

26-27

Igualada Montserrat

27 Kms

A little holiness and great health of body does more in the care of souls than great holiness and little health.

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Step 26

We leave Igualada from the Church of Santa Maria and take the street Santa Maria del Roser from the Town Hall Square and the Church. We carry on along Soledad Street which will become first Avinguda de Caresmar and then, with a slight angle to the left, Avinguda de Montserrat. We cross the Igualada-Barcelona railroad tracks. Walking down Avinguda de Caresmar, we take the first road on the right. It will take us to a large roundabout which we cross to continue ahead. Leaving a large restaurant high on the right, we will take the national road N-II, which so well we know! It is Camino Real.

Before us, a two kilometre road through an industrial state. We cross two roundabouts and at the third we take the first on the left, so that we can follow the road from a little distance, without the distress of the road traffic. A signpost shows the way to Montserrat.

Heading on the paved road, we will walk under the A-2. Then we walk parallel to the A-2, which is on our right. We come to a bridge and cross over the A-2. At the other end of the bridge, we take the first paved road on our left. We come to a

roundabout, cross it and continue on the paved road. Then we take a paved road on our right, so to avoid the A-2. We enter in Can Alzina. A signpost will help us.

Carrying on along the same road, parallel to the A-2, we move towards Castellolí. We arrive in the village and walking onwards on the same road we cross it. We leave the village and keep straight. After a left curve, we can see that the road comes to a bridge over the A-2. We don't take it, but instead we take the path on our right that goes parallel to the A-2. In 750 meters we will find a way on our left that will lead us to the bridge over the A-2.

We cross the A-2 and we are on the road that will take us to Alto de Can Massana. The yellow arrow of the Road to Santiago and the signposts keep us company. We can ascend all the time on the road that will take us to Can Massana. For pedestrians, there are paths that reduce the ascent by cutting the curves. After the first and very sharp bend to the right, in 100m a path appears on our left that will take us away from the paved road and to the forest. A signpost will point us in the right direction and we keep ascending.

When we come again to the road, we will go to the next bend looking for an ascending path on the left. Now it is a wide way that will take us close to Montserrat Parc suburb. At 500m from the junction, we have to leave the way and enter a path heading to the first houses of the neighborhood.

We get to the paved road: Castellolí Street. At 100m, we turn left in the Avenida de la Verge de Montserrat. It will slowly turn right in a slight curve. We will continue on the same avenue that borders the suburb, going ahead and not taking any adjacent street. We come to the end of the suburb and to a crossroads: we take the way in front of us and get to Sant Pau de la Guàrdia.

We walk through the village and leave it walking along a lane that forks into two: we take the lane on the left and continue on the wide path. We leave the Sant Pau cemetery on our left and we keep heading upwards on this path that sometimes gets blurry. We are coming close to the road and Alto de Can Massana, which we finally can see it from our path, high over the road: we have climbed quite high!

We go down to the road and we follow to our left until the crossroads of Can Massana. We always follow the road to Montserrat (for pilgrims is not at all advisable to take the mountain trails).

Just a few kilometers before our goal, the hermitage of Santa Cecilia (XI century) encourages us in our way to the Monastery and the Virgin of Montserrat. Two kilometers later, a poster on our right indicates the way to the monastery through the “Camí dels Degotalls”. For pilgrims on foot it is highly recommended, to take up this way as it will ease their last effort.

We finally get to Montserrat urban complex. We ascend toward the square in front of the monastery: Pilgrims’ office is in the square on our left.

Lodging

CASTELLOÍ

Can Jaume . Tel 937 746 117 Consider which is more than 3 km from the village

City Hall . Tel: 938 084 000. They have opened a hostel for pilgrims.

Taxi Castellolí . 686 229 384

IGUALADA

Taxis Igualada . Tel: 609 478 219

MONTSERRAT

Hotel Abad Cisneros*** . Tel: 938 777 701

. Centre de Coordinació Pastoral. Tel 938 777 766 (better to arrive before 17.30) Monastery information: Tel: 938 777 765.

Taxi Marcel . 607 329 946

SANT PAU DE LA GUÀRDIA

El Cellar de la Guàrdia . El Cellar de la Guàrdia. Hostel – restaurant. Tel: 937 710 323.

Interesting facts

A difficult stage: ascending the 450 very steep meters towards the Benedictine Monastery and the Virgin of Montserrat will not be an easy walk. But the effort is rewarded by the beauty of the mountain of Montserrat and the joy of arriving at

such a symbolic place for the ignatian family. Those on bicycle do not have to take the mountain path from Can Massana, as they can continue on the road, which is a beautiful descent towards the Benedictine Monastery.

CASTELLOLÍ: small town. Its name comes from the ruins of Auli Castle, X century. We will find restaurant, supermarket, pharmacy, health centre and bank.

SANT PAU DE LA GUARDIA: Small church with hostel and restaurant.

MONTSERRAT: The mountain is a very special setting, adequately reflected in its name: "Montserrat" means "sawn mountains". Although the history of the complex is uncertain, it seems that the chapels were built in this place in the IX century (San Aciscolo Chapel, in the garden of the monastery, the ruins of this period).

The Benedictine monastery founded in the XI century flourishes in Montserrat Mountain as the wild flowers we have seen along our way. The vitality of the Benedictine community is offered in their liturgies (Eucharist at 11h) and the irradiation of their presence in the social and political spectrum of Catalonia. Their presence and that of the Virgin of Montserrat have been a reference of faith and attention to pilgrims over the centuries. In the presence of the Virgin, we thank God for the way we have covered so far and we confide in Him for the last stage that will take us to Manresa, the Ignatian city.

According to tradition, the famous statue of the Black Virgin was carved by St. Luke the Evangelist in the first century and for some time hidden from the Muslims in the Saint Cave. Historians suggest that the statue dates back to the XII century. To the monastery, and especially to the statue, many pilgrims have come for centuries and many miraculous healings have been reported (Montserrat has registered more than two million visitors in some years). In 1592, the great basilica was consecrated in order to accommodate the rising traffic of pilgrims; almost totally destroyed during the Napoleonic invasion (1811), it was rebuilt in the decade of 1850.

The Black Virgin is not carved in black Wood, but it owes its color to the smoke of the candles presented as offering that has interacted with the varnish of the statue for many years.

A long descending way takes us to Cova Santa (Saint Cave), the traditional place

for the finding of the Black Virgin. The cave, built in the XVII century, has a cross-shaped basis. It is also possible to take a funicular that will leave us half-way to the cave. Views from some of the mountain paths are spectacular, although pilgrims who have done all the way from Loyola could feel exempt from ascending the steep hills towards a wonderful view.

The collection at the Montserrat Museum includes Gothic altarpieces and paintings by El Greco, Monet and Picasso. The Espai Audivisual illustrates life and spirituality of monks through multimedia exhibitions.

The facade of the basilica, which dates back to 1968, represents Christ and the twelve Apostles. Once in the basilica, you should follow the indications towards “Cambril de la Mare de Déu” in order to visit the Sanctuary of the Black Virgin. Across the yard at the entrance of the basilica is a room where votive offerings are exposed.

The complex offers restaurants, supermarkets, pharmacies, health center, bank and tourist office (Tel. 938 777 777)

Ignatian Tips

Notes: Easter joy continues within us. Remember to begin with the “introductory prayer” and to conclude with the final colloquy, and to pray it throughout the day. Live the joy of Christ’s Resurrection!. Songs, light, flowers, water and friends are welcome! Our Ignatian journey invites us today to do as Ignatius did: spend some special prayer time with the Black Virgin of Montserrat.

Grace: I beg God that I may rejoice deeply with the Risen Christ since I have also been sent into the world to serve His mission. I pray to receive the Holy Spirit so I can better accompany Jesus in His mission to reconcile the world and bring life to all persons.

Reflections: the Spirit of God confirms us in the mission we have received from Christ. Moreover, the same Spirit remains with us and strengthens us in any difficulties that come our way. We follow the dynamics of previous weeks: the true King invites us to accompany him in his conquest of good against the absurd destruction of all that is human. The Spirit strengthens us in our journey across the world, preaching the Good News.

The Spirit breaks down barriers and opens pathways. The Spirit creates fraternity, creates community, and brings forth the Image of God in the world. The Spirit awakens us, enlightens us, and removes our deafness and blindness. The Spirit launches us and pushes us forward, and does not allow us to sit still for very long. The Spirit challenges us, pulls us away from our creature comforts, and breaks through our well-planned schemes. The Spirit fills us with compassion, love, and the desire for solidarity. The Spirit raises us up, helps us to dream, and exalts us. In the Spirit we can hope for everything, we can bear everything, we can accomplish everything. The Spirit is the actual presence of God in our daily lives.

Throughout our pilgrimage we have been “breathing in” the Spirit. Today we beg for a deep awareness of the Holy Spirit’s presence within us. Where do I find the Spirit working within me? Within others? Do I recognize the “action” of the Spirit within the world? Remember to beg for this important grace.

Scripture:

John 16:5-15. I recall the words of Jesus about the work of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:1-21. The promise of the Spirit’s coming is fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 10:44-48. While Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit came down upon all those who were listening. The work of evangelization had begun. I ask to embrace this challenge with energy and commitment.

Luke 4:14-20. Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the power of the Spirit. I pray that my return home will also be filled with the Spirit. I need God’s Holy Spirit to fulfill the mission of God’s Kingdom.

Final colloquy: At this stage of our interior pilgrimage, we are accustomed to walk with our friend and Lord, Jesus Christ, speaking freely as one friend does with another. Conclude with the “Our Father.”

Autobiography

Drawing closer to Manresa we reach a very special place for Ignatius of Loyola and many other pilgrims of his time. The mountain of Montserrat is recognized by many as a place of great spiritual presence. Called “Magic Mountain” by some, tradition remembers it as a place where the presence of the Spirit is “natural.”

Let each of us be carried forward by the flow of this same spiritual force as was Ignatius. Let us present to the Black Madonna our personal offering to follow Jesus, with great freedom of heart for his greater service.

«He continued on his journey to Montserrat, thinking as usual of the great deeds he was going to do for the love of God. As his mind was filled with the adventures of Amadis of Gaul and such books, thoughts about these adventures came to his mind. He determined, therefore, to spend the entire night in a watch of arms, without ever sitting or lying down, but standing a while and then kneeling before the altar of Our Lady of Montserrat. There he would lay aside his fine attire and clothe himself with the armor of Christ. When he arrived at Montserrat, he spent a long time in prayer. With the consent of his confessor, he spent three whole days writing a general confession of his sins. With the permission of his confessor he arranged to give up his horse and to hang up his sword and his dagger in the church, at the altar of Our Lady. This confessor was the first person he told about his resolution to devote himself to the spiritual life. Up to then he had not revealed this purpose to any confessor.

On the eve of the Annunciation of Our Blessed Lady, March 24 in the year 1522, he approached a beggar. He removed his costly clothes and gave them to this man. He then put on the pilgrim's robe he had previously bought and went to kneel before the altar of Our Lady. Alternating between kneeling and standing, he spent the entire night with his staff in hand.»

Spend a longer period of prayer in the chapel of the Virgin of Montserrat. Pray with the text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, begging God to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives, all for the greater glory of God. Here we also change our old clothes and put on those which we “discovered” in Igualada: a new life needs new clothes! What do I leave behind here in Montserrat? What am I going to bring back home?

The basilica of Montserrat was destroyed and rebuilt at various times in its history, following the rhythm of the wars that plagued the region. Each time the church was rebuilt a little further back, closer to the mountain. At the entrance portico by the atrium of the current church, near the statue of Ignatius, you will see a black circle on the ground with a worn quote written on the floor that reminds us that it was here that Ignatius made his offering to the Virgin.

Comments

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[Cyclists: medium difficulty](#)

the upslope to Montserrat is quite strong. If you follow the track for pilgrims on foot you will find yourselves pushing your bike. Preferable to take up the road to El Bruc town and then go to the Monastery by the Height of Can Massana, always following the asphalt road.

Igualada : Km 0.

Castellolí: Km 9,5.

Sant Pau de la Guardia: Km 16.

Can Massana: Km 18,2.

Ermita Santa Cecilia: Km 23,4.

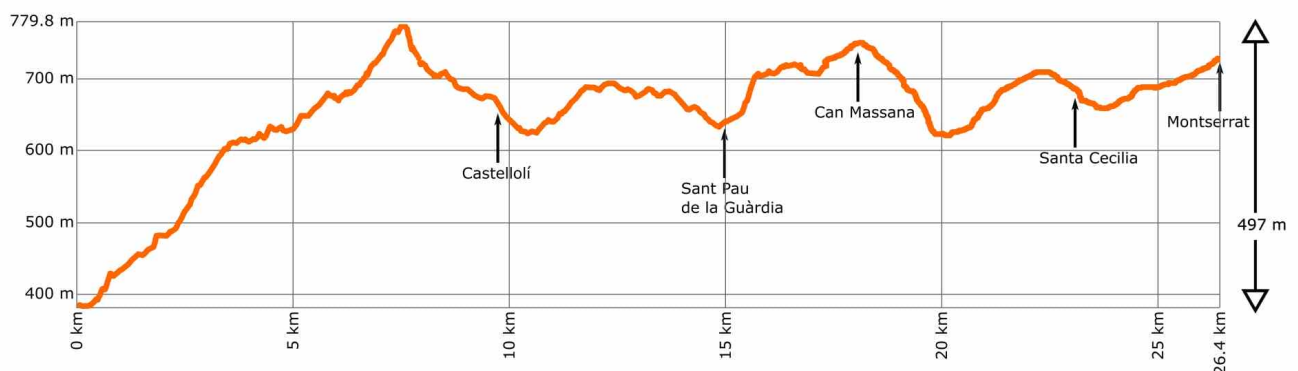
Monasterio de Montserrat: Km 27.

Trail

Step's sketch



Altimetry



The weather in Montserrat

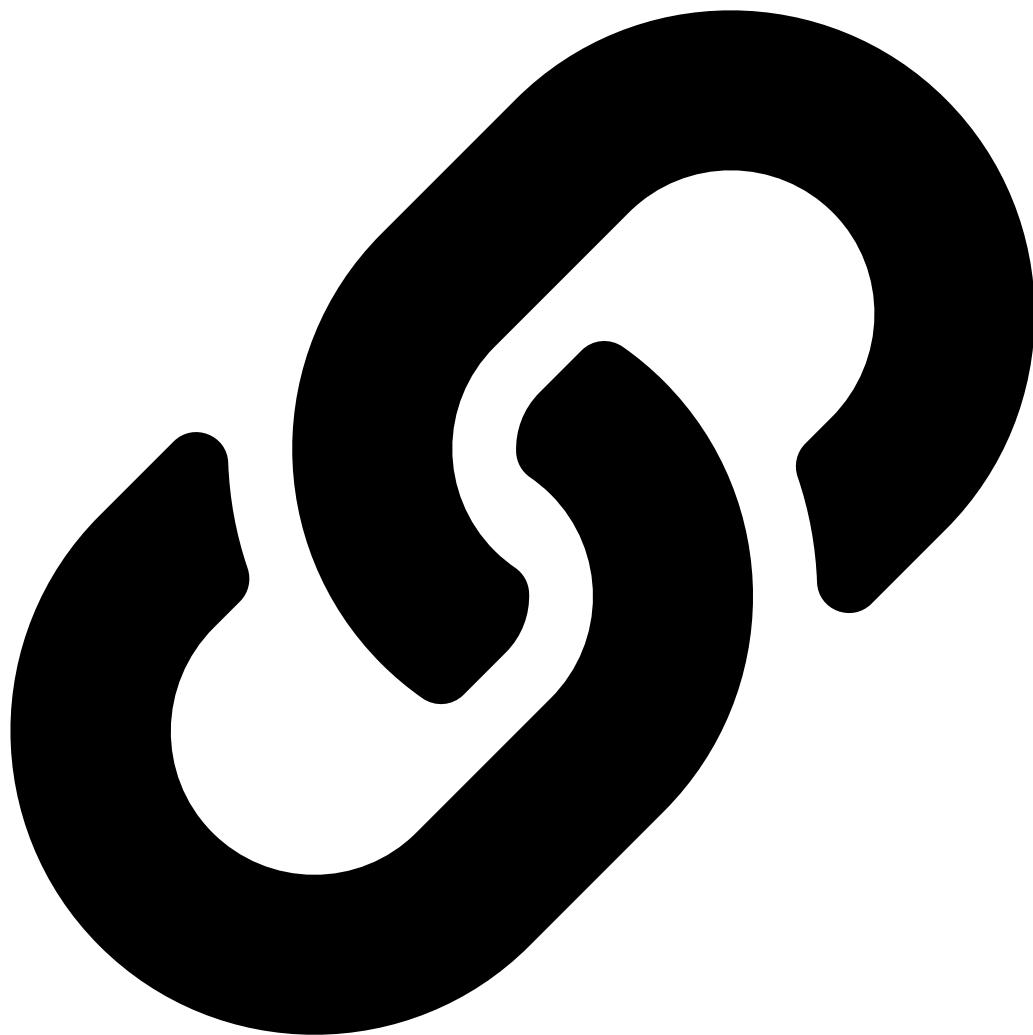
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Galery

Step's photos









































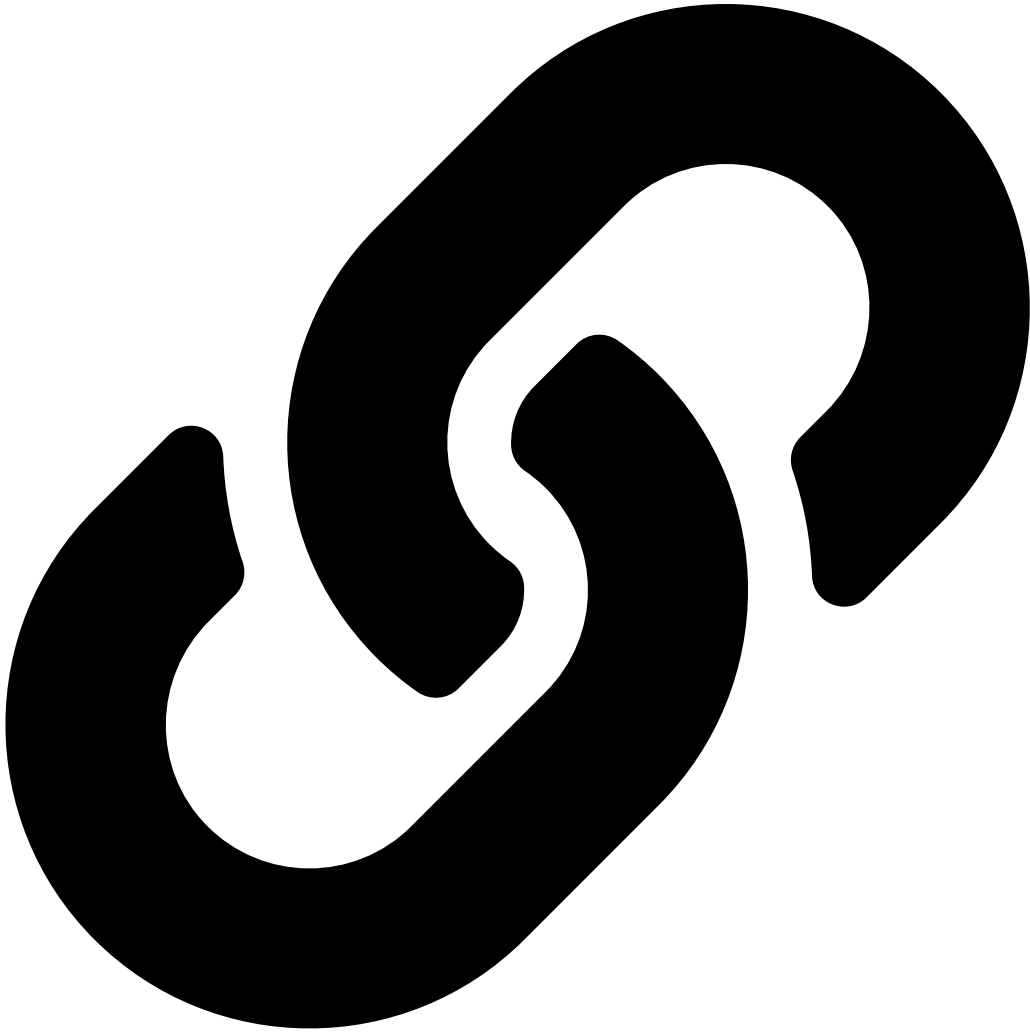












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