

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Gran Trail de Peñalara (GTP) is a long distance ultra trail. The race course is roughly 110 Km along paths and mountain trails that encircle a large portion of Sierra de Guadarrama. Start and finish lines are situated at the village of Navacerrada. The course peaks are La Maliciosa (2227m) and Peñalara (2429 m). Mountain passes are Piornal (2074 m), Las Vacas (1888 m), Dehesilla (1458 m), Morcuera (1777 m), Reventón (2037 m), Fuenfría (1792 m) and finally Navacerrada (1862 m). Valleys are also present such as beautiful La Barranca, Manzanares, Lozoya, Valsaín and Eresma river. It is also the domain for environmentally protected areas such as *Parque Regional de la Cuenca Alta del Manzanares*, *Parque Natural de Peñalara* and *Centro Montes y Aserradero de Valsaín*

GTP begins at the entry gate of our mountains: Navacerrada. Once we reach the Valle de la Barranca we should climb the Maliciosa peak by the steep slopes of Collado del Piornal. Then we descend along the stony Collado de las Vacas through the secondary summit of Maliciosa Baja. We will get down the Porrones ridge to reach the very heart of the natural park: Canto Cochino picnic area.

From Canto Cochino, the GTP starts climbing softly the GR10 trail. We will pass the R.S.E.A. Peñalara mountain hut "Giner de los Ríos", the huge Tolmo rock to reach a tiny pass named Collado de la Dehesilla. Some easy-to-run miles will lead us towards Hoya de San Blas. The Monte Aguirre's pine trees will give us shade while climbing La Morcuera. From this pass, GR10 trail goes down the Lozoya valley and reaches Rascafría checkpoint, just over Paular Monastery

An old carriage single track goes up from Rascafría towards the oaks of Los Horcajuelos. It climbs a long and rough pass called Puerto del Reventón. Then we shall turn south to go along the Sierra crest. We will climb the broad Pico de los Neveros and the rocky Los Pájaros and Claveles peaks. The end of the crest brings us to the highest summit of the race: Peñalara (2429 m).

Mind your feet the way down Peñalara. We will descend more than 1000 metres to reach (probably by night) Aranguez Hut and, thereafter, a lovely single track under the pinewoods to arrive the historical site of La Granja de San Ildefonso.

From the Royal Palace and surroundings, the GTP slowly recovers the altitude along the old royal fishing track of Las Pesquerías at the Eresma creek. We would be able to see Valsain and Boca del Asno picnic area but it all be part of the night course. The GR10 trail will bring us up to the summit at Puerto de la Fuenfría where we will take a northward turn. The Siete Picos (Seven Peaks) north side will give us shelter along the well known Camino Schmid, and will lead us to the Puerto de Navacerrada. After the checkpoint we will only have to climb a wide path to Las Cabrillas crest. From this exceptional balcony we will get the entire Madrid region at our feet. A steep descend begins to close the circle to La Barranca valley. There, good tracks will bring us back to Navacerrada, to finally cross the finish line.