass a small dry-stone shelter built into a slab of overhanging rock (Wp.8 65M). We then follow a cairn-marked route snaking through a sea of debris, the stone so heavily burnished by generations of hooves and boots, the cairns are largely superfluous, after which we descend to the grassy 'beach' on the southern side of the larger of the **Estanys de Fontargent** (Wp.9 75M). We return by the same route.



The descent into France