

9 THREE VILLAGES: CÓMPETA, CANILLAS DE ALBAIDA, ÁRCHEZ

The local authorities call this ‘**The Wine Route**’, which is a polite way of saying that it’s something of a pub crawl. Visiting three villages, each boasting excellent hosteleries, this is not a walk for anyone wanting to count the calories. Nor do I recommend it if you’re hankering after grand vistas and dramatic mountains. But if you appreciate pleasant countryside, pretty villages, friendly locals, and a good ‘pub crawl’, let’s go!

Of the many refreshment opportunities en route, we visited the **Avenida** in **Árchez** and the **Cerezo** in **Canillas**. If you’re taking the pub crawl seriously, there are also two vineyards, **Bodega Lopéz Martín** in **Árchez** and **Bodega Jarel** below **Cómpeta**, the latter of which furnished the King of Spain with a few tipples for his nuptials.

The walk starts from **Cómpeta**, but it’s worth considering starting in **Canillas**, doing the climbing early on and ending at the highly recommended **Bar Restaurant Cerezo**. If you take this option and don’t want to visit **Cómpeta**, there’s an alternative route to **Canillas** from Wp.20. If you don’t like the sound of the barking dogs at Wp.12, turn left at Wp.7 then take **Avenida de Andalucía** down to the **Árchez** road and follow that to rejoin the described itinerary at Wp.14.



Access: on foot from any of the villages.

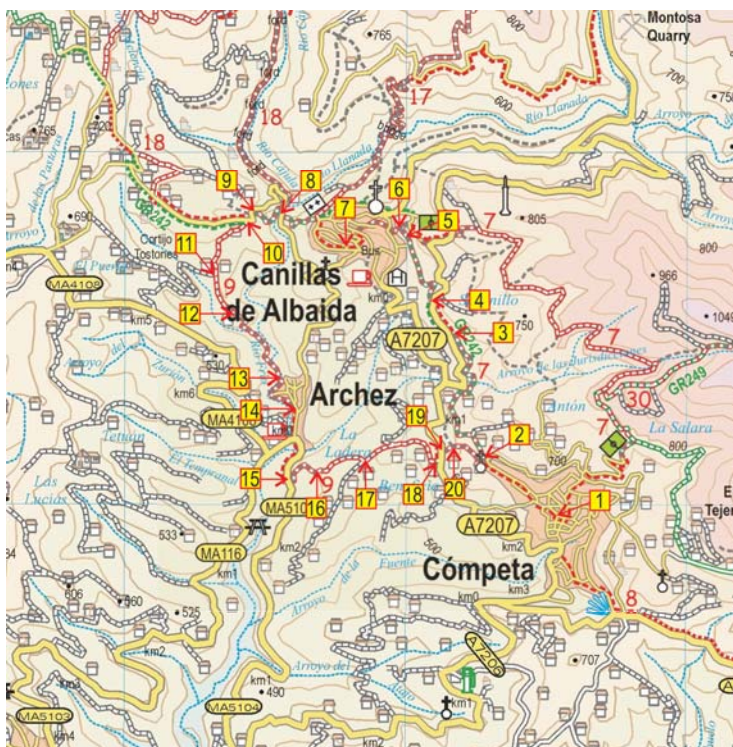
If starting from **Cómpeta**, see Walk 7 for access details. If arriving in **Canillas** by bus, from the bus stop in front of the tourism office, descend **Avenida Andalucía** into **Calle Estación**, joining the walk in front of the **Bar Restaurant Cerezo** (Wp.7). Car drivers can park in front of the tourism office. There’s no bus service to **Árchez**, but plenty of room to park alongside the river (Wps.13&14).

The GR out of Canillas



The start from **Cómpeta** is the same as Walk 7 Wps.1-5. The relevant waypoints are included in the waypoint file for the present itinerary. Fifty metres after the GR joins the dirt track (Wp.5), we leave both track and GR, turning left, as indicated by a large yellow arrow on the concrete base of an electricity pylon up to our right (Wp.6 **30M**).

Descending a stairway between two houses, we recover the *acequia* path, which ends at a road on the edge of **Canillas**. Crossing the road, we carry



straight on along a concrete and brick lane (**Calle Carnero**, unnamed at the start).

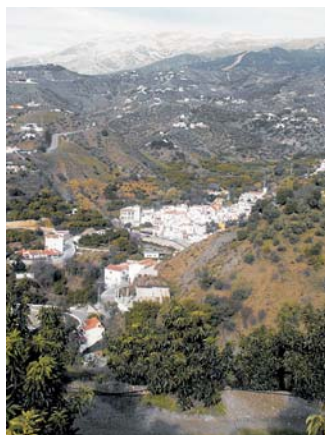
When **Calle Carnero** narrows to an alley, we take **Calle San Antonio**, then turn right into **Calle Granada** and left 25 metres later in front of house N°12. Descending at each junction, we join **Calle Estación** next to the **Bar/Restaurante Cerezo** (Wp.7 **37M**), where we turn right. We stay on **Calle Estación** for 250 metres until we see the brick archway of the cemetery gates ahead of us. Turning left (signposted 'Ruta Turística al Pie, Paraje Natural, Fuente Santa, Rio Llana') then immediately left again, we rejoin the GR, which descends steeply onto a cobbled mule trail that zigzags down to a minor road. 25 metres down the road, we turn left (Wp.8 **53M**), still following the GR as it crosses the ancient **Puente Romano**.

After zigzagging up to rejoin the road, we bear left (Wp.9 **58M**), following the road round a bend, beyond which we leave both road and GR, turning left on a track signposted 'Lisa Katrina' (Wp.10 **59M**). Ignoring the branch on the left 30 metres later, we carry straight on to the right of house N°4.

After passing between two villas, we turn left at a T-junction (Wp.11 **65M**) and descend past two more houses, the second of which is home to several noisy and not manifestly friendly dogs. The dogs' owners are friendly, but if you're nervous about dogs, this stretch can be avoided by taking the road between **Canillas** and **Archez**.

The track ends at ‘Rowdy Dog House’ (Wp.12 68M), beyond which a rough path descends steeply across cultivated terraces to the **Río Turvilla**.

Heading downstream (SE), we ford the river four times before passing the picturesque **Molino Winkler** (AKA **Molino Dña Fidela**) and crossing a footbridge to reach the riverside promenade in **Árchez** (Wp.13 78M).



Árchez & La Maroma

We can either continue along the riverside, passing **Bar La Peña Cataollas** before climbing to the main road at the southern entrance to the village (Wp.14 83M), just past **Bar Avenida**, or reach the same point by traversing the village via **Puerta del Río**. The lively **Bar Avenida** is a good place to soak up the local atmosphere and contemplate the distant dome of **La Maroma** (Walk 35).

After Wp.14, there is a tricky pathfinding moment. We follow the road to the south, passing in front of **Bodega López Martín** and above the **Corumbuela** bridge. 600 metres south of the village, we pass a small house on our right with a distinctive lozenged metal gate. In the bend on the left there is a concrete ramp.



Wp.15

Just before the ramp, a fingerpost (‘Árchez’) and mapboard of local paths mark the point where a rough way climbs to a *cortijo* (fronted with pine, agave and a few sickly prickly pear bushes) just above the road (Wp.15 93M).

We take the rough path beside the signpost, then climb to the left of the *cortijo*, flush with its walls, ignoring the more obvious branch heading back towards the village.

Climbing steadily, we follow the path through an eroded chicane, after which it broadens to a trail leading to a dirt track (Wp.16 100M). We continue climbing steadily (ignoring minor branches accessing terraces) to a crossroads between a white reservoir and a cluster of *cortijos* (Wp.17 106M).



Turning left, we climb on an easier gradient, sticking to the main track until it joins the **Canillas-Cómpeta** road beside **Bodega Jarel** (Wp.18 **113M**).

Turning left, we follow the road for 75 metres then, immediately before it passes between two short crash barriers, turn right (Wp.19) on a narrow path climbing alongside a watercourse, at the head of which we join the remains of an old mule trail (Wp.20 **118M**). If you're not visiting **Cómpeta**, turn left here to follow the trail and its continuation as a path back down to the road, then walk along the road for a little over a kilometre to **Canillas**.

Otherwise, we turn right. If you started from **Cómpeta**, we rejoin our outward route 200 metres later behind the **Ermita San Antonio**. If you started lower down, at the top of the mule trail, carry straight on past the **Hotel Balcón de Cómpeta**, then fork left at the junction with **Calle Constitución** passing the *Biblioteca Municipal*, and carry straight on at every junction till you emerge at the top of the church square, where there are enough restaurants and *tapas* bars to satisfy anyone.