

01 LAKES OF THE VALL DEL RIU (FROM ELS PLANS)

DON'T MISS...

the visit to museu de la Moto (Motorcycle museum), a museum that aims to pay homage to motorcycles. The museum holds the most singular and representative machines of all times, from the beginning of the 20th century to the present.

DID YOU KNOW?

During the Second World War, many refugees fled through the Ransol valley hoping to arrive in Spain.

TOPONYMY

Ransol:
The name of this high-mountain village might seem to come from *Arans*, and from a diminutive for the same, *Aransol*, by means of an evolution from Romanesque. Instead, the etymology is Basque and comes from *arantze*, *arantza*.

HIKING IN ANDORRA



Second lake



Goat willow (*Salix caprea*)



Pyrenean lily (*Lilium pyrenaicum*)



The Vall del Riu forest

This extraordinary valley, which perfectly preserves its ice age origins, is home to one of the best lakes in Andorra, with a surface area of more than 4 hectares, and two other minor lakes that bring added value to the route.

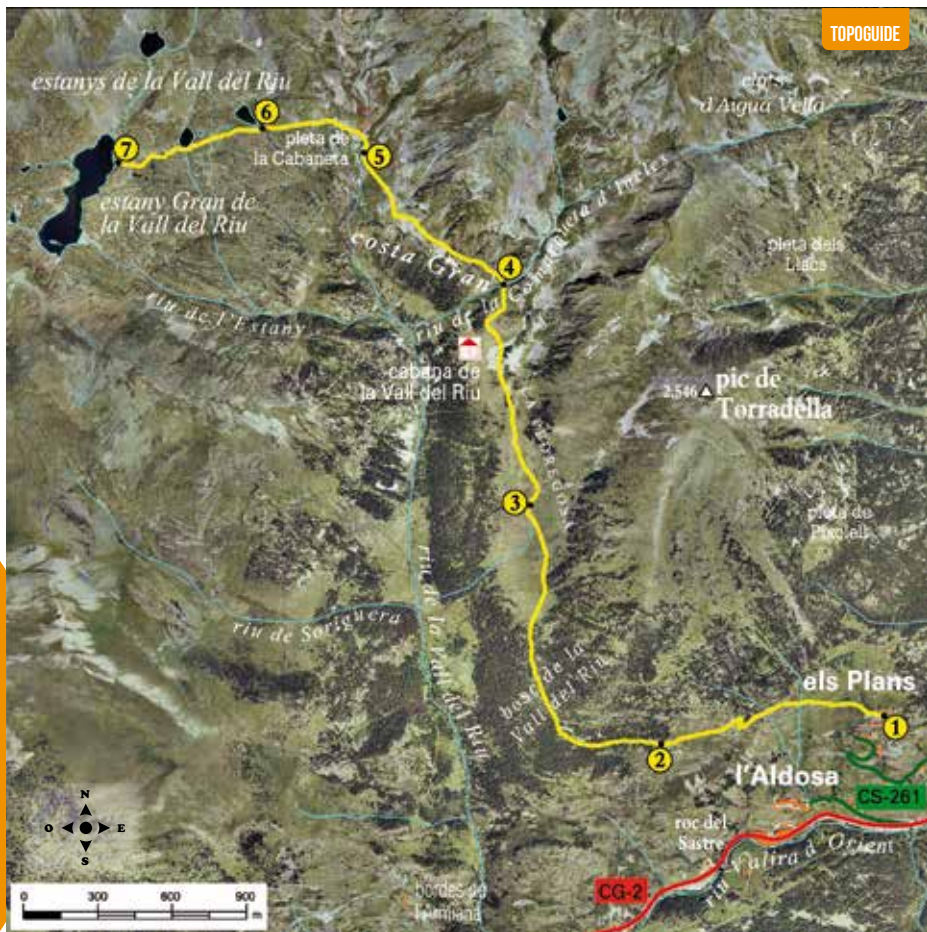
The landscape in Canillo embraces relief marked by the movement of glaciers, which became up to 400 metres thick at the height of the Quaternary Period, as you may guess looking at El Quer rock. Mountain pines (*Pinus uncinata*) dominate the landscape, and are only interrupted by small clusters of deciduous trees such as silver birch (*Betula pendula*), as-

pen (*Populus tremula*) and goat willow (*Salix caprea*). Alpine meadows are found in the upper reaches of the parish, and right below are meadows of wild grain.

Dry stone walls, so typical of Andorra, are found along the route, accompanied by thorny broom (*Genista purgans*) and juniper (*Juniperus communis*). As you walk on, you'll discover sprawling pastures and typical Andorran huts. Forests of mountain pine stretch before you for most of the route and, at 2,650 metres altitude, you can enjoy the Vall del Riu refuge, with capacity for 8 people.

CANILLO

01. LAKES OF THE VALL DEL RIU





DATA SHEET





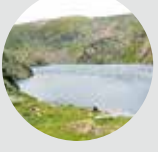
- ● ● ●
- 2H 45 MIN
- 2H
- +720 M
- 5.860 M
- NO
- APPROXIMATE WALKING TIMES

ROUTE SIGNPOSTING

- ● ●
- WRONG WAY



LOCATION	DISTANCE DROP	TIME	COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION
1 ELS PLANS 1.825 m	-- (-)	--	N42 34.933 E1 38.006	Follow the CG-2 heading toward France, and before reaching the car park in El Tarter, take the CS-260, which leads you to Ransol. Afterward, you'll take the road on the left (CS-261) until Els Plans, and then on the right where you'll see some stone houses with red windows. Here you'll find an information panel on the hike. 
2 ENTRANCE TO THE VALL DEL RIU FOREST 2.000 m	1.150 m (+175 m)	45'	N42 34.867 E1 37.349	The path begins gently and continues alongside some dry stone walls. Shortly thereafter, you'll see the Forat de Rius river. You'll continue gaining altitude until you reach the entrance to the Vall del Riu forest. 

LOCATION	DISTANCE DROP	TIME	COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION
3 LA PEDREGOSA 2.145 m	2.610 m (+145 m)	1h 25'	N42 35.385 E1 36.957	The path stays level and enters a mountain pine forest. When you exit the forest, continue heading northeast (see sign). Next, skirt the dry stone wall until you find a wooden panel. This place is called la Pedregosa. 
4 THE COMARQUETA D'INCLES RIVER 2.245 m	3.650 m (+100 m)	1h 45'	N42 35.865 E1 36.873	The path continues northward, where the incline is steep. Soon you'll see the Vall del Riu cabin, with capacity for 8 people. Continue past the scree until you come to the Comarqueta d'Incles river. 
5 COMARCA DE LES FONTS RIVER 2.345 m	4.540 m (+100 m)	2h	N42 36.149 E1 36.457	The path gains altitude with greater ease when you pass the last pine forest. You are now entering the alpine zone. The view of the valley is bucolic. Soon you'll pass by more scree and the Comarca de les Fonts river (area of the La Cabaneta livestock pen). 
6 FIRST LAKE 2.495 m	5.170 m (+150 m)	2h 30'	N42 36.201 E1 36.156	Up ahead is the most rigorous stretch of the hike: the path climbs very steeply in the middle of a bunch of scree. Once this has been overcome, you'll be able to enjoy one of the wildest valleys of Andorra. Continue onward and you'll reach the first lake. 
7 BIG LAKE OF THE VALL DEL RIU 2.545 m	5.860 m (+50 m)	2h 45'	N42 36.122 E1 35.732	The path goes past the first two lakes. After passing by some reservoirs, you'll come to a fork. Follow the path on the right. After walking up a hill, you'll come to Great Lake of the Vall de Riu. 

ROUTE PROFILE

