

HERITAGE TRAIL

“Surp: The Expression of Pallar's Gastronomy”

Introduction

This is a low-difficulty route where you can learn and enjoy at a leisurely pace the different elements that are part of the essence of Pallar's gastronomy.

A walk that combines spaces in the wild and cultivated countryside, all within the municipality of Surp. We will pay attention to very diverse details that explain how rural life, especially in ancient times, had a very direct relationship with local cuisine, and the food independence that continues to this day.

We will find very diverse heritage elements, ranging from traditional dwellings designed to house draft or livestock, the presence of active dovecotes as a supplementary source of animal protein, and the Pallar's images of shepherd's staffs made of hazelnut for managing the area's specific breeds of livestock and their transhumance throughout the seasons.

We will also see the use of wild plants that have been used as edible ingredients, or traditional—and modern—orchards with local varieties of fruits and vegetables.

To finish, we will be able to enjoy a tasting of some local products such as a selection of cheeses or take part in a cooking workshop with a prestigious chef.

What you'll discover

- **Edible Wild Plants** - Wild spaces around Surp with aromatic plants used in traditional Pallars cuisine and herbal liqueurs.
- **Local Orchards** - Small agricultural areas with local fruit and vegetable varieties adapted to mountain conditions, including the prized Cardós pear.
- **Dovecotes** - Traditional pigeon-raising spaces under house roofs, a lost tradition that provided affordable animal protein for mountain communities.
- **Casa Mateu (Cheese Producer)** - Local cheese factory offering tastings of artisanal goat and sheep cheeses. (Optional)
- **El Paller del Coc (Gastronomic Space and Residence)** - Restaurant using traditional Pallars ingredients with modern techniques. (Optional)
- **Old Mill (Mola de Sall)** - Ruins of a historic flour mill and power plant beside the Berasti River. (Optional)

Heritage stories

Story 1 “Quotidian Herbs from Pallar’s: The Wild Garden for Cooking and Health”



The diversity of herbs and wild plants on the planet have been a source of life generating food and health since the origins of humanity.

In Catalonia and especially in the Catalan Pyrenees and Pre-Pyrenees and even more so in more isolated rural towns like Surp, these plants are still part of the identity of the town and their uses remain as alive as their millennial history.

Like the vegetables in the garden, they are clearly conditioned by the changes throughout the year marked by the passage of the seasons, which favor some plants and make others disappear, generating a great diversity of species and potential ingredients.

Surp in this sense has a great variety of aromatic wild plants that can be found throughout the year and green plants that die in the summer. At the same time, some of the plants produce fleshy fruits -such as rose bushes, cranberries, blackberries- that increase local diversity and can be found in the rich cuisine, from liqueurs made from wild plants like Ratafia to distinctive recipes like thyme soup. Visit the small town of Surp to explore this trail.

Story 2 “An Orchard Designed to be The Pantry for the Whole Year”



Both wild and cultivated fruits and vegetables have been the basis of humanity's diet since the beginning of time. In isolated areas, and especially in mountainous regions with a distinct seasonality throughout the year, populations have traditionally found ingenious solutions for harvesting and cultivating all kinds of products, especially to ensure food security during the winter.

The Pallar’s region, more specifically Surp, is a good example of the search for local varieties that are resistant to climate change and the development of conservation and cooking techniques that enable resilience thanks to local-specific vegetables and fruits, such as cabbage or pear varieties in this case.

Orchards simultaneously showcase this diversity in the local microclimate. You can see fruit species from typical warm-weather regions—such as almond trees, fig trees, or vines—as well as those typical of cold, humid regions, such as walnut and pear trees. Visit the small town of Surp to explore this trail.

Story 3 “From Dovecote to The Table: Animal Life in Surp Cuisine”



The need for a rich and varied diet, including animal protein and its derivatives—eggs, milk, wool, leather, and others—has been one of the reasons that has driven people to adapt to a territory since the dawn of humanity. Surp is an excellent, still-living example of the search for animal-based foods in everyday life, and the route shows us many examples of a way of life designed for self-sufficiency, which is now on the verge of extinction.

The design of the village houses was made to keep livestock of local breeds - such as the Xisqueta sheep, the Pallaresa cow, and the Bruna cow - in the lowest areas at street level, with haystacks for drying and preserving the grass located in the highest areas.

In Surp, as an exceptional element, we can also enjoy the presence of dovecotes under the high roofs of old houses. These are very rare in general and still present here today, although they are no longer used to provide low-cost meat from doves as was done in the past. Visit the small town of Surp to explore this trail.

Why this trail matters

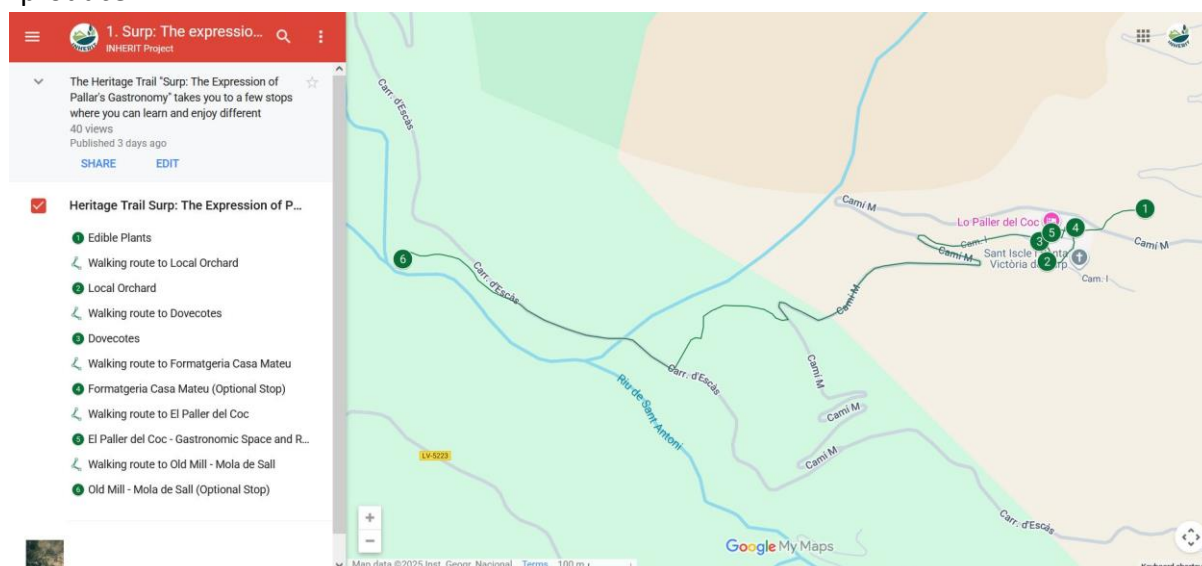
This trail helps travelers to:

- Understand the relationship between the traditional architecture of the area and its relationship with the production of food goods and well-being in homes.

- Understand how to meet basic needs - food security - in relation to seasonality, climate and orography for example through transhumance, wild plant uses, culture of local plants varieties or growing cattle.
- Recover the historical memory - intangible heritage - of the popular culture of mountain life and its popular knowledge. This includes different aspects related to transforming cattle, herbs, vegetables, and fruits into gastronomic expressions. These include traditional recipes such as Girella, live animal meat made with lamb's tail, Tupí cheese, and winter trinxat, as well as traditional cooking and food preservation techniques.
- Understand the complexity of the relationships between nature and culture, which include very diverse aspects that are linked to gastronomy: architecture, methods of cultivation and animal production, beliefs and ancestral knowledges, etc.
- Create a link between tradition and the present: in new ways of cooking, producing products and preserving them.

Trail map

The Heritage Trail “Surp: The Expression of Pallar’s Gastronomy”, takes you to four different spaces in and around the small town of Surp: the wild countryside and its edible plants uses, mountain architecture that include orchards, “barracas” and an abandoned mill far away of the town, and places to participate in activities: a gastronomic restaurant and a cheese producer.



Link to the map:

https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/edit?mid=1SX_1WCD6FgQb2ji_m1VgQ47fakQTgBc&usp=sharing

Stop 1	Edible Plants Link: https://maps.app.goo.gl/UXSPj7BiUWu6tALA
Stop 2	Local Orchard Link: https://maps.app.goo.gl/ER4wABdQABPxu1ZZ7
Stop 3	Dovecotes Link: https://maps.app.goo.gl/dKyEpFvJBwLwihLh6
Stop 4	Cheese Producer (Casa Mateu) Link: https://maps.app.goo.gl/aWmuNxXRnFXMvawG9
Stop 5	Lo Paller del Coc (Gastronomic Space and Residence) Link: https://maps.app.goo.gl/mY6fr94wsYteJsUf9
Stop 6	Old Mill. Mola de Sall Link: https://maps.app.goo.gl/EBuwlHR7Hpmhh8Cw5

Trail details

- Length (km):
 - 1,5 km
- Level of difficulty:
 - Low – 150 m slope
- Duration:
 - 3-4 hours
- Getting there:
 - Public transportation to Sort
 - Taxi, private transportation, or walking by indicated trails to Surp
- Clothing:
 - Comfortable hiking shoes and weather-appropriate clothing for outdoor exploration
- Tools needed:
 - Camera for capturing tile discoveries
 - Map or GPS for navigating
 - Botanical field guide

- Material for foraging
- Safety guidelines:
 - Sloping and unstable terrain
 - Not recommendable in winter
- Guiding:
 - Guided tour (optional)
 - Self-guided (on your own)
- Contacts for more details:
 - Naturalwalks
www.naturalwalks.com
+34 662 251 059
info@naturalwalks.com
 - Ajuntament de Sort
Phone: 973 62 00 10
E-mail: ajuntament@sort.cat
 - Consell Comarcal del Pallars Sobirà Tourist office
www.turisme.pallarssobira.cat
Camí de la Cabanera, 2, 25560, Sort
+34 973 62 10 02
 - Lo Paller del Coc. Gastronomic space and residence
c/ Castell, s/n, 25594 Surp, Lleida
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 - Casa Mateu. Cheese producer
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Quests / Chances to be creative

Quest 1 “Surp: The Expression of Pallar's Gastronomy”

Mission Overview

Enjoy and experience through a walk life in a small mountain town in the Pyrenees of Catalonia and its life from the perspective of gastronomy and the different elements of the territory, both traditional and more contemporary. Many of them are related to the natural resources of the immediate environment.



Success Criteria

Live first-hand the experience of identifying different natural and cultural elements of the local territory and seeing their connection with the daily life of its inhabitants in relation to cuisine.

Participant's Role

You will become active traveler through the identification of plants or wild animals that have been a way of sustaining local communities over time.

You will:

- Be able to identify products grown or raised in the immediate environment and relate them to local cuisine: dishes or liquors, traditional or contemporary foods.
- Experience first-hand the preparation of dishes related to the territory through a culinary experience at Lo Pallar del Coc or by tasting local products and cheese at Casa Mateu, a Cheese producer.
- Have direct contact with different local inhabitants, both original and new, who will give them a complete picture of the place and the relationship of the territory with different perspectives on cuisine.
- Relate traditional constructions (architecture) to elements related to cooking: pigeon breeding areas, vegetable gardens, spaces for livestock in houses, etc.

Quest Questions

To successfully complete the quest, you must answer these questions:

- What plants can you identify that are useful or used in cuisine in the Pallars region and Surp municipality specifically?
- What ingredients from garden, game or farmed animals can you identify in the local cuisine, traditional dishes and products?
- What relationship does traditional architecture have with the production of food products?

Final thoughts

It is important to convey the idea of the difficulties of life for people in isolated mountain places until the end of the last century and the amount of knowledge that local people developed to survive in extreme conditions, given the lack of good transport routes, storage or production of food products, among many other elements.

Disclaimer:

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