

PR - CV 439 THE PALM GROVE WAY

The coordinates were obtained from Google Maps (WGS84 Datum)
To locate a point of interest, enter the corresponding
code in Maps as follows: N 38.26310 W 0.69506

WAY HIGHLIGHTS

1. Congress Centre (start and finish)

This modern steel and glass building was constructed in 2003 and is located in highly attractive surroundings in the historical town centre. Equipped with the most up-to-date facilities, it has become an exemplary venue for meetings, conferences and congresses.



GPS location: N 38.26310 W 0.69506

2. Hort dels Pontos

A garden path lined by lofty palm trees leads to the Casa dels Pontos, which was built in 1900 and is a prime example of the traditional houses commonly found in the countryside surrounding Elche.

GPS location: N 38.26092 W 0.69089

3. Hort del Sol

Together with the other groves in Elche that comprise the vast Elche Palm Grove, this traditional palm tree grove forms a living part of this spectacular natural space declared a world heritage site by UNESCO. Since passing into municipal ownership, the grove has been restored by re-planting young palm trees to ensure its future existence.

GPS location: N 38.26289 W 0.68878

4. Creu del Terme



This Gothic cross made of stone and dated 1400 sits on a Roman column from La Alcudia. The cross is carved with images of Christ, the Virgin and biblical scenes, as well as the old coat of arms of Elche, which can be seen at the top of the column, at the base of the cross.

GPS location:
N 38.26924 W 0.68991

5. Hort de Vicentet

Covering an area of 15,635 m², this grove once belonged to the Count of Casa Rojas. In 1864, a railway station was built in the grove. Besides containing around 533 date palms, the grove also houses Spanish National Distance University buildings, the Candalix Civic Centre and the legendary Harinas Serrano flour mill, which has specialised in milling and marketing wheat flour from 1896 to the present day.

GPS location: N 38.27156 W 0.69446

6. Vaillo Tower

This local historical and artistic monument was built between the end of the Middle Ages and the first half of the 16th century, and was originally intended for observation and defence. The tower is named after its original owners, the Vaillo de Llanos family, Counts of Torrellano. It currently boasts a vantage point giving panoramic views over the area of the Palm Grove located just north of the city.



GPS location: N 38.27411 W 0.69368

7. Viewpoint of the Valle Trenzado and the Acequia Mayor

This vantage point provides exceptional views over a valley criss-crossed with walkways linking the traditional groves to the new part of Elche, which was built in the 1950s and 1960s.



This is also the location of the Acequia Mayor, which carried water to Elche, and the mobile water splitter, a unique element of Muslim origin which helped to distribute the water. In addition, the Bimil·lenari bridge is visible upstream, built on the occasion of the celebration of Elche's more than two millennia of history.

GPS location: N 38.27438 W 0.69938

8. Moli del Real



Together with the Acequia Mayor, the Moli del Real is an architectural symbol of the history of hydraulic infrastructures in Elche. It is a flour mill powered by the force of water from the Acequia Mayor. The highest parts were built in the 18th century, but the retaining walls and their relationship with the Acequia Mayor system reveal a medieval origin. The arches facing the river are one of Elche's most familiar and iconic architectural motifs.

GPS location: N 38.27105 W 0.69886

9. Visitor Centre

This building was originally constructed for the 1946 Regional Exhibition of industry, handicrafts and agriculture. The use of domes as the sole structural element endows it with a striking appearance. Thanks to the building's round forms coupled with a snow-white colour, locals have dubbed it "The Egg".

Used to house the Archaeological Museum until 1984, the Lady of Elche sculpture was displayed here for 14 days in 1965, when she was first returned to her place of origin. Later it housed the White Palm Museum and an exhibition hall, but since 2003 it has been used as the visitor centre, and offers an audiovisual presentation of Elche's tourist attractions.

GPS location: N 38.27060 W 0.69722

10. Tourist Office

What is now the Tourist Office was once an electrical substation, and the originality of its neo-Arabic style was respected when it was converted. Since 2006, a large glass mosaic alluding to the Lady of Elche has been located in front of the Tourist Office, and in recent years this has become one of the most frequently photographed sights in Elche.



GPS location: N 38.26848 W 0.69701

11. Altamira Palace and the Basilica of Santa Maria



Altamira Palace, also known as the Alcázar de la Señoría (his lordship's fortress), was the residence of the Lords of Elche between the 15th and 19th centuries, and its Torre del Homenaje (memorial tower) also housed Spanish monarchs –James II, Peter IV and the Catholic Kings– during their visits to Elche. Today, a large part of the Alejandro Ramos Folqués Museum of the Archaeology and History of Elche (MAHE) is housed here, the museum where the Lady of Elche sculpture was displayed during a temporary exhibition in Elche in 2006. Construction of the Basilica of Santa Maria began in 1672, on the site of a former mosque and subsequent Gothic and Renaissance churches, now long since gone. The Misteri d'Elx (Elche Mystery Play) is performed inside, a lyrical religious drama which has been declared a work of Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. Outside, the basilica has an impressive main façade, known as the Assumption facade, which is one of the most beautiful works of Valencian Baroque and was created by the sculptor Nicolás de Bussy

GPS location: N 38.26838 W 0.69830

12. Hort de les Portes Encarnades

Covering about 30,000 m², this grove is well known for its association with Elche's Venida de la Virgen (arrival of the Virgin) festivities, closely linked with the Elche Mystery Play. According to tradition, in the early hours of December 28, 1370, a coast guard called Francesc Cantó was on lookout duty at the nearby coast when he discovered a chest in the sea containing an image of the Assumption of Mary, the consueta (the book with the lyrics, music and stage directions for the Elche Mystery Play) and a message: Sóc per a Elig (I am for Elche). It is in this grove that serenades, flowers and chants are offered up to the image of the Assumption of Mary, patron saint of Elche. The image is also displayed and garlanded with flowers on December 27, the Dia del llicitano Ausente (a day dedicated to all natives of Elche living elsewhere).

GPS location: N 38.25671 W 0.69731

13. Ressemblanc Tower

This defensive tower dates back in the 15th century and has been declared a local historic and artistic monument. Its main function was as a lookout post for possible Berber raids along the coast. The adjoining building was once a home, but following restoration it now houses the offices of the "La Torreta" Vocational Training Institute.



GPS location:
N 38.25562 W 0.69212

OTHER NEARBY POINTS OF INTEREST

14. Huerto del Cura

Covering about 13,000 m², this private garden is the best-known grove in Elche. This is the home of the unique Imperial Palm, surrounded by more than 1,000 others, most of which are date palms. It also contains many other trees typical of Mediterranean orchards, such as pomegranate trees, jujube trees, orange trees, fig trees and lemon trees, as well as subtropical plants and a large collection of cacti which have been added over the years. It is one of the most emblematic groves of the entire Elche Palm Grove.

GPS location: N 38.263995 W 0.691470

15. Miguel Hernández University of Elche

The University's main campus, the Elche campus (founded in 1996), is located to the north of the town, surrounded by palm tree groves. It incorporates various buildings, whose names are inspired by the history and geography of Elche: Altabix, Galia, Alcludia, Vinalopó, Altamira and El Altet. It also boasts spacious green areas, sports facilities and an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

GPS location: N 38.272928 W 0.692175

16. Municipal Park

The Municipal Park is dear to the residents of Elche and plays a prominent part in their daily lives, not only as a space for recreation but also a green lung in the heart of the town. Its 14 acres encompass the Colomer, Real, Mare de Déu and Baix groves.

GPS location: N 38.270049 W 0.697623

17. The La Merced Convent and Arab baths

The old La Merced Convent is the result of a superimposition of styles and buildings, of which the corner tower and parts of the atrium remain. It has three floors and a beautiful neoclassical cloister on two levels. The south-facing Santa Lucia door is Renaissance. Located in the basement of the convent, the Arab baths, built around 1150, were the hidden treasure of local heritage until their restoration and opening to the public in 1998. They comprise three rooms separated by arches and columns and covered by barrel vaults with skylights.

GPS location: N 38.276554 W 0.699787

18. La Calahorra

This quadrangular building dates back to the end of the 13th century. The rectangular walls are wider at the base to provide stability. Now measuring 15 metres high, it originally exceeded 25 metres in height. Today, it is used for cultural purposes and some of the rooms are open to the public, including a spectacular room containing Egyptian decoration and Masonic motifs.

GPS location: N 38.267224 W 0.696812

19. Altamira Bridge

The result of a new General Plan of Urban Development, this sober and robust bridge was inaugurated in 1963. It opened up a new transport connection that fostered urban growth.

GPS location: N 38.267729 W 0.699997

20. C/ Major de la Vila

This street is located in the historical town centre and hosts the Festa or Elche Mystery Play Museum, and the Casa de la Festa (house of the Festa). One of the museum's rooms occupies the nave of the San Sebastián Chapel, the last vestige in Elche of 15th century Catalanian Gothic. It is from here that the procession accompanying the Virgin emerges, marking the start of the Elche Mystery Play.

GPS location: N 38.267369 W 0.698683

21. The Festa Museum

The museum was launched with the intention of capturing part of the magic that surrounds the Festa (the Elche Mystery Play) for visitors to experience throughout the year. It contains an exhibition of the theatrical tradition surrounding the Mystery Play: posters, models, crowns, costumes, guitars and videos of the performance, so that visitors to the museum can experience all the emotion associated with each performance. It is located in the San Sebastián Chapel, which is also closely linked with the drama of the Assumption.

GPS location: N 38.266841 W 0.698715

22. Elche City Council

Construction of the Consell Tower, the oldest municipal building in the south of the Region of Valencia and the central part of the Town Hall, began in 1441 under the direction of Mestre Beiam and was completed three years later. With an almost square floor plan, it consisted of two parts and was incorporated into the medieval wall in such a way that its lower section, the Guardamar gate, served as a passageway between the Plaza de Baix (below), outside the city walls, and the Plaza de Dalt (above), within the walled town.

GPS location: N 38.265388 W 0.698834

23. Canalejas Bridge

On April 20, 1913, after thirteen months of works, Canalejas Bridge was inaugurated in Elche, the longest in Spain until 1929. It was built by an engineer called Mariano Luján, who pioneered the use of reinforced concrete.

GPS location: N 38.265126 W 0.699827

24. Santa Teresa Bridge

Also known as the bridge of the Virgin, this is the oldest bridge in Elche. Originally built of wood, it joined the historic town with the Santa Teresa neighbourhood around the San José convent, and was also the point of departure towards Orihuela. Soon after, in 1673, the Town Council decided to replace the wooden bridge with a stone one. In 1751, the bridge was demolished by a flood; submerged by water, it split in two.

When the Town Council rebuilt it five years later, its single arch was replaced by two arches, and two niches were added containing figures of the Assumption of Mary and San Agatangelo, patron saints of Elche.

GPS location: N 38.263403 W 0.699991

25. El Raval

This area corresponds to the old Moorish quarter, a settlement built by Muslim settlers in 1265. Following their expulsion as a result of the conquest of the town by James I of Aragon's troops, they were relocated south of the wall, in the vicinity of an abandoned ancient Christian settlement called Puebla de San Jorge. This neighbourhood had its own town hall, and in 1522, after the conversion of the Moors, it changed its name to that of the University of San Juan. In 1609, the Moors were expelled again, and the area was repopulated by inhabitants of Elche. In 1835, it lost its autonomy and became part of the municipality.

GPS location: N 38.260668 W 0.698763

26. Generalitat Bridge

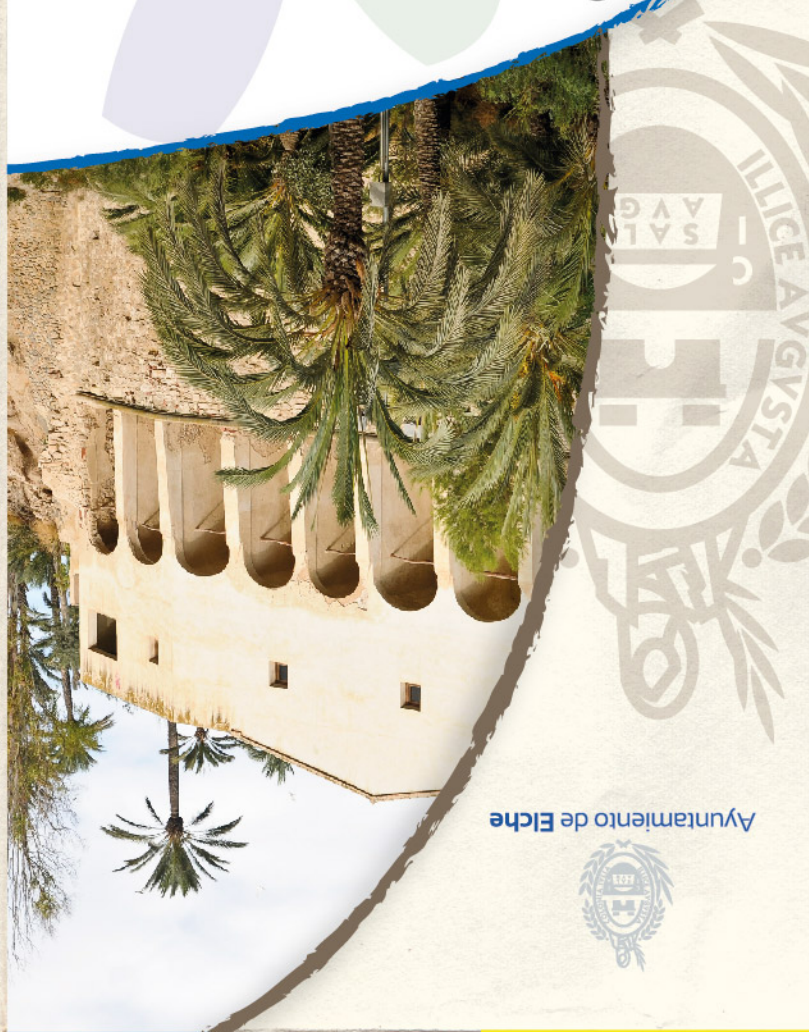
Inaugurated in 1993, this bridge was designed by Doctor Salvador Monleón Cremades. Following its construction, the Generalitat Bridge became an important connection between two areas experiencing huge urban growth.

GPS location: N 38.257436 W 0.699127

27. L'Escorxador Cultural Centre of Elche

Formerly the municipal slaughterhouse, this building has been refurbished and is currently a modern cultural centre that maintains the original structure of the old slaughterhouse. It is now the venue for various activities such as concerts, workshops, theatre or dance performances.

GPS location: N 38.257036 W 0.692200

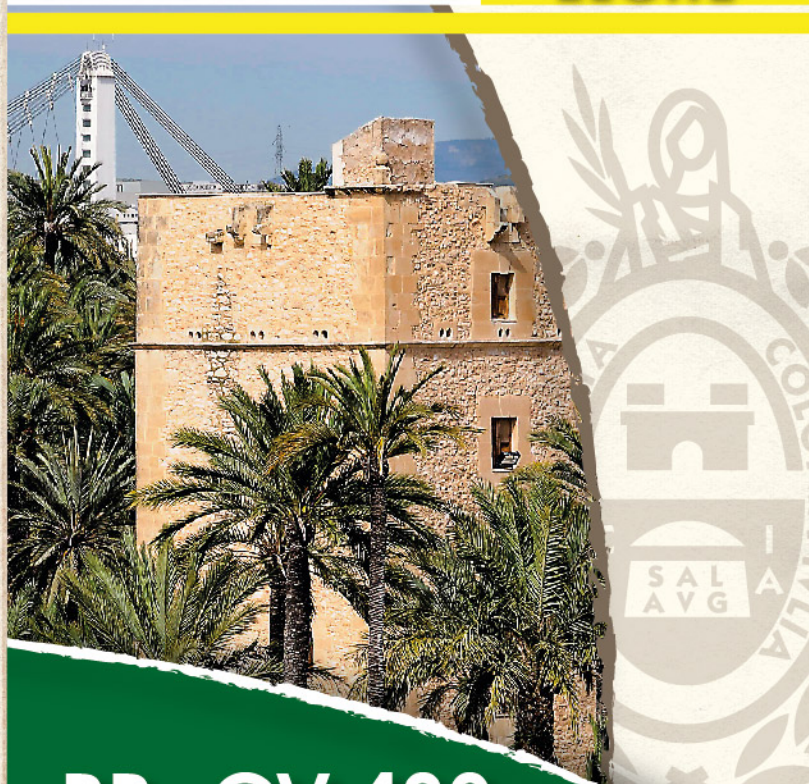


Ayuntamiento de Elche

PR - CV 439

SENDERO DEL PALMERAL

ELCHE



PR - CV 439
THE PALM
GROVE WAY

PR - CV 439 THE PALM GROVE WAY

Way information

Date palms (*Phoenix dactylifera*) form the principal attraction of the Palm Grove Way. The historic Palm Grove of Elche, declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 2000, features constantly along the entire way. In addition to this impressive natural scenery, walkers can also enjoy the city sights: monuments, traditional houses and groves, Elche industry, watchtowers, a medieval fortress and many more.

General information

Way: circular
Length: 10,162 metres
Time: 2 h 35 min
Cumulative elevation gain: 51 metres
Best time of year: all year round
Level of difficulty: low

Description of the way

This is a circular way that can be undertaken in either direction, although the one in which it was originally designed is the recommended way. It starts close to the Congress Centre and initially runs southeast into the Hort dels Pontos. Once immersed among palm trees, the way heads north, passing through all the groves located in the east of Elche, such as the Sol, San Claudio and Gat groves. A few steps away, through urban streets, are the Creu del Terme and Hort de Vicentet. After crossing the Avda. del Alcalde Vicente Quiles, the way continues towards the Vailló Tower and the groves to the north, such as the one now used by the Parque de Tráfico. From there, it descends in a southerly direction, crossing the Municipal Park and part of the banks of the Vinalopó River. Leaving the banks behind, the way crosses the Capa and Veleta groves, close to the Generalitat Bridge. This is the southernmost part of the route, and leads into the final groves on the way: the Hort del Cebo, Ressemblanc Tower, Hort de la Tia Casimira and, finally, the Hort de Monjo, before returning to the starting point.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST NEAR THE WAY

14. Huerto del Cura
15. Miguel Hernández University of Elche
16. Municipal Park
17. The Merced Convent and Arab baths
18. La Calahorra
19. Altamira Bridge
20. C/ Major de la Vila
21. Museum of la Festa
22. Elche City Council
23. Canalejas Bridge
24. Santa Teresa Bridge
25. El Raval
26. Generalitat Bridge
27. L'Escorxador Cultural Centre of Elche

WAY HIGHLIGHTS

1. Start and finish. Congress Centre
2. Hort dels Pontos
3. Hort del Sol
4. Creu del Terme
5. Hort de Vicentet
6. Vailló Tower
7. Viewpoint of the Valle Trenzado and the Acequia Mayor
8. Moli del Real
9. Visitor Centre
10. Tourist Office
11. Altamira Palace and Basilica of Santa Maria
12. Hort de les Portes Encarnades
13. Ressemblanc Tower

Date the way was created: April 2015

metres: 100 0 100 200 300 400m



⑥ Vailló Tower

⑨ Visitor Centre


⑪ Altamira Palace and Basilica of Santa Maria

④ Creu del Terme

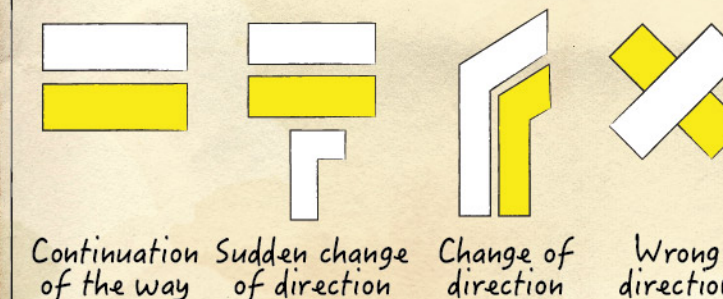
⑦ Acequia Mayor ⑧ Moli del Real

⑬ Ressemblanc Tower

USEFUL TIPS:

If CYCLING the way, bear in mind that it includes 2 flights of steps. Keep DOGS on a lead. Keep the CITY CLEAN: do not leave litter. Keep THE FOUNTAINS clean and do not disturb the FLORA and FAUNA. Keep to the PATH.  The way runs along city streets: RESPECT TRAFFIC REGULATIONS. On VERY WINDY days, some parks and groves ARE CLOSED for safety.

WALK SIGNAGE



Continuation of the way Sudden change of direction Change of direction Wrong direction

ALTITUDE PROFILE

