


General Data

Data According to Recreational Area




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LA ARBOLEDA / ZUGAZTIETA

Valle de Trápaga-Trapagaran



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ACCESS

Access to the La Arboleda/Zugaztieta Park recreational area is from the Valle de Trápaga- Trapagaran, leaving the old Bilbao to Cantabria BI-634 road in Trápaga-Trapagaran, at the intersection in front of the Town Hall and the church. A winding road climbs up the mountain, leaving old mining neighbourhoods behind, until we reach Larreineta, which is where the funicular ends. A little further on, before reaching the town of La Arboleda, is La Arboleda/Zugaztieta Park.



DESCRIPTION

- The recreational area of La Arboleda/Zugaztieta is located on the ravine of Zuloko, over severely altered land caused by the fierce mining activity undertaken in the remote past.
- The banks of the pond of the former Pozo Las Cármenes mine, formed by the flooding of the old mine following the surfacing of underground water, reveal very characteristic shapes and relief: rocky needles, large rocks which with the oxidisation of the iron give the landscape a varied, spectacular range of colours, and the result is scenery of chaotic beauty.
- So much scratching the wealth out of the land has resulted in depleted soil, with a vegetation of meadows and degraded thicket. However, thanks to the existing interest in improving the environment, a substantial improvement of the land has been undertaken, upgrading it and planting many species of native shrubs and trees, besides the typical river bank vegetation on the banks of the pond, which soon will make it more welcoming.

VISITS AND WALKS IN THE SURROUNDINGS

La Arboleda/Zugaztieta and surrounding area

La Arboleda is the most emblematic and important urban nucleus in Somorrostro area that remains of the region's magnificent mining past. Founded in the year 1877, the town retains the character that shaped it, reflected in the workers' wooden houses (some of them have been renovated), the mining trade unions, the grocer's shop, and the most important mining hospital in the area, today in ruins.

The population of the upper valley, such as La Arboleda, Triano, El Sauco and many more neighbourhoods, with 5,060 inhabitants, exceeded those in the lower part of Trapagaran in number in the year 1901, which then had a population of 1,776.

Next to La Arboleda/Zugaztieta, the landscape is chaotic, of rare beauty, with the pond known as El Osti6n standing out in the scenery, next to the recreational area. Adjacent to Pozo Las Cármenes is the Blondies Mine, and in the background, near the road, is the Parkotxa pond, a former mineral washery, and today reconverted into a pond, used as a fishing school.

The Peñas Negras Interpretation Centre provides photographic documentation of the La Arboleda region before the mining boom.

Many open air activities can be practised in the La Arboleda/Zugaztieta area: walking, trekking, climbing and horse riding. Taking advantage of the great infrastructure provided by the tracks built for working the mines, there are magnificent opportunities for mountain bike cycling for all levels.



Traces of iron ore, with their characteristic colour, are still visible on the wide cracks on the walls. It is quite entertaining to conduct a reconnaissance of the labyrinthine land, where it is common to find cattle and horses grazing.

We can return to our starting point either by walking along the forest road, or by taking a wide grassy path from the pond, next to the water tank. This path runs amongst shacks and will lead us to La Arboleda, entering the town from the area where the school building stands.

Meaztegi golf

The Regional Government of Biscay promotes a Special Plan for the Environmental Protection of the mining area.

A golf course is one of the highlights of the actions scheduled for this area, which will be the first public golf course in Biscay. Meaztegi Golf has been designed by Severiano Ballesteros and it is expected to open its doors to the public during the Autumn of 2004.



Walk to Pikwik Mine

An easy walk with many variations, which can be completed in just over an hour. The site of the former Pikwik Mine has been converted by the provincial council, and transformed into enclosed pastures dotted with pine trees, that beckon visitors to stroll around and relax. Between the crevices, sheltered from the wind, are areas with tables, as well as benches to sit on and enjoy the landscape.

Our walk begins at the recreational area, and around La Arboleda on the steep road that climbs up to the cemetery. Before the cemetery, and once we reach the top, we take a track to the right, which runs on smooth flat ground along the inclined mountainside over the Oiola ravine. At one point, the track turns into a path, and gently, amongst the mountain pastures, we reach the Pikwik Mine, surrounded by a wooden fence.