

25 PICO DE LOPERA via the 'BACK DOOR'

Easy walking, lovely countryside, stunning views, good food. What more could you want from a day out? Doubtless quite a few things, but nothing within the scope of a walking guide. Enjoy.



Short Version

Take the signposted track at the **Termino Municipal de Otivar** (500 metres south of the main itinerary, 7km north of the **Mirador de la Cabra Montés** petrol station) joining the described route (in reverse) at Wp.12. A simple, linear walk within sight of the summit throughout.

Access: by car and bus

The walk starts from the **Meson Los Prados** restaurant on the **Carretera de la Cabra Montes** (A4050) linking **Almuñécar** with **Granada**, of itself one of the most remarkable drives from the coast. The restaurant is 7.8km from the **Jayena** turnoff, 7.6km from the **Mirador de la Cabra Montés**.

From the restaurant (Wp.1 **0M**), we take the **Huerto Alegre** lane, forking left after 250 metres (Wp.2) through the large green gates of **Cortijo de los Prados** onto a stony track. The track is soon joined by the green-wayposted **Via Pecuaría Venta de la Lata** (the old drovers' trail starting 50 metres south of the restaurant and nowadays serving no great purpose other than irritating the farmer by cutting a swathe across his ploughed field), at which point we pass the first of two large *cortijos* within the **Los Prados** estate, guarded by several large, loose and friendly dogs.

Climbing towards the second cortijo



650 metres later, we pass a branch doubling back to the left (our return route) (Wp.3 **15M**). Continuing on the main track, we pass a minor shortcut track forking left and the second large *cortijo*, after which two paths fork off to the left. Sticking to the stony track, we curve round onto **Cuesta de las Pulgas** (Flea Hill!), where our track is rejoined by the shortcut and comes to a staggered crossroads (Wp.4 **29M**).

Ignoring dirt tracks to right and left, we continue along the main track, forking right at a Y-junction 250 metres later (Wp.5). Crossing attractive, rolling arable land spotted with pine, we pass a very faint track branching left (Wp.6) and a clearer but still rough track to the right cutting across fields behind a ruin (Wp.7). We then go through a shady stand of pine, after which we turn sharp

left at a major junction within sight of the high summits to the west (Wp.8 **45M**).

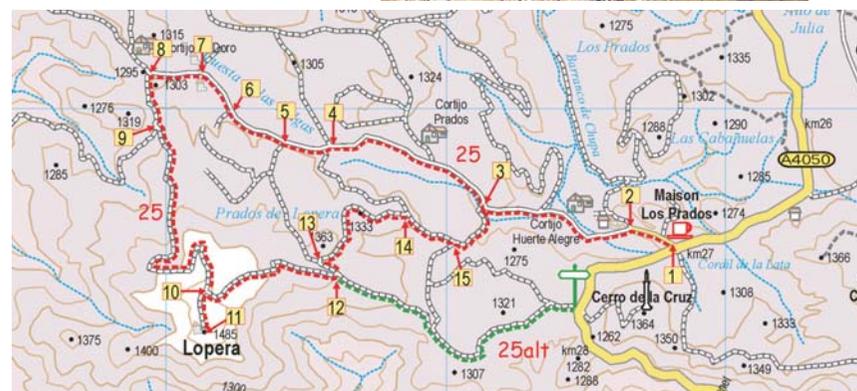
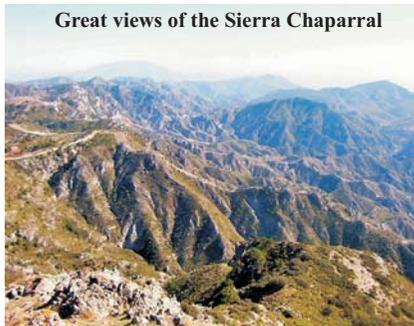
250 metres after the junction, we leave the main track, which continues to **Cortijo de Cabañeros** and eventually **La Resinera**, and fork left on a branch climbing to the south (Wp.9). Enjoying fine views of the **Sierras Tejeda** and **Almijara** (notably the central peak of **Lucero**), we climb steadily, soon curving round to the east and crossing a firebreak, shortly after which views open out of the **Sierra Nevada**. Resuming our southerly climb, we pass a junction with a track coming in from the left (Wp.10 **69M**), a couple of hundred metres short of the **Pico de Lopera** trig-point (Wp.11 **75M**) and firewatch hut, from where we have some great views over the **Sierra Chaparral** and **Río Verde** basin.

If you haven't seen any on the way up, there's a good chance of spotting *cabra montes* to the south of the

firewatch hut. Amateurs of toponymy will enjoy the delightful juxtaposition to the west of **Cerro de las Monjas** and **Mojón de las Diferencias**: The Nun's Summit and The Mount of the Differences! Make of that what you will.

To return, we retrace our steps to Wp.10 and turn right, descending to a wayposted

Great views of the Sierra Chaparral



junction with the Short Version (Wp.12 **91M**). Turning left then right 100 metres later (Wp.13), we follow a minor track meandering among small oak until it doubles back to the left and the oak give way to pine, at which point two minor branches (not marked on other maps) continue to the east (Wp.14 **105M**). We take the clearer branch passing to the right of a grassy hummock and descending through the pine to join another track linking the Short Version with the full walk (Wp.15 **110M**), where we bear left, rejoining our outward route 300 metres later. **Meson los Prados** is a grand little country restaurant, but if you're visiting on a Sunday in autumn, pray that it's not been fully booked by hunters.