

# Walking in the Sierra Nevada



Self Guided Walking Itinerary Number 3

## A circuit in the Rio Poqueira

7 hours strenuous

Pampaneira, Bubion and Capileira are the three villages lying on the eastern side of what is the most popular walking area of the Alpujarra. The villages are linked by trails which traverse the valley sides and cross the Rio Poqueira on old packhorse bridges, these trails provide numerous routes through the valley for you to explore the area making the most of cool picnic spots by the river and passing through the picturesque villages so emblematic of the region.

*Note. This is a long circuit but it is possible to cut this version short at numerous points (refer to a map).*



Park in the main car part at the bottom of the village of Pampaneira. Towards the lower corner of the car park is a street

signposted "Carniceria" (butchers). Follow this to its end where it joins another street. Turn left downhill to reach the bend in the main road beside some electricity pylons. Turn right and follow a dirt track downhill to the Rio Poquiera.

Cross the bridge and turn immediately right. After 10 metres take a faint path that climbs steeply up the hillside and zig zags upwards towards (and passing just beneath) the prominent rocky pinnacle. From the pinnacle, the path – now better defined – continues its steep zig zag ascent and eventually arriving at a flat area by a ruined cortijo.

Approaching the cortijo, the path forks right about 10 metres before the building. 10 minutes beyond this, having crossed a more open area, the path descends steeply downhill to an overgrown bridge. (A path from Bubion also joins from the right and can be a way to cut the walk short). Our way lies onwards and upwards!



The path quickly ascends and passes another cortijo. The path then zig zag's steeply uphill. 5 minutes above the corijo, we pass a circular stone paved 'threshing circle'. 10 metres above the threshing circle the path divides; take the right hand fork. The path is now mainly good and level, as it continues along the valley.

We pass another cortijo, full of traditional character with a 'hatted' chimney. 5 minutes beyond this, is a path junction with sign posts. Here it is essential to turn right, following the sign to Capileira. Descend to a bridge over the river (Punte Chiscal).



Cross the bridge and ascend for approximately 4 minutes.

From here it is again possible to shorten the walk by following the signs straight to Capileira. The main path to Capileira bends right over a small bridge.

We continue up for a further 10 minutes, and turn left towards an old cortijo. When level with the building, turn right towards the barranco and stream. The path then zig



zags back to the left, crossing a boulder field caused by a landslip. We now need to rejoin the path that exits out from the top left of the

boulders. The path ascends gradually to a junction with another path which comes in from the right. Our way on begins a gradual descent and reaches a bridge in approximately 5 minutes and crosses the rio Poqueira.

Cross and take the main path which ascends up to the right. Stay on this until after around an hour's walking you arrive at a farm with a large radio mast.

From the farm, we descend for approximately 50m and join a dirt track which descends down into the barranco of the rio Poqueira at the deserted village of La Cebadilla (3.5 hours from Pampaneira).

Pass through La Cebadilla and continue along the dirt track.



After around 25 minutes, branch right onto a footpath marked 'Camino Capileira'. The path passes a white cortijo, then a smart stone house. 100m

further on, the path divides – take the right hand branch.

At another path junction, turn right following signs to Capileira. On arriving at the edge of Capileira, we descend steeply on a cobbled path – Calle Castilejo. At the road junction, go straight ahead, passing a water fountain on your right. At the next junction bear left, past various bars and a bank. At the end of this street is the bar Maeson Poqueira – a good place to pause for refreshment.



Just beyond the Maeson Poqueira, our route turns right down a set of steep steps. At the bottom of the steps, continue downhill following the narrow

road which then turns to cobbles and ends at some railings. Here turn left and keep on

ahead, ignoring the sign to the “lavadero veja”.



Just beyond a gate is a faint path alongside a wall; take this. The path soon improves and is followed to where it

joins the main road approximately 200m outside Bubion.

Continue along the main road through the upper ‘barrio’ of Bubion, until you arrive at the Café-Bar Fuente Fria. Turn right here onto the Calle Caril. This part of Bubion is a complicated mass of alleys, however you won’t go far wrong by keeping your eye on the Church tower and heading generally downwards to the church and square. When you reach the square, find the main

door of the church, and with your back to this, turn right onto the Calle Barrio Bajo. At some railings safeguarding a good view of the valley, is a path signposted to Pampaneira. On your right is the public wash-house – Lavadero y fuente de la Hondera – which has recently been restored, and is worth a look.



A pleasant path continues down towards Pampaneira. At the point where it meets and a water

channel, cross onto a concrete road and follow this for 50m before turning off to the right. This path eventually leads into the top of Pampaneira. Pick your own route down through the narrow alleys and reward yourself with a refreshing drink in one of the many bars along