

COSTA DAURADA Nature holiday area

The Costa Daurada has some unexpected delights awaiting visitors who are interested in nature. The network of protected natural areas includes a surprising variety of landscapes and an extensive biodiversity.

The inland mountain ranges of the Montsant Natural Park and the Prades Mountains are characterised by their fine examples of Mediterranean mountain vegetation and their large populations of mammals and birds of prey.

The Costa Daurada also has many protected coastal areas of considerable environmental value, where you can observe an abundant diversity of bird life in marsh or dune habitats. The predominant vegetation is Mediterranean brush, with fan or windmill palms, the only palm native to Europe.

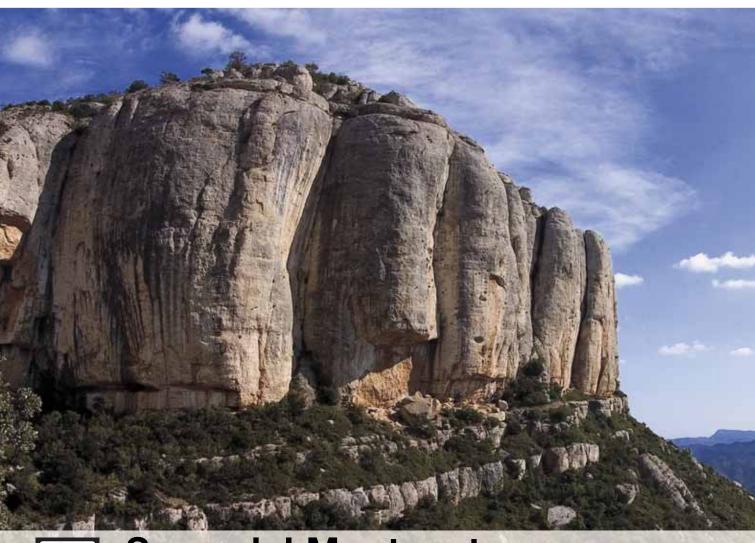
The Costa Daurada's network of nature reserves has the necessary infrastructure to receive visitors. Visitors' centres in the natural park and other protected areas and tourist offices provide the information and assistance needed to enjoy this invaluable heritage.

Complementary services provided by expert naturalist guides and companies specialising in organising sports and nature activities add to the facilities that make the Costa Daurada an exceptional destination for de PEbre the visitor.











Serra del Montsant Natural Park



The Serra del Montsant Natural Park, located in the north of Priorat County, constitutes one of the most imposing reliefs in the province of Tarragona. This massif, the highest point of which is the Roca Corbatera (1,163 m), covers more than 9,200 hectares and is made up of a large block of calcareous conglomerates with many spectacular chasms, caves, grottoes and gorges caused by erosion. Thanks to this unique relief we can still find a wide diversity of flora and fauna in the Montsant Mountains

The vegetation varies widely from holm-oak woods combined with vegetation that likes the shade of the gorges, bushes, and the typical herbaceous plants of very dry areas. A relief that allows the existence of different microclimates makes these combinations possible.

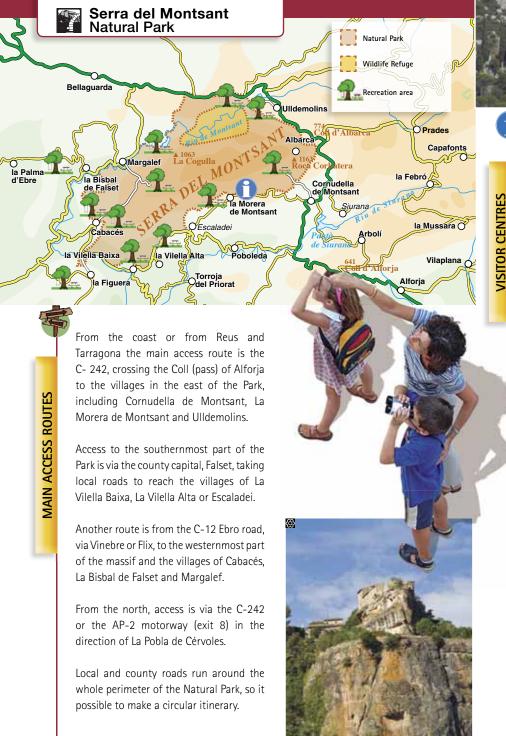
The Montsant also has one of the richest varieties of fauna in Catalonia. Of particular interest is the area around the Montsant River, where we find mammals such as the weasel, the genet and the wild cat. The cliffs are the breeding ground for various birds of prey, some of them as rare as Bonelli's eagle and the eagle owl. The river also has an abundant population of reptiles, amphibians and fish, including the Iberian viper, the salamander, the barbus haasi and the catfish. The 183-hectare estate known as Congost de Fraguerau, in the municipality of Ulldemolins, has been declared a Wildlife Refuge in order to protect these natural communities.

As far as architectural heritage is concerned, the name Montsant (Holy Mountain) comes from the many chapels, which are often located in the most unlikely but stunningly beautiful places. A fine example is the oldest of all, the Chapel of Sant Bartomeu, which was built in the 12th century. All the chapels show how the spiritual sites of the past have been converted into places of meeting and celebration today. Also of great interest are the ruins of the first Carthusian Monastery on the Iberian Peninsula – Scala Dei ("The Stairway of God").

These lands produce wines with two different designations of origin – the Priorat Qualified Designation of Origin and the Montsant Designation of Origin- both of high quality and considerable international prestige, thanks to the sun and climatic characteristics found in the Park. The Montsant area is also known for its excellent Protected Designation of Origin Siurana olive oil.









Park Central Information Office

Major 4, baixos 43361 La Morera de Montsant Tel: +34 977 827 310 pnmontsant.dmah@gencat.net

Priorat County Tourist Office. Falset

www.parcsdecatalunya.net

Sant Marcel, 2 Tel: +34 977 831 023 www.priorat.org

Cornudella de Montsant Municipal Tourism Board

Comte de Rius, s/n Tel: +34 977 821 000

Ulldemolins Culture and Tourism Board

Saltadora, 26

Tel: +34 977 561 577/ +34 977 561 578

Ulldemolins Information Point

Pl. de l'Església, s/n Tel: +34 977 561 866

La Vilella Baixa Information Point

De Priorat (School) Tel: +34 659 750 671

Cabacés Information Point

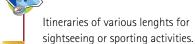
Puntarrer, s/n

Margalef Information Point

Pl. Sant Miquel, 12 Tel: +34 977 819 769

Many picnic areas can be found in or on the outskirts of the Park. These are often used as meeting points for setting off on hiking trips.





CatSud

Themed excursions and guided itineraries Tel: +34 636 162 426/ +34 626 684 917 guies@catsud.com www.catsud.com

Excursions.cat

Interpretative hiking Tel: +34 626 822 385 info@excursions.cat www.excursions.cat

Pedrenca

Guided tours and interpretative itineraries
Tel: +34 690 251 295
pedrenca@pedrenca.com
www.pedrenca.com



Agrobotiga. La Bisbal de Falset

Les Escoles, 1

Tel: +34 977 819 374

Cooperativa Agrícola. Cabacés

Major, 30

FARM SHOPS

Tel: +34 977 839 112

Agrobotiga. Cornudella de Montsant

Pl. de la Vila, 11 baixos Tel: +34 977 821 031

Celler Cooperatiu. Cornudella de Montsant

Comte de Rius, 2 Tel: +34 977 821 329

El Molí de l'Oli. Escaladei- La Morera de Montsant

Pl. Priorat, 1

Tel: +34 977 839 399/ +34 686 707 326

Cooperativa Agrícola Sant Jaume. Ulldemolins

Av. Verge de Montserrat, 11 Tel: +34 977 561 640

Agrobotiga. La Vilella Alta

Rei. 14

Tel: +34 977 839 093

Agrobotiga. La Vilella Baixa

Catalunya, s/n

Tel: +34 977 839 167









The Poblet Natural Area of National Interest is in the county of Conca de Barberà in the municipalities of L'Espluga de Francolí and Vimbodí i Poblet. It has two distinct types of relief: the mountainous northern slopes of the Prades Mountains and the plains of the southernmost part, dotted with traditional rural and residential villages. Covering an area of 2,460 hectares, the highest point is the Tossal de la Baltasana (1,201 metres) in the Prades Mountains. In 1998, the protected area was extended by more than 919 hectares with the declaration of the Partial Nature Reserves of Fl Barranc de la Trinitat and Fl Barranc del Titllar

It has a wide diversity of vegetation in a relatively small area. Of particular interest are the coastal or mountain holm oak woods that are interspersed with cultivated land, especially the vineyards that produce the Conca de Barberà designation of origin wine.

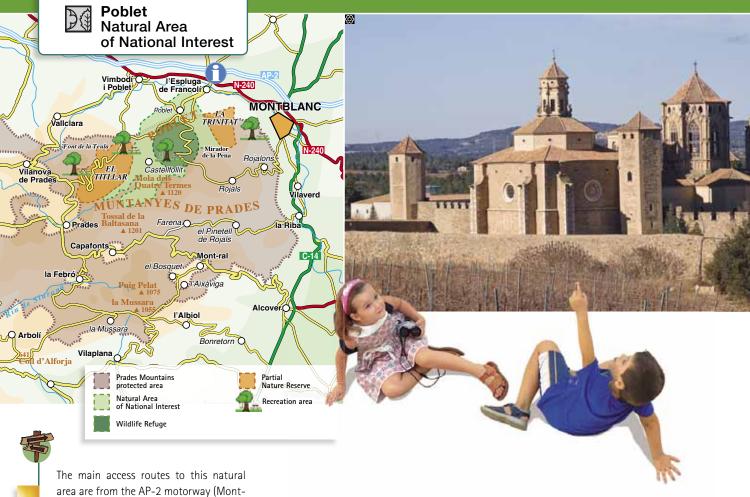
The spectacular expanse of forest, the orientation and the climate make this home to a wide variety of wildlife, including some species with Euro-Siberian and Mid-European requirements, such as the Eurasian nuthatch and the thrush. During the winter months you can see a large number of birds of prey, including the goshawk, the tawny owl, Bonelli's eagle and the peregrine falcon. Mammals, which are more difficult to see due to their nocturnal habits, include typical Mediterranean woodland animals such as the badger, the marten and the fox. There are also large populations of wild boar and roe-deer, which were reintroduced in 1995. A 2,276-hectare area known as the Bosc de Poblet Wildlife Refuge has been declared to protect these animal communities.

The Bosc de Poblet (Poblet Woodland) is a popular place for hiking as its extensive network of trails makes it easy to reach the area's most outstanding beauty spots. It is also a good place to enjoy other outdoor activities such as rock climbing, potholing, mountain biking and archery.

The name Poblet comes from the monastery founded in the 12th century on land donated by Count Ramon Berenguer IV to the monks of the Cistercian order. Today the Monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1991, is one of the highlights of the Cistercian Monastery Itinerary.







The main access routes to this natural area are from the AP-2 motorway (Montblanc exit) and the N-240 main road, via the towns of L'Espluga de Francolí and Vimbodí i Poblet to the Monastery of Poblet.

From the towns there are local roads lead to the village of Prades and also to the Poblet Woodland, either along the bottom of the small valleys of from the head of the valley to La Pena lookout point.

Access from the east and the C-14 is via the village of Rojals.









Information and Area Management Centre

Carretera Les Masies, s/n 43440 L'Espluga de Francolí Tel: +34 977 871 732 pnpoblet.dmah@gencat.net www.parcsdecatalunya.net

Conca de Barberà County Tourist Office. Poblet- Vimbodí i Poblet

Passeig de l'Abat Conill, 9 Tel: +34 977 871 247 www.concadebarbera.info

L'Espluga de Francolí Municipal Tourist Office

Pl. Mil·lenari. 1 Tel: +34 977 871 220

Prades Municipal Tourist Office

Pl. Major 2, baixos Tel: +34 977 868 302

La Roca de l'Abella Leisure Area Information Point

Ctra T-700 de Poblet a Prades- Forest track of Castellfollit

Font de la Magnèsia Information Point

Ctra de Les Masies-Poblet- Forest track of La Pena





AVAILABLE ACTIVITIES

Signposted footpath itineraries.

Oficina Drac Actiu Les Masies

Adventure sports, potholing and hiking

Tel: +34 629 213 263 info@dracactiu.com www.dracactiu.com

Excursions.cat

Interpretative hiking Tel: +34 626 822 385 info@excursions.cat www.excursions.cat



-ARM SHOPS

Agrobotiga de la Cooperativa Agrícola. L'Espluga de Francolí

Josep Maria Rendé, 5 Tel: +34 977 870 105

Agrobotiga del Celler Rendé Masdeu. L'Espluga de Francolí

Av. de Catalunya, 44 Tel: +34 977 871 361

La Cantonada. L'Espluga de Francolí

Lluís Carulla, 52 Tel: +34 977 870 239

Pastisseria Cabal. L'Espluga de Francolí

De Torres Jordi, 13 Tel: +34 977 870 282

Pastisseria Cobo. L'Espluga de Francolí

De Torres Jordi. 8 Tel: +34 977 870 159

Pastisseria Farré Gamell. L'Espluga de Francolí

De Sant Antoni. 2 Tel: +34 977 870 406

Pastisseria Ferrer. L'Espluga de Francolí

Av. de Catalunya, 12 Tel: +34 977 870 269

Mel de la Pallisa. Vilanova de Prades

2n. Trav. C. Major, s/n Tel: +34 977 869 048

Licor de la Vall de Poblet. Poblet- Vimbodí i Poblet

Passeig de l'Abat Conill, 11 Tel: +34 977 871 210

The Costa Daurada protected coastal nature reserves

The Costa Daurada has several small nature reserves that are protected for their special scenery and their high biodiversity value. They range from wetlands with large bird populations to dune and cliff ecosystems and Mediterranean woodland vegetation.





Special Plan for the Protection of the Natural Environment and Landscape of Rojala-Platja del Torn

This PEIN (Plan for Areas of Natural Interest in Catalonia) coastal area is located in the southern part of the municipality of Vandellòs i L'Hospitalet de l'Infant.

It consists of a particularly picturesque stretch of mixed coastline with areas of dune vegetation and dry scrub formations, in which the maquis and coastal pines stand out. Posidonia sea grass meadows cover parts of the seabed.

Thanks to its isolated location, Rojala - Platja del Torn is the perfect place to study and enjoy the natural environment. It is also a nudist beach.





The AP-7 motorway and the N-340 national highway are the nearest main roads

The natural area can be reached from the town of L'Hospitalet de L'Infant





VISITOR CENTRES

L'Hospitalet de l'Infant i La Vall de Llors Municipal Tourism Board

Alamanda, 2

Tel: +34 977 823 328 turisme@vandellos-hospitalet.org www.vandellos-hospitalet.org/turisme

This natural area has a beach bar with a terrace that has beautiful views of the beach and the sea.



AVAILABLE ACTIVITIES

Nudist area

La Vall study centre

Nature itineraries Tel: +34 620 046 955 centrestudis@hotmail.com

La Barrancada sports centre

Hiking and kayaking Tel: +34 605 423 027 info@labarrancada.com www.labarrancada.com

Special Plan for the Protection of the Natural Environment and Landscape of Tamarit-Punta de la Móra

ora Contraction

This PEIN (Plan for Areas of Natural Interest in Catalonia) coastal area is located between Punta de la Creueta, Punta de la Móra and the Tarragona-Barcelona railway line. The protected area covers about 100 hectares of land and 300 hectares of the sea bed.

Thanks to its relief it has not been excessively transformed by the actions of man, making it an area of exceptional botanical and ecological interest. Of particular importance are the Mediterranean coastal woodlands, home to a considerable diversity of land vertebrate species and other coastal communities. The seabed also preserves posidonia (sea grass) meadows.





The main access routes are the AP-7 motorway and the A7 (former N-340) coastal road

Access on foot from the Llarga Beach located to the east of the city of Tarragona.





VISITOR CENTRES

Tarragona Municipal Tourism Board

Major, 39

Tel: +34 977 250 795 turisme@tarragona.cat www.tarragonaturisme.cat



AVAILABLE ACTIVITIES

Depana Guided

Guided interpretative tours of the coastal environment
Tel: +34 977 227 176
puntadelamora@depana.org
www.depana.org/puntadelamora/

Actiac

Water sports and kayaking Tel: +34 685 805 196/ +34 685 805 197 actiac@yahoo.es www.actiac.com

Special Plan for the Protection of the Natural Environment and Landscape of Platja de Torredembarra

This 35-hectare PEIN (Plan for Areas of Natural Interest in Catalonia) coastal area is located on the beach of the municipality of Torredembarra. It is one of the few remaining examples of unspoilt coastline in southern Catalonia.

Here we find open littoral ecosystems with dunes up to 5 metres high, intermittent saltwater ponds and posidonia meadows on the seabed. You can also see a wide variety of migratory birds that take advantage of this unique area to rest on their journey.





The main access routes are the AP-7 motorway and the A7 (former N-340) coastal road.

Access to the natural area is from the town of Torredembarra.





VISITOR CENTRES

Cal Bofill centre for environmental activities

Passeig Colom, 50 43830 Torredembarra Tel: +34 977 641 672 calbofill@ajtorredembarra.org

Torredembarra Municipal Tourism Board

Passeig Rafael Campalans, 10 Tel: +34 977 644 580/ +34 977 644 294

This natural reserve has a leisure area next to the Cal Bofill centre.



AVAILABLE ACTIVITIES

Gepec

Guided naturalist tours
Tel: +34 977 331 142
secretaria@gepec.org
www.gepec.cat/muntanyans/

Torredembarra Town Hall

Activity groups for children aged between 8 and 12 Tel: +34 977 641 672 www.torredembarra.cat

Wild Animal Nature Reserve of Desembocadura del Riu Gaià

This PEIN (Plan for Areas of Natural Interest in Catalonia) coastal area takes in the final stretch and mouth of the Gaià, a small torrential regime river, and covers 5 hectares, including flooded areas and a sand beach.

It is one of the few wetland areas that still has an important presence of riverside vegetation and birdlife. Declared a Wild Animal Nature Reserve in 1995, it is a resting place along one of the main routes for birds migrating between Western Europe and Africa.





The main access routes are the AP-7 motorway and the A7 (former N-340) coastal road.

The Nature Reserve can be reached from the towns of Altafulla or Tamarit



AVAILABLE ACTIVITIES

Hort de la Sínia information and environmental education centre

Guided interpretative tours and organic farming workshops
Tel:+34 977 652 212/ +34 655 486 115
+34 655 486 116

sinia@siniadelgaia.com www.siniadelgaia.com





VISITOR CENTRES

Hort de la Sínia information and environmental education centre

Avellaners, 11 43893 Altafulla

Tel: +34 977 652 212/ +34 655 486 115

+34 655 486 116

sinia@siniadelgaia.com www.siniadelgaia.com

Altafulla Municipal Tourist Office

Marquès de Tamarit, 16 Tel: +34 977 650 008/ +34 977 651 426





Other natural areas on the Costa Daurada

The natural heritage of the Costa Daurada includes a large number of areas, particularly Mediterranean mountain environments that complement the network of protected nature reserves. Also belonging to the Plan for Areas of Natural Interest in Catalonia, many are protected by Special Delimitation Plans with basic development programmes, thanks to which we can still enjoy their scenery and rich flora and fauna.

Most of these areas have signposted walking itineries and in some cases there are informative panels describing the flora and fauna.

They are normally less well-known areas where the experience in one of discovery, both of our natural and cultural heritage.



1. MUNTANYES DE PRADES

The Prades Mountains take in territory belonging to the municipalities of Mont-ral, Alcover, La Riba, Farena, Alforja, Capafonts, La Febró, L'Albiol, L'Aleixar, Arbolí, Prades, Vilaplana, Vilaverd, Montblanc, L'Espluga de Francolí, Rojals, Vimbodí i Poblet, Vallclara, Cornudella de Montsant, Albarca, Siurana and Ulldemolins. Their highest point is the Tossal de la Baltasana (1,201 m). The wide variety of geological substrata, together with their geographical and orographical situation and the existence of large open spaces where human presence is practically non-existent, give the area a high level of biodiversity with endemic species of flora and fauna, some of which are very rare.

A preliminary plan has been drawn up to convert this area, together with that of Poblet, into a natural park.

2. OBAGUES DEL RIU CORB

An area located in the municipalities of Llorac and Savallà del Comtat that occupies 363 hectares. Defined by the series of shady areas facing the River Corb, between the Segura gully and the northern slopes of the two villages, its cold, damp climate gives it an interesting, dense

vegetation reminiscent of the forests of Central Europe. It is curious to see how, outside this area, the conditions change radically and the vegetation changes to holm-oaks.

3. SABURELLA

An area of 1,784 hectares that takes in territory of the municipalities of El Pont d'Armentera, Querol and Santa Perpètua de Gaià. Included in the Areas of Natural Interest in Catalonia Plan for its wildlife, it is home to a large number of species common to the Mediterranean garrigue scrublands and rocky areas. As far as flora is concerned, this is a transitional area between the pre-littoral holm-oak and laurestine vegetation and the central Catalan oak wood basins. The scarce human presence means that species such as the rabbit and the partridge abound, together with their corresponding predators.

4. ANCOSA- MONTAGUT

This mountain formation, full of calcareous faults in all directions, forms part of the Bloc del Gaià. It is interesting for having in a single area Mediterranean elements and sub-Mediterranean vegetation, like



Other natural areas on the Costa Daurada







rushes, that is more common in wetter areas. The fauna is characterised by the predominance of Mediterranean species, together with others as interesting as the coleopterans, endemic to the mountains, and other molluses and heteropterans.

5. TOSSAL GROS DE MIRAMAR

A 177-hectare area located in the municipalities of Montblanc, Barberà de la Conca and Figuerola del Camp consisting of a differentiated calcareous relief between the rivers Francolí and Gaià. Its landscape is typical of secondary and permanent coastal holm-oak communities and it is particularly important for the diversity of wildlife, with a well developed presence of birdlife and some extremely interesting reptiles, such as the golden ocellated lizard.

6. ALBEREDA DE SANTES CREUS

A 9-hectare area located on the left bank of the River Gaià, in the municipality of Aiguamúrcia, important for being the only remaining example of southern Catalan riverside vegetation. This spectacular mass of poplars, close to an elm and a willow grove, also preserves one of the best examples of southern Mediterranean riverside fauna; species such as the rabbit, the squirrel, the fox, the white and grey wagtails, the salamander and the water snake are the most common.

7. FL MONTMELL

This area covers lands in the municipality of Montmell, in the southernmost part of the Bloc de Gaià. Its singular relief is the result of the erosion of calcareous rock by water filtration. Its typical Mediterranean landscape is the transition from the coastal maquis of kermes oak and palmetto on the dry sides of the maritime slopes and the little-changed holm-oak vegetation with laurestine in the rest of the area, where scrub, thickets and brushwood, together with dry meadows, now prevail. Despite a somewhat impoverished fauna,

certain Mediterranean elements stand out; there is a particularly important presence of invertebrates, including the Bythinella alonsae, a mollusc endemic to the springs.

8. SÈQUIA MAJOR

An area of 5 hectares in La Pineda, in the municipality of Vila-seca de Solcina, consisting of a one-kilometre-long water channel. The actual wetlands occupy a much larger area as they include adjacent flood plains totalling some 17 hectares. Its interest lies in the fact that it is one of the few remaining examples of the marshes that covered much of the coastline in earlier times; for this reason it shares many of the characteristics of the southern wetlands. The prevailing vegetation is of reeds and rushes. The fauna includes two singular species, a fish known as the fartet (Aphanius iberus) and the pond turtle, with one of the best preserved populations in Catalonia.

9. MARE DE DÉU DE LA ROCA

A small area in the municipalities of Vilanova d'Escornalbou and Montroig del Camp, at one end of the pre-littoral mountains. Its relief of red rock cliffs and soil is home to an interesting flora and it is an ideal habitat for a large number of species that thrive in such rocky terrain. The landscape is dominated by the coastal holm-oak, although today we also find silicic scrub with some ilex and cork oaks, together with dry pastures. Of particular interest here are numerous species of muscinae and lichens that are very rare in Catalonia.

10. SERRES DE PRADELL- L'ARGENTERA

A small area north of the Pradell-Argentera Mountains, in the northern prolongation of the Llaberia-Colldejou system, in territory belonging to the municipalities of Duesaigües, L'Argentera and Pradell de la Teixeta. It has been included in the PEIN because it is home to a large number of extremely rare plant species, including yews. Apart from this, the

vegetation consists of the typical holm-oak woods on the lower reaches and mountain holm-oak woods together with silicic scrub, often with pines, on the higher reaches.

11. MUNTANYES DE TIVISSA- VANDELLÒS

A natural area divided into two orographical units, the Tivissa Mountains farther inland to the west and the Vandellòs Mountains to the east and nearer the coast. Although these two units are geographically isolated, they form part of the same system and have many features in common. Their typical southern pre-littoral mountain relief is formed by valleys, in which coastal holm-oak woods with laurestine predominate, and hard to reach rock walls that have allowed the survival of populations of species including the badger, the fox, the genet and the weasel. This is also an important wintering area for many birds and birds of prey, such as the kestrel, the golden eagle and Bonelli's eagle, the population of the latter being one of the largest in Catalonia.

12. SERRA DE LLABERIA

Located in the municipalities of Colldejou, Pratdip, Capçanes, Marçà and La Torre de la Fontaubella on the Costa Daurada, and Tivissa in the Terres de l'Ebre, the Llaberia Mountains are representative of the natural systems of the Mediterranean pre-littoral ranges, and a transition between the Prades and Cardó Mountains. This area stands out particularly for its variety of invertebrates, with some very rare endemic species of Catalan fauna, as well as a notable diversity of landscapes.

13. MASIA BLANCA

The only marine reserve on the Costa Daurada. Located on the beaches of El Vendrell, near the port of Coma-ruga, it was established to protect the exceptional rocky depths in an area of mainly sandy surfaces. It covers 280 hectares and is between 4 and 16 metres deep. Of particular interest are the posidonia (sea grass) meadows and the maerl or grapissar, as it is known locally. Here it is possible to fish for conger eel, perch, gilt-head, octopus, cuttlefish and red mullet, among others. The action of the wind on the coastline has formed permanent sand dunes that are home to a variety of plant life. The waters of the Reserve are enriched by the natural spring of Font Déu de Brisamar, from which water emanates all year round at a temperature of 19°C

Advice and regulations for visiting a protected natural area

- Use the Information and Visitor Centres where you will find leaflets, maps, and information about services and activities.
- Take care of facilities and observe the signs, itineraries and areas where access is forbidden. The itineraries are designed to allow you to enjoy these natural areas without damaging them or disturbing the living beings that inhabit them.
- Use the litterbins and where there are none, take your rubbish home with you. Leave the natural area as clean as you find it.
- Please do not uproot any plants and try not to tread on any saplings.
- If you bring your pets, put them on a leash and keep them under control.
- Remember that in the marine reserve it is strictly forbidden to fish or remove any flora or fauna without authorisation.
- Camping is only allowed in established campsites, or, in certain cases, in spacially designed areas.
- The use of motorised vehicles is not allowed.
- Remember that noise is not a part of the environment. Enjoy the sounds of nature.
- Fire is one of the most devastating enemies of natural areas. Do not light any fires and take care with any items that could start a fire (cigarettes, glass, etc.).
- Enjoy the landscape and fauna by using binoculars and taking photos. They will be your best souvenir.

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