



Hermitage of Pinos

in honour to Saint Barbara

Distance from Benissa: 9 Km.

Getting there: 1 Km from the town, taking the N-332 to Alicante, then the CV-750 to Xaló. After about 300 m. on the left, is the C-749 to Pinos and, at a distance of 8.5 Km, after passing the Pinos restaurant, a trail to the left, with a sign "Pinos hermitage", which takes us there.

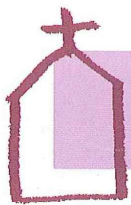
Description: 19th Century. It has a small, attached house, used, in its day, by the priest.

In front of the hermitage, there is a large square, with a cross and some houses around. On the left of the hermitage is what was the parish priest's house and, to the left and separated from both by a path, what was once Pinos school.

The path from the hermitage to school gives a marvellous view of the north face of Bèrnia, with a long, narrow scree, drawing our eyes towards "the arch", an impressive natural archway of stone, on the crest of the Bèrnia mountains.

There are several different paths and trails, leading to Bèrnia spring.

Festivals: The festivals are held on the weekend after the festival in Lleus. Its most important events are mass, "Entrà de la Murta", communal dinners, children's games, chicken races and typical dances.



Hermitage of Benimarco

in honour to Saint James

Distance from Benissa: 4 Km.

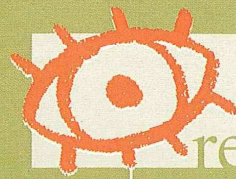
Getting there: From Benissa we take the road leading to la Fustera (Beach), until we reach a cross to the right, with a sign for Benimarco. After about approximately 1 Km, we reach a large square with a cross in the centre; the hermitage is at the end of the square.

Description: It dates from 1884. It is just on the border with the municipality of Teulada.

This hermitage has been re-constructed, and is peculiar because it belongs to the municipalities of Benissa and Teulada.

On the left, a little way away, are what once were the schools. From here, we have impressive views over a stretch of the coast, and we can walk down through Montemar development to the coves or beaches of Benissa. The population of the area is high, because of the large numbers of homes being built.

Festivals: The festivals are held at the end of July and are shared with the neighbouring town of Teulada. The most important events are the "Entrà de la Murta" and the planting of a pine tree, rockets, parades, mass, and typical products, cock races and greasy polcs, fireworks, "bull-fighting" (with heifers) and communal picnics, among others.



recommendations

- Starting fires and unauthorised camping is prohibited.
- Deposit all rubbish in the containers provided for this purpose.
- Do not throw cigarette butts on the ground; each one contaminates 20 litres of water.
- Respect Nature so that it can be the same or better for those who come after us.

LODGINGS

- Casa el Peón de Pinos. Pda. Pinos, 9-B.
Tel.: 96 573 15 73 or 629 65 50 35
- Casa Dolores. Pda. Pinos, 89-Umbria Bèrnia.
Tel.: 96 573 15 73 or 629 65 50 35
- Casa Bèrnia. Pda. Pinos, 11.
Tel.: 96 573 20 59 or 606 78 77 79
- Casa "Ti Tonica Roca". Benimarraig, 91B.
Tel.: 96 587 45 31 ó 617 46 30 13.
e-mail: mail@aperles.com
- Casa del Maco. Pou Roig-Lleus.
Tel.: 96 573 28 42 ó 699 069 926.
Web site: www.casadelmaco.com and
e-mail: macomarcus@hotmail.com
- Hotel Cases de Sant Jaume. Pda. Paratella. Tel.: 96 649 90 75 Fax: 96 649 82 08
- Farm/School-Benissa Rural Inn. Pda. Biesner 2-B.
Tel.: 96 597 35 63 Fax: 96 597 33 84.
web site: <http://www.granja.net>

TOURIST INFO BENISSA

Avda. Pais Valencià, 1. 03720 Benissa (Alicante)
Tel.: 96 573 22 25 Fax: 96 573 25 37
web site: www.benissa.net
e-mail: turismo@benissa.net



Costa Blanca
www.costablanca.org

THE HERMITAGE ROUTE



Via directa a
TERRA MÍTICA



The extensive Municipality of Benissa consists of a several rural districts, many of them quite removed from the town. Formerly, communications between these rural districts and the town were rather deficient, obliging the inhabitants to become an almost self-sufficient community, going down to the town only on well-defined occasions (markets, festivals, death, illness...), religious practice often being relegated to the background.

For these reasons, small churches, known as "the hermitages", were built in some of the most populated districts, at the instance of the church and by the efforts of their inhabitants, to cover the religious needs of the parishioners. Likewise, small schools were built near the hermitages, to attend to the education of the children, converting the areas into small urban centre.

In other, less populated districts, the big houses had their own private chapels, where religious services were held. On occasions, the doors were opened to those who lived nearby.

Except for the isolated case of the hermitage of Saint Anne, built in 1613, all the others were built in the early years of the 19th century. During the canonical visit of the Archbishop of Valencia, Mariano Barrio Nicolás, in 1863, mention is made of the hermitages of Saint Barbara in Pinos, Saints Abdon and Senen in Lleus, Saint Vincent Ferrer in Pedramala, Saint James the Apostle in Benimarco, Saint Anne in the district of the same name, Saint Anthony in the neighbourhood of Saint Anthony and, in the town itself, the Virgin of the Rosary (the latter two being no longer in existence).

Finally, we have to point out a quite new hermitage, Saint Joseph's hermitage (1980), that is located on the road that leads us from Benissa to La Fustera (road to the beach) and it is 8 km. away from the Town Centre. This hermitage has got a modern design.

Most of the hermitages are in a good state of repair, and are still host to their respective festivals. They all have their own altar services.

Because of the distance to the town, some of them have a room for the priest, who normally rode up on Saturday evening to hear the confessions of the parishioners and celebrated mass on the following day. Lleus and Pinos both have a small house attached for this purpose.

Hermitage of Saint Anne

Distance from Benissa: 1 Km.

Getting there: This hermitage can be reached either by car or walking. However, because it is so near, we recommend walking and taking advantage of the lovely road. Cars can be left at the bus-stop. Behind the Martínez furniture store, there is a paved road, which takes 15 or 20 minutes to lead to the hermitage. At the beginning of the road, we go by an old washhouse (Pou d'Avall), with a spring. Washing houses like this are common in many rural districts. They were formerly used for washing clothes, but have now fallen into disuse. We continue our walk up towards the hermitage.

Description: It dates from 1613. It has a pretty sandstone façade with a semi-circular arch over the door. The date of construction was carved into the cornerstone on the right. It has a single nave. In front, there is a small square with a cross in the centre. Inside, there is a small pulpit, a neo-classic altar, the sacristy to the right, and an attached room intended to be the priest's bedroom. If we follow the path, we reach a spring and washing place. This place is an oasis of rest and calm, with the smooth music of the water bubbling from the spring, in the midst of abundant vegetation, consisting mainly of poplar trees. From the square and the hermitage, looking towards the South, we can see Saint Anne's ravine, which joins with the Quisi ravine, and draws our eyes towards Oltà and part of the Bèrnia range. All over the area, we can see extensions of Mediterranean crops, such as almonds, vines, olives, etc., and to our left, a beautiful, leafy pine forest, which lends its green to the landscape. To the west of the hermitage, we can see part of the town of Benissa. From the hermitage we can walk along paths and trails, and can even go down to Calpe, following old trails parallel to the Quisi ravine.

Festivals: The festivals are held on June, 26th, with the following events: awakening with rockets and dulzaina (similar to the clarinet), mass, procession, communal picnic with everybody bringing their own food, dancing and fireworks.

Hermitage of Pedramala

in honour to Saint Vincent Ferrer

Distance from Benissa: 5 Km.

Getting there: Take the same road as you would to go to the Hermitage of Saint James, but instead of turning off for Benimarco, continue on towards Calpe until you see a road off to the right with a sign for Pedramala, where you turn off.

Once you are on the Pedramala road, you will see a sign for "Pedramala Hermitage", approximately 400 m on the left. It dates from the 19th Century. Like all the other hermitages, it has a square in front, where the main events of the festivals are held.

Description: As in the case of the Hermitage of Saint Anne, there is no school here either, due to its proximity to Benimarco (1.5 Km), which did have school. The height here above sea level, 245 m, gives a privileged view point from the impressive Rock of Ifach to Moraig, along the beaches of Calpe, the coast of Benissa, Moraira and the port of Moraira. In the distance we have Puig Llorença mountain, and as the backdrop, the splendid blue of the Mediterranean, shining its light on us and inviting us down to marvellous coves of Benissa. If we visit the hermitage in the morning, we can see the visible face of the Rock of Ifach lit up by the sun, further emphasising its natural beauty.

Festivals: The festivals are held in mid-July, and the main events consist of communal dinners, "Entrà de la Murta", music, mass and fireworks.



Hermitage of Lleus

in honour to Saints Abdón and Senén

Distance from Benissa: 5 Km.

Getting there: The first stage is the same as for Pinos Hermitage, but just before arriving at the bridge over highway A-7, we turn to the left, taking a paved path that takes us to the hermitage.

Description: 19th Century. We arrive at a square similar to the one in front of Pinos hermitage, with the parish priest's house attached to the hermitage, and a few more houses. There is also a school, inaugurated in 1935. In front, there is a small stone cross and a well, which could be used by all the inhabitants of the district.

This type of communal well was normal in rural districts. Unfortunately, some of them are in ruins, due to lack of maintenance, as many of them were private property, but for public use.

Because of the situation of the district of "Els Lleus", in the foothills of Solana and Oltà, we can look up to see the mountains surrounding us. On the right is Solana, Oltà on the left and, in between both, the Bèrnia range.

Several routes branch out from here, which hillwalkers may enjoy. The paved road that brought us here brings us back down to the N-332 (Pou Roig), a mere 3 Km from Calpe.

Festivals: The festivals are held at the end of July or early August, and consist of a communal dinner, live music and dancing, mass and a procession, with typical products such as punch, sweets, appetisers and grilled fish.

Hermitage of Benimarraig

in honour to Saint Therese of the Infant Jesus

Distance from Benissa: 2'5 Km.

Getting there: To reach this hermitage, we simply continue along national road N-332 towards Calpe, until we reach a large square on the right, where we find the hermitage.

Description: 19th Century. It is the newest hermitage. It is built parallel to the road and, unlike other Benissa hermitages, the access is not in front of the altar, which is to the right of the entrance. The bell, which in all the others is above the main façade, here is to the left of the entrance. Another difference is the school, which in the others is separated from the hermitage, and in this case is attached to it.

Because of its closeness to the town, there is no house for the priest.

There is a large pine tree on one side of the square, offering a marvellous vantage point to view the landscape towards the coast of Benissa and Calpe, with the impressive Rock of Ifach in the distance. Turning around, we can see Oltà, the Bèrnia range and Solana.

For those who like walking, there are many different paths, through areas of typical Mediterranean cultivation, pine forests, and the typical country houses of the area.

Festivals: The festivals are held in the middle of August, with the following acts: live music, mass, and competitions for children and adults.